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CLIFFORD

GEERT,

by

HIS COLLEAGUES

Edited by Richard A. Shweder

and Byron Good

The University of Chicago Press

Chicago and London

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*** Contents

Preface vii

Richard A. Sbweder and Byron Good

Clift Notes: The Pluralisms of Clifford Geertz

Richard A. Shtveder

Passing Judgment: Interpretation, Morality, and Cultural

Assessment in the Work of Clifford Geertz 10

Lawrence Rosen

Celebrating Geertzian Interpretivism 20

Jerome Bruner

Coded Communications: Symbolic Psychological

Anthropology 24

Robert A. LeVine

Geertz’s Style: A Moral :Matter 28

James A. Boon

Clifford Geertz on Time and Change 38

Natalie Zenton Davis

Happenstance and Patterns 45

Amelie Oksenberg Rorty

Geertz’s Concept of Culture in Historical Context: How He Saved

the Day and Maybe the Century 52 !antes Peacock

Clifford Geertz and Islam 63

Dale F. Eickelman

Deep Play, Violence, and Social Reconstruction 76

Michael M. 1. Fischer

l I Speaking to Large Issues: The World, If It Is Not ill Pieces 89
ε///Hanners

12 On the “Subject” of Culture: Subjectivity and Cultural Phenomenology in the Work of Clifford Geertz 98

Byron Good and Mary-Jo DelVeccbio Good

Commentary 108

Clifford Geert;

Appendix /. the Original Symposium Schedule 125

Appendix 2. Academic Biography and Writings of Clifford

Geertz 127

Index 141

** Preface

This preface invites the reader to vicariously participate in a historic intellectual event. On November 23, 2002, on the occasion of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the formation of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), the executive board of the Association sponsored a Presidential Session honoring “The Work and Life of Clifford Geertz.” This event, a full afternoon symposium held in a ballroom at the Hyatt Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana, was cosponsored by the Society for Psychological Anthropology and organized by the editors of this book. An overflowing audience listened to eleven presentations followed by a riveting

response and commentary by Clifford Geertz, who has been the single most influential American anthropologist of the past four decades.

Geertz's writings (see appendix 2) have defined, exemplified, and given character and depth to the intellectual agenda of a meaning-centered, nonreductive "interpretive social science," and have provoked much excitement and debate about the nature of human understanding and its relationship to social science explanations. In 1970 he founded the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, which proved to be an ideal setting for the interdisciplinary articulation of his work, and where, although recently ascending to the status of the emeriti, he continues to be one of anthropology's greatest and brightest lights. Given the aims of the Presidential Session—to both honor Geertz's multifaceted academic career and critically engage his broad intellectual agenda—participants in the symposium included a historian (Natalie Davis); a psychologist (Jerome Bruner); experts on cultural locales where Geertz had done research, such as Morocco, Bali- and Java (James Boon, Dale Eickelman, James Peacock, Lawrence Rosen); and culture theorists, globalization theorists, and psychological anthropologists of various sorts and persuasions (Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, Michael Fischer, Byron Good, Ulf Hannerz, Robert LeVine, and Richard Shweder). Due to a sudden but temporary illness the philosopher Amelie Rorty was unable to present her paper at the symposium, blit her contribution is made available in this book, as is Clifford Geertz's response to her essay (which he did not deliver at the symposium).

The organizers hoped to bring together Clifford Geertz and some of his most well known colleagues for a serious colloquy and reflection on the importance of his work. On that memorable afternoon in New Orleans Geertz's contribution to cultural anthropolog)' was interrogated (and celebrated) from a variety of perspectives. The substance and style of his writings were analyzed, praised, and cross-examined. Several of the presenters invited him to clarify issues, ranging from questions about the local versus the global, about the opposition between relativism and absolutism, and about the Geertzian conception of human psychology and mental functioning. The afternoon was divided into two sections, with a fifteen-minute break in between. The speakers for each section sat at an elevated table, and in turn spoke from a podium to the very large and very

crowded room. Geertz himself sat in one of the forward rows, but amongst the audience, until the expectant moment when he rose, walked forward to the podium, and offered a response.

He had received drafts of most of the papers in advance and carried in his hands a bunch of notes on what he had read and what he had just heard. In his informative, witty, and utterly engaging commentary, he addressed the central points in each and every presentation. He gave advice to younger generations of anthropologists and concluded by giving his blessings to the field of cultural psychology and by spelling out the essential features of his theory of symbolic action. The huge audience—which seemed to appreciate the substance of the proceedings, the brilliance and intellectual seriousness of the commentary, and the historic character of the event—responded to Geertz by jumping collectively to its feet, thereby concluding the symposium with a rousing standing ovation.

This slim volume is neither a videotape nor an audiorape—the sights and sounds of that dazzling, riveting, and ultimately inspiring academic occasion are now but memories in the minds of those who were fortunate enough to have experienced them firsthand. Nevertheless, this book does preserve the main intellectual record of that afternoon's interrogation and appreciation of the work and life of Clifford Geertz, along with his illuminating and stunning response. Airhough our "Cliff Notes" are meant to be a historical record of sorts, we should note that our table of contents is not identical to the order of presenrations at the symposium (see appendix 1 for the original symposium schedule). Geertz's remarks are more or less unchanged flom those he gave at the symposium, although hard copies of three of the papers were available only after the event, thus providing an opportunity for comment in slightly more detail. The ordering of Geertz's responses to particular presentations is faithful to the ordering of his remarks at the symposium. His remarks unfolded according to their own logical flow and pattern of cross-referencing, which were not designed to mirror the temporal sequence of the program schedule.

We wish to thank several people for their dedication to this project, most especially Michele Wittels, who contributed in innumerable ways to the organization of the symposium event and the preparation of this book. Our

gratitude extends as well to Don Brenneis (president of the American Anthropological Association), and Deborah Heath (program chair for the 2002 American Anthropological Association meetings), for their enthusiastic sponsorship of the symposium as a featured event at the AAA meetings; and to Geoffrey White (president of the Society for Psychological Anthropology) and Robert Desjarlais (program chair for the Society for Psychological Anthropology), for their cosponsorship of this Presidential Session and appreciation of the proceedings. The University of Chicago Press and Clifford Geertz are both icons of scholarly greatness in anthropology, and we are most grateful to David Brent, the Press's brilliant editor, for supporting this project and making the match.

Richard Shweder and Byron Good

** Cliff Notes

The Pluralisms of Clifford Geertz

Richard A. Shweder

For three decades Clifford Geertz has been the single most influential cultural anthropologist in the United States. Throughout his career he has put his vast intellectual and literary skills to work "ferreting out the singularities of other peoples' ways of life," cultivating a provocative variety of philosophical pluralism and. promoting the idea that there is no fixed kernel to human nature. No "mind for all cultures." No "deep down homo." "If anthropology is obsessed with anything," he writes, "it is with how much difference difference makes" (2000, 197). He goes on to say, "If you want a good rule-of-thumb generalization from anthropology I would suggest the following: Any sentence that begins, 'All societies have ...' is either baseless or banal" (135).

In many ways Cliff Geertz's sense of style has exemplified (and given distinctive character) to his beliefs. He is a master of distinctions who recoils at typologies, grand theories, and universal generalizations and rejects abstractionism and reductionism as methods for the social sciences. He is a discriminating writer who feels very much at home taking the measure of some complex scene. "Rushing to judgment," he writes, "is more than a mistake, it's a crime" (2000, 45). He believes that ultimate reality (if he is willing to speak of "ultimate" things at all) is a complex continuum of overlapping likenesses and differences that should not be placed in neat boxes, and certainly not two boxes. And as everyone in this anthropological audience surely knows he is the mahatma of "thick description." "I don't do systems," he writes, and his preference for portraying "cases," and his antipathy for general laws and formal principles will be obvious to anyone familiar with his work.

Cliff Geertz's critics are many. Almost everyone initially gets side-tracked by the visibility and distinctiveness of his writing style, which is like Cyrano de Bergerac's nose. It is conspicuous, it is spectacular, but it is best to just ignore it, for the sake of getting on with a discussion of his ideas, which is what we hope to do in this symposium. Reading Clifford Geertz is the perfect antidote to obscurantism in the social sciences, which is a very good thing for those of us who have been educated, inspired, or challenged by his writings. It is even good for those who care to be constructive critics or to interrogate various aspects of his work.

Looking beyond reactions to style, it seems fair to say that among Geerrz's critics the lumpers in the social sciences feel frustrated by him because he is a splitter who is nor so easy to dismiss. He arglies rhar knowledge is "local" and most social science generalizations restricted in scope, for which he has no regrets. Geertz writes, "I have never been able to understand why such comments as 'your conclusions, such as they are, only cover two million people [Bali], or fifteen million I Morocco I, or sixty-five million !.Java,, and only over some years or centuries' are supposed to be criticisms" (2000, 137). Nevertheless, the universalizers mistakenly think he is a radical relativist, the positivists mistakenly think he is anti-science. And the skeptical postmodernists (by which I mean those scholars who really are subjectivists,

nihilists, and radical relativists, which Clifford Geertz is not), think he is an old-fashioned American anthropologist who still believes there is some good work to be done with the idea of “culture” (by which I mean human conceptions of what is good, true, beautiful, and efficient made manifest, and thereby expressed, in practice).

But I am a fan. And one reason I admire his work so much is because I believe cliff Geertz is one of the world’s most significant proponents of cultural, moral, and scientific pluralism (which is not the same as radical relativism and is certainly not the same as being “anti-science”).

If I had to identity some of the big philosophical or rheoretical themes in his writings I would name four, theme 1: Diversity is inherent in the human condition. Theme 2: There is no universal essence to human nature that strongly determines human behavior. Theme 3: Across time and space (history and culture) human nature is continuously transformed by the never-ending attempt of particular groups of human beings—Balinese, Moroccans, Northern European Protestants—to understand themselves and to create a social world that makes manifest their self-understandings. Theme 4: Securing universal agreement about what is good, true, beautiful, or efficient in life is rarely possible across cultures and, even more importantly, the ecumenical impulse to value uniformity (for example, convergence in belief) over variety and to overlook, devalue, or even eradicate difference IS not a good thing. Gulture is not icing, he writes. Biology is not cake. Differences are not necessarily shallow. Likeness is not necessarili deep (See Shweder 2000 for a smiikir but more expansive summary of Geertz’s contribution to the social sciences).

Cliff Geerrz has written that relativism “disables judgment” while absolutism “removes it from history.” He has strongly intimated that finding a middle path between relativism and absolutism is what culture theory ought to be about. For my own very specific SUbstantive contribution to this symposium I want to briefly focus on a not very small question concerning judgments about morality (good and bad, right and wrong) and on the issue of cultural critique. In particular I want to ask, is it possible to offer moral evaluations of the social practices of different societies without imposing one’s own parochial or ethnocentric conception of things on others? If the answer is

yes, precisely how is that to be done? If the answer is no, precisely why is that so? In other words, what exactly is Cliff Geertz's implied third choice between relativism and absolutism; and what exactly does it look like (what shape does it take) when one is asked to judge whether, for example, such customary practices as polygamy, arranged marriage, adolescent circumcision, physical punishment, animal sacrifice, and so forth are good or bad, right or wrong?

In his well-known essay "Anti Anti-Relativism," Cliff Geertz offers this quote from Montaigne: "Each man calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice ... for we have no other criterion of reason than the example and idea of the opinions and customs of the country we live in." "That notion," Geertz then remarks, "whatever its problems, and however more delicately expressed, is not likely to go entirely away unless anthropology does" (2000, 45). He goes on to say, "What the relativists, so-called, want US to worry about is provincialism—the danger that our perceptions will be dulled, our intellects constricted, and our sympathies narrowed by the over-learned and overvalued acceptances of our own society" (45).

In the light of that remark it seems reasonable to raise the question: when it comes to evaluating the social norms of others what does the sharpening of our perceptions, the expanding of our intellects, and the widening of our sympathies actually amount to, and doesn't that process of sharpening, expanding, and widening imply that there is more to a moral judgment than Montaigne imagined? And if there is more, doesn't that process of in formed evaluation take US beyond the country we live in, making it possible for US to achieve a nonethnocentric understanding of the degree of moral value of the customs of other societies. Doesn't the process of cultural critique mean that it is possible (perhaps difficult, but possible) to separate the provincial aspects from the nonprovincial aspects of ones own moral judgments?

My guess is that Cliff Geertz, for a variety of reasons (some of them

Wirtgensteinian; some not), will be reluctant to theorize in the abstract about such questions. So in the little time that remains I aim to simply open a conversation, the ultimate purpose of which is to answer such questions. I

would begin by inviting Cliff to say how his own position on moral judgment and cultural critique compares to the positions of two other famous anti-universalists from two other disciplines—the legal scholar Richard Posner and the philosopher Isaiah Berlin.[1]

Posner, who is a United States appellate judge and senior lecturer at the University of Chicago, is also the most widely cited contemporary American legal scholar. Notably, he is a thoroughgoing anti-realist and a provocative moral relativist. When It comes to the study of moral judgments he fully appreciates the Geertzian generalization that “Any sentence that begins, ،All societies have ... is either baseless or banal; “ In his book rhe Problematics of Moral and Legal Theory (1 999) he (Posner) quotes approvingly from Geertz’s essay ^‘Anti Anti-Relativism” and has the following to say:

I shall be arguing first of all that morality is local, and that there are no interesting moral universals. There are tautological ones, such as “murder is wrong’’ where “murder” means “wrongful killing,” or “bribery is wrong,١١ where bribery means “wrongful paying.١١ But what counts as murder, (ر as bribery, varies enormously from society to society. T here are a handful of rudimentary principles of social cooperation—such as don’t lie all the time or don’t break promises without any reason or kill your relatives or neighbors indiscriminately—that may be common to all human societies, and if one wants to call these rudimentary principles the universal moral law, that is fine widi me. But they are too abstract to be criterial. Meaningful moral realism is therefore out, and a form (not every form) of moral relativism is in. Relativism in turn invites an adaptationist conception of morality, in which morality is judged—nonmorally, in the way tliat a hammer might be judged well or poorly adapted to Its goal of hammering nails into wood or plaster—by its contribution to the survival, or other ultimate goals, of a society or some group within It. Moral relativism implies that the expression moral progress must be used with great caution, because it is perspectival rather than objective؛ moral progress is in the eye of the beholder. (Posner 19)99), 6)

In his book (an extension of his 1997 Oliver Wendell Holmes Lectures at Harvard University) judge Posner offers a sustained attack on moial leahsm.

In his lectuies he suggests that “many moral claims are just the gift wrapping of theoretically ungrounded (and preferences and aversions.” He also argues that if any nonlocal moral facts exist at all they are completely useless for resolving any actual real world moral issue. He writes,

Every society, every subculture within a society, past or present, has had a moral code but a code shaped by the exigencies of life in that society or that subculture rather than by a glimpse of some overarching source of moral obligations. To the extent it is adaptive to those exigencies, the code cannot be criticized convincingly by outsiders. Infanticide is abhorred in our culture, but routine in societies that lack the resources to feed all children that are born. Slavery was routine when the victors in war could not afford to feed or free their captives, so that the alternative to enslaving them was killing them. Are infanticide and slavery “wrong” in these circumstances? It is provincial to say that “we are right about slavery, for example, and the Greeks wrong,” so different was slavery in the ancient world from racial enslavement, as practiced, for example, in the United States until the end of the Givil War, and so different were the material conditions that nurtured these different forms of slavery. To call infanticide or slavery presumptively bad would be almost as provincial as unqualified condemnation. The inhabitants of an infanticidal or slave society would say with equal plausibility that infanticide or slavery is presumptively good, though they might allow that the presumption could be rebutted in peaceable, wealthy, technologically complex societies, (Posner 1999, 19)

Three features of Posner’s position with regard to these and other cases are especially worthy of note. First, he describes himself as a moral relativist. As he stated in his Holmes Lectures he believes “that the criteria for pronouncing a moral claim valid are local, that is, are relative to the moral code of the particular culture in which the claim is advanced, so that we cannot call another 'immoral’ unless we add 'by our lights.’”

Second, he allows that he is a moral SUbjectivist in the sense that he believes that there are no “reasonably concrete transcultural moral truths.” In effect he argues that there is no independent or transcendent or objecfive domain of the right and the true (no “objective order of goodness”) to which one might appeal, as the legitimate source for one’s particular judgments

about what is right or wrong, good or bad. (T he discourse of “inalienable” or “natural” rights is, of course, by Posner’s anti-realist account, thereby rendered either illusory or vacuous.)

Third, he claims that he is not a strong moral skeptic. There are moral truths worth knowing and judgments worth making, he argues. But they are merely facts about what is judged right and wrong in one’s own society, for example, the existing social norms, customs, and laws of one’s own land. These local norms and laws are knowable, he argues, and he is quite prepared to make parochial judgments about what is right and wrong for members of his parish or community, and to enforce them.

What Posner is not prepared to do is pretend that his judgments about the practices of other societies are anything more than reactions based on feelings of personal disgust. Perhaps as a result of personal temperament or cultural taste he might feel revolted by some practice (such as infanticide or suttee) and even inclined to intervene to stop the practice with the power at his command. Nevertheless he argues, in keeping with his anti-realist approach, “moral emotions” (shame, guilt, disgust, indignation) have no universal concrete moral content or objective foundation or source in some transcendental domain of the moral good.

fully consistent with his moral subjectivism, he also rejects that idea that there is ،١ universal moral obligation to tolerate cultures that have social norms different from one’s own. Ue comes close to saying that the experience of ،١ negative-feeling stare may restdt in the exercise of power to eradicate the practices of others, and that it is misguided to even ask whether such an intervention is justifiable or not. The moral domain by Richard Posner’s account of moral relativism and subjectivism is simply a natural scene in which different groups, each with their own distincfive social norms and equipped (in varying degrees) with powers and resources to dominate the local or global scene, compete with each other to perpetuate their own way of life. Some will succeed better than others do. Some will adapt or surrender their social norms under pressure to do so. Bur none of this social norm competition or social norm replacement represents true moral progress, and there are no rational discussions or arguments to be had about what the outcome of the competition or conflier ought to be. Why?

Because, according to Posner, there is no objective moral standard against which divergent claims about what is right and good can be assessed. ʌll that matters is power and the struggle to carry forward one s ⅄l) of life efficiently, and to survive in the competition with other groups.

Precisely how do Cliff Geertz's views on these issues differ from Posner s, if at all? The comparison of Geertz and Posner is instructive. If I understand him correctly. Cliff Geertz believes that is it possible to reject subjectivism and radical relativism while at the same time refusing to place anything (other than banalities) outside of culture. Yet if I understand I osnei correctly, he advocates moral subjectivism and relativism pieciseb because (Geeitz-hke) he refuses to place anything other than banalities outside of culture. Posner thereby forces US to ask the following question: If, as Cliff Geertz suggests, there is so very little in the moral domain that transcends culture and history, how it is possible for others to be both different from US in their social norms yet entitled to have their social norms valued by US, or at least tolerated by US, at the same time? Posner's version of anti-universalism (and his refusal to endorse tolerance or any other moral values as real or objective goods) provokes us to consider the possibility that a fully theorized stance of moral pluralism in anthropology must take US beyond any particular culture and outside of history, for the sake of the theory's own systematic jusrification. If one rejects both subjectivism and relativism, as Clifford Geertz (in apparent contrast to Richard Posner) recommends, what does one put in its place? In the absence of any objective values or nonethnocentric moral goods what type of value judgments survive the corrosive force of moral skepticism?

These are big questions, old questions, hard questions. Yet it is with regard to such questions that a comparison of Clifford Geertz to Isaiah Berlin is instructive. One wonders, how close is the connection between the Geertzian practice of anthropology and the philosophical theory of "value pluralism" elucidated by Berlin, and systematized in a thoughtful book by John Gray titled Isaiah Berlin (1996: also see Galston 2002). Berlin's theory is associated with the idea (quoting John Gray here and below) that "human values are objective but irreducibly diverse." And it is linked to an intellectual stance that affirms the "reality, validity and human intelligibility of values and forms of life very different from our own." One basic claim of the theory is that "fundamental hLiman vallies are many, that they are often

in conflict and rarely, if ever, necessarily harmonious, and that some at least of these conflicts are among incommensurables—conflicts among values for which there is no single, common standard of measurement or arbitration."

In other words some moral dilemmas are insolvable and ultimately undecidable by rational reflection. For Berlin at least that is not quite the same as saying (Montaigne-like) that there is nothing more to moral evaluation than "the opinions and customs of the country we live in" or (Posner-like) that moral judgments are no more than an expression of culturally socialized preferences and aversions. What would Cliff Geertz say about Berlin's theory of "value pluralism"? Would he accept that moral values (e.g., liberty, justice, loyalty, equality, protection of the vulnerable, beneficence) are not only diverse and irreconcilable but also real and objective (and in that sense do stand outside of culture and history)?

In one sense or another Clifford Geertz, Richard Posner, and Isaiah Berlin are all deeply critical of universalized moral claims about the goodness or badness, rightness or wrongness of particular social practices. They have views of moral value that appear to be similar in some ways and different in other ways. If I understand them correctly all three would argue that as a matter of fact people around the world do not universally agree on what behaviors in particular are right or wrong, good or bad. All three accept the notion that there exist moral disagreements that cannot (even in principle) be settled by rational means, and that to the extent there exist universal maxims of morality (for example, the injunction to be fair minded in the sense of treating like cases alike and different cases differently) those maxims cannot in and of themselves resolve real world moral disputes. All three would presumably argue that moral judgments depend on circumstances. I can only guess whether Cliff Geertz would accept Posner's argument that there is no such thing as objective moral progress. I can only speculate whether he would accept Posner's view that even the presumption that infanticide is immoral is too presumptive and provincial to count as a moral universal; although I suspect that he would endorse the stance advocated by both Posner and Berlin that there is 1,0 determinate or universal way to choose between various alternative moral claims, for example claims of autonomy versus community, or liberty versus equality, or

family values versus sexual pleasure? But I would certainly love to hear some of his answers to such questions.

A systematic comparison of Geertz's theory of value with the value theories of Posner and Berlin is sure to be helpful in the further development of a philosophically defensible anthropological theory of cultural pluralism. And it is one very timely way to be challenged by, and to honor, that great intellectual tradition that extends from Franz Boas to Clifford Geertz. I have been speaking here, of course, of an intellectual tradition that (nor by coincidence) is coincidental with the I ()O-year-old history of the American Anthropological Association itself. And, I might add, in a world in which triumphal "West Is Best" thinking has returned in full force to the international scene, it is an intellectual and critical tradition that IS just as important today as it was in I 902, during a former age of global empire.

[1] A more extensive discussion of Posner and Berlin appears in a keynote address, "The klea of Moral Progress: Bush versus Posner versus Berlin," which I delivered at the 21)0–5 Philosophy of Education Society meetings. Parts of that discussion are reported here as well.

Also see Richard A. Schweder, "Moral Realism without the Ethnocentrism: Is It just a List of Empty Truisms.;" in tinman Rights with Modesty: The Problem of Universalism, ed. Andras Sajo (Leiden: Martin us Nijhoff Publishers, 2004).

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** Passing Judgment

Interpretation, Morality, and Cultural Assessment in the Work of Clifford Geertz

In the preface to *Available Light*, Clifford Geertz lists the issues he has sought to pursue empirically as “the role of ideas iir behavior, the meaning of meaning, the judgment of judgment.”[2] “Judgment,” of course, implies a wide range of practices. Although some anthropologists have spoken of “sick societies” and many others clearly have their own assessment of the people they study (as do the “natives” of them, there also being much truth in the ﻝll saw that “every anthropologist gets the society he or she deserves”), most anthropologists do nor—or at least they usually pretend they do not—judge other cultures in the sense of forming an opinion or conclusion about them.[3] At best the judgmental anthropologist may be more akin to a self-appointed referee engaged in authoritative guesswork even though the

people studied may view the meaning of “judgment” as applied to anthropological writings as more like a misfortune inflicted through no fault of their own.

But these are not, of course, the senses of judgment to which Geertz is referring. Rather his is a very subtle blend of studying the ways in which others go about creating and comparing the construction of their own experience at the same time that, without literally adjudging them, the ethnographer does not remain impervious to the implications of their actions. Three elements thus converge in this regard in Geertz’s approach as an ethnographer, elenrents that may be posed as a set of interrelated questions. I he first is really about articulating our own scholarly Standards, for it asks: If ethnography is to be an interpretive enterprise what criteria should be used to assess interpretations not as right or wrong but rather as better or worse? Second, if interpretation does import at least relative standards, in what sense is interpretation a moral act, one that necessarily carries some implications of desirable conduct? And, finally, these questions allow the possibility for the third, more directly judgmentai question, by asking: In at least implicitly establishing such criteria does

Geertz’s work, though that is certainly not its primary aim, point to ways in which we can also set some of the terms for the judgment of other cultures and our own? let me take each of these issues in turn.

Geertz does not give US a separate programmatic statement about how to tell better from worse interpretations. His approach, as in all such matters, is informed by his belief that one demonstrates the value of a theory by what it shows us about its subject, by its capacity to capture particularity as part of general propositions. “Theory ... grows out of particular circumstances and, however abstract, is validated by its power to order them in their full particularity, not by stripping the particularity away” (Geertz, Available Light, 2000 l hereafter AL|, 138).[4] Like William James (and unlike, say, Ernest Gellner), Geertz is a not a monist but a pluralist. He rejects (as one commentator has said of James) “the specious consolation and aesthetic charm of the former for the real moral challenge of the latter.”[5] Rejecting the “tendency to see diversity as surface and universality as depth” (AL, 59) in favor of the idea that “difference must be seen not as the

negation of similarity” bur as “comprising it: locating it, concretizing it, giving it form” (226–27, original italics), Geertz asks us to appreciate that the “enormous number of similar intersections of outlook, style, or disposition, are the bases on which cultural complexity is ordered into at least something of an irregular, rickety, and indefinite whole” (254–55). Not all approaches, therefore, would seem to be equally meritorious in showing how such specific conceptual and relational patterns “come to have the force, the immediacy, and the consequences they have” (211), how they constitute a “system” that is, to borrow George Kateb’s phrasing from a different context, “not so much believable as capable of being believed in by others.”[6] Thus when he speaks of the “virtues of a ‚local knowledge’ sort of tack” (137) Geertz lists “knowledge of limits” (the rejection of authority “that comes from nowhere”), coupled with highly circumstantial accounts, comparisons that bring out contrasts and particularities (137–38), and a “grasp of the moral and political issues involved” as factors that, whatever else, may yield an account that is “surer, less prey to the confusing noises of the confused present.”[7] The idea that a culture may constitute a highly structured configuration or just “a bundle of parochialisms that somehow adheres” (255) also bears on the connection between the aesthetics of a better interpretation and the moral aspects of the process of interpretation itself.

Scientists have used replication and Occam’s Razor, social scientists have spoken of elegance and parsimony, humanists have applied notions of validity based on comprehensiveness and authorial intent—all of them means of trying to achieve criteria for interpretation.[8] Each involves a certain aesthetic and Geerrz would, I think, agree with Isaiah Berlin’s position (following Vico and Herder) that cultures, being incommensurable, require US to attend to their coherence without being censorious, to see the creativity of particular forms and styles as central.[9] Thus Geertz can criticize Cai Hua, who claims that the Na of China exhibit no forms of marital alliance or descent, because “we hear little of the tone and temper of Na life, of the color of their disposition, the curve of their experience.”[10] But he departs quite crucially from Berlin in that he does not think this places the understanding of cultures beyond nroral evaluation.[11] To the contrary, the place of morality in interpretation is crucial to Geertz’s own interpretive turn.

The act of interpretation is a moral act twice over for Geertz. It incorporates, first, the scholar’s involvement with others in casting up an understanding of

their lives and in taking actions that will affect one another’s well being.[12] And it is also a moral act to engage in the inrerpretation of one’s own and others’ morality itself. fhus, in the first instance the anthropologist must “look at persons and events (and at oneself) wirh an eye at once cold and concerned,” realizing that “Detachment comes not from a failure to care, but from a kind of caring resilient eitough to withstand an enormous tension between moral reaction and scientific observation, a tension which only grows as moral perception deepens and scientific understanding advances” (AL, 40). And in the second instance, one cannot leave matters at the descriptive level of a “plurality of incommensurable cultures.”[13] The act of interpretation involves nor only deciding what something is but, as Geertz’s colleague Michael Walzer has argued, how to respond to the question “What is the right thing for Its to do?”[14] Like deciding what the law should be by portraying what the law is, or appraising the practices of a culture in terms of the effects of some people’s acts on others, interpretation necessarily includes moral decision-making. “Deprived of a yardstick, ؛writes Walzer, in ،١ vein that is certainly Geertzianl we rely on exegesis, commentary, and historical precedent, a tradition of argument and interpretation.”[15] And as we give an account of any system of morality we necessarily give an account of our own that must intersect that of the others we address.

So, in the words of the medieval Welsh bard: “You must judge at the end.”[16] If some of the criteria for judgment—of the quality of interpretations, of the met It of a particular moral stance, of what we make of OUI seis es in the إ١١locess of assessing other—appear at rimes vague or resistant to I ephcarion, that may, for (ieertz, be related to his view of both our capabilities as scholars and social life itself. “The puzzles of judgment,” as he calls them,[17] bring together the uncertainties and ambiguities of social life with the limits of our own insights. Like Aristotle, who took it as the hallmark of a mature man that he did not try to describe an entity with greater precision than the thing itself possessed, or the later Wittgenstein, who said one should not try to depict a cloud with sharp lines, or unlike Ruth Benedict, who, no doubt unintentionally, demonstrated that by “trying too hard to be clear ... [one] can dim an arguntent best left oblique,”[18] Geertz seeks the appropriate measure of specificity for capturing the specific. Like Aristotle, too, he believes that political theory should (among other things) be a school for judgment, and that our own politics in a diverse world require

a “unity of intent” (AL, 257) and “a liberalism with both the courage and the capacity to engage itself with a differenced world” (259).

To pursue simultaneously the understanding and the assessment of judgment nevertheless poses difficult professional and personal questions. Geertz is, as I have suggested, saying that we cannot judge other cultures as anthropologists. But we certainly can as individuals. This position does, however, present a dual dilemma. First, it means we cannot formulate with certainty criteria that would allow US to rely on anthropological data to reach any judgmental position. We may know that race does not correlate with social complexity or that gender and caste do not correlate with intellectual ability. In the absence of judgmental absolutes, however, we would only interfere with our primary task as anthropologists—namely, to understand how others’ ideas and practices fit into their own socio-cultural lives—if we let the belief that we could ultimately judge others predominate.[19] But there is also a second dilemma; namely, that even in our role as anthropologists we may not be able to use the insights of moral judgment to assess what is taking place in the subject culture if, lurking in the distance, there remains the expectation of ultimate judgments. A kind of anthropological uncertainty principle, akin to that developed in physics by Heisenberg, may be at work. We cannot as anthropologists make supportable moral judgments and simultaneously have the highest confidence in our ability to study the meaning people attribute to their own thoughts and acts.[20] Both perspectives may yield worthwhile insights, but in pursuing one perspective some uncertainty is necessarily introduced into the other. In short, what we can do as anthropologists is to look at how the people we study judge judgment. We cannot as anthropologists exercise absolute judgment over their judgment.

In Geertz’s view, anthropology can nevertheless improve, even though it cannot preserve, our personal appraisals—but only to the extent that it is grounded on adequate knowledge and humility. “We must learn to grasp what we cannot embrace,” he says (AL, 87)ذ “to judge without understanding constitutes an offense against morality” (40) and, indeed, “rushing to judgment is more than a mistake, it’s a crime” (45).[21] His position appears similar to that of one writer who has said, apropos one of Geertz’s favorite topics: “You have to pick your place to stand, and work by the light of informed intellect, before you can judge whether social institutions or indeed

whole societies are accreting meaning or leaking it away."[22] The result is hardly moral paralysis. Geertz would, I think, agree with the him critic Pauline Kael, who wrote that "A mistake in judgment isn't fatal, bur too much anxiety about judgment is."[23] Judgment of self and others, necessarily entangled in the anthropological enterprise, cannot be totally avoided, but ought not, Geertz makes clear, to be the nrst or indeed the last reason for our studies. For him, anthropology is, therefore, neither a terrain for the enactment of what I would call "the higher personal politics" nor an invitation to mindless relativism.[24]

Accordingly, Geertz has not shrunk from making clearly judgmental statements when, for example, he speaks of people in the Third World for whom the problem is sometimes "not what to believe but how to believe it," or who display, in his view, great uncertainty over what, if any, meaning to assign to various aspects of their lives.[25] Similarly, on the political level, it is sometimes insufficiently appreciated how Geertz has spoken out about the massacres in Bali and java in the 1960s, or the political limitations of the regime of the Moroccan King Hassan II, and he has certainly been modest about the work he has done with the National Academy of Sciences on behalf of imprisoned Indonesian intellectuals.[26] It is, to borrow the tirle of one of his most important writings on this subject, that "Thinking as a Moral Act" is made all the more difficult and all the less avoidable when one attends to the profound differences among human cultures. To read his detailed ethnographies or his most theoretical of analyses without grasping the reasons why, for him, morality and ludgment suffuse his concerns, even when his judgments are neither trumpeted nor self-referring, would, therefore, be to miss one of the most essential aspects of his entire life's work.

Finally, on a somewhat personal note, I may very well be the only person who has ever bought a used car from Cliff Geertz. Now the purchase of a used car from one's teacher certainly constitutes an act of interpersonal trust and moral engagement, to say nothing of a source for intellectual speculation. 1 utme biographers ma)', therefore hotly debate the role of this car ill the formation of Geertz's thought and (rather less hotly, I suspect) my own. !some may see in his offer of the car to me the inspiration for his theory of the symbol as a "material vehicle of thought" while others, seeing It from the perspective of a hard-pressed graduate student who was getting a good

deal, as contributing to my own view of certain symbols as “a thoughtful vehicle of materialism.” Admittedly, that 1964 Simca probably did little to inspire some of Geertz’s more important theoretical insights. It wasn’t much of a “model of” much less a “model for” anything, including the vaunted accomplishments of the automaker’s art. But the car got him and later me where we were going. So for the good deal, the memorable moments of those few months we overlapped in the field, and for sr, much else before and since, I am, like all thrrse within and beyond the academy, deeply indebted to Cliff Geertz—for his insights, his generosity, and, not least, for the self-effacing brilliance of his own judgment of judgment.

[2] ٢ل’١١هاًداأ (اااتااآ٠١. ١ Available Lfght: Anth٢o١,ological Re١ ٦ectio١٦s on Philosophical آ(رلا-ICS, Princc،t(،>n: Princeton University Press, 200(}, X.

[3] (ر٢l the idea of “sick societies” see, for example, Robert B. Edgerton, Sick Societies ،New York: ،Maxwell ،Macmillan International, 1 992); and Raoul Narroll, “Cultural Determinants and the Concept of the Silk Society,” in Chanf’inf’ Perspectives III Mental Illness, ed· Stanley c. Plog and Robert B. Edgerton (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1 969), 128–55.

[4] “What we need, It seems, are not enormous ideas, nor the abandonment of synthesizing notions altogether. What we need arc ways of thinking that are responsive to particularitics, to individualities, oddities, discontinuities, contrasts, and singularities, responsive to what C harles Taylor has called deep diversity,’ a plurality of ways of belonging and being, and that yet can draw’ from them—from it—a sense of connectedness, a connectedness that I١ neither comprehensive n(،>r uniform, primal nor changeless, but nonetheless real” (AE, 224).

[5] Houston Peterson, introducing James’s essay “On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings,” in Kssays in Philosophy, ed. Houston Peterson

(New York: Pocketbooks, 195/), 263 Peterson goes on to describe James’s position (and to quote internally James’s “T he Dilemma (A V)c٣erm\msm٦’_١ Eom The l٧/l// to I3elieve and Other E.sscrys m Popular Pbilosophةتلم ,,٦. Erederick H. Burkhardt, Eredson Bowers, and Ignas K. Skrupskelis [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 177): “[James) admitted that his ،pluralistic, restless universe, in which no single point of view can ever take in the whole scene’ would have no appeal to a mind possessed of the love of unity at any cost.’ ” “A friend with such a mind once told me (James writes) that the thought of my universe made him sick, like the sight of the horrible motion of a mass of maggots in their carrion bed.” On Gellner’s monism versus Geertz’s pluralism as exemplified in the issue of segmentary tribal structure in North Africa, see Y<ose١١١ ٦٠he Culture of Islam: Changing Aspects of Contempo a لا Muslim Elfe (Chicago: University of ،’hicago Press, 2002), 42–43. See generally, Roland l !all, Monism and Pluralism,” in rhe Encyclopedia (,/rhdosophy,vol. 5, cd. Paul Edwards (New Tork: 5)-3)(,(١7)٠9 ٦1١٠1 ١ ١111١1١

[6] Cicorgc Katcb, “Can ،:ulturcs Be lodged? Two Defenses of Cultural Pluralism in Isaiah Berlin’s Work,” Socidl Research (١)٦, no. 4 (1)9)9)): 1009–38, iU !()12. Geertz uses the term ه which was also the title (together with “eareers) of the core graduate course he helped to design during his)‘ears at Chicago, in numerous of his publications. Sec, ؛or example, Clifford Gccrtz, “Religion as a l ultural System and “Ideology as a (ultural System,” in his rhe Interpretation (,/ (.idtnres (New Tork: Basic Books, 1٤)7 3) Srl 2١١. “Common Sense as a C ultural System” anil “Art as a Cultural System,” in his Local Knowledge: birther Essays /// Interpretive Anthropol(١مملم ح’ (New ١ork: Basic Books, I 983), 74–120. (),١ this period of his career at Chicago, see his “An Inconstant Profession: The Anthropological î ife in Interesting limes,” in Annual Review ()لم Anthropology (Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews, 2002), 1–19, at 11–12; and After the Fact: Iwo Countries, hour Decades. ()//,٤/مك()/,)(/() ((////١ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 1 10–15.

[7] This latter is said in reference to the debate over the meaning of Captain Cook’s presence to the Hawaiians, ،١ debate in which Geert/ favors Sahhns’s treatment over that of c bcyesckcrc: “I perhaps should at this point come clean and say that, for my part, I find Sahlins, the Structuralist glitter surrounding his analyses aside, markedly the more persuasive. I lis descriptions are more circumstantial, his portrayal of both the I lawaiians and the British more deeply penetrating, and his grasp of the moral and political issues involved surer, less pre) to the confusing noises of the contused present” (٨1,10(١). Compare (icerrz’s crire ria of interpretation with those of Michael Walzcr, Interpretation and Social (rıtıcısnı (C antbridge: Harvard University Press, 198 30 l: “The best reailing |of a pocntl is not ilillerent in kind, bur 111 quality, trom the other readings: It illuminates the poem in a more powertul and persuasive way. Perhaps the best reading is a new reading, seizing upon some pi·e١ iousl) misunderstood symbol or trope and re-explaining the entire poem. I he case is the same ١١ Ith moral interpretation: It will sometimes confirm and sometimes challenge received opinion.”

[8] In the held of literature, for example, sec 1. 1). Hirsch Jr., Validity in Interprctation (Ƴ١١ Haven: Tale University Press, l 9(0; and rhe Alins of Interpretation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 190000000000.

[9] Sec Katcb, “،:an C ultures Be Judged?” at 101 I, 101 (١–18, and 1021. Stressing the relarion of incommensurability to the comparatb 1st project c iccrt/ says: “Santayana’s famous dictum, that one compares only when one is unablc to get at the hcaIt of the matter, is the precise reverse of the truth; It is through comparison, and of incomparables, that whatever heart we can actually get to is reached,” / oca! Knowledge, 233.

[10] (lifford c ieertz, “ I he \ isit: Review of Cai Hua, ·٨ Society without Fathers or Hushands: The Na of China,’ ” Xew ١’٧,·٤· Review of Rooks, October l 8, 2001,29. ،icertz goes on to say: “! here is nothing, or almost nothing, of individual feelings and personal judgments, of hopes, fears, dissents, and resistances, of fantasy, remorse, pride, humor, loss, or disappointment. The question that in the end we most

want answered anil the one most insistently raised l١١ the very circumstantiality of Hua’s ethnography—‘What is it like to be a Na? —govs laigcl) unattciiilcil. ١٢ ن a re left with a compact, we 11-a rrangCll world of rules, institutions, customs, anil piacticcs: a kinship system, ،:an this be enough? ‘Na-ness’ as a foim-of hfc, ،l ١l of bcing m-thc-world, is, whatever it is, a much wilier, more ragged, unsittliil, less aiticulatid, anil less articulable thing. It is ١ mooil and an atmosjihcrc, a suffusing gloss on things, and it is hard to describe or systematize, impossible to contain in summary categories.”

[11] Thus anti-relativism does not, for Geertz, mean treating any practice as acceptable: “The objection to anti-relativism is not that it rejects an ir’s-allhow-you-look-at-it approach to knowledge or a when-in-Rome approach to morality, but that it imagines that they can only be defeated by placing morality beyond culture and knowledge beyond both” (AL, 6.؟). George Kateb says that for Berlin “the aesthetic observer must turn his back on the claims of morality and truth or resist their temptations; they arc aesthetically irrelevant” (“Can Cultures Be Judged.}” 1021). ‘،judging and ranking cultures by the extent to which they avoid or reduce injustice and untruth entangles US, Berlin seems to think, in indifference to creativity and hence to perils to the human stature” (ibid., 1037). Berlin’s distaste for pursuing the untidiness of much of social life is well captured by Adam Gopnik when he writes: ،‘Berlin lifts the curtain, peeks at the irrational, and then quickly closes it again, with a reassuring bow to his audience. It is squalid in there, but, fortunately, not too squalid to bear” (“The Porcupine: A Pilgrimage to Popper,” The New Yorker, April 1,2002, 88–93).

[12] “To recognize the moral tension, the ethical ambiguity, implicit in the encounter of anthropologist and informant, and to still be able to dissipate it through one’s actions and one’s attitudes, is what encounter demands of both parties if it is to be authentic, if it is to actually happen” (AL, 37).

[13] The phrase is from Kateb, “Can Cultures Be Judged?” 1020.

[14] Walzer, Interpretation and Social Criticism, 23 (original italics).

[15] Ibid., 22.

[16] Yr Hen Gyrys o lai. The Red Book of Hergest, 1397, quoted in Tristan Jones, Adrift (Dobbs Ferry, N\z.· Sheridan House, 1992).

[17] Speaking about cultural diversity, Geertz writes: “My purpose is to suggest that we have come to such a point in the moral history of the world (a history itself of course anything but moral) that we arc obliged to think about such diversity rather differently than we had been used to thinking about it. If it is getting to be the case that rather than being sorted into framed units, social spaces whose edges are unfixed, irregular, and difficult to locate, the question of how to deal with the puzzles of judgment to which such disparities give rise takes on a rather different aspect. Confronting landscapes and still life is one thing; panoramas and collages quite another” (AL, 8ʕ).

[18] Clifford Geertz, Works and Lines: The Anthropologist as Author (Stanford: StaIlford University Press, 1988), 113.

[19] This position can also lead to certain misunderstandings about Geertz’s position. Por example, in one interview Geertz, pressed by the reporter, was reluctant to condemn female genital mutilation. This seemed to the interviewer to be an example of relativism, the refusing to take a position on the matter altogether, whereas it would be more accurate to see it as Geertz’s refusal to pontificate as an anthropologist, emphasizing instead our need to know as much as possible about the context of the practice and then reach whatever judgments we may wish to reach separately (David Berreby, “Unabsolute I ruths: Clifford Geertz,” New York Times Magazine, April 9, 1993, 44–47). A more egregious example is Paul Rabinow’s accusation that Geertz has no politics at all, or Vincent Crapanzano’s charges of Geertzian “self-subversion.” For Geertz’s response, see his Works and Lives, 91–101. For an assessment of both commentators as exhibiting “(n]eurotic offendability together with a sort of childish lashing

our” see Fred Inglis, Clifford Geertz: Culture, Custom and Ethics (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 1 53–55. Each of these writers makes the mistake of confuting whar Geertz thinks we can (and realistically ought to) say as anthropologists with what we may be called upon to address as individuals.

[20] It may be worth asking whether Heisenberg himself was applying his indeterminacy principle to his own moral acts. Neither in Michael Frayn’s play C(Ipenhagen nor in the discussions occasioned by it have I noted any indication of this possibility. It might, however, account for sonic of Heisenberg’s action du ling the war. ١ OU cannot pursue a line of inquiry about the “pure” theory of atomic fission knowing it might result in an atomic bomb and, at the same time, rake a stance of moral opposition to it; you can only do one at a time, seeing different things through each focus, knowing that within each vantage there must be a natural uncertainty. The advantage of moving back and forth between two such perspecrives may have been that contradictions, even opposites, can appear, whether in physics or morality, as ،‘natural” equivalents capable of producing equally valuable, yer equally uncertain, results. The analogies to moral thinking in the human sciences are intriguing.

[21] Geertz thus quotes: “as a bar to ... moral presumptuousness ... what Jakob Burkhardt ... said in 1860 about the dubious business of judging peoples: 'It may be possible to indicate many contrasts and shades of difference among different nations, but to strike the balance of the whole is nor given to human insight. The tiltimate truth with respect to the character, the conscience, and the guilt of a people remains for ever a secret; if only for the reason that its defects have another side, where they reappear as peculiarities or even as virtues. ٠/٤٧ must leave those who find pleasure in passing sweeping censures on whole nations, to do so as they like. The people of Europe can maltreat, but happily not judge one another. A great nation, interwoven in its civilization, its achievements, and its fortunes with the whole life of the modern world, can afford to ignore both its advocates and its accusers. It lives on with or without the approval of theorists’ ” {The Civilization ىل the Renaissance of Italy [New ١ ork: Modern Library, 1 9541١ ؤ ١لاءا); quoted in Gccrtz, “Afterword: I he Politics of Meaning,” in Culture and Politics ill Indonesia, cd. Claire Holt (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972), 319–35, at 335.

[22] Hilary Mantel, “NaipauPs Book of the World,” New York Reriew of Books, October 24 2()0)2 10–12, at 10.

[23] Pauline Kael, / Lost It at the Movies (1965), quoted in Rosalie ʌlaggio, compiler, rhe Beacon Book of Quotations by Women (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 178.

[24] (ieertz has at times opposed the anthropology association taking positions on pʏ)litical matters. It seems to him to smack of the old Soviet Academy of Sciences model, since (as we saw at the time of resolutions surrounding anthropological research anil the Vietnam War) there was a serious temptation to read certain people out of the profession on the basis of one’s position on the war dressed up as a particular form of action required in dealing with the peoples affected.

[25] See, for example, Clifford Geertz, Islam observed: Religions Development in Morocco and Indonesia (New Haven: ι’ale University Press, 1968), 98–1 17. For his most explicit assessment of developing nations and the criteria for appraising them, see Clifford Gccitz, Fhc Judging of Nations: Some Comments on the Assessment of Regimes in the New States,” Archives europeenes de sociologie/Enropean Journal of Sociology 18(1977): 245–61.

[26] Geertz also turned down an appointment at the Institute tor Advanced Study it was hist ottered in the late 1)60s because universities like Chicago (where students had taken over the administration building) were in such turmoil over the Vietnam War. Geertz felt an obligation not to abandon the university at a time when everything appeared to be politicized around that single event. That others took as political conservatism his refusal to let an issue of the moment lead to drastic repercussions for the institutions of higher education should more accurately be seen as concern that institutional alterations based on momentary events could be vastly destructive and lead to pressures for political conformity that universities above all should resist. Uis views as a person were very clear as concerned

the war. What he rejected was not only the threat of political pressures within the academy; he resisted the idea that people should be able to claim political believability as anthropologists that could not be sustained on independent intellectual grounds.

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** Celebrating Geertzian Interpretivism

LIFF GEERTZ (AUVERTENTEY or inadvertently) helped rescue me and my like-minded psychologist friends from the long, cold winter of anti-mentalism that had long ago stricken onr beleaguered field of psychology. That’s what 1 want to talk about, and 1 do so with gratitude.

In my own case, indeed the rescue extended even beyond psychology, for more latterly I have been increasingly preoccupied with psychological and cultural issues in law and jurisprudence. Cliff’s emphasis on the role of meaning-making in the law has been as important to me in the study of the law as it had been when, earlier, we were all in the midst of the Cognitive Revolution which, by the way, is now in the process of being ‘ culturalized”! So bravo to his 1 960ی Storrs Lectures at the Yale Law School, of which more presently, and of which you’ll find echoes in a recent book of mine and Tony Amsterdam.[27]

So what was this Geertzian influence? Let me go back to the beginnings, to the 1960s. Cliff fells an intriguing tale about how, during those early years of his at Chicago, he joined forces with “restless” colleagues there “to redefine the ethnographical enterprise whole and entire.”[28] The effort, as he tells it,

“consisted in placing the systematic srudy of meaning at the very center of research and analysis to make of anthropology, or anyway cultural psychology, a hermeneutical discipline.” And the “move toward meaning,” indeed “proved a proper revolution: sweeping, durable, turbulent, and consequential,” to use his words again, a quarter century later.[29]

l ,ιι sure that none of that Chicago gang had it in mind to rescue psychologist from psychology’s chilling, objectivist self-made plight. They were fielding enough flak from their fellow anthropologists to have little time for rescue operations elsewhere. Yer, for all that, the new meaning-centered “interpretivism” in cultural anthropology began having its “unsetting” effects on psychologists very early on. I must say a word about the why and wherefore of these effects.

You see, at its start, psychology had been torn by two conflicting views about how to understand the human condition—through a day view or a night view, to traitslate founding-father Gustave Fechner’s lagesansicht and Nachtansicht. I he night view sought the idiosyncratic dramatic-historical patterns of human experience; the day view searched for content-free constants of experience that could be discerned in sensation, perception, memory—like Weber’s law to the effect that a just mtticeable difference in sensation, any sensation, was always a constant fraction of the sensation presently in force. Weber was our would-be Newton! Even as late as the turn of the century (at least in Europe) it was moor as to which approach had prevailed—the scientific Naturwissenshaftlich way of the hard sciences or the humanistic interpretivist way of the Geisteswissenschaften. But by the time my generation arrived on the scene, just as the Second World War was starting—rhe natural-science approach had been long, loudly, and officially declared the winner, at least on our shores. And since, at least in America, we love converting the outcomes of uncertain struggles into zero-sum form, interpretivism had been declared dead and gone. ι’es, there were still obscure pockets where the insights of the novelist or dramatist were provisionally acceptable, but only fa Ute de mieux until “ real” psychology could clean up the mess. Interpretivism was methodological weakness or just plain slovenliness: forgivable if provisional as with a Gordon Allport; unforgivable if insistent, as with psychoanalysis. We all read Freud anyway and I recall 1. A. Richards’s lectures on literary interpretation with relived delight, even getting a few of my fellow graduate students to trek next door

to Sever Hall with me, sneaking across a corner of the Harvard Yard to get a breath of humanist air.

When it came to research, though, we all went strictly kosher, or at least we kept our yarmulkes well pinned on! If I wanted to explore anything that sounded “cultural,” I made it a point to use the most psychophysically exquisite cover I could find—as with the so-called New Look in perception where, with the most meticulous controls going, I showed that kids overestimated the sizes of coins proportionately to their value, the more so for poor kids than better-off ones. Or I used the soon-to-be-famous Harvard tachistoscope to demonstrate that a black four-of-clubs playing card took only 200 milliseconds to recognize visually, where a red one took 800 milliseconds of exposure. The word “culrure” does not appear in the papers reporting those results, nor does the term “meaning.” We’d already learned by then how to avoid quarrels with psychology journal referees! Even Gordon Allport got raised hackles at the idea (()nee mooted metaphorically by Kroeber at a Harvard seminar he gnesr-condncted) that mind might be the subjective side culture!

You can well understand that what Cliff and his early 19605 Chicago friends were proposing was (at least for a psychologist) far more radical than they may have realized. We listened with rather concealed interest. I hen Cliff’s ethnographic Held studies began appearing—I recall particularly the Balinese CockHghr—demonstrating what you could do by keeping your eye Hrmly on the meaning-making process. And what struck n١e at the rime was that meaning-making so often demanded storytelling, narrative for its realization —whatever that was psychologically. Oddly, to this day I wonder why Cliff doesn’t get more explicit about the place of narrative in meaning-making, and, for that matter, in culture-forming generally. Perhaps he’s still worried about the hard-nosed colleagues who like to attack him. Better to keep your literary backgromrd from showing too plainly in public! For all that, I’m very touched by the following rather covert and quire out-of-the-blue passage that ends the Preface to cliff’s 1988 Works and Lines: The Anthropologist as Author: “Finally, in lieu of a dedication, which would be presumptuous, I would like nterely to mention the name of the man, nowhere cited in the body of the text, who has had no direct connection to it or me, but whose works has served as its governing inspiration at almost every point: Kenneth Burke.”

For those not acquainted with Burke, his 1924 The Grammar of Motines, with its stunning concept of “dramatism” is the birth place of American literary consciousness about the role of narrative in culturally shaped meaning-making. For Burke, narrative is our mode for making sense of breaches in our culturally canonical expectations. And if you can Hnd no narrative, you are lost—like that poor Balinese Regreg in the Hrst of Cliff s Storrs Lectures, unable to accept the local narrative resolutions of his overturned expectancies, ones that might conventionalize his plight as a deserted husband. He Hnally goes out of his mind.[30]

Finally, to the law. I happen to believe that Cliff’s Storrs Lectures of thirty years ago may be his greatest contribution to intellectual life beyond anthropology. They reverberate in the legal academy today as never before, as exemplified, say, in Paul Kahn’s recent book.[31] For interpretation is, of course, the heart of law. Legal interpretation, we now know more clearly, is the assigning of factual accounts, usually in story form, to normative standards in the law that specify what’s a violation, what isn’t. Bur the normative standards specifed in the law must be congruent with, in some obvious way derivable from the norms of the culture. Fact itself can ne\ ei be independent of law— our vision and our verdicts rat if)’ one another, he sa)s. And law Itself cannot transcend the meaning-ways of culture. As Kahn puts it, “Law must rule the imagination before it can rule the state.”[32]

Cliffs masterly demonstration in his Storrs Lecture of this fact-law-culture interdependence in Islamic haqq law (presumably based on “truth”), Indic dharma law (presumably on criteria of “duty”), and in Malay-Polynesia adat law (on standards of “custom”) has had a powerful impact. It has not led so much to reform movements (the lawyer’s usual hyperactive response to new ideas), but rather to consciousness-raising about the inherent dangers and benefits in any system of law, including our own.

Let me sum up Cliff’s contribution in his own words: “The interpretive study of culture represents an attempt to come to terms with the diversity of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of leading them.”[33]

And, to return to the beginning, ir was his dedicated effort to come to terms with that credo that inspired nor only anthropologists but also those dissident psychologists unhappy with their discipline’s proclaimed devotion to the one-way street of positivist science.

Thank you, Cliff. You once wrote me, after you’d read my 1990 book, Acts of Meaning,[34] “We really are doing the same thing, only you call it psychology, because you got your license there, and I call it anthropology, because that’s where I got mine.” I too am convinced that you can’t do either anthropology or psychology without coming to terms with meaning and the contexts in which it is made. And I think that truth makes the distinction between them not so much useless, but misleading. We’re all in the same boat now, never mind the seas aren’t quite yet charted!

[27] Anthony G. Amsterdam and Jerome Bruner, Minding the Law (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

[28] Clifford Geerrz, After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1995), .14 l

[29] Geertz, After the Fact, 114–15.

[30] See Clifford Geertz, “Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective,” chapter 8 in his Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2000).

[31] See, for example, the acclaimed The Cultural Study of Law: Reconstructing Legal Scholarship, by Yale law professor Paul w. Kahn (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[32] Kahn, Cultural Study, 83.

[33] Geertz, Local Knowledge, 16.

[34] Jerome Bruner, Acts of Meaning (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

** Coded Communications

Symbolic Psychological Anthropology

Robert A. LeVnie

r THE TO 1> OF MY LIST of books that will never be written is Prbiciphi Semiotica by Clifford Geertz. I he book jacket says, “ rhis book summarizes concisely all that is known about human symbolic systerns. A few simple axioms are shown to generate all cultural variations past and present, actual and possible, in just ten pages of text. I he deductive algorithm may be difficult for lay readers to understand, but the book comes with a compact disk that you can put into your computer to design your own symbolic system or simulate those of the Amazon or Himalayas. This work represents a new anthropological science eclipsing all previous efforts that were based on the crude approximations of ethnography—thus launching the discipline of anthropology as a science equivalent to particle physics and molecular genetics.”

It should be no surprise that Clifford Geertz never wrote this book, but there was a time in the 19705 when the rumor went around that something like it was in the works, that Geertz was going to unveil his Theory in a formal exposition that would revolutionize anthropological thought and research. It is now clear that Cliff has always been extremely allergic to this kind of theorizing (Geertz 2000), 3–20) and that he developed and pursued an alternative conception of cultural anthropology that has affected the thinking

of a wide circle of those inside and outside the discipline, to our great benefit.

Cliff and I were students together in the Harvard Department of Social Relations during the early 1950s. He was three years ahead of me, but we breathed the same air, with its aroma of scientism, which I found intoxicating and he found distasteful—a reaction on his part already formulated in terms of phenomenology and informed by humanistic studies. l Ie already had the goal of finding a place for cultural anthropolog)' free of scientistic pretensions, that is, the formalizations of theory and method that simplify social and cultural realities in imitation of the natural sciences. Our views were far apart on this issue.

(11 fraud l ovei lapped again, this time on the faculty of the University of Chicago, from 1960 to 1970, wliere we both participated from its beginning in the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations. I spent a large part of that decade studying at the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis where, in contrast to anthropologists whose psychoanalytic training convinced them of Freudian un i versa Is—" pre-cultura l " and "extra-cultural" aspects of the human psyche—1 moved in the opposite direction, toward an appreciation of the clinical phenomenology of psychoanalysis rather than its grand theory. A major reason for this change was the influence of one of my teachers at the Institute, Heinz Koh lit, who appears in Cliff's "1 hick Description" as the author of the distincrion between "experience-near" and "experience-distant" concepts (Ko-hut 1971). Kohut saw clinical psychoanalysis as an exercise in "empathic understanding," and of course ethnography is based on empathic understanding too. In contrast to the approach of other Freudians faced with cultural phenomena, Kohut advocated working carefully from the surface available to observation to the depths of theoretical inference and reconstruction (LeVine 1992). He was teaching this psychoanalytic phenomenology during the 1 9605 but only gradually brought it out in print for fear of appearing too radical within the orthodox world of the American Psychoanalytic Association.

This was of course the same time that Cliff was publishing the papers collected in The Interpretation of Cultures (1973), which formulated the basic terms of his symbolic action theory. This theory,

together with Victor Turner's (1967) work on ritual and Bob Levy's (1973) ethnopsychology, eventually convinced me that some combination of Geertz's symbolic action approach and Kohut's self psychology could lead to the most promising "person-centered ethnography," as I called it, for research in psychological anthropology (LeVine 1982). In the present context, however, I want to acknowledge the foundational importance of the culture concept as Cliff revitalized it in the 19605 and 19705. It is indispensable for psychological anthropology, and I shall illustrate briefly why I think so.

When I talk about Geertzian symbolic action theory I mean first ()fall the premise that all communicative action is coded, that is, it has reference to a shared symbolic code, like the wink that Cliff made famous—a code that is local and complex rather than universal and simple—and can require lengthy translation and explication. Communication is the very center of what we investigate in psychological anthropology, as Gregory Bateson taught US long ago; the understanding that it is always coded in terms that draw their meanings from the history, values, and conceptions of a community is f undamental to our research. Sec nd, by symbolic action theory I mean the metaphor of a cultural model that combines normative and descriptive dimensions and operates like computer software, selectively actualizing human potentials for cognition, emotion, motivation, and action. This view can breathe new life into the dullest corners of human existence.

Take childcare, for example. What could be more mundane, routine, and repetitive? Some think it should be understood simply in terms of strategic formulas for allocating the time and energy of mothers and maintaining the caloric intake of their offspring—as biologists analyze parental care in other vertebrate species (Wilson 1975). Looked at in terms of symbolic action, however, childcare in humans is freighted with moral ideology and emotion, particularly when examined in comparative and historical perspective. These cultural meanings are presumed by, embedded in, and signaled by the communicative actions of parents and others interacting with the child, drawing on population-specific codes of speech and conduct. Rick Shweder (Shweder et al. 1997), Sara Harkness (Harkness and Super 1996) and I, and our colleagues and students, make nuisauces of ourselves among psychologists by pointing this out with better and better evidence. We have made some progress in convincing child development researchers.

١’et cultural models of human parental care cannot simply be reduced to cultural values any more than they can be validly reduced to rational strategies. I have argued, following Geertz, that we have to see them as susceptible to both semiotic and utilitarian analyses, with the former identifying the moral directions and conventional norms of childcare practices, while the latter reveal the pragmatic strategies and logistical tactics involved (LeVine et al. 1994). Parent-child communication is culturally coded but its canonical forms in a particular community have their own logic and responsiveness to environmental pressures. The Geertzian perspecrive enables US to keep these two aspects in focus.

Thus cultural analysis following Geertz is crucial in psychological anthropology, not only for the understanding of childhood environments bur also in all other arenas of social communication. I thank him for taking it as his task from his student days onward to cut “culture” down to size, reiectmg the omnibus concepts formulated by anthropologists from Edward B. I ylor (1&71) to our teacher Glyde Kluckhohn (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952), in favor of an ideational concept with “a determinate application, a definite sense and a specified use” (Geertz 2015 , نن); Ins success in this endeavor has not only deepened our insights into the cential subiect of the discipline bur also given US a tool for ethnographic investigation and interpretation.

But what of the arguments made by some psychological anthropologists (Ewing 1992: Strauss and Quinn 1997, Id-20) that Geertz denies the importance of private mental contents, psychological processes and personal experience in favor of public communication, leaving US to guess at what his psychology consists of—or worse yet, leading US to assume he believes that anthropology or symbolic action theory can do without a psychology.) I don’t believe that Geertz has no psychology, partly because I know he pays attention to the literatures of psychology and psychoanalysis and partly because I feel certain that he agrees with psychological anthropologists that every concept of culture makes psychological assumptions. So I shall end by asking him to join US in considering the psychology of culture, as Sapir called it, and make public his views about this difficult but fundamental subject.

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** Geertz’s Style

A Moral Matter

James A. Boon

Like Bismarck’s sausages, [I) have seen |ir| made. Clifford Geertz, Acdildble Light

: Y title’s leading motive stems from Cliffs “Art as a Cultural System”—with its studiously strange comparison: veering from colloquially sculpted body slashes (Yoruba) and declamatory color-shapes (Abelard); to Quattrocento painting (that’s Italian) as a gauging (Piero della Francesca), a preaching (Fra Angelico), and a dancing (Botticelli); to radically unvisual performance art: Moroccan intersections of ()ur’anic memorization, Arabic media, and festive poetizing. In this third sort of world, Geertz suggests, verbal style is a moral matter. Now Cliff is no Muslim—nor anything else recognizably doctrinal (judging from After the Fact and “Passage and Accident”). So, how can his written “style” (think of it as a “thinking”) be a moral matter, a moral act even? (I’m thinking here of “ I !linking as a Moral Act,” Cliffs 1968 Antioch Review essay on mutual ironies pervading fieldwork encounters and inequalities. I hat fine piece missed two previous boats of collection. Although prior to “ rhick Description,” it was not found leven in translation! in / he Interpretation of Cultures; although unfootnotedly approachable (like “Blurred Genres,” another Antioch Review original!, it lacked in Local Knowledge. That it didn’t make the cut sooner has ɛ١ nice consequence !intended or un-|· Available Light, erring, if it errs, on the side of erudition, includes an un-up-t()-date item less taxing than now-neighboring pieces, e.g., “Anti Anti-Relativism”—that prickly disquisicion first delivered to the AAA in 1981, also now long-ago. But I digress.) 1 o resume: Can an offbeat, various, and assertively liberal corpus help impel—citing the final phrase of Available Light’s last paragraph that sports just one proper name: E. M. Forster (Two Cheers!!)—“the moral obligation to hope?” Did somebody say “liberal”? Yes, indeed; Cliff confesses as much, albeit in that flickeringly indirect way of his:

Those who would therefore, promote the causes for which these names, ’-”’-I others more nearly contemporary—Dewey, Camus, Berlin !“Isaiah,” this Tin-Pan Alley buff reminds himself], Kuron, Taylor—in their various ways variably stand (for “liberalism,” too, is neither compact nor homogeneous, and it is certainly unfinished) need to recognize its culturally specific origin and its culturally specific character. (Geertz, Available Light, 2000]hereafter AL], 259)

Like The Religion of Java and anything else “cultural” (“The Balinese Village,” say), each subject-interpreted varies, indeed variably varies. Whatever is “gotten at” (as Geerrz says) varies (e.g., “The Abangan Variant”)—including variable liberalism, such as Cliff’s own (and mine). A variant (Boasian) name for all this is “disaggregation”—an interpretive tactic enacting philosophical commitment to ironic certainties of cultures’ ever-translated unfinishedness. But that’s another essay.[35]

Let me, then, repeat (varyingly) a leading-motive of this one. Does Cliff’s more-than-mere rhetoric (think of rhetoric as thinking-style) do something? Are his exactingly shaggy sentences—fashioned into peculiarly persuasive juxtapositions, in essays re-collected, sometimes, non-chronologically —“agentive” (to recall Kenneth Burke)?

Or recall again those Moroccan]Muslims in Local Knowledge whose everyday speech-acts (agonistic “speech-actings,” I’d say) strike Cliff as efficacious, or nearly. Even their idle, catch-as-catch-can conversations—“a head-on collision of curses, promises, lies, excuses, pleading, commands, proverbs, arguments, analogies, quotations, threats, evasion, flatteries ... gives to rhetoric a directly coercive force; (’andu klam), “he has words, speech, maxims, eloquence,” means also, and not just metaphorically, “he has power, influence, weight, authority” (Geertz, Local Knowledge, 1983 [hereafter LK|, 1 14). Is there a kind of ’andu klam (pardon my Arabic; my tin-ear for it traces to loanwords in Indonesian)—a virtuoso forcefulness—to Cliff’s own eloquence, earthiness, and maxims (including maxims about ’andu klam)? Could be; I’ve a hunch there is; one might, sure ‘nuff, suppose so.

To catch-as-catch-can the “how” of Cliff’s corpus—the voice of his theory composed (like certain poetry) out of voices encountered—I’m trying here to emulate his “moral-matter” itself. Trying conspicuously, and surely flubbing. Because Geertz’s style is truly difficult—in George Steiner’s precise sense; and pastiche is easier (although in its precise operatic sense, less so than proverbially falling off the proverbial log). 1’11 try to get less pastichey (and patchy) later, but first a few random salutes to Geertzwerk—my name for the beast.[36]

GEERIZWERK: spanning half a century, bridging two millennia, crafting countless comparisons, in prose both manifold and singular, open any Geertzwerk anywhere—a bout Java, about Morocco, about Bali (e·g·, Bali: Interpretation cVnne cultureو with ‘Deep Play” rendered “jeu dɪenfer” (that’s “deep”!)); or about all three (“Muslims, Hindus, and one disguised as the other,” in Cliffs loving quip on Javanese)—and it’s still Geertz: one radically UN NF RM anthropology, The achingly plural style is nevertheless culturally (in Cliffs sense) American, a variant of our philosophical “catalogue rhetoric”—or so I have intimated elsewhere (Boon 1999). Yes, list-laden vernacular discursivity is Cliffs “special somewhere” (not a neutral nowhere)—his being here-and-there in open (liberal) conversation w th cultures everywhere, wondering how “people with differences can live among one another with some degree of comity” (AL, 260).[37]

Back in 1982, I impishly designated Cliff anthropology’s equivalent of “James, both William and Henry”; ensuing years have not dissuaded me.[38] Hardly stagnant, his signature generalization-eschewing grows ever more caveated, colloquial, caustic, scatter-shot—always courageous, and as corrosive as it is consoling: quite suited to our world, I’d say. A William James component is now patent in “the Pinch of Destiny”; to appreciate Geertz’s Henry James side, I recommend parsing such “sentences” as:

Bather than conceiving of a legal system, our own or any other, as divided between trouble over ɪvhat is right and trouble OVCI· what is so (to use Llewellyn’s piquant formulation, if only because it has been so influential among anthropologists) and of “juristic technique,” our own or any other, as a matter of squaring ethical decisions responding to the what is right sort

with empirical determinations responding to the what is so sort, it would seem better—more “realistic,” if I may say so—to see such systems as describing the world and what goes on in it in explicitly judgmatical terms and such “technique” as an organized effort to make the description | 1>AUSE ... I correct. (LK, 174)

What reader negotiating this prosey maze could ever anticipate it’s conchiding word? Perhaps an aficionado of James (Henry). The containlation just delivered graces Cliff’s unremittingly circumstantial inquiry into “law and fact” (contrasting (Islamic/Hindu/Christian/“secular”/etc.). That study reads at moments like late-james: runaway nnance of affect and mood; yet it also offers crisp aphorisms such as Larry Rosen’s paper culled from Cliff 5 verbal hothouse of “comparative ,

ıes, didactic aspects remain key even in their relative abatement, as I a re I - Ceet tzw el k for sweat s theoretic synthesis acerbically yet also doubts easy declarations of absolute free-play or cozy proclamations of post-theoreticism’s triumph. Cliff perhaps remains not unopen (pardon my litotes) to relative systematishness, provided we recognize its contingent (“unfinished”) quality. And regarding that unfinishedness he is still liable to become, rarely, didactic, preachy even. (Recall the close of After the Fact, whose prose abruptly, and helpfully, halts to explain, figurative pointer in hand, punning undercurrents of its title. You’d almost SUSpect some editor had requested this, and Cliff had, perhaps grudgingly, obliged.)

Sermons I myself have published elsewhere, designate this family of style “relative (not absolute) relativism”; I somewhat prefer “relative relativism” to “anti anti-relativism” but only for the nonce. Either formulation (and they are close relatives) resists overblown theorizing (or anti-theorizing)—too intent on apotheosizing this or that, or demonizing that or this.[39]

One shining moment of “relative relativizing” is Cliff’s recent allusion to four centuries of critical consciousness (Montaigne through Foucault, say), with a provocative twist and thrust I’d characterize as: Neither Bentham, nor Foucault; perhaps Montaigne with Weber. In case you missed it, I quote:

If advances in the technical, fine-tuning control of social life (Bentham's dream, Foucault's nightmare) is what you are after, then universality talk is, I guess, the talk to talk. If you are after refinements in our ability to live lives that make some sense to US and of which we can on balance approve (Montaigne's skeptical hope, Weber's desperate one)—moral skills, not manipulative ones—then something less vaulting would seem to be called for.

That's Available Light, page 139, for those of US taking notes; and it provides my paper's second leading motive.

"Something less vaulting" (yet uncommonly learned!)—may just be what Cliff's cross-cultural writing has always been writing-about. What does ethnographer-Geertz do (practice): he writes-about, unmanipulatively. Not just ecrire, but decrire (ecrire de .. . right, Natalie?). Call it description, and call it thick. Yet, to paraphrase Lady Charterley's game-keeper (old what's-his-name, besides "Sir John"), "You have to ta'e the thick with the thin!" And Cliff has addressed (sometimes thinly) superficial play (versus deep) as well—including his sole reference to Doris Day and Montgomery Clift in The Religion of Java (page 307). I broached such thick/thin dilemmas as spiritedly as I dared (berani) in "Showbiz as a

Cross-Cultural System" published in Cultural Anthropology, anno 2000. All of you please read that ardent effort (and buy the book I Boon, 1999 to which it serves as boutadeو aftermath, or sign-off). I hoped to sbotu why Geertz's writing-about (decrire) requires rereading {relire}. Indeed decrire-pour-relire is (for me, anyway) his Beriif.[40]

Cliff himself, of course, remains a reading-ethnographer, diversely educated you might say: and it was ever so. Remember The Religion of java (based on his ,955 dissertation "report," published with new

framing devices in 1960, read by me in 1965 because of HIM !pointing to Jim Peacock I, the first year of the paperback version, my copy of which I marked in red, as sophomores then were inclined to do (studious ones, anyway). On page 337, I might have underlined (but stupidly failed to):

Perhaps Shaw’s comment I for those taking notes, that’s George Bernard Shaw, unreferenced and unindexed, in this book on Java (try to sound like Ray Roniano)1 that the only trouble with Christianity is that it has never been tried is applicable to religion generally; for certainly there is much rivalry anti backbiting among the various sects and a universal intolerance on their part for Islam, often on the grounds of its intolerance. But it is nevertheless true that the syncretistic, tolerant, relativistic outlook toward religious belief Hrs well with the whole tenor of prijaji mysticism. (Geertz, Religion of Java, 1976 (hereafter 1(11, 337)

That’s from “!he Prijaji Variant” (the courtlyfied civil-service gentry); the chapter is “Mysticism”—duly disaggregated by Cliff throughout; the topic is “religious relativism,” and it is chokingly sad to re-experience these pages, given Indonesian history today.

Yes, Cliff’s opening opus already began fashioning wildly well-read ethnography that nudged readers (or, this one anyway) to dip into stray sources: Shaw, even. Geertzwerk’s digressive decriture (writing-about) began and remained dramatically trans-disciplinarian and eccentrically solo. The approach seems cultivated to be engaged both companionably and edgily—not to be standardized or methodized. Indeed, standardized methodology Cliff’s corpus stands against.

ι et for ŏll its “unmethodicalness,” Geertzwerk manages to be “didactic enough” (as when “Thinking as a Moral Act” waddles (the verb is Forster’s! belatedly into Available Light}. His catch-as-catch-can craft cagily (and catchily) encourages novices to stay the course of learning to fathom, comparatively, the un-outlineable. Cliff’s pedagogic devices include so-called native s point of view (a Jamesian notion) and paradoxical gauges of expeiience near/distant. The latter idea repackages emic/etic —Itself too experience-distant sounding to capture the distinction “experience

near/distance” in an experience-near fashion. I he helpful heuristic we cling to becomes fraught; crisp distinction melts away. Nor, by the way, does experience-near correspond to “native’s point of view”; for example:

The [Arabic] word for poetry, s’ir, means “knowledge,” and though no Muslim would explicitly put it that way, it stands as a kind of secular counterpoise, a worldly footnote, to the Revelation itself.

Here, what may seem experience-near for implied readers is precisely how no Muslim would (per Muslim) put it. ١’es, experience near/distant is as convo(invo?)luted as everything else in Cliff’s interpretive turns, including “thick.”

To reiterate: writing-about, rereadably, truly-tricky difficulties of humanity’s agonistic conversation (call it translation) is Geertz’s Beruf. That term was Luther’s (among others); its nondogmatic adaptation was Weber’s (after prolonged etymological parsing!). No more Lutheran than he is iMuslim, Cliff enacts, nevertheless, anthropology als Beruf (and a Is ‘audit klaui!}—a Weberian dimension implicit throughout his style. Whatever else a Beruf might be, it is a little like a religion: a moral act and a moral matter.[41]

Panically short on time, how might I frame Cliff’s “life and work” (I’bouime et le style; Bhoiuiue est le style) in a semi-systematisch way? Well, consider its tripartite modes:

L The oscillatingly contrastive (entrepreneurship in Java/Bali; irrigation in Bali/Morocco; three cases of anything “as a cultural system” or even “as an anti-anti.”

2. The unpanoptic panorame: spicy overviews, all pith and no abstraction, less “march of time” than wayward shuffle. Here’s one of hundreds:

<quote>

[Indonesia] is ... the product of an incredible stream of warring mind-sets—Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, Indian, Chinese, Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, Muslim, Christian; Capitalist, Communist, Imperial Administrative—carried by means of those great world-historical agencies, long-distance commodity trade, religious missionization, and colonial exploitation, into a vast, thousand-island archipelago occupied mainly ... by Malayo-Polynesians, speaking hundreds of languages, following hundreds of cults, and possessed of hundreds of moralities, laws, customs, and arts; hundreds of senses, subtly different or grossly, reasonably concordant or deeply opposed, of how life ought to go. (AL, 253)[42]

</quote>

3. The exponentially local, framed performatively. Here's an intimate for-instance:

Usually this is a lamp-lit space before the house of some wedding giɪ'er or circumcision celebrant. The poet stands, erect as a tree [whether for wedding or circumcision!) in the center.... Behind him are two lines of sidewise dancing men, ... heads swiveling as they shuffle a couple half-steps right, a couple left. He sings his poem, verse by verse, paced by the tambourines in a wailed metallic falsetto, the assistants join him for the refrain ... only generally related to the text, while the ،lancing men ornament matters with sudden strange rhythmic howls. (LK, 1 12)

111 sum, whether (1) oscillatingly, (2) unpanoptic-panoramically, or (3) local-performatively, decrire-pour-relire enacts intersensory condensations of time-over-space through "mots justes" that reverberate interpretive hunches and doubts.

Adjective-noun combos are Cliff's special knack ("rhythmic howls"); modulated, rather than merely mordant, wit his habit. An assonant prose-poetics deserves savoring; a few favorites: aVaiLable Light (note the tin-

howling rhythm and delicate ring, a silkier title than “anthropology’s awkwardness” one key rheme (AL, 248). With “aVaiLable Light” in ear, listen back earlier: “simplicity flees”; “hypothesis hedgehogs”; “fugitive truth”; “almost monotonous” (as in “Next to Sefrou, Manhattan is almost monotonous”); “jural mimesis”; “legal imminglement (1 can think of no exacter a word)”; and come to think of it, “exacter a word” (LK, 32, 150, 18, 127).

Nor are Geerrzy mots necessarily mellifluous: “poets as horses.” Or, shifting cadences now, “bush Picasso,” “noisy Debussy”—coined to convey how Westerners might ethnocentrically process African art and gameIan music. All this in a book whose conceivable titles were: Colloquial Reason; Vernacular Wisdom; Vehicles of Meaning: Their Efbnograplry; Curves of Someone Else’s Experience; At-Home “S’fʏ”—none as catchy (and catch-can) as LoKKal KNoudedge, which concept by the way Cliff defends, and ardently, on seven pages of Available Light (I 340ﻭ).

Geertzwerk thus achieves sustained attention to human foibles of circumsrance (that’s “foibles of,” not “Pomp and ...))). Even when earlier studies assessed potentials of economic take-off (Peddlers and Princes) or envisioned nation-building solidarity (lhe Religion of lava), contradiction and contingency percolated through. Try opening, say, the latter to page 96, and read closely, closely, closely. Two print fonts—the smaller for held notes (slightly polished, and written-down some hours “after the fact, anyhow—check Cliff s afterword on “method” (sort of); the larger font f(),commentary and expert-sounding explanation (kind of). But the division of interpretive labor smudges; “natives” too are explaining, and anthropologist too is doubting, and vice versa, blurily. With space, I’d copy out the entire page to encourage you to read aloud—smaller print softer, and larger print, louder (or vice versa.))—to gauge how Cliff’s twinned fonts of descriptive prose should sound. Short of that here’s a flattened sample:

ISofter.ج] He said he is not a dukun but merely a pitulung (1 have never heard this term applied except by a man to himself; for everyone else, this man was a dukun). I asked him what the difference was, and he said a dukun takes

money, but a pitidling doesn’t—just helps people out. He said he can’t always cure people; sometimes he can and sometimes he can’t. If he could say for certain, ،‘I can cure you,” there would be two gods. As it is, he just supplicates God.... although he admitted he said spells over three hen’s eggs ..., and accepted gifts from satisfied patients.

[Louder?] There are several factors clustering around the psychological relationship between the dukun and his patient which seem to account for the ambivalent attitude most people show toward dukuns. The first ... the uncertain outcome of treatment.... The second, the degree the dukun may become involved in his patient’s personal life.... And the last is the inherent ambiguity of the dukun’s power, trafficking as he does both with God and with devils—ndukuni (“to dukun someone”) means both to cure a person of a disease and to sorcerize a person into having one.... The major alternative term for dukun is tijang sepuh, which means (in the respectful speech style) “parent.”

As early as The Religion of fava, what at first blush looks caveated about “experience” (e.g., cure) becomes caveated about explanation as well. It’s as though evidence and interpretation were already doing a do-si-do, as though circumstantial doubt were as salient as so-called knowledge. Que, indeed, sais-je?

Since 1960, the loud (didactic) and the soft (descriptive) in Cliff’s corpus have often in a sense switched priorities; nothing, however, has been scotched; pedagogy too maintains a say, a voice. Engaged in reading and rereading Geertzwerk, I feel, today like yesterday, “obligated to hope” that its future include much more writing-about, hermeneutically looping hither and yon, perhaps addressing again the circumstantial opera of Max Weber. Yes, I love anticipating still further culminations (along with the Deweyan) of Clifford James Geertz’s inimitable style, a moral matter enacted and ... Unfinished ... !

The epigraph is from page 252, antecedents altered, with a fond wink.

Let me take this endnote-occasion to thank everyone responsible for and involved in the wonderful ʌʌʌ panel. My piece was devised in a performance-flavor I here try to preserve. In New Orleans I opened with an ad-libbed-admission that, unlike Rick shweder, I would assuredly not be ignoring Cyrano s nose. Cliffs scintillating proximity made me especially glad for the burst of applause after I risked delivering one of his amazing phrasings “my way.” I felt confident enough (but only just) that cliff recognized my efforts as neither parody nor pastiche (except operatically), but rather as a “pragmatic instantiation.” (I thank Judith Shapiro, and profusely, for her e-mail to this effect a few days later.) ʌt the event, sitting between Jim Peacock and Natalie Davis, hearing Cliffs responses to all the papers, and sensing the intensity of some 400 listeners engage،! in the a Its of pa r t ic i pa n trece pt i o n, I experience،! sudden hope that anthropology and her sister disciplines might have many years of effervescence ahead.

[35] On Boas’s knowingly impossible standards of ever more exacting comparative evidence and translation, see Arnold Krupafs “Irony in Anthropology: I he Work of Franz Boas,” in Modernist Anthropology: l run I Fieldwork to Text· ed. Ma rc iManganaro (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 155–45. For fresh senses of irony in anthropology overall (or as rd say, “underair), see James Fernandez and Mary Huber, eds.. Irony in Action: Anthropology, Practice, and the Moral Imagination (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2()()1).

[36] (ieorgc Steiner, On Difficulty (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), following up on his After babel. On opera and anthropological hybridities (including pastiche), see James Boon, Verging on Fxtra-vagaiicc: Anthropology, History, Religion, Literature, Arts ... Showbiz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 8–15, 284–86).

[37] Clifford Geerrz, Rall: Interpretation d’line culture (Paris: Editions Gallimard), chap. 5. The fond remark on Javanese is in EK, 1(). On

catalogue rhetoric ami comparative interpretaiion, American-style, see Boon, Verging, xiii, 267–76, passim.

[38] James loon. Other r rihes, Other Scribes (New ١ ork: Cambridge University Press, .19)82), 2l

[39] Geertz’s “Culture and Social Change: The Indonesian Case” (Man N.s. 19 [1884]: 51 1–52), does nearly demonize (and justihably) “economism”—reductionist assumptions riddling both development planners and Marxist theorists in their not-dissimilar reactions to his Agricultural Involution: an earlier theoretical foe, similarly reductionist, was “psychologism.” For more thoughts on ،·relative relativism,” see Boon, Verging, XV, chap. lذ Boon, Other Tribes, chap. 5.

[40] I cite Lady (.batterley s Lover’s lapse (vaulting?) into brogue from memory—more authoiitatoc (if we behe١e I lai old !؛loom on his) than the text. ٢ hat I am not native to this dialect may cause pause. On rereading (both style and substance) Geertz and others, see James Boon, Showbiz as a Cross-Cultural System: Circus and Song, Garland and Geertz, Rushdie, Mordden ... and More,” Cultural Anthropology 15, no. 5 (2000): 424–5(ş; and Boon, ١ eiging, chaps. 1, 3–6. Space restrictions here preclude noting other recent studies of Geertz’s work.

[41] Weber’s extiavagant parsing and etymologizing of Beruf expands over many footnotes in his The Protestant Ethic arid the spirit نCapitalism; several complete translations into English now exist, including Stephen Kalberg’s (Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing, 200)2: see 180–87). Space restrictions here preclude adequate notes (if such a thing is imaginable) on Weber, or even on his notes. Following Geertz, I have stressed the challenge of Weberian sweep in four books: Verging; Affinities and Extremes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990): Other Tribes; and The Anthropological Romance of Pall (New York: Cambridge University

Press, 1977): all of these try to address comparative institutional specifics. Navigating Weber’s vastness can be daunting; on Weber’s contrastive Verstehens of a “calling to commensality,” see James Boon, “The Cross-Cultural Kiss: Edwardian and Earlier, Postmodern and Beyond,” Skomp Distinguished Lectures in Anthropology, University of Indiana, 1997.

[42] See also AL, 255–56: and re-peruse Geertzwerk on back to Negara (1980), Islam Observed (1967), and the essays on “new states” in Interpretation of Cultures, an earlier appraisal of what has become today’s “world in pieces” (AL, chap. 11).

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** Clifford Geertz on Time and Change

Wondering how to tell of his life and thoughts as an anthropologist, Clifford Geertz wrote:

<quote>

Time, this sort of (ii١١c, I١،٦i·r personal pa!·(cocational, parr political, parr (١ ١1٤١)١١[that might mean) philosophical, doe·١ not flo١١’ like some ١ast ri١[·]er catching lip ،l l l Ills trıbııta lies and heading toward some final sea or cara ract, hut as larger and smaller Streams, twisting and turning and 1١١,)١ and then crossing, running together for ،١ ١1١11 separating again. Nor does It mo١e in shorter and longer cycles and durations, superimposed one upon another as a complex ١١١١ tor an harmonic analyst to factor our. It is nor histor) one IS faced with, nor biograph), but a contusion of histories, a swarm of biographies. I here is order m it all of some sort, but It is the order of Tsquall or ،l street market.[43]

</quote>

That quotation suggests some ot the reasons Clifford Geertz has had such a powerful impact on historians, immensely creatne tor some, irritating and frightening for others. In past)ears, he has taught historians especially 1(١١١ ١ to make sense of repeated forms of telling beha١ior—the restless movement and confrontations of a Moroccan marabout, the blood and betting ot the 1 ahnese cockfight. In future years, his work can provide historians W’ith ١١١١ s of thinking about and metaphors for describing longer-term change in a world that IS both precariously post-colonial and threatened with universal monarchy.

Clifford Geertz’s techniques for obsening, understanding, and writing about Indonesia and Morocco burst upon the horizon of historians like hl eworks back in the 1 Os. Iwo concerns drew’ younger historians to his ١١oik. ٢ ١lie \١as the need to understand ceremonial, liturgical, festi١e ،11 ١1Tothet foi ms of S)mbohc beha١ ior. Social historians often ignored these beha\iors

as irrational ·· or reduced them to practical uses like gioup sohdai It) ١: confessional historians simply took them for granted as (Ilk ،ع١ا٦ l God-gi١en. I٦ ١r me and m) students, it was (lift s Interpretation <)/ (Iiltines of 3 9 l that brought the message of the multiple meanings of religious belief and practice. I low many clues these essays gave US as we struggled to understand, say, the strange almost liturgical forms of religious violence in the sixteenth century.

The second appeal of Cliff's work to historians lay in its focus on a limited space—a town, a compotmd, a bazaar—and an intensely significant and observable local event, out of which could be teased a world of meaning and an enduring style of living. I am sure Cliff has had enough of historians who place themselves under the banner ofhis Balinese cockfight and thick description—sometimes delivering only sparse and ephemeral stories—but it is nonetheless true that his essays are, like Carlo Cinzburg's 1 he Cheese and the Worms, among the founding texts for North American microhistory.

Such moves had their critics among historians. What about historical change? they asked. Anthropology may be just fine for depicting systems and their fissures, but how does it account for, say, the change from the domination of the peoples of the East Indies by the Dutch to the domination of the archipelago by the Jakarta-based Indonesian government? Cliff himself recalls this objection in a 1 990) essay: " ! here seem to be historians, their anthropological educations having ended with Malinowski or begun with Levi-Strauss, who think that anthropologists, mindless of change or hostile to it, present static pictures of immobile societies scattered about in remote corners of the inhabited world."[44]

Change is everywhere in the writings of Clif ford Geertz. It is part of his story of peoples, communities, economic sites, religions, scholarly disciplines, and individual lives. The change is usually initiated or described as coming from outside rather than emerging from an instability or conflict within the town, polity, religious formation, or person. T he "forces" or big processes of change are the familiar ones: in Islam Observed of 1 968, they are "the industrial revolution. Western intrusion and domination,

the decline of the aristocratic principle of government, and the triumph of radical nationalism.” These are Cliff’s shorthand ways of helping readers understand what intervened between “the classical styles” of Islamic sensibility and practice in .Morocco and Indonesia and “the scripturalist interlude.” In 1995, in reflecting on the political style of Indonesia and .Morocco as these independent countries maneuver for a place in the world, he draws upon “the rearrangements of global power relations, trade flows and cultural affiliations that the decolonization of Asia and Africa set in motion between the late forties and the early eighties.” Decolonization, along with global migration, is also a critical variable in shifts in the discipline of anthropology and the goals and worries of its practitioners in the late twentieth century: “the transformation,” as he says in Works ami Lires, “partly juridical, partly ideological, partly real, of the people aitthropologists mostly write about, from colonial subjects to sovereign citizens.”[45]

Cliff’s originality in describing change lies not in identifying well-known variables or in establishing long chains of causation—a procedure he rejects even on expository grounds—but in other intellectual and literary actions. He makes an up-close analysis of the agents and impact of external change on whatever cultural complex, production, or set of lives he is describing, noting with elegant precision the signs of “before” and “after,” and yet finding that a fundamental fashion of local doing and thinking is surprisingly durable. lurther, he reveals the possibilities in and viabilities of these durable styles and practices so as to undermine rigid stage theories and other linear models of historical change. Instead he offers fresh metaphors for imagining historical moventent.

I (> illustrate some of these points, who can forget Cliff’s contrast between the Moroccan Sefrou he knew in 1963 and the Sefrou he saw in I 986? ‘!‘he walled market town, with its age-old population of Arabs and Jews, whose variations and dissimulations could still be put together in a book with ethnographic chapter headings, had given way to a swollen population of (ال Arab families—“rhe real Sefrouis”—and Berber new-comers from the countryside, the specialized sections of town dissolved into diffuse urban sprawl. What kind of order could he make of that “instant jumble?” he asked himself, feeling that the transformed Sefrou had also changed hilt, as knower.[46]

And yer Cliff does hud centuries-old continuities after all, in the ways power is lodged in personages: in marabours with their baraka, scholars with their competing claims to legitimation, judges and other notables of the mosques, the markets, and the government offices, all struggling for and constantly shifting alliances. I he loyalty and friendship tmderlying “bargained-out dependency relarions,” is still at the heart of things as it was five hundred years before in the days of the Moroccan traveler “Leo Africanus.”[47] There are other enduring styles, moderated, adjusted, recast in new circumstances, but still recognizable. On the political level, it is the same ()Id task: ،‘building up something that looks like governance our of locally anchored personal loyalties.” Muhammad / transformed the sultanate in the first years of Moroccan independence but succeeded because he assumed the persona of the maraboutic king. In torn Sefrou, the conflict between ()ﻻ and new inhabitants was fought our, if nor resolved, in 1986, on common rurf: the color of buildings, the facades of private dwellings, of great moments in a land where architecture has long been a feature of morality.[48]

Cliff’s treatment of Indonesia has a similar mixture of transformative ruptures and long-term social, aesthetic, and religious styles, which shift, react, and persist. In Works and Lines and After the Fact, he describes the play between historical change, large and local, on the one hand, and the anthropological approach and literary style of individual anthropologists on the other. Precise historical context is of critical importance in setting the objectives for the anthropologist. For Ruth Benedict, the occasion for Patterns of Culture was the interwar quest by anthropologists for basic patterns in human societies; for The Chrysanthemum and the Sivord, the political concerns with japan during and after World War II. But Cliff’s brilliant chapter depicts Benedict embarked throughout these different contexts, from Starr to finish, on moral satire of Swiftian dimensions, her “rhetorical strategy” being, in Cliffs words, “the juxtaposition of the all-too-familiar [us] and the wildly exotic [them] in such a way that they change places.”[49]

Cliffs self-portrait in After the Fact and in his Haskins lecture has the same dialectic between historical settings, style, and self. The social science atmosphere of Harvard right after the war, the interdisciplinary

milieu of the University of Chicago in the 19605, the confrontational life at the Institute for Advanced Study all shaped his plans, even while he describes himself as lighting on Indonesia and ،Morocco simply by good luck. Along with this story of changing institutional scenes and a somewhat Chaplinesque fashion of approaching the mysteries of Javanese and ،Moroccan towns is the story of the early emergence and persistence of his belief that “the study of meaning, the vehicles of meaning, and the understanding of meaning” were at the heart of his anthropological research. In retrospect he sees himself grappling with this goal already as he worked on his doctoral dissertation, The Religion of Jana. “ I he rest is postscript,” he quips and recounts how he has followed the hermeneutic path for forty years, delighted to find that people in other fields were starting off in the same direction.[50]

As an admiring reader of Cliff’s books, I was surprised to come upon this story of sameness in his autobiographical writings. It had seemed دالم me l\\ةأ Peddlers mid Princes, The Religion (دأ Java, Agricultural Involution had multiple and sometimes-conflicting goals—social, functional, and cultural (in the sense of style, affect, and ideas) —and that the study of meaning was a new step that grew out of an early creative conflier. Here I may be projecting from my own experience when as a social historian in 1969 I extended my study of “consciousness” to include a vast space of actions and forms and felt I had really changed.

Cliff ponders often the question of how to narrate the past: Historicizing yourself I he writesl, dividing your past into periods, is an uncomfortable sort of thing to do. It is uncomfortable not just for the obvious reason that the further you move from the beginning the closer you come to the end, but because there are so many ways to do it; any particular one seems arbitrary, rooted in very little else but narrative.[51]

Already in Ishim observed, in 1968, he was running through the choices for explaining and narrating change—indexical (that is, following through a predetermined mark of change like the decline of magic), typological (“primitive,” “medieval,” “modern”) and evolutionary—and

finding them all wanting.[52] Certainly, Cliffs demonstration of the continning viability, flexibility, and creativity of core cultural styles would place him in opposition to any linear evolutionary scheme. Likewise with his treatment of bazaars in Java and :Morocco as tenable economic and information-swapping institutions; he is willing to use the concept of “modern” in After the Fact, but only in the plural as “modernities.”

Especially interesting are Cliffs experiments with new ways of conceiving and telling about time and change. Already in a study of 1968 he found a fresh language for describing an economic situation that most historians would hastily characterize as “static,” or “stagnant.” In the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, the Dutch “superimposed their colonial economy” on the productive and labor-intensive wet-rice agriculrural system of the island of Java. During the nineteenth century, sugar production took land away from the peasants of the rice paddies and brought profits to the Dutch. Ar the same time, the Javanese population soared and rice production increased. [53]

(Jiff accounts for this by a process of “involution,” a term drawn from discussions of artistic design and which his keen eye for patterns in behavior led him to apply to agricultural and social practices. In involution, a fully formed cultural pattern, rather than remaining static or breaking and turning into something new, “continues to develop by becoming internally more complicated.” With no increase in land and Ito alternative, say, in manufacture, the Javanese peasants elaborated on then land-mtensive patterns so as to incorporate their expanded numbers. The paddy fields became places of “internal elaboration and ornateness; technical hairsplitting, and unending virtuosity”:

And this late (lOthic quality of agriculture increasingly pervaded the

\\ hole 1UK1I economy: tenure systems grew more intricate, tenancy relationships more complicated; cooperative labor arrangements more complex—all in an effort to provide everyone with some niche, however small, in the over-all system.[54]

We see Cliff’s temporal imagination at work twenty years later as he characterizes Levi-Strauss’s body of writings. Cliff rejects current views that they should be understood in terms of linear progress—first Levi-Strauss studied nature, then culture, then behavior, then thought—or that, on the contrary, they should be seen as an unchanging structuralist program turned (III different subjects one after another. Instead the movement is “centrifugal,” and 7rules lropiques—a midstream book, which fits neither scheme—is the “arch-text.” As Cliff puts it: all Levi-Strau,s’ι works, even those published before / ristes Tropiques, can be viewed ‘as partial unpackings of it, developments of particular strains present, embryonically at least and usually much more fully than that, in this, the most multiplex of his writings.”[55]

When I read this, I begin to think about whether a historian could use an arch-text or an arch-event to erase the chronology of a sequence, but to imagine a very different way that something in the middle could be related ε(ر W’hat went before and what came afterward.

Finally, Cliff’s book After the fact is a fascinating effort to reconfigure time. Its order is not that of a mere squall, to return to the quoration with which I opened these remarks, nor is it as hard to fathom as the crisscrossings at a bazaar. But it have multiple histories and biographies, as sites, persrms, decades, and themes are returned to with different questions and perspectives and as Clifford Geertz appears in all of them, “coming and going and knocking about,” “trying to find |his| feet in all sorts of places,” “go|ing| if not forward at least onward.”[56] To his words of self-description, we would add: observing and interpreting rhmgs deeply and anew’, opening W’ays of understanding people close to home and far away, telling US about the world in a prose W’hose rhythm captures voice and mind, and writing about himself with the humor and detachment that are the true mark of greatness.

[43] Clifford Geertz, *After the Fact: Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 2.

[44] Clifford Ceert✓., “History and Anthropology,” initially published in Xeiv Literary //o،or> 990[1:, and reprinted in Available Light :Princeton: Princeton University Press, 20Mb 118–19.

[45] s. (..Motd (ietro, !slant ()bserved: Religious Develo|iment m Morocco and Indonesia (New Haven: ١’ale University Press, 1968), 56–57; After the Fact١ 89; Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 132.

[46] Geertz, After the Fact, 1 1–17.

[47] I am currently completing a book on ··Leo Africanus,’’ that is, the early-sixteenth-century traveler and diplomat as Hasan ibn Muhammad as-Wazzan, and am rinding Clifford Geertz’s writings very helpful in putting questions to my texts of 500 years ago.

[48] Geertz, After the Fact· 27, 29, 33, 58–59, 152–64; Islam observed, 74–82.

[49] Geertz, Works and Lives· 106.

[50] Geertz, After the Fact١ 104, I 14, I 19; Clifford Geertz, “A Life of Learning,” The Charles Homer Haskins Lecture for 1999, ACLS Occasional Paper, no. 45, 1999, 14.

[51] Geertz, After the Fact· 109.

[52] Geertz, Islam observed, 57–59: also, After the Fact, 1–2.

[53] Clifford Geertz, Agricultural Involution: The Process of Ecological change in Indonesia (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), chap. 4.

[54] Geertz, Agricultural Involution· 80–82. Geertz's use of "late Gothic" evokes Johann Huyzinga's celebrated book, The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Tbougbtι and Alt m ¥ι*auce mid the Netlei'Lmds m tie XIVtb mid XVtb CentιιιιesƔ\ι\l\ι\ ι had rirst appeared in Dutch just after World War I and in English translation in 1924, with many SUbsequent editions.

[55] Geertz, Works and Laves, 32.

[56] Ibid., 134–35.

** Happenstance and Patterns

LIFFORD GEERTZ EXEMPLIFIES the interpretive mind at its besr, the anthropologist finding himself here or there, in a sirnation that seems half familiar, half utterly strange, himself often uncertain which is which. Sometimes finding himself in the middle of those situations, sometimes at the edge, often not sure which is which, Geertz, cast as Honɔo Anthropologicus is having, and spending the time of his life interpreting What's What. In all these ways, Homo Interpretes is also an actor, an agent provocateur, a deft negotiator engaged in finding/giving an account, a reckoning of The Scene that might, as he puts it, make sense of sensibility. "Interpreter": the etymology derives from Latin, inter pres, a go-between, a negotiator, a broker. The anthropologist living in the field, crafting the right phrase or negotiating with his academic clan, is engaged in a practical activity. Thought is, as Geertz says, a moral act; moral acts are social; they have political presuppositions and implications.

Once upon a time, the activity of interpretation was treated as observational and speculative. The anthropologist was passive in the field, active in his study, in both cases Mind at work discovering underlying forms of Societies (Cultures). After his initiation in the field, the anthropologist was set to become a solitary scholar, construing his notes in order to decipher his society's structures, his culture's coded system of signs and symbols. Unlike the original etymological understanding of interpretation as fundamentally active and transactional, the metaphors of unveiling, deciphering, construing posed a metaphysical dilemma: either there is a basic Fact ofThe Matter that the anthropologist attempts to discover and articulate ... or his descriptive analyses are shadows cast (on what?) by a beholder (in which of the beholder's personae?). Geertz has shown US how to avoid the hopeless heroics of facing such unresolvable metaphysical dilemmas: take a detour around the dead-end metaphors of the solitary observing, deciphering mind ... or, better: so multiply metaphors that the sting of any one set causes no inflammation.

Geertz's essays have shown US how to bypass the mind-deadening theory-defining "isms" that formed the combat zones where academic careers were won or lost. Many of these theories quickly escalated to metatheories that were implausibly ranged as forced options: rednctivism vs. constructivism, biologisin vs. psychologism, phenomenology vs. science, behaviorism vs. ctiltnralism, structuralism vs. functionalism, universalism vs. pluralistic localism, relativism and anti-relativism and anti anti-relativism, and so forth, all ranged to fight in endless unresolvable battles on an otherwise empty plain, without anyone being clear about what, if anything, might be at stake. Like Dewey, Geertz has taken US through these oppositions, analyzed their sources, placed them in a larger conceptual field, reconciled/overcome their apparent opposition, and then acknowledged them again. His own strategy against schemes and systems of dichotomies has a characteristic plot. He first shows that the oppositions are mutually dependent. For instance, the claims of radical relativism pre-suppose enough common understanding to locate differences: identifying structural units presupposes hypotheses about their functions, and functional hypotheses occur in a structured field; the task of defining individuated units of behavior presupposes a system of cultural categories. Having defused oppositions, Geertz then introduces third and fourth mediating categories, and then—with a deft turn—preserves the

insights of the original opposition, There is, as Geerrz has himself remarked, Dewey in his method. Bur unlike Dewey, and like Hegel, Geerrz has a historical understanding of the rise and fall of the opposition of “isms”; and unlike Hegel, and like Dewey, Geertz’s historical understanding casts no meta-physical shadows. Unfortunately both Hegel and Dewey were burdened with a dense and muddy style whose vague abstractions were surprisingly unreflective. Apparently lackiirg irony, their philosophical confidence remained unperturbed by self-criticism. Unlike the philosophers, Geertz undermines premature neatness with a wealth of examples and inimitable ironic asides, construing ancient epics and sacred texts, interpreting artworks and locating the insights of the latest intellectual witnderkindeii (“Deep Hanging Out,” “The State of the Art”).

Having undermined and reconstituted what is living and what is dead in the standard fashionable “isms,” Geertz has also put the apparently interminable wars between the faculties to rest. He has sorted out and adjudicated the claims, appropriations, and renunciations of anthropology by historians, legal and political theorists, philosophers, and natural scientists, rejecting “the historicist/scientist dichotomy” ... 1’deja vu all ovei again l and put them all in their commingled and opposing places, welcoming help wherever he can get it but firmly refusing reductive domination whenever it appears. Starting from a modest recognition of Where One Is and a circumscribed sense of what one is trying to understand — “less than Everything, less than “Society,” “Man, “Woman,” or some other grand elusive upper-case entity”—Geertz reveals his distrust for the grandiose and his taste for the specific. As usual, the best way to convey Geertz’s message is to quote him: “The conjoining of History and Anthropology is not a matter of fusing two academic fields into Something-or-Other, but redefining them in terms of another.... Sorting things out into ... what happened and what we can say about what happened will not, in the end, really do.... In the end nothing will really do.... [To understandl history-anthropology relations in action is not a deliberate tacking between variant modes of discourse, but an unintended, almost happenstance convergence of them upon a common concern: the enmeshment of meaning in power.”[57]

I want to add an item to our wish list for Geertz’s next act. The motif of the respective roles of chance and happenstance in the unfolding of a culture’s

history—or for that matter, of an individual life—is played out in every phase of Geertz's thought. \'et—perhaps profoundly influenced by the happenstance of his early work in Bali—he is also a persistent and even relentless pattern-Hnder. Despite his impatience with forced oppositions, the implicit tension between the pervasiveness of chance and the continuing discovery of patterns has been a driving theme in his work. The theme is explicit in his discussion of odds-on gambling in "Deep Play, Notes on the Balinese Cockfight"; it reaches a crescendo in "Passage and Accident" and in his more recent philosophically reflective writings. The dramas of happenstance have always been present in his vivid ethnographic descriptions: the unexpected, unrehearsed events following a police raid on a Balinese cockfight, the authorial pride of a Javanese informant,[58] the multiply intersecting dramas and rituals of nineteenth century Balinese governance show a people struggling to encompass— to integrate—the inevitability of chance coincidence in a culture in which every event, every turn of object evinces a plenitude of significance and meaning. As he tells it, for such cultures, no leaf falls without a message ... everything, but absolutely everything has a place in a significant pattern. The interplay between the cockfight and the patterned rituals of gambling, the independent but interlocked multiple "political" organizations serve as star examples of the integration of happenstance and pattern. On the one hand, as luck would have it, many independent lines happen to coincide in the outcome of the cockfight. That's why it can be a betting matter. On the other, there is a pattern —an implicit rule—in the permissible alignment of odds in the betting, and that pattern, right in the middle of a chance event, replicates and reinforces the pervasive social and meaningful configuration of the culture. l he rheme develops the searing contrast—and the Balinese resolution—between the jolting recognition of the pervasiveness of chance and happenstance (on the one hand) and the universal verve, indeed the obsession wirh finding patterns, significantly meaning-laden patterns.

If chance incidents only involved a set of contingencies along one narrative line, they could be significantly integrated by stretching probability. Bur the fortuitous, accidental conjunction of a set of independent narrarive lines, each of them itself contingent is another matter altogether.[59] The kind of happenstance that co-incidenrally, accidentally conjoins several independent contingent narrative lines evokes some of our profound existential anxieties. We fear the pervasiveness of chance in marrers of grear personal or political moment, just when the hope—the need—of guiding intelligence is greatest.

For contemporary liberals, there is the further moral chill: the effects of chance aren’t always egalitarian. Even if there is plenty of chance to go around, its impact is more far-reaching on some people, some cultures, some economic classes than on others. Just when we think luck has been on our side, we see how inconstant it is. It is not only a matter of being subject to the erratic turn of events. Pervasive chance undermines the very idea of agency, let alone (what is confidently called) “rational agency.” When we recognize the extent—the scope— of the uninrended consequences of our actions, the claims of intentional and meaningful purposive action begins to seem naively childish, if not downright churlish, d o be sure, chance happenstance is by Ito means all there is; after all, even chaos is only recognizable against the background of the expectation of a particular order or of a consequential narrative. Even advanced postmodern films are charged by recognizable regularities.

Geertz has been the master dramatist of the ramifications of cliff-hanging chance events. But he is also a master diviner of cultural patterns and of the patterns of internally and externally impelled dynamics of cultural transformations. (Let’s have done wirh the critical complaints that Geertz’s ethnographies present cultures as overly unified, simplified and static themes, modes or styles. Ear from being reductive, he has consistently analyzed the dynamics of intracultural conflicts between priests and peddlers, urban people and villagers, high and low art.) A culture’s continuously transformative and transforming expressions of such conHicts are the ingredients of its forms and structures. The dynamic relations among events pervades the dynamics of interpretation, ! racing the drama of such transformations, a Geertz ethnography follows the shifts in the continuously negotiated and contested character—and even the boundaries—of a culture. As the case requires, the organizing scheme of an interpretation may be economic, political, metaphysical, or psychological; it may take the form of history or a drama, a statistical table or a sacred text... most likely, all of the above, the emphasis may rest on kinship structures (Kinship ill Bali), on statistical correlations , tural Involution), the multilayered turns of multiperspectival dramatic narratives (Negara), the complex patterns manifest in the interaction— the fusion—of religion, law, ideology, and politics (Islam Observed, The Interpretation of Culture, ١٦ة ة Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society.

Geertz has, in all of these ethnographical studies, vividly analyzed the integrative strategic resolutions between the disquieting interpenetration of pervasive chance and pervasive patterns: the deep play of Balinese cock-fight gambling, the dramas of the shifts in their multiple political allegiances and the geo-political dynamics of legal, political, and economic organization in Sefrou, Morocco. Those resolutions may be very well for the Balinese and Moroccans. But the metaphysical problems that stir-round the opposition of sheer happenstance and constitutive patterns are merely problems about the limits of our understanding of causation, and they cannot always be resolved by symbolic rituals. They are direct, practical questions for interpretive anthropologists. What is the stance of the interpretive anthropologist, acutely aware of the chance happenstance coincidences of his fieldwork—indeed of his own intellectual history—but who is nevertheless committed to elucidating “the patterns of culture?”

The motif of the pervasiveness of happenstance has moved to the fore-front as a central motif in Geertz’s recent philosophical and Zeitgeistliche autobiographical reflections on the methods of multidisciplinary cultural studies (Local Knowledge and Available Light). He recognizes that the events of his life, the turns of his thought could have gone this way or that.... It so happened that his teacher at Antioch was George Geiger... it so happened that Geiger was Dewey’s last graduate student.... Speaking of his first fieldwork, he remarks, “Once again I caught the wave.... As improbably and casually as we had become anthropologists, and just about as innocently, we became Indonesianists.” We happened to be present W’hen the police raided an illegal cockfight, ... and we happened to run into a villager’s compound, and we all managed to support one another’s stories ... and after that, everything changed.... As luck would have it, my informant was—or wanted to be—a writer and so I lent him my typewriter ... but... one day it happened ... and so on.

Must Geertz follow Isaiah Berlin and Charles I aylor in classifying the world of happenstance and that of patterns as among the irreconcilable, incommensurable forms of life?[60] In this case, there is no escaping the need for ،l resolution. Consider the possibility of a world—a form of life—whose essential thematic interpretive heuristic is: “The

meaning of every event is unintelligible. Events involve coincidental intersections of sequences of events that are themselves disjointed, unpatterned, unintended and unpredictable.” Such a world would not have any stable practices; it is not even coherent. A culture pervaded by a chance-ridden outlook would issue in a life entirely composed of Ionesco conversations randomly interspersed with Beckett reflections. Even if such a form of life were conceivable, we are nor—in this case—able to choose between chaos and order, as if they were two comprehensive, bur inconrpatible ways of life. Neither individuals nor cultures can choose between a life permeated by chance conjunctions of rime and place and one patterned by regularities of strongly defined social roles, friendships, and feuds, a mode of life that exhibits and largely follows a pattern that significantly organizes the movements of individuals and the meanings of institutions.

Nor can the contrast between happenstance and pattern be assimilated to other, more safely theoretical, less existentially vertiginous contrasts: between subjectivity and objectivity for instance, or between free will and necessity, or phenomenology and science. As we experience them, happenstance and pattern are mutually pervasive, They inhabit the same terrain. The reductively simplistic psychological suggestion that the quest for patterns is a function of the terror of chance only introduces another pattern, as does the apparently soothing recommendation that looking for patterns in chance events elicits them.

Geertz himself exhibits and reflects on another kind of resolution of chance and patterns. Uis style is, as Richard Shweder has said, spectacular. It can t be ignored. The style is the man; the medium is the message. l he sentences of Geertz’s later autobiographical and zeitgeisf-mapping essays are palimpsests of distinctive moments of a complex thought. l hey twist and turn, leap and bound; they are interrupted by tangential asides. I hey are lyrical yet earthy, directly confrontational yet evasive. l hey are self-conscious exhibitions and commentaries on the very process of thought, exemplifying assertion, qualification, reflection and counter-reflection on sheer happenstance, even as it affects the authorial stance. l lere I stand; like many others, I might well have thought otherwise, and may yet do so, but for the moment … here is how it seems to me. Asking whether the good fortune of his “charmed life, in a charmed time” is still available for young

anthropologists, Geertz says, “It is difficult to be certain. The matter is sub indice... . There does seem to be a fair amount of malaise about.... !It is probably not altogether wise just now to take unnecessary chances.... I do not know how much of this is accurate, how much it presents a passing condition ... how much an alteration, rich and strange, in the structure of chance and possibilities.” He reflects that he no longer advises younger colleagues to stay loose, take risks, follow their own bent, This is not merely a modest fallibilism; it is, in the reflection and the rhythm of the prose, the practical, transactional and morally sensitive recognition of the fusion of chance and pattern. Speaking of the lessons he learned ill fieldwork Geertz says, “I remain calm and unfazed ؛about the culture wars, about the downfalling of anthropology and just about everything else] not so much above the battle as beside it, skeptical of its very assumptions.” He adds, “and the rest is post script, the working out of happenstance and fate.” But in truth, the rest is the beginning of the next act, the next turn of thought. Geertz accepts the moral obligation he enjoins: to continue conversation, to reflect on the tragedy and farce of having to address the endless return of repressed oppositions. Think of Geertz—the man and his style—as exemplifying Dewey’s philosophic generosity, Isaiah Berlin’s erudition, and Mark Twain’s wry ironic asides, “the working out of happenstance fate.”

[57] ل . ٢د\١١ةآلأ٢١«:غآأ١ Available Eight: Anthrojiological Reflections on PhilosophicalTopics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000)), 127–28.

[58] Clifford Geertz, “Thinking as a .Moral Act: Ethical Dimensions of Anthropological Field Work in the New States,” Antioch Review 27 (1968).

[59] See Aristotle, Physics, 2, 196b 30ff.; and James Lenman, “Consequentialism and Cluelessness,” Philosophy and Public Affairs 24, no. 4 (20)0)0)).

[60] See haiah Berlin, The Sense of Reality (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997) and Charles Taylor, “Conflicts of Modernity,” chapter 25 in his Sources o/ the Self (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

** Geertz’s Concept or Culture in Historical Context

How He Saved the Day and Maybe tie Century

James Peacock

MY OBJECTIVE IS TO HIGH 1.1 GUT one of Geertz’s contributions by reminding US of historical context. I contend that he saved anthropology and the wider society from a great loss at a dangerous point in anthropology’s history.[61]

In 196ü Clifford Geertz published his first book, The Religion of Java. The previous year he had published an important article in the American Anthropologist, “Ritual and Social Change: A Javanese Example.” The book, which was essentially his doctoral dissertation at Harvard with theoretical discussions deleted and a new descriptive conclusion, paralleled in some ways the several works of Max Weber, such as Religion of India and Religion of China, etc., which were parts of the larger Afsatze Zur Religionssoziologie. the article, as we know, introduced anthropologisrs to a concept of culture based on the theories of Talcott Parsons and Pitirim Sorokin, that culture was a system of symbols, ideas, and values, integrated in a logico-meaningful mode, in contrast to a causal-functional mode that better characterized social systems. Geertz provided a suggestive analysis of a Javanese funeral whose tensions, he argued, derived from a clash between the two kinds of systems.

What else was happening in anthropology at this time—rhe late I 90s, early 19605: Two things: deaths and births. In 1960 Clyde Kluckhohn died, lit I 958 Alfred Kroeber gave a swan song at the American Anthropological Association meetings, then died in the early 1960s. Kluckhohn and Kroeber (1952) had authored the scholarly survey of concepts of culture and represented a humanistic and holistic heritage of American cultural anthropology, which drew on German philosophical traditions transmitted by Boas and others. With their deaths, anthropology lost champions of a humanistic and holistic perspective on culture.

Around the same time, new schools were born. Two that had great impact were structuralism and ethnoscience. Structuralism was announced by Claude Levi-Strauss in his 1955 essay “The Structural Study of Myth,” and ethnoscience, otherwise known as componential analysis or cognitive anthropology, broached by Ward Goodenough in his 1956 article “Residence Rules” in the Southwestern Journal ()/ Anthropology, followed by work by Conklin, Frake, Lounsbury, and others (see Goodenough’s “Componential Analysis” in Science, 1967, volume 156). While differing greatly, the two schools shared similarities. Both focused on thought, the mind, either of an individual or a collectivity, as embodied in symbols— language, mythology, kinship systems, and terminologies. Both laid bare the logical structure of these systems. And both tended to see those logics as disembodied, as abstracted from life and action, so that the structures could be analyzed mathematically and technically, by formulas and even computers.

Why was this a dangerous situation for anthropology? A vacuum was opening up with the death of champions and a decline of a great tradition of culture. Contending to fill this vacuum were these new schools such as structuralism and ethnoscience, which were having a large impact. Levi-Strauss’s impact is widely known, but within anthropology ethno-science, too, attracted much attention, for example, dominating the special publication list of AAA during the early 19605. Boasting strengths, their weaknesses were notable. Ethnoscience especially narrowed the concept of culture to ethnosemantics and narrowed ethnographic fieldwork to procedures of eliciting terms from informants so as to define their cognitive models. Structuralism is vast in compass but also reduces culture to cognition, of a sort. Neither ethnoscience nor structuralism treated the dynamics of whole societies,

nations, for example, or global movements and the meaningful or cultural dimensions of them. Nor did they sustain the rich humanistic insights of Benedict (1943), Mead (1953), or Kroeber (1944) who, whatever their excesses, confronted large patterns, be they Native American, Japanese, Soviet, or great waves of history, and did so with dash, flair, and comparative breadth. Should these be replaced by either narrow techniques or by brilliant but abstruse models? Anthropology was in danger of selling its birthright for thin porridge.

Geerrz to the rescue. As the grand old traditions died and the barbarians or flaneurs threatened at the gate, he brought forward a perspective that at once sustained and developed the great tradition while providing a workable alternative to the challengers. He did this by adapting from a sociological tradition not previously salient in American cultural anthropology. This was the Weberian tradition, filtered through Talcott Parsons, now shaped and anthropologized by Geertz. T his is not to reduce

Geertz to Weber or Parsons but to acknowledge their influence, as he does himself and as can be traced through his graduate student papers in the 1950s prepared in seminars with Parsons, on down to his published works. My emphasis here, though, is not origins of Geertz's thinking, which is complex, and on which he himself has elaborated somewhat, in After the Fact (1995), and in his Haskins lecture at the American Council of Learned Societies (1999), but rather on what he contributed at this point in history.[62]

What did he contribute? Most importantly, a concept of culture and a demonstration of the importance of culture in life as a whole and especially as a way of defining meaning and shaping meaning in the midst of action and change.

In asserting this, I will confine my observations to his published sources during the period in question, that is, the decade extending from 1959 with his article on the Javanese funeral to his essay on the Balinese cock-fight published in 1972. These and other essays are collected in The Interbretation of Cultures, published in 1973. I also have in mind the

books during this period, including his first, Religion of Java, and previous and subsequent ones (1956, 1963, 1965, 1968, 1980, 1983, 2000). I was never a student of Geertz, so my knowledge is based primarily on published and unpublished works (plus, I might note, a delicious conversation in the held with one of his informants).

What underlying frame of reference may one abstract from Geertz's varied works? "Action," is basic. From human action, be it a funeral, a cockfight, or a revolution or meditation, ،ר community or a movement, one abstracts meanings: winks; a wink is a meaningful twitch. Detecting meaning entails "interpretation," or "thick description," and such interpretations are framed by a concept of culture, which one might quickly define as logico-meaningfully interrelated ideas, symbols, and values that bestow meaning. That concept of culture evolved through Geertz's writings. In his 1959 paper on the funeral, culture is a system of symbols, while by his 1972 paper on the cockfight, culture is a text one reads over an informants' shoulder. At other points in that decade, culture is ،l molding and shaping configuration, as in "Religion as a Cultural System." But always there s meaning, and meaning is bestowed by interrelated symbols, values, and ideas.

Such configurations of meaning boast a certain autonomy from social structures and processes, a point British social anthropologists such as Mary Douglas[63] never accepted from Geertz, but the meaning configurarions never become hermetically sealed, abstracted logical structures a la

Geertxs ٢,<jfɹce١)t of Culture in :historical Cotrtext ss structuralism/ethnoscience. Rather they engage life, challenge and conflict with processes in society, whether local as in the funeral, or national and economic as in business and revolution.

What did this Geertzian notion of culture add or SUbtract? To the American cultural anthropology heritage, Geertz added a more limited and precise yet still pregnant concept of culture. Rather than a comprehensive rather vague label for all that is human and not biological, the notion holding sway from Tylor to Kroeber, Geertz's notion follows the Parsonsian view of culture as

essentially ideational. To the British social anthropology heritage, he added this elaborated ideational dimension, distinct from yet dynamically interacting with social forces. To Weberian origins, he added anthropology—ethnography, life, the world, and especially the contemporary world. Culture through Geertz's influence became essential in understanding the new nations, Islam, politics, econoinic development, and history. Could this plethora of uses of culture have happened with either the older sprawling notion or the newer restrictive ideas? It did not.

So, jumping to today, many of US, working in varied spheres, inside and outside anthropology, find ourselves bumping into Geertz, sometimes eerily transformed. In my work, directing a center for international studies, he is there, expressed by politicians, security analysts, K-12 teachers among the 300 schools with whom we work, legislators, business people, and culture and political brokers, such as Gordon Smith, the creator of a global interactive museum, Exploris, which is at the center of an effort to internationalize an entire region focused around a state capital, Raleigh, North Carolina. All of these draw on a concept of culture, and one reason they do is Clifford Geertz.

I should not exaggerate. Their concept of culture is not explicitly Geertzian. The concept of culture seems to follow the old diffusionist age-area hypothesis: the older idea has spread wider and deeper than the newer one. So for most of these workers outside academia, culture is not the streamlined Geertzian notion, certainly not the tendentious intellectualist transformations some of US have created even more recently, but the older vague notions that were brought forward by iMargaret Mead and others. Exploris even has Mead enshrined along with Einstein, Jung, and many others in stained-glass windows replacing Christ and saints in a former church, and "culture" is used in the sense of way of life, cultures, which mix and mingle in the increasingly diverse life of everyone in the society revolving around the future manifested in the museum and surrounding evolving downtown community. Still, Geertz's concept sustained and developed the older notion within academic circles, which in turn have nourished and sustained the broader influence of culture in wider circles. What began in 1959 as a crisp refinement of a concept of culture has spread and evolved in interaction with myriad streams of life and thinking that have brought culture thinking, of

various kinds, to the fore. In that wider process, Geerrz work is foundational —a kind of Ghost that haunts.

That ghost is difficult to exorcise. A concluding anecdote. In a class I have taught for many years, I require a hundred or so undergraduates each year to read Interpretations of Culture—until this year, when I decided to drop that book and replace it with Thomas Berry’s 7 be Great Work (1999), which exhorts US to save the earth and ventures bold generalizarions. A brilliant student, who happens to be blind, seats herself on the right hand with her dog, and challenges every bold assertion with relativisms drawn from Clifford Geertz. She (Danielle iredale) wrote on her final exam:

I am a radical relativist anthropologist. I believe that everything in the mentai, emotional, and spiritual lives of all human beings, as well as many of the supposedly biological or otherwise objectively physical elements of human existence, stem wholly from culture.

Later, Danielle upheld her point iti a formal debate at the DiPhi (Dialectical and Philosophical) Society, opposing Derek, another undergraduate from the course, who took a universalist stance.

What if Geerrz had not stepped forward to revitalize and enrich the concepr of culture at a critical point in anthropology’s history? Conceivably we would have replaced a broad and deep heritage with a more limited paradigm, and as a consequence both developments within the discipline and influences of the culrure concept in the wider society could have been stifled. A kingdom could have been lost for want of a horseshoe nail, or maybe a horse plus a nail and a knight. The discipline and the society are therefore in debt to Clifford Geertz.

*** Coda: Thickening The Plot

History, as we know, is complex and constructed. While I stand by the version presented here—a rriumphalist narrative of Geertz as the hero who saved the discipline from a road best not traveled—I would admit that orhei st, earns wete flowing, other roads being paved. Following these side roads permits US also to note some histories nor included 111 standard accounts.

Dichotomizing the Geertzian and holistic/humanistic view of culture versus the structuralist/ethnoscientist view oversimplifies. Other imporrant movements in anthropology emerging in the 195Os and 1 96Os should be recalled as well. Within America was the ethnography ofcommnnication led by Dell Hymes and others. This approach kept alive Boasian interest in culture and language while grounding the linguistic turn within dynamic social process and community context. In Britain, a path breaking work was Edmund Leach's Political Systems of Highland Burma (1954). Leach here placed culture as a key factor in social process, tilting Kachin society toward democratic or authoritarian patterns, although this complex analysis emphasized primarily social change, with culture as only a factor and viewed primarily as content for social process rather than as a framing paradigm. Later, in Culture and Communication (1976), Leach would employ the term "culture" in a more developed way consonant with his neostructuralism. Coming from the]Manchester school led by Max Gluckman, Victor Turner's Schism and Continuity ill an African Society (1957) focused on ritual as a symbolic process correlated with complex and dynamic social process, an analysis also highly developed around that time by John Middleton (1960) and later T. o. Beidelman (1993). "Symbol" and "rite" rather than culture per se were the foci of these social anthropological studies, so that they developed nuanced insights into aspects of culture—symbol, rite, etc.—without naming them "culture" or elaborating a theory of culture as a whole, rather enriching a theory of ritual and symbols within a social anthropological tradition. Returning to the American context, specifically the Harvard context within which Geertz did his graduate work, it is worth noting roots of yet another stream, often termed "symbolic anthropology."

"Symbolic anthropology" is often identified with Chicago and especially colleagues of Geertz, notably David Schneider and Victor Turner, or students of Geertz and Schneider at Chicago (see, e.g., Patterson 200)1). Schneider, like Geertz, had studied at Harvard and was influenced by Parsons but

developed cultural analysis in a parallel, not identical, line, the best example is his work on kinship as a cultural system, in which he elaborated a system or premises that underlay the practices in American family life (1 968). Students of Cieertz and Schneider at Chicago went on to elaborate their perspectives, sometimes using the label “symbolic anthropology.” Some historical interest may be served by noting the following, which, so far as I know, is not widely known, the term “symbolic anthropology” seemingly was first coined as a title of a series, “Symbolic Anthropology,” published by the University of Chicago Press, beginning with a monograph by me, Rites of Modernization (1968), followed by a second volume by Martin Silverman. This series was launched at Princeton University simultaneously with creating a program in anthropology that explicitly focused on the study of symbols. The program and series were created by David Crabb and me, who then brought iMartin Silverman from Chicago, and it ended with Silverman’s volume and his and my departures from Princeton. Later, James Boon, who took the first course I taught in Anthropology at Princeton (it was also his first course in that subject), went on to Chicago, and joined, then developed, the Geertzian stream.

A converging but little known history or prehistory to this development is this, which like Geertz and Schneider is partially traceable to Parsons. In spring 1960, three Hrst-year graduate students in the Social Anthropology department, Terrence Turner, Thomas Kirsch, and 1, enrolled in a seminar on the Sociology of Religion taught by Parsons and Robert Bellah. Bellah set out a perspective, “Notes on the Systematic Study of Religion,” which focused on symbols, while Parsons was also elaborating the cultural and especially “expressive symbols” dimension of his theory of action (later published as Part IV: Theories of Society, in 1961). Partly inspired by this Parsonsian/Bellah perspective as well as others we brought to the work, Turner, Kirsch, and I developed our own formulations as graduate students. In that seminar, Turner wrote a synthesis of the study of symbols while I worked through a case study, medieval mystics (Peacock 1969). Each of US then independently continlied to work on this perspective in varied contexts; thus my first publication was in archaeology, Academica Sinica. T urner went on to do fieldwork in Brazil on ritual, Kirsch in Thailand on Buddhism, and I in Indonesia, focusing on ludruk, a proletarian theater. By this time, Geertz had published Religion of java, which mentioned this form, and I sent him my field proposal, which he encouraged me to pursue. His

work was hugely seminal for my project, but I also turned to other in fluences.

While indebted to Geertz, I found it necessary to trace in depth the communicative process by which streams of culture were born and SUStained (in this case by theater—see Dell Hymes's introduction to my Rites of Modernization). The lack of such analysis has lain behind later critiques of Geertz (e.g., Wikan I 990) as reifying culture, and proposals for "practice" as a focus later emerged by students of Geertz (e.g., Ortner 1999).

Should one probe even more circumstantially into the background of Geertz's perspective, one could go back to his fieldwork in java (see Fagg 1958). Geertz s Heldwork in Java was part of a team project overseen by

Douglas Oliver. Ghosts of this project still reinained more than a decade later: in 1970, when I stayed with the family of Soedibdjo Markoes in the town named "Mojokuto," they were still riding the bicycle of Donaid Fagg, a member of Oliver's team, who had committed suicide, but whose Harvard disserration elaborated a cultural perspective on status and power that foreshadowed the work of Benedict Anderson on a cultural definition of power in Java (Fagg 1958). Histories remain to be written about the mutual ruminations of these team members that doubtless fed the perspective best known in association with Clifford Geertz.

*** Development: Spreading The Word

Unearthing histories reminds US of the swirls of work and talk that were going on as Geertz was publishing his work and shaping thinking culture within anthropology and beyond, in humanistic and scholarly circles. Remarkable though understandable (and still to be plumbed) IS the sociology of know'ledge that would plot how and why his formulation came to stand for the many interrelated efforts; historians, for exampie, would routinely cite "The Cockfight" and nothing else, and scholars of religion treated ,'Religion as a Cultural System" rather as sacred canon. On the other hand boundaries

were apparent; as noted previously, the older, broader notions of culture were the ones that spread so widely in the lay world, as when analysts explore business “cultures.” Humanistic notions that were pre-anthropological still prevail in formulations such as that of D. Paul Schafer, which sets forth a policy of making culture (1 998).[64] And disavowals of the concept of culture tend, also, to hearken back to older and broader notions, as among feminists who see it as patriarchal (Pollock 1988) or those who worry about its generally oppressive potential (Wikan 1998 on cultures of immigrants that result in killing of daughters by fathers or commentators at the hundredth anniversary of the Polish Ethological Society who traced how culture ignited ethnic cleansing in Eastern Europe). In these critiques, the specific formulations of Geertz are not paramount, just as they are missing, also, in the positive popularizations noted here, as in the instance of Exploris.

In short, Geertz’s notion of culture had critical impact within a certain context and period, an impact that still unfolds, while one of many explorations of what one might term “culture,” it is argttably the ()ne with strongest impact during a period when anthropology and other disciplines could have lost a certain “cultural capital,” if one may apply that term to “culture” itself. Culture is arguably the most distinctive resource that

Anthropology has brought forward in its century or so of development, and formulations that lacked either the richness or the precision and engaging exposition of Geertz could have prevailed, robbing the discipline of an inheritance rather than developing and disseminating it strategically among neighboring disciplines. 1,1 this way, it was the Geerrzian rendition of culture that carried the day and saved the day.

[61] A version of this argument was presented in James L. Peacock, ·· the Third Stream: Weber, Parsons, Gecrtz,” Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford 12, no. 2 (1981): 122–29. T his paper summarized a brief talk l gave at the request of Godfrey Lienhardt to characterize the place of Geertz in anthropology.l made two points: first, the crucial contribution of Geertz’s notion of culture at a certain point in history—a point elaborated

here—and, second, relations between Geertz, Weber, and Parsons, elaborated more in that paper.

[62] “The third stream” begins by quoting Clyde Kluckhohn who, as ! recall it, told a group of graduate students in his history of theory course in spring 1 960: “All you need to know is Boas and the French.” I took him to mean that socio-cultural anthropology at that rime boasted only two important streams: the American, beginning with Boas and continuing through Krocbcr, Lowic, and their successors, and the French, beginning with Durkheim and continuing through British and French social anthropology to Levi-Strauss. The third stream, I suggest, was brought by Geertz beginning in 1960) when Kluckhohn died, the summer following that course, and it inserted a Weberian inspiration via Parsons—adding a certain German perspective to the American and Franco-British. 1 lll not reduce (icertz to Weber/Parsons but noted some parallels, to wit: ،·action,\\ that is, meaningful behavior as the focal unit for analysis, “interpretation” (Weber’s Vcrsrehcn) by placing behavior in a framework of meaning defined by the actor (e.g., translating twitches into winks, to use Geertz’s analogy in “Thick Description”), a definition of culture (as (icist, as system, as text) as framework of meaning, a premise that culture is both superior and autonomous to society, and a mode of generalizing through highlighting distinctive features of instances rather than averaging Statistically across instances (ideal types and ethnographic portrayal in contrast to surveys and experiments). Geertz’s approach both drew on other sources, especially philosophical and literary, and transcended this “stream.” But he did join it, learn from it, and enrich It at certain points, some of which can be traced through papers he wrote while at Harvard and, following fieldwork, at MIT.

[63] Mary Douglas said this in reviewing Interpretation of Cultures (Times Literary Supplement 8 [August I 923|): “clearly the boy with guts and intellectual stamina had learnt as much (or more) from mentors in sociology, philosophy, and history as from anthropologists.\\ She comments specifically on his analysis of the Javanese funeral: “He asserts that culture is independent in the style of ،with one bound our hero was free.’ T he fieldwork reporting stops here.” Here Douglas contrasts her Durkheimian premise that culture is grounded in society (a premise she later argued in detail in Cultural Pias) with the Gccrtzian argument that culture and society are analytically distinct and empirically independent of each

other, a premise that Weber and Parsons assert, following a German philosophical tradition of according autonomous power to Geist.

[64] For a review of Schafer and other recent commentaries on culture, see James L. Peacock, ،‘Culture and the Future,” American Anthropologist 102, no. 2 (June 2000): 261–62.

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** Clifford Geertz and Islam

Dale F. Eickelman

In *After Babel*, George Steiner (1975, 24) observes that a “text is embedded in specific historical time,” so that reading a text fully involves restoring “all that time can of the immediacies of value and intent in which speech actually occurs.” This essay seeks to restore how the work of Clifford

Geertz was initially read and heard in Islamic studies in the 19605 and I97os —and indicate its contemporary significance for understanding Islam today.

*** Knowing Islam and Anthropology

Most of us learn the history of academic disciplines from when we enter the field, not from their beginnings (Ortner 1984). I entered two fields in the 19605, Islamic studies and anthropology. From 1964 to 1966, I studied at the Institute for Islamic Studies at Montreal's McGill University, focusing on classical Arabic and developing a special interest in Islam and opposition to it in seventh-century Arabia (Eickelman 1967). Survey courses at McGill, the Castor Oil of graduate studies everywhere, covered the foundation texts of Islam and Islamic history. The name "Geertz" at the time passed the lips neither of mentors nor students, even in advanced seminars. Although several classmates at McGill were Indonesian, my lecture notes for those two years show virtually no reference to Islam in Southeast Asia. Unusual for survey courses on Islam in the! 9605, McGill's balanced Islam and Islamic history in the Middle East with South Asia.

When I entered the University of Chicago's Department of Anthropology in September 1966, Bernard Cohn and Clifford Geertz taught that year's introductory "brainwashing" course—to use the student language of the time. Their complementary approaches were ideal. Cohn's course, which came in the fall, offered us the double vision of a professional historian and anthropologist. As in most introductory courses, the bulk of our readings were excerpts from a variety of different texts, but with Cohn they became more than an assemblage of "found" objects in the style of Marcel Duchamp or a collation of predecessor's texts carefully chosen to persuade class participants of the inevitability of the lecturer's views—a form of pedagogical authority (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) familiar to generations of graduate students.

Sartre aphoristically calls history "rhe deliberate resumption of the past by the present" (1962, 06). Phis phrase, which I had not yet encountered in I 968, perfectly conveys the consciousness of historiography and the historical imagination integral to C'ohn's sense of "doing" history. At a measured pace

he did more than convey a sense of anthropology’s past. Anthropologists do not just “see” societies, they learn to see them at certain rimes in particular institutional settings.

Such a consciousness of “ways of knowing,” elementary from the vantage of today, was innovative at a time when Chicago’s Department of Anthropology, like most departments elsewhere, offered no courses in fieldwork. Students rhenrselves organized ait informal seminar in 19)68, well before the tidal wave of reflexivity hit the discipline. We gleaned what we could from cryptic notes in the introductions of the classic ethnographies of the time and the occasional anecdotes conveyed by our mentors. Cohn’s lectures invited US to pay equal attention to what anthropologists saw, experienced, and heard, and how—and to which audiences—they reported, wrote, and talked. His representation of the discipline’s past conveyed a critical sense of how our own approach to “ways of knowing” influenced how we read the texts of our predecessors and contemporaries.

Geertz’s pace and style of initiating US into anthropology in winter 1967 could nor have differed more from Cohn s. What Evelyn Woods was to speed-reading, Clifford Geertz was to speed-speaking. Limited in size of note-taking group by the pressure of ballpoint pens on carbon paper, I worked in relay with two other students to record what we could of Ceerrz’s rapid-fire lectures, tracing the notion of culture from figures such as Johann Herder, Wilhelm Dilrhey, and iVlatrhew Arnold to the 1960s. The names and texts flew hard and fast, although we later invoked them, half-digested and on the fly but sometimes appropriately, in comprehensive examinations. ‚More immediately apprehended was the impression of Geertz caught in the act of trying to break out of the “iron cage” of received social thought. At the very least, Geertz made US acutely aware of the irregularities and shortcomings of anthropology as receoed tradition and practice. As our readings caught up with our excitement for the discipline, and as Geertz himself acknowledged, his sense of the emergence of a theory of culture was heavily filtered through the sieve of Harvard’s Department of Social Relations, site of his own anthropological initiation beginning in 1950.

*** Geertz on Islam in the 1960s and 1970s

Geertz said almost nothing of Islam or of Indonesia in his formal “core” lectures in winter 1967, notwithstanding his intense and recent field research in Indonesia. It was discussed only in that year’s oversubscribed advanced seminars. My first intimation of his approach to Indonesia came in a short required reading for Cohn’s initiatory course, “Ritual and Social Change: A Javanese Example” (Geertz 1957), an article that captured our imaginations. It took the dominant theoretical conceptions of anthropology’s immediate predecessors and sharpened our critical awareness of forms of social integration not allowed by so-called static functionalism—labeling any predecessor organizing concept as “static” was a fairly obvious cue that it was, or ought to be, on its way out.

The Hungarian composer Gydrgy Ligeti (lecture, Wissenschafrskolleg zu Berlin, February 15, 2001) said of composing music that originality grows at the margins of the incessant repetition of the familiar. The same might be said of anthropology. Geertz, building on a distinction made by Pitirim A. Sorokin, one of his teachers at Harvard, distinguished between “logico-meaningful,” or cultural, integration—“a unity of style, of logical implication, of meaning and value”—and “causal functional,” or social system integration —the kind “one finds in an organism,” with each part an element in a “reverberating causal ring” (Geertz 1957, 34). Geertz argued that distinguishing between these two forms of social integration (and adding the element of individual motivation), better accounted for the “interference”—Geertz’s term—of political with religious meanings and the “open struggle for power” in Javanese village society. Geertz’s argument reassuringly used elements of the social theory we were then learning, but also offered a way beyond the conventional ideas of the day, even if he still called it a “dynamic functionalist approach” (34). We saw the article as a model for breaking into mainstream anthropological journals. It showed how the modification of an existing anthropological approach could improve the questions asked and the answers given. Edmund Leach’s Political Systems of Highland Burma (1954), in retrospect also a creative break with conventional structural-functional anthropology, was also part of our core readings. It addressed issues of social change but offered no direct developinent of the idea of culture. Geertz’s approach intrigued US more because it encompassed a renewed attention to the idea of culture as well as that of the dynamics of societal change.

Like my fellow students in 1967–68, I was almost exclusively concerned with the theoretical implications of Geertz's argument, nor its implications for the stud)' of Islam in particular or religion in general. Nonetheless, eager to relate anthropology as a discipline to understanding Islam, I chose Geertz's rhe Religion of Java (1960) as an optional reading for a timed essay in Cohn's initiation course. Religion of Java exemplifies full-strength thick description. Prior to coming to Chicago in 1 966, I was immersed for two years in what Marshall Hodgson, Chicago's leading scholar on Islam until his sudden death in 1968, referred to as this high culture. Hodgson's focus was the dynamics of religious debate and change in Islamic "high" culture. He acknowledged that the traditions of "peasants or even non-lettered people" had their own dynamics of change, but he explicitly left aside any detailed discussion of such change or how transformations in peasant and high culture might have been interrelated or even share common background understandings (Hodgson 1 974, I: 80). For a student with a certain amount of "Islamic" learning but only a tentative grasp of social theory, Religion of Java was particularly appealing because it related the vicissitudes of "high" Islamic culture in Java with the rest of society, including what Geertz (1957, 49) called the "more or less" fully urbanized elite, the "more or less traditionally organized peasantry," and all the fluctuating in-between social forms. Even in his earliest writing, Geertz's complex qualifications and self-conscious prose invited readers to think on two related levels. Geertz's ethnographic reporting can never be reduced to the Jack Webb (of "Dragnet" fame) approach of "just the facts, ma'am." It also called attention to the frailty and uncertainty of even the best of ethnographic reporting and analysis.

Religion contains an implicit set of theoretical assumptions concerning how adequately to represent the religion of a complex religious tradirion—Islam in this case—nor limited to a single regional or national setting. For scholars of Islam, Religion suggested how anthropologists and others could apply what was learned from the study of the religious words and deeds of small-scale groups or communities to larger entities, including nations and historical traditions. Geertz divided Javanese religious practices into the three now-familiar "orientations" or "cultural types": abangan, associated in a "broad and general" way with Javanese villagers; san tri, a "purer Islam" associated in a "

broad and general” way with Javanese traders in villages and towns; and a Hindu-Javanese prijaji tradition associated with the hereditary aristocracy (Geertz 1960, 5–6). Geertz argued that these three subtraditions refracted an underlying Cidrural unity, so that, for example, the prijaji and abangan cultural orientations were “in part but genteel and vulgar versions of one another” (234).

All the qualifications and caurions in Geertz’s narrative called painful attention to the fragility of social theory and ethnographic practice. The “in part” and “more or less” cautions embedded in the above quotations to relate particular religious “subtraditions” to particular social categories suggest an unambiguous awareness of the difficulties involved in adequately representing the various “strands” of Javanese religious practice and belief in cultural theory as it had developed through the early 19605. the title of the book itself, as opposed to alternative possibilities such as Islam in Jana, which could have been a parallel to Robert Bellah’s Tokugawa Religion (1957), represented an implicit choice in how to represent Javanese religious experience.

Geertz (personal communication, November 23, 2002) preferred the title Religions of Jana, but the publisher’s insistence on religion in the singular won the day and perhaps better reflects the book’s overall strategy. After all, the book concludes, perhaps with intended irony that the holiday of rijaja is “a kind of master symbol for Javanese culture, as perhaps Christmas is for ours,” and that if one understood “everything” concerning rijaja, “a simple impossibility—one could say one understood the Javanese”(Geertz 1960, 379).

This passage is vintage Geertz. It can be read at face value. Or it can be read as deliberately combining ironies and paradoxes, like those present in Jorge Luis Borges’s short story, “El Aleph,” in which the narrator discovers in a dark corner of a friend’s cellar “one of those points of space that contains all other spaces” (Borges 1962, 186, author’s translation), and through which one can at once see all things past and present, whether Geertz’s comparison of rijaja with Christmas is intended at face value or as end-of-book humor emanating from the furious pace—six uninterrupted months of writing in an office at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he once said—

matters less than his reminder to readers of the complexities of writing ethnography in an era when the “it is written” style of ethnography (“The Kaguru assume ...”) still prevailed.

Geertz’s first book to deal explicitly with Islam as world religious tradition, Islam Observed (19684), based on the l erry lectures given a year earlier at Yale University, remains good to think with. For its original audience, the book broke with the history of religions and Islamic studies traditions of looking for single, unifying religious essences and instead considered the implications of strongly contrasting ethnographic and historical characterizations of the Islamic tradition as it unfolded at the antipodes of the Muslim majority world, Indonesia and Morocco.

Islam Observed offered to its original audience two major conceptual innovations to the comparative study of religions and to the writing of anthropology for audiences well beyond its specialist base. The dominant trend in the history of religions through the I 96Os was a reliance on typological classifications of phenomena being compared, such as “mysticism,” that presumed in advance the essential” features of the phenomena being considered. In focusing on the particular, displayed through vivid characterizations of the representations and practices of Moroccan and Javanese saints in their respective social and historical contexts, Geertz suggested an alternative strategy based on “family resemblances”—partial similarities that can be compared and contrasted rather than slotted into taxonomies. Geertz imported this concept into anthropology from the post-analytic philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, just as he also introduced Alfred Schutz’s (1967, 15) distinctions among predecessors, consociares, contemporaries, and successors, distinctions that becante commonplace in anthropology after the publication of Person, Time, mill Conduct in Bedi (Geerrz 1966a). By importing such concepts to anthropology, Geertz joined the held more forcefully wirh wider currents in social thought, making anthropology more visible, and vital, to a large public. His approach also suggested to others ways of following parallel paths. It influenced my work on the changing role of religious intellectuals and ideas of learning in ،Muslim societies (Eickelman I 985).

Geertzs second major contribution was to close the practical gap in academic training and styles of writing between anthropology and history (see Gohn 1980, 1981). Islam Observed “more or less”—to employ the common Geerrzian phrase—conveys the different historical contexts in which the dominant “classical” styles of Islamic expression and practice developed in ،Morocco and Indonesia. Elements of his argument have been superseded, as historian of religion Vincent Cornell (1 998) argues for Morocco in Realm of the Saint, a study of religious experience in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Morocco that also situates Moroccan Sufism in the context of comparable developments elsewhere in the Middle East and ill Christian Europe (see also Munson 1993 for ،Morocco; for Java, see Woodward 1989). Geerrz articulated changing and contested ideas of culture with what happened in history, prompting others to essay better arguments.

In Islam Observed as in his other writings, Geertz’s consistent goal was to develop an improved concept of culture (Eickelman interview with Clifford Geertz, CBS-1 V “Sunrise Semester,” November 26, 1974). At times, his arresting metaphors and images hyperbolically overreach, as in the comparison between the Javanese rijaja and Christmas. Thus Islam

Observed concludes with wh:\t Geertz calls a “human metaphor” of a traditionally raised French-speaking Moroccan student on an airplane bound for New York, his rirst trip outside of]Morocco, passing “the entire trip with the Koran gripped in one hand and a glass of Scotch in the other” (Geertz I 968, 1 16–17)—quire a feat for a six-hour flight. But such flopped images are rare. Accompanying Geertz’s major essays of the period was a steady stream of reviews and review essays such as “]Mysteries of Islam” (19754), a review of Marshall Hodgson’s Venture of Islam, “Conjuring with Islam” (1982), and a variety of single-book reviews that brought specialist studies of Islam to the ken of a wider public and encouraged specialists from several Helds to reach across conventional disciplinary boundaries.

Geertz’s work on Islam is inseparable from the wider goal of significantly developing the concept of culture from earlier anthropological uses of the term and making the newer use of the term an integral part of modern social

thought—the lynchpin of virtually all of his essays, nor just the “as a cultural system” series that encompassed ideology (1964), religion (1966), common sense (1975•) and art (1976). Essays inrroducing a wide public to the cultural implications of Moroccan naming practices (1975ε) and comparing the royal progress in Elizabethan England with Mulay Hasan l’s in late-nineteenth-century Morocco (1977) convey specific manifestations of the idea of culture to a wide audience. Most pertinent to the study of Islam—a nd the understanding of economics “as a cultural system”—is “Suq: The Bazaar Economy in Sefrou, Morocco” (1979), a major and heavily empirical book-length essay with a deceptively modest title, a data-laden essay showing the practical articulation of religious ideologies and institutions with politics and specific social classes and groups.

One would like to think that the argument for a concept of culture that is contested, contingent, and emerging—a notion that Geertz has done so much to convey to a wider public—would have displaced earlier, and in retrospect impoverished, notions of cultures and civilizations as fairly fixed entities. Yet Samuel Huntington’s notion of “West vs. the Rest,” in which “Islam” and “Confucianism” are pitted against the “West” (1 993), relies heavily on the ideas of Arnold Toynbee’s (1947) moralizing and historical stereotypy rather than newer ideas of culture that emphasize the incessant crossing and constructed nature of civilizational and cultural boundaries. Some of Geertz’s characterizations of culture, such as comparing it to an octopus (1966, 67–68) with its “partial integrations, partial incongruencies, and partial independencies” were geared primarily to specialists in the anthropological trade. Other essays were meant for a wider public, such as the 1983 Huxley ،Memorial Lecture, which contains an element of conceptual evangelism to those who would support quantitative approaches to the exclusion of others: “ I he setting aside of cultural factors altogether as something for Islamologisrs, mythographers, and shadow-play enthusiasts to deal with seems to lead not to increased precision but to ascending indeterminacy” (Geertz 19 8 9, 523).

THINKING AS A MORAL ACT: geertz’s impact today

There are several enduring contributions of Geertz’s life and work to the study of Islam. First, he recognized the continuing role of religion and

religious debates in modern societies. Resistance to the idea of culture was nor confined to quantitative positivists. In “،Marabouts in the ،Market-Place,” in part a review of Moroccan Islam (Eickelman 1976), the lare Ernest Gellner (1981,218) issued a strong rebuke against the use of “cloud-culture-talk” derived from the “school” of Clifford Geerrz. The reduction of Geertz to “cloud-culture-talk” is difficult to reconcile with Geerrz (1972), which brings the arguments of Religion in Jana up to date and rereads them in the wake of the murderous violence that followed Indonesia’s 1965 coup d’etat and the subsequent purges of “communists” that by some accounts left as many as half a million dead and hundreds of thousands more in prison. Against this backdrop, Geerrz argued that the most salient religious development in Indonesia since midcentury was the “hesirant” emergence of “somerhing rather like a denominational pattern of religious organization or affiliation,” and toward a “more openly pluralistic system” (1972, 70–71), if not always a tolerant one, and one in which cultural understandings shaped, and were shaped by, the social and political contexts in which they took place.

This short 1972 article demonstrates more than the continuing significance of Geerrz’s earlier interpretations and their relevance to dramarically changed social circumstances. On rereading Geertz’s earliest work on religion in Indonesia, especially in light of the views about the inevitability of secularization prevalent in the 1 9ა0ბ and I 96Os, Geerrz insisted that religion as idea and practice still mattered. The secular bias of modernization theory has had a significant role in deflecting attention away from the continued role of religious practices and values in conremporary societies, including the Muslim majority world.

Geerrz sensed this continuing importance of religious thought and action to modern society while other influential thinkers accepted with few qualifications the assumption that religion and religions intellectuals, who earlier played central societal roles, were doomed to play increasingly marginal ones in modern and “modernizing” societies (Shils 1972, ,7). In the bold language of Daniel Lerner, the Muslim world faced the stark choice of “Mecca or mechanization” (1964, 405), a bleak view echoed by Manfred Halperin, who saw the Muslim world as faced with the unpalatable choice between a “neo-lslamic totalitarianism” intent on “resurrecting the pasr” or a “reformist Islam” that would open “the

sluice gates and I be ل swamped by the deluge” (1963, 129). For Geertz, in contrast, the role of religion, like that of ethnic identities, was dynamic and evolving rather than primordial and fixed. These powerful ideas are, of course, echoed in the work of successors to Geertz on the role of Islam in Indonesia, including Robert Hefner (1 985, 2000) and John Bowen (1993; 2003).

Second, “Ritual and Social Ghange,” like Religion in Java, boldly caprured religious debates that were permeating villages as vigorously as urban life. It was not only in major urban centers that ideas and debates over religious practice had a strong resonance but also in villages and small towns. Throughout the Muslim world most scholars emphasized developments in major urban centers and religious institutions—a trend fully in accord W’ith the self-image of traditionally educated religious scholars {‘ulama) throughout the Muslim majority world as the “guardians” of faith and religious tradition. Like other mortals, Geertz has not always made the right calls in inferring long-term trends, as when he wrote that the Javanese were turning “toward a more experiential sort of faith, and especially tow’ard mysticism” and “a personal, inward, transcendental experience” (1972, 72–73). Here Geertz got it half right—more than most of us manage—in that two major developments in Java’s “experiential turn” have been the development of a strong nationwide movement of moderate, educated Muslims as a major political force (Hefner 2000), the underside of which has been a smaller but deadly movement of extremist violence among groups such as the Laskar Jihad (Hefner 2003).

In Indonesia and elsewhere, mass higher education, mass communications, new media, and the greater ease of travel has facilitated the fragmentation of political and religious authority and the development of new voices that contest or ignore established authority (Eickelman and Biscatori 1996, 121–35). Accompanying these developments has been the objectification of religious knowledge in the form of explicit questions such as “What is my religion?” “Why is it important to my life?” and “How do my beliefs guide my conduct?” (Eickelman 1 992). rhis refiguring of practice an 1 the religions imagination is as important at the village level as in towns, in Indonesia (Bowen 1993) as in Pakistan (Marsden 2003). What Geertz got absolutely right from the very beginning of his field research was the centrality of talk and religions practice and the role of ideas at all social levels and contexts.

Again, ،١11 early statement of Geertz's awareness of the importance of ideas is his " I !linking as a Moral Acr: Ethical Dimensions of Anthropological Fieldwork in the New States" (19681)). Geertz narrates how he often loaned his typewriter to a local poet, until one day he asked for its return in a way that implied to the poet that his work was less important than the anthropologist's own. Geerrz's rapport with the poet was never restored, but the subtext again affirms the importance of local knowledge and practice and its role in shaping wider social and cultural currents.

Finally, Geertz has—with ،١ few exceptions such as Huntington—infused a newer and more persuasive notion of culture into the wider framework of social thought. Anthropologists earlier thought of their academic discipline as the one most involved with the concept of culture, but the concept has, so to speak, lost its anthropological copyright and has developed in multiple ways in fields such as cultural studies. Geertz's work has pervaded studies of Islam and thinking about religion. In his work on the cult of the saints in early Latin Christianity, Peter Brown (1981, 9–10) acknowledges how writing on contemporary ؛Moroccan religiosity has stimulated his approach to a much earlier era. Explicit discussion of culture occurs only at the margins of Vincent Cornell's historical study of ؛Moroccan Sufism (for example, 1998, 6 1–62, I .56–5؟), but a dialogue with Geertz and others who have characterized ؛Moroccan religiosity permeares Cornell's approach.

I he first teaching post of one of anthropology's distinguished predecessors, Edward Evans-Pritchard (192(؛f 973), was at Cairo's Euad I University (now the University of Cairo) in the early 93 lOs. Ele spoke Arabic and conducted held research in Egypt's western desert before deciding to conduct field research among (he Nuer of the southern Sudan. Anthropology's oral history (author's interview' with Robert Fernea, CBS-I V "Sunrise Semester," October 23 1979) has it that "E-P" decided not to make his career in the Arab world because of the need to work among scholars of other disciplines. Nuer society offered ،١ prime exemplar ()fan elementary" society more in line with the anthropological expecrarions of the era.

Geertz's approach could not be more different. In Indonesia as in ؛MoCOCCO his work plunged him into contexts where anthropologists could never claim an exclusive interpretive role. Ill the irony that characterized many of his

hypertextrial commentaries on the practice of anthropology and the study of Islam, Geertz (personal communication, 1973) once suggested only to ask questions that could he answered. Fortunately, Geerrz rarely follows his own advice. Neither his questions nor the answers offered ill his essays—his preferred narrative form—provide a sense of completion, reminding US that no ethnographic essay can. Islam Observed, for example, incorporated an intensive reading of “secondary” literature on]Morocco in French and English; his major field research in Morocco was still underway. ١ et the questions posed have helped shape thinking about religion in the modern world as few other texts have managed to do (for example, Casanova 1994). Geertz’s work in Indonesia, as in Morocco, breaks away from conventional disciplinary boundaries. For Islamic studies, Geertz’s work suggests how historians, anthropologists, and scholars in other disciplines can place their work in thick description ethnographic context—and still communicate to wider publics. Geerrz has posed questions that matter, and his answers, with their “partial integrations, parrial incongruencies, and partial independencies,” remain good to think with. Qualifications such as “more or less” and “partial” are invitations to thought, and this is Geertz’s major contribution to understanding Islam and to anthropology.

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** Deep Play, Violence, and Social Reconstruction

Michael M. ١. Fischer

OR Cl. 11-‘FORD GEERTZ: Errant Thoughts ill a Blurred Genre—

Errant—but hopefully not too erring. Thoughts in a blurred genre. Between the Festschrift—in which one offers in tribute one’s own work as an extension of one’s teacher’s work—and the slide show on “works and lives.” Indeed two slides can serve as frames: a slide of a fabulous large tapestry of a fighting cock that hangs in one of the chemical engineering buildings at MIT, a locus to which I shall return; and a slide of a painting of a buzkashi game that I recently brought back from Central Asia and that now hangs in my house, a game to which I shall also return.

So: errant thoughts in a blurred genre—for Clifford Geertz—in three movements: where we are now, where we have been, and on the trail of an anthropology to come. (One of the condundra of trying to talk about Cliff’s work is that the very language of anthropology—the prose we speak—is suffused with the metaphors he has taught US to think with: turtles and metaphors all the way down.)

*** Part One: Where We Are Now

Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice;

OR:

A post-Geertzian manifesto, where “post,” “posts,” and “postings”

are defined as a sending-receiving relation

between fathers and sons,

and between the three or four phases of self-defined Geertzian work.

I start with an ethnographic datum, a stance toward ethics and politics, and a contextualist stance toward social theory.

We live (again) in an era in which there is a pervasive claim, or native model, asserted by practitioners in many contemporary arenas of life (law, sciences, political economy, computer technologies, education, etc.) that traditional concepts and ways of doing things no longer work, that life is outrunning the pedagogies in which we were trained, that we are experiencing emergent new forms of life—in new cyborgian, hybrid, crossspecies biotechnological forms of life, in databank-networked and new materials infrastructures, in environmental and ecological changes, and in the legal, economic, psychological, and social institutional innovations ١\٢ أ\١ةأese ve٩v\١٢e. (..all ti s native model an ethnographic datum.

We live therefore (again) in an era in which new ethical and political spaces are thrown up that require action and can often have quite serious consequences, but for which the possibilities for giving grounds quickly run out. Traditional ethical and moral guides seem not always helpful, and we are often left to negotiate interests and trade-offs in legal or other tournaments of decision-making over time, and across terrains configured with multiply interacting new technologies, what I call ethical plateaus with due deference

to Giles Deleuze, Gregory Bateson, and the Balinese. Gall this a philosophical stance toward ethics and politics, o١١e أ\١ة١د١٥- wig Wittgenstein formulated when he said that giving grounds comes to an end somewhere and that “the end is not an ungrounded presupposition; it is an ungrounded way of acting” or a “form of life,” a sociality of action that always already contains within it ethical dilemmas, or, in the idiom of Emmanuel Levinas, “the face of the other.” The “face of the other” is particularly of concern in the peopling of new technologies and technosciences.

In coming to terms with this ethnographic datum and this philosophical stance, anthropology is pushed to develop new tools of social theory. The social theory of the last quarter of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty-first is created out of quite different generational, social structural, communication infrastructural, and knowledge-making contexts and experiences from those out of which classical social theory was created at the end of the nineteenth century and turn of the twentieth. Call this a corrtextualist stance toward social and cultural theory;. Classical social theory is hardly passe or superseded, but Marx, Weber, Dilthey, Freud, Durkheim, Fleck, iMauss, Schutz, et al. did not experience or analyze the kinds of shifts that have become focal for post-Algerian independence French theory (Cixcous, Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Touraine, Abeles, Latour, et al.), post-Green movement theory in Germany (Ulrich Beck, Friedrich Kittler) and Italy (Agamben, iMelucci), post-cost-benefit analysis of high hazard high consequence industries from anesthesiology to aeronautics to nuclear power in the United States (Perrow), post-socialist nationalisms, and, importantly for my own work, social and cultural movements in the Islamic world seeking to move beyond patriarchal patrimonialism (inspired among others by Ali Shariati, Nawal al-Sadawi, Saad Ibrahim; and the powerful films coming out of Iran). Indeed today—on the very day that NA 1 o is being expanded, and that we are contemplating war in Iraq—we operate under the sign of the film Safar-e Qandahar by the Iranian director]Mohsen Makhmalbaf, and its image of prostheses being parachuted from Red Cross helicopters to Afghan men running on crutches to catch them.

In the I99٥s anthropology began to take up ethnographic challenges in ٤٦ number of critical arenas: work on the reconstruction 0/

society in the wake of social trauma, structural violence, and disruption on a scale not reflected upon, though it existed, by the social sciences since the early post-World War II, post-India-Pakistan Partition, and post-wars of decolonization era in which Clifford Geertz got his anthropological start. I99٥s anthropology began to take up ethnographic work on the new communication technologies that mediate the contemporary analogues of what Durkheim might have called the conscience collective in their more differentiated, telemediated, transnationally diffuse guises, and that transform the conditions of possibility for governance, legitimacy, and democratic civil societies. And I99ÜS anthropology began to take up ethno١ئ١٢،١٠\\١\\٢ work on the infrastructures of that lie make lite and 11’1)0 we let die.

Io map and critique these technoscientinc worlds and infrastructures, interferences and mediations, dislocations and reconfigurations, cultural forces and autoimmune cultural toxicities (CNN to al-jazeera) requires an anthropology attentive to an expanding variety of cultural differences that go far beyond traditionally understood cultural differences. The distinctive anthropological voice—the aspiration for cross-culturally comparative, socially grounded, linguistically attentive perspectives—continues to be a valuable jewel among the social sciences amidst the pressures to simply turn to statistical indices for all policies and judgments.

Thus far the inconstant son’s sendings to the father; let me turn to the generative sendings of the father to the son.

*** Part Two: Where We Have Been

Rethinking the Anthropology of the Second Half

of the Twentieth Century with Clifford Geertz;

OR:

Cliff’s four phases and my three-fold epistemological interpretive grid.

In his most recent of three essays surveying his own ،‘works and lives,” Cliff uses a four-fold division. I here is the golden age of optimistic post— World War II reconstruction, mtdtidisciplinarity and ream research, modernizarion and development theories grounded in Max Weber’s notions of economic, political, and cultural rationalizations, and the voluntarism of Talcott Parsons’s layer cake of biological, psychological, social, and cultural systems, the latter three, respectively, being dynamically integrated, functionally integrated, and logico-meaningfully integrated with cybernetic feedback among them, such that they were always already inseparable except analytically or heuristically. This was the age of Cliff’s field-defining quartet of ethnographic monographs on Indonesia.

There followed the dramatic shift of the hot spots of the Cold War into Indonesia. Thus the silver age of his migration to Sefrou in Morocco, and the efforts of the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations at Chicago to keep the modernization theories going as they obviously splintered and decayed. His ethnography became less monographic, and justifications were found for turning to the essay form in Local Knoudedge, and the tributes to such literary idols as Lionel Trilling. It is this turn that contains, I think, much of the ambivalence of his own corpus of work and its uneasy relation to the work of some of his progeny.

There followed the bronze and iron ages in anthropology of the 1980s and 19905, which Cliff glosses as a florescence of different schools and isms in the social sciences, followed most recently by a return of “unclear significance” to concerns with violence, ethnic conflict, and the like. This is the period of blurred genres, Cliff’s being in multiple minds about the role of Islam, and so on.

This is, however, the period, in my own trajectory and that of my أدلم ١أدلملأدلمء٢ Writing Culture, Antbropolog’y as Cultural Critique, Debating Muslims, the eight-volume Late Editions Project, the Public Culture Project, the inauguration of the journal Cultural Anthropology, my own directing of a Center

for Cultural Studies, and then directing a Program in Science, Technology and Society. I coil nt myself as one of Clifford Geertz’s progeny, perhaps an inconstant disciple, nonetheless both a fan, and I hope an appreciative and constructive deployer of his insights. My own work followed along behind Cliff’s early interest in ecology, his efforts to test Weberian accounts of sociologically stratified and differentially organized religious forms (in my case in the Caribbean, Iran, and India), his interest in the philosophy of the social sciences, in genres of literary and dramatic forms, and eventually in science and technology. And I particularly want to salute Cliff’s repeated efforts to appoint a science studies person at the Institute for Advanced Studies.

I would divide Geertz’s four phases into three epistemological ones. I think one of the most fascinating features of Clifford Geertz’s writings is the shift from a comparativist Weberian, Parsonsian, and broadly positivist or positive knowledge production, intended to help with notions of development programs for the modernization of “new nations”

ill old cultures and civilizations (a contradiction that soon became generative both descriptive!)’ and epistemologically), it is a shift from the rich ethnographic work of Agricultural Involution, Religions in java as it’s author titled it (not as it was titled in the singular by its publisher kGee\٦٦١ After the Fact, \9١\\ 5< ؟e\·e،١i٦ev (\\ \١ 55٦ ,١Ite Social llistorv ()/ an Indonesian Town, Peddlers and Princes, and such essays as “Religion and Social Change,” “Deep Play,” and perhaps, but maybe not, “Person, Time, and Conduct in Bali,”[65] but certainly the later Negara. By the time we get to After the Fact and Available Light we are in the presence of an ostad, a master, of a very different kind of epistemology, one that plays deeply described cultures off against one another in a comparative epistemology, rather than a comparative realism, where as Geertz himself says, “One is faced with complex and contradictory helds of significative action, most of it tacit, across which assertion and denial, celebration and complaint, authority and resistance,

continuously move.” He is talking about comparing Indonesia and Morocco, and he continues, “When ingeniously juxtaposed, these fields can shed a certain amount of light on one another, but they are neither variants of one another nor expressions of some superfield that transcends them both” (AF, 49). I would c،ıw v\ı\s using tbe epistemological resources of one culttire to critique and see anew into another culture. In this example, Geertz is musing upon the lack of gender inflections in Javanese, and its minutely graded, hierarchical speech registers, in cimtrast to ،Moroccan Arabic, which “has gender inflections for just about every part of speech, bur no status forms” (AF, 46). By so musing, he comes upon the insight—which he does not actually develop, though it would be fascinating to do so—that by looking at Moroccan politics with Javanese eyes (or grammars and speech modes), he is suddenly struck by the “persistent edge of seduction and resistance, flirtation and conquest... ranging from the understanding of sainthood to the metaphors of insult.” ،Moroccan politics is a world of flirtation and seduction, “where rank and station are sexually charged.”

Geerrz in this ntosr recent phase of his epistemological self-reflections speaks of this sort of comparative “method,” or, since he eschews the term “method,” artistic, even intuitive, skill, of these fields of “significative action, most of it tacit, across which assertion and denial, celebration and complaint, authority and resistance, continuously move”—as comparing incommensurables. Nonetheless, he concedes, it is “a useful enterprise, and when the stars are right, an informative one, however illogical.”

Illogical? I would submit even in passing, that hermeneutics and performance are nor illogical, either as method or as art, and that entertaining work ill the comparative critical apparatuses of local hermeneutics is both methodical and reasonable, and at least culturally logical.

Geertz’s middle passage, where I suppose the contradictions of the Parsonsian vision, came to accumulate so many anomalies that a paradigm shift was needed and was found in the Geisteswissenschaften of Dilthey, Weber, and Schutz, the counter-canon to which we were treated by Cliff in the 1 9605. (We also found our way to Hans-Georg Gadamer’s Truth and Method; to Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno; and to Paul

Ricoeur, Kenneth Burke, Victor Turner, and Mircea Eliade who were important presences for my cohort at Chicago—-and even, very sotto voce at Chicago, Claude Levi-Strauss read as talmnd rather than as machine, Marx read as a decipherer of symbolic hieroglyphics of suffering and meaning as well as a political economist and a Saul Alinsky organizer avant la lettre). This middle passage was the time of the essays of the Interpretation of Culture, essays that we as graduate students were enthralled by, and tried without comparable success to mimic in our various term papers, mimicking the vocabulary, the bons mors, the paradoxes and chiasmuses, and elegant turns of polished phrase: models of/models for, experience near/experience far, many, as with all good poets, borrowed from, and gaining resonance from, the sedimented metaphors in the language and epistemological threads of earlier practitioners, Dilthey's Vorbildt und Nachbildt, Kohut's experience near and experience far, Gilbert Ryle's thick description and public language routing the ghosts in the machine, Paul Ricoeur's social action leaving traces that could be read as texts, Jeremy Bentham's deep play, Alfred Schutz's consociates. The middle passage was ethnographic as well as epistemological: Morocco did nor yield up the monographic ethnographic treatments that Indonesia did, though Islam Observed, and Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society had their brilliant insights and verbal pointillisms such as the much quoted image of the mental compartmentalization used by the modern Muslim of undecidable piety on the airplane with Scotch in one hand and the Koran for safety in the other.

This is the middle passage from cultural systems, the era of the hegemony of linguistic models: structural linguistics, generative grammars, cybernetics, paradigms, structuralisms, and the efforts to reformat phenornenology into more systemic modes whether in Sartre's effort to fuse existentialism and marxism or the socialization of perception through cultural forms, cockfights, calendars, teknonymic kinship namings, ethno-semantics, religion as a cultural system, models of/models for, common sense as a cultural system, art as a cultural system, ideology as a cultural system, the middle passage is from these recursive, self-protective symbolic systems to interpretive modes of blurred genres, incommensurable fields of significative action, reading over one another's shoulders, and like a moire flitting back and forth between narrative local worlds and world-historical ones, across which as well "assertion and denial, celebration and complaint, authority and

resistance” continuously shift figure and ground, Gestalt and paradigm, appealing to undecidables and aporias, as when Geertz muses about the place of Islam in Indonesia, noting that in his several decades of observation its role has dramatically shifted several times—itself a sociological and historical comparativist observation. His recent essay on Gus Dur Wahid shows that he remains a shrewd and incisive commentator on Indonesia. But about Islam’s place he rather wishes to leave himself open to being “of many minds.”

*** Part Three: On the Trail of an Anthropology to Come

By way of conclusion, I would return our gaze to the three challenges of 1990s anthropology as sires of deep play, each providing its own slide show: (1) the reconstruction of society in the wake of obliviously caused social trauma and structural violence—call this, title the slide, the move from cockfight to buzkashi; (2) the changes in science institutions fronr the 19605 to the 1990s—call rhis, title this slide, the move from Union Carbide in Bhopal (and Institute, West Virginia) to the demands of ACT UP and patient groups for accountability in the technologies of what is made to live and who is let die; and (3) the immersion in the telemedia—call this, title this slide, “War Again, 9/11, Qandahar, and the Autoimmune Cultural Toxicities of CNN and al-Jazeera.”

1. From Cockfight to Buzkashi

On September ؤ I, 2001, General Amin Said Tariq of the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan was quoted in a Boston Globe headline: “It is time for the Americans to join the game,” the Great Game of and for Central Asia, the game of buzkashi. American special forces were photographed astride Afghan steeds playing the game. Quire apart from one’s political stand on just wars or effectiveness of global interventions, one wonders how we will play the buzkashi game with smart bombs, psycho-pharmacological uppers for long range flights, nanotechnologies for smart protective uniforms, smart mobile surgical rooms, and whether we have, and how good are our game plans to pick up the land mines, destroyed schools, water systems, battered bodies and minds. Like the cockfight for an earlier era of violence, this

buzkashi focuses our attention today again on violence, bare life, and states of exception. Bnzkashi becomes an icon for the shift from disciplinary societies to societies of control (those that depend less on territorial integrity than on statistics, (lows, codes, networks, and standards, and which when attacked create new zones of indistinction).

2. From Union Carbide in Bhopal to the Demands of ACT UP and Patient Groups for Accountability

The biopolitics of globalization are again at center stage, and at the center of these new ethical and political vortices are battles over the technosciences and biotechnologies themselves.

Cliff challenged US a few years ago to extend interpretivist approaches to the forms of life associated with “loose assemblages of differently focused, rather self-involved, and variably overlapping research communities in both the human and the natural sciences.” He wrote: “Of all the sorts of work that go on under the general rubric of the human sciences, those that devote themselves to clarifying the forms of life lived out... in connection with linear accelerators, neuroendocrinological labs, the demonstration rooms of the Royal Society, astronomical observations, marine biology held stations, or the planning committees of NASA, are the least likely to conceive their task as limited to making our the inter-subjective worlds of persons. Machines, objects, tools, artifacts, instruments are too close at hand to be taken as external to what is going on; so much apparatus, free of meaning. T hese mere ‚things’ have to be incorporated into the story, and when they are the story takes on a heteroclite form—human agents and nonhuman ones bound together in interpretivist narratives.” After cautiously acknowledging the “ill-formed and variable, uncertain opening probes in an ... ill-marked enquiry”—but I would say rapidly burgeoning field of science studies, (the anthropologies of Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway, Emily Martin, Rayna Rapp, Deborah Heath, and Karen-Sue Taussig, Steve Shapin and Simon Shafer, Sharon Traweek and joe Dumit, Paul Rabinow and Lawrence Cohen, Kim and Mike Fortun, Adryana Petryna and Joao Biehl, Byron and Mary-Jo Good, Chris Kelty and Hannah Landecker, Jennifer Mnookin, Heinrich Schwarz, Kaushik Sunder Rajan, Cory Hayden, Margaret Lock, Gary Downey, and many others, myself included)—he notes, “Sciences, physical, biological,

human, or whatever, change not only in their content or their social impact (though they do, of course, do that ...) but in their character as a form of life, a way of being in the world” (AF).

What I want to mark here is a set of double movements that Cliff marked جِ٦ل ج٦ا٦ج on the 8اً٢ج٦ll of an anthropology to come, the double movement between lives and works, the coming inevitably onto the scene after the fact. Lifter the fact in search of and after the fact belated, the world-historical narratives, such as they are (bracketed as Lyotard would say, or ironized with Geertzian caution), nonetheless world-historical narratives (political master stories of modernization, or of anti-colonialism, “those were the Bandung days,١١ “the days of May 1968”) bursting from time to time into !()cal worlds, and at other times carrying those local worlds along with the spinning of the globe and the spinning of webs of signihcance and meaning, cosmic, scientific, metaphysical, and moral-ethical.

These doublings, hauntings, and phantasmagoria, tools of poesis, praxis, and gesture, mark out an anthropology to come, a justice to come, a community to come.

But the cockfights of science already are registered ill rich accounts by scientists themselves and by observers of their forms of life: François Jacob’s much admired autobiography, much cited by scientists, provides an exemplary account of two trained roosters beak to beak in, as well, a metaphysical and cosmic competition with God:

<quote>

Seminars, true rites of initiation, free-for-alls.... T hat day an American biochemist ... The audience interrupted incessantly.... Chopping up his discourse with questions ... badgering him, provoking him, nipping at his heels like excited puppies.... As for |Sol| Spiegelman, he was not easily confounded ... he listened to comments anil criticisms while playing with a piece of chalk in the fashion of a Hollywood gangster with a coin.... the deathblow came later in a cafe on the Boulevard Pasteur ... the theory was

dissected, torn apart, shredded into tiny pieces. Bit by bit, the bull weakened. A final thrust of IJacquesI Monod's descabello. The bull's final spasm. And resistance ceased. All this amidst laughter and joking.... Two trained roosters beak to beak vying with humor and sarcasm.... a will to power ... desire for intellectual domination ... a world full of gaiety, of the unexpected, of curiosity, of imagination. A life animated as much by passion as by logic. Science meant for me the most elevating form of revolt against the incoherence of the universe. Man's most powerful means of competing with God: of tirelessly rebuilding the world while taking account of reality. (Jacob 1988,215)

</quote>

There is a richness, a joiiisance, a gamble with passion, in the sport of science, and also metaphysical depth, an agon with the mysteries of the universe and life, not just an aesthetic harmony or a pleasure in technical skill. As the Polish-born physicist, from the spa town and Hassidic seat of Rymanov in Galicia, 1. I. Rabi puts it:

<quote>

Some of the young people I see, who are very good, take physics ... as a system you can do things with, can calculate something with, and they miss ... the mystery of it: how very different it is from what you can see, and how profound nature is.... There is no good translation of a Witz. It's a joke or a trick. It's the use of this kind of witty trick that I have always liked about physics.... I have always taken physics personally.... It's between me and nature. (Rabi 1960)

</quote>

This metaphysical depth is often folded—like a double helix—against cultura I traditions, historical experiences, and community structures. Some of the productive tensions and synergistic reinterpretations between scientitle rationalities (such as they are in a post-Ludwig Fleck, Tom Kuhn, Bruno Latour, and Peter Galison era) and Christian and Jewish traditions have been explored, but one wonders in today's world why more has not been done with Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and Islamic traditions that lie in the

background of some of the world's greatest scientisrs: Homi Bhabha, Vikram Sarabai, Ramanujan, Chandrasekar, Abdus Salam, Ghovind Khoranna, and now the Brahmin and Muslim creators of "the Hindu bomb"—Raj Ramana the classical pianist and explorer of resonances between Buddhist logic and high energy physics, and Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam, the current President of the Republic of India who justifies with good cockfight and game theory logic, "strength respects strength."

Above all, the search for accountability has transformed the ways in which the institutions of science and the rechnosciences operate. Call it the transformation from big science and the national security state to science accountable to multiple constituents lest the complexity of the infrastructure become brittle and break down. T he ethics of science— and the representations of science in both the epistemological (accuracy, reference, completeness) and political or stakeholders' senses—are no longer marginal issues left up to the sensibility of the researcher or expert. Across the sciences these are becoming matters for institutional review, efforts at transparency, and negotiations between publics and researchers over the propriety of research that involves people and publics. As the world becomes more integrated and interactive, questions of how information is collected, packaged, and made available as part of social institutions of reflexive or second-order modernization (to use Ulrich Beck's terms) let)!Ite more important and open to insistent questioning, and that detouring through media circuits of advertising, advocacy, and persuasion only make all the more suspect and SUbject to insistent questioning. Does a local poptdation always have to benefit, or is there a place for presumed consent to collection of various sorts of human biology data (blood, feces, cheek swabs, genetic, epidemiological, pathology samples, medical records), which only after considerable processing can be turned into statistical and "evidence based" knowledge and pharmacological and medical products.) The answers to these questions are not in, but they are today central questions publicly debated and politically negotiated—from Iceland's experiment to allow deCode Corporation to link data banks of medical records, genealogies, and DNA samples, to the Harvard-Millennium Pharmaceuticals project in China to collect DNA samples from populations in Anhui Province—and are not easily swept under the carpet. The biosciences are a deep play that directly pose quesrions of who shall live and who shall die, and that exert pressure toward new institutions of reflexive modernization or deliberative democracy in some of the most difficult areas of human experimental trials, informed

consent, privacy and SUrveillance, parents and ownership of biological information, and the power of huge amounts of investments of not just money and power but also ideology and fantasy.

ز “ Will’ Again, 9/1 l, Qandahar,” and the Autoimmune Cultural Toxicities of CNN mid al-lazeera

No consideration of the current condition can avoid the new fabric of interacting media which have changed the calculus of, and conditions of possibility for, governance and legitimacy, of what democracy could possibly mean, of who speaks for whom, where all must play through the media, scientists and physicians as much as anyone, with anthropologists— for better and worse—far behind (running after the fact), and where the very use of relemedia has the effects, simultaneously, of both extending and undoing the messages, propaganda, persuasions, or pedagogies intended by the sender or patron, and where the truth is less hidden than partially revealed in measured and calculated unveilings that blur truth and falsity, that, as Hannah Arendt once said hide truth in the open where it can be assumed to be false, contaminated, or doctored, and is so by its very nature, without being any less the truth.

While Cliff has never devoted much attention to the felemedia, he has directed attention to the affective and cognitive, metaphorical and interpretive, tactics that form its basis. Symbolic anthropology and its morphing into interpretive anthropology can provide tools probing both cultural-philosophical meaning-making and also the sociology of cultural meanings and their operation as, and in, fields of power. For me, one of the tasks of aitthropology is to do the anthropology—cultural and social analysis —of communities of social thought and social theory itself. It is not very interesting after a while to simply debunk efforts at pattern recognition, generalization, comparison, model building, formalizations-in-the-service-of-models against which complex realities can be approximated, good-enough theory for pragmatic needs, and the like, as if they were misunderstood as universal and eternal truths. It is the recognition of immanent cultural critique, the play of communities of social thought against one another (not, Cliff, “recriminations”) that anthropology often is particularly well poised to place into the interpretive cockfight arena for us all to see the passions and

irrationalities, as well as reasons and calculations, and social structures and cultural legitimations at play.

I end here my marginalia, commentaries, misreadings, and hashiyeh in the hopes that they may serve as a small return gift to an extraordinary teacher and writer. Cliff, thank you!

[65] This remains a stylistically brilliant essay and homage to the “phenomenology” of Alfred Schutz, a genre—of which I am fond—of testing European theories with non-European materials, ideally in the end also retooling the theories. Gananath Obeyesekere’s Medusa lɔ Hair is another such brilliant example. But as ethnography, it raises, as the cliche goes, maybe not more questions than it answers, but many unanswered questions. This is particularly so in the aftermath of 1965. My own imagination for Bali is still profoundly marked by my, much later, visit to Bali with Byron and Mary-Jo Good, and meeting one of our colleagues whose passport continues to be marked as belonging to a “communist” family, and who thereby is prevented from holding any public position, including teaching in the university. He was a child in 1965 and lost both parents. The position of living amongst those one knows or suspects of killing one’s parents, perhaps, only intensifies the tension surrounding the public masques and forms of address, time, and other social markers, that Cliff raises in this essay, and more flexibility in “Deep Play.” It certainly puts a different spin on the implications, long “After the Fact.” In a recent series of public discussions with refugees from social upheavals, preceding each performance of Peter Sellars’s production of Euripedes’ “The Children of Herakles” at the American Repertory Theatre, I heard an almost identical observation from a young Bosnian woman, now studying at Boston University, speaking of living together with the killers of one’s relatives, “It is a small society, and everyone knows .. While severe mental illness involves very different sorts of dynamics, Byron Good’s work in Indonesia on the episodic course of psychoses, in their cultural expressions and social responses among families, also adds layers of questions to the general account of cultural psychology in |aɹa (and Bali). I note these subsequent ethnographic benchmarks not as criticism of Cliffs ɹɹ ork, but as an ongoing form of ethnographic critique that builds upon, and is able increasingly to incorporate more kinds of ethnographic, historical, cultural, and psychological materials. The proɹ

ocations (to uni\ersal psychologies) and questions (for ethnographic method) raised by “Person, Time, and Conduct,” arc such that the essay, I think, can no longer be used in the classroom by itself as a self-contained essay, but requires additional materials to think w ith. That is, as they say these days, a feature, not necessarily, a bug.

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** Speaking to Large Issues

The World, If It Is Not in Pieces

Brief quote from Clifford Geertz reflecting on field work, in After the Fact, will begin to identify my concerns. In sum, he says.

<quote>

It is a matter of living out your existence in two stories at once.... One of these stories is the familiar one of the anthropologist projecting him- or herself onto the local scene as a minor actor, odd but harmless, and a

solemn observer, searching our assorted facts. The other is the less familiar one, rarely recounted, of his or her attempt to maintain such a reduced and specialized persona amid the currents and cross-currents of world-scale politics.... You may set out to isolate yourself from cosmopolitan concerns and contain your interests within hermetical contexts. But the concerns follow you. The contexts explode. (Cjeertz 1995, 94–95)

</quote>

Mostly, in his ethnographic work, Geertz himself has told one of these stories, that of the local scene.[66] Yet the double life of the fieldworker shows up more in his essays, and in his recent variations in autobiography; as for example in commenting on the moral dilemma of sharing or not sharing one's typewriter with a local informant of modest resources who dreams of becoming a writer; and on being sought out, in the late 19505, by a group of earnest Balinese who wanted to have it confirmed by an American that the Soviet Union had indeed put a moon up in the sky. For if even an American would admit it, it must be true.

That concern with "the larger picture," with the world beyond the village, is I think continuously present in Geertz's work, !'or one thing, I see it in his insistence that in anthropology small facts can speak to large issues, when many of his colleagues in the discipline, after all, have seemed content to let their small facts speak to issues that are likewise rather small.[67] In some periods, the concern may not have been so noticeable, yet still contrapuntally present in his writings. At other times, It turns into more of a preoccupation. "The next necessary thing," he proposes toward the end of Works and Lines (1988, 47), is "to enlarge the possihiliry of intelligible discourse between people quite different froin one another in interest, outlook, wealth, and power, and yet contained in a world where, tumbled as they are into endless connection, it is increasingly difficult to get out of each other's way." And along related lines, in the final chapter of Available Light, his most recent book, he portrays the world at the end of the twentieth century; he notes that "a much more pluralistic pattern of relationships among the world's peoples seems to be emerging," but that "its form remains vague and irregular, scrappy, ominously indeterminate"; and he suggests that what political theory should now do is

to participate in the construction of “a practical politics of cultural conciliation” (2000, 256).

This is very recent Geerrz. But I believe that the interest in large issues, the sense of coexistence of local and cosmopolitan stories, really goes back a half century or so, to the formative experiences of fieldwork in the period we may now describe as “early postcolonial.” It was an era of excitement, and not least some optimism, where those new nations had “charismatic leaders,” like Nehru, Nasser, Nkrumah, and of course Soekarno, and nor yer, or at least not yet recognizedly, the despotisms and kleptocracies associated with a later period. Being a witness to Indonesian life in that period, I believe, could both shape a perspective and defiite a horizon. Again, President Soekarno was one of those charismatic heroes of an independence struggle, and the emergence in world politics of what would become the Third World had its perhaps most renowned symbolic sire in the Indonesian ciry of Bandung. These were, as Geerrz has larer put it, “the Bandung days.”

Bur academic setrings count as well. It was likewise a time when schola IS were busily remapping the world, and Clifford Geertz had his significant share of such activity, not least with the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations at the University of Chicago. Perhaps I should insert that among the commentators here, I am no doubt unusual in that my personal interactions wirh Clifford Geertz have been limited; I claim largely a view from afar, although from that vantage point my attention to his evolving thought and writing has been fairly constant. In any case, I believe I first came across Geertz’s work, probably also unusually, in the volume Ohl Societies and Neil’ States (1963), a collaborative effort of that Committee. The book, which he edited and for which he also wrote ،l chapter, may nor by now seem very central to Geertz’s ’ contributions to anthropology, and it is distinctly a document of its era. Nonetheless, he draws attention to the connection between that book, and generally his time with the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, and his current concerns, as he dedicates the concluding chapter of Available Light to the memory of the sociologist Edward Shils, a founding father of the Committee.

What Geertz took on, in his contribution to Old Societies and New States, was “ I he Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States.” It is a wide-ranging essay, drawing on brief interpretations of the state of affairs in seven countries of South and South-east Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and th rough the somewhat uncertain workings of oral and sometimes written tradition of a discipline such as anthropology, it may now be referred to most often as a source of a concept of “primordialism.” We could note here, first, that the concept came from Edward Shils (1957); and second, that Geertz’s actual understanding of primordialism seems rather different from what it may occasionally have been taken to be.Ĩ hose primordial attachments stemming from the “givens” of blood, speech, custom, and so on, noted Geertz (1963, 109) immediately, are assumed givens, “as culture is inevitably involved in such matters”; which means, in a latter-day vocabulary, that primordialism is indeed socially constructed. Yet when people define things as real, they are real in their consequences; and these attachments indeed keep on having consequences.

In his early essay Geerrz thus dwelt on the strains between divisive primordial sentiments and the push toward an overarching political regime in many new states; the strain between identity and recognition on the one hand and progress, efficiency and justice on the other. Again, the time of writing was one when the inclination was to take a fairly optimistic view of the future of the newly independent countries, and Geertz’s argument was generally that through compromises between primordial attachments and civil politics, compromises that varied from one place to the other, the countries he discussed seemed to muddle through. In the following years, some of them did less than that—Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Nigeria— and such failures surely had their part in the decline of optimism. Yet it appears to me that as he returns to similar issues in Available Light, in arguing for that “practical politics of cultural conciliation,” Geertz has maintained a consistent position.

So let us quickly come back to the present. In Available Light, in the final chapter titled “The World in Pieces: Culture and Politics at the End of the Century,” but not only there, and also more occasionally, before that, both in Works and Lives and in After the Fact, I find Geertz increasingly turning explicitly to some large issues—of increasing

global interconnectedness generally, or the upheavals of the world after the Cold War particularly.

Anthropologists have characteristically been merchants in astonishment, he already told IIS once (Geertz 1984, 275), and in a time of global flux, we use astonishing juxtapositions as one way of sensitizing our listeners and readers and ourselves to what is going on and what now goes together. In Available Light 000, 247) Geertz has British bankers in Singapore gambling on Kobe earthquakes and Saudi production rarlongan running backs with the ,(1988, lذا) gers, in Works ،7/,،/ Lives Washington Redskins.

Indeed the end of the twentieth century, and the beginning of a new millennium, finds humanity facing some new circumstances, and that necessarily affects the human sciences as well. Again, scholars are redrawing rheir map the world. Geerrz argues that the cultural organization of the modern world oughr now to be anthropology's proper subject, bur that irs ()لا "cookie-cutter concept of culture" is no longer workable in the world of infinite connection (2000), 248). We must think again, for one thing, about how—or how not—to write anthropology: "Ethnographers have now to l() with realities with which neither encyclopedism nor monographism, world surveys nor tribal studies, can practically cope. Something new having emerged both in 'the held' and in 'the acadenty,' something new must appear on the page" (I 988, 148).

But what, then, can anthropology do? It seems reasonable to bring up the question of small facts and large issues again. In that period of now a little more than a decade that scholars, and some perhaps not quire so scholarly competitors, have once more been remapping the global landscape, some have been marketing what are purportedly very big facts—what one prominent participant in the trade, Neiv York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, has identified as the genre of "Ihe One Big I hing" (I 999, xviii). Some of these grand narratives may already be fading away—،'rhe end of hisrory"—others are still with us: "the clash of civilizations," perhaps "the coming anarchy," certainly Friedman's own global marketplace with its stampeding "electronic herd" of invesrors.[68] Those British bankers in Singapore are presumably somewhere in that herd.) If these stories do not

necessarily homogenize the world, they do portray it as some kind of whole, rather than disconnecting its parts.

Again, ١٧hat can anthropology do now? Can we do anything effectively to contribute to a public intellectual exchange over where the world is today, and where it might be heading? Or more precisely, in the context of this session, what does one particular anthropologist do to speak to large issues? In Available Light, Geertz (2000, ود Iff.) states and exemplife his position. Responding to “One Big Thing” stories—he specifically identifies Samuel Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” scenario— anthropologists can hardly just go on offering another infinity of ethnographic facts. Still, he asserts that he is “an ethnographer, and a writer about ethnography, from beginning to end,” and notes, moreover, that I don’t do systems.” The latter, of course, might seem like a surprising claim from someone who has earned a part of his reputation from a series of essays analyzing religion, and ideology, and common sense, and art, as “cultural systems.” But perhaps that is a matter of the past, and in any case, this is hardly the kind of systems he has in mind.

My own preferences may be a little different here. The gap between American and European anthropologies may no longer be what it has been, and they may no longer be easily told apart, even if there continue to be those in my part of the world who are less than enthusiastic about subversive influences from this side of the Atlantic. Nonetheless, whether we talk about this in terms of “systems” or not, it may be a European streak in my anthropology, perhaps related especially to an old fondness for what I believe Clifford Geertz has somewhere called “cloth-cap anthropology,” which would lead me to favor some more robust sociological framing in the quest to understand precisely that cultural organization of the contemporary world.[69]

Yet let us leave that aside. What Geertz does identify as a resource of anthropology in understanding the global present is the particular kind of cosmopolitanism that he finds in “its determination to look beyond the familiar, the received and the near at hand”—“the considering together of what normally is not considered considerable together” (2000, 251). Comparison, that is to say, continues to be a major ingredient of Geertzian

anthropology, from Old Societies and New States all the way to Available Light. But the style of comparison, as Renato Rosaldo (1999, 32–33) has pointed out in another collective effort to celebrate as well as scrutinize Clifford Geertz's work, is of a special kind, taking central concepts and exploring their connections and range of meanings through varied human contexts; inspired, it seems, by a Wittgensteinian sense of family resemblances.

One comment on this would be that a renewed, and rethought, use of comparison may well be one way of converting our ethnographic small facts into an asset in speaking to large issues—there are other indications of this (see, by way of comparison, Gingrich and Eox 2002). Rather than "One Big Thing" stories, we may favor identifying recurrent themes with their variations. There may be more ways of doing this, and in any case we would hardly all be able to do it in the particular way that Geertz goes about it. In most cases, probably, it would entail dealing with the ethnographic inventory of the discipline rather more as a shared resource, and cultivating skills of synthesis.[70]

But I would like, in conclusion, to point to another issue in the kind of understanding of the world that Geertz seems now to be working out. In his essay in Old Societies and New States, he made a plea for a better understanding of primordial attachments. In Available Light, in that final chapter, this is again the focus, the world scene, he notes, is "growing both more global and more divided, more thoroughly interconnected and more intricately partitioned, at the same time. As the one increases, so does the other" (2000, 246). And so on one side of this equation, there is "the world in pieces." As he also argues, "in a splintered world, we must address the splinters" (221). the identities continuously exemplified are those which in Old Societies and New States would have been identified as primordial: ethnic, national, linguistic, religious. And Geertz observes rhat there is indeed a continuity between the major changes of the 19505 and the 1960s and those of the 1990s, for in both periods what forms the background of a reaffirmation of such identities is the fall of empires. And in both periods it turns out that the relationship between splinters and whole is a different one from rhat of the old Western European notion of the nation-srate.

All the same, I wonder about the other side of the equation, that of the world growing more global, more thoroughly interconnected. Cosmopolitanism may be a keyword here; it seems now to show up with increasing frequency in Geertzian texts, although possibly not always with the same thrust.

As Rosaldo continues his analysis of Geertz's mode of comparison, he notes that while Geerrz rakes barriers erected by cultural differences seriously, he also has a vision of ethnography as a tool by which people can come to understand the differences, and establish a vocabulary for speaking to one another. I think that herein lies a significant part of the cosmopolitanism of anthropology; a sense of the world as a whole, but combined with a respect for, or even appreciation of, diversity. And I do indeed think of Clifford Geertz as a cosmopolitan—more precisely what Kwame Anthony Appiah (1 996) among others have recently described as a "rooted cosmopolitan," strongly connected to one place in the world and yet engaging with other ways of being human.

The rootedness is there, I would suggest, a little parenthetically, in a special although multifaceted relationship between his writings and American thought, in the way Geertz has continuously sought intellectual stimulation from American sources (not that others are missing), ranging from John Dewey by way of Kenneth Bnrke to Jerome Bruner; not necessarily everyday references among anthropologists. I believe it is also noticeable in the way that in Works and Lines (1988), he can incisively analyze the writings of ⁝Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard, and Levi-Strauss, but eventually seems to have a more tender understanding of Ruth Benediet, and her attempt, by way of portraying the strange Japanese, to tell her compatriots about themselves. And I detect this rootedness, too, in his personal style of writing, with its precise deployment of American colloquialisms and occasional but no doubt stylistically very deliberate appeal to what seems like a culturally specific vocabulary of common sense. Ehis rootedness, this cultural thickness as it were, is something that for me adds significantly to the pleasure of reading Geertz.

Yet as far as cosmopolitanism is concerned, that inclination toward looking beyond the familiar and the received, toward considering things together that have otherwise been kept apart, that openness to “another country heard from,” can hardly now belong to anthropologists alone. If the world is not only in pieces, not only splintered, we should perhaps not think of addressing the splinters as our single task. We certainly cannot fail to notice the splintering, the spectacular clashes linked to primordialism on the global scene—as newsmedia editing strategy has it, “when it bleeds it leads.” Yet from the times when primordial sentiments were contrasted with the civil politics of new states, to the present when they are set against global connectedness, the scholars inapping changes in the world may have been a bit inclined toward underestimating the cultural complexity of what is occurring on the other side of the equation, where a variety of people may also be motivated by their personal experiences

interconnectedness to identify with humanity in its diversity.[71]

Perhaps the identities growing here are sometimes not so culturally thin. Perhaps we can sometimes even witness that there is, in a sense, a kind of primordialization of cosmopolitanism going on, although often less spectacular. This will also have its implications for the way we do ethnography. Those contexts referred to in my beginning quote will explode again and again. But as the world is at the beginning of this century, we should hope that there is something other than pieces to look for. And as the final few words in Available Light instruct us, there is yet “the moral obligation to hope.”

[66] (liven what I take to be a reluctance on Geertz’s part to appear very noticeably in person in his ethnography—with the famous exception of the opening scene in the essay on the B^ˀ!inesc cockfight—I can sec why the double existence of the ficldworker does not feature so prominently in it. For to the extent that there is really some tendency for the Stories to be separate, the fieldworkcr may be the main connecting link, and their combination might inevitably turn into what he might see as the wrong kind of person-centered ethnograph).

[67] I realize that I interpret ،‘large issues” in a somewhat narrow sense here, as a matter of social scale. Issues can be large in other ways as well.

[68] The “One Big Thing” stories referred to here, of course, apart from Friedman’s, are those of Fukuyama (19)ε)2), Huntington (1996), and Kaplan (e.g., 2()():)).

[69] (icertz has commented rather ironically on this gap, as it was at an early I 9605 Cambridge conference, in After the Fact (1995, 116–17). Yet certainly there would be American commentators as well, some of them close to Geertz, who would also be inclined to put more sociology into cultural analysis; sec for example, Ortner (I 999) and Sewell (1 999). As far as American, and specifically (icertzian, transatlantic influence is concerned, let me also just note that what was presumably the first “Hyper(ieertz ’ comprehensive, contextual, and referential bibliography and mediagraphy was on an Austrian website ([[http://www.iwp.uni-linz.ac.at/lxe/sektktfGGHyperGeertz.html][www.iwp.uni-linz.ac.at/lxe/sektktfGGHyperGeertz.html]]).

[70] For some more discussion of this, and of the relationship of anthropologists to the genre of macro-scenarios generally, see Hannerz (2003).

[71] For a comment on this in relation to ()/¸ Societies and New Statesι see Spencer (1 997, 7).

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** On the “Subject” of Culture

Subjectivity and Cultural Phenomenology in the Work f Clifford Geertz

Byron Good and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good

When Rick Shweder and we began hiking about organizing this e١enr— two)ears ago at a similar panel organized for Jerome Bruner—we discussed asking the Societ)’ for Psychological Anthropology to sponsor the gathering, as they had the Bruner panel. In Brunei’s ease, the reasons were quite obvious. “Cultural psychology” is ،١ key parr ot the Bruner corpus. In the case ot Clifford Geertz, it is somewhat less obvious. lor while he has turned his attention systematically front one domain to the next—religion, ecology in ف هدلار7٠تمى//كرك٢/ Imvliition. economic development in Peddlers ،1//، Princes. Balinese kinship, the social history and stratification of an Indonesian tow n, and the stare and polity of Nega ra—in each case demonstrating that cultural patterns a re constitutive, essential, nor accidental to their tinderstanding, Geertz has never taken on psychology in the same fashion. Several of his essays— notably “Person, lime, and Conduct in Bali,” and “From the Native’s Point of Ciew’”—examine “the problem of the self—its nature, function, and mode of operation” in Bali, lava, and Morocco. Bur none constitutes ،١ (till blown cultural psychology. Despite this, we will argtie that Geertz has elaborated ٦ view of subjectivity and the relation of the subject to culture, which, while seldom noted, lies at the hearr of the entire corpus, whatever specific he is a d d ressing. It is our goal here to re١iew the lineage of these ideas in light of current debates about subjectivity, in which diverse posrstrucruralist and linguistic theories vie with psychological and phenomenological accounts, and to raise questions about w here Geertz’s ideas might take US in the future.

In 1969, having completed a three-year degree in comparative religion at Harvard Divinity School, I (BG) drove to Chicago to begin amhropology; Mary-Jo took a leave from the Social Relations Department at Harvard to join me for the year.[72] These were rimes both exciring and awful— marked by the deaths of Martin L.uther King and Robert Kennedy, the police riots of the Democratic National Convention, the invasion of Cambodia, and the trial of the Chicago Seven. They were wonderful times to be a student, however, with the invention of interpretive anthropology in full swing; the interdisciplinary Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations in its tenth year, headed by Tom Fallers; Vic and Edie Turner hosting Thursday night seminars in their home in Hyde Park; reading groups taking on Marx and critical theory at Terry Turner’s apartment; and fortuitously, Clifford

Geertz in the final year of a ten-year stint at the University of Chicago. Professor Geertz was, that year, extraordinarily available to students, gracious and accommodating. When forty students showed up for his Seminar on Theories of Culture, he simply divided the class in two and taught it twice, meeting four times each week instead of two. He taught a lecture course titled “Indonesia and Morocco—An Uncontrolled Comparison,” which many attended avidly. And when that wasn’t enough for a small group of US, he invited us to his home each week to discuss books we wished to read on the anthropology of religion.

If Professor Geertz was our teacher for only one year, the reading list for his Theories of Culture seminar—and his books, of course—were to be our teacher for years to come. It was a remarkable reading list—277 books and articles, divided among thirteen sessions—that gives a glimpse of the theoretical origins of Geertz’s work, seldom in full view in his footnotes or bibliographies. The thirteen sessions had titles in parentheses, indicating a loose grouping of sources bearing on a topic: Patterns; Symbols; Values and Norms; World View; Art; Categories, Classification, etc.; Science; Structuralism; Ideology; Change; Semantics; Phenomenology; and Psychology. Readings for the eleventh session, grouped under the heading “Semantics,” will give a flavor: Albert’s “ ،Rhetoric,’ ،Logic,’ and ،Poetics’ in Burundi”; Arewa and Dundes, “Proverbs and the Ethnography of Speaking Folklore”; two essays by Bernstein, including “Some Social Determinants of Perception”; Brown and Gilman’s “ the Pronouns of Power and Solidarity”; Kenneth Burke’s “The Philosophy of Literary Form,” “Terministic Screens,” and the entire Rhetoric of Religion; an essay by Burling; Ernst Cassirer’s book Language and Myth; Geertz’s own essay “Linguistic Etiquette”; Greenberg’s book Language Universals; a Goodenough essay on componential analysis; Izutsu on “Principles of Semantic Analysis”; jakobson’s “Concluding Statement: Language and Poetics”; Katz’s The Philosophy of Language; Mazrui on the “Sociopolitical Functions of English Literature in Africa”; Pike on “Emic and Etic Standpoints”; Vygotsky’s “Thought and Word”; and Whorf on “The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language”—that was for

Tuesday, with ،ד similar list tinder the heading of “Phenomenology on Thursday!

It will he no surprise that literary theorists figured large in the reading list—though this was eons before anyone imagined a “narrative turn” in the social sciences. Kenneth Burke, Northrop Frye, Walker Percy, and Auerbach’s Mimesis, along with Susanne Langer, of course, joined Gombrich on Art and Illusion and historian of Chinese thought Joseph Levinson. However, several intellectual threads of what might be called “cultural phenomenology,” less often recognized but representing a critical strand for understanding Geertz’s theorization of subjectivity, figured large on the reading list. Merleau Ponty, Alfred Sell Utz, and behind these the neo-Kantian Ernst Cassirer provided the basis for developing an anthropological phenomenology, a phenomenology absent a transcendental subject. Geerrz’s set of essays, “Religion as a Cultural System,” “Ideology as a Cultural System,” “Common Sense as a Cultural System,” and “Art as a Symbolic System,” represent a Schutzian exercise in describing phenomenological “perspectives” (explicated in Schutz’s essays on “milltiple realities”[73]), but with local symbolic systems providing the content and substance of each perspective. This anthropological elaboration on Schutz is grounded in the work of Ernst Cassirer and his vision of “symbolic forms” as mediating between Kant’s a priori categories of mind and the perceived world, actively constituting “image-worlds” (in Cassirer’s terms) of language and myth, religion, art, history, and science. But all of this becomes an ethnographic theory of subjectivity when made local, placed in “a small, shabby inland county-seat sort of place” that was Pare in Central Java in the 19505, or in Bali or Sefrou, described by Geertz with similar flair. And for these, the ethnographies on the reading list are more relevant: Hallowell, particularly “The Ojibwa Self and its Behavioral Environment”; Godfrey Lienhardt’s Divinity and Experience; Stauner’s On Aboriginal Religion and “The Dreaming.” In these, as in Geerrz’s ethnographies, the subject embodies culture, lives in a distinctive phenomenal world—spirits here, mystical powzers there, particular categories of kin in each—and has access to that world through a set of embodied practices—Javanese meditation, Balinese dance, or simply growing up in a Balinese household—practices and encounters with realities that “clothe those conceptions W’ifh such an aura of factuality” (and you know’ the rest). In these, culture shapes “the behavioral environment,” in Hallowell’s terms, as well as the “selves” who inhabit that environment; and the “moods and motivations” incorporated into these selves are not limited to the religious perspective, but carry over into the “everyday,”

common sense” world, making Protestants into capitalists, and perhaps even Santri into capitalists as well. Only time will tell about that.

But it is Geertz’s explicit work on the person, or the self, that has had such profound influence on psychological anthropology.

In all three of the societies 1 have studied intensively I he writes in ،‘From the Native’s Point of View”[74]], Javanese, Balinese, and Moroccan, I have been concerned ... with attempting to determine how the people who live there define themselves as persons, what goes into the idea they have (but, as 1 say, only half-realize they have) of what a self, Javanese, Balinese, or Moroccan style, is. And in each case, 1 have tried to get at this most intimate of notions not by imagining myself someone else, a rice peasant or a tribal sheikh, and then seeing what I thought, but by searching out and analyzing the symbolic forms—words, images, institutions, behaviors —in terms of which, in each place, people actually represented themselves to themselves and one another.

It is this notion of the self or person as symbolic “all the way down” that contributed to a movement to investigate “the person” or “self” across cultures. It also initiated an important line of research and reflections on Javanese cultural psychology, from Ward Keeler to Steve Ferzacca’s recent book, that respond specifically to Geertz’s writings on Java.[75] And it is on these writings on the Javanese self that we would like to focus our attention for our few remaining min Utes.

Most of you will recall Professor Geertz’s elaborations of two sets of contrasts —batin and lair, glossed as “inside” and “outside,” and ahis and kasar, “refined” and “coarse”—through which Javanese, he says, pursue their efforts to be human, debating “reason and passion, the nature of time, or the reliability of the senses” with an “absolutely astonishing intellectual vitality.” The goal of being alus, refined, pure, subtle, smooth, is pursued through a set of religious disciplines aimed at quieting the inner self, “thinning out” or

“smoothing” one’s emotional life, and by enacting a form of etiquette through which persons shape their outer or behavioral life to appear “predictable, undisturbing, elegant, and ... choreographed.” In The Religion of java, this complex of symbolic action is shown to be rooted in prijaji religious practices, those distinctive Javanese forms of Hindu-Buddhist and Sufi exercises rooted in what is still called—by our Javanese psychiatrist friends, for example—Filsafat Hichip jawa, the Javanese philosophy of life. It is this vision of cultural psychology, and of Javanese cultural psychology in particular, that we would like to query with three clusters of questions and ethnographic anecdotes.

First, what is the status of this complex of ideas and ideals, this pattern of managing self and the emotions, in Java today.) One anecdote. I taught a course on “Culture. Emotions and Psychopathology” for master’s degree students in psychology in Gadjah Mada University in 1996, shortly after we arrived as Senior Fulbright lecturers. In a session on culture and depression, we broke into small groups to discuss experiences students had had with depression or people they knew who had suffered severe depressions. I was only beginning to study Indonesian language at that time, and ran a small group, all young women, in English. Some of the students knew each other well; others in our group had only recently met. The first young woman to speak launched imnrediately into a story of her separation fronr her husband, her resulting bouts of depression, and her difficulties in deciding whether it was best for the children to remain with her husband or to seek a divorce. Soon she was crying, and the other students were stroking her arms, themselves in tears, joining the conversation. A second young woman in the class soon picked up a more difficult st(ıry—about how her father, a famous psychology professor, had taken up with another woman, lived openly with rhat woman though remaining married to her mother, deeply shaming the mother and the family, and about how she herself had become depressed, and was now less and less seen as a promising young scholar, overtaken by her younger sister, also studying psychology, who, by the way, lived with their father. Few in the group knew this student very well, bur they were soon holding and stroking her as well, engaged in a remarkable bit of intimate reflection on their inner lives.

I should probably not have been as surprised as I was, although this intimacy and open expression of emotion was remarkably different from the style of

managing affect I had expected to find, based on my reading about the Javanese self. These were psychology students, speaking English not Javanese, and this was of course 1996 at the cosmopolitan heart of Jogjakarta, nor the I 95Os in Pare, not prijaji, women not men, a different rime, a different place. But it does raise questions about the status in Java today of what Cliff and Mildred observed about Javanese psychology as graduate students in the 1950s. We know there are continuities. An ontology of inner power, strength, force, achieved through a variety of practices 0ĺl and new—for example, tenaga dalam, “inner power” meditation groups among students today replace many of the mystical sects popular in the 19505 and I96ÜS—still is central to understanding selfhood foi a vast ma|ority of Javanese we know. But lava is now a very complex meeting place of diverse transnational images and cultural religious forms. Our Javanese goddaughter watches Javanese dance (,n television and immediately assumes embodied postures of classical avanese culture. This shifts when dangdnt music comes on, with young Islamic women covered with jilbab swaying to a kind of global Islamic rock. And when she puts on our earphones and listens to CDs of jMotown or blues, she immediately begins to enact yet another culture. She is fluent in each, embodying one after the other with remarkable grace.

The questions we ask in this context are asked daily by our Javanese friends. What is happening to Javanese culture? What contours of Javanese personhood will emerge in this setting? What exactly constitutes “Javanese” SUbjectivity as we enter the twenty-first century? Are the old cultural forms that once shaped how Javanese spoke of the self and managed their emotions still relevant for current generations, and to the extent they are not, what has replaced them? Exploring new forms of Javanese subjectivity, emerging under quite new conditions, is a line of inquiry that follows naturally from the Geertzian corpus.

The second set of questions has to do with the studies of individual lives in relation to the cultural norms through which self and person are imagined. What are the relations among these cultural ideals of selfhood, these “symbolic forms—words, images, institutions, and behaviors” to which Geertz refers, and the enormous diversity of individual lives and psyches? Flow are these symbolic coordinates and cultural practices

appropriated and integrated into their lives by individuals? Ethnographic accounts of Susanne Brenner and Leslie Dwyer show,[76] for example, how Islamic revivalism and donning the jilbab have very different meanings for individual women, and the same is true for the meditation practices of those we know. Our research with persons suffering serious mental illness and their families is a constant reminder of how individual life histories, personal psychologies, and Javanese ideals of personhood interweave. But sustained analysis of individual lives is all too seldom present in ethnographic writing.

In After the Fact, Geertz quotes a retired Nationalist leader talking, in 1971, about the terrible killings of 1965. This man concluded: “There is still a good deal of bad feeling around on the part of friends and relatives of the victims. But anti-Gommunism is now so strong here they don’t dare say anything; they just conceal it, like good Javanese. I myself am as anti-Communist as I always was. But the real hatred, the murdering and being murdered, was a matter between Muslim militants and Communisr ones.” This murdering and being murdered is a matter for inquiry in and of itself, challenging any cultural psychology. But so too are the trauma and memories that mark the lives of individuals who lived through those desperate days. As Indonesians attempt, uneasily, to revisit 1965, even as new violence is afoot and more threatens, the study of trauma in individual lives, of how Indonesian cultural forms such as those Geerrz describes shape memory and the management of the pain it produces, is not only more possible than before, it is even more desperately needed.

But such research requires theories and ethnographic practices that link investigations of symbolic forms with the lives of individuals. Psychology has been out of vogue for much of American anthropology since the late, over-reaching years of culture and personality theorizing. Geerrz singled our for elaboration one crucial thread in American anthropological writing on the subject and subjectivity—a phenomenological subject linked to Hallowell and Sapir (and more ambivalently to Benedict), bur traceable to the “Romantic” subject of German theorizing (including that of Herder, Humboldt, and Hamann, by Charles Taylor’s reckoning[77]). Ironically, elaboration of a cultural theory of the person and subjectiviry may have contributed to resistance to investigations of individuals, reluctance to link

common symbolic forms to enormously diverse psych(logical experiences of particular Javanese. But surely, at a moment when anthropology self-consciously rejects essentialized representations of “cultures” and struggles to write about groups that appear as “a tangle of differences and similarities only half sorted out,” as Geerrz writes,[78] studies of subjectivity through investigations of individual lives, invesrigations of how individuals appropriate elements from increasingly discordant cultural forms available through diverse media, become more critical if we are to make any sense of contemporary “Javanese” personhood or subjectivity. And for this, elaboration of new theoretical constructs and ethnographic practices, and a willingness to engage psychology in a way that threatens to “reciprocally disequilibrate” both anthropology and psychology,[79] will be needed to extend the lineage Geerrz continues to elaborate.

Finally, the story of the Nationalist Party leader’s description of how “good Javanese,” whether Muslim militants or former Communists, concealed their feelings and memories about the killings of 196.ʕ raises a third set of questions. What is the relationship of the politically “hidden” to our understanding of subjectivity and subjective experience? What happens when rhat which has been widely presumed as simple “common sense” is suddenly felt by many in the society to be hegemonic, when broad segments of society recognize how Slate apparatuses have used cherished formutations of selfand family to naturalize their power, when what is actually felt about public ideologies is concealed, when “subjectivity” is placed in tension with “subjection”.) How can a careful cultural phenomenology, such as that pioneered by Geertz, contribute to an understanding of the hegemonic, or, in turn, of those moments when state ideologies are felt to lose their hold, seen as symbolic forms behind which corrupt elites hide their real motives rather than a “map” for an imagined community? How do we theorize Javanese subjectivity in moments of widespread cynicism and despair such as that resulting from the obvious failures of political reform—reformasi—since the fall of Soeharto? Or even more difficult, whose voice do we privilege when we see hegemony where many (but not all) members of a society see everyday reality?

When I assigned my psychology students in 1997 in Jogjakarta to interview young parents about what was different between how their parents raised

them and how they were attempting to raise their own children, discussions of the authority role of the father and the order and “discipline” he maintains for his children were ubiquitous. But this was at precisely the moment that the Soeharto regime had launched a Gerakan Disiplin National, a national discipline movement. The language of the state drew upon powerful symbols and affects of Javanese families, and, combined with memories of the terrible chaos of 1965 and thirty years of state propaganda that linked disorder and Communism, the call for “order” and “discipline” were psychologically powerful. Nonetheless, the mid-1990s was a time of enormous and widely recognized state corruption, and for many Javanese, such New Order symbols had lost much of their power. With typical Indonesian word play, disiplin was transformed into di-silip in, to have “slipped in,” indicating with a wink how one had to slip money into one’s driver’s license whenever stopped by the police, or into the myriad of documents passed to government officials. “Hidden transcripts” were beginning to be less hidden, though the language of order and harmony continued to mask a will to power. Iheorizing subjectivity under conditions such as these, amidst the decline of the New Order, thus required not only an understanding of the power of cultural forms to disguise the regime’s actions and naturalize its notions of “order” but also an analysis of the ability of many Indonesians to provide their own critical readings of elite discourses. It required attention to political subjectivity and the place of the imagination in the constitution of the state and its power.

For a moment after Soeharto was thrown from power in 1998, the loose ideology of reform, or reformasi, mapped a potent new reality.

Balinese could stop co ncealing their rage behind a docile image of the pDI bull, friends told Mary-Jo, and the bull was redrawn on the party banners and logos to represent its actual fierceness. Supporters of Megawati could actually wear Democratic Parry tee shirts—red with the image of the bull in black—rather than Chicago Bulls jerseys with Michael Jordan’s name and numerals, which more covertly proclaimed their allegiance to “Ibu Mega” and their rejection of the New Order regime. But three years and three presidents later, the term reformasi now too is greeted with cynicism, and rogue elements of’ the stare apparatus combine with parochial ethnic and religious leaders to loose new forms of violence in sites scattered about the archipelago. Cultural phenomenology needs to be extended to the

complexities of political subjectivity under conditions such as these if we are to make anthropological sense of contemporary subjectivity in places like Indonesia.

We are at a moment in anthropology’s history when no single theory of subjectivity will, or can possibly, suffice. Clifford Geertz has provided a remarkable synthesis of humanist theorizing of the subject. His work points naturally toward several complementary efforts, linked to psycho-analysis and studies of individuals, on the one hand, and to critical theory and studies of political subjectivity, on the other, which practitioners of interpretive anthropology are pursuing today. And in his latest writing, he continues to try to make sense of the dramatic changes transforming postcolonial societies such as Indonesia and Morocco over the past forty years, to explore the rise of new forms of borh cosmopolitanism and parochialism, which constitute distinctive modernities that frame emerging subjectivities, ’!‘hroughout this monumental work, Clifford Geertz has continued to reflect with great passion and insight on what it means to be human in very diverse—but always specific—times and places. For these profound contributions to anthropology and the hliman sciences, we join the participants in the symposium in paying him homage. And for his assuming that ancient and enduring role of teacher, we say simply, thank you, Cliff.

[72] Although written jointly by Byron and Mary-Jo DcIVecchio Good, this paper was prepared to he read aloud by Byron Good. When the first person is used in the text, the ،1») refers to Byron Good.

[73] Alfred Schutz, Collected Papers, vol. The Problem of Social Reality (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 19)71).

[74] Quoted front Clifford Geertz, Local Knowledge (New York: Basic Books, 198.5), .S8.

[75] Ward Keeler, Javanese Shadow Plays, Javanese Selves (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 19)87): Steve Eerzacca, Healing the Modern in a Central Javanese City (Durham, NC: Carolina Acadeinic Press, 2001).

[76] Susanne Brenner, “Reconstructing Self and Society: Javanese Muslim Women and ‚The Veil,’ ” American Ethnologist (1996): 673–97; Leslie Dwyer, “Making Modern Muslims: Embodied Politics and Piety in Urban Java, Indonesia” (PhD diss., Princeton University, 200)1).

[77] Charles Taylor, “Theories of Meaning,” in his Philosophical Papers, vol. 1: Human Agency and Language (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 248–92.

[78] Clifford Geertz, Available Light (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 249.

[79] Geertz, Available Light, 199.

** Commentary

Clifford Geertz

I have not changed my comments significantly from the form they rook at the symposium at which I had a half-horir to respond. The number of papers necessirated rhat the reply to each be brief, and the variety of topics was such that I took an informal and unsystematic, rather ad hoc, approach to them. I am, as I made clear at the symposium, extremely indebted both to Richard Shweder and B١·ron Good for conceiving and organizing the evenr and to the various participants for giving their rime and arrenrion to my work

and producing such perceprive and challenging discussions of it. The lightness of tone of my remarks conceals, as such lightness often does, the deep emotion I felt upon the occasion, and rereading the conrributions, I feel now. Ir was a very personal occasion, despite the presence of many people. I rrusr rhat at least some of this will get through to the reader.

*** Lawrence Rosen

The turn, starting most dramatically with the Vietnam period, toward a more open and direct expression of personal judgments in anthropology, has raised, as Lawrence Rosen, a half lawyer, half anthropologist hippogriff, is preadapred to recognize, some seriously complex issues for anyone claiming to be just giving the news please about other peopies' ways of going about things. The Olympian pose—that these things, strange as they may seem, are just out there and I only tell you rhat they are, whatever you do or dou r rhink about the matter—is no longer a plausible stance, if It ever was. No one believes you anyway. Leaving the world alone is not something infra-lunary beings, as Paul Veyne would say, meaning IIS, can do. The recognition of the situated (and unreliable) nature of the observer, of the moral overtones of even the most thinned our, reductive, technically armored analysis, and of the fact rhat as humans are not iMartians, rrearing them as though they were, strange objects III a featureless space, pioduces caricature ... all these have brought, as Larry points out, the old question back into our line of sight: "What is the right thing for Its to do?" That is, what is the right thing to say, to write, to argue, to indict, to defend, and when need be, perhaps the most difficult thing of all, when ought we to hold our tongues. The hliman world is indeed various, puzzling, and impossible to sum up in simple good vs. bad formulae. But the matter can hardly be left at that.

This leaves US, as Larry says, with the question not whether to pass judgments, but how. How to phrase them, how to limit them, how to make them plausible, how not to fall in love with them. And, as he also says, n\y own approach here has been less head-on than oblique. The adjusted tone, the passing adjective, the parenthetical allusion, the glancing comment, the careful irony-thrown elbows and sideways kicks. The danger in this, of course, is the fact that judgments are being made, verdicts are being advanced, even sentences are being passed, may be missed

altogether by the prosodically tone deaf, That has, indeed, sometimes been the case in my case: a quietness of comment being taken for an absence of it, a muffled view for no view at all. That’s the danger, especially in these days of blare and polemic. But it seems to me a lesser danger than a loud and headlong parti pris moralism—stiff in opinions, as Dryden says, and always in the wrong. The judgin’ business, as that famous Beyond the Fringe sketch has it, is a lark compared to goin’ down the mines. And it is all too eas\’—to quote the late great jurist Paul Freund—to substitute the complacencies of voting for the strains of judging.

*** Richard Shweder

Richard Shweder’s paper with its hard questions about relativism, pluralism, diversity, and the like takes US further into this whole wrenching issue. But, before trying to address the questions he poses as such, let me extend this notion that much of the ‚‘judgin’)” that rakes place in my work comes less in terms of explicit verdicts than through passing comments, insinuate phrases, over-the-shoulder, curve-ball rones of voice and the like, by taking issue with his recommendation that the best thing to do about my writing style is to “ignore it for the sake of getting on with a discussion of his ideas.” (Jim Boon’s piece is, of course, directed to this subject altogether, and I will deal with it... and with him ... in a moment—or maybe a moment and a half.)

I do this not to defend my style (or styles) as such. Having toiled over it for so many years, I am qitite aware of its deficiencies, and if l am not there is always a reviewer to remind me. The pleasures of the text are hard pleasures. I do it to qtiestion whether style and substance aie so easily separable in such matters. Cyrano without his nose is, after all, not Cyrano, but just another hapless fop orating to a balcony. It IS his style, and the pain that inhabits it, that makes him into a great romantic figure. I do not claim to be that, at leasr in public. But I do think that much of what I have to say inheres in how I say it, and that this is especially true when it comes to deciding about issues of judgment, do make up a Yogi Berra-ism: you can say a lot just by writing.

That aside, Rick’s questions are indeed trenchant and very much to the point, so I will, of course, do my best to evade them. His wish to locate me vis-â-vis Richard Posner’s utilitarian anri-moralism and Isaiah Berlin’s Viconian humanism, between the lawyer-economist’s certainty and the philosopher-historian’s puzzlement, is an interesting notion, at leasr to me. Isaiah was, in fact, a personal friend (it was he who got me to Oxford for a year) from whom I learned an enormous lor, and whose voice, rapid, hectic, and all over the place, warm and engulfing, relentlessly comic, I can still hear fifteen years after, standing on a !Manhattan street corner for a half hour with him, I last heard it. (Dizzy Gillespie was there too, bur rhar’s another story.) Posner, I have never met, and I can’t say rhat his work—only a bit of which I have read, and most of that the fugitive stuff—has impressed me all rhat much.

Isaiah’s great strength was his ability to get deeply enough into views foreign to his own, even antipathetic to them (for, a political actor and a bon vivant, he was anything but detached from the world, and I never knew him to be neurral about anything), to appreciate their force—something I don’t see in Posner, who seems, often at least, to think he has things taped. Berlin is for that reason for me a much more shaking thinker: one who makes things harder, not easier. Posner is too ready with answers to suit me (though again, I can’t claim detailed acquaintance with his work), and he seems to me more complacent about things than he, or anyone else, has at all earned the right to be. Isaiah’s arguments are not fully adequate, as he himself insisted they could not be in the nature of the case. Bur they rake US into the heart of the matter: how to decide and act when there are no answers in the back of the book. And rhar is my concern too, whatever differences I may have with him on this or that matter— for example, that forms of life are readily separable from one another and the natural focus of our moral concern. I don’t think much of trying to judge whole societies, cultures, or historical periods—or schematized institutions, like infanticide, either: we can leave that to the ideologues.

All this doesn’t go very far toward addressing the specific questions

Rick raises. Bur there is not world enough and time, lie is right that l resist short abstract answers to broad theoretical questions. And I doubt there is more to anything that Montaigne imagined.

*** James Peacock

With James Peacock's paper we turn more directly to "my place in the field," always a fascinating topic for an aging savant, who can discourse upon the subject for hours—to the relation of my work to our profession's self-conception, what it is it is supposed to be doing.

As he says, my aim has been to develop a way of studying systems of meaning, ways-of-being-in-the-world, forms-of-life, "culture" with as shuddering a set of quotes as I can devise, which would neither be a high church rationalism, which whatever the exotica it deals with, I regard structuralism as being, or a low church methodism, which is how I see "componential analysis." Whether this has had the Salvationist effects Jim so generously says it has had, I don't rightly know—I'm to much focused on that damned horse and nail. But we don't seem to be in instant danger of running out of either flaneurs or barbarians. Which is probably just as well. As Cavafy almost says: such people are useful, what would we do without them?

But his point that both the impetus for my doing what I have been doing, developing and testing out ways of describing and conceptualizing "logico-meaningful" systems, and the resources for it as well, came in good part from often from far outside, anthropology. Sapir and Benedict, as well as Kluckhohn and Redfield, were of course important, and so was E-P. But sociologists, Weber, Parsons, Goffman, or Schultz; psychologists, Bruner, Vygotsky; philosophers, Wittgenstein, Langer, Ryle, James; critics, Burke; poets, Stevens, Don Marquis, were at least as important. But even more critical was the fact that I came into anthropology from a background in the humanities and have never been fully deprogrammed, or even debriefed, never properly socialized. I have spent, by my count, no more than two and a half years in a purely anthropological setting in my half-century career, and much of that hiding from chairmen.... If, as the oldest living inhabitant, the wisdom-giver emerged blinking from his cave, I have any sage advice to give

you young’ns out there, then, it is this: anthropology is too important to be left to anthropologists. Which, as he assigns books called I DE GREAL WORK (I wish I had thought of that), I gather is Jim Peacock’s view of things as well.

*** James Boon

Then there is that other James: M. Boon, the man who made digression famous. Himself, perhaps the most distinctive stylist in anthropology, tin- less you count G. I). Murdock, he addresses himself, and addresses himself, and addresses himself to my style. ،‘Shaggy sentences,” “list-laden discursivity,” “prosy maze,” “wayward shuffle,” “Geertzy mots” indeed! Quel chutzpah!

Bur seriously folks, the heart of Boon’s message, here as just a Bout everywhere else, is that solemnity and seriousness are not the same thing, and that those of US—he and I are alike in this, as in so much else, ex- cept for the ability to abide Frazer—unable to keep a wholly straight face when confronting the really important things of life have something of a problem when it comes to anthropological prose making. Comic grav- ity, a careless air in the face of hard reality is a difficult thing to bring off. You all know the line, dying is easy, comedy is hard. Bur I rather prefer a reworking of Dolly Parton’s “it takes a lot of money to look this cheap”—viz.—“it takes a lot of swear to sound this casual.” Style is indeed a moral matter, bur that is no excuse for dullness or staying too logical, and a “colloquial, caustic, scatter-shot” way of assembling evidence and passing judgments has much to be said for it, as does, to take Jim’s case, never meeting a pun you don’t like. This high occasion is, as I just mentioned, an opportunity for me to pass on tribal wisdom to the anthropological youth, whom I have never been able to convince that it pays, really pays in hard, tenurable cash and now and then a genuinely grateful business major, to be readable. Better over the top than under the pile.

But I pass the opportunity on to a more talented savage, Theodore Roerhke, who knew what fate awaited the terminally “Academic”:

<verse>

The stethoscope tells what everyone fears

You’re likely to go on living for years

With a nurse-maid waddle and a shop-girl simper

And the style of your prose growing limper and limper.

</verse>

*** Ulf Hannerz

Ulf Hannerz, the only European anthropologist here, extends this genera I line of reflection on to the large scale of societies, of civilizations, of the world. As he notes, I have been concerned with “making small facts speak to large issues” from the very beginning, and for all my fascination, quite undimmed, with strange instances and odd detail (nothing is so interesting as something that doesn’t fit), I have never seen anthropology as a boutique discipline peddling exotica to coffee-table consumers.

The question, of course, is how the devil to do this. How do you turn particular observations—a cockfight, a botched funeral, a sheep raid, market bargaining—into general comment—on violence, on faith, on imperialism, on social trust. And, as he also notes, one of the main areas in which I have tried to do this is with so-called primordial attachments. (Which, praise be to God, someone has finally gotten right: They are not natural givens or frozen history or the return of the repressed; they are cultural perceptions.) My first pass at this, in the New Nations book, is indeed more optimistic in tone than it would be were I to write it today, The “integrative revolution” I hoped for, the “modernization of primordial sentiments within the context of civil politics” has, like other expected revolutions, been rather postponed in many places and in some put off indefinitely. The roll call is horrifying: Rwanda-Burundi, Algeria, the Sudan, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Eastern Indonesia, the southern Philippines, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Chiapas. One is anyway in no apparent danger in running out of hard cases: it all makes work, as Flanders and Swann used to say, for the working man to do.

In returning, a few passing essays over the years in between, to this subject in “The World in Pieces,” I hoped to begin a deeper inquiry into these matters in a way that would make it all less promissory. I hope that piece—which was conceived and originally published separately from the other things in Available Light— concerned as it was with a critique of some master ideas of both political theory and anthropology (a critique, not a rejection), could be a more extended inquiry into a more immediate and more practical question: namely, whether a multiethnic democracy is possible, and whether we can see any movements, any possible paths, in that direction on the present scene.

If we think, for instance, of the three most formidable of the no longer so new, no longer so emerging states (or, as I would prefer, “countries”), Nigeria, India, and Indonesia, they are all vast assemblages of—well, of primordial attachments, barely reconciled. In the past, such polyglot, polycultural, polycredal entities have been contained, with more success or less, and for a time, in empires: the Ottoman, the Habsburg, the British, the Soviet. The nation state, as we know it in France, Italy, Brazil, Canada, the United States where it became the frame and foundation of popular government there, took several centuries to evolve from Westphalia, and it now seems, with the two world wars, to be creaking at the joints, dubiously transferable to such jagged places as Nigeria, India, and Indonesia.

The question of what form nonauthoritarian government might take, or might be struggling to take, in such places seems to me one that an anthropologist, trained to notice difference and see connection, is especially well placed to address. In any case, it is what I want to do if my strength holds out, and whether I get anywhere or not, it should be sociologically robust enough, and “cloth-cap” enough, to suit Hannerz, and cosmopolitan—rooted, primordial, or just plain determined— enough too.

*** Michael Fischer

One of the advantages of living a long time—at least I think it’s an advantage—is that you get to see, in the work of younger colleagues, former students, and after-the-fact critics, something of what is to become of your work in the future—”what (as Foucault once said) your doing does.” Now, when everything is coming up post, this can be a shaking experience. But it can also be, as with Michael Fischer’s piece, a deeply reassuring one. Not only has not all been for naught (there is, after all, nothing so dead as a dead academic) but also one has started some fires that will burn in their own way, with their own fuel, to their own conelusions. If one wants one’s work not to go out of date one should write (very, very good) poetry, not mess around in the human sciences, where the half-life of any idea or any reputation is may-fly in length. Who now reads Robert Lowie? Clark Wissler? Geoffrey Gorer?

Th us I am warmed, to keep the fire metaphor going, by the fact that one of the least tractable spirits in anthropology, someone who has gone his own way with flair and determination from the beginning, has found some things to bounce off against—turtles, metaphors, “comparative epistemology”—in my work. As Michael notes, much of what I have said has been derived, if often obliquely and with a twist, from others— Weber, Dilthey, Ricoeur, Ryle, Schutz, Kohut, the Parsons layer-cake, even, god save the mark, the old Panopticist himself, Bentham—so it is only proper that it be re-projected back into the wider stream of thoughts and thinkers exterior to, in some ways even orthogonal, to it.

Of these, perhaps the development rhat nrost interests me, and which I most regret not having done more with than the few odd pieces, general and project framing, I have produced, is “science studies.” I never wrote the natural sequel to my “X as a cultural system” genre, “Science as a Cultural System” (though I think Available Light is, to a degree, that), partly because I tired of the conceit (I didn’t write “My Life as a Cultural System” either, though l threatened to), and partly because I realized that I didn’t really believe in the ”unity of the sciences” or that the destiny of anthropology was to become physics with the calculus removed. As Michael remarks, I did struggle to get the social study of science represented at the Institute, but was blocked by the natural science hard-liners who, for all their talk of the virtues of criticism, don’t much like it when in comes from what they take to be the rabble. In any case, the project— “the study of science as

a form of life”—thrives, both inside anthropology and just around it. I would, in n١y “revolt but don’t be too revolting” sort of way, urge that we be sure to get somewhere rather far in understanding “science as we know it”—Fleck, Latour, Kuhn, and Galison—before wandering too far off into the distant realm of Muslim physics and Buddhist logic. But doubtless I will, as usual, and with good reason, not be listened to by those for whom the new always beckons and trespassing is a vocation. The future, as they say, lies ahead.

As for games, great and little, everything is becoming such right now (1 write in the closing days of February, 2003, as the United Nations gathers to “finally” decide about the question of Iraq, and Afghanistan seems yesterday’s war), and it is hard to know what to do with such imagery any more. Buzkashi and the cockfight are clearly the models of something, but what they are the models of (or, you should excuse the expression, “for”) is still very much in the process of unfolding. One of the hard parts about being an anthropologist of Michael’s sort and mine, those who chew at our pencils in worry over the moral implications of what we are writing, is that they are, those implications, usually concealed from US until it is rather too late to do anything very much about them, whether the “biopolitics of globalization” will help with this problem or not (it sounds a bit grand to me), it is very much worth the try. We are, indeed, “gambling with passions,” and in fact rather than just in play. Anything that can provide US with a better sense of the odds we face (which as Damon Runyon once said, are always three-to-two against) is all to the good.

*** Dale Eickelman

As Dale points out, my 196Os writings on Islam—Ĩ/حو Religion ofjava, Islam Observed, and various articles and reviews—were very much of their time and place, not just in terms of history as such, as is inevitable, blit ill terms of wliat sort of thing was then being written by orientalist” scholars. That decade was a rather special rime both in the human sciences, especially those like anthropology still concerned with religion, and in the world at large. It was in the full midst of the Cold War, as well as of course, the time of the Vietnam crisis. And it was before the rise—or, at leasr, before the rise to general view—of what came later to be known as “political” (or “radical,” or “fundamentalist” or

“exrremist”) Islam. If there was any reigning view, indeed if there was any general view of Islam at all, in Western minds, it was that it was a relic religion. stiffened, unmodern, and soon to dissolve in the face of some combination of nationalism, secularism, and Marxism. Nationalism, in particular, was, as Nasserism, Baathism, etc., on the march in the Middle East and North Africa, and the role of Islam there was barely on anyone’s radar, a few, secluded world-history type scholars like Marshall Hodgson aside. Most students of “rhe third world” considered it a spent force, a drag on modernity, an “obstacle” to development, to the point that when, a few years further on, this view was finally seen to be (how shall I put it?) inadequate, there was much talk among the same people of “the return of Islam,” as though—Indian Partition, I he Kuala Lumpur Riots, The Egyptian Brotherhood—it had ever been away.

It was, then, in that general environment, that my earlier work in the held was done. In the ferry Lectures, published as Islam Observed, I argued, first, that Islam was indeed alive and well in the two countries I had been studying, Indonesia and iMorocco, if only you knew where to look for it in their societies, in their political institutions and among their leading personalities, and if you were willing to turn away from a hypertextualist, Qur’an, Hadith, and Shari’a approach to the matter. Second, by comparing these incomparables, a Southeast Asian, Malayo-Polynesian-based society and a North African Berber one, a number of things would come into view otherwise not so easy to see. In particular, the importance of what I call “scripturalism,” and others called “modernism,” or “reformism” (“fundamentalism,” was not yet, fortunately, the term of art for political Islam) in the nationalist politics of the two countries.

As Hale also notes, time has both reinforced this more dispersive, variegared view of “Islam,” and transcended it. We are, right now, in the process of constructing, rather hurriedly as though we had better quickly get on with it after years of neglect, a more contemporary, more realistic, less stereotypical, “postnationalist” view of “Islam.” There is, just now, an avalanche of books and articles—by historians, by journalists, by political scientists, by students of contemporary religion, by sociologists and anthropologists, and by various inspired amateurs designed to give ns a crash-course in, as the phrase goes, “Understanding Islam.” Particularly since 9/1 1/01 the multiperspective, multidisciplinary approach to Islam one

could only hope for and briefly illustrate in the 1960s is dramatically underway, and indeed flying off in all directions, as everyone from Oriana Fallaci to Bay Area Sufis like Stephen Schwartz puts a word in. As for me, used to working along the edges of world history and suddenly engulfed in its center, I am both pleased and nonplussed. Pleased, because what I waitted to have done and could only barely indicate is coming to be done. Nonplussed because what Dale rightly calls my “high risk venture” (he is not correct, however, just for the record, in saying Islam Observed was written before I had done fieldwork in Morocco; also, he is wrong about how long one can cling to a glass of Scotch in an airplane—I have tried it) seems even more risky now, as he, Larry Rosen, Bob Hefner, and others take it up, than ever.

*** Robert Levine

Robert LeVine is quite right: I will never write a book called Principia Semiotica, and am quite astonished to think that someone once imagined I might. The longer I go on, the shorter my books get and the more they decline into essays. But he is right, of course, that something like symbolic action has always been the central SUbject of my work and that this implied some strong theses in psychology that I was, as is my wont, strongly disinclined to state explicitly. T he metaphorics, so to speak, of psychology and psychoanalysis reverberate through iny work, not only in the experience-near, experience-distant borrowing from Heinz Kohut, but The Interpretation of Cultures was not so named for nothing. It was just that when I began writing the culture-and-personality vocation was so strong and so, as I put it in a recent paper, explanatorily ambitious that I rather shied away. Too much was being said about too many, and it was that —Yurok salmon orality, Russian teeth, swaddling totalitarianism— that rather put me off. Not any antipathy, which as Bob rightly says I never have had, to the subjective and to psychology as such. Now that a properly cultural psychology, grounded in what people actually say and do, rather that in destiny-in-the-nursery (or, later, in programs-in-the-head) abstractions, has been revived by the likes of him, jerry Bruner, Byron Good and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, Rick Shweder, and others, 1 am, as I think some of my more recent writings testify, more than willing to get back into the effort. And, as he also says, the proper totemic figure for that is Sapir, under the influence of whose writings I began, a half century or so ago now, to think

seriously about “symbolic action anti the sort of psychological assumptions it implied.

*** Byron Good and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good

As I mentioned in my comment on Michael Fischer’s paper, hanging around long enough to see your successors arrive is much of a mixed blessing. But here, with Byron and Mary-Jo, it is even more shaking. For they have been working—how dare they?—in “my” Held site, with “my” people, and “my” culture for the last decade or so. Every field anthropologist, I am sure, wakes up from time to time in a cold sweat fearing that someone has gone back to where he or she worked and found not only that the people had been glad to see the last of him but also that he had made up everything, misquoted everybody, was lied to continuously, and didn’t have a clue about what was going on around him. In my case, a supposed American friend, a political scientist, visited Pare, “my” town in east-central Java, for a day about thirty years ago and found that all dozen or so of us who had been there together in the 19505 had been amalgamated in the local Durkheimian memory into a single archetypal figure called “Don,” the one proper name (that of the sociologist among us) they could, apparently most easily get their phonemes around. I went back not long after that for a revisit myself and more or less straightened all that out. But my demythologizing efforts were hampered a bit by the fact that one of my oldest friends there and ex-party-chieftain, by then pushing eighty, had just got hold of my book on the history of the place in Indonesian translation, had gone through it and written in the real names of the people, including himself, to whom I had given pseudonyms in an effort to spare them embarrassment, Xeroxed the particular pages involved, and distributed them t() the particular people concerned. This provided a re-entry problem (though, as at least at that time and that place ،‘the Javanese were still Javanese,” everyone was quite polite about it all) of a peculiar quality. ١Z()U can’t, really can’t, go home again.

So far as Byron and Mary-Jo’s piece is concerned, they of course have been mainly working in Jogjakarta, where I spent the first eight months of my own expedition in 1952, at a time when it was all oxcarts and bicycles and batiks and hierarchy, and dance classes in the kraton (the castle) on Sunday morning. Pelan-pelan, “slow, slow” as we used to say;

mboten wonten tnenapa “nothing, absolutely is happening, has happened, or is going to happen.” It is very much not like that now of course —it is enormously sprawled our, crowded wirh honking automobiles, a major university center wirh students from all over the archipelago. (1 have heard people say that half the town’s population is now non-Javanese; “nobody stays where they belong anymore.”)

So the question, “are the Javanese still Javanese?” is a natural one to raise. In one sense, of course they are; what else could they be? But in another, as Java 1952 and Java 2002 are hardly the same place, uncritically applying conceptions based on experiences trafficking with the first to realities encountered confronting the second is not going to work our very well. So the flow of history presents, in and of itself, a difficult question: What persists? (Because, as the Javanese are still nor Americans, Moroccans, or even Baraks, something, and something central surely, does.) And what does not? (Because equally surely, now that “development,” massacre, and the state ideologization of culture has intervened, a lot, also central, does not.) After all, as the Goods point out, thirty-five years of Suharto’s putting Javanism andjavanist tradition to the most instrumentai and oppressive uses, when he finally falls, what do we ger in place of him? Firsr, Gus Dur, a Muslim folk figure out of the traditionalist Islamisr context of East Javanese madrasah life, and, when he self-destructs, iMegawati Sukarnoputri, a Javanese “Ibu” (“mother”) whole and entire, complete with grand formality, unnerving patience, and Delphic silences. This is not just the old cliche about change and sameness. It is that this whole question seems to me one of the central perplexities of anthropological accounting: How, through the greatest and most destructive of upheavals, violence, outside intrusion, “modernization ”—dangdut in a bijab, and all that —the core of something, stretched, bent, twisted like a topologist’s rubber sheet, perhaps, re-emerges, snaps back, or approximately, into position.

The relation of subjectivity to culture, as the Goods put it, is surely the route to take in attempting to get somewhere with this issue. My own attempt, as limited as it was, to take a phenomenological approach to self and identity questions was, of course, in the first instance stimulated by the Javanese themselves who, at least as I knew them, had a tremendous bent in that direction and could talk about feelings, consciousness, the inner life, and so on (including “psychosomatic” illness) till the water buffaloes came home.

“Exploring the new forms of Javanese subjectivity, emerging under (ˌquire new?’ well, anyway ˌnew’) conditions’ is clearly the way to go and in doing so the one thing I feel quite sure after all these years is that the Javanese themselves will be superb and willing guides in pursuing such an enterprise. It is hard to ger a word our edgewise from the Balinese about what is going on dalem, “inside.” It is, it still is, hard, so far as I can see, to get the Javanese to stop talking about it.

As for Byron and Mary-Jo’s memories of that last year of mine at Chicago, I can only say I myself had quite forgotten, I suppose repressed, it. Their invocation of how I taught, if “overwhelm with references so they may think you know something” can he called teaching, brought it all back with a rush, and stimulated the same sort of question about my consciousness as needs to be asked about the Javanese. Yes, that person was me. Have I changed? Have I learned anything? Have I unlearned anything?

*** Jerome Bruner

As Jerome Bruner notes, he and I go way back, to the caveman times of neoanti-mentalism, computational determinism, tachistoscopes, and other Harvard horrors. I first encountered him there (but not he, nɹe: I cowered in the back row of a large auditorium, frantically scribbling) in my very first semester i,ɹ graduate school—that would be 195ü—when I audited, because someone said it would be amusing, a course he and the Berkeley experimentalist David Krechevsky, become Krech, gave on perception in which they argued, »lirabile dietu, that it was people—poor kids, rich kids, beggarmen, thieves—who heard and saw, nor ears and eyeballs. Ir was a revelation, as well as one can see clearly now but could already half-sense then, the opening gun in the Cognitive Revolution. I he tokening tremors before I he Big One. I can still see him in my mind’s eye, weaving about the stage like a featherweight boxer, a study in restlessness, energy, rapidity, and thinking, as he came, himself, later to put ir, with the jabbing, feinting, cutting left hand.

Since then we have gone our separate ways institutionally, our converging ones intellectually, blaming each other, and Kenneth Burke, for everything

that has happened since. “Cultural psychology”/“iirterpretive anthropology”—bricoleur inventions, each of US annoying our maternal (or are they paternal?) disciplines with each other’s arguments. The making of meaning-making. The culruralification of fact, law, and verdict passing. Hermeneutic circles, hermeneutic spirals. Going beyond the information given. It’s been a grand ride. Worthy indeed of narration.

*** Natalie Avis

The interaction between Natalie and myself has been steady and, I think, mutually transforming during the many years we were together in Princeton, she at the university, myself at the Institute. She and I taught a seminar together a couple times that Robert Darnton, another French historian, and I started sometime in the 1980s on “history and anthropology.” In that seminar we confronted the students (jtiniors and seniors from various departments—English, International Relations, Art, Economics. History, Anthropology) with paralleled classic texts from both disciplines: Evans-Prichard and Keith Thomas on witchcraft, Mary Douglas on the Lele and Emmanuel Le Roi Ladurie on the Cathars, Geertz on Balinese selfhood, Davis on Martin Guerre—to get the students, and ourselves as well, reflecting on the similarities and differences, both profound, between these two sorts of cousinly minds. I am not sure either we or the students ever arrived at any very certain position concerning the matter, because there is no certain position to be reached. But we did manage to shake up the students as well as ourselves, and a number of the alumni have gone on to have distinguished interdisciplinary careers, falling between two, or even three, stools with an aplomb I like to think owes something to their time with US and our own identity problems.

In her comment, Natalie returns to thatold problem: the supposed synchronic, narrow-focus, talking-informants nature of anthropology, and the (equally supposed) diachronic, wide-lens, dumb-documents nature of history, and shows again its wild inadequacy in distinguishing the sort of things she (or Darnton, or Carlo Ginsburg) does from the sort of thing I (or Douglas, or Ruth Benedict) do. The recurrence in my own work of temporal images—flowing streams, successive styles, java or Morocco then and now—and in her own of configurational ones—patterns of gift-giving, of being female, of

“rough music” for newlyweds in early modern Europe—pretty well upsets any distinctions based on such matters. Whatever it is that divides history and anthropology, if anything does except the sheer fact of tradition and university organization, it is not that the one concerns itself with time and change and the other with form and order.

Prodded then, by Natalie’s over-kind comments, to think again about the differences that connect US, I reflect on the fact that historians, whether of her sort or Fernand BraudePs Ginsburg’s or Lawrence Stone’s (another old Princeton friend of both of US, much missed as both colleague and foil), write about things that have already reached a certain completion, things we know the sequel of, how they came out, how they look after they have happened. Anthropologists, whether of my sort or E-P’s or)ames Fernandez’s or Levi-Strauss’s, write about peoples and places and conditions of things in the midst of happening, whose endings are as obscured from US as they are from our subjects. For someone such as myself, concerned with two countries, Morocco and Indonesia, in the full flow of modern history, this produces a chronic sense of the ground shifting under)[,]our feet: merely in the time to publication your best ideas can be shown to have been quite mistaken, the principles you thought you saw at work been dramatically undercut. Again, this won’t really do as a difference marker (there is, after all, Douglas on the ancient Hebrews, Hans Blumenberg on the modern age), but it does at least mark a certain aspect of my own subjectivity in these matters. But all that imagery of flowing rivers and crossing streams, of how it seemed then and how it looks now, comes from a mind haunted by the fact that his subject is changing, and quite rapidly, even as he writes. Historians’ books go out of date too, but usually not before they are published. Trying to keep up with world-historical places in an age of world-historical motion gives a certain quality to your prose and a penchant for devices—concentration on a walled town, a prince or a peddler, a market system—that can soften, a bit and incompletely, the anxiety not so much of getting it wrong (that never goes away) but of being seen to have gotten it wrong even as you assert it. Writing history in the midst of history is indeed nervous-making and evasion-producing. But as I say, Natalie would probably counter that things are not all that different in her held.

Also I should perhaps remark on my sense of continuity in my work that she says, surprising me, surprises her. Aside from the fact that we all perhaps look back on our lives in ways that make them look at least minimally directed and should not be taken as authorities on ourselves, part of the problem is that I didn’t come to “the study of meaning” after turning away from my initial focus on fact and function. I started out, after my undergraduate work in philosophy and literature, where I was concerned with “the meaning of meaning” and the like on quite supernal levels, went cold-turkey into anthropology and into the field, wrote my licensing volumes, and then took up again, more explicitly (I had never really dropped them, just concealed them in some thick ethnography) the issues about meaning. My career really began in 1946 when I went to college but of course didn’t publish anything; which can give the optical illusion of a sea change in the l97₀s when the Interpretation of Cultures (most of whose articles were written earlier) came out. Plus ca change, plus c’est le meme auteur.

*** Amelia Rorty

k is appropriate for me to end my so brief, so inadequate, so self-protective series of comments with Amelie’s piece, because, in her gadfly, philosophical way, she asks: Ok, Buster—now that you have been duly celebrated, what are you going to do next? As, she would expect, 1 am inclined to answer: who the hell knows? It’s all up for grabs.

But she has, alas, grasped, with uncomfortable exactness, the Yeat-sian (“perfection of the life vs. perfection of the work”) thematic in my authorial tome, the place where biography, the life I have lived, and representation, the world I have described, meet and clash. Am I, after all, a celebrant of chance or possessed by a rage for order? And, as she suggests, I am both, in unstable, indefensible, and determined imbalance. Everything is up for grabs, but we must, somehow, hang on.

To become a bit biographical for a short moment, my actual life, the one that has gone on out there and back then where things happen and happened, has been, in fact, rather a looking for small bits of order to hang onto in the

midst of chaos. So it is hardly to wonder that my work looks like a grasping for patterns in a swirl of change: I was preadapted. My parents were divorced when I was three, and I was dispatched (the verb is appropriate) to live alone with an older woman, a nonrelative, amid the sylvan beauties of the northern California conntryside (a “nonvillage” of three or four hundred farmers, shopkeepers, and summer visitors) in the plumb depths of the Great Depression. I was well cared for, but that’s about it, and I was pretty much left to put my life together (not without real help from schoolteachers responding to a bright kid, and, later on, the U.S. Navy, responding to a callow klutz) by myself. Without going on—I do not much like the “Rosebud” approach to self-understanding—all this predisposed me to becoming, in both life and work, the seeker after a pattern, however fragmentary, amid a swirl of accident, however pervasive, that Amelie rightly sees. It has never occurred to me, not really being a deep thinker, just a nervous one, to try to resolve this “binary.” I have just sought to live with it. Pitched early into things, I assumed, and I still assume, that what you are supposed to do is keep going with whatever you can find lying about to keep going with: to get from yesterday to today without foreclosing tomorrow. And it does, that resolute irresolution, indeed show in my work.

I can hardly here really face up to Amelie’s challenge to make my conception of the relation between “the dramas of happenstance” and “the plenitude ... of significant pattern” clear and explicit. I can hardly face up to it at all, save through further fumbling after meaning of the sort I have done in Bali, in Java, in Morocco, in life. Even as such, this sort of seeing openness and order in the same optic has some use, or so I think, as a guide for the perplexed. That philosophical sociologist, David Reisman, once wrote somewhere that the central problem of political life was how to avoid being forced to clioose between murder and martyrdom. Good advice in general, and again most especially at the moment, late Febrnary 2003, in which I write.

I really don’t believe rhat “everything, but absolutely everything, has a place in a significant order.” I just think that sonre things seem to have some sort of place in a partial sort of order. Bali is not a cockfight writ large, or vice versa. The world is indeed a suq, bur the suq is nor the world. “Existential anxiety,” early encountered, is, for me, apparently here to stay; and, though as Amelie says about Berlin and Taylor, two other passionate evaders, it

won’t really do, I shall just have to go on, at least so long as chance permits and pattern lasts, “cliffhanging.”

** Appendixes

*** Appendix 1: The Original Symposium Schedule

1. The Pluralisms of Clifford Geertz 1(I co A Ria A. Shweder University of Chicago

2. Passing Judgment: Interpretation. Morality, and Cultural Assessment

1. A\ RENCE 1(0 SEN Princeton University

3. Clifford Geertz and Islam Dale Eickelman Dartmouth College

4. Happenstance and Patterns Amelie Rorty Harvard University

5. Deep Play, Violence, and Social Reconstruction Michael Fischer

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

6. Celebrating Geertzian Interpretivism

Jerome Bruner

Nerv York University

7. On the “Subject” of Culture: Subjectivity and Cultural Phenomenology in the Work of Clifford Geertz

Byron Good and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good Harvard University

8. Geertz s Style: A Moral Matter James a. Boon Princeton University

9. Geertz’s Concept of Culture in Historical Context: How He Saved the Day and Maybe the Century

Jails Peacock

University ʏ(North Carolina

10. Clifford Geertz on Time and Change Natalie Zemon Davis University of Toronto

11. Speaking to Large Issues: The World, If It Is Not in Pieces Ulf Hann z

Stockholm University

12. Coded Communications: Symbolic Psychological Anthropology Robert a. LeVine

Harvard University

13. Commentary Clifford Geertz Institute for Advanced Study

*** Appendix 2: Academic Biography and Writings of Clifford Geertz

Clifford Geertz

School of Social Science

Institute for Advanced Study

Princeton, New Jersey 08540

Born August 23, 1926, San Francisco, California

Formal Training

AB Antioch College, 1950 (Philosophy)

PhD Harvard University, 1956 (Anthropology) Department of Social Relations

Professional Career

Instructor in Social Relations and Research Associate in the Laboratory of Social Relations, Harvard University, 1956–57.

Research Assistant, Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1952–56: Research Associate, 1957–58.

Fellow, Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, California, 1958–59.

Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley, 1958–60.

Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1960–61: Associate Professor, 1962–64: Professor, 1964–68. Divisional Professor in the Social Sciences, 1968–70.

Member of the Committee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, University of Chicago, 1962–70: Executive Secretary, 1964-66; Chairman, 1968–70.

Senior Research Career Fellow, National Institute of Mental Health, 1964–70.

Consultant to the Ford Foundation on Social Sciences in Indonesia, 1971.

Professor of Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey, 1970-. (Harold F. Linder Professor of Social Science, 1982-). Professor Emeritus, 2000-.

Visiting Lecturer with Rank of Professor, Department of History, Princeton University, 1975–2000.

Eastman Professor, Oxford University, 1978–79.

Fieldwork

Java, Indonesia, 1952–54; April 1984; March-August 1986; November-December 1999.

Bali, Indonesia, 1957–58.

Morocco, june-July 1965; .June—December 1964; ,line 1965—September 1966; ,line 1968-April 1969; ,line-.,lll)’ I 972; June-.!llly 1976: November 1985-Marcb 1986.

Java, Bali, Celebes, Sumatra, April-September 1971.

Professional Honors

A. Honorary Degrees

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Harvard University, 1974.

Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, Northern Michigan University, 1975.

Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, University of Chicago, 1979.

Honorary Doctor of Hunrane Letters, Bares College, 198:).

Honorary Doctor of Hunrane Letters, Knox College (Illinois), 1982.

Honorary Doctor of Hunrane Letters, Brandeis University, 1984.

Honorary Doctor of Hunrane Letters, Swarthmore College, 1984.

Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, New School for Social Research, 1987.

Honorary Doctor of Social Science, Yale University, 1987.

Honorary Doctor of Letters, Willianrs College, 1991.

Honorary Doctor of Hunrane Letters, Princeton University, 1995.

Honorary Doctor of Letters, University of Canrbridge, 1997.

Honorary Doctor of Letters, Georgetown University, 1998.

Honorary Doctor of Letters, Antioch College, 1999.

Honorary Doctor of Laws, Colby College, 2003.

B. Scholarly Awards

Social Science Prize (Talcott Parsons Prize), American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1974.

Sorokin Prize, American Sociological Association, 1974.

Distinguished Lecturer, American Anthropological Association, 1985.

Huxley]Memorial Lecturerand Medallist, Royal Anthropological Institute, 1983.

Distinguished Scholar Award, Association for Asian Studies, 1987.

National Book Critics Circle Prize in Criticism, 1988.

Horace Mann Distinguished Alumnus Award, Antioch College, 1992.

Fukuoka Asian Cultural Prize (Academic, International), 1992.

Bintang Jasa Utama (Medal), Republic of Indonesia, 2002.

C. Scholarly Memberships

Fellow, American Academy of Arts and Sciences,] 966-.

Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, 1970-.

Fellow, American Philosophical Society, 1977-.

Fellow, I he National Academy of Sciences, 1973-.

Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1980-.

Corresponding Fellow, The British Academy, 1991-.

Honorary Fellow, The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, 1995-.

D. Lectureships

Ferry Lecturer, Yale University, 1967.

Harry F. Camp Memorial Lecturer, Stanford University, 1972.

John Dewey Lecturer, Antioch College, 1973.

Lionel 1 rilling Lecturer, Columbia University, 1977.

Storrs Lecturer, Yale Law School, 1981.

Bicentennial Lecturer, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1981.

Harry F. Camp Memorial Lecturer, Stanford University, 1983.

Obert c. Fanner Lecturer, University of Michigan, 1985.

Lindesmith Lecturer, Carleton College, 1990.

Hitchcock Lecturer, University of California, 1990.

I larvard-Jerusalem Lecturer, 1990.

Flardy Lecturer, Hartwick College, 1992.

Fukuoka Five-Year Anniversary Lecturer, Tokyo and Fukuoka, 1995.

Lecturer in Modern Philosophy, Institut fiir die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, Vienna, 1995.

William James Lecturer, Harvard Divinity School, 1998.

Wells Lecturer, University of Indiana, 1998.

Charles Homer Haskins Lecturer, American Council of Learned

Societies, 1999.

Master’s Seminar, University of Konstanz, 2000.

Sabbagh Lecturer, University of Arizona, 2001.

Sidney A. iMintz Lecturer, Johns Hopkins University, 2003.

Sir James Frazer Lecturer, University of Cambridge, 2004.

E. Other

Council of Scholars, Library of Congress, 1982–93.

Fellow, Intellectual Interchange Program, Japan Society, 1984.

Visiting Humanities Research Centre, Australian National

University, 1987.

Rector’s Visitor, Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Germany, 1993.

Visiting Professor, European University Institute, Florence, Italy, 1994.

Visiting Scholar, EHESS, Paris, 1994.

Visiting Scholar, Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1998.

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</biblio>

** Index

<biblio>

Adorno, Theodor, 81

Alinsky, Saul, 81

Allport, Gordon, 21

American Anthropological Association (ʌʌʌ), vii, ix, 8,181023,36,53

Anderson, Benedict, 59

anthropology: and astonishment, 91–92; cosmopolitanism of, 93, 94–95;

happenstance and pattern and, 49–51: history and, 39, 47, 64, 68, 121–22; and interpretation, 11–14, 45; and judgment, 7–8, 10, 13–14, 108–9: and large issues, 89–95, 12–14: and pluralism, 28 ,7 و; social, 57; study of religion, 66–68; symbolic, 57–58, 86–87; “the third stream” of, 6On2; use of comparison, 93–94

Antioch College, 49

Appiah, Kwame Anthony, 94

Arendt, Hannah, 86

Aristotle, 13

Arnold, Matthew, 64

Balinese cockfight, 22, 38, 39, 47–48, 54

Balinese ideology of reform (reformasih 105–6

Bateson, Gregory, 77

Beck, Ulrich, 85–86

Beidelman, T. ()., 57

Bellah, Robert, 58, 67

Benedict, Ruth, 13, 41, 53, 95, 121

Benjamin, Walter, 81

Bentham, Jeremy, 31,81,114

Berlin, Isaiah, 7–810 1 ,51 ,50 ,171110 ,12 124 ,و

Berry, Thomas, 56

Blumenberg, Hans, 122 blurred genres, 76, 79, 82 Boas, Franz, 36nl, 52, 57, 6On2 Boon, James ∧., 58, 109, 1 12 Borges, Jorge Luis, 67 Bourdieu, Pierre, 64 Bowen, John, 71,72 Braudel, Fernand, 121 Brenner, Susanne, 10)3 Brown, Peter, 72

Bruner, Jerome, 95, 98, 1 17, 120)

Burke, Kenneth, 22, 29, 81, 95, 120 buzkashi, 82–83, 115

Cai, Hua, 12, l6n9

Cassirer, Ernst, 10)0)

Cavafy, c. p., 111

chance. See happenstance

Clemens, Samuel. See Twain, Mark coded communication, 25–26

Cohn, Bernard, 63–64, 66

componential analysis, 53, 111

Cornell, Vincent, 72 cosmopolitanism, 93, 94–95

Crabb, David, 58

Crapanzano, Vincent, 171118

cultural critique, 3–4, 13. See also judgment cultural viii, 20, 88nl, 83

endorsed by Geertz, 117; of Javanese, 101,102–4

culture: causal-functional vs. logico-meaningful integration, 52, 65, 79و

1 I ل; as coded communication, 25–263 concept of, 2, 25–27, 52, 54–60, 68–7(), 72, 92; as symbolic action, 25–26

Darnton, Robert, 120, 121

Davis, Natalie Zemon, 31,36, 120–22

de Bergerac, Cyrano, I, 36, ! 10

deep play, 82, 86, 113

Deleuze, Giles, 77

Dewey, John, 46, 95

Dilthey, Wilhelm, 64, 81,114

Douglas, Mary, 34, 60113, 121,122

Dryden, John, 109

Duchamp, Marcel, 64

Durkheim, Emile, 60112, 60113, 78, 1 18

Dwyer, Eeslie, 103

Eickelman, Dale, 1 13–17

Eliade, Mircea, 81

epistemology, 79–80, 81, 83, 1 14

ethnography, 10, 2(), 25, 92. See also under Geertz, Clifford

ethnoscience, 32–33

Evans-Pritchard, E. E., 72, 95, 121 experience near/distant, 25, 32–33, 81, 11 7

Exploris, 33

Eagg, Donald, 39

Eallaci, Oriana, 117

Eallers, Tom, 99

Eechner, Gustave, 21

Ecrnandez, Janies, 121

Eernea, Robert, 72

Eerzacca, Steve, 1()l

Eischcr, Michael 1\J. I., 1 14–13, 1 18

Elanders and Swann, 113

Eleck, Ludwig, 83, 1 13

Eoucault, Michel, 31,114

Eox, Richard, (1., 93

Ereud, Sigmund, 21,25

Ereund, Paul, 109

Ericdman, Thomas, 92

Eukuyama, Erancis, 96113

Gadamer, Hans-Georg, 81

Galison, Peter, 83, 1 15

Galston, ^Villiam A., 7

(jeertz, Clifford: concept of culture of, 23–27, 32, 34–60, 68–70ˢ critiques of, 1–2, 1 71118, 27, 483 epistemology of, 79–80ˢ as ethnographer, 10–1 1, 3 1–33, 49, 66,

92, 93, 94, 1()(); histor>r/historians and, 38–39, 47, 68, 121–22: and Islam, 23, 63–73, 113–17ˢ on judgment, 1()-11, 12–14, 18,12(), 108–9ˢ and law, 22–23 on meaning, 20, 34–33, 122ˢ phases ot, 78–82ˢ philosophical pluralism of, 1, 2, 1 1ˢ and primordial attachments, 91, 94, 93, 1 13ˢ and psychology, 20, 22–23, 27, 98, 1 17ˢ on relativism, 3, 14, 17nl0, 17nl8, 31ˢ as “rooted cosmopolitan,” 94–93ˢ on science studies, 83, 114–13ˢ study of religion and, 66–73ˢ style of, 1–2 , 29–35, 30–3 1, 1 10, 1 1 2ˢ and subjectivity, 98, 100–101, 104, 106, 119ˢ symbolic action theory of, 25–27, 34, 1 17ˢ as teacher/professor, 64, 99–100, 1 19–20,

46ز ,on theoretical oppositions 120–21ˢ

and “the third stream” in anthropology,

38–43 ,OJI time and change 60,12ˢ

Geertz, Clifford (works): After the Fact, 38, 43, 89ː Agricultural Involution, 36,13,

Art” 3ː ”,Anti Anti-Relativism” 42–43ː

as a Cultural System,” 28ː Available Light, 11, 13,13, 16,16, 17,116, 28–29), 31, 33 , 47, 9)(), 9)1, 92–93, 94ː “Culture and Social Change,” 36113ː

Deep Play,” 47–48: “ I he Integrative” Interpretation of 91ː ”,Revolution ,42 ,Islam observed 25, 38ː ,Cultures

,Local Knowledge 67–69, 73, 1 16ː

لی///، Societies 29, 30), 34, 101ː ()/لی ,Person” –91, 94, 1 13ː 90 ,New States

l ime, and Condtict in Bali,” 87,11ː The Religion 6)/ Java, 32, 35,GU7ו

32ː ”,Ritual and Social Change” 101ː

“Suq: the Bazaar Economy in Sefrou,

“Thick Description” 69ː ”,Morocco ”,Thinking as a Moral Act” 25, 60,12ː

28, 72: “The Visit: Review of Cai Hua,” 12, I6n9ː Works and Lives, 22,

,91 ”,The World in Pieces” 43, 89–90ː

113

Cellner, Ernst, 70 ,13114 ,1 l Cillespie, John Birks (Dizzy), 1 10 Gingrich, Andre, 93

Ginzburg, Carlo, 39, 121

Good, Byron, 87nl, 108, 117, 118–20

Good, Mary-Jo DelVecchio, 87111, 117, 118–20

Goodenough, Ward, 53

Gopnik, Adam, 17nl0

Ciorer, Geoffrey, 114

Gray, John, 7

Halperin, Manfred, 71

Hannerz, Ulf, 112–14

happenstance: and Balinese cockfight, 4748· existential anxiety and, 48; and Geertz’s life, 49, 123; and Geertz’s work, 47–49

Harkness, Sara, 26

Harvard University, 41, 57, 59, 64, 65, 86, 98; Department of Social Relations, 24 98

Hassan II (king of Morocco), 14

Hefner, Robert, 71, 117

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, 46

Heisenberg, Werner, 13, 181119

Herder, Johann, 64

history/historians: and anthropology, 39, 47, 64, 68, 121–22: and historical change, 39; study of religion and, 38–39, 66–68

Hodgson, Marshall, 66, 69, 116 Huntington, Samuel, 69, 72, 93, 96113 Hymes, Dell, 57, 58

Indonesia: historical change and, 39, 41; ideology of reform (reformasi), 105–6: killings of 1965, 14, 1(13–4; President Soekarno, 90; religion in, 7072–71 و. See also Balinese ideology of reform (reformasi);

Java, and agricultural involution; Javanese

interpretation: activity of, 45 and interpretivism, 20–21; legal, 22–23; as moral act, 10, 12; standards/criteria of, 11–12,1616

interpretivism, 2()-21 involution, 42

Islam: change in, 39, 66, 71; law of, 23 and modernity, 70–71: scripturalism,

39, 116; study of, 66–73, 1 15–17. See also Indonesia; Javanese

Jacob, Francois, 84

James, Henry, 30

James, William, 11, 15114, 30, 32

Java, and agricultural involution, 42–43

Javanese: cultural psychology of, 101, 102–4, 1 19; religion of, 66–67, 71; subjectivity, 103, 04–5

Jordan, Michael, 106

judgment: moral, 3–8, 13, 17110, 18n2O;

personal, 13–14, I6n9, 108–9

Kael, Pauline, 14

Kahn, Paul, 22, 23

Kant, Immanuel, 100

Kaplan, Robert D., 96n3

Kateb, George, 11, I6n5, I6n8, 17110

Keeler, Ward, 101

Kennedy, Robert, 98

King, Martin Luther, Jr., 98

Kirsch, Thomas, 58

Kluckhohn, Glyde, 26, 6On2

Kohut, Heinz, 25,81,114,117

Krechevsky, David, 120

Kroeber, Alfred, 26, 52, 53, 55, 6On2

Kuhn, Thomas, 85, 115

Latour, Bruno, 85, 1 15

Leach, Edmund, 57, 65

Lerner, Daniel, 71

Levinas, Emmanuel, 77

LeVine, Robert A., 26, 117–18

Levi-Strauss, Claude, 43, 53, 6On2, 95, 121

Ligeti, (jyorgy, 65

local knowledge, 2, 11, 72

Lowie, Robert, 1 14

Lyotard, Jean-Francois, 84

Makhmalbaf, Mohsen, 78

Malinowski, Bronislaw, 95

Marsden, Magnus, 72

Marx, Karl, 81,99

Mead, Margaret, 53, 55

meaning, 20, 23, 41, 54–55, 1 1 1, 122

Middleton, John, 57

MIT (Klassachusetts Institute of Technology), 76

models of/for, 81,115

Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de, 3, 7, 31و III

Morocco, 14, 29, 38, 39, 40–41, 67, 69,

King 14ː ,King Hassan II 72» l 16ː

Muhammad ٧, 40

Muhammad / (king of Morocco), 40 Munson, Henry, Jr., 68

narrative, 22, 42, 48

Obeyesekere, (jananath, 16116, 87111 Oliver, Douglas, 59

Ortner, Sherry IL, 63, 96114

Parsons, Talcott, 52, 53–54, 57, 58, 60111, 60112,60113,79,81,114

Parton, Dolly, 112

Passcron, Jean-Claude, 64 patterns, cultural: and Balinese cockfight, 47–48: anti Gccrtz’s life, 123: and Geertz’s work, 47–49: and involution, 42

Peacock, Janies, 32, 36, I l 1–12 Peterson, Houston, 15114 phenomenology, cultural, 100, 105, 106, 119

Piscatori, James, 71 pluralism, 2, 7, 8, 1 1 Pollock, Griselda, 59 Ponty, Merleau, 100 Posner, Richard, 4–8, IIO, 111 power, 104–5 primordial attachments, 91, 94, 95, 113 Princeton University, 58: Institute for

Advanced Study, 41,115, 120 psychoanalysis, 25, 106, 1 17 psychological anthropology, 25–27, 101 psychology: and anthropology, 20, 23, 104: and Geertz, 20, 22–23, 27, 98,

20–21. See :and interpretivism 1 17:

also cultural psychology: subjectivity: symbolic action theory

Quinn, Naomi, 27

Rabi, Isidor Isaac, 85 Rabinow, Paul, 171118 Reisman, David, 123–24 relativism, 2, 3, 4–8, 14, 171110, 171118,31, 32, 36115, 1()9

religion: and modernity, 70–71 study of, 66–73

Richards, I. A., 21

Ricoeur, Paul, 81, 114

Roethke, Theodore, 112

Rorty, Amelie Okscnbcrg, vii, 122–24

Rosaldo, Renato, 93, 94

Rosen, Lawrence, 30), 108–9, 1 17

Runyon, Damon, I 14 Ryle, Gilbert, 81,114

Sahlins, Marshall, 16,16

Santayana, George, 16118

Sapir, Edward, 27, 117

Sartre, Jean-Paid, 64, 81

Sellars, Peter, 87111

Sewell, William IL, 96114

Schafer, D. Paid, 59

Schneider, David, 57

Schutz, Alfred, 68, 81, 87nl, 1()0, I 14

Sellwartz, Stephen, 117

science studies, 83–86, 1 14–15

Shils, Edward, 91

Shwcder, Richard, 26, 36, 50, 98, 108, 109-11, 117

Smith, Gordon, 55

Society for Psychological Anthropology, vii, ix, 98

sociology, 93, 96, 114

Soekarno (president of Indonesia),

Sorokin, Pitirim, 52, 65

Steiner, George, 63

Stone, Lawrence, 121

Strauss, Claudia, 27

Structuralism, 52–53, 1 1 1

subjectivity: ethnographic theory of, 100–101 of Javanese, 103, 104–5, power and 104–6ː ,political ː5–104 ,19ː relation to culture, 103, 104, 19 l. See also under Geertz, Clifford

symbolic action theory, viii, 25–27, 54, 1 17:

implied psychology of, 27, 1 17, 1 18

Tariq, General Amin Said, 82

Taylor, Charles, Ind, 50, 104, 124 thick description, 1, 81 ,73 ,54 ,او

Toynbee, Arnold, 69, 72

Trilling, Lionel, 79

Turner, Edward, 99

Turner, Terrence, 58, 99

Turner, Victor, 57, 81, 99

Twain, Mark, 51

Tylor, Edward B., 26, 55

University of Chicago, 20, 24–25, 41, 57, , 63, 64 , 66 , 79, 81, 90, 99, 120:
58

Contmittee for the Comparative Study of New Nations, 79, 90, 99

value pluralism, 7

Veyne, Paul, 108

Vico, Giambattista, 110)

Wahid, Gus Dur, 82,119

Walzer, Michael, 12, I6n6

Weber, Max, 21, 31,33, 36117, 52, 53–54, 601, 60n2, 60n3, 78, 79, 81, 1 14

Wikan, Unni, 59

Wilson, Edward, 26

Wissler, Clark, 114

Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 13, 68, 77, 93

Woodward, Mark R., 68

Yale University, 67

Yeats, William Butler, 123

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** [Back Cover]

ANTHROPOLOGY

CLIFFORD GEERTZ is the most influential American anthropologist of the past four decades. His writings have defined and given character to the intellectual agenda of a meaning-centered, nonreductive interpretive social science and have provoked much excitement and debate about the nature of human understanding.

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CHARLES TAYLOR

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*** Preface

The last few years have seen an upsurge of interest in biography and autobiography across a wide range of disciplines. The appeal of both, as genre and source material, is owed to a new appreciation for narrative, but even more to the quest for a shared humanism. As academic specialties narrow, the practice of biography and the interpretation of self-narrative

constitute common ground, where scholars can conduct a dialogue in which no discipline enjoys a uniquely privileged position.

This volume contains the proceedings of a small gathering meant to open that dialogue. These are papers presented at a conference convened at Tel Aviv University in 1987. The participants, although few in number, included scholars from the disciplines of anthropology, history, political science, and psychology. Some spoke as writers of biographies; others, as critics of biographies and self-narratives. Some presented research papers; others, essays of opinion. The objective was not to cover the Middle East geographically (although the articles do draw on Turkish, Iranian, Arab, and Israeli examples). Rather, the aim was to explore alternative approaches to evidence. The contributors avoided the rarefied theoretical issues that have preoccupied postmodernist critics of literary biography. Their concerns were more practical. How does one persuasively write a life? How does one persuasively use self-narrative as evidence? The wide diversity of approaches produced much heat and also some light, and a sense of shared enterprise that I hope this book conveys.

I wish to thank a number of persons and institutions for their support for the conference and this publication. I am especially grateful to Prof. Itamar Rabinovich, then Director of the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel Aviv University, who assisted at every stage in the preparation of the conference, and to my colleague on the organizing committee, Prof. Saul Friedlander of Tel Aviv University. The conference and book were made possible thanks to the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies at Tel Avix University, which sponsored the conference; the Conference Board of Tel Aviv University, which covered some of the expenses; the America-Israel Educational Foundation (Fulbright Commission), which contributed to participants' travel; and the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, which made a grant toward publication of the book. At the Dayan Center, Nirs. Lydia Gareh typed the manuscript with her customary exactitude, and Mrs. Edna Liftman steered the book safely through bureaucratic shoals. I wish to extend a special word of gratitude to Ms. Cynthia Maude-Gembler of Syracuse University Press for taking the volume under her benevolent wing and seeing it to publication.

It is my hope that this slim volume will initiate a broader discussion of how our understanding of the Middle East might be enriched by the study of individual lives.

Chicago, Illinois January 1991

MARTIN KRAMER

Middle Eastern Lives

** Introduction

Martin Kramer

The Middle East and the West are heirs to long traditions of recounting lives. In the ancient civilizations of the Mediterranean and west Asia, the stories of individuals were chiseled on friezes and triumphal arches, minted on coins, memorized as epic, and written down as chronicle. Although Christendom and Islam arose to proclaim the unlimited power of a single God, they made still more generous allowance for the role of the exemplary life in divine history. Both traditions rested upon individual responsibility before an indivisible God, who worked his will through the lives of prophets and kings, saints and warriors. Christians and Muslims differed over the precise manifestation of the divine presence, but they differed not at all in their search for guidance in the edifying lives of Jesus and Muhammad, the

disciples and the companions, St. Augustine and Ghazali, Richard the Lion-hearted and Saladin. Within both great traditions, the recording of lives became a specialization within the preservation of knowledge, and the recorders followed similar conventions of selection and narration. And in both traditions, the purpose of organizing the circumstances of a life was overwhelmingly didactic, to inspire and guide by example.

It was the West that discovered a new and revolutionary way of telling lives, at a time when, for many of the same reasons, the West was discovering much else that was new and revolutionary. What would become modern biography and autobiography differed from the old telling in their insistence on the intellectual and emotional distance of the teller from the subject—even when that subject was the self. These modern biographers sought evidence of human motive where their predecessors cited divine intervention. In the quest for knowing, they sought to penetrate those corners of lives left unexplored by the traditional edifiers and hagiographers.

This distancing ultimately made biography one of the grandest spires of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century historiography and established introspective autobiography as a major form of literary expression. In the past hundred years, recorded lives achieved a cultural ideal in form and proportion, an ideal preserved to this dav in many biographies and autobiographies. Narrative proceeds in some chronological relationship to the lived life. It draws on the public document and the private diary to weave a coherent story, in which the subject always occupies center stage. Bolder narratives, influenced primarily by psychoanalysis and the modern novel, seek to reconstruct perception and hidden motive, of others and the self. And the narrative champions fullness as the highest virtue, so that a biography, to approach truth, must be comprehensive. Its proportions must evoke the creative (or destructive) energy generated by a lived lite.

But this revolution in the telling of lives did not sweep the Muslim societies of the Middle East. Muslims immediately associated intellectual distance with disbelief, for they were introduced to the methods of modern biography largely by Orientalists, who applied them to the edifying lives of the Islamic tradition, and especially the life of the Prophet Muhammad.[1] In the nineteenth century, Muslim opinion became much exercised over the

subjection of Muhammad’s life and other exemplary Muslim lives to the critical methods of Western biographers. Some in the M»ddle East, battered by the political and cultural expansion of the West, rejected the desacralization of their history, as they have done in our own time by their condemnation of Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses. To make sacred lives the subject of critical biography was to commit a sacrilege. The situation did not differ much among those who substituted the creed of nationalism for the religion of Islam. Nationalism, too, edified through the telling of exemplary lives and created its own personality cults. And so the writing of Middle Eastern lives in the Middle East largely followed the methodological and intellectual ground rules of traditional and uncritical narration. The same held true for self-narration, which was either devoid of introspection or more like memoir than autobiography.

Orientalism and “New” History

The first initiatives in applying critical methods to Middle Eastern lives originated largely from outside the region. Even these were slow in coming, for a subtle bias against biography ran through the Orientalist tradition. Whereas the “old” historian of Europe respected and even exalted the causal role of the individual, the Orientalist insisted on the primacy of culture as expressed in language and religion. Compelling history was not the doings of rulers and their dynasties, although Orientalists did much to establish the chronology of Islamic history and to translate chronicles. Compelling history was cultural history—the history of religion, philosophy, and literature—which evidenced change over time, often through the influences of other cultures. Orientalists therefore produced a very limited corpus of biography. Studies of towering figures were compiled, including the biographies of the Prophet that Muslims found offensive, but the Orientalist history of Islam was largely the history of a religious community, in which the individual was rarely accorded the full autonomy attributed to the individual Westerner.

Nor did the Orientalists receive encouragement from the example of the “new” history as it emerged early in this century. The “new” historians of Europe had little use for biography once they had shifted the territory of historical inquiry from elite to mass, from politics to society. Vast segments of society had been excluded from the “old” historv, even of Europe. The “new”

historian sought evidence for the driving forces of change in villages and town marketplaces, not in courts and palaces. Change itself originated not in the action or inaction of rulers or a ruling elite but in economic, demographic, and ecological forces that unfolded over long durations of time. These constituted the fundamental tiers on which human history rested —so deep and vast that only a total vision of history could encompass them in its sweep. The biography of the “great man” in the nineteenth-century tradition did not disappear, but it was undertaken increasingly by nonprofessional historians who wrote for general audiences. Academic historians questioned not only the utility of biography but its very legitimacy.

When historiography’s European revolution occurred, it led the historiography of the Middle East almost directly from Orientalism to “new” history. The transformation was swiftest in France. There the domineering figure of Louis Massignon personified the metamorphosis of Orientalist into social and economic historian. Under the proximate influence of the An- nalistes, he and other scholars, who had been formed in the tradition of Oriental studies, rushed straight into social and economic history. Maxime Rodinson, trained in philology, followed a similar progression to economic history, although under the rather different impetus of Marxist theory. French scholarship passed through no stage comparable to the “old” history, with its emphasis on politics and biography, but leapt, like Massignon and Rodinson, directly from philology and religion to the study of guilds and prices. When they paused to study individual lives—Massignon that of Hallaj, Rodinson that of Muhammad—their quest was not for the unique but for the exemplary and edifying, although their criteria differed radically from those of Muslims.

In the English-speaking world, the transformation of Orientalist into “new” historian was not as dramatic. Yet the same leap was urged by the Orientalist Sir Hamilton Gibb, who argued that the next generation should devote its resources to social history. “It is vital to stress the word ‘society,’ ” he wrote three decades ago, for “the nature and pressures of the internal social forces engaged have largely determined che working of [Middle Eastern] political structures.”[2] The admonition did not go unheeded. In a comprehensive survey of Middle Eastern historiography published slightly more than a decade ago, the historian Albert Hourani announced that “social history seems likely to be the dominant mode of history writing for the present

generation.”[3] That generation borrowed theoretical models and methodologies first elaborated by the “new” historians of Europe, who had defined the concerns of social history when most Middle Eastern history still was being written by Orientalists. In recent years historians of the Middle East have produced the first studies to employ the paradigms of political economy, the “world-system,” the Annales approach, and even deconstructionism. In the words of one “new” historian of the Middle East, the search is for a paradigm that “is able to describe the activities of the whole society as meaningful, and need not restrict itself to a narrative of political events and elite biography, disembodied from the rest of society.”[4] Nothing in the work of the Orientalists ever quite approximated this avid depersonalization of Muslim society.

“It has been said that when ideas die in France, they are reborn in America,” one eminent American historian has written. “One might add that when they are past their prime in other disciplines, they are belatedly adopted by historians.”[5] And only after they have made their contributions to the history of Europe are they applied to the history of the Middle East. By the time the first “new” historians of the Middle East emerged, the general crisis of the “new” history—what one practitioner once called “history without people”—had already overtaken the field. The crisis grew from a disappointment with the yield of “total history” and doubts about the role of such history as a humanistic endeavor. Over the past decade, narrative history has been revived, and even biography has lost much of its stigma.

The crisis of the “new” history is just now being appreciated by historians of the Middle East. Their disillusionment is bound to be deeper, for in every instance the resort to the themes and methods of the “new” history has been less satisfactory for the Middle East than for Europe. The thinness of rhe sources and the complete absence of many social groups from the extant records has left the “new” history of the Middle East a pale shadow of its European models. The “thick description” that several historians have achieved for parts of premodern Europe can never be approximated for the Middle East. And so historians of the Middle East are becoming aware of the revaluation of biography as evidenced in the work of historians of Europe, the creation of new journals of biographical method, and the choice of biography as a theme of conferences held by advanced research institutes. There are signs of a new willingness among historians of the Middle East to

see whether biography can produce a fuller and richer representation of the past. And there is a readiness to look again at selfnarratives, in order to mine new insights from the texts.

*** Obstacles to Representation

Yet this new endeavor cannot but bring into relief the special problems of writing Middle Eastern lives, for it may be just as difficult to follow the lead of “new” biography on Middle Eastern ground as it was to follow the lead of “new” history.

The “new” biographer, like the “new” historian, cannot discount the dearth of intimate source materials. There are no comprehensive and accessible collections of private papers, no confidential diaries deposited for the scrutiny of all. Certainly there have always been sufficient sources for those seeking to write about one or another Middle Eastern writer, and many of those schooled in the strong Orientalist traditions of cultural and literary history contributed to what might be called intellectual biography or portraiture. Yet this writing was often disembodied, based narrowly on the works of the subjects themselves. There were too few intimate documents to surround public text with context. That there can be a wide discrepancy between the public and private persona of a Muslim intellectual we know from the successive lives of Sayyid Jamal al-Din “al-Afghani,” reckoned as the precursor of the major Muslim ideological responses to the modern West. With each chance discovery of material—a file in the British Public Records Office, another m the French police archives, and finally some of his own papers in a Tehran library—it became clear how futile trying to assess Afghani’s life solely through his own writings had been. No one can say how many lives of Muslim intellectuals might be turned over by the discovery of a trunk of letters. But these lives were not lived in Bloomsbury. Cairo, Damascus, Istanbul, Tehran—these cities insisted on conformity, in politics, literature, and art. An intellectual might dare to stretch these conventions but could never openly defy them. And so it is almost impossible to strip away the heavy layers of self-imposed censorship; in many instances, the absence of letters and diaries means that the private voice is forever lost.

The intimate sources for the lives of rulers and leaders remain even more inaccessible. There is nothing Middle Eastern about the desire of the powerful to erect defensive barriers between their personas and themselves, but the powerful of the Middle East sometimes have erected barriers so high as to be insurmountable, even decades later. “Political biography is essentially concerned with the interaction of personality and politics,” one historian has written. “And personality, it is commonly supposed, is at least as much the product of private as of public experiences. How then are political biographies of Middle Eastern leaders possible? For their private lives are as secluded from public gaze as were the family lives of their fathers, secure behind the windowless outer walls of their dwellings. Syrian presidents disclose what they choose: in place of personalities they have personality cults.”[6] Even when those cults die—usually superseded by the cult of a successor—the evidence for the lived life remains fragmentary or inaccessible.

As a consequence, some modern lives that occupied the center of history’s canvas have never been told with documentary rigor. No documented biographies present the lives of Ottoman sultan Abdulhamid II and Qajar shah Nasir al-Din, the two rulers who dominated the Islamic world in which Afghani lived, and who reigned tor thirty-three and forty-eight years, respectively. (A scholarly biography of Nasir al-Din is now in preparation.) There is no life of Faysal, the leader of the Arab revolt, ruler in Damascus, and then king in Baghdad. There are a number of biographies of their successors—of Egyptian and Syrian and Turkish presidents, of Iranian shahs and Arabian kings. But these works, when they are not journalistic, have been forced to rely on secondary sources because the intimate document is inaccessible. Sometimes interviews can offer compensation, but the intimate document is biography’s adrenaline. If we know Herzl better than Abdulhamid II, Lawrence better than Faysal, Philby better than Ibn Saud, Eden better than Nasser, it is largely thanks to the rich texture of the sources. There is no substitute.

Or is there? All lives leave their documentary gaps; perhaps the documentary problem for the Middle East is one of degree rather than kind. Just as there cannot be total history, there cannot be total biography. All biography, like all history, is a grand compromise.,One biographical strategy is to narrow the focus to questions suggested by the accessible evidence. This is the essence

of “political biography,” a life told with an explicit bias for politics and the kinds of available evidence that politics generates. Another strategy is to draw on some theory to infer a world of meaning from the broadest circumstances and anecdotal details of a life. This is the essence of “psychobiography,” a life told through explicit inferences, guided by a more or less comprehensive theory of motive. Both of these approaches to biography are compromises: the first because of its willful omissions, the second because of its deliberate inferential leaps.

A great deal has been written and said about the problems raised by such compromises. Here it need only be noted that they are often greater for the biographer of a Middle Eastern subject. The political biographer may not have access to the private diary, but if the life of a subject was lived within the confines of a Western democracy, the public archives are probably copious and accessible. Yet in much of the Middle East and during most periods, politics have been conducted much like private life—behind high walls of secrecy, secure from all scrutiny. In what sense is the president of Syria, even after twenty years of rule, a “public man”? Is it not more accurate to say that he is Syria’s most private man, whereas it is the citizens of Syria who are public men and women, who live their lives under the penetrating gaze reserved in the West for the politicians? The political biographer of the Middle Eastern leader is compelled to make not a few leaps of taith in trying to reconstruct the concealed dynamics of decisions for which the evidence is fragmentary at best.

In one sense, the compromise demanded of the psychobiographer of a Middle Eastern subject is no greater than that demanded of any psychobiographer. For adherents of comprehensive theories, the inferential leaps built into theory are essentially the same regardless of cultural setting. Yet in practice, those leaps may be longer and more perilous for the psychobiographer of a Middle Eastern subject. At many times and in many places, the experience of private, family, and sexual life in the Middle East has differed radically from the kinds of experience that have driven theory in the West. And since so little has been done even to describe the range of experience in the Middle East, from palace life to tent life, it is difficult to determine just where the biases might lie. The distance of the leap is further lengthened by a certain sense of propriety and privacy common to most of

the Middle East. This transforms self-revelation into a breach of collective integrity, makes women invisible, and constricts the flow of evidence.

But if the Middle Eastern setting of biography raises the obstacles, it also raises the incentives. For in the Middle East, almost as much as in Europe, this has been a century of “great men.” The Middle East entered the century under the traditional authority of long- ruling sultans and shahs. After an imperial interlude, the charismatic authority of revolutionary heroes had its moment of (vain)glory. A decline in the apparent caliber of leaders occurred just after midcentury, when the Middle East became a cauldron of coups. Historians and social scientists had little cause to dwell on the many rulers who shuttled in and out of office during those years. The prize of these incessant struggles could scarcely be called power, since a growing dependence narrowed the base of resources—social, economic, military—that could support leader-driven change. But in the last two decades, new wealth has combined with new technologies of control to transform some Middle Eastern leaders into immovable strongmen.

With the collapse of the despotisms of Eastern Europe, the Middle East remains the last preserve of protracted individual rule. Syria’s president has ruled for twenty years. Jordan’s king has reigned for thirty-seven years. Libya’s leader brought off his coup twenty years ago. The chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization has held his title for twenty years. Iraq’s ruler helped to bring his party to power twenty years ago, and has ruled the country alone for ten years. Now that the means of control have been supplemented by the technologies of mass destruction, the “great men” loom large. Through cults of personality that they themselves promote, they have become the embodiments of entire states. Their enhanced stature, of course, is partly an illusion, a game of mirrors. The revolutions of Eastern Europe hang over the “great men” of the Middle East like a pall. But the recent history of some Middle Eastern polities is virtually inseparable from the choices and prejudices of a few men. For periods when strong leaders rule, as in Europe during the age of the dictators and in the Middle East today, biography becomes indispensable to history. And so it must be, unless or until Middle Eastern societies rise up to impose some limitation on ambition and personal power.

*** Competing Approaches

Reading and writing lives begin with careful listening to the voices of those who have lived them. Self-narrative in its various forms is the subject of the first two essays in this volume, by Bernard Lewis and Dale Eickelman, and of much of the third, by Marvin Zonis. Lewis considers the nature of the selfnarratives that have figured in the literatures of the Middle East from ancient times to the present, with an emphasis on the Islamic tradition. His point is to demonstrate the continuous thread of self-narrative in these literatures and thus refute the argument that only under Western impact have Middle Easterners given accounts of their own lives. It is a point well taken: the past offers up numerous apologia, self-aggrandizing statements to posterity, and first-person accounts of religious awakening. Yet as Lewis points out, much of this material is of a fragmentary nature and contains little that might be described as introspective.

A question Lewis does not raise, but one that is inescapable, is whether this paucity of introspection is the product of culture. In his essay, Marvin Zonis goes further: noting the dearth of true autobiography in the Middle East, he argues that the retrospective assignment of meaning to a life, so essential to the production of introspective autobiography, is a product of Western historicism. Life experience is not integrated or understood as a variable fashioned by changing contexts; the lived life is understood as a series of discrete experiences. The predominant cultures of the Middle East, with their emphasis on communal values and identity, do not encourage an individualism essential to introspection. These cultural norms preclude more than true autobiography, since true biography also depends on the same sense of historicism and individualism. As Dale Eickelman suggests in his essay, this devaluation of individual will owes nothing to Islam and indeed would seem to stand in opposition to Islamic doctrine, which stresses personal responsibility and autonomy. But that doctrine has always been in tension with social values inherited from pre-Islam.

On all these points, Zonis enters controversial ground. The postulated inability to integrate a life’s experience cannot but evoke those formulations about the atomism of Arab thought so attacked by the critics of Orientalism. The argument that communalism undervalues liberty and equality, and that

the Middle Easterner understands only fraternity, has been made before. Yet the fact remains that very little self-narrative by Middle Easterners satisfies the criteria by which Westerners define true autobiography. If Middle Eastern self-narrative is thin, its thinness requires methodological strategies to compensate for the lacunae.

As Dale Eickelman demonstrates, the anthropologist can supplement the self-narrative by firsthand observation of the wider social context. Eickelman has studied the tarjama, highly stylized self-narrative or biography, of learned men in local settings in both Morocco and Oman. These texts show some evolution in form but remain almost rigidly stylized and selective, offering nothing in the way of introspection or accounting of motive. The texts serve above all to present the cultural personas of learned men: their social masks, put on for the benefit of a contemporary audience of initiates. The tarjamas exclude family context, peer learning, economic activity, and politics— precisely the subject matter sought by the anthropologist in the quest for contextual wholeness. As it happens, the tarjamas consulted by Eickelman are ambiguous about just those political issues that most interest him: the relationship of individual men of learning to French colonial rule in Morocco, and their attitude to the imamate in Oman. Such texts then are not selfcontained, but once their context is established through direct observation, they become invaluable documents, not only for what they include, but just as often for what they omit. The marked discrepancies between what the tarjamas say about these learned men and what Eickelman has found out about them can only sober the historical biographer, who must rely solely on texts and recollections to reconstruct lives.

Eickelman’s kind of “social biography” is not so much the reading of lives as it is reading between the lines of lives. And for some, it is not particular context but universal theory that coaxes the alternative readings from the texts. The second part of the essay by Marvin Zonis advocates the resort to psychological theory to illuminate what he calls the human “black box.” His plea for psychopolitical studies is not precisely a plea for psychobiography: the psychopolitical study is in every instance the case study of an event, not a life, and depends just as much on group psychology. Yet certainly in the case chosen by Zonis, the fall of Iran’s last shah, an abbreviated psychobiography is the inevitable prelude to the study itself.

Ultimately, then, any plea for psychopolitical studies is a plea for psychobiography. In the case of the Shah's fall, Zonis seeks to demonstrate how much can be added to an understanding of Iran's revolution by accounting for the Shah's own conduct—and how much more convincingly that conduct can be explained through psychoanalytic theory. Drawing particularly on the work of Heinz Kohut, Zonis maintains that "the Shah entered adult status with depleted narcissism, unable to provide himself with a level of self-esteem sufficient to allow the maintenance of a reasonable psychic equilibrium. Instead, he was totally dependent, for his narcissistic nurturing on external sources." As it happened, each of those sources failed him as the revolution gathered steam, leaving him quite helpless to resist it. When personality becomes the pivot of explanation, so too does a theory of personality.

The difficulty, of course, is that theories of personality stir deep disagreements among theorists and evoke charges of determinism and reductionism among historians. Zonis argues for tolerance and a kind of suspension of judgment, but the warriors of theory take no prisoners. Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz, whose psychoanalytic biography The Immortal Ataturk evoked many hostile reactions, respond in kind to their critics. The assumption of their piece is that the "unending" argument over the validity of psychoanalysis cannot be resolved: "Let them have it how they will." More consequential for them are the objections of psychoanalysts to psychoanalytic biography, criticism made within the charmed circle of believers. For psychoanalysis is both a theory and a clinical technique that "brings the analyst and analysand together in a highly specific way." This interaction between analyst and analysand generates the very evidence on which the entire analysis rests. Not surprisingly, many psychoanalysts are uncomfortable with the application of their techniques of interpretation to dead, unanalyzed subjects. Volkan and Itzkowitz respond by showing how texts and interviews related to Ataturk can supply some of the information that would have been gained from an actual analysis of the Turkish leader. This information can interact usefully with theory, although they concede that "total biography" is impossible.

For Elie Kedoune, however, this attempt by psychobiographers (and others) to hang their evidence on a shaky scaffold of theory—and then deduce what is hidden and missing—is self-delusion. Biography, like any historical account, “is wholly made up of pieces of evidence interlocking with other similar pieces without, so to speak, being forced. And if there is no evidence, then no concept can make up for its absence.” For Kedourie, “there is nothing beyond or above or below the historical record (as the evidence shows it to be) which may serve to account for or to explain this record.” The record is “its own explanation.” Nor do the biographer and the subject need the mediation of theoretical decoding: mind is akin to mind, mind speaks to mind, mind can and does understand mind.

Kedourie’s repudiation of the social sciences is a view that has few adherents among historians outside Britain. During the conference, the historian Saul Friedlander, who served as commentator, proposed the compromise of “limited models.” But there would seem to be little middle ground on which a Kedourie and a Volkan or Itzkowitz might meet. Practically speaking, the debate over psychobiography has probably gone as far as it can go. Nothing done on the Middle East is likely to carry it much further.

The last two essays, one by a biographer, the other by a political historian, consider the relationship of biography to history. Compared to biographers of most Middle Eastern subjects, biographer Shabtai Teveth works in a very different medium, for writing the lives of the makers of Israel rests on introspective sources that are plentiful and accessible. 'Yet even here Teveth finds history and biography at odds. First, whereas history proclaims the primacy of evidence, biography is an art; it insists on a “blend of evidence and poetic licence.” (Some contributors to this volume invoke theories of science to sanction inferential leaps; others claim the licenses of art—both for the same purpose.) Second, history and biography diverge in assignations of significance. The choice of biography is itself a selection, even an exclusion, that blue-pencils a question mark beside every digression of narrative into the wider context of events. Yet for biography to do credible service as history, it must draw the full-length portrait of its subject’s life and the context of that life. (This may explain why biographies often run to such great length.) But if biography is indeed a “crime against history,” as Teveth says, then it is certainly no more heinous than the offenses committed daily in the name of new theories and methods. Certainly Teveth’s own study of

Ben- Gurion qualifies as history, for the lived life is tightly interwoven with the dramatic events of the time. Yet biography's demands of style, proportion, and emphasis will doubtless continue to repel some historians, even as they attract ever-growing numbers of readers.

Uriel Dann contemplates the other side of the coin. Just how much biography can be usefully introduced into a political history? Quite a bit, Dann concludes, especially in the setting of the Middle East, where the "prevalence ot a hero" makes insistent biographical demands on the political historian. Dann himself has always accepted the challenge; each of his political histories has turned on the axis of a central figure. Just how much biography is essential and how much is intrusive in political history is a matter of—well, plain common sense: "There is no ironclad definition of what is 'palpably trivial,' but we are expected, after all, to exercise some judgment." Theories and models notwithstanding, there is no substitute for sound judgment, a capacity for empathy, and a strong respect for evidence. This is not historical fundamentalism, but simply a reminder that all interpretation must rest on firm foundations.

*** The Promise of Biography

In a book full of pleas and admonitions, a general one in favor of the book's theme is not out of order. When done with sensitivity, the telling and reading of lives increase our empathy for people of other times, other places, other cultures. There are many other roads to other minds (history, language, literature), but few so resistant to the arid pedantry of overspecialization as biography. Biography allows scholars in warring disciplines to debate their differences on the neutral ground of a shared humanism, where no discipline enjoys a uniquely privileged position. And biography and autobiography are literary forms that are appreciated by general readers, including those in the wider world of scholarship, which is otherwise disconnected from the closed community of Middle Eastern studies and the Middle East itself.

It is for this last reason that biographers and students of selfnarrative working in a Middle Eastern medium have an outside chance to move their wider disciplines. Since so many disciplines burned their bridges to

biography and the analysis of selfnarrative, the present work of reconstruction is still open to all. Students of the Middle East again might arrive on the scene too late, and with too little equipment. But those who are inspired by the riveting tension of Middle Eastern lives perhaps hold a key to the inspiration of others.

** 1. First-Person Narrative in the Middle East

Bernard Lewis

After the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, there was [a] sudden outpouring of something that had long been WW rare: the writing and publication of memoirs. Two new circumstances combined to produce this flowering of $ the memoir. The first was an interval of freedom of expression and publication in Turkey that had no precedent in the past and very few parallels in the future. The second was the urgent need felt by a number of rather senior and important figures to provide some explanation of what they had been doing during the previous thirty years. And so we find Said Pasha, grand vezir and holder of various other offices under Abdiilhamid, producing three volumes of self-exculpatory memoirs; Kamil Pasha, colleague and rival, doing the same; Said Pasha then producing comments on Kamil Pasha’s memoirs; Kamil Pasha producing comments on Said Pasha’s memoirs; and each producing a reply to the other’s comments as well as to comments by a number of lesser mortals. Memoir writing engaged not only pashas but even some of the revolutionary leaders. Some of these works were translated from Turkish into Arabic and helped to set afoot a similar trend in the Arabic-speaking world.

It has been claimed that this was the beginning of memoir writing in the Near Eastern Muslim world and that until that time it was not the practice for people to write about themselves. It has been remarked that, generally speaking, the tendency among writers of history in Arabic was to conceal their own personalities, and it is noteworthy that when inserting a personal testimony, they often do so in the third person. Tabari, for example, the great medieval historian, when wishing to make a comment or observation of his own, says qultu, “I said,” instead of his usual

narrative introduction qala, “he said.” But when he is producing a piece of evidence of his own, he says “qala Abu Jarir,” this being his own sobriquet, thus distinguishing between information provided by him and comment made by him.

The idea that autobiographical writing, first-person writing, memoir writing, whatever we may choose to call it, begins with the Young Turk Revolution is quite mistaken. Such writing goes back a very long time, and I shall try to demonstrate this by putting before you a sort of prospectus of the different types of first-person narrative that have at one time or another flourished in this region and that have contributed directly or indirectly to the growth of memoir and autobiography in modern times.

First-person narrative figures among the most ancient writings of the Middle East and therefore in the world. Amenemhet of Egypt, of the twelfth dynasty that flourished between 1991 and 1962 B.C., wrote some rather interesting autobiographical texts. In a description of a journey to the south and some campaigns, each paragraph begins with “I did this” or “I did that,” the classical approach of the autobiographer. Even more remarkable is an autobiographical inscription from a Hittite king, Hatusilis, who felt called on in about 1275 b.c. to provide a justification for his accession to the throne. He felt, almost uniquely among ancient and indeed more-recent rulers, that having obtained power to the disadvantage of other members of his own family, he had to provide a moral and legal justification for what he had done. So we have this rather strange spectacle of an ancient Hittite king saying in effect, “Well, I had to do this. It’s true he was my brother . . .”

Another example is Tiglat Pileser, the Assyrian king who, writing about 1115 b.c., produced another of the classical types of first-person narrative; describing the innumerable countries he had conquered, cities he had devastated, and peoples he had killed or enslaved, thereby building up great glory for himself. Darius, the king of Persia, gives us another type in his Behistun inscription of about 520 b.c. that begins with his pedigree: his father, his grandfather, his ancestors.

When we pass from these and other for the most part now extinct Middle Eastern societies to that of the Jews, we have a somewhat different situation. In the Hebrew Bible, normally only God speaks in the first person. Normally, but not exclusively; there are exceptions. The Book of Deuteronomy, for example, is for the most part first-person narrative by Moses, or at least is presented as such, although it is hardly autobiographical. There are first-person passages in some of the Prophets and a genuine autobiography in the Book of Nehemiah, a personal statement of personal history probably unique in the ancient world. Another Jewish example is the autobiography of Josephus, written or at least surviving in Greek, in which he justifies his own rather questionable activities. M. Vidal Nacquet, the French classicist, described this as a manual of correct behavior in treason. Josephus gives us a perhaps classical example (classical because it was in Greek) of the self-justificatory memoir, explaining his life because it was necessary to answer a whole series of charges and accusations brought against him.

One interesting feature of Josephus's autobiography is that he begins with his pedigree. Apart from Darius, this is almost unique in antiquity. As far as I know, no other Greek or Latin author does so, and there are quite a number of autobiographical writings in Latin and Greek. Josephus begins with his ancestry, explaining that among the Jews, unlike other people, nobility is measured by priesthood, and he goes on to develop this theme at length. This practice of beginning with a pedigree became standard in Islamic times.

Of all the pre-Islamic societies that flourished in the Middle East, the one with the most recent and direct influence on early Islam was of course that of Iran. Unfortunately, we do not know a great deal about the literature of Iran in the period immediately preceding the advent of Islam, that is, in the Sasanid period, but we do have some information, including three documents that purport to be autobiographical and that survive in Arabic. One of them, ascribed to the Sasanid emperor Khusraw Anushirvan and preserved by Ibn Miskawayh, sets forth certain guiding principles that Khusraw as a king found it expedient to tollow. This text is a mirror for princes, of a type common in Islamic literature, but is projected back into a pre-Islamic past and presented in the first person in the name of Khusraw; it is obviously not to be taken seriously as autobiography. Somewhat more autobiographical is a letter of advice from another Sasanid, Khusru Parviz, to his son Shiroye. This does make some personal statements and may in part be authentic.

Much more important than either of these is the brief autobiography of Burzoye, a Persian physician who was sent to India, knew Indian languages, and translated from Sanskrit the collection of animal fables that later came to be known as Kalila wa-Dimna. The introduction to his autobiography states that the king gave orders to set down the history of this man from the day of his birth, including his education, his studies, his travels, “until his heart was filled with all kinds of wisdom and knowledge.” As we shall see, this short autobiography became the model for a vast number of autobiographical writings— fragments rather than autobiographies—by men of learning.

Having set the scene, I come to the heart of my presentation, namely, the Islamic period. For convenience of rapid treatment and at the cost of some inevitable oversimplification, we may divide first-person writings into certain major classes, the first of which I would designate by the Arabic term fakhr, the boast. Perhaps the earliest Arabic autobiography is the Mu[c]allaqa of Imr al-Qays, and to a lesser extent some of the other “hanging odes” of ancient Arabia. These are often lengthy first-person statements describing deeds done. Quite a number of other fragments survive from ancient Arabia; the stories of the Ayyam al-[c]Arab, and other ancient poems are often markedly autobiographical.

This kind of personal statement of deeds done finds expression in an impressive number of royal memoirs, written personally by rulers or under their immediate direction. A fascinating example comes from the far west of Islam. ‘Abdallah Ibn Buluggin, of the Zirid dynasty of Arabized Berbers who lived in the eleventh century, wrote a book-length account of life at court during his father’s and his own lifetimes. A still better known autobiography is that of Usama ibn Munqidh, a local ruler in northern Syria in the twelfth century, who wrote what is probably the most informative single book in Arabic about what life was like in Syria at the time of the Crusades and what kind of human relationships existed between Muslims and Crusaders.

Such writings appear more frequently in the Persian than in the Arab or Turkish world. There are the pseudomemoirs of Timur, the genuine memoirs of Babar and of Tahmasp, and the still later first-person narratives of Nasir al-Din Shah. In contrast, the Ottoman sultans do not seem to have gone in for this kind of writing. They preferred to express themselves artistically by writing verse rather than memoirs. All the Ottoman sultans without exception composed poetry, and some of them were even poets.

Associated with the royal memoir is a rather special genre: the autobiographical biography, a book written by someone who is primarily a literary figure, who is closely associated with the ruler, and who writes a book that is at the same time a biography of the ruler and an autobiography of the writer, the two stories being commingled in order to show, among other things, the intimate position of the writer with the ruler. The best example of this genre is Tmad al-Din's book about his life with Saladin. If he had been modern, he might have called it "My Life with Saladin" or "Saladin and I"; he actually called it al-Barq al-Shami. Displaying at times an almost epic quality, it is a remarkably informative document about Saladin and also about 'Imad al-Din. About the same time, [c]Umara al-ramani, a courtier of the last Fatimid rulers of Egypt, a minor poet and a man of letters, wrote an autobiographical work that is also of considerable interest.

The first category of first-person narrative consists, then, of "things that I did." The second category might be defined as "places I went to and things I saw." In the Middle East, there is an extensive travel literature, arising from many different kinds of travel. Medieval Islamic society enjoyed a far greater degree of voluntary, personal mobility than did any other known premodern society. Men, and sometimes women, traveled; they planned, organized, and conducted long journeys.

The main impetus, of course, was the Muslim pilgrimage, which requires every Muslim once in a lifetime, whether living in Morocco, in Java, in Central Asia, in Central Africa, to go to the Hijaz, visit the holy places, and join with other Muslims in certain rites. An elaborate system of arrangements all over the Muslim world facilitated the pilgrimage. There were roads, relay stations, and other services, and we know of a large number of individual travelers.

The pilgrimage became associated with other forms of travel, notably travel for trade and travel for study. Scholars went to study under different teachers: “Seek for learning even in China,” says a hadith. This is not meant in any sense to be derogatory to China; it simply means that even if you have to go that far, still go. This whole category of writings is devoted to “journeys I made, places I visited, teachers at whose feet I sat, whose courses I attended, whose lectures I noted down,” and the like. People collected shaykhs, and books that are “shaykhs under whom I studied” form a recognized genre, the mashyakha.

There were also diplomatic envoys who, exceptionally, had interesting things to say. There were captives who managed to get themselves ransomed and returned home. And, in more modern times, there were students who went abroad and came back with often very strange stories.

One of the earliest of these travelers was an Arab called Harun ibn Yahya, who was taken prisoner and sent first to Constantinople and then to Rome in about 886. He wrote a brief description of Rome and Western Europe that was preserved by a later geographer. Others, including such famous figures as Ibn Battuta (whose descriptions of the world are at least in part written in the first person), recounted personal adventures and experiences, personal contacts and relationships, conversations with other people, and personal reactions to the strange and wonderful things that they found.

In the Ottoman period we have accounts of India, such as that of the admiral Sidi Ali Reis, who went to India in the late sixteenth century. We have a number of Ottoman ambassadors to Europe, to Iran, to Central Asia, to India, and we have the unique and incomparable Evliya Chelebi, who died in 1684 and wrote of a whole series of adventures. Unfortunately one of the problems with Evliya Chelebi is his credibility. To call him a liar, as some have done, is an injustice; he makes it quite clear in the introduction to his book that his purpose is to entertain rather than to instruct. He is indeed one of the few authors who tells us why he is writing the book and what he is trying to accomplish. There is undoubtedly a great deal of personal information in his work. His account of Vienna, where he went as a member of the entourage of an Ottoman ambassador, is particularly interesting. He seems to have spent

some time in the city, and the responses of an Ottoman gentleman to imperial Vienna in the seventeenth century make a remarkable document.

In the nineteenth century, the literature of travel acquired a new dimension with the process of European discovery and the growing number of students, then diplomatic envoys, and then political exiles who visited the lands beyond Islam. To these three major groups, we may add royal visitors.

If the first two categories are “what I did” and “what I saw,” the third, more interesting in many ways, is concerned with “what I thought.” These latter works are rarely book length. Most are short statements by scientists and philosophers, apparently written for inclusion in some larger biographical work. Reference has already been made to the existence in Arabic and later, to a much lesser extent, in Persian and Turkish of vast biographical dictionaries. Scholars were obviously concerned to have a proper and correct entry in these medieval versions of Who’s Who, and some of them took care to provide an outline. Thus when Ibn Abi Usaybi[c]a compiled his famous biographical dictionary of physicians, many of the physicians in his book provided their own biographies directly. Quite a number of remarkable personal statements by medieval physicians are included in this and other biographical dictionaries, and some entries are preserved from earlier periods. From as early as 873, we have a kind of memoir by Hunayn ibn Ishaq, a translator, who talks about his work, his rivals, and his critics; a memoir by the great physician Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi, who died in 925; and another by an Egyptian physician called Ibn Ridwan, who tells the heartbreaking story of his impoverished childhood and hard times, his inability to study properly because he had no money, and his success in completing his studies all the same: an intensely personal statement also offered as a moral lesson for others.

Not only the scientists and philosophers wrote in this manner, but also others with a more specifically religious purpose, and notably the Sufis. Muhasibi (d. 857) is an example. Hallaj left some autobiographical fragments. These writers want to tell us of their mystical experiences, for our enlightenment and for our guidance. Surely the outstanding and classical example of the religious autobiography in Islamic literature is Ghazali’s (d. mi) Saviour from Error. In it he tells of his struggle to achieve a true

understanding of the world, the universe, and the predicament of humankind. He speaks of trying the way of the philosopher, the way of the theologian, and finding that each one was unsatisfactory. He finally found the true way, that of the mystic, and through that, with some changes, he managed to achieve the understanding that he sought. Among scholars, this introspection takes the different forms of autobibliography and what might be called autohagiography; an outstanding example of the latter is Sha[c]rani (d. 1565).

One religious autobiography is of particular interest, that by an Ismaili da[<]'i, or propagandist, who worked in Iraq in the interest of the Fatimid caliph. He was a propaganda agent of subversion and influence in the territories ruled by the Buyids and eventually was recalled to headquarters in Cairo where, if I may translate it into modern language, he became first a high official in the ministry of propaganda and then minister of propaganda—the head of the Da[c]wa, or da[l]i al-du’-at. His narrative, one of the very rare book-length autobiographies, is a curious mixture of personal statement, religious testimony, and career intrigue. It consists of debates that he had with other people, speeches that he made, sermons that he delivered, letters that he wrote, and actions that he took—demonstrating how clever he was in various tricky diplomatic situations. In the last part, when he is in Cairo and working in the Fatimid government, he tells of his disagreements with other people and describes how this one and that one were treacherous and dishonest, or stupid and vicious, and how he got things right and was therefore deserving of credit and attention. This is the most modern of these books, an early prototype of the present-day memoir that consists of speeches, letters, debates and experiences, accusations against one’s rivals, and above all self-justification.

I spoke a moment ago of the autobibliography. These became more and more common as the biographical dictionaries became larger, more capacious, more copious, and more numerous. Roughly from the thirteenth century onward, there were great numbers of short autobiographies and short memoirs— half a page, a page, rarely much more—that were someone’s draft for his own Who’s Who entry. More often than not, such entries were provided to disciples who then included them in their books. These disciples and compilers also offered selfportraits. The

biographical dictionaries were normally arranged chronologically by years of death, and the individual entries were therefore not, so to speak, published until after the subject’s death. But some compilers arranged their entries by the centuries in which they flourished and therefore felt able to include themselves in their own biographical dictionaries. Sometimes they spoke of themselves in the third person, a practice shared with such distinguished figures as Julius Caesar and

Charles de Gaulle; at other times, they wrote in the first person. Some of these accounts are mixed, as for example that of the famous Ibn Tulun of Syria; he begins his autobiography in the third person and halfway through switches to the first person.

An outstanding book that combines many of these different features is the autobiography of the great Ibn Khaldun. This is not strictly speaking a book but part of a book, a book-length component in his vast universal history. In this he talks of his ancestry, his education, the shaykhs under whom he studied, his travels, his writings, his career, and his scholarship. It is certainly the most comprehensive and, as one would expect from Ibn Khaldun, intellectually the most interesting and the most satisfying.

A distinct group consists of autobiographies by those who lived in some sense on the margins of Islamic society, for example, the dhimmis, non-Muslims living within the Muslim community who, for one reason or another, wrote memoirs or statements about themselves. Two Jewish figures are credited with probably apocryphal autobiographies, Eldad Hadani and David Reubeni; an interesting eighteenth-century figure from Jerusalem, Azulay, produced a real autobiography. Among Christians, there were several memoir writers in the nineteenth century, including Mikha’il Mishaqqa, Rustum Baz, and Aru- tin.

Some of these non-Muslims were converts to Islam. The Jew known as Samuel al-Maghribi was converted in 1163 and wrote a refutation of Judaism called Ifham al-Yahud, to which he appended a brief statement about himself and his family, explaining that he had postponed his conversion because he did not want to distress his father.

Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq wrote extensive memoirs; an experienced convert, he became a Protestant first and then a Muslim.

A special genre consists of solicited memoirs, those written on request, usually of someone European, someone from outside the Islamic world. Some of these documents are interesting personal statements, in part because of the circumstances that brought them into existence. The Yemeni Jew Hayyim Bab- shush, for example, who escorted Halevy in his travels in the Yemen, was asked twenty years later by Edward Glaser to write memoirs of himself and Halevy. Habshush wrote a kind of autobiographical cum biographical travel book, a kind of al-Barq al-Shami on a small scale. There was an Egyptian shaykh called Tantawi who somehow found his way to Russia where he died in 1861, but not before becoming one of the founders of the Russian School of Arabic Studies. Tantawi was asked by a Russian Orientalist of the time to write an autobiography, which he obligingly did. There was the Ottoman interpreter known as Miitercim Osman, a native of Temesvar, at that time an Ottoman city, who was in the service of the Pasha of Temesvar. Osman knew several languages, as apparently did everybody in Temesvar. He spoke Serbian and Hungarian as well as Turkish; after his capture by the Austrians in war, he spent eleven years in captivity during which he mastered German. He was then ransomed or exchanged and went home and got an excellent job as chief interpreter to the Pasha of Temesvar. He wrote two volumes of memoirs, fascinating books about the Turko- Austrian wars in and around Hungary. What is still more interesting is that each of these volumes survives only in a single manuscript, one in Vienna, the other at the British Museum, and that the work is totally unknown to Ottoman historiography or literature.

In the nineteenth century, again, a number of people wrote memoirs to order: Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, for example, who was asked to write in French; As'ad Khayat, who wrote in English; and a rather curious person known as Mme. Veuve Ki- brisli Mehmet Pasha, the widow of Kibrisli Mehmet Pasha, whose book, written or at least published in English in 1872, contains the remarkable memoirs of an Ottoman lady.

What sort of pattern, if any, emerges from this kind of first- person writing, memoirs, autobiographical fragments, and the like, of which I have selected

merely the high points? Certain things are almost standard. These writers begin with ancestry, although in Greco-Roman antiquity only Josephus does so. In Islamic autobiographical writing, this opening is practically universal and includes as many generations as possible. In extreme cases people will go back to Adam, but certainly as far back as ancient Arabia. They say where they were born, though not necessarily when they were born. (There seems to be a certain vanity that inhibits some of our memoirists from giving the date of their birth.) The place of birth is important, and some words of praise for the beauties of the place are often included, perhaps the citation of a well-known hadith, Hubb al-watan min al-iman, love of one's birthplace is part of the faith, and the like. Then, particularly among the scholarly autobiographies, education and travels follow, forming a kind of curriculum vitae. This section may include "the books I have read and the books I have written," and if the autobiography or fragment is a religious one, then of course the religious experience. The length varies enormously. Relatively few are separate books or even long enough to form separate books. The great majority are brief, running from a few lines to a few pages, and obviously written for inclusion in some larger book, either one's own or someone else's.

Finally, why? What are the purposes of these writings? Here again, at the risk of oversimplifying, I would put them in three main categories: to serve oneself, to serve others, and to serve posterity. To serve oneself covers, of course, the numerous apologia written to justify what one has already done or to facilitate what one hopes to do next. The two purposes are often linked. To serve others refers in particular to the religious works. There is no doubt about the religious sincerity of Ghazali or of Avicenna in writing for the intellectual guidance of their readers. And posterity is the intended audience of those who are concerned about their place in history, an important concern in Sunni Islam where, by the very nature of Sunni beliefs, the sense of history is strongly developed.

In the course of the nineteenth century, unnei the influence of European models, many memoirs of one kind or another were added. In the twentieth century, they have become an unstoppable torrent.

** 2. Traditional Islamic Learning and Ideas of the Person in the Twentieth Century

Dale F. Eickelman

Accounts of Muslim men of learning ^ulama-, sing. [c]alim) in the “premodern” era, an epoch that, like mythical time, possesses no distinct temporal markers, suggest that they were oversocialized to a narrow set of public roles and constrained by the “strict observance of traditionally established behavior patterns.”[7] A presumed consequence of tradition is that men of learning, imbued with central cultural and social roles in premodern Muslim societies, lacked the disposition and opportunity to sustain these roles in the modern world and thus have become the equivalent of an endangered species. This essay argues that the discontinuity between past men of learning and those of the present is primarily an artifact of “ulamology,” to use L. Carl Brown’s deliberate neologism. The religious traditions sustained by ulama and the response of these customs to changing political and economic circumstances have been more flexible than the self-image sustained by men of learning themselves.

The capacity of traditionally educated religious intellectuals to play decisive contemporary roles is evident in postrevolutionary Iran, where Ayatollah Khomeini rivaled Ronald Reagan as a “great communicator” by using the mass media and Friday sermons in innovative ways to influence a large and diverse audience, an impact sustained by his clerical successors. Men of learning also remain politically significant in the Arab Middle East.[8] Far from fading away in colonial North Africa, men of learning adapted to radically altered circumstances, although not as a bloc. Ulama in French Algeria were innovators and conservatives, liberals and reactionaries. Some withdrew from participation in colonial institutions, others opposed them, and still others saw certain colonial reforms as offering the possibility for revitalizing the Muslim community.[9] In Morocco, the cooperation of judges, advisors, and administrators was vital in establishing and maintaining colonial rule. After independence in 1956, Moroccan ulama remained an important

component of the elite, and their support of the monarchy is important still in maintaining popular political legitimacy. This is also true elsewhere in the Muslim world.[10]

*** Self-Images of Men of Learning: Morocco and Oman

The principal vehicle for self-representation of men of learning is the tarjama, which in Arabic can mean both biography and autobiography. The term dates from at least the tenth century.[11] Using accounts drawn from opposite ends of the Arab world, Morocco and Oman, I argue that tarjamas, often neglected because of their highly stylized and seemingly inflexible features, serve as an index of changes in self-representation with the important qualification that tarjamas cannot be considered independently of the social contexts for which they are produced. In both Morocco and Oman, I am concerned with persons in regional settings rather than those at the highest levels of political authority.

Islam is a literate and complex civilization, but until recently the vast majority of Muslims has lacked direct access to the written word. In Morocco over 90 percent of the population was illiterate through the 1950s; in Oman this was the case through the 1970s. Since then, significant strides have been made in educating the school-age population in both societies, although literacy rates for the adult population remain low. In both countries, literacy has been primarily associated with religious learning, but this has begun to change: state schooling now affords more prestige to diplomas in other fields. Nonetheless, the popular link between literacy and religious status remains strong. Although a reputation for religious learning does not guarantee high social status, it usually implies wealth, leadership, and distinguished descent.[12]

*** Individual and Person

The distinction between “individual” and “person” is useful in discerning how traditional Muslim religious scholars represent their social roles. “Individual” refers to the mortal human being, the object of observation and self-

reflection. Thus individuals can wield considerable power and still not be recognized as playing a significant or legitimate social role. “Person” refers to the cultural concepts that lend social significance to the individual. Personhood can be regarded as a status that “varies according to social criteria which contain the capacities of the individual within defined roles and categories.”[13] The notion of “person,” to paraphrase Jean La Fontaine, is society’s confirmation that an individual’s identity has social significance.

The roles and categories of the person are defined by society. As Marcel Mauss reminds us, persona in ancient Rome was literally a person’s social mask, a locus of general rights and duties. In clan-based societies, such as ancient Rome, the role of the person was to act out “the prefigured totality of the life of the clan,” allowing very little room for individuality.[14] Mauss’s distinction between individual—he used the term “self”—and person contains an evolutionary assumption: the rise of Christianity saw the emergence of the “moral person,” a growing fusion between the person in the sense of social roles and masks and the self as a conscious, metaphysical entity. He argues that other societies, including such “ancient” (and in his view static) civilizations as India and China, possessed fixed categories of person that ceased to evolve.[15]

Orientalist scholars attributed to Muslim societies a similar fixed nature, of which one component was men of learning with less autonomy and personal responsibility than their counterparts in Western societies. Yet, from the beginning of Islam in seventh-century Arabia, Muslim doctrine has stressed personal responsibility and autonomy. The Qur’anic vision of personGod relations is devoid of intermediaries, although many seventh-century sources depict a tension between Qur’anic notions of person and other ones. The historian al-Tabari (d. 923), for example, relates that a member of the B. Rabi'a tribal confederation posed several questions to Musaylima bin Habib, a B. Rabi'a rival of Muhammad. After questioning Musaylima, the tribesman concluded “that Muhammad is telling the truth. But a liar of the Rabi[c]a is better for us than a true prophet of the Mudar.” (A more skeptical version of the same account is, “A liar of the Rabi[c]a is better than a liar of the Mudar.”)[16] In both versions, loyalty to the collectivity takes precedence over the obligation of the individual to God. We shall return to the issue of the coexistence of competing notions of person and individual and to situations in which only some individuals can realize a full sense of person.

The emergence of the self as an explicit subject in biographies and autobiographies has been an important element of Western social thought since the eighteenth century. Indeed, the idea of the self, a conscious and self-reflexive “me” or “I” possessing individuality and an “inner” life, is so integral to modern European thought that it is considered a natural part of the social landscape.

*** Tar jamas

A tarjama is generally written in the third person, even if autobiographical, suggesting a distancing from self, an appeal to set standards and understandings. The components include a genealogy, an account of formal education and Qur’anic memorization, a list of teachers (often including close relatives, which indicates family support for religious learning), the books and subjects studied, and selections from the subject’s poetry, aphorisms, or other contributions to learning. Dates are provided whenever possible, since the ability to date events distinguishes the traditionally educated from the unlearned.

Tarjamas purport to represent words and deeds reliably and with credible witnesses. Quotation marks are not used, and the stylistic tag, “he said to him” {qal lu), does not clearly distinguish between speech and paraphrase. The tarjama records the evidence of a person’s character and actions; it contains no speculation concerning “inner” self or motive other than anecdotes that demonstrate piety and devotion to Qur’anic studies.

These accounts record the persona of men of learning, the actions and attributes that legitimate their piety and scholarly authority. Other activities, no matter how significant for understanding the role of the individual, are not part of the reported scholarly persona. Marriages are not mentioned, and women are mentioned only when they encourage Qur’anic memorization and recital. In most instances, the family contexts in which early learning occurs cannot be directly ascertained from a tarjama unless the father or other relatives play a direct role in Qur’anic education.[17] Likewise, peer learning,

a crucial element in understanding traditional education, is passed over in silence. The same is true for many political activities. Men of learning may be landlords, politicians, and shrewd entrepreneurs, but these activities are outside the scope of the tarjama, which concentrates on those elements of personhood that link individuals with the sacred center of society, as viewed in religious terms.

There have always been alternative forms of biography and self-representation, ranging from rhe life of the Prophet (sirat) and the chronicles of caliphs and rulers to the lives and miracles of saints, pilgrimage accounts, and, since at least the early nineteenth century, memoirs influenced by the Western genre. The third-person representation of Taha Husayn's autobiographical The Stream of Days, sometimes assumed to be a realistic image of an Egyptian childhood and mosque-school education, is influenced by European literary forms, as is Algerian Malek Ben- nabi's Memoires d'un temoih du siecle.[18] The Moroccan Allal al-Fasi (d. 1974), a popular lecturer at the Qarawiyin mosqueuniversity in Fez in the early 1930s and subsequently a key leader in the nationalist movement, spoke only Arabic, yet the style of his autobiographical writings suggests the influence of forms beyond those of the Qarawiyin.[19]

Tarjamas represent religious scholars to specific, known audiences. Indeed, for a younger generation with a "modern" education, the term tarjama and the form of religious authority it represents often go unrecognized.[20] Until the availability of printing in the nineteenth century for Morocco and the 1970s for the Omani interior, tarjamas circulated only in manuscript form; access to them depended on networks of ulama. Even after the introduction of printing, tarjamas continued to circulate in this form. The compilation of Mukhtar al-Susi cited above circulated for at least two decades prior to its publication in 1961; in Oman several compilations continue to circulate only as manuscripts.

There are several points of resemblance between tarjamas in Oman and Morocco. In both tarjama traditions, genealogies link men of learning with their distinguished ancestors, and the enumeration of scholars under whom the subjects studied does the same for their claims to scholarly authority.

Selections from the subjects’ sayings and actions exemplify character, lists of distinguished students represent their continued authority, and the sayings of associates who admire them enhance authority.

Tarjamas are not ordered by a chronological sequence of events, although genealogical descent and the details of early studies usually come first. Anecdotes intended to show character do not distinguish between youth or maturity. Because the personas of men of learning are linked to fixed qualities, sequence and chronology become peripheral. Indeed, the material chosen for the tarjamas analyzed here suggests that the primary audience is contemporary and not an abstract, generalized audience of future generations.

**** The Maghrib

In Morocco as in Oman, it is difficult to separate a tarjama from its intended audience. A tarjama is almost always prepared in response to a specific request, often for inclusion in one of the compilations that reveal complex, mutually supportive networks of patronage among men of learning. Mukhtar as-Susi’s al-Ma[c]sul portrays judges, court functionaries, teachers, and others with claims to learning as regularly offering hospitality and gifts to writers of such compendia, to poets, and to others who could enhance their reputations.

The three Moroccan tar jamas discussed here indicate significant situational differences, although they share the problem of reconciling Muslim identity with participation in colonial rule. The ulama discussed in two of these tarjamas are brothers, Ahmad Mansuri (1895-1975) and Abd al-Rahman Mansuri (b. 1912), from Bzu, a Berber village not far from Marrakesh. The third tarjama is by a former chief judge of Tangier, Ahmad bin Abd al-Salam al-Bu Ayyashi (1910-83).[21]

The Mansuri brothers’ tar jamas lack specific genealogies; neither brother goes further back than their paternal grandfather. In the late nineteenth century, their father, Mansur bin Ahmad (d. 1946), fled from a village in the

High Atlas Mountains because an intertribal dispute threatened his life. He settled in Bzu and attained a quasimaraboutic status among local tribespeople. He was a notary, a devout member of the Kitta- niya religious order, and by the early twentieth century a minor landowner. 'Abd al-Rahman relates various popular accounts of his father’s piety and the efforts of some genealogical “specialists” who approached the brothers in the 1930s, when their reputations as notables were secure, with “evidence” of their descent from the Prophet Muhammad. None of this information appears in the tarjamas, although the tarjamas of other scholars characteristically make such claims. Not doing so was a means of indicating participation in the reform movements of the early twentieth century. Both brothers emphasize their credentials as men of learning over status based on descent.

**** Ahmad Mansuri

Ahmad Mansuri’s tarjama describes his schooling (from 1913 to 1919). He names his teachers, specifies where he studied (a tent school in a hamlet near Bzu and the Yusufiya mosque-university in Marrakesh), and cites the texts memorized or commented on. He mentions his brief teaching career in Bzu, but not his financial support for students from the Bzu region to continue their religious studies at the Yusufiya.

In 1919 the French native affairs officer for the Bzu region asked Ahmad to assist in the “pacification” of the Ait 'Tab, a large tribe in an adjacent region. Ahmad also assisted in establishing the region’s first agricultural tax (tartib). His tarjama records these facets of his career, commenting only that he cooperated with the French to avoid unnecessary bloodshed. He omits the protectorate’s award of a medal for bravery, the Ouis- sam al-Harb.

French authorities again requested Ahmad’s assistance in 1925 in Azilal, a nearby regional center. When he returned to Bzu at the end of the year, he was appointed qadi, a post he held until 1953 when he was removed for his refusal to recognize the French deposition and exile of Sultan Muhammad V. Ahmad’s tarjama records that a French native affairs officer, who had known him from earlier years, intervened to prevent confiscation of

his property and a prison sentence, the fate of other notables who opposed the deposition. In the tumultuous years tollowing independence in 1956, Ahmad briefly served as both qadi (in 1956 and 1957) and district officer, or qa’id (1956). Later he was appointed to the prestigious Constitutional Council (1 960) and won election to Morocco’s first parliament (1963).

Qadi Ahmad’s correct relations with French authorities, although by no means deferential or obsequious, figure in his tarjama. Cooperation is justified in the “heroic” years of colonial “penetration” as a matter of avoiding greater collective harm; thereafter it is noted as an activity that the French obliged him to do, and he is thus freed of personal responsibility.

Abd al-Rahman Mansur 1

The tarjama of Abd al-Rahman, Qadi Ahmad’s younger brother, places emphasis on his education rather than on his judicial career. He memorized the Qur’an (completed “when he was aged twelve to fifteen”) and studied at tent schools near Bzu and Azilal, where, like his elder brother, he first learned Arabic. He studied in Azilal in 1925 when his brother was there assisting the French. The tarjama records Ahmad’s presence in Azilal as a clerk (katib).

Abd al-Rah man’s tar jama ends in April 1935, when he was compelled to break off his studies and return to Bzu to serve as his brother’s deputy in order to prevent the unpaid post from going to an outsider. A separate diary, kept intermittently from his return to Bzu until his 1957 appointment as qadi in Boujad, provides a record of events after 1935. (Some parts of the diary were destroyed to avoid arrest in the final years of the French protectorate.) The diary records marriages, property titles related to the Mansuri brothers, lists of wedding guests, the visits of notables and men of learning to Bzu, the prices and availability of foodstuffs and commodities during the 1940s, droughts, epidemics, French regulations and exactions, and the Allied invasion.

The events in the diary, unlike events recorded in the tarjama, were outside Abd al-Rahman’s public persona as a man of learning. Even the act of recording was problematic. As he explained, such things were best passed by word of mouth among trusted confidants, through chains of known, reliable witnesses, and written about only in obscure language to avoid political complications; for politics, oral sources were more reliable than written ones, and the oral tradition shared by men of learning provides the background necessary to understand the significance of such events.

**** A Nationalist Judge

Ahmad al-Bu Ayyashi’s tarjama shows a developed awareness of alternative literary forms. He published, at his own expense, a history of Abd al-Krim al-Khattabi’s Rifian revolt (1923—27) and a play, never performed, on the nationalist struggle. Bu Ayyashi’s father was tribal leader of the Bani Waryajil until his death in 1946 and minister of defense in Abd al- Krim al-Khattabi’s Rifian Republic.

The genealogical section of Bu Ayyashi’s tarjama begins with a discussion of the proper name in Arabic for the Bani Waryajil (Ait Waryaghar in Rifian Berber), and he opts for Arabic on the grounds that the tribe was an “early” adherent to Islam. He traces his descent from Musa bin Haddu, a twelfth-century marabout from the Bani Ayyash, the subgroup that provided leadership for the Bani Waryajil for several centuries. Because Bu Ayyashi emphasizes the Bani Ayyash’s role in the struggle against colonial rule, his genealogy cites his twelfth-century maraboutic ancestor and skips directly to his paternal grandfather (d. 1900 or 1901), ruler (hakim) of the tribe, a pious man who applied much of his “vast” wealth to rearm his tribe for resistance to Spanish rule. Bu Ayyashi then discusses his father’s role in the Rifian Republic.

Bu Ayyashi’s account of his early studies is perfunctory. He includes his stay at the Qarawiyin mosque-university in Fez from 1929 to 1936 but mentions only teachers who became important in the nationalist movement, tutored Morocco’s present monarch, or became senior officials after independence. The subjects he studied are mentioned generally, and no specific texts are

cited. In 1936 he went on the pilgrimage as part of a quasi-official Moroccan delegation carrying a message from Sultan Muhammad V to Abd al-Aziz ibn Sa'ud. The delegation was led by one of Bu Ayyashi’s teachers, a former minister of justice in Morocco’s French zone, who was dismissed by the French in 1930 for opposing the “Berber decree” that restricted the application of Islamic law in Morocco’s Berber regions.

Bu Ayyashi’s tarjama is more elaborate in citing connections to persons in the nationalist movement than to those noted for their learning. As in Ahmad Mansuri’s case, he records as an event beyond his control his appointment by the Spanish as Bani Waryajil qadi. After the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, colonial authorities imprisoned Bu Ayyashi’s father as a guarantee for his tribe’s good conduct and his own return from Fez, as well as to forestall renewed anti-Spanish violence. Bu 'Ayyashi claims that his work as a qadi insulated him from collaboration. He describes his relationship to Spanish authorities as that of “old adversaries who have spent considerable time together.” In 1939, he became a member of the Council for Higher Education in Tetouan, capital of the former Spanish zone, and when the zone was incorporated into independent Morocco in early 1957, he served briefly as a regional administrator (qcfid mumtaz) in the ministry of the interior. He felt uncomfortable in an explicitly political role, however, and requested a transfer to the ministry of justice, where he served as a criminal court judge until his retirement in 1976.

Bu Ayyashi details his activities in the late 1940s and early 19 5 os, when the nationalist movement acquired popular momentum, as characterized by bureaucratic infighting with colonial authorities, internal disputes among pronationalist Bani Waryajil lineages and their opposition, and the difficulties of openly supporting the nationalist movement and functioning as qadi at the same time. In interviews, although not in the tarjama, he said that he reconciled these roles by speaking publicly in a way that could be read as nationalist by the nationalists but remained sufficiently ambiguous so that Spanish authorities could not document opposition to their authority. The tarjama provides extracts from these speeches.

**** Oman and the Ibadiyya

There are major differences in scale between Morocco and Oman. Oman’s current population is just over a million, of which some 20 percent are foreign workers, while Morocco’s population is over twenty-four million. Morocco’s most important economic transformations have occurred gradually since the early part of the century; for Oman the most crucial period has been occasioned by the intensified search for oil in the early 1950s, its discovery in commercial quantities in 1964, its export beginning in 1967, and the 1970 palace coup, which saw the application of oil revenues to education, security, and development projects. Moroccan Muslims are all Sunni and follow the Maliki legal school; Omanis are more diverse.

Oman’s pluralism offers a contrast to nonsectarian Morocco. Almost all Omani nationals are Muslim (although a handful of Hindu merchants with ties to the palace have been granted Omani citizenship), but there are important sectarian distinctions among the Muslim population. The Ibadiyya account for 40-45 percent of Oman’s citizen population and predominate in the mountainous northern interior of the country. From 1913 to 1955, the Ibadi tribes of the interior broke away from rule by the Al Bu Sa[c]id dynasty and were autonomously governed by an imam selected by men of learning and tribal leaders. Sunni Muslims form a majority on the coast and in the southern region of Dhufar, where they constitute 50—55 percent of the population. However, significant distinctions exist between the Sunni of the north and those of the south. Men of learning in the south form an almost hereditary stratum of society, as was the case for the Hadramawt region of southern Yemen, where Dhufar’s Sunni men of learning received their religious training until the 1960s when political turbulence severed this line of communication. Finally, the Shi'a, constituting less than 3 percent of Oman’s population, are concentrated in the large coastal cities, including Suhar and Muscat. Added to this complexity is the fact that religious divisions in the coastal regions are crosscut linguistically and ethnically, with Sindi, Baluch, and Persian being the principal non-Arabic languages of northern Oman.

Men of learning in each community are seldom in regular contact with their counterparts in other sectarian groups. Until the early 1960s the intellectual ties of Dhufar’s men of learning were with southern Yemen and not with their

northern Omani counterparts. A further contributing factor was that Oman's ruler until 1970, Sa[c]id bin Taymur, discouraged internal travel. The Sunni community in the north also looks outside of Oman. In Musandam Peninsula, the dominant lineage of the Kamali- yin has produced the leading religious scholars for generations. The post of qadi in Musandam's principal town, Khassab, has been held by a Kamali since at least the early part of this century, and other members of the lineage hold religious appointments in Kuwait and Abu Dhabi. The present qadi in Khassab, who succeeded his father in 1932., studied at a religious school on the Iranian island of Qeshem, located directly north of the Straits of Hormuz. Until the Iranian revolution, Qeshem and the mainland Iranian town of Lengeh were centers of learning for the Sunni (Shafi[c]i, to be precise), Arabic-speaking Muslims of the Gulf region, and they drew students from as far away as India. As of 1980 about seventy students remained there, most of the students leaving for Dubai after the outbreak of the Iran-

Iraq war. Elsewhere in coastal Oman, there is a similar external orientation among the Sunni community, at least for traditional religious studies. Family ties and links with centers of learning allow them considerable mobility but attenuate communication among different sectarian groups within Oman itself.

The same tendency toward autonomy prevails among Oman's Shi'a. One example is the religious leader of one of the coastal Arabic-speaking Shi[c]a communities. The son of a wealthy landowner (who, the son said, would have been called a "feudalist" had he been an Iraqi), this shaykh studied in Najaf, Iraq, from 1969 until 1973 under Shaykh Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (executed by the Iraqi government in 1980) and subsequently in Qum, where he remained until political disturbances forced him to break off his studies.[22] Well read and articulate, this shaykh nonetheless indicated little direct knowledge of religious leaders in other sectarian groups except for those in his immediate locale.

Only Ibadi networks of learning are centered on Oman itself. Although there are Ibadi communities elsewhere in the world, the Ibadi of Oman have, for all practical purposes, been isolated from them. Prior to 1970, regular links were

maintained only with the Ibadiyya of East Africa, most of whom are of Omani origin.

Until the 1960s, literacy in the Omani interior implied religious learning and was widely respected, although its practical use as a means to economic or social advancement was limited. In principle, Qur'anic and higher education was open to all, but in practice, regular participation was difficult without the support of relatives already familiar with the world of learning. Acquiring a reputation as a man of learning entailed sponsor-

ship, and rhetorical skills could not be derived solely from the study of religious texts. Thus, scholars who were part of the tribal oligarchy or sponsored by it had a competitive advantage. Leading shaykhs conducted lesson circles, visited, challenged one another in poetry and aphorisms, and circulated manuscripts among themselves (and because manuscripts were copied by hand, considerable time and expense were involved in obtaining and commissioning copies; thus access was controlled and restricted). Reading was not an anonymous, solitary act, since religious manuscripts were usually read and commented on in small gatherings of men of learning.

Hamra' al-[c]Abriyin, a tribal capital of the interior (not far from the old imamate capital of Nizwa), provides an example of the uses of literacy in the pre-19 70 Omani interior. In the 1940s, the town had a population of 1,200. Of this number, one scholar possessed a country-wide reputation for learning. About thirty other individuals, most of them members of the shaykhly lineage that provided the tribal leadership, also possessed high levels of literacy. Yet no more than five of the thirty knew the conventions of Islamic law pertaining to inheritance, land transactions, and marriage well enough to prepare appropriate documents. Another fifty townspeople were able to read and write, in addition to being able to recite the Qur'an. Except for the Qur'an, a few standard religious texts, and the manuscripts that passed among the leading men of learning, virtually no books were available.

As in Morocco, a reputation as a man of learning was achieved primarily by word of mouth, since the small scale of society limited the scope for what had to be said in writing. No men of learning in the nineteenth- or twentieth-

century Omani interior possessed formal written credentials, such as the ijazas that were common in Morocco and other parts of the Muslim world. In the small-scale society of the imamate, the number of men of learning was in the hundreds, and far fewer if only the upper ranks are considered.

The form taken by contemporary Lbadi tarjamas is indicated by a manuscript by Shaykh Ibrahim Sa'id al-Abri (d. 1975) on the history of the Abriyin tribe, prepared at the request of a leading man of learning of the interior who sought similar accounts from the learned men of other tribes.[23] Shaykh Ibrahim, like his counterparts elsewhere in the northern interior, was both a religious scholar and a man of action. He claims to have been responsible for persuading Muhammad ibn Abd Allah al- Khalili to accept leadership as imam in 1920, a title he held until his death in 1954. For a number of years, Shaykh Ibrahim was both qadi and tribal leader of the Abriyin, as well as a counselor of the imam. He also found time to teach almost daily. After 1937 he became qadi for the sultan, dividing his time between the sultanate and the imamate. After the 1970 coup that brought the son of the former ruler to power, Shaykh Ibrahim became Oman’s first mufti, or official interpreter of Islamic jurisprudence.

Shaykh Ibrahim’s manuscript spans four-hundred years of tribal history. The older sections are largely taken from earlier treatises, but Shaykn Ibrahim is clearly responsible for much of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century material. The account sometimes incorporates letters and other documents, which are not always ordered by chronology. The mention of a place associated with an early tribal migration prompts the inclusion of a famous poem recited there in his youth (e.g., p. 12), and a request that Shaykh Ibrahim write a tarjama of the father of a man of learning occasions Ibrahim’s spirited refutation (using “I” for the only time in the manuscript) of charges that he defied the authority of the imam during a tribal dispute of the 1930s (pp. 111-33).

Genealogical links in a small-scale society like the Omani interior were public and widely known, so there was much less latitude in this region as compared to Morocco for reinventing the past. Men of learning were aware of the complex links of descent and alliance both within and between tribes.

Ordinary tribespeople, although generally unable to express these links in great detail, knew their general outlines. These matters were decidedly important for tarjamas. Although men of learning were expected to rise above tribal loyalties in the service of the imam (for the pre-195 5 period), in practice they acted on behalf of their tribes or were suspected of doing so. Accusations by Shaykh Ibrahim's detractors that he defied the imam, mentioned above, suggest the tensions inherent in the two roles.

Shaykh Ibrahim also includes the tarjama of his teacher and close relative, Shaykh Majid bin Khamis (d. ioz8). Maiid's early Qur'anic studies are mentioned in detail, as is his support for the nineteenth-century imamate of Azzan ibn Qays (186871), during which he was appointed governor of the neighboring town of Bahia. This appointment involved him in organizing and directing tribal levies. Historical elements in Shaykh Majid's tarjama are interspersed with vignettes of personality and deeds—the construction of mosques, poetry, a list of scholars who studied under him, and his views on such topics as graveside Qur'anic readings, the sale of pious foundation land (tuaqf) to finance the imamate, innovations in almsgiving (zakat), and proper forms of prayer. The account at times verges on hagiography: Majid brought rain and reinvigorated the land wherever he went, divined water, healed a broken hand by touching it with the leaf from a tree in a region devoid of trees, and tamed a bull that had broken loose from its tether. Shaykh Ibrahim also records that "some say" that after Shaykh Majid's death there was a light and two green birds, "perhaps angels," over Shaykh Majid's grave (p. 182). Shaykh Majid's participation in the selection of the first two twentieth-century imams (1913 and 1920) is recorded, as is the blindness of his last years.

The other tarjamas incorporated into Shaykh Ibrahim's history contain many of the same elements, although they lack the hagiographic anecdotes. Ibadi tarjamas are more specifically grounded in political history than are their Moroccan counterparts, primarily because men of learning in Oman are closely identified with their tribes and, until the end of the imamate in 1955, acted politically on behalf of their tribes and the imam. And since the framework of political events is already known, Omani tarjamas focus on actions that favor the subject. Thus Shaykh Majid's tarjama recounts how in 1871, when he abandoned the cause of an imamate restoration just before its defeat, he opened the Qur'an and happened on a verse that indicated to

him that God willed him and his retainers to slip out of the Bahia fortress at night rather than to remain to defend it against a more powerful enemy (p. 138). The action described is manifest, the motivation divinely inspired and not the result of individual choice.

Shaykh Ibrahim avoids certain topics—Saudi efforts to subvert the tribal leaders and ulama of the interior in the early 1950s, attitudes toward incorporation into the rule of the sultanate beginning in 1955, and the 1957 rebellion against sultanate rule. In a brief passage, Shaykh Ibrahim dryly writes that “hearts changed,” and the Omani interior “all” went to the sultan: “There is no need for me to say what happened next” (p. 134). Indeed, if one is writing for an audience of contemporaries familiar with events and with what is not said, further elaboration is unnecessary.[24]

*** Conclusion

This essay shows the variation among Muslim societies in representing the lives of traditional men of learning. In spite of the common appeal to fixed and generalized elements, the representations in tarjamas differ according to social and political contexts and over time. Tarjamas are not a self-contained genre: they are intended for known audiences with access to additional, usually word-of-mouth, traditions complementing those of the tarjama.

It might be argued that there is a vast difference between the exemplars discussed here, drawn from the antipodes of the Arab Muslim world, and the persona of ulama contained, for example, in the biographical dictionaries of “classical” Islam, works that were intended presumably for a transregional network of men of learning. The tarjamas of such compendia should not be given a privileged position simply because their abstract and standardized nature make them appear more selfcontained. They merely point to the persona sustained in contexts significantly different from those of nineteenth- and twentieth-century men of learning or, for that matter, those of other times and places in the “premodern” period.

Tarjamas select from the activities of learned individuals those elements that fit the prevailing cultural profile for men of learning. This process is a highly selective one, as only a limited number of individuals in Muslim societies can aspire to the persona of traditional men of learning. In the past, individuals could achieve full personhood on the basis of attributes other than learning, such as tribal leadership or royal authority, but full personhood is still confined to a limited number of individuals. In both Morocco and Oman, a distinction is made between “elite” (nas khassa or mcfrufin) and “commoners” (al-[c]awam), terms that distinguish between those who have reputations as men of learning and those who do not.

Until the late 1950s, a claim to family names going back multiple generations—one means of defining personhood and distinction from others—was confined to families of the elite and to learned persons. In Morocco, where religious roles were fluid, men of learning were sometimes considered to have saintly, or maraboutic, powers. Such powers could exist independent of religious knowledge. (The term salih [pious one] in Morocco can refer to a reputation based on various combinations of piety, learning, descent, mysticism, miraculous deeds, and maraboutic powers, and the weight given to these attributes has varied over time.) Thus in the 1930s, the Mansuri brothers found assistance in “discovering” their antecedents, but their preference was to emphasize the achieved status of learning over the ascribed one of descent. In 1919 the brothers’ father was regarded locally as a salih, an attribute on which Ahmad Mansuri capitalized in arranging for the first French agricultural tax, collected in kind, to be delivered to his father’s house. Tribespeople thought the tax was religiously sanctioned, and armed resistance to the French innovation was thereby avoided. Significantly, Ahmad’s clever initiative is not recorded in his tarjama.

For the Mansuri brothers, as for Bu Ayyashi, distinguished descent is asserted but not explicitly demonstrated. Since their claims were widely recognized and unchallenged, there was no need to do so. The size of the community of men of learning in Morocco allowed considerable latitude for presenting and inventing such ties, but by and large, specific claims to descent, although still important, no longer carried the political and social privileges of earlier eras.[25] Bu Ayyashi’s principal concern is to demonstrate his affinities with

the nationalist movement,[26] and in doing so, he conveys the persona of the man of learning in the service of legitimate authority . For the Mansuri brothers, legitimate authority is the monarch. When the monarch acquiesced to French tutelage, so did the Mansuris; when the monarch opposed the French, so did they.

There is less latitude in Oman for expressing status and social location, for individuals are clearly located within specific frameworks of tribal identity. There is a greater expectation in Oman that a man of learning also be a man of action because of the closer links to tribal identity, in which the man of learning must balance his personas as one of the ulama and a responsible member of a tribal oligarchy. The latter identity, although not specifically Islamic, is implicit in the structure of the tarjama itself. One is expected to defend tribal interests, but in such a way as to advocate only those actions that can be justified in Islamic terms. Men of learning continue to show that their personas fulfill generalized, fixed principles, but the content of the principles and the choice of emphasis among them can vary considerably.

One remaining issue is how the self-representation of traditional men of learning is perceived by a younger generation, the product of an education different in form and emphasis from that of Qur’anic schools and mosque-universities and accessible to a much larger proportion of the school-age population. Modern education has broken the earlier ties between men of learning and the communities of which they were a part. In both Morocco and Oman, the older generation and many of the educated young share the expectation that political authority is legitimated or delegitimated in accord with divine law, although there is a difference of interpretation as to how this is done. The rulers of Morocco and Oman continue to regard the public expressions of legitimation from traditional men of learning as an important component of political legitimacy. Another legitimizing element is the rulers’ ability to bring material progress and “development” to their subjects. For a younger generation, there is greater recognition of alternative interpreters of “what is Islamic” who are not legitimated by knowledge of a specific body of texts or by their predecessors. Indeed, the religious-minded can make such decisions for themselves.

The consequences for conceptions of self and person are as follows: In the past, few individuals could aspire to the persona of a man of learning, as expressed in tarjamas, Now the persona of the sincere, religious-minded believer has become more important and in some dimensions can recapture the early Islamic sense of personal responsibility mediated by only a few privileged interpreters of Islamic doctrine. Concepts of the [c]alim as a person are embedded in particular social contexts, and the way in which individuals achieve full personhood is much more open than in the past, including conceptions of religious knowledge not dependent on the forms exemplified in the tarjama. The persona of the tarjama is not so much attacked as displaced. As men of learning themselves possess qualities and attributes ranging beyond those signaled in tarjamas, many individuals take part in this quiet transformation of forms of valued religious knowledge and the social roles of their carriers.

** 3. Autobiography and Biography in the Middle East: A Plea for Psychopolitical Studies

Marvin Zonis

In an important article, Karl J. Weintraub distinguishes autobiography from memoirs, diaries, and other works by and about the self.

Autobiography adheres more closely to the true potential of the genre the more its real subject matter is character, personality, self-conception—all those difficult-to-define matters which ultimately determine the inner coherence and meaning of life. Real autobiography is a weave in which self-consciousness is delicately threaded throughout interrelated experience. It may have such varied functions as self-explication, self-discovery, self-clarification, selfformation, self-presentation, self-justification. All these functions interpenetrate easily but all are centered upon an aware self aware of its relation to its experiences.[27]

Weintraub refers to the existence of an “autobiographic instinct” and urges the study of autobiography as the means best suited to revealing “the developing self-conceptions of Western men.”[28] It is appropriate that he refers to “Western men” inasmuch as his examples are drawn entirely from the literature of Europe. Reviewing the output of such literature in the Arabic-, Persian-, and Turkish-speaking worlds, one would have to conclude that such an “instinct” is largely confined to Westerners and is not part of the constitution of those from the Middle East.[29] Those works from the region that achieve the “true potential of the genre” are few in number, limiting the utility of autobiography for illuminating Middle Eastern conceptions of the self.[30]

But not only is autobiography generally lacking: biographies, indigenous to the region, are also in relatively short supply.[31] The most obvious explanation for the paucity of these genres, even in the contemporary Middle East, appears to be that the concept of the individual human life as well as the “development” of that life over the course of the individual life cycle are profoundly different from such conceptions in the West.

Weintraub suggests why the genre of autobiography came to be common in the West:

It is the intent of this paper to argue the thesis that the autobiographic genre took on its full dimension and richness when Western Man acquired a thoroughly historical understanding of his existence. Autobiography assumes a significant cultural function around a.d. 1800. The growing significance of autobiography is thus a part of that great intellectual revolution marked by the emergence of the particular modern form of historical mindedness we call historism or historicism.[32]

That particular sensibility, Abdallah Laroui has made powerfully clear, has yet to grip the Middle East.[33] Historicism is the commitment to an understanding of a phenomenon as rooted in particular contexts that change over time with the result that the phenomenon itself may change. That

commitment is not yet thoroughly subsumed within the culture of the Middle East. It is no wonder, then, that autobiography and biography are not yet part of the genres of literature in the Middle East. Both genres depend on the willingness to see a human life as a coherent whole with a history rooted in a variety of social, cultural, economic, and political contexts, where it is both possible and meaningful to assign, retrospectively, significance to the subject's life experiences and to the entire lived life. In the absence of a willingness and a capacity to understand a life in that way, the production of autobiography and biography will be limited. In their stead will be other related genres, such as memoirs, diaries, travelogues, and even lyrical poetry. These genres are similar to autobiography and biography in that they focus on the experiences of the author or subject. They differ in that they do not attempt an integration of those experiences to fashion an account of a lived life. Genres that focus on discrete lived experiences are common in the Middle East.

To be sure, more than one factor works against the production of autobiography and biography in the Middle East. Like all significant phenomena, the paucity of these genres is overdetermined. The absence of historicism is one contributing factor. But in addition, differential cultural emphases regarding the nature and meaning of the individual also reduce their incidence. It has been widely noted that concepts of the individual and individualism assume different dimensions in Middle Eastern and in Western cultures. Communal values are more widely cherished in the Middle East. The well-being of the community, even at the expense of the well-being of the individual (although there is certainly no necessary trade-off), is more highly valued in the Middle East than in the West. It could, in fact, be argued that if the three paramount values of Western society are liberty, equality, and fraternity, only fraternity is central to the value structure of the Middle East. The centrality of the value of community over individuality and individualism works against the production of both autobiography and biography, for that value lessens the need for the critical scrutiny of the individual life and the attempt to organize a life history into a coherent point of view and life pattern.

Thus both the absence of a sense of historicism and the relative underemphasis on the life of the individual in comparison with the group reduce the propensity for persons steeped in Middle Eastern culture to

produce autobiographies and biographies. Not surprisingly, therefore, most such works written about the lives of Middle Easterners have been written by members of the intelligentsia who have been Westernized, most often those who have been educated in the West. Or, in many cases, they have been written by Westerners themselves.

The relative absence of autobiographies deprives investigators of the Middle East, both Western and Middle Eastern scholars, of the opportunity to examine first-person data on the life course as it is lived in the Middle East. In addition, the absence of autobiographies deprives investigators of insights into the shared principles by which individuals come to understand and make sense of their lives. This is because an autobiography is a retrospective reordering of one's life experiences on the basis of one's viewpoints and understandings held at the time of the reconstruction, not at the time of the lived experiences. As Weintraub suggests,

When the autobiographer has gained the firm vantage point from which the full retrospective view on life can be had, he imposes on the past the order of the present. The fact once in the making can now be seen together with the fact in its result. By this superimposition of the completed fact, the fact in the making acquires a meaning it did not possess before. The meaning of the past is intelligible and meaningful in terms of the present understanding; it is thus with all historical understanding.[34]

The value of autobiography as a source of insight into the nature of the lived life in the Middle East rests on the author's understanding of the past at the moment of authorship. Aside from completely idiosyncratic understandings of the past, the kind produced by those adjudged eccentric—geniuses or mad- persons—such understandings are part of the cultural repertoire of the author. They have been produced by that culture or been borrowed from other cultures, but they must be in the cultural repertoire of the author in order to be available for generating the understanding of the lived life. Thus, autobiography gives insights not only into how lives are lived but also into the organizing principles that inform the culture in which the autobiography is produced. Indeed, these two components are difficult to untangle.

But it is not only autobiography that provides investigators with insights into these phenomena. Biography is an equally rich source. Whether producing work about oneself or about another, the process elicits information about two central issues: the lived life and the principles for organizing an account of that life.

Insofar as these organizing principles are derived from Western culture, they will provide little insight into the ways in which Middle Easterners understand their own lives. This does not mean that Middle Easterners are better than Westerners at making sense of a life lived within a Middle Eastern culture. It is simply that Middle Eastern organizing principles can help us understand how Middle Easterners understand their own lives.

When that is not central to the investigation—and for most purposes I think it is largely irrelevant to the investigation— then there is no privileged status for either the autobiographer or the biographer from the Middle East. Western concepts can be as useful, if not more so, for assigning meaning and significance as concepts indigenous to the culture in which the life is lived.

Four recent extraordinary biographies of Middle Eastern figures have been produced, none by Middle Easterners.[35] They constitute the four most important biographies of modern Middle Eastern lives ever written. Fouad Ajami, Vincent Cra- panzano, Roy Mottahedeh, and Vamik Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz, the authors of these works, came to their tasks with formidable credentials. All are deeply steeped in the cultures of the Middle East. They were born into Middle Eastern families or grew up in the region or had long residence there. In addition, three of the authors have had extensive psychoanalytic training, which has helped them to grasp the workings of the minds of their subjects and to produce sensitive yet powerful biographical treatments.

The four works seek to achieve somewhat different purposes: more or less political in focus, more or less interested in the psychological dimensions of their subjects, more or less attempting to learn of the intellectual, social, and political milieus in which their subjects were acculturated and which, in turn, were influenced by their subjects. But all four seek to “know the individuality

of another,” even if, as Crapanzano (quoting from Georg Simmel) reminds us, this knowledge is ultimately unobtainable.[36] Nevertheless, these studies are as successful in achieving that goal as any nonfiction work ever published about the lives of individuals from the Turkish, Arab, and Persian cultural worlds.

Two of the four works are explicitly nonpsychological. Mot- tahedeh strives to place his Shi[c]ite cleric within the context of contemporary Iranian culture and Shi'ite experience. In the sense that the author strives to say something of general significance about the place of Shi'ism in present-day Iran and the ways in which members of the Shi'ite intelligentsia come to terms with the world, the biography is more appropriately cultural and intellectual than psychological. Ajami’s work on Musa al-Sadr can be understood in the same way. The story of the vanished imam is meant to do more than tell us of the life and death of a Shi'ite leader. It is also meant to account for the political power of Musa al-Sadr and the unusual links between him and his followers, which are at least partially explicable by the ways in which Musa al-Sadr embodied the principal myths of Shi'ism in his life and his disappearance. Ajami’s work is also not psychological in any systematic sense.

The other two works are self-consciously psychological. Cra- panzano attempts to present a psychological portrait of Tuhami through a flow of words that represent for his subject the “verbal objectification of the tension between ‘reality’ and desire structures by the author.”[37] Volkan and Itzkowitz strive to present a psychological portrait of Ataturk that will allow the reader to gain access to his inner psychological processes and understand how his political actions spoke to his character structure.

Although all four studies—psychological or not—are successful as different types of biographies, they are less successful in illuminating the political lives of their subjects. Of the four works, Tuhami is the least committed to political investigation. Yet the book contains fascinating insights into significant aspects of political power in Morocco. Crapanzano, through Tuhami, helps us understand the role of the king in Moroccan society.[38] He also illuminates the nature of the power relationship between leader and follower by explicating the role of dependency. He illustrates the crucial role of power and domination in interpersonal relationships, including those

that are not ostensibly political. He speaks, as well, of the ways in which power is accumulated and preserved. Attributions of baraka (divine grace), for example, are significant components of a power base, but it is finally the doing of deeds that makes saints powerful in the eyes of their devotees. Ironically, then, the biography that is the least oriented toward politics is rich with insights for use by students of politics in the Middle East.

The remaining works, although explicitly oriented to politics, suffer to a greater or lesser degree from their failure to focus on the intersection of psychological and political processes. As has already been noted, neither Ajami nor Motta- hedeh take up the challenge of combining political with psychological investigation. Only Volkan and Itzkowitz meet that challenge. The basic narrative of the Volkan and Itzkowitz psychobiography is a fascinating recounting of Ataturk's life, with special attention to his brilliant successes as a military leader and then as "Father Turk." Ataturk's life history is chronicled in terms of conventional political explanations for political acts, and the body of that narrative is devoid of psychological analysis. Only after the rich narrative history, in an epilogue, is a compelling psychological portrait of Ataturk presented. Thus, the introduction of psychological variables to explain or provide rich accounts of Ataturk's significant political acts appears more an afterword than a central component of the analysis of the lived life.

This neglect of politics is not surprising given the central task of the psychobiographer. The thesis of this paper is that neither autobiography nor biography are useful genres for maximizing our generation of theories of the political process. As a type of biography, psychobiography suffers from the same shortcomings as its more abstract "parent." This paper argues that a particular kind of study, combining aspects of psychobiography and political analysis, can produce psychologically grounded understandings of important political events and thus contribute to the development of a body of theory that will come to constitute a specific academic discipline, that ot psychopolitical studies.

Psychobiography is not useful in this goal of discipline building because the psychobiographical task is to "discern and assign meaning to a life" by employing psychological theories and modes of investigation.[39] The

challenge and even the accomplishment of discerning and assigning meaning in order to fashion a coherent life account is different from the process of producing a psychopolitical study. In the latter effort, the emphasis must be placed on understanding the psychological underpinnings of particular political acts or events in which the subject was a participant, or of certain political ideologies or writings that were formulated or disseminated by the subject. The challenge is to understand the character structure of the person and the acts he or she committed, as well as the reciprocal relations between character and political behavior in sociopolitical and interpersonal contexts.[40]

I have undertaken just such a study of the Iranian revolution. Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah of Iran is a study of the revolution from the point of view of the losers: the Shah and the United States, his major foreign backer. The study focuses on the Shah as the central actor of the revolution, that relatively brief, year-long outpouring of rage, and attempts to explain how he lost the revolution—a loss that resulted in his ouster, the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty, and its replacement by the Islamic Republic led by the eighty-year-old Ayatollah Rouhollah Khomeini.[41]

That the Shah lost the revolution is all the more remarkable because of the resources he commanded. He had ruled his country for thirty-seven years and presided over its transformation from a backward, isolated country to a prominent regional power. The development ot the oil industry had produced vast revenues that he had used to build the most powerful armed forces in the Persian Gulf. The governmental bureaucracies had also burgeoned, and the regime had undertaken vast public projects as well as massive expansions of the educational and social welfare systems. Iranian industry had blossomed, establishing a base for a powerful industrial sector.

In addition, the Shah could boast of support from all of the major international states. The United States was his principal champion, but the Soviet Union was not adverse to destroying the Iranian Communist party to win his favor. The European powers—East and West—counted themselves his supporters. The last chief of state to pay an official visit to the Shah, in the midst of the revolution, was the ruler of the People’s Republic of China.

Yet despite his money, armed strength, and international diplomatic support, the Shah could not cope with the revolution. He failed to deal effectively with the complaints of his people and their demands for change. This study of the revolution suggests that a determining explanation for the failures of the Shah can be found in his character structure. It also suggests that his character and the actions that were consonant with that character were the most significant reasons for the rage that propelled the people of Iran into revolution.[42]

The Shah, it is argued, had emerged from his difficult childhood with a “narcissistic character structure.” His youth, even after he was officially designated crown prince at the age of six, was no royal fairy tale. His mother was a powerful woman whose strength was exceeded only by that of her husband. When the young Mohammad Reza Shah was two, his father, Reza Shah, staged the coup that would eventually propel him and his son to the throne. Meanwhile, Reza Shah took another bride and was ostracized by his first wife, an unheard-of response in Iran in the 1920s. To take revenge on his first wife, Reza Shah later withdrew his eldest son from her care and installed him m a separate palace where he could be raised as a “man,” free of her “feminizing” influences. After several years in his own palace, the crown prince was sent away again, to secondary school in Switzerland, also in the interests of preparing the boy for his future imperial responsibilities.

The Shah became an adult with depleted narcissism, with a level ot self-esteem insufficient to maintain a reasonable psychic equilibrium. Instead, he was totally dependent for his narcissistic nurturing on external sources, of which he developed four.

One source was the Iranian people. He had a relationship with “his” people that led him to believe that he was genuinely respected and admired by them, if not loved. In short, he had come to believe his own press.

A second source feeding his self-esteem was his firm belief that he was protected by God. The Shah believed that he had been divinely chosen for

his mission to lead the Iranian people to greatness. His belief stemmed from his early childhood when he recovered from three life-threatening illnesses and during each had visions of sacred figures from early Shifite-Islamic history. From that period on, he believed that he was protected by the Lord in order to fulfill his divine mission.

A third crucial source of psychic support came from certain intense personal relationships. The Shah derived strength from what, in effect, was a psychological merger with three other persons during different periods of his life. Through these “twinship” relations, the Shah was able to use the strength of others to aid his own functioning.

Finally, the Shah derived needed strength from his association with the United States. The Shah had met and worked with eight American presidents, from Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who first met the Shah when he came to Tehran to attend his wartime meetings with Churchill and Stalin, to Jimmy Carter, who came to Tehran and celebrated the Shah in his famous 1978 New Year’s Eve toast. The American presidents became bastions of support for the Shah. He was restored to the throne through a CIA-sponsored coup in 195 3 and received more than a billion dollars in aid through the remainder of the 1950s. But the peak of his relationship with the United States came with his designation by President Richard Nixon as America’s virtual proxy in the Persian Gulf, after which the United States sold billions of dollars’ worth of the most sophisticated American weapons to the Shah. The unusually close links between the two countries help explain the psychic dependency on the United States that the Shah developed.

As long as those sources of narcissistic supplies replenished him, the Shah could derive the self-esteem that he needed in order to “do” shah and not just to “be” shah. Beginning in the early 1970s, however, each of these sources of strength began to fail the monarch.

In February 1971, Iran experienced its first contemporary terrorist incident. A group of armed dissidents attacked a police post, killed many of its defenders, and withdrew into the neighboring forests surrounding the Caspian Sea. The terrorists were eventually captured, but their act initiated a

series of attacks and killings and regime countermeasures that kept news of the armed enemies of the regime in the newspapers for the remainder of the decade.

Later in 1971, the Shah held the now infamous festivities in Persepolis to mark the 2,500th anniversary of the establishment of the monarchy in Iran. Heads of state and dignitaries from throughout the world attended the lavish spectacle, but few in Iran were invited. One result was to distance the Iranian people from rhe grandeur and pomp of the regime. Their dissatisfactions with the monarch became more obvious in the 1970s, dissatisfactions that the Shah found it increasingly difficult to ignore. With the outbreak of the revolution, he was devastated by the depth of the Iranian people's rejection of him.

The Shah's divine protection failed him as well when he learned in 1973 that he had cancer. He was told that the cancer, with proper attention, was not life threatening, but every day he had to take large numbers of pills, medication that reminded him of his illness and of his own mortality.

The Shah's third source of psychic support also failed him. He had established "twinship" relations with three others: Ernest Perron, Assadollah Alam, and his actual twin sister, Princess Ashraf Pahlavi. Ernest Perron, who was the son of the gardener at the Le Rosey School in Switzerland, had accompanied the Shah when he returned to Iran from his studies. Perron lived in one or another of the Shah's palaces until the mid-1950s, when he finally returned to Switzerland. His death in i960 ended their intense mutual involvement. Following Perron's death, the Shah established or strengthened his "twinship" with Assadollah Alam. Alam served the Shah as prime minister and minister of court until he developed leukemia and died in November 1977. Just when the Shah needed Alam's strength to face the revolution—just when the Iranian people were about to demand the Shah's ouster—Alam died. Moreover, Alam died of cancer, fostering the Shah's belief that he had lost his own divine protection. Princess Ashraf, alive to this day and living in New York, was by then no substitute. She had become extremely unpopular with the people of Iran, and the Shah had gradually excluded her from his personal circle. She could play no useful role when he was most in need of her brilliantly calculating political judgment.

Finally, the Shah came to believe that he had lost his fourth source of narcissistic supplies. The 1976 nomination of Jimmy Carter as the Democratic candidate for United States President was greeted with grave concern in Tehran. Carter's campaign and inaugural address only exacerbated the panic in Iranian ruling circles, for Jimmy Carter demanded that United States foreign policy be reoriented. He sought two new emphases. He wanted the United States to insist on the realization of human rights throughout the world. And he wanted the United States to restrict the sale of weapons in order to diminish the international arms race and to tie the sale of those weapons to the institutionalization of human rights. The Shah understood Jimmy Carter to be talking first and foremost about Iran. He believed that President Carter was signaling a significant diminishing of the relationship between the United States and the Shah, a relationship that had been built throughout the terms of the previous seven American presidents.

As the dissatisfactions of the Iranian people turned to rage and as this rage was transformed into street demonstrations and then violence, the sources of psychological support that the Shah had been able to use in the past deserted him. He was thrown back on his own narcissistic resources, which were so inadequate that the Shah's psychological strength ebbed to the point where he could not act. He was effectively paralyzed.

In the face of this paralysis, the revolution grew, the rage of the Iranian people became more intense, and, in relatively short order, the Shah and his entire System were swept from the country. The revolution had completed its first phase, and Mohammad Reza Shah was its first victim. The revolutionaries had not so much won as the Shah had lost.

This is a summary of the argument made in the book Majestic Failure. The work attempts to provide a psychological explanation for the outbreak of the Iranian revolution and for the failure of the Shah to cope effectively with the demands of the revolutionaries and to suppress their attempts to oust him. This explanation is rooted in a psychoanalytic perspective that finds that significant childhood experiences of the Shah led to a particular narcissistic character structure. That character structure, in

turn, meant that the Shah was unable to provide himself with sufficient psychic supplies—with enough of a sense of self-worth—to function effectively as the shah. Deprived of sufficient internal narcissistic supplies, the Shah turned to outside sources. As long as those sources, in his mind, provided him with the narcissistic supplies necessary to maintain his psychic equilibrium, the Shah could function, not always effectively, but usually with sufficient strength to rule. But as these sources of psychic strength failed him and he was unable to identify new sources, his narcissistic balance was shattered. He gradually became more depleted and less able to function. By the outbreak of the revolution, he was a broken man.

This exercise in psychopolitical studies is not a psychobiography, in that it is not concerned with the entire sweep of the shah's life, nor is its principal task to assign a coherent meaning to chat life. It does provide significant amounts of biographical data in order to construct a character structure for the Shah that accounts for the observed qualities of the man during his life. But that is not the purpose of the investigation. It creates a character structure that makes sense of his life, but it does not stop there and for this reason, as well, fails to qualify as a psychobiography Rather, the study proceeds to a third phase, an examination of a particular political phenomenon, in this case, the revolution of 1978—79. The Shah was a single political actor with immense potential power vis-a-vis that political event. By focusing on his behavior and how that behavior emanated from his character structure, the study uses psychological variables to explain a set of political processes.

This investigation of the Iranian revolution is an example of the genre of social scientific research here called psychopolitical studies. The outcome of the Iranian revolution was determined by the actions and mactions of the Shah of Iran in the face of the mounting rage of the Iranian people. Those actions in turn were consequences of the Shah's particular character structure, whose functioning had altered over the course of his rule through his social and political relations with others and, as the Shah believed, with the Lord.

Psychopolitical studies differ from psychobiography because the former focuses on political processes and uses psychology to explain those processes. The goal of such studies is not to make a lived life coherent by

assigning meaning but to explain the nature and outcome of political phenomena.

Psychopolitical studies, then, will be concerned with the explanation of political phenomena, but not with their prediction. If social scientists are to improve the quality of their investigations, they must abandon prediction as a significant enterprise, at least in terms of predicting the outcome of complex political events. Social scientists with long experience in the Middle East frequently make successful predictions about complicated political phenomena; so do diplomats and professional politicians. Successful prediction is a particular kind of achievement, hardly restricted to the social sciences, that suggests a familiarity with “what follows what” or “what goes with what” or the “association among variables.” But to make predictions through the construction of a series of interrelated and meaningful theoretical propositions is a more difficult task, one requiring the identification of the relevant variables, an understanding of those variables, and a comprehensible explanation for their relationships.

Furthermore, most variables of interest to the social scientist relate through a human agency: the dependent variable is affected by the independent variable because intervening between the two are the mental processes of human actors. Take, for example, the area of voting studies, an area of social science investigation in which prediction has been impressively accurate, if not particularly profound. In most voting studies, people are asked to give their voting preferences and intentions; it is not surprising that a high correlation exists between these expressions of intention and subsequent behaviors. Other voting studies attempt to link social variables—economic conditions, political repression, strategic power, international relations, and the like—to voting behavior. These variables are often highly associated with voting behavior, but understanding why the variables relate to each other as they do entails the application of psychology, the study of human mental processes. Intervening between economic conditions, for example, and the act of voting or political protest or any other dependent variable of social scientific interest is the human agency, with its mental processes and character structure. To understand fully the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, one must understand the way the human “black box,” intervening between the other variables, serves to link

the two. Thus psychology lies at the heart of the concept of social science explanation.

To expect to link the variables, however, in a predictive fashion is another matter. The prediction of complicated sociopolitical phenomena through the construction of sophisticated models whose operations are not merely empirically known but also theoretically explicable and, therefore, sensible is still beyond the capacity of the social sciences. For the foreseeable future—indeed, perhaps indefinitely—the construction of such models will be possible only for phenomena of scant interest to the social sciences.[43]

This is not the case, however, for postdiction. Social science theories can be developed most effectively through retrospective examination. The historical examination of events or processes allows for the identification of variables as significant components of the particular process. The examination of those components in other historical processes is one form in which the model that has been produced can be “tested.” In short, it appears possible to explain in the social sciences, but not necessarily to predict.

This act of retrospective explaining is best done through a case study. William Runyan suggests that “a case study is undertaken in response to a problem in understanding.”[44] The social sciences and their individual disciplines and subdisciplines would appear to be reflections of widespread problems in understanding. The case study is not the only possible response to such problems; yet case studies must be a central component of psychopolitical studies and will be a more useful part of such studies than will psychobiographies, or treatments of an entire life. Runyan presents two separate definitions of the case study. First, he suggests that “a case study may be defined as the systematic presentation of information about the life of a single unit.” Then, he suggests that “a case study may be defined as ‘a reconstruction and interpretation’ based on the best evidence available, of part of the story of a person’s life.”[45]

Hans-Georg Gadamer argues more forcefully for the case study:

Surely we can admit that all historical knowledge involves the application of general empirical regularities to the concrete problems it faces; yet, the true intention of historical knowledge is not to explain a concrete phenomenon as a particular case of a general rule. ... In actuality, its true goal—even in utilizing general knowledge—is to understand an historical phenomenon in its singularity, in its uniqueness. Historical consciousness is interested in knowing not how men, people, or states develop in general, but, quite on the contrary, how this man, this people, or this state became what it is; how each of these particulars could come to pass and end up specifically there.[46]

But psychopolitical studies, although based on the study of particular cases, should not necessarily be restricted to the study of the individual political actor. Insofar as such studies are restricted, they are related to and bear a family resemblance to psychobiography. But in addition, psychopolitical studies must concern themselves with the study of group phenomena, of which several variations exist. One kind of group phenomena is found when many individuals are responsible tor a single political decision or act, as, for example, in collective leadership or collective political action. The United States decision to supply arms to Iran, now known as the Iran-Contra Affair, appears to be a classic example of a decision that was reached by a number of political actors for various political and personal reasons.

The president of the United States appears to have sought the link as a way to free the Americans held captive in Lebanon and thus to spare himself the anguish resulting from his own inability to rescue them. That anguish appears to have been a blend of his deep personal commitment to alleviate human suffering and his capacity to best understand the nature of such suffering on a personal basis, on the level of individual human beings rather than abstract phenomena such as whole groups or nations. His anguish was also bred of the pleas that had been made directly to him by the parents, spouses, and children of the hostages. Finally, it appears also to have stemmed from his eagerness to avoid being compared to his predecessor, President Jimmy Carter, who was unable to free the United States diplomats held captive by the Iranians for 444 days.

There certainly were other key actors. The CIA director appears to have been primarily concerned with the fate of William Buckley, the CIA station chief in Beirut, who had been seized by the Islamic Jihad. Director William J. Casey was concerned about the suffering Buckley would likely undergo at the hands of his captors and also about the secrets Buckley knew that would damage American intelligence in the Middle East were he tortured and forced to talk, as the CIA believed would inevitably be the case. Furthermore, Casey still smarted from the losses that the agency had suffered in Beirut during his directorship. Robert Ames, the National Intelligence officer for the Middle East, and the entire staff of the Beirut CIA station were killed when a terrorist bomb destroyed the United States Embassy in April 1983. Casey sought to protect his agents in the field, to maintain the morale of his employees, and to preserve the intelligence capabilities of the United States.

There were yet other actors with other commitments in the decision to supply weapons to the Iranians. The CIA had generated a report in early 198 5 arguing that some officials within the ruling clergy of the Islamic Republic of Iran were interested in contacts with the United States. These contacts were seen as potentially useful for the strategic position of the United States and for moderating Iranian support for terrorism, its commitment to export the Islamic revolution, and its pursuit of the war with Iraq. It appears that some American officials who urged the decision to supply weapons to Iran were interested in altering that country’s foreign policy, if not its domestic politics as well.

Other officials, first in the CIA and then elsewhere, feared mounting Soviet influence in Iran and even the possibility of a Soviet military thrust into Iran as a wav of aiding Soviet proxies. These American officials believed that supplying American weapons to the Iranian regime would accomplish at least two relevant goals: The arms would send a signal to the Soviets that the United States still maintained a commitment to the territorial integrity and independence of Iran. The arms would also strengthen the Iranian military against a possible Soviet invasion.

Other officials in the National Security Council saw the sale of arms to Iran as a means to bail the Nicaraguan Contras out of their increasingly dire financial and political straits. With the refusal of the United States Congress to supply

weapons or financial assistance to the Contras, their cause had nearly collapsed. Profits from the sale of weapons to Iran could be channeled to the Contras to reverse their fortunes. If the Reagan administration later succeeded in changing Congressional opposition to additional funding for the Nicaraguan “freedom fighters,” the arms supply to Iran could be ended.

This abbreviated account of the motives and goals that underpinned the Iran-Contra Affair has dealt only with the American actors. There were foreign actors as well. Israeli officials had their own reasons for supplying weapons to Iran and also for urging the United States to do so. In addition, certain arms dealers had private, financial motives for working toward the opening of a military supply relationship between the United States and Iran.

The point of this discussion is to indicate that in many political situations a focus on the role of a single actor presents an impoverished view of the political event. Even when the focus of the inquiry is narrow—the United States decision to supply weapons to Islamic Iran—it is necessarv to examine more than one actor and more than one “motive” of any given actor to understand, in its complex richness, the basis of even a simple decision. This is especially true when the decision is not simple and when there is not a clear chain of command with an officially designated and universally accepted decision maker.

In audition to the study of group decision making, other group phenomena are important for future psychopolitical studies. Interactions among actors also produce politically significant results. Such is clearly the case when one is studying the behaviors of crowds or mobs. But group phenomena are present outside the study of the political behaviors of “the masses.” Terrorism, for example, has been explained as the re-

suit of a complex series of relationships among certain kinds of members of an intelligentsia.[47] Similarly, insofar as political decisions are the result of group processes, an exclusive focus on the minds of individual decision makers will miss the consequences of group dynamics for political decisions.[48] It is the case, therefore, that psychopolitical studies must not be limited

to the study of individual political actors but must also consider group phenomena as well.

Irrespective of whether psychopolitical studies focus on the postdictive interpretation and explanation of individual or of group processes, such studies confront a problem of validity that is profound and troubling. For the time being, it is difficult to imagine a satisfactory solution to the challenges that bedevil the question of validity in psychopolitical studies. By validity, we refer to the problem of assessing the legitimacy or appropriateness of an interpretation or, as Vincent Crapanzano has put it, of understanding that the real is a metaphor for the truth and distinguishing the latter from the former.[49] How does the investigator of a psychopolitical phenomenon know when a particular understanding of a phenomenon is valid, and how does a reader of that scholarship come to accept the legitimacy of that interpretation?

There is a common solution to the problem of validity, which approximates the solution to the problem of validity advanced in other sciences. As Runyan suggests, the problem of validity can be solved through the judgments of people who are familiar either with the subject of the psychobiographical investigation or with other sources of information about the subject.[50] Ultimately, the problem of validity must be solved by the consensual opinion of others. There is no so-called objective way to establish “truth” in psychobiographical and, by extension, psychopolitical investigation. Validity, in short, is consensual validity.

This should be far from a cause for despair. Rather than leading either proponents or critics of psychopolitical studies to question the scientific status of the enterprise, it would be more appropriate to recognize the central status of consensual validation in virtually all scientific endeavors, or, indeed, perhaps in all communication. Peter Winch refers to “discourse universes,” and E. D. Hirsch stresses the significance of language and communication since “the process of understanding is itself a process of validation.”[51]

The so-called hard sciences may have developed instrumentation to calibrate and replicate their findings, but those instruments are useful for

validation because scientists accepted as knowledgeable have agreed that the instruments measure what the scientists claim. In short, the disciplines of the academic world constitute communities of investigators who share expertise about particular phenomena and ways of investigating those phenomena that are, in the minds of the members of those disciplines, appropriate.[52]

The challenge confronting the practitioners of psychopolitical studies is not whether there ought to be a separate or different method of validation for these studies than for those of other disciplines. There is no reason to expect or demand a different set of procedures tor determining validity in psychopolitical studies than in any other field of inquiry that purports to be scientific in the Western sense of that term.

The problem with validity in psychopolitical studies is rather that the size of the community who could legitimately pass on the validity of a given interpretation may be so narrow as to be limited to the individual investigator. There are two reasons for this. First, the number of practitioners of systematic psychopolitical studies is extraordinarily small, and second, the “discipline” of psychopolitical studies does not exist in any effective fashion.

Psychopolitical studies are not in a “preparadigmatic” state but rather have a variety of competing paradigms in both components of the enterprise—the investigation of political and of psychological processes—none of these paradigms having managed to assert their intellectual dominance. Moreover, there is no reason to believe that there will ever be a single paradigm in the study of either politics or psychology that will compel, by its intellectual power, the loyalty of a significant majority of the practitioners of psychopolitical studies.

Psychoanalysis, for example, is the single most widely used foundation of psychopolitical studies, but psychoanalysis, in its present manifestation, is itself far from a unified paradigm. There have been three stages in the articulation of the discipline; theories and methods from each stage remain important to the present. The field is clearly dominated by the works of its creator, Sigmund Freud. His basic clinical methods as well as the intellectual

grounding of many of his central theories remain widely accepted to this day. But even during his lifetime, many who had originally been his disciples turned away to develop significant modifications of their own. Both Adler and Jung, for example, created alternative theoretical formulations that are used by present-day psychopolitical investigators. The second stage of psychoanalysis began shortly after Freud's death. Significant modifications in his work were then created by those who considered themselves solidly within the intellectual legacy of the master. For example, the ego was assigned a more substantial position in the operation of the psyche than was the case in Freud's writings. The third stage began more recently as the works of Heinz Kohut have dramatically altered Freud's legacy yet have left Kohut and his followers within psychoanalysis.

Thus psychoanalysis is far from a unified discipline. Psychopolitical investigators who apply a psychoanalytic approach to their research will differ dramatically in the kinds of work they do, the kinds of questions they pursue, the kinds of data they consider meaningful, and the kinds of interpretations they make. As Roy Schafer has suggested, "There is no single, necessary, definitive account of a life history. . . . What have been presented as the plain empirical data and techniques of psychoanalysis are inseparable from the investigator's precritical and interrelated assumptions concerning the origins, coherence, totality, and intelligibility of personal action."[53] Those "assumptions" arise from within psychoanalysis itself as well as from other theoretical frameworks and from broader cultural beliefs and practices.

But outside of psychoanalysis, an even larger number of psychological approaches to the study of political phenomena may be found. There are what may be thought of as subdisciplines within psychopolitical studies, defined by the common commitments of their members to shared theories and methods. As a result, there will be many intellectual communities whose members can agree on the validity of particular interpretations because they share the commitments of the interpreter. But there is little likelihood that agreement will be produced between subdisciplines, those mini-intellectual communities whose dogged commitment to their particular approaches was described by Freud as the "narcissism of small differences."

The validity problem in psychopolitical studies is exacerbated because of the difficulty of communicating all the nuances of data and meaning that led to the interpretation at issue. No one knows the subject under investigation as deeply as the investigator, who has a privileged status vis-a-vis the subject since he or she has been immersed in and has developed a feel for the subject that is extraordinarily difficult to convey. Even Freud, that great prose master, had difficulty communicating the richness of his interpretations and the nuances of his data, although he did it better than anyone else.

Given all this, the communities from which judgments of validity will emanate will be small in size. There will be significant disagreements, even from within what appears to be rhe same paradigm, because the number of “validation communities” will be substantial. As a consequence, the practitioners of a scientific enterprise will have to tolerate extraordinarily broad criteria for validity or witness an even greater fragmentation of psychologically based studies of political processes. That does not mean that there are no validity criteria at all, that any interpretation is as good as any other. Within the subdisciplines of the field, the criteria for validity will be explicit, if not always easily applicable. Across fields there will still be common commitments to more overarching modes of intellectual inquiry. Yet ultimately, there are no simple and universal validity criteria.

In our efforts as critical readers, our first task must be to try to adopt the subdisciplinary framework of the author—as long as the suodiscipline falls within the tolerant limits of the field and seeks validity within the paradigms on which that work is based. If it does not, then we are not dealing with a science, and conventional intellectual approaches to the question of validity are irrelevant.

But if the subdiscipline does fall within conventional definitions, then it is necessary to work within that subdiscipline to determine validity, not an easy thing to do. Few of us are trained across subdisciplinary boundaries. Even fewer can lay claim to the intellectual eclecticism necessary to work effectively across such boundaries or the intellectual tolerance to do so. Moreover, we shall never be able to capture the subject as effectively as the investigator, given his or her lengthy immersion in the research.

Validity, in short, is a nearly insolvable issue. We should never cease to search for it or for more adequate ways to determine it, but we need to operate m a tolerant intellectual framework and be willing to function with validity criteria less certain than most of us would conventionally deem essential. In the process, we need to accept conclusions that are “conditioned and incomplete” as well as tentative and uncertain.[54] Lack of certain conviction, however, has never been an impediment to scientific inquiry. To the contrary, it is the impetus for scholarly investigation.

Through the tentative conclusions of psychopolitical studies—the use of psychology to investigate political phenomena—we are most likely to produce an understanding of those processes and so begin to generate theories applicable to other phenomena at other times and in other places.

** 4. Biography and Psychohistory

Elie Kedourie

We may look on biography as a species of historical investigation. It is the attempt to give an account of a subject’s thoughts and actions in the context of his or her own time and place. But a question arises: why should anyone think it useful or interesting to embark on such an investigation? The question is all the more natural since biography is not a universal genre to be found everywhere or at all times. To take a case in point, in the domain of traditional Islam, biography as briefly described here is unknown. There are of course biographical dictionaries of ulama, the tra- ditionists and learned men; here and there in the literature may be found brief accounts of governors and rulers. All of these provide no more than brief and stylized details about those aspects of the subjects’ lives that are, in terms of the self-view that is associated with the world of Islam, considered the most important and the most worthy of notice. Traditional Islamic literature has no equivalent of Plutarch’s Lives, or Thomas More’s biography of his son-in-law, or Monypenny and Buckle’s Life of Disraeli. Even more striking is the utter absence not only of women’s biographies but also

of even the scantiest detail about the mothers, wives, or daughters of those men who are the subject of biographical notices. There are, of course, good reasons why such detail was considered inappropriate, but this absence is significant in itself as a pointer to a lack of interest, within traditional Muslim culture, in individuals as individuals, with their own specific characteristics and peculiar quirks. Men are seen as belonging to well-established categories, and the particular category is deemed to indicate how a person who belongs to it behaves: Muslim or non-Muslim, [c]alim or vizier, military commander or ruler. Biography as an exercise in understanding another human being as fully as possible, and understanding this person simply for the sake of understanding, seems to be a modern Western notion—an invention that has its roots in Western culture but has characteristics that have been articulated and theorized within, say, the last hundred years.

History, then—of which biography is a branch—is a genuinely new enterprise. It is commonly said that Islam is historically minded, and as the Bible shows, the same may be said of Judaism as well as of Christianity; the latter is, or has been, said to be a historical religion. How are we to understand such statements? What they mean is that at one point in the past a divine revelation or a divine intervention took place that is the beginning of what may be called a sacred history. All that follows is the working-out of the consequences of this divine intervention, and the consequences of obeying or, as the case may be, disobeying divine injunctions. History here is a guide to believers, a repository of stories and rules of behavior that will enable them to lead lives pleasing in the eyes of God. This sacred history, then, is a kind of practical history, making use of the past in order to engage in the successful practice of living here and now. There are other kinds of practical historv, the most prevalent, and the most efficient, being the history that serves to instill a sense of pride or glory in the body politic. Other kinds of history may serve as a storehouse of precedents, legal or administrative, or may be used to defend a particular religion or political cause, or are designed to teach political prudence.

However, this practical attitude to the past is not history as history came to be invented or discovered—a term used advisedly, for this attitude is indeed a new discovery made by Westerners about themselves and their past, a new invention dealing in a new way with the fact that people have succeeded one another through the generations and successively left layer

on layer of fragments that can be read as evidence of past thought and past activity.

This new discovery or invention has been called Historismus by the German philosophers and historians who have been prominent in articulating and theorizing it. The English equivalent, as adopted by the translator of Friedrich Meinecke's book on the development of Historismus, is historism. This term is distinct from, and signifies something very different from, what is commonly known as historicism. Historicism, it is well known, as anathematized by Karl Popper and his many followers, is the belief that there exists a pattern that governs human history and that unfolds with an irresistible inevitability. Whether the pattern is cyclical as in Plato, or linear as in Augustine or Bossuet, historicism is at the opposite pole from historism.

There are three other views, in addition to historicism, that are very influential but quite incompatible with a properly historical view of the past. The first is that human existence is a manifestation over time of our unchanging essence, the second is that people's actions are exemplifications of unchanging eternal laws, and the third is that there is an underlying structure in human nature or in society that governs all visible action or thought that may be called superstructure. Marxism is today the most influential, but by no means the only, variant of such a belief.

The properly historical view may be summed up by saying that man's nature is his history. This view signifies that there is nothing beyond or above or below the historical record (as the evidence shows it to be) that may serve to account for or to explain this record, that the record is, in short, its own explanation, chat a subject, to quote Hegel, is the series of his or her actions. In such a record, there is nothing extraordinary (to borrow a word that occurred in the original title of this conference) because there is nothing ordinary either. The pair of ideas, ordinary—extraordinary, imply a norm of human behavior to which people conform or from which they depart. But given that people are mind and will, and that, as such, their actions cannot be programmed or predicted, then it follows that there are no norms against which human actions or thoughts can be judged. Extraordinary lives are

legendary lives, and the historian’s work is to make legend explicable in terms of human actions and responses.

The historian’s work is possible because mind speaks to mind or, as sometimes put, because of the “I” that is in the “thou.” This does not mean that the historian possesses magical powers that open up the minds of others for exploration. Rather, the historian is able to write history because minds have objectified themselves in utterances, artifacts, and institutions that are open to inspection and that one may aspire to understand because they are the expressions of minds with which one’s own mind is kin: mind speaks to mind. For if these utterances and performances are not the expressions of human minds, then they are and must remain hopelessly unintelligible to the historian. But again and again we do find that they are intelligible: Champollion deciphers the Rosetta stone, Gold- ziher disentangles the confusion of hadith, Prescott penetrates the secrets of the Aztecs, Mommsen probes the intricacies of Roman administration, and Syme explores late Republican politics. It can be done—and is done every day—in spite of the fact that Champollion is not the nephew of a Pharaoh, nor is the Orientalist Goldziher an Oriental, Prescott a descendant of Aztecs, or Mommsen and Syme survivals from the time of Augustus and Cicero.

The philosopher Dilthey, who more than anyone else strove to establish the main lines of what he called a critique of historical reason, held that because the object of history is a mind- affected world, then it is biography that is the best entrance into history. Whether one agrees with him or not, biography, in this view, is the attempt to make intelligible the thought and action originating in a particular mind over the whole course of its life. History is the asking of questions from the evidence. The questions that are asked arise from the evidence, but they are not themselves to be found in the evidence. Evidence is itself inert and lifeless until a particular mind with all its ingenuity and originality comes to recognize it as evidence and, so to speak, to vivify it. It is therefore utterly misleading to imagine that history, seen in this way, is an assemblage of “facts” or “materials,” or that historians are mere collectors of “facts” that they only put together, as a child puts together the pieces of a prearranged puzzle.

If history begins with the asking of questions, then the notion of total history, made fashionable by Braudel and the school of the Annales, is misconceived. A historian begins by asking a question because something in the evidence or the account being examined is obscure and puzzling. One question leads to another, until the particular puzzlement that led to the initial inquiry is, as far as possible, banished. Then comes another historian, with a different set of puzzlements and a different set of questions, and so on ad infinitum. This is why it is commonly, and rightly, said that every generation writes its own history. One may go further and say that, since no historian's mind is identical with that of any other historian, every historian writes a unique history: there are no standard histories, no so-called authorities. Similarly, there can be no given quantum or totality that one can hope to cover, and once you have covered it, you have produced total history. Take any subject and survey the literature about it, and you may easily see how revolution follows on revolution in this field: the life of the Prophet from Ibn Hisham to Montgomery Watt to Suleyman Bashir, the Abbasid "revolution" between M. A. Sha'ban and Moshe Sharon, and Afghani from Edward G. Browne's and C. C. Adams's wide-eyed pieties to a book whose subtitle proclaims its subject's religious unbelief and his political activism.

Biography, then, like history, is the asking of questions the answer to which makes intelligible, for instance, the passage of Disraeli from the dissipated dandy of the 1830s to the prime minister of the 1870s, or the passage of Nuri b. Sa[c]id from the small conspiratorial lieutenant of 1914 into the prime minister of the Arab Federation ovet whose mutilated corpse the Baghdad mob danced with glee in 1958. In all these biographies, there is nothing expected or normal or ordinary, and yet nothing that is rebellious to historical discourse. The passage in question here is a passage over time, and the substance of it is made up of actions and responses for which evidence exists; of that for which no evidence exists, thereof one must be silent.

For evidence, there is no substitute. Some speak of a so-called conceptual history, with concepts serving as some kind of scaffolding or framework holding together the bricks of historical "facts," which in turn serve to make the conceptual skeleton attractive with color and decoration. But some such metaphor cannot help being misleading since a historical account is not

made up of concepts plus “facts”; it is wholly made up of pieces of evidence interlocking with other similar pieces without, so to speak, being forced. And if there is no evidence, then no concept can make up for its absence. An economic, social, or psychological theory cannot substitute for evidence. The temptation, however, to make use of such a short-cut—a temptation that Carlo Antoni has examined and illustrated in his book From History to Sociology[55]—is, considering the flourishing condition of the social sciences in the academy, one that must be very difficult to withstand.

It may, however, be said that action is the expression of personality, and that to understand the action we must understand the personality. This is to speak as though the personality is the cause and action the effect: male babies are mother-fixated whereas female children suffer from penis jealousy, therefore— therefore what? This kind of explanation, whether Freudian or Adlerian or Jungian or Pavlovian or other, is at the basis of psychobiography and more generally psychohistory. The “psycho” in psychohistory is a reference to the science of psychology, a science, that deals with unconscious drives and involuntary impulses or reactions, that seeks to explain them and to explain how thoughts and actions are “conditioned” by them. The science is a chain of hypothetical reasonings that, as in all sciences, take the form, if—then. Like all sciences, it is subject to continuous contention and revision and cannot, therefore, be the sturdy structure on which to base history.

Psychobiography proves too little: you cannot establish an evidential chain from an Oedipus complex to a decision to bomb Tripoli. It also proves too much: every Oedipus complex must lead to warlike proclivities. Psychobiography, again, must assume that behind all actions there are hidden motives, unknown to the agent. If so, this must be equally true of the psychobiographer. We then should not ask, for example, whether what the psychobiographer says of James V. Forrestal’s psychosis is true, but rather what drives he seeks to satisfy, or what unconscious motives lead him, when he is making such statements about the United States defense secretary. We then find ourselves revolving in a vicious circle: in this cabinet of Dr. Caligari, it can never be established who is mad, the biographer or his subject.

** 5. A Response to Critics of a Psychobiography

Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, born in 1881, was the founder of modern Turkey. After World War I, in which the Turks fought against the Allies, the Ottoman Empire collapsed, and Turkey was invaded. The Turks generally believe it was Ataturk who, almost singlehandedly, inspired his war-weary compatriots to fight a war of independence. A brilliant military man, he became the first president of the modern Turkish nation and instituted drastic cultural changes that did much to westernize it. Although he died in 193 8, he is venerated in Turkey much as though be were still alive. His representation as “The Eternal Leader” is immortalized.

In 1984 the University of Chicago Press published his psychobiography, The Immortal Ataturk. It was written from an unabashedly psychoanalytic perspective by a psychoanalyst and a historian.[56] Since the book’s publication, it has received more attention from both scholars and lay persons than had been anticipated, and it has been reviewed in journals of different disciplines—psychoanalysis, history, political science, and political psychology—and in magazines and newspapers in the United States, Turkey, England, Israel, and northern Cyprus. In these reviews, and in the Tel Aviv conference on biography, the Ataturk psychobiography was praised. But criticism was of- 98 Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz fered as well, and doubts were expressed as to the value of applying psychoanalytic concepts to the understanding of leaders, especially those of the Middle East. This chapter does not discuss the methodology of psychoanalytic biography,[57] nor repeat our findings on Ataturk. It will deal directly with criticisms raised by our work, the first of which was the claim that the psychoanalytic approach to biography is of little value, and reductionist at best.

In addressing this claim, we concluded that our critics had leapt to the conclusion that all psychobiography is written from the standpoint of Freudian beliefs, for which these critics had little tolerance. We suspected

that those taking this view would dismiss Marxist historiography, women's studies, or quantitative historiography—indeed, anything new, largely because it is new, without asking why they find such enterprises threatening. In particular, they see something pruriently sexual in psychoanalysis, ignoring its use as a comprehensive model of the human mind and a key to understanding the intricacies of how we consciously and unconsciously see our world and balance internal against external demands. One Turkish reviewer remarked that reading our psychobiography of Ataturk was like entering his bedroom, a shocking performance for a Turk; this comment suggests that Ataturk represented the oedipal father to him. A few reviewers made fun of our psychoanalytic interpretations, and we felt this reaction might point to an effort by them to reverse anxiety that had been aroused by the sexual formulations. We were challenged, for example, on our explanation of Ataturk's refusal, or inability, to visit the former Ottoman capital of Istanbul after it became politically possible. He left that city for Anatolia in May 1919 to open the Turkish struggle for independence, a struggle that ended in October 1922. The visit he made to Istanbul in July 1927 was his first since leaving in 1919. We know that in the interim he was preoccupied with making the little Anatolian town, Ankara, into the capital of the new Turkey, but he could have gone to Istanbul during this time. We ascribed psychological reasons, both conscious and unconscious, for his not doing so, and he confirmed our intuitions about this in his own words, as we made clear in our book. It was his own utterance that explained how Istanbul had become a symbol for him. William Nieder- land has written of how a geophysical entity can represent externalized images, wishes, and fears.[58] The ability to symbolize differentiates humans from animals, but apparently our critics were unwilling to conceive of how Istanbul represented to the Turkish leader at this particular time in his life a mother to whom he was ambivalently related, possibly because this seemed to them an uncalled-for sexual reference.

Some of the criticisms have been so far off the mark that one is obliged to conclude that the critic either failed to read the whole book or was unable to understand the work. It seems obvious that the reviewers approached the book from long-held positions that they felt obliged to defend, and they failed to judge the material on its own merits.

To respond further to such critics would be to belabor the unending and largely intellectualized arguments heard since the days of Freud as to whether psychoanalysis is a science, and whether it is prurient. Peter Gay in his recent work on the life and times of Freud indicates that since Freud's proclamation of a dynamic unconscious and psychic determinism, psychoanalysis has been a favorite target for the wrath of certain intellectuals and pseudointellectuals.[59] We are reminded of Freud's musing that the discovery that the world is not the center of the universe, and then the claims of evolutionary theory, dealt narcissistic blows to humanity; clearly, the conclusion that a person has a dynamic unconscious, that the mind operates according to certain patterns, and that we are not always rational tops off the list of such injuries, injuries to which some of our critics appear to react still. In tne words of Matthew Arnold,

Let the long contention cease!

Geese are swans, and swans are geese. Let them have it how they will Thou art tired, best be still.

Reviewers who gave our work serious consideration usually agreed with some of our formulations, but the comments of some demand a response. First, it seems curious that these reviews appeared in journals for those interested in psychoanalysis or for historians or specialists in Near Eastern studies— and that the reviewers were specialists in one of these fields, without any real knowledge of the other. The writing of the Ataturk psychobiography was a collaboration between a historian with psychoanalytic training and a clinical psychoanalyst with a long-held interest in political psychology and familiarity from birth with the Turkish culture. The joint effort pooled diverse resources in such a way as to enhance the skills of each and to preclude any ill-founded conclusions. But few of the reviewers were capable of crossing over from psychoanalysis to history, or vice versa. In general, the reviews in psychoanalytic journals accepted the psychoanalytic conclusions (in spite of some remarks indicative of the operation of Freud's "narcissism of minor differences") but criticized some aspects of the historical analysis, the writer of one psychoanalytic journal praising our representation of psychoanalytic concepts but pointing to

“historical flaws.” At the same time, specialists in history took a more favorable view of historical aspects of the book than of the analytic material.

Second, although we took pains to make it clear that even the Armenians do not accuse Kemal Ataturk of being involved in the Armenian deportation, massacres, and countermassacres, much review space was unprofitably devoted to the Armenian issue. This matter is one much before the public today, and we sincerely hope that Armenians and Turks will make peace, sort out reality from emotional misperceptions, acknowledge each other’s grief, and validate each other’s humanity and self-esteem. But such matters lie beyond the scope of our book, in which our aim was to map out Ataturk’s mind, a mind that did not harbor genocidal thoughts toward any ethnic group.

Freud was keenly aware that “biographers are fixated on their heroes in a quite special way.”[60] He noted that a subject was often chosen on the basis of some special regard that arose from the writer’s own emotional life, and he feared that the result might be biased accordingly. We noted Freud’s comments about the idealization of the hero but recognized that devaluation of a public figure may also be the motivation for a biographer when the subject has become a displacement figure on which hatreds generated in the writer’s own childhood have been placed. We suggest that reviewers may also have transference feelings about the subject of a biography; under some circumstances, leaders, ethnicity, and nationality evoke strong and raw emotions that color perceptions and thought in dealing with such topics.[61]

Ataturk certainly seems to have induced strong feelings in some reviewers. Therefore we appreciate the candid remarks of a psychoanalyst of Greek origin whose mother was born and reared in Anatolia but moved to Athens with her family after the Turkish War of Independence, a war that brought catastrophe to Greeks living in Anatolia. This reviewer noted that Ataturk was obviously not his national hero but that, after some soul-searching and self-analysis, he read our book with an ease that surprised him. On the other hand, one reviewer who was an analyst-turned-historian (!) suggested that Ataturk had taken part in the Armenian problem, and compared him indirectly to Hitler. This was purely transference to Ataturk.

Our book pointed out the differences between reparative and destructive leaders who are charismatic and narcissistic.[62] We claim that Ataturk was a prime example of the former since, having been born into a house of mourning, he fantasied about saving his grieving mother, and this fantasy gave him the impetus to save his motherland. There is evidence for his wanting to repair and idealize his followers without devaluing or killing another group in order to feel superior. Hitler operated in the opposite way, using aggression in order to bolster his and his followers' self-esteem, and was thus an extreme example of the destructive leader. The invocation of Hitler's name in discussing Ataturk indicates the reviewer's need to project some hidden inner dread onto an imagined Ataturk quite different from the real one we studied and wrote about.

Some critics, who were not themselves psychoanalysts, claimed that our approach was reductionist, accounting for everything by reference to unconscious instinctual forces. The work of Erik Erikson and other rigorous historical scholarship should suffice to counter this accusation, but some analysts, notably J. E. Mack, continue to warn against reductionism, considering it a most pernicious pitfall in the writing of psychoanalytic biography.[63] A. Falk argues that reductionism should not be equated with the "nothing but" fallacy and adds that it is in fact "a legitimate scientific method because, in truth, all science is reductionist."[64]

Our approach to The Immortal Atatiirk required examination of his entire life with the assessment of the strength of his instinctual drives, the location of any developmental arrests, reconstruction of his infantile rescue fantasies, and consideration of infantile conflicts and the child's way of dealing with them, ways of adapting, and the nature of the identity crisis at adolescence. Our study also probed the nature of internal responses to external trauma and the handling of midlife issues, as well as psychic transformations and the reaction to aging and the approach of death. We looked at our subject's psychodynamics developmentally. Recent advances in theories of object relations, demonstrating how a cohesive sense of self is established, have enriched our approach to psychoanalytic biography.

Although some of our critics who were not analysts declared our approach Freudian, we are obviously fully aware of the enormous expansion of the field of psychoanalysis since Freud concluded his pioneering work, and of the need to incorporate wider psychoanalytic understanding. Psychoanalysis and Freud are no longer synonymous. Further misunderstandings occur iO4 Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz when a nonanalyst relies on theoretical papers without reference to clinical material. The psychoanalyst Ives Hendrick has written: “Psychoanalysis is misused by intellectuals, who argue its validity as if it were a philosophy, an ethical system, a set of theories; such discussions . . . seem alien and unproductive to the analyst himself, whose primary convictions originate in what his patients have told him.”[65]

We would be the last to deny that there are any problems in psychoanalytic biography. To understand these difficulties, compare the task of an analyst’s writing the biography of one of his or her analysands with that of writing the life story of a long-dead leader who was never psychoanalyzed. In psychoanalysis, a patient’s history unfolds before the analyst during many sessions, and by the end of the treatment, the analyst feels that he or she has the patient’s total biography, including previously unconscious motivations, fantasies, and defenses—and adaptations to them. Formerly repressed material has become available and new material has been constructed. An analyst writing his or her analysand’s biography would add meaning to the life story from the subject’s “internal reality.” Two examples of such inquiries are What Do You Get When You Cross a Dandelion with a Rose? and Six Steps in the Treatment of Borderline Personality Organization, although it must be admitted that a literally total biography is not attainable.[66]

Freud suggested using the archeologist’s model, the restoration by the analyst of pieces of the puzzle that are missing.[67] The analyst may be justified in filling in the missing pieces of the patient’s experience and may approach the truth very closely if what he or she supplies fits well into the tapestry of material apparent in the patient’s life. An analyst writing his or her successfully analyzed patient’s psychobiography can offer data not available to any other writer. The assumption is that the total history of the subject, in the sense used here, can be obtained only through clinical

psychoanalysis and by no other means such as simple interviews or perusal of the record of factual milestones of the life in question.

The method of clinical psychoanalysis, whether in treating or in gathering biographical data about the patient, follows certain principles and brings the analyst and analysand together in a highly specific way. Using Harry Sullivan's terminology, David Rapaport referred to this as "the participant-observation variant of the method of inter-personal relation," adding that this particular type of interpersonal relationship is nonindirective, using free association; is interpretive-genetic; and analyzes defenses.[68] In analysis much information is communicated nonverbally; the trained analyst is sensitive to the revelations of gesture, intonation, and syntax. The analyst also is on the alert for the repetition of patterns the patient developed in childhood in relation to those who were then important to him or her, notably family members. These patterns reappear in daily living, and in dreams and transference neuroses. Free association and the message of repeated patterns will not, however, yield a total history unless the repeated patterns are connected also with the transference, in which the patient displaces them onto the analyst. Rapaport noted that when techniques "are tied up to the concept of transference they are specifically psychoanalytic."[69]

The question remains as to how the biography of a leader who was never analyzed can be called psychoanalytic. Diaries and letters, added to what is known of the subject's political philosophy, artistic productions, and acts, tell much about a public figure, and the story of the subject's youth and growing achievements is often common knowledge. In the case of subjects not long dead, it may be possible to interview persons who had been close to them, or had been affected by them. (This was a very useful source in preparing our book on Ataturk.) Besides citing factual data, a psychoanalytic biography tries to grasp and interpret the unconscious meaning of what does come to light. Since so much depends on the skill of the biographer-analyst, there is always the possibility of a "wild analysis."

It is hard to gain information that will lead to "the royal road of the unconscious."[70] Even if the subject's dreams are known, his or her associations to them are not. The task is obviously easier when symbolic expression of the subject's inner world has been left in artistic productions.

The most difficult aspect of a psychoanalytic biography concerns the area of transference neurosis and the reconstruction of unconscious fantasies.

If we limit the scope of psychoanalysis to cases in which we have the benefit of a transference neurosis, we cannot apply the theory to the biography of someone never treated on the analyst's couch. We may ask, however, if we can find substitutes for the transference neurosis and be reasonably sure of the meaning of repeated patterns without it. Many psychoanalysts are optimistic about the availability of substitutes for the transference neurosis and those free associations that let us understand unconscious material.[71] Niederland found Heinrich Schliemann's "language exercises," in which Schliemann discovered unconscious wishes and dreams in sentences written to master a new language, very like free associations.[72] After all, transferences occur in everyday life, and given everyday transferences in which patterns clearly relate to known childhood events, we can be reasonably sure about the nature of these patterns without the close-up participant-observer evaluation possible in a transference neurosis.

For example, we are struck by Ataturk's fascination with the sun. The cover of our book shows him silhouetted against it, and the book's original title was "The Savior Sun." His public utterances were full of references to the sun and its warmth and brightness, and this was a signal for the psychoanalyst. However, we missed a clue; only after the book's publication did we recognize, tardily, the meaning of the name §emsi, which is "the illuminator," being derived from the Arabic word for sun, and which also was the name of a man critically important to Ataturk in his youth.

The devout mother of the young Mustafa had insisted that he attend religious school, but his father, shortly before he died, made it possible for his son to attend secular school under a teacher named §emsi Efendi, who seems to have become for the seven-year-old boy a badly needed substitute for a father lost during the oedipal period and idealized in spite of his lack of success and addiction to alcohol. The cogency of the name was brought out in a review of our book by Kemal Karpat in the American Historical Review; although opposed to psychoanalytic formulations, Karpat, a Turk, noted that "Ataturk referred to the sun and its life-giving power in many of his speeches."[73]

Analysts may be optimistic for another reason about biography that can be considered psychoanalytic. Little has been written about the usefulness in this connection of countertransference, which complements transference, although Mack, Falk, and Loewenberg provide exceptions.[74] Lacking the benefit of the transference neurosis with a subject who has not been analyzed (and a personal inclusion within that transference), the biographer is likely to seek a substitute in countertransference thoughts and feelings about the subject.

We assume that to call a biography psychoanalytic we must know how the writer deals with this countertransference. A psychoanalyst (or someone who has been well psychoanalyzed) will be uniquely able to handle this; failure to note and analyze countertransference may be an obstacle. At the outset of our project on Ataturk, we probed our motivation tor undertaking it and gave careful attention to what he meant to us. Moreover, we believe that writing in collaboration may help deal with countertransference issues. The involvement of other writers, especially those from other disciplines, can provide checks and balances.

A biographer at work lives with the mental image of his or her subject, and the mental representation of Ataturk was a valued companion to us during the seven years of work on his life story. When our book was published, the dean of the University of Virginia School of Medicine gave a reception for us. A night to remember with great pleasure, it marked the end of our association with Ataturk, and that night one of us dreamt of newspapers written in many different languages, all announcing Ataturk’s death. Although he felt sad in his dream, when he remembered it the next day he knew that he could now let his distinguished countryman rest in peace and could pass, like his coauthor, to other work.

** 6. History versus Biography

Shabtai Teveth

In the writing of outstanding lives, history and biography may seem, at first glance, to be complementary. But they will be found to be at odds once it is realized that the art of biography requires—both for its perfection and for its reputation as the most popular of nonfiction literary forms—careful selection and an appealing, yet sensible, blend of evidence and poetic license. In fact, these demands create in the biographer's mind a sharp conflict between biography's two principal elements: the writing of a life and the writing of history. Indeed, one may rightly refer to this clash as a case of history versus biography.

History deals with events. But events, we all know, mean different things to different people. The event that can drastically change one life can just as well leave no mark whatsoever on another. War is a good example: some who take part in it are marked by the experience for life, whereas for others it proves but a passing episode. That one event does not necessarily play the same role in two different lives will be found to be true even in regard to great statesmen whose lives are closely interwoven with the events of their times. Which of these events should be given precedence: those that changed the hero's life or the ones that altered the course of history? Even the biographer of a minor historical figure is familiar with this dilemma.

Nowhere is this dilemma more challenging than in David Ben-Gurion's case. [75] Any serious biographer is bound to recognize early on that his life almost totally coincided, at least from 1921 on, with the history of Zionism and of the Israeli state. In other words Ben-Gurion's life cannot properly be told without telling the history of Zionism, and vice versa. Yet such an enterprise, filling as it would many thick volumes, could hardly be considered biography in the orthodox sense. Are we to include in Ben-Gurion's life all of Zionism's main events, or only those that left their mark on him? History demands the first, although the requirements of selection and appealing narrative suggest the latter.

Lytton Strachey, I would imagine, can rightly be referred to as the apostle of selection. To satisfy lucidity, poetic figment, and brevity—his gods—he selected only those episodes in the lives of his Eminent Victorians that best highlighted their singular characteristics. But what was fine and admirable for miniature portraits of Florence Nightingale and Cardinal Manning, or even

Elizabeth and Essex, would hardly do for a Churchill or a Lenin. Even Solzhenitsyn’s Lenin in Zurich, penetrating as it may be, is only a sketch. In all these, history gets short shrift—too short. History wants neither sketches nor miniatures but rather insists on full-length portraits, in which monograms done in lace are clearly legible.

But the rivalry between the muse of history and the muse of biography does not end here. They both appreciate personal details, and neither will give up on mentioning Caesar s prowess as a lover and a swimmer, or Beethoven’s growing loss of hearing. Both muses recognize a connection between their hero’s achievements or failures and his life story. Yet they are not of one mind as to the importance or the scope of this connection. History, undoubtedly, would have given Caesar and Beethoven their proper place even if the first had been a cripple and the latter had ears as sharp as a rabbit’s. The Ninth Symphony, history would argue, stands by itself, and that is the main thing. Biography, however, would be twice as enthusiastic about the symphony because it was conceived in total deafness and would inquire to what extent the orchestration and particularly the soprano’s role are indebted to this deafness. Furthermore, this muse would research relentlessly the nature of Beethoven’s deafness, and whether its origin was hereditary syphilis. The biographer, more than the historian, would strive to understand the relations between Caesar and his friends and adversaries as the motive, and perhaps the compass, of the endeavor.

Thus, the disagreement on events does not abate when personal details are at issue. History concerns itself with the fact tnat Ben-Gurion drew conclusions from Mein Kampf, whereas to the biographer the story that in August 1933, at a short stop in Munich’s railway terminal, Ben-Gurion bought only Hitler’s book and Sprinzak cigarettes is of value, this story showing how much sharper than his colleagues was Ben-Gurion’s political sense. The same would apply to the detailed accounts of the groceries with which Ben-Gurion fed himself in November 1938 in London: “ham, canned beef, tomatoes, lettuce, eggs and cheese.” Trivial, yet how well this information helps the biographer in describing the loneliness of Ben-Gurion, who ate in his hotel room and there listened to the radio speeches by Hitler and Chamberlain, speeches that decided the fate of the world and the fate of both Europe’s Jews and Zionism. The biographer must therefore decide which personal details are truly important: only those that left their

impact on history or also those that define and characterize the hero and add color to the narrative.

There is no ready-made compromise. It is up to the biographer to reconcile these conflicting demands, to impose on them a personal solution, knowing full well that no matter what is done in this regard he or she will be accused of committing a crime. Should selection and narrative be favored, the biographer will feel the wrath of historians; should history be given pride of place, readers will be scared away.

In a way it is the biographer's object all sublime, to paraphrase Gilbert, to let the punishment fit the crime. One's ability to let both history and biography represent themselves will decide the degree of one's art. Generally speaking, the less offensive he or she is to either history or biography, the better. Yet, sound advice as this undoubtedly is—is it practical? No. And that is why, to this writer's mind, the biographer who can fully acquit himself or herself in "doing" the life of any major historical figure, let alone one suspected of genius, has yet to be born.

There is a third approach open to the biographer, a very tempting one: to regard "life" as drama. But far from making the biographer's task easier, this option renders it, if this is at all imaginable, far more difficult. For as if two conflicting elements were not enough, this course introduces yet a third. In drama, the argument goes, the hero must be on stage in full view of the audience, if not always then at least most of the time. (Brecht, who once argued to the contrary, clamoring for a play with no hero, was unwilling or unable, great dramatist that he was, to produce one himself.) Now, if biography is to be taken for a play, then the hero must be in evidence on nearly every page. This dictum of the hero's ubiquity leaves little room for historical background (that is, the empty stage, or several pages without the hero), thus further aggravating the biographer's crimes against history. And this is only for starters. For drama, with its strong taste for struggle, would further narrow the field of dramatis personae and events included in the biography to those with which the hero comes to grips directly.

To do justice to the broader backdrop, the biographer as a dramatist will have to resort to “on-the-job” training. In other words, he or she will have to incorporate historical information into the dramatic plot. Robert Graves has shown, in I, Claudius, and still better in Wife to Mr. Milton, how this can be done. The hero either “exploits” the major figures and events that bear on his life or “is exploited” by them. In the case of a bold and imaginative national leader, this technique would involve the events he or she created, used, played with, or even rode the crest of. The catch here is obviously a simple one: if this dramatic rule is to be kept, few candidates will be found fit to star in a biography of this sort, one in which history and plot are at peace with each other.

In this sense the biographer of Ben-Gurion is rather fortunate: Ben-Gurion excelled in what he himself called “exploiting disaster,” that is, turning adversity into advantage. Thus Ben- Gurion provides his biographer with plenty of events from which to choose without the latter running the risk of giving too much offense to history.

To understand Ben-Gunon’s political thinking, one must keep in mind that he was born into what was called, by him and by many other Zionists, “the Jewish disaster”—the pogroms and general misery that were, for many centuries, the lot of Jewry, especially in the central and eastern parts of Europe. His singularity was encapsulated in his view of this disaster as a fount of strength, and in his single-mindedness in harnessing it—the way one would wish to turn nothingness into substance, darkness into light, disadvantage into advantage—to the chariot of Zionism. Furthermore, Ben-Gurion set out to fulfill this unique mission with the greatest possible urgency. His fear of “the destruction of Jewry,” in Europe by Hitler and in Palestine by Arabs, proved to be, throughout the 1930s, the compass and the engine behind his political thinking. “Disaster,” Zionism’s strength, was the “lever,” as he put it, by which he expected the Zionist dream to be fulfilled. In March 1936, he laid down that Zionism must immediately “begin the policy of a Jewish state.” However, the Jewish state was not the end but the means, yet another “lever” to enable “in a minimum of time a maximum of Jewish immigrants” to come to Palestine, and there to create a Jewish majority.

The Arab Revolt, which broke out in April 1936 and lasted three years, threatened the very existence of the Yishuv—the Jewish community of Palestine—then 400,000 strong. Unlike many who feared the Yishuv's collapse, Ben-Gurion greeted the danger heartily, as if it were a heaven-sent challenge to his special talent for turning adversity into advantage. In a spate of imagination and energy and against vehement opposition within his own party and the Yishuv as a whole, he set about using the revolt to launch his "Jewish state policy." The Arab economic boycott would enable the Yishuv, hitherto dependent on Arab farm produce and Arab workers, to develop into a selfsustaining community, what he termed a "Jewish economy." The constant Arab raids on Jewish settlements would facilitate

the strengthening of the Yishuv's defense infrastructure as the groundwork for the army of the future state. And the closure of Palestine's two Arab-manned ports, at Jaffa and Haifa, would pave the way for the improvisation of an off-shore port in Tel Aviv, then the country's only Jewish town. This "Jewish port," both as a symbol and a physical asset, was to him the most important step toward independence. On May 17, 1936, only a day after the port opened for business, Ben-Gurion noted in his diary: "Had there been no loss of life—for which there is no recompense—all the economic destruction would have justified giving the [Arab] rioters a prize for their share in this wonderful creation."

Having proven his mettle as a "disaster-exploiter" par excellence, Ben-Gurion was ready to apply his concept of "disaster means strength" to the European theater. He presaged the Nazi "destruction" of Europe's Jews as early as January 1934 and repeatedly warned that time was running out for them. As Hitler gathered power, Ben-Gurion called on Zionist parties and world Zionist organizations alike to turn "disaster ... to productive force" and "misery," another "political resource," into a "lever." The destruction of European Jewry, he told his party, was an accelerating factor "in the implementation of our enterprise." In May 1936, he explained to his political colleagues: "We want Hitler destroyed, but while he lasts—it is in our interest to exploit this fact for the build-up of Palestine."

The Yishuv in Palestine, he argued, was the only haven for Europe's Jews, their one and only rescue. Not wishing to wait for history to prove him right,

Ben-Gurion energetically explored a number of avenues of rescue while there still was time. In 1934 he negotiated with Palestinian Arab leaders the creation of a federation with Syria, Iraq, and Transjordan, on the understanding that the Jewish state would be entitled to bring in six, even eight, million Jews; in 1937 he was willing to accept partition and a tiny Jewish state, only because it would at least be free to open its gates to Hitler's would-be victims. His idea of "exploiting" Hitler was that Jewish and world opinion recognize the rightness of his cause, the Jewish state, and help to set it up as quickly as possible. But all his predictions and warnings fell on deaf ears.

It was his custom to state, or indeed overstate, his position in stark alternatives; as the years passed and doomsday drew near for Europe's Jews, Ben-Gurion used ever bolder language. His total dedication to the "historic interest," sometimes even to the exclusion of the individual, found extreme expression in December 1938 when, in a reductio ad absurdum, he told his party's Central Committee: "Were I to know that the rescue of all German Jewish children could be achieved by their transfer to England, and of only half their number by transfer to Palestine, I would opt for the latter—because our concern is not only the personal interest of these children, but the historic interest of the Jewish people."

This brutal formulation reflected his bitterness at the world's indifference to Jewish misery, revealed by the Evian Conference; at Britain's betrayal of Zionism, following the horrors of Kristallnacht; and at the blatant hypocrisy of the British government in claiming that the Jewish question could be solved in Angola, in Guyana, or elsewhere, all the while refusing to allow the rescue of 10,000 German Jewish children by sending them to Palestine. The horrors of the Holocaust were still in the future, unimaginable by Ben-Gurion or by anyone else. He knew very well that his formulation was purely theoretical and that there was no hope of rescuing the German Jewish children anyway. In using words to which later events gave a different and unintended meaning, his purpose was to hammer home the axiom that a true rescue of the Jewish people was possible only in Palestine, and that the only real choice that confronted European Jewry, children and adults alike, was for halt and even less to be saved in Palestine, or not to be saved at all.

It was this belief that drove him to militate throughout the war years for a Jewish state, and to inspire and orchestrate Hitler’s survivors—whom he was the first Zionist leader to meet, in 1944 and 1945—in voicing the single demand for a Jewish state. If the establishment of Israel in May 1948 can be seen, at least in part, as directly resulting from the Holocaust, then Ben-Gurion could have claimed this to be his most stupendous “exploitation.” Surely no one would dispute that the Holocaust followed by a Jewish state was better than the Holocaust without Israel. Yet to steer such a course when the Holocaust was in progress, to embed his policy in the minds of the broken refugees from the death camps, to motivate them to proclaim the Zionist cause because humanity owed it to them—this took a great deal more than mere courage and imperviousness. It called for a very special sort of person, one whose vision was soaring unarrested and whose self-control was absolute. That Ben-Gurion was such a man, that only twice was he unable to stop his tears on meeting the survivors, that there was a great roaring inside him and—well, that is what his biography should be all about.

** 7. The Biographical Element in Political History

Uriel Dann

I am a student of political history and not a biographer. But I have a penchant for the role of the individvual. It is purely a matter of preference; there is no J ■ principle involved, and of course I try not to lose sight [v] of the nameless forces that go far to shape the human destiny. All the same, each major theme that has so far taken my attention has one person who occupies center stage: General Qasim as the “Sole Leader” during the first years of the Iraqi republic, Amir Abdallah in Transjordan under the mandate, and King Husayn in Jordan during its struggle for survival. This inclination must be my personal preference, and not something peculiar to the Middle Eastern political scene, for a study on Western Europe in the eighteenth century that recently kept me busy for three years also centers on an

individual, a Baron von Miinchhausen. (He is not the famous teller of tall stories, I hasten to add, but a distant relation.)

I do not consciously couple my work as a political historian with any discipline other than history—be it political science, or economics, or sociology, or anthropology, or psychology. This may be the result of my lack of formal training in these disciplines; or else, my lack of training may be the result of my never having felt the urge to take them up. However that may be, if this makes me a “pragmatic” historian, that tag is as good

I18 as any. (A reviewer once called me a “pragmatic historian” in this context, in no unfriendly spirit.) And if you think the deficiency diminishes the value of my work, then I just have to face my critics, inductively, point by point to be sure. Face the argument as a whole, conceptually, I cannot; I do not feel competent to plead whether or not a political historian must also be trained as a political scientist, or in any other of the additional disciplines I mentioned above.

As to the distinction between biography and political history with a biographical bias, the key is obviously relevant to the overall theme of the work, but some pondering is still useful. Respecting certain societies during certain periods, such as Western Europe in the nineteenth century, the ordinary measure of common sense is a fair guide for the historian. Take for instance Benjamin Disraeli. An outstanding trait of his personality was his need for women. Not, indeed, sexually; he was no womanizer. But he constantly needed female sympathy, admiration, even mothering. Yet Disraeli the politician and statesman was not appreciably bent by this trait. You will not find his sister and his wife, or Henrietta Sykes and Lady Bradford, given any prominence in a political history of Victorian England, not even one focusing on the leaders of that time. Try, however, to remove women from Robert Blake’s wonderful biography of Disraeli and see the havoc—and Lord Blake is as fine a political historian as any today.

The Middle East in the twentieth century poses a more difficult problem; at least, most political societies there do so most of the time. The reason is clear. The phenomenon of the “hero”—not necessarily a term of approval—is

much more general in the Middle East than in the West, for reasons that are a major object of independent research. (The giants of the West during the first half of this century are not characteristic of their society over a longer span.) In our present context, this phenomenon, the prevalence of a hero, makes the task of the political historian more complicated or, if you like, more idiosyncratic. Amir Abdallah loved chess. He also had a trick of assuming a diffident smile when talking to important Britishers. King Husayn goes in (or perhaps used to go in) for speed driving. He divorced his first wife with considerable cruelty, such as is not usually associated with him. General Qasim loved to tour the streets of Baghdad at night, Harun al-Rashid-like. All this is meat for the biographer. Does it have a rightful place in political histories? Considering the societies in which these persons moved, I think it has. But what place? And, more important, how can I ensure that 1 pursue what is after all a penchant of mine in a manner conforming to the agreed rules of our profession? And, with respect, what are these rules?

At the risk of appearing trite, I will make a few points. The first is, I believe, the most controversial, and for that reason I bring it first, and not because it is more important than others. Whether you are a biographer or a political historian with a biographer's bias, you should have a liking for your chief actor. Of course you must preserve your critical faculty—the more so, since you have, by my definition, that liking. But unless you develop a certain affinity, a human fellow-feeling, I think you cannot have the necessary empathy. This underlying liking is in most cases a sort of dowry that the historians bring to their task. After all, they rarely choose a theme with which they have not been well acquainted for some time. There are exceptions: I myself was entirely ignorant of Gerlach von Miinchhausen's existence when I began work on the relations between Hanover and England under George II, and lo and behold, the study turned out to have as much a biographical bias as anything I had ever touched on twentieth-century Iraq, Transjordan, or Jordan. I quickly grew a liking, mixed with respect, for the man—the leading minister of Hanover to be sure, but neither a great statesman nor a paragon in any other way. And he had as much charisma as a dish cloth. Conversely, I know that I could not do anything of value that centered on Saddam Husayn's Iraq, or Nasser's Egypt or, for that matter, on Prussia under Frederick the Great. 1 dislike the protagonists, and that is that. My own limitations need not apply to everybody. But I do not recall any biography that I valued when I sensed that the biographer was fundamentally antagonistic to the hero. Here you may ask, what about biographies of Hitler, or Mussolini, or

Stalin—those which, by professional consensus, are of high standing? I have no ready answer. With some hesitation I suggest that these works are exceptional in that the biographers strove to give a rational fundament to their previous loathing.

Empathy should follow, provided you put in a lot of time and work over a long period. Empathy may become an obsession that reaches a climax as the job in hand nears fulfillment. The obsession soon fades; I have never heard of a historian suffering permanent damage. But I shall never forget, nor did my wife, how I once awoke in the small hours of the night believing that I was Abd al-Karim Qasim. The delusion passed.

Affinity and empathy are worthless professionally, as opposed to, perhaps, aesthetically, unless they are founded on knowledge—the knowledge of evidence or “facts.” I dislike belaboring the obvious, but there are points that I still have to stress: First, the effort involved in the search. This sounds elementary; it should be, but it is not. Second, the distinction between what your mind must register while you prepare your study and what finally passes all sieves to enter your product. Regarding the former, truly all that comes to your mill except the palpably trivial is grist. (There is no ironclad definition of what is palpably trivial, but we are expected, after all, to exercise some judgment.) I think that it is the blurring of this distinction that gives “facts” the slightly derogatory tang that they commonly have in the profession. There is a phrase in a recent essay on psychohistory that expresses disdain for the “mere recital of facts.”[76] Apart from the context (which I do not find convincing), the idea itself that a “mere recital of facts” is something to be held in disdain disturbs me. Of course we do not want a chronicle of disconnected facts, but is this at issue? We certainly cannot do without considering the secret self, the inner myth, particularly not in biography. Being children of our times, we are less likely to ignore the secret self than to overrate it. Yet I believe that one ounce of fact is worth a ton of speculation. I also believe that “le bon dieu est dans le petit detail”— I have just found the sentiment in Professor Shlomo Ben-Ami’s foreword to the first issue of the Mediterranean Historical Review. Incidentally, the Germans say, “der Teufel steckt im Detail.” God or the devil—it depends on whether you get your detail right or wrong.

You must absorb the ambience through proficiency in the language and personal acquaintance with the surroundings associated with your theme. The former, linguistic proficiency, should be a matter of course, but it is not, and again I will leave it at that. Regarding the latter, the recent years have been both kind and unkind to Israelis. The opening of Egypt is priceless; Morocco may follow soon, and possibly it has already opened up to some extent. Iran has been closed to us since 1979. Turkey is less accessible to Israelis than it used to be. Saddest of all is the increasing difficulty for us Jewish Israelis in creating, and maintaining, meaningful contact with the Arab sector, not merely in the West Bank and Gaza, but even this side of the Green Line. This last phenomenon has of course a significance that transcends our professional interest.

What of the potential sources? The national archives of Middle Eastern countries are closed, so far as I know, to most scholars studying the period since World War I. Still, there is a trend toward greater liberality. Israel adheres to the thirty-years rule, by and large. Jordanian files in eastern Jerusalem and elsewhere in the West Bank are mostly open to research. Professor Hanna Batatu has had access to Iraqi police and security files. Egyptian authorities may give access as a favor to the royal archives at Abdm Palace. Jordanian archives seem to have become more accessible, in certain fields. I will add that for the political historian of the modern Middle East the Western public archives are a pretty good substitute, with their thirty-years rule, and with the even more recent official material that is continuously declassified in the United States along quite liberal lines.

I deem it especially important to put in a word for the much- maligned Arabic press. If there is one professional achievement of which I am proud, it is the use to which I have put the Iraqi press of Qasim’s time, and if there is one negative criticism of my work that I think downright ignorant, it is the criticism that I made use of that press. Indeed, journalism in the Arab world is often the object of censorship, regimentation, bribery, harassment, and outright persecution. But publishers, editors, and plain correspondents have as a matter of self-preservation grown an intelligence superior to that of the authorities, and they often find a way to deliver their messages—whether of fact or of opinion. At least, I would advise the historian to assume that they have found the way, and to look for it. The quest may be astoundingly rewarding. (Lebanon is a special case, in regard to its press as in so much

else. Here the researcher’s overriding need is to determine who directs whom, and to what extent.)

Interviews with actors on the stage are an important source in Arab countries that is largely denied to the Israeli historian— largely, though by no means entirely so. I would have given a lot to have talked to General Qasim or to King Husayn. I would have to evaluate their knowledgeability, their frankness, and their truthfulness, but the ability to do so is a test that every historian must pass. For me, it is not to be. I find some comfort in that I am spared one temptation that faces the historian who makes a point of cultivating living sources. I know one colleague, and an eminent colleague at that, whom I suspect of dealing with undue leniency with high-placed interviewees who might, if offended, withhold further cooperation. But mine may be merely a case of sour grapes.

Lastly, I love to gaze at portraits. A good many of course do not tell a thing, but I find that the majority do. And here I will mention the caveats. First, the message of a portrait is personal; your man, or woman, looks at you benevolently, or cunningly, or stupidly—it is all the same photograph, and the reading depends on your individuality, and often on your predisposition. Second, and this of course is an external factor, the message of a portrait depends on the circumstances in which it was taken. Look at Qasim in 1958 and in 1962. The ravages of four years of power, and the corruption of that power, stare from his eyes into ours. But then, the earlier portrait was taken in repose, whereas the latter shows a demagogue in full action. Who can say for certain how far the two are comparable?[77] And who can say whether the frightened little boy propped up against his frightening father’s side has something to tell us about Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi fifty years after?[78] Still, trying to read portraits is a fascinating game, and I would not do without it.

This brings me to autobiographies, or memoirs, and their usefulness to the political historian of the modern Middle East, as distinct from the biographer. As to the incidence—not too bad, so far as my personal interest as a historian is concerned: Abdallah’s Mudhakkirat and the Takmila, King Husayn’s Uneasy Lies the Head and Ma Guerre avec Israel, and works by a few

Transjordanian-Jordanian and a host of Iraqi politicians. The direct gain to the political historian is remarkably small. But as you read between the lines, you do gain in the understanding of political processes at work, beyond the actor-writer's personality. Abdallah describing the stewardship of the chief British representative at Amman after 1924, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Cox, as "a difficult time for . . . the Hashemite family," when "much patience was necessary," provides a shattering understatement that helps to explain why Abdallah proved indestructible. And King Husayn abstaining from mentioning with even a single word the Suez Canal nationalization in July 1956 shows how ill-conceived his Arab-nationalist (qawmi) period seemed to him after a few years and, by implication, how ill it must have sat on him even in 1956.

I have said what I wanted to say. I think it is relevant, or else I would not have said it. But I do not want you to think that I have lost my sense of proportion. Gibbon says somewhere that the cardinal virtues in a historian are diligence and accuracy. (I have failed in my attempt to locate the quotation; hence I certainly lack diligence, and probably accuracy.) Gibbon was a political historian with a penchant for the role of the individual, like myself. He was not a historian of the Middle East, but this gives me no special latitude.

** 8. A Sampler of Biography and Self-Narrative

Martin Kramer

In A comprehensive survey of Middle Eastern historiography written some fifteen years ago, the historian Albert Hourani determined that "there are almost no satisfactory biographies, even in the modern period." That verdict is less apt today, for there are now numerous biographies, influenced by most major schools of biographical writing, that do satisfy more demanding tastes. Still, major gaps remain. The aim of this sampler is to direct the reader to a number of books in English that are representative of various

approaches to biography and self-narrative. This selection is offered as an abbreviated guide to anyone who wishes to compare these approaches, and a practical reading list for courses on Middle Eastern biography, self-narrative, personalities, and leadership. The suggestions are for readers with a primary interest in the modern period. Preference is given to American over British editions, and to the most recent editions or reprints.

The best biographies of Middle Eastern subjects are those of political intellectuals—persons who shaped the ideas of nationalism, reformism, and revolution. The mark left by these figures was often more profound than that of the leaders and rulers who were their contemporaries. And unlike the leaders and rulers, many political intellectuals have left private papers that thoroughly document the evolution of their ideas and politics.

The most prominent figure of this kind was Sayyid Jamal al- Din “al-Afgham,” reckoned as the intellectual precursor of many of the major trends in modern political thought—from reformism to fundamentalism, from nationalism to Pan-Islam. The amount of writing on Afghani is formidable, with even a published bibliography devoted to studies of him. This biographical endeavor culminated in Nikki R. Keddie’s Sayyid Jamal ad-Din “al-Afghani”: A Political Biography (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972). Keddie’s definitive book, which rests on detective work in many European and Middle Eastern archives, succeeded in dispelling the last wisps of fog that had obscured Afghani’s life and works. It is instructive to compare the full biography to Keddie’s article, “Sayyid Jamal ad-Din ‘al-Afghani’: A Case of Posthumous Charisma?,” in Philosophers and Kings: Studies in Leadership, ed. Dankwart A. Rustow (New York: Braziller, 1970), 148—79. In the article Keddie attempts “a psycho-historical analysis” of Afghani, drawing on theoretical literature on paranoia and its relationship to latent homosexuality. The speculative points made in the article were excluded from the full biography, perhaps because, as Keddie noted, “psychological analyses of heroes are often resented, and doubly so when a non-Muslim Westerner writes about a Muslim Easterner.”

A second example, of comparable worth, is Hamid Algar’s Mirza Malkum Khan: A Study in the History of Iranian Modernism (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press,

1973), which painstakingly reconstructs the winding life of a leading Iranian Muslim reformer and reveals it to be something quite different than historians had hitherto assumed. The author’s tone is clearly hostile toward his subject, who is cast in the role of manipulative charlatan, but the charlatanry is documented with impressive thoroughness.

Yet another example is William Cleveland’s Islam against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), a biography of still another Muslim intellectual and activist, who spent the decades between World War I and II in Geneva as a pamphleteer for Arab and Muslim independence. This study tends to extend the benefit of the doubt to the subject, who was enmeshed in intrigue and compromising alliances. The language of the book, however, is a model of balance, and the archival research is thorough. Cleveland, it should be noted, is perhaps the only historian of the modern Middle East to regard himself as a biographer. He is the author of an earlier study of another political intellectual, The Making of an Arab Nationalist: Otto-manism and Arabism in the Life and Thought of Sat? al-Husri (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); Cleveland is now preparing a biography of George Antonius.

There are a number of other stimulating biographies of intellectuals. Particularly noteworthy is the study by Charles D. Smith, Islam and the Search for Social Order in Modern Egypt: A Biography of Muhammad Husayn Haykal (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), which is presented as a “social biography.” Two examples of shorter studies, which fall somewhere between biography and intellectual portraiture, are Uriel Heyd’s Foundations of Turkish Nationalism: The Life and Teachings of Ziya Gokalp (London: Luzac, 1950) and Irene L. Gendzier’s The Practical Visions of Ya[c]qub Santf (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966). Many of the most important figures in Middle Eastern intellectual history have not yet had their lives written in English, including such central thinkers as Muhammad 'Abduh and Rashid Rida. There are, however, shorter sketches of such thinkers, the best known being Albert Hourani’s Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Autobiographies by intellectuals are numerous, but the available English translations are few. Particularly valuable, therefore, are Salama Musa's The Education of Salama Musa (Leiden: Brill, 1961) and Ahmad Amin's My Life: The Autobiography of an Egyptian Scholar, Writer and Cultural Leader (Leiden: Brill, 1978). One such work that has always been one of the most popular books for the teaching of Arabic in America is Taha Husayn's autobiography, published in parts and in various editions as An Egyptian Childhood, The Stream of Days, and A Passage to France. Recently the book has been reinterpreted in Fedwa Malti-Douglas's Blindness and Autobiography: Al-Ayyam of Taha Husayn (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), a work that also has much to say on broader questions of self-narrative.

The modern rulers and leaders of the Middle East have been less well served by biographers. In many cases, the necessary source materials are inaccessible, even for rulers whose dynasties have long since disappeared. None of the major modernizing rulers of the nineteenth century has been the subject of a first-rate biography, although the lives of some have been sketched as part of an overall discussion of their reforms. Noteworthy among such works are the studies by Stanford J. Shaw, Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Se- Um III, 1789—1807 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); by L. Carl Brown, The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, 18371855 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); and by Afaf Lutfi Sayyid-Marsot, Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). In each of these books, a powerful individual stands at center stage, although none of these studies is conceived or executed as a full biography. The limitations in writing about palace lives are perhaps best evoked by Franz Babinger in his monumental Mehmed the Conqueror and His Time (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978): "It is even more difficult to obtain a reliable portrait of Mehmed the man than of Mehmed the ruler. Any attempt to derive a complete picture of his character and personality from the statements of contemporaries and chance observers is a hazardous undertaking. Nearly everything that was said of him in his lifetime reflected either boundless, slavish admiration and deification or hatred and contempt." In such circumstances, the custom has always been to write not just the life but the times, often with emphasis on the latter.

The last and most visible of the palace lives, those lived in the last decades of the nineteenth century, could prove to be exceptions, but they have not yet received scholarly attention. Perhaps the most compelling among them is the “Red Sultan,” Abdiilhamid II—the remarkable product of a once-great Ottoman palace system in decline, and a personality marked by calculating shrewdness and scarred by fear. His life has inspired a few biographical studies by amateurs. Alma Wittlin’s Abdul Hamid: The Shadow of God (London: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1940) presents itself as a “psychological study,” based “especially on the unpublished testimony of persons who once formed a part of the Sultan’s entourage—members of the imperial family, officials, palace-secretaries, sons of members of the Government and women of the Harem.” This work has been described more than once as a biographical novel, although it is not without art. The later book by Joan Haslip, The Sultan: The Life of Abdul Hamid II (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), does not take the story much further. The richness of the Ottoman archives, with the large number of administrative and personal documents that the sultan himself generated, now makes Abdiilhamid II a prime candidate for a scholarly biography. Nasir al-Din Shah, the Qajar ruler of Iran during roughly the same period, is an equally worthy subject for a biography, and one is now reportedly in preparation by Abbas Amanai. This potential is ably evoked by Ehsan Yar-Shater in “Observations on Nasir al-Din Shah,” in Qajar Iran, ed. E. Bosworth and C. Hillenbrand (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1983), 3-13. There are still no scholarly biographies of the ambitious Khedives Isma'il and Abbas Hilmi of Egypt.

The rulers and leaders who rose to preeminence after the collapse of the Ottoman and Qajar empires have inspired a number of amateur and journalistic biographies. Fewer scholarly biographies have been attempted and the distinction between the two approaches is often quite striking. Although historians prefer documentarv materials and sometimes would rather wait until their subject has spoken his or her last, journalists are most at home with the interview and actually prefer to examine living and breathing subjects. The great merit of journalistic biographies is that they often contain rare information and insights. Often they are beautifully written and are free of theorizing jargon. Their principal defect is their tendency to judge their subjects with sometimes unabashed partisanship, and always with haste (for journalists must rush to press). It is often a worthwhile exercise to compare biographies by journalists, written at close range, to

accounts of the same lives written by scholars more remote from their subjects. The instances that lend themselves to direct comparison are few but will be noted below

For the Arab Fertile Crescent, many major figures have not yet found their biographers. Particularly striking is the absence of serious biographies for the Hashemites, including Sharif (later King) Husayn and his son Faysal, who ruled briefly in Damascus and established the (short-lived) Hashemite dynasty in Baghdad. Lord Birdwood's Nuri as-Said: A Study in Arab Leadership (London: Cassell, 1959) is an openly sympathetic account of one of Faysal's chief lieutenants, based on long talks with the subject. The author, however, chose to avoid inquiry into "the details of family life," because they were of "little interest" to the subject himself, and "I would rather this record was in accordance with the wishes of the great man concerned than that it should offer sensational attraction"—a remarkable concession for any biographer to make to a subject. Later rulers in Baghdad still have few biographers. Uriel Dann's Iraq under Qassem: A Political History, 1958-1963 (New York: Praeger, 1969) sets the man in his context but is not intended as a full biography. A line of biographers of Saddam Husayn formed quickly after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The best of these works to date is Efraim Karsh and Inari Rautsi's Saddam Hussein: A Political Biography (New York: Free Press, 1991).

Jordan's more enduring branch of the Hashemite line has been considered in Mary C. Wilson's King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). This is a hostile portrait of an 'Abdallah consumed by an ambition that ultimately consumed Palestine as well. However, the work does not pretend to be a full biography and sketches Abdallah only in such detail as its argument requires. For King Husayn, there is only James Lunt's Hussein of Jordan: Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace (New York: Morrow, 1989). Lunt does "not doubt that my admiration for the King will be evident"—so much so that he is compelled to add that the biography was not commissioned, although it was "written with the King's agreement."

Two biographies of Syria's president, Hafiz al-Asad, provide an opportunity to compare the work of journalist and scholar. Patrick Seale's Asad of

Syria: The Struggle for the Middle East (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989) is “not an official biography” but one very much indebted to the personal rapport established between the journalist and his subject. Contrast this with Moshe Ma’oz’s Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988), written at double the distance by an Israeli academic. Few Lebanese leaders have inspirational qualities that transcend sect, but the life of one has been artfully told in Fouad Ajami’s The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986). The author has based his work largely on interviews with those who were close to his subject, and the portrait is admiring but not overbearing.

It is difficult to say the same for the work done on Palestinian leaders. Philip Mattar’s The Mufti of Jerusalem: Muhammad Amin al-Husavni and the Palestine Question (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) strikes one possible balance of interpretation but is very thin on important and controversial chapters in the mufti’s life. Thomas Kiernan’s Arafat: The Man and the Myth (New York: Norton, 1976) creates a few myths of its own by getting facts wrong. Alan Hart’s Arafat: A Political Biography (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989) casts its subject in a heroic light; this work is an “epic story” cataloging the “miracle of his leadership” and has embarrassed even some of Arafat’s admirers. For Arafat’s Palestinian rivals, little material is available. An example of the rather dubious genre of the intelligence biography, which relies on privileged leaks, is Yossi Melman’s The Master Terrorist: True Story of Abu Nidal (New York: Adama Books, 1986).

Nowhere have the amateur biographers served their subjects so uncritically as in their accounts of the House of Saud. David Howarth’s The Desert King: A Life oflbn Saud (London: Collins, 1964) is the most independent-minded study of the founder of the present kingdom, and still it lionizes the “desert king” and mourns the corruption of his heirs. Those heirs have not been examined by discriminating eyes, but the existing studies do include much useful grist. Such is the case with Gerald de Gaury’s Faisal: King of Arabia (London: Arthur Barker, 1966), which salutes Saudi Arabia’s “good fortune in having Faisal, the boy from Najd, now King, as guide.” Vincent Sheean’s Faisal: The King and His Kingdom (Tavistock, England: Butler, 1975) was written out of

personal friendship, and this fact clearly shows. Biography by “friends” is perhaps the inevitable first step on the road to more diverse representations but is arguably more an obstacle than a useful preface to critical work.

King Faruq of Egypt has yet to find his biographer, although he would make a fascinating subject given his popular reputation for extravagance and debauchery—and the more important fact that his reign was pivotal to Egypt’s transformation by revolution. A rather uneven first effort is Barrie St. Clair McBride’s Farouk of Egypt (New York: A. S. Barnes, 1968). In contrast, Nasser has been the subject of many biographies, both by journalists and scholars. There is, for example, Jean Lacouture’s Nasser, A Biography (New York: Knopf, 1973), a lucid account colored, as he says, with a “critical sympathy” for Nasser. Compare it to P. J. Vatikiotis’s Nasser and His Generation (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1978), which is longer on criticism and shorter on sympathy. Nasser’s successor is virtually skewered in David Hirst and Irene Beeson’s Sadat (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), a work by two journalists that is sometimes little more than an eloquent diatribe against their subject. “Sadat was by no means the world’s most absolute ruler,” they write, “but his career illustrated, in a remarkable way, how far the personal can predominate over the political and, when the personal is as peculiar as it was in him, what perversities, in the name of policy, can then ensue.” Contrast this with Raphael Israeli’s Man of Defiance: A Political Biography of Anwar Sadat (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble Books, 1985), which claims only to evoke Sadat’s “thinking, his hesitations, his fears, his images and the reasoning behind his acts,” without “delving into value judgments of any sort.” Still, this work finds him more hero than buffoon.

Ataturk is the subject of a vast amount of biographical writing in Turkish and of two important biographies in English. Lord Kinross’s Ataturk (New York: Morrow, 1965) is an impressively researched biography that draws on the recollections of many who knew and worked under Ataturk. Its perspective is naturally admiring. The study by Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz, The Immortal Ataturk: A Psychobiography (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), is no less admiring of Ataturk’s achievements but seeks to establish a very different explanation of motive by its reliance on psychoanalytic theory.

For Ataturk’s Iranian contemporary, Reza Shah, there is nothing comparable. Donald N. Wilber’s Riza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran, 1878—1944 (Hicksville, N.Y.: Exposition Press, 1975) is an uninspired narrative. Farhad Diba’s Mohammad Mossadegh: A Political Biography (London: Croom Helm, 1986) is a straightforward narrative based on Mossadegh’s writings and on British and American archives. Mossadegh, a complex man, now warrants still more complex treatment. A different approach has been taken in Marvin Zonis’s Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah of Iran (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), which addresses Mohammad Reza Shah’s conduct during the Iranian revolution from a psychoanalytic vantage point. Although the book is not intended as a full biography, it does develop an innovative line of biographical inquiry. At present, Ayatollah Khomeini is the subject only of journalistic treatments: Amir Taheri’s The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution (Bethesda, Md.: Adler and Adler, 1986) and Baqer Moin’s Khomeini: Sign of God (London: Tauris, 1991). Hamid Algar and Marvin Zonis are reportedly working on more thorough studies. In the meantime, it is useful to compare two sketches of Khomeini’s early years, one by Michael M. J.

Fischer, “Imam Khomeini: Four Levels of Understanding,” in Voices of Resurgent Islam, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 150—74; and the less-speculative and more reverential interpretation by Hamid Algar, “Imam Khomeini, 1902-1962: The Pre-revolutionary Years,” in Islam, Politics, and Social Movements, ed. Edmund Burke III and Ira M. Lapidus (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 263—88.

Such biographical portraiture pretends to less than full biography, although the penetrating portrait can be a miniature work of art in the right hands. Majid Khadduri offers two volumes of (rather uncritical) sketches of Middle Eastern leaders: Arab Contemporaries: The Role of Personalities in Politics (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973) and Arab Personalities in Politics ('Washington. D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1981). More recently, a collection of sketches of Middle Eastern leaders, relating personality to performance in a single crisis, has been

assembled by Barbara Kellerman and Jeffrey Z. Rubin, eds. Leadership and Negotiation in the Middle East (New York: Praeger, 1988). Finally, over seventy sketches by almost as many hands have been collected by Bernard Reich, ed. Political Leaders of the Contemporary Middle East and North Africa: A Biographical Dictionary (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990). The entries are substantial enough to warrant description as sketches and include short bibliographies, providing a useful starting point for students seeking inspiration for assignments.

Students interested in Middle Eastern rulers and leaders should also give due attention to the self-serving autobiographies and memoirs of these leaders, such as Ismail Kemal Bey's The Memoirs of Ismail Kemal Bey (London: Constable, 1920); Djemal Pasha's Memories of a Turkish Statesman, 1913-1919 (New York: Arno Press, 1973); King Abdallah's Memoirs of King Abdullah of Transjordan (London: Cape, 1950) and the sequel, My Memoirs Completed "Al Takmilah" (New York: Longman, 1978); King Husayn's Uneasy Lies the Head: The Autobiography of His Majesty King Hussein I of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (New York: Bernard Geis Associates, 1962); Anwar Sadat's In Search of Identity: An Autobiography (New York: Harper and Row, 1978); Mohammad Reza Shah's Mission for My Country (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961) and his Answer to History (New York: Stein and Day, 1980); and Abu Iyad's My Home, My Land, written with Eric Rouleau (New York: Times Books, 1981). The list could be lengthened considerably.

Beyond the world of thinkers and leaders are the men and women usually excluded from history, people who, despite their obscurity, can personify a social order or revolution from below. This kind of telling is often associated with anthropology but also has been done by journalists and even historians. One example of this approach is Dale F. Eickelman's Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a TwentiethCentury Notable (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), which is an anthropologist's view of the way political and social change is played out in the life of one learned man. Roy Mot- tahedeh's The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985) is a historian's telling of the life of an Iranian cleric, one "Ali Hashemi"—"a real person whose wish to remain anonymous I have scrupulously respected."

The account is intermingled with discursive asides on Perso-Islamic history and contemporary Iranian culture. Richard Critchfield's Shahhat: An Egyptian (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1978) is a journalist's account of events in a young villager's life, as witnessed by the author or recounted to him, a study that borders on literature. "In the end," writes Critchfield, "all study of human beings lies in a borderland between science and art and the difference between the journalist and the anthropologist is one of degree; one mixes some science with his art, the other some art with his science." This apology has not been universally accepted. The book should be read with the article by Timothy Mitchell, "The Invention and Reinvention of the Egyptian Peasant," International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies 22 (May 1990): 129— 50, a critique that accuses Critchfield of racism, plagiarism, and ahistoricism (this last charge, of course, being the privilege of the historian). This article will not be the last word in the controversy.

The amount of published self-narrative by the people overlooked by history is small, and even less is available in English translation. These works include Re§at Nuri Giintekin's The Autobiography of a Turkish Girl, trans. Wyndham Deedes (London: Allen and Unwin, 1949), and Muhammad [c]Ali Ja- malzadeh's Isfahan Is Half the World: Memories of a Persian Boyhood, trans. W. L. Heston (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983). A self-narrative, of course, need not be literary, or even the work of a literate person; it can sometimes be presented through the mediation of a listener. One example is Vincent Crapanzano's Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), a highly experimental account of the author's encounter with an illiterate Moroccan Arab tilemaker. Most of the text is an annotated self-narrative by Tuhami himself, a revelation rich in allusion and embellishment, so that Tuhami is as much a self-portrait as a portrait. The serious student of biography will want to range even further for comparisons and inspiration, from biographical writing on subjects in other cultural contexts to the burgeoning theoretical and methodological literature and the specialized journals devoted to biography. Any interested reader will have no difficulty finding a point of entry into this literature. A beginning can be made in the outstanding periodic bibliography of the quarterly journal Biography, which is published by the Biographical Research Center. Less-systematic inspiration can be had by browsing in specialty bookstores, like New York's Biography Bookshop.

Supplementary reading may be found in the biographies of the many figures from beyond the Middle East who left their impress on the history of the region. Notable among these figures are the English, from proconsuls to travelers, who made careers of the Middle East. Their diaries and letters, often preserved xn their entirety, have supported some impressively thorough (and readable) biographies. An example is Elizabeth Longford's A Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (New York: Knopf, 1980). The late Lady Longford was one of the most prolific biographers of Victorian subjects. Among the fifty or so biographies of T. E. Lawrence, the most important landmarks are the passionately hostile assault by Richard Aldington, Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Inquiry (New York: Greenwood Press, 1976); the psychobiography by John E. Mack, A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978); and the massive narrative by Jeremy Wilson, Lawrence of Arabia: The Authorized Biography of T. E. Lawrence (New York: Atheneum, 1990), which is meant to save Lawrence from the debunkers and psychologizers. These should be read in conjunction with Elie Kedourie's "Colonel Lawrence and His Biographers," in Kedourie's Islam and the Modern World (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981), 261-75—largely a refutation of Mack's work. Another landmark biography is Elizabeth Monroe's Philby of Arabia (London: Faber and Faber, 1973). H. V. F. Winstone has made the biography of the English among the Arabs into his special trade, by writing Captain Shakespear: A Portrait (New York: Quartet Books, 1978), Gertrude Bell (New York: Quartet Books, 1978), and Leachman: "OC Desert": The Life of Lieutenant-Colonel Gerard Leachman D.S.O. (New York: Quartet Books, 1982). The reader will also find many subtle sketches of the English in the Middle East; among the most evocative are Albert Hourani's essays on Wilfrid Scawen Blunt and H. A. R. Gibb, in his Europe and the Middle East (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980).

Not to be overlooked are the many biographies of Zionist leaders, who left behind vast collections of intimate materials that have inspired several modern, thoroughly documented biographies. On Theodor Herzl are the studies by Amos Elon, Herzl (New York: Schocken Books, 1986^, and by Ernst Pawel, The Labyrinth of Exile: A Life of Theodor

Herzl (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989). These may be supplemented with the provocative sketch by Peter Loewenberg, “Theodor Herzl: Nationalism and Politics,” in his Decoding the Past: The Psychohistorical Approach (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985), 101-35. So rich is the documentation for the lives of many Zionist leaders that many of their biographers have produced multivolume works. Particularly noteworthy are the first volumes published by Jehuda Reinharz, Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Zionist Leader (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), and by Shabtai Teveth, Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground, 1886—1948 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). Additional volumes will follow. Anita Shapira’s Berl: The Biography of a Socialist Zionist (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) is an English distillation of a larger multivolume biography in Hebrew, and an example of the full potential of intellectual biography. And on and on, ad (almost) infinitum.

** Notes

3. Autobiography and Biography in the Middle East: A Plea for Psychopolitical Studies

The author wishes to thank Mr. Cyrus Amir-Mokri of the Department of History of the University of Chicago for his valuable assistance in the preparation of this paper. Mrs. Layla Kassem of the Committee on Human Development of the university was also helpful.

2. Traditional Islamic Learning and Ideas of the Person in the Twentieth Century

Arabic names and terms are transliterated from classical or spoken Arabic according to context. The author thanks Deborah Hodges for comments on this essay.

[1] See Maxime Rodinson, “A Critical Survey of Modern Studies on Muhammad,” in Studies on Islam, ed. and trans. Merlin L. Swartz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 23—85.

[2] Hamilton A. R. Gibb, “Problems of Modern Middle Eastern History,” in Studies on the Civilization of Islam, ed. Stanford J. Shaw and William R. Polk (1956; Boston: Beacon, 1962), 340—41.

[3] Albert Hourani, “The Present State of Islamic and Middle Eastern Historiography,” in Europe and the Middle East (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1980), 163, 191.

[4] Peter Gran, “Political Economy as a Paradigm for the Study of Islamic History,” International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies n (1980): 512.

[5] Gertrude Himmelfarb, “Some Reflections on the New History,” American Historical Review 94, no. 3 (June 1989): 662.

[6] Malcolm Yapp, “More Enigma Than Statesman” (review article including Patrick Seale, Asad: The Struggle for Syria, and Moshe Ma’oz, Asad: The Sphinx of Damascus'), Times Literary Supplement, November 4—10, 1988.

[7] L. Carl Brown, The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, 1837—1855 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 161. See also E. Levy-Provengal, Les historiens des chorfa (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1922.), 11; and Abdallah Laroui, L ideologic arabe contemporaine (Paris: Francois Maspero, 1967), 19-28.

[8] The analogy of the Iranian clerics to Ronald Reagan is Yann Richard s (personal communication, June 2, 1987). For Egypt, see Gilles Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh, trans. Jon Rothschild (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 99—101, 173. See also Dale F. Eickelman, “National Identity and Religious Discourse in Contemporary Oman,” International Journal of Islamic and Arabic Studies 6 (1989): pp. 1— 20.

[9] See Allan Christelow, Muslim Law Courts and the French Colonial State in Algeria (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), no. For an authoritative survey of ulama throughout the Maghrib, see Pessah Shinar, “ ‘Ulama’, Marabouts and Government: An Overview of Their Relationships in the French Colonial Maghrib,” in Religion and Government in the World of Islam, ed. Joel L. Kraemer and Hai Alon, Israel Oriental Studies, vol. 10 (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1980), 211—29.

[10] See Dale F. Eickelman, “Religion in Polity and Society,” in The Political Economy of Morocco, ed. I. William Zartman (New York: Praeger, 1987), 84-97.

[11] Three manuscripts by al-Tha[c]alibi (a.d. 961—1038), Tarjama al-Shu^ara^, Tarjama al-katib fi adab al-sahib, and Tarjama al-Mut- tanabi, use the term in their titles, whereas al-Yaqut’s (d. a.d. 1229) Mu[1] jam al-Udaha[3], ed. D. S. Margoliouth (Cairo: Dar Ihya’ al-turath al-Arabi, 1936), 26-27, refers to scholars prior to himself, such as Abu Abbas ibn Yahya al-Shaybani, whose writings date from the ninth century. I am grateful to Adel Sulaiman Gamal of the University of Arizona for bringing these references to my attention.

[12] See Dale F. Eickelman, Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 59-65; and Dale F. Eickelman, “Religious Knowledge in Inner Oman,” Journal of Oman Studies 6 (1983):

166— 67. On the association of literacy with other attributes of high status in the Yemen, see Brinkley Messick, “Legal Documents and the Concept of ‘Restricted Literacy’ in a Traditional Society,” International Journal of the Sociology of Language 42 (1983): 43-44.

[13] J. S. La Fontaine, “Person and Individual: Some Anthropological Reflections,” in The Category of the Person, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 124, 126, 133.

[14] Marcel Mauss, “A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Person; The Notion of Self” (orig. 1938), in ibid., 14.

[15] Ibid., 13—14, 18—32.

[16] Abu Ja[c]far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, Ta’rikh, ed. Muhammad Abu Fadil Ibrahim (Cairo: Dar al-Ma[c]arif, 1964), 1937.

[17] Mukhtar al-Susi’s al-Ma[c]sul (Casablanca: al-Najah Press, 1961), a compendium of tarjamas, contains numerous entries that cumulatively suggest that many men of learning come from households in which the father or another close relative is literate and takes an active role in encouraging Qur’anic recitation.

[18] On genealogical representations of self, see Abdelahad Sebti, “Au Maroc: Sharifisme citadin, charisme et historiographic,” An- nales: Economies, Societes, Civilisations 41, no. 2 (March-April 1986): 433—57; the cited “modern” autobiographies are Taha Hussein, The Stream of Days, trans. Hilary Waymont (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 194.8); and Malek Bennabi, Memoires d’un temoin du siecle (Algiers: Editions Nationales Algeriennes, 1965).

[19] For example, Allal al-Fasi, al-Naqd al-dhati, 5th ed. (1952; Rabat: al-Risala Press, 1979).

[20] Consider, for example, the profile of Palestinian religious activists offered by Jean-Francois Legrain, in “Islamites et lutte nationale Palestinienne dans les territoires occupes par Israel,” Revue Frangais de Science Politique 36, no. 2 (April 1986): 241-43—young and well- educated compared to the general population, deprived of all hope of “social integration,” and often rural in origin. Despite the religious commitment of activists, their pamphlets and slogans rarely cite the Qur’an or hadith literature.

[21] Ahmad Mansuri’s tarjama was written between 1962 and 1963 at the request of a schoolteacher assigned to Bzu. The teacher came from Tetouan, the former capital of Morocco’s Spanish zone, and became interested in local history. Abd al-Rahman Mansuri’s tarjama was prepared at my request in 1976. It is a short document of two pages, brief in part because of extensive interviews carried out over several years and described at length in Eickelman, Knowledge and Power in Morocco. Ahmad al-Bu Ayyashi’s tarjama, a document of six single-spaced pages in Arabic, was written in 1976.

[22] Interview, northern Oman, June 8, 1980.

[23] “Kitab tabsirat al-mu[c]tabirin fi ta’rikh al-Abriyin” [Book for the enlightenment of passers-by on the history of the Abriyin]. The manuscript is undated but from internal evidence was composed between 1956 and 1958—59. The first page of the manuscript states: “Copy finished 1378 [a.d. 1958—59] by Sa[c]id bin Abd Allah bin Muhammad al-Daghghari, by order of Shaykh Muhammad bin Amir.” The manuscript is in the possession of Jabir Musa al-Abri, Nizwa.

[24] On several occasions in 1979 and 1980, and again in 1982,1 saw Shaykh Ibrahim’s manuscript and similar ones being publicly read by men of learning. These readings took place in tribal guest houses, with other men of

learning present, in addition to tribespeople and other interested onlookers. Occasionally particular points in the manuscript were clarified or discussed among senior participants.

[25] For example, shurafc?, recognized descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatima, were exempt from taxation and from corvee labor, among other privileges, prior to the protectorate.

[26] One of these is the support of his father and tribe for Abd al- Krim al-Khattabi, who was a qadi in Spanish Melilla prior to his revolt, and thus in a role not dissimilar to that of Bu Ayyashi. It is interesting that of Bu Ayyashi's personally established ties with the nationalists, he emphasizes those with leaders in former French Morocco instead of the former Spanish zone, where he spent all of his career after 1937. Although his sentiments are undoubtedly nationalistic, it is possible that his persona as a Muslim nationalist was better supported by claims to linkages less susceptible to verification in the northern zone itself. For an example of the biography of an early- twentieth-century Moroccan man of learning that also skillfully bridges the divide between nationalism and reformism within the format of the tarjama, see Abd Allah Jirari, al-Muhaddith al-hafiz Abu Shu'ayb al-Dukkali (Jadida and Casablanca: al-Najah Press, 1976), one of a series of books in a similar format on "Moroccan Personalities." The series itself suggests that the tarjama as a literary form still commands a significant audience in Morocco.

[27] Karl J. Weintraub, "Autobiography and Historical Consciousness," Critical Inquiry 1, no. 4 (1974-75): 814.

[28] Ibid., 821—22.

[29] In referring to the Middle East, this author means to include the Arabic-speaking states, Turkey, and Iran. Israel is specifically excluded, not because it is not part of the Middle East in a geographical or political sense, but because it is not considered a part of the Middle East in a cultural sense in

terms of the central themes of this paper. Clearly, this geographical construct is of limited utility. It is posed at a level of abstraction that is so great as to nearly vitiate its utility— nearly, but not entirely. Appreciating the level of abstraction, one can still, as argued here, produce useful generalization. The same is true for the construct of the West.

Equally adamant disclaimers have to be made for the use of the generalization “culture” when speaking of the Middle East. There is no single Middle Eastern culture—whether Israel is or is not considered part of the region—but three principal cultural arenas in addition to the culture(s) of the state of Israel. Each of these major cultures is unified only at a particular level of abstraction that may not be useful for scholarly purposes. There are also countless minor cultures that are not part of the four major cultures of the region.

For the purposes of this paper, “culture” will be used to refer to the aggregated cultures of the Persian-, Turkish-, and Arabic-speaking areas of the Middle East. The reader must appreciate the author’s serious reservations about the meaningfulness of the construct, while appreciating the efficiencies in writing that can nonetheless be achieved by retaining the concept.

[30] Literary works from the region that appear to adhere more closely to Weintraub’s criteria for “true autobiography” than do most other Middle Eastern examples include the following: In Arabic, Ahmad Amin, Hayati (Cairo: Maktabat al-Nahdah al-Misriyah, 1961); 'Abd al-'Aziz Fahmi, Hadhihi Hayati (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1963); Taha Husayn, al-Ayyam, z vols. (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, 1966); and Ahmad Lufti al-Sayyid, Qissat Hayat (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1962). For a general introduction to this genre in Arabic, see ‘Ali 'Abduh Barakat, Ftirafat Udaba^ina fi Siyarihim al-Dhatiyah (Jidda: Tihama Publications, 1982). In Persian, Qasim Ghani, YacPdashPha-yi Duktur Qasim-i Ghani, vol. 1 (London: Cyrus Ghani, distributed by Ithaca Press, 1980); Muhammad ‘Ali Jamalzadeh, Isfahan Is Half the World: Memories of a Persian Boyhood, trans. W. L. Heston (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); and Ahmao Kasravi, Zindigani-i Man

(Tehran: Jar, 1976). Included with these works must be the following, of a somewhat different order: Mohammad Reza Shah, Mission For My Country (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961); and Ashraf Pahlavi, Faces in a Mirror: Memoirs from Exile (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1980). In Turkish, Halide Edibe Adivar. Memoirs of Halide Edibe (New York: Arno Press, 1972); and Re§at Nuri Giin- tekin, The Autobiography of a Turkish Girl, trans. Wyndham Deedes (London: Allen and Unwin, 1949).

[31] There are, of course, some. For Persian biographies, see, for example, Nasrullah Falsafi, Zindigani-i Shah Abbas-i Awal, 4 vols. (Tehran: Kitab-i Kayhan, 1962); Muhammad Husayn MaymadPni- zhad, Zindigi-i Pur Majara-i Nader Shah (Tehran: Saziman-i Inti- sharat-i Javidan, 1966); Abdul Husayn Nava’i, Sharh-i Hal-i Abbas Mirza Mulk’ara (Tehran: Intisharat-i Babak, 1976); Akbar-i Hash- emi-i Rafsanjani, Amir Kabir Ya Qahriman-i Mubarizeh Ba IstPmar (Tehran: Mu’asiseh’i Matbu‘ati-i Faranahi, 1967); Isma‘il Ra’in, Hay- dar Khan Amu Ghuli (Tehran: Saziman-i Intisharat-i Javidan, 1973); Isma‘il Ra'in,Mirza Malkum Khan (Tehran: Bungah-i Matbu‘ati-i Safi ‘Ali Shah, 1971); and Rahimzadeh-i Safavi, Zindigani-i Shah Isma[c]il- i Safavi (Tehran: Ketab Forushi-i Khayyam, 1961).

[32] Weintraub, “Autobiography and Historical Consciousness,” 821.

[33] Abdallah Laroui, The Crisis of the Arab Intellectual: Traditionalism or Historicism? (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University ot California Press, 1976).

[34] Weintraub, “Autobiography and Historical Consciousness,” 826.

[35] These works are Fouad Ajami, The Vanished Imam: Musa al Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); Vincent Crapanzano, Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Roy

Mottahedeh, The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985); and Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz, The Immortal Ataturk: A Psychobiography (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

[36] Crapanzano, Tuhami, 136.

[37] Ibid., 7.

[38] Ibid., 124.

[39] Weintraub, “Autobiography and Historical Consciousness,” 824.

[40] I have referred to this enterprise as “psychopolitical studies” because the term captures the nature of the effort to use psychology to understand political phenomena. For the reasons suggested, psychobiography is inadequate, but so are psychohistory and psychosocial studies, since both of the latter fail to specify the domain of inquiry as political. As infelicitous as the term psychopolitical studies is, it appears to best capture the nature of the intellectual enterprise here being advocated.

[41] Marvin Zonis, Majestic Failure: The Fall of the Shah of Iran (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). It is recognized that a variety of other, equally legitimate studies of the revolution could have been done. Almost nothing has been written, for example, from the point of view of the winners: nothing about the organization of the principal actors in the victorious coalition, their financing, and the precise leadership role of Ayatollah Khomeini and others. In addition, a study of the revolution could usefully adopt a more explicitly group focus.

[42] This is not the place for a detailed explanation of how the character structure of the Shah and the steps he took to provide himself with narcissistic supplies significantly helped to produce the rage of the Iranian

people that fed the revolution. But by the 1970s, the Iranian people appear to have become ever less tolerant of the Shah’s ever increasing efforts to sustain his narcissistic balance. One such effort— his grandiosity and all that flowed from it—was especially offensive to them.

[43] One unconventional distinction between the physical and the social sciences, that concerning the role of prediction, may disappear with a new formulation of the physical sciences, a formulation based on the study of nonlinearity. For a description of nonlinearity, see Frank M. Richter, “Nonlinear Behavior,” in Metatheory in Social Science, ed. Donald W. Fiske and Richard A. Shweder (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986). For a description of the “new science” see James Gleick, Chaos, Making a New Science (New York: Viking, 1987).

[44] William M. Runyan, Life Histories and Psychobiography: Explorations in Theory and Method (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 127.

[45] Ibid., quoting here from D. B. Bromley.

[46] Hans-Georg Gadamer, “The Problem of Historical Consciousness,” in Interpretive Social Sciences: A Reader, ed. P. Rabinow and W. Sullivan (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), 116 (emphasis in the original). What precisely Gadamer means to suggest by the use of “true” is puzzling in this context.

[47] See the brilliant study of terrorism by Richard E. Rubenstein, Alchemists of the Revolution: Terrorism in the Modern World (New York Basic Books, 1987).

[48] See the important psychopolitical study by the Committee on International Relations, Self-Involvement in the Middle East Crisis, vol. 10, no. 103 (New York: Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, November 1978).

[49] Crapanzano, Tuhami, 130.

[50] Runyan, Life Histories, 150.

[51] Peter Winch, “Understanding a Primitive Society,” American Philosophical Quarterly 1 (1964): 307-24, passim; E. D. Hirsch, “Old and New in Hermeneutics,” in his The Aims of Interpretation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 33.

[52] For an article that argues the similarity of problems of interpretation and thus validity in the natural sciences and hermeneutics, see Mary Hesse, “In Defence of Objectivity,” Proceedings of the British Academy 68 (1972): 275-92.

[53] Roy Schater, “Narration in Psychoanalytic Dialogue,” Critical Inquiry 7 (Autumn 1980): 30. For a fascinating argument that another source of the “assumptions” is the language itself, see Hayden White, Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), especially the section “Poetics and History.” If White is correct (and he presents a compelling argument), then the difficulties of cross-cultural investigations are greater than we had previously imagined.

[54] Donald Polkinghorne, Methodology for the Human Sciences (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983), 241.

[55] Carlo Antoni, From History to Sociology, trans. Hayden V. White (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1959).

[56] Vamik D. Volkan and Norman Itzkowitz, The Immortal Ataturk: A Psychobiography (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

[57] Vamik D. Volkan, “Problems of Methodology in Psychoanalytic Biography” (Paper presented at panel, “Freud’s Vision: Key Issues in the Methodology of Applied Psychoanalysis,” fall meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association, New York, December 1986).

[58] William G. Niederland, “The Naming of America,” in The Unconscious Today: Essays in Honor of Max Schur, ed. M. Kanzer (New York: International Universities Press, 1971), 459-72.

[59] Peter Gay, Freud, A Life for Our Time (New York: Norton, 1988).

[60] Sigmund Freud, Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood, in Standard Edition, vol. n (1910; London: Hogarth Press, 1967), 130.

[61] Vamik D. Volkan, The Need to Have Enemies and Allies: From Clinical Practice to International Relations (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1988).

[62] Vamik D. Volkan, “Narcissistic Personality Organization and ‘Reparative’ Leadership,” International Journal of Group Psychotherapy 30 (1980): 131-52; Volkan and Itzkowitz, The Immortal Ataturk.

[63] See Erik Erikson, Young Man Luther (New York: Norton, 1958); J. E. Gedo, “The Methodology of Psychoanalytic Biography,” Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association 20 (1972): 638— 49; J. E. Mack, “Psychoanalysis and Historical Biography,” Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association 19 (1971): 143-79.

[64] A. Falk, “Aspects of Political Psychobiography,” Political Psychology 6 (1985): 605-19.

[65] Ives Hendrick, Facts and Theories of Psychoanalysis (New York: Knopf, 1950).

[66] Vamik D. Volkan, What Do You Get When You Cross a Dandelion with a Rose? The True Story of a Psychoanalysis (New York: Jason Aronson, 1984); Vamik D. Volkan, Six Steps in the Treatment of Borderline Personality Organization (Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1987).

[67] Sigmund Freud, Fragments of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria, in Standard Edition, vol. 7 (1905; London: Hogarth Press, 1953), 3-I2-[2]-

[68] Harry Stack Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (1946-47; New York: Norton, 1953); David Rapaport, “The Structure of Psychoanalytic Theory: A Systematizing Attempt,” in Psychological Issues, vol. 2, monograph 6 (New York: International Universities Press, i960).

[69] Rapaport, “The Structure of Psychoanalytic Theory.”

[70] Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, in Standard Edition, vols. 4 and 5 (1900; London: Hogarth Press, 1961).

[71] Phyllis Greenacre, Swift and Carroll: A Psychoanalytic Study of Two Lives (New York: International Universities Press, 1955); M. S. Bergmann, “Limitations of Method in Psychoanalytic Biography : A Historical Inquiry,”

Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association 21 (1973): 833—50.

[72] William G. Niederland, “An Analytic Inquiry into the Life and Work of Heinrich Schliemann,” in Drives, Affects, Behavior, vol. 2, ed. M. Schur (New York: International Universities Press, 1965).

[73] Kemal H. Karpat, “Review Article: The Personality of Ataturk,” American Historical Review 90 (1985): 893—99.

[74] Mack, “Psychoanalysis and Historical Biography”; Falk, “Aspects of Political Psychobiography”; Peter Loewenberg, “Historical Method, the Subjectivity of the Researcher, and Psychohistory,” in Rapports, vol. 2, Psychohistory: A Frontier in Method (Stuttgart: Comite International des Sciences Historiques, 1985).

[75] See Shabtai Teveth, Ben-Gurion: The Burning Ground, 1886—1948 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987). Numerous discussions and quotes throughout the remainder of this essay are from this biography.

[76] James William Anderson, “The Methodology of Psychological Biography,” Journal of Interdisciplinary History it, no. 3 (Winter 1981): 455-75

[77] Uriel Dann, Iraq under Qassem: A Political History, 1958—1963 (New York: Praeger, 1969), 78-79.

[78] E. W. Polson Newman, The Middle East (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1916), after 172.

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** Index

[Page numbers don't correspond to this version]

‘Abbas Hihni, 132

Abbasids, 94

“Abd al-Krim al-Khattabi, 45, 150M20 'Abdallah, king of Transjordan, 118, 120, 125,134,139

‘Abdin Palace, 123

‘Abduh, Muhammad, 130 Abdiilhamid II, 9, 20, 131-32 al-‘Abri, Ibrahim Sa'id, 52—55 'Abriyin, 52

Abu Dhahi, 49

Abu Iyad 139

Abu Nidal, 135

Adams, Charles, 94

Adler, Alfred, 85, 95

al-Afghani, Jamal al-Din, 8—9, 94, 128 Ahmad Bey, 131

Ait ‘Tab, 43

Ait Waryaghar, see Bani Waryajil Ajami, Fouad, 65-67, 134

Alam, Assadollah, 73

Aldington, Richard, 141 Algar, Hamid, 128, 137-38

Algeria, 36, 40

Ali, Muhammad, 131 ‘alim, see ulama Amanat, Abbas, 132 Amenemhet, 21 Ames, Robert, 80 Amin, Ahmad, 130 Amman, 125

Anatolia, 98-99, 102

Angola, 116

Ankara, 99

Annales school, 5-6, 94 anthropology, 14, 118, 139-40 Antoni, Carlo, 95

Antonius, George, 129

Arabia, 24, 33, 38. See also Oman;

Saudi Arabia

Arabs, see individual countries Arafat, Yasir, 135 Armenians, 101—2 Arnold, Matthew, 100 Arslan, Shakib, 129 Arutin, 31 al-Asad, Hafiz, 134 Assyria, 22

Ataturk, Mustafa Kemal, 16, 66—68, 97-103, 106-8, 136-37

Atlas Mountains, 42

Augustine, 1, 91 Augustus, 93 Austria, 32 autobibliography, 29—30 autobiography and self-narrative (as literary forms), 2—3, 13-14, 19, 21-26, 29, 31—34, 36, 39—41, 60— 65, 68, 125; bibliography of, 130, 138—40, 151H4, 152«5; and diaries, 2, 7—8, 10, 45, 60, 62, 105, 115, 141; and memoirs, 3, 20—21, 23—25, 28, 30—34, 40, 60, 62, 125, 138—40; and tarjamas, 14-15, 36, 39-47, 52-59, 149M15, 150^20; and travel, travelogues, 24, 26—28, 31—33, 62, 141. See also sources

Avicenna, 34

Ayyam al-Arab, 24

al-Ayyam (Stream of Days), 130 ‘Ayyash, 46

‘Ayyashi, Ahmad bin ‘Abd al-Salam al- Bu, 42, 45-48, 57, 149M15,

150H20

Azilal, 43—44

Aztecs, 93

Azulay, 31

Babar, 25

Babinger, Franz, 131

Baghdad, 9, 94, 120, 133

Bahia, 53-54

Baluch, 49

Bani Waryajil, 45—47

Baqir al-Sadr, Muhammad, 50

al-Barq al-Shami, 25, 32

Bashir, Suleyman, 94

Batatu, Hanna, 123

Baz, Rustum, 31

Beeson, Irene, 136

Beethoven, no—11

Behistun inscription, 22

Beirut, 80

Ben-Ami, Shlomo, 122

Ben-Gurion, David, 18, 109—11, 113— 17,i43

Bennabi, Malek, 40

Berber, 24, 42, 46

Bible, 22, 90

biography (as a literary form), 2—19, 25, 28, 30, 32, 36, 39—40, 55, 60— 68, 75, 89—90, 93-98, 101, 10313, 118-22, 125; bibliography of, 127—38, 141-43; relation to history and historiography, 2—7, 17—19, 62—63, 89—96, too —101, 107, 109—13, 118—26. See also psychobiography; sources

Birdwood, Lord, 133

Blake, Robert, 119

Bloomsbury, 8

Blunt, Wilfred Scawen, 141—42 Boujad, 45

Bradford, Selina, countess of, 119

Braudel, Fernand, 94

Brecht, Bertolt, 112

Britain, British, 5, 17, 116, 119—21, 125,141—42

Brown, L. Carl, 35, 131

Browne, Edward G., 94

Buckle, George Earl, 89

Buckley, William, 80

Burzoye, 24

Buyids, 29 Bzu, 42—45

Caesar, Julius, 30, no—n

Cairo, 8, 29—30

Carter, Jimmy, 71, 74, 80

Casey, William J., 80

Caspian Sea, 72 censorship, 8, 123 Chamberlain, Neville, in Champoilion, Jean Francois, 93 charisma, n, 102, 121, 128 Chelebi, Evliya, 27 childhood, children, 28, 40, 70—71, 75, 95, 101,105, 107, 125, 130, 140

China, 26, 38, 70

Christianity, Christians, 1, 38, 90 Churchill, Winston, 71, no CIA, 71, 80—81

Cicero, 93 communalism, 14 Constantinople, see Istanbul Contras, see Iran-Contra affair Cox, Henry, 125

Crapanzano, Vincent, 65—67, 83, 140 Critchfield, Richard, 140 Crusades, 25

Cyprus, 97

Damascus, 8—9, 133—34

Dann, Uriel, 18, 133

Darius, 22

da‘tva (Fatimid), 29 deconstructionism, 6 De Gaulle, Charles, 31 de Gaury, Gerald. 135 determinism, 16, 99 Deuteronomy, Book of, 22 Dhufar, 48—49 diaries, see autobiography Diba, Farhad, 137 dictionaries, biographical, 28, 30, 55, 89,138

Dilthey, Wilhelm, 93

Disraeli, Benjamin, 89, 94, 119

Dubai, 49

Eden, Anthony, 9

Egypt, Egyptians, 9, zi, z6, z8, 32, 40, 121, 123, 129—32, 136, 140

Eickelman, Dale F., 13-15, 139

Elizabeth I, no

Elon, Amos, 142

Erikson, Erik, 103

Essex, Robert Devereux, earl of, no

Evian Conference, 116

Falk, Avner, 103, 108

family relations, n, 14, 22, 31, 39

40, 50, 56, 105, 125, 132—33. See also childhood; women

Faruq I, 136

al-Fasi, ‘Allal, 40—41

Fatimids, 26, 29—30

Faysal, king of Iraq, 9, 133

Faysal, king of Saudi Arabia, 135

Fez, 40, 46—47

Fischer, Michael M. J., 138

Forrestal, James V., 96

France, French, 5—6, 8, 14, 22, 130;

rule in Morocco, 43—46, 56-57

Frederick the Great, 121

Freud, Sigmund, 85—87, 95, 98—101, 103—4, 106

Friedlander, Saul, 17

Gadamer, Hans-Georg, 79

Gay, Peter, 99

Gaza, 123

Gendzier, Irene, 129

genealogy, 22-23, 31, 33, 41-43, 45~ 46, 53

Geneva, 129

Germany, Germans, 91, 116-17, 122

Ghazali, 1, 29, 34

Gibb, Hamilton, 5, 142

Gibbon, Edward, 126

Gilbert, William, 112

Glaser, Edward, 32

Gokalp, Ziya, 129

Goldziher, Ignaz, 93

Greece, Greeks, 22—23, 33» 102

Giintekin, Re§at Nuri, 140

Guyana, 116

Habshush, Hayyim, 32

Hadani, Eldad, 31

hadith, z6, 33, 93

Hadramawt, 48

hagiography, 1-2, 29, 40, 54, 56

Haifa, 115

Halevy, Joseph, 32

Hallaj, 5, 29

Hamra’ al-'Abriyin, 51

Hanover, 121

Hart, Alan, 135

Harun ibn Yahya, 27

Hashemi, Ali, 139

Hashemites, 125, 133, 139

Haslip, Joan, 132

Hatusilis, 21

Haykal, Muhammad Husayn, 129

Hegel, Wilhelm Friedrich, 92

hero, concept of, 11, 18, 101—2, 119—

21, 128, 135

Herzl, Theodor, 9, 142

Heyd, Uriel, 129

Hijaz, 26

Hindus, 48

Hirsch, E. D., 84

Hirst, David, 136 historicism, 13, 61—63, 91 historism, 61, 91 history, see biography

Hitler, Adolf, 102, in, 114—17, 121

Hittites, 21-22

Holocaust, 116-17 homosexuality, 128

Hormuz, 49

Hourani, Albert, 5, 127, 130, 142

Howarth, David, 135

Hunayn ibn Ishaq, 28

Hungary, 32

Husayn, king of Jordan, 118, 120,

124-25, 134, 139

Husayn, sharif of Mecca, 133

Husayn, Saddam, 121, 133

Husayn, Taha, 40, 130

al-Husayni, Muhammad Amin, 134 al-Husri, Sati‘, 129

Ibadiyya, 48, 50, 52, 54

Ibn Abi Usaybi'a, 28

Ibn Battuta, 27

Ibn Buluggin, ‘Abdallah, 24

Ibn Hisham, 94

Ibn Khaldun, 31

Ibn Miskawayh, 23

Ibn Qays, ‘Azzan, 5 3

Ibn Ridwan, 28

Ibn Sa‘ud, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, 9, 46, 135

Ibn Tulun, 31

Ifham al-Yahud, 31

‘Imad al-Din, 25

imamate (Oman), 15, 48, 51-54

India, 24, 27, 38, 49 intellectuals, intelligentsia, 8, 35, 63, 66, 127-30. See also ulama interviews, see sources

Iran, Iranians, 9, 15, 22—25, 27> 35» 49, 66, 69—76, 79—82, 123, 128, i32> 137, 139-40, 153MI5

Iran-Contra affair, 79, 81-82

Iraq, Iraqis, 12, 29, 50, 81, 116, 118,

121, 123, 125, 133

Isfahan, 140

Islam, 1—4, 13-14, 20, 23-38, 55-58, 89—90, 128; and concept of individual, 1-5, 12—14, 37[-]4°, 61—63, 89—90

Islamic Jihad, 80

Isma'il, khedive of Egypt, 132

Ismail Kemal Bey, 138—39

Ismailis, 29

Israel, Israelis, 17, 82, no, 117, 123, 124, 151213. See also Zionism

Israeli, Raphael, 136

Istanbul, 8, 27, 98—99

Itzkowitz, Norman, 16—17, 65—67, i37

Jaffa, 115

Jamal Pasha, 139

Jamal zadeh, Muhammad ‘Ali, 140

Jerusalem, 31, 123, 134

Jesus, 1

Jews, 22—23, 3[i-]325 9°> [ITI]» [TI]3~

17, 123. See also Israel; Zionism Jordan, Jordanians, 12, 116, 118, 121, 123, 125, 133-34, i39

Josephus, 22—23, 33

journalists (as biographers), 9, 132—

34,136, 139-40

Jung, Carl, 85, 95

Kalila wa-Dimna, 24

Kamaliyin, 49

Kamil Pasha, 20

Karpat, Kemal, 107

Keddie, Nikki, 128

Kedoune, Elie, 16—17, 142

Kellerman, Barbara, 138

Khadduri, Majid, 138

al-Khalili, Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah, 52

Khassab, 49

Khayar, As‘ad, 3 3

Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, 3 3

Khomeini, Rouhollah, 35, 69, 137—

38, 1532115

Khusraw Anushirvan, 23

Khusru Parviz, 23

Kibrisli Mehmet Pasha, Mme., 3 3

Kiernan, Thomas, 135

Kinross, Lord, 136

Kittamya, 42

Kohut, Heinz, 15, 86

Kristallnacht, 116

Kuwait, 49, 133

Lacouture, Jean, 136

La Fontaine, Jean, 37

Laroui. Abdallah, 61

Lawrence, T. E., 9, 141-42

Leachman, Gerard, 142

Lebanon, Lebanese, 80, 124, 134

Lenin, no

Lewis, Bernard, 13

Libya, 12

Loewenberg, Peter, 108, 142

Longford, Elizabeth, 141

Lunt, James, 134

Mack, John E., 103, 108, 141—42

al-Maghribi, Samuel, 31

Majid bin Khamis, 53—54

Maliki school, 48

Malkum Khan, 128

Malti-Douglas, Fedwa, 130

Mansur bin Ahmad, 42

Mansuri, [c]Abd al-Rahman, 42—46,

149/115

Mansuri, Ahmad, 43—44, 56—57,

i49«i5

Ma’oz, Moshe, 134

marabouts, 42, 46, 56

Marrakesh, 42-43

marriage, 40, 45, 51. See also women

Marsot, Afaf Lutfi Sayyid, 131

Marxism, 5, 92, 98

mashyakha, 26

al-Matsui, 42

Mattar, Philip, 134

Mauss, Marcel, 37-38

Mediterranean Historical Review, 122

Mehmed the Conqueror, 131

Mein Kampf, in

Meinecke, Friedrich, 91

Melman, Yossi, 135 memoirs, see autobiography Mishaqqa, Mikha’il, 31

Mitchell, Timothy, 140

Mohammad Reza Shah, 15, 69-76,

125, 137,139,153M16

Moin, Baqer, 137

Mommsen, Theodor, 93

Monroe, Elizabeth, 142

Monypenny, William Flavelle, 89

More, Thomas, 89

Morocco, Moroccans, 14, 36-37, 40

48, 56-58, 67, 123, 139-40, 150W20

Moses, 22

Mossadegh, Mohammad, 137

Mottahedeh, Roy, 65-67, 139

Mu'allaqa, 24

Mudar, 38

Muhammad, Prophet, 1-4, 5, 38, 40,

43,94

Muhammad V, sultan of Morocco, 44, 46

al-Muhasibi, Harith, 29

Mukhtar al-Susi, 41—42

Miinchhausen, Gerlach von, 118, r2o

Munich, in

Musa bin Haddu, 46

Musa, Salama, 130

Musandam, 49

Musaylima bin Habib, 3 8

Muscat, 49

Mussolini, Benito, 121

Miitercim Osman, 32

Nacquet, Vidal, 22

Najaf, 50

narcissism, 15-16, 70-72, 74—75, 87, 101—2

Nasir al-Din Shah, 9, 25, 132

Nasser, 9, 121, 136

Nehemiah, Book of, 22

Niederland, William, 99, 106

Nightingale, Florence, no

Nixon, Richard, 72

Nizwa, 51

Nuri bin Sa[c]id, 94, 133

Oman, Omanis, 14—15, 36—37, 41, 48-58

Orientalism, Orientalists, 2-6, 7, 14, 38

Ottoman Empire, Ottomans, 9, 20, 25, 27-28, 32-33, 97, 130-32. See also Turkey

Pahlavi, Ashraf, 73

Pahlavi dynasty, see Mohammad Reza

Shah; Reza Shah

Palestine, 114—17

Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Palestinians, 12, 134-35, 139,I49«i4

Pawel, Ernst, 142

Perron, Ernest, 73

Persepolis, 72

Persia, see Iran

Persian Gulf, 49, 69, 72

personality, cult of, 3, 9, 12, 131

Philby, H. St. John, 9, 142 pilgrimage, Muslim, 26, 46 Plato, 91

Plutarch, 89

poetry, poets, 24—26, 39, 42, 51—53, 62

political science, see social sciences Popper, Karl, 91

Prescott, William Hickling, 93 psychobiography, 10—n,15—17, 67— 68, 74-76, 78-79, 83-84, 95-98, 100, 105, 122, 137, 141—42; and psychoanalysis, 2, 15—16, 65, 8586, 97—108, 137. See also biography; psychopolitical studies psychopolitical studies, 15, 60, 68, 75-76, 78—79, 82-88, 153H14

Qajar dynasty, see Nasir al-Din Shah Qarawiyin mosque-university, 40—41, 46

Qasim, 'Abd al-Karim, 118, 120-21, 123-25, 133

al-Qays, Imr, 53

Qeshem, 49

Qum, 50

Qur’an, memorization and study of, 38-40, 44, 50-51, 53-54, 58

Rabi'a, 38

Rapaport, David, 105

al-Razi, Muhammad ibn Zakariya, 28

Reagan Ronald, 35, 82

Reich, Bernard, 138

Reinharz, Jehuda, 143

Reis, Sidi Ali, 27

Reubeni, David, 31

Reza Shah, 70, 137

Richard the Lion-hearted, 1

Rida, Rashid, 130

Rifian revolt, republic, 45-46

Rodinson, Maxime, 5

Rome, Romans, 27, 33, 37-38, 93

Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 71

Rosetta stone, 93

Rouleau, Eric, 139

Rubin, Jeffrey Z., 138

Runyan, William, 78—79, 83

Rushdie, Salman, 3

Russia, 32

Sadat, Anwar, 136, 139

al-Sadr, Musa, 66, 134

Sa'id bin Taymur, 48—49

St. Clair, Barrie, 136

Saladin, 1, 25

Sanskrit, 24

Sanu', Ya'qub, 129

Sasanids, 23

Satanic Verses, The, 3

Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabians, 54, 135

Schafer, Roy, 86

Schliemann, Heinrich, 106

Seale, Patrick, 134

self-narrative, see autobiography

Selim III, 131

sexuality, n, 98-99, 119

Sha'ban, M. A., 94

Shafi'i school, 49

Shakespear, Captain W. H., 142

Shapira, Anita, 143

al-Sha'rani, 'Abd al-Wahhab, 29

Shaw, Stanford, 130

Sheean, Vincent, 135

Shi'a, 49—50, 66, 134

al-Shidyaq, Ahmad Faris, 31

Shiroye, 23

Simmel, Georg, 65

social sciences, 17-18, 76-78, 83-84, 88, 95-97, 138-40

sociology, 95, 118

Solzhenitsvn, Alexsandr, no

sources, 7-9, 15, 17, 45, 123-24; archival, 8, 10, 123—25, 128, 129, 131—32, 137; interviews, 9, 16, 47, 105—6, 124, 132, 134; letters, 8, 52, 105, 141—42. See also autobiography

Soviet Union, 69, 81

Spanish (in Morocco), 46—47

Stalin, 71, 121

Strachey, Lytton, no

Suez, 125

Suhar, 49

Sullivan, Harry, 105

Sunnis, 34, 48—50

al-Susi, Mukhtar, 41—42

Sykes, Henrietta, 119

Syme, Ronald, 93

Syria, Syrians, 9, 10, 12, 25, 31, 116, i34

al-Tabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir, 21, 38

Taheri, Amir, 137

Tahmasp, 25

al-Takmila, 125, 139

Tangier, 42

al-Tantawi, 'Ayyad, 32 tarjama, see autobiography

Tehran, 8, 71, 74

Tel Aviv, 97

Temesvar, 32

Tetouan, 47

Teveth, Shabtai, 17—18, 143

Tiglat Pileser, 22

Timur, 25

Transjordan, see Jordan

Tuhami, 66—67, 140—41

Tunisia, 131

Turkey, Turks, 16, 20, 32, 66, 97— 102, 107, 123, 129, 136-37, 139, 140. See also Ottoman Empire

twinship, concept of, 71, 73

ulama, 35-36, 41-42, 54-55, 57-58, 89-90

United States, 6; policy toward Iran, 69, 7i-7*» 74, 80-82

Usama ibn Munqidh, 25

Vatikiotis, P. J., 136

Vienna, 27—28, 32

Volkan, Vamik, 16—17, 65—67, 137

Watt, Montgomery, 94

Weintraub, Karl J., 60—61, 63

Weizmann, Chaim, 143

Wilber, Donald N., 137

Wilson, Jeremy, 142

Wilson, Mary C., 134

Winstone, H. V. E, 142

Wittlin, Alma, 131

women, 11, 26, 33, 40, 70, 73, 89, 95, 98, 119—20, 132, 140. See also marriage

al-Yamani, [c]Umara, 25

Yar-Shater, Ehsan, 132

Yemen, 32, 49

Young Turk Revolution, 20

Yusufiya mosque-university, 43

Zionism, Zionists, no—11,113—17, 142—43. See also Israel; Jews

Zirids, 24

Zonis, Marvin, 13-16, 137

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**** Contents

PrefaceList of contributorsPART I.Al-Manārin a changing Islamic world

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KOSUGI YASUSHI

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DALE F. EICKELMANGlossary—Index

**** Preface

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the weight of the world of Islam, and its significance for humanity in general, have become strikingly apparent. In the aftermath of 9/11 there has been a spectacular increase in

academic as well as public concern for the pursuit of inquiries into sociopolitical, economic, and intellectual dimensions of the world of Islam. The “Islamic Area Studies Project” (IASP), which was implemented by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan during the last decade of the twentieth century, provided clear indications that foreshadowed the now universally recognized vital significance of these concerns.

From 1997 to 2002 the five-year IASP, consisting of six units, conducted interdisciplinary and cross-regional studies on the modern world of Islam. Among others, Unit 1 focused on the dynamism of thought and politics, and since 1999 this subgroup of ours aimed to analyze the evolution of contemporary thought. The essential question dealt with by this research subgroup can be summarized as follows.

Among the movements observable in the contemporary world of Islam one of the most outstanding issues is that of Islamic revivals. Far from being reduced to mere ideological phenomena, these revivals have been reflected in the most diverse political and social processes, in both Muslim-majority countries as well as in Muslim-background minorities throughout the world. Although based on the rich heritage of classical Islamic thought, these revivals reveal great changes in this tradition during the “long” twentieth century. What role should the Islamic world play in the twenty-first century? What significance will it embody in the future of humanity? In order to answer these questions one must understand holistically present-day Islamic revival movements.

We have endeavored to explore the ideas of major modern and contemporary thinkers from the world of Islam by making use of their texts. So doing, we were expecting to complement our comparative research between regions in order to elucidate the nature of twentieth-century Islamic thought and of the most varied Islamic revivalist movements. At the same time, we have tried to take into account the historical backgrounds and interregional influences that worked on various aspects and issues.

Over five years we conducted a number of seminars, workshops, and international conferences to discuss our common issues. Among various international conferences held by the IASP, two had special focus on the intellectual aspects of the modern Islamic world, namely “The Lighthouse of Modern Islam: Al-Manār (1898–1935) Revisited” in 1998, and “Intellectuals in Islam in the Twentieth Century: Situations, Discourses, Strategies” in 2000.

The former coincided with the one hundredth anniversary of the inception of the journal al-Manār. Its name, “The Lighthouse,” indicates the aspirations of its founder and main contributor, Muhammad Rashid Rida, and of his colleagues, to provide intellectual illumination for the faithful throughout the world. Early twentieth-century Islam was perhaps approaching a low point, if compared with the ever expanding West, but in spite of that general impression of decay, or perhaps because of it, the “Manarists,” who were associated with the journal, strove to stimulate a reinvigoration of Islam and of the world of Islam. The journal was published periodically until 1935, gathering information and opinions from, and disseminating them back to, the various parts of the world of Islam, from Java to Morocco. However, the journal was forgotten later as its authors’ call was judged a failure, until the new tide of Islamic revival from the late 1960s onward proved the contrary. The conference held in Tokyo in 1998 was to evaluate the historical significance of the journal and to revive its value as a historical source, both on Islamic thought and on the social realities of the world of Islam in modern times.

While this conference singled out a particular medium at a particular moment in the history of Islam, the latter conference held in 2000 encompassed the entire range of the world of Islam with its diverse areas in culture and history, throughout the turbulent twentieth century. Its three sessions included: “Muslim Intellectuals in an Era of Transformation,” “Modern/Contemporary Thought and Social Movements,” and “Communicating Knowledge and Ideas: Networks and Media.”

Intellectuals in the world of Islam were not only scholars, and men and women of letters, but also leaders and organizers of social movements. All of them had deep concerns about their own societies under the pressure of

foreign domination and the mounting challenges of modernity. Though each had his/her own particular sociohistorical context, all of them endeavored to respond to the task of how a Muslim society in the new era of transition should develop itself, while each strove along the lines of his/her own particular orientation. The diversity and synchronicity of their thinking and works were impressive, and this conference was unique in its attempt to comprehend that diversity, as we usually see contemporary researchers and their work on Islamic thought focusing on the Middle East.

Having synthesized these two conferences with the fruits of later research into the current volume, the editors hope it will serve as an element for the mapping of the world of Islam through the twentieth century, which has been exceptionally significant in terms of social upheavals. Though not exhaustive in any sense, it will be a great satisfaction for us if these elements can serve further enquiries into the responses successively proposed by varied categories of intellectuals in the world of Islam to the question of how to live in the days of deepest transformation.

This volume aims to reconsider the typology and history of intellectuals in the Islamic world in the modern and contemporary periods, from the late nineteenth century to nowadays. Its two parts correspond to the two colloquia of which it provides the combined proceedings. While each chapter presents a separate regional case, with a historically and geographically different background, the two parts of the volume disclose commonalities, similarities, and intellectual echoes through comparative perspectives and identification of direct contacts.

Though numerous monographs and collective volumes on modern intellectual history of the Islamic world have been published, most deal with an individual region or country, and with more specific periods of time. Very few, if any, have tried to sketch direct intellectual exchanges between, for example, Egyptian and Indonesian reformist trends of the early twentieth century, or common features and differences in the modernization of Islamic scholarship between Cairo and rural locations in the Urals, in European and Asian Russia.

Last, this collective work proposes a unique contribution on the diachronic analysis of the modes of communication of information, learning, and authority throughout the Islamic world during the “long” twentieth century—from the international travel, teaching, and press activity of the late nineteenth-century activists to the early twenty-first-century upheavals produced by the generalization of elementary education and the diffusion of electronic medias.

In Chapter 1 of Part I of this volume, Kosugi Yasushi shows how the Islamic revival of the latter half of the twentieth century has stimulated a great deal of reflections among the students in the world of Islam about the role and function of Islam in the contemporary world. Being a pioneer or “the lighthouse” of modern Islam, as its name seems to suggest, the Journal al-Manār contributed substantially to later Islamic revivals. The journal contains an abundance of information on the world of Islam during its period of publication (1898–1935), as well as modern formulations of Islamic thought. This article reevaluates the journal in the light of more recent Islamic revivals, and advocates a renewed interest in the journal as a rich source for further historical studies. The author also touches upon the special role played by al-Manār in the field of Qur’anic commentary.

In Chapter 2 David Commins explores why the “Manarists” had only a limited influence in Syria, by focusing on the conflict between the sultan’s Islamic policy and the Manarist reformist movement in Syria. According to the author, Abdülhamid II succeeded in establishing an official version of Sunni Islam by utilizing popular Sufism and strengthening his own authority, while checking the Manarists through surveillance. It is more due to the Manarists’ failure to win the sympathy of the conservative urban populace by criticizing Sufism influential among them as an obstacle to modernization.

Following the arguments by the major Manarist ideologues such as Muhammad ‘Abduh, Rafik al-ʿAzm, and Rashid Rida, Mahmoud Haddad then delineates the transformation of the Manarists’ discourse. The Manarists had emerged as selective modernists who were inspired by modernization in the West and tried to fuse modern Western thinking with Islam, although in a later period they became critical of the West in the course of colonization by

European powers and after the abolishment of the caliphate by secularist Turkey.

In Chapter 4, Kasuya Gen designates the fact that different Islamist currents such as traditionalism and modernism in the late Ottoman period were underlain by the endogenous themes shared with Westernism and Turkism of how to revitalize and modernize the Empire. Examining the works of Mehmed Âkif, a well-known pan-Islamist polygraph, the author points out that arguments of al-Manār led by the Arab ideologues were regarded as very provincial by him, and that their impact on the modernist Islamists in Turkey should not be overemphasized when we take into consideration the fact that there was incipient Ottoman Islamism endogenously emerging before Âkif.

Al-Manār ’s reach, however, extended far beyond the Muslim-majority world, up to the Turkic-speaking Muslim communities of the Middle Volga and the Western Urals in the north, and to the Malay-Indonesian archipelago in the east. Stéphane A. Dudoignon traces the role of an influential Tatar-Bashkir theologian from the southern Urals, Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din (1859–1936), whose journal the Mura was one of the most significant enterprises of the “Muslim” autonomous press of Russia, from its foundation in 1908 to its suppression by the Bolsheviks in early 1918. Largely modeled on al-Manār, Riza al-Din’s journal is contextualized within a network of madrasa colleges, of students returning from study at al-Azhar, and of multiple other autonomous journals of the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire. All of these actors participated in a vibrant discourse about society, relations with the Russian Christian state, and access to modernity. Rather than passively absorbing the reformist teachings of Afghani and ‘Abduh from al-Manār, the Islamic communities of these regions actively discussed their quest for an indigenous form of modernity.

Our exploration of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim imperial states continues eastward toward China. Contrary to other Muslim minorities such as the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, the Hui have tried to remain loyal to the Chinese State. The alleged hadith, “The love of watan is an article of faith” was strongly demonstrated among the Hui during the Japanese occupation of

Eastern China, mainly through the Yuehua journal. Through this Islamic journal that was modeled on al-Manār, Matsumoto Masumi examines how they strove to be patriotic and nationalistic in modern terms, and how they have absorbed the influence of the Islamic reformers in Egypt, especially of al-Manār.

In Chapter 7 of Part I, Azyumardi Azra deals with journals as channels of transmission of modernist or reformist ideas from the Near-East, especially from Cairo and Mecca, to the Malay-Indonesian world. The author focuses in particular on how and by whom the influence of al-Manār was transformed into two indigenous journals, al-Imām and al-Munir. Providing detailed biographical information of the editors and contributors of the journals, the author carves out the intellectual trends at the time, as well as the tensions between “young” reformists and “old” traditionalists.

The unprecedented expansion of the renewal movement throughout the world of Islam, of which the echoes of al-Manār bear testimony, had immediate effects in the fields of political thought. Whether there are indigenous roots of the constitutional theories and charters that were put forward in the Middle East and North Africa since the nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century is still open to debate. Stefan Reichmuth, comparing European and non-European constitutional movements and doctrines of this time, investigates the constitutional draft which was written in Morocco at the same period. It shows the strong interest of Islamic reformist scholars in local movements of opposition and constitutional reform, which had increased in response to European imperial encroachment. Despite its Utopian character, Murad’s confidence in the Shariʿa, as a source of dignity and a firm baseline for public consensus and political institution-building, reflects an important strand of Islamic political thought of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

A participant in the debates of this time, Shakib Arslan (1869–1946) is known as the most widely read Arab writer of the interwar period and the publisher of the French-language journal La Nation Arabe, that allowed him to reach Arab and non-Arab Muslims, Western policy makers, and anti-colonial activists, introducing concepts of the Arab world and the Islamic

revival to new audiences. Raja Adal’s article traces the members of Arslan’s transnational network, looks into the manner in which it was constructed, and ultimately asks for its raisons d’être based on a systematic analysis of La Nation Arabe. Arslan’s network can be seen as operating on three ideological plans, linking the intellectual currents of Arabism, Islamism, and anticolonialism.

, by Alexandre Popovic, takes into consideration the most representative Muslim intellectuals of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the twentieth century, amounting to about fifty names, and classifies them into specific groups according to their status, discourses, and strategies as well as by respective periods. Based on this overview, the author describes the main intellectual trends that appeared in the Muslim minority society in the course of a long and gradual period, covering the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the emergence of the South-Slav Kingdom, the establishment of the Communist Regime, and the post-Communist era followed by the civil war in 1992–1995.

For the Ismailis, the twentieth century will be regarded as a time of social and religious revival. After the long period of time from the fall of Alamut, the Ismailis have returned to the center stage of the Islamic world. They have constructed a worldwide NGO network called the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). As Nejima Susumu suggests, the AKDN is under the general control of the Imamat (office of the Imam), and the Ismailis are voluntarily working within the network. The NGO activities, involving hundreds of schools, hospitals, and universities, have produced thousands of highly educated Ismaili youth. Some of them have proceeded to religious studies, especially on Nasir Khusraw, the early theoretician of the Ismailiyya. The author shows how this intellectual phenomenon is giving a new character to the followers of the Aga Khan.

In a comprehensive analysis of reformist and nationalist movements among Chinese Muslim intellectuals during the period of turmoil from the late Qing to the beginning of the Communist era, Françoise Aubin investigates the cultural associations, the educational institutions in the Chinese language, and the press established by Muslim intellectuals. She points out that their movements played a decisive role in making the minority Muslims Chinese citizens, and in favoring an overall modernization of Islam in China. In the

course of the twentieth century more than ever, Sino-Islam was an integral part of the world Islam as well as of Chinese culture.

After the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905, Muslim intellectuals had begun to have substantial interest in the emergence of modern Japan. Of these Muslim intellectuals, Abdurreshid Ibrahim (1857–1944) was among the most outstanding. He not only introduced Japan and Japanese people in detail to the broad Turkic Muslim audience through his extensive travels, by means of his journal, The World of Islam: Spread of Islam in Japan, but also made efforts in later life to establish a close relationship between the world of Islam and Japan based on his Pan-Islamic ideology and strategy. Komatsu Hisao provides a preliminary survey of his vision of modern Japan and presents basic information for further research on a comprehensive subject, Islam and Japan, the significance of which is clearly growing in the contemporary world.

In Chapter 14, Dale F. Eickelman criticizes previous modernization theory, through an analysis of the significant dynamism of relations between intellectuals and their publics in the contemporary world of Islam. Together with the emergence of new intellectuals lacking formal religious training, a new sense of public is emerging thanks to mass education and mass communication. Thinkers such as Fethullah Gülen, Muhammad Shahrur, and others are redrawing the boundaries of public and religious life in the Muslim-majority world by challenging religious authority. The author stresses that the Muslim-majority world is demonstrating a vigorous and increasingly diverse intellectual pluralism.

In these matters, thanks to its scope and hopefully to the precision of its individual contributions, the present volume has endeavored to become a landmark of comparative studies in human and social sciences of the modern and contemporary Islamic world. At the same time, it sketches perspectives for a further enlargement of these comparative approaches toward global appraisals of the place and role of different types and categories of intellectuals in such issues as alien domination (whether Western, Russian/Soviet, or Chinese), modernization, community- and nation-building, access to education and learning, from colonization to the current aftermath of the cold war. In the future, the systematization, in this spirit, of separate

area studies should permit the appearance of comparative studies on the history of modern intellectuals in the Islamic world and in other cultural areas —in particular in Western, European, and North American societies.

We would not like to put the final dot to this short preface without expressing our deep gratitude to the MEXT and Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), which provided our IASP with Grant-in-Aid for Creative Scientific Research, as well as to the Japan Foundation (Japan-Europe Support Program for Conferences and Symposiums) and to the Embassy of France in Japan, whose support and attention enabled the organization of our second conference “Intellectuals in Islam in the Twentieth Century: Situations, Discourses, Strategies” in Tokyo. Our thanks, however, would not be complete without mentioning our special gratitude to all the panelists and participants in our two conferences, especially to the first al-Manār conference session chairs Profs Nakamura Kojiro, Hachioshi Makoto, Nakanishi Hisae, Sakai Keiko, Kimura Yoshihiro, and Takeshita Masataka, as well as to the discussants Profs Oishi Takashi, Kagaya Kan, Nakamura Mitsuo, Usuki Akira, Tomita Kenji, and Naito Yosuke. Finally we wish to express our gratitude to the staff members of the IASP, especially Ms Nakamura Chihisa and Ms Shimizu Yuriko for organizing our two conferences as well as to our assistants Dr Sawae Fumiko and Dr Nejima Susumu for supporting our editing works.

Our special tribute goes to the late Professor Yusuf Ibish, who presented a paper on the significance of al-Manār in the first conference, and was to read a paper on a female Sufi saint of Palestinian origin in the second conference. Unfortunately, however, neither paper could be included in this volume due to his long illness and his death in January 2003.

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* Part I : Al-Manār in a Changing Islamic World

* 1. Al-Manār Revisited: The “lighthouse” of the Islamic revival

Kosugi Yasushi

The intellectual map of the Islamic world has experienced a number of rather drastic changes during the twentieth century, continuing on from the turbulent years of the previous century. Various trends of thought and sociopolitical ideas stemming from the West, such as modernism, liberalism, nationalism, socialism, and communism, among others, appeared in Muslim societies, and all of these cast serious doubts on traditional Islamic thought and institutions. Especially modernism, often associated with Westernization, and nationalism, more often secular than not, were undermining traditional Islamic values, while profound socioeconomic transformation was undermining the basis upon which traditional Islamic societies, as well as their intellectual leaders, used to stand.

Against this backdrop, a new Islamic trend calling for a reform of Muslim societies appeared. As this trend voiced the aspiration to revive the Islamic

world, or the Islamic umma (community), to use their own terms, we may call this trend Islamic revivalism. The journal of al-Manār (Majalla al-Manār),[1] the main subject of this article, was the major mouthpiece for this trend. It was published regularly between 1898 and 1935, and its intellectual heritage was maintained by later popular movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Association of Algerian ‘Ulama’ in Algeria. The trend, however, seemed to have lost its momentum by the early 1950s, when Arab nationalism and other secular trends started to overshadow the previous Islamic trends. Accordingly, the contributions of al-Manār appeared obsolete.

“Manar ” in Arabic means a “lighthouse,” or a “beacon.” The journal tried to be a lighthouse in a turbulent ocean where all Islamic ships were suffering the awful storm of the modern world, metaphorically speaking. Many intellectuals in the Islamic world sought other solutions for their societies differing from that which Muhammad Rashid Rida (Muḥammad Rašīd Riḍā, 1865–1935), al-Manār ’s founder and editor in chief, and his colleagues strove to formulate. For others, al-Manār ’s orientation looked anachronistic, as it called for a return to the original purity of Islam. It was judged natural that it had failed by the 1950s.

After seeing the phenomena of Islamic revival in various parts of the world over the last three decades of the twentieth century, however, we can no longer subscribe to this view. This article offers an invitation to reevaluate al-Manār as a major platform of modern Islam, and to present an overview of its intellectual contributions.[2]

** Re-evaluating Islam in the modern age

Scholarly inquiries into the nature of vitality of Islam in the political domains of the Middle Eastern countries started in 1978–1979, when specialists and observers of the region were surprised and perplexed to see an “Islamic revolution” in Iran. Since the revolutionary high times in the region had already passed with the decline of radical Arab nationalism,[3] a revolution alone, against what was considered the most mighty monarchy in the Gulf region, was a surprise. Furthermore, it was under an Islamic banner

with many Islamic symbols, such as jihad (struggle) against taghut (illegitimate power) led by faqih (jurist) or vali amr (holder of authority), revolution by the oppressed who will become martyrs willingly, and the like.[4]

Although the present author had already noticed the beginning of an Islamic revival in Egypt in the latter half of the 1970s,[5] it was still on a lesser level, and the revolution in Iran came as a startling event, as was the case for other students of Middle East studies. Retrospectively, there were many signs of an Islamic revival in various parts of the region during the decade. For example, an Islamic bank was established in Dubai in 1975, starting a new initiative to reinstitute Islam in the economic domain, followed later by many other banks.[6] However, these signs were not well-noticed, and arguments over the Islamic revolution in Iran in academic circles, let alone the mass media, were mostly skeptical about its durability, and therefore tried to explain it in terms of its regional specifics and historical contingencies.

The events of the following years in the Middle East and elsewhere, however, proved that there was something more generally Islamic than regional or sectarian in these phenomena.[7] To cite just a few politically serious cases, [8] we had observed an armed revolt in Mecca, the most holy city of Islam, in November 1979, nine months after the revolution in Iran. This was the very first armed struggle against the Saudi kingdom since its establishment in 1932, and a popular revolt in the Eastern region of the kingdom followed the next month. Then, in the same month the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan occurred, sparkling Islamic resistance movements, or Afghan mujahidin guerrillas. In October 1981, President Sadat was assassinated in Egypt for his peace-treaty with Israel, as a part of a failed rebellion by Islamic radicals, while Bahrain, a conservative monarchy in the Gulf, experienced a failed coup by an Islamic liberation front in the same year. Revolutionary and opposition groups taking an Islamic color were becoming the rule, not the exception.[9]

The reasons why Islamic dimensions had been ignored or underestimated lay in the question of paradigms and analytical frameworks of our studies. Until that time, the predominant paradigms were modernization and nationalism.

They were major paradigms for studies related to developing countries, not only in the Middle East but also in other regions of Asia and Africa, as well as in Latin America. This was occurring during the Cold War, and neither modernization studies nor nationalism studies were completely free from the reality of West-East bipolarity.[10] Both paradigms shared tendencies of secularism, and presupposed the tacit understanding that a modern society is a secular one, be it capitalist or socialist, where Islam continuously loses its sociopolitical significance.

Malcolm Kerr, the author of an authoritative book on the Islamic reformism of Muhammad ‘Abduh (Muhammad ‘Abduh 1849–1905) and Rashid Rida,[11] wrote in 1960 that “Rashīd Riḍā and others of his school, whatever their intentions may have been, have facilitated the accomplishment of a great undertaking of secular reform in Islamic countries,” thus concluding the failure of Rida and al-Manār.[12] Modernization and/or nationalism were well-rooted in the Middle East by then, or at least, seemed so to many, with their secularizing tendencies.

Once this premise came under serious doubt, studies in the field started to provide more accurate information on the Islamic revival. There were, and are today, grassroot activities which either produced Islamic revival or were produced themselves under Islamic revival. Islamic revival can be defined a reorientation of a Muslim society at mass level toward Islam (re-Islamization) after a significant degree of de-Islamization[13] has occurred, and that is accompanied by revitalization or reformulation of Islamic institutions, as well as Islamic discourses and symbols among Muslims in contemporary contexts.

This means that Islamic revival is far from anything “traditional.” The term “traditional” indicates continuity from the past. The “revival” apparently presumes a discontinuity, as it is to revive something that ceased to be vital or functional. Hence, Muslims themselves sometimes refer to revival as an “awakening” from negligence or illness.[14]

To illustrate this point, let us take the example of zakat (zakāt), an obligatory charity for Muslims through payment of a prescribed portion of one’s possessions. It is a part of the well-established Islamic tenets, and

therefore the concept itself seems traditional. However, while collection of zakat was considered a duty of the state during premodern (Islamic) periods, it was suspended or left for private initiatives in the modern era, especially under national governments of the twentieth century. Revitalization of this institution is often called for as remedy for poverty, as a part of Islamic revival.[15] It involves reformulation of how and who should collect zakat, and how and for what it should be spent. Revived Zakat in a modern society is completely different from that of traditional society. Even though its religio-legal sanctions look identical because of the continuity of the legal codes related to it, the socioeconomic significance is quite different.

As collecting zakat cannot be done individually, and while modern states do not perform the duty of collection, an aspiration to activate zakat involves social organization. So, local “zakat committees” were organized in many places to fill the gap. The same can be said about building mosques. Mosques, or prayer halls, are crucially important for a Muslim district if one wants to perform his obligation of prayers. In new suburban districts or underdeveloped districts, there may not be a sufficient number of mosques, if any. Once its inhabitants aspire to have a mosque, they have to organize themselves for that purpose. When a mosque is built, its management or an organizational administration will be needed. Thus, activating Islamic teachings and institutions in a modern society necessitates collective social works, hence, what we may call “Islamic revival movements.”[16]

Why should Islam, then, be revived? That was one of the most basic themes for al-Manār and its writers and associates, the Manarists.[17] For one, Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi (ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Kawākibī, 1854–1902), an Islamic thinker originally from Aleppo, argued the major causes of the decline of the Islamic umma in his Umm al-Qurā[The Mother of Cities, that is, Mecca] (Meccan Conference)[18] through the tongues of participants in a secret international conference in Mecca, supposedly held in 1316 AH [1898][19]

The beginning of the 14th century A.H. is a time when defects and weakness cover all Muslims….The Association [of Umm al-Qura][20] invited some scholars and political writers to investigate the reasons and to search for the best ways for the Islamic nahḍa (revival, or

Renaissance), so that they will publish their opinions in Islamic papers of India, Egypt, Syria and of the Tatars.[21]

The participants included those from Aleppo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Alexandria, Cairo, Yemen, Basra, Nejd, Mecca, Medina, Tunis, and Fez in Arab regions, as well as of Kurdish, Iranian, Tatar, Kazan, Turkish, Afghan, Indian, Sind, and even Chinese and English origins. There was only one from Beirut, among the expected participants, who failed to arrive in time.[22]

They criticized the state of affairs of the Islamic world in general, and the Ottoman administrations in particular, and proposed social reform based on Islam properly understood. They urged the promotion of education among Muslims for the sake of the revival.

The theme of “revival” heard many echoes in later decades, especially in the latter half of the twentieth century. During the heydays of Arab nationalism, however, the Islamic dimension of al-Kawakibi was largely underestimated. As the conference ended by proposing an Arab caliphate, as a remedy to the shortcomings of the Ottoman empire, a Turkish-dominated dynasty, al-Kawakibi had been seen often as a pioneer of Arab nationalism.[23] This is apparently a point we need to reevaluate. He was an associate of al-Manār, and definitely Islamic in orientation.

In this sense, Dawish’s following statement is plausible: “the shift in religious authority from the Turks to the Arabs was proposed for the sole purpose of Islamic regeneration, and the Arabic khilafa was projected to be not a revolutionary nationalist, but a symbol of Islamic unity.”[24]

We certainly find emphasis of ʿurūba (Arabness, Arabism) in his and others’ writings in al-Manār. Rida was also very prominent in this respect. As they called for a return to a pure Islam, that is to say, Islam of the first generations (the Salaf, literally, the predecessors), it coincides with the period when Muslims were basically Arab. Once a call is made to return to the Qur’an, the sacred scripture of Islam recorded in Arabic, the prominence of the Arabic and Arab culture must be emphasized.

[25] However, as al-Manār in Arabic was read throughout the Islamic world, the Arabic language was considered universally Islamic in the minds of its readers. The Arabic has both national and transnational dimensions, and putting Arab Islamic thinkers along the line of Arab nationalism is precisely where one has to be very careful.

In evaluating al-Kawakibi's Meccan Conference, another important point is that this was a fictitious record of a conference that never occurred in reality. Beside what was said on the tongues of the participants, we must pay attention to why it was written as a record of an international conference. The message was that the Islamic umma should decide its affairs through a gathering of leaders, not depending on tyrannical, often not potent in the modern context, dynastic rulers.

This message seems to have recurred in Islamic conferences after the demise of the Ottoman empire. Among the early important meetings Rida was keen to record, there were the General Islamic Conference for the khilafa in Cairo in 1926[26] and the General Islamic Conference in Jerusalem in 1931.[27] Al-Kawakibi's aspiration was partially realized, one may observe, when the first Islamic Summit was convened in 1969, and an international body, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) was set up to visualize the Islamic world in a contemporary form.[28]

Another answer to the question, why and how to revive, was given three decades later by Sakib Arslan (Šhakīb Arslān, 1869–1946), who wrote Limadhā ta'akhkhara al-Muslimūn wa taqaddama gharuhum? [Why Are the Muslims Backward While Others Are Advanced?][29] Arslan saw a remedy in proper understanding of Islam and its application within contemporary realities.

The fact that his writing was meant to serve as an answer to a question sent by a Muslim in Borneo (present-day Indonesia) reveals the nature of al-Manār, as a journal for the entire Islamic world.[30] Shakib's work "is an enduring contribution; it went through three Arabic editions during his lifetime and was reissued in 1965 and again in 1981."[31]

Al-Manār contains quite a substantial amount of writings and information in its nearly thirty thousand pages from 1898 to 1935. After Rida’s death, his immediate heirs published two issues. Then in 1939, the Association of Muslim Brotherhood, an heir in the call of Islamic reform in the form of popular organization, published the issues of the last volume until 1940. The government suppressed it, with the other journals of the Brotherhood in 1941.[32] Al-Manār is a treasure of historical sources for the Islamic areas of its days. Furthermore, when we read its writings in a broader perspective, and compare them with ideas in circulation in Islamic revival movements in recent decades, we see clear similarities as well as further developments. Some of the ideas, or lines of argument, are proved to have direct links, while others seem to have apparent echoes, though not proven in a definite manner. Many others still await scholarly investigation.

What is obvious for the present author is that al-Manār did not end its life by setting an Arab nationalism in a religious garment, nor giving an Islamic excuse for modernization of the Islamic world and resultant secularization. Al-Manār had its own aspirations and claims, and they were heard and followed, though they were overshadowed by other trends in decades preceding the current Islamic revival.

When the Islamic revival started to manifest itself, R. Stephan Humphreys clarified that Islam remained “a significant political force in the Arab lands after the Second World War,”

due largely to the Muslim Brothers, who seemed to combine the militant activism of the Wahhābīya [of Arabian Peninsula], the Sanūsīya [of Libya], and the Mahdīya [of Sudan] with the reformist Quran-centered thought of the Salafīya and the anti-imperialism and mass politics of the secular nationalists.[33]

Salafiyya is a general term for a broad trend of Islamic thought, which claims and calls Muslims to found their understanding of Islam on that of the Salaf

(the Pious First Generations).[34] Although the term is used in this article without the qualification of “modern,” there was also premodern Salafiyya. Its greatest proponent was Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328), and it was al-Manār that revived his teaching by printing his works and promoting his ideas in the journal.[35]

The central force of thought, the Salafi school, originated in the late Ottoman period. To borrow Lahoud’s words, a “new intellectual movement in the Arab world,” was “characterized by a renewal (tajdīd) of Islam, as a response to the emerging sociopolitical and technological changes. This tajdīd served as an intellectual platform for the salafiyya, and it developed primarily under the influence, in chronological order, of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d. 1897), Muhammad ‘Abduh (d. 1905), and Rashid Rida (d. 1935).”[36] In the last stage of this formative phase, the Salafi school of reformism was elaborated and disseminated by the journal al-Manār.

** A brief description of al-Manār

The first journal calling for the revival of Islam, or that of the Islamic umma and its civilization, was al-ʻUrwa al-Wuṯqā (the Firm Bond) [37] published in Paris during an eight-month period in 1884. Though short-lived, it had an eminent impact on the Islamic countries. It gave a serious warning of the dangers of Western colonialism, and called for a reform of the umma and exercise of ijtihad (independent reasoning to find Islamic legal rules) to face the challenges of the time. Among the younger generation who received the message of this pioneering journal, was the young Muhammad Rashid Rida in Syria.

He was born in a village called Qalamūn, near the city of Tripoli on the eastern Mediterranean coast, in the year of 1865. The village belongs to Lebanon today, but in his days it was a part of Sham (historical Syria); Rida identified himself, and was identified by others, as a Syrian,[38] and was active in movements for the independent Syria.[39] He was educated under the reformist Shaykh Husayn Jisr of Tripoli (1845–1909),[40] and later obtained a qualification as an □ālim (independent scholar). When

al-ʿUrwa al-Wuṯqā was published, he was still a young man, and was impressed by the journal. Rida recalled:

I found a copy of al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqa among my father's papers. When I read its articles on the call to pan-Islamism, the return of glory, power and prestige to Islam, the recovery of what it used to possess, and the liberation of its peoples from foreign domination, I was so impressed that I entered into a new phase of my life. And I became very fond of the methodology of these articles to make and prove its arguments on topics with verses from the Qur'an, and of its tafsīr (exegesis) which none of mufassirs (exegetes) have written. The most important points in which al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqa distinguished itself were: (1) Allah's rules in His creation and the order of human society, and the reasons for the rise and fall of nations as well as their strength and weakness; (2) clarification that Islam is a religion of sovereignty and power, combining the happiness of this world and that of the hereafter, while implying that it is a religion both spiritual and social, civil and military, and that its military power is for the sake of protection of the just law, general guidance and prestige of the community, and not for the sake of imposition of the religion by force; and (3) for Muslims there are no nationalities except their religion, so they are brothers whose bloodline must not separate them, nor their languages nor their governments.[41]

Rida became so fascinated with their ideas that he was called "Adorer of al-Afghani" by others.[42] It was, however, only after more than ten years in 1897, when he learned the death of al-Afghani,[43] the founder of the journal of al-ʿUrwa al-Wuṯqā, in Istanbul, he decided to move to Cairo to join Muhammad 'Abduh, the editor in chief of the journal:

When he [al-Afghani] passed away, my hope was hightened to get in touch with his viceroy Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh to acquire his knowledge and opinions on Islamic reform. I waited until an opportunity appeared in the month of Rajab in 1315 [1897], and that was immediately after I completed my study in Tripoli, acquiring an□ālim status, permission to teach independently, from my mentors. Then I immigrated to Egypt, and established al-Manār for call to reform.[44]

While “everywhere the increased use of the printing press for publishing religious texts challenged the‘ulama’s role as guardians and transmitters of knowledge,” “[T]he reformers of Islamic law were aware of the opportunities that the print media opened up. They skillfully used periodicals and pamphlets to disseminate their opinions to a wide audience.”[45] Al-‘Urwa al-Wuṯqā and al-Manār were in their forefront.

Rida based himself in Cairo for more than three decades until his death, from where he made trips to Syria, Istanbul, India, Hejaz, and Europe.[46] Al-Manār was a “monthly magazine that researches the philosophy of religion and the affairs of society and civilization.”[47] The title of the journal was taken from a hadith, “He [Prophet Muhammad] said that there were for Islam landmarks and a lighthouse, like a lighthouse of the path.”[48]

This is a voice calling in a clear Arabic tongue, and an appeal to the truth reaching the ear of a speaker of the ḍād letter [an Arab] and the ears of all Easterners, calling from a close place [Egypt, located between the West and the East] which both the Easterner and the Westerner can hear, and it spreads out so that the Turks and the Persians also receive it. It says, “Oh, the sleeping Easterner who enjoys sweet dreams, wake up, wake up! Your sleep has exceeded the limit of rest.”[49]

The journal was published first as an eight-page weekly, then became a monthly journal from the second year.[50] He printed 1,500 copies for the first issues, and sent them to his acquaintances in Egypt and Syria. Soon the Ottoman authorities banned it in Syria and other provinces, Rida reduced the number of copies to 1,000. In a few years, however, the number of subscribers reached almost 3,000.[51] “By the twelfth year (1909), remaining copies of Volume I were selling for four times the original price; a second printing was therefore made, in the form which had been followed after the first year.”[52]

His claim that it was addressed not only to Arabs but also to all Easterners proved to be true, as its “eventually gained a wide circulation from Morocco to Java.”[53] Thus C. C. Berg wrote about the Indonesians: Al-Manār

did not shine… for Egyptians alone. It illuminated the Arabs at home and abroad, the Moslems of the Malay Archipelago who studied at al-Azhar University or in Mecca, and the solitary Indonesian who had kept his old relations with the heart of the Moslem world after having returned to his border country of the Dār al-Islām.…And all these people now saw Islam in a new light… Those who had caught up and preserved the light of the Manār in Egypt, became lesser “manars” for their environments, once back in Indonesia.[54]

It started as a modest journal and ascended to be a mouthpiece of the Islamic reform, as its reputation spread. One of the reasons was that, while others were complaining the miseries of the Islamic world, “al-Manār proposed the cures for the illnesses of the umma in a general form, then with details and proofs.”[55] A Western scholar, contemporary to Rida, wrote about him, “the leading pupil of Muhammad ‘Abduh during the latter’s lifetime, and, since his death, his biographer, editor of his works, and the one who has principally carried on his tradition and interpreted his doctrines,” and he was “the man who has been perpetuating ‘Abduh’s influence for the quarter of a century since his death,”[56] and “al-Manār has been the organ through which his [‘Abduh’s] views have been given the largest publicity.”[57]

While this function of Al-Manār is confirmed, apparently Rida’s role in formulating a revivalist version of Islamic teachings is not confined to his place as ‘Abduh’s pupil. This is very clear in the political domain. ‘Abduh discouraged Rida from writing on political issues in al-Manār, and political writings increased only after ‘Abduh’s death, partly reflecting the deepening political crises of the Islamic world.[58]

When Rida passed away, the Grand Shaykh of al-Azhar at the time, Mustafa al-Maraghi (Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, 1881–1945), a disciple of ‘Abduh and a

reformer of al-Azhar, attended a memorial gathering at his funeral,[59] and gave a speech with words of praise:

Al-Sayyid Rashid [60] triumphed and his supporters and disciples became many, while there were once few supporters and disciples, and within academic circles there were found those who carry his principles and follow his path, and among the public those whose eyes were opened to light, and clouds of ignorance and falsehood were wiped out of their hearts.

He didn’t have any new principle in Islam, that could be justified as a school of his own, but his principle was the principle of the entire ‘ulama’ of the Salaf, that is, to return in judgment to God and His messenger by executing [the following Qur’anic order in the verse of] “and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to Allah and the Messenger”[Qur’an 4:59], and his principle was also that of the ‘ulama’ of the Salaf in choosing rules appropriate for the time and beneficial for nations in issues of ijtihad [where independent judgment should be exercised], and his principle was that of the ‘ulama’ of the Salaf in everything related to Divine attributes and the issues related to the last day, so he was a Salafi Sunni man who disliked taqlid (taqlīd , imitation, emulation) and propagated ijtihad, seeing it (ijtihad) an obligation upon himself and upon everyone capable.[61]

These words, even taking out the element of courtesy for the deceased, describe fairly Rida as the champion of Salafi school of thought, a reformist formulator of Islam. Associating him with these essential key terms, “Salafi,” “Sunni,” “ijtihad,” and “anti-taqlid (antitraditional),” his major contribution was that he disseminated these ideas widely in the Islamic world through the most enduring and consistent medium in the modern era, the journal of al-Manār.

** Contributions of al-Manār to modern Islam

The contributions al-Manār made toward modern Islam, or to put it more precisely, toward a reformulated understanding of Islam and its practices within the modern Islamic world, are multifaceted, and a careful examination is necessary to determine their extent. The difficulty stems partly from the scope and width of its circulations in geographical terms, and partly from the diverse nature of its topics. Some of its ideas were very innovative but it also promoted what was Islamic in a more general sense. Innovative arguments that had impacts on intellectuals are easier to discern and evaluate, while a more general contribution to the morale of Muslims in those days is subtle and difficult to determine. The reevaluation of al-Manār also involves the evaluation of the Islamic revival in later days, as this article calls for the reevaluation of al-Manār based on the evaluation of the recent revival. The evaluation of what has progressed over the last three decades or so, of course, may be even more controversial than the historical role al-Manār played.

The following remarks are, therefore, sketchy in nature, and offer only a limited outline, inviting to a further investigation.

*** Validity of Islam

The apparent, and most striking, feature of al-Manār is its endurance over a long span of time. Maintaining the publication of a highly intellectual nature for almost four decades, especially under the strong winds blowing against Islamic trends, both traditional and revivalist, was an achievement. Through this achievement, al-Manār contributed to the maintenance of the banner of credibility of the Islamic teachings in the modern context. al-Manār insisted that Islam had been valid in the past, was valid in the present, and would be valid in the future.

In doing so, Rida depended upon al-Afghani and ‘Abduh to a great extent, especially at the beginning. This is partly because he had faith in their thought and believed that their cause was not only correct but also beneficial to all members of the Islamic world. Their authority and credibility were assets to him. Apparently, ‘Abduh’s support and patronage during the first

years of al-Manār, until his death in 1905, lent strength to the journal and its founder. Al-Manār advocated the ideas and thought of al-Afghani and ‘Abduh, and circulated them in four corners of the Islamic world. In his writing on the khilāfa (Caliphate), Rida commented that ‘Abduh was just short of becoming the paramount leader of the Islamic world.

The Ustādh-Imām (mentor-imam) [‘Abduh],[62] may God bestow mercy upon him, reached the leadership position in this umma and the level of those in authority in the religious and temporal affairs, and he came quite close to the leadership of the entire umma . But this potential was not realized, because the umma was not formulated in such a manner to make it possible to move on the line which he planned.[63]

One may get the impression that this was an overestimate for ‘Abduh. With this high esteem for his own mentor, Rida strongly advocated ‘Abduh’s values through the pages of al-Manār . “If it were not for al-Manār most of ‘Abduh’s thoughts and wisdom would have been lost, and his reforms and history unknown. And as a result of al-Manār ’s influence, ‘Abduh had a party and followers in Tunis and Algiers.”[64] Actually, they were numerous in the Maghrib: to name a few, Abd al-Aziz al-Thaalbi (ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Tha ʿālibī, 1874–1944), Muḥammad al-Nahīl and īāhir b.ʿĀshūr in Tunisia, Ben Badis (ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ibn Bādīs, 1889–1940), and the Association of Algerian Scholars in Algeria,ʿAbdullāh Idrīs al-Sanūsī (d. 1931), Abū Shu□ayb al-Dukkālī (1878–1937), and Muhammad b. al-ʿArabī al-ʿAlawī (1880–1964) in Morocco.[65] The list of beneficiaries, of course, is not just confined to the Maghrib countries, and should be longer.[66]

The journal was also read in South Asia, and Rida kept close ties with the leaders of the Khilafat movement, and al-Manār published many articles on and by these leaders. For example, the theory of Caliphate by Abu al-Kalam Azad was serialized in al-Manār.[67] Being a leader of the Khilafat movement supporting the Ottoman dynasty, Azad took the position of discarding the importance of a caliph being of Quraysh origin (of the tribe of Prophet Muhammad), a position in a sharp contrast to Rida’s.

[68] Azad was still a very close ally of al-Manār for the Islamic revival. To the east, the reformist Muhammadiyah established in 1912 in Central Java with a call for return to the Qur’an and the Sunna,[69] which became the second largest Islamic organization in Indonesia today.[70]

Al-Manār ’s insistence on the validity of Islam in modern days generated strong support and encouragement for both ordinary and reform-minded Muslims in those days. In this sense, al-Manār should be placed in the category of Islamic journalism.[71] Rida was, therefore, not only an academic but also a journalist. This combination was essential in creating an Islamic journal of high quality. If such was one of the major objectives of al-ʿUrwa al-Wuṯqā, the first Islamic journal with a brief life, al-Manār as its successor was well managed over a sufficient span of time for its task, though it burdened Rida heavily with its time and energy requirements, as well as in financial terms.[72]

Other ideas of al-Afghani and ‘Abduh that al-Manār propagated included the Unity of the Islamic umma, solidarity of Muslims, harmony of Islam and modern civilization (revelation and reason), return to the pure and original message of Islam, exercise of ijtihad (independent reasoning) of the Islamic law and its applicability in the modern society, and new exegesis of the Qur’an, appropriate for the modern time.

Of these, the central issue at the earlier stage was that of ijtihad (independent reasoning and judgment), because they had to establish the legitimacy of exercising ijtihad if they wanted to reform the Islamic law to meet the social needs of the day, and the Qur’anic exegesis also requires ijtihad if new interpretations were to be made. Furthermore, in Rida’s view, the unity of the umma could be achieved only if ijtihad was exercised correctly.

*** Ijtihad and reform of the Islamic law

For all reformers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, on both Islamic and pro-Western sides, the defects of traditional Islam

seemed apparent, as its incapacity in dealing with the reality of the world under Western dominance proved. The tradition was deemed responsible for the decline of the Islamic world in their eyes.

Al-Afghani called for ijtihad to revive the umma, as he saw the inflexibility of the interpretations of the law a part of the decline. ‘Abduh tried hard to reform Islamic legal institutions and the jurists themselves, and once he was appointed the Grand Mufti of Egypt, the highest Islamic legal position in the state, he issued many fatwas to express new interpretations. His fatwas were recorded in Dār al-Iftā’ (Mufti’s Office) in two large files, each containing more than five hundred fatwas.[73]

Rida had to move further, and elaborate the theme of ijtihad. The citadel of the traditional ‘ulama,’ al-Azhar, was very conservative, and was keeping the tradition of taqlīd (imitation, emulation). Although ‘Abduh’s pupils reformed al-Azhar,[74] it was only in later decades. In ‘Abduh’s time, this was still what Rida had to struggle against. The traditional system of the jurists in those days was based on the dominance of the four Sunni schools of law, while each school attained a kind of independence, so that each could stay within its own tradition. The strong inclination toward taqlīd (imitation) of the preceding scholars was in the air.

There was also the serious question of the “closure of the gate of ijtihad.” In the Western scholarship, this question has been debated as a historical question. Joseph Schacht stated that the gate was closed by the tenth century,[75] and the Schacht thesis was maintained until Wael B. Hallaq proved that this was not a historical fact and that ijtihad was exercised at least to the sixteenth century.[76]

On the other hand, it is also true that at the time of al-Afghani, Abduh, and Rida, there was a prevailing discourse of closure among the traditional scholars, especially those of the Hanafi school. The Hanbali school of law never acknowledged such a concept, as Rida relied on this position heavily. But, the Hanafi school was the official legal school of the Ottoman Empire, and the closure was presumed that against which Rida had to argue.

Rida wrote a dialogue in a serialized form in al-Manār, a dialogue between an aged traditionalist and a young reformer, apparently reflecting himself. The traditional shaykh seemed a typical conservative scholar of the time. What he said in the dialogue might be a little accentuated, as it was Rida's portrait of a traditionalist. Nevertheless, it must have reflected the reality of his time. What this conservative scholar was saying sounds today incredibly out of date, as the traditional and conservative 'ulama' today are all generations after the reforms of al-Azhar, and they don't resemble those whose logic Rida had to struggle with.

Muḥāwarāt al-Muīliḥ wa al-Muqallid (The Dialogues between the Reformer and the Imitator/Traditionalist) was published in al-Manār from Vol. 3, No. 28 (December 1900) to Vol.4, No. 22 (February 1902).[77] It contains a variety of topics, including definitions of man, early Islam, faith and disbelief, decline of the Islamic world and its causes, fatalism and reform, four schools of law, merits and faults of speculative theology, mysticism, saints, astrology, the Shiite and other factions, Judaism and Christianity, and interpretations of Islamic law.

The major issues that concern us here are the question of ijtihad, and the unity of umma. Lengthy arguments were exchanged between the two over the question of whether the obligation is ijtihad (reasoning) or taqlīd (imitation, emulation). The reformer strongly supports the necessity of ijtihad, and says:

The basic fundamentals of Islam are proper creed, ethics, control of one's own soul, and worshipping Allah in an appropriate manner, and general principles for social relations such as protection of life, honor and property. All these principles were established in the time of the Prophet.… As for the details of social relations, after the foundations are laid such as justice of rulings, equality of rights, prohibition of transgression, deception, and treason, and ḥadd punishments for some crimes, and after the principle of shūrā (consultation) is established, the details are entrusted to those with authority among the scholars and rulers, who ought

to be possessors of knowledge and justice, deciding what is best for the umma according to [conditions of] the time.[78]

This distinction between the essential principles and the non-essential details, which are subject of reasoning, was a very important contribution made by al-Manār. This distinction opens the latter space of flexible reasoning, without harming the concept of the eternal Shariʿa (Islamic law), since only the former is eternal and unchangeable. For many Muslims, this question had crucial importance, unless they were inclined toward a secular solution.

The reformer in the dialogue was also eloquent in quoting the words of the masterly predecessors of the traditionalists, forbidding the blind imitation of others. Since Rida’s thinking was along the lines of the Hanbali school, which supports the continuity of ijtihad, he had an important segment of tradition as his resource. In the end, the reformer felt satisfied at the exhaustion of the arguments.

In Rida’s opinion, taqlīd is not only wrong in itself but also in its creation of factionalism. If one insists on the obligation to follow a particular school, this in turn will create intolerance:

What is harmful is fragmentation of Muslims into sects and parties, while each of them requires its members to follow a scholar whom they call an imam, and they follow him in every word and opinion, and assemble themselves against the followers of another scholar, leading finally to the negligence of the Book [Qurʿan] and the sunna (prophetic customs).[79]

To say that the ijtihad is possible is not sufficient. In order to put this principle in action, Rida published fatwas (legal judgment in Islamic law) in al-Manār.

“Beginning in 1903, first under the title ‘Question and Fatwa’, and later in ‘Fatwas of al-Manār ’, Rida responded to a wide variety of queries sent in by readers from all corners of the Muslim world.” As they were collected and compiled, “the 2,592 fatwas first published in the pages of al-Manār constitute a remarkable record of the preoccupations and interests of early twentieth-century Muslims.”[80]

Although fatwas have been constantly issued throughout Islamic history, they were not considered as an exercise of ijtihad when the taqlīd tradition was strong. Rida opened, following ‘Abduh, a new path of issuing fat was by his own judgment, that is, by ijtihad.

Reopening the gate of ijtihad had an impact that was gradually felt later. As Basheer M. Nafi says: “By liberating Islam from the monopoly of the traditional institutions, the reformists prepared the ground for the laymen, the modern Muslim intellectual and the Muslim professional, to speak on the behalf of Islam.”[81] Rida, with other advocates of the ijtihad exercise, scored, therefore, a crucial point for later development of the Islamic revival movements.

*** Qur’anic exegesis

Al-Manār made a great contribution in the field of Tafsīr , that is, “interpretation” or “exegesis” of the Qur’an. When it was serialized in al-Manār from 1901 (Vol. 4), it was simply called “Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-akīm (Exegesis of the Wise Qur’an),” and was later published as a separate multi-volume title named Tafsīr al-Manār (Exegesis of al-Manār), or we may call it the Manarist interpretation of the Qur’an.

The Qur’an, being the primary source of legislation and the ultimate reference for human ideas in Islam, has seldom been disputed in Islamic history. Any idea of a thinker or any policy of a ruler that contradicts the Qur’an has faced the resistance of literati and the general population. However, the compatibility of an idea or of a policy, or the lack of it, be this

in a theological, juristic, sociopolitical, or even scientific respect, with the Qur’an, also depends on how one can explain the relationship between the Qur’anic verses and this idea or that policy. This is why we find numerous references to Qur’anic verses in many kinds of Islamic writing.

In a sense, the history of Islamic thought is the history of how these justifications were made, or how authors tried to incorporate their ideas into the Qur’anic verses. And, each time a new idea succeeds in grounding itself on the Qur’an, the understanding of Qur’anic verses is also expanded.

However, the Qur’anic exegesis is an art or an Islamic science in itself. While it is not difficult to quote a few verses as a support of one’s own argument, it is not at all easy to make interpretations of all verses related to the subject consistently in conformity with one’s claim. If there is suspicion that it involves arbitrary interpretation or projection of wishful thinking into the verses, the claim can be discredited. Even if it gains temporary acceptance, it must bear its validity with the passing of time in the eyes of Muslim intellectuals and masses. Although there is no ecclesiastical authority to judge permissibility of a particular interpretation, it is not free for a Muslim intellectual to read arbitrarily ideas into the Qur’an. Actually all existing tafsīrs in circulation have survived the test of time, and are accepted at one level or another.

Now, if we see the history of Islamic thought as a dynamic process of interpretation of Qur’anic verses, Tafsīr al-Manār is nothing strange in itself. In form, it may even look conventional. When we open any page of Tafsīr al-Manār, it starts with some Qur’anic verses, and the explanation of a particular word and its circumstances, how one should understand it within the context of the verses, and what kind of legal consequences one may draw from these verses. However, the uniqueness of Tafsīr al-Manār lies in its contents. The journal of al-Manār was meant to reaffirm the validity of Islam as a religion in the contemporary world, of Islam as a civilization in the modern context. In order to accomplish this, the editor and contributors of the journal had to introduce new ideas either as Islamic or as compatible with Islamic principles. Tafsīr al-Manār is an attempt to justify the reformulation of Islamic understanding of faith, society, life, and the world in modern days

with its readings of the Qur’anic passages. Dhahabi called this kind of modern Tafsīr as “ethical (adabī) and social (ijtimāʿī) interpretation.”[82] Another description is the “rational and social school of interpretation (al-madrasa al-ʿaqliyya al-ijtimāʿiyya),” given by al-Rūmī.[83] Both emphasize the social nature of interpretation. But the latter is critical of the rationalist element in it, while the first evaluates favorably its linguistic precision. Al-Muhtasib named ‘Abduh’s school of Tafsīr, by emphasizing its reformist tendency, as “rational and revelational trend (ittiğah ʿaqlī tawfīqī)” combining Islam and Western civilization.[84]

Tafsīr al-Manār is also innovative in that its success proved that the traditional form of Tafsīr can still function as a vehicle for conveying new ideas through the interpretation of Qur’anic verses.

We need a small note here on its authorship. Tafsīr al-Manār started, basing itself on the lectures about Qur’anic verses given by Muhammad ‘Abduh and written by Rida. This sometimes gives the incorrect impression that Muhammad ‘Abduh was the real author and Rashid Rida only the record keeper, so that Tafsīr al-Manār is sometimes attributed to ‘Abduh rather than Rida. It is not accurate to say “Muhammad ‘Abduh presented his Qur’anic exegesis in the form of lectures at al-Azhar University and within the scope of legal opinions (fatāwā, sig.fatwā) which were published separately as in the periodical, al-Manār (“The Lighthouse”), and later, with the author’s approval, were compiled, revised from a literary viewpoint, and continued by Muhammad ‘Abduh’s pupil, Muhammad Rashid Rida.”.[85]

When we look actually into the pages of Tafsīr al-Manār, it is quite apparent that this is not a simple record of the lectures given by Muhammad ‘Abduh. We find paragraphs beginning with qāla al-ustādh al-imām (the mentor-imam said): these refer to what Muhammad ‘Abduh said in his lectures. Sometimes, Rida gave summaries of the lectures, by saying “qāla mā maʿnāhu, ” or similar expressions. Then we find the word aqūl, “I say,” writing Rida’s own comments. This may be seen to resemble the traditional style, that is, instead of each author writing an independent Tafsīr, one may add a

sharḥ (explanation) to a preceding Tafsīr. So it is possible to think that ‘Abduh made the major interpretation, followed by Rida who added his notes. However, it is easy to find places where the passages of Rida are more abundant than the words of‘Abduh. For example, on the verse of “You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind,” (chapter Āl ’Imrān, 110), Rida wrote:

The essence of what the mentor-imam [‘Abduh] said is: This description [of the best community] is true about those to whom it was first addressed. They were the Prophet, may Allah bestow blessings and peace upon him, and his companions who were with him, upon them be Divine satisfaction. They were once enemies, but God united their hearts so that, by Divine Grace, they became brothers. And they were those who tied each other by the Divine Rope [Islam] and were not disunited in religion to become partisans of particular sects, and they were those who were ordering the good and forbidding the evil.[86]

‘Abduh continues to portray the companions with their praiseworthy natures and acts. Here we can see the very Salafi attitude of putting an emphasis on the model character of the first generation. Then, Rida adds his comment to accentuate the point:

I say: This is the summary meaning of what the mentor-imam said, except the phrase “and his companions who were with him”[which needs an explanation]. This is from his words, but he intended these noble attributes and perfect characteristics for that perfect faith not for everyone for whom the hadīth scholars apply the term of a companion, such as a Bedouin who just embraced Islam and saw the Prophet only… [87]

He clarifies that the loyal and enduring companions were the models to follow, not any companion. Then, he goes further, raising the question of later conflicts among these leading companions, and giving his answer to the question of internal divisions at length.

Sometimes Rida gave additional explanations, and on other occasions extended comments on his own line of arguments. He was always extremely polite when he raised an objection to ‘Abduh’s interpretation, obscuring the fact that he was raising a point against his mentor.[88]

‘Abduh gave lectures on 5 out of the 30 volumes of the Qur’an, as it is conventionally divided. ‘Abduh used to read what Rida wrote, mostly before the printing, and gave his approval.[89] ‘Abduh passed away in 1905. Since then, Rida continued writing the Tafsīr for another thirty years by himself, and it became progressively his own, though he was confident that if ‘Abduh were to read his writings, he would have confirmed them.[90] He himself did not, however, complete Tafsīr al-Manār. He finished the 12th volume 4 months before his death.[91]

This work can be considered a collective work of ‘Abduh and Rida, or even of the Manarists,[92] as it is called Tafsīr al-Manār. This question of authorship is also related to the question of how we see the relationship among the “trio of Islamic Reform,” namely, al-Afghani, ‘Abduh, and Rida. To use Badawi’s words, “Al-Afghani was the inspirer of the Salafiyya school and ‘Abduh was its brains, but Rashid Ridha was its spokesman.”[93] However, Rida’s function was more than that of a spokesman. We may put them as follows: Al-Afghani lived the life of a busy revolutionary who wielded influence over young Muslims, but did not spend much time to write the details of what he advocated. ‘Abduh continued his mission, though on quite a different plane with a different mode, and founded theoretical principles on which the school of Islamic Reform and Salafiyya rests. Rida gave details to the principles, and tried to formulate them in more concrete manners in al-Manār. One might be tempted to say that Rida went down a particular line of argumentation too rigidly while ‘Abduh left certain difficult questions with ambiguous answers. Here is a secret concerning why other liberal disciples could be confident of their being ‘Abduh’s followers while they distanced themselves from the Islamic line Rida pursued, despite Rida’s monopolization of the position of the most favored disciple of ‘Abduh. Rida could not help but go into detail as the needs of the Islamic world at the time called for. He may be blamed for not having given perfect answers, but not for giving detailed answers. If we recognize this relationship between the three, the same is applicable to Tafsīr al-Manār. Al-Afghani initiated the task of reading the Qur’an in the light of modern conditions of

the Islamic world, and ‘Abduh later gave actual lectures on the Qur’anic exegesis. Then, Rida recorded it, and expanded it with more details.

What are the methodological contributions of Tafsīr al-Manār? Although it looks basically conventional in its form, it is not void of new methodological contributions in the field. Here we refer to two of them. The first is the analytical summary of chapters. As a notable example, Rida cites, after giving a general description of topics in Sūra al-Baqara (Chapter of Cow), twenty-one legal points, or practical sanctions of the Islamic law, addressed to the Islamic community, putting numbers to these items, starting from (1) establishment of daily prayers and paying zakat, (2) prohibition of magic, (3) punishment for murders, kindness to parents and relatives, to (21) a prayer at the end of the chapter as a seal of practical sanctions. Then, he spelled out 33 “general legal principles and rules” in this chapter.[94] For anyone who is familiar with modern Tafsīrs, this may not seem particularly impressive. Classical Tafsīrs are, however, mostly written in a form called Tafsīr taḥlīlī, that is, commentaries given to verses in their order in the Qur’an.[95] As the sequential order of the Qur’an does not follow the kind of order that a law book or a literary text book may follow, it is very difficult to grasp the general view of a chapter or to locate a particular issue in it. They neither give summaries of any chapter, nor a summary of what the exegete writes on that chapter. So, Tafsīr al-Manār pioneers to give such descriptions of a chapter in order to facilitate its understanding by ordinary Muslims.

The second point: The earlier methodology was not just a convenient tool. It had a theoretical basis, which is the thematic integrity of each chapter. In earlier centuries, the concept that each chapter constitutes an integrated unit with central themes was not found. In Mustansir Mir’s words, to see a “sura [chapter] as a unit,” is a definite break with the traditional style of exegesis.[96] On this, we agree with Mir, but he omits ‘Abduh and Rida from his list of most important exegetes in the twentieth century.[97] We would rather agree with‘Abdullah Mahmud Shihata that “‘Abduh’s contribution was in drawing the general idea of a chapter and the issues with which it deals and the principles and the realities it contains, and that it was carried on by Rida.”[98] Shihata cited the integrity of the chapter as the first of the nine foundations on which ‘Abduh’s methodology relied.

As we have seen earlier, Tafsīr al-Manār addressed the needs of Muslims at the beginning of the twentieth century. The journal was for those Muslims who aspired to revive the Islamic umma. Through its Tafsīr, ‘Abduh and Rida were able to justify reformist ideas with Qur’anic verses, and ground these ideas in sacred scripture. They also expanded understanding of the Qur’an by reading these ideas in its verses. As the Qur’an has been a living guide for Muslims throughout these centuries due to this dynamism of updating the understanding of the scripture according to the social and spiritual needs of each era, opening this function for the modern need was an extremely important role played by Tafsīr al-Manār.

Before the twentieth century, Rūḥ al-Ma’ānī by al-Alusi (1802–1854) [99] has been the last encyclopedic Tafsīr of the classical brand. After this complicated and voluminous work in the middle of the nineteenth century, there was a gap of Tafsīr writing until Tafsīr al-Manār appeared. Once Tafsīr al-Manār reestablished the art of exegesis to address the contemporary reader, modern Tafsīrs began to flourish.[100]

A brief and selective list of works may include, from Egypt, Al-Ǧawāhir fī Tafsīr al-Qur’an al-Karīm by Ṭāntawī Ǧawharī (d. 1940),[101] Tafsīr al-Marāghī by Aḥmad Muīīafā al-Marāghī (1881–1945), [102] and Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm by Maḥmūd Shaltūt[103], from Tunisia, Tafisīr al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr by Muḥammad al-Ṭāhir b.’Āsūr[104], and from Algeria, The Tafsīr of Ben Badis. [105] All of these are intellectually related to ‘Abduh, Rida and al-Manār. An important work by the Syrian Salafi Reformer contemporary to Rida, Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī could be added to the list.[106] His Tafsīr is commonly known as Tafsīr al-Qāsimī. In one of its editions, Rida’s remarks of praise for al-Qasimi are quoted as “the renewer of Islamic sciences” and “the reviver of the prophetic sunna ” who is “one of the unifying links between the guidance of the Salaf and the civilizational ascent appropriate for the time.”[107]

In the middle of the century, one of the most important works, probably one next to Tafsīr al-Manār in terms of its wide influence, appeared: FI Zilal al-Qur’an by Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966).[108] Volumes of the work have been translated into English,[109] and it is widely read beyond the Arab countries. Its author was influenced by al-Manār, as “Tafsīr al-Manār & had a great impact on Sayyid Qutb, and he made it a major reference in writing his everlasting work, In the Shade of the Qur’an ”.[110]

The last two decades of the twentieth century also witnessed new Tafsīrs, such as Al-Asas fi al-Tafsīr by Saʿid Hawwa,[111] a leading ideologue of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, al-Tafsīr al-Munir and al-Tafsīr al-Wasit by a prolific Syrian scholar Wahba al-Zuhayli,[112] and al-Tafsīr al-Wasit by the then Grand Mufti of Egypt and now Grand Shaykh of al-Azhar, Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi.[113] The continuity of the Tafsīr literature as one of the most important avenue to express modern Islamic ideas in the form of Qur’anic exegesis seems firmly established by now, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that Tafsīr al-Manār had a major, if not the sole, role in opening this avenue.

*** Modern Islamic political theory

We should now turn to political theory. Rida and al-Manār lived in an era when the Islamic world was in one of the most serious periods of political turmoil. Most of the proponents of the Islamic revival took a defensive position against Western encroachment. Many of them were very critical of the shortcomings of the Ottoman dynasty but did not wish for it to be dismantled. One of the most serious calamities for the Islamic world was the demise of the Ottoman empire. When the new Turkish leadership abolished the Sultanate in 1922, thus ending the long reign of the dynasty over six centuries, and keeping a separate Caliphate as a symbolic institution, it created a terrible crisis in the planes of both political reality and political thought.

The Ottoman dynasty in its later days depended upon the dual institution of the Sultanate-Caliphate for its legitimacy.[114] For the larger part of the Islamic world, the Caliphate was the main concern, as this feature distinguished the Ottoman dynasty from all other polities and made it a representative of the Islamic world, at least for the majority Sunnis. After the republic was declared in 1923, the new Turkish government abolished the formal Caliphate in 1924. For Muslims of other lands, this was not a Turkish domestic issue.

Rida started to write his al-Lilafa, aw al-Imama al-ʿUzma fi al-Islam (Caliphate, or the Supreme Leadership in Islam)[115] immediately after the abolishment of the Sultanate, and ended its argument before the abolishment of the shadowy Caliphate. For Rida, by then it had become a nominal institution—that Caliphate was not worthy of the name—and he formulated a theory of Islamic khilafa (Caliphate), which in his eyes was simultaneously realistic for the modern age.

Though lengthy and full of juristic arguments, his theory may be characterized, perhaps simplistically, by the following eight points[116] :

1 The khilafa (Caliphate) is the sole legitimate Islamic polity for the umma ;

2 It must be reinstituted in such a manner that it can function under contemporary conditions;

3 Government must be run by the Council of Shura (consultation), which is comprised of Ahl al-hall wa al-2aqd (people of authority). Currently, people of authority are not only Islamic scholars but also leaders of the political, military, economic, and other domains;

4 The khalifa (Caliph) will represent the government, and he must be a qualified mujtahid, well-versed in Islamic knowledge

and capable of exercising independent reasoning to guarantee rule by al-Shari‘a;

5 He must be of Quraysh origin (a descendant of the Quraysh, the tribe of Prophet Muhammad);

6 The Muslims must strive to realize Islamic government (or, governments, if necessary) under a khalifa ;

7 If circumstances do not permit a khilafa with full conditions, even an imperfect khilafa should be established;

8 While all Muslims are under this obligation, especially the Arabs and the Turks should cooperate together for its achievement.

It is not unfair to say that it is the masterpiece of the Sunni Caliphate theory in the twentieth century. It is so because of the power of its elaborate discussions, and it provided a sufficient ground for the supporters of the Caliphate as the sole legitimate polity. For others, especially for the generations after the 1940s, the topic lost relevance, and no serious rival theory was offered.[117]

If we look back at the history of Islamic political thought, we find in the premodern periods the classical theories of Caliphate by the famous al-Mawardi (975–1058),[118] and Abu Ya’la al-Farra’ (990–1065)[119] who was no less important, though less known, than al-Mawardi, and a concluding masterpiece of all classical theories by Mihab al-Din Ahmad al-Qalqamandi (1355–1418).[120] We may be tempted to say that Rida’s comes after these in line as a modern masterpiece.[121]

Similarities between the classical theories and Rida’s stem partly from the latter’s numerous quotations from the former, to the degree that one may be tempted to claim that “Rida thinks the traditional system of government still

the best.”[122] Certainly Rida didn’t hesitate to depend on great authorities in the past when appropriate for his own objectives. He was, however, far from being traditional. He mobilized all possible resources to make Islam viable under the contemporary conditions, and authentic according to the primary sources of Islam, that is, the Qur’an and the Sunna. The combination itself is quite revivalist, and therefore modern, however classical it may look, departing from the traditional.

Kerr stated in his conclusion that

[H]is revival of the classical theory of the Caliphate serves to remind us that the classical theory itself had not been a program for action but a hyperbolical, almost allegorical, rationalization…. RiÎa’s constitutional theory, despite his intentions, does not represent a serious program but a statement of ideals.[123]

On the contrary, it seems to the author that Rida had a full intention to lay a theoretical ground of a modern Islamic state, but was not optimistic about the scheme he had. He proposed:

[The proposal is]… to leave the issue of the khilafa (Caliphate) to the all Islamic peoples, and independent and semi-independent governments among them, and constitute a mixed independent committee or assembly with its headquarters in Istanbul, which will study all reports and proposals from the men of knowledge and judgment on the issue, and this will prepare an Islamic conference …[124]

If anything, Rida should be criticized for his lack of popular basis to translate his idea into an action plan, not for being unrealistic in his thinking itself. In fact, “he was increasingly marginal to the main events of the day. In a period when mass political organizations were being established, he remained without a formal organization to present his views.”[125] Al-Manār being an intellectual journal, his ideas had to wait for a mass movement such as the Muslim Brotherhood for realization of any

idea. Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949) established the organization in 1928, yet another reaction to the demise of the Ottoman Caliphate.

Kerr was content that Rida sanctioned modern, secular institutions through Islamic principles, and called it “assimilative function.”[126] This judgment was quite understandable as it was the time “[s]ince the suppression of the Muslim Brethren in Egypt and the demise of the Islamic constitution of Pakistan, there has ceased to be any visible likelihood that Islamic legal and constitutional principles would be made to serve as the operative basis of a modern state in any Muslim country.”[127] Now, after seeing many “visible” signs, such as the Islamic revolution in Iran and the de facto revival and expansion of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt,[128] as well as calls for Islamic constitutions, we may have a more positive, and probably fairer evaluation of Rida’s theory.

Mahmoud Haddad criticizes the preceding works on political ideas of Rida as taking the theory on the khilafa as an independent work, without contextualizing it in the development of Rida’s political thought.[129] He came to the conclusion that “Rida, throughout his career, usually placed the political independence of Islam above all other concerns, including theoretical consistency.”[130] His argument that Rida’s seeming inconsistency in al-Khilafa can be seen as the pragmatic attitudes seeking Islam’s independence, is quite convincing. This also reminds us of his contribution to the legitimacy of an Islamic state as such in the twentieth century, when we see his theory from a distance, as a close look tends to draw us into its details as a Caliphate, a very specific form of the Islamic state.

We can now put his theory in the category of “governance by the jurist,” together with Khomeini’s “guardianship of the jurist (wilaya al-faqih)” and Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr’s political guidance of the “righteous authority (al-mar?ga’iyya al-saliha).”[131] Al-Sadr was very instrumental in the contents of the Islamic Constitution of Iran in 1979, no less than Khomeini’s theory.[132] If we are to name Rida’s theory in this respect, we may call it khilafa al-mujtahid (Caliphate of the qualified jurist). Putting a jurist or a mujtahid on the top of the polity does not necessarily mean the government is run by Islamic scholars

entirely. Actually, Rida conceived the khilafa as governance by both secular and Islamic leaders,[133] as is the case of Iran after the revolution. He was apparently a pioneer in this category of ideas on the contemporary Islamic governance.

*** The third path in the middle

Rida named himself and his colleagues the “moderate party of Islamic reform (hizb al-islah al-islami al-mu’tadil).” Moderation (i’dal) means a balance between two extremes.

Al-Maraghi named three opponents of Rida at the time of his death, namely, “Disbelievers who do not believe in any religion,” “non-Muslim opponents,” and “Muslims who are stagnant.” The first refers, if we take off its religious jargons, not to non-Muslims but to the Muslim secularists, the second, Christian opponents who were again mostly secular,[134] and the third the conservative traditionalists. Rida himself spoke of the mutafarnij (“Franconizer,” that is, Westernizer, or “imitators of European laws and systems”) and the imitators (conservative traditionalists), and himself between these two poles.[135] Hourani, in his work, which became a modern classic in the field, summarizes Rida’s position: “[N]othing much could be hoped from the recognized religious institutions,” but also “nothing could be expected of the ‘westernizers’ who had dominated public life for the last few generations.” “Somewhere between the two extremes however stood a middle group, the ‘Islamic progressive party’: they had the independence of mind necessary to understand at the same time the laws of Islam and the essence of modern civilization.”[136]

Apparently, what is in the middle between the two extremes changes its position from one period to another, as the social realities as well as the intellectual map change over time. Although Rida criticized the secularists seriously, and was criticized by them, what secularism meant had also changed greatly as secularization of each society was progressing.

In Egypt, before the death of ‘Abduh, the reform of the ‘ulama’ and al-Azhar seemed essential for legal and educational reforms, as the ‘ulama’ were the traditional bearers of these two domains. By the time Rida neared the end of his life, these two domains had mostly passed into the hands of secular institutions. The traditional was then much less a focus of the reformists, as it lost ground to the secularists. On the other hand, the trend of the Islamic revival started to have its leaders among the new generation educated in secular institutions, such as Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood.

What is certain at the macro level is, however, the general position of the Islamic reformers who tried to find a middle ground where they could combine Islam and modernity. The combination was that of two substances, contradicting each other, “Islam and modernity,” “revelation and reason,” “religion and modern civilization,” “Islam and modern society,” and the like, and therefore a way had to be found in between. By the middle of the twentieth century, their attempts were considered a failure, and functioned only to facilitate de facto secularization.[137] As discussed earlier in this chapter, the failure was not final, and could be considered a tentative setback, as far as the strength of reformism as a social idea is concerned. It continued to survive as an ideal to which many Muslims strove and are still striving, as they felt unable to abandon Islam or modernity.[138]

The reformers’ capability to sustain the morale of the Muslims is not itself proof that this combination of seemingly contradictory natures can be successfully made. Basheer M. Nafi’s restrained assessment, however, that “[W]hile no religious system could escape the impact of modernity unscathed, Islamic reformist thought paved the way for the assimilation of modernity with the least possible loss for Islam,”[139] is quite agreeable.

Yet, many cast doubts on the actual possibility of the combination proposed by the reformers. Many were, and are, openly skeptical.[140] Investigation of this issue continues to our day in a different garment. Popular topics among the students of the Islamic world today, such as “Islam and modernity,” “Islam and modernization,” and “Islam and democracy”[141] are but a few among them.

What has drastically changed the underlying assumptions and the tone of arguments came from a totally different direction in the latter half of the twentieth century, namely from East Asia. Japan’s success in the postwar period, with its amazing economic growth from the 1950s to the early 1970s and subsequent rise as a leading economic power in the world in the 1980s, and the successes of the emerging economies in East and Southeast Asia following Japan’s model, had changed the fundamental assumption that modernization can be done only through Westernization and therefore traditional cultures such as Islam and Confucianism were nothing but a hindrance to development.

A combination of the inherent culture and modernization can be done, as Japan did.[142] Can this also happen to Islam? In 1930, Rida stated in a lecture:

We need an independent renewal like that of Japan to promote our economic, military, and political interests and develop our agricultural, industrial, and commercial wealth.[143]

Yet, for them, it was a distant dream. Can this actually happen now in the Islamic world? We don’t yet have a definite answer. In the recent decades, Malaysia, a Muslim country, rose as a successful developing country. Mahathir Mohamad, Malaysia’s prime minister from 1981 to 2003, was quite vocal in his country’s “quest for the status of a fully developed nation by the year 2020,”[144] that is to become the first developed country in the Islamic world to prove that the combination of Islam and modernity is possible. This is certainly an interesting case.

What we have to consider now is whether the former assumption that the reformist project was by definition contradictory was right or not. The assumption should be judged, by now, premature, if not totally wrong.

There is another element in this discussion. It is the change of the nature of science and technology, or their bearers. In the days of Rida and al-Manār, we can see many of the reformers were from humanities backgrounds, including Islamic studies. In olden days, the “Easterners” had to acquire a “modern mind” which could work scientifically. Reformers actually advocated that the students in Islamic studies must learn modern sciences. Rida himself learned modern science under his enlightened mentor, Husayn Jisr, and advocated the importance of the combination. Lately, however, in the last three decades or so, we see that many leaders in Islamic movements are of natural sciences background. These medical doctors, scientists, and engineers do not seem to bother themselves with the profound question of how to acquire a “modern scientific mind,” which many asked a century ago. It should be noted that Mahathir Mohamad is originally a medical doctor.

The medical doctors, scientists, engineers, and the like, are apparently the fruit of modernization in each country. Their turning to Islamic identity does not have a necessary correlation with the question of a “scientific mind,” though we need a detailed survey on this question. One might be tempted to say, at least, that these professionals simply learned modern sciences in a modern way, and only when they acquired the sciences did they turn to Islam as their cultural identity.

If we look at what kind of Islam they turn to, however, we find one which ‘Abduh, Rida, and their colleagues founded, that is, a reformist understanding of Islam, based on the primary sources, the Qur’an and the Sunna, exercising ijtihad (independent reasoning) in the Islamic law, advocating that Islam and modern civilization can be merged together. It is not yet time to jump to the conclusion that the Manarists’ formula of combining the two poles proved to be viable. We certainly need a re-evaluation of the issue, not only by examining the recent developments in the Islamic world but also by adding the latest debates on modernity and modernization in a truly global perspective.

*** Islamic revival in the later decades

After Rashid Rida passed away, Hasan al-Banna, the founder and the General Guide (Head) of the Society of Muslim Brotherhood, tried to continue the journal al-Manār . Though he did not succeed except to publish the issues of the last volume in five years, his movement carried out the mission of Islamic reform at a mass level. Al-Banna used to visit Rida, and inherited the ideas of al-Manār for Islamic reform and revival, in a much simplified and popularized version. We can say that, to the extent that he was a Salafi, he continued the mission of al-Manār , which established the modern Salafiyya.[145]

As noted earlier, while the trend of ideas al-Manār established continued to flow in the underground “water veins,” metaphorically speaking, the momentum of the Islamic revival was lost in the 1950s to 1970s, when Arab nationalism and socialism swept across the Middle East scene. When the Islamic Revolution in Iran shook the entire region, this was reversed, and the phenomena of the Islamic revival started to manifest itself not only in predominantly Shiite Iran, but also in Sunni countries. The Muslim Brotherhood re-emerged as a political force to be reckoned with in Egypt, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine, among other Arab countries. As al-Manār elaborated Sunni theories of the Islamic revival in the earlier decades, its ideas also started to surface.[146]

When Rida wrote his theory of “khilafa of the mujtahid, ” or governance by the jurists, in the 1920s, it was seen as an obsolete nostalgia harkening to classical theory. When Ayatullah Khomeini’s theory of “guardianship by the jurist” became the backbone of the new Islamic republic in Iran, few remembered the significance of Rida’s theory. The political thesis that a qualified jurist should govern certainly reflects the contemporary plight of Muslims in the political domain, caught between the inability of the traditional Islamic elites and the non-Islamic nature of new ruling elites. As such, Rida was rather a forerunner, not an anachronistic observer in his time. Although the jurists’ taking power is not particularly prospective currently in Sunni countries, their political roles have been strengthened to a great extent, after a long period of deterioration.

It seems that many of reform ideas Rida and the Manarists proposed were later accepted and incorporated by mainstream Islamic scholars. Rida and

his colleagues probably called for too radical a reform at that time. As the “great majority of the reformist ulama, including ‘Abduh, Rida, al-Qasimi and al-Jaza’iri, belonged to rural or small urban families, not to the entrenched ulama aristocracy of the urban notables,”[147] the establishment found their cause to be at odds with theirs. With the expansion of social space for the masses and the Islamic revival among them, however, their teachings began to reach more friendly ears. Today, what they advocated has become common sense. This subsequent success of the reformers obscures the innovativeness of their claims at their time. Al-Manār struggled hard to make ijtihad possible and to issue modern fatwas. Exercise of ijtihad and innovative fatwas have become more common today.

Of recent events of the Islamic revival, one conference attracts our attention. It was a founding conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama, held in London in July 2004. It was a gathering of more than two hundred Islamic scholars from Muslim countries, many of them prominent in their own countries as well as transnationally in the larger Islamic world. The conference immediately reminds us of the Meccan conference of al-Kawakibi, or his proposal to convene an international conference to discuss the affairs of the Islamic umma.

The formation of the Union aimed to form a common platform where a viable body of men and women of knowledge could create a foundation for the unity of the Islamic umma, and prepare the Islamic law in a way suitable to the times.[148]

The conference invited not only Sunni scholars but also Shiite and Ibadi scholars. Among those who made the first addresses were Dr Ekmeleddin İhsanog?lu, the prospective secretary general of the OIC (as of January 1, 2005), Shaykh Ahmad al-Khalili, the Grand Mufti of Oman, the highest position in the Ibadi school, and Ayatullah Muhammad ’Ali Tasliri, a prominent Iranian Shiite jurist and the president of the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought. The conference established the Union, and elected as its president, Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, three vice presidents, respectively from the Sunni, the Shiite, and the Ibadi.

Al-Qaradawi inherited, it seems to the present author, the reformist school of al-Manār in many ways. When he was young, he joined the Muslim Brotherhood, the organizational heir to the Manarists' thought, led by Hasan al-Banna. While al-Banna was an Islamic leader with a secular school education,[149] and the founder of a mass movement, al-Qaradawi is an Islamic scholar who always argues with the Qur'an and the Sunna, the way Rida used to do.

Rida called his group the "balanced (muʿtadil) Islamic reform party." Al-Qaradawi developed the concept of the "wasatiyya (middle way)."[150] He explains that Islam is of the umma of 'adl (justice) and i'tidal (balance).[151] The concept expresses itself as being in the middle of the path. While al-Qaradawi describes the wasatiyya as one of the main characteristics of Islam, it is his vision of Islam, as the reformers' vision of Islam for Rida and the Manarists was the truly authentic understanding of Islam.

More importantly, al-Qaradawi continues the mission of 'Abduh and Rida in issuing fatwas to give answers to contemporary questions.[152] Al-Qaradawi says in his book on the question of fatwa:

After that [the periods of traditional fatwas], fatwas of al-ʿallama al-mujaddid [great renewer scholar] al-Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida had become famous, which were published in his noble Islamic journal, al-Manār , a journal which continued for thirty five years. Each issue always had one or more fatwas , answering questions from the readers of the journal in the Islamic world. For this reason, the questions and answers did not represent any particular locality, but addressed problems the entire Islamic umma and Muslims in all corners of the earth were facing….

These fatwas had many features. First, they treat modern issues and actual problems which peoples face and suffer and need

to know the answers of Islamic law, or at least, contemporary Islamic ijtihad (judgment, reasoning) on them. Second, they are written with a spirit of intellectual independence, with freedom from bonds of sectarianism, imitation, and narrow-minded insistence on a particular view. He did not refer except to the Book [Qur'an], Sunna, and the foundations of the Islamic law.... Third, they carry the spirit of reform and the invitation to the balanced comprehensive Islam.[153]

Here we can see an apparent successor to the Manarists. The distance between the Manarists and this Union, however, can be seen in the question of khilafa (Caliphate). Rida spoke in strong tones that the Islamic umma needed the true Caliphate as a necessary condition of its revival, and that the Muslims had an obligation to rebuild it. He spelled out in detail the conditions of the khilafa in the contemporary context. In 2004, al-Qaradawi was very explicit that the Union does not seek to restore the khilafa.

Muslims used to have khilafa that united them together, and embodied their unity. It is, according to the 'ulama's definition, deputyship of the Messenger [Muhammad] for the protection of Islam and administration of society, and it is religious and earthly leadership, both spiritual and temporal. The Muslims lived under this unifying banner for more than thirteen centuries, until the khilafa was abolished in 1924, and with its end, Islamic umma's assembly under the banner of Islamic faith was lost.... If fatwa changes according to the changes of time, place and situation, then our fatwa of today is: The 'ulama' are those who have to perform the roles of khilafa (Caliphate) and khalifas (Caliphs).[154]

This does not necessarily mean that the Union departed from the point where Rida resided eighty years ago. Since Rida's theory emphasized essentially the necessity of an Islamic state and the leading function of the scholars in the affairs of the umma , both Rida's and the Union's positions can be seen as different formulations of the same school in different times. When Rida wrote al-Khilafa aw al-Imama al-2Uzma , the Caliphate was an important title just abolished, and therefore could be restored. After many decades without it, the title has become less

significant than the substance of the polity itself. Yet, it took these many decades for Sunni scholars to declare what al-Qaradawi stated in a blunt manner.

** Concluding remarks

Seen from the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the Islamic revival having become a reality, the groundwork which al-Manār and its contemporary counterparts had done could be judged as having great relevance for our understanding of the Islamic world in the modern era. By now, al-Manār seems quite successful in many ways, even as it was judged to the contrary four decades ago.

While we abstain from an oversimplification or overestimation of the roles of al-Manār, certainly a re-evaluation must be done in the context of studying Islamic thought in the contemporary world, from the late nineteenth century, throughout the twentieth century, and well into the twenty-first century.

Since the present author began to call for such a re-evaluation in the middle of the 1980s, simultaneous re-evaluations have been made in some quarters so that we see a better presentation of Rida and his school than before. The attempt has not, however, been satisfactory, and further investigations on the pages of al-Manār and their historical contexts should be made. It will enhance the understanding of not only the Islamic world but also international society at large, as the beam of the lighthouse was directed at both in those days.

[1] A digitalized photographic edition of the complete set of the journal was published in 2003. Kosugi Yasushi (general editor), al-Manār 1898–1935 on CD-ROM (Kyoto: COE-ASAFAS, Kyoto University, 2003), with The Index of al-Manār. The index was published originally in a book form in 1998. Yusuf H. Ibish, Kosugi Yasushi and Yusuf K. Khoury, The Index of al-Manār (Tokyo: Islamic Area Studies Project and Beirut: Turath, 1998).

[2] Studies on al-Manār after the 1970s in the West were not null, though few in number, such as Mahmud Osman Haddad, Rashīd Riḍā and the Theory of the Caliphate: Medieval Themes and Modern Concerns (New York: Columbia University, 1991, unpublished PhD dissertation); Emad Eldin Shahin, Through Muslim Eyes: M. Rashīd Riḍā and the West (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993). Anthologies have not often made justice to al-Manār. Bias in an earlier collection as Anour Abdel-Malek, Contemporary Arab Political Thought (London: Zed Books, 1983) is quite understandable given the dominance of the nationalist paradigm (the original French edition was in 1970). The complete absence of Riḍā, though al-Manār is used as a source for ‘Abduh, in a recent work as Mansoor Moaddel and Kamran Talattof, eds, Modernist and Fundamentalist Debates in Islam: A Reader (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), for example, seems unfair. Charles Kurzman, ed., Modernist Islam, 1840–1940: A Sourcebook (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) is well balanced and much fairer to Riḍā.

[3] Many revolutions, including military coups with the names of revolutions, were made in the 1950s and 1960s in the Middle East, then with September Revolution in 1969 in Libya, a relatively calm decade followed. For the revolutionary decades, see Hisham B. Sharabi, Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1966).

[4] See Ruh Allah Khumayni, Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini, trans. Hamid Algar (Berkeley, CA: Mizan Press, 1981).

[5] To cite a few, Islamic Groups (Gamaat Islamiyya) were active on university campuses; the Muslim Brotherhood was revived after dissolution for almost two decades, and its monthly organ, al-Dawa was widely read especially among the young generation with an Islamic inclination.

[6] Fouad Al-Omar and Mohammed Abdel Haq, Islamic Banking, Theory, Practice and Challenges (London: Oxford University Press, 1996); Nicholas Dylan Ray, Arab Islamic Banking and the Renewal of Islamic Law (London: Graham & Trotman, 1995). Citing the case of Islamic banking as an example of Islamic revival may look unconventional, while arguments on the Islamic revival tend to focus on the political, as the entire issue is sometimes labeled under the title of 'political Islam.' See Nazih N. Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World (London and New York: Routledge, 1991). There was an apparent prominence of the return of Islam in the political domain after the revolution in Iran. However, the Islamic revival which al-Manār sought was much wider in scope, so is the later phenomenon of the Islamic revival.

[7] For the Islamic 'commonalities,' see Kosugi Yasushi, 'Restructuring Islamic Political Theories: Basic Concepts in a Contemporary Framework,' in Kuroda Toshio and R. I. Lawless, eds, Nature of the Islamic Community (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1991), 37–70. Twelve basic concepts are pointed as common between the Sunnis and the Shi'ite on pp. 53–59.

[8] A substantial number of literature on these cases appeared, and the number increased sharply in the 1980s. See Asaf Hussain, Islamic Movements in Egypt, Pakistan and Iran: An Annotated Bibliography (London: Mansell, 1983); Yvonne Yazbeck Hadded et al., The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1991).

[9] These events were described and analyzed in detail in Kosugi Yasushi, The Islamic World (Tokyo: Chikuma-shobo, 1998) [in Japanese].

[10] Nationalism in those days was equated with anticolonialism, anti-imperialism, national liberation movements widely observed in the Third World, nonalignment, and Asian and African solidarity, and also often intermixed with socialism and backed by the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, as well-illustrated in the cases of Arab nationalism.

[11] Malcolm Kerr, Islamic Reform: The Political and Legal Theories of Muhammad ‘Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1966).

[12] Malcolm Kerr, ‘Rashīd Riḍā and Islamic Legal Reform: An Ideological Analysis, Part II: Application,’ The Muslim World 50 (1960): 181.

[13] The concept of ‘Islamization’ used here is that an area or a region may be Islamized (spread of Islam as a religion among the population and accompanying cultural transformation of the society) while the new Muslims’ understanding of Islam takes the form of local culture, as if Islam has become localized. Islamization is not therefore a one-direction movement toward Islam, but a complementary process of Islamization/localization-indigenization. By the same token, when de-Islamization occurs, exteriorization (to consider Islam as an element coming from the outside earlier) happens. When re-Islamization occurs, as observed in the recent Islamic revival, it is not re-localization or re-interiorization, but mostly modernization/contemporarization and globalization, that accompany it. See the argument in Kosugi Yasushi, ‘Reconsidering ‘Unity and Diversity’ in the Islamic World: A Methodological Inquiry,’ Southeast Asian Studies 37/2 (1999): 143–149 [in Japanese].

[14] See, for example, ʿAndnan ʿAli Riḍā al-Nahwi, Al-Sahwa al-Islamiyya ila ayna? [Islamic Awakening, to Where?], Expanded 3rd ed. (Riyadh: Dar al-Nahwi, 1993). ‘Awakening’ can be yaqza in Arabic, as in Muhammad Imara, Al-Tariq ila al-Yaqza al-Islamiyya (Cairo and Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq, 1990).

[15] It is noted that one of the leading exponents of the Islamic revival today, Yusuf al-Qaradawi earned his 2alim degree by a thesis on zakat. Yasuf al-Qaradawi, Fiqh al-Zakat, 16th ed.[1st ed. in Egypt], 2 vols (Cairo: Maktaba Wahba, 1986) [The original edition appeared first in Lebanon in 1969].

[16] This term was formally used first in Japan in 1985, as the title of the main symposium at the first annual conference of Japan Association of Middle East Studies. Since then, it has been in circulation and greatly appreciated academically, as an alternative to the controversial term ‘Islamic fundamentalism,’ which is too heavily colored by threat perceptions, and tends to focus on political and violent dimensions of the Islamic revival. How individual ‘awakening’ can be translated into a social action is analyzed in Kosugi Yasushi, The Contemporary Middle East and Islamic Politics (Kyoto: Showado, 1994), 145–148 [in Japanese].

[17] Charles C. Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt: A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muhammad ‘Abduh (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 205–247, uses the term the ‘ ‘Manar’ Party’ as ‘Abduh’s followers. In this article, the Manarists are Riḍā and his associates/contributors to al-Manār, as liberals among ‘Abduh’s disciples took a different path than Riḍā’s.

[18] Serialized posthumously in al-Manār 5 (1902–1903): 26–33, 65–71, 105–110, 141–146, 183–190, 223–228, 264–268, 304–308, 344–349, 381–385, 501–505, 668–678, 703–710, 771–778, 825–833, 859–864, 899–910. The page numbers from al-Manār given in this article are of the original. There is some incorrect numbering in the original, so certain numbers are printed twice in different places. The errata are clarified in the attached file in Kosugi, ed., al-Manār 1898–1935 on CD-ROM.

[19] Al-Kawakibi wrote the work in Aleppo, modified several times after he moved to Egypt in 1899. It was published as a book in 1900, then published in al-Manār. Sami al-Dahhan, ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi, 4th print (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1980), 55. Al-Kawakibi’s work as a book has been reprinted in Arab countries to this day. See the following edition, which also contains a detailed study by the editor on previous editions of the work: ʿAbd al-Rahman Al-Kawakibi Umm al-Qura: Mu1tamar al-nahda al-Islamiyya ed. Muhammad Jamal Al-Tahhan (Damascus: Dar al-Awa1il, 2002).

[20] The name was given in its announcement in the previous number of the journal as ‘Sigill gamiyya Umm al-Qura [The Record of Umm al-Qura Association],’ al-Manār 4 (1902): 956.

[21] ‘Al-Kitab al-mawud bi-namrihi [The Work Promised of its Publication],’ al-Manār 5 (1902): 26.

[22] Ibid., 27–28.

[23] For example, Sylvia G. Haim, ed., Arab Nationalism: An Anthology (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1962). A portion of Al-Kawakibi’s work is titled as ‘The Excellences of the Arabs,’ and he was judged to be the ‘first true intellectual precursor of modern secular Pan-Arabism’ in the editor’s introduction (p. 27).

[24] Adeed Dawisha, Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), 24.

[25] See, for example, ʿAbd al-Haqq al-Azami (an Iraqi author), ‘Al-Arab wa al-Arabiyya, bihima salah al-umma al-Islamiyya [The Arab and the Arabic, with Them There Will Be the Wellness of the Islamic Umma],’ al-Manār 16 (1913): 753–771; ‘Lugha al-Islam wa al-lugha al-rasmiyya bayna al-mamalik al-Islamiyya [The Language of Islam and the Official Language among the Islamic Kingdoms],’ al-Manār 24 (1923): 753–765; ‘Ahamm ma yajib ala muslimi al-aajim min al-lugha al-Arabiyya [The Most Important Part of the Arabic Language Necessary for the Non-Arab Muslims (fatwa)],’ al-Manār 29 (1929): 661–664.

[26] Riḍā’s reports on the conference in Cairo: al-Manār 27 (1926): 208–232, 280–294, 370–377, 449–458.

[27] Riḍā’s reports on the conference in Jerusalem: al-Manār 32 (1932): 113–132, 193–208, 284–292, 555–558. He was the chair of the committee of Islamic Call and Guidance (al-dawa wa al-irmad) in the conference. The leading convener of the conference, Amin al-Husayni, had studied earlier with Rida in Cairo.

[28] It goes without saying that the OIC is not Islamic in the traditional sense as it is an international organization of nation-states. This is, however, a proof of Islamic revival being modern, rather than traditional or archaic. For OIC, see Hasan Moinuddin, The Charter of the Islamic Conference and Legal Framework of Economic Co-operation among its Member States (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987); Saad S. Khan, Reasserting International Islam: A Focus on the Organization of the Islamic Conference and Other Islamic Institutions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[29] Makib Arslan, ‘Jawab al-Amir Makib Arslan,’ al-Manār 31 (1930–1931): 355–370, 449–464, 529–553. For Arslan, see the chapter on him in the present volume.

[30] The question sent by Muhammad B. Umran was (1) why the Muslims, especially ‘we, the Muslims of Java and Malaya,’ entered into a state of weakness and degeneration; (2) why Europeans, Americans, and Japanese made tremendous progress. Al-Manār 31 (1930): 355. Another example of an Indonesian question and Riḍā’s answer is translated as Rashīd Riḍā, ‘Patriotism, Nationalism, and Group Spirit in Islam,’ in John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, eds, Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 57–59.

[31] William L. Cleveland, Islam against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1985), 115.

[32] Richard P. Mitchell, The Society of the Muslim Brothers, new edition with a foreword by John O. Voll (New York and Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 1993), 23. The last issue of al-Manār 35/10 was published in September 1940.

[33] R. Stephan Humphreys ‘The Contemporary Resurgence in the Context of Modern Islam,’ in Ali E. Hillal Dessouki, ed., Islamic Resurgence in the Arab World (New York: Praeger, 1982), 77.

[34] Respect for the Salaf itself is more generally observed, and not particular to Salafiyya, and as such, the term is used in an extremely varied ways by contemporary thinkers. See ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Zayd al-Zanaydi, Al-Salafiyya wa qadaya al-asr (Rayadh: Dar Ambiliya, 1998), 31–49. In this article, the Manarist understanding of Salafiyya has been maintained.

[35] As an example, a book review on Ibn Taymiyya’s multi-volume fatwa collection, al-Manār 15 (1912): 555–556, praises the work, and says that it is available from the publisher or through Dar al-Manār.

[36] Nelly Lahoud, Political Thought in Islam: A Study in Intellectual Boundaries (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), 16.

[37] Al-SayyidGamal al-Din al-Afghani, Mayl Muhammad ‘Abduh, Al-Urwa al-Wutqa, ed. Sayyid Hadi Khusru Shahi (Cairo: Maktaba al-Muruq al-Duwaliyya, 2002).

[38] See Thomas Philipp, The Syrians in Egypt: 1725–1975 (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlaf Wiesbaden GmbH, 1985), 111–116.

[39] On his political thought on Sham and actual involvement in Syrian politics, Suechika Kota has made a significant contribution. See his work based on his doctoral thesis, Islam and Politics in Contemporary

Syria: From Islamic Reformism to Muslim Brotherhood (Kyoto: Nakanishiya, 2005) [in Japanese].

[40] See a short tribute to him, al-Manār, 12 (1909): 560, and Riḍā's memoir on him, al-Manār, 21 (1919): 160–163. For other mentors of Rida, see Muhammad Ahmad Darniqa, Al-Sayyid Muhammad Ramid Ridā: Islahatuhu al-ijtima'iyya wa al-diniyya (Beirut: Mu1assasa al-Risala and Tripoli: Dar al-Iman, 1986), 23–35.

[41] Riḍā, 'Fatiha Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Hakim,' Tafsir al-Manār 1 (Cairo: al-Hay1a al-Misriyya al-ʿAmma li-l-Kitab, 1972), 11. His first encounter with the journal, a similar account, is quoted from his biography of 'Abduh in Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939 (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 226.

[42] ʿAbd al-Basit Muhammad Hasan, Gamal al-Din al-Afghani wa atharuhu fi al-alam al-Islami al-hadith (Cairo: Maktaba Wahba, 1982), 229.

[43] Al-Afghani is referred to in this article as 'al-Afghani (of the Afghan origin).' He was always described as 'al-Afghani' with the title of 'al-Sayyid' (a descendant of Prophet Muhammad) in al-Manār. While his Iranian origin is basically accepted by Western and Iranian scholarship, this is not the case in Arab countries and Afghanistan. In the Arab and non-Arab Sunni countries, al-Afghani is called al-Afghani even to this day, a prolongation of the Manarists' position. In the latest, and probably best, collection of al-Afghani's works in Arabic and Persian, see a defense of al-Afghani by its Iranian editor: Sayyid Hadi Khusru Shahi, 'Gamal al-Din al-Afghani: Hayatuhu wa nidaluhu,' in al-Afghani and 'Abduh, Al-Urwa al-Wuthqa, 56–57.

[44] Riḍā, 'Fatiha Tafsir al-Qur1an al-Hakim,' 12.

[45] Felicitas Opwis, ‘Changes in Modern Islamic Legal Theory: Reform or Reformation?’ in Michaelle Browers and Charles Kurzman, eds, An Islamic Reformation? (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2004), 34–35.

[46] Ahmad al-Marabasi, Ramid Riḍā: Sahib al-Manār (Cairo: Al-Majlis al-Ala li-l-Mu1un al-Islamiyya, 1970), 145–161. See his own reports of trips in al-Manār, as collected and edited in Yusuf Ibish, ed., Rahlast al-Imam Ramid Riḍā (Beirut: Bisan, 2000).

[47] Al-Manār, the front page of Vol. I, 2nd ed. (1327/1909).

[48] Al-Manār 3 (1317/1900): 1 [The title page]. This is the first part of a longer hadith, not in any of the six canonical collections, but in minor collections.

[49] ‘Preface of the First Volume of al-Manār [of the First Edition],’ al-Manār 1, 2nd ed.[1909]: 9.

[50] Ibid., 5. In the 2nd ed. which Riḍā put in circulation later, even the first volume was made in the new form, as he omitted news and telegrams with little enduring significance from the first issues.

[51] Ibid., 3.

[52] Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt, 180–181. The original of the journal available today for the first volume is from this second printing.

[53] H. A. R. Gibb, Mohammedanism: An Historical Survey, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 178.

[54] C. C. Berg, ‘Indonesia,’ in H. A. R. Gibb, ed., Whither Islam?: A Survey of Modern Movements in the Moslem World (New York: AMS Press, 1973 [1932]), 268–269.

[55] Muhammad Ramid Riḍā al-Husayni ‘Introduction to the Second Edition of the First Volume [written in 1327/1909],’ al-Manār 1, 2nd ed., 8.

[56] Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt, 177.

[57] Ibid., 205.

[58] Riḍā’s writings on political issues were compiled in six volumes. Muhammad Ramid Riḍā, Maqalat al-Mayl Ramid Ridā al-Siyasiyya, eds Yusuf Ibish and Yusuf Quzma al-Khuri (Beirut: Dar Ibn ʿArabi, 1994).

[59] Commemorative gatherings were also held in Tunis, Baghdad, and Damascus. Al-Marabasi, Ramid Riḍā, 214–215.

[60] As a descendant of Prophet Muhammad, he was called by the honorary title of ‘al-sayyid,’ indicating his lineage. After the republican revolution of 1952, the title became a word to mean ‘Mr’ in Egypt, rather than a noble descent.

[61] Mayl al-Gami al-Azhar, ‘Lutba al-Ustadh al-Akbar,’ al-Manār 35 (1936): 187–188.

[62] To call ‘Abduh by this title has become common in Egypt. It was Riḍā who started the title for ‘Abduh. Al-Amir Makib Arslan, Al-Sayyid Ramid Riḍā, aw ikha1 arbain sana (Damscus: Matbaa Ibn Zaydun, 1937), 7.

[63] Ramid Riḍā, ‘Ahl al-hall wa al-aqd fi hadha al-zaman’ (a chapter in his treatise on the Caliphate), al-Manār 24 (1923): 59–60.

[64] Anwar al-Jundi, Tarajim al-alam al-muasirin fi al-alam al-Islami (Cairo: Maktaba al-Anglo al-Misriyya, 1970), 105, quoted in Assad Nimer Busool, ‘Shaykh Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā’s Relations with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad ‘Abduh,’ The Muslim World 66 (1976): 281.

[65] Emad Eldin Shahin, Political Ascent: Contemporary Islamic Movements in North Africa (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 22–33; Emad Eldin Shahin, ‘Salafiyah,’ in John L. Esposito, ed., The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, III (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 466–467.

[66] For the echoes of al-Manār in Turkey, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and China, please see the respective chapters in this volume.

[67] Mawlana Abu al-Kalam Muhiy al-Din Azad, ‘Kitab al-khilafa al-Islamiyya,’ trans. ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Mulihabadi, al-Manār 23 (1922): 45–56, 102–106, 193–201, 282–289, 361–372, 466–471, 509–512, 691–702, 753–757.

[68] Ibid., 753–757. Azad subscribed himself to the equality of Muslims without ethnic distinction.

[69] Nakamura, Mitsuo, The Crescent Arises over the Banyan Tree: A Study of the Muhammadiyah Movement in a Central Javanese Town (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1983).

[70] Citing these cases is not to say that these were products of al-Manār ’s influence. Such an ‘impact-response’ approach would be too

simplistic for all cases. For the reform trend in the Southeast Asia before al-Manār, see Azyumardi Azra, The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia: Networks of Malay-Indonesian and Middle Eastern ‘Ulama’ in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (Crows Nest, Australia: Allen & Unwin and Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004).

[71] See the brief history of daily papers and journals with Islamic colors in Anwar al-Jundi’s introduction in his Taril al-sahafa al-Islamiyya I: al-Manār (Cairo: Dar al-Ansar, n.d.[1983]). This book is probably the most concise introduction of the contents of al-Manār, volume by volume, with descriptions of the sociopolitical background. It divides al-Manār in four periods: From the beginning to the death of ‘Abduh, to First World War, to the abolishment of the Caliphate, and to the death of Riḍā.

[72] He owed two thousand pounds at his death, and his house was on mortgage. Al-Marabasi, Ramid Riḍā, 169.

[73] ʿAbd al-Halim al-Jundi, Al-Imam Muhammad ‘Abduh (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1979), 110.

[74] See Kate Zebiri, Mahmud Shaltut and Islamic Modernism (Oxford: Clarendon Press and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[75] Joseph Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), 70.

[76] Wael B. Hallaq, ‘Was the Gate of Ijtihad Closed?’, International Journal of Middle East Studies 16 (1984): 3–41.

[77] Riḍā, ‘Muhawarat al-Muslih wa al-Muqallid,’ al-Manār 3 (1900–1901): 635–640, 675–683, 715–725, 795–804; 4 (1901–1902): 51–60, 161–170, 205–217, 281–297, 361–371, 521–529, 567–573, 852–866.

[78] Ibid., 4 (1901): 209–210.

[79] Ibid., 362–363.

[80] Muhammad Khalid Masud, Brinskley Messick, and David S. Powers, ‘Muftis, Fatwas, and Islamic Legal Interpretation,’ in Masud, Messick, and Powers, eds, Islamic Legal Interpretation: Muftis and Their Fatwas (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 31. The compilation is: Salah al-Din al-Munajjid and Yusuf Q. al-Khuri, eds, Fatāwā al-Imam Muhammad Ramid Riḍā, 6 vols (Beirut: Dar al-Kitab al-Jadid, 1970–1971). When Muslim Brotherhood succeeded in publishing al-Manār for a brief period, Hasan al-Banna wrote his fatwas. See the section in a collection of Banna’s writings: Ḥasan al-Bannā, Fiqh al-wāqiʿ (Mansura: Dār al-Kalima, 1999), 43–75.

[81] Basheer M. Nafi, ‘The Rise of Islamic Reformist Thought and its Challenge to Traditional Islam,’ in Suha Taji-Farouki and Basheer M. Nafi, eds, Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2004), 52–53.

[82] Muhammad Husayn Dahabi, Al-Tafsir wa al-mufassirun, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Haditha, 1976), Vol. 2, 547–589.

[83] Fahd b. ʿAbd al-Rahman b. Sulayman al-Rumi, Ittigahat al-tafsir fi al-qarn al-rabi ashr, 4th ed. (Riyadh: Maktaba al-Rumd, 2002), Vol. 2, 703–848.

[84] ʿAbd al-Majid ʿAbd al-Salam al-Muhtasib, Ittigahat al-tafsir fi al-asr al-rahin (Beirut: Dar al-Bayariq, 1982), 101–125, 164–176.

[85] Helmut Gätje, The Qur1an and its Exegesis: Selected Texts with Classical and Modern Muslim Interpretations, trans. Alford T. Welch (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), 42.

[86] Tafsir al-Manār, Vol. 4, 48.

[87] Ibid.

[88] ‘Abdullah Mahmud Shihata, Manhag al-Imam Muhammad ‘Abduh fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Karim (Cairo: Matbaʿa Gamia ‘al-Qahira, 1984), 204–205.

[89] Riḍā, ‘Fatiha Tafsir al-Qur1an al-Hakim,’ 15.

[90] Ibid.

[91] J. Jomier, ‘Al-Manār ,’ EI2, VI (1991), 361, states clearly that ‘[Tafsir al-Manār] from the third year onward was the work of Rashīd Riḍā; it included lengthy extracts from the commentary expounded by Muhammad ‘Abduh in the evening lectures at al-Azhar, and the respective contributions of the two men were clearly distinguished.’

[92] Riḍā had worked on Verse 101 of the chapter of Yusuf (Joseph) at the end of his life (the chapter has 110 verses). Bahjat al-Bitar completed the exegesis of the chapter and published it as a booklet under Riḍā’s name. Dhahabi, Al-Tafsir wa al-mufassirun, 567.

[93] M. A. Zaki Badawi, The Reformers of Egypt (London: Croom Helm, 1978), 97. Badawi’s overall judgment of the reformers’ achievements is also negative.

[94] Tafsir al-Manār, Vol. 1, 91–102.

[95] A typology of tafsir s was proposed in Kosugi Yasushi, ‘Typological Inquiries into Exegesis of the Qur1an: An Introduction to Tafsir Studies,’ The Toyo Gakuho 76/1–2 (1994): 85–111 [in Japanese]. This was the first detailed study on the topic in Japanese.

[96] Mustansir MIR, ‘The Sura as a unity: A Twentieth Century Development in Qur1an Exegesis,’ in G. R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef, eds, Approaches to the Qur1an (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 211–212.

[97] Ibid., 212–217. Among the 6 tafsirs listed, 3 were written in Arabic, namely, by Sayyid Qutb, Izzat Darwaza, both Egyptian, and Muhammad Husayn al-Tabataba1i, an Iranian.

[98] Shihata, Manhag al-Imam Muhammad, 36.

[99] Shihab al-Din al-Alusi, Ruh al-mani fi tafsir al-Qur’an al-‘azim wa al-sab‘ almathani (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1978). See also Basheer M. Nafi, ‘Abu al-Thana1 al-Alusi: An Alim, Ottoman Mufti, and Exegete of the Qur1an,’ International Journal of Middle Eastern studies 34 (2002): 482–486.

[100] Al-Manār revived certain classical works. Riḍā’s trust in and reliance on Ibn Kathir among the classical tafsir s (see, Shihata, Manhag al-Imam Muhammad, 214–226) seems to be instructive in the popularity of Ibn Kathir’s exegesis among today’s Islamic activists with the Salafi inclination in the Arab countries.

[101] Tantawi Jawhari, Al-Ëawahir fi Tafsir al-Qur1an al-Karim (Cairo: Mustafa al-Halabi, n.d.). This work was among the study materials for the Brotherhood members during al-Banna’s time.

[102] Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi, Tafsir al-Maraghi, 5th ed. (Cairo: Mustafa al-Halabi, 1974).

[103] Mahmud Shaltut, Tafsir al-Qur1an al-Karim, 7th ed. (Beirut and Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1979).

[104] Muhammad al-Tahir b. Amur, Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir (Tunis: Al-Dar al-Tunisiyya, 1984).

[105] ʿAbd al-Hamid b. Muhammad b. Badis, Tafsir Ibn Badis fi al-Tadhkir min Kalam al-Hakim al-Labir (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1995).

[106] For al-Qasimi, see David Dean Commins, Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[107] Muhammad Ëamal al-Din al-Qasimi, Tafsir al-Qasimi al-musamma Mahasin al-Ta1wil, 2nd ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1978), vol. 10, 3. Originally in al-Manār, 17 (1914): 558.

[108] Sayyid Qutb, Fi Zilal al-Qur1an (Beirut: Dar al-Shuruq, 1973–1974).

[109] Sayed Qutb, In the Shade of the Qur1an, vols 1–11 [out of the total 18 vols], trans. Adil Salahi and Ashur Shamis (Leicester: Islamic

Foundation, 1999–2004). Vol. 30 of the work (exegesis of the thirtieth volume of the Qur1an) was translated and published in English in 1979.

[110] Ahmad Ra1if, ‘Tafsir al-Manār ’ (the publisher’s introduction), in Muhammad Ramid Riḍā, ed. Tafsir al-Manār, No.1 (Cairo: Al-Zahra1 li-l-Ilam al-Arabi, 1991), 7–8.

[111] Said Hawwa, Al-Asas fi al-Tafsir (Cairo: Dar al-Salam, 1989) [The first ed.: 1985].

[112] Wahba al-Zuhayli, Al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-Aqida wa al-Sharia wa al-Manhag (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-Muasir and Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 1991); al-Zuhayli, Al-Tafsir al-Wasit (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2001).

[113] Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, Al-Tafsir al-Wasit li-l-Qur1an al-Karim (Cairo: Dar al-Maarif, 1992). Tantawi has been active in innovative interpretations on contemporary issues, though often controversial.

[114] Hamid Enayat, Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of the Shii and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1982), 52–53.

[115] Muhammad Ramid Riḍā, ‘Al-Ahkam al-mariyya al-mutaallaqa bi-l-lilafa al-Islamiyya,’ al-Manār 23 (1922): 729–752; 24 (1923): 33–67; ‘Al-Lilafa al-Islamiyya,’ al-Manār 23 (1922): 98–120, 185–200, 257–271, 345–373; ‘Fatiha kitab al-lilafa, aw al-imama al-uzma,’ al-Manār 23 (1922): 459–465. It was published as al-Lilafa, aw al-imama al-uzma (Caliphate, or, the Supreme Leadership) by al-Manār Press in 1341 A.H. (1923). Printed on the title page, it was ‘presented to the courageous Turkish people and the reform party in Arab and Indian countries and the rest of Islamic peoples.’ It was translated in the West in French. Le Califat dans la doctrine de Ramid Riḍā: Traduction

annotée d1al-Lilafa au al-Imama al-uzma (Le Califat ou l1Imamat suprême), trans. Henri Laoust (Beirut: Institut français de Damas, 1938). It has detailed notes (pp. 243–274), but omits the introduction that Riḍā wrote at the end of the serialization (‘Fatiha kitab al-lilafa, aw al-imama al-uzma’ earlier). An annotated Japanese translation, partially abridged, was published in 1987. Rashīd Riḍā, Modern Islamic Theory of Governance, trans. Kosugi Yasushi (Niigata: Graduate School of International Relations, International University of Japan, 1987).

[116] This is a summary from the author’s study on Riḍā’s work, Yasushi Kosugi, ‘al-Manār ists on the Islamic State,’ Bulletin of the Graduate School of International Relations 3 (1985): 35–53 [in Japanese]. See Enayat, Modern Islamic Political Thought, 70–83, for another version. This author sees Riḍā’s work from a longer perspective, more positive than Enayat, as the summary here shows.

[117] A notable exception is Hizb al-Tahrir (Liberation Party, or commonly known as Islamic Liberation Party), established in 1949 by a Palestinian, Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani (d. 1977). It aims at establishing the khilafa (Caliphate) as an ideal Islamic polity. See Taqi al-Din al-Nabhani, Al-Lilafa (Hizb al-Tahrir, n.d.).

[118] Abu1l-Hasan Al-Mawardi, Al-Ahkam As-Sultaniyyah: The Laws of Islamic Governance, trans. Asadullah Yate (London: Ta-Ha Publishers, 1996); Hamilton A.R. Gibb, ‘Al-Mawardi’s Theory of the Caliphate,’ in Stanford J. Shaw and William R. Polk, eds, Studies on the Civilization of Islam (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), 151–165.

[119] Abu Yala al-Farra1, Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya, ed. Muhammad Hamid al-Faqi, 3rd ed. (Cairo: Mustafa al-Halabi, 1983); Yusuf Ibish and Kosugi Yasushi, eds, Qiraat fI al-fikr al-siyasi al-Islami (Beirut: Dar Amwag, 2000), 151–211.

[120] Ahmad b. ʿAli al-Qalqamandi, Ma1athir al-inafa fi maʿAlim al-lilafa, ed. ʿAbd al-Sattar Ahmad Farrag (Kuwait: Wizara al-Irmad wa al-Anba1, 1964); Ibish and Kosugi, eds, Qira1at, 315–342.

[121] For the Sunni political theories of the classical periods, see Ibish and Kosugi, eds, Qira1at. For the entire spectrum of Islamic political thought from the eighth to the twentieth centuries, please consult a collection of primary sources in Yusuf Ibish and Kosugi Yasushi, eds, Turath al-fikr al-siyasi al-Islami (Beirut: Turath, 2005).

[122] J. M. S. Baljon, Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation (1880–1960) (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961), 104. Baljon quoted from Riḍā's al-Wahy al-Muhammadi, whose small section on governance is based on al-Lilafa and Tafsir al-Manār. See Muhammad Ramid Riḍā, al-Wahy al-Muhammadi, 3rd ed. (Beirut: Mu1assasa Izz al-Din, 1406 AH [1985/6], 287–291 (The first edition: 1352 AH [1933/4]).

[123] Kerr, Islamic Reform, 220.

[124] Riḍā, 'Al-Lilafa al-Islamiyya,' al-Manār 24 (1923): 372–373.

[125] John O. Voll, 'Fundamentalism in the Sunni Arab World: Egypt and the Sudan,' in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, eds, Fundamentalisms Observed (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 358.

[126] Kerr, Islamic Reform, 221.

[127] Ibid., 2.

[128] For the revived Brotherhood and its activities, Yokota Takayuki made an important contribution based on field work in his PhD dissertation, An Islamic Mass Movement in Contemporary Egypt: The Thought and Practice of the Muslim Brotherhood (Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University, Japan, 2005) [in Japanese].

[129] Mahmoud Haddad, ‘Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era: Reading Rashīd Riḍā’s Ideas on the Caliphate,’ Journal of the American Oriental Society 117/2 (1997): 253–277. The main focus is on Henri Laoust, Malcolm Kerr, and Hamid Enayat.

[130] Ibid., 277.

[131] Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, ‘Utruha al-margaiyya al-mawduiyya,’ in Muhammad al-Husayni, ed., Al-Imam al-mahid al-sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr: Dirasa fI siratihi wa manhagihi (Beirut: Dar al-Furat, 1989), 383–390. An annotated Japanese translation of this short treatise was published with al-Sadr’s other political treatises. Kosugi Yasushi, ed. and tr., Revolution and State in Islam: Political Thought of the Contemporary Arab Shiites (Niigata: The Institute of Middle Eastern Studies at International University of Japan, 1992). For al-Sadr, see Husayn Baraka al-Shami et al., Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr: Dirasa fi hayatihi wa fikrihi (London: Dar al-Islam Foundation, 1996).

[132] Chibli Mallat, The Renewal of Islamic Law: Muhammad Baqer as-Sadr, Najaf and the Shi1i International (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 59–78.

[133] Haddad, ‘Arab Religious Nationalism in the Colonial Era,’ 274.

[134] For Arab secularists in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Azzam Tamimi, ‘The Origins of Arab Secularism,’ in John L. Esposito and Azzam Tamimi, eds, Islam and Secularism in the Middle East (London: Hurst, 2000), 13–28.

[135] Riḍā, ‘Al-Ahkam al-mariyya,’ al-Manār 24 (1923): 62–65.

[136] Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798–1939, 242–243. Though a good summary, to translate the moderate Islamic reform party as ‘progressive’ seems misleading. Basheer criticizes Hourani for his locating these positions as merely responses to the Western challenge (Nafi, ‘The Rise of Islamic Reformist Thought,’ 29–30). While Basheer’s emphasis on the ‘inner impulses’ is quite agreeable, we can still see Riḍā’s own categorization as defining the positions in relation to Islam as he conceived.

[137] See Kerr, Islamic Reform, 209–223.

[138] It goes without saying that the very concept and contents of what modernity constitutes change. Here the author uses the term to mean both modern in the historical sense and modern as the ‘contemporary,’ thus including even what some would like to distinguish as ‘post-modern.’

[139] Nafi, ‘The Rise of Islamic Reformist Thought,’ 52.

[140] See the debates in Nissim Rejwan ‘A Wild Goose Chase: To Cope, Must Islam ‘westernize’ in Michael J. Thompson, ed., Islam and the West: Critical Perspective on Modernity (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 153–182.

[141] See, for example, John Cooper, Ronald Nettler, and Muhammad Mahmoud, eds, Islam and Modernity: Muslim Intellectuals Respond (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998); Johan Meuleman, ed., Islam in the Era of Globalization: Muslim Attitudes towards Modernity and Identity (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002); Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, and Daniel Brumberg, eds, and Islam Democracy in the Middle East (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University

Press, 2003); Akbar S. Ahmad, Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and Promise, revised ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).

[142] On the Japanese model, or a non-Western path of modernity, the author is in debt to works by Murakami Yasusuke, Tsunoyama Sakae, and other pioneers in theoretical investigations on the Japanese paradigm. See Murakami Yasusuke, ‘Modernization in Terms of Integration: The Case of Japan,’ in S. N. Eisenstadt, ed., Patterns of Modernity, II: Beyond the West (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 65–88.; Murakami Y. and Kosai Yutaka, eds, Japan in the Global Community: Its Role and Contribution on the Eve of the 21st Century (Tokyo: Round Table Discussions on Japan in the Global Community, distributed by the University of Tokyo Press, 1986); Murakami Y., An Anticlassical Political-Economic Analysis: A Vision for the Next Century, trans. Yamaura Kozo (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996). See also Kosugi Yasushi, ‘Tradition and Modernization: Reflections on Islam and Confucianism in Japan,’ in Osman Bakar and Cheng Gek Nai, eds, Islam and Confucianism: A Civilizational Dialogue (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1997), 163–171.

[143] Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā, ‘Renewal, Renewing, and Renewers,’ trans. Emad Eldin Shahin in Kurzman, ed., Modernist Islam, 78.

[144] Mahathir Mohamad, Islam and the Muslim Ummah: Selected Speeches by Dr Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, ed. Hashim Makaruddin (Selengor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications, 1995), Vol. 1, 51.

[145] On the Salafiyya in Syria, see an excellent work of Commins, Islamic Reform.

[146] The other most important Sunni trend of Islamic revival, parallel to the Manarists and the Muslim Brotherhood, is the line of Iqbal, Mawdudi, and Jamaat-i Islami in South Asia, which despite its importance is out of scope of this article, and left untouched.

[147] Nafi, The Rise of Islamic Reformist Thought, 40.

[148] ‘Al-Bayan al-ta1sisi li-l-Ittihad al-Alami li-l-Ulama1 al-Muslimīn,’ July 11, 2004, made available to the author by the secretariat.

[149] Al-Banna’s father was an Azhar scholar, and education at home was not secular.

[150] Mawil Izzi Dien, Islamic Law: From Historical Foundations to Contemporary Practice (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 145.

[151] Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, Al-sahwa al-Islamiyya bayna al-guhud wa al-tatarruf, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1984), 28.

[152] Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Fatāwā Muasira, 2 vols (Beirut, Damascus, and Amman: Al-Maktab al-Islami, 2000). He is also active in the European Council for Fatwa and Research as its president. See European Council for Fatwa and Research, Fatwas of European Council for Fatwa and Research, trans. Anas Osama Altikriti and Shakir Nasir Al-Utaydi (Cairo: Dar al-Tibaa wa al-Nashr al-Islamiyya, n.d.).

[153] Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Al-Fatwā bayna al-indibat wa al-tasayyub, 3rd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Sahwa, 1992), 17–18.

[154] Yusuf al-Qaradawi, ‘Kalima al-iftitah,’ Mu1tamar al-Ittihad al-Alami li-l-Ulama1 al-Muslimīn, July 11, 2004, provided by the secretariat to the author.

* 2. Al-Manār and Popular Religion in Syria, 1898–1920

David D. Commins

On July 23, 1898 a Damascene subscriber to the Islamic modernist journal al-Manār wrote a letter to the editor complaining that the journal had ceased to appear for several weeks because the censor’s office had confiscated copies of recent issues. In a comment on this letter, Rashid Rida, the journal’s publisher, noted that the governors in Beirut and Damascus had banned the publication.[155] Years later, Rida reported that Ottoman authorities in Beirut and in Tripoli had banned the second issue published in 1898, on the orders of the sultan’s religious advisor, Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi, who knew that Rida was an admirer of the modernist figure Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (who had died in Istanbul the previous year).[156] Affirmation of Istanbul’s alarm at Rida’s enterprise comes from Russian and German diplomatic sources reporting in 1899 that Sultan Abdülhamid II was upset at Egyptian Khedive ʿAbbas Hilmi for allegedly sponsoring al-Manār ’s publication.[157]

Why did the Ottoman authorities banish a religious reform periodical? Because under Sultan Abdülhamid (r. 1876–1909), religious issues were enmeshed with political controversy. Al-Manār ’s mission of reforming Muslim beliefs and practices interfered with Ottoman efforts to establish an official version of Sunni Islam that would strengthen the sultan’s authority. Part of these efforts included support for popular Sufism whereas Rida’s journal called on Muslims to abandon such Sufism in the name of a return to Islam’s original beliefs and practices. This oppositional stance was not coincidental. Al-Manār was part of a struggle over who had the authority to define proper religious practice, and that struggle naturally spilled over into Ottoman political battles. The present essay assesses the effectiveness of al-Manār in those struggles by examining the extent and limits of its influence in Syria. To properly situate the journal in its context, I first examine the place of popular religion as a pillar of Abdülhamid’s power. I then consider al-Manār ’s opposition to the sultan and his religious policy, its function as a platform and arena for religious reformers, and measures of the journal’s impact in Syria.

** Politics and popular religion

M. Sükrü Hanioglu’s study of the Young Turks has demonstrated the breadth of opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid’s regime throughout the Ottoman provinces during the 1890s, and that opposition’s particular strength in Syria.[158] The Committee of Union and Progress established branches in several cities and towns between 1895 and 1897. Disgruntled military officers, civil officials, ulama, Sufis, and notables joined the underground movement, but its plan for a coup d’état launched from Syria was aborted when authorities uncovered it and ordered mass arrests. Such political threats from the activities and propaganda of constitutional forces had been worrying the sultan for a number of years, and it was, in part, to counter his critics that he embraced an Islamic policy to wrap his throne in the banner of religion. Perhaps the best known individual associated with that policy’s implementation was the sultan’s controversial Syrian adviser, Shaykh Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi, whose prominence made him a target for religious reformers’ attacks.

Controversy swirled around Sayyadi for two reasons: his power and his support for popular Sufism. He rose from humble circumstances in northern Syria to a position of tremendous influence in the sultan’s court. His means to advancement appear to have included a charismatic personality, a knack for poetry, a fine singing voice, and a talent for ingratiating himself with the powerful. He took his first step in his climb to influence when he approached the mufti of Aleppo and asked to be appointed naqīb al-asraf (head of descendants of the Prophet) in the nearby Jisr al-Shaghur district.[159] Sayyadi was able to advance to other posts and ultimately made his way to Istanbul, where he made the right personal connections to gain an audience with the sultan. Abdülhamid’s Islamic policy of fostering greater loyalty and support for the Ottoman sultanate depended on the allegiance of men such as al-Sayyadi, who published dozens of essays arguing for loyalty to the sultanate and adherence to religious practices and beliefs associated with popular Sufi orders.

Muhammad Salim al-Jundi, the Syrian historian of Marʿarrat al-Nuʿman, Sayyadi’s home district, offers a balanced assessment of this controversial figure that takes into account his influence-peddling and at the same time exonerates him from accusations of participating in the suppression of

political dissent. On the former score, Sayyadi was reported to have determined that a railroad between Hama and Aleppo would not pass through Maʿarrat al-Nuʿman, whose inhabitants desired its passage in order to revive local commerce, but through the village his brother resided in.[160] On another occasion, Sayyadi is supposed to have arranged the acquittal of a good friend who had committed a murder before a number of witnesses.[161] On the other hand, Jundi maintained that suspicions that he operated an extensive network of spies were unfounded. Jundi concluded that Sayyadi did not involve himself in the sultan's dealings with political opponents; rather, he sought to increase his following and to raise the status of the Rifaʿiyya Sufi order above all others. He did use influence to get jobs for imams, muezzins, and other religious personnel; he forged a noble ancestry to get ahead; but he was loyal to the sultan and treated his followers well. In this view, Sayyadi's critics envied him and they had little legitimate ground for their complaints.[162] Envy there may well have been in abundance among men living in exile because, they believed, of Sultan Abdülhamid's repressive policies. But there was also the substantial issue of proper observance of religion, and on this point, Sayyadi stood for religious practices that had long been viewed with suspicion by ulama associated with the shariʿa-minded Sufism that was present at the birth of religious reform in Syria.[163]

The first religious reformer to clash with Sayyadi was Jamal al-Din "al-Afghani" Asadabadi. Their initial encounter, however, was not at all contentious. In fact, it arose from Sultan Abdülhamid's effort to increase the prestige of his religious entourage by recruiting Afghani, and thereby buttress his campaign to be recognized as caliph.[164] Sayyadi played a part in the sultan's efforts to persuade Afghani to relocate from London to Istanbul in 1892. First, the sultan made an attempt through the Ottoman ambassador to London to convince the activist to take up residence in Istanbul, but to no effect. Abdülhamid then instructed Sayyadi to correspond with Afghani. It is not clear if two letters from the shaykh or other factors were the cause, but Afghani indeed decided to move to the Ottoman capital, perhaps from a hope that Sultan Abdülhamid might lead Muslim resistance to European encroachments. In Istanbul, Jamal al-Din initially got along quite well with the sultan and his Syrian advisor.[165] At some point in 1895, however, Sayyadi's opinion of Jamal al-Din became less sympathetic: he charged him with expressing heretical ideas, and he helped persuade the sultan that the activist was in fact dangerous.[166] Furthermore, Sayyadi is

reported to have used his influence to thwart an effort by Afghani to release from prison some of his Iranian associates suspected of subverting the Qajar shah’s regime.[167] Sayyadi also called into question Jamal al-Din’s claim to be Afghan and indicated that he was in reality from Iran.[168]

Tensions between Sayyadi and Jamal al-Din appear to have fueled the enmity expressed by members of the religious reform camp toward Sayyadi. For instance, ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Maghribi, a reformer and journalist from Lebanese Tripoli, apparently became a critic of the sultan’s confidant as a result of Jamal al-Din’s influence. Maghribi’s background included attendance at the National School (al-Madrasa al-Waṭaniyya) founded by Shaykh Husayn al-Jisr, himself a precursor to the reform movement’s attention to the need for Muslims to reconcile scientific advances with religious understanding of the natural world. At Jisr’s school, Maghribi met another youth from Tripoli, Rashid Rida. Maghribi would frequently receive forbidden Egyptian newspapers through the consular mail and share them with Rida. Maghribi’s first awareness of Afghani came from hearing the principal of Beirut’s Sultaniyya School praise The Firmest Bond, published in 1884 (when Maghribi and Rida were 17 and 19 years old, respectively). The youth was so impressed by the reformist publication that he copied a number of articles by hand. In 1892, he traveled to Istanbul and met Jamal al-Din, who had himself just arrived there. On returning to Tripoli, he took to teaching the reformist opinions of Jamal al-Din and Muhammad ‘Abduh. He later became known as a critic of Sayyadi, supposedly because the sultan levied a special tax in Aleppo in order to pay for embellishing the tomb of Sayyadi’s father,[169] but perhaps out of loyalty to Afghani.

** Al-Manār ’s opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid and popular Sufism

Rida’s early admiration for Afghani is well-known, as is his intention for al-Manār to serve as a pan-Islamic organ for the views of ‘Abduh.[170] In the journal’s early years, the connection between opposition to the sultan and Sayyadi was evident when Rida published a full review in 1901 of ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi’s essay, The Characteristics of Tyranny (Ṭabāyiʿ al-istibdād), a scathing attack on the Hamidian regime.[171] The following year, Rida published the Aleppan author’s next treatise for fundamental political and religious reform,

Mother of Cities (Umm al-qurā), in serial form.[172] According to Albert Hourani, Kawakibi's attacks on the sultan and popular religion stemmed from personal animosity toward Sayyadi that arose from competition between his family and Sayyadi's for religious influence in Aleppo.[173] Rida reiterated support for Kawakibi's views in a laudatory obituary for him entitled, "Great Loss: On the Death of the Wise Scholar," where Rida described his delight at having become acquainted with him in Egypt during the previous two years, and he mentioned the essay on tyranny as a splendid work.[174]

Yet another Syrian associate of Rida's, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi, combined political opposition to the sultan with calls for religious reform. Al-Manār 's obituary on him summarizes this facet of his life.[175] Zahrawi's first effort was the underground publication of a journal in his hometown of Homs some time around 1895.[176] According to Rida, the journal was part of an effort by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) to save the Ottoman Empire from misrule by the sultan.[177] It addressed the question of Muslim leadership (imāma), the qualifications for leadership, the duty to depose an unjust leader (imām), and a call to fight tyranny. He distributed free issues by mail, but when the authorities heard about it, they issued orders to ban it.[178] In 1902, Zahrawi left the Ottoman lands for Egypt after a number of clashes with the authorities, including the tumult occasioned by his essay on law and Sufism.[179] In Egypt, he published an article in the newspaper al-Mu'ayyad in response to the question of whether Sultan Abdülhamid was the rightful claimant to the caliphate. Zahrawi listed twenty-two reasons why the sultan was not fit to rule and called for his deposition.[180]

Explicit political opposition among Manarists was related to frequent criticism of popular Sufism. Rida's and Zahrawi's writings on Sufism reflected both a political stance of opposition to the Hamidian regime as well as their views on proper religious observance. In Rida's case, concern with this issue long preceded his familiarity with Afghani and the broader questions of political support for certain religious forms. In his later years, Rida wrote about an incident from his youth when he witnessed the Mawlawiyya order's blending of music and dance in its ceremony, and he recalled that he openly condemned the dervishes' exercises.[181] By the time he began publishing his journal, popular Sufism was not a purely religious question because

Sultan Abdülhamid’s policy of fostering loyalty to Ottoman sultanate included patronage for the Rifaʿiyya order. Moreover, favoring this particular order precipitated a reaction from adherents to the rival Qadiriyya order. Hanioëlu notes that Qadiri Sufis, particularly in Hama but also in general, tended to support the CUP’s efforts in Syria between 1895 and 1897.[182] When Rida launched al-Manār in 1898, he addressed the rivalry between the Rifaʿiyya and Qadiriyya orders. The gist of one article was that the Rifaʿi Sufis incorporated forbidden innovations (bidʿa) into their ceremonies. Rida cited two of Sayyadi’s publications that defended the customs of snake-eating, inserting needles in one’s body, and walking on hot coals in Rifaʿi ceremonies because they effectively dispel the doubts of anyone who might deny the truth of religion. To support his criticism of the Rifaʿis, Rida quoted the Baghdad scholar Shihab al-Din al-Alusi’s exegesis of the Qur’an, where he observed that the practice of Rifaʿi Sufis walking on fire demonstrated their ignorance of religion.[183] Subsequent issues of the first volume discussed the controversy between Rifaʿis and Qadiris until a truce was reported.[184]

A second Manarist critic of popular religion, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi, published in 1901 a scathing attack on common views of Sufism and jurisprudence. The essay itself germinated from a correspondence between Zahrawi and Rida concerning the benefit and harm of traditional jurisprudence.[185] In the essay’s section on Sufism, Zahrawi went much further than Rida’s criticism of specific practices associated with the Rifaʿi order. He argued that Sufism is alien to Islam and was invented two centuries after Muhammad revealed the Qur’an.[186] He considered it to be a concoction of philosophy and a few religious texts; and he regarded most Sufis as idlers who scheme to live on the gullibility of ordinary folk.[187] Such complete rejection of Sufism was not characteristic of the views of religious reformers during that period. The elder shaykh of Damascene Salafis, ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Bitar, assessed the essay in his biographical dictionary entry on Zahrawi. In Bitar’s view, the essay was correct in some respects, but contained excessively harsh criticisms of the ulama; to widely circulate the essay was not wise because it was certain to stir up trouble. He added that he found it curious that the essay had generated a strong response from prejudiced readers who concluded that its author was a heretic who deserved to be condemned to death.[188] Likewise, when Rida reviewed the essay, he noted that its author did not present a balanced view on law and Sufism, focusing only on the latter’s negative aspects. He wrote

that it should not have been published because it was one-sided, even though the author had good intentions.[189] Zahrawi’s untempered assault on popular Sufism most likely stemmed from his political commitments, in particular what one biographer described as his desire to denigrate Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi for backing the sultan; it should be noted, however, that Zahrawi does not mention either one in his essay.[190]

A more moderate reformist view on Sufism is found in the works of the leading Damascene reformer, Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi.[191] He had grown up in the milieu of shariʿa-minded Sufism practiced by ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jaza’iri and local branches of the Naqshbandiyya order. He observed that the proper practice of Sufism deepened the believer’s religious life by cultivating habits of worship and nurturing such praiseworthy personal traits as humility and sincerity. It was possible to hold Sufi ceremonies without straying from prescribed forms of worship. At the same time, Qasimi observed that many Sufis held views that could not be reconciled with the Qur’an and the Sunna. Further, eating fire and playing music at Sufi ceremonies gave an unfavorable impression of Islam to educated youth fascinated with European culture. Qasimi also condemned a common practice associated with popular Sufism: visiting tombs to seek the intercession of saints. It was permissible, however, to visit the tombs of deceased family members to honor their memories and to pray to God.

A more balanced approach also characterized Rashid Rida’s review of Sayyadi’s 1906 essay on the shariʿa. Rida called it the best work seen by him because it took sensible positions on questions that would benefit ordinary Muslims. In particular, Rida commended the passage on the alms tax (zakāt) and urged Sayyadi to use his influence with Sultan Abdülhamid to collect the tax more regularly. On the other hand, Rida did criticize the shaykh for including passages about having visions of spirits, or jinn.[192] In another issue, Rida reviewed Sayyadi’s essay on the five pillars of Islam that was intended for use in Ottoman state schools. Rida opposed its adoption as a text on the grounds that it used obscure Sufi terminology.[193] It seems that no matter how the reformers appraised Sayyadi’s ubiquitous works, they could not ignore them.[194]

Two main points emerge from Manarists' writings on popular Sufism. First, politics and religion clearly overlap because criticism of popular Sufism was tied to opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid and his Sufi supporters like Sayyadi. Second, Manarists expressed a range of views on Sufism, from Zahrawi's unqualified attack to a more nuanced view expressed by Qasimi. More generally, Manarists viewed popular Sufism as a problem with different dimensions. It represented a deviation from true Islam; it also represented an obstacle to technical progress. This latter point is crucial because it indicates that an instrumental concept of religion was part of the Manarist outlook. The most immediate concern of early twentieth-century Ottoman Muslims in general was to increase the empire's economic, political, and military power. The reformers claimed that the Muslim world would remain vulnerable to European domination as long as Muslims did not revive true Islam, for only such a revival would make possible scientific and technical advances. Moreover, their outlook in both religious and secular realms emphasized the vanguard role of educated elites, ulama, and scientists, leading the ignorant masses. Given this emphasis on leadership, the reformers considered the political realm to hold the key to the interlocking issues of proper religious observance and technical progress: Sultan Abdülhamid was held responsible for blocking change in both areas.

The activities and writings of the Damascene author Rafiq al-ʿAzm illustrate the Manarist view on connections among politics, religion, and technical progress.[195] As a young man in the early 1890s, ʿAzm became attached to a circle of reformist ulama that included Tahir al-Jaza'iri and Salim al-Bukhari. According to one source, ʿAzm's home became the regular meeting place for this group every Friday after the congregational prayer.[196] The religious reformers associated with Ottoman officers and officials sympathetic to the movement for restoring the constitution. ʿAzm himself joined the local branch of the CUP. When the authorities began a crackdown on constitutionalists in 1894, he moved to Egypt. Rida met ʿAzm shortly after his own move to Cairo, and the two men developed a long and deep association on the basis of their common interest in social and political reform. They joined with Turks, Armenians, and Circassians residing in Egypt to found the Ottoman Consultation Society.[197] ʿAzm served as the society's treasurer and Rida as head of the administrative council. When the society published a newspaper in 1907, ʿAzm edited the Arabic portion. The society was disbanded following the 1908 constitutional revolution after ʿAzm visited Istanbul and joined the CUP in order to unify the empire's constitutional forces.

One of the central ideas in ʿAzm’s writings is the primacy of knowledge as the basis of nations’ power and wealth. This idea had become the widely accepted explanation for European domination over the Muslim world. ʿAzm expressed the common modernist view that it was necessary for Muslims to catch up with Europeans in medicine, chemistry, mathematics, and engineering.[198] It is noteworthy that in al-Manār ’s first volume, ʿAzm published a short piece in which he argued that Sultan Abdülhamid’s regime was to blame for the Ottoman Empire’s backwardness in these fields because its censorship and suppression of scholarly societies perpetuated the empire’s weakness and vulnerability.[199] A decade later, following the constitutional restoration in 1908, ʿAzm saw an opportunity to remedy the recently deposed sultan’s neglect of education, economic development, technical modernization, and efficiency.[200] The connection between ʿAzm’s modernist agenda and other writers’ critique of popular religion may not be evident at first sight. But the two themes do share the intellectual elitism, one technical and potentially secular, the other scriptural and religious, that characterized the sultan’s political opponents in the Committee of Union and Progress and in the Syrian religious reform camp.[201]

** Al-Manār as a platform and arena for religious reform

Rida’s journal served the cause of religious reform in three ways: by publishing the works of various authors; by reviewing reformers’ books and essays; and by spreading the reputation of reformers in obituary notices. Among the most famous essays to appear in al-Manār were those by ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi. In a similar fashion, ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi’s book on Muhammad’s first wife, Khadija, appeared in al-Manār in serial form, and ʿAzm put out portions of his own writings in his friend’s periodical.[202] Reviews of reformers’ works included Tahir al-Jaza’iri’s school primer on theology. The review served as an occasion to tout Jaza’iri to the journal’s widespread audience as the most famous scholar and advocate of reform in Syria.[203] Rida also highlighted the writings of Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi with reviews of his works on topics not always directly related to religious reform, such as health (tea, coffee, tobacco).[204] A single review published in 1911 examined four of Qasimi’s publications that

give an idea of the range of concerns in the reform movement.[205] One essay represented the impulse to revive the classical heritage by publishing the eighth century hijri Shafiʿi scholar al-Zirkishi’s treatise on jurisprudence, philosophy, and logic. A second work introduced readers to religious duties; a third argued for using independent legal reasoning (Igtihād) to support the use of the telegraph in declaring the beginning and end of Ramadan; the fourth essay under review was a summary of the history and nature of the fatwa. Other works by Qasimi that were reviewed included Proofs of God’s Unity (theology),[206] The Opinions of Arabs on Jinns (literary history),[207] The Balance of Judging Prophetic Traditions Sources (legal theory),[208] Wiping the Socks and the Soles (ritual practice),[209] and Sermons.[210]

Besides publishing and reviewing reformers’ works, Rida spread reformers’ reputations through obituary notices. An issue in March 1905 announced the death ofʿAbd al-Baqi al-Afghani, a Peshawar-born ʿālim who had lived in India, Hijaz, and Syria.[211] Rida published extensive notices on Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi,[212] ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi,[213] ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Bitar,[214] Rafiq al-ʿAzm,[215] and Salim al-Bukhari.[216] A proper obituary for Tahir al-Jaza’iri did not appear, it would seem, because of some falling out between him and Rida. There is, however, a review of a biography of Jaza’iri written by one of his admirers, Muhammad Said al-Bani.[217] According to this review, Bani’s biography inaccurately depicts Jaza’iri and inflates his importance. The review credits him with knowledge of numerous manuscripts and acknowledges his role in spreading government schools and founding public libraries in the 1870s and 1880s. At the same time, the review portrays him as stubborn, narrow-minded, and quarrelsome. He possessed neither great learning nor a talent for teaching. It seems, then, that Rida’s journal could also convey splits within the reform camp and shifts from earlier estimations, recalling that years earlier Rida had called Jaza’iri a leading reformer and scholar.

Perhaps the most elusive facet of al-Manār ’s role in Islamic reform in Syria is the ways that readers responded to and used the journal.[218] Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi’s library in Damascus contains evidence of how he used the journal in developing and forming his ideas.[219] A copy of his Proofs of God’s Unity contains his handwritten notes citing an

opinion of Muhammad ‘Abduh’s, published by al-Manār, to support ideas in his own essay.[220] In this instance, Qasimi finds new evidence in Rida’s journal to bolster a work that he had already published and that Rida had reviewed.[221] The review explains to readers that Qasimi referred to ‘Abduh in the work without referring to him by name but by describing him as “a recent sage” (ḥakīm min al-muta’ahhirīn) and that he drew on Rida’s journal when he cited “certain men.” Rida also noted that Qasimi did not mention Rida’s or ‘Abduh’s name because he composed the work when Sultan Abdülhamid was still in power, when their mention could incur persecution.[222]

Al-Manār was also embedded in a web of exchanges on the Shiʿi practice of cursing Muʿawiya. The exchanges appear to have begun with Rida’s fatwa against the practice. A Singapore reformer of Hadramawt origins, Muhammad ibn ʿAqil, wrote to Rida and informed him that he intended to collect and publish in an essay the opinions of traditionists and historians who found fault with Muʿawiya for opposing ʿAli and who argued that Muʿawiya could not be regarded as a trustworthy source of Prophetic traditions.[223] Rida advised against this, and he urged Ibn ʿAqil not to exaggerate differences of opinion on an issue that is not a fundamental aspect of religion.[224] The Singapore reformer went ahead with his project anyway. We learn how Qasimi became involved in this issue from notes he recorded in the margin on his copy of the title page of his own essay on the subject. Ibn ʿAqil sent Qasimi a copy of his essay, perhaps in draft form. Qasimi then wrote to a Meccan scholar, ʿAbd-Allah al-Zawawi, inquiring about Ibn ʿAqil, and his Meccan friend replied that the man was a studious scholar-merchant who had composed an essay on Muʿawiya that differed from Rida’s view. Qasimi wrote some observations on the essay, probably criticisms, because Ibn ʿAqil then wrote again. In this letter, he asked for the reformer’s indulgence for his mistakes because he was very occupied with his trade and there were very few books in his part of the world.[225] In addition to the notes that Qasimi made on his essay, his published biography reproduces a number of letters in which he mentioned this issue. He wrote to a friend in Jeddah, Muhammad Nasif, describing Ibn ʿAqil’s essay as one written in a fine style and with sound reasoning. Qasimi stated, however, that he did not wish to revive the feud between ʿAli and Muʿawiya because it opened the door for degrading ancestors who related Hadiths from Muʿawiya and his companions. So he told his correspondent that he wrote to Ibn ʿAqil and stated that he

would rather promote moderation, evidently to avoid aggravating tensions between Sunni and Shiʿi Muslims.[226]

A more public form of reaction came out when Ibn ʿAqil's essay was published. Rida issued a notice, but not a review, about it, in which he observed that the essay had created a controversy among Muslims in Singapore and Java, and that readers were soliciting Rida's opinion of the essay. He commented that he opposed the practice of cursing Muʿawiya, but preferred not to discuss the essay and advised Muslims excited over the issue not to go overboard in attacking each others' opinions.[227] The matter did not end there, however. Qasimi then composed and published an essay pointing out what he considered to be mistakes in Ibn ʿAqil's essay. The reformer wrote that he intended his essay to set out an alternative point of view, but not to discredit Ibn ʿAqil, whose work he credited for displaying the author's broad knowledge and independent use of reason (igtihād, but not in the technical legal sense).[228]

Rida described Qasimi's essay in the context of a piece on the entire controversy. He noted that a certain Sayyid Hasan ibn Shihab had written an essay refuting Ibn ʿAqil. Rida suggested that Ibn Shihab envied Ibn ʿAqil's scholarly status among fellow Hadramis in Singapore and nearby parts, so he composed his refutation to gain the support of ulama in a contest with Ibn ʿAqil. There followed a rebuttal of this work by a certain Shaykh Abu Bakr ibn Shihab, a teacher in Hyderabad, whom Rida termed the most famous living Hadrami scholar. For readers seeking an exemplary way to respond to Ibn ʿAqil's points, Rida recommended Qasimi's essay for its balanced critique and the moderate tone it adopted in expressing disagreement with Ibn ʿAqil. It was particularly noteworthy that Qasimi recognized certain merits in the essay. Rida concluded that if all controversial issues were addressed in such a style and tone, then Muslims would not suffer from such deep divisions.[229] That Qasimi and his friend Muhammad Nasif remained concerned with the issue is reflected in their correspondence. Qasimi wrote to Nasif in January 1911 reporting that a new essay had come out in Singapore rebutting Ibn ʿAqil.[230] The following month, Qasimi informed Nasif that he had recently seen a reference to a speech by ʿAli forbidding anyone to curse Muʿawiya. The reformer then wrote that he wished he had seen that particular reference before so he could have included it in his essay.[231] Three years later, Qasimi received a letter from a Kuwaiti scholar announcing

the completion of yet another rebuttal to Ibn ʿAqil’s essay, one that incorporated some of Qasimi’s observations.[232]

The entire episode illustrates two aspects of al-Manār ’s influence. First, it served as a platform for debating issues of concern to men versed in Islamic history and religious sources. By coming out at regular intervals in printed form, the journal represented a new kind of more widely disseminated expression of venerable conversations among Muslims on a range of religious matters: ritual, law, theology, history, heresiography, exegesis, and so forth. Second, the journal’s articles were part of public and private conversations carried on through book publishing, private correspondence, and notations in personal copies of essays. A clue to the limits of the journal’s influence is embedded in the requisite literacy and interest in these kinds of issues as well as to its disdain for expressions of popular religion.

** Gauging al-Manār ’s influence

That Rida’s journal made only limited headway in winning Muslims of Syria to its point of view may be inferred from a singular incident and from the association between Manarist views and Amir Faysal in the immediate postwar years. The singular incident occurred when Rashid Rida visited Damascus in October 1908, three months after the constitutional restoration that he had long favored and striven for.[233] During his visit, opponents to the new constitutional regime incited a disturbance by rousing a mob against Rida and the Damascene reformers he associated with (Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi and ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Bitar). Rida delivered a public lecture at the city’s main congregational mosque on the subject of educational reform. In the course of his talk, he was asked to address a completely different issue touching on popular religious observance, namely, praying to saints at their tombs for intercession with God, which he was known to oppose.

His attempt to skirt the issue, the bold challenge to his opinion on the matter, and his quick exit from the mosque all indicate his awareness that in the court of public sentiment, the reformist position was out of favor. In fact, he was advised to leave the city at first opportunity for his own safety and

for the sake of public order. It appears that a decade of publishing the reformist line had not made much of an impression in Damascus.

Yet another decade later, popular nationalism swelled in Damascus and other Syrian towns during the brief rule of Amir Faysal.[234] Historian James Gelvin paints a convincing portrait of two distinct nationalist subcultures, one popular and another elitist. The late Ottoman reformers' interest in the sciences, technology, schools, libraries, and leadership by intellectuals characterized the views of Faysal's supporters.[235] These men perpetuated the Manarists' idea of society's need for a vanguard of educated men to lead society as well as their conviction that their own educational attainments entitled them to leadership.[236] Gelvin's account shows that these themes did not strike a responsive chord beyond a small segment of educated opinion whereas the proponents of popular nationalism were able to mobilize in a brief span a significant portion of the country's urban population. One small detail reflects the continuation of disagreements between reformist and conservative ulama factions from before the First World War into the Faysali era and the alignment of these factions with elitist and popular nationalist camps, respectively. In 1911, members of the reformist faction had attended a play on a historical theme. The conservative faction's journal al-Ḥaqā'iq published a number of articles and readers' letters condemning theatrical performance as an innovation forbidden by Islam.[237] Eight years later, men surrounding Amir Faysal staged plays to rally patriotic feeling to his cause. Members of the popular nationalist committees, however, included in their ranks individuals opposed to theatre since the earlier controversy.[238]

** Conclusion

The Manarists' failure to reshape popular religious attitudes in Syria in the journal's first twenty years cannot be blamed on censorship. Sultan Abdülhamid certainly did his utmost to minimize any impact. On the other hand, he was deposed in 1909; Syria then had nearly ten years of constitutional government and a brief period under Amir Faysal, himself surrounded by men of modernist outlook. In order to fully understand the limits on al-Manār 's influence, it is not sufficient to focus on its publisher, its contributors, and its sympathizers. More attention should be

paid as well to the defenders of more conservative religious views, and in particular to their resonance with the values and outlook of popular urban culture. Then we would know better why Rida’s message had not much altered many Muslims’ notions of proper religious observance and why the sultan and the shaykh did not need to censor the journal after all.

[155] Al-Manār 1/24 (1898): 380–382.

[156] Al-Manār 12/1 (1909): 3. In yet another issue, Rida included al-Manār in a list of newspapers and books that had been banned under Sultan Abdülhamid: al-Manār 15 (1912): 796.

[157] L. Hirszowicz, “The Sultan and the Khedive, 1892–1908,” Middle Eastern Studies 8 (1972): 299, 309 n. 122.

[158] M. Vükrü Hanioælu, The Young Turks in Opposition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 105–107.

[159] Muhammad Salim al-Gundi, Taril Maʿarrat al-Nu2man, 3 vols (Damascus: Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Nationalist Guidance, 1963–1967), 2: 218. The post did not even exist at the time because the population was mostly ʿAlawi—a heterodox sect that does not concern itself with descent from the Prophet. It may be that the Ottoman authorities agreed for political reasons. Selim Deringil documents efforts under Sultan Abdülhamid II to convert heterodox sects to Sunni Islam. Sayyadi’s appointment to this post preceded Abdülhamid’s reign, so perhaps it had nothing to do with such a policy, or such measures were already applied. Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909 (London: I. B. Tauris, 1998), 68–84. Details on Abu al-Huda’s career appear in Butrus Abu-Manneh, “Sultan Abdulhamid II and Shaikh Abulhuda al-Sayyadi,” Middle Eastern Studies 15 (1979): 131–153.

[160] al-Gundi, Taril Maʿarrat al-Nu2man, 1: 214–215.

[161] Ibid., 1: 257–258.

[162] Ibid., 2: 222–229; a similar view is echoed by ʿAbd al-Hafiz al-Fasi, Riyad al-ganna aw al-mudhim al-mutrib, 2 vols. (Rabat: Wataniyya Press, 1932), 2: 149. Fasi wrote that Sayyadi's enemies included frustrated seekers after treasure, who were neglected by the sultan and more sincere critics of the sultan unhappy with Sayyadi's support for him.

[163] On the sources of religious reform in Syria, see David Commins, Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 21–48.

[164] Nikki R. Keddie, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani:" A Political Biography (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1972), 380.

[165] Sayyadi's letters to Afghani are paraphrased in Keddie, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din 370; on Afghani's early relations with Sayyadi, see 372.

[166] Ibid., 383.

[167] Ibid., 382.

[168] Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939 (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 108, 112.

[169] Sami Dahhan, Qudama1 wa muʿasirun (Cairo: Dar al-maʿArif, 1961), 273–276; Keddie also describes Maghribi's acquaintance with Afghani, 379.

[170] Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 226–228.

[171] Al-Manār 4/3 (1901): 105–106.

[172] Al-Manār 5 (1902).

[173] Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 271.

[174] “Asab ʿazim bi wafa ʿalim hakim,” al-Manār 5/6 (1902): 237–240.

[175] “Al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi,” al-Manār 19/3 (1916): 169–178.

[176] The title of the journal is given as al-Minbar by Adham al-Gundi in A2lam al-adab wa al-fann, 2 vols. (Damascus: Voice of Syria Press, 1954), 1: 11. Qadri Qal’agi gives the same name and writes that Zahrawi was 25 years old when he issued the journal; al-Sabiqun (Beirut: Knowledge for the Millions Press, 1954), 31–32. A biographical notice by Ahmad Nabhan al-Humsi gives the journal title as al-Munir. “Targama al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hamid ibn al-Sayyid Muhammad Makir ibn al-Sayyid Ibrahim al-Zahrawi,” al-Manār 21/3 (1919): 151. Rida’s obituary notice cited earlier gives the same title.

[177] “Al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi,” 169.

[178] Qal’agi, al-Sabiqun, 31–32; al-Humsi, “Targama al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hamid ibn al-Sayyid Muhammad Makir ibn al-Sayyid Ibrahim al-Zahrawi,” al-Manār 21 (1919): 151.

[179] On his departure to Egypt, see al-Gundi, Taril Maʿarrat al-Nu2man, 1: 11; on the controversy over Zahrawi’s essay, see Commins, Islamic Reform, 55–59.

[180] Adham al-Gundi, Muhada1 al-harb al-2alamiyya al-kubra (Damascus: Arab Press, 1970), 97.

[181] Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 225, citing Rashid Rida’s al-Manār wa al-Azhar.

[182] Hanioëlu, The Young Turks in Opposition, 55–56, 106–107.

[183] “Al-Hikma al-mar2iyya fi muhakama al-qadiriyya wa al-rifa2iyya,” al-Manār 1/31 (1898): 598–601.

[184] “Garaid suriyya al-muta2bada,” al-Manār 1/32 (1898): 665–667; “al-Insaf min mazaya al-amraf,” al-Manār 1/33 (1898): 639–647.

[185] ʿAbd al-Hamid al-Zahrawi, al-Fiqh wa al-tasawwuf (Cairo: Al-Umumiyya Press, 1901): 2–11.

[186] Ibid., 41–43.

[187] Ibid., 61.

[188] ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Bitar, Hilya al-bamar fi taril al-qarn al-t-alit-ʿamar, 3 vols. (Damascus: Arabic Language Academy, 1961–1963), 2: 792.

[189] “Al-Fiqh wa al-tasawwuf,” al-Manār 4/21 (1902): 838–839.

[190] Anwar al-Gundi, Taragim al-alam al-muasirin fi al-alam al-islami (Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1970), 215.

[191] For Qasimi’s views on Sufism, see Commins, Islamic Reform, 80–82, and the sources cited therein.

[192] Review of al-Haqiqa al-bahira fi asrar al-mari2a al-tahira ; cited in al-Manār 9/4 (1906): 309–311.

[193] Review of Firqan al-qulub ; cited in al-Manār 9/7 (1906): 550–552.

[194] The index of Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi’s personal library includes five works by Sayyadi.

[195] “Rafiq al-ʿAzm: Wafatuhu wa targamatuhu,” al-Manār 26 (1925): 288–299; additional biographical information is found in the journal of another Syrian religious reformer, Muhibb al-Din al-Latib, “Rafiq al-ʿAzm,” al-Zahra1 2/3–4 (1925): 224–234.

[196] Al-Latib, “Rafiq al-ʿAzm,” 226.

[197] In addition to the ʿAzm obituaries listed in n. 42, see Hasan Kayali, Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 46.

[198] Rafiq al-ʿAzm, Tanbih al-afham ila matalib al-haya al-igtimaiyya wa al-islam (Cairo: al-Mawsua Press, 1900), 66–67; ʿAzm also

develops this theme in al-Durus al-hikmiyya li’l-nami1a al-islamiyya (Cairo: Al-Mu1ayyad Press, 1899).

[199] Rafiq al-ʿAzm, “Man al-mas1ul (al-hukuma am al-ma2b),” al-Manār 1/45 (1898): 866–869.

[200] Rafiq al-ʿAzm, “al-Inqilab al-maymun,” al-Manār 12/5 (1909): 340–349.

[201] On the intellectual elitism of the Syrian reformers, see Commins, Islamic Reform, 78, 87–88, 102, 143. On intellectual elitism in the Committee of Union and Progress, see Hanioëlu, The Young Turks in Opposition, 205–208.

[202] Zahrawi’s work came out in volumes 11 and 13; ʿAzm’s in volume 10. Rida’s journal, however, was not the only platform for publishing reformers’ works, especially after the 1908 constitutional restoration. For example, the Damascene reformer Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi had a work on the traditionist al-Bukhari issued in a Sidon journal (al-2Irfan 4/1 (1912): 28–35; 4/2: 65–72; 4/3: 99–107; 4/4: 165–171), and his essay on the jurist’s opinion (fatwa) appeared in a Damascus review (al-Muqtabas 6/2 (1911): 89–116; 6/3: 177–197; 6/4: 275–298).

[203] Review of al -Gawahir al-kalamiyya fi al-aqaid al-islamiyya, al-Manār 5/23 (1903): 914–915. The journal also reviewed Jaza1iri’s Tawgih al-nazar ila usul al-at ¯ ar on the Hadith sciences in al-Manār 15/2 (1912): 160, and called it an indispensable work.

[204] Review of Risala fi al-may wa al-qahwa wa al-dullan in al-Manār 7/8 (1904): 313.

[205] “Matbu2at al-Mayl Muhammad Gamal al-Din al-Qasimi,” al-Manār 14/11 (1911): 870–872. The works were Marh luqtat al-2aglan, Tanbih al-talib ila maʿrifa al-fard wa al-wagib, Irmad al-lalq ila al-2amal bi labar al-barq, and al-Fatwa fi al-Islam.

[206] Al-Manār 12/5 (1909): 387–388.

[207] Al-Manār 14/3 (1911): 230, Maùahib al-aʿrab.

[208] Al-Manār 16/1 (1913): 69, Mizan al-’garh wa al-taʿdil.

[209] Al-Manār 18/4 (1915): 317, al-Mash ʿala al-gawrabayn wa al-naʿlayn.

[210] Al-Manār 18/7 (1915): 556–560; 18/8: 61–634; 18/9: 692–695, Magmu lutab.

[211] Al-Manār 8/2 (1905): 79–80.

[212] Al-Manār 17/7 (1914): 558–560; 17/8 (1914): 628–636.

[213] “Masabuna bi1l-Zahrawi wa Kaylani,” al-Manār 19/2 (1916): 124; 19/3 (1916): 169–178; Humsi, “Tarëamat al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-Hamid,” al-Manār 21/3 (1919): 150–152; 21/4 (1919): 207–211.

[214] Muhammad Bahga al-Bitar, “Tarëjama al-Mayl ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Bitar,” al-Manār 21/6 (1919): 317–324.

[215] “Rafiq al-ʿAzm: Wafatuhu wa targamatuhu,” al-Manār 26/4 (1925): 288–299.

[216] “Wafa al-2allama al-galil al-Mayl Salim al-Bulari,” al-Manār 29/8 (1928): 633–634.

[217] Sayyid Salih Mullis Rida, al-Manār 22/8 (1921): 635–640.

[218] Information on subscriptions would also be welcome. In a 1909 letter to a correspondent in Jeddah, Qasimi mentioned that Rida was sending him issues of the journal. Zafir al-Qasimi, Ëamal al-Din al-Qasimi wa ʿasruhu (Damascus: al-Hashimiyya Press, 1965), 591.

[219] The Qasimi Library is described in Commins, Islamic Reform, 179.

[220] Qasimi indicated that the piece by ‘Abduh appeared in volume 11, number 12.

[221] The point for which Qasimi found support is on page 56 in his text. Rida reviewed Dala1il al-tawhid in al-Manār 12/5 (1909): 387–388. The review praised Qasimi’s use of classical and recent scholars to present a compendium on theological reasoning.

[222] Qasimi also kept a copy of al-Manār’s review of his essay, Pleasing Responses (al-Agwiba al-murdiyya), which deals with a matter of jurisprudence. The copy in the Qasimi library of this work contains new footnotes that he wrote.

[223] Muhammad ibn ʿAqil helped manage a Malay reformist journal, al-Imam. I owe this information to Azyumardi Azra’s chapter in this volume, which mentions Ibn ʿAqil. Prof. Azra noted that Ibn ʿAqil’s “Shi2i” bent is the subject of an article by Werner Ende, “Schiitische Tendenzen bei

sunnitischen Sayyids aus Hadhramaut: Muhammad b. ʿAqil al-2Alawi," Der Islam 50/1 (1973).

[224] "Al-Nasa1ih al-kafiyya li man yatawalla Muʿawiya," al-Manār 13/2 (1910): 152; "Kitab al-nasa1ih al-kafiyya wa al-rudud ʿalayhi wa al-intisar lahu," al-Manār 14/4 (1911): 314–316; Gamal al-Din al-Qasimi, Naqd al-nasa1ih al-kafiyya li man yatawalla Muʿawiya (Damascus: al-Fayha1 Press, 1910), 2.

[225] Muhammad ibn ʿAqil, Al-Nasa1ih al-kafiyya li man yatawalla Muʿawiya, copy in Qasimi library, Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi's handwritten notes on title page. Qasimi gave the date of the letter from Ibn ʿAqil as July 1908.

[226] Letter to Muhammad Nasif, July 30, 1909, in Zafir al-Qasimi, Ëamal al-Din al-Qasimi wa ʿasruhu, 602–603. On the margin of page 221 in his copy of Ibn ʿAqil's essay, Qasimi wrote that he read it in the course of the last ten days during the evening. He dated his note July 22, 1909, so he wrote to Nasif eight days later.

[227] "Kitab al-nasa1ih al-kafiyya," al-Manār 14 (1911): 314–316.

[228] Gamal al-Din al-Qasimi, Naqd al-nasa1ih, 2–3.

[229] "Kitab al-nasa1ih al-kafiyya," al-Manār.

[230] al-Qasimi, Ëamal al-Din al-Qasimi wa ʿasruhu, 617.

[231] Ibid., 618.

[232] Letter from ʿAbd al-2Aziz ibn Ahmad al-Ramid al-Baddah, March 1914; Al-Qasimi, Gamal al-Din al-Qasimiwa2asruhu, 551–554.

[233] The incident is described in detail and sources are given in Commins, Islamic Reform, 128–132.

[234] For details of popular nationalism in the Faysali period, see James Gelvin, Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998).

[235] Gelvin cites officially sanctioned sermons that urged Muslims to strive for technical progress; Gelvin, Divided Loyalties, 190.

[236] Ibid., 194–195, 203–204.

[237] Commins, Islamic Reform, 122.

[238] Gelvin, Divided Loyalties, 258–259.

* 3. The Manarists and Modernism: An attempt to fuse society and religion

Mahmoud Haddad

The first generation of American independence witnessed an energetic, almost a convulsive, effort to “create” an American culture. There was to be an American language, and Noah Webster set himself resolutely to champion American speech and prove its superiority to British speech. There was to be an American literature … an American education… an American science… and even an American arithmetic, for as Nicholas Pike wrote: “As we are now an independent nation it was deemed proper that we should have an independent arithmetic.”[239]

In Europe it was also felt necessary to hide the more offensive aspects of utilitarian industrial modernism under the cloak of an earlier age. One historian wrote:

In London even the railway stations struck archaic poses: Euston Station sought in its façade escape to ancient Greece, St. Pancras to the Middle Ages, Paddington to the Renaissance. This Victorian historicism expressed the incapacity of city dwellers either to accept the present or to conceive the future except as a resurrection of the past.[240]

Although not everyone who wrote in al-Manār can be considered a Manarist, it is commonplace for al-Manār to be associated with the Salafi movement. In the words of W. Ende:

The origin and early development of the Salafiyya in [Egypt and Syria] is above all connected with the names of al-Afghani [1839–1897], ‘Abduh [1849–1905], al-Kawakibi [1854–1902], and Rashid Rida [1865–1935]….With al-Manār , the last mentioned created in Cairo in 1898 the most influential organ of the Salafiyya. From 1926 onwards, al-Manār was joined by al-Fatḥ (Cairo), a periodical of similar tendency which, after the death of Rashid Rida and the cessation of al-Manār in 1935, was considered until 1948 the most important (although not the only) journalistic forum of the Salafiyya in Egypt….Its editor and main author, Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib… had founded, together with his Syrian compatriot ʿAbd al-Fattah Katlan [d. 1931], the Matbaʿa Salafiyya (including a bookshop), a printing press whose production reflects all the essential desiderata of the movement.[241]

It is necessary to point out from the outset, that the Salafiyya or the Manarists/Salafis were not a homogenous group, nor even a group, and even when taken as individuals they are not devoid of contradictions and inconsistencies in their various expositions. It should be made equally clear that the Manarists’ thinking was not completely rigid and underwent changes

over time. The most glaring example of such developments and differences of opinion is Rashid Rida’s transformation in the last phase of his life into a spokesman for the Wahhabi movement in the Arabian Peninsula, and its comparison with Muhammad ‘Abduh’s earlier description of the same movement. In 1902, ‘Abduh lauded the Wahhabiyya for brushing away the dust of tradition and removing the layers that stood between men and a true study of the Qur’an and the Hadith, so as to allow them to derive God’s teachings from the source.[242] For ‘Abduh, however, the Wahhabiyya could be more narrow-minded than the traditionalists. He was bold enough to say:

Though its members may denounce many innovations and corruptions that have been added to the faith unjustly over the years, they advocate a strict interpretation of the literal text, with no regard for the principles on which Islam was built and for which the Prophet called. These are no scholars, and no friends of civilization.[243]

The main thesis of the Salafiyya was the need for Islamic renewal or reform (taǧdād) in order to modernize and update the religious law (shariʿa), even if that entailed partial Western influence. It proposed to do so by marrying two trends: an Islamic trend that called for going back to the early sources of Islam (i.e. the Qur’an and the Hadith) shunning harmful innovations (bidʿa) that came later, and a second trend, the modern Western trend of thought. Thus, it considered itself a modernist movement that accepted Western ideas, but within the general Islamic cultural framework. This approach made the Salafiyya face a double challenge from opposite directions: one from the old Islamic school of imitation (taqlīd) that adhered to interpretations of older ulama, and the second from the newer trend of secularization and uncritical westernization represented by the new emerging elite in the Arab and Muslim worlds. Additionally, the Salafi reformists perceived a need to work harder to inject Muslim moral values into Islamic society before Western style secularism or irreligion had a chance to seep in, or to reverse what they perceived to be not just secularism but de-Islamization. The need to preserve an Islamic identity was extremely relevant in this regard.

Explicitly or implicitly the Manarists/Salafis acquiesced in or rather called for the separation of religion and politics, and in this they were very different

from the contemporary Islamic movements that call for their fusion.[244] The former were, probably without knowing it, in agreement not with ideological, but with historical Islam which organized Islamic society and the Islamic state according to separate norms. As Gibb and Bowen once noted, in the days before the 1979 Iranian revolution, religion and state in Islam were united “only in the realms of theory.”[245] What the Manarists/Salafis were after was a fusion or unity of religion and society rather than of religion and state.

This may be confirmed by the writings of a number of Manarists/Salafi thinkers. Shaykh Muhammad ‘Abduh, in his interpretation of the Sura al-ʿImran, wrote:

The worst thing that can bedevil the faith and lead to a loss of the true Book [the Qur’an] is to put the livelihood of religious scholars and their ranking in the hands of princes and rulers. Religious scholars must be totally independent of rulers, particularly the oppressive ones. I cannot comprehend the purpose of putting scholarly ranks and wages in the hands of kings and princes, except to render these golden chains into bonds around their necks, with which they can be led to where the unjust rulers wish to deceive the public in the name of religion and hold them servile. If the public were to realize this they would not put much stock in the pronouncements of any official scholar bound by these chains. In the Ottoman Empire, religious ranks were bestowed not only on ignorant men but even upon children. There is a long poem mocking this sad state of the State written by a scholar from Tripoli (Syria). Yet, later on and from among those same scholars adorned with fancy outfits and shining medals, and who daily praised their benefactor the sultan, emerged some who declared their desire for the state to reform. This position was a ruse to mislead the public about their true allegiances. Is it possible then to trust a scholar close to the oppressive rulers? [246]

‘Abduh went on to say:

Scholars of the early generations (salaf) used to avoid the embrace of unjust rulers more stridently than they would avoid snakes and scorpions. There are many sayings and accounts about this, including

the Prophet’s hadith: “There will come after me princes [one rendition is: lying and unjust princes], and whomsoever befriends them and believes their lies and helps them in their oppression is not of me, nor I of him, and will not join me in heaven.” (Relayed and authenticated by Tirmidhi, Nasa’i, al-Hakim, and Bayhaqi). Another hadith mentioned, “You shall have imams who control your livelihood, tell you lies and misrule among you. They will not be satisfied until you approve of their evil and believe their lies. You must stay true to the Right as long as they will tolerate it, and if they cross that boundary then whoever among you dies in opposition will die a martyr.” (Relayed by al-Tabrani, with variations. We chose it because it includes the phrase “they will control your livelihood.”[247])

The contemporary state of Islamic society was the subject of ‘Abduh’s response to Renan, the French philosopher, who asked where exactly lay the general atrophy in Islam that was leading others to argue that religion is an obstacle in the path of Muslims, preventing their success and progress. Would it be correct to assume that this rigidity is in the nature of the faith?[248] ‘Abduh answered that this rigidity has to do with the relation that developed between religion and politics and not with Islam per se.[249] He said that we hear about political authorities arresting those who revive the arguments of the Salafi scholars calling for renewal, but these measures are not an expression of adherence to the faith. The traditional scholars afflicted with rigidity (ğumūd) who instigate such steps are motivated by envy and not by concern for the welfare of the religion. The arrests are a political necessity, out of fear that if one scholar was allowed to escape from the bonds of tradition, the practice might spread and others might follow. Then perhaps the practice would spread to other matters outside religion, leading to freedom of thought, which the conservatives abhor.[250] ‘Abduh concluded on a light, but revealing note:

If you wish to argue that politics involve the oppression of thought, religion and science, then I agree. May God protect us from politics, from the word “politics,” from the meaning of politics, from each letter in this word, from each image of it that comes to my mind, from each person that speaks or thinks of politics, and from each form of the verb “politics.”[251]

Equally important, Rafiq al-ʿAzm (1867–1925) wrote in al-Manār in 1904 about the reasons for the decline of Islamic nations, asking:

Is it not saddening and heartbreaking that there is not a single Muslim nation that can match the smallest Christian emirate in progress and advancement? Consider states like Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania, which only recently seceded from the great [Ottoman] Islamic nation, how they have outstripped the Muslim nation and have become its most stubborn opponents. What, I wonder, is the cause of such devastating and pervasive inertia that has enslaved the Muslims, interrupted their system, and made them lag behind other nations? Christians and Buddhists have outdistanced the Muslims in progress, their opponents have subjugated them over authority, and their rivals have defeated them in all aspects of life in all areas of the world.[252]

After considering many answers based on religion, ethnicity, or character, and dismissing them all, he came to a rather novel conclusion for a Muslim:

As a divine religion, Islam is only meant for the happiness and good of mankind. And no rational human being can claim that Islam prohibits its followers from attaining the happiness that God intended for His people through religion. It is only different minds throughout different ages and nations that differ in their comprehension of the meaning of religion. As is well known, the first nation to receive Islam was the Arab nation, which was steeped in aberrance and Bedouinism, and which had no social laws or an advanced or civilized system of government. When Islam came down to the Arabs with its rules, exhortations, commands, and prohibitions, they found in it an accessible goal, a momentous event, and eloquent wisdom. Thus, they embraced Islam and considered it the only and ultimate thing in their lives. They went to such extremes in their belief that it blinded them from the fact that excessiveness in religion, to the extent of associating it with all worldly matters, especially the political life of the nation, is a departure from the true intent of religion. It is a strong distortion of the Prophet’s legislation: “If what troubles you is a religious matter, then come to me with it. But if it is a worldly matter, then you are more cognizant of it than I.”[253]

Such was the result of the Arabs' total devotion to religion, in their Bedouin days, and their failure to place politics separately so that it may develop and grow in line with the developing state of affairs of the Muslims themselves. An indication of their error in that matter is the fact that the Bedouin governments that did not embrace aspects of civilization and did not keep pace with the changing times and with the advanced countries and their forms of government are still to this day considered by many the least developed among Muslim states. The people of such "Bedouin" states as those of the Maghreb and of the Arabian Peninsula are seen in the Middle East as most ignorant of social life, and their deteriorating state of affairs is perceived as a proof of this overall situation.

This is identified by many authors as the cause of the disasters that have afflicted Muslims and the source of their social misery to the present day. According to these authors, a nation that has placed itself in such a position of shunning worldly affairs and of attaching all matters of civil progress to religion and of succumbing to its despotic rulers for hundreds of years cannot strive for an advanced state or learn the lessons of the past without long toil and great hardships. The Muslims could have learnt from "non-religious"[sic] Japan which collectively rose and embraced the means of progress and advancement, reached in thirty years the level of European nations, and challenged the greatest "Christian" nations—while Muslim rule was being wrested away and the states of the Muslims were threatened with extinction, and developed nations dominated them and their governments. There is not a single Muslim state that would have willingly undertaken the formation of an advanced government that could have matched the smallest European nation; that would have repelled the raids of civilized peoples who fought the Muslims for survival with the power of knowledge and the weapons of civilization, or that would have purged governments of their elements of deadly corruption. The Europeans had enslaved three quarters of the Muslims, and before the lapse of a quarter of a century, they might have taken control of the remaining quarter of them. That quarter might have lost their countries to the Europeans had they remained steeped in error and ignorance, and if they did not manage their own affairs and stop relying on their tyrannical governments, the kind of tyranny that consumed kingdoms, toppled towers of glory, and drained the strength of nations while they lie unaware.[254]

One of the characteristics of the Manarist/Salafi trend is that it opted for selective modernism—that is if we think of modernism as an approximation of the stage that the West had reached in thought or behavior at that time. It therefore did not see a problem in accepting modern thinking and found it compatible with Islam in certain areas. In others, it refused modern, or more precisely Western, thinking or behavior as incompatible with Islam. The yardstick one may generally use to differentiate among its varying stances is to evaluate whether a certain stance was in contradiction with basic Islamic teachings or if it posed a problem to Islamic identity according to their definition of it or to historical circumstances. For the Manarist/Salafi movement, modernism was to be respectful of Islam, of the Arabs, and of their past. In that sense, it was necessary to weave the national with the religious. Otherwise, modernism would remain alien and devoid of any acceptable identity (see Appendix). From this perspective, modernism advanced the cause of an Arab nationalism intertwined with Islam. An article entitled, “Love of the Arabs is a True Pillar of Islam, “[255] published in al-Fatḥ in 1947 is a case in point. More importantly, and much earlier, Muhammad ‘Abduh considered that modernism implicitly entailed Arab cultural nationalism and revival in the form of modernizing the Arabic language by going back to study its sources and enabling it to express new genres of literature.[256]

As an example of a modernism that is compatible with Islam, a series of articles by Rashid Rida in 1907 is most revealing.[257] The series, entitled “The Benefits and Harms of Europeans in the East,” lists clearly what benefits the Muslims got from the Europeans. Rida cited, as the first benefit, “independent thought” and said that newspapers write plenty about the independence of nations, but rarely about the independence of the individual, which is the foundation for the independence of the larger group called the nation. He went on to say that “civilization is a form of human perfection of individuals. Its opposite is tyranny, which prevents the perfection of individuals that is required in civilization. Tyranny manipulates individual independence, and controls the learning behavior of individuals.”[258] Rida proceeded to explain that in countries where tyranny is predominant, the educational system is built on imitation and rote learning, following the nature of government. Thus, since the East is more rooted in imitation than the West, it is also more rooted in tyranny. Although Europe suffered from tyranny more in the Middle Ages than the East, in modern times the tables were turned. Consequently, science and business

thrived in Europe to unprecedented levels while the East remained backward. This allowed Europe to penetrate into the East, colonizing the land, spreading the call for its own religion, and seeking profits. People of the two areas mixed together and created mutual ties, when Europeans established schools in the East, and took over many positions and functions. Rida interestingly concluded:

This is a major benefit we have derived from Europeans. We should be grateful to them for the education, and learning they possess. A Muslim should not deny that, or fail to use the argument that, the noble Qur’an itself has taught us to dismantle imitation, and that it is founded on the principle of independent logic. Though this is true… it was not a factor in this age of awakening of the East in general and the Muslims in particular. Our proof is that today our men of religion remain the staunchest enemies of independence [of thought], and the most beholden to imitation. We should be fair, and express our gratefulness to those who have awakened us to our self-interest.[259]

The second benefit we acquired from the Europeans, according to Rida, was “the emergence from tyranny.”[260] He surveyed Islamic and Eastern history in a very open and liberal way and concluded that tyranny was the norm in these lands even before European colonization started. For him, “the greatest benefit that the East has derived from the Europeans is knowledge of what a government should be. That deep conviction leads to an attempt to replace absolute authority in the hands of individuals with a government subject to the rule of consultation (šūrā) and religious law (sharʿia). Some, like Japan, have reached that goal. Others, like Iran, have proceeded along that path. Still others, like Egypt and Turkey, continue to struggle toward that end, with speech and printed word.”[261] Again, Rida’s conclusion is not based on any Islamic premise:

A Muslim should not say that this form of government is a foundation of our faith, and that we derive it from our own clear Book (the Qur’an), and from the conduct of the early caliphs, not from contacts with Europeans and understanding of Western affairs. Without such contacts, Muslims would not have realized that this is a true aspect of Islam. Otherwise, the first to declare the need for fulfilling this command of the faith would have been

religious scholars in Constantinople, Egypt, and Morocco. In fact, however, most of them remain staunch supporters and tools of tyrannical governments ruled by individuals. Most of those who demand the rule of consultation, which is subjected to laws, are those who have become familiar with Europe and European ways.[262]

The third and last benefit which Rida thought the East had received from Europe was “communal societies or communal organizations.” Rida writes that social scientists believe that the primary factor in furthering the advancement of nations is voluntary communal organizations that are obviously independent of the state. For him, such organizations or societies have led the way to the development of science and art, to the increase in glory and power, and to the accumulation of wealth. They also helped spread Europe’s religion throughout the world and guaranteed European domination of East and West.[263] He added that the East had preceded the West in all forms of civil and social progress, but civilization in the East remained lacking and was not established on firm foundations which, according to him, caused it to collapse. The reason was that these foundations were the creation of individual effort and not based on work through communal societies. “Without these societies, modern Western civilization would not have been as strong and as deserving of stability and longevity.”[264] Rida then made the point that,

Today, we see the East beginning to learn from the West how to create communal societies and corporations. The Japanese have been very successful in this field and have reached a level of maturity. The Ottomans and Egyptians remain in a state of childhood in this life of collective effort. Yet, without this effort, it is impossible for a nation to reach maturity….

[Voluntary] societies and corporations are the measure of a nation’s progress and its life. This is indisputable. You should not be deceived by the brilliant achievement of one individual, or several, in some science or enterprise. If they do not find in their nations societies that appreciate their value and assist them into bringing to life the fruits of their brilliance, the efforts of these individuals will be wasted and their abilities squandered. [265]

It is noteworthy that in the series of articles entitled, “The Benefits and Harms of Europeans in the East,” Rida’s impressions were exclusively about benefits with no mention of any harmful effects.

This attitude is drastically reversed on the eve of the First World War. The threat of European colonization, its realization in the core Arab-Muslim areas, and the rise of extreme or militant secular movements calling for near complete Westernization similar to that in Atatürk’s Turkey, had drastically changed the political and cultural picture. From that point on there would be no escape from political issues. These were connected with national and religious integrity and identity. More importantly, they were not simply concerned with the issue of religion and state as expressed by the wisdoms received from a revealed religion, but came to encroach on the relation between religion and society. With the spread of European colonization on the eve of the First World War, Rida perceptively commented:

It is not Islam that shuns the Europeans, but the Europeans who force Islam to give them a wide berth. Harmony between them is not an impossibility, but the way to reach it requires the exercise of a large mind. [266]

Nothing can better describe the new type of conflict that developed between the Manarist/Salafi defenders of Islamic identity and the “new modernists” or Westernizers than the controversy about the wearing of a hat or a turban. This episode exemplifies the clash between Islamic society and religion on the one hand and the state on the other. In an article entitled “The Turban and the Tarbush [fez],” al-Fatḥ, edited by Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib,[267] reprinted a commentary that had previously appeared in the pro-British Egyptian newspaper al-Muqattam. The latter had published a piece by an unknown writer accusing Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, who was himself a wearer of the fez, of becoming an advocate of wearing turbans. The writer claimed that the subject had nothing to do with religion and that Islam had no specific costume or required appearance. This was a matter best left to social customs and personal taste. Islam never introduced any such requirements. Anyone who claimed that religion required a certain

outfit was making a false allegation at the expense of the faith and misrepresenting Islam. Indeed, the turban worn today as a symbol for religious scholars was not the same one worn by the good ancestors. Neither did our worthy ancestors wear a qūftān, ğūbba (overcoat), or belt as is common today. All these were recent introductions. Al-Khatib replied the next day ridiculing some of the minor points made by his adversary. However, he made a lengthy defense of wearing the turban for reasons having to do with both Islamic identity and economic independence:

The turbans are the crowns of the Arabs. They were the symbol of the Arabs and the Muslims when they were masters. They were also the ornament of their heads and the pride of their manhood. When Muslims became enslaved, some of their nation stooped low enough to follow the ways of other nations, a stage which was the subject of a pioneering psychological analysis by Judge Wali al-Din Abu Zayd ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn Khaldun.[268]

The author then makes a point about the “economics of wearing Islamic dress” that is rarely found elsewhere:

Before some Muslims moved away from the turban to the fez, they used to wear textiles produced in their own lands. National industry used to have teeming markets, and the trade of the East was in the hands of the Easterners. This provided the livelihood for hundreds of thousands of workers, many of who have since turned into thieves or beggars. Ever since the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud [II] adopted the Frankish costume, the East has paid to the west hundreds of millions of pounds as the price for foreign textiles. Households in the West prospered with this income, while their equivalent in the East went bankrupt. Every pound that left the pocket of the Easterners to the coffers of the West in payment for their clothes was a nail in the structure of the Western domination of the East. One wishes that the turban had remained our symbol. Then we would have preserved our beauty and dignity. The textile industry in the East would have progressed, and we would have preserved our economic independence to assist us in protecting our national independence, or at least in restoring it.[269]

The shock of the abolishment of the caliphate in Turkey in 1924 and the pursuit of a policy undermining the shariʿa in both state and society had two effects in the Muslim World. For one, it empowered similar trends in other Muslim countries; for the other it put the modernist Manarist/Salafi forces in those countries on the defensive, pushing them to abandon their middle ground and lash out against the Westernizing elements. Such was the shock that the Nation Arabe published by Shakib Arslan in Geneva wrote in March 1930 that

the Turkey of Angora or Ankara, as it now wants to be called, prides itself of being in the process of complete modernization in a European sense. Hat, dance, Roman alphabet, Swiss civil code, Italian penal code, etc., they have gone as far as possible in breaking with the past. It is said that they no longer even tolerate oriental music, and at a given moment they spoke of changing even Turkish cuisine in the strictest sense into a purely Occidental cuisine.[270]

Even more theatrical projects were proposed, such as that of replacing Turkish first names, almost all of Arabic origin, with Latin or Germanic first names. Instead of Ali Riza, Ismail Haqqi, Hüsseyin Kâzim, etc., one would thenceforth be named Jean, Jules, Marcel, Xavier, William, Max, etc. That was to say that Kemalist Turkey was no longer content with Western teachings in the sciences, arts, law, and regulations, but wanted to become completely European in a social sense. In order to better break with the past, they even thought of no longer teaching Turkish history. Some wanted Turkish history to begin with Mustafa Kemal, and no longer wanted to speak of the events which linked Turkey to Asia. The difficulty with this attempt, however, was, according to our authors, that it went around the issues by playing with historical and geographical truths and claiming that Turkey had always been a European power and had never received anything from Asia. It is thus that Tevfik Ravid Bey, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared at the disarmament Conference in Geneva something which, moreover, had no relation to the purpose of the Conference, that is, that all of Turkish history proved that it had always been an essentially European country. “The Kemalist Turks, not content therefore to be Europeans in the future, want to have been Europeans in the past. They do not intend to modernize in the manner of Japan, for example, and seek to be taught European knowledge by adapting themselves to modern technology, while remaining essentially

Japanese. No, the Kemalist Turks were determined to focus on a radical revolution which left little trace of their past.” Such attitudes in the name of “progress” made Shakib Arslan disapprovingly write that the Turkish method of “modernization is merely an attempt to extinguish the Muslim spirit.”[271]

Earlier, in June 1929, Rashid Rida had written a preface for the thirtieth volume of al-Manār.[272] One of the topics that he discussed was “The Renewal of Our Atheists and the Renewal of the Westerners (Franks).”[273] Rida started his attack early by comparing the developments that were taking place in Europe with the opposite kind of developments taking place in the Arab and Muslim worlds:

The destruction of the Islamic aspects of government by renegade Turks and what appear to be initial indications that the Afghan and Iranian governments are emulating them, as well as the events in Egypt (and the contagion is spreading to every province) have tempted colonialists and Christian missionaries in Europe to deliver the coup de grâce to Islam, sweep away all vestiges of Islamic rule, and to revive Christianity and consolidate it in the West and the East.[274]

Rida presented the following list that included, according to his evaluation, some of the efforts by Europeans to renew their religion, most of which he regarded as pretexts to transgress against the Islamic religion:

1 British and other Protestant missionaries had convened one conference after another in Jerusalem, the cradle of Christianity, to consult about increasing the effort to Christianize Muslims. One of their organizations in London had published a statement claiming that the only territory where Islam had truly deep roots was in the Arabian Peninsula. Moreover, it alleged that only 100 dedicated missionaries were needed to destroy it in its first cradle and last redoubt.

2 The French government returned to Catholic organizations all of the money and endowments that it confiscated from them in order to encourage them to spread Christianity in the French colonies in North Africa and Syria.

3 New books were being published in French and other languages reviling Islam and urging the Christianization of Muslims, by force if necessary. Rida had published some excerpts from their books in this and in previous volumes and promised to publish more in the future.

4 The Italian government had reconciled with the Vatican, restoring to the Pope political sovereignty in his domain and hundreds of millions of his (frozen) assets, thus reinvigorating the Catholic Church and commencing a new era in the revival of Christianity, in both the East and West. This did not harm Muslims per se unless the Church transgressed against them, and it remained less injurious than secularism and atheism.

5 The organizations calling for the unification of all Christian churches and sects had shown a greater activism in the East and West. In fact, they had made some progress in that direction.

6 The religious revivalist movement in England was only second to that of Italy. By now the controversy surrounding the suggestion to amend the official Book of Prayers, and the parliament’s repeated rejection of it, had become well known. Other organizations had been formed to look into Christian doctrines and the traditions of the Church, with a view to reconciling them with science and the modern age.

7. Italian and British publications were competing to spread the message urging women to return to (religious) decency in dress and public conduct, and especially to resist the latest excesses in display of feminine charms and dissoluteness, which leads to moral depravity. Some of these writings by well-known British writers had been published in Egyptian newspapers. Moreover, the Italian prime minister, who was a great reformer, had banned excesses in dress, dancing, and swimming, hoping by reviving religion and morality to renew the strength and greatness of his nation. Furthermore, every virtuous man found this praiseworthy.[275]

As for the lessons to be derived from “Europe’s renewal and the renewal of our atheists, “ [276] as he put it, Rida held that the renewal of “our country’s atheists” and advocates of disbelief and licentiousness entailed the destruction of religious bonds and the elements of honor and dignity, namely everything that tied the nation together, gave it strength, unified its word, and preserved it morals. They called disbelief and debauchery originality in renewal and progress and advancement in civilization. They referred to religious consciousness and chastity as old and worn-out notions.[277]

Indeed, for Rida, their mockery and corruption were spreading and the threat that they posed was growing with the growth of magazines and newspapers through which they squirted their poison. This was so despite their low prestige and bad reputation; none of them had superior skill in a useful science or a good deed. Rather, their influence came through the attractiveness of their expression, which they employed to sanction the desires of old trespassers and young juveniles. Knowledgeable people asserted that much of the extent of uncertainty of belief, corrupted honor, and debauched women could be attributed to the corrupting influence of magazines and newspapers.[278]

Rida then shifted to another more sensitive topic, showing not the moderate modernist face, but the conservative side of the Manarists/Salafis, when it came to the issue of women. Writing under the subtitle, “The Danger of Liberating Women, “ [279] he wrote that the question of female anarchy, called women’s liberation (which was shamelessness exemplified by the preference of removing the veil over the chastity exemplified by the veil), had brought Egypt and other Europeanized Eastern peoples to an abyss that threatened their dignity, family unit, health, and wealth, even though the depraved advocates of licentiousness and cuckolding may have called this danger a civilizing renewal.[280]

Rida makes the point that nowadays, women, housewives, mothers, and educated maidens roam the streets day and night with men, their arms around each others’ waists. They frequent promenades and nightclubs in different states of dress and nudity, holding hands with men and more. Some of them swim at sea, in front of men or even with men. Some frequent mixed dance halls where they dance with men in a state much worse than their

foreign counterparts, in terms of nakedness, impudence, wantonness, buffoonery, and silliness. Some of them visit the salons where they have their hair cut and their backs and bosoms beautified. There they meet their lovers; ask not what they speak openly and what they promise secretly. Do not mention the multiplicity of secret brothels, let alone the prevalence of the open ones and the personal trysts. Naturally, the many newspapers and magazines instigate to this temptation. Thus, one of the most serious consequences of this corruption is a decrease in the number of marriages. This threatens the nation by stopping its demographic growth, leading to its diminution and potential extinction.[281] But one should not derive the conclusion that Rida's stance on the issue at hand was novel at that time. In 1908 Qasim Amin (1863–1908), the Egyptian writer in the circle of Muhammad 'Abduh's friends, had died. Rida was very reserved in his eulogy. He described Amin who had called for shunning the veil and was well-known as the "liberator of the [Muslim] woman," which was the title of his first book on the subject, as having been more theoretical than practical and that his writings were in contradiction to the general opinion of the majority of people.[282] Rida was also critical of Amin, though more mildly, when Muhammad 'Abduh was still alive and when Amin published his second book entitled al-Mar'a al-ǧadīda ("The New Woman") in 1901.[283]

Rida went on sounding a pessimistic note when he stated:

The enemies of Islam lie in wait and are happy for the ignominy that Muslims brought on their faith. They are paving the way for enslaving Muslims and colonizing their countries. They carefully monitor every faint whisper for reform that issues from the mouth of any Muslim ruler and every movement for renewal that might arise among them. Then they set out to caution their governments and to urge the neutralization of its salutary effects. They work to defame the advocates of such movements so that unaware Muslims may turn away from them. This is demonstrated in the article "What is Said about Islam in Europe," printed in this volume and based on the writings of Jules Sicard,[284] a French military man, Father Lammens, a Jesuit priest, and Dr Snouk [Hurgonje], a Dutch statesman. Consider what these Europeans have to say about the Imam [Muhammad 'Abduh] and the owner of al-Manār and their call for reform, al-Manār and its analysis, the Epistle ofUnicity [Risālat al-tawḥīd by Muhammad 'Abduh] and its implementation, and

their views regarding the modern Europeanization movement. It should be noted that our authors (the owner of al-Manār and the Imam [Muhammad ‘Abduh]) lament the fact that this movement has begun to erode the fundamentals of religion. They also lament the fact that the ideas of Shaykh Muhammad ‘Abduh, which struck root among thinkers and had wide appeal among Muslim youth, now are most vehemently rejected by the ossified and ultraconservative turban wearers. As the Europeans above put it, “for this reason, one finds that the followers of ‘Abduh are diminishing and are unable to publicize their ideas because they are few in number and face strong resistance from the conservatives.”[285]

Yet, Rida does not despair and, in a twist, he perceives “good omen for reform.” First, he takes heart that his old enemies at al-Azhar have received a higher budget, that the book The Epistle of Unicity (Risālat al-tawḥīd) by Shaykh Muhammad ‘Abduh started to be taught at that institution, and, better still, that the books of the medieval Islamic scholar Ibn Taymiyya have become standard authoritative texts for basing fatwas. Some of the latter’s works, according to Rida, have been used to reform personal statutes in canonical courts. Moreover, the Mufti of Jerusalem is considered one of his disciples, as is the head of the Islamic Council recently established in Beirut.[286] Ibn Taymiyya (661–728/1263–1328) was, of course, not known for works that would give later credence to what the Manarists/Salafis would strive for, that is, separating Islamic state and society, but rather the opposite. He had written the Siyāsa šarʿiyya, a model for a profoundly Islamic state in accordance with the shariʿa.[287] He was a great Muslim scholar engaged in defending Islamic cultural and religious identity at a time when the threat of Mongol invasion was casting a long shadow upon the Arab Muslim world.[288]

Second, and in another expression of optimism, Rida cited the formation of the Organization of Muslim Youths (Gamʿiyyat al-šubban al-muslimūn) and its opening of numerous chapters in Arab countries. He proceeded to say that al-Manār ’s message included, among other things, arguments to counter bad innovations and myths, arguments to refute the suspicious theses of atheists and unbelievers, and arguments to expose the calumnies of imitators of the Europeans. It further included warnings against the deception of missionaries, the errors of materialists, and the dangers of colonialism.[289] The predominant emphasis on these

objectives, together with the revival of the tradition of Ibn Taymiyya, put in question whether the Manarists/Salafis were still “the reform party which occupies the middle ground between the party of uncritical imitation and ossification and the party of modernism identified with renewal.”[290] But there is a possible rationalization: the state increasingly interfered in the affairs of Islamic society through extreme Westernization, thus making it very difficult for the Manarist/Salafi trend to chart a middle course and preserve the independence of society and religion from the state. In actuality the Manarist/Salafi trend lost its raison d’être and, having paved the way for other groups advocating extreme Islamization, found nowhere to go.

** Appendix

From Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib’s The Campaign for Renewal and Reform: Does it have Wise Leaders, and Have They Drawn for it Wise Plans? [291]

Renewal and reform are not mere desires; they are necessities of the first order to preserve the last breath of national life and to protect the last vestige of national greatness. Otherwise, we would be as good as finished.

We have exchanged the art of transcription for the art of printing. And whereas we used to cross the sea in sailboats for purposes of trade or pilgrimage, we now do so on steamers. Furthermore, our Islamic governments stripped their soldiers of bows and catapults and equipped them instead with automatic rifles, hand grenades, and amazingly heavy artillery.

My ancestors used to read and write using oil lamps for light, whereas I dispensed with the lamp willingly and happily to enjoy electric lights, which make the night brighter than day. I write this section and in front of me is a letter from a friend in Baghdad; my answer will be sent by airplane to be delivered in a couple of days instead of a month as in past days.

All this is renewal; all this is well and necessary. But it entails extraneous elements that shame me when I remember them. It is part and parcel of renewal and reform not to deceive my people or myself by concealing them.

For renewal in printing to be genuine [for example], and for me to feel pride in it, the printing press, its materials and parts, and the paper used should all be manufactured in my homeland using native labor. This way, its cost as well as the wages of its labor remain inside the homeland, enabling it to expand its sources of power and might.

For renewal in sea transport to be genuine, the steamer should be one that flies the flag of my nation and whose parts are made in my homeland.

For renewal in armament to be genuine, Islamic governments must not be dependent on others to obtain the gun or the hand grenade or the cannon. Rather, they ought to put themselves on a path such that after 1 year or 10 or 30 years they would manufacture weapons in their own factories using their own laborers and engineers.

Therefore, renewal is necessary and inevitable if we are to carry out what we have been enjoined to do when facing enemies, namely “to organize all of the power we are able to muster.” And reform is inescapable if we intend to shed the cloak of obsequiousness.

There is in the East today—I mean the Arab East, which encompasses West Asia and North Africa—a thing called a renewal movement. To me it is axiomatic that renewal of both the Arab East and the Islamic East is the way to survival. I am expressing this sincerely and candidly, because if I arrive at the truth of something and believe in it, nothing will prevent me from broadcasting it for all to hear. I have made it plain in what I have said that the campaign for renewal cannot be considered a jihad, or a holy struggle in the way of God and the homeland unless it is based on clear principles and strives for specific goals, and follows correct plans. Moreover, its leaders

should work for it sincerely, voluntarily, and with enthusiasm. In other words, they should be free of spies and planted intriguers.

The true colors of the leaders of the renewal movement will remain unknown until the movement's principles, goals, and plans are specified. Thereafter, those who work sincerely and with conviction for the realization of the stated goals and commit themselves not to lead the nation astray will be true leaders of renewal in the way of God and the homeland. Those who have other ways and other goals are moles in our ranks working for the benefit of our enemy. This is true whether they serve the enemy wittingly or whether they are mere tools who do the job unconsciously.

There is then genuine renewal, and there is a tainted one, the distinguishing criteria being the specific principles, goals, and plans and the extent of adherence to them. Moreover, one cannot distinguish a traitorous reformer until his message is tested and found to aim at leading the nation away from the correct path.

What then are the principles, goals, and plans of the true renewal movement that the Arab East needs?

- We want to be intrinsically powerful and respected by powerful nations. This is an important goal.

- We must preserve our national, patriotic, and religious existence. We ought to sever the hand that would cut our connection with this principle.

- The plan that would reconcile this principle with that goal requires us to borrow from any source the means of power that we need. Of course, we ought to preserve all elements of our national, patriotic, and religious existence that cannot be regarded as factors of meekness and impotence. The more numerous and significant the elements we find appropriate to keep, the greater the proof of our worth, of good fortune, and of God's blessings. By the same token, the fewer elements and the lesser in

importance we findnecessary to borrow from others, the more reason we have not to change our character and to melt into another. The upshot of this is: we ought to keep all parts of our national character except what is harmful; and we ought not to borrow anything from others unless it is necessary.

Our national and religious existence is akin to the body of a man. Would a man accept to cut his ears, even if they are not graceful, or to scrape off his skin, even if it is afflicted with smallpox? Or would he sever his fingers, even if they were thick? He who would accept this would not be in his right mind. None of us would accept to sever his sick hand, especially if a medicinal cure is available. We ought to defend our character with all of our might, even unto death. We should sacrifice of it only the excess hair and nails, and remove from it only the dirt that a bath would remove. And he who calls on me to cut muscle or bone or nerve from my body is an enemy or a messenger of the enemy. What I can legitimately borrow from others should be confined to things that would help me to organize times of work and leisure, procure the means of work and production, and secure the requirements of health, well being, and all other factors that contribute health and strength to the body.

We want a renewal that will teach us to organize our lives and to manage our places and offices of business. We favor a renewal that will help us replace the manufactured goods of others with goods that we manufacture ourselves in our homeland.

We want a renewal that would make us aware that we were once the mightiest and most knowledgeable of nations and that would stir us to strive to become in the near future one of the mightiest and most knowledgeable of nations.

We want a renewal that would make us aware that our forefathers were able, after eliminating the Byzantine and Persian empires, to foster the most advanced industries in the world, and that would spur us to become one of the most advanced manufacturing nations.

But a renewal that exploits our present relative insignificance to convince us that we never amounted to anything and that we lack the germ to achieve high rank; or a renewal that exploits our present relative ignorance to convince us that we never had knowledge and that we lack the germ to become knowledgeable; or a renewal that exploits our state of dissolution and anarchy to convince us that our history is inferior and that our only life is through merging with Europeans body and soul; suffice it to say that a renewal of this sort would undoubtedly be a plot conceived by enemies and carried out in the East by enemies in friends' clothing.

I do not hesitate to state firmly and clearly that ignorance is better than a renewal with which foreigners intend to "colonize" our hearts so as to spare them the toil of colonizing our lands. That is because when we become theirs, the slave and his belongings belong to his master. Would the youth of the glorious Arab East accept this sort of renewal?

Jesus, peace be upon him, says: "Ye shall know them by their fruits"["Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Mathew 7:16)]. The test of those who call for renewal and reform is to look at their message: do they encourage to earn power through virtue and knowledge; do they manifest the signs of good counsel to their nation, the respect for its ideals, and the revivification of its feats? If so, then they are true messengers of reform. But if they fill the newspapers with ravings that have no relation to development, or have no purpose except to deceive innocent youth about their history with allegations that they descend from a nation without a virtuous past or an accomplished civilization, then they are without doubt conspirators in our midst. Perhaps an enemy who declares his enmity is less harmful than the bearer of such a rotten fruit to a nation seeking goodness and good standing.

[239] Allan Nevins and Henry Steele Commager, A Pocket History of the United States (New York: Pocket Books, 1976), 147.

[240] Carl E. Schorske, Thinking with History: Explorations in the Passage to Modernism (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press,

1998), quoted by Gordon A. Craig, “The Good, the Bad, and the Bourgeois,” New York Review of Books (August 13, 1998), 8.

[241] W. Ende, “Salafiyya,” EI2, s.v.

[242] Muhammad ‘Abduh, al-Islam wa al-nasraniyya maʿa al-ʿilm wa al-madaniyya, 2nd ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Manār, 1323 [1905]), 116. This work is a compilation, first published in 1905, of articles published in al-Manār in 1902.

[243] Ibid., 116–117.

[244] Johannes J. G. Jansen, The Dual Nature of Islamic Fundamentalism (New York: Cornell University Press, 1997), 12–13.

[245] H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Modern Culture in the Near East (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 1: 1; 2: 79. See also Ira Lapidus, “The Separation of State and Religion in the Development of Early Islamic Society,” International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (October 1975): 363–385.

[246] Muhammad ‘Abduh, Tafsir al-Qur1an al-hakim (Cairo: s.l., n.d.): 4: 283–284.

[247] Ibid., 384.

[248] ‘Abduh, al-Islam wa al-nasraniyya, 119–120.

[249] Ibid., 122.

[250] Ibid., 120–121.

[251] Ibid., 121.

[252] Rafiq al-ʿAzm, “Hadha awan al-2ibar,” al-Manār 7/8 (June 30, 1904): 307.

[253] As related by Ahmad, Muslim, and Ibn Baja, cited in al-ʿAzm, “Hadha awan al-2ibar,” 308–309.

[254] Al-ʿAzm, “Hadha awan al-2ibar,” 311–312.

[255] “Mahabba al-2Arab asl min usul al-islam,” al-Fath (Du1l-Qa2da 1367 [1947]): 257–258.

[256] ‘Abduh, al-Islam wa al-nasraniyya, 120–121.

[257] Ramid Rida, “Manafi2 al-urubbiyin wa madaruhum fi al-marq,” parts 1–3, al-Manār 10/3 (May 12, 1907): 192–199; 10/4 (June 11, 1907): 279–284; 10/5 (July 11, 1907): 340–344.

[258] Rida, “Manafi2 al-urubbiyin wa madaruhum fi al-marq,” part 1, al-Manār 10/3 (May 12, 1907): 197.

[259] Ibid., 199.

[260] Rida, “Manafi2 al-urubbiyin wa madaruhum fi al-marq,” part 2, al-Manār 10/4 (June 11, 1907): 279.

[261] Ibid., 282.

[262] Ibid., 283.

[263] Rida, “Manafi2 al-urubbiyin wa madaruhum fi al-marq,” part 3, al-Manār 10/5 (July 11, 1907): 340.

[264] Ibid., 341.

[265] Ibid., 343–344.

[266] In “Russian and French Moslem Subjects,” The Near East and the Anglo-Egyptian Mail (July 19, 1911), 250.

[267] “Al-2imama wa al-tarbum,” al-Fath (Rabiʿ al-Öani 14, 1353 [1934]), 8–9.

[268] Ibid.

[269] Ibid.

[270] Shakib Arslan, “Le modernisme turc et la civilisation arabe: Une mise au point,” La Nation Arabe (March 1930): 39.

[271] Makib Arslan, in al-Fath (Du1l-Qaʿda 29, 1352 [January 1934]), 1–5, 16–17.

[272] Ramid Rida, “Fatiha al-mugallad al-¯tala¯tin,” al-Manār 30/1 (June 7, 1929): 1–16.

[273] Ibid., 10.

[274] Ibid.

[275] Ibid., 10–11.

[276] Ibid., 11.

[277] Ibid., 11–12.

[278] Ibid., 12.

[279] Ibid.

[280] Ibid., 12–13.

[281] Ibid.

[282] Ramid Rida, “Musab Misr bi-Qasim Amin,” al-Manār 11/3 (May 1, 1908): 226–229.

[283] Ramid Rida, “Ra1y al-nas fi al-kitab wa ra1yuna fihi,” al-Manār 4/1 (February 20, 1901): 30–34.

[284] Author of Le Monde musulman dans les possessions françaises (Paris: Librairie Coloniale et Orientaliste Émile Larose, 1928).

[285] Rida, “Fatiha al-mugallad al-¯tala¯tin,” 13–14.

[286] Ibid., 14–15.

[287] Ibn Taymiyya, al-Siyasa al-mar2iyya fi islah al-ra2i wa al-ra2iyya (Beirut: Dar al-kutub al-2arabiyya, 1966).

[288] H. Laoust, “Ibn Taymiyya,” EI 2, s.v.

[289] Rida, “Fatiha al-mugallad al-¯tala¯tin,” 13–14.

[290] Ibid., 16.

[291] Muhibb al-Din al-Latib, “Hamla al-tagdid wa al-islah wa hal laha qada hukama wa hal rasama laha al-litat al-hakima?,” al-Hadiqa, 5 (Cairo: al-Matba2a al-salafiyya, 1349 [1930–1931]): 190–206. Khatib wrote this piece at a time when, according to him, Cairo’s intellectual and cultural atmosphere was too influenced by Western culture with all its positive and negative attributes. Most of the intellectuals used to look at any Islamic inclination as representative of reaction and rigidity. See Muhibb al-Din al-Latib, Muhibb al-Din al-Latib: Hayatuhu bi-qalamihi (Damascus: Gamʿiyya al-tamaddun al-islami, 1979): 78.

* 4. The Influence of Al-Manār on Islamism in Turkey: The case of Mehmed Âkif

Kasuya Gen

In the years from 1908 to 1918, starting with the 1908 revolution that opened the floodgates for publication up till the Ottoman defeat in the First World War, intellectual circles in the Ottoman Empire eagerly took up the discussion of the place and role of Islam in Ottoman society. The so-called “Islamic modernism” or “Islamic reformism,” often used interchangeably with movements calling for islah (reform), ihya (revival), and tecdid (renewal), was one of the most influential current within the Empire.

It is sometimes mentioned that the ideas of the three major modern Salafi thinkers in the Arab world, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897), Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905), and Rashid Rida (1865–1935), were the ideological roots of Islamism (Islamcilik in Turkish) in the Ottoman Empire during this period. Their ideas of Islamic reform permeated the articles in al-ʿUrwa al-Wutqā (“The Indissoluble Bond”) published by Afghani and ‘Abduh in Paris in 1884, and Rida’s periodical al-Manār (“The Lighthouse,” 1898–1935), whose impact was felt on Islamic currents throughout the Muslim world.

This article is meant to be a reexamination of the impact of al-Manār and the “Manarists” on the development of Islamism in Turkey from 1908 to 1918.

** Islamism (Islamcilik) in Ottoman thought after 1908

Before engaging in a discussion of the impact of al-Manār and of the Manarists on Islamism (Islamcilik) in Turkey, we will begin by categorizing Islamism as it appears within Ottoman intellectual currents after 1908. According to Niyazi Berkes, Ottoman intellectual circles at that time can be divided into three schools of thought: Westernists, Islamists, and Turkists.[292]

The Westernists came out of the 1908 revolution as the most vigorous group, despite their lacking the sectlike cohesion of the Islamists and Turkists, except for the followers of the late Ottoman political theorist “Prens ” Sabahaddin (1877–1948). The Westernist school had two prominent figures, the poet Tevfik Fikret (1870–1915) and Dr Abdullah Cevdet (1869–1932), one of the founders of the İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti (Committee of Union and Progress), which was the primary ruling power in the Ottoman Empire in the period 1908–1918. Without attacking religion itself, the former attacked the doctrines of the Islamic state in his famous poem Tarih-i kadim (“Ancient History”), written in 1905 but which remained unpublished during Abdülhamit II’s reign. The latter, known for his atheism, published the review İctihad (1904–1932), first in Geneva then in Cairo, which became the chief organ of Westernist ideas. İctihad was published until Cevdet’s death in 1932 and provided much of the inspiration for Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk)’s reforms during the early years of the Republic. In all cases, the Westernists appeared as the opponents of the Islamists, and the clash of the two helped to develop the Turkist position as an alternative.[293]

With regard to the Islamists, it should be noted that they did not constitute a single block, and that at least three broad subdivisions can be observed among them. The first is that of the traditionalists: many prominent Turkish-speaking Ottoman ulama opposed the modernist current in the Muslim world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The opponents to a modernist Islam voiced their ideas in the periodical Beyânülhak (“Presentation of the Truth,” 1908–1912), the organ of the Cemiyyet-i İlmiyye-i İslâmiyye (Association of Islamic Scholars), and were led by Mustafa Sabri Efendi (1869–1954), who was to become Veyhülislâm in the years 1919–1922, and to go into exile after the Republic was proclaimed in 1923. The motto of Beyânülhak, “amr bi’l-maʿrufwa nahīʿan il-munkar (Command that which is approved and prohibit that which is rejected), “ [294] symbolically expressed how particularly disturbed its contributors were by the proposal to reopen “the gate of iğtihād (independent judgment)” in Islam, bypassing the precedents established by the classical commentators of Islam. They criticized such proposals as the notion of mezhepsizlik (the refusal of submitting oneself to a theological school), since it meant undermining the traditional legal apparatus (the Islamic schools of law).[295] This accusation can still be heard in contemporary Turkey.

The second subdivision is a group gathered around the İttihâd-i Muhammedî Cemiyeti (the Mohammedan Union), and the newspaper Volkan (“The Vulcano,” 1908–1909) led by the Naqshbandi veyh Derviv Vahdetî (1870–1909). The latter instigated the counterrevolution of April 1909, better known in Turkish history as the “31 Mart Vakʿasi (March 31 Incident),” and was hanged together with other figures of the group. One of the survivors of this incident was Bediüzzaman Said Nursî (1876/77–1960), who later became the founder of the Nurcu movement, probably the largest Islamic cemaat in twentieth-century Turkey. The Volkan pledged itself to fight against the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) régime. According to this newspaper, the new régime after the revolution of 1908 was not Islamic, but made up of dehrîs (secularists), and its promoters did not apply the shariʿa under the pretexts of the presence of non-Muslim nations within the Empire, and of pressures from European great powers.

The third and most influential circle of Islamists gathered around the journal Sirât-i müstakîm (“The Straight Path”), founded by Mardinîzâde Ebul’ulâ and Evref Edib [Fergan] (1882–1971) in 1908; from 1912 onwards, it was entitled Sebîlürrevâd, which has a meaning similar to that of Sirât-i müstakîm. The editor of the journal was Mehmed Âkif [Ersoy] (1873–1936). Among the yazi kadrolari (core writers) appearing in the list of the Sirât-i müstakîm were intellectuals such as Manastirh Ismail Hakki (1846–1912), Bereketzâde İsmail Hakki (1851–1918), Babanzâde Ahmed Naim, a member of Meclis-i Maarif, Abdürrevid İbrahim (1857–1944), Bursali Mehmed Tâhir (1861–1925), Salih E v-Verif-et Tunusî, Ferid Bey, Ahmed Agayef (1869–1939, later to become Ahmed A ëaoëlu), Yusuf Akçura (1878–1935), Halim Sabit [Vibay] (1883–1946), Ali Veyh-i el-Garib Efendi, Tahir-el Mevlevî, Midhat Cemal [Kuntay] (1885–1956), Ibrahim Alaeddin [Gövsa] (1889–1949), Halil Halid, Edhem Nejat, Alim-Can el-Derisî, Hasan Basri, Giyaseddin Hüsnü, and Ragib Bey.[296] Other leading contributors to the Sirât-i müstakîm and the Sebîlürrevâd were such as Aksekili Ahmed Hamdi, Mehmed Fahreddin, Veyhülislâm Mûsâ Kâzim (1858–1921), E vref Edib, Hasan Hikmet, ÖmerRiza, S. M.Tevfik, and Mehmed Vemseddin [Günaltay] (1883–1961).

The Sirât-i müstakîm published many translations of articles by well-known modernist authors like Muhammad ‘Abduh, Muhammad Farid Wadjdi (1875–1954) and Azmizâde Refik (Rafik Bek al- ʿAzm?). This gave the journal modernist tendencies. The Sirât-i müstakîm and its successor Sebîlürrevâd became the organ of Islamic modernism and pan-Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, and had a wide circulation among not only Ottomans, but also Turkic peoples outside of the Ottoman lands, especially in the Russian Empire.[297]

For the other categorizations, one may cite Hilmi Ziya Ülken, who classified Turkish Islamists into four groups: (1) traditionalists like Babanzâde Ahmed Naim, (2) modernists like İzmirli İsmail Hakki (1868–1946) and Mehmed Vemseddin [Günaltay], (3) those espousing a moderate stance between traditionalists and modernists like the Veyhülislâm Mûsâ Kâzim Efendi, and (4) anti-modernists like Mustafa Sabri Efendi.[298]

Both traditionalist and modernist Ottomans seem to have shared the conviction that Anatolian Islam as it appeared in the Sufi lodges or tekkes, and in the madrasas, was suffused with superstition, to which they proposed various solutions. Young Turk Islamic reforms essentially consisted of reorganizing the judicial and educational systems along the lines of the “modernizing” tendencies of the Young Turks. But “modernizing” did not necessarily mean “secularizing.” In 1916, the Veyhülislâm was removed from the cabinet, and during the next year his jurisdiction was limited in various ways. In 1917, the shariʿa courts were brought under the control of the Ministry of Justice, the madrasas were brought under the Ministry of Education, and a new Ministry of Religious Foundations was created to administer the waqfs. At the same time the curriculum of the higher madrasas was reorganized, and the study of European languages was made compulsory. In essence, the Young Turks seemed to regard these reforms as having revitalized Islam and strengthened the Islamic society.[299]

The Turkists [300] appeared later than the other two groups. They can be divided into two groups according to their place of origin. One group consisted of Osmanlilar (Ottomans) such as Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924), the theoretician par excellence of Turkish nationalism.

The other consisted of Turkic exiles, mostly from Russia, such as Yusuf Akçura (1878–1935), author of the pan-Turkist manifesto Üç Tarz-i Siyaset (“Three Types of Policy”) in 1904, as well as Ahmed Agayef (1869–1939) and Halim Sabit [Vibay] (1883–1946). The Turkists published reviews in their organs such as the Genç kalemler (“Young Pens,” 1911–1912), Türk yurdu (“Homeland of the Turk,” 1911–1914), and İslâm mecmuasi (“Islamic Review,” 1913–1918).

But the ideological relationship between the three schools of thought under the headings of “Westernists,” “Islamists,” and “Turkists” was complex, and the categories themselves mutually overlapped. Their organs were supported by different intellectual circles owing to changing conditions, and they sometimes made ideological alliances for political purposes. The authors who sided with the Westernists on one issue sometimes appeared to be Islamists on another. For example, as Niyazi Berkes notes, the İctihad, known as a Westernist organ, showed frequent interest in Islamic reforms and allotted pages to Muhammad ‘Abduh long before the Islamists said anything about him.[301] Similarly, while the İslâm mecmuasi is known to have been published by Turkists, it displayed a wide range of contributors. These included ulama such as Veyhülislâm Mûsâ Kâzim Efendi, İzmirli İsmail Hakki, and Verafeddin [Yaltikaya] (1879–1947), who introduced the pioneer Salafi thinker Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) in the İslâm mecmuasi. It also included Islamic modernists such as Mûsâ Cârullah Bigi (1875–1949), Mehmed Vemseddin [Günaltay], Halim Sabit [Vibay], Turkists such as Ziya Gökalp, Ahmed Agayef, Kâzim Nami [Duru] (1876–1967), and Köprülüzâde Mehmed Fuad (1890–1966), a founder of Turkology in Turkey. What the İslâm mecmuasi eagerly contended was the need for an Islamic reform of Ottoman society. The motto “Dinli bir hayat, hayatli bir din (A Religious Life, an Existential Religion),” was printed on the front cover of every issue. It therefore seems improper to classify the journal only within the current of Turkism.[302] Yusuf Akçura, known as a Turkist, and Bereketzâde İsmail Hakki, known as an Islamist, were involved with both the İslâm Mecmuasi and the Sirât-i müstakîm. Though the majority of the contributors to the Sirât-i müstakîm were Islamists, ranging from traditionalists to modernists, there were many authors who were not, or who later took different political courses. Examples include Ahmed Agayef, Ahmed Midhat Efendi (1844–1912), Yusuf Akçura, Bursali Mehmed Tâhir, Cami [Baykurt] (1869–1949), Edhem Nejad, Emrullah

Efendi (1858–1914), Feyzullah Sacid (Ülkü), Halil Halid, İbrahim Alaeddin [Gövsa], İsmail Gasprinski (1851–1914), Ispartali Hakki, Kazanli Ayaz [İshakî] (1878–1954), and Midhat Cemal [Kuntay]. It can be seen that these three categories are neither universal nor diachronic.

Furthermore, within the category of “Islamists,” the framework of “traditionalist” versus “modernist” is itself debatable. Interestingly enough, in spite of the Salafi tendency of the Sirât-i müstakîm, the Sebîlürrevâd, and the İslâm mecmuasi, some contributors had links with Sufi orders. Unlike in the Arab world, where the doctrine of anti-Sufism were spreading, little radical opposition to the role of the Sufi orders can be observed in Ottoman Islamist circles. Sufi groups published periodicals such as the Cerîde-i sûfiyye (“Sufi Journal,” 1909–1919), Tasavvuf (1911), Muhibbân (“Men of Love,” 1909–1919), Hikmet (“Wisdom,” 1910–1911), and Mihrab (1923–1925) and founded their associations Cemiyyet-i Sûfiyye-i İttihadiye and Cemiyyet-i Sûfiyye. They represented a wide political spectrum, including both members of the İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti and members of the opposition party, the Hürriyet ve İtilâf Firkasi (Freedom and Association Party). The president of the Cemiyyet-i Sûfiyye was Veyhülislâm Mûsâ Kâzim Efendi, who belonged to the Naqshbandi order as well as to the İttihad ve Terakki Cemiyeti.[303] Articles on Ibn Taymiyya were published in the pages of the Mihrab.[304] Babanzâde Ahmed Naim was a member of the Khalwati order.[305] Bediüzzaman SaidNursî’s collective writing, entitled the Risale-i Nur (“Epistle of Light, “) clearly shows the influence of Naqshbandi-Khalidi teachings. Simply labelling Sufi orders as “traditionalist” brings the risk of obstructing the understanding of Ottoman Islamic currents.

Furthermore it should also be added that, with the exception of the émigrés, who could think of the nation as a notion crossing over the Ottoman borders, all three schools of thought were inseparable from Ottomanism until the end of the Ottoman state. Regardless of whether they were Islamists or not, the question of how to save the Ottoman state was most fundamental.

** The influence of al-Manār on Mehmed Âkif’s Islamism

In order to avoid categorical generalizations, we will focus on a Turkish nationalist-Islamist poet, an outstanding figure among Islamists in the Young Turk era, Mehmed Âkif [Ersoy] (1873–1936). Since Âkif continued to wield a profound influence on the later development of Islamism in Turkey, this will constitute a case study of the influence of al-Manār and “Manarism” on Islamic intellectual currents in Turkey.

Âkif was born in Istanbul. His father Mehmed Tahir was a migrant from Ipek in Albania (the modern Pel in Serbia and Montenegro), his mother of Bukharan origin. After receiving his early education in a traditional school and learning Arabic from his father,[306] Âkif attended the Fatih Rüvdiye or secondary school.[307] Graduating from the Rüvdiye school, he continued his higher education at the Mekteb-i Mülkiye (School of Political Science) in Istanbul and then at the Mülkiye Bay tar Mektebi (Civilian Veterinary School). He served as a veterinary surgeon from 1893 onwards for twenty years. After the 1908 revolution, he actively began to publish poems and articles, while at the same time lecturing on literature at the Dârülfünun (later Istanbul University), and still at the same time gained fame as a preacher committed to Islamic reform and national integration of the Ottoman State or pan-Islamic unity. After leaving his job in 1913, he taught at various schools and preached at mosques in Istanbul.

Âkif continued to show a strong interest in pan-Islamism through the period of the İkinci Mevrutiyet (Second Constitution). During the Balkan wars of 1912–1913 and the First World War he worked for the Tevkilât-i Mahsusa (“Special Organization,” the Intelligence Service) of the CUP and tried to disseminate pan-Islamic propaganda in Egypt, Hijaz, Najd, Lebanon, and Germany. Furthermore he was appointed as the first bavkâtip (secretary-general) of the Dârü1l-Hikmeti’i-/slâmiyye (Academy of Higher Islamic Studies) attached to the Veyhülislâm’s office in 1917, but after the First World War lost his post when he joined the newly formed Anatolian resistance movement against the Greek forces which had entered Anatolia in 1919. Âkif became a deputy of the first Grand National Assembly in 1920 and the

author of the new national anthem, the İstiklâl marvi (“Independence March”) showing a religious enthusiasm in 1921. He traveled from town to town and propagated the idea that the “Independence War” would be the last struggle for the existence of Islam. However he became increasingly anxious about the course of events beginning with the abolition of the Caliphate in March 1924, a consequence of the Independence War. Unlike other ideologists of his time, such as Ziya Gokalp, Akif was unable to adjust his ideas to the secular nationalist ideals of the Republic and left Turkey voluntarily for Egypt in 1926 to stay with an old friend, Abbas Halim Pava (1866–1934), a member of the Khedival family of Egypt. Until 1936 he lectured on Turkish literature at Cairo University. Akif also engaged in translating the Qur ’an into Turkish at the request of the Diyânet İvleri Riyâseti (Directorate of Religious Affairs) of Turkey, although he did so unwillingly, for he had a firm belief in the impossibility of translating the Qur’an. He eventually retracted what he had written, fearing that his work might be used as Atatürk’s secular Turkicisation plans. The eventual fate of his translation remains to this day a controversial and mysterious episode of his life. He died shortly after his return to Turkey in 1936.

Already as a student, Âkif devoured the Islamic classics, especially the poetry of Ibn al-Farid (1181–1235) and Saʿdi Shirazi, as well as French romantic and naturalist authors such as Victor Hugo and Émile Zola.[308] He published Turkish translations of the Persian classics Saʿdi and Hafiz in the Servet-i fünûn in 1898,[309] and his own poetry in the Resimli gazete (“Illustrated Gazette”) from 1897 to 1898, and then he wrote poetry on social themes, although he was unable to publish these under the Hamidian censorship. After the 1908 revolution opened the floodgates for publication, Âkif and his friend E vref Edib started publishing the Sirât-i müstakîm. After 1908 Âkif published all of his poetry, articles and translations in the Sirât-i müstakîm and the Sebîlürrevâd. From 1911 onwards he began publishing collections of all of his poetry under the title “Safahat (Phases),” with a total of 109 poems in seven volumes: Safahat (1911), Süleymaniye kürsüsünde (“At the Süleymaniye’s Pulpit,” 1912), Hakkin sesleri (“Voices of the Truth,” 1913), Fatih kürsüsünde (“At the Fatih’s Pulpit,” 1914), Hatiralar (Memoirs, 1917), Asim (“Hanging,” 1924), and Gölgeler (“Shadows”), which was published in Egypt in 1933 and contains his works written during the years 1918–1933.[310]

As to the ideological roots of Mehmed Âkif’s Islamism, it is often stressed that the modern Salafiyya, represented by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad ‘Abduh, whose works were banned during the Hamidian era, and Rashid Rida, made a deep impact on him. Âkif obviously did take sides with ‘Abduh’s school. Âkif’s many translations of ‘Abduh and of his Egyptian disciple Muhammad Farid Wadjdi (1875–1954), famous for his encyclopaedia and commentary of the Qur’an, show the influence of‘Abduh’s teachings.[311]

On the other hand, Âkif described various Muslim personalities in the Sirât-i müstakîm and the Sebîlürrevâd. As to his editorials and columns which are not contained in the Safahat, my research yielded thirteen referring to Namik Kemal (1840–1888), the writer, poet, and one of the prominent leaders of the Yeni Osmanlilar (Young Ottomans), four referring with respect to ‘Abduh, two praising and defending Afghani, attacked by the Veyhülislâm at his first stay in Istanbul and slandered as a “Vehhabî (Wahhabi), “[312] and only one reference to Rida.[313] As to the Young Ottomans other than Namik Kemal, three mention Ziya Pava (1825–1880), a writer and poet who served as third secretary to the Sultan Abdülmecit II, three refer to Yusuf Halis Efendi (1805–1882),[314] one refers to Ahmed Midhat Pava (1822–1884), known as the architect of the Ottoman constitution and parliament, one refers to Ahmed Midhat Efendi (1844–1912), the father of Turkish popular journalism, one mentions İbrahim Vinasi (1824–1871), and one Vemseddin Sami (1850–1904). In the Safahat, which contains all his published verses, one refers to Afghani and ‘Abduh in long verse Asim.[315] As for Rida, no verse makes mention of his name.[316]

These figures seem to prove that Mehmed Âkif was under the strong influence of the Young Ottomans as well as that of Afghani, ‘Abduh and Wadjdi, while he had few intellectual links with Rashid Rida, the publisher and editor of al-Manār.[317] Mehmed Âkif supported the idea of Namik Kemal and Ziya Pa va as he has stated himself.[318]

It would be possible to argue that the Young Ottomans projected the earliest systematic expression of Islamic modernism comparable to Rifaʿa Rafiʿal-Tahtawi (1801–1873)’s in Egypt and Khayr al-Din (1810–1889)’s in Tunisia. The Young Ottomans reinterpreted and popularized the concepts of vura (Ar. mura, counsel), bi2at (Ar. bayʿa, oath of allegiance) and icma (Ar. igmd consensus of the learned) to mean an elected parliament and constitutionalism. Mardin suggests that nineteenth-century Islamic modernist currents were able to find a meeting point with Young Ottoman thinkers.[319] The Young Ottomans considered the superficial adoption of parts of European culture as immoral. They opposed the trend of legal secularization that had started with the Tanzimat. Namik Kemal rejected a Europeanization “which consists of letting women walk around with ‘naked arms.’ “[320] It was also the Young Ottomans who invented the concept of pan-Islamism (İttihad-i islam, or Islamic unity), even if as a kind of national integration ideology of a multiethnic empire (İttihad-i anasir, or National [Ottoman] unity). As early as the late 1860s, the newspaper Hürriyet (“Freedom”), published by the Young Ottomans in London between 1868–1870, had argued about pan-Islamism.[321] In the 1870s, the newspaper Basiret (“Insightfulness,” or “Watchfulness”), published by the Young Ottomans in Istanbul for a decade between 1869 and 1879 and the most widely read popular newspaper of its time, had made further progress toward pan-Islamism.[322] Âkif is known to have read the works of Namik Kemal and Ziya Pa va in his youth, along with the Islamic classics and French romantic and naturalist literature. Âkif, like the Young Ottomans, maintained an anti-despotic and constitutionalist stance in his works. Bereketzade İsmail Hakki, whose articles appeared in Kemal’s newspaper İbret (“Warning,” 1870–1873), maintained close connections with him.[323] This proves the existence of a link between the Young Ottomans, who were the first intellectual group to espouse Islamist ideas in Ottoman history, and the Young Turk Islamists. The Ottoman Islamists (Islamic modernists) of the Young Turk era such as Mehmed Âkif were able to build upon the intellectual legacy of the Young Ottomans.

Interestingly enough, Âkif seemed to see ‘Abduh as one of the “regional [in this case Egyptian] alims” in the world of Islam.[324] His editorial includes the following passages:

Manastirh Jam idi? Müteahhirîn-i ulemânin en büyüklerinden idi. Su son zamanlarda Seyh Muhammed Abduh diyâr-i Misir'in; Mevlâna Hüseyin Cisr Suriye'nin; Seyh Emin Kürdistan'in en büyük hakîmi, en mevhûr ulemâsi olduëu gibi Manastirli da bu diyarin en mütebahhir bir âlim-i nihrîri idi (Who was Manastirli? He was one of the greatest ulama of the recent years. As Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh of the Egyptian land, Shaykh Amin of Kurdistan and Mawlana Husayn Jisr of Syria are the wisest and most famous alims [in their regions], so was Manastirh [Ismail Hakki] the most perfumed and the wisest alim in this region [i.e., in Manastir]).[325]

We can here see the world from Âkif's eyes, from Istanbul as the seat of the Caliphate, which for the Ottomans is nothing less than the center of the world of Islam.

** Conclusion

As Sükrü Hanioğlu has pointed out, in contrast to Egypt, Ottoman statesmen believed that their destiny lay in Europe. Moreover, the Turkish ulama, due to their proximity to the establishment, were uneasy about producing ideologies that challenged the westernization movement, leaving fervent popular feeling against westernization without a strong guiding ideology. On the other hand, the Islamic movements led by reformers such as al-Afghani, 'Abduh, and Rida, namely the Salafi or Manarist movement which emerged in Egypt and Syria, had little influence on the Turkish intelligentsia of the Empire until 1908.

Even the Islamic reformism movement after 1908, represented by the Sirât-i müstakîm and subsequently by the Sebîlürresâd, was relatively weak in comparison to parallel movements in the Arab provinces. Contrary to these Arab lands resisting against colonial encroachment, in the Ottoman state the Islamic state was somehow in existence. It cannot be taken for granted that Manarist thought was adopted in the same context in Istanbul.[326] Furthermore, in the 1920s-1930s, at the time of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, a Kemalist form of secularism (laiklik) gradually replaced Islami. The Sebîlürrevâd, which published articles against the secularist

policies of the newly established Republic, was characterized as “reactionary” and banned in 1925 by the Takrir-i Sükûn Kanunu (Law on the Maintenance Order). The voice of al-Manār could no longer easily reach Turkey.

[292] Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964), 337.

[293] Ibid., 337–338. Mehmed Âkif’s antipathy and criticism toward Fikret’s Tarih-i kadim provides an example of this lasting antagonism.

[294] Quoted by Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey, 340.

[295] Verif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989), 143–144. As for Mustafa Sabri Efendi’s thought, see Mustafa Sabri, Dinî Müceddidler (Istanbul: Sebil Yayinevi, 1969).

[296] Sirât-i müstakîm 6/131 (Vubat 1326[1911]).

[297] On the Sirât-i müstakîm and Sebîlürrevâd, see Akshin Somel, “Sirat-i Müstakim: Islamic Modernism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1912,” The Journal of the Middle East Studies Society at Columbia University 1/1 (1987): 55–80; Esther Debus, Sebilürrevâd: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung zur islamischen Opposition der vor- und nachkemalistischen Ära (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991); “Sirat-i Müstakim,” Türk Dili ve Edebiyati Ansiklopedisi (Istanbul: Dergah Yayinlari), 8 (1998): 6–9; Abdullah Ceyhan, Sirat-I Müstakîm ve Sebîlürrevad Mecmualari Fihristi (Ankara: Diyanet İvleri Bavkanliëi, 1991), a table of contents of the Sirât-i müstakîm and the Sebîlürrevâd.

[298] Hilmi Ziya Ülken, Türkiyede Çagdav Düsünce Tarihi, 2 (Konya: Selçuk Yayinlari, 1966), 443.

[299] Arai Masami, Turkish Nationalism in the Young Turk Era (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 93–95. Vükrü Hanioglu insists that the heavy Islamic rhetoric and references used by the Young Turks in their writings should be deciphered, and that even the titles of Young Turk organs such as Ezan, Hak (“Right”), İctihad, or Mevveret (“Consultation”) had been selected for their appeal to a Muslim readership: M. Vükrü Hanioëlu, The Young Turks in Opposition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 200.

[300] Since the term “Turkism” is often confused with pan-Turkism, and even (pan-) Turanism, we must bear in mind their differences while remembering that these terms overlap at certain points.

[301] Hanioëlu, The Young Turks in Opposition, 340. For example, see Abdullah Djevdet, “Des morts qui ne meurent pas: Cheikh Mohamed Abdou,” Idjtihad 9 (October 1905); Abdullah Cevdet, “Veyh Muhammed Abduh,” İctihad 11 (April 1906). The İctihad also had interviews with ‘Abduh, such as Abdullah Cevdet, “Vâhzâde Veyh-ül Reis Hazretleriyle mülâkat,” İctihad 126 (January 1914).

[302] On the İslâm Mecmuasi, see Arai, 83–95, 141–154; Tuba Çavdar, “İslam Mecmuasi,” Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi İslam Ansiklopedisi (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi), 23 (2001): 53–54.

[303] Mustafa Kara, Din, Hayat, Sanat Açisindan Tekkeler ve Zaviyeler (Istanbul: Dergâh Yayinlari, 1980, second ed.), 275–297; “Cem’iyyet-i Sûfiyye,” Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi İslam Ansiklopedisi, 7 (1993): 335.

[304] Kara, Din, Hayat, Sanat Açisindan Tekkeler ve Zaviyeler, 283.

[305] Somel, “Sirat-i Müstakim: Islamic Modernism in the Ottoman Empire,” 78.

[306] Mehmed Tahir was a müderris (madrasa teacher) and mürid of the Naqshbandi order. Evref Edib, Mehmed Akif: Hayati, Eserleri ve 70 Muharririn Yazilari (s.l.: Asâri İlmiye Kütüphansesi Nevriyati, 1938), 517–518.

[307] Âkif learned at this school Turkish, Arabic, Persian, and French. His favorite teacher was Hoca Kadri Efendi, who exiled himself in Egypt during Abdülhamid’s reign, and published there the newspaper Kanun-i esasi (“Constitution”); he then went to Paris and stayed there until the First World War. Âkif himself states that Hoca Kadri Efendi had a great influence on him. Cf. Edib, Mehmed Akif: Hayati, Eserleri ve 70 Muharririn Yazilari, 517–518.

[308] Mithat Cemal, Mehmet Akif (Istanbul: Semih Lûtfi Kitabevi, 1939), passim.

[309] “Bedayiü1l-Acem,” Servet-i fünûn, 16/399 (1314 [1898]): 401, 403.

[310] On Âkif’s life and ideas, see Edib, Mehmed Akif: Hayati, Eserleri ve 70 Muharririn Yazilari ; Cemal, Mehmet Akif ; Fevziye Abdullah Tansel, Mehmed Akif: Hayati ve Eserleri (Istanbul: Kanaat Kitabevi, 1945); İsmail Kara, Türkiye1de İslâmcilik Düvüncesi, 1 (Istanbul: Risâle Yayinlari, 1986), 309–406; Fahir İz, “Mehmed ʿAkif “, EI2 ; Zeki Sarikan, Mehmet Akif (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayinlari, 1996); İsmail Kara, “İslâm modernizmi ve Akif’e dair birkaç not,” Vefatinin 60. Yilinda Mehmed Âkif Sempozyumu Bildirleri: 30 Aralik 1996 (Istanbul: İslâm Tarih, Sanat ve Kültürünü Aravtirma Vakfi, 1997): 43–54.

[311] Âkif’s translations from ‘Abduh in the Sirât-i müstakîm are: “Müslümanlikta esaslar,” 1/10, 24 (Tevrinievvel-Kanûnusani 1324[1908–1909]); “Bugünkü müslümanlar, yahud müslümanliëa müslümanlarla ihticâc,” 1/25 (Kanûnusani 1324 [1909]); “Ataletin intac ettiëi fenaliklar,” 1/26–27 (Vubat 1324 [1909]); “Atalet ve mekatib-i resmiye talebesi,” 2/28 (Vubat 1324 [1909]); “Atalet geçici bir hastaliktir,” 2/29 (Vubat 1324 [1909]); “Araplarin fünûnu ve kevfiyati,” 2/32 (Mart 1325 [1909]); “Kaza ve kader,” 2/35–36 (Nisan 1325 [1909]); “Din ne kadar müsaid imiv?,” 2/37 (Mayis 1325 [1909]); “Garb medeniyeti nasil bulmuv?,” 2/38 (Mayis 1325 [1909]); “Müslümanlarin esbab-i inhitâd ve meskeneti,” 2/39 (Mayis 1325 [1909]); “Milletler üzerinde câri olan Kavânin-i İlâhiye,” 2/40 (Mayis 1325 [1909]); “Fezâil ve rezâil,” 2/44 (Haziran 1325 [1909]); “Emel ve talebe-i mecd,” 2/46 (Temmuz 1325 [1909]); “Veref,” 2/47 (Temmuz 1325 [1909]); “Zikr-I cemil,” 2/48 (Temmuz 1325 [1909]); “Mülkü muhafaza esbabi,” 2/9 (Temmuz 1325 [1909]); “Milletin mâzisi, hâli ve hastaliklarinin çaresi,” 2/50 (Aëustos 1325 [1909]); “Hiristiyanlik ve müslümanlik,” 2/51 (Aëustos 1325 [1909]); “Vahdet-i islâmiye,” 2/52 (Aëustos 1325 [1909]), “Vahdet ve hakimiyet,” 3/53 (Aëustos 1325 [1909]); “Cinsiyyet ve diyaneti-i islâmiye,” 3/54 (Eylül 1325 [1909]); “Taassub,” 3/55 (Eylül 1325 [1909]); “Merhum Veyh Muhammed Abduh1un Mösyö Hanotaux1a cevabi,” 3/61–63 (Tevrinievvel -Tevrinisani 1325[1909]); “Hanûtû ve islâm,” 3/64, 68, 71 (Tevrinisani-Kanûnuevvel 1325 [1909–1910]); “İslâm ve Hanotaux,” 3/69–70 (Kanûnuevvel 1325[1909–1910]); “Laf ne kadar çok da, iv ne kadar az,” 3/72 (Kanûnusani 1325 [1910]); “Asr Sure-i Celilesinin tefsiri,” 3/73–77 (Kanûnusani-Vubat 1325[1910]). One article of ‘Abduh was translated by Âkif in the Sebîlürrevâd : “Fezâil ve rezâil,” 24/612 (Eylül 1340 [1924]). The earlier ‘Abduh’s articles (no. 61–71) replying to Gabriel Hanotaux (1853–1944), a French historian and statesman, were published in book form: Mehmed Âkif, Hanûtû (Hanotaux)1nun Hücumuna karvi Veyh Muhammed Abduh1un/slâmi Müdafaasi (/stanbul: Tevsi-i Tibaat Matbaasi, 1331[1914]). Âkif introduced this famous controversy between ‘Abduh and Hanotaux before translating these articles: “Hanûtû (Hanotaux) ile Veyh Muhammed Abduh1un münakavasi—Hanûtû1nun makalesi,” Sirât-i müstakîm 3/57–60 (Eylül—Tevrinievvel 1325[1909]). Muhammad Farid Wadjdi (Muhammed Ferid Vecdi)’s refutation of Qasim Amin’s Tahrir-al mar1a was translated by Âkif under the title “Müslüman kadini,” Sirât-i müstakîm 1/3–19 (Aëustos-Kanûnuevvel 1324 [1908–1909]) and then published in book form as Muhammed Ferid Vecdi, Mehmed Âkif (tr.), Müslüman Kadini (Istanbul: Ahmed Saki Bey Matbaasi, 1325[1909–1910]). Âkif’s short preface

shows clearly his sympathy to Wajdi. The other works of Wadjdi translated by Âkif are: “Hadikay-I fikriye,” Sirât-i müstakîm 2/27–41, 43–48 (Vubat 1324-Temmuz 1325 [1908–1909]); “Bütün alem-i islâm1a açik mektup,” Sirât-i müstakîm 2/43 (Haziran 1325 [1909]); “Müslümanlikla medeniyet,” Sirât-i müstakîm 5–7/126–132, 134–138, 141–144, 146, 149–156, 158–159, 161–163 (Kanûnusani 1326-Tevrinievvel 1327 [1911]); “Felsefe: maddiyyun meslek felsefesinin edyana hucûmu,” Sebîlürrevâd 12/298 (Mayis 1330 [1914]). Wadjdi was the editor-in-chief of the official journal of the Azhar University from 1933 to 1952: J. J. G. Jansen, “Muhammad Farid Wadjdi”, EI2. Âkif also translated Azmizâde Refik’s article from al-Manār : “Müslümanlikta ferdin hakimiyeti ile cemaatin hâkimiyeti,” Sirât-i müstakîm 4/82–84 (Mart-Nisan 1326 [1910]).

[312] Mehmed Âkif, “Cemâleddin Efgâni,” Sirât-i müstakîm 4/90 (Mayis 1326 [1910]); “Hasbihal,” Sirât-i müstakîm 4/91 (Mayis 1326 [1910]).

[313] Mehmed Âkif, “Medeniyet-i islamiye tarihinin hatalari,” Sebîlürrevâd 1:8/187 (Mart 1328 [1912]). There exists, however, a series of translations of Rida’s “Akaid-I islamiye” by A. Hamdi Aksekili in the Sebîlürrevâd 10–11/237–245, 247–250, 268, 270–273 (Mart-Tevrinisani 1329 [1913]).

[314] On Halis Efendi, one of the first Turkish authors of a French-Turkish grammar: Miftah-I lisan (1849–1850), see Verif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideas (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 210–211.

[315] The following refers to Afghani and ‘Abduh in Asim : “Misr1in en muhtevem üstâdi Muhammad ‘Abdu, Konuvurken neye dâirse Cemâleddin1le; Der ki tilmîzine Afgan1li [The greatest Master in Egypt, Muhammed ‘Abduh. He always relates his talks with Jamal al-Din and says to be an Afghani’s disciple.]”. Mehmed Âkif Ersoy, Safahat, comp. M. Düzdaë (Istanbul: İz Yayincilik, 2nd ed., 1995), 429. Translation mine.

[316] It must be remembered that Rida harbored feelings against the Young Turks. During his stay in Istanbul from 1909 to 1910, he was disappointed with the Turkish nationalist policy of the CUP. After his return to Egypt, he began to publicly criticize the centralization policy of the CUP, made under the cloak of pan-Islamism, and to advocate the decentralization of the Ottoman Empire. On Rida's decentralization or federalist idea, see Kobayashi Seiichi, "Rashid Rida's View on the Decentralization of the Ottoman Empire" (in Japanese), Seinan Ajia Kenkyu [The Bulletin of the Society for Western and Southern Asiatic Studies, Kyoto University] 40 (1994): 39–54. During the First World War, Rida supported the "Arab revolt" in Hijaz.

[317] Kara, "İslâm modernizmi ve Akif'e dair birkaç not," 49.

[318] Servet-i fünûn 54/1429 (Tevrinievvel 1335[1919]).

[319] Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, 82.

[320] On Kemal's Islamist ideas, Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought, 280–319.

[321] Jacob M. Landau, The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 2–3.

[322] It must be remembered that Afghani stayed in Istanbul from 1869 to 1871. On Basiret 's pan-Islamism or Islamism, see İlhan Yerlikaya, XIX. Yüzyil Osmanli Siyasi Hayatinda Basiret Gazetesi ve Pancermenizm, Panislamizm, Panslavizm, Osmanlicilik Fikirleri (Van: Yüzüncü Yil Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Yayinlari, 1994), 113–120; Kemal H. Karpat, The Politicization of Islam: Reconstructing Identity, State, Faith, and Community in the Late Ottoman State (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 121–124.

[323] Somel, “Sirat-i Müstakim: Islamic Modernism in the Ottoman Empire” 67–68.

[324] Kara, “İslâm modernizmi ve Akif’e dair birkaç not,” 50.

[325] Mehmed Âkif, “Ya hasreten ba’de hasretin ale’l-mü’minîn,” Sebîlürrevâd 9/225 (Kanûnuevvel 1328 [1912–1913]). Translation mine.

[326] Hanioğlu, The Young Turks in Opposition, 10. The Turkish Islamist Sezai Karakoç also stated that Islamic modernist thought in the Ottoman Empire was weak in relation to its counterparts in Egypt and India. Sezai Karakoç, Mehmet Âkif: Hayati, Aksiyonu, Düvünceleri ve Siiri (İstanbul: Yağmur Yayinevi, 1968), 22–24.

* 5. Echoes to Al-Manār Among the Muslims of the Russian Empire: A preliminary research note on Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din and the Šura (1908–1918)

Stéphane A. Dudoignon[327]

The question treated in this chapter will be the diffusion of al-Manār, not outside of Egypt, nor even simply outside the Arab world, but according to some authors outside the dar al-islam itself, that is, among the Sunni Muslim communities of the Russian Empire, with special mention of the Turkic-speaking Muslim communities of the Middle Volga and the Western Urals. The Muslims of the Middle Volga had been submitted to Russian authority since the mid-sixteenth century. They had then faced successive Christianization campaigns, especially during the eighteenth century, in the immediate aftermath of Peter the Great’s reforms. At the turn of the twentieth century, after new statuses for the Russian peasantry were implemented between 1861 and 1907, it was the turn of the Muslim populations of the Eastern Urals and Siberia to be confronted with the massive migration of Slavic peasants coming from Russia’s heartland.

In the particular social context of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, characterized by an overall confrontation of the Christian and Muslim faiths, newspapers and journals from the central part of the Islamic world began to be distributed extensively in these regions, albeit irregularly and to varying degrees from one location to another. Among these periodicals, al-Manār enjoyed a special status. During the short period of relative political liberalization, which lasted from the revolution of 1905 to the beginning of the civil war in the winter of 1917, it was the journal from the distant Islamic world that was probably most often quoted, translated and commented in the press of the Sunni Muslim communities of the Russian Empire.[328]

Some Muslim intellectual circles of European Russia even considered al-Manār as a model to be followed, if not imitated. This perception gave rise to the creation of a Turkic copy or emulation of it: the journal Mura (Council), edited in an ottomanized Tatar language in the southern Uralian city of Orenburg by the outstanding ‘alim and popularizer Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din (1859-1936). Sura was to become one of the most significant editorial enterprises of the entire Muslim press of Russia, from its creation in January 1908 up to its suppression by the Bolsheviks exactly ten years later in January 1918.

As a matter of fact, Muhammad ‘Abduh’s death in 1905 was globally synchronic with the first revolution of Russia, in the immediate aftermath of which a highly politicized Muslim press could make its appearance throughout the Russian Empire. In spite of censorship, this press could enjoy a relatively high degree of autonomy during the years 1905–1911, and again during the revolutionary year from March 1917 to the very first months of 1918. It is during this last period that ‘Abduh’s influence could be expressed fully, albeit posthumously, in the public life of the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire.

We may remember that Egypt, and in particular Cairo’s religious institutions, exerted during those years a sort of fascination on the Sunni Muslims of the Russian Empire. The prestige of Egyptian Islamic culture appears, for

example, in the debates that arose in the 1900s about the style of the Great Mosque which was to be built in Saint Petersburg during the years preceding the First World War. In 1908 the architectural commission, which included prominent members of the local and imperial Muslim community, attributed the first place to a project called “Arabesque,” a concrete-made imitation of the Mamluk architecture of Baybars’ time.[329] In 1908 also, during the World Islamic Congress which was convened that year in Cairo, the Tatar polygraph from Crimea Ismail Gaspralï (Gasprinskij, 1869–1914) locally published three issues of his journal al-Nahda (“Revival”) in Arabic language, with the aim of promoting the idea of the unity of the Muslim world.[330]

However, newspapers and journals created in Russia after 1905 remained under the strict control of the imperial censorship. This situation obliged Muslim journalists and columnists to restrain from making explicit references to the outside Islamic world, for fear of being accused of “Pan-Islamism” or “Pan-Turkism” (two grievances commonly formulated against nonconformist Muslim authors of the Russian Empire in the years preceding the First World War). For this reason, among others, intellectual borrowings made by the new Muslim press of Russia from al-Manār, and from other periodicals of the external Islamic world, took place during a relatively short period, and were restricted to questions which would not arouse the concern of censors. This sometimes makes difficult the identification of influences from the outside, most particularly that of al-Manār and the Manarists.

Nevertheless, the way for cultural borrowings from Cairo had been paved during the previous decades by numerous travels of pilgrims and talabat al-2ilm from Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia, to Egypt, and sometimes from Egypt on to Mecca. Muhammad ‘Abduh and al-Manār’s influences were thus far from being limited to the press. They were also present in a new network of reformed and modernized madrasas, which had been created in the Middle Volga and the Urals since the late 1880s.

Up to the closure of these madrasas by the Bolsheviks in 1918–1919, young Tatar or Bashkir theologians and Arabists, who had received their intellectual

education at al-Azhar, popularized in Russia ideas partly inspired by Muhammad ‘Abduh’s teaching. (Recent documental discoveries even suggest that despite the eventual emigration of many of these young ulama, after 1920, from Russia to Turkey, the Arabic peninsula, Xinjiang, Manchuria, or Japan, their reformist teachings continued to be perpetuated in some of the learned circles of European Russia, of the Caucasus and of Central Asia, at least until the great purges of 1937—largely due to the vitality of traditional discussion circles in the Muslim communities of the young USSR.) [331]

In the early twentieth century the Sunni Muslim communities of the Russian Empire were particularly well prepared to receive and to take profit from ‘Abduh’s teachings and Rida’s writings, thanks to their social and cultural evolution since the end of the eighteenth century. In the 1900s and 1910s, an authoritative quotation of ‘Abduh, or the translation of a paper from the prestigious al-Manār were sometimes intended not to introduce a new idea, but to reinforce or to confirm a position already adopted by particular Muslim clerics of Russia. In such cases, a quotation is not to be interpreted by modern historians as the sign of an unequivocal transfer or borrowing from Egypt to Russia, from the Arab to the non-Arab world, or from a giver to a receiver—in short, from a center to a periphery of the world of Islam. “Ideas such as those of ‘Abduh were ‘in the air’ in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, “ [332] and the most self-evident appearances of servile imitation may sometimes be misleading.

** A well-prepared substratum

The questions that arise here are: what was relevant in ‘Abduh’s teachings and in al-Manār ’s editorials for the Muslims of Russia? Through which canals and to which extent could the influence of al-Manār be propagated among the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire? Who were the interpreters, popularizers, or contradictors of ‘Abduh and Rida’s ideas in Russia? As we shall try to suggest in this paper, the political context of the Russian Empire in the aftermath of the 1905 revolution, and the discussions about the confessional character of the Russian state presented a very favorable substratum for the

diffusion of al-Manār, notably through permanent disputes about the place of Islam in the process of modernization.

In fact, the entrance of the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire into the twentieth century was not characterized by a general movement toward secularization, as was the case for Ottoman Turkey during the same period (although the dominant Eurocentric and state-centered view of Turkey's modern history may perhaps have led to an overevaluation of the secularization of Turkish society during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries).

As for the Muslims of Russia, we should rather speak of a growing political instrumentalization of religion in the framework of a still confessional Christian Orthodox state. Most of the quotations and readings of 'Abduh and al-Manār must be resituated in this peculiar context, which naturally led to the valuation of Islam as a source of civilization and as a guide to social reform.

By the first years of the twentieth century, the Middle Volga had been submitted to Russian power for three centuries and a half (from the time of the conquest of the khanate of Kazan by Ivan the Terrible in 1551). Only at the end of the eighteenth century did the Russian state put an end to its policy of conversion, encouraged or forced, of the Muslim populations of the Volga and the Urals to Orthodox Christianity. Russian authority had been successfully challenged in the Urals by endemic azawats from the 1730s to the 1770s (i.e. predating Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab's movement in the Arabian Peninsula).[333] The Edict of Religious Tolerance signed by Catherine II in June 1773 forbade the Orthodox clergy from intervening in the affairs of the other confessions of the Empire. The aim of this political step was to bring peace among the Muslim populations of the Volga and the Urals. It was also supposed to win over those of the Qazaqs who had been recently integrated into the Empire, as well as the subjects of the khan of Crimea, which was to be annexed to Russia in 1783.

At the same time, the Czarina's government was creating the nucleus of an official Muslim "clergy," following the model of structures instituted earlier in

the century by Peter the Great for a better state control of the Orthodox Church. A muftiyyat was created in Ufa in 1782, and a Spiritual Assembly of the Muslim Law in 1788 (first in Ufa, then in Orenburg after 1796).[334] In addition to controlling the religious hierarchy, this system was intended to turn the Hanafi Sunni Muslims of European Russia, as well as those of the more recently annexed territories of the northern Qazaq steppe and Crimea, away from the authority of the Ottoman sultan-caliph.

Nevertheless, the weak financial means of the muftiyyat and of the Spiritual Assembly, and the discussed religious legitimacy of both bodies, aroused a debate among the Muslim subjects of the Czar that lasted until the end of the imperial period: could the Russian Empire be considered a dar al-islam if the shari ‘a was restricted to those acts otherwise executed by notaries, while the Orthodox clergy enjoyed official support for its conversion campaigns? Should the faithful obey fatwas elaborated under the supervision of the Russian Ministry of the Interior by a religious bureaucracy devoid of great spiritual authority? These discussions undermined all of the theological and judicial polemics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Between the reign of Catherine II and the 1880s Islam, as promoted by the “Tatar”[335] mullahs under the formal leadership of the mufti, was seen by the Russian authorities as an instrument for pushing Russian influence toward the Black Sea, the Qazaq steppe, and southern Central Asia along the caravan roads. However, after Central Asia was conquered in the 1870s and camels were replaced by trains in the 1880s, the “Tatar” commercial intermediaries lost a great part of their initial function. The steppe populations, which had been previously subjected to a new wave of Islamic proselytism, came to be considered a new target for Orthodox Christian missions. After the Islamic renewal of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, this late nineteenth-century revival of Orthodox Christian missionary activity in several regions of the empire with a predominantly, if not exclusive Muslim population (like the Urals or the Qazaq steppe),[336] contributed to make confessional considerations the focus of public debates in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The colonizer was used to viewing the pastoral Turkic-speaking populations of the Urals and the Steppe territory as former pagans less attached to the Muslim faith than the sedentary agrarian and urban communities of the Middle Volga and of the southern Central Asian oases. In addition to making efforts to convert them to Orthodoxy, the Bashkirs and Qazaqs were submitted to a new policy of school instruction given in vernacular languages. Literacy was taught in the “national” Cyrillic alphabets, which had been elaborated in the early 1870s under the direction ofNikolai Il’minskii (1822–1871), the director of the Kazan seminar for Orthodox missionaries. [337]

Under influence from the Ottoman Empire and the Southern Caucasus, Muslim literati of the Middle Volga attempted to face this new challenge through the elaboration of a “new method” (usul-i ëadid) for teaching the Arabic alphabet in Turkic languages, using a phonetical principle which was to replace the old syllabic one. The usul-i ëadid was first experimented in an elementary school (maktab) which was opened in Crimea in 1881 by the Sorbonne-educated polygraph Ismail Gasprali (the future editor of the short-lived al-Nahda in 1908). It was then spread throughout the Russian Empire by means of the journal Tarëuman [“The Interpreter”] which was created by the same Gasprali two years later, and was to remain the main platform for the central ëadidiyya tendency until the beginning of the First World War.

Such an innovation introduced a radical change in the practices of reading, which had until then been based on manuscripts of sacred texts written in the classical Arabic language.[338] The establishment of a fixed teaching program, which would be common to all pupils belonging to the same level, and the distribution of pupils into different classes, entailed rupturing the strong personal relationship that had previously existed between masters and their disciples. This transformation gave a new impetus to the anti-brotherhood discourse, which from the late eighteenth century onwards had developed in Inner Eurasia in connection with new readings and interpretations of Ahmad Sirhindi’s works. It led to the harsh criticism by increasing numbers of young reformist mutakallims, such as Musa Jar-Allah Bigi (1875–1949), a former pupil of Muhammad ‘Abduh at al-Azhar, against the traditional mode of transmission of learning and spiritual

authority among the Sufi turuq.[339] (We must note, however, that the adoption of the usul-i ëadid did not necessarily mean a revolution in the master-pupil relationship. Sometimes the choice of the usul-i ëadid could even go with a powerful renewal of the cult of the murmid, and a reinforcement of the spiritual link between the former and his disciples. Such was, for example, the case of the well-known Shaykh Zayn-Allah Rasuliyeff (1833–1917), the founder and mudarris of the Rasuliyya madrasa of Troitsk in the Eastern Urals, whose personal prestige and authority went far in Western Siberia and in the Qazaq steppe, up to the years following the 1917 revolution.[340] As we can observe in this case, the ëadid reform was implemented with a great variety of applications, which can hardly be summarized under the common denomination of “Jadidism,” as has been done by modern historians.)

However, the fact remains that after 1905, direct access to an autonomous press allowed a young generation of literati with an intermediate status in the ranks of the muftiyyat, like the qaris or the teachers (mu‘allims) of the ëadid schools, both of whom had not finished the full cycle of the classical madrasa, to supersede the influence of the ulama, and to turn upside down the traditional hierarchy of the minbars. The diffusion of the usul-i ëadid and the propagation throughout European Russia of the print press in Arabic characters rapidly undermined the position of religious representatives as dominant transmitters of the learned culture. At the same time, the first modernized madrasas begun to appear in the Middle Volga and the Urals. From the prestigious Muhammadiyya which was reformed in Kazan starting in 1891 by the Bukhara-educated alim Alimjan Barudi (1857-1921), who had met with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838/9–1897) and Muhammad ‘Abduh in Cairo on his way to Mecca in 1887,[341] to the no less famous ‘Aliyya which was created in Ufa in 1906 by Ziya Kamali (1873–1942), a former pupil of ‘Abduh—like the previously mentioned Musa Bigi, a fellow student of Kamali at al-Azhar, and the latter’s hajj companion from Cairo to Mecca during their study years.[342]

The economic and social positions of the ulama were further shaken by the fact that both modernized maktabs (schools) and madrasas

were financed not through the traditional awqaf and zakat which had previously been administered by the muftiyyat and the Spiritual Assembly, but by direct patronage of benevolent societies (layriyya ëam2iyyatlari).[343] The latter were to be created in increasing number after 1905, on the initiative of wealthy individuals, or of the local Muslim communities. They had two very different, although not contradictory, models: the Christian Orthodox charitable organizations that had multiplied throughout the Empire since the 1890s, and the benevolent associations that were promoted by ‘Abduh in Cairo in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

In both the reformed maktabs and madrasas, accent was put on the renewal of Islamic ethical education, notably through the translation or adaptation in Tatar of the classical ethics (allaq) literature from Arabic, Persian, and Chaghatay Turkic. (Hence, in the years preceding the First World War, one could regularly read in the Muslim press of Russia Tatar translations of al-Jahiz, side by side with apparently anachronistic controversies on the adaptation of Sa’di’s works for Turkic audiences.)

We can find several reasons for this general insistence on moral education. The first was doubtlessly the need to differentiate the Muslim communities from the dominant Christian communities. This need was sharply felt in the Urals, in Siberia and in the northern Qazaq steppe, three regions under intensive Slavic colonization and exposed to subsequent social violence. Such a need for differentiation can explain the interest shown by Muslim literati of European Russia of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in the rigorist ideas developed much earlier by the Indian Muslim reformist thinker Shah Wali-Allah of Delhi (1703–1762), and which spread toward Inner Eurasia through the continental Sufi networks of the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya.[344]

A second motive for this ethical renewal was a general need for public respectability. This new sentiment was directly linked with the rapid progression of capitalism among Muslim communities of the Russian Empire, and with the appearance of new Muslim wealth with a strong need for honorability.[345] We may notice in this respect that the general movement toward Islamic moral rigorism (with new arguments about

alcoholism, or the wearing of the veil by women and young girls) echoed similar tendencies in the Orthodox Christian communities of the Russian Empire. As to capitalism itself, although it was sharply criticized by renowned reformist ulama for its fragmenting effects among Muslim communities of the Russian Empire, its specific attributes and devices, in particular the principles of interest loan and the modern credit banks, were generally praised in the modernist Tatar press as the only means for the Muslims of the Empire to face the encroachments of the Russian business community.[346]

** A madrasa-centered modernization movement

The result of these concordant evolutions was an overall renewal and reinforcement of Muslim communal consciousness and institutions. This began with the madrasas, which played a key role in the modernization process of European Russia until the very first years of the Soviet period. At the same time, as we have suggested in the preceding paragraphs, this general process occurred during a period of strong challenge to the traditional authority of the ulama. How can we explain this paradoxical success of a madrasa-centered model of modernization in European Russia at a time when the region was exposed to fierce controversies on the status and legitimacy of the Muslim clergy?[347]

The most tempting explanation is to be found in the double pressure exerted by the Russian state and by the Orthodox church, in particular during the periods of intensive missionary activity, that is, from the 1710s to the 1760s, and again in the last decades of the nineteenth century. How did the Muslim inhabitants of European Russia face the previously unseen demographic, economic, social, and cultural pressure of the Russian state and society? In touch with the contemporary intellectual currents that circulated inside Russian society itself, modern education and family values were soon identified as the key tools for the preservation of the Islamic community under Christian domination.

Nevertheless, up to the end of the Czarist regime Russian legislation forbade the creation of higher educational institutions in languages other than Russian. The only tolerated schools in vernacular languages were the

“confessional” (konfesional’nye) ones, whose teaching program was restricted to religious matters. For implementing their own educational renewal the Muslims of Russia enjoyed a limited choice of three possibilities: (1) entering Russian schools, technical institutes, and universities, all placed under the more or less formal supervision of the Christian Orthodox clergy; (2) attending the so-called “Russo-Tatar” (russko-tatarskie) or “Russo-indigenous” schools (russko-tuzemnye mkoly) which had been created since the 1870s, but which were perceived by many Muslim subjects of the Czar as an instrument of Russification and Christianization; (3) reforming their own “confessional” maktabs and madrasas (or dini madrasas—“religious schools”—as they were called in official practice since the 1780s).

The dini madrasas offered limited possibilities for developing disciplines outside the classical ulum-i ‘arabiyya, such as modern history, geography, mathematics, or the European languages. However, the modernized madrasas of European Russia, which appeared in the late 1880s, included these disciplines in their curriculum and contributed greatly to disseminating them among the Muslim communities of the Empire. Moreover, the religious teaching given by the reformed madrasas of Crimea, the Volga region, and the Urals was deeply influenced by Salafi and reformist ideas imported from the outside Islamic world.

These trends permitted a deep renewal in the perceptions of the nature and in the social function of Islam in the context of Imperial Russia. The origins of this renewal must be sought in both the intellectual movements which developed in Inner Eurasia since the end of the eighteenth century, and in the direct influence of ‘Abduh on the Turkic students from the Russian Empire who attended al-Azhar or used to read al-Manār.

After Catherine II’s Edict of Religious Tolerance, and the creation of the muftiyyat, the talabas of the Volga, the Urals, and Siberia had been once again permitted to attend the greatest of the Hanafi madrasas in Bukhara, Samarqand, and Kabul. Students from European Russia arrived there en masse at a time when a strong reformist movement was spreading from India to Russia via Afghanistan and Central Asia, through the previously mentioned networks of the Mujaddidiyya. In the spirit of the pre-

Mongol Hanafi tradition, the renewal of kalam raised new questions about the choice between taqlid and iëtihad in the theological and judicial problems that were not addressed in the Qur‘an or the Sunna.

The influx of the talabas from Russia contributed to an unprecedented renewal of theological studies in the old Bukharan madrasas. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, a young nonconformist scholar from the village of Korsa on the Middle Volga, ‘Abd al-Nasir Abu1l-Nasr al-Qursawi (1776-1812), aroused an acute controversy about the night prayer Qisa’) in sub-boreal regions.[348] These arguments, and the subsequent debates among Inner Eurasian Hanafis about the reopening of the iëtihad found their way to the Middle-Volga region, thanks to Shihab al-Din al-Marjani (1818–1889), an alim from Kazan.[349] Although Marjani spread throughout European Russia the idea of a cultural decay of the Central Asian oases, his teachings, and publications were deeply influenced by his early years in the madrasas and libraries of Bukhara and Samarqand. (Even the idea of an overall “decadence”—inqira/—of Central Asia may have been inspired to him by mid-nineteenth-century reform-minded Bukharan ulama, only to be later reinforced by his reading of contemporary Russian orientalist literature.)[350]

In his historiographical works Marjani praised the first centuries of Islam among the Volga Bulghars, and the practice of the sharia in the Hanafi madhhab before the Mongol invasion.[351] In so doing, the Kazan alim was stressing the central place occupied by Islam in the collective memory of the Volga Muslims. At the turn of the century, the role of Islam as a structuring element for the community life of Muslims of European Russia was being reinforced by colonization movements linked with the great migrations of Slavic peasants toward the Urals, Siberia, the northern Qazaq steppe, and the Caucasus.

After the Crimean War of 1854-1855 (which was largely perceived among the Muslims of Russia as an Ottoman victory over the Russian Empire), and during the period of political reforms under the Czar Alexander II (r. 1855–1881), the local Muslim communities which had been forcibly converted to Orthodoxy during the eighteenth century asked permission to return openly

to the practice of Islam—something that they would only be allowed to do only after the second Edict of Religious Tolerance of 17 (30) April 1905.[352] Forced migration, departure for the Ottoman Empire, and the memory of conversion were closely associated in the collective mind of the Muslim communities of European Russia on the eve of the twentieth century.[353]

In this general context characterized less by secularization than by an overall re-Islamization process, and by a growing political instrumentalization of religion in the framework of a still confessional state, the presence of a powerful group of Bukhara-educated ulama favorable to the new ideas, and the rich private patronage of an emerging Muslim bourgeoisie, also contributed to orient the cultural renewal toward a reform of the maktabs and madrasas. Except for the specificities of the usul-i ëadid and the debates on the translation of sacred texts and moralist literature, one can only be surprised by the parallels between the reform of the madrasas of Russia and the events observed slightly earlier in Cairo, in spite of very different social and political substratums.

As in the case of al-Azhar, the program of reforms implemented in the first modernized madrasas and maktabs of European Russia from the late 1880s onwards was essentially practical. Like their colleagues in Cairo, the reformist mudarrises (madrasa teachers) of Kazan, Orenburg, and Ufa were mainly preoccupied with enriching the curriculum with new subjects, namely modern and secular ones. The reformers of the Islamic educational system advocated the creation of fixed course schedules, the distribution of pupils among different levels instead of in haphazard classes organized around individual teachers. Annual examinations were to be organized for all courses of the new teaching programs so as to guarantee academic standards comparable to those of the Russian gimnazii, technical institutes, and universities.[354]

As to the content of teaching, instead of secondhand commentaries and explanations by late medieval authors, preference was given to the use of great texts by the classical scholars of Islam, as was also done in al-Azhar. The content of the program was deeply marked by the heritage of both Jamal al-Din al-Afgani and Muhammad ‘Abduh. The overall practice of Qur1anic justification of the most recent scientific discoveries followed a form of

casuistry initiated by al-Afghani during his years of teaching at al-Azhar. At the same time, one could observe a general focusing of kalam on the central pillars of the religion so as to arouse a more vital faith in the fundamental beliefs of Islam, in the spirit of ‘Abduh’s Tawhid.[355]

As for the infrastructures to be created, in Russia, like in Cairo, many authors expressed concern about the need for public libraries to take the place of private collections of books, which some of the more authoritative ulama often gathered in their own residences. In the absence of initiatives from the Russian state authorities, some of the leading figures of the ëadid circles, like ‘Alimjan Barudi in Kazan, and later Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din in Orenburg, would gather huge personal collections of books accessible to the students. (Some of these libraries were to be offered by their owners to the Soviet authorities in the aftermath of the October 1917 revolution, which allowed them to escape destruction or dispersion.) Simultaneously, an editorial system was rapidly developed for the impression of didactical literature, which multiplied throughout the Empire from the mid-1880s.[356] Similar insistence was put on the improvement of sanitary conditions in mosques, maktabs, and madrasas: the quality of architecture was one of the key criteria for the various assessments made by the early twentieth-century Muslim press of Russia of this or that modernized educational institution.

Like al-Azhar, the reformed madrasas of European Russia were accused by the most conservative ulama of being mere schools of philosophy and literature, if not instruments of cultural Europeanization. Moreover, at the turn of the twentieth century, these madrasas had to face fierce criticism from their own students: the talaba revolts of the years 1905–1914 in the Middle Volga and the Urals gave way to the islahi (reformist) movement in Tatar press and literature. Young writers who had received their education in the first ëadid schools of the late nineteenth century, like the novelist Muhammad ‘Ayyaz Ishaqi (1878–1954) and the poet ‘Abd-Allah Tuqay (1886–1913), sharply criticized the madrasa-centered strategy of modernization of the Muslim communities of Russia, in a spirit close to that of the revolted talaba of al-Azhar in the same years.[357]

In the same way as al-Azhar in the early 1910s, the most advanced madrasas of Russia would have to change several times their curricula in order to adapt it to the demand of students, and in order to face challenges from the competition. In a first phase they diversified their programs in accordance with the unattractive prospects of the clerical path, in a country where the muftiyyat and the Muslim Spiritual Assembly had very limited needs for qualified staff. In the mid-1910s, however, the reformed madrasas compensated the creation of special courses for future mu‘allims by reassessing the religious sciences in the special curriculum.

At the same time, voices began to request the opening of a teacher training college in Ufa, the seat of the muftiyyat. Some former Azharians even ventured to demand the creation of a national university. Only after the 1917 revolution could some attempts be made in this matter, although not in European Russia itself, where the Bolsheviks were too prompt to establish exclusive power, but in the Republic of Azerbaijan, and in the former Russian protectorates of Central Asia (in particular in the Soviet Popular Republic of Bukhara, which escaped from Moscow’s complete control until 1923).[358]

Such characteristics correspond more or less to the innovations that were progressively introduced in al-Azhar starting in 1872. Our question, however, is whether we can speak of unequivocal cultural borrowings from Cairo? In fact, although scarcely documented before the Russian revolution of 1905, al-Azhar’s direct influence is without doubt. It can be detected in the content of the teaching of the reformed madrasas of European Russia, as well as in the manner in which organizational matters inside these madrasas were dealt with. The intermediaries for this influence between Egypt and Russia can also be easily identified. They were the Tatar and Bashkir ulama and literati who had established occasional contacts with al-Afghani and/or ‘Abduh, whether in Egypt or during the former’s short visit to Saint Petersburg in 1888; or the leading Tatar or Bashkir students of the Riwaq al-Turk at al-Azhar at the turn of the century.

Among the former, we can see very different figures of the Muslim clergy of Russia, such as ‘Ata-Allah Bayazitoff (1847-1911), the Muslim chaplain (alund) of the Imperial Guard of Saint Petersburg and editor of the journal Nur (“The Light”), published in Tatar in the capital of the Russian Empire between 1904 and 1914.[359] His role as intermediary between the Muslim community of Russia and the Russian authorities allowed Bayazitoff to obtain permission to build the Great Mosque of Saint Petersburg (he was a member of the architectural commission that elected the “Mamluk” project), and to organize throughout the Empire a collection of funds for its construction.[360] Although a cleric with a conservative reputation who practiced a form of political quietism, Bayazitoff was the author of popular booklets in which he echoed and discussed al-Afghani’s writings on the Islamic legitimity of modern sciences.[361] An outsider with a strategy opposite to that of Bayazitoff, the pan-islamist activist ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahimoff (1857–1944) is much better known to modern historians.[362]

Another more central figure of the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire is the Bukhara-educated alim Alimjan ‘Aliyeff, alias al-Barudi (1857-1921). Al-Barudi met with al-Afghani and ‘Abduh in Cairo during his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1887 before he undertook, in 1891, a fundamental reform of the Muhammadiyya madrasa, which had been founded in Kazan by his father Muhammadjan.[363] The founder and editor of the journal al-Din wa’l-Adab (“Religion and Good Manners,” 1906-1908 and 1913–1917),[364] al-Barudi used the press to popularize his own form of madrasa teaching focused on the key subjects of the 2ilm al-tafsir and the usul al-fiqh. His lectures were inspired by the renewed Hanafi tradition as practiced in the Bukharan reformist circles in the mid-nineteenth century, and based upon a rational approach of the fundamental texts of Islam, the Qur‘an, and the Sunna. Emerging as a respected shaykh of the Naqshbandiyya after his return from a short Syrian exile in 1908–1910, al-Barudi was to be elected as the new mufti of the Muslims of Inner Russia in the aftermath of the February revolution in May 1917. During the tragic years of his short term as mufti, between 1917 and his death in 1921, he tried to promote the reformist ideas and principles that he had taught as mudarris of the Muhammadiyya and shaykh of the local Naqshbandiyya. (One of his most notable innovations was the admission of the first female qadi in the muftiyyat.)

Al-Barudi’s successor as mufti of Inner Rusia in 1922, Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din, who had studied in a provincial Russian madrasa and knew about al-Afghani through the reading of al-’Urwa al-wuöqa, met with Jamal al-Din in Saint Petersburg in 1888, only one year after al-Barudi. As we can see through these illustrative examples, the direct contact with al-Afghani and ‘Abduh, whether problematic as in the case of Bayazitoff, or more productive as the cases of Ibrahimoff, al-Barudi, and Fakhr al-Din, crossed the whole spectrum of the reformist conglomeration inside the Muslim clergy of Russia, at the very beginning of the reform of the madrasas between the 1880s and 1890s.

Ten years later, at the turn of the twentieth century, travel to Cairo and Istanbul had become a common feature in the biography of Russian Muslim intellectual figures. From the 1890s onwards, a combination of administrative measures and travel facilities contributed to ease the pilgrimage to Mecca for the Muslims of Russia. These new conditions allowed a growing number of learned people and students from the Russian Empire with various social backgrounds to undertake long stays in Istanbul, and on occasion in Cairo, under pretext of the hajj or otherwise. We must insist on the extreme significance that the pilgrimage to Mecca at the turn of the twentieth century had upon the appearance of modern Muslim intelligentsias in the Russian Empire, whether in Kazan or in Bukhara. Modern historians, who are generally more interested in secularization processes or in modern nation building, have largely underestimated this phenomenon. An elementary statistical survey, which remains to be done, would reveal that a surprisingly high percentage of the leading figures of the various ëadid tendencies, whether from European Russia or from Turkestan, took part in the hajj at an early adult age, although in the present official circles of Russia and of Central Asia these same figures are nowadays considered to have been at the vanguard of secularization and Europeanization.

One of the consequences of the relative liberalization of personal circulation in the 1890s was the great number of Muslim students from the Russian Empire who attended al-Azhar. Their presence there is revealed to us by the functioning of the Riwaq al-Turk at the turn of the century, and by the creation of a “Fraternity of the Tatar students in Cairo”

(Qahirada tatar talabasi ëam’iyyati) in 1906,[365] which was to play a significant role in the diffusion of innovations from al-Azhar.[366] The return to Russia of the young Azharian theologians and Arabists after the revolution of 1905 created a strong generational cleavage inside of the Muslim “clergy,” between official mullahs and ulama, most of whom had been educated in the traditional madrasas of Russia,[367] and a handful of young theologians with the legitimacy of al-Azhar and a strong taste for radical discourse.

There is not sufficient space here to offer the reader a complete presentation of these young theologians. Let us simply say a few words on three of them who left a deep imprint on the history of the reformed madrasas and the Muslim press of Russia in the 1910s.[368] We have already mentioned the two outstanding theologians Ziya Kamali (1873–1942) and Musa Jar-Allah Bigi (1875–1949).[369] Both studied in the same years at al-Azhar and accomplished the hajj together from Cairo to Mecca. They were followed in Egypt by the Arabist Dhakir al-Qadiri (1878–1954), who would later popularize the writings of leading Egyptian intellectuals on the status of women in the Muslim society of Russia.[370] After their return, all became prominent sources of intellectual inspiration for the political party Ittifaq al-muslimin (Union of the Muslims), which was created in 1905 to promote the interests of the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire; they taught in the most famous reformed madrasas of Russia, and wrote regularly in the Mura. All left Russia between the revolution and the time of collectivization, and eventually died in exile (Bigi in Cairo, Kamali and Qadiri in Turkey). Their work would be popularized in Turkey and in the Near-East by a younger fellow student of al-Azhar, ‘Abd-Allah Battal (1882–1969), the author of comments on ‘Abduh’s Tawhid and of papers on female education.[371]

The Azharians, however, also had to face the secularist trend of the first Muslim students educated in Russian and European universities and technical institutes. Last but not least, inside the ëadid tendencies, they would have to mingle with reformist ulama and udaba of an older generation, with a Bukharan or “Russian” background, who dominated the cultural life in European Russia up to the Bolshevik take over. Differences would soon appear between these various tendencies of the ëadid loose conglomeration. These variations

can be compared with those existing between ‘Abduh and his Syrian disciple Rashid Rida. Curiously enough, the audacious and sometimes radical Tatar and Bashkir Azharian theologians of the 1905 generation were generally keen to claim that they were followers of ‘Abduh, while the more well-established figures of the ëadid press and publishing system, like Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din, the editor of the Mura in Orenburg, were getting closer to Rida and the Manar.

Despite all of these elements of proximity, differences are clearly evident between the reforms at al-Azhar and the changes that were implemented in the madrasas of European Russia from the late 1880s onwards. In the Russian Empire, the lack of direct state control and the weakness of the muftiyyat prevented any centralization of the reform movement. The renewal of the madrasas responded to a multiplicity of private initiatives, to which the most conservative ulama and mullahs could hardly oppose a united front. For this reason, among others, the transformation of the modernized madrasas of Kazan, Ufa, and Orenburg seems to have advanced more quickly than at al-Azhar, despite the fact that their first significant initiatives came later than in Cairo.[372] Budgetary questions, and the thorny problem of teachers’ salary were perceived in very similar terms in both Egypt and Russia. However, if compared with the rest of the Islamic world, the Russian Muslim community was in a special situation, under the longest-lasting Christian domination ever seen by the umma, and with only limited financial means in the hands of the muftiyyat. This peculiar state of things forced each madrasa to look to private patronage for financial support, and to modify its own curriculum according to the demands of the public. This determining role of private financing and public demand explains the very big qualitative and quantitative inequalities which existed in the first years of the twentieth century between a few well-equipped urban institutions of the Middle Volga and the Urals (like the previously mentioned Muhammadiyya of Kazan, ‘Aliyya of Ufa, and Husayniyya of Orenburg),[373] and those which depended on the mobilization of more modest local communities in rural and remote areas.

At the same time, an important if not a key role was played by modernized madrasas in rural or semi-rural zones, such as the Bubi madrasa in Izh-Bobino (in the district of Sarapul in the western Urals, now in Bashkortostan). It is there that from 1895 onwards ‘Ubayd-Allah Ni’matullin, known as Bubi

(1866-1936), a former pupil of the Bubi madrasa in Istanbul, and his younger brother ‘Abd-Allah (1871–1922), a prolific theologian and translator of Muhammad ‘Abduh, undertook the modernization of their local madrasa. Confronted with the fierce opposition of the most conservative Muslim clergy, their adversaries denounced them to the Russian police as notorious “Pan-Islamists” and they were prosecuted. When the brothers were imprisoned in 1911 the madrasa was closed. In spite of its short history, the case of the Bubi madrasa is interesting as it contributed to the propagation of reformist ideas—notably through literal translations from ‘Abduh’s works—in rural zones situated far from the main cultural crossroads of European Russia. [374] In this sense, the Bubi madrasa appears as a perfect instrument for the diffusion of Azharian intellectual fashions to a remote northern periphery of the umma. At the same time, the geographical location of the Bubi madrasa, its dimensions, and its history, make it a very different institution from its far-away Egyptian model, if not the latter’s exact opposite.

** Riza al-Din bin Fakhr al-Din and the Šura

Like Rashid Rida, the Bubi brothers and many Muslim reformist thinkers of Russia were born in rural areas. Such was the case of the Tatar-Bashkir theologian and polygraph Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din b. Sayf al-Din (in Russian Rizaetdin Fakhretdinov, 1859-1936), who was born in the village of Kuchuchat in the gov-ernorate of Samara on the Middle Volga.[375] The son of a local mullah, he received his primary education in his father’s maktab before attending the huëra of the mudarris ‘Abd al-Fattah bin ‘Abd al-Qayyum in Nizhnye Chelchely, a village only 15 km from Kuchuchat. During his last years of study in the countryside of the Middle Volga, Riza al-Din was initiated to the works of such reformist thinkers of his time as the Tatars Qursawi and Marjani, as well as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad ‘Abduh (he went to Saint Petersburg in 1888 to meet personally with the former, who left a deep impression on him).[376] Riza al-Din simultaneously begun a prominent and abundant literary career with four manuals on the Arabic language, fiqh, and ethics, which were published in Kazan in 1887-1888 and brought immediate public attention to their author.

After serving as the imam of the village of Il’bak from 1889 to 1891, Riza al-Din was nominated to the Spiritual Assembly of the Muslim Law and moved to Ufa, where he was able to complete his intellectual education as an autodidact. Recognized by Shihab al-Din al-Marjani as one of the most promising authors of the young generation,[377] Riza al-Din was able to continue his biographical work by publishing between 1900 and 1909, the first thirteen fascicules of his unfinished Aöar (“Monumentae”), a biographical dictionary of the great intellectual figures of the Russian Muslimhood, with critical theological considerations on their works. In the same spirit, he published in Orenburg in 1906 a series of critical biographies on great classical authors of Islam, Mamhur erlar (Great Men): Ibn Rushd, Abu’l-‘Ala al-Ma‘arri, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Taymiyya. This penultimate work bears the deep imprint of the Central Asian renewal of kalam studies as it had been transmittted to the Volga-Urals region by Marjani (al-Ghazali was one of the most often revisited authors in mid-nineteenth century Bukharan madrasas); it also reveals the influence of al-Afghani’s casuistry on the Qur1anic justification of modern sciences. As to Riza al-Din’s monograph on Ibn Taymiyya, it suggests the influence of ‘Abduh and Rida’s rehabilitation of the great thirteenth-century Hanbali theologian.[378] Like Rashid Rida, although personally hostile to the heterodox practices of Sufi brotherhoods (like the Naqshbandi shaykh al-Barudi), he remained close to modernized forms of Sufism, as can be seen in the biography of Zayn-Allah Rasuliyeff of Troitsk that Riza al-Din published during the revolutionary year.[379]

He had earlier devoted a book to famous women of the Islamic world, from both the remote and more recent past, which was dominated by ethical preoccupations.[380] Similarly, the didactical novels that he published in the first years of the twentieth century were centered on female characters confronted with the moral decay of the Muslim community. Allegedly inspired by nineteenth-century Russian literature (especially Dostoevskii and Tolstoi), his works reinterpreted its themes in a militant ëadid spirit. Although these works are devoid of great literary originality if compared with the average Tatar ëadid literature of that time, they nevertheless brought their contribution to the ethical response of the Muslim community of Russia, and tell much about the epoch in which they were written.[381]

Riza al-Din’s theoretical works of the same period are concerned with refuting the theory of miracles by saints, and the insistence on karama as an exclusive attribute of the Prophet Muhammad. Through this abundant literary production, in which he constantly advocated the purification of Islam and the focusing of religious teaching on the Qur‘an and the Sunna, Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din acquired as early as the first decade of the 1900s, the status of one of the most outstanding spokesmen for the reformist trend in the Muslim communities of European Russia. Ethical problems, notably through the “women question,” continued to occupy a central place in his work up to his final years and well after the 1917 revolution.[382] In this matter Riza al-Din advocated not perfect equality between women and men (an anachronism often formulated by apologetic modern critics), but the better integration of women in the public life of the Muslim community. In a country where the Muslim population did not enjoy the same electoral rights as the Orthodox community, Riza al-Din’s preoccupations, like those of ‘Ata-Allah Bayazitoff in Saint Petersburg before him, continued to be less political than ethical until the 1917 revolution. His appeals focused on the reform of the family-based and school-based Islamic educational system.

In the aftermath of the first revolution of Russia, in 1906 Riza al-Din gave up his charge as qadi of the Spiritual Assembly and moved to Orenburg in the Southern Urals to act as vice chief redactor of the newspaper Waqt (“Time”). The latter had been created that same year by the Ramiyeff brothers, Muhammad Shakir (1857-1912) and Muhammad Dhakir (1859-1921), two wealthy Muslim entrepreneurs active in gold extraction. The Waqt’s chief redactor and copublisher was the pamphleteer and traveler Muhammad Fatih Karimi (1870-1 937), an early representative of the Tatar didactical ëadid literature.[383] On the initiative of the Ramiyeffs, Riza al-Din participated in the foundation of a new biweekly journal, Mura (“The Council”), a supplement to the Waqt. As its chief redactor, Riza al-Din would steer the new journal from its inception in January 1908 to its banning by the Bolsheviks in January 1918.

The Mura was generously patronized by the Ramiyeffs, and in the 1910s Karimi and Riza al-Din’s salaries each amounted to about 70-80 roubles a month, twice that of the mudarris of a well-

established madrasa in the same period.[384] Riza al-Din was thus able to fully dedicate himself to his new task, devoting much time and means to the accumulation of a large library and documental collection. His exceptionally prolific editorial and literary work during the decade 1908–1918 offers one of the very first, and still a very rare, example of professional intellectual activity outside of the madrasa system of the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire. At the same, however, Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din accepted to serve as mudarris and to teach the Hadith, one of his favorite subjects, at the Husayniyya madrasa of Orenburg. The three Husaynoff brothers, prominent figures of the new industrial Muslim bourgeoisie of the southern Urals, had created this madrasa in 1889. It seems that Riza al-Din developed closer relations with one of them, Ahmad Bay Husaynoff (1837-1906), who is presented in a biography by Riza al-Din as a model benefactor of the Muslim community, and the incarnation of the potential for an Islamic ethics of capitalism.[385]

Interestingly enough, in order to better compete with the most prestigious madrasas of Kazan and Ufa, in the early 1910s Riza al-Din and the Husaynoffs promoted a rearrangement of the curriculum (which, since 1889, had been dominated by secular sciences) in favor of the religious disciplines. They also prolonged the curriculum of the ulum-i mar2iyya from a total of 12 years to 14 years, which was more in accordance with the classical tradition of the madrasas than with the overall practice of the ëadid educational institutions after the late 1880s. Among its more temporary teaching staff, the Husayniyya brought, from time to time, such brilliant Azharians as the theologian Musa Jar-Allah Bigi and the Arabist Zakir al-Qadiri, who both exerted some influence upon the editorial content and overall orientation of the programs of the Mura.

Accused several times of Pan-Islamism by the Russian authorities, Riza al-Din had his most problematical works censored during the years preceding the First World War, especially those dealing with the demands of the Muslim community, or protesting against governmental measures concerning Muslim communal institutions.[386] The same thing happened to his biography of the Ottoman Turkish reformer and popularizer Ahmed Midhat, a book that Riza al-Din submitted to the censorship during the Second Balkans War.[387] Things did not go better after the Bolshevik takeover in November 1917. Deprived of his resources after the closure of the Mura by the

new Russian government, Riza al-Din was invited by the new mufti ‘Alimjan Barudi, one of the leading figures of the former ëadid circles, to recover his position as a qadi of the Muslim Spiritual Assembly. Riza al-Din thus returned from Orenburg to Ufa.

After Barudi’s sudden death in 1921, Riza al-Din fulfilled the latter’s functions before being officially elected in 1923 chairman (mufti) of a newly created “Central Spiritual Board of the Muslims of Inner Russia and Siberia,” which was to replace the old Spiritual Assembly. As the mufti of Russia, Riza al-Din led the 1926 Soviet delegation to the first World Islamic Congress in Mecca. Although his official functions and the new political climate prevented him from openly expressing his views, this period of his life seems to have been marked by a growing pessimism about Western civilization and sympathy for the neo-Hanbali movements which were gaining impetus throughout the Muslim world. Riza al-Din’s ideological turn was marked by a tendency toward a general over-evaluation of the role of Islam in the history of mankind, an idealization of the Islamic Orient in opposition to the Christian West, and a growing reluctance for inter-confessional dialogue.

However the history of the Mura came to an end even before this change. Thus, at least from this perspective, the evolution of the Mura is not comparable to that of al-Manār. The two journals shared nevertheless many common characteristics, up to and including Rashid Rida’s pro-Wahhabi tendencies. Moreover, al-Manār clearly appears not only as the implicit model of the Mura, but also as the most oft quoted periodical publication from the outside Islamic world, especially in the years 1908–1909 and again in 1917.

The Mura was a “literary, scientific and political” (“adabi, fanni wa siyasi”) supplement to the newspaper Waqt, also sponsored by the Ramiyeffs. Like al-Manār it was created in close association with the printing house of the Waqt (Waqt matba‘asi), which published most of Riza al-Din’s works until its closure in 1917. Like al-Manār, the Mura was, from beginning to end, the work of one man. As such, it had an intimate relation with Riza al-Din’s teaching at the Husayniyya madrasa. At the same

time, the journal enjoyed the contribution of many authors from the Muslim reformist movement. Riza al-Din’s fellow companion, Muhammad Fatih Karimi, signed a considerable number of papers and columns on educational questions. The teachers of the Husayniyya, like Musa Jar-Allah Bigi and Zakir al-Qadiri offered a more or less regular collaboration and had their works extensively commented before the latter’s departure to Ufa in 1909. The journal received the regular collaboration of many independent and famous columnists such as the Kazan Tatar nationalist thinker Yusuf Aqchura, the female writer Mahbub-Jamal Aqchurina, the lawyer and politician from Ufa Salim Giray Janturin, the polygraph and memorialist Jamal al-Din Walidoff, the previously mentioned former Azharian student and specialist of questions on education ‘Abd-Allah Battal, et al. The Bashkir traveler Nushirwan Ya’usheff (d. 1917) [388] used to send numerous and regular correspondences from the various areas that he was visiting throughout Inner Eurasia. In a spirit which had been that of the Tatar ëadid and islahi literature since the end of the nineteenth century, Ya’usheff’s columns were centered on problems such as the decadence of Islam, the progress of colonization, or the history and current situation of the Turks of Western and Eastern Turkestan. Such a thematical orientation permitted him to exert the deepest impact upon the Turkestanian readership of the Mura, especially during the revolutionary year 1917. [389]

The sending of open letters by readers from the whole Sunni Muslim Inner Eurasia made the Mura a kind of platform for proponents of Islamic reform throughout the Russian Empire.[390] In terms of the geographical expanse and quality of its audience, the Mura can be compared only with the more conservative journal Din wa ma’imat (“Religion and Life”), which was published in Orenburg in the years 1906-1917 as a tribune for Muslim clerics of the Russian Empire. The letters to the editor published in the Mura reveal that it also functioned, like the Din wa ma’imat, as a forum for questions touching upon the dogmas and rituals of Islam.[391] Its audience explains for a large part the exceptional duration of the Mura, a rare phenomenon in the history of the Muslim press of Russia, even if the constant financial support by Muhammad Zakir Ramiyeff proved salutary in various circumstances.

In spite of a long list of collaborators, a big part of the literary production in the Mura was written by Riza al-Din himself (under his name, his initials, or various pseudonyms, if not anonymously).[392] His encyclopedic expertise, his extensive personal coverage of the mainly Russian academic literature of his time, especially in history, oriented the Mura toward a highly cultured minority readership very similar to the readership of the Manar. Through his activity as popularizer of European and Russian science for a Muslim audience, Riza al-Din can also be compared with the Ottoman Ahmed Midhat, to whom he devoted a very laudative biography in which Midhat himself is compared to both Suyuti and Tolstoi.[393]

The publication by Riza al-Din of a set of comments on the Hadith gave him a high reputation in the Muslim religious establishment of the Russian Empire.[394] It permitted the Mura to enjoy a much larger audience than most of the other journals of the Russian Muslim communities. These were generally aimed at more targeted audiences, and revealed the segmentation of the Muslim communities of Inner Eurasia into multiple factions and ideological trends. Riza al-Din tried to maintain the link between these different factions, at least until the year 1917, when the Mura took on a more political complexion, although it was eclipsed by more radical publications and movements. On the major contemporary questions relevant to the umma, the Mura's leading articles, like those in the Manar, conveyed progressive but still orthodox views based on detailed arguments and formulated with great moderation.

At the same time, the Mura provided extensive news from throughout the whole worlds of Islam, with special attention to the Ottoman Empire, by means of innumerable quotations and translations from Arabic, Ottoman, and North Indian newspapers and journals. The relatively free treatment of the events from a region such as Xinjiang allowed the journal and its partner, the Waqt, to receive correspondences by prominent figures of the East Turkestanian Muslim communities, and to also enjoy some credit in that region.[395] After the end of real Muslim participation in the debates of the State Duma in 1907, news from the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire, through excerpts of the Tatar press such as the Waqt, were focused on the reform of

education and on Muslim teachers' congresses of the 1910s. In addition, the journal offered innumerable editorials about the activity of Orthodox missionaries; papers on the relations between Muslims and Christians; studies on the greatness and decadence of nations; and reviews of books from the whole Muslim world. This very wide scope, which remained without equivalent in the Muslim press of Russia before the October revolution, made the Mura an irreplaceable link between dozens of regular authors and occasional correspondents writing from throughout Sunni Muslim Inner Eurasia. In that respect, although Russian censorship imposed strong limitations on the free circulation of information, the Mura reproduced in Inner Eurasian dimensions the world-scale project of the Manar.

Without being affiliated to any particular school of thought, Riza al-Din's journal had adopted the overall reformist line of the Salafi tendencies. There was, however, a very important difference with Egypt and the other regions of the Islamic world, and that was the Mura's strategy of accommodating with Russian authorities, who supported a more conservative Islam consisting of brotherhoods, sanctuaries, and popular "non-political" piety. The Mura nevertheless shared with the Manar a general will for restoring Islam to its past vigor, and for reestablishing the trust of the faithful in traditional values. This was to be done by means of a biweekly magazine with the fittings of a contemporary journal, redesigned in the 1910s according to the aesthetical innovations of Art Nouveau and Jugen Stijl.

Riza al-Din's constant interest in history was always oriented toward comparison and confrontation between Islam and non-Islam. His evocations of the Volga Bulghars and of the Golden Horde are indeed based on nineteenth-century Russian historiography (Karamzin and Rychkov are often quoted and commented with regard to the Golden Horde and the Khanate of Kazan, as well as Bartol'd about Central Asia). However, like Marjani before him, Riza al-Din persistently insisted on the history of conversion to Islam, and on the practice of the shari'a in the Hanafi madhhab in the pre-Mongol era.[396] His general nostalgia for the Volga Bulghars was nuanced by the first controversies, once again influenced by contemporary Russian historiography, about the arrival of the Tatars in the early thirteenth

century and their influence upon the progress or regress of Islamic civilization in the Volga-Urals region.[397]

The first translation from Muhammad ‘Abduh appeared as early as the Autumn of 1908,[398] and was followed by many others. Those from al-Afghani appear slightly later,[399] but the mention of their author seems to have been globally avoided until the end of the Imperial period (one must remember Riza al-Din’s problems with the Russian authorities for his alleged “Pan-Islamism” during the years preceding the First World War). The first extensive papers devoted by the Mura to the biography of Shaykh Jamal al-Din appeared after the edition of excerpts of the Ottoman and Arabic press; [400] they were published by Riza al-Din in the confused period after the October revolution, and just before the final closure of the journal.[401] In addition to these two key figures, the Mura published in its section on “Famous Men and Great Events” numerous biographical notices on the great figures of Christian civilization, like the philosophers Descartes and Spinoza, undertaking an implicit reflection upon the causes of the decadence of Islam and the need for the rehabilitation of reason. In a spirit which is also very close to that of al-Manār, the series also devoted numerous biographical essays to the rulers and learned peoples of the Islamic world, from both the classical and modern periods.[402]

Among the common themes developed in parallel by both the Mura and the Manar, we find the same insistence on key subjects such as the education of women and their place in the Muslim community,[403] the place and role of the ulama in society (through endless debates about the collection of the zakat, for instance), [404] or the response of the Muslim communities to Christian missionary activity. The highly politicized subject of the conciliar movement, which occupied a central place in the Manar, is treated with many rhetorical precautions in the Mura, which prefers to devote more attention to the congresses of Muslim teachers of Russia. Concerned with the unity of the community, the Mura made constant appeals for Muslims to transcend inner divisions. However, like Rashid Rida, Riza al-Din and the Ramiyeffs’ great project was to teach about the compatibility of Islam with reason and science, in the best interest of mankind (maslaha).

Beyond this typological comparison—which could equally well have stressed such common features as the general aspect of both journals, the distribution of their various sections, their volume numbering and pagination, the presence of annual indexes in both of them, etc.—, more can be learned about the reception of its message by the Muslim readership of Russia through the translations, quotations, and comments on al-Manār. At first glance, al-Manār appears in the Mur beside many other journals and newspapers from Egypt and the Arab Near-East (like al-Mu‘ayyad and al-Hilal), especially when covering contemporary political and cultural events. The Manar was not even the unique vehicle for the popularization of‘Abduh’s thought in Russia, since the old al-’Urwa al-wuöqa continued to enjoy a high reputation at the turn of the 1910s, and to be read and commented in Russia well after its disappearance.[405] In addition to the press, Egyptian books rapidly began to be diffused even in the most remote regions of the Russian Empire, thanks to the development of mail-order sales through catalogues dispatched by Arab and even some Tatar bookstores in Cairo, or by Muslim booksellers in Russia.[406]

For the Muslim readership of Russia, however, the Manar remained the main canal for the penetration of al-Afghani and ‘Abduh’s teachings in the early twentieth century. The Qur1anic justification of science was in a good position,[407] followed by multiple echoes to ‘Abduh’s tafsir,[408] and comments on his Tawhid.[409] For key texts concerning general aspects of Islam in the modern world, al-Manār clearly appeared as the most authoritative source and its articles were translated, quoted and commented.[410] The translation of the Manar itself, in addition to the translation of the sacred and classical texts of Islam, responded to a fundamental need expressed by both the contributors and the readership of the Mura. Voices rose in the 1910s demanding the construction of a Turkic national community by allowing all of its member to freely access and read its texts, that is, texts written in the vernacular Turkic languages of Inner Eurasia, and freed from the “Arabisms” and “Persianisms” that had previously made it impossible for common people to read written literature. The Arabic sources of the Islamic renewal were not to be forgotten or eliminated: they were to be properly translated.[1] Modernization, as it was conceived within this logical

framework, presupposed the existence of a corporation of good specialists of the Arabic language and literature. The Mura gave extensive publicity to former Azharian students, who constantly advocated improving the teaching of Arabic in the madrasas of European Russia as a key means for social transformation. At the same time, Riza al-Din and Muhammad Zakir Ramiyeff's journal never ignored the strong currents for Turkification and for transition from an umma to a nation, which were expressed with growing impetus in the Muslim press and political life of Russia during the decade preceding the 1917 revolution.[411]

** Conclusion

What we have tried to suggest in this preliminary study is that al-Afghani, 'Abduh, and Rashid Rida's works were largely discussed in the 1900s—1910s among the Muslim communities of the Russian Empire, notably by means of translation from and comment on the Manar. This was notably so by the protagonists of the whole reformist spectrum, to whom the Mura offered a unique platform during the last decade of the Imperial period. Ideological relations between the different schools of thought were as complex in Russia or Central Asia as they were in Egypt or the Ottoman Empire during that transitional period, and such categories as modernism and traditionalism ("Jadidism" and "Qadimism" in the case of Russia) were often overlapping. Significantly, the Manar was even more often quoted, translated, and commented in the reputedly conservative (if not reactionary) journal Dm wa ma'imat of Orenburg, than in any other journal of the Muslim press of the Russian Empire including the Mura. Further studies should focus on the various echoes to al-Manār in the Muslim communities of Russia, which could shed new light upon the varieties of modernization strategies.

These studies should further stress the clear disequilibria between an apparent giver and an apparent receiver. Allusions to al-Manār in the Muslim press of Russia are indeed much more numerous than references to the Muslims of the Russian Empire in al-Manār. If we take into account the rich intellectual substratum of the Russian Muslimhood at the end of the nineteenth century, the strength of its re-

Islamization processes, and the openness and dynamism of the Muslim press in the years 1905-1917, such dissymmetrical relations between the Mura and its model the Manar do not necessarily speak in favor of the latter. What about the effective influences from Cairo? Paradoxically, that of al-Azhar seems to be more easily traceable after ‘Abduh’s death, which coincided with the revolution of 1905 and with the beginning of the politicization of the ëadidiyya movement through the Muslim press and Russian Muslim congresses, and through the creation of the party Ittifaq al-Muslimin. ‘Abduh’s influence seems to have grown with the young Azharian intelligentsia, which rapidly politicized after 1905, while that of the Manar gained in the clerical milieus organized around the main reformist madrasas and around the community’s press. We can only imagine what would have been the evolution of the Mura after 1917: this could be the subject of further research on the personal evolution of Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din during the early decades of the Soviet period.

For the moment, our first reading of the Mura as an echo to al-Manār has suggested to us that, for early twentieth-century Muslim spiritual leaders of European Russia, modernization, and even the transition from umma to nation, did not necessarily go with or through secularization. It could even mean the contrary, a modernization through Islamization (or re-Islamization), to the extent that the laws and regulations of the Russian Empire offered no real satisfactory alternative. Although the role of the colonial powers should not be overestimated in the history of Islam in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the case of the Mura and of its understanding of al-Manār shows us in which way and in which measure the long-lasting domination of a Christian state with a policy of confessional discrimination could orient the development strategy of an Islamic minority. This should encourage researchers to attempt to re-place the Mura in the history of sensibility, and to deal with this exceptional document as a source for religious perception, ethics, and inter-confessional relations in the context of a colonial state, in a period of spectacular expansion of capitalism.

Such an approach would also permit external observers to understand why leaders of current Islamic movements throughout European Russia read now

the early twentieth-century Mura with renewed curiosity. Although reinterpreted by the post-Soviet authorities of the Volga-Urals region in a purely secular fashion, and within the logical framework of the old ideology of “peoples’ friendship,” Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s work must be replaced in its original context of an overall confrontation between Islam and Christianity. This may help explain why “Jadidism” is so often appropriated by contemporary proponents of social and political Islamization in the former USSR.

[327] The author would like to express his gratitude to Prof. Hisao Komatsu for his friendly help in the last stage of the redaction of this paper, and for having given him the possibility to consult his personal reproductions of the Mura as well as those kept on microfilm at both the Toyo Bunko and the Faculty of Letters of the University of Tokyo.

[328] For a general overview of this press, see the classic and still irreplaceable work by Alexandre Bennigsen and Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay, La presse et le movement national chez les musulmans de l1Empire russe avant 1920 (Paris—Den Haag: Mouton, 1964). See also Dilara M. Usmanova, “Die tatarische Presse 1905–1918: Quellen, Entwicklungsetappen und quantitative Analyse,” in Michael Kemper, Anke von Kügelgen, Dmitriy Yermakov, eds, Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries, 1 (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1996), 239–278.

[329] See the anonymous paper: “Pitirbur∫ ëami2ning rasmi”[The Draft for the Great Mosque in Saint Petersburg], Mura (Orenburg) 1/16 (1 ma2ban 1326 [15 [28] August 1908]): 516–517 (the two dates in square brackets are respectively those of the Christian Julian—the official one in the Russian Empire—and Gregorian calendars). The project was disapproved by the Russian authorities for its “Pan-Islamic” character and was replaced by another of a more colonial design, with its main body in Caucasian style and a cupola seeking to imitate that of Tamerlane’s funeral complex in Samarqand (both Caucasus and Central Asia were included among the territories of the Russian Empire).

[330] Cf. notably Thomas Kuttner, “Russian Jadidism and the Islamic World. Ismail Gasprinski in Cairo—1908,” Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique 16/3–4 (1975): 383–424.

[331] For more details on this aspect, see my paper: “Islam et nationalisme en Asie Centrale, au début de la période soviétique (1924–1937). L1exemple de l1Ouzbékistan, à travers quelques sources littéraires,” Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée 95–98 (2002): 43–73.

[332] Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962; reed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 222.

[333] On Batirma1s uprising in 1755, see: Iskander Giliyazov, “Die Islampolitik von Staat und Kirche im Wolga-Ural-Gebiet und der Batïrma Aufstand von 1755,” in Kemper et al., ed., Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia [quoted in note 2]: 69–90; by the same author, “Mulla Batyrma i ego pis1mo imperatrice Elizavete Petrovne [Mulla Batirma and His Address to the Empress Elizabeth],” in Damir Ishakov, ed., Iz istorii Al1met1evskogo regiona (Elements of History of the Region of Almetevsk) (Almetevsk: Izdatel1stvo Tatpoligraf, 2000), 129–140. On Muslim participation in the so-called PugaTev revolt, see notably: I. M. Gvozdikova, Bamkortostan nakanune i v gody krest1janskoj vojny pod predvoditel1stvom E. I. PugaTeva [Bashkortostan at the Eve of and during the Peasant War under the Leadership of Emeljan PugaTev] (Ufa: Kitap, 1999), 346–360 ff.; Salavat Tajmasov, Vosstanie 1773–1774 gg. v Bamkortostane (The 1773–1774 Uprising in Bashkortostan) (Ufa: Kitap, 2000), 184–257.

For a general approach of Russian legislation on the Muslims of Russia, and of the successive reactions of the Muslim communities to it, see Aydar Nogmanov, “L1évolution de la législation sur les musulmans de Russie, de la conquête de Qazan à la guerre de Crimée,” in Stéphane A. Dudoignon, Dämir Is1haqov, and Räfyq Möhämmätshin, eds, L1islam de Russie. Conscience communautaire et autonomie politique chez les Tatars de la

Volga et de l1Oural, depuis le XVIII e siècle (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1997): 115–130.

[334] Danil Azamatov, Orenburgskoe magometanskoe duhovnoe sobranie v obsˆestvennoj I duhovnoj zizni musulmanskogo naselenija Juznogo Urala v konce XVIII–XIX vv. [The Muslim Spiritual Assembly of Orenburg in the Social and Spiritual Life of the Muslim Populations of the Southern Urals, Late 18th–19th Centuries] (masters thesis, Rossijskaja akademija nauk, Ufimskij nauTnyj centr, Institut istorii, jazyka i literatury, 1994), 51–85 ff.; Danil1 Azamatov, “Russian Administration and Islam in Bashkiria (18th–19th Centuries),” in Kemper et al., ed., Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia, 91–112; still by the same author, “The Muftis of the Orenburg Spiritual Assembly in the 18th and 19th Centuries: The Struggle for Power in Russia’s Muslim Institution,” in Anke von Kügelgen, Michael Kemper, Allen J. Frank, eds, Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Late 20th Centuries, 2. Inter-Regional and Inter-National Relations (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1998): 355–384.

[335] Up to the 1870s the ethnonym “Tatar” (in Russian tatar, tatarskij) was commonly used by the Russian administration as a superordinate to designate the Turkic-speaking Muslim population of the Empire: cf. Donald Ostrowski, Muscovy and the Mongols. Cross-Cultural Influences on the Steppe Frontier, 1304–1589 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), XIII. This term retained something of its inclusive characteristics in Muslim sources of the early twentieth century. However the Russian practice evolved during the nineteenth century, especially after the conquest of Central Asia in the 1860–1880s. At this time, the imperial administration tried to establish a distinction between the Crimean, Volgian, and Siberian “Tatars,” and the other Muslim populations of European Russia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, so as to fight against the threats of the day, that is, “panislamism” and “panturkism.” From that time on, the term Tatar was to become restricted to the Tatar-speaking Muslim populations of Crimea, the Middle and Lower Volga, and Western Siberia. On these questions, see A. J. Frank, Islamic Historiography and “Bulghar” Identity among the Tatars and Bashkirs of Russia (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), 5–6, 42–43.

[336] Paul Werth, Subjects for Empire: Orthodox Missions and Imperial Governance in the Volga-Kama Region, 1825–1881 (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1996); Robert Geraci, “Russian Orientalism in an Impasse: Tsarist Education Policy and the 1910 Conference on Islam,” in Daniel R. Brower and Edward J. Lazzerini, eds, Russia’s Orient. Imperial Borderlands and Peoples, 1700–1917 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 138–161.

[337] Ingeborg Baldauf, Schriftreform und Schriftwechsel bei den Muslimischen Russland—und Sowjettürken (1850–1937) (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993), 3–52.

[338] On this key aspect of Muslim reformism see: Adeed Khalid, The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform. Jadidism in Central Asia (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, CA, and London: The University of California Press, 1998), 114–154.

[339] See for example Thierry Zarcone, “Un aspect de la polémique autour du soufisme dans le monde tatar, au déut du XXe siècle: mysticisme et confrérisme chez Mûsâ Djârallâh Bîgî,” in Dudoignon et al., eds, L1Islam de Russie, 227–247; Ilmat Gyjmadiev, “Musa Bigiev sufiTylyk hakynda [Musa Bigiyeff about Sufism],” in Ramat Ämirxanov and Väliulla Jag1kub, eds, Idel buenda sufiTylyk: tarixy häm üzenTälekläre [Sufism in the Volga Region: Its history and Specificities] (Kazan: Iman nämrijaty, 2000), 49–54.

[340] See Hamid Algar, “Shaykh Zaynullah Rasulev: The Last Great Naqshbandi Shaykh of the Volga-Urals Region,” in Jo-Ann Gross, ed., Muslims in Central Asia. Expressions of Identity and Change (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1992), 112–133; see also Marsil1 Farhmatov, “Rasulev, Zajnulla, and Rasulija,” in S. M. Prozorov, ed., Islam na territorii byvmej Rossijskoj imperii. EnciklopediTeskij slovar 1 (Islam on the Territory of the Late Russian Empire. An

Encyclopaedic Dictionary), 1. (Moscow: Izdatel1skaja firma “VostoTnaja literatura” R[ossijskoj] A[kademii] N[auk], 1998): 85–86, further references.

[341] Marsil1 Farhmatov, “al-Barudi,” in Islam na territorii byvmej Rossijskoj imperii, 2: 14–15; R. Ämirxan, “Möhämmädija Mädräsäse [The Muhammadiyya Madrasa],” in Röstam Mähdiev, ed., Mädräsälärdä kitap kimtäse. Mämhür mäg1rifat üzäkläre tarixynnan [The Bookshelves in the Madrasas. Elements of History of Famous Educational Institutions] (Kazan: Tatarstan kitap nämrijaty, 1992), 12–32.

[342] Tavkil1 Kamalov, Zija Kamali: myslitel1, prosvetitel1, religioznyj dejatel1 [Ziya Kamali: Thinker, Educator, Religious Figure] (Kazan: Izdatel1stvo Iman, 1997), 8–9; see also Marsil1 Farhmatov, “Kamali, Zija,” in Islam na territorii byvmej Rossijskoj imperi, 1: 41–42.

[343] Stéphane A. Dudoignon, “Qu1est-ce que la qadîmîya? Eléments pour une sociologie du traditionalisme musulman, en Islam de Russie et en Transoxiane (au tournant des XIXe et XXe siècles),” in Dudoignon et al., eds, L1Islam de Russie : 207–226; by the same author, “Status, Strategy and Discourse of a Muslim ‘Clergy’ under a Christian Law: Polemics about the Collection of the Zakat in Late Imperial Russia,” in Stéphane A. Dudoignon and Hisao Komatsu, eds, Islam in Politics in Russia and Central Asia, Early 18th—Late 20th Century (London—New York: Kegan Paul International, 2001): 43–73.

[344] On the mutual articulation between India and Central Eurasia through the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya during the nineteenth century, see the exploratory study by Anke von Kügelgen, “Die Entfaltung der Naqmbandiya Muëaddidiya im mittleren Transoxianien vom 18. bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts: ein Stück Detektivarbeit,” in Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia, 2: 101–152; see also Baxtiyor Babadzanov, “On the History of the Naqmbandiya Muëaddidiya in Central Asia in the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries,” in Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia, 1: 385–413.

[345] Cf. M. Kemper, “Musul1manskaja elita i duh kapitalizma [The Muslim Elite and the Spirit of Capitalism],” Tatarstan 1997/8: 75–81.

[346] See G. N. Hismätova, “XX gasyr bamynda tatar ëämgyjatynda 2riba’ mäs1äläse [The Question of Interest Loan in the Early 20th-Century Tatar Society], in J. G. Abdullin, R. M. Amirhanov, and F. M. Sultanov, eds, Islam v istorii i kul1ture tatarskogo naroda [Islam in the History and Culture of the Tatar People] (Kazan: RIC Mkola, 2000), 155–162.

[347] For comparison with contemporary developments in other regions of the Russian Empire, such as the Southern Caucasus and Siberia, where madrasas played a more limited role in the social life and modernization strategies of the Muslim communities, see: François Georgon, “Une note sur le modernisme en Azerbaïdjan au tournant du siècle,” Cahiers du monde russe 37/1–2 (1996): 97–106; Stéphane A. Dudoignon, “Un islam périphérique? Quelques réflexions sur la presse musulmane de Sibérie à la veille de la Première Guerre mondiale,” Cahiers du monde russe 41/2–3 (2000): 297–340.

[348] Michael Kemper, “Entre Boukhara et la Moyenne-Volga: 2Abd an-Nasîr al-Qûrsâwî en conflit avec les oulémas traditionalistes,” Cahiers du monde russe 37/1–2 (1996), 41–52; by the same author, Sufis und Gelehrte in Tatarien und Baschkirien, 1789–1889. Der islamische Diskurs unter russischer Herrschaft (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1998), 278–286; G. G. Idijatullina, “Problema idztihada i Abu Nasr Kursavi [The Question of iëtihad and Abu1l-Nasr Qursawi],” in D. G. Tumameva et al., eds, Katanovskie Ttenija [Katanov Conferences] (Kazan: Izdatel1stvo Master Lajn, 1998), 128–135.

[349] Thierry Zarcone, “Philosophie et théologie chez les djadids. La question du raisonnement indépendant (iëtihâd),” Cahiers du monde russe 37/1–2 (1996), 59–60.

[350] Stéphane A. Dudoignon, “La question scolaire à Boukhara et au Turkestan russe, du ‘premier renouveau’ à la soviétisation (fin du XVIIIe siècle-1937),” Cahiers du monde russe 37/1–2 (1996), 134–146. The stereotypes about the decadence of Central Asia, which were common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries Tatar literature and press—including the Mura —were vehemently discussed by Turkestanian intellectuals during the 1900s and 1910s. See for instance the critique of a travel account published by the Tatar writer Muhammad Zahir Bigi: “Mawara al-Nahrga sayahat [A Journey to Transoxiana],” Mura 1/5 (safar 11, 1326 (March 1[14], 1908)): 148–149. For an example of Tatar representations and Turkestanian answers to them, see 2Abd al-Karim Sa2id’s classical reformist view of the “decadence” of Islam in Central Asia, in particular in the khanate of Khiva: “Ruhsiz 2alam [A Soulless World],” Mura 2/18 (rama/an 13 1327 [September 15 [28], 1909]): 549–551; and in the same “reformist” spirit, a protestation of the representation given by 2Abd al-Karim Sa2id of a decadent and moribund Khwarezm: Qari Muhammad Rahim, untitled correspondence from Bukhara, Mura 2/20 (mawwal 13, 1327 [October 15 [28], 1909]), 632–633.

[351] Frank, Islamic Historiography and “Bulghar” Identity among the Tatars and Bashkirs of Russia, 149–157; N. G. Garaeva, “Materialy ‘Vafjjat al-Aslaf ‘ M. Mardzani po istorii Povolzja [The Materials of M. Marëani1s Wafiyat al-aslaf for the History of the Volga Region],” in R. M. Amirhanov et al., eds, Mardzani: nasledie i sovremennost1 [Marëani: His Heritage and Actuality] (Kazan: Izdatel1stvo Master Lajn, 1998), 51–60.

[352] For a rare demographic analysis of this “apostasy” movement, see D. M. Ishakov, IstoriTeskaja demografija tatarskogo naroda (XVIII-naTalo XX vv.) [Historical Demography of the Tatar People (18th–Early 20th Centuries)] (Naberezhnye Chelny: PeTatnyj Dvor, 1993), 97–99.

[353] See the documents published by I. N. Morozov and N. N. Semenova, eds, Agrarnyj vopros i krest1janskoe dvizenie v Tatarii XIX veka [The Agrarian Question and Peasant Movement in 19th-century Tataria]

(Moscow—Leningrad: Izdatel1stvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1936), 156–164; see also Kemal H. Karpat, “The Hijra from Russia and the Balkans: The Process of Self-Definition in the Late Ottoman State,” in Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, eds, Muslim Travellers. Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination (London: Routledge, 1990): 131–152; Christian Noack, Muslimischer Nationalismus im Russischen Reich. Nationsbildung und Nationsbewegung bei Tataren und Baschkiren, 1861–1917 (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000), 45–49.

[354] See notably M. N. Farhmatov, Narodnoe obrazovanie v Bamkirii v poreformennyj period, 60–90 e gody XIX v. [Popular Instruction in Bashkiria during the Reform Era (from the 1860s to the 1890s)] (Moscow: Nauka, 1994), 77–95.

[355] See notably R. Ämirxan, “Möhämmädija Mädräsäse,” 26–30; Söläjman Rähimov,” ‘Galija1 Mädräsäse [The 2Aliyya Madrasa],” in Mädräsälärdä kitap kimtäse, 118–119.

[356] See Abrar Karimullin, Tatarskaja kniga poreformennoj Rossii [The Tatar Book in Russia during the Reform Era] (Kazan: Tatarskoe kniznoe izdatel1stvo, 1984), 37–98.

[357] See Ä. H. Safina, “G. Ishaqyj häm Tuqay iëatlarynda mäkert1lär mäs1äläsene Tagylymy [The Talaba Question in the Works of Ishaqi and Tuqay],” in F. K. Bämirov, ed., Tuqaj häm XX gasyr mädänijate. Magyjrdneˇ 110 ellygynda bagymlangan xalyqara konferencija materiallary (Kazan: IJaLI im. G. Ibragimova ANT, 1997), 158–160; Michael Friederich, Ghabdulla Tuqaj (1886–1913). Ein hochgelobter Poet im Dienst von tatarischer Nation und sowjetischem Sozialismus (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1998), 93–108.

[358] See Komatsu Hisao, Kakumei no Chuo Ajia. Aru jadido no shozo [Revolutionary Central Asia. A Portrait of Äbduräuf Fiträt] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppansha, 1996), 191–219.

[359] Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, La presse et le mouvement national, 44–45; R. Muhametshin, “G. Bajazitov,” in R. Muhametshin, ed., IstoriTeskie portrety. Duhovnaja kul1tura i tatarskaja intelligencija (Kazan: Izdatels1tvo Magarif, 2000): 42–46.

[360] On Bayazitoff and his role among the Muslim community of Russia, see the assessment written in 1920 by the mufti [2Alimëan Hazrat Barudi], Pamjatnaja knizka (Xäter däftäre) [Book of Memories], trans. from Tatar to Russian by E. Nigmatullin (Kazan: Izdatel1stvo Iman, 2000), 63–64. See also Anas B. Khalidov, “The History of Islam in St-Petersburg,” Religion, State and Society 22/2 (1994): 245–249.

[361] See [Ataulla Bajazitov], Vozrazenie na reT1 Ernesta Renana “Islam i nauka” Sankt-Peterburgskogo muhamedanskogo ahuna imam dzamija hatyb mudarrisa Ataully Bajazitova [Reply to Ernest Renan’s Lecture on “Islam and Science” by the Muslim Alund 2Ata1-Allàh Bayazitoff, Latib, Mudarris and Imam-Ëami2 of Saint Petersburg] (Saint Petersburg: Tipografija A. S. Suvorina, 1883); by the same author, Islam I progress [Islam and Progress] (Saint Petersburg: Tipografija A. S. Suvorina, 1898); by the same author, Otnomenie islama k nauke i k inovercam [The Attitude of Islam Towards Science and Non-Believers] (Saint Petersburg: Tipografija Nur, 1906).

[362] On Ibrahimoff ‘s relations with al-Afghani in particular, see Ismail Türkoëlu, Sibiriyalı Mevhur Seyyah Abdürrevid Ibrahim [2Abd al-Ramid Ibrahim, a Famous Siberian Traveller] (Ankara: Türkie Diyanet Yayınları, 1997). See also the paper by Hisao Komatsu in the present volume.

[363] See Farhmatov, “al-Barudi,” 14–15, bibliography.

[364] Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, La presse et le mouvement national, 59–60.

[365] See Zavdat Z. Minullin, “ZemljaTestva i blagotvoritel1nye obûestva tatarskih uTaˆsihsja v musul1manskih stranah (naTalo XX v.),” Mir islama (Kazan) 1 (1999): 135–144; English translation available as “Fraternal and Benevolent Associations of Tatar Students in Muslim Countries at the Beginning of the 20th Century,” in Anke von Kügelgen, Michael Kemper and Allen J. Frank, eds, Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia (Berlin: Schwarz, 1998), 271–280.

[366] See for example Qahirada Tatar Talabasi Æam2iyyati, “Misr al-Qahirada: al-Azhar (Misrdan) [In Cairo: al-Azhar (A Correspondence from Egypt)],” Mura 1/4 (muharram 26, 1326 [February 15 [28], 1908]), 114–116; 1/6 (safar 25, 1326 [March 15 [28], 1908]), 168–171; 1/7 (rabi2 al-awwal 13, 1326 [April 1[14], 1908]), 200–202. About the Fraternity of the Muslim Students from Russia in Mecca, and its relations with the Fraternity in Cairo, see the anonymous column: “Makka-yi Mukarramada Rusiya islam talabasiniˇ ëam2iyyat-i 2ilmiyyasi [The Learned Society of Students from the Russian Muslimhood in Mecca],” Mura 3/6 (rabi2 al-awwal 17, 1327 [March 15 [28], 1910]), 191–192.

[367] Azamatov, Orenburgskoe magometanskoe duhovnoe sobranie, 355–384.

[368] See Madina Rahimkulova, Medrese “Husainija” v Orenburge. 2oe dopolnennoe jubilejnoe izdanie, posvjaûennoe 160-letiju Ahmet baja Husajnova [The Husayniyya Madrasa in Orenburg. 2nd Edition, Completed in the Honor of the 160th Birthday of Ahmad Bay Husaynoff] (Orenburg: Jana Vakyt, 1997), 56–60; about the teaching staff of the Madrasa-yi 2Aliyya in Ufa, see Rähimov,” ‘Galija’ mädräsäse,” 115.

[369] See the anonymous paper “Ta1ril-i adiyan darslari [Lectures in the History of Religions],” Mura 2/22 (zul- qada 15, 1327 [November 15 [28], 1909], 679–682. This is the presentation to a course prepared by Musa Bigi for the Husayniyya starting in 1906, and dealing with the diversity of religions, a key issue in 2Abduh’s teachings and work.

[370] About al-Qadiri, see Bennigsen and Lemercier-Quelquejay, La presse et le movement national, 81–82; Dudoignon, “Un islam périphérique?,” 302–304, 322–328.

[371] Abdullah Battal-Taymas, Rizaeddin Fahreddinoëlu (Istanbul: M. Siralar Matbaası, 1958); by the same author, Musa Carullah Bigi (Istanbul: M. Siralar Matbaası, 1958); by the same author, Âlimcan Barudî (Istanbul: M. Siralar Matbaası, 1958). Also see by the same author, “Türk dünyasında Usulü Cedit hareketi [The Movement of the Usul-I Ëadid in the Turkic World],” Türk Kültürü 2/18 (1964), 119–125.

[372] See notably Bayart Dodge, Al-Azhar. A Millenium of Muslim Learning (Washington, DC: The Middle East Institute, 1974), 132.

[373] See M. Rähimkulova and A. Hamidullin,” ‘Hösäjnija1 mädräsäse [The Husayniyya Madrasa],” in Mähdiev, ed., Mädräsälärdä kitap kimtäse, 74–114; Rahimkulova, Medrese “Husajnija” v Orenburge, 4–15.

[374] Abdallah Bubi, Bubi madrasasining qisqa ta1rixi [An Abridged History of the Bubi Madrasa] (Bubi-Sarapul and Ghulja: s.n., 1913–1918; reprinted in cyrillic alphabet by Raif Märdanov and Söläjman Rähimov, Kazan: s.n., 1991). For other analogous examples from the eastern Volga-Kama region, see: I. R. Gabdullin and R. R. Ibragimova, “Mektebe i medrese Bugul1minskogo i Menzelinskogo uezdov v konce XIX—naTale XX vekov [The Maktab s and Madrasas of the Districts of Bugul1ma and Menzelinsk in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries),” in Ishakov, ed., Iz istorii Al1met1evskogo regiona, 174–179.

[375] Although the recent bibliography on RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din remains very problematic due to the tendency of most authors to ignore the religious

aspects of his work and to promote secularist interpretations of it, we may mention the following contributions: in addition to the previously mentioned monograph by Battal-Taymas, Rizaeddin Fahreddinoëlu, see Mahmud Tahir, “Risaeddin Fahreddin,” Central Asian Survey, 8/1 (1989): 111–115; F. N. Bajmev, Ob◊estvenno-politiTeskie i nravstvenno-etiTeskie vzgljady Rizy Fahretdinova [The Socio-Political and Ethical Conceptions of RiÁa Falr al-Dinoff] (Ufa: Kitap, 1996); ¸aisa Hösäjnov, Rizaitdin bin Fäxretdin (Ufa: Kitap, 1997); Mädinä Rähimkulova, ed., Rizaetdin bin Fäxretdingä 140 jam tulu mönäsäbäte belän (1859–1936) [On the Occasion of RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din’s 140th Anniversary (1859–1936)] (Orenburg: Agenstvo Pressa, 1998); Raif Märdanov, Zavdat Mi˘ullin, and Söläjman Rähimov, eds, Rizaetdin Fexretdin. Fänni-biografik Ëyentyk / Rizaetdin Faxretdinov. NauTno-biografiTeskij sbornik [RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din. Collected Studies and Elements of Bibliography] (Kazan: Ruxijat nämrijaty, 1999); M. Farhmatov, “Fahretdinov, Rizaetdin,” in Islam na territorii byvmej Rossijskoj imperii, 1, 94–95; Ismail Türkoëlu, Rusya Türkleri arasındaki yenilevme hareketinin öncülerinden Rizaeddin Fahreddin [RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din, the Vanguard of the Renewal Movement among the Turks of Russia] (Istanbul: Ötüken nevriyatı, 2000).

[376] Rizaetdin Fahretdinov, “Moja avtobiografija (My Autogiography),” trans. from Tatar to Russian by R. Märdanov, in Märdanov, Mi˘nullin, and Rähimov, eds, Rizaetdin Fexretdin. Fänni-biografik Ëyentyk/Rizaetdin Faxretdinov. NauTno-biografiTeskij sbornik, 100.

[377] Riza al-Din published the manuscript of Marëani1s hajj account with a short biography of the great Kazan 2alim : Riza al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Rihlat al-Marëani (Kazan: Tipo-Litografija naslednikov M. ÷irkovoj, 1897). On this work, see my paper: “Us et usages du voyage et de sa narration, par les lettrés et savants de Russie au tournant du XXe siècle. La Rihlat al-Marëani (1880),” presentation at the round table L1Univers en partage. 3: La relation de voyage et ses usages, dir. Alain Roussillon (Rabat: Université Mohamed V, January 26, 2001).

[378] Riza al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Ibn Taymiyya (Orenburg: Waqt matba2asi, 1913), passim (Mamhur erlar maëmu2asindan 5-nëi ëuz2 [Series on Great Men, 5]).

[379] Riza al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Mayl Zayn-Allàh Hazrat tarëuma-yi hali [A Biography of Mayl Zayn-Allàh] (Orenburg: Waqt matba2asi, 1917); for a short analysis of Riza al-Din's writings on Rasuliyeff, see Mäsgud Gäjnetdinov, "Tamkyn koTagynda bir majak [A Lighthouse in the Tempest]," Gasyrlar avazy (Kazan) 1/2 (1997): 136–141.

[380] RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Mamhur latunlar (Famous Ladies), 2nd ed. (Orenburg: Muhammad Fatih b. ¸ilman Karimoff Matba2asi, 1904); on this work see Türkoglu, Rusya Türkleri arasındaki yenilevme hareketinin öncülerinden Rizaeddin Fahreddin, 312–314.

[381] After a long period of censorship under the Soviet regime, Riza al-Din' s fiction works Salima, yaki 2iffat [Salima, or Virtue] (Kazan: s.n., 1899) and 2Isma, yaki 2amal wa ëaza1 [2Isma, or Crime and Punishment, 1903] (Orenburg: s.n., 1903) were read again in the decade preceding Perestroika in Tatarstan, and curiously reinterpreted in a purely secular sense: see for instance Möhämmät Gajnullin, Tatar ädipläre [Tatar Literati] (Kazan: Tatarstan kitap nämrijaty, 1978), 79–98.

[382] See my paper "Women at Stake, and Protagonists in the Intellectual Life of the Muslim Communities of European Russia, Siberia and the Qazaq Steppe (Early 20th Century)," communication to the colloquium Intellectuals in Islam in the 20th Century: Situations, Discourses, Strategies, Tokyo: Islamic Area Studies Project, October 13–15, 2000.

[383] On Karimi, see a short biographical sketch with a rich bibliography in Türkoëlu, Rusya Türkleri arasındaki yenilevme hareketinin öncülerinden Rizaeddin Fahreddin, 350–353; B. Sultanbekov, "F. Karimi," in IstoriTeskie portrety : 111–117.

[384] Raif Märdanov,” ‘Mura’ zurnaly [The Journal Mura],” Gasyrlar avazy (1999/1–2): 227–243 and especially 232.

[385] RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Ahmad Bay Afandi (Orenburg: Waqt matba2asi, 1911), especially 22–24 (chapter on “Diyanati wa allaqi [His Religiosity and Ethics]”), 24–28 (chapter on “Umid wa fikrlari [His Hopes and Thoughts]”), and 51–52 (chapter on “Haëë ga yubarmak [Sending to the Pilgrimage],” a eulogy of the financial support given by Ahmad Bay Husaynoff to the organization of the Pilgrimage to Mecca).

[386] See for example RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Rusiya musulmanlarini˘ ihtiyaëlari wa anlar haqinda intiqad [The Needs of the Muslims of Russia and the Critiques about Them], ed. Imam Layr-Allàh al-2Uömani (Orenburg: Muhammad Fatih b. ¸ilman Karimoff Matba2asi, n.d.), passim.

[387] Riza al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Ahmad Midhat (Orenburg: Waqt matba2asi, 1913).

[388] See his obituary by Mir Muhsin Mir Muhammad (from Tashkent), “Sayyah Numirwan AfandiYa1umeff [The Traveller Numirwan AfandiYa1umeff],” Mura 10/18 (zul-hiëëa 11, 1335 [September 15 [24], 1917]), 419–420.

[389] Cf. Shin1ichiro Oishi, “Nushiruvan Yaushefu no Torukisutan shuyu ni tsuite [About Numirwan Ya1umeff ‘s Journeys to Turkestan],” Kobe Daigaku Shigaku Nenpu 13 (1998), 20–36; reviewed by Hisao Komatsu in Abstracta Iranica 22 (2001): 130.

[390] See, for example, a letter from the Turkestanian adib and playwriter Hajji Mu2in b. Shukr-Allah Katta-Qurghani asking for more attention on the problems of teaching Arabic language and literature: Haëëi

Mu2in b. Mukr-Allàh, untitled correspondence from Samarqand, Mura 8/24 (safar 21, 1334 [December 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1915]), 759. The author complains about the lack of attention of the Mura to Arabic classical literature and to biographies of great Arab scholars and scientists of the past. Significantly, Haëëi Mu2in also asks for the publication of more biographies on the great figures of Central Asian history (such as Amir Temur, Uluʃ Beg, or Babur), and of those of modern Ottoman culture (such as Namık Kemal or Vemseddin Sami). On Haëëi Mu2in's theatrical works, and the Tatar influence on it, see Muhrat Rizaev, Ëadid dramasi [The Ëadid Drama] (Tashkent: Marq, 1997), 86–87, samples of his work on 245–316.

[391] See, for example, Muhammadëan Muhammad Salih Aʃli Luëandi, untitled correspondence from Qarghali [Orenburg], Mura 1/18 (ramazan 3, 1326 [September 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]): 573–576. In it the author, a Muslim traveller from the city of Khujand in Russian Turkestan, questions the Editor on the ritual of the namaz-ëum2a, making references to both Abu Hanifa and al-Marjani. Having asked in vain for a fatwa from the ulama of Tashkent and Bukhara, Muhammadëan decided to submit his question to the Mura.

[392] Statistics in Märdanov," 'Mura' zurnaly," passim.

[393] Riza al-Din, Ahmad Midhat, 42–46.

[394] Riza al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Ëami2 al-kalim marhi (Orenburg: Waqt Matba2asi, 1916); on this work, see a short summary by Türkoëlu, Rusya Türkleri arasındaki yenilevme hareketinin öncülerinden Rizaeddin Fahreddin, 296–298.

[395] Cf. Shin1ichiro Oishi," 'Wakuto1 shijo no Buruhan Shahido no kiji ni tsuite [Burhan Mahid's Articles in the Waqt], Seinan Ajia Kenkyu 49 (1998): 68–84; reviewed by Hisao Komatsu in Abstracta Iranica 22 (2001): 130.

[396] In the series “Mamhur adamlar wa buyuk hadiöalar [Famous Peoples and Great Events],” which was sometimes published anonymously by Riza al-Din himself: [RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din], “Ëa2far bin 2Abd-Allàh (Almas bin Saski),” Mura 1/1 (20 zulhiëëa 20, 1325 [January 10 [<verbatim>23</verbatim>], 1908]), 4–7. This is about the king of the Bulghars who is credited by tradition for the conversion of his people to Islam in the early tenth century CE. Significantly, the paper was published in the very first issue of the Mura ; by the same author, “Berke Lan,” parts 1 and 2, Mura I/2 (muharram 1 1326 [January 21 [February 4], 1908]): 34–38; I/3 (muharram 16, 1326 [February 5 [<verbatim>18</verbatim>], 1908]), 65–76. This is the first of a long series of papers about the Golden Horde, from its conversion to Islam up until the Russian conquest of the khanate of Kazan in 1551.

[397] Cf. for example Darwim (a pseudonym frequently employed by RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din), “Ázimizga 2a1id [About Us],” Mura 1/4 (muharram 26, 1326 [February 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]), 107–110.

[398] 2Abduh made his first appearance as an author in the seventeenth issue of the journal: [Muhammad 2Abduh], “Musulmanlarda salaflar aöarlari yuq (2Allama-yi mamahir Muhammad 2Abduh niˇ ‘al-Islam wa al-nusraniyya’ nam risalasindan tarëuma) [There is no Trace of the Companions among the Muslims (A Translation of the Treaty on ‘Islam and Christianity’ by the Most Famous 2Alim Muhammad 2Abduh)],” translated from Arabic to Tatar by Badr al-Din 2Umrani, Mura 1/17 (ma2ban 18, 1326 [September 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1908]), 527–528.

[399] [Ëamal al-Din al-Afʃani], “Islam dini (Mayl Ëamal al-Din al-Afʃani hazratlarining Radd al-dahriyin nam aöarindan iqtibasan tarëuma idilmimdir) [The Islamic Religion (A Partial Translation of the Refutation of the Materialists by Mayl Ëamal al-Din al-Afʃani)],” translated from the Arabic to the Tatar by Muhammad Hadi b. 2Inan Sa2di, Mura 1/22 (zul-qada 5, 1326 [November, 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]), 701–704. See also 2A[bd-Allàh] Battal,

“ ̣arb ma2imatindan [About Life in the West],” Mura 3/13 (raëab 7, 1328 [July 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1910]), 401–402. In this paper, which is the answer to an article from the Russian journal Musul1manin (“The Muslim”) of Paris with a flattering evocation of the “vie parisienne ,” the author makes critical considerations about a world in which everyday life is not administered by religious laws.

[400] See, for example, Mehmed 2Akif [Ersoy], “Mayl Ëamal al-Din wa Muhammad 2Abduh (Sirat al-mustaqim maëallasindan alindi) [Mayl Ëamal al-Din and Muhammad 2Abduh (taken from the journal Sirat al-mustaqim)],” Mura 3/12 (ëumadi al-alir 20, 1328 [June 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1910]), 370–372.

[401] RF [RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din], “Mamhur adamlar wa ulu∫ hadiöalar: Mayl Ëamal al-Din [Famous Peoples and Great Events: Mayl Ëamal al-Din],” parts 1–9, Mura 10/14 (mawwal 8, 1335 [July 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1917]): 313–316; 10/15 (mawwal 25, 1335 [August 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1917]): 338–341; 10/16 (zul-qada 10, 1335 [August 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1917]): 361–365; 10/17 (zul-qada 27, 1335 [September 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1917]): 386–388 (with a photograph of al-Afghani on the front page); 10/18 (zul-hiëëa 11, 1335 [September 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1917]): 409–413; 10/19 (safar 7, 1336 [November 9 [<verbatim>22</verbatim>], 1917]): 433–436; 10/20 (safar [sic], 1336 [November [sic], 1917]): 457–461; 10/21 (safar 12, 1336 [December 13 [<verbatim>18</verbatim>], 1917]): 481–485; 10/22 (safar 14, 1336 [December 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1917]): 497–499; 10/23–24 (rabi2al-awwal 30, 1336 [December 30, 1917 [January 12, 1918]): 513–517.

[402] See for instance RF [RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din], “Mamhur adamlar wa ulu∫ hadiöalar: 2Abd al-Qadir Ëaza1iri [Famous Peoples and Great Events: 2Abd al-Qadir the Algerian],” parts 1 and 2, Mura 8/22 (muharram 21 [sic], 1333 [November 15

[<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1915]; the hiëri date is erroneous): 673–676; 8/23 (safar 7, 1334 [December 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1915]), 706–707.

[403] 2A[bd-Allàh] Battal, “Latunlar wa taraqqi [Women and Progress],” 3/5 (rabi2 al-awwal 3, 1328 [March 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1910]): 136–139; anonymous paper, “Latunlarni ta2lim (al-Hilaldan) [The Education of Women (from al-Hilal)],” Mura 3/8 (rabi2 al-alir 18, 1328 [April 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1910]): 250, a paper about the al-Jami2a school, an educational institution for young girls in Cairo and other topics.

[404] See RiÁa al-Din b. Falr al-Din, Maktab wa zakat, lazina wa zemstwa yardimi [The School and Its Financing through the Zakat, the Treasury, and the Zemstvo s] (Orenburg: Karimoff, Husaynoff wa mirkasi [sic], n.d.), passim.

[405] M. Hadi (from Cheliabinsk), “Qadr Mas1alasi (÷ilabi mahrinda rus mu2allimi; ustaz wa imam Muhammad 2Abduh HaÁratlarini˘ ‘al-2Urwa al-wuöqa’ da yazilmim maqalasi) [The Question of Destiny (A Russian Teacher in the City of Cheliabinsk; a Paper written by the Master and Imam Muhammad 2Abduh in al-2Urwa al-wuöqa)],” Mura 2/6 (rabi2 al-awwal 6, 1327 [March 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1909]): 166–169. See also the anonymous paper “¸azita wa zurnallar. 3. 2Arabi tilinda (Newspapers and Journals. 3. In the Arabic Language),” Mura 2/11 (ëumadi al-awwal 21, 1327 [June 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1909]): 322–325.

[406] Anonymous notice, “Dar al-kutub al-2arabiyya [The Palace of the Arab Books],” Mura 2/9 (rabi2 al-alir 23, 1327 [May 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1909]): 279. This is an account of the activities of a bookshop with the same name in Cairo, followed by an advertisement for its free catalogue. Another anonymous advertisement for

a bookstore which proposed Turkish translations of Arabic books on the history of Islam can be found in another issue, with the address in French (the language of the International Postal Union): “Egypte, Azhar, M. Ahmed Ourmantchieff,” Mura 1/12 (ëumadi al-awwal 29, 1326 [June 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]): 393. In 1901 the bookstore Marq Kutublanasi (Orient Library), owned by Ahmad Ishaqoff in the remote city of Orsk on the fringe of the eastern Urals and northern part of the Qazaq steppe (i.e. very far from the Mediterranean), was selling books, notably madrasa textbooks from Egypt, Beirut, Istanbul, and India at “reasonable prices.” Ishaqoff was proposing to the readers to send his catalogue, entitled Asami al-kutub (Book Titles). Found in the classified advertisements of the Mura 3/2 (muharram 17, 1328 [January 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1910]): III.

[407] See Muhammad Tawfiq Afandi Sidqi, “Qur1an wa 2ilm. Lu∫at, ta1ril, ëu∫rafiya, tibb wa ∫ayrlarga da1ir darslar (Mu2tabar ‘al-Manār’ maëallasindan Muhammad Tawfiq Afandi Sidqi yazilmim maqalalardan iltisar ila tarëuma idilmimdir) (The Qur1an and Science. Lectures on Lexicography, History, Geography, Medicine, etc. [Abridged Translation from a Paper Written by Muhammad Tawfiq Afandi Sidqi in the Famous Journal al-Manār]),” Mura 3/5 (rabi2 al-awwal 3, 1328 [March 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1910]), 131–132.

[408] Miyan 2Abd al-Awwal al-ˌaffari, “Dinlilar wa dinsizlar (Mayl Muhammad 2Abduh Hazratlariniˇ Tafsirindan bir qadr tasarruf ila muqtabas),” parts 1 and 2, Mura 3/9 (ëumadi al-awwal 5, 1328 [May 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1910]): 265–267; 3/10 (ëumadi al-awwal 19, 1328 [May 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1910]), 299–301.

[409] Imam wa Mudarris Sarwar al-Din [b. Miftah al-Din] “Tawhid, hayat, islam (Divine Unity, Life, Islam),” parts 1–10, Mura 1/11 (ëumadi al-awwal 15, 1326 [June 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1908]), 349–352; 1/12 (ëumadi al-awwal 29, 1326 [June 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]), 382–384; 1/14 (ëumadi al-alir 29, 1326 [July 15

[<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]), 431–433; 1/15 (raëab 17, 1326 [August 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1908]), 482–484; 1/18 (rama/an 3, 1326 [September 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1908]), 567–569; 1/21 (mawwal 20, 1326 [November 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1908]), 671–672; 1/23 (zul-qada 21, 1326 [December 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1908]), 716–717; 2/2 (muharram 5, 1327 [January 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1909]), 37–39; 2/4 (safar 7, 1327 [February 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1909]), 101–102; 2/5 (safar 21, 1327 [March 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1909]), 134–136; 2Abd-Allàh Battal, “Risala at-tawhid (Mayl Muhammad 2Abduh ta1lifi) (The Risala al-tawhid, a Work by Mayl Muhammad 2Abduh),” Mura 2/19 (mawwal 28, 1327 [October 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1909]), 588–591.

[410] See the anonymous paper “2Umumi islam nadwasi (Misrda Tiqmaqda ulan dini ‘al-Manār’ muqtabas) [The Debate on Islam (Summarized from the Religious [Journal] al-Manār published in Egypt)],” Mura 1/3 (muharram 16, 1326 [February 5 [<verbatim>18], 1908]), 74–77.

[1] Hadi, “Bay ham yarli dillar, turkTa yu∫al∫an suzlar [Rich and Poor Languages; Words Absent in Turkic],” Mura 3/7 (rabi2 al-alir 4, 1328 [April 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1910]), 206–208. On the Urdu translation of 2Abduh’s works, see the anonymous chronicle “Muhammad 2Abduh,” Mura 3/11 (ëumadi al-alir 6, 1328 [June 1 [<verbatim>14</verbatim>], 1910]), 348.

[411] Arif Makuri (Qahirada rusiyali turk talabasi ëam2iyyati iTun ra1is [The Chairman of the Fraternity of the Turkic Students from Russia in Cairo]), “Dini madrasalarimizda 2Arab lisanini˘ ahammiyati wa 2Arab lisaninda dars kitablari [The Significance of the Arabic Language in our Religious Schools and the Textbooks of Arabic Language],” Mura 3/12 (ëumadi al-alir 20, 1328 [June 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1910]), 357–361; for a discussion on this matter, see for example Mulla Mihab al-Din (from Chistopol), “2Arab tili bizga kirak bulami? [Do We Need

the Arabic Language?],” Mura 10/14 (mawwal 8, 1335 [July 15 [<verbatim>28</verbatim>], 1917]), 325–325.

* 6. Rationalizing Patriotism Among Muslim Chinese: The impact of the Middle East on the Yuehua journal

Matsumoto Masumi

China has a Muslim population of about 18 million. They are divided into ten national minorities or nationalities. According to official records, they are an important component of the 56 nationalities in China. Sometimes translated into English as “Muslim Chinese,” Sino-Muslims or Hui (Huizus are referred to as “Hui” in this chapter), they are the third most populous nationality in China with a population of 9.8 million according to the 2003 census.

Contrarily to such minorities as the Uyghurs, who are also Muslims, and the Tibetans, who are alleged to have separatist tendencies, the Hui as a whole have tried to remain loyal to the Chinese State and its rulers. Except for a few insubordinate groups, many Hui literati, military leaders, and religious leaders called ahongs (originally alund in Persian) supported the Nationalist Party (Guomindang, abbreviated as GMD) in the Republican Era (1912–1949). Some of them migrated to Taiwan with the GMD. On the other hand, some started to support the Chinese Communist Party (abbreviated as CCP) in the middle of the 1930s. Since 1949 they have supported the People’s Republic. Particularly since the initiation of the Reform and Open Policy, some of them have been promoted to the top cadres of the state. They have worked as decision-makers in the People’s Republic, particularly in the field of policy-making with regards to ethnic minorities. In addition to advocating freedom of religion and the preservation of a plurality of ethnic characters, they have called for increased national sentiment, not only from the Hui but from all people in China, especially from those who are ethnic minorities.

In retrospect, the GMD’s ideology was the Three People’s Principle, which stressed Chinese nationalism rather than the endorsement of various religious and ethnic differences. On the other hand, the CCP, as the follower of Karl Marx, seemed to believe in the evils of religion. Rather than pursuing their own political entity separate from China, why did the Hui choose to support these two parties and political systems whose ideologies seemed to be in contradiction to their belief in Islam?

Patriotism and nationalism are the answers to this question. For these modern ideologies to penetrate into Hui society, advanced ahongs and literati initiated the Chinese Islamic revival movement (sometimes referred as the “Chinese Islamic reform movement” or “Chinese Islamic new cultural movement”) since the late Qing period. The keyword of the movement was aiguo aijiao (“love the fatherland and love Islam”), which identified patriotism as faith toward the religion. Because of this logic, patriotism became one of the most touted virtues for the Hui.

This catchword was broadly accepted in Chinese Hui society during the war against Japan. In order to spread the slogan, methods such as preaching by ahongs and Islamic periodicals were utilized. For example, the Yuehua journal was published from 1929 until 1948. Issuing more than 4,000 copies at its peak, it was the most influential and longest lasting periodical of Hui society in the period before the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949.

This chapter examines how the Hui strove to be patriotic and nationalistic in modern terms, and based on their traditional Islamic understanding as well as their reinterpretation of the Qur‘an and the Hadith. In addition we shall try to argue how the Islamic revival and Islamic reformism in the Middle East influenced Hui society in China, and what the role of Yuehua journal took within this context.

** The Hui in the twentieth century

The Hui are a true minority, with only 0.7% of China’s population of 1.2 billion. Dispersed in every province, every autonomous region, and every prefecture, county and city, there is no region without Hui inhabitants. They are in charge of agriculture and transportation services as well as commercial activities. Some have been successful in gaining high positions as cadres in the CCP. Taking advantage of Muslim networks in China as well as in foreign countries, some have found lucrative jobs after the initiation of the Reform and Open policy.

The Hui’s history in twentieth-century China was, however, affected by the hardships of turbulent times. Like other ordinary Chinese people, Muslims in China faced the collapse of the Qing dynasty, the establishment of the Chinese Republic in 1912, the political, economic, and social confusion caused by the interference of Western powers, and the opposition of the GMD and the CCP. Moreover, they were involved in the turmoil of the Sino-Japanese war, the civil war, and the establishment of the People’s Republic in 1949. Religious suppression during the Cultural Revolution brought the destruction of mosques and the prohibition of religious activities. In other words, as an explicitly minority group, the Hui have had to survive in China and, if necessary, have had to fight to surmount obstacles facing them. In order to adjust the Hui as a group to the new and changing circumstances, ahongs, literati, and local elites strove to reform religion and install both national and ethnic identity in the minds of Muslims. In this chapter we will call these ahongs, literati, and local elite the “Islamic reformers” or the “Islamic revivalists” of China.

We shall first attempt to divide the Hui’s twentieth-century history from the perspective of Islamic reformers:

1 A period of awakening in the late Qing, 1907-1911

2 Adaptation to Republican China, 1912–1937

3 Participation in the Anti-Japanese War, 1937-1945

4 Civil war between the GMD and the CCP, 1946–1 949

5 Adaptation to the People’s Republic and the social reforms, 1949–1958

6 Calamity during the anti-rightist campaign and the Cultural Revolution, 1958–1976

7 The new Islamic revival, 1979-until now.

The first three periods listed here can be considered as the rise and flourishing of the Islamic revival in the Chinese context. The seventh period can be seen as a resumption of another flourishing period for the Islamic revival, due to the promotion of religion and religious culture by the government, and recognition of the Hui’s right to political participation as a nationality. Moreover, in terms of developing improved diplomatic relationship between China and other Islamic countries, one can attest to the importance of domestic Islamic matters in the last twenty years.

Due to space limitations, we will only examine and discuss the former three periods covering four decades. We can assess, however, that the endeavors made by Islamic reformers in these four decades brought a legacy of relatively high prestige for the “Hui nationality” in the People’s Republic.

** The concept of “unity of being” as basis of patriotism—a philosophy for the maintenance of a peaceful society

Concepts of patriotism and nationalism did not exist in pre-modern China. The Hui, however, kept a basic logical concept that was capable of developing into patriotism in the modern period. This concept is the “unity of being.” Muslims emigrating from Central Asia to China during the Mongol period brought this interpretation of Islam from their homeland, where the

philosophy of the “unity of being” (wahdat al-wuëud in Arabic) had prevailed since the eleventh century. The Chinese Muslims called laojiao (the Old Sect or Gedimu , qadim in Arabic) inherited this philosophy.[412]

The structure of the unity of being is as follows. All existence and phenomena in this world are outflows from the only ultimate and supreme existence, Allah. Human beings, as the outflow of Allah, have their virtuous deeds allocated to them by Allah. After the completion of virtues, a human being can become a perfect man/woman and return to the origin of the existence, Allah.

Several outstanding philosophers developed a unique understanding of Islam at the end of the Ming and the beginning of the Qing era. Among them, Wang Daiyu , Ma Zhu , and Liu Zhi were the most famous. They attempted to explain the unity of being with Confucian terminology, and with Zhuzi’s terminology in particular, since their spoken language had already become Hanyu after their long residence in China.

We can characterize their philosophy as the appreciation of co-existence in Chinese society under the rule of the Mandate of Heaven. Consequently the philosophy called for a duplicate faith toward Allah and toward the Mandate of Heaven, who was the real ruler of this world. This was called “the theory of double faith.” These philosophers recognized non-Muslim masters, including the Mandate of Heaven, as the outflows of Allah, and considered them to be entrusted as the ruling power of Allah. Completing the philosophy of Islam in China, Liu Zhi stated that if each obeys to the rules of the Mandate of the Heaven, then the preconditions for the mental practice of human completion would exist and social peace would be maintained. Sincere attitudes toward one’s life would lead to the peace of both family and homeland in this world. From there, a person could attain complete human perfection.

According to this logic, Muslims should implement virtues similar to those of Confucians, who were governed by the Mandate of the Heaven. The Hui, as a minority group in Chinese society, were allowed to live in the Chinese Empire because of this doctrine. However, since laojiao was

interpreted in Hanyu and according to Confucian terminology, Muslims in Xinjiang whose language was Turkic did not accept laojiao Islam.

Nevertheless, because of Hui uprisings in Yunnan and Shanxi in the nineteenth century and after their subjugation by Qing troops, the Hui were labeled as “insurrectionists.” However, despite suppression of these uprisings by the Qing, they had no other homeland than China. Surviving Hui had to reconstruct their communities and overcome the Han prejudice against them.

** China’s Islamic revival and the Chinese state

*** The period of awakening, 1907-1911

We have argued that laojiao belief theorized the concordance of Islam and Confucianism. Adhering to laojiao Islam, ahongs and literati tried to find new methods to accommodate Islamic belief with new and modern trends of thoughts in the late Qing.

Both constitutionalists and revolutionaries argued about the method of introducing modernity in China after the Russo-Japanese War. By then, people in China had been permitted to go abroad if conditions allowed them, and some privileged Hui had the opportunity. Some paid a visit to Mecca and absorbed the new Middle Eastern Islamic interpretation of revivalism. Some visited Japan as students and absorbed the essence of Western modernism. Adhering to the traditional Islamic philosophy harmonious with Confucianism, and influenced by modernizing trends and by the worldwide Islamic revival, “advanced” ahongs and literati in China also initiated an Islamic revival movement in Chinese characters.

What is the role of ahongs and literati in Hui societies? Ahongs are to be responsible for pointing the essence of

human life and world order to Muslims in the community. In concrete terms, they teach Muslims how to implement virtuous deeds in this world. Therefore, ahongs receive enormous respect from Muslims in the community. As for their economic aspects, ahongs of laojiao do not possess property. But their living costs, their activities in mosques, as well as their management of jingtangs, [413] Qur1anic schools attached to mosques, are sustained by tianke (zakat) and sadaqah by Muslims in the community. Ordinary Hui children are sent to the jingtang to learn how to live a moral life based on the teachings of the Qur‘an and other writings. Muslims allocate fees for tianke and sadaqah according to their income. Therefore, even in the past, Hui literati and local power holders, who in many cases were landlords or entrepreneurs, were generous contributors of tianke and sadaqah to support the religious activities of the community.

The social and economic status of these literati and local power holders was highly interdependent on Han society, since most of their commercial clients were Han. Items that they dealt with differed in accordance to regional characteristics. For example, they monopolized wool dealing in Tianjin, they were very successful entrepreneurs in jewelry and antique industries in Shanghai,[414] and dealings in fur and items for Chinese medicine was handled by Hui horse traders in Yunnan, who enjoyed a continued and regular relationships with Muslims in Burma and Thailand.[415]

The Islamic revival movement initiated by these ahongs and local elites can thus be seen supporting the fusion of the Han and the Hui. This is due to the Islamic reformists’ belief that neither faith toward Islam nor Hui communities in China could exist without cooperation and concord with the Han majority.

*** The Islamic revival initiated by literati

Hui literati in Japan initiated the first concrete movement for Islamic revival. Enthusiasm for studying in Japan grew because of the eradication of

the appointment examination for bureaucrats in 1905. Ostensibly more than 10,000 Qing students were studying in Japan at that time. Most of them were sons of local powers and gentry. Among them, thirty-six Hui students organized the Liutong Qingzhen Jiaoyuhui or “Association for Islamic Education in Tokyo” in 1907. Most of them also had membership in the Zhongguo Tongmenghui or Chinese Revolutionary Association. Accordingly, as revolutionaries, these Hui students were convincing supporters of a modern republican state system instead of the old imperial system. With enough Confucian knowledge to be involved in the examination system, and with the Islamic philosophy that they had learned at jingtang, they felt a responsibility for improving their society.

They asserted their need to pursue three directions, that is, the development of nationalism, the reform and promotion of Islam, and the acceptance of modernism, particularly in modern education. These three elements would, they argued, be indispensable to creating favorable conditions essential for the future of not only the Hui ethnic group but for all of China. The reform of Islam, however, was the most important, since “religions have the power to transform society.”[416] In the coming era of the nation-state, these Hui students believed that it was necessary to reform the Islamic doctrine (laojiao) that had until then been understood according to the traditional imperial system. They believed that faith toward the emperor should be replaced by faith toward the new state, and also assured that this could be done if the Qur‘an and Hadith, as well as the writings of Wang Daiyu, Ma Zhu and Liu Zhi, were more carefully and enthusiastically examined.

The Arabic words for “Islam” or “Muslim” had been almost forgotten during the Qing’s long isolation. First identifying themselves as Chinese “Hui” as well as “Muslims,” they also began to perceive themselves as “Chinese” when they studied abroad. Encounters with several Muslims from the Middle East in Tokyo also inspired such ideas. That is to say, they began to set up both a national identity and an ethnic identity. National identity was necessary to build a nation-state. Ethnic identity was, they believed, also necessary to represent ethnic rights within the framework of a nation-state. Furthermore, as successors to the philosophy of the unity of being, they believed that doing three “correct” and “virtuous” acts, such as the step-by-

step construction of a strong and wealthy nation-state, the promotion of modernism, and the reformation of Islam within the modern framework of nation-state, was the fulfillment of Allah’s will.

As revolutionaries, Hui students participated in the Revolution of 1911. The three goals that they pursued in the Republican period were consistent with those of the Islamic reformers.

*** Islamic revival by ahongs: a period of adaptation to Republican China, 1912-1949

Ahongs were expected to be responsible for the lives of Muslims and the future of the community. Listening to the ahongs’ preaching, people understood the meaning of human life and the truth of Islamic belief. Therefore, in an era of drastic transformation of thoughts, ahongs were expected to adjust the doctrine of Islam to make it compatible with the new era.

Some reputable ahongs who were widely known in Chinese Hui society initiated a new trend of the Islamic revival in China. One of the most prominent and respected ahongs was Wang Kuan (Haorang) Ahong (1848–1919) in Beijing. Witnessing the reality of Islamic revivalist movements in regions of Turkey, Egypt, and Arabia when he visited Mecca and the Middle East in 1906, he decided to reform Islam in China. Upon coming back to China, the Revolution of 1911 had occurred, and Wang Kuan met Sun Yatsen in September 1912, expressing support for the newborn Republican state.

At the very beginning of the Republican era, Wang Kuan was the most influential laojiao ahong in China, and he determined that faith toward the Mandate of the Heaven of the imperial period should be replaced by faith toward the state. He believed that patriotism should be reinterpreted as virtuous behavior that would resolve social contradictions and bring pacification to society.

Wang Kuan and other ahongs at the beginning of the Republican period consistently interpreted patriotism within the traditional framework of the unity of being. They failed, however, to discover a concrete basis for patriotism in the Qur‘an and the Hadith. Muslims generally regarded the contents of the Qur‘an as guidance for daily life. The speeches of the ahongs were strictly based on the Qur‘an and the Hadith. If a basis for the ahong’s command was not found in the Qur‘an or Hadith, Hui people in the community would not follow him, or might even lose their trust in Islam. The lack of basis for patriotism was a weak point in mobilizing the Hui people to participate in nationalist activities.

In the 1920s, several Hui students and ahongs began to be sent to al-Azhar in Egypt, largely due to the efforts of literati and ahongs as well as to the development of transportation. Wang Jingzhai (1879-1949), an ahong from Tianjin, studied there for half a year in 1921. After coming back to China in 1923, he translated the Qur‘an into Hanyu for the first time. Adhering to traditional lao-jiao, but also influenced by modern trends of thought in the reform of the society, he also supported the new republican state and obtained membership in the GMD. Quite in accordance with the literati, he also pursued the reform of Islam in China in light of nationalism and modernism, especially in the field of education.[417]

The Islamic revival movement in China was to be the “glue” of Chinese national integration. This also meant that all Muslims within the legitimate territory of China were to obey the orders of the Chinese central government. As subcontractors of the central government, the Islamic reformers were to assist them. That is to say, the Islamic revival movement aimed at creating a unified Islamic understanding of Hui ethnicity and of the political position of the “Hui” nationality. According to this logic, the “disobedient” Muslims who did not “improve” their religious way of life, theological curriculum, or political stance would be put under the tutelary guidance of the Islamic reformers, otherwise not only their lives but the whole Chinese nation-state would be overcome by the ambitions of outside aggressors.

Terms such as “progressive,” “advanced,” or “reforming” were keywords to characterize Islamic reformers in China. In a social atmosphere that appreciated “progress and evolution” in view of nation-building, they apparently recognized themselves as xianzhi xianjuezhe , or those qualified to enlighten the “backward” peoples of the tutelage period, in accordance with Sun Yatsen’s theory of the three steps of social evolution. The Islamic reformers were determined to play a role as teachers and leaders to instruct “ignorant” Muslims and make them adhere to the Chinese nation.

** The role of the Yuehua journal

We have seen the outline of the roles of Islamic reformers in the development of the Islamic revival movement in China. The movement took place simultaneously in many regions of China. It is interesting to see that there was no substantial center for the movement. Many ahongs and literati in major cities such as Beijing, Tianjin, Jinan, Nanjing, Shanghai, Kunming, Guangzhou, Xi’an, Chengdu, Xining, and Ningxia were mobilized and followed the movement, founding branches of the Chinese Islamic Association for Progress in each city. That is to say that, under the network of the association, Islamic reformers shared the same tendency to have a double identity as a nation and as Hui, and tried to educate themselves to the idea that there were other Muslims in China. Some of them were in charge of publishing periodicals and books on Islam, while some ran modern schools instead of jingtang. Here, we will examine the Chengda Normal School and its bulletin, the Yuehua.

*** The Chengda Normal School

In April 1925, “advanced” ahongs, local power holders, and the elite founded a normal school named Chengda Normal School exclusively for Hui youth in Jinan, Shandong. Aiming at the reform of traditional jingtang education, Chengda later developed into the most famous and influential normal school in Hui society.

Combining modern and Islamic education, its curriculum was unique, with an even combination of “teaching-fostering” courses and religious courses. The “teaching-fostering” courses included subjects such as Hanyu, mathematics, history, English, science, music, physical education, and psychology. The religious course, on the other hand, included subjects such as Arabic, Qur1anic studies, Hadith studies, tawhid, and the history of Islam.

When the Jinan incident occurred in 1928, a part of the school was destroyed. It moved to Beiping (at that time the formal name of Beijing) under the financial assistance of Ma Fuxiang , a prominent and wealthy Hui warlord of the Northwest. The concrete educational purpose of the school was as follows. First, rapprochement of the Hui and the Han was to be furthered while the Hui’s national and ethnic identity was to be fostered. Second, the quality of the ahongs should be improved to adapt to the methods of inquiry required by the times. Third, the training of good teachers at modern schools was to be implemented in order to recover the Hui ethnic character. Fourth, the Hui as an ethnic group were to be effective and active in the service of the Chinese State. Finally, mosques under the strong control of ahongs, and with the authority to interpret the doctrine of Islam, were to be put under the command of a public organization enjoying a consensus.[418] That is to say, even though the school was a private school, it worked to foster students that would be effective in nation-building and promote religion.

*** The Yuehua —an introduction to international Islamic affairs and to the promotion of nationalism: the first stage, 1929-1930

The Yuehua began to be published in October 1929 in Beiping, every ten days, as a bulletin of the Chengda Normal School. The proposal to publish it was made by progressive literati of the Huabei region, such as Tang Hesan , the

principal of the school, Sun Shengwu , Sun Youming , and Zhao Zhenwu . Zhao Zhenwu became the chief editor. When literati discussed

the importance of issuing periodicals, Ma Fuxiang agreed to support the plan financially. Claiming that publication was important to promoting Islam in China, Ma continued to donate 100 yuans every month until June 1932, when he was near death. We now ask the question of why he contributed to the development of the Chengda and the Yuehua?

Subordinate to Jiang Jieshi, Ma Fuxiang was a powerful warlord of the Northwest. Believing in laojiao Islam, he was also a pious follower of the unity of being. As personnel responsible for the security of the region, he worried about the frequent turmoil among the Hui, particularly among the menhuan (saintly lineages of the Sufi tradition). Some of them called for rebellion against the Chinese State and rejected the Han's interference. The Islamic reformers were convinced that the turmoil was caused by the ignorance of menhuan Muslims, who only seemed to interpret the doctrine of Islam as jihad against non-Muslims. Most ordinary Muslims in China, and the menhuan in particular, were exceedingly poor and illiterate. Ma recognized that they followed blindly the commands of the ahong of the community, and that the lack of modern knowledge and a correct understanding of Islam was the cause of the prevailing poverty of the Hui and of their backwardness and ignorance. That is why he decided to contribute financially to the Yuehua, expecting to make the journal a confirmed guide for Muslims in difficulty. [419]

The purposes of the journal are drafted in the first edition, and are almost the same as those of the Chengda Normal School:

1 Promotion of Islam in China in accordance with modern trends

2 Introduction of Muslims from the whole world

3 Development of the Huis' knowledge and promotion of their position in China

4 Resolution of the misunderstanding between the Old Sect and the New Sect

5 Development of a national identity among the Hui

6 Promotion of Hui education and improvement of their livelihood.[420]

Almost all the articles in the journal were written in Hanyu and contributed by ahongs, literati, and students of Chengda and other normal schools. The journal's goal was consistent until the suspension of its publication in 1948, although there were minor changes in the contents.

In the first two years, the contents of the Yuehua were limited to relatively narrow fields, reflecting the moderate trends of the Islamic revival in China until 1931. With regard to point 1 in the list, there were few accurate translations or interpretations of the Qur'an and the Hadith. With regard to point 2, contributors translated English books on Islamic affairs written by Westerners, but there were few direct translations from Arabic. Exceptions included Wang Jingzhai Ahong's translation from Arabic and the presentation of Wang Cengshan , who had studied in Istanbul University and witnessed the reality of modernism in Turkey. Information about domestic Hui affairs, on the other hand, was limited to the Hui communities around Beiping.

Although there were few articles based on actual experience, these writers understood the importance of worldwide movements, especially that of the Muslim Brotherhood initiated by Hasan al-Banna in 1928.[421] Articles based on actual experiences were written and translated by Wang Jingzhai Ahong. When Wang studied in Egypt, the Middle East was experiencing the surge of the Islamic revival movement. The three directions of the movement were Islamic revival, modernism, and nationalism.[422] Leaders of the movement had tried to discover foundations for these three vectors in the Qur'an and the Hadith. In particular, a phrase from the Qur'an

—“Why cannot we fight along with the way of Allah? Weren’t we driven out from our home and separated from our children?”[423] —was familiar to scholars of Islamic jurisprudence in Egypt. Wang quoted the interpretation of the given phrase by his professor at al-Azhar as follows:

We all have the responsibility to protect our parents’ country. Once one’s estate is stolen and one is separated from his wife and children, he ought to fight bravely against the rapacious enemy. Without this intention, any prayer has no meaning. One might not feel ashamed to see his homeland perish and his family pass away unless he recognized the importance of this matter.[424]

In addition to the Qur1anic verse cited here, a phrase from an alleged hadith “hubb al-watan min al-iman (love of the watan [patrie, fatherland, homeland] is an article of faith)” was first introduced to China by Wang Jingzhai.

Modern scholars of Islam have pointed out that none of these phrases exist in the real Hadith. The term watan cannot be found in the Qur‘an. This might mean that the term watan had not existed in Arabic at the time of the Prophet Muhammad. However, this doubtful sentence was thought to appear somewhere in the Hadith and was widely known to Muslims in the Middle East early in the nineteenth century.[425] Apparently Wang himself heard the word watan for the first time in Egypt. Annoyed about how to interpret this popular word from the Middle East, he cites a prominent Egyptian religious leader:

Watan in Arabic means the place where you live. Modern scholars of Islamic jurisprudence call watan the land where people’s rights, duties, lives and fortunes are entrusted. That is to say, there is no contradiction between people’s freedom and statehood. In other words, a state cannot do without freedom. The French scholar Molière claimed “there is no state in an era of despotism.” Watan is the place where people possess political rights, like in the ancient Latin term.[426]

The original text, he noted, was found in the journal of the Wafd Party of Egypt. According to the Qur‘anic phrase, and to the popular phrase of the alleged hadith, Wang concluded that loving one’s fatherland or state was one of the virtues that Muslims should strive for.

We can assess the period from 1912 to 1930 as an era focused on promoting rather than moderating nationalism, as well as an Islamic reform movement based on both the theory of the unity of being and the Islamic revival in the Middle East. Even though Japan tried to establish military hegemony in the Northeast, this country did not yet seem to have any intention of becoming aggressive against the whole of China. Therefore, in spite of Wang Jingzhai’s introduction to the foundations of patriotism from the Hadith, the Islamic reformers in China had not yet emphasized the anti-imperialist tendency that characterized the Islamic revival in the Middle East.

*** Direct contact with Egypt and the anti-Japanese movement, 1931-1936

The Yuehua ostensibly changed its character after the printing of its third volume in 1931.[427] Not only did its format change from a newspaper style to a magazine style, but so did its contents. More information directly pertaining to Egypt began to appear as Islamic reformers reinforced their orientation and opinions with regards to discussions taking place in Egypt.

The year 1931 was epoch-making for the Islamic revival movement in China. Four students, including Ma Jian (1906-1978), who was later to translate the Qur‘an into Hanyu, were for the first time officially sent from the Shanghai Islamic School to the al-Azhar University in Egypt, from where they began to send articles for the Yuehua. This meant that these students came to play the role of correspondents, notifying people in China of Islamic affairs in the Middle East, as well as of circumstances in the world outside of China. Furthermore, twenty-two overseas periodicals on Islam in various languages, such as English, German, Arabic, Malay, and Turkish, began to be exchanged. Furthermore, the World Islamic Meeting held in Palestine invited Muslim delegates from China (although a variety of reasons prevented them from attending). In other words, compared to the previous two years,

information on the whole Islamic world became more tangible and accurate from 1931 onwards.

Moreover, a crisis in the domestic environment allowed the application of this new input on Islamic theory. This was Japan’s occupation of the Northeast. In order to meet the demand of readers who wished to acquire new knowledge in order to overcome the new difficulties, more than four thousand copies of the Yuehua were issued, spreading throughout Hui communities all over China. The following is an outline of the contents of Yuehua since 1931:

1 Commentary of the Qur‘an and the Hadith, tafsir.

2 Translation of Arabic and English books and criticism.

3 Critiques of religious questions in China, of Hui education, Hui organization, economy, current issues, etc.

4 Reevaluation of Hui history in China and discussions of its intermingling with Chinese culture.

5 Research on various mosques and Hui communities in Anhui, Guangxi, Chahar, Suiyuan, Jiangxi, Shandong, Henan, Jiangsu, Shanxi, and Gansu.

6 Introduction of Muslim personalities from the whole world. This entailed an introduction to Islamic revivalist trends and current issues in Egypt, Afghanistan, Turkey, Syria, Algeria, India, Yugoslavia, and Iran.

7 Literature.

These contents are very similar to those of al-Manār (“The Lighthouse”) edited by Rashid Rida in Egypt. There is no evidence that contributors of the Yuehua subscribed to this journal, which was well known to the whole Islamic world. Yet it is likely that they understood the popular editorial styles of Islamic revivalist journals and tried to follow their trends.[428]

The most important changes in volume three (1931) was the presentation of the Qur1anic annotations based on their translation from Arabic. Known as one of the most “advanced” ahongs to support the Chengda Normal School and the Yuehua, Ma Songting Ahong, the leading ahong of Chengda,[429] discussed the reason why the journal had started to publish translations and commentaries of the Qur‘an (tafsir).

The Qur‘an is the source of all the beliefs and doctrines of Islam. Scholars have always extracted the code of the times and the regions from its source and abided to its authority. We have been in China for more than a thousand years. The language and habits have been assimilated. Along with the times, we had to draw adequate activity and codes from the source. Therefore, we wish to reveal the real doctrine of Islam, make ourselves adapt to the current environment and understand the Qur‘an better …. Even though there are several schools and orders of Islam in China, we must not be tangled by prejudice. If we comprehend the true meaning of the Qur‘an, then we will be free from mistakes.”[430]

Some articles began to be translated from Arabic journals published in Egypt. These were Maëmu2 al-rasa’il (“Anthology of Theses”), Irmad (“Guidance”), and al-Fath (“The Victory”) of Cairo, which were traded or sent to China by mail. Articles concerning Egyptian social reforms, particularly in al-Fath, were often translated into Hanyu in volume three (1931) and four (1932) of Yuehua —for example, an article entitled “Why Don’t You Try?,” written by the Egyptian writer Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib and translated from al-Fath. The content was an appeal to Muslims in Egypt to stop smoking, since smoking was only beneficial to foreign powers, which were imperialistic exploiters of the people in Egypt.

The publication of this article in the Yuehua of January 1932 was ostensibly a contribution to the rise of the anti-Japanese movement, which included strikes and demonstrations in the coastal regions of China in the wake of the Mukden Incident of September 18, 1931. The article was intended to offer a methodology of concrete action for confronting the imperialists.

As discussed earlier, the Islamic reformers in China upheld traditional laojiao Islam based on the philosophy of the unity of being. In addition to this psychological structure, the modern era brought with it powerful new influences from the Middle East, and especially from Egypt.

The Qur1anic interpretation by Muhammad ‘Abduh was the basis of the Egyptian reform movement aimed at expelling Western imperialists. ‘Abduh regarded Islam’s early years as its most glorious and ideal era. The delay of scientific progress in the Islamic world, and the subsequent suppression by Western powers was attributed to the oblivion of the pure virtues of the original Islam. Therefore, if each Muslim retrieved these original Islamic virtues, the conditions of their livelihood could improve sufficiently to become equal to those in the Western world and the glorious status of Muslims could be restored.

With the acceptance of outside information, especially from Egypt, the Islamic reformers in China must have been surprised and excited at the concurrence of the goals of their twenty-year movement with the goals pursued by reformers in Egypt. Reformers in China confirmed that the interpretation of Islamic texts in Egypt, made by respected scholars of Islamic jurisprudence whose mother tongue was Arabic, was more orthodox and proper than the old interpretations in China, which had long been isolated from the center of the Islamic world. That is why they were eager to absorb Egyptian thought.

The most important incident that spurred this tendency was the Mukden Incident. Just after this, the Yuehua appealed to the Hui to save

the country, declaring that the Hui's spirit against the aggressors was a part of the Chinese nation's spirit and of its appreciation of justice.[431] The Islamic reformers also perceived that anti-aggression struggles should be shared among all Muslims who were suppressed by imperial powers, in complete accordance with the Egyptian reformers.

The Islamic reformers in China also persisted in their efforts to fulfill their responsibility to protect their own watan against aggressors. The alleged Hadith, "The love of watan is an article of faith" became the foundation of the struggle.[432] Proclaiming the Hui an inalienable part of the Chinese nation, the Yuehua became the leading journal of the anti-Japanese movement among the Hui. Needless to say, it regarded Japanese penetration into China as a threat to the whole Chinese nation. Therefore, even if Japan proposed favorable conditions for the Hui to build a Huihuiguo nation-state guaranteeing "the right of national self-determination," they would reject the proposal. They used to declare: "We are Muslims in China, not Muslims in Turkey nor Muslims in Persia. We are not Muslims from Muslim states. We have to demand a status of nationality as an integral part of the Chinese nation."[433]

*** The influence of Nūr al-Islām

Because of the strengthened bond with the al-Azhar University, articles in the bulletin of al-Azhar Nūr al-Islām ("Light of Islam") began to be frequently translated into Hanyu and published in the Yuehua starting with volume four (1932). Since most of the articles in Nūr al-Islām were written by professors of al-Azhar, Islamic reformers believed that its Islamic interpretations were a guiding light or authority in resolving various contradictions and antagonisms among Islamic believers in China.

For example, applauding Nūr al-Islām, Yang Sishi wrote that he had already found in the bulletin effective solutions for the conflicts among the schools and Sufi orders in Chinese Islam. The three big problems of Islam in China at that time were whether vocalizing the Qur'an was permissible,

whether lutub (words of worship in Arabic) could be translated into other languages, and whether the Qur‘an itself could be translated into foreign languages. Nūr al-Islām proclaimed that vocalizing the Qur‘an was not permitted because its prohibition was evident in Muhammad’s words, that lutub could be spoken in languages other than Arabic, and that translation of the Qur‘an was also not a problem. [434] In order to show the appropriateness of Nūr al-Islām’s Islamic interpretation, Yang Sishi translated an article by its chief editor advocating translation of the Qur‘an.[435]

First published in 1929, Nūr al-Islām was a bulletin of the al-Azhar University, then considered the most prestigious academy for Muslims in the world. In 1932 another five students were dispatched to al-Azhar from the Chengda Normal School, eventually forming a group together with the five who preceded them. In accordance with the decision of the Chinese students in al-Azhar, contributors of the Yuehua had no choice but to give particular esteem to Nūr al-Islām. This meant that not only Yuehua but almost all Islamic reformers in China were put under the strong theoretical influence of al-Azhar.

*** The specific impact of the Risālat al-tawḥīd

Similarly, the Yuehua seemed to inherit the spirit of al-Manār. Clear evidence of this was that a picture of a lighthouse began to decorate the front page of the Yuehua starting with Volume 5 (1933). This alteration of design was ostensibly inspired by al-Manār. Furthermore, the tendency to put emphasis on annotation was accelerated in 1933 when ‘Abduh’s Risālat al-tawḥīd, Renzhuxue Dagang (this title was later changed to Huijiao Zhexue when it was published as a book in 1934) began to be translated into Hanyu by Ma Jian and serialized in the Yuehua. Ma Jian explains why he decided to translate this book as follows:

According to the appraisal by Rashid Rida, who is the chief editor of al-Manār and the best disciple of Muhammad ‘Abduh, this

book concisely summarizes the points of tawhid and is the most helpful for beginners. When I first saw Professor Shaykh Ibrahim al-Jibali of the Institute for Islamic Philosophy at al-Azhar, I asked him whether or not there was a new book on tawhid. He immediately introduced this book and recommended me to study it by myself. During my free time, I always read it, caught the meaning and made questions and notes to ask Professor al-Jibali once a week …. Because of the Professor's deep knowledge and modesty, I never gave up studying and also benefited in many ways. Taking advantage of summer vacation this year, I translated the book into Hanyu in order to make it useful to people in China.[436]

The serialization of Renzhuxue Dagang continued until Volume 6, Number 34-36 of December 30, 1934. It was expected to help Muslims in China to gain accurate knowledge of tawhid and to confirm their belief in Islam.[437] In addition to Ma Jian's translation of the Risālat al-tawḥīd, Pang Shifian translated the History of Islam or Yisilan Zongjiaoshi by Professor Muhammad Khuzuli of the University of Egypt, originally published in 1920, and which he began to serialize in 1933. The translation of these important books, as well as the arrival of two professors from al-Azhar to the Chengda Normal School, doubtlessly stimulated the Islamic revival in China.

For example, Zhou Zhongren translated from Nūr al-Islām the Qur'anic annotation by Shaykh Ibrahim al-Jibali, who was the very person who had recommended Ma Jian at al-Azhar to translate Muhammad 'Abduh's Risālat al-tawḥīd.[438] This meant that not only Chengda but the whole Islamic revival movement in China was strongly affected by al-Azhar in terms of the interpretation of doctrine, the methodology of education, and the curriculum. At al-Azhar, the contents of education had come to be "pressed more firmly into a Western inspired mold" under the direction of president al-Maraghi after 1933.[439]

Recognized as "messiahs" for reforming Islam in China, there were high expectations for the two professors Sayyid Muhammad Dali and Muhammad Ibrahim Filfila, who came to China after arrangements were made by both King Fu'ad of Egypt and the president of al-Azhar. King Fu'ad expected them to be a cultural bridge between Egypt and China. They taught Arabic, Islamic

philosophy, and theology to students at the Chengda Normal School.[440] Doubtlessly, they were expected to strengthen not only the bond between al-Azhar and Chengda, but also diplomatic and trade relations between Egypt and China.

*** Systematization of patriotism and belief in Islam

In relation to the accelerated progress of Islamic reforms under Egyptian assistance, the slogan “Love fatherland and love Islam (aiguo aijiao)” was also rearranged. It began to reutilize and advertise the alleged hadith: “The love of watan is an article of faith.” Under the instruction of two professors from al-Azhar, the ahongs, faculty members, and students of Chengda were ostensibly inspired by this hadith, which had already occupied the most important position among Islamic revivalists in Egypt in their promotion of political, economic, social, and religious reforms against Western imperialists. Aiming at scientific and industrial progress, as well as at the promotion of Hui ethnicity as an element for forming a nation, the phrase became a substantial basis for the national progress of China.

At a conference held at the YMCA Beiping in 1933, Ma Songting Ahong, the most important religious leader of Chengda, made the following address:

The Prophet Muhammad said, “hubb al-watan min al-iman” or “the love of fatherland is an article of faith.” In other words, if there is no love of the fatherland, then people will lose faith. Muslims appreciate faith the most. Because of this morality, there is no Muslim who does not accomplish his duties for the state, nation, religion, birthplace and family …. Recently, Muslim countries such as Persia, Afghanistan and Arabia achieved independence and Turkey has recovered its strength and wealth. Moreover, Muslims in Egypt and India have succeeded in their Islamic revival. In China, Muslims have achieved patriotic activities since the Ming and the Qing periods. If you research into historical books, you can understand this fact easily. Recently we have encouraged the harmony between the Hui (Muslims) and the Han for the common benefit of the whole country. What represents

the distinctive spirits of Muslims is that, if someone oppresses or slanders us, everybody, even retailers or trainees, will offer resistance. This means that Muslims in China accept love of association and the doctrine of Islam. If each one can show the virtue of loving their own fatherland and religion, then other countries and religions will give up invading China."[441]

Ma Songting identified the Hui as a part of Muslims outside of China. Encouraged to know the reality of the Islamic revival in the world, he was appealing to Christian youths in Beiping, saying that historically patriotic Chinese Muslims had already begun to contribute toward the construction of a strong Chinese state. There was thus the possibility of fostering nationalism and patriotism among the followers of foreign religions, and Ma Songting wanted to emphasize that there was no contradiction between pious belief in religion and patriotic feeling.

The Islamic reformers in China recognized Chinese Muslims neither as a national nor as a territorial entity. Rather, they understood themselves as sharing common boundaries, territorial integrity, and national identity with other ethnic groups or religious groups such as the Han, the Mongols, the Tibetans, and Christians. In this sense, co-existence and mutual understanding with peoples of various backgrounds were indispensable conditions for the nation-building of China.

There was a distinct difference between Egyptian Islamic reformers and Chinese Islamic reformers concerning the concept of watan. The former recognized watan as their state in which the Muslim majority took leadership. Reformers in Egypt even requested that the King expel or contain Christian missions, even though Christians occupied 20% of the whole population.[442] The multiethnic and multi-religious character in their exclusive watan was not so desirable.

The Islamic reformers in China, on the other hand, reinterpreted watan as a Chinese State where the majority was non-Muslim. Identifying themselves as an indispensable and integral part of the Chinese nation, and also identifying Islamic culture as an important element of a multifaceted Chinese culture, the patriotic phrase of the given hadith

became widespread among Hui in all of China. The Hadith was recognized as the true words of the Prophet Muhammad and was expected to contribute in persuading some “disobedient” Hui to stop conflicts against the Han. At the same time, it was expected to inform the Han that their Hui counterparts were not enemies but supporters of China. Therefore, extracting a convenient and helpful discourse from Egyptian reformers and mingling it with their original discussions, Islamic reformers in China constructed their own theory on nationalism.[443]

Students dispatched from Chengda to al-Azhar were supposed to be trained in bringing orthodox Islamic interpretation to China. Because Ma Songting Ahong succeeded in drawing scholarships for Chinese students from King Faruq, the successor of King Fu‘ad, another sixteen students were sent from China in 1937. However, when these Chinese students gathered in Egypt, the hot tide of Islamic reform, including al-Manār’s influence, had already dispersed into the whole of the Islamic world and changed its characters according to regional features. In other words, Chinese students were latecomers to the center of the Islamic revival movement, which had reached its peak in the 1920s.

Though there was no direct influence of al-Manār in China because of the time lag, progressive Hui elites and ahongs appreciated and absorbed many aspects of Islamic reform which Muhammad ‘Abduh and Rashid Rida had initiated and promoted. In other words, the Islamic revival movement in China can be evaluated as another fruit of the work by reformers in Egypt. It has been broadly acknowledged that ‘Abduh and Rida’s works exerted a great influence upon Muslims in from the Western Sahara to the Dutch East Indies. These tides also reached the Far East in the 1930s, where the seeds of nationalism and anti-imperialism were sown.

In memory of the late King Fu‘ad, the Fude Library was founded at Chengda in September 1936 and collected Arabic books, mostly donated by King Fu‘ad to Ma Songting A hong. The aim of the library was to make people in China acknowledge the close relationship between the Arabic and Chinese civilizations. They believed that understanding Islamic affairs was a key to protecting China, because Muslims mostly inhabited the frontier regions. Thus, Islam was not only a religious matter but also a highly political

one that was intimately related to the fate of the whole Chinese nation.[444] The Islamic reformers reconfirmed that the Chinese nation needed to be an entity that consisted of various ethnicities and histories.

*** The Yuehua after Japan’s invasion of China, 1937-1944

The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in July 1937 had a great impact on the whole Chinese population. Thriving anti-Japanese feeling among Chinese helped to transform the Islamic reform movement into a more patriotic one. This also meant that it needed more concrete foundations if it were to inspire Muslims in China to participate in anti-Japanese activities. We will now discuss the reaction of the contributors to Yuehua and the changes in its publishing environment.

The publication was suspended for almost ten months from June 1937 until April 1938 because of the confusion caused by Japanese invasion. In order to avoid occupation by the Japanese Army, the publishing house of Yuehua and the Chengda Normal School evacuated to Guilin, homeland of General Bai Chongxi . With a background in laojiao Islam, Bai Chongxi was an influential General of the Nanjing Government. From April of 1938 onwards, from its new headquarters in Guilin on the southern frontier of Guangxi, the Yuehua continued to send the same messages to Muslims in China. This meant that the Nanjing Government approved and assisted the printing and dissemination of new issues of Yuehua. This also meant that the direction thus far pursued by the Islamic reformers corresponded with that of the Nanjing Government under the anti-Japanese National United Front. Subsidies given by the government to Chengda in Guilin, however, were minimal.[445]

The Yuehua’s anti-imperialist campaign stemmed from an accurate analysis of the status quo. In accordance with the severe war conditions, the Yuehua began to praise with increasing frequency the Chinese nation’s glorious past and multicultural character, the unity of the nation, and to call for the establishment of a strong state after the victory over Japan. In order to defeat Japan, they also stressed the promotion of antiwar education as well as a strong defense against Japan’s

intrigues aimed at destroying the unity of the Chinese nation by applying the method of “divide and rule.”

The Islamic reformers in China already understood that Japan was pursuing aggression with excuses when it claimed “Mongolians and Muslims have the right to self-determination and the right to establish their own nation-states,” and they set out to reject these arguments.[446] Not only the Yuehua but also other journals such as Huijiao Dazhong in Zhongqing, Qingzhen Zhongbao in Kunming or Tujue in Nanjing were sending almost the same messages. As the most prestigious journal under the Nationalist Government’s authorization and surveillance, the Yuehua took the leadership of the literary anti-Japanese campaign in Hui society.

The Yuehua continued to publish and quote from the Qur‘an and the Hadith in order to explain the Muslims’ concrete justification for participation in a defensive war, and also in order to explain the need to submit to a single national leader, Jiang Jieshi. Translations of articles from the Maëallat al-Azhar (previously Nūr al-Islām) reinforced this tendency.[447] Egypt was also engulfed in the events of the Second World War, and the Qur‘an, the Hadith, and transcriptions of historical wars began to be reinterpreted in accordance with the state of the conflict. Since Muslims both in China and Egypt struggled for the same goal, Islamic theories imported from Egypt were also applicable to the Chinese situation. A “national emergency” was directing Muslims in China to translate the Qur‘an. This was regarded not only as a religious activity, and as one meant to establish an ethnic identity, but also as a national activity.

In addition, the most distinct difference between prewar and postwar days was the appearance of the discourse on martyrdom. The Yuehua began to call for glorious death in the name of the state and against the enemy. The anti-Japanese war began to be regarded by Muslims as a sacred and just war, jihad.[448] Xue Wenbo , a leading teacher of Chengda, wrote a verse entitled “Song of the Hui with an anti-Japanese determination”:

The enemies have made their horses drink water from the Yellow River

The sacred war for national protection has begun

Muslims have a real spirit, feel ashamed to indulge in living

But we feel proud to participate in the battle

Mosques have been burned down to ruins Innocent women and children are shedding blood Alas, in China we fifty million Muslims Are in disgrace

Religion shows us the way of martyrdom

Do we feel reluctant to bleed for justice?

At the defeat of Japan, we yell out and rejoice

Then Muslim men will undress their military uniform.[449]

Martyrdom had until then not been considered to be a glorious act, since ethnic identity as a “Hui” was originally based on the thoughts of Huirus, to which this notion was not familiar. However, the Islamic reformers in China had no choice but to modify this principle in the face of the unprecedented invasion by a foreign power. Since patriotism had begun to occupy the highest position among human virtues, “glorious death for our own state” came to be judged as an act of religious martyrdom in reference to the Qur‘an and the Hadith.[450]

This important transformation from the mere furthering of patriotism to that of national salvation, for which any sacrifice could be made, was brought forth by the political change. The Nationalist government called for a national salvation movement and for spiritual mobilization after 1939. At the same time, the slogan of “love homeland and love Islam” was converted into “save homeland and save Islam” qiuguo qiujiao .[451]

The hadith concept of “love of the fatherland is an article of faith” was stressed over and over again. In order to encourage the Hui to fight against Japanese invaders, this concept was spread to Hui societies throughout China by means of journals, speeches, and radio broadcasts by ahongs and the elite, as well as by travels of the Hui elite to frontier regions for promotional purposes.

“A message to all Muslims in China from the Chinese Islamic Association for National Salvation” was issued in Ramadan, 1940. It clearly spelled out the duties of Muslims in such difficult conditions. After an explanation of the Islamic revival and Muslim nation-building efforts throughout the world, it declared that Muslims in China should not emphasize their own ethnic self-determination but should focus on national self-determination together with other ethnicities in China. It continued:

We have to implement the teaching “the love of the fatherland is an article of faith” by the Prophet Muhammad and to inherit the Hui’s glorious history in China. In addition, let us reinforce our unity and participate in the twice more difficult task of supporting a defensive war and promoting religion …. We hope that ahongs and the elite will initiate a movement of prayer during Ramadan and implement group prayer to support our intimate feeling toward Islam. A sincere unity of Muslims should be developed to contribute power towards the expulsion of Japan.[452]

During the anti-Japanese war, ahongs were not only at the front of the cultural resistance, but also were enthusiastically supporting the resistance movement in the battlefield. Taking advantage of their prestigious status over ordinary Muslims in the community, the ahongs

spoke to the people of the necessity to participate in the war, and if need be of the glories of becoming a mahid. Prominent and influential ahongs such as Xin Zongzhen in Hebei and Hu Songshan of the Ikhwani school in Ningxia, mobilized Muslims in the Hui communities. In the end, the difficult and painful war against Japan brought the formation of a double identity as Hui and as member of the Chinese nation.

** The CCP’s policy toward the Hui: a legacy of Islamic reform

In the wake of the historical coalition between the GMD and the CCP in 1937 in the Shan-Gan-Ning Anti-Japanese Base Area, the CCP implemented its own policy toward ethnic minorities, the Hui, and the Mongols in particular. In view of the formation of the Anti-Japanese National United Front, Mao Zedong presented the new line of the CCP in his On the New Phase in 1938 and On New Democracy in 1940. He stated that the CCP should recognize the Hui and other ethnic minorities as integral parts of the Chinese nation, and that China should thus be a unitary state. Until the coalition, however, the CCP advocated introducing a federal system in China, and Mao’s new line was quite contrary to the CCP platform.

Newly recognizing themselves as the only legitimate successors of Sun Yatsen’s nationalism, the CCP declared that the Hui had equal political and economic rights with the Han. At the same time the party guaranteed them freedom of religion, the preservation of their ethnic culture and customs, and support for ethnic and cultural development. Regional autonomy, which for sixty years had been the pillar of the CCP’s policy toward ethnic minorities, was composed of a combination of the nationalist discourse of Sun Yatsen, Marxism-Leninism, and the wishes of ethnic minorities, the Hui in particular. The Hui had a population of about 1, 500 in the base area.

Concerning the wishes of the Hui, we have acknowledged the fact that the ideology of “Hui ethnicity as a part of the Chinese nation” and their claim to equal political rights with the Han were advocated and spread by the Islamic reformers. However the concurrence of the CCP’s minority policy and the Islamic reform movement did not happen by chance. Li Weihan was a top-

ranking Han cadre of the CCP and was responsible for drafting the new policy toward ethnic minorities after 1938. While writing the booklet Huihui Minzu Wenti (“The Hui Question”), he immersed himself for more than two years in books on Islam and journals by the Islamic reformers published in the end of the 1930s. These were Yuehua, Huijiao Dazhong, Huijiao Qingnian Yuebao, and Tujue.

Li asserted that the Hui, as a minzu (nationality) had political rights, educational rights, and other rights equal to those of the Han, while he simultaneously emphasized that the party should eliminate poverty and forced assimilation, as well as fight racial discrimination. He also claimed that the CCP’s minority policy should grant the Hui all of their wishes and follow the “correct” directions of the Islamic revivalist movement.[453] That is to say, the CCP praised and supported the Islamic reformers’ efforts and orientation up to then. In particular, the Islamic reformers’ enthusiastic encouragement of all Muslims in China to participate in the anti-Japanese War as well as their promotion of anti-Japanese education, were applauded. The orientation of the Islamic reformers helped create the blueprint that would help the CCP in formulating its policy for a unified nation-state that would include multiple ethnicities.

The favored status of the Hui as a “nationality” in the People’s Republic can be understood as a reward for their inclusive patriotic attitude toward the Chinese State. The Islamic reformers also considered the CCP’s policy as ideal for their moral existence. A close relationship was thus built between the CCP and the Hui nationality.

However, the CCP and the Islamic reformers intentionally disregarded the possibility that other ethnic groups in China might wish to have their own nation-state disassociated from China. Both the CCP and the Islamic reformers failed to ponder the more dangerous potentialities of national disintegration. The remedy for any such insurgency was military suppression or conciliation. When the CCP recognized that ethnic problems were equivalent to “Hui problems” and that these could be resolved by use of the methodology propounded by the Islamic reformers, it was clear that new ethnic problems would emerge after the victory over Japan and the GMD. It is needless to say that the separatist movements of the Tibetans and the

Uyghurs characterized these problems. As long as the CCP and its followers upheld a unitary state system, appeased “disobedient nationalities” by pointing to the example of “obedient nationalities,” and continued to implement national integration through the Islamic reformers’ policies from the republican era, these difficult problems could not be resolved.

** Conclusion

At the beginning of the nation-state era, Islamic reformers consisting of ahongs, literati, and local elites rediscovered and reevaluated the philosophy of the “unity of being” as the core of a new Hui identity. They regarded this new ethnic identity as indispensable for China’s nation-building and implemented the Islamic revival movement in order to coexist with the other ethnicities. They also took responsibility for the new political and social situation, since all of these phenomena were outflows of the one and only absolute existence, Allah. Absorbing and digesting “newer and better” Islamic interpretations from the outside, ahongs were expected to always be responsible for the protection of the material and spiritual lives of Muslims, not only in their own communities but also in the broader Hui community of China. The Hui local elite and power holders, with their Confucian and Islamic backgrounds, also felt the burden of saving, enlightening, and leading “backward” people out of poverty, ignorance, and a situation in which their political rights were not assured. In order to adjust the reality of the world to the doctrine of Islam, they needed to be accountable to the community to which they belonged. The founders of the Chengda Normal School and the publishers of Yuehua were some of the most progressive elements of these Islamic reformers.

Essentially, both ahongs and the local elite displayed a double faith toward Allah and the ruler of this world. Therefore, at the beginning of the nation-state era, it was rather easy for them to produce a new national identity instead of the simple faith toward the Mandate of Heaven. Their nationalistic tendency throughout the twentieth century can be explained by their psychological structure.

They were pioneers in declaring that Chinese culture had a multiple but unified character. They also asserted that ethnic identity and national identity should coexist within one's mind. This concept is still active in the CCP's policy toward ethnic minorities, in which the CCP attempts to educate and persuade ethnic minorities in China to have both an ethnic and a national identity. This assertion has common points with Fei Xiaotong's famous statement which is, at the same time, the People's Republic's official definition of the Chinese nation, namely that "the Chinese nation has a multiple and unified structure."

In order to support and promote the concept of patriotism and nationalism in the 1930s, the Hui appreciated the discussions of Islamic reform movements in Egypt that were taking place at the time. In fact, these discussions had considerable impact on the foundation and development of the Islamic revival movement in China. The Egyptian reformers' works were applied in order to promote nationalism, modernism, and Islamic reform in China. These concepts "imported" from Egypt contributed to making the Islamic reformers in China an established and distinguished mainstream force, not only among Muslims in China but also in terms of the People's Republic's policy toward ethnic minorities.

However, it is very important to point out that the Chinese reformers only extracted some of the essence of the Egyptian reformers' discussions, which they rearranged in a form more suitable to the Chinese situation. In other words, the style of their activities and their moral basis could not be completely free from their traditional philosophy of the unity of being. The concrete basis of patriotism, however, was supplemented by the alleged Hadith identifying faith toward Allah with faith toward watan (fatherland). "Love fatherland and love Islam" was regarded as the most effective moral code for Muslims in China. Its slogans were hung on the wall of mosques, just as the slogan of "hurrah for the emperor" used to be seen in mosques in the Qing era. The slogan was taught in schools for Hui children and preached by ahongs in mosques every Friday. Under the tutelage of the educational system initiated by the Islamic reformers, the Hui's obedience to authority became a religious theory.

We have discussed the policy of regional autonomy adopted by the People's Republic at the request of the Islamic reformers. In addition, we may point out that the discussion of the Islamic reformers with regard to the Chinese nation is very similar to the more recent official discourse about the Chinese nation with a multiple and unified structure. The three directions advocated by the Islamic reformers, nationalism, modernism, and the promotion of Islam have been again carefully upheld since the initiation of the Reform and Open Policy in 1978.

As long as they advocated patriotism as the highest political and moral code, the Hui's political status in the state was guaranteed. If we set aside the Tibetans and Uyghurs, ethnic problems have apparently been minimal during the last two decades, at least in China's provincial districts. It seems that in China ethnic consciousness does not always seem to lead to the ethnic nationalism that brought the tragedies of Yugoslavia or Chechnia. This means that the ethnic identity of various national groups in China, for the most part fuses with the central government's purpose of national integration. There may be objections that such ethnic identity in China is a "pseudo identity" that is manipulated by the government. However, as we sought to prove in this paper, the Islamic reformers' efforts for national integration, at least, cannot be underestimated.

[412] Matsumoto Akiro , "Ba Rengen cho 'Tenpo Seiri Abunchukai' no kenkyu ," Toyoshi kenkyu 58/1 (1999).

[413] Ma Shouqian , "Huizu Yisilanjiao de Jingtang Jiaoyu [Jingtang Islamic Education of the Hui]," in Xibei Huizu yu Yisilanjiao [Northwestern Hui Nationality and Their Islam] (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1994), 239–242. Also see several papers on Jingtang in Xi1an Yisilan Wenhua Yanjiuhui , ed., Yisilan Wenhua Yanjiu [Islamic Cultural Studies] (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1998).

[414] Chu Ketong , "Guwan shichang he zhubao yishi—Shanghai Huizu Musilin de Chuantong Hingye [Antique Markets and the Traditional Occupation of Jewerly]," in Zhongguo Isilanjiao Yanjiu Wenji Bianxuezu, ed.,

Zhongguo Isilanjiao Yanjiu Wenji (Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1988), 465–474.

[415] Yang Zhaojun Ma Chaogun , and Ma Weiliang (eds), Yunnan Huizu shi [History of the Hui of Yunnan] (Kunming: Yunnan Minzu Chubanshe, 1989), 201–204.

[416] Cai Dayu , “Liutong Qingzhen Jiaoyuhui xu [Introduction to the Islamic Educational Association in Tokyo],” in Liudong Qinzhen Jiaoyuhui , ed., Xing Hui Pian (Reprint, Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe, 1992), 85.

[417] Wang Jingzhai, “Wushi nian qiuxue zishu [Memoir of My Fifty-Year Study],” in Li Xinghua and Feng Jingyuan, eds, Zhongguo Isilan Jiaoshi Cankao Ziliao Xuanbian (1911–1949) (Yinchuan: 1985), 622–623.

[418] Ma Songting, “Zhongguo Huijiao yu Chengda Shifan Xuexiao [Islam in China and the Chengda Normal School],” Yugong 5/11 (1936).

[419] Jing Jidang “Gu Ma Fuxiang xiansheng xingbang jiaoyu shilüe [The Late Ma Fuxiang’s Promotion of Education],” Yuehua 7/25, 26, 27 (September 30, 1936).

[420] Yuehua 1/1 (November 5, 1929).

[421] Li Tingbi , “Yisilan shisi shiji shidai zhi qingnian [The Muslim Youth in the Fourteenth Islamic Century],” Yuehua 2/6 (February 25, 1930).

[422] Kosugi Yasushi, Gendai Chuto to Isuramu seiji [The Modern Middle East and Islamic Politics] (Tokyo: Showado, 1994), 10–12.

[423] Al-Qur1an (surah 2: 246).

[424] Wang Jingzhai, trans. and interpretation, “Jinshou Huijiao yu Aihu Guojia [Protection of Islam and Love of the Fatherland],” Yuehua 2/3 (January 25, 1930).

[425] C. Ernest Dawn, “Ideological Influences in the Arab Revolt,” The World of Islam: Studies in Honor of Philip K. Hitti (New York: Macmillan, 1959).

[426] Wang, “Jinshou Huijiao yu Aihu Guojia.”

[427] Ma Songting , “Wunian yilai zhi Yuehuabao [The Yuehua Journal in These Five Years],” Yuehua 6/28, 29, 30.

[428] The following is a list of journals or papers traded in exchange for the Yuehua from 1931 until the mid-1930s: al-Fattah (Cairo) seemed to be the earliest journal acquired by the editors of the Yuehua; al-Sath (Cairo), al-Islam 5, 6 (Tunis), Moslemische Revue (Berlin), al-Maban al-salamin, Sırat-ı müstakim 1 (Istanbul), The Islamic Review (London), Pembela Islam (Java), The Mirror of Truth and Guide to Happiness, Mohammad and Christ, The Call of Islam, Back to Qur1an, The Ahamadiyya Movement, al-Huda (Singapore). (From several issues of the fifth volume of Yuehua).

[429] Concerning the bibliography of Ma Songting, see Sai Shengbao, “Aiguo zhuyizhe, Yisilan jingxue jiaoyujia Ma Songting Daahong ,” Huizu Yanjiu 2 (1992).

[430] Ma Songting, “Wunian yilai zhi Yuehua bao.”

[431] Ma Yugui , “Guonan fangyin! Jiaobao suqi! [National Difficulties Will Come Soon! Muslims, Wake Up Soon!],” Yuehua 3/27 (September 25, 1931).

[432] Yisilan Xueyouhui, “Yisilan Xueyouhui kangri xuanyan [Anti-Japanese Declaration by the Muslim Students Association],” Yuehua 3/35 (December 15, 1931).

[433] Xue Wenbo , “Zhongguo Huizu de diwei he bensheng yingyou de renshi [The Status of the Hui Nationality and the Required Consciousness],” Yuehua 4/10, 11, 12 (April 5, 1932).

[434] Yang Sishi , “Duiyu Aiji huiguang yuekan de pingyu [Assessment of Nūr al-Islām],” Yuehua 4/33 (November 25, 1932).

[435] Muhammad Hazar Hoseini, “Zhuanshu Gulan zhi yiyi wei waiguowen [Transfering the Right Meaning of the Translation of the Qur1an into Foreign Languages],” trans. Yang Sishi, Yuehua 5/1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (1993).

[436] Ma Jian, “Renzhuxue dagang,” Yuehua 5/27 (September 25, 1933).

[437] “Bianjishi Tanhua ,” Yuehua 5/30 (October 25, 1933). In addition to the Risālat al-tawḥīd, Ma Jian translated Husayn al-Jisr’s Saʃayiʃ din al-Islam into Chinese and entitled it Huijiao Zhenxiang [The Reality of Islam], under the recommendation of professor Jibali of al-Azhar. The translation was finished in 1937 and published in Zhongqing. Ma Jian also translated a book to solve the question of contradictions between science and religion. Husayn al-Jisr came from Tunisia and was a disciple of Muhammad 2Abduh.

[438] Zhou Zhongren “Gulanjing yijie [Commentary of the Qur1an],” Yuehua 6/34, 35, 36 (December 30, 1934).

[439] J. Jomier, “Al-Azhar,” EI2.

[440] “Felifeile Boshi zai Zhongshan Gongyuan Huanying dahui xishang zhi jiangyan ci [Dr Filfila’s Speech at the Welcome Conference at the Zhongshan Park]” Yuehua 5/25 (September 5, 1933).

[441] Ma Songting, “Huijiao yu rensheng [Islam and Life],” Yuehua 5/35 (December 15, 1933).

[442] Ma Zishi , “Aiji Huijiaotu hujiao yundong [The Egyptian Muslim Movement for the Protection of Islam],” Yuehua 5/26 (September 15, 1933).

[443] To some extent, Islamic reformers in China were inclined to support Muhammad Iqbal of India who insisted on the formation of one Indian nation upon the fusion of both Hindu and Muslims. Information on Iqbal, a prominent leader of the Islamic reform movement in India, was partly transmitted by another of Yuehua’s correspondents Hai Weiliang , who studied at the Lucknow Islamic Institute in India. See Hai Weiliang “Indu zhuming Huijiao shiren Ikeba boshi zhi lunzheng [The Famous Indian Poet Iqbal’s Political Discussions],” Yuehua 5/29 (October 25, 1933).

[444] Ai Yizai “Bannian lai de Beiping Chengda Shifan Xuexiao [The Chengda Normal School in the Last Six Months],” Yugong 7/4 (1936).

[445] Liu Tongsheng , “Chengda Shifan Xuexiao xiaoshi shuyao ,” Huizu Yanjiu 11 (1993): 72.

[446] Mu Fu “Cong Beijing Huijiaohui dao Zhongguo Huijiao Zonglianhehui ,” in Wenshi Ziliao Yanjiuhui, ed., Wenshi Ziliao Xuanbian 32 (Beijing: Beijing Chubanshe, 1987).

[447] (Maëallat al-Azhar 6/9) Yuehua 11/28–30 (1939); (Maëallat al-Azhar 11/7) Yuehua 13/1–3 (1941); (Maëallat al-Azhar 11/7) Yuehua 13/4–9 (1941); (Maëallat al-Azhar special edition 1939) Yuehua 13/10–12 (1941); (Maëallat

al-Azhar 11/4) Yuehua 13/28–30 (1941); (Maëallat al-Azhar 6/9) Yuehua 13/28–30 (1941); (Maëallat al-Azhar 6/9) Yuehua 13/28–30 (1941).

[448] Anonymous, “Yuehua Luntan ” Yuehua 10/14, 15, 16 (September 5, 1938).

[449] Xue Wenbo, “Zhongguo Huizu kangzhenge ,” Yuehua 11/18 (September 25, 1939).

[450] Zheng Daoming , “Cong Huijiao zhi zhanzheng quanyi shuodao women de shensheng kangzhan [Interpretation of Our Holy War from the Perspective of Islamic War],” Yuehua 11/4, 5, 6 (February 25, 1939).

[451] “Guilin Tongxiang daxu Huimin Juxing shendan Jinian shengkuang ,” Yuehua 11/10–15 (May 25, 1939).

[452] “Zhongguo Huijiao Qiuguoxiehui gao quanguo Huibao shu [Message from the Chinese Islamic Association for National Salvation to all Muslims in China],”Yuehua 12/28, 29, 30 (October 25, 1940).

[453] Minzu Wenti Yanjiuhui , ed., Huihui Minzu Wenti (Reprint, Beijing: Minzu Chubanshe, 1981), 129.

* 7. The Transmission of Al-Mānar’s Reformism to the Malay-Indonesian World: The case of al-Imām and al-Munīr

Azyumardi Azra

The spread and influence of modern Islamic reformism to the Malay-Indonesian world since the early twentieth century have been recognized by many scholars of Malay-Indonesian Islam. In a general way, scholars have

delineated the influence of such reformist scholars or activists as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad ‘Abduh, Rashid Rida, and others in reformist or modernist organizations such as the Sarekat Islam, Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam, or Jong Islamieten Bond. Little attention, however, has been paid to the channels of transmission of modernist or reformist ideas from the Middle East, especially Cairo and Mecca, to the Malay-Indonesian world.

There is no doubt that the printed word was the instrumental means responsible for the transmission of modernist or reformist ideas to the Malay-Indonesian world. It is within this context that we can appropriately place the reformist journal al-Mānar, which significantly influenced the course of Islamic reformism in the region. The journal not only directly influenced the spread of Islamic reformism through its own articles, but was most influential in stimulating the publication of similar journals within the Malay-Indonesian world. This chapter is an early attempt to delineate and comprehensively discuss the transmission of Islamic reformism to the Malay-Indonesian world by means of journals, namely by the two indigenous journals al-Imām and al-Munīr.

Regarding the journal al-Mānar itself, a brief note should be made. It is well known that the backbone of al-Mānar was the reformist scholar Muhammad Rashid Rida. Deeply influenced by Afghani and especially by ‘Abduh, his main mentor, Rida published his own magazine, al-Mānar (“The Lighthouse”), which first appeared in 1898 in Cairo as a weekly, and subsequently as a monthly, until his death in 1935. The objectives of al-Mānar were to articulate and disseminate the ideas of reform and preserve the unity of the Muslim umma. It was Rida himself who edited most of the articles that appeared in al-Mānar. Therefore, one can argue that al-Mānar was the personal work of Rida.[454]

** al-Mānar and the Malay-Indonesian world

In her fascinating study of Indonesian students in Cairo, Abaza has correctly argued that, during colonial times, Cairo played an important role

as a center for the publication and circulation of journals and magazines. There were a number of magazines and journals published in Cairo that were circulated in the Malay-Indonesian world. In addition to al-Mānar, which is under discussion here, it is also known that the journal al-ʿUrwa al-Wuöqa, a predecessor of al-Mānar, was in circulation in the Malay-Indonesian world.

It is important, however, to point out that Cairo also received a number of magazines and journals published in the Malay-Indonesian world. It seems possible to find in the collection of the Cairo National Library, Dar al-Kutub, Malay-Indonesian magazines and journals such as al-Iqbal (Java), al-Hudā (Singapore), al-Mirʿa al-muhammadiyya (Yogyakarta), al-Talira al-islāmiyya, and al-Irmad (Pekalongan). Considering this, Cairo is seen playing an undeniably crucial role in the mutual transmission of ideas from one region to another. In fact, Cairo was not only the center for the publication of Arabic literature, but also a center for Malay literature as well.[455]

The influence of al-Mānar on the Malay-Indonesian world can hardly be overestimated. Despite Dutch efforts to ban it from entering the Archipelago, it was regularly read in various parts of the region. In fact, it has been suggested that al-Mānar was reasonably well circulated within the Malay-Indonesian world by several means.

The first is smuggling. It appears very likely that al-Mānar was mostly smuggled into Indonesia through certain ports where Dutch supervision was lax. Mukti‘ Ali points out that al-Mānar was smuggled into Indonesia, or more precisely into Java, for instance, via the port of Tuban in East Java, where there was no customs supervision. According to Pijper Bluhm-Warn, the adviser to the Dutch Government for Native and Arab affairs, who was also responsible for supervising the spread of Islamic literature in Indonesia, the Dutch did not censor the shipment of al-Mānar to Ahmad Surkati, founder of the Irshad movement in the archipelago.[456]

The second means by which al-Mānar was brought into Indonesia was by way of certain hajjis who returned after their pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, where the journal was in wide circulation. It is well known that from the early history of Islam in the archipelago, especially from the sixteenth century onwards, the pilgrimage had been an effective means of the transmission of not only Islamic ideas, but also of a large amount of literature from the Middle East to the region. It is therefore not difficult to understand why Snouck Hurgronje, the leading adviser to the Dutch colonial government on Islamic affairs, suggested that the Dutch pay special attention to supervising returning hajjis.[457]

The third means of transmission of al-Mānar was returning students either from Cairo or Mecca and Medina. As Roff shows, the number of Malay-Indonesian students in these places grew significantly in the early 1920s.[458] This increase allowed them to establish organizations and publish their own journals, the most prominent of which was the Seruan Azhar.[459] The Seruan Azhar itself, as we will see later, played an important role in the continued Islamic intellectual discourse in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.

The fourth means was through certain “appointed” agents. This is clear in the case of Sayyid Muhammad ibn ʿAqil ibn Yahya, one of al-Imām’s leading associates in Singapore. In an obituary to the Sayyid, Rashid Rida mentions that he took the trouble to circulate al-Mānar in Singapore, Java, and the entire Indonesian archipelago.[460]

The spread of al-Mānar was not confined to the Dutch East Indies and the Straits. al-Mānar, and al-Imām, also circulated in the Kota Bharu area of Kelantan. As Nik Hassan makes clear, together with other reformist journals such as Pengasuh (first printed in Kota Bharu in 1918), al-Ihwān (first printed in Pulau Pinang in 1926), and Saudara (first printed in Pulau Pinang in 1928), it played a crucial role in the spread of Kaum Muda ideas in the Kelantan region. All of these journals were among the most important sources of reformist ideas among such ulama as Haji Muhammad Yussof bin

Muhammad, popularly known as Tok Kenali (1868–1933), Haji Wan Musa bin Haji Abdul Samad (1874–1939), and Haji Ahmad Manam (1834–1938).[461]

It is clear that the influence of al-Mānar went beyond journals, magazines, and reformist organizations. al-Mānar even inspired certain writers to write novels containing the reformist ideas that it preached. Shaykh al-Hadi, mentioned earlier, for instance, wrote a novel entitled Farida Lanum that is set in Cairo in late 1894. Despite the fact that the work is fiction, he wished to give some sense of realism and credibility through references to “real people, places, and events.” Thus, for instance, he mentions the names of Cairo streets; he also described the Egyptian ruler, Muhammad ‘Abduh, the journal al-Mānar, and even several Egyptian feminists. As Hooker points out, the specific reference to Muhammad ‘Abduh and the reformist journal al-Mānar in the closing pages of the novel, locate the narrative firmly in the context of reformist Islam.[462]

Another such novel is Hikayat Percintaan Kasih Kemudaan written by Ahmad Kotot (b. 1894), a native Malay. This novel also included the theme of Islamic reformism preached by al-Mānar. Although the novel was written in a Malay setting, it is distinguished by its Islamic reformist underpinnings.

** al-Imām: mouthpiece of reform (1906-1908)

It is doubtless that al-Imām (“The Leader”) was one of the most important channels of the transmission of al-Mānar’s ideas to the Malay-Indonesian world. In his classic study, Roff concludes that, in the first place, al-Imām was a radical departure from standard journals in the field of Malay publications. It was distinguished from its predecessors both by its intellectual stature and intensity of purpose, and by its attempt to formulate a coherent philosophy of action for a society faced with the need for rapid social and economic change. Second, Roff argues that the range and orthodoxy of al-Imām was representative of the incipient movements, which could be seen growing in almost every aspect of Malay life.[463]

The fact that al-Imām was inspired by and modeled on al-Mānar has been agreed upon by many scholars including Roff. It was from the Egyptian reformist movement that the writers and sponsors of al-Imām derived, almost in totality, their reformist ideas. Therefore, like the al-Imām circle in the Minangkabau area, the reformist group in Malaya that was responsible for the publication of al-Imām was known as “kaum al-Mānar”, or the “al-Mānar faction.” An examination of the contents of al-Mānar, as detailed by Adams,[464] makes clear the extent to which al-Imām was modeled upon it; and the Malay journal contains abundant references to and excerpts from al-Mānar.[465]

Thus, it is clear that al-Imām was one of the most important intellectual loci of reformist Muslims in the Malay-Indonesian world. In addition to being known as “kaum al-Mānar, “ as has been pointed out earlier, this reformist group was also popularly known as the “kaum muda, “ the young reformist group, as opposed to the “kaum tua, “ the old traditionalist group. The “kaum muda, “ as one might expect, was inspired and influenced by such reformist Middle Eastern figures as Afghani, ‘Abduh, Rida, and the like, and proposed the renewal of Islam. On the other hand, the “kaum tua” was the proponent of the established and traditional Islam. The reformist tendency represented by the al-Imām group can be seen in the biography of its editors and publishers. These were Shaykh Muhammad Tahir bin Jalaluddin al-Minangkabawi al-Azhari, the first editor, Sayyid Shaykh bin Ahmad al-Hadi, a Melaka-born Malay-Arab who was a frequent and colorful contributor; Haji Abbas bin Muhammad Thaha, a Singapore-born Minangkabau, the second editor, and Shaykh Muhammad Salim al-Kalali, an Acehnese merchant who was director of al-Imām during its first two years.[466]

The most notable figure, not only among the editors of al-Imām, but also among the “kaum muda” was Shaykh Muhammad Tahir bin Jalaluddin al-Minangkabawi al-Azhari, who was born in Kototuo, Bukittinggi in West Sumatra in 1869. His father, Shaikh Muhammad, also called Shaykh Tahir, was a well-known ulama in his area, a

son of Shaykh Ahmad Jalaluddin orTuanku Sami, a judge of the Paderi in the Padri Movement in Central Sumatra in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[467] His father died when he was 2 years old, followed by his mother when he was 8. When he was 12 years old (c. 1881), he was sent to Mecca where he stayed with his well-known cousin, Shaykh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi. Ahmad Khatib was known not only as a teacher of many Jawi students in the Holy City, but was known as the grand imam of the Shafiʻi madhhab in the Haram.[468]

After studying in Mecca for about fourteen years he went to Cairo to study 2ilm al-falak (astronomy) at al-Azhar. It was during his four-year sojourn in Cairo that he was introduced to the teachings of the celebrated reformist Muhammad ‘Abduh. It is also reported that he formed a close relationship with the most brilliant of Abduh’s students, Muhammad Rashid Rida. It is said that later, in 1898, when Rida founded al-Mānar, Muhammad Tahir contributed articles to its columns. If this is true, then he sent his writings to al-Mānar from Mecca, where he lived and taught from 1897 to 1899. Whatever the case, it is clear that he was profoundly influenced by the reformist ideas voiced in the circle of al-Mānar.

In 1899 Muhammad Tahir returned from Mecca to his homeland in West Sumatra. However, he chose Malaya instead of Sumatra as his home, and on 28 September of that year settled in Kuala Kangsar in the State of Perak, where he married a Malay girl. A year later, he was appointed religious officer by the Sultan of Perak, Idris Murshidil Muʻazzam Shah, and in August 1904 he was commissioned as a member of the council of the chiefs and religious elders of the State of Perak. Although he chose to settle in Perak, Muhammad Tahir frequently traveled to Riau-Lingga and Sumatra.

In 1903 he was invited, together with his close friend Sayyid Shaykh bin Ahmad al-Hadi, to accompany a “mission” to Mecca and Cairo, which included the sons of the Sultan and Raja Muda of Riau. Two years later, in 1905, he went to Singapore, where he initially joined his friends to help organize the pilgrim brokerage on the island, a business in which he had been involved since his latest sojourn in Mecca. It was during his stay in Singapore that he met a number of ulama, wealthy people, and personalities

who were knowledgeable, able, and willing to work collectively to publish a journal to be known as al-Imām, beginning in July 1906.[469]

It is important to point out that while serving as the editor in chief of al-Imām, Muhammad Tahir was involved in various other activities. Before and after the First World War he taught in various institutions, the most prominent of which was Madrasa al-Mansur in Penang, which was established by his friend Sayyid Shaykh bin Ahmad al-Hadi. In 1928 he visited his homeland in Sumatra and was immediately arrested by the Dutch authorities for six months on suspicion of being a leftist with Communist leanings in his religious teaching.[470] After a thorough investigation, the Dutch found no evidence supporting their suspicion against him and he was freed. He then returned to Malaysia and settled in Johor until his death in 1957. Muhammad Tahir wrote several books in Arabic and Malay, dealing with religious matters in general and astronomy in particular.

As Roff argues, Muhammad Tahir seems to have combined both the reformist spirit evident among a section of the Jawi community in Mecca in the 1880s and 1890s, and something of the more sophisticated modernism of contemporary religious thought in Cairo. It is also clear that he was profoundly influenced by the Pan-Islamism of Afghani and by the reformist ideas of Abduh, ideas that were current in the al-Mānar circle. Therefore, it is not surprising for him and his friends to fashion al-Imām in the image of al-Mānar.[471]

The second intellectual figure that was closely connected with al-Imām was Haji ʿAbbas bin Mohammad Taha, who succeeded Muhammad Tahir as editor of al-Imām and officially reorganized it in March 1908. Though he was born in Tanjung Pagar, Singapore in 1885, his parents were from the Minangkabau area in West Sumatra. When he was a small boy, he was sent by his parents to Mecca to acquire religious knowledge. On returning to Singapore in 1905 he worked mainly as a teacher. In 1906 he published a book on education and its philosophy entitled Kitab Sempurnaan Pelajaran (the Book of Perfection in Education). When al-Imām ceased its publication in December 1908, he was appointed qadi of the Tanjung Pagar district, where he remained active in the reformist cause, founding and editing the weekly

newspaper Neracha (“The Scales”) in 1911, followed by its companion monthly journal Tunas Melayu (“The Malay Seeds”) in 1913. As Roff points out, these two reformist intellectuals were dedicated to the goals elaborated by al-Imām in 1906. Concerned about the religious conflict that erupted between “Kaum Muda” and “Kaum Tua,” Haji ʿAbbas urged the formation of a special association of religious leaders. For that purpose, in 1936 he made an appeal to found the Persekutuan Ulama Kaum Semenanjung (“the pan-Malayan Association of Ulama”). In the same year he was appointed chief qadi of Singapore. He was also in close association with Burhanuddin al-Helmi, a politically orientated young reformist activist, who was also of Minangkabau origin. Together they were involved in the debate against “Kaum Tua,” which inspired Haji Abbas to write a booklet entitled “Risalah Penting pada Masalah Jilatan Anjing di atas Empat Mazhab” (“An Important Booklet on the Case of Being Licked by a Dog According to the Four Madhhabs of the Sunni”).[472]

The next pillar of al-Imām was Sayyid Shaykh bin Ahmad al-Hadi (1862-1934). Born in Malacca, his father Ahmad al-Hadi was of Hadhrami descent, and his mother was Malay. As a boy he attended for some years a well-known madrasa in Kuala Trengganu. When he was 14 years old, his father took him to Pulau Penyengat, Riau, where his father had connections with the royal house. There he was adopted by Raja Ali Kelana bin Raja Ahmad, half brother of the Sultan and also Raja Muda (then heir apparent to the Sultan), and brought up with the royal children.[473]

As a young man, Sayyid Shaykh was put in charge of the rumah wakaf, the hostel in which travelers were accommodated while visiting the court. Here he had the opportunity to be on familiar term with many noteworthy ulama and to further his own religious knowledge and interests through discussions and debates. In the early 1890s he assisted in the formation of the Persekutuan Rushdiyyah, a study club similar to those set up in Singapore at about the same time, and took an active interest in its activities.[474]

His close association with the court circle can be seen from the fact that on more than one occasion he accompanied the sons of the Sultan and Raja Muda on the pilgrimage to Mecca and to Egypt and the Levant, traveling in

1903 with Muhammad Tahir, with whom he had forged a close friendship. It is perhaps because of these visits that he was reported to have studied in Mecca. But, as Roff points out, it is unlikely that Sayyid Shaykh received much formal religious education during these visits. There is no doubt, however, that he became familiar, probably through the influence of Muhammad Tahir, with the ideas current in the Middle Eastern metropolitan centers of Islam at this time.

During this period Sayyid Shaykh had already been living in Singapore; since 1901 to be precise, for that is when he was appointed by his adoptive father, Raja Ali Kelana, initially as agent and then as manager of his brickworks company. In 1906 he took a leading role in the establishment of al-Imām, increasingly becoming a prominent figure in the Malay-Muslim community. Even though he was not an ʿalim of the calibre of Muhammad Tahir, he was very sharp and eminently suited to the polemicist and propagandist role in which he cast himself. In the course of his long and varied career he was known as a shari ʿa lawyer, educator, merchant, and publisher; however, he is today mostly remembered in journalism and literature.

It is important to note in passing that Sayyid Shaykh’s connection with the Riau court and its intellectual circles contributed to al-Imām’s special importance in the Riau region, as argued by Andaya.[475] According to this author, the fidelity with which al-Imām relayed Arabic opinion on a variety of issues assured it a high standing in the Riau court, where it was read by the Sultan himself. The interest of the Penyengat princes in al-Imām was also stimulated because a number of them, notably Raja Hitam and Raja Ali, were active contributors, while they personally knew the editors. In addition to Sayyid Shaykh’s special position mentioned earlier, Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin traveled several times to the area, giving advice and religious instruction. Thus, Andaya concludes, the relationship between the founders of al-Imām and the Riau court meant that, as Snouck Hurgonje remarked, the journal was a “suitable place for [Raja Ali and his advisers] to publish their desires and grievances.” al-Imām, which subscribed to pan-Islamism, responded accordingly to their grievances, as will be discussed later.

The next pillar of al-Imām was Shaykh Muhammad Salim al-Kalali, who was its first managing director. Though only very little information is available about him, it is known that he was an Acehnese of Hadhrami descent, and that he was a generous merchant residing in Singapore. Despite his epithet of “shaykh,” and although several major articles such as “al-Ummah wa al-watan” are attributed to him,[476] Roff believes that his importance to al-Imām was less as a scholar or writer than as a businessman.[477]

The last figure associated closely with al-Imām was Shaykh Sayyid Muhammad bin ʿAqil. When the management of al-Imām was commercially reorganized in March 1908, resulting in the establishment of the al-Imām Printing Company Ltd., Sayyid Muhammad ʿAqil was chosen and appointed as the Company Director (“mudir”). Little is known about him, although he acquired a certain public fame beyond the Malay-Muslim community when he was put on trial with two others in 1908 for the murder of Sayyid ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Sagoff, another leading Singaporean Hadrami. Though the trial ended inconclusively, Sayyid Muhammad bin ʿAqil was subsequently cleared of all blame when it was discovered that a principal witness for the prosecution had committed systematic perjury. Later, an important study found that he had a strong tendency toward Shiʿism.[478]

What was the content of al-Imām? For the purposes of this paper it is worthy to cite Roff, who has delineated the realm of concern of al-Imām.[479] al-Imām’s first concern was with religion and not directly with social, even less with political change. At the same time, such a tripartite division would have in some measure been foreign to the editors and writers of the journal, who shared the traditional Islamic concept of the undifferentiated umma in which spiritual, social, and political well-being is subsumed under another criteria—the good and profitable life lived according to Divine Law.

With this in mind, it is not surprising to find that the attention of the editors and writers was to turn, in the first place, to the state of Malay society. According to Roff, almost all of the thirty-one issues of the journal contain at least one article, and often more, analyzing the ills of the community. In self

criticism and condemnation, al-Imām reveals the backwardness of the Malays, their domination by alien peoples, their laziness, their complacency, their bickering among themselves, and their inability to cooperate for the common good.

In al-Imām's analysis the root cause of the decline of the Muslim peoples from their past glory is that they have ceased, in their ignorance, to follow the commands of God as expressed through the mouth and the life of His Prophet Muhammad. As an instrument for discovering and understanding the Divine Law, man has been gifted with ʿakal (reason), an intelligence it is incumbent upon him to use and to develop. Islam is not, writes al-Imām, as its detractors allege, hostile to knowledge and progress as exemplified by the West. On the contrary, a proper understanding of and submission to the law and spirit of Islam is "our only means of competing successfully with those who now rule and lead us."[480]

Proceeding with its diagnosis, al-Imām goes on to exhort certain groups of people to take the necessary action. It urges the rulers and traditional leaders to form associations to foster education, economic development, and self-awareness. It also urges the ulama to cleanse an Islam that had been adulterated by impurities of customs and belief derived from ʿadat and from other religions. The ulama that transmit the impure Islam should be brought to a sense of their errors and obligations. For this purpose, al-Imām put strong emphasis on the need to return to the Qurʿan and Hadith, and to practice ijtihad (independent reasoning and judgment) rather than taklid buta (blind acceptance of intermediary authority) for their understanding.

al-Imām pays attention not only to socio-religious matters, but also to political issues. One of the pet issues taken up by al-Imām relates to pan-Islamism. This is of course not surprising, since its intellectual genealogy is al-Mānar and al-ʿUrwa al-Wuöqa, both of which are closely related to Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, one of the most important pioneers of pan-Islamism.

Thus, when the issue of the “Caliphate” was brought forward by the Turkish Sultan Abdülhamid, al-Imām also took it up enthusiastically. Right from the very beginning of its existence, al-Imām printed news on Turkey at the same time as news on Japan. Under the heading “Turkey and Japan,” al-Imām discusses the proposed Congress of Religion to be held in Tokyo. It is reported that Sultan Abdülhamid had sent telegrams to the Emperor of Japan and dispatched three special envoys to Japan in order to attend the Congress.[481]

To further the Caliphate cause, al-Imām listed some achievements of Sultan Abdülhamid. According to the journal it is important to inform anxious readers of the latest news on Turkey. al-Imām gave detailed accounts of the capability of a Turkish warship complete with its capacity, arms, and speed “for those who would like to read it.”[482]

Despite this seemingly powerful Turkish army, however, al-Imām reminds the Ottomans to continue their effort to improve their military strength, for the Empire is surrounded by mighty enemies. al-Imām was convinced that only with the modernization of its army could the Ottoman Empire be on par with other European powers. Again, al-Imām expects that the readers are satisfied with its news and accounts of Ottoman military development.[483]

al-Imām’s attachment to the Caliphate question appears to have led it to lavishly praise Sultan Abdülhamid. In its reports al-Imām describes the Sultan as a caring ruler whose main concern was rebuilding the Empire’s infrastructure by building schools, railways, and other means of communication. According to al-Imām, the noble efforts of the Sultan were challenged by the formidable West. In facing this challenge, the journal hoped that the Turks would be more resilient and prayed that they would be protected until the end.[484]

It may seem strange that the editors of al-Imām were not aware that the Sultan was the subject of strong criticism in Turkey and the Middle East. al-Imām, in an innocent way, believed that Sultan Abdülhamid was sincere in his efforts to revitalize the old Ottoman Empire. It

asserts that there was no other existing Islamic government than that of the Ottoman Empire. al-Imām thus deplored unfavorable reports about the Empire by the Western press, which, it believed, were part of the conspiracy to undermine it.[485] According to Othman, however, when Sultan Abdülhamid was deposed from the throne by the Young Turks in 1908, al-Imām changed its attitude and now shifts its admiration in support of the Young Turks, which it viewed as the patrons of Islam.[486]

As indicated earlier, in connection with the biography of Sayyid Shaykh, al-Imām paid special attention to the destiny of the Riau court suffering under the encroachment of the Dutch. In an editorial published in September 1906, al-Imām pondered the fate of those countries that had lost their independence and preserved nothing else than “a collection of texts and stories.”[487] Furthermore, as Andaya argues, a number of al-Imām’s articles clearly reflected the resentment felt by Riau toward the changes in court protocol introduced by the colonial government, and above all toward the abolition of the Yamtua Muda post.

In 1906 Tengku Osman, the Sultan’s eldest son and Raja Ali’s son-in-law and protégé who had been at school in Cairo during the crisis over the 1905 Treaty, returned. In its November issue, al-Imām published verbatim his speech to the Rushdiyyah Club: “I think, sirs,” he said, “You must all be very worried and sad to see what has recently occurred in our beloved homeland.”[488] al-Imām also published an article by Sayyid Shaykh, which accused foreigners of placing Eastern peoples under slavery, of showing duplicity and disrespect to Eastern rulers, and of closing the doors to knowledge.[489]

How large was the extent of al-Imām’s influence? To answer this question, one may first look at its circulation. Roff admits that, although its subscribers may have been few in number, al-Imām also came into the hands of religious teachers, particularly those in the new style madrasas (modern religious schools). For them al-Imām was an invaluable source in dealing with such diverse and controversial questions such as the validity of certain hadiths, payment for burial prayers, certain practices associated with tarekat such as the Naqshbandiyya, the wearing of European clothing, and interest on loans from savings bank.

Roff concludes that though there is no clear evidence of the size and nature of its audience, there is little doubt that a majority of its readers came from the intellectually and socially more sophisticated elements of the towns, and from those who were religiously educated and had received some introduction to Muslim polemics from their pilgrimage to Mecca.[490]

It is important to note that al-Imām also had representatives (wakil) in many Malay states, and that some of its most cogent contributions came from Malay correspondents in Johor, Perak, and Pahang. Though perhaps the bulk of its readership was within British Malaya, there is no doubt that al-Imām was also in circulation in other parts of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. In fact, a high proportion of its correspondence came from the Dutch East Indies, particularly Sumatra. It is well known that Shaykh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin, the founder of the journal, sent copies to his friends and pupils in Minangkabau. As a result, as Hamka testifies, al-Imām exercised considerable influence on reformist thought and led directly to the establishment of a similar journal in 1911, al-Munīr.[491]

As Daya points out, al-Imām was a source of pride for the Minangkabau Muslims; it was established by one of their best-known ulama, and an intense correspondence linked certain Minangkabau ulama with Shaykh Tahir Jalaluddin. Furthermore the travels of Minangkabau perantau (migrants) who brought al-Imām with them, Daya argues, practically made al-Imām a possession of Minangkabau Malays. There was a good number of agents, subscribers, and correspondents of al-Imām in this area; and a number of articles written by Minangkabau ulama were also published in al-Imām. All of those related with al-Imām in one way or another were collectively called “kaum al-Mānar” (the al-Mānar group). It is therefore not surprising if, when al-Imām ceased its publication, it was lamented by Minangkabau reformist ulama; and this led to the increasing need for publication of their own journal, al-Munīr.[492]

It is clear that the impact of al-Imām was not confined to giving rise to new similar journals in the Malay-Indonesian world. As Roff points out,

it is in its impact on the new type of education, embodied by its encouragement of the more ambitious and elaborate new kind of madrasa (religious schools), that the immediate impact of the reformist group may be most clearly seen. al-Imām also encouraged the formulation of a system of education that, ideally, was to take account of the need not only for a purified Islam but for modern secular knowledge as well.[493] Thus, what al-Imām basically proposed was a reformed system of religious education in which, upon a sound basis of doctrinal instruction, Arabic, English, and modern educational subjects would be taught.

al-Imām not only paid much attention to matters regarding education, it also seems to have had specific educational aims. There were at least five of them promoted by al-Imām: first, to convince the Muslim community that knowledge is the first thing enjoined by God in the Holy Qurʿan, and that the Qurʿan contains all knowledge that is necessary for human progress; [494] second, to introduce a new system of education based on the Qur1anic doctrine; [495] third, to establish educational institutions with a sound curriculum and syllabus; [496] fourth, to encourage and assist Muslim youths in advancing their studies abroad; [497] fifth, to urge the rulers, traditional chieftains, and knowledgeable ulama, to take immediate action to enhance the system of Islamic education in the country.[498]

There are also al-Imām's other numerous exhortations on education, ranging from reiteration of the benefits of education, explanations of the different types of education, warning of the danger of ignorance, to suggestions to parents not to allow their children to sleep during daytime. The concern of al-Imām was indeed wide-ranging. Furthermore, al-Imām was interested not only in ideas, but also in the establishment of institutions that would support the spread and maintenance of these ideas. The most important of the institution that al-Imām helped to establish was the Madrasa al-Iqbal al-islāmiyya founded in Singapore in 1908. Run by an Egyptian, ʿUthman Effendi Raffat, this madrasa borrowed much from modernism in Egypt and the West. It was undoubtedly the forerunner of many others organized in similar lines throughout the Malay Peninsula and other parts of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago during the next few years.

** al-Munīr (1911-1916): the Kaum Muda type of reformism

When al-Imām ceased to publish, the Kaum Muda, especially those in Sumatra, must have felt that they had lost an important mouthpiece. They soon sought to publish a new journal that could succeed it. Prominent leaders of Kaum Muda in West Sumatra, who founded the journal al-Munīr (“The Illumination”), finally took the initiative. As Adams correctly points out, if one takes into account its intellectual genealogy, it was only natural that al-Munīr should take over the role of al-Imām in spreading Kaum Muda teachings and opposing all enemies of Islam.[499]

According to Yunus, al-Munīr was the first Islamic journal published in Padang in 1 Rabiʿ II 1329/April 1911. al-Munīr, however, did not last long; it ceased its publication in 1916 because, according to Yunus, its printing press was burned down.[500]

The founder of al-Munīr was Haji ʿAbdullah Ahmad, one of the most important scions of Islamic reformism in the Minangkabau area in the early twentieth century. Before providing his brief biography, it is important to point out that ʿAbdullah Ahmad’s idea to publish a journal similar to al-Imām came to his mind during his visit to Singapore in 1908. It was on this occasion that he learned about questions related to the journal’s publication, management, and editorship. In addition, he also took the opportunity to gain insights from al-Imām’s experience in establishing the Madrasa Iqbal al-islāmiyya.[501] As soon as he returned, he established his well-known school, “Sekolah Diniyyah al-islāmiyyah.”[502] In the case of al-Munīr, however, it was only three years later that he was able to establish the journal.

Most scholars agree that ʿAbdullah Ahmad was the sole pioneer of al-Munīr. Though their statements are different, Hamka, Alfian, and Djaja agree that it was ʿAbdullah Ahmad who took the initiative to publish al-Munīr.[503] Benda, however, asserts that in addition to ʿAbdullah

Ahmad, ʿAbdul Karim Amrullah was also an initiator of al-Munīr, although this does not seem to be supported by any sources.[504] In its first issue, ʿAbdul Karim Amrullah is referred to as a contributor from Maninjau. Furthermore, there is not a single writing of his in this first issue; most of the writings were by ʻAbdullah Ahmad.[505] In addition, Hamka, the son of ʿAbdul Karim Amrullah, points out that “his father moved from Maninjau to Padang in early 1912 to help Abdullah Ahmad in his school, since the latter was already very busy with it.”[506]

Born in Padang Panjang in 1878, he came from an ulama family; his father Haji Ahmad was an ulama and a textile trader. After finishing his elementary education, he traveled to Mecca in 1899 where he studied with Shaykh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi, a leading Jawi ulama in the Holy City at the time. He returned to Indonesia in 1905 and devoted himself to teaching and dakwah activities in Padang Panjang. Here he began to establish himself as an ardent reformist by opposing bida (unwarranted innovation) and khurafat (delusion). Around 1906 he moved to Padang, the capital city of West Sumatra, to succeed his uncle as a teacher. Later he established the Jamaah Adabiyah, the seed of a school that he would later found. With the financial support of Muslim traders he founded the Adabiyah Diniyyah School in 1909.[507]

Abdullah Ahmad made use of the Adabiyah institution as the organization that was responsible for the publication of al-Munīr. As for the Jamaah Adabiyah itself, it consisted mostly of traders who were the backbone of Adabiyah activities, including the publication of al-Munīr.[508] al-Munīr was published fortnightly, using the Malay language with Arabic characters. Most of the issues consisted of sixteen pages. From its very first edition, al-Munīr proclaimed itself as “a journal of Islamic religion, knowledge, and information” (Majalah Islam, Pengetahuan dan Perkhabaran).

What was the mission of al-Munīr? In the first issue, the editors explain the meaning of al-Munīr itself. In the first place, “al-Munīr” means “candle,” or other things that illuminate their environment. Within the context of this meaning, al-Munīr wished to be the candle and light of the Muslim umma in the Dutch East

Indies, which were suppressed by the Dutch. In a more detailed manner, the editors of al-Munīr explain the goals of the journal. First, to lead and bring the Muslim umma to progress based on Islamic injunctions; second, to nurture peace among nations and human beings; third, to light the Muslim umma with knowledge and wisdom.[509]

It is important to note that in its explanation of the function of an Islamic journal, al-Munīr highlights that an Islamic journal is like a teacher who gives to its readers guidance in the right path, reminds them of their wrongdoings in the past, consoles those in grief, helps those suffering from misery, awakens them to virtues, and sharpens their reason. As Ali writes, this explanation is reminiscent of al-Imām's ideas, and is a further indication that al-Munīr was eager to continue al-Imām's mission.[510]

The publication of al-Munīr was warmly welcomed by many readers, as shown by the number of letters of congratulation from its readers. For example, a letter from Sayyid Hasyim bin Thahir was sent from Palembang. The letter, in addition to congratulating the editors for their noble efforts, expected them to manage the journal in a wise manner, and to continually provide their readers with balanced information from all segments of Muslim society.[511] However, al-Munīr received not only favorable responses, but also negative reactions when it made mention of an unidentified "trouble maker" (tukang kacau). It is likely that the "trouble maker" was among the Kaum Tua who opposed Kaum Muda as represented by al-Munīr, although the root cause may run deeper. Tamar Djaja argues that there was also criticism of al-Munīr, because some critics believed that preaching by means of a journal was a Western innovation, and adopting the Western way was bida (unwarranted innovation).[512]

al-Munīr's spirit of reform can be clearly seen in its insistence on the importance of organization as a vehicle to further the Muslim umma. According to al-Munīr, organization is a means for channeling the spirit of reform, encouraging enterprising, vigor, and enhancing the nobility of knowledge (kemuliaan ilmu). It is a way of cultivating brotherhood of mankind and nations.[513]

Like al-Mānar and al-Imām, al-Munīr was radical in its religious orientation. It published articles on subjects that had hitherto been considered taboo by the Kaum Tua. For instance, the wearing of neckties and hats, and the taking of photographs, which had been considered haram (unlawful, forbidden) by the Kaum Tua, were openly discussed in al-Munīr, which informs its readers that such things had never been forbidden by the Quran and Hadith. al-Munīr also taught that the Friday khutba (sermon before prayers) could be delivered in a language that the congregation could understand. Furthermore, according to al-Munīr, Muslims should not blindly follow (taklid) a specific Islamic legal school, and it insists that the Shafii school of law, which is adhered to by most Indonesian Muslims, is not the only valid interpretation of Islamic legal precepts. Even, the Shafii madhhab can draw upon the three other Sunni legal tradition, that of the Hanafi, Maliki, and Hanbali schools of Islamic legal thought.[514]

** Conclusion

It is hard to be certain which came earlier, reformist magazines and journals or Salafi-oriented organizations. It seems that in the case of Indonesia, the appearance of these reformist journals and magazines took place at almost the same time as the rise of Salafi organizations, such as the Muhammadiyah, Persatuan Islam, and others. The publication of magazines and journals only stimulated the further expansion of Salafi organizations in Indonesia. As a result, Salafi-oriented organizations had strong ideological support, which contributed to their ever-increasing influence in Indonesian Muslim society.

In the case of the Malay Peninsula, on the other hand, the spread of reformist journals and magazines seems to have had only a limited impact on the expansion of Salafi ideas. Even though the publication of al-Imām preceded that of al-Munīr, reformist organizations never struck deep roots in Malay society in general. Islamic reformism was still a long way from gaining momentum in Malay society. This

is due to both the domination of states in Islamic institutions and the interpretation of Islam by Malaysian Muslims, who still hold fast to what in Indonesia is called “Islamic traditionalism.” Only in the late 1970s did Islamic reformism begin to get a firmer hold in Malaysia.

[454] Emad Eldin Shahin, “Rashid Rida, Muhammad,” in John L. Esposito, ed., The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World 3 (Oxford: Oxford University, 1995), 412; J. Jomier, EI2, s. v. “al-Manār.”

[455] It initially seems that a certain number of works by early Malay-Indonesian scholars such as al-Raniri, al-Sinkili, al-Makassari, Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, and al-Palimbani were printed in Istanbul. Subsequently, however, their works were also printed in Cairo, Mecca, and Medina.

[456] See Jutta Bluhm-Warn, “al-Manār and Ahmad Soorkattie. Links in the Chain of Transmission of Muhammad 2Abduh’s Ideas to the Malay-Speaking World,” in Peter G. Riddell and Tony Street, eds, Islam: Essays on Scripture, Thought and Society (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 296–297.

[457] Azyumardi Azra, The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian Ulama in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1992).

[458] William Roff, “Indonesian and Malay Students in Cairo in the 1920’s,” Indonesia 9: (1970).

[459] See Mohammad Redzuan Othman, “Call of the Azhar: The Malay Students’ Sojourn in Cairo before World War II,” Sejarah 3 (1994–1995): 95–110.

[460] Bluhm-Warn, “al-Manār and Ahmad Soorkattie,” 297.

[461] Nik Hassan, “Nik Abdul Aziz bin Haji,” in Islam di Kelantan (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia, 1983), 16–17, 27.

[462] Virginia Matheson Hooker, “Transmission through Practical Example: Women and Islam in 1920s Malay Fiction,” JMBRAS 67 (2): 96–97; cf. William Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 2nd ed. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1967), 82–83.

[463] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism.

[464] Charles C. Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt (London: Oxford University Press, 1933).

[465] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 59.

[466] In the case of the Malay Peninsula, Roff has discussed debates and conflicts that took place among the “kaum muda” and “kaum tua.” See Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 56–90. As for Indonesia’s case, see, among others, Deliar Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900–1942 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1973); Taufik Abdullah, Schools and Politics: The Kaum Muda Movement in Indonesia (1927–1933) (Ithaca, IL: Cornell University, 1971); and Burhanuddin Daya, Gerakan Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam: Kasus Sumatera Thawalib (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana, 1995).

[467] For further accounts of the Padri Movement see, among others, Christine Dobbin, Islamic Revivalism in Changing Peasant Economy: Central Sumatra 1784–1847 (London: Curzon Press, 1983).

[468] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 60–63; Abu Bakar Hamzah, Al-Imam: Its Role in Malay Society 1906–1908 (Kent: University of Kent at Canterbury, 1981; Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Antara, 1991).

[469] Hamzah, Al-Imam, 124–127; Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 60–61.

[470] At this time West Sumatra was experiencing a rise in Communist unrest.

[471] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 61; Hamzah, Al-Imam, 127.

[472] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 63–64; Hamzah, Al-Imam, 132–137.

[473] Pulau Penyengat already had a reputation as a center of Malay learning, largely due to the literary works of Raja Ali Haji, born Raja Ahmad, and to other members of his family. It was by this time a frequent stop on the itinerary of traveling religious scholars. For further details see Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 44–46; Winstedt, “A History of Malay Literature,” JMBRAS 31 (1958); and S. H. Tan, The Life and Times of Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi (thesis, History Department, University of Singapore, 1961).

[474] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 63–64; Hamzah, Al-Imam, 137–142. It is important to note that most of the Bugi princes in the area joined this Rushdiyyah Club, and among its prominent leaders was Raja Ali Haji’s own son, Raja Khalid Hassan, better known as Raja Hitam, who militantly opposed the presence of the Dutch in Riau. For further information, see Barbara W. Andaya, “From Rome to Tokyo: The Search for Anti-Colonial Allies by the Rulers of Riau, 1899–1904,” Indonesia 24 (1977): 123–156.

[475] Andaya, “From Rome to Tokyo,” 139–140.

[476] This article was in fact written by a certain Muhammad Murtaji.

[477] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 64; Hamzah, Al-Imam, 120–121.

[478] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 64; Hamzah, Al-Imam, 123–124; Werner Ende, “Schiitische Tendenzen bei sunnitischen Sayyids aus Hadhramaut: Muhammad bin 2Aqil al-Alawi,” Der Islam 50 (1973): 1. For a further account of the case of Sayyid Muhammad bin 2Aqil, see William Roff, “Murder as an Aid to Social History: The Arabs in Singapore in the Early Twentieth Century,” paper delivered at the International Workshop on Arabs in South-East Asia (1870–c.1990), Royal Institute of Linguistics, and Anthropology (KITLV): Leiden, 1997.

[479] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 56–57.

[480] Cited in Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 56.

[481] Al-Imam 1/1 (July 23, 1906); Mohammad Redzuan Othman, “The Malay Perspective and the Ottoman Response,” Sejarah 4 (1996): 97–108. The Caliphate question was of course a big issue in Indonesia. For a further discussion see Martin Van Bruinessen, “Muslims of the Dutch East Indies and the Caliphate Question,” Studia Islamika: Indonesian Journal for Islamic Studies 2/3 (1995): 15–40.

[482] Al-Imam 1/2 (August 21, 1906): 63; Othman, “The Malay Perspective,” 102.

[483] Al-Imam 1/7 (January 16, 1907): 211; Othman, “The Malay Perspective.”

[484] Al-Imam 1/9 (March 16, 1907): 281–284; Othman, “The Malay Perspective.”

[485] Al-Imam 2/5, 7 (November 1907): 101–102; Othman, “The Malay Perspective.”

[486] Othman, “The Malay Perspective,” 103.

[487] Al-Imam 1/3, 19 (September 1906): 77; cf. Andaya, “From Rome to Tokyo,” 140.

[488] Al-Imam 1/5, 17 (November 1906): 77.

[489] Al-Imam 1/6, 18 (December 1906): 170–172.

[490] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 64, 66.

[491] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 66–67; Ajahku Hamka, Riwajat Hidup Dr. Abd. Karim Amrullah dan Perdjuangan Kaum Agama di Sumatera (Djakarta: Widjaja, 1958), 48.

[492] Daya, Gerakan Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam, 118–119.

[493] Roff, The Origins of Malay Nationalism, 66.

[494] al-Imam 2/12 (June 4, 1908): 279; 2/3 (September 9, 1907): 84–89; 1/1 (July 23,1906): 1–6.

[495] al-Imam, 2/11 (May 3, 1908): 338.

[496] al-Imam, 3/3 (August 29, 1908): 104.

[497] al-Imam, 2/10 (April 3, 1908): 356.

[498] al-Imam, 2/3 (September 9, 1907): 84–89; cf. Hamzah, Al-Imam, 57.

[499] Adams, Islam and Modernism in Egypt [supra n. 11], 140.

[500] Mahmud Yunus, Sejarah Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia (Jakarta: Hidakarya Agung, 1996), 79; Mahmud Yunus, Sejarah Islam di Minangkabau (Jakarta: al-Hidayah, 1971), 48.

[501] Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900–1942, 39.

[502] Al-Munir 5 (1915): 68; cf. Amir Syahruddin, Pemikiran dan Usaha-usaha Abdullah Ahmad terhadap Pembaharuan Pendidikan Islam (Masters thesis, Post-Graduate Programme, IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta).

[503] Hamka, Riwajat Hidup Dr. Abd. Karim Amrullah dan Perdjuangan Kaum; Alfian, Muhammadiyah: The Political Behavior of a Muslim Modernist Organization under Dutch Colonialism (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 1989), 108; Tamar Djaja, Pusaka Indonesia: Riwayat Hidup Orang-orang Besar Tanahair, 2 (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1966), 700.

[504] H. J. Benda, “South-East Asian Islam in the Twentieth Century,” in P. M. Holt, A. K. S. Lambton, and B. Lewis eds, The Cambridge History of Islam, 2A (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984),189.

[505] Syamsuri Ali, Al-Munir dan Wacana Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam 1911–1915 (Master thesis, Post-Graduate Program, IAIN Imam Bonjol, Padang, 1997), 26.

[506] Hamka, Kenang-kenangan Hidup I (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974), 14.

[507] Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900–1942, 38–39; Sanusi Latief ed., Riwayat Hidup dan Perjuangan 20 Ulama Besar Sumatera Barat (Padang: Islamic Centre Sumatera Barat, 1981), 107–111.

[508] Al-Munir 1/1 (1911): 1; Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia.

[509] Al-Munir, 1/1 (1911).

[510] Ali, Al-Munir dan Wacana Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam 1911–1915, 53.

[511] Al-Munir 1/2 (1911): advertisement page.

[512] Djaja, Pusaka Indonesia: Riwayat Hidup Orang-orang Besar Tanahair 2: 701.

[513] Al-Munir 2/1 (May, 1912).

[514] Yunus, Sejarah Islam di Minangkabau, 47; Adam, Islam and Modernist in Egypt, 140.

* Part II : Intellectuals in Challenge: Situations, discourses, strategies

* 8. The Arabo-Islamic Constitutional Thought at 1907: ‘Abd al-Karim Murad (d. 1926) and his draft constitution for Morocco

Stefan Reichmuth

The period between 1870 and the First World War is generally regarded as the culmination of European imperial hegemony. At the same time it brought about a remarkable chain of constitutional movements and revolutions in distant parts of the world. This included Europe itself where constitutional order underwent dramatic changes, leading in some cases such as Italy and Germany to the establishment of entirely new national states and constitutional monarchies. Even the Russian Empire became a constitutional state in 1905. At the same time substantial steps towards constitutional and representative government were taken in countries as different as Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, Iran, British India, and also Japan and China.[515] Despite an abundance of publications about each country and, even more about the philosophical and legal aspects of constitutionalism, the comparative study of the European and non-European constitutional movements and doctrines of this time does not seem to have found much attention until now.

Whether there are indigenous roots of the constitutional theories and charters that were put forward in the Middle East and North Africa during the course of the nineteenth century is still open to debate. Elie Kedourie, who saw the history of the ruling institution in these regions mainly in terms of Wittfogel's "oriental despotism," did not see much substance or grounding of a constitutional process that coincided with a period of imperial weakness. In his opinion, the "grant" of the constitution by the sovereign ruler to his subjects (such as happened in Tunis, Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire) did not indicate a compromise between state and society.; it was "a parody rather than the analogue of what was obtained in Western Europe."[516] According to Kedourie, constitutionalism under these conditions became "a mere device used by different factions within the official classes to pursue their rivalries."[517]

Autocratic rule, however, has not been the only concept offered for a historical interpretation of Islamic political institutions. In W. Montgomery Watt's analysis of the religio-political struggle of the early Abbasid period between the emerging Shia and Sunna groupings, the Shiites are indeed described as the "autocratic block" which supported the unlimited religious

and political authority of the caliph, and which had its roots mainly among the bureaucrats of the empire, many of whom were of Persian extraction. The ahl al-sunna, on the other hand, drew their support largely from what Montgomery Watt has called the “general religious movement” and the emerging “religious institution.” With their demand that the life of the empire should be based on the revealed law, the ahl al-sunna are seen by him as a “constitutional block” which finally came to gain the recognition and support of even the caliphs themselves. For this political antagonism, which found expression in different historical and theological disputes, a parallel to European political thought and controversy is explicitly drawn by this author.[518]

Later periods also saw the emergence of a peculiar type of the Islamic city state in different regions, which was governed by a federation of local communal Muslim groups and headed by an elected qadi or a qadi family holding this office for several generations. This type is represented most aptly by ports or merchant cities like Mogadishu (Maqdishu) in the Somali coast in the fourth/tenth century, or Timbuktu, which flourished since the ninth/fifteenth century at the southern fringe of the Sahara in present-day Mali.[519] Timbuktu in particular is significant for the concept of a semi-corporate community (ëamaa) of scholars headed by a qadi, which can be recognized behind the ruling patriciate of this city which managed to absorb other emerging powerful urban groups well until the nineteenth century.

A closer look at Ottoman political institutions in the classical period also suggests a good deal of consultative and representative mechanisms, some of which were even formally recognized by the sultans. This holds for the Imperial Council (divân-i hümâyun) which included leading administrators, bureaucrats, military commanders and religious scholars under the chairmanship of the Grand Vizier,[520] and even more so for the so-called “Council-on-Foot” (ayak divânı), a special assembly convened by or even forced upon the sultan for the discussion of urgent matters and complaints. Cases of such councils are documented for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Uzunçarvılı.[521] In one of his examples, appeal is made to the caliphal function of the ruler. A well-established and legal pattern of consultation also comes out at the provincial level where local scholars, notables or military groups were sometimes the

most powerful elements within the provincial divans.[522] Consultation and representation of local and regional interests were thus restricted to later times of imperial decline but were part and parcel of the established pattern of administration. Two Muslim intellectuals of the later nineteenth century who attempted to justify the constitutional limitation of the power of the ruler, the Tunisian historian Ibn Abi Diyaf (d. 1874) and the Ottoman writer and poet Namık Kemal (d. 1888), even referred to the precedence of the political role of the Janissaries who were said to have given explicit permission by Süleyman the Magnificent to dethrone a trespassing sultan and who thus, as “people in arms,” had for a long time provided an effective constitutional check to the Ottoman executive.[523]

The challenge of European political institutions can be first noticed among Ottoman bureaucrats in the early eighteenth century. Dadi-, a Dalmatian who visited Istanbul at that period, mentions the strong interest of the Ottoman Effendis in the form of government prevailing in Venice, and their idea to convert the imperial divan into a parliamentary council of the Venetian type.[524] Perhaps related to this kind of discussion was an outline of the three systems of government existing in human society—monarchy, aristocracy, democracy—which was presented by the famous Hungarian convert Ibrahim Müteferrika (d. 1745), himself a high-ranking Ottoman bureaucrat,[525] in his treatise Usûlü1l-hikem fî nizâmil-ümem, where he also made far-reaching proposals for military reforms along European lines.[526]

There can be no doubt that the challenge of European hegemony and of European political institutions was crucial for the constitutional and revolutionary movements which emerged outside Europe in the latter part of the nineteenth century. But the interplay of internal and external factors produced quite different results for each of them. As mentioned earlier, constitutions in the Middle East and North Africa in the nineteenth century were formally granted by the ruler—something that had also happened in several European monarchies at different points of time after 1815. Constitutional initiatives like those in Tunisia and Egypt had been initiated by the monarchs who were hoping to enhance both internal support and international recognition for their government by introducing a constitution and some elected consultative or legislative bodies. When increased pressure from the European powers exposed the failure of the local monarchies and, at the same time, made them more and more autocratic,

constitutional demands quite often became the rallying point for all those who stood in opposition to the existing order.

Constitutionalists in different countries of North Africa and Asia belonged to those groups of the administrative and urban elite which had been exposed to European forms of education and had very often spent considerable time in Europe itself. Models of French, British, and also Italian political thought and organization can be seen at work in many of their writings and activities.[527] At the same time, most of the constitutional movements rose in states and among social groups with age-old traditions of scribal and scholarly training. Despite their quite different educational outlook, constitutionalists were still connected in many ways to the older educational and scribal institutions. Sometimes they belonged themselves to old scholar or scribe families and still shared some of their interests. Commercial groups had strong connections to both older and younger educational elites. No wonder, then, that the constitutional ideas of the younger generation of intellectuals were shaped for the most part by an unmistakable blend of European and indigenous ideas and patterns of thought. With external pressure and internal opposition rising around 1900, larger segments of the scholarly elite and their students were drawn into the constitutional movements.

Within the Islamic context, the blend of European ideas of constitutional government and nationalism with basic ethical and political concepts derived from Islamic thought can be demonstrated in an exemplary way for the group of the Young Ottoman intellectuals and their successors, the Young Turks.[528] The political and constitutional aims of the latter movement which brought together many different groups in opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid II were strongly supported by Islamic reformists in Syria and Egypt, with Rashid Rida being perhaps the most prominent,[529] and some of the concepts of Islamic thought which had been first developed by the Young Ottomans and were then further transmitted and discussed among their successors have remained highly relevant for political Islam until the present. This is true in particular for the discussion about the sovereignty (Ar. hakimiyya, Ottoman hakimiyyet) of God and that of the People, still central to Islamic political discourse even today. The alliance of intellectuals and Islamic scholars and activists of different ethnic background in opposition to the Ottoman Emperor finally contributed to the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution in 1908.

The most spectacular success of an Islamic constitutional movement, however, can be seen in the Constitutional Revolution in Iran, where the support of large parts of the Islamic scholarly elite was crucial for the establishment of both Majlis and the Constitution in 1906.[530] From the First to the Fifth Majlis, elected members with higher Islamic education made up for a solid proportion of the deputies, at times even providing a clear majority.[531] In Iran as well as in the Ottoman Empire and in Egypt, Islamic scholars and reformists of this period tried to develop an Islamic framework for a constitutional system and to defend it against their opponents who regarded their activities as directed against Islam and who supported the prerogatives of their rulers. At the same period, even the Muslim members in the First and Second Russian Dumas (1906, 1907) included a good number of mullahs and deputies with madrasa education.[532]

The constitutional draft which was written in Morocco at the same period and which shall be discussed here also shows the strong interest of Islamic reformist scholars in local movements of opposition and constitutional reform, which had increased in response to European imperial encroachment. It was a period when Islamic scholars and more Europeanized intellectuals were still political allies in opposition to their governments and remained closely engaged in intellectual debate. This made for specific blends of political expression which can be easily criticized for their inconsistencies and which have, therefore, not been found worthy of much attention. Later periods and crises frequently led to political parting of ways and required much more clear-cut ideological decisions.[533] The earlier blend of concepts nevertheless shows the importance of the Islamic discourse for the national movements of their time, and it is this heritage rather than older patterns of Islamic thought which provided the base for political Islamism in the later part of the twentieth century.

In the case of Morocco, constitutional proposals came up in a period of growing interference of France and Spain into the affairs of the country and of a political and economic crisis that accompanied this. At the international conference held in Algeçiras in 1906 different plans of reform under European control had been set up for Morocco. These plans, while officially recognizing the sovereignty of the sultan and the integrity of the country, for

all practical purposes amounted to joint French and Spanish control of its police force, economic resources and financial institutions.[534] In an earlier stage of the crisis, when France had already presented similar proposals, the Moroccan sultan Abd al-Aziz had convened an “Assembly of Notables” (Maëlis al-a2yan, 1904-1905),[535] mainly, as it seems, in order to muster public support against the imminent French interference. Although without much success in the negotiations, the assembly had encouraged some leading scholars in their resistance against both foreign encroachment and against the failing policies of the sultan. Most prominent among them at that time was Muhammad b. Abd al-Kabir al-Kattani, the powerful leader of the Zawiya of the Kattaniyya brotherhood in Fez. The years after 1905 were marked not only by open intervention of foreign powers but also by growing opposition of the religious scholars against the sultan, who was finally deposed and replaced by his brother Abd al-Hafiz. The latter received the bay a of the scholars of Fez in 1908 and was one year later recognized also by the French, after Abd al-Aziz had abdicated himself in July 1908.[536]

There are three extant constitutional proposals for Morocco from this critical period of modern Moroccan history.[537] The first, which was written already in 1324/1906, goes back to a Moroccan from Salé, Ali b. Ahmad Znibar.[538] A second one was published in four editions of the Arabic journal Lisan al-arab in Tangier between 11 October and 1 November 1908.[539] This journal had been founded by the Nammur brothers, two Lebanese emigrants living in Tangier. The circumstances which led to the third draft had been unknown for a long time. The text which directly refers to the Act of Algerçiras (issued on 7 April 1906) was not published until much later, and then without a clear indication of its author.[540] It was only in the early 1980s, when the Moroccan historian Muhammad al-Mannuni obtained another manuscript of this text from a bookseller in Fez, that the text could be ascribed with fair certainty to Abd al-Karim Murad, a visiting scholar and traveler from Tripoli (Lebanon) who refers to himself as the author in a note at the end of the manuscript.[541]

Up to the present day Abd al-Karim Murad (also called in some sources al-Muradi) has remained a hardly known figure in the transnational Islamic networks of the early twentieth century.[542] Information about his life and activities which covered Morocco and the French and British colonies and

protectorates of West Africa can be drawn from some of his Moroccan contemporaries,[543] French colonial intelligence for the Afrique Occidentale Française,[544] and some writings of Islamic scholars in Nigeria where Murad settled and finally died.[545] Al-Mannuni calls him “the Envoy of the East to the West” (mabuö al-marq ilal-ʃarb),[546] which would seem to refer, however, to intellectual mediatorship rather than to any clear-cut political task.

Abd al-Karim b. Sayyid Umar b. Mustafa b. Shaykh Murad belonged to a prominent Sayyid family from Tripoli. He was born around 1860. His early education still remains obscure. His strong interest in both Islamic disciplines and “modern” subjects (al-ulum al-diniyya wal-waqtiyya, as he called them) which comes out later in his own educational activities would suggest an influence of the most famous scholar of Tripoli of the late nineteenth century, Husayn al-Jisr (1845-1909) and his school experiment, al-Madrasa al-Wataniyya (1879-1882).[547] This would link him further to his contemporary Rashid Rida (1865–1935) who also came from the Tripoli area and had been a student of this school.

Abd al-Karim Murad spent some time as teacher in Medina before he went to West and North Africa (the nisba al-Madani which appears at the end of the draft would seem to be related to this stay in Medina). He apparently spent several years as itinerant trader of Arabic books and as Islamic teacher in different parts of West Africa like Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and southern Nigeria. Already at this early stage he is said to have assisted local Islamic communities in the foundation of Arabic schools and Islamic societies. Coming to Fez in 1324/1906,[548] he stayed in Fez in the Zawiya of the Kattaniyya, writing as a correspondent for the Cairo newspaper al-Muayyad which was well known for its Islamic orientation. He dedicated a grammatical commentary to the Moroccan Sultan Abd al-Aziz, propagating—without success—the establishment of a modernized school for Moroccan children which was to be called al-Maqasid al-Aziziyya. This name easily evokes the model of the famous Ëam2iyyat al-Maqasid al-Layriyya and its schools in Beirut.[549] His own teaching activities are said to have included Quranic recitation (taëwid), but also geography, astronomy, arithmetic and even history and politics. His circle became an important place for conversation, political discussion and lectures. Two prominent scholars for whom

constitutional inclinations are also mentioned elsewhere, the qadis Abd al-Hafiz al-Fasi and al-Mahdi al-Fasi (d. both 1383/1963–1964), had been among his students.[550] Among his writings mentioned by Brockelmann [551] for the Qarawiyyin Library in Fez is another treatise called al-Siyasa, which further illustrates his political interests.

Murad left Morocco in 1908 and traveled back to West Africa where his presence is attested, in French intelligence reports from December 1908–1911, in French West Africa (Senegal, Ivory Coast, Dahomey), with contacts to prominent Sufi leaders like Ahmadu Bamba and Malik Sy in Senegal, being engaged in the trade of Arabic books and negotiating the publication of Arabic texts written by local West African scholars [552]. The French authorities remained suspicious of him and expelled him to Morocco in 1912. He was not to stay in the new French Protectorate, either. From 1913–1914 onwards he could be found again in British West Africa, teaching in Sierra Leone and Lagos, finally settling in Kano where he died in 1926 or, according to another source, in 1928.[553] In Kano again, one of the key figures of the expanding Tijaniyya brotherhood, Muhammad Salga (d. 1939), was among his students.[554] In 1922 Murad had gone to Europe and visited the Amir Shakib Arslan in Lausanne, providing him with information about Islam and the Muslims in Nigeria.[555] He thus can be seen in touch with prominent figures of Middle Eastern and Islamic politics until the end of his life.

By his educational background and activities, Abd al-Karim Murad strongly resembles other Salafi scholars of Syro-Lebanese origin like Rashid Rida who had clear constitutional inclinations and in this respect felt strongly encouraged by the spectacular Japanese victory over Russia and by the Iranian constitutional revolution. The text of the draft constitution fully fits into this outlook. As it explicitly mentions the new Iranian monarch Muhammad Ali Shah whose accession to the throne was on 8 January 1907, it was probably written not long after that, because there is no hint to the tension between the Shah and the parliament which intensified from May 1907 onwards.[556] Equally, any impact of the troubles in Morocco which led to the French occupation of Wujda on 29 March 1907 [557] and of Casablanca and its surroundings in May, is absent from the text. On the other hand, an anonymous report about the Moroccan crisis of 1905, published in Rida’s journal al-Mānar,[558] might perhaps already be considered as originating from Murad’s pen, as it shows the same interest in

educational reforms and in the establishment of modernized schools with Arabic as the language of instruction, which is otherwise known for our author. This would mean that he was in Morocco already in that year.

The introduction of the draft [559] praises the people of the Maghrib for their outstanding virtues in the fields of ethnic unity (ittihad al-ëins), religious steadfastness (al-tamassuk bil-din) and love for the Sultan (hubb al-sultan). These virtues are regarded by the author as a firm base for future progress and sovereignty, as shown by the Japanese and Iranian examples. The ruler is nevertheless reminded that he has nowadays to give priority to the interest of the common people (al-amma) if he wants to keep dignity and respect for himself and his country. His own greatness depends on them. He has to enlighten his subjects, to educate and to encourage their industrial production and their inventions. Training in all those crafts which are necessary for human welfare is in itself a collective duty (fard kifaya) in Islam. The appeal to commercial interests aiming at a strong and autonomous national economy is typical also for other constitutional movements in the Islamic countries of that time, as for example in Iran where the Majlis was determined to prevent foreign loans and to regain control of the customs which had been in foreign hands.[560]

Both the Japanese and the Iranian rulers have transformed their absolute monarchy into constitutional rule and have overcome their decadence. The Japanese soon became famous for their schools, and their army even defeated China and Russia. Iran used its parliament to enhance just and fair administration by deriving a general law code from the divine Sharia. For Morocco there is an urgent need for similar reforms after the Algeçiras Conference and the growing interference of foreign powers in the country which is being met with increasing rejection and fear by the people. All the subjects of the sultan desire reforms to be introduced by legal means under control of the Moroccan government. They agree to keep the treaties with the foreigners and to carry out the decisions of the conference, but in such a way as they will be equally acceptable to the people and to the foreign powers, and in accordance with the Sharia. It would seem that to achieve this would have been quite an uphill task.

The first proposed plan of the author [561] is the introduction of a parliamentary system. In order to retain independence and autonomy vis-à-vis the foreign powers, a parliament (called by him sometimes Maëlis al-milla, sometimes Maëlis al-umma) should be established, which is to deliberate all matters “in such a way as to find God’s pleasure and the acceptance of the foreigners.” It will increase legitimacy in their eyes, as they regard a parliament as sacrosanct in its decisions and respect the laws issued by it. In European countries laws are based on reason and experience, in their own case, however, they have to be derived from the principles of the Sharia, as is done in Iran. This gives the ruler a much better position in his negotiations with the foreign powers. The author thus refers to the earlier strategy of Muslim rulers like those of Tunisia and Egypt who had hoped to gain both internal support and external recognition by constitutional changes. Needless to say, their experiences had not been too encouraging, as they had not been able to stop their financial crises and to prevent the occupation of their countries. At this stage, however, the pressure of popular opposition at home had become a far more powerful argument. Reference to the Divine Law quite conceivably could serve to make legislation sacrosanct and inviolable.

The literary background of the author’s thought comes out in his version of the famous “Circle of Equity,” a classical concept of Arabo-Islamic as well as Ottoman political thought which he adapted from two versions of this cycle in Ibn Khaldun’s Muqaddima.[562] The starting point of Murad’s cycle is the dignity of the subject (2izz al-mamluk) which is achieved only through the Sharia, which again is only safeguarded by power (mulk). The power of men is based on wealth (mal), achieved only by cultivation (2imara).[563] Cultivation, however, depends on justice, only to be attained by a reform of the officials (bi-islah al-ummal), which needs upright viziers (istiqamat al-wuzara) and, on top of all, a king who himself cares for the well-being of his subjects (tafaqqud al-malik ahwal al-ra2iyya bi-nafsihi). Some telling deviations from Ibn Khaldun’s text can be noted here: Ibn Khaldun’s starting point is royal dignity, 2izz al-mulk, linked to the Sharia, which is replaced here by the dignity of the subject, 2izz al-mamluk. Equally, a sentence at the end which stresses the necessary power (iqtidar) of the ruler to discipline [564] his people—so that he may rule them, not they him—has been simply cut off by our author. Both changes clearly shift the focus away from the king

and provide a direct link between the Sharia and the people. Murad’s cycle starts with the king’s subjects and ends with them, referring to the Sharia as a source of their personal and public standing. The indicated role of the king is to look after his subjects rather than to master them.

Both military and financial institutions have to be strengthened if foreign intervention is to be brought to an end. The second plan [565] calls for the establishment of a standing army (2askar ëarrar) which would be self-supporting, to consist of armed citizens who were to undergo daily military training—a particularly bold proposal in the context of Moroccan politics, given the delicate balance of power between the Makhzan and the regional tribal groups which was more or less falling into pieces in the period in question. A third plan [566] was intended to generate a solid stock of internal public income (mal dalili). It included an elaborate outline of a basic reform of the pious foundations in order to generate the necessary funds for education, welfare and public investment. It concentrated supervision of the foundations and of the institutions of education, health and public welfare in the hands of a Council of the five leading ulama officials on top of a highly hierarchic body of administration. This would have left the religious institution with a degree of power and influence far beyond even that of the Ottoman veyhülislam and his centralized hierarchy in the last period of the Empire.[567]

By referring to the recommendation of consultation (mura) in the Quran (3: 159 wa-mawirhum fil-amri; Q. 42: 38 wa-amruhum mura baynahum), Abd al-Karim Murad uses the common-stock argument for consultative government in an Islamic state.[568] Rashid Rida, too, had a lot to say about mura in his al-Mānar during these eventful years.[569] Murad proposes the establishment of two Chambers of Parliament: a “National Assembly” (Maëlis al-umma/Maëlis al-milla) whose member are to be elected for five years by each tribe and each town, and an “Upper House” (al-Maëlis al-a2là) with members appointed from the royal family, the administration and the National Assembly. The deputies should not only be literate but also versed in the most common commentary of Malikite fiqh, Khalil’s al-Multasar. This shows the framework of religious and legal scholarship which the author had in mind for the political elite of the country and which also comes out in other points.

Majority decisions in parliament are to be based on each deputy’s understanding of the Quran, the Sunna and the interest of the country (maslahat al-bilad). Maslaha, too, was an important issue for Islamic reformism of the time: Rashid Rida even regarded it as the most important criterion in the worldly affairs of the Islamic community.[570]

Affairs to be decided by the Majlis include the following [571] : international treaties, control and budgets of ministers and governors, introduction and collection of taxes. All taxes which are in contradiction to the Divine Law are to be abolished. Decisions are further to be made about government expenditures, about military training of the citizens, supervision of the government officials and appeals and complaints of the citizens to the parliament. Regular reports on all government activities would be demanded and discussed. This would have given the parliament full control over both administration and judiciary.

The proposed codification of Law and the compilation of a Law Code [572] explicitly refers to the model of the Ottoman Maëallat al-ahkam al-adliyya (Mecelle, issued 1869-1878).[573] Based on the regulations of the Maliki madhhab, it should be compiled by a committee of eight ulama. They should write it in simple language, easy to understand for everybody. Like all other matters of concern it should be discussed by both Houses and after decision issued by royal decree. International treaties approved by the parliament should equally be added as appendix to the Law Code. All jurisdiction would have to follow this Code which would be open only to amendment by the Majlis itself. This approach to legislation is in remarkable contrast to the pattern of Islamic jurisdiction still prevailing in Morocco at that period. It would have restricted the qadis to those legal opinions which happened to have been fixed by the Law Code! This was actually to happen later in the legislation of most Islamic countries.

Of particular interest is the suggestion of a new Police Law which is to be issued in accordance with the Sharia and with the interest of the country, after thorough study of those of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, Tunisia and Iran. [574] A Police School is to be established for the training of a qualified police

corps whose members are knowledgeable enough to interact successfully with the French and Spanish officers acting under the Algeçiras Act. Appeal against police action is also to the Majlis. This reform was clearly designed to counter the French and Spanish control over the Moroccan police force which had just been established.

As the author saw it, the ruler would derive an increase of his glory and of God's pleasure with him if he introduced constitutional rule. It would further add significantly to the dignity and accountability of his administration. Growing wealth and prosperity would result for his country, and he would gain further recognition of neighbouring Islamic states, which was hoped to strengthen their support in times of need. It was even promised that the loyalty of those tribes outside of the control of the Makhzan would be strengthened, due to good governance and to the general respect for the Sharia which no Muslim could deny. This was to be the cornerstone of the new constitutional régime.

It is very easy to criticize this draft for its political naivety and its limited familiarity with Moroccan institutions, points which have already been raised by Abdallah Laroui.[575] The powers and responsibilities of the ruler himself, and the question of his liability to parliamentary control are not even mentioned. The problem of the regional balance of power in the country was hardly given attention. A general obedience to Islamic Law was simply taken for granted, once a central representative body was established. This Islamic design of a constitutional system for Morocco somehow gives the impression of a utopian experiment to be applied in an archaic and retarded country.[576]

The author's confidence in the Sharia as a source of dignity and a firm baseline for public consensus and political institution-building nevertheless reflects an important strand of Islamic political thought of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which perhaps could most aptly be described as "Sharia patriotism."[577] This attitude comes out already in the political thought of the Young Ottomans, especially with Namık Kemal who had even identified the Sharia with the concept of Natural Law which he had found in Rousseau and which he had tried to adapt for his purposes.[578] Recourse to the Sharia as a major source of legitimacy, for both ruler and

state, had dominated official life in the days of the caliph-sultan Abdülhamid II.[579] It also loomed large in the heated discussions of the newly established Ottoman parliament since 1908, with Westernists and Islamists in fierce contest, and Turkist nationalism gradually emerging in between.[580] After all, this was a period when Islamic scholars had entered the political arena on a large scale, in Iran as elsewhere. For all its deficiencies the text shows the opening of the scholars' discourse towards the current affairs of the Muslims, even of those far beyond their own communities. As this draft constitution was published later by the prominent Moroccan politician Allal al-Fasi, it provided an important link between the older reformism which was rooted in the Middle Eastern Salafiyya, and the Islamic strand of Moroccan nationalism which developed in Morocco since the 1930s.[581]

** Acknowledgments

This article greatly profited from discussion following the presentation of the paper at the conference. I am particularly grateful to Yann Richard for his suggestions concerning the dating of the constitutional draft presented here.

[515] See for a useful, though somewhat outdated bibliography concerning constitutional developments in Europe and elsewhere in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Abdul-Hadi Hairi, Shi2ism and Constitutionalism in Iran: A Study of the Role Played by the Persian Residents in Iraq in Iranian Politics (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 249ff.; see further Klaus Fröhlich, The Emergence of Russian Constitutionalism: 1900–1904. The Relationship between Social Mobilization and Political Group Formation in Pre-Revolutionary Russia (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1981); Andrew James Nathan, Peking Politics, 1918–1923: Factionalism and the Failure of Constitutionalism (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, London: University of California, 1976); Theodore McNelly, The Origins of Japan's Democratic Constitution (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000). For a short overview of the constitutional developments and revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see B. Lewis and A. K. S. Lambton, "Dustur", EI2, 2: 638–657; J. Landau, "Madjlis", EI2, 5: 1033–1043; C. Findley, "Madjlis al-Shura", EI2, 5: 1082–1086.

[516] Elie Kedourie, “The Fate of Constitutionalism in the Middle East”, in Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies (London: Frank Cass, 1974): 1–27, here 1ff.

[517] Ibid., 26. He only excepts Lebanon, where various social interests found representation in the political setup, from this assessment.

[518] For the whole issue, William Montgomery Watt, Islamic Political Thought: The Basic Concepts (Edinburgh: University Press, 1987 [1st publication 1968]), 82–89, 140 n. 11 with further reference. See also his “The Significance of the Early Stages of Immamite Shi2ism,” in Early Islam: Collected Articles (Edinburgh: University Press, 1990), 166.

[519] See E. Cerulli and G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, “Maüdishu”, EI2, 6: 128ff.; Elias N. Saad, Social History of Timbuktu. The Role of Muslim Scholars and Notables, 1400–1900 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 120 ff. et passim.

[520] See for example, Stanford J. Shaw, History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey, 1. Empire of the Gazis: The Rise and Decline of the Ottoman Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1st publication 1976]), 118 ff.; Robert Mantran, ed., Histoire de l1Empire ottoman (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 184–189.

[521] Ismail Hakkı Uzunçarvılı, Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Tevkilâtı (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1988 [1st publication 1945]), 225–229.

[522] For example, Mantran, ed., Histoire, 350; for Egypt, Ibrahim El-Mouelhy, Etude documentaire: Organisation et fonctionnement des institutions ottomanes en Egypte (1517–1917) (s.l.: Imprimerie de la Société turque d1histoire), 8 ff.

[523] H. Talloen, “La structure du pouvoir souverain selon l1historien tunisien Ibn 1Abi Diyaf (1802–1874),” in Mélanges d1islamologie dédiés à la mémoire de A. Abel par ses collègues, ses élèves et ses amis (Brussels: Publications du Centre pour l1étude des problèmes du monde musulman contemporain, 1974), 2: 391–399; Verif Mardin, The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought: A Study in the Modernization of Turkish Political Ideals (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 310. See also Godfrey Goodwin, The Janissaries (London: Saqi Books, 1997), 232, for the rather peculiar and hot-heated form of “Janissary democracy” which bequeathed “a curious tradition of popular leadership” to Middle-Eastern societies.

[524] Nicolae Jorga, Geschichte des Osmanisches Reiches (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990 [1st publication Gotha, 1908–1913]), 4: 370 ff.

[525] See on him esp. Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey (London: Hurst, 1998 [1st publication: McGill University Press, 1964]), 36–46; Niyazi Berkes, “Ibrahim Müteferriüa,” EI2, 3: 996 ff.; Stefan Reichmuth, “Islamic Reformist Discourse in the Tulip Period (1718–1730): Ibrahim Müteferriqa and His Arguments on Printing,” in Ekmeleddin Ihsanoælu, ed., International Congress on Learning and Education in the Ottoman World, Istanbul, 12–15 April 1999. Proceedings (Istanbul, 2001): 149–161.

[526] Ibrahim Müteferrika, Usülü1l-Hikem fî Nizâmi1l-Ümem, ed. Adil Ven (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1995), 130 ff.

[527] For the influence of Italian poets, political writers and activists like Alfieri, Pellico and Garibaldi on Young Ottoman and Arab intellectuals, see Mardin, Young Ottoman Thought, 20 ff.; Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987 [1st publication: 1962]), 271. As Italian nationalists also had to put up with a particularly strong religious heritage with universal implications, their aims and strategies were of great interest to the Arab and Ottoman intellectuals of that period.

[528] For the Young Ottomans and their ideology, mainly Mardin, Young Ottoman Thought, passim; Mümtazer Türköne, Siyasî Ideoloji Olarak Islamcılıæın Doæuvu (Istanbul: Iletivim Yayıncılık, 1991); Hüseyin Çelik, Ali Suavî ve Dönemi (Istanbul: Iletivim Yayıncılık, 1994). For the Young Turks and their alliance with the Syrian Salafiyya, see especially Hasan Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918 (Berkeley, CA, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1997).

[529] For Rashid Rida, his cooperation with the Young Turks and his interest in and support for the constitutional developments in Iran and Istanbul, see the different articles and reports in the volumes of al-Manār 9–12 (1324/1906–1327/1909–1910); also Kayalı, Arabs and Young Turks, 46. For his justification of constitutionalism by referring to the obligatory al-amr bi1l-ma2ruf wa1l-nahi 2an al-munkar, see Michael Cook, Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 510 f.

[530] For the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906–1907, see Edward G. Browne, The Persian Revolution, 1905–1909 (London: Frank Cass, 1966 [1st publication: Cambridge, 1910]); Hairi, Shi2ism and Constitutionalism; Ervand Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).

[531] David Menashri, Education and the Making of Modern Iran (Ithaca, NY, London: Cornell University Press, 1992), 274 ff., table 22.

[532] First Duma: 6/25; Second Duma: 6/36; see the table in Dilyara Usmanova, ‘The Activity of the Muslim Fraction of the State Duma and Its Significance for the Formation of a Political Culture among the Muslim Peoples of Russia (1906–1917)’, in Anke von Kügelgen, Michael Kemper, and Allen J. Frank, eds, Muslim Culture in Russia and Central Asia from the 18th to the Early 20th Centuries, 2: Inter-Regional and Inter-Ethnic Relations (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1998): 417–455, here 441–449.

[533] This process has been described in detail for the Ottoman Empire before, during, and after the First World War by Berkes, Secularism, chapters 11–17.

[534] For a comprehensive overview of the events and developments between 1904 and 1921, see for example, Roger Le Tourneau, Histoire du Maroc moderne (Aix-en- Provence: Publications de l1Université de Provence, 1992), 110–142; Abdallah Laroui, Les origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain (1830–1912) (Paris: Maspero, 1977), 371 414.

[535] Le Tourneau, Histoire, 118 ff.; Laroui, Origines, 374 ff.; Ralf Elger, Zentralismus und Autonomie: Gelehrte und Staat in Morokko, 1900–1931 (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1994), 74 ff.

[536] See for these events: Le Tourneau, Histoire, 121–125; Elger, Zentralismus, 79–90, 101 ff.

[537] See Jacques Cagne, Nation et nationalisme au Maroc: Aux racines de la nation marocaine (Rabat: Dar Nachr al Maarifa, 1988), 471–495, 501–543; Laroui, Origines, 374–382, 403–405; Elger, Zentralismus, 88 ff.; Franz Kogelmann, Islamische fromme Stiftungen und Staat: Der Wandel in den Beziehungen zwischen einer religiösen Institution und dem marokkanischen Staat seit dem 19. Jahrhundert bis 1937 (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2000), 121 ff.

[538] Arabic text in Muhammad al-Mannuni, Madahir yaqzat al-Ma∫rib al-hadiö (al-Dar al-Bayda [Casablanca]: al-Ëam2iyya al-ma∫ribiyya li1l-ta1lif wa1l-namr, 1405/1988), 2: 407–421, facsimile of the first page 407. French abstract and translation in Cagne, Nation et nationalisme, 471–479, 501–510.

[539] See for this: Laroui, Origines, 403 ff.; Cagne, Nation et nationalisme, 485–495; Le Tourneau, Histoire, 124 f.

[540] First published by the famous Moroccan politician Muhammad 2Allal al-Fasi in his book Hufriyyat 2an al-haraka al-dusturiyya fi al-Maʃrib qabla1l-himaya (Rabat: Matba2a al-Risala); French summary and partial translation in Cagne, Nation et nationalisme, 479–484, 511–522.

[541] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 405 ff. (about the author and his activities in Morocco), full text of the draft pp. 422–445, facsimile of the last page of the manuscript containing the end of the text (in Maghribi handwriting) and a final gloss (in Oriental handwriting, presumably by the author himself): qalahu1l-2abd al-faqir & 2Abd al-Karim Murad al-Tarabulusi al-Madani &. A vague hint to that author by 2Allal al-Fasi himself in Hufriyyat, 8, is mentioned already by Cagne, Nation et nationalisme, 479 n. 206.

[542] A first attempt at a reconstruction of his career has been undertaken by Stefan Reichmuth and J. O. Hunwick, “Traces of a Forgotten Lebanese. Notes and Inquiries about 2Abd al-Karim Murad/al-Muradi (d. 1926/8) and His Activities in North and West Africa,” Sudanic Africa, forthcoming.

[543] Gathered by al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 311 ff.

[544] Ms. Fonds ancien AOF, Aix-en-Provence.

[545] Especially two books by Adam 2Abd-Allàh al-Iluri (d. 1992): al-Islam fi Nayëariyya (1st ed., Cairo: 2Abd al-Hamid al-Hanafi, 1369/1949–1950), 43 ff. (with photograph); Nasim al-saba fi albar al-islam wa 2ulama bilad Yuruba (2nd ed., Cairo: Maktabat al-adab, 1987), 175, 178 ff., 191, 195 ff.

[546] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 311 ff.

[547] On Husayn al-Jisr, his writings and activities, Johannes Ebert, Religion und Reform in der arabischen Provinz. Husain al-Jisr at-Tarabulusi (1845–

1909): Ein islamischer Gelehrter zwischen Tradition und Reform (Frankfurt/M. Bern, New York, Paris: Peter Lang, 1991).

[548] Year given by his contemporary, Muhammad 2Abd al-Hayy al-Kattani, cf. al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 311.

[549] Cf. Albert Hourani, “Djam2iyya,” Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd ed., 2: 429.

[550] Cf. Elger, Zentralismus und Autonomie, 88. 2Abd al-Hafiz was the uncle of the prominent Moroccan politician 2Allal al-Fasi, see Laroui, Origines, 378; he might thus be considered as a possible source for the transmission of the draft to his nephew. For the collaboration of his circle with the Nammur brothers in Tangier mentioned earlier, see 380, n. 29.

[551] Carl Brockelmann, Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937–1949), Supplement 2: 1017.

[552] See note 31.

[553] 1926: Adam al-Iluri, al-Islam fi Nayëiriyya wa1l-mayl 2Uöman b. Fudiyu al-Fulani (3rd ed., s.l., 1398/1978), 152. 1347/1928: al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 312.

[554] John O. Hunwick, ed., Arabic Literature of Africa, 2: The Writings of Central Sudanic Africa (Leiden, New York, Köln: E. J. Brill, 1995), 261.

[555] Makib Arslan, Hadir al-2alam al-islami (Cairo: al-Matba2a al-salafiyya wa-maktabatuha, 1343/1924–1925), 322.

[556] Both Muzaffar al-Din Shah who had signed the Constitution on 30 December 1906, shortly before his death, and his successor Muhammad 2Ali Shah are mentioned in the text, al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 425. For the dates, see for example, “Dustur,” EI2, 2: 651 ff.

[557] Le Tourneau, Histoire, 119 ff.

[558] Al-Manār 8 (1323/1905), 158 ff.

[559] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 422–426.

[560] See for example, “Dustur,” EI2, 2: 652.

[561] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 426–431.

[562] Ibid., 427. An abbreviated fusion of the first part of the first version (the Mobedan’s speech to the Sassanian emperor Bahram) with the end of the second version (a speech of Khusraw Anushirwan), both quoted from al-Mas2udi in Ibn Laldun, Kitab al-2ibar wa-diwan al-mubtada11 wa1l-labar (Beirut: Dar al-kitab al-lubnani, Maktabat almadrasa, 1983), 1: 64 ff.; Ibn Khaldun, The Muqaddimah. An Introduction to History, trans. Franz Rosenthal (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), 1: 80. For the “Circle of Equity” and its use by Ottoman writers see Lewis V. Thomas, A Study of Naima (New York: New York University Press, 1972), 78; Norman Izkowitz, “Men and Ideas in the Eighteenth Century Ottoman Empire,” in Thomas Naff and Roger Owen, eds, Studies in Eighteenth Century Islamic History (Carbondale, IL, Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press—London, Amsterdam: Feffer & Simons, 1977), 23 ff.

[563] For 2imara, a notion practically identical with 2umran, the central term in Ibn Khaldun’s theory of civilization, see F. Rosenthal in Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah 1: lxxvi ff., 80 n. 80. 2Umran is often translated as “civilization,” a connotation which might come in here also for 2imara.

[564] The Arabic word used by Ibn Khaldun (1: 65) here is ta1dib.

[565] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 432 ff.

[566] Ibid., 435–443.

[567] For the aspirations of the Sheykhü1l-Islamate after 1908 to reform the madrasa system and to regain control of the Ottoman educational and legal institution, see Berkes, Secularism, 413 ff.

[568] For mura in the context of contemporary Islamic political thought see especially Roswitha Badry, Die zeitgenössische Diskussion um den islamischen Beratungsgedanken (shura) unter dem besonderen Aspekt ideengeschichtlicher Kontinuitäten und Diskontinuitäten (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1998); Gudrun Krämer, Gottes Staat als Republik: Reflexionen zeitgenössischer Muslime zu Islam, Menschenrechten und Demokratie (Baden-Baden: Nomosn, 1999).

[569] See for example, al-Manār 9 (1324/1906), 553 ff.; 10 (1325/1907), 68, 281 ff.; 12 (1327/1909–1910), 606–611.

[570] For example, al-Manār 12 (1327/1909–1910), 606–611.

[571] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 428 ff.

[572] Ibid.

[573] See C. V. Findley, “Medjelle,” EI2, 6: 971 ff., with further literature.

[574] Al-Mannuni, Madahir, 2: 429.

[575] Laroui, Origines, 378 ff.; see also Kogelmann, Islamische fromme Stiftungen, 98 ff.

[576] Quite harsh views of Morocco were expressed by Rashid Rida himself, al-Manār 1 (1315–1316/1897–1898), 272 ff.; further 9 (1324/1906), 156 ff., and especially 10 (1325/1907), 554–557, where he qualifies the European supremacy in Morocco as a necessary victory of Order against Chaos. In comparison with the Moroccans, the Christians as bearers of a higher civilization even have to be regarded as righteous (salihun). For Rida, this victory of Knowledge and Order over Ignorance and Corruption follows Divine Providence as expressed in the Qur1an. Long-standing Middle Eastern prejudices against Maghrib seem to come out in full here.

[577] In adaptation of the German term Verfassungspatriotismus (constitutional patriotism) which was coined by Jürgen Habermas and which had a considerable impact on the constitutional debate in Germany after reunification.

[578] See Mardin, Young Ottoman Thought, 292 ff.

[579] See for this Berkes, Secularism, 253–270; Selim Deringil, The Well-Protected Domains: Ideology and the Legitimation of Power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876–1909 (London, New York: I. B. Tauris, 1999), 44–67.

[580] See the exemplary account of this development given by Berkes, Secularism, 337–366.

[581] For this so-called “Neo-Salafiyya,” of which 2Allal al-Fasi was a leading figure, see E. J. Rosenthal, Islam in the Modern National State (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 154, 158, 325; 2Allal al-Fasi, The Independence Movements in Arab North Africa (New York, 1970), 113 ff.;

2Allal al-Fasi, Hadiö al-Maʃrib f i1l-Mamriq (Cairo: al-Matba2a al-2alamiyya, 1956), 23; 2Abd al-Razzaq al-Dawway, ‘2Allal al-Fasi ka-namudhaë li1l-fikr al-salaf i al-ëadid f i1l-Maʃrib’, in Fi1l-intalliëansiya f i1l-Maʃrib al-2arabi (Beirut, 1984), 105–118. I owe these references to Thomas Kerkloh MA, Dortmund.

* 9. Constructing Transnational Islam: The East–West network of Shakib Arslan

Raja Adal

The interwar period saw the division of the greater part of the world into a colonized East and a colonizing West, and within the East into partly overlapping Arab and Islamic worlds. The East, the West, the Arab world, the Islamic world, each had its human networks. At the same time, the very concepts of an Arab world and of an Islamic world competed with local nationalisms, with Westernization, and with each other. As a literary figure belonging to the cultural milieus of Beirut, Cairo, and Damascus, and as the Arab amir al bayan, “the prince of eloquence,” Shakib Arslan was strongly connected to the Arab world. As a former student of Muhammad Abduh, a close friend of Rashid Rida, and an important contributor to the journal al-Mānar, he was a spokesman for the Islamic revival. As a resident of Switzerland, the publisher of the journal La Nation Arabe, and a perpetual anticolonial activist, he was a regular figure at anticolonial congresses and in Paris, Berlin, and Rome.

During the entire interwar period, Shakib Arslan’s position at the crossroad of various regions and worldviews gave him influence throughout an extensive region that stretched from the Arabian Gulf states and the Arab East, through Western and Eastern Europe, and to the Maghreb. At the same time, Arslan was “arguably the most widely read Arab writer of the interwar period, “ [582] and the Egyptian press diffused his lifetime production of more than 2,000 articles and 20 volumes throughout the Arab and Islamic world. In French, his journal La Nation Arabe allowed him to reach Arab students with a Western education, non-Arab Muslims who did not know

Arabic, Western policy makers, and anti-colonial activists, introducing concepts of the Arab world and the Islamic revival to new audiences.

This chapter traces the members of Arslan’s transnational network, looks into the manner that it was constructed, and ultimately asks for its raisons dêtre, for the reasons that drove it into being. It does so through a systematic analysis of the thousands of proper names that appear throughout the 2, 437 pages and 38 volumes of La Nation Arabe. This approach made it possible to unearth pertinent passages scattered throughout the text and overlooked by previous studies of Shakib Arslan, which have only made cursory use of the journal.[583] More importantly, systematic indexing allowed the text itself to provide the key figures which were the pillars of Arslan’s transnational network, and upon which the framework of this article is based.[584]

Its structure is based upon a spatial division of Shakib Arslan’s network into regions. After a brief introduction on Arslan himself, it begins with his connections to the highest echelons of the Ottoman state at the time of the dissolution of the Empire, and with the networks and plans of the exiled community in the first few years of the interwar period. The second section returns to the links geographically closest to Arslan’s birthplace in the mountains of Lebanon, to the land that lay between those mountains and Istanbul, namely to the intellectual milieu of Damascus and Beirut. From the last days of the First World War and until 1937 Shakib Arslan was an exiled nationalist leader, and it is testimony to the intellectual influence that he exercised from afar if after a twenty-year absence he received a hero’s welcome in Beirut and Damascus. The third part is about Europe, where Arslan published La Nation Arabe, collaborated with the leadership of European anticolonial movements, organized the European Muslim Congress, and strove to maintain ties between Eastern Europe and the other centers of the Islamic world.

A fourth section describes how, to the largely independent Arab and Muslim states of Ibn Saud in the Hijaz and Nejd, of Imam Yahya in Yemen, and of Faisal in Iraq, Arslan offered his services for council and, when necessary, mediation, engaging in the difficult task of drawing the three monarchs toward greater Arab unity. While the situation in the Arab East was complex

and highly politicized, fraught with the rivalry of the Husaynis and Nashashibis in Palestine, with that of the independent kingdoms of the Hijaz-Nejd, Yemen, and Iraq, and with the aggressive factionalism of the Syrian independence movement, the Maghreb provided a welcome respite. A fifth section deals with how Arslan came to be known as the protector, strategist, and mastermind of the Maghreb's independence movements, mobilizing the Islamic world for such causes as the repeal of the Berber Dahir. This, in turn, gave the leaders of North African independence movements studying in Paris a new sense of pan-Arab and pan-Islamic consciousness. The sixth section concerns Arslan's close links with the intellectual world of Cairo, which printed Arslan's works and diffused them throughout the Arab world. Yet it so happens that, as the country where Abduh and Rida lived, Arslan's Egyptian network becomes most relevant when studied in the context of the Islamic revival and irrespective of geographic location, and so the last section will be about "the Manarists."

Shakib Arslan was born to one of two families that have traditionally assumed the leadership of Mount Lebanon's Druze community, a heterodox sect of Ismaili Islam. It is unknown when and how he entered the mainstream of Sunni Islam, later to become one of its chief publicizers, but at the age of 16 he was strongly influenced by classes taught at the Madrasat al-Sultaniyya by Muhammad Abduh, who was exiled in Beirut. For his whole life, he remained a follower of Abduh's Islamic reformist movement and a member of Abduh's political and literary circles.

Druze on his father's side and by inheritance, Arslan's mother, as well as his wife, were Circassian, a Muslim minority group from the Caucasus. It is revealing of Arslan's Ottoman background that, although an emblematic figure of inter-war pan-Arabism and pan-Islam, he was originally born a member of a heretic sect not considered Islamic by the majority of Sunnis, was ethnically half non-Arab, and eventually married a foreign immigrant of non-Arab origin. Although his wife Salima had lived in the region of Salt in north Jordan since her childhood, she testifies to only knowing Turkish at the time of their marriage.[585]

Arslan received a modern education, first at an American protestant school, then at the Maronite Christian Madrasat al-Hikma (also known by its French

appellation La Sagesse), and finally at the Ottoman Madrasat al-Sultaniyya. In the course of his education he learned French, Ottoman Turkish, some English, and quickly distinguished himself as a singularly gifted writer of Arabic. For the rest of his life, and to this day, the Arab world knows him as “amir al-bayan, “ the “prince of eloquence.” This title is significant in two ways. When the two words are taken separately the second refers to his literary genius, while the first makes reference to his title of Amir, a responsibility he first came to assume at the age of 17, when his father died and he became governor of the Shuf Mountains in south central Lebanon. Although Arslan would eventually leave the confines of Lebanese Mountain politics, throughout his life he would remain a prodigious writer and a natural political leader.

While Arslan published extensively in Arabic, the one journal that he edited himself was in French. Printed in the vicinity of Geneva and mostly edited with his colleague Ihsan al-Jabiri, La Nation Arabe appeared from 1930 to 1938 in thirty-eight volumes.[586] It is interesting to compare La Nation Arabe and al-Mānar, in that Arslan and Rida shared an exceptionally close friendship and were proponents of very similar visions of the Islamic revival movement, both belonging to the school of Muhammad Abduh. Many of the articles that Arslan wrote for La Nation Arabe he rewrote in Arabic and addressed them to al-Mānar’s readers after making slight changes to accommodate the different readership. Although published in French and Arabic respectively, and addressed to different, although overlapping, audiences, the two journals can often be seen sharing the same source. al-Mānar operated in the context of Islam as a contemporary religion while La Nation Arabe was a “political, literary, economic, and social journal” operating in the contemporary world approached from an Islamic perspective. In other respects, Arslan differed from Rashid Rida. Their difference is illustrated by the one time the two friends were at odds. It was in 1915, at a time when Arab nationalists, including Rida, were earnestly beginning to oppose the Ottoman state. Arslan, as a member of the Ottoman parliament, and more importantly as one raised in the context of its multi-ethnic, multi-lingual cosmopolitanism, could not imagine Arabs separated from Turks embarking alone upon their political destiny. Deceivingly entitled La Nation Arabe, Arslan’s journal dealt as much with the Arab world as with the non-Arab regions of the Islamic world.

** The Ottoman world, its loss, and the endeavor to restore it

Born in nineteenth-century Mount Lebanon and schooled in an Ottoman civil service school, Shakib Arslan’s adoption of the reformist Islamic themes taught by Muhammad Abduh in Beirut only strengthened his attachment to a multi-ethnic Ottoman Empire, seat of the Caliphate and barrier against foreign encroachment. His enthusiasm for the empire is perhaps most clearly expressed by the Ottoman campaign of 1911–1912 to preserve Cyrenaica against Italian conquest. Arslan, a Druze Amir and former mutasarrif (provincial governor) of Mount Lebanon rushed to the front, spending eight months fighting with the regular Ottoman troops. The battle was lost and the empire continued shrinking, but it was there that Arslan met the young Turkish officers from the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), who would come to seize power in 1913 and draw Arslan into the innermost circles of Ottoman rule.

Among them was Enver Pava, who along with Talat Pava and Cemal Pava was member of the triumvirate that held power in Istanbul from 1913 until the end of the First World War.[587] The friendship that bound Arslan, an Arab Ottoman Amir and writer, to Enver Pava, a Turkish Ottoman general of lower class origins, deserves closer examination. On the ideological plane, the CUP is seen by revisionist historians such as Hasan Kayali not as the logical precursor of Turkish nationalism, but only as an advocate of secular Ottoman nationalism, which the party adopted in 1908 only to abandon at the end of the Balkan wars in 1913. With the Balkan possessions lost, and the Ottoman Empire reduced to predominantly Muslim subjects, there occurred what Kayali describes as an “Islamist reinterpretation of Ottomanism.” As a result “the Unionists came to rely on religion in their quest for centralization and social harmony much as their nemesis Abdulhamid had.”[588]

The friendship and partnership between Enver Pava and Shakib Arslan, however, begun in 1911 and continued until the former’s death eleven years later, transcending the CUP “conversion” to Islamist politics, and the exile of both Enver and Arslan. It would be an easy answer to say that both Enver and Arslan had a vested interest in the Ottoman state and thus fought for its

preservation, and subsequently for its restoration. In terms of military ventures, both can be seen engaging in lost causes, which, if not outright romantic, had very little chances of success. The conditions of Enver Pava’s death in the mountains of Eastern Bukhara are described by Arslan in La Nation Arabe:

Enver Pava, to whom I had explained all of the [hidden] intentions of Bolsheviks when they invited him to settle in Moscow by promising him wonders, soon realized that the Bolsheviks were using him to threaten the English and that, in reality, they detested him no less than they detested the English. It is then that he secretly went, disguised as a peasant, to Bukhara and chased the Russians out of this kingdom which they had subjugated and ruined. Since the fight was not equal, Enver could not hold more than one year, and died as a martyr in a battle in which, with 300 fighters he held his own against 12,000 Russian soldiers.[589]

On the political stage, Arslan and Enver Pava would closely cooperate in the years of exile after 1917. In the meantime, after his election to the Ottoman parliament in 1913, Arslan had the much less enviable position of being one of the leading Arab Ottoman figures in Damascus during Cemal Pava’s reign of terror. Later accused of collaboration during Cemal’s suppression of Arab nationalist movements, Arslan insisted that in his position as representative to the Ottoman parliament, it was his responsibility to struggle to alleviate the deportations, executions, and food shortages by negotiating with Cemal Pava. He claims to have done this in frequent meetings with the latter, and to have had recourse to the other two members of the Ottoman triumvirate, Talat Pava and Enver Pava, to attempt to alleviate the famine that hit Syria and Lebanon.[590]

As for Kemal Pava, the future Atatürk, whom Arslan first met when he was chief of staff of Enver’s army, they met again at the Café Maskot in Berlin in the late summer of 1917, on the day that British troops were entering Jerusalem. Expressing his anguish at the fate of Jerusalem and Palestine, Arslan confessed to his companion his fears about the tragic situation of Islam. Kemal Pava, who would one day become the father of the secularist Turkish nation-state, is said to have told Arslan:

We shall take it [Jerusalem] back, we shall take it back … inshaallah [God willing], we shall take it back; and if I say “inshaallah” it is as a good Muslim that I say it, because I am Muslim before all else; but it is certain that we shall take it back.[591]

Before becoming a secularist Turkish nationalist, and in the presence of Arslan, Kemal Pava spoke very much like his fellow Ottoman companions, although perhaps with a more consciously expressed profession of faith.

In the immediate aftermath of the war and with the Ottoman Empire occupied, Arslan exiled himself in Berlin, along with the CUP leadership, which included Enver and Talat. In those immediate postwar years, as Allied ambitions in the former Ottoman lands became clearer, with the Balfour declaration that promised a Jewish homeland in Palestine, with the violent end brought by the French to Faisal’s independent kingdom in Syria, and before the commercial agreements of March 1921 between the Soviets and Britain had been signed, a coalition of Arabs and Turks under the banner of Islam and allied to the Soviet Union did not appear to be a completely improbable scenario. It is in this context that Enver Pava founded the Islamic International (or Islamintern) as an extension of the CUP. Based in Moscow, Enver envisaged a decentralized organization consisting of regional cells spanning the entire Islamic world, each with its own strategy but operating within a general framework and with an overarching goal: the freedom and self-government of Islamic lands.[592]

The long cold voyage to Moscow was not easy for the Arab and Turkish exiles who accepted the invitation. Arslan had previously been in contact with the Soviet Politburo member Zinovev in Saint Moritz in order to communicate a message from King Faisal, and met him again, along with Trotsky, in Moscow during the third general conference of the Komintern.[593] The commemorative photograph of the Islamic International Conference members shows an out of place and depressed group of Arabs and Turks, for demoralization must have been all the more complete after Talat’s assassination earlier that year in Berlin. Shakib Arslan wrote Enver that the loss of Talat represented “not only a loss for the CUP, not only a loss for the

Turkish people, but a loss for the whole Islamic world."[594] Enver's death a year later marked the end of Arslan's hopes for a restoration of the empire.

While the CUP's political position changed with circumstances, adapting the ideologies of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkish nationalism to the various conditions existing during their rise to power and subsequent downfall, a common underlying cultural background can be seen in the personal relationship between Arslan and Enver Pava. As Kayali points out, "the Ottoman state—'sick man' though it may have been—actually had more resilience in its last decade than historians generally credit it with."[595] Not only the state, but what may be called an "Ottoman culture" seems to also have embodied the ideals of men such as Shakib Arslan and Enver Pava, and its resilience may very well have survived the demise of the empire and, as shall later be seen, its legacy found heirs in future generations.

** Syria

Shakib Arslan's relationship with Syria during the interwar period, from 1917 to 1937, was that of an exile. Yet to former Ottomans like Arslan, Syria meant greater Syria and included not only the French mandates of Syria and Lebanon but also the British mandate of Palestine. It was accepted, however, that the political conditions created by the colonial powers were unavoidable, at least in the short term. The "Syrian Congress," which met in 1921 in Geneva to petition the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission, changed its name to "Syrian-Palestinian Congress" upon the request of the Palestinian delegates who contended that, their region being under British mandate, their agenda might also have to differ.[596] Shakib Arslan himself quickly realized that bargaining included compromise, and in his discussions with de Jouvenel accepted the idea of a plebiscite to determine whether Tripoli and the other regions added to Lebanon in 1920 would join a Syrian or a Lebanese independent state.[597]

Shakib Arslan's official position was that of head of the three member permanent delegation of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress to the League of Nations in Geneva. Although the Congress's first meeting in 1921 was unsuccessful in obtaining the League of Nations' interference in British and

French mandatory policy, the idea of a permanent delegation to represent the Syrian issue to the League gained renewed urgency in the summer of 1925, when the Syrian revolt broke out. The revolt, and its violent suppression, coincided with Abd al-Karim's revolt in the Rif Mountains of Morocco, and for an instant it seemed as if France's colonial empire had been fragilized. It is in this context that Arslan moved to Switzerland to express the aspirations of the Syrian and Palestinian indepen-dentists to the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission and to the European world.

The delegation had three members. In addition to Shakib Arslan, there was Ihsan al-Jabiri, Arslan's partner from 1925 until his return to Syria in 1937 to become governor of the district of Latakia. Jabiri was an Arab Ottoman from a prominent family of Aleppo, who had once served as municipal leader. Educated in Istanbul and with a higher law degree from Paris, Jabiri was an aristocratic member of his world, who held several positions in the high Ottoman bureaucracy before becoming Chamberlain of King Faisal during the latter's short reign. He was, in Arslan's words, "our colleague and companion of arms in the patriotic struggle that we have together pursued in Europe, since the Syrian-Palestinian Congress held in Geneva in 1921, and until the completion of the Franco-Syrian treaty in 1937."[598]

The third member of the delegation was Sulayman Kinan, a Maronite from Mount Lebanon who had been a representative in the twelve member Lebanese Administrative Council, which from 1861 to 1919 was the governing body of Mount Lebanon. In 1920 it declared the independence of Lebanon in opposition to the French Mandate, and in 1921 Kinan was a delegate to the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, submitting a request to the League of Nations for Lebanese independence within its pre-1920 frontiers.[599] In later years, Kinan was replaced by Riyad al-Sulh, whose father Riza al-Sulh was interior minister in Faisal's cabinet at the time of the imposition of the French mandate in 1920.[600] A member of Beirut's Sunni merchant bourgeoisie, Riyad al-Sulh was to become the independent Lebanese Republic's first prime minister in 1943.

Beyond the immediate associates of Shakib Arslan in Geneva, there were of course the great alliances and rivalries that characterized the fractious Syrian independence movement. Within this landscape, Arslan can be clearly

positioned as the close friend, ally, and advisor of three major actors, Rashid Rida, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, and his younger brother Adil Arslan; and as the antagonist of two others, Michel Lutfallah and especially Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar.

Although vice-president of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, one of its active participants, and a lifelong ally of Arslan, the Syrian nationalist aspect of Rashid Rida has often found itself overshadowed by his position in the Islamic revivalist movement. Yet Rida's writings in al-Mānar bear the stamp of his ideas on Syrian unity, and of the Islamic content of his Arab and Syrian nationalism. Unlike Arslan, Rida was involved in the Arab Nationalist movement before and during the First World War, and this was the only time when the two friends were at odds. Yet with the war ended, Arslan lost the Ottoman state, which he had defended to the very end, and Rida realized that the Arab revolt had resulted not in independence but in European colonization. During Arslan's difficult period of transition from Ottomanism to Arabism, it was Rida who, in Cleveland's words, "played the major role in reintegrating Arslan with the Arab leaders who had been alienated by his wartime policies [in support of the Ottoman empire]."[601] Thus was Arslan elected Secretary of the Syrian-Palestinian congress, later to become its prime animator.

On the whole, Khoury is justified in stating that Palestinian delegates to the congress were wary of Syrian elements who adopted an increasingly narrow territorial form of nationalism focusing on a smaller Syria, compromising on the issue of Zionism, and attached to the Hashemites, who were suspect in Palestinian eyes.[602] However, while this view was applicable to the Lutfallah and Shahbandar faction within the congress, the situation was different in the case of Arslan and Rida. Indeed, Khoury notes that although both Jabiri and Arslan were exiled, they were looked upon admiringly by the younger group of ultra-nationalist Istiqlalists as leaders of exemplary integrity, who were not reluctant to confront the controversy over Palestine.[603] La Nation Arabe, the delegation's journal published by Arslan, dealt extensively with the Palestinian issue, regularly reproducing the numerous resolutions sent by the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, which by the 1930s was dominated by Arslan and his allies, to the League of Nations. As the years advance it propeled the issue to the forefront of all others, attributing to it crisis proportions. In its 8 years of publication, the journal

devoted 11% of its articles including one special issue to the Palestinian question, and regularly published reports of Zionist congresses in Europe and lists of European politicians and publications with their stance upon the issue, while calling for Arabs and Muslims to unite.

In that section of the Arab world referred to as Palestine, Arslan was closely allied to Hajj Amin al-Husayni, Mufti of Jerusalem, and President of the Supreme Muslim Council of Palestine. The Mufti of Jerusalem held a traditional role in a traditional Arab-Muslim world, that suddenly found itself faced with powerful international pressures. The rapid succession of events beginning with the First World War and the Arab revolt, the end of the Ottoman Empire and the coming of the British, the sudden separation from other parts of Syria and the alarming increase in Jewish immigration, entailed a drastically new brand of political action. For assistance in such matters, from the 1920s until the end of the Second World War, the Mufti turned to Arslan. By 1935, Arslan had written to the Mufti more than 100 letters, and in the next 10 years it is probable that Arslan's stream of letters and advice increased.[604] In 1936, when David Ben Gurion, one of the leaders of the Zionist Executive and the future first Prime Minister of Israel, sought to make an agreement with Arab leaders, it was Shakib Arslan and Ihsan al-Jabiri whom he visited in the former's home in Geneva. Ben Gurion had been in contact with an Arab interlocutor, Musa Alami, who told him that the main leader with decisive power in Palestine was the Mufti, and that the Mufti paid attention to the views of the Istiqlalist leaders outside of "Palestine," and especially to those of Arslan and Jabiri: "It was Musa Alami's opinion that I [Ben Gurion] should first of all meet Jabri and Arslan. He would write to them about his talk with the Mufti. The Mufti attached much weight to their opinion, and they to his."[605]

Arslan and the Mufti both vigorously opposed British and French colonization in the Arab and Islamic world. In an attempt to gain leverage against the British and French, they set about finding European allies willing to oppose British and French hegemony, and in Europe the counterweights to Britain and France were Italy and Germany. In Palestine, the Husayni faction was the political adversary of the Nashashibi faction, which was allied with the British administration. In 1935, Syrian journals close to the Nashashibis published a letter from Arslan to the Mufti meant to discredit the latter. The letter outlined a plan by Arslan for making Italian propaganda in the Arab world,

and although it was eventually widely accepted to be a fake, it created a storm of controversy and involved Arslan in the fierce atmosphere of Jerusalem politics. The ideological positions and practical alliance between Arslan and the Mufti were common knowledge, and compromising either of them had repercussions on the other. During the Second World War, both Arslan and the Mufti found themselves on the side of Germany and Italy, the Mufti spending several years in Berlin and Arslan advising him on what policies to pursue.[606]

The third significant relationship of Shakib Arslan was, not surprisingly, his brother Adil. One of the leading young Istiqlalists, Adil Arslan was close both ideologically and politically to his older brother Shakib. His presence further cemented the alliance within the Syrian-Palestinian Congress between the young pan-Arab Istiqlalists and Shakib Arslan. In fact, Adil Arslan and the Istiqlalists, Shakib Arslan, Rashid Rida, and Hajj Amin al-Husayni formed a closely-knit block within the Syrian-Palestinian Congress. During the Syrian revolt, toward the end of 1925, young Istiqlalists created with Hajj Amin al-Husayni a special finance committee in Jerusalem. Istiqlalist leaders such as Shukri al-Quwwatli, who opposed the Hashemites, were amenable to receive aid from Ibn Saud, and they also began to channel other funds toward the Jerusalem Committee rather than to the Cairo Executive of the Syrian-Palestinian congress. This was a challenge to Michel Lutfallah, President of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, who owed his position to his funding of congress activities. The situation reached a crisis when in October 1927 Shakib Arslan resigned from the Executive of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, pushing Rashid Rida and the Istiqlalist wing of the executive in Cairo and Jerusalem to take the leadership by ousting Lutfallah. The latter formed his own executive committee, and by December there were two antagonistic Syrian-Palestinian Congress committees. Opposing what has at times been called the “Istiqlalist faction,” the “Rida-Istiqlalist faction,” or the “Rida-Arslan faction,” was Michel Lutfallah’s ally Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar, an Arab nationalist from before the First World War who became one of the rebel chiefs during the Syrian revolt and an exiled independentist afterwards.[607] The rift between Shahbandar and Shakib Arslan mirrored the one dividing many of the Syrian nationalists, and it would never heal.

The reasons for the schism within the Syrian-Palestinian Congress may appear surprising when one considers that its members were all fighting a

difficult battle against the French and British for Syrian-Palestinian independence. Yet the similarity stops there, and deep ideological rifts separated each party's vision of the society, of the future, and of the best way to achieve it. In a perceptive passage, Khoury elaborates:

The Arslan-Istiqlali branch of the movement was avowedly pan-Arabist, anti-Hashemite, and opposed to cooperating with the British. It stood for the complete liberation of all Arab peoples and territories from foreign rule and the establishment of a unitary Arab state …. Shahbandar's People's Party and the dominant faction on the Syrian-Palestine Congress Executive [until 1927] were close to the Hashemites and willing to cooperate with the British to accomplish their more limited goal, the establishment of an independent Syrian state. On the question of Lebanon, the Lutfallah-Shahbandar faction, under the influence of Michel Lutfallah, appeared willing to accept a Greater Lebanon.[608]

In the 1921 meeting of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, the lines separating these two parties were already drawn, and in later years ideological rifts would combine with personal antagonisms to usher a split of the congress.

During the Syrian revolt of 1925–1926, the competition between the two factions was fierce, but still left a certain amount of cooperation for their common cause. For a moment there appeared the possibility that a treaty could grant Syria a limited independence while securing France's strategic and economic interests.[609] The unpopular French commissioner Maurice Sarrail was replaced by the relatively liberal de Jouvenel. The new commissioner telegraphed Shakib Arslan in Geneva, inviting him for talks in Paris. In a first meeting in November 1925, Arslan's moderation impressed de Jouvenel. Khoury writes that some members of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress headquartered in Cairo, namely Lutfallah and Shahbandar, were irritated by Arslan's success in securing access to a high-ranking French official. Upon their meeting de Jouvenel in Cairo, they took a hard line of no compromise which alienated the High Commissioner, who buried the accords. This was not, however, the end of the story, for Arslan's journal La Nation Arabe reveals that there was a subsequent meeting with de Jouvenel the following July in Paris, in which Arslan, his associate Jabiri, as well as Lutfallah participated in three working sessions, "during

which several conditions [of the agreement] were defined."[610] Arslan believes that it was the influence exercised by the Maronite Lebanese Shukri Ghanem on the head of the Poincaré government, and French officials rather than factionalism within the Syrian-Palestinian congress, that made the accord fail. According to Arslan, de Jouvenel reported to Poincaré that "we thought it possible to speak with the Syrian nationalists to see if there was the possibility of an agreement," to which Poincaré is said to have answered, "[to speak] with the enemies of France."[611] Shortly afterwards, de Jouvenel was replaced by Ponsot as High Commissioner of Syria.[612]

Ten years later, in 1936, when the Syrian delegation led by Hashem al-Atasi, leader of the National Bloc and soon to be president of the Syrian Republic, went to Paris to sign the treaty with France, al-Atasi, Sadallah al-Jabiri, and Riyad al-Sulh made several trips to Geneva to consult with Arslan. The French were also careful to gain his consent to the treaty, and the French vice-minister of foreign affairs, Viénot, met Arslan for lunch in Geneva. Afterwards, Viénot wrote to the French High Commissioner in Syria Martel that Arslan's influence, both inside of Syria, where he constituted a counterweight to Shahbandar's opposition to the treaty, and in the Arab world, made him a "factor which we cannot ignore."[613] Cleveland further notes that "Arslan's support could not guarantee the treaty's passage in the Syrian chamber but his opposition could sabotage it."[614] On the contrary Shahbandar's opposition to the treaty did not prove fatal, and it is a testimony to Arslan's network inside and outside Syria that, as an exile who had not personally participated in Syrian politics for two decades, he still represented an inescapable linchpin in any agreement between France and Syria.

It is argued by Cleveland that Arslan used his position as representative of the congress in Geneva to air his personal views, using La Nation Arabe as his "personal mouthpiece."[615] Yet once the schism in the congress was finalized in 1927, one can observe an uninterrupted stream of correspondence and perpetual consultations between Shakib Arslan, Rashid Rida, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, and Adil Arslan. After the pro-Hachemite and secularist wing was separated from the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, the Arslan-Rida-Husayni alliance within the congress was united in both its goals and ideology. Whether the Lutfallah-Shahbandar branch of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress exhibited a similar unity would require a separate

study, yet in light of the remarkable homogeneity shown by the Arslan-Rida-Husayni alliance within the congress we may need to revise our image of a fractionalized Syrian exile community, divided along not only ideological but also regional and personal interests.

** Europe

If Arslan’s literary and political career flourished under the Ottoman Empire, it is for the second career that he began at the age of 56 in Europe that he is most often remembered. Arslan most probably owes his encyclopedia definition, “perhaps the most prominent activist for Muslim political causes between the world wars,” to his 20 years as an anticolonial, pan-Arab, and Islamic activist in interwar Europe.[616] Kramer also sees Arslan as one of the two principal spokesmen of the Arabs in the West, along with George Antonius, writing that “between them, these two prolific polemicists repackaged the Arab argument in terms intelligible to foreign audiences, and some of their texts resonate to this day.”[617]

Arslan enjoyed a complex relationship with Europe. It was the seat of the imperial powers which he fought, yet with his first forays into diplomacy he began his lifelong quest to find a European power that could help Arabs and Muslims achieve freedom and modernization. When Arslan first went to Europe in 1889, Tunis had already been occupied by France in 1881 and Egyptian independence thwarted by British troops in 1882. The initial enthusiasm of such writers such as Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din toward a benevolent and friendly Europe had long passed.[618] For Arslan, writes Cleveland, “Europe represented an imperial threat, not an admirable culture.”[619] While it is clear that, since Arslan’s earliest days, Europe already embodied the colonizer, scattered evidence exists of his affection for a Europe other than the one which he daily confronted in his anticolonial struggle. In the guest book of the Goethe Museum in Berlin is scribbled a forgotten poem, written in honor of Goethe during Arslan’s first visit to Germany on October 10, 1917:

I bowed the head of my muse before his gate

Before his doorstep how many have lay prostrate

Although he is not of my community nor my kin

The community of man in literature is one

(For if a common genealogy we do not share Between us literature holds the place of the father) [620]

In his anticolonial campaign waged in Europe, Arslan was a natural ally of European anticolonial movements, and essentially of the French left. If the support of a part of the British left wing for Zionism might have caused an obstacle to a rapprochement with British socialists, it was with the French socialists and radical socialists that Arslan had the most affinity. In the course of defending causes in the Arab East and North Africa, Arslan attended socialist and anti-imperialist congresses in Berne in 1919, Genoa in 1922, and Brussels in 1927, and, despite his vocal aversion to Communism, the tenth Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in Moscow in 1927. Demonstratin g his sympathetic but skeptical stance vis-à-vis socialism, he would tell the French socialist leader Marcel Cachin in 1919: “we have doubts, even about you; statesmen of the left, once in power, become dreadfully imperialist.” Yet in the case of Cachin, nineteen years later Arslan could still express his continued esteem and sympathy.[621] Most prominent among the French friends of Arslan is Jean Longuet, grandson of Karl Marx and vice-president of the foreign affairs commission in the French chamber of deputies. In Longuet’s obituary Arslan would reiterate the same theme of truthfulness in the fight against imperialism: “Jean Longuet did not joke about socialist principles … he advocated a truthful socialism without seeking personal profit, but also without exaltation and without subversive activities.” At the news of both the deaths of Longuet and Pierre Renaudel, another French socialist, Arslan writes of feeling a “true emptiness” at the loss of “real friends.”[622]

Arslan’s relationship with Germany was entirely different. He developed links not with the left, but with the Foreign Service officers and academics whose careers could be traced back to Wilhelmian Germany, and to Kaiser Wilhelm II himself. One of the earlier contacts of Arslan with Germany was in 1898, when the Kaiser declared in Damascus that Germany was the protector of 300 million Muslims throughout the world. Standing by his side was Arslan, who had been appointed by Sultan Abdülhamid II as the Kaiser’s escort in the city.[623] In 1934, Arslan went to see the deposed Kaiser in Doorn,[624] and in the March-April 1935 issue of La Nation Arabe he would engage in a thirteen page defense of the former Kaiser against charges of having initiated the First World War, at the end of which Arslan asks the same question as his reader: “Why have we taken the trouble, we who are not Germans, of defending the ex-emperor of Germany against these ignominious lies?” To this question, Arslan gives a double reply. First, it is in the name of truth and of resistance against the hegemony of the Allies, who wish to throw the responsibility of the war on Germany and its emperor. The Ottoman Empire’s alliance with Germany and subsequent partition at the hands of the allies make Arslan understandably sympathetic toward such resistance. Second is the Kaiser’s approach toward Islam:

This man has, for his whole career, shown an unshakable impartiality with regard to Muslims. He was the only sovereign of Christian Europe—despite his attachment to his religion and despite being himself head of the Lutheran Church—who could see Islam as a good religion that could inspire consideration and respect.[625]

Arslan goes even further, attributing half of the popularity of Germany in the Islamic world to the political policies of Wilhelm II, the other half being attributed to the simple fact that Germany, having no colonies, attracted less complaints from Muslims.

As a member of the Ottoman parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee, Arslan had opportunities to interact with the empire’s wartime ally, Germany. He was, for example, the intermediary between the Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire Said Halim and the German ambassador to Istanbul Wangenheim when relations between both were strained.[626] He had barely returned to Istanbul from his first visit to Germany in 1917 when Enver Pava sent him

back to Berlin to negotiate certain problems between the Empire and Germany regarding the Caucasus and the Russian fleet in the Black Sea.[627] With the war ended, Arslan was again in Germany, as president of the Oriental Club, and his relationship with its intelligentsia and leadership continued throughout the interwar period. In an article on the Arab language, Arslan recounts the long evening he spent in 1930 at the home of Hindenburg, President of Germany's Weimar Republic, discussing such questions as the abundance of words in Arabic that mean "sadness," and the scarcity of those that mean "happiness."[628]

The German governing elite and German orientalists of the interwar period continued to treat Arslan not only as a notable politician who commanded respect for his knowledge of and influence upon the Arab world, but as a living literary prodigy. The journal of the German Society for Islamic Studies carried at least nine book reviews, collections of open letters, translations of articles, or news briefs about Shakib Arslan between 1915 and 1938. This included a 93-page article, 1 part of a 3 part series on contemporary Arabic literature, containing a 13-page biography based on a personal interview of Arslan and 80 pages of translation of some of his works.[629] The editor of the journal and chairman of the German Society of Islamic Studies was Professor Georg Kampffmeyer, who lectured on Arslan's literary works in his seminars on oriental languages in Berlin and regarded him as a living example of the renaissance of Arabic literature.[630] In a review of Arslan's extensive commentary on the Arabic translation of Lothrop Stoddard's The New World of Islam, Kampffmeyer describes it as a "source of highest importance in the study of the contemporary history of the Orient … from the pen of such an admirable Oriental as the Emir Shakib Arslan." The work itself illustrates:

The attitude which the Emir, and doubtlessly a significant portion of the contemporary Arab Orient, is taking towards the contemporary world, [an attitude] which is decisive in determining their approach to the present and the future of Islam, in other words for the self-perception of Islam and for its religious and nationalist attitudes, especially that of the Arab Orient with regards to the European incursion.[631]

In this short passage, Kampffmeyer seems to be pointing to the growing Salafi movement and the influence which it would exert upon the Islamic world.

Among Arslan's European associates and friends one figure stands out, that of "the famed orientalist and friend of the Orient, our friend for forty years, the German baron Max von Oppenheim."[632] It is characteristic for Arslan to use the traditional figure forty when referring to his closest friends. In many ways, the intellectual pursuits and political involvement of Shakib Arslan and Max Freiherr von Oppenheim ran parallel. A German foreign service officer at the turn of the century, von Oppenheim resigned in 1910 to pursue an interest in archeology and the excavation of the Hittite city of Tell Halal that he had discovered. A world authority on the Hittites, von Oppenheim also seems to have had a deep knowledge of and wide connections in the Arab world, and in times of crisis was called upon to return to the Foreign Ministry. Melka writes that it is von Oppenheim who, as a young Foreign Office official under Kaiser Wilhelm II, inspired the previously mentioned Damascus speech of 1898, in which the Kaiser styled himself as the protector of Muslims. It is unknown when and how Arslan and von Oppenheim first met, but it must have been during those last years of the nineteenth century, when both were young high-ranking representatives of their respective governments, each with his talent, Arslan in literature and von Oppenheim in archeology. Until their death in 1946 they remained in frequent correspondence, and it seems that while von Oppenheim was Arslan's primary link to the official policy-making circles of the German Foreign Office, Arslan was von Oppenheim's primary Arab advisor on Middle Eastern and Islamic affairs.[633]

Von Oppenheim exhibited a lifelong interest in allying Germany to the Islamic world, and like Arslan, his model was the Ottoman-Wilhelmian alliance before the First World War. Also similar to Arslan, von Oppenheim drew grand plans for expelling the French and British from the Middle East and for building an alliance with Ibn Saud. It is interesting that the proposals made to the German Foreign Office in the fall of 1940 by the Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Prime Minister of Iraq Ali al-Gaylani were similar to those made by von Oppenheim. Melka writes that "the similarity may have been accidental, but even in the absence of correspondence with Arslan for this period the writer is inclined to believe that he, and possibly also von Hentig and Grobba,

in some way inspired the major lines of von Oppenheim’s memorandum.”[634] Melka’s conclusions are all the more plausible when seen from the perspective of Arslan, for at this time he is said to have written Husayni a constant stream of letters advising him on what course to take, and in September and October 1939 went to Berlin, where he met von Oppenheim.[635] While it is understandable to see Arslan bent on pushing Germany into a declaration of intentions vis-à-vis the Muslim world and an active support of anticolonialism, von Oppenheim’s reasons for favoring such an alliance are less clear. They may have stemmed from an academic interest in the Arab world and the memory of the Ottoman-Wilhelmian alliance. Von Oppenheim, Arslan, and Husayni were, however, unable to tip Germany into an Islamic alliance. For one, von Oppenheim’s influence seemed to show signs of decline. His well-known Jewish ancestry, although apparently overlooked by the Nazi leadership in view of his services to the state, was coupled with an aristocratic background.[636] Similar to Arslan, his career and vision was rooted in the Ottoman-Wilhelmian politico-cultural alliance and this did not fit well with the new ultra-nationalist racial ideologies.

If Arslan’s relations with the French state were strained and antagonistic, and if his relations with the German state rested on relations with the Foreign Office and its career bureaucrats, those with Italy were almost solely based on the one person who held power in the state. Arslan probably knew Benito Mussolini since 1922, when the latter was still editor of Popolo dItalia, and wrote fiery articles defending the Arab cause. Their first meeting must have been during the congress of the League of Oppressed Nations held in Genoa in 1921. At that time, Arslan, who was president of the Oriental Club in Berlin and secretary of the Genoa congress expressed the gratitude of the delegates for the liberal manner in which they had been allowed to conduct their activities in Italy.[637] Thereafter Arslan would always refer to “our friend Mussolini” or “our old friend Mussolini,” even when engaging in the fiercest attacks against the Duce’s policy in Libya.

Arslan was close to Ahmad al-Sharif al-Sanusi, head of the Sanusiyya tariqa, which was at the heart of the resistance movement in Libya, and his attacks against Italy were virulent. Yet criticizing Mussolini’s policies, Arslan adopts the tone of an advisor: “We can assure our old friend Mister Mussolini that all of this will serve him in nothing …”[638] At other times, he would chide: “…

but our friend Mussolini needs conquests, and the gods are thirsty.”[639] For his campaign against the Italians, Arslan would even receive a thankful note from Umar al-Mukhtar, the military leader of the Libyan resistance, whom he knew since 1911 when they had fought with the Ottoman troops in an attempt to defend Tripolitania. A few months before his capture and execution by the Italians, Mukhtar wrote to Arslan:

They are excusable, those who cannot believe all of what is said and written about the Italian atrocities, because it is actually difficult to believe that in the world there are men who behave in this unbelievable manner, but it is unfortunately only too real.[640]

From 1930 to 1933 at least twelve virulent criticisms of Italian policies appeared in La Nation Arabe, similar to the ones aimed against France and later Great Britain. They were in line with Arslan’s uncompromising anticolonial stance. During the year 1933, the articles in La Nation Arabe were critical of Italy, but began pointing toward specific policies which it could take to improve the situation of Arabs in its colonies. The Arab press reported that Mussolini wished to meet Arslan, but that the latter refused until the inhabitants of the Green Mountain in Libya had been repatriated. This condition was fulfilled, and in January 1934 La Nation Arabe printed the first positive article about Italy. This was followed by Arslan’s trip to Rome during which he met Mussolini twice, as well as the Marquis Theodoli, president of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. At the 1935 Muslim Congress of Europe, the Italian orientalist Laura Vagliera was the only non-Muslim allowed to attend and present a paper in Arabic on “What Europe thinks of Islam.” Arslan himself read a letter from a Libyan correspondent who wrote that great strides had been taken, although much remained to be done in Italian administered Libya.[641]

Arslan explains the process which brought him to negotiate with Italy in the following manner:

When we cried out in condemnation against the unbelievable acts which General Graziani had committed, Mussolini sought to have a

conversation with us and sent us an envoy to find out what should be done to repair these wrongs. We answered that before anything else, the Arabs should be reintegrated into their homes. He did it and saved them from a certain death … also upon our request, three to four hundred Arabs condemned to twenty to thirty years of prison term were amnestied. On our request also, the properties which are called “waqf “… were restituted to the Muslims …. Muslim education … was restored in all state schools …. We asked for the prohibition of all Christian religious propaganda among Muslims. … Mussolini himself told us that it was absolutely forbidden and that he would never tolerate such propaganda ….[642]

Although criticized for reaching a settlement with Italy, Arslan knew that he needed allies in Europe, and of the three colonial powers, France, Britain, and Italy, Mussolini was most sensitive to the good and bad press that appeared about Italy in the Muslim world, making him susceptible to negotiations. On the Syrian question, his attitude always seemed “correct and even well-meaning” to Arslan.[643] Mussolini’s Italy gave an independentist leader like Arslan a rare occasion to influence the official policy of a colonial power, and if Arslan’s grander political schemes of a general Italian-German alliance with the Arab world against the British and French did not materialize before the outbreak of the European war, he in the meantime caused a flurry of secret service reports and considerable worry to French authorities.

Not one to equate the Islamic world with the Arab world, Arslan’s Islamic network stretched within Europe. Although there seems little evidence that the nationals of European states who were Muslim engaged in widespread anticolonial campaigns, La Nation Arabe mentions several of both immigrant and European background. Much more numerous were the Muslim communities from Eastern Europe. They had been subjects of the Ottoman Empire, and during the first Balkan War of 1912 Arslan had coordinated the activities of the Red Crescent, an Egyptian benevolent society, to assist Muslim refugees in the Balkans. In the Ottoman parliament, Arslan had not only been an intermediary with Germany, but had also been on the committee responsible for managing the strained relations with Russia.[644] Finally, a more personal detail is that Arslan’s mother and his wife Salima were from the Caucasus. It may thus not be so surprising if Arslan, in his new role as pan-Islamic activist in Geneva, came to devote time to the Eastern European Islamic world.

La Nation Arabe carried regular articles, and even polemics, regarding Eastern European Islam. Between 1932 and 1936, eight articles about Islam in Bulgaria, Rumania, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Hungary appeared under the pen of Smail Dzemalovi-, including one well-known polemic between him and André Girard, law professor at the University of Paris, about the condition of Muslims in Bulgaria.[645] What is interesting is not only that such articles had an academic value, but that they brought to Europe controversies that raged in the Bulgarian, Turkish, and Arabic press, thus contesting the monopoly that European academics and Christian missionaries exercised on the representation of these regions.[646]

Although the information that we have about Arslan's trip to Eastern Europe is disparate and incomplete, in the vastly unexplored field of Eastern European Islam we can locate flashes of Arslan's passage in the region. In 1931 Arslan would make a quick visit to Yugoslavia, and a longer one in December 1933 and January 1934, "to spend Ramadan with my Yugoslavian friends." He would then continue to Belgrade, then Budapest, where he was a guest of the former Hungarian Minister of Justice Stefan Barscy and members of the Association of Gül Baba, a group dedicated to the construction of a mosque near the tomb of a fifteenth-century dervish saint in Budapest. Throughout the interwar period Arslan seems to have had regular contact with Hungarian Muslims and with Huszein Hilmi Durics, who came to be recognized as their Mufti in 1934–1936. In the 1930s he would continue writing letters and making occasional visits, encouraging Hungarian Muslims to continue their attempts to build a mosque at Gül Baba and assuring them that they enjoyed the support of the Muslim world, with which he appears to have been their primary link.[647]

The small Muslim community in Budapest consisted of no more than a few hundred Bosnian immigrant workers of humble origins. It had remained unknown in the Muslim world and was largely isolated, writes Popovic, until the early 1930s when Arslan was almost single handedly responsible for the publicity it began receiving in the Arab and Muslim press:

The situation changed suddenly in 1932, and from that date on we can find a series of notices concerning Hungarian Islam. It must be stressed, however, that on the ground nothing had changed, and that it was nothing other than a campaign begun by the Emir Shakib Arslan, who, while preparing the European Muslim Congress of Geneva (in 1933?) [sic], had sought to strengthen the position of this isolated Muslim community of Central Europe.[648]

In this way, Arslan was developing the links of Eastern European Muslims with the Arab East and the greater Muslim world. One of the central events in the development of this trans-regional Islamic consciousness would be the European Congress of Muslims, which Arslan presided in Geneva in September 1935.

The congress was strictly European, in that it brought together about 60 to 70 delegates, all of whom were residents of Europe. If we look at the Permanent Committee that was established after the congress, it consisted of Geneva's prominent Muslims, with Arslan and Jabiri from Syria, Ali al-Ghayati,Abd al-Baqi al-Umari, Zaki Ali, and Mahmud Salim al-Arafati from Egypt, and a former Iranian prime minister Tabatabai. The council of delegates, on the contrary, included the leaders of Muslim communities from all of Europe, with Iqbal Ali Shah from England, Omar Stewart Rankin from Scotland, Messali Hadj from France, H. v. M. Aly Mohri-Eddine from Switzerland, Mohammad-Aly van Beetem from Holland, Ghassam Zade from Austria, Bernard Barbiellini Amidei from Italy, Huszein Hilmi Durics from Hungary, Jakub Szynkiewicz from Poland, and Dervis Korkut from Yugoslavia. These delegates included an approximately even number of European nationals and of immigrants from Muslim countries. The language of this multinational grouping was officially Arabic, the language of Islam, although delegates also expressed themselves in Turkish, English, German, and French, the latter being most commonly used.[649]

A European Muslim Congress being a unique occurrence, it is not surprising if most speeches concerned local issues. Popular topics included the construction of mosques, the education of children, the rights of Muslims in European countries, and the way in which Muslim communities, most of them religious minorities within their respective states, were treated by their

governments. Yet these local issues were Islamic issues, and as such acquired universal relevance. The congress thus asked for contributions from the whole Muslim world to help build a mosque in Warsaw, while individual members expressed the hope of eventually building mosques in Budapest, Amsterdam, and Geneva. Telegrams and press releases in the name of the congress acknowledged the Yugoslav and Polish governments for the favorable treatment of their Muslim populations. The Palestinian question and the holy city of Jerusalem were similarly considered not as political but as religious issues concerning all Muslims, and the congress sent telegrams to all concerned parties. For Western Europe and its nascent Islamic community, the gathering was an early and still limited show of solidarity. For Eastern Europe, the congress was part of ongoing efforts by Arslan, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, and others, to maintain and revive its links with the wider Muslim world in the aftermath of the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Several prominent figures from Eastern Europe were in attendance at the congress. One of the most respected was Jakub Szynkewicz, a Pole of Tatar origin, who had earned a doctoral degree with a dissertation on “Rabghuzi’s Syntax” in Berlin and was in close relationship with Georg Kampffmeyer, chairman of the German Society for Islamic Studies, which Szynkewicz had helped found. He was highly regarded by members of German academia, and the society’s journal Die Welt des Islams described the qualities most appreciated by his German hosts:

Without doubt, Dr. Jakub Szynkiewicz is one of the most capable Muslims in Europe, highly gifted in organization, of great capabilities, a man, who with his powerful and pure Islamic strength of character combines reason and an extraordinary spiritual culture.[650]

In 1925 Szynkewicz was elected by the Pan-Polish Muslim Congress Mufti of Poland, a position which he used to create links between Poland’s Muslim community and the rest of the Islamic world.[651] He was, for example, active in the society of Muslim youths in Cairo, and later succeeded in obtaining a grant of land from the Polish government to construct a mosque in Warsaw. Szynkewicz was a member of the Oriental Club in Berlin when Arslan was its president, and later visited Arslan in the winter of 1934-1935.

[652] Having attended the Muslim Congress in Cairo in 1926, he headed a Polish delegation to the European Muslim Congress.

The largest delegation at the congress was the 7-member Yugoslav delegation, with its members giving 5 of the 19 speeches. Dervim Korkut, museum curator and editor of a journal in Belgrade, presented the history of Yugoslav Muslims, Vejsil Alisan, president of the Council of Ulama of Uskub, spoke of religious educational organization in Southern Yugoslavia, Dzemaludin #aumevi-, former president of the Council of Ulama and a statistician, gave details, and Abdul Hamid Huramovi-, president of the Muslim Association and member of the Oriental Institute of Warsaw, did not speak about Yugoslavia but about Islam in Poland. The Yugoslav delegation was thus not only large but also vocal. Its head was the widely acknowledged leader of the Balkan Muslim world, Salim Mufti-, Mufti of Sarajevo since 1914, president of the Council of Ulama and head of the Bosnian delegation to the Jerusalem congress four years earlier. He was the one to make the first address after Arslan’s introduction and a minute of silence in remembrance of Rashid Rida. In an obituary Arslan would describe him as “one of the most eminent notables not only of the Balkans, but of the whole Islamic world.”[653]

Outstanding questions about the congress remain. One is tempted to ask why it was a European Muslim congress, while all previous congresses were universal in that they were open to all Muslims irrespective of geographic origin. Whatever its reason, this appellation may highlight that Europe was a region possessing its own internal logic. Arslan was conversant in its language, but also had deep and unquestionable roots in Arab culture and in the Islamic revivalist movement. To those in Europe he represented the link to that wider Islamic world in the Arab East. To those in the Arab East, his role was to provide a link in the other direction.

** The independent Arab states

While most of the Arab world lay under the dominion of foreign mandatory powers, the kingdoms of the Arab East provided an arena where an Arab and Islamic culture was relatively free to develop. Had Arslan

accepted Ibn Saud’s offer to bring his family to the Saudi capital and become a high official in his administration,[654] or had he been present and active in local politics in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, or elsewhere, his perspective on specific social, economic, or cultural policies might have developed. As an international activist based in Geneva, his strategy was to transcend dynastic divisions and apply the ideal of an Arab and Islamic community to the relations between Faisal’s kingdom in Iraq, Ibn Saud’s kingdom in the Hijaz and Nejd, and Imam Yahya’s kingdom in the Yemen. Other regions of the Arab, it was believed, would join this community as their independence progressed.

Although Arslan had supported the Ottoman Empire in the face of Sharif Husayn of Mecca until 1918, he supported Husayn’s son, Faisal, in his efforts to unite Iraq and Syria under his throne. Before becoming king of Iraq, Faisal had, for a few short years, enjoyed the position of king of Syria before the French mandate was imposed in 1920. These few years, however, remained in the imagination of nationalists and Istiqlalists such as Adil Arslan, Shakib’s brother, and Ihsan al-Jabiri, his associate in Geneva, as a golden time when Syria had been ruled by an Arab monarch with its nationalist intelligentsia charting the future. Although he became king of Iraq, the memory of Faisal remained in the mind of many Syrian nationalists, and the prime obstacle to his claim for the throne of Syria seemed to be the French mandate.

Much more immediately achievable were Arslan’s plans to build a united Arab state. These were outlined in a series of articles, and lobbied for in the course of several trips and negotiations that sought to create “an alliance of the three independent Arab states” as a first step to Arab unity.[655] The central point of contention was the personal rivalry between Ibn Saud, King of the Hijaz and Nejd, and Faisal of Iraq, whose father the Sharif Husayn of Mecca, had been expelled from the Hijaz by Ibn Saud. In 1929, Arslan made a highly publicized pilgrimage to Mecca, where he spent the summer as the personal guest of Ibn Saud in the latter’s summer residence in Taef. From there he worked on improving relations between Ibn Saud and his neighbors to the North and South. Although little is known about the specific discussions of that summer, the most pressing need seems to have been the creation of trust between the two foes. Arslan takes credit for conceiving the project with King Faisal at Antibes in Southern France in early 1930,[656] which resulted in the signing of a treaty of friendship on February 22, 1930.

More than a loose treaty, however, Arslan had hoped for a true alliance, military and otherwise, between the two Arab states. On the morning of Faisal's death, September 7, 1933, Arslan had a one-and-one-half hour meeting with the Iraqi monarch, most of which was spent discussing plans for strengthening the pan-Arab alliance with Ibn Saud. According to Arslan, Faisal seems to have been so enthused by the idea that he is said to have told him: "I may be the personal adversary of Ibn Saud, but for the good of the Arabs I must be his brother. Actually, without Ibn Saud the center of the Arabic peninsula would have fallen in anarchy. Had Ibn Saud not been there, we would have had to create him." Two years after Faisal's death, the project of a more thorough alliance was realized between the successor to the throne of Iraq, Ghazi, and Ibn Saud, later to be joined by Imam Yahya of Yemen. Arslan calculated that the alliance of these 3 nations created a bloc of 18 million subjects, which would rise to 40 million once Syria-Palestine and Egypt participated.[657]

If the ambitions of Ibn Saud had been successfully accommodated with those of Faisal and his successor, the relations between Ibn Saud's and his Southern neighbor, Imam Yahya of the much smaller state of the Yemen, only became more belligerent. Already in 1929, during his pilgrimage to Mecca, Arslan had discussed the contentious issue of the province of Asir, on which both monarchs laid claims. The matter came to a confrontation in 1934, when armies of about fifty thousand men from each side clashed. The war between two of a handful of independent Arab or Islamic monarchs was understandably a grave threat to pan-Arab and pan-Islamic solidarity.

Shortly after the beginning of the conflict, the permanent bureau of the Islamic Congress in Jerusalem under the leadership of Hajj Amin al-Husayni named a four-man delegation to arbitrate between both sovereigns. The committee consisted of Amin al-Husayni himself, Muhammad Ali, a former minister in the Egyptian government, Hashim al-Atasi, the acknowledged leader of Syria's independence movement, and Shakib Arslan. The arbiters were eventually successful in tempering Ibn Saud's military ardor, but for Arslan, even in the midst of the fiercest fighting, Arabs could be seen engaging in nothing other than a family feud, "for the Arab nation is the Arab Nation, always forming a single bloc, sharing the same feelings and

traditions. This unity of customs and of feelings surpasses all other considerations for the Arabs.”[658] It is in the light of such words and actions that Arslan’s postwar reputation as a hero of Arab nationalism can be understood.

In 1929, most probably in a rhetorical flourish, Ibn Saud nominated Arslan as his “ambassador in Europe.”[659] Arslan acted, however, less like an ambassador than like a senior counselor. As previously mentioned, his personal loyalty was to the Arab and Islamic cause, and he entertained brotherly relations with each monarch as long as they served that cause. Yet to his last days, he not only arbitrated between the monarchs of the Arab Peninsula, but advised these formerly Bedouin tribal leaders, ignorant as they were of modern European politics and of how to maneuver in the international arena. In Arslan’s last days, during the Second World War, he sent information bulletins with detailed information about the international situation and the progress of the war to Ibn Saud and in Imam Yahya.[660] With his Saudi passport, and enjoying a high statute with Ibn Saud, at least until the mid-1930s, Arslan could have gone to live with his family in the Hijaz as the monarch’s advisor and honorary guest. Yet something must have kept him in Switzerland where he was under the eye of the secret service of half a dozen nations, homesick, and perpetually in debt. It may have been the appreciation that distance allowed the Arab “prince of eloquence” to look at the branches of the Arab and Islamic world from aloof, granting him a unique role at the forefront of what he saw as the road to its reunification.

** The Maghreb

Most often understood as a pan-Arab leader coming from the Eastern centers of the Arab world, Arslan’s appearances in the history of the Maghreb are limited to a few scattered paragraphs describing the unique attraction that he exerted upon nationalist movements of the region. The most complete account of his influence upon the Maghreb remains Cleveland’s general chapter on his mentorship of the young North African nationalists. Yet specific studies, such as Merad’s analysis of the Algerian Islamic reformist journal al-Mihab, or Halstead’s interviews with Moroccan nationalists in the late 1950s and early 1960s, give an important insight into Arslan’s role, and into how he was perceived by the Moroccan nationalist

elite. The analysis of La Nation Arabe, combined with a knowledge of Arslan’s networks in the Muslim, Arab, and European world, reveal a surprising role for Arslan. Throughout the interwar era, he shaped the doctrines and strategies of nationalist students in Paris, of the ulama from each region, and of Islamic revivalist thinkers in the Maghreb.[661]

Morocco’s nascent nationalist movement consisted of highly educated young men, often from prestigious families, who were marginalized by the overwhelming influence of the French protectorate and the general apathy of the Moroccan public. The catalyst that allowed them to ignite Moroccan nationalism was the promulgation of the Berber Dahir on May 16, 1931.[662] The Berber Dahir is significant in that Berbers, who had been Islamized in the early days of Islam, and were thus placed under the jurisdiction of Islamic law and liable to Islamic courts, were now placed under the jurisdiction of French courts and Berber tribunals that applied a revived traditional Berber law antecedent to Islam. To Muslims throughout the world, it seemed that France was seeking to de-Islamize the Berbers as a first step to their Christianization. These fears were fanned by the increased presence of French missionaries in rural areas of Morocco, and by the prohibition for Moroccans from the “Arab regions” of going to the “Berber regions” without a special permit, which prevented Muslim clerics in the cities from maintaining contact with the Berbers. While some saw in this a policy of de-Islamization, others saw it as another application of the colonial policy of “divide and rule.”

The Berber Dahir had three consequences. The first is the ya latif (“O God!”) incantations, usually recited in mosques at times of great calamity. Previously reserved for such disasters as plagues of locusts, the ya latif was for the first time harnessed by the nationalists for political action. Beginning in the great mosque of Rabat on a Friday after the communal prayer, the ya latif incantations spread throughout Morocco, a powerful means for the nationalist elite to impart to the masses its sense of crisis at the breaking of the union uniting Berbers and Arabs under the banner of Islam. Second, as a result of the widespread ya latif incantations and the protests that accompanied them, the young Moroccan Sultan agreed to receive a delegation to discuss the grievances of the population. The future Muhammad V of Morocco was young, educated

completely under the protectorate, and did not yet have the will or the power to oppose the French administration. This first meeting with the nationalists, however, was a first step to what years later become an alliance crucial to both the independence movement and the Moroccan monarchy.

Yet the slow rise in the political consciousness of the Moroccan masses and of the Sultan would only bear fruit in later years. The immediate pressure exerted on the French came from the third measure, the international campaign. A storm of protest from the Arab and Islamic world caused committees in defense of Moroccan Muslims to spring up from Java to Berlin, an economic boycott to be enacted against French goods in India, and a petition by the ulama of al-Azhar asking the Egyptian King Fuad to personally intervene before the French government.[663] International organisms found themselves submerged by telegrams of protests and, in the words of Julien, Shakib Arslan “integrated Muslim Morocco into Islamic ritual by making all of the faithful participate in the trials of their Maghrebi brothers.”[664]

Arslan denounced the Dahir in a dozen articles in La Nation Arabe and wrote in the Arabic press, mostly in the Egyptian journal al-Fath. In successive analyses of French policy in Morocco, Arslan compared the Ottoman Empire’s religious policy, which allowed each religious minority to be ruled by its own laws, with the attempt by republican France to separate the Berbers from the Arabs under the pretext that they had different ethnic customs.[665] Arslan was not only active in publicizing the issue in the press, but was central in drawing the resolution sent by the Islamic Congress held in Jerusalem in 1931 to the League of Nations. Arslan provided the link between the congress members, and namely its president Hajj Amin al-Husayni, and Makki Nasiri, the young Moroccan nationalist who drew up the resolution with Arslan and Jabiri in Geneva. Approved by the Congress, the resolution was signed by its president and forwarded to the League of Nations.[666] In the end the protest about the Berber Dahir attained much more dramatic proportions outside of Morocco than inside, where French authorities maintained a relative calm. The prime reason, writes Le Tourneau, was Arslan:

This incomparable conductor sparked throughout the entire Muslim world a concert of protests against French politics in Morocco, a frenzy that

was in marked contrast with the calm that was reigning inside of the country. Because of Shakib Arslan, Morocco was at the forefront of Islamic events. [667]

The results had both immediate and more long-term repercussions. In immediate terms, the international protests contributed to placing the Islamic world and the anticlerical European left squarely against the Berber Dahir, leading to its replacement in 1934.[668] Indirectly, however, the Berber Dahir awakened a new consciousness among Moroccan and North African nationalists. A few years later, on October 4, 1937, Arslan was second vice-president of the Bludan Congress against Zionist immigration to Palestine, when throughout Morocco's cities protests were organized to mark Morocco's solidarity with the Palestinian cause.[669] Before 1930, such a mass demonstration of Arab and Islamic unity between inhabitants of the Northwest tip of Africa and those around Damascus and Jerusalem would have been almost unimaginable. No one more than Arslan could claim credit for sowing the seeds of a transnational consciousness, manifested as it was in the protest against the Berber Dahir.

Arslan's active involvement in Moroccan politics can be dated to 1930. At that time, the pages of La Nation Arabe announced that Arslan would make an academic visit to the Iberian peninsula to prepare a work on the history of Muslim Spain.[670] In addition to its scholarly purposes, however, the trip constituted an occasion to travel to Morocco and meet some of its most prominent young nationalists, future leaders of the independence period and the postcolonial era. Arslan first stopped in Paris, where he was met at the train station by Allal al-Fasi and Balafrej, described by Halstead as the two highest ranking members of the Moroccan nationalist movement.[671] Although both were students in Paris at this time, Fasi came from a prominent family of Fez and had received a traditional education at the Qarawiyin University, while Ahmad Balafrej was from Rabat and had received a completely Western education at French elite schools. Both young students, who were to lead Morocco to independence in 1956, are known to have visited Arslan in Geneva. Yet Balafrej, the future founder of the Moroccan Istiqlal Party, stands out as one of the dearest "spiritual sons" of the Amir. Halstead remarks that despite having been so thoroughly gallicized in French schools, Balafrej is said to have been "more profoundly affected politically by Arslan than by his formal education."[672] Arslan did not limit

his relationships to politics or even to the intellectual life of his young followers. In response to an interrogation from the Swiss police, and asked why he sent Balafrej 500 Swiss Francs whenever he could afford it, Arslan answered that “I came to his aid because I consider him a little like my son.”[673] Of Arslan’s “spiritual sons,” many came from the Maghreb.

Arslan could only stay for a few days in Paris, and soon left for Madrid and Southern Spain. After completing their examinations, Fasi and Balafrej joined him there, and all three of them visited the convent at Escorial to examine Arabic documents relating to the period of Islamic rule in Spain.[674] From there Arslan proceeded to Tangier, where he was quickly notified of a decree expelling him from the French zone, and pursued his journey to Tetouan, a neighboring city under Spanish control. In Tetouan he spent four days at the house of Abd al-Salam Bennuna, an acknowledged leader, former Minister of the Makhzen, and founder and director of an indigenous electrical company and free school.[675] Arslan had been in contact with Bennuna long before meeting him, for both must have been members of the same Islamic reformist networks in the Arab world. After 1931 and before his death in 193 5, Bennuna went to see Arslan once, stopping in Geneva on his return from Berlin.[676] During his stay in Tetouan, receptions welcomed Arslan as a prominent literary figure from the Arab East whose reputation and writings had long preceded his arrival. His presence not only flattered the Moroccans, but helped bridge the gaps separating the heterogeneous independence movements in Tetouan, Rabat, Fez, and throughout Morocco.

Both in Geneva and when he went to Paris, Arslan entertained numerous North African visitors and students, keeping the French secret service busy. Arslan even took one of the Moroccan nationalist leaders, Mohamed al-Ouezzani, as his private secretary in Geneva from September 1932 until the summer of 1933.[677] In 1936, the Spanish civil war between General Franco’s insurgents and the Republican loyalists provided a splendid opportunity to play off one faction against another. Arslan traveled to Madrid where he was joined by Ouezzani and Umar Abd al-Jalil to offer help against Franco in return for the independence of Northern Morocco.[678]

While the campaign against the Berber Dahir found expression in the pages of La Nation Arabe, al-Fath of Cairo and other journals, by the

1930s Arslan was highly experienced in political activism on the European scene, had extensive networks in Europe, the Arab world, and the Islamic world, and was probably the most prolific Arab writer of his age, with a regular stream of articles appearing in the Arab press. All of this brought undeniable benefit to young Moroccans seeking an Arab-Islamic identity and an anticolonial strategy. When Ouezzani engaged in a conflict with Fassi and Balafrej, Arslan admonished his “spiritual sons” to exhibit moderation and unity, and when circumstances required it, Arslan became a father figure, financially assisting his protégés, despite his own precarious financial position.

In addition to the Islamic reformists, Arslan seems to have enjoyed the respect of some in the younger and largely secular generation. With the French socialists in power and the Franco-Syrian Treaty placing Syria on the road to independence in 1937, Arslan traveled to a hero’s welcome in Paris. A special banquet was given in his honor by the Moroccan nationalist movement, and on this occasion the secular leader of Tunisia’s independence movement, the future President of Tunisia Habib Bourguiba, devoted an entire issue of his nationalist journal L Action tunisienne to Arslan.[679]

However, the most spectacular and oft-cited example of Arslan’s influence over the young nationalists is the “conversion” of Messali al-Hajj during his stay in Geneva. The young and radical leader of Algerian workers in France was the founder of the Étoile Nord-Africaine, which was a close and faithful ally of the French Communist party. The French court having condemned him to yet another term in prison, Messali al-Hajj found refuge before Arslan in Geneva, where he stayed for half a year in 1936. It is difficult to know what privately occurred during those few months, but when Messali al-Hajj reappeared in Paris, he had traded his militant Communist stance advocating Algerian independence for an equally adamant Arab nationalist and Islamic approach to the problem. In 1933, Messali’s party the Étoile Nord-Africaine published in its French language journal El Ouma a new political program declaring its “fraternity in the unity of Islam,” but without abandoning its adamant nationalist and proletarian stand.9 [680] Messali’s Islamic allegiance had superseded his Communist allegiance, resulting in mutual accusations and a break with the Communist party.[681] Joining himself to the Algerian ulama, to Tunisia’s New Destour Party, and to the

Action Marocaine party of the Moroccan reformers, writes Julien, Messali “rallied to the solid, prudent and skillful program defended by the leaders of the Maghreb parties with spiritual allegiance to Shakib Arslan. The revolutionary had given way to the Muslim.”[682]

Throughout the Maghreb, Arslan is known to have been in contact with leading Islamic reformers. In Libya Arslan entertained an intimate friendship with Sidi Ahmad al-Sharif al-Sanusi, leader of the Sanusiyya tariqa and of the resistance against Italian colonization: “For 20 years, our correspondence did not cease for more than two months at most, not to mention the time that we lived together in Mersin [Southern Turkey].” Arslan was, however, more than a counselor to independence movements, for in studying the contents of the Algerian reformist journal al-Mihab, Ali Merad engages in an unprecedented appraisal of Arslan’s influence within the circle of Ibn Badis’ Algerian Islamic reformist movement:

The Emir Shakib Arslan exercised such intellectual seduction and moral and political influence on the [editorial] team of Mihab that it is impossible to analyze the cultural doctrine of the Algerian reformists without taking into account the thought of the Emir. Since he settled down in Switzerland (Geneva-Lausanne), in the aftermath of the First World War, and especially since he began to publish La Nation Arabe, Shakib Arslan became not only a master, but a true oracle to the Algerian elite of Arab culture. Mentor for some, director of conscience for others, counselor whose advice was received with humble gratitude, orator whose language made sensitive souls fall into ecstasy, writer whose fluid and pure prose was a delectation for all lovers of the beauty of the classical tongue, Shakib Arslan was all of this at the same time, and even more. [683]

Perhaps more so than most other figures of his time, Shakib Arslan’s Arab, Ottoman, and European culture allowed him to exercise a varied and multifaceted influence upon those who knew him.

La Nations Arabe was not only read in Paris, but despite its proscription in all French mandates and colonies, it continued to be smuggled

into Morocco, where it was known to a relatively wide audience of nationalists.[684] Yet with regard to the Maghreb, it is difficult to characterize Arslan as a pan-Arab, for he was ideologically much less so than many others.[685] He advocated an Eastern Arab nation that included Egypt, and encouraged the countries of the Maghreb to cooperate and establish as many links as possible, both among themselves and with the rest of the Arab and Islamic world. Yet for tactical reasons, and partly because he feared that in his time it might lead to a new form of intra-Arab colonialism, Arslan did not favor an Arab nation that would extend from the Gulf to Morocco. For such a moderate stance, Arslan was the subject of virulent attacks by such pan-Arabs as Sulayman Baruni.[686] Although outside of the concern of this paper, it may be said that Arslan's identity lay more in a cultural form of Arabism than with pan-Arabism, and most of all in the Islamic revivalist movement. To young students from the Maghreb, he offered a modern and Islamic doctrine capable of adapting their complex relationship with modern West, which they both absorbed and rejected, and their awakening Arab and Islamic identity.

** The Manarists

Although this chapter has thus far adopted a regional division of Arslan's network, this section will refer not to a region but to a school of thought. While the Islamic reformer Rashid Rida certainly had a role in Syrian nationalism, his main role was neither in Syria nor in Egypt but within the world of al-Mānar and of the ideas that it propagated in the Islamic world. Similarly, while Muhammad Abduh, Muhammad Ali Taher, and Ahmad Shawqi were all Egyptians, they addressed themselves to the whole Islamic world and to all Arabic readers. Most restless of all was Afghani, and it is to him that Arslan is most often compared.

The process which would bring Arslan out of Lebanese mountain society began when he was sixteen and met Muhammad Abduh, who in 1886 was lecturing in Beirut. Rashid Rida met Arslan in Abduh's classes and, in the words of Arslan, "the links of friendship that have united us for forty years were caused by our having the same leader."[687] A few years later, in 1890, Arslan was introduced to Abduh's circle in Cairo, to Sad Zaghlul, Ali Yusuf, and the literary and political elite of Egyptian society. For Arslan, who was

known as a close associate of Rida and a frequent contributor to al-Mānar, it is more than probable that after Abduh's death, the network of al-Mānar continued to provide Arslan with links throughout the Islamic world.

On his way back from a trip to Paris in 1889, Arslan stopped in Istanbul and met Afghani.[688] Upon Afghani and Abduh's teachings, and in association with Rida, he was to strike the ideological roots that anchored his fluid and geographically diffuse network. Contemporary observers agree that it is Arslan's perpetual adherence to a cause that provided him with the unflinching continuity that ran through his painfully long exile, his strategic alliances with European powers that often bordered on intrigue, and his network that included rulers of the Ottoman Empire and Arab nationalists, antagonistic Arab kings, and links with Communist, Fascist and capitalist states.[689]

Except at one time in their life, during Rida's days in the Ottoman Decentralization Committee which competed with the Ottoman state, evidence shows Rida and Arslan in frequent consultation regarding both political philosophy and strategy. Before leaving his country to engage on his expatriate existence in Egypt, next to Abduh and as editor of the journal al-Mānar, Arslan was one of two people that Rida turned to for advice.[690] Yet once both were exiled, Arslan was more often than not barred from spending time in Egypt and their chances to meet were rare. They occasionally did, such as during the meeting of the Syrian-Palestinian delegation in Geneva in 1921, and the short time Arslan was able to spend in Rida's house during his one-day special permission to land in Egypt in 1929, but such chances were fleeting and often took place under conditions of tight security surrounding Arslan.[691] After Rida's death in 1935, Arslan promised a commemorative work based on their close collaboration, most of it by correspondence:

Having had the same master, having been bonded together for 40 years, having had a continuous correspondence without any secrets left untold, we have promised, in our memorial writings on our very dear and illustrious friend, a special work on him, which will be entitled The Sayyid Rashid Rida or a Fraternity of Forty Years. The Arab press has

already noted this promise, which we will strive to carry out as faithfully as we have carried out our promise concerning our other friend Ahmad Shawqi, the greatest contemporary Arab poet.[692]

Arslan’s commemorative work for Ahmad Shawqi was written in 1932 and entitled Shawqi, or a Friendship of Forty Years. Shawqi and Arslan first met as young poets in the student district of Paris in 1889. Arslan had already engaged in a political career that would lead him to abandon literature, and Shawqi was at the beginning of a literary career that would make him one of the most famed Arab poets of the century.[693] Arslan’s relationship with Shawqi was literary, and it highlights Arslan not as a politically involved activist, but as amir al-bayan, a literary phenomenon of his age, who was much read and appreciated:

Shawqi is a living dead whose body alone is absent from us but whose soul and spirit, in communion with millions upon millions of souls, will remain eternally as long as there will remain on this planet something called “the Arab language.”[694]

Arslan claims to have chosen the title of Shawqi’s first diwan of poetry, “We have parted physically but remain united in mind and heart,” which makes for an accurate description of Arslan’s exiled existence and his relationship with his closest friends.[695]

** Conclusion

In eschewing a geographical division of Arslan’s network when describing the “Manarists” there lies the possibility for an alternative approach. Arslan’s network can be seen as operating on three ideological planes, linking the intellectual currents of Arabism, Islamism, and anticolonialism. The anticolonial network brought together those colonized who were unhappy with their fate, anticolonial activists in colonial countries, and non-colonial countries. Within its framework can be placed all independentist movements, Arslan’s links with the anticolonial left in colonial countries, and the state institution in non-colonial or semi-colonial countries.

This included Mussolini in Italy, which had few colonies in the Arab and Muslim world, and Germany, which had none. Although French socialists might have cringed at the thought of being lumped with the Fascist regimes, from the perspective of Arslan, they all served the anticolonial cause.

The second network can be referred to as that of Arabism. It regrouped all Arabic speakers, yet did not call for their political union. Arslan's foreseeable goal was to unite the three independent states of Ibn Saud in the Hijaz and Nejd, Imam Yahya in the Yemen, and King Faisal in Iraq. This initial union was later to be joined by the states in geographic Syria and by Egypt, creating a larger Eastern Arab state. There is no evidence to show that union with the Maghreb was thought to be feasible or even desirable. Often using the term "the Arab nation," namely as the title of his French language journal, Arslan has frequently been labeled an Arab nationalist. Yet Arslan's Arab nation drew from Arslan's multifaceted and complex existence, blending into his anticolonial network for strategic reasons, and striking its deepest roots in the Islamic network.

The network of Islamic revivalism clearly concerned all Muslims, but was centered upon the Islamic revivalist movements of each region. Arslan's response was not specifically directed toward the redefinition of Islam or the adaptation of Islamic legal codes to contemporary conditions. This was left to those with a more traditional Islamic education. Arslan, the product of a French, American, and Ottoman civil education, had a different role to play. Muslim students and professionals in Europe, and the newly educated elites inside the Muslim world, were yearning for a worldview that did not see the Islamic religion as flowing counter to the modern world. Europe was important in that for all Muslim students or workers who went there, it provided a stage where the Islamic worldview and Western modernity came in contact. Arslan's network helped Islamic reformists who had little knowledge of Europe to deal with the complexities of European politics, while reassuring nationalist leaders such as Balafrej or Messali al-Hajj that Islam could be a contemporary force in both the personal and public sphere.

It thus contributed to creating links to outside worlds, outside of geographic regions but also outside of the cognitive categories of East and West, Islam

and Christianity, and tradition and modernity. It opened its members unto the new opportunities of a wider, interrelated, and contemporary world.

Arslan’s network served multiple purposes with regards to the Islamic and non-Islamic world, the Arab and non-Arab world, and the struggle against colonialism. It was there, and it was used to link people belonging to different networks together. It impressed upon many a new form of Arab and Islamic consciousness, it had an impact on the history of the region, and it proclaimed the principles of the Islamic revival and the political existence of Arabs. Yet we must consider the possibility that Arslan’s network did not fulfill a solely instrumentalist function. The address made by Salim Mufti- at the European Muslim Congress points in a different direction. Mufti- states that Bosnian Muslims “remain in a perfect communion of thought and feeling with all of their coreligionists in the Orient as well as the Occident, and in good fortune as well as in plight.”[696] This points to the possibility that the creation of a global umma was in itself a goal of Shakib Arslan, independently from any good that may be derived from it. The construction of Shakib Arslan’s network, to the extent that it was principally an Islamic network, was not only justified by its impact upon the Islamic world, but by its very existence.

[582] William L. Cleveland, Islam Against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism (Austin, TX: University of Texas, 1985), xxi.

[583] These include Juliette Bessis, “Chékib Arslan et les mouvements nationalistes au Maghreb,” Revue historique 526 (1978): 467–489; Cleveland, Islam Against the West, passim ; Axel Havemann, “Between Ottoman Loyalty and Arab ‘Independence’: Muhammad Kurd 2Ali, Æiræi Zaydan, and Makib Arslan,” Quaderni di Studi Arabi 5–6 (1987–1988): 347–356; Martin Kramer, Arab Awakening and Islamic Revival: The Politics of Ideas in the Middle East (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1996); and Marie-Renée Mouton, “Le congrès syrio-palestinien de Genève (1921),” Relations internationales 19 (Fall 1979): 313–328.

[584] For the index of proper names and journal titles in La Nation Arabe, see Raja Adal, La Nation Arabe: Contents and Index (Tokyo: Islamic Area Studies, 2002).

[585] From Sharabasi's interview with Salima Arslan in 1954. Ahmad Marabasi, Amir al-bayan Makib Arslan (Cairo: Dar al-kitab al-2arabi, 1963), 125–126.

[586] Reprint, La Nation Arabe (England: Archive Editions, 1988).

[587] Chekib Arslan, "A propos de l1Éthiopie: La situation des Musulmans de ce pays. Document écrasant," La Nation Arabe 6/12–13 (September–November 1936): 691–692.

[588] Hasan Kayali, Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908–1918 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 116–143, 211.

[589] Chekib Arslan, "Sur le Bolchevisme: L1Éternelle légende de l1influence bolcheviste sur le réveil national du monde musulman," La Nation Arabe 3/10–12 (October–December 1932): 29–30. Translation mine.

[590] Chekib Arslan, "La mort du Patriarche maronite," La Nation Arabe 2/10–11 (November–December): 53–54.

[591] Chekib Arslan, "La mort de Kémal Ataturk," La Nation Arabe 8/20–21 (September–December 1938): 1081. Translation mine.

[592] Yamauchi Masayuki, Nattoku shinakatta otoko: Enveru Pasha, Chu To kara Chuo Ajia he [Enver Pasha, the Unsatisfied Man: from the Middle East to Central Asia] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 69, 284–288.

[593] Ibid., 69, 292.

[594] Letter from Shakib Arslan to Enver Pava, March 11, 1921, cited in Yamauchi, Nattoku shinakatta otoko 326.

[595] Kayali, Arabs and Young Turks, 3.

[596] Mouton, “Le congrès syro-palestinien de Genève (1921),” 321, 322.

[597] Philip S. Khoury, Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920–1945 (London: I. B. Tauris, 1987), 231.

[598] Chekib Arslan, “La « Nation Arabe » privée pour le moment de la collaboration de notre cher collègue M. Djabri,” La Nation Arabe 8/16–17 (January–April 1938): 910.

[599] Mouton, “Le congrès syrio-palestinien de Genève (1921),” 315 n. 7.

[600] Ihsan el-Djabri, “La Syrie du 8 mars au 26 juillet 1920,” La Nation Arabe 1 [2] (April 1930): 82 n. 1. It was not Riyad al-Sulh himself, as writes Mouton, but his father Riza who was minister of the Interior in Faisal’s cabinet.

[601] Cleveland, Islam Against the West, 49.

[602] Khoury, Syria and the French Mandate, 222.

[603] Ibid., 222, 227.

[604] Chekib Arslan, “L’Armée Rouge: instrument de la Révolution Mondiale. Le monde civilisé en danger,” La Nation Arabe 5/4 (March–April 1935): 281.

[605] David Ben Gurion, My Talks with Arab Leaders, ed. Misha Louvish, trans. Aryeh Rubinstein and Misha Louvish (New York: The Third Press, 1973 [1967]), 28, 33. The meeting is described by al-Jabiri in Ihsan el-Djabri, La Nation Arabe (November–December, 1934): 144–146; and by Ben Gurion in his My Talks with Arab Leaders, 35–40.

[606] Kramer, Arab Awakening and Islamic Revival, 109.

[607] Khoury, Syria and the French Mandate, 227–240.

[608] Ibid., 240.

[609] Arslan writes that the 1925–1926 treaty draft differed almost in nothing other than details from the Franco-Syrian treaty signed in October 1936. Chekib Arslan, “Le traité franco-syrien,” La Nation Arabe 6/12–13 (September–November 1936): 642.

[610] Ibid., 642–643.

[611] Chekib Arslan, “Il y a, paraît-il, un comité franco-musulman.: Toujours l1Afrique du Nord,” La Nation Arabe 5/2 (November–December 1934): 133–134.

[612] In “Factionalism among Syrian nationalists during the French mandate,” Khoury depends on an unpublished manuscript by Edmond

Rabbath, a student in Paris at the time of the Arslan-de Jouvenel meeting. This document describes the November 1925 meeting, during which Arslan’s moderation successfully impressed the French High Commissioner de Jouvenel, who asked for more time to work out an accord. Although Khoury does not mention the second meeting in 1926, La Nation Arabe sheds light on its three working sessions, and on Arslan’s conclusion as to why the talks failed. Chekib Arslan, “Le traité franco-syrien,” 641–648; and by the same author, “Le départ de M. Ponsot,” La Nation Arabe 4/7–9 (July–September 1933): 37–38. Arslan’s version of events is partly confirmed by the French socialist Robert-Jean Longuet’s article in Clarté of March 1938, reproduced in Robert-Jean Longuet, “A propos de la Syrie,” La Nation Arabe 8/16–17 (January– pril 1938): 891–897; by E. Lévi-Provençal, “L1Émir Shakib Arslan,” Cahiers de l1Orient contemporain 9–10 (1st and 2nd trimesters, 1947), 5–19; and by Meir Zamir in his The Formation of Modern Lebanon (Ithaca, IL: Cornell University Press, 1985), 198.

[613] Bureau politique, Etat-major, theatre d1operations de l1Afrique du Nord, Contribution à l1étude de l1activité politique de l1émir Chekib Arslan, 29H35 (Aix-en-Provence, 1940), 28–29. Despite his conciliatory tone regarding the treaty, Arslan seems to have had serious reservations, both about drawing the frontiers of Greater Lebanon without a plebiscite and about abandoning Iskanderun to Turkey. See Chekib Arslan, “Le traité franco-syrien,” 645; and by the same author, “L1ennemi de la France que je suis?” La Nation Arabe 8/16–17 (January–April, 1938): 801–802.

[614] Cleveland, Islam Against the West, 86.

[615] Ibid., 69.

[616] “Arslan, Shakib,” in Reeva S. Simon, Philip Mattar, and Richard W. Bulliet, eds, Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East (New York: Macmillan, 1996), 37–39. The same definition appears in David Commins, Historical Dictionary of Syria (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1996), 37–39.

[617] Kramer, Arab Awakening and Islamic Revival, 7.

[618] Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798–1939 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 67–95.

[619] Cleveland, Islam Against the West, 11.

[620] Translation from Arabic is mine.

[621] Chekib Arslan, “L1ennemi de la France que je suis?:” 809.

[622] Chekib Arslan, “La mort de l1orientaliste italien Nalino,” La Nation Arabe 8/20–21 (September–December 1938): 1192–1193.

[623] R. L. Melka, “Max Freiherr von Oppenheim: Sixty Years of Scholarsip and Political Intrigue in the Middle East,” Middle Eastern Studies 1973/1: 81.

[624] Ministère Public Fédéral Suisse, “Procès-verbal d1audition,” Doc. C10.7 E 4320 (B) 1984/29 vol. 13 (Geneva, October 6, 1938), 3.

[625] Chekib Arslan, “Qu1est-ce que vous voulez qu1un homme d1Etat français dise de Guillaume II ?,” La Nation Arabe 5/4 (March–April 1935): 249. Translation mine.

[626] Ibid., 254.

[627] Widmer, “Emir Shakib Arslan,” Die Welt des Islams 19 (1937): 7.

[628] Chekib Arslan, “La grammaire arabe est la grammaire la plus classique et la plus parfaite,” La Nation Arabe 5/3 (January–February 1935): 194.

[629] Widmer, “Emir Shakib Arslan.” For Arslan’s reaction to Widmer’s article see Chekib Arslan, “Notre dette de reconnaissance à l1honorable Pasteur M. Widmer, de Berne,” La Nation Arabe 8/16–17 (January–April 1938): 898.

[630] Widmer, “Emir Shakib Arslan,” 3–4.

[631] Georg Kampffmeyer, review of Hadir al-2alam al-islami, by Lothrop Stoddard and annotated by Shakib Arslan, Die Welt des Islams 15 (1933): 117–119. Translation mine.

[632] Chekib Arslan, “Les Hittites ne sont pas turcs et les Turcs ne sont pas hittites,” La Nation Arabe 7/14–15 (January–April 1937): 780.

[633] Melka, “Max Freiherr von Oppenheim,” 81–93.

[634] Ibid., 86.

[635] Bureau Politique, “Contribution à l1étude de l1activité politique de l1émir Chekib Arslan,” 47.

[636] Melka, “Max Freiherr von Oppenheim.”

[637] British Foreign Office, “Letter from R. Graham of the British Embassy in Rome to the Earl of Balfour,” June 5, 1922, in A. L. P. Burdett, ed., Arab Dissident Movements, volume 2: 1905–1920 (England: Archive Editions, 1996), 101.

[638] Chekib Arslan, “Les atrocités italiennes fascistes en Tripolitaine,” La Nation Arabe 2/10–11 (November–December 1931): 47.

[639] Chekib Arslan, “Pour supprimer le nomadisme, il n1est pas nécessaire de déposséder la population,” La Nation Arabe 3/3–4 (March–April 1932): 50.

[640] Chekib Arslan, “Omar Moukhtar,” La Nation Arabe 2/8–9 (September–October 1931): 5–6. Translation mine. 60 “Urkunden: Der Muslimische Kongreß von Europa,” Die Welt des Islams 17/3–4 (1935): 101.

[641] Chekib Arslan, “Le problème éthopien,” La Nation Arabe 6/8–9 (January–April 1936): 514–515. Translation mine.

[642] Chekib Arslan, “Le conflit italo-éthiopien et les arabes [sic]: Les musulmans d1Abysinie,” La Nation Arabe 5/5 (May–June 1935): 309–310.

[643] Chekib Arslan, “Qu1est-ce que vous voulez qu1un homme d1Etat français dise de Guillaume II ?,” La Nation Arabe 5/4 (March–April 1935): 253.

[644] The polemic begins with a short introduction by Arslan in Chekib Arslan, “La vérité sur la situation des Musulmans en Bulgarie,” La Nation Arabe 3/10–12 (October–December 1932): 10–12; this is followed by the argument of Dzemalovi- in Smail Aga Djemalovitch, “Les Musulmans en Bulgarie,” La Nation Arabe 3/10–12 (October–

December 1932): 12–20; the answer by Girard can be found in André Girard, “La situation des Musulmans en Bulgarie,” La Nation Arabe 4/1–3 (January–March 1933): 39–46; finally comes a counter-reply by Dzemalovi- in Smail Aga Dchemalovitch, “Les musulmans en Bulgarie,” La Nation Arabe 4/4–6 (April–June 1933): 38–44.

[645] Among European journals, other than La Nation Arabe, and the reports of Christian missionaries, Popovic mentions Oriente Moderno, which tracked information appearing in the Turkish and Arab press. For further information on the controversy between Dzemalovi- and Girard, see Alexandre Popovic, L1Islam balkanique: Les musulmans du sud-est européen dans la période post-ottomane (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986), 82–85.

[646] Bureau Politique, “Contribution à l1étude de l1activité politique de l1émir Chekib Arslan,” 18. György Lederer, “Sur l1islam à Budapest,” in Stéphane A. Dudoignon and Catherine Servan-Schreiber, eds, La transmission du savoir dans le monde musulman péripherique (Istanbul: Isis, forthcoming), 469.

[647] Popovic, L1Islam balkanique, 191.

[648] Chekib Arslan, “Le Congrès Musulman d1Europe,” La Nation Arabe 6/10–11 (October–November 1935): 417–424.

[649] “Urkunden: Der Muslimische Kongreß von Europa,” 104. Translation mine.

[650] I. Takacs, “Szynkiewicz, Jakub,” in Marc Gaborieau, Nicole Grandin, Pierre Labrousse, and Alexandre Popovic, eds, Dictionnaire biographique des savants et grandes figures du monde musulman périphérique, du XIXe siècle a nos jours, 1 (Paris: CNRS -EHESS, 1992): 55.

[651] Chekib Arslan, “Une mosquée à Varsovie,” La Nation Arabe 5/5 (May–June 1935): 334.

[652] Chekib Arslan, “Pertes très douloureuses,” La Nation Arabe 8/18–19 (May–August 1938): 1028; by the same author, “Le Congrès Musulman d1Europe,” La Nation Arabe 5/7 (October–November 1935): 418–424. Alexandre Popovic, “Mufti-, Salim,” in Marc Gaborieau et al., eds, Dictionnaire biographique, 2: 67.

[653] “Ada’ al-amir shakib li-faridat al-haëë,” al-Manār 30/2 (July 8, 1929): 160.

[654] Chekib Arslan, “L1Alliance des trois pays arabes indépendants: L1Etat Seoudite, le Yemen et l1Irak,” La Nation Arabe 6/8–9 (January–April 1936): 469.

[655] Ibid.

[656] Ibid., 470–471.

[657] Chekib Arslan, “La paix fraternelle entre les deux souverains arabes,” La Nation Arabe 5/1 (September–October 1934): 40–47.

[658] “Ada1 al-amir shakib li-faridat al-haëë,” 159.

[659] These bulletins were intercepted by the British services, who transferred them on to the French. Bureau Politique, “Contribution à l1étude de l1activité politique de l1émir Chekib Arslan,” 51.

[660] See John P. Halstead, Rebirth of a Nation: The Origins and Rise of Moroccan Nationalism, 1912–1944 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1967); Ali Merad, Le réformisme musulman en Algérie de 1925 à 1940. Essai d1histoire religieuse et sociale (Paris: Mouton & Co, 1967).

[661] A copy of the Dahir may be found in Halstead, 276–277.

[662] Ibid., 184–186.

[663] Charles-André Julien, L1Afrique du Nord en marche: Nationalismes musulmans et souveraineté française (Paris: René Julliard, 1972), 133.

[664] See the first article by Arslan on the Berber Dahir published in two parts as “Tribunaux Berbères,” La Nation Arabe 1/6–7 (August–September 1930): 22–28 and

[665] La Nation Arabe 1/8 (October 1930): 5–7.

[666] For the nationalist response to the Berber Dahir see Halstead, Rebirth of a Nation, 181–186. For a translation of the text of the resolution, see Chekib Arslan, “Résolution concernant la désislamisation des Berbères,” La Nation Arabe 3/5–6 (May–June 1932): 33–34.

[667] Roger Le Tourneau, Evolution politique de l1Afrique du Nord musulmane, 1920–1961 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1962), 185. Translation mine.

[668] For Arslan’s comments on the new Dahir, see Chekib Arslan, “Et le fameux Dahir berbère?” La Nation Arabe 5/4 (September–October 1934): 63–66.

[669] Julien, L1Afrique du Nord en marche, 151.

[670] For two articles on the history of Arabs in Spain and Southern France, see Chekib Arslan, “A la recherche des vestiges de la civilisation arabe en Espagne,” La Nation Arabe 1/5 (July 1930): 193–200; and “A la recherche des vestiges arabes en Espagne et dans le Midi de la France,” La Nation Arabe 2/3 (Mars 1931): 19–31.

[671] Halstead, Rebirth of a Nation, 165.

[672] Ibid., 129. From Halstead’s interviews with 2Umar 2Abd al-Jalil, Mahdi Bennuna, and Muhammad al-Fasi in 1959.

[673] Ministere Public Federal Suisse, “Procès-verbal d1audition,” Doc. C10.7 E 4320 (B) 1984/29 vol. 13 (Geneva, October 14, 1938), 2.

[674] Bureau Politique, “Contribution à l1étude de l1activité politique de l1émir Chekib Arslan,” 13.

[675] Chekib Arslan, “Une Campagne de mensonge,” La Nation Arabe 2/ 8–9 (September–October 1931): 36.

[676] Chekib Arslan, “Une perte très douloureuse: la mort de Hadje Abdessalam Bennouna,” La Nation Arabe 5/3 (January–February 1935): 209–210.

[677] Halstead, Rebirth of a Nation, 129. From Halstead’s interview with Mohamed Hassan al-Ouezzani in 1959.

[678] Ibid., 238. From Halstead’s interview with Ahmed Mekouar in 1963.

[679] Ibid., 486; for the special issue devoted to Arslan, see Habib Bourguiba, “Un veteran de la lutte anti-coloniale: l1Emir Chekib Arslan,” L1Action tunisienne, June 3, 1937.

[680] Julien, L1Afrique du Nord en marche, 108.

[681] Le Tourneau, Évolution politique, 327.

[682] Julien, 109; for Arslan’s opinion on Messali al-Haj, see Chekib Arslan, La Nation Arabe (January–April, 1937): 782–784.

[683] Merad, Le réformisme musulman en Algérie, 365. Translation mine.

[684] Halstead, Rebirth of a Nation, 127. Halstead’s conclusion comes from personal interviews with Messaoud Chiguer, Ibrahim al-Kattani, Mohammed Lyazidi, and Mohamed Hassan al-Ouezzani in 1959.

[685] Cleveland’s work is the first to portray Arslan as an Islamic revivalist as much as an Arab nationalist. Le Tourneau characterizes Arslan as an “apostle of nationalism,” and Halstead writes of Arslan as a” ‘secular’ Arab nationalist.” Le Tourneau, Evolution Politique, 71; Halstead, Rebirth of a Nation, 127.

[686] For the controversy between Arslan and Baruni, see Merad, Le réformisme musulman en Algérie, 370. Arslan also advocated a more limited form of Arab union in the pages of La Nation Arabe. For example, see Chekib Arslan, “Ils prennent leurs désirs pour des réalités: dissertation d1un Général français sur le Panislamisme et le Panarabisme,” La Nation Arabe 8/18–19 (May–August 1938): 925–946.

[687] Chekib Arslan, “La disparition d1une des plus grandes figures de l1Islam Rachid Ridha,” La Nation Arabe 5/7 (October–November 1935): 448.

[688] Luörub Studard, Hadir al- 2alam al-islami, trans. 2Aëaë Nuwayhid, comp. Shakib Arslan, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dar al-fikr 1971), 1–2: 298. This is the Arabic translation of Lothrop Stoddard’s The New World of Islam (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1922). It is so extensively annotated by Shakib Arslan that it became several times the size of the English original, and one of Arslan’s major works.

[689] See Cleveland, Islam Against the West ; Kramer, Arab Awakening and Islamic Revival.

[690] Chekib Arslan, “La disparition d1une des plus grandes figures de l1Islam Rachid Ridha,” La Nation Arabe 5/7 (October–November 1935): 448. The other was 2Abd al-Qadir Kabbani, a notable from Beirut.

[691] Arslan’s permission to stop in Egypt was only obtained after a special intervention before Hafiz Afifi, the Egyptian foreign minister and friend of Arslan from before his move to Europe. “Ada1 al-amir Makib li-faridat al-haëë,” 157. On Arslan’s exclusion from Egypt, Cleveland explains that “King Fu1ad was not anxious to ease the passage of a notorious associate of 2Abbas Hilmi to the state of Ibn Saud.” Cleveland, Islam Against the West, 73.

[692] Chekib Arslan, “La disparition d1une des plus grandes figures de l1Islam Rachid Ridha,” 450. Translation mine.

[693] Chekib Arslan, “Le plus grand deuil des lettres arabes contemporaines,” La Nation Arabe 3/7–9 (July–September 1932): 51–52.

[694] Ibid., 52. Translation mine.

[695] Ibid.

[696] Chekib Arslan, “Le Congrès Musulman d1Europe,” La Nation Arabe 5/7 (October–November 1935): 418.

* 10. Muslim Intellectuals in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Twentieth Century: Continuities and changes

Alexandre Popovic

To speak about the general situation of Muslim intellectuals in the Balkans and in the whole South Eastern European area, we must start, at the beginning, with some very global considerations, like the following four points, but, of course this list can be easily developed.

1 We can observe in these regions many groups of Muslims, as far as their “ethnicity” and their spoken language are concerned: there are Muslims of Albanian origin, Turkish origin, Greek origin, and also various groups of Muslims of Slavic origin (Bulgarians, Serbs, Macedonians, Croatians, those of Bosnia-Herzegovina (B.-H.) etc.), and finally some smaller groups, composed of Muslims of Gypsy origin, Wallachian origin, Circassian origin, etc.

2 However, the personal trajectories and the intellectual development of these various peoples were, to a large extent, influenced at the same time by the possibilities (or by the lack of possibilities) offered by the country where they lived (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Romania, and former Yugoslavia), according to the local attitudes and to the local atmosphere toward the different groups of the Muslim communities existing in each of these countries, and toward Islam in general.

3 This situation must be observed also in relation with various periods, because the behavior was not the same throughout the twentieth century, and was depending, of course, on numerous internal and external factors, political or of another nature.

4 Finally, the last—and the most important point—is evidently the personal degree of religiosity of the members composing this community, where it is possible to observe, globally, on one side—the more or less secularized groups of people, who are considering themselves only as being “of Muslim origin,” but not “Muslims” at all, and even, some times, totally atheistic groups; and on the other side—more or less religious Muslim groups, who are composed of two main subgroups: the religious people in their private way of life; and the religious people “in a professional way” (let us say, active, or very active members of the Muslim religious community).

Let us see now, after this preliminary remarks, and very quickly, what we can say, about one of these particular “ethnic” groups, more precisely about the Muslims of B.-H., during three successive periods of the twentieth century (1878–1945; 1945–1990; and since 1990).

** First period: 1878-1945

We can observe in B.-H. at the end of the Ottoman period (1878), like in many other parts of the worlds of Islam, the presence of two main groups of Muslim intellectuals: on one side—the qadîm-s (or “qadîmists,” which are “Conservatives,” or “Traditionalists”), claiming the necessity of a return to the “purely Islamic sources,” that is, those of the very first times of Islam; and, on the other side— the jadîd-s (or “jadîdists,” which are “Modernists,” or even better “Renovators”), claiming the necessity of some reforms (according to the development of the modern world).[697]

However, very soon after the end of the Ottoman era, and for different reasons, the situation became more and more difficult. The main problem was, of course, the indispensable necessity for the Muslims of B.-H. to create

their own “nationality”—vis-à-vis the two other populations of the “new homeland”: the Serbs of B.-H. (who were Christian Orthodox), and the Croatians of the B.-H. (who were Christian Catholics); and, for the first time, after 1878—within the “Austro-Hungarian Empire”; for the second time, after 1918—in the framework of the “State of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians” (a new State which became in 1929 “the State of the Southern Slavs,” that is “Yugoslavia”); and for the third time, after 1941, during the Second World War—within the fascist “Independent Croatian State.”

The second problem was the necessity to articulate this new “nationality” of the Muslims of B.-H. with the world of Islamic umma in general (which meant on one hand with the worlds of Islam, and on the other hand—and much more precisely—with the Ottoman world). In the case of the Ottoman world, the problem was not only the question of the relationship of this identity with the Ottoman Empire, but also when they had to live together in the past, with a special attention (of course) to the past of B.-H. and its particularities, during the very long centuries of Ottoman power (1463–1878).

It was, in reality, a very hard task, which split in the next decades the “qadîmist” and the “jadîdist” groups in some new fractions (thanks also to the irruption of some new possibilities in the domain of the “Western,” or more exactly the European modern education); and that, especially after the end of the First World War, and the creation of the “South-Slav Kingdom” (December 1918)—which introduced some additional complexities. In particular, in this new State some other groups of Muslim populations existed (Turks, Albanians, and some other, much smaller groups), having their proper vision of the Ottoman past and heritage, which may have not been corresponding (and some times were not corresponding at all) with those of the Muslims of B.-H.

In this way, it is clearly possible to observe during this period, in each of the two mentioned groups of Muslim intellectuals of B.-H.—at least—two main fractions, and sometimes three, or more:

In the “qadîmist” group, there was on one side the fraction of the “Pures and Hards” (who were called by their adversaries “the Obtuses,” or “the Dumbs,”

or “the Hopelessly narrow-minded”) [698] ; and on the other side, some “Semi-reformists,” who had studied, generally for some years, in Istanbul or in Cairo (at al-Azhar, indeed) as, for example, the two very important figures of the Bosnian Muslim Community at that time, the Reis ul-ulema Dzemaludin #aumevi- (1870-1938),[699] and the famous theologian Mehmed Handzi- (1906-1944).[700]

In the “jadîdist” group, it was also possible to observe two main subgroups:

First—the fraction of the, let us say “a little bit more moderate religious Muslim intellectuals,” who had sometimes studied (most of them just for some years) in Vienna, in Budapest, or in Zagreb, as had done the renowned poet, politician, historian as well as historian of local Ottoman literature, Savfet-beg Bamagi-(1870–1934),[701] the Arabist (specialist of the Quran and tafsir) Mukrija Alagi-(1881–1936),[702] and the very prolific writer on Islamic topics (but, for different reasons, hated by the ulama of B.-H.) Osman Nuri Hadzi- (1869–1939).[703]

Second—the fraction of completely secularized “Yugoslav intellectuals of Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslim origin,” without any ties with the local Muslim religious community, like the most important Yugoslav orientalist of that time, professor at the University of Belgrade, and founder in 1926 of the first chair of Oriental studies in Yugoslavia, Fehim Bajraktarevi- (1889–1970); [704] the specialist of Islamic law and professor at the Belgrade Faculty of Law, Mehmed Begovi-(1904–1990); [705] and the Director of the famous “State Medrese King Alexander” of Skopje, Ahmed Mehmedbami- (1877–1942).[706] To this same fraction also belonged a very great number of many other Yugoslav intellectuals (doctors, engineers, teachers, professors, politicians, artists, sportsmen, etc.), which considered themselves only “of Bosnian (or of Herzegovinian) Muslim origin,” and having little to do (or absolutely nothing to do) with this religious origin, to such a point that it would be really a nonsense to try to include them here, into the different categories of “Muslim intellectuals.” It would be better to put them in the category of something like: “Bosnian (or Herzegovinian) intellectuals,” but within this case one other difficulty exists, because all the Serbian and Croatian non-Muslim intellectuals of Bosnia-Herzegovina are, of course, also “Bosnian (or Herzegovinian) intellectuals.”

Finally, between these two extreme fractions of the “new jadîdists,” it is necessary to make a room for some well-known Muslim personalities, who are in reality somewhere in the middle, between these two last groups, as for example: the very important member of the High Direction of the Muslim Community, Hasan Rebac (1890-1953); [707] the politician and Minister in the Royal Government, Mehmed Spaho (1883–1939); [708] the famous scholar (belonging to one of the most important Naqshbandi families of Bosnia), specialist of Persian language and literature, and professor at the University of Sarajevo, Ma-ir Sikiri- (1893–1966); [709] and a well known self-taught historian, Hamdija Kremevljakovi- (1888–1959).[710]

But, what is particularly necessary to understand is the importance of the political situation of the B.-H. Muslim community, in the intricate general political game existing during these first three post-Ottoman period (and afterwards also, of course, as we shall see in the next pages): the Austro-Hungarian period (1878–1918),[711] the Period of the Yugoslavian Kingdom (1918–1941),[712] and that of the Croatian Fascist regime during the Second World War (1941–1944/45).[713] The authorities of these different regimes, the leaders of some groups opposing these regimes, or the leaders of opponent political parties tried to attract the Muslim population of B.-H. to their own camps. From these actions resulted the creation of some new groups of Muslim intellectuals in B.-H., like some pro-Serbian, or pro-Croatian, or pro-Ottoman (or, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, pro-Turkish) groups and subgroups, about which we have a very rich historical material, thanks to some archives, to the different Muslim newspapers of that time, and even to some extremely important books and articles (where it is possible to find the names of the principal personalities, with some details of their biographies).

A similar process occurred in the case of three modern ideologies, in the development of which a certain number of Muslim intellectuals of B.-H. were — more or less—implicated, according to their personal engagement. Here, on the one hand I would like to speak about “two general ideologies,” which were common to the Muslim and to the non-Muslim populations: that is Communism and Fascism. Both had their own groups and groupings (in which it is possible to follow the individual, or the collective trajectories of

some Muslim intellectuals of B.-H., thanks especially to the newspapers and the periodical press, but also to some archive documents, and to a large number of publications, concerning particularly Communist groups). On the other hand, one very specific group of Muslim intellectuals appeared in B.-H.: the famous Pan-Islamistic group called “Mladi muslimani” (Young Muslims) founded in Sarajevo, Mostar, and Zagreb in March 1941, about which there are several important publications by Xavier Bougarel.[714] (In the next part of this chapter, will be quoted some important names of B.-H. Muslim intellectuals, belonging to each of these last three groups.)

** Second period: 1945-1990

The general situation of each of these groups and their fractions became much more difficult when the Communist Party of Yugoslavia took power in the country, at the end of the Second World War in 1944–1945, and kept it during forty-five years, establishing the “Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia” under the highly dictatorial regime of Josip Broz-Tito, and his different and successive camarillas.[715]

It was, of course, one of the numerous variants of the “Eastern Socialist Republics,” but with some particularities, owing to some special conditions. Two main factors, one internal, the other external, must be kept in mind if we want to understand the general situation of each of the different groups of B.-H. Muslim intellectuals at that time. First: the very special status of the Muslim population of B.-H., which until 1968 had no proper “nationality,” within the extremely intricate puzzle of different “nations” and “nationalities” in Yugoslavia. Second: the fantastic opportunity for the Muslims of B.-H. given by Tito’s decision at the Bandoeng Conference of the “Non-Engaged” bloc of countries in 1955 (a movement that became some time later the “Non-Aligned” bloc, with a clear dominance of Islamic countries), to try and play the leading roles in this bloc (with Nasser and Nehru), by using the card of the Muslim Community of Yugoslavia, especially with the most educated part of this community, that is that of B.-H.[716]

From this moment onwards, a new era began for all groups and subgroups of Muslim intellectuals of B.-H., for about forty years. A large spectrum of

political, social, and religious possibilities was created, which was absolutely unimaginable before, but, of course, under some specific conditions. These conditions were, above all, the obligation to insist very strongly on the importance of the social aspects in Islam (much more than on the religious one), and, on the other hand, the necessity to insist on the great importance of one of the extremely popular phantasms of that time, which was “Arab Socialism.”

In the complex game played by the principal actors of that time, two main groups of Muslim intellectuals of B.-H. can be observed: the religious one, and the secular one, but it is necessary to divide each of them in several subgroups:

Within the religious group—the first subgroup was that of the “domesticated high official leaders” of the “Muslim Religious Community,” who were chosen after lengthy deliberations and verifications in secret meetings, by the Yugoslav Communist authorities. The principal task of these men was to claim officially their (false) attachment to the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and to its ideology, to serve the interest of the State and the different populations of Yugoslavia, as well as that of the Muslim Religious Community, etc. At the top of this group stood the Head of this Religious Community, the Reis ul-ulema, Sulejman Kemura (1908–1975), who is called today “the Red Reis”; [717] after him came his closest collaborators (“the religious and cultural ‘referents’“—who were kinds of religious and political commissars of the Muslim Community during the Communist regime)—as were, for example, Husein Djozo (1912–1982),[718] Abdurahman Huki- (1921–1990),[719] Ahmed Smajlovi- (1938–1988),[720] and some others.

Behind this first subgroup, and more or less linked to it (but at some distance), a much larger subgroup existed: that of the “domesticated Muslim religious actors,” composed of the small fry: senior executive members of the Muslim Religious Community, directors of the Muslim newspapers and publications, journalists, etc. Generally speaking, these men used to share in common three main particularities: (a) they were of humble rural origin; (b) after finishing their first studies in the Gazi Husrev-beg Medrese in Sarajevo, and thanks to different kinds of grants and scholarships offered by some

Arabic countries, they had studied some years Islamic theology and “Islamic sciences” in various places (in Egypt, Libya, Iraq, or in some of the Arab States of the Gulf area); and (c) they were affiliated, at one time or another, to certain important personalities of the first subgroup, or to certain (religious or/and political) Muslim pressure groups in B.-H. Their number was relatively high, but only very few of them (as the above mentioned Ahmed Smajlovi-, for example), had had the opportunity to become “first-class leaders” of the Muslim Religious Community of B.-H., or of the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia.

The third subgroup of religious Muslim intellectuals of B.-H., during this period, was composed of personalities who had been (or had been considered) clearly in opposition to the Communist regime. A lot of names should be mentioned in this category of people, as that of the learned Qadiri shaykh Fejzulah Hadzibajri- (1913–1990); [721] those of the well-known Muslim religious writers and historians of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Islamic community: Muhamed Hadzijahi- (1918–1986); [722] Mahmud Tralji- (b. 1918); [723] Kasim Hadzi-(1917–1990); [724] Hivzija Hasandedi- (b. 1915); [725] Alija Nametak (1906–1987),[726] etc.; or that of the specialist of Oriental manuscripts Kasim Dobra3a (1910–1979); [727] without forgetting the most famous personality of all this category of Muslim religious opponents, the former President of B.-H., Alija Izetbegovi3 (1925–2003).[728] Nevertheless, let us remember that some of the Muslim opponents to the Communist regime have been, at the time of the Second World War, active members of the above mentioned Pan-Islamistic group of the “Young Muslims” or collaborated more or less actively with the Croatian Fascist authorities, and spent therefore after 1945 some years in prison, while others were condemned to death and executed.

As far as the group of secular Muslim intellectuals of B.-H. (which was composed of the politicians, scholars, engineers, doctors, professors, teachers, artists, etc.) is concerned, during this period one can observe some similarities with the situation of the different religious subgroups mentioned earlier, but we need to distinguish—at least—four subgroups, if we want to understand the extreme complexities of their position.

The first subgroup was formed by the principal Muslim Communist political leaders, like Dzemal Bijedi- (1917–1977),[729] and Hamdija Pozderac (1924–1989).[730] Their main preoccupation was, of course, the most important political problem of the Muslim population of these two regions at that time, that is, the eventuality of the creation, and of the official recognition by the authorities of the Yugoslav State (and by the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party) of a very bizarre “Muslim nation” within the Federal Republic of B.-H., which had been effectively proclaimed in 1967.[731]

The second subgroup of secular Muslim intellectuals was composed of some “official Muslim Marxists,” close to (and working for) the Yugoslav Communist authorities, but with very tight links with a Muslim Religious Community of B.-H. Among them we can mention here the “First-class secular Muslim politician” (and principal representative of the ideology of “ethnic Muslims of B.-H.”) Atif Purivatra (b. 1928); [732] the Marxist philosopher and enfant terrible of the secular Muslim intelligentsia, Muhamed Filipovi- (b. 1929),[733] who was excluded several times from (and re-integrated into) the Yugoslav Communist Party, but played (and is playing still today) multiple roles in the various (and often opposite) political, religious, and nationalist Muslim groups and coteries. We can also mention in this subgroup another very well-known “Marxist philosopher of the Sarajevo circle,” Fuad Muhi- (1941–1991),[734] et al.

The third subgroup of secular Muslim intellectuals in B.-H. between 1945 and 1990 was composed of the numerous Communist (or at least leftist, and sometimes allegedly leftist) scholars such as the historians: Hamdija Kapidzi-(1904–1974),[735] Enver Redzi- (b. 1915),[736] Avdo Su-eska (b. 1927),[737] and Hasan Sumi- (1937–1991); [738] the historians of literature Muhsin Rizvi-(b. 1930),[739] and Alija Isakovi-(1932–1997); [740] the sociologist of religious problems Esad _imi- (b. 1931),[741] and many others.

Finally, the fourth subgroup of secular Muslim intellectuals during this period was that of the many opponents to the Yugoslav Communist regime who pretended not to be one of them, such as the historians of the Ottoman period Hamid Hadzibegi- (1898–1988),[742] Alija Bejti- (1920–1981),[743]

Hazim Mabanovi-(1916–1971),[744] Adem Handzi- (1916–1998); [745] the epigraphist Mehmed Mujezinovi- (1913–1981),[746] and many others.

** Third period: 1990-2000

The end of the “Communist era” was followed by the civil war of 1992–1995 in B.-H. (the Muslims speak generally of “genocide”). These events introduced several new complexities in the relationship between the different groups and coteries of Muslim intellectuals which existed before. They unified, or divided and subdivided along new schemes and diagrams. New alliances and new schisms appeared with new religious, nationalistic, and ideological mixtures. This obliged the Muslims, once again, to re-interpret the recent and remote past of B.-H., as well as the role played in this past by different local personalities (whose biographies were remodelled, according to the needs of the time).

Moreover, this difficult aggiornamento was extremely complicated by the strong implications of some external Muslim or non-Muslim “Great Powers,” from the East and the West (such as Iran, or the different Arabic and other Muslim states, organizations and ideological groups), on one side, and by the multiple pressures and actions coming from the “Western” side, that is, from the USA, NATO, EU, etc.).

Of course, we cannot examine here, even very quickly, the intricacies of this extremely unsteady new situation. Let us describe summarily its principal contours. There are now four main groups of “Muslim intellectuals”: two religious, and two secular.

First, there is a “religious-political group,” with well-known personalities such as the former President of B.-H. Alija Izetbegovi-, his sometimes “First Minister,” sometimes “First Opponent” Haris Silajdzi- (b. 1945) [747], and behind them several other personalities with very precarious careers.

Second, the “religious-theological group of scholars” in which at least three “first-class personalities” can be mentioned: the new Reis ul-ulema Mustafa Ceri- (b. 1952); [748] the specialist of Qur1ranic studies Enes Kari- (b. 1958); [749] and one of the best specialists of Islamic law, Fikret Kar3i- (b. 1955).[750]

As for the two secular groups: we have on one side, the very numerous group of “secular Muslim politicians,” such as the “eternal chameleon” Muhamed Filipovi- and many others; and on the other side, the group of the “old- style/new-look scholars,” such as the historian Mustafa Imamovi- (b. 1941); [751] Amir Ljubovi-(b. 1945),[752] a specialist of the Ottoman Muslim literature of B.-H. written in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages, and some others.

Let us add to the enumeration of all these groups and subgroups, one very special group: that of the Muslim intellectuals who left the country and lived in the early twentieth century, or are living today, outside their homeland, such as the learned mufti of Mostar and teacher at the University of Istanbul, Ali Fehmi Dzabi- (1853–1 918); [753] the well-known historian and professor of Ankara University, Muhamed Tayyib Oki- (1902–1977); [754] the librarian and prolific historian of the Bosnian cultural life, living in Austria, Smail Bali- (b. 1920); [755] the founder of the “Boshnakian Institute” in Zurich and politician Adil Zulfikarpami- (b. 1921); [756] the specialist of medieval Arabic philosophy, living in Paris, Tarik Haveri- (b. 1955); the Ottomanist living in the USA Nenad Filipovi- (b. 1962), and many others.

** Some concluding remarks

This is a very long period and an extremely intricate set of individual and collective trajectories. Therefore, let us say just some words in connection with some of the main themes of our conference: situations, discourses, strategies, continuities, changes.

The complexity of the situations is clearly the result of several constraints. The nature of these constraints may be of different orders: religious, nationalist, economic, social, political, ideological, and so on, but more often it is, in fact, a sort of mixture of all of them.

Moreover, all the discourses of the Muslim intellectuals of B.-H., in each of these different periods of the long twentieth century (even those of the completely secularized groups) were obviously (and still are) strongly influenced by unavoidable requirements, and at first by the “general line” imposed by the political authorities of the state, in connection with the inextricable game of relationship between the neighbouring non-Muslim groups of population (each of them having, of course, its own vision of the past, and its own hopes for the future, which are evidently in complete opposition with those of Muslim groups).

As far as the strategies used by the Muslim intellectuals are concerned, they were extremely changing (as we have seen in the preceding pages). Nevertheless, it is clear that, during each period and according to new circumstances (speaking only about the groups of the religious Muslim intellectuals of B.-H.), there were always two main trends: continuity on the one side, and change on the other side. Both should serve the principal goal of the “Muslim population” of the two regions, that is to say the absolute necessity to make of this “religious community” (which is, however, composed to a large extent of more or less secularized people) a “nation.” This “nation” should have a specific name and should be guided by a kind of “Islamic” ideology. Nevertheless, it should assemble together, at the same time and under the same banner, the religious (and the very religious), as well as the secular (and the very secular) part of the population of B.-H. And, as it is often the case with minority groups, we can observe the same process going on: it consists in grabbing all the possible advantages offered by the political situation of the time, and when new authorities arrive, to dissociate the Muslim community from the previous ideology, position and the activities of their former official leaders, presenting them as (more or less horrible) traitors of the Muslim community. This, in order to fit into a new deal, thanks to some subterfuges coming from the stock of the “eternal Islamic values.”

In the field of change, we must examine very carefully some particularly “neuralgic” points, such as: the new theories and the new interpretations concerning the phenomenon of Islamization (or the “conversion to Islam,” or the “expansion of Islam”); the image of the “Turks,” and of all the Ottoman past, either rejected or rehabilitated; the reassessment of the ancient and present relations with the neighboring non-Muslim populations, as well as the relations with other Muslim communities of the Balkans, and the rest of the Islamic umma; and in a word, what we could call the “invention of the past.”

In this short essay, the names of around fifty—among the most representative Muslim intellectuals of B.-H. in the twentieth century—have been mentioned. They represent a sample of about 5–10% of the names which ought to appear in a serious study on the subject. The aim of this chapter was not to elaborate a kind of “Who’s who?,” but to describe the main trends which appeared within this society in the course of a long and eventful period. Those who have written and still write about it are generally of two kinds. On one side, those who write the “holy story” of one or another group, without criticizing the data given by their informants. On the other side, those who select some names in only one group, according to their own point of view or ideology, in order to give a picture, which is supposed to be a general one. (In this way, some authors are describing the “European Islam” in B.-H.!) Except a few cases, even in former Yugoslavia, the problem has always been that the non-Muslims (and the Muslims themselves) have never had a precise idea on the subject. The main reason is that the biographical data, in encyclopedias or elsewhere, have always been “arranged.”

To conclude, I must draw very strongly the reader’s attention to one crucial point: if one wish to study seriously this subject, it is absolutely essential to examine in detail the very rich local Muslim press (newspapers and periodicals) which exists since the last third of the nineteenth century—since these questions are there less often altered or falsified (or at less “taboo-ized”) than in a great number of books and articles.

[697] We know more than thirty authors and activists belonging to these two groups. For each we would have to present their biographies and their points of view about these topics. But this cannot be done here, of course.

[698] It would not be appropriate of course to mention here the names of persons belonging to this category, or to be too harsh on them. These men had their ideas and have done what they believed they had to do.

[699] For the biography of Dzemaludin #aumevi- (1870–1938) and his works, see: Anonymous, Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji (Beograd Zagreb, 1928): 25; O. Hadzi-, Narodna Enciklopedija (Zagreb, 1929), s. v. (4: 937, of the Cyrillic edition); M. Handzi-, Novi Behar (Sarajevo) 11/20 (1937–1938): 309–312; M. Sikiri-, Novi Behar (Sarajevo) 11/20 (1937–1938): 314–316; A. Balagija, Les musulmans yougoslaves (Algiers, 1940): 116–119; M.Hadzijahi-, Hrvatska Enciklopedija (Zagreb, 1944), 4: 207–208; H. Mabanovi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije (Zagreb, 1956), 2: 546; Anonymous, Glasnik Vrhovnog Islamskog Starjeminstva (Sarajevo, henceforth: GVIS), 27 (1964): 470–475; M. Tralji-, Takvim 1971 (Sarajevo, 1970): 92–97; A. Purivatra, Jugoslavenska Muslimanska Organizacija u politi3kom zivotu Kraljevine Srba Hrvata i Slovenaca (henceforth: JMO) (Sarajevo, 1974): see Index, 639; Anonyme, GVIS (Sarajevo) 1983/1–2: 371; A. Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij (Zürich: Bomnja3ki Institut, 1994), see: Index, 298; M. Djilas and N. Ga-e, Bomnjak Adil Zulfikarpami- (Zürich, Bomnja3ki Institut, 1994): 38, 40; M. Filandra, Bomnja3ka politika u xx. stolje-u (Sarajevo, 1998): 59 (and passim, see: Index, 402).

[700] For the biography of Mehmed Handzi- (1906–1944) and his publications, see: H. Kremevljakovi-, Kalendar Narodna Uzdanica za 1945 godinu (Sarajevo, 1944), 24–31; El-Hidaje, 8 (Sarajevo), 1944–1945 (see all the whole issue); R. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young, EI 2, Supplément 5–6 (Leiden, 1982), s. v., 354 (of the French Edition); Anonymous, GVIS 1983/1–2: 374; A. Popovic, “Handpi- Mehmed” in M. Gaborieau, N. Grandin, P. Labrousse, and A. Popovic, eds, Dictionnaire biographique des savants et grandes figures du

monde musulman périphérique, du XIX e siècle à nos jours (Paris: CNRS-EHESS, 1992), 1: 52 (henceforth: Dict. Biogr.); A. Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij (see: Index, 300); Filandra, Bomnja3ka : 161 (and passim, see: Index, 404).

[701] For the details of the life, political activities, and principal writings of Savfet-beg Bamagi- (1870–1934), see: H. Kremevljakovi-, Znameniti i zasluzni Hrvati (Zagreb, 1925): 20; O. Hadzi-, Narodna Enciklopedija (Zagreb, 1926), 1, s. v. (p. 136 of the Cyrillic edition); E. Mulabdi-, Novi Behar (Sarajevo) 19–21 (1933–1934), see the whole issue; I. A. Mili-evi-, Glasnik Zemaljskog Muzeja (Sarajevo, henceforth: GZM), 46 (1934): 5–9; F. Bajraktarevi-, Prilozi za orijentalnu filologiju (Sarajevo, henceforth: POF), 2 (1951 [1952]): 315; N. Filipovi-, in “Odzakluk timar &,” POF, 5. (1954–1955): 252–253; M. Sikiri-, ibid.: 321–322 (note 1); H. Mabanovi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije, s. v. (Zagreb, 1955), 1.: 384; Anonymous, GVIS 27(1964): 152–155; M. Tralji-, Takvim 1971 (Sarajevo, 1970): 88–92; M. Rizvi-, ≈ivot 20/1–2 (January–February 1971): 6–17; M. K., Preporod 2/14 (1.4.1971): 7; A. Purivatra, JMO : Index, 638; A. Kadribegovi-, GVIS 1984/4: 473–495; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij, Index: 29; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z., Index: 233; Filandra, Bomnja3ka politika, 22 (and passim, see: Index, 401).

[702] For the biography and writings of Mukrija Alagi- (1881–1936), see: A. Nametak, Hrvatska Enciklopedija, s. v. (Zagreb, 1941), 1: 168–169; Anonymous, Preporod 2/10 (1.2.1971): 7; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 369; Popovic, Dict. biogr., 1: 51 (with some additional references).

[703] For the biography and writings of Osman Nuri Hadzi- (1869–1939), see: M. Krasovi-, in Znameniti i zasluzni Hrvati (Zagreb, 1925): 102; D. Panti-, Narodna Enciklopedija, s. v. (Zagreb, 1929), 3: 782–783 (Cyrillic edition); I. Kecmanovi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije, s. v. (Zagreb, 1958), 3: 650; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij, see Index, 300; Filandra, Bomnja3ka politika : 22, 271, 302.

[704] For the biography and works of Fehim Bajraktarevi- (1889–1970), see: H. Kremevljakovi-, Hrvatska Enciklopedija, s. v. (Zagreb, 1941), 2.: 105; H. Mabanovi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije, s. v. (Zagreb, 1955), 1: 286–287; M. Djukanovi-, Anali Filolomkog Fakulteta (Belgrade) 10 (1970): 1–7; K. Amkovi-, Anali Filolomkog Fakulteta (Belgrade) 10 (1970): 9–28; M. Hadzijahi-, Anali Gazi Husrev-begove biblioteke (Sarajevo, henceforth: AGHBB) 1 (1972): 132–134; A. Popovic, Journal Asiatique 260/1–2 (1972): 178–185; I. Eren, Güney-Doæu Avrupa Aravtırmaları Dergisi (Istanbul) 2–3: 181–216.

[705] For the biography and publications of Mehmed Begovi- (1904–1990), see: B. Nikolajevi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije, s. v. (Zagreb, 1955), 1: 409; J. Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 216–217; I. Dzananovi-, Glasnik Rijaseta Islamskog Starjeminstva (Sarajevo, henceforh: GRIS), 1990/5: 167–171.

[706] For the biography and work of Ahmed Mehmedbami- (1877–1942), see: M. Memi-, Velika Medresa i njeni u3enici u revolucionarnom pokretu (Skopje: Fonografika, 1984), see Index, 290.

[707] For the biography and publications of Hasan Rebac (1890–1953), see: Anonymous, Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji (Belgrade-Zagreb, 1928): 128; F. Slipi3evi-, Preporod 3 [130] and 4 [131] (1.2.1976): 13, (15.2.1976): 13 (series of articles, interrupted—without any explanation—after the second issue, but published before in: Sloboda (Mostar) 32–38 (11.8.1975–22.9.1975); M. Memi-, Velika Medresa i njeni u3enici u revolucionarnom pokretu (see Index: 291); Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z., 132; Filandra, Bomnja3ka politika : 200.

[708] For the biography and publications of Mehmed Spaho (1883–1939), see: Anonymous, Ko je ko u Jugoslaviji (Belgrade-Zagreb, 1928), 136–137; O. Hadzi-, Narodna Enciklopedija (Zagreb,

1929), 4.: 286–287 (Cyr. ed.); Anonymous, Glasnik Islamske Vjerske Zajednice (Sarajevo, henceforth: GIVZ) 7/8 (1939): 305–311; Balagija, Les musulmans yougoslaves : 134–135; A. Purivatra, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije (Zagreb, 1968), 7.: 498; Purivatra, JMO, passim ; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : 306; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z., Index: 237; Filandra, Bomnja3ka politika : 79 (and passim, see: Index, 410).

[709] For the biography and publications of Ma-ir Sikiri- (1893–1966), see: Anonymous, GVIS 29 (1966): 604–606; S. Grozdani-, Radovi Filozofskog Fakulteta u Sarajevu, 4, Sarajevo, 1966–1967: 413–415; Anonymous, GVIS 1967/11–12: 545–548; Anonymous, Preporod 2/25 (15.9.1971): 14; M. Tralji-, Takvim 1977 (Sarajevo, 1976): 222–227; I. Morina, Tan (Primtina) 539 (1980): 8; Anonymous, GVIS 1983/1–2: 377–378; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij, Index, 305.

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musulmans du sud-est\ européen dans la période post-ottomane (Berlin: Wiesbaden, 1986): 269–291; A. Babuna, Die nationale Entwicklung der bosnischen Muslime. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der österreichisch-ungarischen Periode (Frankfurt a. Main: Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1996); Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 9–54.

[712] See Popovic, L1Islam balkanique : 311–336; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 55–152.

[713] Popovic, L1Islam balkanique : 336–342; E. Redzic, Muslimansko automamtvo i 13 SS divizija (Sarajevo, 1987); A. Popovic, “La presse des musulmans des Balkans au cours de la Seconde Guerre mondiale (1941–1944/45),” Etudes balkaniques. Cahiers Pierre Belon 4 (1997): 199–211 (in part. 211–221); Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 155–195.

[714] Z. Klju3anin, Mladi Muslimani (Sarajevo, 1991); S. Trhulj, Mladi Muslimani (Zagreb, 1992); X. Bougarel, “Un courant panislamiste en Bosnie-Herzégovine,” in G. Kepel, ed., Exils et royaumes. Les appartenances au monde arabo-musulman aujourd1hui (Paris, 1994): 275–299; X. Bougarel, “From Young Muslims to the Party of Democratic Action: the Emergence of a Pan-Islamist Trend in Bosnia-Herzegovina,” Islamic Studies 36/2–3 (1997): 533–549; and his doctoral thesis Islam et politique en Bosnie Herzégovine: le Parti de l1Action Démocratique (Paris: Institut d1Etudes Politiques, 1999), 2 vols.

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[716] A. Popovic, Les musulmans yougoslaves (1945–1989). Médiateurs et metaphors (Lausanne, 1990).

[717] For the biography of Sulejman Kemura (1908–1975), see the very numerous obituaries published in the Yugoslav Muslim press in 1975 and after this date; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 375; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij, several passages, see Index, 302, and 283–288; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z., 83.

[718] For the biography and publications of Husein Djozo (1912–1982), see: Anonymous, Preporod 11 [283] (1.6.1982): 9–11; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 372–373; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 349 (and passim, see Index, 403); and very numerous articles in the Yugoslav Muslim press, especially in the period 1958–1979. 23 For the biography of Abdurahman Huki- (1921–1990), see: Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 375; A. Kadribegovi-, Preporod 13 [476] (1.7.1990): 16; A. Kadribegovi- GRIS (1990/3): 113–115; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : Index, 301.

[719] For the biography and publications of Ahmed Smajlovi- (1938–1988), see: Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 378; Anonymous, Preporod, 17 [433] (1.9.1988): 14; Anonymous, GVIS (1988/4): 468–469; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : Index, 410.

[720] For the biography and publications of Fejzulah Hadzibajri- (1913–1990), see: Anonymous, GVIS (1982/1): 60–62; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 373; Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 234–235; Anonymous, Mebi Arus 1985 (Sarajevo, 1985): 67–74; D. Tanaskovi-, Politika (23.1.1990); Z. Faji-, Preporod 10 [474] (15.5.1990): 17; Anonymous, Islamska Misao (Sarajevo), 137 (May 1990): 49–51; E. Durmimevi-, GRIS (1990/3): 116–118; A. Gami, Mebi Arus 1990, Sarajevo, 1990: 39–45; M. Tralji-, AGHBB (Sarajevo), 15–16 (1990): 287–291. ALEXANDRE POPOVIC

[721] For the biography and publications of Muhamed Hadzijahi- (1918–1986), see: A. Purivatra, JMO, Index, 642; Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 237–238; M. Tralji-, AGHBB 13–14 (1987): 251–256; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 206 (and passim, see: Index, 404).

[722] For the biography and publications of Mahmud Tralji- (b. 1918), see: Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 270; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : 307; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : Index, 411; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka (Sarajevo, 2000): 402.

[723] For the biography and publications of Kasim Hadzi- (1917–1990), see: M. Mahmutovi-, Preporod 15 [239] (1.8.1980): 14–15; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 373; M. Mahmutovi-, Preporod 24 [487] (15.12.1990): 15; M. Omerdi-, GRIS 1990/6: 109–112 (biography), and 1991/1: 108–132 (bibliography).

[724] For the biography and publications of Hivzija Hasandedi- (b. 1915), see: Anonymous, Preporod 15 [190] (1–15.8.1978): 10–11; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 374; Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 246–250; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 182.

[725] For the biography and publications of Alija Nametak (1906–1987), see: Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 377; Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 256; M. Tralji-, AGHBB 15–16 (1990): 293–299; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij, Introduction, 7–10; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 160, 299, 302.

[726] For the biography and some of the publications of Kasim Dobra3a (1910–1979), see: V. Monteil, ed., Annuaire du monde musulman, 4th ed. (Paris, 1954): 410; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 372; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : Index, 299; Filandra, Bomnjaka politika : Index, 403.

[727] For the biography and publications of Alija Izetbegovi- (1925–2003), see: Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z., Index, 235; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 375 (see also Index, 405); Bougarel, Islam et politique, passim ; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 210.

[728] For some details on the biography of Dzemal Bijedi- (1917–1977), see: T. Vujasinovi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije (Zagreb, 1955), 1: 558; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : 279; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : Index, 401.

[729] For some details on the biography of Hamdija Pozderac (1924–1989) and some of his publications, see: Zbornik radova 1961–1976 (Sarajevo: Univerzitet u Sarajevu, Fakultet Politi3kih Nauka, 1976): 365; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 219; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 309 (see also Index, 409).

[730] See some details in Popovic, L1Islam balkanique : 344–346.

[731] For the biography and publications of Atif Purivatra (b. 1928), see: Zbornik radova 1961–1976 : 366–367; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 116; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 323 (see also Index, 409); Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 331–332.

[732] For the biography and publications of Muhamed Filipovi- (b. 1929), see: Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : Index, 234; M. Sokolija, Tunjo. Velik turban pod njim hodze nema (London, 1995); Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 258 (see also Index, 404).

[733] For the biography and publications of Fuad Muhi- (1941–1991), see: Filandra, Bomnjaka politika : 269, 282, 302, 356.

[734] For the biography and publications of Hamdija Kapidzi- (1904–1974), see: I. Kecmanovi-, Enciklopedija Jugoslavije (Zagreb, 1962), 5: 190; Anonymous, Radovi Filozofskog Fakulteta u Sarajevu (Sarajevo) 4 (1966–1967): 405–409; M. Ekme3i-, Univerzitet danas (Belgrade) 1–2 (1974): 53–54; S. Bali-, Südost-Forschungen (München) 33 (1974): 321–323; Purivatra, JMO, Index, 644; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij, Index, 301.

[735] For the biography and publications of Enver Redzi- (b. 1915), see: Purivatra, JMO : Index, 650; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : Index, 409; E. Redzi-, Bosna i Hercegovina u drugom svjetskom ratu (Sarajevo, 1998): 481; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 338.

[736] For the biography and publications of Avdo Su-eska (b. 1927), see: Purivatra, JMO : Index, 651; Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 263–267; E. Stanek, POF (Sarajevo) 46 (1996 [1997]): 175–185; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 235 (see also Index, 410); Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 370; A. Ljubovi- and L. Gazi-, eds, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu 1950–2000 (Sarajevo: Orijentalni Institut, 2000): 125–126.

[737] For the biography and publications of Hasan Sumi- (1937–1991), see: Anonymous, Zbornik Radova 1961–1976 : 382–383; M. Rizvi-, GRIS (1991/5): 651–653; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 236, 266, 378.

[738] For the biography and publications of Muhsin Rizvi- (b. 1930), see: Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 260; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 297 (see also Index, 409).

[739] For the biography and publications of Alija Isakovi- (1932–1997), see: Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 116; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 271 (see also Index, 405); Knjizevnik i mislilac Alija Isakovi-, Sarajevo, 1998.

[740] For the biography and publications of Esad _imi- (b. 1931), see: Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 218–219; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : Index, 402; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 100.

[741] For the biography and publications of Hamid Hadzibegi- (1898–1988), see: Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 373; Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 235–236; K. Hadzi-, Preporod 8 [424] (15.4.1988): 14; Ljubovi- and Gazi-, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu : 99–100.

[742] For the biography and publications of Alija Bejti- (1920–1981), see: Anonymous, POF 31 (1981): 7–9; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : 259–260; Ljubovi- and Gazi-, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu : 117–118.

[743] For the biography and publications of Hazim Mabanovi- (1916–1971), see: A. Su-eska, POF 18–19 (1968–1969 [1973]): 5–7; Z. Bostandzi-, Politika (26.3.1971); Fil., Preporod 2/14 (1.4.1971): 7; S. Bali-, Südost Forschungen, 30 (1971): 300–304; M. Hadzijahi-, AGHBB 1 (1972): 136–138; S. A. Ali-, POF 22–23 (1972–1973 [1976]): 7–10; B. Nurudinovi-, POF : 11 32; Anonymous, GVIS (1983/1–2): 378; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : Index, 306; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : Index, 410; Ljubovi- and Gazi-, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu : 110–113.

[744] For the biography and publications of Adem Handzi- (1916–1998), see: Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 244–246; A. Ali3i-, POF 47–48 (1997–1998): 9–15; M. Bav3i-, POF : 191–199; Ljubovi- and Gazi-, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu : 113–115.

[745] For the biography and publications of Mehmed Mujezinovi- (1913–1981), see: Anonymous, Preporod 14–15 [165–166] (15.7.–15.8.1977): 10–11; K. Hadzi-, Preporod 11 [259] (1.6.1981): 26; M. Tralji-, Mebi Arus 1981 (Sarajevo, 1981): 34–38; Anonymous, GVIS 1983/1–2: 376–377; Anonymous, AGHBB 9–10 (1983): 327–333; Anonymous, Mebi Arus 1990 (Sarajevo, 1990): 6; Nametak, Sarajevski nekrologij : 254–255.

[746] For the biography and publications of Haris Silajdzi- (b. 1945), see: Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 384–385; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 357.

[747] For the biography of Mustafa Ceri- (b. 1952), see: Anonymous, Preporod 388 (15.10.1986): 2; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 146; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 83–84.

[748] For the biography and publications of Enes Kari- (b. 1958), see: Anonymous, GVIS 1983/1–2: 375; N. #an3ar, Preporod 447 (1.4.1989): 2; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 229–230; X. Bougarel, “Trois définitions de l’islam en Bosnie- Herzégovine,” in M. Gaborieau and A. Popovic, eds, Islam et politique dans le monde (ex-) communiste (Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions, 46e année, nº 115, juillet–septembre, Paris, 2001): 183–201.

[749] For the biography and publications of Fikret Kar3i- (b. 1955), see: Anonymous, GVIS 1983/1–2: 375; Anonymous, Preporod 14 [454] (15.7.1989): 12; Bougarel, “La diversité de l1islam bosniaque,” passim.

[750] For the biography and publications of Mustafa Imamovi- (b. 1941), see: M. Imamovi-, Historija Bomnjaka (Sarajevo, 1998): 2; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 264 (see also Index, 405); Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 207.

[751] For the biography and bibliography of Amir Ljubovi- (b. 1945), see: Mami-, Turcica 16 (1984): 252–253; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 263; Ljubovi- and Gazi-, Orijentalni Institut u Sarajevu : 143–144.

[752] For the biography and publications of Ali Fehmi Dzabi- (1853–1918), see: I. H. Mehinagi-, GVIS 7/1–3 (1956): 22–30; B. Djurdjev, EI 2, s. v. (Leiden, 1965), 2: 698–699 (of the French edition); I. H. Mehinagi-, AGHBB 2–3 (1974): 81–96; S. Bali-,

[753] Biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas (München, 1974), 1: 451–453; A. Nametak, AGHBB 4 (1976): 187 199; Donia, Islam under the Double Eagle, Index, 234; Popovic, Dict. biogr., 1: 51; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 36.

[754] For the biography and publications of Muhamed Tayyib Oki- (1902–1977), see: A. Ljubovi-, POF 25 (1975 [1977]): 9–11; H. M-d., Preporod 8 [159] (15–30.4.1977): 5; K. Hadzi-, GVIS (1977/3): 365–370; S. Bali-, Südost Forschungen 36 (1977): 235–239; Prof. M. Tayyib Okiç Armaæanı (Ankara, 1978); S. Bali-, Islam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi 7/1–2: 330–336; I. Morina, Tan, 548 (12.4.1980): 6; M. Tralji-, AGHBB 7–8 (1982): 275–277; Nametak, Sar. nekr. : 70–72.

[755] For the biography and publications of Smail Bali- (b. 1920), see: F. H. Eterovich, ed., Croatia. Land, People, Culture, 2 vols. (Toronto:

University of Toronto Press, 1964–1970), 2: 512–513; Anonymous, Der Donau Raum (Wien) 20/1–2 (1975): 128; H. Hajdarevi-, Preporod 24 [487] (15.12.1990): 10–11; Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak A. Z. : 130–131; Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 361, 365, 370; Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 54.

[756] For the biography of Adil Zulfikarpami- (b. 1921), see: Djilas and Ga-e, Bomnjak, Adil Zulfikarpami- (Zürich: Bomnja3ki Institut, 1994). Filandra, Bomnja-ka politika : 361 (see also Index, 412); Anonymous, in Ko je ko u Bomnjaka : 421. MUSLIM INTELLECTUALS IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

* 11. From Social Development to Religious Knowledge: Transformation of the Ismaʿilis in Northern Pakistan

Nejima Susumu

For the Ismaʿilis, the twentieth century will be regarded as a time of social and religious revival. After a long period of time since the fall of Alamut in 1256, Ismaʿilis have come back to the center stage of the worlds of Islam. This time, it is through NGO activities in the field of social and cultural development, not through armed political struggle. Various self-help programs to build schools, manage health care service, and preserve architecture of the past under the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) have been demonstrating the Ismaʿilis' abilities to tackle social problems. It shall be made clear that the AKDN is non-denominational, involving thousands of non-Ismaʿilis in its activities. Still, Aga Khan is the honorific title of the Ismaʿili Imam, and the AKDN is, as its name suggests, under the general control of the Imamat (office of Imam). Most of the AKDN activities are found in areas where Ismaʿilis are predominant. In the Ismaʿili communities the NGO activities exist as an integral part of community life along with the religious organizations (for a detailed description of Ismaʿili community life, see Nejima 2002).

The AKDN is following and promoting this trend, and this Muslim minority community with a living and hereditary Imam actually has become predominant in the field of social development. As a consequence, the Imamat has acquired more religious authority, and the Jama at (Ismaʿili community) has become a better defined and more autonomous community. This is particularly true in Northern Pakistan (the Northern Areas and Chitral District). In this mountainous region, the AKDN has successfully undertaken many “model cases.” The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) has innovated a model for participation of the rural poor (Khan and Khan 1992), and organized more than 70,000 members, or over 70% of rural households, in the first decade (AKRSP 1993). Later on, the Government of Pakistan officially acknowledged the model and adopted it in all the provinces of the country. In 1997 the Aga Khan Education Service (AKES) operates 177 schools (usually known as Diamond Jubilee (DJ) schools) with 850 teachers. The number of students, girls and boys, exceeds 20,000. The Aga Khan Health Service (AKHS) provides service, especially for mother and child health care, with 38 medical units. It has trained more than 700 volunteers as community health workers and trained birth attendants. The renovation of the Baltit Fort (Hunza Valley) by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has been praised by President Leghari as “an excellent role model for the restoration of many historical structures in Pakistan” (The Ismaili Pakistan 1997/42).[757] In the 1990s the concept of social development—the local community’s active participation in their own health care, primary education, sanitation, and other basic human needs in collaboration with NGOs—has become important. It has become mainstream practice.

With anthropological data from villages in Northern Pakistan, we would like to delineate the features of the contemporary Ismaʿili community. The AKDN provides permanent occupations for hundreds of educated youth that otherwise may find no place in the rural economy. They come back to villages as DJ school teachers, AKHS local officers, or Lady Health Visitors. While they get income from the NGOs, they take the initiative to participate in other volunteer activities at the same time. For example, a DJ teacher may record the accounts for the Village Organization, a vehicle for rural development initiated by the AKRSP. Or he may reconcile disputes in the Arbitrary Panel, and collect zakat (tithe) as a member of Local Council (LC). Besides, the Ismaʿilis have now started studying their own religious texts, namely those of Nasir Khusraw. Having professional religious

scholars in their own community is a step toward joining mainstream Islam, and it also enables them to contribute to the reconstruction of Islamic civilization through NGO activities. Therefore we believe that the locale clearly demonstrates the transformation taking place among the Ismaʿilis as a whole.

** The Ismaʿilis in the early twentieth century

*** Northern and Southern Pakistan

The followers of Aga Khan, the Ismaʿilis are distributed across the Indian Subcontinent, the Middle East, Central Asia, and East Africa. They live in North American cities and in Europe as well. The Imamat has its center in Eiglemont, near Paris. Today, Pakistan is the largest homeland for the Ismaʿilis: about half a million of them live in this country, whence in the 1980s they were estimated around 400,000 (Kreutzmann 1989: 149). The Pakistani Ismaʿilis are categorized into two groups, ethnically and linguistically quite different. One is that of the Khoja, known as a Karachi-based business community. The Khojas lead a reputed business network and have been a driving force in the modernization of the Jama at (Ismaʿili community), and their history is well-documented (cf. Bocock 1971; Clark 1976, 1978; Masselos 1978; Nanji 1974, 1978, 1983; Papanek 1962; Rattansi 1987; Walji 1974).

In 1845, Aga Khan I arrived in India from Persia, namely to the Khoja community. It was the starting point of the new history of the community. Here, as Gellner points out, the Ismaʿili Imam was given the financial and social means for doing something quite different (Gellner 1981: 108). It was Aga Khan III who started “something quite different” on a full-scale. During his long reign (1885–1957), while cultivating friendship with Western elites, the Imam promoted the modernization of the Khoja community. Profound changes took place in the Khoja community. The jama2at-khana, a center of prayer and assembly now features many kinds of organizations. A council system has been established for administration and arbitration. The Ismaʿilia Association deals with religious affairs. Cooperative banks channel loans to the individual merchants. The

Education Board provides schools, and so on. Offices have been filled with eager volunteers (the Imam officially nominates them). Aga Khan III was issuing farmans (royal decrees) and exercising general control over all the organizations. Thus a modern Jamaat was formed with the volunteer works motivated not only by economic profit, but also by spiritual fulfillment.

The other group, much less studied as the Ismaʿilis, is located in the northern corner of Pakistan. This is a border region between Central Asia and South Asia within the high mountains of the Karakorum-Hindukush. They are distributed throughout the numerous valleys, speaking various languages: Khowar, Shina, Burushaski, Wakhi, and so on. Life is mainly based on an agro-pastoral economy, with ever-increasing emphasis on off-farm income (on the rapid socio-economic changes in Northern Pakistan, see Stellrecht 1998; Stellrecht and Bohle 1998; Stellrecht and Winiger 1997).

*** Mountain farmers

Historically speaking, there were many principalities ruled by local rulers (called mir, mehtar, or raja) in the North until the 1970s. Besides the local political system, there was a religious hierarchy in the Ismaʿili community (pir, khalifa, and murid). Pirs (elders, masters) used to have a deep influence among the Ismaʿilis, which is expressed through a ritual of personal obedience (Holzwarth 1994: 39–40). A British administrator, John Biddulph, residing in Gilgit in the 1870s, wrote as follows (in the text, “Maulai” means “Ismaili,” “Kunjoot” refers to “Hunza”):

The countries inhabited by the Maulais are roughly divided among a number of Pirs, who are treated by their disciples with extraordinary respect. The office is hereditary, and Maulai families transfer their spiritual obedience from father to son. For instance, Shah Abdul Rahim of Zebak, who is honoured and respected as being next in rank to Aga Khan himself, has disciples in Sirikol, Kunjoot, Zebak, Yassin, and Badakhshan, but other Pirs have also disciples in those places. The respect paid to the Pirs by their disciples is unbounded; if they ask for a son

or a daughter of any house, no refusal is dreamed of. One of them once said to me: “If I ordered a father to kill his own son, he dare not refuse.” Whenever they move about, they maintained out of their superfluities, and they live entirely on the offerings of their disciples. Presents of horses, cattle, clothes, fruits, wheat, etc., are continually being made, and the best of everything a Maulai possesses is given to his Pir. A portion of these offerings is converted into coin and sent yearly to Aga Khan, and agents travel yearly from those remote parts to Bombay solely for the purpose of conveying these contributions to him.

(Biddulph 1880: 119)

At the turn of the twentieth century, Aga Khan III had consolidated his authority in Bombay. Still, the pirs in this remote area maintained autonomous religious authority. Pirs might not have sent all the offerings to the Imam, and kept some portion for themselves or redistributed it within the local community. Disposal of the offerings was left to the pirs’ discretion (Holzwarth 1994: 41; see also Keshavjee 1981 and Shahrani 1979 for similar situations in Iran and Afghanistan respectively).

*** Reforms from the center

Reforms among the Khojas were not easily emulated among the Ismaʿilis of the hinterlands such as Northern Pakistan. As mountain farmers with a subsistence economy, they did not have the capital of which the Khojas could dispose. But the region was also changing in its own way. Toward the turn of the century, the British tightened their control on the principalities of Chitral, Hunza, Ghizr, etc. It was the time of the Great Game between the Russian and the British Empires. This situation eventually had crucial impacts on the Ismaʿilis. As the newly created international borders came under increasing tension, pirs in the Pamirs faced difficulties in communicating with followers in British territory. At the same time, thanks to the British administration, which improved the transportation system from Srinagar to Gilgit, the Imam obtained a way to convey his message—and extend his control—more directly and efficiently to his

followers in this mountain region. From that time onwards, most pirs disappear from the stage of local religious history (see Hunzaʿi 1991). Instead, the mir of Hunza, the sole Ismaʿili ruler in the region, came to the fore as the agent of the Imam. Mir Muhammad Nazim Khan was granted an audience with the Imam in 1903 in Delhi (Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 56-57). One of his sons went as far as Zanzibar to do homage to Aga Khan III (Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 375). Beforehand, pirs had monopolized the communication with the Imam.

Aga Khan III introduced reforms to the mountainous region under the “Pax Britanica.” In 1922 and 1923, the Imam sent delegations to the various Ismaʿili communities. Important steps taken at that time were the construction of jamaʿat-khanas and the introduction of money orders for sending tithes (Müller-Stellrecht 1979: 218–220). The Imam nominated mukhi and kamria to be in charge of the management of each jamaʿat-khana (Kreutzmann 1989: 154-165, follows the development in Hunza from that time onwards). In 1946 Aga Khan III instructed the followers to build the first DJ schools (Felmy 1997: ch. 5; Hunzai 1991: 56-60). Since the British had established one or two primary schools in each principality, a few literate youths were available. They were to be appointed as the first DJ teachers.

** The Pir as a modernizer

In the following sections we would like to investigate the changes taking place among the Ismaʿilis using anthropological approaches. Our fieldwork was done between 1993 and 1995 in the villages of the upper Ghizr. First, we examined the early stage of school education in Ghizr through the life history of a pir family. The informant’s life exemplifies the transformation of the Ismaʿilis at that time.[758]

Our pir, hereafter mentioned as Pir Sahib as called in his locality, was born in 1929 in Yarkand (Xinjiang). Pir Sahib claims that his family is originally from Badakhshan, and that an Imam has nominated his ancestor as a pir and gave him the title of khwaja. King Taj Moghol was also from the Khwaja, says Pir Sahib (Taj Moghol is a

legendary king of Badakhshan, who is said to have conquered the Chitral and Gilgit in the fourteenth century CE: see Dani 1989: ch.6).

Pir Sahib’s grandfather lived in Wakhan [759] and used to visit Aga Khan in Bombay every year to deliver zakat and to get religious instructions. In June, when the snow of the Baroghil Pass melted, he used to cross the pass between the Wakhan and Ghizr. Then he used to join another pir in Mastuj and to visit Bombay in the latter’s company. The family moved to Yarkand in c. 1908. Pir Sahib says thatpirs at that time used to move as they liked. Wakhan is a narrow valley similar to that of Ghizr, so his father was happy to settle in the town, Pir Sahib suggests. They lived among the Ismaʿilis and spoke Persian. After twenty-five years, Yarkand was drawn into harsh conflicts and, in 1933, the family had to leave the land. Pir Sahib remembers the forty days’journey through the mountain path, spent on the back of a donkey. They moved to Mastuj, relying on another pir family there. In 1946, they came to the upper Ghizr and finally settled there. They were received with the respect of the Ismaʿilis. The raja also exempted them from tax and corvée out of respect. Pir Sahib says that his father visited neighboring villages. However, there were not so many pirs active in the area, and their activities were not institutionalized. Religious education was limited among the pir families, and to some extent in those of khalifas. At the age of 17, in 1946, Pir Sahib began to study at the Gupis Primary School, an educative institution established by the British. He recollects:

There was a school in Gupis, Yasin, Gulapur and in another village respectively. Admission was easily available since people were not eager to study. The population was small and people were busy with cultivation.

They had many livestock as well. About 30 students were studying in the school. Many of them were teenage boys like me. At that time, people did not appreciate that girls go to school, so that there was no single girl in the class. At school we used to learn Urdu and Persian languages, the geography of the Gilgit region, and mathematics. There was no class of Islam.

(Dani 1989: 413)

This was a turning point in Pir Sahib’s life. He became a DJ teacher after studying only three years in the primary school. Pir Sahib remembers the first days of the DJ school:

We started the classes in a small room attached to the jama2at-khana. There was just one blackboard in it. About thirty five boys were coming from the surrounding villages. Sunni boys joined from the beginning. The course was for six years and there was no tuition fee. There were classes of Urdu language, mathematics, social science, and Islam. At that time, the only middle school was in Gilgit. Very few students could reach that place. We had English class after the 5th grade, at least until 1992. In the present DJ school, English language is taught from the beginning. Since I had never studied English at school, I learnt it by myself. I picked up words with dictionary, one by one. But then it was Urdu that we needed: we were eager to write letters, fill application forms, or talk to officers from Pakistan. Through the 1950s English was not that much required. The DJ school was originally intended only for boys.[760] It became mixt in the course of time, but parents did not agree to send their daughters to school. If a girl came, she seldom attended the classes until graduation.[761]

While coming from a traditional family, Pir Sahib became one of the forerunners of modernization. The role he played was quite important and decisive for the transformation of an illiterate farmers’ society.

** A new collective leadership

In 1960 Aga Khan IV visited Northern Pakistan for the first time in Ismaʿili history (Hunzai 1991: 70-74; Kreutzmann 1989: 157). The Harvard-graduate Imam was impressed with his followers’ dedication. Since then, much attention has been paid to Northern Pakistan. The abolition of the principalities and the opening of the Karakorum Highway in the 1970s

brought about further crucial changes in Northern Pakistan. The Ismaʿili community had produced many young literates by the 1980s and the collective leadership of the younger generation has emerged. The appearance of waʿizs (lecturers) clearly demonstrates this tendency, since waʿiz progressively took the place of thepirs in the field of religious instruction.

*** The waʿiz

Our waʿiz was born in 1962 in a village in upper Ghizr, two years after the first visit of Aga Khan IV. He is from an ordinary farmer’s family. He has studied at DJ primary and middle school, and at the Government highschool. In 1980, he has advanced to the Government College in Gilgit. The same year, the Gilgit branch of the Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿili Tariqa and the Religious Education Board for Pakistan (hereafter ITREB) started a training project for waʿizs. He applied for it, and then studied hard for four years. From 9:00 to 13:00, he was at College and studied Islamic history, Islamic studies, the history of Pakistan, Persian and English languages. The medium for education was Urdu, except for English class. From 14:30 to 17:30, he was being trained in the ITREB. The subjects were Arabic and Persian languages, Islamic history, Islamic philosophy, Islamic literature, Hadith, Greek philosophy, and logic. Arabic and Persian languages were being taught in these respective languages. In addition, there was an English class. Two PhD holders were lecturing systematically to the trainees. In 1984 he finished the training course and college. Since then he works as a waʿiz. Riding on his motorbike, the waʿiz goes from village to village. The waʿiz is a local channel of the religious information from the higher rank and the Imam’s English farman. To perform his duty, he has to use several languages. In the ITREB, the flow of information and reporting is communicated through English as well as through Urdu language. In the villages, the waʿiz uses local languages such as Khowar and Shina: he must explain and comment on the words of the Imam in local languages, so that every follower can understand them. The waʿiz also holds religious classes called YAR in jamaʿat-khanas. [762] In the classes the waʿiz gives a plain explanation of the Imamat, the Qurʿan, Islamic history, and the principles of Ismaʿilism.

On the one hand, the waʿiz upholds the religious tradition of Badakhshani Ismaʿilis. He learns Persian in the training and esteems Nasir Khusraw very highly. However, this does not mean that the waʿiz follows thepir’s old style directly: his learning and teaching style come as a consequence of the systematization of the religious knowledge within Ismaʿili organizations.

*** The children of Aga Khan

Moreover, the waʿiz is not alone. He is among those young leaders working in the Ismaʿili Council system, Arbitration Panel, Tariqa Board, and others. (These religious organizations are not NGOs open to everyone, but basically only for the socio-religious affairs within the Ismaʿili community.) The young leaders have much in common. They are born in dispensaries of the AKHS, study at DJ school, and proceed to College with scholarships from the AKES. In Gilgit, they may stay in the Shah Karim al-Husayni Hostel named after the present Imam. They come back to villages as DJ teachers, AKHS local officers, or Lady Health Visitors. The tendency is widespread in the upper Ghizr, Hunza and elsewhere. In other words, they are products of the AKDN in social development. Now they are men of influence in their own villages. We now examine their socio-religious activities.[763]

**** The Local Council

The most important organization at the local level is the Council system. Twenty-five LC and five Regional Councils (RC), under the Federal Council (FC) in Karachi, stretch over all the Ismaʿili villages in the Northern Areas. In the villages, every jamaʿat-khana is under a certain LC. In Ghizr, there are 4 LCs: Gupis, Pingal, Phandar, and Gologh Muli. In the Yasin Valley, there are also 4 LCs. These 8 LCs are under Gupis Regional Council. The members of the RC is made of experienced volunteers. The RC gives instructions to the less experienced members of LC, or deals with issues that cannot be handled at the LC level. The RC members are so

qualified that they can theoretically discuss the regional problems with the Imam. The FC is located in Karachi and its members are mainly composed of the Khojas. Keeping communication with the Imam, the FC decides the direction of the Pakistani Ismaʿilis.

The Imam’s instructions come to the villagers through the Council system. The Council also collects the zakat and delivers it to the Imam. In principle the zakat is made of 10% of the income, paid in cash, but due to the less stable economic situation, it is set slightly lower compared to the Khojas. The Ismaʿilis emphasize that the zakat is meaningfully used for the development of villages. The problems in the villages are moved out through the Council system, and the Imam decides how to tackle them. Until then, the collected zakat is kept in a bank in Karachi. Eventually it comes back to the villages for various expenditure. People claim that the zakat has never been squandered on the whims of the Imam.

**** The Panel

“His Highness the Prince Agha Khan Shiʿa Imami Ismaʿili Masalti-o-Salisi Panel” is a spin-off organization out of the Council system. It is specialized in conducting mediation and arbitration. Its trademark is a crown that symbolizes the Imamat. The Panel is basically an arbitration body for solving troubles and disputes within the Ismaʿili community. The Government of Pakistan officially acknowledges it. Therefore, the Panel can deal with injury and murder as well as marriage and business troubles. To obtain essential knowledge of the Pakistani laws, members are trained in Gilgit. There are upper Panels in Gilgit and Karachi, and the latter has among its members professionals with a judicial background. With problems concerning land and water, local Sunnis can be concerned since they live together in most villages in Ghizr. If they agree, the Panel offers a table for negotiation. Sometimes a civil judge in Gupis sends cases to the Panel, but the reverse does not happen. It is claimed that the advantages of the Panel are that it is “free, fast and just.” In the Panel, one does not have to submit any particular paper. He or she can discuss the matter fully in his/her mother tongue. On the contrary, the government judicial system has a very poor reputation. People have to attend trials repeatedly. Since it may take years until

judgment, the cost of attending these formalities in remote places is regarded as too expensive. There are always rumors of bribery in and around Government offices.

Regardless of one’s tenet, people call it jirga and are ready to accept its proposal when one is concerned. The jirga is a judicial system that used to be based on the authority of the raja (and later, of the British Political Agent). “The raja’s rule was tyranny, but we could solve the matter very quickly at that time.” “We used to solve the case at once.” “We did not take bribes.” The elders who once were jirga members unanimously claim this to be true. These claims also imply criticism of the present Government. Here, there is a base for wider acceptance of the Panel or new jirga, which is under the authority of the Imamat.

**** The Ismaili Tariqa and the Religious Education Board

The ITREB deals with religious education and publications. Tariqa (Ar. tariqa) originally means “path” of an ascetic practice. It also refers to such or such specific mystic order. Through this word, it is the Ismaʿili attitude of putting significance on the inner (batin) meaning of the Qurʿan that is understood. The organization is called the “Ismaʿilia Association,” as well. Its headquarters are again in Karachi and take charge of religious education and information as a whole. The ITREB publishes various journals and books, mainly for the Ismaʿili audience. At the local level, the main task of the Board is religious education of children. Boys and girls of more than 5 years old attend 2-hour classes to learn the recitation of the Qurʿan. Children also study the history of the Imams. As already mentioned, the wa2iz holds YAR classes for adults.

** Nasir Khusraw as an intellectual root

In the previous sections, we have seen how the leadership within the Ismaʿili community has been transformed in Northern Pakistan. These new

leaders are produced and supported by various NGO activities. Though the AKDN is nonde-nominational, in the Ismaʿili life NGOs and religious organizations complement each other. Then, what are the implications for religious studies? This question is not easy to answer, since most Ismaʿilis hesitate to talk about religion with non-Ismaʿilis. Nonetheless, some important steps have been taken, and it is possible for outsiders to make some observations. Therefore in this section we will try to deal with this issue despite our still much limited information sources.[764] Within religious studies, the focus is put on the Fatimid Ismaʿili philosopher and missionary Nasir Khusraw (1004-after 1072 CE). Of course, Nasir Khusraw has been known for more than a century in the West, where first attempts of study and translation of his work have been made as early as c. 1880 (Schimmel 1993: 1). Here it is important to emphasize that the tradition of the well-known Fatimid philosopher is deeply rooted in Northern Pakistan.

Nasir Khusraw was born in Balkh (in the North of modern Afghanistan) and is famous for his journey to Mecca and Cairo. Later, he resided in Yumgan, a remote mountainous region of Badakhshan. Yumgan is not far from Chitral and the Ismaʿilis in Northern Pakistan revere Nasir Khusraw as their first missionary from Badakhshan. The “Isma2ili Mission in the Northern Areas: A Historical Review” begins with a mention of Nasir Khusraw as the first to have propagated the Ismaʿili doctrine to the region (Hunzaʿi 1991), where many local folk tales narrate Nasir Khusraw’s miracles (cf. Schomberg 1938). Another piece of evidence to demonstrate Nasir Khusraw’s significance in the North is a ritual called chiragh-i rawshan, a lamp-lighting ceremony attributed to Nasir Khusraw and performed on the third day after a death. The chiragh-i rawshan is performed to console and give a message about the dead’s life in the other world; it invites the living ones to focus on the mystical presence of the Imam, who is identified with a spiritual lamp. Thus, through folk tales and traditional ritual, Nasir Khusraw has long been known and familiar among the Ismaʿilis as a great saint.

His writings can be divided into three categories: a prose memoir of his travels, poetry, and philosophical books (Hunsberger 2000: 114). Yet works of his such as the Safar-nama, Diwan, Waëh-i din and others have not been widely accessible to the faithful until very recently, and in the

past only a small number of people used to be familiar with his philosophy. This is not strange when considering that the community was largely based on agro-pastoralism and had only very scanty means for reproducing the scholarly class from generation to generation. Now, thanks to widespread education, many young persons with scientific and technical MAs and BAs are eager to acquire by themselves a higher religious knowledge. When they turn to religious studies, Nasir Khusraw is always a focal point.

Nasir Khusraw studies have been developed mainly in the Hunza Valley, where social development is most advanced among Northern Ismaʿilis. It is Allama Nasir Hunzaʿi (Allama Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzaʿi) who started serious study on Nasir Khusraw. Nasir Hunzaʿi was born in 1917 in Hunza. Being a member of a khalifa family, he must have been closer to religious learning, although in general, circumstances in Hunza were then far from ideal for education. He was able to attend school for only one year, and acquired knowledge mainly by himself. Later, when he was in Xinjiang to propagate Ismaʿilism, he was arrested. While in prison, he experienced a spiritual awakening. So far, the prolific thinker has published more than 150 books and pamphlets, which made him be known under the title of Allama, or greater scholar.

Beside translating the Waëh-i din and other works of Nasir Khusraw into Urdu, Nasir Hunzaʿi has written several articles about this great figure. One of these articles, “Pir Nasir Khusraw, A Universe of Knowledge,” has been published in the Tazkira-yi Sayyidna Pir Nasir Lusraw (Iqbal et al. 1992). This is the record of two Ismaili conferences on Nasir Khusraw held in Chitral (October 1989) and Gilgit (November 1990). Beside Nasir Hunzaʿi’s, it includes more than twenty articles. Topics are extremely broad and cover various aspects of Nasir Khusraw’s life, works, and influence in Central Asia. The book is epoch-making, since the articles were mainly written by the educated young generation for their fellow readers. Another important work of Nasir Hunzaʿi is his Chiragh-i Rawshan (1993), the first written interpretation (ta wil) of the ritual, exploring its various esoteric significations.

Allama Nasir Hunzaʿi has established several private institutions and taught many students. Originally installed in 1961 in Hunza, the Danishgah-i

Khanah-i Hikmat has been relocated in Karachi since 1977, and become a locus of religious studies. The Allamah Research Institute Foundation, or Idara-i ARIF, has been established by his students in Canada. Nasir Hunzaʿi's works include as well poetry in Burushaski, the vernacular tongue of Hunza. The BRA, or Burushaski Research Academy, specializes in the study of the language, and Nasir Hunzai is also known locally as Baba-e Burushaski (Father of Burushaski). There are thousands of young Ismaʿilis from the North studying and working in Karachi. Nasir Hunzaʿi's circle attracts students from this population (there are students from Afghanistan too). Among his students, colleagues, and ex-colleagues, one can mention the following figures.

Ghulam Abbas Hunzaʿi has written his Master thesis (McGill University) on the concept of pleasure in the philosophy of Nasir Khusraw. He has worked with the ITREB, and is presently working with the AKHS. Shahnaz Hunzaʿi has had a unique career: she is one of the Khoja women married to Hunza, and masters the local Burushaski language. She is the author of a thesis on the concept of qiyamat (resurrection of the Last Day) in Nasir Khusraw's thought at the Institute of Ismaʿili Studies (IIS, London), in which she has translated a few chapters of the Lwan al-ilwan into English. Azizullah Najeeb, one of the editors of the Tazkira, has completed his Doctoral Degree on Nasir Khusraw from Hamdard University in Karachi. He was working as a waʿiz when the Gilgit branch of the Ismaʿilia Association was first established. Fida Ali Isar Hunzaʿi is the author of Ismaʿili Mission in the Northern Areas; he has also translated selected poems of the Diwan in Urdu, and it is published from ITREB (Hunzaʿi 1998–1999).

But these intellectual movements are not limited to Northern Pakistan or Karachi, and are in fact resonating with the center. We can see it through the example of another student of Nasir Hunzaʿi's—Faqir Muhammad Hunzai (sic), a Research Associate at the IIS. He has been translating the 'Allama's works from Urdu into English in collaboration with his wife, who is from the East African Khoja community. He undertook his post-graduate studies at Karachi University, where he was studying philosophy, Arabic, and Persian language and literature. The holder of a PhD from McGill University (Islamic Studies), he is active at the IIS and his works include The Shimmering Light. An Anthology of Ismaʿili Poetry (1996), which

collects nineteen poems from the Diwan, and Nasir Khusraw: Knowledge and Liberation (1998), a new edition and English translation of the Gumayim wa rahayim.

Thus the local intellectual movement originating from the Northern Pakistan appears closely linked with the center or the IIS. The Institute of Ismaʿili Studies has been established in 1977 with the object of promoting Islamic scholarship and learning in general, and Ismaʿilism in particular. The IIS offers a graduate program in Islamic Studies and Humanities, which attracts students from Ismaʿili communities around the world. Since the mid-1990s, the Institute has vigorously published academic books and research papers on Ismaʿilism, especially that of the Fatimid period. In one of the IIS publications, Heinz Halm writes: “under the Fatimids and through their efforts, Cairo became one of the centres of Islamic culture and art, and a focus of a scholarship and science” (Halm 1997: xiv). For the Ismaʿilis who have achieved social, cultural, and economic uplift through NGO activities, the Fatimid golden age is associated with their own efforts to reconstruct Islamic civilization under the Imamat. It is quite understandable that, in such an overall framework, Nasir Khusraw is highly esteemed in the center as well as in the North.

** Conclusion

*** The change in authority transmission

In the Ismaʿili community in Northern Pakistan, the forms and features of leadership have changed considerably. Within a century, especially in the last fifty years, they have gradually established a collective leadership. “Now we don’t have much to do” says Pir Sahib, relaxing in his porch, listening to a Persian program on the radio. “The institutes do it.” Religious tradition is revived by the activities of the ITREB. Furthermore, researchers in the IIS in London are eager to edit the classical texts. Local waʿizs may follow this academic trend.

Religious organizations as well as NGOs offer leadership to the educated youth regardless of their origin. They can go up the hierarchy of the religious organizations, from Local to Regional offices. Beside the Imam’s encouragement, respect and prestige within the community are the rewards for one’s volunteer work. The young generation shares the following features as local leaders under the present Imamat.

1 They personify the equality of the followers.

2 With higher education, they are fluent in reading and writing English, as well as Urdu.

3 They are in charge of managing organizations based on their merits, not by holy ancestry.

4 Reflecting their own transformation, they have started to produce religious knowledge directly related to the Great Tradition, or the texts of Nasir Khusraw, who was formerly known only through miracles and rituals.

The new leaders make a good combination with the Imam. As the supreme leader of the AKDN, Aga Khan IV is well known in the development circles: he makes speeches in UN conferences, or holds international conferences in partnership with the World Bank. For this Imam, those who talk about high hopes for the AKRSP’s grassroots program are the best counterpart. Local pirs with traditional ritual and holy ancestry are not able to follow in the Imam’s footsteps.

The change of leaders at the local level reflects not only the internal changes of Northern Pakistan. The way these changes were institutionalized demonstrates but also the direction of self-reform in the Ismaʿili community as a whole. The holy ancestry except that of the Imam has been denied, and collective leadership has become an organizational principle. Thanks to religious and NGO activities, the northern Jama at of the

mountain farmers and the southern Jama at of the Khojas have become one with regard to institutionalization.

*** An emerging civil society and identity

The change in the modes of acquisition and transmission of literacy has been intermingling and strengthening the tendency of self-help among the Ismaʿilis. It has made the Ismaʿili community more egalitarian and autonomous. If it does not oppose the state, in Pakistan as well as in Tajikistan, it does virtually replace the local administration in various fields. Among the Ismaʿili religious organizations, persistence in voluntarism is a most visible feature. At the same time, volunteers are being nominated to their offices by the Imam himself. This appointment is a source of honor and prestige that excites the Ismaʿilis' efforts. Through the volunteer works, the Ismaʿilis nurture their personal relationship with the Imam. Thus institutionalized voluntarism has an aspect of large-scale expression of spiritual dedication to the Imam. The consequence is the construction of an autonomous space, which can be termed "civil society" in the contemporary world. It is interesting enough that the century-old office of Imamat is the founding stone of the new civil society.

Being a minority in Pakistan, the Ismaʿili version of the revival movement has its own subtlety too. The AKDN's nondenominational attitude, inviting non-Ismaʿilis as well as Ismaʿilis for development has created an image of openness to both the Imamat and the Jamaat. "Participation for development" has, at the same time, produced a particular meaning within the Ismaʿili community. Since the NGOs' activities are well coordinated with the religious organizations in the community, they have contributed to the creation of a new identity among Ismaʿilis. It also means the creation of a boundary between Ismaʿilis and non-Ismaʿilis. This boundary strengthens their identity, often by tacitly contrasting themselves with the others. This factor can be exclusionary and may cause negative social results. Higher religious studies, though still embryonic, are interesting in this regard. Through studying Nasir Khusraw and the Fatimid Golden Age, the Northern Ismaʿilis will be able to widen and deepen their religio-cultural identity. In other words, Nasir Khusraw can be a passport to the Great Tradition for Northern Ismaʿilis. By invigorating religious studies, the latter will be able to

identify themselves in their own community in the North, in the Pakistani Ismaʿili community, and in the world of Islam in general.

** Note

[757] The data mentioned here was kindly given from the offices of AKES and AKHS.

[758] The narratives given here are paraphrased to be compact by the author.

[759] There are “Khuja families” in Wakhan. See Shahrani 1979: 56.

[760] Nowadays AKES’s main task is education for girls.

[761] Interview conducted by the author in May 5, 1995.

[762] YAR stands for Youth and Elder Religious Course. Yar means “friend” in Urdu.

[763] The Isma2ilis are not eager to offer the information about their socio-religious activities. From time to time, however, some of them kindly gave me some information.

[764] I highly owe 2Allama Nasir Hunza2i and Shahnaz Hunza2i for the information. I would like to express special acknowledgment to them.

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[IIS] means the title is published in association with the Institute of Ismaili Studies.

* 12. Islam on the Wings of Nationalism: The case of Muslim intellectuals in Republican China

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Unceasing convulsions, chaos and troubles have shaken China, as it is well known, during the first half of the twentieth century: the Boxer rebellion in 1900, the overthrow of the Qing dynasty at the turn of 1912, the xenophobic anti-Christian (more precisely anti-Protestant) outburst in 1925, the breaking of a tactical alliance between Guomindang [765] and Communists in 1927, the rapid militarization of the politics and so on.[766] While intellectuals were contending without end about the significance of the past, the throwing out of their so-called ossified spiritual legacy, the invention of a new way of life and thought, their political commitment, there were other groups of intellectuals who unostentatiously and unnoticed were conducting their own revolution, on the fringe of the main currents, especially in the coastal big cities. These intellectuals were Chinese believers in Islam.[767]

** How Muslim intellectuals reacted to the surrounding turmoil

*** With cultural associations

The basis of their social activity was the creation of numerous cultural associations, whose program focused on the modernization and the expansion of popular religious education, on the improvement of higher religious formation, on the promotion of Islamic culture, and whose leaders were often the imams in charge of the cult (zhangjiao), usually called in China the ahongs. [768]
Associations had too the merit of being a remedy for the dispersion of local communities, each of them congregated round a mosque, without links between one another. And, doing so, the activists were convinced that they put into practice their love of the Chinese motherland and their wish to help it, although without taking political stand, they say. But, from the names chosen for these associations and for the schools they supported, it is

obvious that a very important point then was at stake: the identity of the Chinese Muslims, that is Muslims whose everyday and literary language is Chinese. Did they constitute a religious or an ethnic minority? That is a problem which was new at the turn of the twentieth century and during the following decades, linked with the diffusion of Western ideas (often thanks to a Japanese intermediary) about religion, ethnicity, nationality and citizenship.

Actually there are several Chinese expressions for rendering the concept of Islam and Muslim according to the point of view of the speaker, and each of them appears somehow in one or another designation of these associations. The traditional wording of self-designation was to be a follower of “the Religion of the Pure and the True” or of “the Pure and True Religion”, Qingzhenjiao , a statement still very appreciated at the turn of the twenty-first century for it stresses the believers’ purity as a special marker of their superiority. They could also be called Mumin , “the Mu[slim] people,” an abbreviation of the word now currently in use, Mu-si-lin .[769] During the first half of the twentieth century they were more and more often named—and they called themselves more and more often—members of the Huijiao “the religion of the Hui,” or Huimin , “the Hui people,” it being understood that Hui had then the mean ing of the world-wide Islam,[770] an equivalent of the word now common, Yi-si-lan , Chinese transliteration of “Islam.” They also frequently called themselves the Hui Hanzi ,, “the Muslim Han.” Later on, history has decided: under the People’s Republic, the Chinese Muslims have been registered as a specific “nationality” or minzu, , as the Huizu .[771] In the following list I shall draw from the main cultural associations created during the first decades of the twentieth century; I shall translate their names as closely as possible to their original meaning, unfortunately at the expense of elegance, because such names were not chosen at random, and each of the words forming them bore in itself the weight of an emotionally heavy tradition.

Since the very beginning, the appearance of associations of their own is unmistakably a reply the Muslim modernists gave to the pervasive atmosphere surrounding them. Indeed the earliest association just followed, at the end of the Qing dynasty, the official reform of the educational system, culminating in September 1905 in the abolition of the thousand year old civil

service examinations and of the Confucian schooling. It was founded in 1906 (Guangxu 32) [772] at Zhenjiang (Jiangsu),[773] under the appellation of the “General Association for the Religious Education of the Muslim People (Mumin) of Eastern Asia” (Dongya Mumin jiaoyu zonghui). Its initiator, Tong Cong ,[774] was a local Muslim in his forties, having recently graduated in the Confucianist system, so a man well integrated in the surrounding society. The interesting point is that he was then in touch with a group of thirty-six young Muslim Chinese sent for studying in Tokyo, because Japan was, after its victory over Russia in 1905, the favorite place where one could be introduced into modernity.[775] These young men in their turn founded in 1907, on the model drawn by Tong Cong, an “Association for the Pure and True [i.e. Muslim] Education of the Students in To[kyo]/or in the East”—with a play on the word dong “East,” and the first syllable of Tokyo, ‘the Eastern Capital’ (Liudong Qingzhen jiaoyu hui). And then, so important was, in the Chinese tradition, the correct naming of any enterprise, that Tong Cong, at these students’ instigation, changed the name of his society to “General Association for the Pure and True Education of East Asia” (Dongya Qingzhen jiaoyu zonghui), a formulation which stressed at the same time the religious and the Chinese characters of his program. The aim of Tong Cong’s association was the promotion of a good Muslim education, so many Muslim notables backed him. He had actually opened in 1905 one of the first “modernized” Islamic schools in China—if not the first one—, a “School of Muslim sources” (Muyuan xuetang), fit out with a printing house for presenting his pedagogical ideas in a journal “To develop us” (the Yiwobao). As early as in 1908, he called in the school a meeting of his supporters and encouraged the creation of branches of his association everywhere. But this still remained a provincial venture.

Merchants of Shanghai, during the troubles accompanying the fall of the impe rial dynasty in the last weeks of 1911, constituted for protecting citizens a militia directed by a future journalist, Sha Shanyu ,[776] and they were proclaiming to be adepts of the “Pure and True” using the name itself chosen for their group, Qingzhen shangtuan [Militia of Merchants of the Pure and True].[777] The need for a common local organization of the believers was then strongly felt. For example, shortly before the overthrow of the dynasty, in 1910, a group of Muslim merchants and students of Shanghai elected (through a genuine vote, toupiao , with ballot papers) a marine officer as a general

administrator with two assistants, to make up for the lack of a central authority heading their community; and they came to the office of the representative of the throne, the head of the xian , begging for an official registration: this has been immortalized by an inscrip tion on stone.[778] Shortly after the beginning of the new era in 1912, Muslim intellectuals of the major centers of coastal China felt more and more the acute need for associations promoting Islamic (Hui) culture and education. Pekingese launched in this very year 1912 a progressive movement with the long-lasting “Society for the Advance of the Hui Religion of China” (Zhongguo Huijiao jujin hui or al-Ëam2iyyat al-taqaddum al-islamiyya al-siniyya),[779] which has been the first nationwide association of the believers, endowed with subsidiary associations (fenhui) in each province, and, since 1934, sub sidiary groups in the mosques too. Very fine scholars were among its members, such as the ahong Ma Songting [780] and its first director, the ahong Wang Haoran.[781] The principle for naming this association, which was to be fol- lowed by several others, was to use the word Huijiao, meaning Islam as a whole, and to add the specification of Zhongguo, “China.” The movement extended to Shanghai later. In the full burst of xenophobic man ifestations and of large strikes in 1925, appeared, in the foreground of Muslim revival, Ha Decheng. [782] He was both a religious personality—an ahong at a Shanghai mosque—, and since 1913 one of the managers of an international commercial society, whose benefits were earmarked to finance the schooling of future ahong and to buy Islamic books overseas. In 1925, back to Shanghai after several years spent abroad, he was struck by the still low level of religious teach ing. In order to remedy to this situation, he gathered ten or so co-religionists of Shanghai, among others Sha Shanyu, a teacher and journalist,[783] and Wu Tegong a journalist; [784] and on the 25th of June he created with them a specifically nonpolitical “Learned Society of the Hui Religion of China” (Zhongguo Huijiao xuehui , or al-Ëam2iyyat al-2ilmiyya al-islamiyya al-siniyya).[785] Its aim was the promotion of religious education, of the collective good, of friendship with foreign co-religionists; the practical actions were the creation of an Islamic school, of an Arabic school and of elementary schools, of a library, the diffusion of foreign Muslim scholarship, the translation of the Qurʿan, the publication of handbooks, of a journal, and so on. Such it remained, till the Japanese took over Shanghai, the most efficient society in the field of Muslim scholarship.

Some years later, in October 1929, still in Shanghai, some distinguished Muslim personalities, who were not professionals of religion, initiated a “Guild of the Hui Religion of China” (Zhongguo Huijiao gonghui).[786] Its main leaders were again Sha Shanyu, Wu Tegong and Da Pusheng, [787] an elderly man who had graduated some years before at the Cairo University of al-Azhar and who was to play a prominent part in the relation of the Muslim community with the Guomindang and the Communist governments. The aim of this association was to help the country and to plan the public good; the means to reach it was the formation of ahongs of the highest grade, the construction of numerous schools, hospitals and libraries, and the introduction of a technical training. However, the association could not carry it off, a failure due to a lack of organization, of talented helpers, and to some inner resistance, which shows that the task was not easy.

Two years after this one, in 1931, another scholarly society was created by young Muslims, in Nanking this time: the “Learned Society of the Youth for the Hui Religion of China” (Zhongguo Huijiao qingnian xuehui), whose program was to meet together on a friendly footing, to study in a scholarly way, and finally to help the society as a whole, the means of action being meet ings of young people, vocational orientation of the youth, various publications, contribution to an improvement of believers’ life. A new step was passed, which showed that young Muslims had begun to feel concerned by the political atmos phere, especially in Nanking, then the capital of the Guomindang government: they have added to their program a study of Sun Yatsen’s “Triple Demism” or Three People Principles (Sanmin zhuyi) to check if it did not contradict Islam. They complemented their association in 1936 by an “Association for Scientific Research of the Hui People” (Huimin xueshu yanjiu hui) [788] which was aimed at realizing specific scholarly studies.

By that time, in 1934 a “Cultural Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China” (Zhongguo Huijiao wenhua xiehui) [789] was launched at Shanghai. One of its founding members was Fu Tongxian,[790] a modernist and the future author of a history of Chinese Islam which remains our best source of information for the evolution of Islam in the Republican era. The objective of the group was to upgrade the

level of Chinese Islam, felt as too low, its tools being publication of new researches or of old classical studies in the field of Chinese Islam. The list of Muslim associations with a purely cultural aim, which started in the late twenties and early thirties, could be expanded with provincial initia tives too. We may quote, for example, a “Society for the diffusion of Chinese Islam” (Zhongguo Yi-si-lan budao hui),[791] introduced in 1933 into Taiyuan, the capital city of Shanxi, whose program was to spread broadly the Muslim doctrine, through a translation of the Qurʿan, various publi cations and news about the Religion in the local newspaper, the Daily of Taiyuan (Taiyuan ribao). This time the name of the association showed it referred not just to Hui religion but Islam (Yi-si-lan) itself.

In the thirties, the Islamic associations were beginning to feel the weight of politics, as testified by the Nanking students’ concern for the official ideology of the Guomindang as conveyed by Sun Yatsen’s program. A new stage was passed when Muslim military personalities of Western China, while becoming warlords, were heartily supporting a revival of Islamic culture in its sinicized and confu- cianized version and adhered to Muslim cultural associations of the coastal regions. It was in May 1933, when Ma Hongkui ,[792] just appointed governor of Ningxia, at the door of Tibet, entered into the administrative committee (weiyuan) of a new “Society for the Promotion of Education of the Hui People” (Huimin jiaoyu cujin hui),[793] and served in this capacity till 1948. The program was a straight education for everybody. But a new preoc cupation was added to the usual promise of establishing a lot of good schools: to push forward Chinese Islam to the western part of the country by proselytizing in border regions and applying to the government for bringing together Uighurs and Muslim Han and giving them a common education. The name of another associ ation, started once more in the capital Nanking in 1934, the “Confederation of the Hui religion in China” (Zhonghua Huijiao zonghui),[794] indicated a certain display of support for the government, as the term Zhonghua has been selected by Sun Yatsen, and after him by the Guomindang, for referring to China, instead of the usual Zhongguo. One of its subsidiary association (fenhui), the one settled in Western China, in Lanzhou the capital of Gansu, was led by military and political figures belonging to the circle of warlords, Ma Lin ,[795] his nephew Ma Buqing ,[796] Ma Hongbin , [797] the nephew of the famous Ma Fuxiang ,[798] and a cousin of Ma Hongkui—himself Ma Fuxiang’s son.

The starting point of a general mobilization of believers for a political move was the shock of the so-called Marco Polo Bridge Incident, on 7 July 1937, the day Japan began to invade China. In the following months, a political personality of Tianjin, who was busy promoting a Muslim lobby inside the Guomindang, Shi Zizhou ,[799] and an influential ahong of the same town, Wang Jingzhai ,[800] initiated a “Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Resistance to Japan and the Salvation of the Country” (Zhongguo Huimin kangri jiuguo xiehui —with the term “Hui People” and no longer the “Hui Religion”). At about the same time, the higher Muslim member of the Guomindang government, the General Bai Chongxi , [801] wishing to unite the efforts of the cohort of Muslim voluntary associations, with Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi)’s support, invited the most influential Muslim personalities of the hour to meet at Wuchang (one of the three cities forming Wuhan in Central China) [802] where the government had withdrawn after the fall of Nanking.

So he gathered the so-called “Four Great Ahongs” (si da ahong), Wang Jingzhai (who was then 66 years old), Da Pusheng [803] (63 years), Ha Decheng [804] (49 years), Ma Songting [805] (42 years), and activists of the education, as Tang Kesan — of Shandong. [806] After discussion, these men, at Bai Chongxi’s instigation and with Chiang Kai-shek’s approval, founded a “Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country” (Zhongguo Huimin jiuguo xiehui , later called, as we will see, “Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country”),[807] which, under General Bai Chongxi, Tang Kesan and Shi Zizhou’s joint leadership, began to make itself known at the beginning of 1938 and held its first general meeting in May 1938. Among the overabundant boards of trustees (thirty-two persons), were present the representatives of Muslim military power of the West, the cousins Ma Hongkui and Ma Hongbin, the brothers Ma Bufang and Ma Buqing; and among the eight “observers” (jianshi) Da Pusheng and Wang Jingzhai. Inner depart ments (bu) were set up for organization, propaganda, investigation; and com mittees (weiyuanhui) were formed for dealing with specific questions such as education, youth, training, relief, and so on.[808] The aims of the association were: enlistment of Muslim citizens, especially youth, side by side with unbe lievers, in the struggle against the invader, purge of “running

dogs” of the enemy, and help to co-religionists who had fallen into misfortune, particularly in regions lost to the conquerors. During the summer of 1938, under threat of the progress of the front, the headquarters of the association moved to Chongqing , in Sichuan, shortly before the government and the intellectuals of the whole coun try.[809] There, in the cramped and boiling world of the wartime capital, Muslim intellectuals met with as never before the leaders of literature and scholarship, who in their turn became interested in Islam.

During that epoch, which saw in the country more than ever a blossoming of various kinds of associations among intellectuals of all convictions, an “Association for Studying the Culture of the Hui Religion” (Huijiao wenhua yanjiu hui was established, at the beginning of 1939, chaired by the General Bai, co-chaired by Tang Kesan, and counting among its members famous scholars or writers such as Guo Moruo (better known as Kuo Mo-jo) and Lao She, sitting alongside Muslim intellectuals, totally 123 persons. The discussion about the meaning and limits of the concepts “Hui People/Hui Religion” (Huimin/Huijiao) was then fierce. So that finally, at Bai Chongxi’s suggestion, the name of the main association was changed into “Association of the Hui Religion (Huijiao instead of Huimin) of China for the Salvation of the Country,” to show that it concerned all the adherents to Islam, even recent converts [810] and not only members of what was more and more considered as a special ethnic group (it seems that Muslims from Xinjiang were not included in the scope of the project).

In the emergency of the age, an association like this was bound to encounter a great success, opening subsidiary associations (fenhui) in the provinces— even in Hong Kong, in Tibet and, curiously enough, in Yan‘an under the leader ship of the Communist Party—, branches (zhihui) in the xian, sections (quhui) in the market towns, each of them subordinate to the local mosque.

It launched periodicals too, which reached a large audience; it created other derived associations, one “for the Youth” (Yi-si-lan qingnian hui) in February 1940, another “for the Study of Questions of the

World of Islam” (Yi-si- lan shijie wenti yanjiu hui or “for the Study of Questions of the Northwest” (Xibei wenti yanjiu hui) both in April 1943.

The assessment of its activity is diversified. Within the scope of its vast cultural and religious influence, it worked for organizing a company of Hui singers who had to popularize anti-Japanese songs; it asked the great writer Lao She to write a play about the common front of Hui and Han facing the enemy: the result was “The Acme of the Nation” (Guojia chishang), performed for the first time in Chongqing in Spring 1940. The patriotic awareness of Muslim citizens has been stirred up by the ahongs’ sermons and collective prayers made through its impetus. Moreover, it led to the enrolment of volunteers to fight the enemy, in all sixty-one detachments. It succeeded in creating a kind of anti-Japanese pro-Chinese lobby in Muslim countries, from Egypt and the Near-East till South and Southeast Asia, paving the way for the role the future official Islamic association of the People’s Republic would play as a link between the Chinese government and the Gulf countries. In 1946, the headquarters of the association followed the government to Nanking under Tang Kesan’s leadership; and in May 1948, an assembly of delegates of all the branches installed everywhere since 1938, announced as a new program a return to specifically cultural and religious concerns. But 1949 was already the year of the withdrawal to Taiwan, where the association kept up its program.[811]

*** With educational institutions

In harmony with a motto popular in China since the late Qing, “Save the Country by Education” (jiaoyu jiuguo),[812] every Muslim cultural association and its supporters advocated, as main practical action, the establishment of primary schools everywhere, and afterwards, as far as possible, of secondary schools. The aim was twofold: to increase the network of schooling in order to reach all the sons from believers’ families—and, with the passing of years, the girls too; and to introduce a so-called “New Style of Education” (xinshi jiaoyu).

But here was concealed a crucial question: what exactly was the content of this new-style education, especially at its beginning, before it became rather well theorized in the late twenties and the thirties? Its main ground appears to be a reaction of repulsion against the traditional system of mosque instruction, named the “Scriptural Hall education” (jingtang jiaoyu) [813] —which was in fact a madrasa system, that is a form of higher education, while the common new-style schools were at a primary or a secondary level. This standpoint of denial of the past was well in the line of rejection that the surrounding cultured society inflicted on the immemorial system of thought, Confucianism. It was also in the line of the traditional attitude of the Chinese ulama, who from century to century were overwhelmed with the feeling of an alleged decay of their religion, due to its distance from its origins in space and time, and who were convinced that a correct religious education was the absolute remedy for all the evils of the time. Anyway the introduction of the system of the “Scriptural Hall education” at the end of the sixteenth century had been celebrated as the most significant innovation in the history of Chinese Islam. Three centuries later, this system was repudiated and, in order to replace it, the Muslim elite had to face a much more complex agenda than the ordinary anti-Confucian modernists. It was still agreed that the education of the youth would remain under the tutelage of mosques: it is a fact that, so far as I am aware, new schools regularly settled within the mosque precincts, often in a special structure built on the backyard of the edifice. But the stake was the content of the teaching, a hard bone of contention between various Muslim allegiances during the first decades of the twentieth century.

The first part of the program of renovation concerned, of course, the teaching of Arabic and of religious matters (there was no more question of Persian, which had been, in its written form, more or less mastered by ahongs, and which would remain till the post-Maoist period the literary written language of female ahongs).[814] The first initiators of the modernist movement brought back from their trips to Mecca, Egypt, Turkey, India, in the early twentieth century, new teaching materials in Arabic, and, in the thirties even Western studies in islamology. In addition, on the model of public education in the country, the method of making the children drone by heart an incomprehensible classical text (in the case in point the Qurʿan in Arabic) was given up. The first question to solve was how should Arabic be taught and pronounced by the schoolboys? In the late Qing, the elementary schools appended to mosques used manuals in which

Qurʿanic extracts were transcribed by Chinese characters sounding, in the standard Northern reading, roughly as the corresponding Arabic phonemes; and the believers remained all their lives accustomed to recite Surats from the Sacred Book according to such a distorted way: for example the mahada, “la ilaha illa’llah,” used to become in the mouth of a traditional Chinese Muslim “la-yi-la-ho yin-lang-la-ho.” Reformers were adamant: Chinese transcription of Arabic phoneme was an evil to get rid of, and Arabic should be pronounced as correctly as possible. However, grassroots ahongs in charge of teaching in mosques not affiliated to a modernist trend continued being content with the traditional way of reading.

The next problem to resolve was the language in which to give the classes: Arabic or Chinese? At its beginning during the last years of the nineteenth century, the Ikhwani movement in China (there called Yi-hei-wa-ni), inspired by the Wahhabi reformism, pleaded for a complete arabization of the teaching as well of the practice of religion, and for an utter prohibition of any Chinese and Sufi influence.[815] But very soon, already by the second generation of leaders of the movement, Islam as taught by the Ikhwani adepts, though it remained anti-Sufi, became more than ever a Chinese religion; and it was so well integrated into the social and political surroundings that it was since the mid-twenties a staunch supporter of every constituted military or civil power, that of the Muslim warlords of the Northwest as much as that of the Guomindang and later, paradoxically, that of the Communist Party.[816] The fundamentalism which remained firmly entrenched in an Arabian orthodoxy and in the refusal of political and social commitment was then the prerogative of the last wave of Muslim reformism reaching China, the Salafiyya movement, which has been endowed with its own personality since 1937 and has been really active since the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949.[817] So, in the twenties, when the move towards inner modernization of Islam was well set on its way, particularly endorsed by the advocates of the Ikhwan, one wish was nearly general among cultivated Muslim: it was that their children, who will graduate from new schools, be perfectly proficient in written, colloquial and literary Chinese, and in Chinese classics. The third side of their pedagogical program was to follow the full curriculum of the official schools, first not to be outdone by them—and later, in the thirties, because the Nationalist government has made it more or less compulsory for religious schools—, that is to have the children study arithmetic, geography, history, science, modern Chinese

literature, often English too, and to practise physical education, handicrafts, music and so on; without forgetting the most important parts of the teaching, Arabic and religion, a very heavy program indeed. The final goal of these efforts was to give perfect citizens to the motherland, the underlying idea being that a good Muslim was intrinsically a perfect citizen.

The very first new-styled Muslim school appeared, so far as I am aware, already in 1898, and it would not have been by sheer chance that this happened in Hunan (in Southern central China), as this province has been at the forefront of the short-lived reforms of the last years of the nineteenth century—reformist spirit of the Muslim elite ought not to be dissociated from the reformist spirit at work in the surrounding society. It must be noted that this first reformed school, organized at the initiative of the mosque of Changde (in the North of the province), received sons of unbelievers as well as of believers; [818] as did Tong Cong in the new-style school he started to manage in 1905 (one year before initiating the first Muslim cultural association of modern times), the Muyuan xuetang (the "Teaching Hall of the Source of the Mu[slim]"—xuetang being the old generic name for school, before the new word xuexiao was introduced from Japan).[819] Of the many schools opened between 1898 and 1937,[820] some have rapidly disappeared due to the scarcity of financial means, to a bad organization, to a lack of suitable management, and to the scarcity of qualified teachers. Many were destroyed during the war. But some were reconstructed and have survived till the Communist time, and even till today, as for example the Muyan school of Tong Cong, which has recovered its original name of "Muyuan" in 1984. The schools which have left the most lasting memory are the "Sino-Arabic Schools" (Zhong-A xuexiao), that is, schools teaching Chinese language and literature (zhongwen) and Arabic language (awen), in Western China under the tutelage of adherents to the Ikhwan, as the Mingde ("Luminous Virtue," a fundamental Neo-Confucian concept) School of Kunming, , the capital city of Yunnan.[821]

The formation of both religious and teaching professionals at a good level has early become a deep concern for the activists. In 1907, the ahongs Wang Haoran and Da Pusheng initiated a "Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion" (Huijiao shifan xuetang) [822] at the famous Peking mosque of Ox Street (Niujie libaisi) for

spreading knowledge of Qurʿanic studies in Arabic and the history of Chinese literature, according to a genuine Islamo-Chinese design. This first normal school is still respected for the broad influence it had at this time, but it collapsed rather fast.

Later on, some normal schools were established in the 1920s and 1930s. The one, which has had the most far-reaching impact and which is celebrated by pres ent-day Muslims like a kind of founding icon of modern Chinese Muslim iden tity, is the Chengda Normal School (Chengda shifan xuexiao),[823] opened during the most bustling year of the Republic, on April 1925, at Jinan , the capital of Shandong, for “Perfecting [Virtue] and Manifesting [Talent],” cheng[de] da[cai] , as was suggested by its name. Its main initiator was a young man of 30 years, Ma Songting [824] ahong of a mosque in the town, who was the head of studies, while the director of the school was Tang Kesan [825] who partly financed the institution. At that time, it was a limited experiment, as the first enrolment was only often students. Soon the unpleasant political events of May 1928 in the town led to its closure. However, in spring 1929 help came from a side which, seen from afar, would seem quite unexpected: from a Muslim general, native of Ningxia, in Western China, a weighty arbiter in the conflicts opposing Chiang Kaishek to Northern warlords, Ma Fuxiang,[826] in fact a fine connoisseur of Confucianism, a warm supporter of a sinicized version of Islam as of a mod ernized Muslim education, and a sympathizer of the new trend of the Ikhwani movement. He struck up a friendship with Tang Kesan as an approval of his endeavor, and therefore handled the Chengda case as his own affair: he pushed for reopening the school at Beiping (Peking) which became prosperous thanks to his money and to his personal involvement.

In 1932, Ma Songting traveled to Egypt and other Islamic countries, to find out how pedagogy should be organized. With the backing of the Egyptian king Fuʿad, he invited two Egyptian scholars to take in hand the teaching at Chengda. He also brought home a collection of Arabic books, given by the king and by the director of al-Azhar; so that he could undertake the establishment of a large Muslim library which he called the “Fuʿad Library” (Fude [827] tushuguan), sup- ported in 1936 by some leading personalities of the cultural national world, such as Cai Yuanpei , Chen Yuan, , Gu Jiegang . On the eve of the Japanese invasion, Muslim elites had definitely enlarged to include non-Muslims in the circle of their sympathizers, at least

in Peking. In 1937, the Chengda School was evacuated to Guilin , in Southern China. In 1945, when re-established at Peking, it was merged with another pedagogical school, first promoted in Ningxia by Ma Fuxiang’s son, Ma Hongkui,[828] also a military and political leader of North Western China—Ma Fuxiang having died in 1932. The new school took the name of “High Institute of the Hui People” (Huimin xueyuan), a name which it kept till its end, in 1958, under Communist rule.

Still another normal school was created in Eastern China in 1928, the “Normal Islamic School of Shanghai” (Shanghai Yi-si-lan shifan xuexiao),[829] which was successful thanks to Ma Fuxiang’s financial support, once more, and was directed by Da Pusheng and Ha Decheng. Closed in 1937, it came to life again in Western China, in Gansu, under Da Pusheng’s leadership, as the “Normal Islamic School of Pingliang” (Pingliang Yi-si-lan shifan xuexiao).[830] Another normal school of the pre-war time in Eastern China was installed in Northern Hebei, not very far from Peking: the “Normal Islamic School of Wanxian” (Wanxian Yi-si-lan shifan xuexiao).[831] Opened in 1929, its curriculum has a modern tone, as subjects of the official program were taught along with Arabic grammar and Quranic theology; but it still taught traditional classical literature and written Chinese language, so disparaged by the young iconoclasts, heirs of the May Fourth movement. The school was short-lived, as it had closed in 1935, due to financial strain. The so-called “Sino-Arabic University” (Zhong-A daxue), founded in Ningxia by the warlord Ma Hongbin [832] in 1932, became in 1936, after various transformations, the “Yunting Provincial Normal School” (Shengli Yunting shifan xuexiao)— Yunting being the courtesy name of the Ma Fuxiang,[833] and this school, the first Muslim normal school functioning with a provincial allocation of money, followed the official program of four years with the addition of a compulsory Arabic course.[834] The ambitious educational programs, partly in Arabic, partly in Chinese, partly about modern topics, foreseen by the Muslim reformists since the last decades of the nineteenth century, have seen, in spite of many upheavals, interesting steps forward, the effects of which have made themselves felt even into the Communist period. However, it was obvious too that the movement which they implied could not reach all the places in such a broad land as China.

*** With the printed word

The activists, being aware of the difficulty of keeping in touch with the remote parts of the country, were willing to make use of the printed word in order to overcome the obstacles of distance and dispersal of their local communities, and to spread their ideas and programmes widely. They were particularly eager to exploit the new opportunities offered by the modern press, which had appeared in late Qing China first in foreign concessions of the treaty ports, and then slowly in the hinterland.[835] A total of 133 Muslim periodicals has been registered between 1904 and 1949 [836] : more precisely 8 from 1904 to 1919, 22 from 1920 to 1929, 52 from 1930 to 1937, 49 from 1938 to 1949, the average being 1 new title every 2 years till the May Fourth movement of 1919, 3 every year for the decade finishing in 1929, and then about 5 every year till the Communists took control, with sizes going from a few to 80 pages. Statistics breaking down the figures according to places and turnover of publication show the leading role of coastal large towns and the instability of the press: 36 periodicals or so were launched in Peking, Tianjin and around, but 23 were already dead in 1937; 29 or so appeared in Shanghai, Nanking and around, but 10 were dead before 1937. In the South-Eastern province ofYunnan, the movement got a good footing too, but the political situation disturbed it rapidly: 6 journals were founded from 1915 till 1937, but they had already suspended their publication at the time of the general war; only one resumed in 1938. These total figures may seem not very significant by comparison with the publishing activity of modernist circles of China but, put in correlation with the small number of Muslim intellectuals actively participating in the modernist move, it is not bad at all.

The very first Muslim periodical publication had a title symptomatic of the interests of its founders: “The Journal of Correct Teaching and Love of the Country” (Zhengzong aiguo bao),[837] initiated already in 1904 in Peking and aimed at a popular Muslim readership, as it was written in spoken language; as was the next journal, born in the capital too, in 1906, the Zhuyuan baihua bao [The Journal of the Garden of Bamboos (in baihua, the colloquial language)].[838] The one which has most struck contemporary observers started in December 1908: it was the Xing Hui pian [A Leaf for Awakening the Hui], due to the thirty-six Muslim students who had created in Tokyo, in 1907, the “Association for the Pure and True [=Muslim] Education of the Students in To[kyo],” quoted

earlier.[839] The pamphlet was not for sale but for a free distribution, and, as the students soon returned to their motherland, it did not go beyond the first issue (or issues?).

Finally, the most durable and influential journal was the Yuehua [Moonlight] whose publishing house was established by the warlord Ma Fuxiang and others, in November 1929, in the precinct of the new Chengda School at Peking.[840] As a result of the war, the journal was compelled to close and to move several times (with the Chengda School at Guilin in 1937, then at Chongqing, followed by a break from 1942 till 1946), nevertheless, when finally it closed in 1948, it had released a total of 418 issues in 18 volumes, with a circulation amounting to 3,000, and up to 4,000 copies in the most favorable year, 1931 [841] —a notable figure by comparison with other Chinese Muslim publications of the time. It accepted articles in the old literary style as well as in the more fashionable colloquial language. It had the distinctive feature of turning its attention to social subjects, at least according to its initial program, which included in addition to religious subjects, such as modernization of Muslim doctrines and news from the Muslim world abroad, the improvement of the social status and standard of living of Muslims families. In tune with the times, patriotism was celebrated; and, a rare occurrence among the adepts of the Ikhwani movement of the capital, it stressed a reconciliation between and with the different Sufi allegiances. While after 1936 the program proposed mainly the diffusion of news: religious news from the field and from abroad, snatches of Muslim history.[842] Books and booklets aimed, like the periodical press, at educating the believers and their most favorite topic was a minute description of correct ritual attitudes.[843] As formerly, in the imperial times, they were produced by printing houses appended to large mosques, the main one being the Ox Street mosque of Peking. When the first generation of young scholars produced by the reformed Muslim normal schools returned from their study trip to Egypt—a must in the 1930s— a literature of translations from Arabic became widespread, as well as some translations of European islamology, mainly thanks to the Yunnanese Ma Jian .[844] The activists’ most constant worry was to give to their co-religionists a reliable translation of the Qurʿan, initially in the form of serials in periodicals. Here, once again there was the problem of choosing the adequate language for translation (the Protestants have had to face the same dilemma when releasing new parts of the Bible in Chinese): whether to use the classical literary language, the wenyan ? Then at which level, a high or a

low one (both were possible)? Or the colloquial language, the baihua, which had been turned into the new literary language by the May Fourth movement in 1919? The choice was obviously a matter of personal sensibility, determined by the age of the translator. Ha Decheng, born in 1888, worked hard, till his last days in 1943, on a translation in wenyan, while his disciple Ma Jian, younger by 18 years, although helping him faithfully, was preparing by himself a baihua version (which was to appear posthumously as a book in 1981 only).[845] The oddest editorial activity of the Muslim modernists was the multiple reprints and new editions they carried out, always in the printing houses of the mosques, of the masterpieces of their own literary tradition.[846] It is well known that some gifted ulama have produced, since the mid-seventeenth century, works which later shaped the spirit of every generation of cultivated Chinese Muslims.

These books display a fascinating use of Confucian terminology and reasoning for expounding Islamic theology, Qur1anic tenets and Sufi mysticism (without any affiliation to a particular brotherhood). Strangely enough, they have enjoyed batches of reprints, often with the same lithographic boards kept in mosques, or of new editions, at every time of crucial national crisis. The most striking example is the “Philosophy of Islam” (Tianfang xingli) that one of the favorite ulama of the past, Liu Zhi , had composed in the early eighteenth century: since its first known edition in 1760, 17 new editions or reprints are attested,[847] 6 were released during the great turmoil of Muslim uprisings in mid-nineteenth century; while in the modernist crisis of the twenties and thirties, in spite of the condemnation of the old method of the “Scriptural Hall education,” seven more editions were thrown on the market—and sometimes even on the general market through standard edition houses, not only for the Muslim audience of mosques. Nevertheless, the book was at that time largely out of date, owing to its literary style and to its Sufi content, while the modernist Islamic trend leaned towards an Ikhwani tendency. Even stranger is the personality of some sponsors. The general Ma Fuxiang financed between 1921 and 1931 the edition of almost all the most celebrated works of Chinese classical Islam from the seventeenth till nineteenth century, adding his own prefaces, often in his beautiful calligraphy.[848] Still stranger is the fact that these editions of the Republican time, with prefaces by Ma Fuxiang for example, were once more reprinted in post-Maoist China, sometimes in different kinds of editions, cheap or luxurious, whilst “translations” in

colloquial language were undertaken. These classical works, using Confucianist terms, are a sort of symbol of the greatness of Chinese Muslim identity through the centuries.

** Who were the intellectual modernizers of Islam?

It is rewarding to ask this question, because it helps to clear up the position of ahongs or imams in the Chinese Muslim society. It is certain that common ahongs are grouped together and receive negative judgments: they were those who delivered poor education to the children, those who were against any reform, those who came into conflict with local modernists, those who tried to wreck any new project. Such testimonies are numerous, though often veiled and diffuse. It is obvious too that the common ahong was not a highly respected personality, for his presence at the head of a mosque and his livelihood there were dependent on the committee of elders of the mosque: he was in the position of some high level employee. The prestige came only to ahongs with special talents and knowledge, who were, for this, invited to teach at a large mosque. We may suspect that more than once the source of their fame was their double expertise, in Qurʿanic studies as well as in Chinese classics, as has been the case for almost all the personalities met in the present story. We will now dwell upon men who have been considered as the main actors in the modernization of Chinese Islam, whether they were outside the field, as were politicians of various beliefs, or constituted the nucleus of the regeneration of Islamic education. The important point is that all these men have been recently, during the 1990s, the subject of many biographical notes, articles or books, even if they had chosen the Guomindang’s side in the forties and had then migrated to Taiwan. If they have pertained to what we may call the hard core of religious activists, they are celebrated as venerated founding fathers of modern Chinese Islam.

*** The outer circle of modernists

The most conspicuous helpers of the modernist Muslim movement have been some Muslim generals, at the margin of warlordism before

throwing in their lot with Chiang Kaishek and holding high positions in his government.

Bai Chongxi (1893–1966),[849] a native of the Southern province of Guangxi, received a traditional primary education in the Chinese classics, and then a modern schooling (in his biographies, there is no question of his Islamic education). He was a member of the so-called “Guangxi Clique,“[850] which accepted the authority of the Nationalist government at the end of 1936 only; in 1946, he was appointed minister of War. Defeated by the Communists, he finally fled to Taiwan in 1949 (his life has been the theme of a novel published in Mainland China, in his native province of Guangxi in 1988).[851] His support and leadership of the “Association for the Hui People/Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country” was a warfare device in view of mobilizing his co-religionists in support of the Nationalist government in war and it had a definitely political orientation.

The two Generals Ma of Western China were born in Linxia (ancient Hezhou), a stronghold of Islam where every denomination and trend has had a footing, on the boundary between Gansu and Qinghai (or Kökönor); they are known as sympathizers of the Ikhwani movement. The elder brother was Ma Buqing (1901-?),[852] who received his primary education in the Chinese classics. The younger was Ma Bufang (1902 or 1903–1975),[853] whose education was religious, preparing him to become an ahong. Both boys, however, chose a military career, which turned for Ma Bufang to be largely political and adminis trative: he was acting governor of Qinghai in 1936, with his uncle Ma Lin (1876–1945) [854] as titular head of the provincial government, and then nominal governor in 1938, and in 1943 member of the Guomindang’s Central Executive Committee. He went to Egypt in the early 1950s, was Nationalist ambassador to Saudia Arabia in 1961 and ended his days in Islamic countries. His administra tion was reputed to be one of the most efficient and modern in China at that time—authoritarian but benevolent. He used to pay a special attention to basic education for all children and young people in his province, of any ethnic or reli gious origin, supporting the schools financially as well as administratively. As a part of his educational program, he began to develop after the war a special Muslim system of schooling: in 1944, the Ruiwei Elementary School (Ruiwei xiaoxue),[855] with a military training, intended especially for his son and other young boys of his family, which afterwards expanded; a

pedagogical school; [856] a Arabic-Chinese school for girls (Beiguan A-Zhong nüxiao ; in 1945); [857] the Kunlun Secondary School (Kunlun zhongxue ; in 1946); [858] the Fanghui Kindergarten for young children from 4 to 6 (Fanghui youzhiyuan [859]

Among Muslim generals who are counted as warlords, the most interesting is Ma Fuxiang (1876–1932),[860] a really fascinating figure. The top specialist of Chinese Islam in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Jonathan N. Lipman has already recounted his political career: first a loyal officer of the Qing dynasty, then an almost independent leader in Ningxia, propelled in the last 1920s into the national political arena. He was born in the deepest Muslim China, like the two generals Ma, near Lingxia (or Hezhou), to a father who chose in 1872 to side with the governmental army at the end of the bloody Muslim uprisings of the Tongzhi era in 1862-1873; he then received the typical education of a distinguished young Muslim, half Confucianist, half Qur1anic, which was representative of Muslim intellectuality in the first half of the twentieth century. He has left delicious snatches of his way of thinking about morality in letters, for example to Tang Kesan, in prefaces and post-faces to the numerous editions of Han kitab (i.e. Confuciano-Muslim books) he backed financially, and also in his own collection of exhortations to his sons and nephews.[861] His cultural activity beneficial to his co-religionists was multifarious, as we have noticed. From 1915 on, in Ningxia, a province of North Western China with a notable Muslim population, he founded a pedagogical secondary school, about sixty primary schools, where Qurʿanic studies were taught together with Chinese classical literature and colloquial Chinese, history, geography, arithmetic, sciences, physical education, hygiene—subjects still revolutionary at that early time; interestingly, as there was a Mongolian public too, Mongolian language in addition to Arabic. He strongly supported the rebirth of the Chengda Normal School in Peking and the other higher Muslim schools, kicked off the successful periodical Yuehua, granted stipends to gifted young men for studying in China or at al-Azhar. After his death in August 1932, his son Ma Hongkui (1892 or 1893–1970) [862] carried on with his father’s action, although in a less flamboyant style. The message delivered about both loyalty and service to the country through improvement of education fitted perfectly well with the ideas of cultivated believers.

An example of an early and deep engagement in politics comes from a young man educated in the new Muslim system, Su Baoqiao (1895–1962).[863] A Hunanese as was Mao Zedong, he was also of about the same age (Mao was born in 1893). Su entered in 1905 into a mosque school of Changsha which one year later became a new-styled primary school named Jiejin [litt. “Advance together”], under the impulse of a pioneer of the new Muslim education, Ma Linyi (known too as Ma Zhenwu, 1864–1938),[864] just returned from a three year study period (1903–1905) in Japan and was filled with Sun Yatsen’s revolutionary ideas. In 1908, Ma Linyi joined Wang Haoran in Peking and participated actively there in the adventure of the beginning of the modernization of Islam. Later, he took advantage of his good positions in the national educational system to help the development of new-style mosque schools: he is credited with the birth of some hundreds of them and was the author of two influential books, the most ancient reflection about modern schooling (Xinjiaoyu xue , “Schools with the New Education”) and a presentation of Islam (Yi-si-lan-jiao gailun , “A Summary of Islam”).

As for Su Baoqiao, after his first religious education and a pedagogical secondary one, he began commercial studies, still at Changsha, when in 1919 the national and xenophobic turmoil known under the generic term of the “May Fourth Movement” broke out. Then 24 years old, he appeared as one of the local agitators, along with Mao Zedong. From that time onwards, he kept collaborating with both Mao brothers—with Mao Zedong indeed, but even more with Mao Zemin (when Mao Zemin was executed in Xinjiang/Sinkiang in 1943, he said “I am finished”). In the early twenties, he managed the library which the young Communist Party had opened in Changsha in order to spread its propaganda and he himself joined the Party in 1926. However he remained a right Muslim, devoted to the propagation of a new mosque education; after the founding of the People’s Republic, he held several actual and honorary functions, especially in the field of cultural promotion of the “Hui people.” Till the late 1950s, Party and Islam were not at all exclusive one from the other.

Another example of collaboration, although beginning much later, between a Muslim activist and the Communist regime is that of Da Pusheng (1874–1965),[865] descendant of a Persian who had come to China under the Mongolian dynasty in the thirteenth century. A native from the region of

Nanking (from Liuhe in Jiangsu), he followed a traditional mosque education which enabled him to master Arabic as well as Persian, and then pursued his education in 1894 at Peking, at the Ox Street mosque, under the guidance of a future modernist, Wang Haoran. How the master taught at that early time, we don't know. In 1896, Da Pusheng "wore the clothing [or the robe]" (chuanyi), the usual term to mean that somebody become an ahong, recognized as a specialist of religion. And indeed, in 1905, he was invited to lead the prayers at the Ox Street mosque. Two years later, when Wang Haoran came back from an overseas trip and founded a new pedagogical school at this same mosque, he collaborated in this innovative work. At the beginning of the Republic in 1912, he followed his friend Ma Linyi in North-Western China and, in Gansu, holding a position in the official educational system, he promoted Muslim schooling too. In the early twenties, he was invited by a group of Muslim merchants of Shanghai to represent their interests in India. There he learned Urdu and English, opened his eyes to the outside world and probably also to Indian versions of Islam. After his return to China in 1925, he joined Muslim modernists of Shanghai. His knowledge of languages turned him after 1937 as a perfect messenger of the Nationalist government for pleading the cause of the invaded nation to the Indian subcontinent, Egypt and other countries. Apparently forgotten during the first years of the People's Republic, the old man—he was 78 years old in 1952—was suddenly discovered as an ideal representative of Islam under Communist rule. Honours piled up on his shoulders and he became a sort of precious showcase presented to the Afro-Asian world under the label of the freedom of religion. He died one year before the Cultural Revolution. He is styled, at least now in the post-Maoist literature, as one of the "Four Great Ahongs, " a near institutional term to mark the main designers of modern Chinese Islam, though he seems to have held a secondary role, becoming a symbol only after the Communist take over—because of this I prefer to classify him among the outer circle of activists.

In this outer circle were also men who had not received a special religious training but who dedicated a part of their active life to the promotion of a modern Muslim education, more as organizers, fund-raisers and administrators than as religious teachers. Among them a notable personality was Tang Kesan, native of Shandong (active between 1925 and 1946),[866] who, apart from administrative charges in the government, was involved very closely in the creation of the Chengda Normal School after 1925 and of

the Friendly Association of the Hui People for the Salvation of the Country after 1938. There is also the Shanghai man, Sha Shanyu (1879-1968),[867] who was proud of his Arab ancestor who allegedly had come as an astronomer to the Ming court. After having acquired a double training, as a child in classical Chinese and as a grown-up in English, he took up the headship of a militia constituted by Muslim merchants of Shanghai at the fall of the Qing dynasty, and then he entered into the world of journalism in 1914. Yet after 1909 he was fully associated to several enterprises for the modernization of Islam, as trustee of schools in Shanghai, as one of the founding members of the Learned Society of the Hui Religion of China in 1925, as sponsor of the school Dunhua of Shanghai after the war, and so on. Despite the fact that he had retired on the arrival of the Communists, he was invited in 1954, at the age of 74, to contribute to the compilation of documents about Islam in Shanghai. Wu Tegong (?-1963),[868] journalist like Sha Shanyu at the Shenbao — a journal of Shanghai, the most ancient of China—had been his close collaborator in some scholarly ventures in the Islamic field, such as the redaction, printing and diffusion of the monthly periodical of the Learned Society of the Hui Religion in China. Both friends had worked with Ha Decheng and Ma Jian on their translations of the Qurʿan. We must note that Wu Tegong, who adopted the pen-name of “The Virtue of the Way” (daode), championed the point of view of a pure traditional scholar and was prone to resort to the most elegant style of classical Chinese in his proposals for translations, notwithstanding that Ma Jian had finally opted for a version in modern colloquial language.

Now who were the supporters of all the modernist enterprises of the great Muslim teachers of the Republican time, who gave their money, their time, their expertise, and whose names are only known in the best cases? As money was the sinews of the success and as merchants appear sometimes in the course of the story, we may infer that at least some sympathizers were traders and businessmen, some were journalists, while some others were certainly teachers and specialists of religion.

*** The inner circle

This is the group of men whose entire raison d’être was the fulfillment of a modern Islamic education in the reach of every young

believer, preparing him to a fruitful life of compliant citizen and of pious worshipper. Among the first ones, were two genuine pioneers, breaking new ground. Tong Cong (1864–1923),[869] who graduated in the official system as Bachelor (xiucai) in 1904, was only active in his province of Jiangsu and, perheps for this reason, seems now to be somewhat forgotten. The notable point in his case is the role that co-religionists who studied in the Japan of Meiji time exerted on him.

In contrast, the ahong Wang Haoran (also called Wang Kuan, 1848–1919),[870] of Peking, has been respected since the twenties as the genuine founder of a modern Islamic curriculum. His father was an alim too. The great experience of his life, fraught with far-reaching consequences, was his pilgrimage to Mecca in 1905, and a return trip through Turkey and Egypt, which enabled him to see an evolution in Islamic countries that he did not suspect. Back in Peking in 1907, he launched a revolutionary cultural movement with the creation, at the Ox Street mosque, of a Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion, which included Chinese culture in its curriculum: this experiment was short-lived due to financial inadequacies, but it stood out in the mentalities. Wang Haojan was the initiator of primary new-styled mosque schools too and, at the very beginning of the Republic in 1912, of a popular Society for the Advance of the Hui Religion in China, created certainly with an underlying patriotic aim, though non-political in its program.

The hard core of activists is constituted by three ahongs belonging to the group called the “Four Great Ahongs” (Da Pusheng being the fourth one). The oldest one was Wang Jingzhai (also known as Wang Wenqing, 1871 or 1879-1949),[871] a native from Tianjin who all his life kept the strong accent characteristic of his Eastern province. Besides his religious training for becoming an ahong, which made him proficient in Arabic and Persian, he studied alone classical Chinese and a diversified Qur1anic literature. As a hai-li-fan (i.e. lalifa, in China the helper of an ahong) and since 1905 an ahong invited to teach in a mosque of Peking, his fame began to increase. His psychological evolution was marked by the influence of a journalist of Peking, Ding Baochen ,[872] an ardent defender of the colloquial Chinese language in literature, a man who would later adhere to the Communist Party and die for this cause. In 1921, rich sponsors like Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi financed his pilgrimage to Mecca and a visit to leading

places of Islamic learning—Istanbul, al-Azhar and others. In 1924, he brought back to China a collection of six hundred Western books dealing mainly with Islamic and Arabic studies, an unprecedented step at that time. Till his last days, his main activity was concentrated on translations from Arabic, on the compilation of a Chinese-Arabic dictionary and, first and most important of all, on attempts to translate the Qurʿan: after his first translation into the classical language, he made another one in colloquial language which was greatly praised by his coreligionists. In 1927, due to a disagreement about the quality and level required for rendering the Sacred Book into Chinese, he expounded his views on the subject: for example, he criticized the position of Yang Zhongming, who in his own translation of the Qurʿan (which would be destroyed during the war) had chosen to follow the obscure style of the sutras, considering that Buddhism is the dominant religion of China. Wang Jingzhai opposed this, just as he opposed the idea of taking Protestant translations of the Bible as models. For him, the style ought to be clear and comprehensible to everybody. Though an austere man—in his room the only book was a Qurʿan—, he did not keep aloof from politics when this appeared necessary. Thus he was among the first to initiate a Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country in 1937, and to be a consultant of the Nationalist government in wartime.

The case of Yang Zhongming (1870–1 952),[873] just quoted, is interesting too, because, when he was a young man following the regular religious curricu lum which led to his becoming a professional ahong, he studied Chinese classics by himself so well that, at the age of 19, he was able to pass the examination of Bachelor (xiucai), an occurrence which, rare among the Muslims, was even more extraordinary on the part of an ahong. At the age of twenty-nine (in 1898), he wrote “The Essential Content of the Four Religions” (Sijiao yaogua), that is of Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. He was throughout his life an activist urging the modernization of the teaching of Islamic studies at, among other places, the Chengda Normal School and in his writings, so that now he is considered an important “historical figure.” Ha Decheng (1888–1943),[874] from Shanghai, one of the “Four Great Ahongs, “ was, like the ahong Yang Zhongming, an enlightened ulama who was educated in both Qur1anic and classical Chinese studies. His pilgrimage in 1913 provoked his rejection of the traditional Chinese mosque teaching. As said earlier, he engaged in commercial activities abroad, in a Muslim commercial society of course, and

in countries with a majority of Muslims, mainly India, Ceylon, and Egypt (he could speak Arabic, Urdu and English): this enabled him to import religious books from these countries and from Turkey. Back in Shanghai in 1925, his name was henceforth linked to every endeavor of Islamic modernization in Shanghai and of help to his co-religionists.

The last so-called “Great Ahong” was Ma Songting (1895–1992),[875] from Peking who already belonged to the generation formed according to the new system of education; he was trained at the Ox Street mosque after Wang Haoran and Da Pusheng initiated a Sino-Arabic curriculum there, and from 1925 on, his name was linked to the experiment of the Chengda Normal School. His exploratory trip to Egypt in 1932–1933 has already been mentioned here; it was followed by another in 1935–1936, from which resulted the foundation of a specialized library. In the fifties, he was one of those recognized Muslim intellectuals who were given functions and titles in the official Muslim association and who were representative of the “minorities” of the People’s Republic. He taught Arabic at Peking University until he was dismissed during the Cultural Revolution; afterwards rehabilitated, he died at a very advanced age, venerated as one of the most glorious cases of the progressive Islam of the past.

Many other figures should be mentioned. One who cannot be overlooked is typical and important on several grounds: Ma Jian (1906–1978),[876] a Yunnanese from a small Muslim town sadly known for having been a martyr town during the Cultural Revolution, Shadian , in the far South Eastern China, almost on the Vietnamese boundary, a town which for long was perceived as a center of vivid Muslim intellectual life. It was possible for Ma Jian to take advantage in 1922 of the new Sino-Arabic schooling, at a secondary school which was recently opened in a mosque of the provincial capital, Kunming . After his graduation, he taught in 1926–1927 in a primary Sino-Arabic school of Shadian. But he could not help feeling disappointed with the turn taken by the Muslim new-styled education: this inner view gives us a useful balance about the alleged tremendous success of the reform. So he went to the North-West of the country, in the homeland of brotherhoods, to be in 1927-1928 the disciple of the second generation leader of the anti-Sufi Ikhwan, Hu Songshan (1880-1956). This man had then recently (in 1925) returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he was deeply hurt by the prejudices he encountered, merely because he was a Chinese. In consequence, he became

convinced of the duty of any good Muslim to help China enforce its national and international stature. With this aim in mind, he transformed the Ikhwani teaching, which had been introduced into North-Western China in the last decade of the nineteenth century as an anti-Sufi and anti-Chinese undertaking, into a pro-Chinese and modernist movement.[877] This move adopted by Hu Songshan gives the main clue for understanding the modernization of Chinese Islam in the first half of the twentieth century and its apparently easy adaptation to the Communist rule.

The Muslim warlords of Western China, Ma Fuxiang, Ma Bufang and others, were full supporters of Hu Songshan’s theories; the Four Great Ahongs and other main Muslim intellectuals of the coastal China also were his adepts. They concentrated on the pedagogical and cultural work, sure of bringing in that way their contribution to the motherland’s greatness; and they placed their trust in the current government. When finally the Communist Party obtained the power after years of trouble, they rejoiced, as did many other patriots of the country, at the restoration of the national pride; and they were eager to collaborate to the reconstruction in doing what they have always done: to write books and articles, and to teach Arabic.

Ma Jian’s case is exemplary in this respect. After his education in the Ikhwani convictions, he spent three years, in 1929-1931, in the new Normal Islamic School of Shanghai,[878] thanks to a stipend which may have been provided by Ma Fuxiang; and then eight years at al-Azhar, in 1932–1939, with Yunnanese financial help. There he began to act as an intermediary between Arabic modernism (incidentally modernism was not so much at work at al-Azhar itself, to Chinese students’ great disappointment) and the Confucianist culture. Thus his first translation into Arabic was the Confucian Analects, the Lunyu .[879] In wartime China and afterwards under the Communist rule, he remained without respite a hard worker, writing translation after translation in a clear colloquial Chinese. After 1949, he kept his position of professor at Peking University, and he was also a eulogist of the regime, with some honorary political positions. His role as official interpreter for Arabic in international relations spared him the worst of the Cultural Revolution; but he still bitterly suffered and lost a great part of the manuscripts of his works. Less compliant Muslim intellectuals lost their life during the Cultural revolution, as did Chen Keli (1924-executed in 1970),

[880] an Ikhwani militant, who had been a student of Wang Jingzhai, Ma Songting and Ma Jian himself, and a very prolific translator.

*** Conclusion

A wide range of figures involved in the propagation and teaching of Islam, from the late Qing to the beginning of the Communist era, has been met in the course of this short survey. Other names have been left aside for the fruit of their action has been of a different kind. So it has been for leaders of Sufi brotherhoods, notably the head of a Jahriyya menhuan (a sub-branch of the Naqshbandiyya), Ma Yuanzhang (1853–1920) [881] who too cultivated Chinese classical litera ture along with religious endeavours; or for the leader of a Sino-Islamic collective movement, the Xidaotang .[882] Muslim literate women could have been mentioned, so also collaborators to the Japanese occupying forces. Let us leave these questions for a later publication.

Despite the variety of particular cases, the whole story has a consistent background. All the intellectuals who have been here mentioned strongly believed in the power of a correct education as a royal way of entering into the modern and happy world of the future. All of them, at a certain time in their life, as a child or as a teenager or as an adult, received a double education, Arabic and Qurʿanic on the one side, Chinese on the other. Of course, local colloquial Chinese was for everybody the everyday language, as all of them were undivided sinophones. Their spoken language was only, for an inner intercommunication, interspersed with some special words generally of a Persian origin, like a kind of domestic slang. What they called an education in Chinese language meant, first, the command of the script for reading and writing; second, the regular use of the Chinese language, not only of the Arabic one, for explaining orally and in writing religious questions. The third part of an educational Chinese program was the mastery of the Chinese Confucian classics, of the Chinese classical literature, and, since the 1930s or later, of the colloquial Chinese as a form of modern literary language. The unavoidable modernization of thought and techniques meant for the Muslim intellectuals not a complete rejection of the past, but the comprehension of the Chinese literary language, which remained for them the classical written language, the wenyan, which lasted very

much longer than for the commonalty of Chinese intellectuals. For this very reason, the masterpieces of the great Chinese ulama of the last three centuries, Confucian and Sufi though, far from being obsolete, remained or became—it depended on the reader's personality—favorite readings. Thus Muslim activists of the Republican times, particularly those who pursued their career under the Communist rule, have been the transmitters to their heirs of the post-Maoist times of the so-called Han kitab: these Islamic books written in Chinese since the mid-seventeenth century are definitely among the most enduring constituent of the Muslim intellectuals' feeling of identity, that is the very expression of their "Chineseness" with the necessary point of otherness.

Another way of voicing their Chineseness was their assertion that they loved their motherland and that they contributed in every possible way to its prestige in peacetime and to its integrity in wartime. It is significant that during the war the Japanese occupying forces, in spite of their propaganda and of their financial outlay for the young generation, could not create a separatist movement among the Chinese Muslims as they succeeded doing so among the Mongols of Eastern Inner Mongolia.[883] Now that the concepts of citizenship [884] and of a Han homoge neous ethnic group (or "nationality," minzu) are questions which have come to the foreground in the field of sociological studies on modern China, it is urgent to take account of the Chinese Muslims' experience in the Republican context. In 1925 for example, they could still contend that "Hui is the name of a religion, it is not the name of a race, Hui yi mingjiao, fei yi ming zu ye ,"; [885] and that to quote in a single list "Hui, Meng, Zang, Miao "—as was officially done under the Guomindang rule—is exact for the Mongols (Meng), the Tibetans (Zang), the Miao, but not at all for the Muslims. Are the Buddhists named a "Fomin "[Buddhist people] though Buddhism came from India? Are the Christians called a "Jidumin "[Christian people, Jidu being the Protestant appellation of Christianity], though Christianity came from Europe and America? Islam, as Christianity is a world religion,[886] but in the 1930s already, the Muslims themselves began to admit that they were a distinctive people, a Huimin, as shown in the names they chose for their associations. Specialists of this problem such as Jonathan N. Lipman, Dru Gladney, Matsumoto Masumi suspect that the crystallization of the idea of a Han nationality is indissolubly linked to the assertion of a Hui nationality, Huimin, becoming in the

Communist times a Huizu —a term which implies a criterion of genealogical descent. As Jonathan N. Lipman puts it: “We may ask how the presence of the Muslim as a familiar other has contributed to the formation of Chinese majority identity. How does Sino-Muslim history challenge the hegemonic narrative of monolithic, culturally homogeneous China? What modifications to our notions of Confucianism, of symbolic exchange must we make if some neo-Confucians are also Muslims?”[887] The last question seeks to know from which side the Muslim activists received the impulse towards modernization in the way they took it. It is unthinkable to single out one influence to the exclusion of others. Potential applicants are the Japanese Meiji peaceful revolution, then the Chinese iconoclast atmosphere, and also anti-colonial and anti-Western feelings in India, Egypt, Turkey, and the revolutionary spirit widely held: all these trends were certainly combined. But a hidden hand from a Tatar Jadidist origin has little chance of being discovered in coastal China which was turned towards sea route, nor in Yunnan which was oriented towards the traffic through a Burmese route, unlike Sufi Brotherhoods which were concentrated in North Western China and were sensitive to Inner Asia’s fragrance, but not to modernism. In the career of a typical Muslim intellectual of the twentieth century the great event was the opportunity of travel overseas, or at least, if unable to do better, of direct contact with travellers. Also, the best occasion for a discovery of the outside world was the pilgrimage to Mecca, usually followed, on the way back, by more or less lengthy stops in various Muslim countries.

In the course of the twentieth century more than ever, Sino-Islam was an integral part of the worlds of Islam as well as of Chinese culture. From an intellectual point of view, its literary tradition till nowadays goes back to the mid-seventeenth century without any real severance, through the mediation of the Republican times.

*** Acknowledgments

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Donald D. Leslie who kindly, cleverly and speedily polished my English. It goes without saying that any remaining inaccuracies in the facts or in the style are my own.

** Note

[765] The system of transcription followed for the Chinese is the now official pinyin, which, inter alia, renders ts’ with a c, hs with an x.

[766] For an overall picture of the situation during this period see for example, The Cambridge History of China, 11, Late Ch’ing, 1800-1911, Part 2, 1980; 12, Republican China, 1912-1949, Part 1, 1983; 13, Republican China, 1912-1949, Part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Marie-Claire Bergère, Lucien Bianco, and Jürgen Domes, eds, La Chine au xxe siècle, d1une révolution à 1autre, 1895-1949, 1, 1st ed. (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 3rd ed. (Paris: Armand Colin, 2000); Arthur Waldron, From War to Nationalism: China s Turning Point, 1924-1925 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) and the bibliography included in these works.

[767] For recent studies dealing with Chinese Islam and its believers: Françoise Aubin, “L’islam, une religion chinoise,” forthcoming in Revue bibliographique de Sinologie.

[768] Ahong [Persian alund] offers the rare case of a word pronounced differ ently from one of the characters transcribing it down (is generally read heng). For the ahong’s functions: Zhongguo Huizu dacidian [Great Dictionary of the Hui Nationality in China], ed. Qiu Shusen (Jiangsu guji chubanshe [Publishing House of Ancient Books in Jiangsu], 1992), 761.

[769] Chinese words which are plain transliterations of Arabic-Persian originals are here by convention hyphenated (except ahong, which long ago became for Chinese Muslims an everyday word).

[770] Although Huijiao indicated at that time, the worldwide Islam, we will keep a literal translation “Hui Religion” in the names of the associations where it occurs, to let speak by itself the terminological choice made by the Muslim activists.

[771] The reification of the concepts of Hanzu, “Han nationality” and minzu , “nation ality,” “ethnic group,” during the Republican time till its official acceptance by the Communist regime, is being detected more and more subtly by a whole series of excellent studies, the most recent being: Susan D. Blum, Portraits of ‘Primitives’: Ordering Human Kinds in the Chinese Nation (Oxford: Roman and Littlefield, 2001); Jonathan N. Lipman, “How Many Minzu in a Nation? Modern Travellers Meet China’s Frontier Peoples,” Inner Asia, 4/1 (2002): 113–130; Dru Gladney, Muslim Chinese. Ethnic Nationalism in the People’s Republic (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1st ed. 1991, 2nd ed. 1996).

[772] Guangxu 32, that is, 32nd year of the Guangxu era, is the date according to the Chinese calendar of the time.

[773] Zhenjiang: a town of Eastern Central China, about 60 km east of Nanjing.

[774] For Tong Cong [pron. Tong Ts’ong] (1864–1923) and his actions: Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 704–705, 993.

[775] For the cultural leadership of Japan in Asia after its victory over Russia, see Françoise Aubin, “Le Japon en terre dislam chinois et au pays de Gengis-khan (fin XIX-début XX siècle),” Études orientales, 21-22 (2004), Special issue on Le Japon et l’islam L’islam au Japon, pp. 36-79 and Japanese summary pp. 80-87. See a recent (anony mous) article about “Historical Materials on the Unrest of [Chinese] Students Staying in Japan in 1905”: “Guangxu sanshiyinian liuri xuesheng fengchaoshiliao ,” Lishi dangan , 2001/3: 62-67. About the action of the Muslim students who went to Japan in 1905: Matsumoto Masumi

, Chugoku minzoku seisaku no kenkyu. Shinmatsu kara 1945 nen made no ‘minzokuron’ wo chushin ni [Study about the Politic of Nationalities of China, Centred on the Theory of the Nationalities from the Late Qing to 1945] (Tokyo: Taga shuppan , 1999), 292–296.

[776] For Sha Shanyu (Shanyu being his courtesy name, zi, while his given name, ming, is Qing , 1879–1968): see Ma Zhongde and Yang Zhenghua , “Huizu aiguorenshi Sha Shanyu [A Hui Patriot, Sha Shanyu],” Huizuyan- jiu , 1993/4: 95-96; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 726. We must stress that a special feature of Muslim personal names is that many personalities are called by their courtesy name, zi (yi zi xing), instead of their given name, ming .

[777] Huizu yanjiu, 1993/4: 95.

[778] A. Vissière, “Association culturelle mahométane de Chang-hai,” forming “Etudes sino-mahométanes,” 2e série, 4, Revue du Monde musulman, 19 (1912): 228-240.

[779] The basic documentation about the Zhongguo Huijiao jujin hui (as about all the following associations) is due to a contemporary of the events, Fu Tongxian , Zhongguo Huijiaoshi [History of Islam in China] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1940, reprint Taibei: Commercial Press, 1969), 199-200. A detailed study is: Zhang Juling , “Zhongguo Huijiao jujin hui chuchuang jiping [First Stages of the Association for the Progress of the Hui Religion of China],” Huizu yanjiu, 1997/4: 1–11, 1998/1: 10–22, 1998/2: 14–16. About the branch founded in Yunnan: Sha Feiya , “1911–1951 nian de Yunnan Huizu Yi-si-lan-jiao zuzhi, 1911–1951 [Organization of Islam among the Hui of Yunnan in the Years 1911–1951],” Huizu yanjiu, 1992/4 (49-61): 49-53.

[780] Among the numerous notices devoted to the ahong ‘Abd al-Rahim Ma Songting (1895–1992), who is considered by the believers as one of the “Four Great Ahongs” and who has had a long career

under the communist regime, see Sai Shengbao , “Aiguo zhuyizhe, yisilan jingxue jiaoyujia Ma Songting da ahong , [The Nationalist and Qurʿanic Teacher, the Great Ahong Ma Songting],” Huizu yanjiu, 1992/2: 98–100; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 969.

[781] The given name of the ahong famous under the name of ‘Abd al-Rahman Wang Haoran (1848–1919) is Kuan, a Chinese translation of Ra hman, “Merciful,” while Haoran is his courtesy name; he enjoys many notices, for example in Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 951; Bai Shouyi , “Ma Lianyuan, Wang Kuan, Ma Wanfu , , ,” in Zhongguo Musilin ; Matsumoto Masumi, Chugoku minzoku seisaku no kenkyu (see supra, note 11), 300-303.

[782] Ha Decheng (given name: Guozhen —Decheng being his courtesy name used as a given name, 1888–1943) is counted too as one of the “Four Great Ahongs”; see his notice (in French) by Leila Cherif, “Ha Te-ch’eng/Ha Decheng,” in Marc Gaborieau, Nicole Grandin, Pierre Labrousse and Alexandre Popovic, eds, Dictionnaire biographique des savants et grandes figures du monde musulman périphérique, du XIXe siècle à nos jours (Paris: EHESS), 1 (1992): 39; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 966.

[783] For Sha Shanyu: see note 12.

[784] For Wu Tegong (?–1963): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 717.

[785] For the Zhongguo Huijiao xuehui: Zhang Zhicheng , “Ershi shijichu Shanghai Yisilanjiao xueshu wenhua tuanti: Zhongguo Huijiao xuehui [A Cultural and Scholarly Islamic Organization in Shanghai at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: The Learned Society of the Hui Religion of China],” Huizu yanjiu, 1992/3: 81-86; Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 201.

[786] About the Zhongguo Huijiao gonghui: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 200.

[787] For Nur Muhammad Da Pusheng (given name: Fengxuan, , Pusheng being his courtesy name, 1874–1965): Donald W. Klein and Anne B. Clark, Biographic Dictionary of Chinese Communism, 1921-1965, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 2: 794-796; Da Jie , “Da Pusheng ahong zhuanlüe [Short Biography of the Ahong Da Pusheng],” Zhongguo Musilin, 1984/1: 18–26; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 960.

[788] For the Zhongguo Huijiao qingnian xuehui and the Huimin xuehui yanjiu hui: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 202-203.

[789] For the Zhongguo Huijiao wenhua xiehui: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 205.

[790] For Fu Tongxian (1905–1985): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 739.

[791] For the Zhongguo Yi-si-lan budao hui: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 205.

[792] For Ma Hongkui (zi: Shaoyun , 1892 or 1893–1970): Howard L. Boorman and Richard C. Howard, eds, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, 4 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967–1971), 2 (1968): 468–469 (date of birth: 1893); Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 328. About the various Ma warlords of Gansu in Republican times: Jonathan N. Lipman, “Ethnicity and Politics in Republican China: The Ma Family Warlords of Gansu,” Modern China 10/3 (1984): 285–3 16 (family lin eages: 291); Ningxia san Ma [The Three Ma of Ningxia] (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1988)—about Ma Hongkui: 149-366.

[793] For the Huimin jiaoyu cujin hui: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 204.

[794] For the Zhonghua Huijiao zonghui: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 201.

[795] For Ma Lin (zi: Xunchen, 1876–1945): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 312.

[796] For Ma Buqing (zi: Ziyun, 1901-?): Boorman and Howard, eds, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, 2 (1968): 473-474; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 340.

[797] For Ma Hongbin (zi: Ziyin, 1884–1960): Boorman and Howard, eds, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, 2 (1968): 469-470; Ningxia san Ma, 49–143; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 321.

[798] For Ma Fuxiang (zi: Yunting , the name of his library being his pen-name: Jishantang, 1876–1932): Boorman and Howard, eds, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, 2 (1968): 464-465; Ningxia san Ma, 3–45; Jonathan N. Lipman, Familiar Strangers. A History of Muslim in Northwest China (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1997), 167–177; Ding Mingjun , “Lun Ma Fuxiang zaixi- andai Huizu wenhua jiaoyusheshang de diwei . [Ma Fuxiang’s Position in the History of Culture and Education of the Hui],” Huizu yanjiu 1998/4: 58-69.

[799] For Shi Zizhou (given name: Zuoxin —Zizhou being his courtesy name —, 1879-d. in Taiwan 1967): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 315.

[800] For Wang Jingzhai (first given name: Wenqing , called too Hajj Sheykh, or Wang lao, “Old Wang,” 1871 or 1879?–1949): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 962; Zhongguo Musilin, 1989/2: 2-6; Saguchi Toru , “Chugoku Isuramu no kindai shugit [The Modernism of Chinese Islam],” Kanazawa daigaku hobun gakubu ronshu. Shigakuhen , 16 (1969): 37-40.

[801] About Bai Chongxi (Qurʿanic name: ‘Umar, 1893–1966): Boorman and Howards, eds, Biographical Dictionary (supra note 34), 3 (1970): 51-56.

[802] About Wuhan/Wuchang as a temporary wartime capital: Stephen R. MacKinnon, “Wuhan’s Search for Identity in the Republican Period,” in Joseph W. Esherick, ed., Remaking the Chinese City. Modernity and National Identity, 1900-1950 (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000): 161–173, especially 168–170.

[803] For Da Pusheng: see note 23.

[804] For Ha Decheng: see note 18.

[805] For Ma Songting: see note 16.

[806] For Tang Kesan (whose dates are unknown): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 347.

[807] For the Zhongguo Huimin/Huijiao jiuguo xiehui: see Bai Youtao , “Zhongguo Huijiao jiuguo xiehui shulun [Account of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country],” Huizu yanjiu, 1995/4: 48-55. About its branch in Yunnan: Sha Feiya, “1911–1951 ni a …” (article quoted under note 15), 53-54.

[808] According to the Xinhua ribao of 1938, June 19th, March 10th, November 24th, as quoted by Huizu yanjiu, 1995/4: 49.

[809] For Chongqing during the war: Lee McIsaac, “The City as Nation. Creating a Wartime Capital in Chongqing,” in Remaking the Chinese City (quoted supra note 38), 174–191.

[810] This means that conversions to Islam occurred in the Republican time, a fact which is sometimes overlooked.

[811] Information here given about the Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country is entirely extracted from the Chinese article quoted in note 43.

[812] Cf. for example Guan Wei, “Jiaoyu jiuguo sichao yu jindai shehui bianqian [The Stream of Thoughts for Saving the Country by Education and the Changes of Modern Society],” Lishi dang an, 2002/3: 90-96. About the major educational debates during the late Qing and the early Republic: Paul Bailey, Reform the People. Changing Attitudes towards Popular Education in Early 20th Century China (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University, 1990, x-296). Among the numerous works dealing with Chinese education in the twentieth century, let us quote an article noticeable for its succinct survey of the main relevant questions: Colin MacKerras, “Education in the Guomindang Period, 1928–1949,” in David Pong and Edmund S. K. Fung, eds, Ideal and Realities: Social and Political Change in Modern China, 1860-1949 (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 153–183.

[813] See F. Aubin, “L’enseignement dans la Chine islamique pré-communiste (du xvie siècle au milieu du xxe). Entre affirmation identitaire et modernisme,” in Nicole Grandin and Marc Gaborieau, eds, Madrasa. La transmission du savoir dans le monde musulman (Paris: Arguments, 1997): 373-401; Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi (1940: quoted supra note 15), 205-209. About the formation of a Chinese Muslim intellectual through education since the seventeenth

century: Zvi Ben-Dor, The ‘Dao of Muhammad’: Scholarship, Education, and Chinese Muslim Literati Identity in Late Imperial China (Dissertation presented at University of California, Los Angeles, 2000), 51–107.

[814] About the nü (female) ahongs and their mosques, the Qingzhen nüsi Elisabeth Allès, Musulmans de Chine. Une anthropologie des Hui du Henan (Paris: Editions de lEcole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences sociales, 2000), 235-287; about the ability of the female ahong to read Persian: Allès, Musulmans de Chine, 286.

[815] Jonathan N. Lipman, “Hyphenated Chinese: Sino-Muslim Identity on Modern China,” in Gail Hershatter, Emily Honig, Jonathan N. Lipman and Randall Stross, eds, Remapping China. Fissures in Historical Terrain (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 97–112, 296-299—about what the author soundly calls the “scripturalist fundamentalism” of the founder of the Chinese Ikhwan: 105–106.

[816] About the first anti-Chinese trend of the Ikhwan in China in late Qing time: Lipman, ‘Hyphenated Chinese,” 105–106; Leila Cherif-Chebbi, ‘Ma Wanfu, Nuh, Zixi, surnommé Haj Guoyuan ou Ma Guoyuan (1853–1934)’, in Gaborieau et al., eds, Dictionnaire biographique des savants et grandes figures du monde musulman périphérique, du xixe siècle à nos jours (Paris: EHESS, 1998), 2: 33–34. About the political conformity of the second trend of the Ikhwan: Lipman, “Hyphenated Chinese,” 106–112; Lipman, “The Third Wave: Establishment and Transformation of the Muslim Brotherhood in China,” Etudes Orientales 13–14 (1994): 89–105, espe cially 96–103; Leïla Cherif-Chebbi, “L ‘Yihewani, une machine de guerre contre le soufisme en Chine?,” in Frederick de Jong and Bernd Radtke, eds, Islamic Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics (Leiden: Brill, 1999): 576-602.

[817] Dru C. Gladney, “The Salafiyya Movement in Northwest China: Islamic Fundamentalism among the Muslim Chinese?,” in Leif Manger, ed.,

Muslim Diversity. Local Islam in Global Context (Richmond, UK: Curzon, 1999): 102–149, especially 130–135.

[818] Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 505.

[819] Ibid., 507, 704–705.

[820] See in the Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, a list with description of Muslim schools of dif ferent levels opened in late Qing times (505-509), in early Republican times (509-512), in the twenties (513-517), in the thirties and during the war (517-524), in the last years before the Communist taking of power (524-527), in the early Communist time (527-528), after the Cultural Revolution till 1989 (528-531).

[821] About the School Mingde: Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 515; Sha Feiya, “1911–1951 nia …” (quoted in note 15), 56, 59-61.

[822] Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 507; Sha Feiya, “1911–1951 ni a …” (see note 15), 57.

[823] About the Chengda School, among others, a presentation of the institution, of its aims, of its organization, by Ma Songting himself: “Zhongguo Huijiao yu Chengda shifan xuexiao [The Hui Religion of China and the Chengda Normal School],” Yugong banyuekan [The Bimonthly Tribute of Yu] 5/11 (1937), Huijiao zhuanhao [Special Issue about the Hui Religion]: 1–14; Liu Dongsheng, “Chengda shifan xuexiao shuyao [Summary of the History of the Chengda Normal School],” Huizu yanjiu 1993/2: 61–75; 1993/3: 71–78; Saguchi, “Chugoku Isuram …”: 19-44 [see supra note 36]; Matsumoto, Chugoku minzoku … (see note 11), 303–307.

[824] For Ma Songting: see note 16.

[825] For Tang Kesan: see note 42.

[826] For Ma Fuxiang: see note 34. About his links with the Chengda School: Ding Mingjun , “Lun Ma Fuxiang zai xiandai Huizu wenhua jiaoyu shishang de diwei [Ma Fuxiang’s Position in the History of Culture and Education of the Hui],” Huizu yanjiu, 1998/4: 58-69.

[827] The Chinese characters used for transliterating the syllables of Fu’ad are noteworthy: fu “good fortune, prosperity,” and de “Virtue.”

[828] For Ma Hongkui: see note 28.

[829] For the Normal Islamic School of Shanghai: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi (1940), 211–212; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 514.

[830] For the Normal School of Pingliang: Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 521.

[831] For the Normal School of Wanxian: Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi (1940), 212; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 516.

[832] For Ma Hongbin: see note 33.

[833] For Ma Fuxiang: see notes 34 and 62.

[834] According to Fu Tongxian, Zhongguo Huijiaoshi, 212-213.

[835] See a recent article about the subject (and references given there): Natascha Vittinghoff, “Readers, Publishers and Officials in the Contest for a Public Voice and the Rise of a Modern Press in Late Qing China (1860–1880),” T1oung Pao, 87/3–4: 393–455.

[836] The main references about the Muslim press in Republican China are: Rudolph Löwenthal (or Loewenthal), The Religious Periodical Press in China, 2 vols (Peking: The Synodal Commission in China, 1940, reprint San Francisco, CA: Chinese Materials Centre, Inc., 1996), 211-249 +Chart VII in two parts; the same, “Djarida [Press]/Japan,” EI2 , 2/30-34 (1963), “China and Japan” (or French edition, 2/30-34 (1963), “Chine et Japon,” 490-491). For a list of the 133 periodicals: Lei Xiaojing , “Zhongguo jinxiandai Huizu, Yi-si-lan-jiao baokan de jueqi, [Eminence of the Modern and Contemporary Press of the Hui Nationality and of Islam in China],” Huizu yanjiu 1997/1: 16-33.

[837] According to Lei Xiaojing, “Zhongguo jinxianda …” (see note 72): 19.

[838] Lei Xiaojing, “Zhongguo jinxianda …”: 19. About the beginning of a Muslim press in China: Zhang Juling , “20 shijichu Zhongguo Huizu Yi-si-lan yanjiu shubu jiping 20 [A Survey of the Study on the Hui Nationality and of Islam at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century],” Huizu yanjiu 2000/1: 10–15; 2000/2: 26–32.

[839] See a facsimile of the first page and of the table of contents of the Xing Hui bao in Marshall Broomhall, Islam in China. A Neglected Problem (London: Morgan and Scott, and China Inland Mission, 1910), opposite p. 283 and 283–284. See also Yao Jide , “Huizu liuxuesheng yu Yunnan xiandai Yi-si-lan wenhua , [Muslim Students Staying Abroad and the Contemporary Muslim Culture of Yunnan],” Huizu yanjiu 1996/3 (10-21): 11–12.

[840] About the Yuehua: Löwenthal, The Religious Periodical Press, 226-228; Huizu dacidian, 619; Lei Xiaojing “Yuehua yu shehui diaocha [The Yuehua and Social

Investigation],” Huizu yanjiu 2000/2: 95-96; Matsumoto Masumi , Kingendai Chugoku no kokumin togo genri to Chugoku Isuramu kaikaku-ha no seijiteki shokankei ni tsuite no rekishigaku teki kenkyu [Historical Study on the Relationship between National Integration of Modern China and Islamic Reformers’ Roles in Politics] (Shibatashi, Niigata: Keiwa Gakuen Daigaku JinbunGakubu, 2003), ch. 2, “Kai aikokushugi no konkyo: Gekka ni miru Isuramu kaikaku-ha no ronri [The Logic of the Party of Islamic Reformers as seen in the Yuehua —The base of the Nationalism Hui],” 19-36. See also the paper by Matsumoto Masumi in the present volume.

[841] Löwenthal, The Religious Periodical Press, 227.

[842] Ibid., 226.

[843] Some American Protestant missionaries in China who specialized in the apostolate amongst Muslims bought all these publications. Thanks to them two collections can be consulted in United States: one in the New York Public Library (Isaac Mason fund), the other in the Harvard-Yenching Library (Claude L. Pickens fund). There is an analytical catalogue of the Pickens fund by Matsumoto Masumi , in Chugoku kenkyu geppo /Monthly Journal of Chinese Affairs 54/12 (2000): 28–42. For I. Mason, C. Pickens, and other Protestant missionaries, and their influence on the evo lution of Islam in remote places of China: Françoise Aubin, “L’apostolat protestant en milieu musulman chinois,” in Chine et Europe: évolution et particularités des rapports est-ouest du xvie au xxe siècle. Actes du IV colloque international de sinologie de Chantilly (Taipei, Paris and Hong Kong: Institut Ricci/Ricci Institute, 1991), 12-74.

[844] For Ma Jian (or Muhammad Ma Jian al-Sini, courtesy name Zishi , 1906–1978), one of the greatest figures of the Sino-Muslim intellectual history of the twentieth century, there are several detailed studies: Françoise Aubin, “L’islam chinois face à sa modernisation. Le cas de Ma Jian (Ma Chien) (1906–1978),” Etudes Orientales 19-20 (2003); Li Zhenzhong , Xuezhe de zhuiqiu. Ma Jian zhuan — [The Research of a Scholar. A Biography of Ma Jian] (Yinchuan: Ningxia renmin chubanshe, 2000)—a part

of this book (chapters 8 to 11 and some pages of chapter 12) being simultaneously published as an article, under the same title, in Huizuyanjiu 2000/1: 64—102.

[845] For translations of the Qurʻan: Françoise Aubin, “Les traductions du Coran en chinois,” Etudes Orientales 13–14 (1994): 81-88.

[846] A bibliographical analysis of these beloved masterpieces of the past is found in Donald Daniel Leslie, Islamic Literature in Chinese, Late Ming and Early Ch’ing: Books, Authors and Associates (Belconnen, ACT: Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1981).

[847] For the Philosophy of Islam of Liuzhi and its editions: Leslie, Islamic Literature, 46 and chart p. 143.

[848] For a survey of several of the publications sponsored by Ma Fuxiang and translations (in French) of his moral exhortations: A. Vissière, “Les musulmans chinois et la République. Littérature islamique chinoise,” Revue des Etudes islamiques 3 (1927): 309-319, esp. 313-319.

[849] For Bai Chongxi: see note 37; and passim in The Cambridge History of China, Volume 12 and 13, Republican China (quoted in note 2).

[850] For the Guangxi Clique: The Cambridge History of China, 12: 293 sq., 13: 124 etseq. assim; and in the detailed biography of Bai Chongxi in Boorman and Howard’s Biographical Dictionary, 3: (51-55) 52-55.

[851] It is “The Storybook of Bai Chongxi” (Bai Chongxi chuanqi), by Su Liwen (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe , 1988).

[852] For Ma Buqing: see note 32.

[853] For Ma Bufang (zi: Zixiang , Qurʿanic name Husein): Boorman and Howard, eds, Biographical Dictionary of Republican China, 2 (1968): 474-475 (giving as date of birth 1903); Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 341-342 (giving as date of birth 1902).

[854] For Ma Lin: Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 312.

[855] For the Ruiwei Elementary School: Ibid., 524.

[856] Ibid.

[857] Ibid., 523.

[858] Ibid.

[859] Ibid.

[860] For Ma Fuxiang: see notes 34 and 84.

[861] Cf. note 84.

[862] For Ma Hongkui: see note 28.

[863] For Su Baoqiao: Su Yao , “Su Baoqiao shilue [Biographical Notice of SuBaoqiao], “Huizuyanjiu 1995/1: 82-88.

[864] For Ma Linyi (zi Zhenwu): Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 705.

[865] About Da Pusheng: note 23.

[866] For Tang Kesan: note 42.

[867] For Sha Shanyu: note 12.

[868] For Wu Tegong: note 20.

[869] ForTong Cong: note 10.

[870] For Wang Haoran: note 17.

[871] For Wang Jingzhai: note 36.

[872] For Ding Baochen: Zhonguo Huizu dacidian, 317, and Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 705, under the notice about his elder brother, Ding Ziliang (ming: Guorui , 1870–1935), who collaborated with him.

[873] For Yang Zhongming (given name Jingxiu —Zhongming being his courtesy name, appellation Xiuzhen, Qurʿanic name Salih): Yang Daye , “Yang Zhongming shengping [Yang Zhongming’s Whole Life],” Zhongguo Musilin/Muslims of China 1990/1: 12–16; Zhongguo Huizu Musilin, 959.

[874] For Ha Decheng: note 18.

[875] About Ma Songting: note 16.

[876] For Ma Jian: see note 80.

[877] Jonathan N. Lipman and Leila Cherif-Chebbi have already dealt in detail with the transformation of the Chinese Ikhwan: see note 52.

[878] For the Normal Islamic School of Shanghai: see note 65.

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[880] About Chen Keli: Leila Cherif-Chebbi, “Chen Keli, Yusuf,” in Gaborieau et al., eds, Dictionnaire biographique des savants et grandes figures du monde musulman périphérique (Paris: EHESS, 1998), 2: 31; Zhongguo Huizu dacidian, 978-979.

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[882] Jonathan N. Lipman, “Ma Qixi (1857–1914),” in Familiar Strangers: 186–199.

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[885] Excerpt from the Xing Hui pian zhaiyao [Summary of “A Leaf for Awakening the Hui”—the journal started in Tokyo in 1908] (Peking: Chinese Islamic Book Co at Ox Street Mosque, 1925, publication kept in the New York Public Library), appendix Lun Hui min [Discussion of the People Hui], 25a-27a.

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[887] Lipman, “Hyphenated Chinese” (quoted note 51), 111. See also Gladney, Muslim Chinese (quoted note 7), 306 and et seq.

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* 13. Muslim Intellectuals and Japan: A Pan-Islamist mediator, Abdurreshid Ibrahim

Komatsu Hisao

Since the end of the nineteenth century, especially after the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905, Muslim intellectuals began to take substantial interest in the emergence of modern Japan, and to develop a positive image of Japan and the Japanese people. In general, they supposed that Japan adopted Western civilization without abandoning its traditional culture, becoming one of the most developed countries in the world within a short period after the Meiji revolution. Of these Muslim intellectuals interested in Japan, Abdurreshid Ibrahim (1857–1944) was among the most outstanding.

[888] He not only introduced Japan and Japanese people in detail to the broad Turkic Muslim audience through his extensive travels, by means of his journal, Âlem-i İslâm: Japonyada intivar-i İslâmiyet [The World of Islam: The Spread of Islam in Japan],[889] but also made efforts later in his life to establish a close relationship between the Muslim world and Japan based on his Pan-Islamic (/ttihad-i İslâm) ideology and strategy. This essay is a preliminary survey of his vision of modern Japan and aims to present basic information for further research on a comprehensive subject, Islam and Japan, the significance of which is clearly growing in the contemporary world.

** A leading Pan-Islamist in Russia

We will begin with an overview of Ibrahim’s activities before his arrival in Japan in 1909.[890] He was born in Tara, a city in the Tobolsk governorate, Western Siberia. According to his autobiography, his Tatar family came from the descendants of Bukharans who had migrated from Central Asia to Western Siberia. Being an ardent student of Islamic learning, he traveled through Odessa and Istanbul to Mecca and Medina in 1879, just after the Russo-Ottoman War (1877–1878). There, he mastered Islamic learning. After returning to his country in 1885 to engage in reforming outdated madrasas, he was appointed a qadi in the Spiritual Assembly of the Muslim law located in Ufa. Established by order of Catherine II (r. 1762–1796) to supervise “Muslim clergymen” such as the imams or mudarrises (madrasa teachers) in Russia proper and Siberia, this official institution enjoyed great authority among the Russian Muslims, who constituted at least 13% of the total population of the Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century. Ibrahim’s esteemed position as a qadi caused Japanese journalism to introduce him in later years as “the former president of Muslims in Russia, “ [891] even though such an office never existed. However, after a few years of protesting against the stagnation and collapse of the Assembly leaders under full control of the Russian government, Ibrahim resigned from his office to move to Istanbul in 1894.

Outside Russia, he published articles that criticized Russia’s oppressive policy toward her Muslim subjects. For example, in his essay Muslims in Russia published in Cairo in 1900, he exposed various measures of

forced conversion and assimilation applied by Orthodox missionaries toward Tatar Muslims, as well as obstacles that the Russian authorities imposed on the Muslim educational reform movement. Among Russian Muslims, he was the first to openly criticize Russian policies toward Muslims. Nonetheless, he had to acknowledge the overwhelming power of Czarism as well as the incapability and ignorance of Russia's Muslim population. Remembering that the Muslim revolts against Qing rule in Xinjiang in the nineteenth century brought about only the great tragedy of a massacre, he urged his fellow Muslims to engage in educational reform and development instead of direct opposition to the ruling power.[892]

During his travels in Europe, Ibrahim came into contact with Russian revolutionaries and socialists in exile. Probably due to his apparent anti-Czarist discourses and activities, he was surrendered to Russian authorities by the Ottoman government on the former's insistence and for a time was in jail in Odessa. According to Russian authorities, he was nothing less than a dangerous Pan-Islamist who advocated the awakening and mutual integration of Muslims inside and outside the borders of the Russian Empire. In addition to this, it is said that during the Russo-Japanese War Ibrahim had made the close acquaintance of General Akashi Motojiro (1864–1919), a leading Japanese intelligence agent in Europe.[893]

When the Russian revolution in 1905 brought about relative freedom of speech and of the press, Ibrahim published Tatar and Arabic newspapers and journals such as the Ulfat and al-Tilmid in St Petersburg, and otherwise contributed to the development of Muslim journalism in Russia. At the same time, in order to unite Muslim peoples in the direction of reform and progress he endeavored to convene Russian Muslim congresses (which were held three times) and bring into existence the first Muslim political organization, the Ittifaq al-Muslimin [Union of (Russia's) Muslims]. As one of the most active leaders in the Muslim national movement in Russia, he published an interesting essay, Avtonomija [Autonomy], in 1907 that discussed the possible forms of autonomy for Muslim peoples in Russia. He envisaged territorial autonomy for the Qazaqs and Turkestanis as well as cultural autonomy for the Tatars and other Muslim minorities scattered among the Russian majority.[894] At any rate, his energetic activities in the political sphere during the

revolutionary years caused later Japanese journalism to introduce him as “a former representative in the Russian parliament.”[895]

The reaction of Czarism after 1907 put an end to the first Muslim political movement, however, and many Muslim intellectuals in Russia were obliged to migrate to Istanbul, where the Young Turks revolution in 1908 made their political and journalistic activities secure. Unlike them, Ibrahim traveled first in Russian Turkestan and Bukhara [896] to witness negative aspects of Russian colonial rule, and then at the end of September 1909 set out on a great journey from Kazan through Siberia, Manchuria, Japan, Korea, China, Southeast Asia, India, and Arabia to Istanbul. On his travels, he continued to send his reports and essays to the Tatar newspaper Bäyanul-hak in Kazan and the Ottoman journal Sirat-i müs-takim in Istanbul.[897] He was not, however, merely a journalist traveling in Eurasia. His travel account, The World of Islam, shows that his great journey had at least two major aims: first to awaken and enlighten Muslim peoples by describing real situations in the Muslim world that extends into Eurasia, and second to elaborate a strategy for the liberation of Muslim peoples under the rule of Western great powers. According to Ibrahim, Japan would play a decisive role in this strategy. Arriving in Vladivostok in January 1909, he waited for a steamship bound for Japan. Given that he visited the Japanese consulate in Vladivostok to consult with the officials, it is reasonable to think that Japanese authorities obtained considerable information about this famous Muslim activist in Russia.

** Ibrahim in Japan

In February 2, 1909, Ibrahim arrived in Tsuruga harbor, where he observed on land the huge Russian cannon made in St. Petersburg and captured by the Japanese army during the previous war. In Japan, he observed considerable reminiscence about the war. After settling in Yokohama, he began to study Japan and the Japanese people with unlimited interest. Although he did not know the Japanese language, his acquaintance with Nakayama Itsuzo, who had a good command of Russian and was probably a member of the Kokuryukai (Black Dragon Society),[898] enabled Ibrahim to communicate with many Japanese people by way of the Russian language. Ibrahim notes, however, that “after discovering that the

grammatical structure of Japanese is similar to Turkish, my desire to learn Japanese was stimulated so much.” He was proud of learning Japanese, and it helped his everyday life in Japan. In this way he began his field survey to study Japanese political, socioeconomic, military, and cultural systems, as well as customs and manners.

He stayed in Japan until June 1909. This long stay, exceptional in his great journey, underlines his strong interest in Japan. Indeed, he visited a variety of places: villages around Yokohama, the Parliament in session, the Sugamo prison, hospitals, shrines, temples, the Kabuki Theater, and a cherry blossom party. He preferred to visit schools such as Waseda University, the Tokyo Imperial University, the Tokyo Institute of Arts, and schools for girls. He even attended classes, as well as graduations. He was obviously impressed by a Japanese educational system that made rapid progress during the Meiji era (1868–1912). Underlying his admiration for Japanese education are the sentiments of a Jadid-Reformist intellectual who has not yet witnessed the full achievements of educational reform among Russian Muslims.

Another favorite place of his was the press bureaus. As soon as he arrived in Japan he visited the Kokumin shinbun, directed by a leading journalist, Tokutomi Soho (1863–1957), and the Hochi shinbun, which took pride in its daily 350,000 copies. The Hochi shinbun of February 16, 1909 reported on “an unusual giant” who is nothing but “an ex-representative in the Russian Parliament and head of the recently banned revolutionary newspaper Ulfat, Mr Rashid Ibrahim (60 years old) himself.” During his stay in Japan, major newspapers reported his activities and the aims of his journey with some curiosity. In other words, Ibrahim succeeded in introducing himself to the Japanese audience, who had hardly any knowledge about Muslims in Russia.

He tried to meet every kind of Japanese in order to study Japan and the Japanese people. His meeting list extends from ordinary people to ex-prime ministers, as well as university professors and notables. Among them we find such leading figures as Ito Hirobumi (1841–1909: one of the most eminent statesmen during the Meiji era, ex-prime minister), Okuma Shigenobu (1838–1922: ex-prime minister and ex-minister of foreign affairs, later once again prime minister), Inukai Tsuyoshi (1855–1932: later prime minister), Oyama

Iwao (1842–1916: Marshal, ex-general commander in Manchuria), and two ultranationalist leaders who advocated Pan-Asianist ideology for the sake of Japanese interests, Toyama Mitsuru (1855–1944) [899] and Uchida Ryohei (1874–1937).[900] Probably by their introduction, he was sometimes invited to give lectures, which were in Russian. In these meetings and lectures he used to stress three points, as described later.

First, he commented in every talk that Japanese should keep their “national spirit (ahlak-i milliye).” Comparing Japanese characteristics— such as virtue, a sense of equality among people who are not divided into classes, and respectable manners— with characteristics of the European and Muslim worlds, he spares no word of admiration for Japanese virtue. Of all Japanese characteristics, he considered “national spirit” (sometimes translated into Japanese as “Yamato damashii”) to be the most important. According to him the reason for the rapid progress of the Japanese was an intensive acceptance of Western science and technology while nonetheless keeping Japanese spiritual values—in other words, not losing their own tradition and identity. Although he clearly overestimates a spiritual factor in Japanese development, at the base of his argument we can recognize the deep anxieties of a Muslim intellectual who witnessed the decline of Islamic tradition in the Ottoman Empire due to rapid Westernization after the Tanzimat reforms, as well as the great changes in Muslim societies threatened by powerful Western influences.

Second, he never forgot to criticize any attitude of blind Westernization, especially the activities of Christian missionaries in Japan. This criticism is simply another aspect of his first argument. On every occasion he raised an alarm against the trend of superficial Westernization among the people, the so-called “haikara” phenomena (derived from the “high collar” used in Western clothes, a symbol of Westernization), and pointed out political motives of the great powers behind the missionary activities, including the Russian Orthodox Church. Here we should recognize the Muslim intellectual who confronts threats of cultural imperialism in the guise of missionary activities, not merely a Pan-Islamist with a simple irritation and opposition to Christianity. He was of course aware that the new method of conversion and assimilation through education by the native languages of inorodcy (non-Russian and non-Orthodox peoples in the Russian Empire), introduced by N. Ilminskij (1822–1891), was a crucial threat to Tatar

Muslims in the Volga-Ural region. We consider that Ibrahim overestimated missionary activities in Japan due to his experiences in Russia.

Third, he stressed the geopolitical importance of the Muslim world extending from North Africa to East Asia and Southeast Asia, especially in his conversations with statesmen and military agents. It is worth noting that he tried to draw their attention to Chinese Muslims (present-day Huis). According to him, Chinese Muslims could be the best partners for Japanese who wanted to penetrate into China. Such a partnership was planned as one of the rings of his great strategy, which envisaged the union of Asian peoples by joining the Muslim world with Japan and aimed to resist to the great powers' rule in Asia by this strong union. To join the Muslim world with Japan, he saw the best solution to be Japanese acceptance of Islam. Although he believed that Japanese virtue is in total accord with the doctrine of Islam, he was also convinced that the Japanese would never accept Islam if political and economical interests were lacking.

Ibrahim's vision is clearly presented in a speech published later in the journal GaikoJiho [Foreign Affairs], as follows:

In short, my purpose in visiting Japan is to investigate Japanese affairs in detail. Frankly, before the Russo-Japanese War I knew almost nothing about Japan. Japan's great success in this war affected me so much that I decided to come to Japan. I am sure we can learn many things in Japan, which is developing day by day like the rising sun. As to our Tatar people, words cannot describe the various kinds of oppression that we suffered during 450 years under Russian rule. The Russian government has not permitted us to learn our own history. They do not want to have enlightened Muslim subjects; for example, last year alone 15 Tatar schools, built by the people's own efforts and expense, were closed down by order of the government. You can understand everything by this simple example. I will repeat once more that, as a whole, Asians are disgusted by the Europeans. From this point of view, I am sure that bringing about the union of Asian countries to stand up to Europe is our legitimate means of self-defense. We Tatars do not hesitate to respect Japan as our senior, and we hope to send our youth to study in Japan. I will never believe that our independence can be achieved by ordinary means. It will become possible for us to carry out

the independence movement only when the world order transforms all at once and great changes come about in the balance of power.[901]

** The Ajia Gikai [The Society for the Asian Cause]

Ibrahim’s eloquent argument emphasizing the significance of the “rising sun” in world politics could not fail to attract the attention of Japanese nationalists and Pan-Asianists in the late Meiji era. As he was considered the most eminent political leader among Russian Muslims, his convincing words must have stimulated Japanese intellectuals. Ibrahim’s Pan-Islamist vision of a union of Asian peoples coincided with their Pan-Asianist ideology. In fact, he became acquainted with Nakano Jotaro (1866–1928), an agent of the General Staff Office and ardent Pan-Asianist, and Ohara Bukei (1865–1933), a former General Staff officer and member of the Toa Dobunkai [902] who received his Muslim name Abu Bakr from Ibrahim. Introduced by these men, he cultivated close acquaintance with Toyama, the charismatic master of Pan-Asianists, and statesmen with the same ideology such as Inukai Tsuyoshi and Kono Hironaka (1849–1 921: ex-president of the Diet). Their common objectives were to pave the way for joining the Muslim world with Japan and to bring about the union of Asian peoples. As a first step, they planned to construct a mosque in Tokyo as a symbol of cooperation.

Finally, they agreed to establish a political society, Ajia Gikai, aimed at the union and defense of Asian peoples. According to Ibrahim it was established in Tokyo on June 7, 1909, and the initiators swore an oath to keep their agreement.[903] The prospectus of the society says as follows:

Our Asia, being full of sublime and sacred thought, occupies the most important place in the world. Asia is superior to any other continent in its wide space, vast landscape, huge population, and abundant products. Therefore the first civilization was born in Asia, and the greatest thought spread from Asia. However, it is a great pity for us that Asian peoples not only lack communication within them, but also do not hesitate to oppose each other. It was this opposition among Asian peoples that enabled Western powers to invade the East. Without being aware of this defect and putting an

end to internal opposition, Asian peoples will have no future. Being confident in their capability, Asian peoples with superior ethics and manners as well as sound character and thought should endeavor after the reform and development of Asia. It is for this cause that we established the Ajia Gikai. We would like to address our proposal to a large audience in Asia and to call for their participation and assistance.

The prospectus referred to the following four directions of activities:

1. For the sake of the development of Asian countries, the society studies religion, education, economy, geography, colonization, international affairs, politics and military affairs in Asia.

2. Research results are to be published in our journal.

3. Our society gradually opens its branches in China, Thailand, India, Persia, Afghanistan, Turkey and other areas of importance.

4. Our society dispatches its members to Asian countries for field surveys. [904]

It is not certain to what extent the program was realized, because the society was short-lived. It is true, however, that according to Ibrahim’s proposal the president of the society, Ohara, sent a letter to the veyhülislam [the chief of the ulama in the Ottoman Empire] in September 1910 asking for the dispatch of ulama to Japan and financial assistance. It is said that at the beginning of 1911 membership was more than 100, and three Turkish graduates were learning Japanese at the temporary dormitory of the society in Tokyo.[905] Although the group failed to construct a mosque due to lack of money, their prospectus and programs were published in an Ottoman Turkish translation by the major Islamist journal in Istanbul, Sirat-i müstakim. [906] Since this journal circulated not only in the Ottoman Empire but also in Russia, we can suppose that the vision of the Ajia Gikai was popular among Turkic Muslim intellectuals.

Even after leaving Japan, Ibrahim continued to work in accordance with the program of the society. When he was in China, noting the rising waves of boycotting Japanese goods, he dared to call for the union and liberation of Asian peoples. He writes in his account of his travels that he contributed an article, “The East for the Eastern Peoples” to the Muslim journal published in Beijing, Zhengzong aiguo bao [The Journal of Correct Teaching and Love of the Country]. In this article, referring to Russian ambition in Inner Asia, the British invasion of Tibet, the French occupation of Tonkin, and the division of the Near-East and Iran by great powers, he pointed out that without a union of Eastern peoples they have no way to survive against merciless Western invasion, and anticipated the leading role of Japan that established her hegemony in Korea and Manchuria. Although this argument was not paradoxical for the author, who went so far as to advocate a Chino-Japanese union, he failed to consider how his argument for Japanese expansion in East Asia would affect a Chinese audience. Ibrahim probably told the program of the Ajia Gikai to Chinese Muslim leaders such as Wang Haoran (1848–1919).[907] A few decades later, however, they followed an alleged but popular hadith, “Love of one’s country is part of religion.” In other words, they participated intensely in anti-Japanese protest movements.[908]

In March 1910, just after a long journey, Ibrahim and his companion from India Yamaoka Kotaro (1880–1959), the first Japanese hajji, were invited to give lectures by the Society of Muslim Students from Russia in Istanbul. Ibrahim’s speech, which presented the prosperous future of the Ajia Gikai, won great applause from the audience. A young Bukharan student, Abdurauf Fitrat (1886–1938), may have attended this conference or read the Âlem-i İslâm carefully. In his Persian work, Munazara [The Debate], which became the manifesto of the Jadid-Reformist movements in Bukhara and Turkestan, Fitrat describes Ibrahim’s activities in Japan as follows:

The Venerable Abdurreshid Ibrahim, leaving his home with only 12 rubles, did not mind the trouble of visiting as far as China and Japan in order to establish the union of Islam. In the capital of Japan, Tokyo, he succeeded in converting some notables to Islam and even setting up an Islamic society.

This is nothing else than sincere service to Islam. One of the Japanese ministers is said to have dedicated his spare time for teaching children of the common people. Although he is a so-called school manager, he does not receive any money from anybody. It seems that he pays all expenses out of his own pocket.[909]

Of course, here Fitrat mentions the Ajia Gikai. The “school manager” may be marshal Oyama, who according to Ibrahim was living in a school as a supervisor after retiring from the army. By the way, when Fitrat’s work was translated into Uzbek in Russian Turkistan, this passage praising the devoted activities of Ibrahim was totally omitted, replaced by an account of humanistic activities of Tolstoy, due to Russian censors. However, positive images of Japan introduced by Ibrahim are found in other works of Fitrat such as Bayanat-i sayyah-i hindi [Tales of an Indian Traveler (Istanbul, 1912)], and Rahbar-i naëat [The Guide to Salvation (Petrograd, 1915)].

Despite Ibrahim’s personal efforts, clearly his vision of uniting Japan and the Ottoman Empire remained unrealized in real politics. When he visited Kamil Pava (1832–1913) to consult about his project, this experienced Ottoman statesman told him:

You are a little bit late to come. If you had come in the reign of Abdülaziz (1861–76), you would have enjoyed his favor. The late sultan was very fond of such projects. In those days, our mighty navy could serve to send you with special equipment. Sultan Abdülhamit (1876–1909) also intended to send a delegation of ulama; unfortunately, our ship Ertuærul sank near the Japanese coast. Although the sultan had a goal, he had no power to realize it.[910]

Indeed, the Ottoman Empire, confronted with a series of fatal problems since the Young Turks revolution in 1908, could not afford to elaborate an Eastern policy as Ibrahim desired. At the same time, a new nationalist ideology of Turkism began to gain a broader audience among Muslim intellectuals in the Empire.

** Ibrahim in war and revolution

Despite unfavorable conditions, Ibrahim worked actively as a Pan-Islamist journalist in Istanbul. His extensive travels as reported in Âlem-i İslâm made him widely known among Turkic-speaking Muslims. It is not, however, merely a travel journal. It is a unique work that reads the early twentieth century world from the viewpoint of a Pan-Islamist ideology based on his direct observations in Eurasia. While denouncing the great powers' colonial rule in Asia, the author does not hesitate to also criticize the weakness and contradictions that prevailed within the Muslim world. He describes at every opportunity the heavy damage caused by sectarian antagonism, corruption, and ignorance among Muslims. In other words, he is carrying out the duties of ulama, who should be responsible for the development of the Muslim community. This work is an example of enlightenment literature that aimed at awakening Muslim peoples in Asia. At the same time, it should not be missed that his detailed and overstated narration about Japan and the Japanese contributed to the formation of a long-lasting pro-Japanese image in modern Turkey.[911] For example, the poem Japonlar [Japanese], written by Mehmet Akif (1873–1936), who was inspired by the Âlem-i İslâm, introduced to fellow Muslims a "Japanese virtue" that is completely in accord with Islamic teachings. According to him, the Japanese could be the most perfect Muslims in the world. Along with the publication of his travel narrative, Ibrahim started to publish Ottoman journals such as the Teârüf-i müslimin [Acquaintance of Muslims: 1910–1911] and /slâm dünyasi [The World of Islam: 1913] to give information about the recent events in the Muslim world as well as to exchange opinions and information among Muslim intellectuals throughout the world.[912] In the former journal, an article by a member of the Ajia Gikai appeared. Ibrahim also published the Ottoman translation of a Japanese treatise that exposed Western oppressions against Asian peoples. In this treatise the author says:

Once a Tatar colleague [Ibrahim] visited Japan, and made a very important attempt. That is he asked Japanese government supports to recover their independence. According to him, if the Japanese government

carries out seriously its mission of leading Asian peoples, it will succeed in uniting Asian peoples within three or five years.[913]

Ibrahim’s activism was also distinguished in the following war years. In 1911, when Italians invaded Libya under Ottoman rule, despite his advanced age he visited the front to encourage the defense army. Calling Ottoman Muslims for the jihad, he asked spiritual and material supports from Japan, Java, and India through his extensive networks of fellowship cultivated during his great travel. His Pan-Islamist activities were repeated during the Balkan war in 1912. In these war years, Ibrahim gained acquaintance with an eminent leader of the Young Turks, Enver Pava (1881–1922). When the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War in 1914, at Enver Pava’s request Ibrahim went to Berlin and, from a great number of Russian war prisoners captured by the German Army,[914] recruited Tatar Muslim soldiers who could fight on the Ottoman front. By publishing the newspaper Cihad-i İslâm [The Holy war of Islam] and working as an imam in the prisoner camps, he endeavored to form the Asian Battalion. Later on it was dispatched to the Iraqi front and fought against the British army. In 1918 he worked for the Tevkilat-i Mahsusa (Intelligence Department of the Ottoman Army) and helped Ottoman citizens returning from Russia to their homeland.[915]

In October 1918, after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, he decided to go back to his native country, where the civil war had continued since the October revolution in the previous year. He may have expected that the revolution had put an end to the Czarist oppressions and brought about favorable conditions for Russia’s Muslims. On the way to Tobolsk, however, he found miserable people suffering from a famine that prevailed in the Volga-Ural region. In his native city, Tara, he taught Muslim young people for two years. When Bolshevik repression toward Muslims obliged him to leave Tara, he traveled through Xinjiang, China, and Manchuria to Moscow. On the way, he heard news of the victorious Turkish National Army recovering Izmir from the Greeks. In Moscow he made acquaintance with the highest leaders of the Bolsheviks, such as Lenin and Stalin, and worked to ensure the existence of Muslim communities in Russia as well as to help Muslim peoples suffering from great famines. According to Zeki Validov [Togan (1890–1970)], who hosted Ibrahim and his Indian companions in the South Urals in March 1920, they planned to unite the Muslim world with Soviet Russia for the

liberation of Muslims under Western colonial rule.[916] However, recognizing that compromise with the Bolsheviks could not be possible, in the spring of 1923 Ibrahim decided to go back to Turkey.[917]

** Once again in Japan

However Ibrahim found that the new political conditions in the Republic of Turkey would never be favorable for him. First, his Pan-Islamist ideology was not allowable under Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk (1880–1938)]’s new regime, which had abolished the caliphate and aimed to be a secular national state. Second, Ibrahim’s anti-Soviet speaking and behavior was also intolerable for a Turkish government that cultivated close relations with Soviet Russia after the difficult years of the Turkish war for independence. Consequently, after 1925 Ibrahim was obliged to live in retirement in Konya, where a number of Muslim migrants from Russia were now living. This “home arrest” may have promised him a peaceful old age. Starting in the latter part of the 1920s, however, Japanese military attachés in Ankara came to invite him to Japan. Although the details of this invitation remain to be unearthed, cooperation with eminent Muslim leaders must have been indispensable for Japanese authorities that understood the strategic importance of the Muslim world spreading in Asia. Ibrahim once again came to Japan in October 1933.

Ibrahim was warmly welcomed by Tokyo’s Muslim community, headed by the Bashkir imam Muhammad Qurban-Aliyeff (Kurbangaliev, 1890–1972),[918] as well as by Japanese dignitaries in a reception held on November 5, 1933.[919] According to his talk published in the Yomiuri shinbun, he had a set of projects to be realized in Japan: first, to promote cooperation between the Muslim world and Japan, which had withdrawn from the League of Nations; second, to study the current state of affairs in Japan that he was visiting once again after a twenty-five years’ absence; third, to correct misunderstandings about Islam among the Japanese people, who got all their information about Islam from biased Western publications. The third project included the publication of his autobiography, which could instruct the Japanese as to the modern history of the Muslim world and the Japanese translation of the Qur1an.[920] Clearly, he was eager to realize his long-

cherished plan to bring the Muslim world together with Japan in the post-war world order.

In Tokyo he was esteemed as the most respectable elder in a Muslim community that was established by Muslim émigrés, mostly Tatars, from the Russian Empire after the revolution. Especially after Kurbangaliev was deported to Manchuria in 1938, it was Ibrahim who presided in the community. When a long-desired mosque was set up in Tokyo in May 12, 1938, he was elected imam, thus securing a key position for his grand idea. At the same time he continued to work as an active journalist and contributed several articles to the Yani Yapon muhbiri [New Japanese Correspondent], a monthly Tatar-Ottoman journal founded by Kurbangaliev in February 1932. It aimed “to introduce Muslim peoples to social thought and movements important for both Japan and the Japanese people and for Muslims.” The journal’s nameplate is followed by these words: “a unique journal that introduces Japan to Muslim countries in the world.” In fact, it contains a number of anonymous articles informing Muslim readers about the state of affairs in Japan as well as pro-Japanese articles written by Muslim intellectuals. Considering its contents and the high quality of its publication, it is likely that the Japanese authorities gave both moral and material support to the publisher, the Tokyo Muslim Community headed by Kurbangaliev.

It is worth noting that Ibrahim contributed his articles before arriving in Japan. For example, in his article, “The Eastern World,” he thinks highly of the Japanese withdrawal from the League of Nations in March 1933. According to his interpretation, the League of Nations was nothing else than a trap set by Western great powers for putting Japan under their control and preventing Japan from playing a leading role in liberating Eastern peoples under Western rule. Therefore the day of Japanese withdrawal, March 10 [sic],[921] should be celebrated not only by Japanese people but also Eastern peoples, among others the Muslim peoples.[922] We find that his argument was totally in accordance with the hard-line foreign policy supported by Japanese right-wing thinkers.

The “el-Cihad [Holy war],” probably his first article written in Tokyo, is outstanding for its comprehensive and radical arguments. He reasons as follows:

In the recent World War, Muslim peoples have made great mistakes. Despite their great losses and suffering, Muslim peoples were deceived by the Western powers and could not gain anything after the war. Even today, these powers are conducting oppressive policies in Muslim countries. Muslim peoples seem to have lost every hope as to the future of Islam. However, they must grow out of their present miserable situations.

When great changes in the world and an unprecedented war are expected soon, Muslims should not make mistakes again. They should be careful and not be deceived. In this situation, they should pay attention to Japan and the Japanese people who, like us, give great importance to moral and spiritual matters, and do not spare sincere support to Muslims in Manchuria and Japan. Recently Japan announced its own worldview, different from the Western one, and declared its intention to put an end to the Bolsheviks’ inhuman policies [sic]. This statement was addressed to the 30 million Muslims living in Soviet Russia. Therefore all Muslims should participate on the Japanese side for their liberation, and fight for the sake of Islam in the forthcoming war. Regarding this important matter, the ulama should consider what is right and lawful according to the directions of the Prophet, the sacred hadith.[923]

The argument can be considered the leitmotiv throughout his last activities in Japan.

In another article, “The Relationship between Japan and Islam,” Ibrahim again raises the alarm as to Christian missionary activities in that country.[924] According to him, Christianity and Western rule in general threaten the “national spirit” and patriotism of oppressed peoples, as seen in the history of Asian peoples. Christianity deprives them of a natural spirit of bravery and brings about religious disputes among them. It is Islam that secures their survival against Western threats through Christianity. Despite the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Turkish people can live thanks to the spiritual force of

Islam. From this point of view, the Japanese people also came to think about being acquainted with Islam. Protecting Japanese from the threats of Christianity is the most important for Asian peoples, especially Muslims.[925] Although his argument is rather subjective, he clearly shared a basic idea with the Japanese right wing that called for the revival of a martial spirit among Japanese people, in other words for the protection of the pure spirit of the Japanese. It is true that his arguments in the Yani Yapon muhbiri are consistent with those in the Âlem-i İslâm. However, his arguments in the former are more radicalized and militarized than in the latter. This change may reflect political and intellectual trends in Japan in the 1930s, as well as Ibrahim's sense of urgency as he anticipated a great change in the world.

Ibrahim participated in the organization of the Dai Nippon Kaikyo Kyokai [Great Japan Islamic Society]. In 1938, four months after the opening of the Tokyo mosque, this society came into existence under the presidency of General Hayashi Senjuro (1876–1943: ex-War Minister and Prime Minister). It aimed to establish close relations between Japan and 300 million Muslims in the course of building up the Toa shin chitsujo [New Order in East Asia]. While introducing the state of affairs in the Muslim world to a Japanese audience through the monthly journal Kaikyo sekai [The Muslim World], the society also supervised Muslim organizations in the occupied territories in China and Manchuria.[926] Cooperation with influential Muslim intellectuals such as Ibrahim must have been indispensable for Japanese authorities that worked to secure support from Muslim countries and populations in Asia. Mutual agreement existed between Ibrahim's Pan-Islamist strategy and Japanese expansionist strategies. It is not certain to what extent Ibrahim believed in the successful future of Japan. As far as this old Pan-Islamist was concerned, he had only a small-sized Tatar Muslim community in Tokyo and a journal with limited circulation. It is possible to raise a question: was not the Muslim world, to which Ibrahim addressed his work, an imagined community? He died in Tokyo on August 31, 1944, when Japanese defeat seemed certain.

** Conclusion

This paper presents an overview of the activities and ideas of Abdurreshid Ibrahim, who worked for Pan-Islamic causes throughout his life. The paper focuses on his relations with Japan. His checkered career is worth examining, not only from the viewpoint of the modern history of the Muslim world but also from that of the modern history of Japan. Japanese approaches to Ibrahim and the world of Islam as a whole remain to be studied. Finally, we would like to mention a legacy of Ibrahim in Japan. The late professor Izutsu Toshihiko (1914–1993) has described an interesting personal episode regarding his meeting with Ibrahim: when he was a young assistant, he took private lessons in the Arabic language from Ibrahim in Tokyo and was encouraged to study Islam.[927] Given that Izutsu later made a great contribution to Islamic studies in the world, Ibrahim’s name should be retained in the historiography of Islamic studies in Japan.

[888] In the last decade a number of studies of Abdurreshid Ibrahim’s life and activities have been published. As to the bibliography, see one of the most comprehensive works:Ismail Türkoælu, Sibiryalı Mevhur Seyyah Abdürrevid Ibrahim (Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1997), 172. Among other places, intensive studies have been conducted in Turkey. For example, see the special issues of Toplumsal Tarih (4/19, 4/20) published in 1995. In Japan also, several works have been published. For example, see: Komatsu Hisao, “Senkyuhyakugo nen zengo no sekai: Roshia musurimu no shiten kara [The World around 1905: From the Viewpoint of Russian Muslims],” in Kyoshano sekai: Teikokushugino jidai (Koza sekaishi 5) [The Age of Imperialism (A Course of the World History: 5)], ed. Rekishigaku Kenkyukai (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995): 117–146; Komatsu Hisao, Kakumeino chuo ajia: Aru jadidono shozo [Revolutionary Central Asia: A Portrait of Abdurauf Fitrat] (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1996), 312; Sakamoto Tsutomu, “Yamaoka Kotarono Mekka junreito Abudeyurureshito Iburahimu [Yamaoka Kotaro’s Hajj and Abdurreshid Ibrahim],” in Ikei Osamu and Sakamoto Tsutomu, eds, Kindai nihonto toruko sekai [Modern Japan and the Turkic World] (Tokyo: Keiso Shobo, 1999): 157–217. See also Selçuk Esenbel and Inaba Chiharu, eds, The Rising Sun and the Turkish Crescent: New Perspective on the History of Japanese Turkish Relations (Istanbul: Boæaziçi University Press, 2003).

[889] Abdürrevid Ibrahim, Âlem-i Islâm: Japonya’da intivar-ı Islâmiyet, 2 vols (Istanbul: vol. 1: Ahmed Saki Bey Matbaası, vol. 2:

Kadar Matbaası, 1910–1913), 620 _ 243. As a Japanese translation of the chapter on Japan: Abudeyurureshito Iburahimu, Japonya: isuramukei roshiajin no mita Meiji Nihon [Japonya: Meiji Japan Seen by a Russian Muslim], trans.Komatsu Kaori and Komatsu Hisao (Tokyo: Daisan Shokan, 1991), 412.

[890] As to his early life, see Abdürrevid Ibrahim, Tercüme-i hâlim yâke bavıma gelenler (St. Petersburg, n.d.), 128. Some sources inform us that he prepared an autobiography during his second stay in Japan. However, it remains unpublished.

[891] For example, see “Iburahimushito kataru,” in the Yomiuri Shinbun (June 11, 1909): 2.

[892] [Abdürrevid Ibrahim], Rusya1da Müslümanlar yahut Tatar Akvamının Tarihçesi ([Cairo], 1900), 88. Later on its Tatar version was published: Chulpan Yoldizi (St. Petersburg, 1907), 58.

[893] Wakabayashi Han, Kaikyo sekai to Nihon [The Muslim World and Japan] (Tokyo: Dainichisha, 1937): 9.

[894] Abdurreshid Ibrahim, Aftonomiya yake Idare-i Muhtariye (St. Petersburg,[1907]), 35.

[895] For example, see “Iburahimushito kataru,” in the Yomiuri Shinbun (June 11, 1909): 2. In fact, on the occasion of the Third Conference of Russian Muslims held in Nizhnii Novgorod in August 1906, Ibrahim was elected a member of the Central Committee of the Union of Russian Muslims (Musul1manskaja konstitucionno-narodnaja partija) by the greatest majority; however, this party was not authorized by the Russian government. See Nijni Novgorod1da vaki olan Rusya Müslümanları üçüncü nedvesinin muqarriratı: 16–21 August 1906 (Kazan: Matbaa-i Kerimiye, 1906): 16–19.

[896] For an annotated English translation of Ibrahim’s travel accounts in Bukhara see Kimura Satoru, “Bukhara-yi Sharif as Witnessed by a Tatar Intellectual in the Early 20th Century,” Iz istorii kul1turnogo nasledija Buhary 7 (Bukhara: Izdatel1stvo Bukhara, 2001): 95–111.

[897] The first part of his travels, describing his journey from Kazan to Vladivostok, was published in Tatar: Abdurreshid Ibrahim, Devr-i Alem (Kazan: Bäyanul-Hak, 1909), 160.

[898] Kokuryukai: A leading ultranationalist society founded in 1901 under the direction of Uchida Ryohei (see later) succeeded to the ideas and strategy of the Genyosha (see later). It advocated expelling Russia from Asia and Japanese expansion into Manchuria, Mongolia, and Siberia, as well as a hard-line foreign policy. The members were engaged in Russian and Chinese studies, and worked in close contact with the army. During the Russo-Japanese War, it provided the army with intelligence agents and translators. After the war, it supported the annexation of Korea and the Chinese revolutionary movement against the Qing dynasty. After the First World War it advocated the independence of Asian peoples under the guidance of Japan until the defeat in the Second World War.

[899] Toyama Mitsuru: charismatic leader of the first ultranationalist society Genyosha (1877–1946), which advocated Japanese advance on the continent and a hard-line foreign policy. Until his death, he maintained a strong influence among nationalist groups. His close relationship with Ibrahim continued all his life.

[900] Uchida Ryohei: active leader of the ultranationalist society Kokuryukai. He advocated war against Russia after the triple intervention in 1895, after the Sino-Japanese War. When Ibrahim visited Uchida, he was engaged in preparatory works for the annexation of Korea to Japan.

[901] Abudorashitto Iburahimu, “Dattanjin dokuritsuno kibo [Tatars’ Aspiration for Independence],” Gaiko Jiho 137 (1909): 212–219.

[902] The Toa Dobunkai [East Asian Friendship Society] was a nongovernmental society established in 1898 for the purpose of promoting friendship between Japan and China.

[903] The written oath is not found in the Âlem-i Islâm, but in Wakabayashi, Kaikyo sekai to Nihon.

[904] The prospectus of the Ajia Gikai was published on every issue of the journal Daito [Great East]. A preliminary survey of this journal is conducted in Japan. See Misawa Nobuo, “Ajia Gikai kikanshi Daito ni shoshusareru nijusseiki shoto no Nihonniokeru isuramu kankei joho [Introduction of Primary Sources Regarding Relations between Late Meiji Era Japan and the Islamic World: Information about the Islamic World in Early Twentieth-Century Japan Contained in the Journal of the Society for the Asian Cause, the Great Orient],” Toyo Daigaku Ajia Ahurika Bunka Kenkyusho (Kenkyu nenpo) 36 (2001): 60–75.

[905] “Ajia Gikai,” in the Nihon oyobi nihonjin 550 (1911): 8.

[906] “Japonya1da Dayto mecellesi ve Âsya Gikay cemiyetinin beyannamesi,” Sırat-I müstakim 6/133 (March 23, 1910): 42–44; “Âsya Gikay cemiyetinin maksad-ı tesisi,” Sırat-ı müstakim, 7/162 (October 5, 1911): 89.

[907] In the Âlem-i Islâm : 428, Ibrahim put a document bearing signatures of some initiators of the Ajia Gikai as well as of three Chinese Muslim leaders including Wang Haoran.

[908] For the details of sociopolitical movements of Chinese Muslims, see Matsumoto Masumi and Françoise Aubin’s papers in this volume.

[909] Fitrat Bularayi, Munazara-yi mudarris-i bularayi ba yak nafar Farangi dar Hindustan dar bara-yi makatib-i ëadida (haqiqat natiëa-yi tasadum-i afkar ast) (Istanbul: Matba2a-i islamiyya, 1911): 14. As to the details of the Munazara see Komatsu Hisao, “Bukhara and Istanbul: A Consideration about the Background of the Munazara ,” in Stéphane A. Dudoignon and Komatsu Hisao, eds, Islam in Politics in Russia and Central Asia (Early Eighteenth to Late Twentieth Centuries) (London, New York, and Bahrain: Kegan Paul, 2001): 167–180.

[910] Revid Efendi Ibrahim, Tarihin Unutulmuv Sahifeleri [Forgotten Pages of History] (Berlin, n.d.): 8.

[911] We can suppose that Ibrahim’s admiration for Japan had another aspect. The Japanese image was used as a mirror reflecting the defects of the Muslim societies.

[912] Ibrahim’s idea presented in these journals is well analyzed in Nadir Özbek, “Abdürrevid Ibrahim1in ikinci Mevrutiyet yılları: Teârüf-i Müslimin ve Islâm Dünyası,” Toplumsal Tarih 4/20 (1995): 18–23.

[913] Hatano [Hatano Uho], Asya Tehlikede [Asia in Crisis], translated by Japonyalı Mehmed Hilmi Nakava and Abdürrevid Ibrahim (Istanbul, 1912): 13–14.

[914] According to Ibrahim’s talk, about 84,000 Muslim soldiers were in German prison camps. “Torukokara Nihon1e [From Turkey to Japan] (1),” Yomiuri shinbun (December 10, 1933): 4.

[915] Türkoælu, Sibiryalı : 70–81.

[916] Validov, a leader of the Bashkir national movement, pointed out that their idea is nothing but an illusion, and tried to persuade them to give up the alliance with Communists. Zeki Velidi Togan, Hâtıralar: Türkistan ve Diæer Müslüman Doæu Türklerinin Millî Varlık ve Kültür Mücadeleleri (Istanbul: TAN Matbaası, 1969): 301–302. Cf. Verif Mardin, “Abdurreshid Ibrahim and Zeki Velidi Togan in the History of the Muslims of Russia,” in Korkt A. Ertürk, ed., Rethinking Central Asia : Non-Eurocentric Studies in History, Social Structure and Identity (Reading: Ithaca Press: 1999): 111–128.

[917] Türkoælu, Sibiryalı : 81–94.

[918] As to Kurbangaliev, see: Nishiyama Katsunori, “Kurubangali ryakuden: Senkanki zairyu kaikyotono mondaini yosete”[Short Biography of Kurbangali: Émigré Muslims in Japan during the Inter-War Period], Roshia kakumeishi kenkyu shiryo 3 (1996): 1–26; Ajslu Junusova, “Velikij imam Dal’nego Vostoka Muhammed-Gabdulhaj Kurbangaliev,” Vestnik Evrazii 2001/4[15]: 83–116.

[919] As to the details of the reception see, Yani Yapon muhbiri, 12 (1933): 41–45. I am very grateful to Dr Ismail Türkoælu for providing me this rare journal.

[920] “Toruko kara Nihon e (1–4),” in the Yomiuri shinbun (December 10, 12–14, 1933).

[921] Precisely on February 24, 1933, the Japanese delegation left its seats, protesting against the report of the Lytton commission that pointed out Japanese acts of aggression in Manchuria.

[922] Abdürrevid Ibrahim, “Vark âlemi,” Yani Yapon muhbiri 8 (1933): 4–7. As to Ibrahim’s argument, of course, we find opposite ones

among contemporary Muslim intellectuals. For example Miyan Abdul Aziz, the ex-president of the All-India Muslim League, says as follows: Now it is quite clear … that Japan was contemplating aggression instead of achieving her object successfully by enlisting the goodwill of those concerned. For this reason it is impossible for Islam to sympathize with Japan’s present mood. Adjustment between nations there must be from time to time, but adjustment by force and violence is not the way of Islam. At this late time in the history of the world the moral sentiment must count, and a country that outrages it must expect general condemnation. Violence is the negation of Islam, which means peace. M. Abdul Aziz, The Crescent in the Land of the Rising Sun (London: Blades, East and Blades Ltd., 1941): 69. The author was requested to visit Japan to perform the opening ceremony of the Kobe mosque on behalf of the Islamic world in 1935, and during his long stay had ample opportunity of coming into contact with Japanese people and state of affairs. It should be noticed that he never refers to Ibrahim, while describing the inside story of the Tatar Muslim community in Tokyo in detail. According to the author he obtained a lot of information “regarding the real situation of Muslims in that country, which is full of spies and suspicious people.” Abdul Aziz, The Crescent in the Land of the Rising Sun, 25.

[923] Abdürrevid Ibrahim, “el-Cihad,” Yani Yapon muhbiri 12 (1933): 29–33. See also Türkoælu, Sibiryalı : 97.

[924] Ibrahim was critical of the Japanese law that authorized Christianity as one of Japan’s official religions but excluded Islam. For example, see his speech at the celebration of the publication of the Qur1an in Tokyo: Yani Yapon muhbiri 19 (1934): 43. A number of Japanese dignitaries participated in this reception.

[925] Abdürrevid Ibrahim, “Yapon ve Islâm münasebeti,” Yani Yapon Muhbiri 13 (1934): 37–41.

[926] For the details, see Office of Strategic Services, Research and Analysis Branch, Japanese Infiltration among Muslims in Russia and Her

Borderlands, August 1944 (R&A No. 890. 2). I am very grateful to Prof. Edward J. Lazzerini for providing me this important material.

[927] Shiba Ryotaro, Shiba Ryotaro rekishi kandan [Shiba Ryotaro's Conversations on History] (Tokyo: Chuo koronsha, 2000, first published in the Chuo koron, 1993/1): 479–484.

* 14. Clash of Cultures?: Intellectuals, their publics, and Islam

Dale F. Eickelman

A new sense of public is emerging throughout Muslim-majority states and Muslim communities elsewhere. Joined with this new sense of public are new intellectual styles and messages, disseminated in increasingly diverse yet overlapping fields of communication and understanding. The influence of state authorities and intellectuals trained in the formal religious sciences remain strong, but their authority is increasingly displaced by intellectuals with increasingly disparate backgrounds. The Intellectuals and the Powers. The idea of "intellectual" implies an individual claiming or imputed to possess an especially intense awareness of the sacred center of social and spiritual values and the ability to reflect and explain valued categories of knowledge.[928] In the present era, people have increased latitude in choosing who can most effectively articulate core social and spiritual values. In the contemporary Muslim majority world, those with training in the formal religious sciences remain important but are increasingly complemented by lawyers, engineers, and others lacking formal religious training. Indeed, formal education is often less significant than an ability to communicate effectively in different media and across social classes. As Olivier Roy pointed out in the early 1990s, modernist Muslim intellectuals can often choose among audiences and languages.[929] A Moroccan religious intellectual can choose to write in French or Arabic, or to record a cassette in colloquial Moroccan Arabic or in one of Morocco's Berber languages. His South Asian counterpart can choose between Urdu and English, and a Qazaq might switch between Russian and Qazaq. At the present, men remain foregrounded as communicators of religious ideas and practices, although women are playing increasingly important roles.[930] Books remain an

important and valued means of communication, but pamphlets, newspaper and magazine articles, audio cassettes, videos, and the ability to master (and have access to) the broadcast media play an increasingly significant role. The book may remain the apex of valued knowledge, but its role is multiplied by discussion in other media and by word of mouth.

In language, audience, and style, messages—and those who create them—have become increasingly diverse. In the religious domain, both intellectuals and audiences are shaped by increasingly open contests over the authoritative use of the symbolic language of Islam. New and increasingly accessible modes of communication have made these contests increasingly global, making even local disputes take on transnational dimensions. Islam and thinkers within the Islamic tradition have always been transregional or transnational, but increasingly open and accessible forms of communication play a significant role in fragmenting and contesting political and religious authority.

In one respect, recognition of the role of religion in shaping intellectuals and intellectual life in Muslim societies shows a remarkable continuity with the West. Open societies claim to respect religion and religious worship. At the same time, however, in the words of the philosopher Richard Rorty, religion usually functions as a “conversation-stopper” outside of circles of believers.[931] The role of religion in public life has fared no better. This is because prevailing social theories have marginalized religion and the role of religious intellectuals. To the extent that many Muslim majority societies have failed to construct open and civil societies, the role of religion in them is often almost automatically invoked as a cause for this failure. Yet for such Muslim-majority countries as Indonesia and Turkey, religious intellectuals play a major role in furthering the goals of civil society, religious pluralism, and tolerance.[932]

** Islam, modernity, and modernization theory

Ernest Gellner was characteristically blunt in his views of Islam, and his writings offer an exemplar of how religion in general, and Islam in particular, figure in much thinking about modernity. With the collapse of Marxist regimes, only Islam, Gellner argued, continued to resist the universal

trend toward secularization and nationalism. As a faith, he regarded Islam as imposing “essential” constraints on the conduct and thought of those committed to it.[933] It offered a “closed system” of thought.[934] For Gellner, the “essence” of nationalism in the West is that a “high— literacy-linked—culture becomes the pervasive, membership-defining culture of the total society.” In Islam, in contrast, fundamentalism becomes the essence of total society. As a consequence, regimes are judged by “the religious norms of sacred law, rather than the secular principles of a Civil Society.” For Gellner, Islam “exemplifies a social order which seems to lack much capacity to provide political countervailing institutions or associations” and “operates effectively without intellectual pluralism.”[935]

Contrary to such assumptions, the Muslim majority world is demonstrating a vigorous and increasing diverse intellectual pluralism. Such debates and awareness of alternative interpretations of Islam and its role in society do not translate directly into political and social practice. However, the proliferation and increased accessibility of the means of communication in today’s global society, together with the rise of mass education, has increased the power of intellectuals to communicate and of audiences to listen and discuss. Religious intellectuals, like their secularly minded counterparts, tacitly compete for increasingly fragmented publics. Moreover, far from constituting an exception to worldwide trends, the role of religious intellectuals in the Muslim majority world increasingly reflects the spectrum of debate and public discussion prevalent in other parts of the world. Some religious leaders and intellectuals claim a privileged position for religious voices, but many more accept the pluralism of competing voices. In addition, the line between religious and secular voices is increasingly blurred.

Just as modern conditions facilitate a fragmentation of religious and political authority, they create diverse publics who understand ideas and messages in various ways. Some Muslim intellectuals increasingly form part of a transnational elite, but effectiveness on the global stage comes at a price. With globalization, mobility increases for a small segment of the elite but it increases polarities with the more localized rest. As a consequence, religious intellectuals like Iran’s Abdolkarim Soroush becomes more in tune with Edward Said and accessible at a multilingual website (http://www.seraj.org), but at the risk of losing touch with more localized audiences.

The conventional wisdom of social thought remains profoundly informed by modernization theory, the single most important social theory to influence both academic and policy approaches to the Third World from the 1950s to the late 1970s, and with continued significance today. The secular bias of modernization theory had its specific echo in analyses of the Islamic world. In the early 1960s, modernization theorists saw the Muslim world as facing an unpalatable choice: either a “neo-Islamic totalitarianism” intent on “resurrecting the past,” or a “reformist Islam” which would open “the sluice gates and [be] swamped by the deluge.”[936] In Daniel Lerner’s memorable phrase, Middle Eastern societies faced a stark choice—”Mecca or mechanization.”[937] At the least, such views suggest an intensely negative view of the possibilities of evolution in Muslim societies and an inherent preference for militantly secularizing reformers such as Turkey’s Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938) and the Pahlavi Shahs of Iran, Reza Shah (1878–1944) and his son, Mohammad Reza Shah (1919–1980).

In such formulations, Islam is merely a particularly salient example of the hindering roles of religion and religious thinkers in modern society. Edward Shils offers a kinder, gentler, variant of the role of intellectuals in modern thought. For him, intellectuals possess an “innate need” to be in “frequent communication with symbols which are more general than the immediate concrete situations of everyday life.”[938] Although intellectual work originally arose from religious occupations, Shils writes that religious orientations in modern times attract “a diminishing share of the creative capacities of the oncoming intellectual elite.” In Shils’s view, among Western intellectuals in earlier periods, and Asian and African intellectuals since the nineteenth century, “the tradition of distrust of secular and ecclesiastical authority—and in fact of tradition as such—has become the chief secondary tradition of the intellectuals.”[939] The notion of the sacred has shifted in his view from religious concerns to a focus on and mastery of the technological, organizational, and political skills most useful in forging a modern state in the face of congeries of supposedly primordial loyalties. In modernization theory, the present thus belongs to the liberals and the technocrats, found primarily in the differentiated “modern” class. Shils argues that only intellectuals attached to “modern” values have the vision to rise above parochial identities and to attach themselves to the notion of a modern nation-state.

How disconcerting, then, for this view of modernization theory and the role of the nation-state to see no less a committed political leader than Václav Havel declare that “human rights, human freedoms, and human dignity have their deepest roots outside the perceptible world.”[940] On the state and its probable role in the future, writes Havel, “while the state is a human creation, human beings are the creation of God.”

Havel’s statement serves as a poignant reminder that religious belief and practice are not necessarily inimical to modernity and can play a vital role in public life. Nonetheless, common to all variants of modernization theory is the declining role of religion, except as a private matter, as modernization takes hold. To move toward modernity, political leaders must displace the authority of religious leaders and devalue the importance of traditional religious institutions. “Modernity” is seen as an “enlargement of human freedoms” and an “enhancement of the range of choices” as people began to “take charge” of themselves.[941] “Secularization” thus refers to the fact that religious, and religious intellectuals, come to have a less prominent or influential position in modern societies. Religion can retain its influence only by conforming to such norms as “rationality” and relativism, or by making compromises with science, economic concerns, and the state.

** Transnational religion and religious intellectuals

By the late 1970s this prevalent view of the declining role of religion began to erode. Several nearly simultaneous but independent developments indicated the continuing central role of religion in public life: the Iranian revolution, the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, the role of liberation theology in Latin American political movements, and the return of Protestant fundamentalism as a force in American politics.[942] Ignored by modernization theory, these developments and others suggest how religious ideas and practices sometimes act as a transnational force, at other times in highly locality- and historically specific contexts, and most often in an unstable and evanescent combination of the local and the global.

Even locally rooted movements benefit significantly with transnational sponsors or supporters, whether emigrants, states, or others sharing a group's objectives. Opposition to the Shah's regime was firmly rooted in Iran, but the safe haven provided for opposition leaders in exile, particularly Ayatollah Khomeini, and the transnational ties and freedom of movement and action of opposition leaders, were integral to the revolution's success. After the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the long-standing vertical transnationalism of the Roman Catholic Church was increasingly complemented by the horizontal transnationalism of decentralized grassroots networks and organizations created for purposes as diverse as Bible study, evangelicalism, and social and political action. Many of these organizations have direct and significant ties to the Church hierarchy, while others operate autonomously. Sometimes with direct Vatican encouragement but often without, such groups have played a significant role in sustaining resistance to authoritarianism and political repression and freely make tactical alliances with other like-minded groups. These groups, and their leaders, give concrete form to the ideas and practice of transnational civil society and suggest the changing framework within which ideas, movements, and practices spread.

Muslim religious intellectuals, and movements associated with them, operate in a significantly different context than Christian ones. Islam lacks a central organizational hierarchy. In certain limited contexts, Muslim intellectuals and organizations create formal institutions to "represent" Islam for various purposes. Thus in France since the 1930s, the imam of the grand mosque of Paris has been either an Algerian or Moroccan, presumed by the French state to represent "all" Muslim communities in France. In Germany, the Central Council of Muslims (ZentralRat der Muslime in Deutschland) "represents" Islam in such functions as the 2000 World's Fair in Hannover. There are also transnational organizations such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and numerous nongovernmental organizations. Yet of themselves, such organizations do not form centers of intellectual organization, although fragmented and loosely linked networks of like-minded groups and individuals play a major role in disseminating ideas.

Contemporary religious transnationalism and the diffusion of ideas facilitated by it take many forms. Some are highly structured, while others are only informally organized and related primarily by affinity of goals. Informality and

the lack of formal structure can be an organizational strength in contexts of political and religious oppression.

Paradoxically, however, it is easy to see formidable challenges to modernization theory. Of all the countries of the Third World, Iran was a society that had undergone enormous modernization prior to 1978–1979. Nonetheless, revolution ensued and not political stability, with the greatest challenge emanating from the growing urban middle classes, those who had benefited the most from modernization. Moreover, it was religious sentiment and leadership, not the secular intelligentsia that gave the revolution its coherence and force.

An Iranian born French political scientist, Fariba Adelkhah goes even further. She argues that the major transformations of the Iranian revolution took place since the 1990s. A new generation of Iranians, not even born at the time of the revolution, came of age and had a significantly different interpretation of social context than the preceding generation. Adelkhah argues that a “religious public sphere” (espace public confessionnel) has emerged in Iran in which politics and religion are subtly intertwined in ways not anticipated by Iran’s established religious leaders.[943]

The emergence of this public sphere has also been accompanied by a greater sense of personal autonomy for both women and men, and debates over core issues of politics and society that would have been difficult to imagine in an earlier era.[944] Others make the argument on a more general scale. Olivier Roy, one of the first to use the term “post-Islamism” in 1992, notes the proliferation of various types of Islamic movements. The fragmented and protean nature of these movements limits state efforts to control or channel them. Roy argues that the growing numbers of “centrist” Muslims largely support openings for democratization, while secular conservatives, often fearful about losing their special relationship with state authorities, often oppose efforts to open up the political system. Public religion, reminding the faithful of their commitment to higher values and contributing to shaping public and policy goals, has returned with force to the center stage of social and political life in the Muslim world and elsewhere.[945]

** The return of religion to public life

The initial force and imagery of Samuel Huntington’s “West vs. Rest” argument has largely dissipated. One lasting value, however, has been to spur a realization that there is no arbitrary division between “tradition” and modernity.[946] Huntington’s article indirectly pointed out that “tradition” co-exists with the modern and that a number of traditions may co-exist in any given society. There may be clashes, but the fault lines along which sides are divided are rarely clear and often shifting. Thus ethnicity, caste, clientelism, and religion can be distinctly modern or can at least co-exist with it. In a word, Huntington reintroduced the concept of culture to international relations theory. Unfortunately, having reintroduced culture and religion to thinking about politics, Huntington overstated their coherence and force. Culture is composed of more than explicit ideas and ideologies, but it consists of ideas that are debated, argued, often fought about, and re-formed in practice. Thus ideas and their articulation in political practice count, and cannot be reduced to objects that wiggle when the strings are pulled by political and economic forces.

The role of religious ideas and practices in the public life of Muslim majority societies can be seen as less exceptional if the European experience with secularism is reassessed. As historian Dominique Colas argues, religious discourse was a basic precondition for the rise of the early modern public sphere in Europe and strong Christian traces remain in such matters as blasphemy laws, religious holidays, and public prayers.[947] Contemporary defenders of secularism often exaggerate the durability and open-mindedness of thoroughly secular institutions in the United States, Turkey, India, and elsewhere. Indeed, in many contexts, a militant secularism seems to have an affinity with authoritarianism and intolerance.

The role of religious intellectuals in the Muslim-majority world remains suspect by many secularists, although many religious movements and leaders contribute significantly to an emerging public sphere, calling for mutual respect among religious traditions. Turkey’s Fethullah Gülen, Iran’s Muhammad Khatami and Abdolkarim Soroush, and Syria’s Muhammad

Shahrur each make such appeals to their respective audiences. Over the past half century, there has been a rapid growth in mass education throughout the Muslim world. In country after country since mid-century, educational systems have vastly expanded.[948] Even where educational expansion has not kept up with population growth, large numbers of citizens now speak a common language that crosses localities, and think of religion and other aspects of their society as systems and objects. This makes them more capable of adapting and incorporating new elements. Education contributes to systematizing religious belief and practice, eroding intellectual and physical boundaries, and facilitating connections across formerly impenetrable boundaries of class, locality, language, and ethnic group.

Both mass education and mass communications, particularly the proliferation of types of media and access to them, profoundly influence how people think about religious and political authority throughout the Muslim world. We are still in the early stages of understanding how different media—print, television, radio, cassettes, music, and the Internet—influence groups and individuals, encouraging unity in some contexts and fragmentation in others. Taken together, these various means of communication have multiplied the means by which ideas and practices are shaped and shared. For many persons, the availability and rapidly declining cost of many new media have vastly accelerated the pace at which ideas and practices can be shaped and shared throughout the world.

** Turkey’s Nurculuk movement and its successors

A salient indication of the ways in which new forms of communication and rising levels of education contribute to new ideas of political and religious authority is to follow the development of the Nurculuk movement. It began in Turkey in the early twentieth century and today has followers throughout Europe, Central Asia, and North America. The teachings of its founder, Said Nursi (1873–1960), were originally written and passed on in samizdat form because of state hostility toward religious expression in the first decades of the Turkish republic. Since the 1950s, Nursi’s writings have been published in books and pamphlets with titles such as The Miracles of Muhammad, Belief and Man, and Resurrection in the Hereafter [949] These pamphlets have “the

function of explaining, in accordance with the understanding of the age, the truths of the Quran."[950] Nursi insisted that books, not people, "have waged a battle against unbelief," thus distinguishing his teachings in principle from the master-disciple relationship at the core of most Sufi orders.[951]

Nursi stressed the importance of direct contact with texts and encouraged his followers to adopt his own approach. He emphasized exploring multiple combinations of knowledge, including learning outside the Islamic tradition. In 1910 a policeman in Tiflis, asking Nursi about his plans for building a religious school, said that it was hopeless to envision a unity of the "broken up and fragmented" Muslim world. Nursi replied:

They have gone to study. It is like this: India is an able son of Islam; it is studying in the high school of the British. Egypt is a clever son of Islam; it is taking lessons in the British school for civil servants. Caucasia and Turkestan are two valiant sons of Islam; they are training in the Russian war academy. And so on.[952]

In 1911, a half century earlier than the Second Vatican Council urged Christians and Muslims to resolve their differences and move beyond the conflicts of the past, Nursi advocated such a dialogue, and his successors have taken significant steps to engage in interfaith discussions.[953]

Another element in Nursi's writing sets him apart from religious intellectuals such as Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838/9-1897). As much as these two predecessors appealed to the learned classes throughout the Muslim world and sought to popularize their message, their primary audience remained the educated, urban cadres. Nursi, in contrast, never lost his rural roots and often employed the metaphors and imagery of Turkey's rural population. Other religious modernists, in contrast, distanced themselves from popular belief and rhetorical styles. Nursi was familiar with the structure and content of modern scientific knowledge, but he also recognized the value of fable and metaphor in shaping his message. They facilitated understandings of his message in different social and historical contexts. Thus in the early part of Nursi's career, his writings and messages

were listened to by audiences rather than read, either directly by Nursi to his disciples or by “persons who had already acquired religious prestige.” Moreover, in spite of the “official terror and persecution” carried out against those caught reading and teaching books in the old (Arabic) alphabet in the 1920s and 1930s, the practices continued.[954] The Risale-i Nur, the collection of Nursi’s principal writings, was first disseminated by “thousands” of women and men, young and old, making copies by hand, and by 1946 or 1947 through the use of a duplicating machine.[955] After 1956, when Nursi’s books were taken off the banned list and published in modern Turkish, readers were added to his audience—those whose primary contact with the Risale-i Nur was not necessarily the face-to-face or hand-to-hand contact of an earlier era.[956]

The Risale-i Nur is modern in the sense that its texts encourage reflection on ideas of society and nation. In countries other than Turkey, religious intellectuals also spoke of constitutionalism, justice, and the relation of Islamic belief to modern science, morality, public responsibilities, and the application of faith to public life and spiritual development. Moreover, Said Nursi made a distinctive contribution to the sense of public space in his post-1923 writings. The Syrian translator of his writings, Said Ramadan al-Buti, uses exegesis to reach this conclusion, reflecting on the disjunction in Said’s career between his early political activism and his post-1923 writings and activities. These writings encouraged reasoned reflection and action on core ethical and religious values without prescribing particular, context-specific political action.[957] More so than many of his contemporaries, Nursi’s message was accessible not only to religiously oriented educated cadres but also to the less educated, who saw in Said’s message a means of integrating faith with modernity, nationalism, and social revitalization.

The other defining feature of his message, especially in the earlier part of this century, was its success in articulating with the conditions of Turkish society, especially rural Turkish society, when the hold of local leaders was rapidly giving way to an increasingly effective state apparatus, improved communications, and centralization. The message was sufficiently adaptable in structure and content, however, so that it subsequently articulated with the Turkey of later eras and, increasingly, to an international audience. Nursi’s work is now communicated in multiple languages and publications and through a multilingual website (www.nesil.com.tr/). Nursi’s style is

readily accessible to these multiple audiences, and women are taking an increasingly active role in promoting the message. For some readers, the specifics of Turkish historical development help explain the nuances of certain passages and the context for which they were originally intended. For others, however, the rich metaphors and imagery offer a point of departure for religious understanding that requires only minimal familiarity with the specifics of the times and places in Turkey where the various elements of the Risale-i Nur first came into existence.

In the current era, the Nurculuk movement has succeeded in attracting significant followers from all social classes in Turkey. Fethullah Gülen (b. 1938), a leading contemporary disciple of Nursi, articulates the views of one of the two major clusters of those inspired by Nursi's teachings. Like Nursi, Gülen's interpretation of Islamic values offers a union between religion and science, and tradition and modernity, stressing the compatibility of Islamic ideas and practices with Turkish nationalism, education, and the market economy.[958] Gülen's followers control a complex web of businesses and broadcast and print media. The movement has over 550 schools in Turkey and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, especially Central Asia. Within Turkey, the only religious classes are those prescribed by the Turkish national curriculum. The schools do not promote any particular interpretation of Islam, but rather instill a morality and sense of discipline intended to pervade private conduct and public life. In Turkey, the curriculum strictly follows state guidelines. Elsewhere, English is the language of instruction and religion is not taught at all. Gülen also advocates a public role for women in society. To the consternation both of conservative Muslims and Turkey's secular elite, he has stated that the wearing of the headscarf by women is a matter of personal choice, not one prescribed by faith. One need not visit Turkey to learn more about Gülen's views, for they are available on websites in English and Turkish (www.fgulen.org and www.m-fgulen.org).

The businessmen, teachers, journalists, students, and others to whom his message appeals stress the combination of knowledge and discipline for spiritual and personal growth. Less a centralized network than loosely affiliated clusters of organizations, those inspired by Gülen's ideas stress discipline and dialogue.[959] The use of reason and acquisition of knowledge is stressed within Turkey itself, and this is combined with highly publicized and sustained dialogues with Christian and Jewish religious leaders, stressing

tolerance, electoral politics, moderation, and participation in a market economy.

In spite of efforts of some elements of Turkey's militantly secularist elite to consider all those who advocate a public role for religious expression as antidemocratic "fundamentalists," most Turks consider Islam an integral part of their social identity. Indeed, the "background" understandings of Islam are on the side of Gülen and others who see Islam as a religion of dialogue, tolerance, and reason. In televised chat shows, interviews, and occasional sermons, Gülen has spoken about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events. In this respect, rising educational levels, strengthened ties between Turks living in Turkey and in Europe, and the proliferation of media and the means of communication favor these more open interpretations. Public opinion polling is still in its infancy in Turkey and the Middle East, but available data suggest a growing openness of interpretation. For example, in 1992, 1993, and 1994 a sample of rural and urban Turks (N = 1, 363) was asked whether Turkey was "Muslim," "European," or "both." Roughly the same number, 20–21%, said "European" in all three years. The number who said that Turkey was primarily Muslim, however, declined from 37% in 1992 to 25% in 1994, while the number who answered "both" increased from 25% to 36%.[960]

More recently, a survey conducted by Tesev, a Turkish think tank, found that 97% of those questioned identified themselves as Muslim, 92% said they fasted during the holy month of Ramadan, and 46% claimed to pray five times a day. But 91% also said different religious beliefs should be respected, and clear majorities thought it did not matter if Muslims consumed alcohol, failed to fast or pray or, if they were women, went outside without covering their heads. Only 21% called for an Islamic state, and once the implications were pointed out to them, some were not so sure.[961]

The Turkish experience does not represent the entire Muslim world, but it serves as a reminder of the diversity of the Muslim experience, both among intellectual formulations of Islamic thought, and the practical, implicit shared understandings of large numbers of people.

** Islamic modernity, Syrian style

Civil engineer Muhammad Shahrur’s 800-page long first book, al-Kitab wa al-Qur1an: Qiraa mua sira [The Book and the Qur1an: A Contemporary Interpretation], has sold tens of thousands of copies throughout the Arab world in both authorized (Damascus and Beirut) and pirate (Cairo) editions.[962] The book is widely circulated by photocopy elsewhere (including Saudi Arabia), in spite of the fact that its circulation has been banned or discouraged.

Books such as Shahrur’s could not have been imagined before there were large numbers of people able to read it and understand its advocacy of the need to reinterpret ideas of religious authority and tradition and apply Islamic precepts to contemporary society. Yet resistance to such challenges to established authority has also been intense.

Shahrur draws an analogy between the Copernican revolution and Qur1anic interpretation, which he says has been shackled for centuries by the conventions of medieval jurists, who had mastered the craft of chaining authoritative commentaries to prior authoritative ones and of creating chains (silsilas), of traditions of authoritative learning:

People believed for a long time that the sun revolved around the earth, but they were unable to explain some phenomena derived from this assumption until one person, human like themselves, said, “The opposite is true: The earth revolves around the sun.” … After a quarter of a century of study and reflection, it dawned on me that we Muslims are shackled by prejudices (musallimat), some of which are completely opposite the [correct perspective].[963]

Shahrur’s ideas directly challenge the authoritative tradition of Quranic exegesis (tafsir) and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). The subtitle of his first book—”a contemporary interpretation”—uses the

term qiraa, which can mean either reading or interpretation, rather than the term tafsir, which directly evokes the established conventions of traditional Islamic learning from which Shahrur advocates a decisive break. For many Muslims and established men of religious learning, Shahrur argues that traditional disciplines of learning such as tafsir have implicitly acquired an authority equal to that of the Quran itself, except that the juridical tradition says little about tyranny, absolutism, and democracy.[964] Such ideas are at the center of an emerging social imaginary.

Because Shahrur's ideas pose such basic challenges to existing authority, he has been attacked in Friday sermons in Damascus and elsewhere, even though one leading legal scholar, Wael Hallaq, recently wrote that Shahrur's efforts to reformulate Islamic jurisprudence are the "most convincing" of all contemporary thinkers.[965] The appeal of Shahrur's ideas and the speed at which knowledge of his first book spread in the early 1990s is remarkable. Prior to 1998, his primary means of communication was the book, an unadorned means of persuasion that appeals to a growing educated middle class and continues to represent the pinnacle of knowledge to others. Beginning in 1997, he spoke on several public occasions in Syria, spoke several times in the US, and more recently (January-May 2000), participated in a weekly religious program on an Egyptian satellite channel, Nile TV, that discussed The Book and the Quran chapter by chapter.

Shahrur is not alone in attacking conventional religious wisdom and the intolerant certainties of religious radicals. Others also argue for a constant and open reinterpretation of how sacred texts apply to social and political life. Another Syrian thinker, the secularist Sadiq Jalal al-Azm, for instance, does the same. A debate between al-Azm and Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a conservative religious intellectual, was broadcast on al-Jazeera Satellite TV (Qatar) on May 27, 1997. For the first time in the memory of many viewers, the religious conservative came across as the weaker, more defensive voice. A similar debate took place in December 1997 on the same program between Nasir Hamid Abu Zayd and the Egyptian religious thinker, Muhammad Imara. Such discussions are unlikely to be rebroadcast on state-controlled television in most Arab nations, where programming on religious and political themes is generally cautious. Nevertheless, satellite technology and videotape render traditional censorship ineffective. Tapes of these

broadcasts circulate from hand to hand in Morocco, Oman, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere. Indeed, the format of satellite technology has begun to influence the format of books, in which scholars with contrasting views present their ideas. Recent titles in this style include Islam and Modernity and What is Globalism? [966]

** Conclusion

As a result of direct and broad access to the printed, broadcast, and taped word, more and more Muslims take it upon themselves to interpret Islam’s classical and modern texts. Much has been made of the “opening up” (infitah) of the economies of many Muslim countries, allowing “market forces” to reshape economies, no matter how painful the consequences in the short run. In a similar way, intellectual market forces support some forms of religious innovation and activity over others. The result is a collapse of earlier, hierarchical notions of religious authority based on claims to the mastery of fixed bodies of religious texts. Even when there are state-appointed religious authorities—as in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and some of the Central Asian republics— there no longer is any guarantee that their word will be heeded, or even that the religious authorities themselves will follow the lead of the regime.

Thinkers such as Fethullah Gülen, Muhammad Shahrur, and others are redrawing the boundaries of public and religious life in the Muslim-majority world by challenging religious authority, yet the replacement they suggest is a constructive fragmentation. With the advent of mass higher education has come an objectifi-cation of Islamic tradition in the eyes of many believers, so that questions such as “What is Islam?” “How does it apply to the conduct of my life?” and “What are the principles of faith?” are foregrounded in the consciousness of many believers and explicitly discussed. These objectified understandings have irrevocably transformed Muslim relations to sacred authority. Of crucial importance in this process has been a “democratization” of the politics of religious authority and the development of a standardized language inculcated by mass higher education, the mass media, travel, and labor migration. This has led to an opening up of the political process and heightened competition for the mantles of political and religious authority.

The impact of modern mass education is pervasive, but not necessarily in the ways intended by state authorities. Students are taught about the unity of Muslim thought and practice in a set national curriculum that includes Islamic studies as one subject among many. Even while teaching that Islam permeates all aspects of life, the formal principles of Islamic doctrine and practice are compartmentalized and made an object of study. The traditionally educated religious authorities sometimes adapt to this form of education, but some resist it. Without fanfare, the notion of Islam as dialogue, tolerance, and civil debate is gaining ground.

A new sense of public is emerging throughout Muslim-majority states and Muslim communities elsewhere. It is shaped by increasingly open contests over the use of the symbolic language of Islam. New and accessible modes of communication have made these contests increasingly global, so that even local issues take on trans-national dimensions. Muslims, of course, act not just as Muslims but according to class interests, out of a sense of nationalism, on behalf of tribal or family networks, and from all the diverse motives which characterize human endeavor. Increasingly, however, large numbers of Muslims explain their goals in terms of the normative language of Islam, and look to those intellectuals who can frame arguments in these terms.

This distinctly public sphere exists at the intersections of religious, political, and social life and contributes to the creation of civil society. People in Muslim majority societies have access to contemporary forms of communication that range from the press and broadcast media to fax machines, audio and video cassettes, from the telephone to the Internet. Like Christians, Hindus, Jews, Sikhs, and others, thinkers and activists in Muslim majority societies have more rapid and flexible ways of building and sustaining contact with constituencies than was available in earlier decades. These new media in new hands reverse the asymmetries of the earlier mass media revolution, when state authorities initially dominated radio and television. This combination of new media and new contributors to religious and political debates fosters awareness on the part of all actors of the diverse ways in which Islam and Islamic values can be created. It feeds into new senses of a public space that is discursive, performative, and

participative, and not confined to formal institutions recognized by state authorities.

Publicly shared ideas of community, identity, and leadership take new shapes in such engagements, even as many communities and authorities claim an unchanged continuity with the past. Mass education, so important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era, and a proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance and opening new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition.

In the present era, to paraphrase the Sudanese religious intellectual Hasan Turabi, an alim or religious intellectual is as likely to be an engineer or doctor as a religious scholar. Just as the new media have blurred the line between public and private, so has the modern era blurred the assumed hard and fast line between religion and politics. The prevailing secularist bias of prevalent theories of society has alternatively marginalized religious forces and religious intellectuals or has demonized them. Far from being resistant to modernity, the Muslim-majority world is as open to it as any other region of the world, even if the paths to modernity are multiple.[967] We live in a world in which an Islamic intellectual such as Fethullah Gülen meets popes and patriarchs, advocating diversity and tolerance in the public sphere more than many of his secular counterparts, and yet at the same time arguing that Islam is thoroughly compatible with an enlightened Turkish nationalism. Far from compromising the public sphere, religious movements and religious intellectuals can advocate compromise and a mutual agreement to persuade by words rather than by force. Contemporary religious intellectuals may claim strong links with the past, but their practice conveys significantly modern ideas of person, authority, and responsibility.

[928] Edward Shils, The Intellectuals and the Powers (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 3.

[929] Olivier Roy, L1Échec de l1islam politique (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1992), 37.

[930] Azam Torab, “Piety as Gendered Agency: A Study of Jalaseh Ritual Discourse in an Urban Neighbourhood in Iran,” Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) 2/2 (1996): 235–252.

[931] Richard Rorty, cited in John Keane, “The Limits of Secularism,” Times Literary Supplement, January 9, 1998: 12.

[932] For Indonesia, see Robert W. Hefner, Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). For Turkey, see Bülent Aras, “Turkish Islam’s Moderate Face,” Middle East Quarterly 5/3 (September 1998): 23–30.

[933] Cited in John Davis, “An Interview with Ernest Gellner,” Current Anthropology 12/1 (1991), 71.

[934] Ibid., 69.

[935] Ernest Gellner, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994), especially 22, 29. For a further discussion of Gellner’s views, see Dale F. Eickelman, “From Here to Modernity: Ernest Gellner on Nationalism and Islamic Fundamentalism,” in John A. Hall, ed., Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998): 258-271. In contrast, Augustus Richard Norton, “Introduction,” in Augustus R. Norton, ed., Civil Society in the Middle East (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 25, argues vigorously that civil society is “theoretically, conceptually, normatively, and ontologically” as much a part of political discourse in the Middle East as it is elsewhere in the world.

[936] Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), 129.

[937] Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (New York: Free Press, 1964 [orig. 1958]), 405.

[938] Shils, Intellectuals, 16.

[939] Ibid., 17.

[940] Václav Havel, “Kosovo and the End of the Nation-State,” New York Review of Books, June 10, 1999, 4-6.

[941] Triloki N. Madan, “Secularism in Its Place,” Journal of Asian Studies 6 (1987), 748.

[942] José Casanova, Public Religions in the Modern World (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

[943] Fariba Adelkhah, Être moderne en Iran (Paris: Karthala, 1998), 152-247, and Farhad Khosrokhavar and Olivier Roy, Iran: comment sortir d1une révolution religieuse (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1999), 143–205.

[944] See Ziba Mir-Hosseini, Islam and Gender: The Religious Debate in Contemporary Iran (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[945] Robert Wuthnow, Producing the Sacred: An Essay on Public Religion (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

[946] Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” Foreign Affairs 72/3 (1993): 22–49. See Dale F. Eickelman, “Muslim Politics:

The Prospects for Democracy in North Africa and the Middle East," in John Entelis, ed., Islam, Democracy, and the State in North Africa (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997), 35–38, for a critique of Huntington's approach.

[947] Dominique Colas, Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories, trans. Amy Jacobs (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), and Keane, "Limits of Secularism," 12.

[948] Dale F. Eickelman, "Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies," American Ethnologist 19/4: 643-655; and Dale F. Eickelman, "Islam and the Languages of Modernity," Daedalus 129/1 (2000): 119–135.

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[952] Vükran Vahide, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: The Author of the Risale-i Nur (Istanbul: Sölzer Publications, 1992), 89-90. For a further discussion of the structure of Nursi's ideas and their appeal to different audiences, see Dale F. Eickelman, "Qur1anic Commentary, Public Space, and Religious Intellectuals in the Writings of Said Nursi," Muslim

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[953] Thomas Michel, “Muslim-Christian Dialogue and Cooperation in the Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi,” Muslim World 86/3–4 (1999), 325.

[954] Vahide, Author, 217.

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* Glossary—index

[Page numbers currently don’t correspond with this version.]

‘ABBAS II HILMI (Egyptian Khedive from 1892 to 1914): 40 (Abdülhamid II’s hostility to him, because of his alleged support to al-Manār)

‘Abd AL-’AzIZ (Moroccan sultan from 1895 to 1907): 165 (his convocation of an “assembly of notables” in 1904–1905, and the opposition of Moroccan ulama to the ruler)

‘Abd AL-FATTAH B. ‘Abd AL-QAYYUM (the teacher of Riza al-Din in Nizhnye Chelchely, Southern Urals): 98 (his role in R.D.’s initiation to Islamic reform)

‘Abd AL-HAFIZ (Moroccan sultan from 1912)): 165 (his succession to his brother ‘Abd al-’Aziz, and his reception of the bay’A of the ulama of Fez in 1908)

‘Abd AL-HAFIZ AL-FASI (d. 1963–1964, constitutionalist ez): 166 (pupil of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

‘Abd AL-KARIM (1882–1963, leader of theulama from F Rif Mountains revolt in 1925): 182 (coincidence of his uprising with the

Syrian revolt)

‘Abd AL-KARIM MURAD (or al-Muradi, d. 1926 [or 1928], Lebanese-born visiting scholar and traveler): 161 –175 (article by S. Reichmuth, esp. 165 –171)

‘Abd AL-QADIR AL-JAZA1IRI (1808–1883, Algerian community leader and Sufi shaykh): 45 (his intellectual influence in Syria)

‘AbdUH, MUHAMMAD (1849–1905, prominent Egyptian reformist thinker, Shaykh al-Azhar): 5 (his historical role in facilitating secular reform), 8 –11 (his role and audience as the editor of al-2Urwa al-Wuöqa), 12–14 (his stature as a paramount leader for the Islamic world), 17 –20 (his authorship of the Tafsir al-Manār), 26 (his reformist understanding of Islam), 27 (his rural origins, alien to the ulama aristocracy of the urban notables), 28 (his tradition of issuing fatwas on contemporary questions, as continued by al-Qaradawi), 47 (answer by al-Qasimi to an idea expressed in al-Manār), 55 , 56 (‘A.’s connection with the early development of the Salafiyya), 57 (‘A. on the independence of religious scholars from rulers), 58 (‘A.’s answer to Renan on the question of the “rigidity” of Islam), 60 (his idea of modernism entailing Arab cultural revival), 67 –68 (European views of his Epistle of Unicity), 74 (‘A.’s ideas as a root of Islamism in Ottoman Turkey), 77 (interest of the Ottoman Westernist journal /ctihad in ‘A.’s ideas), 79 –80 , 81 (‘A.’s impact on Mehmed Âkif), 85 , 90, 94 , 95, 98 –99 , 104 (his influence in Russia), 130 (translation of the Risala al-tawhid into Chinese in 1933), 145 (reference to ‘Abduh in the Malay-Indonesian writer Shaykh al-Hadi’s novel Farida Lanum), 146 –147 (attendance of ‘Abduh’s lessons by Shaykh Muhammad Tahir from Sumatra), 176, 178 , 202 (lessons given by ‘Abduh to Sh. Arslan in the Madrasa al-Sultaniyya during his exile in Beirut), 296 (educated, urban cadres as the primary audience of his

message—contrary to the broader public of present-day religious intellectuals)

ABDÜLHAMAD II (Ottoman Sultan-Caliph from 1876 to 1909): 40 , 41, 42 , 43 (al-Zahrawi’s call for his deposition), 44 , 45 (connection between opposition to him and to popular Sufism), 46 (the Caliph as an obstacle to modernization), 47 (censorship under his reign), 150 –151 (support of the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam to Abdülhamid II and to the Caliphate), 170 (the Shari’A as a source of legitimacy under his reign)

ABU’L-’ALA AL-MA’ARRI (979–1058, Arab poet): 99 (his biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

ACTION MAROCAINE (a Moroccan independentist party): 201 (its rapprochement with Messali al-Hajj)

ADABIY’AH DINIYYAH SCHOOL (created in Minangkabau in 1909): 154 (its founder Haji ‘Abdullah Ahmad’s association the Jama’Ah Adabiyyah)

ADAMS, CHARLES C. (historian of modernism in Egypt): 146 (his detailed description of al-Manār)

‘ADAT (Arabic: custom, customary law): 150 (struggle of al-Imam against customs and beliefs derived from ‘Adat)

ADELKHAH, FARIBA (political scientist studying the Islamic Republic of Iran): 293 (on the appearance of a “religious public sphere” in Iran in the 1990s)

AL-AFGHANI, ‘Abd AL-BAQI (Peshawar-born early twentieth-century ‘Alim): 47 (his obituary in al-Manār)

AL-AFGHANI, JAMAL AL-DIN ASADABADI (1838/9–1897, Iranian-born reformist thinker and political activist): 8 –9 (his role in the edition of al-’Urwa al-Wuöqa), 12 (his posthumous influence on Rashid Rida), 14 (his call for iætihad to revive the umma), 19, 55 (his role as a major inspiration for the Salafiyya), 33 (denegation of his Iranian origin in Arab countries and in Afghanistan), 40 , 42 –43 (some causes of tensions between Abu’l-Huda al-Sayyadi and al-Afghani), 74 (his ideas as a root of Islamism in Ottoman Turkey), 79 –80 (his impact on M. Âkif), 90 , 95 (his meeting with Barudi in Cairo in 1887), 94 , 95 (influence of his casuistry for justifying scientific discoveries), 96 , 99 (his meeting with Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din in St. Petersburg in 1888), 98 –99 (his discovery by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din), 104 (first translations of al-A.’s works in the Mura in 1908), 147 (his influence on the Malay-Indonesian Shaykh Muhammad Tahir), 202 –203 (his meeting with Sh. Arslan in Istanbul in 1889), 296 (educated, urban cadres as the primary audience of his message—contrary to the broader public of present-day religious intellectuals)

AFGHANISTAN: 4 (Soviet invasion of 1979), 33 (denegation of al-Afghani’s Iranian origin in Arab countries and in Afghanistan), 65 (Rashid Rida’s denunciation of the early twentieth-century Westernization policy)

AGA KHAN I (Hasan ‘Ali Shah, d. 1881, Nizari Imam): 228 (his arrival in India, to the Khoja community, from Persia)

AGA KHAN III (Sultan Ahmad Shah, d. 1957, Nizari Imam from 1885 to his death): 228 , 229 –230 (innovations brought about during his reign, after the establishment of British control over Hunza)

AGA KHAN IV (Shah Karim al-Husayni, Nizari Imam since 1957): 231 (his visit, the first by a Nizari Imam, to Northern Pakistan in 1960), 237 –238 (his role in the current modernization of the Isma ‘ili community)

AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK: 226 –240 (article by Nejima S.)

AGAYEF, Ahmed (1939, Azerbaijani nationalist thinker exiled in Turkey): 77 (his role as a figure of Turkism)

AHMADU BAMBA (1850–1927, leading Senegalese Sufi shaykh): 166 (his contacts with ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

AHMED MADHAT EFENDA (1844–1912, Ottoman Turkish reformist novelist and newspaperman): 101 (censorship of his biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

ALLAQ : see ethics

AHONG (Chinese, from Persian alund : Islamic religious community leader): 117 , 118 (launching by the ahong s of the Chinese Islamic revival movement), 120 (their accommodation of Islamic belief with modern trends in the late Qing period), 121 (their role and prestige among the Hui), 123 (ahong s defining themselves as “those qualified to enlighten the people”), 125 (critic of their responsibility in cultural backwardness), 241 (role played by local imams in the expansion of popular religious education in Republican China), 242 –243 (role

played by leading ahong s in the early twentieth-century expansion of associations of believers in Eastern China), 244 (education of ahong s as an aim of the Guild of the Hui Religion of China), 246, 257 , 259, 260 (“Four Great Ahong s”[si da ahong]—Wang Jingzhai, Da Pusheng, Ha Decheng, and Ma Songting—and their mobilization of the Chinese Muslims against the Japanese since 1937), 247 (stirring up of patriotic awareness of Chinese Muslims, and their military mobilization against the Japanese occupation, by the ahong s’ sermons), 248 (conservative attitude of grassroot ahong s in mosque teaching), 254 (flourishing of biographical literature on modern ahongs

in the 1990s), 257 (chuany [“wearing the clothing of the robe]”): ceremony of graduation of the ahong s), 259 (hai-li-fan [from Arabic lalifa : “successor”] as the helper of an ahong), see also imam; ulama

AJIA GIKAI (Society of Asian Cause): 278 –281 (its creation in Tokyo in 1909 by Japanese Pan-Asianist circles)

AKASHI MOTOJIRO (1864–1919, Japanese general): 274 (his acquaintance with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim during the Russo-Japanese War)

AKÇURA, YUSUF (1878–1935, Volga Tatar nationalist thinker, exiled in Turkey): 77 (his role as a figure of Turkism)

ÂKAF, MEHMED (Ersoy, 1873–1936, editor of the Sirât-i müstakim): 74 –84 (article by Kasuya G.; especially 76 : Âkif’s role as editor of the Sirât-i müstakim ; 78 –81 : influence of al-Manār on his Islamism), 282 (his poem Japonlar and its inspiration from ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s Âlem-i Islam)

ALAGIa, MUKRIJA (1881–1936, Bosnian specialist of the Qur 1 an and tafsir): 213 (as a figure of the moderate jadid group)

‘ALAMI, MUSA (Arab political activist): 184 (his role as an intermediary between the Arab leaders and Ben Gourion in 1936)

ALAMUT: 226 (fall of Alamut and its impact on the place of Isma ‘ilis on the stage of the worlds of Islam)

ALBANIANS (Muslims of Albanian origin in Bosnia-Herzegovina): 211 (their place in the Muslim populations of the Balkans)

ALCOHOL AND ALCOHOLISM: 91 (Orthodox Christian influence on the struggle of Muslims vs. alcoholism in Imperial Russia), 298 (position of believers toward the consumption of alcohol in Turkey), see also ethics

ÂLEM-A /SLAM: JAPONYA’DA ANTAVAR-I /SLAMAYET (“The World of Islam: The Spread of Islam in Japan,” work [1910–1913] by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim): 273 , 280 –281 (its pioneering introduction of Japan and of the Japanese to a Muslim audience; its influence on Mehmet Âkif’s poem Japonlar)

ALEPPO: 43 (tomb of al-Sayyadi’s father), 182 (Aleppo as Ihsan al-Jabiri’s hometown)

ALGEÇIRAS: 165 (international conference of 1906 on Morocco)

ALGERIA: 201 (Sh. Arslan’s influence within the circle of the Algerian reformist ulama), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany—like the Algerian or Moroccan Imam of the Grand Mosque in Paris)

ALGERIAN ULAMA ASSOCIATION: 3 , 13 (Association’s maintenance of the heritage of al-Manār after 1935)

‘ALI (the Prophet Muhammad’s nephew and son-in-law, the fourth caliph): 49 (a speech by him forbidding anyone to curse Mu’Awiya)

‘ALI B. AHMAD ZNIBAR (Moroccan literati from Salé): 165 (his redaction of a first draft constitution for Morocco)

‘ALIM : see ulama

ALISAN, VEJSIL (chairman of the Concil of Ulama of Skopje): 194 (his participation in the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935)

‘ALIYYA (reformed madrasa in Ufa, Western Urals, Russia): 90 , 98 (its creation by Kamali in 1906)

AL-ALUSI, SHIHAB AL-DIN (1802–1854, Ottoman mufti and exegete of the Qur 1 an): 20 (his Ruh al-Ma’An as the last encyclopaedic tafsir of the classical brand), 43 (his denunciation of some Rifa’i Sufi practices)

AMERICA: see USA

AMIN, QASIM (1863–1908, modernist Egyptian writer): 67 (his contributions on the question of the liberation of women)

AMSTERDAM: 194 (hope of members of the European Muslim Congress of 1935 for the building of a mosque in Amsterdam)

ANCESTRY: 13 , 22 (debates of the 1920s on the importance of a caliph being of Quraysh origin), 237 (decrease of the role of holy ancestry among present-day Isma ‘ili leaders in Northern Pakistan), 230 (claim of the legendary king Taj Moghol’s ancestry by the Isma’ili preacher Pir Sahib), 257 (Da Pusheng’s Persian ascendency), 258 (Muslim activist Sha Shanyu’s proudness of his Arab ancestry), 273 (Bukharan ascent of many Siberian Tatars, and of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim), see also authority

ANDAYA, BARBARA W. (historian of the Sultanate of Riau): 149 (role of the Sultans of Riau in the diffusion of al-Imam)

ANTIBES (city in southern France): 196 (organization by Sh. Arslan of a meeting of Ibn Saud and King Faisal, in 1930)

ARAB CALIPHATE: 6 (proposed by al-Kawakibi as a remedy to the shortcomings of the Ottoman Empire), 13 (Abu’l-Kalam Azad’s discarding of the importance for a caliph of being of Quraysh origin)

ARAB CULTURE: 7 (prominence of Arabic language and culture in the Islamic reformist thought), 68 (long “shadow” following the Mongol invasion)

ARAB NATIONALISM: 4 , 26 (its decline after the 1970s), 6 –7 (emphasis of ’uruba [Arabness, Arabism] in al-Kawakibi’s works), 50 (strengthening of popular nationalism in Syrian cities after First World War), 60 (necessity to weave the

national and the religious to the Salafis’ eyes), 171 (Sh. Arslan’s efforts at drawing post-First World War Arab monarchs toward greater Arab unity), 178 –179 (beginning of the opposition of A. nationalism to the Ottoman state during First World War), 183 (on the opposition of Palestinian delegates to the Syrian Congress to the Syrian elements’ narrow territorial nationalism), see also nation and nationalism

ARABIAN PENINSULA: 56 (development of the Wahhabi movement, and its connection with the Salafiyya), 59 (criticism by R. al-’Azm of “Bedouin” states as ignorant of social life)

ARABIC LANGUAGE AND ALPHABET: 7 (prominence of A. language and culture in Islamic reformist thought), 105 (modernization through the translation of the A. sources of the Islamic renewal, in Imperial Russia), 125 (need for translations from A. stressed by early twenteith-century Chinese Muslim reformers), 128 (Chinese translations from A. journals of Egypt in the 1930s), 166 (foundation of A. schools by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad in Western Africa), 178 (Sh. Arslan’s study of A. language), 193 (A. as the official language of the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935), 232 (as a medium of religious education among Northern Pakistani Isma’ilis), 248 –249 (giving up of making pupils memorize by heart the Q. in Chinese transcription, in Chinese Muslim religious schools, and its replacement by the arabization of religious teaching), 250 (teaching of Arabic language in Sino-Arabic schools), 251 (teaching of Arabic grammar in the normal Islamic schools opened in the 1920s to 1930s in Eastern China), 257, 259 (place of Arabic and Persian languages in the traditional curriculum of China’s mosque scools), 259 (Wang Jingzhai’s work as a translator from A. language into Chinese, and his two translations of the Quran, in classical and colloquial Chinese), 260 (Ha Decheng’s fluency in A. language, Urdu, and English), 260 (Ma Songting’s teaching of A. language at Beijing University, until the Cultural Revolution), 260 (Ma Jian’s translations from Chinese into A., notably of the Confucian Lunyu), 274 (Tatar and A. newspapers published in Russia by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim after the revolution of 1905), 295 (Nursi’s oral teaching, and the lasting preservation of its oral character because of the forbidding of the “old” Arabic alphabet in Republican Turkey)

ARABIC-CHINESE SCHOOL FOR GIRLS (Beiguan A-Zhong nüxiao): 255 (its creation in 1945 by Ma Bufang)

ARABIC PENINSULA: 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909), see also Saudi Arabia

ARABS: 6 (post-First World War shift in religious authority from the Turks to the Arabs, seen then by some as a means for Islamic regeneration), 22 (Rashid Rida’s insistence on the necessity of a cooperation between Arabs and Turks), 59 (Arabs as the first nation which has received Islam), 60 (Salafi idea of love of the Arabs as a pillar of Islam), 181 (unrealized scenario of a coalition of Arabs and Turks allied to the Soviet regime, after First World War), 258 (Muslim activist Sha Shanyu’s proudness of his Arab ancestry)

ARMENIANS: 46 (participation of Armenians of Egypt in the Ottoman Consultation Society)

ARSLAN, ‘ADIL (Sh. Arslan’s younger brother, and a key figure of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress): 182 , 184 –185, 186 (his role as a leading young Istiqlalist in the Arslan–Rida–al-Husayni alliance inside the Congress)

ARSLAN, SHAKIB (1869–1946, Lebanese publicist and political activist): 7 (his theory of a proper understanding of Islam as a remedy to the Muslims’ “backwardness”), 64 (his denunciation of Westernization in Atatürk’s Turkey), 166 (his visit by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad in Lausanne in 1922), 176 –210 (article on him by Raja Adal)

ASIR (province on the Arabian peninsula): 196 (as a contentious issue between Ibn Saud and Imam Yahya in 1934)

ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES: see Maglis al-a’yan

ASSOCIATION FOR THE PURE AND TRUE [I.E. MUSLIM] EDUCATION OF THE STUDENTS IN TOKYO (Liudong Qingzhen jiaoyu hui): 242 –243 (its creation in 1907 by a group of thirty-six Chinese Muslim students), 252 (their publication, since 1908, of the journal Xing Hui pian)

ASSOCIATION FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON THE HUI PEOPLE (Huimin xueshu yanjiu hui): 244 (its creation in Nanking in 1936)

ASSOCIATIONS AND SOCIETIES: 3 , 13 (the Association of Algerian ‘Ulama’), 27 (founding conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama), 96 (Fraternity of the Tatar Students in Cairo), 121 (Association for Islamic Education in Tokyo), 121 (Chinese Revolutionary Association), 135 (Chinese Islamic Association for National Salvation), 147 (Pan-Malayan Association of Ulama), 148 (participation of Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi in the creation of the Persekutuan Rushdiyyah club in Riau in the early 1890s), 150 (calls of al-Imam to form associations for fostering education and development), 166 (foundation of Islamic societies by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad in Western Africa, on the model of the Ëam’iyyat al-Maqasid al-Layruyya of Beirut), 181 (creation of the Islamic International by Enver Pava), 188 –189 , 194 (Oriental Club in Berlin: its chairmanship by Sh. Arslan; Szynkewicz’s membership), 192 (reception of Sh. Arslan in Budapest by the Association of Gül Baba), 192 (Sh. Arslan’s coordination of the activities of the Red Crescent during the Balkan War of 1912), 194 (Society of the Muslim Youths in Cairo), 214 (creation of the “Mladi Muslimani” organization in Zagreb in 1941), 241 –247 (role of Muslim cultural associations in Republican China, in part. 243 (creation in 1912 of the first nation-wide association of believers, with subsidiary associations [fenhui]), 275 , 286 (probable meeting of a member of the Kokuryukai, Nakayama, with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in

Yokohama in 1909), 278 (Toa Dobunkai [Japan] and the Islamic activism of one of its leading members, Ohara Bukei), 278 –279 (creation of the Ajia Gikai in 1909 by Japanese Pan-Asianist circles), 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim and Yamaoka Kotaro’s invitation by the Society of Muslim Students from Russia in Istanbul), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany), see also benevolent societies; congresses, conferences and fairs; networks and networking, sponsorship

ASSOCIATION FOR STUDYING THE CULTURE OF THE HUI RELIGION (Huijiao wenhua yanjiu hui): 246 (its creation in 1936, under the chairmanship of General Bai)

ASTRONOMY: 146 , 147 (science studied and practiced by Shaykh Muhammad Tahir), 298 –299 (Shahrur’s analogy between the Copernician revolution and modern Qur1 anic interpretation)

AÖAR (“Monumentae,” biographical work by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din): 99 (on Riza al-Din’s biographical project)

AL-ATASI, HASHEM (leader of the Syrian National Block, the President of the Syrian Republic in 1936): 186 (his consultations with Sh. Arslan, in Geneva, prior to the signature of the treaty with France)

ATATÜRK (Mustafa Kemal, 1881–1938): 62 (post-First World War critics of his Westernization policy), 75 (journal /ctihad as a source of inspiration for A.’s first reforms), 180 (his first meetings with Sh. Arslan), 291 (modernization theory’s postulate of a preference for secularizing reformers like Atatürk in Turkey, or Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah in Iran)

AUTHORITY: 6 (post-First World War shift in religious authority from the Turks to the Arabs seen as a means for Islamic regeneration),

45 (ulama’s role as leaders of uneducated masses in the late Ottoman Empire), 89 (Bigi’s criticism of the mode of transmission of learning in Sufi turuq), 89 –90 (renewal of the cult of the murshid among reformist Sufis in early twentieth-century Russia), 90 (in Russia by school teachers the shaking of the ulama’s authority, thanks notably to the maktab s and madrasas’ financing through benevolent associations), 90 (Rasuliyeff ‘s role and authority as head of the Rasuliyya Madrasa), 231 –232 (appearance of Isma ‘ili wa’iz s in Northern Pakistan in the 1970s, and its impact on the structure of religious authority among the Isma ‘ilis), 289, 290 , 295, 298 –299 , 300 (challenge to the ulama’s authority by new categories of literati in the contemporary Muslim majority world), 291 (E. Shils on the distrust of secular and ecclesiastical authority as a tradition of modern intellectuals), 295 (distinction of Nursi’s teaching, centered on autonomous book reading, from the master–disciple relationship that lies at the core of most Sufi orders), 296 –297 (Nursi’s success in articulating his message with rural Turkish society, when the hold of local leaders was giving way to the state apparatus), 299 (Shahrur’s challenge to the authoritative tradition of tafsir and fiqh, and his debates with conservative religious intellectuals on the interpretation of sacred texts), 300 (state-appointed religious hierarchies in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and ex-Soviet Central Asia, and their resistance to challenges to their authority), see also ancestry; ethics; ulama

AVTONOMIJA (“The Autonomy,” a work [1907] by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim): 274 (its discussion of varied possible forms of autonomy for the Muslims of the Russian Empire)

AWQAF : see waqf

AYAK DAVÂNI (lit. “Council-on-Foot,” in the Ottoman Empire): 162 (its consultative and representative mechanisms)

AZAD, ABU AL-KALAM (leader of the Khilafat movement, supporting the Ottoman dynasty): 13 (serialization of his ideas in al-Manār)

AL-AZHAR: 14 (al-A.’s conservatism until the late nineteenth-century), 24 (impact of al-A.’s reform on legal and educational reforms in Egypt), 67 (gradual reform of teaching in the first third of the twentieth-century), 87, 90 , 92, 95 , 96 –97 (attending of al-A. by students from the Russian Empire in the 1890s to 1900s), 123 , 127, 130 , 133 (al-A.’s attendance by Chinese Muslim students since the early 1920s), 130 (translations into Chinese of articles in al-A.’s journal Nur al-islam), 131, 250 –251 (arrival of two professors from al-A. at the Chengda Normal School in 1933), 145 (publication of the journal Seruan Azhar in al-A. in the 1920s by Malay-Indonesian students), 146 (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir’s study of astronomy in al-A. in the 1890s), 198 (al-A.’s participation in the campaign against the Berber Dahir in Morocco), 244 (graduation of Da Pusheng, a religious scholar from Shanghai, in the 1880s), 256 (the sponsorship of Chinese students in al-A. by Ma Fuxiang in the 1930s), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi’s sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai’s pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul), 260 (Ma Jian’s studies in al-Azhar in 1932–1939, with Yunnanese financial help), see also education; madrasa; schools and schooling; travels and travelling

AL-’AzM, RAFIQ (an early twentieth-century Damascene editorialist): 46 , 58 (his views on the “decline” of Islamic nations), 47 (his obituary notice in al-Manār), 59 (his critic of Bedouin life as a backward form of political organization)

AL-’AzM, SADIQ JALAL (late twentieth to twenty-first-centuries Syrian reformist thinker): 299 (his reinterpretation on how sacred texts apply to social life, and his debate with the conservative religious intellectual Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, on al-Jazeera satellite TV, in 1997)

BABANZÂDE, AHMED NAAM (Turkish traditionalist thinker of the late Ottoman period): 78 (his membership of the Khalwatiyya mystical path)

BACHELOR: see examination

BADAWI, M. A. ZAKI (historian of Egyptian reformers): 19 (his introduction of al-Afghani as the inspirer of the Salafiyya)

BAHRAIN: 4 (failed coup of 1981 by an Islamic liberation front)

BAI CHONGXI (1893–1966, leading Guangxi warlord, the minister of War in the Guomindang government in 1936–1949): 134 (his welcoming of the Chengda Normal School in Guilin in 1937), 246 –255 (his role in the creation and leadership of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country), 246 –247 (his chairmanship of the Association for Studying the Culture of the Hui Religion), 255 (publication of a novel on his life in Guangxi in 1988)

BAIHUA : see Chinese language and literature

BAJRAKTAREVIa, FEHIM (1889–1970, a Bosnian orientalist): 213 (figure of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian secularized intelligentsia)

BALAFREJ, AHMED (b. 1908, Moroccan nationalist leader and statesman): 199 (his contacts with Sh. Arslan)

BALFOUR DECLARATION (promising a Jewish homeland in Palestine): 180 – 181 (its impact on the strategy of Arab nationalists)

BALIa, SMAIL (b. 1920, librarian and historian of Bosnian cultural life): 218 (representative of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora)

BALKAN WAR OF 1912: 192 (Sh. Arslan’s coordination of the activities of the Red Crescent), 281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s Pan-Islamist activities during the Balkan War of 1912)

BANDOENG CONFERENCE: 215 (its impact on the political utilization of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia)

BANKS: 4 (establishment of a first Islamic bank in Dubai in 1975), 237 –238 (utilization of the World Bank by Aga Khan IV for the modernization of the Isma ‘ili community in Northern Pakistan), see also commercial societies

BARSCY, STEFAN (Hungarian politician, Minister of Justice): 192 (his reception of Sh. Arslan in 1934)

BARUDI (‘Alim-Jan ‘Aliyeff, 1857–1921, Tatar ‘Alim from Kazan): 90 (his meetings with al-Afghani and ‘Abduh in Cairo, and his reform of the Muhammadiyya Madrasa), 94 (his personal library), 95 –96 (short assessment of his life and work)

BARUNI, SULAYMAN (pan-Arabic theoretician): 202 (his attacks against Sh. Arslan)

BAMAGIa, SAVFET-BEG (1870–1934, Bosnian poet, politician, and historian of local Ottoman literature): 213 (figure of the moderate jadid group)

BASHKIRS: 89 (their submission to a policy of school instruction in vernacular language in Cyrillic script in the late twentieth century)

BASARET (“Watchfulness,” newspaper published by the Young Ottomans in Istanbul in 1869–1879): 80 (its evolution toward Pan-Islamism)

BATTAL, ‘Abd-ALLAH (1882–1969, ‘Alim from Russia): 97 (his comments on ‘Abduh’s Tawhid, and on female education)

BAY’A (Arabic: oath of allegiance): 80 (popularization of the concept by the Young Ottomans, with a political meaning), 165 (allegiance given by the ulama of Fez to the sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz in 1908)

BÄYANUL-HAK (“The Statement of Truth,” Tatar newspaper published in Kazan from 1906 to 1914): 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel correspondences to the B.H. in 1909)

BAYANAT-I SAYYAH-I HINDI (“The Tales of an Indian Traveller,” a work [1912] by Fitrat): 279 –280 (its positive image of Japan, as it had been introduced by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in his Istanbul conferences)

BAYAZITOFF, ‘ATA1 -ALLAH (1847–1911, leading ‘Alim in St. Petersburg, and the Muslim Chaplain of the Imperial Guard): 95 (his role as an intermediary between the Muslim subjects of the Czar and the central Russian authorities)

BEDOUINISM: 59 (its criticism by al-’Azm as a backward form of political organization)

BEGOVIa, MEHMED (1889–1970, Bosnian specialist of Islamic law): 213 (as a figure of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian secularized intelligentsia)

BEIJING: 124 , 250, 252 –253 (relocation of the Chengda Normal School after 1928, and its publication of the journal Yuehua), 243 (siege of some of the first associations of Muslim believers, from 1912 onward), 250 , 253 (creation by Da Pusheng and Wang Haoran, in 1907, of the Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion, at the Ox Street Mosque, and its printing house)

BEIRUT: 166 (Ëam’iyyat al-Maqasid al-Layriyya and its influence on ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s Islamic societies), 178 (exile place of M. ‘Abduh, and of his teaching in the Madrasat al-Sultaniyya), 182 (Riyad al-Sulh’s hometown), 298 (distribution of Shahrur’s al-Kitab wa’l-Qur’n in both authorized [Damascus and Beirut] and pirate [Cairo] editions)

BEJTIa, ALIJA (1920–1981, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (representative of the crypto-opponent trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

BELGRADE: 192 (Sh. Arslan’s travel to Yugoslavia in 1931 and 1933–1934)

BEN GOURION, DAVID (1886–1973, leader of the Zionist Executive, and the first Prime Minister of Israel): 184 (his seeking of an arrangement with Arab leaders in 1936)

BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES: 90 (role of Russian Orthodox charitable organizations in the emulation of Russia’s Muslim benevolent societies), 90 (their early twentieth-century substitution to waqf and zakat in the financing of Russia’s Islamic educational institutions), 166 (Ëam’iyyat al-Maqasid al-Layriyya of Beirut, and its influence on ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s Islamic societies), see also associations and societies; commercial societies; missionaries; sponsorship

BENNUNA, ‘Abd AL-SALAM (d. 1935, Moroccan political leader): 200 (his contacts with Sh. Arslan)

BERBER DAHIR (legal status created in 1931 by the French protectorate for the Berbers of Morocco): 197 –198 (its contestation throughout the world of Islam)

BERKES, NAYAZA (historian of modern Turkey): 74 (on the division of Ottoman intellectual circles into Westernists, Islamists, and Turkists), 77 (on the interest of Turkish Westernists in Islamic reformism)

BERLIN: 176 (place of anti-colonial congresses attended by Sh. Arslan), 180 (Sh. Arslan and Mustafa Kemal’s meeting in the Café Maskot in 1917), 180 –181 (exile of the CUP leadership and Sh. Arslan in Berlin in 1918), 181 (Talat Pava’s assassination in 1921), 184 (al-Husayni’s residence in Berlin during First World War), 187 (Sh. Arslan’s visit to the Goethe Musem), 188 –189 (his presence in Berlin after First World War, and his chairmanship of the Oriental Club), 190 (Arslan and von Oppenheim’s meeting in October 19391939), 194 (presentation of Szynkewicz’s dissertation on Rabghuzi’s Syntax), 281 (sending of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim to Berlin by Enver Pava, in 1915, for the recruitment of Tatar Muslim prisoners of war)

BERNE: 187 (Arslan’s attendance of the anti-imperialist congress of 1919)

BEYÂNÜLHAK (“Presentation of the Truth,” a journal edited in 1908–1912 by the Cemiyyet-i /lmiyye-i /slâmiyye): 75 (its role as the voice of opponents to modernist Islam)

BIBLE: 253 , 259 (Protestant’s dilemma as to the translation of the Bible into Chinese, whether to use the classical or the colloquial language, and its influence on the translation of the Qur 1 an), 292 –293 (expansion of grassroots Bible studies after the Second Vatican Council)

BID’A (Arabic: a forbidden innovation): 44 (bid’A s incorporated by early twentiethcentury Rifa’i Sufis in their ceremonies), 50 (condemnation of theatrical performances in pre-First World War Syria as a bid’A), 56 (criticism of b. by the Salafiyya), 154 (the denunciation of b. a by Haji ‘Abdullah Ahmad after his return from Mecca to Indonesia in 1905), 155 (argument on Indonesian traditionalists of journals as a Western innovation)

BIGI, MUSA JAR-ALLAH (1875–1949, Tatar reformist theologian): 89 (his criticism of the mode of transmission of learning in Sufi turuq), 90 (his studies with ‘Abduh at al-Azhar), 96 (his studies in al-Azhar and pilgrimage to Mecca with Kamali), 101 (his teaching in the Husayniyya Madrasa of Orenburg), 102 (his contribution to the Mura)

BIJEDIa, D?EMAL (1917–1977, Muslim Communist political leader of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (his role in the campaign for the recognition of a “Muslim nation” in Yugoslavia)

BIOGRAPHY: 47 (publication of obituary notices in al-Manār as a means of promoting reformist ideas), 99 (Riza al-Din’s Aöar, and his overall biographical project), 101

(Russian censorship of Ahmed Midhat Efendi’s biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din), 128 (introduction of figures of the world of Islam by the Yuehua journal), see also history and history writing; ulama AL-BITAR, ‘Abd AL-RAZZAQ (elder shaykh of early twentieth-century Damascene Salafis): 44 (his critic of al-Zahrawi’s radical view on Sufism), 47 (his obituary notice in al-Manār), 49 (raising of a mob against him and other reformers in Damascus in 1908)

BLUHM-WARN, PIJPER (adviser of the Dutch Government for the Native and Arab Affairs): 144 (on the selective censorship of al-Manār in Indonesia)

BOLSHEVIKS: 179 (their utilization of Enver Pava against the British in Central Asia), 180 –181 (agreement of March 1921 with Great Britain, and its impact on the strategy of Arab nationalists), 282 (Bolshevik repression, and the emigration of Muslim intellectuals from Russia), see also Trotsky

BOMBAY: 229 , 230 (consolidation of his power by Aga Khan III from this city)

BOOKS AND BOOK TRADING: 166 (book trading as a profession exerted by the young ‘Abd al-Karim Murad), 250 (purchase of Islamic books in Egypt by Ma Songting, in 1932, for the future library of the Chengda Normal School), 256 (edition of Han kitab s —Confuciano-Muslim books—in early modern China), 260 (Ha Decheng’s importation of Islamic literature from Egypt, India, and Turkey), 289 (books as a present-day important means of communication, challenged by a wide range of new media), 295 (distinction of Nursi’s teaching, centered on autonomous book reading, from the master–disciple relationship at the core of most Sufi orders), 296 (dissemination of Nursi’s Risale-i Nur by “thousands” of men and women, and after Second World War through the use of a duplicating machine), 298 (distribution of Shahrur’s al-Kitab wa’l-Qur’a in both authorized and pirate editions), 299

(Shahrur’s use of the term qira’a [reading] instead of tafsir [Qur 1 an exegesis], and the attacks against him in lutba s [Friday sermons] in Damascus and elsewhere), see also libraries; journals and newspapers; orality; printing and printing houses; reading; translation

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: 211 –225 (article by A. Popovic)

BOURGUIBA, HABIB (Tunisian nationalist leader and President): 201 (his edition of an issue of L’Action tunisienne in homage to Arslan)

BOWEN, HAROLD (mid-twentieth-century historian of the world of Islam): 57 (on the theoretical unity of religion and state in Islam)

BOXER REBELLION (of 1900 in China): 241 (reactions of Chinese Muslim intellectuals to the turmoils of the early twentieth century)

BRUSSELS: 187 (Sh. Arslan’s attendance of the anti-imperialist congress of 1922)

BUBI (madrasa in Izh-Bobino, Western Urals): 98 (its reform by the Bubi brothers since 1895)

BUBI (‘Abd-Allah Ni’matullin, alias Bubi, 1871–1922): 98 (his role in the reform of the Bubi Madrasa, and his translations of ‘Abduh’s works)

BUBI (‘Ubayd-Allah Ni’matullin, alias Bubi, 1866–1936): 98 (his role in the reform of the Bubi Madrasa)

BUDAPEST: 192 (Sh. Arslan’s travel to Hungary in 1934), 193 (isolation of the Muslim community in Budapest in the 1930s), 194 (hope of members of the European Muslim Congress of 1935 for the building of a mosque in the city)

BUDDHISM AND BUDDHISTS: 58 (their outdistancing of Muslims in progress in modern times), 260 (Yang Zhongming’s comparison of Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam in the Sijiao yaogua)

BUKHARA: 90 , 92, 93 (Bukhara as the education place of Kazan Tatar ulama, from Marjani to Barudi), 99 (center of a deep renewal of kalam in the first half of the nineteenth century), 273 (Bukharan ascent of many Siberian Tatars, and of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travels to Russian Turkestan and Bukhara in 1908), 279 –280 (Munazara, the manifesto of the jadid movement in Bukhara) AL-BUKHARI, SALIM (late nineteenth-century Syrian reformist ‘Alim): 46 (his participation in the circle of Rafiq al-’Azm), 47 (his obituary in al-Manār)

BULGARIA: 58 (its secession from the Ottoman Empire, and opposition to it), 192 (articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe)

BULGHARS: see Volga Bulghars

BURHANUDDIN AL-HELMI (reformist thinker from Minangkabau): 148 (his participation in the debate against the Kaum Tua)

BURUSHASKI LANGUAGE (vernacular tongue of Hunza): 236 (writing of poetry in Burushaski by Hunza’i)

AL-BUTI, SAID RAMADAN (Syrian translator of Nursi’s works): 296 (his use of exegesis to reach his conclusions)

CACHIN, MARCEL (1869–1958, French socialist leader): 187 (his relations with Sh. Arslan)

CAFÉMASKOT (in Berlin): 180 (as a meeting place of Mustafa Kemal and Arslan)

CAI YUANPEI (leading personality of the Chinese cultural world, at the eve of the Japanese invasion): 251 (his involvement into the creation of the Fude Library)

CAIRO: 7 (General Islamic Conference for the Caliphate), 46 (meeting of Rafiq al-’Azm and Rashid Rida in 1894), 46 (foundation of the Ottoman Consultation Society), 90, 95 (meeting of Barudi with al-Afghani and ‘Abduh in 1887), 96 (creation of the Fraternity of the Tatar Students in Cairo in 1906), 144 –145 (Indonesian students in Cairo in the late colonial period), 145 (city described in Shaykh al-Hadi’s novel Farida Lanum), 147 (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir’s mission to Mecca and Cairo in 1903), 177 (Sh. Arslan’s close links with C.’s intellectual world), 185 (siege of the Executive Committee of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, marginalized after 1925 by a newly created Finance Committee in Jerusalem), 194 (Muslim Congress of Cairo in 1926), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi’s sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai’s pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul), 274 (publication, in 1900, of Rusiyada musulmanlar by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim), 298 (the distribution of Shahrur’s al-Kitab wa’l-Qur’a in both authorized [Damascus and Beirut] and pirate [Cairo] editions)

CALIPHATE: 6 (Arab caliphate proposed by al-Kawakibi as a remedy to the shortcomings of the Ottoman Empire), 13 (Abu'l-Kalam Azad discarding the importance of a caliph being of Quraysh origin), 13 (Khilafat movement in South Asia), 21 (Rashid Rida's thought on the Caliphate), 22 (Rida as a successor to classical theoreticians of the caliphate), 28 –29 (differences of perception on the caliphate between Rida and al-Qaradawi), 42 , 43 (al-Zahrawi's call for Abdülhamid II's deposition), 64 (abolition of the caliphate in Turkey in 1924), 88 (Spiritual Assembly of the Muslim Law created in Russia as an instrument for turning Muslims away from the Ottoman sultan-caliph), 150 –151 (Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam supporting Abdülhamid II on the question of the Caliphate)

CASABLANCA: 167 (its occupation by the French in March 1907)

CATHERINE II (Empress of Russia from 762 to 1796): 88 (her 1773 Edict of Religious Tolerance), 273 –274 (her establishment of the Spiritual Assembly of Ufa in 1788)

CATHOLIC CHURCH AND ORGANIZATIONS: 65 (restitution of their confiscated endowments to French Catholic organizations)

CATHOLICS: see Christianity and Christians

CAUCASUS: 89 (Southern Caucasian influences on the elaboration of the usul-I ëadid in Russia), 192 (Northern Caucasian origins of Arslan's mother and wife) #AUMEVIa, D?EMALUDIN (1870–1938, a chairman of the Concil of Ulama in Bosnia-Herzegovina): 194 (his participation in the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935), 213 (as a figure of the early twentieth-century "semireformist" trend in Yugoslavia)

CEMAL PAVA, AHMED (1872–1922, Young Turk leader and Ottoman statesman): 179 , 180 (his reign of terror in Damascus in 1914–1917)

CEMAYYET-A /LMAYYE-A /SLÂMAYYE (“Association of the Scholars of Islam”): 75 (conservative organization led by Mustafa Sabri Efendi)

CEMAYET-A SÛFAYYE (“Sufi Association,” an organization of the late Ottoman period): 78 (the links of its chairman with the Naqshbandiyya and the CUP)

CENSORSHIP: 48 (in the Ottoman Empire under Abdülhamid II), 86 (in the Russian Empire after the 1905 Revolution), 101 (Russian censorship of Ahmed Midhat Efendi’s biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din), 144 (in the Dutch East Indies in the 1920s to 1930s), see also police; prison

CENTRAL ASIA: 295 (expansion of the Nurcu movement outside Turkey), 297 (F. Gülen’s movement’s web of more than 550 schools in Turkey and the CIS, especially in Central Asia), 300 (stateappointed religious hierarchies in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and ex-Soviet Central Asia, and their defence of their authority)

CENTRAL SPIRITUAL BOARD OF THE MUSLIMS OF INNER RUSSIA AND SIBERIA: 101 (its creation in 1921, and its chairmanship by Barudi and by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

CERIa, MUSTAFA (b. 1952, current Reis ul-Ulama of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 218 (representative of the religious scholars of independent B.-H.)

CEVDET, ABDULLAH (1869–1932, leader of Westernists in late Ottoman Turkey): 75 (his position in this current)

CEYLON: 260 (Ha Decheng’s travels to India, Ceylon, and Egypt on behalf of his commercial society)

CHANGDE (city in the north of Hunan, in south central China): 249 (appearance of the first new-style Chinese Muslim schools in 1898, at the initiative of a local mosque)

CHANGSHA (city in Hunan): 256 (creation of the Jiejin new-style Muslim primary school, and its replacement of the city’s mosque school)

CHEMISTRY: 46 (as a discipline to be caught up from Europeans)

CHEN KELI (1924–1970, Ikhwani militant executed during the Cultural Revolution): 261 (his studies with Wanj Jingzhai, Ma Songting, and Ma Jian, and his work as a prolific translator)

CHEN YUAN (leading personality of the Chinese cultural world, at the eve of the Japanese invasion): 251 (his involvement into the creation of the Fude Library)

CHENGDA NORMAL SCHOOL (Chengda shifan xuexiao, school created for Hui youth in Jinan, the capital of Shandong): 124 , 252 – 253 (its edition of the journal Yuehua, after its moving to Beijing in 1928), 130 , 133 (its sending of students to al-Azhar in 1932 and 1937), 131 (arrival of two professors from al-Azhar, Dali, and Fulifela, in 1933), 133 (creation

of the Fude Library in 1936, in memory of King Fu 1 ad of Egypt), 134 , 251 (school’s evacuation from Beijing to Guilin after the Japanese invasion of China in 1937), 250 (the school’s opening by the ahong Ma Songting in Jinan in 1925), 251 (school’s return to Beijing in 1945, under the name of High Institute of the Hui People), 256 (support given by Ma Fuxiang to the school’s rebirth in Beijing), 258 (role played by the activist Tang Kesan in the school’s administration), 260 (role of the reformist activist and translation Yang Zhongming), 260 (Ma Songting’s role in the school’s history)

CHIANG KAI-SHEK: see Jiang Jieshi

CHINA: 117 –142 (article by Matsumoto M.), 161 (early twentieth-century Chinese constitutionalist movement, and its impact outside China), 241 –272 (article by F. Aubin), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909), 282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s emigration from Siberia through Xinjiang, China, and Manchuria), 284 (supervision of local organizations by the Dai Nippon Kaikyo Kyokai in the occupied territories in China and Manchuria

CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY: 117 (its support by a fraction of Chinese Muslims since the mid-1930s), 136 –137 (its new nationality policy after 1937), 241 (breaking of its alliance with the Guomindang in 1927), 247 (its support to the creation of a subsidiary association [fenhui] of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), 249 (support given by the Ikhwani movement to the CCP, as the guarantee of a strong power), 256 –257 (collaboration between Muslim activists and the Communist Party and régime—in part. 257 : Su Baoqiao’s activities for the CCP in Changsha, and Da Pusheng’s biography), 259 (Communist activist Ding Baochen’s influence on Wang Jingzhai, as a defender of the colloquial Chinese language and literature), 261 (collaboration between the CCP and Hu Songshan’s pro-Chinese Ikhwani movement)

CHINESE ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION FOR NATIONAL SALVATION: 135 (its appeal for the national unity of Chinese people in 1940)

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE: 127 (Yuehua ’s practice of translating and criticizing Arabic and English books), 128, 130 , 134 (Ch. translations from Egyptian journals in the 1930s), 130 , 135, 244 (initiatives and disputes over the translation of the Qur’an into Ch.), 130 (translation of ‘Abduh’s Risala al-tawhid into Ch. in 1933), 131 (a translation into Ch. of the History of Islam by Khuzuli), 242 (Ch. language as a vector of denomination for Chinese Muslims), 248 –249 (giving up of making pupils drone by heart the Qur1 an in Ch. phonetical transcription, in Chinese Muslim religious schools, and its replacement by the teaching of Arabic language and learning of the Qur’anic text), 249 (Ikhwani influence on the arabization of religious teaching, and on the prohibition of Chinese and Sufi influence among Ch.-speaking Muslims), 250 (teaching of Ch. language and literature in Sino-Arabic schools), 251 (teaching of Ch. language and literature in the normal Islamic schools opened in the 1920s to 1930s in Eastern China), 252 (publication of colloquial-Chinese [baihua] Muslim journals since the early 1900s), 253 (Protestant’s dilemma as to the translation of the Bible into Ch., whether to use the classical [wenyan] or the colloquial [baihua] language, and its influence on the translation of the Qur 1 an), 256 (teaching of colloquial Ch. language in the primary schools created by Ma Fuxiang in Ningxia), 259 (teaching of Ch. language in the Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion), 259 (Ch. language in the traditional curriculum of mosque schools in China), 259 (Ding Baochen’s influence on Wang Jingzhai as a defender of the colloquial Ch. Language and literature), 259 (Wang Jingzhai’s work as a translator from Arabic language into Chinese, and his two translations of the Quran, in classical and colloquial Chinese), 260 (Yang Zhongming’s selflearning of Chinese language and literature), 260 (Ma Jian’s translations from Chinese into Arabic, notably that of the Confucian Lunyu), 262 (cultivation of Chinese classical

literature in Ma Yuanzhang’s Jahriyya menhuan, a subbranch of the Chinese Naqshbandiyya)

CHITRAL: 229 (tightening of British control over this region, and its consequence for the modern history of Isma ‘ilism)

CHONGQING (a city in Sichuan): 246 (relocation, in 1938, of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation the Country), 247 (first representation of Guojia chishang in 1940)

CHRISTIANITY AND CHRISTIANS: 58 (their outdistancing of the Muslims in progress in modern times), 88, 93 (the Edicts of Religious Tolerance taken in Russia by Catherine II in 1773 and Nicholas II 1905), 178 (US Protestant schools in the Near-East, and the attendance of one of them by Sh. Arslan), 178 (Maronite Christian Madrasa al-Hikma in Beirut, and its attendance by Sh. Arslan), 241 (the anti-Christian outburst in China in 1925), 253 , 259 (Protestant’s dilemma as to the translation of the Bible into Chinese, whether to use the classical or the colloquial language), 260 (Yang Zhongming’s comparison of Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam in the Sijiao yaogua), 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s critic of Christian missionary activity in Japan), 292 (appearance of Solidarnosc in Poland, the role of liberation theology in Latin America, and the return of Protestant fundamentalism as expressions of an overall Christian revivalism), 292 –293 (Second Vatican Council’s influence on the emergence of transnational decentralized grassroots networks), 294 (religious discourse as a precondition for the rise of the early modern public sphere in Europe), 297 (F. Gülen’s organization’s publicized and sustained dialogues with Christian and Jewish religious leaders)

CHRISTIANIZATION OF MUSLIMS: 65 (its denunciation by Rashid Rida), 85 (chr. Of the Muslims of the Volga and Urals region since the mid-sixteenth century), 88 (the first interruption of Russia’s policy of chr. of its Muslim subjects in the late eighteenth century), 133 (Muslim reformers in Egypt requesting that the King contain

Christian missions), 191 –192 (international debates on Christian religious propaganda in Libya), 197 –198 (Berber Dahir in Morocco, seen in the world of Islam as an instrument of chr. of the Berbers), 274 (denunciation of the chr. of Russia’s Muslims by Ibrahim in his Rusiyada musulmanlar)

CAHAD-I /SLÂM (“The Holy War of Islam,” an Ottoman journal): 281 (his publication during First World War by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim)

CIMIc, ESAD (b. 1931, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian of literature): 217 (as a representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

CIRCASSIANS (Muslim group in the Northern Caucasus, with numerous diasporas in the Near-East): 46 (participation of Circassians of Egypt in the Ottoman Consultation Society), 178 (Circassian origins and connections of Sh. Arslan, through his mother and his wife), 211 (Muslims of Circassian origin in Bosnia-Herzegovina)

CIRCLE OF EQUITY (classical concept of Islamic political thought): 168 (the adaptation of two versions of this circle from Ibn Khaldun by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States): 297 (F. Gülen’s movement’s web of more than 550 schools in Turkey and the CIS, especially in Central Asia)

CLERGY (in Russian: duhovenstvo): 88 (creation on the nucleus of a registered Muslim “clergy” by Catherine II since 1782), 99 (nomination of Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din as a qadi of the Spiritual Assembly of the Muslim Law), 216 (Gazi Husrev-beg Medrese of Sarajevo and its role in the education of the official religious leaders of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia during the Communist

period), 273 –274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s appointment as a qadi of the Spiritual Assembly of Ufa), see also ulama

CLEVELAND, WILLIAM L. (biographer of Sh. Arslan): 183 (on Rida’s role in reintegrating Arslan with Arab leaders), 186 (on Arslan’s weigh in the ratification of the French-Syrian treaty of 1936), 187 (on representations of Europe as an imperial threat as to the 1880s)

CLOTHING: 63 (adoption of the European costume by the Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II), 63 –64 (al-Khatib’s contribution to the dispute on the Islamic dress), 63 (edition of a paper by al-Fath on the wearing of a turban or a fez), 66 (Italian and British publications urging women to return to decency in dress), 91 (Christian Orthodox influence on the Muslim campaigns on the wearing of the headscarf in Imperial Russia), 152 (al-Imam ’s condemnation of the wearing of European clothing), 155 (al-Munir ’s argument on the wearing of neckties and hats as not prohibited by the Qur 1 an and Hadith), 297 (F. Gülen’s advocacy of a public role for women in society, and statement that the wearing of the headscarf by women is a matter of personal choice), see also headscarf; identity; westernization; women and the “women question”

COLAS, DOMINIQUE (historian of the former USSR): 294 (on religious discourse as a precondition for the rise of the early modern public sphere in Europe)

COLONIALISM: 68 (thirteenth-century Mongol invasion as an equivalent of modern European colonialism), 85 (submission of the Volga region to Russia from the mid-sixteenth-century onward), 88 , 89 (Catherine II’s seductive policy toward the Kazakhs, and their submission to a policy of school instruction in vernacular language in Cyrillic script), 91 (confrontation of Russia’s Steppe territory with Slavic colonization in the nineteenth century), 164 –165, 167 (France’s early twentieth-century interference into the affairs of

Morocco), 165 (ulama’s mobilization against the French encroachments in early twentieth-century Morocco), 167 (occupation of the Moroccan city of Wujda by the French army in March 1907), 180 (British invasion of Jerusalem in 1917), 180 –181 (the French suppression of Faisal’s ephemerous Syrian kingdom), 182 (shaking of the French colonial empire by the Rif Mountains’ and the Syrian revolts in 1925), 182 –186 (Shahbandar’s position as to the French mandate in Syria), 183 (political consequences of the coming of the British to the Near-East after First World War), 184 (opposition to the British and French colonization policies in the world of Islam by the Mufti of Jerusalem al-Husayni; alliance of the Nazshashibi faction with the British administration in Palestine, and its opposition to the Husayni faction after First World War), 187 (Tunisia’s occupation by France since 1881, and British occupation of Egypt in 1882; obsolescence of the Egyptian traveller Tahtawi’s influence after European colonial encroachments in the early 1880s), 187 (Sh. Arslan’s rapprochement with the French anticolonial left), 190 (von Oppenheim’s grand plans for expelling the French and British from the Middle East), 200 –201 (new perception of France in Arab nationalist circles after the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1937), 229 (tightening of British control over Hunza, and its consequence for the modern history of Isma ‘ilism), 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s denunciation of Russian, British, and French colonization), 281 (his encouragement of Ottoman resistance against the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911), 281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s translations into Ottoman Turkish of Japanese literature on Western oppression of Eastern peoples), see also westernization COMMERCIAL SOCIETIES: 243 –244 (their role in the financing of Islamic schools in early twentieth-century China), 260 (Ha Decheng’s travels to India, Ceylon, and Egypt on behalf of his commercial society), see also banks; merchants; sponsorship

COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS: see CUP

COMMUNICATION: 126 (Wang Jingzhai’s diffusion in China of information on reformist movements in Egypt), 289 (O. Roy on the possibility for modern Muslim intellectuals to choose among languages and audiences), 289 (increasingly important role played by women in

modern communication), 290 (growing accessibility of the means of communication and the increased power of intellectuals to communicate and of audiences to discuss), 296 (educated, urban cadres as the primary audience of ‘Abduh and al-Afghani’s message—contrary to the broader public of present-day religious intellectuals), 297 (communication of Nursi’s message through a multilingual website), see also books and book trading; Internet; journals and newspapers; language; mass media; orality

COMMUNISM AND COMMUNIST PARTIES: 147 (arrest of Shaykh Muhammad Tahir in Sumatra in 1928, on suspicion of Communist leanings), 181 (Sh. Arslan’s meetings with Zinoviev in Saint Moritz and in Moscow, and with Trotsky in Moscow), 201 (alliance of the French Communist Party with Messali al-Hajj’s Etoile Nord-Africaine), 214 (influence of state Communism in Yugoslavia on the evolution of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia), 217 (pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia), 241 (breaking of the alliance between the Guomindang and the Chinese Communist Party in 1927), 249 (support given by the Ikhwani movement to the Chinese Communist Party, as an embodiment of a strong power), 256 –257 (collaboration between Muslim activists and the Communist Party and régime in mid-twentiethcentury China), 261 (collaboration between the Chinese Communist Party and Hu Songshan’s pro-Chinese Ikhwani trend), 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s contacts with Russian revolutionaries during his travels in Europe), see also Socialism and Socialist parties

CONFEDERETION OF THE HUI RELIGION IN CHINA (Zhonghua Huijiao zonghui): 245 (its creation in 1934 in Nanking)

CONFUCIANISM: 121 , 242, 248 (its place in the Chinese imperial examination system), 250 (Ma Fuxiang’s knowledge of Confucianism, and sympathy for the Ikhwani movement), 253(use of Confucian terminology and reasoning by pre-modern Chinese ulama, notably Liu Zhi, for expounding Islamic theology), 256 (place of Confucianism in the education of young Chinese Muslims), 256 (edition of Han kitab s—Confuciano-Muslim

books), 260 (Yang Zhongming’s comparison of Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam in the Sijiao yaogua), 260 (Ma Jian’s translations from Chinese into Arabic, notably that of the Confucian Lunyu), 262 (place of Confucianism and Sufism in the readings of twentieth-century ahong s)

CONGRESSES, CONFERENCES, AND FAIRS: 6 , 27 (al-Kawakibi’s fictitious Mecca conference); 7 (General Islamic Conference for the Caliphate in Cairo in 1926), 7, 198 (General Islamic Conference of Jerusalem in 1931); 27 (conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama in London in 2004), 65 (early twentieth-century conferences of Protestant missionaries in Jerusalem), 101 (World Islamic Congress of Mecca in 1926), 150 (discussion by al-Imam of a proposed Congress of Religion to be held in Tokyo), 165 (international conference of Algeçiras in 1906), 176 (Sh. Arslan’s participation in anticolonial congresses in Paris, Berlin, and Rome), 181 (meeting of Trotsky and Arslan during a general conference of the Komintern in Moscow), 183 (regular publication of reports of Zionist congresses in Europe by La Nation arabe), 187, 190 (Arslan’s attendance of the socialist and anti-imperialist in Berne, Geonoa, and Brussels 1919–1927), 187 (Arslan’s attendance of the tenth Anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in Moscow in 1927), 191 , 193 –194 (European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935), 194 (Pan-Polish Muslim Congress of 1925), 194 (Muslim Congress of Cairo in 1926), 199 (Bludan Congress of 1937 against the Zionist immigration to Palestine), 215 (the Bandoeng Conference and its impact on the political utilization of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia), 246 (conference of Wuchang in 1937, organized by Bai Conqxi for mobilizing the Chinese Muslims against the Japanese), 293 (representation of the Muslims of Germany by the Zentral Rat der Muslime in the 2000 World’s Fair in Hannover), see also associations and societies; networks and networking; travels and travelling

CONSTITUTIONALISM: 61 (Turkey’s early twentieth-century constitutionalism as a model for the world of Islam), 61, 161

(Japan’s early twentieth-century constitution as a model for the world of Islam), 61 (early twentieth-century claims by religious scholars of Morocco for a consultative regime), 161 –174 (article by S. Reichmuth), 161 (early twentieth-century Chinese constitutionalist movement, and its impact outside China), 163 (nineteenth-century constitutional initiative in Tunisia), 165 (convocation of the “Assembly of Notables” by the Morocan sultan ‘Abd al-’Aziz in 1904–5), 167 (Iranian monarch Mohammad ‘Ali Shah’s role in the Constitutional Revolution), 296 (constitutionalism in the work of twentieth-century Muslim religious intellectuals), see also leadership; parliament; state and state apparatus

CONSULTATION AND CONSULTATIVE RÉGIMES (Arabic: mura): 61 (consultative régimes in early twentieth-century Japan, Iran, Egypt, and Turkey), 80 (popularization of the concept of a consultative régime by the Young Ottomans), 169 (Rashid Rida and ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s reference to the recommendation of consultation in the Qur1 an)

COUNCIL SYSTEM (instigated from the 1970s onward by the Nizari Imams): 233 (its organization in the Isma ‘ili communities of Northern Pakistan)

COUNCIL-ON-FOOT: see ayak divâni CRIMEA: 88 (its annexation to Russia in 1783 and the consequences of this event on Russia’s policy toward Islam), 89 (experimentation of the usul-i ëadid education method by Gaspralï in the 1880s)

CRIMEAN WAR (in 1854–1855): 93 (its perception by Russia’s Muslims)

CROATIANS: 212 (their share in the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

CULTURAL FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OF THE HUI RELIGION OF CHINA (Zhongguo Huijiao wenhua xiehui): 244 –245 (its creation in Shanghai in 1934)

CULTURAL REVOLUTION: 260 , 261 (its impact on the Chinese Muslim community, and on the personal destiny of its religious leaders)

CUP (Committee of Union and Progress): 41 (its branches in Syria), 43 (its participation in the failed underground publication of a journal in Homs), 44 (its support by Qadiri Sufis in Syria), 46 (Rafiq al-'Azm's adhesion to its branch in Damascus), 75 (A. Cevdet's role in its foundation), 78 (links of a number of its members with Sufi lodges and organizations), 179 (Sh. Arslan's meeting with officers from the CUP during the Cyrenaica campaign of 1911–1912), 179 (Kayali on the CUP as an advocate of Ottoman nationalism, and on its "conversion" to Islamism after the Balkan wars), 180 –181 (exile of the CUP leadership in Berlin in 1918), 181 (Enver Pava's foundation of the Islamic International as an extension of the CUP), 181 (CUP's successive adaptation of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism)

CYRENAICA: 179 (Ottoman campaign of 1911–1912 to preserve it against Italian conquest)

DA PUSHENG (Nanking-born Muslim Chinese religious scholar of Shanghai, graduated from al-Azhar, one of the "Four Great Ahong s" of China): 244 (his role in the relations of the Muslim community of China with the Guomindang and the Communist Party, and in the creation of the Guild of the Hui Religion in China, in 1929), 246 (his participation in the Wuchang conference, and in the creation and

administration of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the the Salvation of the Country), 250 , 260 (its initiation, with Wang Haoran, in 1907, of the Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion at the Beijing mosque of Ox Street), 251 (his co-direction of the Normal Islamic School of Shanghai since 1928), 251 (his leading role in the creation and administration of the Normal Islamic School of Pingliang, in Gansu, since 1937), 257 (a summarized biography, including his links with Ma Linyi, his travel to India)

DADIa (early eighteenth-century Dalmatian traveller): 163 (his mention of the interest of Istanbul's ruling circles in the form of government of Venice)

DAHOMEY: 166 (workplace of 'Abd al-Karim Murad's)

DAI NIPPON KAIKYO KYOKAI ("Great Japan Islamic Society," created in Tokyo in 1938): 284 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's participation in its organization)

DALI, SAYYID MUHAMMAD (professor from al-Azhar): 131 (his arrival to the Chengda Normal School in 1933)

DAMASCUS: 179 (Cemal Pava's reign of terror in 1914–1917, and its political consequences), 188, 189 –190 (impact of Wilhelm II's declaration, in 1898, on Germany being the protector of Muslims), 298 (the distribution of Shahrur's al-Kitab wa'l-Qur'a in both authorized [Damascus and Beirut] and pirate [Cairo] editions)

DANISHGAH-I KHANAH-I HIKMAT (lit. "The University of the House of Wisdom"): 236 (creation of this locus of Isma 'ili religious studies in Hunza in 1961, and its relocation in Karachi in 1977) \

DERVAV VAHDETÎ (1870–1909, Naqshbandi shaykh, leader of the /ttihâd-i Muhammedî Cemiyeti): 75 (his role in the counterrevolution of April 1909)

DHAHABI, MUHAMMAD HUSAYN (Egyptian specialist of tafsir): 17

AL-DIN WA'L-ADAB ("Religion and Good Manners," Tatar journal published by Barudi in 1906–1908 and 1913–1917):

95 (its popularization of Barudi's madrasa teaching)

DIN WA MA'IMAT ("Religion and Life," conservative journal published in Orenburg in 1906–1917): 102 (as a tribune for Muslim religious people), 106 (its quotations from al-Manār)

DING BAOCHEN (journalist of Beijing): 259 (his influence on Wang Jingzhai as a defender of the colloquial Chinese language and literature)

DAVÂN-I HÜMÂYUN (Imperial Council, in the Ottoman Empire): 162 (its consultative and representative mechanisms)

DAYANET /VLERA RAYASETA ("Directorate of Religious Affairs of Turkey"): 79 (its order of a Turkish translation of the Qur1 an from Mehmed Âkif)

DJOZO, HUSEIN (1912–1982, collaborator of Kemura's): 215 (as a representative of the official leaders of the Muslim Religious Community under Tito)

DOBRAbA, KASIM (1910–79, Bosnian specialist of Oriental manuscripts): 216 (as a representative of the opposition trend among the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

DRUZES (Lebanese heterodox sect of Isma ‘ili Islam): 177 –178 (as Arslan’s original milieu)

DUBAI: 4 (Islamic bank of Dubai)

DUNHUA SCHOOL OF SHANGHAI: 258 (its sponsorship by Sha Shanyu after Second World War)

DURICS, HUSZEIN HILMI (Mufti of the Muslims of Hungary in 1934–1936): 192 –193 (his regular contacts with Arslan)

DUTCH EAST INDIES: 144 (Dutch efforts at banning al-Manār from their colonies), 147 (arrest of Shaykh Muhammad Tahir in Sumatra on suspicion of Communist leanings), 151 (defence of the Riau court by al-Imam vs. encroachments of the Dutch administration)

D?ABIa, ALI FEHMI (1853–1918, Mufti of Mostar and a teacher at the University of Istanbul): 218 (as a representative of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora)

D?EMALOVIa, SMAIL: 192 (his series of articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe)

EAST ASIA: 25 (late twentieth-century reference for non-Western modernization)

“EASTERNERS”: 63 –64 (dress and textile industry as an element of “Eastern” identity)

EDICTS OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE (taken by the Czars of Russia): 88 (by Catherine II in June 1773), 93 (by Nicholas II in April 1905)

EDUCATION: 24 , 26 –27 (education of Muslim Brother leaders in secular institutions), 76 (Young Turks’ Islamic reforms in the judicial and educational systems), 89 (experimentation of the usul-i ëadid by Gaspralï in Crimea in the 1880s), 89 , 277 (N. Il’minskij’s policy of school instruction in vernacular languages and Cyrillic script for the non-Orthodox peoples of the Russian Empire), 146 , 154 (Shaykh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi’s role as a teacher for many students from Java in Mecca), 238 (changes in the mode of acquisition of literacy among present-day Isma ‘ilis, and its strengthening of self-help), 241 (expansion of popular religious education seen by Chinese Muslims as a condition to modernization), 244 (education of ahong s as an aim of the Guild of the Hui Religion of China), 245 (action of the Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Hui People, in Ningxia, for bringing together the Uighurs and the Muslim Han through a common education), 247 (“Save the Country by Education,” motto popular in China since the late Qing), 247 –248 (the opposition of the “New Style of Education (xinshi jaioyu)” to the “Scriptural Hall Education (jingtang jiaoyu)”—that is the traditional system of mosque instruction—in early twentieth-century China), 248 (correct religious education seen as the absolute remedy for all the evils of the time—among early twentieth-century Chinese Muslims), 248 (giving up of making the pupils drone by heart the Q. in Chinese Muslim religious schools, and the launching of a phonetic method of teaching Arabic language), 255 (Western Chinese warlords’ work in favor of reformed education), 262 (education as the royal way of entering the modern world, to the eyes of Chinese Muslim reformists), 274

(‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim urging his fellow Muslims to engage in educational reform instead of armed opposition to the ruling power), 276 (educational progresses of the Meiji era in Japan, and their impact on Muslim travellers), 289 (formal education being challenged by the ability to communicate in different media in the contemporary Muslim majority world), 290, 294 –295 (rise of mass education and the increased power of intellectuals to communicate and of audiences to discuss), 295 –296 (Nursi’s apology of early twentieth-century Western-style school education among the Muslims), 297 (F. Gülen’s interpretation of Islamic values offering a union between religion and science, faith and nationalism, education and the market economy, and tradition and modernity), see also ethics; madrasa; schools and schooling; sponsorship, teaching; universities

EGYPT: 4 (beginning of an Islamic revival in Egypt in the late 1970s), 14 (‘Abduh’s authority as the Grand Mufti of Egypt), 24 (impact of al-Azhar’s reform on legal and educational reforms), 27 (Muslim Brothers in Egypt), 43 , 46 (Egypt as a

refuge to Rafiq al-’Azm in 1894), 46 (participation of Turks, Armenians, and Circassians of Egypt in the Ottoman Consultation Society), 61, 161 (early twentieth-century constitutionalism as a model for the world of Islam), 65 (Rida’s denunciation of early twentieth-century Westernization trends), 66 (edition by the Egyptian press of Italian and British texts urging women to return to decency in dress), 79 (Egypt as a refuge to Mehmed Âkif in 1926), 85 (fascination for Egypt among Muslim literati in late Imperial Russia), 86 (Egypt as a major destination for Muslim travellers from the Russian Empire), 122 –123 , 259 (influence of Wang Haoran’s travels to Turkey and Egypt on his reformist thought), 127 (information on Egypt in Hui periodicals of the 1930s), 128, 253 (Chinese translations from Egyptian Salafi journals in the 1930s), 131 (relations between al-Azhar and the Chengda Normal School), 145 (description of Egypt in Shaykh al-Hadi’s novel Farida Lanum), 148 (Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi accompanying the Sultan and Raja Muda of Riau to the hajj

and to Egypt), 163 (nineteenthcentury constitutional initiatives by Egyptian sovereigns), 164 (support of Syrian Islamic reformists to Young Ottomans and Young Turks), 177 (Arslan’s Egyptian network), 187 (the British occupation of Egypt since 1882), 250 –251 , 260 (Ma Songting’s travel to Egypt and other Islamic countries, in 1932–1933, to find out new pedagogical methods), 255 (Ma Bufang’s travel to Egypt in the early 1950s), 260 (Ha Decheng’s travels to India, Ceylon, and Egypt on behalf of his commercial society), 260 (Ha Decheng’s importation of Islamic literature from Egypt, India, and Turkey), 300 (resistance to the challenges to their authority by stateappointed hierarchies in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and ex-Soviet Central Asia), see also al-Azhar; Cairo

ENGINEERING: 46 (as a discipline to be caught up from Europeans)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE: 178 (its study by Arslan), 193 (E. as one of the languages of the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935), 237 (the central place of E. in modern Isma ‘ilis’ education and literacy), 249 (E. as a matter of teaching in Chinese Muslim reformed religious schools), 257 (Da Pusheng’s learning of English language in India), 260 (Ha Decheng’s fluency in Arabic language, Urdu, and English), 297 (E. language as the language of instruction in F. Gülen’s schools outside Turkey)

ENVER PAVA (1881–1922, Young Turk leader and Ottoman Turkish statesman): 179 (his first meeting with Sh. Arslan during the Cyrenaica campaign, and origin of their lasting friendship), 180 –181 (his deeds in the former Russian Empire and his death in Eastern Bukhara), 181 (his foundation of the Islamic International as an extension of the CUP), 188 (his sending of Arslan to Berlin to negotiate problems regarding the Caucasus), 281 (his acquaintance with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim during the Balkan War of 1912)

ESCORIAL: 200 (Sh. Arslan’s consultation of manuscripts on the history of Muslim Spain)

ETHICS (Arabic: allaq): 90 (role of ethics literature in the reform of Russia’s madrasas), 100 (“women question” in the ethical debates of the 1900 to 1910s in Russia), 296 (relation of Islamic belief to modern science in the work of twentiethcentury Muslim religious intellectuals), 297 (instillation by F. Gülen’s movement of a morality and sense of discipline intended to pervade private conduct and public life), see also alcohol and alcoholism; clothing; education; women and the “women question”

ETOILE NORD-AFRICAINE (political organization created by Messali al-Hajj): 201 (its affinities with the French Communist Party)

EUROPE: 187 (on representations of Europe as an imperial threat since the 1880s), 295 (expansion of the Nurcu movement outside Turkey)

EUROPEAN MUSLIM CONGRESS OF GENEVA (in 1935): 191 (debates on the Italian administration of Libya), 193 (composition of the congress and Arslan’s personal role), 194 (mobilization by the congress of resources for the building of a mosque in Warsaw)

EUROPEANIZATION: see Westernization

EUROPEANS: 59 –63 (their domination over the world of Islam, its alleged benefits for the Muslims, and the reactions to this idea after First World War), 163 (challenge of European hegemony and its role in the emergence of constitutional movements outside Europe), 192 (articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe)

EXAMINATION (civil service examination of Bachelor [xiucai] in imperial China): 242 (its abolition in September 1905),

260 (its passing by the self-taught reformist ahong Yang Zhongming in 1899)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, in Cairo): 184 (its tentative marginalization by the Finance Committee after 1925), 184 –185 (Arslan’s resignation from the E.C., followed by Lutfallah’s ousting from the chairmanship of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress in 1927, and by the creation of a concurrent E.C.)

EXILE: 77 (division of Turkism between “Ottomans” and Turkic exiles), 218 (M. T. Oki- and A. Zulfikarpasi-, representatives of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora), 275 (exile of Muslim intellectuals of Russia to Turkey after the Czarist reaction of 1907 and the Young Turk revolution of 1908), see also migration

FAISAL (ruler in Syria, then in Iraq [1921–1933] in the aftermath of First World War): 50 (the swelling of popular nationalism during his brief rule in Syria), 177 (Sh. Arslan’s offering of his services for council and mediation during his reign in Iraq), 180 –181 (suppression of his ephemerous Syrian kingdom by the French), 181 (bearing of a message from him by Arslan to Zinoviev), 182 (his choice of al-Jabiri as his Chamberlain during his short reign in Syria), 195 (support given to him by Arslan in his attempts to unite Iraq and Syria), 196 (preparation by Arslan of the 1930 treaty of friendship with Ibn Saud)

FANGHUI KINDERGARTEN (Fanghui youzhiyuan): 255 (its creation by Ma Bufang)

FARIDA LANUM (novel on the women question by Shaykh al-Hadi): 145 (setting up of its intrigue in Cairo)

AL-FARRA, ABU YA’LA (990–1065, classical theoretician of the state): 22 (as a premodern predecessor to Rashid Rida)

FARUQ (1920–1965, King of Egypt in 1936–1952): 133 (his role in the relations between al-Azhar and the Chengda Normal School)

FASCISM: 190 –191 (Sh. Arslan’s relationship to Mussolini, and to his policy in Libya) 214, 216 (impact of Fascism on Bosnian-Herzegovinian intellectuals during and after Second World War), see also nation and nationalism

AL-FASI, ‘ALLAL (1906–1974, Moroccan nationalist leader and statesman): 199 (his contacts with Sh. Arslan)

AL-FATH (Salafi periodical published in Cairo): 55 (journalistic forum of the Salafiyya in Egypt), 60 (a 1947 article on the love of the Arabs as a pillar of Islam), 63 (edition of a paper on the wearing of a turban or a fez), 128 (al-F.’s spreading in China in the 1930s), 198 (Sh. Arslan’s papers against the Berber Dahir)

FATIMIDS (tenth to twelfth centuries Isma ‘ili dynasty of North Africa, then Egypt and Syria): 237 (Fatimid period seen as a golden age by present-day Isma ‘ili scholars and literati)

FATWA : 14 –16 , 27 (al-Manār ’s struggle to make iëtihad possible and to issue modern fatwa s), 28 –29 (al-Qaradawi’s continuation of al-Manār ’s mission of issuing fatwa s on contemporary questions), 47 (review by al-Manār of a treatise by al-Qasimi on the history and nature of the fatwa), 48 (Rashid Rida’s fatwa against the Shiite practice of cursing

Mu’Awiya), see also fiqh, maùhab, Shari’A

FEMINISM: see women and the “women question”

FENHUI (Chinese word: subsidiary association): 243 (creation in 1912 of the first nation-wide association of Muslims of China, with subsidiary associations), 245 (creation, in Lanzhou, of a subsidiary association of the Confederation of the Hui Religion in China), 247 (subsidiary associations of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), see also associations and societies

FEZ: 165 (siege of the Kattaniyya mystical path), 166 (the coming of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad in 1906)

FI ZILAL AL-QUR’A (work on tafsir by Sayyid Qutb): 20 (its influence compared to that of the Tafsir al-Manār)

FIKRET, TEVFIK (1870–1915, leader of Westernists in late Ottoman Turkey): 75 (his attacks against the doctrines of the Islamic state)

FILFILA, MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM (professor from al-Azhar): 131 (his arrival to the Chengda Normal School in 1933)

FILIPOVIa, MUHAMED (b. 1929, Marxist philosopher of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 217 , 218 (as a representative of the ideology of “ethnic Muslims” in B.-H.)

FILIPOVIa, NENAD (b. 1962, Bosnian Ottomanist): 218 (as a representative of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora)

FINANCE COMMITTEE (of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, in Jerusalem): 184 (its creation by the Istiqlalist wing of the congress, and its financial support by Ibn Saud)

FIQH (Islamic jurisprudence): 44 (attack of traditional fiqh by al-Zahrawi), 47 (publication by al-Qasimi of al-Z.'s treatise on jurisprudence, philosophy, and logic), 75 (Islamist critic of mezhepsizlik as undermining the traditional legal apparatus), 76 (Young Turks' Islamic reforms in the judicial and educational systems), 95 (central place of the usul al-fiqh [the methodology of jurisprudence] in Barudi's teaching), 298 – 299 (Shahrur's analogy between the Copernician revolution and Qur 1 anic interpretation, and his challenge to the authoritative tradition of tafsir and fiqh), see also fatwa; maùhab ; Shari'A

FIRSTWORLDWAR: 74 (its consequences on the debates about the role of Islam in the Ottoman society), 183 (its overall influence on the political situation in the Near-East)

FITRAT, 'Abd AL-RA'UF (1886–1937, Bukharan writer and political activist): 279 –280 (his comments on 'Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's Istanbul conferences)

FRANCE: 65 (restitution of their confiscated endowments to Catholic organizations), 163 (influence of French political thought in the world of Islam), 164 –165 , 167 (France's early twentieth-century interference into the affairs of Morocco), 180 –181 (French suppression of Faisal's kingdom in Syria), 182 (shaking of the French colonial empire by the Rif Mountains and the Syrian revolts in 1925), 182 (French Mandate on Lebanon, and the declaration of independence of 1920), 184 (opposition to French colonization policy by the Mufti of Jerusalem al-Husayni), 186 (circumstances of the French-Syrian treaty of independence in

1936), 187 (French occupation of Tunisia since 1881), 187 (Sh. Arslan’s rapprochement with the French anti-colonial left), 190 (von Oppenheim’s grand plans for expelling the French and British from the Middle East), 200 –201 (new perception of France in Arab nationalist circles after the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1937), 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s denunciation of Russian, British, and French colonization), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany)

FRATERNITY OF THE TATAR STUDENTS IN CAIRO: 96 (on its creation in 1906)

FRENCH COLONIES: 65 (encouragement of Catholic organizations to spread Christianity in North Africa and Syria)

FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY: 201 (its alliance with Messali al-Hajj’s Etoile Nord-Africaine)

FRENCH LANGUAGE: 176 (language of publication of La Nation arabe), 178 (its study by Sh. Arslan), 193 (one of the languages of the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935)

FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OF THE HUI PEOPLE OF CHINA FOR THE RESISTANCE TO JAPAN AND THE SALVATION OF THE COUNTRY (Zhongguo Huimin kangri jiuguo xiehui): 246 (its creation in 1937 in Tianjin)

FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OF THE HUI PEOPLE OF CHINA FOR THE SALVATION OF THE COUNTRY (Zhongguo Huimin jiuguo xiehui): 246 –247 (its creation in 1937 at the Wuchang conference, relocation to Chongqing in 1938, and change of name), 246 –247, 255 (Bai Chonqxi’s role in its history), 258 (Tang Kesan’s role in its history), 259 (Wang Jingzhai’s role in its history)

FRIENDLY ASSOCIATION OF THE HUI RELIGION OF CHINA FOR THE SALVATION OF THE COUNTRY: see Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country

FU TONGXIAN (modernist thinker and the author of a reference history of Chinese Islam): 244 –245 (his participation in the foundation of the Cultural and Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China, in Shanghai, in 1934)

FU'AD (1868–1936, King of Egypt in 1922–1936): 131 , 250 –251 (his role in the setting up of relations between al-Azhar and the Chengda Normal School)

FUDE LIBRARY (Fude tushuguan, in Chengda Normal School): 133 , 250 –251, 260 (its creation in 1936 in memory of King Fu1 ad of Egypt)

ËAMA'A (semi-corporate community of scholars headed by a qadi): 162 (its representation in late medieval Timbuktu)

ËAMA'AT-LANA : see jamaat-khana

ËAM'IYYAT AL-MAQASID AL-LAYRIYYA (early twentieth-century benevolent society in Beirut): 166 (its influence on 'Abd al-Karim Murad's Islamic societies)

ËAM'IYYAT AL-MUBBAN AL-MUSLIMU¯N ('Organization of Muslim Youths'): 68 (opening of its numerous chapters in Arab countries)

GANSU: 251 (creation of the Normal Islamic School of Pingliang, in 1937)

GASPRALÏ (or Gasprinskij, Ismail Bey, 1869–1914, a Crimean Tatar publicist): 85 (his publication of his journal al- Nahda in Cairo in 1908), 89 (his experimentation of the usul-i ëadid in Crimea since 1881, and publication of the Tarëuman from 1883 onward)

AL-GAYLANI, ‘ALI (an Iraqi Prime Minister), 190 (his proposal of an alliance with Germany in the fall of 1940)

G.

AZA: see italic>jihad

GAZI HUSREV-BEG MEDRESE (in Sarajevo): 216 (its role in the education of the official religious leaders of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia during the Communist period)

GELLNER, ERNST (philosopher and anthropologist of Muslim majority societies): 290 (on Islam as the only force resisting against the trend toward secularization and nationalism since the collapse of Marxist regimes)

GELVIN, JAMES (historian of post-First World War Syria): 50 (his depiction of two nationalist subcultures, one popular, another elitist)

GENERAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PURE AND TRUE EDUCATION OF EAST ASIA (Dongya Qingzhen jiaoyu zonghui): see General Association for the Religious Education of the Muslim People of East Asia

GENERAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF THE MUSLIM PEOPLE OF EAST ASIA (Dongya Mumin jiaoyu zonghui): 242, 243 (its creation in 1906 in Zhenjiang, and its renaming)

GENEVA: 178 (editing and printing place of La Nation arabe), 181 –182 (creation of the Syrian Congress in 1921 for petitioning the League of Nations Permanent Mandates Commission), 191 , 193 –194 (Muslim Congress of Europe in 1935), 194 (hope of members of the European Muslim Congress of 1935 for the building of a mosque in Budapest)

GENOA: 187 , 190 (Sh. Arslan’s attendance of the congress of the League of Oppressed Nations in 1921, and his probable meeting there with Mussolini)

GERMAN LANGUAGE: 193 (one of the languages of the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935)

GERMAN SOCIETY FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES: 189 (its studies on Sh. Arslan’s work between 1915 and 1938), 194 (Szynkewicz’ role in its foundation)

GERMANY: 184 (counterweight to British and French hegemony in the Near-East), 184 (its support by Sh. Arslan and al-Husayni during Second World War), 188 (Arslan’s overall relationship with this country), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany)

GHANEM, SHUKRI (Maronite Lebanese political activist): 186 (his presumed role in the failure of the negotiations between Arslan and the French authorities in 1925–1926)

AL-GHAZALI (twelfth-century prominent philosopher of Islam): 99 (his biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

GHIZR: 229 (tightening of British control over this region, and its consequence for the modern history of Isma ‘ilism), 230 –231 (history of a modern pir family in Ghizr)

GIBB, H. A. R. (historian of the world of Islam): 57 (on the theoretical unity of religion and state in Islam)

GIRARD, ANDRÉ (law professor at the University of Paris): 192 (his polemics with S. D?emalovi- on the condition of Muslims in Bulgaria)

GOETHE MUSEUM (in Berlin): 187 (its visit by Sh. Arslan in 1917)

GÖKALP, ZAYA (1876–1924, theoretician of Turkish nationalism): 77 (his role as the leading figure of the Osmanlis)

GOLDEN HORDE: 103 (as a historical entity of reference for Russia’s nineteenthcentury Muslim reformers)

GREAT BRITAIN: 65 (Protestant revivalism), 66 (spread of publications urging women to return to religious decency in dress and conduct), 163 (influence of British political thought in the world of Islam), 180 (British invasion of Jerusalem in 1917), 183 (political consequences of the coming of the British to the Near-

East after First World War), 184 (opposition to British colonization policy in the world of Islam by the Mufti of Jerusalem al-Husayni), 187 (British occupation of Egypt in 1882), 187 (support of the post-First World War British left to Zionism as an obstacle to rapprochement with Arab nationalists), 190 (von Oppenheim’s grand plans for expelling the French and British from the Middle East), 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s denunciation of Russian, British, and French colonization)

GREEKS (the Muslims of Greek origin in Bosnia-Herzegovina): 211 (their place in the Muslim populations of the Balkans)

GU JIEGANG (leading personality of the Chinese cultural world, at the eve of the Japanese invasion): 251 (his involvement into the creation of the Fude Library)

GUILD OF THE HUI RELIGION IN CHINA (Zhongguo Huijiao gonghui): 244 (its creation in Shanghai in 1929, and its failure to fulfil its goals)

GUILIN (city in southern China): 134 , 251 (relocation of the Chengda Normal School, from 1937 to 1945)

GÜL BABA ASSOCIATION (in Budapest): 192 –193 (its reception of Sh. Arslan in 1934)

GÜLEN, FETHULLAH (b. 1938, Turkish religious intellectual, a leading disciple of Nursi): 294 , 300 (contribution of his movement to the emergence of a public sphere in Turkey), 297 , 301 (his interpretation of Islamic values offering a union between religion and science, faith and nationalism, education and the market economy, and tradition and modernity)

ÆUM cD (Arabic: “rigidity”): 58 (debate between Renan and ‘Abduh on the question of the “rigidity” of Islam)

GUO MORUO (or Kuo Mo-jo, Chinese writer): 246 –247 (his membership of the Association for Studying the Culture of the Hui Religion)

GUOJIA CHISHANG (“The Acme of the Nation,” a play by Lao She): 247 (its command by the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country, and its first representation in Congqing in 1940)

GUOMINDANG (Chinese Nationalist Party): 117 , 123 (its support by Chinese Muslim leaders, during the Republican period), 134 (its support to Yuehua ’s publication and diffusion after 1937), 241 (breaking of the G.’s alliance with the Communist Party in 1927), 244 , 245 (checking of Sun Yatsen’s “Three People Principles” by Chinese Muslim students of Nanking, in search of contradictions with Islam), 245 (promotion of a Muslim lobby inside the Guomindang), 249 (the support given by the Ikhwani movement to the G., as the guarantee of a strong power)

GYPSIES (Muslims of Gypsy origin in Bosnia-Herzegovina): 211 (their place in the Muslim populations of the Balkans)

HA DECHENG (1888–1943, an ahong from Shanghai—one of the “Four Great Ahong s” of China—and the manager of an international commercial society): 243 –244 , 260 (role of his society in financing the schooling of future ahong s, and in purchase of Islamic books overseas), 244 (his leading role in the creation of the Learned Society of the Hui Religion of China), 246

(his participation in the Wuchang conference, and in creation of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the the Salvation of the Country), 251 (his co-direction of the Normal Islamic School of Shanghai since 1928), 253 (his choice of classical Chinese language for the translation of the Qur 1 an), 258 (his collaboration with Shu Shanyu and Wu Tegong on his translation of the Qur1 an), 260 (influence of his hajj in 1913 on his rejection of the traditional mosque teaching), 260 (language abilities, and his travels to India, Ceylon, and Egypt on behalf of his commercial society)

HADDAD, MAHMOUD (historian of Islamic reform): 23 (his insistence on Rida's concern on the political independence of Islam)

HADHRAMAWT (in Yemen, place of origin of leading Malay-Indonesian ulama): 148 (for Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi), 149 (for Shaykh Muhammad-Salim al-Kalali)

HADITH (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad): 48 (early twentieth-century debates on the Umayyad caliph Mu'Awiya's role in their transmission), 56 ('Abduh's praise of the Wahhabiyya for removing layers between men and a true study of the Qur 1 an and Hadith), 57 ('Abduh's comment on the Prophet Muhammad's saying about the scholar's independence from unjust rulers), 96 (Hadith's rational approach in Barudi's teaching), 99 –100 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din's focusing of religious teaching on the Qur1 an and the Sunna), 102 –103 (publication by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din of a set of comments on the Hadith), 122 (early twentieth-century Hui calls for a return to the Qur1 an and the Hadith, within the framework of Chinese Islam), 125 (need for accurate translations and interpretations of the Hadith stressed by Chinese Muslim reformers), 126 –127 , 129, 131 –132 , 134, 135 (use of Hadith by Hui thinkers for defining watan), 150 (al-Imam 's emphasis on the need to return to the Qur 1 an and the Hadith)

HAD?IBAJRIa, FEJZULAH (1913–1990, learned Qadiri shaykh, and opponent to the Yugoslavian Communist regime): 216 (representative of the opposition trend among the Muslim religious leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

HAD?IBEGIa, HAMID (1898–1988, Bosnian- Herzegovinian historian): 217 (representative of the crypto-opponent trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

HAD?Ia, KASIM (1917–1990, Muslim religious writer of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (representative of the opposition trend among the Muslim religious leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

HAD?Ia, OSMAN NURI (1869–1939, Bosnian writer on Islamic topics): 213 (representative of the modertate jadid group)

HAD?IJAHIa, MUHAMED (1918–1986, Muslim religious writer and historian of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (representative of the opposition trend among the Muslim religious leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

HAFIZ (a Persian classical poet): 79 (his influence on the young M. Âkif)

HAI-LI-FAN: see ahong

HAIKARA (Japanese word, from the English “high collar”: an adjective pointing at western lifestyles adopted in Meiji Japan, used with a nuance of both admiration and cynicism): 276 –277 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s warnings against superficial Westernization in Japan)

HAJI ‘ABBAS BIN MUHAMMAD TAHA (‘Alim from Singapore, second editor of al-Imam, in 1908): 147 –148 (his biography, especially his call for the creation of the Persekutuan Ulama Kaum Semenanjung)

HAJI ‘AbdULLAH AHMAD (founder of the Sekolah Diniyyah al-Islamiyyah, of the Adabiyah Diniyyah School, and of al-Munir in Minangkabau): 153 –154 (his biography, especially his studies in Mecca and his Salafi da’wa in Java)

HAJI AHMAD MANAM (1834–1938, reformist ‘Alim of the Kelantan region): 145 (sources of his reformist ideas)

HAJI MUHAMMAD YUSSOF BIN MUHAMMAD: see Tok Kenali

HAJI WAN MUSA BIN HAJI ABDUL SAMAD (1874–1939, reformist ‘Alim of the Kelantan region): 145 (the sources of his reformist ideas)

HAJJ (the pilgrimage to Mecca): 96 (its place in the biography of early twentiethcentury Muslim intellectuals from Russia), 122 –123, 259 (influence of his hajj, and of his travels to Egypt and Turkey on Wang Haoran’s reformist ideas), 144 (role of Indonesian hajjis in the diffusion of al-Manār in the Archipelago), 147 (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir settling down in Singapore as an organizer of the pilgrim brokerage), 148 (Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi accompanying the Sultan and Raja Muda of Riau to the hajj and to Egypt), 195 (the hajj made by Arslan in 1929 for meeting Ibn Saud), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi’s sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai’s pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul), 260 (Ha Decheng’s hajj, in 1913, and its influence on his rejection of the traditional mosque teaching), 261 (influence of Hu Songshan’s hajj on his Chinese nationalist convictions), 263 (the hajj as the best occasion for a discovery of the outside world for twentieth-

century Chinese Muslim intellectuals), see also networks and networking; travels and travelling

AL-HAJJ, MESSALI (1898–1974, Algerian nationalist and socialist leader): 201 (Sh. Arslan’s influence on his ideological evolution)

LALIFA (Arabic, “successor”): 228 –289 (title in the religious hierarchy of the Isma ‘ili community), see also hai-li-fan

HALAM, SAAD (Ottoman Grand Vizier in 1913–1917): 188 (his strained relations with the German ambassador Wangenheim, and Sh. Arslan’s intermediary between them)

HALLAQ, WAEL B. (historian of the Islamic thought): 14 (his demonstration that iëtihad was exercised at least up till the sixteenth century)

HAN: 245 (action of the Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Hui People, in Ningxia, for bringing together the Uighurs and the Muslim Han)

HAN KITAB (Confuciano-Muslim books): 256 , 262 (their edition in Western China in the 1930s)

HANAFI RITE: 14 (discourse of Ottoman Hanafi ulama on the closure of iëtihad), 92, 93 , 95 –96 (nineteenth-century rehabilitation of pre-Mongol Hanafi tradition in Central Asia and Russia), 103 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s apology of the practice of the shari’A in the pre-Mongol period)

HANBALI RITE: 14 –15 (its nonacknowledgement of the concept of a closure of iëtihad), 101 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s early Soviet sympathy for neo-Hanbali movements)

HAND?Ia, ADEM (1916–1998, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (representative of the crypto-opponent trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

HAND?Ia, MEHMED (1869–1939, famous Bosnian theologian): 213 (as a figure of the early twentieth-century “semireformist” trend in Yugoslavia)

HANAOÆLU, M. VÜKRÜ (historian of the Young Turks): 41 (on the breadth of opposition to Sultan Abdülhamid II in Syria), 44 (on the support of Qadiri Sufis to the CUP’s efforts in Syria in 1895–1897), 81 (on the belief of Ottoman statesmen that their destiny lays in Europe)

HANNOVER: 293 (representation of the Muslims of Germany by the Zentral Rat der Muslime in the 2000 World’s Fair in Hannover)

HASAN AL-BANNA (leading founder of the Muslim Brothers): 126 (diffusion of information on him and on the Muslim Brothers among the Hui of China), see also Ikhwani movement

HASANDEDIa, HIVZIJA (b. 1915, Muslim religious writer of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (representative of the opposition trend among the Muslim religious leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

HASHEMITES: 183 (opposition between Syrian and Palestinian elements of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress on the question of the allegiance to the H.)

HAVEL, VACLAV (Czech writer and statesman): 292 (on the compatibility of religious belief and modernirt)

HAVERIa, TARIK (b. 1955, Bosnian specialist of medieval Arabic philosophy): 218 (representative of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora)

HAYASHI SENJU¯RO (1876–1943, Japanese War and Prime Minister): 284 (his chairmanship of the Dai Nippon Kaikyo Kyokai)

HEADSCARF (Arabic: hiëab): 91 (Russian Orthodox Christian influence on the Muslim campaigns for the wearing of headscarf by women in late Imperial Russia), 297 (F. Gülen's advocacy of a public role for women in society, and statement that the wearing of the headscarf by women is a matter of personal choice), see also clothing; ethics; identity; westernization; women and the "women question"

HIGH INSTITUTE OF THE HUI PEOPLE (Huimin xueyuan): 251 (name taken by the Chengda Normal Scool after its final relocation in Beijing in 1945, until its suppression in 1958)

HIKAYAT PERCINTAAN KEMUDAAN (novel by the Malay writer Ahmad Kotot): 145 (manifesto of Islamic reform)

AL-LILAFA, WA AL-IMAMA AL-'UZMA FI ALISLAM (work on the Caliphate by Rashid Rida): 21

HINDENBURG, PAUL VON (1847–1934, President of Germany's Weimar Republic in 1925–1934): 188 –189 (his reception of Sh. Arslan in 1930)

HISTORY AND HISTORY WRITING: 4 (Anwar al-Sadat’s assassination as the landmark of a new era in the history of Islam), 64 (Turkish history as a proof of the country’s European character), 93 , 103 (imprint of Russian imperial historiography on the early twentieth-century Volga Tatar perceptions of the Volga Bulghars and of the Golden Horde), 128 , 134 (Yuehua ’s re-evaluations of Hui history in China), 217 (obligation for Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims to reinterpret the recent and remote past after the end of the Communist era), 232 (Islamic history as a matter of religious education by the wa’iz s among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis), 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s work “The Muslims in Russia, or a Short History of the Tatar People”), see also biography; identity

“HISTORY OF ISLAM” (in Chinese: Islan Zongjiaoshi): 131 (a work [1920] by Muhammad Khuzuli, translated into Chinese since 1933)

HOCHI SHINBUN (important early twentiethcentury Japanese newspaper): 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit to the newspaper’s bureau in 1909) HOMS (city in Syria): 43 (tentative underground publication of a journal by al-Zahrawi)

HONG KONG: 247 (creation of a subsidiary association of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country)

HOURANI, ALBERT (historian of Islamic reform): 24 (on the discredit of Westernizers after the First World War), 38 (the critics of his introduction of the Islamic reform party as “progressive”), 43 (on al-Kawakibi’s animosity toward al-Sayyadi as the expression of family competition for religious authority in Aleppo)

HU SONGSHAN (1880–1956, anti-Sufi ahon? of the Ihwani school in Ningxia): 136 (his mobilization of the Hui against the

Japanese occupation of China), 261 (influence of his hajj on his Chinese nationalist convictions; his transformation of the Ikhwani teaching into a pro-Chinese trend)

AL-HUDA (Malaysian newspaper published in Singapore): 144 (its distribution in Cairo)

HUGO, VICTOR (1802–1885, French writer): 79 (his influence on the young M. Âkif)

HUI (Chinese-speaking Muslims): 117 –142 (article by Matsumoto M.), 241 –172 (article by F. Aubin, in part. 242 , 245 – 247 : definition of the Hui as an ethnic [Huimin], religious [Huijiao], or national [Huizu] group)

HUIHUI MINZUWENTI (“The Hui Nationality Question”): 137 (booklet by Li Weihan on the CCP’s policy toward the Hui)

HUKIa, ABDURAHMAN (1921–1990, collaborator of Kemura’s): 215 (representative of the official leaders of the Muslim Religious Community under Tito)

HUMPHREYS, R. STEPHEN (historian of the world of Islam): 8 (on Islam as a significant political force in the Arab lands after Second World War)

HUNAN (province in south central China): 249 (the appearance of the first newstyle Chinese Muslim schools in 1898)

HUNGARY: 192 (articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe)

HUNTINGTON, SAMUEL (political philosopher): 294 (discussion of his “West vs. East” argument)

HUNZA: 229 (tightening of British control over this region, and its consequence for the modern history of Isma ‘ilism), 236 (creation of the Danishgah-i Khana-yi Hikmat in 1961)

HUNZA’I, ‘ALLAMA NASIR AL-DIN NASIR (b. 1917, an Isma ‘ili religious scholar of Northern Pakistan): 235 –237 (his contribution to the present-day re-interpretations of Nasir-i Khusraw’s works, and his poetry in Burushaski language)

HURAMOVIa, ABDUL HAMID (chairman of the Muslim Association, and member of the Oriental Institute of Warsaw): 194 (his participation in the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935)

HURGRONJE, SNOUCK (leading adviser of the Dutch colonial government of East Indies on Islamic affairs): 67 (Rida’s response to his views), 144 (his suggestion that the Dutch supervise returning hajjis for preventing the diffusion of Islamic literature), 149 (his remark on al-Imam as a suitable place for the Sultans of Riau to publish their grievances)

HÜRRAYET (“Freedom,” newspaper published by the Young Ottomans in London in 1868–1870): 80 (its pioneering arguments on pan-Islamism)

HÜRRAYET VE /TALÂF FIRKASI (“Freedom and Association Party,” opposition party of the late Ottoman period): 78 (links of a number of its members with Sufism)

HUSAYNI FACTION (in Palestine): 184 (its opposition to the Nashashibi faction after First World War)

AL-HUSAYNI, HAJJAMIN (Mufti of Jerusalem, and the Chairman of the Supreme Muslim Council of Palestine in the 1910s to 1940s): 182 , 186 (his strategic alliance with Rida and the Arslan brothers inside the Syrian-Palestinian Congress), 183 (modification of his role in the aftermath of First World War), 184 (his opposition to British and French colonization in the world of Islam), 184 (his alliance with the young Istiqlalists, and their creation of a special finance committee in Jerusalem in 1925), 190 (his proposal of an alliance with Germany in the fall of 1940), 196 –197 (his nomination of a delegation to arbitrate the conflict between Imam Yahya and Ibn Saud in 1934)

HUSAYNIYYA (reformed madrasa in Orenburg, Southern Urals): 98 (model of well-equipped urban educational institution in Russia), 100 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s teaching of the Hadith), 101 (the teaching activity of Bigi and of al-Qadiri)

HUSAYNOFF, AHMAD BAY (1837–1906, patron of the Husayniyya Madrasa): 100 (his introduction by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din as a model benefactor)

LUTBA (ARABIC: the Friday sermon): 299 (Shahrur’s use of the term qira’a [reading] instead of tafsir [Qur 1 an exegesis], and attacks against him in lutba s [Friday sermons] in Damascus and elsewhere)

LWAJA (Persian: “master,” title given notably to representatives of the Isma ‘ili Nizari Imam): 230 (this title given to Pir Sahib)

HYGIENE: 94 (insistence of Russia’s Muslim reformers on the improvement of sanitary conditions in mosques and madrasas),

256 (teaching of hygiene in the primary schools created by Ma Fuxiang in Ningxia)

IBADIS: 27 –28 (participation of Shiite and Ibadi scholars in the conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama in 2004)

IBN ABI DIYAF (d. 1874, Tunisian historian): 162 (his justification of the constitutional limitation of the ruler’s power)

IBN ‘AQIL, MUHAMMAD (early twentiethcentury Singapore reformist scholar–merchant of Hadrami origin): 48 –49 (his project of an essay against the Umayyad caliph Mu’Awiya)

IBN KHALDUN (fourteenth-century jurist and thinker from Ifriqiyya): 63 (quoted as an authority by al-Khatib on Muslims following the ways of other nations), 168 (adaptation by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad of his version of the concept of Circle of Equity)

IBN RUSHD (Averroes): 99 (his biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

IBN SAUD (founder of the Saudi dynasty): 177 (Sh. Arslan’s offering of services for council and mediation), 184 (I.S.’s financial support to the Istiqlalist wing of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress), 190 (von Oppenheim’s grand plans for building an alliance with I.S.), 195 (I.S.’s invitation to Arslan to become a high official of his administration), 196 (preparation by Arslan of the 1930 treaty of friendship with Faisal)

IBN SHIHAB, SAYYID HASAN (early twelfthcentury scholar of Islam): 48 –49 (his essay refuting Ibn ‘Aqil)

IBN SHIHAB, SHAYKH ABU BAKR (Hadrami teacher in Hyderabad): 49 (his essay refuting Sayyid Hasan Ibn Shihab’s attack on Ibn ‘Aqil)

IBN TAYMIYYA (1263–1328, Hanbali jurist, great ancestor of modern reformist and revivalist thinkers): 8 (as the great ancestor of Salafiyya), 33 (al-Manār ’s review of I.T.’s multi-volume fatwa collection), 68 (al-Azhar’s use of his texts for basing fatwas), 77 (his introduction by Yaltikaya in the Turkist journal /slâm mecmuasi), 78 (publication of papers on him in the early Republican Turkish Sufi periodical Mihrab), 99 (his biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

IBRAHIM (OR IBRAHIMOFF), ‘Abd AL-RASHID (1857–1944, a pan-Islamist Siberian Tatar activist): 273 –288 (article by Komatsu H.)

/BRAHAM MÜTEFERRAKA (d. 1745, highranking Ottoman bureaucrat of Hungarian origin): 163 (his proposals for military reforms along European lines)

/BRET (“Warning,” Turkish newspaper published in 1870–1903 by N. Kemal): 81 (its relations with M. Âkif)

/CTAHAD (Arabic iëtihad [q.v.]: Turkish journal edited in 1904–1932 by A. Cevdet): 75 (chief organ of Westernist ideas in the late Ottoman Empire), 77 (its interest in Islamic reform, especially in ‘Abduh’s thought)

IDENTITY: 6 (Rida’s emphasis on ’uruba), 6 –7 (al-Kawakibi’s ideas on Arab identity), 63 –64 (dress

and textile industry as an element of “Eastern” identity), 297 (majority of Turks considering Islam as a part of their identity), 298 (measure of religious practice and identity through the observance of Ramadan in Turkey), see also clothing; history and history writing; nationalism

IDRISMURSHIDILMU’AzZAM SHAH (a Sultan of Perak): 147 (his appointment of Shaykh Muhammad Tahir after the latter’s return from Egypt)

IËMA2 (Arabic: consensus [of the learned]): 80 (popularization of the concept by the Young Ottomans, with a new political meaning)

IËTIHAD (Arabic, independent legal reasoning in the interpretation of sacred texts): 11 (its apology by al-Maraghi), 13 – 16 (posterity of al-Afghani and ‘Abduh’s thought on iëtihad), 27 (commonness of iëtihad and of innovative fatwa s in present-day Islam), 28 (al-Qaradawi’s apology of iëtihad), 47 (review by al-Manār of a treatise by al-Qasimi supporting the use of the telegraph in declaring the beginning and the end of Ramadan), 48 (al-Qasimi’s praise of Ibn ‘Aqil’s independent use of reason, qualified of ijtihad), 75 (hostility of Ottoman ulama to the reopening of “the gates of iëtihad “), 92 (opposition of taqlid and iëtihad in Islamic reformist thought), 150 (al-Imam ’s emphasis on the need to practice iëtihad), see also kalam, philosophy; reason

/HSANOÆLU, DR EKMELEDDAN (Secretary General of the OIC): 27 (his participation in the founding conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama)

AL-ILWAN (Malay-Indonesian journal first published in Pulau Pinang in 1926): 145 (its role in the spread of Kaum Muda ideas in the Kelantan region)

IKHWANI MOVEMENT (or “Muslim Brothers”): 249 (its Wahhabi roots, appearance in China in the early twentieth century, and influence on the arabization of religious teaching, and on the prohibition of Chinese and Sufi influence), 250 (Ikhwani influence on the creation of the Sino-Arabic schools in Western China), 250 (Ma Fuxiang’s knowledge of Confucianism, and sympathy for the Ikhwani movement), 253 (celebration of patriotism by Chinese adepts of the Ikhwani movement), 253 –254 (modern Ikhwani critic of Liu Zhi’s Tianfang xingli for its Sufi content), 255 (support to the Ikhwani movement by the Ma warlords of Western China), 261 (Hu Songshan’s transformation of the Ikhwani teaching into a pro-Chinese trend)

IL’MINSKIJ, NIKOLAJ (1822–1871, a Director of the Kazan Seminar for Orthodox Missionaries): 89 , 277 (his policy of school instruction in vernacular languages and Cyrillic script for the non-Orthodox peoples of the Russian Empire)

AL-IMAM (“The Community Leader,” Malay journal published in 1906–1908): 143 –158 (article by Azyumardi Azra, especially 145 –153)

IMAM YAHYA (Yemeni ruler): 177 (Sh. Arslan offering his services for council and mediation), 195 –196 (Imam Yahya’s conflicts with Ibn Saud)

IMAMA (Arabic: Islamic leadership): 43 (al-Zahrawi addressing the question of Muslim leadership)IMAMOVIa, MUSTAFA (b. 1941, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 218 (representative of the traditional secular intelligentsia)

IMAM(S): 241 (role played by local imams in the expansion of popular religious education in Republican China), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany—like the Imam of the Grand Mosque in Paris), see also ahong ; clergy; ulama

IMPERIAL COUNCIL: see divân-i hümâyun

AL-’IMRAN (a Sura of the Qur 1 an): 57 (its commentary by ‘Abduh)

INDIA: 92 (place of origin of the early twentieth-century Islamic reformist trend in Russia), 161 (overall influence of the Indian constitutionalist movement), 257 (Da Pusheng’s travel to India as a representative of Shanghai merchants), 260 (Ha Decheng’s travels to India, Ceylon, and Egypt on behalf of his commercial society), 260 (Ha Decheng’s importation of Islamic literature from Egypt, India, and Turkey), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909)

INDONESIA: 13 (Muhammadiyah as the second Islamic organization of Indonesia today), 143 –158 (article by Azyumardi Azra), 290 (major role of religious intellectuals in furthering the goals of civil society in countries like Indonesia and Turkey)

INQIRAZ (Arabic: “decadence”): 93 (invention of the concept by nineteenthcentury Tatar ulama, and its application to Central Asia)

INTERNET: 291 (accessibility of the works by modern religious intellectuals through the Internet), 297 (communication of Nursi’s

message and F. Gülen’s movement through multilingual websites), see also communication; mass media; networks and networking

INUKAI TSUYOSHI (1855–1932, statesman of the Meiji era): 276 , 278 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

AL-IQBAL (Indonesian newspaper published in Java): 144 (its distribution in Cairo)

IRAN: 4 , 26 –27 (Islamic Revolution of 1979 and its impact abroad), 23, 27 (Islamic Constitution), 61, 161 , 164, 167 (Iran’s early twentieth-century Constitutional Revolution, and its impact in the world of Islam), 65 (Rida’s denunciation of Iran’s early twentieth-century Westernization policy), 291 , 293 (discussion of the modernization theory’s postulate of a preference for secularizing reformers like Atatürk in Turkey, or Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah in Iran), 294 (Mohammad Khatami and the reformist movement’s contribution to the emergence of a public sphere in Iran), 300 (stateappointed religious hierarchies in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and ex-Soviet Central Asia, and their resistance to challenges to their authority)

IRMAD (“Guidance,” Arabic journal of Egypt): 128 (its diffusion in China in the 1930s)

AL-IRMAD (“Guidance,” Indonesian journal published in Pekalongan): 144 (its diffusion in Cairo)

‘IMA 1 (Arabic: the night prayer): 92 (early nineteenth-century Bukhara dispute on ‘ima in sub-boreal regions)

ISAKOVIa, ALIJA (1932–1997, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian of literature): 217 (representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

ISHAQI, MUHAMMAD ‘AYYAZ (1878–1954, Tatar novelist and a leader of the islahi movement): 94 (his criticism of the madrasa-centered strategy of modernization of the Muslims of Russia)

ISLAHI MOVEMENT (protestation movement of madrasa students in Russia in 1905–1914): 94 (its criticism of the madrasa-centered strategy of modernization among Russia’s Muslims)

/SLÂM DÜNYASI (“The World of Islam”): 281 (its publication by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in Istanbul in 1913)

/SLÂM MECMUASI (“Islamic Review,” Turkist journal published between 1913 and 1918): 77 (contribution of authors from other trends of thought)

ISLAMIC CONSTITUTION OF IRAN: 23 (influence of al-Sadr’s ideas on the Iranian Constitution of 1979)

ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL (Islamintern): 181 (its foundation in Moscow by Enver Pava as an extension of the CUP)

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: 27 (theory of the wilayat al-faqih as its backbone)

ISLAMIC REVOLUTION OF 1979 IN IRAN: 4 , 26 –27, 292 (its expression of an overall Islamic revival), 292 –293 (on locally rooted movements—like opposition to the Shah’s regime in Iran—benefiting with transnational sponsors or supporters)

ISLAMIC SUMMIT OF 1969: 7 (seen as a first embodiment of al-Kawakibi’s ideas of an Islamic conference)

ISLAMINTERN: see Islamic International

ISLAMISM: 74 –84 (in late Ottoman Turkey; in particular 75 –76 : its main figures and journals), 170 –171 (Shari’A in the debates between Westernists and Islamists in the Ottoman parliament after 1908), 179 (CUP’s “conversion” to Islamism after the Balkan wars), 181 (CUP’s successive adaptation of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism), 293 –294 (O. Roy on the present-day proliferation of different types of Islamist movement, and his use of the term “post-Islamism”), see also identity; nation and nationalism; pan-Islamism; Turkism

ISLAMOLOGY: 248 , 253 (influence of Western studies in islamology on twentieth-century Chinese Muslim learned circles) ISMA ‘ILIS AND ISMA ‘ILISM: 226 –240 (article by Nejima S.)

ISTANBUL: 182 (education place of Ihsan al-Jabiri), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi’s sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai’s pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and of Istanbul), 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s settlement in 1894), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909), 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim and Yamaoka Kotaro’s invitation by the Society of Muslum Students from Russia in Istanbul), 280 –281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s journalistic activity in Istanbul in the early 1910s)

ISTIQLALISTS (Arabic, “independentists,” radical wing of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress): 184 (role played by one of their leaders, ‘Adil Arslan, and their creation of a special Finance Committee in Jerusalem in 1925), 184 –185 (Lutfallah’s ousting by the I. from the

chairmanship of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress in 1927), 185 (I.’s pan-Arabism and its opposition to Shahbandar’s People’s Party)

ITALY: 65 (reconciliation of the Italian state with the Vatican, and its impact on the subsequent Catholic revival), 66 (spread of publications urging women to return to religious decency in dress and conduct), 163 (influence of Italian political thought in the world of Islam), 179 (Italian conquest of Cyrenaica in 1911–1912), 184 (Italy as a counterweight to British and French hegemony in the Near-East), 184 (its support by Sh. Arslan and al-Husayni during Second World War), 190 –191 (Arslan’s relationship to Italy, and his criticism of the Italian policy in Libya), 281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s encouragement of Ottoman resistance against the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911)

ITO HIROBUMI (1841–1909, prominent statesman of the Meiji era): 276 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

ITTIFAQAL-MUSLIMIN (“Union of Muslims”, a political party created in Russia in 1905): 97 (the membership of prominent ulama educated in al-Azhar), 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s endeavours for its creation)

/TTAHAD VE TERAKKA: see CUP

/TTAHÂD-I MUHAMMEDÎ CEMAYETA (“Mohammedan Union,” subdivision of the Islamist trend in late Ottoman Turkey): 75 (its role in the counterrevolution of April 1909, and as a root of the Nurcu movement)

IVAN THE TERRIBLE (Czar of Russia from 1533 to 1584): 88 (his capture of Kazan in 1551)

IVORY COAST: 166 (workplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

IZETBEGOVIa, ALIJA (1925–2003, Bosnian politician and statesman): 216 , 218 (leader of the opposition trend among the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina under the Socialist régime)

IZMIR: 282 (recapture of the city by the Turkish Army from the Greeks in 1922, and its influence on ‘Abd al-Rashid’s Ibrahim’s decision to migrate to Turkey)

IZUTSU TOSHIHIKO (1914–1993, prominent Japanese islamologist): 285 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim, and the latter’s influence on him)

‘IZZ AL-MAML cK (Arabic: “dignity of the subject”): 168 (concept developed by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

‘IZZ AL-MULK (Arabic: “royal dignity”): 168 (concept developed by Ibn Khaldun)

AL-JABIRI, IHSAN (Ottoman bureaucrat, King Faisal’s Chamberlain, Arslan’s partner from 1925 to 1937, and the coeditor of La Nation arabe): 178 (his role in the journal’s edition), 182 (further elements of his biography)

AL-JABIRI, SA’D-ALLAH (member of the Syrian delegation to France in 1936): 186 (his consultations with Sh. Arslan in Geneva prior to the signature of the treaty leading to independence)

JADID (Arabic: “new”): 212 , 213 (denomination of late nineteenth-century reformists in Bosnia-Herzegovina)

JADIDISM (term used by modern historians on Islamic reform in the Russian Empire): 90 (problematic character of this denomination)

AL-JAHIZ (tenth-century Arab moralist): 90 (translation of his works into Tatar language in Imperial Russia)

JAHRIYYA: see Naqshbandiyya

JAMA’AH ADABIYYAH (association created in Minangkabau by Haji ‘Abdullah Ahmad): 154 (its role in the funding of the Adabiyah Diniyyah School after 1909)

JAMA’AT-KHANA (Persian word, lit. “communal house,” center for prayer and assembly among Isma ‘ilis): 228 (its new functions in modern times)

JANISSARIES: 162 (N. Kemal’s reference to them as a limitation to the sultan’s absolute power)

JAPAN: 25 , 59, 242 –243 (present-day reference for non-Western modernization in the world of Islam), 61, 161 (Japan’s early twentieth-century constitution as a model for the world of Islam), 64 (Japan’s model of development compared by Arslan with that of Atatürk’s Turkey), 118 , 127 –128, 134 –135 , 137, 245 –246 , 262 –263 (evolution of Chinese Muslim patriotism before, during and after the Sino-Japanese War, and the evolution of the CCP’s nationality policy), 120 , 121, 242 –243 (stay of Chinese Muslim literati in Japan and their absorption of Western modernism), 150 (discussion by al-Imam of a proposed Congress of Religion to

be held in Tokyo), 167 , 273 (echo of the Japanese victory over Russia in 1904 throughout the world of Islam), 242 –243 (Japanese intermediary in the diffusion of Western ideas on ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship among early twentiethcentury Chinese Muslims), 256 (Ma Linyi’s studies in Japan in 1903–1905), 273 –288 (article by Komatsu H.)

JAPANESE LANGUAGE: 275 (discovery by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim of the structural similarity of Japanese and Tatar language)

JAPONLAR (“The Japanese,” poem by Mehmet Âkif): 281 (its inspiration by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s Âlem-i /slam)

JAVA: 48 (tensions among Sunni and Shiite Muslims after the publication of Ibn ‘Aqil’s treatise on the Umayyad caliph Mu’Awiya)

AL-JAZA’IRI, TAHIR (late nineteenth-century Syrian reformist ‘Alim): 45 (his participation in Rafiq al-’Azm’s reformist circle), 47 (publication of his school primer on theology in al-Manār ; his dissensions with R. Rida)

AL-JAZEERA (Qatari satellite TV channel): 299 –300 (debates between S. J. al-’Azm and Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, and between Nasir Hamid Abu Zayd and Muhammad 2Imara on al-Jazeera in 1997)

JERUSALEM: 7 (General Islamic Conference of 1931), 65 (early twentieth-century conferences of Protestant missionaries in J.), 180 (entrance of the British troops in 1917), 184 (Sh. Arslan’s involvement in Jerusalem politics around 1935), 185 (siege of the Finance Committee of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, created in 1925 by young Istiqlalists against the Cairo Executive Committee), 194 (status of J. considered by the European Muslim Congress of 1935 not as a political, but as a religious issue)

JEWS AND JUDAISM: 297 (F. Gülen’s organization’s publicized and sustained dialogues with Christian and Jewish religious leaders)

JIANG JIESHI (or Chang Kai-shek, 1887–1975, Chinese nationalist leader and statesman): 246 (his support to Bai Chongxi in the latter’s attempt at uniting the Hui to the Han, in 1937, against the Japanese)

JIEJIN (lit. “Advance Together”) SCHOOL (in Changsha, Hunan): 256 (creation of the new-style primary school, by Ma Linyi, and its replacement of the city’s mosque school)

JIHAD: 88 (?azawat [wars for the defence or extension of the territory of Islam] of the 1730s to 1770s in European Russia), 125 (jihad seen by the Chinese Muslim warlord Ma Fuxiang as war against non-Muslims), 135 (jihad against Japan as a sacred duty for the Muslims of China after 1937), 281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s call to the jihad after the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911), 281 (publication of Cihad-i /slam during First World War by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim), 283 –284 (publication of a paper on jihad by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim after his settlement in Tokyo), see also colonialism; westernization

JINGTANG (Chinese: Qur 1 anic school attached to a mosque): 121 (the jingtang s’ traditional financing by the zakat), 241 (their traditional role in the transmission of popular religious knowledge), 247 –248 (opposition of the “New Style of Education (xinshi jaioyu)” to the “Scriptural Hall Education (jingtang jiaoyu)”—that is, traditional system of mosque and madrasa instruction—in early twentieth-century China), see also schools and schooling; sponsoring

JINGTANG JIAOYU (Chinese: “Scriptural Hall Education”—that is, system of mosque and madrasa instruction prevailing among Chinese Muslims between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries): 247 –248 (opposition of the “New Style of Education (xinshi jaioyu)” to the jingtang jiaoyu in early twentieth-century China)

JINN (Arabic: spirit): 45 (criticism by Rashid Rida of al-Sayyadi’s assertions of having visions of jinn s)

AL-JISR, Shaykh Husayn (1845–1909, Syrian reformist thinker): 9 , 26 (his role in the education of Rashid Rida, especially in modern sciences), 42 , 166 (his creation of the Madrasa al-Wataniyya in Tripoli), 81 (his introduction by M. Âkif as a perfect ‘Alim), 166 (his presumed influence upon ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

JORDAN: 27 (Muslim Brothers in Jordan)

JOURNALS AND NEWSPAPERS: 8 –10 , 13, 33 , 42, 105 , 144 (journal al-’Urwa al-Wuöqa as an antecedent to modern Islamist periodicals), 9 (influence of al-’Urwa al-Wuöqa ’s discourse on tafsir upon Rida), 43, 166 (early twentieth-century Egyptian newspaper al-Mu’ayyad and its Islamic themes), 63 (participation of the newspaper al-Muqattam in the post-First World War dispute on the wearing of hats or fez), 76 , 275, 279 (Ottoman Islamist journal Sirat-i müstakim ’s staff, its publication of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel correspondences in 1909, and translation of the programmes of the Ajia Gikai), 81 (N. Kemal’s publication of the journal /bret), 85 –116 (article by S. A. Dudoignon on the Mura, in particular 98 –105), 117 –142 (article by Matsumoto M. on the Yuehua, especially 124 –136), 128 (distribution of the Egyptian journal Maëmu2 al-rasa’il in China in the 1930s), 130, 134

(translation into Chinese of papers from al-Azhar’s Nur al-islam in the 1930s), 144 (distribution of the Indonesian newspapers al-Mir’a al-muhammadiy a and al-Talira al-islamiyya in Cairo), 144 (role of the port of Tuban for the diffusion of al-Manār in the Indonesian archipelago), 145 (role of the journal Seruan Azhar in the emergence of an Islamic discourse in Indonesia), 145 (role of the journals Pengasuh and Saudara in the spread of Kaum Muda ideas in the Kelantan region), 146 –147 (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir’s role in the launching of al-Imam), 148 (role of the Tunas Melayu and of Neracha in promoting the reformist cause among Singapore Muslims), 149 (role of the Riau court in the circulation of al-Imam in the Riau region), 151 (support of the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam to the Young Turks after 1908), 152 (criticism of the turuq, especially the Naqshbandiyya, in the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam), 153 –154 (‘Abdullah Ahmad’s visit to Singapore in 1908, and his idea to publish a journal similar to al- Imam), 155 (argument on Indonesian traditionalists of journals as a Western innovation), 201 (Sh. Arslan’s influence within the circle of the Algerian reformist ulama through the journal al-Mihab), 202 (smuggling of La Nation arabe in Morocco), 243 , 245 (role of journals for helping early twentieth-century Chinese Muslim school reformers to present their ideas), 251 –254 (history and statistics of the Muslim periodicals of China in the Republican period, 274 (Tatar and Arabic newspapers published by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim after the Russian revolution of 1905), 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit to the Tokyo bureaus of Japanese newspapers in Tokyo in 1909), 280 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s publication of the Ottoman journals Teârüf-i müslimin and /slam dünyasi), 284 (Kaikyo Sekai ’s introduction of the world of Islam to the Japanese audience), 283, 284 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s collaboration to the Yani Yapon Mulbiri), 289 (book as a present-day important means of communication, challenged by other modern media), see also books and book trading; printing and printing houses; sponsorship

DE JOUVENEL (French High Commissioner in Syria): 182 (his discussions with Arslan on the destiny of Tripoli), 185 (his succession to Sarrail after the Syrian revolt of 1925), 185 (his meetings with Arslan and Jabiri in Paris in November 1925 and July 1926)

AL-JUNDI, Muhammad Salim (Syrian historian): 41 (his balanced assessment of al-Sayyadi)

KABUL: 92 (education place of early twentieth-century Volga Tatar scholars of Islam)

KAIKYO SEKAI (“The Muslim World,” journal of the Dai Nippon Kaikyo kyokai): 284 (his introduction of the world of Islam to the Japanese audience)

KALAM (Islamic dogmatic theology): 92 (its renewal in Bukhara in the early nineteenth-century), 94 (its focusing on the central pillars of Islam in reformist thought), 99 (al-Ghazali as a major reference on reformist kalam in Central Asia and Russia), see also philosophy

KAMALI, ZIYA (1873–1942, Tatar ‘Alim from Ufa): 90 (his creation of the ‘Aliyya Madrasa in 1906), 96 (his studies in al-Azhar and his pilgrimage to Mecca with Bigi)

KAMAL PAVA (1832–1913, Ottoman statesman): 280 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim, and his views on the perspective of the conversion of Japan to Islam)

KAMPFFMEYER, GEORG (German orientalist, chairman of the German Society of Islamic Studies): 189 (his lectures on Sh.Arslan’s literary works), 194 (his relations with Szynkewicz)

KANO: 166 (workplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad, and his death place, and center of the Tijaniyya mystical path, represented locally by Muhammad Salga, a pupil of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

KAPID?Ia, HAMDIJA (1904–1974, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

KARACHI: 233 (center of the council system instigated from the 1970s onward by the Nizari Imams), 236 (relocation of the

Danishgah-i Khana-yi Hikmat in 1977)

KARAMAT (Arabic: prodigies accomplished by a special grace of God): 99 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s refutation of the theory of karamat accomplished by saints)

KARbIa, FIKRET (b. 1955, Bosnian specialist of Islamic law): 218 (representative of the religious scholars of independent B.-H.)

KARIa, ENES (b. 1958, Bosnian specialist of Qur 1 anic studies): 218 (representative of the religious scholars of independent B.-H.)

KARIMI, MUHAMMAD FATIH (1870–1937, Tatar pamphleteer and traveller): 100 (his role as chief redactor of the Waqt),

102 (his contributions on educational questions to the Mura)

KATLAN, ‘Abd AL-FATTAH (an early twentieth-century Syrian publisher): 56 (his foundation of the Matba’A Salafiyya printing press)

KATTANIYYA (mystical path with its main center in Fez): 165 (its mobilization against early twentieth-century French encroachments in Morocco), 166 (‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s arrival to the Zawiya of the Kattaniyya in 1906)

KAUM MUDA (Malay-Indonesian: “young group,” as opposed to the Kaum Tua, “old group”): 146 (definition of these factions of reformists and traditionalists in the Malay-Indonesian world), 148 (Haji ‘ABbas’s efforts at uniting the two trends in the Pan-Malayan Association of Ulama), 153 (reaction of the Kaum Muda after the disappearance of al-Imam in 1908)

AL-KAWAKIBI, ‘Abd AL-RAHMAN (1854–1902, Syrian reformist thinker): 6 –7 (his ideas on Arab identity), 32 (editions of his Umm al-Qura), 43 (Rida’s review of his essay The Characteristics of Tyranny, written against Abdülhamid II), 46 (publication of an essay on al-K. in al-Manār), 55 (al-K.’s connection with the early development of the Salafiyya)

KAYALI, HASAN (historian of the Young Turks): 179 (on the CUP as an advocate of secular Ottoman nationalism), 181 (on the Ottoman Empire’s viability during the last ten years of its history)

KAZAKHS (or Qazaqs, a modern Central Asian nation): 88 (Catherine II’s seductive policy toward them), 89 (their submission to a policy of school instruction in vernacular language in Cyrillic

script), 274 (territorial autonomy proposed for the Kazakhs by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1907)

KAZAN: 88 (city’s capture by Ivan the Terrible in 1551), 90 (reform of the Muhammadiyya Madrasa by Barudi since 1891)

KEDOURIE, ELIE (historian of constitutionalism in the Middle East): 161 (Arab constitutionalism as a parody of the same trends in Western Europe)

KELANTAN REGION (Indonesia): 145 (spread of Kaum Muda ideas by al-Manār and the local Islamic press in the 1920s)

KEMAL, MUSTAFA: see Atatürk

KEMAL, NAMIK (1840–1888, Turkish writer, leader of the Young Ottomans): 80 (his influence on M. Âkif), 81 (his publication of the journal /bret), 162 (his justification of the constitutional limitation of the ruler’s power), 170 (his identification of the Shari’A with Rousseau’s concept of Natural Law)

KEMURA, SULEJMAN (1908–1975, Reis ul-Ulema of Yugoslavia): 215 (representative of the official leaders of the Muslim Religious Community under Tito)

KERR, MALCOLM (historian of Islamic reform): 5 (on ‘Abduh and Rida’s contribution to secular reform), 22 –23 (on Rida’s theory of the Caliphate as a statement of ideals)

AL-KHALILI, AHMAD (Grand Mufti of Oman, the highest position of the Ibadi school): 27 (his participation in the founding conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama)

KHATAMI, MOHAMMAD (Iranian religious intellectual, the President of the Islamic Republic in 1997–2005: 294 (Khatami, Soroush, and the reformist movement’s contribution to the emergence of a public sphere in Iran)

AL-KHATIB, MUHIBB AL-DIN (editor and main author of al-Fath): 56 (his foundation of the Matba’A Salafiyya printing press), 63 (his edition of a paper on the wearing of a turban or a fez), 68 – 71 (translation of “The Campaign for Renewal and Reform”), 128 (translation of his article on smoking in the Yuehua)

KHAYR AL-DIN AL-TUNISI (c. 1822–1890, Caucasian-born Tunisian statesman): 187 (obsolescence of his influence after European colonial encroachments in the early 1880s)

KHILAFAT MOVEMENT (of South Asia): 13 (discussions about the support to be given to the Ottoman dynasty)

KHOJAS (Karachi-based business Isma ‘ili community): 227 (their sociological specificities), 233 (their leading role in the council system set up since the 1970s by the Nizari Imams)

KHOMEINI, AYATOLLAH RUHOLLAH (1902–1989, leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the first “Guide” of the Islamic Republic): 23 , 27 (his theory of the wilayat al-faqih as the backbone of the Islamic Republic)

KHOURY, PHILIP S. (historian of modern Syria): 183 (on the opposition of Palestinian delegates to the Syrian-Palestinian Congress to the Syrian elements’ narrow territorial nationalism), 185 (on the

opposition between the Istiqlalists and Shahbandar’s People’s Party in the late 1920s)

KHOWAR LANGUAGE (vernacular language in Northern Pakistan): 232 (as a medium of religious education among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis)

KHUZULI, MUHAMMAD (teacher at al-Azhar): 131 (translation into Chinese of his “History of Islam” since 1933)

KIN’AN, SYLAYMAN (member of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress in Geneva after 1921): 182 (elements of his biography)

KITAB SEMPURNAAN PELAJARAN (“The Book of Perfection in Education”): 148 (its publication in 1906 by Haji ‘ABbas b. Muhammad Taha)

AL-KITAB WA AL-QUR’AN: QIRA’A MU’ASIRA (“The Book and the Qur 1 an: A Contemporary Interpretation,” a work by M. Shahrur): 298 (its distribution throughout the Arab world in both authorized and pirated editions), 299 (its discussion on the Egyptian satellite channel Nile TV in 2000)

KOKUMIN SHINBUN (early twentieth-century Japanese newspaper directed by Tokutomi Soho): 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit to the newspaper’s bureau in 1909)

KOKURYcKAI (“Black Dragon Society,” Japanese ultranationalist organization created in 1901): 275 (probable meeting of one of its members, Nakayama, with Ibrahim in Yokohama in 1909), 286 (note 11)

KOMINTERN: 181 (meeting of Trostky and Arslan in Moscow during a general conference of the Komintern)

KONO HIRONAKA (1849–1921, Pan-Asianist Japanese statesman): 278 (his strategy for joining the world of Islam with Japan)

KONYA: 282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s retirement in this city between 1925 and his departure to Japan in 1929)

KOREA: 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909)

KORKUT, DERVAV (museum curator and editor of a journal in Belgrade): 194 (his participation in the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935)

KOTOT, AHMAD (b. 1894, Malay writer): 145 (his novel Hikayat Percintaan Kemudaan as a manifesto of Islamic reform)

KRAMER, MARTIN (historian of the Islamic revival): 187 (his vision of Sh. Arslan as a spokesman of the Arabs in the West)

KREMEVLJAKOVIa, HAMDIJA (1893–1966, Bosnian historian): 214 (figure of the new jadid trend)

KUNLUN SECONDARY SCHOOL (Kunlun zhongxue): 255 (its creation in 1946 by Ma Bufang)

KUNMING (capital city of Yunnan): 250 , 260 (the creation of the Mingde School)

LAGOS: 166 (workplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s)

LAMMENS, FATHER HENRI (French author on modern Islam): 67 (Rida’s response to his views)

LANGUAGE: 232 , 235 (Urdu as the medium par excellence of religious education among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis), 242 (Chinese language as a vector of denomination for Chinese Muslims), 252 (publication of colloquial Chinese [baihua] Muslim journals since the early 1900s), 289 (O. Roy on the possibility for modern Muslim intellectuals to choose among languages and audiences), 297 (communication of Nursi’s message and F. Gülen’s movement through multilingual websites), see also communication; translation LANZHOU (capital city of Gansu): 245 (creation of a subsidiary association [fenhui] of the Confederation of the Hui Religion in China, led by Muslim warlords)

LAO SHE (Chinese writer): 246 –247 (his membership of the Association for Studying the Culture of the Hui Religion), 247 (writing of a play, Guojia chisang, on the common front of Hui and Han facing the Japanese enemy)

LAOJIAO (Chinese: “the old religion”): 119 (its heritage of the classical theory of the “unity of being”), 120 (its theorization of the concordance of Islam with Confucianism)

LAROUI, ABDALLAH (historian of Moroccan nationalism): 170 (his critic of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s draft constitution)

LAUSANNE: 166 (‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s visit to Sh. Arslan in 1922)

LAW: 169 (‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s draft law code, and its reference to the Ottoman Mecelle)

LE TOURNEAU, ROGER (historian of modern Northern Africa): 199 (on Sh. Arslan’s personal impact in Morocco)

LEADERSHIP: 7 , 27 (al-Kawakibi’s thought on the umma ’s leadership), 12 (Rida’s introduction of ‘Abduh as a paramount leader of the umma), 13 (discussions within the Khilafat movement about the support to be given to the Ottoman dynasty), 21 (abolition of the Ottoman Sultanate in 1922), 23 (influence of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr’s concept of political guidance of the “righteous authority” on the Islamic Constitution of Iran), 43 (al-Zahrawi addressing the question of Muslim leadership), 57 (‘Abduh’s comment on the salaf ’s independence from rulers), 61 (theory of the Shari’A’s rule as an alternative to absolute authority), 64 (abolition of the Caliphate in Turkey in 1924), 89 –90 (renewal of the cult of the murshid among reformist Sufis in early twentieth-century Russia), 165 (Moroccan sultan ‘Abd al-’Aziz’s convocation of an “assembly of notables,” and the opposition to him of Moroccan ulama), 167 , 168 (his duties according to classical and modern Islamic political thought), 178 (Sh. Arslan succeeding his father as governor of the Shuf Mountains), 228, 231 (abolition of Northern Pakistan’s principalities, and the opening of the Karakorum Highway in the 1970s), 241 (reactions of Chinese Muslim intellectuals to the overthrow of the Qing dynqasty), see also state and state apparatus

LEAGUE OF NATIONS: 181 –182 (creation of the Syrian Congress in 1921 for petitioning its Permanent Mandates Commission), 198 (sending of a resolution by the Islamic Congress of Jerusalem in 1931, against the Berber Dahir in Morocco), 283 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s praise of Japan’s withdrawal from the L.N. in 1933)

LEAGUE OF OPPRESSED NATIONS: 187 , 190 (its congress in Genoa in 1921)

LEARNED SOCIETY OF THE HUI RELIGION OF CHINA (Zhongguo Huijiao xuehui): 244 (its creation in Shanghai in 1925)

LEARNED SOCIETY OF THE YOUTH FOR THE HUI RELIGION IN CHINA (Zhongguo Huijiao qingnian xuehui): 244 (its creation in Nanking in 1931)

LEBANESE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL: 182 (its administration of Mount Lebanon from 1861 to 1919, and declaration of independence in 1920)

LEBANON: 177 (Sh. Arslan’s birthplace), 178 (Arslan succeeding his father as governor of the Shuf Mountains), 179 (famine in L. before First World War), 182 (Mount Lebanon’s administration by the Lebanese Administrative Council from 1861 to 1919, and declaration of independence by the latter in 1920)

LECTURERS: see wa’iz LI WEIHAN (a top-ranking Han cadre of the CCP): 137 (his role in drafting the party’s policy toward ethnic minorities after 1938)

LIBRARIES: 47 (al-Qasimi’s library in Damascus), 94 (Russia’s Muslim reformists’ concern on the need for public libraries), 133 (Fude Library in the Chengda Normal School), 133, 250 – 251 , 260 (creation of the Fude Library in 1936, in memory of King Fu 1 ad of Egypt), 244 (creation of an Islamic library in Shanghai after 1925 by the Learned Society of the Hui Religion in China), 244 (construction of libraries as an aim of the Guild of the Hui Religion of China), 250 (purchase of Islamic books

in Egypt by Ma Songting, in 1932, for the future library of the Chengda Normal School), 256 –257 (Su Baoqiao’s administration of the library created by the Communist Party in Changsha), see also books and book trading; madrasa; sponsorship

LIBYA: 190 –191 (Sh. Arslan’s attacks against Mussolini’s policy in Libya), 201 (Arslan’s friendship with Ahmad al-Sharif al-Sanusi), 281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s encouragement of Ottoman resistance against the Italian invasion of Libya in 1911)

LINSXIA: 255 (birthplace of the Ma warlords of Western China)

LISAN AL-’ARAB (“The Arabic Language,” an early twentieth-century journal of Tangier): 165 (its publication of a second draft constitution for Morocco in 1908)

LITERACY: see education

LIU ZHI (late Ming—early Qing Muslim Chinese scholar): 119 –120 (his role in the elaboration of the Islamic thought through Chinese characters), 253 –254 (successive reprint of his Tianfang xingli, and its modern Ikhwani criticism for its Sufi content)

LIUTONG QINGZHEN JIAOYUHUI (Association for Islamic Education in Tokyo): 121 (its creation by Hui expatriates in 1907)

LJUBOVIa, AMIR (b. 1945, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian of local Ottoman literature): 218 (representative of the traditional secular intelligentsia)

LONGUET, JEAN (French socialist politician): 187 –188 (his relations with Sh. Arslan)

LUNYU (the Confucian “Analects”): 260 (its translation into Arabic by Ma Jian)

LUTFALLAH, MICHEL (Syrian political activist, Chairman of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress): 182 (his alliance with Shahbandar against Arslan, Rida and al-Husayni), 183 (his and Shahbandar’s opposition to Palestinians on the questions of territorial nationalism, compromise with Zionism, and allegiance to the Hashemites), 184 (challenge posed to M. L. by the creation by young Istiqlalists of the Finance Committee of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress, in 1925), 184 –185 (M. L.’s ousting from the chairmanship of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress in 1927 by Rida and the Istiqlalists), 185 (conciliatory positions of the Lutfallah—Shahbandar faction regarding the British Mandate and creation of a Greater Lebanon), 185 –186 (his and Shahbandar’s intrigues against Arslan’s negotiations with French officials)

MA BUFANG (1902/3 –1975, nephew of Ma Lin: Chinese Muslim warlord, governor of Qinghai, and member of the Guomindang’s Central Executive Committee): 246 (his membership in the board of trustees of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), 255 (support to the Ikhwani movement by the Ma warlords of Western China), 255 (his travel to Egypt in the early 1950s, and his erm as a Nationalist ambassador to Saudi Arabia in 1961), 255 (his work in favor of reformed Muslim education)

MA BUQING (1901–?, Muslim warlord of Lanzhou, in Gansu, a nephew of Ma Lin’s): 245 (his family’s role in the creation, in Lanzhou, of a subsidiary association of the Confederation of the Hui Religion in China), 246 (his membership in the board of trustees of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), 255

(support to the Ikhwani movement by the Ma warlords of Western China)

MA FUXIANG (1876–1932, powerful Hui warlord of Ningxia): 124 , 125, 250 , 256 (his role in the foundation and in the financing of the Chengda Normal School, during its Beijing period), 125 (his being a follower of laojiao Islam), 250 (his knowledge of Confucianism and sympathy for the Ikhwani movement), 251 (his support to the Shanghai Normal Islamic School), 252 (his support to the publication of the journal Yuehua since 1929), 254 (his sponsorship of the edition of almost all the celebrated works of classical Chinese Islam from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries), 255 –256 (elements of his biography), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi's sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai's pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul)

MA HONGBIN (Muslim warlord of Lanzhou, in Gansu, a nephew of Ma Fuxiang): 245 (his role in the creation, in Lanzhou, of a subsidiary association of the Confederation of the Hui Religion in China), 246 (his membership of the board of trustees of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country)

MA HONGKUI (1892/3 –1970, Ma Fuxiang's son, a Ningxia Muslim warlord and governor): 245 (his membership, from 1933 to 1948, of the direction of the Society for the Promotion of Education of the Hui People), 246 (his membership of the board of trustees of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), 251 , 256 (his support to the creation of a reformed Islamic school in Ningxia, and continuation of his father's work for Muslim education)

MA JIAN (1906–1978, Yunnanese translator of the Qur 1 an into Chinese): 127 (his sending to al-Azhar in 1931 by the Shanghai Islamic School), 130 (his translation of 'Abduh's Risala al-tawhid in 1933), 253 (his role in the translation of Islamic literature from Arabic, and from European islamology), 253 (his

choice of colloquial Chinese language for the translation of the Qur 1 an), 258 (his collaboration with Shu Shanyu and Wu Tegong on their translation of the Qur1 an), 260 (his studies in Shadian, Kunming, Shanghai, and al-Azhar; his teaching in the Sino-Arabic school of Shadian, and his moving to the North-West of China, for becoming a disciple of Hu Songshan), 260 (his translations from Chinese into Arabic, notably that of the Confucian Lunyu), 260 (his professorship in the Beijing University)

MA LIN (Muslim warlord of Lanzhou, in Gansu): 245 (his family's role in the creation, in Lanzhou, of a subsidiary association of the Confederation of the Hui Religion in China)

MA LINYI (known as Ma Zhenwu, 1864–1938, Hunanese modernizer of Islam): 256 (his studies in Japan, his creation of the new-style Jiejin primary school in Changsha, and his books on modern schooling, Xin jaioyu xue and Yisi-lan-jiao gailun), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi's sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai's pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul)

MA SONGTING (1895–1992, leading ahong of Chengda, one of the 'Four Great Ahong s'): 128 (his arguments on the publications of translations of the Qur1 an and of tafsir in the Yuehua), 133, 260 (his role in setting up relations with al-Azhar, and in the creation of the Fude Library), 243 (his membership of the Society for the Advance of the Hui Religion of China), 246 (his participation in the Wuchang conference, and in the creation of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the the Salvation of the Country), 250, 260 (his opening of the Chengda Normal School in 1925), 250 –251, 260 (his travel to Egypt and other Islamic countries in 1932, to find out new pedagogical methods), 260 (his training in the Sino-Arabic curriculum at the Ox Street Mosque), 260 (his teaching of Arabic language in the Bejing University until the Cultural Revolution)

MA YUANZHANG (1853–1920, leader of a Jahriyya menhuan — sub-branch of the Naqshbandiyya): 262 (his cultivation of Chinese classical literature)

MA ZHU (late Ming—early Qing Muslim Chinese scholar): 119 –120 (his role in the elaboration of Islamic thought through Chinese characters)

MAÙHAB (Arabic: theological and jurisprudential rite): 75 (Ottoman Islamist critic of mezhepsizlik [the refusal of madhab obedience] as undermining the traditional legal apparatus), 155 (al-Munir ’s contestation of the Shafi’i hegemony, and its advocacy of maùhab pluralism in the Indonesian archipelago)

MADRASA (school of higher Islamic theological and judicial education): 42 (Madrasa al-Wataniyya and its establishment by Husayn al-Jisr), 76 (reform of madrasas by the Young Turks), 87 (madrasas’ role in transmitting ‘Abduh’s influence to the Russian Empire), 90, 92 , 98 (appearance of reformed madrasas in the Volga–Urals region of Russia, and their financing by benevolent societies), 90 (Rasuliyeff ‘s role and authority as head of the Rasuliyya Madrasa), 91 (madrasas’ role in modernization processes in European Russia), 93 (essentially practical content of their reform in early twentieth-century Russia), 94 (Tuqay’s critic of the madrasa-centered strategy of modernization of the Muslims of Russia), 101 (al-Qadiri’s teaching in the Husayniyya Madrasa of Orenburg), 127 (sending of students to al-Azhar in 1931 by the Shanghai Islamic School), 147 (Madrasa al-Mansur in Penang), 152 (role of new-style madrasas in the diffusion of reformist newspapers in the Malay-Indonesian world), 152 (role of al-Imam in the formulation of a system of education centered on the need for both a purified Islam and modern secular knowledge), 153 (role of the Egyptian scholar 2Uthman Efendi Raffat in the direction of the Madrasa al-Iqbal al-Islamiyya of Singapore), 153 –154 (influence of the Madrasa al-Iqbal al-Islamiyya of Singapore on the creation of the Sekolah Diniyyah al-Islamiyyah in Minangkabau in 1908), 154 (Adabiyah Diniyyah

School, founded in Minangkabau in 1909), 216 (Gazi Husrevbeg Medrese of Sarajevo and its role in the education of the official religious leaders of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia during the Communist period), 247 –248 (opposition of the “New Style of Education (xinshi jaioyu)” to the “Scriptural Hall Education (jingtang jiaoyu)”—that is traditional-system of madrasa instruction—in early twentieth-century China), 273 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s engagement in the reform of madrasas in Russia), see also education; mosques; schools and schooling; sponsorship

MADRASAT AL-HIKMA (in French: “La Sagesse,” Maronite Christian school in Beirut): 178 (its attendance by Sh. Arslan)

MADRASAT AL-IQBAL AL-ISLAMIYYA (founded in Singapore in 1908): 153 (role played by al-Imam in its creation), 153 –154 (madrasa’s influence on the launching of the Sekolah Diniyyah al-Islamiyyah)

MADRASAT AL-MANSUR (established in Penang by Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi): 147 (teaching given by Shaykh Muhammad Tahir)

MADRASAT AL-SULTANIYYA (in Beirut): 178 (lessons received there by Sh. Arslan from M. ‘Abduh)

AL-MADRASAT AL-WATANIYYA (‘The National School’ founded by Husayn al-Jisr in Tripoli, 1879–1882): 42 (its attendance by the young al-Maghribi)

MADRID: 200 (Sh. Arslan’s stay in this city in 1930, with the young al-Fasi and Balafrej)

MAËALLAT AL-AZHAR : see Nur al-islam

MAGHREB: 59 (criticism by al-'Azm of 'Bedouin' states as most ignorant of social life), 177 (place of Maghreb and of Maghreb's independence movement in Sh. Arslan's thought), 197 –202 (Arslan's political influence in this region)

AL-MAGHRIBI, 'Abd AL-QADIR (an early twentieth-century reformer and journalist from Lebanese Tripoli): 42 (his studies at the Madrasa al-Wataniyya, and his connections with 'Abduh and Rida)

MAËLISU – AL-A'YAN (Arabic: Assembly of Notables): 165 (its convocation by the Moroccan sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz in 1904–1905)

MAËM c 2 AL-RASA'IL ("Collected Epistles," Arabic journal of Egypt): 128 (its distribution in China in the 1930s)

MAHATHIR MOHAMAD (Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1981 to 2003): 25 , 26 (on the possibility of a combination of Islam and modernity)

AL-MAHDI AL-FASI (d. 1963–1964, constitutionalist ulama from Fez): 166 (his being a pupil of 'Abd al-Karim Murad)

MAHMUD II (Ottoman Sultan from 1808 to 1838): 63 (his adoption of the European costume)

MAKTAB : see schools and schooling MALAYSIA: 25 (reference for non-Western modernization), 143 –158 (article by Azyumardi Azra)

MALIK SY (early twentieth-century Senegalese Sufi shaykh): 166 (his contacts with ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

Al-Manār (journal published by Rashid Rida between 1898 and 1935): 3 –39 (article by Kosugi Yasushi), 40 –54 (article by David D. Commins), 55 –73 (article by Mahmoud Haddad), 79 –81 (al-M. ’s impact on Mehmed Âkif’s Islamism), 85 –116 (article by Stéphane A. Dudoignon), 117 –141 (article by Matsumoto M.), 143 –158 (article by A. Azra), 169 (Rashid Rida’s discourse in al-M. on political consultation), 176 (contributions by Sh. Arslan), 178 –179 (comparison of al-M. with La Nation arabe by R. Adal)

MANCHURIA: 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909), 282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s emigration from Siberia through Xinjiang, China, and M.), 282 –283 (Qurban-’Aliyeff ‘s deportation to M. in 1938), 284 (supervision of local organizations by the Dai Nippon Kaikyo Kyokai in the occupied territories in China and M.)

MAO ZEDONG (Chinese Communist leader and dictator): 136 –137 (reformulation of the CCP’s nationality policy after 1937), 256 –257 (his brother Mao Zemin’s collaboration with the Muslim activist Su Baoqiao)

MAO ZEMIN (d. 1943, Communist activist, Mao Zedong’s brother): 256 –257 (his collaboration with the Muslim activist Su Baoqiao)

AL-MARAGHI, MUSTAFA (1881–1945, disciple of ‘Abduh and a reformer of al-Azhar): 11 (his apology of his master’s Iëtihad)

MARCO POLO BRIDGE INCIDENT (of 7 July 1937): 245 –246 (impact of the Japanese invasion of China on the Chinese Muslims' relation to the state)

MARDAN, VERAF (historian of modern Turkey): 80 (on a meeting point of nineteenth-century Islamic modernism with Young Ottoman thought)

AL-MARËA'IYYA AL-SALIHA ("guidance by the righteous authority"): 23 (concept developed by Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr)

AL-MARJANI (Shihab al-Din, 1818–1889, 'Alim from Kazan): 92 –93 (his role in the spreading of reformist thought from Central Asia to European Russia), 98 –99 (discovery of his work by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

MARONITES: see Christianity and Christians

MARTEL (French High commissioner in Syria): 186 (his correspondence with Viénot on Arslan's role as a counterweight to Shahbandar's opposition to the treaty on independence)

MARTYRDOM: 135 (Hui discourse on martyrdom after Japan's invasion of China)

MARXISM: 290 (E. Gellner on Islam as the only force resisting against the trend toward secularization and nationalism since the collapse of Marxist regimes)

MAMH cR ERLAR (Tatar, “Famous Men,” series published by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din): 99 (Riza al-Din’s overall biographical project)

MASLAHAT AL-BILAD (Arabic, “the interest of the country”): 169 (key issue of Islamic reformist political thought, for example in ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s draft constitution)

MASS MEDIA: 289 , 295, 301 (challenges to formal education by a new ability to communicate in different media, in the contemporary world of Islam), 289 (book as a present-day important means of communication, challenged by other modern media), 296 (educated, urban cadres as the primary audience of ‘Abduh and al-Afghani’s message—contrary to the broader public of present-day religious intellectuals), 297 (control by F. Gülen’s followers of a web of broadcast and print media), 299 (discussion of Shahrur’s al-Kitab wa’l-Qur’a on the Egyptian satellite channel Nile TV in 2000), 299 –300 (debates between S. J. al-’Azm and Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi and between Nasir Hamid Abu Zayd and Muhammad 2Imara on al-Jazeera in 1997, and the circulation of tapes of these broadcasts from hand to hand), see also communication; journals and newspapers; Internet

AL-MAWARDI, ABU’L-HASAN (a medieval theoretician of the state): 22

MAWLAWIYYA (Sunni Sufi mystical path): 44 (its criticism by Rashid Rida)

MECCA: 4 (the armed revolt of 1979); 6 (al-Kawakibi’s fictitious conference), 96 (place of the hajj in the biography of early twentieth-century ulama from Russia), 101 (World Islamic Congress of 1926), 120 (the influence of Islamic revivalism on Chinese Muslim travelers and pilgrims), 122 (city’s influence on Wang Haoran’s reformist thought), 144 (role of Indonesian hajjis in the diffusion of al-Manār in the Archipelago), 145

(growing number of Malay-Indonesian students there in the 1920s), 146 (Mecca as study place of the Malay-Indonesian reformist thinker Shaykh Muhammad Tahir), 146 (role of the Shafi'i imam Shaykh Ahmad Khatib in the teaching of students from Java), 147 (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir's mission to Mecca and Cairo in 1903), 148 (study place of the 'Alim from Singapore Hajji 'ABbas b. Mohammad Taha), 148 (Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi accompanying the Sultan and Raja Muda of Riau to the hajj and to Egypt), 154 (study place of Haji 'Abdullah Ahmad), 273 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's study in Mecca and Medina), see also hajj

MECELLE (in full: Maëallat al-ahkam al- 'Adliyya, Ottoman law code elaborated in 1869–1878): 169 (its influence upon 'Abd al-Karim Murad's draft constitution for Morocco)

MEDINA: 166 (workplace of the young 'Abd al-Karim Murad), 273 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's study in Mecca and Medina)

MEHMEDBAMIa, AHMED (1877–1942), Director of the State Medrese King Alexander of Skopje): 213 (figure of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian secularized intelligentsia)

MEHTAR : 228 (title of local rulers in the North of Pakistan until the 1970s), 231 (abolition of the principalities and the opening of the Karakorum Highway in the 1970s)

MEIJI ERA (1868–1912): 276 (educational progresses of this period in Japan, and their impact on Muslim travellers)

MENHUAN : see Sufism

MERCHANTS: 149 (businessman Shaykh Muhammad-Salim al-Kalali’s support of the journal al-Imam), 243 (the creation of the Militia of Merchants of the Pure and True in Shanghai in 1911), 258 (role of merchants and traders in the early twentieth-century Islamic revival in Eastern China), see also commercial societies; sponsorship

MEVLEVIYE: see Mawlawiyya

MEZHEPSIZLIK (Turkish, refusal to submit oneself to a theological school—Arabic: maùhab): 75 (Islamist criticism of mezhepsizlik as undermining the traditional legal apparatus)

MIGRATION: 85 , 91 (confrontation of the Muslim populations of the Urals and of Siberia with Slavic mass migration since the late nineteenth century), 152 (influence of the local distribution of al-Imam in Minangkabau in 1906–1908, and of the travels of migrants [perantau] on the appearance of al-Munir in 1911), 275 (exile of Muslim intellectuals of Russia to Turkey after the Young Turks revolution of 1908), 282 (Bolshevik repression, and the emigration of Muslim intellectuals from Russia; in Turkey, their geographical concentration in Konya), see also exile; travels and travelling

MAHRAB (Turkish Sufi periodical published in 1923–1925): 78 (its publication of articles on Ibn Taymiyya)

MILITIA OF MERCHANTS OF THE PURE AND TRUE (Qingzhen shangtuan): 243 (its creation in late 1911 by merchants of Shanghai)

MINANGKABAU (region of Java): 146 (role of local Manarists in diffusing al-Manār), 152 (influence of the local

distribution of al-Imam in 1906–1908, and of the travels of migrants [perantau] on the appearance of al-Munir in 1911), 153 –154 (creation of the Sekolah Diniyyah al-Islamiyyah in 1908)

MINGDE (“Luminous Virtue”) SCHOOL (Sino-Arabic school at Kunming): 250 (an example of the Sino-Arabic schools of Western China)

MINZU (Chinese: national group): 137 (CCP’s definition of national groups after 1937)

MIR (Persian: “leader”): 228 (title of local rulers in the North of Pakistan until the 1970s), 231 (abolition of the principalities and the opening of the Karakorum Highway in the 1970s)

MIR MUHAMMAD NAZIR KHAN (mir of Hunza at the turn of the twentieth century): 229 (his becoming of an agent of the Nizari Imam after the establishment of British control over Hunza)

MIR, MUSTANSIR (historian of Islamic reform): 20 (his comment on ‘Abduh’s break with the traditional style of tafsir)

AL-MIR’A AL-MUHAMMADIYYA (Indonesian newspaper published in Yogyakarta): 144 (its distribution in Cairo)

MIRACLES: see karamat

MISSIONARIES (Christian Catholic): 191 –192 (debates of the 1930s on the Christian religious propaganda in Libya), 198 (increasede presence on French missionaries in Morocco in the 1930s, and its perception throughout the world of Islam)

MISSIONARIES (Christian Orthodox): 89 (renewal of their activity in late nineteenth-century Russia), 274 (denunciation of the Christianization of Russia's Muslims by Ibrahim in his Rusiyada musulmanlar), 276 , 284 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's criticism of Christian missionary activity in Japan)

MISSIONARIES (Christian Protestant): 65 (their denunciation by Rashid Rida; their successive conferences in Jerusalem), 276, 284 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's criticism of Christian missionary activity in Japan), see also revivalism (Christian)

MLADI MUSLIMANI ("Young Muslims," political group in Bosnia-Herzegovinia): 214 (its appearance in Sarajevo, Mostar, and Zagreb 1941)

MODERNIZATION THEORY: 291 –292 (criticism by D. F. Eickelman of the postulate of a parallelism modernization/secularization)

MOGADISHU (Maqdishu): 162 (Somalian port city dominated in the tenth-century by dynasties of qadis)

MOHAMMAD 'ALI SHAH (Iranian monarch in 1907–1908): 167 (his role in the Constitutional Revolution)

MOHAMMAD REZA SHAH (1919–1980, Iranian monarch from 1941 to 1979): 291 (modernization theory's postulate of a preference for secularizing reformers like Atatürk in Turkey, or Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah in Iran)

MOLIÈRE (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, 1622–1673, French playwright): 126 (his quotation by Wang Jingzhai for his definition of watan)

MONGOLIAN LANGUAGE: 256 (teaching of Mongolian language in the primary schools created by Ma Fuxiang in Ningxia)

MONGOLS: 68 (thirteenth-century Mongol invasion as an equivalent of modern European colonialism)

MOROCCO: 61 (early twentieth-century claims by religious scholars for a consultative regime), 161 –174 (article by S. Reichmuth), 182 (revolt of the Rif Mountains in 1925), 197 –200 (Sh. Arslan’s influence on Morocco’s nascent nationalist movements), 199 (protests of the late 1930s to mark solidarity with the Palestinian cause), 202 (smuggling of La Nation arabe in Morocco), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany—like the Algerian or Moroccan Imam of the Grand Mosque in Paris)

MOSCOW: 181 (siege of the Islamic International founded by Enver Pava), 181 (meeting place of Trotsky and Arslan during a general conference of the Komintern), 187 (Arslan’s attendance of the anti-imperialist congress of 1922)

MOSQUES: 5 –6 (their role in structuring local Muslim communities), 86, 95 (debates on the building of the Great Mosque of St. Petersburg in 1908–1912), 128 (Yuehua ’s historical researches on mosques and Hui communities), 194 (call of the European Muslim Congress for the building of a mosque in Warsaw, and its construction under Szynkewicz’s supervision), 241 –242 (traditional role of mosques in popular religious education among Chinese Muslims), 243, 253 (role of printing houses appending to mosques, and journals, for helping early twentiethcentury Chinese Muslim school reformers to present their ideas), 247 –248 (opposition of the “New

Style of Education (xinshi jaioyu)” to the “Scriptural Hall Education (jingtang jiaoyu)”—that is, the traditional system of mosque instruction—in early twentieth-century China), 250 (creation by Da Pusheng and Wang Haoran, in 1907, of the Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion, at the Ox Street Mosque), 278, 279 , 283 (successive phases of the early twentieth-century project of construction of a mosque in Tokyo, until its opening in 1938), 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to “represent” Islam in France and Germany—like the Algerian or Moroccan Imam of the Grand Mosque in Paris), see also madrasa; sponsorship

MOSTAR: 214 (creation of the Mladi Muslimani organization in 1941)

MOUNT LEBANON: 182 (its administration from 1861 to 1919 by the Lebanese Administrative Council)

MU’AWIYA (the first Umayyad caliph): 48 (Shiite practice of cursing him)

AL-MU’AYYAD (an early twentieth-century Egyptian newspaper with an Islamic orientation): 43 (article by Zahrawi on Abdülhamid II’s claim to the caliphate), 166 (contributions by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

MUFTIa, SALIM (Mufti of Sarajevo, and leader of the Balkan Muslim world): 194 –195 (his participation in Jerusalem Congress in 1931, and in the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935), 205 (his call to the creation of a global umma)

MUFTIYYAT (of Russia): 88 (its creation and its location in Ufa in 1782), 97 (its weakness, preventing a centralization of Islamic reform in Russia)

MUËTAHID : see ulama

MUHAMMAD B. ‘Abd AL-KABIR AL-KATTANI (leader of the Zawiyya of the Kattaniyya brotherhood in Fez): 165 (his role in the mobilization of the ulama against French encroachments in early twentiethcentury Morocco)

MUHAMMAD SALGA (d. 1939, key figure of the Tijaniyya in Kano): 166 (his studies with ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

MUHAMMAD V (1909–1961, Sultan then King of Morocco from 1927 to 1961): 198 (his early contacts with the Moroccan nationalist circles)

MUHAMMADIYAH (reformist movement established in 1912 in Central Java): 13 (its place as the second Islamic organization in Indonesia today), 155 (its historical roots in the early twentieth century)

MUHAMMADIYYA (madrasa in Kazan, Russia): 90 , 95, 98 (its reform by Barudi since 1891)

MUHAWARAT AL-MUSLIH WA’L-MUQALLID (“Debate between a Reformer and an Imitator,” work by Rashid Rida): 14

MUHIa, FUAD (b. 1941–1991, Marxist philosopher of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 217 (as a representative of the ideology of “ethnic Muslims” in B.-H.)

AL-MUHTASIB, ‘Abd AL-MAJID (Lebanese specialist of tafsir): 17

MUJEZINOVIa, MEHMED (1916–1998, Bosnian-Herzegovinian epigraphist): 217 (as a representative of the crypto-opponent trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

MUKDEN INCIDENT (of September 18, 1931): 129 (its impact on the anti-Japanese movement among the Hui of China)

MUNAZARA (“The Debate,” work by Fitrat, and the manifesto of the jadid movement in Bukhara and Russian Turkestan): 279 –280 (its comments on ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s Istanbul conferences)

AL-MUNIR (“The Candle,” Indonesian journal published in 1911–1916): 143 –158 (article by Azyumardi Azra, especially 153 –155)

AL-MUQADDIMA (Ar. “The Prolegomena,” major work of Ibn Khaldun): 168 (adaptation by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad of Ibn Khaldun’s version of the concept of Circle of Equity)

AL-MUQATTAM (early twentieth-century pro-British newspaper): 63 (its participation in the post-First World War dispute on the wearing of hats or fez)

MURID (Persian, “disciple”): 228 –229 (title in the religious hierarchy of the Isma ‘ili community)

MURSHID (Arabic, guide of a Sufi path): 89 –90 (renewal of the cult of the murshid among reformist Sufis in early twentieth-century Russia)

MÛSÂ KÂZIM EFENDA (Naqshbandi shaykh and a veyhülislâm of the late Ottoman period): 77 (his contribution to the Turkist journal /slâm mecmuasi), 78 (his chairmanship of the Cemiyyet-i Sûfiyye, and his links with the ruling CUP)

MUSIC: 247 (organization of a company of Hui singers for the popularization of anti-Japanese songs, by the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), see also songs

MUSLIM BROTHERS: 3 , 7 –8, 28 (their genealogical links with al-Manār), 21 (contribution of M.B. to the late twentiethcentury renewal of tafsir), 23 (Muslim Brothers' realization of the ideas of al-Manār as a mass movement), 24, 26 –27 (education of Muslim Brother leaders in secular institutions), 126 (diffusion of information on the M. B. among the Hui of China), 136 (role of the Ikhwani school in Ningxia in the mobilization of the Hui against the Japanese occupation of China)

MUSSOLINI, BENITO (1883–1945, Italian Fascist leader and dictator): 190 –191 (Sh. Arslan's relationship to him, and to his policy in Libya)

MUTAFARNIJ (Arabic, 44 "franconizer," that is imitator of European laws and systems): 24 (use of this notion by Rida)

NAFI, BASHEER M. (historian of Islamic reform): 16 (on the transition from Muslim reformers to Islamic intellectuals), 25 (on Islamic reform facilitating the assimilation of modernity for Islam), 38

(criticizing Hourani for presenting Islamic reform as a mere response to the Western challenge)

NAHDA (Arabic: “revival,” generic term for designating the late nineteenth-century revival of Arabic thought and literature): 6 (al-Kawakibi’s vision of it)

AL-NAHDA (“Revival,” journal published in Arabic in Cairo by Gaspralï in 1908): 86 (its aim as promoting the unity of the world of Islam)

NAKANO JOTARO (1866–1928), agent of Japan’s General Staff Office and an ardent Pan-Asianist): 278 (his introduction of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim into the Japanese Pan-Asianist circles)

NAKAYAMA ITSUZO (probable member of the Kokuryukai): 275 (his meeting with Ibrahim in Yokohama in 1909)

NAMETAK, ALIJA (1906–1987, Muslim religious writer of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (representative of the opposition trend among the Muslim religious leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

NANKING: 244 (creation, in 1931, of the Learned Society of the Youth for the Hui Religion in China, in Nanking—then the capital of the Guomindang government), 244, 245 (checking of Sun Yatsen’s “Three People Principles” by Muslim Chinese students of Nanking), 245 (launching of the Confederetion of the Hui Religion in China, in 1934), 247 (relocation to N. of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country)

NAQSHBANDIYYA (Sunni Sufi mystical path): 45 (Shari’A-minded Sufism of the path’s early twentieth-century Syrian branches), 78 (Turkish N.’s relations with the Cemiyyet-i Sûfiyye and with the ruling CUP),

78 (influence of Naqshbandi–Khalidi teachings on Nursi’s thought), 91, 92 (spreading of Shah Wali-Allah’s thought in Russia by the Naqshbandiyya–Mujaddidiyya), 96 (Tatar ‘Alim Barudi’s reception into the Syrian N. between 1908 and 1910), 152 (criticism of the N. in the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam), 262 (cultivation of Chinese classical literature in the early twentiethcentury Jahriyya menhuan, a sub-branch of the Chinese N.)

NASHASHIBI FACTION (in Palestine): 184 (its alliance with the British administration, and its opposition to the Husayni faction after the First World War)

NASIF, MUHAMMAD (friend of al-Qasimi’s in Jeddah): 48 –49 (his involvement in al-Qasimi’s dispute with Rida and Ibn ‘Aqil on the Shiite practice of cursing Mu’Awiya)

NASIR-I KHUSRAW (prominent eleventhcentury theoretician and propagator of Isma ‘ilism): 232 , 234 –237 (present-day re-interpretations of his works by educated Isma ‘ili middle classes)

LA NATION ARABE (journal published near Geneva from 1930 to 1938 by the delegation of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress under the direction of Sh. Arslan): 64 (its denunciation of Westernization in Atatürk’s Turkey), 176 –210 (article by Raja Adal)

NATIONAL BLOCK (Syrian political party): 186 (its role in the signature of the treaty of independence with France in 1936)

NATION AND NATIONALISM: 4 –5 , 26 (transition from nationalism to Islamism in the world of Islam in the 1970s), 50 (popular nationalism in the Syrian cities after First World War), 60 (necessity to weave the national and the religious to the Salafis’ eyes), 118 , 127 –128, 134 –135 ,

137, 245 –246 , 253, 261 262–263 , 279 (evolution of Chinese Muslim patriotism before, during and after the Sino-Japanese War, and the evolution of the CCP’s nationality policy), 126 (influence of modern Middle Eastern nationalisms upon Hui patriotism in China), 135 (translation of the Qur 1 an into Chinese as an activity in the service of the nation), 179 (Kayali on the CUP as an advocate of secular Ottoman nationalism), 183 (on the opposition of Palestinian delegates to the Syrian Congress to the Syrian elements’ narrow territorial nationalism), 190 (incompatibility between the Nazis’ ultra-nationalist racial ideology and Sh. Arslan’s thought), 197 (Arslan’s influence on Morocco’s nascent nationalist movements), 241 –272 (nationalism and patriotism among Chinese Muslims, in part. 244 : checking of Sun Yatsen’s “Three People Principles” by Chinese Muslim activists, to know whether they contradict Islam; 245 : action of the Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Hui People, in Ningxia, for bringing together the Uighurs and the Muslim Han), 253 (celebration of patriotism by Chinese adepts of the Ikhwani movement), 261 (influence of Hu Songshan’s hajj on his Chinese nationalist convictions; his transformation of the Ikhwani teaching into a pro-Chinese trend), 276, 284 (Japanese “national spirit (allaq-I milliya)” praised by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim as a model for the world of Islam), 277 (interest of Japanese nationalists and Pan-Asianists in ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s discourse), 290 (E. Gellner on Islam as the only force of resistance against the trend toward secularization and nationalism since the collapse of Marxist regimes), 296 (Nursi’s Risale-i Nur ’s encouragement of reflection on ideas of society and nation), 297 , 301 (F. Gülen’s interpretation of Islamic values offering a union between faith and nationalism), see also Fascism; identity; Pan-Asianism; secularism

NATIONALITY: 137 (Li Weihan’s role in drafting the CCP’s policy toward ethnic minorities after 1938), 215, 216 , 217 (nations and nationalities system created in Yugoslavia after 1945), 242 , 245 –246, 263 (nationality [minzu] system in the People’s Republic of China, and its application to the Hui nationality [Huizu]), 245 (action of the Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Hui People, in Ningxia, for bringing together the Uighurs and the Muslim Han), 247

exclusion of Xinjiang Muslims from the scope of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country

NERACHA (“The Scales,” weekly newspaper created in 1911 by Haji ‘ABbas in the Tanjung Pagar district of Singapore): 148 (its role in promoting the reformist cause)

NETWORS AND NETWORKING: 7 , 293 (OIC as an example of present-day transnational Muslim organizations), 247 (international lobbying organized by the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country during the Japanese occupation), 292 (on locally rooted movements—like opposition to the Shah’s regime in Iran—benefiting with transnational sponsors or supporters), 292 –293 (Second Vatican Council’s influence on the emergence of transnational decentralized grassroots networks), 297 (F. Gülen’s organization being less a centralized network than loosely affiliated clusters of organizations), see also associations and societies; Internet; travels and travelling

NEW DESTOUR PARTY (Tunisian independentist organization): 201 (its rapprochement with Messali al-Hajj)

NGOs: 226 –240 (article by Nejima Susumu, in part. 238 : (coordination of their activity with Isma ‘ili religious organizations)

NIGERIA: 166 (a workplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad, and his death place)

NILE TV (Egyptian satellite television channel): 299 (discussion of Shahrur’s al-Kitab wa’l-Qur’a in 2000)

NINGXIA (north-western province of China with a notable Muslim population): 245 (creation, in 1933, of the Society for the Promotion of Education of the Hui People, and its sponsorhip by the warlord Ma Hongkui), 256 (Ma Fuxiang’s foundation and sponsorship of Muslim schools)

NIZHNYE CHELCHELY (village near Kuchuchat, in the Southern Urals): 98 (education place of Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

NORMAL ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF PINGLIANG (Pingliang Yi-si-lan shifan xuexiao, in Gansu): 251 (its creation in 1937 under Da Pusheng’s direction)

NORMAL ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF SHANGHAI (Shanghai Yi-si-lan shifan xuexiao): 251 (its creation in 1928)

NORMAL ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF WANXIAN (Wanxian Yi-si-lan shifan xuexiao, in Hebei): 251 (its creation in 1929 under Da Pusheng’s direction)

NORMAL SCHOOLS: 250 –251 (their establishment among Chinese Muslims in the 1920s to 1930s)

NORTHERN AREAS (of Pakistan): 226 (specificities of Isma ‘ilism in the Northern Areas and in the Chitral distrits)

N cR (Arabic: “Light,” Tatar journal published in St. Petersburg in the 1900s): 94 (its editor Bayazitoff)

NU –R AL-ISLAM (bulletin of al-Azhar, renamed in the 1930s Maëallat al-Azhar): 130 , 134 (translation into Chinese of its papers in the 1930s)

NURCU MOVEMENT (larger Islamist cemaat in twentieth-century Turkey): 75 (its genealogical links with the /ttihâd-I Muhammedî Cemiyeti), 295 –298 (its history and sociology)

NURSA, BEDAÜZZAMÂN SAAD (1873–1960, founder of the Nurcu movement): 75 (his participation in the counterrevolution of April 1909), 78 (influence of Naqshbandi-Khalidi teachings on his thought), 295 (distinction of his teaching, centered on autonomous book reading, from the master–disciple relationship at the core of most Sufi orders), 296 (its calls of resolving confessional differences between Christians and Muslims)

ODESSA: 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s stay in jail)

OHARA BUKEA (1865–1933, Japanese General Staff officer and member of the Toa Dobunkai): 278 (his introduction of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim into the Japanese Pan-Asianist circles), 279 (his correspondence with the Ottoman veyhülislam [1910] for asking the dispatch of ulama to Japan) OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference): 7 , 293 (example of presentday transnational Muslim organizations)

OKIa, MUHAMED TAYYIB (1902–1977, historian and professor in the University of Ankara): 218 (representative of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora)

OKUMA SHIGENOBU (1838–1922, prominent statesman of the Meiji era): 276 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

OPPENHEIM, MAX FREIHERR VON (German orientalist, foreign service officer, and archaeologist): 189 –190 (his relations with Sh. Arslan)

ORALITY: 198 (diffusion of the incantation ya latif! throughout Morroco’s mosques as a protest against the Berber Dahir), 295 (Nursi’s oral teaching, and the preservation of its oral character because of the forbidding of the “old” Arabic alphabet in Republican Turkey), see also books and book trading; communication; language; reading

ORENBURG (city in the Southern Urals region): 85 –86 (the siege of the journal Mura)

ORIENTAL CLUB (of Berlin): 188 –189 , 190 (its chairmanship by Sh. Arslan after the First World War)

OSMANLIS (“Ottomans,” subdivision of the Turkist school of political thought): 77 (its main figures and trends)

OTTOMAN CONSULTATION SOCIETY: 46 (its foundation in Cairo by Rafiq al-’Azm and Rashid Rida)

OTTOMAN DYNASTY: 21 (its dependence on the Sultanate-Caliphate for its legitimacy)

OTTOMAN EMPIRE: 7 (the multiplication of Islamic conferences after the empire’s demise), 14 (conservatism of the Hanafi maùhab in the O.E.), 21 , 183 (consequences of the empire’s demise for the world of Islam), 58 (secession of Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia), 74 (consequences of First World War on the debates on the role of Islam in Ottoman society), 89 (Ottoman influences on the elaboration of the

usul-i ëadid in Russia), 93 (O.E. as a refuge land for the Muslims of Russia in the decades following the Crimean War), 151 (Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam ’s considerations of the modernization of the Ottoman army), 161 (overall influence of the Ottoman constitutionalist movement), 162 (consultative and representative mechanisms in classical Ottoman political institutions), 163 (Dadi-’s mention of the interest of early eighteenth-century Ottoman ruling circles in Venice’s form of government), 164 (restoration of the Ottoman constitution in 1908), 170 (Shari’A in the debates of the newly established Ottoman parliament since 1908), 179 (Sh. Arslan’s attachment to a multi-ethnic O.E.), 179 (Ottoman campaign of 1911–1912 in Cyrenaica), 181 (the emergence of an Ottoman culture in the last ten years of the O. period), 278, 280 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s failed efforts at uniting Japan and the Ottoman Empire), see also Turkey

OTTOMAN PARLIAMENT: 188 , 192 (Arslan’s role in the parlament’s Foreign Affairs Committee)

OTTOMAN TURKISH LANGUAGE: 178 (its study by Sh. Arslan)

OTTOMANISM (overall orientation of late Ottoman political thought): 78 (its links with Westernism, Islamism, and Turkism), 181 (CUP’s successive adaptation of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism), 183 (Sh. Arslan’s transition from Ottomanism to Arabism)

AL-OUEZZANI, MOHAMED (Moroccan nationalist leader): 200 (his contacts with Sh. Arslan)

OX STREET MOSQUE (in Beijing): 250 , 259 (creation by Da Pusheng and Wang Haoran, in 1907, of the Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion), 253 (role of the printing house appending to the O.S.M. in the publication of reformist journals), 257 (Da Pusheng’s

studies in the O.S.M., under the guidance of Wang Haoran), 260 (Ma Songting’s studies in the O.S.M., after Wang Haoran and Da Pusheng initiated a Sino-Arabic curriculum there)

OYAMA IWAO (1842–1916, Japanese Marshal, general commander in Manchuria): 276 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

PADRI MOVEMENT (late eighteenth to early nineteenth-centuries political movement in Central Sumatra): 146 (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir’s grandfather’s belonging to this movement)

PAKISTAN: 226 –240 (article by Nejima Susumu, in particular 238 : lack of an opposition of Ima’ilis to the state in spite of their autonomous strategies of modernization)

PALESTINE: 27 (presence of the Muslim Brothers), 180 (Sh. Arslan’s anguish at the fate of Palestine in 1917), 181 –182 (weigh of Palestinian delegates oin the Syrian Congress created in Geneva in 1921), 183 (publication of articles on the Palestinian question by La Nation arabe), 194 (Palestinian question being considered by the European Muslim Congress of 1935 not as a political, but as a religious issue), 199 (protests of the late 1930s, in Morocco, to mark solidarity with the Palestinian cause)

PAN-ASIANISM: 276 (launching of this ideology in Japan for the sake of Japanese interests), 278 (coincidence between Ibrahim’s Pan-Asianism and the statesponsored Japanese Pan-Asianist ideology), see also identity; nationalism

PAN-ISLAMISM (in Turkish: ittihâd-i /slâm): 80 (invention of this concept by the Young Ottomans), 86, 98 (accusation against nonconformist Muslim thinkers in the late Russian Empire), 147 (influence of al-Afghani’s pan-Islamism on the Malay-Indonesian thinker Shaykh Muhammad Tahir), 150 (pan-Islamism in the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam), 273 – 288 (article by Komatsu H.), see also Islamism

PAN-POLISH MUSLIM CONGRESS (of 1925): 194 (its election of Szynkewicz as Mufti of Poland)

PAN-TURKISM: 86 (accusation against nonconformist Muslim thinkers in the late Russian Empire)

PANEL (key element of the judicial system set up since the 1970s by the Isma ‘ili Nizari Imams in Pakistan): 233 –234 (implementation of this system in Northern Pakistan)

PANG SHIQIAN (Hui scholar): 131 (his translation into Chinese of the “History of Islam” by Khuzuli)

PARIS: 176 (place of anti-colonial congresses attended by Sh. Arslan), 182 (education place of Ihsan al-Jabiri), 199 (place of Sh. Arslan’s meeting with al-Fasi and Balafrej in 1930)

PARLIAMENT: 167 , 168, 169 (Shari’A’s central place in the parliamentary system proposed by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad for Morocco), 170 (Shari’A in the debates of the newly established Ottoman parliament since 1908), 179 (Sh. Arslan’s election to the Ottoman parliament in 1913, and his activity in this framework), see also constitutionalism

PATRIOTISM: see nationalism

PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE OF THE HUI RELIGION (Huijiao shifan xuetang, in Beijing), 250 , 259 (its creration in 1907 by Da Pusheng and Wang Haoran, at the Ox Street Mosque)

PENANG (city in the Indonesian archipelago): 147 (location of the Madrasa al-Mansur)

PENGASUH (Malay-Indonesian journal first published in Kota Bharu in 1918): 145 (its role in the spread of Kaum Muda ideas in the Kelantan region)

PERAK (Malaysian state): 147 (installation of Shaykh Muhammad Tahir after his return from Egypt in 1899)

PERSEKUTUAN RUSHDIYYAH (club created in Riau in the early 1890s): 148 (participation of Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi in its creation)

PERSEKUTUAN ULAMA KAUM SEMENANJUNG (Pan-Malayan Association of Ulama): 148 (appeal for its creation in 1936, for uniting reformists and traditionalists)

PERSIAN LANGUAGE: 214 (role of Ma-ir Sikiri-, specialist of Persian language and literature, in the Bosnian new jaded trend), 230 (Persian as the language of the Isma ‘ili da’wa in Xinjiang in the early twentieth century), 232 (Persian as a medium of religious education among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis), 248 (replacement of Persian by Arabic language in Chinese Muslim schools—Persian remaining till the post-Maoist period the literary language of female ahong s), 257 , 259 (place of Arabic and Persian languages in the traditional mosque scools of China)

PERSIANS: 10 (their being concerned by the awakening of Islam), 162 (early Abbasid Shiites of Persian extraction as an “autocratic block” opposed to the “constitutional block” of the Sunnis), 257 (Da Pusheng’s Persian ascendency)

PETER THE GREAT (Czar of Russia from 1686 to 1725): 85 (impact of his reforms on the conversion of Muslims to Orthodox Christianity in the Volga-Urals region), 88 (his reform of the Russian Orthodox Church as a model for Catherine II’s creation of a Muslim “clergy”)

PHILOSOPHY: 47 (publication by al-Qasimi of al-Zirkishi’s treatise on jurisprudence, philosophy, and logic), 58 (Renan and ‘Abduh’s polemic on the “rigidity” of Islam), 119 , 123, 125 (Hui classical theories of adhesion to the Chinese Imperial state), 119 –120 (Liu Zhi and Ma Zhu’s role in the elaboration of the Huiru philosophy), 120 (combination of wahdat-i wuëud with Confucian terminology in Huiru philosophy), 122 (avatars of the wahdat-i wuëud theory in the early twentieth century), 168 (adaptation by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad of Ibn Khaldun’s version of the concept of Circle of Equity), 169 (maslahat al-bilad as a key issue of Islamic reformist political thought, for example, in ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s draft constitution), 170 (N. Kemal’s identification of the Shari’A with Rousseau’s concept of Natural Law), 244, 245 (checking of Sun Yatsen’s principles by Muslim Chinese students of Nanking, to know whether they contradict Islam), 253 –254 (Liu Zhi’s early eighteenth-century treatise “The Philosophy of Islam,” and its multiple reprints), 260 (Yang Zhongming’s comparison of Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam in the Sijao Yaogua), see also kalam

PILGRIMAGE: see hajj

PIR (Persian word, “elder”): 228 –229 (title in the religious hierarchy of the Isma ‘ili community)

PIR SAHIB (b. 1929, Isma ‘ili pir of Ghizr): 230 –231 (history of his family, and transformation of his authority during the twentieth century)

POINCARÉ, RAYMOND (1860–1934, French statesman): 186 (role of his government in the failure of the negotiations with the Syrian-Palestinian Congress in 1925–1926)

POLAND: 192 (articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe), 194 (acknowledgement of the Polish government by the European Muslim Congress of 1935 for its favorable treatment of its Muslim population), 194 (Pan-Polish Muslim Congress of 1925)

POLICE: 170 (suggestion of a new Police Law for Morocco by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad), see also censorship; prison; secret services

PONSOT (French High Commissioner in Syria): 186 (his succession to de Jouvenel in 1926, after the failure of the negotiations with the Syrian-Palestinian Congress)

POPOVIC, ALEXANDRE (historian of Islam in the Balkans): 193 (on the Muslims of Hungary in the Interwar period)

POZDERAC, HAMDIJA (1924–1989, Muslim Communist political leader of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (his role in the campaign the the recognition of a “Muslim nation” in Yugoslavia)

PRINTING AND PRINTING HOUSES: 56 (foundation of the Matba’A Salafiyya printing press), 90 (role of printing in Arabic characters in

the undermining of the ulama’s transmission of learned culture, in Imperial Russia), 243 , 253 (role of printing houses attached to mosques, and journals, for helping early twentieth-century Chinese Muslim school reformers to present their ideas), 254 (Ma Fuxiang’s sponsorship of the publishing of almost all the celebrated works of classical Chinese Islam from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries), 256 (the publishing of Han kitab s—Confuciano-Muslim books), 295 (formal education being challenged by the ability to communicate in different media in the contemporary Muslim majority world), 296 (dissemination of Nursi’s Risale-i Nur by “thousands” of men and women, and after Second World War through the use of a duplicating machine), 297 (control by F. Gülen’s followers of a web of broadcast and print media), see also books and book trading; journals and newspapers; sponsorship

PRISON: 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s stay in jail in Odessa), see also police

PROTESTANTS: see Christianity and Christians

PURIVATRA, ATIF (b. 1928, Muslim secular politician in Bosnia-Herzegovina): 217 (representative of the ideology of “ethnic Muslims” in B.-H.)

QADI (Arabic: judge of the Shari’A): see ulama

QADIM (Arabic word, lit. “old, ancient”): 212 (denomination of late nineteenth-century traditionalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina)

AL-QADIRI, DHAKIR (1878–1954, ‘Alim of Ufa): 97 (his popularization of Qasim Amin’s writings on the status of woman), 101 (his teaching in the Husayniyya Madrasa), 102 (his contribution to the Mura)

QADIRIYYA (Sunni Sufi mystical path): 44 (support provided by its Syrian branches to the CUP)

AL-QALQASHANDI, SHIHAB AL-DIN AHMAD (medieval theoretician of the state): 22

AL-QARADAWI, SHAYKH YUSUF (leading Sunni revivalist thinker, the chairman of the European Council for Fatwa and Research): 28 (inheriter of the school of al-Manār), 299 (his debate with the Syrian reformist intellectual S. J. al-’Azm about the interpretation of sacred texts, on al-Jazeera satellite TV in 1997)

QARI (Qur 1 an reader): 90 (qari s’ role in the shaking of the ulama’s authority in the Russian Empire), see also reading; ulama

AL-QASIMI, MUHAMMAD JAMAL AL-DIN (leading early twentieth-century Damascene reformer): 20 (his praise by Rida as “the renewer of Islamic sciences”), 27 (his non-urban social origins), 45 (his short biography; his critics against Sufism as irreconcilable with the Qur1 an and the Sunna), 47 (reviews of his works, and his obituary notice in al-Manār ; his library in Damascus), 48 –49 (his participation in the debate with Rida and Ibn ‘Aqil on the Shiite practice of cursing Mu’Awiya), 49 (raising of a mob against him and other local reformers in Damascus in October 1908)

QATAR: 299 –300 (debates between S. J. al-’Azm and Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi and between Nasir Hamid Abu Zayd and Muhammad 2Imara on al-Jazeera in 1997)

QING DYNASTY: 241 (reactions of Chinese Muslim intellectuals to its overthrow)

QUR’AN: 7 , 9, 13 , 15 –16, 22 , 26, 28 (call to a return to Q. exegesis in reformist thought), 18–20 (‘Abduh’s lectures on the Q.), 45 (Q.’s antinomy with Sufism, according to al-Qasimi), 56 (‘Abduh’s praise of the Wahhabiyya for removing the layers between men and a true study of the Q. and Hadith), 79 (Q.’s lost translation into Turkish by M. Âkif), 96 (rational approach to the Q. in Barudi’s teaching), 99 –100 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s focusing of religious teaching on the Q. and the Sunna), 122 (early twentieth-century Hui calls for a return to the Q. and the Hadith, within the framework of Chinese Islam), 123, 259 (Wang Jingzhai’s two translations of the Q., in classical and colloquial Chinese), 125 (need for accurate translations and interpretations of the Q. stressed by Hui reformers), 128 (Ma Songting’s arguments on the publication of translations of the Q. in the Yuehua), 130, 135 , 253 (disputes on the translation of the Q. into Chinese), 150 (al-Imam ’s emphasis on the need to return to the Q. and the Hadith), 169 (‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s reference to the recommendation of consultation in the Q.), 232 (Q. as a matter of religious education by the wa’iz s among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis), 244 (launching of the Q.’s translation into Chinese by the Learned Society of the Hui Religion in China), 245 (creation of the Society for the Diffusion of Chinese Islam, in 1933, for spreading the Muslim doctrine through the translation of the Q. into Chinese), 248 (giving up of making the pupils memorize by heart the Q. in Chinese phonetic transcription in Chinese Muslim religious schools, and its replacement by the teaching of Arabic language and learning of the Qur 1 anic text), 258 (Shu Shanyu and Wu Tegong’s collaboration with Ha Decheng and Ma Jiang on their translations of the Q.), see also language; reading; translation

QURAYSH (tribe of the Prophet Muhammad): 13 , 22 (debates of the 1920s on the importance of a caliph being of Quraysh origin)

QURBAN-’ALIYEFF, MUHAMMAD (1890–1972, Bashkir religious scholar exiled in Japan): 282 –283 (his relations with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim during the latter’s exile in Japan, and his deportation to Manchuria in 1938)

AL-QURSAWI (‘Abd al-Nasir Abu’l-Nasr, 1776–1812, an ‘Alim from the Volga Region): 92 (his role in the appearance of Islamic reform in Bukhara), 98 –99 (discovery of his work by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din through the latter’s master ‘Abd al-Fattah)

AL-QUWWATLI, SHUKRI (Istiqlalist leader, opposed to the Hashemites): 184 (his amenity to receive financial support from Ibn Saud, and his participation in the creation of the Jerusalem finance committee of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress)

RABAT: 198 (beginning of the ya latif incantations in Rabat’s mosques, as a protest against the Berber Dahir)

RADIO: see mass media

RAHBAR-I NAËAT (“The Guide of Salvation,” work [1915] by Fitrat): 279 –280 (its positive image of Japan, introduced by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in his Istanbul conferences)

RAILROAD: see travels and travelling

RAJA (title of local rulers in the North of Pakistan until the 1970s): 228 , 231 (abolition of the principalities and the opening of the Karakorum Highway in the 1970s)

RAMADAN: 192 (Arslan’s travel in Yugoslavia in 1933–1934 “for spending Ramadan with [his] Yugoslavian friends”), 298 (measure of religious practice and identity through the observance of Ramadan in Turkey)

RAMIYEFF (Muhammad Shakir [1857–1912] and Muhammad Dhakir [1859–1921], entrepreneurs and publicists of Orenburg): 100 , 101 (their edition of the Waqt newspaper and the Mura journal)

RASULIYEFF, SHAYKH ZAYN-ALLAH (1833–1917, Naqshbandi shaykh the Eastern Urals): 90 (his role and authority as head of the Rasuliyya Madrasa), 99 (his biography by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

READING: 89 (radical change introduced by the usu l-i ëadid in the practice of reading among the Muslims of Russia), 232, 234 –237 (present-day re-interpretations of Nasir-i Khusraw’s works by educated Isma ‘ili middle classes), see also books and book trading; orality

REASON (in Arabic: ‘Aql): 48 (al-Qasimi’s praise of Ibn ‘Aqil’s independent use of reason, qualified of iëtihad), 96 (Hadith’s rational approach in Barudi’s teaching), 150 (apology of reason by the authors of al-Imam), see also science

REBAC, HASAN (1890–1953, prominent member of the High Direction of the Bosnian Muslim Community): 214 (figure of the new jadid trend)

RED CRESCENT: 192 (Sh. Arslan’s coordination of the activities of the Red Crescent during the Balkan War of 1912)

RED?Ia, ENVER (b. 1915, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (a representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

RENAN, ERNEST (French philosopher): 58 (‘Abduh’s response to him on the question of the “rigidity” of Islam)

RENAUDEL, PIERRE (French socialist politician): 188 (his relations with Sh. Arslan)

REVIVALISM (Christian): 65 (Catholic revivalism after the signature of the Latran Agreement; Protestant revivalism in England), 292 (appearance of Solidarnosc in Poland, role of liberation theology in Latin America, and return of Protestant fundamentalism as expressions of an overall Christian revivalism)

REZA SHAH (1878–1944, Iranian monarch from 1925 to 1941): 291 (modernization theory’s postulate of a preference for secularizing reformers like Atatürk in Turkey, or Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah in Iran)

RIAU (Indonesian sultanate): 149 (role of the Riau court in the circulation of al-Imam in the Riau region), 151 (defence of the Riau court by al-Imam against the encroachments of the Dutch administration)

RIDA, RASHID (1865–1935, Syrian reformist thinker, editor, and main author of al-Manār): 3 –39 (article by Kosugi Yasushi), 40 –54 (article by David D. Commins), 55 –73 (article by Mahmoud Haddad), 79 –80 (his impact on Mehmed Âkif), 99 (his rehabilitation of Ibn Taymiyya), 164 (his support to the Young Turks), 166 (his presumed influence on ‘Abd al-Karim

Murad), 176, 178 –179 , 202 –203 (his close friendship with Sh. Arslan, and his occasional opposition to him), 182 –183 , 186 (his strategic alliance with the Arslan brothers and Hajj Amin al-Husayni inside the Syrian-Palestinian Congress), 184 –185 (R.’s role and the Istiqlalists’ in Lutfallah’s ousting from the chairmanship of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress in 1927), 194 (minute of silence in remembrance of R. R. in the European Muslim Congress of Geneva)

RIF MOUTAINS (in Morocco): 182 (revolt of ‘Abd al-Karim in 1925)

RIFA’IYYA (Sufi mystical path): 41 (advocated by al-Sayyadi), 44 (its patronage by Abdülhamid II)

RISALAH PENTING PADA MASALAH JILATAN ANJING DI ATAS EMPAT MAZHAB (“An Important Epistle on the Case of Being Licked by a Dog According to the Four Madhab s of the Sunnis”): 148 (booklet by Haji ‘ABbad and Burhanuddin al-Helmi against the traditionalists of Singapore)

RISALAT AL-TAWHID (The “Epistle of Unicity,” by ‘Abduh): 67 (its view by early twentieth-century European authors), 68 (teaching of this work at al-Azhar), 130 (its translation into Chinese by Ma Jian in 1933)

RASALE-A NUR (“The Treatise of Light,” collection of Nursi’s principal writings): 296 (its dissemination by “thousands” of men and women, and after Second World War through the use of a duplicating machine), 296 (its encouragement of reflection on ideas of society and nation)

RIZA AL-DIN B. FAKHR AL-DIN (1859–1936, ‘Alim and publicist from the Southern Urals): 85 –116 (article by S. A. Dudoignon)

RIZVIa, MUHSIN (b. 1930, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian of literature): 217 (representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

ROFF, WILLIAM (historian of Malay-Indonesian national movements): 145 (his study on Malay-Indonesian students in Egypt and Hijaz in the 1920s), 145 –146 (his assessment of al-Imam ’s role in diffusing Islamic reform in the Malay-Indonesian world), 147 (on Shaykh Muhammad Tahir’s combination of reformism and modernism), 148 (on Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi’s education), 149 –150 (on the realm of concern of al-Imam), 152 (on the circulation of al-Imam)

ROME: 176 (place of anti-colonial congresses attended by Sh. Arslan), 191 (Arslan’s meetings with Mussolini and Theodoli in 1934)

RORTY, RICHARD (Northern American philosopher): 290 (on religion acting as a “conversation-stopper” outside of circles of believers)

ROUSSEAU, JEAN-JACQUES (1712–1778, French philosopher): 170 (N. Kemal’s identification of R.’s concept of Natural Law with that of the Shari’A)

ROY, OLIVIER (philosopher and social scientist of Muslim majority and minority societies): 289 (on the possibility for modern Muslim intellectuals to choose among languages and audiences), 293 –294 (on the proliferation of different types of Islamist movement, and the use of the term “post-Islamism”)

R cH AL-MA’ANI (work by al-Alusi): 20 (last encyclopaedic tafsir of the classical brand)

RUIWEI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Ruiwei xiaoxue): 255 (its creation, with a military training, in 1944 by Ma Bufang)

RUMANIA: 58 (its secession from the Ottoman Empire, and its opposition to it), 192 (articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe)

RURALITY/URBANITY: 27 (‘Abduh, al-Qasimi’s and numerous other early twentieth-century reformist thinkers’ rural origins, alien to the ulama aristocracy of the urban notables), 98 (education of Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din in the village of Nyzhnye Chelchely), 296 , 297 (Nursi and other present-day religious intellectuals’ preservation of their rural roots)

R cSIYADA MUSULMANLAR YAKH cD TATAR AQWAMINING TA’RIKHCHASI (“The Muslims in Russia, or a Short History of the Tatar People,” work [1900] by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim): 274 (its publication in Cairo)

RUSSIAN EMPIRE: 85 –116 (article by S. A. Dudoignon, in part. 88, 93 (Edicts of Religious Tolerance taken in Russia by Catherine II in 1773 and Nicholas II 1905), 161 (impact of the revolution of 1905 on the Muslim opinion), 167 , 273 (echo of the Japanese victory over Russia in 1904 throughout the world of Islam), 273 –288 (article by Komatsu H.)

RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTIES: 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s contacts with Russian revolutionaries during his travels in Europe)

RUSSO-TATAR SCHOOLS (russko-tuzemnye mkoly): 92 (their perception by the Muslims of Russia)

SABAHATTAN, “PRINCE” (1877–1948): 74 –75 (chief of a Westernist current in late Ottoman Turkey)

MABANOVIa, HAZIM (1916–1971, a Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (representative of the crypto-opponent trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

SABRA EFENDA, MUSTAFA (1869–1954, conservative veyhülislâm, leader of the Cemiyyet-i /lmiyye-i /slâmiyye): 75 (his role as an Islamist leader in late Ottoman Turkey)

AL-SADAT, ANWAR (Egyptian President from 1970 to 1981): 4 (his assassination as the landmark of a new era in the history of Islam)

SA’DI (Persian classical poet): 79 (his influence on the young M. Âkif), 90 (translation of his works into Tatar in Imperial Russia)

AL-SADR, MUHAMMAD BAQIR (modern Shiite theoretician of the state): 23 (influence of his concept of political guidance of the “righteous authority” on the Islamic Constitution of Iran)

SAFAHAT (“Phases,” collection of poems by M. Âkif): 79 (its publication from 1911 onwards)

LA SAGESSE: see Madrasat al-Hikma SAINT MORITZ (ski resort in Switzerland): 181 (place of Zinoviev and Sh. Arslan’s first meeting)

SAINT PETERSBURG: 86 , 95 (debates on the construction of the city’s Great Mosque in 1908–1912), 96 (meeting of al-Afghani and Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din in 1888)

SALAF (Arabic, “predecessors,” religious scholars of the early generations of Islam): 7 , 8, 11 , 20, 33 (symbol of pure Islam in Salafi thought), 57 (‘Abduh’s comment on the salaf ’s independence from rulers)

SALAFI/SALAFIYYA (broad trend of Islamic thought, claiming for a return to the pure Islam of the Salaf): 8 , 18 –19, 33 (its historical roots and principles), 11 (its relation to taqlid and iëtihad), 26 , 36 (its genealogical links with al-Manār), 43 (in Damascus; its relation to Sufism), 53 (its origin and early development in Egypt and Syria), 54 (its heterogeneity in its early stage), 55 (al-Kawakibi’s onnection with the early development of the Salafiyya), 56 , 60 (its acceptation of Western ideas within an Islamic framework), 64 (its hostility to Westernization after the abolition of the caliphate in 1924), 68 (Salafiyya as a midway between imitation and modernism identified with change), 74 (ideas of its thinkers as roots of Islamism in the Ottoman Empire), 77 –78 (links of the late Ottoman Salafi-oriented periodicals with Sufism), 79 –80 (the Salafiyya’s impact on M. Âkif), 81 (its little influence on Turkish Ottoman intellectuals before 1908), 92 (Salafi influences in the early twentieth-century madrasas of Russia), 128 (Chinese translations from Egyptian Salafi journals in the 1930s), 152 (the critic of the turuq, especially the Naqshbandiyya, in the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam),

155 (early twentieth-century roots of the Indonesian Salafi organizations Muhammadiyah and Persuatan Islam), 249 (Salafiyya’s activity in China since the foundation of the People’s Republic in 1949)

SAMARQAND: 92 , 93 (education place of nineteenth-century and early twentiethcentury Tatar scholars of Islam)

AL-SANUSI, AHMAD AL-SHARIF (head of the Sanusiyya tariqa and Libyan leader): 190 –191 , 201 (his relationship with Sh. Arslan)

SARAJEVO: 214 (creation of the Mladi Muslimani in 1941), 216 (Gazi Husrevbeg Medrese and its role in the education of the official religious leaders of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia during the Communist period)

SARRAIL, MAURICE (French High Commissioner in Syria): 185 (his unpopularity, and his replacement by the relatively liberal de Jouvenel after the Syrian revolt of 1925)

SAUDARA (Malay-Indonesian journal first published in Pulau Pinang in 1928): 145 (its role in the spread of Kaum Muda ideas in the Kelantan region)

SAUDI ARABIA: 255 (Ma Bufang’s term as Nationalist ambassador to S.A. in 1961), 300 (state-appointed religious hierarchies in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Malaysia, and ex-Soviet Central Asia, and their resistance to challenges to their authority), see also Arabian peninsula; hajj; Mecca

AL-SAYYADI, SHAYKH ABU’L-HUDA (Syrian religious advisor to Abdülhamid II): 40 , 41 –43 (his overall attitude toward reformers), 44

(his publications defending Rifa’i ceremonies), 45 (review by Rashid Rida of his 1906 essay on the Shari’A)

SAYYID MUHAMMAD B. ‘AQIL B. YAHYA (associate of al-Imam in Singapore): 145 (his role in the journal’s diffusion in the Indonesian Archipelago)

SAYYID QUTB (1906–1966, main theoretician of the Muslim Brothers): 20 (influence on his tafsir), 24 (his education in a secular institution)

SAYYID SHAYKH B. AHMAD AL-HADI (1862–1934, scholar from Malacca, founder of the Madrasa al-Mansur in Penang): 147 (his mission to Mecca and Cairo in 1903), 148 –149 (his biography, especially his participation in the formation of the Persekutuan Rushdiyyah)

SCHACHT, JOSEPH (historian of Islamic law): 14 (his assertion on the closure of the gate of iëtihad by the tenth century)

SCHOOL OF MUSLIM SOURCES (Muyuan xuetang) of Zhenjiang: 243 , 250 (its opening by Tong Cong in 1905)

SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLING: 76 (reform of Ottoman madrasas by the Young Tu • rks), 87 (madrasas’ role in the transmission of ‘Abduh’s influence in the Russian Empire), 89 (experimentation of the usuli ëadid in Crimea in the 1880s), 89 (submission of the Bashkirs to a Russian state policy of school instruction in vernacular language in Cyrillic script, in the late nineteenth century), 90 (role of Russia’s Muslim school teachers in shaking the ulama’s authority; schools and madrasas’ financing through benevolent associations), 92 (Russo-Tatar schools and their perception by the Muslims of Russia) 166 (foundation of Arabic schools by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad in Western Africa), 178 (US Protestant schools in the Near-East, and

attendance of one of them by Sh. Arslan), 243 (creation of the “School of Muslim Sources” by Tong Cong in Zhenjiang in 1905), 243 –244 (financing of early twentieth-century Islamic schools in China by commercial societies), 244 (creation of a variety of schools by the Learned Society of the Hui Religion in China, from 1925 onward), 244 (construction of libraries as an aim of the Guild of the Hui Religion of China), 247 (the creation of schools as a key aim of early twentieth-century Chinese Muslim associations), 249 (following, by Chinese Muslim reformed religious schools, of the curriculum of Chinese official schools), 249 (appearance of the first new-style Chinese Muslim schools in Hunan in 1898), 250 (appearance of Sino-Arabic schools in Western China), 250 –251 (establishment of normal schools among Chinese Mudslims in the 1920s to 1930s), 255 –256 (school foundations by Western Chinese Muslim warlords), 256 (Ma Linyi’s creation of the Jiejin school, and his books on modern schooling), 259 (Wang Haoran’s role in the creation of new-style mosque schools in China), 260 (opening of a Sino-Arabic curriculum in Kunming in the early 1920s), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit of universities and schools for girls in Tokyo in 1909), 295 –296 (Nursi’s apology of early twentieth-century Western-style school education among the Muslims), 297 (F. Gülen’s movement’s web of more than 550 schools in Turkey and the CIS, especially in Central Asia), see also education; jingtang; libraries; madrasa; mosques; Sino-Arabic curriculum; universities

SCIENCE: 20 (al-Qasimi’s praise by Rida as “the renewer of Islamic sciences”), 46 (chemistry and medicine as disciplines to be caught up from Europeans), 94 , 95 (influence of al-Afghani’s casuistry for justifying scientific discoveries), 194 (Szynkewicz’s relations and exchanges with German scientific circles), 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s praise of Japan’s acceptance of Western science and technology, and his warnings against superficial Westernization), 298 –299 (Shahrur’s analogy between the Copernician revolution and Qur1 anic interpretation), 296 (relation of Islamic belief to modern science in the work of twentieth-century Muslim religious intellectuals), 297 (F. Gülen’s interpretation of Islamic values as offering a union between religion and science), see also reason; secularization and secularism; westernization

SEBALÜRREVÂD (“The Straight Path,” name taken by the Sirât-i müstakim after 1912): 76 (a description of its staff)

SECRET SERVICES: 192 (flurry of reports by the French secret services on Sh. Arslan in the 1930s), 281 –282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s collaboration with the Intelligence Department of the Ottoman Army), see also police

SECULARIZATION AND SECULARISM: 5 (its overestimation in the history of modernization processes), 24 (Sayyid Qutb’s education in a secular institution), 56 (criticism of Western secularism by early Salafis, and their call for the separation of religion and politics), 59 (al-’Azm’s considerations on the separation of religious and worldly matters), 75 (attacks by the newspaper Volkan against the Turkish revolution of 1908 as made up by “secularists”—dehrî s), 80 (Young Ottomans’ opposition to the legal secularization started with the Tanzimat), 290 (E. Gellner on Islam as the only force resisting against the trend toward secularization and nationalism since the collapse of Marxist regimes), 291 –292 (criticism by D. F. Eickelman of the postulate of a parallelism modernization/ secularization, through the example of the Iranian revolution of 1979), 294 (religious discourse as a precondition for the rise of the early modern public sphere in Europe), see also nationalism; reason; westernization

SEKOLAH DINIYYAH AL-ISLAMIYYAH (new style madrasa of the Minangkabau area): 153 –154 (influence of the Madrasa al-Iqbal al-Islamiyya of Singapore on its creation in 1908)

SENEGAL: 166 (workplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

SERBIA: 58 (its secession from the Ottoman Empire, and its opposition to it)

SERBS: 212 (their share in the population of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

SERUAN AZHAR (journal of the Malay-Indonesian students of al-Azhar in the 1920s): 145 (its role in the emergence of an Islamic discourse in the Archipelago)

VEYHÜLASLÂM (highest religious authority in the Ottoman Empire): 76 (reforms of its status and functions in 1916 and 1917)

SHA SHANYU (1879–1968, Chinese Muslim teacher, journalist at the Shenbao of Shanghai, and public activist): 243 (his leading of the militia created in late 1911 in Shanghai by local merchants), 244, 258 (his participation in the creation, in 1925, of the Learned Society of the Hui Religion in China, and, in 1929, of the Guild of the Hui Religion in China), 258 (his and Wu Tegong's collaboration with Ha Decheng and Ma Jiang on their translations of the Qur 1 an)

SHADIAN (city in the far South Eastern China): 260 (Ma Jian's birthplace, and a center of Sino-Arabic schooling)

SHAFI'IYYA (one of the four madhab s of modern Sunni Islam): 146 (Malay-Indonesian Shaykh Ahmad Khatib as the Imam of the Shafi'i madhab in Mecca and Medina), 155 (al-Munir 's contestation of the Shafi'i hegemony, and its advocacy of madhab pluralism in the Indonesian archipelago)

SHAH WALI-ALLAH OF DELHI (1703–1762, Indian Muslim reformist thinker): 91 (diffusion of his thought in Inner Eurasia by the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya)

SHAHBANDAR, ‘Abd AL-RAHMAN (Arab nationalist, a rebel chief during the Syrian revolt of 1925): 182 (his alliance with M. Lutfallah against Arslan, Rida and al-Husayni in the Syrian-Palestinian Congress), 183 (his and Lutfallah’s opposition to Palestinians on questions of territorial nationalism, his compromise with Zionism, and his allegiance to the Hashemites), 185 (conciliatory positions of the Lutfallah—Shahbandar faction regarding the British Mandate and the creation of a Greater Lebanon), 185 –186 (Shahbandar’s and Lutfallah’s intrigues against Arslan’s negotiations with the French officials), 186 (Sh.’s unfruitful opposition to the French-Syrian treaty of 1936)

SHAHRUR, MUHAMMAD (Syrian reformist religious intellectual): 294 , 300 (his contribution to the emergence of a public sphere in Syria), 298 –300 (his work al-Kitab wa’l-Qur’an and its current interpretation, in part. 298 –299 : Shahrur’s analogy between the Copernician revolution and Qur 1 anic interpretation)

SHANGHAI: 127 (Shanghai Islamic School), 243 (creation of the Militia of Merchants of the Pure and True in 1911), 243 –244 (creation, by Ha Decheng and others, of the Learned Society of the Hui Religion of China), 244 (creation of the Guild of the Hui Religion in China in 1929), 244 –245 (creation, in 1934, of the Cultural Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China), 251 (creation of the Normal Islamic School of Shanghai in 1928), 260 (Ha Decheng’s work of modernization of Islam in Shanghai)

SHANGHAI ISLAMIC SCHOOL: 127 (its sending of students to al-Azhar in 1931)

SHARI’A (Islamic law): 15 (field of reflection opened by al-Manār on the Sh.), 22 (caliphate as a guarantee of the rule of the Sh.), 61 (Sh.’s rule as an alternative to absolute authority), 64 (Sh.’s undermining after the abolition of the caliphate in 1924), 75 (criticism by the newspaper Volkan against the Turkish revolution of 1908 for not implementing the Sh.), 76 (reform of Ottoman Sh. a courts in 1917), 88 (debates on the field of application of the Sh. in the Russian Empire), 167 (Sh.’s central place in the parliamentary system proposed by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad for Morocco), 170 (Young Ottomans’ confidence in the Sh. as a source of dignity and as a baseline for political institution-building), 170 (Sh. as a source of legitimacy under Abdülhamid II), 197 –199 (creation of the Berber Dahir in 1931 by the French protectorate in Morocco, and its contestation throughout the world of Islam), see also fiqh

SHAWQI, AHMAD (1868–1932, Egyptian poet and dramatist): 203 –204 (his friendship with Sh. Arslan)

SHAYKH AHMAD KHATIB AL-MINANGKABAWI (Shaykh Muhammad Tahir’s cousin, and the imam of the Shafi’i madhab in Mecca and Medina): 146 , 154 (his role as a teacher for many students from Java in Mecca)

SHAYKH AL-HADI (Malay-Indonesian writer): 145 (his novel Farida Lanum on reformist themes)

SHAYKH MUHAMMAD-SALIM AL-KALALI (managing director of al-Imam): 149 (his role for the journal as a businessman)

SHAYKH MUHAMMAD TAHIR B. JALALUDDIN AL-MINANGKABAWIAL-AZHARI (1869–1957, reformist ‘Alim from Sumatra): 146 –147

(his biography, assessing his role in the launching of al-Imam)

SHAYKH SAYYID MUHAMMAD B. ‘AQIL (director of the al-Imam Printing Company Ltd.): 149 (his tendencies toward Shi’ism)

SHI ZIZHOU (Chinese Muslim political personality): 245 –246 (his role in the leadership of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country)

SHIHATA, ‘AbdULLAH MAHMUD (historian of Islamic reform): 20 (on the respective contributions by ‘Abduh and Rida)

SHIITES: 48 (Shiite practice of cursing the caliph Mu’Awiya; the tensions among Sunni and Shiite Muslims in Singapore after the publication of Ibn ‘Aqil’s treatise on Mu’Awiya), 149 (Shaykh Sayyid Muhammad b. ‘Aqil’s tendencies toward Shi’ism), 162 (early Abbasid Shiites as an “autocratic block” opposed to the “constitutional block” of the Sunnis)

SHILS, EDWARD (author of The Intellectuals and the Power, Chicago 1973): 291 (on the distrust of secular and ecclesiastical authority as a tradition of modern intellectuals)

SHINA LANGUAGE (vernacular language in Northern Pakistan): 232 (as a medium of religious education among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis)

SHUF MOUNTAINS (in south central Lebanon): 178 (Sh. Arslan succeeding his father as governor of this region)

SIBERIA: 85 , 91 (confrontation of its Muslim populations with Slavic mass migration since the late nineteenth century), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909), 282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s emigration from Siberia through Xinjiang, China, and Manchuria), see also Tara

SICARD, JULES (French author on modern Islam): 67 (Rida’s response to his views)

SIERRA LEONE: 166 (workplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

AL-MIHAB (Algerian reformist newspaper): 201 (Sh. Arslan’s influence within the circle of the Algerian reformist ulama)

SIJIAO YAOGUA (“The Essential Content of the Four Religions,” treatise by Yang Zhongming [1898]): 260 (its comparison of Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam)

SIKIRIa, MAaIR (1893–1966, Bosnian specialist of Persian language and literature): 214 (figure of the new jaded trend)

SILAJD?Ia, HARIS (b. 1945, Bosnian-Herzegovinian politician): 218 (allied and at the same time an opponent to Izetbegovi-)

SINGAPORE: 48 (tensions among Sunni and Shiite Muslims after the publication of Ibn ‘Aqil’s treatise on the Umayyad caliph Mu’Awiya), 49 (publication of a second essay rebutting Ibn ‘Aqil), 147 (installation of Shaykh Muhammad Tahir in 1905, as an organizer of the pilgrim brokerage), 148 (activity of Haji ‘ABbas after his return from Mecca in 1905), 153 (creation of the Madrasa al-Iqbal al-

Islamiyya in 1908), 153 –154 (‘Abdullah Ahmad’s visit to Singapore in 1908, and his idea to publish a journal similar to al-Imam)

SINO-ARABIC CURRICULUM (in Chinese: Zhong-A xuexiao, school teaching Chinese literacy and Arabic language, in Western China): 250 (its appearance under the tutelage of adherents to the Ikhwani movement), 250, 260 (Da Pusheng and Wang Haoran’s initiation, in 1907, of a Sino-Arabic curriculum in the Ox Street Mosque of Beijing), 251 (Sino-Arabic University of Ningxia), 260 (opening of a Sino-Arabic curriculum in Kunming in the early 1920s)

SINO-ARABIC UNIVERSITY (Zhong-A daxue, founded in Ningxia by the warlord Ma Hongbin in 1932): 251 (its transformation into the Yunting Provincial Normal School)

SIRÂT-I MÜSTAKÎM (“The Straight Path,” influential journal of late Ottoman Islamist circles, published from 1908 onwards): 76 (its staff), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel correspondences to the S.M. in 1909), 279 (translation on the prospectus and programmes of the Ajia Gikai)

SIRHINDI, AHMAD (seventeenth-century reformer of the Naqshbandiyya mystical path): 89 (new interpretations of his work in Inner Eurasia, since the late eighteenth century)

AL-SIYASA (“The Policy,” treatise by ‘Abd al-Karim Murad): 166 (its illustration of Murad’s political interests)

AL-SIYASA AL-MAR’IYYA (“The Shari’A-Based Policy,” by Ibn Taymiyya): 68 (model for modern theoreticians of the Islamic state)

SMAJLOVIa, AHMED (1938–1988, collaborator of Kemura’s): 215 (as a representative of the official leaders of the Muslim Religious Community under Tito)

SMOKING: see tobacco

SOCIALISM AND SOCIALIST PARTIES: 26 (elimination of Socialism from the Middle East scene since the 1970s), 187 –188 (Sh. Arslan’s rapprochement with the French anti-colonial socialists and radical-socialists in the mid-1930s), 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s contacts with Russian revolutionaries during his travels in Europe), see also Communism and Communist parties

SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCE OF THE HUI RELIGION (Zhongguo Huijiao jujin hui): 243 , 259 (its creation in Beijing in 1912, first nationwide association of the believers, with subsidiary associations [fenhui])

SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF CHINESE ISLAM (Zhongguo yi-si-lan budao hui): 245 (its creation in 1933 in Taiyuan, Shanxi, for the spreading of the Muslim doctrine)

SOCIETY OF MUSLIM STUDENTS FROM RUSSIA (in Istanbul): 279 (its invitation of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim and Yamaoka Kotaro)

SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF EDUCATION OF THE HUI PEOPLE (Huimin jiaoyu cujin hui): 245 (its creation in Ningxia in 1933, and its direction by the warlord Ma Hongkui)

SOLIDARNOSC (Polish trade union): 292 (its appearance as the expression of an overall religious revival)

SONGS: 247 (organization of a company of Hui singers for the popularization of anti-Japanese songs, by the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), see also music

SOROUSH, ‘AbdOLKARIM (an Iranian religious intellectual): 291 (availability of his works on the Internet), 294 (Khatami, Soroush, and the reformist movement’s contribution to the emergence of a public sphere in Iran)

SOUTHEAST ASIA: 25 (as a reference for non-Western modernization), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909)

SOVEREIGNTY (Arabic hakimiyya, of God, or of the people): 164 (launching of this discussion theme by the Young Ottomans)

SPAHO, MEHMET (1883–1939, Bosnian politician): 214 (as a figure of the new jadid trend)

SPAIN: 164 –165 (its early twentieth-century interference into the affairs of Morocco), 199 –200 (Arslan’s interest in the history of Muslim Spain, in the late 1930s)

SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE MUSLIM LAW (created in Russia in 1788): 88 (its location in Ufa, then in Orenburg), 99 (nomination of Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din as one of its qadis), 101 (replacement of the Assembly in 1921 by the Central Spiritual Board of the Muslims of Inner Russia and Siberia), 273 –274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s appointment as a qadi of the Spiritual Assembly of Ufa)

SPONSORSHIP: 40 (‘ABbas II Hilmi’s alleged support to al-Manār, and Abdülhamid II’s hostility to him for this reason), 90 (early twentieth-century replacement of waqf and zakat by benevolent societies for the financing of Russia’s Islamic educational institutions), 90 (the shaking of the ulama’s authority in Russia by school teachers, thanks notably to the maktab s and madrasas’ financing through benevolent associations), 100 (Ahmad Bay Husaynoff ‘s sponsorship of the Husayniyya Madrasa of Orenburg, and his posthumous introduction by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din as a model benefactor of the Muslim community of Russia), 100 , 101 (sponsorship of the Waqt newspaper and the Mura journal in Orenburg by the Ramiyeff brothers), 121 (financing of Qur1 anic schools by the zakat —tianke —among the Hui), 149 (businessman Shaykh Muhammad-Salim al-Kalali’s support of the journal al-Imam), 149 (role of the Riau court in the circulation of al-Imam in the Riau region), 151 (Tengku Osman’s speech in the Rushdiyyah Club of Riau in 1906 after his return from Cairo), 184 (al-Quwwatli’s amenity to receive financial support from Ibn Saud, and his participation in the Jerusalem finance committee of the Syrian-Palestinian Congress), 243 –244 (role of commercial societies in the financing of Islamic schools in early twentieth-century Eastern China), 245 (creation, in Ningxia in 1933, of the Society for the Promotion of Education of the Hui People, and its sponsorhip by the warlord Ma Hongkui), 245 (role of Muslim warlords in the creation, in Lanzhou, of a subsidiary association of the Confederation of the Hui Religion in China), 246 –255 (his role in the creation and leadership of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Salvation of the Country), 246 –247 (his chairmanship of the Association for Studying the Culture of the Hui Religion), 254 (Ma Fuxiang’s sponsorship of the edition of almost all the celebrated works of classical Chinese Islam from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries), 256 (Ma Fuxiang’s foundation and sponsorship of Muslim schools in Ningxia, of the journal Yuehua, and of Chinese students in al-Azhar), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi’s sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai’s pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul), 260 (Yunnanese financial help to Ma Jian’s studies in al-Azhar), 292 –293 (on locally rooted movements—like opposition to the Shah’s regime in Iran—benefiting with transnational sponsors or supporters), see also associations and societies; benevolent

societies; jingtang ; journals and newspapers; libraries; madrasa; maktab ; merchants; mosques; schools and schooling; zakat

STATE AND STATE APPARATUS: 22 (current reinterpretation of al-Qalqashandi’s classical theory of the state), 23 (influence of Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr’s concept of political guidance of the “righteous authority” on the Islamic Constitution of Iran), 68 (Ibn Taymiyya’s al -Siyasa al-mar’iyya as a model for modern theoreticians of the Islamic state), 75 (T. Fikret’s attacks against the doctrines of the Islamic state), 163 (Dadi-’s mention of Istanbul’s early eighteenth-century ruling circles’ interest in Venice’s form of government), 163 (Müteferriqa’s proposals for military reforms along European lines in the Ottoman Empire), 169 (reform of awqaf in ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s political thought), 194 (acknowledgment of the Yugoslav government by the European Muslim Congress of 1935 for its favorable treatment of its Muslim population), 228 , 231 (abolition of Northern Pakistan’s principalities, and the opening of the Karakorum Highway in the 1970s), 238 (lack of an opposition of Ima’ilis to the state in Tajikistan, in spite of their autonomous strategies of modernization), 249 (support given by the Ikhwani movement to the warlords, as the represerntatives of a strong power), 296 –297 (Nursi’s success in articulating his message with rural Turkish society, when the hold of local leaders was giving way to the state apparatus), see also authority; constitutionalism; leadership; sovereignty; Sufism; ulama

STEPPE TERRITORY (Russian: Stepnoj kraj): 89 (renewal of Christian Orthodox missionary activity in late nineteenth century), 91 (territory’s confrontation with Slavic colonization)

SU BAOQIAO (1895–1962, Hunanese Muslim religious and Communist activist): 256 (his activities in Changsha inside the CCP)

SUaESKA, AVDO (b. 1927, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (as a representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

SUMI´a, HASAN (1937–1991, Bosnian-Herzegovinian historian): 217 (as a representative of the pro-Communist trend in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian intelligentsia)

SUFISM: 41 –43 , 45 (popular Sufism; links between the Rifa'iyya mystical path and the Ottoman power); 43 (attack by al-Zahrawi against popular Sufism); 44 (criticism of the Mawlawiyya by Rashid Rida; patronage of the Rifa'iyya mystical path by Abdülhamid II; disputes between the Rifa'iyya and the Qadiriyya); 44 (attack by al-Zahrawi, arguing that Sufism is alien to Islam); 45 (Shari'Aminded Sufism of the Naqshbandiyya path; the antinomy of Sufism with the Qur 1 an and the Sunna, according to al-Qasimi); 76 (criticism of Sufi lodges or tekke s by late Ottoman, Islamists, for being suffused with superstition), 77 –78 (links of the late Ottoman Salafioriented periodicals with Sufism), 78 (publication of articles on Ibn Taymiyya by the Turkish Sufi periodical Mihrab in 1923–1925), 89 (Bigi's criticism of the traditional mode of transmission of learning in Sufi turuq), 91 (diffusion of Shah Wali-Allah's thought in Inner Eurasia by the Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya), 99 (reformist critics of the heterodox practices of Sufi paths in Russia), 125 , 130 (turmoil among Chinese Sufi lineages—menhuan s—in the 1930s, and the reformist response to it), 152 (critic of the turuq, especially the Naqshbandiyya, in the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam), 165 (Kattaniyya's role in the mobilization of the ulama against French encroachments in early twentiethcentury Morocco), 166 ('Abd al-Karim Murad's relations with Malik Sy in Senegal, and with the Tijaniyya's key figure Muhammad Salga in Kano), 190 –191, 201 (Ahmad al-Sharif al-Sanusi's relationship with Sh. Arslan), 249 (Ikhwani influence on the arabization of religious teaching, and on the prohibition of Chinese and Sufi influence among Chinese-speaking Muslims), 253 (call of Chinese adepts of the Ikhwani movement to a reconciliation between and with the different Sufi allegiances), 253 –254 (the modern Ikhwani

criticism of Liu Zhi’s Tianfang xingli for its Sufi content), 262 (cultivation of Chinese classical literature in the early twentieth-century Jahriyya menhuan, a sub-branch of the Chinese N.), 262 (place of Confucianism and Sufism in the readings of twentieth-century ahong s), 295 (distinction of Nursi’s teaching, centered on autonomous book reading, from the master–disciple relationship at the core of most Sufi orders), see also authority; books and book trading; education; language; state and state apparatus; ulama

AL-SULH, RIYAD (member of the Syrian- Palestinian Congress, and the Lebanese Republic’s first Prime Minister in 1943): 182 (his succession to Kin’An in the Syrian-Palestinian Congress), 186 (his consultations with Sh. Arslan in Geneva prior to the signature of the treaty of indpendence)

AL-SULH, RIZA (Interior Minister in Faisal’s cabinet in 1920): 182 (his son Riyad’s role in the Syrian-Palestinian Congress)

SUN SHENGWU (progressive literati of the Huabei region in the 1930s): 125 (his role in the launching of the Yuehua journal)

SUN YATSEN (1866–1925, founder of the Chinese Republic): 122 (his meeting with the reformist ahong Wang Haoran), 244, 245 (checking of his “Three People Principles” by Chinese Muslim activists of Nanking, to know whether they contradict Islam), 256 (the influence of his ideas on the young Ma Linyi)

SUN YOUMING (progressive literati of the Huabei region in the 1930s): 125 (his role in the launching of the Yuehua journal)

SUNNA (tradition of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad): 13 (Indonesian Muhammadiyah’s call for return to the Sunna), 15 , 22, 26 (Rida’s condemnation of the neglect of the Sunna), 28 (continuation of Rida’s discourse on the Sunna by al-Qaradawi), 45 (Sunna’s antinomy with Sufism, according to al- Qasimi), 96 (the rational approach to the Sunna in Barudi’s teaching), 99 –100 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s focusing of religious teaching on the Qur1 an and the Sunna)

SUNNI ISLAM: 178 (its being joined by the Druze-born Sh. Arslan)

M cRA : see consultation and consultative regimes

M cRA (“Council,” a Tatar–Bashkir journal published in Orenburg from 1908 to 1918): 85 –116 (article by S. A. Dudoignon, in particular 98 –105)

S cRA AL-BAQARA (Sura of the Cow): 19 (its comment by Rida in the Tafsir al-Manār)

SURKATI, AHMAD (founder of the Irshad movement in Indonesia): 144 (his permission by Dutch censorship to receive al-Manār)

SWITZERLAND: 176 , 182 (as the residence place of Sh. Arslan, in connection with the location of the League of Nations in Geneva)

SYRIA: 27 (Muslim Brothers in S.); 41 (local branches of the CUP); 49 –50 (influence of al-Manār),

164 (support of Syrian Islamic reformists to Young Ottomans and Young Turks), 179 (famine in S. before First World War), 180 – 181 (French suppression of Faisal's ephemerous Syrian kingdom), 181 –186 (Arslan's relationship with S.), 298 –300 (Islamic modernism through the work of M. Shahrur)

SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN CONGRESS (created in 1921 in Geneva for petitioning the League of Nations' Permanent Mandates Commission): 181 –182 (its change of name upon the request of Palestinian delegates), 183 (publication of its resolutions in La Nation arabe), 184 (creation of its Finance Committee by young Istiqlalists in Jerusalem after 1925, and marginalization of the Cairo Executive Committee), 184 –185 (Sh. Arslan's resignation from the Executive Committee, and Lutfallah's ousting from the chairmanship of the S.-P.C. in 1927)

SZYNKEWICZ, JAKUB (Polish orientalist of Tatar origin, the Mufti of Poland from 1925 onwards): 194 (his relations with German scientific circles)

TABAYI2 AL-ISTIBDAD ("The Characteristics of Tyranny," an essay by al-Kawakibi): 43 (attack on the Hamidian regime)

TAFSIR (Arabic: exegesis, notably of the Qur 1 an): 9 (influence of al-'Urwa al-Wuöqa 's discourse on tafsir upon Rida), 13 (tafsir as the central issue of al-Manār in its earlier stage), 16 –20 (the Tafsir al-Manār), 20 (al-Alusi's Ruh al-Ma'An as the last encyclopaedic tafsir of the classical brand), 57 ('Abduh's commentary of the Sura al-'Imran), 95 (tafsir 's central place in Barudi's teaching), 127 (Yuehua 's publication of

articles on tafsir), 128 (Ma Songting’s arguments on the publications of tafsir in the Yuehua), 298 – 299 (Shahrur’s analogy between the Copernician revolution and Qur1 anic interpretation, and his challenge to the authoritative tradition of tafsir and fiqh) Tafsir al-Manār : 16 –20 Tafsir al-Qasimi : 20

AL-TALIRA AL-ISLAMIYYA (Indonesian newspaper published in Pekalongan): 144 (its distribution in Cairo)

TAHTAWI, RIFA’A (1801–73, Egyptian traveller and scholar): 187 (obsolescence of his influence after European colonial encroachments in the early 1880s)

TAIWAN: 254 , 255 (exile of Chinese Muslim leaders after 1949)

TAIYUAN (capital city of Shanxi): 245 (creation, in 1933, of the Society for the Diffusion of Chinese Islam)

TAIYUAN RIBAO (“The Daily of Taiyuan,” regional newspaper of the Shanxi in the 1930s): 245 (its utilization by the Society for the Diffusion of Chinese Islam for spreading news on religious matters)

TAJ MOGHOL (legendary fourteenth-century king of Badakhshan): 230 (claim of his ancestry by Pir Sahib)

TAJIKISTAN: 238 (lack of an opposition of Ima’ilis to the state, in spite of their autonomous strategies of modernization)

TALAT PAVA, MEHMED (1874–1921, leading CUP politician, minister of Interior, Grand Vezir): 179 , 180 (Sh. Arslan’s contacts

with him in order to alleviate the famine in Syria and Lebanon), 181 (his assassination by an Armenian assassin in Berlin)

TANG KESAN (Shandong activist of Muslim education, active between 1925 and 1946): 125 , 250, 258 (his direction of the Chengda Normal School since 1925, and his role in the launching of the Yuehua journal), 246, 257 –258 (his participation in the Wuchang conference, and in the creation and leadership of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the the Salvation of the Country), 246 –247 (his co-chairmanship of the Association for Studying the Culture of the Hui Religion)

TANGIER: 165 (publication of a second draft constitution for Morocco by the journal Lisan al-'Arab in 1908), 200 (Arslan's short stay in, and expulsion from this city in 1930)

TANZAMAT: 276 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's critic of Westernization in Turkey after the Tanzimat reform)

TAQLID (Arabic, 'imitation': conformation of religious and judicial practice with theological and jurisprudential literature): 11 , 14 –16 (its place in Rida's thought and legacy), 150 (al-Imam 's emphasis on the need to reject taklid buta : blind acceptance of intermediary authority), 154 (condemnation of blind taqlid by al-Munir), 276 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's praise of Japan's acceptance of Western science and technology, and warnings against Tanzimat-style Westernization)

TARA (city in the Tobol'sk governorate, Western Siberia): 273 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's birthplace), 282 (his two-year stay there, and his teaching activity after First World War)

TARBUSH: see fez

TARËUMAN (“The Interpreter,” newspaper published by Gasprali from 1883 to 1914): 89 (as the main platform of the Islamic reformist tendency in Russia until First World War)

TARIHI KADIM (“Ancient History,” poem by Tevfik Fikret): 75 (being an attack against the doctrines of the Islamic state)

TARIQA (pl. turuq, Arabic: “path,” Sufi mystical path): 89 (Bigi’s critic of the mode of transmission of learning among the turuq)

TASKHIRI, AYATOLLAH MOHAMMAD ‘ALI (a Shiite jurist, the chairman of the World Forum for the Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought): 27 –28 (his participation in the founding conference of the World Union of Muslim Ulama in 2004)

TATAR LANGUAGE: 274 (Tatar and Arabic newspapers published by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim after the Russian revolution of 1905)

TATARS: 88 (their historical role as a cultural intermediary between Russia and Central Asia), 273 (the Bukharan ascent of Siberian Tatars, and of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim), 274 (cultural autonomy proposed for the Tatars by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1907), 281 (sending of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim to Berlin by Enver Pava, in 1915, for the recruitment of Tatar Muslim prisoners of war)

AL-TAWHID (“The Unicity,” work by ‘Abduh): 94 (its influence on the renewal of kalam in Russia)

TEACHING: see schools and schooling TEÂRÜF-I MÜSLIMIN (“The Acquaintance of Muslims”): 281 (its publication by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in Istanbul in 1910–1911)

TEKKE (Turkish: Sufi lodge): 76 (criticism of tekke s by late Ottoman, Islamists, for being suffused with superstition)

TELEGRAPH: 47 (its use in declaring the beginning and the end of Ramadan, as supported by al-Qasimi)

TELEVISION: see mass media

TENGKU OSMAN (member of the Riau ruling family): 151 (his speech in the Rushdiyyah Club in 1906 after his return from Cairo)

TETOUAN: 200 (Arslan’s stay in this Moroccan city in 1930)

TEVFAK RAVAD BEY (Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs in the early Republican period): 64 (his declaration on Turkish history proving the country’s European character)

THEATRE: 50 (its condemnation in pre-First World War Syria as an innovation forbidden by Islam), 126 (Molière’s quotation by Wang Jingzhai for his definition of watan), 247 (Lao She’s writing of a play, Guojia chisang, on the common front of Hui and Han facing the Japanese enemy)

THEODOLI, MARQUIS (President of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations): 191 (his meeting with Arslan in 1935)

THREE PEOPLE PRINCIPLES (Sanmin zhuyi, an ideology promoted by Sun Yatsen): 244 , 245 (checking of Sun Yatsen’s principles by Muslim Chinese students of Nanking, to know whether they contradict Islam)

TIANFANG XINGLI (“The Philosophy of Islam,” early eighteenth-century work by the theologian Liu Zhi): 253 –254 (its multiple reprints)

TIANKE : see zakat

TIBET: 247 (creation of a subsidiary association of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s denunciation of the British invasion of Tibet)

TIJANIYYA (modern Western African Sunni Islamic mystical path): 166 (‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s relations with its key figure Muhammad Salga in Kano)

AL-TILMIÙ (“The Student,” Arabic-language journal published in St. Petersburg): 274 (its edition by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim)

TIMBUKTU: 162 (as a medieval merchant city dominated in the fifteenth century by dynasties of qadis)

TITO (Josip Broz, 1892–1976, dictator of Yugoslavia): 215 (his diplomatical utilization of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia in the framework of the Non-Aligned block)

TOA DOBUNKAI (“East Asian Friendship Society,” established in 1898 for promoting friendship between Japan and China): 278 (conversion to Islam of one of its members, Ohara Bukei)

TOA SHIN CHITSUJO (“New Order in Eastern

Asia”): 284 (a motto of the Japanese military régime in the 1930s)

TOBACCO: 128 (Chinese translation of a paper by al-Khatib on smoking as beneficial to Western powers)

TOK KENALI (nickname of Muhammad Yussof bin Muhammad, 1868–1933, reformist ‘Alim of the Kelantan region): 145 (sources of his reformist ideas)

TOKUTOMI SOHO (1863–1957, leading Japanese journalist, director of the Kokumin shinbun): 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit to the newspaper’s bureau in 1909)

TOKYO: 150 (discussion by al-Imam of a proposed Congress of Religion to be held in Tokyo), 242 –243 (role played by a group of thirty-six young Chinese Muslims in the creation, in 1907, of the Association for the Pure and True [i.e. Muslim] Education of the Students in Tokyo), 252 (their publication, as to 1908, of the journal Xing Hui pian), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit to Waseda University, the Tokyo Imperial University, the Institute of Arts, and schools for girls in 1909), 278 , 279 (successive phases of the early twentieth-century project of construction of a mosque in Tokyo)

TOKYO IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY (in Tokyo): 275 (its visit by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

TONG CONG (1864–1923, Chinese Muslim religious scholar and activist): 242 –243 (his creation, in 1906, of the General Association of the Religious Education of the Muslim People of Eastern Asia, and his renaming of this structure), 243, 250 (his opening, in 1905, of the School of Muslim Sources [Muyuan xuetang]), 258 (influence on him of former Chinese Muslim students in Japan)

TONKIN: 279 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s denunciation of the French colonization of Tonkin)

TOYAMA MITSURU (1855–1944, Japanese ultranationalist leader): 276 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

TRADITION: 294 (its coexistence with the modern in any given society), 297 (F. Gülen’s interpretation of Islamic values offering a union between religion and science, faith and nationalism, education and the market economy, and tradition and modernity)

TRALJIa, MAHMUD (b. 1918, Muslim religious writer of Bosnia-Herzegovina): 216 (representative of the opposition trend among the Muslim religious leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina)

TRANSLATION: 80 (translations by M. Âkif from M. F. Wadjdi’s encyclopaedia and commentary of the Qur1 an), 90 (translation of Sa’di’s works into Tatar in Imperial Russia), 127 (Yuehua ’s practice of translating and criticizing Arabic and English books), 128, 130 , 134, 253 (Chinese translations from Egyptian Salafi journals in the 1930s), 130, 135 , 244, 253 (disputes over the translation of the Qur1 an into Chinese), 130 (translation of ‘Abduh’s Risala al-tawhid into Chinese in 1933), 130 , 134 (translation into Chinese of papers from al-Azhar’s Nur alislam in the 1930s), 131 (translation

into Chinese of the History of Islam by Khuzuli), 245 (creation of the Society for the Diffusion of Chinese Islam, in 1933, for spreading the Muslim doctrine through the translation of the Qur 1 an into Chinese), 253 , 259 (Protestant's dilemma as to the translation of the Bible into Chinese, whether to use the classical or the colloquial language, and its influence on the Chinese translation of the Qur 1 an), 258 (Shu Shanyu and Wu Tegong's collaboration with Ha Decheng and Ma Jiang on their translations of the Qur1 an), 259 (Wang Jingzhai's work as a translator from Arabic into Chinese, and his two translations of the Qur 1 an, in classical and colloquial Chinese), 281 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's translations into Ottoman Turkish of Japanese literature on Western oppression of Eastern peoples), see also books and book trading; journals and newspapers; language; westernization

TRAVELS AND TRAVELLING: 88 –89 (role of railroad in the suppression of the cultural intermediary of Tatar caravan traders between Russia and Central Asia), 102 (N. Ya 1 usheff 's travel correspondences to the Mura), 122 –123 , 259 (influence of Wang Haoran's hajj, and of his travels to Turkey and Egypt, on his reformist thought), 127 (sending of students to al-Azhar in 1931 by the Shanghai Islamic School), 147 (Sayyid Shaykh b. Ahmad al-Hadi's mission to Mecca and Cairo in 1903), 166 ('Abd al-Karim Murad stay and work in Senegal Sierra Leone, and Nigeria), 181 (Sh. Arslan's meetings with Zinoviev in Saint Moritz and in Moscow, with Trotsky in Moscow), 187 (obsolescence of the Egyptian traveler Tahtawi's influence after European colonial encroachments in the early 1880s), 192 (Sh. Arslan's travels in Yugoslavia in 1931 and in 1933–1934 "for spending Ramadan with [his] Yugoslavian friends"), 200 (Sh. Arslan's stay in Tetouan in 1930), 229 (homage paid to Aga Khan III in Zanzibar by a son of the mir of Hunza), 250 –251 , 260 (Ma Songting's travel to Egypt and other Islamic countries in 1932, to find out new pedagogical methods), 255 (Ma Bufang's travel to Egypt in the early 1950s), 256 (Ma Linyi's studies in Japan in 1903–1905), 257 (Da Pusheng's travel to India as a representative of Shanghai merchants), 259 (Ma Fuxiang and Ma Linyi's sponsorship of Wang Jinzhai's pilgrimage to Mecca, in 1921, and of his visit of al-Azhar and Istanbul), 260 (Ha Decheng's hajj, in 1913, and its influence on his rejection of the traditional mosque teaching;

his travels to India, Ceylon, and Egypt on behalf of his commercial society), 261 (influence of Hu Songshan’s hajj on his Chinese nationalist convictions), 263 (overseas travel, or direct contact with travellers, as the great event in the career of a twentieth-century Chinese Muslim intellectual), 274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s contacts with Russian revolutionaries during his travels in Europe), 275 , 280 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travels to Russian Turkestan and Bukhara, then to the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East, and their echo in the world of Islam), 281 (the sending of ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim to Berlin by Enver Pava, in 1915, for the recruitment of Tatar Muslim prisoners of war), 282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s emigration from Siberia through Xinjiang, China, and Manchuria), see also hajj; networks and networking

TRIPOLI (of Lebanon): 42 , 166 (siege of Husayn al-Jisr’s experimental school al-Madrasa al-Wataniyya), 165 (birthplace of ‘Abd al-Karim Murad)

TROTSKY (Lev Bronstejn, 1879–1940, Russian revolutionary leader): 181 (his meeting with Sh. Arslan in Moscow)

TUBAN (a port in East Java): 144 (its role during the colonial period for the diffusion of al-Manār in the Indonesian archipelago)

TUNAS MELAYU (“The Malay Seeds,” monthly journal created by Haji ‘ABbas in 1913 in the Tanjung Pagar district of Singapore): 148 (its role in promoting the reformist cause)

TUNISIA: 163 (nineteenth-century constitutional initiative), 187 (its occupation by France since 1881)

TUQAY, ‘Abd-ALLAH (1886–1913, Volga Tatar poet, leader of the Islahi movement): 94 (his critic of the

madrasacentred strategy of modernization of the Muslims of Russia)

TURABI, HASAN (Sudanese religious intellectual): 301 (on the likeliness for present-day ulama to be engineers or doctors as well as religious scholars)

TURBAN: 63 –64 (post-First World War controversy about the wearing of a hat or a turban)

TURKESTAN: 274 (territorial autonomy proposed for Turkestan by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1907), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travels to Russian Turkestan and Bukhara in 1908)

TURKEY: 21 (abolition of the Sultanate in 1922), 61 (its early twentieth-century constitutionalism as a model for the world of Islam), 62 (post-First World War critics of Westernization in Atatürk’s T.), 64 (abolition of the caliphate in 1924), 64 (Turkish history as a proof of the country’s European character), 74 –84 (influence of al-Manār in T.), 122 –123 , 259 (influence of Wang Haoran’s travels to T. and Egypt on his reformist thought), 150 –151 (publication of news on T. by al-Imam, at the same time as news from Japan), 260 (Ha Decheng’s importation of Islamic literature from Egypt, India, and T.), 275 (exile of Muslim intellectuals of Russia to T. after the Czarist reaction of 1907 and the Young Turks revolution of 1908), 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s critic of Westernization in Turkey after the Tanzimat reform), 282 (recapture of Izmir by the Turkish Army from the Greeks in 1922, and its influence on ‘Abd al-Rashid’s Ibrahim’s decision to migrate to T.), 290 (major role of religious intellectuals in furthering the goals of civil society in countries like Indonesia and T.), 294 (Fethullah Gülen and his movement’s contribution to the emergence of a public sphere in T.), 295 –298 (history and sociology of the Nurcu movement in T. and abroad, in part. 296 –297 : Nursi’s success in articulating his message with rural Turkish society, when the hold of local leaders was giving way to the state apparatus)

TURKISH LANGUAGE: 193 (as one of the languages of the European Muslim Congress of Geneva in 1935), 281 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s translations into Ottoman Turkish of Japanese literature on Western oppression of Eastern peoples)

TURKISM (school of political thought in the late Ottoman Empire): 77 (its division between “Ottomans” and Turkic exiles), 170 –171 (role played by Turkists in the debates on the Shari’A in the Ottoman parliament after 1908), 181 (CUP’s successive adaptation of Ottomanism, Islamism, and Turkism)

TURKS: 6 (post-First World War shift in religious authority from the Turks to the Arabs seen as a means for Islamic regeneration), 10 (Turks’ concern in the awaikening of Islam), 22 (Rida’s insistence on the necessary cooperation of Arabs and Turks), 46 (participation of Turks of Egypt in the Ottoman Consultation Society), 65 (Rida’s critic of the role played by “renegade Turks” in Westernization), 211 (the Muslims of Turkish origin in the Balkans)

TURUQ : see tariqa

UCHIDA RYOHEI (1874–1937, Japanese ultranationalist leader): 276 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

UFA (a city in the Western Urals): 88 (as the siege of the Muftiyyat of Russia since 1782), 90 (creation of the ‘Aliyya Madrasa by Kamali in 1906), 273 –274 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s appointment as a qadi of the Spiritual Assembly of Ufa)

UIGHURS (modern Turkic-speaking Muslimbackground people of Xinjiang): 245 (action of the Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Hui People, in Ningxia, for bringing together the Uighurs and the Muslim Han), 247 (exclusion of Uighurs from the scope of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country)

ULAMA: 11 (ulama of the Salaf as a reference to modern reformers of Islam), 14 (change in the intellectual profile of ulama in the twentieth century), 24 (status of the muëtahid in Shiite Islam), 27 (rural origins of early twentieth-century reformist ulama), 45 (the ulama's role as leaders of uneducated masses in the late Ottoman Empire), 56 ('Abduh's praise of the Wahhabiyya for removing layers between men and true study of the Qur 1 an and Hadith), 76 (reforms of the status and functions of the Ottoman veyhülislâm in 1916 and 1917), 81 (Ottoman ulama's uneasiness in challenging the Westernization movement), 90 (school teachers and qari s' questioning of ulama's authority in Imperial Russia), 96 (nomination by Barudi of a female qadi in the muftiyyat of Russia in 1917), 150 (ulama's responsibility, from the reformist viewpoint, in the transmission of impure Islam), 162 (the qadi's political role in classical Islamic societies), 164 (crucial support of large part of the ulama to constitutional movements in early twentieth-century Iran, Egypt, and Turkey), 165 (ulama's mobilization against the French encroachments in early twentieth-century Morocco), 170 (restriction of the qadi's role in 'Abd al-Karim Murad's draft constitution for Morocco), 171 (ulama's entrance into the political arena in the world of Islam, since the late nineteenth century), 216 (Gazi Husrev-beg Medrese of Sarajevo and its role in the education of the official religious leaders of the Muslim community of Yugoslavia during the Communist period), 273 –274 ('Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim's appointment as a qadi of the Spiritual Assembly of Ufa), 289 , 292 (challenge to the ulama's authority by new categories of literati in the contemporary Muslim majority world), 290 (major role of religious intellectuals in furthering the goals of civil society in countries like Indonesia and Turkey), 299 (Shahrur's challenge to the authoritative tradition of tafsir and fiqh), 301 (Hasan Turabi on the likeliness for ulama to be engineers or doctors as well as religious scholars), see also ahong ; authority; clergy; education; mosques

ULFAT (“The Rapprochement,” Tatar newspaper published in St. Petersburg in 1906–1907): 274 , 276 (its edition by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim)

ÜLKEN, HALMA ZAYA (historian of modern Turkey): 76 (his classification of Turkish Islamists into four groups: traditionalists, modernists, moderates, and anti-modernists)

’UMAR AL-MUKHTAR (military leader of the Libyan resistance against the Italians): 191 (his relationship to Sh. Arslan)

UMM AL-QURA (“The Mother of Cities,” an essay by al-Kawakibi): 6 (on the imaginary conference in Mecca), 32 (on its various editions), 43 (its publishing by Rida in serial form)

UMMA (community of Muslim believers): 7 , 27 (al-Kawakibi’s thought on the umma ’s leadership), 12 (Rida’s introduction of ‘Abduh as a paramount leader of the umma), 13 –15, 20 –21 , 28 (‘Abduh and Rida’s discourse on the unity and revitalization of the umma), 205 (Mufti-’s call to the creation of a global umma), see also nation and nationalism; nationality; watan

UNIVERSITIES: 260 (Ma Songting’s teaching of Arabic language at Beijing University, until the Cultural Revolution), 260 (Ma Jian’s professorship in the Beijing University), 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s visit to universities and schools for girls in Tokyo in 1909) see also education; madrasa; schools and schooling

UNITY OF BEING: see wahdat al-wuëud

URALS: 85 , 91 (confrontation of its Muslim populations with Slavic mass migration since the late nineteenth century), 88 (renewal of Christian Orthodox missionary activity in the late nineteenth century)

URBANITY: see rurality

URDU LANGUAGE: 232 (U. as the medium par excellence of religious education among Northern Pakistani Isma ‘ilis), 235 (translation of Nasir-i Khusraw’s works from Persian to U. by Hunza’i), 257 (Da Pusheng’s learning of U. in India), 260 (Ha Decheng’s fluency in Arabic language, Urdu, and English)

‘UR cBA (Arabic, “Arabic identity,” “Arabism”): 6 (Rida’s emphasis on ‘uruba)

AL-’URWA AL-WUT ¯QA (“The Firmest Bond,” a journal edited in Paris in 1884 by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad ‘Abduh): 8 –10 , 13 (first journal calling for a revival of Islam, and a predecessor of al-Manār), 33 (its reprint), 42 (its influence on Maghribi and Rida), 96 (its reading by the young Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din in Orenburg), 105 (its high rating in Russia until the early 1910s), 144 (journal’s circulation in the Malay-Indonesian world) USA: 178 (US protestant schools in the Near-East, and attendance of one of them by Sh. Arslan), 292 (return of Protestant fundamentalism as an expression of an overall present-day Christian revivalism), 295 (expansion of the Nurcu movement outside Turkey), 299 (Shahrur’s lectures in the USA in the late 1990s) USSR: 188 , 192 (Sh. Arslan’s role in the Ottoman parliament’s foreign commission during negotiations with the Bolsheviks and the Soviet government)

US cL AL-FIQH (methodology of Islamic jurisprudence): 95 (its central place in Barudi’s teaching)

US cL-I GADID (“new method” of teaching the Arabic alphabet in Turkic languages): 89 (its experimentation by Gaspralï in Crimea in the 1880s)

USÛLÜ 1 L-HIKEM FÎ NIZÂMI 1 L-ÜMEM (treatise by /brahim Müteferrika): 163 (its proposals for military reforms along European lines)

‘UTHMAN EFENDI RAFFAT (Egyptian scholar): 153 (first director of the Madrasa al-Iqbal al-Islamiyya of Singapore)

UZUNÇARVILI, /SMAAL HAKKI (historian of the Ottoman state): 162 (on the consultative and representative mechanisms in sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries Ottoman councils)

VAGLIERA, LAURA (Italian orientalist): 191 (her paper at the Muslim Congress of Europe in 1935, on “What Europe Thinks on Islam”)

VATICAN COUNCIL (Second, 1962–1965): 292 –293 (its influence on the emergence of transnational decentralized grassroots networks), 296 (its calls of resolving confessional differences between Christians and Muslims)

VELAYAT-E FAQIH : see wilaya al-faqih VENICE: 163 (Dadi-’s mention of Istanbul’s early eighteenth-century ruling circles’ interest in Venice’s form of government)

VIDEO: see mass media

VIÉNOT (French Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs): 186 (his meeting with Arslan in Geneva, prior to the signature of the treaty of independence with Syria in 1936)

VLADIVOSTOK: 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s travel to Siberia, the Far-East, South Asia, and the Near East in 1909)

VOLGA BULGHARS: 93 , 103 (as a community of reference for Russia’s nineteenth-century Muslim reformers)

VOLGA REGION: 85 (its submission to Russia since the mid-sixteenth century)

VOLKAN (“The Vulcano,” 1908–1909, newspaper of the /ttihâd-i Muhammedî Cemiyeti): 75 (its struggle against the CUP)

WAHDAT AL-WUÆ cD (Arabic: “unity of being,” notion borrowed from the mystical thinker Ibn al-’Arabi): 119 (its place in Hui classical theories of adhesion to the Chinese Imperial state), 120 (its combination with Confucian terminology in Chinese Islam), 122 (avatars of the unity of being theory in the early twentieth-century), 123 (interpretation of patriotism in the framework of the unity of being theory by ahong s of the early Republican period), 125 (following of the doctrine by the warlord Ma Fuxiang)

WAHHABI/WAHHABIYYA: 56 (its apology by Rashid Rida in the last phase of his life)

WAHHABI REFORMISM: 249 (its influence on the Ikhwani movement in China)

WA’IZ (Arabic word: preacher, lecturer): 231 –232 (appearance of Isma ‘ili wa’iz s in Northern Pakistan in the 1970s, and its impact on the structure of religious authority among the Isma ‘ilis)

WADJDI, MUHAMMAD FARID (1875–1954, Egyptian disciple of Muhammad ‘Abduh): 80 (translations by M. Âkif from his encyclopaedia and commentary of the Qur1 an)

WAKHAN (region in the Pamirs): 230 (place of origin of Pir Sahib’s lineage)

WALLACHIANS (Muslims of Wallachian origin in Bosnia-Herzegovina): 211 (their place in the Muslim populations of the Balkans)

WANG CENGSHANG (former student of Istanbul University): 126 (his presentation of the Qur1 an)

WANG DAIYU (late Ming—early Qing Muslim Chinese scholar): 119 –120 (his role in the elaboration of Islamic thought through Chinese characters)

WANG HAORAN (or Wang Kuan, 1848–1919, prominent ahong of Beijing and reformer of the Islamic curriculum): 122 –123 , 259 (influence of his hajj, and of his travels to Egypt and Turkey on his reformist thought), 243 , 259 (his direction of the

Society for the Advance of the Hui Religion of China), 250 , 259, 260 (his creation with Da Pusheng, in 1907, of the Pedagogical Institute of the Hui Religion at the Beijing mosque of Ox Street), 256 (his collaboration in Beijing, after 1908, with Ma Linyi), 257 (Da Pusheng’s studies in the Ox Street Mosque of Beijing, under Wang Haoran’s guidance), 279 (Wang Haoran’s meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim, and the latter’s failure to convert him to a rapprochement with Japan)

WANG JINGZHAI (1871 or 1879–1949, also known as Wang Wenqing, influential ahong of Tianjin, one of the “Four Great Ahong s” of China): 123 , 124 –125 (his studies in al-Azhar, and his Chinese translation of the Qur 1 an), 126 (his diffusion of information on reformist movements in Egypt), 245 –246 (his role in the creation of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the Resistance to Japan and the Salvation of the Country), 246 (his participation in the Wuchang conference, and in the creation and administration of the Friendly Association of the Hui People of China for the the Salvation of the Country), 259 (biographical sketch, including his education, travels, and activity)

WANG KUAN: see Wang Haoran

WANXIAN (city in Hebei): 251 (establishment of the Normal Islamic School of Wanxian in 1929)

WAQF (pl. awqaf, Arabic: pious endowment): 90 (their partial replacement by benevolent societies in Imperial Russia), 169 (reform of awqaf in ‘Abd al-Karim Murad’s political thought), 191 –192 (the international debates on the Italian administration of waqf s in Libya)

WARLORDS (of Western China, during the Republican period): 245 , 254 –258 (their role in the sponsoring of the revival of Islamic

culture in China), 249 (support given by the Ikhwani movement to the warlords, as the representatives of a strong power), 255, 261 (support to the pro-Chinese Ikhwani movement, and of Hu Songshan’s ideas, by the Ma warlords of Western China)

WARSAW: 194 (call of the European Muslim Congress for the building of a mosque in W., and its construction under Szynkewicz’s supervision)

WASATIYYA (Arabic, lit. “middle way,” concept developed by al-Qaradawi): 28

WASEDA UNIVERSITY (in Tokyo): 275 (its visit by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in 1909)

WATAN (Arabic: homeland, fatherland): 126 (Molière’s quotation by Wang Jingzhai for his definition of watan), 126, 129 , 132 –133 (the definition of watan through the Hadith among the Hui of China), 133 (Hui interpretation of watan as a Chinese state with a non-Muslim majority), see also nation and nationalism; nationality; umma WATT, W. MONTGOMERY (historian of Islam and of the Arab world): 162 (early Abbasid Sunnis as a “constitutional block” opposed to the “autocratic block” of the Shiites)

WENYAN : see Chinese language and literature

WESTERNISTS (late Ottoman school of political thought): 74 –75 (its role as a source of inspiration for Atatürk’s first reforms; its opposition to Islamists), 170 –171 (Shari’A in the debates between Westernists and Islamists in the Ottoman parliament after 1908)

WESTERNIZATION: 24 (polemic use of the notion of mutafarnij [“franconizer”] by Rida), 25 (early discussions of the assumption that modernization implies Westernization), 56 , 60 (selective acceptation of Western ideas by the Salafiyya, within a general Islamic framework), 62 , 64 (post-First World War critics of Westernization in Atatürk’s Turkey), 65 (Rida’s critic of the role played by “renegade Turks” in Westernization), 79 (E. Zola’s influence on the young M. Âkif), 80 (Young Ottomans’ opposition to the superficial adoption of parts of European culture), 94 (Russia’s madrasas accused by conservative ulama of being an instrument of Westernization), 96 (some excesses of the theory of Westernization, about the Muslims of Russia), 101 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s pessimism about Western civilization), 120 (absorption of Western modernism in Japan as seen by early twentieth-century Muslim travellers), 163 (Ottoman bureaucrat /brahim Müteferrika’s proposals for military reforms along European lines), 242 (influence of Western ideas, through a Japanese intermediary, on ethnicity, nationality, and citizenship among early twentieth-century Chinese Muslims), 248, 253 (influence of Western studies in islamology on twentieth-century Chinese Muslim learned circles), 276 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s praise of Japan’s acceptance of Western science and technology, and warnings against superficial Westernization), 295 –296 (Nursi’s apology of early twentiethcentury Western-style school education among the Muslims), see also alcohol and alcoholism; clothing; colonialism; hygiene; identity; translation

WILAYA AL-FAQIH (Arabic, “guardianship by the jurist”): 23 (formulation of the concept by Ayatollah Khomeini), 27 (its antecedence by Rida’s theory of the caliphate of the mujtahid)

WILHELM II (German emperor, r. 1888–1918): 188 , 189 –190 (impact of his declaration in Damascus, in 1898, on Germany being the protector of Muslims, and on Sh. Arslan’s relationship to the Kaiser’s approach toward Islam)

WOMEN AND THE “WOMEN QUESTION”: 66 (Rashid Rida’s writings on the “danger of liberating women”), 96 (Barudi’s nomination of a female qadi in the muftiyyat of Russia), 97 (popularization by al-Qadiri of Qasim Amin’s writings on the status of woman), 99 (Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din’s series on the famous women of Islam), 100 (“women question” in the ethical debates of the 1900 to 1910s in Russia), 145 (Malay-Indonesian writer Shaykh al-Hadi’s novel Farida Lanum on feminist themes), 248 (female ahong s in twentieth-century China, with Persian language as their literary language), 289 (increasingly important role of women in modern communication), 297 (women’s increasingly active role in the promotion of Nursi’s message), 297 (F. Gülen’s advocacy of a public role for women in society, and statement that the wearing of the headscarf by women is a matter of personal choice), see also biography; clothing; education; ethics; headscarf; language; nationalism

WORLD BANK: 237 –238 (its utilization by Aga Khan IV for the modernization of the Isma ‘ili community in Northern Pakistan)

WORLD ISLAMIC CONGRESS OF MECCA IN 1926: 101 (its attending by Riza al-Din b. Fakhr al-Din)

WORLD UNION OF MUSLIM ULAMA: 27 (its foundation in 2004 in London)

WU TEGONG (d. 1963, Muslim Chinese journalist at the Shenbao of Shanghai): 244 , 258 (his role in the creation of the Learned Society of the Hui Religion of China in 1925, and of the Guild of the Hui Religion in China in 1929), 258 (his collaboration, beside Sha Shanyu, with Ha Decheng and Ma Jiang on their translations of the Qur1 an)

WUCHANG (one of the three cities forming Wuhan, in central China): 246 (conference organized in 1937 by Bai Conqxi, to mobilize the Chinese Muslims against the Japanese)

WUJDA (Moroccan city): 167 (its occupation by the French army in March 1907)

XIN JIAOYU XUE (“Schools with the New Education,” book on modern schooling by Ma Linyi): 256 (its influence in China)

XIN ZONGZHEN (prominent ahong in Hebei): 136 (his mobilization of the Hui against the Japanese occupation of China)

XING HUI PIAN (“A Leaf for Awakening the Hui”): 252 (the publication of this journal, since 1908, by the thirty-six students who had created in Tokyo the Association for the Pure and True Education)

XINJIANG: 230 (Yarkand as Pir Sahib’s birthplace, and the center of his family’s Isma ‘ili da’wa in the 1910–1920s), 235 (Isma ‘ili da’wa led in the 1940s by Hunza’i), 247 (exclusion of Muslims from Xinjiang from the scope of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country), 282 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s emigration from Siberia through Xinjiang, China, and Manchuria)

XINSHI JAIOYU (Chinese: “New Style of Education”): 247 –248 (its introduction among Muslim Chinese in the early twentieth-century)

XIUCAI : see examination

XUEWENBO (teacher of the Chengda Normal School in the 1930s): 135 (his poem “Song of the Hui with an anti-Japanese Determination”)

YA LATIF! (“O God!”): 198 (incantation diffused throughout Morroco’s mosques as a protest against the Berber Dahir)

YALTIKAYA, VERAFEDDAN (1879–1947,

Ottoman religious scholar): 77 (his introduction of the pioneer Salafi thinker Ibn Taymiyya in the Turkist journal /slâm mecmuasi)

YAMAOKA KOTARO (1880–1959, first

Japanese performer of the hajj): 279 (his and ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s lectures in the Society of Muslims Students of Russia, in Istanbul)

YAN’AN: 247 (creation of a subsidiary association of the Friendly Association of the Hui Religion of China for the Salvation of the Country)

YANG SISHI (contributor to Yuehua): 130 (his praise of Nur al-islam for providing solutions to conflicts among madhab s and Sufi orders in Chinese Islam)

YANG ZHONGMING (1870–1952, activist of the modernization of Islamic teaching in China): 260 (his writing of the Sijiao

yaogua, and his role at the Changda Normal School)

YANI YAPON MULBIRI (“The New Japanese Correspondent,” a monthly Tatar-Ottoman journal founded in Tokyo by Qurban-’Aliyeff in 1932): 283 , 284 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s collaboration to the journal)

YARKAND (city in south western Xinjiang): 230 (Pir Sahib’s birthplace, and the center of his family’s Isma ‘ili da’wa in the 1910–1920s)

YA’USHEFF, NUSHIRWAN (d. 1917, Bashkir traveller and travel writer): 102 (his correspondences in the Mura)

YEMEN: 195 –196 (Imam Yahya’s conflicts with Ibn Saud)

YI-SI-LAN-JIAO GAILUN (“A Summary of Islam” book on modern schooling by Ma Linyi): 256 (its influence in China)

YIHEIWANI: see Ikhwani movement

YIWOBAO (“To Develop Us,” journal created in 1905 by Tong Cong for presenting his pedagogical ideas): 243

YOKOHAMA: 275 (‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim’s stay in this city in 1909)

YOUNG OTTOMANS: 80 (their influence on Mehmed Âkif; their invention of the concept of pan-Islamism), 164 (their support by Islamic reformists in Syria and Egypt), 170 (their confidence in the Shari’A as a source of dignity and as a baseline for political institution-building)

YOUNG TURKS: 76 (their Islamic reforms in the judicial and educational systems), 151 (support of the Malay-Indonesian journal al-Imam to the Young Turks after 1908), 164 (support to Y.T. by Islamic reformists in Syria and Egypt), 275 (exile of Muslim intellectuals of Russia to Turkey after the Young Turks revolution of 1908)

YUEHUA (“Moonlight,” Chinese Muslim journal published from 1929 to 1948 by the new Chengda School at Beijing): 117 –142 (article by Matsumoto M., especially 124 –136), 253 (journal’s stress on patriotism, Ikhwani inspiration, and call for a reconciliation between and with the different Sufi allegiances), 256 (sponsorship of the journal by Ma Fuxiang)

YUGOSLAVIA: 192 (articles in La Nation arabe on Islam in Eastern Europe), 192 (Sh. Arslan’s travels in Yu. in 1931 and 1933–1934), 194 (acknowledgment of the Yugoslav government by the European Muslim Congress of 1935 for its favorable treatment of its Muslim population), 211 –225 (article by A. Popovic)

YUNTING PROVINCIAL NORMAL SCHOOL (Shengli Yunting shifan xuexiao): 251 (former Sino-Arabic University of Ningxia)

ZAGREB: 214 (creation of the Mladi Muslimani organization in 1941)

AL-ZAHRAWI, ‘Abd AL-HAMID (early twentieth-century Syrian publicist, an associate of Rashid Rida’s): 43 (his attempt at the underground publication of a journal in Homs), 44 (his attack on common views on Sufism and jurisprudence), 46 (his book on Muhammad’s first wife, Khadija), 47 (his obituary notice in al-Manār)

ZAKAT (Islamic alms tax, amounting to one fortieth of a household’s income): 5 (its being left for private initiative in modern era), 19 (in Rida’s comment of the Qur 1 an), 45 (approval by Rashid Rida of Sayyadi’s views on the collection of the z.), 90 (its partial replacement by benevolent societies in Imperial Russia), 121 (financing of Qur1 anic schools by the zakat —tianke —among the Hui), 227, 229 –230 , 233 (tithe on the tenth part of a household income, as it is perceived among the Nizari Isma ‘ilis)

ZANZIBAR: 229 (homage paid to Aga Khan III in Z. by a son of the mir of Hunza)

AL-ZAWAWI, ‘Abd-ALLAH (early twentiethcentury scholar from Mecca): 48 (his involvement in the debate between Rida and Ibn ‘Aqil on the Shiite practice of cursing Mu’Awiya)

ZEKI VALIDOV, AHMED (1890–1970, Bashkir political activist, memorialist and historian): 282 (his meeting with ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim in the Southern Urals in March 1920)

ZENTRAL RAT DER MUSLIME (Central Council of Muslims, Germany): 293 (creation of central formal institutions, since the 1930s, to ‘represent’ Islam in France and Germany)

ZHAO ZHENWU (progressive literati of the Huabei region in the 1930s): 125 (his role in the launching of the Yuehua journal)

ZHENGDONG AIGUO BAO (‘Correct Teaching and Love of the Country’): 252 (publication of this Hui journal in Beijing, in spoken Chinese language, since 1904), 279 (publication of a paper by ‘Abd al-Rashid Ibrahim)

ZHENJIANG (a city in Jiangsu): 242 (creation of the General Association for the Religious Education of the Muslim People of Eastern Asia, in 1906)

ZHONGGUO TONGMINGHUI (Chinese Revolutionary Association): 121 (membership of Hui students in Tokyo)

ZHUYUAN BAIHUA BAO (“The Colloquial-Language Journal of the Garden of Bamboos”): 252 (publication of this Chinese Muslim journal in Beijing since 1906)

ZINOVIEV (Grigorij E. Radomylskij, alias Z., 1883–1936, a Bolshevik leader): 181 (his meetings with Sh. Arslan in Saint Moritz and in Moscow)

ZIONISM: 183 (opposition of Palestinian delegates to the Syrian Congress against the Syrian elements’ will of compromising on the issue of Zionism), 187 (support of the post-First World War British left to Zionism, an obstacle to a rapprochement with Arab nationalists)

AL-ZIRKISHI (sixteenth-century Shafi’i scholar): 47 (publication by al-Qasimi of al-Z.’s treatise on jurisprudence, philosophy, and logic)

ZOLA, EMILE (1840–1902, French critic and novel-writer): 79 (his influence on the young M. Âkif)

ZULFIKARPASI-, ADIL (b. 1921, Bosnian politician, founder of the Boshnakian Institute in Zurich): 218 (as a representative of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora)

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Translated, Edited, and with an Introduction by

Andreas Christmann

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** Front Matter

*** Foreword by Dale F. Eickelman

Both mass education and mass communications, particularly the proliferation of media and the means by which people communicate, have profoundly influenced how people think about religious and political authority throughout the Muslim world. Multiple means of communication have eroded the frontier between ‘authorized’ and ‘illicit’ communications, making the control of information and opinion much more difficult than it was in prior eras and fostering, albeit inadvertently, a fragmentation of authority and a civil society of dissent. We are only now beginning to understand how different media—print, television, radio, cassettes, music, and the Internet—

influence groups and individuals, encouraging unity in some contexts and fragmentation in others, but the written word remains the privileged cultural vehicle for shaping religious beliefs and practices throughout the Muslim world. Books and pamphlets, including banned ones, are talked about and invoked as authority in sermons, cassettes, lectures, reviews, and conversations. In seeking to ban and confiscate them, censors only draw attention to their existence and increase their circulation.

At the high end of this transformation is the rise to significance of books such as Muhammad Shahrur's. His first major book in Arabic, al-Kit§b wa'l-Qur"§n: Qir§"a mu#§ßira [The Book and the Qur"§n] (1990), became an unexpected best-seller throughout the Arab world in spite of its length of over 800 pages and being banned in several countries. Four successive books (through 2008) followed, further elaborating and articulating his ideas on the state, civil society, and democracy in Qur'anic thought, values and ethics in modern society, and the sources of tyranny and terrorism.

The Book and the Qur"§n became an instant success, with tens of thousands of copies sold throughout the Arab world in both authorized (Damascus and Beirut) and pirated (Cairo) editions, and was widely circulated by photocopy elsewhere (including Saudi Arabia), in spite of the fact that its circulation was banned or discouraged. The impact of Shahrur's writings, like those of comparable writers, is not limited to those who read it. A much larger number of people learned about his book in reviews or rebuttals or in admonitions not to read it. We may live in what sociologist Manuel Castells has famously called the era of the 'network society,' but the main vehicle for the spread of Shahrur's ideas from the outset has been the printed word. The covers of Shahrur's books are austere, distinctive from the eye-catching techniques of modern graphic design. Ironically, only the pirated Egyptian editions show a flair for graphic design.

The impact of ideas such as Shahrur's could not have been imagined before large numbers of people were able to read his books and understand his sustained advocacy. Shahrur argues that there is a need to reinterpret ideas of religious authority and tradition, and to apply Islamic precepts to contemporary society. Yet popular resistance to such challenges to established authority has also been intense. Dozens of books and many more

critical reviews have been written and Friday sermons delivered in response to Shahrur. The popularity and appeal of his argument has so infuriated some of his traditionalist detractors that they imitate the cover design of his book and even insert in their bibliography the number of ‘factual errors’ in his essay—‘over 2,500’ by one 1996 account. Such error-counters fail to realize that Shahrur’s goal is to redefine how Muslims and non-Muslims alike think about religion and sacred authority.

From the outset in his writings, Shahrur has made a striking analogy between the Copernican revolution and Qur’anic interpretation. Copernicus (1473–1543) replaced the older Ptolemaic view of a universe in which all celestial bodies revolved around a stationary earth with one in which the earth revolved daily on its own axis and once yearly (at least with a solar calendar) around the sun. Shahrur writes that Qur’anic interpretation has been shackled for centuries by the conventions of medieval jurists, who had mastered the craft of chaining authoritative commentaries to prior authoritative ones and of creating genealogies, or chains (silsilas), of traditions of authoritative learning.

Shahrur’s intent is to replace this long tradition with human reason. On issues ranging from the role of women in society to rekindling a ‘creative interaction’ with non-Muslim philosophies, Shahrur argues that Muslims should reinterpret sacred texts anew and apply them to contemporary social and moral issues: “If Islam is sound

[ß§liÈ] for all times and places,” then we must not neglect historical developments and the interaction of different generations. We must act as if “the Prophet just ... informed us of this Book.”

Shahrur’s ideas directly challenge the authority of traditional Qur’anic exegesis (tafsÊr), collections of sayings of the prophet (ÈadÊth), and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). The subtitle of his first book—‘a contemporary interpretation”—uses the term qir§“a, which can mean either reading or interpretation, rather than the term tafsÊr, which directly evokes the established conventions of traditional Islamic learning from which Shahrur advocates a

decisive break. For many Muslims and established men of religious learning, Shahrur argues that traditional disciplines of learning such as tafsÊr have implicitly acquired an authority equal to that of the Qur’an itself. As Shahrur explains, the four conventional schools of Islamic jurisprudence say little about tyranny and absolutism, although they deal extensively with rules for inheritance and ritual cleanliness.

Because Shahrur’s ideas pose such basic challenges to existing authority, he has been periodically attacked in some Friday sermons in Damascus since the publication of his first book. As a Muslim Brother said to me in Kuwait in June 1993, Shahrur is “worse than Salman Rushdie” because he proclaims his faith in Islam but advocates a critical stance toward established conventions of authoritative learning. The Kuwaiti continued: “Not all Muslims have a high level of education or an ability to know Islam. That’s why we have committees of properly qualified scholars, to keep such books out of the hands of Muslims who cannot distinguish between Shahrur’s correct understandings and deviations, especially his errors on ideas of women and the family.”

These attacks on Shahrur are all the more important because his notion of disseminating his ideas is almost as formally rigorous as Kant’s notion of ‘public’ contained in his essay on the Enlightenment, in which the idea of ‘public’ is the words of a writer appearing before readers independent of authoritative intermediaries such as preachers, judges, and rulers. For a long time, Shahrur’s public speaking invitations were rare. Beginning in the early 1990s, however, he began to grant newspaper interviews in Arabic and English, has appeared on various Arabic satellite channels, and has made public presentations in English in North America and Europe. The Arabic appearances are meticulously recorded on his website (w ww. shahrour.org). Unsurprisingly, the website is austere. It is easy to navigate, but its focus is on the text. This unadorned means of persuasion, however, appeals to a growing educated middle class.

Shahrur’s use of the term ‘Copernican revolution’ to emphasize contemporary innovations in interpreting God’s word contains an element of hyperbole. The cliché of the Renaissance, itself a nineteenth century term, is that people like Copernicus discarded the dusty parchments of earlier eras to

learn ‘directly from nature.’ In practice, the revolution wrought by Copernicus and others combined first-hand observations and the careful analysis of received opinions of the past, made possible through the dissemination of multiple texts through printing. The present ‘revolution’ in thinking about Islam is not a complete break with the past. However, the rise in educational levels and the multiple channels of communication have created an unprecedented opportunity for people to talk back to authorities, both religious and political, and to invest conventional forms with new meanings and contexts. The field of discourse has shifted, so that even those who advocate a more exclusively Islamic intellectual development do so in a language and style that assumes background knowledge of ideas and institutions which are not distinctively Muslim. The current situation is far different from earlier eras, when men of religious learning all read essentially the same ‘core’ texts.

The Qur’an, Morality, and Critical Reason presents for the first time in English a comprehensive account of Shahrur’s original approach to how to think about Islam. In preparing the Arabic original of this book, Shahrur has naturally drawn on his nearly two decades of writing about Islam. In so doing, however, he has gone beyond and created a text that is often both new and consistently accessible.

In an interview that I conducted with Muhammad Shahrur in Damascus in 1996, published for the first time in this volume, we explored his original sense of audience. Over the years, Shahrur has learned to communicate to new and wider audiences. His earlier writings dealt only obliquely with the rough topics of the world in which we live—tyranny and terrorism. His more recent writings in Arabic, and this book in English, confront these hard issues head on.

The Qur’an, Morality, and Critical Reason is in part a long-term dialogue with Shahrur’s audience in the Arab world, Europe, North America, and even Indonesia—where his work in translation has received a wide and appreciative audience. Andreas Christmann, like myself, saw early on the originality of Shahrur’s work and his approach to linking faith to reason. This translation is so clear and effective that it is at times easy to think that it was written originally in English rather than translated from Arabic. Christmann’s

introduction, like his annotated explanations of Shahrur’s narrative, adds value by giving readers an intimate sense of the intricacies of Shahrur’s approach to critical inquiry, the context for the interpretive issues that Shahrur addresses, and a window into the critical debates now underway in the Arabic-speaking world.

Shahrur’s approach goes to the heart of current debates about how to interpret Islam in the modern world. In many respects I find his approach to thinking about religion and reason the Arabic counterpart to Wilfred Cantwell Smith’s highly influential The Meaning and End of Religion (1962). Shahrur vigorously offers an innovative approach to interpreting Islam and its relation to other faiths, prophetic tradition, the controversial ‘limits’ (Èudåd) of Islamic law, women, and political Islam—including a head-on confrontation with advocates of tyranny and terrorism.

In The Qur’an, Morality, and Critical Reason Shahrur boldly confronts controversial issues and at the same time links the fundamentals of faith—and not just Islamic faith—to critical reason. He offers a strong argument for a civil society that encompasses both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This book is a portal to his thought for the English-speaking world, and Andreas Christmann’s superb introduction and annotated translation makes it an exciting and accessible point of departure for Shahrur to engage a wide audience in the English-speaking world.

*** Acknowledgements

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*** Used Translations and their Abbreviations

YA Yusuf Ali, The Holy Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary (Medina: King Fahd Holy Qur"§n Printing Complex, 1410 AH/1990).

AH M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, The Qur'an (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

MF Majid Fakhry, An Interpretation of the Qur'an: English Translation of the Meanings (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

MP Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, The Meaning of The Glorious Qur’an: An Explanatory Translation (New Modern English Edition, Birmingham: Islamic Da”wa Centre International, 2004).

AB Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley, The Noble Qur’an: A New Rendering of Its Meaning in English (Norwich: Bookwork, 1999).

AhA Ahmad Ali, Al-Qur”§n: A Contemporary Translation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001).

AA Arthur J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted, 2 vols. (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1963).

Muhammad Shahrur’s frequent use of quotations from the Qur’an was a particular problem in the English translation, as his understanding of the Arabic text differed considerably from most available English translations. After consultation with Muhammad Shahrur, it was decided to use Yusuf Ali’s version as the default translation in the main text, but it was felt unnecessary to replicate Ali’s antiquated use of English personal pronouns (thy, ye, thou, etc.) and his frequent use of capital initial letters for terms he felt had a particular spiritual resonance. However, in instances when Ali’s translation was either incomprehensible or completely inadequate to render Shahrur’s understanding of a verse, I have sought help from other translations, in particular from Abdel Haleem’s rendering. I have consulted six of the most commonly used English translations from a variety of different linguistic, religious, and educational backgrounds. I indicate in footnotes where discrepancies between their translations and Shahrur’s interpretations occur. In some instances, however, where no translation seemed to offer any resemblance to Shahrur’s reading I have decided to use my own version based on what I thought was the author’s purpose in quoting a specific verse. In situations where I thought it was vital to stress the disagreement between Shahrur’s reading of a verse and its common rendering (including those by abbreviations

English translators), I have kept Ali’s version but inserted the Latin abbreviation [sic] in order to highlight Shahrur’s explicit disagreement with such renderings which he regards as erroneous. When the author has not produced an explicit alternative meaning of a word whose common understanding he heavily criticises, the word in question has not been translated but rather replaced by suspension points in square brackets […], followed by Shahrur’s commentary after the quotation of the verse.

** ‘Read the Qur’an as if it was revealed last night’: An introduction to Muhammad Shahrur’s life and work

This edition assembles the essential writings of Muhammad Shahrur, one of the most interesting and innovative thinkers in the contemporary Arab-Muslim world. The success of his first book on Islam, The Book and the Qur”§n: A contemporary reading (1990),[1] made him a household name among intellectuals, students, and scholars of the entire Middle East during the 1990s. Many readers were stunned by the bold, creative, and unfamiliar way of thinking that characterised Shahrur’s writings. People who were neither experts nor full-time students of Islam and the Qur’an were fascinated by the logic of his arguments and gained easy access to rather complex philosophical and theological debates. My own first encounter with his work came during my fieldwork for my PhD thesis in the mid-1990s in Damascus, when I witnessed what Peter Clark, back in 1996, had called ‘the Shahrur phenomenon’: the publication of an extraordinary book that “challenges a millennium of Islamic tradition”.[2] The unusual composition of the book, its peculiar Arabic style, and its original way of presenting logical arguments were so unique that in 1997 Wael Hallaq emphatically stated that the book “is impressive in that it offers both depth and range, virtually unparalleled in modern writings on the subject”.[3] The enormous number of copies sold, the speed by which reprints were issued and pirate versions reproduced, and the extent to which the book’s ideas were circulated in the preInternet 1990s throughout the Middle East inspired Dale F. Eickelman in 1999 to argue that the Shahrur phenomenon reflected the fact that in most Muslim countries a reconfiguration of the ‘public sphere’ can be witnessed, not only in terms of different communication channels used and different kinds of topics publicly discussed but also in terms of the type of actors who

now enter the public debate about Islam and the type of listeners/readers who participate in it. The book's success, Eickelman says, "could not have been imagined before there were large numbers of people able to read it and understand its advocacy of the need to reinterpret ideas of religious authority and tradition and apply Islamic precepts to contemporary society". [4]

By the time I seriously began to consider Shahrur's œuvre in 2001, three more books had appeared,[5] and Shahrur was already working on his fifth book, which he eventually finished in 2007 and published in 2008.[6] Thus, it has become clear that 'the Shahrur phenomenon' cannot be reduced to the appearance of only his first book but needs to be explained in a more comprehensive way by covering his other writings as well. This volume is an attempt to present Shahrur's entire œuvre in a single book, covering almost two decades of his publications and (almost) the entire spectrum of his thought. It is hoped that this selection, translated and specifically arranged for an English-speaking readership, with the approval of the author, will help the English reader to understand what has captured the public imagination of Arab readers in the 1990s and, beyond that, why Shahrur's work has been perceived by some as so emphatically revolutionary that Eickelman concluded that "compared to most other Islamic thinkers, Shahrur is a radical",[7] while others, like Rainer

Nabielek, even compared his ideas to the Ninety-Five Theses that Martin Luther nailed to the door of the Wittenberg church in 1517, thereby starting the Protestant Reformation.[8] The following essay which contains a brief summary of Shahrur's intellectual life and a short explication of his major streams of thought provides readers with a first orientation before they embark on the main text of Shahrur's writings.

*** Life and Work

Muhammad Shahrur was born in 1938 in the '§liÈiyya quarter of Damascus, the capital of Syria. He was the fifth child of a Sunni dyer who decided not to send his son to the local kutt§b and madrasa, but to the secular primary and secondary state school in al-MÊd§n, the southern

suburb of Damascus outside the walls of the old city. Shahrur's childhood was thus spent in a liberal atmosphere in which, even though his father observed the rituals of prayer and fasting and went with his son on the \ajj in 1946, pious ritual observance was seen as less important than the ethical teachings of Islam. His father taught him that the goodness of a religion can only be measured by its practical and moral implications, not its spiritual efficacy. In a reminiscence, given in an interview in 1996, Shahrur fondly recalled how his father had pointed to the stove of the house and said: "if you want to warm yourself, don't recite the Qur'an, but light a fire in the stove."[9]

Shahrur's most formative years coincided with the politically most unstable periods of the Syrian Arab Republic after it gained its independence in 1947. The young Shahrur was, first as a pupil of the natural sciences then as a student of civil engineering, directly and indirectly influenced by the political turmoil (between 1946 and 1956, Syria had twenty different cabinets and four different constitutions), administrative instability (there were ten successful coups d'état between 1949 and 1970), and the ideological chaos that resulted. In 1959, after the Soviet Union became a key ally of Syria in 1955, Shahrur was sent to Saratow, near Moscow, to study civil engineering. There he experienced another phase of political and ideological confusion. While witnessing the dismantling of Stalinism during Nikita Khrushchev's reign as Soviet Prime Minister (1958–64), his religious beliefs were challenged by a confrontation with Marxist philosophy and institutionalised Soviet-style atheism. Sharing with many contemporary foreign intellectuals the disillusionment with the one-party rule and totalitarian tendencies of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, he still battled with atheism and was—according to his memories—so involved in defending his theistic beliefs that all other questions of religion seemed irrelevant to him.[10] When he graduated in 1964 with a diploma from the Moscow Institute of Engineering, fluent in Russian and married to a Russian wife who bore him a son, he returned to Syria. A couple of years before his return, the political union between Syria and Egypt (1958–61) had been buried along with any hope for a pan-Arab union. Trying to explain the underlying reasons for such political failure, Shahrur believed that pan-Arab thought had failed to produce the necessary ideology for a political union as it was too immersed in romanticist nostalgia entrenched in sentimental poetry. His encounter with Marxist philosophy had taught him that any viable ideology needed a fundamental concept of knowledge, that is, a theory about the human perception of things

that exist in objective reality. He was determined to put this right with his own philosophical ideas.

Yet at this point in Shahrur’s development, the prospect of a good career as a civil engineer and all that this required, in particular the mastering of mathematics and analytical geometry, proved more attractive to him than his philosophical interests. Thus, in 1968, he left Syria again to study abroad, this time at the University College in Dublin where he earned his master’s degree in 1969 and his doctoral degree in soil mechanics and foundation engineering in 1972. Eventually, he went back to Damascus University, where he lectured as a mudarris, then as an assistant professor before being made a full professor at the Faculty of Engineering. He taught at Damascus University for twenty-six years, from 1972 to 1998, and became renowned as the author of several Syrian standard reference works on soil mechanics and foundation engineering. Beside his teaching obligations he worked as a consultant engineer supplying inspection services for over two thousand building projects in Syria (most famously for the a l-Yalbågha Commercial Complex in Damascus and the capital’s four big football stadiums), as well as the Gulf countries (e.g., the Commercial Centre in Medina, Saudi Arabia).

Despite his full-time career as a university professor and consultant engineer, Shahrur never lost interest in developing his views on logic, epistemology, and theistic theology as a response to the crisis of panArabism and the military debacle of the lost Six Day War in 1967. In this, he was similar to many other Syrian Arab intellectuals during the 1970s and 1980s, who also taught at Damascus University (such as ‘§diq Jal§l al-#Aím, •ayyib •ÊzÊnÊ, Adonis, Y§ssin al-\§fií, Eli§s Murqus, SalÊm Barak§t, Burh§n Ghalyån, et al.), and who had also been influenced by Marxist theories. This is not to say that Shahrur was particularly visible or audible in matters of philosophy or Islam. In fact, his intellectual positions appear to have been developed more or less in private, as evidenced by the fact that before his sudden breakthrough with The Book and the Qur”§n in 1990, Shahrur had not published anything on the subject and was then, at the age of fiftytwo, an unknown author—often tentatively referred to as a l-k§tib al-muhandis, the ‘writer-engineer’. And yet, what distinguished him from his more famous and better trained

philosopher-colleagues was the ‘unorthodox angle’ from which he looked at the place of religion and Islam in contemporary Arab intellectual thought.

Although he shared with other Syrian thinkers (in particular •ayyib •ÊzÊnÊ) the belief that Islam possesses a universal epistemology that encourages rationalism, human liberty, and the appropriation of knowledge, Shahrur did not find his inspiration in the classical philosophical heritage nor in the exegetical tradition of medieval Islam, but rather in his work as a natural scientist and engineer. What mattered to him most was not a consistent argument derived from the scholarly discourses of the past, but absolute consistency between the Qur’anic worldview and his own modern and rational experiences of reality. Much of this outlook had already been developed during his Dublin years, where he is said to have devoured the writings of Alfred North Whitehead and his pupil, Bertrand Russell, both mathematician-philosophers themselves, in particular Whitehead’s 1925 Lowell Lectures on “Science in the Modern

World”.[11] Through Whitehead’s work, Shahrur also absorbed much of his influences from German positivist philosophy (Kant, Fichte, and Hegel).[12] This synthesis between Whitehead’s speculative philosophy, German rationalist idealism, and the structuralism of his mathematica l-engineering mind has given his work its distinctive character among the work of other philosophical thinkers.

Shahrur’s unorthodoxy is best illustrated by his account of how he came to elaborate his theory of limits, the central and most significant part of his work on Islamic law: “One day an idea occurred to me when I was lecturing at the university on civil engineering on how to make compaction roads. We have what we call a proctor test, in which we sample and test the soil used in fills and embankments. In this test, we follow a mathematical pattern of exclusion and interpolation. We have two vectors, x and y, a hyperbole. We have a basic risk. We plot a curve and put a line on the top of it. This line is the upper limit, and there is a lower limit. Then I thought of the concept of ‘God’s limits’. I returned here to the office and opened the Qur’an. Just as in mathematics where we have five ways of representing limits, I found five cases in which the notion of God’s limits occurred. What they have in common is the idea that God has not set

down exact rules of conduct in such matters as inheritance, criminal punishments, marriage, interest, and banking practices, but only the limits within which societies can create their own rules and laws. [Therefore, on reflection I came to the conclusion that] thieves do not have to have their hands amputated."[13]

*** The Shahrur Case

The controversy around The Book and the Qur'an started immediately after its first release in Syria in 1990 with a handful of short reviews and culminated in the year 2000 with a 1014-page magnum opus by MuÈammad 'ayy§È al-Ma#rr§wiyya, a "comprehensive refutation" of Shahrur's work, which intended to deal the deathblow to all "contemporary readings of the Qur'an".[14] The debate that took place between 1990 and 2000 generated eighteen books and as many journal articles which specifically targeted the book. It also produced a large number of publications in which various issues, which the book had raised, were discussed without explicit reference to Shahrur's work.[15] The biggest bulk of the polemic against Shahrur was written within the first five years after its publication, and the focus lay entirely on The Book and the Qur'an, while all subsequent writings by Shahrur were more or less ignored. It was the wide and rapid circulation of the book among Arab readers in Syria, the Lebanon, Morocco, and the Gulf states that caused his opponents to respond so quickly. Evidently, the literary and religious elite, who had never heard of an author called Shahrur, were puzzled by the large n umbers of copies sold in the first few months after the book's publication. In 1994, when the sixth edition was on the market, Sheikh Kh§lid a l-#Akk acknowledged that such a development had caused "profound anxiety among the educated public, in particular among scholars and scientists".[16] Undoubtedly, the initial polarization of opinions about the book's 'real origins' unintentionally stimulated wider public interest; in January 1991, the literary critic Na#Êm a l-Y§fÊ wrote gushingly that Shahrur's book "is the most significant work that has been published within the last 1,000 years [!], a work that examines the Qur'an in a sharp-minded manner, reveals a scientific spirit, a holistic vision and a progressive, modern point of view".[17] In stark contrast to such effusive praise, a damning article about the book was published in the journal Nahj al-Isl§m, the official press organ of the Awq§f Ministry in Syria in as early as

December 1990. Without naming the title or author of the book, Sheikh Rama·§n al-BåãÊ, one of Syria's most influential #ulam§", informed the reader of a "tip-off from one of the Deans of Libya's Tripoli University that a Zionist organization had produced a new commentary of the Qur'an and now [has found] an Arabic publishing house, as well as an Arab writer whose name can serve as the author of the book".[18] After a l-BåãÊ provided a number of allusions to the content of The Book and the Qur'an, the association was certainly well established. A few months later, in March 1991, a l-BåãÊ's spiritual novice, ShawqÊ Abå KhalÊl, wrote another article in Nahj a l-Isl§m in which he declared that he had come across three books which, although published at exactly the same time and under three different titles, were absolutely identical: "the same ideas, the same preface, method, aims, even the same conclusion!"[19] —for Abå KhalÊl a clear sign that all three were written as part of a well-orchestrated intellectual war against Islam.

However, the official disapproval of the book failed to achieve its purpose—to discourage and prevent people from buying it—and within a short period of time it was sold out. Thus, tactics had to be changed. In a series of five articles by Sheikh MuÈammad ShafÊq Y§sÊn against Shahrur, published in late 1991 and 1992 again in the journal Nahj al-Isl§m, the accusation of an intellectual and religious crusade was dropped and a less aggressive approach adopted.[20] Critics of Shahrur had two options: to ignore his book, thus expressing contempt through ostentatious silence, or to criticise it publicly, although this implied a tacit acknowledgement of its significance. More and more critics opted for the latter. Two further publications in 1991—now available in book format—one by SalÊm al-J§bÊ[21], the other by MuÈammad Haytham Isl§mbålÊ,[22] tried to discredit the book by 'discovering' its Marxist, secular, and materialistic underpinnings. This, in turn, caused a critical reaction by leftist intellectuals, such as Naßr \§mid Abå Zayd,[23] •ayyib TÊzÊnÊ,[24] •§riq Ziy§da,[25] and #AlÊ NåÈ,[26] who all tried to distance themselves from Shahrur's book by demonstrating its lack of real Marxist and secular-materialist analysis. SalÊm al-J§bÊ's polemical assault was also criticised by other like-minded Muslims similarly opposed to Shahrur's book, who initiated a series of publications that wanted to "set the record straight".[27] By 1993/94, it had become a matter of principle and urgency to join the debate. The circle of critics expanded from the group of Islamic scholars who had started the debate to other intellectual and social groups, now including

linguists,[28] economists,[29] engineers,[30] lawyers,[31] journalists,[32] and school and university teachers.[33] However, the popularity of the book did not subside. On the contrary, its widespread circulation among young Muslims and the fact that in 1992 the announcement of a (later cancelled) lecture by Shahrur at Damascus University attracted over 5,000 people rang alarm bells among the intellectual establishment. Thus, in 1994, M§hir Munajjid wrote a book against The Book and the Qur'an out of fear that it might become the authoritative source for "a large group of people" who would use it ideologically to justify their own non-Islamic lifestyle.[34]

Many authors regarded their refutations as a kind of 'protective wall' to shield Muslim youths from the dangerous influences of the book.[35] Books published against Shahrur grew bigger and thicker, providing a comprehensive, page-by-page refutation of the already voluminous book by Shahrur. The two publications by #Abd al-RaÈm§n \asan \abannaka al-Mayd§nÊ (1997)[36] and MuÈammad 'ayy§È al-Ma#ar r§wiyya (2000), which concluded the fiercest phase of the controversy, aimed to provide the theological means to prove every argument of Shahrur wrong by delivering a counterargument.[37]

Compared to other cases outside Syria the Shahrur case has been a relatively restrained and civilized affair. It never made it to the civil courts in Damascus, and the author has never been officially accused of blasphemy, disbelief or apostasy as happened elsewhere. There has not even been a public hearing where the author had to defend his position, and there has certainly not been any attempt to arrest him. No one has dared publicly to declare Shahrur a renegade, and although the author has received a considerable amount of hate mail there has been no immediate threat to his safety or life. His books have not been confiscated by the Syrian police even though his first book was officially banned in Egypt and temporarily forbidden in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Following his retirement from his position at Damascus University in 1998, Shahrur accepted several invitations from universities in and outside the Arab world (e.g. the Lebanon, Bahrayn, Morocco, Turkey, United States, Germany), and he could travel to all these places without any interference by Syria's state authorities. The papers and lectures he was allowed to produce after 9/11 furnished the material for his most recent and politically most outspoken publication,

TajfÊf man§bi# al-irh§b (Draining the sources of terrorism), in which he refutes the militant interpretations of central Qur’anic concepts by today’s radical Islamists and traces their historical roots in what he sees as the equally militant understandings of medieval Islamic jurisprudence. Given his late entry into the public discourse on Islam and the negative press his first book received in spite of its popularity, it is remarkable to see that Shahrur, not least because of the toleration by the Syrian government and rulers of several Arab countries, has now become a major voice in the debate about a more liberal and tolerant interpretation of Islam and a reform of traditional concepts and understandings of the Qur’an.

*** Theory

The philosophical work of Shahrur, as presented in this volume, is a multidimensional undertaking: it endeavours to provide a systematic and entirely novel presentation of the Qur’anic text and, thus, a completely new conception of religion and Islam. It aims to demonstrate that faith and reason do not need to be mutually exclusive, and it also attempts to show that a rational definition of faith is not only more truthful to the modern, universal spirit of intellectual thought but also superior to the particularistic and ritualistic religiosity of traditional Islam. Like reformists such as Muhammad #Abduh and Fazlur Rahman before him, Shahrur seeks to synthesize Qur’anic with modern worldviews. To this end, he points out what to him seems an already existing symbiosis between the Qur’anic notion of religion (called al-isl§m) and a universally applicable and de facto observable form of common (human) religiosity (also called al-isl§m). Finally, he develops the thesis that the eternal verities of al-isl§m and the philosophical perceptions of the world, defining the parameters of morality and religion, are all but identical.

Shahrur’s main philosophical position can be found in his views on general religion (al-isl§m) and on particular religion (al-Êm§n). The former is guided by scientific reason and by what common (human) sense in all periods of history has viewed as good, moral action. The latter was brought into existence during one limited period of time by a prophet’s appearance as God’s messenger and promulgator of a l-isl§m, who was guided by the specific needs and particular

requirements of the people he represented. Al-isl§m (religion in its general, ethical expression) is eternal, that is, an ideal code of human action, valid forever and everywhere. Al-Êm§n (religion in its particular ritual, legal, and cultural expression) is contingent, that is, variably and differently realizing in the contemporary ‘here and now’ the eternal ethical values of al-isl§m. It is, according to Shahrur, ethical religion that must provide the motive for humankind’s intellectual and spiritual search, not prayer and fasting. It is ethics alone which constitute the true raison d”être of religion, not ritual, mystical contemplation, or the observance of rigid dress codes. If people begin to regard rituals as more important than ethics, then religion in its ritual, legal, and cultural expressions (al-Êm§n) cuts off its roots from the ethicality and rationality of al-isl§m and becomes irrational, immoral, and fundamentally inhuman.

This is the current state of affairs which Shahrur ‘diagnoses’ for what he calls SalafÊ Islam. Looking nostalgically backwards to the time of MuÈammad, SalafÊ Islam is non-ethical al-Êm§n that clouds people’s rational minds and obscures their moral understanding of life. But ethical religion is rational, concerned with humankind’s future, and composed of human values that are intrinsic to human nature. In Shahrur’s tripartite model of human existence, consisting of ‘being’ (material existence), ‘progressing’ (time), and ‘becoming’ (change and development), it is the latter’s dimension, connoting purposeful and dynamic progression of material existence, which Shahrur associates with the ethical religion of al-isl§m. Historical religion (al-Êm§n), which has lost this third dimension—by replacing ethics with blind ritualism that stifles the rational mind and suppresses intellectual curiosity—must strive to adopt again the morality and innate humanity of al-isl§m in order to allow society to further develop and flourish.

Shahrur’s concept of God is crucial in this respect as his theology supports this philosophica l-ethical understanding of religion. Although based on an empirical model of human perception, Shahrur follows Whitehead’s neo-Kantian idealism by stating that the function of an idea is to serve the criteria by which humans judge the impressions they perceive through their senses. Shahrur’s God is not the personal God of established religion, but a manifestation of an idea that represents the foundation of all existence: its

source, its ultimate finalization, and its supreme ethical criterion. God the Creator manifests himself to humans as God the Provider. That is, He continuously provides the material existence of ‘being’, its constant ‘progressing’ day by day, and the ethical standards or limits by which Creation realizes its ‘becoming’. God provides the physical setting and eternal laws of nature that are scientifically discernable by the rational, human mind, enabling humans to pursue an ethical life which will culminate in the realization of the good on earth. In other words, Shahrur’s God is a different God from the one believers want to reach with their prayers and sacrifices (the God that Soviet atheism wanted to destroy). In his concept, humankind postulates its relationship with God through the realization of the ethical good, which is humankind’s eternal and universal task, because both the ultimate goal and the limits set up by God to achieve such a goal are eternal.

God represents what is eternal and immutable, while nature and humankind are subject to change. And yet, because God has created humans and endowed them with reason, He has also created humans’ innate disposition that allows them, even if finite, to translate the abstract, absolute ideals of ethics into concrete, actual reality. These dialectics of the divine-human relationship is at the heart of Shahrur’s epistemological, hermeneutical, and legal theories. On the one side, there is what he sees as descriptors of the transcendent God: immortality, immutability, absoluteness, infinity, abstractness, and sacrality; while on the other side, the exact opposite is true for nature and humankind: mortality, changeability, relativity, finiteness, concreteness, and relatedness. Epistemologically, God’s knowledge of objective reality (cosmos, nature, and society) is infinite and perfect, while human knowledge is finite and deficient. Hermeneutically, God’s revelation to humankind is sacred, objective, and unalterable, but its human interpretation is contingent, subjective, and mutable. And God’s limits of law (its upper and lower boundaries) are immutable and absolute, but human legislation (the move between God’s boundaries) is changeable and relative. Yet, through humans’ rational faculty, which is God-given, human beings are able, though always limited, to participate in God’s knowledge, to understand His revelation, and to follow His law, by which they submit to His ethical code and bring about the realization of the good and sacred on all levels of personal and societal existence. It is only when people forget that they possess such rational faculty—when, for example, dogmatic ritualism takes priority over critical enquiry or when the dominance of the religious

class of #ulam§” and fuqah§” marginalizes scientists and philosophers in society—that the bond between God and humans is broken and human society becomes ‘immoral’.

Shahrur’s concept of prophethood is also inseparable from his philosophical notions of ethical religion and God. Many of his critics failed to see that Shahrur did not apply the traditional theological notion of a personal God who sends His revelation down to chosen prophets. In his philosophical concept of revelation there is no space that connotes a vertical dimension of the revelatory event. In fact, the whole process of transmitting God’s knowledge and divine wisdom to humankind does not take so much the form of ‘revelation’ (waÈy) but of human, subjective ‘comprehension’ (inz§l), of what has been objectively ‘delivered’ by God (tanzÊl). And this act of subjective comprehension is not carried out through some extraordinary prophetical gifts or divine inspiration but through logical enquiry and common-sense reasoning. The prophetical era of humankind—from Noah to MuÈammad—witnessed a series of prophets who transmitted the ‘objective’ and taught the ‘subjective’, submitting to their societies an ever more sophisticated ‘comprehension’ of what had been delivered to them (or better, what had been presented to them in front of their eyes). In Shahrur’s vision, prophets were not divinely supercharged geniuses but spokespersons of objective knowledge equipped with the best possible—and until MuÈammad ever more penetrating—rational deduction of objective truth. Revelation in this vision is less a mind-boggling presentation of an impenetrable text of divine mysteries. Instead, revelation not only encourages rational enquiry (the apologetic argument), it also is the creation of reason in understanding objective reality. Only if this philosophical point is understood, can one appreciate Shahrur’s dictum that societies today live in a post-prophetic era in which an ever more sophisticated way of rational enquiry by society’s leading thinkers (philosophers, natural scientists, lawyers, and the like) has succeeded the prophets of the prophetic era in their attempt to rationally understand the truth. “Inspiration came to [Isaac] Newton when he saw the apple dropping and the earth attracting it. He had some unconnected ideas in his mind, but after he saw the apple fall the conscious connection happened.”[38]

The absence of a personal God in Shahrur’s philosophy explains why no prophet, saint, or mystic—not to mention the religious scholar—has a particular ‘nearness to Him’, which would give him a special status because of his religious enquiries. The prophets’ special status is only derived from their own rational enquiries (ijtih§d) into the objective truth and their applaudable application of the universal ethical code (al-isl§m) to the moral conduct of concrete individuals and the legal functioning of particular societies (a l-Êm§n). And the saints, mystics, and the #ulam§” have distanced themselves from God by preferring rituals over ethics and doctrine over critical reasoning. Here, more than anywhere else, the teleological and evolutionary character of Shahrur’s prophetology becomes evident because each prophetic vision turns into historical perspective with the passing of time. Each prophet taught the universal message vis-à-vis the particular concerns of their people, but as the prophetic era has ended, their particular teachings must eventually be superseded by the universal concerns of all humankind. National legislation must become world legislation, and particular ethics must turn into universal ethics shared by all human beings. Given Shahrur’s endeavour to bring historical Islamic religion (al-Êm§n) back to what is shared universally as human, ethical conduct (al-isl§m), one understands his impatience with SalafÊ Islamists who, like medieval scholars before them, regard the particulars of MuÈammad’s time as the universal ideal for all humankind and who, thus, sacrifice the truly universal ethical teachings of the Qur’an in favour of the particularistic interpretations of MuÈammad, his companions, and subsequent generations of Islamic scholarship.

Here lies the root of Shahrur’s bitter anticlericalism and antitraditionalism. He feels that the #ulam§” and fuqah§” of Islam have betrayed the progressive, universal message of al-isl§m in the following ways: by their obsession with the particular details of seventhcentury Arabia; by their imposition of the ÈadÊths onto the Qur’anic text (holding its meanings firmly locked up in the distant past); by their fixation on the details of rituals; by their distrust of the human rational faculty; by their suppression of freethinking; and by their neglect of the common good and what Islam shares with other religions in favour of particularistic, sectarian interests that advocate a sense of spiritual superiority. Even more radically, in idolizing the early generations of Islam, in declaring MuÈammad’s sunna as sacrosanct, and in sacralizing

the opinions of famous medieval scholars, the #ulam§” and fuqah§” are fundamentally undermining the dialectical God-men relationship that is based on a sharp distinction between divine-human, immorta l-mortal, infallible-fallible and so forth. For Shahrur, their ignorance of the moral ideals of a l-isl§m and their preoccupation with the ritual elements of al-Êm§n represent the antidote to his rational, liberal, and ethical approach: he deems their approach backward, primitive, entangled in political corruption, breeding fanaticism, superstition, and sectarianism. For all these reasons, Shahrur feels strongly that if the renewal of Islamic religion is to succeed, society must categorically dispense with the #ulam§“s interpretation of the Qur’an (tafsÊr) and, instead, rely on the views of nonclerical intellectuals who are untouched by traditional scholarship.

*** The Qur’an

The most innovative element in Shahrur’s work is, however, neither his prophetology nor his philosophical concept of God, but rather the way he synthesizes both into a new understanding of the Qur’an. The mistake that most Muslim critics of Shahrur made was to attempt to impale his linguistic-philosophica l-mathematical system of reading the Qur’an onto the nominalist-transcendent almetaphysical model of traditional tafsÊr exegesis. What they were unable to see is that Shahrur neither projected his philosophical thoughts into the Qur’an (a form of subjective eisegesis, they claimed) nor illegitimately extracted them from the Qur’an (a kind of dilettante misreading), because he always maintained that the Qur’an instead is part of the ontological, cosmological structure (discerned by philosophy) that exists outside the text. This is where his work is most influenced by various models of structuralist thought which had their peak in Western universities in the 1960s and 1970s—exactly when Shahrur started his work on the Qur’an—and which, unlike in

Biblical Criticism,[39] never created a lasting impact on the scholarly disciplines of #ulåm al-qur”§n in the Arab-Muslim world.[40] In the l inguist and colleague from Damascus University (English Faculty), Ja#far DÊk al-B§b, Shahrur found a mentor who wrote for him the

introduction to linguistic theory in The Book and the Qur’an, which was heavily influenced by linguistic structuralism. However, apart from this collaboration with a l-B§b, structuralism had already found its way into Shahrur’s thoughts through his reading of Bertrand Russell’s ‘structure of a relation’, which is fully developed in Russell and Whitehead’s Principia Mathematica[41] but more readable in Russell’s Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy.[42] He learned from Russell that the structural definition of a relation is extensional, in terms of the things related rather than of the properties of the reaction considered independently of those things. In other words, objects should not be conceived in terms of internal properties, but as a system of relations between unspecified elements whose properties are derived from these relations. What mathematicians call set theory, and which became standard mathematical logic from the 1930s, includes the proposition that knowledge of a mathematical object cannot be gained by analyzing the isolated qualities of an entity, but only by searching for the formal properties of a system entailed in algebraically closed communicative sets. The relations of such a system are in mathematical logic specified as sets of ordered pairs (finite-infinite; limited-converse; inductive-deductive; maximum-minimum, etc.). Shahrur’s next step was then to link mathematical to linguistic structuralism and regard the Qur’an as a semantically ‘closed communicative set’ whose meanings cannot be derived by an analysis of isolated words or passages but by discovering the inherent structures that govern the relationship between the individual semantic units. The concept of ‘structure’ here differs from literary ‘pattern’ or textual ‘arrangement’, that is, from the internal organization, composition, or formation of the text, even though an analysis of this plays in important role in Shahrur’s readings. But ‘structure’ differs from ‘textual pattern’ in that it refers to the hidden or underlying configuration which explains and justifies the more or less visible or obvious pattern of the text. Such a hidden configuration is applied from outside, not from within the text. The text’s meaning is essentially not found inside it but, as Greenwood says, “beside it, at its limits, at the point where the text is joined to its structure”.[43]

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This is where Shahrur combines mathematical and linguistic structuralism with the philosophical structure outlined earlier. The Qur’an’s underlying structure is manifested in the dialectical relationship between a set of binary oppositions, such as divine-human, absolute-relative, objective-subjective, eterna l-temporal, immutablemutable, universa l-particular, infinite-finite,

and so forth, comprising the same constellation of the God-men bond as can be found in cosmos, nature, and society. This binary structure explains the arrangement and thus the meaning of the text which, in reverse, fully reveals its underlying structure once its meaning is discovered. Shahrur's exegetically most provocative step is to divide the Qur'anic text into groups of verses that are either ontologically eternal, absolute, and objectively valid, or temporal, relative, and subjectively conditioned. The verses of the first group belong to al-qur"§n, representing objective truth, eternal laws, and absolute knowledge, whereas the second group belongs to umm al-kit§b, the subjective part of the Qur'an (that is, of the whole book as we know it and different from Shahrur's al-qur"§n), constituting the historically contingent, changeable, and what is subject to human interpretation. Likewise, since MuÈammad enjoyed the status of a prophet and messenger of Allah, Shahrur argues, the text structurally reflects these two separate positions (conventionally not perceived as separate); while his prophethood represents the eternal and absolute of Allah's revelation, in contrast, his messengerhood represents its temporal and relative side (rules of jurisprudence, state administration, warfare, etc.).

Relating this fundamental division to a large number of subsets and subcategories (always as binary oppositions, e.g., tanzÊl-inz§l; im§m mubÊn-kit§b mubÊn; qa·§"-qadr; ulåhiyya-rubåbiyya; kal§m-kalima), Shahrur manages to sustain his philosophical vision that all existing objective reality (and that includes the Qur'an) is a reflection of the ontological division between the eternal and universal ethical code of God and the particularistic historical/contingent (legal, political, economic, etc.) concerns of human societies, and hence the d istinction between al-isl§m and al-Êm§n. In this vision the Qur'an ceases to be 'Scripture' whose sacred meanings are firmly locked inside each individual word and which need to be unlocked by the hermeneutically and spiritually most astute reader (normally the trained #§lim-mufassir). Instead, the Qur'an functions as text whose words are simply vehicles of meanings that point to a nontextual structure to be discovered either in cosmos, nature, and history of all humankind (the universal laws of a l-qur"§n) or in the manifestation of humanity in concrete, historical human societies (the contingent laws of umm al-kit§b). The process of discovering the former is called al-ta"wÊl, while the

deduction of laws for the latter’s procedures of human legislation is called al-ijtih§d.

As for al-ta”wÊl (that is, the act of interpreting al-qur”§n or better, the disclosing of its objectivity), this is based on Shahrur’s evolutionary philosophy that envisages humans’ increasing participation in God’s absolute knowledge. According to his ‘dialectics between the universal and human episteme’ in a postprophetic era, the only way to link the total, comprehensive knowledge which is in Allah (that is, objective existence), and the relative, partial knowledge which humans possess (because of their subjective understanding of objective reality), is through the existence of a text whose miraculous nature allows a correspondence between its objective nature and the subjective understanding of each historical age. Shahrur calls this correspondence al-tash§buh or ‘assimilatability’, God’s assurance of a permanent harmony (though, not sameness) between the temporal and eternal, relative and total, partial and absolute. Explaining this point, he establishes an analogy between al-ta”wÊl’s dialectical relationship between human readers and their texts (scripture or otherwise) and our perception of ancient wall paintings: “Think of a fresco at the Vatican. The fresco is fixed, objective. But as the viewer changes position, he sees the fresco in a different way. Each time we move, we see the fresco in a different way. The mullahs want us to stand still and see the fresco as it was in the seventh century. We want to move around and see the fresco in a dialectic between text and context. Our interpretation of the fresco as we move around is subjective”.[44]

His critics understood this as a free license to the human mind to read into the Qur’an whatever it finds suitable (which is, i ncidentally, the most often voiced killer-argument against all ‘contemporary’ readings of the Qur’an). What has been overlooked, however, is that in Shahrur’s philosophical scheme of things this ‘whatever humans find suitable’ is not necessarily what is incompatible with ‘what God finds suitable’. This is because God ‘guarantees’ compatibility in a twofold way: by the absoluteness of His being He vouchsafes for the absolute and infinite validity of the text’s form (fresco) and its content/meaning. And by having created human beings and endowed them with reason with which they make sense of the text in each historical period, He also created the inherent warranty

that human beings, provided they find a joint consensus or similar understanding, will always correctly concur with what has been said in the text. Since there can be no inherent contradiction between the divine text and its (contemporary) human understanding—if performed on the highest possible rational/scientific level and in full accord with empirical reality—the accusation of an overly subjective, all-toohuman interpretation of the Qur’an is—at least seen from Shahrur’s point of view—beside the point.

As for the second act of interpretation, al-ijtih§d, or the disclosure of a congruence between the divine law of the sharÊ#a, applied in society, and what is intrinsically and universally human in all societies on this earth, this does not involve, as many modern ijtih§d theories have argued, adapting the eternally valid aÈk§m rules of the Qur’an to the temporal needs of contemporary societies. On the contrary, it is the attempt to get the always temporally valid aÈk§m attuned to the eternally valid laws of al-qur”§n, that is, with what each historical period has relatively understood of it (through al-ta”wÊl). In other words, a rigid dress code (such as the total veiling of the female body), for example, which jars with human instinct and deviates from the current social consensus about good etiquette and moral decency, cannot be—by definition—divine law. Inheritance law which discriminates against female heirs and deviates from legal practice anywhere in the world is incompatible with God’s law. Legal injunctions on apostasy, theft, polygyny, jih§d, killing and such like, which are rejected by the majority of people and interpreted as inhuman and in violation of universally accepted human rights, undermine the ethical God-humankind bond and must be reformulated in the light of al-isl§m. Shahrur holds that the rules of umm al-kit§b are in permanent need of active preservation (Èifí), supervision (riq§ba), and confirmation (taßdÊq), while the al-qur”§n is its È§fií, raqÊb, and mußaddiq.

This is the reason why the verses of al-qur”§n and the verses of umm al-kit§b are not separated in the Qur’an (or the Book as Shahrur calls it), but combined. The significance of this aspect lies in the fact that it reverses the current Islamist trend to apply the most rigid interpretations of sharÊ#a law in the name of

applying God’s law against man-made law (implying ‘what humans find suitable, not God’) by his conviction that there should not be one sharÊ#a rule that is incompatible with the higher values and overarching principles of a l-qur”§n, that is, the eternal laws of nature and humanity as shared by the majority of people at a given period of time in history, and al-isl§m, the universally valid code of ethical practice that is immutable and even indisputable.

Although Shahrur mentions a number of exegetical principles that he applied in his reading of the Qur’an (e.g. nonsynonymity, nonabrogation), the actual proposed process of interpretation—schematized in the format of a triple movement model—can be summarized as follows:

1. The first movement consists of approaching the Qur’an with a cognitive understanding of reality that is deeply rooted in the most advanced discourse on nature, cosmos, and human s ociety. Once approached in this way, it follows that any reading of any verse in the text must never contradict either human reason (as fed by scientific data from the humanities, social and natural sciences) or empirical reality (that is, globally available to human perception). This implies that the study of empirical data derived from objective reality must always precede the study of concrete passages of the Qur’anic text. It also implies that existing commentaries on the Qur’an which lack the contemporary episteme and fail to consider the most recent discoveries (and this by default includes the tafsÊr work of medieval scholarship) are to be barred from any consultation. Most important, however, is that contemporary readings of the Qur’an regard as irrelevant historica l-critical studies of the Qur’an and any attempt to ask what the text meant to the original readers in seventh-century Arabia. To use Shahrur’s analogy, what the frescos in the Vatican meant for the viewers in sixth-century Rome is rather irrelevant in comparison to the question of how they are perceived today. Following his conviction that one must always read the Qur’an “as if it was revealed last night” and his philosophical premise that the content of al-qur”§n is always contemporary (being part of God’s objective Being which irreversibly ‘progresses’ and ‘becomes’), the readers cannot but access the text from the historical position they occupy. This is to reverse the traditional exegetical dogma which states that the closer the interpreters are to the semantics of the

revelatory event in seventhcentury Arabia, the more authoritative their interpretation becomes. In Shahrur’s approach, the exact opposite is true.

2. The second movement consists of attaching the most recent content/meaning available to the immutable format of the Qur’anic text. This proceeds in two steps. The first step consists of creating al-tash§buh, lit. ‘likeness’, between what is currently shared as universally accepted theories about nature/society and the verses of al-qur§n. If both appear to be incompatible, judgement is to be suspended until further research results in more insights, up to a point in history when incompatibility no longer occurs. Inasmuch as objective reality cannot be faulted, no verse of the al-qur”§n can ever be considered incorrect. The second step is to assess the compatibility of the legal verses with the currently applied value systems and universally accepted codes of conduct. If these ethical norms are still within the legal boundaries, that is, God’s limits, their mor al-legal requirements determine how the aÈk§m verses of umm al-kit§b are to be interpreted. If the aÈk§m rules contradict universally accepted standards of behaviour, the latter must take precedence over the former and annul them. The model for this second step is to be found in MuÈammad’s sunna, in that MuÈammad applied the aÈk§m rules for what was then shared as ethically and legally acceptable. It implies, however, that if the sunna contradicts what is today globally accepted as ethical and legal standards (e.g., human rights), none of the actual content of MuÈammad’s sunna must be applied today. Whereas human rights are universal, the sunna is not, as it is deeply rooted in the historical contingencies of seventh-century Arabia. This implies that the application of Islamic law cannot be done purely by an internal revision of the Islamic legal tradition (al-fiqh), as it is primarily based on MuÈammad’s sunna and thus epistemologically located in the past, but rather from outside it (using the parameters of civil law and parliamentary legislation).

3. The third movement is then to move away from the text and return to the nontextual side of objective existence and change human behaviour, state legislation, and political administration in the light of what is compatible with the ethical requirements of al-isl§m.

Once the first two movements have established the general mora lsocial objectives by way of the most contemporary readings of God’s revelation, these objectives must then be applied in the present concrete sociohistorical context. Such application requires that each country determines its priorities differently but makes sure that it nevertheless implements the same Qur’anic values (e.g., currently human rights) as any other country in the world. It also requires that each religion, even if differently shaped by ritual diversity, constantly readjusts its teachings to those mor al-social objectives gained by a fresh reading of the Qur’an. The important aspect of this phase is that law and rituals are not seen as identical with ethics but as its subordinated parts. This corrects the traditionalist and Islamist discourses that regard the moral message of Islam as embodied in the performance of rituals and strict adherence to sharÊ#a law. In Shahrur’s view, religious practice and legal injunctions may or may not correspond with God’s ethical ideals. If, for example, the implementation of sharÊ#a law justifies the violation of the rights of women and religious minorities, or undermines freedom of opinion, expression, thought, and religion, such a law has become immoral and devoid of God’s divine, ethical norms. And if rituals and the law do not correspond with these norms, they have to be changed.

*** Applied Theory

A concrete example of Shahrur’s interpretations will illustrate the model just explained and bring together all points brought up so far. Verse 34 in chapter a l-Nis§” has persistently been a difficult verse to reconcile with human rights and gender equality. The Arabic text in transliteration reads as follows:

Verse 4:34:

Al-rij§l qaww§mån #al§ ’l-nis§” bi-m§ fa··ala All§h ba#·ahum #al§ ba#· [in] wa-bim§ anfaqå min amw§lihim fa’l-ß§liÈ§t[u] q§nit§t[un] È§fií§t[un] li’l-ghayb bi-m§ Èafiía All§h wa-all§tÊ takh§fån nushåzahunna fa-#iíåhunna wa-

uhjuråhunna fi’l-ma·§ji# wa-”·ribåhunna fa-in aã#anakum fa-l§ tabghå #alayhinna sabÊl[an] inna All§h k§na #alÊy[an] kabÊr[an][45]

Two passages are particularly problematic: 1) Al-rij§l qaww§mån #al§ ’l-nis§”, and 2) wa-all§tÊ takh§fån nushåzahunna… wa-”·ribåhunna. The traditional rendering of these two passages by medieval tafsÊr exegetes can be summarised as follows: 1) Men are in charge of women, because of their physical, intellectual, financial etc. superiority by which Allah favours men over women; 2) If husbands are faced with the disobedience, open rebellion and disloyalty of their wives, it is legitimate to beat them and reinforce their obedience.

Such open misogyny and sexism in Shahrur’s eyes is unacceptable for several reasons. First, it contradicts universally held ethical principles, dominant in gender politics of the twenty-first century, which state that discrimination on the basis of a person’s sex is intolerable. Second, it contradicts the ethical norms held by the text’s objective and unchangeable part, that is, al-qur”§n, as expressed in verses such as 2:187 and 4:1, which emphasise sexual equality in terms of reason, intelligence, religion, and legal responsibility. Given what a l-qur”§n states as an absolute divine norm (sexual equality), it is compulsory for any interpreter to explain 4:34 (a verse of umm a l-kit§b) in the light of 2:187 and 4:1 (verses of a l-qur”§n). Third, the misogyny of traditionalist exegetes reflects the prevalent understanding of medieval patriarchal societies. Since this understanding ignored the divine ethical code of al-qur”§n and clashes with what is currently regarded as morally just, it ought to be abandoned. Finally, the assumption of male superiority is contradicted by recent scientific data which ascribe no deficiency to female persons, intellectually or otherwise. Moreover, beating and physical violence is not only universally condemned as immoral but has also been proven as highly counterproductive for resolving marital crises. And if it is against universally held standards and practice, no religious community (a l-Êm§n) has the right for a moral Sonderweg and to oppose al-isl§m. Verse 4:34, which addresses all believers worldwide, must be “as applicable to men and women in Tokyo or São Paulo as it is to men and women in Cairo, Damascus, or Riyadh”.[46]

Apart from Shahrur, many contemporary Muslim writers have attempted to reread 4:34 in the light of modern feminist thought. As for the first phrase al-rij§l qaww§mån #al§ ’l-nis§”, they stressed that the qiw§ma of men over women, a) is not a biological/anthropological superiority and, hence, not an essential privilege given to the male part of God’s creation;[47] b) is, instead, a financial duty of material protection of women and maintenance of their families; thus, it is not a privilege but rather a responsibility;[48] c) is an ideal, not a defacto description of reality and, thus, conditioned on the actual financial power of men;[49] d) is restricted to those men who have marital responsibilities and cannot be generalised for all men in society;[50] e) is restricted to times when women pursue their “child-bearing responsibilities”;[51] f) is not even linked to protection and maintenance by men but to their “moral guidance and caring”;[52] or g) was a restriction on men’s absolute and repressive power over women in seventh-century Arabia.[53] As for the second phrase wa-all§tÊ takh§fån nushåzahunna… wa-”·ribåhunna, these writers argued that men’s beating of women a) does not imply a repeated, intense, and random use of maximum force but rather a symbolic gesture of rebuke and punishment;[54] b) is a restriction on hard hitting as practiced in seventh-century Arabia and was, thus, an improvement in the women’s situation and not an injunction of universal validity;[55] c) indicates a measure of last resort in a three-step attempt to solve a marital crisis and is, thus, not a way to discipline disobedient wives;[56] d) is a strike of very little intensity, more like a soft stroke with a towel, toothbrush, f an or folded handkerchief;[57] e) does not at all imply ‘strike’ but the “confinement of women”;[58] f) simply means “to create an effect upon her” by employing nonviolent means,[59] or just g) “to strike out of a marriage”.[60]

Given his position as a ‘radical’, Shahrur would regard most of these interpretations as not far-reaching enough and, in spite of their well meaning, still inadequate for a real contemporary reading of the Qur’an. His explicit criticism of those feminists who interpret al-qiw§ma as men’s ‘standing in service’, implying that men are not the masters but in fact the servants of women, shows that he disagrees with the inherent or hidden structural imbalance in such a view. For him, the above-mentioned interpretations still perpetuate an essential inequality between the sexes. The most innovative aspect of Shahrur’s reading of 4:34 is then that he does

not subscribe at all to the men-women or husband-wife polarity that this verse seems to suggest. He maintains that the main theme of the verse is al-qiw§ma, that is, leadership or guardianship as such, not the relationship between men and women. In order to prove this point he suggests reading the two terms al-rij§l and al-nis§” not as ‘men’ or ‘women’ respectively. Instead, he reads the two terms in a gender neutral way and proposes that both in fact imply men and women. Quoting verses in which a l-rij§l (24:37) or rij§l[an] (2:239; 22:27) are not exclusively used for male persons, he stresses that rajul-rij§l (sing.-pl.) is semantically not always restricted to connoting maleness. The generic sense of the lexeme r-j-l is ‘to walk’ or ‘to go on foot’, which in neither case is a prerogative of the male sex. Similarly, the term al-nis§” does not only mean ‘women’ but also expresses an ungendered notion of delay, deferral, or postponement. The Arabs say ‘the delivery has been postponed’ or ‘Zayd is late’, both expressions using the related term al-nasÊ” (connoting deferment), as does 9:37 “Verily the transposing (of a prohibited month) (al-nasÊ” [u]) is an addition to unbelief...”.

In the context of 4:34, it refers to a group of people (men and women) who ‘lack behind’ or ‘follow next’, namely behind those al-rij§l (men and women) who possess the authority of qiw§ma (leadership or guardianship).

Such a gender neutral reading of al-rij§l and al-nis§” allows Shahrur to understand the verse not as a prescriptive instruction of a unique ‘Islamic’ gender relationship (and thus not to any preference, men or women), but as a description of a universal type of unequal distribution of talent as well as leadership qualities, which objectively and empirically exist in human society (Islamic or not). Since al-rij§l refers to both men and women, Shahrur argues that high competence, moral strength, determination, education, and strong cultural awareness will always lead to a situation where some men and women are put in charge of other women and men who do not excel in these things at the same level. Bi-m§ fa··ala All§h ba#·ahum #al§ ba#· [in]—the line that follows the qiw§ma phrase—here literally means a preference of ‘some of

them’ (men and women) to ‘some others’ (women and men), as the personal pronoun suffix hum is again rendered as gender neutral. The marital context, which has been traditionally seen as the point of reference in this verse, is in Shahrur’s interpretation replaced by a reference to a wider societal context, in which in all spheres of social, political, cultural, and economic life some men and women outperform others and thus assume leadership.

Following this line of argument that circles around an ungendered concept of qiw§ma, Shahrur turns then to those terms that are grammatically feminine. The term q§nit§t refers to those women who faithfully preserve the special skills and power of qiw§ma which God has bestowed upon them: they ‘guard what God would have them guard’. If they keep using their talents for the benefits of all, they are ‘righteous women’ (ß§liÈ§t). If, however, they squander God’s special gifts, they become n§shiza, that is, women who, because of their carelessness, are unfaithful to their talents and abuse their position of leadership. Nushåz is here interpreted as lack or abuse of qiw§ma in all spheres of life where women (or men—as stated in 4:128) assume leadership and responsibility; it does not refer to any kind of marital crisis (or worse, to disobedience, stubbornness, or dislike). Once the marital context is out of the way, Shahrur is able to apply (almost) universally acceptable rules on how to deal with lack or abuse of power: a) admonition and official warning first, then b) avoidance of close (social and personal) contact, and finally c) the withdrawal of the right of leadership/guardianship. Quoting several Qur’anic verses that use derivations of the lexeme ·-r-b, Shahrur maintains that ·araba is such a polysemous word that the most literal reading, ‘to strike’, is too restrictive and inconsistent with any other verse or even most ÈadÊths in this respect. I·ribåhunna thus implies a nonaggressive and nonviolent but firm resistance against any abuse of qiw§ma, a kind of civilised conveyance of discontent and rebuke carried out by men and women.

In sum, Shahrur’s interpretation of 4:34 is able to give women full social and juristic status whereby their entire intellectual, physical, moral, religious, and economic capacity is secured sui juris, and where women are in control of their own agency unchecked by any notion of male leader- or

guardianship. And the possibility that the Qur’an might sanction domestic violence or that husbands might be allowed to beat their wives into obedience is seen as entirely out of the question. In the light of Shahrur’s interpretations, verse 4:34 should then be read as follows:

People lead other people, who follow them, because Allah has given some of them more talent and competence than others, and because they have more financial power (than others). Hence righteous women are those able and competent women who guard their talents of leadership (for the good of society), which Allah has asked them to guard. As to those women whose incompetence and lack of good leadership you fear, warn them first, then reduce intimate contact with them and, finally, resist firmly but nonviolently the abuse of their position of leadership (before you withdraw leadership from them). Should they then comply (with what you are saying), do not seek a way of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great![61]

This interpretation of 4:34 shows that for Shahrur the morality of the al-qur”§n is not—as with quite a number of so-called modernist interpretations of the Qur’an—limited to only a select few legal enact ments, while women’s human rights remain severely compromised. His understanding of the al-qur”§n’s universal moral message tells him that the female is an autonomous moral being who has a direct relationship with God who is her only guardian. He wants this to be adequately preserved in his legal interpretations of umm a l-kit§b, in which no limitation or advance privilege is ascribed to any gender group under any circumstances, and in which individual morality is recognised as more important than the preservation of different or reciprocal social roles on the basis of sex or gender. Shahrur’s reading of 4:34 also shows to what extent he is prepared to go in finding a semantic congruence between the legal verses of the divine text and what he sees as the eternally valid laws of God’s ethical code. As for any other structuralist interpretation, the meaning of 4:34 is not encapsulated in its individual words (al-nis§” does not always and essentially refer to ‘women’, nor does a l-rij§l intrinsically mean ‘men’) but is construed through the relational properties of words within a particular set of reading conventions which, in Shahrur’s case, departs from every single customary rule in the study of the Qur’an. Here his stern anticlericalism finds itself utterly vindicated since any reliance on traditional tafsÊr would have

drawn him back into a discourse that attempts to rationalise sexual discrimination in one form or another. This is the reason for his defence of his main methodology of sola scriptura, that is, complete reliance on the Qur’anic text alone: no other text/authority of the past can stand between him and the text in front of him—it is “as if the Qur’an was revealed last night”.

Shahrur’s ultimate concern when applying his philosophical ideas to the sphere of Islamic law is to accomplish that semantic congruence between the ethical and legal verses of the Qur’an, symbolising God-given morality and humanness in a legal system. And it is this concern which motivates him to prove to his secularist critics that the ethical concepts of rational philosophy are not entirely incompatible with the legal notions of Islamic jurisprudence. In fact, he does not completely abandon the tools and even rhetoric of the fuqah§”, but often retrieves suppressed or marginalised legal interpretations, while revealing a remarkable knowledge about the ‘orthodox’ positions which he then begins to amend. And since it is not easy to deal in detail with Islamic law from a purely philosophical point of view, and since his philosophical views are all outlined in Qur’anic v ocabulary, one occasionally gets the feeling that he applies to universal ethics, religion, and law a still dominantly ‘Islamic’ rather than purely philosophical or scientific perspective. Ironically, in Shahrur’s effort to fit the God of the Qur’an or of sharÊ#a law into the mould of a neo-Whiteheadian system, parts of the latter’s truly and uncompromised universality seems to have been lost.

On the whole, though, Shahrur’s attempt to set up the universally human aspects of the Qur’an and then to apply these to his legal exegesis is eminently successful. No other modern Muslim writer, except perhaps Fazlur Rahman, has managed to combine both a theoretical critique and a concrete analysis of the Qur’anic text that covers such a large area of Islamic law. Indeed, Shahrur’s writings on the rules of bequests and inheritance law, polygyny, women’s dress codes, and personal status law, all developed on the basis of his theory of limits, constitute a landmark in the development of modern Islamic thought and deserve broad attention. Moreover, his compelling fusion of European philosophical concepts with a Qur’anic worldview has not only achieved the establishment of a ‘theory’ which Shahrur saw as vital for overcoming the intellectual crisis of Arab

nationalism, but also forcefully addresses the current crisis provoked by radical Islamism.

True, much of the idealism, scientific positivism, and high-flown enthusiasm for evolutionary progress that characterised nineteenthcentury European philosophy seems a bit alien to the disillusioned, postmodern spirit of our current time. Undoubtedly, what was then called rational, universal and moral may be seen now as irrational, context-bound, and interest-driven; and the ideal of an irreversible progress of human knowledge climaxing in a total grasp of absolute knowledge may seem to some either as too simplistic or entirely anachronistic. Shahrur's conviction that the ethical ideals of al-isl§m are indivisible and eternally valid will be unacceptable to those who deconstruct this as just another product of a monotheistic worldview in the tradition of Judeo-Christian-Islamic theology, ignoring nonmonotheistic and nontheistic/nontranscendent ethical models (e.g., choice theory or situation ethics). His faith in the incorruptible rationality of modern philosophy and in the moral efficacy of the modern sciences may appear too naïve to those more critical in their appraisal of what philosophers and scientists have contributed to what is irrational and evil in the modern age. Many of Shahrur's own interpretations will be seen as too subjective and arbitrary, or incompatible with a rigorous, falsifiable, and verifiable system of textual analysis. And his absolute trust in the essential goodness of secular, parliamentary legislation and his unbroken optimism that this embodies the humanness of society much better than the #ulam§"s uncodified religious law, might be untenable to those who seriously question the political implications of such a concept (e.g., after the British parliament in 2003 sanctioned an unjust war in Iraq).

And yet, none of this has deterred ten thousand and more readers in the Arab-Muslim world from being 'hooked' by what Shahrur has written. The core meaning of his work is not so much determined by the novelty or originality of individual ideas or approaches as such, but by its boldness and power to suggest an alternative way to what is assumed to remain as 'orthodox'. The appeal of his call for rationality and scientific objectivity lies in the readers' exposure to a religious climate of an incredible anti-intellectualism spread from thousands of pulpits throughout the Middle East. Shahrur's stress on the priority of ethics over rituals find its significance against the background of thirty years of public debate about the full

implementation of sharÊ#a law in Muslim countries and the devastating spirit of overzealous legalism that accompanied it. His emphasis on a strictly contemporary reading of the Qur’an and the accent he lays on a progressive trajectory of human development have their bearing in what critics of the Islamist movement see as an absurd obsession with the past and the cultural details of seventh-century Mecca and Medina. And his call for a return to the universal, ethical objectives of Islam (al-isl§m) is important in the light of the excesses of religious fundamentalism and Islamic radicalism which have existed in the Arab Middle East since as early as the mid-1970s. The ultimate relevance of Shahrur’s books for Muslim readers, however, originates in the fact that he manages to synthesise critical reasoning with religious thought, which for both his secular as well as his traditionalist opponents is anathema. Instead of citing numerous authorities of medieval legal schools as the best proof for the quality of an argument/interpretation, Shahrur suggests shifting the emphasis from ‘borrowed authority’ to the authority of one’s own rational faculty. Instead of memorizing an ultimately amorphous corpus of ÈadÊths in order to produce a tolerable rendering of a Qur’anic passage, Shahrur encourages individual’s critical thought—however subjective or idiosyncratic—in order to make the text meaningful to Muslims today. For those Muslims who want to apply their critical reasoning, which it is increasingly encouraged to use elsewhere in society, to their own religion and yet still maintain their religious identity as ‘good believers’ and in full harmony with their critical mind, this approach appears to be conclusively attractive.

** Introduction by Muhammad Shahrur

Since the beginning of my attempt to reunderstand and reread the Qur’an I have published five books in Arabic. This volume seeks to convey my thoughts in one concise volume especially prepared for an English-speaking audience. The main intention of my work is to go beyond the epistemology of traditional Islamic scholarship. What is too often hailed as either inimitable or unsurpassable holds us in fact back when we attempt to reach new insight. In order to achieve genuine renewal and lasting reform we cannot rely on the

solutions of bygone eras. As Einstein once said, “The world we have made as a result of the level of thinking we have done thus far creates problems that we cannot solve at the same level at which we have created them…We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humankind is to survive.” In order to solve the current problems of the Arab-Muslim world we are required to use the ideas and thoughts of our most creative minds even if their proposals appear unusual or unfamiliar. But the familiar and the well-acquainted are often insufficient to solve the challenging problems of our ever-more-complex world. We want this volume to be perceived as a relentless critique of all attempts to reform Islam by a return to seventh-century Arabia and through an adoption of the archaic worldviews of our salafÊ forefathers. Such reforms, we believe, are utterly fruitless and bound to fail because they possess an inherently atavistic nature that is incompatible with the modern episteme that demands plurality, tolerance, and progressive thinking.

Allah’s Book teaches us to divide human history into two historical epochs. The first epoch is the period of prophets and messengers, which ended with MuÈammad’s (ß)[62] mission. The second epoch began after MuÈammad’s (ß) death, and is the epoch in which we still live today. In this second epoch, humankind no longer requires God’s[63] prophets and messengers because human beings have matured to such an extent that they can, without direct interventions from God, confidently explore the laws of the universe. This allows human societies today to issue legislations without the instructions from living prophets or messengers. Think of the creation of human rights, the abolition of slavery and the emancipation of women, all of which are indications that a new level of civilisation has been reached as the result of a postprophetic way of legislation. It would be an extreme regression if we tried to establish a modern society on the basis of premodern values and bygone norms. Our task today is not to regress to a state of society that is less complex than the previous one but to develop the most advanced forms of civil society whose impact can be felt by every despotic ruler in this world.

In this volume, Allah’s Book is presented as the seal and ultimate expression of the first epoch of humankind, the period of prophetic guidance. This confronts us with the question of how to read and understand it from the perspective of those who live in the second epoch in which direct

prophetic guidance is neither necessary nor longer available. Just as in the seventh-century people understood Allah’s Book with the help of what was then contemporary knowledge, in the twenty-first century we must understand it with what is now contemporary knowledge. Only through such a truly contemporary rereading of Allah’s Book can we succeed in achieving real reform and a successful renewal of Islamic thought.

We offer a radically new interpretation of Allah’s Book (al-kit§b)[64] which fundamentally questions the so-called sacred certainties of Islamic theology and the so-called fundamentals of Islamic jurisprudence. However, we do not claim that this is the only correct interpretation or the only possible way to understand the text. We reject the dogmatism of the salafÊ traditionalists and their claim to be in the possession of absolute knowledge about the Qur’an. Such claim is a violation of Allah’s oneness, as it presupposes that humans can be equal to God in His knowledge, which to claim is—as verse 43 of Sårat al-Ra#d states —truly blasphemous: ‘Say, “God is sufficient witness between me and you: all knowledge of the Scripture comes from Him”’ (Al-Ra#d 13:43, AH).[65]

Our study is concerned with the exposition and fresh interpretation of God’s revelation to humankind. It is vital for the reader to understand that we follow a different methodology in reading the divine text of Allah’s Book and that we do not stand in the tradition of scholarly disciplines such as #ulåm al-qur”§n or tafsÊr al-qur”§n. Our methodology will be laid out in the separate chapters of this volume, but some of the most important linguistic and philosophica lhermeneutical aspects that underlie our approach are summarised in this introduction.

*** Linguistic Principles

We understand the process of reading texts, of whatever type or format, as a process of communication between the author and the reader/listener via the medium of the text. We believe that it is possible for the reader to learn about the author’s intention by reading the text alone. There is no need to go

back to the author and ask what the meaning of the text is. However, no reader can ever claim to have fully understood the text because this would imply that in terms of the acquired and transmitted knowledge of the text reader and author have become absolutely identical. As for the Book, which embodies the ultimate level (of knowledge), its author is Allah who alone possesses absolute knowledge about it. While the text of the Book is of divine origins, all its readers/listeners are humans like you and me whose knowledge is not absolute. Human knowledge of the divine text is partial, limited, and relative. Therefore, people understand the text in different ways according to their historically conditioned, context-based perceptions of the text's meaning. Until the coming of the Last Hour this will be the unchanging hermeneutical condition in reading the divine text, because the human reader will always be influenced by the time and historical context in which he or she lives.

Because no revelation has occurred after the last one to MuÈammad (ß), who hence completed all previous chains of prophethoods, every prophecy has its fixed time and cannot be infinitely extended. We also argue that since Allah alone has absolute knowledge of the text we human beings only possess relative knowledge that aspires to reach towards the unattainable absoluteness of Allah's knowledge. If it is true that the era of revelations has come to an end with MuÈammad (ß) and that only Allah enjoys absolute knowledge, then the divine text must possess the quality of 'assimilatability' (al-tash§buh). This means that even if the form of the text in its literal substance is fixed, its content (that is, its meaning) moves. This movement means that the rules and injunctions of the text have the flexibility to be applied according to the changing circumstances of human societies, a flexibility that is the core element of ÈanÊfiyya, which we define as the curved movement of human legislation within the straight lines that God has set up. We do not mean by flexibility moral and legal relativism but rather a greater amount of responsiveness to the needs of human societies. This can be achieved by applying divine norms within the boundaries of upper and lower limits that the text provides. It implies that Allah has left it to us to make sense, by way of our relative and context-related knowledge, of the many injunctions in the text, and to fill the gaps that the text has left—all of this strictly within the constraints of the divine boundaries (or limits).

In our linguistic analysis of the divine text we start with the premise that words cannot be meaningless. This is a departure from traditional exegesis which claims that some words in Allah’s Book have no meaning or that their meanings cannot be grasped by the human mind. Such a claim entirely ignores the purpose of Allah’s revelation because it was sent down ‘so that [we] may understand’ (Yåsuf 12:2). It ignores that words, in their phonetic and grammatical expressions, always serve their (intended) meanings or, put differently, that the meaning of a word is determined by the linguistic structure into which it was purposefully embedded. The function of language is therefore to serve the communicative purposes of those who speak this language and who want to convey their thoughts and ideas to their readers/listeners. No word can thus become meaningless. To claim that some of God’s words are semantically obscure or cannot be understood by humans is to deny the communicative purpose of revelation and contradicts its explicit aim to be understood. It is to deny that language is a carrier of thoughts through which it acquires meaning. Only language outside any human thought at all (the language of animals, for example) is incomprehensible (to us), but in this case such language will also be entirely insignificant as ‘text’. This is certainly not the case with Allah’s Book. Its language does fully function within the constraints of the human intellect. To claim that its language (Arabic) is so ‘sacred’ that it cannot be understood by the human mind is irrational and also contradicts everything we know about how languages work.

If the meaning of a word is determined by the communicative purpose that a speaker/author gives to it, it implies that meaning only exists within the structure of any given language and any concrete historical context. It does not reside within the word itself. If we want to make sense of a person’s speech we do not analyse each individual word separately and in isolation from its place in the sentence structure or the entire system of a language. We follow in this al-Jurj§nÊ who maintained that words in isolation, that is, words purely as lexical items, do not make sense until they are constructed in a certain way, and arranged and harmonised in one pattern rather than another. Al-Jurj§nÊ believed that isolated words have no communicative or expressive value, and that the only possible way to mean anything is for words to be included into sets of relations which dramatically change the way the single word is to be understood.[66]

When we say that the meaning of a single word is derived from the composition and the grammatical structure of a certain text we also imply that its explicit meaning is derived from what is implicit, that is, not explicit or ‘silent’. When someone says, for example, that ‘Joe ate a red apple’ we realise that the meaning of the colour red is established through the fact that other colours exist that are not red. Or if we hear in Allah’s speech that ‘these are the sins that are inexcusable’ we understand its meaning, and the significance of stressing that these sins are inexcusable, only because of our implicit knowledge that other types of sins might exist that are not inexcusable but good and justified. Since Allah’s Book avoids tedious elaboration as well as elliptic terseness, it is of paramount importance, in particular in our legal interpretations of the verses, to read the explicit as well as the implicit in the text. When we hear, for instance, in Sårat a l-Nis§”, verse 11, ‘if there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he (the deceased father) leaves’, or ‘but if there is only one female, she is entitled to one half’ [FM], we realize that in both instances the existence of a male heir is implied even if the text does not explicitly refer to male heirs.

The Book expresses its structure, composition, and meaning with utmost precision, a precision comparable to the structural perfection that one finds in nature and that is studied in chemistry, physics, biology, medicine, and mathematics. This is because the Creator, who has created the universe with its smallest atoms and particles and who has created human beings with their organs, bones, arteries, eyes, ears, and noses, He is the same who also authored the Book. We therefore need to acknowledge the unity of the Creator and the unity of universal laws, expressed both in nature and the Book. As in nature, every letter of His words has a specific function and meaning. As in nature, the Book does not contain anything that is semantically redundant or superfluous. Some grammarians have called repetitive features of the text ‘matters of emphasis’ and have claimed that such features affect the style but not the meaning of the text. We, however, believe that a concession of redundancy undermines the divine authority of the Book. We believe that it is impossible to take away a single word or to even remove a single particle from the text without seriously damaging the integrity of its meaning. Likewise, every attempt to restructure the syntax of the text, for example by moving a word forward or backward, would significantly alter the intended sentence structure. This would not only

change the aesthetic effect and the musical rhythm of the verse but also quite substantially its meaning. In our interpretation of the Book we must therefore strictly observe the unity between form and content, that is, a harmony between the linguistic expression and its semantic content. If we violate this unity and study a word’s meaning separate from its lexical form, for example by disregarding its tense, gender, or number, we will produce more confusion than clarity, and ambiguities will obfuscate the actual clear intentions of the text.

If the Book does not contain anything redundant or superfluous, it follows that the significance of a single word cannot be conveyed by another word. Two or more different words cannot express the same idea, because if they did we could replace one word with another and could claim that the meaning has not changed or that the expressive power of the construction is still intact. But this is impossible because God’s speech is never redundant or arbitrary. It is precise and purposeful. One cannot remove a single dot in the text without corrupting its meaning. This implies that absolute synonymity does not exist in Allah’s Book—neither in the form of individual words nor whole idiomatic phrases. The often-assumed synonymity between, for example, a l-kit§b and a l-qur”§n, between lawÈ maÈfåí and im§m mubÊn, or between al-ba#l and al-zawj is unsustainable. If al-qur”§n meant exactly the same as al-kit§b why did Allah not drop one of the two and why did He not continue to use just al-qur”§n? Why did His revelation continue to use both a l-kit§b and a l-qur”§n? We believe that the two terms are indeed semantically distinct. Each embraces a different range of potential meanings whose disclosure has enormous implications for our perception of Allah’s revelation. Also, the word al-ba#l should not be perceived as completely synonymous with the word al-zawj, meaning ‘husband’, since in the context of verses 24:31 and 4:31, which discuss behavioural codes for women and men, they are definitely not synonymous, and their semantic distinction is crucial for a proper understanding of the social and legal issues involved.

To allow synonymity in the Book would imply that we allow the principle of substitutability in Allah’s revelation. If a l-kit§b can always be substituted for a l-qur”§n without changing the

meaning or the truth of the verses, then we would concede that Allah’s speech is imprecise, indistinct, and full of conceptual fuzziness. The Book says: ‘These are the verses of al-kit§b and a qur”§n that makes things clear.’ (A l-\ijr 15:1) The doctrine of synonymity led to the erroneous view that al-kit§b and qur”§n in this verse express an absolutely identical meaning, ignoring the fact that both terms possess two entirely different linguistic forms and etymologies and that they are linked by the conjunction and (-wa), indicating an addition (+) and not an equation (=). If both words were synonymous one of the two would be superfluous and the verse could, for example, stop earlier: ‘These are the verses of al-kit§b’. Or the two words could be swapped around: ‘These are the verses of a qur”§n and a l-kit§b’. This however—in both cases — would change the meaning of the verse significantly. The fact that the verse contains both words and connects them with the conjunction wa- cannot be explained away by the argument that they are synonymous and cannot be justified only by a reference to poetic licence imposed by the rhyme or metre of the verse. Assessed as single, isolated words (that is, in isolation from grammatical and syntactic relations) the two terms do share a similar semantic field and can be used in some instances of everyday speech as synonyms. But the point is that as soon as these two isolated words have been inserted into the grammatical and syntactical construction of a concrete verse (15:1), connected by the conjunction wa-, they do mean two different things and the one cannot be substituted by the other. This underlines the argument, held by the majority of modern linguists, that perfect synonymity is impossible in concrete syntactic and grammatical relations of human speech (and this is different from words in isolation).

If there are terms, for example, the fifty or more words in Arabic for a she-camel, which are treated as synonyms (that is, all referring to the same semantic core, i.e., the she-camel), we should not regard this as an argument against nonsynonymity. Firstly, it shows that everyday life of nomadic Arab tribes demanded that nomads communicated the subtlest differences of the appearance of a she-camel with the help of a variety of different terms. To substitute one with another would have meant a loss of precision and clarity and could have led to potentially serious misunderstandings. Secondly, it does not disprove our point that these fifty or more words for she-camel are

synonymous only because they are isolated words, for example as they appear on a list of terms for she-camel or as they are listed in a dictionary. If they enter into the construction of a phrase or sentence they become part of a syntactical pattern whereby they lose their synonymity. This applies to all the words in the Book which we do not read as isolated words but always in a concrete syntactical arrangement. For example, when we come across the following verse: ‘For Muslim men and women (al-muslimÊn wa’l-muslim§t) and for believing men and women (a l-mu”minÊn wa’l-mu”min§t)…’ (A l-AÈz§b 33:35), we realise that the two terms al-muslimÊn and al-mu”minÊn, even if they, as isolated words, may be seen as near-equivalents, cannot exactly mean the same. Why would Allah repeat the same concept twice and then link them with the conjunction wa-? We realise that the text indeed refers to two different types of believers, one called al-muslimÊn and the other al-mu”minÊn. This requires us to uphold this distinction and then search for a terminological clarification in other verses of the Book. As another example, if we read in verse 11 of Sårat al-Nis§” ‘to each of his carer parents [li-abawaihi], one sixth of what he leaves’, we should not assume that li-abawaihi can be replaced by li-w§lidaihi, ‘to each of his biological parents [li-w§lidaihi]’, because abaw§n and w§lid§n, even if both mean ‘parents’, are different, nonsynonymous terms that refer to two different kinds of parents (carer parents do not necessarily have to be the biological parents of a child, that is, its ‘birth-givers’), and this terminological distinction is significant in the discussion of inheritance laws.

The assertion of nonsynonymity lies at the heart of our methodology. This is one of the reasons why our approach is different from that of traditional exegetes who all operate on the assumption that synonymity exists in Allah’s speech. We believe that for a truly modern understanding of the text it is necessary to leave behind the era of #ulåm al-tafsÊr which is based on the doctrine of synonymity. Our aim is to reach for a more subtle and precise understanding of the divine text in which every word in the Book expresses a unique meaning. It is also our aim to leave behind the dichotomy between grammar and rhetoric in Arabic linguistics that we have inherited from medieval scholarship. In the history of Arabic linguistics we saw how grammarians such as al-KhalÊl[67] and

SÊbawayh[68] developed different positions from those of rhetoricians such as Abå #AlÊ al-F§risÊ,[69] Ibn JinnÊ,[70] and a l-Jurj§nÊ.[71] We witnessed how their debates initiated a great amount of hostility and eventually created a sharp divide between Arabic grammar and rhetoric. We today who live in the twenty-first century must overcome this divide and combine in our reading of the Book both grammatical and rhetorical analysis. We should also not forget that in the meantime, other disciplines such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, and medicine have advanced on an unprecedented scale which gives us the opportunity to go beyond the narrow range of the philological disciplines and include, in a measured way and only if it is absolutely appropriate, the insights of the social and natural sciences. We deem it as inexcusable that some current scholars still interpret the Book solely on the basis of medieval sciences, ignoring the need to apply the latest findings of modern sciences.

Finally, it is our intention to read Allah’s Book not in isolation from social reality. It is a scandal how little traditional exegetes cared for the societies in which they were born and bred, and whose subsidies they enjoyed in order to interpret the divine text for their people. It is also a scandal how dogmatic they read the text and how often they projected their preconceived ideas of Islam, revelation, and Arabic grammar on the text and distorted what the Book actually says. We should always remind ourselves that the rules of Arabic grammar and lexicography were fixed only after the Book was revealed to humankind, not before. When, for example, the linguist SÊbawaih described the grammatical rule that noun and verb in a sentence must be congruent in gender and number, it contradicted Allah’s speech in verse 19 of Sårat al-\ajj: ‘Here are two adversaries who dispute about their Lord…’ [FM][72], because the dual form of the noun does not correspond with the nondual, plural form of the verb. And yet, we must not assume that Allah made a grammatical mistake because of SÊbawaih’s rule. Instead, we shall assume that the rule was not laid down with absolute precision. The many disputes about this and the emergence of different linguistic schools debating the correctness of this rule prove our point. Grammatical rules and theories of language must be derived from the actual usage of the language, and these rules and theories must be based on the Arabic usage of the Book—it should not be the other way around. What is right and wrong must not be declared by Arabic grammarians but by the actual language use of Arabs. The text will always rule over theory, not theory over the text.

*** Philosophical Principles

As for the philosophical premises of our rereading of Allah’s Book, we first of all need to refer to our tripartite concept of existence with which we aim to illustrate our thinking about the dynamics of d evelopment and progress. This explanatory tripartite model will be used both for the description of the universe as a whole and for the analysis of human societies in particular. In this philosophical model we also employ mathematical terminology and explain the dialectical relationship between movement and stasis in cosmos and society on the basis of three coordinates: 1: ‘being’ (al-kaynåna), 2: ‘progressing’ (al-sayråra), and 3: ‘becoming’ (al-ßayråra). Let us begin by exploring the characteristics of these coordinates by referring to a more general theory of existence. The first coordinate, ‘being’, is defined as the material existence of our universe. Such ‘being’ filled the realm of the empty space of the cosmos even before it turned into the material world we now know. It is therefore true to say that such material ‘being’ exists whether we human beings can perceive it or not. It exists outside of our human consciousness. The second coordinate, ‘progressing’, refers to time. It denotes movement, process, and motion. Time is intrinsically linked to the first coordinate, to the extent that ‘progressing’ is the signifying force of ‘being’, that is, the material existence. In other words, only through movement, process and motion—that is, time—do the manifestations of the material world come into existence (and are visible, audible, touchable and such). ‘Becoming’ is the indispensable third coordinate that denotes change, alteration, and transformation. Existence would be incomplete, or two dimensional, if this third evolutionary dimension, which attributes purpose to ‘being’ and ‘progressing’, was excluded. Without this dimension of ‘becoming’, objects of the material world would wander randomly and aimlessly through time and space. It would lead to self-destruction and eventually nonexistence. Conversely, no item could change or move if it did not exist materially in the first place. In short, no ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ without ‘being’, and no purposeful ‘being’ without ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’.

The Book emphasises the need to unite the three coordinates and stresses the mutual inclusiveness of ‘being’, ‘becoming’, and ‘progressing’. The best example we can give is this:

O people, if you are in doubt regarding the resurrection, We have indeed created you from dust, then from a sperm, then from a clot, then from a little lump of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed, in order to show you. (Al-\ ajj 22:5)[73]

In this verse, ‘being’ is expressed in the sentence ‘We have indeed created you from dust’. ‘Progressing’ is discernable in the transformation of dust into water (sperm). And, finally, ‘becoming’ takes place in several chains of existential transmutations, that is, the change from dust to sperm, from sperm to a clot, from a clot to a little lump of flesh, each chain representing different levels of ‘being’.

The two dimensions of ‘being’ and ‘progressing’ can be described as the upright or vertical coordinates of existence, representing existence in all its material and temporal manifestations. The third dimension, ‘becoming’, can be seen as a horizontal coordinate that displays the extent to which existence is developing and changing. If we take this model into the earliest possible time period, we observe that all three dimensions were manifested during the Big Bang at the beginning of our world. After the explosion, the first material components, the photons, turned into hydrogen; hydrogen then turned into helium; helium into nonorganic beings; nonorganic beings into organic beings; organic beings into living creatures of primitive, protoplasmic cells; primitive cells into animals; and finally animals into human beings. Such chains of transformations point to a continuous process of ‘becoming’ which has, since then, become a constant feature of nature’s two other dimensions: ‘being’ and ‘progressing’.

If we take our model into the future and see what will happen at the end of this world, we recognise a rather two-dimensional existence: ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ will exist without ‘progressing’, existence in all its manifestations will freeze in time: ‘being’ comes to a standstill and time, as we know it, will cease to exist. Existence will degenerate as its outward manifestations

infinitely regress. Such a situation is manifest in the Book’s description of Hell and Paradise, where time is nothing but an accumulation of eternally fixed realities. Existence in the fire of Hell, for example, will be frozen, the outward manifestations of suffering and pain will not change, and the souls of the sinners will be tortured forever. In verses 106–7 of Sårat Håd we hear:

As for the wretched, they shall be in the Fire; they shall have therein groaning and moaning; abiding therein forever, so long as the heavens and the earth shall endure, except as you Lord pleases. [MF]

This new life (in Hell or Paradise) requires, however, a prior transformation of existence from a state in which time is a factor of material existence into a state in which time has come to a standstill. The Book refers to this when it predicts the coming of the Last Hour. It predicts that the end of this world leads to an acceleration of ‘progressing’, at the end of which, upon the debris of the old world, a new kind of existence will be born wherein no ‘progressing’ exists any longer. This is a form of negation or destruction mentioned in the following verse:

Do not call, besides Allah, upon any other god. There is no god but He. Everything will perish save His face. He is the judgement, and unto Him you shall all be returned. (Al-Qaßaß 28:88, MF)

Destruction does not mean nonexistence. It implies a new form of existence through a different ‘becoming’; this new ‘becoming’ in the Afterlife will be fixed and stable because of the lack of ‘progressing’. The end of this world and the creation of the Afterlife are, we might say, a second Big Bang which follows the first at the beginning of this world. Since ‘becoming’ represents the purpose of any existence, the purpose of the first Big Bang was to eventually lead to the second Big Bang, to the creation of the Afterlife and a new existence after death.

What happens if we take one dimension out of this tripartite concept of existence? We have said that ‘being’ and ‘progressing’ without ‘becoming’ is

existence without purpose; it is senseless and aimless. If we took ‘being’ out of the tripartite structure and leave ‘progressing’ and ‘becoming’ on their own, it would imply a logically and ontologically impossible fixation upon any point A on the coordinates of ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’. On the coordinate of ‘progressing’, that is, the dimension of time and movement, any point A would remain A, as movement is frozen, and on the coordinate of ‘becoming’, that is, the dimension of purpose and aim, our point A would turn into A’, which is self-contradictory, in the sense that A is A and yet not A—according to the dialectical logic of ‘negation’ or ‘negation of negation’ this would be impossible. This notion of an antagonistic struggle between internal contradictions leads us to think that ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ necessitate the dimension of ‘being’. The dimension of ‘being’ is then expressed or manifested through movement and development. The colour red, for instance, if we take it as an example of ‘being’, exists only through the things that are red, such as a rose, a shoe, or a hat; it only exists through its manifestation in things that make it visible. Without such things the colour red would not exist (for us) visibly.

We are now able to describe the following constellations with regards to the interplay among the three dimensions or coordinates of existence:

1. ‘Being’ (existence) and ‘progressing’ (time) without ‘becoming’ (trans formation):

This constellation indicates motionless, purposeless existence. Even if equipped with time, there would be no change or alteration. Development and selective evolution would become impossible. If we had such a constellation we would never arrive at the Last Hour; this world would never end. But since verse 5 of Sårat Al-\ajj proves the truth of the resurrection (and thus of a preceding Last Hour), Allah unmistakably added the dimension of ‘becoming’ to ‘being’ and ‘progressing’. Even theoretically, the laws of dialectical logic would render a constellation in which ‘becoming’ is missing as inconceivable. Thus, whoever believes in the existence of a Last Day through his belief in the existence of God has therefore already fulfilled the fundamental pillar of al-isl§m, as we will explain in chapter 1. Belief in Allah and in the Last Day represents the lowest possible limit of

a l-isl§m, and this excludes the possibility of perceiving ‘being’ and ‘progressing’ without ‘becoming’.

2. ‘Being’ (existence) and ‘becoming’ (transformation) without ‘progressing’ (time):

This constellation pertains to timeless transformations, that is, motionless change of existence. This, however, can only be possible at the time of the Last Hour. Within our existing world the quality of nontemporal and yet transformable existence is only possible in the sphere of pure light.

3. ‘Progressing’ (time) and ‘becoming’ (transformation + purpose) without ‘being’ (existence):

This simultaneous constellation of existence and nonexistence is inconceivable in terms of dialectical logic. Instead, we have a series of ‘beings’ where one existence negates the previous ones. The first Big Bang and the creation of our world negated a previous existence, most probably a substance out of nothing. The second Big Bang, the coming of the Last Hour, will negate our existing world and create a new world. From the very first moment of the initial explosion the purpose of our world has been to move to a second big explosion at the time of the Last Hour as the Book describes it. The next world, in contrast, will have no such purpose; it will be nonteleological, that is, it will be aimless since it lacks ‘becoming’.

Moving on to the level of human society, ‘being’ refers to the basic biological existence of human beings, ‘progressing’ means advance in history, and ‘becoming’ is civilisational development and social change. Point zero, where the three coordinates of human existence originated, was Adam, the father of humankind and the starting point of human history. Similar to life on a cosmological macrolevel, human life is deficient or even unsustainable if one dimension is taken out of the tripartite structure. If, for example, ‘being’ was removed, human life would simply cease to exist. In this scenario, history would stop, time would disappear, and human life would regress to an animalistic stage; the evolutionary process would be reversed, back to the

period of primitive forms of biological existence. This, however, is ontologically inconceivable.

If ‘progressing’ is removed, time will be abolished. But since time exists whether we want it to or not, a negation of time is also inconceivable. History implies a conscious acknowledgement of time, since human beings, in contrast to the animal world, are able to locate temporal succession in their brains.

With ‘becoming’ we face the biggest challenge to human existence. The dimension of human will and self-determination allows development and change. ‘Becoming’ produces a development that varies from one culture to another and from one historical period to another even within the same culture. We call the first variety historical difference, the second historical development. To sum up, ‘progressing’, or time, cannot be removed from human existence, ‘being’ can ontologically not not exist, and ‘becoming’ is historical change (a l-ßayråriyya al-ta”rÊkhiyya) which human beings, in exercising their free will, either accelerate or slow down—but can never fully stop.

On the level of ‘becoming’ human beings realise their full potential and assume responsibilities. Reading the Book, we realise that every Qur’anic story deals with this problem. We learn through these stories that an act of a human being, before its actual execution, belongs to the world of possible acts, whereas after its execution, it belongs to the world of determined acts—and this is because time can never regress. [74] We also realise that choice and purpose are intrinsically part of every human act, as are the reward and punishment that human beings receive for what they do. Their acts are therefore always voluntary and not predetermined. On this we hear in the Book:

In these narratives about them [i.e., the messengers], there is a lesson for people of understanding. (Yåsuf 12:111)

Say: “Travel in the land and look what was the fate of those who disbelieved (the messengers).” (Al-An#§m 6:11)

Furthermore, in ‘becoming’ and the dual process of time movement and development, we see the dialectical law of the negation of negation fully realised. The Book contains several examples, of which we will discuss the three most important:

1. ‘Becoming’ in the belief of God’s unity (al-tauÈÊd):

Belief in the unity of God passed through several stages due to an increasing human capacity to believe: from belief in a personified, concrete godhead to belief in an abstract, invisible God; or from belief in many different goddesses to belief in only one God. There we recognise different periods of religious history: from astral worship (stars and planets) to nature cults (trees and rocks), and then from idolatry (statues and idols) to the worship of saints (salaf forefathers and ßåfÊ sheikhs). We recognise in each of the subsequent periods a trace of the previous ones, but we also acknowledge an evolutionary progressing from a more primitive to a higher stage of religious belief. The credo ‘there is no god but God’ is the most advanced and most abstract form of expressing belief that can be shared by everyone, philosophically minded or not, and is also the ultimate expression of al-isl§m (see chapter 1).

2. ‘Becoming’ with regards to morality and ethical ideals (muthul #uly§ li’l-akhl§q):

We will show in chapter 1 that the history of ethics is accumulative. Human ethics has evolved from the simple forms of respect for parents to the more advanced forms of the ‘ten commandments’ which finally culminated in the messengerhood of MuÈammad (ß) which represents an extended and most sophisticated version of previous ethical codes.

3. ‘Becoming’ in human legislation (al-tashrÊ#):

Evolution and progress to higher forms of legislation, negating previous ones, is expressed in the concept of ‘abrogation’ (al-naskh). As will be explained later, it implies the abrogation of earlier messengerhoods by later ones; it does not imply an abrogation of legal verses by other verses of the same messengerhood.

We explained macrocosmic ‘being’ and ‘progressing’ without ‘becoming’ as existence without change or development, and as an aimless and purposeless progressing of time. ‘Being’ and ‘progressing’ without ‘becoming’ is deficient existence. The same applies to human societies: the most advanced societies possess all three dimensions since they progress on all three coordinates of existence. Less advanced or stagnating societies are two dimensional. We might call them ‘flat’ societies as they are missing a third dimension that gives them depth and width.

In a direct confrontation between three-dimensional and twodimensional societies the former always win. The Book, in its insistence on a unity of all three dimensions, reminds us that a two-dimensional existence, a ‘flat’ society, is only legitimate in the Afterlife, that is, in Hell, and that a society in this world should be three dimensional. It prophesizes terrible affliction on every society that has neglected its third dimension: by having lost their purpose or aim in this world such societies have lost their place under the sun and will eventually perish.

We now realise the danger of saying that ‘becoming’ in Islamic societies has happened only once, namely in seventh-century Arabia, and that it should never happen again—until the Day of Resurrection. It will be a tragic mistake to say that until the Last Hour no further development or renewal should ever take place again. It would be fatal to insist that societies should always be modelled according to MuÈammad’s (ß) state on the Arabian Peninsula 1,400 years ago. It would mean defeat and stagnation if his words and deeds remain the highest ideal of human behaviour, so all-embracing that they cover all spheres of life until the coming of the Last Hour. To do so would give MuÈammad’s (ß) words and deeds, including the way he ate, the way he

dressed, and the way he used his toothpick, the same sanctity as the injunctions of the Book. It would also mean to accuse everyone who does not behave like MuÈammad (ß) of heresy or even apostasy.

We have said that the precision of nature and universe can also be found in the text of the Book. As humankind has become very advanced in all spheres of the natural and social sciences, we are today much better equipped in the study of the textual subtleties of the Book. It will be the ultimate concern of our contemporary reading (qir§“a mu#§ßira) of the Book that we facilitate it with the most advanced techniques and scientific methods of our age and that we come up eventually with meaningful knowledge with which we are able to establish human legislation within the boundaries that God has set for all humankind.

Muhammad Shahrur

** 1. Al-isl$m and Al-^m$n

Why the Conventional Understanding of al-Isl§m and al-^m§n is not Adequate

Traditionally, the term al-isl§m stands for the religion of those who are commonly known as Muslims, the followers of Prophet MuÈammad (ß). In this traditional understanding, the term al-Êm§n has been used to also describe the ‘faith’ of these Muslims, the adherents of a l-isl§m. The result of linking al-Êm§n to a l-isl§m was that the followers of MuÈammad (ß) were thought to be both the Muslims (Ar. al-muslimån) and the believers (al-mu”minån), while it was ignored that there is a big difference between al-isl§m and al-Êm§n. In the books of the \adÊth scholars both terms have also been treated

as more or less synonymous (see al-Bukh§rÊ; Muslim, ‘aÈÊÈain, chapters on al-Êm§n).

However, the assumption of synonymity in Allah’s Book has been a fundamental flaw in traditional scholarship. As we will prove in this chapter, it has obscured the fact that the two terms are neither semantically nor etymologically identical. It is the aim of this chapter not only to explore the semantic differences between a l-isl§m and al-Êm§n but also between terms such as al-kufr, al-shirk, and al-jir§m, which were (all) thought to be synonymous terms contrasting with a l-isl§m and a l-Êm§n (see the works of our honourable scholars in tafsÊr, uß å l a l-fiqh, lugha, and so forth). This study hopes to demonstrate the distinct universal nature of the term al-muslimån (those who assent to God), which can be (generically) applied to all believers in this world, and this in contradistinction to the term al-mu”minån (those who believe), which, because it describes a more particular type of religious belief, must be used only for the followers of Prophet MuÈammad

(ß).

Let us first revisit how al-isl§m and al-Êm§n have been traditionally understood. Al-isl§m is commonly perceived to be based on the following five pillars:

1. The shah§da: the creedal statement that ‘there is no god but God’ and that ‘MuÈammad is the Messenger of God’;

2. ßal§h: the ritual to pray five times a day;

3. zak§h: the duty to donate money as a ‘poor due’ or #alms tax’;

4. ßaum: the fast during the month of Ramadan;

5. Èajj: the pilgrimage to Mecca ‘for those who have the means to do so’ (3:97).

The common description of a l-Êm§n is that it is based on the following five tenets of belief in:

1. Allah;

2. His angels;

3. His books and messengers;

4. The Hereafter;

5. Allah’s divine predestination and His power over good and evil.

It is immediately clear from these (quite dubious) lists, the pillars of al-isl§m and the tenets of al-Êm§n, that they are either based purely on ritual practice (al-isl§m) or on theological doctrines (al-Êm§n). Ethical and moral rules have been entirely excluded from either category. As a consequence, secularists, nationalists, and Marxists have (wrongly) perceived the religion of Islam as fundamentally flawed and incapable of providing moral guidance for people in modern societies—a perception that has relegated Islam to the scrap heap of history. What has been ignored in such often anti-religious propaganda is the fact that moral teachings were always an inseparable part of al-isl§m and that it was only because of our honourable scholars’ ignorance that ethics was excluded from religion. It is the aim of this chapter (and indeed the entire book) to reconnect ethics to religion and to present an interpretation of al-isl§m in which the moral

teachings of the Qur’an are rediscovered for the benefit of an Arab civil society, which gets its priorities right and places enlightened civility before stupefying ritualism and mindless doctrinism.

*** Disproving the Conventional Understanding

We will now turn to the text of the Qur’an, which—according to our terminology—is called the Book.[75] Let us first agree that Allah’s revelation is free from error and (human) interpolation. Let us also agree that we must identify the meaning of the terms al-isl§m and al-Êm§n by locating them in the context in which they appear in the Book. It will then immediately become clear that the traditional definitions of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n do not make sense, and that those who insist on the old definitions actually deviate from the Book. The results of our findings can be summarised as follows:

1. Based on 33:35, ‘men and women who assent to God’ (al-muslimån and al-muslim§t) are both terminologically and conceptually separated from ‘men and women who believe’ (al-mu”minån and al-mu”min§t).[76]

2. Based on 49:14,[77] al-isl§m precedes al-Êm§n —chronologically (in terms of its appearance in human history) as well as biographically (in terms of the individual’s spiritual progress and transition from al-isl§m to al-Êm§n).

3. Muslims are not the followers of Prophet MuÈammad (ß)! Instead, the Jinns, Abraham, Jacob, the tribes of the Israelites, Joseph, the magicians of the Pharaoh, the disciples of Jesus, Noah and Lot—they are the actual Muslims; and when the Pharaoh saw the splitting of the sea he also became a Muslim. Historically speaking, none of them could follow the Prophet MuÈammad (ß). Instead, they followed other messengers: for example, the disciples followed Jesus (r) and the magicians of the Pharaoh followed Moses (r). If we keep postulating that the

shah§da is the first pillar of a l-isl§m and the ultimate criterion for adherence to al-isl§m, we would deny—since the shah§da demands that one must follow MuÈammad as the Messenger of God—not only that the Pharaoh had converted to al-isl§m by following Moses (r) but also that the disciples of Jesus adhered to a l-isl§m by following the prophet Jesus (r). We would negate their adherence to al-isl§m on the grounds that they did not follow Prophet MuÈammad (ß). Other so-called pre-Islamic prophets, their families, and tribes, who could not yet have known MuÈammad (ß) but whose strong adherence to al-isl§m is well-attested in the Book, would also be excluded from being attached to al-isl§m. Surely, our honourable scholars do not want us to believe that they were not Muslims only because they never fasted during the month of Ramadan and never did the pilgrimage to Mecca![78]

4. The rituals of prayer, alms tax, fast, and pilgrimage are not pillars of al-isl§m. This is because the Book demands that these rituals be practised only by the Muslim-Believers (a l-mu”minån) and not by the Muslim-Assenters (al-muslimån).[79]

5. The pillars of a l-isl§m cannot be reduced to religious rituals because the Book mentions other things that are absolutely essential to a l-isl§m, for example, the injunction to fight, to kill, and to seek consultation, to fulfil contracts and obligations, and many, many other moral and legal responsibilities.[80]

6. To interpret the words ‘Allah only accepts al-isl§m’ and ‘The followers of al-isl§m will enter Paradise’ as a reference only to those who adhere to MuÈammad (ß), and thus reduce al-isl§m to the prayer, alms tax, fasting, and pilgrimage of only one part of all humankind, contradicts the spirit of the Book. Such an exclusivist claim by one specific religious community has been repeatedly rebuked by the Book. For example, it fiercely criticised those Qur’anic Jews and Christians who had desired God’s favour solely for themselves:

They also say: ‘No one will enter Paradise unless he is a Jew or a Christian.’ This is their own wishful thinking. [Prophet], say, ‘Produce your evidence, if you are telling the truth.’ In fact, any who direct themselves wholly to God and do good will have their reward with their Lord: no fear for them, nor will they grieve. (Al-Baqara 2: 111–2, AH)

7. The narrow definition of al-isl§m referring only to prayer, alms tax, fasting, and pilgrimage deviates from the most fundamental teachings of the Book. To say, for example, that Allah approves of only one religious community (and its specific rituals), Islam in its narrow [conventional and historical] sense, contradicts Allah’s notion of a l-isl§m as a religion that is inherent in human nature (a l-fiãra al-ins§niyya) and that Allah has bestowed upon all of His creation.

So [Prophet] as a man of pure faith, stand firm and true in your devotion to the religion [li’l-dÊn ÈanÊf [an]]. This is the natural disposition [fiãra] God instilled in mankind—there is no altering God’s creation—and this is the right religion [al-dÊn al-qayyim], though most people do not realize it. (Al-Råm 30:30, AH)

The implication of this verse is that the pillars of al-isl§m must be consistent with the natural disposition that ‘God instilled in mankind’. It implies that nothing of this religion must contradict human nature. But do the rituals of (historical) Islam really conform to the natural instincts of all human beings? In other words, are humans naturally inclined to perform these rituals? Of course not. To pay alms tax (zak§h), for example, means to give away money and part of our possessions, which undoubtedly goes against human instinct!! Allah has ordered His creation to care for property and to ‘love wealth with a passion’.[81] Likewise, to fast (ßaum) contradicts our natural disposition because it undermines the human instinct for survival.

The basis of human nature is to eat and drink and to satisfy hunger and thirst; it is not to fast. It is to reveal emotions and even to shout insults as a spontaneous expression of anger and provocation, and not to hold back because of Ramadan’s sacredness. In contrast, the specific rituals of MuÈammad’s community are all against human nature. If these rituals were part of our human nature we all would perform them naturally (like drinking and eating) and we would not need explicit commands from God to do so (as they are given in the Book!)—we would act perhaps similar to a herbivorous cow which instinctively eats only grass because Allah made this the inherent disposition of cows. We, however, do not perform any of these rituals by instinct or on impulse, which means that the specific forms of prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage and so on cannot be part of al-isl§m, the religion of all humankind. Instead, they are only part of the definite (and hence more particular) section of Allah’s Book.[82] They were stipulated only for the Muslim-Believers (al-mu”minån), not for all Muslim-Assenters (al-muslimån) who, by their natural disposition, instinctively follow the religion of al-isl§m, and not of al-Êm§n.

*** Towards a New Understanding of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n

So far we have shown that the traditional definitions of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n are incompatible with Allah’s text. What we need to do now is to explore the definitions that are more faithful to the Book. We need to explain the differences between ‘those who assent to God’ (muslimån) and ‘those who have faith’ (mu”minån). This implies a redefinition of the pillars of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n, for which the concepts of ‘doing what is fair and just’ (al-iÈs§n) and ‘doing what is righteous’ (a l-#amal a l-ß§liÈ) will be introduced. ‘Doing what is righteous’ (a l-#amal a l-ß§liÈ) will be defined as a pillar of a l-isl§m, while a l-iÈs§n (‘doing what is fair and just’) will be defined as a pillar of al-Êm§n. We will also deal with two often-misunderstood verses in the Book. These verses say that ‘the religion before Allah is al-isl§m’ ($l #Imr§n 3:19) and that ‘if anyone desires a religion other than al-isl§m, never will it be accepted of Him’ ($l #Imr§n 3:85). In order to interpret these verses correctly we need to ask: what is meant by the phrase ‘a religion other than

al-isl§m’? How is this religion defined and why it is so special? The answers to these questions will eventually help us to put our priorities right, to place morality and ethics above ritualism, and, finally, to achieve a truly sustainable ‘Islamic awakening’.[83]

Instead of returning to the notion of synonymity in the Book, we set out to find subtle differences of meaning between terms such as al-isl§m and al-Êm§n or between al-shirk and al-kufr that only look similar on the surface. We have already seen how the Book displays an astonishing precision, reflecting the majesty of its divine Maker, in distinguishing between al-muslimån (those who assent to God) and al-mu”minån (those who have faith in MuÈammad). In the same manner, it also subtly distinguishes between al-mu”minån (those who have faith) and different categories of ‘unbelievers’ such as a l-k§firån (those who reject God), a l-mushrikån (those who violate God’s unity) and al-mujrimån (those who dissent from God).

It is absolutely vital for our reading of the Book to negate synonymity and to identify even the smallest semantic variation in the Book. And yet, our claim that there is no synonymity in the Book does not mean that we insist on an absolute difference between these terms. What we mean is that there are subtle semantic variations between these words that are by no means oppositional or antonymic. For example, the Arabic words al-jazm and al-jurm, al-jazz and al-Èazz, a l-batt and a l-qaãã, a l-batr and a l-shaãr, all connote the same root meaning, which is ‘to cut off’ (al-qaã# —yet another term); however, minor additional layers of meaning make each word unique and different from the others in this group.[84] Ignoring such subtle differences while writing or reading newspapers is bad enough, but we should not ignore them while reading Allah’s Book!

**** Al-isl§m and al-muslimån

Now that we have established that al-isl§m and al-Êm§n are two different concepts and that the traditional understanding of al-isl§m’s five pillars is inaccurate, we can now redefine al-isl§m and its pillars according to the Book, applying the method of tartÊl,[85] that is, a thematic arrangement of the verses that contain the terms in question.

1. The term al-isl§m refers to an ‘assent to God’:

We learn that al-isl§m means belief in the existence of God, in His unity and in life after death; we learn that this belief contains an absolut4e, axiomatic truth, insofar as these articles of faith can neither be proved nor disproved by empirical evidence or scientific tests; and we learn that such beliefs are equally shared by all people in this world and are, as they are based on natural reason and instinct, intelligible to both common people and the intellectual elite (al-r§sikhån bi’l-#ilm).[86]

2. Al-isl§m (‘assent to God’) is a religion shared by the entire universe (and not just by the inhabitants of our globe):

We read in Sårat $l #Imr§n, ‘All creatures in the heavens and on earth, willing or unwilling, bowed to His will [aslama lahu],’ (3:83). We hear that these are rational beings that live in the many galaxies of this universe who—according to the Book—not only heard of God, the only One, but also assented to Him, subjectively and willingly because of God’s divinity (al-ulåhiyya) as well as objectively and dispassionately because of His sovereignty (a l-rubåbiyya). We also learn that this religion is called al-isl§m, meaning ‘belief in His existence and His unity’. This belief is a matter of utmost logic because Allah, the Highest, is our Lord, that is, the Lord of the sky and the earth, the Lord of what is in the sky and the earth, and what is between the sky and the earth.

3. The religion of al-isl§m and life as a muslim cannot be identified with MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood, nor with any other prophetical message:

We hear that Noah was a muslim, as were Abraham, Joseph, Jacob, Solomon, Moses, and Jesus. They all were muslims in spite of the fact that they were not contemporaries of MuÈammad (ß) and never performed the rituals he prescribed. Their faith was confined to belief in God and His unity. Everyone who believed in the existence of God and the Hereafter (the absolute, axiomatic truth) was a muslim, regardless of the individual messenger he followed, and regardless of the name of the religious community to which he belonged.

4. Al-isl§m is the only heavenly religion that humankind has ever known:

It has been transmitted by different messengers, each in his own way. A l-isl§m began with Noah and culminated in the Noble Prophet (ß), passing messengerhoods from Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and Jesus, undergoing several developments and passing through several periods, while facing a growing intellectual and material capability that its human recipients developed in dealing with subsequent messengerhoods.[87]

**** The Definition of al-isl§m

Let us read again the words of the Book:

The believers, the Jews, the Christians and Sabians—whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does what is good, shall receive their reward from their Lord. They shall have nothing to fear and they shall not grieve. (Al-Baqara 2:62, MF)

Who is fairer in speech [aÈsana qaul[an]] than one who calls unto Allah and performs the righteous deed [#amila ß§liÈ[an]] and says: “I am one of those who submit [min al-muslimÊn]”. (Fußßilat 41:33, MF)

41:33 tells us that al-isl§m is based on the axiomatic truth of Allah’s existence and belief in the Hereafter. It is linked to ‘doing what is righteous’ (al-#amal al-ß§liÈ) and, because al-isl§m is the generic term that includes the particular, to ‘doing what is fair and just’ (al-iÈs§n), the pillar of al-Êm§n. If someone ‘does what is righteous’ he is one of the muslimån (‘those who assent to God),[88] and it does not matter whether he is—as 2:62 says—a follower of MuÈammad (ß) (‘the believers’), a follower of Moses (‘the Jews’), a follower of Jesus (‘the Christians’), or whether he follows any other religious creed or religious community of whatever name (‘the Sabians’).[89] The existence of Allah and the Hereafter—and that includes the resurrection of the dead—is an axiomatic truth that is indisputable for every muslim. If we accept this premise it will be clear what is meant by the phrase ‘the religion before Allah is al-isl§m’ and ‘if anyone desires a religion other than al-isl§m, never will it be accepted of Him’. It means that the only religion God can accept is the one inherently linked to belief in Him, which is a l-isl§m. A l-isl§m, in this context, means the opposite of disbelief, and it is disbelief (that is, a religiously held form of disbelief) which Allah cannot accept. It is only logical that Allah cannot accept from His creation a religion that refuses to believe in God altogether.

Dissent from God

In order to better understand the terms al-isl§m and al-muslimån in the Book we hence also need to study the term opposite to al-isl§m, which is a l-ijr§m (connoting a dissent from God) and the opposite term to al-muslimån, which is al-mujrimån (those who dissent from God). The Book says: ‘Shall we treat those who are [a l-muslimÊn] in the same way as those who are [al-mujrimÊn]?[] What has come upon you that you judge in

such a wise?’ (A l-Qalam 68:35–36, AhA).[90] The root of the word al-mujrim is j-r-m whose basic meaning is ‘to cut off’. In modern Arabic we call a thief or a murderer a mujrim (i.e. culprit or criminal) because a mujrim has cut off his ties with law and order and has given free reign to his instincts and desires. This is exactly how the Book uses the term, because a ‘culprit’ in this context is someone who has cut off his ties with God, who denies His existence, who does not believe in the Hereafter, the resurrection of the dead, and the Day of Judgement. Unlike a muslim, who freely assents to God, a mujrim is someone who (freely) dissents from Him. In modern parlance, a mujrim would be called an ‘atheist’, a dissenter from God. In the Book ‘those who cut off their ties with God’ are defined as those who reject the possibility of a resurrection after death, who deny the existence of God, and who tell lies about the Hereafter. They are also described as those who, with their own eyes, suddenly will come to see what they have always denied: they will come out of their graves and be dumbstruck, while their astonishment will increase even more when they realise that they are, without being interrogated by Allah, being sent straight to Hell (whose existence they had always denied).[91]

Why are they not interrogated by Allah?[92] It is because a mujrim, a dissenting atheist, does not believe in the existence of God. This alone sends him straight to Hell. He will not even be asked by God about his acts in this world. The reason is that he has no account with God. The omission of prayer, the breaking of the fast, the tampering with weights and scales (corruption in trade and commerce) and such, which are all sins that Allah might forgive an assenter (muslim)[93], will not even be mentioned in the case of a dissenter, because a mujrim has cut off his ties with God. A person cannot be made accountable for things whose consequences for the Afterlife have never been acknowledged by him in the first place. The Book says:

Except the companions of the right hand. (They will be) in gardens (of delight): they will question each other, and ask of the sinners: “What led you into Fire?” They will say: “We were not of those [mußallÊn], nor were we of those who fed the indigent; but we used to talk vanities with vain

talkers, and we used to deny the Day of Judgement.” (Al-Muddaththir 74:39–46)

We learn that the ‘companions of the right hand’ will ask the mujrimån what had led them into Hell. They will reply that they had not assented to al-isl§m—in belief and practice: they did not accept the existence of God and had cut off their ties with Him (‘We were not of those who [are connected to God]’); they also denied the Hereafter (‘we used to deny the Day of Judgement’), and they did nothing that was good for His creation (‘nor were we of those who fed the i ndigent’); instead, they did what was bad and harmful (‘we used to talk vanities with vain talkers’). Then came, all of a sudden, the Last Hour and they ended up in the Fire.

Some misguided exegetes interpreted the words ‘those who are connected to God’ as ‘those who prayed the ritual ßal§h prayer’. However, the Arabic term al-mußallÊn in 74:43 does not refer to the ritual prayer. Otherwise it would mean that those who omit the ritual prayer or a fasting day also deny the existence of God, which is simply not the case. It would be a gross injustice to call them ‘those who cut off their ties with God’ (a l-mujrimån) only because they missed a prayer. Evidence for this can be found in the following verses:

[Prophet], have you considered the person who denies the Judgement? It is he who pushes aside the orphans and does not urge others to feed the needy. So woe to those […] who are heedless of their [ßal§tihim], those who are all show and forbid common kindness. (A l-M§#ån 107:1–7, AH)

In these verses we hear that those who deny the Day of Judgement and those who deny the existence of God are regarded as those who have left the realm of al-isl§m and have instead entered the realm of al-ijr§m. We therefore do not interpret the expression ‘those who are a l-mußallån’ in both såras as literally ‘those who perform the ritual prayer’, in the sense of a prostration of the body, but more figuratively as ‘those who connect themselves to God’

(ßila).[94] Surely, one does not need rituals if one wants to strengthen one's ties with God. One may perhaps say 'Oh Lord, help me!' or 'Praise and Glory be to God', but no specific bodily gesture is needed to enhance one's spiritual attachment to Allah. There is clearly a difference between a person's individual attachment to God and a ritualised way to express it. This distinction is evident in the way the Book uses words derived from the triliteral root ß-l-w. If it wants to refer to the connection between the believer and God by way of rituals, it uses ßalawa, with the letter waw (as in Al-Når 24:37), [95] but if it refers to the personal, spiritual link with God which does not need to be o utwardly expressed by any conventional ritual, it uses ßal§h, with the letter y§ (as in A l-Når 24:41)[96]. We must never ignore these subtle differences, and if the text employs two derivatives of the same lexeme, when it could have used an identical expression, it indicates a difference. It indicates that we are meant to clearly distinguish between 'prayer' in the sense of a ritual, and 'prayer' in the sense of a spiritual connection between God and the believer, giving praise to Allah, mentally or verbally, but not by a movement of the body.

In sum, the term al-isl§m expresses a connection to God, a belief in Allah and the Hereafter; those who establish that spiritual connection (al-mußallån) are 'those who assent to God' (al-muslimån),[97] while those who perform the ritual prayer of rak#a and sujåd, that is, a l-ßal§h, are 'those who believe' (al-mu"minån).

The Pillars of al-isl§m

We are now in a position to redefine the three pillars of al-isl§m as they are presented in the Book. Let us begin with the first two pillars:

1. Belief in the existence of God

2. Belief in the Hereafter

As we said before, these two pillars contain elements of an axiomatic, indisputable truth which, once it is accepted, initiates a believer into the religion of al-isl§m. The first part of the shah§da, ‘There is no god but God’, is already the most elaborate expression of a theological doctrine in al-isl§m as it follows naturally from the more fundamental belief in the existence of God and the Hereafter. This doctrine was first expressed by the prophet Noah, and then reaffirmed by several messengers and prophets until it was finally sealed by MuÈammad

(ß).[98]

3. ‘Doing what is righteous’ (al-#amal al-ß§liÈ).

**** The Good Work

Since the ethical fundaments of al-isl§m have always been ignored by our honourable scholars the following section is dedicated to studying the third pillar in more detail. The #ulam§“s negligence of ethics meant that it was excluded from both the pillars and tenets of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n, which is the reason why we should not brush over this important duty too quickly.

‘Doing what is righteous’ (a l-#amal a l-ß§liÈ) refers to the entire body of teachings, instructions, moral commandments and ethical ideals that all religions have issued throughout human history. We might call this body the common denominator of all existing heavenly religions on earth. A person who ‘does what is righteous’ is a muslim per se—regardless of whatever specific creed he or she upholds —on condition that this is based on belief in the existence of God and the Hereafter. Such general, absolute teachings and moral commandments were conveyed through the books and messages of previous prophets, starting with Noah and ending with MuÈammad (ß), a chain of prophetical

instructions that absorbed a steady growth of ethical norms and an increasing accumulation of moral values. The reward for acting in accordance with these ethical ideals will be, as the Book promises, blissful life in the gardens of Paradise.[99]

In terms of their hierarchy, these ethical ideals are placed as the third pillar of al-isl§m after the statements of belief in God and the Hereafter. Ethical ideas are referred to by the Qur'anic phrases 'do worship God' (a#budå All§h) and the 'straight path' (a l-ßir§ã a l-mustaqim)[100], insofar as the worship of Allah (#ib§da) is the 'straight path'—see Y§-SÊn 36:61.[101] Ethics incorporate a system of human values that has binding force upon believers of every religion.[102] Consider the following verse:

In matters of faith [al-dÊn], He has laid down for you [shara#a lakum] [people] the same commandments [waß§] that He gave Noah, which We have revealed to you [Muhammad] and which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: 'Uphold the faith and do not divide into factions within it'—what you [Prophet] call upon the idolaters to do is hard for them; God chooses whoever He pleases for Himself and guides towards Himself those who turn to Him. (Al-Shår§ 42:13, AH)

From this we learn that the religion (al-dÊn) which Allah 'has established for you' is al-isl§m, authorised by Him. It is the only religion that Allah will ever accept. It is a religion of guidance, of truth, and of moral values, finally revealed to the Prophet MuÈammad (ß) but with a history of constant maturation via previous prophets the first of which was Noah. We hear in this verse that Allah enjoined this religion on Noah, then on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus—He wanted them to 'remain steadfast in it'. We also learn that this enjoinment, or better these enjoinments, were jointly shared by all prophets, including MuÈammad ('the same religion has He established for you'). And yet, each of their enjoinments had been adapted to the historical circumstances in which the prophets lived, as a result of which their messages underwent a process of acculturation and proliferation.

What exactly were these enjoinments? According to the Book they came down in the form of commandments that are summed up by the term al-furq§n, to be rendered as ‘moral guidance’. Over time, the commandments increased in number, from Noah to Moses, until they reached ten. The ten commandments are called the ‘general or universal ethics’ (al-furq§n al-#§mm) and form the foundation of al-isl§m.

From Moses onwards they matured further and accumulated more commandments, until they were finally perfected in MuÈammad’s

(ß) message. They are what we call ‘particular ethics’ (al-furq§n al-kh§ßß) and form the ethical foundation of al-Êm§n (and also of al-isl§m since al-isl§m is the general type of religion for al-Êm§n).

Al-isl§m and Universal Ethics

I will now explain both types of ethics. Let us first focus on what we call the ‘general’ or ‘universal’ ethics of al-isl§m and quote from the Book:

Say: “Come, I will rehearse what God has (really) prohibited you from”: Join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents; kill not your children on a plea of want. We provide sustenance for you and for them. Come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret; take not life, which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus does He command you, that you may learn wisdom.

And come not nigh to the orphan’s property, except to improve it, until he attain the age of full strength; give measure and weight with (full) justice. No burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear. Whenever you

speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfil the covenant of God: thus does He command you, that you may remember.

Verily, this is My way, leading straight, follow it; follow not (other) paths: they will scatter you about from His (great) path; thus does He command you that you may be righteous. (Al-An#§m 6:151–53)

These verses provide us with ten commandments (of which nine are moral orders and one a religious creed). Although many readers will know these ten commandments by heart it will be worth listing them one by one in order to emphasise their importance for the religion of al-isl§m (and al-Êm§n because al-Êm§n is the particular religion of al-isl§m). They can be summarised as follows:

1. ‘Join not anything as equal with Him’:

This religious creed refers to the witness of Allah’s unity (al-tauÈÊd) expressed in the formula ‘there is no god but God’. This is, as we saw above, the most important pillar of al-isl§m. It is the next step after accepting the existence of God and the Hereafter. A person might believe in God and the Hereafter but still remain in a state where he or she violates God’s unity

(a state which is defined as shirk).[103] The prophet Noah was the first to live up to this first (religious) commandment. According to the Book, after Noah, it was enjoined by other prophets, such as Abraham and Jacob, upon their tribes, families and all of their descendents.[104] This pillar is so fundamental that its rejection would be an unforgivable sin. This would turn a person into someone ‘who cut off his ties with Allah’ and into someone who denies the existence of God, the resurrection after death, the Day of Judgement, and the duty of ‘doing what is righteous’. It is a heinous crime which actually, according to the Book, is the only transgression for which no pardon can be expected from God.[105] What is also indeed ‘a sin most heinous’ is to make an image of God (to make Him anthropomorphic, hence the Arabic term al-

tajsÊd), which is to give God a concrete, temporal, spatial, and material dimension, forgetting that He is beyond any such dimension or description. As we heard, Noah was the first prophet who prevented such a violation of God's unity. Other prophets followed suit, and MuÈammad (ß) finally completed this prophetical mission. But be assured that no compulsion is allowed (l§ ikr§h fÊhi) to achieve this goal.[106]

2. 'Be good to your parents':

This refers to your respect for your parents. It is, in principal, the first moral commandment which was first given to Noah,[107] and then passed on as Allah's revelation to MuÈammad (ß).[108] We gather from the text of the Book, in particular from 31:14 and 46:15,[109] that Allah addresses all human beings because He appeals to their general innate disposition of kindness. It implies that this injunction enjoys universal validity.

3. 'Kill not your children on a plea of want':

This third moral commandment is a ban to kill children out of a desperate financial situation. It was first stated as general ethics and then confirmed as particular ethics in MuÈammad's (ß) message (17:31).[110] However, we recognise that the Book clearly indicates a difference between general and particular ethics when it talks about the killing of children. In Sårat al-An#§m it says 'on a plea of want' (6:151), while in 17:31 it says 'for fear of want', indicating that in the first instance the situation of the people was actually really miserable, a very concrete case of economic crisis ('on a plea of want'), while in the second instance the prohibition was less specific as it referred to a situation in which people only feared or anticipated future plights due to the burden of having children ('for fear of want'). Also, Allah says first: 'We provide sustenance for you and for them' (6:151) but then changes it to 'We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you' (17:31). In the first instance, Allah provides sustenance firstly for the parents ('for you') and then for the children ('for them'), whereas in the second instance, it is the other way around: God gives firstly sustenance to the children ('for them') and then

feeds the parents in honour of the children they have raised (‘for you’). In the latter sequence of provision, the killing of children would deprive their parents of God’s sustenance, which is not the case according to the sequence of 17:31. In other words, the general prohibition to kill children ‘for fear of poverty’ has become even sharper in particular ethics. And yet, we should not see this as a command to have as many children as possible and not to introduce birth control and family planning. This is because nowhere does Allah link his assurance of sustenance with the number of children parents raise. There is absolutely no connection between the number of children and God’s provision of help and support; in fact, one child would be enough to secure God’s sustenance.

4. ‘Come not nigh to shameful deeds, whether open or secret’:

This fourth moral commandment perhaps illustrates best the evolutionary development of moral values and ethical ideals. Sexually ‘shameful deeds’ were first defined in the messengerhood of Lot through the prohibition of homosexuality. This was expanded by the prohibition of fornication by the Prophet Moses and finally further expanded by a ban on public acts of homosexuality by the Prophet MuÈammad (ß). Similarly, the lessening of the punishments for these sins evolved, as they underwent several changes from, for example, the most severe form, execution, to lighter ones such as flogging. What we also learn from this commandment is that chastity is one of the highest moral ideals, and that it lies at the root of human nature and the innate disposition (al-fiãra) instilled into humans by God.

5. ‘Take not life, which God has made sacred, except by way of justice and law’:

In the fifth moral commandment we notice that to kill another person is against the natural instincts of human beings. It implies that, unless provoked, humans will always refrain from such acts of violence. We know from psychological research that soldiers who have returned home from war face enormous difficulties in readjusting their daily life to the normality of human society. It shows how extraordinary was their life as soldiers.

6. ‘And come not nigh to the orphan’s property, except to improve it’:

The sixth moral commandment is further elaborated in Sårat a l-Nis§”, for example, by the instruction that one is only allowed to marry more than one wife if it is the intention of a man to better care and protect the life and property of orphans. This is fully explained in chapter 5.

7. ‘Give measure and weight with (full) justice’:

This seventh moral commandment implies that one should impose control and restrictions on how to set up the standard measures in trade transactions, and that one should impose harsh penalties against those who transgress against the officially accepted limits (of weights and measures)—as we hear in the Book: ‘Woe to those who give short measure, who demand of other people full measure for themselves, but give less than they should when it is they who weigh or measure for others!’ (Al-MuãaffifÊn 83:1–3, AH).

8. ‘Whenever you speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned’:

The eighth moral commandment is a powerful call to give testimony truthfully and in all sincerity. This commandment has been given an even stronger note in MuÈammad’s (ß) message: ‘O you who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin’ (Al-Nis§” 4:135).[111]

9. ‘Fulfil the covenant of God’:

The ninth moral commandment requires believers to avoid perjury or disloyalty against a person’s individual beliefs and, most naturally, against the covenant between God and humankind. Loyal believers are ‘those who fulfil the covenant of God and fail not in their plighted word’ (Al-Ra#d 13:20). The covenant of God consists of an alliance that people—by swearing an oath—publicly agree to act upon. Most importantly, this refers to the covenant of a l-isl§m but can include others, for example, the covenant of faith (a l-Êm§n), a marriage contract, the covenant of a nation state (the oath of citizenship), or the covenants of an occupational association (guild), a political party, or a sports club.

10. ‘Verily, this is My way, leading straight, follow it; follow not (other) paths’:

The tenth and last moral commandment urges people to follow the path of God and to fulfil the divine commandments unharmed by friction, animosity, and sectarian strife. It implies that unity, agreement, and concord between religions and denominations is a law of human nature and that it is a great offence to violate this law by stirring up animosity and hatred between religious communities. As the tenth commandment it comprises all other nine commandments as it urges the muslimån to fulfil them all and not to be content with only adhering to a few of them.

These are the commandments, or universal moral laws of al-isl§m, which we call general ethics (al-furq§n al-#§mm). Revealed long before the seventh century they were further elaborated and fully perfected in the form of MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood. We will now turn to the moral values that constitute what we call the particular ethics (al-furq§n al-kh§ßß) of al-Êm§n and that were revealed to seal the chains of messengerhoods. They fully established ‘faith’ (al-Êm§n) and completed al-isl§m.

**** Al-Êm§n and Particular Ethics—The Straight Path

The Book contains several moral injunctions and ethical guidelines that, even though dispersed in many different såras, outline a consistent model of ethical behaviour, called the straight path of God (al-ßir§ã al-mustaqÊm). The most important injunctions are, in terms of their social impact, the call to spread peace (al-sal§m) and to speak in a mild-mannered way (al-lÊn fi'l-qaul). We learn from the Book that the meaning of al-sal§m is 'peace' (salm), that is, the avoidance of war and conflict. It is not—as our honourable scholars have it—just a form of greeting (as in 'peace be with you'). But let us provide some more examples of such moral injunctions as stated in the Book. For the good-hearted and well-mannered reader these rules may look trivial and rather obvious, but given that in the recent past we have seen scandalous degrees of immorality committed by Muslim-

Believers who have abandoned morality in favour of fanaticism and mindless ritualism we believe it is worth spelling them out here:

1. O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor let some women laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former). Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames… (Al-\ujur§t 49:11).

– This verse prohibits us from pouring scorn on fellow human beings (friends, neighbours and colleagues).

2. And do not speak ill of people behind their backs… (Al-\ujur§t 49:12,

AH)

– This is a clear prohibition of calumny.

3. And do not spy on one another… (Al-\ujur§t 49:12, AH)

– This injunction includes all forms of spying and espionage, including the clandestine tapping of telephone calls, the opening of letters, and the bugging of flats and cars by state security services.

4. Do not follow blindly what you do not know to be true: ears, eyes, and heart, you will be questioned about all these. (Al-Isr§” 17:36, AH)

– This verse prohibits us from accusing other people (of a crime or sin) without clear evidence and hard (empirical) facts.

5. O you who believe! Enter into [a l-salm][112] whole-heartedly… (Al-Baqara 2:208)

Say not to any one who offers you [a l-sal§m][113]: “You are none of a believer!”… (Al-Nis§” 4:94)

But if the enemy incline towards peace, do you (also) towards peace [li’l-salm], and trust in Allah… (Al-Anf§l 8:61)

Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and (instead) send you (guarantees of) peace [al-salam], then God has opened no way for you (to war against them). (Al-Nis§” 4:90)

– These verses, inter alia, urge believers to spread peace and avoid war by pursuing a policy of peace and of resolving conflicts rationally and effectively by addressing adequately the needs of all involved parties.

6. Believers, do not enter other people’s houses until you have asked permission to do so and greeted those inside… (Al-Når 24:27, AH)

– This injunction refers to the duty to respect the property and privacy of houseowners.

7. If you find no one in, do not enter unless you have been given permission to do so. If you are told, ‘Go away’, then do so—that is more proper for you… (Al-Når 24:28, AH)

– To enter and stay in a house requires the permission of its owner. If permission is not given one has to leave immediately.

8. You will not be blamed for entering houses where no one lives, and which could provide you with some useful service… (Al-Når 24:29,

AH)

– No one is allowed to move into an unoccupied house and stay there if it is not equipped with all the necessary household appliances.

9. Those who have been graced with bounty and plenty should not swear that they will [no longer] give to kinsmen, the poor, those who emigrated in God’s way: let them pardon and forgive… (Al-Når 24:22,

AH)

When death approaches one of you who leaves wealth, it is prescribed that he should make a proper bequest to parents and close relatives—a duty incumbent on those who are mindful of God. (Al-Baqara 2:180,

AH)

– This refers to the act of ‘doing what is fair and just’ (iÈs§n) to our closest relatives.

10. Alms [ßadaq§t] are for the poor [al-fuqar§”] and the handicapped [al-mas§kÊn]… (Al-Tawba 9:60)

– This refers to the act of ‘doing what is fair and just’ (iÈs§n) to the poor and the handicapped people.

11. …and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet)… (Al-Nis§” 4:36)

– This refers to the act of ‘doing what is fair and just’ (iÈs§n) to our next-door neighbours and to neighbours and acquaintances who live farther away. It also urges us to be kind to the traveller and wayfarer, that is, people ‘on the move’ who stay with us as guests.

12. [It is righteous] to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for friends and acquaintances who are not blood-related [dhawÊ ’l-qurba], for orphans [al-yat§mÊ], for the handicapped people [al-mas§kÊn], the ‘men of the road’ who, while on travel, stranded because of mishaps such as robbery or car accidents [ibn al-sabÊl] … (Al-Baqara 2:177)

Alms [ßadaq§t] are for the poor [al-fuqar§”] and the handicapped [al-mas§kÊn], and those who administer the zak§h tax [al-#§milÊn #alaih§]; people whose work has a positive impact on public life [a l-mu”allafa qulåbuhum]; the financially enslaved [fi’l-riq§b] and people in debt and imprisoned

because of their insolvency [al-gh§rimÊn]; those who sponsor the foundation of universities, schools, hospitals [fÊ sabÊl All§h]; and travellers in need of help [ibn al-sabÊl]. … (Al-Tawba 9:60)[114]

– This refers to the act of ‘doing what is fair and just’ (iÈs§n) to people in need.

13. Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes). (A l-Furq§n 25:67)

– This verse urges us to be prudent in what we spend, in private or public.

14. The duty of spending (zak§h) refers to the realm of al-isl§m, but it is an amount on top of what has already been spent within the realm of al-Êm§n. Zak§t al-isl§m may be given to anybody, not just to the followers of MuÈammad (ß). In contrast, zak§t al-Êm§n is given only to the followers of MuÈammad (ß)—the minimum amount is 2.5 percent of accumulated profit.

O you who believe! Fulfil (all) obligations! (Al-M§“ida 5:1)

– This is a moral obligation to fulfil all our contracts and written agreements.

15. You who believe, when you contract a debt for a stated term, put it down in writing: have a scribe write it down justly between you… (Al-Baqara 2:282, AH)

– This is, finally, an obligation to write down ‘in black and white’ what money or property we owe, as well as what we have lent to other people.

These are only a few examples of the many injunctions and ethical guidelines for a l-Êm§n that can be found in the Book. Every moral guideline or ethical teaching that existed before MuÈammad's messengerhood and which contradicts the above list of injunctions must be seen as repealed or abrogated. This is because the ethical rules of al-isl§m were subject to abrogation, a process that started—as we heard—with Noah and ended with MuÈammad (ß). As for MuÈammad's (ß) messengerhood, it was not subject to abrogation, therefore there is nothing in it that can be classified as abrogating or abrogated. His message has, instead, confirmed certain rules that were sent before, and has added rules or abolished others in order to complete al-isl§m. In doing so, it abrogated other previous messages that were revealed to prophets before him (i.e., before al-Êm§n). MuÈammad (ß) sealed (or put an end to) this successive, continuous abrogation whereby each new message abrogated the previous, older ones.[115]

The following explanations are intended to clarify the nature of the universal ethical laws of al-isl§m which are shared but not exclusively embodied by al-Êm§n:

1. These ethical guidelines are meant to restrain human behaviour. One may call them our inner conscience (al-·amÊr), something we attain through education.

2. They are essential, innate moral values that exist only within our human consciousness. One can easily transgress ethical rules and violate moral injunctions because they are, insofar as they do not objectively exist, inherently weak. Therefore, every civilized society is compelled to firmly establish them as social rules by way of reward and sanction. Those who dare to undermine these values by reckless, unsocial behaviour must be prosecuted without mercy.

3. In principle, these guidelines do not need to be explained to people nor should they be imposed upon people by force, because they are part of a human's innate disposition, and people therefore absorb these moral values naturally and instinctively. Thus, sincerity and honesty are natural virtues,

while fraud and deceit are despicable. These things are neither culturally nor historically conditioned.

4. These moral injunctions are social obligations that cannot be disputed or become the subject of public referenda. They are social facts whose content and meaning are unambiguous. Lies or disrespect of parents will always be seen as repulsive behaviour and cannot be reinterpreted as honesty or respect. To establish these moral values as social norms does not imply a denial that immorality and evil exist in this world. Al-isl§m is a realistic and pragmatic religion in which there is no room for beatified, unreal visions or fantasies. It knows how to accept both good and evil in this world, in the same way as it acknowledges the existence of death. We hear it in the Book: ‘Every soul shall have a taste of death; and We test you by evil and by good by way of trial. To Us must you return’ (Al-Anbiy§” 21:35).

5. These guidelines reflect universal values that encompass all periods of human history. This means that their ethical truth is hidden beneath their explicit expressions in the Book. The vast potential of ethical truth is not exhausted by explicit expressions of moral guidelines. In other words, one may add other moral guidelines and expand on those that already exist. What is required is human wisdom, not divine revelation. Moral guidelines are formulated by the most astute people of a society who know how to harmonise ethical rules with the life experiences of the common people and how to link them to the accumulated wisdom of their cultural past. Undoubtedly, history offers people much wisdom and is, at the same time, their fiercest admonisher, since it relentlessly mirrors the real experiences that people have in their daily lives.

6. All these moral guidelines are firmly interlinked, forming a holistic net of strings and connections; no partition or division is allowed, because there is only one, undividable path. The Book puts it like this: ‘Verily, this is My way, leading straight, follow it…’ (A l-An#§m 6:151–53).

7. To adhere to these moral guidelines does not depend on the individual’s strength and human capability. To believe in God and to follow these moral

commandments requires neither special skills nor high intelligence. One does not need to be exceptionally gifted in order to know that the killing of other people is wrong. Such an aversion is engrained in human nature. One may, perhaps, compare the pillars of a l-isl§m and its commandments to what we know from counting goals in football: it is, for example, either 1 or 0 but never anything in between. The Book says: ‘O believers, fear Allah as He should be feared, and do not die except as Muslims [ill§ waantum muslimån]’ ($l #Imr§n 3:102, MF). It means that al-isl§m and its pillars demand that we fear Allah as He should be feared. And everyone who thinks this verse has been abrogated by verse 64:16 has been spitefully deceived.[116]

Morality (a l-akhl§q) is here understood as a sociospiritual law that lays the foundation of the relationship between the members of the human race. It distinguishes human beings from animals and it is effective, regardless of the economic structure in a society. The morality of al-isl§m is characterised by universal validity. It achieves its characteristic as ‘general ethics’ through its status as divine revelation. This morality differs from mere custom and tradition, which, although mentioned in the Book, were neither stated as precise rules nor—because of their nature as constantly changing social practice— explicitly particular norms. In contrast, social ethics were revealed in the form of commandments, the a l-furq§n, from Noah onwards until MuÈammad (ß). They are still valid at the present time and are shared by many different cultures in the world; they are enforced regardless of the nature of the economic system or social environment. In sum, they are the common (human) denominator which unites cultures, political systems, race, class, and gender. They directly influence the individual’s social behaviour once they have been institutionalised as a cultural norm or common practice. What every Arab Muslim must realise is that, contrary to what is currently believed, social obligations towards society are first and foremost moral obligations and only secondarily religious duties or politica llegal obligations.[117]

The traditional understanding of al-isl§m has seriously corrupted our minds and has caused us to stagnate in our thinking of al-isl§m. The fateful error of defining religion exclusively in terms of the performance of the rituals of a l-Êm§n, and the

false labelling of these rituals as pillars of al-isl§m, has meant that religion was defined in isolation from ethical laws that are universally applicable. It meant that a person’s religiosity was measured solely by his or her fulfilment of ritual obligations, regardless of that person’s moral or social behaviour in society. The confusion of al-isl§m with al-Êm§n has produced other conceptual difficulties, for example, the confusion between several different degrees of ‘permission’ and ‘prohibition’, such as, a) a l-Èal§l / a l-Èar§m, what is absolutely allowed / absolute taboo (and which can only be decreed by God), and b) al-masmåÈ / al-mamnå#, what is permitted / forbidden (which is decreed by positive law), c) al-ma#råf / al-munkar, what is prescribed as right / proscribed as wrong (the result of popular practice and social conventions), d) al-Èasan / al-qabÊÈ, what is good or bad (and which is subject to the personal taste of each individual). This confusion between legal, social, and moral rules, and the muddling of the many different levels of jurisdictions, has created this dreadful current trend among many Muslims to excessively label things as absolute taboos (i.e., Èar§m), for which there is no evidence in the divine text of the Book. We hear, for example, that for a woman to show her face in public, to hear a woman’s voice, to play musical instruments, to make sculptures, to take photographs, or, for fear that the devil might slip into someone’s mouth, to yawn with one’s mouth open, even to clip one’s fingernails at night, all things that are normal everyday activities, have suddenly become absolute taboos! We should remember that the great sins in al-isl§m are only those acts that transgress the ten commandments of the universal furq§n. Everyone who claims that there are seventy major sins, or even seven hundred, has been thoroughly misled.[118]

**** Faith and Believers

The Term al-Êm§n (Faith) in the Book

Let us come back to the main topic of this chapter, which explores the distinction between al-isl§m and al-Êm§n. So far we have defined al-isl§m and its fundamental pillars, so now we

need to do the same with al-Êm§n. The following list of characteristics of al-Êm§n has been derived from our systematic search through the Book, in which we analysed every single verse that is relevant to the topic. The outcome of this analysis can be summarized as follows:

1. Al-isl§m always takes precedence over al-Êm§n:

Historically and conceptually al-Êm§n proceeds from al-isl§m or, to put it the other way, a l-isl§m always (and necessarily) precedes al-Êm§n.

The desert Arabs say, “We believe.” Say, “You have no faith; but you (only) say, ‘We have submitted our wills to God [aslamn§]’, for not yet has faith [al-Êm§n] entered your hearts. (Al-\ujur§t 49:14)

2. Al-isl§m and al-Êm§n mean two different types of faith:

The first, a l-isl§m, contains the tripartite belief in a) the existence and oneness of God, b) the Hereafter, and c) God’s command to ‘do what is righteous’. Al-isl§m commands and incorporates all other types of faith, including a l-Êm§n. It implies that any form of particular religious faith must conform to these three general pillars of belief. Verse 4:137 below states that a system of faith that omits these pillars basically rejects beliefs and is called kufr.

Those who believe, then reject faith [kafarå], then believe (again) and (again) reject faith [kafarå], and go on increasing in unbelief [kufr [an]]—God will not forgive them nor guide them nor guide them on the way. (Al-Nis§” 4:137)

The second, al-Êm§n, is defined as belief in MuÈammad (ß) and his messengerhood, including belief in the Book and its

message as well as the books that were revealed before the Apostle (ß)—as stated in 4:136 addressed to ‘those who believe’ (alladhÊn §manå).

O you who believe! Believe in God and His Apostle, and the scripture which He has sent to His apostle and the scripture which He sent to those before (him).... (Al-Nis§” 4:136)

Whereas the adherents of al-isl§m are the Muslim-Assenters (a l-muslimån), the followers of a l-Êm§n are Muslim-Believers (al-mu”minån).[119]

3. Al-isl§m and a l-Êm§n combined receive a ‘double portion’ of God’s mercy:

According to verse 57:28, Allah promises to bestow on ‘those who fear God’ (the Muslim-Assenters) and on ‘those who believe in MuÈammad (ß)’ (the Muslim-Believers) a double share of His mercy.

O you who believe! Fear God, and believe in His apostle, and He will bestow on you a double portion of His mercy: He will provide for you a light by which you shall walk (straight in your path), and He will forgive you (your past)... (Al-\adÊd 57:28) In a more abstract way it looks like this:

Those who assent to God—first type of faith— al-isl§m—the first share of mercy;

Those who believe in His Apostle—second type of faith— al-Êm§n—the s econd share of mercy.

4. Divine reward is given to both types of believers:

Those who believe in God and the Hereafter (the muslimån) will receive God’s reward, and those who in addition believe specifically in the Book revealed in Arabic (the mu”minån) will be rewarded twice:

And when it is recited to them, they say: “We believe therein, for it is the truth from our Lord: indeed we have been Muslims (bowing to God’s will) from before this.” Twice will they be given their reward, for that they have persevered… (Al-Qaßaß 28:53–54)

5. The term al-Êm§n is always linked to a relationship with a specific messenger:

Whenever it is said in the text that someone ‘believed’ (§mana) in a specific messenger, it implies that this person followed this messenger as a disciple, novice, or member of a specific religious community:

And when Our Decree came, We saved Hud and those who believed with him, by a mercy of Ours… (Håd 11:58, MF) And when Our Decree came, We delivered Shu#ayb and those who believed with him by a mercy of Ours… (Håd 11:94, MF)

The Book calls ‘those who believed in Moses’ Jews, members of the Jewish community. It calls ‘those who believed in Jesus’ a l-naß§r§ (Christians), either because they supported and protected (naßarå) Jesus and became his followers (anß§ruhu), or because they were from the city of Nazareth (al-n§ßira)—in either case they were members of the Christian community.

<right>

When the text mentions ‘those who believed in MuÈammad

</right>

(ß)', they are referred to as the 'believers':

O Prophet! Allah is Sufficient for you and so are the believers

[al-mu"minÊn] who follow you. (Al-Anf§l 8:64)[120]

6. Al-Êm§n is a specific type of piety:

There exists three types of piety. The first type is the piety of al-isl§m, expressed as belief in Allah, the Hereafter, and 'doing what is righteous'. Muslims all over this world, including Christians, Jews, New Age groups, and followers of MuÈammad (ß) and so forth, practise this type of piety. The second type is the piety of faith (a l-Êm§n), expressed as belief in a specific messenger and the book that was revealed to him; the 'Muslim-Believers' embody this type of piety. The third type is a combination of the first and second types of piety (al-isl§m + al-Êm§n) that can be practised through al-iÈs§n (particular ethics), because the Book states Allah's love for those who practise the piety of 'doing what is fair and just':

On those who believe and do deeds of righteousness there is no blame for what they ate (in the past), when they guard themselves from evil, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, (or) again, guard themselves from evil and believe, (or) again, guard themselves from evil and do good. For God loves those who do good [All§h[u] yuÈibb[u] al-muÈsinÊn[a]]. (Al-M§"ida 5:93)

**** The Pillars of al-Êm§n

The tenets a l-Êm§n (faith in MuÈammad (ß) and in his messengerhood) allow a gradual growth of piety from the fundaments of al-isl§m to a higher form of belief. The Book reflects upon the spiritual development of those who already have a firm belief in Allah, the Hereafter and 'doing what is righteous', in sum, al-isl§m. The following pillars of a l-Êm§n are built—perhaps similar to the sublime top floor of a massive building—upon the pillars of al-isl§m:

1. The witness (al-shah§da) that MuÈammad (ß) is Allah's apostle:

But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and believe in the (revelation) sent down to Muhammad… (MuÈammad

47:2)

Only those are believers who have believed in God and His apostle, and have never since doubted, but have striven with their belongings and their persons in the cause of God: such are the sincere ones… (MuÈammad 47:15)

2. The prayer 'at stated times':

For such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times. (Al-Nis§" 4:103)

3. The giving of alms tax (spending). Note that spending (al-inf§q) is a pillar common to both a l-isl§m and a l-Êm§n because spending has a social (care for other people) as well as a spiritual dimension (the wish to come closer to God). The difference, however, is that spending in a l-isl§m is a natural act ensuing from the humans' innate disposition (a l-fiãra) —'Whatever good you give, shall be rendered back to you…' (Al-Baqara

2:272)—while spending on the zak§h tax in al-Êm§n is a social burden that does not come naturally:

[How] prosperous are the believers! […] who pay the prescribed alms. (Al-Mu”minån 23:1, 4, AH)[121]

4. The fast in the month of Ramadan:

O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you… (A l-Baqara 2:183)

5. The pilgrimage to Mecca by ‘those who can afford the journey’:

…Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to God—those who can afford the journey… ($l #Imr§n 3:97)

6. Consultation:

[Those who] respond to their Lord; keep up the prayer; conduct their affairs by mutual consultation… (Al-Shår§ 42:38, AH)

7. The fight in God’s way (note: ‘there is no compulsion in religion’, Al-Baqara 2:256) for freedom, justice, and equality:[122]

Fighting is ordained for you, though you dislike it… (A l-Baqara 2:216, AH)

These seven pillars of al-Êm§n are not exclusive but also include the pillars of al-isl§m, such as belief in Allah, the Hereafter, and ‘doing what is righteous’. Muslim-Assenters (al-muslimån) who, in addition, seek to become Muslim-Believers (al-mu”minån) are therefore fully obliged not to forget their

commitment to fulfilling al-isl§m’s three pillars of faith. As we laid out above, the fundamental difference between the two kinds of faith is that al-isl§m is the innate (natural) disposition of all people in this world, while a l-Êm§n is a form of ritual worship that contradicts humans’ innate disposition. Through these rituals, adherents of al-Êm§n differ from those who are not ahl al-Êm§n, but they do not differ in their moral behaviour (respect for parents, avoidance of fraud and perjury, etc.), which is universally articulated in similar ways.

As for the problem of disbelief (al-kufr), we have said that the Book correlates two kinds of disbelief to the two types of faith: disbelief in the realm of al-isl§m and disbelief in the realm of al-Êm§n. The first kind of disbelief negates the existence of God, the Hereafter and ‘doing what is righteous’; it undermines the fundaments of al-isl§m. Al-k§fir bi’l-ll§h is, in short, an atheist who has dissented from God. The second kind of disbelief rejects belief in MuÈammad (ß) and his book. It refers to someone who refuses to acknowledge both MuÈammad’s prophethood (al-k§fir bi-nubåwatihi) and his messengerhood (al-k§fir bi-ris§latihi). Both kinds of disbelief must be expressed in deliberate, fully articulated, and publicly stated views by which the disbelievers antipathetically oppose either kind of faith. Only those who have declared their disbelief in such an open and antagonistic manner, like for example Abå Lahab who became a k§fir because he was openly hostile towards MuÈammad (ß), shall be declared infidels. Others who did not openly contradict MuÈammad’s message even though they did not believe in it, were—quite rightly so—not regarded as k§firs.

O you who believe! Believe in God and His Apostle, and the scripture which He has sent to His apostle and the scripture which He sent to those before (him)… (Al-Nis§” 4:136)

‘Those who believe, then reject faith, then believe (again) and (again) reject faith, and go on increasing in unbelief—God will not forgive them nor guide them nor guide them on the way.’ (Al-Nis§” 4:137)

**** Al-isl§m and al-Êm§n

Having established the true pillars of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n we can now extend our study of the differences between the two realms of faith: Al-isl§m means faith that entails belief in Allah, the Hereafter, and ‘doing what is righteous’; al-Êm§n, in contrast, pertains to faith in the truth of messengerhoods, that is, divine revelations put down in heavenly scriptures and transmitted by God’s apostles, and finally in

‘doing what is fair and just’. A Muslim-Assenter (al-muslim) can also be a Muslim-Believer (al-mu”min), but not all Muslim-Assenters are Muslim-Believers. One might, for example, believe in God, the Hereafter, and ‘doing what is righteous’ and still not believe in MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood. However, a Muslim-Believer is, by definition and self-designation, a Muslim-Assenter too, since a believer always assents to God.

Al-isl§m is the more general type of faith. It is the universal, human religion of all people on earth. That is the reason why it is called

‘Islamic religion’ (a l-dÊn a l-isl§mÊ), not ‘religion of faith’ (a l-dÊn a l-Êm§nÊ). We also remember that God said: ‘the religion before Allah is al-isl§m’ ($l #Imr§n 3:19) and ‘if anyone desires a religion other than al-isl§m, never will it be accepted of Him’ ($l #Imr§n 3:85). Al-Êm§n, in contrast, is a very specific term for those who follow MuÈammad (ß).[123] Allah has coined the term ‘believers’ (al-mu”minån) to refer to those who believe in His Prophet (ß). The term ‘commander of the faithful’ (amÊr al-mu”minÊn) has been specifically created for Muslim-Believers. It was first used during the reign of #Umar b. al-Khaãã§b; note that the Caliph was not called ‘commander of the Muslims’ (amÊr a l-muslimÊn). Also, the wives of the Apostle MuÈammad (ß) were called

‘mothers of the believers’ (ummah§t al-mu”minÊn) and not ‘mothers of the Muslims’!

Al-isl§m is consistent with human nature (al-fiãra), but al-Êm§n is not. To believe in God—and only one God—can be compared to the natural instinct of an ant that cannot help but be trampled underfoot by its fellow ants or with a tortoise that digs holes in the banks of a river or the seashore to hatch its eggs there. In other words, we are naturally disposed to believe in God and ‘do what is righteous’. The Book says:

Say: “I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me, that your God is one God: whoever expects to meet his Lord, let him work righteousness, and, in the worship of his Lord, admit no one as partner. (Al-Kahf 18:110)

And your Lord taught the bee to build its cells in hills… (Al-NaÈl 16:68)

The natural disposition of humans was created by God Himself. Nobody else interfered in this process of creation. That is the reason why we read:

Indeed We showed you favour before. We inspired your mother… (•§-H§” 20:37–38, AH)

We also read that when the Arabs came to tell MuÈammad (ß) that they had embraced a l-isl§m, God ordered MuÈammad (ß) to let them know that their assent to God was not his (MuÈammad’s) doing but rather because of ‘God’s favour He conferred upon’ them:

They think they have done you [Prophet] a favour by submitting. Say, ‘Do not consider your submission [isl§makum] a favour to me; it is God who has done you a favour, by guiding you to faith, if you are truly sincere’. (Al-\ujur§t 49:17, AH)

In al-isl§m, human nature does not need instructions from heavenly scriptures, but in contrast a l-Êm§n, containing ritual performances, codes of human behaviour, and ethical rules, does require guidance from divine scriptures. By Allah’s grace, messengers were sent to the peoples to bring them the light of the truth and instructions on how to worship God. Now we understand why God has said, in chastising those who disbelieved in MuÈammad’s messengerhood, that al-isl§m must still be the minimum (the lowest limit) of belief that is required of them. He said:

Again and again will those who disbelieve wish that they had bowed (to God’s will) in Islam [lau k§nå muslimÊn]. (Al-\ijr 15:2)

Piety in al-isl§m means ‘to fear God as He should be feared’, while piety in al-Êm§n is ‘to fear God as much as you can’. We read in the Book:

O you who believe! Fear God as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam. ($l #Imr§n 3:102)

So fear God as much as you can; listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul… (Al-Tagh§bån 64:16)

On no soul does God place a burden greater than it can bear…

(Al-Baqara 2:286)

We learn from 2:286 that Allah set the task of fulfilling religious obligations in accordance with the strength and ability of each believer. We know from experience that human beings differ in their abilities and that some people are more pious than others because they are given greater spiritual strength.

Such diversity, however, contradicts verse 3:102, which orders the believer to ‘fear God as He should be feared’. No allowance is given for varying degrees of piety. But a contradiction between text and reality is inconceivable. How can we solve this problem?

The exact wording of the first verse provides an answer. It begins by addressing those ‘who believe’ (alladhÊna §manå). Given that the Book distinguishes between two kinds of faith we need to ask which of the two is meant here. The way the verse ends provides a clue. It refers to ‘a state in Islam’, that is, to those who believe in God, in the Hereafter, and in ‘doing what is righteous’. We infer from this that these are the Muslim-Assenters and that the verse addresses only the muslimån, whereas the second verse (64:16), ‘fear God as much as you can’, is addressed to the mu”minån, the believers who believe in MuÈammad (ß).

The difference is that in a l-isl§m faith needs to be rigorously implemented, whereas al-Êm§n allows different degrees of piety and spirituality. In al-isl§m:

a) One possesses belief in the existence of God regardless of one’s strength or abilities;

b) It is inconceivable that one believes in God for an hour and then stops doing so in the next;

c) It is impossible to practise falsehood or commit adultery because of a lack of strength or ability; for example, it would be frivolous if someone claimed that he did his best not to fornicate but could not help it or, even worse, that he tried very hard not to kill someone but in the end could not avoid it happening. We would certainly never respond to such acts by saying to the perpetrator: ‘Never mind, on no soul doth God place a burden greater than it can bear….”!

Therefore, the command to ‘fear God as He should be feared’ belongs only to the pillars of a l-isl§m and is part of the innate disposition of humans that guides moral behaviour. This is the reason why the verse ends by saying: ‘die not except in a state of al-isl§m’.

As for the pillars of a l-Êm§n, we fear God according to our strength and ability (‘On no soul does God place a burden greater than it can bear’). It is important to note that the previous verse, 2:285, starts with the phrase ‘The messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith [al-mu”minån]’. In al-Êm§n, the sick believer is exempted from fasting because he is not strong enough to do so; pilgrimage is subject to the ability of the pilgrim to do the journey; jih§d is no obligation for those who are unable to practise it; no alms tax is required from those who cannot afford it; and consultation is subject to historical circumstances since no absolute model is given of how to conduct it. All religious obligations of al-Êm§n are not absolute but relative and subject to historical change, and since they are not part of the human innate disposition (al-fiãra) they are practised in accordance with an individual’s strength and ability.

The overarching capital of all pillars of al-isl§m is → to witness that ‘there is no god but God’ → that is, the worship[124] of Allah (performed by the Muslim-Assenters or al-muslimån);

The overarching capital of all pillars of al-Êm§n is → to witness that ‘MuÈammad (ß) is the messenger of God’ → i.e. the obligatory rituals (performed by the Muslim-Believers or al-mu”minån).

Those who jump directly into the realm of al-Êm§n without having passed the stage of al-isl§m are called ‘hypocrites’. The Book says:

When the hypocrites come to you [Prophet], they say, ‘We bear witness that you are the Messenger of God.’ God knows that you truly are His Messenger and He bears witness that the hypocrites are liars. (Al-Mun§fiqån 63:1, AH)

This verse teaches us that if someone performs the ritual prayer as part of al-Êm§n, but ignores the ethical commands as part of al-isl§m, he is a ‘hypocrite’, even if he rigidly observes the prayer times, the duty of the fast, and the \ajj rite.

The following chart demonstrates how the Book distinguishes between the two types of faith—even within one single verse:

| Faith: Type 1 (the Muslims) | | Faith: Type 2 (the Believers) |

| ‘But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness…’ (1) | → | ‘…and believe in the

(revelation) sent down to

Muhammad…’ (2)

(MuÈammad 47:2) |

| ‘O you who believe!

Fear God…’ (1) | → | ‘…and believe in His apostle…’ (2) (Al-\adÊd 57:28) |

| Allah’s first portion of mercy (1) | ‘…He will bestow on you a double portion of His mercy…’ (Al-\adÊd 57:28) | Allah’s second portion of mercy (2) |

| ‘O you who believe!…’

(1) | → | ‘…Believe in God and His Apostle…’ (2) (Al-Nis§” 4:136) |

| ‘Those who believe, then reject faith…’ (1) | → | ‘…then believe (again) and

(again) reject faith…’ (2)

(Al-Nis§” 4:137) |

| ‘On those who believe and do deeds of righteousness…’ (1) | → | …when they guard themselves from evil, and believe, and do deeds of righteousness, (1 + 2) (or) again, guard themselves from evil and believe, (or) again, guard themselves from evil and do good (2) (Al-M§“ida 5:93) | *** A Moral Understanding of al-iÈs§n

Finally, we turn to the concept of ‘doing what is fair and just’

(al-iÈs§n), the crucial moral term for al-Êm§n. In short, ‘doing what is fair and just’ means doing good deeds that fight evil acts and misdeeds. Hence, good and bad deeds stand in a dialectical relationship. Good deeds are for the benefit of humankind and other creatures, while bad deeds bring them harm. This is, in simplest terms, the general definition of al-iÈs§n. It has nothing to do with human behaviour in the eyes of God, because He, in His omnipotence, sublime majesty, and perfection, is above human deeds and misdeeds. Al-iÈs§n is purely defined by the way we interact as human beings in this world.

Worryingly, the lack of clarity in defining the term a l-iÈs§n has always been the Achilles heel of the way moral ethics have been conceptualised in Islam. By describing it purely as a Sufi term (‘to act as if God sees you’, etc.), we forget that al-iÈs§n actually means that we should respect one another and care for those close to us, that is, our spouses, children, neighbours, and parents, as we are told by the Book:

…and do good [iÈs§n[an]] to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbours who are near, neighbours who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and what your right hands possess… (Al-Nis§” 4:36)

If we do something bad we are requested to do something good in compensation for the bad deed. We are reminded that we should judge others by their deeds and good work, not their outward appearance. It is like a warning that we should not judge, for example, a woman by what she wears or whether she is veiled or not, but by the deeds she has done for others and for society as a whole. This means that we act righteously and justly by working for others and not by following rigid dress codes or other shallow norms of external religious correctness. The moral aspect of al-iÈs§n has been tragically ignored by contemporary Arab believers, to the point where people are now more obsessed with appearance than with good deeds.

But do our physicians not do good deeds by taking care of their patients? And do not lawyers, teachers, builders, farmers, and so on do al-iÈs§n by being good and professional in their work? Is it not high time to open a completely new chapter of fiqh and write it under the title ‘Good deeds at work”? In that chapter, we would talk about competence and excellence in performing good deeds in all spheres of life, perhaps one section for each sphere (good work at home; good work in our neighbourhoods; good work for the environment; good work for spiritual happiness; good work as citizens, etc.). What would be important to write is that all good deeds are firmly located in this world. We cannot ignore the fact that this world is the field where the seeds of the Afterlife grow, even if we acknowledge the existence of the next world. But without life in this world Hell and Paradise would not make sense, neither would the Day of Judgement or the concepts of reward and punishment. Once we have grasped the dialectics between this world and the Next, we are able to nourish this life and give it meaning. We will then be able to fully participate in establishing a prosperous human society that can positively influence the course of events in history.

Let us look at these two verses from the Book:

Nay, whoever submits his whole self to God and is a doer of good [muÈsin], he will get his reward with his Lord… (Al-Baqara 2:112) Who can be better [aÈsana] in religion than one who submits his whole self to God, does good [huwa muÈsin], and

follows the way [milla] of Abraham the true in faith [ÈanÊf [an]]? For God did take Abraham for a friend. (Al-Nis§” 4:125)

In both verses the category of a person who is a ‘doer of good’ (a l-muÈsin) is discussed. We hear in the first verse (2:112) that the Afterlife is intrinsically linked to ‘doing what is fair and just’ in this world. As we have said above, this world lays the foundation for our life in the next world where we will reap the fruits of our work in this world. We learn that good deeds are recorded by Allah for each individual soul, because the Book says ‘he will get his reward with his Lord’, using the singular (his), which indicates an individual account with God, and not the plural form (their), that is, a collective account. When it uses the plural form as in ‘on such shall be no fear (for them), nor shall they grieve’[125], it is directed to the entire group of muÈsinån in the next world, reminding us in more general terms that ‘doing what is fair and just’ in this world does not entail losing sight of the Next. In the second verse (4:125) we hear that ‘who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to God’. We learn that every religious community, of whatever name or title, in which there is a person who assents to God (and who is someone who is ‘doing what is fair and just’), will find God’s approval.

The same verse clarifies the dialectics between the individual and society in terms of ‘doing what is fair and just’. The verse links the opening part that talks about al-iÈs§n with the concluding part that talks about the ‘way (milla) of Abraham’ who is called a ÈanÊf. We gather from this link that ‘doing what is fair and just’ is part of ‘the true way of faith’ (al-ÈanÊfiyya)[126] which is embodied in the community of Abraham (millat Ibr§hÊm).[127] Note that the text does not say ‘religion of Abraham’ but ‘community of Abraham’, because ‘religion’ (dÊn) is different from ‘community’ (milla). Religion consists of all those civil and ethical rules which are upheld by ‘doing what is fair and just’ and which define the relationship between individuals and society. The Book tells us that there is only one religion in this world—and this is al-isl§m. As for the term ‘community’, it refers to the assembly of like-minded people who translate these ethical rules into concrete norms

of behaviour that are obligatory for the members of this community. Their sociocommunal behaviour is based on the principle of ÈanÊfiyya, which means that in the way they formulate and translate these ethical rules they are influenced by the historical context in which they live. Allah has given us rules that are fixed, the ‘straight path’ and His commandments, but He left us to deal with ÈanÊfiyya, the task of allowing and constantly absorbing diverse developments.

The principle of ÈanÊfiyya is embodied in MuÈammad’s message of a theory of limits (al-Èudåd).[128]

As for the problem of historical change and the potential constant evolution of what is ‘fair and just’, we need to recall that historical circumstances govern most ethical rules. New, unprecedented ethical rules will have to be introduced in the light of new developments in human society, and new ethical rules, of which we have yet no knowledge, will have to be created in the future. Today, we are asked to apply the principle of ÈanÊfiyya to our contemporary community (milla), which we do by following the example of the community of Abraham. In order to achieve this, Allah has given us the principles of moral behaviour, its foundation and ethical boundaries, but He has left it to us to formulate ethical rules according to the idea of ÈanÊfiyya.

Exactly how this is done is a matter of historical variance and differs from one place to another and from one historical period to the next. ‘Doing what is fair and just’ in terms of working in a factory, for example, depends on the existing conditions of production. And the conditions of production are often troublesome and oppressive; so we hear the Book calling: ‘So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance.’ (Al-RaÈm§n 55:9). This implies, however, that the conditions of production might change and develop, primarily because of the effects of scientific and technological progress. Means of transport and the driving conditions differed tremendously between the late and the early twentieth century. We need to be aware that if we applied the same old rules of driving today with our current means of transport and much-improved infrastructure, we would be in danger of ceasing to be ‘those who do righteous things’ because, as we

said before, this would not apply the principle of ÈanÊfiyya of Abraham’s community. Its core message is to take historical change into consideration and to adapt the concept of ‘doing what is fair and just’ to the actual conditions of the time and the place in which it is to be practiced.

The two verses of Sårat al-Baqara and Sårat a l-Nis§” stipulate that whoever submits his whole self to God is ‘doing what is fair and just’ on condition that the principle of ÈanÊfiyya is applied to his ethics. The following verse articulates this idea nicely by giving us the example of a prosperous, thriving person who has a firm grip on the rope that Allah has given him:

Whoever submits his whole self to God, and is a doer of good, has grasped indeed the most trustworthy hand-hold; and with God rests the end and decision of (all) affairs. (Luqm§n 31:22)

Finally we want to stress again that the need to develop an understanding of ‘doing what is fair and just’ (fiqh al-iÈs§n) for all spheres of life is the biggest challenge that contemporary Arab believers face. As believers we need to be familiar with ‘doing what is fair and just’, its underlying principle of ÈanÊfiyya and its fundamental condition to believe in Allah and the Hereafter. We need to realize that such familiarity is the only way to avoid remaining isolated and outside history, outside civilisation and outside the centre of the world’s creative powers. If we continue to give priority to our prayers and the fast of Ramadan, to hide our women behind the Èij§b, and to grow our beards, that is, if we continue to be obsessed with the superficialities of external behaviour and appearance, we will stay backward and remain a miserable, humiliated nation. If we do not implement the concept of ‘doing what is fair and just’ and the principle of ÈanÊfiyya with all its different practical implications in our daily life, if we do not socialise our youth in this spirit, and if we do not replace the traditional manuals of religious rituals (fiqh a l-sha#§“ir) with the new practices of fiqh a l-iÈs§n we will, in the long run, achieve absolutely nothing.

**** Conclusion: Getting Our Priorities Right

The rediscovery of a clear distinction between al-isl§m and al-Êm§n in the Book requires us to revise how we are used to set our priorities:

***** Top Priority

Our top priority must always be a l-isl§m, belief in God, the Hereafter, and ‘doing what is righteous’ (our ethical norms). Al-isl§m must be the shared platform upon which we cooperate and interact with the rest of the world. Most of the inhabitants of this earth are M uslim-Assenters in the sense that they naturally accept a l-isl§m’s beliefs and ethical values, even though they are shaped and articulated differently in each state and society. As for the practice of rituals and belief in messengers, al-Êm§n, it is evident that they are (ethically) neither self-sufficient nor self-explanatory. They need to be authenticated by the moral ethos of al-isl§m. It is our task to inform Arab Muslims about the real understanding of al-isl§m and tell them that they are not just followers of MuÈammad (ß) but that they are first and foremost Muslims, that is, assenters to God, as we hear in the following verse:

And they say: “None shall enter Paradise unless he be a Jew or a Christian.” Those are their (vain) desires. Say: “Produce your proof if you are truthful.” Nay, whoever submits His whole self to God and is a doer of good, he will get his reward with his Lord; on such shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. (Al-Baqara 2:111–12)

It is our responsibility to advise people of the importance of ‘doing what is righteous’ and ‘doing what is fair and just’ and to tell them that these are fundamental pillars of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n. Every Muslim on this earth is called upon to fulfil this duty. It is the only criterion in judging a person’s righteousness. The gates and avenues of ‘doing what is good’ are many and they will be kept open until the Day of Resurrection. Innovation and diversity in ‘doing what is good’ is of high priority and will be

rewarded by God because everything that is of benefit to His creation is registered with Him for all eternity.

***** Second Priority

Second on the list of priorities are the religious obligations of al-Êm§n (prayer, alms tax, fasting, pilgrimage), which are entrusted to the mu”minån who follow the Prophet MuÈammad (ß). This does not mean—as we have said several times—that the religious obligations are detached from a l-isl§m and from ‘doing what is righteous’. It only implies that they are particular obligations which do not enjoy u niversal validity or political significance. They are ritual obligations that do not permit alteration or diversity. Innovations—either by adding new rituals or removing old ones—are illicit acts (bid#a). In the realm of a l-Êm§n, innovations are impudent and reprehensible. In the realm of al-isl§m, however, innovations are good and laudable.

Until now, we have not gotten our priorities right. Absolute priority is given to things that are, in fact, of minor importance, as a result of which we let the top priorities slip into second place. Inexplicably, we have given absolute priority to the pillars of al-Êm§n rather than to the pillars of a l-isl§m, resulting in our minds being completely preoccupied with the most insignificant details of ritual performances. A slip in the fast during Ramadan is to us more scandalous than the widespread corruption in our society, and the question of how to make up for a missed prayer is given more attention that the question of how to stop the fraud and deceit that cripple our societies and make life unbearable.

***** Islamic Revival (al-ßaÈwa al-isl§miyya) and the Reawakening of Faith (al-ßaÈwa al-Êm§niyya)

Once we have accepted that a l-isl§m is the natural religion of all human beings (dÊn al-fiãra), enjoying universal validity and applicability, we are able to sustain a true Islamic revival. The following observations will help the reader to understand why the

implementation of a l-isl§m—a proper Islamic revival—will be beneficial to all societies. Since al-isl§m means wealth and welfare (al-isl§m bi’l-khayr) for everyone, we observe that in every society on this globe:

– Employment is higher than unemployment. This shows that human societies advocate a culture of work ethics, a commitment to labour, and striving for the better. The concept of predestination and fatalism by which individuals’ lives are once and for all predetermined is utterly un-Islamic.

– Health care and medical treatment are provided in order to prolong life and sustain health. The thought that each individual’s life span has been predetermined, that the duration of life should not be ‘artificially’ prolonged by medicine, is fundamentally un-Islamic.

– The fight for justice is essential for the proper functioning of human societies. The existence of fraud and deceit undermines the social and moral fabric of society and, hence, committing these things is relatively heavily sanctioned by the legal systems of most countries.

– Orphans are normally taken care of by orphanages and other welfare organisations regardless of the children’s ethnic or national origins.

– Sophisticated guidelines are laid down for the production of consumer goods and deviations are harshly punished. In most countries, the main objective of the economy is the production of food, clothes, furniture, and luxury goods.

– Simple rules are given for the interaction between men and women. Most importantly, the inheritance of property by male and female descendants is regulated by testaments—not by complicated, gendered, and unjust inheritance laws as they are cherished by our honourable fuqah§”.

In short, a true Islamic revival means endorsing moral and social values that foster civil society, in the shape of welfare organisations, trade unions, NGO’s, community groups, business associations, selfhelp groups, coalitions, and advocacy groups. Unfortunately, generations of #ulam§” have failed to turn al-isl§m into a universally applicable and practical religion. Instead, they have promoted the values of slavish ritualism and a mentality of flight from this world to the Next, that is, a form of escapism that left them unable to give common people guidance on how to fulfil their aspirations in this world. We believe that this mentality of escapism and slavish ritualism is the reason why political Islam and the Islamist movement will fail to get overwhelming support of the majority of the population in most countries of this world.

A true reawakening of faith (a l-ßaÈwa a l-Êm§niyya), a revival that does not exhaust itself by an increase in ritualistic performances through prayer, fast, and pilgrimage, is characterized by:

1. An increase in the number of people who fast during the month of Ramadan and who disburse the month-specific voluntary donations because al-Êm§n (in this respect) means (also) wealth and welfare.

2. An increase in the number of people who pay alms tax because a l-Êm§n means wealth and welfare. Since voluntary donations and the ritual of zak§h are essentially social activities uniting society by means of charity money, it is—unlike prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage—also an activity of al-isl§m, and not just exclusively of al-Êm§n.

3. An increase in the number of people who take part in the burial prayer for deceased fellow believers, showing their condolence, compassion, and commiseration because al-Êm§n means wealth and welfare.

4. An increase in love for the Messenger (ß).

Every true moral act that is achievable by everyone everywhere in the world belongs to the realm of al-isl§m. The followers of MuÈammad's messengerhood do not possess a monopoly over moral righteousness. We know that high moral virtues existed before the life of the Prophet (ß), who embodied some of these noble virtues, hence they are not essentially grounded in his sunna. The fact that they were also embodied by people before him shows us that they can be found outside the realm of al-Êm§n. In contrast, the (very specific and particular) rituals practised by the followers of MuÈammad's messengerhood belong exclusively to the realm of al-Êm§n. Al-Êm§n came after a l-isl§m, not before. It is not correct to say that a l-isl§m was imposed on earlier religions because we know that there was no other religion that existed before al-isl§m. It is, however, correct to say that a l-Êm§n was imposed on earlier religions. Sårat MuÈammad states that people had faith in MuÈammad (ß) (al-Êm§n) after they had believed in something else ('He will remove from them their ills and improve their condition', MuÈammad 47:2). Al-isl§m, with its belief in the existence of God and good deeds, is firmly placed in this world and yet also leads into the Next. As for al-Êm§n, its place is also in this world but, unlike al-isl§m, it is separated from the state and the organisations of civil society. This aspect will be further explained in chapter 6.

To talk about a currently ongoing Islamic revival is nonsense. If we take the example of Egypt and look at what has happened in this country between 1970 and today, we see that a l-isl§m has almost entirely disappeared. We are observing a deep slumber, not an awakening! In contrast, in other so-called non-Islamic countries we recognise that al-isl§m is everywhere because in those countries wealth and welfare are ever growing, bypassing the so-called Islamic countries by a hundred miles.

The current reawakening of faith (al-ßaÈwa al-Êm§niyya), it is sad to say, will not feed us, will not eradicate hunger and poverty, and will do nothing to reform state and society. Its focus on prayer, dhikr,

recitation, death, Paradise and Hell, that is, on life in the next world, will only improve the state of the individual’s soul, it will do nothing for society at large. It replaces a life-affirming attitude with an obsession with death and the Afterlife. It will keep the believers unsympathetic to the plights and sufferings in this world as it will shut their eyes to the glaring despotism and autocracy of the political tyrants who seem to have been installed everywhere. It is a sobering thought that the impact of an increase in prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage on political culture is laughably negligible, and the political regimes will feel its weight like that of a dust speck.

** 2. The Sunna of the Prophet (‘)

*** Introduction

Islamic jurists’ excessive fixation on the life of MuÈammad (ß) has led to the unfortunate result that the sunna of the Prophet (ß) not only became theoretically the second most authoritative source of Islamic law but practically also very often the primary source of legislation. When issuing their fatw§s—in particular on legal issues with farreaching social and political implications—Islamic jurists very often ignored the rules of the Book or had them replaced by the sunna, which over time became their ultimate—and often only—point of reference. By focusing on the sunna of the Prophet (ß) as a major source of Islamic legislation, our honourable scholars clearly overstepped the mark when they began to treat it as the principal and most authoritative source of truth, equal if not superior to the word of God in the Book. Their theologically most detestable step was to regard the Book as incomplete and in need of the elaborations and specifications of the sunna, implying that a divine text needs to be completed and confirmed by a human source—which is a truly blasphemous thought!

In order to understand what went wrong in Islamic law and why we ended up with a mindset focused on analogies that constantly forces today’s Muslims

to bring their behaviour in line with minute details of the sunna, leaving no room for innovative thinking, reform, or renewal, we need first to establish what in Allah’s Book enjoys universal validity (and is part of MuÈammad’s prophethood), and what was and has been of particular relevance (and is part of MuÈammad’s messengerhood). For this discussion the universal norms of human existence and the dialectics between social development and civilisational progress need to be fully considered.

Contemporary Islamic discourse lacks philosophical depth. The ignorance of modern philosophical thinking is the root cause of the almost primitive reflex by our honourable scholars to treat everyone who is blessed with the tiniest spark of originality and creativity as a subversive renegade or even an enemy of Islam. It is a real scandal that people are mobbed and treated as pariahs if they dare to unmask the datedness of the salaf heritage, and it is outrageous that they are ridiculed if they apply modern critical methods to unravel the mysteries of the divine text. And it is an even greater scandal that people are accused of apostasy when they rely on the truth of Allah’s words, which state that MuÈammad (ß) became God’s messenger not through personal sanctity but due to the mercy of the Almighty; and also when they believe that the message of the Book—and not the sunna of MuÈammad (ß)—is the seal of all prophetic messages.

*** Prophethood and Messengerhood

It is our aim to show that the sunna of the Prophet is culturally and historically conditioned, and that it lacks the universality of Allah’s Book. While MuÈammad’s sunna cannot be perceived as being outside the law of historical development and needs to ‘stay’ in seventhcentury Arabia, MuÈammad’s messengerhood in the Book needs to be understood according to the dialectics between form and content, insofar as its text is fixed but its content moves. Let us therefore first turn to Allah’s Book and introduce two fundamental categories: MuÈammad’s prophethood and MuÈammad’s messengerhood. We start out from the premise that Allah revealed the Book to MuÈammad (ß) as text (naßß) and content (muÈtaw§). As text it consists

of all the revealed verses, from the first Sårat al-F§tiÈa to the last Sårat a l-N§s, and as content it covers the entirety of themes and topics that have ever been addressed in revealed scriptures or books. These themes and topics can be classified under two major categories whose characteristics can be derived from the following two verses:

This is the Book which cannot be doubted and is a guidance to the God-fearing. (Al-Baqara 2:2) Who are these ‘God-fearing”?

Those who believe in the unseen [al-ghayb]... (Al-Baqara 2:3)

→ this refers to the ‘book of the unseen’ (kit§b al-ghayb) = category I

And ‘[who] perform the prayer and give freely from what We pro vided for them.’ (Al-Baqara 2:3, MF)

→ this refers to the ‘book of conduct’ (kit§b al-sulåk) = category II These two different categories (book of the unseen / book of conduct) indicate a distinction between prophethood and messengerhood. Prophethood (nubåwa) is derived from the Arabic root n-b-#, which means—in its second verb form (nabba”a) —‘to announce’ or ‘to disclose’,[129] and in the context of the Book it refers to those parts of the text that announce or disclose the themes of universal—and sometimes, historical—‘truth and falsehood’ (a l-Èaqq wa’l-b§ãil). The verses of messengerhood (al-ris§la), in contrast, contain concrete moral, social, and ritual instructions, that is, precepts of correct and praiseworthy behaviour, to be followed by the believers in their daily life. The verses of prophethood talk about the essential questions of human existence: about life and death, about the beginning and the end of the world, Hell and Paradise, and such; they form the ‘book of prophethood’ (kit§b al-nubåwa). The verses of MuÈammad’s message or messengerhood, in contrast, talk about

religious practices: about rituals, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, prohibitions, social duties, welfare obligations, and the like. They represent the ‘book of messengerhood’ (kit§b al-ris§la). The book of prophethood deals with the reality of our objective existence; it distinguishes between true and false, real and illusory; it possess the quality of being ‘ambiguous’ (mutash§bih), and it is located in the textual (or existential) subcategories of al-qur”§n and sab# al-math§nÊ. The book of messengerhood, that is, the book of conduct, possesses the quality of being unambiguous or ‘definite’ (muÈkam) and is located in the umm al-kit§b, the ‘mother of the book’. In short, MuÈammad (ß) is a messenger of God and a prophet, but both roles contain different tasks and themes. The Book acknowledges MuÈammad’s dual role by clearly distinguishing between verses of messengerhood and verses of prophethood.[130]

For the purpose of further exploring the difference between prophethood and messengerhood we must now define how we understand prophethood and the role of a prophet. In order to do this we need to introduce the categories of naba” and khabar which designate two different types of ‘news’:

1. Naba”: refers to an event in the unseen or unknown world which has either already taken place in the near or distant past or will take place in the near or distant future. MuÈammad’s (ß) role as a prophet (naby) was to disclose to his fellow men these events which were hidden to them but which, through his announcements, became discernable. These announcements form the book of prophethood which does not contain any legal injunctions. In terms of style and rhetorical expression prophetic announcements are short, crisp, and concise. A reference to them can be found in the following verse:

Those cities, We relate to you [i.e., MuÈammad] some of their [anb§“ih§];[131] their messengers came to them with clear signs, but they would not believe in what they had denied earlier. This Allah seals the hearts of the unbelievers. (Al-A#r§f 7:101)

2. Khabar: refers to an event in the past or immediate present (not the future) in the tangible or known world which can be empirically seen or reconstructed (if it happened in the distant past) by the people. However, such khabar events may turn into naba” events with the passing of time. For example, what happened to Noah and his people were khabar events for those who personally witnessed them. But over the centuries they turned into naba” events as they became unknown or indiscernible to subsequent generations. In terms of style and rhetorical expression they are elaborate, lengthy, and detailed. Both categories of ‘news’, naba” and khabar, pertain to the content of a l-qur”§n and form the Qur’anic stories; they belong to the book of prophethood and do not contain legal injunctions.

With this in mind we say that the miraculous nature (al-i#j§z) of the book of prophethood is defined by the quality of knowledge it contains; it is i#j§z #ilmÊ, or an ‘epistemological miracle’. Not only does it contain precise knowledge of the universal laws that govern the entire universe and nature, but it also hosts historical stories which had either already happened before MuÈammad’s time (naba” events to him) or which he himself witnessed (khabar events). For us today, such khabar events have now become naba” events.

The miraculous nature of the book of messengerhood, in contrast, is defined by the soundness and righteousness of its legal instructions: they are valid until the Day of Judgement. It enjoys everlasting validity because it is based on the principle of ÈanÊfiyya and because its injunctions are applied within the legal framework of Allah’s limits (see chapters 4 and 5).

The Book, directly revealed into MuÈammad’s brain, holds prophethood and messengerhood. It came down as the last of the many messages of al-isl§m which history had accumulated over time and with which Allah has sent his prophets and messengers to all peoples in this world. A l-isl§m, as we said in chapter 1, started with Noah and found its perfect expression with MuÈammad (ß). Since MuÈammad’s (ß) death our knowledge of the universe has increased and our

legal systems have improved. Humankind as a whole has greatly advanced, so much so that we no longer need another prophet or another revelation as we can now rely on reason and our matured experiences of this world. The scientific institutions of the modern era have inherited prophecies and prophethoods, and the new legislative assemblies and parliaments have inherited ancient messengers and their messengerhoods. In other words, with the ‘seal of the prophets’ ended too the period of external, moral intervention and consequently also the role of religious experts.

If the Book is Allah’s revelation as text and content from its first to its last letter, we would need to specify what makes it so different from the other messages and prophecies that have previously been revealed. We believe that the special nature of the Book lies in its sacredness as the last and final revelation. But what do we mean by sacredness?

We take our clue from one of the ninety-nine names of Allah in the Book, al-qudus, which we translate as ‘the one who governs over the living’. We read in the Book:

We also gave Jesus, son of Mary, clear signs and strengthened him with the [råh al-qudus][132] (Al-Baqara 2:87)

We know that the miraculous ability to reanimate the dead was one of God’s gifts to Jesus. We infer from this that ‘holy’ or ‘sacred’ (muqaddas) means to live, and that a sacred text is a text that shows signs of life or is living. Accordingly, the Book is a sacred text because it is a living text, a text of life, and a text for the living, not the dead. Even if we find in the Book things about people who belong to a different historical period, and who were therefore subject to the ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ of their times, it can still be read as if they belonged to the time of our reading of the text—as if the Book was revealed only yesterday! How is this possible?

We find the answer in the ontological quality of the text as ‘being’ in-and-for-itself, and of being originated in Allah who is also pure ‘being’ in-and-for-

itself. Both God and text can only be understood by looking at their outward signs and external manifestations, by the ninety-nine names that manifest themselves in the externalities of our existence. As created beings, we will never fully understand the entirety of this universe because only God can do this. What we can do is to gradually comprehend it by a continuous ‘becoming’ of our relative and contingent knowledge. The ultimate aim is to come closer to God even though we will never fully reach Him. But to facilitate this process of coming near Him we are allowed to make everything in nature subservient, whether we use it wisely and for the benefit of humankind or foolishly and even to the detriment of society and the environment.[133]

No one, we repeat, is able, nor should be allowed, to claim total knowledge of the Book in its entirety or its single parts, even if he is a prophet or messenger. If someone claimed to have such total knowledge he would commit the crime of shirk, as he would become a partner of God in His knowledge and His ‘being’ in-and-for-itself. If MuÈammad (ß) had total knowledge of the Book, in its entirety or its single parts, and his interpretations and ijtih§ds had all the flavour of absolute truth, it would make him a partner of Allah in divine knowledge and, even more ridiculously, the author of the Book. By God, we cannot accuse MuÈammad (ß) of shirk regarding Allah since he never claimed to possess absolute knowledge of Allah’s Book. But because our honourable scholars overrated the sunna to such an extent that they began treating Allah’s Book as if MuÈammad (ß) had been able to write it himself, Muslim believers were given the impression that MuÈammad (ß) possessed superhuman knowledge.

How does the Book constitute its ‘being’ in-and-for-itself? We believe it is because of the stability or firmness of the text, or better: the stable nature of al-dhikr, which is the linguistic, that is, phonetic/ lexical, format of the Book. The text’s dhikr, which we have in front of us today, is exactly the same dhikr that existed in the seventhcentury. And it is the same text that Allah revealed into MuÈammad’s brain from where it was then transmitted ad verbum ipsissimus to his fellow men. The text of al-dhikr does not possess ‘becoming’ or ‘progressing’, hence its textual format is fixed forever. On that we hear:

It is truly We who have revealed [al-dhikr],[134] and we are truly its guardians.[135] (Al-\ijr 15:9)

If the Book possesses the quality of ‘being’ in-and-for-itself, how are human beings supposed to deal with it? How should we, being subject to ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’, read the divine text? And how should future readers, whose ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ will have inevitably moved on to a more advanced level of knowledge, understand the Book? We believe that readers of different historical periods will have understood different things from the text. Readers of the eighth, ninth, twelfth, eighteenth and twentieth centuries have differed from one another in terms of their intellectual capacities and methodologies. Some have discovered things that others have overlooked, and a third group of readers may have elicited things from the text that the other two groups have completely ignored. This is because despite its fixed ‘being’, the Book is a text of life into whose ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ the reader has been absorbed according to his own degree of ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’. This fundamental hermeneutical principle underlines our dictum that ‘the text is fixed but its content moves’, expressing a subtle dialectical relationship between textual structure and meaning.

The messages that readers receive from the text and the messages that they might overlook depend on the epistemological context in which they read the text. In this regard, every reading is bound to be contemporary. A reader of the twelfth century approached the text with the scientific and social awareness of his time, his reading being the most contemporary reading possible at that time; we in the twenty-first century apply the scientific and intellectual level of our own age, turning our reading into the best possible contemporary reading. A reader in premodern times will have used the most upto-date knowledge available to him to understand the text’s explanation of life on earth. He would have used the model of the four elements of water, earth, air, and fire which scholars at that time employed to explain nature and life. In the modern age, however, we apply the findings of laboratory experiments that explain life as the basic transformation of hydrogen into uranium, that is, we are using an altogether different explanatory model. In both cases the most contemporary forms of knowledge have been applied

and yet two different interpretations have resulted. This is because the scientific and intellectual horizon of the prescientific reader simply was not as advanced as ours, by which we recognise the unstoppable, relentless progress of ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ in our scientific knowledge.

We now understand much better why the Book is the only and ultimate source of prophethood and messengerhood (not the sunna!). It is the only text that possesses the quality of ‘being’ in-and-for-itself, and therefore the only text that is sacred. No other text by a human being, whether prophet or messenger, can ever claim to possess the same level of sacredness as the Book.

*** A Critique of the Traditional Understanding of the Sunna

In this section we refute the traditional understanding of the sunna which has caused serious damage to Arabic civilisation. Because ‘becoming’ has been forced to stay locked in the period of the first three centuries of Islamic history, the traditional fixation on the sunna of the Prophet (ß) has made Arab-Muslim societies—philosophically speaking—flat, two dimensional. In contrast to other more threedimensional civilisations, Arab-Muslim societies have remained backward and still display symptoms of cultural decay and intellectual stagnation. A traditional understanding of the sunna forces today’s jurists to make their legal decisions strictly analogous to those issued between the seventh and the ninth centuries.

The traditional view has it that the sunna relates to us the words, acts, good deeds, statements, and decisions of MuÈammad, God’s Messenger (ß). It requires us to emulate the example of the Prophet (ß) as rigidly as possible in our daily conduct. The following verse 21 of Al-AÈz§b and two ÈadÊths[136] have often been cited to convince and discipline us:

You have indeed in the Apostle of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in God and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of God. (Al-AÈz§b 33:21)

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “I have left two things to you. As long as you hold to them you will not go astray: these [two things] are the book of Allah and the Sunna of His Prophet.”[137]

“Behold, I have been given this book together with something similar/ equal.”[138]

Based on the dubious notion of MuÈammad’s sanctity as prophet and messenger, the sunna, that is, the collective body of all ÈadÊths that capture the words and deeds of a supposedly über-human being, has gained an authority that intrudes into the daily life of every Muslim-Believer. General issues of religious belief and specific questions of social conduct are indiscriminately treated as equally authoritative and binding on us all. Every little detail of the Prophet’s life has been defined as equally sacrosanct, whether it concerned questions of universal, objective laws (nubåwa) or legislation (ris§la), whether it referred to prophetic knowledge (#ilm) or to legislation (aÈk§m shar#Êyya). The ÈadÊths of the sunna have thus acquired the status of sacred texts whose authority cannot any longer be questioned. As a result, the ÈadÊths, regardless of their often dubious origins and weak chains of transmitters, were given priority to the divine text even when they contradicted the verses of the Book.

Neither MuÈammad (ß) himself nor his companions would ever have approved of such notions of sanctity. On the contrary, we hear that MuÈammad (ß) explicitly forbade his followers from compiling anything but the words of God. The oft-heard argument that the collection of ÈadÊths enabled the Prophet’s companions to better distinguish between MuÈammad’s words as a prophet (and human being) and the words of God (the divine author), and thus protect the latter from

being mixed with the former, can be refuted by quoting verse 9 of Sårat al-\ ijr that rebukes such efforts. In this verse we are assured of the fact that Allah Himself will take care of His words as the sole and best protector of the Book, and that He would not need ÈadÊth compilers to do so:

We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption). (Al-\ijr 15:9)

The truth is that after the prophet’s death in 632 his companions were preoccupied only with the task of producing an authoritative collection of divine revelations. They did not bother at all about prophetic ÈadÊths. They started collecting the divine §y§t under the caliph Abå Bakr and completed the task under the caliph #Uthm§n b. ‘Aff§n, who eventually compiled the written mußÈaf, the copy we hold in our hands today. This is what has become known as the codex of #Uthm§n. It is said to have abrogated all other codices that existed at that time and which were subsequently all destroyed. The Prophet’s (ß) companions had realised that whatever MuÈammad (ß) said or did as a human being could not have originated from a divine source and thus was strictly related to the politica l-historical context in which he lived. Even though they could have started to collect ÈadÊths they continued to rely exclusively on the divine text. Knowing the Book very well they realised that to collect ÈadÊths in order to complete divine revelation would have contradicted Allah’s words in verse 3 of Sårat al-M§“ida:

This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you al-isl§m as your religion… (A l-M§“ida 5:3)

It was clear to them that the religion of al-isl§m was perfected even without the existence of a single ÈadÊth. It was indeed inconceivable to think that Allah has given them an incomplete religion of which half, the ÈadÊths, was still missing. And it would also be inconceivable to think that they, after

having successfully collected all existing divine revelations, could have been so neglectful of not having exhaustively collected all existing ÈadÊths (a process that lasted several centuries), therefore embarrassing generations of future Muslims by having secured only half of al-isl§m.

The collection of ÈadÊths and the process of turning them into sacrosanct texts is undoubtedly a later development. The following aspects have triggered this fateful turn towards the sanctification of the Prophet's sunna. We have identified six major errors which all occurred because of a wrong interpretation of a verse in the Book. In dealing with these errors, we quote the verse first, highlight the mistakes made, and then introduce our own reading of the text.

1. The first one concerns the belief that MuÈammad's (ß) words were inspired by God:

And he [MuÈammad] does not talk [yanãiq] capriciously. It is only a revelation [waÈy[un]] being revealed [yåÈ§]... (A l-Najm 53:3–4, FM)

It was thought that the two verses equate what MuÈammad (ß) said (yanãiq) with divine revelation (waÈy). This led to the erroneous view that the Qur'an and the sunna are two categories of revealed or inspired word. It has been overlooked that Al-Najm 53:3–4 were revealed in Mecca at a time when MuÈammad (ß) was confronted by strong opposition from the Ahl a l-Quraish. They had questioned the validity of MuÈam mad's (ß) claim to have received revelations from God. They did not question MuÈammad's (ß) own words but only what he presented as divine revelation. Verses 3 and 4 were revealed as an assurance of the divine origins of his revelations from God, not an assurance of the sacrality of MuÈammad's sayings as prophet and human being.[139]

2. The second error concerns the belief that MuÈammad’s (ß) acts and deeds are sacrosanct, that is, unblemished by mistake and hence infallible. This view can easily be rejected by reading the following verses of Sårat #Abasa in which Allah unambiguously reprimands MuÈammad (ß) and concedes his fallibility:

He frowned and turned away when the blind man came to him— for all you know, he might have grown in spirit, or taken note of something useful to him. (#Abasa 80:1–4, AH)

This is a clear rebuke by God because MuÈammad was so impertinent to have turned away from Ibn Maktåm, an old, blind beggar, in order to address instead the notables of the Ahl a l-Quraish in the hope that they would accept his call and convert to Islam. Criticising such snobbishness, Allah asks MuÈammad (ß) to change his attitude and turn back to the beggar, for the old man might spiritually benefit enormously from the Prophet’s attention. In the following verse we hear another rebuke of MuÈam mad’s action:

Prophet, why do you prohibit what God has made lawful to you in your desire to please your wives? Yet God is forgiving and merciful. (Al-TaÈrÊm 66:1, AH)

And another time:

It is not fitting for an apostle that he should have prisoners of war until he has thoroughly subdued the land. You look for the temporal goods of this world, but God looks to the Hereafter: And God is exalted in might, wise. (Al-Anf§l 8:67)

3. The third error has occurred by inventing the notion of the Prophet’s (ß) impeccability (a l-#ißma). This view can easily be rejected by reading the following verse of Sårat Al-M§“ida:

Messenger, proclaim everything that has been sent down to you from your Lord—if you do not, then you will not have communicated this message—and God will protect you from people. God does not guide those who defy Him. (Al-M§“ida 5:67, AH)

The verse makes it clear that MuÈammad (ß) was not infallible as a prophet per se. His impeccability as a prophet is qualified by, a) his infallible delivery of the revealed text of al-dhikr al-ÈakÊm (because he transmitted the message without adding or taking away a single letter and without letting any human being interfere in the process of transmission); and by, b) his moral perfection, in the sense that he did not violate an absolute taboo of God or transgress a limit set by God.

His moral perfection lied in the fact that he never ventured to perform ijtih§d in anything that God had explicitly forbidden. Instead, in everyday life he performed practical ijtih§ds within the parameters of what God had allowed (al-Èal§l). His ijtih§ds were never fixed once and for all and were never declared absolute as they changed and developed according to historical circumstances. In other words, by his sunna he impeccably specified what Allah had allowed in His Book. But such impeccability does not imply that the Prophet’s (ß) specifications are absolute and to be enforced in other regions of this world or in other sociohistorical contexts of human history.

4. The fourth misunderstanding pertains to the common exaggeration of MuÈammad’s prophetic role:

(We sent them) with clear proofs and scriptures; and We revealed to you the reminder, so that you may make clear [li-tubayyin] to mankind what has been revealed to them, and that, perchance, they may reflect. (Al-NaÈl 16:44, MF)

This verse of Sårat Al-NaÈl has led to much confusion among Muslim commentators. This confusion produced the outrageous view that the Sunna

is superior to the Qur’an,[140] in the sense that the Sunna overrides the authority of the Qur’an if the latter contradicts the former, which basically amounted to an abrogation of the divine text.

The problem lies in a too literal understanding of verse 44 of Al-NaÈl and the phrase ‘that you may make clear to mankind what has been revealed to them’. It was thought that this refers to textual ambiguities in the divine text which MuÈammad (ß) was meant to clarify, or to too generally formulated injunctions that he was sent to specify. In other words, the sunna of the Prophet (ß) was seen as a pragmatic specification and perfect exemplification of Allah’s rather ambivalent legal injunctions. Legal experts had forthwith to use the instrument of analogy in applying MuÈammad’s decisions in order to find and establish their own. In the end, the ÈadÊths were believed to be the perfect filter through which one could explain an obscure divine text, while the sunna became the absolute yardstick of the ‘real’ legal intentions by the divine text. To read the Book without the filter of the ÈadÊths became increasingly difficult, resulting in the fatal thinking that the sunna overrides the Qur’an’s authority and that ‘the Qur’an needs the sunna more than the sunna needs the Qur’an’. And yet, ‘Allah, the Highly exalted, is above what they ascribe to Him’![141]

Confusion occurred over the correct interpretation of the Arabic phrase li-tubayyin and its root words bay§n or tiby§n. The verb bayana was often thought to mean ‘to explain clearly’ or ‘to make clear’ and was identified as the main task of the sunna. The following verses of the Book, however, show that bayana rather denotes ‘to make evident’, or to bring out what is hidden (i.e., not yet discernible):

Those who conceal the clear (signs) We have sent down, and the guidance, after We have made it (known) [bayyan§hu][142] for the people in the Book—on them shall be God’s curse, and the curse of those entitled to curse. (Al-Baqara 2:159)

And remember God took a covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear [la-tubayyanunnahu] to mankind, and not to hide it… ($l #Imr§n 3:187)[143]

O people of the Book! There has come to you our Apostle, revealing to you [yubayyinu lakum] much that you used to hide in the Book…

(Al-M§“ida 5:15)[144]

‘And eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear [yatabayyina] to you distinct from its black thread…’ (Al-Baqara 2:187)

It is clear that in this context the root meaning of b-y-n is ‘to make apparent’, that is, visible to the eyes, something that is hidden, obscured, that is, invisible to the eyes. We hear further proof in the following two verses:

And Abraham prayed for his father’s forgiveness only because of a promise he had made to him. But when it became clear to him [tabayyana] that he was an enemy to God, he dissociated himself from him: for Abraham was most tender-hearted, forbearing. (Al-Tawba 9:114)

He has created man; He has taught him speech (and intelligence) [al-bay§n]. (Al-RaÈm§n 55:3–4)

In 9:114 we learn that tabayyana refers to the moment when the enmity of Abraham’s father to God became evident to Abraham— perceived by his senses and understood by his rational mind: [145]

When we have recited it, repeat the recitation and We shall make it clear [bay§nahu]. (Al-Qiy§ma 75:18–19, AH)

We have sent down to you the Book [revealing][146] all things [tiby§n[an]], a guide, a mercy, and glad tidings to Muslims. (Al-NaÈl 16:89) There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it—a detailed exposition [tafßÊl[a]] of all things, and a guide and a mercy to any such as believe. (Yåsuf 12:111)

<right>

This is the way of your Lord, leading straight: We have detailed

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[faßßaln§] the signs for those who receive admonition. (A l-An#§m 6:126)

The Book says it over and over again: the divine text is clearly visible to the eyes and audible to the ears; in all its details it is unobscured, uncovered, and unambiguous. Such a cryst al-clear text does not need clarifications by the sunna: it has already been explained and made clear, and all the necessary details have been given. Why should there be a need to lessen the confusion if there is no confusion in the first place?

An example taken from contemporary politics can illustrate what is really meant by bay§n. Just imagine that two heads of state come together to negotiate a new bilateral treaty. At the end of their meeting a joint communiqué is prepared with a summary of the talks, and this is distributed among the accompanying press journalists. What happens is that the spokesperson announces all the details of the negotiations even though he did not take part in them. Furthermore, he does not know what else has been discussed and what the communiqué does not mention. The spokesperson’s only task is to read the communiqué to the press, and make

its points audible and visible, that is, known to his audience; a clarifying commentary by him is neither requested nor expected.

This example illustrates the role that MuÈammad (ß) played. His role as a messenger of God was to make Allah’s revelation known to people. It was neither requested nor expected that he change the form or shape of the revelations (the dhikr al-ÈakÊm), nor that he reformulate them in his own words. Some Muslim scholars have claimed that MuÈammad (ß) merely received inspirations from God and that he put them into his own words which he then announced as divine revelations. If this is true, it would mean that MuÈammad (ß) possessed all the superhuman capacities necessary to formulate such sublime speech, and that he had completely understood all the divine instructions. It would mean that the Prophet’s ‘being’ is the ‘being’ of the most praiseworthy, but surely Allah, the highly exalted, is above what they ascribe to Him!

Let us repeat the fundamental truth that in front of us is the Book, the unaltered, unfiltered, and untampered word of God that came down to MuÈammad (ß) in its final format and complete in content. It was delivered to the people without the need for clarification or specification, and without the need for protection or guardianship (see Sårat Al-\ijr 15:9). Such protection has since been achieved by written copies of the original manuscript, first as scrolls, then, after the invention of the printing machine as books and, nowadays, as computer files or audio/video CDs and DVDs. Before all of that was possible, the Prophet MuÈammad (ß) was in this respect the most reliable, most trustworthy, and most perfect transmitter of the divine text.

A final thought: if it is true that the Book is ambiguous and the sunna unambiguous, and that one always has to go back to see how the sunna has specified the general rules of the Book, it would leave no room for human reason, experiment, reflection, or independent thinking. It would disqualify verse 2 of Sårat Yåsuf as being entirely meaningless:

We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an, in order that you may learn wisdom. (Yåsuf 12:2)

5. The fifth problem occurred because of a wrong understanding of Sårat Al-\ashr:

Whatever the Messenger gives you [m§ at§kum], take; but whatever he forbids [m§ nah§kum], refrain from. Fear Allah, for Allah is terrible in retribution. (Al-\ashr 59:7, MF)

In verse 59:7 we notice the usage of the verb a-t-§, ‘to come’ or ‘to arrive’, which implies that the Book deliberately avoids the verb j-a-”, which also means ‘to come’ or ‘to arrive’. The reason for this is that the two verbs connote two different origins for what ‘comes’ or ‘arrives’. Whereas a-t-§ is (semantically) reflexive and connotes an origin that lies in the source (item or person) itself, the verb j-a-” is transitive as it connotes an origin that lies outside a source (item or person). This difference is best illustrated by verse 43 of Sårat Maryam:

“O my father! To me has come [j§“anÊ] knowledge which has not reached you [ya”atik]; so follow me: I will guide you to a way that is even and straight.” (Maryam 19:43)

We notice here that the text uses first j§“anÊ in order to indicate that Abraham, the speaker in this verse, has received divine knowledge from Allah, that is, from somewhere outside himself, whereas in the case of his father, who has not received such knowledge, the verb ya”atik is used, hence Abraham’s command to his father to follow him. As for the verb a-t-§ in general, the Book employs it only if it refers to actions, never to speech acts or communication by words.

If we apply these insights to 59:7, we can now explain why the verb a-t-§ (m§ at§kum), is used and not j-a-”, or j§“akum. M§ at§kum refers to knowledge that MuÈammad (ß) gained from human experiences, that is, from human origins, sources that lie within himself. The Book deliberately avoids the term j§“akum in the phrase ‘so take what the apostle assigns to you (m§ at§kum)’ because if it had used j§“akum, it would mean that MuÈammad’s (ß) (human) knowledge is derived from an (outside) divine source—surely Allah, the Highly exalted, is above what they ascribe to Him—or, at least, it would give the impression that MuÈammad (ß) might even be the author of the Book.

In sum, ‘what the Apostle assigns to you’ is taken from within MuÈammad (ß) as a human being, while the Book came down (j§“a) from outside MuÈammad, both in shape and content. If we apply this more specifically to the phrase ‘so take what the apostle assigns to you’ and link it to the question of human legislation in the form of the sunna of the Prophet, we must then regard MuÈammad’s efforts to govern seventh-century Arabian society and to establish a new, centralised state on the Arabian Peninsula as his efforts and as contingent to his historical context. Every human society is asked to do exactly that (‘take what the apostle assigns to you’), to govern society and build a state according to the conditions of the present time.

On a different note, we see how verse 59:7 employs the term n-h-y in the phrase ‘refrain from what he forbids you (nah§kum)’. This usage is deliberate because it avoids the term È-r-m. MuÈammad (ß) was only required to permit or prohibit (ya”amur wa-yanh§) but never to absolutely allow or forbid (yuÈallil wa-yaÈram) since the latter is the prerogative of Allah alone. The difference is far-reaching: whereas the area of permission/prohibition is part of human legislation and is contingent, relative, flexible, and changing, the area of absolute permission and taboo (Èal§l and Èar§m) is divine, fixed, absolute, and everlasting. Whereas

Allah allows or forbids and permits or prohibits, human beings can only permit or prohibit but not absolutely allow or forbid.

The divine absolute taboos (al-muÈarram§t) are sufficient for creating and sustaining the inner core and consciousness of human beings, but alone they would not be enough to run a state and govern society with all its political, economic, and social complexities. But this is exactly what MuÈammad (ß) did when he created a state under the conditions of life in seventh-century Arabia. In doing so he applied what we may call the principle of 'tying and loosening' (taqyÊd wa-iãl§q),[147] which means that he introduced legislations and legislative bodies on the Arabian Peninsula that aimed at either 'loosening' the areas of divine permissions (to give them general applicability) or 'tying' them due to specific circumstances (to make them only particularly applicable). His applications reflect the dialectical relationship between the limits that Allah has set and human legislation that manoeuvres between God's boundaries. Such manoeuvres, we must stress, are subject to human error.

6. The sixth and final error was to equate obedience to Allah with obedience to Allah's Apostle:

First, it needs to be pointed out that the Book demands obedience to MuÈammad (ß) only as a messenger (rasål) but never as a prophet

(naby):

And obey God and the Apostle [al-rasål]; that you may obtain mercy. ($l #lmr§n 3:132)

This verse stands for many others of similar wording. The Book never uses the phrase 'And obey God and the prophet'. Second, prophethood is faced with either acceptance or disapproval, and a typical response would be 'Yes, it could be' or 'No, it can't be', whereas messengerhood is faced with

either obedience or disobedience, typically expressed in ‘Yes, I assent’ or ‘No, I dissent’. When, for example, MuÈammad (ß) announced, as Prophet, the verse: ‘for the convulsion of the Hour (of Judgement) will be a thing terrible!’ (Al-\ajj 22:1), the reaction of his listeners was either: ‘Yes, I think this is true’, or ‘No, this is a lie’, whereas when he, as Messenger, said: ‘anyone who is ill or on a journey should make up for the lost days by fasting on other days later.’ (Al-Baqara 2:185) [AH], the likely response was surely not ‘Yes, I think this is true’ but either ‘Yes, I will follow that instruction’ or ‘No, I reject it’. Third, when Allah addresses MuÈammad (ß) in the Book as prophet, in the manner of ‘O you prophet’, the instructions that follow are of general guidance, advice, or admonition issued because of very concrete instances in the life of MuÈammad. They are not meant to fall into the category of legal permissions or prohibitions. In sum, the call for obedience to MuÈammad (ß) is restricted to his role as Messenger, not as a prophet. And his messengerhood, as we have explained earlier, consists of legal injunctions, moral rules, and ritual obligations.

In order to avoid the confusion that is so common in dealing with MuÈammad’s sunna we need to introduce two different types of obedience:

A. ‘Combined obedience’ (al-ã§#a al-muttaßila): obedience to Allah and His Messenger (ß):

And obey God and the Apostle; that you may obtain mercy. ($l #Imr§n 3:132)

All who obey God and the Apostle are in the company of those on whom is the grace of God—of the prophets (who teach), the sincere (lovers of truth), the witnesses (who testify), and the righteous

(who do good): Ah! What a beautiful fellowship! (Al-Nis§” 4:69)

In those two verses, Allah, the Living and Everlasting, connects obedience to God to obedience to His Messenger. If obedience is demanded in this manner, it becomes obligatory for everyone who lived at the time of MuÈammad (ß) or after his death. Ritual and moral obedience is expressed by performing the rituals that MuÈammad (ß) practised[148] and by respecting the absolute taboos that Allah has set. The taboos are clearly laid out in the Book and are, as explained in chapter 1, part of the innate disposition of human beings and an essential element within our consciousness. No shackles or bonds are necessary in order to accept them.

MuÈammad's (ß) infallibility consisted in his perfection of never having violated any of these taboos, and our obligation is to at least try to imitate him in that. Our obedience to MuÈam mad's (ß) legal injunctions is expressed in practising ijtih§d within the limits set by Allah, which allows us to 'turn and bend sideways', that is, to follow the principle of ÈanÊfiyya. It is not expressed in following his ijtih§ds to the letter because the legal limits (al-Èudåd) are Allah's limits, not MuÈam mad's limits. When verse 14 of Sårat a l-Nis§" says, 'But those who disobey God and His apostle and transgress His limits…' (Al-Nis§" 4:14), the possessive pronoun 'His' refers to Allah, not to MuÈammad. If the Book had wanted to refer to both Allah's and MuÈammad's limits it would have used the Arabic du al-ending hum§, 'transgress their (both) limits'.

MuÈammad (ß) himself practised ijtih§d within Allah's limits and it is our obligation to follow him in this. Several times he cautioned his companions not to apply the highest possible legitimate penalty (the upper limit), the death penalty, in cases where there was doubt and uncertainty about the guilt of the accused. He said: 'Repeal the Èudåd due to uncertainty, and overlook the offence of the righteous person unless it occurs in one of Allah's Èudåd.' He also said: 'Repeal the Èudåd from Muslims as much as you can. If you can find a way out for a Muslim then apply it. For it is better for a ruler to make a mistake in forgiving someone than to make a mistake in punishing someone."[149] He did not urge his companions to implement the Èudåd penalties if doubts persisted. He urges us to describe and define the crime before exacting penalties, and he calls upon us to be p articularly vigilant the nearer we approach the upper limit of Allah's punishments, allowing us to move

away from it due to the circumstances of a specific case and the contingencies of objective reality.

As for the obedience concerning ritual practices we distinguish between two types:

a. Absolute obedience: believers follow the instructions as given in the Book, for example, ‘So establish regular prayer and give regular charity; and obey the apostle; that you may receive mercy…’ (A l-Når 24:56), or as a ÈadÊth puts it: ‘Pray as you saw me praying.”[150] Obedience here is absolute so, for example, a prayer will be rejected if it is done in a way that differs from MuÈammad’s behaviour. It will also be rejected if it is outwardly performed according to this model while it is not directed to Allah. The same applies to the pilgrimage—a ÈadÊth requests: ‘From me take your rituals’.[151] It also applies to the fast. However, even if one has to fast as MuÈammad (ß) did, there is no injunction that demands also to break the fast as he did.

b. Relative obedience: this requires ijtih§d within the limits set by Allah with regards to these rituals. For example, the lower limit of alms tax is 2.5 percent of our income but it might not always stay as low as this. If economic and financial circumstances dictate, one may raise the alms tax and increase the financial burden for the benefit of those who receive our charity. This increase can be decided by a proper ijtih§d. But note that one must never go below the lower limit of 2.5 percent— obedience to MuÈammad (ß) in this is also obedience to God.

B. ‘Separate Obedience’ (al-ã§“a al-munfaßila): eternal obedience to Allah and time-restricted obedience to MuÈammad (ß):

O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the apostle, and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to God and His apostle, if you do believe in God and the Last Day: That is best, and most suitable for final determination. (Al-Nis§” 4:59)

Obey God, and obey the apostle, and beware (of evil): if you do turn back, know you that it is our apostle’s duty to proclaim (the message) in the clearest manner. (Al-M§“ida 5:92)

These verses refer to a second type of obedience to MuÈammad (ß) which, to us today, is separate from obedience to God. It was a combined form of obedience only during MuÈammad’s (ß) lifetime. It designates the obedience of his followers to what he had decided, based on the principle of ‘tying and loosening’. While creating the foundations of a new state amidst the political and cultural turmoil of his time, MuÈammad (ß) continuously exercised ijtih§d, sometimes loosening up to a maximum of permissibility, sometimes tying it up to an absolute minimum. He was by no means infallible in his ijtih§ds, while his decisions reflected the conditions of his time. His ijtih§ds were historical, relative, and contingent.[152] The decisions he took fell into the categories of situational permissions and prohibitions and had, since they were not explicit rules (aÈk§m) of the Book, only regional and temporary significance. As historically contingent rules which reflected the breadth and width of the limits that MuÈammad (ß) himself had set, they do not fall within the sphere of Allah’s limits. Unlike the limits of Allah, MuÈammad’s limits and the rules he ‘placed in between’, for example, the prohibition of music, dance, singing, the visual arts, and such, enjoy neither absolute validity nor eternal authority. If MuÈammad’s decisions were necessary at the time he took them, they had all the flavour of the ancient society in which he lived.

His prohibitions of music, dancing, singing, painting, sculpturing, for example, can be explained—only, of course, if one wants to explain and justify them—by the prevailing idolatry of Arabian society. They were however never inserted into the text of the Book and hence cannot be regarded as permanent injunctions. The concrete measures that MuÈammad (ß) took against the idolatry of his time, originating in human (not divine) legislation, cannot be equated with the universal and eternal limits that Allah has set and which are binding for us today. What we hear, instead, is the admonition to keep away from the ‘filth of the idols’ (al-rajas min al-auth§n), not from the idols as such.[153] The ÈadÊths, reflecting the cultural milieu of ancient societies,

certainly will not help to identify measures and rules that are appropriate for our contemporary period. We will have to do without them.

How Shall We Understand What Is Known as ‘The Sunna of the Prophet”?

You have indeed in the apostle [rasål, i.e., not prophet or nabÊ] of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct) [uswat[un] Èasanat[un]] for any one whose hope is in God and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of God. (Al-AÈz§b 33:21)

It is generally agreed that Verse 21 of Sårat A l-AÈz§b declares God’s Messenger to be our ultimate role model. We do not deny this. But the question is for what exactly is MuÈammad (ß) our role model? What are the areas of belief and practice concerning which God requires us to emulate MuÈammad’s (ß) example? We know that belief in the oneness of God (al-tauÈÊd) is the indisputable essence of Islamic doctrine. It is also, as we said in chapter 1, the backbone of al-isl§m, next to belief in the existence of God and the Afterlife. And it is, as we saw, the first and principal commandment of al-furq§n. Following from this we suggest that the answer to the above questions can be found in the following verses of the Book:

There is for you an excellent example [uswat [un] Èasanat [un]] (to follow) in Abraham and those with him, when they said to their people: “We are clear of you and of whatever you worship besides God: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred for ever, unless you believe in God and Him alone”… (A l-MumtaÈana 60:4)

“Our Lord! Make us not a (test and) trial for the unbelievers, but forgive us, our Lord! For you are the exalted in might, the wise.” There was indeed in them an excellent example [uswat [un]

Èasanat [un]] for you to follow, for those whose hope is in God and in the Last Day. But if any turn away, truly God is free of all wants, worthy of all praise.

(Al-MumtaÈana 60:5–6)

They think that the confederates have not withdrawn; and if the confederates should come (again), they would wish they were in the deserts (wandering) among the Bedouins, and seeking news about you (from a safe distance); and if they were in your midst, they would fight but little. You have indeed in the apostle of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct) [uswat [un] Èasanat [un]] for any one whose hope is in God and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of God. When the believers saw the confederate forces, they said: “This is what God and his apostle had promised us, and God and His apostle told us what was true.” And it only added to their faith and their zeal in obedience. (Al-AÈz§b 33:20–22)

The first two verses from Sårat al-MumtaÈana tell us that, in His quest to implant tauÈÊd in us, Allah has made Abraham a role model. It says ‘there is for you an excellent example (to follow) in Abraham and those with him’. In verse 33:22 we hear that Allah has made MuÈammad (ß) a role model for exactly the same reasons: to implant tauÈÊd in us. In both cases the text addresses the same people for whom MuÈammad (ß) and Abraham are role models: ‘for any one whose hope is in God and the Final Day’; it confirms the same identity of those who should emulate Abraham and MuÈammad. It is undeniable that the Book stresses a similarity between the two prophets and between those who follow them. We hear that the reason why Abraham turns away from his peoples is their shirk of Allah because they worship idols. And we learn that the root cause of conflict between MuÈammad (ß) and his peoples is exactly the same.

Allah wants us to take MuÈammad (ß) and Abraham as role models in our fight against idolatry and in our efforts to plant tauÈÊd in our souls. The similarity of MuÈammad and Abraham

as role models, as given by the Book, does not allow us to define the exemplary behaviour of MuÈammad (ß) exclusively through the ÈadÊths, because they give MuÈam mad (ß) a separate identity (from Abraham) and do not contain anything about Abraham that we could emulate.

The call for tauÈÊd, following the examples of Abraham and MuÈammad, is the only reason why we should confront our fellow brothers and sisters. They should never be challenged because they do not wear the Èij§b or because their beards are too short. We distance ourselves from any attempt to define MuÈammad's role model in terms of how we should dress, eat, drink, sleep and talk. It is unacceptable that people form groups and sects because of such trivial issues, sow enmity and hatred, and even go as far as to kill people because they dress and behave differently.

This is certainly the case with the so-called Islamic revival. The so-called revivalists have completely forgotten the tauÈÊd principle, the basic moral commandments of God and Allah's dictum that 'there shall be no coercion in religion' (Al-Baqara 2:156). Instead, they focus exclusively on matters of ritual purity and what could go wrong while praying or fasting: how our ablutions might be polluted, how our prayers can become corrupted, how our fast is invalidated, and so on. We can buy hundreds and hundreds of books that deal with our mortal sins, the punishments of the grave, and stories that sow fear and aggression. Such gloomy stuff will certainly not heal our societies. By any leap of the imagination, this is neither a revival nor is it Islamic.

It is truly regrettable that the Islamic doctrine of tauÈÊd has been distorted to such an extreme degree. The noble example of Allah's Messenger has been unbelievably vulgarised. It has been detached from its true intention as stated by God, to the extent that we now emulate MuÈammad (ß) as Prophet and human being and not—as demanded by God—as Allah's Messenger (ß). As a result, the ÈadÊths of the sunna have become eternally valid legislation. The words and deeds of MuÈammad's (ß) companions, because of their noble reputation, have turned into the eternal basis of analogical jurisdiction, and the scholarly

discipline of uß̊ål al-fiqh, while forgetting the rationale for its contingent existence, has become the yardstick for legal debate for all times.

We do not dispute the possibility that ablutions for prayer, a fast, or a supplication might become invalid, and do not deny the existence of mortal sins and vicious acts of obstinacy. What we do dispute, however, is that these things are perceived as the totality of our religion and that our minds are completely occupied by these topics. We criticise the fact that people, intentionally or not, are forced to deal constantly with these secondary issues, while being increasingly drawn away from the truly significant issues of their existence. The Book repeatedly mentions the truly important things of life, as for example:

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And

God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). (Al-\ujur§t 49:13)

Exalted is He who holds all control in His hands; who has power over all things, who created death and life to test you [people] and reveal which of you does best—He is the mighty, the forgiving. (Al-Mulk 67:1–2, AH)

Here we hear that togetherness, piety and good work are the fundamental aims of Allah’s creation. Togetherness is achieved through cooperation, mutual help, and assistance in order to achieve cohesion in whatever social unit we live, be it the unit of the family, a team at work, or the state at large. Piety is achieved through knowledge and fear of Allah, by doing what He has ordered and avoiding what He has forbidden. Good work consists of the deeds and righteous acts that are beneficial to our fellow brothers and sisters. One may, for example, strive for perfection at work or abstain from fraud in trade transactions; one may build a school, a mosque or a hospital; or one may simply pray, fast and perform all the other rituals. The only thing

one should not do is only to pray or fast or only to build mosques and nothing else. Surely, these actions alone do not really qualify as the righteous deeds that Allah wants us to do.

What about this murderous tendency among so-called revivalists to categorize every little transgression as a mortal sin?

Those who avoid the greater crimes [kab§“ir a l-ithm] and shameful deeds

[al-faw§Èish], and, when they are angry even then forgive. (Al-Shår§ 42:37)

If you (but) eschew the most heinous of the things [kab§“ir] which you are forbidden to do [m§ tuhaun[a]], we shall expel out of you all the evil in you, and admit you to a gate of great honour. (Al-Nis§” 4:31) Those who avoid great sins [kab§“ir a l-ithm] and shameful deeds [al-faw§Èish], only (falling into) small faults; verily your Lord is ample in forgiveness… (Al-Najm 53:32)

O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: It may be that the (latter) are better than the (former); nor let some women laugh at others: It may be that the (latter are better than the (former); nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames… (Al-\ujur§t 49:11)

O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible), for suspicion in some cases is a sin; and spy not on each other behind their backs… (Al-\ujur§t 49:12)

In these verses Allah tells us that there is a clear difference between an absolute taboo (Èar§m) and a prohibition that is not absolute (nahy). We hear that He prohibits us from spying on each other.

We shall not defame or be sarcastic to each other, nor shall we insult others by offensive name-calling. We also notice that the text calls suspicion a sin (al-ithm) and that in the first three verses the terms ‘greater sins’ (kab§“ir al-ithm) and ‘shameful deeds’ (al-faw§Èish) are used—sins that ‘shall be avoided’. These are prohibited (nahy)—see 4:31 m§ tahaun[a]—but are not absolute taboos (Èar§m). We infer from this that there are greater and smaller sins (53:32: ‘only small faults’), but in terms of those acts that violate absolute taboos, ‘capital crimes’ (a l-muÈarram§t), no qualitative distinction is made between great and small. A small ‘capital crime’ is a contradiction in terms and does not exist. Al-muÈarram§t are ‘capital crimes’ that are to be equated with ‘major sins’. They are absolutely forbidden and must be avoided.

Let us examine the two acts that Allah prohibited in these verses: spying on each other and slander. We deduce from this that spying on your neighbour and your friends and identifying their weak points for public slander is unacceptable. These things do, indeed, lead to serious friction in society and an acute deterioration in social relationships. That is the reason why He ordered us to abstain from them and why He categorized spying and slander as unjustifiable sins. However, if one has to spy on the enemy of a country by collecting intelligence from abroad, this constitutes, in contrast, a necessary and useful activity or is, as we call it, a justifiable sin that is not included in Allah’s sanction.

The same applies to slander. If we gather information about someone’s shortcomings and imperfect character traits in order to defame this person, it is, even if true, an abdominal act or an unjustified sin that Allah has prohibited. But if a person enquires about someone’s life and character because of an intention to marry into the family or a desire to start a business with someone, speaking openly about moral or social deficiencies might be necessary in order to prevent great harm. In this case, calumny is a justifiable sin since it has at least some merit. We learn from Allah’s differing treatment of sins that prohibition can be either absolute or conditional, depending on the intention or purpose behind the sinful act.

The same applies to the problem of drinking alcohol. Some jurists have said that alcohol inevitably implies a state of intoxication, even though the drinking of alcohol does not necessarily always lead to drunkenness. These jurists have completely forbidden alcohol under the pretext that an absolute taboo helps to prevent further harm. In their eyes, the conditioned prohibition (nahy) of alcohol in the Book justifies their absolute prohibition (taÈrÊm) of it. Our position, however, is that a conditioned prohibition does not justify an absolute taboo since a taboo implies, as we have explained earlier, a different quality of scope, validity, and authority. No one can possibly deny the fact that alcohol can be potentially beneficial, for example if it is used as an anaesthetic in surgical operations. In these c ircumstances the use of alcohol is a justified sin. If it is used, however, in order to induce drunkenness it is clearly an unjustified sin.

We must stress that only Allah, who can order temporary or conditioned orders, can issue absolute taboos or permission, while His Messenger (ß), who may also give temporary or conditioned orders, cannot issue absolute taboos or permission. He can only pass on the taboos and permissions contained in Allah's Book. As for 'those of authority', that is, the parliament of the country, it may also legislate temporary or conditioned orders, but it cannot issue absolute taboos or permission. This distribution of legal authority is based on the fundamental distinction between human and divine interdiction. Divine interdiction enjoys universal validity while its implementation is historically conditioned (intention, purpose). Human interdiction is always historically conditioned and never enjoys universal validity. Divine interdiction contains a universal moral ideal, whereas human interdiction does not possess such a moral core. If we ignore these differences and place MuÈammad's (ß) all too human interdiction on the same level as absolute taboos, we risk attributing to them universal, eternal, and indisputable validity. If we added to his rulings the interdictions of his companions and the interdictions of the Imams of the Sunni and Shi#i legal schools, we would suddenly be faced with a huge number of absolute taboos that would make our lives a misery.

The irony is that this is exactly what is about to happen in our societies: the most trivial acts of daily life are interpreted as capital crimes against the religion of Islam: to play a game of backgammon is now tantamount to shirk against Allah, to wear a silk tie is now as serious a crime

as killing one’s soul, and to compose eloquent poetry is now considered as reprehensible as stealing the property of orphans. It is not enough that such thinking displays a condemnable frivolity of the human mind, but such punitive rulings in fact compete with Allah’s authority since they forbid things that Allah has not forbidden. The ridiculous outcome of linking the major sins with our private lives is that we are almost inevitably bound to commit a major sin every day of our life. And once we realise that the way we eat, drink, sleep, and dress is judged by the parameters of major, mortal sins, as traditional tafsÊr suggests, we may legitimately ask, when did we lose the kindness and generosity of Islam and where has its sincerity and authenticity gone? Is the essence of MuÈammad’s message not lost when we turn every little misdeed of ordinary life into capital crimes? Have we not completely missed the point of MuÈammad’s mission when we enslave humankind with such onerous bonds and shackles in their daily life? I say: ‘there is no power save in

Allah’.[154]

With this in mind we propose to follow an alternative route. We propose to regard the sunna as nothing but the Prophet’s ijtih§d in applying the rulings of the Book according to the social reality of seventh-century Arabia. MuÈammad (ß) placed his ijtih§ds between the boundaries of God, while at other times he created new boundaries if they had not been provided by God. As MuÈammad’s exemplary model, valid until the Last Day, we propose this: his exegetical moves between Allah’s limits and his pragmatic creation of new limits if no divine order is given. About this Allah said: ‘I have brought to you the book and with him [MuÈammad] is something similar.”[155] And MuÈammad (ß) said: ‘The disagreement of my community is a blessing”[156] which, in our interpretation, means that it is a blessing that we differ in our ijtih§ds and move like the Prophet between Allah’s limits. If we take this to heart we will eventually be able to return to the authentic hermeneutical principle which says that the ÈadÊths need to be interpreted in the light of the Book and not the other way around.

*** The Specific, Circumstantial Nature of the S_{UNNA} of the Prophet

The core activity of MuÈammad's sunna was to 'restrict the released' and to 'release the restricted', to allow greater or lesser freedom in applying what Allah has permitted (al-Èal§l). His legal decisions were also intended to regulate the affairs of his society and to modify its development within the parameters created by Allah's absolute taboos and permissions. Based on these premises we can summarise the characteristics of MuÈammad's sunna as follows:

1. His decisions were conditioned by the circumstances of life on the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century.

2. His ijtih§ds in restricting the allowed (al-Èal§l) did not need divine revelation.

3. MuÈammad's restrictions of the 'unrestricted permissions' (Èal§l muãlaq) were subject to constant corrections due to changing circumstances in his life.

4. His ijtih§ds were not infallible and can therefore, unlike revelations, be corrected.

5. His ijtih§ds, prophetic or not, do not constitute Islamic legislation. Instead, they reflect his applications of civil law arising from the historical conditions of seventh century Arabia. In administrating the state and society of his time, MuÈammad (ß) applied a specific civil law (q§nån madanÊ) suitable for his time which, by reason of its historical contingency, has no transhistorical validity—even if the reports about it, the ÈadÊths, are totally accurate.

The best example we can give to illustrate the specifity of MuÈammad's ijtih§d is his interdiction against visiting graves. We notice that MuÈammad (ß) first 'restricted the released' and then, after much deliberation, reversed his decision and 'released the restricted'. Whether one is allowed to visit graves or not was not explicitly decided by divine injunction in the Book; it, therefore, fell into the category of the absolutely allowed (al-Èal§l). MuÈammad (ß) was free to allow such practices. But in order to combat superstitious practices of j§hiliyya Arabia, MuÈammad (ß) exercised legitimate 'restriction of the released' and forbade the practice. This did not reflect divine legislation, nor did it forbid such visits for all time. In fact, after the ideas and moral principles of the new faith had been planted in the hearts of most Arabs, MuÈammad (ß) reversed his decision and allowed women to visit the graveyards again. This reversal has confused generations of Muslim jurists since, in their understanding, MuÈammad (ß) had first created an 'absolute' taboo and then abandoned it. And since everything what MuÈammad (ß) did, carried—in the eyes of the #ulam§"—legislative significance (a misconception that, fatefully, became the whole rationale of Islamic fiqh), it led to great confusion in deciding whether visiting graves was allowed in Islam or not.

We know that the jurists' solution to the dilemma was to invent a doctrine of abrogation—and God knows where they got that from! Instead of acknowledging that MuÈammad (ß) simply decided what was best for his society at a specific time of his life, they tried to prove the existence of abrogated and abrogating ÈadÊths, from which they then deduced the existence of abrogated and abrogating verses in the Book.[157] Instead of wasting our time and exploring what is abrogated and what not, it is more important for us today to commission our parliaments and ask them to 'release the restricted' and to 'restrict the released' in what Allah has permitted—and do this strictly in accordance with the conditions of contemporary societies. In doing so we would follow the sunna of the Prophet and emulate his example in the best possible and most authentic way.

*** The Content of Prophetic \adÊth s

The prophetic sayings of MuÈammad (ß) can be divided into two categories: words of wisdom and prophetic statements.[158]

A. Words of Wisdom

A reference to such words of wisdom can be found in the following verses of the Book:

God has sent down the scripture and wisdom to you, and taught you what you did not know… (Al-Nis§” 4:113, AH)

He gives wisdom to whoever He will. Whoever is given wisdom has truly been much good, but only those with insight bear in mind. (Al-Baqara 2:269, AH)

And recite what is rehearsed to you in your homes, of the signs of God and His wisdom: for God understands the finest mysteries and is wellacquainted (with them). (Al-AÈz§b 33:34)

We bestowed (in the past) wisdom on Luqm§n: “Show (your) gratitude to God.” (Luqm§n 31:12)

A person who speaks words of wisdom does not need the help of divine revelation, not even of prophethood or messengerhood. Luqm§n was not a prophet, and yet we hear in verse 31:12: ‘We bestowed (in the past) wisdom on Luqm§n’. In the Book we find many such ‘precepts of wisdom’ which, incidentally, proves that MuÈammad IdrÊs al-Sh§fi#Ê’s view that ‘wisdom’ is primarily represented by the sunna of the Prophet is totally wrong:[159]

Do not follow blindly what you do not know to be true: ears, eyes, and heart, you will be questioned about all these. Do not strut arrogantly about the

earth: you cannot break it open, nor match the mountains in height. The evil of all these actions is hateful to your Lord. [Prophet], this is some of the wisdom your Lord has revealed to you… (A l-Isr§” 17:36–39)

The essential feature of words of wisdom is that they contain moral sayings that are universally understood and shared by all people. Let us quote some examples from a variety of ÈadÊths:

There [should be] no harm [to anyone], and there [should be] no harm in retaliation [if someone was harmed before].[160]

Leave behind what gives you doubt for what does not give you doubt.[161]

Begin with yourself, only then with your brother.[162]

The one who believes in God and the Last Day, he shall speak nicely or not speak at all.[163]

No one is truly a believer unless he desires for his brother what he desires for himself.[164]

A Muslim is one from whose hand and tongue people are safe.[165]

Wisdom is the believer’s lost property; wherever he finds it he takes it.[166]

Another feature is that words of wisdom are formulated from the pool of human experiences and hence come from within human beings. They may be perceived by revelation but revelation is not necessary in order to speak words of wisdom. The following ÈadÊth makes it clear that wisdom is of a distinct quality to revelation:

Wisdom is harmful to the believer when he finds it [and it is] taken away [again].[167]

No religious or civil law should be based on words of wisdom. One of the above-mentioned ÈadÊths states that ‘the one who believes in God and the Last Day, he shall speak nicely or not speak at all’. Such prophetic statements cannot be turned into a doctrine or religious law, because if they were, every believer who is very talkative and sometimes prattles utter nonsense must be imprisoned or called a k§fir, that is, someone who, because of his talkative nature, is a renegade and a disbeliever in Allah and the Last Day. God forbid that words of wisdom are turned into law or doctrine. What this ÈadÊth wants to teach us is that a good believer is moderate in his speech, chooses his words carefully, and tries to be as exact and precise as possible when he describes things or talks about other people.

B. Statements of the Prophet

Prophetic statements are divided into five categories:

6. Statements about rituals:

These are the aÈ§dÊth al-sha#§“ir, MuÈammad’s (ß) instructions, comprising his messengerhood, on how to perform the ritual obligations of the Book. Believers of MuÈammad’s (ß) message have to obey his orders; their adherence to them is what we have called ‘combined obedience’.

7. Statements about the unseen world:

These are the aÈ§dÊth a l-akhb§r bi’l-ghayb, MuÈammad’s (ß) speculations about the unseen world. Because of the fact that he, as a prophet, had no special knowledge about the unseen world, it would be improper for us to take his words as truth. Like every human being, he could only believe in the existence of the unseen world and, like every human being, could only confirm things of the unseen world if they became empirically perceptible, for example, by scientific research. If such things had not been sufficiently researched, he—like everyone else—had to rely on what the Book says about it. Moreover, since the things of the unseen world are part of the ontological reality of the cosmos they were above and beyond the sphere of al-Êm§n and hence, strictly speaking, not in MuÈammad’s area of expertise (see chapter 1).

8. Statements about legal injunctions:

These are the aÈ§dÊth al-aÈk§m which comprise every legal injunction and every piece of legislation that MuÈammad (ß) issued. They are in strict compliance with the verses of the Book and between the limits that Allah has set. They are, as we have pointed out, only informative for us, since, as orders of his time, they show us how MuÈammad (ß) applied the divine injunctions to the contingent social and political problems that he faced in ancient Arabia. His statements have nonnormative value for us because they merely reflect his activities as a mujtahid who responded to the needs of his time and who applied rulings that the objective conditions of his society made necessary. Due to their historical contingency our ijtih§ds may considerably deviate from his ijtih§ds—even if this does not diminish our love for the Prophet MuÈammad (ß)!

9. Sacred statements:

This category refers traditionally to the aÈ§dÊth al-qudsiyya about the unseen world which, as the name indicates, were thought to be inspired by divine revelation. However, we cannot accept them as sacred or divine for the same reasons as given for the aÈ§dÊth a l-akhb§r bi’l-ghayb: MuÈammad (ß), as Prophet, simply could not have spoken

such words, as his knowledge of the unseen world amounted basically to nothing. Moreover, we reject the existence of such sacred statements because they imply that the Book was in some way ambiguous or needed further elaboration or additional explanations.[168] We believe that if Allah had thought it necessary to add explanations He would have given them within the Book. This was, of course, not necessary as we hear in the following two verses:

“Shall I seek for judge other than God? When He it is who has sent unto you the book, explained in detail [mufaßßal[an]].”… (A l-An#§m 6:114)

And if the apostle were to invent any sayings in our name, We should certainly seize him by his right hand, and We should certainly then cut off the artery of his heart. (Al-\§qa 69:44–46).

From the second verse, taken from Sårat Al-\§qa, we realise that fabricating lies about Allah includes words of defamation and slander as well as words of praise and glorification. But even if these fabrications contain praise and glorification they still remain spurious words put into the mouth of Allah. Even if positive and well-intended, they are still fabrications for which Allah’s punishment is, as we hear in 69:46, very severe. God forbid that the Prophet might have done such a thing!

10. Personal statements:

These are the aÈ§dÊth al-Èay§t al-ins§nÊ which cover the sayings about MuÈammad’s personal life, his eating and sleeping habits, his favourite pastimes, his way of dressing, speaking, travelling, walking, running, hunting, and so on. They also include his kindness, good-naturedness, tolerance, courage, and his feelings about justice and injustice, truth and falsehood, hardship and welfare, and so forth. We hear and thoroughly absorb all these biographical details of MuÈammad’s daily private and public life so that our souls are polished, our spirits uplifted, and our virtues strengthened. But we deny the legitimacy of turning such personal

matters into normative behaviour to be emulated by everyone on this planet at all times and throughout every period of human history.

*** Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to solve one of the most complex problems of Islamic history, that is, to define the form and essence of the sunna of the Prophet (ß). We have demonstrated that it is necessary to place the sunna into the epistemological, cultural and political context of seventh-century Arabia. We showed that we, living in the twenty-first century, must be critical of the sunna's contingent and context-bound nature as well as of formulations and definitions of the sunna that Islamic fiqh invented during the seventh to the ninth centuries.

We have made it clear that MuÈammad b. #Abdall§h (ß) was a human being. What made him different was his reception of divine revelation, as we hear in verse 110 of Sårat Al-Kahf:

Say: "I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration [waÈy] has come to me… (Al-Kahf 18:110)[169]

Revelation came down to MuÈammad (ß) complete in form and content, which means that he delivered it to his people exactly as he heard it. His great mission was to make it public, that is, to 'unhide' what was hidden and to make clear what was unclear. On this we hear the Book:

And remember God took a covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it… ($l #Imr§n 3:187)

Through his transmission of the divine text—and here we compare MuÈammad (ß) to a conductor transmitting an electric current—the Prophet became a messenger of Allah. It was this mission that distinguished him from

all the other prophets and messengers that humankind had seen before. We learn that prophets and messengers who preceded MuÈammad (ß) had been equipped with special gifts of miraculous power that they possessed independently from the messages they carried to the people. MuÈammad's (ß) mission as a prophet and messenger, in contrast, was solely authorised by Allah's order to deliver the text of the divine revelations exactly as he heard it.

It is because of this mission that Allah asks the Muslim-Believers to be obedient to MuÈammad (ß) as messenger (rasål), not as prophet (nabÊ) or human being (a l-bashr a l-ins§n). Why? Because obedience requires the impeccability of the one whom we obey, and MuÈammad (ß) was not in any way impeccable either as human being or as prophet—only as messenger (within the boundaries that the Book stipulates). Numerous passages in the Book could be quoted to illustrate this truth.

As for the thorny problem of how to correctly follow MuÈammad's sunna we conclude that we should emulate not his rules as such but the manner in which he harmonised with the Book the 'becoming' and 'progressing' of his society on the Arabian Peninsula in the s eventh century. In other words, we should follow his model and also apply the divine rules but this time within the politic al-historical context of our own time. He presents to us the first and most authentic model of how to transform the 'being' of-and-in-itself of the Book into concrete realities of society, state, family, and such, a model ijtih§d which we have to emulate for our own times, the twenty-first century.

This insight allows us to conclude that MuÈammad (ß) was a pragmatic leader who received the 'absolute' and applied it to the 'particular' of his time. As we have seen, he was certainly a wise man, but, as we have also seen, the wisdom of his sunna was not derived from a divine source. This implies that our philosophical and theological knowledge, which should be anchored in divine knowledge, can only be derived from the Book alone. It cannot come from the words and statements of MuÈammad (ß) even if he was God's most perfect Messenger. Only Allah alone, not His Messenger, should be the ultimate source of knowledge. Nor

shall the words of his companions and contemporaries be the inspiration for contemporary thought.

Finally, let us assure the reader that we are committed to following the sunna of the Prophet but only to the extent and degree we defined in this chapter. We are indeed willing to emulate the example of MuÈammad (ß) but only within the parameters of a new Islamic jurisprudence that we propose in this volume. The following six principles summarise our definition of the sunna of the Prophet:

1. The oral tradition, that is, the entire collection of ÈadÊths, whether classified as reliable or weak, as supported or singular, has no binding authority. The reason for this is that the sunna consists of human legislation, and human legislation, as the #ulam§” themselves told us, changes according to the historical context in which it is passed. The key criterion for their implementation (or modification) is the extent to which they are (or are not) in harmony with the Book and social reality. If they are in harmony they should be implemented, if they are not in harmony then they should be modified. We do not follow the tradition of overriding the authority of the Book, so bluntly expressed in the tradition of some \anafÊ scholars: ‘If the views of the Sheikhs [of our school] contradict the views of the Qur”§n, we adhere to what the Sheikhs say’.

2. The sunna of the Prophet is the first ijtih§d, that is, one out of many alternative options that MuÈammad (ß) exercised in order to issue concrete injunctions that embodied his application of the divine absolute idea. His sunna is the first ijtih§d, but not the last and not the only one. It is the first successful attempt to adapt divine law and order to social reality.

3. The sunna of the Prophet authentically reflects MuÈammad’s (ß) magnificent ability to create—while receiving the revelations of the Book—a legal, social, and political reality in full congruence with the divine text.

4. The legal injunctions of MuÈammad’s messengerhood (a l-ris§la) have only limited validity. One has to bear in mind that he received these verses within a period of only ten years while he lived in Yathrib (Medina). Surely, the social and political situations he faced in those ten years cannot possibly constitute the only situations that people faced at that time all over the world. And given that there will be no further revelation and no new messengerhood until the Last Day, surely MuÈammad’s ten years in Yathrib cannot possibly cover all the circumstances that we will encounter now and in the future. The emergence of different and novel situations, which need to be handled by Islamic law, will make obsolete the method of analogical reasoning that takes its basis in MuÈammad’s ijtih§d. Our ijtih§d should be based on reason and modern scientific thinking in full compliance with the Book and objective reality.

5. The tradition and customs of the companions of the Prophet have no binding authority. They only have value as historical information. In Islamic fiqh, the consensus of the fuqah§” should be replaced by the consensus of living people who issue laws through contemporary institutions such as legislative assemblies and parliaments. We believe that living people are far more competent to solve current social and economic problems than MuÈammad’s (ß) companions and their successors who lived 1,400 years ago. However, if by chance, their decisions happen to be suitable for some of our current problems we would, of course, not be foolish enough to reject them. But they should not to be applied in principle, and in any case only after a search for more contemporary solutions has failed.

6. Ijtih§d, qualified and within well-defined boundaries, is not only legitimate but also necessary. We reject all claims that an ijtih§d of so-called naßß verses[170] is forbidden and that ijtih§d is only allowed if a verse does not contain an explicit ruling, that is, a non-naßß verse. But what is the purpose of an ijtih§d outside the realm of such explicit naßß rulings? Outside the realm of naßß, that is, outside the legal verses that possess legislative significance, the law-giver

may legislate whatever he wants (because it would have no legal relevance). We aim to introduce a new Islamic philosophy and a new Islamic jurisprudence. We want to secure an historical continuity with previous generations of Muslims by maintaining the shah§da of ‘there is no god but God, MuÈammad is the messenger of God’, by maintaining the fundamental ethical principles and by maintaining the fixed forms of ritual obligations as they were taught by the Prophet (ß). All other areas of religious and social conduct do not need to be maintained, since our ‘becoming’ requires an adaptation of the message to the needs of our own time which are different from the needs of our forefathers in seventh-century Arabia. The sole criterion of exercising a legitimate ijtih§d is, hence, not the existence or nonexistence of a naßß text, but the degree of c ongruence between the outcome of the ijtih§d and the circumstances of our objective reality. If the mujtahid’s decision is fully in accord with the realities around him, or her for that matter, at the time of his or her ijtih§d, the decision is right; if it contradicts social and political realities, the ijtih§d is wrong.

Someone might look at these five points and ask ‘what about the details of rituals, where shall we learn about the exact way to pray, to fast, and do the pilgrimage, and how will we know about the minimum amount of charity if the Book does not provide us with such details? Should we not consult the sunna for that?’ Our answer to this is ‘yes’: the Book teaches these things only in a general, absolute manner which the greatest of all messengers (ß) put into practice by his concrete, ritual performances. A theoretical, verbal, or oral specification of the details of his rituals was not needed.

MuÈammad’s (ß) practical sunna, reflecting the exact details of rituals, is the only part of his messengerhood (al-ris§la) which we today wholeheartedly accept both in form and content. It comprises, as we defined in chapter 1, the pillars of al-Êm§n. They define the identity of the Muslim-Believers (al-muslimån al-mu”minån), those who are Muslims and believers in MuÈammad’s messengerhood and who express their faith through the pillars of a l-Êm§n. We consider the form and content of these rituals as fixed. In spite of their stable form, they do not obstruct historical ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’.

However, we should not forget that due to their manifest religious and spiritual nature, rituals are inappropriate for the task of forming a society and controlling state institutions. Religious rituals can be practiced in any political system, democratic or not, and given that people agree that as long as a despotic ruler does not prohibit rituals they have to obey him, the performance of rituals has no significant impact on the political culture of a country. Rituals are not part of civil society and hence, in this respect, need not to be changed, modified, or intensified.

Having said this we should be wary of unnecessary complications in the performance of rituals. It cannot be right that, after having practised these rituals for over 1,400 years, people are still in need of prayer manuals and instruction by legal scholars. The rituals should be simple and straightforward and easy to practise; there can never be any cultural or civilisational value in the infamous casuistry for which our fuqah§” are so well-known.

A final word: all social legislation needs to be based on the knowledge which humans have derived from modern social, human, and natural sciences. In order to gain such knowledge, human beings need to enjoy maximum freedom—the highest and most sacred good on earth. Restrictive legislation, however, restricts human freedom. A healthy society can exist with less restrictive legislation. The reverse situation makes people not only less free but also mentally and physically ill. With this in mind we have come to the decision to separate the legislative aspects of the Book, where there is room for manoeuvring in order to be less restrictive, from the moral and ethical ideals, the ethical ideals of the al-furq§n or ‘the straight path’ (al-ßir§ã al-mustaqÊm), where there is no room for manoeuvring.[171]

** 3. Revelation

The previous two chapters have made it clear that our analysis of Allah’s Book is based on the understanding that its text is divided into

two basic units: the ‘book of messengerhood’ (kit§b al-ris§la) and the ‘book of prophethood’ (kit§b al-nubåwa). This chapter is dedicated to a full exploration of this division. Its aim is to show how Allah has split up the different parts of these two books and shared them out between the såras of the written text. We believe that the miraculous nature (al-i#j§z) of the text lies precisely in the Book’s dual nature and that its protection against any tampering with the text’s meaning must be secured by keeping verses of prophethood apart from the verses of messengerhood. All of this is based on our notion that Allah’s words are nonsynonymous, in the sense that no word shares exactly the same meaning with another word regardless of how close their semantic core may be. This point will be demonstrated by a detailed comparison between verses that are believed to contain synonymous words. The semantic differences between these words will be shown by an analysis of their specific location and concrete context within a såra.

Let us first quote some of these verses of the Book and begin by asking questions that are meant to raise some doubts about how they are conventionally understood. The answers to these questions will be provided later in the chapter.

– First, we observe that the text uses several different terms in referring to Allah’s revelation. Apart from terms such as a l-qur”§n, a l-kit§b, and a l-furq§n we also find a l-dhikr, as in the following verse:

It is We who have sent down the remembrance [al-dhikr];[172] and We watch over it. (Al-\ijr 15:9, AA)

Do all these supposedly synonymous terms carry the same meaning? If not, how and why are they different?

– Second, when the text refers to ‘book’ we find that the noun is qualified by two different attributive phrases:

(This is) a book, with verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning) [kit§b uÈkimat §y§tuhu]… (Håd 11:1)

…a book, consistent with itself [kit§b[an] mutash§bih[an]]… (A l-Zumar 39:23)

Is it correct to say that in the first instance the text refers to a book that contains all ‘definite verses’ (§y§t muÈkam§t) of the Book,[173] whereas in the second instance a different book is mentioned which contains ‘ambiguous verses’ (§y§t mutash§bih§t)?[174] Is it feasible to assume that the text contains two different categories of verses, each of which are assembled in two different books, that is, two smaller units within the larger unit of the Book?

– Third, we observe in the following verse that the term al-qur”§n is juxtaposed with the term al-kit§b, connected by the conjunction wa.

A. L. R. These are the ayats of revelation [a l-kit§b]—of [and][175] a Qur’an that makes things clear. (Al-\ijr 15:1)

Are we right in saying that two words in a divine text cannot be juxtaposed unless they are purposefully thought to contain different meaning? If so, is it not logical to assume that the term qur”§n adds something different to the term al-kit§b first mentioned? And if we agree on this, would we not have to find out whether al-kit§b and al-qur”§n are two distinctly different terms or, since qur”§n is placed after the term al-kit§b, whether their juxtaposition yields a relationship of subordination? If the latter is correct would it not imply that al-qur”§n is the more specific of the two and an integral part of the more generic al-kit§b?

– In the text it is said that al-kit§b is ‘guidance for the pious’ [Al-Baqara 2:2], whereas al-qur”§n is ‘guidance for the people’ [Al-Baqara 2:158]. Does this not indicate that the divine message is intended for two different groups of recipients? Of the two, ‘people’ is certainly the more generic term as it includes both ‘pious’ and ‘non-pious’ persons, whereas addressing ‘the pious’ excludes people who are not religious. Is it right to infer that since al-qur”§n means ‘guidance for the people’, referring to both religious and secular people, it cannot contain verses that address issues of religious practice? If that is correct, to what exactly does al-qur”§n refer?

– A clue is given in the following verse:

It is a confirmation [taßdÊq] of (revelations) that went [with] it [alladhi baina yadaihi]… (Yånus 10:37)

The qur”§n is a confirmation of what ‘went with it’. But what does the phrase ‘what went with it’ mean? Does it refer, as the traditional exegetes thought when they rendered alladhi baina yadaihi as ‘what went before it’, to the Torah and the Gospel? This would imply, to the greatest delight of some Jews and Christians, that the qur”§n was revealed only in order to confirm previous scriptures. Or does it instead refer to the fact that MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood in seventh-century Arabia was supposed to confirm a new legislation, different from the Torah and Gospel? If so, what was the new legislation that MuÈammad (ß) was asked to confirm by the qur”§n?

– The qur”§n mentions the term ‘words of God’ (kalim§t All§h). Are words of God words in the sense that they can be written down or orally recited? Are divine words similar to human speech? If they are, would that not inevitably turn God into someone who, by speaking Arabic, shares human attributes of race, gender, and language? And would this not contradict the following verse?:

Say [Prophet], ‘If the whole ocean were ink for writing the words of my Lord [kalim§t rabbÊ], it would run dry before those words were exhausted’—even if We were to add another ocean to it.

(Al-Kahf 18:109, AH)

– The following three verses tell us that:

His word is the truth [al-Èaqq]… (Al-An#§m 6:73)

And God by His words [bi-kalim§tihi] does prove and establish His truth… (Yånus 10:82)

A.L.M.R. These are the signs (or verses) of the book [a l-kit§b]: that which has been revealed unto you from your Lord is the truth [al-Èaqq]; but most men believe not. (Al-Ra#d 13:1)

What does the verse mean when it states that Allah’s words are the truth? And why do we not once in the entire text find the expression: ‘Allah said “Perform the prayer!”’ or ‘Allah said “Keep the fast!”’? Or, put differently, why are ‘His words’ (kalim§t All§h), referring to the truth, never stated in connection with ritual and legal commands?

– Two important terms in this respect are ‘spirit’ and ‘soul’:

[Prophet], they ask you about the spirit [al-råÈ]. Say: ‘The spirit is part of my Lord’s domain [amr rabbÊ]. You have only been given a little knowledge.’ (Al-Isr§” 17:85, AH)

It is God that takes the souls (of men) [al-anfus] at death… (Al-Zumar 39:42)

How does ‘spirit’ (al-råÈ) differ from ‘soul’ (al-nafs)? It is incorrect to interpret ‘spirit’ as the ‘secret of life’ as many traditional exegetes have claimed because this implies that all living creatures—animals, plants, and humans—share God’s ‘spirit’. But if Allah has ‘breathed his spirit’ only into Adam, the ‘father’ of humankind, would that not exclude animals and plants? Is it correct to associate ‘spirit’ with ‘God’s command’ simply because it is mentioned in the same verse (amr rabbÊ)? Are they not two separate terms, connoting two different concepts that should not be confused? Did traditional exegesis not simply err here because it did not fully engage with a thorough study of the term ‘spirit’ (al-råÈ)? To simply define it as ‘secret of life’ seems to be highly inadequate, given the depth and complexity of this term. But, if ‘spirit’ is different from ‘soul’ and ‘command’, what exactly does it mean?

– Also, what is the difference between ‘Lord’ and ‘God”? Why does the text always use the term ‘God’ (All§h) when it refers to ritual duties of worship? Why does it not contain a phrase such as: ‘Do not worship anyone but the Lord’ (al-rabb)? In what context does the text use ‘Lord’ and when does it use ‘God’?

The following verse, for example, uses the term ‘Lord’. Revealingly, it does not command a specific ritual but a decree about general human behaviour:

Thy Lord [rabbuk[a]] has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. (A l-Isr§” 17:23)

Does the verse state a decree that contains objective reality unrelated to the human mind? Is this a command that human beings can fulfil regardless of their actual mindset and behaviour? Does ‘worship of Him’ describe an

objective fact of human nature regardless of human intention and consciousness? Does someone worship Allah if he, in practice, worships the moon or the sun because, objectively, one always worships Him even if, subjectively, something else is worshipped? Can ‘His words’ never be replaced by something else as, for example, Ibn ‘ArabÊ claimed? Of course, if it was like that then why did Muslims never theless drift into practices of tawakkul, superstition and scientifically absurd folklore?

– On a different topic, why, in the traditional interpretation of the following verse, was the descriptive negation (‘nobody touches’) changed into a prescriptive negation (‘none shall touch!’)?:

That this is indeed a qur”§n most honourable * in a book wellguarded * which none shall [sic][176] touch [l§ yamass[u]] but those who are clean. (Al-W§qi#a 56:77–79)

How could the traditional exegetes ever say that the phrase ‘those who are clean’ refers to the pure and sane, thereby excluding menstruating women, women in childbirth, and people in a state of major ritual impurity from being allowed to touch the qur”§n? Do these verses really refer to a written copy of the qur”§n, written down by a human being on a piece of wood or camel skin, or recorded on a tape? Is this really the rule not to touch a copy of the qur”§n in a state of impurity? If not, what could be the alternative?

*** Al-kit[§]b and Al-qur”[§]n

Let us first explore the two terms al-kit§b and al-qur”§n and establish how they are related to each other. The following three verses will guide us on this:

A. L. R. These are the §y§ts of revelation [al-kit§b] —of [and] a Qur’an that makes things clear. (Al-\ijr 15:1)

This is the book [a l-kit§b]; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear God [li’l-mutaqÊn]. (Al-Baqara 2:2)

Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the qur”§n, as a guide to mankind [hud§ li’l-n§s], also clear (signs) for guidance and judgement (between right and wrong). (Al-Baqara 2:185)

In verse 1 of Sårat a l-\ijr the term qur”§n is added to the term a l-kit§b through the conjunction ‘and’ (wa). A conjunction is employed in Arabic to either connect two distinct lexical units or to add a new semantic property to a preceding term. If al-kit§b and al-qur”§n were two completely different categories, it would be as if someone said: ‘AÈmad and Sa#Êd’, referring to AÈmad and Sa#Êd as two different persons. If, however, al-qur”§n was a more specific unit of al-kit§b, it would either corroborate al-kit§b or introduce a different nuance to it. Surely, we need to establish which of the two possibilities is correct. But first we maintain that, based on the reading of the following two verses, al-qur”§n contains ‘clear signs’ (§y§tun§ bayyan§t[in]), and that these ‘clear signs’ represent the truth (al-haqq). And if the qur”§n contains clear signs, and if the clear signs represent the truth, then al-qur”§n means truth:

But when Our clear signs [§y§tun§ bayyan§t[in]] are rehearsed unto them, those who rest not their hope on their meeting with Us, say: “Bring us a reading other than this, or change this.” Say: “It is not for me, of my own accord, to change it: I follow naught but what is revealed unto me: if I were to disobey my Lord, I should myself fear the penalty of a great day (to come).” (Yånus 10:15)

When Our clear signs [§y§tun§ bayyan§t[in]] are rehearsed to them, the

unbelievers say, of the truth [al-Èaqq] when it comes to them: “This is evident sorcery!” (Al-AÈq§f 46:7)

As for the relationship between a l-qur”§n and a l-kit§b, verse 31 of Sårat F§ãir provides a clue:

That which We have revealed to you of [from] the book [min al-kit§b] is the truth [al-Èaqq], confirming what was (revealed) [with] it: for God is assuredly—with respect to His servants—well acquainted and fully observant. (F§ãir 35:31)

If it says that the qur”§n was revealed from the book,[177] it means that the qur”§n does not cover the entire book but only one part of it. We will prove further below that al-qur”§n represents that part of the Book which is the truth (al-Èaqq), embodied in the ‘ambiguous verses’ (§y§t mutash§bih§t), i.e. the verses of prophethood. In this specific capacity as the truth, it is attached to the more generic term a l-kit§b. Conversely, a different part of al-kit§b will then embody the ‘definite verses’ (§y§t muÈkam§t), i.e. the verses of messengerhood which do not specify the truth (even if, in being more generic, it does participate in the truth by being controlled or monitored by it). Whereas the former refers to objective reality, revealed as ‘knowledge’, in its totality the latter represents a much narrower glimpse of that reality and is dependent on its ‘corroboration’ by the qur”§n.

(1) Al-kit§b (the Book)

The word kit§b is derived from the Arabic root k-t-b which literally means ‘to collect or compose things’ in a coherent and comprehensive manner. The derivative kit§ba means ‘writing’ and refers to the process of composing a series of sentences for the purpose of dealing with a specific subject matter. It always denotes ‘writing’ of more than one line or less. The term a l-k§tib refers to the author of a book. If the term kit§b is indefinite, meaning

‘a book’, it always requires a genitive compound to qualify what kind of book it is: ‘a book of physics’, ‘a book of medicine’, or ‘a story book’.

In the Book, the many topics revealed to MuÈammad (ß) are called ‘books’ (kutub), as in:

An apostle from God, rehearsing scriptures kept pure and holy * wherein are laws [books] [kutub][178] right and straight. (A l-Bayyina 98:2–3)

Prayer, for example, constitutes one book, a ‘book of prayer’; all verses that deal with the topic of prayer are contained in this book, such as:

For such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times. (Al-Nis§” 4:103)

Other books are the ‘book of fasting’, the ‘book of pilgrimage’, the ‘book of inheritance’, the ‘book of death’, and so forth; every subject matter is arranged as a book. Not a single thing exists in nature, in the cosmos or in society that is not kept in a book—as in the following verse:

And all things have We preserved on record [in a book] [kit§b[an]][179]. (Al-Naba” 78:29)

The definite term a l-kit§b, the Book, refers to the entire body of all subject matters that exist. The Book has been revealed in individual ‘books’ to MuÈammad (ß), but these books are scattered throughout the text. Books have been revealed as ‘words’ with ‘meaning’, thus representing the complete textual corpus (al-mußÈaf)—from the first Sårat al-F§tiÈa to the last one, al-N§s. The indefinite term kit§b, a book, refers therefore only to one subunit within the larger unit of ‘the book’; kit§b[an] mutash§bih[an][] (39:23), for example, the book of ambiguous verses, does not refer to the entire

revelation (i.e., the Book) but only to a smaller component of it. Humankind explores the universe through the study of these verses. The same applies to kit§b[un] uÈkimat §y§tihi (11:1), the ‘book whose verses are definite’, which covers only the definite part of the Book. The believers explore the etiquette of human behaviour through the study of these verses.

A look at verse 3 of Sårat $l #lmr§n reveals what exactly is covered by the term al-kit§b:

He it is who has sent down to you the book [al-kit§b]: In it are verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning) [§y§t muÈkam§t]; they are the foundation of the book [umm a l-kit§b][180]—others are [ambivalent] [mutash§bih§t]. [181] But those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical, seeking discord, and searching for its hidden meanings, but no one knows its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge [al-r§sikhån fi’l-#ilm] say: “We believe in the book; the whole of it is from our Lord”—and none will grasp the message except men of understanding [ålå ’l-alb§b]. ($l #lmr§n 3:7)

I) The Definite Book (al-kit§b al-muÈkam):

The definite book contains all ‘definite verses’ (§y§t muÈkam§t) of Allah’s revelation to which the term ‘mother of the book’ (umm a l-kit§b) has been given to designate the origin or source of this book. The ‘definite verses’ address the rules and principles of human behaviour within the spheres of ritual worship, economics, the community, politics, and social and personal ethics. They embody MuÈammad’s messengerhood (al-ris§la).

II) The Ambiguous Book (al-kit§b al-mutash§bih):

The ambiguous book contains all ‘ambiguous verses’ (§y§t mutash§bih§t) of Allah’s revelation, pertaining to the universal laws given by Allah to His Prophet MuÈammad (ß). Universal laws explain processes of nature in the unseen world, those parts of the universe that had not yet been discovered by the human mind when Allah’s revelation occurred. In embodying the signs of the objective reality, ‘ambiguous verses’ separate truth from falsehood—they represent MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood (al-nubåwa). Unlike the ‘definite verses’, they do not contain rules of human behaviour and hence are purely descriptive. They contain ‘news’ about the universe, and not prohibitions or permissions.

The ambiguous book is divided into two parts: a) the seven oftrepeated (verses) and b) the grand qur”§n—as we hear in the following verse:

And We have bestowed upon you the seven oft-repeated (verses) [sab#[an] min al-math§nÊ] and the grand qur”§n [al-qur”§n al-#azÊm]. (Al-\ ijr 15:87)

III) Explanation of the Book:

This is inferred from the above phrase: ‘other [than the] ambiguous verses’ (ukhar mutash§bih§t). Note that the text does not say ‘the others are ambiguous verses’ (al-§khir mutash§bih§t), as many exegetes suggest.[182] It rather points to the existence of a third verse-type that is neither definite nor ambiguous. In the following verse we come across a special term for this type which is ‘explanation of the book’

(tafßÊl al-kit§b):

This qur”§n is not such as can be produced by other than God; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went [with] it, and a fuller

explanation of the book [tafßÊl al-kit§b]— wherein there is no doubt—from the Lord of the worlds. (Yånus 10:37)

Sårat Yånus refers to all three categories of books in just one verse:

– al-qur”§n (the truth);

– [rules] ‘that went with it’ (explained further down as umm al-kit§b);

– tafßÊl al-kit§b (the explanation of the book or literally: ‘a fuller explanation of the book—wherein there is no doubt—from the Lord of the worlds’).

The Definite Verses—The ‘Mother of the Book’ (umm al-kit§b)

The definite verses (§y§t muÈkam§t) of the Book for which a special term was given: ‘the mother of the book’ (umm al-kit§b), are contained in the definite book and cover the rules and principles of human behaviour in all spheres of life—they are representing MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood (al-ris§la). We have established seven subcategories of definite verses:

1. Rituals;

2. The limits of God (al-Èudåd), defining ways of non-ritual worship

(al-#ib§d§t);

3. General ethics (a l-furq§n), moral codes given as commandments, and absolute taboos (al-muÈarram§t);

4. Temporary rules (only valid for MuÈammad’s (ß) time);

5. Circumstantial rules (e.g., prohibition), only enforceable if a specific historical situation emerges that is similar to the one prescribed in the Book;

6. General notifications, nonbinding instructions in the Book introduced by the phrase ‘O you Prophet!’ (e.g., instructions for the dress code of women);[183]

7. Specific notifications, likewise nonbinding as they were specifically and exclusively revealed for MuÈammad’s (ß) time (e.g., rules of behaviour for the Prophet’s wives).[184]

MuÈammad (ß) received the umm al-kit§b from God and, by way of his sunna, applied it immediately to the historical context of seventhcentury Arabia. Unlike the other part of the book, al-qur”§n, it does not require a theoretical understanding but allows for a practical exegesis that considers the needs of society. Such exegesis however requires the qur”§n to approve and confirm it. Unlike the verses of the qur”§n, the verses of umm a l-kit§b do not contain Allah’s words that are eternally valid and to be enforced by necessity. Nowhere in the Book do verses of the ‘definite book’ start with the opening phrase ‘And God said:’ (q§la All§h); therefore the verses of umm al-kit§b are:

A. A moral commandment:

God commands [All§h ya”amur[u]] justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful

deeds, and injustice and rebellion. He instructs you, that you may receive admonition. (Al-NaÈl 16:90) B. A prohibition stated as an imperative:

‘Do not come close [fa-l§ taqrabåh§]…’ (Al-Baqara 2:187) C. A legal rule:

God (thus) directs you [yußÊkum All§h] as regards your children’s (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females… (Al-Nis§” 4:11)

The Ambiguous Verses

Again for recapitulation, we said: The ambiguous book contains all ‘ambiguous verses’ (§y§t mutash§bih§t) of the Book which reveal the universal laws given by Allah to His Prophet MuÈammad (ß). The ‘ambiguous verses’ separate truth from falsehood. They represent MuÈammad’s prophethood (a l-nubåwa). The ambiguous book is divided into two parts: a) the seven oft-repeated and b) the majestic al-qur”§n.

Al-qur”§n (the Truth)

Al-qur”§n contains ‘the truth’. It consists of those verses that reveal what is reality and those that explain it. It embodies MuÈam mad’s (ß) prophethood and provides such deep insights into universal realities that those who listen to it shout admiringly, ‘This is nothing but sorcery!’ The qur”§n’s ‘ambiguous verses’ occupy more space in the Book than those of the umm al-kit§b.

The miraculous nature or inimitability (al-i#j§z) of the qur”§n lies in its dual nature of expressing the truth in a total, comprehensive, and absolute manner, on the one hand, and of allowing the

possibility of understanding it in a relative, contingent, and subjective manner, on the other. This duality of containing both the totality of the qur”§n’s truth and the relativity of humans’ perception of it, is what makes the qur”§n both eternally valid and historically viable. Human understanding of the eternal truth will always be relative, that is, short of the absolute. One may read the qur”§n from all possible angles, philosophical, scientific, historical, linguistic, religious, and such, but human interpretations will always remain partial and relative. Therefore, the qur”§n is the subject of successive, continuous, and progressively improving rational interpretations (al-ta”wÊl), in contrast with traditional verse-by-verse exegesis (al-tafsÊr). And because of its partiality and relativity, it is bound to attract a multiplicity of interpretations due to the sheer diversity of human perception and of the subjective ways to understand objective reality.

The qur”§n consists, primarily, of narratives about the truth and its laws in reality. But it also weaves these together (note the etymological root of q-r-n: ‘to bind together’) with narratives (ÈadÊth) about events that occurred in human history (it never predicts or predestines such events but records them only after they have occurred). It thus links (qarana) the laws and events of objective reality together with the laws and events of human history. In its capacity as the source of both the cosmic and historical truth it confirms ‘what went with it’ (alladhi baina yadaihi), that is, the umm al-kit§b, and functions as the latter’s ultimate protector and guardian.

The Seven Oft-Recited (sab# al-math§nÊ)

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And We have bestowed upon you the seven oft-repeated (verses)

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[sab#[an] min al-math§nÊ] and the grand qur”§n. (Al-\ijr 15:87)

1. In verse 87 of Sårat al-\ijr the conjunction ‘and’ connects the term a l-qur”§n to the preceding term sab# a l-math§nÊ. Since the terms cannot be synonymous and since al-qur”§n is preceded by sab# al-math§nÊ, the latter must be a separate term and cannot be explained by al-qur”§n. Because sab# al-math§nÊ is mentioned first this also indicates that it enjoys greater significance than the qur”§n in Allah’s act to bestow upon humankind divine instructions about the universe.

2. The number ‘seven’ in the term sab# a l-math§nÊ [lit. ‘the doubledseven”] is further proof of our thesis that the term sab# al-math§nÊ is different from al-qur”§n, as the qur”§n consists of more than just seven verses.

3. In spite of their separate nature, the two terms still share one generic root. One may compare this verse to another in which it is said that there are women who are ‘[either] previously married or virgins’ [TaÈrÊm 66:5]. Despite their different social status wives and virgins have something in common because they are both women. Likewise, the common denominator between a l-qur”§n and umm a l-kit§b is their shared origin of being both revealed from God, even though they designate two different realms of the divine text. What links sab# al-math§nÊ and al-qur”§n is that both reveal the same information about the universe, although they do it in entirely different ways:

God has revealed (from time to time) the most beautiful [event] [aÈsan al-ÈadÊth] in the form of a[n ambiguous] book [kit§b[an] […] mutash§bih[an]], (yet) repeating (its teaching in various aspects) [math§nÊy[a]]. The skins of those who fear their Lord tremble thereat; then their skins and their hearts

do soften to the celebration of God’s praises. Such is the guidance of God: He guides therewith whom He pleases, but such as God leaves to stray, can have none to guide. (Al-Zumar 39:23)

In the above verse, the term kit§b is indefinite, ‘a book’, implying that in this instance the text does not refer to all revealed verses of the Book. It is qualified by the two adjectives ‘ambiguous’ (mutash§bih) and ‘repeated’ (math§nÊ), from which we infer that the book of sab# al-math§nÊ consists of both ‘ambiguous’ and ‘repeated’ verses. It proves once more that sab# a l-math§nÊ differs from a l-qur”§n, because the qur”§n consists only of ‘ambiguous’ verses. Moreover, the first line of the verse defines sab# al-math§nÊ as ‘most beautiful’ [or the ‘best narrative”], implying that the qur”§n is only ‘narrative’, whereas sab# al-math§nÊ is the ‘best narrative’.

What, then, is sab# a l-math§nÊ exactly? It contains the number seven (sab#a) and the adjective math§nÊ, ‘repeated’, and indeed it literally means ‘seven times twice-repeated’. But it also connotes the sense of something that ‘holds two different things together’, ‘from two ends’ or ‘two borders’. It points to the ability of connecting ‘one end to the other’. Since each chapter of the Book has a beginning and an end, that is, is located between two borders, the term points us to the chapters’ two ‘ends’. What we find there is what is conventionally called the ‘abbreviated’ or ‘disconnected’ letters (al-muqaããa#§t). Interestingly, they occur in seven different combinations, which are as follows:

1) Alif-L§m-MÊm-R§” (which also occurs as Alif-L§m-MÊm and Alif-L§m-R§), 2) Alif-L§m-MÊm-‘§d, 3) K§f-H§”-Y§”-#Ain-‘§d, 4) Y§”-SÊn, 5) •§”-H§’, 6) •§”-SÊn-MÊm (which also occurs as

- §”-SÊn), 7) \§”-MÊm

The so-called abbreviated letters, introducing their chapters, are correctly numbered either as verse one or as one and two. It is either: a)

Nån. By the [identification] [qalam] and the (record) which (men) write. [Al-Qalam 68:1] or b)

\§-MÊm * #Ain-SÊn-Q§f. [Al-Shår§ 42:1–2]

The second verse in b), in which the letters are both verse 1 and 2, demonstrates that these letters are not just cut off from the rest of the chapter, and should not be seen as cryptic initials or meaningless Arabic signs which are there for no apparent function. Instead, we should regard them as expressing the chapter's message, in a different linguistic format.

If we count the number of letters in these seven combinations, we arrive at the number eleven:

1- Alif 2- '§d 3- K§f 4- Y§" 5- •§" 6- •§" 7-\§" 8-MÊm 9-R§" 10-H§" 11-SÊn

Our thesis is that these eleven letters are not just letters of the Arabic alphabet, or any other alphabet, but are rather graphemes of phonetic utterances that can be found in all other languages that exist on earth. Human language, in general, is based on eleven basic forms of laryngeal or labial sounds that human beings can utter. As pure utterances they do not carry a specific meaning; hence, the exclusion of the letter D§l which, at least in Arabic, is not meaningless if uttered but, because it is homonymic to d§ll, may connote 'significant'. If these utterances were letter combinations of the Arabic language, we would surely find among the many million Arabic native speakers at least one who could provide us with an explanation of them. But the truth of the matter is that they do not mean anything in Arabic or any other language since they are simply utterances of the human voice. Strictly speaking, one should change their transcriptions: from, for example, Alif-L§m-MÊm (for _{الم})

to Aa-Ll-Mm, since Alif-L§mMÊm still associates a combination of alphabetical characters of the Arabic language (that connote verbal meaning). But this association is, as we have shown, unfounded.

The Explanation of the Book (tafßÊl al-kit§b)

We have said that the ‘explanation of the book’ refers to a third category of verses: those that are neither ambiguous nor definite. These verses were revealed directly from Allah and, because of their in-between status, they transcend the division between ‘definite’ and ‘ambiguous’. The following verses show how this category is connected to the other parts of the book:

This Qur’an is not such as can be produced by other than God; on the contrary it is a confirmation of (revelations) that went [with] it, and a fuller explanation of the book [tafßÊl al-kit§b]—wherein there is no doubt—from the Lord of the worlds. (Yånus 10:37)

There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went [with] it—a detailed exposition [tafßÊl] of all things, and a guide and a mercy to any such as believe. (Yåsuf 12:111)

A-L-R. (This is) a book, with verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning), further explained in detail [fußßilat]—from one who is wise and well-acquainted (with all things). (Håd 11:1)

Say: “Shall I seek for judge other than God, when He it is who has sent unto you the book, explained in detail [mufaßßal[an]]?” They know full well, to whom We have given the book, that it has been sent down from your Lord in truth. Never be then of those who doubt. (Al-An#§m 6:114)

According to the dictionary of Ibn F§ris,[185] the Arabic term tafßÊl can mean both ‘elaborate exposition’ and ‘to set apart’. As for these two meanings we come across two further subdivisions:

1. Exposition as ‘commentary’:

Verses that do not contain general laws of the universe or rules of human behaviour but which provide information about either of the two, are ‘explanatory’ and function as a running commentary on other verses. For example, verses that elucidate that the qur”§n came down in Arabic, or that the Book contains ambiguous and definite verses etc., are commentaries on either the nature of the qur”§n (revealed in Arabic) or the composition of the Book (types of verses). Thus, they provide further information. One might say that these are the self-reflective verses of the Book.

2. Setting apart in the sense of ‘to contextualize’:

Verses that place a specific event in a concrete, historical context will set that event apart from other events that occurred elsewhere and at other times. Such verses help to establish a chronological sequence as they distinguish between earlier and later events.

In both functions, the ‘explanatory’ verses interrupt the flow of verses that are either ‘ambiguous’ or ‘definite’. They also put the different chapters into a specific order as they structure and subdivide the various categories of verses. This is particularly significant as the Book does not provide a thematically or chronologically coherent exposition of its topics. Instructions concerning issues of family law, for example, are scattered throughout different chapters (e.g., Al-Baqara, A l-Nis§”, A l-M§“ida) without attempting to introduce either a systematic order or consistent argument. To identify the ‘explanatory’ verses is, therefore, an important exegetical operation so that gaps of information, created by the scattered nature of the book’s line of argument, can be closed.

If these verses are neither ‘ambiguous’ nor ‘definite’, and if the Book knows only these two types of verses, ‘book of prophethood’ and ‘book of messengerhood’, to which of the two should one allocate ‘explanatory’ verses? As they do not contain any rule, commandment, or moral instruction, they are clearly not in the book of messengerhood. By exclusion, they are part of MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood, even if they are not ambiguous. But since MuÈammad (ß) held only two offices, of prophet and messenger, there cannot be a third category. And yet, even as nonambiguous verses of

MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood their origin is still different: they were revealed directly from Allah; the explanatory verses do not originate from either lawÈ maÈfåí or im§m mubÊn as do the other prophetical verses.

Why is the Book composed in such a multistructured way, containing so many different types of books and categories of verses? The answer lies in the history of revelation. Until the revelation of the Book, Allah had sent down revelations to the Jews and Christians which only consisted of rules and commandments, that is, revelations came down as books of messengerhoods and definite verses. As it happens, human beings transgressed against the commandments, divine instructions were ignored and new rules were added and declared as divine:

Then woe to those who write the book with their own hands, and then say: “This is from God.” (Al-Baqara 2:79)

In order to prevent a recurrence of this calamity, Allah’s last revelation was equipped with the criterion of truth, the qur”§n. It not only confirms ‘what went with it’, the ‘definite verses’ of the umm al-kit§b, it also controls and monitors their application. That is why the two books and the three categories of verses are so harmoniously intertwined in the text, and why they are so precisely, mathematically arranged in a manner that has, until now, escaped the penetrating view of so

many commentators on the divine text. But just as modern medicine explores further and further the c omplexities of the genes, tissues, and organs of the human body, and just as the natural sciences correlate more and more the different signs of changes in the weather, climate, and human habitats, so does a contemporary reading of the Book. The One who created the human body and nature in such a complex manner will do the same with His revealed words—to perceive the Book in a simpler way would not do justice to God’s power.

Remembrance (al-dhikr)

We have, without doubt, sent down the [remembrance][186] [a l-dhikr]; and We will assuredly guard it (from corruption). (Al-\ijr 15:9) They say: “O you to whom the [remembrance] [al-dhikr] is being revealed! Truly you are mad (or possessed)!” (Al-\ijr 15:6)

‘§d. By the qur”§n, containing the remembrance [al-qur”§n dhÊ ’l-dhikr]. (‘§d 38:1, AA)

If we now turn to the term al-dhikr (the remembrance) which, as in the two verses of Al-\ijr above, is stated in its definite form, as the remembrance, we notice that in verse 1 of Sårat ‘§d, al-dhikr is the possessive attribute of al-qur”§n, connected to it by the conjunctive particle dhå (of). It means that the qur”§n possesses ‘remembrance’.[187] But what exactly is remembrance?

We have said that the qur”§n represents the totality of objective, universal laws that govern every event in the cosmos, nature, and human history. By means of revelation these laws, which used to exist outside the human mind, were then expressed in human language:

We have made it a qur”§n in Arabic… (Al-Zukhruf 43:3)

Only because of this transformation into a linguistic format did it become possible for human beings to participate in knowledge of the qur”§n and to ‘remember’ it spiritually as well as intellectually:

We have raised onto you your remembrance [dhikrak]... (Al-SharÈ 94:4)

We therefore define al-dhikr as the result of transforming the qur”§n from a nonlinguistic, naturalist state into words of Arabic:

Now We have sent down to you a Book [kit§b[an]] wherein is your remembrance [dhikrukum]; will you not understand? (A l-Anbiy§” 21:10, AA)

This implies that al-dhikr was a revived or renewed form of what had existed before in our universe. Notice in the following verse the precision of the Book when it refers to the renewal of a l-dhikr and not al-qur”§n:

Whenever any fresh revelation [dhikr[in] muÈdath[in]] comes to them from their Lord, they listen to it playfully with frivolous hearts... (A l-Anbiy§” 21:2, AH)

Once we realize that al-qur”§n and al-dhikr are not identical, and that al-dhikr is only an attribute of al-qur”§n (after it had been transformed into Arabic), the dilemma of Mu#tazilÊ theology should no longer haunt us. We are now able to say that Allah did not create the qur”§n as such but only its verbal format, that is, al-dhikr. This allows us to state that the qur”§n has existed since eternity and has been an integral part of Allah’s primordial nature. We can also say that, by creating the linguistic

format of books (kutub), Allah provided the grounds on which the signs of the qur”§n can be rationally understood:

And We sent none before you, but men to whom we made revelation—question the people of the remembrance [ahl a l-dhikr = those who speak Arabic], if you do not know—nor did We fashion them as bodies that ate not food… (Al-Anbiy§” 21:7, AA)

After the transformation of the qur”§n into Arabic it had become objectified, it entered into the realm of human texts (oral or written) and thus could become part of people’s ritual practices. The recitation of the qur”§n could then become one of the central features of religious life. Believers are now able to recite the Arabic text whether they understand its content or not:

And to rehearse the qur”§n… (Al-Naml 27:92)

And We have indeed made the qur”§n easy to understand and remember [li’l-dhikr]: then is there any that will receive admonition? (Al-Qamar 54:17)

The linguistic format of an Arabic text also exists for the other parts of the book. We hear the proof in verse 29 of Sårat F§ãir:

Those who rehearse the book of God [yatlån kit§b All§h], establish regular prayer… (F§ãir 35:29)

Since no human being can rehearse, or better, recite something that does not exist as a text, we conclude that all verses of the book must have been transformed into al-dhikr. This is significant because if we, as believers, recite the verses of al-kit§b we do so by reciting the transformed parts of al-dhikr. And when MuÈammad (ß) was given the Book, he received it as al-dhikr, that is,

as oral lecture that he only needed to hear (and not necessarily to understand), so that he was able ‘to pronounce it clearly to men’:

We have revealed to you the reminder [a l-dhikr], so that you make [known] to mankind what has been revealed to them, and that, perchance, they may reflect. (Al-NaÈl 16:44, MF)

(2) The qur”§n

The qur”§n embodies MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood. It provides the reason for distinguishing between truth and falsity. Together with the ‘seven oft-repeated’ (sab# al-math§nÊ) it constitutes the book of ambiguous verses. The qur”§n reveals the ‘clear signs’ which represent the truth (10:15; 46:7). The qur”§n is the truth.

The Words of God (kalim§t All§h)

Before we are able to define what Allah’s words are we need to distinguish between the different categories of human speech. In Arabic, words that are spoken but not understood (aßw§t) are distinguished from words that are spoken and understood (qaul). If one overhears a conversation in Chinese and does not understand a word, the spoken utterances are just incomprehensible ‘sounds’ (aßw§t). If one is Chinese and understands every word of the conversation, the words we hear would be classified as ‘meaningful’ (qaul). Furthermore, if the words are spoken with fluency and clarity, the words are defined as ‘good speech’ (faß§Èa).[188] If words are used eloquently and their meanings well expressed, they are called ‘intelligent speech’ (qaul).[189] Intelligent speech (qaul) is the realm of ‘rhetoric’ (al-bal§gha),[190] whereas good speech is the realm of language fluency or competence (al-lis§n). We therefore distinguish between ‘sounds’ that exist objectively but make no sense and ‘sounds’ as words, whose meaning is perfectly clear. As for the latter category, we distinguish between words

whose meanings are registered but not pondered upon by their receivers, on the one hand, and words which are ‘food for thought’, words meant to evoke conscious reflections in the receivers, on the other. Such reflections can be stimulated either by oral speech or by a written presentation of the (silent) word.

If we apply these categories of human speech to the qur”§n we are faced with a dilemma, because if we claim that the words of the Qur’anic text, written or orally recited, are the words of God, we would turn His words into human speech, and Allah would become an Arabic native speaker. But since this would violate God’s unity (‘Say: “But in truth He is the one God…’ A l-An#§m 6:19) and His uniqueness (‘Say: “He is God, the one and only”’ A l-Ikhl§ß 112:1), Allah is neither Arab nor of any other nationality. An analogy between God’s words and human speech must be rejected. In the Qur’anic text, the signified (divine) meaning of words must be found outside the text, not in human speech. The word ‘sun’, for example, signifies—if understood as Allah’s word (kalima)—the sun itself, not just the meaning of the word ‘sun’. The word ‘moon’ signifies, or better is, the moon in space, not just the signified meaning of ‘moon’. Allah’s word ‘nose’ is the nose, not just the signified meaning of ‘nose’, and so forth. In other words, the essence of Allah’s words cannot be found in the Qur’anic text but in the objective, material existence of the universe, that is, in the general laws that govern the cosmos, nature and human history. Or, if put dialectically, the words of God are the essence of the entire universal existence which, in its status as the divine signified, is the essence of God’s words (kalim§t All§h).

Because of this extra-textual link between Allah’s words and their signified essence, we are assured that His words cannot be changed or modified. Since nobody can interfere with the course of nature and since nobody can turn the clock back, human beings can only accept or ignore God’s words but they cannot be changed.

And recite (and teach) what has been revealed to you of the book of your Lord: none can change His words [la-mubaddil li-kalim§tihi], and none will you find as a refuge other than Him. (Al-Kahf 18:27)

This verse proves that the essence of Allah’s words reside outside the text. Just imagine someone reading the following verse as representing (essentially) the word of God:

God (thus) directs you as regards your children’s (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females… (Al-Nis§” 4:11)

Imagine further that someone came along and a) ignored this instruction and gave his daughters twice as much as his sons, and b) tampered with the text by changing its words around, then verse 27 of Sårat a l-Kahf (‘none can change His words’) would actually be contradicted by what this person just did. And if someone is able to change ‘His words’ so easily, the self-definition of the text that it cannot be changed would actually be a lie. But to find a lie in Allah’s text is, categorically, impossible. We have to accept the fact that Allah’s words encompass more than what any human language can ever express (as text). If He were to express His words, that is, the totality of objective reality, in written (human) text, ‘oceans of ink’ would not be enough to exhaust Allah’s knowledge:

Say [Prophet], ‘If the whole ocean were ink for writing the words of my Lord [kalim§t rabbÊ], it would run dry before those words were exhausted’—even if We were to add another ocean to it. (Al-Kahf 18:109, AH)

The Truth (al-Èaqq)

Allah is the truth and His words are the truth.[191] He establishes what is true through His words.[192] The existence of the universe, which is outside the human mind, is the sacred abode of God—He is the reality.[193] This all-encompassing existence is expressed in His words which are thus also true.[194] Hence, Allah is the truth, and His words are the truth.[195] His words are rooted in the truth, not in human language. Among the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah you will not find the attribute ‘the

speaker’. But in order to instruct humankind about the truth, God transformed the laws of objective reality into human language. The ninety-nine beautiful names are therefore derived from human concepts. Human beings understand the truth of objective reality according to what their limited minds can grasp. Such understanding is relative and confined to what the dominant episteme allows us to comprehend. The language of the qur”§n must therefore allow such piecemeal understanding, inasmuch as it must guarantee an ever-growing awareness of objective reality because human societies develop and the intellectual horizon of people broadens day by day. The qur”§n does allow such relative and gradual understanding because of its revelation in Arabic which has the quality of ‘ambiguity’ (al-tash§buh). God has chosen Arabic as the vessel for His divine references to objective reality because it provides the necessary dialectics between the absolute objective truth of God and its relative, subjective understanding by human beings. This dialectic guarantees that human societies, in spite of their diversity and multiplicity of interpretations, participate equally in the divine truth and take from it what they can comprehend. This is the true explanation of why the qur”§n is called inimitable and why its opponents were overwhelmed when they heard it:

When Our clear signs are rehearsed to them, the unbelievers say, of the truth [al-Èaqq] when it comes to them: “This is evident sorcery!” (Al-AÈq§f 46:7)

The Content of the qur”§n

In the Book the term qur”§n appears both in its definite as well as in its indefinite form:

a) definite:

Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur’an… (Al-Baqara 2:185)

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And We have bestowed upon you the seven oft-repeated

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(verses) and the grand Qur’an. (Al-\ijr 15:87)

b) indefinite:

Nay, this is a glorious Qur’an [qur”§n[un] majÊd[un]], * (inscribed) in a tablet preserved! (Al-Buråj 85:21–22)

If an article determines the noun, it refers to the qur”§n as we have defined it so far. If the noun is undetermined, however, it refers to a subcategory of ‘a qur”§n’, which means that there are several (sub-) qur”§ns within a larger unit called ‘the grand qur”§n’ (al-qur”§n al-#aíÊm). The qur”§n, revealed in the month of Ramadan, belongs to the former category, whereas the qur”§n, inscribed on a ‘tablet preserved’, is of the latter. Therefore, the content of the qur”§n must be subdivided into two classes:

1. A fixed part:

This class appears in verses 1–2 of Sårat al-Buråj (‘Nay, this is a glorious qur”§n (qur”§n majÊd), * (inscribed) in a tablet preserved!’). In this class we group all those universal laws that will never change or be abolished: the certainty of death, the coming of the Last Hour, the resurrection of the dead, the existence of Hell and Paradise. These things exist or will occur independent of any human interference and are, thus, certainties that cannot be questioned, even if all the prophets of this world

want it (because ‘none can change His words’ [Al-Kahf 18:27]). These are the laws of objective reality that are ‘inscribed in a tablet preserved’ (lawÈ maÈfåí), a tablet that controls all changes within the universe, holds all information, and instructs the ‘glorious qur”§n’ (a l-qur”§n a l-majÊd). It holds the highest authority and represents the ultimate complexity of knowledge that can ever be grasped—by a gradual epistemological progress in al-tash§buh—through philosophy, the mother of all sciences.

2. A changeable part:

Referred to in verse 12 of Sårat Y§-SÊn (‘Verily We shall give life to the dead, and We record that which they send before and that which they leave behind, and of all things have We taken account in a clear book (of evidence) (im§m mubÊn)’ [Y§-SÊn 36:12]). Two further subcategories are mentioned in this verse:

a) Events in nature:

Unpredictable occurrences of floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, and such; the sudden changes of colours in trees, exceptional growth in plants, sudden changes of health in animals and humans, and such; nothing of that is prefixed. Yes, death is certain but its arrival is not predestined—one may prolong or shorten life by one’s own actions. The generic term for the changeable parts of nature is ‘sign of God’ (§yat All§h), see: ‘And among His signs (min §y§tihi) is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colours…’ [Al-Råm 30:22] and ‘Such are the signs of God…’ [Al-J§thiyya 45:6]. These ‘signs of God’ are kept in a ‘book manifest’ (kit§b mubÊn), see: ‘With Him are the keys of the unseen, the treasures that none knows but He. He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf does fall but with His knowledge: there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered), but is (inscribed) in a record clear[196] (kit§b mubÊn) (to those who can read)’ [Al-An#§m 6:59]. None of this is ever predetermined or prerecorded before its occurrence. One might try to

influence the course of events, for example, by prayer and invocations of God and He then might or might not send rain by changing the direction of the wind in times of draught or, in cases of childless couples, increase their fertility by granting them better living conditions, and the like. The outcome of this is always unpredictable, but we trust the words saying that ‘nothing turns (back) destiny except the du#§”-prayer’.[197] Moreover, more research in biology, chemistry, medicine, and so on can be undertaken because it will equip us with better ways to change the weather or maintain good health. In doing so we realize the tash§buh of God’s signs, contained in the ‘book manifest’, and this is the true meaning of the verse: ‘When He has decreed a plan, He but says to it, “be”, and it is!’ [$l #Imr§n 3:47].

b) Human affairs:

These are things that can change within human history. The technical term for them is ‘stories’ (qaßaß) because the Book stores such data as stories. ‘We tell you [Prophet] the best of stories (aÈsan al-qaßaß) in revealing this qur”§n to you. Before this you were one of those who knew nothing about them’ [Yåsuf 12:3]. And as verse 12 of Sårat Y§-SÊn points out, such historical narratives are installed in ‘a record clear’ (im§m mubÊn), not in the lawÈ maÈfåí. Their recording takes place only after their historical occurrence. ‘We shall certainly bring the dead back to life, and We record what they send ahead of them as well as what they leave behind: We keep an account of everything in a clear record[198] (im§m mubÊn)’ [Y§-SÊn 36:12]. These stories report how, during the long history of divine revelations, people have responded differently to the messages of the prophets and how, in accordance with their degree of knowledge, they have implemented what they learned from the text. Such accounts are so valuable for later generations to hear that they are, as in Sårat Yåsuf, called the ‘best of stories’, which are stored in the im§m mubÊn but contained in the ‘clear book’ (al-kit§b al-mubÊn), a term that appears in three separate såras.[199] Each story, however, forms a separate ‘book manifest’ (i.e., indefinite kit§b mubÊn), covering one single event in human history or nature. The varying and ever more increasing ability of humankind to learn from these stories provides the basis

for their tash§buh: the further advanced our knowledge the better equipped we are to interpret the stories’ lessons for our own time period (=

ta”wÊl).[200]

In conclusion, the qur”§n is either general or particular. In its general form it is stored as qur”§n majÊd in the ‘tablet preserved’, referring to the words of God that are unchangeable and everlasting. It enjoys absolute, unquestionable authority and nobody and nothing can escape its rule. Its authority is eternally valid as it is eternally stored in the lawÈ maÈfåí and, hence, is not subject to occasions of revelation (asb§b al-nuzål). In its particular form, however, the qur”§n responds to change and alterations in nature and records human history reflecting its peculiar fluctuations and unpredictable movements. And yet, the particular qur”§n will never undermine the authority of the general qur”§n. Instead, it works within the limits of the laws and conditions set by the qur”§n majÊd. As it is said in the verse: ‘when he has ordained something, He only says, “be”, and it is!’ [Al-An”§m 6:47]. This connectivity between the general laws of the universe and the particular manifestations in nature and human history defines the core of al-qur”§n (= the one which ‘connects’—qarana).

The Ambiguous Nature of al-qur”§n (al-tash§buh)

Allah represents the totality of objective reality. His knowledge is absolute. He neither requires further knowledge nor needs any form of guidance. But human beings, in their attempt to apprehend Allah’s absolute knowledge, can only do so within the limits of their relative, historical understanding. Allah took this partiality in human understanding into consideration when He decided to impart His knowledge to humankind.

An analogy to this would be the case of a father who wants to teach his five-year-old son the things he has learned about theoretical physics. The father

is a trained physicist and an international authority on the subject, whereas his son knows nothing about it yet. He teaches him his expertise in a piecemeal manner over a long period of time, that is, by considering his son’s age and by proportioning the amount he can teach according to what his son has already understood. This approach requires that father and son are in constant contact with each other and that the father never stops teaching his son until he fully understands the entirety of his father’s knowledge. Or, alternatively, the father gives his son a text to read which encapsulates an ultimate summary of his knowledge and never again changes what he has written. Since the son would initially not understand much he will be required to come back to the text year after year and every time absorb a little bit more of it. In this case, even though the text remains fixed and unchanged, its content changes insofar as the son will develop a gradual understanding of it. It is this quality of a text, where the form remains fixed but its content moves, that we define as the text’s ‘ambiguity’, or tash§buh.

Like in the example of father and son, Allah communicated with humankind in two ways: at first, constantly, repetitively, and over a long period of time, but after that only by one single instance. Until His revelation to MuÈammad (ß), Allah repeatedly returned to humankind to renew His message. After the revelation of the Torah, for example, He sent down the Gospel, and after the revelation of the Gospel, He returned again and brought down the qur”§n. But after that He will never return again, nor will any other prophet or messenger ever appear again to renew Allah’s message.

This has serious consequences for the way we understand the Book. With the Torah and the Gospel, Allah attuned His revelations to the actual historical circumstances that formed the intellectual horizon of the Jews and Christians who were the recipients of His message. In other words, God’s revelations showed all the signs of the Zeitgeist that these periods had. It would be seriously anachronistic to go back to the Torah and the Gospel in order to understand the text that was revealed later, the Book. It would be more appropriate, as was done during the European Enlightenment, to regard these texts, which inadequately discuss the laws of nature and the complexities of the cosmos, as historically obsolete. Neither the Torah nor the Gospel possess the universal quality of tash§buh since they are purely historical texts, written for a

specific group of people in a narrowly defined historical period. It is no wonder that the Torah and the Gospel have no relevance any more in modern sciences and are only used for liturgical purposes. May God prevent our #ulam§” from inflicting the same destiny upon the Qur’anic text!

Allah no longer communicates directly with human beings. He returns to them solely through the text of the Book, revealed fourteen hundred years ago. And yet, even today we still absorb immense knowledge about objective reality from His text. This can only imply that even if the form of His text is fixed, its content still moves. A miracle! This elasticity of the text allows its readers to relate what is read directly to what is experienced in reality. Generations of future readers will do the same without having violated either the form or the content of the text. No one, of course, will ever be able to fully understand or exhaustively interpret the text; this can only be done by God. Even those ‘who are deeply rooted in knowledge’ (al-r§sikhån fi’l-#ilm) [3:7] will always be restricted in their interpretations due to their limited understanding of the truth. As for MuÈammad (ß), he never actually ventured to interpret a single line of the qur”§n; instead, he interpreted other parts of the Book, for example, the umm a l-kit§b, but not the qur”§n, which he was asked to deliver, uninterpreted, to the people.

The Approving and Controlling Nature of the qur”§n

The scripture We have revealed to you [Prophet] is the truth and confirms the scriptures that [came with] it [m§ baina yadaihi]... (F§ãir

35:31, AH)

The disbelievers say, ‘We will believe neither this qur”§n nor the scriptures that came [with] it [alladhi baina yadaihi].’ (Saba’ 34:31)

Generations of exegetes interpreted the phrase m§ baina yadaihi as ‘scriptures (the Gospel and the Torah) that preceded it (the Qur”§n)’, ignoring the fact that their interpretation seriously undermined the authority of MuÈammad’s prophethood. Having been provided with a revelation that simply confirmed previous scriptures would have dramatically sabotaged the Prophet’s (ß) mission to convince people that he had received a new message from God. They also ignored MuÈammad’s (ß) assurance that he had brought a revelation that abrogated previous scriptures including the Torah and the Gospel. How could they ever think that the qur”§n only confirmed what had been revealed before! The ‘scripture that came with’ the qur”§n was MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood (ris§la) that needed to be confirmed by the truth. Verses that instruct people to pray, fast, go on a pilgrimage, arrange divorce and inheritance, and such, are verses that require absolute obedience and therefore need to be authorized. Approval had to come from outside his messengerhood, and it came through MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood. Objective reality, encapsulated within the qur”§n and the sab# al-math§nÊ, confirms the rules of human behaviour and sanctions what has been declared as allowed or taboo (Èal§l au-Èar§m). Disbelievers are those (see 34:31 above) who believe neither in the qur”§n nor the umm a l-kit§b that ‘came down with it’. In sum, revelation to MuÈammad (ß) in the form of the qur”§n confirmed the umm al-kit§b which had preceded the qur”§n (35:31).

The qur”§n’s ambiguous nature (al-tash§buh) was the ‘miracle’ that MuÈammad (ß) brought to the people. It was the most abstract miracle that God could ever have created. Previous prophets had to rely on concrete miracles which they performed in front of a disbelieving crowd (e.g., when Moses turned a staff into a snake inside the Pharaoh’s palace). Without the performances of miracles prophets could not convince people that they were in the possession of a divine message. Their miracles were nothing but extratextual proof that their message came from God. This happened in humankind’s primitive phase when people thought with their senses and when only phenomena that defied the laws of nature would impress people.

The miracle that MuÈammad (ß) performed occurred on a different, more abstract level. His miracle was the qur”§n itself. No extratextual miracle was required to prove that his message came from God. This miracle, the text’s ambiguous quality, shows three characteristics:

1. MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood, embodied in al-qur”§n and saba# al-math§nÊ, is the result of a rational deduction based on empirical perception of objective reality. It is inscribed in ambiguous ways inside the textual features of the prophetical verses. As time progresses, the rational deductions of the text mix with the ever more sophisticated empirical perception of reality and produce what is defined as ‘unmediated apprehension’ (al-ta”wÊl al-mub§shir). As Allah says: ‘We shall show them Our signs in every region of the earth and in themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the truth (al-Èaqq). Is it not enough that your Lord witnesses everything?’ [Fußßilat 41:53].[201]

2. The qur”§n of MuÈammad’s prophethood possesses the quality of both expressing the entirety of knowledge and allowing a partial understanding of it. It is a truly textual miracle that no human author could ever have produced. It implies, however, that no human interpreter can ever reflect the total knowledge of the qur”§n in his exegesis. Every interpretation reflects, instead, the standards of thinking of the time when the exegesis was written. If we want to see the paradigms of the seventh century, we only need to read Ibn #Abb§s’s commentary. If we want to know the paradigms of thinking in the fourteenth century, Ibn KathÊr’s tafsÊr will tell us. Their understanding of the text was partial, relative, and context related, whereas the text’s knowledge is absolute, total, and transhistorical. This synthesis is the real ‘miracle’ of the qur”§n.

3. The qur”§n combines the perfect style of literary poetry with the accuracy and precision of the best scientific writing. The beauty of its poetic expressions, its melodic rhythm and its rhetoric symbolism is not compromised by its scientific reflections and discursive, objective exposition of scientific laws. In a way, it combines all the poetic masterpieces by

Shakespeare, Pushkin, and a l-MutanabbÊ[202] with the sum of scientific genius in the writings of Newton, Einstein, and Ibn a l-Haitham.[203] To write, as traditional exegetes did, about the miraculous nature of the qur”§n only in terms of its literary style and rhetorical beauty is surely a sign of disrespect for and disloyalty towards the much more complex nature of the Qur’anic text.

The Interpretation [or Better: Apprehension][204] of the qur”§n (al-ta”wÊl)

If the qur”§n represents the truth and the totality of knowledge, and if human beings can only partially participate in this knowledge, their human interpretations of the qur”§n will always be limited, selective, and relative, as opposed to perceiving the full truth. With the increase in scientific knowledge, however, they will eventually come closer to the truth, but the entirety of knowledge about objective reality will only be revealed on the Day of Resurrection. Allah says: ‘On the day when it is fulfilled (ya”tÊ ta”wÊluhu),[205] those who have forgotten it will say: “The messengers of our Lord did indeed bring true (tidings) (bi’l-Èaqq)’ (Al-A#r§f 7:53). Until then, human beings will have to rely on the dynamics of tash§buh and constantly attempt to harmonize the absolute nature of the Qur’anic verses with their relative understanding (nisbÊyat al-fahm). This harmony is achieved by synchronizing the text’s content (meaning) with its interpreters’ changing and p rogressing knowledge which they gain from the most advanced scientific achievements of each period, and vice versa, by deducing scientific theories from the text of the qur”§n itself. The ultimate aim of each act of ta”wil is to establish perfect congruence between humans’ sensory perception of objective reality and their interpretation of al-qur”§n.

Ta”wÊl is therefore both a hermeneutical process (reading the qur”§n) and a scientific-philosophical task (exploring nature, the cosmos and history). Since ta”wÊl is only linked to the prophetical verses, the qur”§n, and not to the legal verses of umm al-kit§b, can be interpreted by everyone, believers or unbelievers, Arabic speakers or nonArabic speakers,

Islamicists or non-Islamicists. Verse 7 of $l #Imr§n in which Allah says: ‘...for its interpretation (ta”wÊlihi). But no one knows its true meanings except Allah and those who are firmly grounded in knowledge (al-r§sikhån fi’l-#ilm)...’, does not refer, as conventionally assumed, to the most learned and devout among the #ulam§” and fuqah§”, but rather to the scholars and philosophers who occupy the most eminent place in society. It is absolutely vital to invest in the authority of progressive science rather than in regressive tafsÊr (which is based on the assumption that earlier commentaries are more authoritative than later ones). The inclusion of modern science and philosophical theories and the exclusion of traditional exegetes will secure a constant assimilation of contemporary episteme into the text and a progressive extraction of knowledge from the text.

In their vain attempt to protect the qur”§n from the outside world, traditional exegetes have ignored the fact that the qur”§nic text, even in the most sophisticated abstraction, is the entire objective reality revealed as text, which, by definition, cannot be contradicted. In other words, since the qur”§n represents the totality of reality, and since nothing else but this reality is contained in the qur”§n, no single item of this reality could ever occur which is not already apprehended inside the qur”§n. Our honourable scholars have also ignored Allah’s dictum that He has revealed the qur”§n from the intelligible world so that people can understand it. Human reason, again by definition, is therefore unable to contradict the content of the qur”§n.

Based on this insight we conclude this section by proposing two fundamental doctrines and eight principles of ta”wÊl.

The doctrines:

1. Revelation does not contradict reason.

2. Revelation does not contradict reality.

The principles:

1. Interpreters of the qur”§n need to view the text as if MuÈammad (ß) died only yesterday. They also must believe in the eternal validity of its content and that, because of its inherent ambiguity (tash§buh), it is applicable in all times and all places in this world.

2. Interpreters start their exegesis by asking the most pressing questions of their time. They extract answers directly from the text without reference to traditional exegesis and the literature of religious heritage (al-tur§th). This interpretation is the realm of modern philosophy.

3. The qur”§n is to be studied by the human faculty of reason (al-#aql), given that it was revealed to people from the sphere of the intelligible world so that they could comprehend it (‘We have made it a qur”§n in Arabic, that you may be able to understand’ [Al-Zukhruf 43:3]).

4. The aim of interpretation is to establish a constant harmony between objective reality, which we perceive via our senses, and the theories and laws that we derive from reading the qur”§n. Sometimes a complete harmony is achieved (when science has discovered an absolute truth, for example, the earth is a globe and rotates around the sun), at other times, harmony remains deficient (if a scientific theory is not yet fully proven, such as Darwin’s theory of evolution). Total harmony will never be fully achieved—except on the Day of Resurrection.

5. Since revelation cannot contradict reason we have to suspend criticism if we come across a passage that apparently contradicts the laws of nature. Verse 45 of Sårat al-Furq§n, for example,[] seems to suggest that there are shadows that exist without light. According to what we currently know about shadows’ dependency on light, such claims seem inaccurate. Since we

cannot say that the text is wrong (it never is!), we need to intensify the study of light and eventually discover a type of shadow that is yet unknown to us.

6. When we deal with future aspects of reality that empirically cannot be known yet, for example, the end of the world, the Day of Judgement, Hell and Paradise, the theories of the qur”§n cannot be supported by empirical knowledge. We can only speculate about such events in the distant future. We can do this on the basis of the verses which the Book provides. We thus assume that the discrepancy between the rational and empirical will eventually be resolved by the occurrence of these events (Day of Resurrection, Day of Judgement etc.), that is, when they become reality. Rational theories will then either be confirmed or contradicted by experiences of the other world. As Allah says: ‘On the day when it is fulfilled, those who have forgotten it before will say: “The messengers of our Lord did indeed bring true (tidings)”’ [Al-An#§m 6:53].

7. No interpretation is ever eternally final or fixed. As human views change with time, certain interpretations will become obsolete. They will be replaced by new ones. To preserve previous interpretations as ‘guardians of the truth’ means, in reality, to preserve the shortcomings and limitations of previous centuries. Interpretation must remain fluid and flexible. We do not expect the generations of interpreters coming after us to deal with our interpretations as if they were the non plus ultra of truth, thus fossilizing what we said as doctrines that can never be challenged.

8. The qur”§n needs to be taken away from our honourable scholars because their attitude towards it is like that of uneducated people: they surrender their brains uncritically in a cloud of piety. They do not ask questions that satisfy the modern, rational mind, nor do they understand the philosophical quest for the truth. They use the qur”§n primarily as a tool for moralistic and ritualistic exhortations to bring the masses in line with their views. The qur”§n needs to be studied by an enlightened, educated, and intellectually open readership. This is the last and most important principle of ta”wÊl.

*** Al-inz§l and Al-tanzêl

The study of the two terms al-inz§l and al-tanzÊl will lead to a correct understanding of Allah’s revelation. Our study is based on the principles of interpretation outlined above and on the crucial premise that we do not accept the traditional notion of synonymity between the two terms. We reject the idea that both describe the process of the Qur’an’s ‘coming down’ indiscriminately as revelation to the Prophet MuÈammad (ß). We believe, instead, that both terms support our thesis of the division of the text into many variant sections that differ in theme and status, at the centre of which is the division between verses of prophethood and verses of messengerhood, which, according to our analysis, have been revealed in different ways. References to both words in the Book will demonstrate the considerable extent to which the second form of the verb nazzala (in al-tanzÊl) differs semantically from the fourth form anzala (in al-inz§l).

Verses that use anzala (noun: inz§l):

...and We sent down[206] [anzaln§] iron... (Al-\adÊd 57:25)

O you children of Adam! We have bestowed [anzaln§] raiment upon you to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you...

(Al-A#r§f 7:26)

We have sent it down [anzaln§hu] as an Arabic Qur’an...(Yåsuf 12:2) We have indeed revealed this [anzaln§hu] (message) in the night of power. (Al-Qadr 97:1)

...and sent down [anzaln§] to you manna and quails... (A l-Baqara 2:57)

…and We send down [anzaln§] pure water from the sky. (A l-Furq§n 25:48)

…and We have sent down [anzaln§] unto you (also) the message; that you may explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought. (Al-NaÈl 16:44)

Verses that use ‘nazzala’ (noun: tanzÊl):

It is We who have sent down[207] [nazzaln§] the Qur’an to you by stages. (Al-Ins§n 76:23)

The revelation of the book [tanzÊl al-kit§b] is from God the exalted in power, full of wisdom. (Al-J§thiyya 45:2)

A revelation [tanzÊl[un]] from (God), most gracious, most merciful. (Fußßilat 41:2)

A revelation [tanzÊl[un]] from the Lord of the worlds. (Al-W§qi#a 56:80)

…and We sent down [nazzaln§] to you manna and quails. (•§-H§” 20:80)

And We send down [nazzaln§] from the sky rain charted with blessing… (Q§f 50:9)

We notice that at times the two terms seem to interchange in the text: when it states that ‘manna and quails were sent down’ the text employs both nazzala (20:88) and anzala (2:57). Since a synonymous use must be excluded here, a different reason should be

considered. A clue to this can be found in the use of the verb balagha, which, in a similar way as nazzala and anzala, implies processes of communication. The following verses use either ballagha (2nd form) or ablagha (4th form):

The apostle’s duty is but to proclaim [al-bal§gh] (the message) … (Al-M§“ida 5:99)

O apostle! Proclaim [balligh] the (message) which has been sent [anzala] to you from your Lord… (Al-M§“ida 5:67)

So Shu#aib left them, saying: “O my people! I did indeed convey to you [ablaghtukum] the messages for which I was sent by my Lord: I gave you good counsel…” (Al-A#r§f 7:93)

If ballagha (2nd form) is used, a message is delivered whose actual reception by an intended addressee remains uncertain; if, however, ablagha (4th form) is used, a conscious reception is implied. A bulletin announcement of the state treasury, for example, issued in order to explain the new tax allowances for married couples, is delivered (like al-bal§gh in verse 5:99) without the need for feedback from citizens telling the Chancellor that they have received and understood his announcements. If, however, a full recognition by the addressees is intended, the term iblagh (as in 7:93) is used. As for MuÈammad’s (ß) role, the use of the imperative balligh, ‘proclaim!’ (2nd form, as in 5:67), indicates that a straightforward (mechanical) proclamation of the revelation was all that was required of him. The text would have used the term abligh, ‘proclaim”[208] (4th form, as in 7:93), if the i ntention had been to deliver the revelation in such a way that full comprehension by everyone was secured. Prophets other than MuÈammad (ß) had indeed been asked to do exactly this, since in their messages God’s punishment was announced to everyone who did not pay heed to the prophet’s words. And since God would not punish anyone who had not consciously become aware of His revelation, prophets were required to

disseminate God’s word to literally everyone. Therefore, whenever the text mentions prophets such as Shu#aib, ‘§liÈ, or Håd, the verb ablagha (4th form) is used:

So Salih left them, saying: “O my people! I did indeed convey to you [ablaghtukum] the message for which I was sent by my Lord…” (Al-A#r§f 7:79)[209]

I [Hud] (at least) have conveyed the message [ablaghtukum] with which I was sent to you… (Håd 11:57)

“That He may know that they have (truly) brought and [made perceived] [210] [ablaghå] the messages of their Lord…” (Al-Jinn 72:28)

This in stark contrast to the much broader mission of MuÈammad (ß) who had been asked to proclaim Allah’s last revelation to all humankind. In his time, surely MuÈammad (ß) did not have the means to reach everyone on earth. Hence, his role was limited to proclaim Allah’s message without the need to reach everyone (acoustically) and without the need to receive confirmation that he had been heard:

O apostle! Proclaim [balligh] the (message) which has been sent to you [unzila ilayk] from your Lord. If you did not, you would not have fulfilled and proclaimed His mission. And God will defend you from men (who mean mischief)… (Al-M§“ida 5:67)

If we apply the above considerations to the two terms of al-tanzÊl and al-inz§l, we may deduce that al-tanzÊl (2nd form) refers to the process of communication that occurs outside the human mind. Al-inz§l (4th form), in contrast, describes the process of recognition inside the human mind. The difference is that in al-tanzÊl ideas are exchanged unrecognized by the human brain, whereas in al-

inz§l these ideas are transformed into information that is perceived and understood.

The following example from everyday life will illustrate this point.

Phase 1: al-ja#l

(Creation of information signals)

Football match in Brazil

↓

The live action is being filmed by cameras and sent out into the world; sound and pictures are being transformed into waves

Phase 2: al-tanzÊl

(Transport)

Waves are transporting sound and pictures from Brazil into the world

↓

This transport occurs in the air and completely unnoticed by the human mind

Phase 3: al-inz§l

(Transformation into perceivable information)

The process by which the TV aerials receive the waves and transform them into sounds and pictures

↓

The result is a form of pictures and sounds that is perceivable by the human senses

Phase 4: al-idr§k

(Perception)

Viewers in China can follow the football match in Brazil through their senses.

*** The football match enters the viewers’ knowledge.

This example shows that it is possible to distinguish between ways of communication that happen objectively and outside human perception (the transfer of sound and pictures via waves from Brazil to China), or that occur explicitly for the sensory perception of the human mind (the reconversion of the waves back into acoustic and visual signals for the reception of TV viewers). The term al-tanzÊl is assigned to this process of objective, nonhuman communication (reception by human beings is uncertain, impossible, or unintended), while the term a l-inz§l refers to the process of changing unperceivable signals outside the human mind to signals that can be perceived.

In the case of the televised football match, al-tanzÊl occurred first and al-inz§l second. If, however, a sports reporter took photographs of the match in Brazil and then sent these pictures to China to have them displayed at the National Sports Show, the process of al-inz§l (taking pictures) would have preceded al-tanzÊl (transport of pictures to China). Sometimes, a l-inz§l happens without an accompanying al-tanzÊl (e.g., if the pictures had been displayed immediately in Brazil),[211] but in all instances, a l-inz§l and a l-tanzÊl communicate something that exists in reality (e.g., the football players, the ball, the referee, the spectators, etc.) and that exists before the process of communication has been initiated.

Al-inz§l and al-tanzÊl of the al-qur”§n

The processes of al-inz§l and al-tanzÊl in communicating the qur”§n to humankind require that the qur”§n exists prior to its communication (like the football players in the example above). Since the qur”§n contains the objective sources of reality, its revelation to MuÈammad (ß) occurred in a conclusive, unalterable manner, regardless of any circumstances of revelation (hence, the asb§b a l-nuzål do no apply to the qur”§n). Its revelation was inevitable, whether someone required this information or not. Allah even urged people not to ask questions in this respect before the qur”§n was revealed:

Ask not questions about things which, if made plain to you, may cause you trouble. But if you ask about things when the Qur’an is being revealed, they will be made plain to you… (Al-M§“ida 5:101)

We have agreed that the qur”§n’s preexistence, before its inz§l and tanzÊl, could not have been in the form of an Arabic text. This is because if it had been an Arabic text before it was revealed, Allah would be an Arabic native speaker. This, of course, is an absurd idea. What really happened was that Allah changed the

qur”§n from something else into an Arabic text, that is, He changed the text’s ‘becoming’ (al-ßayråra), and the following verses attest to this truth:

We have made it a Qur’an in Arabic, that you may be able to understand (and learn wisdom). (Al-Zukhruf 43:3)

Therefore, rather than being an Arabic text the qur”§n was objective reality before its revelation, embodying general, absolute, and eternal laws of the universe, unaltered since the creation of the world. Allah revealed it for the first time in human history as (an Arabic) text, that is, He developed its ‘becoming’ so that it was, by way of al-inz§l, perceivable by the human mind:

We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur’an in order that you may learn wisdom. (Yåsuf 12:2)

According to this sequence, a l-inz§l is the process of transforming (al-ja#l) the absolute laws of life and nature which had been stored primordially in a ‘tablet preserved’ (lawÈ maÈfåí) and in a ‘record clear’ (im§m mubÊn), or which were derived directly from Allah’s knowledge (#ilm All§h), into the linguistic form of the Arabic language so that these laws, which previously existed outside the human mind, could now be perceived, heard, and seen. Al-tanzÊl, in contrast, represents the subsequent objective transfer of the content of a l-kit§b, via the messenger angel JibrÊl, into Muhammad’s brain, from where he delivered it verbatim to the people of Mecca and Medina. Whereas al-inz§l occurred in one single impulse during the laylat al-qadr (‘We have indeed revealed this [al-qur”§n] in the night of power’, A l-Qadr 97:1), al-tanzÊl took twenty-three years to be completed. The reason for this long process of revelation in installments was that Allah wanted to strengthen the hearts of the believers gradually: (‘Those who reject faith say: “Why is not the Qur’an revealed to him all at once? Thus (is it revealed), that We may strengthen your heart

thereby, and We have rehearsed it to you in slow, well-arranged stages, gradually', Al-Furq§n 25:32).

In describing the revelation of the qur"§n, the text uses the term a l-inz§l (anzaln§hu qur"§n[an] #arabÊy[an]), in its 4th verb form, not in the 2nd form, that is, it does not say: nazzaln§hu qur"§n[an] #arabÊy[an]. If it had been an objective transfer (al-tanzÊl) of an Arabic qur"§n without al-inz§l, without a prior process of transformation into Arabic, it would imply that Arabic is a nonhuman language, since its existence would be absolute, self-sufficient, and transcendent. That is, Arabic would objectively exist, whether in fact used by human beings or not. Applied to the example of TV transmissions, such a notion of al-tanzÊl without al-inz§l would allow the possibility that waves, beams, and light particles are 'Arabic', since what is being objectively transferred would be immediately perceptible to the Arabic readers/listeners. But who has ever heard of Arabic waves or Arabic molecules?

The qur"§n was revealed orally. It would have been possible to reveal it in written form (as was done with Moses' 'tablets'),[212] but its dhikr, its format of remembrance, was in oral format which did not allow the unbelievers to touch Allah's revelation 'with their hands' and deride its true identity:

If We had sent unto you a written (message) on parchment [fÊ qirã§s[in]], so that they could touch it with their hands, the unbelievers would have been sure to say: "This is nothing but obvious magic!" (Al-An#§m 6:7)

This implies that today when we touch a copy of the qur"§n, we do not actually touch the qur"§n itself (the latter was revealed in one impulse during the night of power and transformed into—oral—Arabic). Instead, we have in front of us a copy of the qur"§n, a

parchment (qirã§s) which we can ‘touch with our hands’. Thus, what we touch is ink on paper, not the qur”§n itself.

Should then those ‘who are impure’ be allowed to touch the qur”§n or not?

<quote>

That this is indeed a qur”§n most honourable, * In a book well-guarded, * Which none shall [sic] touch but those who are clean [al-muãahharån] * a revelation [tanzÊl] from the Lord of the worlds. (A l-W§qi#a 56:77–80)

</quote>

These verses state that the qur”§n is in a concealed book (kit§b maknån).[213] It also refers to it as ‘tanzÊl from the Lord of the worlds’, implying that after the original qur”§n had been hidden, it was first translated into Arabic and then transferred by JibrÊl—orally, not in writing—to MuÈammad (ß). Those ‘who are clean to touch it’ (al-muãahharån) are in fact angels processing al-tanzÊl, since no human, ritually pure or impure, could ever touch the original qur”§n.[214] It was a grave mistake of the traditional exegetes to interpret the above verse of Sårat al-W§qi#a within the context of ritual purity:

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If you are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bath your whole body

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[fa-uãahharå]… (Al-M§“ida 5:6)

They ask you concerning women’s courses. Say: They are a hurt and a pollution. So keep away from women in their courses, and do not approach

them until they are clean [yaãhurn[a]]. But when they have purified themselves [taãahharn[a]], you may approach them in any manner, time, or place ordained for you by God. For God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean [al-mutaãahhirÊn]. (Al-Baqara 2:222)

The error occurred when exegetes treated the term ‘those who are clean’ (al-muãahharån), as in 56:79, as synonymous to ‘those who are ritually pure’ (a l-mutaãahhirÊn), as in 2:222 (note that the former is derived from the 2nd verb form, the latter from the 5th verb form; moreover, whereas the latter connotes the practice of ablution before prayer performed by the believers, the former is the act of purification by Allah which cannot be performed by the believers). But while those ‘who are ritually pure’ can indeed perform the prayer since they have done the ritual ablution, they nevertheless are still unable to touch the original qur”§n because they are not angels. And while those ‘who are ritually impure’ can indeed not perform the prayer since this is prohibited by 4:43 and 5:6, they are nevertheless allowed to touch a copy (!) of the qur”§n and recite it whenever they want. Ritual impurity and touching the qur”§n are simply two different things, conflated together by unscrupulous tafsÊr exegetes.

Al-inz§l and al-tanzÊl of the umm al-kit§b

Allah blots out and confirms what He pleases; and with Him is the mother of the book [umm al-kit§b]. (Al-Ra#d 13:39, MF)[215]

Two important things are stated in verse 39 of Sårat a l-Ra#d:

a) matters of the mother of the book (umm al-kit§b) are either ‘blotted out or confirmed’, and this contains an acknowledgement of possible alterations, and b) the mother of the book is distinct from the qur”§n because the umm al-kit§b is ‘with Him’, that is, in the immediate vicinity of God. From this we deduce that the

umm a l-kit§b is not inscribed in the ‘tablet preserved’ (lawÈ maÈfåí) and not stored in the ‘record clear’ (im§m mubÊn); hence, everything contained in the umm al-kit§b, that is, ritual prescriptions and specific rules of social behaviour, are not absolute laws. If the fast in Ramadan, for example, had been inscribed in the ‘tablet preserved’, it would have become a word of God (kal§m All§h). And if it had been stored in the im§m mubÊn, it would have become an objective fact of nature, that is, the truth, and people would instinctively begin to fast, whether they wanted to or not. Fasting, as any other ritual and social behaviour, would become a universal human attitude that recognizes neither modification nor deviation. But this is simply not the case. We know that Allah said:

We have assigned a law and a path to each of you. If God had so willed, He would have made you one community… (Al-M§“ida 5:48, AH)

Instead, the umm a l-kit§b allows human behaviour to change and diversify. It is for this reason that humankind has not become ‘a single people’. Since God has prescribed ‘a law and a path’ (shar#[an] wa-manhaj[an]), the content of the umm al-kit§b is issued directly from God and responds to ‘causes of revelation’ (asb§b al-nuzål). If MuÈammad (ß), for example, had not frowned upon the beggar #Abdall§h b. Amm Maktåb, verses 1 to 4 of Sårat #Abasa would never have been revealed. The same applies to the messages of previous prophets who brought legislation that was entirely geared towards the historical context of their timeperiod and which had to be annulled once this period was over. So, for example, a very strict legal code was prescribed for the Jews ‘in recompense for their wilful disobedience: for We are true (in our ordinances)’ (A l-An#§m 6:146), but once things had improved, Jesus was sent ‘to make lawful to you part of what was (before) forbidden…’ ($l #Imr§n 3:50). Later legislation abrogated earlier ones, and through MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood we hear about instructions (ta#lÊm§t) that abrogated earlier messengerhoods. This was possible because revelations of the umm al-kit§b were not taken from the ‘tablet preserved’ but given directly by Allah, transmitted by JibrÊl, and stored in Muhammad’s brain. It implies that a l-inz§l and a l-tanzÊl occurred simultaneously, that is, not separately one after the other like in the

qur”§n, and no prerevelation took place, since the revealed messages were immediately available to MuÈammad (ß) in their perceivable (Arabic) version.

As previously pointed out, the umm al-kit§b is ‘with Him’: it comes directly from Allah. It would be more precise to say that the concrete location of the umm a l-kit§b is Allah’s throne. What and where exactly is Allah’s throne? The word ‘throne’ in Arabic (al-#arsh) can either mean literally the ‘chair of a ruler’ or metaphorically the ‘seat of power’. The Book uses the term al-#arsh in both meanings.

a) Throne in the sense of ‘chair’:

And he raised his parents high on the throne (of dignity)[216] [a l-#arsh], and they fell down in prostration, (all) before him… (Yåsuf 12:100)

b) Throne in the sense of ‘authority’ or ‘seat of power’:

He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days—and His throne was over the waters… (Håd 11:7)

Your guardian-lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and is firmly established on the throne (of authority) [al-#arsh]… (Al-A#r§f 7:54)

And the angels will be on its sides, and eight will, that day, bear the throne [#arsh] of your Lord above them. (Al-\§qqa 69:17) (God) most gracious is firmly established on the throne (of authority) [al-#arsh]. (•§-H§” 20:5)

Say: If there had been (other) gods with Him, as they say, behold, they would certainly have sought out a way to the Lord of the throne [al-#arsh]! (Al-Isr§” 17:42)

In verse 7 of Sårat Håd it is said that ‘His throne was over the waters’. This does not imply that a chair was literally placed over the oceans. It rather means that before this universe was created with all its planets, galaxies, and stars, the world consisted of just hydrogen, water particles, and Allah’s command ruled ‘over the waters’. Then came the period, as verse 54 of Sårat Al-A#r§f says, when God created the heavens and the earth, which became His ‘seat of power’:

He draws the night as a veil over the day, each seeking the other in rapid succession. He created the sun, the moon, and the stars, (all) governed by laws under His command. Is it not His to create and to govern? Blessed be God, the cherisher and sustainer of the worlds! (Al-A#r§f 7:54)

Finally, Allah’s authority will reign over a new world, the Afterlife, or rather: a new ‘becoming’ of this universe, transformed into a new existence with new laws that will host Allah’s ‘seat of power’. On ‘that day’, eight angels will bear the throne, this being a metaphor for Allah as merciful God on the Day of Judgement (69:17; 20:5). In sum, the word al-#arsh is a generic term for the (metaphorical) place where Allah’s power resides. It is dependent on the material state of the universe but has by no means a concrete spatial connotation. This is also true for verse 42 of Sårat a l-Isr§” which refers to the (only theoretical) possibility that other gods, if they were ‘with Him’, would have competed with one another to become the one who commands over right and wrong, that is, to become the ‘Lord of the throne’, Allah. It certainly does not mean a race by those gods to a specific chair!

*** Summary of Terminology

A. Transformation into perceptible revelation (al-ja#l):

a. al-qur”§n

We have made it [ja#ln§hu] a Qur’an in Arabic, that you may be able to understand (and learn wisdom). (Al-Zukhruf 43:3)

B. Process of becoming perceptible revelation (al-inz§l):

a. al-qur”§n

We have sent it down [anzaln§hu] as an Arabic Qur’an…(Yåsuf

12:2)

b. umm al-kit§b

Thus have We revealed it [anzaln§hu] to be a judgement of authority in Arabic… (Al-Ra#d 13:37)

c. al-kit§b

Praise be to God, who has sent [anzala] to His servant the book [al-kit§b]… (Al-Kahf 18:1)

Note that the last verse refers to the inz§l of the entire book which includes the qur”§n, the umm al-kit§b, the explanation of the book (tafßÊl al-kit§b), and the seven oft-recited (sab# al-math§nÊ).

C. Transmission of revelation (al-tanzÊl):

a. al-qur”§n

It is We who have sent down [nazzaln§] the Qur’an to you by stages.

(Al-Ins§n 76:23)

b. umm a l-kit§b together with tafßÊl a l-kit§b and sab# al-math§nÊ

The revelation of this book [tanzÊl a l-kit§b] is from God, the exalted in power, full of wisdom. (Al-Zumar 39:1)

The revelation of this book [tanzÊl al-kit§b] is from God, exalted in power, full of knowledge. (Gh§fir 40:2)

The revelation of the book [tanzÊl al-kit§b] is from God the exalted in power, full of wisdom. (Al-J§thiyya 45:2)

As for the seven oft-recited we hear about their inz§l in verse 1 of Sårat al-Kahf (together with the whole Book, see above), but their tanzÊl (as an individual, separate revelation) is stated in the following verse:

God has revealed (from time to time) [nazzala] the most beautiful message in the form of a book, consistent with itself, (yet) repeating (its teaching in various aspects)… (Al-Zumar 39:23)

**** Notes:

– The qur”§n was subject to both ja#l and inz§l, and the process of tanzÊl occurred separately (over a period of twenty-three years);

– The umm al-kit§b and tafßÊl al-kit§b and sab# al-math§nÊ were revealed in a simultaneous process of inz§l and tanzÊl (over a period of twenty-three years), ja#l was not needed;

– The book as a whole (a l-kit§b) was revealed over a period of twenty-three years; no specific verse is needed to express the tanzÊl of the umm al-kit§b; all verses only refer to the tanzÊl of the whole book (see above under C.). The reason why the tanzÊl is specifically mentioned for the qur”§n is that such explicitness emphasizes the qur”§n’s special nature and distinguishes it from the other parts of the book.

*** The Objectivity of the Qur'an

We define objectivity as a state of existence that has its cause outside the human mind. The sun’s existence, for example, is objective because it exists whether we recognize it or not. Since the sun’s existence is objective (part of objective reality) it is also real or true— one might say that the sun embodies the truth (al-Èaqq). The fact that we have to die is an objective fact, whether we recognize it or not. We do not say: ‘Death is allowed or forbidden’. We say: ‘Death is real’. Death is the truth. The force of gravitation, the end of this world, the Day of Resurrection—these are real, objective facts which occur whether we like it or not. We will die even if we deny the existence of death. We will fall down from the roof even if we deny that the force of gravitation exists. And we will be resurrected from death even if we reject such a possibility. These things will occur objectively: their cause is outside the human mind.

In contrast, we define subjectivity as existence that depends on the state of affairs inside the human mind. The entire field of human behaviour is subjective because it is influenced by what we think and feel. Prayers, fasts, pilgrimages, charity work, games of chance, loans on interests, bad or good governance, and such, the entire sphere of social, political, religious, aesthetic, economic, and other activities does not exist objectively but depends on how we think about it. Whereas the subjective sphere of human behaviour cannot exist without the objective reality, the opposite is not the case. Even if, to take an extreme example, all humankind had been eradicated, by a nuclear inferno, it would not dramatically affect the universal laws of existence and the movements of planets and the expansion of the galaxies. The truth exists whatever we make of it.

As pointed out earlier, the qur”§n represents this objective, absolute reality that exists outside the human mind. The study of this reality can only be done within the parameters of objective, scientific research, such as in physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, in addition to metaphysics, which is the epitome of objectivity. Humanities and social sciences, for example, religious studies, law, sociology, the political and educational sciences, and psychology, cannot produce anything substantial or beneficial in our endeavour to explore the qur”§n.

In contrast with the objective qur”§n, the umm a l-kit§b expresses subjectivity. Allah’s command, for example, to treat parents with respect cannot be carried out independently of the human mind. If we do not attend to Allah’s command, respect for our parents disappears because we have decided not to treat them respectfully. If we decide not to pray, to fast, or go on a pilgrimage, these rituals will simply not happen. ‘His word (qauluhu) is the truth…’, Al-An#§m 6:73, but nowhere in the umm al-kit§b is Allah’s word (qaul) attached to a command, as for example: ‘He said (q§l [a]): do fast…’ or ‘He said (q§l[a]): do pray…’. Why? Because if He had said so, prayer and fasting would be parts of the objective, absolute truth, and we would pray and fast objectively, that is, automatically, whether we want it to or not, just like the process of digestion starts when we eat or like our pulse increases when we are excited.

If the qur”§n represents the objective reality of the universe, and if the umm al-kit§b embodies the subjective behaviour of humankind, it follows that the qur”§n exists independent of the umm al-kit§b and that it serves to confirm the umm al-kit§b’s subjectivity. Let us explore this relationship a little further by looking at the term ‘spirit’ (al-råh) in Allah’s Book:

[Prophet], they ask you about the spirit [al-råÈ]. Say: ‘The spirit is part of my Lord’s domain [amr rabbÊ]. You have only been given a little knowledge.’ (Al-Isr§” 17:85, AH)

Traditional exegetes thought that ‘spirit’ in this verse stands for ‘secret of life’. We cannot accept this interpretation because it reflects a misreading that was quite common in early tafsÊr. Let us look at verses that contain the term ‘soul’ (al-nafs):

Nor can a soul [li-nafs] die except by God’s leave [bi-ithn All§h], the term being fixed as by writing… ($l #Imr§n 3:145)

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It is God that takes the souls (of men) [al-nafs] at death… (Al-Zumar

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39:42)

“[But] you, soul [al-nafs] at peace: * return to your Lord well pleased and well pleasing.” (Al-Fajr 89:27–28, AH)

If you could only see the wicked in their death agonies, as the angels stretch out their hands [to them], saying, ‘Give up your souls [anfusakum]…’ (Al-An#§m 6:93, AH)

We notice that souls die and souls return to God after a period ‘fixed as by writing’ (kit§b[an] mu”ajjal[an]). Angels will come to the wicked and ask them to give up their souls. None of this ever applies to the spirit (al-råÈ). Life and death cannot affect the spirit. In no way can spirit mean ‘secret of life’, as this would assume synonymity between ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’, and this is unacceptable.

The verses about Allah’s creation of humankind give us a clue as to how to interpret ‘spirit’. They tell us that Adam was chosen by Allah (‘God did choose Adam…’, $l #Imr§n 3:33) to become the ‘father of the human race’; and, indeed, with him human beings were born who differed from animals, plants, and other creatures. The way Allah chose Adam was to ‘breathe spirit (al-råÈ) into him’ (‘and breathed into him of My spirit (min råÈÊ)…’, Al-\ijr 15:29).[217] Equipped with Allah’s spirit, human beings were blessed with two things that other aspects of creation did not have: knowledge and legislation (‘And He taught Adam the names of all things…’ [that is to distinguish the sounds and shapes of everything in nature], Al-Baqara 2:31). It qualified human beings to become God’s vicegerents on earth (“I will [let come forth] a vicegerent (khalÊfa) on earth”, A l-Baqara 2:30) and to build airplanes, submarines, computers, digital cameras, and so forth; also to create nation-states, governments, and civil society. The ‘spirit of God’ (memory) enabled nations to write their history self-reflectively and use historiography to enhance humankind’s historical consciousness. By giving human beings knowledge and legislation, Allah initiated a qualitative jump in history: creatures turned into human beings through the acquisition of God’s spirit.

The following verses show that the spirit came ‘by God’s command’ (amr All§h):

…He casts the spirit by His command [min amrihi] upon whomever of His servants He wishes, to warn of the Day of the Encounter. (Gh§fir 40:15, MF)

He sends down the angels with the spirit by His command [min amrihi] upon whom He pleases of His servants… (Al-NaÈl 16:2, MF)

So We have revealed a spirit to you [Prophet] by Our command [min amrin§]: you knew neither the Scripture nor the faith… (A l-Shår§ 42:52, AH)

[Prophet], they ask you about the spirit [al-råÈ]. Say: ‘The spirit is part of my Lord’s domain [amr rabbÊ]. You have only been given a little knowledge.’ (Al-Isr§” 17:85, AH)

Therein come down the angels and the spirit by God’s permission

[bi-idhn rabbihim], on every errand [min kull amr[in]]. (Al-Qadr 97:4)

We note that the ‘spirit’, unlike the ‘soul’, does not possess any corporality. Allah gave us the spirit from Himself, not from objective reality or the material world of the universe. The umm al-kit§b comes directly from God. The rules, injunctions, and commandments of the umm a l-kit§b are Allah’s spirit. They have no corporal identity but are expressed as human behaviour. They do not exist on their own but are exemplified in our daily social and moral conduct. If the human race disappeared, so would Allah’s spirit in the form of the umm al-kit§b because it can only be manifest in relation to humans’ conscious activities and their efforts to comprehend it.

The spirit is therefore the common denominator between human beings and God. It embodies human capacity to think and legislate on an ever broader

epistemological and humanist level. We may thus define a l-råÈ as the ‘secret of human progress’. When Allah ‘breathed His spirit’ into Adam it caused the angels to prostrate themselves in front of human beings, it liberated humans to enjoy their role as God’s vicegerents on earth freely, and allowed them to determine their affairs independently. God knows best—because His knowledge coincides completely with objective reality—but human beings constantly learn to know more and they will come closer to His knowledge.

*** The Realms of God’s Divinity and Sovereignty

Why does the text of the Book designate different terms for ‘Allah’? In some instances He is called rabb (sovereign or lord), in others il§h (god).[218] What is the difference between the two terms?

1. Allah as Sovereign (rabb):

(He is) Lord [rabb] of the two Easts and Lord of the two Wests. (Al-RaÈm§n 55:17)

The term rabb in Arabic denotes a form of supremacy as it conveys the notion of a master or lord, even ruler or king, who possesses high status and prestige. We say in Arabic that someone is the ‘master of the house’, which signifies a position of power over the dependents of his family. Applied to the term rabb or lord in the Book, we infer that this stands for the concept of Allah’s sovereignty (al-rubåbiyya), that is, His lordship over the objective reality of existence outside human consciousness. It connotes a relationship of Allah with all of His creation, which is a relationship of dominance, power, and possession. This relationship is objective, absolute, and unalterable. In studying the laws of nature, the cosmos, and history we become aware of the realm of Allah’s sovereignty which governs the universe independent of the human mind. In this capacity, Allah is the Lord of all creatures, be they believers or unbelievers, Arabs or non-Arabs, learned or ignorant, humans or animals.

Allah transferred this sovereignty to humanity when he installed Adam as His vicegerent on earth,[219] indicating that a thorough study of His sovereignty, of objective reality, will enable humankind to rule over His creation, the earth and the skies, the plants and the animals—in His manner. When, for example, humankind learned how to master the force of gravitation they took possession of the moon and Mars, fulfilling His word:

Do you not see that God [All§h] has made subject to you (men) all that is on the earth, and the ships that sail through the sea by His command? He withholds the sky (rain) from falling on the earth except by His leave: for God [All§h] is most kind and most merciful to man. (Al-\ajj 22:65)

Do you not see that God [All§h] has subjected to your (use) all things in the heavens and on earth, and has made his bounties flow to you in exceeding measure, (both) seen and unseen? Yet there are among men those who dispute about God [All§h], without knowledge and without guidance, and without a book to enlighten them! (Luqm§n 31:20)

And He [All§h] has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on earth. Behold, in that are signs indeed for those who reflect. (Al-J§thiyya 45:13)

The concept of God’s vicegerency on earth is inclusive: it transfers power to both believers and unbelievers. It requires good and responsible governance over the earth’s resources by everybody regardless of their beliefs. It is a universal task for all humankind, unaffected by religious affiliations.

2. Allah as Divine God (il§h):

Know, therefore, that there is no god but God [All§h]... (MuÈammad 47:19)

But your God [il§hukum] is one God [il§h[un] w§Èid[un]]... (Al-\ajj 22:34)

In contrast, the concept of Allah's divinity (al-ulåhiyya), derived from the term 'God' (il§h), refers to Allah's demand to follow His rules and commandments in return for having bestowed upon humankind the freedom of vicegerency. It is less inclusive as it only requests 'those who understand' to witness His unity and to follow His rules:

He [All§h] has commanded that you worship none but Him: that is the right religion, but most men understand not. (Yåsuf 12:40)

Note that this verse acknowledges that most men are ignorant about 'the right religion' and do not worship Him (ulåhiyya). In contrast, His sovereignty (rubåbiyya) is all-inclusive, nobody cannot not worship Him:

"O my two companions of the prison! (I ask you): are many lords differing among themselves better, or the one God [All§h], supreme and irresistible?" (Yåsuf 12:39)

In sum, Allah's sovereignty pertains to a relationship of power and domination that is unchangeable and essentially irresistible. It can neither be undermined nor limited; it is a matter-of-fact substance of reality. Allah's divinity, however, is the realm of voluntary worship by 'those who understand'. It is a matter of choice, since one can choose to opt out or opt in; there is no coercion in matters of worship. As for the relationship between the two realms, undeniably Allah's sovereignty always assumes priority over His divinity, since the latter is dependent on a variable; that is, the existence of rational people. There is no divinity without 'those who understand'. Hence, no verse in the book refers to 'the God of the worlds' or 'the God of the heavens and earth', but only to 'the Lord of the worlds' and 'the Lord of the heavens and earth'.

Likewise, no verse requires believers to witness that ‘there is no lord (rabb) but Allah’ but, as in the shah§da, that ‘there is no god (il§h) but God’. This is because Allah is their Lord, whether they witness it or not. No testimony is required because its truth transcends all human testimony. Allah is the Lord of both the believers and the unbelievers, He nourishes them all, He gives all humankind rain, light, and food, and all His laws of nature apply equally to everyone:

Of the bounties of your Lord [rabbuka] We bestow freely on all. These as well as those: the bounties of your Lord are not closed (to anyone). (Al-Isr§” 17:20)

Allah’s rules and commandments are stated in the umm al-kit§b, MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood. We infer from this that the umm a l-kit§b belongs to the book of divinity (kit§b a l-ulåhiyya). The universal laws of nature, cosmos, and history are contained in the qur”§n, the realm that exists outside the human mind. Hence, the qur”§n belongs to the book of sovereignty (kit§b al-rubåbiyya).[220]

Determinism in _{QUR}”§_N and _{UMM}
_{AL}-_{KIT}§_B

In this final section an important distinction will be made between the two Arabic terms a l-qadar and a l-qa·§”. In traditional theology the two terms were normally regarded as synonyms, both indiscriminately expressing the notion of ‘predestination’, which humans have to accept submissively since God’s predestination of all things on earth is unfathomable. We propose to revise the alleged synonymity between the

two terms and redefine them as follows: the term that expresses the notion of Allah’s ‘predestination’ is only a l-qadar, whereas al-qa·§” refers to decisions that are taken, or ‘determined’, by human beings. While the former characterizes God’s laws in the objective reality of the universe, the latter symbolises the existence of free will in human activities in this world. Al-qadar belongs to al-qur”§n, whereas al-qa·§” belongs to the umm al-kit§b.

Let us first explore the notion of determinism in the qur”§n. We established that the qur”§n contains the objective, absolute laws of nature, the cosmos and history; explains the manifestations of the natural world; and narrates the events of human history as they had occurred in the past. The Book defines the qur”§n as the ‘truth’, in the sense that death is true, the sun is true, day and night are true, and so on. These things are objective because neither human knowledge nor human activities can affect or change them. Their course is ‘predestined’ by the eternal laws of the universe. The same is true for events in history: once they have happened they cannot be undone—they are real; they are true; or, better, they are determined. This is the realm of al-qadar.

In contradistinction, we defined umm al-kit§b as the part of the Book that contains the legal rules of human behaviour. In response to these rules, human beings can decide between acceptance and rejection, between submission and rebellion, between approval and disapproval. Allah has granted human beings a choice which they can exercise in fulfilling His demand to ‘do good and avoid evil’. We also pointed out that the fulfilment of Allah’s rules requires ‘understanding’ of the rules as an absolute precondition. Rules have to be comprehensible, so that both the man on the street and the country’s intellectual elite are able to follow them. Rules should not possess ‘ambiguity’ (tash§buh) but be clear, unambiguous, and precise. Once these rules have been made clear the people are able to either accept or reject them. Hence, knowledge and acceptance are the prerequisites for following the rules of the umm al-kit§b. In other words, these rules are not unconditioned or objective, but conditioned insofar as they require acceptance in order to be implemented and subjective because their execution is subject to men’s

consciousness and decision-making. This is the realm of al-qa·§”.

Two verses from Sårat al-Nis§” illustrate the distinction we have made:

Wherever you are, death will find you out, even if you are in towers built up strong and high! If some good befalls them, they say, “This is from Allah”, but if evil, they say, “This is from you” (O Prophet). Say: “All things are from Allah.” But what has come to these people that they fail to understand a single fact. (Al-Nis§” 4:78)

Whatever good, (O man!) happens to you, is from Allah, but whatever evil happens to you, is from yourself. And we have sent you as a messenger to (instruct) mankind. And enough is Allah for a witness. (Al-Nis§” 4:79)

The first verse, by stating that ‘wherever you are, death will find you out’, makes it clear that truth is absolute and independent from human acts, be they for or against it. Death will ‘find people out, wherever they are’. ‘What has come to these people that they fail to understand a single fact (hadÊth[an])’, asks the verse. Note the term hadÊth here, a term that we defined as relating to al-qur”§n. And indeed, the first verse does not talk about good and evil in human behaviour but about good and evil in objective reality, the existence of life and death, of angels and the devil, which all have their origin in Allah. ‘Say: “All things are from Allah.”’ This verse talks about al-qadar.

The second verse, however, talks about good and evil in human behaviour. Whereas in objective reality angels (symbolising good) and the devil (evil) are both essential parts of the truth, and no preference exists for either of the two, angels are supposed to compete with the devil in what humans do. In saying, ‘Whatever good, (O man!) happens to you, is from Allah, but whatever evil happens to you, is from yourself’, the verse acknowledges: a) a distinction between ‘what is from Allah’ and ‘what is from human beings’, and b) an autonomy in human acts. These acts of human behaviour are

thought to be regulated by the rules of the umm al-kit§b that are MuÈammad's (ß) messengerhood. MuÈammad (ß) was ordered by God to give people instructions about His rules. 'And we have sent you as a messenger to (instruct) humankind.' This verse talks about al-qa·§".

The following verse will give us an indication as to why it is so significant to distinguish between the al-qadar and al-qa·§":

Thy Lord has decreed [qa·§] that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour. (Al-Isr§" 17:23)

This is clearly an instruction that falls into the category of umm al-kit§b, as people have a choice whether to follow it and treat their parents respectfully or reject it and do the opposite. It is the realm of 'worship none but Him' by 'those who understand' to which the ethical rule ('be kind to parents') is attached. It would be a mistake to regard this verse as part of the qur"§n because then the ethical demand would turn into an objective fact whether one subjectively intended to do it or not. 'To be kind to parents' would turn into an objective law of human behaviour which exists absolutely and independently of what human beings actually do. Even if people began to abuse their parents, disobey them, or starve them to death, it would still count as 'being kind to parents' because, objectively, people cannot but 'be kind to parents' regardless of their subjective intentions. In analogy, if 'to worship none but Him' became objective law, it would not matter whether someone subjectively worships idols, pagan gods, or political despots such as Pharaoh, because all of these would count, objectively, as worship of Him. This is the big error that we find in Ibn 'ArabÊ's Fußåß al-\ikam where the author announced a 'unity of worship', implying that since God had decreed (qa·§) to 'worship none but Him', humans are predestined to do exactly that (in whatever manner and regardless of their individual intentions). In Ibn 'ArabÊ's notion of the unity of worship, free will to accept or reject a 'worship of Him' does not exist. The rules of Islam became an inescapable fate—heedless of what someone actually intended to believe or practise—a

determined destiny that releases people from being responsible and in charge of their religious and ethical deeds. Because of Ibn ‘ArabÊ’s huge influence the verb qa·§ was seen as synonymous with qadara, and this has had a disastrous effect on the Arab-Muslim mind.

Finally, let us look again at the verses that we cited at the beginning of this chapter:

That is indeed a Qur’an most honourable, in a book well-guarded, which none shall touch but those who are clean. (A l-W§qi#a 56: 77–79)

These verses have been the subject of another fatal confusion between matters of a l-qur§n and the rules of umm a l-kit§b. The verb la yamassuhu was not understood in its indicative form (they do not touch) but rather as an imperative (they shall not touch). What was a descriptive narrative about the angels who did not touch the qur”§n, became a proscriptive rule and a ban for the ritually impure not to touch the Book. A statement of the qur”§n turned into a statement of the umm al-kit§b, and something from the realm of al-qadar was transformed into something of al-qa·§”. As a consequence, menstruating women, women in childbirth, and people of impurity are today not allowed to touch a copy of the qur”§n, only ink on white paper (!), which is, to say the least, simply outrageous.

*** Summary

al-qur”§n umm al-kit§b

Hermeneutical quality of verses | ambiguous | definite |

| Content | The truth of absolute reality that allows humans’ relative knowledge of it; it separates truth from falsehood | Rules of human

behaviour; it separates things that are allowed from things that are absolute taboos |

| Context of revelation | No causes of revelation | Responds to historical circumstances |

| Possibility of abrogation | No | Yes |

| Origin | ‘Clear Record’ and

‘Tablet preserved” | Allah’s throne: a direct command from Him |

| Inz§l and TanzÊl | Separate processes; al-inz§l and al-ja#l precede al-tanzÊl | Simultaneous processes without preceding transformation (al-ja#l) |

| Prophethood or Messengerhood | Prophethood (includes the ‘explanation of the book’ and the ‘seven oft-recited’) | Messengerhood |

| Sovereignty or Divinity | God’s sovereignty: it does not allow humans’ approval or disapproval | God’s divinity: the area of His rules, instructions, and commandments |

| al-qadar or al-qa·§” | al-qadar: Allah’s predestination of universal, objective, absolute laws of nature, the cosmos and society; historical events are determined after their occurrence | al-qa·§”: the legal, ethical, and religious codes of human behaviour; human beings have free will and choose between acceptance and refusal |

| Inimitability | The qur”§n is inimitable due to its quality of ‘ambiguity’ and being subject to historical/philosophical interpretations (al-ta”wÊl) | The umm al-kit§b is not inimitable, but it is subject to legal, ethical, and religious interpretations

(al-tafsÊr) |

** 4. The Theory of Limits

This chapter explains the existence of limits in MuÈammad’s (ß) message. It also shows that Islamic legislation must be based on the principles of ijtih§d that govern a controlled renewal and flexible adaptation of legal rules to changing historical circumstances. It offers an alternative view to the current attempts to regard sharÊ#a law as an eternally fixed body of rigid rulings which allows neither additions nor modifications, and whose strict rules must be followed by every Muslim to the letter. Our alternative reading of MuÈammad’s (ß) message allows us to reinterpret the rules of sharÊ#a law as constantly evolving and, at the same time, to accept the sunna of the Prophet (ß) as a model in applying Allah’s laws flexibly to the everchanging circumstances in a variety of different cultures and economic systems. We will start by explaining what we mean by ‘change of Islamic legislation’ and why we still adhere to the belief in the ‘eternal validity’ of MuÈammad’s (ß) message. We will then introduce the concepts of ‘straightness’ and ‘curvature’ as they apply to sharÊ#a law and specify the upper and lower limits of Islamic legislation. A detailed application of our theory of limits to the area of Islamic inheritance and family law will follow in the next chapter.

*** The Need of Change in Islamic Legislation

Let us start by revisiting the distinction between al-isl§m and al-Êm§n: to believe in Allah’s existence and the Last Day are the quintessential elements of al-isl§m, culminating in the creed that ‘there is no god but God’. Being the root and stem of its three main sub-branches— ethics, law, and rituals— al-isl§m also contains the area of sharÊ#a law which is, as we defined in chapter 1, the area of al-Êm§n, of MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood (since a l-isl§m is the generic type of the particular al-Êm§n). Followers of al-Êm§n believe that ‘MuÈammad is

God’s Messenger’ and are, thus, Muslim-Believers (al-mu”minån). As law and legislation are subrooted in a l-

isl§m and as a l-isl§m is eternally valid, MuÈammad’s message is also eternally valid. The question is, of course, how does this square with our notion of an ever-changing legislation and its flexible adaptation to human develop ment?

We need to recall the historical truth that the more knowledge and expertise human societies accumulate and advance technologically, the more intense will they feel the impact of social, cultural, and economic change. And the more human societies change the more flexible and adaptable must be the law to accommodate its rules to the changing parameters of people’s daily life. Think of the time when car manufacturers improved their assembly lines so that cars could be mass produced—this not only changed the way people travelled, commuted, and went about their daily routines, it also required new legislation that regulated entirely new areas concerned with traffic control, the issuing of driving licences, and prosecution of driving offences. Or think of the legal consequences when it became possible for several nations in the world to produce nuclear weapons in the 1960s and 1970s; international law had to be adapted to this new technological advance, and the United Nations had to adjust their legislation accordingly. Or, when mobile phones became affordable consumer goods for all in the 1990s, new legislation had to regulate whether it was legal to use mobile phones at work, during public events, or at the steering wheel while driving a car. These few examples are enough to show the link between technological progress and the need to follow suit with new legislation. They also provide an illustration of the dynamics between prophethood and messengerhood during the time of the prophetical epoch, that is, before the death of Prophet MuÈammad (ß).

We know that there were more prophets than messengers in the history of humankind. The many, different prophethoods represented the constant accumulation of knowledge over long periods of time. What was then required was a messenger, ending the historical chain of prophets, who would bring new developments in line with official legislation by introducing new codes of behaviour. However, today we have been told not to wait until a new messenger arrives and issues a new message, because—and this is final—MuÈammad (ß) was the last messenger. How can we, citizens of the twenty-first century, an era of fast developments and

epistemologic al-technological progress, deal with a message that was revealed to people in the seventh century?

The answer lies in the fact that the Book did not stipulate the sharÊ#a in the form of a codified law that is eternally unchangeable. Instead, Allah set the limits for the law whose upper and lower boundaries encompass the scope of legislation that human societies are allowed to explore freely. For the first time in the history of humankind, the messenger, MuÈammad (ß), did not introduce fixed regulations that accurately reflected the achieved accumulation of knowledge and technological progress of his time. Instead, he conveyed, in terms of its civilisational qualities, a highly advanced form of legislation that stood in sharp contrast to the existing abysmal economic situation and primitive tribalism of Arabian society. It was clear from the beginning that some verses of the new legislation were impossible to implement there and then because of the primitive backwardness of Arabian tribes. We hear that:

The desert Arabs are the most stubborn of all peoples in their disbelief and hypocrisy. They are the least likely to recognize the limits [Èudåd] that God has sent down to His Messenger. God is all knowing and all wise. (Al-Tawba 9:97, AH)

This acknowledgement of the Arab’s incapability to fully recognise the impact of the new law implies that the needed recognition could be achievable in more advanced societies. This is why the possibility of advanced recognition has been built into the text of the Book, because accumulation of knowledge never ends, technological development never stops, and legislation will never remain the same. We are today in a much better position to understand the legislative verses of the divine message because of the advances that human and natural sciences have achieved.

And we can confidently say that we have surpassed the Prophet’s companions in doing so, with the exception, of course, of the area of rituals. This is the only part of MuÈammad (ß) message that the companions knew best because they saw how MuÈammad (ß) performed them. It is the only

area of law where innovations are illegitimate. The Messenger (ß) said, ‘whoever brings up new things in this matter of ours, is to be rejected’;[221] and ‘every innovation is deviation and every deviation is in the Hell fire’; [222] and the Book says: ‘The Messenger has said: “Lord, my people treat this qur”§n as something to be shunned”’ (Al-Furq§n 25:30; AH).

In order to understand the legal message of the Book and the dynamics between its eternal validity and historical temporality, it is necessary to introduce two contradictory yet complementary concepts that form the basis of our theory of limits. These are ‘straightness’ (al-istiq§ma) and ‘curvature’ (al-ÈanÊfiyya): they represent the internal dialectics of human life between the constant acquisition of new knowledge, leading to social and economic changes, on the one hand, and on the other, the introduction of new legislation as a proactive response to these changes and developments. We believe that the two concepts of ‘straightness’ and ‘curvature’ allow the full recognition of such dialectical dynamics without which no true contemporary understanding of Islamic law can ever be achieved.

Let us first look at the verses in which the terms occur.

‘Straightness’

Show us the straight way [al-ßir§ã al-mustaqÊm]. (Al-F§tiÈa, 1:6) Say: “Verily, my Lord has guided me to a way that is straight [ßir§ã mustaqÊm]—a religion of right—the path (trod) by Abraham the true in faith, and he (certainly) joined not gods with God.” (Al-An#§m 6:161) Verily, this is my way, leading straight [ßir§ãÊ mustaqÊm[an]]: follow it; follow not (other) paths, they will scatter you about from His (great) path: thus does He command you, that you may be righteous. (A l-An#§m

6:153)

And We guided them to the straight way [a l-ßir§ã a l-mustaqÊm]. (A l-‘§ff§t 37:118)

We find in these verses the concept of ‘straightness’ in the form of the adjective mustaqÊm. Both noun and adjective are derived from the Arabic root q-w-m which can mean two things: 1) a collective body of men, that is, ‘crowd’, which basically functions like the plural imra” (men), or 2) a reference to either intaßaba (to erect/set up/right) or #aíama (to determine/resolve/firmly intend). The concept of ‘straightness’ is derived from the root meaning of intaßaba and means ‘to put something right that has strayed’, and the Qur’anic notion of al-isl§m as the ‘correct or true religion’ (al-dÊn al-qayyim) is also defined by the second meaning of #aíama (strength); [223] hence the notion of ‘straight’ also connotes the meaning of ‘strong and mighty’ (qawÊy). This double meaning of ‘putting straight’ and ‘being strong’, which already indicates the dialectical nature of ‘straightness’ and ‘curvature”—the true strength of the Islamic religion—can be found in the following verses:

[Al-rij§l] are the protectors and maintainers [qaww§mån] of [al-nis§”]…[224] (Al-Nis§” 4:34)

God! There is no god but He, the living, the self-subsisting [al-qayyåm], eternal… (Al-Baqara 2:255)

‘Curvature’

As for the term ‘curvature’, this occurs in the Book primarily in the form of the noun ÈanÊf (sing.) or Èunaf§” (pl.), referring a) to those who are ‘true in their faith’ and b) to the religion the faithful adhere to. We hear from the Book:

So [Prophet] as a man of pure faith, stand firm and true in your devotion to the religion [li’l-dÊn ÈanÊf [an]]. This is the natural disposition [fiãra] God instilled in mankind—there is no altering God’s creation—and this is the right religion [al-dÊn al-qayyim], though most people do not realize it. (Al-Råm 30:30, AH)

And they have been commanded no more than this: To worship God, offering Him sincere devotion, being true (in faith) [al-dÊn Èunaf§”]; to establish regular prayer; and to practise regular charity; and that is the religion right and straight [dÊn al-qayyima]. (Al-Bayyina 98:5)

Being true in faith to God [Èunaf§” li-ll§h], and never assigning partners to Him… (Al-\ajj 22:31)

Who can be better in religion than one who submits his whole self to

God, does good, and follows the way of Abraham the true in faith [ÈanÊf [an]]? For God did take Abraham for a friend. (Al-Nis§” 4:125)[225]

However, etymologically the noun ÈanÊf is derived from the Arabic root È-n-f which means ‘to drift’ or ‘to bend’ and almost always implies an aspect of incorrectness or distortion. If, for example, someone walks with a twisted ankle or a crippled foot one would use adjectives derived from È-n-f (e.g., aÈnaf) in order to indicate a foot distortion. Furthermore, related root words such as kh-n-f or j-n-f, which only differ from È-n-f by a different first radical, connote similar kinds of distortion or deviation, for example, khanafa, is to speak with a nasal twang, while janafa indicates a distorted sense of justice or unbalanced judgement, as indicated in the Book:

But if anyone fears partiality or wrong-doing [janaf [an]] on the part of the testator… (Al-Baqara 2:182)

In our reading of Sårat A l-An#§m, verse 79, the quality of being ‘curved’ or ‘bent’ (ÈanÊf) is a natural quality as it is intrinsic to human nature in the material, objective world. The verse reads as follows:

Lo! I have turned my face toward Him who created [faãara] the heavens and the earth, as one by nature [ÈanÊf [an]],[226] and I am not of the idolaters. (Al-An#§m 6:79; MP)

The term ÈanÊf occurs here in the form of a È§l-accusative, ÈanÊf [an], and designates the state or quality of the act to which the previous subclause refers, that is, to God’s creation of the heavens and the earth.[227] This implies that nature has been created in a nonlinear fashion, and that all things in the universe, from the smallest electrons to the biggest galaxies, move in curves. And since there is no natural ‘straightness’ in God’s creation, human beings, in their innate natural disposition (al-fiãra, notice the same root as the verb faãara in verse 79) are also characterised by curvature and a lack of straightness. But in their ‘curvedness’ they are in total harmony with the material, objective reality around them as this is marked by the same law of natural nonlinearity.

If the entire universe is characterised by curvature, nonlinear movement, and change, straightness will be necessary in order to implement some sort of equilibrium and constancy. Human beings need Allah as their guide to show them the ‘straight path’ (al-ßir§ã al-mustaqÊm) because of this necessity for controlling and restraining their natural inclination to constant permutations. Essentially, humans do not need God’s guidance to follow their ÈanÊfiyya disposition—they instinctively ‘bend towards’ non-linearity and change— hence, no verse in the Book tells man how to seek curvature. Instead, we hear ‘this is the natural disposition (fiãrat All§h) God instilled in humankind—there is no altering God’s creation—and this is the right religion…’ (Al-Råm 30:30; AH) and, thus, we hear instead ‘show us the straight way (a l-ßir§ã a l-mustaqÊm)’ (A l-F§tiÈa 1:6), not ‘show us curvature’.

Even if straightness is provided by God and curvature is a feature of human nature, this does not mean that God’s aim is to entirely replace curvature by straightness. This would destroy the disposition He created for humankind. It does mean that curvature and straightness stand together in a dialectical relationship whereby stability and change are intrinsically intertwined. This dialectical opposition between curvature and straightness allows for a limitless number of movements which human legislation can take so that Islamic law remains adaptable to all times and places until the coming of the Last Hour. It means that God’s provision of straightness allows humankind to know the utmost limits of human behaviour which humankind is not allowed to transgress. But within these extreme limits, as stated in the umm a l-kit§b, human beings are allowed to move freely and adjust their legislation according to the needs and circumstances of their times.

The following examples will help us to understand how intrinsic and natural the concept of upper and lower limits is for all of us in our daily life:[]

1. People live in locations in this earth which are defined by an average altitude between two extremes. We do not live on top of the highest mountains (the upper limit would be Mount Everest in the Himalayas) nor on land that is situated much below sea level (the Jordan Valley near the Dead Sea is the lowest limit). Only a tiny minority dare to occupy the extreme regions of this earth (e.g., mountaineers and adventurers), while the majority prefer to live in the middle between the outermost limits.

2. Daylight varies throughout the year according to season and time of the year. In Damascus, for example, the longest day of the year is fourteen hours and twenty-six minutes, while the shortest day is only nine hours and fifty minutes long. The other days of the year are in between these two extremes.

3. The human eye can only see colours that are visible within the spectrum of light. It cannot recognise the colours that are above violet or below red.

4. The human ear can only hear vibrations of sounds that are between the range of twenty to twenty-thousand Hertz. Body temperature, heart rate, frequency of breathing through inhaling and exhaling, the movement of our limbs, and such—all these function naturally between two extremes, and if these limits were transgressed, the body would cease to function properly.

5. The amount of blood sugar in our veins varies between 70 and 120 mg. Any amount in between the limits is normal, even if it is exactly either 70 or 120 mg, but this would trigger some tests and closer supervision. Most of us will have a healthy blood sugar level between the two extremes, as we do in relation to cholesterol, blood corpuscles, fat, and other elements of the blood.

6. Daytime temperatures also vary between two extremes. We may, for example, have a case where the highest temperature ever measured in a city is 46˚C, while the lowest temperature is –5˚C. Most days of the year, however, do not reach these extreme temperatures and the average is somewhere between the two. The same applies to the measurement of wind speed, air humidity, rainfall, or the height of waves on the sea.

7. In order to prevent dehydration the human body needs a minimum amount of liquid per day, but there is no strict upper limi for this. The amount needed differs according to air temperature, humidity, human activity, and other external factors.

8. The minimum speed required to overcome gravitation forces is 11km/s, while there is no limit for the maximum speed. However, if a spaceship reached the speed of light, the spaceship would turn itself into light.

9. The fastest possible way to travel is at the speed of light. No higher speed has ever been recorded. The minimum speed, however, is not zero m/h, because this would be an absolute standstill. Only when a body moves will it qualify as having speed.

10. The minimum requirement for organic life is the existence of water (i.e., humidity) and oxygen.

11. The minimum amount of subshells circling an atomic nucleus is one, and the maximum amount is seven. Hydrogen, for example, has only one subshell, while others have seven, such as radium. Therefore, the number of circling subshells always varies between one and seven.

These examples are sufficient to demonstrate how nature and society function between upper and lower limits, adherence to which is vital for the preservation of life.

The first person in the history of Islam who recognised the significance of the ÈanÊfiyya disposition of change and nonlinearity was Abraham. He, followed by other prophets and messengers after him, came to believe that nothing in nature and society should be forced to become fixed and stable, since this would mean turning something into ‘straightness’, a quality that only God alone can possess. To pretend ‘straightness’ for something that is naturally ‘curved’ is to violate Allah’s unity and commit shirk All§h. That is why in verse 161 of Sårat Al-An#§m the tauÈÊd of Abraham’s faith is contrasted to the shirk of the unbelievers:

Say: “Verily, my Lord has guided me to a way that is straight [ßir§ã mustaqÊm]—a religion of right—the path (trod) by Abraham, the true in faith [ÈanÊf [an]], [↔] and he (certainly) joined not gods with God.” (Al-An#§m 6:161)

In light of this verse, we say that Abraham’s faith consisted of his belief in the ÈanÊfiyya disposition of nature (curvature and change) and in the existence of Allah’s straightness in the form of limits between which the ‘curved progression of nature’ occurs. It was because of this belief and Abraham’s insistence on the unity of Allah’s sovereignty (a l-rubåbiyya) that the Book told us to see him as a role model to follow:

Abraham was truly an example: devoutly obedient to God and true in faith… (Al-NaÈl 16:120; AH)

In line with this perception of nature, the following examples show that curvature between the limits of straightness is also realised within the realm of human behaviour and social, that is, legally regulated, interaction:

1. The clearest sign of the existence of limits within a society are the actual borders of a country. These borders define the extent to which national laws apply and within which social, cultural, and economic relations are regulated. Between these borders a multitude of possible variations are permissible; in terms of how and where people settle down, the regional areas they live in, go to work, change their place of residence, spend their spare time, educate their children, and such. If someone wants to escape these societal patterns of life and work, in order to avoid breaking the law, he or she will have to cross the border and live under a different jurisdiction, by other norms, and within new borders.

2. The lawgiver in a society stipulates the maximum number of hours a human being is required to work without being able to claim overtime payment from his or her employer. Similarly, in every workplace there exists a notion of the minimum number of hours that an employee must work before the manager steps in and issues an official warning or even initiates a cut in wages because of negligence or absenteeism.

3. We are faced with hundreds of traffic signs on the roads that prescribe the maximum or minimum speed limit allowed or requested in order to secure a smooth flow of traffic. If someone exceeds the maximum speed limit or ignores the minimum speed limit, the traffic police will act and, together with city officials, prosecute the person for having broken the law.

4. If a toddler burns his fingers on a hot stove he has, despite the fact that he was told by his parents not to go near the stove, crossed a limit and is

punished for it (burnt fingers). He has also had a moving, new experience (pain). This is because of our innate curiosity that sometimes causes a deviation from the rules and ignites some (curved) movements by sheer impulse.

These examples illustrate that human behaviour needs to be restrained by legal order. This is the reason why Allah sent messengers to humankind who brought legislation in order to put lawless societies back on (the straight) track. Before it was MuÈammad's (ß) turn to bring a new message, Allah decided to send messengers who, each in his own society, enforced concrete punishments that were expressly stipulated for each individual crime. It was a type of direct, explicit legislation that ended with MuÈammad's (ß) messengerhood which marked the beginning of a new legal concept: lex liminalis,[228] law by which humans legislate between the legal limits that the Book provides.[229]

MuÈammad's (ß) message not only launched a new type of human legislation but, by allowing change and nonlinearity, it also best reflected the nature of humans' ÈanÊfic predisposition. As such it essentially reflects the religion of al-isl§m that fully corresponds to the innate propensity of all people on this earth, even if they are not (yet) aware of it.[230] We sincerely believe that, sooner or later, most people will realise their natural inclination to this type of legislation, following the model of Abraham who was leaning towards his ÈanÊfic 'rectitude of conduct' even before he received divine revelations:

Long ago We bestowed right judgement on Abraham and We knew him well. (Al-Anbiy§" 21:51, AH)

Abraham's insights into the cosmological truth of ÈanÊfic law were passed on directly to MuÈammad (ß), since the Book tells us that lex liminalis was not part of the Christian and Jewish legal systems:

Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in faith, and bowed his will to God’s (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with God. ($l #Imr§n 3:67)

We hear, for example, that when the Jews were told to sacrifice a heifer, they asked what specific kind of heifer they were supposed to slaughter. And we hear how God provided every detailed answer to every question (i.e., not a single detail of the law was left open to be filled by human legislation).[231] In questions of penal law, we are told that the punitive logic of their lex talionis required them to immediately punish a crime by maximum force and a like-for-like mentality that induced indiscriminate punishment:

We ordained therein for them: “Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal.” (Al-M§“ida 5:45)

In contrast, Islamic legislation tries to avoid punishments being indiscriminately enforced and instead considers mitigation as absolutely vital. In the case of theft, for example, the amputation of the thief’s hand must be only regarded as the last resort if other forms of punishment have proved ineffective or if the type of theft was very serious. If, for instance, only a slice of bread has been stolen and if this was not done out of sheer menace but because of desperate hunger, to cut off a person’s hand—as if he had stolen somebody’s possessions out of greed and pure self-indulgence—is a violation of the flexible and moderate character of Islamic law. Yes, we accept that MuÈammad (ß) had indeed ordered the amputation of the hands of thieves in Medina, but we should not forget that the second caliph #Umar b. al-Khaãã§b (r) ruled against the Prophet’s example and pardoned a number of thieves.[232] In doing this, the caliph certainly did not abolish the Èadd penalty for theft once and for all. What he did was to exercise his right to judge each case individually. If a theft did not occur to him sufficiently grave or sufficiently proved, he did not apply the maximum penalty.[233] Because of this inbuilt flexibility of Islamic law, #Umar, opting for a different form of penalty, did not violate the divine ruling on theft. What he did was to simply move with his (human) legislation between the upper limit of punishment for theft (amputation of the right hand) and its lower limit (full pardon). And we should add that what #Umar did as caliph in

seventhcentury Arabia has today become common practice in legal systems around the whole world. This makes our argument even stronger that the aspect of limits is a natural element in all human legislation. And while #Umar acted on impulse in judging cases of theft differently, we today can benefit from the findings of mathematical statistics and the scientific theories of limits that provide much more sophisticated means for pursuing a further diversification of Islamic legislation. We no longer need the help of our honourable scholars who would only continue their search for the umpteenth justification for amputation. Instead, we will use modern theories that can lead us to new horizons in the formulation of Islamic law.

*** The Theory of Limits in Islamic Legislation

The theory of limits is based on the notion of a flexible system of (contingent) law that replaces legislation containing rigid regulations and certain penalties that allow no mitigation and are thought to be once-and-for-all fixed. Taking up again an analogy with the measurement of blood sugar in the blood, we propose a system that allows much tolerance in what is perceived to be normal, that is, we tolerate blood sugar levels within the range of 70 to 120 mg because we believe that if we insisted on a strict limit of just 70 mg as the only acceptable level of blood sugar we would seriously risk the health of millions of people. Doctors all over the world know that 70 mg is just the lower limit and that blood sugar levels of up to 120 mg (the upper limit) can be tolerated.

The legal verses of the Book provide us with the legislative framework within which we may adopt the new laws required by social change. A framework of legislation does not contain, as many believe, certain penalties which turn into ‘sources of law’, but just their outposts or, to use a football term, their sidelines. In some legal cases one may not even come near such sidelines, in others it is permitted to touch the line without fully stepping over it. Analogous to a football match, Islamic law allows movement over the entire football field. Sidelines only indicate the limits within which the game can be played while still allowing millions of different ways to play the game and of applying different tactics and strategies. Islamic law after MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood requires legislation within the limits of Allah, allowing an unlimited number of different legislations

according to the needs of society. That is why MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood is called ‘mother of the book’ (umm al-kit§b) and not just ‘book’—as Moses’ and Jesus’ messengerhoods were called—because it allows millions of ‘books’ of legislations to be derived from it. And as the ‘mother of the book’ abrogated the previous books of Moses and Jesus, so will future legislations (‘books’) subsequently abrogate each other (not, of course, within weeks or months as some of our critics have insinuated).

Limits of Legislation

5. Lower limit

Lower limits are provided in:

A. The verses of marriage:

And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what is past: It was shameful and odious—an abominable custom indeed.

(Al-Nis§” 4:22)

Prohibited to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, daughters, sisters, father’s sisters, mother’s sisters, brother’s daughters, sister’s daughters, foster-mothers (who gave you suck), foster-sisters, your wives’ mothers, your step-daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in—no prohibition if you have not gone in— (those who have been) wives of your sons proceeding from your loins, and two sisters in wedlock at one and the same time, except for what is past; for God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-Nis§” 4:23)

In these two verses of Sårat a l-Nis§” Allah has issued a rule that provides a lower limit prohibiting certain marriage types. Nobody is permitted to transgress this lower limit. Under no circumstances is an ijtih§d acceptable that, for whatever cultural or political demands, aims at allowing a Muslim-Believer to marry his mother, daughter, maternal or paternal aunt, and the like. However, since the lower limit stands alone in the text, one may add further restrictions. For example, if medical tests indicate that children from couples who are cousins show higher risks of developing genetic disorders, the legislator is required to respond and to extend the list of prohibited marriage partners to the children of maternal or paternal aunts (note that this prohibition can never be an absolute taboo, because this is God’s prerogative).

Such an extension would not violate Allah’s limits, because, in stipulating possible marital arrangements, He did not provide an upper limit. The only condition is that clear scientific proof must be provided before any new legislation can be introduced. This means that a call for ijtih§d must be based on scientific evidence, and not on analogy. Analogies compare newly arising legal problems with previous legal cases or with a consensus of jurists who lived in the past, such as the salaf forefathers. Such analogical reasoning is, by definition, retrospective and regressive. It prevents Islamic legislation from being truly ÈanÊfic, that is, changeable, progressive, and adaptive to new scientific discoveries. God has assured us that mujtahids who, in their endeavour to be as scientific and analytical as possible, make mistakes, still deserve Allah’s reward for their efforts, and that mujtahids whose decisions are right will be given a double reward.

B. The food taboos:

Forbidden unto you (for food) are carrion and blood and swineflesh, and that which has been dedicated unto any other than Allah, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which has been killed by (the goring of) horns, and the devoured of wild beasts, saving that which you make lawful (by the death-stroke), and that which has been immolated unto idols. And (forbidden is it) that you swear by

the divining arrows. This is an abomination. This day are those who disbelieve in despair of (ever harming) your religion. So fear them not, fear Me! This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion a l-Islam. Whoso is forced by hunger, not by will, to sin: (for him) lo! Allah is forgiving, merciful. (Al-M§“ida 5:3)

Verse 3 of Sårat al-M§“ida lists ‘carrion and blood and swineflesh’ as prohibited food as well as food that has been ‘dedicated unto any other than Allah’. This constitutes the lower limit for those who want to legislate what is illegal to eat. A different category is meat of ‘the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which has been killed by (the goring of) horns, and the devoured of wild beasts’. Food from this kind of meat cannot be regarded as an absolute taboo, because, if one manages to slaughter it correctly by an ‘invocation of God’s name’, it becomes

Èal§l food and, hence, edible:[234]

Say: “I find not in the message received by me by inspiration any (meat) forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it be dead meat, or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine, for it is an abomination, or what is impious (meat), on which a name has been invoked, other than God’s”. But (even so), if a person is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, your Lord is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-An#§m 6:145) Why should you not eat of (meats) on which God’s name has been pronounced, when He has explained to you in detail what is forbidden to you, except under compulsion of necessity? But many do mislead (men) by their appetites unchecked by knowledge. Thy Lord knows best those who transgress. (Al-An#§m 6:119)

These two verses of Sårat al-An#§m state that under duress one is allowed to eat food that is normally forbidden. A transgression of Allah’s lower limit is hence permitted provided that we did not invent the reason that forced us to eat forbidden food. Such an exemption from the normal rule, however, does not exist with regard to marital arrangements. Under no circumstances is

one permitted to cross the lower limit, not even in exceptional circumstances. Even if marriage outside one’s own family has become virtually impossible because of a dramatic shortage of unmarried women/men, it would still be illegal to marry close relatives.

Note that 5:3, which states Allah’s lower limit in terms of food taboos, is immediately followed by the announcement that:

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you as religion al-isl§m. (Al-M§“ida 5:3)

This implies that 5:3 is Allah’s last revelation as far as His legislation of limits is concerned. It is chronologically, therefore, the last verse of MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood and thus of the umm al-kit§b. And yet, it is not the last verse of the entire Book as far as the whole al-mußÈaf is concerned because it also includes the verses of al-qur”§n.

C. The regulations concerning debt:

O you who believe! When you deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time, reduce them to writing. Let a scribe write down faithfully as between the parties: let not the scribe refuse to write as God has taught him, so let him write. Let him who incurs the liability dictate, but let him fear His Lord, and not diminish aught of what he owes. If the party liable is mentally deficient, or weak, or unable himself to dictate, let his guardian dictate faithfully, and get two witnesses, out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as you choose, for witnesses, so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her. The witnesses should not refuse when they are called on (for evidence). Disdain not to reduce to writing (your contract) for a future period, whether it be small or big: it is juster in the sight of God, more suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves but if it be a transaction which you carry out on the spot among yourselves, there is no

blame on you if you reduce it not to writing. But take witness whenever you make a commercial contract, and let neither scribe nor witness suffer harm. If you do (such harm) it would be wickedness in you. So fear God; for it is God that teaches you. And God is well acquainted with all things. (Al-Baqara 2:282)

If you are on a journey, and cannot find a scribe, a pledge with possession (may serve the purpose). And if one of you deposits a thing on trust with another let the trustee (faithfully) discharge his trust, and let him fear his Lord. Conceal not evidence; for whoever conceals it, his heart is tainted with sin. And God knows all that you do. (A l-Baqara 2:283)

In verses 282–83 of al-Baqara, Allah stipulated the lowest limit for what can be accepted as a valid contract. Since no upper limit has been set further regulations might be added that reflect the changing nature of financial contracts and the ever evolving rules of society's commercial markets.[235] Note that the minimal requirement of 'one man or two women' only refers to an oral contract ('so that if one of them errs, the other can remind her…'). If two women must appear in person to witness the 'signing' (or sealing) of a contract, it is because the contract is only expressed orally, and not in writing. However, if such contract is produced in written form, the testimony of two females is no longer necessary. In this case, the minimum of 'one man or one woman' is all that is required. We reject all sexist interpretations that explain double female testimony as proof of women's inferiority and an indication of their incompetence in commercial affairs.

D. Women's dress:

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their [lower] private parts [furåjahunna]; that they should not display their [hidden] beauty [zÊnatahunna] except what [visibly of her beauty] appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their [upper] private parts [juyåbihinna] and not display their [hidden] beauty [zÊnatahunna] except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or [what follows] next

in line [nis§“ihinna], or the [temporary partner] whom their right hands possess, or male [persons] free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden [beauty] [zÊnatihinna]. O you believers! Turn you all together towards God, that you may attain bliss. (Al-Når 24:31)[236]

In stipulating the rules of how women are required to cover their body, the Book merely provides us with a lower limit. The reason why only a lower limit is stated and what exactly this implies will be explained in detail in chapter 5. Suffice it to say here that 4:31 allows, under certain circumstances, to transgress the lower limit of 24:31, which is similar to the case of contingent food taboos in Surat al-An#§m. It is however different, as we mentioned above, from the absolute rule that one must not ignore the limits of marital partners as provided in Sårat al-Baqara.

2. Upper limit

A. The punishment of theft:

As to the thief, male or female, cut off [sic][237] [fa-aqta#å] his or her hands [aidiyahum§]: a punishment by way of example [nak§l[an]], from God, for their crime—God is exalted in power. But if the thief repents after his crime, and amends his conduct, God turns to him in forgiveness; for God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-M§“ida 5:38–39)

Common wisdom has it that Islam is a harsh religion that forbids leniency in cases of theft and demands extreme cruelty against any convicted thief. The truth is that the two verses of Sårat al-M§“ida reflect the flexible character of Islamic legislation that encourages us to mitigate every single case of theft and thus disproves the unmediated application of harsh penalties. Most civilizations in the world possess legal systems in which a process of mitigation is a normal procedure. Mitigation means that judges move—by way of deciding each case differently and on its own merits—between the

limits that Allah has set. It shows that the proposed type of a lex liminalis is a universal, human, and civil form of legislation.

The central clue to the existence of a law of limits in verse 38 is given in the accusative noun nak§l[an], which translates as ‘exemplary punishment’ or ‘punishment as a deterrent’. Allah has set a condition by which the thief’s hand shall be cut off: its aim should be a warning so that the crime will not be repeated. This means that the punishment has a sociopedagogic function; it is not a merciless revenge of a crime. As such, it can only be exercised in the most extreme cases of theft; it is the upper limit of punishments that cannot be transgressed; cutting off the thief’s hand is the most extreme form of exemplary punishment (thus, thieves cannot be executed).

The existence of limits in the theft-verse (representing an upper limit and no lower limit) is reflected in the fact that theft was differently punished in early Islam. The ÈadÊths tell us that even though MuÈammad (ß) applied the Èadd-punishment, that is, he ‘moved’ to the upper limit, #Umar b. al-Khaãã§b, in his capacity as the second caliph, avoided the upper limit and used his ijtih§d to circumvent the most severe form of punishment. It is indeed the responsibility of each mujtahid, following the example of #Umar, to determine which type of theft is so severe that it requires the cutting off of hands, and what type does not. The fact that verse 38 does not want us to show mercy and compassion indicates that it discusses only the most extreme forms of theft, while for normal types of theft we are required to show mercy. In normal cases of theft the rationale for a punishment is to prevent its repetition, and this can be done in different ways, such that one does not have to come near the upper limit (amputation).

The verb used for ‘to cut off’ is the Arabic term q-t-# which, as the dictionary of Ibn a l-F§ris shows, has more meanings than the physical amputation of hands. In phrases like ‘to cut a corner’, ‘to cut a long story short’, ‘to cut off a relationship, or ‘to cut down expenses’, the verb ‘to cut’ is used both literally and metaphorically; and it does not always require a knife or a sword to cut something off. In addition to the root meaning of ‘to separate’ or ‘to set apart’, q-t-# can also acquire completely

different connotations in the Arabic language, for example, ‘to sell’, ‘to save’, or ‘to suffocate’. The word is so polysemic that it beggars belief how often ‘to cut off’ is simply understood as ‘amputation’ (for which, incidentally, the Arabic language has an entirely different term, which is al-batr). The common understanding that q-t-# means ‘to cut off’ the left hand of a thief (bizarrely not his right hand!), contradicts the above quoted verse, which clearly uses the plural ‘hands’: (‘his or her hands [aidiyahum§]’), indicating that the best way to keep a thief’s hands(!) off society is to send him or her to prison. Surely, to cut off both hands of a thief would be a barbarity that not even the most scrupulous fuqah§” have ever contemplated.

A clear mistake by the jurists was to associate q-t-# with a complete amputation of the entire (one) hand. However, other verses of the Book, in which q-t-# of hands is discussed, prove that alternative readings are possible. In verse 31 of Sårat Yåsuf we hear, for example, of women who accidentally cut their hands after they became ecstatic over the beauty of Joseph’s face:

When she heard of their malicious talk, she sent for them [women of the city] and prepared a banquet for them: she gave each of them a knife. And she said (to Joseph), “Come out before them.” When they saw him, they did extol him, and (in their amazement) cut their hands [qaãa#na aidiyahunna]: they said, “God preserve us! No mortal is this! This is none other than a noble angel!” (Yåsuf 12:31)

Note that in this situation the women were already equipped with knives, provided by Potifar’s wife, the host of the banquet, which they used in order to peel the fruit served at the buffet. And yet, when, in their amazement, they ‘cut their hands’ they did not ‘cut their hands completely off ’, but only caused some minor cuts that certainly must have hurt but did not mean a loss of their hands.

Other verses support our thesis that the term q-t-# does not necessarily mean the amputation of a part of the body. Verse 49 of Sårat a l-Shu#ar§”, for example, in which Pharaoh is depicted as threatening his court

magicians with severe corporal punishment, makes it logically and anatomically inconceivable to understand the term as ‘to cut off’:

Said (Pharaoh): “You believe in Him before I give you permission? Surely he [Moses] is your leader, who has taught you sorcery! But soon shall you know! “Be sure I will cut off [sic][238] [la-uqaãã i#ann[a]] your hands and your feet on opposite sides, and I will cause you all to die on the cross!” (Al-Shu#ar§” 26:49)

The conjunction ‘and’ used to connect the threat of a cut to their hands and death on the cross, indicates that the Pharaoh envisaged both punishments, in succession, for the wicked sorcerers. But a crucifixion after an amputation of both hands and feet is practically impossible to execute. Hence, the threat ‘to cut your hands’ (la-uqaãã i#ann[a] aidiyakum), preceding the threat of crucifixion, cannot possibly be interpreted as a threat of amputation. This is different from verse 33 of Sårat a l-M§“ida in which not ‘and’ but the conjunction ‘or’ is used which, because of possible alternative punishments, allows the verb q-t-# to be understood as ‘to cut off their hands’:

The punishment of those who wage war against God and His Apostle, and strive with might and main for mischief through the land is: execution, or crucifixion, or the cutting off [au nuqaãã a#[a]] of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land… (Al-M§“ida 5:33)

Other verses suggest even more different renderings of q-t-#, such as ‘to cut across’:

Nor could they spend anything (for the cause)—small or great—nor cut across [yaqãa#ån[a]] a valley, but the deed is inscribed to their credit… (Al-Tawba 9:121) Or ‘to sunder’:

Those who break God’s covenant after it is ratified, and who sunder [yaqãa#ån[a]] what God has ordered to be joined, and do mischief on earth… (Al-Baqara 2:27) Or ‘to wipe out’:

Of the wrong-doers the last remnant was cut off [quãi#[a]]. Praise be to God, the cherisher of the worlds. (Al-An#§m 6:45) Or ‘to break ties’:

Then, is it to be expected of you, if you were put in authority, that you will do mischief in the land, and break your ties [tuqaããi#å] of kith and kin? (MuÈammad 47:22) Or ‘to divide’:

We divided them [qaããa#an§hum] into twelve tribes or nations… (A l-A#r§f 7:160)

In light of these semantic variants of q-t-#, we conclude that the expression ‘to cut the thief’s hand’ cannot be interpreted as ‘amputation by knife or sword’. Instead, we must consider alternative forms of punishments, such as imprisonment, which equally deters convicted thieves to ‘put their hands’ on items that they might steal. Imprisonment also allows society to release fully rehabilitated criminals back into society unharmed, thus fulfilling God’s command to forgive and show mercy in the face of a thief’s repentance and remorse:

But if the thief repents after his crime, and amends his conduct, God turns to him in forgiveness; for God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-M§“ida 5:39)

Unlike a merciless, indiscriminate revenge for theft by corporal punishment, the possibility of imprisonment permits judges to impose different penalties that take the seriousness of each act of theft into consideration. In serious cases, such as stealing intelligence through espionage or embezzling money on the corporate or state level, the judge might interpret this as a serious

threat to national security and our economy and impose the maximum sentence (analogous to the penalty for ‘corruption in the land’, see further below). But if the theft is of a much smaller scale, a lesser sentence will be more appropriate, and convicted criminals could be released from prison on parole if they no longer pose a threat to their community and society as a whole. None of this flexibility is, however, possible if sentences stipulate an indiscriminate amputation of the thief’s hand, regardless of how serious the crime is and regardless of the circumstances in which it takes place. It has become the norm in most legal systems today that one should not go to the extreme and cut off the thief’s hand. Given that, in referring to a thief, the Book always uses the active participle s§riq (‘the one who steals’), referring to someone who is still actively engaged in criminal activities in contrast to someone who has profoundly repented of his crime, we should seriously reconsider our current understanding of theft and adopt a more flexible stance towards it (which, we believe, a well-organised prison system can clearly provide).

B. The punishment for ‘corruption in the land’ and ‘war against God’:

Those who wage war [yuÈ§ribån] against God and His Messenger and strive to spread corruption in the land [yas#aun[a] fi’l-“ar· fas§d[an]] should be punished by death, crucifixion, the amputation of an alternate hand and foot, or banishment from the land… (Al-M§“ida 5:33)

Except for those who repent before they fall into your power: in that case, know that God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-M§“ida 5:34)

Clearly, Allah provides us with the most extreme forms of punishment that determine the upper limit of what judges can impose on the enemies of God and His Messenger. But in light of what we said in chapter 1, that we must not criminalise those ‘who cut off their ties with God’, as they enjoy their human right to do so, we cannot interpret the phrase ‘those who wage war against God and His Messenger’ as a reference to atheists and freethinkers, and ‘corruption in the land’ is not a reference to peaceful opposition to

despotic regimes or, for that matter, to any political authority. Instead, those who wage war against God are those who disrespect freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, and freedom of religion, while ‘corruption in the land’ is a reference to the corruptive practices in the political administrations of this world, to vandalism and antisocial behaviour by thugs and street gangs, and to the pollution of the environment by irresponsible big business tycoons.

Note, however, that He also provides several options, and it is up to the mujtahids to decide, in the concrete historical context, which penalty is the most appropriate for each crime. Note also that in 5:34, following the list of possible punishments in 5:33, God wants to open the ‘gate of forgiveness’ by stressing the possibility of repentance for the sinners ‘before they fall into your power’. Such a condition implies that the sinner’s repentance should occur before any arrest or other forms of intimidation (e.g., torture) take place, allowing time and opportunity for forgiveness on the part of those who prosecute the offender. Since there are three types of punishment mentioned in the verse it indicates that God leaves the decision to human legislators, and since imprisonment is currently the most applied form of punishment, we should accept this as the most sensible way to punish criminals. It is not a sin to stay below the application of the upper limit. Only in the most severe cases of ‘war against God’ and ‘corruption in the lands’ should judges consider the application of the upper limit.

C. Homicide and physical harm:

Nor take life—which God has made sacred—except for just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, we have given his heir authority (to demand qiß§ß or to forgive): but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking life; for he is helped (by the law). (Al-Isr§” 17:33)

O you who believe! The law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain then grant any reasonable demand and compensate him with handsome gratitude; this

is a concession and a mercy from your Lord. After this whoever exceeds the limits shall be in grave penalty. (Al-Baqara 2:178)

Once again, the Book only mentions the upper limit: the most extreme punishment for taking a human life. Verse 33 of Sårat al-Isr§” refers to the punishment of ‘wrongful killing’, defined as an unjust act of unprovoked aggression and disproportionate brutality, but warns ‘not to exceed bounds in this matter’. It is thus forbidden to punish, in addition to the killer, his or her family, clan, and tribe, since excessive, revengeful punishment violates the principle of lex talionis and means that those who impose a penalty have overstepped the upper limit. Mujtahids will be required to clarify the degree of aggression, brutality, and premeditation that would justify the maximum penalty (death), and to distinguish this type of murder from unintentional killing or killing in self-defence for which life-long imprisonment might be the most appropriate punishment.[239]

We notice again the possibility of repentance that is built into verse 178 of Sårat al-Baqara: ‘but if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome gratitude’. As for the crime of killing a person by mistake, several different punitive actions are possible, depending on the social, ethnic, and geographical identity of the victim. Verse 92 of Sårat al-Nis§” mentions a lower limit, consisting of ‘a fast for two consecutive months’ or the ‘freeing of a slave’, but one may free more than just one slave (or the equivalent of money through personal accident insurance policies):

Never should a believer kill a believer; but (if it so happens) by mistake, (compensation is due): If one (so) kills a believer, it is ordained that he should free a believing slave, and pay compensation to the deceased’s family, unless they remit it freely. If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you, and he was a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (is enough). If he belonged to a people with whom you have treaty of mutual alliance, compensation should be paid to his family, and a believing slave be freed. For those who find this beyond their means, (is prescribed) a fast for two months running: by way of repentance to God: for God has all knowledge and all wisdom. (Al-Nis§” 4:92)

Two types of penalties should be distinguished: the first is with regard to the family of the victim, to which the convicted killer must pay a certain amount of ‘blood money’. The second is with regard to the killer himself, whose atonement must consist of freeing a slave or, if he or she cannot afford this, of fasting for two consecutive months. Note that ‘freeing a slave’ has a wider meaning and does not just mean slavery in the conventional sense. It encompasses all forms of (modern) slavery. If a convicted killer liberates someone from the bondage of his or her financial debts, this would be accepted as a modern equivalent to ‘freeing a slave’. This idea is supported by verse 60 of Sårat al-Tawba, which identifies ‘those in slavery’ as those who receive charity (a l-ßadaqa),[240] and verse 177 of Sårat a l-Baqara which mentions financial help for the ‘enslaved’ even before it mentions the duties of prayer and zak§h.[241] In sum, the lower limit of atonement is freeing at least one ‘financially enslaved person’. If one can afford it, one should release more than one. If one cannot afford to free even one, a two-month fast is the absolute minimum for the reparation of the crime.

D. Public homosexual activities (al-faÈsha)

I. Female homosexuality in public:

If any of your women are guilty of lewdness (al-f§Èisha),[242] take the evidence of four (reliable) witnesses from amongst you against them. And if they testify confine them to houses until death do claim them, or God ordain for them some (other) way. (Al-Nis§” 4:15)

The upper limit for punishing homosexual activities between two women in public is their confinement to the house. Their crime is not the homosexual activity as such but the illicit performance of a sexual intercourse in public. The Book is silent about homosexual relationships in people’s private sphere. However, homosexual intercourse in public will be prosecuted, for which the verse demands four (reliable) witnesses ‘from amongst you’ (masculine plural), that is from the general passer-by. No

penalty can be inflicted if a witness is from their own kind: the text clearly says minkum, not minhunna (from among the homosexual women). This implies that, for example, a public ‘coming out’ of a woman who confesses to be lesbian would not count as proper testimony. In any case, since homosexual feelings and desires are not sinful but the public act of intercourse is, lesbian women can enter into a romantic relationship as long as they avoid sexual acts in public. Even if they are caught in public, the verse mentions an alternative punishment to confinement to the house: ‘or God ordain for them some (other) way’. It should be considered that Allah calls here for a much lighter form of punishment. Who are we to think that we can afford to ignore a hint from God for more lenience in such serious matters!

II. Male homosexuality in public:

If two men among you are guilty [of it], punish them both. If they repent and amend leave them alone; for God is oft-returning, most merciful. (Al-Nis§” 4:16)

In the case of homosexual intercourse between two males in public, punishment can be immediately inflicted without the need to call for witnesses. And yet, we should not forget that we can forgive the sinner because God has suggested this possibility in the very same verse. If, however, the path of forgiveness is blocked (because homosexual activities continue publicly) we should not hesitate to inflict punishments that cause pain. Strictly speaking, all kinds of pain, short of death, are allowed because this constitutes the upper limit of punishment for male homosexual intercourse in public.[243] Homosexual relationships in private are of no concern for Muslim legislators as long as they are based on consensual activities that avoid bestiality, debauchery, and orgylike excesses.

3. Conjoined upper and lower limits

This third type, conjoined upper and lower limits, is exemplified in the law of inheritance, which will be explored in detail in the next chapter. The main

aim will be to demonstrate that Islamic inheritance law does not just prescribe one formula for distributing the inheritance but consists of several different options that depend on the number, sex, and the nature of the relationship between those who survive the deceased, for example, whether one has to consider the existence of parents, grandparents, and grandchildren or not. It will also be shown that the inheritance law which has been traditionally applied has had enormous repercussions on the manner in which the political system has functioned, basically since the seventh century. A reform of these inheritance procedures will therefore have a direct impact on the way state and government operate in the ArabMuslim world.

4. Meeting of upper und lower limits at one point – Unchasteness (zin§):

The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication: flog each of them with a hundred stripes; let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by God, if you believe in God and the Last Day: and let a party of the believers witness their punishment. (Al-Når 24:2)

Let no man guilty of adultery or fornication marry but a woman similarly guilty, or an unbeliever: nor let any but such a man or an unbeliever marry such a woman: to the believers such a thing is forbidden. (Al-Når 24:3)

This fourth type refers to injunctions whose punitive measures are unambiguous. They exhibit absolute norms of how to punish for a crime. In the case of zin§ (illicit sexual relations in either fornication or adultery), for example, to ‘flog each of them with a hundred stripes’ is a fixed penalty that combines both upper and lower limits. It should neither be less nor more than one hundred stripes, and no compassion shall ‘move you in their case’. The other instance in which it is not permitted to even come near the prescribed limit (‘do not come near’, 2:187) is Allah’s command to stop eating and drinking during Ramadan as soon as ‘the white thread of dawn becomes distinct from the black’. This has been regarded as so important that a special call from the minaret warns people not to overstep this time limit; if they do their fast will become invalid and this will incur God’s punishment.

Allah does not, however, impose such extreme penalties unconditionally. We hear in verses 4 to 10 of Sårat al-Når that no less than four witnesses are required to support the allegation of adultery. We also hear that ‘the curse of God’ will be evoked if these allegations turn out to be unfounded:

And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegations), flog them with eighty stripes and reject their evidence ever after; for such men are wicked transgressors. Unless they repent thereafter and mend (their conduct); for God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. And for those who launch a charge against their spouses, and have (in support) no evidence but their own, their solitary evidence (can be received) if they bear witness four times (with an oath) by God that they are solemnly telling the truth. And the fifth (oath) (should be) that they solemnly invoke the curse of God on themselves if they tell a lie. But it would avert the punishment from the wife, if she bears witness four times (with an oath) by God that (her husband) is telling a lie. And the fifth (oath) should be that she solemnly invokes the wrath of God on herself if (her accuser) is telling the truth. If it were not for God’s grace and mercy on you, and that God is oft-returning, full of wisdom—(you would be ruined indeed). (Al-Når 24:4–10)

It is remarkable to read how strictly Allah regulates the witnessing of unchaste activities. In requiring four truthful witnesses or a sacred oath from either husband or wife, Allah’s sense of justice is supreme: If God had not made it very hard to accuse someone of adultery we would see hundreds of baseless accusations on a daily basis, wild insinuations made purely out of menace, jealousy, envy, or feelings of frustration and disappointment by being rejected by the accused. Without Allah’s binding conditions for any accusation of adultery, men and women would simply be too frightened to be seen together, girls and boys would be too scared to talk and sit with the opposite sex, and the possibility of platonic friendship between men and women would be too risky to even contemplate. In His justice, Allah not only imposed a very harsh penalty, leaving no room for either mitigation or mercy, He also provided a system of ‘double-checks’ that aims at

counterbalancing the harshness of the imposed penalties and at preventing abuse by overzealous bigots.[244]

5. Lower and upper limits remain untouched by curvature

The fifth type contains the movement of curvature between the lower and upper limits by which neither of the two are touched. This movement of curvature is, for example, present in sexual relations between men and women. Beginning with a point above the lower limit, where men and women do not yet have any physical contact, the curvature moves upward in the direction of the upper limit and stops close to committing zin§. The lower limit (no relationship) and the upper limit (zin§) remain untouched by this relationship. If, however, a couple is legally married, it is permitted to cross the upper limit since their (licit) sexual intercourse will not count as zin§ (here: adultery). Thus type four will not apply here. In this case, to step over the upper limit is justified, similar to the case of (pardonable) killing in self-defence or manslaughter through culpable negligence. Types 4 and 5 are therefore interrelated because if, for example, a nonmarried couple is sexually active, their curvature illegitimately touches the upper limit, that is, zin§ (here: fornication), while the sexual intercourse of a married couple does not count as zin§ but as a legitimate touching of the upper limit as in type five.

6. Curvature movement between a positive upper limit and a negative lower limit

The sixth type represents the curvature movement between a positive upper limit and a negative lower limit. We often see this with financial transactions: if interest is levied the lower limit is reached; if, however, alms tax (zak§h) is paid the curvature moves towards the upper limit. In between, there is a level of payment that can be defined as point zero. An example of this neutral stage (neither positive nor negative) is an interest-free loan. Hence, fiscal transactions in a given society move, by responding to the economic and social needs, between the two extremes of a) payments

of taxes and charity money to b) giving loans with interest, while a middle position is reached if c) interest-free loans are provided.

If we take the root meaning of r-b-w, the Arabic term for ‘interest’, we notice that it means ‘growth or increase’, an expansion of wealth by ‘adding up’ or ‘piling up’. In words such as rabiyya or rubwa (‘hill’), derived from the same root, we discover similar semantic connotations. Let us look at verses that mention the term al-rib§:

Those who devour usury [al-rib§] will not stand except as stand one whom the evil one by his touch has driven to madness. That is because they say: “Trade is like usury [al-rib§],” but God has permitted trade and forbidden usury [a l-rib§]. Those who, after receiving direction from their Lord, desist shall be pardoned for the past. Their case is for God (to judge), but those who repeat (the offence) are companions of the Fire: they will abide therein (for ever). (Al-Baqara 2:275)

God will deprive usury [al-rib§] of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity; for He loves not creatures ungrateful and wicked.

(Al-Baqara 2:276)

O you who believe! Fear God and give up what remains of your demand for usury [al-rib§], if you are indeed believers. (A l-Baqara 2:278)

If the debtor is in a difficulty, grant him time till it is easy for him to repay. But if you remit it by way of charity, that is best for you if you only knew. (Al-Baqara 2:280)

O you who believe! Devour not usury [a l-rib§], doubled and multiplied; but fear God that you may (really) prosper. ($l #lmr§n 3:130) That

which you lay out for increase [al-rib§] through the property of (other) people, will have no increase with God. But that which you lay out for charity, seeking the countenance of God, (will increase): it is these who will get a recompense multiplied. (Al-Råm 30:39)

O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities. But let there be amongst you traffic and trade by mutual good-will. Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves; for verily God has been to you most merciful! (Al-Nis§” 4:29)[245]

From this list of verses we are able to discern four different types of ‘interest’:

A. Interest on ßadaqa

God will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity; for He loves not creatures ungrateful and wicked. (Al-Baqara 2:276)

B. Interest on zak§h

That which you lay out for increase through the property of (other) people, will have no increase with God. But that which you lay out for charity, seeking the countenance of God, (will increase): it is these who will get a recompense multiplied. (Al-Råm 30:39)

C. An upper limit for acceptable interest

O you who believe! Devour not usury, doubled and multiplied; but fear God that you may (really) prosper. ($l #Imr§n 3:130)

D. A point zero

If you do it not, take notice of war from God and His apostle. But if you turn back you shall have your capital sums. Deal not unjustly and you shall not be dealt with unjustly. (Al-Baqara 2:279)

Based on verses from the Book we propose a flexible banking system which can incorporate, if need be, interest on loans provided that the limits set by Allah are observed, but which can also prevent interest being charged at an exorbitant rate (usury). Our proposal is based on the belief that the Book does not categorically and unconditionally prohibit the charging of interest, and we do not follow either MuÈammad's (ß) or #Umar b. al-Khaãã§b's conclusive veto against it.[246] Instead, we maintain that the three possible ways of money transfer within a society correspond to the movement, suggested above, between an upper and a lower limit.

1. Zak§h:

This is a special type of charity since it is defined as an alms tax for the benefit of the poor and handicapped who are adherents of MuÈammad (ß): Muslim-Believers. It corresponds to the absolute minimum of money transfer, a lower limit of ßadaqa (fixed as 2.5 percent of supraincome) that cannot be reduced.

2. 'adaqa:

This is a general type of charity, called ßadaqat al-isl§m, whose recipients are the poor and handicapped, whether they believe in MuÈammad's (ß) message or not. There exists no upper limit and each contribution is voluntary. The lower limit of ßadaqa is the payment of zak§h. There are therefore two different kinds of ßadaqa:

I. General ßadaqa for everyone:

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West. But it is righteousness to believe in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the messengers; to spend of your substance [‘at§ al-m§l], out of love for Him, for your [dhawÊ ’l-qurba], for the [yat§mÊ], for the [al-mas§kÊn], for the [ibn al-sabÊl], for those who are [a l-sa”ilÊn], and for those [fi’l-riq§b]; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity [zak§h]; to fulfil the contracts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing. (A l-Baqara 2:177)

II. Specific ßadaqa for the Muslim-Believers (paid as zak§h):

Alms [ßadaq§t] are for the [fuqar§”] and the [mas§kÊn], and those who are [al-#§milÊn #alaih§]; for those who are [al-mu”allafa qulåbuhum]; for those [fi’l-riq§b] and [al-gh§rimÊn]; [fÊ sabÊl All§h]; and for the [ibn al-sabÊl]. (Thus is it) ordained by God, and God is full of knowledge and wisdom. (Al-Tawba 9:60)

In verse 177 of Sårat a l-Baqara we hear about six types of people who are recipients of charity money: 1) dhawå ’l-qurba: friends and acquaintances who are not blood related (because blood relatives would be ålå ’l-qurba);[247] 2) a l-yat§mÊ: orphans; 3) a l-mas§kÊn: handicapped people, those whose body functions are paralysed or ‘still’ (sakana); 4) ibn al-sabÊl: people on a journey who are stranded because of mishaps such as robbery or a car accident; 5) al-s§“ilÊn: people in need as a result of natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, famines, or hurricanes; 6) fi’l-riq§b: those, as defined earlier, who are indebted without a chance to pay off their debts.

If we read the verse farther down we see that ‘regular alms-tax’ (zak§h) is mentioned separately, and we know why, because this is a special tax of the Muslim-Believers and an exclusive pillar of al-Êm§n. Charity money, as mentioned first in the verse, is, however, part of al-isl§m and given to people in need, needless of their religious affiliation. Verse 60 of Sårat al-Tawba even mentions eight types of recipients: 1) a l-fuqar§”: the poor, 2) a l-mas§kÊn: the handicapped,[248] 3) al-#§milÊn #alaih§: those who administer the zak§h tax, 4) al-mu”allafa qulåbuhum: people whose work has a positive impact on public life, 5) fi’l-riq§b: the financially enslaved, 6) a l-gh§rimån: people in debt and imprisoned because of their insolvency, 7) fÊ sabÊl All§h: donations ‘in God’s way’ to sponsor the foundation of universities, schools, hospitals, and 8) ibn al-sabÊl: travellers in need of assistance.

These eight types of recipients are entitled to charity from within al-Êm§n, that is, they are the recipients of zak§h, the lowest type or minimal amount of ßadaqa. Three types of recipients are mentioned in both såras: a) travellers in need of help, b) the handicapped, and c) the financially enslaved, implying that these people are entitled to charity regardless of their religious affiliation.

In contrast, three types in the first såra are not mentioned in the second såra and will therefore not receive money through zak§t al-Êm§n: a) orphans, b) acquaintances, and c) people in need because of natural catastrophes. That leaves us with five types of recipients who receive alms by virtue of their religious affiliation to MuÈammad (ß) and a l-Êm§n: a) the poor, b) the zak§h administrators, c) people who improve public life, d) people imprisoned because of their debts, and e) those who sponsor institutions of public health and education.

3. Loans:

Zak§h and ßadaq§t are for those who cannot repay their debts. We cannot expect any return for what we donate to them. O thers, however, can repay their debts but without having accrued interest. They would receive an interest-free loan which defines a financial transaction being at point zero:

If you do it not, take notice of war from God and His apostle. But if you turn back you shall have your capital sums [ru”s amw§likum].

Deal not unjustly and you shall not be dealt with unjustly. (Al-Baqara 2:279)

If people are wealthy enough to repay the borrowed money with interest (e.g., people working in industry, agriculture, the financial and service sectors, and such, in short the great majority of s ociety), one should not, as verse 130 of Sårat $l #Imr§n demands, asks for more than 100 percent interest of the original loan, that is, at maximum twice the borrowed sum, regardless of how long it takes to repay the debts:

O you who believe! Devour not usury, doubled and multiplied; but fear God that you may (really) prosper. ($l #Imr§n 3:130) Finally, why does verse 275 contain the following clause?

…but God has permitted trade and forbidden usury (Al-Baqara 2:275)

The answer is given in verse 276 that immediately follows:

God will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity; for He loves not creatures ungrateful and wicked. (Al-Baqara 2:276)

We understand that 2:276 prohibits the payment of interest on money given in charity but allows recipients of charity to earn income through trade. In 2:275, Allah thus ‘permitted trade’ for recipients of charity but forbade charging interest on the money they receive through charity. In other words, while profit through trade is allowed, profit through charity is forbidden. It must not be understood, as can frequently be heard, that, through 2:275, Allah has allowed all types of trade while forbidden all types of interest. Such an unqualified statement would imply that, before Allah’s revelation concerning trade and interests all trade was forbidden and all types of interest were allowed which would, of course, be historically untrue and economically absurd. Instead, Allah wanted to clarify the position of the recipients of charity.

If He had not allowed people to trade with profit we would be in a grotesque situation in which every businessman ought to check whether his trade partners are entitled to charity or not; if so, the partnership would have to cease immediately. In order to avoid such chaotic and counterproductive trade arrangements and to separate trade from charity, verse 2:275 was revealed. This had a huge impact on society since it allowed welfare organisations, hospitals, charity banks, mental institutions, old people’s homes, and such to receive charity money regardless of their commercial and financial activities. If we look at the existing fiscal arrangements in most countries of the world we see how it corresponds best to the human disposition

(al-fiãra).

We conclude this chapter by discussing the main differences between our proposed theory of limits and conventional fiqh jurisprudence:

1. We do not treat the legal verses of the Book as codified law but as signposts or ethic al-legal markers that Allah asked human beings not to overstep. Traditional fiqh jurisprudence has regarded the legal verses as absolute law which allowed neither mitigation nor adaptation to changing social and cultural circumstances. Our theory of limits aims to regain the flexibility and elasticity in human legislation that was originally

built into the divine text but which was removed by an overly rigid system of fiqh jurisprudence.

2. We re-emphasise the high degree of universality in Islamic legislation that is implicit in Allah's revelation. Traditional jurisprudence has sacrificed this universality in favour of very narrow cultural and nationalist agendas that reflect particular political interests more than they do the universal ethical message of the Book. We propose to disentangle Islamic legislation from the narrow cultural perspective of seventh-century Arabia and to replace it with a universal perspective which allows cultural diversity beyond the specific legal parameters on the ancient Arabian Peninsula.

3. We treat the sunna of MuÈammad (ß) as a model of good legal practice in the theory of limits, not as the ultimate specification and binding exemplification of Islamic law. Traditional jurists imprisoned the universal message of a l-isl§m too rigidly by their legal injunctions derived from MuÈammad's (ß) sunna, thereby mixing al-isl§m with the more specific and much narrower concept of al-Êm§n. We suggest to regard the sunna as an exemplary method of how to cope with the challenges and legal conflicts that MuÈammad (ß) faced in his time and of how to emulate his methods and apply them with our methodology (minh§j) to a system of law by which we are able to face the challenges of our modern times.

4. We dispense with 'analogy' (qiy§s) as a source of law as a consequence of our quest for universality in Islamic legislation. Traditional jurisprudence is inhibited by this method which has locked generations of jurists firmly inside the legal and intellectual horizon of seventh-century Arabia. The theory of limits functions perfectly well without analogies, which allows mujtahids to be firmly rooted in their contemporary context and to substitute comparisons to early Islam with references to the latest results of scientific research. This also allows them to correlate Islamic legislation with the epistemological progress in the sciences.[249]

5. We base the theory of limits on the belief that MuÈammad’s (ß) message (a l-ris§la) is the last message sent by Allah to human beings. No other new revelation will ever replace MuÈammad’s (ß) message, unlike previous revelations that were meant to be replaced entirely. For this reason MuÈammad’s (ß) message was not formulated as a final expression of law but in a way that permits a further evolution of law for millions of years until the coming of the Last Day. Unforgivably, traditional jurisprudence has regarded MuÈammad’s (ß) message in exactly the same way as previous messengerhoods and treated its law as absolute, certain, and definitive. This is a fatal mistake because it has regretfully negated the real essence of MuÈammad’s (ß) message as the last and final revelation which is, by legal and historical logic, at odds with absoluteness and comprehensiveness.

6. We take seriously the changes in cultural and social patterns of human behaviour and adopt them with our theory of limits. We compare human legislation with a football field where players are allowed to move freely and to use the entire space available. Traditional jurists have been so frightened of unexpected moves and unpredictable developments that they interpreted the rules of the game in such a rigid way that players were only allowed to move on the sidelines of the field which, inevitably, led to a complete paralysis of the game. Put in legal terms, we would allow flexibility in moving across the entire field of legislation, encouraging creative moves that lead to great sociocultural diversity in regulating marriage, divorce, inheritance, theft, murder, adultery, polygamy, dress codes, and so on, provided that legislators and mujtahids always stay strictly within the limits that Allah has laid out in the Book.

7. We distinguish between three branches (furå#) of MuÈammad’s (ß) message, of which only one allows the practice of ijtih§d. Ijtih§d will never be allowed in the sphere of rituals, since alterations will be rejected as harmful and illegitimate innovations (bid#a). The same is true for ethics and moral ideals, since the divine condemnation of hatred, greed, dishonesty, gluttony, and such must never be modified or changed. In the third branch, that is, the legal sphere, the legislative verses of command (do!) and prohibition (do not!) permit the exercise of ijtih§d. However, traditional fiqh jurisprudence, obsessed with an almost pathological quest for ritual accuracy, has ignored the ethical sphere, blocked

ijtih§d in new legislation, and instead dealt with the smallest and most insignificant details of ritual behaviour. Our theory of limits puts the priorities right and allows ijtih§d for all legal verses, whether explicit naßß texts or not, and retrieves the ethical underpinning of Islamic law that it once undoubtedly had.

8. Finally, we believe that the theory of limits functions without the need to resort to abrogations. In our view, the abrogation of legal verses within one and the same messengerhood never took place. If verses were abrogated then this was only between subsequent messengerhoods, for example, between Moses and MuÈammad, as explained earlier. This implies that a new messengerhood could either amend or completely annul an earlier messengerhood or, if no legal provision was given, introduce an entirely new rule. Traditional fiqh has, on the contrary, been based on the acceptance of abrogation within messengerhoods, assuming wrongly that the following two verses support their false views:

None of our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar… (Al-Baqara 2:106) When We substitute one revelation for another…; and God knows best what He reveals (in stages)… (Al-NaÈl 16:101)

We believe that both verses refer only to the abrogation of divine messages (as a whole), not individual sentences of the divine text. This is based on our belief that Allah would not issue contradictive legislation within one and the same messengerhood, whatever the historical situation. We believe in a succession of messages that are naturally replaced by a new revelation. Thus we see ourselves today in a wholly new postprophetic age in which, although formed and shaped by previous messengerhoods, we have matured to such a degree that we can be left alone to sort out legal problems without further divine messages. As we have shown, Allah has urged us unambiguously not to wait for new revelations but to rely on reason in using what we have already been given.

** 5. Women and Islamic Law

Since the age of Islamic reformism in the nineteenth century numerous attempts have been made to improve the position of women in Islam by reformulating sharÊ#a law in the light of social change and modern developments. And yet, to our knowledge, not a single study has tried to propose legal reforms by exploring the dialectical relationship between ‘straightness’ and ‘curvature’ in human legislation and by studying this relationship in consideration of the human natural disposition, a l-fiãra. We propose therefore to start our investigation into the possibilities of legal reform with the notion of Allah’s limits, which not only stipulates boundaries (straightness) but also allows human legislation the freedom to move and change (curvature).

We can see three major reasons why previous attempts to radically reevaluate the situation of women in the Arab-Muslim world have failed:

In their study of the ‘mother of the book’ (umm al-kit§b), jurists have failed to distinguish between verses that stipulate Allah’s limits and verses that are purely informative and legally nonbinding (suggesting only good practice). Also, in their study of MuÈammad’s sunna they confused compulsory with optional categories of law. In more general terms they simply overlooked the existence of limits in Islamic legislation. In defence of medieval scholarship we might say that their understanding of Èudåd All§h was bound to be rather primitive and that their scholarship could not significantly improve before the introduction of Isaac Newton’s revolutionary theories, which gave Allah’s limits a solid mathematical underpinning. It was only after the introduction of Newton’s theory of ‘limits’[250] that forthcoming generations of scientists were able to study phenomena in nature and link them to the limits that Allah has set for human societies. However, current Muslim scholarship cannot resort to this excuse. After centuries of progress in the natural and social sciences, we are

now able to apply the legal impositions of what is ‘straight’ and what is ‘curved’ in line with what is inherent in nature and the disposition of human beings, thus allowing us to embark on a truly contemporary and enlightened assessment of the situation of women, based on our rereading of the Book.

1. Feminists have failed to envisage a struggle for the liberation and emancipation of women that goes beyond the time of MuÈammad’s life. In their attempt to prove that Islam is not misogynous, Islamic feminists have too often focused solely on how MuÈammad’s mission has liberated women in ancient Arabia, while more or less ignoring the plight of Muslim women ever since. By doing so they have unintentionally suggested that the liberation of women achieved under MuÈammad was the optimum of emancipation possible. And since during MuÈammad’s time women were not working as judges and preachers and since they did not occupy high political positions, this was seen as the maximum amount of women’s liberation that we, today, are not allowed to further extend. This ignores, of course, the fact that the position of women in Arabian society was, just like slavery which initially had to be endorsed, something that did not allow radical changes or, to put it in evolutionary terms, something that did not allow a sudden ‘combustion of entire time periods’. Just as a sudden abolition of slavery would have destroyed the social fabric and the prevalent means of production in ancient Arabian society, a radical repositioning of women’s roles would have undermined the social stability that MuÈammad (ß) so desperately wanted to achieve with his new state.[251] The society which MuÈammad (ß) created was Islam’s first but not only model—Islam’s first fruit, so to speak.

MuÈammad’s (ß) political and legal decisions were deliberately positioned between Allah’s limits and constantly adapted to the spirit of his time: at times he enforced Allah’s limits vigorously, and at other times he allowed old conventions to continue if their practices did not violate Allah’s law. Such conventions, however, prevented women from doing what they would do today because it severely limited the opportunities of women to fulfil public roles. In some areas, however, for example as advisors to political leaders, in community administration, or during military campaigns, the remarkable public positions of #$“isha or Khaula bint al-Azwar[252] demonstrate that the new religion inherited a structural imbalance but did not exclude women

from public affairs per se (i.e., only because they were women). One should not forget that the first martyr for the sake of Islam was Sumayya, a woman.[253]

And yet, we must not think that women's emancipation ended with MuÈammad's (ß) reform of ancient Arabian society. What is needed today is to understand his messengerhood and the verses of the 'mother of the book' in their dual capacity to both absorb the prevalent historical conditions of MuÈammad's (ß) time and encompass subsequent developments that allow much greater emancipation. MuÈammad's (ß) reforms were only one small (albeit not insignificant) part of a much wider scheme of women's liberation.

2. Exegetes have failed to correctly identify the meaning of the Arabic term a l-nis§", which has often been too narrowly understood to mean 'women'. The importance of redefining this term is immediately apparent when we look at the following two verses:

Fair in the eyes of men [sic] [li'l-n§s] is the love of things they covet: women [sic][al-nis§"][254] and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence); and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life, but in nearness to God is the best of the goals (to return to). ($l #Imr§n 3:14)

Your wives [sic][nis§"ukum][255] are as a tilth unto you. So approach your tilth when or how you will, but do some good act for your souls beforehand; and fear God. And know that you are to meet Him (in the Hereafter), and give (these) good tidings to those who believe. (Al-Baqara 2:223)

If we still insist, as generations of exegetes did,[256] that a l-nis§" can only mean 'women' or 'wives' we have entered, hermeneutically and intellectually, a cul-de-sac that cuts us off from a progressive flow of history. In both verses (3:14 and 2:223), if

nis§” is rendered as ‘women’, they can only be seen as no more than a commodity for men (‘the possessions of this world’s life’) or a piece of land to be tilled (‘when or how you will’). A first step to avoiding such misogynist renderings is to accept the fact that, in speaking of ‘women’ and ‘men’, Allah uses different terms when He refers to them as: a) biological beings, either male or female, or b) when He refers to them as cultural beings who possess morality, consciousness, and the ability to rationally reflect on their social and cultural environment. Examples are as follows:

That He did create in pairs—male [al-dhakar] and female [al-unth§]. (Al-Najm 53:45)

And of every thing We have created pairs [zawjain]: that you may receive instruction. (Al-Dh§riyy§t 51:49)

O mankind [sic][257]! [Y§ aiyuh§ al-n§s] We created you from a single (pair) of a male [al-dhakar] and a female [al-unth§], and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other—not that you may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you… (Al-\ujur§t 49:13)

We have honoured the sons [sic][baniya] of Adam… (Al-Isr§” 17:70)

In the first and second verse Allah speaks about His creation in pairs which include not only men and women but everything that is either male or female, and that includes animals and plants that unlike humans do not possess the capacity to think and reflect. Biologically, women share their sex with other female creatures, by receiving the semen of the male species, by becoming fertilised by the male sperm, by giving birth after a period of pregnancy, and by nursing their progeny. Men are of the opposite sex which they share with any other male creature on the earth. They are the biological partners (zawj) of females with whom they form a relationship of natural correspondence for the purpose of procreation.

In the third and fourth verse, Allah does not speak about males and females but about humans (men and women) who, by having Allah’s spirit breathed into them, are able to think rationally and act consciously. In all those instances in which Allah addresses humans as rational beings the qur”§n starts with the exclamatory ‘O humankind!’, implying that no distinction is made between males and females. In other words, Allah ‘honoured both sons and daughters of Adam’,[258] regardless of their biological status, on the basis of the ‘good deeds’ they perform for the benefit of all humankind. Provided that the right historical circumstances are given, we believe that women are as capable as men to occupy leading positions in state and society. It is our endeavour to completely revise the notion that men are inherently superior to women because women lack rationality or because they are spiritually inferior to men.

Toward a Contemporary Understanding of _{FIQH} for Women

Our aim is to correct these three failures of traditional jurisprudence and to present a truly contemporary understanding of fiqh jurisprudence for women, based on the notion of a lex liminalis in Islamic legislation and on the belief that the legislative verses of the Book are valid for all time and in all places, allowing both flexibility and elasticity vis-à-vis the development of history and the demands of human society. In contrast to the legal codex that Moses brought to his people, which contained more than 600 concrete laws or legal injunctions, the legal verses of the Book contains less than a tenth of this number. The reason for this sudden reduction in the number of legislative verses is, as explained in chapters 2 and 4, the change in the nature of MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood: from a legal system where all laws are specific and punishments certain, to a legal system which only provides a universally applicable legal framework in the form of upper and lower limits (straightness), between which legislators formulate (diverse) particular laws (curvature). This new legal system works like a field whose borders provide the outer boundaries between which human legislation takes place. In some instances, laws may not even touch these boundaries (cf. 2:187),[259] in other instances boundaries may be touched but not transgressed (cf. 24:31). And when the Book states that

‘these are the limits (imposed by) Allah…’ (Al-Nis§” 4:13) and warns people not to ‘disobey Allah and His messenger and transgress His limits…’ (A l-Nis§” 4:14) it is clear that His intention is to declare the limit-based character also of Allah’s law of succession—stated in the preceding verses: ‘God (thus) directs you as regards your children’s (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females…’, and such. (Al-Nis§” 4:11–12).

We will observe three fundamental principles in determining a law that moves between the boundaries of God:

1. The legal instrument of analogy (qiy§s) must only be employed if comparisons are based on what is empirically manifest (sh§hid) and not, as traditional jurists claim, on what is hidden (gh§“ib): that which has its root in the past and cannot be proven empirically. Acceptable empirical data are, for example, statistics about current birth rates, the percentages of women currently employed, or the distribution of wealth and the per capita income of a society’s current population. These data constitute the external criteria (of credibility) from which textual analogies are drawn.

2. Internal credibility is achieved through analogies and comparisons between textual passages of the Book based on the dialectical notion that underneath the thematic unity of verses and såras an ideational polarity of mutual opposition and duality exists.

3. The verses of the Book are never repetitive or, worse, redundant. The divine text does not allow synonymity between words. In cases of textual ambiguity or grammatical inconsistency, it is always a word’s semantic meaning that explains and determines a word’s occurrence in the text (and not style, rhyme, or other rhetorical considerations).

4. We believe that ijtih§d must be performed in all legal areas and that every ijtih§d should tackle the explicit legal text passages (naßß) that the Book provides, following

our maxima that ‘there is no ijtih§d outside a naßß text’.

With the help of these principles we will now reenter the legislative arena and explore issues such as inheritance, polygamy, guardianship, dress codes for women, and other issues of family law.

*** Bequest and Inheritance Laws

The traditional law of succession has its roots in the cultural and political milieu of the first two to three centuries of Islamic history. It has been characterised by a dominance of male centred perspectives which created a patriarchal inheritance law and which fuelled the spirit of tribalism and clan-ideology that controlled the way wealth was distributed among the different sections of Arab-Muslim society. Laws of inheritance were formulated by deliberately conflating the strict demarcation between family and state, leading to a situation where political succession (of dynastic rule) was secured by formulating inheritance laws that maintained the political interests of the ruling families (as was the case with the Umayyads, Abbasids, Shi#ites, Zubayrites, and others respectively).

Intellectually, inheritance laws were issued purely on the basis of the four arithmetic operations which, given the complexity of the matter, were highly insufficient and produced very crude and oversimplified solutions. All this happened before Descartes (1596–1650) laid down the foundations of analytical geometry and introduced a pioneering synthesis between ‘erupted digital quantities’ and ‘nondigital quantities’. This means that Islamic inheritance law became unfortunately finalised before the introduction of analytical geometry and the concept of mathematical ‘derivatives’, which was brought to perfection by the genius of Isaac Newton (1642–1726). Today, we can use the insights gained from further developments in the geometrical sciences, benefit from Newton’s and Descartes’ theories, and reorganize the distribution of wealth by inheritance laws. We should not repeat the unbelievable mistakes of earlier fiqh and formulate a law of succession purely on the basis of a single ÈadÊth or, as has been often the case, overrule the injunctions of the Book by an

unconvincing reference to several weak and unauthentic ÈadÊths.

In doing this, we have to tackle the tendency in current jurisprudence to ignore the priority of bequest stipulations over inheritance rules, as explicitly stated by the Book.[260] We need to combat the jurisdictional practice of abrogating clear Qur'anic rules by the citation of ÈadÊths that were brought into circulation by parties who profited from military expeditions and the resulting booty. We need to question the widespread belief that 'no testament shall invalidate an heir's right' which, basically, disrespects a proper bequest and unfairly prioritises strict inheritance rules.

In addition, we have to correct the profound misunderstanding of the verse 'if only (mature) women (nis§"[an]), more than two (fawq ithnatain)...' (Al-Nis§" 4:11), which is still interpreted as '…if only daughters, two or more…"[261] which is, clearly, not the same. We need to tackle the erroneous understanding of 'child' (walad) as 'son' (ibn) and also the belief that only the existence of a male heir changes the patterns of inheritance, while the existence of a female heir changes nothing— and this in spite of the verse: 'God (thus) directs you as regards your children's (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two female' (al-Nis§" 4:11).

Finally, we need to deal with the widespread exclusion of orphaned grandchildren from inheriting from their grandparents—in spite of the fact that this is explicitly mentioned in the verses of inheritance, while other people, for example, uncles and aunts, are included as inheritors who are not mentioned in the text. We will have to introduce different sets of allocations for everyone who is qualified for inheritance and we will do this by departing from basic arithmetical operations because they only result in either surpluses, a convoluted system of returns and redistributions, or shortages which provoke long legal battles by those who feel cheated.

Considering the massive exegetical problems which the fuqah§” tend to either ignore or belittle, and the current attempts to implement a uniform Islamic law of succession, the subject of inheritance must be seen as a very sensitive topic: the distribution of wealth from the one generation to the next. We have carried out a thorough rereading of all relevant verses of the Book through the prism of our theory of limits. We have started our study by distinguishing between the general nature of inheritance rules and the specific nature of bequests, by which we aim to reverse current practice and restore Allah’s preference for bequests over inheritance rules.

*** The Difference between Specified and Unspecified Shares (al -Èaíí wa’l-naßÊb)

Let us first explore the difference between the two Arabic terms for

‘share’, al-Èaíí and al-naßÊb. The first term, al-Èaíí, refers to shares whose exact amount is not specified but only defined in a very general manner, whereas the second term, al-naßÊb, usually connotes shares of an exactly identifiable quantity. If parliament, for example, passes a law whose aim is to improve life in general we would expect the benefits of this new law to be distributed to all social classes in society, even though one class, group, or region may profit from it more than others. A new law to improve pedestrians’ access to local shops on High Streets, for example, may give some shopkeepers, whose shops are close to the new crossings and traffic lights, greater benefits than others whose shops lay at a greater distance from the new crossings and are therefore less accessible. But since the new law was introduced to improve access to local shops in general, not for the benefit of any particular, individual shops, it is bound to create bigger and smaller shares of benefit. These shares, whose exact amount can not be pre-calculated, are known as ‘unspecified shares’

(al-Èaíí).

If, in contrast, a house owner plans to extend his house or to improve its access by building a ramp for his daughter’s wheelchair or by having a new back door installed to be used by his son’s family who lives next door, the benefits gained will be distributed in shares that the owner of the house has precisely calculated; that is why they are predetermined. These shares are called ‘specified shares’ (a l-naßÊb) which should never be confused with the first category of ‘unspecified shares’ (al-Èaíí). The term al-naßÊb is used to designate profit shares in business, shares held by shareholders of big companies or the tax contributions paid into the treasury (niß§b a l-zak§h). These are all shares known and specified in each individual case by those who are involved in the financial transactions. In the case of unspecified shares, however, the individual has neither the power nor the authority to change the amount payable; it is ‘beyond his or her reach’.

If we apply this to the question of bequests and inheritance, it would be correct to say that the latter is unspecified whereas the former is specified. On the one hand, Allah ordered a system of distribution of wealth that is universally applicable to everyone worldwide and where the individual share is given in the Book in very general terms (e.g., one-half or one-third of the legacy). On the other hand, Allah also prescribed bequests by which people can determine the distribution of their wealth individually, and by which they can specify the exact amount of individual shares. Whereas bequests are based on individual circumstances, the laws of inheritance are defined by much more abstract criteria for which, we propose, the application of analytical geometry, mathematical analysis, and set theory— in addition to basic arithmetics—is absolutely vital.

We will see that the Book contains rather rigorous legal injunctions by which Allah defined the distribution of inheritance according to blood relationship and degrees of kinship. For bequests, however, no such connection to kinship is prescribed. It is up to the testator to determine the beneficiaries of his or her legacy, be they close relatives or unrelated acquaintances, welfare institutions, charity organisations, cultural projects, or others. After reading the relevant verses in the Book, it is apparent that a greater number of people may benefit from bequests than from inheritance laws. Inheritance laws only consider those eligible who are

next of kin within an extended family while bequests are not and therefore reach more people in society.

**** Bequest

A bequest regulates the distribution of money or property according to the will of a testator who will define the amount of each share to be bequeathed (quantity) as well as the method of distribution (quality). A great variety of different people and institutions which do not belong to the family of the testator may receive bequests, and for this reason bequests have more weight in the Book than inheritance laws. Since bequests are not confined by fixed rules, testators enjoy great flexibility, thus may distribute their wealth evenly or unevenly and consider heirs to whom they feel personally obliged. Bequests therefore reflect the personal circumstances of the testator accurately. The outcome is often an uneven, or asymmetrical distribution of wealth, and each bequest will differ considerably from one to the next since objective reality is as complex as the human relationships we establish during our lifetimes.

Inheritance laws, in contrast, are meant to achieve a more balanced, symmetric distribution of money and property. Each share is calculated according to the relationship of the heir to the deceased (father, mother, child, husband, wife, brother, sister, and such). While imbalance characterises inheritance through bequests, balanced distribution is a characteristic of general inheritance laws. Balance or imbalance, symmetry or asymmetry—this polarity or duality expresses the dialectical relationship between bequests and inheritance laws. Imbalance reflects the diversity, curvature, and plurality of human relationships in human society, while balance reflects Allah’s will (and His order of straightness). But since unbalanced distribution of wealth mirrors the unbalanced relationships of our daily lives much better, the Book gives bequest rules a more prominent place than inheritance laws. We hear:

It is prescribed, when death approaches any of you, if he leave any goods that he make a bequest [al-waßiyya] to parents and next of kin

[li’l-w§lidain wa’l-aqrabÊn], according to reasonable usage—this is due from the God-fearing. (Al-Baqara 2:180)

This verse starts with the same formula (‘it is prescribed’) that Allah, only three verses further down of Sårat A l-Baqara, uses in a similarly authoritative way to command the duty of prayer and fasting:

O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that you may (learn) self-restraint. (Al-Baqara

2:183)

When you pass (congregational) prayers, celebrate God’s praises, standing, sitting down, or lying down on your sides; but when you are free from danger, set up regular prayers: for such prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times. (Al-Nis§” 4:103)

There is the same prescriptive tone in His injunction to fast and pray as in His injunction to make a bequest. The only difference is that the command to fast and pray is only addressed to the MuslimBelievers (mu”minån), that is, to the followers of MuÈammad (ß), whereas bequests are the duty of ‘God-fearing’ Muslim-Assenters all over the world.

The above verse of bequest also lists the potential beneficiaries of a testator’s will. It uses the Arabic term li’l-w§lidain wa’l-aqrabÊn which, unfortunately, for far too long has been broadly understood as ‘to parents and next of kin’. But what kind of parents is meant here, the biological parents, that is, the ‘birth-givers’, or the foster parents, who have raised a child without being the child’s biological parents? And who exactly is ‘next of kin”? The Arabic language distinguishes between w§lid (father and ‘birth-giver’, that is, ‘who begets a child’) and ab (father and caregiver/nurturer, but not ‘birth-giver’), also between w§lida (mother and ‘birth-giver’, ‘who brings forth a child’) and

umm (mother and caregiver, but not ‘birth-giver’). The dual term w§lid§n refers to the biological parents and the term abaw§n refers to the caregiver-parents. If the biological parents have also raised their children, they are considered as both w§lid§n and abaw§n. Seen from a child’s perspective, every child will have biological parents, and every child that is fed, raised and schooled will have caregiver-parents, but biological and caregiver parents are not always identical.

She [Mary] said: “O my Lord! How shall I have a son [walad] when no man has touched me?”… ($l #Imr§n 3:47)

The wife of Pharaoh said: “(Here is) joy of the eye, for me and for you: slay him not. It may be that he will be use to us, or we may adopt him as a son [walad[an]].” And they perceived not (what they were doing)! (Al-Qaßaß 28:9)

The distinction between natural parents and caregiver-parents is recognised in both verses. As Mary was ‘not touched by a man’ she could not become a w§lida, that is, the biological mother of Jesus.[262] And since Pharaoh and his wife were not Joseph’s biological parents (w§lid§n) they hoped to adopt him and become his caregiver-parents (abaw§n).

In the verse of bequest the given terms are, as we have said, li’l-w§lidain wa’l-aqrabÊn. Since li’l-w§lidain means ‘to the biological parents’, how does the verse refer to the caregiver-parents and others who feed, raise, and school the child, for example, the wet nurse or the dry nurse or relatives who have fostered the child for a certain period? The verse refers to them by the term wa’l-aqrabÊn, which connotes six different groups:

1. caregiver-father (al-ab) and caregiver-mother (al-umm)[263];

2. ascendants—to whatever degree above;

3. husband (if the deceased was a married woman) or wife (if the deceased was a married man);

4. children and grandchildren of the deceased, and any descendant—to whatever degree below;

5. brothers and sisters;

6. agnate uncles and aunts, and cognate uncles and aunts.

Together with the natural parents, these are the groups of primary beneficiaries to whom a testator may bequeath his wealth according to verse 180 of Sårat a l-Baqara. However, the following verse extends this circle considerably:

But if at the time of division other relatives, or orphans or [al-mas§kÊn], are present, feed them out of the (property), and speak to them words of kindness and justice. (Al-Nis§” 4:8)

Verse 4:8 adds another group of potential addressees: ‘orphans or [the handicapped]’,[264] which are not considered by any verse of inheritance law. The verse does not specify whether one should bequeath money to orphans or people in need individually or collectively by giving money to charitable bodies, such as orphanages, refugee camps, shelter homes for asylum seekers, or red cross/red crescent organisations.

Another, fourth group is added in verse 4:9:

Let those (disposing of an estate) have the same fear in their minds as they would have for their own if they had left a helpless family [dhuriyyat[an] ·i#§f [an]] behind: let them fear God, and speak words of appropriate (comfort). (Al-Nis§” 4:9)

The phrase dhuriyyat[an] ·i#§f [an] is a broad term to denote a wide range of ‘helpless’ people, for example disabled children, chronically ill wives, unmarried daughters who live, in comparison to their much happier married sisters, a miserable life. The point is that the Book’s designation of people who receive bequests is as open and varied as the testator wants it to be. It is entirely up to the person who writes a will to allot a bigger share for a handicapped daughter and a smaller share for the other children. In other instances a (divorced) parent might be given the sole rights over the deceased’s immoveable property, while the other parent receives the moveable property or no share at all. Bequests are simply more flexible and less restrictive because the laws of inheritance do not apply here. Inheritance laws would not allow such personal preferences since they regulate the distribution of the deceased’s money and property according to fixed formulas that ignore the personal circumstances of both the deceased and the inheritors. Also, inheritance laws are gendered laws, they operate on the basis of a distinction between male and female inheritors, a distinction that is entirely irrelevant in verses dealing with bequests.[265]

It is a religious duty (far·) to draw up a last will ‘whether the property be small or large’ (4:7). It is an individual duty (far·#ayn) to fulfil ‘when death approaches you’ (2:180). It is a sacred obligation that no one is allowed to change or abrogate: ‘If anyone changes the bequest after hearing it, the guilt shall be on those who make the change. For God hears and knows (all things)’ (A l-Baqara 2:181). If mistakes are made, for example, if someone bequeaths all the money to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals despite the fact that one should have considered existing children, brothers, and sisters, it means that this person has indeed overlooked Allah’s command to consider a l-w§lidain wa’l-aqrabÊn. But in this case the following verse will apply, advising people, if faced with such errors, to apply mercy and forgiveness:

But if anyone fears partiality or wrong-doing on the part of the testator, and makes peace between (the parties concerned), there is no wrong in him: for God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (A l-Baqara 2:182)

After the death of the testator, the bequest must not be changed otherwise it will incur God’s wrath. If the testator is still alive, one might protest and demand a higher share, but if the testator insists on it, nothing can be done about it. The courts cannot interfere in this.

Inheritance Laws

The technical term ‘inheritance’ (a l-irth) refers to the process of dividing the money and property of the deceased among the successors. This occurs either by drawing up a testament in which every share is individually determined (see above) or, if no such testament exists, by following the regulations of the inheritance verses as stipulated by the Book. Preference should always be given to the will of a testament. If a testament exists, it will be incumbent on everyone to adhere to it literally: ‘the distribution in all cases (’s) after the payment of legacies and debts…’ (Al-Nis§” 4:11). If, however, someone has neglected this duty and has not written a will, Allah will act on the deceased’s behalf through His stipulations of a general testimony that regulates the shares of each heir. It is incumbent on everyone to painstakingly adhere to them, both with respect to the given number of heirs and the amount of individual shares.

Three verses of Sårat al-Nis§” specify how the inheritance is to be distributed:

Allah commands you, with respect to your children, that the male shall inherit the equivalent of the share of two females. If there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he leaves; but if there is only one female, she is entitled to one-half. To each of his parents, one-sixth of what he leaves, if he has any children; but if he has no children, then his

parents will inherit him, the mother receiving one-third. But if he has any brothers, then his mother receives one-sixth, after any will he had made or any debt he had incurred [is taken care of]. Your fathers and sons—you know not who of them is of greater advantage to you. This is a law from Allah; Allah surely is All-Knowing, Forbearing. (Al-Nis§” 4:11, MF)

In what your wives leave, your share is a half, if they leave no child; but if they leave a child, you get a fourth; after payment of legacies and debts. In what you leave, their share is a fourth, if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth; after payment of legacies and debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question, has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of legacies and debts; so that no loss is caused (to any one). Thus is it ordained by God; and God is all-knowing, most forbearing. (Al-Nis§” 4:12)

Those are the limits set by God [Èudåd All§h]: those who obey God and His apostle will be admitted to gardens with rivers flowing beneath, to abide therein (for ever) and that will be the supreme achievement. (Al-Nis§” 4:13)

Let us first establish who is addressed here (subject) and to whom inheritance shall be given (object). This is similar to the identification of subject and object in any other verse of the Book. For example, in the sentence ‘We have enjoined on man (a l-ins§n) kindness to parents (bi-w§lidaihi)…’ (Al-#Ankabåt 29:8 and Al-AÈq§f 46:15), the subject of Allah’s enjoinment is ‘man’ who is told to be kind, and the object of man’s kindness is his ‘parents’. The subject of the verses of inheritance is ‘humankind’ (a l-n§s), who are ordered to show ‘reverence [to their] Guardian-Lord…’ (Al-Nis§” 4:1), and verse 4:11 states their object: ‘God (thus) directs you as regards your children’s (inheritance) (aul§dikum)…’.

Note that the text does not say ‘your own children’s’ (abn§“ikum) but just ‘your children’s’ (aul§dikum), while further down in the same verse the text says

‘abn§“ukum’: ‘You know not whether your parents [ab§“ukum] or your (own) children [abn§“ukum] are nearest to you in benefit…’. The difference is significant, since ‘aulad’ is the plural of ‘child’ which, both in Arabic and English, is not engendered as it can be either male or female. As a neuter term (a feminine form of walad does not exist) it has universal application since it basically connotes ‘every child that is born’ on the earth.

Thus, the verse ‘God (thus) directs you as regards your children’s (inheritance) (aul§dikum)…’ expresses Allah’s concern for the ‘children of this earth’ and His honouring of all humankind. He even swears an oath on them in Sårat a l-Balad: ‘(I swear) by parent (w§lid[in]) and offspring (wa-m§ walada),’ (90:3, AH), and God also uses the term for a self-reference: ‘He begot no one (lam yalid) nor was He begotten (wa-lam yålad) (A l-Ikhl§ß 112:3). In other words, by specifying the object of Allah’s inheritance laws as ‘your children’ verse 4:11 makes it clear that the rest of the inheritance verses are meant to cover every possible case of inheritance applicable to all humankind, that is, for everyone who, unlike God, ‘has begotten and was begotten’ and has, therefore, father, mother, son, daughter, husband, or wife.

The first injunction after the introduction in 4:11 states: ‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’. This is the first law of inheritance. It indicates that the portion a male heir inherits is calculated on the basis of the portion that the female heirs inherit, as if Allah has urged us to define the portion of the female inheritors first and only then to deduce from it an equal amount for male inheritors. Mathematically, it is only logical that the equivalent number to sum A cannot be accurately established if sum A is not properly defined in the first place. Thus, only if sum A (female shares) is properly described can one work out an equivalent sum B (male shares).

The second injunction in 4:11 states: a) ‘if only daughters, more than two, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance’; and b) ‘if only one, her share is a half’. These are the second and third laws of inheritance. The two injunctions of verse 4:11 contain the essence of inheritance laws in the Book; other injunctions, given later in the verse, are just variations on

these and are calculated on the basis of the three laws. They constitute Allah's limits as testified by the conclusion in 4:13, which says, 'those are limits set by God…'. Within these limits (the first two injunctions) we hear about the distribution of inheritance to several other inheritors, for example, children, grandchildren, husband, wife, brother, and sister, but we hear nothing about uncles and aunts as potential inheritors. This implies that within the limits of Allah uncles and aunts do not receive any share of the inheritance.

As it is our aim to give inheritance law a sound mathematical foundation we apply the following formula: the value of the ordinate (y) equals the value of the variable (x) by a multiplying factor t (parameter), thus, y=t(x). If (x) represents the value of variable t and (y) the value of the ordinate, then the value of (y) changes by an increase or decrease of variable (x). Applied to inheritance law we define (y) as the value of male shares and (x) as the value of female shares because the female shares (x) are the basis of the calculation, and if (x) changes so does the value of (y), the male shares. This reverses the traditional understanding of the first injunction entirely: 'to the male, a portion equal to that of two females', which used to be interpreted as 'to the male twice the portion of that of females'. Even if this looks like playing with words, the traditional interpretation had turned the originally intended basis of calculation on its head since it assumed that male shares are the variable (x) that determines the value of the ordinate (y), the female shares. In this equation, male inheritors always get twice the amount of female share, regardless of the actual number of female inheritors (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 … to infinity!) and regardless of the amount of shares calculated on the basis of the number of females in the family. This is, of course, unacceptable and violates Allah's proposition in this verse. We need to remind ourselves that Allah's legislation reflects the conditions of objective reality that universally exist for all humankind. And if it is said that 'to the male, a portion equal to that of two females', it is not just a purely hypothetical, abstract scenario but also an adequate reflection of a concrete social condition. In this case, if 'to the male, a portion equal to that of two females' should apply we need to have a situation where the number of female inheritors is twice the number of male inheritors, as illustrated by a few examples in this table:

| two females | one male |

| four females | two males |

| six females | three males |

How will this change if there is more than twice the number of females compared to the number of male inheritors, that is, if the ratio is for example, 3:1; 4:1; 6:2 or 12:4? In these instances the second injunction comes into play, which states: ‘if there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he leaves’.[266] This confirms again, first, that Allah always calculates female shares first, which might increase or decrease, and, second, that the male share is not always twice the amount of the female share. If, for example, these are four inheritors (one male + three females), the male share is 33.333 percent, while the female share(s) are 66.666 percent, and divided by three this equals 22.222 percent each. And if there are six inheritors (one male + 5 females), the male share is again 33.333 percent, but the female share(s) change to

66.666 percent divided by five equals 13.333 percent. Hence, only in one specific situation, when the number of males is half the number of females, do male inheritors receive twice the amount of female shares. This clearly contradicts the traditional position of the fuqah§” who claim that males always receive twice the amount of female shares.

If there is only one female in the family who inherits, the second part of the second injunction applies: ‘if only one, her share is a half’. In this case, the female share is 50 percent and the male share is 50 percent. This last possibility means that the Book has covered all three possible inheritance constellations (there is not, either mathematically or empirically, a fourth one possible):

1. ‘if there is one female (heir)’ → the male (heir) receives half of her share;

2. ‘if there are two female (heirs)’ → the male (heir) receives double the amount of one female share;

3. ‘if there are more than two female (heirs)’ → the male (heir) receives one-third and the female heirs receive two-thirds regardless of their number (three to infinity).

The Book does not deal with situations where only male or only female inheritors exist. In this case, if there are either 1–∞ males or 1–∞ females, the shares will be equally distributed among all heirs. This can be done by simple arithmetical operations—and without the help of divine instructions. The Book is only concerned with the more complicated situation of male-female inheritance (mother–father); (sister–brother); (widowed wife–widowed husband), and such. Where the text mentions only one sex, for example, ‘females’ in verse 4:11, it always presupposes the existence of ‘males’ who live with the family. Likewise, although 4:11 only mentions the deceased’s ‘mother’, it does assume the existence of the deceased’s ‘father’.

The Book’s major concern is social justice in society. Equality is not absolute and does not imply that every individual will get exactly the same share of the inherited property. Justice is achieved on a more collective level insofar as inheritance is equally distributed among the two sexes, even if, in some instances, one individual female share is smaller than an individual male share. But on the whole, and only this really achieves peace in society, the two sexes receive the same amount of the disposable inheritance.

The Limits of God

As explained earlier, the Book draws Allah’s limits in verses 11–13 of Surat al-Nis§” and concludes the section on inheritance by explicitly referring to these verses as ‘limits set by God’ (4:13). This is a powerful reminder of the fact that those who keep these limits are rewarded with life in Paradise, whereas those who break them will go to Hell. Let us therefore recapitulate what these limits are:

1. The first limit:

‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’: This limit applies to those cases where the survivors of the deceased are two females and one male and, by analogy, to all other cases where the number of females is twice the number of males (if one male + two females → then one-half to him, the other half to them (=) if two males + four females → then one-half to the two males, the other half to the four females, and so on). This limit is expressed by the formula:

F

—

= 2 (F = number of female heirs; M = number of male heirs)

M

2. The second limit:

‘If there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he (the deceased) leaves…’ [MF]: This limit applies to all cases where the number of females is more than twice the number of males. If there are one male and three females, then the one male receives a third and the three females receive two-thirds. The actual amount of the male share depends on the number of female shares (3–∞), (e.g., if two males + five females → then one-third is shared in equal portions by the two males, and two-thirds are shared equally among the five females; if three males + seven females → then one-third to the males and two-thirds to the females, etc.). This limit is described by almost the same formula as above:

F

—

> 2 (F = number of female heirs; M = number of male heirs)

M

In any case, male shares are not twice that of female shares (onethird is always smaller than two-thirds). Hence, it is different from the first case where individual male shares are always bigger than the individual female shares. But the first case is rather exceptional since it applies only to those rare situations where the female heirs outnumber [twice] the male heirs.

3. The third limit:

‘if only one, her share is a half’: This limit applies to all cases where the number of male inheritors exactly equals the number of female inheritors (if one male + one female → then half to each; if two males + two females → then a quarter to each, etc.).

This limit is expressed by the formula:

F

—

= 1 (F = number of female heirs; M = number of male heirs)

M

Once more, the male shares are not twice the amount of the female shares as in case 1/limit 1. The mistake of traditional jurisprudence was to apply case 1/limit 1 to all possible cases of inheritance, thereby conflating three different limits into one and spuriously overruling the two other limits by the first one. Our model proposes keeping the three limits apart and applying them separately to the case in which they can provide the best and fairest solution.

The text reminds us that ‘those are the limits set by God”! We will see that the remaining verses (11–13) provide the upper and lower boundaries of these limits. The following sections will demonstrate, with the help of analytical geometry and mathematical theories, that the exact amount of portions can be precisely calculated and allocated and that we do not have to put up with the quantitative or qualitative ambiguity of the traditional models of inheritance law.

The General Law of Inheritance

Moving from digital quantities to nondigital quantities in calculating inheritance shares, six situations can be formulated:

Case (A): there is more than one heir; they are male and female (three males and one female):

| female | male |

| | 1* | 1 |

| | 0 | 1 |

| | 0 | 1 |

| Total: | 1 | 3 | Applied limit: ‘if only one, her share is a half’ (3)*

Rule: 50 percent for females; 50 percent for males (a third each); absolute equality (in total) between male and female shares; yet, individually: one male share is a third of one female share, while the number of females is only one-third of the number of males—or if put the other way around: one female share is three times the amount of the individual male share, while the number of males is three times larger than the number of females. This means that the ratio of female to male shares (individually) is in exact inverse proportion to the ratio between female-male numbers (3:1 → 1:3)

Case (B): there is more than one heir; they are male and female (three males and two females)

female | male |

| 1* | 1 |

| 1* | 1 | 0

Total: 2

Applied limit: ‘if only one, her share is a half’ (3)*

Rule: 50 percent for females (one-third each); 50 percent for males (one-third each); absolute equality (in total) between male and female shares; the ratio of female to male individual shares (3:2) is in exact inverse proportion to the ratio between female-male numbers (2:3).

Case (C): there is more than one heir; they are male and female (three males and three females)

female | male |

| 1 | 1 |

| 1 | 1 | 1

Total: 3

Applied limit: the number of female heirs matches (in each row) the number of male heirs:

F

—

= 1 (F = number of female heirs; M = number of male heirs)

M

Rule: 50 percent for females (one-third each); 50 percent for males (one-third each); absolute equality (in total) between male and female shares; the ratio of female to male individual shares (3:3) is the exact ratio of female-male numbers (3:3), in total: 1:1 (each female and male share is exactly the same).

Case (D): there is more than one heir; they are male and female (three males and four females)

female | male |

| 1* | 1 |

| 1* | 1 | 2°

Total: 4

Applied limit: ‘if only one, her share is a half’ (3)* and ‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’ (1)°

Rule: 50 percent for females (a quarter each); 50 percent for males (a third each); absolute equality (in total) between male and female shares; the ratio of female to male individual shares (3:4) is in exact inverse proportion to the ratio of female to male numbers (4:3), since an individual female share is only 75 percent of the individual male share, while the number of males makes up 75 percent of the number of females.

Case (E): there is more than one heir; they are male and female (three males and five females)

female | male |

| 1* | 1 |

| 2° | 1 | 2°

Total: 5

Applied limits: ‘if only one, her share is a half’ (3)* and ‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’ (1)°

Rule: 50 percent for females (one-fifth each); 50 percent for males (one-third each); absolute equality (in total) between male and female shares; the ratio of female to male individual shares (3:5 = 1.666) is in exact inverse proportion to the ratio of female to male numbers (5:3 = 1.666), since an individual female share is only 60 percent of the individual male share, while the number of males makes up 60 percent of the number of females.

Case (F): there is more than one heir; they are male and female (three males and six females)

female | male |

| 2° | 1 |

| 2° | 1 | 2°

Total: 6

Applied limit: ‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’ (1)°

Rule: 50 percent for females (one-sixth each); 50 percent for males (one-third each); absolute equality (in total) between male and female shares; but since the number of female heirs is twice the number of male heirs, their individual share is only half the amount of the individual male share or, put differently, since the number of male heirs is only half the number of female heirs (3:6 = ½), males receive individually (and only then!) twice the amount of the individual female share (6:3 = 2).

The Distribution of Inheritance

So far we have calculated inheritance shares on the basis of the generic distinction between male and female heirs. Our next step will be to consider other subdivisions. For this purpose we need to go from digital quantities to nondigital quantities which can be found in analytical geometry. If we take our findings from the last section, where we concluded that the ratio of male to female shares is in exact inverse proportion to the ratio of the male to female number of heirs, and express this in geometrical terms we get the following formula:

If it is said that X = F/M (F = number of female heirs; M = number of male heirs), and Y = D2/D1 (D1 = share of the male heirs; D2 = share of the

female heirs), and if the ratio of male-female shares is the inverse/reverse ratio of the male-female number of inheritors, then it follows that: Y = 1/X

This last equation describes the geometrical figure of a hyperbola. It is based on the application of only two limits of Allah (1 + 3). We can only achieve a hyperbola if the ratio between male and female numbers is greater than zero and smaller than 2 or if it equals 2:

$0 < F/M \leq 2$

If we apply the second of Allah's limits which says: 'If there be more than two females (nis§”[an]), then they should receive two-thirds of what he (the deceased) leaves…', we would first have to define the Arabic term nis§”. The usage of this term in the text is particularly odd since one would expect to see the proper term for 'female' which is in§th. So why does the verse use nis§”? Nis§” is the plural of imra”a and means 'women'. It connotes mature women, not girls. This is significant because even though every woman is obviously female, not every female is a woman who has reached her puberty. By using the term nis§”, and not in§th, the condition of the verse is that female heirs must have reached puberty (one should read: 'If there be adult women [nis§” [an]] more than two …'). This is different from the first injunction. Since every creature is either male or female ('that He did create in pairs—male and female' [Al-Najm 53:45]), we were able to conclude that Allah's first limit (1) 'to the male (dhakar), a portion equal to that of two females (unthayain)' implied a distribution of shares to male and female heirs regardless of their status of being either a minor or an adult.

Nis§” is, as we have said, the plural of imra”a, 'woman'. By definition it refers to more than two (ithnatain), that is, three or more. But why does the text say: 'adult women (nis§” [an]), more than two (fawq ithnatain)…',[267] if the term nis§” already indicates a number of more than two? Is this a redundant expression? Should

it not be ‘if there are women’ or ‘if there are more than two (women)”? Since we believe that there is no redundancy in the Book, we are convinced that the expression ‘if there are women, more than two’ points to something extra that neither of the two units (‘women’ and ‘more than two’) possess alone. But what is this extra information? The following two contrasting examples will explain it:

Example 1: if we are faced with a constellation of two males and four female inheritors, the number of women would be ‘more than two (nis§”)’, but the ratio of 4:2, equalling two, is not ‘over two (fawq ithnatain)’. In other words, only the first part of the condition is fulfilled: ‘if there are females (i.e., over two)’, but not its second part: ‘more than two’ (i.e., over two more than male inheritors). Example 2: if, however, we have only one male and three female inheritors, the ratio of 3:1, equalling three, would be over two, which would qualify as ‘over two’ in actual numbers as well as ‘over two’ in comparison with the number of male inheritors. The same applies, for example to three males and 5 females, with a ratio of 5:3, equalling 2.5 which is > 2, and a number of women of more than two.

Example 2 illustrates that we might attain whole numbers (1, 2, 3…) as well as fractions (2.5) in calculating the number of inheritors. The text certainly allows the existence of fractions when it uses the preposition ‘over’ (fawq) but usually implies whole numbers when it uses the elative ‘more than’ (akthar). Verse 12 of Sårat al-Nis§” uses akthar: ‘but if more than two (brothers and sisters), they share in a third’, implying that to count here with 1 ½ brothers or 1 ¼ sisters would be impossible. But in using fawq: ‘women, more than two’, and not akthar, it is possible to calculate the ratio of male and female inheritors so that we might receive whole numbers or fractions.

We now return to the second limit of God in its entirety: ‘If there be more than two females (nis§” [an]), then they should receive twothirds of what he (the deceased) leaves…’, and explore the different variant options of male-female ratios.

If ⇒

women male

3 1

2 1

Rule: __ __

3 3

66.66% 33.33%

_____ _____

Result: = 22.22 = 33.33

3 1

and if ⇒

women male

5 2

2 1

— —

Rule:

3 3

0.666% 0.333%

_____ _____

Result: = 0.1333 = 0.1666

5 2

⇒ Y = [_____] D2 → 0.1333 _____ = 0.8 = _____ 2×2 =

then

D1 0.1666 5

number of males multiplied by two

_____ number of females

If we apply nondigital quantities, we get the following equations:

a. For the individual female share:

2

D2 = [___]

3F

b. For the individual male:

1

D1 ___

3M

c. For the ratio between female and male shares:

2/3F 2 ___ 3___M ___ D2 2M ___

_____

= × or =

1/3M 3F 1 D1 F

If the ratio of the male to female number of heirs is:

F

X = __ [M]

and if we equate this with the two limits in inverse proportion, we receive:

___ 1 ___ F 2 ___ 2 ___ 2M ___

= or or =

X M X X F

It follows from this that the male-female ratio of shares is:

2M 2

Y = ___ = __

F X

This is entailed in the equation:

2

Y = [__]

X

This equation describes a hyperbolic function. However, it is only valid, a) if all females are mature women, and b) if the ratio of female to male numbers is more than two (fawq ithnatain):

F

___ > 2

M

This is where the hyperbolic ellipsis starts. It starts directly above zero and moves until infinity, but only if the hyperbolic equation is:

1

Y = [___]

X

According to analytical mathematics, the first derivative of this last equation must be described as follows:

Y = ___ 1 = X –1 of which is Y ′ = 1/2 ____

X x

Finally, if we assume Y[] ′ over X equals 1, we get:

[__] 1

Y′ = = 1 = α-tangent

1

If the derivative of X equals 1, the alpha-angle (α) of the tangent is 45°. The x-axis (abscissae) is then touched at 1, the point at which F equals M (i.e., if the number of female heirs equals the number of male heirs). This represents the hyperbola’s peak (or focus point), and if the tangent has an alpha-angle (α) of 45°, the derivative equals the tangent. Preceding the hyperbola’s peak are points on the x-axis that describe the situation where female heirs are outnumbered by male heirs but where their individual share is bigger than the male share. Following the hyperbola’s peak are points that describe the reverse situation, that is, where the female heirs outnumber male heirs and where their share is smaller than the male share. The result is a picture of absolute symmetry—to the effect that the extra that female heirs receive (pictured on one side of the hyperbola) is exactly balanced by the extra that male heirs receive collectively as a whole group (pictured on the reverse side of the hyperbola). This rather abstract picture, gained through analytical geometry, is matched by statistics taken from objective reality. According to these statistical data the number of female shares existing in the entire world equals the number of male heirs. The mathematical balance achieved through Allah’s limits thus reflects the actual circumstances that we encounter in our daily life.

1 _{___} 2

_{___}

And yet, what happens if the premise is not Y = but Y = ?

X X We attain: _{2 x X}[–1] and, as a result:

____₂/2 2 [__] 1[__]

Y = ; if X = 2, then Y′ _{= = =} β; β = 30° which is X = 2 of

X 4 2

the hyperbola

In conclusion, we maintain that all possible variants of how to distribute inheritance are covered by the three limits proposed by God and can be calculated accordingly. We also maintain that each case of inheritance can be described geometrically by a hyperbolic curve

___ 1 [] _{___} 2

(or function) of either Y = or Y = . There is no case of inheri-

X X

tance that is not covered by these two formulas. Our calculations are so precise that we will never have a surplus or a shortage of inherited property after the heirs have received their portions. Hence, we will never face the absurd situation where heirs receive less than their legitimate share or

where, because of a sudden surplus, the families of aunts and uncles are considered who actually have no legitimate right to inherit anything at all.

Inheritance of Ascendant Members of the Family (al-ußål)

So far we have only covered the shares of the descendant heirs (al-furå# or ‘branches’) which were calculated by the parameters of mathematical set theory. This will now be complemented by a discussion of the shares for ascendant members of the family (al-ußål or ‘roots’). In contrast to the identity of a whole set (being either male or female), our calculations are now for elements of those generic sets which can acquire multiple identities. The element ‘father’, for example, may intersect with several sets, in their order of significance: 1) male 2) mature adult 3) married and 4) guardian of children. The element ‘mother’ is defined by: 1) female 2) mature adult 3) married 4) guardian of children. Because of the fact that elements such as ‘father’ or ‘mother’ are part of a larger set (male, female), the generic cases of inheritance law for male/female heirs can also be applied here. Three constellations are possible:

1. The deceased is survived by parents (whether also by brothers and sisters is here irrelevant): ‘For parents (li-abawaihi), a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children…’ (4:11)

Rule: the father receives the same share as the mother (limit law III). The share is given to ‘parents’, whether they are ‘birth-givers’ or ‘caregiver-parents’, as the text uses li-abawaihi and not li-w§lidaihi. One-sixth goes to the father (‘birth-giver’ or ‘caregiver-father’), and one-sixth goes to the mother (‘birth-giver’ or ‘caregiver-mother’). This rule covers the possibility that the deceased is the adopted son/ daughter of the surviving parents. This reflects national statistics showing that in a situation like this (the deceased is survived by his or her parents and children) the number of inheriting fathers equals the number of inheriting mothers.

| Share of subset ‘mother” | = | Share of subgroup ‘father” |

| Number of mothers | = | Number of fathers |

| Individual share | = | Individual share |

2. The deceased had neither children nor brothers and sisters: ‘if no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third…’ (4:11)

Rule: the father receives two-thirds and the mother one-third (limit law I), after deducting the shares for the husband or wife of the deceased, if there are any. This reflects statistics showing that in a situation like this (the deceased is survived by only his or her parents) the number of inheriting fathers is half the number of inheriting mothers.

Share of subset ‘mother” | = | Share of subgroup ‘father” |

| Half the number of inheriting mothers | = | Number of i nheriting fathers |

| Twice the individual share | = | Individual share |

3. The deceased is survived by brothers and sisters but had no children: ‘if the deceased left brothers (or sisters), the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases) after the payment of legacies and debts…’ (4:11)

Rule: the father receives five-sixths and the mother one-sixth (limit law II), similar to the case of one male (brother) and ten females (sisters), whereby the brother receives one-third and the ten sisters receive two-thirds. The share of the brother is five times the individual share of his sisters, exactly as in the case above where the father’s share is five times the share of the mother. And this is in spite of the fact that the father has not even been mentioned in the verse; it says: ‘the mother has a sixth”! This reflects statistics showing that the number of inheriting fathers is only a fifth of the number of inheriting mothers.

| Share of subset ‘mother” | = | Share of subgroup ‘father” |

| A fifth of the number of inheriting mothers | = | Number of i nheriting fathers |

| Five times the individual share | = | Individual share |

Taking the three situations together we can safely claim that the total share of inheritance all over the world is equally divided between surviving fathers and mothers. This is based on our belief that objective reality and its laws are the words of God (kalim§t All§h), that the Book is His speech (kal§m), and that the criterion of truth is within His words (i.e., objective reality). Even if we concede that the distribution of inheritance and the calculation of shares in each individual case is always a complicated procedure (if no bequest exists), it is still a remarkable fact that in all three cases permanent equality between male and female shares is achieved, which reflects God's justice.

The concluding statement in 4:11 is: 'You know not whether your parents (ab§"ukum) or your children (abn§"ukum) are nearest to you in benefit…'. The two groups mentioned here are ascending relatives of the deceased (ab§"ukum), to whatever degree upwards, and descending relatives (abn§"ukum), to whatever degree downwards. In other words, in both cases the verse does not refer to the nearest ascendants (parents) or descendants (children) of the deceased, but to the grandparents (and above) or to the grandchildren (and below). The use of ab§"u in this wider (figurative, nonbiological) sense can also be found in "And I follow the ways of my fathers (ab§"Ê): Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob…" (Yåsuf 12:38), implying that two of the three were Joseph's forefathers not his 'birth-givers'. The rule here is 'nearer [in degree excludes] the more distant [in degree]' (a l-aqrab fa'l-ab#ad), which means that if, for example, both the father/mother and grandfather/ grandmother of the deceased are still alive, the grandparents cannot inherit because of the parent's existence.

Likewise, if the deceased is survived by a son/daughter and grandson/granddaughter, the existence of the children automatically excludes the grandchildren. If, however, parents or children are already dead, grandparents and grandchildren will inherit because there is no parent

or child to exclude them as heirs.[268] The lexical distinction between progeny (aul§d) and children (abn§”) is very significant in this respect. The term ‘progeny’ is much wider and more general than ‘children’. The latter describes direct descendants of the uß̊al-generation, whereas the former connotes a variety of relationships and is unspecific about the sex of the descendants. In prescribing the three basic laws of inheritance for the parties of parents, children, spouses, brothers, and sisters, Allah uses the term ‘progeny’ (aul§d): ‘Allah (thus) directs you as regards to your children’s (fÊ aul§dikum) (inheritance)…’ (4:11). This leads us to the meaning of the last sentence of the verse: ‘You know not whether your parents (ab§“ukum) or your children (abn§“ukum) are nearest to you in benefit…’, because it is never certain who will inherit from whom.

Is it the daughter who will inherit from her father or is it the father who will inherit from his daughter? Will the grandmother survive her grandson, or will it be the other way around? Each case is unpredictable and will vary from family to family, but statistically and on average it is more likely that sons/daughters inherit from their parents and not the reverse. The general rule (children inherit more often from their parents than vice versa) might, however, not apply in particular cases of inheritance (where parents do inherit from their children). In real life things are more complex and one can never be absolutely sure who exactly inherits from whom and how many heirs will survive the deceased. Particular case-law is unpredictable, inconclusive, and never predetermined. And yet, since the particular is part of the universal, there is no real contradiction between particular case-law and universal law, since the latter absorbs and assimilates the former in formulating its absolute and universally applicable laws.

The Inheritance of Spouses

The first part of the second verse of inheritance is dedicated to spouses:

In what your wives leave, your share is a half, if they leave no child; but if they leave a child, you get a fourth; after payment of legacies and debts. In

what you leave, their share is a fourth, if you leave no child; but if you leave a child, they get an eighth; after payment of legacies and debts. (Al-Nis§” 4:12)

It starts by addressing men whose wives have died. Allah permits them half of her inheritance if the couple have no children (male or female, children or grandchildren). If the couple have children, he will receive only a quarter of her inheritance. It then addresses women whose husbands have died. They receive a quarter of his inheritance, but only one-eighth if the couple have children. Undoubtedly, the verse applies limit law I (‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’), since the childless widowed husband receives one-half, and one-quarter if the couple have children—no specification is given to the sex or number of children. Once again, we should remind ourselves of the need for such regulations only in situations where a bequest does not exist. If, however, a bequest exists, precisely specifying each share, it must be taken as the basis for allocating the deceased’s inheritance. A specific bequest always overrules the general regulations of inheritance law. [269]

The so-called kal§la inheritance

So far, the verses have covered inheritance cases where the deceased is survived by children or parents. But what happens if the parents have already died and no children exist? This situation is called a l-kal§la, i.e. a distribution of the inheritance to collateral heirs (those who are not of the direct line of the deceased but come from a side line, e.g. brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, etc.). There are two types of al-kal§la:

1) If the deceased has one brother and one sister each will receive one-sixth, that is, each sex gets the same amount. If there are several brothers and sisters they all share equally one-third of the inheritance. One-third is the upper limit that brothers and sisters of the deceased can inherit, and their individual share is absolutely identical (limit law III). It also applies if the deceased has a husband (who gets at the lower limit ½ without children, ¼

with children) or a wife (who gets at the lower limit ¼ without children, ⅛ with children):

If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question, has left neither ascendants nor descendants [al-kal§la], but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of legacies and debts… (Al-Nis§” 4:12)

2) The second type applies if the deceased is not survived by a husband/wife and not by children or parents either. In this case, limit law III is used (‘if only one, her share is a half’), but only if the number of brothers and sisters is three or less and if male and female heirs exist (e.g. one brother and one sister, or one brother and two sisters, or two brothers and one sister). In all other cases where the number of brothers and sisters is four and above, and if male and female heirs exist, limit law I will be used (‘…to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’). If there are only sisters or only brothers, then each heir gets exactly the same share.

They ask you for a legal decision. Say: God directs (thus) about those who leave no descendants or ascendants as heirs [al-kal§la]. If it is a man that dies, leaving a sister but no child, she shall have half the inheritance: If (such a deceased was) a woman, who left no child, her brother takes her inheritance: If there are two sisters, they shall have two-thirds of the inheritance (between them): if there are brothers and sisters, (they share), the male having twice the share of the female. Thus does God make clear to you (His law), lest you err. And God has knowledge of all things. (Al-Nis§” 4:176)

*** Conclusion and Summary

Bequest/Testimony Inheritance laws

General and Bequests are the primary specific laws source for distributing inheritance. Allah gave priority to bequests over inheritance laws since they reflect the personal and objective circumstances of the testator. Bequests represent a specific law within the realm of the more general laws of inheritance. They achieve specific justice on the personal level of an individual.

Inheritance laws were stipulated by Allah for all people on earth. They represent a universal law of distributing inheritance through a general formula of allocating shares in cases where no bequest/testimony exists, or where there is a surplus, i.e., ‘after payment of legacies and debts’ (4:12). Their aim is to achieve social justice on a general level (between whole sets), not on an individual level (between each heir).

| | Bequest/Testimony | Inheritance laws |

| Symmetry | Symmetry of distributional shares does not exist. | Symmetry does exist. Inheritors form symmetrical relationships to the deceased (father/mother/ son/daughter/brother/sister/ husband/wife). Symmetry is one of the universal attributes, while asymmetry is an attribute of the particular sphere. There is a dialectical

relationship between symmetry and asymmetry. |

| Shares of bequests and inheritance | Shares of bequests are called naßÊb. They are individually inheritance defined by the testator; hence they are subject to the human will. | Shares of inheritance laws are called Èaíí. They are primordially defined by divine will and cannot be changed by human will. Verse 4:11 says: ‘this is a law of God…’ [AH]. |

| Obligation or Law | Bequests are ordained by Allah as a religious obligation (taklÊf), just as He ordained prayer and fasting. | A law of God (farÊ·a min All§h) |

| Persons entitled to receive bequests and to be legal heirs | Testators can bequeath shares to anyone they want, but the Book mentions people to whom it is recommended to allocate shares (e.g., to parents, next of kin, orphans, people in need, the disabled and old). The potential number of people who can receive bequests is much higher than the number of potential heirs who are entitled to inherit by inheritance laws. | Inheritance laws stipulate precisely who is entitled to inherit and who is not. If persons are not mentioned they cannot inherit. |

| Laws of distribution | No law regulates the distribution of shares. It is entirely up to the testators when and how their inheritance is allotted to the people they mentioned in their bequest. It is a particular and specific form of distribution. | The verses of inheritance follow general, universal laws that are based on calculations that can be analysed by analytical geometry and mathematics (in addition to the basic arithmetic operations). These are fixed laws, defined by Allah, in which each share is meticulously determined. The amount of the total inheritance (100 percent) is neither to be under- or overused. The practice of surplus or shortage is illegitimate because it would imply that we have not calculated the shares correctly on the basis of the portions that Allah has fixed by His laws and limits. |

| Caregiverparents and birth-givers | Verses of bequests consider caregiver-parents. | Verses of inheritance consider ‘birth-givers’ and other ascendants (to whatever degree up) under the umbrella of al-ab§’, as well as children and other descendants (to whatever degree down) under the umbrella of al-abn§’. |

| Comments | Testators are entitled to combine shares of bequests with shares of inheritance by stipulating how much can be bequeathed and how

much can be inherited. There is therefore nothing that would limit or restrain the freedom of the testators to write their last will as they wish.
However, parliament might issue a law that regulates the amount of the inheritance that can be bequeathed. Such laws have no eternal validity. We do not accept the traditional understanding of inheritance that states: ‘no bequest [is admitted] to the inheritor’. Bequests can take effect even before the death of the testator. | Inheritance laws were given on the assumption that both male and female heirs exist (mother/ father; brother/sister; husband/ wife). There are of course cases where only one sex exists, e.g., the deceased is survived by only male children, or only female children, or where there are only brothers but no sisters, or only sisters but no brothers. In all these cases the rule is that every heir of the same sex receives exactly the same share. For this rule no additional revelation was needed, and it is so self-evident that no further fiqh commentary or ÈadÊth by a companion of the Prophet (ß) or by anyone after them is required. |

Symbols Used to Calculate the Shares of Inheritance

| Category | Symbol |

| Number of female heirs | F |

| Number of male heirs | M |

| Ratio between female and male heirs | X = F/M

| Share of a male heir | D1 |

| Share of a female heir | D2 |

| Ratio between the share of a female heir and the share of a male heir | Y = D2/D1 |

The Three Limit Laws of Inheritance

| Limit | Hyperbolic function | Condition |

| Limit I
‘to the male, a portion equal to that of two females’ | The amount of male-female shares is in inverse proportion to the number of male-female heirs: | 0 < F/M < 2

The peak of x is 1

F[__] ≤ 2 F___ = 2

Limit II

‘If there be more than two females, then they should receive two-thirds of what he (the deceased) leaves…’ __ 2 M

The amount of male-female shares is in inverse proportion to the number of male-female heirs: F__ > 2

F__ > 2 Y = X

M The peak of x is 2.

Limit III

‘if only one, her share is a The equation is as follows:

half” __ 1 0 < F[__] ≤ 2 F__ = 1 Y = X M

The peak of x is 1

*** Polygyny

The issue of polygyny[270] has perhaps been the most controversial topic since reformers of the nineteenth century began to question the plausibility of Islam’s traditional marriage law. It is certainly one of the key issues that women in the Arab-Muslim world today face in their struggle for liberation and emancipation. If this issue is ever to be resolved once and for all, Muslim-Believers worldwide must come to terms with the modern age and the problems that come with it. The reform we propose is to understand the verses of polygyny, contained in the umm al-kit§b, as Èudåd verses (pointing to upper and lower limits), which allows us to legislate in accordance with concrete historical conditions in society and to appeal to the most noble and universal aspects of all human beings.

The verse of polygyny, or should we say the verse about its abolition, can be found in Sårat al-Nis§”, the fourth såra and hence right at the beginning of the Book. It only consists of one verse, 4:3, and nowhere else in the entire text is polygyny mentioned again. The mistake of traditional exegetes has been to treat this verse consistently detached from its textual context ignoring the preceding verses which discuss how to avoid injustice to orphans. As a result polygyny was legislated for in isolation from the issue of marriages to widowed mothers of orphans and thus in isolation from its divine ratio legis.

In order to rectify this mistake, we will give the reader the exact sequence of the first verses of Sårat al-Nis§”. The såra begins with God’s call to humankind to show reverence to the ‘GuardianLord’:

O [humankind]! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women. Reverence God, through whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you); for God ever watches over you. (Al-Nis§” 4:1)

It continues in verse 2 with a call to humankind not to squander the property of orphans but to take good care of it:

To orphans restore their property (when they reach their age), nor substitute (your) worthless things for (their) good ones; and devour not their substance (by mixing it up) with your won. For this is indeed a great sin. (Al-Nis§” 4:2)

Then comes the crucial third verse in which humankind is ordered to allow marriage to two or three or four wives on condition that people fear that they are unable to deal justly with orphans (the condition is underlined):

If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly [all§ tuqsiåå] with the orphans, marry women of your choice [m§ ã§ba lakum], two or three or four; but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly [all§ ta#dilå] (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess [au m§ malakat aim§nukum], that will be more suitable, to prevent you from [having too great of a burden] [all§ ta#ålå]. (Al-Nis§” 4:3)

Verse 4 follows by ordering the obligation of a bridal gift and asks women to ‘take it and enjoy it with right good cheer’, while verse 5 forbids people from handing over their property to the feeble-minded, but requires them to ‘feed and clothe them, and speak to them words of kindness and justice’.[271] After this, verse 6 returns once more to the question of orphans:

Make trial of orphans until they reach the age of marriage… (Al-Nis§” 4:6)

These verses mention the matter of justice several times, using terms such as qisã and #adl. Both terms are autoantonyms or contranyms, words that have opposite and self-contradictory meanings. The word qisã, for example, can mean both ‘doing justice’ (as in 5:42, ‘For God loves those who judge in equity [al-muqsiåån]’) and ‘doing injustice’ (as in 72:15, ‘But those who swerve [al-q§siåån], they are (but) fuel for Hell-fire’). And

#adl denotes ‘equality/balance’ on the one hand, and ‘inequality/imbalance’ on the other. Moreover, there exists a subtle semantic difference between qisã and #adl, even if they both mean ‘justice/equality’: whereas qisã implies that justice is done by only one side of the involved parties, #adl connotes a demonstration of justice by all, or at least two sides. The morphological root of the mathematical term ‘equation’ (mu#§dala), indicating an equality between two sides (as in x=y), can be found in #adl, but not in qisã.

Orphans, whether male or female, are legal minors (children that have not yet reached puberty), and they are fatherless. In the context of al-Nis§” they are orphans whose mother is still alive. Verse 6 says: ‘Make trial of orphans until they reach the age of marriage…’ (Al-Nis§” 4:6), indicating that orphans have not yet reached sexual maturity. And the absence of their father is pointed out in the following verse: ‘As for the wall, it belonged to two youths, orphans, in the town; there was, beneath it, a buried treasure, to which they were entitled—their father had been a righteous man…’ (A l-Kahf 18:82), as well as in the two passages that imply the absence of the guardian who normally takes care of children’s property: ‘And come not nigh to the orphan’s property, except to improve it…’ (A l-An#§m 6:152) and ‘To orphans restore their property (when they reach their age)…’ (4:2).

These verses urge people to take care of orphans’ property as they have become fatherless and are living with their (now widowed) mother. The case that orphans have lost both parents, including their mother, is not covered in the polygyny verse (4:3), because if both parents had died, the question of remarriage would not occur at all, and if they were motherless orphans who stay with their (widowed) father, the father’s steps for a possible remarriage were legally unproblematic and are, therefore, not in any way discussed in the verse.

Allah wants us to be kind to orphans who are minors and who have lost their father, and He wants us to take care of their property until they have reached majority. How are we supposed to do this? If we, for instance, fear that we cannot do justice to all of them equally (‘If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly (all§ tuqsiãå) with the orphans…’) we

may, as the polygyny verse suggests, consider marrying their mothers (‘marry women of your choice’). These men who are addressed here and who are asked to consider marriage to a widowed mother of orphans are men who are already married to one wife and who have children of their own. The verse explicitly says, ‘marry […] two or three or four’, starting to count with two (not one), thereby excluding men who are single and also those who have no children.

Hence, Allah does not give unconditional permission for polygyny. First, he requests that the second, third, or fourth wives are widowed mothers of fatherless minors. Second, such polygynous marriages are only allowed if there is justifiable fear that one cannot give orphans equal shares. If these two conditions are not met a polygynous marriage cannot be considered legally valid.

Allah’s qualification m§ ã§ba lakum, which contains His permission to take more than one wife, has been the subject of lengthy debate among exegetes. It has often been understood as a free license for polygyny in the sense of ‘marry women of your choice’. It is unthinkable for us that God could have meant that men can have as many wives as it pleases them, and that it was revealed to encourage men’s arbitrary selection of whatever woman was available. If Allah had really intended to please men’s sexual desires He would have said: ‘marry women you want’. Instead, He said m§ ã§ba lakum, which means: ‘marry such women as seem good to you’ [AA].[272]

Such expression demands kindness and generosity towards women who have lost their husbands, the provider of the family and the guardian of their children, and who are at the mercy of whatever suitor is willing to take them. ‘As seem good to you’ calls for men’s generosity, an open heart, and their compassion for the plight of the poor women who have to care for their orphaned children. Justice, kindness, and fairness are at the heart of the polygyny verse!

And yet, Allah must have anticipated that this powerful appeal to humanity, as expressed in this verse, might lead to a situation in which some men, in

their relentless endeavour to please God, fulfil this obligation and marry widowed women with children without actually having the means to maintain them. This would result in many emotional and economic tensions whereby they are pulled between their own children of their first wife and the adopted orphaned children from their co-wives, resulting in a state of imbalance and injustice.

This is the reason Allah revealed the second part of the verse in which people are advised about the pitfalls of polygyny and are urged to stay monogamous. Some exegetes thought that this refers to the danger that in a polygynous marriage a husband might not give his several co-wives the same conjugal rights. However, the verse is not about equal sexual satisfaction of co-wives but about equality in terms of social and economic justice. The verse deals, after all, with the issue of orphaned children, not with marital problems, since it discusses the question of how to treat orphans justly (that is, equal to the husband's own children). The verse ends with an admonition to avoid injustice by not committing yourself to a polygynous marriage ('to prevent you from [having too great of a burden] [all§ ta#ålå]...', that is from having too many dependents to care for).

The verse of polygyny was intended to solve a crisis in the nascent Islamic community. The Arabian society of the seventh century was exhausted by the many wars that were fought in defence of the new religion, and the streets of Mecca and Medina were full of orphaned children who had lost their fathers on the battlefields. In those difficult years, Allah's revelation of the polygyny verse was a great relief for a society that did not know orphanages or state-sponsored charities for children. The polygyny verse should better be called the verse of adoption because it basically aims at regulating the process of adopting orphaned children into existing families. It does not deal with the marital issue of polygyny as such.

The danger is that this verse is read in isolation from the historical circumstances of its revelation and is interpreted as Allah's eternal order to unconditionally marry up to four wives regardless of the social or historical context (e.g., regardless of whether orphaned children exist or not). It would be extremely irresponsible to allow the practice of polygyny in a society in

times of peace when there is no significant numerical imbalance between men and women, where the number of widowed women with small children is insignificantly low, and where there are properly functioning systems of adoption and care through orphanages. Some fuqah§” have fabricated long lists of reasons why men are allowed to marry more than one wife. They have said, for example, that polygyny could be justified if a woman cannot give birth, or if she is chronically ill, or if she has acquired some sort of physical or mental disability. These reasons are in our opinion totally unacceptable and completely against the essence of

Allah’s revelation. We need to ask the fuqah§”, ‘why only women’?

Can men not become sterile, barren, and impotent? Are there not men who are disabled or chronically ill? Why do you not allow women to be polygamous and let them marry a second, third, or fourth co-husband?

Let us reiterate that Allah’s main concern was to create justice for orphaned children and to call for mercy for widowed mothers of young children. Polygyny was proposed as a solution to the social dilemma of not being able to care justly for orphans. It was not to solve the sexual problems a marital couple might have! And a restriction to monogamy was issued immediately afterwards covering the situation where a father faced the social problem of an unbalanced treatment between his blood children and the children he adopted. Verse 4:127 of the same såra basically reissues the moral appeal of verses 4:2–6:

They ask you for instruction concerning the women; say: ‘God does instruct you about them. And (remember) what has been rehearsed unto you in the book, concerning the orphans of women [yat§m§ al-nis§”] to whom you give not the portions prescribed, and yet whom you desire to marry, as also concerning the children who are weak and oppressed: that you stand firm for justice [al-qisã] to orphans. There is not a good deed which you do, but God is well-acquainted therewith’. (Al-Nis§” 4:127)

This verse has not escaped the superficial readings of traditional exegetes. Although the verse reiterates the previous call for ‘justice to orphans’ (li-yat§m§ bi’l-qisã) almost word for word, most commentators do not link this verse with 4:2–6, because of their misreading of ‘orphans of women’ (yat§m§ al-nis§”), which they understood to mean ‘orphan women’.[273] There are several considerations that speak against this interpretation by our honourable scholars. The Arabic yat§m§ al-nis§” contains a genitive construct (literally ‘the orphans of the women’) and not an attributive compound of noun and adjective (i.e., women who are orphans, or orphan women). Also, the Arabic term nis§” is the plural of imra”a, a woman who has reached marital age. Orphans, however, are by definition (4:6) not yet of marital age, thus, to call someone an orphan woman is a contradiction in terms, and as nonsensical as to call a male person an ‘orphan man’ (because male orphans are by definition minor boys). In sum, verse 4:127 must be understood in connection with the orphan verses 4:2–6 because both similarly call upon people to stand up for justice to orphans (children!). To interpret 4:127 in the context of orphan women is a mischievous attempt to draw the attention away from the true message of the verse.

**** The Application of the Theory of Limits

The verse of polygyny contains an upper and lower limit whose exact definition has to be stated in quantitative and/or qualitative terms.

1. Quantitative limits:

The purely quantitative calculation is based on the passage ‘marry […] two or three or four’, starting with the number two, that is, double the number of the first wife. Since a man cannot marry himself or half a woman, we infer that the lower limit of marriage is one and that the upper limit is four. The separate presentation of each number, ‘marry […] two or three or four’, instead of saying ‘marry up to four’ stresses that we are dealing here with whole numbers, not with fractions, implying a ‘whole’ commitment, not just a

‘fractional’ 0.9, for example. If we prohibited polygyny completely we would still be within Allah’s limits as we would legally (and quantitatively) stand on the lower limit (of one). No verse of the Book explicitly prohibits us from doing so. If we allowed polygyny with up to four women, we would move between Allah’s limits towards the upper limit (of four). By focusing on a purely quantitative interpretation of the polygyny verse, traditional Islamic legislation has done exactly this and has allowed polygynous marriages without any qualitative considerations. The only qualification permitted, with regard to the conditional clause ‘but if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly’, was to demand a balanced treatment of all co-wives. As this condition is difficult to meet, some schools of law came to the conclusion that one wife should be the norm and that only in exceptional circumstances (see above) should polygynous relationships be permitted. [274]

2. Qualitative limits:

The qualitative limits are defined by the virginal status of the woman. If she is still a virgin she will be treated differently from a woman who has lost her virginity. And if she has lost her virginity, one will have to qualify whether she is a divorced woman or a widow. This qualitative assessment is needed to link the conditional clause ‘If you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans…’ to the response ‘[then] marry women of your choice, two or three or four…’. If we include these qualitative criteria in our analysis of polygyny, we come to the following conclusion: 1) with regards to the first wife, no specification is given: she might be a virgin, a divorcée or a widow; 2) the marriage to co-wives two, three and four is, however, qualified by a reference to ‘justice to orphans’, from which we infer that co-wives two to four must be widowed mothers of orphans, women who have lost their virginity. In this case, the quantitative limits are still between one and four, while the qualitative criteria restrict polygynous relationships to marriages of widows with small children. The marriage contract must include the adoption and financial support of the orphaned children by a man who is already married to a first wife.

The chart below shows that legislators are encouraged to issue polygyny laws in the light of the social and cultural conditions of the time. If in times of war we face, for example, a serious shortage of men and a sudden increase

of fatherless children, legislators may consider changing laws that prescribe monogamous relationships and introduce laws that allow polygyny of up to four widows. This may include permission to marry more than two widow-wives who have no children at all. Absolutely forbidden are marriages to widows if the potential husband is not willing to adopt the orphans whom the widow wanted to bring into the new marriage.

Chart 1: Legislation of polygyny

<right>

Islamic fiqh, due to historical conditions and limitations, has up to now

</right>

followed a purely quantitative model of legislating polygyny. Today, social change allows us to combine quantitative and qualitative models

The Wives of the Prophet (ß)

Some clarifying words are now in order with regards to MuÈammad's (ß) polygynous marriages (to more than four wives) which has caused enormous irritation amongst the critics of Islam in the past. What we need to consider is that MuÈammad's (ß) mission took place during a transition period between two historical epochs of humankind. History has been in two stages: the ages of human civilizations before MuÈammad's (ß) mission and after it. The current age ('after his mission') will last until the coming of the Last Hour. Even though MuÈammad's (ß) messengerhood introduced the beginning of the second historical epoch ('after his mission'), his own marriages were still arranged according to the traditions and customs of the old epoch ('before his mission'). This is confirmed by the following verse:

There can be no difficulty to the prophet in what God has indicated to him as a duty. It was the practice (approved) of God [sunnat All§h] amongst those of old who have passed away. And the command of God is a decree determined. (Al-AÈz§b 33:38)

We should avoid judging his polygynous marriages by the standards and norms of the second historical period he helped to initiate. We should not, for example, postulate that to marry more than four wives was a special dispensation for prophets since this presupposes that a restriction on polygyny was already in place as a norm at MuÈammad's time, but this clearly was not the case. It follows from this that we are not supposed to imitate MuÈammad's (ß) example with regard to his marriages. Note that the above verse explicitly uses the term 'prophet' (al-nabÊy) and not 'messenger' (al-rasål), and we know that only what MuÈammad (ß) did as a messenger is meant to be a role model to be followed by the Muslim-Believers:

You have indeed in the apostle [rasål] of God a beautiful pattern (of conduct)… (Al-AÈz§b 33:21)

Verse 38 of Sårat al-AÈz§b makes the point that Allah had asked His Prophet (ß) to do things that were 'practice amongst those of old who have passed away', which is a clear sign for us not to follow MuÈammad (ß) in that. Two things can be deduced from this:

1. The normative study of the Prophet's (ß) marriages is a pointless exercise because it would inevitably mean to assess his polygynous relationships from the perspective of contemporary norms and practices. It would confuse the standards of his pre-mission marital practices with the post-mission marital norms that his messengerhood (and this excludes his marriages!) aimed to introduce.

2. In as much as MuÈammad's (ß) polygynous marriages cannot be a model for us to follow, the same is true regarding the behaviour of MuÈammad's (ß) wives. Allah says: 'O consorts of the prophet! (y§ nis§" a

l-nabÊy!) You are not like any of the (other) women…’ (A l-AÈz§b 33:32). This verse addresses only the ‘women of the prophet’,[275] indicating that no legislation is intended here, just information that is not binding legally (it is just suggested practice).[276]

**** Concluding Remarks on Polygyny

We have seen that permission of polygyny is conditional (expressed in the clause ‘if you fear…’). Allah gave it, as we pointed out, in order to solve an acute social problem (surplus of women) in the war-torn society of seventh-century Arabia. It is now up to us to either use Allah’s permission if, and only if, the condition (fear) is fulfilled and the social circumstances are similar. If the condition and circumstances are not given, we must not permit polygyny. This may lead to a situation in which one country will introduce a polygyny law, while another country may abolish it because the country’s political and economic situation is entirely different. In both instances, however, legislators have to back up their decision by statistical data, representative surveys of existing marital relationships, and consultation with the population. If legal decisions are taken on the basis of sound empirical evidence, and a country like Syria allows polygamy while Saudi Arabia prohibits it, we will have to accept that the two legislative decisions, even if contradictory, are both sound. Should the social circumstances in these countries change again, polygyny legislation will have to be reconsidered; therefore neither the decision in Syria nor that in Saudi Arabia is forever fixed and eternally valid.

The dilemma of traditional jurisprudence is that the fuqah§” never bothered to consult people and ask what they think about polygyny. They have been so occupied with the task to implement Allah’s rule on earth, based on their narrow understanding of the concept of È§kimiyya, that they forgot to ask what this rule actually meant for people in their daily life. Far from being a practical solution to real problems, polygyny has become a matter of ‘right or wrong’ (Èar§m au Èal§l), while they ignore the fact that a Èar§m interdiction is allcomprehensive and implies an eternally valid taboo, and that Èal§l allows for changing legislation on the basis of empirical proof, statistical data, and proper parliamentary debate.

As a matter of fact, polygynous relationships are not a matter of ‘right or wrong’. If a country has ruled that polygyny is forbidden (on the grounds that the state provides enough care for orphaned children and sufficient financial support for widowed mothers of small children), a violation of that law must be sanctioned by social disapproval and prosecuted by the state authorities, but it must not be classified (religiously) as ‘adultery’ or ‘sin’. If a country decides to ban polygyny it does not mean, as some claim, to prohibit what Allah has allowed since God gave us the right to legislate in these matters.

If someone, for example, wants to ban smoking in public places (which Allah allowed), this person will have to provide hard evidence for the harmful effects of smoking on people’s health, and on this basis parliament might then decide to ban smoking in pubs, restaurants, and workplaces. Such a ban neither deliberately ignores Allah’s permission nor is it eternally fixed (because one might in future develop a kind of tobacco that is not harmful). One has to draw a fine line between absolutely forbidden things (Èar§m taboos) and those that are temporarily banned (mamnå#). Human legislation can never claim to have stipulated absolute taboos (the prerogative of Allah) because circumstances might change that require new legislation; and those practices (e.g., polygyny, smoking) that used to be permitted might be found to undermine public good, health, and welfare which would necessitate their public ban (although not forever).

We need to understand the status of the prophetical sunna in similar ways. During his lifetime, MuÈammad (ß) exercised ijtih§d in matters of Allah’s permission (by either ordering or banning what Allah had permitted), but none of MuÈammad’s (ß) decisions have eternal validity. Today, prophetical sunna is embodied in the many academic institutions and legislative assemblies that a modern nation-state possesses. Matters of rituals and religious worship are different; they are not part of MuÈammad’s (ß) prophetical sunna (only of his sunna as a messenger) and are therefore dealt with by muftis and their ift§” councils.

*** Guardianship or Competence and Leadership (_{AL} - _{QIWA}¯_{MA})

What is frequently forgotten in debates about women in Islam is that the Book of Allah does not privilege one sex over the other. Nowhere does it claim superiority for either sex. Numerous verses address both male and female believers as well as male and female Muslims in an ungendered way, indicating equal status in the eyes of the Lord, and absolute and indiscriminate equality socially and religiously. The following study aims to prove this point against the claim of traditional exegetes, often made solely on the basis of a few isolated verses, that women are inferior to men and that women are 'deficient in reason and religion'. They argue that the verses of inheritance and (male) guardianship support their view that God does indeed differentiate between men and women and that He favours the former over the latter. However, reality has it that the views of medieval scholarship were clouded by an ideology of male dominance and patriarchal hegemony that characterised their entire exegesis and overshadowed their interpretations of the authoritative texts of Islam. Today, in the Islam of the twenty-first century, such forms of sexism and male chauvinism have no credibility any longer, and it is our aim to show that such male-centred interpretations can be fully contradicted by alternative readings which argue for equality and an end to sex discrimination.

Before we analyse the verses of guardianship in detail, we first outline our position on the relationship between men and women. We believe in a relationship of love, kindness, and mutual respect, to the effect that men are like a garment (lib§s) for women and women are like a garment (lib§s) for men. The Arabic term we use here, lib§s, means 'being intertwined' or 'blended together', referring to a symbiosis between your body and the garment you wear. It is taken from verse 187 of Sårat al-Baqara:

Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments [lib§s[un]] and you are their garments [lib§s[un]]... (Al-Baqara 2:187)

A relationship of love, kindness, and mutual respect is a relationship of equality and equivalence (a l-mutak§fi”a) as to how both partners feel, think, and respond to each other. To talk about women as a kind of commodity for men or, less likely, about men as a commodity for women, is the opposite of what we intend by our concept of equivalence.

Let us now turn to the so-called verse of guardianship:

[Al-rij§l] are the [qaww§mån] of [al-nis§”], because God has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means… (Al-Nis§” 4:34)

Also, let us listen to the Book on the issue of the neglect of responsibility (al-nushåz) on the part of the woman, that is, at times when she upholds the duty of qiw§ma:

If you fear a breach between them twain, appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers; if they wish for peace, God will cause their reconciliation—for God has full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things. (Al-Nis§” 4:35)

Concerning the neglect of responsibility (al-nushåz) on the part of the man, that is, when he is holding the qiw§ma, the Book says:

If a [woman] [imra”a] fears cruelty or desertion [nushåz][277] on her husband’s part [min ba#lih§], there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best, even though men’s souls are swayed by greed. But if you do good and practise self-restraint, God is well-acquainted with all that you do. (Al-Nis§” 4:128)

Verse 34 of Sårat al-Nis§” begins with a definition of al-qiw§ma, which means ‘to take care of’, ‘to be responsible’, or ‘to be in charge’.[278] It implies that if you take care of something you want to improve it. In verse 34, al-rij§l take care of al-nis§”, that is, the former are responsible for the latter. This has often been understood as ‘men take care of women’. For some naïve people it even expresses a biological superiority that is forever engrained in the constitution of the male sex, and since Allah created both sexes in this way they usually jump to the conclusion that Allah wanted women to be essentially deficient in reason and religion and that He preferred men to women (‘because God has given the one more (strength) than the other’, 4:34). But if Allah had really wanted to make such an essentialist and sexist claim on the basis of people’s gender, why did He not say: ‘All males [i.e., using a different word than rij§l, e.g. dhukår] are the guardian over all females [i.e., again, using a different word, not nis§” but in§th]’?

Defining the Term ‘Men’ (al-rij§l)

Conventional wisdom tells us that ‘men’ are defined by their masculine sexuality. But if masculinity was the only marker of manhood, the two terms ‘male’ and ‘men’ would be synonymous, interchangeable, and, hence, absolutely identical. This, of course, is out of the question since ‘men’ are not exclusively defined by their sex. The Arabic term ‘man’ (rajul) has the same root as the noun rijl, which refers to that part of the body which enables people to move, to walk, or to stand. People are called ‘pedestrians’ if they walk with their legs and feet (arjul), and a woman who walks per pedes is called ‘a woman going on foot’ (al-r§jila). Many verses in the Book use the term rij§l in exactly this way: to denote ‘movement’ regardless of the mover’s sex:

– ‘If you fear (an enemy), pray on foot (rij§l[an]), or riding…’ (Al-Baqara 2:239). If rij§l in this context only meant male sex, it would imply that women never go on foot!

– ‘“And proclaim the pilgrimage among men: they will come to you on foot (rij§l[an])…”’ (Al-Hajj 22:27). Again, if rij§l meant only male pilgrims, would this not exclude women from making the pilgrimage on foot? Of course, women also perform their pilgrimage on foot. Rij§l[an] in this context implies that those who perform the Èajj have to be strong enough to walk long distances; it addresses the stronger and healthier people among the believers (men and women).

– ‘By [the al-rij§l] whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the remembrance of God, nor from regular prayer…’ (Al-Når 24:37). Can only men, in their prayers, not be distracted by traffic and trade? Does this mean, by logical inference, that women are constantly distracted by these things and thus cannot pray properly? Of course not! Al-rij§l in this context again includes both male and female believers!

– [al-rij§l] are the [qaww§mån] of women [al-nis§”]. Given the above examples of an ungendered usage of a l-rij§l, we maintain that the same term, used in 4:34, must refer to both sexes![279]

In contrast, other verses of the Book do have a gendered meaning; the term rij§l refers to male adults and the term nis§” to female adults, as we can see in the following three examples:

– …and if there are not two men, then a man [fa-rajul] and two women [imra”at§n]… (Al-Baqara 2:282)

– …Had there not been believing men [rij§l] and believing women [nis§”] … (Al-FatÈ 48:25)

– Would you really approach men [a l-rij§l] in your lusts rather than women [al-nis§”]?… (Al-Naml 27:55)

The point we want to make is that the terms rajul-rij§l (sing.-pl.) are semantically not exclusively restricted to denote maleness. The generic sense of the term is ‘to walk’ or ‘to go on foot’ which is in neither case a prerogative of the male sex. As we have seen in the verses quoted above, the context will tell us whether rajul-rij§l is used in the generic, ungendered sense of ‘walking’ / ‘going on foot’ or whether its derivative, gendered sense ‘male adult’ is implied. The fact that in public life in the past men did all the walking to earn their living for family and wife (who stayed at home or did not walk when on travel), might explain why the generic sense (on foot) is almost always associated with the derivative sense (men). And yet to claim that this is the only sense of the term would mean, as we have seen, to amputate its meaning by half.

**** Defining the Term ‘Women’ (al-nis§”)

The Arabic term al-nis§” is the plural of two different singular terms: first, of a l-mar”a (woman) and, second, of a l-nasÊ” (deferment). The latter term refers to things that are delayed or postponed, for example, we say, ‘the delivery has been postponed’ or ‘Zayd is late’. Verse 9:37 uses al-nasÊ” in this sense: ‘Verily the transposing (of a prohibited month) (al-nasÊ” [u]) is an addition to unbelief…’ (Al-Tawba 9:37). And a ÈadÊth, if authentic, states, ‘Whoever likes his provision to be increased and his life to be extended (yansa’, i.e., his death postponed), should uphold the ties of kinship.’[280] The former term, in contrast, refers either to the opposite partner of men (i.e., women, but in the sense of men’s social, nonsexual companion) or to the plural of woman (as a collective term), while, incidentally, the feminine singular imra”a (woman) has the same root as the male singular imru” (man).

The conventional—and rather primitive—rendering of the creation story wants us to believe that Adam was created before his wife. According to this story, she was formed out of his ribs and thus entered the world after him. Women were thought to be those who ‘come after’, ‘lag behind’ or are

‘delayed’, a misconception to which the following verse was believed to give full support:

O [humankind]! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, his mate… (Al-Nis§” 4:1)

A more objective (scientific) understanding, however, can prove that at the beginning of creation there was no division into male and female creatures. The first organisms were all single celled. They increased in their number not by copulation and fertilisation but through cell division (mitosis). Only when evolution had reached the stage by which animals and humans reproduced life through procreative intercourse do we witness a (simultaneous) split into a male and female sex. In evolutionary terms, the traditional creation story simply does not make sense. Also, it is a biological fact that male sperms always produce embryos that initially are both male and female (some scientists even claim that they are initially all female). Thus, scientific research on the early stages of embryonic development also contradicts the hypothetical ‘male first, female second’ story.

As said before, the term nis§” expresses the notion of delay, deferral, or postponement, and can refer to basically everything that might ‘come later’. We propose to understand nis§” in this sense when we look at 3:14, which uses the term nis§” when talking about people’s ‘love of things’ and objects ‘eagerly desired’:

Fair in the eyes of men [zuyyina li’l-n§s] is the love of things they covet: [a l-nis§”] and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence); and (wealth of) cattle and [a bonus in crops of wheat]. Such are the possessions of this world’s life; but in nearness to God is the best of the goals (to return to). ($l #Imr§n 3:14)

In this context nis§” cannot possibly mean ‘women’.[281] First, because such a rendering would ignore the fact that the verse speaks about the desires of all people (al-n§s!), men and women, and not just men.[282] Second, it would turn women into

commodities and goods of pleasure that are no more than ‘heaped-up hoards of gold and silver’, and on a par with ‘horses, cattle and well-tilled land’. However tempting it must be for some of the fuqah§” and many sexist exegetes to regard women as part of their livestock (ranked as equals with cows, sheep, donkeys, oxen, and mules), we should resist such a ridiculous interpretation of Allah’s speech. Instead, nis§” here literally means ‘things that arrive last’, that is, goods of the latest fashion.

The verse is absolutely accurate in saying that people in general, not just men (!), want to purchase the most recent models (cars, mobile phones, clothes, CD-players, designer spectacles, etc.). All over the world, people want to follow the latest fashion and look down on things that are ‘last year’. This implies an endless cycle of consumption because what is ‘hot’ in one year is old and ‘out’ in the next, when it will be replaced by the new arrivals, by what ‘follows next’

(al-nis§”).

Al-Nis§” can also refer to people who ‘come next’ or ‘follow behind’, as in the following verse:

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty… [in front of] their women [sic] [au nis§“ihunna]… (Al-Når 24:31)

This verse addresses the ‘believing women’ who should lower their gaze and guard their private parts. It then mentions those relatives in front of whom women are allowed to reveal their zÊna (explained later), one group being described as nis§“ihunna, usually translated as ‘their [i.e. the believing women’s] women’.[283] But is it correct to say ‘women’s women”? If we look at the sequence of the people given: …except their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons, their brothers, their brothers’ sons, their sisters’ sons, their nis§”…, we notice that the verse does not continue to list those ‘who come next’, that is, the sons of the sons, or the sons of the brothers’

sons, or the sons of the sisters' sons, and so on; and what could have potentially become an endless list is efficiently condensed into the phrase 'and those who follow next' (nis§”). The same applies to verse 55 of Sårat al-AÈz§b, 'There is no blame (on these ladies if they appear)… [in front of] nis§“ihunna… (33:55); the term nis§” here refers again to those male relatives who 'follow those mentioned before'.

The Verse of Guardianship (4:34)

Having defined the crucial terms of nis§” and rij§l, we are now in a position to understand the verse of guardianship:

[Al-rij§l] are the protectors and maintainers [qaww§mån] of [a l-nis§”], because God has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are [q§nit§t], and guard […] what God would have them guard. As to those women on whose part you fear […] ill-conduct, admonish them (first). (Next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly) [sic]; but if they return […], seek not against them means (of annoyance)—for God is most high, great (above you all). (A l-Nis§” 4:34)

We have ruled out the possibility that the first line of this verse can be interpreted as 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women', because each of the two terms al-rij§l and al-nis§” refer to both men and women in this context. Let us say it again: to assume that al-rij§l means 'men' and al-nis§” 'women' is a serious mistake because in this verse both terms are not gendered: al-rij§l refers to both men and women, and al-nis§” means 'those who follow behind'. We need, of course, to identify the middle term that connects al-rij§l and al-nis§”. We know that the qaww§mån are 'those in charge' or 'those with power and competence'. Many well-meaning feminists have tried to reverse the supposed sexism of the verse and claim that qaww§mån means 'standing in service', implying that men

are not the masters but in fact the servants of women. This may sound quite appealing to some but it is frankly very far-fetched. It still suggests that one should keep a division between men and women, even if husbands are now the alleged servants of their wives. It also fundamentally contradicts the next line of the verse, ‘God has given to some [the rij§l] more than others [the nis§”]’ [AH]. Such preference given by God is incompatible with the notion of servitude. Some have claimed that this verse makes it clear that Islam, in contrast with other religions and cultures, does not want gender equality and hence treats men and women differently. We object to this because the verse does not exclusively address ‘male believers’ (mu”minån) and ‘female believers’ (mu”min§t), the followers of MuÈammad (ß), but rather men and women in general. For us this implies that the verse must have a high degree of universality, to the extent that it is as applicable to men and women in Tokyo or São Paulo as it is to men and women in Cairo, Damascus, or Riyadh. Thus, we are not allowed to claim a higher or different status for the religion of MuÈammad’s (ß) followers. If we keep referring only to the context of Mecca and Medina of the seventh century while reading God’s revelation, we are bound to loose the Book’s universal message which is valid in all places and at all times.

The second line, ‘God has given to some more than [some] o thers’, is for some exegetes an indication of God’s preference of men to women. Since their interpretation of the first line is essentially gendered, they claim that God’s preference for men explains why men are in charge of women, since it is, in their view, clearly stated in the first line. This ignores the fact that the text says ‘some’ and not #all’. According to the scholars’ interpretation it would imply that God prefers ‘some’ men to ‘some’ women. The question would then be who these chosen men are, and who are the men whom God does not favour? Also, who are the (other) women God prefers to men? Since we cannot know the answer to these questions, such interpretation must be immediately discarded. What is indeed correct to say is that God has given to some men and women more (strength) than to other men and women. This view is supported by the following verse:

See how We have bestowed more on some than on others; but verily the Hereafter is more in rank and gradation and more in excellence. (Al-Isr§” 17:21)

Having dismissed the notion that Allah puts men in charge of women, we are now able to provide an ungendered explanation of Allah’s preference. Since al-rij§l refers to both men and women, we believe that high competence, moral strength, determination, education, and strong cultural awareness will always put some men and women in charge of others who do not excel in these things at the same level. People are very different in this respect; some men and women will always outperform others in their activities; some women are stronger than other women and other men; some men are stronger than other women and (other) men because ‘God has given to some more than others’.

The same applies to financial and economic power. Some people will always have more than others. This is what line 3 says: ‘because they [the qaww§mån] support them [the others] from their means’. Financial power is not, however, always coupled with cultural competence. Rich tycoons who own several companies, for example, are often incapable of running their business without the help of more competent and better-qualified people. And yet, because of their financial prowess they will remain in charge (qiw§ma) and dictate the overall strategies of their companies. Financial and economic power can be found in every level of society, in families, small businesses, political parties, sports clubs, international companies, and so on, and is exercised in most cases heedless of cultural competence.

The point we want to stress is that qaww§ma is not, as traditional exegesis suggests, only located within the realm of family and between husband and wife. Guardianship is found everywhere where cultural competence and financial power are necessary: in schools, universities, farms, factories, football clubs, ministries, hospitals, nurseries, banks, insurance companies, and estate agencies, that is, basically in all aspects of society. The universal aspect of our notion of guardianship lies in the fact that we find examples of cultural and financial strength everywhere in history, be it in ancient Rome, Palmyra, or Tsarist Russia, and also everywhere on the planet, be it in Egypt, Syria, England, Turkey, India, Pakistan, or Indonesia. This proves how absurd it is to identify guardianship

solely with the male sex and conclude from this an essential (and everlasting) superiority of men over women.

Some exegetes have tried to justify their misogynist views by referring to verse 36 of Sårat $l #Imr§n which, in their opinion, reiterates Allah's preference of boys to girls:

…but when she gave birth, she said, 'My Lord! I have given birth to a girl"—God knew best what she had given birth to: the male is not like the female [wa-laisa 'l-dhakar ka'l-unth§]—I name her Mary… ($l #Imr§n 3:36, AH)

Halfway through the verse it is said, 'the male is not like the female'. Opinions differ about whether this is said by #Imr§n's wife (who, by a miracle, conceives a child from God) or, in parentheses, by Allah Himself. Either way, it is, we believe, powerful speech that contains a powerful message (regardless of who actually said it). More problematic is that the text is believed to discriminate against girls by stating a clear preference for boys ('males are different' is thought to express 'males are better'). In fact, if the text states a preference at all, it is the other way around! What has been overlooked is the fact that the text compares boys with girls, and not girls with boys. And if boys are compared to girls and found wanting ('males are different'), preference is, implied by such a negative reading, given to those to whom boys cannot be compared (the girls!). Note that we have mentioned a similar case of God's preference in our discussion of inheritance laws, by which the shares of the male heirs are always determined by the shares of the female heirs.

In the past, life was characterised by hard work and physical labour. This meant that, at least in terms of public presence, men had an advantage over women. Because of such physical superiority and public dominance, al-rij§l and qiw§ma were naturally associated with men. However, things have changed and technological progress has wiped out the advantage that physical labour once had over what used to be considered 'soft' work: education, administration, service, and intellectual and creative activities. Women are now not only active in almost all branches

of industry, commerce, and agriculture, they have also taken up leading positions in politics and in the city’s boardrooms. Moreover, data from medical and educational research show that we can once and for all discard the myth that women are biologically and intellectually disadvantaged: women live longer than men, suffer less often from heart diseases, and girls do better in almost all school and university exams.

As for guardianship on the level of the family, research has shown that children are happier if both parents do the housework together, if they show kindness and respect to each other, and if at least one parent is willing to put in the hard work, to show a high degree of family commitment, and to provide strong leadership. And yet, not everyone is willing or able to take on the same amount of responsibility because some are naturally better than others in organising family life. In some families there are strong husbands who provide the necessary leadership, in others it will be the wife who takes up this role. And if both have strong personalities and high social and emotional competence, they will, following the principle of equivalence, make their decisions together. We therefore interpret ‘guardians’ as follows: Those who have strength, competence, and power (male or female) who will provide leadership to ‘those who follow them’ or ‘those who come after them’ (a l-nis§”) in terms of ability and competence (male or female). God gave more to those who possess qaww§ma (male or female) than others.[284] The gist of our argument is that rather than defining ‘guardianship’ as a characteristic of men, we believe that women can acquire it as well. This is supported by line 4 of our verse:

‘Righteous women [fa’l-ß§liÈ§t] are devout [q§nit§t] and guard what God would have them guard in their husband’s [sic] absence [È§fií§t li’l-ghayb]…’. [AH]

Righteous women are not those who are obedient[285] or who pray, fast, and give alms, as many exegetes have it, but those who possess qiw§ma (this is the theme of the verse after all), that is, those who do competent work and provide leadership. The crucial term is ß§liÈ§t, which many, too hastily, have understood as ‘devout and pious women who pray and fast’. But a comparison to Sårat Al-Anbiy§” reveals that this is incorrect:

<quote>

And (remember) Zakariya, when he cried to his Lord: “O my Lord! Leave me not without offspring, though you are the best of inheritors.”

* So We listened to him and We granted him YaÈy§. We cured [aßlaÈn§] his wife’s (barrenness) for him… (Al-Anbiy§” 21:89–90)

</quote>

The term ß§liÈ§t means here that Allah cured (aßlaÈa) Zakariya’s wife from her barrenness. This surely does not imply that Allah’s cure made her pray and fast! Instead, the passage tells us what righteous women do who possess qiw§ma, that is, those to whom God has given special skills and the power of leadership: they ‘guard what God would have them guard’, what God has given to them in terms of special gifts and talents. And if they keep and use their talents for the benefit of all, they are ‘righteous women’ (ß§liÈ§t).

What happens, however, if a woman does not possess these qualities and skills? What if she once had all that characterises good guardianship but lost it by wasting her skills and talents? In this case, a woman becomes what the Book calls a n§shiza, a woman who, because of her negative behaviour, is unfaithful to her talents and who rebels against her good nature. Having addressed righteous women, verse (4:34) continues by saying, ‘if you fear high-handedness (nushåz) from your wives [sic]’ [AH]. It basically says that nushåz women squander God’s special gifts and do not ‘guard what God would have them guard’. The rest of the verse explains the procedure of dealing with the problem of nushåz:

…admonish them (first). (Next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) [i·ribåhunna]; but if they return […], seek not against them

means (of annoyance)—for God is most high, great (above you all). (A l-Nis§” 4:34)

By exclusively attaching this verse to the realm of marital relationship, some exegetes thought that nushåz meant a wife’s refusal to obey her husband’s orders.[286] However, marital disobedience is not at all the theme of the verse, which in fact focuses on a description of general leadership and guardianship. Also, nushåz connotes a much wider meaning of disapproval and discord than just marital disobedience, which is evident in the following verse:

O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room: (ample) room will God provide for you. And when you are told to rise up [unshuzå], rise up [unshuzå]. God will rise up… (Al-Muj§dila 58:11)

This is evidence enough to suggest that nushåz cannot be rendered as the state of a wife’s recalcitrance or, as some traditionalists suggest, as her refusal to pray, fast, and pay zak§h. It is definitely not, as al-SuyåtÊ claimed, a form of female disobedience that needs to be disciplined by her husband’s firm hand and, if needed, by corporal punishment. It is closer to the truth, and to the spirit of the whole verse, to say that nushåz means the lack of qiw§ma in a woman. If she has lost her temper and has turned into an unkind, impatient, and pretentious person, she has lost her qiw§ma. If she has become selfopinionated and high-handed in everything she does, and takes all her decisions autocratically, she has also lost qiw§ma. This may be paralleled by the loss of qunåt, as explained in the previous line, that is, of ‘what God asked her to preserve’, for example, if a wife gossips and reveals marital secrets to other people. The important point to stress is that all women can become guilty of nushåz (whether they are married or not), be they sisters who are rude to their brothers, mothers who are mean to their children, or grandmothers who treat their children and grandchildren with disdain and disrespect.

The verse indicates what needs to be done in these circumstances: admonition and warning advice first, then, if the woman is married, a refusal to share her bed. Finally, if these things fail, she should be punished by the withdrawal of her right of guardianship. These three steps of solving the crisis only make sense if we accept that women actually possess qiw§ma, because if they did not, if qiw§ma, the provision of strong leadership and financial power, was the sole prerogative of men, the suggested solutions to the problem of nushåz would be entirely pointless.

The third step (withdrawal of guardianship) is stated in the Arabic text with the phrase wa-”·ribåhunna. This is conventionally understood to mean ‘to beat them’, either by a slap of the hand, a punch with the fist, or a blow with a stick. What has escaped most traditional exegetes is the fact that the verb ·araba is so polyvalent that it is ridiculous to reduce its meaning to the physical act of ‘beating’. A few examples will prove this point: ·araba Èaqn[an] means ‘to give an injection’; ·araba fi’l-“ar· means ‘to travel the world’; ·araba ·arÊba means ‘to impose a tax’; ·araba mathal[an] means ‘to apply a proverb’; and ·araba mith§l[an] means ‘to quote an example’. How on earth could scholars like a l-SuyåãÊ think that ‘to beat’ or ‘to strike’ is the only possible rendering of the verb ·araba?

Did they not consult the example of the Prophet (ß) who, after he heard that his companions had applied this verse too literally by beating their female slaves, rebuked them saying, ‘Do not beat Allah’s handmaidens’.[287] Provided that this ÈadÊth is sound, did our exegetes really think that MuÈammad (ß) would so unashamedly contradict Allah’s command of 4:34 (‘beat them’)? In reality, there is no contradiction between the Prophet’s (ß) interdiction not to beat women and Allah’s verse 4:34, which does not talk of physical punishment at all. To say that wa-”·ribåhunna literally means ‘beat your wives’ is a scandalous example of male biased exegesis.[288] Because of the fact that male chauvinism was culturally incubated, enacted and tolerated at the time of their writing, traditional exegetes like al-SuyåãÊ were bound to make the most misogynist reading of the verse and project their hostility to women onto the text. Little has been done to change this attitude. Some attempts have been made to explain

beating as a ‘slight touch’ on the woman’s arm or face or, even more bizarre, as a gentle tap with ‘a toothpick”! However hard people have tried to present the beating as less harsh forms of corporal punishment, the tendency to denigrate women as a different kind of house pet which needs to be domesticated and if required, disciplined, did not change.

This goes entirely against the way in which nushåz of women is treated in other countries of the world. Men can always take a firm stand against women who haughtily refuse to cooperate with other men and women without using violence. And this is exactly what the verse suggests: if women abuse the gifts and talents of qiw§ma, of which ‘Allah has given to them more than others’, and if they squander their potential for leadership, their intellectual skills, or their financial resources, one should 1) warn them, 2) reduce contact with them, 3) establish a firm but nonaggressive and nonviolent resistance against their nushåz. If all of this fails the Book recommends the possibility of arbitration in the verse that follows:

If you fear a breach between them twain, appoint (two) arbiters, one from his family, and the other from hers; if they wish for peace, God will cause their reconciliation. For God has full knowledge, and is acquainted with all things. (Al-Nis§” 4:35)

So far we have only covered the nushåz of women. What about the nushåz of men? A reference to this can be found in verse 128 of Surat al-Nis§”:

If a wife [sic] [imra”at [un]] fears cruelty [nushåz[an]][289] or desertion [i#r§· [an]] on her husband’s part [min ba#lih§], there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best; even though men’s souls are swayed by greed. But if you do good and practise self-restraint, God is well-acquainted with all that you do. (Al-Nis§” 4:128)

The text does not use the sexually charged terms for wife/husband (zawja/zawj) but uses the terms imra”at [un][] (woman) and ba#l (nonconjugal partner). [290] Both terms describe a wider category of relationship than zawja/zawj. The term used to describe the object of a woman’s fear is ba#l (partner) which is not identical with zawj, her conjugal husband. In the context of a family relationship, a l-ba#l connotes someone who earns a living, who eats, drinks, plays with the children, and has close contacts with each member of the family. If such a ba#l marries the woman of the family, he becomes al-zawj, her conjugal husband. Every zawj husband is legally also a ba#l, but not every ba#l is a zawj (husband with whom she has sexual intercourse). One may describe the ba#l relationship between a woman and a man as nonsexual, as a friendship or acquaintance that has no sexual implications. Even between sexually active spouses there might be ba#l moments, that is, when they cannot exchange intimacies, for example, in front of their children or in public. Also, a husband who has become too old to have sex, resumes the status of a ba#l he had before he married his wife (even though, legally, he remains the husband of his wife). The following verse makes it clear that zawj refers to those who have licit sexual intercourse with their wives:

And those who guard their [lower] private parts [li-furåjihim È§fiíån], * except from their wives and what their right hands possess [azw§jihim]. [For these] they are not blameworthy… (Al-Mu”minån 23:5–6) [FM]

In contrast, the text uses ba#l when it refers to men in front of whom a women does not need to cover her private parts because no sexual complications are to be feared:

…[they should] not display their [bodily] beauty [zÊnatahunna] [291] except to their husbands [li-bu#ålatihinna], their fathers, their husband’s fathers

[ab§” bu#ålatihinna]… (Al-Når 24:31)

The verse lists a woman’s male relatives to whom she is not prohibited to show her zÊna: to her brother, her father, her son, the father of her husband, and so forth. In the context of this list a woman’s husband, by necessity, assumes the status of a ba#l because a zawj husband with all his conjugal rights would be allowed to see his wife entirely naked and would not need an explicit (thus, redundant) permission to see other parts of her body! Verse 72 of Surat Håd gives us an example of how precisely the Book distinguishes between zawj and ba#l; we notice how Abraham, when he had passed his sexually active years, was now called by his wife her ba#l husband, not any longer her zawj husband:

She said: “Alas for me! Shall I bear a child, seeing I am an old woman, and my husband here [ba#lÊ] is an old man?… (Håd 11:72)

Another example can be found in 2:228 in which divorced husbands are categorised as ba#l, not as zawj, since it is clear that they have ceased to have sexual intercourse with their former wives:

Divorced women shall wait concerning themselves for three monthly periods. Nor is it lawful for them to hide what God has created in their wombs, if they have faith in God and the Last Day. And their husbands [bu#ålatuhunna] have the better right to take them back in that period… (Al-Baqara 2:228)

Divorced husbands may still have close contacts to their divorced wives and their children, they may even continue to be the breadwinner of the family, and in some cases they may even still live in the same house as the rest of

the family, but mostly their (sexual) intimacy with their former wives has stopped. The term that uniquely signifies this special relationship between a men and a woman is ba#l.

Since the verse in question (4:128) uses the term ba#l, not zawj, we can now safely say that contrary to popular belief, it does not discuss the sexual relationship between a wife and her husband. Instead it addresses a woman's social relationship with the ba#l provider of the family who possesses qiw§ma. Two things that can put a strain on such a relationship are mentioned:

3. Nushåz: a man becomes a despot and a tyrant to his family, which results in (complete) loss of freedom: the woman is not allowed, without his prior consent, to do anything in the household, not even the smallest things of everyday life. Good leadership (qiw§ma) is thus lost and has turned into bad leadership.

4. Neglect: a man does not fulfil his duties: he is absent from work, irresponsibly spends money that he has not earned himself and is—as the Arabs say—'swept around by the winds of the day'.

A woman can respond to this dreadful situation in two ways. She can accept it and regard it as God-given. This is, unfortunately, what most women in the Arab world do, despite the fact that the Book encourages them to actively try to seek a way out of the predicament (e.g., 'there is no blame on them if they arrange an amicable settlement between themselves; and such settlement is best…' [Al-Nis§" 4:128]). Or, alternatively, she can refuse to accept it and strongly object to his lack of respect, his despotic attitudes, and his neglect of his family duties. The Book instructs women what to do in this situation. It resolutely urges women to be firm in their protest and to seek 'a peaceful settlement, for peace is best' (4:128, AH).

Finally, it is absolutely vital to consider those situations in which an amicable agreement cannot be reached. The text mentions cases when ‘men’s souls are swayed by greed’ (4:128). In this context ‘greed’ must be interpreted as a man’s denial of any wrongdoing on his part. He blames the woman for the breakdown of their relationship while claiming all goodness for himself. In front of an arbiter, who wants to reconcile the two parties, the man admits no fault in his own behaviour, resists all attempts at change, and avoids reflection on the things that have gone wrong in his relationship. Such behaviour makes it extremely difficult, if not totally impossible, to mediate and reconcile the differences.

It is most intriguing to see that our verse ends with Allah’s encouragement to practice self-restraint, and that the next verse (4:129) continues the theme by advising against the practice of polygyny. It is as if polygyny is seen as one of the reasons why men forget their duties and neglect their families.

But if you do good and practise self-restraint, God is well-acquainted with all that you do. (Al-Nis§” 4:128)

You are never able to be fair and just as between women, even if it is your ardent desire: But turn not away (from a woman) altogether, so as to leave her (as it were) hanging (in the air). If you come to a friendly understanding, and practise self-restraint, God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-Nis§” 4:129)

It should be stressed again that the problem of ‘injustice between women’ is not primarily sexual negligence. Injustice is caused by negligence regarding all the other aspects of family life: care for children, support of elderly people in the family, provision of food and clothes, mortgage payments, and so on. This is exactly how the previous verse defined men’s nushåz and neglect as the two reasons why men have lost their qiw§ma.

The use of the conditional phrase ‘but if you do good…’ in 4:128 indicates that Allah accepts that reconciliation is only a possibility and not a foregone

conclusion. Many things can go wrong at this stage, and even if it is preferable that a family stay together, it cannot always be achieved by all the will in the world. The next verse 4:130 confirms that at some junctures separation is inevitable:

But if they disagree (and must part), God will provide abundance for all from His all-reaching bounty: for God is He that cares for all and is wise. (Al-Nis§” 4:130)

Again, the position of women provides the rationale for this verse. If they have been treated badly, if men have been cruel to them or have neglected them, it is they who are entitled to ask for a divorce and request half of their husbands’ possessions—and not only the remainder of their bridal gift—as compensation paid to them as divorced women (because of their status as co-partners). We believe that current divorce practices are intolerable. Ironically, our Imams and preachers keep enthusiastically praising the role of women in Islam, presenting them as equal partners of men and as enjoying the same rights as men both in public life and at home. But as soon as divorce procedures are mentioned all such talk of equality suddenly stops, women are no longer equal partners, and it is soon forgotten that they own half the men’s property. What is granted to a divorced woman, if she gets anything at all, is just what remains of her dowry,[292] even if it is sometimes no more than a ring made of nickel. For a woman to demand a divorce is still seen as an affront, a deviation, a crime that must not be rewarded by any form of financial support. Hence, divorced women very often end up with nothing at all.[293] We believe, however, that women have every right to ask for a divorce if they have been treated badly (nushåz) or suffered because of their husbands’ negligence (i#r§·). And we believe that divorced women should get all the rights and provisions that modern family law allows, and that includes her right to stay in the house of her husband (unless she has become guilty of ‘open lewdness’), as is prescribed by the first verse of Sårat al-•al§q:

O Prophet! When you do divorce women, divorce them at their p rescribed periods, and count (accurately), their prescribed periods: And fear God your Lord: and turn them not out of their houses [buyåtihinna], nor

shall they (themselves) leave, except in case they are guilty of some open lewdness, those are the limits set by God… (A l-•al§q 65:1)

Note that the verse speaks about ‘their (the women’s) houses’, not about ‘your (the men’s) houses’, even though the speech is only addressed to men!

*** Dress Norms for Women (_{LIB}§_S)

The Issue of Women’s Headscarf (Èij§b)

Muslim women’s headscarf, called al-Èij§b, has become almost synonymous with the Islamic dress code for women. However, this contradicts the fact that in the Book, in all eight occurrences, al-Èij§b does not refer to a piece of cloth at all. When the text does address questions of dress code it uses other terms, such as al-thiy§b (outer garment), a l-jal§bÊb (galabia), or a l-khumår (veil). Why have exegetes been so obsessed with treating al-hij§b as a piece of cloth?[294]

Arabic dictionaries tell us that the root meaning of È-j-b is: ‘to guard’ or ‘to protect’; È§jib means ‘gatekeeper’, someone who guards an entrance and keeps out unwanted people; Èij§bat al-ka#ba was the name for the office of the gatekeeper of the Ka#ba in Mecca, whose task it was to protect the Ka#ba by ‘standing between the pilgrims and the sacred shrine’. In sum, everything that ‘comes between two things’ and keeps them apart is called a Èij§b, as the following examples from the Book underline:

The companions of the Garden will call out to the companions of the Fire: “We have indeed found the promises of our Lord to us true; have you also found your Lord’s promises true?” They shall say, “Yes”; but a crier shall proclaim between them: “The curse of God is on the wrong-doers.” (Al-A#r§f 7:44)

Between them shall be a veil [Èij§b [un]], and on the heights will be men who would know every one by his marks; they will call out to the companions of the Garden, “peace on you”: they will not have entered, but they will have an assurance (thereof).* When their eyes shall be turned towards the companions of the Fire, they will say: “Our Lord! Send us not to the company of the wrong-doers.” (Al-A#r§f 7:46–47)

In the context of these three verses, a l-Èij§b separates the companions of the Garden from the companions of the Fire. We understand that the ‘veil’ mentioned does not prevent the two groups from seeing and hearing each other or, as the following verse shows, from full, open interaction:

The companions of the Fire will call to the companions of the Garden: “Pour down to us water or anything that God does provide for your sustenance.” They will say: “Both these things has God forbidden to those who rejected Him.” (Al-A#r§f 7:50)

Another verse from Sårat al-Isr§” talks about ‘a veil invisible’ in the hearts of people who are not moved by the recitation of the qur”§n:

When you recite the qur”§n, We put, between you and those who believe not in the Hereafter, a veil invisible [Èij§b [an] mastår[an]]. (Al-Isr§” 17:45)

In this context, Èij§b is more like a natural disposition or a character trait that Allah has created so that the hearts of the unbelievers cannot recognise the beauty of the Book’s dhikr. And yet, they could still see and hear MuÈammad (ß)! These examples show that in the Book the term a l-Èij§b, in its meaning of ‘veil’, ‘curtain’, or ‘screen’, is primarily employed in its figurative, metaphoric sense, so much so that a literal interpretation as ‘a piece of cloth’ or ‘headscarf’ is completely untenable. We will therefore put

al-Èij§b aside and concentrate instead on the term a l-lib§s and its association with women’s clothes.

Before we present our analysis let us reiterate the five cornerstones of our methodology:

1. We avoid a synonymous understanding of words in the Book. We maintain that there are semantic differences between terms that supposedly are synonyms, such as thiy§b (outer garment) and lib§s (raiment); saw”a (shame) and #awra (embarrassment); ba#l (nonconjugal husband) and zawj (conjugal husband), and so forth.

2. We maintain that the context in which words appear confines the meaning of polysemous words. For example, the term a l-lib§s in the following verse, meaning ‘raiment of righteousness’, needs to be understood in a figurative way. The context makes it clear that it does not literally mean ‘shirts’ or ‘trousers’:

O you children of Adam! We have [made you aware of] [anzaln§ #alaikum lib§s[an]] how to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness [lib§s al-taqw§]—that is the best. Such are among the signs of God, that they may receive admonition! (Al-A#r§f 7:26)

3. We stress the need to distinguish between absolute, divine law (Èar§m-Èal§l), which is the prerogative of Allah, and time-bound, contingent law (amr-nahy; Èasan-qubÈ), which is the realm of human legislation (see chapter 2).

4. We remove the mantle of sacrality from the body of medieval scholarship. What these scholars wrote is subject to criticism, correction, and revision because scholars can err and misunderstand. Human beings are fallible; they

are forgetful, inattentive, and negligent. We must not give them the aura of infallibility.

5. We only attach sacrality to Allah and His Book. Divine sacrality is stored inside the text of the Book. It cannot be transferred to anything or anyone outside the text, for whatever reason and on whichever pretext.

The Problem of Original Sin

The imposition of a specific dress code on women has often been justified by references to the story of Adam and Eve and to the original sin of humankind. It is therefore important that we revisit the evidence given for this and then decide whether it withstands close scrutiny. Historians of religion will tell us that not all religious traditions accept the notion of humankind's original sin, and that those which do have various versions of the story that do not necessarily make women responsible for the original sin. The Old Persian religions, such as Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Mazdaism, or the ancient Indian religions, such as Vedanta-Hinduism, Brahmanism, and Buddhism, do not posses any mythological account of the existence of an original sin, nor do they blame women for any sort of ur-sin. Nevertheless, many of them regard women as essentially inferior to men in their attempt to achieve sacredness, as a result of which women are asked to put a veil over their mouth and nose so that they cannot poison with their breath the sacred flame that burns for men. Socially, such inferiority has been translated into servitude, such that women have been forced to serve their (male) masters as if they were gods.[295]

Judaism was the first religion which attached the stigma of original sin to the cunning nature of women, and Christianity followed by basically accepting the account of the Old Testament. Centuries later, when Jews and Christians converted to the new religion of MuÈammad's (ß) mission, this story sneaked into the collective consciousness of Qur'anic exegetes and remained there for centuries, despite the fact that there is no textual evidence for any such misogynist rhetoric in the Book. The story can be found in Genesis 1–19, telling the reader how Eve's disobedience led to

God’s curse on every living being on earth. The blame which Jewish exegetes threw at Eve because of her sin was extended to include all women on earth. Women were thought to naturally symbolise the disobedient behaviour of their female ancestor, and as a result it was thought best to restrain women by containment, repressive dress codes, and a position of servitude toward the man of the house. The view of men’s spiritual vulnerability by a woman’s appearance was deeply rooted in folk tradition and official doctrine, creating a culture in which a woman was seen as an ambassador of death. Her heart was portrayed as a hidden trap, her hands as shackles, and her whole body as an image of seduction from which the righteous soul can only seek refuge to God. It was only a question of time that Jewish women were then forced to hide their bodies behind long garments and their faces beneath a veil.[296]

In spite of the more progressive message of the Gospels which contained Jesus’ message to all humankind, men and women, regardless of sex and ethnicity, apostles and missionaries appeared to have replaced this progressive message in later years with the old hostility towards women. Paul, for example, in his epistle to the Corinthians, says ‘I want you to know that the head of a woman is her husband, that the head of a man is Jesus Christ, and that the head of Jesus Christ is God’, as a result of which women were sentenced to a life at home since they were denied the freedom to speak up in church (how striking is the similarity to what the fuqah§” say about #awra, ‘the feeling of shame”[297] of a woman’s voice). Women were subsequently forced to ask men for permission when they wanted to leave their house, and if they were given permission they had to cover their head and hide their face.[298]

If we look at the situation of women in pre-Islamic Arabia we will be surprised to learn that in spite of many rules and regulations, which disadvantaged women, the nomadic Bedouin society allowed women a considerable degree of freedom in choosing and divorcing her husband. It was, for example, sufficient for a woman during her husband’s absence to rearrange the entrance of her tent to let the returning man know that his wife had divorced him. During this period of ancient Arabia we can witness the existence of outstanding female personalities, such as the two queens Balqis and Zanubia, the poet al-Khansa”, the priest Zarqa” al-Yamama, and the wise woman Jahina. Numerous clans and tribes were named after women, such as the tribes of the Ummiyya, the Ghazziya, and al-Muzayyina. And yet, social

practices reflected considerable misogyny, for example, the practice of female infanticide (cf. ‘When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned * for what crime she was killed,’ A l-TakwÊr 81:8–9).

Let us see how the Book covers the question of original sin:

Then began Satan to whisper suggestions to them, bringing openly before their minds all their shame that was hidden from them (before); he said: “Your Lord only forbade you this tree, lest you should become angels or such beings as live for ever.” * And he swore to them both, that he was their sincere adviser. * So by deceit he brought about their fall: when they tasted of the tree, their shame became manifest to them, and they began to sew together the leaves of the garden over their bodies… (Al-A#r§f 7:20–22)

But Satan whispered evil to him: he said, “O Adam! Shall I lead you to the tree of eternity and to a kingdom that never decays?” * In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to sew together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden… (•§-H§” 20:120–21)

Five points can be immediately deduced from this account:

1. There is no indication that the original sin was committed by an act of sexual transgression. The body of Adam’s wife has absolutely no relevance to the sin.

2. The name of Adam’s wife is not given. Her role in the sin is so insignificant that her name is nowhere mentioned in the entire Book. It is certainly not \aw§”—as is so often claimed in the tafsÊr literature—which is the Arabic version of the name in Hebrew.

3. Adam either commits the original sin alone (såra 20) or together with his wife (såras 5 and 2), but in both accounts it was the Devil (shayã§n) who, by his whispers, instigated the act of disobedience.

4. A snake or a viper is not mentioned in the Book. This differs significantly from the Biblical account where the snake entices Eve to eat from the forbidden fruit.

5. The verses do not mention any item of clothing belonging to Adam and his wife—neither in Paradise nor on earth. It is only said that both become aware of their nakedness and that ‘they began to sew together the leaves of the Garden over their bodies…’ (7:22).

This last aspect is particularly important since it points out that the original sin of Adam and his wife was accompanied by the discovery of their nakedness. The effort of the two to cover their nakedness (first with the leaves of the Garden, then with clothes) finally results in God’s sending down of ‘raiment’ to the children of Adam (humankind):

O you children of Adam! We have [made you aware of] [anzaln§ #alaikum lib§s[an]] how to cover your shame, as well as to be an adornment to you. But the raiment of righteousness—that is the best. Such are among the signs of God, that they may receive admonition! * O you children of Adam! Let not Satan seduce you, in the same manner as He got your parents out of the Garden, stripping them of their raiment, to expose their shame; for he and his tribe watch you from a position where you cannot see them. We made the evil ones friends (only) to those without faith. (Al-A#r§f 7:26–27)

The significance of this sequence of events is that in order to establish women’s dress code in MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood, one has to study in general the clothes that early humankind wore in order to cover their nakedness before one can embark on a more specific study of particular

items of clothing, such as the Èij§b, the jilb§b, or others.

Being Covered (lib§s)

The Arabic term lib§s connotes that something or someone is covered. The term can literally mean a garment that covers the whole body, as in 35:33, or can figuratively refer to a state of confusion because the truth is hidden or ‘covered’ beneath layers of falsehood, as in 2:42. Finally, it can be used as a metaphor for protection, help, and spousal support, as in 2:187:

Gardens of eternity will they enter: therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls; and their garments [lib§suhum] there will be of silk. (F§ãir 35:33)

And cover not [la-talbiså] truth with falsehood, nor conceal the truth when you know (what it is). (Al-Baqara 2:42)

Permitted to you, on the night of the fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments [lib§s[un]] and you are their garments [lib§s[un]]... (Al-Baqara 2:187)

Shame (saw”a)

The term saw”a can be understood literally and metaphorically, similar to its antonym lib§s. When Allah asked Moses to press his hand to his side, we are told that it came out white (as if being leprous) but ‘without harm’ (ghayr så”[in]), not physically ‘disfigured’ (20:22), but when Allah sent a raven to show Cain how to hide the nakedness of his brother Abel, saw”a is metaphorically used as a metonym (5:31). It certainly does not refer to nudity as such, but rather to shameful states of exposure, vulnerability, and intimacy. It pertains to the zone of #awra, i.e. the intimate

parts of the body, which people are forbidden to show in public, that is, the pudenda, the sexual organs of men and women, because if they are exposed, it ‘causes harm’, or, as al-R§zÊ says, it signals ‘corporal decay’ and ‘mortification’.

“Now draw your hand close to your side: it shall come forth white (and shining), without harm (or stain) [ghayr så”[in]]—as another sign…” (•§-H§” 20:22)

Then God sent a raven, who scratched the ground, to show him how to hide the shame [saw”a] of his brother. (Al-M§“ida 5:31)

We tend to follow a more symbolic reading of al-saw”a and define it as a bad act which would, if publicly exposed and thus discovered, bring shame and dishonour and inflict pain on its perpetrators. Thus we do not understand 20:22, ‘…and so their nakedness (saw”atuhum§) appeared to them…’ literally as the uncovering of their private parts, but rather as a reference to their disgraceful act of having disobeyed God’s order. It describes more an act of moral denudation than just bodily nudity. One may object to this by asking, if their nakedness is not meant to be understood literally, why did Adam and his wife begin to cover their bodies immediately after they discovered their nakedness? The answer is that the text, even though it links the two events together, that is, a) the manifestation of the nakedness and b) ‘sewing together leaves of the garden’, uses the conjunction wa- (and), not in order to indicate cause and effect (because of their nakedness they collected leaves) but rather to narrate the sequence of events (first nakedness, then the collection of leaves). Why can it not be a causative wa-? Because we are told, in another verse, that Allah has assured Adam and his wife that they will not ‘go hungry or naked, suffer thirst or the sun’s heat’:

…their shame became manifest to them, and [wa-] they began to sew together the leaves of the garden over their bodies… (A l-A#r§f 7:20–22)

“There is therein (enough provision) for you not to go hungry or to go naked, * nor to suffer from thirst, nor from the sun’s heat.” (•§-H§” 20:118–19)

We understand that Allah placed Adam and his wife in His Garden where both cannot go hungry (fruits of the earth are plenty), or thirsty (water everywhere), or be harmed by the sun’s heat (no shadow required). Hence, Allah does not request saturation (which is permanent), nor does He want them to get dressed (nakedness is normal). Allah does not ask them to still their thirst (it is permanently stilled), nor does He want them to seek shelter in the shade (no heat can harm them). Allah only asks them not to come near the tree. But Allah’s creation consists of fallible human beings who are weak and forgetful, and indeed Adam ended up as a sinner because of his forgetfulness:

We also commanded Adam before you, but he forgot and We found him lacking in constancy. (•§-H§“20:115, AH)

After Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray, he was expelled to an open land where hunger and thirst reigned. He discovered the need to dress against the cold and to seek the cooling shade against the sun. They suddenly faced the need to work which was particularly painful for women because in matriarchal societies women worked more and harder than men. And yet, the reason why Adam and his wife ‘began to sew together the leaves of the garden over their bodies’ was not because of the cold but because of a childish impulse to hide their wrongdoings as soon as they realised the gravity of their sin. When they realised this—and note that the emergence of a consciousness of sin marked, in evolutionary terms, the transition to humans as moral beings—Adam and his wife desperately tried to cover it up with the leaves of the Garden hoping that this would undo it. In doing so they expressed the primitive belief that if something is visibly concealed it will magically disappear. This gesture was certainly not meant to conceal their nakedness because nakedness is only considered to be improper if a particular social context requires people to assess it as socially unacceptable.

But neither in the Garden nor in the Open Land was there a context that made them feel ‘naked’, that is, improperly dressed! If the incident occurred outside Paradise, on earth, it certainly happened during a very early evolutionary stage in which people lived primitively. Humans, known as Homo erectus, who were alive at that time would have found nakedness the most natural way of existence. Even if the arrival of Adam and his wife meant the transition from Homo erectus to Homo sapiens, their nakedness would not have been judged as improper in the surrounding milieu. Therefore, we maintain that the collection of leaves was not meant to cover their nakedness but was rather an attempt to hide and undo their disobedience to God. We should therefore regard Adam as the ‘father of humankind’ (abå ’l-ins§n) only in this figurative (moral) and symbolic (nonbiological) sense, not literally as our genetic forefather (and note that the Book does not refer to him as father, the ‘birth-giver’, w§lid, but as abå, indicating nonbiological fatherhood).

Although the Book corrects the Old Testament’s account of original sin by not putting the blame on Adam’s wife, it is astonishing to see that Muslim exegetes such as a l-•abarÊ have found it appropriate to have recourse to the older version. Not only that; they have also elaborated on the old narrative and changed it to such a degree that its misogynous tone has become the dominant feature of the whole story. The old accusations against Adam’s wife, now called \aw§”, were revived: it was she who lured Adam into thinking that he could disobey God; it was she who tempted Adam to go near the tree; it was she who gave in to the temptations of IblÊs, and, even worse, it was she who acted as if she was the Devil. And since \aw§” was wrongly understood to be humankind’s biological foremother, all women on earth were indiscriminately seen as sharing genetically \aw§’s devilish nature of disobedience and seductiveness and were collectively punished for her sin. Suffering for her original sin, women had now to endure the ‘pain’ of menstruation and childbirth. The exegetes completely ignored the fact that the Book categorically rejects collective punishment: ‘no burdened soul will bear the burden of another…’ (35:18, AH). And yet, the same hostility to women can be found in the literature of \adÊth. One ÈadÊth makes MuÈammad (ß) say, ‘If I were to order someone to bow down before someone else, I would order the

wife to bow down before her husband’[299]. Such misogyny is, however, in clear breach of the following verse of the Book:

And among His signs is this that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts)… (Al-Råm 30:21)

In another ÈadÊth MuÈammad (ß) is quoted as saying, ‘Women are nakedness. So shut them up in the house’. And: ‘Three things invalidate your prayer: a woman, a donkey, and a black dog’.[300] Finally: ‘A woman asked the Prophet: “What is the husband’s right over his wife?” He said, “[That] she does not give any charity from his house except with his permission, and [that] she does not fast a day except with his permission. If she does that [without his permission], the angels of Allah and the angels of [His] blessing and the angels of [His] wrath would curse her.”’[301] These sayings are so outrageous and so completely against the spirit of Allah’s Book that one wonders which sick mind invented them and put them into the mouth of the Prophet (ß). One could quote hundreds of verses that contradict this fabricated misogyny but a few references will be enough to prove the entirely different tone of the Book:

O mankind [sic]! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other—not that you may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). (Al-\ujur§t 49:13)

This verse reminds us that God makes no distinction between males and females when He judges His creation. The only criterion for His praise is whether men and women do ‘good works’ in the world.

According to the Book, righteousness is an ethical category and not biologically inherent in the male sex.

God sets forth, for an example to the unbelievers, the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot… (Al-TaÈrÊm 66:10)

<right>

And God sets forth, as an example to those who believe, the wife of

</right>

Pharaoh…and Mary, daughter of Imran… (Al-TaÈrÊm 66:11–12)

Both these verses demonstrate that Allah does not define righteousness on the basis of the female sex either. The Book gives examples of righteous women (the wife of Pharaoh, Mary) immediately after it mentions the example of disbelieving women (the wives of Noah and Lot)—two good and two bad examples in equal measure! Also, there is not the slightest hint in Allah's verses that women's monthly cycle makes their prayer or fast invalid, or that 'women are deficient in religion'. Religion is bigger than prayer and fast, and Allah is above such petty notions that claim that female menstruation, so vital for the preservation and procreation of the human race, would make women religiously and spiritually inferior.

The truth is that the male chauvinist studies of medieval exegetes and \adÊth scholars reflect the influences of the social conditions of their times. One influence was the existence of slavery in ArabMuslim society. It is well-known that in ancient Arabia only free women wore the headscarf in order to distinguish them from bareheaded slave girls. Today, slavery has disappeared, and so has the necessity to differentiate free women from slave girls. Some people argue that what has survived until today is the proper, legal tradition of free women, which should be the norm: women should go veiled. But people forget that the way the dress of a free woman was distinguished from the dress of a slave girl was a historical convention that had no legal basis in Allah's law. Also, it was neither logical nor theologically sound to demand that the slave girl should not wear the

Èij§b. Because, if it is true that a woman’s body and face cause fitna (social and sexual disturbance)[302] among men, all women in society, including slave girls, should have been asked to wear the Èij§b. How can anyone justify a law that puts free women under a veil to avoid sexual arousal, while most attractive slave girls were left unrestricted to wander bareheaded up and down the streets, free to cause fitna among men?

Such contradictions prove our point that anyone who fabricates ideas that ‘women cause fitna of men’ ultimately reiterates the misogynous renderings of the Paradise story (Eve tempts Adam). They ignore that the Book contradicts this account. Medieval Arab society created the milieu in which it was possible to present social conventions as if they were religious norms, creating a fatal confusion between patriarchal culture and religious ethics, a confusion that still exists today. Ideas of ‘honour’ (sharaf / nakhwa), ‘dignity’ (#ir·), ‘manhood’ (mur”a), and ‘respectability’ (shah§ma) have no textual basis in the Book and yet they are constantly fused into the religious discourse as if they represent the pinnacle of Islamic morals. The same is unfortunately true for the current debate about the Èij§b because, even though there is very little evidence for it in Allah’s revelation, the veil has been portrayed as the ultimate pillar of Islamic dress code, while in reality it is just a cultural convention that people introduced centuries ago.

**** Women’s Dress Norms for Their ZÊna, or Their Hidden Beauty (Private Parts)

The upper and lower limits are contained in Sårat a l-Når, beginning with the following verse:

A sura which We have sent down and which We have ordained in it have We sent down clear signs, in order that you may receive admonition. (Al-Når 24:1)

For men the norms are stated in verse 30:

Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them. And God is well acquainted with all that they do. (Al-Når 24:30) The norms for women are stated in verse 31:

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their [lower] private parts [furåjahunna]; that they should not display their [hidden] beauty [zÊnatahunna] except what [visibly of her beauty] appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their [upper] private parts [juyåbihinna] and not display their [hidden] beauty [zÊnatahunna] except to their [ba#l] husbands, their fathers, their husband's fathers, their sons, their husband's sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or [what follows] next in line [nis§"ihinna], or the [temporary partner] whom their right hands possess, or male [persons] free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden [beauty] [zÊnatihinna]. And O you believers! Turn you all together towards God, that you may attain bliss. (Al-Når 24:31)[303]

It is our aim to analyse each single part (as semantic-syntactic units) of these verses separately. We therefore start with the first line of both verses and continue line by line in parallel before we then concentrate exclusively on 3:31 until this verse reaches its conclusion.

First Line:

Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze [yaghu··å min abß§rihim] (24:30). And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze [yagh·u·na min abß§rihinna] (24:31)…

Both verses start with Allah’s command, addressed to both men and women, to lower the gaze. It has often been ignored that the text uses the preposition min as the partitive ‘of’. Because of this oversight, the usual transitive rendering of the verb as ‘to cast down their gaze’, which omits to acknowledge the existence of min, is incorrect. We also notice that the verse does not specify the object that the gazes of the eyes should avoid. It is obvious that the Book leaves it to us to decide what this should be—in accordance with existing social norms and moral etiquette. The Arabic term used for ‘to cast down’ is gha·· which, in its root meaning, connotes an act of politeness, that is, the opposite of being rude or impolite. A l-gha·§·a means softness, tenderness, or mildness, as used in: ‘a tender twig’, that is, a young, succulent branch of a tree compared to an old, dry, and arid limb.

What is the social meaning of being soft and tender? We believe that the verse addresses a social situation of embarrassment and how we can avoid such embarrassment with softness and tenderness. Just imagine the embarrassment when a man changes his clothes while several people, whom he does not know very well, surround him. Still, people cannot help but look at him. This naturally causes a lot of anguish for him. He feels utterly embarrassed and does not want to be seen by anyone, not even by his friends. The same distress can be observed in a woman who does not want to be looked at while changing her clothes, not even by her best friends. This is the social context, we believe, that Allah addresses in these two verses. He orders men and women to avoid staring at one another at those times when our looking could cause anguish and embarrassment. Today, it is seen as ‘good manners’ when people gently ‘cast down’ their eyes, pretending not to see the man or woman who does not wish to be seen. In all cultures this is regarded as good manners and praised as refined and civilised. This sums up our interpretation of this line. We do not think for a minute that ‘to lower your gaze’ means that men should not look at women, or that women, while working in offices, shops, and restaurants, should not look at men.

Second Line:

… and guard their [lower] private parts [wa-yaÈfaíå furåjahum]

… and guard their [lower] private parts
[wa-yaÈfaín[a]
furåjahunn[a]]

Men and women are asked to guard their furåj, which is often inadequately understood as ‘modesty’.[304] This time, for once, the term’s sexual connotation has been clearly overlooked. In the Book, Allah has ordered men and women to protect their private parts (furåj), in order to avoid two situations: first, that their nakedness leads to adultery or any other form of illegitimate sexual contact:

And those who guard their private parts [li-furåjihim È§fiíån], * except from their wives and what their right hands possess [azw§jihim]. [For these] they are not blameworthy… (Al-Mu”minån 23:5–6) [FM]

Second, and no less important, that any nonrelated male can cast a glance at their private parts. This is expressed by the second line in both verses. We notice the use of the noun abß§r, sing. baßr, which means ‘look’ or ‘glance’ by the movement of the eyes. This is different from ‘view’ or ‘sight’, which takes place inside the brain, where things can be ‘seen’ even if the eyes are closed. We infer that to keep the lower limit of proper men’s dress requires men to protect their private parts. This can be fulfilled by wearing underpants or a swim suit as this sufficiently covers a man’s genitals and buttocks, or what the fuqah§” called his ‘thick’ #awra (#awra mughallaía).

Verse 30 ends with the assertion that ‘God is well acquainted with all that they [men] do’. The term used to express ‘do’ is ßana#, usually employed to refer to a process of manufacturing things (e.g., ‘…Forthwith he (starts) constructing [yaßna#[u]] the Ark…’, Håd 11:38), or to a process of education (‘…and (this) in order that you may be reared [wa-li-tußna#[a]] under Mine eye’, •§-H§”

20:39). In 24:30 the term ‘doing’ is used in this second sense, that is, indicating a process of education, because, by asking men and women to protect their private parts, Allah sends down His instructions in order to teach us good and civilised behaviour. This is done in a nonrepressive and nonobtrusive way since people should learn gradually, and without harsh public sanctions, how to avoid casting glances that might embarrass other people. Members of every social community should learn how to protect their private parts by interaction with their surrounding culture and by responding, flexibly and open-mindedly, to each individual social occasion.

Third Line:

…that they should not display their [hidden] beauty [zÊnatahunna] except what [visibly of her beauty] appears thereof [ill§ m§ íahara minh§];

This line, like the rest of the verse, is different from 24:30 (the instructions to men) because lines 3–11 were revealed so that women could receive additional instructions about their dress code. It will be interesting to learn in detail what the implications of these additional norms for women’s lives are. We will analyse verse 31 in conjunction with Sårat a l-Nis§”, which provides additional information about women’s maÈ§rim (forbidden marriage partners), which is vital for a complete analysis of the verse.

A woman’s beauty/ornament, charms, or finery, can be divided into two parts: an outer (visible) part and an inner (invisible) part. Beauty is of three kinds: 1) beauty of things or material beauty; something that is added to the basic substance of a thing, for exam ple, special decoration to rooms, hairclips to hair, make-up to the face, and such; these external additions make something more attractive and enhances its basic beauty. Material beauty is described in:

And (He has created) horses, mules, and donkeys, for you to ride and use for show [wa-zÊna]… (Al-NaÈl 16:8)

O children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel [zÊnatakum] at every time and place of prayer… (Al-A#r§f 7:31)

2) beauty of places, or spatial beauty; this beauty can be seen in the public parks, zoological gardens, or herbaceous borders that one finds in big cities. These gardens and parks are that part of nature that has been cultivated for the benefit and recreation of everyone. People cultivate gardens by planting shrubs, bushes, and trees, or they establish a nature reserve, all for the purpose of a well-controlled interaction with nature, avoiding the excess and devastation that harm the environment. We propose to interpret zÊna[305], as described in verse 31, as spatial beauty (the space of the human body), not as material beauty (jewellery, rings, bracelets, etc.), as it was often thought to be.[306]

3) beauty that combines material and spatial beauty, as described in:

Say: ‘Who has forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of God [zÊnat All§h], which He has produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure (which He has provided) for sustenance?…’ (Al-A#r§f 7:32)

(It grows) till the earth is clad with its golden ornaments and is decked out (in beauty) [wa-“zayyanat]: the people to whom it belongs think they have all powers of disposal over it… (Yånus 10:24)

The last verse states that historical progress and technological development will fill the earth with material and spatial beauty. This type of beauty as well as type 1 are not applicable to zÊna in this context, because zÊna refers, as we said, to spatial beauty (type 2) which a woman will display with her entire body; it is decidedly not just her make-up or her adornments. ZÊna refers to her body as a whole.

Fourth Line:

…that they should draw their veils over their [upper] private parts [wa’l-ya·ribn[a] bi-khumårihinna #al§ juyåbihinna] and not display their [hidden] beauty [wa-l§ yubdÊn[a] zÊnatahunna]

A woman’s body is divided into two parts: a) an exposed (visible) part: the verse says, ‘except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof (ill§ m§ íahara minh§)’; these outer parts are what can be seen of a female body: the head, back, shoulders, arms, legs, and such, constituting her physical appearance (in public); b) an unexposed (invisible) part: parts of her body that Allah has not exposed to the eyes; a woman’s unexposed part is called juyåb. The Arabic term jayb is derived from j-y-b and refers to an opening, a ‘cleft, crack or split’ that opens up between two sides (‘a cleft in the rocks’ or ‘an opening of a pocket’). A shirt sleeve, for example, has a round opening and extends between two sides. As for the body of a woman there are several parts that are located ‘between two sides’, for example, the area between, and under her breasts; under her armpits; the area of her vagina and her buttocks. All of these areas are her juyåb, and it is these that a believing woman is required to cover. It is incorrect to define jayb as merely the woman’s bosoms.[307] The verse uses the term khumår for the cover, but by no stretch of the imagination can it just mean ‘veil’. It is derived from kh-m-r, ‘to cover’. Wine is called al-khamr because it ‘eclipses/obscures’ or ‘covers’ the brain. Al-khim§r is not, as convention has it, a piece of cloth to wrap around the head; it is certainly more than that. Generically, it refers to any cover, whether of a woman’s head or other parts of her body. That is why Allah orders woman to cover her juyåb, those parts of her bodily, spatial beauty (zÊna) which are naturally hidden (breast, inner thighs, and armpits), but which He made possible to (naturally) be seen—since what can be revealed must originally be hidden (‘…whether you show what is in your minds or conceal it…’, Al-Baqara 2:284). Those who ‘see’ a woman’s beauty, and who would legally be allowed to do so, are only the sane and rational (‘…and so their nakedness appeared to them…’, •§-H§” 20:121). Some people will argue that a woman’s face (eyes, ears, mouth, and nose) can also be regarded as private. We do not deny this, but a

woman’s face belongs to those parts that are m§ íahara, parts of the body that ‘protrude’ or, literally, ‘stick out’ (like the head, feet, and legs), meaning parts that are exposed and not naturally concealed. Moreover, a human face is the most visible part of the body and gives individuals their identity. Allah would never have wanted to put a woman’s face, with which she expresses her personality, under a veil. Therefore, the face (mouth, eyes, ears, etc.) does not belong to a woman’s ‘hidden’ juyåb but is part of her visible beauty (zÊna) and does not need to be covered.

Fifth Line:

…except to their [ba#l] husbands, their fathers, their husband’s fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons, their brothers or their brothers’ sons, or their sisters’ sons

Allah has explicitly identified the [lower] juyåb parts (line 4) as her genitals (farj) (‘…and guard their private parts’—MF, line 2), which are to be protected from view. We must start from the premise that a woman is, by primitive law, not allowed to show her genitalia to anyone except her zawj husband. The fuqah§” also call the female genitalia a woman’s ‘thick’ #awra (shame), which a slave woman, according to Islamic fiqh, may not reveal to any male person and which a free woman, according to the Book, may not reveal to her maÈ§rim relatives. This explains why in the above list of people to whom a woman is explicitly allowed to show other parts of her [hidden] beauty (zÊna), only the ba#l husband is mentioned and not her zawj husband (because he is allowed to see it anyway).

We hear about, a) the ba#l husband (‘their husbands’), b) father and grandfather (‘their fathers’), c) father of the ba#l husband and his grandfather (‘their husband’s fathers’), d) sons (‘their sons’), e) sons of the ba#l husband (‘their husbands’ sons’), f) brother (‘their brothers’) or g) sons of the brother (‘their brothers’ sons’), or h) sons of the sister (‘their sisters’ sons’). If we ignore the difference between

ba#l and zawj husbands, that is, if ba#l and zawj are treated as synonyms—which most exegetes say they are—we would be faced with a contradiction between verse 24:31 and 23:5. It is not logical to allow a woman to show her entire body to her husband (24:31), while at the same time being explicitly allowed not to guard her most intimate private parts in front of the very same person (23:5).[308] One assumes that a woman who is allowed to reveal her private parts to her husband is naturally also allowed to show him (the rest of) her entire body. One would not need an explicit divine command for it. This contradiction can only be solved if we accept that Allah treats the zawj husband differently from the ba#l husband. That is why He did include the ba#l husband among the others in the list to whom a woman can reveal other parts of her body (zÊna)[309] except her genitals (her ‘thick’ #awra, or, her farj).

As said above, the juyåb parts of a woman are her genitals, buttocks, breasts, and armpits. We also defined what is known as her ‘thick’ #awra (genitals and buttocks) as forbidden to anyone except to her zawj husband. As for the juyåb part of a woman’s breasts, no one disagrees that they are part of her (upper) private parts, or her ‘thin’ #awra (mukhaffafa). Most exegetes even go so far as to say that only her breasts are really covered by the term al-juyåb. This intolerable reduction of the term to a woman’s breasts was a result of the dress code in ancient Arabia. In seventh-century Arabia, Arab Bedouin women dressed themselves in public by basically covering their breasts with a long shawl; while inside their private homes they wore clothes that did not cover that area of their body. Naturally, only a woman’s breasts could be revealed when she walked in public. Hence, they were seen as the private parts she must cover. As for the other parts of her juyåb, they were essentially covered anyway.

Some may think that our interpretation of zÊna allows a woman to appear half-naked in front of anyone listed in verse 31 (with only her genitals covered). This may indeed happen but only by accident, through absent-mindedness or by force, while the zawj husband is the only person who is legally entitled to see her lower private parts (her ‘thick’ #awra). As for a woman’s upper private parts (breasts and

armpits), a woman will not be prosecuted if she reveals them in front of the six types of men mentioned in the list. If it happens it is not regarded as Èal§l or Èar§m, but she should be criticised as being immodest (even though it is sanctioned by the Book).

The maÈ§rim Relatives and a Woman’s Body

As stated earlier, even though the ba#l husband is not formally counted as among a woman’s maÈ§rim, he is treated like a maÈram to whom a woman cannot reveal her (lower) private parts. Among those listed in verse 24:31 are seven maÈ§rim: a) the father, b) father of the zawj husband, c) son, d) the son of the zawj husband, e) brother, f) son of the brother, and g) son of the sister. These seven constitute exactly half of the fourteen maÈ§rim that are mentioned in 4:23. As for the maÈ§rim whom a woman is not allowed to marry but with whom she may stay alone (in a room or a house), but without being allowed —because they are not mentioned in 24:31—to reveal her upper private parts (breasts and armpits), they are: 1) the brother of the father, 2) brother of the mother, 3) foster son, 4) foster brother, 5) husband of the umm mother, 6) husband of the daughter (son-inlaw), and 7) husband of the sister (brother-in-law). This latter list of maÈ§rim whom she cannot marry and cannot show her body (zÊna) is surprising and forces us to rethink our understanding of zÊna as being merely a woman’s make-up, pieces of jewellery, or some sort of hair decoration (that, the fuqah§” claim, she is not allowed to display and thus must hide beneath a veil)! But zÊna cannot just mean make-up or jewellery, and such, because a woman appears, for example, in front of her son-in-law (No. 6) exactly as she would appear in front of a complete stranger (because he would be forever a kind of maÈram to her). And all the others who are not listed in the zÊna verse (24:31) would not be allowed to see the hidden zÊna of her body, this including her uncles, that is, the brothers of her father and of her mother (No. 1 and No. 2). Is it not more likely that zÊna is nothing else than her juyåb private parts, as we explained above? Clearly, it was a mistake by the fuqah§” to regard a woman’s zÊna as just material beauty (decoration and adornment) while, in reality, it is her

bodily beauty (visible and hidden). The fault lies in their methodology since they drew an analogy between what is hidden (gh§“ib) and what is visible (sh§hid), and they did not apply the theory of limits.

Sixth Line:

…or [what follows] next in line [nis§“ihinna],

It is believed that this sequence permits women to reveal their hidden zÊna to other believing women. This is incorrect because the Arabic does not say ‘except to believing women’ (a l-mu”min§t min a l-nis§”). Rather it says nis§“ihinna with the third-person feminine plural suffix. This suffix is not that of possession, that is, ‘their’, in the sense of ‘their women’, because then it would mean ‘women of the women’, which is absurd. Also, the personal suffix cannot refer to the wives of the male relatives listed above (son, brother, nephew, etc.) meaning ‘except to their (m.) wives’, because this would require the thirdperson masculine plural hum, while we have hunna. It is nonsense to claim that the text might have substituted for stylistic purposes hunna for hum, given that the rules of saj# poetry sometimes make grammatical rearrangement necessary. Semantic considerations always override stylistic concerns, so we should not make baseless assumptions about stylistic necessities. We believe that nis§” in this context cannot refer to women but rather to male persons, so that the personal pronoun suffix is a true feminine plural ‘their’ (f.), as in their (the women’s) houses or their (the women’s) books. And nis§” means, as we explained earlier, ‘the most recent’ or ‘those who follow after’, in this context meaning those who ‘follow next’ but who are not explicitly mentioned in the verse, that is, the grandchildren: the sons of the son, the brother’s grandchildren, the sister’s grandchildren, the husband’s grandchildren, and so forth. They are the ones ‘who come next’ following the persons mentioned in the zÊna verse; and since they are all relatives of the women, who is the subject of the verse, they are called their (the women’s) nis§”.

If we look at verse 55 of Sårat al-AÈz§b, a similar picture emerges:

There is no blame (on these ladies [the prophet’s wives] if they appear) before their fathers or their sons, their brothers, or their brother’s sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their women [sic] [nis§“ihinna], or the (slaves) whom their right hands possess. And, (ladies), fear God; for God is witness to all things. (Al-AÈz§b 33:55)

This time only the wives of the Prophet (ß) are the subject of the verse. Again, as in 24:31, it does not list all maÈ§rim relatives when it allows the Prophet’s wives to reveal their bodies. Also, the verse does not mention the zawj husband because MuÈammad (ß) as their zawj has the right to see them naked anyway. It similarly does not mention the husband’s son, because MuÈammad (ß) did not have sons (only daughters). Likewise, it does not mention the husband’s father, because MuÈammad (ß) was an orphan. Again, nis§“ihinna is used to refer to those ‘who come next’, that is, MuÈammad’s (ß) grandchildren. It is striking that the verse addresses the question of the exposure of the zÊna of the Prophet’s wives in front of men. We know that Allah had decreed that all believing men are to be treated as maÈ§rim relatives who cannot be married:

...and his wives are their mothers... (Al-AÈz§b 33:6)

Nor is it right for you that you should annoy God’s apostle, or that you should marry his widows after him at any time... (Al-AÈz§b 33:53)

The special instruction for MuÈammad’s (ß) wives was that believing men should talk to them from behind a screen (al-Èij§b), in spite of the fact that they would never be allowed to marry them. As for the legal force of this verse, the explicit instruction of Allah that MuÈammad’s (ß) wives are not like any other believing women (33:32) makes it incumbent upon women not to follow the Prophet’s wives in speaking from behind a screen. If a woman ignores God’s command and follows the example of the Prophet’s wives she should then speak from behind a

Èij§b to all male persons, except to her seven maÈ§rim relatives and ‘those who come next’. But in so doing she would, unnecessarily and unlawfully, impose upon herself what Allah only preserved for MuÈammad’s (ß) wives. What the believing women share with MuÈammad’s (ß) wives is Allah’s command that they protect their private parts. Women can use whatever clothes are sanctioned by the prevailing customs and dress norms of society.

The following table summarises the previous sections and presents our comparative survey of såras Al-Nis§” (4:23) and Al-Når (24:31):

List of maÈ§rim (taboo-)relatives | List of people to whom a woman may reveal her upper private parts (hidden zÊna) but must not reveal her lower private parts (farj) |

| 1. Son | 1. Son |

| 2. Father | 2. Father |

| 3. Brother | 3. Brother |

| 4. Brother of the Father

5. Brother of the Mother

6. Son of the Brother | 4. Son of the Brother |

| 7. Son of the Sister | 5. Son of the Sister |

| 8. Foster Son

9. Foster Brother

10. Father-in-Law | 6. Father of the ba#l husband |

| 11. Husband of the Mother

(from a previous marriage)

12. Husband of the Daughter

(Son-in-Law)

13. Husband of the Sister

(Brother-in-Law)

14. Son of the Husband

(from another marriage) | 7. Son of the ba#l husband

8. Added to the seven listed above are also the children and grandchildren who are all covered by the term nis§“ihinna: the descendants to whatever degree downwards. | We stress that we do not suggest that a woman is free to show those parts of her body that are not her lower private parts to all those persons (mentioned in the right-hand column), but if it unintentionally happens it should not be judged as Èar§m.[310]

Seventh Line:

… or the [temporary partner] whom their right hands possess [m§ malakat aim§nuhunna]

Historically, the phrase ‘what their right hands possess’ was used to indicate the slaves of the household. This immediately raises the question of how we today, given that slavery has ceased to exist, should interpret this verse. We know that slave girls dressed differently during the period of the Prophet’s

companions. For one thing, they did not cover their heads and breasts with a Èij§b. M§lik b. Anas reported that #Umar's handmaidens 'used to serve us while revealing their hair that would touch their breast'.[311] Slave girls were seen as free sexual objects, and Muslim men took 70:30 for a long time as a licence to have unrestricted access to them ('Except with their wives and the (captives) whom their right hands possess; for (then) they are not to be blamed', A l-Ma#§rij 70:30). However, this was a one-sided practice since men did not allow their women to treat male slaves in a similar fashion. We hear about a woman called #Aziba whom the Caliph #Umar explicitly forbade to have sex with her male house slave. If we insist on saying that the phrase 'what their right hands possess' refers to slaves we risk having to admit that this part of the Book is today no longer relevant. This, however, would contradict the axiomatic truth that MuÈammad's (ß) message is eternally valid for all times. Therefore, we propose to regard the so-called misy§r marriages, which have become quite popular in recent years,[312] as the contemporary equivalent to the premodern master–slave girl relationship. We suggest that today's partners of a misy§r marriage can be described by the phrase 'what their right hands possess'.

Eighth Line:

... or male [persons] free of physical needs [al-t§bi#Ên[a] ghayr ålÊ 'l-irba min al-rij§l]

We understand that the verse refers here to those men who have no sexual desires. This does not necessarily include, as some claim, those who are mentally or physically disabled. The sexual drive of a disabled person might still exist. More likely, it refers, for example, to a gynaecologist who examines his female patients dispassionately and whose relationship to his patients is similar to the relationship between a mother and her son or a father and his daughter. If a gynaecologist needs to examine a girl's vulva, he will ask the father for permission.[313] Women in the Arab-Muslim world should know that they are, without any reservations, entitled to see a doctor; and they should be at ease with the physical examination of their body by a female or male doctor. Gynaecologists and other people working in the

medical professions (male nurses, anaesthetists, x-ray specialists, dentists, and such), are the modern equivalent to the ‘servants free of physical needs’ mentioned in 24:31.

Ninth Line:

<right>

…or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex [lam yaíharå

</right>

#al§ #awrat al-nis§”]

It will be necessary first to define the term #awra, or as a l-Tha#§libÊ has put it, ‘what someone is embarrassed to reveal’.[314] As explained below, Prophet MuÈammad (ß) spoke about #awra in very similar terms. It needs to be stressed that the notion of shame does not fall into the categories of either Èal§l or Èar§m, because the feeling of shame is a cultural phenomenon. If a bald-headed man does not want to show his baldness to others, he will purchase a wig to cover his head. It is the baldness of his head that creates #awra (shame or embarrassment), but only in a cultural context in which baldness is seen as embarrassing, deficient, or ugly. The Prophet (ß) said: ‘Whoever covered a believer’s #awra [i.e., kept it secret], Allah c overed his [i.e., this person’s] #awra.’[315] This means that if somebody wants to hide some specific flaws of his body but notices that someone has already seen parts of it, he will be relieved to find out that this person has kept this to himself and that his flaws were not disclosed to anyone else. This is what is meant by ‘overlooking the #awra of a believer’. Also, to ‘conceal the #awra’ does not imply, as the following verse proves, to hide it beneath a piece of cloth. What it really means is to seriously question people’s perception of it. We hear in 33:13:

Behold! A party among them said: “You men of Yathrib! You cannot stand (the attack)! Therefore go back!” And a band of them ask for leave of the prophet, saying, “Truly our houses are bare and exposed [#awrat[un]],” though they were not exposed [bi-#awrat[in]] they intended nothing but to run away. (Al-AÈz§b 33:13)

We hear that people believed that their houses were exposed (#awrat[un]) and feared that their enemies would soon discover them. And yet, in reality this was simply not the case, and Allah made them realise their misconception. Back to verse 24:31, #awra, means shame, it describes that feeling of unease when a part of the human body or an act of human behaviour is exposed against one’s wishes. The feeling of unease is determined by norms that are set by the social milieu and cultural context in which we live. Even though our private parts (juyåb) are biologically determined, how we perceive them and how we respond if they are exposed, is culturally determined and always changes.

The verse says, ‘children who have no sense of #awra’, implying that children do not yet know why a person is ashamed of being exposed or seen in an awkward position or wearing insufficient clothes. Up to a certain age, children are ‘shameless’, they do not understand why a certain flaw of their body should be shameful. They have to be educated and socialised first in order to acquire a sense of shame. Only then will they adjust their behaviour so that shame is avoided. The verse refers to those children who have not yet acquired that knowledge.[316] Some cultures determine that the #awra of a man extends from head to knee and require men to cover this area. That is entirely acceptable as long as it is not perceived to be an eternally valid definition of #awra. What is felt as ‘shame’ varies from culture to culture and will eventually change over time.

Shame is, strictly, not part of either Èar§m or Èal§l, because the areas of shame are not explicitly mentioned by Allah’s Book, which contains God’s limits. And since the limits of a woman’s #awra are not given in the

Book, they are left to human societies to define. It was certainly a purely historical decision to define #awra exclusively in sexual terms as the lower private parts of a woman: forbidden for men and slave girls in front of a stranger, and for the free woman in front of her maÈ§rim relatives. This latter distinction between slave women and free women is obsolete today, but it is still valid to apply #awra to only a few of the maÈ§rim relatives of a woman (those mentioned in 24:31). We have shown that it is possible to define #awra not only in sexual terms.

Tenth Line:

… and that they should not strike [ya·ribn[a]] their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden [beauty] [min zÊnatihinna].

The conventional understanding is that women ‘should not strike their feet’ to prevent anyone from hearing the noise of their anklets and other jewellery that they wear around the ankles, or to prevent anyone from hearing the click-clack of their heels if they wear highheeled shoes. We do not believe that this nonsense can ever be true. We have already learned that the Arabic verb ·-r-b is polysemous, and that one should not always take it literally to mean ‘to beat’ or ‘to strike’. It can mean, for example, ‘to travel’ the world for the sake of trade, commerce, or study, and to fight in God’s way, as we hear in the Book:

O you who believe! When you go abroad [·arabtum] in the cause of God, investigate carefully… (Al-Nis§” 4:94)

When you travel [·arabtum] through the earth, there is no blame on you if you shorten your prayers… (Al-Nis§” 4:101)

If you are journeying through the earth [·arabtum fi’l-“ar·], and the chance of death befalls you (thus)… (Al-M§“ida 5:106)

4-r-b also denotes the act of ‘forming’ or ‘shaping’. Humans are given a certain ‘shape’ by their Creator, a shape that is made in His image, that is, similar to Him; hence the meaning of ‘to strike an image’, ‘to set an illustration’ or ‘to give an example’ in several verses of the Book:

We gave you many examples [·arabn§ al-amth§l]. (Ibr§hÊm 14:45, AH)

…to each one We set forth parables and examples [·arabn§ lahu al-amth§l] … (Al-Furq§n 25:39)

In this Qur’an, We have set every kind of illustration [·arabn§ min kull al-math§l] before people… (Al-Råm 30:58, AH)

4arÊba means tax, a duty that is ‘imposed’ (·araba) upon people to compensate for their profits and salaries or to reclaim the expenses for public services. The literal meaning ‘to beat’ can sometimes mean ‘to stop’ or ‘to hinder’ in a wider sense; if, for example, I give you a rap on the knuckles I want you to stop doing something bad. An industrial strike (i·r§b) means to stop work and to prevent other people from continuing to work. A hunger strike (i·r§b #an al-ãa#§m) means to stop eating food. The verse says, ‘and that they should not strike (ya·ribanna) their feet’, because Allah requests from women that they prevent anyone from seeing the hidden part of a woman’s body (‘in order not to draw attention to their hidden zÊna”).

The verse thus talks about the hidden parts of her body, that is, a woman’s juyåb. It implies that Allah does not want a woman to work in a job where she needs to ‘strike her feet’ in such a way that her private parts can be seen. If a woman works as a striptease artist or a pole dancer her private parts will be inevitably revealed. It does not mean that dancing as

such is forbidden, because a short exposure of the private parts while dancing is purely accidental. But in doing striptease or prostitution or nude sunbathing on beaches—the rationale here is to be naked.

We now know the limits of Allah. On the whole, His limits only rule out two female occupations: 1) jobs that contain elements of intentional nakedness (striptease, pole dancing, etc.) and 2) prostitution. Any other occupation is allowed for women. She does not need to fear that she is not complying with existing dress norms as long as she does not intentionally show her private parts in public. All other codes of behaviour (at work) are determined by the society in which women live; if a woman does not comply with these rules she will be criticised or even disciplined. Such norms and rules are historical and bound to change, hence they do not fall into the category of Èar§m/Èal§l.

Eleventh Line:

…And O you believers! Turn you all together towards God, that you may attain bliss.

The last line of the verse asks believing men and women to repent. During the course of one’s life mistakes are inevitable and only human. If deviations from the above rules have occurred, Allah in His mercy calls for repentance. He does not issue threats about future punishments.

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Given what we said about women’s obligatory dress norms

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(al-far§“i·), stated in 24:31, we are now in a position to conclude that it is obligatory for a woman to cover her lower private parts (juyåb, the ‘thick’ #awra) from the eyes of all men, including the ba#l husband, except from the

zawj husband who is entitled to see her, and that she must cover her lower private parts (farj) but not her upper private parts (breasts and armpits) in front of those men mentioned in 24:31. Her upper private parts (upper juyåb or hidden zÊna) must be covered in front of the other maÈ§rim relatives and any other stranger. This constitutes the lower limit of dress norms. Allah has imposed as a duty (far·) on the believing women that they comply with this lower limit; it is the minimum degree of dress regulations on the basis of which a woman knows what is permitted (masmåÈ) and what is prohibited (mamnå#). Women know that no concrete form of punishment is stipulated if they transgress this lower limit. It is, however, expected that they will repent.

But what if a woman wants to go a step above the lower limit by covering more of her body? In this case verse 59 of Sårat al-AÈz§b helps her to apply the norms that were addressed to MuÈammad's (ß) wives and that are not compulsory for all believing women. They were revealed to him (only) as a prophet, which means that they are not legally binding:

O Prophet! Tell your wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments [min jal§bÊbihinna] over their persons (when abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such [sic]) [yu#arafn[a]] and [thus] not molested [yu"dhain[a]]. And God is oft-forgiving, most merciful. (Al-AÈz§b 33:59)

The verse begins by addressing MuÈammad (ß) as a prophet. The invocation 'O Prophet!' is always used as a textual marker to indicate the realm of prophethood, which does not contain legislation. It is purely historical as it reflects the atmosphere of MuÈammad's (ß) time, alluding to the fact that women were not safe from harassment when they carried out their daily tasks in the streets of Medina. Inevitably, when societies change and public safety for women on the streets is improved, such precautionary measures no longer apply.

The verse talks about the possibility of wearing an outer garment (a jilb§b) when women leave the house.[317] The term jilb§b has its root in j-l-b, which either means to import things, literally, to carry things from A to B, or to wrap up, conceal, or veil what is visible. This second meaning can be found in the term julba (scar): it refers to the process of ‘closing down’: when a wound begins to heal it is scarred over by the skin which protects the wound from further external damage or an infection. Jilb§b thus literally means any cover that protects a person’s body from external threats (heat, water, coldness); such a cover is provided by trousers, shirts, cardigans, dressing gowns, anoraks, coats, parkers, and the like. All these things would qualify as proper jilb§bs.

In any case, this verse is only informative and not legally binding. There are two reasons for its injunction: a) women should be recognizable and b) it should prevent harm. In this verse, women are informed (not ordered) of how to avoid harm by safely covering their body. Harm can come in two ways: from nature and from society. Nature can harm a human body by exposure to cold, heat, humidity, and extreme weather conditions. Common sense dictates that a woman normally wears clothes that protect her body from extreme heat or cold. Society can hurt a woman through ridicule or blame, for example if she is not dressed according to prevailing dress norms. Again, by common sense and properly internalised social rules, a woman normally wears clothes that comply with these norms.

It is often overlooked that the verse links the injunction’s first reason ‘that they should be known”[318] to the second ‘that they are not being injured’ (MF). This is achieved by the causative preposition fa- (thus), and means that women who ‘know’ how to dress properly will therefore not be harmed.[319] However, if there is injury, then only because of the power of nature or of social sanctions. Further punishments by Allah are not mentioned.

The upper limit defining what a woman should cover of her body is provided by a ÈadÊth. If authentic, it says, ‘A woman’s #awra [what she might be ashamed of] is her whole body except her face and her hands’.[320] Leaving the fact aside that this

ÈadÊth is not eternally valid, it still allows a woman to cover more of her body. It still does not, however, allow a woman to cover also her face and her hands, because these constitute a person’s identity.

This leads us to the conclusion that if a woman forgets to cover her upper private parts and only covers her lower private parts (‘thick’ #awra), she violates Allah’s lower limit (except in front of the maÈ§rim of 24:31). If she goes to the other extreme and chooses to cover her entire body, including her face and hands, she transgresses the upper limit set by Allah’s Messenger (ß). Most women in this world (naturally) dress in such a way that they move between Allah’s limit and MuÈammad’s (ß) limit. This corresponds to the inherent disposition of human beings and their natural way to dress in public. It is also normal that in some instances women happen to stand close to the outer limits, and occasionally they even transgress them.

Change of Dress Code?

We are now able to draw conclusions about the dress norms before and after the revelations of 24:31 and 33:59:

6. At the time of their revelation, Arab women did not go naked in public.

7. Arab women and men wore the clothes and costumes of the regional Bedouin culture that reflected the level of material production on the Arabian Peninsula. MuÈammad (ß) himself was dressed according to the regional culture of Arabia, to the extent that people who arrived in Medina could not distinguish him from other Arabs. ‘They would ask: “Who amongst you is Muhammad?”’[321]

One feature of this ancient culture was long garments that protected men and women from the heat. Women put a scarf over their heads similar to the way of Bedouin women today. We know that KhadÊja, MuÈammad’s (ß) first wife, dressed in this way—before the revelation of 24:31 and

33:59. This proves that a long garment was primarily a regional tradition. With the revelation of verse 24:31, Arab-Muslim women were asked to closely examine their way of dressing. It turned out that, basically, they did not have to change a lot. What was new was the possibility of displaying parts of their upper torso by way of a small neck cut in their blouses; their breasts were covered by their headscarves. No drastic changes were needed because it was clear that the other (lower) private parts were perfectly covered by the kind of regional clothes that women wore at the time.

This is how #$“isha, the ‘mother of the believing women’, was dressed (after the revelation of 24:31 and 33:59), showing no fundamental difference from KhadÊja’s way of dressing. There was, in particular, no difference in the way both wore a headscarf as protection, KhadÊja before and #$“isha after the revelation of the dress verse, against the heat. The mistake of traditional jurists was to define jayb as describing only a woman’s breasts. What led to this mistake was that they confused revelation with local tradition by issuing prescriptive dress codes for all Muslim women on the basis of customary dress norms to which all Arab women adhered in the seventh century (Muslims and Christians alike). The irony is that these supposedly ‘Islamic’ dress codes for believing women are still shared equally by Muslim and Christian Bedouin women, for example in the region of \aur§n in southwest Syria. These women are simply following the same regional tradition as they have done for centuries.

We should not forget that 24:31 was revealed in order to issue the minimum dress requirements for all believing women at all times (in the East and the West, in cold and warm climates). ArabMuslim women today have to rectify the fundamental mess they have inherited from fiqh jurisprudence. They have to remove that fateful analogy by which jurists drew from something nonempirical (the dress-codes of women, Muslims and Christians, in the seventhcentury Arabian Peninsula), and applied it to something empirical (the dress codes of Muslim women all over the world at all times of human history). We have seen that such an analogy is implausible because it is based on the wrong assumption that Arab women were, if we take the jurists’ interpretations of 24:31 and 33:59, completely covered from head to toe and had to be given permission to reveal those parts that the two verses supposedly describe. This is, of course, historically

wrong. The truth is that the Book describes what women should cover (of their naked body) and not what to disclose (of their fully covered body).

8. Supposing that a woman wants to embrace Islam and that she is, at the moment, completely naked, what clothes would she wear? The simple answer is that every believing woman, of whatever origin and nationality, needs to follow the dress norms of the society in which she lives. The only restriction is that she needs to observe the lower limit of 24:31. Verse 33:59 is only for her information.

9. The assumption of some fuqah§” that a woman’s voice is part of her #awra is downright nonsense. We hear of women who stood together with MuÈammad (ß) on the streets and in the mosques of Medina, and when the Prophet (ß) asked them questions they were encouraged to answer without any inhibition or threat of punishment. It is thus incorrect to claim that there is a vocal #awra of a woman that is Èar§m[322] because common social practice worldwide proves this wrong. Most societies unreservedly accept female voices in public concerts, operas and the mass media—and we believe that it is not a sin to encourage women to take part in such activities.

*** Concluding Remarks on Women’s Dress

One may ask why the traditional fuqah§” were not able to discover this by themselves. Was their command of the Arabic language really so bad? Not at all. The truth is that this has nothing to do with poor grasp of grammar, syntax, and rhetoric, but with a mistaken methodology. In their reading of 24:31 and 33:59 they assumed that the Prophet’s ÈadÊth (‘a woman’s #awra is her entire body except her face and her hands’) is a specification of the Book and misread it as an ÈadÊth abrogating 24:31 and 33:59. We believe, instead, that MuÈammad (ß) was simply formulating the upper limit of women’s dress requirements. But the jurists were so eager to formulate restrictive practices for women that their male-centred ideologies eventually

got the better of their expertise in the Arabic language—with fatal results for all of us today who have to pick up the pieces of their reactionary zeal.

Let us finally summarise the findings of our study:

1. Dress requirements for men:

The lower limit means to cover the lower private parts, their genitalia, the so-called thick #awra according to traditional fiqh. Every other part of the body is covered (or remains uncovered) according to the existing cultural dress requirements of the country/region in which they live.

2. Dress requirements for women:

There are four stipulations to be considered:

a. Women are not allowed to appear completely naked except in front of their zawj husband—no other person is allowed to be present.

b. Women are required to cover their lower private parts (= absolute lower limit) in front of those persons mentioned in 24:31, but not their upper private parts. Their ba#l husband and half of their maÈ§rim (taboo-)relatives (note: not all of them!) belong to this group.

c. Women are required to cover their upper private parts (breasts and armpits) in addition to their lower private parts, her thick #awra (= this constitutes the lower limit for all women). This definition, however, does not cover dresses for special social occasions (parties, opera, concerts, etc.). As for the concept ‘from the navel to the

knee’, we conclude that fiqh jurists unashamedly invented this. [323]

3. Headscarf:

Women and men are not required to cover their head. If they do so they are merely following the local conventions of their place of origin.

Finally, as the best counterargument against all those traditionalists who claim that women will never enter Paradise, we quote the following two verses:

Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has faith, verily, to him will We give a new life, a life that is good and pure and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions. (Al-NaÈl 16:97)

And they shall hear the cry: “Behold! The garden before you! You have been made its inheritors, for your deeds (of righteousness).” (Al-A#r§f 7:43)

Chart 2: Legislation of women’s dress code

Upper Limit (set by the Messenger of Allah)

To cover

Transgression of the limit set by MuÈammad (ß) Dress

The covering of the entire body except the face and hands; the natural disposition of human beings in setting up dress codes makes them move between the upper and lower limits according to their traditions and

customs. Curvature (al-ÈanÊfiyya) results from this movement between the limits of Allah and His Messenger (this is, basically, the essence of verse 59 of Sårat al-AÈr§f).

Lower Limit (set by Allah): the covering of all juyåb private parts (breasts, area of the belly, vagina/vulva, and buttocks).

Transgression of the lower limit means complete nakedness in front of the

[] maÈ§rim (taboo-)relatives (including the ba'l husband); also the exposure of the upper private parts to everyone except those mentioned in 24:31.

Historical time and place (contingency)

No upper limit.

Occupation All other possible occupations are allowed as long as society views them as proper workplaces for women. Societies will set up their own limits for female occupation, but these limits are neither absolute taboos nor absolute permissions (this is the prerogative of

Allah).

The lower limit (set by God) is not to work as a prostitute or striptease dancer.

Transgression of the lower limit implies work in forbidden occupations (e.g., prostitution, striptease) because it would spread indecency, adultery, and fornication.

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Historical time and place (contingency)

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** 6. Political Islam

In order to consider the phenomenon of Political Islam one has to address a number of burning questions: does freedom of religion exist in Islam; how is apostasy treated; what is the correct way ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’; what is the proper understanding of a l-jih§d and ‘fight’; how do we express loyalty and to what extent is it possible to harmonise differing personal, religious, and political identities? Since the emergence of Political Islam, which has proliferated in the many different streams of the

Islamist movement, we have become accustomed to turning to our #ulam§” and asking them how we can make sense of this strange mixture of religion and politics. Initially, we thought that Islamism would be explained as a deviation from the #ulam§”’s sound scholarly tradition, and we expected the scholars to refute the Islamists and their aggressive ambitions to politicise Islam and to Islamise the whole world. How surprised were we when we heard not a word of condemnation from our honourable scholars but instead legal explanations that basically condoned the concoctions of the Islamists. We then realised that the #ulam§“s interpretations of apostasy, a l-jih§d,

and al-qit§l were in fact not too different from the Islamists' positions and that the deviation from the spirit of Allah's Book did not just come with the Islamist movement but that it had occurred much earlier in history, namely during the formative period of Islamic scholarship!

To prove this point we have applied a different approach throughout this chapter. Instead of turning only to the Book in our analysis, we include ÈadÊth reports, tafsÊr commentaries and ta"rikh narratives and compare their ideas with those of Allah's Book. The benefit of this method is that we are now able to demonstrate that politicised Islam is basically an invention of our honourable scholars who aimed at replacing the spiritual message of the Book by a political ideology that pleased the authoritarian rulers of their times and mobilised the masses for unjustified wars and crimes against humanity.

This chapter intends to show how differently the Book talks about those topics that became politicised and militarised by traditional scholarship. We will show that struggle and fight in God's way have nothing to do with martyrdom, missionary activities, and warfare; that Allah does not stipulate any legal punishment for apostasy; that in Islam there does exist a concept of freedom of religion; that loyalty to the religion of Islam does not mean an exclusivist identity eliminating all other attachments and loyalties; and that finally Allah wants us to live a peaceful existence of multiple identities. It will become evident how close the #ulam§"'s and the Islamists' arguments are. Both demand the death penalty for apostasy; both deny freedom of religion; both treat humans as 'slaves of God'; both use the concepts of a l-jih§d and a l-qit§l as aggressive tools to justify militancy and violence; and both abuse the Qur'anic a l-amr bi'l-ma#råf wa-nahy #an a l-munkar as a strategy to intimidate people, to intrude into their private lives, and to function as a kind of combined thought police and vice squad. It is the aim of this chapter, which has been adapted from our fifth book,[324] that the readers will understand why both groups, the Islamists and #ulam§", since their views on these matters fundamentally contradict everything that Allah says in the Book, have lost the right to speak in the name of God.

*** Freedom

We begin with the issue of freedom whose proper conceptualisation is absolutely vital for a critique of Political Islam and for a reconfiguration of the collective consciousness of Arab Muslims. The current intellectual crisis has been caused by a century-long absence of any viable notion of freedom in the public mind. As a result, in our debates about Islam and religion the issue of freedom counts for very little or is entirely absent. This section intends to contribute to a wider awareness of how important the notion of individual and collective freedom is for a reformulation of Islamic ethics and for the draining of the sources of religious fundamentalism.

Philosophically, the notion of freedom allows human beings the right to act and make decisions without external constraints. It refers to a state of being free or at liberty to exercise a conscious choice between affirmation and negation with regards to all aspects of objective reality. Expressed in the terminology of the Book, freedom gives individuals the power to determine their action by moving from al-qadar (objective determinism) to al-qa·§” (indeterminism/free will), facilitated by knowledge of the real world. Whereas al-qadar pertains to God’s laws of the objective reality, al-qa·§” refers to the free will of human beings to choose between confirmation or rejection of God’s laws. The achievement of this form of freedom depends upon the individual’s ability to acquire knowledge about the laws of nature and society, because without knowledge there is no choice, and where there is no choice, there is no freedom.

Freedom expresses a fundamental dialectic between (absolute) necessity/determination that is embodied in universal social and natural laws on the one side, and on the other, the ability of individuals to act independently of both the dictates of natural laws and social constraints. Freedom is born out of human beings’ desire to use objective laws to their own advantage. And this applies even if humans are incapable of doing so, either because of a lack of technology and hence an incapacity to use natural resources or because of sociopolitical factors that suppress individual

sovereignty and selfdetermination. Not everyone who has accumulated knowledge of objective existence will gain freedom from it, but it is undeniable that such knowledge develops at least a feeling for the dialectical tension between objective determination and individual choice.

Choice in this context means the realisation of the dialectics between opposition and unity. It means to realise that in the world of nature, contrast (or opposition) can be resolved by a process of synthesis (or unity). The natural opposition, for example, between a mountain (thesis) and a valley (antithesis), is resolved by the unifying element of ‘landscape’ that combines the two opposites (synthesis). The opposition between cold and hot is resolved by the uniting element of ‘temperature’ (and this applies to many other oppositions: deaf ↔ hearing = ear; blind ↔ seeing = eyes; darkness ↔ brightness = light; slow ↔ fast = speed; above ↔ below = height; in front ↔ behind = position; right ↔ left = direction; north ↔ south = directions/points on the compass, etc.) Freedom consists of the ability of individuals to choose their own direction by moving between objectively existing opposites.

Freedom is thus not just an illusion in people’s minds. It is a fundamental law that awareness of choice increases when more knowledge is acquired about nature, cosmos, and society. The more people learn about the laws of objective reality the better they are equipped to make informed decisions. In order to decide, for example, whether to carry out a complicated surgical operation on the heart or not, one has to have thorough knowledge of the way a heart functions, the physiology of organs, the circulation of the blood, and so forth; the more we expand our knowledge in this area and the more we learn about the organ’s functions and its structure, the more freedom we possess in deciding whether to proceed with the heart operation or not (= a choice between affirmation and rejection). Herein lies the importance of research institutes in the natural sciences and their pivotal role in studying the constitution and function of the human body, coupled with their duty to teach people their research results, thus enabling individuals to make the right decisions.

What does a culture or civilisation look like that does not acknowledge the concept of freedom (as we have defined it) and how can we explain the absence of freedom in Arab-Muslim societies? We begin to answer this

question by stating that freedom has two dimensions: it is personal/individual and collective/social. Personal freedom is manifested in the conscious decision of an individual, for example, to either eat (affirmation) or not to eat (rejection). The limits of such individual freedom are, however, restricted by nature and society. Human beings are by nature also social beings, and society is the collective assembly of individuals, defined by rationality. The individuals of a society are connected with one another by a collective sense of moral responsibility and sociopolitical duty that distinguishes human societies from the world of animals (because although animals assemble in herds and flocks they could never build complex organisations such as nations or states). Whereas the behaviour of animals is predominantly ruled by instinct, in human societies these instincts are curbed by ethical rules and civil contracts, for example, by the so-called maÈram code that prohibits a man to marry his mother, sister, daughter, and paternal and maternal aunts, curbing the biological, indistinctive drive of his sexuality. Other moral and social duties, such as respect for parents, justice to orphans, a balanced distribution of inheritance, and such, which do not exist in the world of animals, are established norms in human societies in order to foster civility and morality. These civilisational achievements have been acquired over a long period of time during human evolution. In this process, human societies have gradually moved away from the world of animals because now civility and morality regulate the social behaviour of society’s citizens and not animalistic urges of instinct and desire.

An awareness of personal freedom is necessary in order to develop an acceptance of the notion of democracy which is the political expression for the existence of individual freedom. Democracy signals the existence of freedom of thought and expression that individuals enjoy in any given society. It also indicates a higher amount of social and moral responsibility among its members, and a healthier atmosphere of care, compassion, and sympathy. If a country wants to achieve such a healthy state of mutual solidarity it has to give democracy an important place in its political life and facilitate it with an authority that is intellectually and morally supported by all members of society.

Such an authority does not exist in the Arab-Muslim world. Democracy is not truly embedded in the political consciousness of Arab Muslims. But we should

not forget that we live in a region full of traditional customs and traditions that existed long before MuÈammad's (ß) mission had arrived, that is, long enough to have had a stronger impact on the people's mind (until today) than the message of the Book. Before MuÈammad (ß) called for a new social consciousness, ancient Arab society promoted an excessive form of individualism, much more so than any other culture that existed at that time. Arab Bedouin culture nourished a very individualistic concept of freedom. This individualism has ruled in our political consciousness ever since, in spite of MuÈammad's (ß) mission to abolish it. It has caused the absence of democracy in our culture because individualist ideologies suppressed the collective-social consciousness which any form of democratic culture would require. This is manifest in the victory of egotism, a consciousness of 'I', among the Arabs, in terms of political decision-making, and in the absence of a consciousness of 'us'. This, in turn, has generated a culture of political despotism which has become deep-rooted in the Arab-Muslim world. Arab culture consists of societies that are 'built on sand', in the sense that they are built upon millions of individual grains of sand totally isolated and unsupportive of one another. This is in stark contrast to European societies which are based on a widely shared sense of social and moral responsibility, solidarity, and national unity. Democracy has become strongly rooted in their societies which, as a result, show a remarkable degree of wealth, education, and economic strength.

MuÈammad's (ß) mission confronted the existing Bedouin society with the challenge of a new type of centralized state unique in the history of Arabia. This state was based on tauÈÊd, representing the first pillar of al-isl§m, complemented by the belief in MuÈammad (ß) as Allah's Messenger, representing the first pillar of al-Êm§n. During MuÈammad's (ß) lifetime, the distinction was fiercely protected, on the one hand, between a l-isl§m, which began with Noah ('a) and which was perfected by MuÈammad (ß), and on the other hand, a l-Êm§n, embodied in MuÈammad's (ß) messengerhood and its instructions for prayer, zak§t, fasting, pilgrimage, shår§ consultation, and Jih§d in God's way (see chapter 1).

Soon after the Prophet's (ß) death this distinction gradually disappeared, which had disastrous effects on the political culture in the Arab-Muslim world.

Through the ill-fated fusion of al-isl§m and a l-Êm§n, the central (universal) concepts of a l-isl§m remained semantically imprisoned within the culture of seventh-century Arabia as they were kept inside the compound of al-Êm§n. The interpretation of the term ‘mosque’ (al-masjid), for example, is today entirely dominated by the semantic constraints of al-Êm§n, as it is defined as the place where people perform ritual prayers five times a day, celebrate festivals, and listen to sermons from state-employed preachers who recite an oath of allegiance to the ruler of the country. In short, everything that is associated with the Êm§nic term al-j§mi#, the communal place of worship for the followers of MuÈammad (ß), the Muslim-Believers, and which is under the control of the state authorities. And yet, according to the Book, a mosque is an isl§mic term and refers in general to a place where God is remembered and where one calls upon all Muslim-Assenters to follow Him, that is, a place of universal a l-isl§m (referring to no building in particular but to ‘places where people assent to God’). Today, we see signs of a very welcome return to the mosque’s original function as the Book defines it. It had never fully disappeared but it was buried under centuries of exclusive usage for a l-Êm§n when mosques were turned into big prayer halls.

Let us reiterate that the Book gave Muhammad’s followers al-Êm§n, a set of rituals and very specific ceremonies of worship (in a j§mi#, not in a mosque). But it also gave humankind al-isl§m that is embodied in the intention to achieve, in a truly universal manner, the highest possible human ideals, a message that began with the tauÈÊd of Noah (“That you should worship God, fear Him and obey me…”, NåÈ 71:3), that was continued by the many calls of ancient prophets and messengers, and that was perfected by the noblest of Allah’s messengers (ß): ‘Say: “I am but a man like yourselves, (but) the inspiration has come to me, that your god is one God…”,’ (A l-Kahf 18:110). A l-isl§m contains the highest forms of morality as exemplified in Noah’s call to respect our parents (“O my Lord! Forgive me, my parents…”, NåÈ 71:28) and in the noble Messenger’s (ß) admonition to pay attention to the smallest details of everyday life (‘O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room: (ample) room will God provide for you…,’ Al-Muj§dila 58:11).

As its core value, al-isl§m promotes freedom of worship. It negates slavish submission to a wrathful God. Human beings are free in their worship; obedience or disobedience occurs from their own will. They are God’s affirmers, not His slaves. This is what #Umar b. a l-Khaãã§b (r) meant when, in the famous narration of #Amr b. al-#$ß, he said, ‘Why did you enslave people when their mothers had born them free?”[325] #Umar said this in order to promote a strong sense of social justice among his companions, and this at a time when the son of a slave was still considered a slave! His words contain one of the most important human rights, namely the right of individual freedom, because it is a gift from God, like His gift of life and His gift of intellect. No human society can live without it. Individual freedom is the foundation of collective democracy; and democracy is the practice of freedom that is backed up by the most influential civic authorities of a society.

In spite of MuÈammad’s (ß) monumental efforts to establish a new political culture in Medina, building upon the few traces of democratic rules that existed in ancient Arabia, most of his achievements were destroyed by the political events that followed his death. Disregarding the Book’s injunction, people started to confuse his prophethood with kingship, in spite of the fact that MuÈammad (ß) did not create his state as a king or statesman, but only as a prophet. After his death, politic al-theological measures of the companions filled the (political, not religious!) vacuum that caused a serious internal crisis, as a result of which economic and tribal interests completely took over the political agenda—and history took its ill-starred course in the seventh century. Fatally, the political measures taken by the companions were eventually regarded as the continuation of MuÈammad’s prophetic office and entered Arab consciousness as a combined form of al-isl§m and al-Êm§n. But they had nothing to do with either of them. Our most important task today is to separate these political (and purely historical) measures again from MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood, which in effect demands a separation of religion from politics.

Since political rule of the companions entered our political consciousness as al-isl§m, religion was confused with politics, and after this the

political and religious establishment has always found it necessary to promote educational and intellectual methods which suppress critical thinking and freedom of speech. We should remind our political and religious elite that the governance of Muhammad’s (ß) companions was purely based on a realpolitik which any state, ancient or modern, would be able to pursue (i.e., regardless of any prophetical message). The Arabs were by no means original in anything they did (politically) in the seventh century. Even their concept of a caliphate was completely improvised and based on the companions’ need to fill the political vacuum left by the Prophet’s (ß) death. The period of the rightly guided caliphs was in fact a transition period between the era of the Prophet (ß) and the era of Arab imperialism (of the Umayyads and Abbasids). Everything that happened in that transition period was based on the politica l-theological requirements of the day—the companions’ decisions were human, fallible, and contingent—with no real connection to the Messenger (ß). With the emergence of the epoch of imperial expansion, which started with the reign of Mu#§wiya b. AbÊ Sufy§n, rulers began to suppress the democratic right of people to participate in politics. As will be shown in this chapter, Jih§d was transformed into conquest and military raids, while during the period of the Prophet (ß) it had meant a struggle in God’s way to secure freedom of choice for all people.

During the formative period of the first three to four centuries, the pillars of religion were reduced to only four (prayer, zak§t, fasting, and pilgrimage). Shår§ consultation and fighting (al-qit§l) in Allah’s way (i.e., freedom of choice) were removed from of al-Êm§n, while ‘good work’ and ethics (moral laws) were removed from al-isl§m. Of course, eliminating these democratic and ethical dimensions from the pillars of religion was entirely in the interest of the individualistic and despotic political culture that dominated the formative period of (historical) Islam. In fact, this removal even bolstered the power and authority of political tyrants and despots. It created a lack of critical thinking because people thought that as long as they pray, fast, and go on pilgrimage, everything will be all right and Islam will prosper!

The lack of critical awareness created a mind-set that easily accepted the #ulam§”s newly devised theologies of predestination according to which God predetermines every single human act. The concept of free will

and freedom of choice was entirely marginalised. In this way the formerly revolutionary (Islamic) concept of social, collective responsibility was replaced by a politic al-dynastical practice by which one tyrant removes another tyrant, leading to an endless series of political assassinations and a political culture of force and violence. Until today it has not been fully registered that a l-jih§d al-qit§lÊ does not mean militant holy war but rather ‘legislation’ for the purpose of establishing God’s word (kalimat All§h) as the highest ideal. The most significant ‘word of God’ is freedom of choice for all people, regardless of whether they are assenters, heretics, believers, or unbelievers. Any other form of a l-qit§l (in particular if it means ‘killing’) does not qualify as a ‘fight in God’s way’, even if it is regarded as legal (e.g., the execution of prisoners in the USA).

In order to change the current situation and mind-set of Arab Muslim-Believers we need to achieve a higher degree of acceptance of democracy in the Arab-Muslim world. We believe that these following four things will achieve this:

1. A spiritual covenant, consisting of worship of God by all people and based on freedom of choice between obedience and disobedience—a worship that will be assessed by Allah on the Day of Judgement. The Book’s eschatological vision of God’s judgement acknowledges the existence of free will and the freedom of choice (between faith and heresy) because freedom is a ‘word of God’ that is given primordially to humankind since God has eternally granted freedom to all of His creation.

2. An ethical covenant (the covenant of al-isl§m) which includes all humankind. The protection of Human Rights is a fundamental part of this ethical covenant.

3. A civil covenant (in the sense of Rousseau’s Civil Contract), implying a pledge of citizenship.[326]

4. A political covenant (or a code of practice for political participation). This consists of a pledge to successfully implement democratic values and procedures in all spheres of political life, from the formation of political parties (so that they cover a wide spectrum of political opinions) to the practice of state censorship (so that it does not stifle political opposition and dissent).

It is a regrettable fact that most people in the Arab-Muslim world have still not learned that freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion can only be achieved if that society is organised by a political system that wholeheartedly embraces democratic principles such as political pluralism, equality before the law, freedom of the press, the right to petition elected officials, civil liberties, judicial independence, separation of powers, and so on. We all have to learn that without these democratic principles a society cannot promote independent, critical thinking, and without intellectual autonomy and critical thinking a society will slide back into the darkness of either tyranny and despotism or complete anarchy. Our plea for more democracy is a plea to prevent the current attitude among Arabs from becoming so entrenched in archaic notions of politics that we can no longer hope for any reform of the political regimes currently in power.

*** Apostasy

The notion that apostasy is forbidden and that apostates will be punished by death has often been used by political authorities and the religious establishment to suppress freedom of religion. For centuries the threat of the death penalty has been hanging over the heads of those who dare to question the fundamental doctrines of Islamic scholarship or who want to explore religions other than the one he or she was born into. This section shows that the death penalty is a fiction of Islamic fiqh concocted in order to discipline MuslimBelievers and to punish political dissent. Our aim is to reinvigorate the very lenient attitude of Allah’s Book towards apostasy and to leave behind the political, military, and ideological baggage of the past that the fiqh concept of apostasy has carried over into modern times.

We start by looking at the Arabic term for apostasy in the Book. Al-ridda is derived from the three-radical verb radda (r-d-d) that occurs, in its different cognates, fifty-nine times in the text. Al-ZamakhsharÊ, in his As§s al-bal§gha, lists over twenty different semantic meanings for its literal/descriptive usage, and over ten more meanings for its nonliteral, figurative usage.[327] In general, the verb radda (r-d-d) touches on a variety of thematic clusters, two of which are of particular interest for our study of apostasy:

1. radda meaning: to ‘return to’, ‘restore’, or ‘turn back to’ regarding something lost:

Thus did We restore him [radadn§hu] to his mother, that her eye might be comforted, that she might not grieve… (Al-Qaßaß 28:13) Quite a number of the people of the book wish they could turn you (people) back [yaruddånakum] to infidelity after you have believed… (Al-Baqara 2:109)

Then when they opened their baggage, they found their stock-in-trade had been returned [raddat] to them… (Yåsuf 12:65)

2. radda meaning: to ‘avert’, ‘prevent’, or ‘hold back’ things:

Nay, it may come to them all of a sudden and confound them: no power will they have then to avert it [raddah§], nor will they (then) get respite. (Al-Anbiy§” 21:40)

…if God inflicts harm on you, no one can remove [r§dd[a]] it but Him … (Yånus 10:107, AH)

…but if He wills harm on a people, no one can ward it off [maradd[a]]… (Al-Ra#d 13:11, AH)

‘O my people! Enter the holy land which God has assigned unto you, and turn not back [wa-la tartaddå] ignominiously, for then will you be overthrown, to your own ruin.’ (Al-M§“ida 5:21)

Two verses in the Book specifically address the issue of apostasy:

They ask you concerning fighting in the prohibited month. Say: “Fighting therein is a grave (offence); but graver is it in the sight of God to prevent access to the path of God, to deny Him, to prevent access to the sacred mosque, and drive out its members.” Tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter. Nor will they cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith if they can. And if any of you turn back from their faith and die in unbelief, their works will bear no fruit in this life and in the Hereafter… (Al-Baqara 2:117)

O you who believe! If any from among you turn back from his faith, soon will God produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him—lowly with the believers, mighty against the rejecters, fighting in the way of God, and never afraid of the reproaches of such as find fault… (Al-M§“ida 5:54)

Based on these two verses, we shall define apostasy as any form of human behaviour that expresses a ‘turn back’ from faith. In contrast, belief is a form of human behaviour that expresses a ‘turn towards’ faith. On the Day of Judgement, Allah issues either reward or punishment for human behaviour in this world, which He will assess by weighing people’s acts ‘towards faith’ against their acts ‘back from faith’. (‘On that day will men proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the deeds that they (had done). * Then shall anyone who has done an atom’s weight of good, see it! * And anyone who has done an atom’s weight of evil, shall see it’, Al-Zalzala 99:6–8). These verses assure us that every human being, by consciously choosing either to turn towards faith or back from it, determines his future destiny and whether he will be rewarded or punished ‘on that day’.

The word apostasy literally means ‘to stand clear’ or ‘to stay away’. The question is away from what? The Book says it means to stay away from ‘religion’ (dÊn), which is defined as a form of universal human behaviour that is characterised by faith in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day and doing Good Work. The lower limit of religion is marked by belief in God, the Last Day, and doing Good Work (= the minimum requirement for embracing al-isl§m), and the upper limit of religion consists of the pillars of al-Êm§n, that is, prayer, alms tax, fasting, and pilgrimage. In between the upper and lower limits people decide to follow God’s orders and abstain from what He has forbidden. While the witness that ‘there is no other god but God’ defines the realm of al-isl§m, the witness that ‘MuÈammad is the Messenger of God’ defines the realm of al-Êm§n. In both realms, people are obliged to implement the highest moral ideals and act correctly in their daily conduct. Given these definitions, apostasy means to stay (altogether) away from religion, that is, a transgression of its lower limit, the first shah§da (‘there is no other god but God’), implying the complete abandonment of a l-isl§m. It does not, however, mean to leave a religious community. If someone parts from a monotheistic Abrahamic community, such as that of MuÈammad’s (ß) followers, of Jews or Christians, or from a nonmonotheistic religious community, it is not defined as apostasy. It would only mean to withdraw from membership to a specific religious community, not from a ‘religion’ as such, because there is only one religion and that is al-isl§m.

If apostasy occurs how are we supposed to respond to it? Should we punish apostasy and punish the apostate? Looking up the Book, we learn that there are two forms of punishment for apostasy: a) impotence of actions in this world and the Next, and b) a withdrawal of God’s love. The first punishment is stated in 2:217: ‘And if any of you turn back from their faith and die in unbelief, their works will bear no fruit in this life and in the Hereafter,’ and the second in 5:54: ‘God will produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him’. These punishments must be treated as the upper limit of penal law, similar to the other so-called Èadd/Èudåd punishments mentioned in the Book (for murder, adultery, theft, false accusation of fornication, etc.). The existence of a punitive boundary implies that there is no absolute and once-and-for all fixed punishment for apostasy, only a description of an upper limit for possible legislation concerning it.

Neither verse suggests punishing the apostate in any specific (corporeal) or personal way. Given the fact that the adoption of faith is a conscious, rational decision taken by intelligent people freely and voluntarily, the absence of any order to act against apostasy should not surprise anyone. After all, apostasy is a personal decision that only needs to be given account for on the Day of Judgement. The Book says that those who believe do so for the good of their own soul, and those who disbelieve do so to their own loss:

Say: ‘O you men! Now truth has reached you from your Lord! Those who receive guidance, do so for the good of their own souls; those who stray, do so to their own loss: and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs.’ (Yånus 10:108)

We showed him the way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (rests on his will). (Al-Ins§n 76:3)

Given that these are clear rules by the Book, it is surprising to read that the commentaries of the exegetes prescribe unbelievably cruel punishment for apostates. In al-R§zÊ’s Maf§tÊÈ al-ghayb we read, for example, that an apostate ‘should be killed and should be fought until he is defeated. He does not deserve any support, help or good words from the believers. His wife should separate from him, and he does not deserve inheritance from the believers.”[328] By which verse of the Book can they justify such cruelty? We also hear unbelievable stories about the punishment of entire tribes for apostasy during the early period of Islam. In a l-ZamakhsharÊ’s TafsÊr al-kashsh§f we read that ‘during the period of the Messenger (ß) there were three groups of people who apostacized: 1—the clan of the Banå Mudlaj (the people of al-Aswad al-#AnasÊ), 2—the clan of the Banå \anÊfah (the people of Musaylima a l-Kadhdh§b), and 3—the clan of the Banå Asad (the people of •ulaiÈah b. Khuwaylid). During the reign of Abå Bakr (r) there were a further seven groups of apostates: 4—the tribe of the Faz§rah (the people of #Uyaynah b. \ ißn), 5—the Ghiãf§n (the people of Qurrat b. Salima al-QushayrÊ), 6—the clan of the Banå SalÊm (the people of al-Fuj§“at b. #Abd Y§lÊl), 7—the clan of the

Banå Yarbå# (the people of M§lik b. Nuwayrah), 8—some from the clan of the Banå TamÊm (the people of Sij§È bint a l-Mundhir), 9—the tribe of the Kindah (the people of al-Ash#ath b. Qays), 10—the tribe of the Bikr b. W§“il of al-BaÈrayn (the people of a l-Khaãm b. Zayd); and during the reign of #Umar b. a l-Khaãã§b there was one more group: 11—the Ghass§n (the people of Jibillat b. al-Ayham)’.[329]

ZamakhsharÊ’s list is very peculiar for three main reasons. First, it omits, for no given reason, the Banå Amiyya (and hence of #Abdall§h b. Sa#d b. AbÊ SaraÈ and Marw§n b. al-\akam who allegedly apostacized), while it includes the people of Ghass§n as apostates who, ironically, had never accepted MuÈammad’s new message and could therefore not apostatise. Second, it suggests collective takfÊr, that is, the accusation of unbelief against a whole group because of the apostasy of individual members of this group—which contradicts the rule of the Book that ‘no laden soul shall bear the burden of another’ (35:18, MF). Third, it lists the names of MuÈammad’s (ß) companions (e.g., al-Ash#ath b. Qays) who should be, by the exegetes’ own logic, beyond the accusation of kufr, given that our noble scholars keep circulating a ÈadÊth that calls the believers to follow (all!) of Mu Èammad’s (ß) companions: ‘My companions are like the stars. Whichever [of them] you follow, you obtain guidance.”[330]

It is obvious to everyone that such accounts of apostasy are in clear breach of the rules of the Book. Later exegetes such as a l-R§zÊ and al-ZamakhsharÊ were victims of a scholarly ethos that, a) regarded the Companions as infallible and b) took their accounts as sacrosanct, resulting in doctrines that mutated ‘historical Islam’ into ‘Islamic history’, a form of revisionism through which purely historical narratives turn into sanctified heritage, and heritage into legislation. By the time a l-R§zÊ and a l-ZamakhsharÊ wrote their commentaries, they could not but accept at face value the texts of the tradition which had acquired an authority that they did not dare to challenge. At the root of this problem lay the earlier fuqah§”s’ search for a passage in the Book with the help of which their masters and employers, that is, the despotic rulers of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties, could legitimise the liquidation of their political opponents as a preventive measure for the protection of religion. When the fuqah§” realised that they could find nothing in

the Book that served this purpose, they moved on to the prophetical Sunna searching for a suitable ÈadÊth. Yet again, they could not find a rule that demands the killing of an apostate. Finally, they searched the sÊra biographies of the Prophet (ß) and made a strike. They referred to reports that claim that MuÈammad (ß) had ordered the killing of the clan of the Banå Mudlaj (because of the apostasy of a l-Aswad a l-#AnasÊ), the killing of the clan of the Banå \anÊfah (because of the apostasy of Musaylima al-Kadhdh§b), and the killing of the clan of the Banå Asad (because of the apostasy of •ulaiÈah b. Khuwaylid). Furthermore, they claimed to have found a ÈadÊth that quotes the Prophet (ß) saying that 'he who changes his religion, kill him', and finally they managed to portray Abå Bakr and #Umar as acting only in the tradition of the Prophet's (ß) harsh words on apostasy when they persecuted and punished clans and tribes which had apostacized.

However, their claims can easily be contradicted in several ways, for example:

1. By a ÈadÊth, narrated by a l-Bukh§rÊ, Abå D§wåd, al-Nis§"Ê, al-TirmidhÊ, Ibn \ay§n, al-\§kim, AÈmad b. \anbal, Abå Ya#l§, al-BayhaqÊ, al-D§quãnÊ, al-•abar§nÊ, Ibn AbÊ Shaybah, reported from 'Ikrima: '#AlÊ had burnt a group of apostates. This [news] reached Ibn #Abb§s who said, "Had it been me, I [also] would have killed them because of the statement of the Messenger (ß): 'he who changes his religion, kill him'. But I would not have burnt them because of the statement of the Messenger (ß): 'Do not punish with Allah's punishment.' This [news] reached #AlÊ who said: "Ibn #Abb§s has spoken the truth". Abå '^s§ al-TirmidhÊ said: 'This ÈadÊth is ßaÈÊÈ Èasan, and based on this is the practice of the people of knowledge regarding apostates. They [only] differ with regard to [the treatment of a] woman if she apostacizes. One group said: she is to be killed; and this is stated by al-Awz§#Ê and AÈmad; and one group said: she is to be imprisoned and not killed; and this is stated by Sufy§n and others from Kåfah."[331]

Also, by a ÈadÊth narrated by Im§m M§lik in his Muwaãã§, reported by Zayd b. Aslam: 'The Prophet (ß) said:

“He who changes his religion, cut off his head.” This is mursal according to all narrators. The meaning of the Prophet’s (ß) statement is, according to our understanding—and Allah is most knowledgeable—that whoever leaves Islam for another [religious community], including the zan§diqah [those who have secretly apostacized] and similar others, if they make it [i.e., their apostasy] [publicly] manifest, they will be killed and will not be asked to repent. As for someone who has left Islam for another [religious community] but did not make it [publicly] manifest, he will be asked to repent. If he repents [he should be left alone], otherwise he will be killed. The Prophet (ß) [however] did not intend [to include], according to our understanding—and Allah is most knowledgeable—someone who leaves Judaism for Christianity or someone [who leaves] Christianity for Judaism or for any other [religious community]…’.[332]

Three things can be deduced from M§lik b. Anas’s account:

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First, the prophetical statement, reported by Zayd b. Aslam, is graded as (only) mursal (‘hurried’)[333] but is then transmitted as authentic as it is included in the Muwaãã§ (note that Im§m Muslim objected to the authenticity of this ÈadÊth). Second, the ÈadÊth transmits a rule about someone who leaves one religious community for another (i.e., from MuÈammad’s community of believers to Christianity, Judaism or others). It does not talk about someone who leaves ‘religion’ per se and turns to unbelief—this in spite of the text’s use of the term dÊn, ‘religion’. It is impossible to interpret dÊn in this ÈadÊth as ‘religion’ in the conventional meaning of ‘religious community’, because then it should also be applied to Jews and Christians who have converted to Islam. Since these converts have also ‘changed their religion’, they should also be killed according to the fuqah§“s’ logic, which is, of course, utter nonsense. Third, and most important of all, the commentary on the ÈadÊth states that before anyone is killed for apostasy, his infidelity must be publicly manifested, implying that a renegade must openly declare that he has (completely) abandoned his religion.

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From the first ÈadÊth, narrated by a l-TirmidhÊ, three things seem immediately obvious: First, the ÈadÊth, as reported by ‘Ikrima from Ibn #Abb§s and #AlÊ, has been classified as ßaÈÊÈ (sound) and Èasan (good), indicating that it has been accurately transmitted (word for word). Second, the rule about someone who apostacizes (‘kill him’) is therefore, at least according to the rules of ÈadÊth sciences, correct. Third, female apostates are exempted from the death penalty—according to the Kufan School—which, however, seems to be at odds with the prophetical statement in which the Prophet (ß) used the pronoun ‘whoever’ (Arab. man) which includes both men and women (‘kill him or her’). It seems very peculiar that whereas the first ÈadÊth (‘he who changes his religion, kill him’) was unanimously classified as sound (ßaÈÊÈ) by all \adÊth scholars, the second ÈadÊth (‘he who changes his religion, cut off his head’) was, even though it is almost identical to the first ÈadÊth, criticised for its weak chain of transmission, and that Im§m Muslim rejected it as entirely spurious.

We believe that both ÈadÊths are unreliable/false for the following five reasons:

a) They contradict the punishment for apostasy as it is given in the Book (2:217; 5:54).

b) They deviate from the spirit of the Book and its treatment of disbelief or—as it puts it—any ‘rejection of God’:

Not for you, (but for God), is the decision: whether He turn in mercy to them, or punish them; for they are indeed wrong-doers. ($l #Imr§n 3:128)

Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your Lord

knows best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance. (Al-NaÈl 16:125)

If it had been your Lord’s will, they would all have believed—all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe! (Yånus 10:99)

Therefore, do give admonition, for you are one to admonish. * You are not one to manage (men’s) affairs. * But if any turn away and reject God, * God will punish him with a mighty punishment. (Al-Gh§shiyya 88:21–24)

c) They contradict other ÈadÊths of the Prophet (ß), for example:

Ibn #Abb§s reports that the Prophet (s) said: ‘I have been ordered to fight people till they say ‘there is no god but Allah’. So, whoever said it has saved his life and wealth from me—and yet, the [final] reckoning is with God.”[334]

Abå Huraira reports that the Prophet (ß) said: ‘None of the Muslims is allowed to [take] another Muslim’s blood, property and honour.”[335]

a) They were not cited by the companions when they themselves had to deal with apostasy. Ibn #Abb§s quoted the ÈadÊth (‘he who changes his religion, kill him’) in the context of his disapproval of #AlÊ’s punishment of the Zaãã, a sect that refused to give up their pagan practices. This happened during #AlÊ’s reign as caliph, more than thirty-five years after the Hijra of the Prophet (ß). Significantly, this ÈadÊth was not cited by Abå Bakr when he was challenged by #Umar for his harsh treatment of apostate tribes twenty years earlier. He only said to #Umar:

‘By God, I will [definitely] fight those who separate between prayer and zak§t. By God, if they refuse [to pay even] a bridle, which they used to pay to the Messenger of God (ß), I will fight them for their

refusal."[336] If the ÈadÊth reported by Ibn #Abb§s had been such an approved and well-known statement of the Prophet (ß), as it is now claimed, Abå Bakr would have surely used it in his reply to #Umar in order to justify his persecution of apostate tribes because it would have had much more authority than his own ijtih§d on this.

b) The ÈadÊth has never been applied and turned into common practice ('kill him'), neither during the time of the Prophet (ß) nor during the reign of the rightly guided caliphs. Those clans, tribes, and individuals, which al-ZamakhsharÊ lists, were not killed because of the fact that they abandoned religion but because of the political consequences their apostasy had for the safety and welfare of MuÈammad's community at the time. This will be explained in detail below.

2. All accounts of the first cases of apostasy start in the year ten of the Hijra, after MuÈammad's farewell pilgrimage. This includes the exegetical works on 2:217 and 5:54, and the treatment of apostasy by scholars of ÈadÊth, sÊra, akhb§r, and tar§jim—all of them seem to date the first cases of apostasy to the last year of MuÈammad's life. Does this mean that before 632 there were no cases of apostasy? Of course there were many! We are told that it was then labelled as 'hypocrisy' (nif§q), not apostasy. #$"isha said: 'the Messenger of Allah (ß) died, and the Arabs apostacized, but it was [still] known as hypocrisy'.[337] Also, al-ZamakhsharÊ's list of apostates ends with a group that apostacized during the reign of #Umar. Does this mean that after his death in 644 there were no more cases of apostasy? Of course there were, but in the fiqh manuals they became categorised under different headings, for example, ßiy§l (assault), naq· al-bay#a (breach of the oath of allegiance), al-khuråj #an al-jum#a (secession from the community), a l-zandaqa (heresy, 'free thought'), raf· a l-ã§#a ålÊ 'l-amr (disobedience and rebellion against those in authority, political dissent), and others.

It is evident from this that apostasy has not been treated systematically by the fuqah§" and that the lists of apostates circulated by the exegetes are both historically and legally worthless. From the discussion so far we can discern four things: first, apostasy needs to be publicly manifest

(openly declared) in order to be punished (Im§m M§lik); second, it has to become ‘known’, that is, officially acknowledged—even though it might be under the name of hypocrisy (ÈadÊth by #$“isha); third, apostasy was treated as a collective misdeed (a l-ZamakhsharÊ); and fourth, apostasy is reported to have occurred in the shape of (armed) separatist movements which forcefully opposed the authority of the central government. We are told by al-•abarÊ:

He then turned to Najr§n and conquered it in ten days. The people of MadhÈaj supported him. Then he killed Shahr b. B§dh§m (one of the Prophet’s [appointed] collectors in Yemen after the death of his father). He defeated the (tribes of) a l-Anb§” and conquered ‘an#§’. Al-Aswad conquered [everything] between ‘ahÊd— a desert of the \a·ramawt—and al-BaÈrayn before ‘Aden. The Yemen supported him, and his authority started to spread like fire. [By the time] a month had passed, he had seven hundred horsemen in addition to the camel corps. His governor in MadhÈaj was #Amr b. Ma#d Yukarrib a l-ZabÊdÊ… (He [a l-#AnasÊ] had written a letter to those who came to fight him. He wrote: “O you who have come to us! Keep away from us and do not take our land because we deserve it more.”)[338]

Then al-•abarÊ tells us about the apostate •ulaiÈah b. Khuwaylid:

At the time when #Abas and Dhuby§n and its surroundings until al-Buz§khah were enclosed (i.e., the springs of the Asad clan, where •ulaiÈah and his helpers stayed after returning from Sumayr§”), •ulaiÈah sent to Judaylah and a l-Ghawth [asking them] to join him. So people from \uyayn hurried towards him. The horsemen of the Tay’ used to run into the horsemen of the Asad and the Faz§rah, but they would not fight. [The horsemen of] the Asad and the Faz§rah would say: “No, by God, we will never give alliance to Abå Faßil [a derogatory name for Abå Bakr meaning father of the calf of a shecamel]”, and [the horsemen of] the Tay’ would say: “We testify that he will fight you until you call him Abå al-FaÈl al-Akbar [father of the biggest bull, i.e., a person of strong, masculine personality]”….[339]

We see that the real issue at stake was the question of loyalty which was measured according to the standards of tribal alliances of ancient Arabia.

Apostasy from religion, as such, did not matter to anyone. This also becomes clear when we read the lines of the following poem:

We obeyed the Messenger of Allah when he was among us, But what is with Abå Bakr, O servants of God?

Will he bequeath that [money of zak§h] to a [young] camel if it survives him?

By God, that would be a disaster.

Why did you not return our support during his time?

And why did you not fear the noise of the young braying camel?[340]

These accounts give us a good picture of the tribal culture of ancient Arabia. At its heart lay the question of allegiance, loyalty, tribal solidarity, and the (male-centred) norms of honour and dignity. Tribal warfare was an expression of power politics that aimed at the regulation of the balance of power in the Arabian Peninsula and at the political and military control over the area. The so-called apostasy wars were not fought because someone ‘left religion’ or apostacized from the faith, otherwise everyone who abandoned Islam in those years would have been killed, which was clearly not the case. Reading a l-•abarÊ’s history, one comes across names of people[341] who, because of their alliance to tribes that fought the troops of Abå Bakr’s central government, should also have been killed—at least according to the alleged words of the Prophet (ß), i.e. ‘he who changes his religion, kill him’ and ‘he who changes his religion, cut off his head”—but the fact that they were left alone not only increases our doubts as to the authenticity of these ÈadÊths but also as to the fuqah§“s’ claims to have correctly read these events.

In his a l-Iß§ba fÊ tamyÊz a l-ßaÈ§ba, a l-#Asqal§nÊ writes for example about al-Ash#ath b. Qays:

Al-Ash#ath b. Qays b. Ma#d Yukarrib al-KindÊ[h], called by the agnomen Abå MuÈammad, had visited the Prophet (ß) with seventy camel corps from Kind[ah]. He was one of the kings of Kind[ah] and was chief of the \a·ramawt. Al-Bukh§rÊ and Muslim reported about him in their ‘aÈÊÈ [ÈadÊth collections]. He had apostacized together with others from Kind[ah] and was arrested. When he was brought to Abå Bakr, Abå Bakr freed him and married his sister to him. So, he [al-Ash#ath] drew his sword, entered the camel market and hamstrung every male and female camel [he came across]. The people shouted: “Al-Ash#ath has rejected [i.e., apostacized]!”. After he had finished, he threw his sword away and said: “I, by God, did not reject [i.e., apostatise], but this man [i.e., Abå Bakr] has married his sister to me. If we were in our land, the feast would be different than this. O people of Madina! Eat! … and you camel owners, take their bodies!” He visited a l-Yarmåk and a l-Q§disiyyah, and [also] ‘iffÊn, together with #AlÊ. He died in the year 42 [Hijra] after #AlÊ was assassinated.”[342]

And al-#Asqal§nÊ tells us about #Uyayna b. \ißn:

Uyaynah b. \ißn b. \uzayfah a l-Faz§rÊ, called Abå M§lik, was among the converts [to the new religion] [a l-mu”allafat a l-qulåb]. He was one of the Prophet’s companions but his narration [of ÈadÊth] was not valid. He became a Muslim before the seizure [of Mecca] and took part in the seizure of Mecca, [the battles of] \unayn and a l-•§“if. He was among those who apostacized during the reign of Abå Bakr. He inclined towards •ulayÈah and gave allegiance to him. In him was the harshness of the desert [Bedouins]. Ibr§hÊm al-Nakha#Ê said: “#Uyaynah b. \ißn came to the Prophet (ß), while #$“isha was with him, and said: ‘Who is this woman sitting next to you?’ He [the Prophet] replied: ‘#$“isha’. He said: ‘Do I not come to you with a better [woman] than her?’ he meant his [own] woman, Umm al-BanÊn.” I read in al-Sh§fi#Ê’s Kit§b al-umm that #Umar b. a l-Khaãã§b killed #Uyayna b. \ißn due to [his] apostasy, but I did not find anyone else who mentioned that. Instead, #Uyaynah lived until #Uthm§n’s caliphate…[343]

As for a l-Zaburq§n b. Badr, we hear nothing about his apostasy in al-#Asqal§nÊ, but we know that he lived until the reign of al-Mu#§wiya because of the following account by al-J§Èií: #Al-Zaburq§n went to Ziy§d b. AbÊhi—whose eyesight had weakened—and greeted [him] lightly. Ziy§d made him come closer and sit next to him. He said: “O Abå #Abb§s! The people are laughing about your harshness.” He said: “Even if they laugh, by God, there is no man among them whose wishes I have not fathered due to [my] charm or [my] wisdom.”[344]

Is it possible that Abå Bakr and the other caliphs would have been allowed to kill apostates in the way it is reported—assuming for a moment that the accounts are accurate—purely because these people abandoned a specific belief? Or put differently, how likely is it that their harsh (persecution and decapitation) and often inconsistent (marriage to relatives, release from prison) treatment of apostates could have been possible—and this includes the reported cruelty by Kh§lid b. a l-WalÊd against M§lik b. Nuwaira and his people[345]—if such shameful and disgraceful acts would today be enough to send its perpetrators to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague? Just to make it clear, we are not attempting to set up a court and charge people for their crimes during this part of Islam’s history—similar to the inquisitional style of caliphs such as #Abd al-Malik b. Marw§n or Abå Ja#far a l-Manßår[346]—since

the Book reminds us that they were ‘a nation which passed away. I shall reap what it has earned, and you shall reap what you have earned. You shall not be questioned about what they were doing’ (Al-Baqara 2:141, MF).

Indeed, we would not be so critical of our early history if that spurious concept of (punishment for) apostasy, which provided the perfect legal pretext for the elimination of political opponents during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, did not today play such a dominant role in the tactics of Islamist groups and their terror against the political establishment. Ironically, by allowing the killing of political rulers on the basis of (alleged) apostasy, Aiman al-£aw§hirÊ and other ideologues are using precisely the same

weapon of terror as the ancient political regimes did in order to intimidate their opponents. Because of the confusion between religion (disbelief) and politics (secession) from the time of the early ‘wars of apostasy’, apostasy has attained a political dimension and has thus been fixed in the Arab-Muslim mind ever since. And since the fuqah§” were so involved in power politics during that period, apostasy, with these political overtones, has come to be formulated in Islamic law with exactly that fusion of religion with politics, rendering what happened during the appointment of Abå Bakr as MuÈammad’s (ß) successor (eliminating the influence of the al-Anß§r) as perfectly legal.[347] Once these apostasy wars, and in particular Abå Bakr’s military expedition in the years 10–11 A.H., were defined as ‘fulfilling God’s words’, they became the legal norm of how to deal with (any) apostate (individual or group), so that the possibility of being persecuted as an apostate hung over the political opposition like a sword of Damocles and is today, because the Islamists have turned this threat against the rulers themselves, a common feature of our current political life.

Many factors contributed to this amalgamation of apostasy with politics; we name only six:

a) The tendency to idolise people who are mentioned in the authoritative texts of nascent Islam, to the extent that we are supposed to emulate their every action and act in our times as they did thousands of years ago. As a result of this we are faced with comical situations, such as people insisting on paying their alms during Ramadan in the form of wheat, exactly as their forefathers did, because they do not accept money or any other modern substitute for it. Such excessive veneration of people is close to personality cult, which causes people to invent exaggerated accounts of their idols’ lives (similar to what we have seen with the mystics and their almost fanatical veneration of dubious ‘åfÊ sheikhs).

b) The completely uncritical attitude towards the early history of Islam, which makes it impossible to assess this period objectively according to the (political, economic, and military) parameters of its time. Instead, the period of the forefathers is seen as sacrosanct and the writings of the founders of the legal schools are regarded as infallible and untouchable, with the terrible consequence that its historic values (e.g., tribalism, paternalism, male

chauvinism, and martialism) have now been transported into the modern age and are with us all the time (e.g., in the horrendous repression of women and their rights in marriage, education, and work), and are, in spite of their contingent origins, praised as absolute standards that are universally valid for all times.

c) The enormous influence of cultural traditions whose power is seen as overriding the authority of Allah’s Book. As we have seen in chapter 5, this is particular harmful in the sphere of family law where the Book’s insistence on bequests is ignored in favour of rigid inheritance laws that are applied in such a way that they maximise the male shares and minimise the female shares to the detriment of all women in the family. This against the clear rule of Allah that ‘from what is left by parents and those nearest related there is a share for men and a share for women, whether the property be small or large—a determinate share’ (Al-Nis§” 4:7).

d) The power of schoolism in legal thought, that is, the tradition to force people to attach themselves to a specific school of law and get their legal guidance exclusively from this school, even if it clearly contradicts the guidelines from Allah’s Book. We once more quote the position of the \anafÊ school: ‘if the views of the Sheikhs [of our school] contradict the views of the Qur’an, we stick to what the Sheikhs said’. Such an attitude of schoolism is also prevalent in the current obsession to call one another disbelievers, simply because of the conviction that what is not congruent with our own position must, by definition, be kufr, since we see ourselves as holding a monopoly on the truth.

e) The absence of freedom of speech in our societies and the power of public censorship in cases of nonconformity, both in the present and the past. The fact that news about the arrest of political opponents, as well as their torture and imprisonment, is met by the majority of the population with silence and indifference, while the police would not dare to ask a woman to remove her veil because of the massive public outcry it would cause, is an expression of this culture of conformity in which people cannot say what they think and cannot wear what they want.

f) The dominance of an ethos of death that attaches little value to life and belittles the attempts by modern medical research to prolong life. Doctors in our societies carelessly treat their patients like guinea pigs in laboratory experiments and do not really fight against unnecessary or accidental loss of life. Instead, if patients die we are at once told that it was God’s will, that it was predetermined that the person would die at exactly that moment. Day by day and week by week we hear the preachers from their pulpits scolding us because we love life and fear death, in spite of the fact that love of life and fear of death is a natural disposition that Allah has instilled in all of His creation. But this continuing praise of death has turned many young men into monsters who care little about life and do not think twice about blowing themselves up, killing children, women, and old people—the higher the number of casualties, the greater is their bravery. This praise of death is indeed a sick ideology.

Let us return to the problem of how to correctly define apostasy, and let us explore the following questions: What is apostasy? Who can be called an apostate? Why does the Book mention the futility of an apostate’s work in this life and the next without stipulating an actual legal punishment for the act of apostasy? Does this imply that God left it to the ruler, the judges, and the prevailing legal system to determine the punishment for apostasy? Is the Prophet’s (ß) command to kill an apostate in harmony with the divine intention as stated by the Book? Does apostasy mean that someone leaves a community for good? Can apostasy mean a revolt against a political ruler, a government, or a state? Is political apostasy the same as religious apostasy? And, finally, can any punishment for apostasy be justified in the light of our demand for freedom of religion and freedom of speech?

It is vital to answer these questions in order to sort out the mess that the traditional fuqah§” have left. It is more than evident that they were unable to conceptually separate political dissent from religious apostasy, as they constantly muddied the water with their religious interpretations and legal classifications of purely political events in the history of Islam. They were never fully able to see the difference between an oath of allegiance to a political ruler or (political) system and the religious witnessing of Allah, the Last Day, and the unity of God. In their work we see how they failed to assess the killing of Sa#Êd b. Jubayr by a l-\ajj§j as a

politically motivated murder (because al-\ajj§j regarded Ibn Jubayr's disloyalty as a political affront that must be punished by death),[348] because they interpreted it as the ruler's legitimate punishment for heresy (and, thus, apostasy). But political apostasy/separatism, which may occur independently from either al-isl§m or al-Êman, should not be confused with religious apostasy, even though it has become fixed as such in the minds of most Arab-Muslims.

Apostasy from al-isl§m

We defined the lower and nonnegotiable limit of al-isl§m as a commitment to believe in God, the Last Day, and the good deeds, implementing the moral ideals of ethical perfection that were first laid out by Noah and accomplished by MuÈammad (ß). Al-isl§m is the (only) religion of humans' natural disposition that Allah has authorised for humankind. It is the religion that does not allow the increase in the number of absolute taboos, but allows new permissions and prohibitions according to what human societies, parliaments, and civil law courts see fit to introduce. It is the religion that most people in this world adhere to at the moment. And yet, apostasy from al-isl§m occurs, namely on three levels:

A. The level of religious doctrine:

Apostasy here means to cut oneself off from Allah by disbelieving in His existence and the Day of Judgement. Apostasy here means heresy, and this includes withdrawing from a monotheistic belief ('there is no god but God') and adopting a polytheistic belief—here, the second shah§da ('MuÈammad is God's messenger') does not matter at all. As for religious doctrines, a person enjoys absolute freedom. He can freely decide between al-isl§m and heresy. No one should ever force a person to adopt a specific belief (or disbelief), because the religious belief of a person does not touch, as such, the social collective, and everyone should be free to voice his beliefs in public. B. The level of social and ethical practice:

Apostasy here means to renounce the Good Work and ignore the prescriptions of morality. To transgress the basics of moral law would mean to live a life of flagrant immorality: disrespect of parents, open vandalism, truancy, indecencies, and public calls for more corruption, bribery, exploitation, slander, and defamation. If such a person apostatises from morality, it is the duty of everyone—regardless of their religious affiliation—to restrain him. The fight against immorality all over the world is the realm where Muslim-Believers should work hand in hand with the rest of humankind. Unlike the first level of religious doctrine, it is clear that apostasy from morality—and this includes from human rights—cannot be tolerated since al-isl§m organises the social relations between the different sections of a society and beyond. Put differently, an apostasy from al-isl§m, which would have disastrous social and moral consequences, must be categorically prohibited by the legislator. C. Hence, the level of legislation:

Apostasy occurs when legislation transgresses the upper and lower limits set by God in the Book. Islamic legislation means a civil, human legal system that operates within the limits of Allah. The more civilised a society becomes the closer its laws approach a true legislation of limits, which represent the ÈanÊfiyya character of al-isl§m. At the moment this is best realised in those states that possess a constitution and a parliamentary system because the more democratic a society is the more ÈanÊfic it is with respect to its forms of legislation.

Apostasy from al-Êm§n

We have learned that al-Êm§n combines the first shah§da (‘there is no god but God’) with the second shah§da (‘MuÈammad is God’s messenger’). We identified the people who followed Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jacob, and Jesus as Muslim-Assenters, and the followers of MuÈammad (ß) as Muslim-Believers. Some chapters of the Book are entirely dedicated to a discussion of issues relating to the MuslimBelievers, such as Sårat MuÈammad (47) and Sårat al-Anf§l (8). It follows from here that Judaism and Christianity are, like the umma of Muslim-Believers, not religions but spiritual

communities, as we are told by the Book (‘Never will the Jews or the Christians be satisfied with you unless you follow their [socioreligious community] [millatahum][349]...,’ A l-Baqara 2:120). A Muslim-Believer who leaves al-Êm§n, that is, apostacizes from following MuÈammad (ß) in order to become a Christian or Jew, only moves—according to our understanding—from one monotheistic community to another. He simply ceases to be a Muslim-Believer, but since he still believes in tauÈÊd— God’s unity—he is still a Muslim-Assenter. The Book states:

Say: ‘O people of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but God; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than God.’ If then they turn back, say: ‘Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to God’s will)’. ($l #Imr§n 3:64)

The verse says ‘O people of the Book!’ because Jews and Christians were addressed like this during the time of the Prophet (ß)! It also contains the ‘common terms’ shared by them and MuÈammad’s followers: worship none but God, no shirk and no idolatry, that is, they all rejected rubåbiyya among themselves. It ends with the admission that if they are not happy about this they ‘at least’ should bear witness that he (i.e., MuÈammad) is a prophet and that they (i.e., his followers) are (still) Muslim-Assenters. But why did MuÈammad (ß) want Jews and Christians to testify that he and his followers are Muslim-Assenters? Because he believed that Jews and Christians were themselves Muslims and he saw himself as one of them, even though later on he wanted them to join a l-Êm§n, while he allowed them to keep their faith in Allah’s tauÈÊd.

If we look at MuÈammad’s mission from a political angle, it is evident that in addition to his role as a messenger who spread the revelation of his Lord, he was also a prophet who—with the support of his followers—was able to erect a centralized state on the Arabian Peninsula with Yathrib (later Medina) as its capital. His new state included people and tribes from all religious affiliations, including Christians and Jews. Compared to anything that existed before, this was a qualitative jump in the way states were previously formed and administrated. It was only natural that the names of the state’s new political

positions reflected the historic situation, for example, the title ‘Leader of the Muslim-Believers’ (amÊr al-mu”minÊn), or ‘Treasury of the Muslim-Assenters’ (bayt m§l al-muslimÊn). While the Emir (Arabic: amÊr) was the head of state because he led the group of believers who founded the state (hence amÊr al-mu”minÊn), the public treasury administrated the money and property of all citizens regardless of their religious affiliation (hence: bayt m§l al-muslimÊn). The historical sources tell us that in his capacity as a caliph, #AlÊ (r) did not hesitate to give money to Jews and Christians from his treasury (bayt m§l) and that after #AlÊ’s death, Abå Dharr a l-Ghif§rÊ opposed the proposal of the new caliph Mu#§wiya to change the name from ‘treasury of all Muslims’ to ‘treasury of God’ (bayt m§l All§h).[350] This reflected the widespread opinion that even though the amÊr al-mu”minÊn, as head of state, is in possession of all legislative and executive powers administered mostly by his fellow Muslim-Believers (hence his title as their leader), the public treasury must not be restricted solely to the concerns of Muslim-Believers but should also consider the financial needs of Jews and Christians. Many modern states show a similar structure of public administration. The prime minister of Great Britain, for example, has been appointed to lead a government because he represents all the political goals and aspirations of the political party that won the last election (mostly either Labour or Conservatives), whereas the chancellor of the exchequer is expected to administer a budget whose money is spent on all sections of the population regardless of their political affiliations.

Before the introduction of a unified national tax system, Jews and Christians were required to pay the so-called jizya, a head tax on free nonbelievers who lived under the rule of a Muslim-Believer. This was seen as an equivalent to the tax (zak§h, ßadaq§t) which the Muslim-Believers had to pay. The money the public treasury received in this way was spent in roughly equal terms in return on both Muslim-Believers and Muslim-Assenters. Today, modern tax law requires the state to collect taxes from all citizens equally, and yet it allows both Muslim-Believers and Muslim-Assenters alike to pay voluntary ßadaq§t to religious and charity organisations. This is money they can spend on the specific needs of their respective religious communities (e.g., for prayer rooms, schools, nurseries, interfaith centres, etc.). The modern tax system is hence more dynamic and flexible and has made the old jizya head tax

entirely redundant. The call for a reintroduction of the jizya tax ignores the fact the current economic and financial context of our tax system has changed to such a degree that any specific state tax collected from citizens according to their religion would make no sense whatsoever. It ignores the fact that in fiscal reality the religious ßadaq§t are no longer part of the monthly/annual state income and that non-MuslimBelievers already contribute to state revenues in the form of national income tax, VAT, and other taxes on consumer goods (such as petrol and tobacco, etc.). To call for a return of the old jizya tax in the modern world is certainly as anachronistic as it is ignorant of the possibility that ancient terms can acquire new meanings when they have lost their old ones. What jizya signifies today is adequately expressed in the general tax laws that modern nation-states apply. A return to the old system would create nothing but bloodshed and national disintegration.

Seen from a modern perspective, the followers of MuÈammad (ß) operated on the level of state and government like a political party that was led by the Prophet (ß). Institutionally and ideologically, this represented a dramatic change to the political scene on the Arabian Peninsula, which used to be organised around the principles and values of clan culture and tribal solidarity. Because of their early conversion to the new faith, the groups of the Muh§jirÊn and Anß§r formed a kind of political avant-garde that also enjoyed more privileges than others in terms of political posts and shares of war booty. It certainly marked a progression to a higher form of political organisation, which, regrettably, was abolished soon after the Prophet (ß) died.

The fact that MuÈammad (ß) succeeded in establishing a centralized state led, however, to the unfortunate impression that his prophetical mission essentially included his role as a statesman, and that he was both prophet and king in one person. And yet, this is both theologically and historically inaccurate, as shown by MuÈammad Sa#Êd al-#Ashm§wÊ's profound analysis in his book al-Isl§m al-siy§sÊ.[351] In the political Arab-Muslim mind we come across two concepts: first, whoever wants to found a state and become its head, thereby emulating the model of MuÈammad (ß), needs to be first a prophet, (i.e., needs to present his political aspirations in religious terms); second, whoever wants to seize leadership of the Muslim-Believers must wait until the founders of the state

disappear. Both things have indeed occurred in our history. The prophetical claims of a l-Aswad al-#AnasÊ, Musaylimah, and •ulaiÈah b. Khuwaylid are examples of the first concept, because their religious rhetoric was in fact a tactical (political) tool to undermine the unity of the community and the authority of the state. Religion was propagated in order to pursue political 'apostasy' and to disobey the government. Neither the Prophet (ß) nor, after his death, Abå Bakr (r) could afford to tolerate a political schism, hence their orders to fight and kill the secessionist apostates. The occurrence of political opportunism after the seizure of Mecca in 630 is a good example of the second concept. After the Meccan opposition to MuÈammad (ß), led by Abå Sufy§n and #Amr b. al-#$ß, was defeated (in 630 when the Prophet seized Mecca), the Prophet's former enemies quickly closed ranks with the MuslimBelievers and, in order to pursue their old goals in the disguise of the new faith, joined the party of the new religion. However, they had to wait until the first generation (i.e., the first rightly guided caliphs) which had established the state had gone, before Mu#§wiya could restore the power and privileges of the old Meccan aristocracy (in 661), which had lost its influence in politics for some thirty years.

Let us repeat that a society cannot afford to tolerate apostasy (in the sense of 'turning away') from morality and civility and must introduce legislation that makes such apostasy punishable. If the apostasy is, however, from a religious creed, society must not interfere because it should tolerate freedom of choice on such personal matters. It should never be punished by death. Only in the case of political apostasy, whose aim is to undermine the unity of the nation and its territories as well as the authority of the state and its institutions, is the use of force and the shedding of blood justified. The secessionist wars in the history of the United States are a good example of what we mean by political apostasy. When the states of the South (the separatists), declared their independence in 1860 (under the leadership of Jefferson Davis and General Robert E. Lee) and thus threatened to undermine the territorial integrity of the USA, their secessionism was fought by the Union army under Abraham Lincoln in a long and bloody civil war that cost millions of lives; by the end of the conflict national unity was restored. If any religious community in the United States today, for example the Christian Right, threatened to withdraw from mainstream society in order to establish their own autonomous state which does not accept the authority of (secular) state law, the federal government in Washington would immediately respond to such a threat by forcefully suppressing any practical step in that direction.

The same would be true if some Islamist groups decided to create an autonomous region near Aleppo in an attempt to establish a separatist state inside Syria, independent of any political decision taken in Damascus. The Syrian authorities could respond to such a threat only by force. The separation of Syria from Egypt in 1961 after three years of a political union (1958–1961, in the form of the United Arab Republic), was in fact a form of political apostasy. We know that President Nasser was given all the powers (including military force) to stop Syria's secession but, in the end, shied away from using force and consequently the separation took place. Separatism can never be accepted, except when a nation reclaims territory that has been occupied by a foreign power (Tibet, Palestine) or has been denied territorial sovereignty (Kurdistan, Darfur) and on condition that its claim to an independent state are acknowledged by the United Nations and supported by the majority of countries worldwide.

Given this political history, it is peculiar to see a revival of #Umar's very narrowly defined view on apostates. He had labelled as apostates those renegade tribes who denied the Medinan central government the right to collect the official zak§h tax from them. Those who claim similar things today forget that in spite of their religious pretexts these tribes were motivated by their ultimate goal of becoming financially, and eventually politically, independent from central government. They refused to pay zak§h not because they had doctrinal quarrels with an alms tax but rather because they wanted to spend the money on their own region. And yet, it was clear that the tribes' refusal would have resulted in their secession from the central state, something which #Umar countered through his campaigns against 'apostasy' (the term only reflecting the tribes' religious rhetoric). But whatever the political motivations might have been, #Umar's definition of apostasy has lost its relevance today because zak§h is no longer collected by the state but rather voluntarily paid in order to support either charities and welfare organisations or the poorer relatives of one's own family.

As for religious apostasy, it is shocking to notice a new kind of fanaticism amongst Muslim-Believers when they accuse one another of apostasy; sometimes only on the ground that someone has missed a prayer or has said something provocative or contradicting mainstream views. People get called apostates only because they dare to challenge the opinion of our noble

scholars who deem themselves to be a kind of thought police who control and censor everything people say and do. Such zealousness has nothing to do with either al-isl§m or al-Êm§n. In our eyes, it is an unfortunate return to the medieval inquisition where lists of heretics and apostates were circulated during the reigns of Abå Ja#far al-Manßår and a l-Ma”mån b. a l-RashÊd. Under the pretext that they must uphold religious orthodoxy for the will of God they had their (political) opponents’ heads cut off because these people dared to differ on sensitive issues. Under the same pretext today hundreds of innocent elderly people, women, and children are killed simply because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time when a suicide bomber strikes in the name of religious orthodoxy. And still, no one seems to dare a complete revision of the old fiqh concept of apostasy that has imported the ancient values of inquisitionist fanaticism into our current times.

Why can we not have, like in France or Canada, the freedom to openly express our religious beliefs (or disbeliefs) without someone being allowed to harm them? Provided that the ethical and social behaviour of apostates does not undermine public order and the general norms of moral decency, why can people not choose the religious creed they want (in particular if they are born into a community they did not choose themselves)? As long as their loyalty to their home nation cannot be questioned, what harm would there be in allowing a Muslim-Believer to leave MuÈammad’s (ß) community and join the followers of Jesus (r)? Given that the Book prohibits ‘compulsion in religion’ (2:256), can we force people to stay in a religious community they have not chosen? We are told that ‘if it had been your Lord’s will, they would all have believed—all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!’ (Yånus 10:99). People should be permitted to differ in their opinions and practices, and as long as they do not undermine the general consensus on human rights and the highest moral ideals that the Book describes, they should be allowed to apostacize. It is vital that they should enjoy the same rights as those who apostacized during the time of the Prophet (ß): they were left entirely unharmed because MuÈammad (ß) strictly adhered to the Book’s prescription of religious tolerance.

After the death of the Prophet (ß), his followers became divided into several different political blocs that later turned into different religious sects. This

early split in MuÈammad’s (ß) community had initially nothing to do with either the pillars of a l-isl§m or a l-Êm§n, but it eventually led to a scholarly revisionism by which the pillars of al-Êm§n were given preference over the pillars of al-isl§m.

Having learned the lesson from the political schism of Islam’s early history, we propose to establish a new basis on which we can strengthen the human, universal character of a l-isl§m which overrides all narrow interests of party politics. The truth of al-isl§m does not lie in being capitalist or socialist or in promoting the manifestos of a Labour Party or a Conservative Party, before anything else, a l-isl§m promotes humanity. It does not favour one social class over another and it does not put the views of medieval fuqah§”, #ulam§”, and the Companions over anyone else. It does not accept the exclusivist notion of an Arab morality, nor does it believe in the existence of a non-Arab morality. There is only one morality, which is the morality of humanity. What appears as Arab or non-Arab are rather customs and traditions that can be overcome, albeit with difficulty and only over a long period of time.

Let us finally come to the frequently discussed clash between tradition and modernity that modernist discourse proposes. For us, it is a clash of two different epistemologies; one based on modern methods of historicism, historica l-critical research, and dialectical, philosophical thinking, and one that is based on medieval terminologies which have come to us as empty signifiers that have lost their meaning. The semantic content of these terms that once fitted nicely into the politica l-historical context in which they were created has become entirely anachronistic in our different, modern context. Unlike modern epistemologies that have their origin in the study of reality, these traditional epistemologies avoid reality by remaining in a past that disappeared a long time ago. This is the terminology of fiqh, kal§m, tafsÊr, and ÈadÊth.

*** “Prescribe What Is Right and Proscribe What Is Wrong”

In this section we propose to correct the fuqah§“s’ interpretation of the Book’s injunction ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’ (al-amr bi’l-ma#råf wa’l-nahy #an al-munkar). In the hands of our honourable jurists, this divine injunction has been turned into a slogan for the justification of dictatorial rule and autocratic government. We totally disagree with this abuse of the divine word, and we begin our own investigation with the study of the four binary pairs of terms whose complex meanings have been so carelessly treated by the fuqah§”:

1. Èal§l ↔ Èar§m 2. amr ↔ nahy

3. sam§È ↔ man#

4. Èasan ↔ qabÊÈ

Deplorably, the fuqah§” have not paid much attention to how these pairs of terms differ from each other, with the disastrous result that Èal§l is treated as synonymous to Èasan (or mustaÈsan), and sam§È (or masmåÈ) as ‘what ought to be prescribed’ (al-ma”mår bihi). Similarly, Èar§m is seen as just another word for qabÊÈ (or mustaqbiÈ) and man# (or mamnå#), meaning ‘what ought to be proscribed’ (al-munhÊ #anhu). This careless conflation of terms made it only logical —by the power of synonymity—to link ‘what ought to be prescribed’ with things that are Èal§l, sam§È, and Èasan; and ‘what ought to be proscribed’ with things that are Èar§m, man#, and qabÊÈ.[352]

Such indiscriminate use of terms, as we will show, is detrimental to a correct understanding of Allah’s injunction ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’. We will discuss each term of this injunction

separately and then finally propose a different understanding of it. Let us first quote the verses that contain the injunction:

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong[353]: They are the ones to attain felicity. ($l #Imr§n 3:104)

You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in God… ($l #Imr§n 3:110) They believe in God and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong; and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works: they are in the ranks of the righteous. ($l #Imr§n 3:114)

The hypocrites, men and women, (have an understanding) with each other: they enjoin evil, and forbid what is just, and are close with their hands. (Al-Tawba 9:67)

The believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil; they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey God and His apostle. (Al-Tawba

9:71)

(They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong: with God rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs. (Al-\ajj 22:41)

“O my son! Establish regular prayer, enjoin what is just, and forbid what is wrong; and bear with patient constancy whatever betide you; for this is firmness (of purpose) in (the conduct of) affairs. (Luqm§n 31:17) … for he commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits

them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them… (Al-A#r§f 7:157)

The above verses quote the two terms ‘what is right’ and ‘what is wrong’ always in conjunction with each other. Other verses mention them separately, as in the following two examples:

For divorced women maintenance (should be provided) on a reasonable (scale) [bi’l-ma#råf]. This is a duty on the righteous. (Al-Baqara 2:241) …for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds [al-munkar]; and remembrance of God is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt. And God knows the (deeds) that you do. (Al-#Ankabåt 29:45)

Right and wrong is one of those pairs of binary opposition that the Book uses repeatedly in order to highlight clear and unambiguous contrast: e.g., day and night, heaven and earth, blind and seeing, even and odd, far and near, this world and the Next, Paradise and what is right and forbid indecency’; AhA: ‘enjoin what is esteemed and forbid what is odius’; AH: ‘urges what is right, and forbids what is wrong’. The translators’ use of the pair ‘to enjoin”—‘to prohibit’ does not reflect MS’s intention to separate the activities of al-amr and al-nahy from the sphere of (state) legislation. For him al-amr and al-nahy ought to be seen on the same level as the prescriptions of medicines or the proscriptions (i.e., health advice) of a medical doctor, who cannot enforce what he or she has prescribed and who is not permitted to punish someone who has failed to follow his proscriptions. AH’s rendering as ‘urges what is right’ is perhaps closest to MS’s interpretation.

Hell, knowledge and ignorance, first and last, mortal and immortal, reward and punishment, and so on.

‘To Prescribe’ (al-amr)

The Arabic noun a l-amr is derived from the regular verb amara which is polysemous. First, it expresses an order to act. The one who issues the order usually enjoys a higher status than the one to whom the order is directed, as in: ‘They said: “O Shu”aib! Does your prayer command you (ta”umuruk) that we leave off the worship which our fathers practised”…’ (Håd 11:87), or ‘God does command you (ya”umurukum) to render back your trusts to those to whom they are due; and when you judge between man and man, that you judge with justice…’ (Al-Nis§” 4:58). An amÊr, or military commander, is the one who issues his orders to the officers and soldiers who serve under him. A second meaning for a l-amr is matter, business, or affair, as in: ‘It is no business (al-amr) of yours whether Allah…’ ($l #Imr§n 3:128, MF), or ‘…so pass over (their faults), and ask for (God’s) forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs (al-amr)…’ ($l #Imr§n 3:159). Al-immar is a pejorative term because it refers to a foolish or wicked act, for example: ‘Said Moses: “Have you scuttled it in order to drown those in it? Truly a strange thing (immar[an]) have you done!”’ (A l-Kahf 18:71). A l-am§ra means sign or token, and a l-im§ra is the place (that is, an Emirate) where the Emir (Ar. al-amÊr) rules over his subjects.

Al-amr, in its many derivatives, occurs 248 times in the Book. In its meaning as ‘order’ it can be both prescriptive (‘do it!’) and proscriptive (‘do not do it’), thus containing internally a binary opposition (prescription ↔ proscription) as well as an external opposition, if understood prescriptively (‘do it’): an opposition to the proscriptive term al-nahy (‘do not do it!’). Such binary oppositions structure human conscious behaviour. Both terms (prescription and proscription), as a pair of contrast, are dialectically linked to another pair of opposition, that is, obedience and disobedience, because obedience and disobedience need prescription and proscription in order to be meaningful, and need choice and deliberation in order to be legally and theologically relevant. It is obvious that if someone receives an order but does not want to fulfil it, his disobedience will vitiate the order. If, however, he fulfils the order, he validates the order and expresses his obedience to the one who gives it. Adam and his wife were given the choice to either obey or disobey God’s proscription not to ‘…approach this tree…’ (Al-Baqara 2:35). IblÊs too had the choice and he also decided to disobey when he refused God’s

prescription to ‘“…bow down to Adam”: They all bowed down except IblÊs. He was one of the Jinns, and he broke the command of his Lord…’ (A l-Kahf 18:50). We have, however, to acknowledge that there are different categories of orders and that the importance of an order depends on the status, power, and authority of the one who gives it. Clearly, if Allah is the giver of an order, His orders will have a different authority than orders issued by human beings.

**** ‘To Proscribe’ (al-nahy)

The Arabic noun al-nahy is derived from the regular verb nah§ which basically means ‘to reach’, that is, to get to a stage where something has been completed or ‘has come to an end’. We say ‘I informed him’, meaning literally (in Arabic): ‘I “ended” the news with him’ (anhaitu ilayhi al-khabr). Nih§ya means end and implies the limit or utmost degree of something; nuhan means intelligence because reason and intellect end foolish talk; al-nahy implies an interdiction to say or do something. Its many cognates occur fifty-six times in the Book, most of them carrying one of the meanings just explained. Just like al-amr it is dialectically linked to obedience and disobedience which require free will in order to be meaningful. ‘(God) said: “What prevented you from bowing down when I commanded you?”…’ (A l-A#r§f 7:12), which unambiguously refers to the existence of a rational mind that can freely think about its decision to obey or disobey. Proscriptions, just like prescriptions, consist of a dialectical process of communication between their sender and their receiver. The side that issues proscriptions can only do so because a receiver exists to whom proscriptions can be addressed. Proscriptions, just like prescriptions, are only meaningful if there is a possibility of obedience and disobedience on the part of the receivers, and the existence of choice between obedience and disobedience is only intelligible if no force is exercised by those who issue the order. We hear from the Book that the first thing addressed to humans is a command by God[354] and that their response to this, that is, their first ever response to the Creator was an act of disobedience(!). By Adam’s refusal to obey his Lord, he showed that he enjoyed freedom of choice. In his act of disobedience he appears as someone who has decided on his own accord and under no duress because he decided deliberately to act against God’s prohibition to go near the tree.

But freedom of choice is not absolute and does not apply equally to everyone. For a more well-rounded account of disobedience we need to explore other issues of Adam’s case, for example:

– Did Adam disobey God’s prescription (amr) to ‘dwell in the Garden’ or God’s proscription (nahy) not to ‘come near the tree”?

– Why did God order the angels to bow down in front of Adam by His word: ‘We said’, while the same order to IblÊs was issued by His command?[355] Is there, then, a difference between God’s word (qaul) and His command (amr)?

– Does the story of Adam imply that there are further differences between angels and jinns in terms of obedience to God’s orders?

As for the first question, it is clear from the textual evidence that Adam and his wife did not disobey God’s prescription (amr) to live in the Garden. If they had done so they would never have found the tree. Thus, they only disobeyed God’s proscription (nahy). It was the first ever proscription by God directed at human beings, because before that (before human beings could think rationally, as Adam and his wife could) everything was allowed in the Garden. As for the second question, the different treatment of angels and jinns (IblÊs) indeed reveals two different methods by which God issues His commands. A divine word (qaul) is a compulsory rule that is irrevocable and irreplaceable, (‘We said: “Embark therein, of each kind two, male and female, and your family—except those against whom the word (al-qaul) has already gone forth…”’, Håd 11:40). God’s word is unchangeable because ‘“the word changes not before Me, and I do not the least injustice to My servants”’ (Q§f 50:29). His words are irrevocable as they represent objective reality which everyone can touch and hear: (‘It is He who created the heavens and the earth in true (proportions): the day He says, “Be,” behold! it is. His word is the truth’, A l-An#§m 6:73). God’s irrevocable, compulsory

words turn into objective reality, that is, the truth, in which there is no room for choice between obedience and disobedience. God’s words cannot be disobeyed. In contrast to His words (qaul), God’s prescriptions (amr) can be disobeyed. This is why all verses of messengerhood were issued in the form of prescription or proscription, not as God’s words. Verses that contain God’s prescriptions to pray or fast never start with ‘God said:’ (q§la All§h) because this would mean that prayer and fasting are parts of objective reality and that people are compelled to pray or fast whether they wanted to or not.

As for the third question, angels are indeed unlike jinns. Whereas angels are creatures that obey their Lord by nature and would not know how to revolt against His prescriptions (‘… over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the commands they receive from God, but do (precisely) what they are commanded’, Al-TaÈrÊm 66:6), jinns, by contrast, possess intellect and—just like humans—free will, which allows them to express their willingness to either accept or refuse God’s prescriptions, so that ‘amongst us [jinns] are some that submit their wills (to God), and some that swerve from justice. Now those who submit their wills— they have sought out (the path) of right conduct’ (Al-Jinn 72:14). IblÊs, one of the jinns, chose to disobey God’s order and refused to bow down in front of Adam. The phrase ‘he was one of the Jinns’, was added to explain the fact that ‘he broke the command of his Lord (amr [in] rabihi)…’ (A l-Kahf 18:50). This is why when IblÊs was told to bow down in front of Adam he did not receive God’s order as His word (qaul) but as His prescription (amr), which left him with the choice to either follow or disobey it.

As we said earlier, nahy (proscription) has often been mixed up with Èar§m (absolute taboo). A few explanations are now necessary to clarify our position on this matter:

First, conflation of the two terms must be avoided because the semantic (and legal!) differences are simply too important to ignore. It is evident that every Èaram rule contains a proscription (‘do not do it!’) but not

every nahy rule expresses an absolute taboo (and is therefore different from a Èar§m rule). Second, unlike proscriptions, the Book’s Èar§m rules are eternally valid. A new Èar§m rule can only be introduced by a new revelation from God. For example, to introduce an absolute, eternally valid ban on smoking would require a new message from God. Third, a Èar§m rule is the sole prerogative of God and no human being can ever claim to do like Him. In contrast, a prescription can be issued by God, a prophet, and/or a human legislator (‘Have you seen the man who forbids [yanh§] * [Our] servant to pray?’ Al-#Alaq 96:9–10, AH). And fourthly, the historical sequence of God’s commands and orders requires us to make a sharp distinction between nahy and Èar§m:

1. First, it began with God’s order to Adam and his wife to stay in the Garden (‘Dwell”!) and to stay clear from the tree (‘Do not go near!’).

2. Next, during the era of Abraham we hear of God’s orders for a sacred space in Mecca (‘O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in a valley without cultivation, by your sacred house [baytik al-muÈarram]…’ Ibr§hÊm 14:37). While continuing the theme of human dwellings from the time of Adam, this introduces more complex notions of spatial sacrality (with the concept of a sacred house).

3. This order was later complemented by orders that express temporal sacrality (‘The number of months in the sight of God is twelve (in a year)—so ordained by Him the day He created the heavens and the earth—of them four are sacred [Èurum[un]]…’ Al-Tawba 9:36).

4. In legislation to the Israelites (Jacob), we come across a new concept: the notion of absolutely forbidden food (‘All food was lawful to the children of Israel, except what Israel made unlawful for itself, before the law (of Moses) was revealed…’ $l #Imr§n 3:93).

5. During the time of Moses, God revealed the Ten Commandments in the form of prohibitions (Do not!) which at the time of MuÈammad (ß), were upgraded to ten absolute taboos (‘Say: “Come, I will rehearse what God has (really) prohibited (Èarrama) you from”…’ Al-An#§m 6:151). The same applies to the law of usury which used to be a simple proscription (nahy) to the Israelites[356] and which the Book later issued as an absolute taboo (Èar§m).[357]

6. MuÈammad’s (ß) message concluded the epoch of messengerhoods and in this way Allah closed the gate of eternally valid legislation (in the form of absolute taboos) and opened the gate of human/ historical legislation (in the form of prescription and proscription, permission and prohibition). This allows doctors to order their lung disease patients not to smoke, and it allows a government to pass a new law that prohibits smoking in public places and to order the police and the legal authorities to enforce it. Once the new law has been accepted (by parliament), the individual citizen is obliged to observe it, but he is free, on a personal level, to dislike the law and to air his discontent, provided that he does not try to impose his opinions on others.

How are we then expected to read the phrase ‘if you avoid the grave sins you are proscribed to do’ (in tajtaninå kab§“ir m§ tunhaun[a] #anhu)’ in verse 4:31?[358] To what extent does this verse reflect the choice of humans to obey or disobey God’s proscriptions? Firstly, we notice the conditional conjunction ‘if’ (in) which, as in the following two other verses, introduces a conditional subclause:

If [in] a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth… (Al-\ujur§t 49:6)

Say: “If [in] I am astray, I only stray to the loss of my own soul: but if I receive guidance, it is because of the inspiration of my Lord to me…” (Saba’ 34:50)

In this capacity it shares its meaning ‘if’ or ‘when’ with the particle idh§ as in:

When [idh§] comes the help of God, and victory. (Al-Naßr 110:1) When [idh§] it is said to them: “Make not mischief on the earth,” they say: “Why, we only want to make peace!” (Al-Baqara 2:11)

The difference between in and idh§ is, however, that while in states a condition whose fulfilment is uncertain, idh§ states a condition that is absolute and fulfillable. The use of the particle in for 4:31 tells us that the text wants to stress uncertainty because it is not clear whether human beings will commit or avoid such grave sins since this is subject to their free choice. If they choose to obey they will avoid heinous crimes; if, however, they choose to disobey they will commit them.

Secondly, we notice the Arabic term kab§“ir for ‘grave sins’, literally meaning ‘great’ or ‘major’ in contrast to ‘small’ or ‘minor’ sins (ßagh§“ir). The Book refers to major sins three times, and only once to minor sins—by using the term lamam :

If you (but) eschew the most heinous of the things [kab§“ir] which you are forbidden to do, We shall expel out of you all the evil in you, and admit you to a gate of great honour. (Al-Nis§” 4:31)

Those who avoid great sins [kab§“ir] and shameful deeds [a l-ithm wa’l-faw§Èish], only (falling into) small faults [lamam]... (A l-Najm 53:32)

<right>

Those who avoid the greater crimes [kab§“ir] and shameful deeds

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[a l-ithm wa’l-faw§Èish], and, when they are angry even then forgive. (Al-Shår§ 42:37)

These verses introduce a very relevant terminological clarification that is vital for our discussion on prescription versus proscription. The implicit distinction between major and minor sins in 4:31 is supported by 53:32 where ‘great sins’ are explicitly distinguished from ‘shameful deeds’ (al-ithm wa’l-faw§Èish), as we also find in 42:37. In order to establish their proper meaning against the meaning that these terms have acquired in Islamic fiqh, we need to distinguish between four different stages (of interpretation): a) the qur”§n, b) the Prophet (ß), c) the companions, and d) the second and third generation after the companions, of which only the first two encapsulate the terms’ true meaning.

A. Major sins in the qur”§n

All heavenly messages in general, and also MuÈammad’s (ß) message in particular, distinguish between two categories of divine commands: orders (Gebote) and prohibitions (Verbote). Orders are meant to guide human behaviour to concrete actions by issuing a (positive) command ‘Do it!’, while prohibitions restrict human behaviour by asking people to avoid certain actions with a (negative) order ‘Do not!’. As seen above, prohibited acts are classified as major or minor sins, the prohibition of idolatry being on top of the list of major sins. Commands also come in the categories major and minor: to have faith in the existence of God is a major command (kab§“ir), and the order to be polite to a passer-by on the street is, so to speak, a minor command (ßagh§“ir). Between these major and minor orders lies the command to believe in the Last Day combined with the command to do righteous acts that are beneficial to society. It is one of God’s blessings to the believers who receive His orders, that ‘He made them love belief and hate unbelief, wickedness, and rebellion’ (49:7).[359] Unbelief, as we explained earlier, is an openly hostile view of a specific command or a person, hence, unbelief (kufr), in this context, is a publicly declared enmity against

MuÈammad’s (ß) message and, according to 4:37, a ‘niggardliness that expresses a disbelief in God’s bounty and grace’.[360] Transgression of God’s orders is called fisq (pl. fusåq); when IblÊs disobeyed God and did not bow down in front of Adam, ‘…he broke the command (fa-fasaqa) of his Lord…’ (Al-Kahf 18:50). Transgression of God’s prohibition is given the term #iß§n, which the text uses when it talks about Adam’s rebellion against God’s prohibition not to come near the tree, ‘…thus did Adam disobey (#aß§) his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced’ (•§-H§ 20:121). Another of God’s great blessings is to tell those who have disobeyed His prohibitions that if they avoid the major sins (kab§“ir) Allah will ‘expel out of you all the evil in you, and admit you to a gate of great honour’ (Al-Nis§” 4:31). However, such forgiveness is the sole prerogative of God, no human ijtih§d is allowed here.

Prohibitions in the Book are thus divided into two categories: a) major sins (kab§“ir) that are fixed and absolutely valid for all time (these are the Èar§m taboos), and b) minor sins (ßagh§“ir). But while it is possible to enumerate the prohibitions in the Book and qualify which of them is an absolute taboo, it is impossible to do so for the major sins (kab§“ir). The simple reason for this is that not all major sins were transgressions of absolute taboos as it depended on the prevailing social conditions whether a major sin was perceived as such. For example, the sins of idolatry, usury, and wine consumption were the gravest major sins during the first thirteen years of MuÈammad’s mission and his confrontation with the standards of Meccan society and the prevailing norms of the tribe of the Quraish. After the migration to Medina this changed to desertion from military duties (after the ban to kill was lifted), which had not been previously mentioned as a major sin. In another context, during the time of Lot homosexuality was so widely practised that it had become the most serious major sin. Thus, Allah had finally to send a new prophet-messenger with the mission to restore (heterosexual) morality, redirecting Lot’s people back to the right path (and when they did not listen, they were destroyed).

It is true that the Book reiterates and reevaluates a number of previous prohibitions, and yet nowhere does it categorize them as ‘major sins’ (kab§“ir). If the term kab§“ir is mentioned

(see above) it is without the definite article, that is, its numbers are kept indefinite because the noun with a definite article would suggest a limit of some kind that the Book did not want to specify. Instead, the Book says, yes, absolute taboos (muÈarram§t) are major sins (kab§“ir) but not every major sin is an absolute taboo. The indefinite nature of kab§“ir allows us to consider as ‘major sins’ those things that a society regards as the gravest, most heinous crimes (which may change from epoch to epoch and from society to society), but we are not permitted to add such prohibitions to the list of absolute taboos since these are defined only by God.

B. The Prophet (ß) and major sins

The evidence that the prophetical understanding of ‘major sins’, as in most other areas, does not differ significantly from the Qur’anic concept is overwhelming. In a ÈadÊth quoted by al-R§zÊ we hear, for example, that MuÈammad (ß) considered public defamation of innocent women and false accusation of adultery as one of the most heinous crimes. [361] Within the context of his efforts to establish a new society upon the sound basis of good relations within and between families and clans, we see MuÈammad’s definition of kab§“ir as a logical and necessary consequence of life in seventh-century Arabia. It also corresponds to the Book’s appeal to root out injustice (íulm) as one of the most serious dangers for the sound functioning of a s ociety. Since there was no political injustice and no oppressive usurpation of power in Medina at MuÈammad’s (ß) time, it was perfectly l egitimate to target public defamations as a form of injustice that needed to be wiped out. One should also note that the Prophet (ß) did not use the definite article al- when he talked about the kab§“ir but left it as undefined, indeterminate and unspecified as he found it in the qur”§n. This indicates that when he proposed his understanding of what ‘major sins’ are, he knew that it was (only) relevant for his own period of time and for his own society and did not rule out the possibility that the perception of such sins might be subject to considerable change.

C. The companions and major sins

After MuÈammad’s death the efforts to accurately define what constitutes a ‘major sin’ and an ‘absolute taboo’ were seriously undermined by the sudden circulation of obscure ÈadÊth traditions that, for example, issued a bizarre number of kab§“ir, ranging from nine to seven hundred, and which were all treated as absolute taboos. We observe the tendency to blend together major and minor sins, and proscriptions and absolute taboos so that clear demarcation lines eventually disappeared and all the different types and classes of orders and prohibitions were perceived equally and indiscriminately as ‘what God has prohibited’. Even then it was obvious how weak the chains of transmission back to the Prophet (ß) were.

D. The generations after the time of the companions

This situation became aggravated within two generations after the Prophet’s (ß) death. We see an explosion of hadÊths circulated in the different centres of the Empire and which could not possibly all go back to the Prophet (ß). Bear in mind the fact that MuÈammad (ß) received his first revelation at the age of forty and that he died twenty-three years later at the age of sixty-three. He had therefore twenty-three years as a prophet, that is —based on a lunar calendar—195,408 hours, to discuss and debate the matters of the new faith (supposing, for the sake of the argument, that he did not sleep a single minute throughout a twenty-four hour day), in addition to his role as a prophet and messenger who transmitted God’s revelation to the people. If we assume that MuÈammad (ß) had roughly 85,000 hours left to fulfil his prophetical role (in his ten years in Medina), and since we have now in front of us a total of 750,000 hadÊths that were circulated after his death from his Medinan period

(of which Im§m AÈmad reported 40,000 in his Musnad alone), which means that the Prophet (ß) must have issued on average nine ÈadÊths per hour which is, of course, absurd. Because of this very shaky basis for the authenticity of most ÈadÊths and the likelihood that a considerable number were fabricated during the Umayyad and #Abb§sid periods, we believe it is, a) dishonest to assert the authenticity of the ÈadÊths, and b) illegitimate to construct a body of texts,

called sunna, on the basis of such dubious evidence (fabricated ÈadÊths) and then oblige Muslim-Believers to use it as a binding source of law. We know that legal rulings can only be found in MuÈammad's (ß) message, not his sunna, and that if the sunna was to be binding it would mean a good deal of hardship (socially, psychologically, and financially) for most people today, which contradicts the Book's imperative that 'God intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties…' (Al-Baqara 2:185). And yet, we also know that after MuÈammad's (ß) death, the community of believers increased more and more, with the Empire becoming diverse and heterogeneous in its composition. Diversity led to tensions and people began to disagree about the correct way of eating, drinking, dressing, and sleeping by quoting the example of the Prophet (ß) to substantiate their own positions and refute others. Every little dispute was transformed into a battle over the right methodology, creating separate schools for every single issue or particular opinion.[362] This situation not only resulted in several schisms within the community, best illustrated by the Battle of the Camel and the Battle at 'iffÊn in 36 A.H., it also led to further confusion over the term kab§"ir, which now came to be defined according to the positions of the schools, sectarian conflicts, and dynastic rivalries that more and more obscured the original concept of the Book.

Let us therefore return once more to the original source, the Book. We said earlier that prohibitions express the negative aspect of divine legislation, and that 'major sins' are formulated as prohibitions, some of them in the form of absolute taboos. The difference between (the generic form of) prohibition and absolute taboos (which is one specific type of prohibition) is that the former contains rules that are contingent and that give people the choice between obedience and disobedience, while the latter are absolute and eternal, even though the former includes the latter. It also means that 'major sins', in contrast to absolute taboos, may increase or decrease in number according to the historical (legal and moral) context. If, for example, in a certain society traffic incidents have reached an alarmingly high number because of the inconsiderate behaviour of drivers, the authorities, equipped with more legislative powers, will change their attitude, and while having viewed inconsiderate driving as a minor offence in the past will now regard it as a major crime and punish it with tougher sentences. This will continue until the new regulations have made an impact and have reduced the number of incidents. In contrast, absolute taboos do not

increase or decrease in number and do not change their content. To kill a person or to marry one’s mother or sister remains Èar§m everywhere—in London, Damascus, or Mecca, and at all times in history, whether in the seventh, twentieth, or fortieth centuries. The Book gives fourteen absolute taboos, of which the first nine are as follows:

I. To commit idolatry

II. To be disrespectful to parents

III. To kill one’s children for fear of poverty

IV. To come close to shameful deeds (adultery)

V. To take life unjustified

VI. To consume the property of orphans

VII. To give false measure and weight

VIII. To commit perjury

IX. To break a vow (this is different from an oath which God has allowed us to expiate; but the vow of a doctor is a pledge to Allah binding the doctor to the cure of his patients: breaking a vow cannot be expiated by a fast of three days or the feeding of ten poor people; unfortunately, many people often confuse an irrevocable vow to Allah with an expiatory oath).

Together with the tenth (religious) command, which is to follow the straight path (6:153), these nine taboos comprise God’s ethical guidance (al-furq§n), elsewhere called the ‘Ten Commandments’ or the ‘First/Old Testament’.[363] In addition, the following prohibitions received by Moses were eventually turned into absolute taboos through MuÈammad’s (ß) message:

X. To marry maÈ§rim relatives (mother/sister/daughter, etc.)

XI. To eat dead meat (carrion) and pork, and drink blood;

XII. Usury (‘merely’ a prohibition in Moses’ message); XIII. To commit illegitimate sins and transgressions; XIV. To say about God what cannot be known.

The first twelve taboos are clear and self-explanatory. The remaining two, however, need further elaboration:

E. The attribute ‘illegitimate’ for a sin implies the existence of a ‘legitimate’ sin—in addition to the subdivision of ‘sin’ (in 42:37 and 53:32) into major and minor sins. But what are legitimate sins? The Arabic term for sin is ithm. This term occurs forty-eight times in the Book, mostly in the context of, a) to stay behind, to fall back, for example, when we say ‘the she-camel fell back’ (athamat a l-n§qa), that is, it stays behind the rest of the caravan; or b) to abstain or refrain, as in ‘if one is forced by necessity, without wilful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then is he guiltless[364] (fa-l§ ithm #alayhi)…’ (A l-Baqara 2:173). The sinner in this context is someone who does something that others do not do. The first context expresses a legitimate sin, while the second refers to an illegitimate sin. The horseman who falls back with his horse in a race, the student who falls behind the rest of the class, the pupil who stays behind the group on an excursion; these ‘sins’ are all legitimate. But whoever holds back his witness when he should give it, commits an illegitimate sin, because: ‘conceal not evidence; for whoever

conceals it, his heart is tainted with sin (ithm[un]). And God knows all that you do’ (Al-Baqara 2:283). If alcohol is used for the benefit of society, for example, as an anaesthetic in surgical operations, as was done before the discovery of chloroform, it is classed as a legitimate sin. The same drug can yield both a great sin and great benefit depending on the intention of its use. It is a great sin if alcohol is used for pure pleasure and if it is consumed until the brain is intoxicated so that a person cannot control his tongue any longer. If gossip is used to defame your relatives at home and your colleagues in the workplace, it is classed as slander and a great sin. But if it used as a tool by the secret intelligence services in order to gain advantage over the nation’s enemy, it is a legitimate sin.

The Arabic term for ‘transgression’, baghy, is used ninety-six times in the Book. In a more literal sense it means to seek hard in order to obtain something desirable, as in: ‘To him who does this, seeking (ibtigh§” [an]) the good pleasure of God, We shall soon give a reward of the highest (value)’ (Al-Nis§” 4:114); we say ‘the woman is a prostitute’ (baghat al-mar”a bigh§“an), meaning literally ‘she is out to acquire a man’.[365] Mostly, the term is used to indicate a violation of moral standards, implying injustice, rudeness, and causing enmity: ‘If God were to enlarge the provision for His servants, they would indeed transgress (la-baghau) beyond all bounds through the earth; but he sends (it) down in due measure as He pleases…’ (Al-Shår§ 42:27). It means the opposite of ‘doing good’ and is—as the Book says—a rebellion against God’s command of justice: ‘God commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion (al-baghy)…’ (Al-NaÈl 16:90). And yet, there are situations where we find legitimate forms of transgression, for example, if we look at the issue of (the actually prohibited act of) seeking oracles from lot-casting. If at the beginning of a football match lots are cast (in order to decide what team plays on which side and who kicks off), it is a legitimate transgression. If, however, lot-casting is practised in matters of trade, marriage, travel, or even in political and military affairs (e.g., to decide on war or peace), it is an illegitimate transgression. We know that deliberate, callous theft is an illegitimate form of taking things away, but paying the price and to take things away after one has paid for them is perfectly legitimate. We believe that in every legal system there are many grey areas where legislation is not

(and can never be) clear cut. Between the definite limits of Allah’s law we are faced with an area full of ambiguities. It is as the Prophet (ß) said: ‘The lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear, and in between are ambiguities.”[366]

F. The prohibition ‘to say things about God without knowledge’ is based on the Book’s injunction 7:33.[367] Widely known examples of things said without knowledge are the content of the fatw§s by our honourable scholars who have invented an increasing number of absolute taboos (close to a hundred by now), including the (absolute) ban on smoking, adopting children, surrogate motherhoods, listening to music, and singing in public. Even clearer examples are their fatw§s which, by applying all sorts of legal tricks—applying the strategy of fraudem legis agere—allowed dubious monetary institutes to run their business under the name of ‘Islamic Banking’, which, to our mind, is just a different way of legalising serious financial fraud. The Book tells us that the prohibition ‘to say things about God without knowledge’ was first revealed as a (normal) prohibition but was later, because of its seriousness, upgraded to an absolute taboo:

But say not—for any false thing that your tongues may put forth— ‘This is lawful, and this is forbidden’, so as to ascribe false things to God. For those who ascribe false things to God will never prosper. (Al-NaÈl 16:116)

‘What Is Right’ (al-ma#råf)

The Arabic term for the phrase ‘what is right’, al-ma#råf, is derived from the verb #-r-f, whose diverse forms are used seventy-two times in the Book. Its first occurrence is in 2:89, [368] and its last in 83:24.[369] The most important cognates are ma#råf, #urf, ta#§ruf, ma#rifa, and #ir§fa, each of which will be briefly defined:

– ma#råf has two meanings: a) known, widely accepted, recognised, as in: ‘And women shall have rights similar to the rights against

them, according to what is equitable[370] (bi’l-ma#råf) …’ (A l-Baqara 2:228); and b) to do kindness, to render others a service, as in: ‘… except that you should do kindness[371] to your friends (auliy§“ikum ma#råf [an]). This is written in the Book (of nature)’ (A l-Ahzab 33:6), or: ‘…yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration)[372] (ma#råf [an])…’ (Luqm§n 31:15).

– ‘urf has several meanings: a) the opposite of nukr (denial, disavowal), that is, beneficence, kindness; b) the highest part, top of something, for example, the comb of a rooster; c) conventional practice, customs, traditions, that is, what has come to be ‘widely accepted’ (ma#råf); a l-arf (i.e. with a fatÈa) means fragrance, perfume, as in ‘And admit them to the Garden which He has announced for them’ (MuÈammad 47:6), that is, the Garden’s fragrance was nicely diffused for them;[373] and al-#irf (i.e., with a kasra) means—according to al-Za makh sharÊ —patience.

– ta#§ruf means mutual understanding, acquaintance, and peaceful co-existence, both between individuals and between groups, states, and nations. It constitutes the purpose of Allah’s c reation, as we are told in the following verse:

O [humankind]! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other) [li-ta#§rifå]. Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you… (Al-\ujur§t 49:13)

– ma#rifa refers to the relationship that is perceived in the human intellect between the different manifestations and properties of this existence, or—in a more philosophical sense—to the relationship between objective reality and human consciousness. Knowledge (#ilm) is what feeds this relationship with data from the external social and objective reality. The Book never uses the phrase

ma#rifat All§h, only #ilm All§h, because God’s knowledge does not need to be fed with data since He already knows everything. He does not need, as human do, a theory of knowledge (i.e., a methodology of how to acquire data and to perceive knowledge). Knowledge itself can be either known (í§hir) or hidden (makhfiyy), for example, when states do not reveal their intelligence to other states it is hidden knowledge, or when God does not lead anybody astray with His knowledge (i.e., by hiding it), only those He wants to.

– #ir§fa means false knowledge such as that of fortune-tellers and divinatory fraudsters, as among ‘åfÊ groups; some pretend to perform miracles while others claim to receive supernatural knowledge by meditation, contemplation and other ascetic practices. Only very few can be considered true ‘knowers’ (#§rifån); most of them are just fortune tellers (#ir§fån). True knowledge, on the one hand, is a deep longing whose subject matter exerts total control over the seeker who is never distracted by anything and who has no desire for wealth, rank, and power. On the other hand, producing false knowledge is perhaps the oldest trade in human history and is done by magicians, shamans, sages, sorcerers, and all the H§m§ns[374] of this world. It is a mistake to believe that #ir§fa knowledge died out with the end of the age of idolatry, pagan worship, and ancient tribalism. This form of heathendom only changed its outward appearance; it still exists and trades its old (false) knowledge under new names, wrapped up in a different cloak.

**** ‘What Is Wrong’ (al-munkar)

The Arabic term for the phrase ‘what is wrong’, al-munkar, is derived from the verb n-k-r, whose diverse forms are used thirty-seven times in the Book. It first occurs in 3:104[375], and last in 67:18.[376] The most important cognates are munkar, nakÊr, nukr, nukra, and ink§r, each of which will be briefly defined:

– munkar refers to the opposite of ma#råf, that is, to everything that rational beings regard as shameful or repulsive, and everything that a society agrees to eradicate from its traditions or customs. When Lot asked his own people about their bad practices, he enquired about their munkar habits: ‘Do you indeed approach men, and cut off the highway, and practise wickedness (al-munkar) (even) in your councils?’ (A l-#Ankabåt 29:29). According to the Book, absolute taboos are exactly those shameful, repulsive acts of munkar§t.

– nakÊr has several interconnected meanings: a) difficulty, restrain, restriction, siege; we say ‘the army beseiged the city and exerted pressure on it’ (shaddada #alayh§ al-nakÊr)’; and b) a well-fortified stronghold, as is (metaphorically) used in ‘that day there will be for you no place of refuge nor will there be for you any room for denial (nakÊr) (of your sins)!’ (Al-Shår§ 42:47); and c) deterrent punishment or rebuke, as in: ‘But I granted respite to the unbelievers, and (only) after that did I punish them: but how (terrible) was my rejection (nakÊr) (of them)!’ (Al-\ajj 22:44).

– nukr refers to an extremely ‘foul thing’ that every soul despises and tries to prevent. We hear how ‘Moses said: “Have you slain an innocent person who had slain none? Truly a foul (unheard of) thing (nukr [an]) have you done!”’ (Al-Kahf 18:74). We use the term nukar§” to express hostility to anything feminine; we also say ‘a terrible calamity has befallen them’ (nazalat bihim maßÊba nukar§”), that is, something of considerable pain.

– nakira is a grammatical term used for an indefinite noun, an unknown person, or a nameless human being; people say about such a person that he is ‘neither this nor that’, that is, someone without any individuality in what he does and being incompetent to such a degree that if he offered his help, everybody would be immediately on their guard.

– ink§r means negation, rejection, and denial. The rejection of grace is a kind of denial, but the negation of one’s own ego is a form of altruism and as such is a laudable act, as we hear in 59:9.[377]

How ‘to Prescribe What Is Right and to Proscribe What Is Wrong’ Today

Before we are able to define the proper meaning of ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’ for today, we need to explain two other related aspects:

1. Harshness (faí§ía):

the Book warns that ‘were you severe (faí[an]) or harsh-hearted (ghalÊí a l-qalb), they would have broken away from about you…’ ($l #Imr§n 3:159), implying that if someone prescribes what is right and proscribes what is wrong in a harsh-hearted manner, that is, if he talks to people in a rude and patronising way, then people will not listen but rather run away from him. In this context, ‘harsh-hearted’ means dull-witted stupidity; it refers more to the brain than to the heart (the organ that pumps blood through the body). Even though the heart is indeed in people’s breasts, its functioning is controlled by the front part of the cranium that works from behind our foreheads: ‘Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts which are in their breasts’ (Al-\ajj 22:46).

2. Compulsion/duress (ikr§h):

the Book makes it clear that under duress neither belief nor unbelief can be accepted as authentic or valid: ‘Any one who, after accepting faith in God, utters unbelief, except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in faith…’ (A l-NaÈl 16:106). The Book mentions variations of the term ikr§h over forty times, expressing the notion of dislike and detestation, and also of pain and hardship. The notion of dislike is

mentioned first in 2:216, a verse that will be further discussed in the section on al-qit§l,[378] and mentioned last in the context of the pagans' detestation of the true religion.[379] The sense of aversion to accept anything under pressure is expressed in Håd's speech to his people: 'He said: "My people, think: if I did have a clear sign from my Lord, and He had given me grace of His own, though it was hidden from you, could we force you to accept it against your will (lah§ k§rihån)?" (Håd 11:28, AH). The meaning of pain is stated in: 'We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: in pain did his mother bear him, and in pain (kurh[an]) did she give him birth…' (Al-AÈq§f 46:15). The term ikr§h means compulsion, duress, and also, as we saw in 11:28, a force against a person's will. The prohibition of ikr§h is not only mandatory within the realm of prophethood (and hence the realm of personal responsibility on the Day of Judgement), but also within the realm of messengerhood, as is expressed in many verses of the Book[380] and in numerous ÈadÊths.[381] If it is true that a contract of sale or any other business contract is invalid if it is signed under duress, that an oath of allegiance to the ruler is worthless if it is given under compulsion, that a marriage contract is null and void if it is done by force, and if it is true that a statement of belief in God, His angels, His books, and His messengers is false if it is not given wholeheartedly and voluntarily, how can it then be right that people use force and swing a whip when they prescribe what is right and proscribe what is wrong?

Let us now return to the question of how to define 'to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong'. The following three verses will help in this:

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, [prescribing] what is right, and [proscribing] what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity. ($l #Imr§n 3:104)

You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, [prescribing] what is right, [proscribing] what is wrong, and believing in God… ($l #Imr§n 3:110)

They believe in God and the Last Day; they [prescribe] what is right, and [proscribe] what is wrong; and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works: they are in the ranks of the righteous. ($l #lmr§n 3:114)

We notice that, firstly, the task of ‘prescribing what is right and of proscribing what is wrong’ is coupled with the invitation to #all that is good”—it is either mentioned first (3:104) or second (3:114); secondly, the task of ‘prescribing what is right and of proscribing what is wrong’ is also coupled with the condition to believe in God—it is either mentioned first (3:114) or second (3:110); thirdly, the three verses of $l #lmr§n mention four interconnected things: a) to call to do good works; b) to prescribe what is right; c) to proscribe what is wrong, and d) to call to believe in God; and finally, these elements are connected by the conjunction wa- (and), implying that it is a connection between four inseparable items that cannot be considered in isolation to one another. What connects the four elements is the notion that none of them must be forced upon people; their common denominator is the absence of compulsion. We should also not forget that this is a description of ‘a band of people’ who are praised as ‘the best of people’ enjoying ‘the ranks of the righteous’, the counterimage of those who are idolaters, pagans, and heathens.

We now include three more verses:

The believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they [prescribe] what is just, and [proscribe] what is evil; they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey God and His Apostle. (Al-Tawba 9:71)

Those that turn (to God) in repentance; that serve Him, and praise Him; that wander in devotion to the cause of God; that bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer; that [prescribe] good and [proscribe] evil; and observe the limit set by God… (Al-Tawba 9:112)

(They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, [prescribe] the right and [proscribe] wrong—with God rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs. (Al-\ajj 22:41)

These verses attach even more things to the task ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’:

a) to believe in God (as above);

b) to observe prayers;

c) to practise charity;

d) to obey God and His Messenger in what they have ordered and prohibited;

e) to observe the limits set by God.

We notice that the tasks to observe prayers and to practise charity either precede the task ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’ (22:41) or follow it (9:71). Again, we understand that the conjunction wa- (and) is meant to connect different things and that it does not imply a hierarchy (of importance). And yet, some of the tasks mentioned are practised purely on a personal level (belief in God, prayer, obedience to God and His Messenger), while others are practised both on a personal and a collective level (to prescribe what is right, to proscribe what is wrong, to practise charity, to observe the limits of God). If they are practised on a collective level, they need to be organised, properly administered, and controlled. But neither on a personal nor on a collective level is it allowed to apply pressure, force, or compulsion.

How the fuqah§” and #ulam§” Have Misconstrued the Qur”anic Phrase

In order to strengthen their grip on people’s private and public lives, it became necessary for our h§m§n§t scholars to arrive at a legal pretext that concealed their true intention, which was to gain full control of what the common people felt and thought. Some scholars used the pretext of calling themselves the guardians of religion; others claimed that they were the legitimate heirs of the prophets, a third group claimed to be the friends of God (auliy§t All§h), while a fourth maliciously used their misreading of the Book to secure them a special position within the umma of the Muslim-Believers. As for the third group, just listen to the preposterous claims of a scholar such as al-NawawÊ and his quite inventive way to use the Prophet (ß) for his purposes. In his book al-Tiby§n fÊ §d§b Èamalat al-qur”§n, he says, #al-Bukh§rÊ narrated from Abå Hurayra in his ‘aÈÊÈ that the Messenger of Allah (ß) said:

“The Exalted said: ‘Whoever hurts a friend of mine, I will wage a war against him.”” It is reported from the two revered Im§ms, Abå \anÊfa and al-Sh§fi#Ê (r), who said: “If the scholars (i.e., men of religion) were not friends of Allah, then there would be no friends of Allah.” Im§m al-\§fií Ibn #As§kir (r) said: “Let it be known, O brother, and Allah accorded us His pleasure and made us fear Him and be conscious of Him—as is His due—that the flesh of the scholars is poisoned. Allah’s habit is well-known that He discloses the secrets of those who find them [i.e., the scholars] defective. Whoever sets his tongue free to abuse them, Allah will try him by the death of his heart before his [real] death. So, those who disobey His command should beware of a trial or severe affliction that will come upon them.[382]

This is exactly the way—like intellectual terrorism—to instil fear into the hearts of the common people that if they criticise our honourable scholars, God will punish them for it.

As for the fourth group, their favourite trick was to point to 3:104 and claim that Allah had indeed elevated them above everyone else. The verse says: ‘Let there arise out of you a band of people (la-takun minkum) inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is

wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity’ ($l #Imr§n 3:104). Claiming that the phrase ‘a band of people out of you’ is a reference to the class of #ulam§”, they then argued that the following ÈadÊth, transmitted and authenticated by all major ÈadÊth collectors, supports this claim. The version transmitted by Abå D§wåd says:

‘It is reported from Abå Sa#Êd al-KhudrÊ who said that Marw§n brought out the pulpit on the day of #Êd and started the sermon before the prayer. A man stood up and said: “O Marw§n! You have just contravened the sunna. You brought out the pulpit the day of #Êd, while he [the Prophet (ß)] did not do that, and you started the sermon before the prayer [while he started the prayer first].” Abå Sa#Êd asked; “Who is this man?” They replied, so and so, the son of so and so. He [Abå Sa#Êd] said: “As far as this [man] is concerned, he has fulfilled what is required of him. I heard the Messenger of Allah (ß) saying: ‘Whoever sees evil that he is able to change, he should do so first with his hands, and if he is not able [to do so], then with his tongue, and if he is not able [to do so], then with his heart. This is the minimum [degree of] Êm§n.””[383]

In the eyes of our honourable scholars there is no question that God appointed them not only as the guardians of His religion but also as the intermediaries between Him and the people, as the translators of His orders and prohibitions, and as the commentators of His verses and rules. They maintained that the preposition + suffix pronoun minkum (out of you) is partitive, dividing the umma into those whom Allah appointed ‘to prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’ and the rest (who were not appointed), while they, of course, embody ‘the band of people’ that Allah chose for this task. The truth is, however, that the preposition min is not partitive (out of you) but rather designative (of you), as in the sentence: ‘The emir so-and-so turned his country (ja#la min bil§dihi) into a highly civilised nation’, implying a change of his entire country—in spite of the use of min—and not just parts of it. Moreover, the identification of a privileged group contradicts several important principles: first, it would condemn the majority of the population to passivity, while only a tiny group ‘prescribes what is right and proscribes what is wrong’ which, according to 3:110, contradicts Allah’s more general designation that the entire

umma are ‘the best of peoples’. Second, it would suggest a certain hierarchy that contradicts the spirit of the Book. We know that Allah appointed His noble Prophet (ß) to prescribe what is right, [384] after a long process (over forty years!) of selection during which MuÈammad (ß) lived with his peoples and his family, and during which he proved himself trustworthy to carry out this majestic task. The testing and probing was done in a rigorous manner so that His word could be true: ‘Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you…’ (A l-\ujur§t 49:13). Given this rigorous process of selection, is it plausible that God chose a group of people even before they were actually born? Can such a selection be sensible when it means that mere membership of this group is enough to gain a privileged position regardless of skill and competence? Is this not similar to the presumptuous (racist) claim that God chose one nation over all others, whereby everyone born into this nation is, by birthright, God-chosen simply because of his ethnicity and not because of his character or good work?

As for the ÈadÊth, it clearly contradicts the Book, a fact that our honourable scholars tried to circumvent by issuing their famous dictum that ‘the Sunna abrogates the Qur’an’ which is, frankly, a despicable hermeneutical trick. What is even more detestable is that they used this ÈadÊth to justify violence and force in prescribing what is right and proscribing what is wrong. To correct what is wrong by (only) your tongue and heart became labelled as ‘soft’ or ‘feeble’ and was interpreted as a reflection of having weak belief. And after having turned this upside down, the act of correcting ‘by your hand’, that is, by force and pressure, became the ultimate expression of strong belief. Needless to say that this turns the message of the Book completely on its head, which prefers ease over hardship and friendliness over harshness, as the sequence of actions demonstrates in the following verse: ‘As to those women on whose part you fear […] ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) [criticize them (severely)][385]…’ (A l-Nis§” 4:34). The ÈadÊth has also often been used by our honourable scholars to give state authorities a free hand to use violence against what they (religiously) perceive as (politically) wrong. But the ÈadÊth is only concerned with human behaviour on a personal level. The Prophet (ß) was far too clever to allow state authorities to interfere with an individual’s faults and errors, as he—quite justifiably so—anticipated that this would turn any democratic rule into despotic rule where the ruling class will be allowed

to take the law into their own hands and turn it— under the pretext of ‘forbidding what is wrong”—against their political opponents. He also anticipated that to give political rulers the licence to ‘forbid what is wrong’ would allow them to set up religious tribunals which sentence critics of the regime to death, masked under the pretence that this will eradicate heresy, atheism, and free thinking. And indeed, this is what has happened: the accusation of takfÊr has given the political and religious establishments freedom to confiscate the property and possessions of so-called convicted ‘apostates’, and by hiding behind a façade of laughable accusations of immorality and licentious lifestyles they have deemed it proper to destroy the honour and dignity of their fiercest opponents. Thus, what the Prophet (ß) wanted to prevent has in fact turned out to be a political reality. The use of force and violence by political rulers has become a feature of everyday life. And yet, the sword that our honourable scholars presented to the rulers as a gift turned out to be doubleedged, as we explained earlier. While in the past it allowed oppressive regimes to fight their opponents with brutality, it left the political opposition with no choice but to acquire the same brutal mentality in their fight against the political order. Once again, the pretext of ‘forbidding what is wrong’ is used today for purely political reasons, only this time accusations of kufr are being turned against the political class itself.

** Conclusion

To prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong is a divine duty. Allah did not set up fixed rules that can be automatically applied in how to exercise this duty. Instead, He left this to be done according to what is ma#råf, that is, widely recognised and what is perceived as good taste and common sense within any given society. What needs to be prescribed or proscribed is what is shared by most people as accepted norms of good or bad social practice. The condition is that, for the implementation of such norms, violence and force must not be used. Whoever forces people to pray five times a day, and whoever forces women to wear a Saudi-style Èij§b, regardless of the cultural norms of their country, has not properly fulfilled God’s duty because something has been enforced that is not commonly shared or practiced. In an age of mass communication and globalised forms of interaction (global village), we

propose six general principles that are indispensable for the fulfilment of God’s duty:

1. freedom of speech: nobody should fear prosecution or punishment for expressing his thoughts and ideas in public (radio, newspapers, television, books, internet, etc.);

2. civil society and nongovernmental organisations: these should be given as much support as possible (be they human rights organisations, societies for the protection of animals, consumer watchdog organisations, professional associations, or environmental campaign groups), but they should not use force and violence to impose their ideas of ‘what is right and what is wrong’.

3. confederation of states: their task is to investigate accusations of crimes against humanity, violations of human rights and breaches of international law in a member state; the other members apply international sanctions and diplomatic pressure in order to ‘prescribe what is right’ (i.e., widely accepted and recognised as international norms).

4. politics as social contract, not God’s rule on earth: individual freedom is constrained by a social contract that exists between a state and its citizens. The individual citizen gives up parts of his personal freedom by observing the existing laws. But the laws of a society (limits) should not be confused with the political rules of the state authorities. There are God’s limits in human legislation, but there is no God’s rule in politics. Political rule is exercised by humans who exercise it within the parameters of a social contract. The concept of God’s rule on earth has no evidence in the Book and, if applied to politics, is a recipe for despotism and religious authoritarianism.

5. separation between isl§m and politics: Isl§m means rituals, legislation between God’s limits, and moral guidance. No political party must therefore carry the adjective ‘Islamic’ in its title, because isl§m is (not politics but rather) a ÈanÊf religion. Political slogans that carry the name isl§m (e.g., ‘Islam is the

solution’) are nonsense because religion cannot solve the economic, social, and political problems of a society, but only the people themselves. More prayers, more fasting, and more pilgrimages will never solve the ills of the community, but rather good, sensible, and moral legislation within the limits that God has set. These limits and the moral ideals of the Book are not addressed only to the followers of MuÈammad (ß) but to all humankind.

6. synthesis between isl§m and society: isl§m as a universal religion and is as valid for the Peoples Republic of China as it is for the Kingdom of Monaco, provided it is kept out of politics. But we say politics, not society. Isl§m must not and cannot be separated from society.

Sadly, after centuries of political misuse and abuse, isl§m has lost its universality. It has been carelessly sacrificed for the ills of power politics and the political opportunism of our honourable scholars. This book’s aim is to recover Islam’s lost universality and restore its powerful message as it is laid out clearly in All§h’s Book. But only God knows whether we will achieve this aim.

*** JIH§D

In this section we tackle the complex problem of how to understand jih§d. We accept that it is a very sensitive issue and recent events in world politics, in particular after 9/11, have unduly emotionalised the entire debate and severely hampered our understanding. In recent publications on the topic we recognise how easily religious doctrines are mixed up with politics, how legitimate anger about the West’s neocolonialist expansionism is expressed in religious terms, and how readily learned scholars conflate the concept of jih§d with the killing of unbelievers and innocent civilians. We also observe, in response to the threat of terrorism, how authoritarian regimes in the Arab-Muslim world have managed to eradicate any democratic opposition to their autocratic rule, while attempting to appease the Islamist opposition by allowing outdated, medieval ideas of religion to dominate the public debate. In this sensitive

debate about jih§d, we are faced with a dual invasion of our freedom: externally, by the ever more aggressive globalisation of Western capitalism, and internally by the elimination of our civil liberties by oppressive states firmly in the grip of the mukh§bar§t.

This is not just a recent development, however. The entire history of Islamic fiqh is basically characterised by efforts of the #ulam§" to define jih§d with bellicose connotations and to advance reasons for the so-called legitimate killing of the enemies of Islam. Some scholars claim to be innocent because of their ignorance of the subject or try to justify their misunderstandings by saying that they were blindly following the authority of a school of law, while, in fact, they were actively involved in power politics and wanted to please authoritarian rulers by providing them with an expansionist ideology for their imperial ambitions. That Islamist groups today resort to the concept of jih§d as a cloak of legitimacy to hide their lust for political power and authoritarian rule unashamedly, is also not new in Islamic history. This history of abuse begins with the first civil war and the killing of the third caliph #Uthm§n in seventh-century Arabia and finds its culmination in the twentieth century with the dethronement of Reza Shah Pahlavi in Iran and King Farouk in Egypt. It currently ends with the so-called Jihadist groups, the militant Taliban in Afghanistan and the al-Q§#ida networks all over the world. The political history of Islam reveals a frightening habit to use religion for the purpose of usurping political power. The list is indeed very long: Zubayrites, Harurites, Qarmatis, Umayyads, Abbasids, Mamluks, Ottomans, and so on, all used jih§d as a pretext for their hunger for power. Another feature of this fatal alliance between religion and politics is that the jih§d doctrine has been misused over centuries to justify an ever-growing expansion of the Islamic empire by declaring military conquests a 'mission for the spread of Islam' and by disguising conquests and invasions as 'openings' to the religion of Islam. Inevitably, Islam soon became known as the religion of the sword, of violence, terror, oppression, supremacy, hatred, and vengeance, and today's terror in the name of Islam certainly does not help to eradicate this image of Islam as a martial religion.

It is the aim of this section to contribute to a clarification of the concept of jih§d. We will first explore a general definition of the term and

then outline specific categories that properly define the act of ‘fighting in God’s way’. We will need to clarify whether jih§d allows the use of force and in which context opposition to injustice can justifiably be called jih§d. A considerable part of our analysis will be dedicated to a study of issues related to the problem of jih§d, in particular the thorny question of whether al-isl§m allows martyrdom or not.

*** The Term jih§d

The noun jih§d is derived from the third verb form j§hada and thus has the structure and semantic meaning of words of the f§#ala group, such as jid§l (dispute), qit§l (fight), and khiß§m (argument). Jih§d, like these three nouns, connotes a struggle between two sides in which one side wants to overcome and triumph over the other (which may be an individual or a whole group). It has often been assumed that jih§d is derived from the first verb form, jahada, and that the long § is accidental and not constitutive for its meaning. This has led to the understanding of jih§d as a derivative of juhd (exertion) and to the fatal parallel classification of qit§l (fight) as qatl (killing), culminating in the association of jih§d with qatl (killing) and not with qit§l (fight)!

The following two verses show how absurd it is to link jih§d to killing:

We have enjoined on man kindness to parents: but if they (either of them) strive (to force) you [j§had§k] to join with Me (in worship) anything of which you have no knowledge, obey them not. (A l-#Ankabåt 29:8)

“But if they strive to make you [j§had§k] join in worship with Me things of which you have no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration)…” (Luqm§n 31:15)

In both verses the possibility is considered that parents may not want their children to worship God. The force they may apply is described by the term jih§d. This cannot possibly imply the parent's killing of their children, given that God asks the children 'not to obey them', also to 'bear them company in this life with justice"! We could not find a better definition of this aspect of jih§d than in the ÈadÊth in which 'the Prophet (ß) once said to his companions: "You have made a good transition from the lesser jih§d to the greater jih§d." They asked: "What is the greater jih§d?" He said: "A servant's struggle against his desires."[386]

In spite of this textual evidence, the fuqah§" not only successfully associated jih§d with killing (qatl), they also invented an arsenal of arguments that justified armed expeditions, conquests, raids, incursions, and other military activities as essential forms of jih§d. The main tool and principal method of achieving such a mischievous rendering of the term was naskh, abrogation. By using the concept of naskh, according to which Allah's earlier revelations were considered as superseded by later ones, they were able to argue, based on this diachronic logic, that later (human) traditions of the Prophet's companions overruled the authoritative verses of the Book and of the authentic sunna. This is so central to the debate about jih§d that we need to revisit the question of abrogation before we can proceed.

The main argument of the jurists for the existence of abrogation was that some verses of the Book seem to contradict one another. One of their prime examples was the theological discrepancy between the following two verses:

O you who believe! Fear God as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam. ($l-#Imr§n 3:102)

So fear God as much as you can; listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul and those saved from the covetousness of their own souls… (Al-Tagh§bun 64:16)

It confused the exegetes that 3:102 demands fear of God ‘as He should be feared’, that is, with an intensity that is equal to Him, whereas 64:16 only asks to fear God ‘as much as you can’, that is, with an intensity that humans are capable of even if that falls short of how ‘He should be feared’. In order to solve the contradiction it was suggested that 64:16 was abrogated by 3:102 since it did not correspond to the normative expectations of the fuqah§”. The exegetes were also confused by the fact that the Book apparently contradicts itself by calling for tolerance, nonviolence, and peaceful persuasion in some verses, such as:

Let there be no compulsion in religion… (Al-Baqara 2:256) Say, “The truth is from your Lord”: Let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it)…” (Al-Kahf 18:29)

Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: for your Lord knows best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance. (Al-NaÈl 16:125)

While in other verses, the Book seems to promote intolerance and legitimate violence against other religions by an aggressive expansionist theology, as for example in the so-called sword verses of Sårat al-Tawba:

O Prophet! Strive hard against the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be firm against them. Their abode is Hell—an evil refuge indeed. (Al-Tawba 9:73)

Fight those who believe not in God, nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which has been forbidden by God and His Apostle, nor acknowledge the religion of truth, (even if they are) of the people of the Book, until they pay

the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. (Al-Tawba 9:29)

…then fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war)… (Al-Tawba 9:5)

We do not deny that abrogation exists within the Book. Abrogation occurs in two forms: as annulment (ibt§l) and as amendment (ta#dÊl) of previous legislative verses. The Book confirms this:

None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: do you not know that God has power over all things? (Al-Baqara 2:106)

When We substitute one revelation for another—and God knows best what He reveals (in stages)—they say, “You are but a forger”: but most of them understand not. (Al-NaÈl 16:101)

Most fuqah§” base their theory of abrogation on these two verses. However, they have failed to interpret these verses within the context of either preceding or succeeding verses. We believe that 2:106 and 16:101 are specified by 2:105 and 16:102 respectively:

It is never the wish of those without faith among the people of the Book, nor of the pagans, that anything good should come down to you from your Lord. (Al-Baqara 2:105)

Say, the Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from your Lord in truth, in order to strengthen those who believe, and as a guide and glad tidings to Muslims [li’l-muslimÊn].[387] (Al-NaÈl 16:102)

We deduce from this that abrogation occurred between messengerhoods (e.g., between the message of Moses and the message of Jesus), but not within one and the same messengerhood. Verse 5:15 confirms this:

O people of the Book! There has come to you our apostle, revealing to you much that you used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary)… (Al-M§“ida 5:15)

Abrogation became necessary because several centuries had passed between the messengerhoods, life changed, and legal adjustments were needed. This certainly was not the case, however, within the time span of only one messengerhood. We hear in 40:78 that people had forgotten the ‘stories’ of previous messengers who came a long time ago, so Allah had to remind them:

We did a foretime send apostles before you: of them there are some whose story We have related to you, and some whose story We have not related to you… (Gh§fir 40:78)

Abrogation occurred because Allah wanted to implement legal rules that either improved existing legislation (‘We substitute something better’ 2:106) or replaced similar rules (‘We substitute something … similar’ 2:106). The underlying principle of abrogating similar rules is Allah’s wisdom to express the truth within the changing idioms of the time. For example, the truth of al-tauÈÊd is essential to all messengerhoods, starting with Noah (‘a) and ending with MuÈammad (ß), but it needed to be explained differently according to the progressing stages of human societies. In addition, old legislation occasionally required updating to bring it in line with new ritual practices even though the essence of the rule did not change. Let us, for example, compare 21:48 with 2:185:

In the past We granted to Moses and Aaron the criterion (for judgment) [al-furq§n], and a light and a message for those who would do right. (Al-Anbiy§” 21:48)

Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur’an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (signs for) guidance and judgement (between right and wrong) [al-furq§n]… (Al-Baqara 2:185)

The similarities between the first message (to Moses and Aaron) and the second (to MuÈammad) are indeed striking: both were revealed in order to bring light and guidance to ‘those who would do right’, and both contain al-furq§n, formulated in the form of the Ten Commandments to Moses and as a catalogue of orders to MuÈammad

(ß).[388]

But God also abrogated legislation when a rule was to be abolished and replaced by a better one. A good example of this type of abrogation is God’s decision to lessen the severity of the punishment for adultery. Jewish law demanded the death penalty, while the law of the Gospel prescribed forgiveness and mercy with the adulterers, but MuÈammad’s (ß) message finally abrogated both the death penalty and the granting of complete absolution by introducing a ‘better rule’ which stipulates the penalty of flogging with a hundred stripes:

If a man is found sleeping with another man’s wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. (Deuteronomy 22:22)[389]

If anyone of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her. (John 8:7) [390]

The woman and the man guilty of adultery or fornication—flog each of them with a hundred stripes… (Al-Når 24:2)

The Book speaks about the notion of successive messengerhoods by precisely defining the role each messenger had to play. We hear, for example, about the mission of Jesus:

“(I [Jesus] have come to you), to attest the law which was before me. And to make lawful to you part of what was (before) forbidden to you…” ($l #Imr§n 3:50)

And about MuÈammad’s (ß) mission:

“Those who follow the Apostle, the unlettered prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (scriptures)—in the law [Thora] and the Gospel—for He commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; He allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them… (Al-A#r§f 7:157)

This verse stresses the fact that MuÈammad’s (ß) role was to ‘release people from the heavy burdens’ of previous rules. This would occur, for example, by abrogating the death penalty for adultery. It beggars belief that the fuqah§” have ignored all the textual evidence and overruled Allah’s command by shamelessly reintroducing the death penalty for adultery.

A similar evolutionary development of legislation can be observed if we look at the rules on killing. First, we hear about the Law Code of Hammurabi (e.g., paragraphs 196, 197, 200, 229, 230) which basically introduced a lex talionis (law of retaliation).[391] Next, the Torah reiterates the lex talionis of the Code of Hammurabi (Exodus 21:22–25; Leviticus 24:17ff.; Deuteronomy 19:21) but no longer condones its class distinctions.[392] This is explicitly endorsed by the Book (see 5:44), which at that time was, in legal terms, a huge step forward because it established retributive justice as a strong deterrent against intentional killings:

We ordained therein for them: “Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal.” (Al-M§“ida 5:45)

It was We who revealed the law (to Moses): therein was guidance and light… (Al-M§“ida 5:44)

This level of legislation was finally abrogated by MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood. The Book also prohibits homicide but extends this to the killing of all creatures that possess a soul, that is, animals and plants:

Nor take life [nafs = soul]—which God has made sacred—except for just cause… (Al-Isr§” 17:33)

The added concessive subclause ‘except for just cause’ indicates a higher form of legal reasoning because it considers the possibility of justified killings if this follows the principle of utility, for example, the cutting of trees in order to acquire wood, or the slaughtering of animals for food. Any other killing is unlawful and will be prosecuted. Both messengerhoods distinguish between unintentional and intentional homicide. For intentional homicide, both legal systems prescribe the same penalty (death). As for unintentional homicide, the Torah of Moses stipulates that the killer has to flee into one of three cities of Israel to save his life (Deuteronomy 4:41), whereas MuÈammad’s (ß) message is more lenient and only stipulates a fast of two successive months for the killer.

Never should a believer kill a believer; but (if it so happens) by mistake, (compensation is due): If one (so) kills a believer, it is ordained that he should free a believing slave, and pay compensation to the deceased’s family, unless they remit it freely. If the deceased belonged to a people at war with you, and he was a believer, the freeing of a believing slave (is enough). If he belonged to a people with whom you have treaty of mutual alliance, compensation should be paid to his family, and a believing slave be

freed. For those who find this beyond their means, (is prescribed) a fast for two months running: by way of repentance to God: for God has all knowledge and all wisdom. (Al-Nis§” 4:92)

We are now able to return to the problem of an apparent contradiction between 2:256 (prohibiting coercion) and 9:5 (permitting coercion). It can now be ruled out that either verse is abrogated because abrogation did not occur within MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood. The key to the solution lies in the distinction between MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood and his messengerhood. It has been overlooked that verse 9:5 (permitting coercion) is part of his prophethood (nubåwa), whereas verse 2:256 (prohibiting coercion) is part of his messengerhood (ris§la). This distinction has far-reaching consequences. Thus, whereas the verses of messengerhood have legal significance (insofar as we enjoy the power to exercise legislative ijtih§d about them), the verses of prophethood are not legislative at all but are purely informative. The verses of Sårat a l-Tawba which give an account of the military expeditions of the early Muslim community—when killing was a historic necessity—do not state universal laws but only ‘news’: khabar news for MuÈammad’s contemporaries and naba” news for us who live centuries after the events took place.[393]

*** The Act of Witness

The terms shah§da and shahÊd are derived from the root word sh-h-d which appears 160 times in the Book. Its first occurrence is in Sårat al-Baqara (…and call your witnesses [shuhad§“akum] or helpers (if there are any) besides God, if your (doubts) are true, 2:23), and it is mentioned for the last time in Sårat al-Buråj (…and God is witness [shahÊd[un]] to all things, 85:9). None of the 160 occurrences of sh-h-d even remotely concern martyrs or martyrdom. It is indeed a mystery how this bizarre meaning could have ever been associated with the act of giving witness. A l-shahÊd is one of the ninety-nine names of God and describes Him as someone who is permanently present and who is near you so as to see, hear, and listen, as the two following verses confirm:

He is with you wherever you are; He sees all that you do. (A l-\adÊd 57:4, AH)

It was We who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein. (Q§f 50:16)

The message is clear: God can only see, hear and listen (be a witness) because He is present, He is with you, He is ‘nearer to you than your jugular vein’. The active participle of sh-h-d is a l-sh§hid, one ‘who is witnessing’, from which al-shahÊd is derived. The dual of al-sh§hid is al-sh§hid§n, and the dual of al-shahÊd is al-shahÊd§n. Al-sh§hidån is the plural of al-sh§hid, and al-shuhad§” of al-shahÊd. Both terms describe the act of ‘witnessing’, but they denote two different types of it. The first type of witnessing requires the witness to be physically present when something happens and to directly observe and perceive things with his own senses. The second type does not demand physical presence as it requires the witness to testify according to his (previously) acquired knowledge. The act of witnessing given in the latter is based on empirical evidence, that is, similar to a legal case which is assessed purely on the basis of evidence that the police or lawyers have provided. In telling the story of Joseph’s seduction by Potifar’s wife, the Book provides an example of a witness who, even though he was not a member of the household and not even present when the incident happened, was able to testify against Potifar’s wife purely by looking at the state of Joseph’s shirt:

He said: “It was she that sought to seduce me—from my (true) self.” And one of her household saw (this) and bore witness [shahida sh§hid[un]], (thus): “If it be that his shirt is rent from the front, then is her tale true, and he is a liar! * “But if it be that his shirt is torn from the back, then is she the liar, and he is telling the truth!” (Yåsuf 12:26–27) The Book employs sh-h-d as follows:

1. As a term for physical presence (at home during Ramadan) and eyewitness (of the new moon), characterising witness as both presence and observation:

Ramadan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur’an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (signs for) guidance and judgement (between right and wrong). So every one of you who is present (at his home) [fa-man shahida] during that month should spend it in fasting. But if anyone is ill, or on a journey, the prescribed period (should be made up) by days later… (Al-Baqara 2:185)

2. As a term for physical presence in the form of companionship; when Jesus denied that he had ever asked his disciples to worship both God and Mary, [394] the term ‘witness’ is used to point to the time when he was alive (‘when I was a witness over them during my time with them’). After his death, that is, after his presence with, or witness over them, he refuses to take responsibility for his disciples’ action:

“I told them only what You commanded me to: ‘Worship God, my Lord and your Lord’; I was a witness [shahÊd[an]] over them during my time among them. Ever since You took my soul, you alone have been the watcher [al-raqÊb] over them: You are witness

[shahÊd[un]] to all things. (Al-M§“ida 5:117, AH)

3. As a term for someone who is present at the writing of a commercial contract or an official document and confirms its existence with their testimony, showing that they have seen with their own eyes that the partners of the contract or the author of the document have signed it:

…and get two witnesses [shahÊdain], out of your own men, and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as you choose, for witnesses… (Al-Baqara 2:282)

4. As a term for the four witnesses who are present during an act of lewdness; these four (male) witnesses must tell in a court of law what they saw with their own eyes:

If any of your women are guilty of lewdness, take the evidence of four (reliable) witnesses from amongst you against them… (Al-Nis§” 4:15)

We learn from these examples that in the Book a ‘witness’ has five characteristics:

I. A shahÊd witness (note the long Ê) is required to be physically present when something happens. If they give evidence of an event that they themselves did not attend, their status is that of sh§hid witnesses (long §).

II. A shahÊd witness is by definition alive. If someone is dead their status as a witness ceases (as in the case of Jesus). We have learned in 5:117 that after Jesus’ death only Allah alone remained to be the watcher (al-raqÊb) over his disciples: ‘He, eternally, is a witness (shahÊd[un]) to all things’. But when a human being dies, their witness-ship ends.

III. A shahÊd witness is more precise and accurate than a sh§hid witness who does not base his account on direct experience. Even if one were able to completely reconstruct a scene from the past, the account of an eyewitness who was actually present at the scene will always provide more detail and depth.

IV. According to 2:282, contracts are only valid if they are testified to by a shahÊd witness. If they are testified to by a sh§hid witness, the contracts are invalid.

V. A shahÊd is not someone who is killed or kills himself on the battlefield but, for example, the journalist who is embedded in a military unit and reports home what he has witnessed at the battlefront. Whether he is killed in action or whether he returns alive does not at all matter to his status as a shahÊd. Similarly, the peace activist who is thrown into prison, alongside murderers, thieves, and drug dealers, because he protested peacefully against the government's atrocities and numerous violations of human rights—he is also a true shahÊd (pl. shuhad§") because he dared to 'witness' the truth in the face of an inhuman regime.

It has become clear that it is unjustifiable to associate the Qur'anic terms shahÊd or shuhad§" with martyrs or martyrdom. The evidence from the Book is supported by the \ adÊth literature. One particular ÈadÊth stands out because it has been transmitted in not less than 139 variations of text (matn) and in as many chains of narrations (isn§d). This ÈadÊth narrates how MuÈammad (ß) responded to his companions' answer to his question: '"Who of you is a shahÊd?" They said: "Whoever was killed in the way of All§h is a shahÊd." He [MuÈammad (ß)] said: "Verily, the shuhad§" of my nation, in that case, are very few." They said: "[If we are not right in our definition of a shahÊd] Then who are they, O Messenger of Allah?" He said: "Whoever was killed in the way of God is a shahÊd. And whoever died in the way of God is a shahÊd. And whoever died [due to the illness of] the stomach is a shahÊd."'[395] In another ÈadÊth, MuÈammad's (ß) definition is much wider: 'He said: "Whoever was killed in defence of his wealth is a shahÊd. And whoever was killed in defence of his family is a shahÊd. And whoever was killed in defence of his religion is a shahÊd. And whoever was killed in defence of his blood [i.e., life] is a shahÊd."'[396] In a third ÈadÊth the Prophet's (ß) views are even more comprehensive: 'He said: "There are five [ways] and whoever died in one of them is a martyr; the one who is killed in the way of God; the one who is drowned in the way of God; the one who suffered [due to the illness of the] stomach in the way of God; the one who suffered [due to] plague in the way of God; and the woman in childbirth in the way of God."'[397] A fourth ÈadÊth adds: "Whoever departed [went away] in the way of God, and died or was killed is

a shahÊd; whoever breaks his neck by [falling off a] horse or camel is a shahÊd; whoever is bitten by a poisonous creature, or whoever dies in his bed by any death All§h wished for him, is indeed a shahÊd. For him there is Paradise.”’[398] Finally, a fifth ÈadÊth concludes: ‘He said: “Whoever was killed [fighting] against oppression is a shahÊd.”’[399]

MuÈammad (ß) was obviously not happy with the very narrow definition of shahÊd that his companions gave (he rebuked them by saying, ‘Verily, the shuhad§” of my nation, in that case, are very few’).

He corrects them by providing a wider definition that is more compatible with the concept of the Book. He also includes, however, the components of death and killing for God in his definition, which is, as we have shown, an innovation that is against the message of the Book. We have broadly defined the semantic field in which the term sh-h-d is used in the Book (presence in the month of Ramadan, guardianship and social presence, eyewitness of the new moon, signing of a contract or official document, and witnessing an act of lewdness), and none of these have any association with death, killing, or martyrdom. We have also distinguished sh§hid from shahÊd in that the former witness is not required to attest to something he has seen with his own eyes. Those who, according to the shah§da, witness the existence of God are sh§hid witnesses, not shahÊd witnesses because God can neither be seen nor heard. When the Book says that Allah sent MuÈammad (ß) as a witness of God, it uses the term sh§hid and not shahÊd![400] To deny this and to claim to be a shahÊd of God would be to anthropomorphise God, because it would imply that we actually see Him with our own eyes—‘Allah, the Highly exalted, is above what they ascribe to him’.[401]

Critics of our definition of shahÊd may come along and reject it on the grounds that it is too comprehensive. They might object to our notion that basically every single one of us can become a shahÊd, men and women with no distinction. If we accept the Prophet’s (ß) definition but take the component of death away, one might say that most of us will

seek knowledge in one way or another, or will provide for home and family, or will suffer one way or another from some kind of disease. Will this be enough to make us shuhad§”? Our answer to this is that in our definition of shuhad§” we first of all made sure that we did not depart from the semantic field of sh-h-d as it is defined in the Book. Given that the plural shuhad§” is ungendered and connotes witness by men and women, there is no linguistic restriction that would exclude women from being shuhad§”. This is supported by verse 78 of Sårat al-\ajj in which the verb ‘be’ is similarly gender neutral and includes men and women who can be ‘witnesses for mankind’:

…that the Apostle may be a witness for you, and you be witnesses [wa-takunå shuhad§”] for mankind! … (Al-\ajj 22:78)

Our definition also remains faithful to the ÈadÊths of the Prophet (ß). It does not include, however, his reference to death (‘whoever was killed’) since this contradicts the Book. As said above, a shahÊd cannot be dead. He must be alive, present, and see with his own eyes. He witnesses what is evident before his own eyes. A witness of something that is absent (al-gh§“ib) is impossible. For us today, MuÈammad’s (ß) community is absent insofar as it is not present in the current level of civilisational development and the current modes of production.

The other question is whether someone who is killed, for example, in a car accident or by drowning in a river, is to be considered a shahÊd. Since death itself cannot be taken as the decisive component, we need to define the circumstances of his death and explore the reasons why he was killed. We need to find other criteria that make someone a shahÊd. We believe that everyone who is killed in an accident is a shahÊd (a witness of his accident), and that Hell or Paradise (reward or punishment) have nothing to do with it; it will be —as 56:60 says—that death ‘has been decreed as our common lot’.[402] In this sense (of witnessing your own death), all the graves of Muslims and non-Muslims alike become graves of shuhad§”. Our understanding of the prophetical ÈadÊths is that the shuhad§”

are those who are still alive. What MuÈammad (ß) meant to say is that those who witness a serious illness or those who witness a cruel war are the real shuhad§”; since it is impossible to witness either illness or war as a dead person. Death was mentioned in the ÈadÊths only in order to express the idea that if death comes it abruptly ends the act of giving witness. We understand that those listed as prophets, ßidÊqån, shuhad§”, ß§liÈån, and such, are those who, when still alive, publicly declared their faith and for which they eventually gave their lives. Giving their lives was the price they paid for their open declaration of the shah§da, but their death alone did not define them as shuhad§”; they did not hurt or kill anybody, they just behaved bravely when they, defenceless and unarmed, faced a mighty opposition. Abå Bakr, for example, did not earn his title of honour, al-ßiddÊq, through his death but through his sincerity, righteousness, and bravery, while he was still alive! In fact, if someone witnesses the signing of a sales contract and is killed because of his act of witnessing, he will indeed be listed next to the prophets, ßidÊqån, shuhad§”, ß§liÈån, and such, not because—we dare to say—but in spite of his death (because he never wanted to lose his life). Our point of contention is that it is not death as such which is the deciding factor in being a shahÊd. Peace activists who witness the cruelty of their own government and pledge their shah§da are certainly shuhad§” regardless of whether they are killed or continue to protest until they die naturally. Our views correspond with social and political reality because those who die for their convictions or are killed because of their ‘witness’ are few. If death is one aspect of being a true shahÊd, it would apply to the unarmed, peaceful journalist who is killed by a sniper bullet while reporting the news from a war zone.

What about the suicide bomber who blows himself up in the middle of a busy marketplace, killing hundreds of innocent civilians—is he a shahÊd? Or are those civilians who are killed during such incidents shuhad§”? What about the human rights activist who takes part in a peaceful protest demonstration—is he a shahÊd? Or are those politicians shuhad§” who order a massive crackdown on the protesters, arresting and torturing hundreds of them on the pretext of maintaining public order and national security, while in reality fearing that public protest might reveal their corrupt

deals with the army, the police, and the security services? What about the religious zealots who besiege entire villages with their missionary campaigns, using threat and violence to force men and women to adopt their radical religion—are they shuhad§”? Is this really jih§d in the name of Islam and fighting in God’s way? Or is this simply aggression against the social order, a violent negation of life that has nothing to do with either jih§d or the shah§da? We know that the fuqah§”, corrupted by their alliance with despotic rulers (basically since the reign of the Umayyads until today), cannot bring themselves to categorically remove violence, coercion, and death from their definitions of jih§d and the shah§da. In this way they contradict Allah’s Book and Allah’s Messenger (ß).

Clearly, the defence of a nation’s security in the face of outside aggression is an objective necessity and must not be mixed up with the concepts of jih§d or shah§da. The peaceful spread of a religious message by persuasion and good argument is, whether it is done by men or women, a laudable activity if, and only if, it is done in God’s way. Whether someone dies during such a mission should not matter at all. To seek knowledge and to maintain a family are praiseworthy acts if, and only if, it is done in God’s way. Whether someone dies during his studies or in his job should not matter at all. Women will be rewarded for enduring menstruation and childbirth, whether they die or not. The activist who fights against tyranny and for democracy and social justice surely deserves Paradise, if, and only if, his protest is done in God’s way. Whether he dies during his struggle should not matter. All of these activities, however, are not related to the concept of shahÊd, that is, to witness with your own eyes, nor to shuhad§” as proposed by the Book:

And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a sura like thereunto; and call your witnesses [shuhad§“kum] or helpers (if there are any) besides God, if your

(doubts) are true. (Al-Baqara 2:23)

I called them not to witness [m§ ashhadtuhum] the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor (even) their own creation: nor is it for helpers such as Me to take as lead (men) astray! (Al-Kahf 18:51)

O you who believe! Stand out firmly for God, as witnesses [shuhad§”] to fair dealing... (Al-M§“ida 5:8)

These three verses support our reading of the Book. Not even remotely do they link the act of ‘witnessing’ to being killed on the battlefield or to dying for Allah’s cause. Even if we consider verses that use al-istishh§d, the fuqah§“s term for martyrdom, we still cannot see any connection to violent death:

...and get two witnesses [istashhadå shahÊdain], out of your own men... (Al-Baqara 2:282)

If any of your women are guilty of lewdness, take the evidence of four

(reliable) witnesses [istashhadå] from amongst you against them... (Al-Nis§” 4:15)

We still need to clarify the meaning of the phrase ‘in God’s way’ (fÊ sabÊl All§h), which is so often used and abused in the context of the debate about jih§d. Let us first start with the preposition ‘in’ (fÊ). It can be used in basically three different ways:

1. As a preposition of time and place, meaning ‘in’, ‘at’, ‘on’, ‘near’, ‘by’, ‘within’, ‘during’, ‘among’, ‘through’, and such, either literally or metaphorically, for example, ‘Say: “Travel through (fÊ) the earth...”’ (A l-#Ankabåt 29:20) uses fÊ literally within an adverbial clause of place. In ‘so Moses conceived in his mind (fÊ nafsihi) a (sort of) fear’ (•§-H§ 20:67); even though fÊ means literally ‘in’, the fear in Moses’ head is nevertheless not real. Finally,

‘within a few years…’ (Al-Råm 30:4) uses fÊ as a preposition of time.

2. As a preposition of cause, meaning ‘because of’ or ‘for’, for example, the hadÊth says ‘A woman entered Hell because of the cat she imprisoned’,[403] that is, the woman will be punished because of (fÊ) her cruelty to her cat.

3. As a preposition meaning ‘in the company of’ or ‘with’, as in: ‘He will say: “Enter you in the company of (fÊ) the peoples who passed away before you—men and jinns—into the Fire.”

(Al-A#r§f 7:38)

In all three instances, fÊ always points to something that is inside, hidden, or secretly concealed. If we, for example, say ‘I will look into it (fÊhi)’, it indicates that one is keen to discover or disclose what is still hidden or concealed.

The noun sabÊl, often translated as ‘cause’, literally means ‘way’, ‘course’, or ‘means’ and is used in a neutral sense, that is, it can be (theologically) a good or a bad path since the term as such is value free. Its actual nature is determined by either the textual context or explicit attributes, for example, ‘way of God’ or ‘way of evil’:

…it took its course [sabÊlahu] through the sea in a marvellous way! (Al-Kahf 18:63)

Invite (all) to the way of your Lord [sabÊl rabbika] with wisdom and beautiful preaching… (Al-NaÈl 16:125)

In the first verse sabÊl literally means ‘path’, while the second verse uses sabÊl figuratively as ‘way’, in the sense of manner or method. It says ‘way of the Lord’, that is, His manner, method, or doctrine, referring to the straight path of God. But sabÊl can also turn into a ‘way of evil’, that is, of deviation, aberration, and deceit, as we hear in the following verse:

Those who believe fight in the cause of God [fÊ sabÊl All§h], and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil [fÊ sabÊl al-ã§ghåt]… (Al-Nisa” 4:76)

The phrase ‘in God’s way’[404] (fÊ sabÊl All§h) can be found seventy times in the Book. It first occurs in 2:190: ‘Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God loves not transgressors’, and its last 73:20: ‘…yet others fighting in God’s cause…’. In several instances it connotes a fight, struggle, even military battle. In other instances it refers to a struggle for a family’s nafaqa in the form of sustenance, clothing, and shelter. It is often used in c onnection with the term jih§d, less often with the command to ‘travel the world’. In all instances, however, it demands doing something ‘in His way’, that is, according to Allah’s way/method/path. It is not used to demand a human sacrifice for Allah’s cause. The idea that people should sacrifice their and other people’s lives for a higher, divine aim is not found in the Book. ‘Fight in God’s way’ cannot mean ‘kill other people’ or ‘sacrifice yourself for God’. Allah is greater than that anyone should kill for Him.

What does ‘in God’s way’ mean? We believe it means that in the struggle for nafaqa, for example, one should seek money and property in a legal and ethical way. One should not squander things that are permitted, nor should one be parsimonious and forbid what is allowed; one should neither be excessive nor miserly, and one should abstain from what is forbidden. If one abides by these rules, one indeed lives ‘in God’s way’. However, if these rules are broken, one strays from the way of God (sabÊl All§h) and follows on the path of evil (sabÊl al-ã§ghåt):

And spend of your substance in the cause of God [fÊ sabÊl All§h], and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction; but do good; for God loves those who do good. (Al-Baqara 2:195)

Those who spend their substance in the cause of God [fÊ sabÊl All§h], and follow not up their gifts with reminders of their generosity or with injury; for them their reward is with their Lord… (Al-Baqara 2:262)
Behold, you are those invited to spend (of your substance) in the way of God [fÊ sabÊl All§h]. But among you are some that are niggardly. But any who are niggardly are so at the expense of their own souls… (MuÈammad 47:38)

These verses ask us to spend sustenance ‘in God’s way’ (fÊ sabÊl All§h). This can be done in many ways: one may nourish and feed the dependents of the family; one may give ßadaq§t and support charitable organisations; one may finance a school, or a nursery, or a clinic—all these things cover ‘sustenance in God’s way’. In contrast, however, it is against ‘God’s way’ to establish security services that terrorise the population; it is against ‘God’s way’ to supply paramilitary organisations with rocket-propelled grenades to shoot down civilian airplanes; it is against ‘God’s way’ to provide militant groups with explosives which they detonate as bombs in crowded market places or on trains containing hundreds of commuters during the rush hour, killing innocent people who have not killed anyone and who have never been involved in any military operation.

Let us also look at the term ·-r-b which has often been misused in the debate about jih§d. What does ·araba ‘in God’s way’ really mean? If we take verses of the Book as evidence, it simply connotes ‘to travel the world’ and ‘to travel fast’ for the purpose of trade, commerce, study, or research, as it is stated in the following verse:

O you who believe! When [idh§] you go abroad in the cause of God [·arabtum fÊ sabÊl All§h], investigate carefully, and say not

to any one who offers you a salutation: “You are none of a believer!”, coveting the perishable goods of this life… (Al-Nis§” 4:94)

Three things can be deduced from how the above verse uses ·araba ‘in God’s way’:

1. The particle idh§ in 4:94 (if, when) expresses a fulfillable condition ‘when you go abroad in the cause of God’; there is no doubt about the possibility of going abroad and travelling the world. The ‘when’ particle is like the idh§ in the verse ‘when (idh§) the sun (with its spacious light) is folded up…’ (A l-TakwÊr 81:1), expressing a condition that is inevitably and naturally fulfilled. This is not the case if we assume the verse to mean ‘killing or going to war in God’s way’, simply because peace is the base condition of life while war is an exception to it. Wars do not happen because they are inevitable, natural, or essential to human life. They are rather accidental and anomalous, destroying the normal rhythm of social life. An interpretation of d-r-b as ‘to kill’ would, therefore, not comply with the need to have a fulfillable condition required by idh§.

2. The second part of 4:94 orders the believers not to reject greetings from a nonbeliever by saying, ‘you are not a believer’ [AH]. But exegetes, in forcing a militant interpretation upon the verse and by seeking textual support for the so-called sword verses of Sårat a l-Tawba, claimed to see not the expression of a greeting in al-sal§m, but rather the offering of peace (after a military struggle). We absolutely reject this interpretation because al-sal§m refers to a greeting (‘Peace be with you’) in normal encounters of everyday life, and therefore it is not an offer of peace negotiations or a plea to save one’s life when facing death by a Muslim warrior.[405] We also think it is more plausible to render the phrase لست مؤمناً not as ‘you are not a believer’

(mu”min[an]) but rather as ‘you are not safe or secure’ (mu”ammanan), because the Arabic term mu”min[an] (believer) can also be read as mu”amman[an] (safe, secure).[406] Be that as it

may, what we want to stress is that the exegetes' hawkish reading of the verse can be thoroughly countered by a much more peaceful interpretation.

3. The verse concludes by linking the act of 'going abroad in God's way' with the possibility to do it 'out of desire for the chance gains in this life' [AH]. We believe that these 'chance gains in this life' entail the pursuit of studies, the participation in conferences, the development of business relations, meeting partners in trade and commerce, even tourism. Traditional exegetes have claimed that this verse speaks negatively about the 'ephemeral goods of this life' which are incompatible with the believers' quest for guidance and faith. But we believe that the Arabic text (#ara· a l-Èay§t a l-duny§) does not allow such a negative rendering.[407]

We have shown that the phrase ·arabtum fÊ sabÊl All§h in 4:94 should not be rendered to mean a belligerent 'fight in God's way'. We propose as an alternative rendering 'to travel the world in God's way', in which the association with war and violent conflict is entirely eliminated. The adverbial clause 'in God's way' defines how one should go about things, stipulating a condition that must be met if something is done 'in God's way'. The most important characteristic of human interaction 'in God's way' is to speak fairly and gently and to invite people with wisdom and eloquent preaching to live a Godcentred life:

...speak fair to the people... (Al-Baqara 2:83)

Invite (all) to the way of your Lord [sabÊl rabbika] with wisdom and beautiful preaching... (Al-NaÈl 16:125)

To 'travel the world' means to leave home, while the one who travels is a muh§jir. Verse 4:100 proves that hijra does not connote exile and life as an armed renegade, soldier, or guerrilla fighter because such a dangerous muh§jir would never find 'many a refuge, wide and spacious':

He who forsakes his home (man yuh§jir) in the cause of God (fÊ sabÊl All§h), finds in the earth many a refuge, wide and spacious… (A l-Nis§” 4:100)

To ‘travel the world in God’s way’ means to do business peacefully with the rest of the world. The condition is to do it ‘in God’s way’. Owners of global companies must forsake their monopoly over the market if they want to do business in God’s way. Salespeople must stop cheating and looking for a quick profit if they want to sell their products in God’s way. Producers of groceries and dairy products must stop adulterating their food with unhealthy substances if they want to provide the supermarkets with products in God’s way. Joiners, tailors, carpenters, plumbers, painters, and so on, all need to practice their trades diligently and competently without overcharging their customers if they want to do things in God’s way. Surely, one does not need to be a resistance fighter if one wants to ‘travel the world in God’s way”!

According to the Book istishh§d does not mean martyrdom but rather ‘to give evidence as an eyewitness’ (2:282; 4:15). How is it possible that this term lost its Qur’anic meaning? We believe that the semantic shift occurred after MuÈammad’s (ß) death. We know that the Prophet (ß) classified jih§d as either great or small. The greater jihad, he said, is the struggle of the soul against its animalistic passions and cravings. The smaller jih§d is armed defence in the event of external aggression. In the later works of fiqh, however, jih§d becomes a technical term for armed conflict with unbelievers. Unbelievers had to be fought until they accepted Islam, and if they refused, they should be killed. Jih§d, in this technical sense, was then qualified by the phrase ‘fight in God’s way’ by which it adopted the meaning of ‘to kill in God’s way in the fight against unbelievers’. Jih§d, originally expressing the notion of self-defence, was finally linked to the offensive concept of ‘conquest’ through raids (ghazwa). This was then retrospectively applied to MuÈammad’s military actions, which were all identified as ‘conquests’, thus contradicting the historical evidence that they were in fact defensive battles of survival (and this includes the battle of Tabåk).[408] This identification of jih§d with conquest is unacceptable. The meaning attached to the terms conquest or invasion is always

pejorative. There are no positive or beneficial conquests. We say, ‘Hitler’s Germany conquered France during the Second World War’, and the word conquest gives Germany’s war a negative and aggressive connotation. We also say, ‘The French fought against the German invasion’, by which we attach a positive significance to the fight of the French (against the invasion). The term ghazwa was taken from the vocabulary of J§hiliyya Arabs. They regularly carried out raids into neighbouring tribes, seeking booty by extremely violent means. In flagrant contradiction with the Qur’anic term jih§d, the fuqah§“s revived this aggressive concept of conquest and projected its meaning on the concept of a defensive battle. In order to do so, the jurists had to produce a semantic transformation of a whole list of terms in the Book: shah§da, shahÊd, istishh§d, shuhad§”, ·araba, fÊ sabÊl All§h, and such; by which the true (irenic) meaning was stripped off and a false (belligerent) meaning put on, and hence constructing an Islamic concept of ‘conquest’ (which in reality was the old tribal notion of an offensive raid). As a result, the shuhad§” of the Book were turned into soldiers of Islam and a shahÊd was turned into a fanatical warrior who falls heroically on the battlefield (this in spite of the fact that a shahÊd needs to be alive and ceases to be a shahÊd when he dies).

The decline of political culture in the Arab-Muslim world started immediately after MuÈammad’s (ß) death. It was triggered by the political crisis caused by the caliphate of #Uthm§n b. a l-#Aff§n. His leadership had alienated a growing number of people who eventually demanded his removal from power. #Uthm§n’s reluctance to give up power and to hold on to it as long as he could caused the breakdown of political culture which eventually led to #Uthm§n being killed by his opponents. We see in this event the beginning of a fatal development of political corruption: the rulers’ fear of assassination by their opponents; the tendency to hold on to power for as long as possible; the frustration of political opposition leading to calls for violent resistance; lack of democracy, plurality, and a will to reform. We can identify five aspects that were decisive for the deterioration of political culture in the Arab-Muslim world and for the emergence of the concept of ‘martyrdom’ in Islamic thought:

1. The confusion over the term ‘consultation’ (al-shår§):

…who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance. (A l-Shår§ 42:38)

Despite the clear ruling of the Book that consultation has to be mutual and consensual, shår§ came to be understood as the ruler's prerogative to allow his subjects to voice discontent which he was, however, free to ignore. In contrast to a true open and democratic system of mutual consultation, as practised by the Prophet (ß) who accepted collective decisions even if they did not reflect his own views, shår§ was reduced to a means of identifying potential critics of the regime. If people dared to articulate views that threatened the ruler's position they were eventually silenced by imprisonment and torture.

2. The emergence of the concept of 'dispatching' / 'sending of' (al-tasyÊr): This was practiced in two ways, 1) by escorting a group of critics to the ruler's palace where, intimidated and frightened by the presence of fully armed guards, they had to listen to the views of the despot without been given the chance to respond; 2) by sending them ('unescorted') as soldiers to the front where they had to fight, and die, alongside the troops of professional ghazwa warriors. For their comfort and psychological assurance, they were made to believe that their fight was a form of jih§d. This convinced the warriors, who fought bloody wars, that they were in fact muj§hidÊn. It did not take long for this ideological dilemma to lead to a confusion between ghazwa and jih§d. Historical documents show that this terminological confusion occurred in the transition period between the era of the rightly guided caliphs and the beginning of Umayyad rule. By the time that Islamic fiqh emerged, a clear distinction between ghazwa and jih§d had already completely disappeared. The muj§hidÊn were subsequently defined as 'warriors for the cause of Allah' and shuhad§" became the 'martyrs of Islam' who were given a guaranteed entry-ticket to Paradise.

3. The practice of eviction:

To force people to leave their houses and send them into exile has become a favourite way to silence critics of the regime.

4. Manipulation by bribery:

If the above three methods did not yield the expected results, tactics had to change. After having being kept in abject poverty for a humiliatingly long period of time, critics were suddenly showered with money, goods, and all sorts of privileges. The aim was to corrupt their souls by asking them to join the ranks of the mercenaries who yearned after the booty gained in the most recent raids and who became rich by amassing the plundered goods of foreign peoples. And who would listen to the criticisms of a corrupted soul?

5. Physical elimination:

The last and final solution when all other strategies have failed.

Our point of contention is this fatal confusion of power politics and religious doctrine. As a result, a political (!) doctrine of jih§d emerged that justified the military conquest of foreign cultures. It justified, in religious (!) terms, the sacrifice of soldiers and the political elimination of opponents by declaring the enemy infidels and the fallen soldiers martyrs. The peaceful sermon that wanted to persuade people, in a good and convincing argument, to follow the path of God was abandoned in favour of parading the military might of brutal warriors. The Book's call to 'travel the world in God's way' turned into a pretext to 'spread Islam by the sword' which, in fact, was just another ideological pretext for looting and plundering foreign villages and cities. As usual, the prophetical ÈadÊths were used to replace the peaceful message of the Book with a more bellicose rendering that legitimised the political goals of the regimes. Just look at how exegetes interpreted the politically neutral (read: purely soteriological) term 'victory':

Verily We have granted you a manifest victory. (Al-FatÈ 48:1)

When comes the help of God, and victory. (Al-Naßr 110:1)

For no reason whatsoever fatÈ, in conjunction with naßr in 110:1, became in both verses Allah’s description of MuÈammad’s (ß) conquest of Mecca in 630. This interpretation ignores the fact that in 48:2–3, the text clearly specifies why the Prophet (ß) was granted success or victory;[409] namely, that he had secured four things from God: a) His forgiveness of sins; b) His grace; c) His guidance to the straight path; and d) His powerful help. Nothing supports the connection made by the exegetes between the conquest of Mecca and Allah’s granting of these four things. The error of the exegetes is even more obvious if we look at other verses that use the term fatÈ:

In the God is our trust. Our Lord! Decide you [iftaÈ] between us and our people in truth, for you are the best to decide. (Al-A#r§f 7:89)

If the people of the towns had but believed and feared God, We should indeed have opened out [la-fataÈn§] to them (all kinds of) blessings from heaven and earth… (Al-A#r§f 7:96)

Yet you [Prophet] will see the perverse at heart rushing to them for protection, saying, ‘We are afraid fortune may turn against us.’ But God may well bring about a triumph [bi’l-fatÈ] or some other event of His own making: then they will rue the secrets they harboured in their hearts. (Al-M§“ida 5:52, AH)

The first verse employs the imperative iftaÈ (‘you decide’) in the sense of God’s command; the second verse uses fataÈn§ (‘we opened out’) to refer to God’s blessing; while the third uses fatÈ (‘victory’)[410] to suggest the possibility of reconciliation or peacemaking with ‘those in whose hearts is a disease’. What on earth made exegetes think that these verses describe military activities and success on the battlefield? We fear that medieval commentators allowed

their ideological agenda to hijack the nonbellicose connotations of the Book. How else can we explain why they understood al-fataÈ al-#aíÊm as a reference to a situation of war, that is, to the siege of a town by an army and to the imminent demolition of its walls by the attacking forces, in the following verse?

Say: “Our Lord will gather us together and will in the end decide the matter between us (and you) in truth [bi’l-Èaqq] and justice [wa-håwa al-fataÈ al-#aíÊm]...” (Saba’ 34:26)

Let us finally explore whether 3:169 really justifies martyrdom in the name of Islam. We will first quote the verse in full and then attach our commentary summarised in five points:

[Prophet], do not think [la taÈsabanna] of those who have been killed in God’s way [alladhÊn qutilå fÊ sabÊl All§h] as dead. They are alive with their Lord [#inda rabbihim], well provided for. ($l #Imr§n 3:169, AH]

1. The verse mentions ‘those who have been killed in God’s way’ (alladhÊn qutilå fÊ sabÊl All§h). Death in God’s way can be caused by a multitude of reasons. We believe that it is inexcusable to reduce this only to death on the battlefield. The ÈadÊth of MuÈammad (ß) cites over ten different types of people who are killed in God’s way. These types can be applied, if removed from the narrow context of seventh-century Arabia, to almost all inhabitants of this world. However, in order to be real shuhad§”, the condition is that they are alive. If they are killed and given their lives for the defence of their shah§da, they must not have killed anyone for this and should not have purposefully intended to be dead! We heard the condition stated in the Book that a shahÊd is an eyewitness who must be alive. If he dies, his witness ends and after which, as the example of Jesus tells us, God takes over as ‘watcher’ and ‘witness’ (5:117).[411]

2. If we accept a literal reading of 3:169 (‘those who have been killed are still alive with their Lord’), and thus follow the exegetes, we would commit the sin of anthropomorphism. Moreover, we would contradict logic. If we, for example, understand literally that those killed in God’s way are not really dead but live ‘with their Lord’, we would assume that they physically found a place ‘with Him’. Such a reading not only anthropomorphizes God, it also divinises mortal souls, and both of these things are theologically untenable. The notion that these people are only seemingly dead also contradicts the clear evidence of the decay of their bodies in the grave. It is absurd to claim that they possess ‘holy’ bodies which remain fresh and free from any decomposition until the Day of Judgement, when evidence proves the opposite.

3. For a correct interpretation of 3:169 we must avoid the confusion between ‘soul’ and ‘spirit’. It is the soul (nafs) that returns to dust, that is, to its original state (‘It is God that takes the souls (of men) at death…’, A l-Zumar 39:47). But the spirit (råÈ) returns—not necessarily ascends—to God, its Creator, who breathed it into His creatures when they developed into rational human beings who are able to think in abstract terms. Death has, therefore, two meanings: 1) a material, physical meaning that implies decay and decomposition (‘every soul shall have a taste of death…’, Al-Anbiy§” 21:35); and 2) the symbolic, figurative meaning of absence or lack of something, for example, of light when ‘death’ means darkness: ‘Is a dead person brought back to life by Us, and given light with which to walk among people, comparable to someone trapped in deep darkness who cannot escape?…’ (Al-An#§m 6:122, AH). While the first meaning is covered by the term mawt (real death), the second meaning is contained in the term waf§” (absence).

4. Verse 3:169 starts with an imperative: ‘Think not!’ The Arabic la taÈsabanna is derived from the verb Èasiba, used here negatively in the sense of ‘to be deluded’ or ‘to wrongly assume’. In this sense it is used forty-five times in the Book, indicating that something is really different from how it appears on the surface:

Think not [l§ taÈsabanna] that God does not heed the deeds of those who do wrong… (Ibr§hÊm 14:42)

Does man think [a-yaÈsab] that We cannot assemble his bones? (Al-Qiy§ma 75:3)

The imperative, ‘Think not!’, in 3:169 is intended to correct a misconception of death. The verbal format l§ taÈsabanna (3rd pers. sing.), even though formally directed at the Prophet (ß) only, actually addresses all human beings, men and women. With His rebuke, Allah wants to forbid His noble Prophet (ß) from assuming that those killed in God’s way are dead while they are in reality alive (for Him). He wants MuÈammad (ß) to understand that both life and death must not always be understood literally or physically; that someone whom our eyes cannot see and our hands cannot touch could still be (with God, i.e., in His eyes) alive. If life and death were to be physically or biologically understood in 3:169, its message (‘they are alive’) would be a lie because our human senses would contradict it—which is categorically impossible.

In sum, to understand this verse to mean that those who are killed on the battlefield spreading the religion of Islam by the sword are not really dead, since their bodies will not decay and since they and their unharmed bodies will find a space near God, is as ridiculous as it is dangerous. It is a fundamental misreading of every single word of this verse, and exegetes who do so must be accused of anthropomorphism, literalism, and an over-reliance on the military history of nascent Islam. In this section it was our aim to identify the verses that have been illegitimately loaded with the semantics of war and we hope that we have given sufficient evidence for this. In the next section we will study the verses that must be read within the context of killing in Allah’s way.

*** Fight (al-qit§l)

The Arabic term qit§l consists of four radicals (q-t-a-l). It is derived from the four-radical verb

q§tala which belongs to the same verb form (f§#la) as verbs such as j§dala (to contest), kh§ßama (to quarrel), sh§raka (to share) and b§ya#a (to make a contract). The long § in qit§l is—as with the long § in jih§d—not accidental, as some have claimed, but rather essential to the word's meaning. To ignore the long § in qit§l has serious implications and would create even more harm than if it was neglected in the word a l-jih§d. This is because if we took q§tala as a synonym for qatala (the first verb form without a long §), the meaning of 'to fight' (q§tala) would turn into 'to kill' (qatala), which, as we will explain in this section, would be a serious misunderstanding of the term.

Together with its many verbal cognates, the noun qit§l occurs seventy-one times in the Book. It is first mentioned in 2:190[412] and last mentioned in 73:20.[413] It connotes a violent clash between two opposing sides, either two individuals or two groups of people. If only one side seeks to fight while the other refuses to fight, the resulting collision cannot be called qit§l, as we read in the following verse:

"Should you stretch your hand out to kill me [li-taqtulanÊ], I will not stretch my hand out to kill you [li-aqtulak[a]] [414]; for I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds." (Al-M§"ida 5:28, MF)

This implies that if one side does not commit itself to a fight and withdraws, while the other side keeps fighting, it becomes a one-sided battle (i.e., qatala). A fight is also one-sided if it is initiated by one side (the aggressor) while its opponent is not given a chance to respond. This is the case with suicide missions in Iraq and elsewhere in which innocent, defenceless people are attacked by an unknown, armed aggressor. Such missions are premeditated collective killings in a one-sided fight, because they are planned deliberately to give the ambushed victims no chance to either defend themselves or to fight back.

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The best description of qit§l can be found in the following verse:

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Fighting is prescribed for you [kutiba #alaikum al-qit§l], and you dislike it [wa-huwa kurh[un] lakum]. (Al-Baqara 2:216)

This verse states that the obligation to fight is one of the hardest duties to fulfil. The phrase ‘and you dislike it’ means that a human soul will find it naturally very distressing to fight and kill anyone. To fight, therefore, must be seen as a last resort when all other means to solve a conflict have been exhausted. And yet, ‘to fight’ has been prescribed as a duty by Allah, similar to His order to fast[415] and to exact retribution.[416] It is a religious obligation that, like any other obligation, only the rational and sane person may fulfil. Some exegetes have claimed that it is an individual duty to which everyone must comply. Others have claimed that it was only a duty for the Prophet (ß) and his companions and is, therefore, not applicable any longer. The latter view is driven by the fear of admitting that Islam prescribes fighting as a religious duty. The truth is that ‘to fight’ has been glossed as jih§d, and ‘to fight in God’s way’ has become mixed up with the notion of military conquest. The first error occurred when ‘to fight’ (al-qit§l) was defined as the essence of the ill-named ‘smaller jih§d’ (as it was incorrectly called by the Prophet). The second, more dangerous mistake was made, when ‘smaller jih§d’ was given an exclusively military connotation: ‘to fight’ (qit§l) turned into ‘to kill’ (qatl), which was then associated with the military battles for the expansion of the Islamic empire. Once again, this terminological confusion was caused by the exegetes’ failure to distinguish between the verses of messengerhood and prophethood in the Book. The exegetes ignored the fact that the stories of MuÈammad’s (ß) military expeditions belong to the verses of prophethood and do not possess legislative authority.

It will be necessary therefore to first point out the difference between jih§d and ‘to fight’ (qit§l). In the previous section we learned that jih§d comprises many activities that are not in any way militant, such as the duty to seek knowledge wherever you are, to provide maintenance and sustenance for your family, to suffer the pain of menstruation, to provide guardianship for a woman, to resist the temptations of your carnal soul, to be steadfast in the face of great challenges, and so forth. None of these things involve throwing stones or firing rocket grenades; they can be achieved without resorting to physical violence and are indeed the opposite of armed conflicts. This is in sharp contrast to ‘fight’ in the sense of qit§l which, by definition, implies the use of violence to resolve a conflict when all other means have failed. Examples of such fights are given by the Book: both fights between individuals[417] and battles between large armies (e.g., the battles of Badr, UÈud, Khaybar, and a l-•§“if). All these fights are reported as historic events, like the stories about Moses and Noah, and are thus just ‘Qur’anic stories’ which do not belong to the verses of messengerhood. This makes it possible to regard Allah’s order ‘to fight’ as an individual duty that is valid at all times and places (‘fighting is prescribed for you, and you dislike it’, 2:216). This is different from the so-called sword verse (‘then fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them’, 9:5) because the command to fight here is historically qualified. Whereas the former verse contains an order to fight that has universal validity, the latter verse gives an order that is applicable only in a very specific historical context and should not be universally applied.

It is astonishing to see how consistently the fuqah§” have inflicted a military intention on the Book’s vocabulary. Dogmatically using the notion of synonymity, they equated al-fatÈ (opening) with al-Èarb (war), jih§d with fight, and fight with raiding (ghazwa). Their ill-conceived theory of abrogation meant that later Medinan verses, such as 9:5, are thought to repeal earlier Meccan verses, as a consequence of which the sword replaced peaceful persuasion in the believers’ ‘fight in God’s way’. This was in addition to the fuqah§“s flagrant attempts to totally eradicate the original meanings, for example, when they invented completely new fiqh terminology (such as the notion of an ‘offensive jih§d’) that has increasingly conditioned our understanding of the original terms.[418] Such innovations, enforced to

eliminate the Book’s authentic meanings, have often been legitimised by reference to the existence of a consensus (al-ijm§#) among our honourable scholars—as if that would mean anything! Not that it is wrong to achieve a consensus on matters of the Book and to come to an agreement on how to apply it during a specific period of time and in a specific type of society. But it is fundamentally wrong to take an ijm§” that was achieved by a circle of scholars in one of the early centuries of Islam and propound it as a source of legislation binding for all future generations of Muslims, eternally valid until the Last Hour! Such eternal validity of a ijm§# gives human beings (e.g., scholars of the ninth to tenth centuries) an immortality that, strictly, can only be attributed to God. It ignores the simple fact that human societies constantly progress and that conditions of life always change. It ignores the fact that new developments will inevitably overturn old consensuses, and that new parties, groups, and movements will emerge that question old certainties and undermine the agreements of the past. This is not to mention the romanticist, utopian bias in the scholars’ conception of ijm§#, because such a comprehensive consensus is notoriously difficult to achieve. Societies possess complex structures of human organisations whose complexities cannot possibly be reduced or eliminated except by despotic, authoritarian force. Open societies have pluralistic, heterogeneous, and multifarious structures, producing myriads of different views and opinions that make it impossible to achieve a communal consensus. What the notion of ijm§# disguises is the historical truth that the ‘consensus of the umma’ has never amounted to more than the agreement of a few privileged scholars who declare their own views as sacrosanct while dismissing divergent views as ‘heretical’. It also ignores the possibility that even an absolute consensus can still be wrong. The fact that in Israel there used to be a national consensus to occupy the territory of Palestine did not make the occupation right or sacrosanct, and the beginning of an internal opposition in Israel to the occupation proves that one-time overwhelming majorities are only temporary and can never be eternally maintained. We must relinquish this romanticist and utopian notion of ijm§# by acknowledging the historical truth that legislative decisions have always been made by an intellectual elite—whether they represent a majority or minority—and that it can never attain immortality or infallibility. What might be right and good for one specific historical situation could be disastrous in another, and what has been harmful and regressive in an earlier period might be fruitful and beneficial in a later one, which is best illustrated by the example of the Mu#tazila.[419]

The act of fighting is, as 2:216 says, an obligation that is part of the human disposition, even though it is naturally disliked by everyone. This instinctive aversion to fight is imprinted (maktåb) into human nature, perhaps, similar to the monthly cycle of women as we hear about it in the prophetical ÈadÊth,[420] or the survival instinct of human beings (who come to the fore regardless of how we feel about it). The phrase '…and you dislike it' means that fighting is unnatural; it means that humans must be fore against their will to fight (and use violence to kill their opponents).[421] Nonetheless, the phrase 'it is prescribed to you' implies a religious obligation that every human being has to fulfil, like the obligation to fast ('fasting is prescribed to you…', 2:183) or the obligation of answering 'like with like' in response to murder ('the law of equality is prescribed to you in case of murder…', 2:178), and this in spite of the fact that human beings naturally show great aversion to such acts and would instinctively avoid them as much as they could.

The universal nature of 'fighting is prescribed to you' contradicts the view that fighting was only an obligation for the Prophet (ß) and his companions. Since fighting is a natural disposition (inasmuch as the dislike of it) it is generally applicable to everyone; and indeed, a dislike of fighting has been observed with people who lived long before MuÈammad (ß) ('He [MuÈammad] said: "Is it not possible, if you were commanded to fight, that you will not fight?", Al-Baqara 2:246). A dislike for fighting will be part of our constitution until the Last Hour. Such universality does not square with the common view that fighting is only a so-called collective or representative duty (al-kif§ya) which is fulfilled by only a few people for the benefit of all. The verse says 'it is prescribed to you (lakum)', implying all of us, because 'to you' does not pertain to a specific group of people but rather includes everyone who lived before or after the Prophet (ß). If the duty to fight was only a collective duty, as some fuqah§" have claimed, we should then apply the same thinking to the preceding verse 2:215, that is, a few people should pay charity for the benefit of all—which would be rather absurd.[422]

God made 'aversion to fight' a natural disposition, and that includes 'dislike for killing' and carrying out any other destructive act. And yet His revelation

made it incumbent upon every human being to fight if they need to (‘Fighting is ordained for you, though you dislike it…’, AH). After having explained the conditions for such necessary fights, the Book issues several verses with the imperative ‘Fight!’, calling people to action (even though they dislike it). There is no reason to assume that the command ‘Fight!’ (Ar. q§tilå) is only directed at a select few, since the plural form of the verb q§tilå suggests that it is addressed at all humankind. In their deliberate effort to impose a military connotation upon the text, the fuqah§” believed that ‘Fight!’ addresses only a few, that is, the army of the Islamic empire that fought wars on behalf of the entire community. Such interpretations, of course, say more about the historical (medieval and premodern) context of our scholars, in which military castes such as the Mamluks, Turks, and Janissaries held the upper hand and saw their military aggression justified by the fuqah§“s’ readings of the Qur’an, more than about the actual meaning of verses in the Book.

The Aims and Objectives of Fighting

We know that when the Book talks about victory in 48:1 (‘Verily We have granted you a manifest victory (fatÈ[an]).’), the two verses that follow give four objectives of this victory: to provide for God’s, a) forgiveness, b) grace, c) guidance to the straight path, and d) powerful help.[423] We also know that when the Book in 49:13 refers to God’s creation of humankind into ‘male and female, nations and tribes’, it also attaches the divine rationale to it ‘that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other))’.[424] The same applies to the Book’s other instructions to fast, pray, do the pilgrimage, believe in God and His Messenger (ß), and so forth, which are all introduced along with their purpose (e.g., to show God’s mercy, to purify the believers’ souls, etc.). It is therefore surprising that God’s order to fight (2:216) is given without any explanation of its aims. Surely, it cannot imply that there is no divine rationale for the command. It only means that we have to look elsewhere, and we believe that the Book provides these three objectives: 1) so that God’s word reigns supreme; 2) so that the earth is protected from destruction; and 3) so that the house of the Lord is preserved against destruction. These objectives can be found in the following three verses:

If you help not (your leader), (it is no matter): for God did indeed help him, when the unbelievers drove him out: he had no more than one companion; they two were in the cave, and he said to his companion, “Have no fear, for God is with us”: then God sent down His peace upon him, and strengthened him with forces which you saw not, and humbled to the depths the word of the unbelievers. But the word of God is exalted to the heights [kalimat All§h hiya a l-#uly§]: for God is exalted in might, wise. (Al-Tawba 9:40)

…And did not God check one set of people by means of another [wa-lau-l§ daf #[u] All§h al-n§s ba#·ahum bi-ba#·[in]], the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But God is full of bounty to all the worlds. (A l-Baqara 2:251)

…Did not God check one set of people by means of another [wa-laul§ daf #[u] All§h al-n§s ba#·ahum bi-ba#·[in]], they would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated in abundant measure ... (Al-\ajj 22:40)

First aim: the exaltation of God’s word

Since verse 40 of Sårat al-Tawba has often been used to justify sectarian strife, partisan spirit, and religious chauvinism, we need to have a closer look at it in our discussion of the aims of fighting. The verse discusses three things: first, MuÈammad’s (ß) and Abå Bakr’s (r) flight from Mecca; second, the battle of Badr; and third, the divine rationale that lies behind the violent conflicts of that period. The problem with 9:40 lies in the phrase ‘the word of God is exalted to the heights’ because exegetes have found it difficult to explain what ‘the word of God’ (kalimat All§h) means. Kalima (word) is a singular noun whose plural can either mean ‘speech’ (if it is the collective plural kal§m)[425] or ‘existence’, that is, the laws of objective reality (if the plural is kalim§t). [426] It certainly cannot refer to the first part of the shah§da

(‘there is no god but God’) as many exegetes have believed, because such a rendering would make no sense in the context of many other verses of the Book, such as 3:45[427] and 10:33.[428] Instead, the shah§da (‘there is no god but God’) is part of God’s speech (kal§m), as laid out in the Book—of which its readers either approve or disapprove—but God’s words (kalim§t) are the laws of the universe that are there unconditionally—whether people approve or disapprove of them. (“And God by His words (bi-kalim§tihi) does prove and establish His truth, however much the sinners may hate it!” Yånus 10:82). If the shah§da (‘there is no god but God’) were one of God’s words (kalim§t) it would mean that it has become objective reality, implying that we are all monotheists and that we would not find a single idolater or disbeliever in the whole world.

In the context of 9:40 and 2:216 we notice that the ultimate aim of any fight is to establish God’s word in the world. The words of God (kalim§t) yield all the distinctive marks that God has provided for us, rational human beings, since they represent all the laws of objective reality that nobody can remove or undo. Allah has explained these laws in their totality, and because of this His words have become reality. God has given His words to men and jinn who perceive them as the ultimate expression of freedom. Free will, a selfdetermined quest for a better life, and the choice of religion and ideological conviction are the most important features of the freedom that lies in God’s words. By their predisposition to act like free men, people will (naturally) implement justice and equality; and yet in a society where personal freedom and the notion of free will are absent, the intuitive inclination towards justice and equality will be inhumanely blocked. We understand justice as legal fairness in the spirit of verse 4:58,[429] and equality as equality before the law. This equality does not mean absolute equality where everyone possesses the same amount of money or property. Such was the futile dream of communism that is as utopian and unrealistic as it is counterproductive to all the natural urges to work that human beings possess.

Our notion of justice is different from the notion of a just despot— so much cherished in the Arab-Muslim world—a notion which, to say the least, is illusionary and in the realm of politics reflects an inexcusable naivety.

The Book’s position is clear on this since it defines ‘fight in God’s way’ (a l-qit§l fÊ sabÊl All§h) as a struggle against tyranny and despotism:

Those who believe fight in the cause of God [yuq§tilån fÊ sabÊl All§h], and those who reject faith fight in the cause of evil [yuq§tilån fÊ sabÊl a l-ã§ghåt].[430] So fight you against the friends of Satan; feeble indeed is the cunning of Satan. (Al-Nis§” 4:76)

For a believer, any fight in God’s way is a fight against what those who reject faith represent: al-ã§ghåt, the cause of evil, that is, tyranny and despotism. This implies that any other category of fight, if it is not directed against tyranny and despotism, is—by definition—not a fight in God’s way.

One decisive feature of any fight in God’s way is that it does not tolerate any form of compulsion in questions of religion. We hear in the Book:

Let there be no compulsion in religion [l§ ikr§h fi’l-dÊn]. Truth stands out clear from error; whoever rejects evil [fa-man yakfur bi”-l-ã§ghåt] and believes in God has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And God hears and knows all things. (Al-Baqara 2:256)

The verse identifies ‘no compulsion in religion’ as an essential part of people’s faith in God, while at the same time it associates compulsion and force with those who allow tyranny and despotic rule. The Arabic term for tyranny (al-ã§ghåt) expresses, like other nouns of the f§#ål group such as ‘cleaver’ (s§ãår) or ‘counter’ (È§såb), the notion of a prolonged and oft-repeated activity; a counter, for example, repeatedly carries out arithmetical operations, a cleaver repeatedly cuts through wood or meat—both things are done more than just once. The same applies to tyranny, which is not just an isolated event in history but a frequent phenomenon of political absolutism

throughout the entire human history. And yet, we learn that the ultimate aim of humankind is #ib§diyya (the worship of God), not #ubådiyya (the life of slaves): ‘I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me’ (Al-Dh§riyy§t 51:56). The phrase ‘that they may serve Me’ means ‘that they worship Me’, not ‘that they may be slaves’! To worship God means to obey Him freely or to disobey Him freely. In contrast to the much-too-narrow understanding of worship by the fuqah§” only as performance of rituals (prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, zak§h, etc.), #ib§diyya (the worship of God) is a much wider concept and includes many activities of people’s daily life. Worship of God in no way means just servitude symbolised in one’s outward (ritualistic) expression of slavish submission (e.g., through prostration in prayers) since that would turn worshippers (al-#ubb§d) into slaves (al-#abÊd). This would, linguistically and theologically, be a grave error.

The Arabic term #ubb§d is the plural of #§bid (worshipper) which has a second plural: #§bidån, for example, ‘Nor will you worship (#§bidån) that which I worship’ (Al-K§firån 109:3).[431] The Arabic term #abÊd, in contrast, is the plural of #abd (slave) which implies captivity, servitude, and the absence of freedom. The difference between the two terms is that whereas the worshipper (#§bid) is free to choose and exercise free will, the slave (#abd) is deprived not only of property but also of free will and any freedom of choice. We have to understand that worship of God (#ib§diyya) is expressed both as obedience and disobedience. (‘Say: “If (God) most gracious had a son, I would be the first to worship”’ A l-Zukhruf 43:81). The noun #ib§da (acts of worship), derived from #ib§diyya, is thus auto-antonymic as it hosts two meanings that directly contradict each other (obedience ↔ disobedience). Because of this auto-antonymity, the common interpretation of #ib§da as rituals of worship (performed in mosques, churches, and synagogues) is too simplistic. To worship God means, instead, to position yourself vis-à-vis God—obediently or disobediently—in all spheres of life: at work, at home, in the supermarket, in schools, hospitals, factories, football stadiums, and so on. Consequently, the word ‘mosque’ (al-masjid) should not be reduced to mean ‘place where people perform rituals’. According to the Book it has a much wider meaning:

In houses, which God has permitted to be raised to honour, for the celebration, in them, of His name: In them is He glorified in the mornings and in the evenings, (again and again). * By men whom neither traffic nor merchandise can divert from the remembrance of God, nor from regular prayer, nor from the practice of regular charity. Their (only) fear is for the Day when hearts and eyes will be transformed (in a world wholly new). (Al-Når 24:36–37)

We thus learn that mosques are ‘houses, which God permitted to be raised to honour, for the celebration, in them, of His name’. This definition may include prayers and the collection of alms, but the term #ib§da covers more than just these rituals. The Book says:

Verily, I am God: There is no god but I: So serve you Me (only), and establish regular prayer for celebrating My praise. (•§-H§” 20:14)

Verse 20:14 links the phrase ‘so serve Me’ (fa-a#budnÊ) with the command to ‘establish regular prayer’ (fa-aqim al-ßal§t) by the conjunction ‘and’, that is, #ib§da and prayer, meaning that the two cannot be the same thing (hence, #ib§da cannot be explained only by prayer).

Allah’s commands and prohibitions in the Book were revealed to free men and women. ‘There is no compulsion in religion’ means that men and women are worshippers (a l-#ubb§d), not slaves (a l-#abÊd). By their own will, they either accept Allah’s commands or reject them. Reward and punishment are measured according to people’s acceptance and rejection and will be issued on the Day of Judgement. Nevertheless, people must obey the law of the state and respect its constitution.

The companions of the Prophet (ß) understood the difference between worship and slavery. It is reported that when #Umar b. al-Khaãã§b heard that a man prayed all night in the mosque and did also not leave it during the day, he asked, ‘When does he eat?’ He was told, ‘A brother of his feeds him and even feeds his family.’ #Umar then said, ‘He worships God more than his brother!’ and ‘He should not be his brother’s slave!’ This supports our thesis that slavish servitude (#ubådiyya) is neither necessary nor desirable, but if such slavish relationships exist (e.g., in a partnership or as forced labour) this should not be seen as a reflection of the relationship between God and His creation. Instead, God’s relationship to human beings is characterised by the fact that humans enjoy the freedom to choose between obedience and disobedience. Jih§d and fighting in God’s way are, then, the struggle of human beings to achieve this basic freedom of choice that is reflected in their freedom to choose whatever religious creed or humanistic belief they want.

Second aim: the protection of the earth

The second aim of qit§l is stated in 2:251: the protection of the earth against corruption:

…And did not God check one set of people by means of another [walau-l§ daf #[u] All§h a l-n§s ba#·ahum bi-ba#· [in]], the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But God is full of bounty to all the worlds. (Al-Baqara 2:251)

Our honourable scholars have misunderstood the phrase ‘and did not God check one set of people by means of another’ believing it pertains to military battles between opposing armies or political factions. Blinded by this military interpretation, the fuqah§” have filled whole libraries with books that assessed in legal terms the many different battle situations (who is attacking whom, for what reason, under what circumstances, and with what outcome, etc.). But the truth is that this verse does not talk about military battles. It touches on two things: a) the fact that God checked one set of people by means of another, and b) that this prevented the earth from becoming full of corruption. The two topics are linked together by a

conditional main and subclause: ‘if God had not checked…, then the earth…’, implying that the act ‘to check’ (dafa#)[432] prevented the earth from becoming corrupt. The first topic refers to a form of competition that exists within human societies, a kind of mutual rivalry which makes people push one another to reach higher goals. This mutual competition is a socio-communal disposition that God has instilled in His creation. The phrase ‘one set of people’ cannot be reduced to a specific group of people (e.g., the believers, or the army of the caliph), but remains generic, meaning exactly what it says: ‘one set of people’ that remains undefined. The Arabic term for ‘to check”— in the sense of ‘to drive back’—is dafa#, a three-radical, transitive verb that requires a direct object, while the term for a ‘mutual push’ is tad§fa#a, a four-radical verb that requires two sides that are both subject and object, because it implies a process of simultaneously pushing and being pushed. Al-qit§l describes a similar competition between two sides, but, in contrast to al-tad§fu#, it might culminate in a violent battle between two armed opponents resulting in potentially high numbers of casualties, either wounded or dead. But mutual competition does not always have to be violent or deadly. Al-tad§fu# refers, for example, to the fight between sickness and health that we observe every day in hospitals, clinics, and the consultation rooms of medical centres; it refers to the fight between consumers and the retail industry over the best price and the best service possible; it refers to the fight between two opposing teams on the football field or the cricket ground; it stands for the fight between two rival parties in a lawsuit in the Magistrates Court where the only weapon allowed is a better argument and a more convincing piece of evidence, not guns or rocket-propelled grenades. A l-tad§fu# refers to the competition between universities for attracting better funding for their research institutes and for achieving a higher ranking than their competitors; it refers to the fight for a more successful advertising campaign than that of a rival company that operates in the same sector of the market; it refers to the peaceful opposition between rival political parties fighting for more seats in parliament; finally, it refers to the rivalry of states or multiple state organisations for a better share in the global economy. Admittedly, such rivalry may in some cases, which we will define further below, escalate into armed conflict, and most wars are indeed a development of previously peaceful conflicts. A war, as we know, is defined as a conflict of interests that cannot be solved by any peaceful means. The United Nations is the prime example of an international organisation set up to prevent the escalation of

interstate rivalry into armed conflicts, and if wars cannot be prevented it will devise plans to solve the military conflicts by political means.

It follows from this that the phrase ‘check one set of people by means of another’ cannot possibly refer to a violent clash or an armed conflict. Mutual competition in this context should not be understood as al-qit§l, as the exegetes believed, because al-qit§l—in the sense of military conflict (which is not ‘in God’s way’)—will eventually cause the destruction of the earth, whereas the theme of 2:251 is the prevention of such destruction. This is how we understand the meaning of 2:216.[433] We also deduce that verse 22:38, ‘Verily God will defend those who believe…’ (A l-\ajj 22:38), does not carry a military connotation. According to our honourable scholars, God stands firmly behind the trenches of the believers and, with a sword in His hand, leads their army to victory against the infidel enemy. We despise such anthropomorphic fantasies and propose to replace the exegetes’ militant explanations with a more symbolic interpretation of the phrase ‘God will defend those who believe’. It is more plausible that God empowers the believers with the force of creativity, and this in all spheres of life and in the battles of everyday life, not in situations of war!

The second part of 2:251 says ‘the earth would indeed be full of mischief’. This implies that without fair competition and without a peaceful clash between the mundane and material interests of people, the earth would become corrupt. The phrase ‘be full of mischief’ or ‘become corrupt’ should not be understood literally as ‘moral corruption’. The earth may break into pieces or may become completely deserted, its wells may dry up, and its volcanoes may erupt all at once, but the earth as such cannot be morally corrupt. In this context, ‘earth’ refers to the entire cosmos in all its material existence, or as ‘worlds’ referring to the universe that is much bigger than the globe (‘…But God is full of bounty to all the worlds’, Al-Baqara 2:251). Seen from this angle, the interpretation of verse 2:216 is as follows: if there were no peaceful competition in human society, people would live contrary to the natural disposition that Allah has given them. This would lead to a corruption of their material interests—corruption meaning collapse or suppression—and result in the decline of the society’s material prosperity; living conditions would deteriorate and all avenues for additional income and financial revenues would be blocked. Eventually, material frustration would

cause the ‘corruption’ of the social order: cooperation, solidarity, and fair and respectful competition give way to distrust, friction, and resentment. The material decline of the Communist states in Eastern Europe showed us how disastrous it was to stifle economic competition with centralised economies, to suffocate initiative by overbureaucracy, and to eradicate private property by nationalisation.

Armed conflicts (qit§l), defined as the last resort of (militarily) solving a (previously) peaceful clash of material interests, can, in contrast to competition, only take place between states, not between individuals, communities, or ethnic minorities. If, however, a whole nation suffers from suppression of freedom, brutal dictatorship, and the absence of human rights, we concede that a l-qit§l may take place (inside a state) in order to restore freedom and liberty. Even if such a fight outwardly does not pursue (material) interests, it is obvious that all armed conflicts do pursue other interests albeit not always transparently. In the case of a fight against oppression and dictatorship, values such as justice, freedom, and equality are the underlying interests of such an armed struggle.

Third aim: the protection of the house of the Lord

The third aim is found in verse 22:40.[434] While the second aim pertains to mutual competition among people in their pursuit of material interests, this verse talks about the peaceful coexistence of religious communities. It allows them to live according to their diverse spiritual interests and encourages them to achieve God’s rewards in the Next World in whatever way they want. To expand one specific religion by force and to destroy or reuse houses of worship that belong to other religious communities is to blatantly ignore the meaning of this verse. Not even Communist China, which is officially secular, dared to demolish the Buddhist temples in Tibet—surely not out of respect for Buddhism but because of international pressure and the fears of the Chinese rulers lest they provoke a political scandal—nonetheless, their restraint is more in line with the Book than what happened several times in history during the Islamic call (al-da#wa) that spread menace, intimidation, and sheer violence:

If it had been your Lord’s will, they would all have believed—all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe! (Yånus 10:99)

It is in the spirit of the Book to allow as many religious creeds as exist in this world. The call to MuÈammad’s message (al-Êm§n) must be based on the acknowledgment that other religions—and this includes the so-called non-Abrahamic religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Mazdaism, Jainism, and Shintoism—have a legitimate right to exist, bearing in mind that the religion of al-isl§m is based only on belief in God and the Last Day combined with faith in the unity of God

(tauÈÊd).

The three aims of qit§l form a single unity whereby each aim is interconnected with the others. Verse 9:40 states the condition that any fight between two opponents must aim, if it can be regarded as a fight in God’s way, at restoring God’s word concerning freedom, justice, and equality in human societies. The envisaged ideal of complete submission to God is the human characteristic of voluntary obedience or disobedience, not a relationship of servitude that suppresses humans’ free will and their choice of religion. Verse 2:251 states that mutual competition among men for material prosperity does not necessarily lead to armed conflict and normally stays within the realm of peaceful rivalry. It warns against the stifling of healthy competition between groups and sections of human society and stresses the natural inclination of humans to contend with one another, which, if suppressed, leads to a serious decline of material standards in human civilisation. Finally, verse 22:40 brings this idea of a peaceful contest onto the level of spirituality, since it forbids the destruction of religious buildings or, even in times of conflict, closing them, which would prevent people from ‘commemorating the word of God’. If peaceful competition leads to violence and armed conflict, however, the resulting fight is not in God’s way (even if, according to international law, it is a legal war and a pursuit of legitimate interests). The

First and Second World Wars are prime examples of rivalry between states and entire armies that continued by military means what was once a peaceful (economic) contest to rewrite the political world map during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Even if—on both sides of the front—the Christian Church thought of God as ‘defending its believers’, neither war can be justified as a fight in God’s way. We believe that religious doctrines should never be used to justify such purely military and expansionist campaigns. Communism, as another example of a fight for an unjust cause by unjust means, proposed a world revolution but ended in a dictatorship of the working class which failed miserably both as theory and social practice. Because it suppressed the individual’s personal struggle for a better and more prosperous life in both material and spiritual terms, its fight cannot be justified as a fight in God’s way.

The verses using the term qit§l have often been read in isolation from the immediate context in which they occur in the Book. But these verses are so firmly embedded in the argument that precedes and succeeds them that they cannot be properly understood if read out of context. The following example illustrates this:

1. Verily God will defend [yud§fi#[u]] those who believe; verily, God loves not any that is a traitor to faith, or show ingratitude (Al-\ajj 22:38).

2. To those against whom war is made [sic],[435] permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; and verily, God is most powerful for their aid (Al-\ajj 22:39).

3. (They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right—(for no cause) except that they say, “our Lord is God”. Did not God check [lau l§ daf #u] one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated in abundant measure. God will certainly aid those who aid his (cause); for verily God is full of strength, exalted in might, (able to enforce His will) (Al-\ajj 22:40).

4. (They are) those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid wrong—with God rests the end (and decision) of (all) affairs (Al-\ajj 22:41).

First, it is important to understand the phrase ‘God will defend those who believe’ (22:38) in the light of the phrase ‘Did not God check one set of people by means of another’ two verses further below (22:40), because it clearly distinguishes between d§fa#a (third verbal class), as used in 22:38, and dafa# (first verb form), as used in 22:40. This helps us to understand the differences between ‘to defend’ and ‘to check’ and shows both can be understood in nonmilitary terms. Second, the phrase ‘God is most powerful for their aid’ (22:39) cannot be isolated from the phrase ‘God will certainly aid those who aid his (cause)’ in the succeeding verse (22:40). Third, the phrase ‘those who establish prayer’ and the houses of worship in the diverse religious communities (22:41) must be read in conjunction with the phrase ‘monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques’ as stated in the preceding verse (22:40). This helps us to understand that since Allah has firmly established humankind on this earth, the best way to consolidate people’s place on earth is to give them religious freedom and the right to perform the traditions and rituals of their choice. Fourth, it is impossible to correctly understand the phrase ‘Did not God check’ (22:40) in isolation from ‘one set of people by means of another’, as stated in the same verse. Finally, the term ‘mosque’ in 22:40 is to be understood in its specific meaning of ‘the place of prayer for the believers and followers of MuÈammad (ß)’ because it is mentioned separately from the ‘monasteries, churches, synagogues’ in the previous line. In a different context, however, for example, in 72:18 or 22:18, the same term has a more general meaning, referring to a ‘place of commemorating God’s name’ which includes mosques, churches, synagogues, and monasteries.[436]

Causes and Conditions of al-qit§l

We have said that there are three aims of fighting in God’s way. This means that such fights are caused by specific conditions and are led under specific circumstances. We propose to unconditionally disallow the possibility of

calling any fight that has not been marked by these causes and conditions a fight in God’s way.

There are three legitimate causes of a fight in God’s way:

1. The occurrence of injustice (a l-íulm)—in accordance with verse 22:39, ‘to those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight)…’ (Al-\ajj 22:39).

2. A humanitarian crisis in which hundreds of people have been expelled from their houses—in accordance with verse 22:40, ‘(they are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right…’ (Al-\ajj 22:40).

3. An external or internal attack against people’s life, property, and dignity; and a flagrant violation of human rights (the right to work, the right to move and to travel freely, freedom of expression, freedom of religious conviction, and freedom of ritual practices)—in accordance with verse 2:194, ‘…[there is the law of equality]. If then anyone transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress you likewise against him. But fear God, and know that God is with those who restrain themselves’ (Al-Baqara 2:194).

Let us begin by dealing with the first aim. Most importantly, we have to define what injustice (al-íulm) means. First, it literally means ‘out of place’, that is, ‘improperly (ad-)justed’ or, in a more technical sense, it refers to a device (e.g., a computer) that has not yet been ‘justified’. In the Book it means a digression from fairness and justice. We are told: ‘…God means no injustice (íulm[an]) to any of His creatures’ ($l #Imr§n 3:108). Injustice implies failure, total loss, and inade quacy: ‘each of those gardens brought forth its produce, and failed not (lam taílim) in the least therein…’ (Al-Kahf 18:33). Second, íulm means an aggression against the limits of Allah: ‘…these are the limits ordained by God; so do not transgress them. If any do transgress the limits ordained by God, such persons wrong themselves as well as others (a l-í§limån)’ (A l-Baqara 2:229). It is an aggression that leads to rebellion against God and to a refusal to obey His

orders: '…We visited the wrong-doers (alladhÊn[a] íalamå) with a grievous punishment because they were given to transgression' (A l-A#r§f 7:165). Third, íulm connotes injustice in a more political sense that is shared by other terms such as 'oppression' (ãughy§n), 'tyranny' (baghy), and 'haughtiness' (istikb§r). In this sense, injustice is a constant theme in the Book, and as mentioned above 22:39 uses íulm in exactly this way as it defines the fight for the oppressed as the ultimate rationale for any jih§d,[437] and if this jih§d is met by the resistance of the oppressor, it turns into a fight in God's way (qit§l fÊ sabÊl All§h). The ultimate aim is to restore the word of God, as verse 9:40 states: '[that] the word of God is exalted to the heights…'. This means that the word of God is restored when injustice is eradicated, when freedom, justice, and equality reign, when compulsion and force are removed from people when they choose their religion, their doctrines, and their membership of whatever confessional group they want. 'To restore the word of God' does not mean to conquer other countries or to force people to believe or practise a specific religious belief. And it should not matter whether injustice is done by a ruler who adheres to MuÈammad's (ß) message or by a ruler who is an atheist: jih§d against injustice and subsequently qit§l (if jih§d fails to end injustice in a peaceful manner) is not concerned with the ruler's religious affiliation. What matters is the injustice and the crimes against humanity that the ruler has committed. It is wise to say that 'it is better to serve under a just ruler who is an infidel than to suffer under an unjust ruler who is a believer', because infidelity affects only the person himself, whereas injustice affects us all. Unfortunately, the political culture we have become used to has turned this on its head. We now believe 'that if a ruler is unjust, it is because he shoulders so much responsibility' and all we can do is to show sympathy for him. Yet, if a ruler is just, all we do is to hope that he will be rewarded for it. This often translates into political apathy and moral indifference. The culture of lethargy is perhaps best reflected in the political axiom that 'a ruler who is feared by his subjects is better than a ruler who fears his subjects'. Here, it is vital to learn from the political culture that exists in non-Islamic countries where the opposite is true. If politicians in those countries evade the rule of law and violate the principles of fairness and justice, they must fear the wrath of the media and the enquiries of investigative journalists whose revelations will certainly cause the public to demand a politician's resignation if the allegations are found to be true.

It has not escaped our attention that many of our honourable scholars have disapproved of our irenic stand against other religious communities. Their view is that the use of violence against nonMuslim-Believers is always legitimate because of the fact that they are infidels and idolaters. They maintain that shirk idolatry, in the sense of ‘false worship’, is a form of íulm as we are told in the Book (‘…“O my son! Join not in worship (others) with God: for false worship (la-íulm) is indeed the highest wrong-doing”’ Luqm§n 31:13). Infidelity is by any account a form of íulm, as the case of the people of Thamud makes unmistakingly clear (‘…We sent the she-camel to the Thamud to open their eyes, but they treated her wrongfully (fa-íalamå)…’, A l-Isr§” 17:59). Given such clear textual evidence they argue that it is legitimate to oppose the infidels and idolaters by force.

Our response to this is as follows: First, idolatry is—as 31:13 tells us—an act of worship of other than God (i.e., it is not a refusal to belong to a specific religious community), and infidelity—as we hear in 17:59—is an act of denial, rejection, or disbelief. Both forms of íulm are wrongdoings against a person’s own soul, not against anyone else, as we hear in the Book: ‘They said: “Our Lord! We have wronged our own souls. If you forgive us not and bestow not upon us your mercy, we shall certainly be lost”’ (A l-A#r§f 7:23). In contrast, the íulm that Allah ordered us to fight is wrongdoing against other people because they are denied personal freedom, in particular the freedom of religion.

Second, to believe or disbelieve in God is a choice that Allah has left to human beings to make for themselves, by free will and safe from any form of compulsion (‘Say, “The truth is from your Lord”; let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it)…’, Al-Kahf 18:29). This point is emphasised more than once in the Book:

And have patience with what they say, and leave them with noble (dignity).* And leave Me (alone to deal with) those in possession of the good things of life, who (yet) deny the truth; and bear with them for a little while. (Al-Muzzammil 73:10–11)

This is clear proof that it is illegitimate to force anyone into adopting a specific religious belief. Any fight (a l-qit§l) that ignores this is in clear breach of 18:29 that, in unmistakable terms, guarantees every person the freedom to choose his or her religion.

Third, Allah has forbidden His noble Prophet (ß) to force people to accept his new message. He said, ‘If it had been your Lord’s will, they would all have believed—all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!’ (Yånus 10:99). This verse contains a prohibition against the use of force in spreading Êm§n or, as it is traditionally understood, Islam, so why do our fuqah§” insist on using the sword as the most viable means of spreading belief ‘in God’s way’. Does their call for a fight against unbelievers not violate the Book’s command to ‘invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious…’ (Al-NaÈl 16:125)?

Fourth, Allah has forbidden the believers—while they are ‘travelling the earth’—from passing judgement on other people on the basis of their religious convictions. He tells us that their faith should simply not matter when we do business with them or study at their universities. The Book says, ‘O you who believe! When you go abroad in the cause of God, investigate carefully, and say not to any one who offers you a salutation: “You are none of a believer!”…’ (A l-Nis§” 4:94). Given that this verse encourages us to deal open-heartedly with anyone who does not share our beliefs, is it not absolutely ludicrous on the part of our honourable scholars to call for a fight against infidels?

The existence of injustice does not allow the wronged person to immediately fight the oppressor—see 22:39. He must first exhaust other peaceful means such as appeals, exhortation, and dispute. Allah urges us to ‘noise injustice in public speech’ (‘God loves not that evil should be noised abroad in public speech, except where injustice (íulm) has been done; for God is He who hears and knows all things’, Al-Nis§” 4:148). Nevertheless, as a last resort (and if all peaceful means have failed), Allah does not consider the

physical challenge of injustice to be an illicit assault under the condition that the fight is conducted within the limits that God has set: ‘Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God loves not transgressors’ (Al-Baqara 2:190).

This last verse, 2:190, has often been read out of context. It is critical to put it in the context of its three preceding verses since 2:190–93 constitute a thematic unit.[438] This context tells us that any fight against someone ‘who does not fight you’ is illegitimate and that a fight must cease if the other side stops fighting back. This implies that it is forbidden to start an attack or to unconditionally continue with it, because the Book makes it absolutely clear that Allah does not love aggressors. Verse 2:193, however, ends with the command, ‘let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression’. The exceptive particle in this sentence implies that all the preceding injunctions which restrict and condition offensive fights are only valid when we do not face a situation of injustice and oppression. This means that if all peaceful methods of al-amr bi’l-ma#råf wa-nahy #an a l-munkar have been exhausted, an offensive fight against an oppressor is not an act of aggression. If we turn to the example of the Prophet (ß), we know that he endured injustice, oppression, and physical assault for over thirteen years during his time in Mecca. It was a time of persecution and suppression of the freedom of religious choice, because the leaders of Meccan society persecuted people for accepting the new religion. The Prophet (ß) suffered great hardship but with admirable patience endured all the Meccan injustice, until things escalated and people were driven out of their homes. Only then did the hijra (or flight) take place.

In the light of the Book’s rulings against aggression and offensive attacks, a small minority of modern fuqaha” have gone as far as to rule that any kind of violence is illegitimate because they consider it to be politically incorrect to follow a religion that allows violence. On the other side of the extreme is the majority of our honourable scholars who still adhere—almost always with reference to the socalled sword verse 9:5—to the traditional concept of jih§d that unconditionally allows the use of force against infidels as a way of spreading the message of Islam. They continue the tradition, established during the reign of the Umayyads, of propagating militant concepts for the spread of Islam. These fuqaha” propose a doctrine of jih§d that leads, on

the level of the individual, to suicide missions and an idealisation of martyrdom, and, on societal level, to military campaigns against infidels and idolaters (even if these do not show the slightest sign of hostility). Even more objectionable than their aggression towards other religions is their placidity in the face of injustice and oppression in their own countries. Their concept of qiã§l is thoroughly one-sided since it accepts only external aggression as a legitimate ground for ‘fighting’. Cases of internal aggression, for example, the existence of despotic rule by tyrannical rulers, have been met with acquiescent silence and political opportunism. These fuqah§” are responsible for the fact that the world currently does not associate Islam with a call for courage and resistance in the face of injustice and political oppression, and that we assume that Muslims would not stand up, if necessary by force, for justice, freedom, and equality.

The unholy alliance between religion and politics during the formative period of Islamic history meant that the fuqah§”, corrupted by their closeness to the people in power, constructed a militaristic doctrine of jih§d and qit§l that basically supported the colonialist expansions of the dynastic empires and the insatiable appetite for ever-more booty of the warlords under the pretext of spreading the call of Islam. In the current period, we observe an unfortunate reemergence of this fatal fusion between religion and politics within the groups of so-called Islamic revivalism, such as al-Jam§#at a l-Isl§miyya, a l-Jih§d, a l-Q§#ida, and such, which, in some way or another, are all subbranches of the Muslim Brotherhood (Jam§#at al-Ikhw§n al-MuslimÊn). Their new doctrines of jih§d and qit§l bear an alarming resemblance to the old doctrines of the medieval fuqah§”, in particular in their obsession with reading military connotations in every word of the Book. But they even go beyond that, and to their definition of the essential components of jih§d and qit§l they now add the seizure of political power in their home countries, for which they sanction all forms of violence, including assassination, physical assault, and the destruction of a country’s infrastructure. This movement has often been wrongly perceived as a legitimate protest against authoritarian regimes in the Arab-Muslim world, and some people in the West have indeed sympathised with the Islamists and have hailed their idealism as Islam’s form of a theology of liberation. It has often been overlooked that these groups simply want to replace one form of despotism with another, as their ideology still diffuses the old foul

stench of the authoritarian rule and political oppression that we became accustomed to long time ago.

Such ideological revisionism began after the Second World War, as we detect the first traces of politicized doctrines in Egyptian publications of that time. We see, for example, how MaÈmåd Shaltåt, the rector of a l-Azhar University under Nasser, in his exegesis of the Qur'an[439] confuses cause and effect when he writes about al-qit§l and turns the whole universe into a continuous (eternal) battlefield, treating fighting, conflict, and war as essential rather than accidental (nonessential) conditions of human life. This signalled the end of a benevolent view on history and the beginning of an ideology that lacks any notion of cooperation, solidarity, and mutual understanding between nations and peoples of this world. We see, at the same time, how Sayyid Quãb writing about 'jih§d in God's way' in his book Signposts[440] not only invents an arsenal of completely new terminology but also creates an ideology that legitimises the dethronement of his own government by force for reasons that have nothing to do with the question of liberation or the struggle to end oppression or the fight for freedom, justice, and equality. Such thoughts became extremely influential in the creation of Islamist groups, and in 1997 we listened to Aim§n a l-£aw§hirÊ, who in an interview with a French news agency, declared how he permits the killing of a country's ruler on the basis that he is an apostate and that he does not rule according to Allah's law, that is, on the grounds of apostasy and the absence of Allah's rule (È§kimiyya), thus reminding us of what had been proposed earlier by Sayyid Quãb. A l-£aw§hirÊ basically calls for political assassination, heedless of the fact that the rulers of a country (president or prime minister, etc.) have been democratically elected, irrespective of the actual type of governance (republic, monarchy, constitutional monarchy, etc.), and regardless of whether people are enjoying a period of material prosperity and security, that is, completely ignorant of the actual socioeconomic situation of the country. The only thing that matters to him is whether the ruler is an apostate or not! This turns on its head the traditional politically quietist attitude of our fuqah§", for whom it was sacrosanct not to attack even the most despotic autocrat who in their opinion still deserved obedience even if he committed the most cruel crimes against humanity ('absolute obedience to those in power'!). And yet, for several reasons, it cannot be welcomed as a decisive turn away from the inadequacies of traditional Islamic thought. The most important reason is that both Sayyid

Quãb and Aim§n al-£aw§hirÊ call for the removal of an apostate ruler not because they want to restore Allah’s word by fighting for freedom, justice and equality, but purely because of their desire to take over political power. Having said this, we nevertheless agree with the two ideologues in that al-isl§m is a perfect divine system that is understood and applied by humans’ relative, historical, and contingent knowledge which structures the activities of those who embrace al-isl§m in a multitude of different areas of life, among which we find the area of al-qit§l. The two following verses, for example, express two fundamental aspects of such perfect divine system:

…[there is the law of equality]. If then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress you likewise against him. But fear God, and know that God is with those who restrain themselves. (A l-Baqara

2:194)

Nor can a bearer of burdens bear another’s burdens if one heavily laden should call another to (bear) his load. Not the least portion of it can be carried (by the other). Even though he be nearly related… (Al-F§ãir 35:18)

Our ideologues have ignored the fact that the phrase ‘transgress you likewise against him’ (i.e., an oppressor) does not mean to become and act like an oppressor but rather asks us to fight against injustice and oppression. How could they ever define ‘fight in God’s way’ as the assassination of politicians and attacks on the security forces, the destruction of public buildings and explosions in overcrowded markets, when the Book rejects al-qit§l as a clash or conflict involving only one side and prohibits punishing people for the guilt of others?

It would have been easier for us and every sound-minded person to support the cause of the Islamist groups had they called, at home and abroad, for a full restoration of God’s word in freedom, justice, and equality for all people regardless of their religious or ethnical affiliations. Instead, they called for an immediate seizure of power. We would even have considered joining their

ranks and participating in their activities had they been truthful and sincere in what they propounded. Instead, they not only committed the cold-blooded murder of politicians, civil servants, and soldiers, but also ruthlessly cut each other's throats. One of the most shocking examples was the assassination of \is§m al-Baãåj Ê, the leader of the military wing of the al-Jih§d al-Isl§mÊ group in BanÊ Swayf by #Us§ma 'iddÊq Ayoub, another leading member of the group which was then headed by Aim§n al-£aw§hirÊ, purely because of an internal dispute over leadership. Moreover, members of the Islamist groups are convicted criminals who committed daylight robbery by extorting, in the style of the real Mafiosi, protection money while claiming that as Muj§hidÊn they were entitled to receive a share of people's money even, if necessary, by force. They were similarly involved in money laundering in order to finance their clandestine activities, as frequently happened in Syria during the 1970s.[441] Such criminal activity has absolutely nothing to do with the fight in God's way as the Book describes it. Because of its character as a fight by only one side, the doctrine of assassination which the so-called Islamic insurgents adhere to is not al-qit§l but rather politically motivated murder in the tradition of assassinations of statesmen, for example, the killing of emperors in Ancient Rome, the killing of Husayn at Kerbala, or the assassinations of al-Naqr§shÊ B§sh§ in Egypt[442] and John F. Kennedy in the United States.

We would also look less critically at the Islamist movement's desire for power had it produced successful governments with a proud record of admirable cultural and civilisational achievements, but the pitiful nature of, for example, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, makes us wish that the Muslim-Believer—in the words of the Prophet (ß)—'is not stung from the (same) hole twice'.[443]

The Islamists' slogan of God's rule on earth (a l-È§kimiyya) is, in reality, nothing more than their code word for political power. To call the only acceptable form of political governance 'the rule of God' is empirically nonsensical since there are many successful and powerful states in this world that do not represent 'God's rule' and yet are run by politicians who sincerely believe in God. The Islamists' seemingly religious slogan of God's rule on earth is, paradoxically, a purely political manifesto for the acquisition of political power. This is, because if religion, that is, any religion (in the conventional understanding of 'religious community'), came to power, it

would, due to its exclusivist claims, deny the legitimacy of any other religion. In the case of Islamism, the ruler would be God's deputy on earth, while the mufti would—as Ibn Qayyim a l-Jauziyya said—'sign in God's name' or, according to a l-Sh§ãibÊ, 'stand in for the Messenger (ß)'. Once in power, the doctrines of Islamism would deny the existential right of any other belief and, since it would possess all legislative and executive powers, it would autocratically define the 'others' as heretics. A religious government is therefore by nature dictatorial, allpervasive, and, if in possession of an exclusivist ideology, despotic.

In contrast to the Islamists' understanding of al-È§kimiyya, we propose to define it in the light of the Book as a rule that no human being is allowed to participate in Allah's governance with regard to those things that are exclusively His prerogative:

1. Allah '…does not share His command with any person whatsoever' (Al-Kahf 18:26). Everyone (who claims to rule like God and) does not share his power with any other person, has acted unjustly towards Allah and has challenged His È§kimiyya.

2. 'He cannot be questioned for His acts, but they will be questioned (for theirs)' (A l-Anbiy§" 21:23). Every government which (claims to act like God and) refuses to be questioned for its acts has acted unjustly towards Allah and has challenged His È§kimiyya.

3. For '…your Lord is the (sure) accomplisher of what He plans' (Håd 11:107). Everyone who (claims to act like God and) thinks that he can do whatever he wishes, has acted unjustly towards Allah and has challenged His È§kimiyya.

4. '…No god do I know for you but myself…' (Al-Qaßaß 28:38). Everyone who challenges Allah's È§kimiyya—just like the Pharaoh in 28:38—by thinking he is God and by demanding unconditional obedience from his subjects has challenged Allah's sovereignty

(ulåhiyya).

5. ‘I am your Lord, most high’ (Al-N§zi#§t 79:24). Allah is the Lord of the worlds and the owner of all goods. Everyone who thinks that a nation’s wealth is his private property has challenged God’s lordship (rubåbiyya)—like the Pharaoh who, in his hybris, had declared: ‘Does not the dominion of Egypt belong to me, (witness) these streams flowing underneath my (palace)?...’ (Al-Zukhruf 43:51).

It follows from this that, as Muslim-Believers, we will never allow anyone to challenge Allah’s rule (al-È§kimiyya) by claiming attributes that are only His. Many states in this world adhere to this and are, in this respect, following Allah’s rule even though most of them are governed by non-Muslim-Believers, that is, by those who are not followers of MuÈammad’s (ß) message. In these countries we observe that the state’s main interest lies in the provision of service and good government in this life. It does not see its main task as administering people’s affairs in preparation for the Next World. It seems foolish to them to try to save people from Hell by obliging them to a life that promises Paradise. Instead, the state guarantees a good health service, proper education, traffic control, material prosperity, national security, defence of the state’s borders, and the like, all of which need proper planning and support from research institutions. Success and failure of these things are based on the amount of knowledge and competence that went into the planning of these things; success does not depend on how often and vociferous we call for ‘God’s rule on earth’.

The emergence of political Islam and the spread of armed militant groups in the Arab-Muslim world have been the cause of much concern. We believe that, historically, the existence of militancy and violence is the result of too much political interference from political rulers in matters of religious doctrine and practice. As a result, politics has suffered from too much interference from religious scholars in matters of policy and legal administration. This unholy alliance between religion and politics created a political culture in which our honourable scholars generally became too closely involved in the day-to-day running of the state, in particular during a

l-MutawwakÊl’s inquisition. The calamitous consequence of this involvement is that our scholars have seemed to have turned a blind eye to political injustice if they were faced with tyranny, despotism, and autocratic rule. They never seemed to have the courage or intelligence to develop a theology of freedom, justice, and equality. For them, to be free, in purely technical terms of the law, meant not to be a slave. The lack of any moral concept of liberty meant that such important values as freedom of speech, the preservation of human dignity, individual autonomy, and freedom of religion have been entirely absent from the collective consciousness of Arab people. The Islamists’ craving for political power adequately reflects the lack of a mature and enlightened political culture in the Arab-Muslim world, since under a dictatorial, autocratic regime the radical seizure of power is the only way to participate in the political process, while in a society in which democracy, human rights, and the values of freedom of religion are fully implemented in the political culture, the radical seizure of power is the least viable way for full political participation. But the fatal closeness of the traditional, religious establishment to those in power has left a lethal legacy in the minds of modern Islamists as they, just like the old fuqah§”, believe that to mix religion into politics and to concoct an Islamic version of theocracy, teaming up H§m§n with Pharaoh and the Q§rån of this world (i.e., the financial oligarchs), is the shortest path to success. This legacy is also the reason why we, after the abolition of the Caliphate, still lack a viable theory of a modern state.

Reasons for the Corruption of al-qit§l

After having defined the aims and conditions of al-qit§l, we finally need to explain the reasons for its corruption, that is, its erroneous application or false practice. Inasmuch as one can invalidate the benefits of a charity donation if it is done through illegal channels (‘O you who believe! Cancel not your charity by reminders of your generosity or by injury…’, Al-Baqara 2:264), a fight is corrupt and fails to fulfil its proper aims if it is done in violation of the Book’s injunctions. This applies to all kinds of al-qit§l, including the fight in God’s way, mutual competition (in self-defence, for national security, or political interests—for example, a political mandate over another country, etc.), or the withdrawal from a battle, from troops, or from deployment in the field, that is, the withdrawal from fighting, the offering of peace; the avoidance of excessive retaliation;

the accusation of infidelity and other forms of ‘fights’. There are five things that make a fight invalid:

1. O you who believe! When you meet the [al-k§firÊn] in hostile array, never turn your backs to them.* If any do turn his back to them on such a day—unless it be in a stratagem of war, or to retreat to a troop (of his own)—he draws on himself the wrath of God, and his abode is Hell—an evil refuge (indeed)! (Al-Anf§l 8:15–16)

These two verses are from the Book’s section of definite verses (a l-muÈkam§t) in MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood (a l-ris§la) that contains orders and prohibitions. Both verses prohibit the MuslimBelievers (‘O you who believe!’) from avoiding a fight if faced with an imminent attack from the k§firÊn. The act of avoiding a fight is figuratively expressed as ‘a turn of your back’. It is, of course, not meant to be literally understood as a physical turn of one’s back, because people may withdraw or retreat from a fight while still facing the enemy. The term a l-k§firån here does not have the specific meaning of ‘infidels’ but points in a more general way to everyone who starts a conflict.[444] Every aggressor is a k§fir whatever his religious beliefs. Seen from the side of the Russians who were attacked, the troops of Nazi Germany were the k§firån; as was the Iraqi army of Saddam Hussein in the eyes of the people of Kuwait. Moreover, if we take the literal meaning of k§firån as ‘infidels’, it has always been the case that the enemy is taken to represent the dark side of heresy and unbelief, while orthodoxy and correct belief is reserved for oneself.[445] The text’s use of k§firån is hence more than adequate to express this historical phenomenon.

What invalidates any individual or collective fight in God’s way is a manner of fighting that ignores the word of Allah which wants to secure freedom, justice, and equality for all people. Such a fight would be corrupted and could not be considered as a fight in God’s way; it might still be a worthwhile fight for some other aims, but it cannot any longer be called a fight in God’s way.

God has purchased of the believers their persons and their goods; for theirs (in return) is the garden (of Paradise): they fight in His cause, and slay and are slain, a promise binding on Him in truth, through the Law, the Gospel, and the Qur”§n… (Al-Tawba 9:111)

The fight mentioned in 9:111 is such a fight. It does not fulfil the criteria for a fight in God’s way because, a) it promises the garden of Paradise as a reward, and b) it is only required from the Muslim-Believers, not universally from all humankind. Such a fight differs fundamentally from a fight in God’s way, for example in the form of a nations’ defence against an outside aggressor, because this latter would involve the whole nation and transcends religious, ethnic, and regional boundaries. In contrast to 9:111, the verses of 8:15–16 concern not only the Muslim-Believers but also everyone and refer to a general situation of conflict and opposition to people who attack (al-k§firån). We disagree with al-R§zÊ who, like any other exegete who bases his views on spurious ‘causes of revelation’, claims that 8:15–16 refer to the Battle of Badr. The conditional phrase ‘when you meet’, at the beginning of 8:15, implies a fulfillable condition for a situation in the future, rather than a historical account of a specific event in the past (which only starts with verse 17[446] and not before). The two verses are not a historical narrative but an instruction holding a general lesson—similar to verse 8:45 which also does not narrate events from the life of MuÈammad (ß) or his companions.[447] The feeble historicism of the exegetes’ rendering of 8:15–16 reduces the audience of ‘O you who believe!’ to a handful of companions and al-k§firån to a couple of thousand idolaters of the Banå Quraish in Mecca, which is, given the verse’s universal significance, highly unacceptable. A narrow (historicised) reading of the verse (i.e., believers against unbelievers) denies the possibility that a fight or even a war might take place whereby both sides are ‘those who believe’ (but where one side is called k§firÊn because it has started the conflict), which has indeed happened in history and still happens at the present time.

2. Truly God loves those who fight in His cause in battle array, as if they were a solid cemented structure. (Al-‘aff 61:4)

And obey God and His apostle; and fall into no disputes, lest you lose heart and your power depart; and be patient and persevering: for God is with those who patiently persevere. (Al-Anf§l 8:46)

These two verses underline the importance of comradeship and the spirit of brotherhood, not only on the battleground but also in all spheres of daily life. The first verse uses the picture of ‘a solid cemented structure’, similar to a well-built wall, to describe the fighters’ comradeship and mutual help. They stand shoulder to shoulder in their fight against injustice. We are told that this is what God truly loves. It creates an association to a similar picture: of people praying the ßal§t prayer, standing shoulder to shoulder in their prayer and forming one straight line, a ‘solid wall’ of brothers in faith. The opposite of such unity, as the second verse says, is to ‘fall into disputes’. This is why we are told to ‘hold fast, all together, by the rope which God (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves…’ ($l #lmr§n 3:103). Quarrels cause discord; discord causes friction; and friction will weaken the united front of the believers, leading not only to disappointment and failure in the fight against injustice, but also to destruction of their own united front. We are told in the Book that Pharaoh of Egypt was able to establish his tyrannical regime only after he managed to ‘break up his people into section’,[448] and that the reason for the Prophet’s (ß) defeat at UÈud was disagreements about the aims of the campaign, leaving ‘huge holes in their wall’ of brotherhood and comradeship.

3. …Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and (instead) send you (guarantees of) peace, then God has opened no way for you

(to war against them). (Al-Nis§” 4:90)

As explained above, al-qit§l requires a fight in which at least two sides are actively involved. If one side withdraws, the fight either ends or, if the other side continues to fight, the two-sided fight (qit§l) turns into a one-sided fight (qatl). Verse 4:90 describes such a situation, as do verses 5:27–31 that narrate Cain’s killing (qatl) of Abel in a fight that the Book describes as unambiguously onesided.[449] It is useful to distinguish between a forced retreat and a

voluntary withdrawal from the fight. We are told by #Us§ma bin L§din that ‘whoever is not for us is against us and with our enemies’, which is, oddly enough, mirrored by G. W. Bush’s dictum that ‘if any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocents, they have become outlaws and murderers themselves’.[450] In fact, both fundamentally contradict the message of 4:90 which first allows humans free choice in making their decisions (to withdraw) and, second, does not expect them to fight until the bitter end but allows compromise, resolution, and reconciliation.

4. Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God loves not transgressors. (Al-Baqara 2:190)

…[there is the law of equality]. If then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress you likewise against him. But fear God, and know that God is with those who restrain themselves. (Al-Baqara 2:194)

The first verse calls upon the followers of MuÈammad (ß) to fight those who fight them, but within the limits Allah has set ‘because Allah does not love those who transgress His limits’. In their exegesis of this verse, our honourable scholars have made the following mistakes:

a) They claimed things from the Book that Allah never said, by deliberately misplacing the words within the verses or reading them out of context, for example, out of 2:194, resulting in an understanding of al-qit§l as offensive warfare.

b) They ignored the fact that one of the following verses, 2:193, specifies the situation in which ‘fight in God’s way’ is required: ‘…let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression.’ This requires the occurrence of injustice, which is confirmed by 22:39: ‘…because they are wronged’ (Al-\ajj 22:39). A fight against wrongdoing requires the existence of a wrongdoer and the act of wrongdoing. Aggression is an act of wrongdoing, so is despotism. This means that there are different kinds of fights: fights that want (unselfishly) to end tyranny, and fights that want (selfishly) to defend and

protect one’s material, intellectual, political, and other interests. Only fights for the former are fights in ‘God’s way’.

c) They misread another relevant verse, 2:190, through using the wrong variant reading of 22:39 that says ‘to those against whom war is made [sic], permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; and verily, God is most powerful for their aid’ (Al-\ajj 22:39). This has been understood as God’s permission of self-defence in the face of aggression or an attack. It has been overlooked that the phrase ‘to those against whom war is made’ (yuq§talån), using the passive voice, can also be read as ‘to those who make war’ (yuq§tilån), using the active voice.[451] Most exegetes have tended to accept the first reading (passive voice), but given that people are attacked by an aggressor, does it really need divine permission to fight back? Certainly not, because the right to defend one’s life, property, land, and dignity is God-given, a natural disposition instilled into all of His creation, humans, animals, and plants, and does not need Allah’s special permission, just like other natural acts such as eating, drinking, breathing, sleeping, and procreating.

Verse 2:194 expresses the principle of lex talionis in a response to an act of aggression, supported by 5:45.[452] The phrase ‘transgress you likewise against him’ implies restraint in one’s response and the avoidance of excessive and unjustified brutality. A violation of the principle of equal retaliation makes any fight in God’s way null and void, and it also invalidates a fight for any other reasons, for example, in defence of a nation’s security, or other forms of worldly struggle and contest.

5. O you who believe! When you go abroad in the cause of God, investigate carefully, and say not to any one who offers you a salutation: “You are none of a believer!” Coveting the perishable goods of this life: with God are profits and spoils abundant. Even thus were you yourselves before, till God conferred on you His favours: Therefore carefully investigate. For God is well aware of all that you do. (A l-Nis§” 4:94)

This verse disqualifies ‘unbelief’ as a legitimate reason for a l-qit§l. This applies equally to the context of qit§l as ‘going abroad in God’s way’ or qit§l as ‘seeking knowledge wherever you go’, or qit§l as providing for the family’s income, because if, in the case of the latter two, the material aims and the pursuit of worldly interests supersede Allah’s orders and prohibitions, such acts of qit§l cease to be ‘in God’s way’, since they have become thoroughly corrupted. As for the way in which one talks to the unbeliever while ‘travelling the world in God’s way’, the Book urges us to ‘speak fair to the people’ (Al-Baqara 2:83), that is, in a soft, mild-tempered and well-mannered way—and this applies to people of all religious schools and denominations.

He does not forbid you to deal kindly and justly with anyone who has not fought you for your faith or driven you out of your homes: God loves the just. (Al-MumtaÈana 60:8, AH)

Verse 60:8 demands us to be ‘kind and just’ to the unbelievers. In stating its first qualification (‘who has not fought you for your faith’), it stresses the principle of religious freedom and nonviolence in our fight in God’s way and, in its second qualification (‘or driven you out of your homes’), it stresses the necessity of establishing national security as well as the citizens’ right to shelter and privacy.

The ban to say ‘to any one who offers you a salutation “You are none of a believer!”’ reminds every Muslim-Believer that before their conversion to the new faith the first believers in

MuÈammad’s message had all been unbelievers themselves, but their heart was opened by Allah’s forgiveness and mercy. Hence, the prohibition to fight unbelievers on the basis of their infidelity. This is because, first of all, they enjoy the God-given right to choose whatever faith they want; second, because Allah’s forgiveness and mercy extends to His entire creation (believers, hypocrites, and unbelievers alike); and third, it is Allah alone who knows the real extent of belief and disbelief, of sincerity and hypocrisy, of truth and falsehood, and it is He alone who will judge regarding the faith of

the believers and the disbelief of the unbelievers. Those things (the Last Hour, the Day of Judgement, the books, the messengers, the angels) must be left to Him, while we better turn to the things that are left in our care (to act justly or unjustly, to tell the truth or a lie, and so on).

The five points that invalidate the fight in God’s way are certainly not exhaustive. Many more things could be identified as corrupting the cause of Allah. But it is important to show that the encroachment of even one minor item of the principles given above which qualify a fight as a fight in God’s way, would make such a fight null and void and would remove any reward that Allah has promised to give to those believers who fight for Him.

Concluding Remarks on ‘Fighting in God’s Way’

1. The acts of shah§da and shahÊd are, conceptually, entirely different from the acts of fighting (qit§l), killing (qatl), and the subject of death (maut). Nobody can be called a shahÊd if he is not alive and therefore unable to declare his shah§da publicly. The shuhad§” are those who, just like the ßiddÊqån, prophets, and ß§liÈån, give public witness against injustice (and even suffer for it by incarceration), or give witness to a major scientific discovery (e.g., new medicines that are first tested on themselves), or report under danger about world-changing events (as journalists)—in all instances regardless of whether they are killed during their witness or not. To call people killed in a war shuhad§” is a political ruse by Machiavellian politicians. Governments and army generals know only too well that after they have sent young men to their certain death they cannot do anything for those who are killed. But in order to encourage more people to go to war, they invent stories about an easy entry to Paradise and about beautiful maidens who will serve the killed martyrs in the Garden. These are naturally just empty promises because Allah alone can decide on such matters, not politicians. It is for life (not death) that God created the acts of shah§da and of the shahÊd. But the political caste and the religious establishment has conflated shah§da / shahÊd with qit§l / qatl, that is, with fighting and death. It has created a collective mindset in which the life of a

human being does not count for much and wherein lies a mental numbness in which people seem to be no longer shocked by the number of people killed, even if it is indeed alarmingly high. In our feeblemindedness we boast that foreign armies employ spineless soldiers who are psychologically unable to sustain high casualties. For shock and awe we send our young men to certain death, hoping to produce the highest number of casualties possible. We completely ignore the fact that the so-called feeblemindedness of Western armies can be explained by their value for human life and their regarding the death of each single soldier as a tragic loss of life. We forget that in the West every military action undertaken by the army requires parliamentary consultation and the broad support of the electorate. We forget how praiseworthy it is that they treat the life God has given them as a precious gift which they try to preserve and prolong as long as they can. How bizarre is it, in contrast, that we celebrate and send our zagh§rÊd shrills over the whole town or village, announcing that we have a martyr in the family when one of us has died in a war. We proudly announce that this or that young man has now entered Paradise, even though this is downright nonsense because Allah alone is the Lord over Hell and Paradise, while we know nothing about Hell and Paradise. How foolish of us it is to claim we have knowledge of such things.

2. The concept of abrogation cannot be applied to the verses of military qit§l. These verses have been given to us as reports on historic events during the battles of Badr, UÈud, Khandaq, T§båk, the taking of Mecca and Khaybar, and so on. These are stories from MuÈammad’s life, belonging to the realm of prophethood, not messengerhood. They have, therefore, no legislative significance. Just like with the stories about Moses, Jesus, and Joseph, there is of course a lesson to learn for those who understand (‘There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding’ Yåsuf 12:11).[453] The phrase ‘in this is a warning for such as have eyes to see’ (3:13) implies that these stories are intended to teach, to edify, to admonish, and to warn; but they should not—and this includes the verses of qit§l in Sårat al-Tawba—serve as a basis for human legislation on international war.

3. Jih§d in God’s way is one specific kind of the many types of jih§d. Also, jih§d in God’s way is only one aspect of things that can be done ‘in God’s way’. One may provide food and shelter

for a family in God’s way, one may travel the earth in God’s way, or one may seek knowledge in God’s way. ‘In God’s way’ means according to His method, not for God. Jih§d in God’s way is a jih§d that wants to ‘restore the word of God as most high’. Fight (qit§l) is one form of jih§d to achieve this goal. Jih§d in God’s way is a struggle for the freedom of all people, in particular for the freedom of religion (free choice in deciding which rituals to practice and which religious doctrine to adhere to). A struggle for freedom breeds free-minded people, and free-minded people are those who care for the justice and equality that we need so badly in the Arab-Muslim world.

4. Fight (qit§l) can be legally justifiable and still not be ‘in God’s way’. One may fight an opponent in God’s way (qit§l fÊ sabÊl All§h) in a peaceful contest pursuing one’s own material and intellectual interests. If, however, the contest gradually turns into a fierce battle that cannot be resolved by peaceful means, such a fight in God’s way turns into an ordinary fight (al-qit§l). Most wars in the history of humankind have originated and developed like this.

5. Fight (qit§l) can be legal in the event of an external invasion and foreign occupation, and self-defence in such cases does not need permission for anyone by anyone, because the defence of a nation is pure self-defence.

6. The protection of the life and safety of the population in any state, and defence of the territorial boundaries of a nation-state against external invasion are regulated by international law and are covered by the martial code of each individual state. Wars between entire armies cannot be defined as ‘in God’s way’ unless they are designed to liberate a population that suffers under the #ubådiyya of a repressive regime that suppresses freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and violates human rights openly. Very few wars in the history of humankind have been led in order to achieve such goals.

7. Jih§d in God’s way is always peaceful. In certain circumstances it might be necessary to turn jih§d into a fight

(al-qiã§l) in God’s way. In this case it is a kind of ‘fighting jih§d’ that is fought to ensure freedom of choice for all people, in particular freedom of religion. This is a code only for the individual, not for groups, armies, or entire nations.

8. The Book does not contain a doctrine that regards humans as slaves of God. Human beings in this life—including believers and unbelievers, Muslim-Assenters and God dissenters, the pious and the impudent—are all worshippers of God (al-#ib§d) if they choose to worship God. Only in the Next Life are they God’s slaves (al-#abÊd). When slavery exists in this world, it always means subservience to someone other than God. Even though Arab-Muslims for centuries have been told that they are slaves of God—to the effect that today they believe that this is what their religion wants them to be—in reality they have been tricked into a kind of slavish obedience to someone other than God. Over a long period of time, acquiescence has become second nature for Arab-Muslims, and a mentality of (political) surrender has become fixed in their minds. The hangman-ruler who tyrannises his own people has—by this logic of surrender—become the epitome of a national hero. We believe that there is no other nation in this world where this type of #ubådiyya oppression has been so willingly and almost enthusiastically embraced as the Arab nation. That is why, sadly, people do not think that a jih§d for the freedom of expression is a cause worth fighting for. This is why the call for a fight for the liberation of all people regardless of their religious affiliation is still very alien to them. The corollary of this slavish mentality is the sense of inferiority Arab-Muslims have when faced with their own heritage, their traditions, and the people who represent the Arab past. For them, the past per se is superior to everything they think and do today. However, a person who feels like a dwarf vis-à-vis Ibn #Abb§s cannot act like a giant vis-à-vis the president of the United States. If he feels like a dwarf in comparison to someone in the distant past, he will also feel like a dwarf when faced with someone in the present. True, we vilify the West and abuse it with strong language, and yet the (actual) situation in our countries perpetuates our #ubådiyya towards the West. The West has hegemony over everything, so much so that it can silence our protests and futile outcries. Regrettably, all Arab regimes of whatever nature seem to be more aware of this than their own people. I predict, therefore, a long life and much stability for these regimes, because our culture totally defies a (peaceful and

democratic) revolution against the political authorities; if revolts occur they are almost always accompanied by the dreadful ‘nights of long knives’: revenge killings, retaliations, assassinations, and bombings that kill hundreds of innocent people. The path of the Arabs is a cul-de-sac. We fear that the international community will not bet on a losing horse, and we can only hope that if Arab regimes do not see the need for reforms themselves they are pressurized to do so from outside.

9. We will not solve the problem of violence by simply giving more power to the security services. Such measures only have a temporary effect, like sedatives, because the disease requires a surgical operation. To remove the root cause of this illness requires a revision of the entire foundation upon which Islamic fiqh is based, and of the legal parameters that the fuqah§” have invented. Concepts of personal freedom and love of life are not rooted in Islamic fiqh. This revision cannot be done without the creation or adoption of a new epistemological system that is not hijacked by a notion of sacrality belonging to the past or by sacrosanct scholarly traditions. For more than forty years our main concern has been to propose and apply such a new epistemological system. Halfbaked compromises that stop short of a full revision are not good enough. Perfunctory proposals that do not tackle the root of the crisis, such as the idea of a ‘moderate Islam’ or of a rapprochement between the different legal schools, are, for us, an opportunity lost.

10. Most urgently, the concepts of jih§d and qit§l need to be revised. In the past, they were based on a dichotomist model by which the umma of kufr was opposed to the umma of Islam. The world was divided, in purely religious terms, into an abode of disbelief (d§r al-kufr) and an abode of belief (d§r al-isl§m). What appeared to be a religious conflict was in reality a war over economic interests, territorial gains, and political dominance. Such concepts must change because any war between nations, in particular in the current age, does not know winners and losers since all would lose out. The past has shown that religious wars are terribly destructive, and every Muslim-Believer who thinks that military battles for a religion are a kind of jih§d in God’s way has been misled by a murderous, criminal ideology.

11. To talk about ‘God’s rule on earth’ is naïve and theologically contestable. The È§kimiyya of God will not provide us with a viable modern state because it is the task of the state to look after the concerns of people in this life (health system, education, security, economy), whereas life in the Next World should always be the individual’s own prerogative.

12. It is not permissible to separate religion from society, but it is logical and pertinent to separate religion from politics. As soon as religion enters politics, a culture of exclusivist claims will spread and poison the relationship between groups and denominations. The many legal justifications for the discrimination of other believers in the books of fiqh should be a warning sign for everyone.

13. Democracy is a natural state of human beings. Democracy protects the principles of the freedom of choice, free elections, freedom of speech, and academic freedom. It projects life in society as a social contract that binds the rulers and the citizens. It provides the minimum of procedures to which humans naturally adhere to, for example, the practice of consultation (al-shåra). It has been prescribed in the Book as a duty but its exact modi operandi have been left open because people apply it differently according to their contingent political systems. Unfortunately, Arab-Muslims have not produced a single system of consultation that secures the above democratic principles.

14. The Caliphate, with all its despotic credentials, held its political legitimacy until its abolition in 1924; subsequent political regimes have continued with the Caliphate’s despotic tradition but have never gained its political legitimacy. We still lack a new concept of political rule that enjoys unchallenged legitimacy and differs from the notion of a Caliphate (which, hopefully, will never return).

15. The so-called Islamic awakening is a big swindle. Instead of an awakened morality we have gained a culture full of hypocrisy, dishonesty, and unreliability. And the more people focus solely on their prayers and rituals,

and the more women decide to become muÈajjib§t (veiled), the more we will observe a decline in order and public morality.

16. The more people turn to the books of fiqh and the manuals of the medieval fuqah§”, such as al-Sh§fi#Ê’s al-Umm, or Ibn #$bidÊn’s \§shiyya, the more people are cut off from their natural disposition as laid out in the Book. Applied on the level of society, the more we rely on the political doctrines of our honourable scholars, the more politics will become undemocratic, authoritarian, and in flagrant violation of international law and universal human rights.

17. Isl§m and its three basic pillars exist for all people in this world. What Sårat al-An#§m prescribes are general human values that are applicable to everyone (e.g., the prohibition of usury and the maÈ§rim marriage rules). It implies that all must adhere to them— including secularists and liberalists—but, most importantly, politicians of whatever country. The ethical and moral values of a l-isl§m should influence the legal and political sphere of a society, but they should not force religion into politics, in the sense that state and government rule in favour of just one religious community and discriminate against others. Religious rituals should remain untouched by human legislation, inasmuch as the state’s concern for the material (this-worldly) welfare of its citizens should not be affected by the theological aspirations of one specific religious group. Even if all of a political party’s followers are devout religionists, this party should not just promote the interests of one specific Êm§n, but must care for the interests of all people, based on the ideals of isl§m.

18. It is morally, theologically, and intellectually dishonest to declare suicide missions to be part of istishh§d, promising young men and women the status of a shahÊd. No one but God is allowed to take life. Suicide bombings are against all rules of military combat and competition that requires the existence of two opposing sides. It is the task of humankind to prolong life, not to shorten it by whatever feeble justification. The real act of istishh§d does not take place on the battlefield but in the courtrooms of civil magistrates and in police stations

where statements of (living) witnesses are given. Suicide missions are merely imitations of the Japanese kamikaze pilots who crashed to their deaths. This is alien to anything that al-isl§m stands for. Isl§m is a religion of life, not of death.

19. Our honourable scholars are spreading a mentality of conformism which persuades the masses to do what they are told by their religious leaders. They do not want to hear critical questions from their followers and prefer their brains to be completely switched off. They encourage the proliferation of the herd instinct which makes people feel insecure when they are not cuddled into the warmth of group conformity. People behave like sheep who hurry into mainstream (thinking) at the bark of the shepherd’s dogs (the mullahs, Imams, and leaders of sectarian groups). It will require an intellectual revolution to change this mentality of conformity and promote individuality and originality in thought and practice by both the men in the street and the most ordinary sharÊ#a student.

*** Loyalty in Islam and the Question of Personal and Collective Identities

Current public discourse about Islamic identity in the Arab-Muslim world is marked by an enormous number of terminological inaccuracies and deliberate conceptual mystifications. People seem to constantly confuse their religious identity with their ethnic, national, political, or ideological affiliations, thereby blurring the boundaries of what constitutes a religious community, a racial group, a nation, a people, a political party, or an ideological movement. However, we cannot blame these people because the same confusion of terms and identities can be found in the books of our tur§th heritage. For many centuries, our honourable scholars have been discarding the clear distinctions that the Book made and, driven by the logic of party policies and sectarian strife, have concocted a religio-political amalgam that indiscriminately fuses religious, ethnic, and political identities. In this section, we want to complete our study of the relationship between religion and politics by looking at the concepts of wal§” and bar§”, which are both closely linked to the other concepts so far discussed in this chapter. Identity is expressed either through a sense of likeness (wal§”) or otherness (bar§”). It will therefore be necessary to define terms that

describe the (multiple) identities of a person, as member of a family, clan, tribe, community, people, nation, and such, which we will do by closely adhering to the clear distinctions that the Book has drawn. We will, for example, examine the way the Book treats the term umma (community) as a sociological category. We will learn that a community is a group of people who share the same ideological convictions and behave similarly according to the group's shared cultural values. We notice that the followers of MuÈammad (ß) are described as such a community, as the umma of the Muslim-Believers. In contrast to the community, the term 'people' (qaum) refers to a body of persons who share the same language and ethnicity; we say, for example, the Arab people, the Turkish people, or the German people. Such a body is usually divided into several different (religious, political, and social) subunits, for example, communities, tribes, clans, and such. An Arab woman, on the other hand, belongs to the Arab people, but may also belong, in addition to her membership to her family, to a clan and a tribe, to a Marxist umma or to a Christian umma, or to the umma of the MuslimBelievers. A 'nation' (sha#b), on the other hand, is a more complex term as it refers to a self-defined cultural and social body that combines several languages (lis§n) and several ethnicities (qaum) with a multitude of ideological or religious communities (umma), but it is governed by a single political system and contained in a unified territory (the national homeland) which are both controlled and regulated within the realm of a nation-state (waãan). We will show that membership of each of these bodies is explicitly acknowledged by the Book and that the term a l-wal§" is uniquely employed in order to express the many different layers of personal and collective identities.

Al-wal§"

The Arabic term wal§" is derived from the root w-l-§, from which the Book has drawn 217 derivatives (e.g., walÊy; maulan; wil§ya; tawallin; muw§l§h): the first mentioned is in 2:64[454] and the last is in 96:13.[455] The semantic field of this verb root contains basically two (contradictory) meanings: a) a turn towards someone or something, and b) a turn away from someone or something. The first meaning is expressed in 5:56 and 2:115:

As to those who turn (for friendship) to God [yatawall[a] All§h], His Apostle, and the (fellowship of) believers—it is the fellowship of God that must certainly triumph. (Al-M§“ida 5:56)

To God belong the East and the West: whithersoever you turn [tuwallå], there is the presence of God. (Al-Baqara 2:115)

The second meaning is contained in 2:142 and 17:46:

The fools among the people will say: “What has turned them from [wall§hum #an] the qibla to which they were used?” (Al-Baqara 2:142) …when you do commemorate your Lord and Him alone in the Qur’an, they turn on their backs [wallau #al§ adb§rihim], fleeing (from the truth). (Al-Isr§” 17:46)

The terms al-walÊ and al-maul§ refer to a master or lord whose authority people are prepared to accept and willing to follow, that is, ‘to whom they turn’, and whose orders and prohibitions they obediently observe:

“For my protector is God [waliyÊy [a] All§h], who revealed the Book (from time to time), and He will choose and befriend [yatawall§] the righteous. (Al-A#r§f 7:196)

Behold! Verily on the friends of God [auliy§” All§h] there is no fear, nor shall they grieve. (Yånus 10:62)

Semantically and lexically, this is how the Book employs the terms that have their roots in w-l-§, and yet it is intriguing to see how differently al-wal§” has been defined as a technical

term in Islamic fiqh (e.g., as ‘loyalty’). In this transition from a polysemous Qur’anic word to a rigidly defined terminus technicus of legal jurisprudence, al-wal§” shares the same destiny as other words and phrases we have discussed in this chapter (jih§d, qit§l, amr, nahy, ridda), so much so that these terms acquire nuances of meaning that did not exist in the Book—and this includes other words as well, such as #ulam§, fiqh, #ißma or taqiyya. This semantic shift has been completed to such a comprehensive degree that people today are no longer able to pierce through the hermeneutical covers that our noble scholars have put around the clear terminological core that Allah’s speech provided in His Book.

As we said above, al-wal§” is situated inside the semantic field of an apparent self-contradiction: it either means, a) a turn towards, or b) a turn away. We need to establish the object of such a turn, either towards or away. We also have to explore whether this move, towards or away, is meant to be purely intellectual or mental, or whether it also involves a practical, physical, and hence sociopolitical turn. In other words, we need to establish whether al-wal§” is an individual, personal feeling of belonging (that has no social consequences) or a social act of collective membership (that has huge social implications), or, perhaps, whether it is both at the same time. If it is a form of social behaviour, we need to ask whether al-wal§” is ‘a turn’ that is manifested in ostentatious acts of approval or disapproval or, rather, whether it is a psychological state of mind that influences but does not totally control our social and political activities. If al-wal§” is articulated on a collective level, how does it affect the relationship between the individual and his community, people, or nation but also his tribe, clan, and family? Finally, how does the Book harmonise the concept of al-wal§” with the notion of al-ta#§ruf, God’s will that ‘nations and tribes have been created that they know each other (and not despise each other)’?[456] Does a l-wal§” govern a l-ta#§ruf, or does al-ta#§ruf govern al-wal§”?

We begin by stating that a l-wal§” expresses a form of social identity that is realised first as a decision by an individual who wants to stay in a relationship with someone else. This can be a relationship between a

master and his pupil who (intentionally and voluntarily) decides to follow his master and to imitate his behaviour. We are told that ‘to each is a goal to which God turns him (muwallÊh§); then strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good…’ (Al-Baqara 2:148). On a more advanced level, a l-wal§” is expressed as social behaviour, which means that a person’s decision is now embodied as social practice. If this social behaviour is shared by other people, for example, if the guidance and instructions by the leader of a group are widely accepted and observed by each of its members, if they constitute ‘goals to which they strive together’ (2:148), al-wal§” is articulated on the level of a community. The Book provides the term umma, as in 3:110. The community here shares the same goal, that is, ‘to prescribe what is right and proscribe what is wrong’, while the community also shares the same ideology, that is, ‘to believe in God’.[457] The identity of this community is relatively stable. Differences of opinion are permitted but they never deteriorate to the extent that they turn into antagonisms that endanger the group’s collective identity. (‘All people were originally one single community [ummat [an]], but later they differed…’, Yånus 10:19, AH.) The term umma can also be used to refer to smaller social units, for example, to a group, circle or club. But its defining characteristic is always that its members share a common activity, as in 28:23, where the ‘group of men in Madyan’ were all ‘watering their flocks’. [458] Furthermore, the Book says:

Abraham was indeed a model [ummat [an]], devoutly obedient to God, (and) true in faith, and he joined not gods with God: * He showed his gratitude for the favours of God, who chose him, and guided him to a straight way. * And We gave him good in this world, and he will be, in the Hereafter, in the ranks of the righteous. * So We have taught you the inspired (message), “Follow the ways of Abraham the true in faith, and he joined not gods with God.” (Al-NaÈl 16:120–3)

The verse describes Abraham as a model for a community (umma) which God wants us to emulate. Abraham’s model, his distinctive social behaviour, is characterised by four aspects: a) devout obedience to God; b) ÈanÊfiyya attitude in general and ÈanÊfiyya rejection of idolatry in particular; c) gratitude for the favours of God; and d) guidance to the straight path. Allah’s command to

follow Abraham’s model was sent down as revelation directly into MuÈammad’s (ß) brain. The Book describes Abraham even as an ‘im§m to the nations’,[459] and it says k§n[a] ummat [an], implying that he embodies a collective identity—that his behaviour represents a path, course, or tradition that unites people who belong to his umma.[460] God has made it incumbent on everyone to follow his example (“Follow the ways of Abraham the true in faith…”, A l-NaÈl 16:123). Verses 16:120 and 16:123 reiterate twice why we should emulate Abraham’s example: because ‘he joined not gods with God’. This constitutes the shared value of Abraham’s community. A full commitment to this value expresses a person’s wal§” (likeness) to this community. If we look around and see who today would belong to Abraham’s ÈanÊfiyya community that does ‘not join gods with God’, we would have to frankly admit that we (Muslim-Believers) are the lowest ÈanÊfiyya community in the entire world and, hence, closer to committing shirk than any other community on earth. It is a truism to say that the more ÈanÊfiyya religiosity there is the less is there the possibility of shirk, but the reality is that in the Arab-Muslim world there is very little ÈanÊfiyya and a great deal of shirk.

If a l-wal§” expresses a social relationship based on a personal sense of likeness to someone who is both your guide and teacher, we need to establish the identity of such a guide or teacher and the role he or she fulfils. A direct instruction in this respect can be found in the following verse:

Your guardian [walÊyukum] can be only Allah; and His messenger and those who believe, who establish worship and pay the poor-due, and bow down (in prayer). (Al-M§“ida 5:55; MP)[461]

This verse demands adherence firstly to Allah, secondly to His messenger, and thirdly to those who believe. As for Allah, adherence is expressed by obedience to the Lord, by doing what He has ordered, and by refraining from what He has forbidden. As for adherence to His messenger, this is expressed by confirming MuÈammad’s messengerhood, by following what it prescribes as model behaviour—in the same way as MuÈammad (ß) once took Abraham as a model he wanted to follow—and by adhering to what was revealed to

him by his Lord. As for adherence to ‘those who believe’, this means support for a group of people whose behaviour is characterised by three things: a) they believe in God and bow down (in prayer), b) they establish worship, and c) they pay zak§h. Adherence requires acquiescence, and acquiescence requires obedience. Obedience is undoubtedly one fundamental aspect of al-wal§”, which is shown in the form of both a positive affirmation (of what has been prescribed) and a negative refraining (from what has been proscribed). This is confirmed by the following verse:

O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority [ålÊ al-amr]... (Al-Nis§” 4:59, MP)

If we now compare 4:59 with 5:55, quoted in the previous paragraph, the parallel structure is immediately striking:

5:55 Your guardian can be only Allah | His messenger | and those who believe |

| 4:59 Obey Allah | His messenger | and those of you who are in authority | This parallelism suggests that ‘those of you who are in authority’ in 4:59 are defined as ‘those who believe’ in 5:55. Allah’s instruction orders us to show our ‘likeness’ (wal§”) to them by a) believing in God, b) bowing down in prayer, and c) paying zak§h. This implies that al-wal§” here (on the level of a community) requires conformity in terms of ritual practice and charitable activities. Now we understand the verse: ‘The Jews and the Christians will never be pleased with you unless you follow their ways (millatahum)’ (A l-Baqara 2:120, AH), because they practiced different rituals and different forms of charitable donations. In any case, verse 4:59 does not refer, as some claim, to political allegiance, and the phrase ‘those of you who are in authority’ (ålÊ ’l-amr) does not refer to those in power, that is, a ruler or government to which we should pledge allegiance. The Book defines group identity on the level of a religious community, not political loyalty on the level of a nation-state. This verse has been unjustifiably politicised by the opportunist fuqah§” who unashamedly wanted to please their masters by providing them with a legal cover for their

despotic rule that required an ideology of political quietism and absolute obedience to a ruling tyrant.

Our definition of a l-wal§” in terms of a personal decision expressed through social relations implies the existence of a human society with its diverse networks and interconnectivities. Al-wal§” does not exist if someone is stranded on a desert island because there is no possible social relationship that can bear the fruits of his personal attitudes. Some people claim that in such circumstances al-wal§” must be shown to God, and this applies to even the most isolated monk in his cell or to someone hidden in the cellar of a house. Their argument is that all of them are God’s creation and they should make their a l-wal§” known to their Creator. This view, however, confuses the relationship between the Creator and His creation with the relationship between God and the believers. Whereas the relationship between God and His creation can be denied only by those who completely deny the existence of God, the relationship between God and the believers operates on a completely different level (of religious commitment). The confusion between the two is apparent in the widespread custom among Muslim-Believers to connect their sons’ names with one of the ninety-nine beautiful attributes of God, such as #Abd al-D§“im (slave of the Everlasting) or #Abd al-Maujåd (slave of the Existing) and assume thereby a special relationship between their sons as ‘slaves’ to a personified God, ‘their’ God. They ignore that the Book provides these attributes for the description of the entire universe in which all creation, believers and non-believers, live. Only when Allah is called by the names of al-walÊ or al-maul§ is it done exclusively for the benefit of those who believe in Him (and not for all His creation). This is clearly expressed in the following verse:

God is the protector [walÊ] of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light. Of those who reject faith the patrons are the evil ones: from light they will lead them forth into the depths of darkness… (Al-Baqara 2:257)

In contrast, God in His capacity as Creator, is the walÊ for all humankind, whether they believe in Him or not. This is different from a

l-wal§” that requires a conscious act of allegiance which only rational and sane people can perform, in contrast to the animals and the insane who just follow by instinct or habit.

As verse 49:13 makes clear, humankind is organised in many different ways: by their sex or social class and/or by their communal, tribal, and national affiliations. If a community (umma) is characterised by the relatively homogenous behaviour of its members, a tribe, or a nation, and so on, are obviously characterised by other criteria. We will have to establish these criteria in order to be able to discuss the different features of a l-wal§” with regard to each type of these social categories.

Looking at the general evolution of humankind we observe that even before a l-wal§” became articulated in social relationships, its dual composition of either affirmation or negation was always part of the natural set-up of living beings. Even before God breathed His spirit into His creation, through which animals turned into human beings capable of rational thought and social interaction, a social instinct had always been (naturally) instilled in them. When humans became God’s deputies on earth, their instinctive form of a l-wal§” acquired a new social dimension which had not existed before: they organised themselves into families, clans, and tribes. This new stage of social organisation was underscored by the existence of a social ideology that fostered humans’ social identification with these new social types (families, clans, and tribes). The aim of social ideologies was to hold the different articulations of a l-wal§” in harmony with human beings’ social instincts. Because of the fact that social organisations often create tensions between the demands of a society and the demands of nature, these social ideologies were needed in order to ease these tensions and stimulate a cultural context in which nature and society were not seen as antagonistically contradicting each other. Many verses in the Book fulfil this purpose:

1. And admonish thy nearest kinsmen. (Al-Shu#ar§” 26:214)

2. That day shall a man flee from his own brother, * and from his mother and his father, * and from his wife and his children. (#Abasa 80:36)

3. And Abraham prayed for his father’s forgiveness only because of a promise he had made to him… (Al-Tawba 9:114)

4. And when Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commandments which he fulfilled, He said: “I am making you a spiritual exemplar to mankind.”… (Al-Baqara 2:124, MF)

5. Noah called out to his Lord, saying, ‘My Lord, my son was one of my family, though your promise is true, and you are the most just of all judges.’ (Håd 11:45, AH)

The first verse is addressed to God’s noble Prophet (ß). It advises him to start his call to believe in God and the Last Day with his nearest kinship. This advice corresponds with the natural order of social interaction that is instinctively part of the psychological and social nature of human beings. Human beings would naturally first start with those closest to them in their families: parents, brothers, sisters, spouses, (male and female) children, uncles, aunts, nieces, nephews, grandparents, and grandchildren etc.

The second verse describes the horrors of the Day of Resurrection. It describes the fear that the dead will feel when they congregate in order to be summoned by their Lord. It is the day when the wet nurse will abandon her suckling infant and men their closest relatives. Preoccupied with their own fate, people will forsake the wal§” to their family and clan, that is, they ‘flee from brother, mother, father, wife and children’, as 80:36 says, which provides a more elaborate description of ‘kinship’ than 26:214. In a different verse, men’s closest relatives are given the term ‘kindred’ (faßÊla), to whom they show wal§” because they are given ‘shelter’, that is, help and protection.[462] We deduce from the Book’s description of the Day of Resurrection that the wal§” to one’s own family and clan is the strongest form of social bond; it will last longer than any other relationship and only break if shattered by the might of these eschatological events.

The third verse describes two things: first, the obligation to show respect to one’s parents regardless of circumstances. We are given the example of Abraham’s prayer for forgiveness to his father (Azar). This is in spite of the fact that Allah does not forgive those who have committed shirk against Him (although Abraham could not have known this then). Second, the verse refers to the task to include into one’s call for belief in God even those family and clan members who are opposed to the call and are even prepared to fight it. We hear from the same verse: ‘…but when it became clear to him that he was an enemy to God, he dissociated himself (tabarra”a) from him…’.[463] The verse describes an attitude that requires the caller of God to become detached from those who oppose his faith. It is a form of withdrawal that does not involve any harshness or hardheartedness. We are told that even when faced with his father’s shirk ‘…Abraham was most tender-hearted, forbearing’ (Al-Tawba 9:114). It is rather a form of unengaged neutrality that still keeps the relationship intact but at the same time makes it clear that one does not endorse the position of the God-deniers. Through such disengagement the caller expresses his ‘otherness’ (al-bar§”) which is the opposite to the ‘likeness’ (al-wal§”) that is shown when in the company of like-minded people.

The fourth verse continues the (family) theme of the third verse but extends Abraham’s wal§” to his descendents. By the power of what was naturally given to him, Abraham wanted to secure for his descendants the same role of spiritual exemplars as that by which Allah had made him so special among humankind: ‘Abraham said: “And what about my posterity?” He replied: “My covenant does not apply to the evil-doers”’, implying God’s reluctance to secure privileges on the basis of lineage and pedigree. God objects to the principle of primogeniture and dynastic succession in deciding a nation’s im§m (the verse’s term for spiritual leadership), because the im§mate must be earned and cannot be inherited.

The fifth verse states a similar plea to assist members of a family. While 9:114 contains a petition for Abraham’s father, and 2:124 for Abraham’s descendants, 11:45 states Noah’s call to his Lord to forgive his son. In all three cases the pleas were issued because of the strong feeling of likeness (al-wal§”) that Abraham and Noah felt for their close relatives. The differences, however, between the pleas of Abraham and Noah are

threefold: First, Abraham’s prayer for forgiveness was motivated by a promise that he had made to himself, as we hear in the verse: ‘Abraham said: “Peace be on you: I will pray to my Lord for your forgiveness: for He is to me most gracious’ (Maryam 19:47). In contrast, Noah’s plea was based on the promise (of truth regarding the parentage of Noah’s son) that Allah Himself gave. Second, God’s intention in addressing Abraham’s plea was to stress that the spiritual authority of the im§mate cannot be inherited by birth, while the intention in Noah’s case was to remind us that salvation by Allah’s command does not come to anyone without the delivery of good deeds. Noah is told that God’s command of rescue comes to him ‘… and [his] family—except those against whom the word has already gone forth… (Håd 11:40), that is, his son who might have betrayed his wife, therefore, God said: ‘“O Noah! He is not of your family: for his conduct is unrighteous…”’ (Håd 11:46). Third, Noah’s case contained an additional element, a warning that excessive forms of family loyalty could turn a blessed institution (kinship solidarity) into a cursed form of blind tribalism and zealous partisanship: ‘I give you counsel, lest you act like the ignorant!’ (Håd 11:46).

A family is defined as a small social unit that forms the nucleus of a genealogical line, that is, those who belong—seen from within a patriarchal system—to the father of the family (the wife and children). A clan unites all families that are descendants of the same grandfather, while a tribe unites all clans, divided into the buãån and afkh§dh subclans, which have a common ancestor. A l-wal§” to all three of those social institutions is a very natural form of association that is experienced and sustained according to the prevailing cultural traditions and inherited customs. Successive messengers, beginning with Noah (#a) and ending with MuÈammad (ß), with Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others in between, have issued revelations that gradually purified these family-based forms of al-wal§”, refining them within the divine parameters of mutual support, coexistence, and cooperation—as 49:13 puts it.[464] The phrase ‘verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you’ again stresses the necessity of doing good deeds for God’s blessing and deliverance. Based on this gradual improvement of familybased wal§”, God’s messengers were then eventually allowed to produce a new type of wal§” that goes beyond blood-related affiliations, because it is based on an intellectua l-doctrinal

commitment that requests a higher form of loyalty. The Book says:

Say: If it be that your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline; or the dwellings in which you delight—are dearer to you than God, or His Apostle, or the striving in His cause; then wait until God brings about His decision. And God guides not the rebellious. (Al-Tawba 9:24)

Verse 49:13 states that Allah ‘made [us] into nations (shu#åb[an]) and tribes’, indicating a level of social organisation that is superior to the institutions of family, clan, and tribe. The nation (sha#b, pl. shu#åb, derived from the root sh-#-b, meaning ‘to gather’ or ‘to assemble’), is defined as a body of people who share the same form of social system but who may differ in their ethnic and tribal origins. This is in contrast to ‘people’ (al-qaum), which is characterised by sharing the same language and hence a similar way of thinking and expressing thoughts. We are told that Allah ‘sent not an apostle except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people (bi-lis§n qaumihi), in order to make (things) clear to them…’ (Ibr§hÊm 14:4). In contrast with the wal§” to families, clans, and tribes, which is based on blood relationship and ethnic identity, the wal§” to a nation or a people is based on aspects of identity that are not determined by one’s birth. In some instances, ethnic origins may coincide with national, linguistic, and political identities (as in the case of Pakistani Sunni Muslim-Believers living in Pakistan), in other instances these different identities might not overlap (as for Pakistani Sunni Muslim-Believers living in Great Britain).

**** Concluding Remarks on al-wal§” wa’l-bar§”

Let us sum up the most important results of our study. It has been shown that al-wal§” is derived from w-l-§ whose semantic field in the Book is characterised by an oppositional move between engagement (turning towards) and disengagement (turning away). This has been demonstrated by the quotation of a number of verses from

the Book. It has also been shown that al-wal§” is articulated in concrete social relationships which human beings enter (or leave) after they have made a personal decision whether to commit themselves to this relationship or to disengage from it. This has also been supported by several verses from the Book. Such social commitment can be seen on several levels of collective institutions, for example, on the level of an umma (community) which is defined by a relative unity of beh aviour and conformity of thinking, or on the level of a family, clan, or tribe which is characterised by a unity of the social system that governs the behaviour of all its members. Finally, we reached the conclusion that the divine messages of successive apostles, culminating in the messengerhood of MuÈammad (ß), added a new type of social identity that transcended the level of family, clan, and tribe and introduced the notions of nation and people which required a higher, more abstract (or intellectual) commitment, and which neither abolished nor even contradicted the existing identities based on genealogy and blood relationship. History provides us with several examples of mutually overlapping identities, as for example with Hamza #Abd al-Muããalib, the uncle of the Prophet (ß), whose religious faith grew out of his family commitment and his animosities with Abå Jahl,[465] or the example of #Abdall§h b. ArÊqaã whose encounters with the Prophet (ß) and Abå Bakr (r) on the day of the hijra made his moral commitment (to the values of sincerity, loyalty, and altruism) grow so strongly that in the end they outweighed his former doctrinal commitment.[466] Similar is the case of al-Kh§ãib b. AbÊ Balta#a after his encounter with the Prophet (ß) and his people on the day of the conquest of Mecca.[467]

We conclude with a few comments that are drawn from the material we have presented. Firstly, the different social identities can coexist side by side and no one should be forced to abandon the one for the other. To accept social identities—beyond those based on blood relationship—is a matter of personal choice which should be taken individually and without force or interference from outside. The way these different identities are prioritised is also a matter of personal choice and varies from individual to individual. It has been a great danger that Islamist theories of the Islamic umma have tried to construct a unified Islamic identity—solely at the level of community— and to slice off aspects of Muslim-Believers’ other identities, such as their national and political identities, by defaming them as secondary or even contradictory to their religio-communal identity.

As a serious consequence of such misguided theories many Muslim-Believers thought that it is a duty of their religion to show loyalty only to their religious community and that a good believer drops all interest (and responsibility) to their families, nonbelieving friends, neighbourhoods, and schools. In extreme cases Muslim-Believers even turned to violence against their own people in pursuing the Islamists' cause— as happened in London, Madrid, Casablanca, Sham El-Sheikh, and Amman. Islamist propaganda made Pakistani youth in Great Britain feel guilty when they were happily combining their identities of being British, Pakistani, and Muslim-Believers. It confused young Turkish girls and boys in Germany when they were told that they should feel first and foremost as Muslim-Believers and that loyalty to German society is a betrayal to their religion. It misled so many French Muslim-Believers who heard from their Islamist Imams that their loyalty should be only with their fighting brothers in the Muslim world rather than with the country in which they were born and bred. The Islamists want us to have one single identity behind which they can nurture their dreams of a totalitarian society in which plurality is suppressed and otherness eradicated. This fundamentally contradicts the teachings of the Book which allows us to possess multiple identities and to live a mode of existence where both MuslimAssenters and Muslim-Believers overcome repressive forms of single identities. The Prophet (ß) himself acted successfully on the basis of several identities: he belonged to the smaller clan of the Banå #Abd al-Muããalib and the wider clan of the Banå H§shim; his tribe was that of the Quraish; he belonged to the Arab people (qaum), while his nation (sha#b) was, after his hijra from Mecca, the people of Medina, which included both believers and nonbelievers (e.g., Jews); and finally he founded the state in Medina where Muslim-Believers who followed his prophethood and attested his messengerhood constituted the umma that existed inside his multireligious state. Today, people can follow the example of the Prophet (ß) by accepting the possibility of multiple identities. As a Turkish Muslim-Believer in Germany, an Arab Muslim-Believer in France, or a Pakistani MuslimBeliever in Great Britain one follows the example of the Prophet (ß) by protecting first and foremost the welfare and safety of the country in which one has gained citizenship. Loyalty to the state—and this includes the right to fiercely criticise its government and administration—is a matter of absolute priority. As the example of MuÈammad's first state shows, such loyalty does not eliminate or even diminish loyalty to one's cultural tradition (language and customs), ethnic roots, or religious beliefs. The Prophet (ß) would not have

accepted a Muslim-Believer who risked the welfare and safety of the state by exclusively adhering to religion and completely ignoring other loyalties.

Fortunately, more and more young Muslim-Believers in Europe realise that the exclusivist ideology of a l-Q§#ida and other Islamist groups have driven them unnecessarily to the brink of high treason when they were asked to place loyalty to their religion above loyalty to their home nation. They now realise that Allah's Book wants them instead to negotiate the sometimes difficult and often ambiguous relationship between religious and other identities and not combat one with the other. Even if their host societies make the mistake of perceiving Muslim-Believers primarily through their religious identity, it would be foolish to correspond to this stereotype and accept such discrimination. It is socially and economically always counterproductive to play the religious card and withdraw from society or dream of a paradisiacal life in a so-called d§r al-isl§m (which was an invention of the fuqah§" in any case!). Instead, Muslim-Believers should show that they first and foremost feel loyal to the constitution of their countries and that they are willing to harmonise their roles as citizens with their duties of a religious believer—as, by the way, everyone else does as well (Jews, Christian, Hindus, and Buddhists)— and that their religion is not different in this respect from any other religion in this world.

The Meccan verse urging MuÈammad (ß) to first 'admonish [his] nearest kinsmen' (26:214) demonstrates God's wisdom and foresight, given that it was very sensible for the Prophet (ß) to start his call with his own Arab people before taking it to other people who had an entirely different ethnic, linguistic, geographical, social, or national background. God eventually told him (ß): 'We sent you not but as a mercy for all creatures' (Al-Anbiy§" 21:107). Eventually, this introduced a form of wal§" that went beyond all existing forms of identities and social relationships.[468] On this basis, a new state was created by the Prophet (ß). Its new forms of social organisation and its principles of a multitude of identities differed from everything that had existed before on the political landscape of ancient Arabia. It is our hope that at some point in the near future these forms and principles can be revitalised and reintroduced into all societies of the Arab-Muslim world.

482 chapter six

*** Conclusion

In the introduction to this volume we proposed to submit a radically new interpretation of Allah’s Book. We stressed the fact that our interpretation fundamentally questions what has been held sacrosanct in Islamic theology and jurisprudence. It is our hope that we could demonstrate to the reader that such a new interpretation is not only badly needed but also indeed possible provided that one succeeds in applying consistently a methodology that is different from the scholarly methods of our medieval ancestors. For the sake of full clarity as far as this methodology is concerned, we conclude this volume with a summary of the most important aspects that lie at the heart of our approach and that formed the foundation from which we developed a rereading of the individual verses of the Book.

1. The main task of our study was to demonstrate that there is no other way to understand the text but through rational analysis. By rational analysis we mean a study of the text whose results correspond with the objective reality around us. In this volume we have shown that any interpretation that contradicts reality is nonrational and undermines the purpose of Allah’s revelation which was sent down ‘so that people understand’.

2. We have shown that the truth of a text does not lie in its aesthetic or rhetorical beauty but in the substance and truthfulness of its content. Human ideas are either true or false only if they are assessed by the limits of philosophical thinking. The validity or falsity of a statement does not rely on whether it is linguistically or logically correct or incorrect. A lie, for example, can be expressed quite logically in the most beautiful, aesthetically pleasing way and still remain untrue. Thus, a rhetorically powerful sentence does not

necessarily have to be true. That is why, in explaining the miraculous nature (al-i#j§z) of the Book, we did not just refer to its rhetorical or stylistic beauty. Instead, we referred to our belief that the content of the Qur’anic message is true and valid. Everyone who devotes his or her life to certifying the truthfulness of the Book, that is, the eternal validity of Allah’s laws, is one of those ‘who certify the truth’ (al-ßiddÊqån). It has now become clear to the reader of this volume that we were more concerned with the truthfulness and authenticity of the Qur’anic text than with the beauty and stylistic finesse of its expressions. Also, to attest to the authenticity of the divine text has been more important to us than to attest to the validity of the many (human) sources of the Islamic tradition, whether their authors are highly reputable or not.

3. When the Book was revealed it represented a new level of linguistic evolution. It displayed textual qualities that j§hiliyya Arabs had not known before. It contained vocabulary of nonArabic origins that j§hiliyya poetry had not used. It was arranged in a composition that is different from the entire textual corpus of the j§hiliyya period. In this volume we have therefore not used the common exegetical strategy to refer to j§hiliyya poetry in order to explain the text of the Book. We believe that this poetry reflects the specific cultural characteristics of its period, and its poetical expressions are only beneficial and pleasing for the people who lived at that time. It is therefore of no use for our contemporary understanding of the text. In j§hiliyya poetry we find, for example, no reference to the earth’s gravity or its roundness because Arabs then had not known anything about that. In our study we have instead applied the principle that the authenticity of Allah’s Book is confirmed by modern scientific discoveries and not by its aesthetic impact. In adding new discoveries to our knowledge, human societies take part in constructing the meaning of the text inasmuch as they find in the text the discoveries they have just made. No matter how rapidly societies develop, human beings will always remain in perfect harmony with the Qur’anic text, because creation evolves in the cosmic orbit which the qur”§n prescribes. To go back to j§hiliyya poetry would mean a regress in knowledge and a return to a primitive, premodern understanding of the divine text.

4. We have shown that the Book guarantees complete congruence between its content and the reality of our existence, including the laws of nature and the universe as well as the innate disposition of human beings. Nothing that the Book contains have we treated as insignificant, trivial, or banal. Divine revelation, by definition, is always of the utmost importance to human beings and can never lose its relevance, regardless of the circumstances in which it is perceived. One does not need revelation in order to learn, for example, that a jar will break if smashed to the ground. And one does not need revelation to learn that an elephant's tail is short and that its trunk is long. Let us look at another example which we have not yet discussed. We read in verse 196 of Sårat a l-Baqara that 'if he [the pilgrim] lacks the means, he should fast for three days during the pilgrimage, and seven days on his return, making ten days in all…' [AH]. We should not assume, as many exegetes did, that Allah wants to teach us here such trivial sums as three plus seven equals ten. Everyone, whether clever or stupid, would know that; no revelation is needed for such triviality. If we took away the ending phrase 'in all' (k§milat[un]) it would not change its message that three plus seven equals ten. But we are not allowed, as we explained, to take anything away from the text without changing its semantic meaning. The Book is purposefully composed; not a single syllable in it is redundant or insignificant. Hence, we cannot accept that the phrase 'in all' (k§milat[un]) does not change the meaning of the verse; thus, we need to find a different interpretation for it. We believe that the text here alludes to the existence of several different numeric systems. There is, for example, the decimal system, the seven-number system, the twelve-number system, and the sixteen-number system. In a twelve-number system, the number ten would have an inferior value—expressed as 10/12—compared to a ten in a decimal system, expressed as 10/10 or as one whole (k§milat[un]). We conclude that this verse contains not only the number of days to be fasted but also the identity of the number system (the decimal system) to be used for the calculation of the actual number of the fasting days.

5. The Book constitutes 'being' (al-kaynåna) in-and-for-itself, derived from Allah. As we have shown in chapter 2 it points to its selfsufficient existence, that is, 'being' without change or interference

from external factors. This ontological quality is expressed in the eternal stability of the text, not in terms of its meaning but in terms of its linguistic, visual, and acoustic form. Its form will never change and is therefore not subject to ‘becoming’ (al-ßairåra) and ‘progressing’ (al-sairåra). No one, not even a prophet or a messenger, is able to grasp the total meaning of the Book because this would imply partnership with Allah in His self-sufficient ‘being’. Instead, we become gradually acquainted with its content through the process of ‘becoming’, that is, through a gradual growth and expansion of our knowledge.

We believe that the text of the Book is fixed but that its content moves. Its content moves because every reader will approach the text differently. Some will find things in the text that others do not, and some are better than others at understanding specific passages of the text. Even if the text’s form itself is fixed, its content displays the flexible qualities of everyday life that constantly changes. To put it differently, even if the text constitutes self-sufficient ‘being’, it contains sufficient ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ for its readers. Hence, the Book always allows its readers to understand the text in a contemporary manner (qir§“a mu#§ßira). Whether a reader approaches the text in the twelfth century or the twentieth century, the resulting interpretations will have been ‘contemporary’. Even if the two readings occurred at different times in history, both readers have realised to the same extent the logic of the dialectics between the form of the text and its content. In the twenty-first century, however, both readings have lost the status of ‘contemporary’, as a new, more contemporary reading is required for our current century.

6. The Book is the indirect speech of God (kal§m All§h). Our interpretations of the many verses of the Book are based on the understanding that we grasp the meaning of God’s speech through His words (kalim§t All§h) that exist in our universe. The words of Allah have both a natural and historical component, since they encapsulate all the universal laws that govern cosmos, nature, and human society. Through the study of these universal laws, manifested in our objective human and natural reality, we learn to know the words of Allah (kalim§t) through which, in turn, we come to learn His speech (kal§m). The words of Allah and His speech are not the same thing. While His speech

represents self-sufficient ‘being’, which is eternally fixed, his words, that is, nature and human existence, are subject to ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’. This means that our understanding of Allah’s speech is changing and developing because Allah’s words are changing and progressing, while the speech of Allah is fixed. Allah’s speech is present in the ‘being’ of the fixed divine text of the Book.

7. We have treated the Book as a guide for all humankind and a blessing for ‘the worlds’. It has a universal character and is not just an expression of Arabic thought. Its criterion of authenticity is applicable to the entire world, not just to some Arab societies. And it must carry this criterion for the entire span of time and history, not just for the prophetical period and the time of the Prophet’s companions. In addition, the Book has two further qualities:

a. Its revelation does not contradict reason.

b. Its revelation does not contradict reality.

8. The qur”§n verifies the existence of the material basis of human knowledge. The philosophical foundation of our interpretations is that knowledge (#ilm) is derived from what is known (ma#låm) in objective reality, that is, acquired through empirical data, implying that we receive information (ma#låm§t) from outside the human mind through sense perception or through revelation or inspiration. Both scientific sense perception and revelation/inspiration are based on empirical observations of our objective reality. But whereas the former is restricted to an observation of the present, the latter allows observations within a wider temporal framework and includes things of the past and the future. The inverse process, that empirical knowledge of objective reality (ma#låm) is derived from knowledge (#ilm), that is, the possibility of knowledge without sense perception or revelation/inspiration, does not apply to human beings and is the sole prerogative of Allah.

9. The foundation of human life is freedom. Freedom is the highest and most sacrosanct ideal of humankind. The notion of religion we have proposed in this volume is based on the conviction that the worship of God has its secret seat in the freedom that human beings enjoy. It is a form of existence or word of God (kalimat All§h) that existed even before this world was inhabited. The purpose of Allah's creation was to continue this form of existence and to set His creation free. The idea that believers are God's slaves is fundamentally and categorically false.

10. The Book contains 'between its two covers' MuÈammad's (ß) prophethood and MuÈammad's (ß) messengerhood, designating the two different roles of either prophet or messenger. We have shown that the verses of prophethood (§y§t al-nubåwa) explain the laws of this universe, the laws of historical development, and the stories of previous prophets and messengers. Their inherent quality allows for approval and disapproval. The verses of messengerhood (§y§t a l-ris§la) explain the legal injunctions, orders, and prohibitions. Their inherent quality allows for obedience and disobedience. The verses of prophethood are called the ambiguous verses (al-mutash§bih§t); their outward textual form is fixed but their content is moving. This means that they can be constantly reread in the light of new progress in our knowledge of nature and the universe. This may happen throughout the entire history of humankind. The verses of messengerhood are called the unambiguous or definite verses (a l-muÈkam§t); they are valid at all times but are never to be fixed once and for all. They are to be implemented within the limits that Allah has set and in the light of changing cultural, social, and political circumstances. It has been stressed that we are allowed to exercise ijtih§d so that the verses of messengerhood always remain in harmony with the objective realities that have been newly introduced into human societies. Ijtih§d has to be carried out within the confinements of the divine text.

11. The legal injunctions of the Book, as exemplified in chapters 3 and 4, are to be implemented within the limits that Allah has set (Èudåd All§h). There are two types of rules and their

implementation: 1) human beings are not allowed to step over these limits even if they are allowed to stand on them. That is applicable, as we have shown, to the question of inheritance in verses 13 and 14 of Sårat al-Nis§": 'These are the limits of Allah…But whoever disobeys Allah and His messenger and transgresses his bounds, He will admit him into the Fire' [MF]; 2) human beings are not allowed to stand on the boundaries, not even to come close to them, as we gave the example of verse 187 of Sårat al-Baqara that instructs us how to fast: 'Eat and drink until you can discern the white thread from the black thread of dawn. Then complete the fast till nightfall […]; those are the bounds of Allah; do not approach them' [MF]. We learn that the fast is like a time field: it has a beginning which is the moment when you can discern the white thread from the black thread of dawn, and an ending which is the night. Allah instructs us not to come near its borders, neither at the beginning nor at the end. Instead, we are supposed to keep a safe distance of a couple of seconds both before dawn and after sunset.

12. We have shown the need to rethink the notion of abrogation in the Book. As such, there are no abrogating or abrogated verses that were stated within a one single messengerhood. Every verse owns an area for itself, and every injunction possesses a legal space in which it operates independently. However, based on verse 106 of Sårat a l-Baqara, which says 'whichever verse We abrogate or cause [over long periods of time] to be forgotten, We bring instead a better or similar one. Did you not know that Allah has the power over all things?' [MF], we maintain that abrogation did occur but only between different systems of legislation. There had been, for example, the legal proscriptions in Moses' sharÊ#a which were abrogated by the legal proscriptions as issued in the sharÊ#a of Jesus. We have given the example of verse 50 of Sårat $l #Imr§n: 'I [Jesus] have come to confirm what came before me of the Torah and make lawful to you some of the things that were forbidden to you' [MF]. We then said that MuÈammad's (ß) message came next which abrogated some more injunctions of Moses' sharÊ#a, such as those concerning adultery and homosexuality, and replaced them with different injunctions and added new ones for areas of law where previously there had not been any legal prescription, such as for issues of inheritance and lesbian relationships.

We have stressed that our criticism is directed against the current confused understanding of abrogation, by which hundreds of verses are deemed to be abrogating or abrogated, to such an extent that, on the basis of eccentric hermeneutical manoeuvres, peaceful jih§d is interpreted as military conquest and moral admonition is interpreted as militant fight, to name but a few of such misinterpretations we have cited in chapter 6. For us, every legal injunction, whether revealed first or second, earlier or later, will count equally. In fact, we apply the same measures of authentication and explanation of abrogations that were used by the councils at the time of Abå Bakr, #Umar, and #Uthm§n. We also believe that the right of abrogation lies solely with the Creator and the author of the Book. And we believe that He would have told us explicitly what verse of which såra was abrogated by what verse. But there is no explicit text about such a thing. And apart from a few hints scattered around in the texts of Islamic fiqh, which do not do justice to the importance of the subject, we do not have a theory of abrogation firmly rooted in the Book. All we have are flimsy justifications of abrogation that reflect the ideologies and particular political interests of historical periods in which political rulers demanded to get rid of certain verses that challenged their unIslamic morality and aggressive worldviews.

13. Our understanding of the Book required us to introduce the two categories of ‘historicity’ and ‘historicality’. The first category refers to passages of the Book that narrate the stories of the qur”§n. These are historic narratives, that is, stories about events that really happened in human history. Such stories only contain moral lessons and no legal injunctions, for example, reports about events in the life of God’s messenger, references to the battles of Badr, UÈud, Tabåk, the battle of the ditch, the seizure of Mecca, and so forth.[469] Such reports, as they can be found in Sårat al-Tawba, are ‘historic texts’ (nußåß ta”rÊkhiyya), narratives of events that took place in history. No human legislation can ever be derived from them. They do not belong to MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood since their revelation was the result of specific historic circumstances as they are reflected in the so-called occasions of revelation.

The second category of ‘historicality’ is a hermeneutical term that refers to the context-based nature and historical bias of our understanding and

interpretation of texts. Our understanding for instance of the verses of messengerhood, such as, the injunctions about inheritance law and the different ritual obligations, is ‘rooted in history’, due to both the historicity of the text (ta”rÊkhiyyat al-naßß) and the historicality of our understanding (ta”rÊkhiyyat al-fahm). Thus, if we read the ‘stories’ of the Book we need to understand them as being historic (events that actually took place in history) and our understanding of them as historical (shaped by our historical context). Likewise, if we read the legal injunctions of messengerhood we need to consider both their nature as being historic (as legal measures for a concrete period of time in history) and our understanding of them as historical (because we study them with the epistemological paradigms of the twenty-first century).

14. The freedom to exercise ijtih§d, the individual interpretation of the sacred text, is conditioned. One should not allow people to apply it too freely or too narrowly. We have stressed that the criterion of a legitimate ijtih§d is whether its outcome corresponds with social reality. We defined an ijtih§d as correct and acceptable if it brings the sacred text into harmony with objective reality. And because objective reality constantly changes, the outcome of our ijtih§ds will also constantly change. If no congruence between objective reality and the sacred text is established, an ijtih§d shall be deemed unsuccessful or even false. We applied the same criteria for modern parliamentary legislation. A law is effective when the existing social order of everyday life has been successfully analysed and when appropriate legislation has been found to administer and govern the social affairs of the citizens in an efficient way. As we heard in verse 137 of Sårat $l #Imr§n[470] and verse 20 of Al-#Ankabåt[471], such congruence establishes a perfect line from ‘becoming’ to ‘progressing’, running from Adam to the Last Hour, and it is the sole criteria of truth by which the authenticity of Allah’s word is confirmed. The criterion of a successful ijtih§d is certainly not whether the Prophet’s companions, their successors, or any of the traditional jurists would agree with it or not.

15. The act of ijm§#, of a consensus about sharÊ#a law, is carried out collectively by living people, not dead fuqah§”. One may dispute public injunctions, such as

what is permitted and forbidden, but one should never touch the thirteen absolute taboos (muÈarram§t) which we have discussed in chapters 1 and 2. One may, for example, introduce a ban on smoking in public places as a result of scientific research into the health risk of smoking, by issuing fatw§s or resolutions of national assemblies or through bills of parliament. Or one may forbid or allow polygyny by fatw§s or state law but one should never absolutely allow or forbid smoking or polygamy, since this is the prerogative of Allah.

16. The act of qiy§s, of drawing analogies between two or more legal cases, must be done on the basis of empirical evidence and scientific proof provided by sociologists, economists, mathematicians, and natural scientists. These scholars function as the real advisers of state authorities and political legislators. This should not be done by the #ulam§” and the jurists of fatw§ bureaus. The primary task of these religious ‘experts’ is to give advice on what should be prohibited and permitted in matters of ritual worship. They should not be consulted in matters that are absolutely forbidden or absolutely allowed (which is God’s prerogative).

17. We distinguished between different categories of injunctions and different types of legal authority. We avoided confusing the type of absolute, religious taboos (taÈrÊm) with types of prohibitions (nahy wa-mana#) that can be changed by positive law. And we did not confuse the seat of authority for such legislations. We distinguished between the role of the divine legislator on the one hand, and the role of the state, customary practice, and popular traditions on the other. We have pointed out that the thirteen absolute taboos cannot be made subject to ijtih§d, ijm§#, and qiy§s, and that includes the prohibition to eat dead meat, blood from slaughtered animals, and the flesh of swine (see verse 173 of Sårat al-Baqara). We believe that in keeping the thirteen taboos sacrosanct the contemporary Islamic discourse will lose its current reputation of being provincial and inward-looking and will thus regain universal acceptance. No one, be they muftis, politicians, bureaucrats, or generals, is allowed to add any more absolute taboos to the existing thirteen which Allah decreed in the Book. If someone did make any such illegitimate addition, God’s response would be: ‘How dare you say things about God without any knowledge!’ (Yånus 10:68, AH).

18. The role of a prophet is to exercise ijtih§d for a specific historical period. In his effort to create a viable state and a functioning society, the Messenger MuÈammad (ß) used his independent judgement to issue prohibitions or permissions which he had to qualify in accordance with the shifting historical context and changing circumstances. This is (also for us) the only way to apply the dictum of the #ulam§” that ‘the legal injunctions change with the changes of time’ (a l-aÈk§m tataghayyar bi-taghayyur al-azm§n). It is the only chance to turn the current geographically and temporally very narrow-minded Êm§nic discourse— caged into the space of the Arabian Peninsula at the time of the seventh century—into a universal isl§mic discourse that integrates all people on this globe and covers all periods of time until the coming of the Last Hour.

19. The sunna of MuÈammad (ß) has been defined as the first ijtih§d ever, a deliberate application of the rules of the Book to a concrete historical situation. We have shown that the sunna embodies MuÈammad’s (ß) interpretations of how to transform the divine and absolute rules into practiced norms of everyday life on the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century. It was not the only and certainly not the last application of the Book. What MuÈammad (ß) did was to consider the cultural, political, and economic situation of seventh-century Arabia and to position its ‘becoming’ and ‘progressing’ vis-à-vis the divine and transhistorical ‘being’ of the divine text. In applying universal injunctions to his concrete historical milieu, he built the foundation of a centralized state on the Arabian Peninsula which was, at that time and in terms of ancient Arabia, an enormous qualitative leap. In this role, MuÈammad (ß) was a truly pragmatic leader and an immensely convincing bearer of a new, revolutionary message. As the first mujtahid and greatest messenger (ß), who received a divine, absolute message from God, he transformed the eternal into the temporal, the abstract into the concrete, the universal into the particular. Because of this intrinsic link between MuÈammad’s (ß) ijtih§d and the concrete, contingent circumstances of seventh-century Arabia, we stated that we do not draw analogies from the decisions we face in our contemporary world to his decisions of the seventh century. We must apply our own ijtih§d and use our own intellect to bring the rules of the Book in line

with objective reality as we face it today and in accordance with the epistemological paradigms we possess now. Therefore, we did not apply the method of qiy§s, of drawing analogies, between contemporary and ancient legal rulings but between current, contingent realities and the divine text.

20. We stressed the need to distinguish between the sunna of the Prophet and the sunna of the Messenger. We defined the sunna of the Messenger as consisting of those acts and deeds of MuÈammad (ß) which are, and already have been during his life and immediately after his death, deemed to be worthy of imitation. These are the ritual obligations by which MuÈammad's (ß) followers differ from other groups that follow other messengers. The form of these ritual obligations (e.g., the act of prayer as such) is once and for all fixed but their content moves (e.g., how exactly to pray). The ritual content is transmitted from generation to generation through actual performance—the books of ÈadÊths do not have a say in this.

The sunna of the Prophet, in contrast, was said to consist of MuÈammad's (ß) words and sayings about society, the state, politics, governance, dress codes, and popular practices during his time. We proposed to regard them as words of wisdom to which one should listen attentively. But they do not possess absolute authority or eternal validity, and they should not be made a source of modern legislation. The books of ÈadÊths and the many volumes of ÈadÊth criticism are a real burden for us today, since they force us to constantly authenticate our modern positions in accordance with the sunna of MuÈammad (ß). We stressed that it is important to realise that MuÈammad's (ß) views are neither absolute nor do they possess everlasting truth, as their validity is restricted and subject to interpretation.

21. MuÈammad's (ß) major role was to transmit the divine message that came down to him by revelation.[472] We have shown that in judging this role one should avoid two extremes. One is to say that the Qur'anic text is what MuÈammad (ß) understood of the divine message and how he explained it to his followers. In this view the divine text has turned into MuÈammad's prophetic announcements. The other extreme is to give

MuÈammad’s sunna the function of explaining the obscure and ambiguous in the Qur’an, of specifying general meanings, and of particularising general rules. In chapter 2 we thoroughly criticised those who outrageously attributed divine wisdom to the sunna and even gave it the authority to abrogate Qur’anic injunctions, an attitude that resulted in the slogan that ‘the Qur’an is more in need of the sunna than the sunna of the Qur’an”—may Allah protect us from what they are saying!

In several passages, the Book says that the aim of proclaiming the divine message is to ‘make it public’, that is, the opposite of keeping it hidden or private.[473] We therefore defined the role of the Prophet as that of a messenger whose task it was to bring the divine message out into the open, that is, to announce its news loudly and clearly to the people. His task was not to interfere with the transmission of the phonetic and lexical format of the Book, al-dhikr (i.e., with the process of linguistic transformation or al-inz§l into Arabic) nor with the actual content (i.e., with the act of revelation, or al-tanzÊl), inasmuch as he was forbidden to alter the revealed commands and prohibitions by his prophetical practice.

We discussed the need to keep two different steps of revelation separate: first, the transformation of the text of divine revelations into a linguistic format (Arabic) so that human beings are able to perceive it. Second, the reception of these divine revelations by the Prophet (ß). We said that MuÈammad (ß) enjoyed the status of a messenger of God only because of his task to make revelations public and to deliver Allah’s message in a clear manner without any distortion, alteration, or addition. MuÈammad (ß) performed this role in the most perfect and complete manner. However, we refused the idea that he was chosen to explain and elucidate the divine message. Our argument is that the very long såras of the Book, such as A l-An#§m, Al-A#r§f, Håd, Yåsuf, or Yånus, whose complex meanings unquestionably demand further explanations, were entirely left unexplained by MuÈammad (ß). This shows that it was never MuÈammad’s (ß) self-understanding that he should comment on everything he proclaimed as revelation. This confirms our view that MuÈammad’s (ß) role was only that of a transmitter of the divine message. He represented

‘the completion of prophethoods’ but not the ultimate level of the Book’s interpretation.

22. We have shown the importance of recognising the differences between Islamic sharÊ#a and Islamic fiqh. Islamic sharÊ#a, as we defined it, contains those legal verses of the Book that share Allah’s absolute ‘being’, whereas Islamic fiqh or jurisprudence represents the contingent nature of human interaction with and understanding of the divine legislation at a specific time and place in human history. Whereas Islamic sharÊ#a is divine, Islamic fiqh is human. The distinction between sharÊ#a and fiqh helps us to further differentiate between al-isl§m and al-muslimån. Whereas al-isl§m is represented by the Book, the term muslimån refers to human beings who interact, historically, intellectually, and socially with the divine text. In other words, the muslimån personify the historical presence of the Book and, by doing so, differ immensely in their interpretation of it.

We have made it clear in all chapters of this volume that we regard the whole literature of Islamic fiqh as a first reading or first understanding (i.e., context-based application) of the divine text and its sacred injunctions. We see it as our task today to add to this a second reading which is firmly rooted in the twenty-first century. This requires us to fully apply modern paradigms of knowledge and learning so that we may go beyond the premodern foundations and sources of Islamic fiqh. Following this logic, we are convinced that in the future there will be further readings, for example, a third rereading, a fourth rereading, a fifth … and so forth, until the coming of the Last Hour.

23. In our interpretations of the legal verses of the Book we applied the scholarly principle ‘legal injunctions change with the changes of time’. We are convinced that legal rulings do change as a result of epistemological and scientific developments that take place in our societies. Being true to this principle, we have interpreted the verses of inheritance more in line with modern statistics and mathematics than with explanatory

models that existed in ninth-century Arabia. Consequently, we were able to remove insignificant factors of medieval fiqh thinking, such as questions of obedience and disobedience, of mental soundness and madness, and were thus able to see things from a different perspective which led to completely different results. After us, of course, others might come and see again new things and create new results because of their own perspective, which will differ from ours.

24. We have proposed throughout the volume that Islamic law should be applied as human and civil legislation within the limits that Allah has set. It requires the principle of ÈanÊfiyya which allows change and plurality of opinions. It requires the institutions of civil society and the existence of legislative assemblies, a fair electoral system, democratic elections, and the possibility of correcting and revising religious fatw§s. Muftis should give fatw§s only on matters of ritual duties. This self-restriction will be their contribution to a fair, democratic, open, and pluralistic Islamic society.

25. We have shown that the fuqah§”’s harsh penalties for apostasy deviates from the spirit and explicit text of the Book. According to Allah’s Book, apostates should not be punished for their change of religious affiliation because every human being enjoys the freedom of religion and the freedom to choose membership to whatever religious community he or she wants. We have shown that Islamic jurists interpreted politically motivated secessions by Arabian tribes as religious apostasy as a result of which, basically until today, an individual’s renunciation of Islam is treated as high treason for which the death penalty is demanded. It is important to disentangle this political history from the religious message of the Book and reestablish the freedom to change religious communities or the freedom to not follow any religious community at all.

26. The fuqah§”’s indiscriminate treatment of a l-jih§d and a l-qit§l has been exposed as insufficient. We have shown that the Book cites a large number of activities that are subsumed under the category of al-jih§d, for example the pursuit of knowledge, the provision of sustenance, and the peaceful

struggle for freedom, justice, and equality. A struggle is defined as ‘jih§d in God’s way’ (a l-jih§d fÊ sabÊl All§h) if the intention is to fight for freedom, justice, and equality for all people on earth (that is not restricted to a particular religious community, ethnic tribe or nationstate).

27. Al-qit§l is one possible type of al-jih§d, that is, a type of fighting that implies violence and involves a considerable amount of force. It is the last resort in any kind of confrontation between two sides, and it is tried or done when everything else has failed. A fight is defined as ‘fight in God’s way’ (al-qit§l fÊ sabÊl All§h) if the intention is to forcefully resist internal oppression by an unjust totalitarian regime and to fight for freedom, justice, and equality in one’s own country. A military fight against an external invasion may be legitimate but it cannot be defined as ‘fight in God’s way’. We have shown how important it is to differentiate between normal warfare (undertaken in order to pursue political, economic, and military objectives) and fights in God’s way that refer to the struggle against injustice, totalitarianism, and discriminations on the basis of people’s social class, ethnic race, religion, or gender.

28. ‘To prescribe what is right and to proscribe what is wrong’ is a powerful activity of al-jih§d that is done in God’s way. If this activity is carried out in the correct spirit of the Book (that is, without the use of force and violence), it helps to spread peace, prosperity, and happiness in a nation. We have argued that the best agents of this activity are the civil rights and civil society organisations of a country, and that the highest level of ‘prescribing what is right and proscribing what is wrong’ can be found in groups or movements who peacefully protest against political oppression, the breach of human rights, and the lack of political transparency in government and state administration.

29. The persistent usage of the term war§” for ‘loyalty’ purely on the communal level was exposed as inadequate, as it was shown to be a convenient tool to silence political opposition. We have shown that the two terms al-wal§” and al-bar§” are used in the Book in order to describe the process of identity formation, and its dissolution respectively, on several collective levels, that is, within a family,

clan, tribe, community, people, and nation. It was emphasised that an individual person can adopt several identities that need not necessarily contradict one another. Rather than instrumentalising these terms in order to enforce a single, monolithic identity on Muslims (favouring the religious over all other), we have shown that it is possible to reconcile the religious with the ethnic, political, linguistic, and tribal affiliations that a person might have. It is hoped that this will help contemporary Muslims to liberate themselves from the fetters of a religio-centric worldview, which forces us to become more and more alienated from mainstream society, and to open their minds to the possibility that they can harmonise their multiple modern existence with their religious faith.

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Praise be to the Lord of the worlds!

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** Appendix

*** Interview With Muhammad Shahrur by Dale F. Eickelman (1996)

The first interview was conducted by Dale F. Eickelman who in 1996 met Muhammad Shahrur in Damascus to ask him about his personal and intellectual biography. Professor Eickelman was one of the first Western academics to discover the significance of Muhammad Shahrur's writings within the context of the emergence of a Muslim public space in the Arab and Islamic world.[474] The interview took place at D§r al-Istish§r§t al-\andasiyya, the engineering firm in which Shahrur is a senior partner and where he does his writing. Professor Eickelman told me that the interview was conducted in a combination of English and Arabic, with the choice of language left to Muhammad Shahrur. In practice, he switched to Arabic in discussing theology and technical points in Qur'anic interpretation, using English to discuss the more general aspects of his life and career. The language switching was

facilitated by the presence of ‘§diq Jaw§d Sulaim§n (‘SS’ in the interview transcript), an Islamic activist, who accompanied Dale Eickelman to Damascus. Sulaim§n, a former journalist and senior official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman, was also interested in Shahrur’s work, although from the vantage point of a fellow participant in Islamic reform. I wish to thank Dale Eickelman for allowing me to include in this volume his interview which has not yet been printed or published elsewhere. [475]

**** Coming of Age in Damascus

DFE: When we first spoke about your family and youth in Damascus, you mentioned an occasion when your father took you past the shrine of MuÈyÊ al-DÊn Ibn #ArabÊ, in the ‘§liÈiyya quarter of Damascus where you were born and raised.[476] Why did you begin with this episode?

MS: The episode took place after the 1967 Six Day War. My father and I were passing by the shrine. He pointed to it and asked me, ‘Do you know who defeated us?’ ‘No,’ I replied. He said, ‘The man who is buried under this shrine’. He told me that Ibn #ArabÊ ruined our ability to reason. He turned our focus away from the physical world to a hallucinatory one existing only in our minds.

DFE: How old were you in 1967?

MS: I was born in 1938, so I was twenty-nine. I had graduated from the university in 1964, three years earlier.

I: Is your father religious?

MS: He’s a conservative. People call us conservative. He prays and fasts. He went on the pilgrimage in 1946, and I went with him, when I was eight years old.

DFE: Did he speak with you often about religion?

MS: No. He talked mostly about how to be honest and truthful. He thought that to worship God is good, as was honesty with people, work, and following the objective laws of nature.

DFE: How would he say ‘the objective laws of nature’ to a young child? This sounds like a phrase you might have learned later in Russia.

MS: Objective knowledge? He used the example of a stove. If you want to warm yourself, don’t recite the Qur’an, but light a fire in the stove. This is how he explained the idea to us. Anyone could understand his example. He still explains things this way.

DFE: What role did your mother play in your early life?

MS: In 1953, I wanted to drop out of school. My father had no objections, but my mother was opposed to it. She was illiterate, but she quarreled with my father and cried. Finally, to secure peace, he said, ‘Okay, go to school’ [laughter]. She insisted that I continue, and he finally agreed with her.

DFE: Why did you want to leave school?

MS: I was attracted by money. I worked, earned money, and liked it. At the time, I considered school as a kind of confinement. You had to go every morning, sit on a chair all day, and then go home. I thought that working allowed more freedom.

DFE: Did you have religious lessons in school?

MS: Yes.

DFE: What did you think of them?

MS: My interest for each subject depended on the teacher. My religious teacher was good, although he didn’t pay much attention to prayer and fasting. He knew that he had to teach us the main framework of Islam and he was good at that. He wore a suit like anyone else.

DFE: As you look back on your youth, would you consider yourself particularly interested in religious issues?

MS: No [laughter]. I was not particularly interested in religious issues. But my family is religious. In our neighborhood, we were considered quite odd. Our father was strict about not fasting and praying. He fasted and prayed himself, but considered religion as more than this. He was more concerned with how people treated one another and how to deliver goods or work to people. He emphasized this all the time.

DFE: After you finished primary school, did you have a choice in your studies?

MS: We could choose between humanities and science, and I chose science. I liked it, and think that I have a scientific disposition. I was good at mathematics and physics, and understood them easily.

*** Studies in Moscow

DFE: Why did you choose the Soviet Union for advanced studies in 1958?

MS: I didn’t choose. There was a competition for twenty-eight students to go to Russia as part of a cultural agreement, and I wanted to continue my studies abroad.

DFE: How did you find life in Russia?

MS: At first, everything was odd and strange. I didn’t know Russian, and Russia was a new society for me. It took me four to six months to adapt to my new circumstances. Then I enjoyed it. It was a new experience and gave my life a new scope. I had never been outside Damascus and was only nineteen years old, a very young man in Russia.

I was very curious about Russia. I asked about the October Revolution and how it came about. I learned Russian quickly, and read a lot of books that weren’t on the syllabus. Russians were obliged to study Marxist philosophy, the history of the Communist Party, and political economy. Foreigners from the United Arab Republic, as we were at the time, were exempt from this requirement. We had no examinations on these subjects, but I studied them anyway. I read books on the history of the Communist Party, Marxism, and the work of Engels, although no one obliged me. I discussed philosophy with many people. This was my hobby, and physics and mathematics helped me to understand more.

DFE: What were your living conditions like in Russia? Were you living with Syrians or with Russians?

MS: Syrians and Russians together. I lived only the first year with another Syrian. All the other years I lived with Russians. They are good people, ordinary and direct. I liked them as people and enjoyed their company. I married a Russian in 1963, a girl from my institute. We lived together in a student hostel and she had a son by me in 1964, the year I graduated.

DFE: Did you speak about religion with Russians or Syrians?

MS: With both, but from a philosophical point of view, not about prayer or fasting. I asked questions like: Does God exist? What is morality? Why do we need it? I asked about the existence of God. Marxist philosophy is atheistic. This was hard for me to accept, especially because the Russians sometimes advanced arguments which I could not answer. I felt defeated and disappointed when this happened. I believed in God and read the Qur’an, but I could not convince them and they could not convince me.

How could I convince them? When I was in Russia, a Qur’anic verse ran through my head: ‘Say: God’s is the argument that reaches home. Had He wanted, He could indeed have guided you all’ (Qul: Fa-li’ll§h al-Èujja al-b§ligha, fa-law sh§” la-had§kum ajma#Ên) (Al-An#§m, 6:149). I didn’t know how to explain this verse repeatedly coming to mind. At the time, I hardly knew the Qur’an at all.

I read newspapers a lot, especially a newspaper called Za rubezhom.[477] It translated stories from foreign news broadcasts and periodicals into Russian. I liked reading. I took a book with me and read wherever I went, because my Russian was like a Russian’s and I enjoyed Pushkin and poetry.

DFE: How long did it take you to become fluent in Russian?

MS: One year and three months.

DFE: Were other Syrian students also interested in talking about religion?

MS: No. We gathered as friends on Sundays and feast days. We talked about lots of things, including philosophy, religion, and politics. At the time, Syria and Egypt were combined in the United Arab Republic and the Arab world was turbulent. There was the Algerian revolution for independence and troubles in Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia, and Africa. We were wrapped up in politics and proud that we were from the United Arab Republic.

So I was astonished when the United Arab Republic broke up. In Russia, I repeatedly told my friends that Arabs had no theories of society. I felt that we Arabs needed to understand concepts of freedom and society. On this issue, I was influenced by Marxist philosophy. I understood from Russia that people need concepts about society, so that if a man in Casablanca and another in Damascus were asked a question, they would give the same answer and take the same stand. This is what we call ideology or culture now. In Russia I called it theory. I felt that we were all in urgent need of theory. This made me read more books on how to formulate theory. I also felt that theory without strength and progress means nothing.

DFE: You speak of a strong sense of Arab identity during this turbulent period in the Arab world. How do you feel now about the idea of Arab nationalism (#uråba)?

MS: It’s a good idea, but overwhelming. It’s romance.

DFE: What did it mean to you in 1958 and 1959?

MS: Romantic meanings only.

DFE: You called it ‘romantic’ then?

MS: Yes. You see, we are Arabs. We have one culture and one language. We express Arab unity in poetry but not in theory.

SS: Did Arab unity have any political implications for you?

MS: No. Only the union between Syria and Egypt had political implications.

SS: When you say you were astonished, were you also frustrated or pained?

MS: Yes, I was convinced that it was wrong that some political parties were banished and that democracy was abolished. It must be revived. In addition, Lenin’s definition of party was useful to me. He defined the party as an objective expression of thought. This made sense for me. Until now it makes sense that a party is an objective expression of thought, that common thought gives birth to parties, that parties were born from thought. I still think that this expression is valid.

DFE: When you arrived in the Soviet Union, Nikolai Bulganin was Prime Minister (1955–58), and he was replaced by Nikita Khrushchev about a month after your arrival. What did you think about the Soviet system at the time?

MS: In the first two or three years of my stay in Moscow, the Soviet system had a great impact on me. I knew that the Soviet Union was a backward nation in 1917. Then they built a strong army and won the Second World War. Later, when I went into the Russian countryside and saw Russian peasants, I was astonished by the many government lies. Then I stopped believing in the Soviet system. There was something fishy about it. There is a Communist Party slogan, which I put in my third book: The party is the mind, heart, and conscience of the people (al-Èizb huwa #itq wa-·amÊr wa-sharaf al-sha#b). It disgusted me, I felt sick when I read this slogan. I put my views in my compact for national action (mith§q a l-#amal a l-waãanÊ). All parties and universities, scientific research institutions, a free press, and all organizations together express the mind, conscience, and honour of the people, but no one party. It’s impossible.

**** Arab Nationalism and Theories of Society

SS: Let’s return to the notion of #uråba. At the time did you think that the Arab world would unite?

MS: Yes, the pan-Arab world. For instance, we supported the Algerian revolution. For us, that was the immediate concrete application of #uråba, so objectively we had to support Algeria. The Algerian issue concerned all the Arab countries, as did the 1958 revolution in Iraq. These events were concrete. I thought that Iraq would join the United Arab Republic. These were the immediate implications of #uråba.

However, we didn’t think about theory at that time. Our thoughts were driven by events. After the break-up of the union between Syria and Egypt, I realized something was wrong with #uråba Islam, although I didn’t yet know what it was. We had to look at where we went wrong.

SS: You say that you still believe in the Arab nation. Do you mean this only in an emotional sense or do you see in pan-Arabism a practical means of uniting the Arab world on the basis of a common culture? Do you see pan-Arabism as the basis for a political movement?

MS: I believe that it could serve as the basis for a political movement, to bring Arabs together with one language, one culture, and one state. This remains my ambition. I hope by my writing to contribute something useful to the Arabs in their fight for unity. We have to give up romance. My writing doesn’t deal with romance.

I call [the earlier period] the romantic one.

DFE: Your studies in the Soviet Union gave you fluency in Russian, a solid basis in civil engineering, a love for Pushkin, a wife, a son, and frustration that the Russians could talk theory but you couldn”t.

MS: Exactly. When I returned to Syria I repeatedly said that we had no theory. I vaguely understood in 1964–65 that any ideology that doesn’t include a theory of knowledge is not really complete. At that time I realized that the first step was to formulate a theory of human knowledge and consciousness, the relationship between things outside yourself and things in your mind (al-#al§qa bayn a l-wujåd fi’l-#ay§n wa-ßuwar a l-mawjåd§t fi’l-adhh§n). This relationship is the main issue in philosophy, and how to

improve our understanding of it will remain the main issue until the Hereafter.

DFE: In the 1960s did you think of theories of society primarily in terms of #uråba, Islam, or both?

MS: After the break-up (infiß§l) of the union between Syria and Egypt in 1961, I realized that we needed a theory of society for the pan-Arab movement.

DFE: And religion?

MS: No. Religion at that time meant to me only to believe in God or atheism, because I was confronted with Russian atheism and Marxism. Does God exist or not? I didn’t go into details because the main issue confronting me was atheistic philosophy. I had to defend myself and my beliefs. I didn’t think about praying or fasting. You see, the main issue—whether God exists—was so big a problem that I forget about fasting and everything else.

DFE: So Islam was not then central to your thought?

MS: No.

SS: And theory was?

MS: Theory for #uråba, for pan-Arabism. Arabs needed a party system with a theory so that they could understand words and the universe.

SS: You didn’t think that Ba#thist ideology was adequate?

MS: The Ba#th party recognized that it had no theory to its credit. They offered only revolutionary principles (al-munãalaq§t al-thaw riyya). The unionists (al-waÈdawiyån) now say the same thing.

Professor F§“iz Ism§#Êl K§mil[478] says that we have no theory. After the 1967 Six Day War, when my father pointed to the shrine of MuÈyÊ a l-DÊn Ibn a l-#ArabÊ, I knew that Ibn #ArabÊ was a philosopher. I realized then that the principle of making theory had to come from inside Arab culture in order to change Arab thought. Islam and the Qur’an are at the basis of how Arab culture is formed. Islam defines our thinking, our way of doing things. All the books written through the fourteenth century, our social and scientific consciousness, had been worked out through the philosophy of Islam. I realized that even Arab atheists are Islamic in their culture.

SS: So it was Arab identity and #uråba that led you to an interest in Islam?

MS: Because Islam has shaped our culture. I believe in God. I was never in my life an atheist. Not even for one minute.

DFE: Did you ever have doubts?

MS: Yes. When I was in Russia, when I began to read the Qur’an, I knew that I had to eliminate my doubts. How? I wanted to see the Qur’an’s credibility. Abraham himself had doubts and from his doubts he came to certainty. I read about a theory of doubts in René Descartes’ On the Method of Seeking Truth in the Sciences (arÊqat al-wußål il§’l-ÈaqÊqa). It is good to have doubts because you reach truth through them.

**** Return to Syria (1964)

MS: When I returned to Syria, I was appointed as [teaching] assistant after a competition at the university. The Faculty of Civil Engineering was founded 1961. There were few engineers in Syria at that time and the faculty needed them. My registration number in the Syrian Syndicate of Engineers is 750. That was the number of all engineers in Syria at the time, not just civil engineers.

DFE: Did you return with your wife and child in 1964?

MS: No my wife was still a student. She joined me after she finished her studies in 1965. Unfortunately, she did not bring our son, Leonid, with her.

She was a pioneer, the first or second Russian wife to come to Syria. She lived here one year and couldn’t stand our different environment. Finally we agreed to divorce without a quarrel. I told her, ‘Keep Leonid because you are the mother and he will be happy with you. It would kill you if I kept him here. I still provide for our son. It’s my obligation.’ Two months after my first wife returned to Russia, I married my present wife, ‘AzÊza.

DFE: Were you active in politics or discussion circles when you returned to Syria?

MS: In politics no, but discussion circles yes, on Arabness, #uråba, until 1967.

DFE: Why just 1967?

MS: The 1967 war had an impact on all Arabs in different ways, but it affected the consciousness of us all. I was then twenty-nine years old.

DFE: When did the idea to write The Book and the Qur’an first come to you?

MS: The project began to form in my head after 1967. I became convinced that our problem was in the Arab understanding of thought and society. The problem was ourselves, not America or the West. I was convinced of that.

DFE: Did you intend from the outset to develop new interpretations of Islam?

MS: Yes. I wanted to understand Islamic culture thoroughly, to see where we went wrong in order to correct our consciousness. There was an incident which was very clear and upsetting to me. At the first Friday sermon in Damascus after the Six Day War, the preacher in the mosque said that the reason for our defeat was women. ‘[Our] women are cruel, naked’ (al-nis§” q§siy§t #§riy§t). The people sitting there in the mosque believed him. How can we say that the disaster occurred because God was punishing us for the conduct of our women? I rejected that explanation, but not all people did. They were astonished but they accepted the idea that God might be punishing us.

DFE: How do you know?

MS: They remained silent. They were astonished at the sermon but said nothing. ‘Oh no, it’s women. God is punishing us because women are not wearing head scarves.’ I said to myself, ‘How could that be? Israeli women are in bikinis and they defeated us’ [laughter].

After the sermon I became convinced that something was wrong with our shared understandings, since the preachers were blaming our problems on the two or three tons of textiles used to veil women. You see why I thought that there is something wrong with our worldview. One of my friends told me that the first Friday sermon in the Prophet’s mosque in Medina after the Six Day War concerned the rules for divorce (aÈk§m al-ãal§q) in

Islam. I became convinced that our thought was wrong. We had to revise how we reason.

DFE: Did you express your ideas to other people in 1967?

MS: Only the idea that our worldview (dhihniyya)—our mentality or way of thinking—was wrong. We were living in another sphere.

DFE: Did you write anything down?

MS: Not until I went to Dublin in September 1968. There I was alone.

DFE: Were other Syrians with you?

MS: Only four. One was my business partner. The four of us had been accepted at the Imperial College in London, but after the Six Day War, Syria broke diplomatic ties with Britain and we went to Dublin instead. In September 1969 I received my master’s degree and in July 1969, §riq, my first son by my second marriage, was born.

I learned about a new world in Dublin: Western schools, Irish society, a new university, a style of life different from Syria and Russia. As always, I read more, including Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern

World. When I returned to Syria, I brought new ideas about logic with me.

DFE: Did you begin writing in Dublin?

MS: In my last year there, 1972. I wrote four or five pages about idolatry (al-shirk). I began to read the Qur’an and to understand that al-shirk is remaining static or unchanging in one’s thinking. That was my first conclusion, that our thinking was static, that we were dead. When I returned to Syria in 1972, I still only discussed my ideas with people and read books. I was expanding my understanding. I began to read such things as commentaries on the Qur’an (tafsÊr). Much of what I read was not convincing.

In 1980, during Ramadan, I began to define the difference between a historically specific act (al-fi#l) and the notion of action in general (al-#amal). This was the first distinction which I recognized. It took me all of Ramadan to sort out the Qur’anic verses related to these two terms. As I see the distinction, fi#l refers to a specific act. No generalizations can be drawn from it. ‘Amal refers to a more generalized, objective activity or category of activities, like ‘good deeds.’

At the time I didn’t even know that there was a concordance of the Qur’an. I had to extract all the related verses on my own. Although I asked Arabic-language experts for guidance, they did not tell me the distinction between fi#l and #amal. I discovered it myself. Similarly, it took me two years, from 1980 to 1982, to understand the difference between the two elements of the Qur’an: the book (al-kit§b), which is the subjective element, and al-qur”§n, which is the objective one. These two elements together constitute the holy book, the tanzÊl al-ÈakÊm. The Prophet is the messenger for a l-kit§b, and the rules of jurisprudence, of what to do and what not to do must be

subject to interpretation (ijtih§d) within the limits set down by God. Al-kit§b is dynamic and has such a close relation to social life that it must be reinterpreted to apply to different places and historical periods.[479] Al-qur”§n is objective truth, prophecy. It exists independently of human knowledge or consent and is unchanging.

Think of a fresco at the Vatican. The fresco is fixed, objective. But as the viewer changes position, he sees the fresco in a different way. Each time we move, we see the fresco in a different way. The mullahs want us to stand still and see the fresco as it was in the seventh century. We want to move around and see the fresco in a dialectic between text and context. Our interpretation of the fresco as we move around is subjective. With the kit§b we can use interpretation, and interpret how a verse complies with objective truth. The qur”§n involves prophecy, which is objective truth. I was perplexed when I looked at the Qur’anic verses containing these two terms, kit§b and qur”§n. I looked at their meanings interactively and then understood them.

SS: With whom did you first discuss your ideas?

MS: Primarily with the linguist Ja#far DÊk al-B§b.[480] In the 1980s, we had long discussions on the meaning of kit§b.

DFE: In the early 1980s political events and economic conditions in Syria obliged some people to leave the country, and your business was reorganized. You also found yourself more free to focus on writing ...

MS: Yes, and in May 1982 I discovered the difference between kit§b and qur”§n. It was very surprising to me. I

told my family about it. My father was the first to understand the distinction. He became interested, asked me difficult questions, and forced me to answer them.

DFE: After 1982, you began to discuss your ideas with others, especially Ja#far DÊk al-B§b when he returned during summer from his teaching post in Algeria.

MS: I showed him what I had written. I kept the manuscript in my house. I gave it to my son for safekeeping, saying: ‘Look, this is my first book. The manuscript is in this envelope. Now I will prepare a second book.’

After discovering the difference between kit§b and qur”§n, I discovered the meaning of tartÊl, a term usually referring to the slow, elegant recitation of the Qur’an: ‘Or add to it; and recite the Qur’an in slow, measured rhythmic tones’ (aw zid #alayhi wa-rattil a l-qur”§n tartÊl[an]) (A l-Muzzammil 73:4).[481] I discovered the distinction between comprehension (through inz§l), which is the phrasing of objective truth or doctrines in a manner which humans can understand in a particular historical setting, and the delivery of revelation (tanzÊl), the objective transmission from God to humankind via Gabriel. TanzÊl exists outside of ourselves, like radio waves, which exist whether or not we are aware of them. Inz§l is the act of explaining the tanzÊl.

I also discovered the distinction between the ‘record clear’ (al-im§m al-mubÊn) that makes matters clear for a specific place and time—these actions collectively constitute an archive of human deeds—and the ‘tablet preserved’ (a l-lawÈ a l-maÈfåí), which are the general laws of existence—life, death, resurrection. To understand these distinctions, I had to reread each Qur’anic occurrence and write out all the verses on the subject. At the time I had no computer. I bought one and began word processing only in 1987.

DFE: When did you consider your manuscript finished?

MS: The third version, which I completed in 1988. I read it out loud to some of my former students who were interested in my ideas. We gathered weekly in a friend’s house. [A former student] read the text and I would interrupt and comment on various points.[482] I made final corrections to the manuscript in October 1989.

I delayed publishing until then because I felt that my section on Islamic personal and family law (al-aÈw§l al-shakhßiyya) was anemic. [483]

Let me explain. One day an idea occurred to me when I was lecturing at the university on civil engineering on how to make compaction roads. We have what we call a proctor test, in which we sample and test the soil used in fills and embankments. In this test, we follow a mathematical pattern of exclusion and interpolation. We have two vectors, x and y, a hyperbole. We have a basic risk. We plot a curve and put a line on the top of it. This line is the upper limit, and there is a lower limit. Then I thought of the concept of ‘God’s limits’ (Èudåd All§h). I returned here to the office and opened the Qur’an. Just as in mathematics we have five ways of representing limits, I found five cases in which the notion of God’s limits occurred. What they have in common is the idea that God has not set down exact rules of conduct in such matters as inheritance, criminal punishments, marriage, interest, and banking practices, but only the limits within which societies can create their own rules and laws. Thieves do not have to have their hands amputated. That is merely the maximum punishment allowed.

I have written about ideas of ‘straightness’ (al-istiq§ma) and universal moral codes and ethics. The idea was at first only a footnote in my

last chapter, but I saw that it applied to my main argument, so I corrected everything I wrote about Èudåd All§h in the book in order to be consistent. Then I considered my argument sound. Ja#far returned to Syria in February 1990. I showed him the text and he said, ‘Congratulations. Now your argument is strong.’ On April 1, 1990, I gave the book to a specialist in Arabic grammar and style, who corrected only the mistakes in written expression. He took about a month. Then we sent the book to censorship for approval and then it went to press.

DFE: Did the censor change anything?

MS: Nothing.

DFE: What were the first reactions to the book after publication?

MS: This was a most amazing time for me. My publisher, \usayn al-#^d§ of D§r al-Ah§lÊ, and I had an argument. I was publishing at my own expense, as I still do, and he wanted to print only 1,000 copies. He said, ‘No, maybe it won’t sell.’ I told him I was paying the expenses and could decide for myself. So we agreed on 2,000 copies.

The Book and the Qur’an was a bestseller at the September 1990 Damascus Book Fair. I was an unknown author, yet 400 copies were sold right away, and the entire first edition was sold out by December, only three months later. Then we reprinted, and the Lebanese publisher, Riyad a l-

Rayyes, asked \usayn a l-#^d§ to provide 1,000 copies, a special order for Oman. D§r a l-Ah§lÊ keeps reprinting the book and it has now sold over 10,000 copies in Syria alone.[484]

DFE: Riyad al-Rayyes asked for 1,000 copies for Oman?

MS: Yes, we printed the books, which al-Rayyes shipped to Oman. Riyad told \usayn that the Sultan wanted this number to distribute in Oman.[485]

DFE: So the first sign you had of interest in the book was that it sold out quickly ...?

MS: And by December 1990, the preachers began to attack it in the mosques of Damascus.

DFE: What were the principal arguments against the book?

MS: That I was against Islam. I was pleased [laughter]. I was pleased because I knew that my book was controversial. I knew that I was introducing a new theory. If it was not criticized, I would have doubted myself. ‘Dr. Shahrur has done nothing.’ Silence would have been a bad sign. The accusations began that the Zionists and their agents supported the book. Some religious authorities asked [a prominent Syrian religious figure] to request the government to withdraw the book. The government refused, saying to my opponents that it would not ban the book because it was published in Syria,

but that they had the right to answer the book’s argument in print. To date, seventeen books, from Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, have been written against my first book.

DFE: What was the personal effect of the attacks against you in the Friday sermons?

MS: From the first sermon after the publication of my book, Jam§l Qaßß§ß, who is now the person who checks my writing for Arabic style, knew about the book. He didn’t realize, however, that Muhammad Shahrur was his neighbour. He just knew me as Muhammad, but thought that Shahrur was someone else [laughter]. He telephoned me to say that he wanted to meet me and discuss my book. At first I replied that I was busy because I didn’t recognize his name. Then he said, ‘My name is so-and-so, the son of so-and-so.’ I replied, ‘In that case, you are my neighbour!’ Only then did we recognize each other.

**** Style and Method

DFE: Moroccans, Pakistanis fluent in Arabic, and others have explained to me that you differ in style from other interpreters of the Qur’an. You gather all the verses related to a given subject—what you call tartÊl—and write about them as a unit rather than as they occur in the Qur’an. How did you develop this method?

MS: From the Qur’an itself. As I told you, I discovered it after learning the difference between kit§b and qur”§n. Second, I realized the meaning of tartÊl is identical to arrangement (tartÊl), so I immediately gave the term a concrete application.

As I told you, I also discovered the difference between comprehension (inz§l) and reve lation (tanzÊl). Some things are objective and common to all, like air and the first principles embedded in nature and the human condition. Others relate to the circumstances of society, which can be modified.

SS: What were the main criticisms against you? What was said in the mosques?

MS: First of all, I knew that the preachers were ignorant of philosophy and logic, but I didn’t know the extent of their ignorance. What I write touches at the foundations of conventional belief: the difference between kit§b and qur”§n, between a ‘record clear’ (im§m mubayyin) and a ‘tablet preserved’ (lawÈ maÈfåí), and what I said about women. One preacher said that women must be veiled. He said: ‘Do you accept that your mother can be nude, that a daughter can be nude in front of her father?’

SS: Did they speak in terms of veiling (Èij§b) or equality (mus§w§h)?

MS: Only Èij§b.

SS: What do you consider to be the main points of difference between your interpretation and the classical one?

MS: My approach is totally different. For example, in all classical writing the authors have not considered the credibility of the sayings of the Prophet. They only state that various witnesses said certain things. The result is the total reality of the Qur’an and the total unreality of their writing. I begin by reflecting on this distinction.

SS: Would you consider, for instance, your idea that inspiration (waÈy) occurs within nature and not just as prophecy a great departure?

MS: Yes, a person can have a moment of inspiration about issues on which he is thinking. You are thinking about atomic energy and then you do something else, but your mind is still thinking about atomic energy and inspiration may come to you. It is absurd. Inspiration came to Newton when he saw the apple dropping and the land attracting it. He had some unconnected ideas in his mind, but after he saw the apple fall the conscious connection happened. This occurred to me, yes.

SS: I think that your acceptance of evolution is another major point of departure.

MS: Yes, because of the stories in the Qur’an (al-qißaß al-qur”§niyya) which reflect the process of evolution. They are meant for teaching: ‘Listen, people who lived at the time of Noah did not live in a society like ours. They lived in another era and we gave a revelation related to their circumstances. Islamic revelation began at the time of Noah and evolved through the time of MuÈammad.’ I explain why this is so in my writings.

In the current era, humanity no longer needs revelation. Let us say that you have a child in school. Once she is four or five years old, what do you teach her? Only A, B, C, D. Later she goes to school and gets a diploma, a bachelor’s degree. She will be much older. She spends, say, fifteen or sixteen years learning. After that, she will conduct research on her own. I consider that Noah is at the A, B, C level of human society and that MuÈammad came to humanity at the bachelor’s degree level. Humanity now goes it alone. We discover the universe by ourselves. We can now, because we have graduated.

DFE: So prophecy and revelation are now finished?

MS: Finished. People can now do it by themselves. And the principle of moral law is closed. The Qur’anic story proves this: ‘Legislate for yourself, discover the universe for yourself, and you will have legislative authority. But don’t forget My [God’s] limits. That’s all.’ Therefore I say that Islamic legislation is civil legislation enacted within the limits set down by God.

**** Islam and Civil Society

DFE: This brings us to issues perhaps best developed in your third book, al-Isl§m wa’l-Êm§n [Islam and Faith]: Islam, Freedom, and Civil society.

MS: Democracy operates on two levels and is as basic to belief as prayer. The Qur’an (42:38) says: ‘And those who respond attentively to their Lord, pray regularly, and conduct their affairs by consultation among themselves,

and give charity out of what we bestow on them’ (wa-alladhÊna istaj§bå li-rabbihim wa-aq§må al-ßal§t wa-amruhum shår§ baynahum wa-mimm§ razaqn§hum yunfiqån). This is one of the Meccan verses. In the Meccan period there was no state, yet the Qur’an mentions democracy, which I consider the equivalent of shår§, as a concept of belief. Its application is historical because it’s not an absolute. You have to adapt the concept of democracy to social and economic conditions and the level of development. The Prophet applied democracy according to the social forms of his own tribal period. The main theory of democracy is in the Qur’an, the same concept (nafs al-mafhåm).

Some people criticize democracies because they make mistakes, and they conclude that democracy is not good. Mistakes in democracy don’t give us the right to abolish it. When the Prophet asked people to go to UÈud, he didn’t want to go himself. But most of his followers said, ‘We have to go’ and the Prophet replied, ‘OK, vote on the decision.’ They voted to go and were defeated. The Prophet didn’t blame them by saying: ‘See I didn’t want to go but you went anyway.’ He didn’t blame anybody. He taught that mistakes do not give us a right to abolish democracy.

They make mistakes, but don’t abolish democracy.

DFE: The other day, one of your university colleagues said, ‘I have read Muhammad Shahrur’s book. I respect it, but I cannot agree with it. For me Islam is prayer, fasting, and obedience.”

MS: I think that this view of Islam indicates a lack of comp rehension.

DFE: Our friend was suggesting that Islam has nothing to do with democracy and civil society, that Islam is separate from state and political authority.

MS: As an ideal, Islam is separate from the state. Do you think that Syria is an Islamic state? Islam is a charter for humanity. Society by its nature is Muslim. Therefore, the state is a contract. It is a contract for governing, and the contract is Islamic. That means that I vote for you, for your programme. If you fulfill your programme, you have fulfilled your contract. If you do not, I will not vote for you again. In this sense, the state is Islamic, contractual. In this situation, Islam asks only one thing: don't exceed the limits set down by God. Do whatever you please, but don't oppress people. There is a contract between people and the state. And in legislation, don't exceed the limits of God.

The ideal of Islam will not be subject to vote. 'Honour to your parents.' How do you vote for it? 'Be a good liar.' How can you vote for it? It's impossible. Nobody will accept this because it is against morality.

DFE: Ernest Gellner has said that the religious tradition in which fundamentalism is the strongest is Islam and that Islam prevents the growth of civil society.[486] How would you reply?

MS: Gellner understands Islam as it was understood by al-Sh§fi#Ê, from the point of view of fundamentalists themselves. He has not studied the concept of Islam as a philosopher—from the source itself, as civil society, as spirituality, as morality. Gellner understands Islam as presented in Qur'anic commentary (tafsÊr) and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and most of these structures are now absurd.

DFE: Gellner writes that Islam is so pervasive and powerful in the Muslim world that it has blocked people from developing the sorts of reasoning and civil society that have emerged in the West.

MS: I agree with that. It is our fault and the West has exploited our weaknesses neatly. The West is smart. We didn’t criticize our method of knowledge and reasoning when Napoleon came into Egypt. Instead, we turned our backs and said that we have to preserve our identity and our own sciences. Some of our religious scholars meant by this everything that was developed in the first three centuries after the death of the Prophet, that the knowledge and reasoning present in that period constituted the core of our identity.

America, England, and France didn’t create anything new in the Arab world. They just read it well, accepted it as it was, and exploited it for their own ends. America didn’t do anything new in the Arab world but she knew our mentality and how we do things. The Arab world was created before England and before America but they exploited us.

Now, if you have a new mentality according to my thesis, you will have new people. Then it will be difficult for the West to exploit us. We’ll have a new method to deal with other people. We’ll be scientific and have a civil society, and people will learn to deal with us in a different way.

I hope that the Arab world will change by itself. We cannot afford not to remain as we are, and I hope that the British and American attitude to our region of the world also changes. If our society and habits of thought change, then we can match the rest of the world. I know that. Pragmatism will help [laughter]. That’s right.

DFE: Let us consider another type of change. Your first book took eight years to write. Now you have completed a third book, and envisage a fourth. How has writing and publication changed how you think about yourself?

MS: I am changing and my thinking is making progress. I am now beginning to see the product of my thinking over the past twenty years. I have developed my method of analysis, and therefore I write more quickly. Recently, for instance, it took me only two weeks to write an essay on the difference between birth-givers (al-w§lid§n) and caregiver-parents (al-abaw§n), and its implications for Islamic ideas of the family. It took me only two weeks sitting here.[487]

SS: Do you think of yourself primarily as a university faculty member, as the proprietor of an engineering firm, or as a writer?

MS: I am all of these things, but my main activity now is philosophy. Because of my experience in engineering, I have associates and an assistant, so I make executive decisions only. My duties at the University of Damascus take one day a week. In the university, I am a teacher, a professor. But outside of the university, people consider me a thinker.

SS: That’s right, but do you consider yourself a ... ?

MS: An amateur! I am an ordinary human. I am afraid of one thing: that one day I will be hit by old age, and I will not be able to develop my ideas any longer. I prefer to die before that happens to me. I discuss my ideas even with my children. I don’t feel bothered that they criticize me, saying ‘You are

so modest that you speak with anybody. Anybody can ask you a question, and you give longer replies than they expect.’ I answer my children, ‘So what? That’s the way I am.”

I am afraid to consider myself as a thinker. Even if I am invited to some place, I purposely go a bit late in order not to sit at the front. I want to sit at the back, where nobody will notice me, so that I can pay better attention to what others say.

DFE: Now that your work is published and your ideas better known, you”re invited to places such as Morocco and Bahrain, and journalists and diplomats pay attention to your writings. Your publisher told me that he once asked you to prepare a public talk explaining your ideas in one hour, explain everything you believe in one hour, to attract people to reading your work.

MS: I honestly can”t. Sometimes, I develop one small point and talk for two hours about it. But I don’t talk rubbish. Not all ideas can be explained in one hour. This is me. I can’t change myself, I can’t. [Laughter.]

DFE: What is the reaction to your public lectures in Syria?

MS: I gave the first one only last week, in northern Syria. Four years ago, at noon on May 3, 1992, I was scheduled to lecture during the Cultural Week at our university’s Faculty of Medicine. I went there about a quarter to twelve. There were about 5,000 people there. The scene was fascinating and impressive. The authorities—and they were right—felt that it was not safe for me to lecture and so I did not. More recently, the same thing happened in Bahrain.

DFE: Some people express surprise that a book exploring such basic principles of conventional belief and democracy should be published in Syria. Are you surprised?

MS: No, because I think that in Syria, objectively speaking, our society is now stable. We have an ancient civilization. And there are other writers, such as Dr. ‘§diq Jal§l al-#Aím, who also challenge conventional belief. My book is also allowed. I don’t know why, but it is. I know that my book could not have been published in any other Arab state, even in Egypt. N§ßr \§mid Abå Zayd’s writings are less controversial than mine, and we know what happened to him.[488]

*** Interview With Muhammad Shahrur by Andreas Christmann (2007)

The second interview took place in October 2007 in one of the nice rooms of the Rotana Hotel in Abu Dhabi. Muhammad Shahrur had agreed to go through the manuscript of this volume and on this occasion accepted the idea to do a follow-up interview eleven years after the first interview with Dale Eickelman in 1996. The main purpose of this interview was to go over the first interview again and discuss some details that emerged from the answers Muhammad Shahrur had given then. The interview also wanted to cover the period between the two interviews and enquire about Muhammad Shahrur’s intellectual development since then. As with the first interview, some of Shahrur’s answers are short, condensed versions of ideas that are fully laid out in the book, and yet his oral accounts (now, of course, transcribed) reveal, more than his written essays, the freshness, directness, and originality of his thinking as well as the honesty, modesty, and sincerity of his personality. […] I wish to thank my student MuÈammad Khaled for transcribing the interview from the tape recorder.

AC: I would like to start with a few questions that I had when I read the interview back in 1996. When you were asked about your time in Moscow and your confrontation with atheism, the state doctrine of the Soviet Union at that time, you said that the study of physics and mathematics helped you to understand philosophy better and to find an adequate response to atheism.

MS: Yes, that is right.

AC: The link between physics/mathematics and philosophy/atheism is not clear to me. How did the study of physics and mathematics help you to understand philosophy better?

MS: Because mathematics and physics are rational…[Laughter] Yes…that's all. Physics is the science about nature and mathematics is the science about logic and how to ask questions and find a rational answer for them. Both serve together. They helped me to create in myself a rational mind… [Laughter]…that's all.

AC: How difficult is it for someone who has no degree in physics or mathematics to understand your ideas?

MS: It is not difficult at all provided that the reader uses his or her rational mind and follows my logical arguments. Because when you read my work you will see that it is very consistent. You don't need a degree in mathematics to find this out. This is the main thing of my work: it is consistent and you either take it all or leave it. You cannot just take one chapter and leave the rest. It is a whole package and it is a consistent one.

AC: My question was more about the mathematical parts in this volume, for example, the application of geometrical formulas and theories

for inheritance laws and the theory of limits. Does this not pose a problem for those without a mathematical background?

MS: Yes, I can see that, but people with a secondary school certificate will understand it. Because they do geometry, integration, and coordinates in schools, don't they? And people will know what equations are, what a mean is, and that groups might be one, or two, or three, etc. It is pure logic that anybody can understand.

AC: When you talked about your confrontation with atheism you quoted verse 149 of Sårat a l-An#§m and said that it helped you to find an answer to atheism. How exactly did it help you?

MS: The verse says: 'Say: God's is the argument that reaches home. Had He wanted, He could indeed have guided you all'. It tells me that when I have a debate with an atheist the best argument for God is the strongest argument. I then asked myself where this argument was, I could not see it anywhere!

AC: And back then you were unable to find a strong argument for God?

MS: That is right. You see, our education in the Muslim world is very weak. It is not based on logical reasoning. We confront atheism with animosity and that is all, hostility but no argument. But in the Soviet Union I could not be hostile; I had to argue for my belief. At that time I could not find a good argument for God, now I have found it, but then I asked myself 'where is the proof of God?' I want to see it. Back home, our Sheikhs still could not confront atheism, but now I have found strong arguments for it so that I can have a debate with atheists. Although I know that there is a 50:50 chance, as Stephen Hawking says, that God exists, at least I can tell people why I believe in God and then leave it to others to decide how convincing it is. I do not want to defeat atheism, I will not prove that God exists—and I don't want an atheist to disprove my belief—all that I have now is a strong argument for God and people will judge how good it is.

AC: In another answer to a question about post-1967 you talked about the necessity for a new theory about society, but then you seemed to equate this with a call for an ideology. Maybe the translation didn’t capture what you said then, but can you clarify what you meant by this link between theory and ideology?

MS: Yes, my point was that we have got many ideologies but very little theory. The Arab world is a world of ideologies that are not based on a sound theory of knowledge based on the Qur’an; and we don’t have a theory of state and society. The views of Islamists are pure ideology, an ideology of how to rule and how to seize power. I am interested in theory, not ideology. I know how ideologies have damaged societies in the past. When they [i.e., ideologies or their followers] become dogmatic, they suppress freedom of choice and turn into [ideologies for a] dictatorship. Communism and Islamism are very similar in that; they are dogmatic, oppressive ideologies. The only difference is that Islamists believe in God and communists don”t, but other than that they are very similar. I want to oppose that with theory, because we need more theory, not more ideology. Ideology without theory is dogmatism.

AC: Then you said, and also reiterated it in your book, that the opposite of dogmatism is freedom, and that freedom is linked to democracy. However, you don’t really specify how exactly you define democracy. What is democracy?

MS: We need to distinguish between democracy and the dictatorship of a majority. It is not the same. Democracy means that your opposition is alive. Dictatorship of majority does not allow any opposition. Democracy means that you allow an opposition to criticize your government, to target your authority and to eventually replace you in government through elections. People here in the Arab world don’t know this. They think that once you are in power you have the right to ban and censor everyone who speaks out against your government. This is why I say that we have to learn from America and Great Britain what democracy means. Democracy is measured

by the freedom that the oppositional parties enjoy. In this, both countries are truly democratic states— whatever their other faults are.

AC: Quite often one hears from Arabs in the Middle East that the democracies in the West are as flawed as their own. For them, the censorship on Holocaust debates is just proof of the fact that each society has its taboos and won’t allow freedom of speech [on them] whatever the state of democracy. Do you agree with that?

MS: No, I don”t, because there is a difference of scale. There might be some issue where even the most democratic societies feel a certain sensibility and constrain an open debate. But this cannot be compared to the autocracy and lack of freedom we have here [in the Arab world]. I think Muslims and Arabs have no right to criticize Western democracy. The man riding a donkey, does he have the right to criticize airplanes [laughter]? Whatever he may criticize…, maybe the engines are too noisy or the seats are a little bit uncomfortable, but look at him, look what he is travelling on! No, really, we have to be realistic. Because some democracies are not without flaws does not mean that we should throw the baby out with the bathwater and demand the abolition of democracy. Flawed democracies are better than no democracy, don’t you think?!!

AC: Do you believe it is worth thinking about different types of democracy that develop naturally from within the Arab-Muslim world rather than being imposed by force and imported from the West?

MS: Only insofar as it allows different types of political systems, but democracy is the same everywhere. It means the freedom of political opposition—as long as this is done peacefully. Which party you form and whether you have a monarchy or a parliamentary system or both—that may differ from country to country. But no one should be allowed, under whatever name or slogan, to suppress freedom of speech and your personal freedom to speak out against the ruling party. Democracy does not mean the rule of the majority. Democracy means the right of a minority to criticize the majority. This is democracy and it should be applied everywhere.

AC: The question of Arab unity was a big topic in the previous interview. You said in 1996 that ‘I hope my writings will contribute to something useful for the Arabs to fight for unity’. In the book itself, however, you almost never touch on this topic. How do your writings contribute to an Arab unity?

MS: I did not mean that I support a political unity of Arab states like we had between Egypt and Syria. This failed miserably and such unity remains a political dream that we Arabs can perhaps realize in the future, possibly as gradually as it happened in the United States or as it is happening now with the European Union. But I am more concerned with an intellectual unity, a similar thinking that unites the people of the twenty or so Arab states in the Middle East. I want a man in Casablanca to share the same theory as I do, to tackle problems in the same way as I do, and that means that he (hopefully) adopts my method that I propose in my books. Because if a man in Morocco and a man in Kuwait think similarly about a problem, they might come to an agreement, even though the Moroccan remains a Moroccan and the Kuwaiti remains a Kuwaiti.

AC: In terms of this unity of method, how much unity have you achieved since 1996?

MS: I believe I have formed an intellectual stream—from Morocco to the United Arab Emirates—that is always growing.

AC: How can you measure this stream?

MS: By the number of e-mails people keep sending me and their questions about my ideas and interpretations of the Qur’an. I know that my books are being reprinted without my consent [laughter], and read everywhere. I know it through the personal contacts I have with people when I travel to other Arab countries. My books have started a common thinking and common understanding.

AC: Let me come back to the beginning of your work on Islam which started after 1967 and which was a response, as you called it, to the irrational reaction to the defeat. What was your own analysis of the situation?

MS: We lost the war because of our wishful thinking. We thought Israel is so small and we are so big that we can defeat it in one day. We said to the world leave us Israel, we can deal with it alone—and they did leave us with Israel and we lost miserably. We were so convinced we would win that on the first day of the war the PLO invited all Arabs to come to a reception party in Palestine—which shows that they had completely lost touch with reality. 1973 was different, because the Arabs were better organized and also much more determined, in particular the Egyptians who could not tolerate the occupation of Sinai and the seizure of the Suez Canal. The Golan Heights are different, for Syria they don’t mean anything.

The problem is that these events shook people tremendously. They said we were defeated because we were remote from God, and thus the Islamist movement was born.

AC: You said what we needed was a revision of how we reason.

MS: Until now I have been saying this, and I am still working on this.

AC: Do you think it is possible to do this revision by returning to the philosophical tradition of Ibn Rushd and other rationalist thinkers?

MS: Yes, I believe that. The problem with Ibn Rushd is that what links him to us Arabs is only his name, his ideas however have been forgotten. Not even 1 percent of our thinking is influenced by Ibn Rushd. Arabs keep talking about Ibn Rushd and how great he was and how proud we should be that we have such a prominent Arab philosopher, but our thinking is influenced by a

l-Ghaz§lÊ, not by Ibn Rushd. Ibn Rushd went to Europe and we were left with al-Ghaz§lÊ. I wish it was the other way round, then we would flourish and Europe would stagnate [laughter]. Unfor tunately, Ibn Rushd revolutionized only the European mind, while the Arabs were entirely left untouched.

AC: And yet we seem to have a kind of revival of interest in Ibn Rushd in Arab countries. More and more people call for a rational enlightenment (a l-tanwÊr) in the tradition of Ibn Rushd and the ideas of the European Enlightenment. Would you yourself identify with this movement?

MS: Not really, for the simple reason that, even though Ibn Rushd has influenced European rational thoughts, European philosophy has gone beyond his ideas and progressed much further than Ibn Rushd. For them, Ibn Rushd is history. The same goes for me. Ibn Rushd is a medieval philosopher who for me, as someone who writes in a modern context, is no longer relevant.

Epistemologically, I should stand on his shoulders, not in his shoes [laughter]. If I think and speak like Ibn Rushd, I will end up in a museum like he is.

AC: Many of your critics have called you a Marxist because of your use of dialectical criticism as your main method. Have you any sympathies for the work of the so-called Islamic left and the attempt to combine Marxist ideas with Islamic concepts?

MS: As a method, that is, as dialectical criticism, I believe it is worthwhile studying Marxism, but not as an ideology. I want to explore the causal connections between the form and content (and interpretations) of ideas at a given historical moment, and the economic, social, and ideological factors that have shaped and determined their content or form. This is why dialectical criticism is so important in my theory of knowledge. But apart from that I don’t take anything from Marxism. I have read all their work. I can understand their critique and I often share it, but they don’t seem to offer

any alternative. They are locked into a barrage of criticism but have no idea about what to do and how we can change the current situation. They are well-minded people but they cannot produce anything that is substantially different from what we already have.

AC: How different is your method from theirs?

MS: I went straight back to the context of the Qur’an but used a contemporary perspective. I went back to the origins of Islam itself and yet used a modern approach in studying it. I said to myself, if the Qur’an is from God, it will be possible to analyze it by the most modern methods available. If it cannot be analyzed by modern methods, it is not from God. This is my argument, and I have every right to think this because the Qur’an is a divine text that allows us to bridge the historical gap between then and now. It does not mean that my acceptance of God makes my ideas and how I understand it sacred. One day, a student came up to me and said ‘If you believe that it [i.e., the Qur’an] is from God, how will I ever be able to argue [rationally] with you about it?’ I told him that the text itself is absolute but for us it is relative. Therefore, you can argue with me about it. You do not argue with God about the Qur’an, do you? Your and my understanding is relative and human. The essence of the Qur’an is one thing, but its essence for us is another thing altogether.

AC: Some critics, like Naßr \§mid Abå Zayd, have argued that in spite of your claim to be modern you are not modern enough because you have not applied historical criticism to the Qur’anic text. What would you say to this criticism?

MS: Maybe I wasn’t radical enough, and maybe I wasn’t modern enough, but I do encourage people to surpass me and continue my work and be more modern and radical than I am. This nation will be damned if in three hundred years they are still quoting me as the authority on this. Time is moving on and new things will have to be applied—and if someone wants to apply historical criticism, I would welcome it.

AC: Let us now move on and talk about the period after the first interview in 1996. Have the events of 9/11 changed your writings?

MS: Of course, they have. They are the reason why I stopped for a couple of years to work on my current project about Islamic prophetology. Instead, I began to write the chapters of al-jih§d, a l-amr bi'l-ma#råf, a l-wal§" wa'l-bar§" and the parts on apostasy [that are now summarized in chapter six of this volume]. I began to realize that one cannot treat these topics in isolation from one another but that they had to be tackled together. When I heard about Aim§n a l-£aw§hirÊ's condemnation of all Arab rulers as apostates and that British Asian Muslims are killing their own fellow countrymen [in London 2005] because of their confused understanding of a l-wal§" wa'l-bar§" and that terrorism and violence is justified with the term al-jih§d I knew that I had to clarify these concepts and connect them together.

AC: When did you realize that you had to tackle these issues? Was it immediately after 9/11?

MS: Yes, after 9/11 but I didn't rush into it because I didn't want to react too quickly and too hastily to what had happened. Since 2004 I have begun to work on these problems seriously. Initially,

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I could not find the answer to the problem of Sårat a l-Tauba and Sårat a l-Anf§l that both talk about the military expeditions in early Islam. For almost two years I worked on this problem, and only two years ago, that is, five years after 9/11, I found the solution in the difference between al-khabar and al-naba". I began to realize that these events were khabar events for MuÈammad because he had witnessed them himself, but that they are naba" events for us who live so many centuries after them. They belong to prophecy, not to MuÈammad's message, and hence are not relevant for the legal rules of the sharÊ#a. It was clear to me that abrogation cannot be the solution because these events are part of the Qur'anic stories about

MuÈammad, just like we have the Qur’anic stories about Adam and Qur’anic stories about Moses. We should draw our historical lessons from these stories but should not base our legislation on them.

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AC: They are only historical narratives about events in the past?

MS: Exactly. That is why we are required to analyze them from an historical perceptive and formulate historical laws that are based on them, but we are not required to draw conclusions as far as sharÊ#a law is concerned.

AC: Why did it take so long for you to begin tackling these major concepts of political Islam?

MS: I began to think about all these things much earlier than this but it took me some time to come to satisfactory answers. You see, I don’t want to write things that are forgotten tomorrow; I want to make a real impact and change things for the better. I wanted to find a profound, logical, and consistent answer to all these problems, and in the end it doesn’t matter how long it takes you to produce something substantial, it is the result that counts, that is, how good your thoughts are.

AC: You have been tackling the question of why Islamists and political Islam are so obsessed with the question of political authority. Did you find the answer to this?

MS: Since MuÈammad died we have had a long tradition of authoritarian rule in the Arab-Muslim world and no political opposition whatsoever. Political authority for a ruler meant to be in a position to exercise excessive force. Political rule meant oppression and corruption, and because of the absence of any form of opposition, there was no transparency. Our scholars, the

fuqah§”, did not tackle this problem at all, on the contrary, they provided the rulers with the legal rulings they wanted in order to consolidate their power. As long as we had the biggest empire in the world, everything was all right. But now we are politically weak and so all the scholars’ concepts and theories do not work any longer. That is why we have this frustration and anger, this rush to solve our political problems and to tackle political authority so that these old concepts fit with reality again.

AC: There is a specific group among Western scholars that explains the Islamist movement as a form of protest against the problems of despotism, authoritarian rule, corruption, and the collapse of the national economy, etc. that exist in the Middle East. Would that not contradict your view on this movement?

MS: Do the Islamists really tackle these problems? I don’t think they do. They don’t even live and apply Islam. All they want to achieve is a change of power and rule for themselves. If they take over, we will face the same kind of oppression and autocracy as we are facing now. I haven’t seen a single suicide bomber who died as a martyr for freedom; I don’t know of anyone who says he is fighting for the freedom of choice and he defends anyone who wants to be a Christian, or a Muslim, or a Buddhist and that he defends my freedom to choose whatever I want. Freedom is not a value in our culture, and I am afraid. I can’t see that freedom of choice is on the agenda of any of the Islamist groups I know of.

AC: Do you share the view that Arab governments have not handled the problem of Islamism very wisely? Many have accused them of unnecessary brutality and of adopting a rather one-sided view on solving the crisis.

MS: Islamism and religious extremism is a disease that is spreading the fear of anarchy, upheaval, and violence among the common people. I agree that the security forces have reacted in a very harsh manner, but you should not forget that this is a dangerous disease. And yet, the security side of it is like Panadol, a painkiller that can’t cure the disease. Too much

painkiller and you kill the patient. The cure has to come from something else, and I am convinced that my books are part of the cure.

AC: Do you think that one could also solve the political crisis by allowing Islamist parties to participate in the political process?

MS: I doubt that this is possible. They are politically not experienced enough and are too impatient and want to get to power very fast. Do you know why in October 1917 Lenin refused to accept the idea that one should delay the revolution because it seemed certain that the Bolsheviks could win the next elections anyway? Do you know why he insisted on seizing political power by force? Because he knew that five years down the line he would have to be reelected in the normal democratic way, but if he once took power by force that would be the end of it and someone else would have to use the same force to take it away from him. And he preferred this to democratic elections. The Islamists think like that, they are not true democrats. Their model is the salaf forefathers, but think about what happened after MuÈammad's death when they gathered at ThaqÊfat BanÊ S§#ida and where they removed the Anß§r from power by force, or during the battles of the Camel and at 'iffÊn when fifteen thousand people were killed: not for al-isl§m, not for al-Êm§n, not because of the legal aÈk§m or apostasy—they were all killed because of their ruthless fight for political authority. This is what I fear when Islamists say that this is the model they want to emulate. This is what I want to address in my current writings.

AC: You said that your current writing is applied theory. Is it true that your period of writing theory is really over?

MS: Yes, that is done. I am now applying the very same theory and using it to solve the problem of jih§d, loyalty and disloyalty, apostasy, and the issue of MuÈammad's state which will be my next project.

** Back Matter

*** Glossary of Terms and Concepts

| TERM IN ARABIC | TRANSLITERATION | ENGLISH TRANSLATION |

| الكتاب | al-kit§b | The Book

This contains the total content of Allah’s revelation to MuÈammad (ß). |

| التنزيل الحكيم | al-tanzÊl al-ÈakÊm | The authoritative revelation

This comprises all revealed topics which the Book contains from the first to its last page; it is verbatim revealed in form and content—it is not just divinely inspired knowledge (see similarly al-kit§b). |

| كتاب النبوة | kit§b al-nubåwa | The book of prophethood (contained in the Book and, hence, in the tanzÊl al-ÈakÊm)

This approves and confirms the ‘book of messengerhood’. |

| النبوة | al-nubåwa | The prophethood

This contains all the subjects that fall into the category of historical and cosmological knowledge. |

| كتاب الرسالة | kit§b al-ris§la | The book of messengerhood (contained in the Book and, hence, in the tanzÊl al-ÈakÊm)

It is approved and confirmed by the ‘book of prophethood’. |

| الرسالة | al-ris§la | The messengerhood

The totality of instructions which human beings are obliged to follow and which fall into the categories of religious worship, social etiquette, morals, and legal rules. |

| الكتاب المحكم | al-kit§b

al-muÈkam | The book that contains definite verses

These are rules of human behaviour; it separates things that are allowed from things that are absolute taboos. |

| أم الكتاب | umm al-kit§b | Mother of the book

This is one part of the Book; it contains the definite verses which prescribe the duties and principles of human behaviour in terms of what is absolutely permitted or absolutely taboo and

what is contingently allowed and contingently prohibited, i.e., ethical and legal rules; it belongs to MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood;

(it falls into the same category as al-kit§b al-muÈkam and al-ris§la). |

| القرآن | al-qur”§n | The prophetical revelation

This is one part of the Book; it belongs to MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood. |

| الكتابالمتشابه | al-kit§b al-mutash§bih | The book that contains ambiguous verses

This is one part of the Book; it contains the ambiguous verses and deals with the realities of truth which Allah gave MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood; it separates truth from falsehood; it is divided into two categories: sab# al-math§nÊ and al-qur”§n al-#aíÊm. |

| المتشابهة الآيات | al-§y§t al-mutash§bih§t | Ambiguous verses

These belong to the prophetical revelation (which is contained in al-qur”§n and sab# al-math§nÊ). |

| القرآن يد | al-qur”§n al-majÊd | The glorious qur”§n

This is the fixed part of al-qur”§n; it originated in the Tablet Preserved; it contains the general and universal laws of all existence, e.g., of the creation (first explosion), the laws of development, change, alteration, and destruction, including the eschatological teachings of life after death, Hell and Paradise, etc.; these laws are universal and unchangeable. |

| الإمام المبين | al-im§m al-mubÊn | The clear record

This is the changeable part of al-qur”§n; it contains two sides: the Clear Book and the stories of prophets and messengers such as Moses and Jesus. |

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الكتاب المبين | al-qaßaß

— al-kit§b al-mubÊn | The stories and the clear book

These are things that can change within human

history and which are told in the qur”§n as stories; such historical narratives are stored in the Clear Record, not in the Tablet Preserved; their recording takes place after their historical occurrence. |

| السبع المثاني | al-sab# al-math§nÊ | The seven oft-recited that introduce chapters of the Book These are part of the Book, and part of the prophethood; they are in quantity and quality on the same level as the qur”§n and as equally abstract in information but not expressed in clear Arabic, rather in the form of incomprehensible utterances, e.g., in the form of the seven openings of some såras (such as alif-l§m-mÊm, etc.). |

| اللوح المحفوظ | al-lawÈ al-maÈfåí | The tablet preserved

This contains laws that control the universe and objective existence; it has programmed the Glorious Qur’an from within. |

| الكتاب لا محكم و لامتشابه | al-kit§b l§

muÈkam wa-l§ mutash§bih | This is the book that contains neither definite nor ambiguous verses and neither legal rules (aÈk§m) nor historical information (anb§”). |

| تفصيل الكتاب | tafßÊl al-kit§b | Explanation of the Book

This is one part of the Book; it contains those verses that are neither definite nor ambiguous; they are directly revealed from God; they belong to

MuÈammad’s (ß) prophethood; (the same as al-kit§b l§ muÈkam wa-l§ mutash§bih). |

| الذكر | al-dhikr | The remembrance

This is the textual, i.e., linguistic and acoustic, format of the Book in the Arabic language; Allah has ordered us to venerate and preserve this remembrance forever. |

| الموضوعيوالذاتي | al-maw·å#Ê wa’l-dh§tÊ | Objective and subjective

Objective refers to the existence of the laws of existence that exist outside human consciousness

(e.g., the existence of the sun); subjective refers to the existence of things that do not exist independently from human consciousness; their acceptance depends on human behaviour; hence, the prophetical revelation (al-qur”§n, i.e., the prophethood) is the objective part of the

Book, and the Mother of the Book

(umm al-kit§b, i.e., the messengerhood) is the subjective part of the Book. |

| الكرسي | al-kursÊ | The chair

The total of all knowledge of the Lord of Heavens; it has no spatial meaning and no connotation of ‘seat’; the ‘throne’ (al-#arsh) is superior to the Chair insofar as the latter’s commands and prohibitions are only applicable to things that the ‘One who commands and prohibits’ has previously made known. |

| الإسلام/المسلمون | al-isl§m / al-muslimån | Islam / Muslim-Assenters

These are those who believe in the existence of God and in the Last Day (and the Resurrection), those who do good deeds and adhere to the Straight Path; they witness that: ‘there is no god but God’.

This cannot be reasoned nor scientifically proven. |

| الإجرام | al-ijr§m | Interruption of the relationship with God

This is the opposite of al-isl§m, i.e., disbelief in the existence of God, the Last Day, Resurrection, and the Day of Judgement; the modern term for it is ‘atheism’. |

| رمون□وا | al-mujrimån | God-dissenters, i.e., those who sever their ties with God This is the opposite term for al-muslimån. |

| المصلون | al-mußallån | God-connected people

Those who have not severed their connection with God, like the dissenters or atheists, and who believe in Him and remember Him; they are the MuslimAssenters who, as the Book states, fight the dissenters or atheists. |

| الإيمان

والمؤمنون | al-Êm§n / al-mu”minån | Faith / Muslim-Believers

These are those who believe in the prophecy and messengerhood of MuÈammad (ß): there are two types of faith: a) the category of al-isl§m (see above); b) the specific faith in following MuÈammad (ß); those who follow MuÈammad and have faith in his message are the ‘Muslim-Believers who have faith in MuÈammad (ß)’ (al-mu”minån); they witness that:

‘MuÈammad is the Messenger of God’. |

| مقيموالصلوة | muqÊmå al-ßalawa or

al-ßal§t | Those who perform the ritual prayer of ablution, prostration, and rak#a-positions

These are by necessity God-connected people (and hence also al-muslimån) but not all God-connected people need to perform the ritual prayer because it is part of al-Êm§n, not al-isl§m. |

| الرحمن | al-raÈm§n | The merciful

This is an attribute of God and one of His ninety-nine beautiful names; together with the name “All§h” it is the most distinguished; it contains a notion of God that expresses dialectically opposite attributes, such as merciful and mighty or mild-tempered and quick in punishment, etc. |

| العـدم | al-#adam | Nothingness

Expressed in linguistic terms, this refers to a signifiant (signifying) that has no signifié (signified), or in philosophical terms it refers to knowledge that is not (yet) known (ma#låm); in cosmological terms it refers to the existence of the world when it was not yet created, i.e., it was only in God’s knowledge but not yet known (i.e., not visible), it was a signifiant without a signifié; when it became known, creation became the signifié insofar as Allah’s words (kalim§t) are the source of all existence which are the significant; currently ‘nothingness’ refers to all abstract (theoretic al-mathematical) relationships in nature and the cosmos that appear to be at random but are studied logically by theoretical mathematicians. |

| الوجـود | al-wujåd | Existence

The term refers to Allah’s words which are the truth; it refers to the existence of creation which became the signifié of Allah’s words (kalim§t) which are the source of all existence and the significant; such existence is subject to time and place in that it is ‘Being’ (kaynåna) which is subject to ‘Progressing’

(sayråra) and ‘Becoming’ (ßayråra), whereas Allah’s ‘Being’ (and only this) is not subject to ‘Progressing’ and ‘Becoming’, because He is the First and the Last, the Outward and the Inward. |

| الحـرام | al-Èar§m | Taboo

This is an absolute prohibition issued by God alone; there are thirteen taboos in

the Book; they belong to al-isl§m, not al-Êm§n and cannot be extended or reduced, e.g., by parliament or a mufti. |

| المحـرمات | al-muÈarram§t | Taboos

These are absolute, universal, eternal, and comprehensive prohibitions that are to be enforced in all cultures and time periods; they are idolatry; recalcitrance; infanticide; acts of indecency; torment of the soul; misappropriation of the possession of orphans; corruption and tampering with weights and measures; false witness (perjury); redemption by committing Allah; marriage with maÈ§rim relatives; consumption of dead animals, blood, pork, and everything that does not suit Allah; usury of alms; to speak against Allah or say ill-informed things about Allah. |

| السنة | al-sunna | MuÈammad’s (ß) law

This contains MuÈammad’s application of al-ris§la and, hence, the umm al-kit§b during the seventh century on the Arabian Peninsula; his interpretations are only applicable for the period in which he lived, with the exception of the rituals that form the (transhistorical) foundation of the ‘pillars of faith’ (ark§n al-Êm§n). |

| الكلاموالقول | al-kal§m wa’l-qawl | Speech act and meaningful speech

A speech act consists of phonetic utterances by a human voice through the mouth, in orderly sequence and comprehensible form; meaningful speech means that the uttered words have achieved meaningfulness in the mind of the listener who has thus understood them. |

| ا كلمات | kalim§t All§h | Words of God

These are the source of objective, material existence and its general laws as well as of existence’s particular events at the time of their occurrences; human beings have no power to alter them or prevent them from happening; they constitute what is termed ‘divine preordainment’ (al-qadar), within whose limits, however, human beings can exercise choice. |

| الربوبيةوالألوهية | al-rubåbiyya wa’l-ulåhiyya | God’s sovereignty and God’s divinity

God’s sovereignty refers to the objective reality of existence outside human consciousness; it is a relationship of Allah to all of His creation, which is a relationship of

dominance, power, and prepotency; this relationship is untouchable and unalterable; God’s divinity, however, can be acknowledged by men of reason and this entails conscious and voluntary acts of devotion and submission; God’s sovereignty always precedes God’s divinity, therefore the umm al-kit§b is a book of God’s divinity, while the qur”§n is a book of God’s sovereignty as it contains eternal cosmological laws. |

| القدروالقضاء | al-qadar wa’l-qa·§” | Divine preordainment and human will

Divine preordainment refers to the absolute existence of things and events outside human consciousness, while human will refers to the conscious human movement within the limits of this existence as it moves between assent and dissent; knowledge (al-ma#rifa) forms the bridge between divine preordainment and human will in the sense that if knowledge grows so does human will and human freedom, and in the sense that Allah means the maximum of knowledge and freedom, and the more humans know the closer they get to Allah; accordingly, before an event occurs in human history it is part of human will but part of the divine preordainment after it has occurred, since there is no regress possible. |

| التنزيل والإنزال والجعل | al-tanzÊl wa’l-inz§l wa’l-ja#l | Objective revelation, transfer to the human mind, and transformation

Al-tanzÊl refers to the process of an objective transport (of revelation) outside human consciousness; al-inz§l refers to the transport (of the revelation) which enters human consciousness and knowledge; al-ja#l refers to the process of change in “Progressing” (ßayråra): this could be a transformation from a nonperceptible format into another nonperceptible format, or from a nonperceptible format into a perceptible format (al-ja#l + al-inz§l); the Book inseparably combines both al-ja#l and al-inz§l, whereas with the aÈk§m (legal rules) there is only a combination of al-tanzÊl and al-inz§l, but no transformation. |

| الناسخوالمنسوخ | al-n§sikh

wa’l-mansåkh | The abrogating and the abrogated

Abrogation refers to the replacement of a rule as stated in a preceding message (ris§la) by a lighter rule in the succeeding message (e.g., the punishment of adultery by stoning in Mås§’s message with flogging and chastisement in MuÈammad’s (ß) message); it takes place only with regard to the legal rules (aÈk§m) and only between messages

(alterations, annullment, supplements are possible), but never within one and the same message. |

| مواقعالنجوم | maw§qi# al-nujåm | The positions of the asterisks

Asterisks separate the verses of the Book and decide whether a stop is allowed or not; there is no relationship to the galactic stars whatsoever. |

| القلم | al-qalam | The pen or axis of human knowledge see below; note that in the Book it does not refer to ‘reed pen’, ‘pencil’, or ‘crayon’ as it has often been too literally translated; instead the term qalam refers to the cognitive process of ‘identification’. |

| والتقليم | al-taqlÊm | Identification

This refers to the process of distinguishing things, which is the vertebral column of human knowledge that expands constantly and which circles the axis that is called al-qalam. |

| التسطير | al-tasãÊr | Classification

This refers to the process of classifying things in human knowledge; it is the process of human thinking that is based on identification; this is why identification, the basis of human thinking, precedes classification. |

| التأويل

الاوجتهاد | al-ta”wÊl wa’l-ijtih§d | Interpretation and legal deduction

Interpretation is possible for the book of ambiguous verses and those things that are changeable; interpretations are carried out from the perspective of a rationally derived theoretical law or on the basis of insights into objective reality; it is an interaction between the text (al-naßß) and human perception; interpretations are relative, subject to change and debate among people; legal deduction takes place in the realm of rules, admonitions, and commandments; these carry the distinctive characteristics of the historical period in which they are made; they are made continuously; outside the realm of rules, admonitions, and commandments no legal deduction takes place, because these other things are subject to general human interests upon which human beings come to a mutual agreement (for which they do not need legal rules). |

| الترتيل | al-tartÊl | Well-ordered arrangement

This is one of the tasks of interpretation: the arrangement of thematically connected

verses in a sensible and systematic order; it is applicable for the understanding of the qur”§n where the relevant passages are scattered around in different chapters. |

| التراث | al-tur§th | The Islamic heritage

This is not congruent with the Book because the latter has no human agency, whereas those who contributed to Islamic heritage, including the salaf forefathers, are all humans. |

| التسبيح

”الشيء”جدل هلاك | al-tasbÊÈ #jadal hal§k al-shay” | Glorification and ‘the dialectics of negation/destruction” This is an internal dialectical movement that contains a battle between two antagonistic elements in everything which create constant change and development, as one thing may be destroyed and reappear in another thing; such dialectics of a constant battle between antagonistic elements guarantees progress; while we say ‘Glory be to God’ we acknowledge that He is beyond negation and change while everyone else in existence changes and, thus, praises God. In other words: this is the dialectics of the interpenetration of opposites and the negation of the negation. |

| البعث | al-ba#th | The resurrection

This refers to the resurrection of men after their death and their entry into a new material ‘Being’ (kaynåna), but without changing their ‘Progressing’ (ßayråra); resurrection is the final step and the last progress of this universe as it transcends into another universe; but because in that world the dialectics of antagonistic battles does not exist, there is no death or birth, but rather eternal immortality. |

| الآخرة | al-§khira | Life after death

This refers to existence in the Next World after the Day of Resurrection; the dialectics of antagonistic battles is replaced by the law of ‘eternal immortality’; however, the law of ‘duality’ and the law of interrelationships (cause and effect) between things do not disappear but rather operate in a different way; there will be oppositional pairs in Hell and Paradise, but their essential quality is different from this world. |

| الحقوالباطل | al-Èaqq wa’l-b§ãil | Truth and falsehood

Truth refers to the material, objective existence outside human consciousness; Allah is the truth, and existence which is Allah’s words (kalim§t) is true;

falsehood is illusion and deceptive imagination or idealistic philosophical thinking. |

| الغيبوالشهادة | al-ghayb wa’l-shah§da | The unknown world and the visible world

Unknown means not yet identified, it refers to those material things and human and natural events that are partially or wholly invisible or not yet present in human understanding and knowledge; visible refers to those things and events that are known or present in human understanding, either through physical awareness of the human senses or through abstract, theoretical thinking. |

| السمع والبصروالفؤاد | al-sam# wa’l-baßar wa’l-fu”§d | Hearing, seeing, and perceptual understanding

Whereas hearing and seeing are bound to an organ of the human body (eye or ear) and form the material basis of human thinking, perceptual understanding is linked to the brain and is the result of the perceptual process of hearing and seeing; it implies that there is no human thinking and understanding without prior perceptions through the senses. |

| البشر والإنسانوالأنسنة | al-bashar wa’l-ins§n wa’l-ansana (or al-unsana) | Human race, human being, and becoming human Human race refers to the material, physiological existence of the human body as a living creature (the Homo erectus); human being refers to mankind as social and rational beings that form relationships and are able to think; becoming human is the process of transforming the human race into rational beings by breathing the spirit of God (al-råÈ) into them. |

| آدم المصطفى | §dam al-mußãaf§ | Adam, the chosen man

He is the father of mankind; he was not alone in this world but always with other people; Allah chose him and taught him how to think in abstract terms; Adam’s task was then to teach this to other people; human beings are ‘his descendants’ (not genealogically his children) in the figurative sense of following him in the process of becoming human. |

| النفس والروحوالوفاة والموت | al-nafs wa’l-råÈ wa’l-waf§t wa’l-mawt | The soul, the spirit, the death of the spirit, and the death of the soul

The term soul has two

meanings: first, the ‘body’ and second the ‘soul’. In the first sense, it is like a normal human organ that can die; in the second sense it embodies the human feelings and emotions, such as love and hatred, happiness and pain. In this sense, the soul is the result of the spirit (al-råÈ) and through the spirit human perceptions of things take place. The spirit itself is not a bodily organ; it is the human secret that transforms the human race into human beings; as a result of possessing ‘spirit’, human beings possess knowledge and legislate what is right and wrong, which is part of their responsibility given to them by God (al-taklÊf). |

| الإكراه

والإضطرار | al-ikr§h wa’l-i·ãir§r | Force and compulsion

Force refers to the reduction of possible options with regard to the choice and free will of a person, a reduction carried out by other people; ‘knowledge of God’ is beyond such a force from outside as this would make His knowledge deficient. Compulsion is the reduction of possible options with regards to the choice and free will of a person because of the (objective) circumstances and social context in which the person lives, i.e., it is not induced (subjectively) by other people. |

| قضاء الله وإرادة الله | qa·§” All§h wa-ir§dat All§h | Allah’s will and Allah’s desire

Allah’s will refers to the omnipotent, ubiquitous divine will that originates in the words of God, i.e., all existence and its objective laws, which means that Allah’s will is firm, irrevocable, and preordained (encapsulated in kun fa-yakån; yaqål; naqål). Allah’s desire is of two kinds: a) prescriptions and proscriptions, as stated in the ‘Mother of the Book’, given in the form of moral laws and ‘subjective’ legislation; and b) conditioned orders (to be implemented in nature, the cosmos, and history) as stated in the qur”§n, which are not eternally fixed but circumstantial and context-bound. |

| الإذن والمشيئة | al-idhn

wa”-mashÊ”a | God’s authority and God’s intent

God’s authority will inevitably be manifested—in the form of the objective, material laws of existence; there is no way to interfere or change the way these laws are implemented. However, God’s intent is changeable and capable of becoming either positive or negative; it is a circumstantial intent and linked with human behaviour and historical context. |

| الأجر | al-ajr | Reward

A reward is given by the Lord to a human being as a result of his acts; it is the ultimate outcome of human acquisition (kasab). |

| خلق | al-khulq | Creation (design)

This refers to the planning of an act before its execution; in modern usage it would be called ‘design’; Allah creates and human beings create, but Allah is the superior creator. Creation does not mean creating something ex nihilio as some believe. |

| سوى-

تسوية | saw§ / taswiyya | Implementation

This refers to the complete execution of the design without any omission or fault; this, naturally, happens after the stage of planning. |

| الاستقامة | al-istiq§ma | Straightness

This is an attribute of al-isl§m and the opposite term to ‘Curvature’ with which it stands in a dialectical relationship; it contains the fixed elements (‘the Straight Path’) around or within which the more flexible elements move; these are only to be found in the ‘Mother of the Book’. |

| الحنيفية | al-ÈanÊfiyya | Curvature

This is an attribute of al-isl§m and the opposite term to ‘Straightness’ with which it stands in a dialectical relationship; it is the more dynamic part that contains changes and alterations (of legislation and human behaviour in general) within the limits of the fixed parts of ‘Straightness’. |

| □ا حدود | Èudåd All§h | God’s limits

These refer to the ‘Straightness’ in al-isl§m; they are the outward boundaries of human behaviour which Allah has set down in the Book and which humans are not allowed to step over but are permitted to move between. |

| الحد الأدنى | al-Èadd al-adn§ | Lower limit

This defines the lowest denominator of acceptable (legitimate) human behaviour (or of legal punishment) that no one is allowed to step under. |

| الحد الأعلى | al-Èadd al-a#l§ | Upper limit

This defines the most extreme possible amount of

legality in human behaviour (or of legal punishment) that no one is allowed to step over. |

| الزكاة والصدقاتوالربا | al-zak§h wa’l-ßadaq§t wa’l-rib§ | Duty of alms tax, general charity; and usury

Duty of alms is an act of charity that contains no obligation for a return of the amount given (money or otherwise); it forms the lower limit of general charity and belongs to the pillars of al-Êm§n. General charity is a much broader term. Duty of alms is performed by and for followers of MuÈammad’s (ß) messengerhood, while general charity can be given by and to any person of whatever belief or religious community. Usury is the abuse or misuse of the charity system, however small the amount is. It is also to wrongly give interest-free loans to people who do not need them (businessmen, farmers, traders, etc.). Finally, it is also to falsely reduce or increase the amount of debt a person has accumulated. |

| الشعائر | al-sha#§“ir | Rituals

These define the connection between human beings and God; they are firmly fixed and unchangeable but differ from one religious community to the next; prayer is the most common form of a ritual as it is the most direct form of communication between a worshipper and the Lord. Typical of rituals is that they are not subject to objective, rational research reflecting the limits of legislation and commandments, because they are fixed and because they express loyalty to a specific messenger. This is also the case with the rituals of al-Êm§n (e.g., prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, and alms) that are performed while adhering to Muhammad’s (ß) messengerhood; they are wrongly called pillars of al-isl§m since they are only pillars of al-Êm§n. |

| الفقراءوالمساكين | al-fuqar§”

wa’l-mas§kÊn | Poor people and handicapped people

Poor people are those with little or no income; they are not necessarily handicapped people; what constitutes poverty differs from one historical period to the other and from one country to the next; handicapped people are those who are mentally and physically disabled. This term is often used in the Book but not mentioned in Islamic fiqh which reflects a derisory attitude towards handicapped people as they were thought of as not fully human. |

| الفرقان أو الوصايا العشر(الأخلاق) | al-furq§n aw al-waß§y§ al-#ashr (al-akhl§q) | Moral guidance or the ten commandments

(ethics) The term al-furq§n refers to the common moral ground of the three monotheistic religions: it includes the straight path of Moses, the wise guidance of Jesus, and the straight path of

MuÈammad; Jewish, Christian and ^m§nic (based on MuÈammad’s messengerhood) principles of moral behaviour are the common denominator that is called al-furq§n. There are two types of al-furq§n: a) general guidance and b) specific guidance; general guidance refers to the ten commandments which are the lower limit of moral guidance given to all human beings; this forms the common moral ground of all human communities through which one may achieve high standards of morality; specific guidance refers to the set of commandments given by MuÈammad (ß) that are applicable not only to those who want to realise social ethics as they are specified by its lower level (i.e., general guidance) but who also want to increase their commitment and become leaders of the devout and pious. These commandments are not given in clear, explicit commands since they are stated in the ‘general guidance’, but only in the form of (indirect) notifications. |

| التقوى | al-taqw§ | Piety

This refers to the act of doing what is permitted and abstaining from what is prohibited, as stated in the umm al-kit§b; it refers to human behaviour and not to human knowledge about objective existence; there are 1) individual piety (rituals), 2) social piety (ethics, al-isl§m), and 3) public (legal) piety (legislating within the limits of Allah); interference in matters of individual piety should be prohibited. |

| الأعرافوالأخلاق | al- a#r§f

wa’l-akhl§q | Customs and ethics

Customs are changeable and variable as they differ from one social and cultural milieu to the next; ethics are the common ground of human interaction and intermundane communication and have therefore a more comprehensive, universal character. Hence, they are directly and precisely revealed by God, while customs are, because of their changeable nature, only loosely mentioned. |

| الامر بالمعروف والنهي عنالمنكر | al-amr bi’lma#råf wa’l-nahy

#an al-munkar | The prescription of what is right and the proscription of what is wrong

This refers to the duty of human beings to (politely and in a civilized manner) urge people to do what is generally accepted as

right and to (equally politely) urge them to refrain from what is generally regarded as wrong in a given society. These things cannot be implemented by force and coercion. |

| متاع الحياةالدنيا | mat§# al-Èay§h al-duny§ | The delights of this world

These include things that human beings can legitimately use as enjoyable products of society’s human economy; they cannot be fixed once and for all because they are subject to changes (in human economy and in what humans wish to enjoy). The qur”§n has defined six fundamental human wishes and called them the ‘delights of this world’. |

| النساء | al-nis§” | Women or those who come later

The term al-nis§” carries two meanings: a) the partners of men, i.e., women (in this case it is the plural of imra”a); and b) those who or that which come later (in this case it is the plural of nasÊ’). In the latter meaning it may refer to what is most recent of the delights of this world (i.e., the latest fashion); a desire for this is only natural for all human beings. |

| الفسوقوالفساد | al-fusåq wa’l-fas§d | Disobedience and corruption

Disobedience refers to the act of rejecting the orders and injunctions of the Lord of the Heavens; corruption, however, is a structural phenomenon, e.g., when because of bureaucracy and bribery a state cannot function properly. |

| بر الوالدين | birr al-w§lidain | Respect of parents

This was the first ethical concept in the history of mankind which separated humans from animals; it first appeared at the time of Noah and signalled a change from matriarchy to patriarchy, in the sense that the son now respected both his parents, not only his mother, and it provided the development from the small nuclear family to the extended family and to the tribe; it also marked a transition from the council of the elders to the social classes, the police, and then later on to the state. |

| الأمة | al-umma | Community

This is a group of people who share a common behaviour; or a group of animals whose behaviour follows the same instincts; in social terms, it is perhaps better expressed with the modern term ‘culture’ (al-thaq§fa) and might extend to people who lived in the past, including ancient, medieval, and modern historical epochs; Muslim-Believers form the community of MuÈammad, and they respect other communities. |

| القوم | al-qawm | People

This is defined by the use of a common language, e.g., the Arabs are the people of MuÈammad (ß); they trade and cooperate with other peoples. In the Book the term al-qawm is a concept that is more advanced than the concept of ‘community’ and was, chronologically, revealed later. |

| الشعب | al-sha#b | Nation

This is a more complex term as it refers to a self-defined cultural and social body that combines several languages (lis§n) and several ethnicities (qawm) with a multitude of ideological communities (umma), but is governed by a single political system and contained in a unified territory (the national homeland) that both are controlled and regulated within the realm of a nation-state (waãan); today, there is one community of believers of Arab ethnicity within twenty-one Arab nation-states, consisting of many nationalities and communities. The relationship between peoples is based on tolerance and cooperation, not force or hatred. It refers to citizenship if it is applied on the level of individuals. |

| الحرية والعدالةوالمساواة | al-ÈurrÊya wa’l-#ad§la wa’l-mus§w§h | Freedom, justice, and equality

These are the main aims of jih§d in God’s way. |

| فرعون وهامان وقارون و المستضعفونفي الأرض | far#ån wa-h§m§n wa-q§rån wa’l-musta·#ifån fi’l-“ar· | Pharaoh, H§m§n, Q§rån, and the ‘wretched souls of this world”

The name Pharaoh stands for political despotism, tyranny, and government based on violence; the name H§m§n stands for religious policing and power in collaboration with the political administration; in a theocracy both types of power come together in just one person; the name Q§rån stands for the power of global companies in business and commerce with enormous economic might and political influence; people or the ‘wretched souls of this world’ will always fight political, religious, and economic despotism even though the face of such despotism may change over time, e.g., today, political and religious despotism is less severe, and economic force has become less inhuman than it used to be. |

| القصاص

والعقوبة | al-qiß§ß

wa’l-#uqåba | Punishment and retribution

A punishment follows a criminal act and may be different in kind

from the criminal act, whereas retribution is quantitatively and qualitatively of the same kind, so for example the flogging of the adulterer is a punishment, whereas the killing of the murderer is retribution. |

| العبد والعبادوالعبادة | al-#abd wa’l-#ubb§d wa’l-#ib§da | The Worshipper, the worshippers, and the worship

The worshipper of God is a free human being who is able to choose between obeying or disobeying orders; the worshippers are those for whom messengers have issued orders but they are free to choose between obedience and disobedience; worship is the way to follow the straight path, not in the sense of performing rituals such as pilgrimage and fasting, etc. which are the rituals of al-Êm§n (and not of the straight path). |

| العبد الحر(الآمر) | al-#abd al-Èurr (al-§mir) | A free worshipper of God

This is someone who can issue orders to others. |

| العبد والعبيدوالعبودية | al-#abd wa’l-#abÊd wa’l-#ubådÊya | A worshipper of God / slaves / slavery

The Book states that worshippers have a choice between obedience and disobedience, while slaves do not enjoy such a choice. To forbid free choice is a human invention—it would never have been allowed by God. Slavish obedience towards God is not requested in this world, only on the Day of Judgement when people indeed become slaves of God. |

| العبد الرق(المملوك) | al-#abd al-riqq (al-mamlåk) | Slave

A slave is owned as private property by someone else; he has no free choice as he must always say yes to whatever his owner demands from him. |

| الميثاق وميثاقالإسلام | al-mÊth§q

wa-mÊth§q

al-isl§m | Covenant and the covenant of Islam

A covenant is a voluntary bond based on trust and acceptance between two partners; it is of a lesser and historically earlier level than a law or a constitution; a covenant of God contains an oath of allegiance to God, this means that the fulfilment or breach of that oath in respect to God is the fulfilment or breach of the covenant; the covenant of al-isl§m is the ultimate model for a human society (and what we would call ‘moral law’ (al-q§nån al-akhl§qÊ), i.e., the

general human law, based on following the straight path (the worship of God). |

| الشهيد والشهادة الحضورية و الشاهد والشاهدةالمعرفية | al-shahÊd wa’l-shah§da al-Èu·årÊya + al-sh§hid wa’l-sh§hida al-ma#rifÊya | ShahÊd-witness and sh§hid-witness

A shahÊd-witness directly observes things and events as an eyewitness, while a sh§hid-witness observes (nonsensually) these things from a distance; the first term relates to witness in its strictly empirical sense (i.e., perception through the senses), while the second term refers to a theoretical observation (e.g., in the case of an epistemological recognition); the meaning of ‘martyr in a battle’ is an invention and cannot be found in the Book; the one who is an eyewitness to a financial contract is, of course, a shahÊd-witness. |

| الوالد والأبوالوالدة والأم | al-w§lid wa’l-ab

wa’l-w§lida wa’l-umm | The biological father (i.e., the birth-giver) and the caregiverfather (who may not be the biological father); the biological mother (the birth-giver) and the caregiver-mother (who may not be the biological mother) |

| الوالدانوالأبوان | al-w§lid§n wa’l-abaw§n | The biological parents (i.e., the birth-givers) and the caregiver-parents (who may not be the biological parents) If the caregiver-parents are also the biological parents they would never be called caregiver-parents (al-abaw§n) but always birth-givers (al-w§lid§n). |

| التبني | al-tabann§ | Adoption of a child

If adoption is carried out within the first two years of a child’s life, the foster parents achieve the same status as the biological parents of the child, since the child would have no other recollection of his/her parents than that of his/her foster parents. |

| الشرك با | al-shirk bi’l-ll§h | Violation of God’s unity

There are three different ways of violating God’s unity but only the first is regarded as an unforgivable ‘sin’ (al-dhanb), and that is, a) to make an image of God, which is to give God a concrete temporal, spatial, and material dimension (ignoring that He is beyond any such dimension or description); the other two less severe but equally condemnable sins are: b) a violation of God’s divinity, which is to declare the generation of the forefathers and of the medieval jurists infallible, or to regard what is

called ‘Islamic jurisprudence’ as eternally valid. This is a violation of the ÈanÊfiyya principle as it renders fixed something that is subject to historical change; it is a form of an indirect violation of God’s unity, since it attempts to call something fixed and everlasting, while these are attributes that can only be applied to God; c) a violation of God’s sovereignty, i.e., the visit of the tombs of saints, ‘åfÊ brotherhoods, the call for human intermediaries between God and human beings, etc. |

| الربا | al-rib§ | Interest

The verses of the Book allow to propose a flexible banking system that can incorporate, if need be, the taking of interest and which, by holding to the limits that Allah has set, can also prevent its misuse (i.e., usury). |

| الخمر | al-khamr | Intoxicating substance

The Book mentions the benefits of intoxicating substances, such as in drugs or anaesthetics which some people need during surgical operations. Al-khamr always connotes substances that lead to intoxication and a total confusion of a person’s mind; in instances where a person consumes alcohol but does not get intoxicated the term al-khamr is not applicable. |

| الرجس | al-rajas | Confusion

This refers basically to a conflation or confusion between two things and is usually caused by doing something (beneficial and useful) to excess, e.g., excess in terms of al-khamr leads to intoxication, and excess in terms of games of chance is to bet on a large amount of money. |

| الحلال والحرام | al-Èal§l

wa’l-Èar§m | The permitted and the absolutely taboo

Forbidden things are those acts which Allah has explicitly forbidden in the Book; if God did not explicitly forbid a thing, it is permitted. The absolute taboos are universally and eternally forbidden, while the permitted things are universally allowed. However, the latter might be, if the cultural context makes it necessary, further qualified (and hence limited) within the boundaries of God and according to historical circumstances. Only God can absolutely forbid and permit things, while human legislators can temporarily allow or prohibit (yasmaÈ wa-yamna#) things. The latter are not subject to authorisation by the religious scholars (al-istift§”). |

| الأمر والنهي | al-amr wa’l-nahy | Prescription and proscription

Prescriptions and proscriptions can be issued

both by God and human beings, but while God absolutely permits and forbids as well as prescribes and proscribes, human beings prescribe and proscribe. This implies that there are divine proscriptions and human proscriptions; divine proscriptions are either absolute or relative, but human proscriptions can only be relative and temporary; divine proscriptions are within a grey zone of black and white, i.e., permitted or prohibited (the ‘ambiguous decrees’), e.g., in the case of the consumption of intoxicated substances; however, human proscriptions, including those by MuÈammad (ß), are relative and subject to historical circumstances, e.g., to forbid intercourse between a girl and her maternal or paternal uncle is a human proscription not a (divine) prohibition and we may add further interdictions of this kind, e.g., concerning intercourse between a girl and her male cousin, but we are not allowed to regard this interdiction as an absolute taboo. |

| الحكمة | al-Èikma | Wisdom

This refers to the teaching of general moral instructions that are applicable to all people; however, one must not issue legal or doctrinal rules on the basis of these moral instructions; wisdom comes through revelation, but revelation is not always necessary; it can be found with the wisest men in all periods of time even in those times when divine revelation has ceased to come down. |

| اليتيم | al-yatÊm | Orphan

This is a minor who has lost his/her caregiverfather, while the mother may still be alive; if an orphan reaches adulthood he/she legally ceases to be an orphan. |

| الحجابوالجلباب | al-Èij§b wa’l-jilb§b | \ij§b is an item of clothing to cover the breasts of a woman; Jilb§b is an item of clothing that covers a woman’s body outside her home; this belongs to the field of social dress codes, not official legislation, and the only criteria is that the way a woman dresses should prevent ‘harm’ or ‘insult’ in public (this might vary from one culture to another). |

| زينة المرأة

والجيوب | zÊnat al-mar”a wa’l-juyåb | Beauty of a woman

This might be external (face), which should not be covered, or internal (hidden), like the area from the neck downwards to the buttocks, which should be covered. There is no textual proof that the head of a woman needs to be covered. |

| العورة | al-#awra | Feeling of shame

This refers to the desire of a person not to reveal something of his or her body or behaviour. But shame is relative, not

absolute, as it expresses current customary practices and may change over time; there is no connection to things that are absolutely forbidden or permitted. |

| الزواج | al-zaw§j | Marital relationship

This refers to a marital relationship between a man and a woman who are adults and compos mentis; the purpose of this relationship is to establish a family and have children with the perspective of a long-term relationship that is, however, permitted to be terminated by divorce. |

| علاقة ملك اليمين

 | #il§qat mulk al-yamÊn | Partnership

This pertains to a voluntary relationship between a man and woman who are both adults and compos mentis, but who are not married and whose relationship is short-term but of a sexual nature; there are several types of partnerhships, e.g., zaw§j al-mut#a (temporary partnership) where the male partner provides for the female partner; zaw§j al-misy§r (controlled or guided partnership) where the female partner has no right to demand such provision; and zaw§j al-frind (friendship) where there is mutual provision and care; all these types, are not absolutely forbidden though they do not constitute marriage. |

| البعل | al-ba#l | Partner or companion

He is someone who fulfils the roles of a family provider, eating companion, drinking companion and play mate; if he does all of this and fulfils his conjugal rights he is regarded as a women’s (sexually active) husband (al-zawj). |

| □ا حاكمية | È§kimÊyat All§h | The immutable domination of God

This is expressed in the following way:

1. a demand for absolute obedience (God’s divinity) by human beings

2. the absolute power over everything (God’s sovereignty)

3. absolute singularity (oneness) in such divinity

4. absolute arbitrariness in His actions (‘He does what He wants’)

5. … He is beyond examination and enquiry. |

| التبذيـر | al-tabdhÊr | Squandering

This efers to an excess in (legitimate) spending, e.g., when someone spends 90% of his income on charity, or spends the cost of food for thirty people on only three guests; it is a quantitative excess, i.e., it means to transgress the limits of a (normally) permitted act. |

| الإسراف | al-isr§f | Excess

Excess turns a permitted act into a forbidden act by acting in too extreme a manner. It is quantitative excess, for example, when someone not only kills a murderer (which is permitted) but also his whole family (which is forbidden); it is qualitative excess, for example, when one eats only one slice of (the absolutely forbidden) meat pork. |

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*** Index

al-abaw§n (caregiver-parents) 9, 521–22, 553; bequests 231–32, 257; inheritance of ascendant members of family 249–53

Abbasids 336, 343, 352, 377

#Abd al-Malik b. Marw§n 351

#Abd al-Muããalib, Hamza 478

Abraham 29, 36, 38, 86, 89; al-wal§” (likeness) 474, 475–76, 477; community of 63, 470; al-ÈanÊfiyya 185–86,

188; role model 96 abrogation (al-naskh) 489–90, 533; codex of #Uthm§n 81; of earlier messengerhoods by later 18, 45–46, 217, 396–402, 489, 543; inheritance 227; al-jih§d 396, 402, 489; jurists 102–103, 396–98, 489–90, 495; alqit§l (fight) 425, 460

Ab å #AlÊ al-F§risÊ 10

Ab å Bakr 81, 342, 343, 346–47, 349,

350, 351, 352, 361, 408, 489

Ab å D§wå d al-Sijist§nÊ 389

Ab å Dharr al-Ghif§rÊ 359

Ab å Ja#far al-Manß år 351, 363 Ab å Jahl 478

Ab å KhalÊl, ShawqÊ xxiv Ab å Lahab 55

Ab å Zayd, Naßr \§mid xxv, 523

Adam 16, 299–301, 367–68, 369, 371,

374, 546

#adl and qisã (equality and justice) 261 adultery 206–208, 306, 378, 399–400 #Aff§na, Jaw§d Mås§ MuÈammad xxvi

Afghanistan 395, 449

Afterlife 13–14, 18; life in this world 62; obsession with 70; pillar of al-isl§m 34–35; slavery 59, 462

#$“isha bint Ab å Bakr 221, 275, 324,

347, 348, 350 #Akk, Kh§lid #Abd al-RaÈm§n al- xxiii alcohol 99–100, 374, 379–80; al-khamr (intoxicating substance) 554 #AlÊ 358–59

Allah/God, concept of xxix–xxx, xxxi, 2; divinity and sovereignty 119, 166–69, 542; kalim§t All§h (words of God) 136–38, 430–431, 486; unity

17, 95–97, 334, 399; unity: violation of (shirk) 37–38, 136, 554; war against Allah/God 201

Allah/God’s rule (al-È§kimiyya) 450–451,

463–64, 557 alms tax (al-zak§h) 22, 24, 25, 53–54, 59, 66, 336, 548; al-isl§m and al-Êm§n 53–54, 68; early history; refusal to pay 362; recipients 44, 211–214; theory of limits 93, 209–14

al-#amal al-ß§liÈ (righteous, doing what is)

27, 35–37, 52–53 ambiguous verses (§y§t mutash§bih§t) 26,

116, 121, 123, 124, 127, 129, 488, 538 amputation as penalty for theft 189–90,

196–201

al-amr bi’l-ma#r åf wa’l-nahy #an al-munkar see prescribing right, proscribing wrong

analogy (al-qiy§s) 71, 85, 97, 110, 192, 215,

225, 493–94; empirical evidence 492 angels 22, 158, 161, 165, 166, 171, 369– 70; JibrÊl 156, 158, 160 #$nÊ, BashÊr xxvi antisocial behaviour 201 antitraditionalism and anticlericalism xxxii–xxxiii, xlvi

apostasy 72, 330, 338–39, 497; allowing religious 363; amalgamation of politics with 353–54, 363; Arabic term: al-ridda 339; early history 343, 347– 52, 358–61, 362, 363–64; from al-Êm§n 357–64; from al-isl§m 356–57, 364; ÈadÊths 343–47, 348, 349; political apostasy/separatism 355, 361–62; punishment 341–42, 497; removal of rulers for 447–48; standing away from religion 340–341; turning back from faith 339–40

Arab nationalism xx, 506, 507–509, 510,

529

arts, visual 9

#Ashm§wÊ, MuÈammad Sa#Êd al- 360 #Asqal§nÊ, AÈmad B. \ajar al- 350 assassinations 449 assimilatability (al-tash§buh) xxxvi, xxxix, 4, 138, 140, 142, 143–44, 145, 148,

149

atheists see dissent from God Averroes (Ibn Rushd) 530–531

Ayoub, #Us§ma ‘iddÊq 449

B§b, Ja#far DÊk al- xxxiv, 513 backgammon 100

al-ba#l/zawj (partner/conjugal husband) 287–89; female dress code 294,

310–311, 312, 321, 326 Balta#a, al-Kh§ãib b. AbÊ 479 banking 381; interest (al-rib§) 209–14, 554 al-bar§” (otherness) 466, 475, see also iden-

tities, multiple

Baãå jÊ, \is§m al- 448–49 beauty 308–309

becoming (al-ßayrå ra) xxix, xxx, 11–19, 76, 78–79, 111, 112, 485–86 Bedouin culture 333 being (al-kaynå na) xxix, xxx, 11–19; al-

<right>

kit§b (the book): being in-and-for-itself

</right>

76–79, 485–86 bequests 229–34, 253–54, 353; specified and unspecified shares 228–29; summary 255–57; wills: religious duty 233

Bible 117, 143–44, 145; Corinthians 296; Deuteronomy 379, 400; Exodus 401; Genesis 295–96; John 400;

Leviticus 401 Big Bang 13, 14, 15 bin L§din, #Us§ma 456 birth control 39–40 Brahmanism 295

Buddhism 295, 438 Bush, G.W. 456 business 68, 381, 415; duress (al-ikr§h) 386; interest (al-rib§) 209–14, 554; occupational associations 41; pollution 201; standard measures 40–41, 64, 378

Bå ãÊ, MuÈammad Sa#Êd Rama·§n al- xxiii, xxiv

Cain and Abel 299, 455 Caliphate 336, 464 chastity 40; punishment for unchasteness 206–208, 399–400

children 396; adoption of 381, 554; ban on killing of 39–40, 378; female infanticide 297; orphans see orphans; preference of boys to girls 281–82; sense of shame 318; walad (pl aul§d)

227, 235, 252–53

China 438

Christianity/Christians 25, 30, 52, 53,

132, 295–96, 357–58, 439 civil society 392–93, 497, 519–21 Clark, Peter xvii

clear book (al-kit§b al-mubÊn) 140–141,

142, 538 clear record (al-im§m al-mubÊn) 140,

141–42, 156, 159, 514, 538 commandments 36; al-furq§n al-#§mm

36–42, 46–50 communism 431, 437, 439, 527 companies, global 415 competition 435–37, 438–39 compulsion 194, 385–86, 547 comradeship, importance of 454–55 conduct, book of (kit§b al-sul åk) 72–73

confederation of states 393 conformism 465–66 consensus (al-ijm§#) 426–27, 491–92 consultation (al-sh år§) 54, 59, 336,

417–418, 464 contracts, debt 45, 194–95; interest (alrib§) 209–14, 554

covenant 553; of Allah/God 41, 553 creation story 276 curvature (al-ÈanÊfiyya) 4, 63–65, 181–83, 230, 548; messengerhood, book of 75

dancing 94, 320 Darfur 362 death, praise of 354 debt contracts 45, 194–95; interest (al-

rib§) 209–14, 554

decimal system 485 defamation 99, 375–76, 380 definite verses (§y§t muÈkam§t) 26, 116,

121, 123, 124, 125–26, 488 democracy 333, 335, 336, 464, 497, 519; acceptance of 337–38; oppositional parties 527–29 Descartes, René 226, 509 despotism 337, 338, 343, 409, 431, 432, 446–47, 462–63; individualism 333; peaceful opposition 201; proscribing wrong 391–92

determinism see predestination al-dhikr (remembrance) 77, 115, 133–35,

157, 495, 539 dialectical criticism xxx, xxxv, xxxvi, 531; glorification and dialectics of negation/destruction 545

discrimination see equality disobedience see obedience

dissent from God (al-ijr§m) 31–34, 55,

540 divorce 288–89, 290–292; pre-Islamic

Arabia 297 doctors 354, 372, 378 domestic violence xl–xlvi, 285–86 dress requirements: men 304, 305–307,

318, 326, 327 dress requirements: women xxxvii, 49, 61; first line: 24:30/31 305–306; second line: 24:30/31 306–307; third line: 24:31 307–309; fourth line: 24:31 309–10; fifth line: 24:31 310–311; sixth line 24:31 313–314; seventh line 24:31 315–316; eighth line 24:31 316–317; ninth line 24:31 317–319; tenth line 24:31 319–320; eleventh line 24:31 320–321; #awra, zone of (intimate private parts) 294, 296, 299, 310, 311, 317–319, 321, 323, 325, 326; ba#l partner 294, 310–311, 312, 321, 326; being covered (lib§s) 294, 298–99; conclusion 325–28; face 310, 323; fitna (social and sexual disturbance) 303–304; furå j (lower private parts) 306–307, 310, 311, 321; ÈadÊths 302, 323, 326; hands 323; headscarf (Èij§b) 292–94, 303–304, 324, 327, 556; jilb§b 322, 556; juyå b 309–10, 311, 312, 318, 320, 321; khim§r (cover) 309–10; limits, upper and lower 196, 304, 313, 320, 321, 323, 326, 328; maÈ§rim relatives 310, 312–313, 315, 319, 321, 326; private parts/hidden beauty (zÊna) 288, 304–12; problem of original sin 295–301; righteousness 303, 327; seventh-century Arabia 311, 321, 323–24; shame (saw”a) 294, 299–304; slavery

303–304, 315–316; striking of feet 319–20; three kinds of beauty 308–309; wives of Muhammad 313–314, 324; zawj husband 294, 310, 311, 312, 321,

<right>

326; zÊna, m eaning of 288, 308–309,

</right>

312–313

duress (ikr§h) 194, 385–86, 547 Eastern Europe 437

Egypt xxvii, 69, 362, 395, 447, 521, 523

Eickelman, Dale F. xvii–xviii, 501 Einstein, A. 1

elite, intellectual 29 environment 77, 308; pollution 201 epistemology xxi, xxx, xxxviii, 1, 364,

463, 496 epochs, historical 1–2 equality; before law 431; gender: in-

heritance laws 238, 251; gender:

verse 4:34 xl–xlvi

espionage 42, 99 ethics (al-furq§n) 17–18, 36–37, 113, 549;

particular 37, 39–40, 42–45; universal 36–42, 46–50

evolution 149, 276 explanation of the book (tafßÊl al-kit§b) 125, 130–132, 162, 163, 539; summary 174–75

extortion 449

face, covering of 310, 323 fair and just, doing what is (al-iÈs§n) 27,

30, 44–45, 53, 60–65 family planning 39–40 fast (ßaum) 22, 24, 25–26, 54, 66, 67, 336–37; limits of Allah/God 207, 488–89; obedience 93; reparation of crime 203, 204; sickness 59

fatalism 67 feet, striking of 319–20 feminism/feminists xlii–xliii, 220, 279 fingernails 49

First World War 439 al-fiãra (human nature) 25–26, 54, 56–57,

183, 214

flexibility see curvature food 192–94 fornication 40, 206–208 France 480, 521 freedom xl, 59, 113, 330–338, 463, 487; democracy 333, 335, 336, 337–38, 464, 528; dialectics between opposition and unity 331; individualistic concept of 333; not to follow a religious community 497; personal 332–33, 335; of religion 330, 335, 337, 356, 363, 431–34, 438, 440, 443–44, 445, 451, 452, 497; of

speech 354, 392; war against Allah/

God 201

al-fuqar§” (poor) 44, 549; charity money

211, 212

al-furq§n (moral guidance) 36–37, 113, 549; al-furq§n al-#§mm (universal ethics) 36–42, 46–50; al-furq§n al-kh§ßß (particular ethics) 37, 39–40, 42–45

gender equality see equality

general ethics see universal ethics

Germany 479–80 global companies 415 God/Allah, concept of xxix–xxx, xxxi, 2; divinity and sovereignty 119, 166–69, 542; kalim§t All§h (words of God) 136–38, 430–431, 486; unity 17, 95–97, 334, 399; unity: violation of (shirk) 37–38, 136, 554; war against Allah/God 201

God/Allah’s rule (al-È§kimiyya) 450–451,

463–64, 557 grammar, rules of Arabic 10–11 grandparents/grandchildren: grand-

<right>

children 24:31 313; inheritance laws

</right>

227, 251–52 graves, visiting of 102–103 Greenwood, David xxxv guardianship see al-qiw§ma guidance, moral (al-furq§n) 36–37; par-

ticular ethics 37, 42–45; universal ethics 36–42, 46–50 Gulf states xxiii gynaecologists 317

ÈadÊths 79–81, 85, 94–95, 97, 101, 110, 391, 494; abrogation 102–103; apostasy 343–47, 348, 349; beating 285; companions of MuÈammad 80–81, 343; compulsion 386; content of prophetic 103–108; defamation of women 375–76; dress 323, 326; hostility to women 302; inheritance laws 226–27; jih§d 396, 419; major sins and absolute taboos 375–77; rituals 93; shahÊd 405–406, 407, 408; theft, penalty for 197; see also MuÈammad, sunna of

al-Èajj 22, 24, 25, 26, 54, 59, 66; obe-

dience 93 \ajj§j b. Yå suf, al- 355 al-È§kimiyya (rule of Allah/God) 450–451,

463–64, 557 al-Èal§l (absolutely permitted) 49, 90,

102, 271, 365, 491–92, 555

Hallaq, Wael xvii handicapped people (al-mas§kÊn) 44, 549; bequests 232; charity money 211,

212, 213 hands, covering of 323

al-ÈanÊfiyya 92, 497; curvature 4, 63–65, 181–83, 230, 548; messengerhood, book of 75

al-Èar§m (absolutely taboo) 49–50, 90, 92, 271, 365, 377–81, 492, 541, 555; consensus 491–92; food 192–94; nahy and 98–100, 365, 370–372, 492; types of marriage 191–92, 194

al-Èasan 49, 365

Hawking, Stephen 527 headscarf (Èij§b) 292–94, 303–304, 324,

327, 392, 556 health care 67 Hell 13–14, 18, 32, 62, 460

Hereafter see Afterlife

Èij§b (headscarf) 292–94, 303–304, 324,

327, 392, 556 Hinduism 295, 438 historicality 490–491 historicity 490–491 homicide 40, 47, 202–204, 378, 400–

402 homosexuality 40, 204–206, 375, 378 al-Èudå d see limits, theory of human existence, tripartite model of xxix, xxx, 11–19, 541; becoming (alßayrå ra) xxix, xxx, 11–19, 76, 78–79, 111, 112, 485–86; being (al-kaynån a) xxix, xxx, 11–19; being in-and-for-itself: al-kit§b (the Book) 76–79, 485–86; progressing (al-sayrår a) xxix, xxx,

11–19, 78–79, 112, 485–86 human nature (al-fiãra) 25–26, 54, 56–57,

183, 214 human rights xxxvii, xxxix, xl, 201, 337,

356; verse 4:34 xl–xlvi human speech, categories of 136 husband see ba#l/zawj (partner/conjugal

husband)

hypocrites/hypocrisy 59–60, 347

IblÊs (jinn) 368, 369, 370, 374

Ibn #Abb§s 146, 344, 346, 347 Ibn #ArabÊ 119, 172, 502, 509 Ibn ArÊqaã, #Abdall§h 478–79

Ibn F§ris al-QazwÊnÊ, Abå ’l-\usayn

AÈ mad 131, 197

Ibn JinnÊ, Ab å ’l-FatÈ #Uthm§n 10 Ibn KathÊr 146

Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyya 450 Ibn Rushd (Averroes) 530–531 identities, multiple 330, 466–67, 498–99; al-bar§” (otherness) 466, 475; al-wal§” (likeness) 467–78; clans 476–77, 478; conclusion 478–81; families 476–77, 478; MuÈammad 480; obedience 471; qaum (people) 466–67, 477–78, 551; sha#b (nation) 467, 477–78, 551; tribes 476–77, 478; umma (community) 466, 467, 469–70, 473, 478, 479, 551; w-l-a: contradictory meanings 467–69, 473, 478; waãan (nation state) 467

idolatry 94, 96, 373, 374, 378, 443 al-iÈs§n (fair and just, doing what is) 27,

30, 44–45, 53, 60–65 al-ijm§# (consensus) 426–27, 491–92

al-ijr§m (dissent from God) 31–34, 55,

540

al-ijtih§d xxxvii, 111–112, 177, 216–217,

491, 492–93, 512; forgiveness for sin 374; MuÈammad 84, 92, 94, 101, 102, 106, 109, 110, 271–72, 493; pro hibited marriage partners 192; pro phets xxxii; punishment for theft 197; rituals: relative obedience 93; scientific evidence 192; taboos 492; umm al-kit§b xxxvi; verses of messengerhood 402, 488; women and

Islamic law 225 al-ikr§h (duress) 194, 385–86, 547 images of Allah/God 38 al-im§m al-mubÊn (clear record) 7, 140,

141–42, 156, 159, 514, 538 im§mate 476 al-Êm§n see al-isl§m and al-Êm§n; pillars of

al-Êm§n

#Imr§n, AÈmad xxvi individualism 333 infanticide, female 297 infidelity 443 inheritance xxxvii, 68, 226–28, 353–54, 496, 526; bequests 228–34, 253–54; conclusion 255–58; contrasted: inheritance laws and bequests 229–30; laws 230, 233, 234–38; laws: analytical geometry 243–49, 258; laws: ascendant members of family 249–53; laws: collateral heirs 254–55; laws: ra-

tio of female to male shares 240–243; laws: spouses 253–54; limits of Allah/ God 206, 239–40, 258, 488; meaning of words 6, 9; social justice 238, 251; specified and unspecified shares

228–29; summary 255–58

injustice (al-íulm) 441–45, see also justice interest (al-rib§) 209–14, 554 interpretation: al-ijtih§d see al-ijtih§d; alta”wÊl xxxvi, xxxvi–xxxvii, 111, 127, 142, 147–50, 544; assimilatability

(al-tash§buh) xxxix, xxxvi, 4, 138, 140,

142, 143–44, 145, 148, 149; proposed process of xxxviii–xl; see also limits, theory of

al-inz§l (transfer to human mind) xxxi, 150–155, 161–63, 495, 514, 543; alqur”§n 155–58, 161–63; umm al-kit§b

159–61, 162–63 Iran 395 al-isl§m and al-Êm§n xxviii–xxix, xxxv– xxxvi, 334–36; abrogation see abrogation; conventional view 21–22, 49; differences between 55–60; disproving conventional view 23–26; dissent from God 31–34, 55; ethics: particular 37, 39–40, 42–45; ethics: universal 36–42, 46–50; fair and just, doing what is (al-iÈs§n) 27, 30, 44–45, 53, 60–65; history 334–37; hypocrites 59–60; Islamic revival/reawakening xxxiii, 27, 67–70, 96–97, 464, 465; redefinitions 26–28; redefinition: al-Êm§n xxix, 50–53; redefinition: alisl§m xxix, 28–31, 393, 438; redefinition: pillars of al-Êm§n 53–55, 59; redefinition: pillars of al-isl§m 34–35, 59; religion other than al-isl§m 27; revised priorities 65–67; righteous, doing what is (al-#amal al-ß§liÈ) 27,

35–37, 52–53; taboos 49

Isl§mbå lÊ, MuÈammad Haytham xxv

Islamic revival/reawakening xxxiii, 27, 67–70, 96–97, 464, 465

Islamism/Islamists xxviii, 329, 330, 394, 446–50, 451–52, 533–35; Abå

Zayd, Naßr \§mid 523; al-ßaÈwa 27, 68; apostasy 352–53, 447–48; Islamic umma 479–80; oppressive ideology 527; rituals and sharÊ#a law xl, xlviii, xxxviii, 113; start of 530

Israel 426

al-istiq§ma (straightness) 180–181, 230,

548

J§bÊ, SalÊm al- xxv

Jacob 29, 38, 371 Jainism 438

al-ja#l (transformation) 154, 161, 162,

163, 543 al-Jam§#at al-Isl§miyya 446 al-j§mi# 334 JawÊj§tÊ, Ma”må n al- xxvi

Jesus 24, 29, 36, 52, 160, 296, 404, 477

Jews/Judaism 25, 30, 52, 53, 132, 160,

188–89, 295–96, 357–58 al-Jih§d 446 al-jih§d 24, 54, 59, 336, 337, 394–95, 497; abrogation (naskh) 396–402; act of witness 402–422; ‘in Allah/God’s way’ 410–415; characteristics of witnesses 404–405; derivation of 395; difference between qit§l and 424–25; fight for oppressed 442; martyrdom: 3:169 420–422; martyrdom concept, emergence of 416–419; politics and religion 394–95, 409, 416–420; sh-h-d, use in the Book of 402–404, 407; shahÊd: death not deciding factor 408–410; shahÊd: ÈadÊths 405–406, 407, 408; sh§hid and shahÊd witness 403, 405, 407; shuhad§” (sing shahÊd) 403, 407; textual evidence of meaning 396; verses of messengerhood and prophethood 402

al-jilb§b (outer garment) 322, 556 jinns 368, 369–70

al-jizya (head tax on free nonbelievers) 359–60

Joseph 29, 198, 403

Jurj§nÊ, #Abd al-Q§hir Ibn #Abd al-

RaÈm§n al- 5, 10 justice; al-iÈs§n (doing what is fair and just) 27, 30, 44–45, 53, 60–65; freedom and 431; human societies 67; inheritance laws 238, 251; for orphans and polygyny 260–268; al-qisã and al-#adl 261; truth telling 41; al-íulm (injustice) 441–45

al-k§fir ån (unbelievers) 27, 55, 444, 458–59; different meaning 452–53,

454

kalim§t All§h (words of God) 136–38,

337, 430–431, 486, 487, 542 al-kaynå na see being khabar news 74–75, 402, 533 Kh§lid b. al-WalÊd 351

KhalÊl, Ibn AÈmad al-Far§hÊdÊ al-

9–10

Khaula bint al-Azwar 221 Khrushchev, Nikita xx killing 40, 47, 202–204, 378, 400–402 al-kit§b al-mubÊn (clear book) 140–141,

142, 538 al-kit§b (the Book) 122–24, 162, 163, 537; being in-and-for-itself 76–79, 485–86; indirect speech of God (kal§m All§h) 486; multistructure composition xxxvii–xxxviii, 132–33; prophethood and messengerhood 72–79; al-qur”§n and 116–17, 120–122, 512, 513; use of term 2, 7–8, 23, 537

knowledge xxx–xxxi, xlvii, 75, 140, 383, 487; absolute and relative 4, 143; absolute taboo: to say things about Allah/God without 381; freedom and 113, 331–32

Kurdistan 362 Kuwait xxvii

language, function of 5 al-lawÈ al-maÈf åí (tablet preserved) 7,

140, 142, 156, 159, 160, 514, 538 leadership see al-qiw§ma Lebanon xxiii

lexicography 10–11

likeness (al-wal§”) see identities, political

limits, theory of (al-Èudå d) xxii, xxx, 92–93, 177, 190–191, 515, 548; Abraham 185–86, 188; concept of upper and lower limits: examples 184–85; conjoined upper and lower limits 206; corruption in the land 201–202; curvature (al-ÈanÊfiyya) 4, 63–64, 181–83, 230, 548; curvature between positive upper and negative lower 209–14; debt contracts 194–95; dialectical opposition 183; differences between conventional view and 214–17; dress requirements 196, 304, 313, 320, 321, 323, 326, 328; fight (al-qit§l) 456; food 192–94; homicide and physical harm

<right>

202–204; homosexual activities, pub-

</right>

lic 204–206; human behaviour and social interaction 186–87; inheritance 206, 239–40, 258, 488; Jews 188–89; limits untouched by curvature 208; lower limits 191–96, 548; marriage 191–92, 194; meeting of upper and lower limits 206–208; messengerhood, book of 75; mitigation of punishments 189–91, 197; MuÈammad’s limits 94; MuÈammad’s messengerhood 187–88, 191; need: change in Islamic legislation 177–80; occupations 320, 328; polygyny 265–68; religion, lower and upper limits of 340; straightness (al-istiq§ma) 180–181, 230, 548; theft, penalty for 189–90, 196–201; upper limits 196–206, 548; war against Allah/God 201–202

linguistic principles 3–11, 82, 90 logic, mathematical xxxiv Lot 40, 384 lot-casting 380 loyalty see identities, multiple

al-mamnå# (temporary ban) 49, 271 Ma”m ån b. Al-RashÊd, al- 363

ManfÊkhÊ, MuÈammad FarÊz xxvi

Manichaeism 295

Ma#arr§wiyya, MuÈammad ‘ayy§È al- xxii–xxiii, xxvii

marriage 41, 379; al-ba#l/zawj (partner/

conjugal husband) 287–89; lower limit 191–92, 194; misy§r 316

martyrdom 330, 403, 405, 446, 459–60; emergence of concept 416–18; Sumayya bint al-Khayy§ã 221; see also al-shahÊd; suicide missions

al-ma#rå f 49, 381–83, see also prescribing right, proscribing wrong

Marxism/Marxists xx, xxi, 22, 48, 504,

505, 531 al-mas§kÊn (handicapped people) 44, 549; bequests 232; charity money 211,

212, 213 mathematics and physics 525–26; mathematical logic xxxiv

Mayd§nÊ, #Abd al-RaÈm§n \asan

\aban naka al- xxvii Mazdaism 295, 438 meaning of words xxxvi, 4–9, 82, 90, see also nonsynonymity medical treatment/research 67, 354 men: ba#l/zawj (partner/conjugal husband) 287–89; ba#l/zawj and f emale dress code 294, 310–311, 312, 321, 326; dress requirements 304, 305–307, 318, 326, 327; homosexuality, public 205–206; nushå z 273,

<right>

287–90; relationship with women

</right>

272–73; rij§l xliii–xliv, xlvi, 274–76; messengerhood, concept of (al-ris§la) xxxv, 72–79, 217, 336, 487–88, 537; definite verses 124, 488; historic/ historical 490–491; al-jih§d 402; prescription or proscription 370; al-qit§l

(fight) 424 minorities, religious xl misy§r marriages 316 money laundering 449 monopolies 415 moral guidance see al-furq§n

Morocco xxiii

Moses 24, 29, 36, 37, 40, 52, 224, 299,

371, 477; miracles 145 mosque, meaning of (al-masjid) 334, 433,

mother of the book see umm al-kit§b Mu#§wiya b. AbÊ Sufy§n 336, 361

MuÈammad 35, 36, 38, 40, 42, 144; abrogation 18, 45–46, 400; al-Êm§n 51, 56, 69; al-isl§m 57; Bedouin society 333–34; believers 52, 53, 56; companions of 80–81, 97, 109, 111, 179, 335–36, 342–43, 376; defeat at UÈud 455; disbelief 55; dress 323–24; establishment of centralised state 89, 90, 358–61, 493; fallibility 83–84, 92; family-based forms of al-wal§” 477; al-ijtih§d 84, 92, 94, 101, 102, 106, 109, 110, 271–72, 493; impeccability (al-#ißma) 84, 109; infallibility 83–84, 92; interest 210; justice 41; last message sent by Allah/God to human beings 216; major sins, understanding of 375–76; Meccan injustice 445; multiple identities 480; Muslims and 23–24; obedience to 90–95, 109; wives of 56, 126, 268–70, 313–314, 324; wives of: #$“isha 221, 275, 324, 347, 348, 350; words of Allah/God and 81–82

MuÈammad, sunna of xxxix, 271–72, 377, 493–94, 542; conclusion 108–13; content of prophetic ÈadÊths 103–108; critique of traditional view of 79–101; exaggeration of MuÈammad’s prophetic role 84–88, 494–96; human and divine interdiction 100; introduction 71–72; MuÈammad’s ijtih§d 84, 92, 94,101, 102, 106, 109, 110, 271–72, 493; nahy and Èar§m 98–100; prophethood and messengerhood xxxv, 72–79, 110, 402; role model: al-tauÈÊd 95–97; secondary issues 97; six errors of interpretation 81–91; specific, circumstantial nature of 101–103; theory of limits 215; togetherness, piety and good work 97–98; two types of obedience 91–95; see also ÈadÊths

Muhammedans 56

al-muÈarram§t see taboo, absolutely al-mujrimå n (dissenters from God) 27,

31–34, 540

multiple identities see identities al-mu”min ån (Muslim-Believers) 32, 34,

540; al-Êm§n and see al-isl§m and al-

Êm§n; nonsynonymity 9, 21 Munajjid, M§hir al- xxvi al-munkar 49, 384–85; see also prescribing

right, proscribing wrong

music 49, 94, 381

Muslim-Assenters (al-muslim ån) 32, 34, 496, 539; al-isl§m and see al-isl§m and al-Êm§n; nonsynonymity 9, 21

Muslim-Believers (al-mu”minå n) 32, 34,

540; al-Êm§n and see al-isl§m and al-

Êm§n; nonsynonymity 9, 21

Muslim Brotherhood (Jam§#at al-Ikhw§n al-MuslimÊn) 446, 449

al-muslim ån (Muslim-Assenters) 32, 34, 496, 539; al-isl§m and see al-isl§m and al-Êm§n; nonsynonymity 9, 21

mystics xxix, xxxii, 353, 383, 502

naba” news 74–75, 402, 533 Nabielek, Rainer xviii–xix al-nafs and al-r åÈ (soul and spirit) 118–119,

164–66, 421–22, 546 names of sons 473 al-n§s (humankind) 222–24, 277 al-naskh see abrogation naßß text 111–112 Nasser, Gamal Abdel 362 nation (al-sha#b) 467, 477–78, 551 nationalism/nationalists 22; Arab xx,

506, 507–509, 510, 529

natural resources, use of 77, 308 NawawÊ, YaÈy§ b. al-Sharaf al- 388–89

New Age groups 53 Newton, Isaac 219, 226 al-nis§” xliii–xliv, xlvi, 275, 276–78, 313, 550; inheritance 222–24, 227, 244–45

Noah xxxi, 29, 35, 36, 38, 334, 335,

474, 476, 477 nongovernmental organisations 392–93 nonsynonymity 6–9, 21, 27–28, 82, 115,

151, 294, 365 nothingness (al-#adam) 541 Nå È, #AlÊ xxv numeric systems 485 al-nushå z xliv; men 273, 287–90; women 273, 284–86, 287

obedience 471; freedom of religion 335, 337, 431–34, 438; to MuÈammad as messenger 90–91, 109; to prescribe and to proscribe 367–70; two types of obedience 91–95; women 283

objectivity of al-qur”§n xxxv–xxxvi,

163–66, 487, 512–513 occupations 416; women 320, 328 original sin 295–301 orphans 68, 556; bequests 232; charity money 211, 212; definition of 261, 265, 556; inheritance laws 227, 251–52; polygyny and justice for 40, 260–268; property of 40, 260,

261–62, 378 otherness (al-bar§”) 466, 475, see also

identities, multiple

painting 94 Palestine 362

Paradise 13–14, 35, 62, 327, 459, 460 parents 9, 396, 521–22, 553; ban on killing children 39–40; bequests 231–32; inheritance of ascendant members of family 249–53, 257; respect for 38–39, 47, 164, 171–72, 378, 475,

551

Paul (Corinthians) 296 peace (al-sal§m) 42, 43 perjury 378 permission 49, 89–90, 491–92; absolu-

<right>

te (al-Èal§l) 49, 90, 102, 271, 365,

</right>

491–92, 555 philosophical principles 11–19 photographs 49

pilgrimage (al-Èajj) 22, 24, 25, 26, 54, 59,

66, 336–37; obedience 93 pillars of al-Êm§n 112, 336–37; conventional view 22; definition of rituals 549; fair and just, doing what is (al-iÈs§n) 27, 30, 44–45, 53, 60–65; obedience 93; redefinition 53–55, 59,

66–67; see also individual pillars pillars of al-isl§m 336–37; conventional view 21–22; disproving conventional view 23–26; redefinition 34–35, 59; righteous, doing what is (al-#amal alß§liÈ) 27, 35–37, 52–53

poetry 100, 484 political Islam 329–30; apostasy see apostasy; freedom see freedom; identity see identities, multiple; jih§d see al-jih§d; qit§l see al-qit§l (fight); right and wrong see prescribing right, proscribing wrong

political parties 41, 393 pollution 201 polygyny 40, 258–60, 290, 492; conclusion 270–272; historical context 264; limits, theory of 265–68; m§ ã§ba lakum 262–63; orphan, definition of 261, 265; purpose: justice for orphans 260–265; qisã and #adl 261; Sår at al-Nis§” 4:1–6 260–261; Så rat al-Nis§” 4:127 265; wives of

MuÈammad 268–70

polysemy xlv, 198, 285, 294, 319, 367,

468

poor (al-fuqar§”) 44, 549; charity money

211, 212 power, financial and economic

280–281

prayer (al-ßal§h) 22, 24, 25, 26, 34, 53, 66, 67, 336–37; burial 69; obedience

93 predestination 67, 127, 140, 337, 354; al-qadar and al-qa·§” 169–73, 331, 543; conventional view of al-Êm§n 22; possible acts 16

prescribing right, proscribing wrong (alamr bi’l-ma#rå f wa’l-nahy #an al-munkar) 330, 364–67, 498, 550, 555; absolute taboos 49–50, 374, 375, 376, 377–81; compulsion/duress (ikr§h) 385–86; conclusion 392–94; definition of 387–88; harshness (faí§ía) 385; in and idh§ 372–73; legitimate sins 379–80; legitimate transgressions 380–381; major sins: companions 376; major sins: later generations

376–78; major sins: MuÈammad 375–76; major sins: qur”§n 373–75; misconstrued 388–92; nahy and Èar§m 365, 370–372; to prescribe (al-amr) 367–68; to proscribe (al-nahy) 368–70; verses containing injunction 365–66; verses referring to major/minor sins 373; what is right (ma#r åf) 381–83; what is wrong (munkar) 384–85

prison system 200–202 privacy 43 progressing (al-sayrå ra) xxix, xxx, 11–19,

78–79, 112, 485–86 prohibition 49, 89–90, 491–92 property 43 prophethood, concept of (al-nubåw a) xxxi– xxxii, xxxv, 72–79, 487–88; ambiguous verses 124, 488; al-jih§d 402; alqit§l (fight) 424, 460

proscribing wrong see prescribing right,

proscribing wrong

prostitution 320, 328 protection money 449 prudence 45 punishments 92–93, 552; amputation as penalty for theft 189–90, 196–201; apostasy 341–42, 497; corruption of the land 201–202; homicide and physical harm 202–204; mitigation 189–91, 197; prison 200–202; public homosexual activities 204–6; unchasteness 206–208, 399–400; war against Allah/God 201–202

al-qabÊÈ 49, 365 al-qadar and al-qa·§” (divine preordain-

<right>

ment and human will) 169–73, 331,

</right>

543 al-Q§#ida 395, 446 al-qaum (people) 466–67, 477–78, 551 al-qiw§ma (leadership/guardianship) xl–xlvi, 272–74; al-nis§”, meaning of term 276–78; al-rij§l: meaning of term 274–76; ba#l/zawj (partner/ conjugal husband) 287–89; beating 285–86; definition of 273; divorce 288–89, 290–92; financial and economic power 280–81; interpreting verse of 279–86; men: nush åz 273, 287–90; in and outside family 281; righteous women and obedience 283; technological progress and physical strength 282; women: nushåz 273,

284–86, 287

al-qit§l (fight) 54, 336, 337, 497–98; aims 429–30, 438–40; aim, first: exultation of Allah/God’s word 430–34; aim, second: protection of earth 434–37; aim, third: protection of house of the Lord 437–38; al-isl§m: perfect divine system 448; Allah/God’s rule (al-È§kimiyya) 450–51, 463–64; causes of, three legitimate 441; competition 435–37, 438–39; conclusion 460–66; context in the Book 439–40; derivation of 423; difference between al-jih§d and 424–25; early Islamic period 445–46; exhaust peaceful means 444; al-ijm§ # (consensus) 426–27; injustice (al-íulm) 441–45; mistakes in interpretation 424, 425–26, 428, 434, 436, 443–44, 445–46, 447, 456–57; non-Muslim-Believers 443–44; offensive fight against oppressor 445; one-sided fights 423–24, 445, 449, 455–56, 465; politics and religion 445–50, 451–52, 464–65; prescribed and disliked 424, 425, 427–28; reasons for corruption of 452–59; tyranny and despotism 431, 432, 446–47,

462–63; verses of prophethood 424 al-qiy§s (analogy) 71, 85, 97, 110, 192, 215, 225, 493–94; empirical evidence

492

qisã and #adl (justice and equality) 261 al-qur”§n 127–28, 129, 132, 135, 487, 538; al-inz§l and al-tanzÊl 155–58, 161–63; al-kit§b and 116–17, 120–22, 512, 513; ambiguous nature of 143–44, 145, 149; approving and controlling nature of 145–47; content of 139–43; determinism 169–73; glorious qur”§n 139–40, 142–43, 538; not to touch 120, 157–58, 172–73; objectivity of xxxv–xxxvi, 163–66, 487, 512–13; summary 173–75; use of term 2, 7–8,

23, 538

Quãb, Sayyid 447, 448

Rahman, Fazlur xlvii

al-r§sikhå n fi’l-#ilm (intellectual elite) 29 R§zÊ, Fakhr al-DÊn MuÈammad al- 299,

341–42, 343, 347, 375, 454 redundancy 6–7, 485 remembrance (al-dhikr) 77, 115, 133–35,

157, 495, 539 revelation; ‘Allah/God’ and ‘Lord’ 119, 166–69, 542; ambiguous verses (§y§t mutash§bih§t) 26, 116, 121, 123, 124, 127, 129, 488, 538; ‘And God said’ (q§la All§h) 82, 126; categories of human speech 136; clear book (kit§b mubÊn) 140–141, 142, 538; clear record (im§m mubÊn) 140, 141–42, 156, 159, 514, 538; definite verses (§y§t muÈkam§t) 26, 116, 121, 123, 124, 125–26, 488; explanation of the book (tafßÊl al-kit§b) 125, 130–132, 162, 163, 539; glorious qur”§n (qur”§n majÊd) 139–40, 142–43, 538; al-inz§l see al-inz§l; al-kit§b (the Book) 72–79, 122–24, 162, 163; al-qur”§n 127–28, 129, 132, 135, 155–58, 161–63, 173, 538; al-qur”§n and al-kit§b 116–117, 120–122, 512, 513; al-qur”§n, ambiguous nature of 143–44, 145, 149; al-qur”§n, approving and controlling nature of 145–47; al-qur”§n, content of 139–43; al-qur”§n, objectivity of xxxv–xxxvi, 163–66, 487, 512–513; reason for multistructure composition xxxvii–xxxviii, 132–33; reason and reality xxxi, 487; remembrance (al-dhikr) 77, 133–35, 157, 495, 539; seven oft-recited (sab# al-math§nÊ) 73, 124, 127, 128–30, 135, 145, 146,

162, 163, 538; signs of God (§yat All§h) 140; spirit and soul (al-r åÈ and al-nafs) 118–119, 164–66, 421, 546;

summary 173–75; tablet preserved (al-lawÈ al-maÈf åí) 7, 140, 142, 156, 159, 160, 514, 538; al-tanzÊl see altanzÊl; Truth (al-Èaqq) 121, 138–39, 545; umm al-kit§b see umm al-kit§b; words of God (kalim§t All§h) 136–38,

337, 430–31, 486, 487 revival/reawakening, Islamic (al-ßaÈwa)

xxxiii, 27, 67–70, 96–97, 464, 465

al-rib§ (interest) 209–14, 554 right and wrong see prescribing right, proscribing wrong

righteous, doing what is (al-#amal al-ß§liÈ)

27, 35–37, 52–53

al-rij§l xliii–xliv, xlvi, 274–76

rituals see pillars of al-Êm§n Rousseau, Jean-Jacques 337 al-rå È and al-nafs (spirit and soul) 118–119, 164–66, 421–22, 546 Russell, Bertrand xxi, xxxiv

sab# al-math§nÊ (seven oft-recited) 73, 124, 127, 128–30, 135, 145, 146, 162,

163, 538; summary 174–75 Sabians 30 al-ßaÈwa (Islamic revival/reawakening)

xxxiii, 27, 67–70, 96–97, 464, 465 Salafi Islam xxix, xxxii al-ßal§h (prayer) 22, 24, 25, 26, 34, 53,

66, 67; burial 69; obedience 93 al-sal§m (peace) 42, 43, 413–414 Saudi Arabia xxvii al-ßaum (fast) 22, 24, 25–26, 54, 66, 67; limits of Allah/God 207, 488–89; obedience 93; reparation of crime

203, 204; sickness 59 al-saw”a (shame) 294, 299–304 ‘ayd§wÊ, Yå suf al- xxvi al-ßayrå ra (becoming) xxix, xxx, 11–19,

76, 78–79, 111, 112, 485–86 al-sayr åra (progressing) xxix, xxx, 11–19,

78–79, 112, 485–86 schoolism 354 sculptures 49, 94 Second World War 439

secularists 22 security services 42, 380, 413, 463 seven oft-recited (sab# al-math§nÊ) 73, 124, 127, 128–30, 135, 145, 146, 162,

163, 538; summary 174–75 sexual relations 40, 206–208, 306, 378; al-ba#l/zawj (partner/conjugal husband) 287–89, 557; homosexuality 40, 204–206, 375, 378; partnerships

557; prostitution 320, 328 al-sha#b (nation) 467, 477–78, 551 Sh§fi#Ê, MuÈammad, sunna of IdrÊs al-

104

al-shah§da 22, 24, 53, 111, 169; first part 34–35, 37–38, 340–341, 430; second part 340

al-shahÊd 553; ‘in Allah/God’s way’ 410–416; characteristics of witnesses 405; politics and religion 409, 416–420; sh-h-d, use in the Book of

<right>

402–404, 407; shahÊd: death not deciding factor 408–10; shahÊd: ÈadÊths 405–406, 407, 408; sh§hid and shahÊd witness 403, 405, 407, 548; Så rat $l #Imr§n 3:169 420–22; verses of messengerhood and prophethood 402

</right>

Shahrur, Muhammad: 1967 war xxi, 510, 511, 530; antitraditionalism xxxii–xxxiii; Arab nationalism xx, 506, 507–509, 510, 529; birth and early life xix, 502–503; civil engineering career xx–xxi, 509, 522; civil society and Islam 519–521; controversy xxii–xxviii; democracy 527–29; Dublin, time in xx, 511; education xix–xx, 503; events of 9/11 532–33; existence of Allah/God xx, 504–505, 508, 509, 526–27; Ibn Rushd 530–531; influences on xxi–xxii; Islamists 533–35; marriages and children xx, 510, 511, 522; Marxism xx, xxi, 504, 505, 531; mathematics and physics xxxiv, 525–26; public lectures 522–23; Soviet Union, time in xix– xx, 504–507; style and method xxi– xxii, 517–519, 531–32; teacher xx, 509, 522; The Book and the Qur”§n xvii, xviii, xxii–xxvii, xxxiv, 510–517, 523; theories of society 505–506, 508–509, 527; theory: al-isl§m and al-Êm§n xxviii–xxix, xxxii–xxxiii, xxxv–xxxvi; theory: Allah/God, concept of xxix– xxxi; theory: applied xl–xlviii; theory: prophethood, concept of xxxi–xxxii; theory: understanding of the Qur”§n xxxiii–xl; works xvii, xviii, xxii–xxviii,

510–517, 521–22, 523 Shaltå t, MaÈmå d 447 shame (saw”a) 294, 299–304 sharÊ#a law xl, xlvi–xlvii, xlviii, xxxvii–

xxxviii, 533; Islamic fiqh and 496; limits see limits, theory of

Shaww§f, MunÊr MuÈammad •§hir al- xxvi Shintoism 438

al-shå r§ (consultation) 54, 59, 336, 417–

418, 464

SÊbawayh, #Amr b. #Uthm§n 9–10, 11 sins: original sin 295–301; see also pre-

scribing right, proscribing wrong

slander 99, 380 slavery 59, 220, 315–316, 553; freeing enslaved as reparation 203–204; heads carf 303–304; worship of Allah/ God and not 432–34, 438, 462, 487,

553 smoking 831; ban on smoking in public

271, 372, 491–92 social contract 337, 393, 464, 520 Solomon 29

speech, categories of human 136

spirit and soul (al-r åÈ and al-nafs) 118–119,

164–66, 421, 546 sports clubs 41 spying 42, 99 straightness (al-istiq§ma) 180–181, 230, 548 striptease 320, 328 structuralism xxii, xxxiii–xxxv, xlvi subjectivity xxxv, 163, 164 succession: im§mate 476; inheritance see inheritance

suicide missions 363, 409, 423–24, 446, 465; praise of death 354; see also alshahÊd; martyrdom

Sulaim§n, ‘§diq Jaw§d 501

Sumayya bint al-Khayy§ã 221

Så rat #Abasa (80): (1–4) 83, 159; (11–16) 158; (36) 474–75

Så rat al-AÈq§f (46): (3) 138; (7) 121, 135, 139; (15) 39, 235, 386

Så rat al-AÈz§b (33): (6) 314, 382; (13) 318; (20–22) 95–96; (21) 79, 95, 269; (32) 269–70, 314; (34) 104; (35) 9, 23; (38) 269; (53) 126, 314; (55) 278, 313–314; (59) 126, 321–23, 325, 326

Så rat $l #Imr§n (3): (3) 123–24; (7) 123, 144, 148; (13) 460; (14) 222–23, 277;

(19) 27, 56; (33) 165; (36) 281–82; (45) 430; (47) 138, 141, 231; (50) 160, 400, 489; (52) 24, 30; (67) 182, 188; (83) 29; (85) 27, 56; (93) 371; (95) 182; (97) 22, 54; (102) 48, 57, 58,

397; (103) 455; (104) 365, 384, 387, 389; (108) 441; (110) 366, 387, 390, 469; (114) 366, 387; (128) 346, 367; (130) 209, 210, 213; (132) 90, 91; (137) 491; (145) 164; (159) 367, 385; (169) 420–422; (187) 86, 108, 495

Så rat al-#Alaq (96): (9–10) 371; (13) 467

Så rat al-An#§m (6) 465, 495; (7) 157;

(11) 17; (19) 136; (23) 303; (45) 199; (47) 143; (48) 36; (53) 150; (59) 140, 142; (67) 146; (73) 118, 138, 164, 370; (79) 182, 183; (93) 165; (100) 85; (114) 107, 131; (115) 430; (119) 193–94; (122) 421–22; (126) 87; (145) 193; (146) 160; (149) 505, 526; (151) 39, 371; (151–53) 37, 47, 399; (152) 261–62; (153) 180, 378; (161) 36, 180, 185; (162–63) 34

Så rat al-Anbiy§” (21): (2) 134; (7) 135;

(10) 133, 134; (23) 450; (35) 47, 421; (40) 339; (48) 399; (51) 188; (89–90) 283; (106) 432; (107) 481; (108) 30, 35

Så rat al-Anf§l (8) 357, 533; (15–16) 452–53, 454; (17) 454; (28) 303; (45) 454; (46) 454; (61) 43; (64) 24, 52; (67) 83–84

Så rat al-#Ankab åt (29): (8) 235, 396; (20) 410, 491; (29) 384; (39) 383; (40) 383; (45) 366

Så rat al-A#r§f (7) 495; (12) 368; (20–22) 297, 300; (22) 298; (23) 443; (26) 151, 294; (26–27) 298; (31) 308; (32) 308; (33) 381; (38) 411; (43) 327; (44) 293; (46–47) 293; (50) 293; (53) 147; (54) 160, 161; (79) 153; (89) 419; (93) 152, 153; (96) 420; (101) 74; (126) 24; (154) 157; (157) 366, 400; (160) 200; (164) 469; (165) 442; (196) 468;

(199) 390

Så rat al-Balad (90): (3) 235

Sår at al-Baqara (2) 132, 196; (2) 72, 117, 120; (3) 72; (11) 372; (23) 402, 410; (27) 199; (30) 165, 167; (31) 165; (35) 368; (42) 299; (57) 151, 155;

(62) 30; (64) 467; (67–71) 189; (79) 132; (83) 415, 458; (87) 76; (89) 381; (102) 303; (105) 398; (106) 217, 398, 399, 489; (109) 339; (110) 24;

(111–112) 25, 66; (112) 30, 36, 62; (115) 467; (117) 339–40; (120) 357, 472; (124) 470, 474, 475–76; (128) 30; (132) 24, 38; (133) 30; (141) 352; (142) 467; (148) 469; (156) 96; (158) 117; (159) 85; (173) 379, 492; (177) 25, 44, 203–204, 211, 212; (178) 24, 202–203, 424, 427; (180) 44, 226, 230, 232, 233; (181) 233; (182) 182, 233; (183) 24, 54, 230, 424, 427;

(185) 24, 91, 120, 139, 377, 399, 404; (187) xli, 86, 126, 207, 224, 272–73, 299, 488, 495; (190) 412, 423, 456, 457; (190–93) 444–45;

(193) 456; (194) 441, 448, 456, 457; (195) 412; (196) 485; (208) 43; (215) 428; (216) 24, 54, 385–86, 424, 425, 427, 429, 436, 437; (217) 341, 346, 347; (222) 158; (223) 222–23; (228) 288–89, 382; (229) 441; (239) 274;

(239) xliii; (241) 366; (246) 428; (251) 429, 434–37, 438; (255) 181; (256) 38, 54, 363, 386, 397, 402, 432; (257) 473; (262) 412; (264) 452–53; (269) 103; (272) 54; (275) 209, 210, 213–214; (276) 209, 210, 214; (278) 209, 210; (279) 210, 213; (280) 209; (282) 45, 194–95, 275, 404, 405, 410, 416; (283) 45, 195, 379; (284) 310; (285) 59; (286) 57–58, 386

Så rat al-Bayyina (98): (1–2) 122; (2–3) 122; (5) 181

Så rat al-Burå j (85): (1–2) 139; (9) 402–403; (21–22) 139

Sår at al-Dh§riyy§t (51): (35–36) 24; (49) 223; (56) 59, 432

Så rat al-Fajr (89): (20) 25; (27–28) 165

Så rat al-FatÈ (48): (1) 419, 429; (2–3) 419, 429; (4) 51; (25) 275

Så rat al-F§tiÈa (1): (2) 166; (5–6) 35; (6) 180, 183

Så rat F§ãir (35): (18) 302, 342, 448; (29) 135; (31) 121, 145; (33) 299

Sår at al-Furq§n (25): (30) 180; (32) 156; (39) 319; (45) 149; (48) 151; (67) 45

Så rat Fußßilat (41): (2) 152; (6) 108; (33)

30; (53) 146

Så rat al-Gh§shiyya (88): (21–24) 346

Så rat al-\adÊd (57): (4) 403; (20) 25; (25) 151; (28) 51, 60

Så rat al-\ajj (22): (1) 91; (5) 12, 15; (18) 440; (19) 11; (27) 274; (27) xliii; (31) 181; (34) 168; (38) 436, 439, 440; (39) 439, 440, 441, 442, 444, 456, 457; (40) 430, 437–40, 441; (41) 366, 387–88, 440; (44) 384; (46) 385; (62) 138; (65) 167; (78) 408

Så rat al-\§qqa (69): (17) 160, 161; (44–46) 107

Så rat al-\ashr (59): (7) 88–90; (9) 385 Sår at al-\ijr (15): (1) 7–8, 116, 120–121; (2) 57; (6) 133; (9) 77, 80, 88, 115, 133; (29) 165; (87) 124, 128, 139; (95) 32

Sår at al-\ujur§t (49): (6) 372; (7) 374; (11) 42, 98; (12) 42, 98; (13) 97, 223–24, 302, 382, 390, 429, 469, 473, 477; (14) 23, 50; (15) 24, 52;

(17) 57

Så rat al-Ikhl§ß (112): (1) 136; (3) 235

Så rat al-Ins§n (76): (3) 341; (23) 151, 162

Sår at al-Isr§” (17); (20) 169; (21) 280; (23) 38, 119, 171; (31) 39; (33) 202, 401; (36) 43; (36–39) 104; (42) 161; (45) 293; (46) 468; (59) 443; (70) 223–24; (85) 118, 164, 166

Så rat al-J§thiyya (45): (2) 151, 162; (6) 140; (13) 168

Så rat al-Jinn (72): (14) 24, 370; (15) 261;

(18) 440; (28) 153

Så rat al-K§firå n (109): (3) 432

Så rat al-Kahf (18): (1) 162; (26) 450;

(27) 137, 139; (29) 397, 443, 444; (33) 441; (35) 138; (50) 368, 369, 370, 374; (51) 410; (63) 411; (71) 367; (74) 384; (82) 261; (107) 35; (109) 118, 137–38; (110) 57, 108, 335

Så rat al-Ma#§rij (70): (11–13) 475; (19–20) 25; (30) 316

Sår at al-M§“ida (5) 132; (1) 24, 45; (3) 81, 192–93, 194; (6) 158; (8) 410; (15) 86, 142, 398, 495; (21) 339; (23) 52; (27–31) 455; (28) 423; (31) 299; (33) 199, 201; (34) 201; (38–39) 196; (39) 200; (42) 261; (44) 30, 401; (45) 189, 401, 457; (48) 159; (52) 420; (54) 340, 346, 347; (55) 471–72; (56) 467; (67) 84, 152, 153, 494; (69) 36; (92) 93; (93) 53, 60; (99) 152; (101) 156; (106)

319; (116) 404; (117) 404, 405, 421 Så rat al-M§# ån (107): (1–7) 33

Så rat al-Muddaththir (74): (39–46) 32;

(42) 32; (43) 33

Så rat al-Muj§dila (58): (11) 284, 335 Så rat al-Mulk (67): (1–2) 97; (18) 384

Så rat al-Mu”minån (23): (1) 54; (4) 54; (5) 311; (5–6) 288, 307, 311

Så rat al-MumtaÈana (60): (4) 95; (5–6)

95; (8) 458

Så rat al-Mun§fiqå n (63): (1) 60

Så rat al-Mursal§t (77): (18–19) 32

Så rat al-MuãaffifÊn (83): (1–3) 41; (24) 381; (29) 32

Så rat al-Muzzammil (73): (4) 28, 513;

(10–11) 443; (20) 412, 423 Så rat al-Naba” (78): (29) 123 Så rat al-NaÈl (16): (2) 166; (8) 308; (44) 84–85, 135, 151; (68) 57; (89) 87; (90)

126, 380; (97) 327; (101) 217, 398; (102) 398; (106) 385; (116) 381; (120) 182, 186; (120–23) 470; (123) 182; (125) 346, 397, 411, 415, 444

Så rat al-Najm (53): (3–4) 82; (32) 98, 99, 373, 379; (45) 223, 244

Så rat al-Naml (27): (1) 142; (12) 309;

(44) 30; (55) 275; (69) 32; (75) 142;

(91) 30; (92) 135

Så rat al-Naßr (110): (1) 372, 419

Så rat al-N§zi#§t (79): (24) 450

Så rat al-Nis§” (4) 40, 132, 308; (1) xli, 235, 260, 276; (2) 260, 262; (3) 260–268; (4) 261; (5) 261; (6) 261, 265; (7) 233, 354; (8) 232; (9) 232–33; (11) 6, 9, 126, 137, 227, 234, 235–53, 256; (11–12) 225; (11–13) 226, 239, 240; (12) 234–35, 245, 253–55; (13) 225, 235, 236, 239, 488; (14) 92, 225, 488; (15) 204, 405, 410, 416; (16) 204, 205; (19) 427; (22) 191; (23) 192, 312, 314–315; (29) 209–10; (31) 7, 98, 196, 372, 372–73, 374; (34) 181, 273–75, 279–86, 391; (34) xl– xlvi; (35) 273, 286; (36) 44, 61; (37) 374; (43) 158; (48) 38; (58) 367, 431;

(59) 93, 94, 471–72; (63) 136; (69) 91;

(76) 411, 431; (78) 170–171; (79) 171;

(90) 43, 455, 456; (92) 203, 401–402; (94) 43, 319, 413, 444, 458; (100) 415; (101) 319; (103) 24, 53, 122, 230; (113) 103; (114) 380; (116) 38; (125) 30, 36, 62–63, 181; (127) 265; (128) xliv, xlv, 273, 287–90; (129) 290; (130) 290; (135) 41; (136) 51, 55, 60; (137) 50–51, 55, 60; (148) 444; (161) 210; (176) 255

Så rat al-Når (24): (1) 304; (2) 206, 400; (3) 206; (4–10) 207; (22) 44; (27) 24, 43; (28) 43; (29) 43; (30) 304; (31) 7, 196, 225, 278, 288, 304–305, 304–26; (36–37) 433; (37) xliii, 33,

275; (41) 34; (56) 24, 93

Sår at al-Qadr (97): (1) 151, 156; (4) 166

Så rat al-Qalam (68): (1) 129; (35–36)

31; (44) 32

Så rat al-Qamar (54): (17) 135

Så rat al-Qaßaß (28): (2) 142; (4) 455; (6) 383; (8) 383; (9) 231; (13) 339; (15) 425; (23) 470; (32) 309; (34) 136; (38)

383, 450; (53–54) 52; (78) 32; (88) 14

Så rat al-Qiy§ma (75): (3) 422; (18–19)

87

Så rat al-Ra#d (13): (1) 118; (4) 12; (11) 339; (20) 41; (37) 162; (39) 159

Så rat al-RaÈm§n (55): (3–4) 86; (9) 64; (17) 167; (41–43) 32

Så rat al-R åm (30): (4) 411; (12) 32; (21) 302; (22) 140; (30) 25, 36, 181, 183;

(39) 209, 210; (58) 320

Så rat al-‘aff (61): (4) 454–55; (9) 386

Så rat al-‘§ff§t (37): (118) 180 Så rat al-SharÈ (94): (4) 134

Sår at al-Shu#ar§” (26): (2) 142; (49) 198–99; (214) 474, 475, 481

Så rat al-Shå r§ (42): (1–2) 129–30; (13) 36; (27) 380; (37) 98, 373, 379; (38) 24, 54, 417, 519; (47) 384; (52) 166

Så rat al-Tagh§bun (64): (16) 48, 57, 58, 397

Så rat al-TaÈrÊm (66): (1) 83; (3) 73; (5) 128; (6) 370; (10) 303; (11–12) 303

Så rat al-TakwÊr (81): (8–9) 297 Så rat al-•al§q (65): (1) 292

Så rat al-Tawba (9) 461, 490, 532–33; (5) 397, 402, 425, 445; (6) 430; (24) 477; (29) 397; (36) 371; (37) 276; (37) xliii; (40) 429, 430, 438, 442; (60) 44,

203, 212–213; (67) 366; (71) 366, 387, 388; (73) 397; (86) 481; (97) 179; (111) 453; (112) 387; (114) 86, 474, 475, 476; (121) 199; (124–25) 51

Så rat al-W§qi#a (56); (60) 408; (77–79) 120, 172; (77–80) 157–58; (79) 158;

(80) 152

Så rat al-Zalzala (99): (6–8) 340

Så rat al-Zukhruf (43): (3) 134, 149, 156, 161; (22) 470; (51) 450; (81) 433

Så rat al-Zumar (39): (1) 162; (23) 116, 123, 128–29, 162; (42) 118, 164; (47) 421; (65) 35

Så rat Gh§fir (40): (2) 162; (15) 165; (24) 383; (36) 383; (78) 399

Så rat H åd (11) 495; (1) 116, 123, 131; (6) 142; (7) 160, 161; (28) 386; (38) 307; (40) 369, 476; (45) 474, 476; (46) 476; (57) 153; (58) 52; (72) 288; (87) 367; (94) 52; (106–7) 13; (107) 450

Sår at Ibr§hÊm (14): (4) 477; (37) 371; (42) 422; (45) 319

Så rat Luqm§n (31): (12) 104; (13) 443;

(14) 38–39; (15) 382, 396; (17) 366; (20) 167; (22) 65; (25) 35

Sår at Maryam (19): (43) 88–89; (47)

Så rat MuÈammad (47) 357; (2) 51, 53, 60, 69; (3) 82; (4) 453; (6) 382; (15)

53; (19) 168; (22) 200; (38) 412

Så rat Nå È (71): (3) 334; (28) 38, 335

Sår at Q§f (50): (9) 152; (16) 403; (29) 370

Så rat Saba” (34): (3) 142; (26) 420; (31)

145; (50) 372

Så rat ‘§d (38): (1) 133; (72) 165

Sår at •§-H§” (20): (5) 161; (14) 433; (22) 299; (37–38) 57; (39) 307; (44) 136; (67) 411; (80) 152, 155; (82) 36; (115) 300; (118–19) 300; (120–21) 297; (121) 310, 374

Så rat Y§-SÊn (36): (12) 140, 141; (59) 32; (61) 36; (82) 138

Så rat Y ånus (10) 495; (15) 121, 135; (19) 470; (24) 308–309; (33) 430; (37) 117, 125, 130; (39) 146; (61) 142; (62) 468; (68) 492; (72–73) 24; (82) 118, 138, 430; (84) 30; (90) 24, 30; (99) 346, 363, 386, 438, 444; (105) 181; (107) 339; (108) 341

Sår at Yås uf (12) 142, 495; (1) 142; (2) 5, 88, 156, 162; (3) 141; (11) 460; (26–27) 403; (31) 196, 198; (38) 252; (39) 168; (40) 168; (65) 339; (100) 160; (101) 24, 30; (106) 35, 38; (111)

17, 87, 131 synonymity 6–9, 21, 27–28, 82, 115, 151, 294, 365, 425

Syria 362, 449, 523; inheritance laws

252; regional tradition in dress 324 Syria xxiii, xxiv, xxvii–xxviii

- abarÊ, MuÈammad b. JarÊr al- 301,

348–49

- abb§#, MuÈammad Sa#Êd al- xxvii tablet preserved (al-lawÈ al-maÈfå í) 7,

140, 142, 156, 159, 160, 514, 538 taboo, absolutely (al-Èar§m) 49–50, 90, 92, 271, 365, 377–81, 492, 541, 555; consensus 491–92; food 192–94; nahy and Èar§m 98–100, 365, 370–372,

492; types of marriage 191–92, 194 tafßÊl al-kit§b (explanation of the book) 125, 130–132, 162, 163, 539; summary 174–75

al-tafsÊr, traditional ix, xxxiii, xxxviii,

127

Taliban 395, 449

al-tanzÊl (objective revelation) xxxi, 150–155, 161–63, 495, 514, 543; alqur”§n 155–58, 161–63; umm al-kit§b

159–61, 162–63 al-tartÊl, method of 28, 513, 517, 544 al-tash§buh (assimilatability) xxxvi, xxxix,

4, 138, 140, 142, 143–44, 145, 148, 149 al-tauÈÊd 334; unity of Allah/God 17, 37–38, 95–97, 136, 334, 399, 556 Tawba, Gh§zÊ al- xxvi al-ta”wÊl xxxvi, xxxvi–xxxvii, 111, 127,

142, 147–50, 544 tax: al-isl§m and al-Êm§n 53–54, 68; alms see zak§h; jizya (head tax on free nonbelievers) 359–60; recipients of alms

44 telephone tapping 42 theft, penalty for 189–90, 196–201 Tibet 362

TÊzÊnÊ, •ayyib xxi, xxv

Torah 117, 143, 144, 145; Deuteronomy

379, 401; Exodus 401; Leviticus 401 trade transactions see business tripartite model see human existence

tying and loosening (taqyÊd wa-iãl§q) 90,

94, 101–103 tyranny 337, 338, 343, 409, 431, 432, 446–47, 462–63; individualism 333; peaceful opposition 201; proscribing wrong 391–92

#Umar b. al-Khaãã§b 56, 335, 342, 343, 347, 362, 434, 489; interest 210; penalty for theft 189–90, 197 Umayyads 336, 343, 352, 377 umm al-kit§b (mother of the book) xxxvii– xxxviii, 73, 124, 125–26, 128, 132, 145, 148, 194, 537; al-inz§l and altanzÊl 159–61, 162–63; Allah/God’s spirit 166; determinism 169–73; fast (al-ßaum) 207, 488–89; messengerhood 73; nontextual structure xxxvi; subjectivity xxxv, 164; summary 173–75; theory of limits 191; verse

4:34 xli, xlvi; see also al-ijtih§d

umma (community) 466, 467, 469–70, 473, 478, 479, 551; consensus of

426

unbelievers 27, 55, 444, 458–59; dif fer —

<right>

ent meaning given to k§fir ån 452–53,

</right>

454

United Kingdom xlviii, 479, 521, 532 United Nations 178, 362, 436 United States 337, 361–62, 521 unity of Allah/God see al-tauÈÊd

universal ethics (al-furq§n al-#§mm) 36–42,

46–50 unseen, book of the (kit§b al-ghayb)

72–73 usury 209–14, 371, 374, 379 #Uthm§n b. #Aff§n 81, 395, 417, 489

vandalism 201 vows 378

al-wal§’ (likeness) see identities, political
al-w§lid§n (birthgiver-parents) 9, 521–22, 553; bequests 231–32, 257; inheritance of ascendant members of family 249–53

Whitehead, Alfred North xxi–xxii, xxix, xxxiv

wills see bequests witnessing, act of see al-shahÊd women xl, 61, 510–511, 517–18; al-nis§”, interpretation of see al-nis§”; ba#l/zawj (partner/conjugal husband) 287–89; childbirth 120, 173, 301, 409; debt contracts 195; defamation of 375–76; divorce 288–89, 290–292, 297; dress see dress requirements; failure to reevaluate situation of 219–24; fundamental principles 225; gender equality and verse 4:34 xl–xlvi; guardianship see al-qiw§ma; homosexuality, public 204–205; inheritance see inheritance; leadership see al-qiw§ma; limits and human legislation 224–25; menstruation 120, 173, 301, 303, 410; nushå z

<right>

273, 284–86, 287; obedience 283; occupations 320, 328; Paradise 327; polygyny see polygyny; pre-Islamic Arabia 297, 323–24; relationship with men 272–73; righteousness 303, 327; shuhad§” (sing shahÊd) 407; surrogate motherhood 381; taboos

</right>

49; voice 296, 325 worship of Allah/God (#ib§diyya) 432–34,

487, 552–53, 462 wrong see prescribing right, proscribing wrong

Y§fÊ, Na#Êm al- xxiii-xxiv Y§sÊn, MuÈammad ShafÊq xxiv yawning 49

al-zak§h (alms tax) 22, 24, 25, 53–54, 59, 66, 336, 548; al-isl§m and alÊm§n 53–54, 68; early history: refusal to pay 362; recipients 44, 211–214; theory of limits 93, 209–14

ZamakhsharÊ, Abå ’l-Q§sim MaÈmå d al- 339, 342–43, 347, 348, 380, 382, 414

£aw§hirÊ, Aim§n al- 352, 447, 448, 449,

532 zawj/ba#l (conjugal husband/partner) 287–89; female dress code 294, 310–311, 312, 321, 326

Zhiby§n, Nash”at MuÈammad Ri·§ xxvi

zÊna, meaning of 288, 308–309, 312–13 zin§ (unchasteness) 206–208, see also

sexual relations

Ziy§da, •§riq xxv Zoroastrianism 295 al-íulm (injustice) 441–45; see also justice

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[1] MuÈammad ShaÈrår, Al-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n—Qir§“a mu#§ßira (The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Reading), (Damascus: D§r a l-Ah§lÊ li’l-Nashr wa’l-TawzÊ#, 1990).

[2] Peter Clarke, “The ShaÈrår Phenomenon: A Liberal Islamic Voice from Syria,” Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations 7, no. 3 (1996): 337–41 (337).

[3] Wael Hallaq, A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to SunnÊ uß§l al-fiqh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 246.

[4] Dale F. Eickelman, The Coming Transformation of the Muslim World. The 1999 Templeton Lecture on Religion and World Affairs (June 9, 1999).

[5] Shahrur wrote his second book in 1994, entitled Dir§s§t isl§miyya mu#§ßira fi’l-dawla wa’l-mujtama# (Contemporary Islamic Studies on State and Society), in which he applies his methodology and the evolutionary philosophy of human knowledge, as developed in A l-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n, to the sphere of Islamic politics, arguing for the need drastically to revise its traditional understanding. In 1996, he wrote a l-Isl§m wa’l-^m§n (Islam and Faith), and finally, in 2000, he published NaÈw uß§l jadÊda li’l-fiqh al-isl§mÊ (Towards New Foundations of Islamic Jurisprudence), in which he presents a more systematized and considered version of his Èudåd theory from Al-Kit§b, applied to Islamic family law and law of inheritance. He also gives a clearer account of his views about the historicity of the Prophetic Sunna, which he takes as the starting point to revolutionize Islamic fiqh.

[6] MuÈammad ShaÈrår, TajfÊf man§bi# al-irh§b (Draining the Sources of Terrorism), (Damascus: D§r al-Ah§lÊ li’l-Nashr wa’l-TawzÊ#, 2008).

[7] Dale F. Eickelman, “Muhammad Shahrur and the Printed Word,” ISIM Newsletter 7 (2001): 7.

[8] Rainer Nabielek, “Muhammad Shahrur, ein ‘Martin Luther’ des Islam,” inamo 23/24, no. 6 (Autumn and Winter 2000): 73–74, and Dale F. Eickelman, “Inside the Islamic Reformation,” Wilson Quarterly (Winter 1998): 86.

[9] The full transcript of the interview can be found in this volume on pages 501–523.

[10] Ibid, 504–505, and 508.

[11] Alfred N. Whitehead, Science in the Modern World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926). Whitehead’s dictum that “the progress of science must result in the unceasing modification of religious thought, to the great advantage of religion” (p. 264) could indeed serve as Shahrur’s own philosophical credo.

[12] Despite the fact that Whitehead only confessed a modest indebtedness to the nineteenth-century school of German philosophy, its influences, in particular of G. F. Hegel, have been unambiguously established by Whiteheadian scholars: see George R. Jr. Lucas, ed., Hegel and Whitehead: Contemporary Perspectives on Systematic Philosophy (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986).

[13] Interview, 514–515.

[14] MuÈammad ‘ayy§È al-Ma#arr§wiyya, al-M§rksl§miyya wa’l-qur”§n, aw: al-b§Èithån #an #im§ma li-D§rwin wa-M§rks wa-zawjat al-nu#m§n: “qir§“a fÊ da#w§ al-mu#§ßira” (Marx-Islamism and the Qur’an, or; The Seekers of a Turban for Darwin, Marx, and Nu#m§n’s wife—“A Study of the Call for Modernity”), (n.p., 2000).

[15] See, for example, Sheikh a l-BåãÊ’s publications in the 1990s after the release of Al-Kit§b, in which al-BåãÊ extensively argues against

secularism, historicism, and feminism etc., which he condemns as alien to the Islamic tradition, referring indirectly to the debate which Al-Kit§b has initiated. This is to be seen in particular in: Yugh§liãånak idh yaqålån…uslåb Èiw§rÊ yakshif #an mugh§laã§t khaãÊra fÊ maw·å#§t h§ma (They Deceive you when they are talking…A Dialogical Method that makes Evident the Dangerous Swindles with regards to Important Topics), 2nd ed., (Damascus, 2000); a l-Mar”ah bayna tughy§n a l-nií§m a l-gharbÊ wa-laã§“if a l-tashri# a l-rabb§nÊ (Women between the Tyranny of the Western System and the Mercy of the Divine Law), (Damascus, 1996); al-TaghyÊr: Mafhåmuhu wa-ãar§“iquhu (Change: Its Concept and its Methods), (Damascus, 1996); H§dhihi mushkil§tuhum (Such are their Problems), (Damascus, 1990—new ed. 1992); al-Isl§m wa’l-#aßr: TaÈadiy§t wa-§f§q (Islam and the Modern Age: Challenges and Horizons), (Damascus, 1998).

[16] Kh§lid #Abd al-RaÈm§n al-#Akk, al-Furq§n wa’l-qur”§n: qir§“at isl§miyya mu#§ßira ·imn al-thaw§bit al-#ilmiyya wa’l-·aw§biã al-manhajiyya; wa-hiyya muqaddim§t li’l-tafsÊr al-#ilmÊ li’l-qur”§n al-karÊm (The Furqan and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Islamic Reading within the well-established Scholarly Principles and Methodological Rules which are the Premises of a Scholarly Exegesis of the Noble Qur’an), (Damascus: \ikma, 1994), 64.

[17] Na#Êm al-Y§fÊ, “ al-Qur”§n wa’l-Kit§b [sic]: Qir§“a Mu#§ßira,” Al-Usbå# Al-AdabÊ 247 (January 1991): 3.

[18] MuÈammad Sa#Êd Rama·§n al-BåãÊ, “ al-Khalfiyya al-Yahådiyya li-shi#§r qir§“a mu#§ßira,” (The Jewish Origins of the Call for a Contemporary Reading) Nahj al-Isl§m 42 (December 1990): 17–21 (17).

[19] ShawqÊ Abå KhalÊl, “Taq§ãu#§t khaãÊra fÊ darb a l-qir§”§t a l-mu#§ßira” (Dangerous Crossings on the Path of Contemporary Readings) Nahj al-Isl§m 43 (March 1991): 17–21. One year earlier, in 1990, he had already published a little booklet titled Qir§#a #ilmiyya li’l-qir§”§t al-mu#§ßira (A Critical Reading of the ‘Contemporary

Readings’), (Damascus/Beirut: D§r al-Fikr 1990), in which he attacked ‘contemporary readings’ of the Qur’an as a form of warfare against the religion of Islam, without specifically mentioning Al-Kit§b.

[20] MuÈammad ShafÊq Y§sÊn, 1. “Qir§“a naqdiyya fÊ mu”allaf ‘al-Kit§b wa’lQur”§n’” (A Critical Reading of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’”; 2. “Qir§“a naqdiyya fÊ mu”allaf ‘al-Kit§b wa’l-Qur”§n’— al-Maw·å# al-th§nÊ: al-Èudåd fi’lisl§m” (A Critical Reading of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’—the Second Topic: The \udåd Limits in Islam); 3. “Qir§“a naqdiyya fÊ mu”allaf ‘al-Kit§b wa’l-Qur”§n’—a l-Maw·å# a l-th§lith: a l-sunna” (A Critical Reading of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’—the Third Topic: The Sunna) Nahj al-Isl§m 46 (December 1991): 35–43; 47 (March 1992): 136–44; 48 (June 1992): 84–95; 4. “Qir§“a naqdÊya fÊ mu”allaf #al-Kit§b wa’l-Qur”§n”—al-Mau·å# al-r§bi#: qa·§y§ fi’l-#aqÊda (A Critical Reading of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’—the Fourth Topic: Problems of Doctrine) Nahj al-Isl§m 49 (September 1992); 5. “Qir§“a naqdÊya fÊ mu”allaf ‘al-Kit§b wa’l-Qur”§n’—a l-Mau·å# a l-kh§mis: qa·§y§ fi’l-fikr (A Critical Reading of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’—the Fifth Topic: Problems of Thinking) Nahj a l-Isl§m 50 (December 1992).

[21] SalÊm a l-J§bÊ, a l-Qir§“a a l-mu#§ßira li-Duktår MuÈammad ShaÈrår: Mujarrad tanjÊm— kadhaba a l-munajjimån wa-law ßadaqå (The Contemporary Reading of Dr. Muhammad Shahrur: Pure Astrology—Astrologers Lied Even If They [Spoke] Sincerely), (Damascus: Ak§d, 1991).

[22] Isl§mbålÊ, MuÈammad Haytham. al-Radd #al§ al-Duktår ShaÈrår fÊ mas’alat lib§s al-mar”a (Refutation of Dr. Shahrour with regards to the Issue of Women’s Dress), (Damascus: D§r al-#Ilm, 1992—2nd ed., 1994).

[23] Naßr \§mid Abå Zayd, “Lim§dha ãaghat al-talfÊqiyya #al§ kathÊr min mashrå#§t tajdÊd a l-isl§m,” (Why have Patch-ups come to dominate so many Projects on the Renewal of Islam?) Al-Hil§l (October 1991): 17–27; “a l-Manhaj a l-naf#Ê fÊ fahm al-nußåß al-dÊniyya,” (The Utilitarian Method in the Understanding of Religious Texts) Al-Hil§l (March 1992).

[24] Tayyib •ÊzÊnÊ, “FÊ mun§qashatihi li’l-isl§m wa-mushkilat a l-taqaddum al-ijtim§#Ê” (About his Discussion of Islam and the Problem of Social Progress) Al-Usbå# al-adabÊ (The Magazine of the Arab Writers’ Organization—al-IttiÈ§d al-Kutt§b al-#Arab), no. 204 (1990): 12.

[25] •§riq Ziy§da, “•ar§fa fi’l-taqsÊm wa-ghar§ba fi’l-ta”wÊl” (Strange Division and Grotesque Interpretation) Al-N§qid 45 (March 1992): 57–60.

[26] #AlÊ NåÈ, “Al-Kit§b wa’l-Qur”§n, Mu”allifuhu: MuÈammad Shahrår—Qir§“a #ilmiyya: #aßriyya am m§·awiyya,” (‘The Book and the Qur’an’, its Author: Muhammad Shahrur—A Critical Reading: [Is is] Modern or Pre-Modern?) Al-Fikr al-#ArabÊ 4 (Summer 1994): 192–209.

[27] M§hir al-Munajjid, al-Ishk§liyya a l-manhajiyya fÊ #Al-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n’—Dir§sa naqdiyya (Methodological Problems in ‘The Book and the Qur’an’—A Critical Investigation), (Damascus/Beirut: D§r a l-Fikr, 1994). See also his review “Mun§qashat al-ishk§liyya al-manhajiyya fi’l-Kit§b wa’l-Qur”§n,” #$lam al-Fikr (1993): 162.

[28] Yåsuf al-‘ayd§wÊ, Bai·at al-dÊk: Naqd lughawÊ li-kit§b ‘al-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n’ (The Egg of a Rooster: A Linguistic Critique of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’), (Damascus: al-Maãba#a al-Ta#§wunÊya, 1993); Nash”at MuÈammad Ri·§ Zhiby§n, Dh§k radd?!! #An qir§“a mu#§ßira li’l-kit§b wa’l-qur”§n (That Is a Refutation?!!—About the Contemporary Reading of the Book and the Qur’an), (Damascus: D§r Qutayba, 1992).

[29] MuÈammad FarÊz ManfÊkhÊ, TaqwÊm #ilmÊ li-kit§b “ al-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n” (A Critical Assessment of the Book ‘The Book and the Qur’an’), (Beirut: D§r al-RashÊd, 1993).

[30] Ma”mån al-JawÊj§tÊ, al-Ußuß al-kh§sira li’l-qir§“a al-mu#§ßira (The Corrupt Foundations of the ‘Contemporary Reading’), 2nd ed., (Limassol: A l-Jaffan & A l-Jabi, 1993); Jaw§d Mås§ MuÈammad #Aff§na, al-Qur”§n wa-awh§m al-qir§“a al-mu#§ßira— Radd #ilmÊ sh§milÊ #al§ kit§b: ‘al-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n: qir§“a mu#§ßira’ (The Qur’an and the Delusions of Contemporary Reading—A Comprehensive Critical Rejection of ‘The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary Reading’), (Amman: D§r al-BashÊr, 1994).

[31] AÈmad #Imr§n, al-Qir§“a al-mu#§ßira li’l-Qur”§n fi’l-mÊz§n (An Impartial Review of ‘The Contemporary Reading of the Qur’an’), (Beirut: D§r al-Naq§sh, 1995).

[32] BashÊr #$nÊ, “MuÈammad ShaÈrår: Manhaj fi’l-qir§“a al-mu#§ßira,” (Muhammad Shahrur: A Method in Contemporary Reading) Dir§s§t Ishtir§kiyya 164/65 (1996): 46–54; Gh§zÊ al-Tawba, “Duktår ShaÈrår yulawwi a”n§q al-nußåß li’l-ajr§d ghayr #ilmiyya wa-taftaqir il§’l-bar§“a,” (Dr. Shahrur Distorts the Texts Ignorantly and with no Authority) al-Mujtama#, no. 1301 (May 26, 1998).

[33] MunÊr MuÈammad •§hir al-Shaww§f, Tah§fut al-dir§s§t al-mu#§ßira fi’l-dawla wa’l-mujtama# (Refutation of Contemporary Studies on State and Society), (Beirut, 1993), (Riy§dh: D§r al-Shaww§f, 1995), also published as: Tah§fut al-dir§s§t al-mu#§ßira (Limassol: D§r al-Shaww§f, 1994).

[34] al-Munajjid, al-Ishk§liyya, 11.

[35] Most vividly: MuÈammad Sa#Êd al-•abb§#, Ris§la…wa-Radd il§ dh§k al-rajul (A Message…and A Refutation for that Man), (Damascus: Maãba#at al-‘ubul, n.d). Compare this to similar responses in Egypt after the publication of a series of articles on the Qur’an (“MuÈ§wala li-fahm #aßrÊ li’l-qur”§n”) by Mußãaf§ MaÈmåd in the magazine ‘ab§È al-Khayr, see: J. J. G. Jansen, “Polemics on Mustafa Mahmud’s Koran Exegesis,” in Proceedings of the Ninth Congress of the Union Européenne des

Arabisants et Islamists (1978), ed. R. Peters, 110–22 (Leiden: Brill, 1981).

[36] #Abd al-RaÈm§n \asan \abannaka al-Mayd§nÊ, al-TaÈrÊf al-mu#§ßir fi'l-dÊn: Tasallul fi'l-anf§q ba#d al-suqåã fi'l-a#m§q—makÊda al-m§rksiyya wa'l-b§ãiniyya al-mu#§ßira taÈt shi#§r qir§"at mu#§ßira li'l-nußåß al-isl§miyya (The Contemporary Deviation from Religion: The Infiltration into Tunnels after going Underground—The Conspiracy of Marxism and of the Contemporary Batiniyya Sect with the Slogan of a Contemporary Reading of the Islamic Texts), (Damascus: D§r al-Qalam, 1997).

[37] This summary of the Shahrur controversy is a shortened version of the account published in: Andreas Christmann, "73 Proofs of Dilettantism: The Construction of Norm and Deviancy in the Responses to 'al-Kit§b wa'l-Qur"§n: Qir§"a Mu#§ßira' by Mohamad Shahrour," Die Welt des Islam 45, no. 1 (2005): 20–73.

[38] Interview, 518.

[39] For a good survey, see David Greenwood, Structuralism and the Biblical Text (Berlin: Mouton Publishers, 1985).

[40] With the exception of Izutsu, structuralism never made a big impression in non-Muslim studies of the Qur'an either. While traditionally the historica l-critical (and hence diachronic) method dominated the field, a more recent trend to study the Qur'an (synchronically) as literary text has not shown any inclination to apply linguistic or philosophical structuralism. For Izutsu, see Toshihiko Izutsu, God and Men in the Koran: Semantics of the Koranic Weltanschauung (Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies, 1964); Ethico-religious Concepts in the Qur'an: The Structure of the Ethical Terms in the Koran (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1966).

[41] A. N. Whitehead and Bertrand Russell. Principia Mathematica (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, vol. 1, 1910; vol. 2, 1912; vol. 3, 1913).

[42] Bertrand Russell, Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy (London: Allen & Unwin, 1919).

[43] Greenwood, Structuralism, 6.

[44] Interview, 512–513.

[45] A common translation in English would be “Men are in charge of women, because Allah has made some of them excel over the others, and because they spend some of their wealth. Hence righteous women are obedient, guarding the unseen which Allah has guarded. As for those of them that you fear might rebel, admonish them and abandon them in their beds and beat them. Should they obey you, do not seek a way of harming them; for Allah is Sublime and Great!” Translation by Majid Fakhry, An Interpretation of the Qur’an: English Translation of the Meanings (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

[46] Chapter 5 in this book, pp. 279–280.

[47] Asma Barlas, “Believing Women” in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur”§n (Karachi: Sama, 2004), 186.

[48] #$“isha#Abd al-RaÈm§n, Al-Mafhåm al-isl§mÊ li’l-taÈrÊr al-mar”ah (Khartoum: J§mi#at Umm Durm§n, 1967), 12.

[49] Barlas, “Believing Women”, 187.

[50] Amina Wadud-Muhsin, Qur’an and Women (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Fajar Bakti, 1992), 72.

[51] Wadud-Muhsin, Qur’an and Women, 73.

[52] Aziza A l-Hibri, “A Story of Islamic Herstory: Or How did We ever get into this Mess?,” Women and Islam: Women’s Studies International Forum Magazine 5, no. 2 (1982): 207–19 (217).

[53] Aziza a l-Hibri, “Islam, Law and Custom: Re-defining Muslim Women’s Rights,” In Women and Islam, ed. Aziza a l-Hibri, 32 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1997)—an argument that slightly contradicts her earlier one published in 1982, see previous footnote.

[54] Barlas, “Believing Women”, 188.

[55] Wadud-Muhsin, Qur’an and Women, 76–77.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Murad Hofmann, Islam: The Alternative (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 1993), 141.

[58] Riffat Hassan, “An Islamic Perspective,” In Sexuality: A Reader, ed. Karen Le bacqz, 355–56 (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1999).

[59] Hadia Mubarak, “Breaking the Interpretive Monopoly: A Re-Examination of Verse 4:34,” Hawwa 2, no. 3 (2004): 261–89 (284–85).

[60] Dahlia Eissa, “Constructing the Notion of Male Superiority over Women in Islam: The Influence of Sex and Gender Stereotyping in the Interpretation of the Qur’an and the Implications for a Modernist Exegesis of Rights.” WLUML Occasional Paper, no. 11 (November 1999): 45.

[61] Verse 4:128 is then understood to be paired with 4:34 and to be read as follows: “If a woman fears lack of respect and loss of good leadership on her male partner’s part (married or not), she should strongly object to this and be firm in her protest, aiming for an amicable agreement between them, for such an agreement is best, even though men’s souls are swayed by greed (that is, lack of self-criticism). But if you do good and practice self-restraint, God is well-acquainted with all that you do”.

[62] The transliterated Arabic letter (ß) stands for: ßall§ All§h #alayhi wa-sallam (God bless him and grant him salvation!) by which Muhammad Shahrur [henceforth he will be referred to as MS] adopts the standard eulogy applied when the name of the Prophet MuÈammad is mentioned; (r) stands for: ra·iyya All§h #anhu (May God be pleased with him!), which MS occasionally employs as a eulogy for the prophets that came before MuÈammad.

[63] The English term ‘God’ and the transliterated Arabic term ‘Allah’ will be used interchangeably for the Arabic word الله . The aim of using these terms interchangeably is to avoid perceiving الله as primarily the God of the Arabs or Muslims (if only ‘Allah’ were used) or as ‘God’ of the Judeo-Christian tradition with all its specific (Biblical) connotations (if only ‘God’ were used). For MS, الله is the indeterminable, nontemporal, nonspatial and nonreducible entity of mere creativity and objective existentiality that is, philosophically and epistemologically, a wider category than the traditional categories of either ‘Allah’ or ‘God’.

[64] MS does not use the term a l-qur”§n because, as it will be fully explained in chapter 3, al-qur”§n constitutes only one subunit of Allah’s Book, not the entire revelation. Instead, he uses the term al-kit§b, translated as ‘the Book’ (written in italics and with capital initial letter), which contains both al-

qur”§n and the other parts of Allah’s revelation. When the author refers to the conventional understanding of the Qur’an (i.e., the entire Book), the term is capitalized and not italicized in order to distinguish it from al-qur”§n as MS defines it. The same rule will apply for other terms that are differently interpreted by MS, e.g., al-isl§m ↔ Islam; al-Êm§n ↔ Iman; sunna ↔ Sunna; a l-shah§da ↔ Shahada; a l-zak§h ↔ Zakah, while in other cases different spelling + translation indicates a departure from the conventional rendering of the terms, e.g., Muslim-Assenters for al-muslimån or Muslim-Believers for al-mu”minån. For further clarifications on the different understanding of the Qur’anic terms, see the Glossary of Terms and Concepts.

[65] References to the Qur’an will normally include the full name of the såra, its number and the number of the verse that is quoted. If the name of the såra has already been given or is mentioned in a footnote, a shorter version is used that only cites the number of the såra followed by the number of the verse, e.g., 33:35.

[66] #Abd al-Q§hir Ibn #Abd al-RaÈm§n al-Jurj§nÊ, Kit§b asr§r al-bal§gha, ed., Hellmut Ritter (Istanbul: Maãba#at Wiz§rat al-Ma#§rif, 1954), 3.

[67] Ibn AÈmad al-Far§hÊdÊ al-KhalÊl (d. 175/791), was one of the earliest Arab grammarians. He was also a lexicographer and phonologist who belonged, like SÊbawayh (his pupil), to the Baßra School of Arabic grammar. With his other pupil Layth b. al-Muíaffar he compiled the first dictionary of the Arabic language called Kit§b al-#Ain (the Book of #Ain—because it begins with the letter #Ain). His methodology, which was to exemplify his entries with references to Arabic poetry, became the standard method in Arabic lexicography for many centuries.

[68] #Amr b. #Uthm§n SÊbawayh (d. 177/793), was a philologist and grammarian from the Iranian province of Fars who belonged to the so-called Baßra School of Arabic grammar. His only work, al-Kit§b, is a

compendium of Arabic grammar that he compiled from the texts of the Qur’an and the ÈadÊths of the Prophet aiming at deducing the rules of the Arabic language from the way Arabic was used in those two sources. It has been the standard work of Arabic grammar for many centuries in spite of the fact that it was severely criticized for its often flawed methodology and implausible conclusions.

[69] Abå #AlÊ a l-F§risÊ (d. 377/987) was a grammarian and lexicographer from Iran but lived most of his life in Baghdad. His teachers were Ibn a l-Sarr§j and a l-Zajj§j, while he himself became the teacher of the famous grammarian Ibn JinnÊ. His most significant book, al-^·§È fi’l-naÈw wa’l-takmila, is a compendium of Arabic grammar and rhetoric that has been the subject of numerous commentaries.

[70] Abå ’l-FatÈ #Uthm§n Ibn JinnÊ (d. 392/1002) was a grammarian from Baßra, a pupil of al-F§risÊ, and befriended the poet al-MutanabbÊ. He is the author of several books on Arabic grammar and rhetoric, e.g., Sirr ßin§#at al-i#r§b, al-Khaß§“iß or al-Munßif. He wrote a commentary on the DÊw§n of a l-MutanabbÊ and of Ibn Aws al-T§“Ê (al-\am§sa).

[71] #Abd al-Q§hir Ibn #Abd al-RaÈm§n al-Jurj§nÊ (d. 470/1078) is a well-known linguist and rhetorician who wrote seminal books such as al-#Aw§mil al-mi”a, Kit§b asr§r al-bal§gha, and Dal§“il al-i#j§z.

[72] ‘H§dh§n[i] khaßm§n[i] ikhtaßamå fÊ rabbihim…’ (Al-\ajj 22:19); according to the rules of Arabic grammar (about congruence in gender and number) it should be as follows: ‘H§dh§n[i] khaßm§n[i] ikhtaßam§ fÊ rabbihim…’.

[73] See also: ‘And in the earth are plots adjoining each other and gardens of vines, tillage and palm trees, from one or different roots, which are irrigated by the same water…’ (Al-Ra#d 13:4, MF)

[74] [Italics as in the Arabic text.] MS explains in a footnote that to know the outcome of an act beforehand, before the act has been carried out, would mean that Allah can work Himself through history from the end towards the beginning, against the flow of history, regressing in time. But this is, according to MS, a logical impossibility, since even God has to obey the law of evolution and progressing of time. The im§m mubÊn, says MS, stores the events in history in a kind of historical archive, but nowhere are future events and developments recorded. Acts are not predetermined, only determined after they have been done. Strictly speaking, the notion of the divine predestination of human acts and events in nature and society contradicts Allah's objective law of existence and is, hence, to be rejected both theologically and empirically.

[75] MS's definition of the term al-qur"§n is different from the definition of the term al-kit§b. Whereas in traditional tafsÊr both terms refer more or less synonymously to the Qur'an—the holy scripture as we understand it—he differentiates al-qur"§n from a l-kit§b. In his arrangement a l-kit§b is the generic term (ism #§mm) which stands for the whole content of the written copy (al-mußÈaf), beginning with al-F§tiÈa and ending with Sårat al-N§s, while al-qur"§n is the more specific term (ism kh§ßß) that comprises only one part of al-kit§b. Hence, what we normally describe as Qur'an (the entire copy of all chapters) should be defined as al-kit§b, the Book, which is henceforth written in italics and with a capitalised initial letter in order to distinguish it from other books that the Book also contains. The exact definition of this term and its difference from al-qur"§n is given in chapter 3.

[76] 'For Muslim men and women [al-muslimÊn wa'l-muslim§t] [and] for believing men and women [al-mu"minÊn wa'l-mu"min§t]' (Al-AÈz§b 33:35); MF: 'men and women who have submitted'; MP: 'men who surrender to Allah, and women who surrender'; AH: 'for men and women who are devoted to God'; AhA: 'men and women who have come to submission'; AA: 'men and women who have surrendered'; AB: 'men and women who are Muslims'.

[77] ‘The desert Arabs say, “We have faith [amann§].” [Prophet], tell them, “You do not have faith [lam tu”minå]. What you should say instead, ‘We have submitted

[aslamn§],’ for faith [al-Êm§n] has not yet entered your hearts’ (A l-\ujur§t 49:14, AH).

[78] ‘Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian, but he was upright, and bowed his will to Allah’s (ÈanÊf [an] muslim[an])’ (Al-Jinn 72:14); see also $l #Imr§n 3:52, 67; Al-Baqara 2:132; Yåsuf 12:101; Al-A#r§f 7:126; Yånus 10:90; Yånus 10:72–73; Al-Dh§riyy§t 51:35–36; Al-Nis§” 4:103; Al-Baqara 2:110; Al-Når 24:56; Al-Baqara 2:185.

[79] ‘For such prayers are enjoined on believers (al-mu”minÊn) at stated times’ (Al-Nis§” 4:103); see also Al-Baqara 2:110, 183, 185; Al-Når 24:56.

[80] ‘Those who believe, and emigrate, and fight for the faith, in the cause of Allah; as well as those who give (them) asylum and aid,—these are (all) in very truth the believers: for them is forgiveness of sins and a provision most generous.’ (Al-Anf§l 8:64); see also A l-\ujur§t 49:15; A l-Baqara 2:178, 216; A l-Shår§ 42:38; A l-M§“ida 5:1; Al-Isr§” 17:34–37; Al-Når 24:27.

[81] ‘And you love wealth with a passion’ (A l-Fajr 89:20, AH); see also A l-Baqara 2:177; Al-\adÊd 57:20; Al-Ma#§rij 70:19–20.

[82] MS distinguishes between verses that are ambiguous (mutash§biha), designating verses relating to prophethood; and those that are definite (muÈkama), the verses relating to messengerhood. These are supplemented by verses that are neither fully definite nor fully ambiguous. The ambiguous verses represent what MS calls

a l-Èaqq: the objective sources of existence, inasmuch as they are the general, absolute, and eternal laws of the universe, unaltered since the creation of the world, but for the first time revealed in a human (Arabic) language. The definite verses designate al-sulåk: guidance for human attitude and specific rules of social behaviour. They are not part of al-Èaqq. The distinction between ambiguous and definite verses is fully explained in chapter 3, but it is already clear from this that MS departs from the conventional exegetical understanding of ‘ambiguous’ and ‘definite’, in which the latter refers to divine commands that are universal and never change, and the former refers to commands that are limited and do change. In this understanding, the muÈkama verses contain the basic commandments, shared by all religions, while the mutash§biha verses contain the practical aspects of these commandents and may vary from one religion to another (Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Ambiguous.” (L. Kinberg), 70–77). In MS’s interpretation it is exactly the opposite.

[83] MS understands the current phenomenon of al-ßaÈwa al-isl§miyya, represented by the diverse streams of contemporary Islamism, as consisting of the following aspects: a) obsessive focus on ritualism (veiling, fasting, and pilgrimage), b) veneration of the sal§f forefathers, and c) exclusion of an ethical discourse and hatred of the West and everything non-Islamic. His own concept of al-ßaÈwa al-isl§miyya is meant to reverse the current Islamist agenda and advance an ethical ‘awakening’ that emphasises morality against a rigid ritualism; see the conclusion of this chapter and also chapters 2 and 6.

[84] E.g., jazama: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to give an apodictic judgement’; jarama: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to commit an offence, crime’; jazza: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to clip, shear’; Èazza: ‘to cut’ and ‘to incise, indent’; batta: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to decide, settle’; qaãåa: ‘to cut’ and ‘to trim, shorten’; batara: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to amputate, mutilate’; shaãara: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to halve, bisect’; qaãa#: ‘to cut off’ and ‘to

separate, disjoin, interrupt’. The additional meanings of these words have been highlighted by the underlined and because, according to MS, these additional or indirect meanings make them unique and different to those terms with which they share the common or direct meaning of ‘to cut

(off)’.

[85] This term is conventionally understood as a Qur’anic self-reference (Al-Muz zammil 73:4 says: “Or a little more; recite the Qur’an slowly and distinctly [tartÊl[an]]”, AH), urging readers of the Qur’an to perform a ‘measured recitation’. In contrast, MS interprets wa-rattil a l-qur”§n tartÊlan as Allah’s request to group together the many different subject themes (maw·å#§t) that are scattered throughout the entire Book and to create a logical order or meaningful sequence (tartÊl) which allows a proper interpretation of a specific theme or topic. Ambros translates the verbal root r-t-l as “to arrange s.th. in good order” (Ambros, Dictionary, 108) which exactly renders MS’s literal understanding of the term tartÊl.

[86] Al-r§sikhån fi’l-#ilm: the term does not refer, as it is commonly understood, to the most learned and devout among the #ulam§” and fuqah§” but, according to MS, to scholars and philosophers (religious or not) who occupy the most eminent place in society because of their exceptional knowledge and expertise.

[87] ‘They replied: “We shall worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, one single God: we devote ourselves to Him (wa-naÈnu lahu muslimån).’ (Al-Baqara 2:133, AH; also 2:62, 112,128); see also Al-Naml 27:44,91; Yåsuf 12:101; Yånus 10:84,90; $l #Imr§n 3:52; Fußßilat 41:33; Al-Anbiy§” 21:108; Al-Nis§” 4:125; Al-M§“ida 5:44.

[88] MF: ‘one of those who submit’; AB: ‘one of the Muslims’; AA: ‘of them that surrender’; AhA: ‘of the obedient’; AH: ‘one of those devoted to God’; MP: ‘of those who surrender’; closest to MS is AH because it does not keep the notion of total surrender (passive servitude) that MS wants to avoid, hence his ‘those who assent to God’, which reflects an active, conscious, emancipated, and enlightened decision to believe in God’s existence.

[89] MS interprets a l-ß§bi”Ên not as a specific religious group (e.g., the Manichaeans, as proposed by Bellamy in JAOS 116 (1996)) or sect (‘most commonly they are assumed to be a group called after their baptismal practices, bearing a name derived from Aramaic’ (Ambros, Dictionary, 309)), but as a generic term, used by the text in order to refer to any other religious community that does not belong to Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.

[90] No translation captures the meanings that MS intended; e.g. mujrimån: MP: ‘the guilty’; AH: ‘those who do evil’; AhA: ‘those who are culpable’; AA: ‘the sinners’; AB: ‘the evildoers’; MF: ‘who are criminals’, although MS would accept MF’s rendering as ‘criminals’, since the term has acquired this meaning in modern Standard Arabic; see further below.

[91] ‘The guilty (a l-mujrimån) will be known by their mark and will be seized by their foreheads and their feet. Which, then, of your Lord’s blessings do you both deny? This is the Hell the guilty (a l-mujrimån) deny…’ (A l-RaÈm§n 55:41–43, AH); see also Y§-SÊn 36:59; Al-Råm 30:12; Al-Naml 27:69; Al-Mursal§t 77:18–19. For even more details about the Mujrimån see A l-MuãaffifÊn 83:29; A l-Qaßaß 28:78; A l-Qalam 68:44; Al-\ijr 15:95; Al-Muddaththir 74:42.

[92] ‘The guilty will not be questioned about their sins’ (Al-Qaßaß 28:78, AH).

[93] Verbs of the root s-l-m, in particular sallama/yusallimu and aslama/yuslimu, are

commonly translated as ‘to submit’, ‘to resign’, even ‘to surrender’, which all connote a passive act of submission and lack the element of putting obedience to God into active practice, an element that the verbs sallama and aslama also contain in the sense of ‘to consent’, ‘to approve’, or ‘to accept’. In the light of MS’s thesis that the opposite of disobedient dissent (an active practice) is not surrender or submission but an active process of approval, al-muslimån has been translated as assenters or, in order to distinguish them from the Muslim-Believers, as Muslim-Assenters.

[94] All translators render al-mußallån as ‘those who pray’ as they go back to the root ß-l-w, whereas MS prefers an association with the root w-ß-l ‘to connect’ and its derivation ßila (connection, link, tie); see also his distinction between ß-l-w and ß-l-§ below.

[95] ‘By men whom neither trade nor sale can divert from the remembrance of Allah, nor from regular prayer (al-ßalawa), nor from paying zakah, their only fear is for the day when hearts and eyes will be turned about’ (Al-Når 24:37).

[96] ‘Do you not see that it is Allah whose praises all beings in the heavens and on earth do celebrate, and the birds with wings outspread? Each one knows its own [ßal§tahu] and praise. And Allah knows well that they all do.’ (A l-Når 24:41); YA: ‘(mode of) prayer’; MF: ‘the prayer of each’ and most translators, except MP: ‘He knows verily the worship’, AhA: ‘each one knows its obligations’, who seem to share the view of MS that ßal§tahu does not refer to ‘prayer’. Ambros also distinguishes between ßal§(t) and ßalaw§t and admits that 24:41 cannot mean ‘ritual prayer’ (Ambros. Dictionary: 163). The root is an import from Aramaic, meaning ‘prayer’, derived from the root ß-l-y, meaning ‘inclining’ (ibid.) that can be figuratively understood and may support ‘symbolic or spiritual connection to God’ as proposed by

MS.

[97] ‘Say: “Truly, my prayer (ßal§tÊ) and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds; no partner has He: this am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit to His will (al-muslimÊn)”’ (Al-An#§m 6:162–3).

[98] E.g., ‘Say: “What has come to me by inspiration is that your God is One God: Will you therefore bow to his will (fa-hal antum muslimån)” (Al-Anbiy§” 21:108); see also Yåsuf 12:106; Luqm§n 31:25; Al-Zumar 39:65.

[99] ‘As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, they have, for their entertainment, the gardens of Paradise’ (Al-Kahf 18:107).

[100] ‘You do we worship (na#budu), and Your aid we seek. Show us the straight way (al-ßir§ã al-mustaqÊm).’ (Al-F§tiÈa 1:5–6); ‘Say: “Verily, my Lord has guided me to a way that is straight (ßir§ã [in] mustaqÊm[in]), a religion of right (dÊn[an] qiyam[an]), the path (trod) by Abraham, the true in faith, and he joined not gods with Allah” (A l-An#§m 6:161); see also Al-Råm 30:30.

[101] ‘And that you should worship Me, (for that) is the straight way’ –, refer to acts of ‘doing what is righteous and beautiful’ (Y§-SÊn 36:61).

[102] ‘Nay, whoever submits (man aslama) his whole self to Allah and is a doer of good (wa-huwa muÈsin)’ (Al-Baqara 2:112); see also Al-Nis§” 4:125; Al-An#§m 6:48; •§-H§” 20:82; Al-M§“ida 5:69.

[103] ‘Most of them will only believe in God while also joining others with Him’ (Yåsuf 12:106, AH).

[104] ‘And Abraham enjoined upon his sons and so did Jacob; “Oh my sons! God has chosen the faith for you; then die not except in the state of submission (to Me)” (Al-Baqara 2:132).

[105] ‘Allah forgives not that partners should be set up with Him; but He forgives anything else, to whom He pleases; to set up partners with Allah is to devise a sin most heinous indeed’ (Al-Nis§” 4:48, also 116).

[106] Reference to 2:256.

[107] ‘O my Lord! Forgive me, my parents, all who enter my house in Faith’ (NåÈ 71:28).

[108] ‘Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour’ (A l-Isr§” 17:23).

[109] ‘And We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning: (hear the command), “Show gratitude to Me and to your parents: to Me is (your final) goal.’ (Luqm§n 31:14), and ‘We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth’ (Al-AÈq§f 46:15).

[110] ‘Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin’ (Al-Isr§” 17:31).

[111] Also, ‘You who believe, be steadfast in your devotion to God and bear witness impartially’ (Al-M§“ida 5:8, AH).

[112] YA translates salm as ‘Islam’; AB: ‘enter Islam totally’; AH: ‘submission to God’; MP: ‘into submission (to Him)’; AhA: ‘to full submission to God’, but clearly MS understands it as ‘peace’, like AA: ‘O believers, enter the peace, all of you’. MF translates ‘O believer, enter into complete peace’, but adds in a footnote that this is synonymous with ‘complete submission’ or ‘true religion’ (fn. 156), which tries to link al-salm with al-isl§m.

[113] YA translates al-sal§m as ‘a salutation’; AB: ‘who greets you as a Muslim’; AA: ‘a greeting’; MF: ‘who greets you’, but clearly MS understands it as ‘an offer of peace’, which is wider in its meaning than a ‘greeting of peace’ (AhA: ‘who greets you in peace’; AH: ‘a greeting of peace’), more like MP: ‘who offers you peace’.

[114] The translation of these two verses has been adapted to the interpretation of the Arabic terms that MS introduces in chapter 3. The conventional rendering would be as follows (MF): near of kin (dhawÊ ’l-qurba), orphans (al-yat§mÊ), the needy (al-mas§kÊn), the wayfarers (ibn al-sabÊl), the poor (al-fuqar§”), their collectors (al-#§milÊn #alayh§), whose hearts are bound together (a l-mu”allafa qulåbuhum); the slaves (fi’l-riq§b), the debtors (al-gh§rimÊn); spending in Allah’s path (fÊ sabÊl All§h). As we will see in chapter 3, it is MS’s intention to replace the often archaic renderings of those terms that have lost their relevance in a modern society (e.g., slaves and slavery) with a contemporary understanding.

[115] This is a very novel understanding of the legal concept of naskh. Technically, fiqh literature allows four types of abrogations: 1) a Qur’anic ruling abrogates another Qur’anic ruling; 2) a Qur’anic ruling abrogates a ÈadÊth; 3) a ÈadÊth of the Prophetical tradition abrogates a Qur’anic ruling; and 4) a ÈadÊth abrogates another ÈadÊth. As for types 2 and 3, MS would maintain that a Qur’anic ruling always abrogates a ÈadÊth of the Prophetical tradition (if it contradicts the Qur’anic ruling) but that a ÈadÊth can never abrogate a Qur’anic ruling

(see MuÈammad Zayd, al-Naskh fi’l-qur”§n (Cairo, n.p., 1963), 1–6; 82–84; Sha#b§n MuÈammad Ism§#Êl, Naíariyy§t fi’l-shar§“i# al-sa m§wÊya (Cairo, n.p., 1977), 99–171). As for type 1, the fiqh rule is that a later revealed Qur’anic ruling abrogates an earlier revealed ruling. The criterion is, hence, the time of their revelation between 610 and 632. This is not the criteria which MS applies. It is, rather, the type of messengerhood for which historically a ruling was revealed (i.e., for Moses, Jesus, or MuÈammad). A historically later-revealed ruling abrogates historically earlier-revealed rulings. It is not the chronology of revelation between 622 and 632 that counts but the chronology of messengerhoods between several centuries BD and the seventh century AD., i.e., between the prophet Noah and the Prophet MuÈammad. MS is not concerned with the fourth type. See, for an equally critical view of the classical concept of naskh, AÈmad \ij§zÊ al-Saqq§, L§ naskh fi’l-qur”§n (Cairo: D§r al-fikr al-#arabÊ, 1978).

[116] ‘So fear God as much as you can; listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul and those saved from the covetousness of their own souls…’ (Al-Tagh§bun 64:16).

[117] MS added to this the following comment: ‘It has been a big mistake in our intellectual past, intended or not, to denounce universal ethical guidelines as ideological reflections of a specific cultural tradition. Some Arab Marxist intellectuals thought, for example, that ethics belongs to a kind of ideological superstructure in a society that reflects primarily its economic, material substructure. According to this view, the ethics of the Bible and the Qur’an, and this includes the ten commandments, express a specific kind of morality derived from the primitive economic conditions that existed in the ancient Near East. Marxist thinkers argued that because these economic conditions do not exist any longer, the ethics that accompanied them must also disappear. However, such a position, where implemented, led to utter frustration and disappointment because it cut people off from morality and divine guidance, which were not replaced by something better. The practice of discarding moral guidance under the pretext of a Neo-Marxist deconstruction of history has given rise to an attitude of moral licentiousness whereby murder, disrespect for parents, fraud, false testimony, and adultery are perceived as perfectly normal. We know the abandonment of ethical rules has led Arab-Muslim societies into a deep moral crisis and will, if it is

not rectified, eventually trigger their total destruction. We need to understand that divine commandments express a moral culture that is universal and applicable to all humans of any historical, religious, or economic background. These commandments can never be replaced or redefined.”

[118] The number of major sins or al-kab§“ir given in the ÈadÊths differ considerably. A popular ÈadÊth, reported by a l-Bukh§rÊ, states seven major sins (MuÈammad Abå

#Abd All§h al-Bukh§rÊ, al-J§mi# al-‘aÈÊÈ li’l-Bukh§rÊ (Beirut: D§r Ibn KathÊr, 1987), vol. 3, 1017) but Muslim fiqh scholars differed in classifying some of these sins as major sins, while others were included in this list of major sins (see #Abd al-RaÈm§n al-JazÊrÊ, al-Fiqh #al§ madh§hib al-arba#a (Cairo: Wiz§rat al-Awq§f, 1950), vol. 5, 223). It seems that MS refers to the popular work by a l-DhahabÊ which classified the kab§“ir into seventy categories (see MuÈammad b. #Uthm§n al-DhahabÊ, al-Kab§“ir (Beirut: Nashr D§r al-Nadwat al-JadÊda, n.d.)).

[119] Many verses refer to these two types of faith: ‘O you who believe! Believe in God and His Apostle, and the scripture which He has sent to His apostle and the scripture which He sent to those before (him)….’ (A l-Nis§” 4:136); ‘O you that believe! Fear God, and believe in His apostle, and He will bestow on you a double portion of His mercy…’ (A l-\adÊd 57:28); ‘But those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and believe in the (revelation) sent down to Muhammad…’ (MuÈammad 47:2); ‘It is He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers, that they may add faith to their faith…’ (Al-FatÈ 48:4); ‘…Yea, those who believe, their faith is increased and they do rejoice. But those in whose hearts is a disease, it will add doubt to their doubt, and they will die in a state of unbelief’ (A l-Tawba 9:124–25).

[120] See also Al-M§“ida 5:23; Al-\ujur§t 49:15.

[121] See also Al-Baqara 2:43; Al-Nis§” 4:162.

[122] MS defines any struggle for freedom, justice, and equality as a fundamental pillar of a ‘jih§d in God’s way’ (a l-jih§d fÊ sabÊl All§h), but if this cannot be achieved by peaceful means it turns into a violent fight, or al-qit§l. Any fight that is fought for a different cause, that is, not for freedom, justice, and equality cannot be defined as a ‘fight in God’s way’ (al-qit§l fÊ sabÊl All§h). The reference to 2:216 implies that MS here refers to al-qit§l as the violent form of al-jih§d. The difference between al-jih§d and al-qit§l is explained in detail in chapter 6.

[123] MS believes that the now antiquated terms for ‘Muslims’, for example in French (Mahométans), German (Mohammedaner), and English (Muhammedans), do in fact reflect more adequately the fact that ‘Muslim-Believers’ are the followers of MuÈammad. The pejorative sense of these words, insofar as they seem to suggest that ‘Muhammedans’ worship MuÈammad or think of him—analogous to how ‘Christians’ believe in ‘Christ”—as God, needs of course to be omitted. Once it has been clarified that MuÈammad is human and a prophet, the term ‘Muhammedans’ might be used again to designate Muslim-Believers.

[124] MS comments in a footnote: ‘Note that human beings are worshippers of God (al-#ubb§d), not His slaves (al-#abÊd). Worshippers of God enjoy freedom of choice, on a personal as well as political level, whereas slaves of God do not enjoy such freedom. Worshippers of God are capable of implementing justice in society, whereas slaves do not have such power. What Allah demands from every human being is worship (al-#ib§da), not slavery. So we are His worshippers (al-#ubb§d) in this world (but we are free to choose between obedience and disobedience), while in the Afterlife we will become His slaves (al-#abÊd), since no choice will then be left to humans. That is why we read in verse 56 of Sårat a l-Dh§riyy§t: ‘I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me.’ This should be read as: ‘human beings are worshippers of Me who obey Me so that their will is fulfilled, and they disobey Me through the freedom of their choice.’ However, this verse does not refer to the rituals of al-Êm§n, i.e., fasting,

alms tax, or pilgrimage, etc.’. The topic of freedom is discussed again in chapter 6.

[125] This phrase completes verse 2:113.

[126] The term ÈanÊf in the Qur’an usually connotes the meaning ‘monotheist other than Jewish or Christian’ (Ambros, Dictionary, 79) and is in Islamic fiqh positively denoted as referring to someone who is a sincere or straight believer (see MuÈammad b. #AlÊ al-Shawk§nÊ, Nayl al-awt§r min aÈ§dÊth Sayyid al-Akhy§r: SharÈ munãaqa ’l-akhb§r (Cairo: Id§rat al-•ib§#a al-MunÊriyya, n.d.), vol. 2, 208). According to al-•abarÊ, the term ÈanÊf also stands for the È§jj, i.e., the pilgrim who travels to Mecca, because the pilgrimage is mythologically linked to Abraham’s tradition, which is usually referred to as a l-ÈanÊfiyya (Abå Ja#far a l-•abarÊ, J§mi# a l-bay§n fÊ ta”wÊl al-qur”§n (Beirut: Mu”assasat al-Ris§la, 2000), vol. 3, 104). However, the term is differently defined by MS (see chapter 4). Although he keeps the direct meaning of ‘monotheist’ and ‘sincere’ (believer) he adds his indirect (interpreted) meaning, which is ÈanÊf, the human inclination to move (in curves) between the straight limits that God has set down. Whereas ÈanÊfiyya embodies the essence of humanness, straightness embodies the essence of the divine (and hence nonhuman) self.

[127] YA: ‘way of Abraham’; MP: ‘the tradition of Abraham’; AhA; AA: ‘the creed of Abraham’; MF: ‘the true religion of Abraham’; AH: ‘the religion of Abraham’; AB: ‘the religion of Ibrahim’; ‘religion’ seems to mean ‘creed’ with all translators, but Ambros (Ambros, Dictionary, 259) defines milla also as religious community (in the social, historical sense of religious tradition). MS wants to draw on this social, collective meaning of milla.

[128] This theory is fully explained in chapter 4. It basically contains MS’s fundamental position that the Qur’an should not be regarded as a book of codified law that stipulates exact punishment for specific crimes but, instead,

only indicates the outer boundaries (the upper and lower limits of moral and social tolerance) in God’s law. Human legislation, thus, should not take place with these outer boundaries but in between them.

[129] MS refers exclusively to the root n-b-# and hence nabba”a ‘to make s.th. known, to announce s.th.’ (as in 66:3), even though the conventional reference would be to n-b-y and nabÊy ‘prophet’, from Syriac nbÊy§ or from another Aramaic dialect (Ambros, Dictionary, 262). MS uses the semantic association between nubåwa (prophecy) and nubå”a (prognosis, prophecy), the latter linked to inb§” (notification, information), to establish his interpretation that the role of prophets is ‘to notify’ or ‘to inform’.

[130] Based on his assumption of two fundamentally different categories of divine revelation, MS defines verses according to their metaphysical status as either eternal, absolute, and objectively valid or as temporal, relative, and subjectively conditioned. Since MuÈammad enjoyed the status of the Prophet and the Messenger of Allah, MS argues, the Qur’an must reflect these two positions (which are conventionally not perceived as separated) in the form of two different categories of verses: verses of prophethood and verses of messengerhood. Chapter 3 provides a detailed explanation of this distinction.

[131] YA translates anb§” as ‘tales’, similarly MF: ‘their tales’; AhA: ‘whose accounts’; AH: ‘the stories of those towns’, but MS wants to convey the meaning of ‘news’ or ‘tidings’, as this was captured by other translators, e.g., AB: ‘we have given you news of them’; MP: ‘We relate some tidings of them to you’; AA: ‘We relate to thee tidings of’. In strictly legal terms, the fiqh scholars do not distinguish between al-khabar and al-naba”, but Arab linguists, who oppose the existence of synonymity in the Arabic language, usually define naba” as ‘extremely important information that the listener (i.e., the person who is informed) could not have known’, while khabar is defined as ‘normal information which the listener may or may not already know’ (see Abå Hil§l al-#AskarÊ, al-Furuq al-lughawiyya (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 2000), vol. 1, 528–30). It

seems that MS keeps this distinction as his khabar news are, for the first time, discernable to human knowledge, while naba” news might be known or not known, i.e., they have already become ‘yesterday’s news’, not ‘breaking news’ like the khabar news.

[132] RåÈ al-qudus is usually rendered as ‘the Holy Spirit’, see YA, AA, AH, MF, including MP who glosses ‘a term for the angel Gabriel’; different but not better AB: ‘the Purest Ruh’ and AhA: ‘divine grace’; Ambros (Ambros, Dictionary, 221) says: qudus is from Syriac qudà§, in 2:87 means ‘holiness’. Still, it does not provide the intended sense of ‘life-creating’. The best phrase to capture MS’s intention is to render it as ‘the spirit of life’ or, perhaps Pneuma Kyriou, ‘Spirit of the Lord’ (as in NT) that provides the way to (eternal) life.

[133] In a footnote, MS explains that regulations against the irresponsible use of natural resources should come through the implementation of the ethical rules as discussed in chapter 1. Since God’s religion, al-isl§m, can be broadly defined as ethics and moral principles, the implementation of a l-isl§m would secure a balance between humans and nature, and a responsible use of human and natural resources.

[134] Notice that the text uses the term a l-dhikr, and not a l-kit§b, a l-qur”§n, or a l-furq§n; on the nonsynonymous use of all these terms against conventional tafsÊr, see chapter 3.

[135] Most translators render al-dhikr literally as: ‘the Reminder’ (MF, AB, MP) or ‘the Remembrance”(AA); AhA says: ‘this exposition’; only AH thinks it is synonymous to: ‘the Qur’an’. MS believes that al-dhikr refers only to the actual textual format or, if recited aloud, its audible expression whose meaning is not (yet) discerned.

[136] If this term refers to a specific saying of MuÈammad it is written with a small initial letter (i.e., ÈadÊth). If, however, it refers to the

entire textual corpus of prophetic sayings and the scholarly (Muslim) study of it, it is written with a capital, \adÊth.

[137] M§lik ibn Anas Al-AßbaÈÊ, Muwaãã§ al-im§m M§lik (Abå DhabÊ: Mu”assasat Z§yid ibn Sulã§n $l Nahy§n, 2004), vol. 5, 1323 (ÈadÊth no. 3338).

[138] Abå al-Sa#§d§t Ibn al-“AthÊr, J§mi# al-ußål (n.p., n.d.), vol. 1, 68 (Kit§b al-i#tiß§m bi’l-kit§b wa’l-sunna; B§b al-istims§k bihim§).

[139] MS adds in a footnote the following explanation: ‘A short clarification is in order here in order to tackle the fateful legacy of synonymicist philology that holds the minds of our #ulam§” in a firm grip. Against that we hold the non-synonymous definitions of philological terms, such as utterance (nuãq), word (qawl), lexeme (lafí), and speech act (kal§m), that we derived from modern linguistics and classical, nonsynonymicist philology. We start with a quote from Qaãr al-nad§ wa-ball al-ßad§ by Jam§l al-DÊn b. Hish§m al-Anß§rÊ (d. 708 AH): [Begin of quote] ‘A word (kalima) is an utterance that can be found either alone or in a compound; a word (qawl) consists of a lexeme (lafí) that carries meaning, but not all lexemes are words; lexemes involve vocal sounds that are based on the letters of the alphabet—they may mean s omething or not. Thus, a word consists of a lexeme, denoting a specific meaning, that might be derived from one single sentence, such as: ‘Nay, this is a word he is speaking’. A word, given that it consists of a lexeme that carries meaning, can occur singly, such as Zayd, servant, bed etc., but it might form a compound if it consists of more than just one lexeme, such as the young boy Zayd, see verse 3 of Sårat MuÈammad: ‘Thus Allah coins their similitudes for mankind.” [End of quote]

An utterance (nuãq) is a vocal articulation that involves an intelligent connection of different lexemes (alf§í), to the extent that they are logically and meaningfully linked to each other. We might also call this the area of syntax. An utterance (nuãq) is also used to

produce meaningful articulations through which logically and meaningfully words (kalim§t) are interconnected in different ways. We might call this the area of grammar. The lexeme (lafí) of an utterance is a sound which the tongue, lips, and vocal cords produce in order to be heard. This can be found with humans as well as animals when dogs bark, wolves howl, or birds sing. A word (qawl), in contrast, could hold only one, singular segment or unit of this sequence of vocal articulation. A word (qawl) contains the meaning that is transported from the speaker to the listener in order to be understood.'

[The difference is here made between the words q§la All§h and naãaqa al-nabÊ, which are for MS not just two words for 'saying' but denote different meanings. Whereas q§la All§h denotes the real speaker and communicator of a meaningful sentence, naãaqa al-nabÊ denotes MuÈamm ad's utterances, i.e., a meaningful and coherent transmission of Allah's words. The former (q§la) relates to 'saying' whereas the later (naãaqa) refers to the pronouncement of what has been said. That the Book does not employ q§la when it refers to MuÈammad's sayings is, for MS, significant; it points to the impossibility of MuÈammad 'saying' revelations—contrary to what the verse of Al-Najm might suggest—because he can only 'pronounce' them.]

MS continues: 'Suppose we accept synonymity, it would mean that the verb naãaqa, i.e. to pronounce, has the same meaning as q§la, i.e. to speak. In this case, the sayings of God's messenger (naãaqa al-rasål) would enjoy the status of divine revelation (as in q§la All§h). This would imply that the prophetic ÈadÊths enjoy divine protection, that they are free of ambiguity and obscure meaning, that they need to be preserved literally (bi'l-lafí) and not just in terms of their meaning, and that no distinction can be made between the utterances of MuÈammad as Prophet and his utterances as Messenger of Allah. Against all of this we raise the following objection: the only book that legitimately contains the phrases q§la All§h and naãaqa rasål All§h is the Book. The phrase q§la MuÈammad in the books of ÈadÊths, must not be understood as equal to q§la All§h in the Book, even if these ÈadÊths

were transmitted by uninterrupted chains of transmitters that go back to the Prophet.’

[140] The terms Qur’an and Sunna (i.e., not in italics and with an initial capital letter) are used here in order to remain as close as possible to common usage in this context. Strictly adhering to MS’s terminology, however, Qur’an should be rendered as the Book or al-tanzÊl al-ÈakÊm. See chapter 3.

[141] This is a phrase taken from Sårat al-An#§m 6:100.

[142] All translators understood bayyan§hu as ‘to make s.th. clear’, which does not necessarily exclude the possibility that they saw this as synonymous with ‘to display’ and ‘to uncover’ as MS intends it—MF: ‘after making them clear’; AH: ‘made them clear’; MP: ‘made it clear’; AhA: ‘have made clear’; AB: ‘make things clear’; AA: ‘after we have shown them clearly’.

[143] Most translators follow MS here, e.g., MF: ‘you shall reveal it to mankind’; AH: ‘make it known’; AhA: ‘to make (its truth) known’; synonymous use in AB: ‘make it clear’; AA: ‘make it clear unto the people’; only MP equates tubayyanunnahu with ‘to explain it’.

[144] Similar to a previous footnote, MF: ‘to show you’; AH: ‘to make clear’; AhA: ‘announcing many things’; AB, AA: ‘making clear to you’; again with the exception of MP: ‘explaining to you’ who regards yubayyinu more in the sense of ‘to elucidate’ rather than MS: ‘to uncover’ or ‘to open out’. Lane (Book 1), distinguishes between circumstantial evidence and verbal evidence, the latter being ‘to make something apparent, manifest or perspicuous, either spoken or written’, and MS seems to follow this meaning of tubayyinu as ‘verbal evidence’.

[145] On this point, MS has added a footnote stating that Allah has taught human beings how to use their language in order to communicate to other people, and he remarks how, through such

intercommunicative skills, they establish groups and communities, that is, social cohesion in their daily life. The traditional scholars' insistence on the need of the sunna of the Prophet for the bay§n of the Book, seems really absurd in this respect, because [if bay§n means 'to show' and 'to display', and not the narrow notion of 'to explain"] why should communities in Tokyo, Cairo, Washington, or the Himalayas ever need the sunna of MuÈammad (ß) in order to hear God's speech? Surely, the disclosure or pronouncement of the Book in all these locations does not need the sunna of MuÈammad.

[146] For 16:89 and 75:19 it is my gloss because all translators render tiby§n and bay§n as 'to explain' and not as 'to make known' as MS intends it.

[147] This fiqh principle is based on the general linguistic distinction between the use of a word in its absolute, unqualified (muãlaq) meaning in contrast to its specific, qualified (muqayyad) meaning. The process of qualifying the general meaning of a word is called al-taqyÊd, while the reverse process is called al-iãl§q. In ußål al-fiqh and ußål al-qur"§n, al-taqyÊd refers to the effort of scholars to qualify an absolute, general rule and apply it to specific, particular legal cases, while a l-iãl§q refers to the effort to generalize a rule that has been stated only for a very specific, particular situation. Further distinctions are made between al-taqyÊd, al-takhßÊß, al-naskh, al-ta#lÊq and al-istithn§", see RafÊq al-#Ajm, Mawså#at mußãalaÈ§t ußål al-fiqh #inda 'l-muslimÊn (Beirut: Maktabat Lubn§n N§shirån, 1998), vol. 1, 486–87.

[148] MS adds in a footnote here: 'Through these rituals we are connected to an uninterrupted transmission of knowledge from the time of MuÈammad until today, a history of interconnection in which \adÊth scholars and the fuqah§" have played a very minor role. Indeed, their contributions to this are almost zero. With their excessive casuistry concerning the insignificant technical details of these rituals they

have made it even harder for people to practice them and participate in this tradition of transmitting knowledge from MuÈammad.

[149] #Abd al-RaÈm§n Al-SuyåãÊ, al-J§mi# al-saghÊr (Beirut: D§r a l-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 1, 52 (ÈadÊth no. 313).

[150] Reported by a l-Bukh§rÊ, quoted in Ibn a l-“AthÊr, J§mi# al-Ußål, vol. 1, 3866 (ÈadÊth no. 3820).

[151] Reported by Muslim, quoted in Muslim Abå’l-\usayn A l-NÊs§bårÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ Muslim (Beirut: D§r al-JÊl, n.d.), vol. 4, 79 (ÈadÊth no. 3197).

[152] In verse 59 of Sårat A l-Nis§” we hear that believers are asked not only to obey God and His Messenger but also ‘those charged with authority among you’. This requires a detailed analysis that is given in chapter 6.

[153] MS adds in a footnote: ‘That is, when MuÈammad forbade the worship of tombs he legislated against the worship, not the tombs as such. The same applies to the worship of stars, trees, rocks, and statues! It is not the dancing, singing, and sculpturing that people should not do—rather, what instigated MuÈammad’s legislation was the un-Islamic intention behind these things. It would imply mindless iconoclasm if the legislation was meant to rule out these things as such.’

[154] Al-Kahf 18:39 [FM].

[155] Abå D§wåd Al-Sajist§nÊ, Sunan Abå D§wåd (Beirut: D§r al-Kit§b al-#ArabÊ, n.d). vol. 4, 328 (ÈadÊth no. 4606).

[156] Al-Suyåã Ê, al-J§mi# al-ßaghÊr, vol. 1, 48 (ÈadÊth no. 288).

[157] In \anafÊ and M§likÊ law it is indeed encouraged, with specific reference to the Prophet's later permission, that men and women do visit the graves of their relatives. And—as MS rightly claims—for \anafÊ scholars such as the Syrian Wahba al-ZuÈaylÊ, the existence of such abrogating decisions by the Prophet in the \adÊth does indeed prove the existence of abrogating verses in the Qur'an itself (see Wahba al-ZuÈaylÊ, al-Fiqh al-isl§mÊ wa-#adillatuhu (Damascus: D§r a l-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 2, 679–10).

[158] This is a novel distinction proposed by MS, but in traditional fiqh there is a recognition of the fact that not all of the sunna of the Prophet is legislative (tashrÊ#Ê). There is, for example, the category of ghayr tashrÊ#a (nonlegal) or al-af #§l al-jibilliyya, that is, habitual activities (lit. acts of natural temperament) that consist of the P rophet's personal likes and dislikes and his everyday manners that do not have binding force. See Kamali, Hashim. Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence, Cambridge: Islamic Text Society, 1991, 50–57). The latter category might be covered by MS's class 5, 'personal statements', whereas the former category (of legislative Sunna) might be covered by his class 3, 'statements about legal injunctions', and yet neither of the two is seen to serve as a normative model for current legislation which is a decisive departure from traditional fiqh.

[159] Quoted from MuÈammad IdrÊs al-Sh§fi#Ê, Kit§b al-ris§la, in Fakhr a l-DÊn Mu Èam mad al-R§zÊ, Maf§tÊÈ al-ghayb (n.p., n.d.), vol. 25, 181 (tafsÊr of 33:34).

[160] Reported by Ibn M§jah, quoted in A l-QazwÊnÊ, Sunan Ibn M§jah (Beirut: D§r IÈy§" Kutub al-#Arabiyya, 1952), vol. 2, 784 (ÈadÊth no. 2341).

[161] Reported by Abå ‘^s§ al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan al-TirmidhÊ (Cairo: Sharikat Mußãaf§ al-B§bÊ, 1975), vol. 4, 668 (ÈadÊth no. 2518).

[162] Al-SuyåãÊ, al-J§mi# al-ßaghÊr, vol. 1, 11 (ÈadÊth no. 46).

[163] Reported by MuÈammad Abå #Abd All§h a l-Bukh§rÊ, a l-J§mi# a l-ßaÈÊÈ (Beirut: D§r ibn KathÊr, 1987), vol. 5, 2272 (ÈadÊth no. 5784).

[164] Al-Bukh§rÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ, vol. 1, 14 (ÈadÊth no. 13).

[165] Al-Bukh§rÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ, vol. 1, 12 (ÈadÊth no. 10).

[166] Al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan, vol. 5, 51 (ÈadÊth no. 2687).

[167] Al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan, vol. 5, 41 (ÈadÊth no. 2611).

[168] A ÈadÊth qudsÊ is, according to the #ulåm a l-qur”§n scholars, defined as a saying of God that was spoken through the medium of the Prophet. It is also called waÈy ghayr matlå, nonrecited revelation, in order to distinguish it from waÈy matlå, recited revelation, which is the Qur’an. While the Qur’an is the actual word of Allah (verbatim), a ÈadÊth qudsÊ contains God’s message expressed in the words of the Prophet. The Qur’an enjoys, at least theoretically, superior status due to several theological and ÈadÊth-specific considerations, for example, due to the fact that the Qur’an was narrated through taw§tur (multilateral) chains of transmission, while the aÈ§dÊth qudsiyya were narrated only by a khabar w§Èid (solitary) chain of transmission (see Mann§# KhalÊl al-Qaãã§n, Mab§Èith fÊ #ulåm al-qur”§n (Riyadh: Maktabat a l-Ma#§rif li’l-Nashr wa’l-TawzÊ#, 2000), 22). The fact that the Islamic tradition acknowledges the existence of divine revelation outside the covers of the Qur’an is unacceptable to MS as it opens up the possibility of divine inspirations that are expressed in human words— a

possibility too close to the claims of sanctity of Islamic fiqh that MS wants to combat.

[169] See also Fußßilat 41:6.

[170] The fiqh rule of naßß regulations implies that no ijtih§d is allowed in a matter of explicit Qur'anic injunctions (e.g. the Èudåd punishments). MS wants, in contrast, to exercise ijtih§d on exactly these naßß injunctions. An interpretation outside the realm of naßß verses he calls al-ta"wÊl, not ijtih§d.

[171] MS argues against the Islamist tendency to define a l-isl§m as law and to impose the most draconian legislation by a literal understanding of the aÈk§m injunctions. Against that, he defines al-isl§m as ethics and introduces the theory of limits that allows mitigations and a less punitive approach to law. A restrictive, literal, and even punitive approach is only allowed in the sphere of ethics, not in (formal) law.

[172] The notion of synonymity is explicit in AH: 'sent down the Qur'an Ourself', MF: 'revealed the Reminder' (which is explained in a footnote as 'the Qur'an'); YA: 'sent down the message', and AhA: 'sent down this exposition'; closer to the actual word meaning of al-dhikr are: AB: 'sent down the Reminder'; MP: 'reveal the Reminder'.

[173] MS intends to describe an antonymic term to 'ambiguous' (mutash§bih), that is, inconclusive, enigmatic, or indefinite, because its meanings are kept in a state of eternal indeterminateness until the Last Hour, hence the opposite term 'definite' (muÈkam), connoting explicitness, clearness, and exactness. It does not convey the meaning of perfection, as in MP: 'revelations of which are perfected; AH: 'whose verses are perfected'; AB: 'whose ayats are perfectly construed', nor of great length or detail, as in MF: 'Verses which are elaborately formulated';

or of strong appeal, AhA: ‘whose verses are indeclinable’, more in a sense of clarity, AA: ‘whose verses are set clear’.

[174] The translation of YA clearly does not capture MS’s intended meaning of mutash§bih§t as ambiguous; neither do AH: ‘a Scripture that is consistent’; MF: ‘a Book, both insistent and corroboratory…’; AB ‘a Book consistent in its frequent repetitions’; AhA: ‘the [sic] Book conformable in its juxtapositions’; MP: ‘A Scripture consistent’, or AA: ‘a Book, consimilar in its oft-repeated’.

[175] YA’s translation does not consider the conjunction wa-, but translates the second clause as a È§l-accusative, whereas MS takes it literally as referring to two different things. YA also does not translate a l-kit§b as book but as ‘revelation’ which makes it difficult to get across MS’s point of the juxtaposition of al-kit§b and al-qur”§n. A similar translation that ignores the wa- is: AH: ‘These are the verses of the Scripture, a Qur’an that makes things clear’. Other translators acknowledge the existence

[176] YA like most translators reads the negated third person singular l§ yamass[u] prescriptively because of the inserted ‘shall’. Similar are MF: ‘that only the purified shall touch’; AB: ‘No one may touch it except the purified’; AA: ‘none but the purified shall touch’; AH: ‘that only the purified can touch’; while MP understands it like MS as a description: ‘which no-one touches except the purified’. This discrepancy is reflected in the tafsÊr literature, where the statement is interpreted either as a proscriptive requirement of ritual purity for those who touch earthly copies of the Qur’an or as a description of the heavenly exemplar of the Qur’an touched only by the angels. See Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Cleanliness and Ablution.” (M.H. Katz), 343. AhA gives the verse a novel (modernist) touch, ‘Only they can reach it who are clean (of mind)’, in which the legal notion of purity is rendered in spiritual/moral terms.

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[177] YA understands the partitive preposition min as pertaining to all parts of the

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Book, similar to MF, AB, AhA, AA: ‘of the Book’; MP: ‘of the Scripture’, while AH: ‘the Scripture We have revealed to you [Prophet] is the Truth’ does not even acknowledge its existence but expresses what the others intended by ‘of the Book’ (i.e., all of it). But MS regards it as strictly partitive, i.e., (a) part of, some of it (not all).

[178] YA’s translation again avoids dealing with ‘books’ and renders kutub[un] as ‘laws’, likewise AhA: ‘containing firm degrees’; AB: ‘containing upright precepts’; AH: ‘containing true scriptures’; MP: ‘containing correct scriptures’, but MF: ‘wherein are valuable books’ follows MS in taking it literally as books, while the use of a capital in AA: ‘therein true Books’ may indicate an understanding of Scriptures other than the Qur’an (sent to the ahl al-kit§b and idolaters, see 98:1–2).

[179] Again, YA’s translation avoids rendering kit§b[an] as a ‘book’, so does AH: ‘We have recorded everything in a Record’ and AB: ‘We have recorded all things in writing’; but not MF: ‘Everything We have enumerated fully in a Book’; and AA: ‘everything We have numbered in a Book’; MP: ‘Everything We have recorded in a Book’; AhA: ‘We have kept account of every thing in a book’ (notice the small letter for book which reflects MS’s understanding that such a book is not the Book).

[180] Lit. ‘Mother of the Book’; this is how it will be translated forthwith.

[181] YA contrasts ‘verses basic or fundamental (of established meaning)’ with ‘other verses that are allegorical’, which is not what MS intends; similar AhA: ‘and others allegorical’ (in contrast to ‘categorical’) and MP: ‘and others (which are) allegorical’ (in contrast to ‘clear revelations’). The other

translators regard the verse as indicating hermeneutically two different categories of verses, AB: ‘and others which are open to interpretation’ (in contrast to ‘clear judgements’); MF: ‘and others which are ambiguous’ (in contrast to ‘precise in meaning’); AH: ‘and others are ambiguous’ (in contrast to ‘definite in meaning’); AA: ‘and others ambiguous’ (in contrast to ‘verses clear’). All translations, however, do not acknowledge a semantic difference between wa-ukhar[u] mutash§bih§t[un] (some others, i.e., other than these that are ambiguous) and al-§khir mutash§bih§t (the others are ambiguous) and render the former expression (of 3:7) as containing the meaning of the latter (which is not in 3:7). MS, in contrast, sees here a reference to another type of verse other than ambiguous and definite. It means that MS does not use 3:7 as a reference to the ‘ambiguous verses’ (he uses 39:23) but to the verses of tafßÊl al-kit§b.

[182] See the explanations given in the preceding footnote.

[183] ‘O you Prophet! Tell your wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And God is oftforgiving, most merciful’ (Al-AÈz§b 33:59).

[184] ‘O you who believe! Enter not the prophet’s houses—until leave is given you— for a meal, (and then) not (so early as) to wait for its preparation; but when you are invited, enter; and when you have taken your meal, disperse, without seeking familiar talk. Such (behaviour) annoys the prophet. He is ashamed to dismiss you, but God is not ashamed (to tell you) the truth. And when you ask (his ladies) for anything you want, ask them from before a screen: that makes for greater purity for your hearts and for theirs. Nor is it right for you that you should annoy God’s apostle, or that you should marry his widows after him at any time. Truly such a thing is in God’s sight an enormity’ (Al-AÈz§b 33:53).

[185] Abå’l-\usayn AÈmad Ibn F§ris al-QazwÊnÊ, (d. 395/1004). Mujmal al-lugha (Beirut: Mu”assasa al-Ris§la, n.d.), vol. 3, 722.

[186] YA’s rendering of al-dhikr as ‘message’ does not fully convey MS’s interpretation of it, unless one qualifies this message by saying that it is a message in human language so that human beings can remember it. Consistent with their previous renderings of a l-dhikr are AA: ‘wherein is your Remembrance’ and AB: ‘containing your Reminder’ but not AhA: ‘which has a reminder for you’ and MP: ‘in which is your Reminder’, which both here render it as ‘reminder’, and MF: ‘in which there is admonition for you’, who dropped his rendering as ‘reminder’ elsewhere. Again, AH: ‘a Scripture to remind you’ regards the genitive construct (38:1) or the adverbial clause (kit§ban fÊhi dhikrukum) in 21:10 as attributive clauses stated in order to describe the function of the Book/Scripture, not its set up as MS intends it. Lane (Book I), gives the meaning of dhikr also as Remembrance and adds ‘the presence of a thing in the mind’, also termed dhikr bi’l-qalb to distinguish it from dhikr in the sense of telling, saying, mentioning, i.e. dhikr bi’l-lis§n. It seems that MS tends—albeit not in their mystical interpretations within the Sufi-tradition—towards the former and intends to convey a ‘presence of the Qur’an in people’s minds’ (as an Arabic text) in his interpretation of al-dhikr.

[187] The idea of such a subjective genitive of possession is supported by several translations, e.g., AB: ‘By the Qur’an holding the Remembrance’; AA: ‘By the Koran, containing the Remembrance’; MF: ‘By the Qur’an which contains the Reminder’; to a lesser degree by AH: ‘By the Qur’an with its reminding’, but understood in an entirely different way by MP: ‘By the renowned Qur’an’, also AhA: ‘I call to witness the admonishing Qur’an’—al-dhikr is usually rendered as either a) reminder or b) admonisher, sometimes interchangeably because the Qur’an has been traditionally understood as a means of warning humankind against the consequences of overlooking (i.e., forgetting) God, see Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Remembrance.” (A. Brodersen), 422.

[188] ‘He is more eloquent in speech [afßaÈ] than I…’ (Al-Qaßaß 28:34).

[189] When Allah sent Moses to Pharaoh he said: ‘But speak to him mildly [fa-qål§ lahu qawl[an] layyin[an]]...’ (•§-H§” 20:44).

[190] As in: ‘and speak [qul] to them a word [qawl[an]] to reach their very souls

[b§ligh[an]]’ (Al-Nis§” 4:63).

[191] ‘His word is the truth…’ (Al-An#§m 6:73).

[192] ‘And God by His words does prove and establish His truth…’ (Yånus 10:82).

[193] ‘That is because God—He is the reality; and those besides Him whom they invoke—they are but vain falsehood…’ (Al-\ajj 22:62).

[194] ‘We created not the heavens and the earth and all between them but for just ends [bi’l-Èaqq]...’ (Al-AÈq§f 46:3).

[195] ‘Verily, when He intends a thing, His command is, “be”, and it is!’ (Y§-SÊn 36:82); ‘When He has decreed a plan, He but says to it, “be”, and it is!’ ($l #Imr§n 3:47); see also Sårat al-Kahf 18:35.

[196] YA’s translation of kit§b mubÊn as ‘record clear’ is unfortunate as it confuses it with MS’s rendering of im§m mubÊn as ‘a record clear’; AH: ‘a clear Record’; MP: ‘a clear record’; MF, AB: ‘a Clear Book’; the best rendering is with AA: ‘a Book Manifest’, but the closest, even if a bit wordy, translation of what MS intends is AhA: ‘recorded in the open book (of nature). This expresses exactly the notion of God’s signs manifested in the open (!) book of nature.

[197] Al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan, vol. 4, 448 (ÈadÊth no. 2139).

[198] Most translators follow this and render al-im§m al-mubÊn as ‘a record or register clear’, e.g., AB, AA: ‘a clear register’; AhA: ‘a lucid register’; MP: ‘a clear Register’; AH: ‘a clear Record’. And yet, MF: ‘a clear Master Register’ (fn: umm al-kit§b or lawÈ al-maÈfåí) shows that this is associated with the primordial register of al-lawÈ al-maÈfåí, an association that MS categorically rejects. Since the im§m mubÊn registers human events like a historiographer chronicles historical events, one could also understand it—according to Ambros—as ‘some kind of written document, prob. “ledger”’ (Ambros, Dictionary, 29).

[199] The term appears with the definite article, al-kit§b al-mubÊn, in: 12:1, 26:2, and 28:2, and indefinite, kit§b mubÊn, in: 5:15; 6:59; 10:61; 11:6; 27:1; 27:75; 34:3.

[200] Literally, the word ta”wÊl (derived from the root a-w-l) means ‘to return’, implying a return to the original meaning of a word in order to establish its real meanings and its unadultered semantic connotations. In the uß˚l al-tafsÊr literature it means three things: a) to understand a word on the basis of a connotation that is not its literal or primary connotation (this includes a symbolic or allegorical interpretation), b) to interpret a word or a phrase (i.e., by using your own rational judgement), and c) to explain the nature of a historical event (see Jal§l al-DÊn al-Suyåã Ê, al-Itq§n fÊ #ulåm al-qur”§n (Cairo, n.d.), 460–62). In \anafÊ uß˚l al-fiqh, the term ta”wÊl is used to refer to the process of choosing or preferring one specific meaning over others if a word or phrase has more than one connotation (al-mushtarak). The preferred connotation is referred to as al-mu”awwal (see Zayn al-DÊn b. Ibr§hÊm Ibn Nujaym, al-Ashb§h wa’l-naí§“ir (Damascus: D§r al-Fikr, 1986)). For MS, al-ta”wÊl is the search for the most adequate contemporary connotation that a Qur’anic word has acquired even if the resulting (indirect or secondary) interpretation is different from its literal (direct or primary)

interpretation. His point is that language, like everything else in society and history, changes, and that words develop new connotations which reflect adequately the current state of affairs in science and society. Even if the primary connotation of a word does not change (it stays fixed with the text's shape) its secondary connotations always do (the text's content), and it is the task of ta”wÊl to follow up on these constantly newly emerging meanings that the divine text allows.

[201] 'For every prophecy is a limit of time, and soon shall you know it' (A l-An#§m 6:67). 'Nay, they charge with falsehood that whose knowledge cannot compass, even before the interpretation thereof has reached them… (Yånus 10:39).

[202] Abå al-•ayyib AÈmad b. \ussayn al-MutanabbÊ (915–965), Arab poet, considered one of the greatest authors of the classical Arabic qaßÊda poetry. He was killed while on a trip near Baghdad.

[203] MuÈammad b. al-\asan b. al-Haytham (ca. 965–1039), Arab physicist, mathematician, and philosopher, became known in Europe under the name of Alhazen. He has influenced philosophers such as Roger Bacon (1214–1294) and the physicist Johannes Kepler (1571–1630).

[204] It would be natural to translate ta”wÊl as 'interpretation' as it has been conventionally defined as allegorical or symbolic interpretation (of 'åfis, Ism§#ÊlÊs, Mu#tazilites) in contrast to tafsÊr, which is a more literal reading or rather outward and circumstantial commentary (i.e. not strictly interpretation) of the Qur'an. And yet, it appears that 'apprehension', in the sense of 'to comprehend', 'to realize', and 'to absorb' is the more appropriate term since MS's process of ta”wÊl is not only a hermeneutical exercise of textual exegesis but a far wider (philosophical, scientific, epistemological, and textual) act of realizing the laws and entities of objective reality or, in using a term from Whitehead, pertains to a kind of 'concrescence' by which the individual entities of this existence acquire complete complex unity (see A. N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas (Cambridge: CUP, 1933), 303–4).

[205] Lit. ‘when its ta”wÊl comes’, i.e., in MS’s sense: ‘when its [full] interpretation is realized”—this is, of course, not quite captured in YA’s translation, nor in MF, AB: ‘its fulfilment’; MP: ‘the fulfilment of it’; closer is AH: ‘the fulfilment of its [final prophecy]’, but even more so AhA: ‘the day that (Reality) is unravelled’ and—one should add in the spirit of MS—it is fully and adequately perceived by the human senses or, as AA translates, when ‘its interpretation comes’. Whereas the translators are undecided whether ta”wÊl refers to the final unravelling of prophecy/reality or the interpretation of it, MS combines the two strings as one and renders it as the perception/interpretation of the fully unravelled (objective) reality. Ambros thinks that ta”wÊl, meaning either interpretation or ultimate outcome, consequences, could mean both in 7:53 (Ambros, Dictionary, 31).

[206] All the translations that were consulted keep the spatial connotation of ‘coming down’ [from heaven] which is, as it will become clear, not connotated in MS’s use of the word. The best translation of the term inz§l would be: ‘transformation of revelation so that it enters human consciousness’ and of tanzÊl: ‘delivery of revelation so that it penetrates the human mind’.

[207] Since the two terms are treated as synonyms, translators do not indicate a semantic difference. Therefore, one needs constantly to reread these verses in light of the new definitions provided by MS and pay attention to whether the verse mentions the verb nazzala or anzala.

[208] YA and—as it was to be expected—all the other translators render 2nd form ballagha and 4th form ablagha synonymously in the sense of ‘transport’, a move from one place to another, AA: ‘deliver (2nd)/ delivered’ (4th); AB: ‘transmit / transmit’; MP: ‘convey / deliver’; AhA: ‘convey or deliver / convey’; AH: ‘deliver or proclaim / deliver’; deliver or proclaim / deliver.

[209] Almost identical: ‘So Shu#ayb left them, saying: “O my people! I did indeed convey to you [ablaghtukum) the messages for which I was sent by my Lord: I gave you good counsel…”’ (Al-A#r§f 7:93).

[210] YA, MF, AH, AhA, AA: ‘delivered’; MP: ‘conveyed’; AB: ‘transmitted’.

[211] Al-inz§l without a l-tanzÊl: this is, MS maintains, why for example when it states that ‘manna and quails were sent down’, the text employs either nazzala (20:80) or anzala (2:57). In both verses the children of Israel are addressed and asked to ‘eat from the good things’, but while in the first instance (nazzaln§) in 20:80 the verse ends with the statement that ‘manna and quails were sent down’, in the second instance (anzaln§) in 2:57 the verse continues to say ‘eat of the good things We have provided for you’ which indicates that ‘manna and quails’ have become perceptible to human beings and are registered as food to be eaten, whereas in 20:80 this last step of perception through inz§l is not indicated.

[212] ‘When the anger of Moses was appeased, he took up the tablets; in the writing thereon was guidance and mercy for such as fear their Lord’ (Al-A#r§f 7:154).

[213] YA translates maknån as ‘well-guarded’, which does not fit MS’s rendering. AH is not much closer: ‘a protected record’, nor AB: ‘a well protected Book’; but AA: ‘a hidden Book’; MP: ‘a Book kept hidden’; AhA: ‘the well-kept Book’, and MF: ‘a hidden Book’ exactly render the phrase as MS sees it.

[214] See Sårat #Abasa 80:11–16.

[215] AH translates: ‘God erases or confirms whatever He will, and the source of scripture is with Him.’ Even if it does not render MS’s definition of

umm al-kit§b, it acknowledges a theological distinction between the book and its (heavenly) ‘source’.

[216] YA does not allow a literal reading of throne here, therefore he puts in parenthesis: (of dignity), implying that Joseph did not really raise his parents on the throne (of Egypt). AH, however, allows this possibility by translating: ‘and took them up to [his] throne’, the insertion excludes the figurative understanding that the parents were made the rulers of Egypt.

[217] See also verse 72 of Sårat ‘§d.

[218] ‘Praise belongs to God, Lord of the Worlds’ (Al-F§tiÈa 1:2, AH).

[219] ‘I will create a vicegerent on earth’ (Al-Baqara 2:30).

[220] MS adds here that historically, the stories of the qur”§n tell us how people have interacted with objective reality (the realm of sovereignty) by studying the prophethoods and how they coped with the rules of divinity by following the rules of messengerhoods. These stories are invaluable historical material and need to be studied in much detail.

[221] Al-Bukh§rÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ, vol. 2, 959 (ÈadÊth no. 2550).

[222] AÈmad b. Shu#ayb Al-Nasa”Ê, Sunan al-kubr§ li”-l-Nasa”Ê (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 1991), vol. 1, 550 (ÈadÊth no. 1786).

[223] It is not quite clear from where this second meaning is derived; #aíama means ‘majesty’, ‘exaltedness’, and since it is an attribute of God it is not used to describe a human being. Lane (Book I) gives as a second meaning ‘the thick part of the forearm; the half next to the elbow, of the forearm, in which is the [main] muscle’. It seems that MS

concurs with this ‘second meaning’ when he defines #aíama as strength.

[224] AH: ‘who take good care’; AA: ‘who are the managers of the affairs’; MP: ‘who are in charge’; AhA: ‘who are the support’; AB: ‘who have charge of’; MS defines the qaww§mån as ‘those in charge’ or ‘those with power and competence’. Likewise, Lane (Suppl.) describes qaww§m (a l-amr) as someone who manages and orders a thing or an affair, whereby it subsists; also as someone who has the power to withstand s. th.; but MS does not support the conventional understanding—and that of all translators—that al-rij§l means ‘men’ and al-nis§” means ‘women’. See chapter 5 for a detailed explanation.

[225] See also: ‘And further (thus): “set your face towards religion with true piety

[li’l-dÊn ÈanÊf [an]], and never in any wise be of the unbelievers”’ (Yånus 10:105); ‘Abraham was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to God, (and) true in faith [ÈanÊf [an]], and he joined not gods with God’ (A l-NaÈl 16:120); ‘So We have taught you the inspired (message), “Follow the ways of Abraham the true in faith [ÈanÊf [an]], and he joined not gods with God”’ (Al-NaÈl 16:123); ‘Abraham was not a Jew nor yet a Christian; but he was true in faith [ÈanÊf [an]], and bowed his will to God’s (which is Islam), and he joined not gods with God’ ($l #Imr§n 3:67); ‘Say: “God speaks the truth: follow the religion of Abraham, the sane in faith [ÈanÊf [an]]; he was not of the pagans”’ ($l #Imr§n 3:95).

[226] MP’s translation of ÈanÊf as ‘upright’ does not reflect MS’s intended ‘non-linear’, nor do AB: ‘a pure natural believer’; AhA: ‘I have chosen one way’; AA: ‘a man of pure faith’; AH: ‘a true believer’; YA ‘never [shall I give partners to God]’. Lane (Book I) defines ÈanÊf as ‘inclining to a right state or tendency’, also ‘inclining, from any false religion, to the true religion’, but in a more general sense

‘inclining, from one religion, to another’. It seems that MS intends to capture this moment of fluctuation, shift (from one end to another), and inconsistency that lies in such ‘inclining from one to another’ when he defines ÈanÊf.

[227] Alternative rendering: ‘I have turned my face as a true believer towards Him who created the heavens and the earth. I am not one of the polytheists’ [AH adds: ‘hanÊf [an], here, refers to I (Ibrahim) not the created heavens and earth”].

[228] The term ‘liminal’ only seems diametrically opposite to the anthropological concept of ‘liminal’ as Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner defined it. While it is true that for Turner liminality is a transitional state between two phases (during rites of passage) in which individuals were ‘betwixt and between’, i.e., neither staying any longer in the society that they previously belonged to nor yet entering into the society they will be part of in the future, and while this transitional state is characterised by an inversion of normative patterns of social hierarchy, the state of liminality in MS’s concept is a state of legislative effort by which the normative patterns of society are constantly sought after and, if necessary, reinforced. And yet, MS’s concept of liminality also acknowledges a form of legal ambiguity, openness, and indeterminacy (a l-tash§buh!) by which a certain degree of deviation (ÈanÊfiyya!) from the straight path set down by God is actually quintessential and only human. Moreover, as it is for Turner that during the state of liminality as sense of the ideal state of social existence is formed or anticipated (communitas), so is MS’s human society a permanently liminal experience that eventually leads to an ever-deeper realization (or apprehension) of divine knowledge, i.e., the totality of objective reality, which is as utopian as Turner’s notion of communitas. Because of this latter resemblance the term lex liminalis was chosen as it seems to us most appropriate to describe MS’s law of limits.

[229] The term ‘legal limits’ has been created to highlight MS’s significant departure from the traditional, legal understanding of Èadd / Èudåd which he interprets more in the literal sense of (geometrical) ‘limits’. As a legal terminus technicus, Èudåd

refers to the canonical punishments that are fixed (or limited) by a clear and decisive text in the Qur’an and/or the Sunna, with regard to which a judge does not possess any discretion. The \anafÊ school describes the Èudåd punishments as ‘the right of Allah’, while the other schools see them as ‘the right of human beings’ as well. Whereas the \anafÊ school restricts the Èudåd to five crimes (illicit sexual intercourse, theft, banditry, consumption of alcohol, false accusation of illicit sexual intercourse), the M§likÊ and Sh§fi#Ê schools also include homicide, apostasy, rebellion, and sodomy. Since the punishments for these crimes are already fixed, it has been the main concern of the fuqah§” to establish what exactly constitutes theft, adultery, robbery, etc. Like MS, they regard the Èudåd punishments as the upper limit, the maximum punishment that must not be exceeded, and for which it is possible to negotiate mitigating circumstances (see al-ZuÈaylÊ, al-Fiqh al-isl§mÊ, vol. 5, 5–12; R. Peters, Crime and Punishment in Islamic Law (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), 19–30; 53–68). MS, however, differs from fiqh a) by denying that fixing the Èudåd is beyond the intellect of the human mind and because of which he therefore allows human reason to exercise ijtih§d on them, and b) by expanding the field of Èudåd legislation to include the entire field of Islamic law and not just adultery, theft, robbery, etc., i.e., the area of penal law for which the term was solely used in classical fiqh theories. MS’s much wider understanding of Èudåd as ‘God’s boundaries’ in all aspects of social, public, and private life is indeed much closer to the Qur’anic text than its conceptualization in Islamic jurisprudence. (See Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Boundaries and Precepts.” (R. Kimber), 252– 53).

[230] This includes, says MS, legislation all over the world that is based on the existence of limits even if legislators are not aware that they notionally fulfil the guidelines set out in the Book. A good example is the prohibition of the death penalty in many countries of the world. Another example is the common practice of many banks not to charge interest of more than 100 percent of the given loan money (guidelines for this will be explained below in this chapter). Finally, there is the practice of many orphanages not to accept new admissions beyond the age of two. In all of these cases the practice is entirely Islamic even if it is not called or known by this attribute.

[231] ‘And remember Moses said to his people: “God commands that you sacrifice a heifer.” They said: “Are you making a laughing-stock of us?” He said: “God save me from being an ignorant (fool)!” They said: “Beseech on our behalf your Lord to make plain to us what (heifer) it is!” He said; “He says: The heifer should be neither too old nor too young, but of middling age. Now do what you are commanded!” They said: “Beseech on our behalf your Lord to make plain to us her colour.” He said: “He says: A fawn-coloured heifer, pure and rich in tone, the admiration of beholders!” They said: “Beseech on our behalf your Lord to make plain to us what she is; to us are all heifers alike. We wish indeed for guidance, if God wills.” He said: “He says: A heifer not trained to till the soil or water the fields; sound and without blemish.” They said: “Now have you brought the truth.” Then they offered her in sacrifice, but not with good-will’ (Al-Baqara 2:67–71).

[232] This goes back to a story narrated by al-QurãubÊ according to which #Umar pardoned a servant who had stolen ‘from the property of his master and from the property of someone of the bayt al-m§l’. The reason #Umar gave was that the servant had (even if only nominally) a share in the master’s property (lahu fÊhÊ naßÊb[un]). No dissension, according to the sources, was reported from his companions (see Abå #Abdall§h MuÈammad b. AÈmad al-Anß§rÊ al-QurãubÊ, al-J§mi# li-aÈk§m al-qur”§n (Cairo, n.p., 1952), 2nd ed., vol. 6, 169).

[233] In traditional \anafÊ law the following conditions have to be fulfilled before a punishment for theft can be carried out: a) the thief at the time of the crime is mentally sound; b) he/she has reached the age of puberty; c) he/she has stolen something not less than the worth of a niß§b that is one dÊn§r or ten dirhams (i.e., the equivalent of ca. 4.373 grams of gold); d) he/she has stolen something securely held; e) he/she did not steal under coercion; f) he/she did not steal as a result of (mental) confusion; g) the stolen item was wholly owned by someone else; h) there exists a confession of theft or the testimony of two witnesses. If these conditions are fulfilled, the thief’s right hand is to be amputated. If a convicted thief stole for a second time, his/her left foot is to be amputated; and if a third time, he/she is to be imprisoned until he/she repents (see #Abd al-GhanÊ al-

Mayd§nÊ, Lub§b fÊ sharÈ al-kit§b (Beirut: D§r al-Kit§b al-#ArabÊ, n.d.), vol. 1, 336–41). In contrast to this, MS allows more mitigating circumstances and he allows, in addition, the introduction of a completely different set of punishments (even if all eight conditions have been met in the case of theft), whereby the amputation of the hand or foot is avoided at all costs.

[234] \anafÊ law provides a very similar ruling but supplies a much more complex lists of lawful and unlawful food that MS wants to avoid by referring to an exhaustively clear lower limit of food taboos. \anafÊ jurists distinguish between meat from animals that live in the sea and those that live on land, and then between a) bloodless animals, b) animals that bleed if slaughtered, and c) animals that do not bleed; and finally with regards to category b) between domestic and wild animals. Everything from the sea except fish is unlawful, so are bloodless, blood-static (except locusts), and wild animals. Consumption of animals that live from impure substances are also unlawful unless they were fed with lawful substances before they were slaughtered. These categories and distinctions are not all Qur'anic and hence have for MS no legal significance (see #Al§" al-DÊn al-K§s§nÊ, al-Bad§"i# al-ßan§"i# fi'l-tartÊb al-shar§"i#, vol. 5, 35–62).

[235] According to \anafÊ law there are several regulations that govern the handling of debts and loans in Muslim societies. The most significant regulations are as follows: a) the transaction (of a loan) must be contracted in writing; b) it is compulsory to have the testimony of two men or, in the absence of two men, the testimony of one man and two women; c) the time of the repayment and its potential deferral must be specified; d) the repayment must not be delayed (if possible); e) the repayment should not be made earlier than the specified date. This seems to follow quite closely the injunctions of 2:282–83 and is—according to MS—the lower limit in such financial transactions. However, MS interprets 2:282 as referring to verbally finalized contracts which is against the fuqah§"s understanding of a reference to written contracts. According to MS, if the contract is written down, the minimum requirement is the testimony of one man and one woman, not one man and two women.

[236] For a detailed analysis of 24:31, see chapter 5. The rendering of 24:31 has been done by myself [AC] in the light of MS's interpretations thereof. MS deviates considerably from the conventional renderings of this verse so that no available translation can be used.

[237] Like YA, all translators render fa-aqta#å aidiyahum§ as 'cut off the hands' (AH; AA; MP, MF; AB), except AhA who writes 'cut his hand' and adds a similar argument as MS: 'in 12:31 […] [it] means they wounded their hands or stopped peeling fruit, not cut off their hands. Hence here, in v. 38, it could mean to stop their [i.e., the thieves'] hands from stealing by adopting a deterrent' (fn. 2, 113).

[238] All translators without exception (i.e., including AhA) render la-uqaããi#ann[a] as 'to cut off' and do not seem to see a problem in the (technically) impossible sequence of punishment from amputation to crucifixion.

[239] Only on this last point does MS differ from classical Islamic jurisprudence which does not accept imprisonment as a form of punishment. If someone is killed accidentally (khaãa") or semi-intentionally (shibh #amd) the killer is liable to pay an increased blood price (diya mughallaía) and retaliation is thus avoided. But MS upholds the notion of qiß§ß or retaliation in the case of intentional killing, and yet he does not specify whether the state authorities or the family of the victim perform the act of retaliation. According to Islamic fiqh, qiß§ß is carried out by the nearest kin of the victim after the conviction has been officially confirmed. The schools differ as to who among the relatives has the right to demand qiß§ß, but they agree that if the victim has no known relatives the state will take over the task of qiß§ß. The M§likÊ, Sh§fi#Ê, and \anbalÊ schools state that the murderer is to be killed in the same way as he murdered his victim, while the \anafÊ school allows in principal only execution by the sword—but for other types of punishment they acknowledge the possibility of ta#zÊr, i.e., discretionary considerations by the executive officials and judges. See al-ZuÈaylÊ, al-Fiqh al-isl§mÊ, vol. 7, 494–532; Peters, Crime and Punishment, 38–53.

[240] #Alms [ßadaq§t] are for the […] [financially enslaved] [fi ’l-riq§b] […]. (Thus is it) ordained by God, and God is full of knowledge and wisdom’ (A l-Tawba 9:60). Translators maintain ‘slaves’ in their rendering of riq§b, but MP widens its meaning to: ‘to free the captives’ (but not for 2:177 where he keeps ‘slaves’), also AhA: ‘redeeming slaves (and captives).

[241] ‘It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West. But it is righteousness to believe in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the messengers; to spend of your substance [“at§ a l-m§l], out of love for Him, for […] the ransom of [the financially enslaved] [fi ’l-riq§b]; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity [zak§h]; to fulfil the contracts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing’ (Al-Baqara 2:177).

[242] MS understands the Arabic word al-f§Èisha in this context not as ‘lewdness’ in the sense of any illicit heterosexual relations (adultery or fornication) but as an illicit public homosexual intercourse between either two women (4:15) or two men (4:16). This allows him to see no contradiction with the other verses (and what they contain of punishments) that deal with ‘abomination’ in a heterosexual context.

[243] The harshness of MS’s verdict on repeated public homosexual activity reflects the severity by which homosexuality is treated in Islamic fiqh. In the M§likÊ, Sh§fi#Ê, and \anbalÊ schools homosexual intercourse is equated to illicit sexual intercourse (al-zin§) and is, therefore, punished by death through stoning (M§likÊ) or the sword (Sh§fi#Ê and \anbalÊ). According to the \anafÊ school, punishment is determined by ta#zÊr or discretionary (corrective) chastisement because the treatment of the punishment for homosexuality lacks, unlike zin§, a clear naßß. The most frequently prescribed punishment by \anafÊ jurists is flogging or imprisonment, but they acknowledge the possibility of the death penalty if

the ‘offence’ is repeated (see al-JazÊrÊ, al-Fiqh #al§ ’l-madh§hib al-arba#a, vol. 5, 63; Peters, Crime and Punishment, 61–62). MS demands punishments ‘short of death’ which means that he follows the position of the \anafÊ school in the case of nonrepentance and the continuation of homosexual practices. As for female homosexuality, it is a great offence according to all four schools. There is however, a consensus among the fuqah§” that the rule of Èadd is not applied to lesbianism, so that the punishment is given according to ta#zÊr, because full sexual intercourse (with penetration) does not take place between two women (see a l-JazÊrÊ, a l-Fiqh, vol. 5, 63). MS follows this logic of ‘lighter punishment’ and proposes corrective ta#zÊr measures of chastising lesbian ‘offenders’. MS stays more or less within the remits of classical fiqh but restricts punishments for homosexuality to acts of sexual intercourse in public. His more liberal interpretation allows homosexual couples a loving relationship without feeling guilty as long as they do not act it out in public. In this respect, public homosexual intercourse is not better or worse than public heterosexual intercourse which is equally illicit. What matters is not the sexual orientation of people but the undermining of the public order through sexual obscenities. This queer-friendly interpretation offers a possibility to homosexual Muslims to reconcile their sexuality to their faith.

[244] According to \anafÊ law, both man and woman must be held accountable for the offence of zin§ if they meet the following criteria: a) that they had illicit sexual intercourse (with penetration), outside a marital relationship, and b) that they either confessed this act four times on four different occasions, or four witnesses testified against them by providing specific details about the intercourse. As for its punishment, if the offender is a muÈßan/a, i.e., if he or she is a free adult who has previously enjoyed legitimate sexual relations in matrimony, he/she would be punished by death (stoning). If he/she is not a muÈßan/a the punishment is one hundred lashes applied to the whole body except for the face and the private parts (see Ibn Mawdåd al-MåßilÊ, al-Ikhtiy§r li-ta#lÊl al-mukht§r, vol. 2, 311–16). It is obvious that MS does not accept the death penalty since it cannot be supported by any textual evidence from the Qur’an (it is based on a ÈadÊth that changed flogging into stoning, even though the ÈadÊth only mentions the stoning of the married female adulterer. See Peters, Crime and Punishment, 60).

[245] Ambros summarises the use of rib§ as follows: ‘lit. “increase”, is used in eight places, with reference to the practice of lending money (or possibly other goods) with an increased charge, in at least three different ways: 1. “the practice in question itself” (2:275, 2nd & 3rd occ.s), 2. “(unlawful) gain from this practice” (2:275, 1st occ., 2:276, 3:130, 4:161), 3. “money that is lent” (30:39), while in the last place (2:278) the word appears to mean “contract stipulating the payment of interest” or possibly “outstanding payment of interest” (note the spelling in 30:39 r-b-” indet., in the other places articled: “lrbw”’(Ambros, Dictionary, 107–8).

[246] In the \anafÊ fiqh literature rib§ is commonly described as of two kinds: a) rib§ al-nasÊ”a, also defined as credit, and b) rib§ al-fa·l or surplus rib§. The first kind, rib§ al-nasÊ”a, refers to a transaction of goods by which one party receives a higher amount in return for accepting the delay of payment by the other party. The second kind, rib§ al-fa·l, refers to an exchange of similar goods between two parties in which one party receives an unfair gain in the six forbidden commodities: gold, silver, barley, salt, wheat, and dates. For both kinds of rib§ the legal ruling is Èurma, impermissibility, which rendered the transaction as f§sid, corrupt or incomplete. However, the example is often quoted of the ßaÈ§ba who believed that only the second type is impermissible as it was explicitly forbidden by the Qur’an, while the first type was only mentioned in the Sunna. Al-ZuÈaylÊ believes that this opinion has been challenged by the majority of fuqah§” and that a consensus has been established according to which all types of rib§ are forbidden (see a l-ZuÈaylÊ, al-Fiqh al-isl§mÊ, vol. 5, 353–71). MS aims at bypassing this uncompromising disapproval of financial gain through rib§ and proposes a more flexible position whereby financial gains are controlled, reassessed, and, if necessary, capped by state regulations (more in line with the existing banking system).

[247] MS’s definitions of the Arabic terms are not given by any of the consulted translations. A typical rendering [by YA] would be: “It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in God and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfil the contracts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing’ (Al-Baqara 2:177).

[248] Same as previous footnote; YA renders this verse as follows: #Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of God; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by God, and God is full of knowledge and wisdom’ (Al-Tawba 9:60).

[249] In brief, qiy§s in Islamic fiqh means judicial analogy and is a juristic tool that legal scholars use when they are dealing with issues for which there is no specific provision in the Qur’an or the Sunna. It is technically defined as the extension of an original legal precedent to a subsidiary case by virtue of an effective ‘illa, or cause common to both. Not all judicial analogies today take their original legal precedent from the early period of Islam, but it is the case—as MS says—that the fuqah§” aim to legitimize their legal rulings by at least one supportive statement (that resembles in cause or reason their current ruling) from the Sunna or other early authoritative texts of their legal school. For MS, such reassurance by rulings of the past is an obstacle to the formulation of a system of law that is firmly rooted in the contemporary, modern, period.

[250] MS alludes here to Newton’s groundbreaking solutions to inherently difficult problems in analytical geometry by drawing tangents to curves (differentiation) and by having defined areas bounded by curves (integration), which are both elementary for MS’s approach to solving the problems of Islamic inheritance law. The specific mathematical reference here is to Newton’s method of approximation that is iterative and that

employs a differential expression which is the derivative f″(x) of the function, a kind of a fluxion that is based on a theory of limits. See P. Kitcher, “Fluxions, Limits, and Infinite Littleness: A Study of Newton’s Presentation of the Calculus,” Isis 64, no. 221 (1973), 33–49, and N. Kollerstrom, “Newton’s Method of Approximation: An Enduring Myth,” British Journal for History of Science 25 (1992), 347–54.

[251] The slave trade in Islam was banned for the first time in 1847 for the region of the Persian Gulf, and in 1887 the authorities of the Ottoman Empire signed with Great Britain a convention against it. The last Muslim countries to outlaw slavery were Qatar (1952), Saudi Arabia (1962), and Mauritania (1980). Even though slavery is now not practiced any longer in the Arab and Muslim world, Islamic fiqh ‘only’ strongly discourages the practice of slavery but does not, because it cannot formally abolish an explicitly condoned practice in the Qur’an, declare it as obsolete. Hence, the notion of slavery still exists in principle (see al-ZuÈaylÊ, al-Fiqh al-isl§mÊ, vol. 3, 359–61; vol. 8, 67–69. See also William Clarence-Smith, Islam and the Abolition of Slavery (New York: OUP, 2006)).

[252] A female companion of the Prophet who died in the year 655. She came from the famous tribe of the Banå Asad and was known for her elegant poetry and her skills in warfare. She was among the Muslim women who were taken as prisoners of war during the Battle of Yarmåk where she led a campaign to fight for their freedom. She also impressed the caliph #Umar b. al-Khaãã§b and the Muslim commander Kh§lid b. WalÊd with her bravery when she came to Syria to free her brother 4ir§r who was held captive by the Byzantine army (see Abå #Abd All§h al-W§qidÊ, FutåÈ al-Sh§m (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 1997), 42–48; 208).

[253] Sumayya bint a l-Khayy§ã, a female Abyssinian slave of Abå \uzayfa b. al-MughÊra who had converted to Islam in the early period of MuÈammad’s mission. She died as a result of brutal torture by Abå Jahl and was subsequently considered the first female martyr in Islam, although strictly speaking in a (traditional) Sunni Islamic context, martyrs are primarily those who fight unbelievers for the advancement of Islam in a military confrontation and who sacrifice their lives for this. As a consequence, Muslim exegetes count those fighters who fell at UÈud (625) as the first martyrs (see

Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Martyrs.” (W. Raven), 281–87). MS vehemently contests this definition of martyrdom (see chapter 6), that is why he considers Sumayya as the true first martyr of Islam.

[254] Like YA other translators render the Arabic al-n§s and al-nis§” as referring to men (al-n§s) and women (al-nis§”), even though al-n§s is gender neutral and includes men and women, AH: ‘the love of desirable things is made alluring for men—women, children…’; AA: ‘Decked out fair to men is the love of lusts—women, children…’. Other translators render al-n§s in a more generic sense as ‘mankind’ (although still gendered—it should be humankind!) or ‘people’, but still translate al-nis§” as ‘women’; AB: ‘To mankind the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colours: women and children’; MF: ‘attractive to mankind is made the pleasures of women’; AhA: ‘Enamoured are the people of the lust of (earthly) pleasures, of women and of children’; MP: ‘Beautified for mankind is love of the joys (that come) from women and offspring’. This rendition of [gender biased] mankind (loves) women is for MS still not satisfactory since it: a) allows us to regard women as a commodity, not more than ‘heaped-up hoards of gold and silver, and b) it is theologically inconsistent since mankind’s (at least generically comprising both men and women) love of women sanctions women’s love of women and this is not explicitly sanctioned by the Book.

[255] Like YA, AH renders al-nis§” straightforwardly as ‘wives’, implying that the verse addresses the (sexual) relationship of a (heterosexual) marriage, ‘your wives are your fields’. The others keep al-nis§” generically as ‘women’, MF, AA: ‘your women are a tillage for you’; AhA: ‘women are like fields for you’; MP: ‘your women are a tilth for you’; AB: ‘your women are fertile fields for you’, but both renderings are for MS still inherently misogynist in the way they project women as objects or commodities for sating men’s lust.

[256] The translators of the Qur’an are no exception to this, as we can see in the examples given in the two previous footnotes.

[257] ‘Mankind’ is, unlike the nongendered Arabic term al-n§s, a gendered term. That is why ‘humankind’ much better translates the gender neutrality of the Arabic original.

[258] MS says ‘sons and daughters of Adam’, in contrast to YA’s rendering of baniya adam as only ‘sons of Adam’; also AB ‘the sons of Adam’, but others have kept it, as MS, more gender neutral, MF, AhA, MP, AA, AH: ‘the Children of Adam’.

[259] These are the bounds set by God, so do not go near them [la taqrabåh§]… (Al-Baqara 2:187, AH).

[260] MS adds in a footnote: ‘Testimony has been prescribed in several verses of the Book, and in verse 180 of Sårat a l-Baqara it is enforced in a similar authoritative manner as the command to pray and to fast. “It is prescribed, when death approaches any of you, if he leave any goods that he make a bequest to parents and next of kin, according to reasonable usage—this is due from the God-fearing.” In contrast, verses of inheritance are only three, as in Sårat a l-Nis§” 11–13. Moreover, in four different passages, Allah clearly prioritizes the attention to bequests over the payment of inheritance; one of them reads as follows: “[In all cases, the distribution comes] after the payment of any bequests or debts…” (A l-Nis§” 4:11). This quotation needs no further explanation!”

[261] This rendering of YA is shared by AH: ‘daughters, two or more’, but the Arabic term is nis§” (women), not ban§t (daughters), and also the other translators accept that fawq ithnatain means ‘more than or above two’, AB: ‘if there are more than two daughters’, and that al-nis§” does not specifically connote only ‘daughters’, AA: ‘if they be women above two’; MP: ‘women more than two’; AhA: ‘women only, and of them more than two’; MF: ‘if there be more than two females’.

[262] How does the verse indicate this by employing walad—child? That is, how does this imply the existence of the nonbiological mother Mary (umm)? MS adds that the verses about Jesus and Mary show that, when the boy Jesus was about to be conceived by Mary, his mother is referred to in the text as w§lida (because she was then under the impression that she would be the biological mother of Jesus), but when Jesus was an adult and all the details of his perception were made clear to Mary, the verses refer to Jesus as Ibn Maryam, implying that she was his umm, not his w§lida.

[263] MS added a comment that a caregiver-mother is the main type of a nonbiological mother; other types are, for example, a surrogate mother or a wet nurse; caregiver-mothers are foster mothers who have either adopted their children or cared for them during their childhood (without formally adopting them). In this role she will inherit from her children, not the child's biological mother.

[264] See chapter 4: MS defines mas§kÊn not as poor but as handicapped people, i.e., those whose bodily functions are paralyzed or 'still' (sakana).

[265] 'From what is left by parents and those nearest related there is a share for men and a share for women, whether the property be small or large—a determinate share' (Al-Nis§" 4:7).

[266] The best translation in MS's sense would be: 'If there are more than two females (in the family), their share is…', as observed by MF: 'If there be more than two females, then they should receive…' and AA: 'And if they be women above two, then for them…'.

[267] Some translators ignore the exact syntactic sequence of the Arabic verse 'if there are women, more than two' and condense it to: 'if there are

more than two women/daughters/females', e.g., AB: 'if there are more than two daughters'; MF: 'if there be more than two females', more precise are AA: 'if they be women above two'; MP: 'women more than two'; AhA: 'women only, and of them more than two'.

[268] The technical term is Èajb (prevention). Syria changed the old rules of inheritance in 1952. According to the new law, grandchildren and grandparents are now entitled to receive their shares even if the parents or children of a deceased are no longer alive. Previously, grandparents/grandchildren were excluded from the inheritance even though those who excluded them when they were alive (i.e., parents or children of the deceased) had already died. The inheritance was then simply distributed elsewhere, while grandparents/grandchildren received nothing at all. Now, the inheritance is distributed as if they were alive but no longer exclude the more distant in line. However, only male inheritors are considered, while women are still excluded from inheriting anything at all. MS wants to change this as well and proposes that both sexes benefit from this change of law.

[269] In this reversal of priorities MS deliberately departs from traditional Islamic fiqh. Even though the importance of a bequest is acknowledged by all schools of law, there is also a consensus that the deceased's will cannot overrule the laws of inheritance. A will is seen as significant only if the deceased was in debt so that his leftover wealth can be used to repay the debts or similar liabilities. According to \anafÊ law it is not permitted to write a bequest for someone's legal inheritors (who will be allotted their fixed share). It is also the rule that, after paying off the deceased's debts, a bequest can only amount to a third of the person's wealth (see a l-JazÊrÊ, al-Fiqh #al§'l-madh§hib a l-arba#a, vol. 3, 134–40). The rules of inheritance law say that the full wealth of the deceased, or of what remains in case debts had to be repaid or onethird had to be bequeathed, is distributed among the inheritors. \anafÊ law distinguishes between two primary groups: a) aßÈ§b al-furå·, or those who possess the obligatory (shares), i.e., father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, husband, wife, full sister, consanguine sister, uterine brother and uterine sister, and b) al-#aßabah, or the residuary heirs, who consist of three groups, 1) the agnatic heirs, i.e., brother, son, paternal uncle, and nephew, 2) the parallel residuary, i.e., daughter, the son's daughter, sister, and consanguine sister, and 3) the uterine heirs, i.e., those

who have kinship with the deceased (see al-Mayd§nÊ, al-Lub§b fÊ sharÈ al-kit§b, vol. 1, 419–27). It is obvious that MS not only restored the supremacy of bequest over inheritance laws, he also reformed the inheritance laws to a considerable extent in his effort to make them less complicated, much leaner, and entirely focused on the relatives of the first and second degree. In return, he widened the scope of bequests so that those relatives who are, in this new model, no longer considered as legal inheritors have a greater chance to become beneficiaries of a will.

[270] The term polygyny is defined as the practice of having more than one female partner (either wife or sexual partner) at the same time. Since the Arabic term ta#addud a l-zaw§j has only been discussed as a concept that pertains to the marriage of more than one wife, the more general term polygamy (marriage of more than one male or female partner) has not been used.

[271] And give the women (on marriage) their dower as a free gift; but if they, of their own good pleasure, remit any part of it to you, take it and enjoy it with right good cheer. * To those weak of understanding, make not over your property, which God has made a means of support for you, but feed and clothe them therewith, and speak to them words of kindness and justice (Al-Nis§” 4:4–5).

[272] AA’s translation comes closest to MS’s intention. YA’s rendering ‘marry women of your choice’ seems to yield an element of arbitrariness (on the side of the marrying men) that MS would not tolerate. Similarly, MF: ‘marry such of the women as appeal to you’; MP: ‘women who seem good to you’; AH: ‘marry whichever [other] women seem good to you’, while AB: ‘marry other permissible women’ and AhA: ‘marry women who are lawful for you’ [fn. i.e., those who are not al-maÈ§rim] understand m§ ã§ba lakum as a legal phrase indicating ‘lawful’ or ‘legitimate’.

[273] AH: ‘orphan girls’ [in your charge]; MF: ‘orphan women’; AA: ‘orphan women’; MP: ‘female orphans’; AhA: ‘orphaned women (in your charge)’; AB: ‘orphan girls’; clearly, for once, YA, unlike the other translators, captures

MS’s intention to see here an objective genitive, by saying: ‘orphan of women’.

[274] According to all four legal schools, it is permissible for a man in normal circumstances to have up to a maximum of four wives at a time, provided that equality, such as the provision of food and maintenance as well as parity in overnight stays, can be guaranteed among all wives. The four schools only differ in explaining what exactly constitutes the required equal treatment of all wives, and it is correct to say that Islamic fiqh does not discuss the virginal, family, or economic status of the future wives, i.e., the fuqah§” do not suggest what MS calls a qualitative examination of the wife in spe, but only an assessment of the situation of the existing, current wife of the polygynous husband or of the situation after he has already married a new wife (see al-JazÊrÊ, al-Fiqh #al§’l-madh§hib al-arba#a, vol. 4, 85; 115–20).

[275] Other translators render al-nis§” not as YA by the old formal, legal term ‘consort’ but straightforwardly as ‘wife’; AH, AB, AA: ‘Wives of the Prophet’; MF, AhA: ‘O wives of the Prophet’; MP: ‘O you wives of the Prophet’. The SÊra and \adÊth scholars disagree about the exact number of his wives, some count nine as the minimum, others twelve as the maximum. The \anafÊ school lists eleven wives: 1) KhadÊja bint Khuwaylid, 2) Sawda bint Zam”a, 3) #$“isha bint Abå Bakr, 4) \afßa bint #Umar, 5) Zaynab bint Khuzayma, 6) Umm Salima bint Abå Umayya, 7) Zaynab bint JaÈsh, 8) Juwayriyya bint \§rith, 9) Umm \abÊba bint Abå Sufy§n, 10) ‘afiyya bint \uyaÊ, and 11) Maymåna bint a l-\§rith. M§riya a l-Qibãiyya (12) was a slave woman gifted to the Prophet by the king of Egypt. According to the \ anafÊ position she remained a slave (and cannot be counted as a wife), while others argued that the Prophet freed her and formally married her afterwards.

[276] MS proposes here a purely historical approach to the Prophet’s personal and marital practices, which is, inevitably, turning the traditional fiqh position on its head. The legal scholars have generally maintained that there were only very few specific rulings that only applied to the Prophet, one of which is that he was allowed to perform ßawm a l-

wiß§l (a continuous fast that ignores the normal break after sunset during Ramadan), and another was the permission to marry more than four wives at a time (see above).

[277] MF, AA, AhA: ‘aversion’; AH: #alienation’; AB: ‘cruelty or aversion’; MP: ‘illtreatment’.

[278] MF, MP, AB: ‘to be in charge’; AH: ‘to take good care’; YA: ‘to guard and protect’; AhA: ‘to support’; AA: ‘to manage the affairs’. In particular AA’s rendering corresponds with MS’s interpretation of al-qaww§mån.

[279] Here, MS’s interpretation of al-rij§l is unique; no translator renders ar-rij§l different from either ‘men’ (AA, MP, AhA, AB, MF) or ‘husband’ (AH). Lane gives the same derivatives as MS and lists as the only possibility whereby al-rajul can connote both sexes as al-rajul§n, i.e., the dual of sing. rajul, ‘sometimes means a man and his wife’ [my emphasis] but adds that ‘predominance being thus attributed to the former’; or a l-rajula, ‘a woman who is, or affects to be, or makes herself, like a man in some of her qualities, or states, or predicaments’ adding that #$“isha was called rajulat al-ra”y, ‘meaning she was like a man in judgement’. It seems that the term is predominately masculinised and that MS relies here on the gender-neutral meanings of all the other derivatives of r-j-l in order to render al-rij§l as unisex.

[280] Al-NÊs§bårÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ Muslim, vol. 8, 8 (ÈadÊth no. 8867).

[281] All translators consulted think otherwise and translate al-nis§”, like YA, as ‘women’. Ambros lists, as do all other dictionaries, al-nis§” under the radical root of n-s-w (Ambros, Dictionary: 267), whereas MS links al-nis§” to the root of n-s-”, hence his interpretation of nis§” in the sense of nasÊ”, lit. ‘postponed’. However, the link is not as far-fetched as it seems. Lane lists under n-s-” terms such as

nas” [un], nus” [un] and nis” [un]: ‘a woman who is supposed to be pregnant’, also nasu” [un] or nusu” [un]: ‘in whom pregnancy has appeared’; in the sense of nasi” [un]: ‘a woman whose menstrual discharge is later than its usual time, and who is therefore hoped to be pregnant’. In the last example, the semantic connection between n-s-” and n-s-w is clearly evident, and it seems that MS bases his interpretation of al-nis§” on this.

[282] Some translators render a l-n§s as ‘men’, but MF and others follow MS and say ‘attractive to mankind’ (i.e., men and women) and yet still translate al-nis§” as ‘women’, leaving it unexplained why the text states that all mankind (including women) lust after women, implying a natural disposition (lesbian-homosexual love) that is theologically very difficult to uphold.

[283] AA, MF, MP: ‘or their women’; AH: ‘their womenfolk’; some translators feel uncomfortable translating ‘women in front of their women’ and insert a qualifying attribute, e.g., AB: ‘or other women’, or AhA: ‘or their women attendants or captives’, the latter linking nis§“ihinna together with the following m§ malakat aim§nuhunna (captive slaves) which both combined results in ‘women attendants or captives’, i.e., women of inferior class.

[284] This breaks entirely with the unambiguously gendered definition of qiw§ma in Islamic fiqh. According to the \anafÊ school of law, qiw§ma means that the husband is liable to pay the mahr (dower) to his wife and that he (and only he!) is responsible for the financial support and maintenance of his wife and his family throughout their marriage (see al-MåßilÊ, al-Ikhtiy§r li’l-ta#lÊl al-mukht§r, vol. 4, 229).

[285] Most translators, though, render this phrase exactly like this, e.g., MP: ‘good women are the obedient’; MF: ‘righteous women are obedient’; AA: ‘righteous women are therefore obedient’; YA: ‘righteous women are

devoutly obedient’; AB: ‘Right-acting women are obedient’, and only AH, YA, and AB see the verse as referring to a marital context. AhA expressly wants to avoid the potential (ideological and legal) abuse of such a rendering and qualifies obedience as nonmarital: ‘women who are virtuous are obedient to God’ [fn. only to God]. MS, in addition, wants to exclude the possibility of understanding ‘righteousness’ as obedience (to God) which is expressed purely in outward forms of ritual devotion and as (purely quantitatively) increased piety.

[286] The suffix pronoun of nushåzahunna refers back to al-ß§liÈ§t[un] q§nit§t[un], so if translators have rendered the latter as referring to a marital context, as did AH, YA, and AB, they must then understand the latter as referring to the nushåz of wives, even though the verse explicitly neither states ‘husband’ nor ‘wife’ (this is why MF, MP, AhA, AA regard, similar to MS, nushåzahunna as a reference to women in general, wives or not).

[287] Abå D§wåd a l-Sajist§nÊ, Sunan AbÊ D§wåd (Beirut: D§r a l-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 3, 248 (ÈadÊth no. 2146).

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[288] MF, AB, AA: ‘and beat them’; AH: ‘then hit them (fn. with a single blow)’; YA:

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‘beat them (lightly)’; MP, with a reference to physical violence, says: ‘chastise them’;

AhA suggests instead a sympathetic act of reconciliation: ‘and go to bed with them (when they are willing)’. In a footnote, he refers to al-RaghÊb (al-Mufrid§t fÊ gharÊb a l-qur”§n) who said that ·araba metaphorically means to have intercourse, and quotes as proof the phrase ·araba a l-faÈl a l-n§qa, ‘the stud camel

covered the she-camel', and concludes that ·araba cannot be taken here to mean 'to strike them (women)', (78–79). MS's rendering of wa-"·ribåhunna as a civilized conveyance of discontent and rebuke is perhaps closest to AhA's nonviolent understanding of the phrase.

[289] 'Nushåz relative to women has been commonly referred in English as denoting "disobedience, disloyalty, and rebellion" (relative to a husband) as in 4:34, but when used in relation to men (relative to a wife or wives) it has been translated into English as "cruelty or desertion" as seen in 4:128. The male translators of the standard English versions of the Qur'an have conducted an exegetical act in the very process of translating'. See Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an, s.v. "Gender." (M. Badran), 292—this is a valid point in spite of AB's 'cruelty', see above.

[290] Only YA and AH translate imra"at[un] directly as 'wife', while MF, MP, AB, AA, AhA say: 'woman' which is only indirectly qualified as wife through '…her husband' (ba#lih§). MS's point is that neither imra"a nor ba#l refer to the conjugal relationship between a husband (zawj) and his wife (zawja), implying that their relationship must be differently defined, i.e., in nonsexual marital and nonmarital terms. This rendering of ba#l is unique; Lane and Ambros treat it as synonymous with zawj.

[291] ZÊna will be explained below as the beauty of a woman that has two dimensions: a) a visible beauty (nose, eyes, mouth, ears, etc.) and a hidden beauty (her private parts called juyåb and furåj). This description differs from the traditional understanding insofar as zÊna connotes beauty that primarily consists of ornaments and adornments and only secondarily of the natural beauty of the female body. See #AlÊ b. AbÊ Bakr b. #Abd al-JalÊl al-Rashd§nÊ al-MarghÊn§nÊ, al-Hid§ya (Cairo: Maãba#at Mußãaf§ al-B§bÊ, n.d.), vol. 4, 458.

[292] MS refers here to the so-called deferred dowry, al-mu"akhkhar, which is held back by the husband until a divorce arises.

After a divorce has taken place the husband would (at least theoretically) pay the amount of dowry that was agreed upon at the time of the marriage contract. If the marriage has not been consummated, the wife would still be entitled to half of the agreed mahr. If the mahr was not stipulated at the time of the contract, the wife would be entitled to mahr mithlÊ, i.e., a dowry typically given for a woman of the same status and class if the marriage was consummated, if not, she would be entitled to mut#as or gifts (see a l-MåßilÊ, a l-Ikhtiy§r li'l-ta#lÊl al-mukht§r, vol. 3, 127–30). According to MS, these regulations reveal the structural problem of the current fiqh law of divorce, because the financial compensation for women is fixed solely on the payment of the dowry which is—given the actual wealth (money and property) that husband and wife shared during their marriage—a rather pitiful share.

[293] According to \anafÊ law, the right of divorce has been granted to men only. If a woman wants a divorce but her husband refuses to initiate the legal steps, she can opt for khul# by which her husband agrees to release her in return for financial compensation from his wife's family. This arrangement is called ãal§q b§"in or irrevocable divorce (see a l-MåßilÊ, al-Ikhtiy§r li'l-ta#lÊl al-mukht§r, vol. 3, 127–32). If, however, it turns out that it was the husband's faults that led his wife to opt for khul#, then the husband would not be allowed to ask for any financial compensation in return (see Abå Bakr b. Mas#åd al-K§s§nÊ, Bad§"i# al-ßan§"i# fÊ tartÊb al-shar§"i# (Cairo: Maãba#at al-Jam§liyya, n.d.), vol. 3, 149–50). A different way for a woman to seek divorce is through faskh, i.e. an official annulment of marriage by a court on the grounds that her husband is either impotent or insane, or that he has neglected his duty to maintain her and his family. If these conditions have been stipulated in the marriage contract, their breach will be considered as sufficient reason for a divorce. The woman would then be entitled to get the dowry that was fixed at the time of the contract, if the marriage has been consummated (see MuÈammad b. MuÈammad

AmÊn Ibn #$bidÊn, \§shiyyat radd al-Mukht§r (Beirut: D§r a l-IÈy§" a l-Tur§th a l-#ArabÊ, n.d.), vol. 13, 130–34). Again, MS criticises the fiqh rules as highly inadequate since it is seen as the norm that the husband initiates a divorce, while

khul# and faskh are regarded as exceptions that are—even if theoretically acknowledged in fiqh—socially disapproved.

[294] It is interesting to note that Èij§b has been discussed in fiqh literature both as a social category (seclusion) as well as in its sense of a piece of cloth (veil), whereby one might regard the latter as the material marker of the former. In the tradition of the \anafÊ school, three levels of Èij§b have been discussed: 1) a woman must stay indoors except in cases of necessity; 2) if she leaves the house and goes to public places or other houses of non-maÈ§rim relatives, she must dress herself with a long, loose outer garment that, at least, covers her head and is drawn to her bosom; and 3) a woman must observe the rulings of #awra (explained below in fn. 74, p. 326–27), (see ShafÊ# #Uthm§nÊ, Ma#§rif al-qur”§n (Karachi: Id§rat al-Ma#§rif, 2005), vol. 7, 214–20). From this it is clear that Èij§b has been traditionally understood as both seclusion and veil, the latter being the visual sign of maintaining a form of seclusion whose enforcement is required both in the private and public spheres (the veil replacing the walls of the house).

[295] For Hinduism, see Arvind Sharma, ed., Goddesses and women in the Indic religious tradition (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Mildreth W. Pinkham, The status of women in Hinduism as reflected in the Pur§nas, Mah§bh§rata, and the R§m§yana (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941); and Lynn E. Gatwood, Devi and the spouse goddess: Women, sexuality, and marriages in India (Riverdale: Riverdale Co., 1985), ch. 5 (‘Women and Caste Level’, 75–107). For Buddhism, see Diana Y. Paul (with Frances Wilson), Women in Buddhism: Images of the feminine in Mah§y§na tradition (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1985), ch. 1 (‘“Temptress,” Daughter of Evil’, 3–59); and Rita M. Gross, Buddhism after patriarchy: A feminist history, analysis, and reconstruction of Buddhism (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), ch. 2, section 5 (‘Do innate female traits and characteristics exists? Roles and images of women in Indian Mahayana Buddhism’, 55–77); I. B. Horner, Women under primitive Buddhism: Laywomen and almswomen (London: Routledge, 1930), ch. 2 (‘The daughter’, 19–34), ch. 3 (‘The wife’, 35–71).

[296] See Lynne Schreiber, ed., Hide and seek: Jewish women and hair covering (Jerusalem: Urim Publications, 2003); Carol L. Meyers, Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite women in context (Oxford: OUP, 1991), ch. 7 (‘Household Functions and Female Roles’), 139–64; Beverly Bow and George W. E. Nickelsburg, “Patriarchy with a twist: Men and women in Tobit,” in “Women like this”: New perspectives on Jewish women in the GrecoRoman world, ed. Amy-Jill Levine, 127–43 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991).

[297] The term #awra is explained below. On the prohibition of a woman speaking in church, see Richard Farnworth, Woman forbidden to speak in the church: The grounds examined, the mystery opened, the truth cleared, and the ignorance both of priests and people discovered (London: Giles Calvert, 1655).

[298] See Jorunn Økland, Women in their place: Paul and the Corinthian discourse of gender and sanctuary space (London: T&T Clark, 2004); Claudia L. Thompson, “Hairstyles, head-coverings, and St. Paul: Portraits from the Roman Church,” BA 5 (June 1988): 99–115; Karen Armstrong, The Gospel according to a woman: Christianity’s creation of the sex war in the West (London: Elm Tree, 1986)—‘The result: Eve’, 52–87; ‘The four faces of Eve’, 250–58; for both Judaism and Christianity see Naomi R. Goldenberg, Changing the gods: Feminism and the end of traditional religions (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979) —‘Rebels of the Bible’, 72–84.

[299] Al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan, vol. 3, 456 (ÈadÊth no. 1159).

[300] Al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan, vol. 2, 59 (ÈadÊth no. 1165); a l-Nasa”Ê, al-Sunan al-kubr§, vol. 1, 271 (ÈadÊth no. 826).

[301] Abå Ya#lÊ Al-MåßillÊ, Musnad AbÊ Ya#lÊ (Beirut: D§r al-Ma#rifa, n.d.), (ÈadÊth no. 2455); Abå Bakr al-BayhaqÊ, Sunan a l-

BayhaqÊ a l-kubr§ (Mecca: D§r a l-B§z, 1994), vol. 7, 292 (ÈadÊth no. 14490).

[302] This is the fuqah§”’s legal interpretation of the Qur’anic term ‘temptation’ (as in 2:102; 8:28) or ‘mental confusion’ (6:23). Because of this fear of temptation or unlawful attraction it is regarded as unlawful for men to look at women’s #awra except in cases of necessity. For women, it is unlawful to dress improperly as this can cause fitna among men (a desire to have unlawful, extramarital sexual relations). \anafÊ scholars stress that this interdiction has been made regardless of the factor of temptation and that every woman has to observe the rules of #awra due to the explicit rulings (see al-ZuÈaylÊ, al-Fiqh al-isl§mÊ, vol. 4, 200–204).

[303] This is my rendering, based on YA, and in the light of MS’s interpretation of the verse. It differs considerably from the conventional understanding of this verse, perhaps best illustrated by the complete quotation from YA’s translation:

‘And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husband’s fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons, their brothers or their brothers’ sons, or their sisters’ sons, or their women, or the slaves whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O you believers! Turn you all together towards God, that you may attain bliss’.

[304] YA: ‘and guard their modesty’; MP: ‘and be modest’.

[305] ZÊna, not to be confused with zin§ (adultery) as discussed in chapter 4.

[306] YA: ‘ornaments’; MF, AhA: ‘finery’; AA, MP, AB: ‘adornment(s)’; AH: ‘charms’.

[307] As do YA, MF, AhA, AA: ‘their bosoms’; AB: ‘their breasts’; MP: ‘their chests’; still narrower than MS in its definition is AH: ‘they should let their headscarves fall to cover their neckline’, who seem to locate juyåbihinna above a woman’s breasts. Lane defines jayb as ‘the ãawq or opening at the neck and bosom of a shirt and the like, for instance, of a coat of mail; or the opening of a shirt at the uppermost part of the breast; or the opening in a garment for the head to be put through: or such an opening as a sleeve and a ãawq’ (see line jayb). It seems that MS follows this definition as well but also transfers such openings of clothes, i.e., shirts and the like (see also 27:12; 28:32) to the ‘openings’ of the female body.

[308] ‘[The believers are] those who guard their private parts [li-furåjihim] except from their wives [#al§ azw§jihim] and what their right hands possess. [For these] they are not blameworthy’ (Al-Mu”minån 23:5–6, MF].

[309] This is because of the fact that sexual complications are not to be feared from these people.

[310] MS uses here Èar§m in the sense of a transgression against something that is ‘off-limit’ or ‘sacrosanct’, not in the sense of an absolute taboo, i.e., something that is categorically ‘forbidden’ (as he defined Èar§m in ch. 2).

[311] Abå Bakr a l-BayhaqÊ, Sunan a l-kubr§ (Mecca: Maktabat D§r a l-B§z, 1994), vol. 2, 227 (ÈadÊth no. 3038).

[312] Misy§r marriages are ‘marriages without commitment’. In such marriages, the woman relinquishes the marital rights that are granted to her in a normal marriage, such as the right to a home and to financial support from her husband, and, if he has other wives, the right to an equal part of his time and attention. The \anafÊ school distinguishes between misy§r marriages (which are considered legal) and the so-called pleasure marriages (mut#a in Arabic or sigheh in Persian) that are practiced in ShÊ#a Islam (and which are illegal) because the latter contains a deliberate attempt to seek pure pleasure and to limit the marriage for a specific period of time, while the former does not have this intention (at least not explicitly), see a l-JazÊrÊ, al-Fiqh #al§ ’l-madh§hib al-arba#a, vol. 4, 52.

[313] The author refers here to common practice in countries of the Arab Middle East.

[314] #Abd al-Malik b. MuÈammad a l-Tha#§libÊ, Kit§b fiqh al-lugha wa-asr§r a l-#arabiyya (Beirut: Manshår§t D§r Maktabat al-\ay§h, n.d.), vol. 1, 22.

[315] Al-BayhaqÊ, Sunan al-ßaghÊr, vol. 7, 326 (ÈadÊth no. 2759).

[316] Traditional fiqh interprets this line simply as permission to define a child’s #awra differently from that of an adult. According to the \anafÊ school, children up to the age of four do not have to be covered at all, but over the age of four, their genitals and buttocks must be covered. At the age of ten they are considered as grown-ups and have to follow the rulings with regards to an adult person’s #awra; see a l-JazÊrÊ, al-Fiqh #al§’l-madh§hib al-arba#a, vol. 1, 198.

[317] ‘When abroad’ as Ali glosses (in parentheses), is far-fetched and not supported by any other translator. MP puts into brackets (when they go out) for ‘to draw their cloaks close around them’; the others do not specify the occasion: MF: ‘to draw their outer garments closer’; AH: ‘to make their outer

garments hang low over them’; AA: ‘that they draw their veils close to them’; AhA: ‘to draw their wraps a little over them’; AB: ‘to draw their outer garments closely round themselves’.

[318] This phrase should be understood in the sense of ‘it should be known to them’.

[319] Most translators render fa in the sense of wa (and), linking yu”rafn[a][] and yu”dhain[a] together syntactically and grammatically as one unit, AH: ‘so as to be recognized and not insulted’; FM: ‘That is more conducive to their being known, and not being injured’; AA: ‘so it is likelier they will be known, and not hurt’; MP: ‘so that they may be recognised and not annoyed’; AB: ‘that they will be recognised and not be harmed’, except AhA who separates the two syntactically: ‘They will thus be recognised and no harm will come to them’.

[320] Abå MuÈammad #Abd al-JalÊl b. Mås§ b. #Abd al-JalÊl al-QaßrÊ, Shu#ab al-Êm§n (Cairo: D§r al-\adÊth, 1996), B§b al-\ayy§” (ÈadÊth, no. 7796); Ibn #Abd al-Barr al-NumayrÊ, Al-Istidhk§r (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 2000), vol. 2, 201; al-BayhaqÊ, Sunan al-kubr§, vol. 7, 85 (Kit§b al-nik§È; B§b takhßÊß al-wajh wa’l-kaffayn).

[321] Al-Bukh§rÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ, vol. 1, 35 (ÈadÊth no. 63).

[322] MS refers to the popular belief of naghmat al-mar”a #awra, that ‘the melody of a woman is #awra’ or—as Ibn #$bidÊn put it—‘Do not follow (a woman) in public, because her voice is #awra’ (see Ibn #$bidÊn, \§shiyyat radd a l-mukht§r, vol. 6, 406; and Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Modesty.” (Angel Hsu, Shiu-Sian), 403–405).

[323] In Islamic fiqh, this is traditionally understood as the area of a woman’s (or men’s) #awra, i.e., ‘the zone of modesty’. It is categorised as, 1) #awra mughallaía (thick #awra), which consists of the furåj private parts (vagina/men’s genitals, buttocks and anus), and 2) #awra mukhaffafa (thin #awra) which are other parts of the body that must be covered. The \anafÊ school makes a distinction between #awra that exists, a) during the ritual of prayer (the whole body except the face, hands, and feet), and b) outside the ritual of prayer. As for the latter category, the extent of the #awra depends on the following circumstances: 1) in seclusion, it is obligatory for a woman (and a man) to cover the area ‘from the navel to the knee’, except when there is a need to uncover it; 2) in the presence of the husband, a woman does not need to cover any part of her body; however, it is discouraged to remain naked if it is not necessary; 3) in front of other Muslim women, it is obligatory, to cover the area ‘from the navel to the knee’; 4) in front of the maÈ§rim relatives, i.e., unmarriageable kin (see above), the #awra consists of the area ‘from the navel to the knee’ as well as the stomach and her back; 5) in front of non-maÈ§rim relatives, i.e., marriageable kin (and any other male person), the #awra consists of the whole body except the face, hands, and feet; 6) in front of non-Muslim women, the #awra is the same as for a non-maÈram male (see Ibn #$bidÊn, \ §shiyyat radd a l-Mukht§r, vol. 1, 140; 405–10; vol. 2, 464; vol. 5, 261; vol. 6, 371; and a l-MarghÊn§nÊ, al-Hid§ya, vol. 4, 458–61). This definition makes it clear that in the \anafÊ school, the face, hands, and feet are not considered as #awra. And yet, one point is constantly mentioned in all fiqh manuals which is that, because of the fear of fitna, it is necessary to cover the face of all women who are not considered ‘old’ (see ShafÊ# #Uthm§nÊ, Ma#§rif a l-qur”§n, vol. 7, 214–20). MS’s decisive break with traditional fiqh lies with situations 3, 5, and 6; 3) has become an extension of 4 since al-nis§” are not ‘women’ but ‘those who come next in the family line’; 5) and 6) have become readjusted, in that women are now allowed to show their entire bodies in front of non-maÈ§rim strangers/relatives (men or women), including their heads(!), except for their lower and upper private parts. In other words, a woman who in public is dressed in shorts and a T-shirt observes the lower legal limit of the Islamic dress code, unless the cultural norms demand something different (e.g., a business suit at work).

[324] Shahrur, TajfÊf man§bi# al-irh§b, 2008.

[325] #Al§ al-DÊn al-MuttaqÊ, Kanz al-#umm§l fÊ sunan al-aqw§l wa'l-af #§l (Beirut: Mu"assasat #Ulåm al-Qur"§n, n.d.), vol. 12, 661 (Kit§b al-fa·§"il min qism al-af #§l; B§b fa·§"il al-F§råq).

[326] Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), French philosopher and political theorist, argued in his Du Contrat Social ou Principes du Droit Politique (1762) that a state, based on a genuine social contract with its citizens, could give them real freedom in exchange for their obedience to a self-imposed (i.e., self-legislated) law. It seems that Rousseau's idea of a civil society that is united by a general will and that promotes the common interest of people while occasionally clashing with personal interest is shared by MS (see his thoughts on 'freedom' in this chapter).

[327] J§r All§h Abå Q§sim MaÈmåd b. #Umar al-ZamakhsharÊ, As§s al-bal§gha (Cairo: Maãba#at D§r al-Kutub, 1972–73), vol. 1, 332–33.

[328] Fakhr al-DÊn MuÈammad al-R§zÊ, Maf§tÊÈ al-ghayb (n.p., n.d.), 323–25 (tafsÊr of 2:217).

[329] This is a summarised version of Abå'l-Q§sim MaÈmåd al-ZamakhsharÊ, TafsÊr al-kashsh§f (Cairo: Sharikat Mußãaf§ al-B§bÊ al-\alabÊ, 1966), 620–21 (tafsÊr of 4:54).

[330] Quoted from Ibn #Abd al-Barr Abå #Umar al-NumayrÊ, J§mi# bay§n al-#ilm wa-fa·lih (Dammam: D§r Ibn al-JawzÊ, 1994), vol. 2, 898 (ÈadÊth no. 1684).

[331] Abå '^s§ MuÈammad al-TirmidhÊ, Sunan al-TirmidhÊ (Cairo: Mußãaf§ al-B§bÊ, 1937), vol. 4, 59 (ÈadÊth no. 1458).

[332] M§lik b. Anas al-AßbaÈÊ, Muwaãã§ al-Im§m M§lik (Abu Dhabi: Mu”assasat Z§yid

b. Sulã§n $l Nahy§n, 2004), vol. 4, 1065, (ÈadÊth no. 2727).

[333] I.e., unreliable, because the link between the successors of the Prophet and the Prophet himself is missing in the chain of narrators; a ÈadÊth mursal usually begins with ‘The Prophet said…’.

[334] Al-Bukh§rÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ, vol. 2, 507 (ÈadÊth no. 6935).

[335] Al-Sijist§nÊ, Sunan, vol. 13, 45 (ÈadÊth no. 4238).

[336] AÈmad b. a l-\usayn Al-BayhaqÊ, Sunan al-SaghÊr (Al-Manßårah: D§r al-Waf§, 1989), vol. 2, 78 (ÈadÊth no. 1279).

[337] Fakhr al-DÊn MuÈammad al-R§zÊ, Maf§tÊÈ al-ghayb (n.p., n.d.), vol. 12, 18.

[338] This is a summarised version of MuÈammad b. JarÊr al-•abarÊ, Ta”rÊkh al-•abarÊ (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, n.d.), vol. 2, 248 (B§b dhikr baqqiyyat al-khabar #an ghiãf§n).

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[339] Al-•abarÊ, Ta”rÊkh al-•abarÊ, vol. 2, 248 (B§b dhikr baqqiyyat al-khabar #an ghiãf§n).

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[340] Quoted from Abå Ja#far al-•abarÊ, Ta”rÊkh al-•abarÊ (Beirut: D§r al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 2, 149; the first four lines of the poem are often

cited from Abå'l-Faraj al-Isfah§nÊ, al-Agh§nÊ (Beirut: D§r al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 2, 149.

[341] Among which are: al-Ash#ath b. Qays, al-Zaburq§n b. Badr, Jirwal b. Aws (al-\aãÊ"a), #Awf b. Sin§n, #Ilqima b. #All§tha, #Uyayna b. \iß n, and Zumayl b. Qaãaba al-QÊnÊ.

[342] This is a summarised version of AÈmad B. \ajar al-#Asqal§nÊ, al-Iß§ba fÊ tamyÊz al-ßaÈ§ba (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kulliyyat al-Azhariyyah, n.d.), vol. 1, 79.

[343] This is also a summarised version from the same source, a l-#Asqal§nÊ, al-Iß§ba fÊ tamyÊz al-ßaÈ§ba, vol. 7, 195–96.

[344] Abå #Uthm§n #Amr Al-J§Èií, al-Bay§n wa'l-tabyÊn li'l-J§Èií (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 1998), vol. 1, 128.

[345] Kh§lid b. al-WalÊd (d. 21/642), one of the most successful military commanders in the history of the Islamic conquests who defeated with his troops within only ten years after MuÈammad's death the Byzantine armies in Iraq, Syria, and Jordan. And yet, during the so-called apostasy wars under the caliph Abå Bakr he was accused of having used unnecessary force and cruelty against M§lik b. Nuwayra and his clan of the Banå Yarbå", and this because of his selfish desire to marry Ibn Nuwayra's wife, Layla bint al-Minhal. Faced with these accusations and under pressure from fierce criticism by #Umar and Abå Qaã§·a, al-WalÊd claimed that his orders had been misunderstood by his guards (thus, indirectly conceding that his killings were wrong); a feeble excuse that was nevertheless accepted by Abå Bakr ('I will not sheathe a sword that Allah has drawn for His service'), see a l-•abarÊ, Ta"rÊkh, vol. 2, 'Prophets and patriarchs', translated and annotated by William M. Brinner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 496–502.

[346] #Abd al-Malik b. Marw§n (25–86/646–705) was the fifth caliph of the Umayyad rule and responsible for its consolidation as a dynastic autocracy that he mercilessly enforced against all attempts of sectarian rebellion (Banå al-Azraq; Banå al-Ash#ath) or claims of rival caliphates (Ibn Zubayr); Abå Ja#far #Abdall§h b. MuÈammad a l-Manßår (93–158/712–775) was the second ‘Abbasid caliph who consolidated the new dynasty in the new capital city (Baghdad) with equally brutal force against rebellion (Abå Muslim in Khur§s§n; Kharijites in Transoxania; #Alids in Persia) and secessionist movements (Berbers in North Africa) while at the same time establishing the claim of a divinely sanctioned absolute sovereignty of the ruler after the theocratic model of ancient Byzantine monarchs. See Abå’l-\asan al-Mas#ådÊ, The meadows of gold: the Abbasids, translated and edited by Paul Lunde and Caroline Stone (London: Kegan Paul, 1989).

[347] The al-Anß§r belonged mostly to the two Medinan tribes of the Aws and Khazraj and are believed to have initially supported #AlÊ and not Abå Bakr in the succession to the Prophet but (either by pressure, intimidation or change of heart) eventually gave their allegiance to Abå Bakr. For an alalysis of the rivalry between the Anß§r and the Muh§jirån, see Maya Yazigi, “AlÊ, MuÈammad, and the Anß§r: The Issue of Succession,” Journal of Semitic Studies 53, no. 2 (2008): 279–303.

[348] Al-\ajj§j b. Yåsuf, military commander under the caliph #Abd a l-Malik b. Marw§n, defeated the troops of #Abd All§h Sa#Êd b. a l-Zubayr during the siege of Mecca in 692 by which al-Zubayr’s sedition from the government in Damascus and his reign as a counter-caliph ended, see al-•abarÊ, Ta”rÊkh al-rusul wa’l-mulåk, vol. 22 ‘The Marw§nid restoration’, translated and annotated by Everett K. Rowson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

[349] Translation by AC, because most translators render millatahum as dÊnahum, i.e., ‘their religion’; AH and AhA say ‘their way’, MP: ‘their creed’, which still does not capture MS’s meaning of milla as the socioreligious, institutionalised form of dÊn, religion. Ambros gives all three meanings: ‘creed, religion, religious community’ (Ambros, Dictionary, 259), and the

EQ confirms that milla denotes ‘religion’ or ‘sect’ used for the Muslim communities as well as for communities of non-Muslims, including those prior to MuÈammad, see Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, s.v. “Religious Pluralism.” 401. The EI states that in the Ottoman period milla became the technical term for ‘religious group’, denoting the internally autonomous religious groups within the Ottoman Empire, such as the Jews, Armenians, Greek Orthodox, etc. This implied a semantic shift away from ‘religion’ in the sense of religio-moral belief, and it seems that MS uses the term in exclusively this religio-communal sense of ‘institutionalised religion’, see Encyclopaedia of Islam, s.v. “Milla”, vol. 7, 61.

[350] Abå Dharr a l-Ghif§rÊ (d. 32/653), a companion of the Prophet, a muh§jir and one of the earliest converts to Islam; famous for his ascetic lifestyle and purist worldviews he criticised #Uthm§n’s free use of public money from the treasury and, after his forced emigration to Damascus, the luxurious life and free spending of Mu#§wiya I, at this time (around 647) the governor of Syria. For this he was exiled to a l-Rab§tha, an oasis near Medina where he died, see Wilferd Madelung, Succession to Muhammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), 84; W. M. Watt, Muhammad at Medina (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 81.

[351] MuÈammad Sa#Êd al-#Ashm§wÊ, al-Isl§m al-siy§sÊ (Cairo 1987).

[352] See chapters 2 and 3 where these terms are separately defined. According to MS, Èal§l and Èar§m refer to a category of divine commands that enjoy absolute validity and which are not subject to change, while sam§È, Èasan, man#, and qabÊÈ are descriptions for rules that are subject to change in human legislation. This distinction is not unknown in Islamic fiqh but the novelty lies in the fact that for MS there are only thirteen muÈarram§t (absolute taboos) in total and that they belong exclusively to the area of socio-ethical behaviour, while the entire field of what normally constitutes the furå# al-fiqh (including

family law, dress codes, penal law, etc.) belongs to the changeable parts, and their rules should not be classified by the terms Èar§m or

Èal§l.

[353] AB: ‘enjoin the right and forbid the wrong’; MF: ‘bidding the right and forbidding the wrong’; AA: ‘bidding to honour, and forbidding dishonour’; MP: ‘enjoin

[354] ‘We said: “O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the garden; and eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) you will; but approach not this tree…”’ (Al-Baqara 2:35).

[355] ‘We said [quln§] to the angels, “Bow down to Adam”: They bowed down except Iblis. He was one of the Jinns, and he broke the command of his Lord [amr[in] rabihi]…’ (Al-Kahf 18:50).

[356] ‘That they took usury, though they were forbidden [nuhå] …’ (Al-Nis§” 4:161).

[357] ‘God has permitted trade and forbidden [Èarrama] usury…’ (A l-Baqara 2:275).

[358] Translation by MC, because all translators state ‘forbidden’ which does not reflect the subtle difference between Èar§m and manhÊy that MS wants to make; typical is YA: ‘If you (but) eschew the most heinous of the things which you are forbidden to do, We shall expel out of you all the evil in you, and admit you to a gate of great honour’ (Al-Nis§” 4:31).

[359] ‘And know that among you is God’s apostle: were he, in many matters, to follow your (wishes), you would certainly fall into misfortune: But God has endeared the faith to you, and has made it beautiful in your hearts, and He has made hateful to you unbelief, wickedness, and rebellion: such indeed are those who walk in righteousness’ (Al-\ujur§t 49:7).

[360] ‘(Nor) those who are niggardly or enjoin niggardliness on others, or hide the bounties which God has bestowed on them; for We have prepared, for those who resist faith, a punishment that steeps them in contempt’ (Al-Nis§” 4:37).

[361] Fakhr al-DÊn MuÈammad al-R§zÊ, Maf§tÊÈ al-ghayb (n.p., n.d.), vol. 10, 62.

[362] Because of his very realistic view on humans, MuÈammad (ß) had already anticipated that his new message would not overnight change people’s behaviour: ‘When they attain knowledge, people are like treasure-troves; those who, among them, were better [in that] in the J§hiliyya period are also better [in that] in Islam.’ MuÈammad Abå #Abdall§h al-Bukh§rÊ, al-J§mi# al-ßaÈÊÈ (Beirut: D§r Ibn KathÊr, 1987), vol. 3, 1238, 1288 (ÈadÊth nos. 3203, 3303); Muslim Abå’l-\usayn al-NÊs§bårÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ (Beirut: D§r al-JÊl, n.d.), vol. 7, 181 (ÈadÊth no. 2526).

[363] The Torah demands: ‘You shall follow the Lord, your God’ (Deuteronomy 13:4) and the Book states: ‘Verily, this is My way, leading straight [ßir§ãÊ mustaqÊm[an]]: follow it. Follow not (other) paths—they will scatter you about from His (great) path; thus does He command you, that you may be righteous’ (Al-An#§m 6:153). See also chapter 1.

[364] Better: ‘not guilty of sin’, similar to MF: ‘will commit no sin’; MP: ‘it is no sin for him’; AB: ‘commits no crime’; AhA: ‘not guilty of sin’; AH: ‘he commits no sin’; AA: ‘no sin shall be on him’.

[365] Al-ZamakhsharÊ, al-Bal§gha, 27.

[366] Abå Bakr a l-BayhaqÊ, Sunan al-BayhaqÊ al-kubr§ (Mecca: D§r al-B§z, 1994), vol. 5, 265 (ÈadÊth no. 10180).

[367] '…and saying things about God of which you have no knowledge' (Al-A#r§f 7:33).

[368] '…when there comes to them that which they (should) have recognised [m§ #arafå], they refuse to believe in it but the curse of God is on those without faith' (Al-Baqara 2:89).

[369] 'You will recognise [ta#rif] in their faces the beaming brightness of bliss' (Al-MuãaffifÊn 83:24).

[370] MF: 'according to what is just'; AB: 'to be honoured with fairness'; but closer to MS is AH: 'according to what is recognized to be fair', and AhA: 'Women also have recognised rights as men have'; whereas MP: 'of kindness'; AA: 'as obligations' have nothing in common with MS's rendering of ma#råf.

[371] Similar are MF: 'doing an honourable deed'; AhA: 'be kind'; MP: 'do kindness'; AA: 'act honourably'; AB: 'act correctly'; a bit over the top is AH: 'bestow gifts on your protégés'.

[372] Similar are MP: 'kindly'; MF, AhA: 'honourably'; AA: 'company honourable'; AB: 'correctly and courteously', while AH: 'according to what is right' translates it in the former sense and close to the phrase al-amr bi'l-ma#råf.

[373] All consulted translators do not read #arrafah§ lahum as #arfuh§ lahum (i.e., the Garden's fragrance for them), as MS does but, i.e., MF, AA, AB, MP: 'which He has made known to them', AH: 'the Garden He has already made known to them'; AhA: 'which he has acquainted them', all similar to YA: 'which He has announced for them' (as above).

[374] This is a reference to the chief minister of Pharaoh, H§m§n, who is mentioned six times in the Qur'an (28:6, 28:8, 28:38, 29:39, 40:24, 40:36) and who has become the embodied symbol of an unjust, oppressive ruler's ruthless and willing henchman. He finds his end 'in the waters' where he drowned with Pharaoh (29:40). See Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an, s.v. "H§m§n." (A. H. John), 399–400.

[375] 'Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right [yanhaun #an a l-munkar], and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity' ($l #Imr§n 3:104).

[376] 'But indeed men before them rejected (My warning): then how (terrible) was My rejection (of them) [nakÊr]?' (Al-Mulk 67:18).

[377] '…but give them preference over themselves, even though poverty was their (own lot). And those saved from the covetousness of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity' (Al-\ashr 59:9).

[378] 'Fighting is prescribed for you, and you dislike it [wa huwa kurh[un] lakum]. But it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you…' (Al-Baqara 2:216).

[379] 'It is He Who has sent His Apostle with guidance and the religion of truth, that he may proclaim it over all religion, even though the pagans may detest (it) [kariha]' (Al-'aff 61:9).

[380] E.g., ‘Let there be no compulsion [ikr§h] in religion. Truth stands out clear from error…’ (Al-Baqara 2:256); and ‘If it had been your Lord’s will, they would all have believed—all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!’ (Yånus 10:99).

[381] ‘All§h has taken away from my nation [the sins of] mistake, forgetfulness and those [things] they were forced to do.’ MuÈammad Al-QazwÊnÊ, Sunan b. M§jah (Beirut: D§r IÈy§” al-Kutub al-#Arabiyya, 1952), vol. 1, 659 (ÈadÊth no. 2045). MS adds in a footnote that ‘this ÈadÊth is clearly in harmony with the spirit of the Book (see, for example, 2:256). Why \adÊth scholars such as Bukh§rÊ and Muslim did not authenticate this ÈadÊth, there are certainly many obvious reasons, but space prevents us from going into details here’.

[382] YaÈy§ b. al-Sharaf al-NawawÊ, al-Tiby§n fÊ §d§b Èamalat al-qur”§n (Cairo: al-Maktabat al-TawfÊqiyya, 1976), 29.

[383] Abå D§wåd a l-Sijist§nÊ, Sunan AbÊ D§wåd (Beirut: D§r a l-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 1, 296 (ÈadÊth no. 1140).

[384] ‘Hold to forgiveness, command what is right, but turn away from the ignorant’ (Al-A#r§f 7:199).

[385] See MS’s interpretation of this verse in chapter 5 where he makes it clear that he does not support the common rendering of wa”·ribåhunna as ‘and beat them’. In his understanding any form of physical force, even of a very small degree, is forbidden in the act of reprimanding women.

[386] #Al§ al-DÊn al-MuttaqÊ, Kanz al-#umm§l fÊ sunan al-aqw§ wa'l-af #§l (Beirut: Mu"assasat al-Ris§la, 1981), vol. 4, 430 (ÈadÊth no. 11260).

[387] This term must be understood according to MS's wider understanding of the term al-isl§m (see chapter 1). The phrase 'to Muslims (li'l-muslimÊn)' refers thus to those who assent to God and that includes all generations of Muslim-Assenters who lived long before the time of MuÈammad.

[388] Sårat al-An#§m 6:151–53. Note that the Ten Commandment revealed to Moses and the commands given to MuÈammad are both forms of 'particular ethics', or al-furq§n al-kh§ßß, and that the Ten Commandments (in capital initial letters) of Moses are not identical with the ten commandments (in small initial letters) of 'general ethics' or a l-furq§n a l-#§mm for all humankind even if some of the individual commandments are indeed overlapping. See also chapter 1.

[389] The Holy Bible, New International Version (Dunton Green: Hodder and Stough ton, 17th printing, 1991).

[390] Ibid.

[391] For example, paragraph 196: 'If a citizen has destroyed the eye of one citizen status, they shall destroy his eye'; paragraph 197: 'If he has broken the bone of a citizen, his bone shall they break'; paragraph 200: 'If a citizen has knocked out the tooth of one of equal status, they shall knock out his tooth'; taken from D. Winton Thomas, ed., Documents from Old Testament Times (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), 33–34.

[392] For example, paragraph 199: 'If he [i.e. a citizen] has destroyed the eye of a slave of a citizen, or has broken the bone of a serf, he shall pay half of his marketvalue'; or paragraph 201: 'If he [i.e., a citizen] has knocked out

the tooth of a vassal, he shall pay a third of a mina of silver’ (Thomas, Documents, 34).

[393] Khabar news and naba” news are for MS two categories of MuÈammad’s propheth ood that do not contain legal rules or stories on the basis of which jurists should formulate legal rules, e.g., about human warfare. Khabar news refer to events that are or become perceptible to the eyes of those who are present at the time, that is, contemporaries to those involved in such events, while naba” news refer to events that can only be indirectly witnessed. In either case they are only ‘news’, not legal commands. See chapter 2.

[394] And behold! God will say: “O Jesus the son of Mary! Did you say unto men, worship me and my mother as gods in derogation of God”?” He will say: “Glory to you! Never could I say what I had no right (to say). Had I said such a thing, you would indeed have known it. You know what is in my heart, though I know not what is in yours. For you know in full all that is hidden.” (Al-M§“ida 5:116)

[395] Muslim Abå’l-\usayn al-NÊs§bårÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ (Beirut: D§r al-JÊl, n.d.), vol. 6, 51 (ÈadÊth no. 5050).

[396] Abå D§wåd a l-Sijist§nÊ, Sunan AbÊ D§wåd (Beirut: D§r a l-Kit§b a l-#ArabÊ, n.d.), vol. 4, 391 (ÈadÊth no. 4774).

[397] Abå #Abd al-RaÈm§n al-Nas§“Ê, Sunan al-Nas§“Ê (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyyah, 1991), vol. 6, 344 (ÈadÊth no. 4371).

[398] Al-Sijist§nÊ, al-Sunan, vol. 2, 317 (ÈadÊth no. 2501).

[399] Abå #Abd al-RaÈm§n al-Nas§“Ê, al-Sunan al-kubr§ (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 1991), vol. 2, 310.

[400] ‘O prophet! Truly We have sent you as a witness [sh§hid[an]], a bearer of glad tidings, and warner’ (Al-AÈz§b 33:45).

[401] Al-An#§m 6:100.

[402] ‘We have decreed death to be your common lot…’ (Al-W§qi#a 56:60).

[403] Al-NÊs§bårÊ, ‘aÈÊÈ Muslim, vol. 8, 98 (ÈadÊth no. 7158).

[404] Most translators render sabÊl interchangeably either as (the more literal) ‘way’ or as ‘cause’ (in the sense of ‘on behalf of God’), except AA and AhA who consistently write: ‘in the way of God’; AH also renders fÊ sabÊl All§h as ‘for the sake of God’. ‘In God’s way’ is closest to MS’s intention to render fÊ sabÊl All§h as ‘according to God’s way’, which is not captured by ‘in God’s cause’ nor by ‘for the sake of God’.

[405] According to one sabab al-nuzul a mixture of the two meanings is possible: ‘A Muslim killed someone in battle who had given him the Muslim greeting, thinking that the man was trying to save himself, but the Prophet condemned this’ [AH].

[406] MS’s views on this are similar to those of al-ZamakhsharÊ whom al-R§zÊ quotes as having said that the variant of a qir§“a is mu”amman, with fatÈa above the mÊm, meaning ‘his security’ (§mnuhu) and interprets the phrase as ‘do not say “we cannot give you safety”’, Fakhr al-DÊn MuÈammad al-R§zÊ, Maf§tÊÈ al-ghayb (tafsÊr of 4:94), and al-ZamakhsharÊ, TafsÊr al-kashsh§f (tafsÊr of 4:94).

[407] Most translators give their rendering a slightly derogative touch, YA thinks that #ara· al-Èay§t al-duny§ are ‘perishable goods of this life’; MF: ‘the fleeting goods’; MP: ‘the chance profits of this life’; AA: ‘the chance goods of the present life’, but MS renders them as goods and things of this life that one may fully enjoy, e.g., cars, mobile phones etc.—which are perishable but not entirely negative and condemnable; perhaps more neutrally in the sense of AB: ‘the goods of this world’ or even, if a bit far-fetched, AhA: ‘the gain of earthly life’.

[408] The reason for MS’s specific mentioning of the battle of Tabåk (630) under the rubric of defensive warfare is that the Prophet’s expedition of a 30,000-strong army from Mecca to the far northwestern town of Tabåk was, in effect, a precautionary move to approach the Byzantine troops that were rumoured to have amassed near the Arab borders in the north. Even though the attack failed to materialize and in spite of the fact that MuÈammad used his advance in order to secure alliances with local tribes that agreed to pay him protection tribute (al-jizya), the expedition to Tabåk went down in Islamic historiography as a preemptive strike in the face of an imminent attack by the Byzantine army or pro-Byzantine Ghassanid tribes.

[409] ‘That God may forgive you your faults of the past and those to follow—fulfil His favour to you—and guide you on the straight way. * And that God may help you with powerful help’ (Al-FatÈ 48:2–3).

[410] MP, AB, AA, MF: ‘victory’; AhA: ‘success’; AH: ‘triumph’.

[411] ‘…and I was a witness over them while I dwelt amongst them; when you did take me up you were the watcher over them, and you are a witness to all things’ (Al-M§“ida 5:117).

[412] ‘Fight [q§tilå] in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God loves not transgressors’ (Al-Baqara 2:190).

[413] ‘He knows that there may be (some) among you in ill-health; others travel through the land, seeking of God’s bounty; yet others fighting [yuq§tilån] in God’s cause…’ (Al-Muzzammil 73:20).

[414] In both instances the verse uses variants of the first verb form (qatala), not q§tala.

[415] ‘Fasting is prescribed to you [kutiba #alaykum]…’ (Al-Baqara 2:183).

[416] ‘The law of equality is prescribed to you [kutiba #alaykum] in cases of murder…’ (Al-Baqara 2:178).

[417] ‘And he entered the city at a time when its people were not watching: and he found there two men fighting [yaqtatil§n]—one of his own religion, and the other, of his foes’ (Al-Qaßaß 28:15).

[418] See for example AbÊ #Abd All§h MuÈammad b. IdrÊs al-Sh§fi#Ê, Kit§b al-umm (Cairo: D§r al-•ib§#a al-MunÊra bi-Bål§q, n.d.), vol. 4, 168; or MuÈammad b. #AlÊ al-Shawk§nÊ, Kit§b a l-sayl wa’l-jarr§r (Beirut: D§r al-Kutub al-#Ilmiyya, 1985), vol. 4, 518–19.

[419] The reference here is to the school of the Mu#tazilites (or better: ahl al-tawÈÊd wa’l-#adl—people of divine unity and justice) who with their inquisitional zeal for religious and intellectual orthodoxy (especially under the caliphs al-Ma”mån [197–218/813–833] and al-Mu#taßim [218–227/833–842]) had brought their views of divine justice, human reason, free will, and moral responsibility into disrepute in the ninth century but which were revitalized in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and ‘benefited’ the advocates of a modern religious discourse, in particular Mu Èam mad #Abduh (1265–1323/1849–1905), the famous reformer, Azharite scholar, and moral philosopher (author of the Ris§lat al-tawÈÊd).

[420] MuÈammad Abå #Abdall§h al-Bukh§rÊ, al-J§mi# al-‘aÈÊÈ (Riyadh: D§r al-Sal§m, 1999), Kit§b al-Èay· (ÈadÊth no. 294).

[421] ‘O you who believe! You are forbidden to inherit women against their will [karh[an]]. Nor should you treat them with harshness, that you may take away part of the dower you have given them, except where they have been guilty of open lewdness. On the contrary, live with them on a footing of kindness and equity. If you take a dislike to them [karihtumåhunna] it may be that you dislike [takrahå] a thing, and God brings about through it a great deal of good’ (Al-Nis§” 4:19).

[422] ‘They ask you what they should spend (in charity). Say: Whatever you spend that is good—is for parents and kindred and orphans and those in want and for wayfarers. And whatever you do that is good—God knows it well’ (Al-Baqara 2:215).

[423] ‘That God may forgive you your faults of the past and those to follow. Fulfil His favour to you and guide you on the straight way; * and that God may help you with powerful help’ (Al-FatÈ 48:2–3).

[424] ‘O humankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)’ (Al-\ujur§t 49:13).

[425] ‘If one amongst the pagans asks you for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the word of God [kal§m All§h]…’ (Al-Tawba 9:6)

[426] ‘The word of your Lord does find its fulfilment in truth and in justice. None can change His words [li-kalim§tihi]; for He is the one who hears and knows all’ (Al-An#§m 6:115).

[427] ‘Behold! The angels said: “O Mary! God gives thee glad tidings of a word from Him [bi-kalimat[in]]: his name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary…”’ ($l #Imr§n 3:45).

[428] ‘Thus is the word [kalimat[un]] of your Lord proved true against those who rebel: verily they will not believe’ (Yånus 10:33).

<right>

[429] ‘And when you judge between man and man, that you judge with justice…’

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(Al-Nis§” 4:58).

[430] AA: ‘in the idols’ way’; MP: ‘for the cause of idols’; AhA: ‘for the powers of evil’; MF: ‘on behalf of the Devil’; AB: ‘in the way of false gods’; closest to MS’s interpretation of al-ã§ghåt is AH: ‘for an unjust cause’.

[431] See also ‘Verily in this (Qur’an) is a message for people who would (truly) worship God [#§bidÊn]’ (Al-Anbiy§” 21:106).

[432] The translators’ renderings are all expressing MS’s notion of a mutual competition provided that phrases like ‘to check on others’, ‘to drive some back’, ‘to repel others’, ‘to deter one another’, etc., are not understood in a physical or military way; AH: ‘If God did not drive some back by means of others’; MF: ‘Had Allah not caused some people to repel others’; AA: ‘Had God not driven back the people, some by the means of others’; AhA: ‘If God

did not make men deter one another’; MP: ‘if Allah had not repelled some men by others’; AB: ‘If it were not for Allah’s driving some people back by means of others’.

[433] Fighting is prescribed for you, and you dislike it. But it is possible that you dislike a thing which is good for you, and that you love a thing which is bad for you. But God knows, and you know not (Al-Baqara 2:216).

[434] ‘…Did not God check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of God is commemorated in abundant measure…’ (Al-\ajj 22:40).

[435] See p. 457 and fn. 128 for MS’s different rendering of this verse.

[436] ‘And the places of worship [al-mas§jid] are for God (alone): So invoke not any one along with God’ (Al-Jinn 72:18); ‘Do you not see that to God bow down in worship [yasjud] all things that are in the heavens and on earth…’ (Al-\ajj 22:18).

[437] To those against whom war is made [sic], permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged [íulimå]; and verily, God is most powerful for their aid (Al-\ajj 22:39).

[438] 2:190, ‘Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God loves not transgressors.”

2:191, ‘And slay them wherever you catch them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out; for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the sacred mosque, unless they (first) fight you there; but if they fight you, slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith.”

2:192, ‘But if they cease, God is oft-forgiving, most merciful.”

2:193, ‘And fight them on until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in God; but if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression.”

[439] MaÈmåd Shaltåt, al-Qur”§n wa’l-qit§l (Cairo, 1951).

[440] Sayyid Quãb, Ma#§lim fi’l-ãarÊq (1964), translated into English as: Milestones (Beirut: The Holy Koran Publishing House, 1980).

[441] MS refers here to the time (1976–82) when the radical wings of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood turned to violence in their fight against the Ba”th state and the #AlawÊ-dominated regime of H§fií al-Asad. The attacks culminated in a massacre on mostly #AlawÊ cadets at a military camp near Aleppo which caused the regime to respond with an equally brutal crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, ending with the bloodshed at \am§ in 1982.

[442] MaÈmåd al-FihmÊ al-Nakr§shÊ P§sh§, Prime Minister of Egypt, assassinated by Islamist militants on December 28, 1948 (1368 A.H.).

[443] Muslim, ‘aÈÊÈ Muslim, Kit§b al-zuhd wa’l-raq§“iq (ÈadÊth no. 1695).

[444] Most translators render al-k§firån in its direct, specific meaning, AA, MF, AhA: ‘the unbelievers’; AH: ‘disbelievers’; MP: ‘those who disbelieve’; but AB: ‘those who are kafir’ leaves the term untranslated and thus for the reader to understand (potentially) in MS’s indirect, nonspecific meaning of ‘aggressor’.

[445] ‘Therefore, when you meet the unbelievers (in fight), smite at their necks, at length; when you have thoroughly subdued them, bind a bond firmly (on them). Thereafter (is the time for) either generosity or ransom: until the war lays down its burdens…’ (MuÈammad 47:4).

[446] ‘It is not you who slew them; it was God. When you threw (a handful of dust), it was not your act, but God’s. In order that He might test the believers by a gracious trial from Himself, for God is He who hears and knows (all things)’ (Al-Anf§l 8:17).

[447] ‘O you who believe! When you meet a force, be firm; and call God in remembrance much (and often), that you may prosper’ (Al-Anf§l 8:45).

[448] ‘Truly Pharaoh elated himself in the land and broke up its people into sections…’ (Al-Qaßaß 28:4).

[449] ‘Recite to them the truth of the story of the two sons of Adam. Behold! They each presented a sacrifice (to God): It was accepted from one, but not from the other. Said the latter: “Be sure I will slay you.” “Surely,” said the former, “God does accept of the sacrifice of those who are righteous. * “If you do stretch your hand against me, to slay me, it is not for me to stretch my hand against you to slay you: for I do fear God, the cherisher of the worlds. * “For me, I intend to let you draw on yourself my sin as well as yours, for you will be among the companions of the fire, and that is the reward of those who do wrong.” * The (selfish) soul of the other led him to the murder of his brother: he murdered him, and became (himself) one of the lost ones. * Then God sent a raven, who scratched the ground, to show him how to hide the shame of his brother. “Woe is me!” said he; “Was I not even able to be as this raven, and to hide the shame of my brother?” Then he became full of regrets’ (Al-M§“ida 5:27–31).

[450] Address to the Nation on October 7, 2001. See for an intriguing analysis of the similarity between the rhetoric of G. W. Bush and #Us§ma b.

L§din, Bruce Lincoln, Holy terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

[451] Like YA, the following two translators render the phrase with a passive voice, AH: ‘Those who have been attacked are permitted to take up arms because they have been wronged’; AB: ‘Permission is given to those who are fought against because they have been wronged’. However, the other translators render yuq§talån as yuq§tilån, in the active voice, AhA: ‘Permission is granted those (to take up arms) who fight because they were oppressed’; FM: ‘Permission is given to those who fight because they are wronged’; MP: ‘Sanction is given to those who fight because they have been wronged’; AA: ‘Leave is given to those who fight because they were wronged’. Fight in the face of oppression or wrongdoing (not because of an attack)—this is exactly how MS understands the verse.

[452] ‘We ordained therein for them: “Life for life, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal…’ (Al-M§“ida 5:45).

[453] See also concerning the battle of Badr: ‘There has already been for you a sign in the two armies that met (in combat): One was fighting in the cause of God, the other resisting God; these saw with their own eyes twice their number. But God does support with His aid whom He pleases. In this is a warning for such as have eyes to see’ ($l #Imr§n 3:13).

[454] ‘But you turned back [tawallaytum] thereafter: Had it not been for the grace and mercy of God to you, you had surely been among the lost’ (Al-Baqara 2:64).

[455] ‘Do you see if he denies (truth) and turns away [wa-tawall§]?’ (Al-#Alaq 96:13).

[456] ‘O [humankind]! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)’ (Al-\ujur§t 49:13).

[457] ‘[Believers], you are the best community [khayr [a] ummat [in]] singled out for people: you order what is right, forbid what is wrong, and believe in God…’ ($l #Imr§n 3:110, AH); AhA: ‘Of all the communities raised among men you are the best’ and MP: ‘You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind’ translate umma as MS does, but YA: ‘You are the best of peoples’; MF, AB, AA: ‘the best nation”— show that the term is understood interchangeably as nation, peoples, community, or even ‘a group of people within a community’ (Ambros, Dictionary, 28, on 7:164) etc.; MS, as always, denies such semantic imprecision in rendering the term and insists that the Book uses different terms for nation, peoples et al., but not umma.

[458] ‘And when he arrived at the watering (place) in Madyan, he found there a group of men [ummat [an] min al-n§s] watering (their flocks)…’ (Al-Qaßaß 28:23).

[459] ‘And remember that Abraham was tried by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled: He said: “I will make you an Imam to the nations”…’ (A l-Baqara 2:124).

[460] ‘No! They say: “We found our fathers upon this course [ummat [in]], and we are actually following in their footsteps”’ (Al-Zukhruf 43:22).

[461] MF, AhA: ‘Your only friends’; AH: ‘Your true allies’; AB: ‘Your only friend’; YA: ‘Your (real) friends’; AA: ‘Your friend is only God’ are all not capturing MS’s understanding of walÊ as signalling a position of authority (of a guide/teacher vis-àvis a pupil/novice), while ‘friend’ or #ally’ indicate a

relationship of equality (even if theologically that is not what the translators wanted to state).

[462] ‘…The guilty person will wish he could save himself from the suffering of that day by sacrificing his sons, * his spouse, his brother, * the kinsfolk who gave him shelter’ (Al-Ma#§rij 70:11–13, AH).

[463] The translations closest to MS’s interpretation of tabarra”a and the concept of bar§” (to show difference or otherness in opinion and behaviour, implying a personal and intellectual disassociation from someone) are AhA: ‘he broke away from him’ or AA: ‘he declared himself quit of him’; too harsh are AB: ‘he renounced him’ or AH: ‘he washed his hands of him’, and (socially) unacceptable is FM, MP: ‘he disowned him’.

[464] ‘O [humankind]! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)’ (Al-\ujur§t 49:13).

[465] Hamza #Abd al-Muããalib (3/625), uncle of the Prophet, who is reported to have converted to his nephew’s new religion after he heard that Abå Jahl had verbally abused MuÈammad during his absence in Mecca, which he also avenged by an open confrontation with the offender during an assembly of the Ahl al-Quraysh.

[466] #Abdall§h b. ArÊqaã was one of the party of four (Prophet MuÈammad, Abå Bakr, Ibn Fuhayra) that fled from Mecca to Yathrib in 622. Ibn ArÊqaã rode the camel that also carried the Prophet, while Abå Bakr and his servant Ibn Fuhayra rode on the second camel. Ibn ArÊqaã’s status as a non-Muslim is particularly interesting because it meant that the Prophet completely trusted the service of a nonfollower; in Islamic fiqh this became a prophetical precedence for the permission for Muslims to do trade and commerce with non-Muslims.

[467] According to the SÊra literature, al-Kh§ãib b. AbÊ Balta#a betrayed the Prophet as a favour to his old tribe by sending a letter to the Quraysh in Mecca in which he warned them that MuÈammad was about to invade their city in 630. The letter was caught and Balta#a summoned to the Prophet (ß) who, however, forgave Balta#a the latter’s betrayal of trust.

[468] This is also exemplified in the verse: ‘When a sura comes down, enjoining them to believe in God and to strive and fight along with His Apostle, those with wealth and influence among them ask you for exemption, and say: “Leave us (behind): we would be with those who sit (at home)”’ (Al-Tawba 9:86).

[469] MS refers here to the events of the so-called first fitna (temptation) and the fight of the Ahl a l-Quraish against the newly formed Muslim community after the P rophet’s Hijra from Mecca in the year 622. These were the battles of Badr (624), UÈud (625), Khandaq, or the battle of the ditch (627), the seizure of Mecca (630). Also included is one of the first military expeditions to regions outside the areas of the Ahl a l-Quraish, to Tabåk (630), while the other two most important expeditions, to Mu”ta (629) and \unayn (630), are not mentioned.

[470] ‘There have been examples before you; so travel in the land and behold the fate of those who disbelieved’ ($l #Imr§n 3:137).

[471] ‘Say: “Travel in the land and see how Allah originated the creation; then Allah produces the other generation. Allah truly has power over everything’ (Al-#Ankabåt 29:20).

[472] ‘Messenger, proclaim everything that has been sent down to you from you Lord—if you do not, then you will not have communicated His message—and God will protect you from people. God does not guide those who defy Him’ (A l-M§“ida 5:67, AH).

[473] $l #Imr§n 3:187; Al-M§“ida 5:15; Al-Baqara 2:187.

[474] Publications on MS by D. F. Eickelman are listed in the Bibliography.

[475] Dale Eickelman wrote: ‘Travel to Damascus to interview MuÈammad ShaÈrår and others associated with religious book publishing in Damascus (March 14–24, 1996) was funded by the Humanities Program of the Rockefeller Foundation, New York, under a grant awarded to Dartmouth College for the project “Print, Islam, and Civic Pluralism: New Religious Writings and their Public.” The author also wishes to thank Colin S. O. Grey, a Presidential Scholar at Dartmouth College, and Christine Eickelman for transcribing the English sections of the interview’. (Transcript of the original interview, p. 1.) The footnotes were provided by Dale Eickelman and left unchanged (except where some updates seemed necessary) as they are in the original manuscript.

[476] MuÈyÊ al-DÊn Ibn #ArabÊ (1165–1240), the influential Sufi mystic and scholar who lived in Damascus from 1230 until his death.

[477] Abroad, a weekly news magazine intended for a general readership covering events outside the former Soviet Union.

[478] Leader of Syria’s National Progressive Front (al-Jabha al-waãaniyya al-taqad dumiyya), one of the constituent parties of the Socialist Union Party (al-Èizb a l-waÈdawiyÊn a l-ishtir§kiyÊn), which encompasses all of Syria’s recognized political parties.

[479] This point is further developed in Shahrur, al-Kit§b wa’l-qur”§n, 59–60, and in chapter 3 of this book.

[480] A prominent Syrian linguist who has worked in Algeria and the Sultanate of Oman, DÊk al-B§b first met Shahrur when they were students

together in Moscow. His Asr§r a l-lis§n a l-#arabÊ (Secrets of the Arabic Language) is included as an appendix to Shahrur's al-Kit§b.

[481] As '§diq J. Sulaim§n explains, rattil also means to place in a logical sequence, although this is a somewhat rare use of the term. Yusuf #Ali, one of the translators of the Qur'an, uses the term only in the sense of measured recitation. It also can refer to military formations, and Shahrur is building on this more physical and logical sense of the term.

[482] This is a common pattern for religious lesson circles. See Dale F. Eickelman, Knowledge and Power in Morocco: The Education of a Twentieth-Century Notable (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 91–104. Participants in Shahrur's discussion groups with prior experience of religious studies or participation in religious orders placed particular emphasis on the 'traditional' structure of their meetings.

[483] Shahrur, Kit§b, 443–67.

[484] There is also an authorized Beirut edition, although Shahrur indicates that the actual print run is considerably higher than the reported figures (Interview, Damascus, March 23, 1996). Sales figures for the pirated Egyptian edition are unavailable. The book is also now available in a CD-ROM version (Interview with Muhammad Shahrur, New York, May 22, 1997).

[485] Among the other recipients of the book were members of the Council of Ministers. In distributing the book to his ministers, the sultan indicated only that ministers might find the book interesting. He makes no statement for or against its argument (Interview with a member of the Council of Ministers, Muscat, June 26, 1996).

[486] Ernest Gellner, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994), 22, 29.

[487] See Muhammad Shahrour, “Islam and the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women,” translated by Dale F. Eickelman and Sadek J. Sulaiman, in Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook, ed., Charles Kurzman, 139–42 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[488] Formerly a faculty member in the Department of Arabic at Cairo University, Abå Zayd argued in successive publications that the text of the Qur’an was subject to historical interpretation. Following pressure from Islamists in 1992, he was denied promotion to full professor and subsequently attacked from the pulpit at various mosques and accused of apostasy for using nontraditional methods for interpreting the meaning of the Qur’an. A mosque preacher, aided by a volunteer group of Islamist lawyers, brought a suit in the Family Court, petitioning that Abå Zayd’s marriage was invalid because he was an apostate. In January 1994, a Family Court judge ruled the case inadmissible, but an appeals court confirmed Abå Zayd’s apostasy and officially annulled his marriage. A further and final appeal to the Court of Cassation resulted only in a stay of execution of the sentence. Professor Abå Zayd and his wife were eventually forced to flee Egypt. He now lives and works in Holland. (Interview, Leiden, March 25, 1996), and Nasr Abu Zaid, “The Case of Abu Zaid,” Index on Censorship 4 (1996), 30–39.

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** Front Matter

*** Synopsis

This book explores the theology and philosophy of the distinguished modern Muslim scholar and theologian Bediuzzaman Said Nursi [d.1960]. Nursi wrote in both Ottoman Turkish and Arabic and his life and thought reflected the transition of modern Turkey from an empire to a secular republic. The contributors to this volume shed new light on two major dimensions of Nursi’s thought: theodicy and justice. classical Muslim theologians debated these two important issues; however, we must consider the modern debate of these issues in the context of the radical political and social transformations of modern Turkey. Nursi explored these matters as they related to the development of state and society and the crisis of Islam in the modern secular nation-state.

Nursi is the founder of a ‘faith movement’ in contemporary Turkey with millions of followers worldwide. in this book, distinguished scholars in islamic, Middle eastern, and Turkish studies explore Nursi’s thought on theodicy and justice in comparison with a number of western philosophers, theologians, and men of letters, such as dante, Merton, Kant, and Moltman. This book presents an invaluable resource for studies in comparative religion, philosophy, and islamic and Middle eastern studies.

*** Title Page

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edited by

Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi

University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

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*** Editor’s introduction

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (henceforward referred to as Nursi) is one of the most significant Muslim theologians in the modern world. In fact, it is possible to compare him to other well-known modern Muslim theologians and thinkers such as Jamal al-din al-afghani, Muhammad ‘abduh, rashid rida, Mustafa abdul razeq, Muhammad iqbal, and several others. Nursi, however, is very unique in that his life and theology reflect the deep transformations of Ottoman/Turkish society from the end of the nineteenth century until his death in 1960.

in addition to understanding Nursi’s life in the context of the complex political and social changes in modern Turkey, one must also understand his theological work as a reflection by a modern Muslim thinker on the challenges of modernity and the impact of the West on the Muslim world. Nursi used the tenets of the islamic tradition to shed light on the challenges of modernity in Turkey and the larger Muslim world. in this sense, he was heir to a long tradition of theological and philosphical debate in classical and modern islam that concerns itself with numerous theological and “secular” issues and questions. one such issue Nursi highlighted in his writings is that of the renaissance of islamic tradition and the Muslim ummah in general. Nursi understood, as have many other modern Muslim reformers, that the West looms large in this renaissance.

It is with this perspective that we are best able to reflect on Nursi’s magnum opus, the Risale-i Nur (henceforward referred to as the Risale).[1] The Risale is not a simple work of Qur’anic exegesis, but a commentary on the transformation of the Muslim world in the modern era. in addition to reading it in the context of islamic theology and exegesis, one must read it historically and personally, as well. in this complex text, Nursi reflects on his life, the life of the Turkish nation and the Muslim ummah in general. ultimately, he reaches the conclusion that the best way to salvage islam and the Muslim

world would be by placing ultimate faith in divine destiny and justice. That is to say, Nursi gave up on politics as a means to save the Muslim world or rebuild the ideal Muslim state. in this, Nursi diverges fundamentally from the worldview of modern islamists such as hassan Banna and allama Mawdudi, who advocated the restoration of islam in the modern world by building an islamic state. however, Nursi never abandoned Shari‘ah during his lifetime, or even the Muslim ummah. on the contrary, Nursi’s ordeal in the modern secular Turkish state stemmed from his deep commitment to Shari‘ah and ways to revive the Muslim community.

The chapters included herein treat two major theological themes that preocuppied Nursi in his “new said” phase: Post World War i and the defeat of the ottoman army in this war, and theodicy and justice. Nursi’s deep immersion in the rich tradition of islamic spirituality is perhaps the most single important factor shaping his theological perspective on the above issues. Nursi grew up in a Sufi environment in eastern anatolia and his Risale is replete with references to key figures of Islamic mysticism such as Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Abu al-Hassan alshadhili, shaykh ahmad sirhindi, and others.[2] in addition to offering an esoteric path to knowledge of the divine (al-ma‘rifah al-ilahiyyah), the Risale elaborates on the need in the age of materialism to reflect on death and the Afterlife. In other words, in his “new said” phase, Nursi was inclined to give up on Western philosophical or even scientific methods of understanding the mystery of the world. he immersed himself deeply in the study and interpretation of the Qur’an as a divine text in order to reflect on the multiple challenges facing him and the larger Muslim ummah. As a young man, Nursi had every confidence in Western philosophy as an aid to understanding the complexity of social and political life. however, in the “new said” phase, Nursi abandons those methods and places his trust completely in the Qur’an as a divine source.

in the Risale, Nursi argues that the Qur’an is “the spring from which all emanations gush forward” (manba‘ al-fuyud), and that whatever beautiful truths are contained in his books all originate from the Qur’anic emanations. Nursi establishes an important connection between the Qur’an, as a sacred text, and his own text, as a human text. he argues in a manner reminiscent of the great Muslim saints that the Risale

does not constitute an autonomous theological quantity, but is a reflection of the Qur’anic text. However, we must caution here that Nursi was simply an exegete of the Qur’an who tried to live the life of the Qur’an in the modern era.

In addition to reflecting on classical Islamic theological arguments on theodicy and justice, Nursi’s life in modern and secular Turkey was characterized by a deep alienation from this world and the desire to meet death without hesitation. A number of articles in this book affirm this idea. It is very clear that Nursi’s problems with the secular Kemalist regime after the foundation of the Turkish republic in the 1920s and his subsequent exile by the authorities to distant places in the country gave him ample opportunity to reflect on alienation, death, and the afterlife. one may argue that there are two different meanings of exile in Nursi’s life: one is concrete and the second is abstract. on the concrete level, Nursi faced exile and alienation; however, on the abstract level, he channeled the feelings that arose within him during exile into an immense spiritual and moral force which he used to write the main parts of the Risale.

It is with his deep reflections on exile and this world, so to speak, that he was able to spiritually grasp the Qur’anic verses on death and the afterlife. Nursi never saw death as a limitation but rather as an emancipation from this life’s problems and a prelude to a life of full of happiness and glory. yvonne haddad aptly observes that Nursi’s life “provides an example of how it is possible to conquer the profound sense of loneliness and alienation experienced by the immigrant in an alien and hostile environment. it sets a paradigm for survival, for seeking solace and affirmation from God by attempting to dwell in His presence. in the process, the experience of ghurba, estrangement, is transformed into uns, companionship.”[3] did Nursi consider exile to be a manifestation of evil? no one can be sure. however, one thing is clear: it is impossible for us to understand the profundity of the Risale without considering Nursi’s long period of exile. in a sense, he was able to develop if not perfect his text in the context of exile from this “world” and immersion in the “wider possibilities of the afterlife.”

Furthermore, Nursi understood the significance of exile in the Islamic theological and spritual contexts. a famous hadith states that, “islam began in exile (ghariban) and it will be exiled again as in the beginning. happy are the expatriates of the community of Muhammad, for they live in solitude, alone with their religion.”[4] another hadith stipulates, “Be in this world as if you were a stranger or an ‘abir sabil or passer-by.” Nursi’s suffering forces contemporary readers to focus on the problem of evil in life. Theodicy is simply defined as a theological answer to the prevalence of evil in human life, although god is endowed with absolute goodness and justice. one may raise the following questions in Nursi’s case: if god is characterized by absolute goodness and justice, then why does he allow this evil (alienation) to befall him for the better part of his life? Why was the Muslim ummah in a state of collapse, especially following the disintegration of the ottoman empire after World War i? if secularism is “evil,” why has god allowed it to form the basis of the state, constitution and structure in modern Turkey? in the Risale, Nursi takes the issue of evil for granted. only people of deep faith and not the people of this life (ahl al-dunya) can overcome the problems emanating from evil.

a good number of articles in this volume discuss the Qur’anic verses dealing with theodicy at length and Nursi’s intricate theological arguments with respect thereto. In the first chapter, Barbara Freyer Stowasser of Georgetown University sheds important light on the biblical and Qur’anic discussions of evil. in addition to discussing what the Qur’an has to say, she delves into classcial islamic philosophy and theology, especially that of the Mu‘tazilites and asha‘arites, and their different formulations of the issue. she argues that:

so then why did adam rebel and what caused him to do so? in other words, how did evil originate in a world created by a Just and all-Powerful god? This, of course, is the key issue in the theological problematic of theodicy. Nursi addresses the problem by way of contrasting divine determining (to save the human soul from pride) with the gift of choice (to make the human soul admit to its responsibility). god creates both good and evil, but it is man’s soul that “acquires” (kasb) good or evil acts by its own free will.

in chapter 2, ian Markham discusses the problem of evil from the angle of suffering and destruction. he argues that for Nursi, the evil of the world is impossible to understand unless there is an afterlife. although Markham's discussion is less theological than stowasser's, it complements it in that it sheds important light on the evils of the modern world and the immense destruction brought about by World War i and World War ii. Markham's article draws our attention not just to the way Nursi pondered evil, but also to the suffering of the ottoman and Turkish people in the modern era. in chapter 3, Thomas Michel skillfully links the issue of evil with ressurection. he argues that "god's own just nature demands a resurrection. The one who so wisely ordered this universe could not fail, in his mercy, to provide justice for those who have remained upright and faithful. god's generosity and compassion demands justice towards the oppressed. But that justice is not found on this earth, so it must be found elsewhere." hence, the Risale is full of passages that discuss resurrection and the lessons that the people of this world must learn from the afterlife.

In Chapter 4, Şükran Vahide, who has translated Nursi's work into English, elaborates on the issue of ressurection and Nursi's preoccupation with it. she argues that Nursi highlighted the Qur'anic proofs for the hereafter while at the same time emphasizing "the indivisibility of this world and the next." in this sense, Vahide affirms the arguments of the preceding authors by focusing primarily on what Nursi had to say about theodicy, this life and the afterlife.

in chapter 5, Bilal Kuşpinar discusses the connection between death and theodicy. he reaches the conclusion that death is part of the all-encompassing mercy and all-embracing goodness of god, "This all-inclusive mercy and beauty, in fact, necessitates the existence of both life and death. despite its scary face in appearance, death yields ultimately good results as it paves the way for an everlasting life." death is one of the few divine signs that human beings have to ponder.

in chapter 6, lucinda Mosher discusses a short piece Nursi wrote entitled Lā Siyyamā and published in his major book, al-Mathnawi al-'Arabi al-Nuri. This book, written originally in arabic, is perhaps the most sophisticated philosophical and theological text he ever wrote. in it,

Nursi is not a simple preacher or man of faith but a classical Muslim mutakkalim or philosopher using all the philosophical tools available to him to prove the essential truths of the Qur’an, especially with regard to the issues of the resurrection and afterlife.

other contributors to this volume, such as W. Mark richardson, leo d. lefebure, eric ormsby, gareth Jones, and ian Kaplow, analyze Nursi’s ideas in a comparative context, in relation to a Western theologian or philosopher. The data and arguments included in this volume shed important light on a multiplicity of theological and philosophical voices, both classical and modern.

Finally, i would like to thank all the contributors to this volume for their scholarly contributions and, in particular, i would like to thank dr. Faris Kaya of the istanbul science and culture Foundation for his tremendous support and dedication to the work of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi.

** 1. Theodicy and the Many Meanings of adam and eve

Barbara Freyer Stowasser

among the several meanings of the term theodicy, i am choosing the broad conceptual meaning of: vindication of the justice of god, especially in ordaining and permitting moral evil.[5] in this chapter, i pursue the issue by way of two foundational texts, the Bible and the Qur’an, both of which deal with god’s creation of humanity (in the form of adam and adam’s wife) and the manner in which humanity (again in the form of adam and his wife) rebelled against the creator. The two scripturalist narratives share a great many features, most important among them the concept that sin – evil –

entered god’s creation through acts of disobedience and rebellion by satan and primordial humanity, all of them god’s creatures whom god had endowed with the power of choice. at the same time, the two narratives diverge on the fundamental question of the nature of mankind, indeed the nature of the world, after god had punished their disobedience with banishment. The Biblical account ends with the affirmation of Adam’s mortality “you are dust, and to dust you shall return”. christian theology later developed the notion that adam’s disobedience was the very reason for all sin and death, so that adam’s fall required christ’s redemption. The Qur’anic narrative, on the other hand, ends with the humans’ repentance, god’s forgiveness, and god’s promise of guidance for all.

This chapter begins with a synopsis of the Qur’anic revelations on god’s creation of humanity and the origin of evil. in its foundational narratives on the origin of man and the beginning of evil, the holy Qur’an presents adam and iblis/ satan as coevals, since it was iblis’ rebellion against god’s primordial command to acknowledge the human’s higher rank and nature that led to iblis’ being cursed as satan and banished from the sight of god. The drama therefore has four protagonists: god the omnipotent creator and Judge, his creature iblis (created as angel or as jinn), and His creatures the first human couple, Adam and Adam’s wife (whose name is not mentioned). out of the webs of iblis’/satan’s pride and arrogance and the humans’ weakness and gullibility, emerges the Qur’anic definition of the principle of evil as disbelief in God whose main manifestations are rebellion and disobedience against his commands; these acts of rebellion and disobedience are undertaken by free choice/free will on the part of the perpetrators.

Their punishment is expulsion from god’s presence to a life of toil. at the same time the Qur’anic narrative concludes with the affirmation of God’s mercy and forgiveness for those who repent and believe.

Briefly presented in the second part of this chapter are the Biblical narratives of the creation of mankind, and the manner and consequences of man’s disobedience to god’s premundane command, which especially christian theology – in decisive contrast to the Qur’anic doctrine – defined as a fall from grace (Augustine’s concept of “original sin”).

among the many deep-going doctrinal differences between Qur’an and Bible on these issues is also the woman’s creational status in relation to the man (in the Bible, created after him and “of him,” a doctrine that is missing in the Qur’an), as well as the role of the woman in humanity’s primordial act of rebellion against the creator (in the Qur’an, the woman is a partner in disobedience with the male, while the text in the Bible suggests – or at least permits – the reading that she is the first target of verbal communication and so presumably the first willing victim of the snake of temptation). having disobeyed god’s command, the man and the woman are expelled and condemned to a life of suffering, passed on to their descendants, in which the man’s lot is to toil as a farmer in fields of thorns and thistles and the woman’s, to suffer pain in childbearing for all time to come. in the Bible, the story ends there: the couple’s banishment is not mitigated by their repentance and god’s forgiveness of their disobedience; nevertheless, Jewish and especially christian theology soon developed the notion of adam’s repentance and divine forgiveness, that very many centuries later even came to include a vindication of the woman’s role in the primordial drama.

The third part of this chapter presents a brief survey of three major pre-modern Muslim Sunni Tafsir works on the Qur’anic texts here under consideration. This survey reveals the extent to which medieval Islamic theology was laboring to find scholastic answers to the theodicycal problem of the origin of evil in a world created by a good and Just creator. it also reveals that Bible-derived traditions (isra’iliyyat) on the issue of gender (the woman’s guilt) continued to play some role in the medieval arabic islamic scripturalist interpretations, a trend that largely came to an end in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

in its fourth part, this chapter looks at some of Nursi’s teachings on these issues. read in the light of the Qur’anic texts and against the canonical arabic interpretations of the premodern period, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’s teaching about humanity and satan, godliness and sin, human freedom of choice and the necessity of a last judgment reflects Qur’anic doctrine in a clear scripture-focused hermeneutics that ranges from Nursi’s theological discourse to his kerygmatic sermons employing metaphors of everyday life.

*** God’s Creation of Humanity and the Origin of Evil in the Qur’an[6]

The Qur’anic accounts of the events involving the creation of adam and the rebellion of iblis indicate that god created adam from clay, or from sounding clay, from mud molded into shape (15:26; 38:71); god fashioned adam with his hands (38:75) in due proportion and breathed into him of his spirit (ruh) (15:29; 38:72). Thus, while created from matter, adam’s nature included a divine breath, a spark, which god granted to the human beyond all other creatures. This higher nature conferred dignity and also obligation. The Qur’an states this by saying that god’s purpose in adam’s creation was to make him god’s vicegerent (khalifa) on earth (2:30). he endowed adam with creative knowledge about the natures of things by teaching him “the names, all of them” (2:31), so that adam’s knowledge was above that of the angels (2:32–3); and god commanded the angels to prostate themselves before adam. only iblis[7] refused to acknowledge the human’s superiority and instead asserted his own. he rebelled against god’s command, was arrogant, and became satan (20:116; 15:30–33; 38:73–6; 7:11–12; 2:34). For this disobedience, god cursed and banished iblis but gave him respite until the day of Judgment, until which time iblis vowed to tempt and assault all humankind except for those strong enough to withstand him, that is, god’s devoted servants (15:34–3; 38:77–85; 7:13–18, 26–7). These accounts center on man and satan, telling both their histories and defining their innate natures. Satan is shown to have started his career together with adam, as adam’s coeval; thus his role is essentially linked to man, his nature is brought out by antagonism to man, he is an “anti-man” force. satan’s very rebellion against god needed man to express itself, and it is perpetuated throughout history in satan’s labors to seduce and tempt man away from morality to sin.

it is only in the second half of the Qur’anic story, which tells of human disobedience to god and man’s banishment from the garden, that the woman appears. Adam’s wife is first mentioned as Adam’s partner in God’s injunction to “dwell in the garden and eat freely of its bountiful fruit,” but “not to approach this Tree” (7:19; 2:35). sura 20 relates that it was adam to whom god addressed the warning that iblis was his and his wife’s enemy; if he let iblis get the two of them ejected from the garden, he (adam) would be landed in misery (or, come to toil) (20:117). it was also to adam that satan then whispered his temptation concerning “the Tree of eternal life, and everlasting kingdom” (20:120), and it was adam who “disobeyed his lord and

went astray” (20:121). By contrast, sura 7 mentions the woman’s participation in the acts of disobedience and repentance: “satan whispered to them twain, in order to reveal to them their private parts, and said: ‘your lord only forbade you this Tree lest you be angels, or of eternal life.’ and he swore to them: ‘i am indeed your sincere adviser.’ and he caused their fall with deception” (7:20–22). When adam and his wife ate of the Tree, they perceived their private parts or, “shame,” [saw’at] and began to sew together leaves from the garden to cover themselves (20:121; 7:22). Thus did iblis cause their expulsion from the garden (2:36), so they would live on earth for a time in mutual enmity (20:123; 7:24; 2:36). according to sura 20, god “chose” adam and forgave him and guided him (20:122), and whoever follows god’s guidance will not lose his way nor fall into misery, or, toil (20:123). according to sura 7, both man and woman asked for god’s forgiveness and mercy, saying that they had wronged themselves, or, committed an outrage against their own natures (7:23), and god bestowed (on mankind) the garment of righteousness (7:26). sura 2 here adds that adam received from his lord “words” (of inspiration) and god forgave him (2:37) and promised freedom from fear and grief to all humans who heed his guidance (2:38).

since each of these Qur’anic narratives varies from the others as to focus, sequencing of events, and the involvement of the woman, a brief analysis of each account in chronological order may be useful. as indicated above, the main textual body of the accounts if found in suras 2:30–39, 7:11–27, 15:26–43, 20:115–24, and 38:71–85. studies on the Qur’an’s internal chronological sequencing[8] place the suras in the following chronological order: suras 20, 15, and 38 revealed in the Middle Meccan period, sura 7 in the late Meccan period, and sura 2 in (early) Medina. in sura 20 (the earliest account), god’s warning, satan’s temptation, and god’s forgiveness are all directed at adam, even though both man and woman eat of the Forbidden Tree and are expelled from the garden. suras 15 and 38 (both Middle Meccan) speak of adam’s creation and iblis’ rebellion, banishment, and curse. Man’s disobedience toward god is not part of the narrative, and the woman is not mentioned. in sura 7 (the latest of these narratives revealed in Mecca), both male and female are tempted and tricked by iblis, both succumb, repent, and are banished. The final version of the story in Sura 2, revealed in Medina, emphasizes that the purpose of adam’s creation was as god’s “vicegerent” on earth and tells of adam’s god-given higher knowledge. god’s ordinance to stay way from the Tree is here addressed to both adam and his wife; there is,

however, no seduction or temptation scene, merely the statement that it was satan who caused the couple's "slip" and expulsion. The narrative then makes mention of the "words" adam received from his lord and of god's forgiveness for adam, both expressed in a single verse that is inserted between two divine commands of expulsion. The account ends with god's promise of guidance for all and his pledge that "whoever follows My guidance shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve" (2:38).

The dynamics of the narrative procede from a focus on adam (sura 20) to one involving both Adam and his wife (Sura 7); the final version of the story, however, transcends both by way of introducing the additional notions of man's vicegerency on earth, higher knowledge, god-given inspiration (words) and the promise of (spiritual) well-being of all humans who heed god's guidance. Thus, as the drama is related in various, dynamically evolving plots, the woman gradually appears as participant in the events of rebellion, repentance, and banishment; but the gender question remains a mere detail that bears no importance for the drama, and in the end the main theme has shifted away from it altogether to the issue of mankind's purpose on earth and the ways of god's guidance. The latter theme, central to the Qur'anic message, is expanded upon in 33:72–3, a later Medinan revelation that speaks of a primeval covenant between god and the human in terms of "the Trust" (al-amana) which god offered "to the heaven and the earth and the mountains, but they refused the burden and were afraid of it. But the human undertook to bear it. he was indeed wanton (or, unfair to himself), and foolhardy. so that god punish the male and female hypocrites, and the male and female unbelievers, but forgive the male and female believers" (33:72–3). The Qur'an, then, declares that humans, male and female, are free and equal agents called upon to wage the battle of righteousness against satan. adam's and his wife's "slip" (or "error," zalla) did not result in a lasting defect of human primordial nature. cast out to live on earth for a time (7:24; 2:36), the banishment did not include the burden of the curse of original sin. Man and woman may be weak and lagging, proud and ungrateful, but the Qur'an judges neither as lost to forgiveness as long as they continue to believe in god. evil action is a willful act of disobedience. doing evil does not result from ignorance that god exists, or ignorance of his commands. This was true not only of the first couple but is equally true of all later generations, since God revealed his laws to humankind through a continuing series of prophets, a sequence of scripturalist events that culminated in the revelation of the Qur'an to the seal

of the Prophets, Muhammad. Therefore, “because knowledge of god and of doing good is self-evident and periodically re-revealed, doing evil is a conscious decision to disobey god’s commands.”[9]

*** God’s Creation of Humanity and the Origin of Evil in the Bible[10]

The narrative of god’s creation of the world that culminates in his creation of the human is found at the beginning of the Book of genesis in the hebrew Bible. The story is related twice, in genesis 1.26–30 and genesis 2.7–25. genesis 1 speaks of the ideal equality of male and female creation, while genesis 2 places the man above the woman, and in genesis 3 the man blames the woman for her role in his expulsion from the garden. historians of the Biblical text opine that “the development of the book of genesis was a long process extending over centuries.”[11] Genesis 1 (identified as P*, abbreviation for the Priestly source in the Pentateuch) is generally regarded as younger, that is of later provenance, than Genesis Chapters 2 and 3 (identified as parts of J*, the Yahwist source in the Pentateuch);[12] the date given for P is around 550 bc, that for J is around 950 bc.

According to the first (and younger) narrative recorded in Genesis 1.26–30, “god created humankind in his image, in the image of god he created them, male and female he created them,” and then god blessed them and gave them dominion over “everything that has the breath of life.” By contrast, the second (and older) narrative of genesis 2 and 3 relates adam’s creation in genesis 2.7–20, the creation of eve from adam in 2.21–5, their temptation, facilitated by the woman, in 3.1–7, their shared guilt and anxiety in 3.8–13, and god’s curse of the snake and condemnation of the woman and of the man in 3.14–19. god perceives the world as “very good” (genesis 1.31) even though it also includes not only the Tree of life but also the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil (genesis 2.8–9), along with a subtle snake who encourages the consumption of its fruit (genesis 3.1). The second narrative is thus profoundly different from the first.

according to this second narrative in genesis 2.7–20, god “formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being, ... and he put him in the garden of eden to

till it and keep it, and god commanded the man: you may freely eat of every tree of the garden but of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” adam was thus not created in the garden but was placed there after his creation. god then brought all living creatures to the man to see what he would call them, ... (and how he would bond with them?) ... “but for the man there was not found a helper (among them) as his partner.” genesis 2.21– 5: so god caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. “And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said: This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.” it was thus the woman who was created in the garden. genesis 3.1–7 then tells the temptation story whose main protagonists are the snake (3.1: “the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the lord god had made”) and the woman. The snake casts suspicion on god’s motive in forbidding the humans to eat from the Tree, saying to the woman “you will not die; for god knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like god, knowing good and evil.” and so the woman “took of its fruit and ate and also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.” According to Genesis 3.8–13, when questioned by god the man then blamed the woman for his failing, and the woman blamed the snake, “the serpent tricked me, and i ate”. in genesis 3.14–16, god curses the snake, condemning it to crawl upon its belly, eat dust, and live in constant enmity with the woman, and then god condemns the woman to suffer pain in childbearing, sexual desire for her husband, and subordination to him, “he shall rule over you”. in genesis 3.17–19, god then condemns the man to a life of toil on ground now cursed because he had listened to his wife’s voice and had disobeyed god. only thorns and thistles would grow for him. “By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” in genesis 3.22–4, the man then named his wife eve, “because she was the mother of all living”; then god cast him out, to keep him away from the Tree of life (that was also in the garden) and banished him “to till the ground from which he was taken.” since the snake, like the human, was one of god’s creations, this Biblical story of the first couple’s temptation does not offer an explanation of the origin of evil as a primordial, negative force. on the contrary, god is the omnipotent and omniscient, Just and compassionate lord over good as well as evil, and he employs both to

accomplish his ends. god has no equal and the cosmic order that he wills must inevitably be established. in genesis 3.1–7 the snake speaks but is not satan: “the devil does not yet exist.”[13] The concept of the created satan as the personification of evil evolved slowly during Biblical times and only underwent some sort of standardization at the hands of early christian authorities.[14] But the scripture understood that the one place where evil exasperates god is the human heart; “there remains a mystery that is not further explored, namely the freedom that human beings have to direct their own hearts for good or evil.”[15] When the primordial human will was turned against god and thus incurred guilt, their punishment was expulsion from god’s presence and separation from the Tree of life (genesis 3.22), even though mortality – death – was already a decreed part of the human condition (genesis 3.19).[16] christian theology later developed the notion that it was adam’s and eve’s disobedience that occasioned the Fall of Man by which mankind was thrust into the vale of tears, death and sin that marks all human existence until its redemption by christ the redeemer. adam’s fall was a religious and a cosmic catastrophe. in the new Testament, the apostle Paul elaborated the view that sin, like death, originated with adam (romans 8.2); sin’s power emerged simultaneously with the giving of the Law. Christ’s death was the expiatory sacrifice (Romans 8.3) that liberated humanity from their enslavement to the power of sin (romans 6.23). While Adam (the man of flesh) had brought sin and death to the world, Christ (the second adam and the man of spirit) had brought life (1 corinthians 15.20–22 and 47). rooted in divine mystery, the suffering of christ manifests the divine response to evil.

Paul’s views led the early church father augustine (354–430), Bishop of hippo, to develop the doctrine of original sin to describe the stain inherited from adam by way of propagation that affected all of humanity, since to be conceived without grace is to begin life in the state of sin. This belief was not accepted by Judaism and was resisted by early christian thinkers, but augustine’s interpretation of the Fall became the accepted doctrine of catholic christianity.[17] augustine had been a Manichean before becoming a christian. in his doctrine of original sin, however, he did not adhere to an innate tendency in the human toward evil (such as propounded in gnostic dualism) but focused on the force of evil as hatred of the truth that (like in Paul’s definition) derived from the anterior bondage discovered in every free choice.[18] apparently there was already in the first human beings “an element of pride, self-love, that issued in disobedience.” adam and eve

chose to put their own wills ahead of god's and lost paradise for all humanity. original sin and concupiscence are inherited from adam and handed down from generation to generation by way of propagation, whence it is both a physiological and psychological blemish. But since evil was the result of a wrong act of will by a rational creature (satan, humankind), its cause did not lie in a god wholly good and therefore incapable of evil.[19] in the end, "augustine retains the essential obscurity of the origin of evil. he cannot explain evil initiative whether in the angels and adam or adam's descendants."[20] augustine could understand that free will is fallible, but he could not understand how it actually does choose evil. "Trying to understand this is not simply like looking for something in the dark (that would be in search for an evil nature – dualism's project) but like trying to see the dark itself, or like trying to hear silence."[21] With adam's fall began time. The redemption through christ is salvation out of all time. But even adam and eve did not remain rebellious but repented and were saved. Indeed, when the crucified christ descended into hell before his resurrection, he did so to release adam (and eve followed along). all church fathers, including augustine, declared it as heresy to claim that adam and eve were damned forever. on the contrary, they became saints in the liturgical calendar of the catholic church; their saints' day was the 24 december, and they became patron saints of the tailors.[22]

Judaism and especially Christianity have traditionally emphasized the first woman's guilt in humankind's primordial act of rebellion. in addition, the new Testament (following Jewish tradition) offers a very negative view of eve as representative of the alleged weaknesses of all women. early christian theologians contrasted eve's sinfulness with the perfect sinlessness of the "new eve," Mary the mother of Jesus, who was herself immaculately conceived, so that she was ever without sin and possessed the gift of sanctifying grace. By contrast, in one of his Pastoral letters, the apostle Paul expressed fear that the corinthian christians would be led astray from christ as eve was deceived by the serpent (2 corinthians 11.3). Wives should be subject to their husbands, "for the husband is the head of the wife just as christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the savior" (ephesians 5.22–4). in the Pastoral letters Timothy and Titus (that were most probably not written by Paul), eve's creation after the man, and her deception by the serpent are given as reasons why women must keep silent in church, neither teaching nor having authority over a man. "For Adam was formed first, then eve; and adam was not deceived, but the woman was

deceived and became a transgressor. yet she will be saved through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and holiness, with modesty” (1 Timothy 2.11–15). (cf. 1 corinthians 14.34–5). Titus assumed that only men would be bishops (Titus 1.7–9). regarding the origin of evil as rooted in humanity’s wrong act of will, these teachings and the traditions on which they are based introduce an element of gender into the debate. The problem is not, however, whether sin is “gendered,” but whether there is not in women a tendency toward sin that is greater or more pronounced than in men. Modern exegesis, on the other hand, has maintained that, although it is a possible interpretation of the Genesis narrative to argue that the first woman had a tendency toward sin, this reading is not inherent in the narrative’s literal wording; and even then, the woman’s role in the fall is not that of a temptress, since no such action is described in Genesis 3.6, but is that of the first human transgressor of a covenant of law (genesis 2.17).

*** God’s Creation of Humanity and the Origin of Evil in the Arabic Tafsir Literature

classical (pre-modern) Muslim interpretation of the Qur’anic narrative of the rebellion of adam and his wife against their lord departs from the scripturalist referent in numerous ways. extraneous detail transmitted in hadith form and frequently originating in Bible-related sources not only fleshes out the story but drastically changes it, especially with regard to the woman’s role. on the whole, the pre-modern interpretations of woman’s origin and nature largely denied female rationality and female moral responsibility, as the consensus of the learned doctors of islamic law and theology accepted and propagated some ancient hadith materials on women’s inferior nature, until eighteenth-century pre-modern reformists began to question these traditions’ authoritative status. since the nineteenth century, islamic modernists have denied the authenticity and doctrinal validity of what they viewed as medieval extraneous interpretative lore, while re-emphasizing the Qur’anic notions of the female’s full personhood and gender-equal moral responsibility. The latter is also the position embraced by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, whose books make no reference to these extra-Qur’anic medieval texts.

When abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 923) wrote his great hadith-based Qur’an commentary[23] in the late ninth and early tenth centuries, many traditions on the story of human creation were in circulation, which the Muslim scholars – as Tabari repeatedly acknowledges “had learned from the people of the Torah.” While he quotes large numbers of these traditions, Tabari remains cautious as to their reliability; frequently he indicates mental reservations with the phrase “god knows best,” or by expressing the hope that his sources “god willing” are right, or by opining that their accounts represent interpretations “within the realm of possibility.”[24] But then there also follows, in Tabari, a whole array of Bible-derived traditions that relate such extra-Qur’anic lore as that adam’s wife was created from a rib in his body and therefore he named her hawwa’, “because she was created from a living thing”,[25] and that iblis entered into the garden in the belly (or mouth, fangs, or jaw) of a snake.[26] Many of the traditions quoted by Tabari also blame the woman for succumbing to iblis’/satan’s temptation, as it was also the majority opinion of theological experts by Tabari’s time that it was only through the woman’s weakness and guile that satan could bring about adam’s’ downfall. after hawwa’ succumbed to iblis’s insinuations, she went to adam and addressed him with iblis’ very words, and he ate,[27] or she commanded her husband to eat,[28] or she used sexual desire or intoxication as her means to overcome his rational powers of resistance.[29] god then cursed the earth from which adam was created so that its fruits would turn to thorns, and he banished him to a life of want and work.[30] Then god condemned the woman in terms that involved her constitution and mental abilities, indeed her very personhood and that of her daughters for all time to come: because hawwa’ had tempted god’s servant and had made the tree bleed when she picked its fruit, she was condemned to bleed once month, to carry and deliver her children against her will, and to be often close to death at delivery.[31] god also made the woman stupid and foolish, while he had created her wise and intelligent. “Were it not for the calamity that afflicted Hawwa’, the women of this world would not menstruate, would be wise, and would bear their children with ease.”[32] The snake in whose belly iblis had entered the garden was cursed to slither (naked) on its belly, to eat dust, and to be the eternal enemy of man,[33] wherefore the Prophet commanded the Muslims to “kill the snake wherever you find it.”[34] on the question of the humans’ repentance after their disobedience, many traditions quoted by Tabari indicate that both the man and the woman acknowledged their sin and asked god’s forgiveness and mercy, but an even larger number of reports specify that the prayer for forgiveness and god’s acceptance of it involved adam alone.[35] The medieval exegetes largely

continued to blame the woman for mankind’s individual and communal sin by opining that the Qur’anic notion of “sound nature” (fitra) was largely reserved for the male, while the female was viewed as an occasion of “social anarchy” (fitna) in need of control.

over time, however, the theme of the woman’s role in humanity’s primeval error ceased to be the focus of the debate as other theological issues gained prominence. Two great exegetic works written during the twelfth century reveal the extent to which medieval Islamic theology was laboring to find scholastic answers to the theodicycal problem of the nature of evil in a world created by a good and Just creator. in this great debate, the islamic “Free Will Party” was represented by Mahmud ibn umar al-Zamakhshari (d. 1144) who was a Mu’tazili. Mu’tazilite rationalist theology argued ethical and metaphysical principles, especially the principles of god’s unity and Justice, and their implications, with the strictest logic. Mu’tazilite theology was speculative, intellectualist, and strictly Qur’anic; thus, the Mu’tazilites were neither philosophers nor freethinkers or liberals, but theologians in the strictest sense of the word. Their doctrine of god’s Justice gave widest berth to man’s free will but also argued that god – by his essential nature – was Bound to be Just.[36] Being a Mu’tazilite, al-Zamakhshari regarded adam’s and hawwa’s sin as “minor” since it involved disobedience, not apostacy, and thus “god had to forgive it.” Consequently Zamakhshari attributed the first couple’s repentance to their “exaggerated righteousness,” saying that they acted “in the manner of saints and the righteous who regard minor sins as major, but enormous good deeds as minor.”[37] The purpose of this reading, of course, was to support the Mu’tazilite definition of “sin,” not to exonerate Hawwa’. Indeed, to Zamakhshari Hawwa remained as guilty as she first appeared to the early traditionalists. He establishes this by quoting a tradition (already quoted by Tabari) according to which the angels did not permit hawwa’ to approach her husband adam on his deathbed, while he was calling out to her to leave the lord’s angels alone, since what had happened to him had only happened because of her.[38]

Mainstream (orthodox) opposition to Mu’tazilite theology was thereafter formulated by al-ash’ari (d. 935) and his school that came to dominate sunni theology until modern times. ash arism teaches that since god’s will is absolute and eternal, He is the efficient cause of all motion, including man’s

actions. To explain human responsibility in a universe of predestination, the ash’arites developed the doctrine of “acquisition” (kasb, iktisab), where god creates the power (to act) in man, and man “acquires” that power, since the act and the power to act occur simultaneously.[39] (Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’s theological argumentation was in part profoundly influenced by al-Ash’ari, as is outlined in what follows). Ash’arism’s greatest representative among the medieval Qur’anic exegetes was abu abdallah Muhammad ibn umar ibn al-husayn al-razi, known as Fakhr al-din al-razi (d. 1209). in his enormous commentary on the Qur’an, al-Tafsir al-kabir (also known as Mafatih al-ghayb), he brilliantly fused the principles of (Qur’an-based) ash’arism with those of falsafa, the islamic heir to greek philosophy.

as a scholastic theologian (mutakallim) whose main frame of reference was the Qur’anic text, razi at times questioned the consensus of the doctors of law and theology, re-thought the hadith in terms of inner-Qur’anic logic and rationalist dogma, and measured traditional lore against the categories of islamic law. For razi, the real issue in the narrative of iblis, rebellion and the humans’ disobedience was the problematic of free will as opposed to predestination. To razi, the chain of disobedience leading from iblis to adam had to originate somewhere in god’s intention,[40] but the trouble with iblis, says razi, is that he argues for “predestination” in his own case while explaining or explaining away the seduction of the human “in the manner of the free-will party.”[41] By logic razi also concluded that iblis must have seduced adam directly, without the woman’s interference.[42] With all of its rationalism and Qur’an-centeredness, however, razi’s exegesis also reflects the legal and social realities of his age. Thus, for example, he finds proof of male authority over the woman and woman’s exclusion from activites outside of her home in the Qur’anic accounts of the first couple’s repentance and punishment, when he emphasizes that adam repented “while the woman was his follower.”[43] The punishment of adam’s earthly “toil” (sura 20:117) was not really a punishment, because toil enjoined on a person is a means of atonement as well as a source of recompense for a man.[44] The burden of “toil” was imposed on adam alone because a man must also toil for his wife whose guardian he is; “toil” implies the fatigue of the quest after sustenance, which is incumbent on the man but not the woman.[45] razi also found occasion to quote the widely circulated and still popular woman-as-rib hadith which reflects Hawwa’s origin in Adam and also means to describe female nature. The hadith, found in

Bukhari and other canonical hadith collections, indicates on the authority of the Prophet that “woman was created from a crooked rib. if you set out to straighten her, you will break her, and if you leave her alone while there is crookedness in her, you will enjoy her.”[46] But when razi contended that the traditions blaming adam’s lapse on hawwa’s wine that besotted his senses “are not farfetched,” he only did so “because adam was permitted to partake of all things (in the garden – even wine) except for that Tree.”[47]

God’s Creation of Humanity and the Origin of Evil in the Works of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

Nursi’s monumental Qur’anic commentary, known as the Risale-i Nur Collection, is not an interlinear exegesis of the holy text in the format favored by the classical authorities, but represents “what is known as a manevi tefsir, or commentary which expounds the truth of the Qur’an, that is, explains and proves the verses containing the Qur’anic teachings about the essential truths of belief.”[48] Prominent among the many topics in this work on the essential truths of belief are the divine names and attributes (god’s existence and unity), god’s creation of the world, god’s determining power and man’s free choice (the mystery of theodicy), the certainty

of resurrection, last judgment, and the afterlife in heaven or hell. Nursi’s teachings on the story of adam and his wife coalesce in the Qur’anic notion of theodicy which stipulates that evil action is a willful act of disobedience. doing evil is not the result of ignorance that god exists or ignorance of his command. “Because knowledge of god and of doing good is self-evident and periodically re-revealed, doing evil is a conscious decision to disobey god’s commands.”[49] god “created everything in the best way” (sura 32:7). god created the world to see and enjoy, as well as to show and display his own beauty and perfection. To explain the mystery of creation, Nursi uses the parable of the mighty king (god) who constructed a vast and majestic palace in order to display to the people the majesty of his rule, his glittering wealth, the wonders of his art, and the marvels of his knowledge. later he appointed

a supreme commander (the Prophet Muhammad) who informed the people that the king had made and displayed all these riches to make himself known to them and so that they would love him in thanks and praise. some of the people who visited the palace heeded the supreme commander's message and were (eventually) rewarded with permanent bliss. The others misused the pleasures of the palace, disobeyed the king's rules, and were cast into prison. Nursi clarifies that the first group believed in Muhammad's message, listened to the Qur'an and followed its rules, and thanked and praised god. The second group rejected and denied all manifestations of the divine names and thus was cut off from the king's presence.[50] god is Truth, Beauty, and reality. Whatever elements of truth, beauty, and reality are embedded in our terrestrial lives of brute facticities, are mere reflections of god's Perfection. on the relationship of god to the world of his creation, Nursi at times adopts the metaphors that many Sufi authorities had employed before his time. Thus he states that god is to the world just as the sun is to the mirror images that reflect the sun's brightness in the world's many "bubbles and transparent objects," meaning that while the latter reflections are entirely contingent upon the sun, the sun is entirely independent of them. all things testify to the necessary existence and oneness of the necessarily existent one, and with their deaths and disappearance, they testify to his pre-eternity, everlastingness, and unity. "Just as life, which displays a manifestation of divine beauty, is a proof of divine oneness, and a sort of manifestation of divine unity, death too which displays the manifestation of divine glory, is a proof of divine unity."[51] god "created everything in the best way" (sura 32:7), meaning that everything in creation is put together according to its innate abilities with perfect measure and order.[52] it is god "who creates death and life" (sura 67:2). death is not a punishment wrought on humankind because of their primordial act of rebellion against their creator (as taught by the apostle Paul), but death is a proof of god's dominicality, as much as life is a proof of it.[53]

god "created man in the best of forms" (sura 95:4) and then: "he taught adam the names, all of them" (sura 2:31). Nursi sees man as the (defective) mirror to the divine names in three aspects: his weakness, poverty, and faults show up god's power, riches, and mercy; his partial knowledge and sovereignty show up god's absolute knowledge and complete sovereignty; and he is "the greatest impress" among the many impresses of the divine names.[54] To Nursi, the meaning of "teaching adam the names" was linked to adam's ability to be god's vicegerent (khalifa) on earth and

thus symbolized man’s domination over most of the other physical beings in the universe.[55] god willed that man, a single species, would perform functions unfettered by the natural restrictions that limit all other animals.[56] But man’s lofty nature was also linked to his foolishness, as specified in sura 33:72: god offered “the Trust (al-amana) to the heavens and the earth and the mountains; but they refused to undertake it, being afraid thereof. But man assumed it; indeed, he is most unjust, most foolish. “To Nursi this verse signifies the morally devastating potential of man’s selfishness. Just as man can rise to great heights of morality, he can also surrender himself to great wrongdoing.[57] so then why did adam rebel and what caused him to do so? in other words, how did evil originate in a world created by a Just and all-Powerful god? This, of course, is the key issue in the theological problematic of theodicy. Nursi addresses the problem by way of contrasting divine determining (to save the human soul from pride) with the gift of choice (to make the human soul admit to its responsibility). god creates both good and evil, but it is man’s soul that “acquires” (kasb) good or evil acts by its own free will. Therefore, the acquisition (kasb) of evil is evil, because it signifies desire for evil; evil and ugliness pertain to human desire and derive from man’s capacity to act on that desire. But divine determining is based on truth and justice, and thus the creation of evil (as a potential choice?) is not evil. Nursi avers that, ultimately, this question is a mystery; “our not knowing how the power of choice is compatible with divine determining does not prove that it is not so, “just as the Qur’an says: (sura 4:79) “whatever good happens to you is from god, but whatever evil befalls you is from yourself.”[58] god’s wisdom even turns evil and ugliness into goodness and beauty. adam’s expulsion from paradise, says Nursi, served but as a means to unfold his potentialities. if he had remained in the garden, his rank would have been like that of the angels; since divine wisdom required a realm of accountability appropriate to the potentialities of man, his expulsion from paradise was a divine act of pure wisdom and pure mercy.[59] There are numerous universal good purposes (even) in the existence of satan, because human striving occurs only through the challenges that are posed to the human by the existence of evil spirits and harmful things.[60] in his theology of divine determining and human free will, Nursi thus argued from within the orthodox position first formulated by al-Ash’ari (mentioned above) which Nursi himself acknowledges as “the sunni school” and its members as “we people of truth,” while speaking of the Jabriyya (Predestinationists) and the Mu’tazila (Free Will Party who taught that “god could not create evil”) as “heretics.”[61]

*** Conclusion

The abrahamic scriptures that were the focus of this chapter on the origin of evil share numerous concepts. Most important among them are, first, that evil originated not with god but with an act of rebellion against god on the part of satan and/or primordial humanity; and, second, that this act of disobedience was not pre-ordained but followed from the fact that god had endowed his creatures with free will.

The many differences in how the various religious traditions developed and interpreted this shared blueprint can likewise be ascertained by investigating the paradigmatic roles attributed to adam and his wife. early christian thought developed both the christian concept of adam’s Fall from grace and also eve’s instrumentality in this Fall. it was not the former but the latter notion (eve’s culpability) that found resonance in the medieval islamic Tafsir. By contrast, the Qur’anic narrative weaves together the themes of human disobedience and god’s punishment with the themes of human repentance and god’s forgiveness, as it progresses from its gender-equal doctrine of human rebellion and banishment to the affirmation of God’s mercy and forgiveness for those who repent and believe. Nursi’s exposition of humanity’s creation narrative is strictly Qur’anic, and is free of any of the hadith materials that were so abundant in the premodern exegeses. adam stands for all of humanity, male as well as female; god created adam to be his vicegerent on earth, god charged adam with the Trust, adam’s nature was lofty but he was also foolish. adam was given the freedom of moral choice and adam used it to covet what was forbidden. Nursi pays no attention to the old gendered hadiths that diminish the woman’s creational rank and augment her role in mankind’s primeval act of disobedience against god. in his Risale-i-Nur

Collection, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi thus dealt with the theological problematic of theodicy by focusing his arguments strictly and exclusively on the Qur’an’s interplay between god’s omnipotence and human capability to sin, human repentance and god’s forgiveness; by asserting that

through the grace of god even human sin can result in good; and by maintaining that even human suffering can refine human life.[62]

** 2. living life in the light of death: a conversation with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

Ian Markham

in the West, belief in life after death has gone out of fashion. For some, it has become fashionable to offer an account of faith that does not include life after death.[63] For others, life after death, along with the rest of the religious edifice, is just implausible. Nursi would have recognized both of these challenges. living at a time in Turkey when some saw islam as a problem which needs to be overcome if Turkey is to be a progressive nation state, he was deeply concerned about the gap between faith and the modern, rational mindset. Therefore it is interesting to see how Nursi responds to the challenge of skepticism about life after death.

in this chapter i propose to put Betrand russell in conversation with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. In the first section, we shall explore Russell's worldview (as it pertains to life after death). in the second section, we shall give sustained attention to the Tenth Word and its five addendums. We shall seek to get inside the arguments of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. in the third section, we shall see how Nursi's fundamental "orientation" is the key difference with russell. an orientation that, as a Christian, I find compelling and persuasive.

*** Bertrand Russell (187–1970)

There is no doubt that Russell is a major influence on the shape of British philosophy in the twentieth century. he is best know for his work in the

philosophy of mathematics: he was responsible for “logicism” (the view that maths can be reduced to certain basic logically axioms) and, with others, is credited with the emergence of “analytical philosophy.” along with these achievements in philosophy, he became a leading advocate of social causes: he was a strong supporter of voting rights for women and a leading opponent of war.

our interest in russell is around his work in philosophy of religion. in a famous essay, russell explains why he is not a christian. he has several problems with Christianity. For a start he does not find the arguments for belief persuasive. This is his summary and criticisms of the design argument, which is worth quoting at length:

The next step in the process brings us to the argument from design. you all know the argument from design: everything in the world is made just so that we can manage to live in the world, and if the world was ever so little different we could not manage to live in it. That is the argument from design. it sometimes takes a rather curious form; for instance, it is argued that rabbits have white tails in order to be easy to shoot. i do not know how rabbits would view that application. it is an easy argument to parody. you all know Voltaire’s remark, that obviously the nose was designed to be such as to fit spectacles. That sort of parody has turned out to be not nearly so wide of the mark as it might have seemed in the eighteenth century, because since the time of darwin we understand much better why living creatures are adapted to their environment. it is not that their environment was made to be suitable to them, but that they grew to be suitable to it, and that is the basis of adaptation. There is no evidence of design about it.

When you come to look into this argument from design, it is a most astonishing thing that people can believe that this world, with all the things that are in it, with all its defects, should be the best that omnipotence and omniscience have been able to produce in millions of years. i really cannot believe it. do you think that, if you were granted omnipotence and omniscience and millions of years in which to perfect your world, you could produce nothing better than the Ku Klux Klan, the Fascists, and Mr. Winston churchill? really i am not much impressed with the people who say: “look at me: i am such a splendid product that there must have been design in the

universe.” i am not very much impressed by the splendor of those people. Moreover, if you accept the ordinary laws of science, you have to suppose that human life and life in general on this planet will die out in due course: it is merely a flash in the pan; it is a stage in the decay of the solar system; at a certain stage of decay you get the sort of conditions and temperature and so forth which are suitable to protoplasm, and there is life for a short time in the life of the whole solar system. you see in the moon the sort of thing to which the earth is tending – something dead, cold, and lifeless.

i am told that that sort of view is depressing, and people will sometimes tell you that if they believed that they would not be able to go on living. do not believe it; it is all nonsense. nobody really worries much about what is going to happen millions of years hence. even if they think they are worrying much about that, they are really deceiving themselves. They are worried about something much more mundane, or it may merely be a bad digestion; but nobody is really seriously rendered unhappy by the thought of something that is going to happen in this world millions and millions of years hence. Therefore, although it is of course a gloomy view to suppose that life will die out – at least i suppose we may say so, although sometimes when i contemplate the things that people do with their lives i think it is almost a consolation – it is not such as to render life miserable. it merely makes you turn your attention to other things.[64]

in amongst russell’s humorous presentation and critique of the argument, there are three major arguments. First, he makes much of darwinian evolution as a naturalistic explanation of order. The theme that science has explained the complexity of the world more effectively than theism reoccurs throughout his essay “Why i am not a christian.” For russell, christianity has been a frequent opponent of scientific insight. Where Christians presumed that the world was at the center of the universe, science proved them wrong. so in like manner, where christians presumed that god had put the universe together, science demonstrated that the apparent order is due to the elegant hypothesis of evolution.

The second argument is that there is so much evil, suffering, and wickedness in this world that it is very unlikely that an all-loving and all-powerful being would have created it. elsewhere in russell’s writings, the problem of evil and

suffering, for russell, is a decisive argument for skepticism. he thinks it is just impossible for the fact of evil to be reconciled with the traditional attributes of god.

The third argument is that the scientific worldview, which includes the ultimate extinction of all life on earth in the death of our star, is one that we must learn to live with. And in fact, psychologically, this is not a difficult thing to do.

This last point is important for our purposes. in an article entitled: “a Free Man’s Worship,” Russell outlines his credo. Having first outlined the increasingly implausibility of religion, he writes:

such, in outline, but even more purposeless, more void of meaning is the world which science presents for our belief. amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. That Man is the produce of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcomes of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grace; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man’s achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins – all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.[65]

For russell, there is no life after death. We are, ultimately, simply remarkable complex bundles of atoms that face extinction when we die. although, for russell, this might require “character” to admit this, it is truth that we cannot ultimately evade and to imagine otherwise is a self-delusion. We turn now to

the first volume of the Risale-i Nur – The Words – in which Bediuzzaman Said Nursi sets out the arguments for resurrection.

*** Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1877–190)

although the worldview of russell never really persuaded the Turks, Nursi's robust defense of life after death came in a setting where anti-religious voices were being heard. as Kemal atatürk moved in with his modernizing project, islam became association with everything backward and misguided. Said Nursi's project was to push back. he explained that his goal in writing on resurrection and the hereafter was to show "how rational, appropriate, well-founded and coherent are the truths of islam."[66] he wanted to illustrate that placing this life into a cosmic context, which assumes that this life was a stage prior to judgment and accountability, was a rational, well-grounded belief.

To understand Nursi's account of resurrection, we need to identify five aspects. The first is that the argument does not take the traditional deductive form. We search in vain for a straightforward syllogism. instead, as with much of the Risalei Nur, we are invited through story and allegory to see how "incomplete" this life is when we deny the existence of the hereafter. Nursi wants us to stand back from the details of living and appreciate the setting and context. in much the same way a book is unintelligible without an author, so this world is unintelligible without a god and correspondingly life after death. in the conclusion to the tenth word, Nursi writes: "The preceding Twelve Truths confirm, supplement and support each other. coming together in union, they demonstrate the required result."[67] Nursi is here explaining the cumulative character of the argument. Perhaps Nursi would concede that a skeptic could challenge one strand of the argument, but "coming

together in union, they demonstrate the required result."[68]

The second aspect to his argument is that the universe is clearly intended. This is the point of Nursi's delightful story of two men strolling through the

world. one man recognizes the order in the world as clear evidence that there is a creator who oversees everything; the other decides to live and do as he pleases hoping that he will not be held accountable. at this point Nursi is appealing to that basic sense of awe, which is the fundamental impulse of religion. in much the same way as an elaborate, beautiful house needs an architect, so Nursi explains:

The cosmos also requires an infinitely wise, all-knowing and all-powerful maker. For the magnificent cosmos is a palace that has the sun and the moon as its lamps and the stars as its candles; time is like a rope or ribbon hung within it, on to which the glorious creator each year threads a new world.[69]

For Nursi, the problem with atheism is that it is not marveling sufficiently at the world. The order in the world – documented so well by modern science – all points to a creator. We live in a world which is intended. When we ask "why are things the way they are?," only one answer makes sense "things are because god intended them to be." The force of Nursi's point does not dissipate if one believes in evolution. With evolution, we still have a process which requires explanation: "Why does evolution occur?" is still a proper question. and the theist will answer that "the process occurs because god intended the process to occur." Nursi repeatedly comes back to this point: this world requires an explanation. one is morally culpable if one cannot see this.

in addition to the atheist (who questions the existence of god), Nursi has another target in this section of The Words. he is deeply concerned about the "theist" who believes in god but makes no explicit acknowledgement of god in terms of behavior. recognizing that the world is intended and points to god is only stage one. stage two is linked: therefore we should expect to be held accountable for our behavior. We should expect our actions to be judged. on the positive level, we should be living our lives open to the divine. on the negative level, we should resist evil, hatred, and selfishness. Nursi sees this world as an arena of testing and growth. it is – to quote Keats – a vale of soul-making. We should live life aware that we will be held accountable for our behavior.

along with this general argument that the order is evidence for god and therefore we have good reason to believe that we will be held accountable for our behavior, Nursi has an additional argument derived from nature, which is worth mentioning. Nursi writes:

[i]n the majority of beings, there exists different aspects and qualities that are like curtains opening to the right and the left: one aspect bears witness to the Maker, and the other aspect indicates resurrection. For example, the beauty of man's being, fashioned as he is in the fairest of forms, demonstrates the existence of the Maker, while at the same time the fact that together with his comprehensive abilities, lodged in that fairest of forms, he soon declines and dies, demonstrates the existence of the resurrection. [70]

There is a power in this argument, which is worth dwelling on. The extraordinary beauty of the human person is evidence for the Maker, yet this beauty is encased in a mortal body that rapidly deteriorates. The argument here could be called the "Beauty imperative." it is inconceivable that the beauty could just cease to be because the very intrinsic nature of the beauty requires that it be reformed in some way. In much the same way as one is entitled to be confident that a report of a wicked action by a very good person cannot be true because you know about the nature of that good person, so one can be confident that the beauty of the human form will be resurrected because of the nature of beauty. This argument is a further development of that basic awe impulse, which is the heart of the religious disposition.

The third aspect is that for Nursi the hereafter is an essential part of his theodicy. The problem of evil is a major conundrum. Why does a good, all-powerful, god permit suffering? since the inception of faith, this has always been a problem. But for the modern mind, this is an acute problem. This is partly because the twentieth century birthed such imaginative and horrendous evils (from the holocaust to Pol Pot) that it became difficult to believe in humanity (understood as an entity that had sufficient intellect and discernment to know that certain forms of behavior are wrong), let along

god. But also this was partly due to the decline in belief in the hereafter. The suffering of a child (as documented by dostoyevsky in The Brothers Karamazov) or the evil of the stalin gulags become unintelligible and impossible to reconcile with faith unless this world is part of a bigger context. Nursi puts it bluntly when he writes:

There must in addition be a realm of punishment appropriate to god’s glory and dignity. For generally the oppressor leaves the world while still in possession of his might, and the oppressed while still subjected to humiliation. These matters are therefore deferred for the attention of a supreme tribunal; it is not that they are neglected.[71]

Nursi is exactly right here. The evil of the world is impossible to understand unless there is an afterlife. left with all the evil in its naked awfulness makes theism a complete nonsense. We are, of course, still left with the puzzle why god’s action to rectify evil does not occur during this lifetime, yet that is a lesser problem than no rectification at all.

an obvious objection is that this is open to the Marxist objection that the “hope” of the hereafter is the tool of the oppressor to prevent the poor complaining about injustice. For Nursi, he wants to turn this around. one of the reasons that he is willing to stress the inevitability of judgment, rather than just stressing rewards for the oppressed, is that he wants to motivate the potential oppressor to live morally. unlike the propensity of much liberal christian theology that wants to stress the way everything is reconciled into the life of god, Nursi wants the oppressor to fear life after death. Fear might trigger better behavior.

The fourth aspect is the most interesting. For Nursi, a major reason why we can be sure that there is a hereafter is that it is revealed. Nursi summarizes thus:

From the previous truths it has become apparent that resurrection is so firmly rooted a truth that not even a power capable of lifting up the globe, breaking it and casting it aside, could shake it. For God Almighty Himself

affirms this truth in accordance with the meaning of all his names and attributes; his Most Noble Messenger confirms it with all of his miracles and the cosmos itself bears witness to it with creational signs it contains and all the wise processes that take place within it.[72]

For Nursi, where creation points, revelation confirms. In this respect, Nursi is a straight-forward uncomplicated, traditional Muslim. elsewhere in his writings he talks of the “proofs” that the Qur’an is the definitive revelation of God and the Prophet Muhammad is the “messenger of god.” Nursi wants Muslims to revisit the Qur’an and be reminded afresh of its coherency, power, and beauty. The Qur’an is the very word of god: and the Qur’an teaches that there is a hereafter.

For Jews and christians, i am sure Nursi would also point out the hereafter is also taught in the Torah and gospel. Jesus talked about “life beyond the grave” as a setting for accountability and rectification. Indeed all the major religions of the world challenge the secular assumptions that this empirical world is all there is. it does look as if god has been repeatedly telling humanity that this life is a stage leading to a life to come.

The last aspect is much more pragmatic. again Nursi’s context is important here. Throughout the Risale-i Nur, Nursi is sensitive to the accusation that observant Muslims do not make good citizens. again atatürk’s passionate advocacy of a modern european nation ran parallel with a conviction that the observant Muslim can be a problem. so Nursi takes this opportunity to explain how moral behavior is enhanced at every stage of life with belief in the hereafter. it is worth quoting at length:

We will indicate, by way of being a measure, four out of the innumerable proofs of this fact, that belief in the hereafter is the very basis and foundation of all the social and individual life of man, and the fundamental of all bliss and accomplishment.

The FirsT ProoF: children, who comprise one fourth of the human race, can endure the death and decrease that appear to them so awesome and tragic only by means of the idea of Paradise... .

The second ProoF: old people, who make up another fourth of humanity, can support the proximity of the grave only by means of the afterlife. only by this means can they find some consolation for the approaching extinction of the worldly life to which they are so bound and the closing off to them of this fair world... .

The Third ProoF: it is only thought of hell that enables young men ... to restrain their turbulent feelings and tempestuous souls and passions from committing transgression, oppression and destruction, and to make them serve instead the purposes of social life. Were there not the fear of hell, those intoxicated youths would follow the principle, “might is right,” and running after their passions would turn the world into a hell for the weak and feeble... . The FourTh ProoF: The most comprehensive center of the human race in its worldly life, its most fundamental resource, its paradise, refuge and stronghold of worldly happiness, is the life of the family. everyone’s home is like a small world for him. The vitality and happiness of his home and his family depend upon earnest, sincere and devoted respect, upon true caring and selfsacrificing compassion. This in turn depends on eternal friendship, an everlasting companionship, an immortal bond, and the belief in the existence of paternal, filial, fraternal and friendly relations that are to exist for an infinite period and in a life everlasting.[73]

There is considerable wisdom in this text. For the young who have to cope with sudden loss or tragedy, the hope beyond the grave is essential. For the elderly, there own mortality make them think about the life hereafter. For those tempted by the pleasures of youth, the hereafter provides a salutary warning that one will be held accountable. and for those who are married, the hereafter provides a framework for the relationship that can help to cope with changes in appearance.

*** Russell and Nursi Compared

in one area there is agreement between russell and Nursi. Both agree that belief in life after death is deeply connected with belief in god. For russell, there is insufficient evidence that God exists; therefore life after death is implausible. For Nursi, the evidence for god is incontrovertible; therefore life after death is a necessary corollary.

What is at stake here is a fundamental orientation. russell cannot see any evidence for god anywhere, while Nursi cannot see a place where god is not. The fundamental orientation is shaped by Nursi by that basic sense of awe. For Nursi, the fundamental question “why things are?” requires an explanation. For Russell, it is simply a fluke – the cosmos is a big accident. For Russell, if he is going to believe in god, he needs further evidence – beyond the existence of this remarkable world. and Nursi considers this unreasonable. indeed he would go further, it is needlessly stubborn. in an echo of William Paley’s (1743–1805) design argument, Nursi draws a parallel between a human artifact and the world of nature. in much the same way, an author can be deduced from an experience with a book (even if you didn’t see the book being composed or physically encounter the author), so one can deduce the existence of a creator from our experience with the world.

now for russell, there are two possible explanations for the order in the world: it could be either an accident or design. russell’s problem is that he needs decisive evidence to persuade him of the design hypothesis. For Nursi, the “accident” hypothesis for anything which is so orderly and manifestly intended is so implausible that one can disregard it at the outset. Nursi does not consider the two hypotheses – accident or intended – as equivalents. it would be a little like suggesting that there are two possible explanations for a car accident; it is either reckless driving or an alien intervention from the skies. although it is logically conceivable that aliens exist and might be causing traffic accidents, the alien hypothesis is so remote a possibility that it can be rejected at the outset. To use the language of the logicians, the prior probability of the “accident” hypothesis for the order can be disregarded at the outset.

Nursi does not explicitly discuss the darwinian hypothesis of natural selection as an explanation of order in the world. however, both Paley[74] and more recently swinburne, both argue that the processes of natural selection still require explanation. swinburne talks about the processes of nature as a “machine-making machine,”[75] which is still remarkable and best explained as an intended process.

Nursi, however, does challenge russell on the problem of evil. For Nursi, it is not surprising that the problem of evil becomes overwhelming if this life is all there is. as noted in my description of Nursi’s argument, he does concede that are many instances of sustained injustices in this world. For theists to cope with evil and suffering, it is essential that there is life beyond the grave. For atheists not to misunderstand theism, it is important that they recognize this wider canvas on which god is working – a canvas that includes both this life and the life to come.

To these arguments for life after death grounded in nature, Nursi supplements them with an appeal to the revelation of god through the prophets (for Nursi, this includes the Torah, Jesus, and supremely Muhammad). all of the prophets teach that god exists and that god will hold us accountable for our life on earth. Presumably, russell would take issue with the credibility of these witnesses. he would argue that the supposed revelations are self-contradictory and often unedifying. however, russell’s problem is that on this issue of life after death, there is a universal witness. every religious tradition rejects the view that we are simply complex bundles of atoms that face extinction when we die.

and so we come back to that basic difference – that basic orientation. For Nursi, the total narrative of faith provides a location and perspective that makes sense of the complexity of the world and our sense that there is more to come. it will not surprise you to know that this christian, in this exchange with Bertrand Russell, stands firmly with Bediuzzaman Said Nursi.

** 3. The resurrection of the dead and Final Judgment in the Thought of Said Nursi

Thomas Michel, S.J.

one of the questions that most clearly distinguishes the followers of those religions that trace their origins back to their common ancestor abraham from those who do not accept any divine religion is their belief in the resurrection of the dead. in both christianity and islam, the resurrection of the dead, together with the Final Judgment, and the eternal reward or punishment granted on the basis of the individual's faith and deeds, is an essential element, a "pillar" of that faith. The two religions might differ on details concerning the eschatological fate that awaits all humans, but on the key issues of the reality of resurrection, god's judgment of all humankind on the last day, and reward and punishment, there is broad agreement in the theology of islamic and christian faiths.

however, for a person thinking and operating in a positivistic frame of mind, the concept of resurrection is a religious myth that can be neither proven nor disproved, but must remain always a hypothesis whose validity depends on blind faith. some of those who reject religious faith go farther to advance arguments that would attempt to disprove the possibility of resurrection, while for others the concept is simply an absurdity, "pie in the sky," evidence of the fairy-tale wishful thinking of religious people.

This is not a new experience for believers in the divine religions. in the christian tradition, when st. Paul spoke at the areopagus in athens, the assembled scholars were interested until Paul began speaking about the resurrection, at which point they sneered and turned away (acts of the apostles 17.32). For Paul, god's raising Jesus from the dead is evidence of god's promise to raise all those who believe, and thus the resurrection becomes a key element in christian faith. as Paul says, "if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even christ has been raised, and if christ

has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith” (1 corinthians 15.13–14).

Many centuries later, the experience of Muhammad with Quraysh was similar. When Muhammad spoke to the pagan arabs about god who causes death and resurrection, they answered, “What, will we and our fathers be raised up, once we have turned into dust? We have been promised this, we and our forefathers, but these are merely legends of earlier peoples” (Qur’an 27:67–8; cf. also 23:82–3). The earlier peoples whom the Quraysh accused of perpetuating fanciful myths were evidently the Jews and christians conveying the teaching of Moses and Jesus.

Just as the pagan Quraysh rejected the teaching of the earlier prophets about the resurrection, so also they were rejecting Muhammad bringing the same message.

For Said Nursi, the resurrection and Final Judgment are central to the Qur’anic message. he goes so far as to say that a third of the Qur’an focuses on these eschatological elements with the intention of proving and demonstrating them to unbelievers. “all the miracles, truths, and proofs proving foremost the veracity of the Qur’an of miraculous exposition testify to and prove the realization and occurrence of resurrection. almost a third of the Qur’an is about resurrection, and at the beginning of most of its short suras are powerful verses about it. it expresses the same truth explicitly and implicitly, and in thousands of its verses it proves and demonstrates it.”[76]

*** The Resurrection and the Demands of Justice

similarly, one could say that almost one-third of the content of The Words, the first part of the Risale-i Nur, focuses on questions of the resurrection, intent on demonstrating the reality of these elements of faith for modern unbelievers. in the Tenth Word Nursi strives to give systematic order to his argumentation in favor of the resurrection, and hence this portion of the Risale-i Nur can serve as a suitable starting place for our analysis of his view of this pillar of islamic faith.

Nursi introduces the topic with a long allegory of two men journeying through an earthly utopia. it is a well-ordered and prosperous place where no one locks their homes or shops, as there is no need to guard one's possessions. one of the travelers heedlessly wants to take and steal as much as he can carry, but his companion undertakes to show him, in twelve reasoned arguments, that in such a place, there must be a supreme tribunal where everyone will be judged according to their deeds.[77]

The underlying concept in these twelve arguments is that of justice. The manifest injustice of life on earth requires another world where wrongs will be corrected, victims will be avenged, and upright behavior will be rewarded. it is also in god's character to be just, and therefore any conception of the universe which would lead to the denial of god's justice and mercy is an attack on god's very nature. his twelve arguments may be summarized as follows:

1. even in the best-ordered earthly realm, there must be a mechanism for justice: for punishing misdeeds, defending the oppressed, and rewarding faithful service. obviously, in the world in which we live, there is no manifest justice. The wrongdoers prosper, the innocent suffer, loyalty and honesty are not rewarded. The demands of cosmic justice require a resurrection, for there is no reward and punishment here. There must be a resurrection to a next life where judgment, reward and punishment will correct earthly wrongs.

2. god's own just nature demands a resurrection. The one who so wisely ordered this universe could not fail, in his mercy, to provide justice for those who have remained upright and faithful. god's generosity and compassion demands justice towards oppressed. But that justice is not found on this earth, so it must be found elsewhere.

3. god would not be compassionate and merciful if he did not hear and respond to the cries of the oppressed. But those who are victims of wrongdoing do not find satisfaction on this earth, and the unjust operate freely and successfully in this world. Therefore, if one believes that god is

compassionate and merciful, there must be a resurrection to judgment where the oppressed can finally obtain the redress they deserve.

4. god’s abundant gifts show god to be generous and loving. But if these gifts are all perishable, and all that awaits people is death, separation, and extinction, then these apparent gifts would be nothing but a cruel joke. Moreover, god grants these gifts in order to be known and loved. But if there is no resurrection, those appreciating these gifts on earth would be only temporary admirers, and their appreciation would turn to resentment upon learning that the gifts were only fleeting hand-outs destined to be definitively snatched away in death.

5. all that god has granted humankind in this world is only meant to whet people’s appetite for the more permanent, exalted gifts that god has yet in store for them. god would be a cruel charlatan to give and promise so much and then abandon people to eternal extinction without fulfilling his promises. Thus, god’s integrity demands a resurrection and reward for faithful obedience.

6. This world is a constantly changing exhibition of god’s gifts, both the everchanging gifts of nature as well as man-made technological achievements. However, the very transient, fleeting nature of this worldly display requires that there be some eternal, stable world where the reality that shows itself here in an ephemeral way will permanently reside. otherwise, god would be reduced to acting like a stage magician who creates illusions with mirrors.

7. god’s omniscience demands resurrection. if god is truly cognizant of all that occurs on earth, then it follows that god knows, notes, and remembers every human deed, whether good or evil, and that the record of these deeds will be the basis for divine judgment. god would be a negligent caretaker and it would consequently be contrary to god’s dignity if misdeeds never went unpunished.

8. in all the revealed scriptures god has consistently promised to reward the good and punish evil. if god is truthful and the scriptures can be believed, there must be a resurrection. Can it be imagined that God will not fulfill God’s promises?

9. All the prophets and holy men have testified to God’s promises and assure us that those promises will be fulfilled. Yet the prophets are unanimous in affirming the resurrection and final judgment. Are we ready to disregard such unanimous testimony on the part of those sent by god?

10.The setting of this argument is anatolian spring. all the varied and constantly burgeoning life that can be seen in springtime points to a wise order in the universe and indicates that this ordered universe cannot be an end in itself. if it all ends in total extinction, the world is absurd and without rhyme or reason. if there is truly a wise purpose in the universe, it must point to something real and permanent in another world. Nursi will return repeatedly to this argument, with different emphases, again and again in the Risale-i Nur.

11.denying the resurrection and judgment would mean not only denying the wise order of the universe, but it would mean denying god’s compassion, mercy, and justice. Nursi is saying that denying the resurrection is tantamount to denying the existence of god, as this god is known from the scriptures. “We would also have to regard the one from whom all these wise measures proceed, all these generous acts, all these merciful gifts, as a vile gambler or treacherous tyrant (god forbid!). This would be to turn truth on its head.”[78] Moreover, denying the resurrection would mean not only denying god as god is known from scriptural tradition, but it would also mean denying the evidence of our own senses.

12.since the rewards for faithful service as well as punishments for evildoing are both deferred to the next life, denying the resurrection amounts to denying both reward and punishment. good and evil become equivalent and have the same end. Thus, denying the resurrection reduces all religions, scriptures, and claims to ultimate purpose to a relative value and condemns people to life in a pointless, superficial, ephemeral universe.

In his final argument, Nursi takes up what is most deeply at stake in the question of the resurrection and judgment. if this is the only world and life that exists, if there is no “Day of Reckoning” when accounts will be definitively settled, then religion and morality become human creations which point to no permanent reality. People are condemned to a shallow existence of validating their lives through a constant search for new and exciting pleasures and the acquisition of an unending stream of perishable consumer goods.

Nursi does not pretend that the twelve arguments which he produced for demonstrating the resurrection are exhaustive, or that no other proofs could be adduced.[79] in fact, the Risale-i Nur is replete with arguments in favor of the necessity of belief in the resurrection and Final Judgment. Nursi sees belief in god and the resurrection as a kind of double talisman which will protect and guide a person through the dangers of life.

in another allegory, he describes the situation of a wounded soldier on a battlefield, surrounded by dangers on all sides. In his hopeless plight, a stranger, “shining with light like Khidr,”[80] comes to teach him the twin talismans of “i believe in god and the last day,” which will heal his wounds and protect him from the physical and spiritual dangers that surround him. in explaining the allegory, Nursi holds that the life of people in this world is like that soldier. The challenges and problems that beset us are greater than our strength or wisdom to bear. however, belief in god and the resurrection will enable a person to confront life’s challenges with courage and to persevere with patience in the face of adversity.

*** The Miracle of Springtime

skeptics reacted to Nursi’s teaching about the resurrection with the objection that it is scientifically impossible for dead bodies to come to life again. Irreversible processes of corruption, molecular changes, interruption of brain waves, and the permanent malfunctioning of organs commence immediately after death. after some time in the grave, the human corpse itself reverts by

inexorable biochemical processes to the substances from which it was composed. not even god could reverse these changes. Perhaps one could speak, as did some of the philosophers, of the resurrection of the soul, while the body lies decomposed for eternity in the grave. on the last day, if there should be a last day, there would be nothing left for god to raise, all the body's elements and compounds, bones and tissues, having been dispersed and recycled elsewhere in nature.

This objection, posed repeatedly in modern times, is in fact not a new one. The pagan Quraysh objected to Muhammad's preaching about the resurrection on the same grounds of impossibility. not even god can bring life out of death. in response to this objection, the Qur'an appeals to the sense experience of the Quraysh and says that just as god has the power to bring the earth to new life at the beginning of each spring, so god has the power to revive the dead.

Behold the marks of allah's mercy, how he revives the earth after it was dead. he indeed is the one who revives the dead and he has power over everything (Qur'an 30:50).

one could say that Said Nursi's defense of god's ability to raise the dead is simply an elaboration or commentary on this Qur'anic verse. This is not a peripheral idea to his thought, as he uses the image of new life in the spring over fifty times in the Risale-i Nur as an illustration of god's power to resurrect the dead. For god, the one is as easy as the other. There is no doubt that Nursi must have personally found spiritual enrichment in the miracle of anatolian springtime, with its "more than 300,000 species of plant and animal life"[81] appearing almost miraculously, but predictably at its appointed time every year at the end of the long, cold, grey winter.

i cannot hope to give all the references in the Risale-i Nur to this image, but a few citations must suffice to show Nursi's use of the figure of spring as likeness of the resurrection:

in exactly the same way, [god] creates the universe as easily as a city, and raises to life the springtime as easily as a garden, and raises to life all the dead at the resurrection as easily as creating the leaves, flowers, and fruits of the garden’s trees in the spring.[82]

The one who cannot create a spring cannot create a single apple either, for the apple is made at the same workbench. But the one who makes an apple can make the spring. each apple is an example in miniature of a tree, even of a garden or a cosmos. The apple seed that carries within itself the life story of the huge tree is, from the point of view of artistry, such a miracle that the one who creates it is incapable of nothing. so too, the one that creates today is able also to create the day of resurrection, and it is only the one capable of creating the spring that is able to create resurrection.[83] in spring, the dead trees, roots and animals come to life again exactly as they were, thus providing hundreds of thousands of examples, specimens and proofs of the supreme resurrection. in the place of others, plants and animals resembling them exactly are brought into being and life, thus publishing the pages of the beings of the preceding spring, together with their deeds and functions.[84]

The raising to life of all animate beings at the resurrection of the dead can be no more difficult for Divine Power than restoring to life a fly in the spring, heavy with the death-stained sleep of winter.[85] o you who deny resurrection! look at the trees! one Who raises to life and makes green in spring numberless skeleton-like trees which have been dead throughout winter, and in every tree even demonstrates three examples of resurrection through the leaves, blossoms, and fruit – the power of such a one cannot be challenged through denial or by considering resurrection improbable.[86]

The raising to life of all animate beings at the resurrection of the dead can be no more difficult for Divine Power than restoring to life a fly in the spring, heavy with the death-stained sleep of winter. For eternal Power is essential. it does not change; impotence cannot penetrate it; obstacles cannot intervene in it; there can be no degrees in it; everything is the same in relation to it.[87] now come back in the spring, the arena of the annual resurrection, and

look! Note carefully the time in the spring when the Israfil-like angel of thunder calls out to the rain as though sounding his trumpet, giving the good news of the breath of life being breathed into the seeds buried beneath the ground. you will see that under the manifestation of the divine name of Preserver, those seeds that resemble each other and are all mixed up and confused, conform perfectly and without error to the creative commands proceeding from the all-

Wise creator.[88]

The administration and sustaining of the whole universe in relation to the power from all eternity of that all-glorious one is as easy as that of the spring, indeed, of a tree. and the creation of the resurrection of the dead, the realm of the hereafter, and Paradise and hell, is as easy as the resurrection in spring of a tree which had died the previous autumn.[89]

Nursi’s point in this oft-repeated image is that it is no more difficult for God to raise the dead than it is for god to bring new life to the dead earth or to bring about a single tree or flower from a dry, frozen bush. In other words, the resurrection of the dead is a part of god’s creative power and energy. if god is able to create life once from nothingness or from dead matter, god is able to do that over and over.[90]

One must not think that Nursi is living in a pre-scientific world in which he thinks that vegetable and animal life actually dies in the winter. he is well aware of the botanical dormant period that plants undergo, of the hidden life pulsating in a winter landscape of forests and fields. This scientific awareness, however, makes the springtime miracle of regeneration – the formation of blossoms, leaves, and fruits – no less amazing, no less remarkable as the sign of an all-powerful creator. he states:

With what miraculous and elevated style [the Qur’an] describes the resurrection of the dead and the great gathering and points to the following convincing proof: one can observe that the seeds concealed as though dead in the darkness of the earth and drops of water hidden and dispersed,

seemingly non-existent in the atmosphere are raised to life swiftly and with perfect order every spring, and they emerge into the field of trial and examination as perpetual examples of resurrection. at the supreme resurrection, beings will emerge with same ease. since you observe the one here, you cannot deny the other.[91]

in fact, it is not only the miracle of spring that demonstrates the resurrection. an individual's own sense perception gives evidence of resurrection over and over. Waking from sleep can be seen as a type of resurrection, as does the physical process of replacing all the molecules in the body. Nursi states:

There are many varieties of resurrection that a person experiences during his lifetime. Just as one sees the signs of the resurrection in a sort of dying every night and rebirth every morning, so it is agreed that he undergoes what resembles a resurrection every five or six years by changing all the particles in his body, and even undergoes a gradual resurrection twice a year.[92]

The phenomenon of springtime is not only a sign and symbol of the resurrection in demonstrating god's power to bring new life out of the seemingly dead, but it is also a demonstration, for those who are able to perceive it, of the transitory nature of life in this world. The wildflowers and blossoms that flourish in all their glory for a week or ten days and then vanish for another year are reminders that this world and all that pertains to it are not permanent. in world-weariness reminiscent of the great Sufi masters, Nursi expresses the sorrow he experienced at witnessing the transient nature of springtime beauty:

one time when observing the season of spring, i saw that the successive caravans of beings, and especially living creatures and the small young ones, which followed on one after the other and in a flowing torrent displaying hundreds of thousands of samples of the resurrection of the dead and great gathering on the face of the earth, appeared only briefly then disappeared. The tableaux of death and transience amid that constant, awesome activity seemed to me excessively sad. i felt such pity it made me weep. The more i observed the deaths of those lovely small creatures, the more my heart ached. i cried at the pity of it and within me felt a deep spiritual turmoil. life

which met with such an end seemed to me to be torment worse than death. [93]

Clearly, the transient splendor of nature that flourishes today and tomorrow is dry stubble reminds people of the passing away in human life of youth, beauty and vitality. Today’s beauty queen or olympic athlete is tomorrow’s toothless wheelchair patient. For those who believe in no other life than this, this awareness can produce misery and despair, but for those who see the power of god at work in the fragile and transitory nature of created things, the cycle of youth, aging, and death is always followed by rebirth. This is the promise Nursi holds out for those who are able to proceed from a contemplation of the patterns of nature to an awareness of god the resurrector (al-Qâ’im).

*** The Great Gathering

Nursi’s usual term for god’s calling together all humankind from every stage of history in order to enact the final judgment according to their deeds is the Great Gathering. No doubt the figure is taken from the Qur’anic verse “(And remember) the day when he will gather you on the day of gathering. That will be the day of mutual loss and gain. and whosoever believes in god and performs righteous good deeds, he will remit from him his sins, and will admit him to gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever” (64:9). This imagery of calling all humankind together for judgment is common to both islam and christianity. in the christian Bible, for example, the epistle to the hebrews sees “The universal gathering” as equivalent to “Mount Zion, the new Jerusalem” (hebrews 12:23; cf. also 2 Thessalonians 2:1), an appointment to which all are called.

The image depicts generations of dead arising from their graves all over the earth and brought together for the final Day of Judgment. Can God actually bring together every individual in the history of the human race to be judged each according to one’s deeds? surely this must be some fanciful imagery that is not meant to be taken literally? Nursi responds by citing again God’s creative power in nature to affirm that such is well within god’s abilities. Nursi addresses the creator as follows: “Through your activity in the

atmosphere, your power, which continuously displays examples of the resurrection of the dead and great gathering and transforms the summer into winter and winter into summer and similar acts, gives the sign that it

will transform this world into the hereafter and there display its everlasting acts."[94]

The Great Gathering may be seen as the final act and the wise climax of god's creation.[95] Nursi's point is that god accomplishes much greater things in the continuous exercise of his creative activity. The difficulty of producing the gathering pales by comparison with the intricacy of the creative act and yet the ease of its execution. "That he will bring about a resurrection and gathering is far easier for him than the thousands of miraculous gatherings that occur every spring, each more wondrous than the supreme gathering."[96] Nursi explains:

The One Who performs these matters with infinitely fine art and perfect order and changes with infinite wisdom, bounty, and perfection of power and art the traveling worlds which follow on one after the other and are attached to the string of time, is certainly all-Powerful and all-Wise … in relation to his power the resurrection and great gathering are most easy and free of trouble. since his creational command comprises power and will, and all things are entirely subjugated and obedient to His command, and He creates with no difficulty or hindrance.[97]

one might object that the gathering staggers the mind. it seems preposterous to suppose the whole human race, from adam onward, all summoned to the same place at the same moment. Moreover, how can one imagine god keeping track of every good action and misdeed over the course of millennia? Nursi agrees that the gathering is not something that can ordinarily be known by human reason:

Just as a man of the night who has never seen the sun and has only seen its shadow in the mirror of the Moon, cannot squeeze into his mind the resplendent light and awesome gravity particular to the sun, but submits to

those who have seen it and imitates them; similarly, one who cannot attain to the maximum degrees of names like all-Powerful and giver of life through the legacy of Muhammad (PBuh), must accept the resurrection of the dead and great gathering imitatively, and declare that it is not a matter which can be known by reason.[98]

Nursi is not claiming that the gathering is irrational or even that it is beyond reason in all cases. he does state, however, that for most people, the gathering is beyond their powers of reasoning. They must accept the gathering “imitatively,” that is, they should accept the word of those who have been given to know about this, that is, the prophets and the message they bear from god.

This, however, is not an invitation to blind fideism, for even if the concept of the gathering is too hard for most people to imagine, nevertheless there are many arguments in scripture and indications in the natural world that point to the gathering as a coming reality. “The day of Judgment (Yawm al-Din) alludes to a vast and powerful proof of the resurrection of the dead … for various parts of the Risale-i Nur have proved with hundreds of powerful arguments that the morning and spring of the resurrection of the dead and great gathering will occur as certainly as day follows night and spring follows winter.”[99] one need not be a genius or philosopher in order to recognize and acknowledge these signs. They are evident to any sincere seeker of ordinary abilities, and the person who denies the evidence of his own common sense is either willfully blinded or deranged:

you can, moreover, behold with your own eyes, the numerous designs made by god as signs, similes and indications of resurrection, designs placed by him in

every age and epoch of the world, in the alternation of day and night, even in the appearance and disappearance of clouds in the sky. if you imagine

yourself to have been living a thousand years ago and then compare with each other the two wings of time that are the past and the future, you will behold similes of the gathering and indications of resurrection as numerous as the centuries and days. if, then, after witnessing so many similes and indications, you still regard corporeal resurrection as improbable and rationally unacceptable, know your behavior to be pure lunacy.[100]

What will the command be like? Nursi prudently refrains from engaging in fanciful descriptive speculation, and instead relies on what can be known from sound Qur'anic revelation. The Qur'an teaches that the gathering will be instantaneous, a concept very difficult to grasp. Thus, people are permitted to indulge in the imagery of the graves being opened, the corpses rising up and being transported immediately to the site of the Judgment. as Nursi states: "'The command of the hour will be like the glance of the eye' (Qur'an 16:77) shows that the resurrection of the dead and the Great Gathering will occur instantaneously, in a flash. But man's narrow reason requires some tangible example so that it can conceive of this wondrous, extraordinary and unparalleled event and accept it."[101] in other words, people should focus on the essence of this teaching, that is, the reality of god's judgment, and the actuality of human responsibility for one's deeds on earth, rather than getting distracted by the images that are intended to help human reason to approach conceptually and visualize what is meant by the gathering.

*** The Final Judgment and God's Wise Purpose in Creation

It is not only the possibility of the resurrection and Gathering that is difficult to understand, but also the Judgment that follows. at the resurrection, all the deeds of everyone will be produced, written on pages. Being very strange on its own, the mind cannot grasp this matter. But as the sura indicates, the same way as in the resurrection of the spring, the things similar to this laying open of the pages are quite clear. For all fruit-bearing trees or flowering plants perform deeds, acts, and duties, and in whatever way they display the divine names and glorify god, they perform worship. all these deeds are written in their seeds together with their life histories, and emerge in another spring in another place. Just as they mention most eloquently the deeds of their mothers and stock through the tongues of the shapes and forms they

display, so they publish the pages of their deeds through their branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits.[102] as he does on other occasions, Nursi looks to the natural world for his argument. Just as plant life bears within itself the hidden seeds of its own resurrection, so also humans bear within themselves the hidden seeds of their own eternal destiny, either the good deeds and faith that will bring them eternal reward, or the evil actions and faithlessness that will earn them eternal punishment. even though in this world these seeds of destiny are hidden from view, like the latent promise of life secretly present within seeds, nevertheless to the same God who brings new life in fields and orchards, men and women are already determining their eternal fate by their good or evil deeds. Judgment day will simply reveal what humans have already prepared for themselves.

Nursi insists so strongly on the resurrection of the dead and the day of Judgment because for him these are neither marginal elements of islamic faith nor mythological representations of eschatological hope. They are expressions of divine wisdom which validate the whole intention of god's creation. For if god has not created the world "in jest" or "purposelessly," as the Qur'an states (Qur'an 38:27; 23:115), but with a serious purpose in mind, then divine wisdom must guide the whole of human history towards a climatic moment when god's justice, power and mercy, reward and punishment, promise and judgment will all become manifest.

The wisdom that is seen in the created world parallels that which guides human destiny. For Nursi, if creation were not governed, in matters small and great, by god's wisdom, human existence would be futile and absurd. The guarantee of this sovereign wisdom of god, who orders all things wisely, is the resurrection of the dead and the Great Gathering for the Final Judgment. I leave the final words to Nursi himself:

in just the same way, the all-Wise Maker attaches hundreds of instances of wisdom to each of the beings in the palace of the universe and equips them to perform hundreds of duties. To all trees he bestows instances of wisdom to the number of its fruits and gives duties to the number of its flowers. For Him not to bring about the resurrection of the dead and the great gathering, and for all those incalculable numbers of purposes and instances of wisdom and infinite duties to be meaningless, futile, pointless, and without purpose or

benefit, would impute impotence to that absolutely Powerful one’s perfect power, just as it would impute futility and purposelessness to that absolutely Wise one’s perfect wisdom, and utter ugliness to the beauty of that absolutely compassionate one’s mercy, and boundless tyranny to that absolutely Just one’s perfect justice. it would be quite simply to deny the wisdom, mercy, and justice in the universe.[103]

** 4. Proof of the resurrection of the dead: Said Nursi’s approach

Şükran Vahide

Said Nursi was unique among contemporary islamic scholars in that he claimed to have proved the resurrection of the dead “to ordinary people and even children,”[104] although, as he pointed out, a genius like ibn sina had maintained that it could not be established by rational criteria.[105] This chapter will investigate the basis of Nursi’s claim; in other words, it will attempt to pinpoint and set out those aspects of the method he developed with the Risale-i Nur that provide such clear proofs of this, one of the great mysteries of religion.

Nursi’s aim with the Risale-i Nur was to offer proofs and explanations of the main truths and tenets of belief taught by the Qur’an, in order to strengthen and reinvigorate the faith of believers, which after the founding of the Turkish republic in 1923 he feared would be undermined and shaken by the rapid implementation of Westernizing and secularizing reforms. in the previous era, as the old said, he had devoted considerable effort to the updating of teaching methods and curricula, and was concerned particularly with the combining of the modern and religious sciences, and with developing new methods of Qur’anic interpretation. The Risalei Nur, which he began to write in 1926 having been sent into exile in western anatolia, was the product of the new said and his single-minded attachment to the Qur’an and its method, but it was also the fruit of his

lifetime of study and teaching experience and his search for a way of conveying the truths of religion relevantly to current circumstances.

Two main features of the Risale-i Nur may be mentioned here: the first is that, according to Nursi, its method is “taken from the Qur’an”[106] and contains many elements inspired by it. The chief of these is reflective thought on the natural world, and consists of close observation of it from the Qur’anic viewpoint; that is, viewing beings as (âyât) or signs signifying their Maker, and as letters and words describing him and alluding to such truths as the resurrection of the dead. a secondary, and to a large extent tacit, function of this observational method is to reply to and refute positivism and other materialist philosophies, which were based on empirical science and were being actively propagated at the time.

a second characteristic of the Risale-i Nur is its containing in part some of the traditional islamic sciences and its performing their essential functions, in addition to including modern scientific knowledge. It was Nursi’s intention to produce a method that effectively answered the needs of the times by marshalling all these disciplines and employing elements of them in his proofs of the truths of belief.

a further advantage of this approach, indeed its main objective, is that it addresses both the human faculty of reason, and such “inner” faculties as the heart, conscience, and soul, and seeks to induce complete certainty concerning the truth of the matters proposed. it was Nursi’s insights into the many human powers and abilities and their functions, as well as the unusual extent of his knowledge of the eloquence and profundities of the Qur’an that made him one of the great Muslim teachers and scholars of recent times.

*** The Resurrection of the Dead

Nursi insists that it is the Qur’an that “solves” the question of resurrection, just as it solves the riddle of creation and discloses the purposes of the universe.[107] in proving this, he seeks to show that the evidences for the resurrection that the Qur’an cites and those indicated by the principal truths

of faith that it teaches are all mutually supporting. For just as god almighty and his names and attributes, the prophets and scriptures, the Prophet Muhammad (PBuh), and the angels, together with the cosmos and its “creational signs” all indicate and prove each other, so they all furnish evidences for the resurrection of the dead, proving it either directly or indirectly.[108] That is to say, Nursi was at pains to demonstrate the indivisible nature of the truths of faith and the fact that they form a coherent whole. The majority of his proofs for the hereafter are set out within the framework of these truths. similarly, he emphasized the indivisibility of this world and the next, and included many lucid explanations of the two worlds and the continuum they form. since this is one of the most persuasive elements of his overall method, brief mention will be made of it before outlining his other main proofs of the resurrection of the dead.

*** Nursi’s Cosmic Scheme

Following the Qur’an, the fundamental distinction Nursi makes between the worlds of existence is that between the Manifest World (Âlem-i Şehâdet) and the Worlds of the unseen (Gayb).[109] According to Nursi’s classification, the Unseen consists of myriad worlds, including those of the hereafter. These are furnished with the products of this world or are constructed out of them; they are the result of this world. he said: “The life of the hereafter is the outcome of all this world.”[110] Nursi uses many metaphors to describe this world, such as its being “an arable field” for growing vast quantities of crops and provisions suitable for the endless worlds of the hereafter. Beings “flow” through this world “in floods,” pouring into the unseen worlds. Nursi stresses this world’s transience, but explains the constant motion, change, decline, and death on its apparent face as being the means of fulfilling the divine purposes, of displaying infinite manifestations of the divine names and the performance of endless glorifications of God in finite time and limited space.[111] god causes the motion of the cosmos, which is its “speech;” he causes “it to silently recite his verses, his signs, and to inscribe them.”[112] all the glorifications beings perform, that is, all their actions and states throughout their worldly

existences are recorded and preserved in the various worlds of the unseen. Their transient existences are the seeds of numerous perpetual existences.

The point here, and this is typical of Nursi's approach, is that rather than focussing on human actions good and bad and their consequences, he delineates the whole cosmic scheme and seeks to instil a total conception of existence that relates all beings, including man, to their Maker and is conscious of "the meanings" they express and their "results" in other existential realms. Nursi's offering almost pictorial images of the relations between this Manifest World and the unseen greatly facilitates understanding of the resurrection and life of the hereafter and acceptance of his many arguments and proofs of their reality.

To come to the evidences and proofs of resurrection, in an earlier work Nursi cites Fakhr al-din al-razi's (d. 606/1209) categorization of rational (aklî) evidences and textual (taken from the Qur'an and hadith – naklî) evidences. resurrection may be proved by both rational and textual evidences.[113] Traditionally, however, religious scholars had relied on textual evidences and did not attempt to prove it rationally. Nursi, however, since his aim was to provide a means of revitalizing belief in an age of science and scepticism, "when belief by imitation is past and meek acceptance has disappeared,"[114] the great majority of arguments and proofs he puts forward in the Risale-i Nur may be classified as "rational." He mentions only briefly the "textual" evidences, such as those supplied by the previous prophets and scriptures, and their concurrence with the evidences offered by what he asserts are the four main sources of (rational) proof: the Qur'an, the divine names and attributes, the universe and its creational signs, and the Prophet Muhammad (PBuh). But just as he presents the institution of prophethood in terms of reasonable necessity; [115] so too, as shall be shown, even for matters such as the form and sequence of the resurrection and last judgement, which previously were held to be acceptable only "on faith," he offers a series of allegorical comparisons and explanations that presents them as easily and reasonably acceptable. We shall now investigate how Nursi tackled the four main sources of proof, which as mentioned are mutually supportive and overlapping.

1. The Qur'an

Nursi states that the Qur’an contains “thousands of certain rational proofs” (berahîn-i akliyye-i kat’iyye) of resurrection, which “it lays before the eyes” and “repeatedly enjoins” that they are reflected upon.[116] The verses he most frequently cites in this connection are: “seeing that he has created you in successive stages,” (71:14) and: “Say: He will give them life who created them in the first instance” (36:79). These he describes as being “figurative analogies” or “allegorical comparisons,” comparisons (temsilat and derivatives of the same root) being a device frequently used in the Qur’an.[117] To expound them he himself employs an attractive style that combines metaphor, allegory, and modern scientific knowledge, with which he describes the regular stages of human growth and development and the distribution of nutriments to the cells. Arguing that the specific laws and determined order necessitate purpose and will, he refutes the ideas of chance, nature, and causes. his aim is to demonstrate that “the second creation” would present no problem for the one who the above-mentioned processes prove “has absolute disposal over all beings.”[118] according to Nursi, belief in the hereafter is “the most important thing the Qur’an teaches us.”[119] In the Twenty-fifth Word, which is about the Qur’an’s miraculousness, in a section about various points of the Qur’an’s eloquence, he explains further ways in which it “proves” (isbat) the resurrection. here, he says that “in order to impel the heart to accept” the divine works of the hereafter “and make the mind affirm them,” it sometimes mentions the divine works in this world, as above; or it induces firm conviction about those future works by drawing attention to similar things that we observe here. To illustrate this, Nursi elaborates on the last seven verses of sura yasin. he gives two other verses as examples. one is: “When the pages are laid open,” (81:10) which refers to the publishing of the deeds of all mankind at the resurrection. This he says, is difficult to grasp on its own, so just as the Qur’an makes allusion to “the resurrection of the springtime” to make other points, it makes this laying open of the pages similarly clear. he then describes how the deeds of trees and plants, and their glorifications of God and worship, are written in their seeds, to emerge in subsequent springs.[120] another method of the Qur’an Nursi notes is its contrasting the divine works in this world with those of the resurrection and hereafter to arouse the desired emotions. For instance, the mountains with which god almighty stabilizes the earth in this world will be scattered at the resurrection, an idea that excites feelings of dreadful awe, and for the gardens he makes verdant here look to the gardens of

Paradise, descriptions of which fill a person with delight and hopeful longing. [121] in many discussions in the Risale-i Nur,[122] Nursi points out the ways in which the springtime displays innumerable samples, similes, and indications of the supreme resurrection. clearly these are also lessons in how to regard beings as signs and symbols, for the meanings they denote. The verse he cites most often in this connection is: “so look to the signs of god’s mercy; how he gives life to the earth after its death. indeed, it is he who gives to the dead, for he is powerful over all things” (30:50). For example:

… The forms of countless members of hundreds of thousands of species emerge, in the utmost precision, from a simple material and are then nurtured in most merciful fashion … countless tasty and delicious forms of food, in the most merciful and tender fashion, are brought forth from dry clay, and from roots, seeds and drops of liquid that differ little among each other. every spring, innumerable kinds of food and equipment are loaded on it from an unseen treasury, as if onto a railway waggon, and are despatched in utmost orderliness to animate beings … This living page of the spring displays innumerable examples and samples of the supreme gathering, and is a tangible demonstration of the verse, “So look to the signs of God’s mercy …”[123]

he also cites the verse together with others as an example of “the category of proof” among the various categories in the Qur’an’s manner of exposition. [124]

Further matters, which traditionally were accepted due to their sacred source (naqlî), are those related to the manner and sequence of the resurrection, yet, for these too, Nursi endeavors to offer rationally acceptable explanations. For instance, he says the verses “it will be naught but a single cry,” (36:29) and “The command of the hour will be like the glance of the eye, or briefer” (16:77) show the resurrection to be instantaneous, but it is

difficult to conceive of such an unparalleled event. he therefore explains it in three stages: the return of spirits to their bodies; the revivification of the bodies, and the remaking of the bodies, clarifying each with a short comparison.[125] similarly, at the end of the Twenty-ninth Word, he includes a section that offers explanations of the possibility of the world's death, its actual death, the possibility of the world's resurrection and reconstruction, and its actual resurrection and reconstruction. his various explanations expound verses denoting those events. he concludes, however, that his expositions are merely "to prepare the heart for acceptance, the soul for surrender, and to convince the reason;" it is to the Word of the universe's creator that we should listen.[126] Nursi's expositions of divine power form an important part of his proofs of the resurrection. They are dealt with in the next section, but since he points out that the Qur'an indicates the traces and works of divine power in connection with resurrection on many levels, mention should be made of it here too.[127]

2. The Divine Names and Attributes

With the Risale-i Nur, Nursi sets out to prove that the very nature of the world necessitates the truths of faith that the Qur'an teaches, and primarily the existence of a single creator; that is, the universe requires a necessarily existent with particular attributes and names. Thus, the recognition and "reading" of the divine names and attributes and their manifestations in beings forms an important part of Nursi's method of proving the pillars of faith, and is the basis of the reflective thought (tefekkür) that is one of its four main principles. as far as the resurrection of the dead is concerned, this method shows that "most of [the divine] names and proofs of [the] necessarily existent require the hereafter and testify to it."[128] This is the line of reasoning followed by Nursi in the Tenth Word, about resurrection, which, being written in 1926, was the first major treatise of the Risale-i Nur in which he used the divine names to prove the principal truths of faith. Nursi himself explained it as follows:

each [of the twelve Truths of which the main part of the work is composed] proves three things at the same time. each proves both the existence of the necessarily existent one, and his names and attributes, and then it

constructs the resurrection of the dead on these and proves it. everyone from the most obdurate unbeliever to the most sincere believer can take his share from the Truths, because in each, the gaze is turned towards beings, works. it says: “There are well-ordered acts in these, and a well-ordered act cannot be without an author, in which case the act has an author. and since it has been carried out with order and balance, its author must be wise and just. since he is wise, he does nothing in vain. and since he acts with justice, he does not permit rights to be violated. There will therefore be a great gathering, a supreme tribunal.” The Truths have been tackled in this way. They are succinct, and thus prove the three things at once.[129]

of those Truths, it will be useful here to mention the third one by way of illustration and to note some of the arguments Nursi puts forward, since he describes manifestations in the universe of the same names given above, that is, Wise and Just, and shows how they necessitate the hereafter. having established the existence of this world’s Lord and Sustainer in the first section of the treatise, which takes the form of an allegorical comparison or parable designed to prepare the mind for the truths set out in the main part and is followed by a lengthy introduction, Nursi commences with a general statement about “the wisdom and order, the justice and equilibrium that pervade all things.” he asks if the one holds the whole cosmos in this state of purposeful balance would not favor those who believe in him and whose actions are in accordance with his wisdom and justice (ubûdiyet). similarly would he not chastise the discourteous who disbelieve? in this transient world, not even a thousandth part of that wisdom and justice is exercised in respect to man, he says, so there must be a supreme tribunal and ultimate bliss.

Nursi strengthens his numerous arguments with constant use of the rhetorical question: “is it at all possible?” With this he intends to draw attention to: “the true impossibility, absurdity, and irrationality” of what he calls misguidance on the one hand, by which he means materialist philosophy, and the “true possibility, facility, and rationality” that characterize faith and islam on the other. Because, he says, “lack of belief generally springs from the habit of imagining things to be impossible and far removed from the realm of reason, and of therefore denying them.”[130] Nursi continues the Third Truth by providing a proof (burhan) that the Being who controls the world, does so with infinite wisdom. This is

the following of interest and benefit in all things. In his usual persuasive style he points out that “numerous wise benefits” are intended in all the parts of the human body, even in its cells and particles, in trees and their fruits, and especially in seeds. The fine artistry and craftsmanship in all things proves the existence of an infinitely Wise Maker. on the non-material plane as well as the material, included in the human being are “an index of the cosmos, the keys to all the treasuries of mercy, and of the mirrors of all the divine names,” demonstrating the “wisdom within that infinitely fine artistry.” This proof is an example of how Nursi takes the classic proofs of kalām and philosophy – here it is the proof of divine providence (ar. dalīl ‘ināyatī; T. inâyet delîli),[131] – and without naming them, includes the gist of them in accordance with his own style and method, making them easily comprehensible to the ordinary reader.

next Nursi lists some proofs “that all things are done with justice and balance.” These include everything being given precisely measured and balanced bodies and forms; their being given their needs and the necessities of life; the fact that answer is given to requests made with the tongue of disposition, and so on. so is it at all possible, Nursi asks, “that the justice and wisdom which hasten to relieve the pettiest need of the smallest of creation should fail to provide immortality, the greatest need of man, the greatest of creatures?” shouldn’t this wisdom and justice preserve the dignity of god’s lordship and rule by preserving the rights of his servants? in this transient world, man does not receive his just deserts, so matters must be postponed for a supreme tribunal. For true justice requires that man should be rewarded and punished not in accordance with his apparent insignificance but in accordance with the greatness of his function and importance of his nature. The transience of this world disallows the full manifestation of justice and wisdom. of necessity therefore there will be an eternal hell and everlasting Paradise of that Just and glorious Possessor of Beauty, that Wise and Beauteous one of glory.[132]

Nursi’s proofs and explanations of absolute divine power form a significant part of his proofs of the resurrection of the dead and hereafter. The main series of arguments is in the Twentieth Letter, where in five sections and employing allegorical comparisons for every point he makes, he demonstrates “the infinite ease, utmost speed, extreme swiftness of actions,

and boundless facility apparent in the creation of things," and primarily that everything is equal in relation to divine power.[133] These arguments, he offers in explanation of the verses: "The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all is but like that of a single soul," (31:28) which he interprets as meaning "the resurrection of all humankind is as easy as causing one person to die and raising him to life again," and "nothing will there have been but one single blast, and lo! Before us will all of them be arraigned," (36:53) meaning: "to raise to life all human beings at the resurrection is as easy as calling together with the sound of a bugle an army that has dispersed to rest."[134] in the Twenty-ninth Word, in conjunction with proofs of related matters, he reiterates some of the arguments in the Twentieth letter to prove the verse: "The creation of you all and the resurrection of you all is but like that of a single soul" specifically.[135] since among the divine names, considerable emphasis in placed in the Risale-

i Nur on the names of Merciful and compassionate and their manifestations in beings, brief mention should be made here of how they are shown to require the hereafter. The argument Nursi most frequently advances in this respect is that the self-evident unlimited bestowals, bounties, gifts and favors indicate the existence of one Merciful and compassionate. But "mercy can only be mercy, and bounty be bounty when resurrection comes about. otherwise, on thinking of eternal separation, intelligence, which is one of the greatest bounties, would be a calamity for mankind, and affection and compassion, the most refined kinds of mercy, would be transformed into severe pain."[136] only eternal life in an eternal realm saves the bestowal from mockery, the bounties from deception, the gifts from treachery, and will make the bounties bounty and the bestowal bestowal.

it is within the context of the divine names that Nursi offers arguments for bodily resurrection. For corporeality, that is, the physical universe, is the most comprehensive mirror of the divine names; it is the center of the divine aims in creation; the greatest variety of divine bounties is found in the physical realm, and is thus the most important means of man's supplications and thanks. corporeality is the scene of awesome divine activity whereby the earth becomes the arable field of the hereafter. countless artistic foods and precious bounties being prepared in corporeality, with all the different tastes

and pleasures they yield, indicates the existence of physical pleasures in the eternal realm. Would it be possible, he asks, that the Munificent Merciful Almighty would accept the prayer of the common stomach, gratifying it in this way, and not grant the universal prayer of humanity for corporeal pleasures in an eternal realm?[137] having provided all the instruments and members to experience and know the manifestations of the divine names in corporeality, it would be contrary to the wisdom, justice, and mercy of the allWise and compassionate Maker not to bestow a wage and reward on each member

in eternity, as recompense for its duties of worship.[138] it is within this approach of deciphering and beholding the manifestations of the divine names that, according to Nursi, the way is opened up to gaining a rational understanding of resurrection. For since the resurrection will be through the manifestation of the greatest name, it is “only through beholding … the great deeds evident in the maximum manifestation of the greatest name as well as the other names, that it is possible to prove it as certain and unshakeably believe that resurrection is as simple as the spring.” he goes on to say that it was thanks to the effulgence of the Qur’an that he had discovered this much, for intellect on its own would have been powerless and condemned to believe in resurrection by way of imitation.[139]

3. The Universe and Its Creational Signs

according to Nursi, “the universe together with all its creational signs points to [the resurrection of the dead].”[140] The term “creational (or cosmic) signs (âyât-ı tekviniye)” is derived from the Qur’an,[141] and is often used in the Risale-i Nur in association with the idea of the universe as a book, with its beings and events as its signs or verses. These have a mutually interpretative and affirmative relationship with the Qur’an and its verses. Thus, just as “the book of the universe teaches the creational signs about the divine existence and unity,”[142] so in innumerable ways it alludes to the resurrection of the dead, thus confirming corresponding verses of the written Qur’an. although technically all beings are signs or verses, in the Risale-i Nur certain attributes or characteristics of the universe are cited specifically as being creational signs. For instance: “Through such creational signs as order, balance, regularity, adornment,

differentiation, and the giving of form, the verses (the signs) of the mighty Qur’an inscribed by divine power and called the universe confirm these statements of the Qur’an.”[143] a series of ten proofs that was originally included in his early works is based on some of the above creational signs.[144] in a number of these proofs, which he tells us, in the manner of the old said address the reason only, he cites the findings of science as supporting the premise of his argument. Having argued that the “perfect, intentional order [which] embraces the whole universe,” and the purposive wisdom, mentioned earlier, necessitate eternal happiness, he asserts that the absence of waste and futility in creation, indicate eternal happiness. For if it were not to come about, everything would be a waste and go for nothing. in which case, Nursi argues, man’s deep-rooted desire for perfection, points to a perfection, and his desire for happiness, indicates that he is destined for eternal happiness. otherwise, all his non-physical faculties and potentialities, his elevated hopes and desires, would all be futile and wither up and die. in fact he frequently cites man’s intense desire for immortality as offering decisive proof of an eternal realm.[145]

Moreover, there are the innumerable allusions to the day of resurrection of all the different sorts of resurrection that occur continuously in the alternation of night and day, and winter and spring, in the skies, in sleep, in humankind, and so on.

Time itself, with the succession of hours, days, weeks, years, and eras, intimates that after death, the morning of resurrection will break.[146] another form of creational sign that indicates the hereafter are what in the Risale-i Nur are called “dominical laws (kavânîn-i rubûbiyet).” These are the laws that raise and administer all things and are in force from minute particles to the totality of the world. They are first and foremost proofs of divine unity, and of divine knowledge and will, but they also indicate the resurrection of the dead. For example:

Through whichever law that All-Powerful Maker raises a fly to life, through the same law he restores to life the plane-tree before your window every spring; and through that law, he raises the globe of the earth to life in the spring; and through the same law will raise creatures to life at the resurrection. The

Qur’an alludes to this with the verse: “your creation and your resurrection is but as a single soul.” (31:28)[147]

life, and particularly the life of man, the highest living being, forms a decisive proof of the hereafter.[148] indeed, “life is the greatest of all bounties and the clearest of all proofs of the first creation and the resurrection of the dead.” To illustrate this Nursi describes the progressive expansion of life in the stages of human development in accordance with specific laws. The person who observes these carefully will grasp with his mind the purpose and intention behind these processes, and “the second life will appear to him far easier, simpler, and more possible [than the first], and he will feel convinced in his heart.”[149] 4. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

among the evidences for resurrection that Nursi ascribes to the Prophet Muhammad (PBuh), whom he cites as the fourth source of evidences, here two may be mentioned. The first consists of the mutual and joint evidences of the Prophet (PBuh) and the Qur’an. For just as the Prophet, supported by the miracles he performed as confirmation of the Creator, proved the Qur’an to be true and god’s Word; so with its miraculousness and inimitability, and as a miracle of the Prophet, the Qur’an proved that he was truly god’s messenger. and just as he proclaimed the resurrection throughout his life, confirmed by all the previous prophets and the saints, so the Qur’an proclaims it with thousands of verses, confirmed by all the previous scriptures. According to Nursi, this constitutes a proof as certain as daylight.[150]

The second is interesting in that Nursi presents the Prophet’s (PBuh) plea for eternal happiness as the reason for its creation. in a moving section in the Tenth Word, he describes the sublime worship of the Prophet within a vast congregation consisting not only of humankind, but of the inhabitants of the heavens and the whole of creation, all participating in his supplication for bliss and eternity. is it possible, Nursi asks, that the compassionate one who responds to the least creature and provides it needs, should reject such a prayer? Thus, “Just as the Prophet’s messengerhood was the reason for the foundation of this realm of trial; so too the worship he performed was the cause for the foundation of the abode of bliss.”[151]

*** Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to outline the method of proving the resurrection of the dead that Said Nursi used in the Risale-i Nur, rather than offering a comprehensive survey of all the proofs he employed. For the fact is that he mentions hundreds of proofs and evidences, many of which spring from his wish to demonstrate the mutually affirmative character of the chief pillars of faith. he believed that with this method he had presented a watertight case for the resurrection, so that anyone fair-minded would be compelled to affirm it and concur that “the existence of the hereafter is as certain as the existence of this world.”[152]

** 5. death in Nursi’s Thought

Bilal Kuşpinar

Death (al-mawt) is generally defined, in the famous classical dictionaries of Islam, as: “an existential attribute created by god for a living being as the opposite of life” (hayāt).[153] This is of course the definition of natural death and is originally derived from the verses of the Qur’an, some of which will be reviewed later in this article.[154] The same dictionaries also record other types of deaths and afford for each one a separate definition. Among them the mystical notion of death appears to take up the most considerable space right after the natural death, though the accounts that have been suggested there for the understanding of the former are, relatively speaking, more profound and subtle than those that have been supplied for the understanding of the latter. This has to do with the distinct position of the Sufis who have approached death from a moral perspective and conceived it as something spiritual and not simply as a natural phenomenon. in their somewhat allegorical discourse on this subject two types of opinions have been persistently stated for their understanding

of death: firstly, death is viewed by the Sufis as a cause or a veil that hinders “the illuminations of [god’s] disclosures and unveilings.”[155] secondly, it is regarded as a means or a way of “curbing or suppressing the lustful desires of the carnal soul,” in which case one who accomplishes this difficult task would attain to the spiritual reality of death and become truly alive.[156]

Most of these theological and mystical conceptions of death that consist in the classical technical dictionaries, find their various expressions in Nursi’s writings as well. This is not to suggest at all that Nursi’s account of death is a verbatim duplication or reproduction of the opinions of his predecessors. such a slavish attitude is in the first place against the principles of the traditional Islamic scholarship, let alone the high standards of a revivalist genius thinker like Nursi himself. as we shall see in this chapter, his treatment of this subject appears to be a fresh articulation of the hitherto widely-accepted notion of death among the Muslim intellectuals, but with substantial elaborations and further novel additions based on his own examination and self-experience of death.

*** On Natural Death

it must be noted at the very outset that Nursi’s approach to death is holistic, treating all the possible dimensions of it in a distinct form but not in a systematic manner. one of our tasks here, therefore, is to bring together all the relevant points about death and put them in order and thus show to the reader how consistent and profound he is indeed in his own of conception of death. One may find him, for instance, in one place talking about the natural death strictly within the framework of islamic theology, in another place making some comments on the Sufis’ understanding and contemplation of allegorical death, and still in another place offering his personal reflections on his own experience of death. In the end, however, all appear to underscore and serve for Nursi one important goal, among many others, that is: “death is inevitable to any living being as part of the law and wisdom of god, and if understood well, it is not to be scared of at all.” on natural death, to begin with, Nursi proposes a pragmatic distinction between the appearance of death and the reality of death.

such a differentiation is important not only for understanding of the real meaning of death but its raison d’être, as well. death appears, for instance, to the people without belief as nothing else than a bitter and eternal separation from all the loved ones. it is a kind of eviction from the illusory-paradise of this world and a lonely entry into the gloomy prison of the grave. But for the people of faith, says Nursi, it is in fact an indispensable means of joining among the old friends and the dearly loved ones who have already left for the next world. it is also the means for them the entry into their real homeland and the dwelling of their everlasting happiness. again, it is an invitation extended from the gloomy prison of this world to the flowery gardens of the next world. It is the time due for collecting the wage that is to be paid off generously in the hereafter by the all-Merciful and Most compassionate god in return for the services rendered to Him in the present world. In this sense, it is not only a discharge from the difficult tasks and heavy duties of this life but a termination of the trial and examination concerning the requirements of servitude and worship.[157] in order to illustrate and substantiate the real meaning of the natural death Nursi draws our attention to the philosophers’ well-known triple divisions of the world as the world of creation, which is sensory, transient and mortal, the world of images (ālem-i misāl), and the world of meaning (ālem-i manā), which is eternal. He further indicates that all the beings in this transient world find their true meanings in the everlasting world. although the root-substance of all beings, proclaims Nursi, lies beneath the soil of this world, they always turn their faces towards the world of meaning, that is the hereafter, and find their real purposes therein, while they attain their growth and maturity in the world of images. Man, on the other hand, can become truly man, he stresses, only when he perceives these aspects of beings, aspects that are related to the hereafter. For, in doing so, he finds a way leading him from the temporal existence of these transient beings to the permanent abode of their everlasting fruits. Then it is necessary for man to find out the real aim of all these beings before death.[158]

Then when looked at from the spiritual and other-worldly window, which is open only to the people of guidance and revelation, the natural death, as well as its appointed time serve as a pathway leading man first to the intermediate world (barzakh), the grave, and then letting him join and meet their beloved ones who have already migrated to the world of eternity. in this case, death is, in the true sense of the term, a change of location,[159] a time of real meeting with the loved ones and the prelude to

the everlasting life and the eternal happiness,[160] rather than an eternal separation as presumed by the people of misguidance.[161]

For Nursi the very existence of this world of creation entails and necessitates the existence of the hereafter. on the other hand, the true nature and real understanding of the former depends mainly on the meaning of the latter. if we discover correctly and observe such subtle yet profound connection between the two, we would be able to comprehend the meanings and purposes of the existing beings on this planet and relate them intelligibly and return them ultimately to their origins. according to Nursi, this kind of observation and comprehension has already been accomplished by such prominent sages of Islam as al-Ghazālī, Ibn al-'Arabī, 'Abd al-Qadīr al-Gilānī, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī and Imam Rabbānī, and some others. For them, as for Nursi, this world was brought into existence as the theatre or locus of manifestation of god's names, attributes and acts. among his names two, al-Muhyī [the life-giver] and al-Mumīt [the death-causer or striker], are directly connected with life and death, respectively. The reason for bestowing the earthly life upon human beings, who are the noblest of all beings, is, as the Qur'an puts it: "for test and trial as to which of them are best in conduct."[162] since it is a test, it demands that they assume certain duties and obligations and that they fulfill and discharge them according to the moral standards laid down by the Provider of the life through his prophets.[163]

As has been noticed, Nursi differentiates between the life of this world and the world itself. The life in this world, as the Qur'an depicts, is "a play and an amusement,"[164] whereas the world itself is a place of parade or festival adorned with the beautiful embroideries of the names of god and as such it is presented and displayed for the observation and contemplation of its dwellers. Those who cannot perceive all that is displayed there in their real purpose and hence cannot conceive them in their true meaning may be captivated by and drowned into the apparent, corporeal and transient aspects of the parade, while loosing sight of its inward, spiritual and permanent dimensions. These people, because they have not duly contemplated the signs and manifestations of god's names in the world, have failed to develop an appropriate state of mind for death. To acquire such a state of mind, Nursi offers a few

practical and quite illustrative examples, but for the sake of brevity we shall skip them for the time being.[165]

The knowledge of the reality of death, Nursi declares further, is connected directly with the knowledge of god (ma‘rifetullāh) and his names and attributes. one who carefully perceives, with the help of this particular knowledge, the realities of all things and beings of this life, whether they are material or immaterial, essential or accidental, including human beings, as well as their life and death, will be able to see them as the rays of the Truth from one or more of god’s names and their manifestations. Without these names they are merely empty forms bereft of meaning and reality.[166] after all, the forms and meanings of all things and beings are subordinate to the realities of the divine names. everything in this world ought to be seen and conceived in connection with its own reality pertaining to one or more of the divine names.

This being the case then, death, like life, is wisdom of god and as such it has a meaning and reality appropriate to itself. The meaning and reality of death, as mentioned earlier, rests first and foremost on the meaning and reality of the Divine name al-Mumīt, the death-striker, just as the meaning and reality of the life in this world depends on that of the divine name al-Muhyī [the life-giver] and the meaning and reality of the life on the day of resurrection is based on that of the divine name al-Ba‘ith [the raiser of the dead; reviver].

By the study of all of these divine names, according to Nursi, one can not only develop the aforementioned state of mind, or say, mental preparedness for death, but also maintain the much needed equilibrium between the demands of this-worldly life and those of the other-worldly life. in accordance with the famous ash‘arite doctrine of “unending recreation of atoms,” Nursi describes the life of this world as “the present minute or even moment we are in,” as we are in constant change, so much so that our body a while ago is not the same as our body now.[167] Therefore, the physical life we rely on, he declares, is only one minute or even, as some of the truth-examining thinkers stated, “a tenth of a minute,” rather a fleeting instant (ân-ı seyyâle). Because of this mystery, certain saintly people, Nursi goes on to say, have regarded the world as non-existent in itself.[168]

In this case, all the time prior to the present moment, as well as all the things of this world within that time, are simply dead, as far as the present moment is concerned. all the time that will follow the present moment, on the other hand, as well as all the things it may possibly contain, are non-existent in this present moment. how tenable is it, then, poses Nursi rightfully, for man to long for such a momentary life and flee death? Instead of plunging into the games and amusements of this ephemeral life, he urges, one has to rise to a higher level of life pertaining to one's heart and spirit. only then can one transcend beyond time and space and perceive everything of the past and of the future as living.[169]

Once one has attained to that lofty state of life, one would be able to realize how needy one's spirit and heart are for such divine names as the inheritor (alWārith), the raiser of the dead (al-Bā'ith), the everlasting (al-Bāqī), the allgenerous (al-Karīm), and the life-giver (al-Muhyī), and so on. Thus, far from grieving and mourning for all those who die, one would rather feel tranquil at knowing that god, the owner of all these names, has in effect delivered them from the darkness of the non-existence which is this transient earthly life, and secured for them a much finer place than this world.[170] For such people the moment of death becomes a pleasurable moment of meeting with the beloved ones, or what some Sufis, like Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, call a blissful moment of unification, rather than a miserable separation.

*** Death as the Corollary of Life

In responding to a question posed to him concerning the life of Khidr, Nursi makes mention of five degrees of life. The first level of life belongs to human beings, which is very limited. The second one is the life of Khidr and the Prophet ilyas, which is free to a certain extent. since they can be present in more than one place at the same time, their life is not restricted by the requirements of humanity. Among human beings, saints who have attained to the station of witnessing and unveiling may be granted this degree of life in which case they may receive special instruction from Khidr. Therefore, this station is also called "the station of Khidr." The third level of life belongs to

the Prophets Idrīs and Jesus, which, having been detached from the requirements of the human life, has assumed an angelic life in luminous subtlety. Both of them reside in the heavens with their earthly bodies illuminated, though, by the luminosity of the starry-bodies. The fourth level of life is that of the martyrs, which is higher than the life of the other dead in their graves. Because of the sacrifices of their worldly lives, Nursi remarks, God bestows on the martyrs in the intermediate realm (ālem-i barzakh) a life similar to earthy life, but free from pain and hardship. The fifth level of life pertains to the life of the spirits of the dead in their graves. The proof of this life is that the spirits of the saints appear in certain form to the people of unveiling and that the other dead have relations with us while awake or sleeping, occasionally telling us of things corresponding to reality.[171]

Be that as it may, any thing that has a natural life-span, Nursi argues, is subject to the law of the process of perfection through various stages of birth, growth, development, and decline. as such, it is also bound to experience death, as it has already experienced life. The death of a man in this sense is in many ways analogous to the death of the world, as both of them possess the potential for the resurrection too. so, just as man as the microcosm is not free from the claws of death and hence cannot be saved from destruction, the world too as the macrocosm is not immune from the clutches of death and hence cannot be saved from destruction, either.[172] This is, Nursi remarks, due to the law of the process of perfection (kanūn-u tekāmul), which encompasses all things.[173] as we have noted earlier, there is a corollary link between life and death, which Nursi sometimes compares with the necessary connection between “wakefulness and sleep” and between “night and day” and between “winter and spring.”[174] on the nature of this intimate relation between life and death, he furnishes substantial comments especially when he interprets the verse, “it is he Who creates death and life that he may try you, which of you are the best in conduct.”[175] his analysis of this verse, as will be seen, is quite consistent with his above-presented discourse on the knowledge of god and his names and attributes. in the beginning he takes up life and examines it in conjunction with the same discourse and then moves on to elaborate on death in the same fashion.

he considers life as the most luminous and the most beautiful of the miracles of god’s lordly Power, as well as the most forceful and most obvious of the proofs of his unity. it is a self-evident truth for the existence of the divine names and also the most brilliant mirror to reflect on itself the effects and the manifestations of those names. in other words, wherever there is life, various aspects of the divine names and attributes become manifest there. For instance, when life enters a body, it begins to reflect sustenance from the Name of Provider (Razzāq), mercy, from the name of all-Merciful, knowledge, from the name of all-Knowing, wisdom, from the name of all-Wise (al-Hakīm), and so on and so forth.[176]

Moreover, in the above-cited verse, Nursi goes on to expound and teaches that death, like life, is created and that it is also a blessing or gift from god, like life itself. Though death, as compared to life, may appear dissolution, decay, annihilation, and non-existence, it is in reality a change of existence, a change of location, a discharge from the duties of life, an invitation to the everlasting life, and a prelude to an immortal life. considered in all these aspects, Nursi asserts, death is seen as pleasurable, rather than reprehensible. life’s coming into the world is through creation and determining, and departure from the world is also through creation and determining. in other words, just like life, death too is the result of god’s planning and creation. as such, it is not only wisdom but a blessing from him, too. Nursi further explains how death is created by god as a blessing for human beings by four illustrations, each of which in fact touches upon one or more aspects of the phenomenon of death.

Firstly, death, as Nursi declares, is indeed one of the greatest bounties of god, because it is a discharge from the heavy duties and burdensome obligations of the earthly life and also because it serves as a door that lets the person who has experienced death enter into the company of his beloved friends who are already in the intermediate realm.

Secondly, since death relieves man from the hardships of this life and delivers him from the narrow and dark prison of this world, it becomes a source of joy for him, allowing him to enter into the trouble-free immortal life within the mercy of god.

Thirdly, the conditions of this life are fraught with numerous difficulties and immense hardships, such as the complications of old age. Were it not for death, the life would have been unbearable for human beings because of these naturally developing factors. Nursi gives as an example the situation of very elderly parents who cause their children much distress due to their increasingly ailing conditions. one would better appreciate the value of death if one looks at these and other similar situations. in this case, concludes Nursi, death, like life, is a mercy of god.

Fourthly and lastly, death, like sleep, which is in fact the brother of death, functions as a cure, a comfort, a mercy, and a rest for those struck by disaster and calamities. it then saves them from the unbearable tribulations which may even drive them to suicide. since death overall is a blessing and a mercy from god, it is always welcomed by the people who have faith in god, while it is abhorred by the people of misguidance who see it as a sheer torment and affliction.[177]

In Nursi’s view, then, all things and beings appear to journey on a path of a life-span [passage] between life and death, that is, between creation and recreation, generation and regeneration. From this point of view, the decay of a thing and the death of a living being in fact turn out to be their renewals and replacements with their likes.[178]

*** On the Causes of Death

Nursi, having firmly established that death in essence is not destruction or extinction, even if it appears ostensibly so, now draws our attention to possible causes of death. he is of the opinion that death cannot be attributed to causes or nature. despite the existence of certain natural circumstances or events that may appear to cause death, it occurs in any case at the command of god who creates it, just as he creates life. in other words, we should distinguish the real death, which occurs to human beings with the divine permission as an entitlement for their entry into perpetual life, from the apparent death, which seems to be dissolution and annihilation of the

earthly life.[179] seed, for instance, Nursi discusses, dies and decays in its appearance, but in reality there is a shoot inside it, which is being kneaded and is coming to life, and as such, “it is passing from the particular life of a seed to the universal life of a shoot.”[180] such an observation undoubtedly proves Nursi’s ingenuity in unfolding mystery-laden phenomenon of death and making it a meaningful stage at the lives of the living beings. so, it is god who gives life and causes life to continue by means of sustenance. again, it is also god who causes death by creating various means and ways. in doing so, he in fact discharges man from the heavy responsibilities and hefty duties of life, changes his abode from this ephemeral world, releases him from the labor of service and takes him to an immortal life. All of these facts are sufficient, argues Nursi, to prove to man that death is not destruction, or nothingness, or extinction. nor is it cessation and eternal separation or yet a haphazard event. on the contrary, like numerous other things, it is one of the well-planned and well-established realities of this life.[181] after all, death is a return to the original homeland and to the everlasting happiness,[182] just as life is a period of preparation for such return.

*** Possible Reasons for the Death of Beings Aside Humans

in grappling with one of the most crucial questions of islamic theology and philosophy, Nursi discusses the worldly conditions of all beings in relation to life and death. The question that occupies and even agitates many inquisitive minds deals directly with the universal Will of god and his all-inclusive decree, which is summed up in this maxim: “god does whatever he wishes and decrees whatever he wills.”[183] The response he provides for the question and the analysis he makes for the several ramifications of the maxim in the twenty-fourth letter of his Maktūbāt reveal at the same time his islamic theodicy. he begins by posing the hypothetical question, “how can we reconcile the purposeful planning and the compassionate governing of god, Who is possessed of such greatest names as all-Merciful, allWise, and all-loving, with death and non-existence, disappearance and separation, and calamity and hardship?” “how can we explain that on the one hand there is all-compassionate, all-loving god who knows and rules all by his Will and Wisdom and there are, on the other, awesome phenomena and terrible events such as deaths, disasters, hardships, and sufferings?” one can probably afford a somewhat reasonable

explanation for the raison d’être of death for man, or at least one can tolerate the occurrence of death to man, since it is expected to lead him hopefully to everlasting happiness. But, what sort of wisdom and compassion can we find in the constantly occurring deaths of all other living beings and creatures, like the species of animals, the species of trees and plants? What wisdom and purpose are there in their natural dying and in their annihilation by calamities and killings? how is such a seemingly strange phenomenon compatible with the love and mercy of god?

In attempting to resolve these difficult questions, Nursi at first examines more closely the purpose of the creation of all the living creatures, apart from human beings. he believes that if one can truly grasp the reason for the creation of the world and of all the existing beings there, one can also figure out or at least estimate a plausible explanation for the reason of their apparent death. By means of an imaginary parable Nursi aims to establish the inherent connection and mutual relation between god the all-glorious Maker and all the beings created by him on the earth. a tailor, for instance, who sews a garment and tries it on a poor man whom he has employed and displays all his skills and arts on it. during this process, he measures the garment and cuts it, either shortens it or lengthens it, by making the man sit down and stand up. Thus he shapes and decorates it in various forms completely on his own accord. one would wonder, asks Nursi, if the poor man has the right to complain to the tailor, “why are you interfering with this garment which makes me beautiful?” “Why are you making me sit down and stand up?” in exactly the same manner, god, in order to display the perfections of his art through the embroideries of his names, takes the essential nature of every living being as a model and then wraps it in the bodily garment, while adorning it with senses and engraving it with the pen of divine decree and determining. in doing so, he puts on view the manifestations of his names. at the same time he grants to every being a perfection, a pleasure, and an illumination appropriate and suitable to it. [184] none of these living beings, nevertheless, have the right to ask god why he is doing as such, for he, as the lord of all worlds, has free disposal over his realms as He wishes. Their right rather, stresses Nursi, is to fulfill their tasks of offering gratitude and praise in accordance with the degree of existence that god has granted them. so, minerals cannot complain by saying why they were not plants. nor can plants complain by asking why they were not animals. nor can animals complain by saying why they were not humans. But every one of them has the right to offer thanks. Minerals

offer thanks to their creator for having received mineral existence; plants do so for having received life and existence; animals too for having received spirit in addition to life and existence. humans do all the more so for having received life, existence, spirit and intellect.

As noted, Nursi classifies all the living beings according to the degree of their respective existence. every group of beings, from the lowest to the highest degree, receives from their creator a form of perfection, a sort of pleasure, and an amount of illumination in commensurate with their respective aptitude. every one of them, nonetheless, serves as a model for displaying the perfections of the art of their Maker, as well as a mirror for reflecting the manifestations of His Names.

since the living beings were created for such lofty purposes as seen above, they do not disappear with death. not only they but all the things (ashyā) on the earth, Nursi proclaims, do not go to annihilation or to non-existence. Things other than the living beings rather pass from the sphere of power to the sphere of knowledge; they go from the Visible World to the World of the unseen; they turn from the world of change and transience to the world of light and eternity. again, because they display on themselves the beauty and perfection pertaining to the divine names and because they mirror the manifestations of those names, they do not pass to non-existence and nihility. Moreover, since all the divine names are eternal, their manifestations likewise are perpetual. Therefore, although they are subject to change in their outward appearances, their realities and essences, which are the means of beauty and perfection, endure.

as for the living beings, they consist of three categories: (i) beings with no spirits; (ii) beings possessing spirits, and (iii) beings possessing both spirits and intellects. Beings without spirits display the beauty and fineness pertaining to the divine names; hence they suffer no harm while their determinations change. Beings possessing spirits but with no intellects pass from corporeal existence and thus are saved from the tumultuous duties of life. That is to say, death for them is not annihilation and perishing into nihility, since their immortal spirits persist and attain eventually happiness worthy of them. as to the beings possessing both spirits and intellects, namely human beings, their death, as we have stated

earlier, is an introduction or a journeying to everlasting happiness, attaining ultimately perfection. The death they taste is not at all an eternal separation or non-existence.[185] as has been clearly seen, Nursi’s application of death to the living beings has a lot to do with his doctrine of the divine names and attributes. so much so that without referring to the latter the former cannot be explained. and if we closely follow the logical sequence of his arguments, we come to the following conclusion: god is eternal, so are his names and attributes. similarly, all that is manifested from his names and attributes may afford a sort of perpetuity. since all the beings display the manifestations and impresses of those names and attributes, with death then they do not go to extinction in their essence, even though they may appear changing due to the constant renewal of manifestations they display.

*** The Importance of Belief for the Understanding of Death

as we have stated before, throughout his Risāle, Nursi repeatedly insists that death is not extinction and vanishing at all. although this is an undeniable fact, those who fail to discern the subtle relation (intisāb) that exists between god and the world and the beings therein also fail to comprehend the true nature of death, as they become stuck with the external side of it. Thanks to such relation, which can only be noticed through belief (īmān), all things and all beings become related to, and connected with, one another. if a man, for instance, is aware of his relation with god, he also becomes aware of his connection with other beings. For such a man, then, Nursi emphasizes, there is no separation or death in the sense of annihilation but rather another degree of existence. however, in the absence of belief, which he identifies elsewhere as “some sort of spiritual light” and the genuine affiliation with god, not only death but everything appears as non-existent and dark.[186]

In expounding further on the various implications of belief and its significance for understanding the true meaning of death, Nursi incidentally

enters into the discussion of a rather different subject, which he later links with the issue of death. The world, he says, as well as all things, has three faces: the first face looks to the divine names and serves as their mirror. neither death nor separation nor yet non-existence can ever fall on this face, that is the face that looks to the divine names. all of these rather come to it in the form of renewal and replenishment. The second face looks to the Hereafter and fixes its gaze upon the Everlasting World, for which it serves as a land of cultivation. While producing lasting fruits, this face even turns transitory things into permanent. hence, on this face too there is neither death nor disappearance, but the manifestations of life and eternity. as for the third and last face, it looks to transitory beings, namely to us. it is the favorite of transient beings and those who follow their lustful desires, and the market place for the conscious, and the field of test and examination for those who are charged with duties. on the outer side of this face there is death and extinction, as well as pains and wounds. The cure and remedy for them are then manifestations of life and eternity in its inner face.[187] all in all, all beings are mirrors in motion and changing places of manifestation for the renewal of god's lights of creation and existence.

Furthermore, most Qur'anic verses dealing with death, Nursi claims, offer glad-tidings for the person who has faith and comforts his heart by delivering it from the fear of sheer nothingness and of utter extinction. But, again, this can ultimately be accomplished by virtue of faith that connects the heart of the believer with its Beloved.[188] as the Qur'an teaches, "unto god we do belong and to him we shall return,"[189] death is a godly-planned prelude for entry into the Presence of the eternal Master of the universe.

*** Death as a Proof for God's Power and Unity

Nursi views death as an uncontestable evidence for god's Permanence and eternity and life as a decisive proof for his oneness and the necessity of his existence. he tries to demonstrate his view by citing concrete examples from the observation of the nature. one can easily conclude, he argues, the oneness of the sun by observing its images reflected, for instance, in a flowing river and in a sea and in many translucent objects. all of these observable images, though numerous in quantity, bear witness to the oneness and the necessity of the sun. Their disappearance at the time of the

sun-set and their re-appearance the next day after the sun-rise testify beyond any doubt to the permanence of the sun. likewise, the existence of all the beings is an obvious testimony for the necessity of the existence of the necessary Being, the eternal sun, as their disappearance together with their causes and their re-emerging renewals that follow them bear witness to his oneness, Pre-eternity, and Permanence.[190] in other words, both life and death, in Nursi's view, are irrefutable evidences not only for the oneness of the creator but for the essentiality and indispensability of his existence for the existence of all beings. They are also incontestable proofs for the existence of a permanent life beyond death.

life and death, if we perceive them with our inner eye, as Nursi himself does it and suggests us to do the same, will unveil their true nature to us. only then shall we notice how the former speaks to us as if uttering constantly, "there is no deity but he, the one," and hence you should reject all the apparent causes, as he is the cause of all. We shall also take heed of death and hear him as if declaring, "there is no deity but He, the Peerless," and hence you should reject all the defiant souls and egos, as he is the creator of all.[191]

*** Contemplation of Death

contemplation of death (rābita-i mevt) occupies considerable space in Nursi's life, as it does in the lives of many spiritual masters. he says that we can effortlessly infer the proposition "death is a reality," from the transience of the world. even long before the occurrence of the natural death, we can see ourselves dead if we develop the appropriate state of mind for it through the contemplation and recollection of death. as compared to many other creatures whose corpses were long buried in the graveyard of this globe, we, human beings, can envisage and foresee our own deaths and imagine how all our beloveds are turning their backs, abandoning us and leaving us alone. in this sense, therefore, the death of every living creature along with their corpses becomes "a wisdom-displaying passage."[192] seeing the dead body of a person may apparently cause agony and awesome fear; but, when we think of the real meaning of death as a departure and passage to another world of the Infinitely Merciful God, rather than a going to non-existence, we welcome it rather with optimism and hope and consent to

it, saying “to god we all belong, and to him is our return.”[193] after all, the principal aim and the most anticipated result of our life in this world, Nursi again underscores, is to manifest the names and attributes of our real owner.[194] Just as the life we have assumed from him as a trust manifests his name al-Muhyī, [the life-giver], so, too the death, which we shall experience at the end of that life, displays his name alMumīt, [the death-causer], which also means “returning the trusted life back to is real owner.” contemplation of death is one of the most effective means, according to Nursi, to attain and preserve sincerity (ikhlās). By reflecting on such verses as, “every soul shall taste death,”[195] and: “surely you will die and surely they will die too,”[196] one could save oneself from the worldly ambitions, as well as from the snares and tricks of the evil-commanding soul. This is why, the Sufis, says Nursi, and those who have trodden their path, regarded the contemplation of death as the necessary means for their spiritual journey. For it is through the contemplation of death that one can not only dispel the fantasy of eternity but also free oneself from the unattainable ambitions and false hopes of this-worldly life.[197] This practice has also been underlined

in various Prophetic statements, as Nursi cites one of them: “you should frequently mention death which drives away [from you the worldly] pleasures.” at this juncture, it must be pointed out that Nursi, though he seems to admire the path of the Sufis and deems their way of contemplation of death valuable, proposes rather a direct method or what we may call a “self-experienced method of contemplation,” the theoretical foundation of which rests exclusively on the Qur’an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and the practical performance of it is demonstrated by him. For him the contemplation of death in the Sufi path is performed mostly in an imaginary form, by thinking of the end and thus bringing the future hypothetically to the present. such a way, Nursi criticizes, is not compatible with the way of reality. For an actual contemplation of death, he asserts, there is no need for imagination and supposition. one may instead look directly on one’s own body and thereby see there one’s own death and from there he can even observe the death of this century and the death of this whole world. This temporal life resembles a tree, and our individual corpse is like a single fruit from that tree. so, Nursi’s mode of contemplation, as far as

death is concerned, starts in mind from the present and advances to the future, as exactly the opposite of the Sufis' imaginary way contemplation mentioned above, which intends to bring the future to the present in imagination.[198] in any case, the contemplation of death, in the eyes of Nursi and the other spiritual masters, is a mental preparation for man to endure unexpected severe illnesses, trials, and calamities with perseverance, as well as a reminder for him to fulfill his duties and obligations duly and carefully. For such a self-contemplative activity warns and alerts man of the fleeting nature of this world and of his fragile status therein as a transit passenger. in this particular sense it is regarded as the most effective antidote for man in struggling to overcome his heedlessness and keeping himself vigilant and sober in all circumstances. Because of all of these benefits, Nursi indicates, many friends of god and saints who incessantly exercised contemplation of death as part of their spiritual training, have considered and even welcomed such a severe illness as stroke or apoplexy as a blessing from god. For the end-result of this life for them is a blissful union with their Beloved in whom they have faith and place trust and on whom they rely under every possible situation.[199]

*** Nursi's Self-Reflection of Death

The very process of the self-contemplation of death, which had always been one of the most effective principles cultivated by the people of the Sufi path and in particular by the followers of the naqshibandiyya order, has also transformed Nursi himself, as he confesses it on several occasions, from the old said into the new said; as a result he has henceforward become a close companion of the new said in his own intellectual endeavor. in his small treatise, "elderly People" as well as in some other places of his writings, he has demonstrated, by virtue of that selfcontemplation, the luminous face of death and its true meaning for the faithful.[200] Nursi's self-experience of death of course draws on his reading of the Qur'an. For instance, the verse, "every living being shall taste death,"[201] has propelled Nursi to make a self-reckoning and re-assessing of his past life. While pondering upon it deeply, the following meaning, as he declares, began to be unveiled to his heart: Mankind is a living being; it shall die in order to be resurrected. The earth is a living being, which will also die in order to enter into an eternal life. and the world, too, is a living being; it will die in order to take on the form of the hereafter.[202]

Furthermore, Nursi’s self-reflection of death has allowed him to see its two faces, one appearing as a terrible event, clothed in a black, dark and ugly veil, the other appearing as a luminous and beautiful moment for which all the faithful yearn.[203]

Nursi, by his study of the Qur’an and his own reflection of death, has been able to unravel the mystery of death and utilize its talisman in his Risāle-i Nūr, for the benefit of his readers and students. His success in this context lies in his efforts at removing the veil from the cruel face of death and bringing its unknown luminous side to open.[204]

*** Concluding Remarks

Nursi’s approach to death, as we have tried to demonstrate here, is direct and based on his own reckoning and introspection. Placing himself before the mirror of death, he looks at it not as something that will happen to him in the future or something happening to others, but as an imminent reality he is about to face in his own body. in other words, his comprehension of death is by way of “complete certainty,” leading him to its interiority and letting him witness as it is really occurring to him and not as it appears to him from outside. Because of such certainty, he, as he declares, changed his attitude towards death, from fearing it with awesome worry to welcoming it with great consent.[205]

The positive position Nursi has adopted towards death concurs with the position of the Muslim thinkers of the past. in addition to the examples we have furnished earlier, we can still add one more, that is, his elaboration of alGhazālī’s celebrated doctrine that “the world is the best possible of all that exists.” In discussing the ramifications of this crucial issue of theodicy, Nursi poses a fundamental ethical question: If the universe is filled with, and encompassed by, goodness (husun), beauty (cemāl), and justice (adalet), then how can one explain the occurrence of all sorts of ugliness, calamities, disasters, illnesses,

and deaths before our eyes? every instance of ugliness, he answers, conceals in itself either an instance or numerous instances of beauty and also it is through the occurrence and interference of ugliness that the degrees of beauty unfold. For instance, it is through the occurrence of cold that the degrees of heat become manifest or it is through darkness that the degrees of light become apparent. likewise, it is through particular instances of evil, harm, disasters and ugliness that universal instances of good and beauty, and universal benefits and bounties become visible. To put it in more precise terms, the creation of the so-called ugliness, stresses Nursi, is not ugly at all; on the contrary, it is beautiful, because what comes out and results from it in the end is mostly beautiful. Then we have to take into account the overall results and benefits of the creation of ugliness, not ugliness itself. A lazy man, as he exemplifies it, who suffers damage and loss due to the rain, cannot overlook or deny the beneficial results it produces in the name of mercy. The falling of rain is ultimately mercy, not harm.[206]

By the same token, the creation of death is part of the all-encompassing mercy and all-embracing goodness and beauty. This all-inclusive mercy and beauty in fact, Nursi concludes, necessitates the existence of both life and death. despite its scary face in appearance, death yields ultimately good results as it paves the way for an everlasting life. even the creation of satan is also good, merely because he is instrumental cause of man’s striving and competition for achieving spiritual progress.[207]

** 6. Lā Siyyamā: Nursi’s Treatise on al-Hashr in Mathnawi al-Nuriye

Lucinda Mosher

in 1955, some dozen arabic rasā’il [epistles; treatises] of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi were collected, edited, and collated as the single-volume compendium alMathnāwī al-‘Arabī al-Nūrī (or, Mathnawi al-Nuriye, as it will be called here).[208] These essays date from 1920–21, a period of self-imposed

spiritual retreat from political activism and military service. it was during this period of deep theological reflection and personal transformation that Nursi (now in his 40s) began to call himself the “new said.”[209] Among this set of Arabic essays we find Lā Siyyamā (in Particular): a treatise on the certainty of life beyond earthly existence. in this chapter, I comment on the structure of this treatise, reflect upon its themes, and locate it in the Nursi canon as a whole. i do this as a christian moral theologian in the anglican tradition who has long enjoyed the close reading of classical islamic writings on the doctrine of resurrection.

*** Structure

The thirteen treatises of the Mathnawi al-Nuriye are a diverse lot: some are quite long, with many divisions, subdivisions, and appendices—akin to short chapterbooks; others are concise and through-composed; still others read more like litanies than lessons. at 20 pages, the edition examined here (17.5 pages of actual arabic text), Lā Siyyamā ranks among Mathnawi’s shorter items.[210] structurally, Lā Siyyamā has five discernable sections: three discreet sections of discussion bookended by devotional material. Most of Mathnawi al-Nuriye’s epistles open with supplication, praise, and extended testimony, and Lā Siyyamā is no exception. its introductory supplication praises god as self-revealing author of all creation:

Praise be to god, the perception of whose necessary existence and unity the atoms and elements of all creation speak with the tongue of their helplessness and their poverty.

Blessing and peace be upon his Prophet, who is the discoverer of the talisman of the living creatures and the key to its signs; and upon his brothers among the prophets and the transmitters, and upon the archangels, and upon the virtuous servants of god among the inhabitants of the heavens and the earths.[211]

Lā Siyyamā’s second section, which i am calling the Preamble, begins with four assertions prefatory to its main argument, each introduced with the imperative Know. The section’s exposition consists primarily of a series of analogies, and closes with profession of the uniqueness of the Prophet Muhammad.[212] Nursi signals that we have entered a new phase of the discussion by saying, in effect: “now to the matter at hand!” This third section, which i am labeling the evidentiary Phase, comprises the bulk of the treatise (some eleven pages). here Nursi attempts to demonstrate that belief in a hereafter is logical, introducing each of his argument’s twenty-one steps with the idiom lā siyyamā [in particular]. Thus he develops and sustains a rhetorical rhythm, albeit suspending it eventually for extended theological reflection and supplication.

With the vocative phrase: “o whoever is our friend, anyone whose understanding of the matter has made it to this point …,” Nursi heralds a shift in tone and style of discourse. The evidentiary Phase of the treatise has closed. We have entered the treatise’s fourth section—its denouement (my label). The treatise concludes as it began, with supplication (the fifth section):

o god: include us among Ahli’l-Sa‘ādah [the People of happiness], gather us into the Zumrati’l-Sa‘ādah [the Body of happiness], and enter us into the garden with the Pious [al-Abrār] through the intercession of your Prophet. So, blessings be upon him and upon his family, as befits Your Compassion and and his compassion, and preserve and keep us safe, bring peace upon our religion. amen. all praise be to god, the lord of the Worlds.[213]

*** Stylistic Considerations

given Nursi’s reputation as a Qur’an commentator, it is striking that Lā Siyyamā includes only five Qur’an quotations: two in the Preamble, and three in the evidentiary Phase.[214] rhetorically, this treatise is hortatorical more so than it is didactic: its style is florid and emphatic, designed to convict rather than merely to inform the reader; illustration is

provided by means of multiple colorful analogies; energy is built through ample use of repetition and assonance best appreciated when read aloud.

as a literary work, Lā Siyyamā reads as a composition written by someone very well read in the arabic language, but not entirely comfortable writing in it. on virtually every page we encounter sentences which are as awkward as they are complex. Occasionally, we find unusual plurals, odd spellings, obscure idioms, or Turkish words interspersed.

i have written elsewhere about Nursi's propensity in his arabic writings to play with assonance, to pair terms for their mutual resonance, to employ obscure terms (or even to coin them) for their rhythmic value. a style of preaching in which rhythm, alliteration, and other auditory effects take precedence over clarity of meaning is sometimes termed "the mystification of language."[215] With this in mind, it is interesting to hear Nursi, in a note to the Tenth Word, defend his discursive method. To those who wonder why he has punctuated that argument with some forty-five iterations of a particular question, he responds that he does so "because it expresses a most significant mystery."[216]

even in this comparatively early authorial stage (of which the essays of 1920–21 are the fruit), Nursi is aware of the criticism his rhetoric provokes. in the preface to Habbah, another of his arabic treatises now included in the Mathnawi, he states: "Know that it has been reported to me that people are saying 'we cannot comprehend much of his writings, and so they [get printed in vain]';" in Nūrun min Anwāri (also now part of the Mathnawi), he acknowledges: "it is often said [about my writing]: 'your kalām can not be clearly understood!' agreed, but what to do?! This is the way insights come into the heart!"[217] he has not made his treatises opaque on purpose, he insists: "it is only that these writings are unexpected words addressed to myself during a bewildering period of my life."[218] in spite of its occasional opacity, the rhetoric of the Lā Siyyamā is that of persuasion, furthered effectively by artful use of repetition. it is to Nursi's delight in repetition as a rhetorical device that we now turn.

When we look at Mathnawi al-Nuriye as a whole, we may be struck by the preponderance of dense paragraphs, and the frequency with which Nursi initiates them with the imperative ‘Ilam! [Know!] We encounter this imperative in Lā Siyyamā, but only in the Preamble, and only four times. The distinctive rhythm and sound of this treatise is produced by long sequences of other parallelisms.

For example, in the Preamble, following the third ‘Ilam!—imperative, we find six statements beginning with ka-dhā inna nahāyah [thus, verily, the degree of], interrupted by one declaration begun simply ka-dhā inna. a series of analogies follows the final ‘Ilam!—imperative, each is initiated with lā yumkin [there is no …]. Nursi uses this construct 17 times in the treatise as a whole: 13 iterations here in the Preamble, and another five times in the Evidentiary Phase.[219]

The idiom lā siyyamā [in particular], which provides the treatise its title, occurs 23 times in the text—twice in the Preamble, where it is used merely in passing. By contrast, in the evidentiary Phase, this idiom functions as a vocative, calling our attention to each move in the mounting of evidence that belief in a hereafter is rational. The first 11 of these come in quick, almost breathless succession; following the 11th through 21st assertions, on the other hand, Nursi allows time for extended explanation—or, as following his 15th evidentiary point, for supplication:

o god, blessings and peace be upon that Beloved [Muhammad] who is the Master of the Two realities, the Pride of the Two Worlds, and the life of the Two abodes, stream of the Two Felicities; and the Possessor of Two Wings, the Messenger of al-Thakalān; and upon his progeny and his companions (all of them); and upon his brothers—the prophets, and the messengers. amen.[220]

The treatise’s denouement, which summarizes the preceding evidentiary argument in terms of god’s Beautiful names, stands in contrast to the preceding section by its lack of repetition of idioms as a rhetorical device.

rather, it makes repeated reference to god as the Wise, noble, compassionate, Just, all-Preserving Maker. in so doing, this section bears more resemblance to dhikr and du‘ā’ than to exhortation.

*** Nursi’s Argument

The Qur’an makes it clear that “god can and will raise the dead and that such a resurrection is an indispensable part of his plan for each individual and for all creation.”[221] Jane smith and yvonne haddad have observed that the vocabulary of traditional islamic eschatological thought juxtaposes the temporal and the spatial, the individual and the collective, the already and the not yet. Thus the life of this physical earth and all which relates to it is called al-dunyā [the closer, the lower]. Al-dunyā refers not only to the time an individual spends on earth, but as well “to the total time frame continuing until the coming of the hour of judgment.” Whereas al-dunyā is the realm of measurable duration, al-ākhira [the hereafter—from the last, or the ultimate] is beyond or apart from time. Just as aldunyā has both specific and general meanings, so it is with al-ākhira, which refers not only to eternity (that is, the antithesis of al-dunyā), but also to al-samawat [the heavens]—the specific abodes of the angels and of the saved.[222] an eschatology informed by the Qur’an speaks of two parallel creations: the first creation into this world, and the second creation after death.[223] it is upon these notions which Lā Siyyamā expands. however, the classical writings examined by smith and haddad desire to describe what the resurrection is—what, in detail, will happen; [224] Nursi’s concern is to convince his reader that the resurrection will be.

Lā Siyyamā has been called Nursi’s treatise on the resurrection. [225] in english translations of the Qur’an and arabic literature, resurrection is used to render a number of terms; among the most common are: Yawm al-Akhirah [the hereafter], al-Qiyāmah [the rising], al-Ba‘th [the awakening], al-Hisāb [the reckoning], al-Ma‘ād [the return]. These

terms are double referents, variously employed to name either the entirety or a single component of the eschatological event.[226] in Lā Siyyamā, Nursi employs al-Akhirah five times;[227] al-Qiyāmah only once;[228] al-Ba‘th, al-Hisāb, and al-Ma‘ād not at all. in this treatise, his preferred term for the eschaton is al-Hashr [the gathering], which appears ten times.[229] While alHashr may name only one phase of the eschatological process, throughout this treatise Nursi seems to intend it to name the whole of it.

as is easily discerned from any of Nursi’s writings, the existence and absolute oneness of god is self-evident if we but pay attention to the natural order. atheists persist, and he desires to persuade them to theism by appealing to their love of logic. here in Lā Siyyamā, Nursi will preface his main argument with four assertions:

• That true appreciation of scientific knowledge ought to lead even the atheist to admit that the earth and all it contains is too intricate and complex to be the result of mere chance;

• That everything has a material aspect and a non-material aspect, the former determined by “Power,” and the latter determined by “destiny;” that is, all things have “knowledge” of the form to take in the first place, and what forms to take on as they develop over time;

• That “everything bears the imprint and seal of al-Ahad [the one], al-Samad [the eternal; the refuge], and possesses signs testifying that [god] has sovereignty over it, owns it, and has made it;”

• That a relationship inheres between faith in god, faith in prophethood, faith in the hereafter, and belief in the necessary existence of an eternal designer.[230]

Lest the reader not understand how god's "imprint and seal" be discerned—nursi provides evidence from the natural order. similarly, lest the reader not understand the essential connection between faith in god, prophethood, and the hereafter, Nursi makes it overt by means of a series of analogies; for example:

• Just as a book requires an author, and a house requires both an architect and a builder, so too the universe cannot have come into existence without a maker;

• Just as the images of the sun reflected in drops of water cannot be explained without reference to the sun itself, so too can the systematic transformation of the creatures of the universe be explained only by reference to their necessary creator;

• Just as the sun cannot help but diffuse light, and an infinitely beautiful work of art cannot fail to draw attention to itself by means of someone capable of describing and interpreting it, so too would it be inconceivable for god to do other than to make godself known by means of Messengers.[231]

"Now observe the power of the reality of the gathering and the hereafter," Nursi urges; "and it is that there is no power without rewarding those who obey, and punishing those who disobey."[232] That is, power is not viable unless there are consequences for ignoring it. Power is viable, Nursi argues, if the one wielding it, for example:

• "[M]anifests great generosity that necessitates ihsan [the doing of the beautiful], and a great dignity that necessitates concern for others;"

• Is immensely merciful, thus necessitating merit which matches his wide mercy; and also possesses glory necessitating a response to those who undermine his ability and do not respect him;

• Has wisdom to an elevated degree, thus necessitating the protection of his prestige and power by accommodating those who seek refuge under his wing; and also has a pure sense of justice which necessitates the preservation of his prestigious domain by the way he cares for his flock—(that is, all people);

• As the owner of great treasure, is filled with ultimate generosity that necessitates the existence of an ultimate generous guest house, which in turn necessitates the continued existence of those in need of different things—food, clothing, and so on—such that always there will be people coming to this open guest house;

• Demonstrates great merciful and compassionate in the way he rescues the needy and answers the supplicant, responding to needs from the smallest ones expressed by people at the lowest level of society to the greatest request issued by a sultan.[233]

God's "secret Perfections" are perpetual, Nursi asserts; and perpetual perfection cannot but manifest itself perpetually. such perfection will demand that notice be taken of it perpetually: "a perfection loses its value in the view of an observer condemned to eternal extinction."[234] Nursi insists that our observation of the natural order should lead us to conclude that there is an ultimate Power behind it: as he sees it, by all logic there must be. in the longest explanatory passage of the evidentiary Phase section (some two pages), Nursi reinforces his contention that such a Power as has founded and regulates the cosmos will, of course, be able to orchestrate a general day of gathering and an eternal life thereafter. indeed the natural order itself illustrates the reality of resurrection. offering yet another analogy, Nursi suggests that this universe is like a caravanserie: caravanseries fill up quickly and empty quickly every day. Playing with images of luxury and hospitality, he makes his point: "This world has not been created for its own sake … . Rather, it is a realm filled through births and emptied through

deaths. its inhabitants are guests only, whom the noble lord invites to the abode of Peace.”[235]

For proof that things are destined for baqā’ [immortality] rather than fanā’ [extinction], “Consider a flower which looks at us for a very short time and then goes away,” Nursi suggests. “you may think of it as a word uttered, which by god’s permission goes to thousands of ears, with its meanings understood by numerous intellects. Then, when the flower dies, it entrusts itself to the memories of those who have seen it, and its forms and meanings to its seeds … .”[236] Nursi urges us to remember that god is all-Preserving: “he misses nothing and whether it be the biggest or the smallest, he records and preserves everything in a manifest book.” consider “the memories of human beings, the fruits of trees, and the seeds of fruits and flowers, so that you may understand the comprehensiveness of the law of recording and preserving.”[237] in particular, he stresses, it is no more difficult for the King of This World with all his attributes of strength to build the other World with all its gardens than it is for him to create the early springtime with all its gardens and the transformations they display. god’s promise, which all the Prophets [al-Anbiyā’] and the Pure ones [al-Asfiyā’] have established, is found in the Qur’an: “he is god: there is no god but him. he will gather you all together on the day of resurrection.”[238]

Furthermore, Nursi continues, “the governor of This universe [Mutasarrif Hadhā’l-Ālam] makes manifest in every moment, every day, every year, and every century in the arena of the earth many examples similar to things which take place in the greater, wider arena [of the cosmos].” consider the annual springtime resurrection [al-Hashr al-Rabī‘ī], he suggests: you’ll be able to see 300,000 examples of gathering and spreading [hashr wa nashr] such as we anticipate at the last day. is not he Who created the universe in a matter of six days responsible for this annual resurrection season? how could it be that god have created the heaven and earth in six days, and orchestrates this annual resurrection, yet not be able to command a general resurrection, by which all human beings are gathered in a flash?[239]

“And in particular,” says Nursi, making his final evidential point, consider how ephemeral are our earthly habitats, yet these ephemeral arenas manifest traces of divine wisdom, favor, justice, and mercy sufficient to convince humanity that there can be no greater wisdom, favor, justice, and mercy than god’s. if there be no permanent habitat with eternal inhabitants, then—since logic has already established that god must be—this display would be but a malicious prank! and, Nursi concludes, to think that god could be such a trickster is to upset all of the logic through which he has just guided us.[240]

Throughout the evidentiary Phase, Nursi has alluded to god by various attributes—among them: al-Jawād [generous], al-Rahmān [the compassionate], Mutasarrif Hadhā’l-Ālam [governor of This universe], Maliku’l- Ālam [King of the universe]—to mention but a few.[241] as he prepares to summarize his lengthy argument in just a half-page of text, Nursi takes a moment to warn us not to think that the attributes of god which point to the absolute certainty of resurrection be limited to those which he (Nursi) has mentioned in this discourse: “[d]o not suppose that the Beautiful names which require that there be a hereafter and a Gathering be confined to al-Hakīm [the Wise] and al-Karīm [the noble] and alRahīm [the Merciful] and al-‘Adil [the Just] and al-Hafīz [the Preserver]. By no means; nay, rather, all of the names manifested in the management of creation require this.”[242] indeed, he insists as he summarizes, “the question of the gathering is a question already agreed upon, by virtue of the truth of god’s glory and his Beauty and his splendor and all the rest of his names”—to which all revealed texts and prophets (especially the Qur’an and Muhammad the Trustworthy), all souls which are luminous, pure, and exalted, and all the signs present in the natural order attest.

everything points both to its creator and to its (telos): each thing has a “tongue” which testifies to Divine Oneness, and a “tongue” which testifies to the Hereafter and the last day. divine Wisdom, Favor, Mercy, Justice, and Preservation establish the order of the cosmos; so to the natural

order points to the Wise, noble, compassionate, Just, all-Preserving Maker. “Thus it manifests the truth of the hereafter and the imminence of the hour and the actualization of bliss.”[243]

Thus it is Nursi’s contention that the Beautiful names themselves require that there be such a thing as resurrection.[244] That he would make this connection is not surprising, given his well-documented love of the 100-stanza meditation on the Beautiful names known as the Jawshān al-Kabīr [The great armor]. as i have explained elsewhere, while he may have known of it beforehand, it was during his profoundly transitional sojourn of 1920–21 (the period during which he penned the treatise now known as Lā Siyyamā) that Nursi cultivated his deep and abiding fondness for the Jawshān al-Kabīr—a devotional aid which, Şükran Vahide affirms, Nursi recited regularly from then on, and which served him not only as an aid for contemplation, but also as an inspiration for his writing projects.[245]

*** Reflection

i approach Nursi as a christian ethicist, thus in conversation with a range of christian thought.[246] My encounter as a christian ethicist with Nursi’s carefully crafted logic brings to mind the methodological assertion by the theologian John Polkinghorne (who had as well a distinguished career as a particle physicist) that “the aim of the religious quest, like that of the scientific quest, is to seek motivated belief about what is the case.” By “motivated belief,” Polkinghorne means belief which can appeal to evidence. in his own work on the interface of science and religion, he explains, he addresses “evidential questions”—questions which will require rational responses if faith is to be possible.[247] Nursi’s method is similar. he too seeks motivated belief—belief which can appeal to evidence. For me, Nursi’s turning to the natural order for answers to his own “evidential questions” recalls Thomas aquinas’s “Five Ways” by which the human mind may apprehend god. in his Summa Theologiae, Thomas’s style of argument is to pose a question, then detail a number of objections to it (negative answers to it); he then lays out his own position on the matter, and his detailed responses to each objection in turn.

For Thomas, all human knowledge proceeds from experience: even our knowledge of God must start from the world. The finite world cannot explain its own existence, order, and dynamism. Therefore, there must be a First Mover, a First Efficient Cause, a cause that is its own necessity (something that does not have to be caused by anything else), a cause of any and all degree of perfection in anything else, and an intelligent Being which directs each thing toward its particular telos. This Prime Mover, this First Efficient, Necessary, Perfect Cause, this intelligent Being, Thomas insists, is “what everyone calls ‘god’.”[248] in effect, Thomas turns the question of whether god exists on its head: it does not need to be proven. The economy of the universe is self-evident; and that very economy is what the word “god” means! interestingly, however, the supplement to Part Three of Summa Theologiae has Thomas dismissing appeals to the natural order in explaining resurrection by such earlier christian thinkers as John of damascus and gregory the great. our knowledge of resurrection comes from god’s revelation through christ. resurrection will involve the reunion of soul with body, and this will be miraculous, not natural.[249]

We might turn for a moment to anselm of canterbury (1033–1109 ce), known for his ontological argument by which he asserts that god is that “than which nothing greater can be conceived.”[250] anselm, as William Placher points out, “saw few limits to what reason could achieve when guided by faith.”[251] But which comes first: faith, or reason? Anselm “insists that faith must come before rational understanding of the mystery of the self-revealing god.”[252] says anselm, “unless you believe, you will not understand.” Faith is the first move. Yet he insists as well that “faith would be lacking if it did not use human reason to explore the mysteries of revelation.”[253] Thus from Anselm we receive a classical definition of theology as

“faith seeking understanding.” given anselm’s notion of faith’s preceding rational understanding, we might ask whether “proofs from nature” are the best way to name the cosmological arguments made by Thomas aquinas on the one hand, and Said Nursi on the other. Perhaps it is better to describe them as arguments which begin with a particular interpretation of nature by a believing mind, and then demonstrate the reasoning process of that

believing mind.[254] regardless, in Lā Siyyamā it is clear that Nursi (not unlike anselm) sees few limits to what reason can achieve when guided by faith. however, when we recall the circumstances under which the essay foundational to it was written—nursi's personally formative spiritual retreat of 1920–21—it is equally clear that it allows us to hear Nursi's own faith seeking understanding.

as he preaches, Nursi chides people who do not see things as he does. in Lā Siyyamā, he accuses the unbeliever of ingratitude,[255] of succumbing to "the intoxication of ignorance,"[256] of (perhaps) being "drunk with error,"[257] or of being "sophists who deny the existence of things".[258] When we contrast his tone here to that of the Tenth Word, in which he calls refusal to "assent to the attributes of perfection of the glorious creator" a "sign of lunacy and misguidance," and declares that, in spite of his detailed argument in its favor, "you regard corporeal resurrection as improbable and rationally unacceptable, know your behavior to be pure lunacy," we find the Nursi of the Mathnawi al-Nuriye comparatively mildmannered.[259] Nursi is far from alone in turning to sarcasm and scolding: Thomas and anselm use ridicule as a rhetorical device as well.

Is anyone ever brought to belief by reprimand? Probably not. however, anselm's discourse is couched in prayer, as is Nursi's. When this is noticed, we become aware that the object of the scolding may be as much the author as the reader, the teacher as much as the student. When it comes to belief in god and god's ways, does logic ever convince? does reason bring individuals to faith? Perhaps—although even a distinguish theologian like alistair Mcgrath, a selfdescribed "former atheist," says the consensus of thought on the matter is: not likely. Be that as it may, it must also be conceded that believers can give a rational account of their faith.[260] What is delightful about each of the exemplars above, Said Nursi included, is the way in which they give this account.

*** Conclusion

From the discussion above, we have learned that Lā Siyyamā is a colorful and comparatively concise example of Nursi’s style of argumentation, one item in a handbook which stands in contrast to most of his output because it is arabic, rather than Turkish, discourse. The relationship between the contents of the Mathnawi al-Nuriye and the contents of the multi-volume Risale-i Nur can confuse even those with some experience with the Nursi canon. it is thus helpful to know that the Risale-i Nur includes or mentions several essays which would eventually become part of Mathnawi al-Nuriye. [261] according to a note in the 1999 edition of the Mathnawi, we can surmise that al-Hashr was in fact the title of an arabic essay Nursi penned in 1922–23. It figures twice in the Risale-i Nur: it is the “second station” of the “Twenty-eighth Word;” and, it provides the core for the (vastly longer) “Tenth Word.” The treatise now known as Lā Siyyamā thus is in actuality a revision: Nursi calls it “an expression of the essence of the epistle al-Hashr.”[262]

My effort to sort out the origins as well as the themes and structure of Lā Siyyamā brings me to a final point. Considerable effort is being made to bring the Nursi canon to a wider audience. as an item of literature, Lā Siyyamā demonstrates Nursi’s skill as a preacher. it deserves to be read. it will enjoy more readership if it be provided an arabic edition in which the roughest rhetoric is smoothed out a bit. an english translation which preserves and foregrounds the repetitive devices that give the work its distinctive structure, and which makes clear Nursi’s vocabulary vis-à-vis the Beautiful names of god, will allow the anglophone student of this text to appreciate, not only the ideas it contains, but the method by which they are expressed.

Lā Siyyamā—and that this same material functions both as the basis for and a summary of the Tenth Word. see Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words: On the Nature and Purposes of Man, Life, and All Things, translated from the Turkish Sözler by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözler Neşriyat, 1992), p. 513. A note on the first page of Lā Siyyamā confirms this: see Mathnawi, p. 81.

** 7. resurrection in the Writings of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: Comparative Reflections with christian Theology

W. Mark Richardson

The opportunity for inter-religious dialogue is something to be welcomed not for the sake of wholesale agreement on all topics, nor finding syntheses which show our traditions at their depths to be really the same thing under different cultural histories. it is, rather, an opportunity for mutual understanding, and the gaining of insight within one’s own tradition by virtue of stepping outside it to reflect on another.

Nursi’s writings provide fertile ground for this kind of task. as spiritual seeker, accomplished scholar and compassionate leader, he brings to his work uncommon strengths for deepening inter-religious dialogue. The topic of “resurrection” proves to be quite rich for this undertaking. it is a theme at the core of these two theistic traditions, and one in which contrasts between the traditions lead to insight.

*** Method

i have pursued this study in the mode of comparative theology. as a scholar of christianity, i am interested in how the similarities and differences on a belief, embedded in both traditions, enhance understanding. But, of course, i cannot represent more than a single point in a spectrum of christian thought. We have the advantage of reflecting on Nursi who represents one voice in the spectrum of Islam, but the comparison will necessarily remain broad because of this consideration.

i have concentrated on the topic of “resurrection” and on Nursi’s Tenth and Twenty-ninth Words. My first task is empirical: looking for the form of the argument and the key ideas in making the theological case. My

next task is consideration of theological implications one might draw from the language and concepts employed in the respective traditions.

Nursi tells us the topic of resurrection is exceedingly important in islam, so we can expect it to be a very significant point of departure for comparative theology. i will compare his thoughts about resurrection with broadly held views in the christian tradition. i begin by asking: on what grounds could, or would, a monotheist believe in god resurrecting his creatures from the dead? and just what is meant by “resurrection” such that one could not just say, instead, the continuing life of the soul which (some believe) is an entity constituted in god’s creation as immortal? What is special, that is, about the notion of resurrection to distinguish it from immortality of the soul? after some remarks about this distinction, i will consider the implications of the response for the whole of creation and the social dimension of our humanity, the nature of time and transformation, and finally closing remarks on eternal reward and punishment. First, then, the question of the form of argument asserting resurrection.

*** The Basis for Making the Claim about “Resurrection”

One significant comparative interest between Nursi’s thought and Christian theology is the basis on which one makes a claim about resurrection. Nursi’s argument is nuanced and varied, but overall it has the form of cumulative cosmological arguments, intending to lead the reader not just to the reasonableness of the resurrection, but its virtual inevitability. The often repeated phrase in forming a rhetorical question to those who would doubt the resurrection – “is it at all possible …” – expresses the tone of certainty and boldness he intends to convey. notable examples of the arguments are:

1.since there are creatures able to appreciate god’s mercy, beauty, goodness as observed in the world, it would discount the very meaning of these virtues if there were no eternal enjoyment of them.[263]

2.The design of this world points to a more permanent rendering of the virtues we find in it.[264]

3.Belief in an eternal reality is the condition for an interpretation of value in the things of this world.[265]

The arguments always comes to a climax by exposing the faith that drives the reasoning: god, who chooses to be known through the Prophet and through creation itself, can be trusted to not delude the creature.

although these rational arguments are stated as irrefutable support for resurrection drawn from this world, an examination of the actual reasoning performed by Nursi leads to a conclusion similar to that reached by david Burrell when examining aquinas’s cosmological arguments. They are not so much proofs as they are the tracing of the path of mind and heart after receiving and responding to revelation.[266] Nursi’s actual starting point is not the world un-interpreted, after all, but faith which leads to a particular interpretation of phenomena in the world. he subtly and effectively blends faith in god as revealed by the Prophet with reasoning not unlike aquinas’s cumulative cosmological argument for the existence of God. Aquinas argues from finite reality to its divine creation or source via causal arguments. Nursi argues still more boldly from finite things to resurrection or eternal goal. He finds the total impression on the believing mind, coming from various angles of consideration, leading to the reasonable trust that god raises the dead.

But the key question here is whether this functions as “proof” in a modern sense of the term, or rather functions as reasonable steps of a believer once the interpretative framework is grounded in belief in god. although aquinas thought that nature as such could lead us to certainty of god’s existence, and resurrection was a matter of revelation, both arguments begin in faith, not in inference from natural knowledge.

*** A Christian Context

Nursi defends what christians would name “general resurrection,” to distinguish it from the particular resurrection of Jesus. For the christian, however, the belief that God has raised Jesus from the dead is the ground of Christian faith in a final, eschatological transformation of all things. as J. christiaan Beker claims, in its original Jewish context, Jesus’ resurrection lacks all intelligibility apart from its immediate implication for the completion of history, the general resurrection to which Nursi refers.[267] Jesus’ resurrection is not a coherent event, and in that sense not complete in itself, except as prolepsis of the transformation of all things.

a christian beginning point for faith in the “resurrection” is tied to the outcome of Jesus’ life and career. That God raised him is taken to be affirmation of the message and ministry. This event launches a “new creation” and becomes the ground of expectation for a general resurrection at the end of history. christians do not agree about how to understand what happened to Jesus, nor about its meaning. indeed the range of interpretation of this resurrection varies widely.

The common factor in the stories surrounding Jesus’ return to his followers is that the accounts are in verbal pictures depicting an occurrence which exceeds historical categories.[268] There is no denying the peculiarity of asserting such a thing as resurrection of Jesus amidst the ordinary events of nature and history. scholars in recent years have dedicated much attention to uncovering the core meaning. i think the general bearing of these depictions is something like nancey Murphy’s claim: “none [of the picture language] is adequate in itself to say what Jesus was like after resurrection, but each sets boundaries regarding what we must not say: he is not a resuscitated physical corpse; not merely a [subjective] vision appearance; not a ghost.” it does involve some kind of recognized embodiment which provides for continuity of personal life, its memories, relations, and characteristic actions. But it also involves transformation, and this constitutes discontinuity with whatever had gone before.[269]

To Murphy’s statement, we might add Pheme Perkins’s claim that new Testament accounts of resurrection assume the presence of god in the reception of the appearances of the resurrected one, and found resurrection

to be a symbol of social and cosmic solidarity: the expectation of being with god in the consummation of all things.[270]

What we can say comparatively at this point is, first, that Christian belief in a general resurrection is not rooted in rational necessity, but in historical encounter of god's action which comes as a contingent and surprising event. The gospels narrate the surprise through Jesus' followers: the quick turn-around from fear and disappointment to recovery of courage and hope. it occasioned the remembering of Jesus through the filter of this experience. They associated the ethic of Jesus' "kingdom" teaching with the new hope centered in this resurrection. Jewish background gave a language for interpreting the experience of resurrection but not the expectation of it in the case of Jesus. The joyful surprise in faithful followers, and not rational inference, grounded future expectation.[271] second, this starting point in Jesus for the belief in general resurrection introduces a complex temporal schema for the contemporary believer: the vision of final things is formed by looking back to this event of a particular resurrection, then projecting its meaning forward into the future beyond our own present. ultimate meaning centered in a future promise of general resurrection then loops back into the present to inform a personal, social and cosmic ethic. So we find future projection from past event circling back into the present to form the ethic. in fact, this is expressed sometimes as Jesus' resurrection inaugurating a "new creation." This world participates in realities yet to be fulfilled: the "already/not yet" status of history.

in summary, Jesus' resurrection becomes the basis of hope, on the one hand, but also the basis of judgment and critique on all those aspect of life – personal relations and socio-political institutions – which remain opposed to the character of justice and mercy affirmed in the risen Jesus. As an important living theologian, Jurgen Moltmann, once said, hope does not leave one at peace, but anxious, since the content of hope judges all that remains incomplete in this present age.

*** Resurrection and Personal Identity – Continuities and Discontinuities

The above pictures, from Nursi and from my general sketch of christian perspective, give us material to explore for implications regarding the meaning of “resurrection of the body” and how it differs from belief in immortal souls and their fate. What is at stake in this distinction? i claim that personal and social imagery, important to each tradition, depends on resurrection of the body, and further, becomes vulnerable when the concept shifts to immortality of soul.

Both Nursi and the broad christian outline i have presented wish to assert continuity of personal identity between this present existence and the hoped for life to come. one question is: what are the conditions constituting personal identity presupposed in traditions which speak of resurrection? What does identity consist of? Here I want to reflect on some contemporary observations about identity, not to settle the question but as a heuristic device for drawing out what we care about on the matter.

We soon discover in the three great monotheisms that embodiment is close to the core of personal identity. The Jewish scholar neil gillman: “… my body is the landmark which connects me with everything else that exists physically, specifically with all of history and society.”[272] indeed, his assumption is both attuned to strains within ancient Jewish anthropology and resonant with perspectives we find today.

Most basically, bodies constitute a spatial and temporal boundary, marking of discrete identities, which makes the concept of relationships and interactions intelligible. But personal identity is much more than this, of course. It is a specific kind of embodiment which supports and realizes the capacities of subjectivity (awareness of one’s own identity), sentience, patterned intentional action, moral relations, and generally a purposive bearing toward life, and long term memory which allows a person to see the long history of such capacities as one’s own, and for others to recognize it as such also.

in the present inter-disciplinary context, in which theology interfaces with natural sciences, it is difficult to argue against growing evidence that our highest mental and spiritual capacities are realized through physical

substrates of bodily systems. There is no thought, feeling, urge to action, no mental phenomenon at all which isn't realized through physical processes. We cannot speak of, say, "dis-embodied actions," and this is not just because bodies mark a boundary between discrete objects interacting; it is also because all actions, from thoughts to observable bodily motion, rely on extended, structured systems.

But the bodies we speak of are not identical to particular bundles of physical stuff. This kind of literalism about embodiment quickly reduces to the absurd problem of whose body a particular atom belongs to in the resurrection, a sure sign one is involved in a conceptual misfire. A literal physicalist view of embodiment – that is, a one-to-one correspondence between materials at time (a) with the same materials at time (B) – is a falsehood scientifically, and fails to account for what we find significant in the idea of embodiment. Physical systems are the basis for capacities, but the things we care about most with respect to personal identity are not marked in physical concepts but language depicting the highest capacities that human physical systems yield. under this point of view, "mind" refers to the highest capacities we associate with the complex biological organism named "homo sapiens." and "soul" refers to the personal unity in terms of the characteristic patterns of action broadly conceived. The logical primitive of human beings is "person" not "body with soul."

If the idea of finite persons in relation to God is an expectation after this life, then some minimal sense, at least, of surviving personal identity is included in this expectation. again, Murphy gives us a useful summary of aspects of personal existence that will be transformed and raised up in the post-resurrection existence, if the idea of agents in relationship is intelligible: it involves the "subjectivity of remembered self through this time and in some transformed existence." This involves "continuity of memory, and the patterns of remembered personal action," especially moral pattern in relationships. also critically important is consciousness that these memories are one's own.

as personal identity is acquired over a life time, it must involve the kind of adaptation involved in character making, including the training of emotion, and of desire, and of the perception of the other persons and things. Thus,

the forming of character is also possible only in embodied existence. The critical concern in all of this is that these characteristics, which mark our personhood, lean on embodiment as essential to this recognizable identity. so, we may agree with Nursi that transformed embodiment need not be linked strictly with physicalism, but refers instead to patterned and structured action. nevertheless, whatever form it takes, embodiment remains a necessary condition for the imagery we use around resurrection.

so, just how these conditions of embodiment are realized eschatologically is beyond the scope of what we can know. But what can be said is that in our understanding of identity now, its conditions include a capacity for subjectivity, memory, relationship, patterns of purposive or moral action, growth and adaptability to changing circumstances, all of which we infer from embodied identity. and, all these attributes imply transformed embodied existence, about which we have no access. Maybe all we can say is that god will “re-member” us, meaning that our identity, consisting as it does in relationship and patterns of interaction, will be held in divine memory, then somehow transformed and carried forward.

*** Nursi on Personal Identity

on the one hand Nursi speaks of the soul as an eternal form, suggesting it is immortal and passes through death of the body. Technically speaking, this would mean it needs no “raising” up, but merely the passing over into some other existence: “… how closely tied to eternity is the spirit of man, which possesses an extremely exalted and comprehensive nature, which although clothed in a body, is a conscious and luminous law issuing from the divine command.”[273] The indication is that the essential identity of the human being is found in the soul, and the soul is eternal.

on other hand, he intuitively recognizes the embodiment problem, and has no desire, it would seem, to express paradise apart from embodiment and its environment. If, in this universe, human beings have this kind of identification with the rest of the natural world, and as Nursi himself has indicated, the material world is its instrument, then the medium of our agency is inextricable from the rest of the natural order:[274] “… is it at all

possible that so compassionate and powerful a one, so wise, and all knowing a one, should not bring about resurrection; should not gather his creatures together, or be unable to do so; should not restore man to life… ?”[275] here is would seem evident that Nursi’s conceptuality belongs to resurrected life as embodied life. his anthropology is compatible with the hylo-morphism of the aristotelian tradition, rather than the non-reductive physicalism of nancy Murphy. But in each case there is recognition that fully functioning personal identity is embodied, and that this is a condition for social existence. and in each case the logical primitive of the identity is “persons,” not “souls and bodies.”

The reasoning to support embodiment is similar also to what we have said about personal identity thus far. Nursi specifically finds continuity between this life, on the one hand, and the “permanent world,” on the other hand, in memory of patterns of action in this life: “considering that the results of such transient, commonplace, impermanent and insignificant things are preserved, is it at all possible that men’s deeds, that yield important fruits in this world of the unseen, the world of the hereafter.should not be recorded as a matter of importance?”[276] history’s meaning, the relations, the patterns of purposive action which shape our lives now, are linked to the meaning of resurrection.

Nursi moves toward a rather extraordinary image in the Twenty-ninth Word of The World as a whole moving from the density of this kind of embodiment toward refinement, lightness, and transparency. This is also presented in active voice as the power of god which makes this happen: “creative power sprinkling the light of life on dense, lifeless, extinguished, dead objects with an astonishing activity is a sign that it dissolves, burns, and illuminates this dense world with the light of life on account of the subtle world.”[277] it is an instance of daring imagination about an eternal life wherein embodiment is transformed, not eliminated. This Twentyninth Word distinguishes resurrection existence from non-spatial “soul-ish-ness.” one thinks, from a christian perspective, of the language of the christian apostle, Paul, of “spiritual bodies” and the similar effect it has regarding personal identity, social reality and embodiment.

i close this section with the observation that Nursi links this idea of embodiment with a larger cosmic environment. and it appears that he envisions this as creation transformed, not a starting over tabula rasa. it is true that, at times he speaks of a “new” dwelling place, this one having served its purpose. But elsewhere, and i think more powerfully, he imagines a transformed creation as a whole, not a new one. he states: “… time is certain to come when the manifest world, which is the shell and form of the mighty reality of the universe, will break up, with the permission of the all glorious creator. Then it will be renewed into a better form.” Then Nursi quotes from the Qur’an: “That day the earth will be changed into a different earth.”[278]

The difference is morally significant. The idea of future hope consisting in God’s making of an altogether new and different creation, rather than the transformation of the first creation, turns the environment of human life into mere instrument for the soul’s refinement, and ultimately something to be annihilated and thus of only temporary worth. This is not creation made new, but rather creation annihilated for a new one. But a wholly new creation is disconnected with history and memory, and leaves unanswered why the “before” of such a new creation would matter.

on the other hand, if the things of this world are transformed, then nature and history are themselves invested with meaning, not just as instruments but as participants in the world to come. This would involve an ethic which perceived things of this world, and their corporeal form, as a sign of a still more robust life, and therefore a mode of things to be profoundly respected.

If the final expectation or hope does not consist in the annihilation of the old, but rather its transformation, then it has moral significance now. We are, then, not saved from history and this world, but in it. There is, in other words, a considerable difference in moral tone between the options.

*** Resurrection and Social Reality

i have maintained so far that the principal imagery surrounding belief in resurrection, both for Nursi and in christian perspective, entails embodiment and that this has implications regarding the environment of embodied existence, even if we must remain agnostic about the nature of this eschatological embodiment and environment. next, i believe we can go a step further to claim that the above extends to include social relations as part of the core of our picture language about ultimate things.

A Christian Perspective

The imagery about “final things” in the Christian tradition is socio-political: the metaphors of “‘kingdom of god,” “body of christ,” “heavenly banquet,” “city of god” are all is suggestive of action and interaction, within a differentiated unity. sometimes the language (especially of st. Paul) expresses the intimacy of individuals within an environment of an organically knit whole. Jesus’ parables of the Kingdom of god and the ethic centered in this social image, make clear that divine-human, and human-human relationships are fundamentally moral. and the morality alluded to in this “kingdom” is not driven by obligation, but internalized. When Jesus is asked to summarize the law he distills it into love of god, and love of neighbor as oneself. Moreover, when he teaches in parable and sermon he often gets to the matter of intentions, the state of the “heart” in moral relations, the grounding of value and desire in love of god.

The final goal of transformation, in St. Paul, is expressed in the mystical imagery of being “in christ:” personal identity inextricably in communion with other persons. individuals will be more transparent to each other as dwelling within a larger organic whole named the “body” of christ. given Paul’s eschatological fusion of christ with god, what is suggested in the above picture is that the transformed creation dwells within god. it is a kind of intimacy and differentiation we do not yet know how to express. The plurality of individual identities within a larger organic whole means that persons are only identifiable by reference to the relation of communion with others in god.

one British theologian at the time of Nursi’s middle years, lionel Thornton, following the Eastern Orthodox vision of deification, spoke of this image of being “in christ” as a new emergent reality continuous with nature and history, yet dependent on the new transformative action of god in order to complete the human longing and human potential. The transformed social reality is likened to an organism, emergent from simpler levels or organization, in which our individuality is intensified even as our relation to the whole becomes more transparent. The human being essentially is a social reality, in this outlook, and this is the key point of the body of christ imagery.[279]

This advanced stage of human realization presumes a movement of persons from self as the center of value, to self realized in relations with others, and this latter is only possible when god is the center of value. Nursi

Nursi, too, is clear about the social allusions to eternal life, or paradise. he speaks of the human community in unity with the Prophet in its prayer of yearning for fulfillment. He speaks of the Prophet’s prayer as causing “… the cosmos to weep and thus to share in his prayer.”[280] and, of course, the end time is depicted as a “great gathering.”[281] Moreover, one motivating aspect is that the happiness to come is tied to the continuation and shared friendship, family relations, and renewal of spousal relations in “immortal beauty.”[282] all of these references emphasize the social reality of personal existence, wherein remembrance of this world and its relationships is tied to the anticipation of perfection of relationships.

The logic of this social aspect of resurrection hope links resurrection reality to a vision of God’s remaking of the old or first creation (creatio ex vetera), so that, somehow, there is a transformation of the social and personal matrix in terms of its pattern of meaning, the memory of relationships, and the general purposive bearing in the forming and continuing of relationships of meaning and love.[283] Nursi intimates this when he states, “… think of how the parts of the universe are bound to one another with an exact, exalted order.”[284] again, we have the implication that if continuity of relationships matters, and this is linked to the environment of relationships, then transformation bearing some continuity

with this world, and not utter newness, best characterizes the vision of god’s action. This is suggested in Nursi’s remarks.

*** Resurrection and Time

The classic metaphysical idea of perfection as immutability corresponds, of course, to the notion of eternity as transcending time, even the cessation of time. however, the implication of our metaphors and picture-language about ultimate hope, so far discussed, calls this view of perfection into question. if the images we bring into ultimate fulfillment involve renewed relationships and not their absence, and if relationships involve action, and if time is the measure of motion (interaction), then it may be that the implication of our own images is that temporality is transformed into a kind of temporality we cannot imagine, but not into timelessness or immutability. This again is nothing more than reflecting on the implications of images which project our future hope.

Nursi, however, speaks of the permanent world as “unchanging” – a carryover most likely from the classic aristotelian ideal of perfection.[285] This poses a problem: if the “permanent” world is constituted in the perfection of goodness, mercy, wisdom, beauty and justice, as we find in the Tenth Word,[286] and we know these virtues only in relational interactions in the social domain which instantiate them, then how can there be perfection of these virtues without motion, without active relationships which realize, for example, justice? Thus the social imagery of action and interaction is invoked, and time, albeit transformed somehow, is brought into our conception of eternal life.

if, in contrast to the general bearing of the imagery mentioned above, we were to think of the essential self as a disembodied soul – a non-spatial reality of some sort – then there is no environment, there is no interaction, there is thus no relationship, and the nature of identity begins to take a mystical form about which we can say little or nothing at all. it is more likely to resemble the timeless absorption into the one, and not a differentiated unity of social community centered in adoration of god. The soul becomes an

island – a solitary reality. relations dissolve, action concepts fall away, and time is no longer an essential category.

This apparent incompatibility between imagery and characterization of “perfection” respecting time, is no less a problem within the christian tradition. a disagreement on this point recently argued by Miroslav Volf, in contrasting his view with Jurgen Moltmann, indicates this problem in contemporary context.[287] But, as the imagery thus far suggests, personal identity is shaped in relationship, instantiated in action, and action is temporal. resurrection represents the possibility of continuity of identity across the discontinuities of transformation. it is compelling, then, to see temporality (the perfection of time) as implicated in utterances about resurrection. indeed this distinction between: 1) resurrection and “everlastingness,” on the one hand, and 2) immortality and “eternity as timelessness,” on the other hand, is part of what gives theological traction to the idea of resurrection.

*** Resurrection, Heaven and Hell

Finally I raise the sensitive matter of the vision of God’s final action as the creation of two possible destinies. This is not only the revealed position on which Nursi comments, but also the majority position within christianity.

Nursi

Nursi, as with many monotheists, finds the oneness of this world a sign of God’s oneness.[288] Yet – and herein lies the difficulty – the destiny of all things must refer to two worlds: paradise and hell. if god creates one world from many things, and this indicates god’s own unity (whereas the world’s multiplicity would otherwise intimate polytheism), then the suggestion of a two-world destiny would intimate two gods. now this is clearly not Nursi’s conclusion, so we must, of course, assume he sees this line of thought against the background of many other threads of reasoning which support monotheism and two end-states. But there is a troubling aspect to be dealt with in his introduction to The Words. To give eternal status to a

realm of evil it is, in effect or practice, difficult to distinguish from a metaphysic that affirms good and evil principles as ultimate metaphysical poles.

one sees both the impulse toward such a vision, and the dangers in it. about the former, if in this existence i act in such a way that i become a vile character, locked in habituated self-centeredness, prone to consumption and violence, then even if God did forgive this disgracing of His will, it is difficult to imagine what it would mean for me to retain my identity while being transformed and made fit for God’s eternal kingdom. In the context of continuity/discontinuity implied in resurrection, how can it be the same me if one strips away the core of what constituted my transitory self: self-centeredness, violence and consumption? Thus we can imagine the claim that this very hour we are shaping our eternal destinies in decisive ways, in the grand symmetry of divine justice. Nursi does not make this argument with much force, although it is clearly there. rather, what seems at stake for him as the reason for maintaining an ultimate state of eternal punishment is the reverence or obedience we owe to god. he asserts that no matter whether the human being is finite in knowledge and will, and therefore vulnerable to error and misdeeds, he or she nevertheless has the command to honor, praise and worship god through the manner of living. Mercy toward the weak or disobedient person has no significance when juxtaposed against the offense to the infinite majesty of the One against whom the person has sinned. In other words, the finite and vulnerable status of the offender (for which one might expect compassion) matters less than the infinite status of the One offended. This bears resemblance to the calculus of anselm in his defense of satisfaction theory of atonement. The offense against god’s honor, and therefore against divine justice, can only be is resolved by payment greater than finite agents can render.

Nursi also reasons that punishment realizes the great scale of justice and provides for a moral symmetry which cannot be achieved in this life, especially when one considers moral atrocities, the apparently unscathed status of perpetrators, and the unanswered suffering of victims in this world. [289] since these things cannot be a just god’s ultimate will, there must be a way to resolve the moral imbalance beyond this life. a god without judgment would make a lie out of this being a moral universe.

The argument, so far as it goes, is compelling. But it leads to the theological question any monotheist must face: Why would an all powerful god create what god will eventually lose, or be eternally alienated from? in other words, does not the very existence of hell as an ultimate state represent a defeat of god?

To this theological problem we may add a logical one: if the construction of our persons and our relations now is continuous with an eternal existence, and we are inextricably linked as social creatures, then some of these personal identities and the social relations which partly constitute them, will in principle be split into two destinies. Thus, there is the specter of being cut off from, and not transformed along with, part of the environment in which personal identities are constituted.

Finally, we may name a moral problem with the two-destinies view. This takes us back to motivating principles which drive our pursuit of ultimate things. The prospect of Hell might easily lock the finite agent in a cycle of self-concern: fear of punishment, desire for reward, and imaginings of eternal pleasures which make the goal self-reflexive. The danger is that the motivations of fear and need for reward do not, as such, direct the mind and heart toward the good but toward the self. This need not be the case, but it is a danger. another moral danger is to collapse future end-states into the present and to exact punishments now to those one is convinced are deserving of god’s punishment.

*** A Christian Perspective

This topic is clearly a problematic one for christians as well. in fact, as stated above, the majority view probably sides with Nursi in asserting two end-states, heaven and hell, as ultimate in some sense.

The apostle Paul, intimates that nothing in god’s creation will be lost, but he is not entirely clear about the matter.[290] and the christian biblical picture

as a whole is ambiguous enough to open the door to two options. The synoptic gospels, for example, each contain references to hell as if one would take it for granted that it is the destiny of those who do not believe.[291] Briefly stated, both options have well established roots – the two-destinies position (heaven and hell) and the universalist (the idea that all of god's creation is transformed into creatureliness in communion with god) – so that one's perspective on the topic depends on how one reads the total bearing or force of the tradition's message.

*** A Personal View – Siding with Universalism

one can make the reasonable case that if our embodied existence is inextricably linked with the social and natural environment, as suggested above, then it becomes difficult to separate aspects of this world which constitute one ultimate reality, hell, from aspects which constitute another ultimate reality, eternal paradise. each of us, even the most righteous, knows his or her moral dark side – the moral failures and unfinished business. The spiritual point is that each of us embodies a mixture of moral goodness and moral evil or sin. even good intentions in this world may contribute to unjust ends. Moral life and obedience to god is ambiguous, and not as straightforward as it seems because personal morality cannot be separated from flaws social structures which have injustices embedded in them.

Thus, when we anticipate god eventually dividing this existence between heaven and hell, we risk the danger of projecting this division back into history: that is, projecting evil onto the other, goodness onto ourselves, and rationalizing violence in god's name. We risk the illusion of innocence, when in our enlightened moments we recognize a morally and spiritually ambiguous reality, in which we can not separate our good intentions from our involvement in institutions of injustice. Anyone with money in the bank, or who pays taxes, knows this firsthand.

Two twentieth-century christian theologians, whose work spanned some of the same years as Nursi's career, embed their understanding of divine judgment within a final transformation of all things into a single reality.

Moltmann, for example, leans on the message that all things will be united in christ, which is found in the Pauline letters to the ephesians and colossians, as evidence that this universalist stream is evident from the church's origins, at least among some.[292] in universalist perspective god's judgment-forgiveness-transformation are conflated into a single action, such that all persons face their darkness in the light of God's mercy and find it at once painful and healing. This penultimate step of judgment-forgiveness-transformation leads finally to an ultimate life with God as a single pleroma of god's transformed creation in a more transparent communion with god.

In the alternative, two-destinies picture, judgment and final destiny merge into a single action. Judgment renders either eternal punishment or eternal reward. The judgment of one's disobedience, in this view, is ultimate. it cannot cleanse. rather, it realizes and amplifies human freedom to destroy eternally God's own desire for human beings.

Morally speaking, the universalist vision circles back with the following ethical implication: in anticipation of the transformation of all things there is urgency to enter just relations with all things now, because they have been determined to have eternal worth. its weakness is the tendency of moral and spiritual lethargy: if there is no ultimate symmetry on the scale of justice, could it not lead to the cynic's despair?

The two-destinies vision leads to a sense of moral urgency now. god holds in memory our every action. its weakness is twofold. First it tends to center spiritual motivation in self-concern – fear of hell and desire for reward. second, it tends to project divine judgment back into history, determining god's friends and enemies, and engaging in actions of "justified violence" in God's name.

regarding this latter weakness, we have reason to worry about the extremes in each tradition. There is an inclination among some christians in the u.s. to prepare for apocalyptic end times, including spiritually pitched battles of good against evil. and of course, they see themselves as on the side of the good against some faithless enemy. Violence under this banner is

rationalized, even divinized, contrary to the peaceable kingdom which is at the heart of Jesus' own message. This outlook is in many respects profoundly dissonant with the moral core of the story of Jesus, which christians receive as revelatory of god's nature.

and, in islam, Nursi would have known in his own day the dangers lurking in the background of false motivation – expectations about the end of history which motivate zealotry – contrary to the theme of mercy in the Qur'an, which Nursi so relentlessly pronounced in his writings.

*** In Conclusion

i have found the comparative task, centered on Nursi's Tenth and Twenty-ninth

Words, a wonderful opportunity for reflection on themes dear to both Islam and christianity. My goal has been to draw out implications from the imagery employed in reference to resurrection. one hopes that the essay bears witness to how insights from another tradition can enhance the understanding one has of one's own tradition. as stated from the outset, the goal of such dialogue need not be to agree, but more modestly to discover new things which expand one's understanding of prior convictions, allowing one to enter more richly into one's own path.

** 8. The resurrection of the dead: Said Nursi and Jürgen Moltmann

Leo D. Lefebure

The theologies of the resurrection of the dead proposed by Said Nursi and Jürgen Moltmann are grounded in the scriptures of their respective traditions;

they also reflect the experiences and contexts of their lives. Both Nursi and Moltmann lived through oppressive political regimes that persecuted devout believers. Both witnessed the powerful ambiguous effects of modern Western culture, with its objectification of nature, its scientific breakthroughs and its unprecedented destructive power. Both were captured on the battlefield and were held as prisoners of war; both survived disastrous military defeats that led to the dismemberment of the reigning political structures. after realizing that their lives could not continue in their formerly accustomed paths, both went through profound personal crises that eventually led them to a deep faith in god despite the massive violence and suffering of history and the danger of tyrannical regimes. Faith in the resurrection from the dead offered both thinkers a way of affirming belief in God's justice even in historical and political contexts where injustice prevailed. Both have had widespread influence in shaping the attitudes of believers towards concrete social and political issues in this world.

This chapter examines the ways in which Nursi and Moltmann each experienced a profound personal and spiritual transformation. it will note their recognition of the ambiguities of modern Western culture and the role of belief in the resurrection of the dead in responding to these. it will then compare and contrast their understandings of faith in the resurrection of the dead.

*** Spiritual Transformations in a World of Death

early in his life, Nursi was intimately involved with political issues, including the debates over a constitution for the ottoman empire; and he served as a regimental commander of a militia during World War i, eventually was captured by the russian army and spent time as a prisoner of war. The defeat of the ottoman empire led to its dismemberment and, a few years later, its dissolution. The concrete governmental structures that Nursi had worked to reform were no more. The sultanate and the caliphate would soon be abolished by Mustafa Kemal ataturk, ending the centuries-old claims of the ottomans to lead the islamic community.

The victors saw their conquest as a defeat of islam itself, and Nursi was shaken by the report that the British empire was seeking to destroy islam. The new secular Turkish republic sought to be radically different from the ottoman heritage, and before long it was severely restricting the range of religious activity.

during 1920 and 1921, in the wake of the massive destruction of World War i and with the prospect of the demise of the ottoman empire, Nursi went through a personal crisis centering on “the contemplation of death.”[293] he withdrew from most of his normal activities, pursuing a spiritual quest that eventually led to a deep personal transformation. The world that he had known was being drastically transformed. Nursi later looked back on this period:

at a time this poor said was trying to emerge from the old said, his intellect and heart were floundering among truths in a terrible spiritual storm resulting from lack of a guide and the pride of his evil-commanding soul. ... and when, at the time on that spiritual journeying i saw myself under awesome pressure overwhelmed by truly burdensome loads, i followed the matters of the Practices [of the Prophet (PBuh)] touching on that situation, i experienced a lightness as though all my burdens were being lifted from me. Through submitting to them, i was saved from doubts and scruples, that is, from anxieties like: “is such a course of action right, is it beneficial, I wonder?” Whenever I drew back my hand, I looked and saw that the pressure was intense. ... The load was heavy, and i was utterly powerless. My view was short, and the way, dark. Whenever i adhered to the Practices of the Prophet (PBuh), the way was lit up and seen to be safe.[294]

Nursi went through a particularly frightening awareness of death: “at one time, i saw myself in a strange world resulting from a state of mind produced by contemplating death and affirming the propositions ‘Death is a reality,’ and from the transience and passing of the world, i saw myself as a corpse standing at the head of three huge corpses.”[295] While in distress, he contemplated a verse from the Qur’an: “But if they turn away, say: ‘God suffices me, there is no god but He; in him do i place my trust—he the sustainer of the Throne [of glory] supreme!”[296] The verse served Nursi “like a safe and trusty boat,” and he discovered an allusive meaning in

addition to its explicit meaning: “Say: Almighty God suffices me. Since he exists, everything exists. so those who have departed have not gone to nonexistence; they have departed for another of his realms.”[297] In light of this confident assurance of a life hereafter, Nursi commented, “the three awesome corpses which filled me with terror took on another form. They became a wisdom-displaying passage, an instructive excursion, a journeying for the performance of duties, a demobilization and a charging with duties, whereby the universe is shaken up, and comes and goes.”[298]

Şükran Vahide comments: “His contemplation of death set him off on an inner journey or spiritual quest that he depicted as a journey through the earth. The subterranean tunnel down which he traveled, and then the suffocating desert, were metaphors for ‘the way of philosophy.’ he only reached the light and truth through ‘manifestations of the all-Wise Qur’an.”[299] on the other side of this period, he would describe himself as “the new Nursi.” no longer would he take an active role in governmental structures or military campaigns. he served rather as a religious leader, interpreting the Qur’an through the Risale-i Nur, which he described as coming through him rather than as being his own creation. he represented and embodied the Muslim heritage of Turkey, resisting the efforts of ataturk’s secularists to circumscribe and control islam. his followers would circulate his writings for many years at great personal danger of arrest and imprisonment. Nursi himself would be repeatedly arraigned in courts and would spend time in jail for his heroic witness to his faith.

Nursi conceived the project of explaining essential islamic beliefs, including the resurrection of the dead, to the ordinary faithful. at the time, he had recently been exiled to Barla, a remote village in the mountains of southwestern Turkey.[300] Mustafa Kemal ataturk and his followers were rapidly seeking to modernize, secularize, and Westernize Turkey; the removal of Islamic influence from the public sphere was an integral part of their program. Nursi, as one of the most influential Muslim intellectuals of his generation, constituted a significant obstacle to their program.[301] even though he had repeatedly refused to support armed insurrections against the Kemalist government, the ruling party deeply distrusted him and resented his influence. Ironically, exile to a remote, mountainous village, would provide him with eight and a half years in which he could pray, reflect, and

dictate writings on the Qur’an to his students. What emerged is the Risale-i Nur.

The context of Nursi’s life during the time of the Risale-i Nur was most difficult, due to repeated persecution by the Turkish governmental authorities. Confidant belief in the resurrection of the dead offered him and his followers a way to maintain their faith despite great adversity. According to Şerif Mardin, the audience of Nursi “seems to have consisted primarily of persons from the provincial periphery who were seeking a means of coming to terms with the disenchantment of the world, and who had a perception of the new world, even though through the prism of their provincial Muslim culture.”[302] Mardin explains: “in Said Nursi’s case, an innovation such as the propagation of a clear understanding of the foundations of islam to the masses was a ‘coming to terms’ with a world-historical process which went beyond the tradition he had inherited.”[303] Nursi’s eloquence and courage inspired countless followers.

*** Jürgen Moltmann

Moltmann grew up in a german family that had long since rejected christian faith. his early heroes included Max Planck, albert einstein, goethe and nietzsche. as an adolescent during World War ii, he served in an anti-aircraft unit. during an air raid on hamburg during July, 1943, a companion standing near him was killed instantly, while Moltmann was thrown into the water without being injured.[304] he later recalled that moment: “But in that catastrophic night, for the first time in my life I cried out to God, ‘God where are you?’ That was my question in the face of death.”[305] later, when he was in the regular german army, Moltmann was captured and sent to great Britain as a prisoner of war. during the summer of 1945, the British began to post pictures of the victims of the Holocaust. At first Moltmann and his companions thought it was deceitful British propaganda. gradually, it sank into him what the nazis had done to Jews and other persecuted groups, and he went into a profound personal crisis. all meaning in life vanished. goethe and nietzsche no longer had anything to say to him. Many of the British reached out to the german prisoners, seeking to avoid the mistakes made after World War i, treating the former combatants with a kindness that shamed the german prisoners. The British hoped to establish a basis for

future friendly relations with their former enemies through education and training.

Toward the end of 1945, a chaplain gave Moltmann a Bible; and the young prisoner began to read through it, being impressed by the stark anguish expressed in the psalms of lament. one night he came upon the passage in the gospel of Mark where Jesus prays from the cross: “My god, my god, why have you abandoned me?” (Mark 15:34) Moltmann was deeply moved by the image of the son of god knowing what it felt like to be abandoned by god. he came to believe that this meant that god is involved in the worst depths of human suffering. if god knows what it is like to be abandoned by god, then god is present in the suffering of all the oppressed and the seemingly godforsaken throughout history. Moltmann came to the beginning of hope. “i began to understand the christ who was assailed by god and suffered from god, because i felt that he understood me. That gave me new courage to live.”[306]

Moltmann later drew two lessons from this experience:

First, I discovered that in every end a new beginning lies hidden. It will find you if you look for it. don’t lose heart.

second, i found that if one gathers the courage to live again, the chains begin to smart, but the pain is better than the dull resignation in which nothing matters, and one is more dead than alive.[307]

after he was released in 1948, Moltmann studied theology and became a professor at one of germany’s most prestigious universities in Tübingen. he dedicated much of his career to interpreting the mystery of god’s presence in human suffering. While his personal and professional life was much more sheltered and secure than Nursi’s, he always kept in mind the terrible sufferings of the oppressed and the poor and consistently attempted to do theology with their situations in mind. he would become arguably the most influential European theologian for the development of theologies of liberation in latin america and around the world.

*** The Ambiguities of Modernity and the Resurrection of the Dead

living through horrendously destructive wars, severe military defeats, widespread social dislocation, the destruction of earlier political structures and the creation of new political forms of governance, both Said Nursi and Jürgen Moltmann recognized the profound ambiguities of modern Western culture. Scientific and technological improvements offered enhanced styles of life at least for the wealthy but also vastly more efficient means of destruction. Nursi and Moltmann personally witnessed and participated in massive conflicts that devoured millions upon millions of combatants and civilians alike, including countless innocent victims. The traditional religious heritages of both germany and Turkey were profoundly challenged and shaken by their respective military defeats, by Western secularism, and the question of god's role in a world of overwhelming suffering and death. Many in germany and Turkey would abandon faith in god. Both in the resolutions of their personal crises and in their mature theologies, Moltmann and Nursi would turn more to their respective scriptures than to philosophical modes of argument for guidance. Both sought to present their respective faiths in a way that their contemporaries could appreciate, while remaining profoundly wary of the destructive aspects of modernity.

For both thinkers, belief in resurrection of the dead offered a basis for hope even in a world of overwhelming injustice and pain. Walter Benjamin had posed the famous question: "Will the executioner triumph forever over his victim?" For both Nursi and Moltmann, the eschatological judgment of god assures a negative response.

*** The Resurrection of the Dead

Said Nursi based his view of the resurrection on the Qur'an, at times quoting one sura after another in support of his perspective and asserting that about one-third of the Qur'an concerns the resurrection.[308] Nursi saw his entire work in the Risale i-Nur as the Qur'an interpreting itself for the twentieth century, declining to claim it as his personal creation. he frequently

proposed original parables to illuminate the significance of the Qur'anic message. In 1954 Nursi recalled receiving an inspiration about how to understand the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come:

it was about thirty years ago and just this season. i was walking through these orchards with the almond trees all in blossom when suddenly the verse "so think on the signs of god's mercy, how he gives life to the earth after its death; indeed, he it is who will give life to the dead, and he is powerful over all things" (Qur'an, 30:50) came to mind. its meaning became clear to me that day. i was both walking and repeating it over and over again at the top of my voice. i recited it forty times. In the evening I returned and together with Samli Hafiz Tevlik wrote the Tenth Word. That is, I dictated and Hafiz Tevlik wrote it down.[309]

Nursi sharply rejected the positivist and materialist forms of modern science that he studied early in his life; he frequently looked to order and beauty of the natural world as a sign of god's wisdom and providential care, which would provide the foundation for his presentation of the resurrection of the dead:

similarly, each day and each week of the spring is like a festival for each class of the vegetable kingdom, and each class presents itself to the witnessing gaze of the Pre-eternal Monarch with the jeweled decorations. ... such wise and wellordered arrangement and ornament demonstrates of a certainty, to all who are not blind, that they derive from the command of a monarch infinite in power and unlimited in wisdom.[310]

in sharp contrast to the marvelous beauty and order of the natural world, human experience is consistently disordered and unjust. Nursi resolved this tension through the doctrine of the resurrection, the final judgment and the world to come: "There must in addition be a realm of punishment appropriate to god's glory and dignity. For generally the oppressor leaves this world while still in possession of his might, and the oppressed while still subjected to humiliation. These matters are therefore deferred for the attention of a supreme tribunal."[311]

To illustrate this belief, Nursi proposed a parable of two travelers going through “a land as beautiful as Paradise (by that land, we intend the world).”[312] They marveled that people leave their doors open and their money and property unguarded. one traveler began to steal everything that he could, doubting that any authority would enforce justice. The other person warned him of a just judgment in another world, noting that every day caravans depart and vanish: “soon the whole land will be changed; its inhabitants will depart for another and more lasting realm. There everyone will be either rewarded or punished in accordance with his services.”[313] The thief professed disbelief that this could happen, whereupon his interlocutor retorted: “look at the organization and administration of this kingdom! see how everyone, including the poorest and the weakest, is provided with perfect and ornate sustenance. The best care is taken of the sick.”[314] nonetheless, the speaker continued, all too often justice is lacking and wrongdoers go unpunished: “The oppressor retains his power, and the oppressed, his humiliation as they both depart and migrate from this realm. ... But here in this land, not a thousandth part of the requirements of such wisdom and justice is fulfilled; for example, emptyheaded people such as yourself usually leave this realm unpunished. so again we say, matters are postponed for the consideration of a supreme Tribunal.”[315]

Frequently Nursi expressed his views in rhetorical questions that imply only one response is reasonable: “now is it at all possible that the justice and wisdom that hasten to relieve the pettiest need of the smallest of creation should fail to provide immortality, the greatest need of man, the greatest of creatures? That it should fail to respond to his greatest plea and cry for assistance? or that it should not preserve the dignity of god’s dominicality by preserving the rights of his servants?”[316]

now is it at all possible that an all-Wise and all-Preserving Being, who does not neglect the most banal doings of the lowest of his subjects should not record the most significant deeds of the greatest among his subjects, should not call them to account, should not reward and punish them? after all, it is those foremost among his subjects that perform deeds offensive to his glory, contrary to his pride and unacceptable to his compassion, and those deeds

remain unpunished in this world. it must be, therefore, that their judgment is postponed to a supreme court.[317]

From this vantage point, Nursi has harsh words for those who reject the resurrection of the dead:

o denier! do you know how foolish a crime you are committing with your unbelief and denial? Paying heed to your own lying fancy, your delirious intellect, your deceptive soul, you reject as a liar one Who in no way can be compelled to the breaking of his promise, Whose glory and stature can in no way admit the breaking of his word, and Whose truthfulness and veracity are attested by all visible matters and objects! Despite your infinite pettiness, you are committing a crime of infinitely great proportions. Without doubt you deserve great and eternal punishment.[318]

Nursi frequently uses the words “prove” and “proof” regarding this teaching. For example, he claims that events in the life of the prophet Muhammad “prove” the teaching of the resurrection: “all the miracles indicating the Messengership of Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him) and the evidences for his prophethood, and all the proofs of his veracity, together testify to the occurrence of the resurrection and prove it. For after the divine unity, everything he claimed throughout his life was centered on the resurrection of the dead.”[319] he also argues that the Qur’an itself proves the resurrection and that earlier scriptures had contained the teaching in a veiled manner:

Moreover, by their definite acceptance of the truth of resurrection, which the Qur’an—prevailing over the future and all times—repeatedly proves in detail and elucidates, all the revealed scriptures and sacred books, each of which dominated a particular period, proved it according to their own times and centuries, but in un-detailed, veiled, and summary manner, confirming with a thousand signatures what the Qur’an teaches.[320]

however, Nursi does not offer the type of philosophical, metaphysical reasoning that is usually designated “proof” in Western philosophy and christian systematic theology.

*** Jürgen Moltmann

Moltmann never claimed that the Bible was interpreting itself through his theology, but from his early work, The Theology of Hope, to the present, the Jewish and christian scriptures have provided the basis and all-pervading context for his theology. The early theology of Moltmann, which appeared in the 1960s, reflected the trauma of Europe in the mid-twentieth century. Christian hope in the resurrection does not flow from any goodness experienced in this world but comes in stark contrast to the experience of suffering: “hope’s statements of promise, however, must stand in contradiction to the reality which can at present be experienced. They do not result from experiences, but are the condition for the possibility of new experiences. They do not seek to illuminate the reality which exists, but the reality which is coming.”[321] he quotes Paul’s statement that “We are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope (rom 8.24).”[322] Moltmann concludes that christian hope in the new Testament “brands the visible realm of present experience as a god-forsaken, transient reality that is to be left behind. The contradiction to the existing reality of himself and his world in which man is placed by hope is the very contradiction out of which this hope itself is born—it is the contradiction between the resurrection and the cross.”[323] it is the resurrection of Jesus and his post-resurrection appearances to selected followers and to saul on the road to damascus that open up the christian hope in the resurrection of the dead and eternal life.

in what is arguably the most important difference from Nursi’s perspective, Moltmann sees christian faith in the resurrection as inseparably linked to the crucifixion of Jesus. The mainstream Muslim tradition believes that Jesus was not crucified, in accordance with Qur’an 4:158: “They did not kill him, they did not crucify him, it was made to appear so to them.” For Moltmann, by contrast, faith in the Risen Lord is faith in the Crucified One. As Moltmann argues: “The risen christ is the historical and crucified Jesus, and vice versa.”[324] Moltmann sees the appearances of the

risen lord Jesus and the outpouring of the holy spirit as the decisive events that transformed the followers of Jesus from a small, frightened band into a fearless community. he stresses how decisive the resurrection of Jesus was for the early church: “The union of Jesus with god and of god with Jesus was constituted for it [the early church] by that event which it originally and—as we shall see—rightly called ‘the resurrection of Jesus’. The first creeds that we know speak of ‘Jesus the lord’, and of ‘god who has raised him from the dead’ (rom. 10:6; 1 cor. 15:1), in the same breath.”[325] The new Testament does not describe the moment of the resurrection itself but only the discovery of the empty tomb and the later appearances of the risen lord. Moltmann notes that christians never see the resurrection itself but only the crucified and risen one: “As a process and as an event, the resurrection was so to speak a light into which it was impossible to look directly. it was necessary to look at the one whom it illuminated and manifested, and that was none other than Jesus, the crucified.”[326] according to Moltmann, the effects of the resurrection of Jesus reach out to transform the entire world: “his resurrection was not regarded as a fortuitous miracle in an unchangeable world, but as the beginning of the eschatological transformation of the world by its creator… . Therefore his historical crucifixion was understood as the eschatological event of judgment and his resurrection as a hidden anticipation of the eschatological kingdom of glory in which the dead will be raised.”[327] later, in awareness of the ecological crisis, Moltmann charged that the scientific objectification of nature had led to the exploitation of nature; instead, he proposed a vision of creation as the dwelling place of god and as being drawn by god’s spirit toward reconciliation in an eschatological, “eternal sabbath, in which the whole creation will find bliss.”[328]

For Moltmann, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus are a profound challenge to received notions of god as unaffected by events in the temporal world. “god represents and reveals himself in the surrender of Jesus and in his passion and death on the cross… . in the death of the son, death comes upon god himself, and the Father suffers the death of his son in his love for forsaken man… . he is acting in himself in this manner of suffering and dying in order to open up in himself life and freedom for sinners.”[329] Moltmann’s Trinitarian interpretation of the death and resurrection of Jesus is another significant difference from Nursi.

another noteworthy divergence concerns the ultimate fate of sinners. Where Nursi presents the resurrection of the dead as leading to reward for the just and eternal punishment for sinners, Moltmann sees resurrection as a process leading to the eventual reconciliation of all human beings and the entire cosmos: “The life we have lived will be absorbed into the eternal livingness and preserved there. But does that lead to the eternalization of all our misdeeds and sufferings? ‘resurrection’ always also means transformation (1 cor. 15.52), the forgiveness of sins and the putting right of what was wrong, the consoling of grief and the wiping away of the tears.”[330] in the early third century c.e., the early church father origen had expressed the confidant hope that in the end-time, all spiritual creatures would be saved, including the devil. augustine and most of the Western christian tradition has rejected this belief, expecting that at the last Judgment some humans would be damned to eternal suffering in hell.[331] Moltmann offers his own perspective by reflecting on the descent of Jesus into hell (1 Peter 3:19–20):

What we call the last Judgment is nothing other than the universal revelation of Jesus christ, and the consummation of his redemptive work… . no punishments of eternal death will be imposed… . The Christian doctrine about the restoration of all things denies neither damnation nor hell. on the contrary: it assumes that in his suffering and dying christ suffered the true and total hell of godforsakenness for the reconciliation of the world and experienced for us the true and total damnation of sin. it is precisely here that the divine reason for the reconciliation of the universe is to be found. it is not the optimistic dream of a purified humanity, it is Christ’s descent into hell that is the ground for the confidence that nothing will be lost.[332]

*** Concluding Reflections

After coming through extremely difficult personal and spiritual trials, Nursi and Moltmann both came to a mature faith that could reflect on God’s presence even in a world of massive suffering. Both thinkers sharply reject the positivist objectification of nature proposed by some forms of modern Western culture; both share a similar faith in the goodness and glory of god manifesting itself in creation. They also agree in seeing much of human history as warped and tormented by sin, as a rejection of the goodness of god in creation. For both theologians, belief in the resurrection of the dead

offers a response to the charge of modern atheism that an all-powerful, all-good god would be unjust for allowing the suffering of innocent victims. Nursi sees this world as a testing ground, a temporary abode from which caravans are constantly departing to another world, where a supreme Tribunal will deliver just eternal rewards and punishments. Much of the christian tradition has shared the expectation of a last Judgment leading to either eternal happiness or suffering. Moltmann, however, trusts that the love and mercy of god lead god into hell itself. since Jesus has descended into hell, Moltmann believes that god is present even to the god-forsaken, to the perpetrators of severe crimes; they too in the end-time will be forgiven and reconciled with god, with those they wronged in this life, and with the entire created world.

There is also an important difference in rhetorical style. Nursi proposes various “proofs” of the resurrection of the dead, though he never offers the rigorous mode of argumentation that Western philosophy considers logically compelling. There may be a question of the appropriateness of this translation for Western readers. Moltmann believes that one cannot prove the christian hope in the resurrection; it is a matter of faith based on the revelation of god in Jesus christ. The only verification will be eschatological.

** 9. The Problem of animal Pain: an introduction to Nursi’s approach

Cüneyt M. Şimsek

“The Problem of animal Pain,” which is studied in the context of “the Problem of evil,” has consistently been one of the issues discussed among the members of major religions such as Judaism, christianity and islam, where the belief in the existence of a god who is omniscient, omnipotent, and wholly good has a central place in the fundamentals of belief. When we look at islamic traditions, we see that the issue has been dealt with in the framework of the concepts of “observing the best,” “compensation” and “retaliation” and in relation to “divine justice.” some of the solutions suggested throughout history for the “problem of evil,” undoubtedly, are

valid for “animal pain” as well. however, even though “animal pain” shares in essence certain characteristics with the “problem of evil,” it is partly different from the latter in terms of some of its special features. in this article I will first define the problem, then mention some solutions suggested in the literature of Kalām and finally try to demonstrate some aspects of Nursi’s views on this issue stated in Risale-i Nur Collection, his magnum opus.

*** A. Definition of the Problem of “Animal Pain”

in this world not only human beings but also animals are exposed to evil situations. There are countless numbers of animals killed mercilessly by people, tortured and used in painful medical experiments, killed in natural disasters, and torn atrociously (in appearance) into pieces by wild animals. The misfortunes befalling man can be tolerated by relating them to acceptable reasons such as worldly examination, reward in the next world, and moral development, but how will the misfortunes happening to animals be explained? When animals are being discussed, the questions coming to the mind will naturally be different from those asked in relation to the human evils. some questions that can be asked are as follows:

do animals feel pain and sorrow during misfortunes and hardships? if they do, is it similar to what man feels or is it different in essence? is there any purpose in animal pain and sorrow as there are with human beings (such as spiritual development, moral improvement and other universal instances of good)? do animals have free will and are they responsible for their actions? Will there be an eternal life for them in the other world where reward or punishment will take place?[333]

The questions mentioned above can be answered from different perspectives. There have been attempts in history both by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars. similarly the author of the Risale-i Nur Collection, Nursi, touches on the above mentioned questions in some of his works and suggests some solutions. it will be appropriate first to give a brief summary of how the problem has been dealt with in the islamic history.

*** B. A Summary of the Problem of “Animal Pain” in Islamic Thought

Besides the “problem of evil,” suffering both by small children and animals (īlām) has been discussed by islamic scholars as well. The concepts of “compensation” (‘ivāz) and “retaliation” (qis□ās)[334] are especially worth of attention. as is known, the sunni scholars claim that “observing the best” (as□lah□), creating the best for the interest of the created is not an obligation for God and they find it possible and reasonable that god’s servants, even if they are innocent, suffer in this world without any compensation in the next world.[335] Furthermore, according to sunnis, if god torments his servants without any compensation, this can never be considered as tyranny, because tyranny is in question only in the case of an unfair conduct in relation to somebody else’s property. since all property and the domain of existence belong to god, none of god’s conduct toward his creatures can be specified as tyranny.[336] sunni scholars generally accept that a sort of “retaliation” will be executed in case of animals’ tormenting each other.[337] on the other hand, most of the Mu’tazilites, regarding “not observing the best”[338] as ugly and as a requirement of “justice,”[339] (one of their five basic principles), consider [īlām], giving pain to animals without “compensation,” as unacceptable.[340] While some of the Mu’tazilites state that animals suffering in the world will receive a sort of “compensation,”[341] they do not agree on whether this is a possibility or a necessity for god. on the other hand there are some Mu’tazilites who claim that animals, after receiving their “compensation,” will be used as an instrument of tormenting the people of hell, as well as some who say that animals will be annihilated after resurrection and judgement. some Mu’tazilites claim that “compensation” in the next world will continue forever. Just as there are some Mu’tazilites who argue for the existence of “retaliation” in return for the cruel actions animals afflict on each other, there are those who believe that nothing of this sort will happen.[342]

Al-Taftāzānī (A.D. 1322–89), one of the Sunni scholars who deals with this issue, declares that god may make animals suffer, but this will happen only with a “retaliation.” in relation to “retaliation,” after quoting the hadith: “all the rights will be turned back to their holders and even, retaliation will be

made for the hornless sheep on the horned on the resurrection day,”[343] al-Taftāzānī, argues that the “retaliation” in the hereafter does not depend on the imposition of religious obligations (taklīf) and the ability to distinguish between right and wrong[344] (tamyīz), and he deduces that even a small child receives his right from another child or person. however, considering that animals have no “reasoning,” the author does not mention on what the responsibility be based.[345]

When generally evaluating what sunni scholars say concerning the animal pain, we may come up the following points: 1) all property completely belongs to god, and he is free to do whatever he likes with his property. Therefore god can never be qualified with tyranny. 2) God conducts all of his affairs in the best and most useful way, away from absurdity. Therefore animal pain, similar to human evils, serves well-being, health, strength and perfection, or the minor evil is compensated with a payment incomparable with the evil.[346] 3) Finally we understand that some Sunni theologians find too much discussion of the issue by the Mu’tazilites as improper. For instance Ghazālī talks about the Mu’tazilites’ claim that it is a necessity for god to resurrect and reward even insects for what they suffer in the world, apparently in a derisive way.[347]

*** C. Nursi’s Approach to the Problem of Animal Pain

i will try to analyze some of the solutions Nursi proposes in his works concerning the problem of “animal pain or evil” under seven headings.

1. “The Purpose of Things” and “The Indicative Meaning”

“The purpose of things”[348] and “indicative meaning”[349] are two important concepts in relation to Nursi’s views in general and animal pain specifically. As Nursi frequently touches on the problem of evil and animal pain in general, he tries to explain the subject in relation to these two concepts. The concept of “indicative meaning” briefly expresses that things have no meaning and value in relation to themselves and that their real meanings and values are in their manifestation of god’s names and in

carrying out their duties regarding the divine purposes.[350] on the other hand, the concept of “the purpose of things” explains what these duties are. in this context, Nursi examines the purposes of creatures under three categories:

(i) The purposes regarding god as the manifestations of divine names and demonstrations of divine attributes

(ii) The purposes regarding intelligent beings who contemplate the arts of god inscribed on the created and the divine names seen in these arts and, thus, who recognize and love god, and

(iii) The purposes of beings such as the experience of pleasure, living in comfort, and surviving, which regard themselves.[351]

According to this categorization, ninety-nine percent of the purpose of life, as much as the amount of his limitless ownership, belongs to god. Merely one or a few of these purposes are related to living beings. on the other hand, according to Nursi, the minor purposes belonging to living beings and concerning their survival, interest and perfection are fulfilled over a long time, while the purposes regarding god are achieved instantly.[352] This approach, which relates the greatest purposes in the creation of things to the names and attributes of god, recognizes merely one percent of the purposes as those of “pleasure, comfort, survival,” which fall to the share of animals and living beings in life. Therefore animals, just like all the other creatures, labor not on their own account, but in the name of god who employs them,[353] since, to Nursi, essential rights (necessities) of life belong not to the creatures but to god.[354] Nursi gives an example about this subject: a man working in a big commercial ship has a share in the trade of this ship as much as the payment he will get in return for the job he does personally. But the main profit of the trade belongs to the owner of the ship. similarly each creature’s small interests and purposes in the ship of the earth are individual and insignificant. The essential and great purposes and universal uses pertain to purposes such as manifestations of the names and attributes of god. according to Nursi,[355] who connects the employment of animals and plants in the palace of the universe to the fact of god’s purpose of making

himself known and beloved by his creatures, there are purposes and uses that are so exalted in their employment that sometimes even very distinguished scholars cannot comprehend them.[356] Nursi argues that the creation of small living beings, including plants, approaches abundance in their numbers and variety in their species within the framework of divine universal purposes mentioned above. Thus the small living beings, having being created abundantly and differently, become a wide domain for the administration of divine power and manifest most of the names and attributes of god. on the other hand, a purpose in the abundant, continuous creation of minute animals with short life spans is to provide for contemplation, appreciation and admiration on the part of thinking observers consisting of countless angels, jinns and human beings.[357] another purpose is that each creature expresses a different meaning, beauty and use, which is similar to different versions of a book.[358] To Nursi[359] who specifies the purposes of life within the categories mentioned above, the choice that best suits divine providence and eternal wisdom is the numerous creations of animals and plants. Finally, in Nursi's opinion, the creation of minute animals with short life spans abundantly and continuously gains additional significance when considered with respect to the last two points. as he writes, "the most perfect art is the one which places the big in the small with all its decoration."[360] This approach, which locates the idea of divine purposes at the center of the thought of goals, can be said to consider states such as hardships and troubles experienced by living beings as a necessary result of being used in various services for the fulfilment of divine purposes.

2. God has a "Special Mercy" and "Providence" for Everything

Nursi argues that the names of god are manifested in created things in two forms, namely Divine Unity and Divine Oneness. The manifestation of divine unity expresses the administration by god behind the curtain of the chain of cause-andeffect[361] and the universal laws current in the universe, which is a world perceived with senses (Ālem-i Mulk or Ālem-i Şehadet).[362] in this world, being a place where opposites take place, contrasting pairs of states such as beautiful-ugly, big and small, difficult and easy, benefit and harm, perfection and defect, light and darkness, light and fire, belief and unbelief, obedience and rebellion, and fear and love, and good-evil are seen together. In this

respect, which is defined in Nursi’s words as “the outer face of life and events,” there are “grievous circumstances.”[363] The manifestation of Divine Oneness (Tawhīd), on the other hand, expresses the divine administrations which do not belong to cause-and-effect relationships and which are out of the monotonously running (regular) laws. Nursi calls this side of things as “the kingdom of Heaven” (Malakūt).[364] god, through this manifestation, treats his creatures[365] crying for help under the pressures of universal laws in this world, with his special providence and favours, outside of the current laws and causes. due to the flexible nature of realizations of laws depending on the will of God, Nursi states that each being has the opportunity of directly taking refuge in and appeal to god for each of its needs.[366] Nursi, who considers these special cases happening outside of the regular and universal laws as exceptions,[367] indicates that what is essentially current is the regular and universal continuation of laws, which make up the order of universe and the manifestations of the knowledge, will and power of god.[368] This approach focuses on the absolute, intentional and conscious manifestation of the names of god in the creation of things. This approach describes the cruel wheel of nature,[369] (which in appearance works with rigid and unchanging rules), the chain of cause-and-effect and the senseless, unconscious and imaginative but logically necessary laws as a flexible and changing painting under the decision, will, and decree of god, who dominates everything. even though, according to Nursi, there is, in front of our eyes, a regularly working order, an activity and a chain of creation based on the chain of cause-and-effect which apparently makes up this order, we cannot talk about an ontological existence of cause-and-effect relationships and current laws (which are the continuation of these relationships), whose nature resembles the laws of a constitution and has no external reality. Therefore, without the existence of angels, who represent and supervise these laws which are in fact “rational expressions” (al-i‘tibārāt al-‘aqlīya), they can not become sources of conscious affairs, divine performances and actions.[370] in conclusion, the laws and apparently effective causes are administered by god and god can change them whenever and however He wants. But Nursi at this point reminds us that flexibility in the laws will never take place in such clarity as to interfere with the worldly examination/trial and to oblige people to believe willingly or unwillingly.[371]

3. Animals have Duties, Reward and Punishment

Bediuzzaman presents a brief summary of how he perceives the whole world of beings in the Twenty-fourth Word. Before describing beings and their duties, he gives a short translation of a verse of the Qur'an which states that all beings worship god (Qur'an 22:18) and concludes that "their worship varies according to their capacities and the divine names that they manifest; it is all different."[372] Nursi who compares the universe we live in to a city or a splendid palace, explains that the owner of the universe employs angels, animals, plants and inanimate beings in building this city or palace and encourages them to worship and that "these four species have been charged with different kinds of worshipping."[373] he asserts that god employs these creatures in the building of the palace of universe not out of his need, since he is the creator of everything, but for "certain instances of wisdom, like the functioning of his might, sublimity, and dominion" and thus Nursi expresses that "in the realm of causality"[374] all creatures have been charged with various duties.[375] let us now look at what Nursi tells us about our subject, animals, putting aside the other three groups of creatures.

To Nursi, animals, "having an appetitive soul,"[376] naturally want a kind of reward for every job they do. Furthermore, Nursi draws a more general theoretical framework for this service-wage relationship and within this framework not only living creatures but also inanimate beings such as minerals, and atoms, in return for their services, receive some sort of "wage," as a requirement of divine mercy and wisdom.[377] Nursi bases his theoretical framework about the servicewage relationship[378] on the verse, "And His Mercy embraces all things." (Al-Isrā' 16:68) according to Nursi, god's responding to all actions and the services of each being he employs in the construction of universe, in the form of reward or punishment express a general law of his mercy dominant in the universe from atoms to the sun. on the other hand, to Nursi, in this world god has placed the reward for work within the work itself.[379] From this point of view, the wages in return for the services of animals, as they conform with complete obedience to the commands that bring them into existence, have been inserted into those services themselves in the form of "special pleasures," which continue as long as their services last.[380] Nursi declares that after the results demanded from the lives of creatures, which he describes as their "ceremonial parade,"[381] are obtained, god mercifully makes them "dislike" life, and makes it easy for them to leave the world by giving them a

tendency to rest and an eagerness for migration to another world and thus gets them leave not with much disappointment, but even happily.[382] Moving from the principle that “activity is a sort of pleasure,”[383][] Nursi goes a step forward by claiming that every sort of activity that results in the transformation of the potential abilities of creatures into action is a sort of “pleasure.”[384] in Nursi’s opinion, “pleasure in activity” is a kind of “wage” paid to animate and inanimate creatures in return for their services in this world.[385] Besides this reward in advance inserted into the services by creatures, Nursi indicates another point: god grants a soldier dying during his duty, the rank of “martyrdom;” similarly god gives a sacrificed sheep, an “immortal material body” and rewards it by giving the rank of being “a mount for its owner on the Bridge of sirat.”[386] Nursi deduces from this picture the conclusion that animals and beings with spirits, while performing the dominical duties peculiar to their natures and in obeying the divine commands in this world, sometimes perish and suffer severe distress.[387] Bediuzzaman, by considering the fact that “a wisdom and a sovereignty which does not leave the smallest creature without a wage, recompense, and perfection in its duties,”[388] connects the framework of the wages that will be given to every creature with the divine wisdom. Therefore, he concludes that it is not far from logic that these unfortunate beings will be given a sort of “spiritual reward” and a kind of “wage” in accordance with their capacities from the inexhaustible treasuries of his mercy.[389]

From another point of view, Nursi’s approach to the service-wage relationship is based on the comparison between existence and non-existence. as is known, all people of wisdom unanimously agree that “existence” is absolutely good.[390] if existence ends up with death and annihilation,[391] that is, in the author’s words, “all living creatures, and the species of animals, which are worthy of existence, lovers of life, and desire permanent life”[392] are “torn up like rags and thrown away into the obscurity of nothingness,” then the good will turn into the evil and the blessing of existence into “a torment worse than death.”[393] however, since divine knowledge encompasses everything, for Nursi, absolute non-existence (adem-i mutlaq) is impossible.[394] on the other hand, Nursi, states that the divine names manifested within beings necessitate the availability of an eternal life for them.[395] Moreover, we can deduce that Nursi, who declares that the perfection of existence is through “life” and the perfection of life is through “continuation” and “eternity,”[396] may advocate the following approach: just like the existence of all creatures, the

existence of animals too, has been preferred to their non-existence, and their bodies have been equipped with physical and spiritual skills and capacities appropriate to their duties in this world, have been given to them; and through this existence, which is decorated with life, perfection and good have become true. These creatures have received in advance their “wages” in return for their services, which already contain “enjoyment” and “pleasure” for them. in this case, even if their bodies are turned into soil, real goodness and perfection will still be accomplished for them, through the eternity of their souls which manifest perfection and beauty.[397] Thus we can mention three types of perfection for a being:

First: each being’s gaining “absolute perfection” by acquiring an absolute existence (that is passing from the realm of knowledge to this world which is the realm of power). every being, including animals, whose existence has been preferred to non-existence, was made to gain this perfection.

second: The “private perfection” of each being, which is achieved by being given an existence peculiar to each which raises its abilities from the potential to the actual.

Third: each being, no matter whether it exists in the knowledge of god and in the other worlds of existence[398] or is clothed with external existence, has a “real perfection” through possessing a “material or spiritual permanence”[399] and attaining everlasting manifestations of the name of eternal (al-Bākī) and the other divine names in the chambers of existence in the divine Knowledge such as the Preserved Tablet (al-lawh al-mahfūz).[400] as a result, Nursi, who touches on the topic of “material-spiritual wages” in return for the materialspiritual service, expresses that each creature will be given a sort of reward as it is a requirement of the universal manifestation of divine Mercy.[401]

in our opinion, Nursi’s greatest contribution to the idea of animals’ wages and their reward in the next world is his discovery that all beings, including animals, in as much as they have

innumerable sorts of existence in addition to this material and bodily existence, continue to live at various levels of life. For example, Nursi's idea that "even an insignificant flower, which has no spirit, when it ceases from external existence, manifests a sort of immortality in a thousand ways"[402] can be regarded as an original contribution. according to this idea, all creatures, even plants which are at the lowest level of life, attain many other kinds of existence through manifesting divine names in addition to their material and apparent existences. on the other hand, the effects of misfortunes and troubles befalling creatures are limited to their material and apparent existences but the fruits of and the purposes meant in those misfortunes, especially those regarding god, are permanently left in existence. since beauty and perfection, two attributes manifested through beings, originate from the divine names and these names are already everlasting and permanent, those beings, in Bediuzzaman's phrase, "are renewed in a spiritual permanency."[403] From this point of view, Nursi considers death and decline, which in appearance seems like the greatest misfortune, trouble and evil, as a "journey" in the chambers of the divine names and attributes, and as a transfer from one state to another. Furthermore, he regards diseases, misfortunes and troubles as a requirement of the manifestations of divine names.[404] Therefore Nursi accepts this consideration as a universal law and truth valid not only for mankind but for all creatures. Nursi states that:

if they are Beings with spirits but no intellect, their death and departure is not extinction and vanishing into non-existence, it is rather being saved from physical existence and the turbulent duties of life. Making over to their spirits, which are immortal, the fruits of the duties they have gained, each relying on a divine name, their immortal spirits persist, attaining happiness worthy of them.[405]

Thus Nursi explains that hardships suffered by animals will be compensated, first through immediate rewards inserted into activities as "enjoyment and pleasure," secondly by ways such as "retaliation" in this world or the next world, and finally, by giving their souls "eternity," a "perfection and happiness" they deserve, even if their bodies are turned into soil.

4. Free Will and Ability for Evil in Animals

Whether creatures other than man have will or not, and the nature and limits of that will if they do in fact possess it, is a controversial matter. Al-Jurjānī claims that men and animals are common in moving with free will (irāda) and having feelings (ih□sās).[406] As for Nursi, as we mentioned briefly above, he compares the universe to a palace, and states that god employs four kinds of creatures in the construction of this palace and encourages them to worship and praise himself. according to this description, minerals and elements have only the blessing of existence; plants are blessed with existence and life; animals are blessed with existence, life and soul, self, and partial free will; and man is blessed in addition to these with intelligence, conscience, heart and “a comprehensive nature” able to manifest the divine names. here Nursi compares animals to human beings in having “an appetitive soul” and “a partial will.”[407] We can deduce two results from the existence of a partial will in animals:

First: “Will” is the freedom of making a choice among varying options and this choice, as a requirement of its nature, can move both in the area of good and evil. Nursi declares that all living beings are subject to “the principle of mutual assistance,”[408] which he defines as “the law of magnanimity and generosity,”[409] while “the principle of conflict,” which is considered by some philosophers as a common and generally accepted phenomenon, “springs from the misuse of their inborn dispositions by a number of tyrants, brutish men, and savage beasts.”[410] The phrase, “the misuse of the inborn disposition” can be said to express animals’ use of their free will in the areas prohibited for them. This free will possessed by animals, which we do not know its exact nature, makes their exposition of retaliation or similar conduct more meaningful. as a matter of fact, Nursi considers wild animals’ attacking other living animals for prey instead of eating the carcasses of dead animals, which is their “lawful food,” as a kind of “deviation from their nature.”[411] if these wild animals content themselves with the carcasses of dead animals and remain in a way in their legitimate place, they will not only find their sustenance but they will also be employed in the service of “cleaning” the earth’s surface,[412] an action which is required by the divine name of Most holy (alḲuddūs),[413] which is dominant throughout the universe. another conclusion that can be drawn is that god does not interfere with the

actions that animals conduct according to their free will, just as is the case with human beings. in other words it can be claimed that at least some animals to the extent of their partial will, also can act against the decrees of god.

Second: We must indicate that another result brought by will is “responsibility.”[414] We may say that since animals have no intelligence, their will is dependent on their “feelings.” While Nursi deals with the topics of the will and the responsibility of animals, he first explains that the concept of law (Sharia) has two senses, namely “Verbal laws” in revealed religions and “creational laws,” or the “laws of divine Will” in creation/the universe. he then he declares that obedience and disobedience to both laws are possible. While he defines the Verbal Laws as the collection of the laws which has been sent by god to mankind by means of the Prophets and which address only intelligent beings,[415] he describes creational laws as the universal laws dominant in the universe. according to Nursi, having intelligence is not necessary in order to abide by the creational laws. For human beings, “intelligence” and “will” are required conditions for legal responsibility, but for Nursi, “the heart” and “feelings” and “abilities” may also be appealed to for responsibility. in this context, he says that “animals may be considered as mature in the senses or feelings of the self.”[416] Therefore, conduct based on the heart, feelings and abilities could be rewarded or punished. in this respect, while some animals may appear perfect in terms of “the feelings of the self,” children may be considered as mature in the feelings of the heart.[417] For instance, in Nursi’s words: “if a child does not heed his feeling of compassion or pity and kills a honeybee to indulge an impulse, he may have his head broken as a deserved punishment,”[418] even though a lion has great affection towards its young and the feeling of protection towards a member of its kind, if these two feelings do not prevent the lion from tearing an antelope to pieces, it will deserve the bullets of a hunter.[419] Through this idea, Nursi points out the validity of the notion of “retaliation,” suggested by the Kalām scholars, even in this world.

in relation to the fact that powerful animals disturb weak animals, Nursi declares that this situation serves to obtain the results of “acting watchfully, alertness, continual mobility, being swift and quick, using refined skills, and activating the potentials on the part of animals.”[420] in order

to point out the useful results of this “disturbance,” he suggests the comparison of domestic animals with wild animals of the same kind.[421] Finally Nursi, who touches on the disturbance of human beings by animals and insects such as mosquitoes, accepts this situation as a sort of “retaliation.” That is, just as many animals endure the disturbances given to them by human beings, so human beings too must tolerate this sort of “retaliation” acts by animals.[422]

5. Perception of Time, Feelings of Pleasure and Pain in Animals

Whether animals feel pain and sorrow is one of the issues discussed in the literature of Kalām. Al-Jurjānī says that some of the Mutazilitas claim that children and animals do not feel pain or sorrow with the fear that it will necessitate their entering paradise and possessing intelligence.[423] at different points, Nursi argues that animals are capable of feeling physical hurt caused by injury or disease.[424] Nursi, who often compares human beings and animals in terms of their duties and functions, explains, in broad terms, that man has a very different creation from animals in that man is multidirectional in skills and abilities; due to intelligence and thinking, his feelings are very developed and therefore his needs are very different. Moreover, the things he is interested in extend outward like concentric circles and cover all the universe; he understands himself and the world around himself as a whole; he can discover the cause-and-effect relationships between events; he is able to perceive the past, present and future times in his mind; he is able to become a sort of mirror for the divine names and to observe their manifestations in creatures; and each of his feelings and abilities has pleasures and sorrows of its own.[425]

if we consider what has been pointed out, the circle of things that concern animals, due to their lack of intelligence, is very limited.[426] on the other hand, the relationships of animals with the members of their kind and other animals, take place only at the level of certain feelings.[427] since animals have no intelligence and conscience, we can not talk about their possessing an extensive perception of time and a sense of permanent life. Furthermore, animals’ benefit from the blessings in this world, being devoid of “intelligence, heart, soul, and humanity/compassion”[428] takes place only in a very limited way.

according to Nursi, animals having no perception of the past and future,[429] and feel “neither the deaths of the creatures in the past and future, nor their eternal separation.”[430] on the other hand, human beings have been created with such a disposition to feel sorrow and pleasure that is incomparable to animals. Furthermore Nursi declares that every feeling and sense in man has its own pleasure and sorrow.[431] in this respect “man falls to a level a hundred times lower than animals.”[432] since the animals’ perception of time is not extensive and they are not rich in abilities and equipment, their feelings of pain and sorrow seem weak but their feeling of pleasure seems dominant. For this reason, a three dimensional perception of time and richness of abilities are among the most important characteristics that distinguish man from animals. since animals have no ideas or thought, they cannot understand the past and future as comprehensively as men; therefore, in Nursi’s words, neither do they receive “sorrows and regrets,” nor do they feel “anxiety and fears.”[433] On the other hand, due to the deficiency in their perception of time, animals “receive perfect pleasure; sleep and rise and thank their creator.”[434] here Bediuzzaman proceeds a step further and puts forward a very interesting idea by saying that: “an animal held down to be slaughtered, even, does not feel anything. it wants to feel it as the knife cuts, but that feeling disappears as well, and it is saved from the pain.”[435] Nursi declares that “a great instance of divine mercy and compassion is not making known the unseen, the

things that are going to happen in the future,” and the mercy in question works “more perfectly for innocent animals.”[436] however, he does not clearly say whether this state of “getting rid of pain” is a property pertaining to sacrificed animals or to all animals covered by the quality of “innocent.” nevertheless, when all the remarks made by Nursi, concerning the issue, and especially those about the hardships of animals, are analyzed altogether, we may conclude that this rule does not include every animal.

another point that Nursi brings to our attention is that though animals differ in body and shape, they are very similar in their spiritual nature, as in the

examples of birds and fish.[437] human beings are exactly opposite in this point. nevertheless, for Nursi, animal feelings are not at the same level for all animal species. in this respect, for instance, “fish,” which are quite weak in terms of “animal feelings,” can be considered within the class of “plants.”[438] From the perspective of this approach of Nursi’s, we may say that also flies and insects, due to the weakness of their animal feelings when compared to fish, can be included within the class of “plants.” Nursi, touching on the death of animals, argues that death becomes a sort of evolution for them and regards, for instance, their death in the human stomach as a source of rise to human life.[439] he also mentions the shortness of the life span of beautiful animals and the state of small and weak animals whose lives come to an end in the harshness of the winter season. according to Nursi, god does not sustain the lives of these animals in periods of their weakness and desperation. For example, Nursi, mentioning the shortness of the life span of flies, which he describes as “the lovers of roses” or “the friends of the coy flowers,”[440] indicates that the duties these creatures perform under difficult conditions become a source of troubles rather than pleasure, and, therefore their lives must be terminated. in Nursi’s words, “they must be discharged from the duties of their lives.”[441] Nursi bases divine employment, as a general rule, on the conditions of “the easiness of the duties in life, the convenience of life conditions, and the continuation of excitement by living beings.”[442] as a conclusion, Nursi connects the extent of the perception of pleasure and pain in living beings, first, to the wealth of their abilities and feelings, which he defines as “comprehensiveness,” and, secondly, to the perception of three dimensional time. noticing that animals are incomparable with men on these two points, he concludes that pleasure and pain in animals are sudden and passing and that pleasure and pain never take place in animals at the same level as those of human beings.[443]

6. The Particularity of Animal Pain and Secrecy of Trial

The size of evils in the universe and their ratio to good deeds and beauties has always been a matter of discussion.[444] Nursi, by claiming repeatedly that evils and bad things in the universe are little, dependent, and partial, while good deeds and beauties are basic, numerous, and universal, shares the view of Muslim philosophers and Kalām scholars.[445] our thinker bases his opinion that good deeds and beauties are universal on the “universality

of order,” which is dominant over all species in the universe,[446] and he connects the claims that evils have prevailed the world and that evils are dominant over good deeds to a misguided regard of things with a headless and heretic viewpoint, originating from atheism, or disbelief in god.[447] in one of his works where he studies the concept of beauty, Nursi states that what we describe as “evil,” is in fact “a beauty through others,” that is, an indirect kind of beauty, in respect to its results. When considered under the light of this concept, “beauties through others” consist of certain partial evils which have to be allowed to occur for the creation of “the universal instances of good.”[448] For instance, cutting off a gangrenous finger, at first sight, is evil, but if it is not cut off then a hand will have to be amputated, which is a greater evil. Therefore the amputation of the finger is an evil which is good in terms of its result.[449]

On the other hand, Nursi, associates the existence of evil with the nature of religion and trial as well. on this matter, he says:

since belief and accountability are a test, a trial, a competition within the bounds of man’s will, matters that are obscure, profound, and in need of careful study and experiment cannot be obvious. They should not be so compelling that everyone has to affirm them willy-nilly. For in this way the Abu Bakrs may rise to the highest of the high and the abu Jahls descend to the lowest of the low. if there is no will, there is no accountability. it is because of this mystery and wisdom that miracles are displayed only rarely.[450]

This world is a field of trial and examination, and a place of obligation and struggle. obligation and examination require that reality remains veiled so that through competition and struggle the abu Bakrs may rise to the highest of the high and the abu Jahls may enter among the lowest of the low. if the innocent remained untouched in such disasters, the abu Jahls would submit just like the abu Bakrs, and the door of spiritual and moral progress through struggle would be closed and the mystery of obligation spoiled.[451] religion is an examination, a test, which distinguishes elevated spirits from base ones. it therefore speaks of matters that everyone shall see with their eyes in the future in such a way that they remain neither altogether unknown, nor

self-evident so that everyone would be compelled to confirm them. They open the door to the reason but do not take the will from the hand.[452]

Winning an eternal happiness, which is a universal act of good, necessitates that the bases of belief, which is the subject of trial, should remain theoretical and at such a distance that they should not obligate people to approve by heart and take away their free will.[453] according to Nursi, for the mystery of obligation to continue, the veil of causes must not be abolished, and within this framework innocent animals and human beings have to be exposed temporarily to certain misfortunes and hardships, which superficially seem evil to the human mind.[454] if, during general disasters innocents, in Nursi's words, "are able to stay in safety in a wonderful way, then the mystery of obligation will be spoiled."[455] however these misfortunes and hardships are compensated through "wages" in advance inserted into their services as a requirement of the divine mercy and also through having the most appropriate "rewards" and "perfection" in an everlasting happiness.[456]

7. Human Tyranny and Animal Pain

As we know, in the holy Qur'an it is declared that "Mischief has appeared on land and sea because of (the need) that the hands of men have earned that (god) may give them a taste of some of their deeds: in order that they may turn back (from evil)" (Qur'an 30:41). Taking inspiration from this and similar Qur'anic verses, Nursi thinks that the mistakes made by the majority of people also have a role in the great disasters and misfortunes involving major elements such as air, soil, and water, which give harm not only to human beings but also other living beings.[457][] Nursi presents the great disasters that befell the nations of prophets, beginning with the People of noah, as punishment for their rebellions and heresies throughout history and, therefore, as evidence for this relationship.[458][] in addition to this, Nursi interprets the two World Wars and the great destructions, hunger and deprivation caused by these wars in this frame[459] and compares them to the prophet Muhammad's saying: "Even the fish in the depth of the sea complain of man for they cause the cessation of their appointed sustenance."[460]

*** Conclusion

Nursi studies the problem of animal pain very seriously and deals with this topic directly or indirectly in many of his works. he tries to tackle the problem both by adding new elements to the classical/traditional solutions and by expressing his own findings. Since the concepts of Unity (Tawh□īd), hereafter, divine justice, the purpose of creation and indicative meaning (Mā‘nā al-Ḥarfī) have a central place in Nursi’s system, he tries to analyze almost every problem by referring to these principles; the problem of animal pain is not an exception to this general method. in this article, i have tried to analyze some of the solutions presented to the problem of animal pain by Nursi under seven headings. regarding things from the point of view of “indicative meaning” and determining the purposes of their creation as manifesting the divine names, intelligent beings’ contemplation of the Divine Names reflecting on the creatures, and uses such as each being’s personal pleasure and comfort, Nursi indicates that animals have will and self as well as a sort of responsibility based on animal feelings and that they will be rewarded or punished accordingly. on the other hand, Nursi argues that in the partial evils and misfortunes which befall animals as a requirement of universal laws, the pains of animals are little and sudden due to animals’ deprivation of the comprehensive structure possessed by mankind and animals’ deficiency in the perception of time, and that universal [natural] laws are made flexible through special mercy, providence, and assistance by god. Finally, Nursi explains that as a reward for their deeds in the world, pleasures are placed into their services. Furthermore, in his view, the hardships befalling animals in the world will be compensated permanently in the hereafter through being blessed with an eternal soul and a permanent existence in the divine knowledge (‘Ilm al-Ilāhī) and other realms of existence.

** 10. Justice, Morality, and Modernity: What Makes the Risale-i Nur Modern?

Dale F. Eickelman

The ideas of justice and morality expressed in the Risale-i Nur are thoroughly modern. To recognize this, we must set aside the idea of modernity dominant from the mid-twentieth century to the 1990s that deflected attention away from the contributions of religious thinkers, public religion, and public values inspired by faith. These mid-twentieth century versions of modernization theory also played a significant role outside Turkey —as within the country—in deflecting attention away from Nursi's contributions and the Risale-i Nur to thinking about religion as it shapes justice and morality in contemporary societies, including of course the contemporary Muslim majority world.

To give a sense of antagonism to the idea that religion could play a constructive role in thinking about justice and morality in modern societies, among other central issues, a leading public intellectual in the 1960s saw the Muslim world as facing an unpalatable choice: either a "neo-islamic totalitarianism" intent on "resurrecting the past," or a "reformist islam" which would open "the sluice gates and [be] swamped by the deluge."[461] another social scientist, who at least had a good ear for alliteration, suggested that Middle eastern societies faced the stark choice of "Mecca or mechanization."[462] at the very least, such views suggest an intensely negative assessment of the role of religion in modern society and of islam in particular. equivalent views were also prevalent among intellectuals in the Middle east. The syrian philosopher sadiq al-'azm, for example, had both christian and islamic fundamentalisms primarily in mind when he wrote of their "principled rigidity" and the eventual triumph of secular reason: "in the longer run the resulting socio-historical secular reality will inevitably burst through the mystical shell of islam."[463] Al-'Azm makes two assertions that flow from the earlier versions of modernization theory. The first is that religion—Islam in the passage cited—has a "mystical" shell and is thus alien to reason, and that the long-term global trajectory is one toward reason that is thoroughly secular.

*** The Risale-i Nur and Justice

Thinking in public space about justice and morality involves no necessary incompatibility between religion and reason. The concepts and practices of tradition, like those of “modernity,” must be actively constructed, adjusted, and sustained. Proponents of “tradition” may claim antiquity for practices and ideas, but in the context of modernity, as in the past, these ideas and practices are strongly shaped by context even if the claim is made that they exist outside of ordinary social life. To paraphrase Nursi, it is not just the “worldly” whose ideas and acts are influenced by social context, but also those who aspire to recognize the ideas of justice and balance implicit in what he calls “divine determining.” Nursi’s writings and life suggest by example how religion and reason are compatible, although this compatibility requires struggle and pragmatism. as Nursi maintained, he was not a Sufi shaykh but a hoja,[464] and in his case one who demanded a critical engagement with texts. By example, Nursi stimulated individual critical thought and reflection about justice, morality, and personal responsibility. Said’s point of departure was islam as understood by the scholars of his day, he articulated these ideas of justice and morality so that they transcended islam as a bounded tradition and became more amenable to compatibility with other traditions.

implicit in Nursi’s writings is the idea that religion and reason are not bounded entities, nor are they polar opposites. concepts of reason—the use of the plural is deliberate—must necessarily be understood in specific historical circumstances rather than as disembodied and timeless concepts that exist only in dichotomies such as “traditional” and “modern.” Nursi knew that he was elaborating a system of inquiry that for him unfolded over time. Moreover, his rhetoric[465] advances not through strictly juridical arguments but through allegory, metaphor, and parable that can be continuously interpreted and applied to new circumstances.

Nursi makes a key distinction between “pure” and “relative” justice based on incidents in the early years of islam, but his style obligates his readers to interpret his distinction through metaphors and allegories. Thus he discussed the violent dispute—actually a war—called the “event of the camel” that pitted ‘ali bin abi Talib, the Prophet’s son-in-law and caliph (r. 656–661), against his opponents. ‘ali advocated the application of “pure justice” to resolve the issue. ‘ali’s opponents countered that applying “pure justice was

extremely difficult. For this reason, their judgment of the law was to proceed on the basis of relative justice, known as the lesser of two evils."[466]

To explain "pure" and "relative" justice, Nursi invokes a Qur'anic verse (5:32), "if any one slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land—it would be as if he slew the whole people." explains Nursi: "a single individual may not be sacrificed for the good of all. In the view of Almighty God's compassion, right is right, there is no difference between great and small." in relative justice, however, "a particular is sacrificed for the good of the universal; the rights of an individual are not considered in the face of the community."[467] Nursi explains that both sides in the "event of the camel" made interpretations "purely for God's sake and for the benefit of Islam." As a consequence, both the killers and the killed "gained Paradise" and "acted rightfully." Nursi's stance had the added benefit of distancing him from a partisan interpretation of events in the first hijri century. Then, to cut off further discussion of the incident, he cites a "learned person who is widely known amongst us" who "wrote in Kurdish: 'don't gossip about the war between the companions, for both killer and killed were destined for Paradise'."[468] his invocation of a learned person writing in Kurdish, whose name he does not disclose, suggests the complex layers of his original Turkish audience and his ability to engage it in seeing the incident's relevance to understanding twentieth-century events.

Nursi's example transcends specifically Islamic concerns. Similar to the example above, his aphorisms are "good to think with," as the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss might say, ranging beyond the specifics of religious thought. "one grain of trust consumes a stack of lies. one grain of reality is superior to a stack of illusions. everything you say should be true, but it is not right to say everything [that is] true."[469] Such phrasing transcends the specifics of particular cultural traditions and facilitates its adaptation to new circumstances.

*** Nursi and Western Concepts of Morality and Justice

Nursi's approach to morality and justice has strong parallels in Western moral and legal thought. The noted jurist lon l. Fuller (1902–78) distinguished

between the morality of aspiration and the morality of duty, explaining that the morality of aspiration shows a close affinity with aesthetics as a means for making the best use of our short lives.[470] Nursi's notion of divine or "pure" justice has an important aesthetic and moral dimension that resonates with Fuller's notion of the morality of aspiration. Nursi writes:

do you wish for a proof that all things are done with justice and balance? The fact that all things are endowed with being, given shape and put in their appropriate place in accordance with precise equilibrium and in appropriate measure, shows that all matters are done in accordance with infinite justice and balance.[471]

Nursi indicates that humankind cannot experience "the true essence of justice in this transient world," although occasionally he relents, invoking as an example "the pleasure and enjoyment a just ruler who loves to enforce justice and right receives from giving the oppressed their rights," and inviting a comparison by analogy "with the sacred meanings pertaining to the absolutely Wise one" which arise from establishing justice, and not only for men and jinn, but for all creatures."[472]

Fuller regards the morality of aspiration as "the fullest realization of human powers."[473] People might fail to realize their fullest capabilities, but this is a failure of shortcoming, not of wrongdoing.[474] no laws can compel humankind to "live up to the excellences" of which they are capable.[475] citing adam smith, Fuller[476] compares the morality of aspiration to "the rules which critics lay down for the attainment of what is sublime and elegant in composition." it rescues humankind from "the blind play of chance" and places humans "safely on the road to purposeful and creative activity."[477]

The morality of aspiration pervades all of existence, much like Nursi's notion of aspiration to pure justice, or divine determination. Both Fuller and Nursi see morality as the basis for law and justice. Nursi's notion of justice and balance parallels Fuller's argument except that Nursi invokes not only a higher morality, but also divine determination.

Fuller’s morality of aspiration starts at the top of human achievement. his morality of duty starts “at the bottom,” laying down “the basic rules without which an ordered society is impossible.”[478] The morality of duty is prescriptive, much like Nursi’s specific invocations of prescribed punishments in Shari‘ah where he explains that the amputation of the thief’s hand “restrains and prohibits” theft as the conscience of thieves restrain their desire.[479] here Nursi’s reliance on metaphors falters in favor of a literalism. other modernist interpreters of scripture place more weight on the shared values that deter criminals rather than on a literal reliance on scripture as mandating amputation.

in general, Nursi’s arguments on the supposedly prescriptive elements of shari‘ah wear less well than the overall thrust of his argument on justice. if pure justice holds everything in equilibrium, his explanation of the justice in Qur’anic inheritance law that, he writes, opposes the unjust law of “present-day civilization.” it is just, he argues, for a man to receive twice the share of a woman, for men “take a wife and undertake to provide for her,” and because “a girl is “delicate and weak by nature.” The “savage greed” of the present time, Nursi continues, “recalls the appalling tyranny of burying girl children alive in the age of ignorance,”[480] an indeterminate epoch projected into the unbounded jahili past, which he then compares to the twentieth century.

These invocations of conventional and time-bound gender differences contrast to his more enduring reflections, such as his forced exile at the hands of the “worldly.” he describes their actions as wrong, but realizes that god turned his exile into a situation that allowed him to better serve religion. Prohibited from the world of politics, he turned instead to the service of the Qur’an. To Nursi, this service was the morality of aspiration in Fuller’s sense of the term, contrasted to the “swamp” of the transient world in which we live, the “dissolute social life of mankind,” with the “caravan of mankind stumbling forward in stinking and filthy mud.”[481]

In his forceful narrative, Nursi reflects on responsibilities toward the twenty percent of the population who suppose that the “filthy mud” of this world is

musk and ambergris, with the other eighty percent understanding that they are in a swamp but unaware of how to get out of it. one choice, writes Nursi, is to bring the “drunken” twenty percent to their senses with a club—Fuller’s equivalent of the morality of duty (or Nursi’s “relative justice”). The alternative choice is “to point out the safe way to the bewildered by showing them a light.”[482] The “lights of the Qur’an” constitute the morality of aspiration, “far superior to all political currents and partisanship” and “exempt from and free of all their biased considerations.”[483]

*** Nursi, the Morality of Aspiration, and Modernity

The Risale-i Nur and Said Nursi’s distinction between pure and relative justice exemplify modernity. Most proponents of modernization theory have generally assumed that modernity marks a sharp break with the “traditional” past. in Turkey, as in the Middle east, political reformers exaggerated this great divide, so that only in the last few decades have Turkish social historians and social scientists acknowledged that “modernity,” both political and social, is a much more nuanced and complex process than can be explained by such sudden tectonic political shifts as the collapse of the ottoman empire and the birth of the Turkish republic.

Nursi was acutely aware of the multiple ways in which the ottoman empire was itself a modernizing force, and a more general consideration of his approach to modernity contributes to framing his ideas of justice. even when his proposals failed to be realized, as in his petition on education reform presented to the sublime Porte in May or June 1908 concerning the Zehra madrasa. Nursi advocated joining religious schooling with the best of the mektebs, or new “secular” schools,[484] so that education would be more effectively at the center of social reform than was possible by the late ottoman practice of leaving the religious schools to themselves and unrelated to the “new” schools for nonreligious subjects created in the ottoman empire beginning in the late 1830s.[485] in terms of social reforms and religious understandings, both Turkish and foreign scholars today recognize that many incremental innovations, and not necessarily the “top-down” ones mandated by state authorities, were underway long before the Republican era in fields such as marriage, family, and fertility patterns.[486] republican Turkey constituted a sharp formal

political break with the Ottoman era, but informal, incremental innovations were equally significant, such as the emergence of a public sphere in forms as diverse as coffeehouses,[487] women’s fashion, and patterns of consumption.[488] similarly, in spite of a drive to remove religion from public space from the 1920s to the mid-twentieth century, a strong sense of religion remains central to Turkish public life and social institutions that is at the same time compatible with the secular nature of state institutions and mainstream political expression.[489]

*** Religious and Secular in Open Societies

open societies claim to respect religion and religious worship. at the same time, however, in the words of the late philosopher richard rorty (1931–2007),[490] religion usually functions as a “conversation-stopper” outside of circles of believers. rorty’s observation points to why the career and writings of Said Nursi have proven such a challenge to conventional ideas of modernity. “Modernity” is seen as an “enlargement of human freedoms” and an “enhancement of the range of choices” as people began to “take charge” of themselves.[491] religion can be seen as fully compatible with these goals. shils[492] argued that only intellectuals attached to these “modern” values had the vision to rise above parochial identities and to attach themselves to the notion of a modern nation-state. Thus were religious intellectuals such as Nursi implicitly marginalized.

yet Nursi saw his role as integrating the norms of “rationality” with science, economic concerns, and a respect for justice in ways that were fully compatible with being Turkish. he addressed the burning issues of his day but at the same time transcended the specifics of place and time in order to aspire to the higher morality of “true justice” and its commitment to the common good.[493]

The modern era has intensified the pace of interaction among believers in different religious traditions. however, for much of islamic history, Muslim societies have been remarkably open to the outside world, incorporating many pre- and co-existing elements through bricolage. an awareness of religious pluralism is not the exclusive byproduct of modernity

in the Muslim majority world. The basis for openness to different religious interpretations of ethics and justice within the Muslim tradition and for other religious traditions antedates european modernity. Pluralism was also encouraged by the fact that the boundaries of the Muslim world were never sharply delineated. not only were the boundaries between the Mediterranean Muslim world, including Anatolia, fluid and indistinct, but also those of the Muslim world elsewhere.

*** Nursi and Diversity in Justice

The contextual interpretations of Qur'anic verses are multiple, but in contemporary Muslim discussion and debate, the point of departure is increasingly the Qur'an itself and not the scholarly interpretations that have accumulated over the centuries. it would be incorrect to say that there is a single, dominant view among Muslims concerning religious and ethical pluralism. The Qur'an offers a distinctly modern perspective on the role of islam as a force for tolerance and mutual recognition in a multi-ethnic, multi-community world: "To each among you, We have ordained a law and assigned a path. had god pleased, he could have made you one nation, but his will is to test you by what he has given you; so compete in goodness" (5:48). other verses reinforce the concepts and practices of tolerating religious difference: "had your lord willed, he would have made mankind one nation: but they will not cease differing" (11:118). another reads: "o mankind! We created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another" (49:13). Nursi invokes these verses and the travels of the "old said," as recorded by the "new said," powerfully evoke his recognition of diversity and pluralism.

There have always been several traditions of morality and justice in islam, [494] many of which—as in other religious traditions—are more tolerant and open to alternative ethical positions. Throughout the world, increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media are leading to more open societies, just as globalization has been accompanied by such developments as Vatican ii, secular transnational human rights movements, and currently the global Risale-i Nur movement. in this context, Nursi's notions of justice and its underlying morality have survived well over time.

Writing in the 1960s, sociologist robert Bellah argued that islam in its seventh-century origins was for its time and place “remarkably modern ... in the high degree of commitment, involvement, and participation expected from the rank-and-file members of the community.”[495] its leadership positions were open, and divine revelation emphasized equality among believers. Bellah argued that the restraints that kept the early Muslim community from “wholly exemplifying” these principles of modernity underscore the modernity of the basic message of the Qur’an, exhorting its initial audience in seventh-century arabia to break through the “stagnant localisms” of tribe and kinship. indeed, Bellah argues: “the effort of modern Muslims to depict the early community as the very type of equalitarian participant nationalism is by no means entirely an unhistorical ideological fabrication.”[496] of course, these “stagnant localisms” offered powerful resistance to the Qur’anic vision of community in the seventh century. another often-cited Qur’anic verse emphasizes that there is “no compulsion in religion. Whoever ... believes in God has grasped a firm handhold of the truth that will never break” (2:256). other verses nonetheless appear to justify coercion and severe punishment for apostates, renegades, and unbelievers who break their agreement with the prophet Muhammad (for example, 4:89, 9: 1–16).

Some commentators conclude that such coercion is specific to the context of the early islamic community and grounded in “emergency conditions”—what Nursi recognizes as “relative” justice. in this view, coercion was needed to emphasize such “basic moral requirements” as keeping promises and treaties, and protecting a community’s “basic welfare and security against aggression.”[497] nonetheless, the overall Qur’anic emphasis is on voluntary consent to the will of god “which is prompted by the universal guidance that is engraved upon the human heart.”[498] The Qur’an advises even the Prophet Muhammad to show tolerance toward his opponents: “if it had been your lord’s will, they would all have believed, all who are on earth. Would you [o Muhammad] then compel mankind against their will to believe?” (10:99).

as Fazlur rahman[499] argued, the prophet Muhammad “recognized without a moment of hesitation that abraham, Moses, Jesus, and other old and new Testament religious personalities had been genuine prophets like himself.”

Their different messages, coming to different peoples and nations at different times, were “universal and identical.” indeed, Muhammad is made to say in the Qur’an, “i believe in whatever book god may have revealed” (42:15), because “god’s guidance is universal and not restricted to any nation or nations.”[500] The idea of “book” (kitab), as rahman points out, is a generic term in the Qur’an, “denoting the totality of divine revelations.” This focus on the text, requiring individuals to “take charge” of their responsibilities and conduct in society, is also at the core of Nursi’s sustained emphasis on texts rather than personalities.

The modern era has intensified the pace of interaction among believers in different religious traditions. however, as the above Qur’anic verses indicate, intense awareness of and interaction with other faiths have been present in the islamic tradition from its inception and are not characteristics unique to the modern era. For much of islamic history, Muslim societies have been remarkably open to the outside world, incorporating through bricolage many preexisting and coexisting elements.

Nursi in his writings and travels exemplifies these trends. According to one account, a policeman in Tiflis in 1909 challenged Nursi about his plans for building a medrese, saying that it was hopeless to envision unity of the “broken up and fragmented” Muslim world. Nursi replied: “They have gone to study. it is like this: india is an able son of islam; it is studying in the high school of the British. egypt is a clever son of islam; it is taking lessons in the British school for civil servants. caucasia and Turkestan are two valiant sons of islam; they are training in the russian war academy. and so on.” in 1911, a half-century before the second Vatican council urged christians and Muslims to resolve their differences and move beyond the conflicts of the past, Nursi advocated such a dialogue, and his successors have taken significant steps to engage in interfaith discussions.[501] an awareness of religious pluralism is not the exclusive byproduct of modernity in the Muslim majority world. The basis for openness to different religious interpretations of ethics and justice within the Muslim tradition and for other religious traditions antedates european modernity. in andalusia, for example, the jurist abu ishaq al-shatibi (d. 1388) advocated the centrality of human reason for interpreting Islamic law and applying it to specific social, economic, and political contexts.[502] such a formulation recognized the possibility of multiple and co-existing interpretations. Pluralism was also

encouraged by the fact that the boundaries of the Muslim world were never sharply delineated. it was not only the boundaries between the Mediterranean Muslim world, including anatolia, that were fluid and indistinct but also those of other areas of the Muslim world. In india, the great Mughal ruler akbar (1542–1605) ruled over Muslims, christians, Jains, sikhs, Parsees, Jews, and others.[503]

*** Modern Understandings of Justice

The Risale-i Nur bridges older yet thoroughly “modern” ways of explaining justice and morality. unlike other religious intellectuals of his time, Nursi never lost his rural roots and often employed the metaphors and imagery of Turkey’s rural population. other religious modernist contemporaries, in contrast, distanced themselves from popular belief and rhetorical styles. Nursi, while familiar with the structure and content of modernity, recognized the value of fable and metaphor in shaping his message. his use of these tropes also facilitated understandings of his message in different social and historical contexts.

since the mid-nineteenth century, the dramatic rise in mass higher education, the greater ease and rapidity of travel, and the proliferation of means of communication has enabled large numbers of people to raise questions such as “What is my religion?” “Why is it important to my life?” and “how do my beliefs guide my conduct?” This interest in such basic, abstract questions of doctrine and faith by large numbers of people, as opposed to a small elite, is admittedly new. The rise first of literacy in vernacular languages, and subsequently the advent of new media, including the internet, has encouraged less the homogenization of faith, but rather an intensified, multi-polar struggle over people’s imaginations— over the symbols and principles of “islam” and ideas of justice.

Nursi’s vision was thoroughly modern in the sense that his writings, for many decades, copied and disseminated by hand, much like the samizdat publications of the former soviet union, were ready-made for wider distribution once his books were taken off the prohibited list and published in modern Turkish. after the restrictions were lifted in 1956,

[504] readers were added to his audience—those whose primary contact with the Risale-i Nur was not necessarily the face-to-face or hand-to-hand contact of an earlier era, but the text itself. if many small groups congregated to read the text together, this was a practice also compatible with a thoroughly modern education.

The Risale-i Nur encourages reflection on core ideas of morality and justice without prescribing particular, context-specific directives. At the same time, its advocacy of multiple systems of learning, including those derived from the colonial experience,[505] encourage the elaboration of habits of thought and practice that facilitate introducing new elements and practices. For Nursi, it is not sufficient simply to “be” Muslim and to follow Muslim practices. One must reflect upon and articulate one’s faith in practice. Pluralism, and a respect for complementary values of justice and ethical conduct, is of necessity constantly negotiated between universal and local ethical values.

The teachings of Nursi readily function to explain, “in accordance with the understanding of the age, the truths of the Qur’an.”[506] his writings represent the islamic tradition as one that enjoins a continuous dialogue over meaning, one that explicitly enjoins tolerance among Muslims and between Muslim and other religious traditions. religious intellectuals such as Nursi may claim strong links with the past, but their practice in the present conveys the idea of the modern at its best, dissolving the artificial frontier between “traditional” and “modern.”

Bridging this gap has challenged Turkish intellectuals, as the career of Şerif Mardin suggests. soon after i met Mardin in the early 1970s, he shared with me the first of multiple successive drafts of what eventually became Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey (1989), his study of the life and thought of Said Nursi. It took Mardin almost two decades to finish the manuscript.

Mardin told me that it was the most difficult book he ever had to write. He explained that Nursi’s writings and career were impossible to understand through the conventional lens of modernization theory, and the popularity of

his work also contravened the tenets of Turkey’s then prevailing secular vulgate. in word and in deed, Nursi showed how faith and modernity worked together. if Nursi’s point of departure was religious studies, that of Mardin was secular modernity. With very different motivations, both men transcended conventional wisdom and practice to understand how the spiritual can be thoroughly compatible with modern notions of responsibility, justice, and ethical pluralism based on critical reason.

** 11. Two epistles of consolation: al-shahid al-Thani and Said Nursi on Theodicy

Eric Ormsby

For defenders of god’s justice, no question is thornier or more intolerable than that of the sufferings of the innocent and especially, the suffering and death of young children. it is this issue which provokes ivan Karamazov to declare, in his confrontation with the grand inquisitor in dostoevsky’s The Brothers Karamazov, that the death of an innocent child would force him to “hand back his ticket” to existence. The suffering or the death of a young child not only pierces the heart but baffles the reason. And so the human response is almost always twofold: first, to offer consolation and then, to seek some explanation. The goodness of god and indeed, the established order of nature itself, are thrown into question. our children should die after us; they should not go before us into the next life. in the following i present and compare two islamic responses to this calamity. Both responses attempt to comfort and, in comforting, to find some underlying reason to give to a grieving parent. neither is a formal “theodicy” in the strict theological sense. In the first case, that of the Shi’ite jurist and scholar Zayn al-Din al-‘amili, al-shahid al-Thani (1506–57 or 8), he himself is the bereaved party; it is clear, though he does not say so, that he is writing to ease his own pain. in the second, the charismatic Turkish visionary Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1876–1960) tries to console a grieving parent.[507] I have chosen these two exemplary figures, despite their wide separation in time, doctrinal

affiliation, and personality, because the contrasts, as well as the affinities, between them serve to illumine larger issues.

There are of course obvious points in common, especially in their troubled and shifting relationships with the ottomans, of whom both were uneasy subjects. Thus, Sulayman the Magnificent originally supported Zayn al-Din al-‘Amili, appointing him to the Madrasa nuriyya in Ba'labakk, where he began teaching in 1546, but it was at the same sultan’s instigation that our author was summoned for interrogation on a charge of heresy; according to some reports, he died as a result of the machinations of the grand Vizier rustem Pasha, machinations which led to his murder under obscure circumstances, probably in 1558. in that year he was already being referred to as “the second Martyr.”[508] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi suffered continual reversals, including prolonged exile, under the ottomans, even if his greatest struggles would come during the period of the republic.[509] Both men were embattled thinkers, though each would conduct his spiritual and intellectual campaign in distinctly different ways.

however divergent their views, their positions on the question of innocent suffering often converge. and their arguments illustrate well the surprising range of answers which Muslim thinkers came up with in an attempt to resolve this most excruciating of human problems. each of them was aware that their attempts to console and to explain carried long and lingering echoes from the earliest period of islamic thought. This lent force and credibility to their arguments. But unlike earlier writers on theodicy, for whom the dilemma of theodicy possessed abstract horns, however vexing, these two men had to confront the dilemma head-on, and for them its horns were both sharp and intensely personal. To appreciate fully what this meant, we must step back briefly in time to a period before “theodicy” in any formal sense was possible or even conceivable.

*** I. Confronting the Inconsolable: An Early Example

By definition, the problem of theodicy arises only within the context of belief in a sovereign god who may be described as both just and merciful. david hume put it most succinctly when he paraphrased epicurus, as follows: “is

god willing to prevent evil, but not able? Then is he impotent. is he able, but not willing? Then is he malevolent. is he both able and willing? Whence then is evil?”[510] The problem of unmerited suffering becomes acute only within such a framework; it is a consequence—and, as it were, a casualty—of such sharp doctrinal formulations. nevertheless, only within such a framework can any cogent attempt at a resolution be articulated. in a pre-theological age, mourning alone offers the possibility of consolation.

one famous example, which vividly illustrates the point, comes from the period shortly after the advent of islam. in the year 638, during the Muslim conquest of egypt, a devastating plague swept through the land. among the dead were the five sons of the poet Abu Dhu'ayb al-Hudhali. The poet, who had been born in the Jahiliyya, lived into islamic times and became himself a Muslim. even so, no islamic allusion, let alone any religious solace, appears in the long and beautiful ode which he wrote to lament his loss. Though a mukhadrim, he might have been born a century before islam, as far as his outlook is concerned. For this great poet, it is Fate, not god, which determines events; and in fact, god is never mentioned, let alone invoked, in his celebrated ode. as alan Jones remarks, “never, perhaps, has the relentlessness of Fate been more tellingly drawn.”[511] This isn’t quite as surprising as it might seem. The genre of lament has its own conventions, its own distinctive tropes; many later islamic laments, as well as many christian and Jewish ones, invoke “fate” as a malign agency.

The poem begins: “is it by Fate and its enormities that you are grieved? But Fate is never indulgent to those who grieve.”[512] When his wife (rather surprisingly!) asks why he has grown haggard, the poet answers, “What’s wrong with me is that my sons have died and bid farewell.” he now gives full expression to his grief:

My sons have died and have brought me to grief with tears that do not stop long after the time for sleep.

They have forestalled my desire and hurried after their desire. They have been destroyed and yet, a time to die comes to everyone.

i have lingered after them in calamitous life though i seem to be hurrying behind them, trying to overtake them.

even more poignantly, in lines 8–9, the poet laments his helplessness to protect his sons from the onslaughts of Fate:

How I longed to protect them; but Fate cannot be deflected when it draws near.

When Fate grips with its talons, every amulet proves useless.

Throughout the poem, Fate (manun or dahr in arabic) is apostrophized but never personalized; it is mechanical, inexorable, and blind. The underlying human sentiment may remain the same: abu dhu'ayb is particularly grieved because his sons have “preceded” him in death. Their premature death appears monstrous, a disruption of the normal order. it is too right that order that the poet expatiates on three parallel instances: the fates of two noble animals—a wild ass and an oryx—and a mighty warrior. despite their heroic stature, Fate did not spare these exemplars. Fate destroys us all, noble and ignoble. all that a man can do is practice endurance before its assaults; this is the ancient notion of sabr (or tajallud, as the poet calls it), a pre-islamic virtue which later underwent profound transformation in the teaching of Sufi masters. But here the implication is that the death of his sons was not the result of some senseless randomness; they perished as all noble things must. an order exists, however arbitrary and indecipherable it may appear. and by the poem’s close, a sober sense of fitness—indeed, of that cosmic order—has been reasserted.

Of course, this is a poem in a well-defined genre—that of the lament—and we wouldn’t expect the poet to engage in theological speculation. But in fact, with this grand ode we stand at point zero. it would take at least another century before Muslim theologians would begin to spin attempts to confront

the inconsolable out of revealed scripture and sacred tradition. The two later thinkers i turn to now understood abu dhu'ayb’s grief all too well, but they could draw on a rich repertoire of sources which might serve to allay, if not remove, that grief.

*** II. Al-Shahid al-Thani: Reason and Tradition as Solace

Zayn al-din (ibn 'ali ibn ahmad ibn Muhammad) al-'amili, better known as alshahid al-Thani, one of the great jurists of the Twelver shi’a, was born in lebanon on the 13 of shawwal, 911 (9 March 1506), the scion of an illustrious shi’ite family dynasty of scholars and sages. There is no need to rehearse his distinguished career or his prodigious literary output, some 70 volumes on subjects as disparate as grammar, theology, exegesis and tradition. The salient fact for our purposes is that in the month of rajab 954 (september 1547), one of his sons, still an infant, suddenly died. al-'amili had been unlucky in fatherhood: only one of his sons survived to adulthood. But this late death of a small child may have been the final drop in a lifelong distillation of sorrow. For his son’s death prompted him to write a treatise under the title “The soother of hearts upon the loss of loved ones and children” (Musakkin al-fu’ad 'inda faqd al-ahibba wa’l-awlad). [513]

This is a manual of consolation, and frankly intended as such. But the solace it offers seems strange at first sight. The grieving father invokes two sovereign principles in accord with which he will proceed; moreover, much is made throughout, in fine juridical fashion, of the precise distinctions in both age and development of the deceased child, from the foetal stage onward, as a kind of calibration of grief. The guiding principles are, first, the intellect; and second, god’s justice. The intellect ('aql) is the instrument given to humans through which they can come to know god, as well as the authenticity of the prophets and the prescriptions of the sacred law. By the exercise of reason we cultivate virtue and avoid vice; reason sets in order the affairs of both the earthly and the transcendent realms. The human intellect “is a light shining in the darkness” and yet, it is all too scarcely used among people; for most people it is little better than a “blind man’s eye.”[514] More specifically, however, the intellect teaches us “contentment with god’s decree” (al-rida’ bi-qada’ Allah).

This precept is commonplace in islamic discussions of theodicy, especially in Sufi treatments, Said Nursi will invoke it as well. Throughout the Ihya' 'ulum al-din of al-ghazali, for example, it is repeatedly invoked; there, however, contentment arises not only from rational considerations but from an intuitive grasp of the true nature of reality, that is, from what ghazali called “taste” (dhawq), the experience of the truth rather than mere awareness of it.[515] al-shahid al-Thani refrains from such expedients. For him, the intellect alone can lead to a proper understanding of our true condition. only the intellect can, as it were, heal the heart broken by grief, even if the intellect too finds support in edifying examples drawn from tradition. and in fact, in its deft alternation between intellectual and traditional proofs, our treatise offers a perfect example of the ideal equilibrium between 'aql and naql.

We know, for example, that god is supremely just; his justice is axiomatic. so, too, are His wisdom, beneficence and compassion; these attributes are realized in his “perfected providence” (kamal 'inayatihi), in accord with which all that happens in the world has been specifically designed and intended for the maximum good. If we direct our intellects to these tenets, we will understand that because god is “the most compassionate of the compassionate and the most generous of the generous,” all His acts must somehow redound to our benefit. Even death must be seen as one of His benefits to mankind. If your inmost self tells you otherwise, “know that this is tacit polytheism (shirk khafi).”[516] In other words, if death were not a benefit bestowed by god, it would represent something at variance with his will, but that is to associate another agency with god’s. and in fact, such judicious reasoning, such reliance on the intellect, must be conducive to tranquility of mind even in the deepest grief; if not, you are guilty of “downright stupidity.” dissatisfaction with

god’s decree betokens ignorance of his wisdom.[517]

The emphasis on the sufficiency of the intellect and on divine justice are, of course, old Mu’tazilite themes. That they resurface almost four centuries

after the death of the last distinguished representative of that school—the grammarian, exegete and theologian al-Zamakhshari—is hardly surprising: shi’ite theology had long incorporated key Mu’tazilite notions into its discourse. The problem of the suffering and death of children had constituted a sequence of thorny dilemmas subsumed under the general rubric of atfal [infants] in Mu’tazilite debates. a central dilemma was this: if god does nothing without purpose—indeed, if he does nothing without some intended benefit—how may we explain the sufferings of innocent children, and furthermore, how might there be “benefit” in their afflictions? It couldn’t be claimed that children experienced pain as a means of “grace,” nor could it be plausibly argued that their sufferings were the prerequisite for some reward. children were not responsible under the law; they were not (mukallaf). What possible purpose could a just God have for inflicting suffering and early death upon them?

one solution was to maintain that children would receive some recompense in the next world (the notion of 'iwad), but this possibility still failed to explain the reasons for their suffering. For most Mu’tazilites, infant suffering served as a warning to adults; the pains of their children put parents to the test. it was a sign which the perceptive had, however agonizingly, to interpret for their own ultimate good.[518] such Mu’tazilite rationales struck their critics as frankly ludicrous and they mocked them savagely. The great andalusian theologian ibn hazm (d. 1064) would remark that believers in such arguments appeared to be “absent from the world; or, when they are present, it is as if their intellects had been stripped from them, and their senses numbed.”[519] We all know, he says, that “god is the most compassionate of the compassionate, truly so, not metaphorically so. Whoever denies this is an infidel; both his blood and his property are lawful. In fact, God afflicts infants with smallpox, tumors, mental illness, diphtheria and various aches so that they die, and some even starve to death, and all of that grieves fathers and mothers.”[520] The same ibn hazm pours scorn on the notion that the death of a child might lead anyone to lose his faith; children die every day and no one in the whole history of the world, he exclaims, with typical hyperbole, has ever renounced belief for so “moronic” a motive. This has a brutal ring. But i think its very vehemence suggests how prickly a topic this was.

Though he does invoke the Mu’tazilite conception of “recompense,” al-shahid al-Thani gives it a subtler nuance. There is some recompense for grieving parents even in their children’s death. There is, for example, the knowledge that the child has gone ahead of the parent into paradise. The sense that a child precedes or outstrips its parent by dying hearkens back to the sorrow that haunted our early poet Abu Dhu'ayb whose five sons had gone ahead of him into death; here that grief is transmuted into hopefulness. in the next world, such a child will intercede for his parents; their failings in this world will be set aside because of his, and their, suffering. He will go so far as to affirm that “one son who predeceases his father is better than 70 who succeed him.”[521] and there is a grimmer consolation: a child who dies before his time cannot grow up to disappoint and shame his parents; he has been, as it were, pre-empted from a sinful life. This notion too carries Mu’tazilite overtones but they are somehow softened in the treatise and infused with a personal accent. Perhaps this is because al-shahid al-Thani for all his intellectual rigor makes full allowance for the expression of grief. contentment with the divine decree does not preclude mourning, he affirms. Weeping is “natural to man;” the prophets and the imams wept.[522] after all—and here the shi’ite supersedes the Mu’tazilite—“if the afflicted person considers the fact that he exists in a realm which by its very character involves distress and hardship, a realm rife with calamities and misery, in which what occurs does so as a very prerequisite of its inmost nature; and that if that were not so, it would be contrary to the normal course of events ('adah),”[523] he will gain a truer sense of the way things actually are. This world is a (lacrimarum valle), a “vale of tears.” When we understand that, we will no longer be shocked by the disasters that befall us.

In one particularly magnificent passage he goes on to say: “this world is the abode of him who has no abode; it is the possession of him who has no possessions. The unintelligent heap up this world, the faithless pant after it, those with no knowledge contend within it, those lacking understanding brim with envy of it; in this world the healthy man is sick while the sick man staggers with weariness; in this world the poor man is sad while the rich man is beguiled.”[524] This is the immemorial contemptus mundi—the classic dhamm al-dunya—in full swing. But it is no mere jeremiad. For he adds, “Know that you were created for a specific purpose in this world because god is too exalted to act in vain.” Through this low abode we may come to an everlasting habitation. life is very brief. do not lose your

life, do not squander your time, in sorrow, which is “at odds with the purpose for which you were created.” That purpose is nothing less than eternal happiness, god’s ultimate benefit bestowed on human beings. He adds more soberly, “The absent do not come back, the dead do not return.” God afflicts us with loss only so that we may learn patient endurance (sabr) and so come to our rightful place in paradise.[525]grim as this world of trial may be, we have consolations. We take strength from the sufferings of the prophets and the imams. They accompany us in our afflictions; our miseries are lightened by their example. They are our hidden friends whose bliss in paradise we will one day share. Therefore, he exhorts the mourner—and we feel he is bracing himself too—“you must not grieve, even if your sorrow is huge. Even if a lion or a snake pounces on you or a devastating fire [occurs] while you are with your children and those closest to your heart, for a prophet stands with you too, even if you do not discern his presence; even if you lose your child, you and your child are safe.”[526] By “safe” he means, of course, “saved.”

i can hardly do justice to this rather complex work in so short a space. at first, it seems dry and surprisingly technical. Jurist that he is, al-'Amili tabulates the exact circumstances surrounding a child’s death in a list of “compensations” to parents; that is, at what stage of development a child may have died, whether stillborn or miscarried or before the age of “culpability,” and so forth.[527] This lengthy discussion strikes the reader as cold and abstract, but that is, i think, a misapprehension. For it becomes clear as we read that for al-shahid al-Thani, consolation that is vague is meaningless; the only solace that matters is that which is grounded in the actual. and so, he draws on Mu’tazilite arguments, he invokes such venerable precepts as “contentment with god’s decree,” he enumerates the sufferings and the exempla of prophets and saints and imams, but he somehow humanizes and indeed, personalizes, them all to his own ends. Moreover, though he praises “patience” and urges the grief-stricken to practice it, exactly as the early poet had exhorted himself almost a millennium before, he charges it with hope. Patient endurance isn’t just an end in itself, as in the Jahiliyyah. Through patience we gain a place in paradise. But he softens it further; even the man who cannot find patience at the death of a beloved child will still be rewarded in the hereafter, by virtue of his suffering.[528] he accommodates his consolations to the reality of human nature. he avails himself of the theologians’ arguments and distinctions but infuses them with compassion. His little manual of

consolation is significant finally not because he constructs a systematic theodicy or comes up with new solutions to immemorial dilemmas; its importance lies in less measurable factors, in the just balance of intellect and the example of tradition, but also in the author’s recognition of human weakness, his sensitivity to the frailty of our hopes and the stubbornness of our sorrow. This is the tone of a man who has not merely speculated but suffered, and that gives his treatise unexpected nobility.

*** III. Said Nursi and his Visionary Theodicy

In a letter of condolence, written sometime between 1928 and 1932, to Hafız Halid efendi, whose child had just died, Said Nursi offers several of the same precepts which we have already encountered in our shi’ite treatise; thus, he invokes the venerable notion of “contentment with the divine decree” and affirms that the dead child will be “a supporter and an intercessor” in the world to come.[529] These are, after all, conventional gestures of consolation. nevertheless, it is characteristic of this exuberant and charismatic thinker that he cannot resist elaborating and embellishing his precepts in the most vivid way. What for other writers is little more than a commonplace becomes in Nursi’s hands a fabulous parable. if al'amili held fast to intellect and sacred tradition as the bedrock of acceptance, Nursi takes these as springboards for visionary leaps. imagination of a deeply poetic and mystical nature characterizes his thought throughout.

he begins by alluding to Qur’an 56:17 where paradise is invoked and the phrase “immortal youths” (wildan mukhalladun) occurs. he comments, “The verse indicates and gives the good news that the children of believers who die before reaching maturity will remain perpetually as eternal, lovable children in a form worthy of paradise.”[530] But he is not content to stop there. he spins out the implications of the phrase to create a scene of everlasting parental happiness where parent will enjoy “the sweetest of pleasures,” namely, “loving and caressing children.” and this will be an eternal pleasure, free of pain, and so, utterly incomparable with the ten years or so which we have in this world to enjoy the happiness our children bring us. The death of a much-loved child thus offers us the prospect of endless pleasure in the hereafter. The image, in all its domestic warmth and family coziness, has an irresistible appeal.

Nursi delights in parables and anecdotes. he draws on them constantly to enforce a spiritual point. In this he stands in the long tradition of Sufi masters who knew that a story was often more powerful, and more persuasive, than rational argument. imagine a man thrown into jail. his son is sent to comfort him. now the man suffers both for his own sake and for the sake of his imprisoned child. When a judge offers to take the child and raise him in a beautiful palace, the man refuses, for his child is his only comfort in his captivity. his friends reason with him. The child, they say, would be going to a “spacious and happy” place, whereas if he remains in prison with his father, he will suffer and will cause him to suffer. in the palace, by contrast, the child may act as an intercessor for the father and “attract the king’s mercy.” But for this, trust in the king’s wisdom and benevolence is required. The point of the parable is obvious but effective. When our children die, they are taken to a realm of beauty; there they can intercede for us. They are fortunate; it is we who remain as miserable captives in the dungeon of the world. under such circumstances, grief becomes meaningless.

in his third point, Nursi moves to a profounder level. We own nothing in this world. “The child who died was the creature, possession, servant and together with all his members, the artefact of a Most compassionate creator, and belonging to him, was a friend of his parents, put temporarily under their supervision.”[531] We are reminded of our earlier author’s declaration that this world is the “possession of him who has no possessions.” The notion of god’s “ownership” of everything in creation is Qur’anic but Nursi here discusses it in a manner reminiscent of alghazali’s treatment in his Ihya' 'ulum al-din. Nursi was not himself a Sufi;[532] even so, his works betray the influence of certain great early masters throughout, and in particular, that of al-ghazali (whose work he revered and often quoted).[533]

in his next point, Nursi holds up the very transience of the world as a source of consolation. if this world were eternal, and we remained eternally separated from those we love, then sorrow would be appropriate. But the world is only a “guesthouse” and we are only travelers passing through. separation is not everlasting.

In his fifth and final point, Nursi invokes God’s compassion as a consolation, but his words are enigmatic. compassion is “true love” which “binds the heart” to god. The death of their child causes parents, who “love their child more than all the world,” to turn their eyes from this world towards another realm “worthy of the heart’s attachment.” on the face of it, certain of Nursi’s points in this letter are quite conventional. But the letter is merely an outline of hints which must be supplemented by his other works. in the remarkable discourses that make up the Risale-i Nur Collection, we find in fact a powerful Islamic theodicy. It is not systematic but emerges in “rays” and “flashes.” Though he had mastered the traditional disciplines, Nursi was not a methodical thinker after the pattern of al-shahid al-Thani, but a visionary who drew on dreams, parables, sudden insights, and poetic intuitions, all of which were grounded in a profound command of islamic tradition. at the same time, he was a man with his feet firmly planted on the ground; though he saw himself as in a five-fold exile, as expressed in his famous “gurbet” letter written during his exile in Barla,[534] he acted, often with great effectiveness, to carry out practical projects, especially after the establishment of the republic.

in his conception of theodicy, Nursi is a direct successor to al-ghazali. in The Words,[535] he approvingly quotes his controversial statement, “nothing in possibility is more wonderful than what it is” (laysa fi’l-imkan abda' mimma kan).[536] But his use of this notion, which permeates his many writings, is quite original; he takes the ghazalian dictum but develops it in his own distinctive way. here i can indicate only two aspects of this striking originality.

First, though he draws on sources as disparate as the providence of such philosophers as ibn sina (though like al-ghazali with critical reservations!) and a conception of creation as a “locus of manifestation,” derived from ibn al-'arabi, he fuses these in a novel manner. one conspicuous aspect of this is his acute sensitivity to nature. i know of no other thinker in the long history of theodicy who raises the question of why non-human beings in the order of nature must suffer destruction and decline. The Mu’tazilites, to be sure, had raised the issue of animal suffering; but Nursi’s vision is far broader than theirs. For example, in his Twentyfourth letter, he notes that man can hope for eternal happiness, but what about:

the delicate, lovely species of trees and plants, and the flowers, all living creatures, and the species of animals, which are worthy of existence, lovers of life … What compassion and kindness is there in their continuously, without exception, being annihilated, in their swiftly being despatched to non-existence without being allowed to so much as open their eyes, in their being made to work and labour without being allowed to so much as take a breath, in their being changed by calamities with not one of them being left in peace, in their being killed without exception, in their dying with not one of them remaining, in their departing with not one of them being gratified—what wisdom and purpose, what favour and mercy, are there in this?[537]

The passionate tone of this question makes plain that for Nursi, the problem was anguishing; this is no arid school-question devised for debate, but a cry from the heart. Throughout his work, nature—and especially trees and other growing things—are viewed with deep compassion and love.[538] if man is, for Nursi, a “spoiled and delicate child,” pampered by god, the garden in which he has been set by a compassionate creator is still permeated by “the breath of the Merciful.”

Of the five answers which Nursi offers to this question, his third impresses me as the most profound, the most convincing: “Things do not go to non-existence; they rather pass from the sphere of power to the sphere of knowledge; they go from the Manifest World to the World of the unseen.”[539] in this world, all things, including ourselves, including our beloved children, as well as the trees and the animals, are contingent, brought out from nothingness and the realm of infinite possibility, only by the Mercy of god, and all these things—again including ourselves—serve as both signs and manifestations of god during our earthly sojourn; but when we die, we pass from the sphere in which we, and everything else, are “objects of god’s power” to a permanent place in his knowledge. We, and everything in creation, are manifestations of god’s names, and these remain in his omniscience forever. “all species of creatures,” he says, are transformed “into books of the Most Merciful, and all gardens into divine decrees, placing stamps on the letters of the trees to the number of its fruits, and seals to the number of its leaves.”[540] accordingly, there is an intense sense of joy throughout Nursi’s writings, even when he is grappling with the most painful

issues. To my knowledge, no other thinker on theodicy has infused his reflections with such palpable jubilation, both in the beauty of creation and in the wonders of the world to come. This finds continual expression in his poetic style with its delicate intuitions—his sense of the world of man and of nature as “a festival”[541] —as well as in his keen eye for the tiniest wonders. even the humble fly is a miracle in his eyes (as the Qur’anic gnat was for al-Ghazali).[542] in a certain superficial sense, Nursi’s theodicy is an aesthetic one; the world is “a work of art,” it is an “embroidery,” fashioned by a supreme artisan. But though he delights in the loveliness of created things, he always looks beyond. his theodicy is visionary; it is a sudden intense burst of light shining into another world.

in this presentation i have only been able to suggest the riches to be found in the works of both these thinkers, at once so different and yet, in a deeper sense, so alike. Both were outsiders in the worlds they inhabited; both came under suspicion from the authorities; both suffered for their beliefs. Whether relying unshakably on intellect and sacred tradition, as in the case of al-shahid al-Thani, or on a profound cosmic vision, as with Said Nursi, they faced the most tormenting questions, questions for which our grieving early poet had no answers and no consolations. as al-shahid al-Thani himself points out, in the Jahiliyya the “arabs neither hoped for reward nor feared punishment; “they practised patience and forebearance ['ilm] and pursued an attitude of ‘manliness’ [muruwwa],” and after the coming of islam, when they learned the merits of these virtues, they cultivated them even more fervently.[543] Perhaps then for all his stoicism abu dhu’ayb too earned merit in heaven. unlike him, both our thinkers could draw on ever more refined speculation on the painful dilemmas of theodicy in fashioning their own efforts at consolation. But in the end, perhaps the finest contribution of both lay in their example. in the nobility of their faith they stood—for many, they still stand—as enduring figures of consolation for the sorrowful.

** 12. “landscape and Melancholy:” Said Nursi, dante alighieri and the contexts of Modernism

Gareth Jones

look upon the signs of god’s mercy, and see how he restores life to the earth after death. Verily he it is Who shall bring to life the dead, and he is powerful over all things.[544] in Istanbul: Memories of a City, orhan Pamuk writes:

Huzun, the Turkish word for melancholy, has an arabic root; when it appears in the Koran (as “huzn” in two verses and “hazen” in three others) it means much the same thing as the contemporary Turkish word. The Prophet Mohammed referred to the year in which he lost both his wife hatice and his uncle, ebu Talip, as “Senettul huzn,” or the year of melancholy; this confirms that the word is meant to convey a feeling of deep spiritual loss.[545]

Pamuk outlines the way in which this understanding of huzun, with its strong connotations of “loss and the spiritual agony and grief attending it,” found a natural home in modern Turkey after the fall of the ottoman empire.[546] Pamuk also identifies a second tradition of interpreting huzun, however, one he says arises from Sufi mysticism and which suggests a more positive sense for the word. In a signal passage Pamuk writes:

To the Sufis, huzun is the spiritual anguish we feel because we cannot be close enough to allah, because we cannot do enough for allah in this world. A true Sufi follower would pay no attention to worldly concerns like death, let alone goods or possessions: he suffers from grief, emptiness and inadequacy because he can never be close enough to allah, because his apprehension of allah is not deep enough. Moreover, it is the absence, not the presence, of huzun that causes him distress. it is the failure to experience huzun that leads him to feel it; he suffers because he has not suffered enough; and it is by following this logic to its conclusion that islamic culture has come to hold huzun in high esteem.[547]

Pamuk’s description of Turkish and Muslim religious sensibilities also resonates for christian themes in europe, in the sense that medieval notions of spiritual devotion and consolation, current for centuries, were compromised by nineteenth- and twentieth-century ideas of progress and identity (as they were in Turkey with the fall of the ottoman empire). For christian thought as for Bediuzzaman Said Nursi these themes reached a crisis in the 1920s, against a background of political and economic restructuring after the First World War and the intellectual modernism that accompanied it. The grief and melancholy that followed that war inspired divergent responses, some religious some not, but all with a profound sense of the challenges and responsibilities of being human.

i think the concept of huzun informs the question of what was happening in those years, and i want to discover something of what that means for how one interprets both Nursi and european modernism. This argument is not intended to demonstrate that Nursi was a modernist, just as it is not intended to show that literary modernism is inherently religious.[548] rather, my point is that both Nursi and modernism perceive the need to respond to the challenge of an enormous crisis of cultural identity, and even though they respond in very different ways the necessity to respond is marked by the same melancholic realisation that things have unalterably changed. i am interested by the integrity of Nursi’s religious response to that melancholic realisation, and what that integrity tells us about the relationship between christianity and islam on the question of the resurrection of the dead.[549]

The First World War remains the greatest of all assaults on european thought and identity, outstripping the later global conflict in its all-consuming destruction of our social convictions and political beliefs. its impact in the West has been the subject of endless study and debate: in Turkey, too, the questions that return to 1918 and the relationship between ottoman empire and europe continue to shape contemporary discussion (particularly with integration into the european Community a significant issue).[550] The First World War was the great dislocation between past and present – between the high culture of the Victorian era and its dismemberment in the twentieth century – and the 1920s the crucible in which critical responses to that

dislocation forged. in the West those critical responses were often fashioned in the guises of a developing secularisation, with the established churches at first relatively incapable of making sustained counter-demonstrations to the social and political changes unleashed by the War.[551] Nursi’s response to these same events, however, was markedly different and sheds remarkable light on the period as one of decisive religious significance, most notably for the writing of the Risale-i Nur.

The First World War was a great trauma for Nursi, as Şükran Vahide notes:

The ottoman defeat, which as the holders of the caliphate was interpreted by the victors as a defeat of Islam, and the final demise of the Empire and occupation by foreign forces, as well as the long years of war and captivity, had all affected Nursi deeply and taken their toll on his health.[552]

in his own way (quite different to those in the West), Nursi then goes through the same catharsis experienced by the West, years of hope then disillusion then the emergence of a renewed understanding of the heart and study of islam. hope and disillusion marked Nursi’s experiences in istanbul and ankara, including his concerns about the developing government of the secular Turkish state. renewed understanding came in the form of Nursi’s Risale, in which his exposition of

islamic beliefs about the resurrection of the dead emerges.[553] Nursi’s Risale has been the subject of immense study, of course, and the links between that text and the period 1918–23 are well known.[554] What has been less clearly examined, however, is the degree to which Nursi’s critical response to the aftermath of the First World War, and his return to a deeper understanding of islam, contrasts so revealingly with the situation in Western europe, where the cultural response to social and political crisis for the most part was against faith, not for it. in this chapter i will be concerned with that critical contrast, not in order to make spurious connections between Nursi and a modernist response that he did not know

and would have had no sympathy with if he had known it, but rather to demonstrate something of Nursi’s power to illuminate worlds of thought that lie beyond his immediate concerns.

The argument will begin with an identification of some of the key features of Nursi’s thought in 1918–24, before moving on to a contrast with the intellectual origins of european literary modernism in the same period, particularly in the work of T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. I will then draw out the influence of dante alighieri on both eliot and Pound before, in the chapter’s main part, comparing the though of Nursi and dante on the question of resurrection, for Nursi discussed in the Tenth Word of the Risale and for dante as revealed in the Divine Comedy.[555] a section drawing together the ways in which Nursi’s achievements cast light on a singularly important period in european thought and culture, one that continues to inform european senses of its unity to this day, will conclude this analysis.

Said Nursi 1918–194 in his essay’s section on istanbul and the emergence of the new said, Vahide notes:

From his own descriptions, it was ‘the contemplation of death (rabita-i-mevt) and the overwhelming realisation of his own age (in fact he was forty-five) and the transitory nature of things that sparked off the mental and spiritual crisis that was finally resolved with the emergence of the New Said.[556]

That transformation can be dated to Nursi’s return to istanbul in June 1918, after two years in a Russian prison camp, and his subsequent reflection on both his experiences and his faith. “The transformation probably began in the second half of 1920 and was completed by the end of 1921,” notes Vahide, after which Nursi set to work developing his new critical perspective.[557] Nursi then travels to ankara towards the end of 1922, where he is disillusioned by the new Turkish government, before leaving for Van in april 1923. Nursi leaves Van in 1925 and, after a short period in Burdur, finds his home in Barla. The key writings of this period, including the Tenth Word on

the resurrection of the dead, form the basis of the Risale that Nursi began in Burdur and Barla.

The most interesting intellectual feature of this early period, prior to the great work on resurrection in the Risale and found in the earlier al-Mathnawi al-arabi al-nuri, is perhaps Nursi's work in Katre (A Droplet) on the "four words and phrases" that summed up his insights at the time.[558] The four words and phrases, all related to method or the form of critical inquiry associated with the new said, are that all things signify beyond themselves, demonstrate divine cause, reveal divine intention, and are understood by a distinctive viewpoint or perspective. The first three words or phrases properly understood belong to explicitly theological concerns and will be considered below in terms of Nursi's work on the resurrection of the dead. The question of perspective, however, while axiomatically theological for Nursi, also allows of literary or hermeneutic interpretation, and as such forms a significant bridge to European literary modernism of the same period.

Perspective, as Vahide acknowledges, is the point at which Nursi brings together the heart and intellect, god and the world, the natural and the divine.[559] Properly (that is, theologically) understood, as Nursi insists, perspective means that the viewpoint of the inquirer is itself transformed by the subject viewed, in faith (hence perspective rather than viewpoint, where stance or position is crucial to the former but not the latter). To acknowledge the theological dimension of perspective, however, is also to acknowledge that it can be denied; therefore, that god's order and providence, which the inquirer discerns in perspective, can be rejected or denied because of other concerns or issues. For Nursi such a denial would be both an abomination and strictly nonsensical, since it would involve a denial of one's own existence as much as god's.

it is, however, a denial that lies at the heart of ezra Pound's modernism, as revealed by his famous declaration that "i haven't an aquinas-map; aquinas not valid now."[560] The contrast here between Pound and Nursi is as marked as it could be. Pound, on behalf of modernism, declares the old maps invalid and urges on poetry and thought to discover and embrace new maps

for human knowledge and understanding. Nursi, by contrast, argues for something very different: the identification of new ways back to the old maps, to follow the old maps with renewed faith.[561] The tension between old and new is a key distinction between Nursi's response to modernism and that of such western writers as T.s. eliot and ezra Pound.

*** Eliot, Pound, Dante

ezra Pound is one of the great mysteries of western religious thought in the 1920s and 30s, because western thought has generally overlooked Pound's influence on such questions.[562] That oversight is unsurprising given Pound's general antipathy to religion, as noted in the comment cited above; but his antipathy holds some useful ideas, too. What Pound really objected to in this comment was the sense in which people attempted to map out a devotional journey, with indexed points of reference along the way. Pound's general point was that any attempt to fix one particular understanding of the world, even one including god, is inappropriate for modernity.[563] at its most charitable, Pound's reading supposes that a dependence upon religious authority (in the guise of Thomas aquinas) is redundant, obsolete in a world that has developed beyond the limits of theological liminality.[564] More harshly, Pound suggests that such a religious loyalty blinds one to the real nature of human journeying, in the sense that for Pound human existence is just such a journey towards knowledge and understanding, rather than a fideistic journey without or beyond knowledge, as Pound thinks it is in religion.

T.s. eliot articulates similar thoughts in his epic poem The Waste Land, dedicated to ezra Pound ("il miglior fabbro" as eliot calls him, quoting dante).[565] eliot is not as explicit as Pound is in his rejection of the religious journey, but some of the lines of "The Burial of the Dead," the first poem from The Waste Land, come close to evoking a similar world:

unreal city,

under the brown fog of a winter dawn, A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many, i had not thought death had undone so many. sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled,

And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.

Flowed up the hill and down King William street,

To where saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours

With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.[566]

To some degree eliot is developing some of the clearer themes of 1920s modernism, in his allusion to the godless existential journey that all men must make, devoid now of illusions in the aftermath of the First World War.[567] The implicit reference to hell – “i had not thought death had undone so many” – captures the desolation experienced by this generation, a desolation unencumbered by spiritual consolation. The notion here of journey, however, also resonates with a deeper (albeit compromised) religious sense in its evocation of dante’s Divine Comedy, in which dante’s own journey takes him down to similar “unreal cities” that one recognises in The Waste Land. The next lines of “The Burial of the dead’,” moreover – “There I saw one I knew, and stopped him, crying: ‘Stetson! /You who were with me in the ships of Mylae!’ …”[568] – invoke the same collision between the classical and the contemporary that dante made such a feature of his own poem. Whereas in dante the tensions are between the classical and the medieval, however, in eliot they are between the classical, the medieval, and the modern: the extra layer is part of the need to bring dante’s thought world into contrast with some of the modernist sensibilities already seen in Pound.

The concept of huzun sheds light on this question, since to characterize part of eliot’s response as melancholy draws out something of the desire and longing that lies at the heart of The Waste Land,

and which is an important feature of eliot’s poetry as a whole. Pound’s response to the same experiences, by contrast, is more one of grief and anger, emotions that while melancholic are viscerally so, without the sense of detachment that one finds at the heart of Eliot’s poem. Nursi, interestingly, echoes something of eliot’s detachment, but does so in a more religiously active sense: as Pamuk notes about huzun, melancholy in this sense is always a matter of detached engagement, or perhaps engaging detachment: either way the abiding human experience is one of a longing that has a focus and a goal: god.

There is an interesting contrast here between this kind of literary interpretation and the model of Qur’anic reading adopted by Nursi.[569] in the opening note to the Tenth Word, Nursi writes:

The reasons for my writing these treatises in the form of metaphor, comparisons and stories are to facilitate comprehension and to show how rational, appropriate, well-founded and coherent are the truths of islam. The meaning of the stories is contained in the truths that conclude them; each story is like an allusion pointing to its concluding truth. Therefore, they are not mere fictitious tales, but veritable truths.[570]

Nursi’s work is to open up the truth of the Qur’an by showing people the character of their relations with god through faith and by telling them parables – “metaphors, comparisons and stories” – that illuminate that truth.[571] Nursi’s stress throughout, though, is upon the continuities between god and the world, whereas in the kind of modernism exemplified by Pound and Eliot it is discontinuity that is highlighted: they are concerned with alienation rather than the reconciliation that Nursi wishes to confess and proclaim for true believers in god. Nursi wants us to have answers to our questions: it is not clear that Pound and eliot agree.[572]

The reference to the ships of Mylae in The Waste Land, and even more the broader reference to Pound’s influence, throws into relief the wider interpretive question, one that starts to make greater sense if one considers the transitions from the classical to dante and on to Pound and

eliot in the 1920s. Pound begins his Cantos with an extended reference to Book Xi of homer’s Odyssey:

and then went down to the ship,

set keel to breakers, forth on the godly sea, and We set up mast and sail on that swart ship, Bore sheep aboard her, and our bodies also heavy with weeping, and winds from sternward Bore us out onward with bellying canvas, circe’s this craft, the trim-coifed goddess.[573]

The stimulus here is Pound’s interest in the emblematic quality of the sense of journey itself, and he selects a high point of the most heroic journey from antiquity to announce the same virtues that must inform the quintessentially modern journey towards self-understanding.[574] More directly significant, however, is the immediate reference – “Bore sheep aboard her” – that prefigures the fast-approaching confirmation of “A sheep to Tiresias only, black and a bell-sheep.”[575] For it is this same Tiresias whom Odysseus has been commanded to find by Circe in Book X of the Odyssey, across “the stream of ocean to where there is a narrow shore and the groves of Persephone – tall black poplars and willows.”[576] From there he must travel down to hades to consult Tiresias on how he is to return home:

and anticlea came, whom i beat off, and then Tiresias Theban Holding his gold wand, knew me, and spoke first:

“a second time? why? man of ill star,

Facing the sunless dead and this joyless region? stand from the fosse, leave me my bloody bever

For soothsay.” and i stepped back,

and he strong with the blood, said then: “odysseus shalt return through spiteful neptune, over dark seas, lose all companions.”[577]

in Pound’s poem Tiresias’ prophecy is at odds with homer’s own description of odysseus’ return to ithaca, echoing instead dante’s unique description of the traveler’s end in canto XXVi of the Inferno:

We all rejoiced, but soon it turned to grief; For from the unknown land a storm blew up and struck against the fore part of the ship.

Three times it turned her round, with all the waters; at the fourth turn it raised the stern aloft, and the head went down, as it pleased another it should, until the sea again closed over us. (Inferno XXVi, 136–42)[578]

The shift here, from Pound to Homer to Dante and back again to Pound, is difficult.[579]

Yet the move has been foretold in Pound’s own poem, as early as Tiresias’ first words to odysseus: “a second time? why? man of ill star, /Facing the sunless dead and this joyless region?” The latin original used by Pound at this point reads: Cur iterum o infelix linquens lumen Solis/ Venisti, ut videas mortuos, et iniucundam regionem? – [Why again, oh unfortunate one, have you come here to see the dead and this unpleasant region?] – and is an echo of Virgil’s quod si tantus amor menti, si tanta cupido est/ bis Stygios innare lacus, bis nigra videre/ Tartara – [But if such love is in your heart, if such yearning, twice to swim the stygian lake, twice to see black Tartarus], from Book Vi of the Aeneid.[580] The echo – impossible to homer, but made real for Pound because of his use of divus’ medieval latin translation of the Odyssey – brings Pound’s odysseus where homer’s can never travel and where, paradoxically but significantly, Homer himself will never come, namely the lower circles of hell.

Nursi is fully familiar with the concept of hell: “in the whole world there is no truer report, no firmer claim, no more apparent truth than this. The world is without doubt a field, and the resurrection a threshing-floor, a harvest. Paradise and hell are each storehouses for the grain.”[581] The point of the concepts of Paradise and hell is not to throw into relief or contrast the nature of our isolation as in literary modernism, however, but rather to confirm the character of belief in god’s creation: “Faith, then, follows inevitably on the observation of the world, unless one is drunk on misguidance.”[582] Nursi is not interested in discussing the resurrection of the dead because he thinks that by describing the nature of these places one can steer people towards a truth that somehow lies within human being. rather, the link between this world and the beyond is one of complementarity: they reveal each other in perfect symmetry:

it is not possible that the Wise, Powerful and Merciful creator of this world, which is like an exhibition, or a testing-ground, or a field, should not also create a hereafter in which the purposes of this world shall be made manifest.[583]

Nursi’s work on the resurrection of the dead is in fact a theological discussion of the meaning of life understood as a pilgrimage, a journey back towards and with god. What there is here in the western modernist tradition, by contrast, is not one intriguing journey, nor even simply two, but rather three (with an allusion to a fourth journey, aeneas’): odysseus’ journey in homer, in Pound, and in dante. The homeric original is simplest, because it works straightforwardly as narrative. Pound’s version, though in truth a poetic corruption, is purposive because it outlines the essential parameters of the modern quest for identity: to achieve knowledge and understanding, up to and beyond death, now stripped of its mythical religiosity and outfitted in a new metaphysics.[584] dante’s account, by contrast – though it agrees with Pound on odysseus’ death by drowning – takes him on a darker road, down beyond the rivers acheron, styx, and Phlegethon, and on to the eighth cleft of Malebolge, reserved for souls guilty of the fraudulent use of intellect and eloquence, as employed by Odysseus in persuading his companions to their final course:

i worked my friends to such a pitch of keenness

With that little speech, for carrying on the journey,

That afterwards i could hardly have held them back ...(Inferno XXVi, 121–3)[585]

odysseus’ crime is far deeper than solely a sin of deceit, however, notwithstanding dante’s forthright condemnation of that failing. odysseus’ true offence is against the divinely imposed limits on natural reason and human knowledge, and in traveling beyond the confines of the known world Odysseus offended not simply against Virgil’s moral injunction, but also against those doctrines of Trinity and incarnation that are so closely related to the quia, the gift of faith.[586] odysseus’ true offence is to depart not simply from the path of right knowledge and understanding, suitably limited, but also from the path of christ – an offence that Pound well understood, since his interest in odysseus is because he offers modernity a model of what stephen sicari has called “the epic ambition.”[587] The literary motif here for that epic ambition (and offence) is descent; for just as odysseus descends to seek out Tiresias, and just as Aeneas descends to the Underworld to find his father Anchises, so Christ too descends unto hell.[588] The purpose of these three descents, however, as with the purpose of the three journeys, is very different. odysseus and aeneas descend to hell to seek information for their own ends, virtuous or not. christ descends to redeem those who might be redeemed, a journey dante repeats, with Virgil as his guide, as he descends in the footsteps of Christ, the first living Christian ever to do so.[589]

*** Nursi on the Resurrection of the Dead

in the conclusion to the Tenth Word, Nursi writes: “For even a master of philosophy such as Ibn-I Sina said that ‘resurrection cannot be understood by rational criteria’,” an insight that characterizes the entire text.[590] On first

sight the modernist themes i have explored here have little in common with the thought world of Nursi's Risale, and his representation of the resurrection of the dead fails to resonate with either Pound's epic ambition or the specific details of the journeys into the afterlife made by aeneas, odysseus, and dante. as Nursi makes clear in the Tenth Word of the Risale, however:

There is … a realm apart from the present one. in it, there is a supreme tribunal, a lofty place of justice, an exalted place of reward, where all this compassion, wisdom, mercy and justice will be made fully manifest (eleventh aspect).[591]

Just as in dante's Divine Comedy, therefore, Nursi's Risale wants to speak of Paradise as a distinct place, with distinct characteristics, "gardens and treasuries full of the pure and elevated originals of the samples and shapes we see in this world."[592] Nursi spends less time than a writer like dante in describing that Paradise, however, preferring instead to concentrate upon the relationship between this world and what lies beyond. That relationship focuses upon the role of a tribunal or court in which just decisions about one's worth in life will be set towards reward (or punishment) after death, as Nursi argues in the Tenth Word in the context of one of his several narratives:

This implies that proceedings at some great concourse and meeting will be based on what happens here. Further, the results of all that occurs here will be permanently displayed at some supreme exposition. all the transient and fluctuating phenomena we see here will yield the fruit of eternal and immutable form (Tenth aspect).[593]

The urgent question for Nursi, therefore, is how one gets from this world to what lies beyond; that is, the resurrection of the dead. The question of resurrection is the question of transition, but a transition that is understood in terms of just continuity between this world and the beyond. it is the point Nursi makes throughout the Tenth Word: "Since man is not called to account and judged in fitting fashion while in this world, it follows that he must proceed to a supreme Tribunal and a final felicity."[594] What one does not

find in the Risale, consequently, is any account of a descriptive journey through Paradise or hell. on the contrary, Nursi wants us to understand the world: “For the magnificent cosmos is a palace that has the sun and the moon as its lamps and the stars as its candles; time is like a rope or ribbon hung within it, on to which the glorious creator each year threads a new world.”[595] The point of the new world’s motif is to make us understand our role in worshipping god by embracing his providence: to understand the purity of his purpose by affirming the miracles of creation, a point Islam shares with Judaism and christianity.

There are some interesting things happening in the texts considered here on this question of “transition,” which one might define as the process whereby one moves from one discrete realm to another, however such movement is itself understood. in the Divine Comedy dante famously does not “move” at all, if by “movement” one means some act of agency: he simply finds himself at the entrance to Hell and enters (Inferno ii, 142). aeneas, by contrast, like odysseus, must bid for entrance, and entrance is permitted because of purpose: aeneas and odysseus are suffered to enter the underworld because their journeys there are predestined and in that sense provided.[596] For both dante and aeneas, however, there is some place that they transit to; they change location, though living, to the places of the dead. in eliot and Pound, by contrast, notions of locus and transition are internalized: they are understood rationally not as distinct places but as existential possibilities. resurrection from the dead, if it has any meaning at all in such modernist texts as The Waste Land and the Cantos, is something one must do for oneself: there is no supreme court, to cite Nursi’s own motif from the same period.[597]

The first thing one can say about transition in the Risale, by contrast, is that Nursi does not appear to be interested either in physical relocation (living or dead) or in the internalization of existential possibilities. rather, Nursi appears to deploy a commonplace sense of life and death in which the cessation of the former leads immediately to the latter, as one state gives way to the next. Transition between the two, therefore, is not a complex issue if the kind of complexity one seeks is either descriptive or philosophical. again, Nursi is not interested in setting up a compelling intellectual argument that positions doctrine in some kind of winning

position. rather, Nursi’s purpose is always to turn people back towards god’s mercy, which one can know this side of resurrection.

Transition is complex, however, when one considers the causality that lies behind the transition, understood theologically as in the Risale. That causation is god’s, and the way humans know it is morally. We live morally or immorally, argues Nursi: that quality, in turn, is recognized by god and rewarded. resurrection from the dead is not a physical process, therefore, so much as a function of divine grace: it is god’s gift to just lives, and his punishment to the unjust. as Nursi writes in the second Truth:

Is it possible that the Lord of this world, Who in His works demonstrates infinite generosity, infinite mercy, infinite splendour and infinite glory, should not give reward in a manner befitting His generosity and mercy, and not punish in a manner befitting His splendour and glory?[598]

The key question about resurrection as transition, therefore, is finally how we have responded in this life to the mercy, splendor and glory that god has revealed in his bounty, and which we should embrace morally and faithfully. not to do so is not to recognize god, as Nursi makes clear in the Tenth Word: “The worst error and misguidance of the students of philosophy, the people of unbelief and the instinctual soul, lies in not recognising god.”[599] at heart, therefore, Nursi’s doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is a teaching about the love of god and humanity’s right response to that love. i take it that this argument tells us a great deal about Nursi’s understanding of islam, and as much about the new said’s motivation in beginning the Risale with a sustained critique of the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. it also makes sense of Nursi’s otherwise opaque aphorism from the Tenth Word:

There is nothing that makes impossible the gathering of resurrection, and much that necessitates it.[600]

it is this sense of a contrast between the apparent contingency of human existence and the necessity of divine grace that informs Nursi’s entire theology, and which creates a link to the intellectual world of the Divine Comedy.

*** Dante and the Resurrection of the Dead

There are some significant similarities between Nursi’s teaching and Dante’s Divine Comedy, therefore, albeit in the latter text articulated via the traditional language of medieval Catholic theology. Significantly, however, Dante places the doctrinal point in the context of a discussion of the salvation of non-christians. The fourth canto of the Inferno is one of the most significant theological passages of the entire poem, because it deals directly with christian doctrine at a key juncture, and because it relates an understanding of that doctrine which will in turn inform some of dante’s most pressing concerns, particularly the clash between the redemption of certain virtuous pagans and, to dante’s great sorrow, the endless grief of many of his greatest heroes. There has already been a way into the issue here in the third canto of the Purgatorio:

“and you have seen some whose desires would Have been satisfied, desiring fruitlessly, Which is their lot in their eternal grief:

i speak of aristotle and Plato and many more.” and here he bent his head, and said no more, and he continued troubled (Purgatorio iii, 40–5).[601]

The central idea here is that aristotle and Plato and many others are “desiring fruitlessly.” Virgil does not tell us why this is the case here, but dante provides a full answer in the fourth canto of the Inferno:

The master said: “are you not going to ask What spirits these are which you see in this place? i think you should know, before you go on;

They have committed no sin, and if they have merits,

That is not enough, because they are not baptized, Which all must be, to enter the faith which is yours.

and, if they lived before the christian era, They did not adore god as he should be adored: and i am one of those in that position.

For these deficiencies, and no other fault,

We are lost; there is no other penalty

Than to live here without hope, but with desire” (Inferno iV, 31–42).[602]

dante immediately shows that he knows exactly whom Virgil is speaking of: “it grieved my heart when i heard him say that, / Because i knew there were people of high value / Who were in that limbo, as it were suspended” (Inferno iV, 43–5).[603] in case there were any confusion, however, dante appends a long list of these “people of high value” in lines 88–144, beginning with homer, horace, ovid, and lucan, and ending with avicenna and averrhoes.[604]

That is not the only significant passage in this canto, however, because prior to the listing of these “people of high value,” Virgil answers dante’s question:

“But sir,” i said, “will you explain to me,” i asked because i wanted to be certain about the faith which overcomes all error:

“did anyone, either through his own merit, or through another’s, ever get out of here and achieve blessedness?” he understood What i implied, and said: “When i was new here, i saw a powerful spirit come this way, crowned with the insignia of victory.

He took away the shade of our first parent, With that of abel and his son, the shade of noah and of Moses, the obedient law-giver,

With the patriarch abraham, and david the king, israel with his father and his children, and with rachel, for whom he did so much;

and many others, and he made them blessed; i think that you should know, that before these,

There were no human spirits who were saved” (Inferno iV, 46–63).[605]

The juxtaposition, therefore, is clear: on the one hand, people of high value who were not redeemed when christ harrowed hell and who yet remain in limbo, living there without hope but with desire; on the other, many patriarchs and mighty figures of the old Testament whom the powerful spirit, crowned with the insignia of victory, took away on holy saturday.[606] What is not as clear in the narrative is why this separation took place, and what it was that these people of high value, who had committed no sin, had done wrong sufficient to deserve their endless grief in Hell.

dante provides an answer in line 38: “They did not adore god as he should be adored …”. The italian here – non adorar debitamente a Dio – echoes the latin found in Thomas’s commentary on the Fourth gospel, 3:5, remarking on the works of pagans: “Nec etiam omnia bene operabantur, quia Deo cultum debitum non reddebant” – [nor were they wont to do all things well, because they did not pay due honour to god.] [607] The point is a significant one because Virgil, too, remarks earlier that even if these pagans have committed no sins and have merits, this by itself

is insufficient if either they have not been baptized, or did not adore god as he should be adored (Inferno iV, 34–9).

That Virgil introduces a pair of alternatives here is crucial because it reiterates the distinction between the contingent and the necessary. The key point is not that all must be baptized, because although that is necessary to enter the christian faith, it clearly is not the only means to salvation, as neither adam nor abraham nor any of the others redeemed from limbo were ever baptized. rather, baptism itself is a contingent sign of something deeper, namely the right disposition towards god: to adore god as god ought to be adored. With this disposition, even if born many centuries before christ and many miles from Bethlehem, abraham was redeemed. Without it odysseus, who traveled beyond the limits of the known world and who twice journeyed to the underworld, is condemned to everlasting torment.[608]

This is a crucial tension, one that will be rehearsed throughout the Inferno and the Purgatorio and which will in turn inform dante’s eventual enlightenment in the Paradiso (especially canto XiX). Inferno iV is both about an event – christ’s descent into hell – and also a central theme of theological anthropology. “To adore god as god ought to be adored” is not simply a function of baptism (though baptism should always entail the adoration of god), and certainly not a quality gained by ceaseless study of beauty, truth, and goodness; for if it were the latter, then Virgil would have been redeemed from hell in the company of the others he watched pass by with christ. rather, “to adore god as god ought to be adored” is a point about fundamental ontology: it is an argument about what human beings can do without knowledge of christ, and even before the time and place of the incarnation.

Nursi would recognize this point entirely: “The worst error and misguidance of the students of philosophy, the people of unbelief and the instinctual soul, lies in not recognizing god,” as has been seen before.[609] not recognizing god, or not adoring god as he ought to be adored, is the same failing: the failure to understand one’s life in this world as always being in continuity with god and always before god’s love and justice. Nursi and dante have very different worlds, and very different beliefs in some respects. But in the final

analysis they both understand the question of what lies beyond this world not as one of physical location so much as spiritual transfiguration: becoming one with god’s grace and truth, for “to god belongs the mystery of the heavens and the earth” (Qur’an 16:77). That mystery is the mystery of resurrection.

*** Said Nursi’s Contribution to An Understanding of Dante, European Literary Modernism and the Question of the Resurrection of the Dead

These parts of the Divine Comedy are overlaid with a deep christological structure, one that shapes the narrative development of dante’s argument: it is, in this sense, a poem about being reunited with Beatrice by encountering the risen lord, his work and his glory. The fact that it is the Risen lord that always shadows dante’s path, however, makes the connection with Nursi that much more evocative. To state the point as bluntly as possible, both dante and Nursi are employing very similar language about the pilgrim way of the believer confronted by eternity.

i think there are three crucial lessons that christian thought, after dante, should learn from an engagement with Nursi. First, “to adore god as god ought to be adored” is not a relic from the medieval past: it is, rather, the prayerful essence of religion, and in a world that is forgetting how to be truly religious – and one which is seeing today the results of western incomprehension of significant religious belief in the Middle east – Nursi’s reminder that prayer is about worship and that worship means the practice of love is an invaluable lesson. Nursi is not concerned about the resurrection of the dead because he wishes to prove certain assertions about the destination and even location of our departed souls. he is concerned because resurrection is about returning to god from our journeys through the world. such oneness is not the opposite of separation. oneness is who we learn we are, through a lifetime of remembering.

second, and in direct response to both the spiritual vacuum created by the First World War and modernism’s responses to it, Nursi insists that a world in which cultural models of eternity replace god’s grace is a world that has lost touch with its own realities. ezra Pound’s “i haven’t an aquinas-map; aquinas

not valid here," may therefore be a brilliant insight into the historic character of the 1920s and 30s in europe, but it cannot be an option for truly religious peoples, whatever their faith. in their different ways writers like Pound, eliot, Joyce, Fitzgerald, Mann, Kafka, canetti and hesse give us a wide range of challenging maps for tracing paths through the modernist world. as Nursi rightly observes in a different context, however, the challenge today is not to discover new maps but to learn again how to follow the old ones. The oldest map of all, the one tracing the way with god, is resurrection from the dead.

Third, and arguably most importantly, Nursi reminds us that tracing this map with god is a moral endeavor. Being religious means being ethical, not as an optional extra but as the defining characteristic of being called before God in His creation. even more than that, however, Nursi insists that being ethical is something that we do together: that even though we hear god's word individually, we understand it collectively. The modernist turn, stephen sicari's "epic ambition," realizes itself as a world of individual quests, most powerfully evoked in Joyce's litany for stephen daedalus. Nursi by contrast tells us again and again that other people are not points of collision as we pick out our own route through the debris of life. other people are our life, because in them we meet god. resurrection of the dead, our collective fate, tells us more than that we all share a common fate, therefore. it tells us that we are bound together by god for a purpose, and that god has provided for that purpose. such is Nursi's understanding of god's ordered and provided world: that we rise together as we have lived together, prayerfully and morally.

if the pathway towards such unity is compassion, both god's and ours, then huzun too, melancholy, plays its part. in the Fifth Truth of the Tenth Word Nursi asks us to imagine traveling back in time to the arabian Peninsula, there to imagine the Prophet "performing his duties and engaging in worship." in a wonderful passage, Nursi writes:

he is praying for so universal a need – immortality – that not merely the people of this earth, but also the inhabitants of the heavens and the entirety of creation are participating in his supplications and silently proclaiming, "yes, o lord! grant his prayer; we too desire it." he petitions for everlasting bliss with such touching sadness, in so yearning, so longing, and so pleading

a fashion, that he causes the whole of the cosmos to weep and thus to share in his prayer.[610]

Nursi’s work on the resurrection of the dead, and indeed the Risale as a whole, causes us to remember that, although the landscape of religious belief is too often torn by conflict, not least in tensions between the three great monotheistic faiths, nevertheless we share a faith born of our desire to be one with god and our sadness that this unity appears to lie beyond this world. such appearances, however, point us towards a deeper truth, albeit one grasped in humility: that humanity, “the highest form of life and possessor of an eternal soul,” is drawn constantly towards eternity.[611] No matter what the conflicts of this world, the hope of eternity transcends time and draws us together as one. Nursi’s Risale continues to teach us this truth.

** 13. Said Nursi’s approach to Justice and its role for Political reforms in the Muslim World

Leonid R. Sykiainen

The significance of any prominent thinker’s ideas is determined not only by their intellectual content, their orientation to fundamental sources and convincing quality of argument, but primarily by the role those ideas play at the moment when a society is undergoing a crisis or confronting problems which need to be solved in order to secure its future. outstanding thinkers can only be described as great if their views affect not only the consciousness and behavior of some limited groups or even nations, but also if they influence the mode of thinking of the whole of mankind or at least a numerous religious community such as Muslims in our World.

among those thinkers Said Nursi occupies an honorable place for Said Nursi’s thoughts are directly linked with the present situation in the Muslim countries

as well as with the role islam plays there. Said Nursi is not a political thinker in the proper sense but the political future of the above mentioned nations can be predicted more profoundly if his ideas are taken into account because he contributed much to the understanding of islam and its role in today's world. But in any case when discussing this issue it is necessary to start with the analysis of Said Nursi's approach to islam and shari'ah in general.

*** Islam as Belief and Righteous Action

as a Muslim thinker he considers islam and the Qur'an to be a comprehensive universal system of allah's provisions which concern every side of human life and embrace the past, the present and the future of all mankind. stressing this point, Said Nursi underlines that the Qur'an caused a transformation in social life in this world in so luminous, happy, and truthful a fashion, and brought about such a revolution in both men's souls, and hearts, and spirits, and minds, and in their personal lives, social lives, and political lives, and continued and directed that revolution. also, the Qur'an is a founder; it is the basis of the clear religion, and the foundation of the world of islam. it changed human social life, and is the answer to the repeated questions of its various classes.[612]

The thinker believes that in expounding secondary matters of the shari'ah and laws of social life, the Qur'an at once raises the views of those it addresses to elevated, universal points, and transforming a simple style into an elevated one and instruction in the shari'ah to instruction in divine unity, it shows it is both a book of law, commands and wisdom, and a book of the tenets of faith and belief. But for Said Nursi the main feature of islam consists in the indissoluble combining of ideas and religious values together with their implementation in practice. in this regard he intentionally points out that islam, as a religion, does not consist only of belief; its second half is righteous action.[613] Said Nursi's approach to islam becomes apparently clearer when he distinguishes the leading islamic values saying that love, brotherhood, and affection are basic to islam, and they are its bond. Fairness and favorable thinking mark the islamic character.[614] at the same time the thinker pays special attention to the general attitude of islam towards the fundamentals and the main goals of human life arguing that the Qur'anic wisdom supports truth instead of force. it takes virtue and god's pleasure as

its aims in place of benefits. It takes the principle of mutual assistance as the principle of life in place of the principle of conflict. And it takes the ties of religion, class, and country to be the ties bonding communities. islam aims at forming a barrier against the lusts of the soul, urging the spirit to sublime matters, satisfying the high emotions, and urging man to the human perfections, making him a true human being. and the mark of the truth is accord. The mark of virtue is solidarity. The mark of mutual assistance is hastening to assist one another. The mark of religion is brotherhood and attraction. islam caused a revolution among mankind, and men drew closer to each other.[615] as a result islam provides for the material progress of man, and indeed urges him towards it. at the same time it provides for man's true progress and development in moral and spiritual matters. This combination forms the basis of true civilization. only in the holy Qur'an and the shari'ah of the Prophet Muhammad the virtues of progress predominate, and the benefits of civilization may be profited from. islam gained for mankind the happiness both of worldly life and of the life of the hereafter; and in the civilization that will grow out of the all-Wise Qur'an, the virtues of civilization will prevail over its evils.[616]

in this respect Nursi acknowledges that the inner look at islam differs from the outside one. For someone who has truly entered into the bounds of islam by conforming precisely to its incontestable matters, the desire to expand is the desire to be perfected. But for someone who may be counted outside those bounds through slackness, the desire to expand is the desire to destroy.[617] The thinker believes that according to its genuine nature the Qur'an is both a book of law and commands and a book of wisdom and guidance, and a book of the tenets of faith and belief, and of invocation and reflection and summons. By its nature the Qur'an comprises many books and teachings. in reality every Qur'an verse has numerous meanings, numerous benefits, and many aspects and levels. In each place its verses are mentioned with a different meaning, for different benefits and purposes. For sure, such a book has no like; it is a wonder, a marvel, a miracle.[618] stressing righteous actions as a real manifestation of the Qur'anic truth Said Nursi pays special attention to the islamic shari'ah which is the practical side of islam and the universal expression of allah's commands given to people. in this regard he distinguishes different levels and meanings of this phenomenon pointing out that there are two shari'ahs. The First is the shari'ah which orders the actions and conduct of man, the microcosm, and proceeds from the attribute of speech. The second is the supreme shari'ah of

creation which orders the motion and the rest of the world and proceeds from the attribute of Will.[619] as far as the correlation between these two meanings is concerned Said Nursi draws attention to the fact that the divine command and divine prohibition are the reason in the injunctions and prohibitions of the shari‘ah. advantages and instances of wisdom are to give them weight, and may be the reason for the command or prohibition from the point of view of the divine Will.[620]

Taken as a complex set of practical rules and orders of man’s conduct the shari‘ah comprises different kinds of provisions. Just as there are two sort of rights, personal rights and general rights, which are considered to be a sort of god’s rights, so too in the matters of the shari‘ah, certain matters concern individuals, and others, with regard to generality, concern the public; these last are called “the marks of islam.” since these marks concern all, all participate in them. To interfere in them without the consent of the public is an infringement of the public’s rights. They directly concern the whole World of islam. Thus there are certain matters of the shari‘ah concerning worship which are not tied to the reason, and are done because they are commanded. The reason for them is the command. instances of wisdom or benefits cannot change those matters of “the marks of Islam.”

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Besides, there are other shari‘ah provisions which have “reasonable meaning.”

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That is, they possess some wisdom or benefit by reason of which they have been incorporated into the Shari‘ah. The marks of Islam are sufficient for all peoples in every age. no need has remained for different laws on them. however, in secondary matters which have reasonable meaning the need for different schools has persisted to a degree. Just as clothes change with the change of the seasons and medicines change according to dispositions, so sacred laws change according to the ages, and their ordinances change according to the capacities of peoples. so the secondary matters of the ordinances of the shari‘ah look to human circumstances and come according to them. They could be changed along with the changes in the conditions

which people live under. This is the essence of one of the key islamic legal notions which is ijtihad – independent judgments of the law. everyone capable, who is qualified to practise ijtihad, may interpret matters for himself which are not incontestable; and they are binding on himself, but not on others. he cannot make laws and call on the Muslim community to conform to them. his ideas are from the shari‘ah, but they are not the shari‘ah. he may be a mujtahid, but he cannot be the lawmaker.[621]

The practical application of the ijtihad during centuries of islam’s history lead to the emergence of different schools of islamic legal doctrine. Said Nursi touches this issue in detail pointing out the positive results of this process. he recalls a hadith which says: “difference among my people is an instance of divine Mercy.” it is from the confrontation of opinions and the contradiction of views that truth becomes apparent in its full measure. The thinker stresses that the difference intended in the hadith is a positive difference. That is, each party strives to promote and diffuse its own belief; it does not seek to tear down and destroy that of the other, but rather to improve and reform it. negative difference is rejected by the hadith, for it aims in hostile fashion at mutual destruction, and those who are at each other’s throats cannot act positively.

But difference requires partisanship. if it is in the name of truth, it can become a refuge for those seeking their rights. But as for the partisanship which is biased and self-centred, it can only be a refuge for the unjust and a point of support for them. Said Nursi concludes in a very strong manner that if the confrontation of views takes place in the name of justice and for the sake of truth, then the difference concerns only means; there is unity with respect to aim and basic purpose. such a difference makes manifest every aspect of the truth and serves justice and truth. But what emerges from a confrontation of views that is partisan and biased, and takes place for the sake of a tyrannical, evil-commanding soul, that is based on egotism and fame-seeking – what emerges from this is not the “flash of truth,” but the fire of dissension.[622]

This leads us directly to Said Nursi’s attitude to justice.

*** “God Commands Justice”

The starting point of Nursi’s approach to justice is recognition that besides the law of human justice there is divine justice which determines the genuine nature of this phenomenon.[623] Such conclusion reflects the fact that justice is one of the leading features of allah and the universe created by him. The whole world manifests his overwhelming justice. That is why one of his names is all-Just.[624]

When explaining this feature, Said Nursi argues that the universe is a palace, but it is such a palace that in it is a city which is being constantly shaken by destruction and reconstruction. and in the city is a country which is being continuously agitated by war and emigration. and within the country is a world which is unceasingly revolving amid death and life. But such an astonishing balance and equilibration prevail in the palace, city, country and world that it self-evidently proves that the transformations, incomings and outgoings apparent in these innumerable beings are being measured and weighed every moment on the scales of a single Being Who sees and supervises the whole universe. Thus, everything is ordered and weighed with so sensitive a balance, so fine a measure, that the human mind can nowhere see any waste or futility.[625] allah demonstrates his dominical sovereignty in the wisdom and order, the justice and equilibrium that pervade all things. all the worlds are within the grasp of his order and balance, and ordering, balancing and his justice.[626] Said Nursi believes there is a proof that all things are done with justice and balance. The fact that all things are endowed with being, given shape and put in their appropriate place in accordance with precise equilibrium and in appropriate measure, shows that all matters are done in accordance with infinite justice and balance. Similarly, the fact that all things are given their rights in accordance with their disposition, that they receive all the necessities of their being and all the requirements of life in the most fitting form – this too is the sign left by a hand of infinite justice. Again, the fact that answer is always given to every petition and request made by the tongue of disposition, and of natural need or necessity, demonstrates the existence of infinite justice and wisdom.[627] all this is seen in a clearest manner in the Qur’an. Said Nursi quotes its famous verse: “god commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and he forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion” (16:90). The thinker explains this verse and other Qur’anic provisions saying

that the politics of civilization sacrifice the minority for the comfort of the majority. Indeed, the despotic minority sacrifices the majority of people for itself. Qur’anic justice would not take the life of a single innocent, spill their blood, or sacrifice him even for all mankind, let alone the majority.

The verse, “if anyone slew a person – unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land – it would be as if he slew the whole people” (5:32), lays two mighty mysteries before the eyes. one is pure justice. This sublime principle deems equal the individual and the community, the person and mankind; divine justice sees no difference between them; this is a constant sunna. an individual may sacrifice his rights himself, but they cannot be sacrificed otherwise, even for all mankind. The canceling of his rights, or the spilling of his blood, or the smearing of his name is equal to the canceling of the rights of all humanity, or the besmirching of it, and is its equivalent. The second mystery is this: if a selfish man murders an innocent out of greed or passion, he will lay waste the whole world if he can, should it be an obstacle to his desires, and wipe out all humanity.[628]

The total justice in the universe proceeding from the greatest manifestation of the name of all-Just, administers the balance of all things. Mentioning the word “balance” four times, these verses in Sura al-Rahman “And the firmament has He raised high, and He has set up the balance [of justice], * In order that you may not transgress [due] balance. * So establish weight with justice and fall not short in the balance” (35:7–9), indicate four degrees and four sorts of balance, showing its immensity and supreme importance in the universe. yes, just as there is no wastefulness in anything, so too in nothing is there true injustice and imbalance.

so, we may understand how basic to human life are the principles of justice, frugality, and cleanliness, which are truths of the Qur’an and islamic principles. and know how closely connected with the universe are the injunctions of the Qur’an, having spread their firm roots everywhere, and that it is impossible to destroy those truths like it is impossible to destroy the universe and change its form.[629]

To sum up, Said Nursi underlines that the pure justice of the Qur’an does not spill the life and blood of an innocent, even for the whole of humanity. The two are the same both in the view of divine Power, and in the view of justice. But through self-interest man becomes such that he will destroy everything that forms an obstacle to his ambition, even the world if he can, and he will wipe out mankind.[630]

The entire balance of the universe enjoins the supreme justice on man. in early history of islam this principle was exercised. For instance the rightly-guided caliphs were leaders of a religious republic the meaning of which was true justice and the freedom of the shari‘ah.[631] But afterwards unfortunately people very often did not act in accordance with the justice which is the principle by which the whole universe and all beings act. it is not by chance for man, whose life is so brief, cannot experience the true essence of justice in this transient world; it is for this reason that matters are postponed for a supreme tribunal. For true justice requires that man, this apparently petty creature, should be rewarded and punished, not in accordance with his pettiness, but in accordance with the magnitude of his crime, the importance of his nature and the greatness of his function. since this passing and transient world is far from manifesting such wisdom and justice for man, who is created for eternity, of necessity there will be an eternal hell and everlasting Paradise of that Just and awesome Possessor of Beauty, that Wise and Beauteous Possessor of awe.[632]

There are two varieties of justice, one affirmative, the other negative. The positive variety consists in giving the deserving his right. This form of justice exists throughout the world in the most obvious fashion, because, as proven in the Third Truth, it observably bestows, in accordance with special balances and particular criteria, all the objects of desire requested by everything from its glorious creator with the tongue of innate capacity, the language of natural need, the speech of necessity, and all the requirements of life and existence. This variety of justice is, then, as certain as life and existence itself.

The other variety of justice, the negative, consists in chastising the unjust; it gives wrongdoers their due by way of requital and punishment. This type of justice is not fully manifest in this world, even though there are countless

signs and indications that permit us to sense its true nature. For example, all the chastising blows and punitive lashes that have descended on all rebellious peoples, from the Ad and Thamud to those of the present age, show definitely that an exalted justice dominates the world.[633] in this regard Said Nursi points out that certainly and without doubt, just as the sun cannot be without the day, so that pre-eternal wisdom and eternal justice cannot be without the hereafter. There is no contradiction between the existence and ghastly torments of Hell, and infinite mercy, true justice, and wisdom with its balance and absence of waste. indeed, mercy, justice, and wisdom require its existence. For to punish a tyrant who tramples the rights of a thousand innocents and to kill a savage animal which tears to pieces a hundred cowed animals, is for the oppressed a thousand-fold mercy within justice. While to pardon the tyrant and leave the savage beast free, is for hundreds of wretches a hundred-fold pitilessness in place of that single act of misplaced mercy.[634]at the same time the all-Just provides a positive and negative responsibility for man’s conduct on the earth which represent his unlimited justice for out of his perfect munificence, compassion, and justice, Almighty God has included in good works an immediate reward and in bad actions an immediate punishment.[635] Taking into account the supreme value of the Qur’anic injunctions Said Nursi concludes that justice should be executed in the name of religion so that it may be effective over the mind, heart, and spirit, and they may conform to it. otherwise it affects only the imagination. a criminal is then frightened only of the penalty set by the state, if it is enacted, or he shrinks from the reproaches of the public, if they occur.[636] Said Nursi draws out attention to the fact that even severe punishments established in the Qur’an are more just than any sanctions provided for in criminal codes adopted by state authorities. That is for when the punishments are carried out in the name of the divine commands and dominical justice, both the spirit, and the intellect, and the conscience, and man’s innate subtle faculties are affected and influenced. It is for this reason that the execution of a punishment once in fifty years is more effective than your imprisoning numerous people every day. your penalties affect only your imaginations, for when one of you decides to steal something, suffering a penalty on account the country and nation and its benefits seems imaginary; or he thinks others will condemn him if they know about it; or it occurs to him that if it turns out unfavorably the government will send him to prison. so only his power of imagination feels minor discomfort. and the powerful desire issuing from his instinctual soul and emotions – particularly if he is needy as well – will overpower him. Then the penalty will be ineffective in making him refrain

from committing the bad deed. anyway, because they are not a divine command, the penalties are not justice. They are vain and futile like performing the prayers without taking ablutions and not facing the (qibla). That is to say, true justice and effective penalties are those which are in accordance with the divine command and executed in its name. others can have only a minimal effect.[637]

*** Social, Economic and Legal Sides of Islamic Justice

When discussing islamic justice Said Nursi distinguishes its different modes and among them a social and economic one. in his view the origin of all revolutions and corruption, and the spur and source of all base morals are just two sayings: “so long as i’m full, what is it to me if others die of hunger?” and “you suffer hardship so that i can live in ease; you work so that i can eat.” The thinker believes that the only remedy for extirpating the First saying is the obligatory payment of zakat. While the remedy for the second is the prohibition of usury and interest. Qur’anic justice stands at the door of the world and says to usury and interest: “no entry! it is forbidden! you don’t have the right to enter here!” Mankind did not heed the command, and received a severe blow. so it must heed it before it receives one even more severe.[638]

The other side of justice manifests itself in equality. Said Nursi underlines very strongly that just as there is obedience and rebellion in the face of the commands of the shari‘ah, so too there is obedience and rebellion in the face of the creative commands in the universe. With regard to the first, the reward and punishment are mostly in the hereafter, while with the second, they are mostly in this world.

For example, the reward of patience is victory; the punishment for idleness is poverty; the reward of effort is wealth, and the reward of constancy, triumph. Justice without equality is not justice. unequal justice is not justice.[639]

This manifestation of justice is apparently seen in accordance with the meaning of the verses: “no bearer of burdens can bear the burden of

another” (6:164) and: “if anyone slays a human being – unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth- it shall be as though he had slain all mankind” (5:32). These two verses teach the following principle: others are not answerable for a person’s crime, and, without his consent, an innocent person may not be sacrificed, even for the whole of mankind. If he voluntarily gives his consent and sacrifices himself, his self-sacrifice is a sort of martyrdom and is another matter.

Said Nursi is convinced that these Qur’anic injunctions establish true justice for man and express pure justice. To nurture rancor and enmity towards a believer is like condemning all the innocent attributes found in him on account of one criminal attribute, and is hence an act of great injustice. if you go further and include in your enmity all the relatives of a believer on account of a single evil attribute of his, then, in accordance with the following verse in which the active participle is in the intensive form: “Verily man is much given to wrongdoing” (14:34) you will have committed a still greater sin and transgression, against which truth, the shari‘ah and the wisdom of islam combine to warn you.[640] Said Nursi gives some convincing examples of practical application of islamic justice linked with court decisions. it is because in the administration of justice its essence and the rights of everyone who applies have to preserved without discrimination and the duty of those involved is to work solely for the sake of right. according too this principle during his caliphate, imam ‘ali sat together with a Jew in court and they were tried together. On another occasion, a just judge saw that an official was angry with a delinquent thief when he was cutting off his hand as demanded by the law. he immediately sacked the official, and full of regret said: “Those who up to now have been influenced by their feelings in this way while executing the law have perpetrated great wrongs. yes, even if in executing the law he does not pity the convicted man, he may not be angry; if he is, he is acting tyrannically. if he carries out capital punishment angrily, even if it is in retaliation (qisas), he becomes a sort of murderer.” Thus, in courts of law it is this pure, unbiased truth which rules.[641] Said Nursi mentions another event occurred to imam ‘ali. once he threw an unbeliever to the ground. as he drew his sword to kill him, the unbeliever spat in his face. he released him without killing him. The unbeliever said: “Why did you not kill me?” he replied: “i was going to kill you for the sake of god. But when you spat at me, i became angered and the purity of my intention was clouded by the inclinations of my soul. it is for this reason that i did not kill you.” The unbeliever replied: “if your religion is so

pure and disinterested, it must be the truth.” interpreting this Said Nursi underlines that when once a judge showed signs of anger while cutting off the hand of a thief, the just ruler who chanced to observe him dismissed him from his post. For if he had cut the hand in the name of the shari‘ah, his soul would have felt pity for the victim; he would have cut it off in a manner devoid of both anger and mercy. since the inclinations of his soul had had some share in his deed, he did not perform the act with justice.[642] it is therefore totally reasonable that through reviving the shari‘ah of Muhammad and his sunna and the reality of the Qur’an at the end of time, and proclaiming them and putting them into practice, they should display to the world the perfect justice. in other words justice can be achieved only through direct application of the way shown by the Qur’an.[643]

*** Mutual Consultation, Freedom and Equality as Pillars of Islamic Justice in Politics

The approach of Said Nursi to justice is a grounding of his attitude towards state power and politics. he stresses that truth and right, and conscience, severely prohibited him from politics and from interfering in government. at the same time the thinker formulates five principles which are necessary, essential, in order to save the social life and nation from anarchy: respect, compassion, refraining from what is prohibited (haram), security, the giving up of lawlessness and being obedient to authority.[644] But these requirements are to be observed only if the politics of the present are not founded on self-interest. unfortunately the politics of civilization sacrifice the minority for the comfort of the majority. Indeed, the despotic minority sacrifices the majority of people for themselves. Politics which revolves around benefit is savagery.[645]

The last estimation is of major interest for the despotism arises from opposing the shari‘ah. Very often tyranny dons the hat of justice.[646] But as we know the true justice and law are found only in the shari‘ah. But if the principles of wisdom, codes of government, laws of right, and rules of force do not aid and support one another, they will be neither fruitful nor effective among the mass of the people. The marks of the shari‘ah will be neglected and remain in abeyance. The people will not rely on them in their affairs, nor

have confidence in them.[647] it is very important to remember that anyone who is capable may make interpretations of the law for his own self; but he cannot make the law.[648] at the same time man-made laws are not to be based on the shari‘ah rules as the only natural law. if the laws of government are not combined with the principles of wisdom, and the bonds of force not combined with the laws of truth, they will not be fruitful among the mass of the people.[649] Said Nursi is convinced that power must reside in the law, otherwise arbitrary rule spreads. so the law is a measure of just power as well as of any democratic rule. republicanism consists of justice, mutual consultation, and the restriction of power to the law. Taking into account that all these notions are directly linked with the shari‘ah, Said Nursi addresses to political leaders with the question: “if you apply the title of the illusTrious shari‘ah to the justice, mutual consultation, and restriction of power to the law which is the constitution and constitutionalism, and make it the authority for your rulings and apply its principles, what will you lose?” his own answer is quite clear: the shari‘ah is the source of absolute justice; establishes constitutionalism on a firm base; delivers “Divine rights,” that is, the rights of the public, from wrongful exploitation; gives rise to public opinion, the spirit of consensus; shows the collective personality of the government to be Muslim; makes the government and its activities serve licit constitutionalism; teaches the principles of good morals and elevated emotions. since the illustrious shari‘ah proceeds from pre-eternal divine speech, it will continue for all eternity. our salvation from the vile tyranny of the evil-commanding soul is through reliance on islam. if you want success, conform to the divine laws! otherwise you will be unsuccessful.[650] Said Nursi considers freedom and mutual consultation as main pillars of any just rule. For him freedom in accordance with the shari‘ah and the consultation enjoined by the shari‘ah have demonstrated the sovereignty of our true nationhood. The thinker adopts any political regimes under the condition that they preserve the freedom which is in accordance with the shari‘ah and public order. as for the key to Muslims’ happiness in the life of islamic society it is the mutual consultation enjoined by the shari‘ah. The verse, “Whose rule is consultation among themselves” (42:38) orders consultation as a fundamental principle. Just as the consultation of the ages and centuries that mankind has practiced by means of history, a conjunction of ideas, formed the basis of man’s progress and sciences, so too one reason for the backwardness of asia, the largest continent, was the failure to practice that true consultation. The key and discloser of the continent of asia and its future is mutual consultation. That is to say, just as individuals should consult one another, so must nations and continents practice consultation.[651] Said Nursi pays special attention

to another feature of islam and the shari‘ah which is of great importance in nowadays Muslim world. That is moderation as one of the fundamentals of islamic mode of life and thinking. Moderation is the main principle of the Qur’an. The noble Prophet was created with a most moderate character and in the most perfect form. his actions and rest all proceeded on moderation and equanimity. his biography shows clearly that in all his actions he proceeded with moderation and equanimity, avoiding excess and negligence. and therefore moderation is apparent in all his acts, words, and conduct. For example, free of wiliness and stupidity, which are the excess and negligence, like the corruption and darkness, of the power of reason, his reasoning faculty always worked from the point of wisdom, the middle way and means of moderation. in all his practices, daily conduct, and injunctions of his shari‘ah, he chose the way of moderation, and avoided excess and negligence, and wastefulness and prodigality, which are wrongdoing and darkness.[652]

Today, the Muslim world is torn between two contradictory trends: advancing along the road toward democratization and upsurges of radicalism. Modern islam approaches these phenomena in quite a different way. until recent times, balanced islamic thought did not manifest the necessary dynamism when issues of democratization and political reforms or the possibility of the Muslim world joining the globalization process came up for discussion. in other words, even some decades ago this moderate trend of Islamic political and legal thought hadn’t proposed definite and convincing solutions of the above mentioned problems based on the genuine islamic mental tradition. We couldn’t help but feel that, at the ideological level, islam had so far been unable to meet the challenges of our times. no wonder, in the absence of a clear islamic strategy, most contemporary authors remained reserved, or even pessimistic, about the future of the islamic civilization. Those who would like to detach it from the world came up with a much clearer message.

There is still a widely shared opinion outside countries with predominantly Muslim populations that democracy and traditional islamic values are incompatible. islamic extremists share this view for different reasons: they are convinced that the contemporary developments threaten islam. The global “islamic project,” or islamization of mankind, is seen as the only adequate answer.

This leads to a question of fundamental importance: is islamic ideological potential big enough to finally arrive at a formula that would bring Islamic values and the latest achievements of contemporary civilization together?

When trying to answer this question, we should take account of the fact that islamic thought abounds in various trends, three of which until recently were considered the main ones. One of them, the traditional trend, justifies conservation of sorts of Muslim society's present state; another, the fundamentalist trend, insists that the public and state structures should undergo radical changes and return to the literally understood shari'ah. The modernist approach uses the outwardly islamic interpretation in an attempt to justify liberal reforms patterned on the West.

until recently, another of the many trends that interprets the contemporary world along islamic lines remained lost to the public, which has its attention riveted on the three prominent trends. We have in mind the idea of tapping islam's internal potential, which says that reality should be measured against the shari'ah cornerstones, values, and general principles rather than its petty rules related to minor things and interpreted in a narrow-minded manner.

This is very close to what the Muslim reformers of the turn of the twentieth century thought, even though they never got beyond the calls to return to ijtihad and never tried to apply the other shari'ah principles to put their purely islamic idea of the changing world on firmer ground. It should be added here that since the mid-twentieth century this position has been limited to the works of those scholars who preferred to concentrate on the immutable principles of the shari'ah as opposed to its particular, and never consistent, solutions. Just recently, this theoretical construct had absolutely no influence on political and legal practices.

now the situation is obviously changing: the formerly ignored trend has come to the fore as the most promising soil on which the strategy of contemporary islam and the Muslim world will probably grow. Said Nursi together with the

other prominent Muslim thinkers laid the theoretical foundation of this evolution.

*** The Dialogue between Western Culture and Islamic Tradition is Possible

Said Nursi’s thoughts are also very useful for tackling another urgent problem of the modern islamic world which is the process of globalization as well as the relationships between the Western and islamic political cultures together with formulating islamic approach to the theory of clash of civilizations.

Beginning from the late twentieth century islam developed into a major issue of contemporary world politics. it left the realm of academic deliberations to be discussed by political scientists, publicists, and journalists. They normally concentrate on several subjects: islam and international terrorism and political extremism inherited from the past as well as several recent ones, namely the Muslim world’s future in the context of political changes and the role of islam in the process. all these issues cannot be properly discussed outside the main trends of islamic thoughts: ideas hold a special place in the Muslim world, in which all deep-cutting changes and important projects of national dimension are scrutinized through the prism of islamic principles. What is more, devoid of an islamic foundation they will never take off. This means that all positive solutions for the above-mentioned issues should be sought within islam. in other words, to discuss the prospects of political transformation of the Muslim world today means first of all to interpret Islam in the light of contemporary world realities.

Said Nursi defines the differences between the Western culture and Islamic traditions. He stresses that modern Western civilization has been founded on five negative principles:

1.its point of support is force, the mark of which is aggression.

2.Its aim and goal is benefit, the mark of which is jostling and tussling.

3.Its principle in life is conflict, the mark of which is strife.

4.The bond between the masses is racialism and negative nationalism, which is nourished through devouring others; its mark is collision.

5.its enticing service is inciting lust and passion and gratifying the desires. But lust transforms man into a beast.

however, the civilization the shari‘ah of Muhammad comprises and commands is this: its point of support is truth instead of force, the mark of which is justice and harmony. Its goal is virtue in place of benefit, the mark of which is love and attraction. its means of unity are the ties of religion, country, and class, in place of racialism and nationalism, and the mark of these is sincere brotherhood, peace, and only defense against external aggression. in life is the principle of mutual assistance instead of the principle of conflict, the mark of which is accord and solidarity. And it offers guidance instead of lust, the mark of which is human progress and spiritual advancement.[653] so to attribute to christianity the virtues of civilization, which are not its property, and to show retrogression, the enemy of islam, to be its friend, is to suggest that the firmament is revolving in the opposite direction.[654] at the same time Said Nursi distinguishes two different european cultures and acknowledges some of the Western achievements. he underlines that europe is divided into two parts. one follows the sciences which serve justice and right and the industries beneficial for the life of society through the inspiration it has received from true christianity. The second corrupt europe through the darkness of the philosophy of naturalism, supposing the evils of civilization to be its virtues, has driven mankind to vice and misguidance.[655] in Said Nursi’s view the progress of our World is determined not only by military force or by economical achievements but also by other factors. islam and its truths possess the perfect capacity to progress, both materially and in moral and non-material matters. despite serious obstacles which previously prevented the truths of islam completely overwhelming in the future, in place of weapons, the immaterial, moral swords of true civilization, material progress, and truth and justice will defeat and scatter the enemies. Through the strength of islam in the future, the

virtues of civilization will prevail, the face of the earth cleansed of filth, and universal peace be secured. These needs can be brought about through the sacred commands of religion, and fear of God, and firm adherence to religion. The future shall be islam’s and islam’s alone. and its ruler shall be the truths of the Qur’an and belief. it is only through the truths of islam that the islam will prosper and flourish. Islamic society can function only through the Shari‘ah of islam and its worldly happiness be achieved. otherwise justice will disappear, public security will be overturned, immorality and base qualities will prevail.[656] Today most Muslim states are developing in a rather contradictory way in the political and legal sphere where islamic traditions coexist with universally accepted standards and Western liberal values. We should always bear in mind that politics and the principles of state power functioning form a very specific sphere of interaction (cooperation and competition) between islamic principles and Western patterns. Islamic thought believes that the most specific feature of this sphere is created by the fact that the traditional Muslim legal doctrine (fiqh) offers no detailed, exact, and unambiguous answers to the vast majority of specific questions. it limits itself to identifying the most general landmarks, such as consultation, fairness, and equality to be realized in different, including borrowed, versions. When applied, these general principles may produce different results. The consultation principle, for example, can be put into practice in the form of a consultative council accountable to the head of state or as representative body with full legislative powers elected by universal suffrage.

Today, Muslim legal postulates are invoked to prove that Western experience of parliamentary elections, political pluralism, the division of powers, and even human rights should be tapped. in these spheres, however, the borrowing is limited to outward features, yet the very fact that islamic legal thought does not issue rigid instructions about the power system in general opens the road to the widest possible reliance on the experience of political democracy.

What is more, today any modernization and democratization project has good prospects in most Muslim states if realized within the islamic political and legal tradition, or at least with due account of it. The opposite is also true: no political reform stands a chance of survival if it is aimed at setting up formally democratic institutions that go against the grain of islamic

thought. objectively, the people at the top and the public at large are interested in democratic developments if they are accompanied by political stability and security. This can be done if democratization is realized within the Muslim political and legal traditions, islamic interpretation of all the changes included.

The strategy of political and legal reforms of the Muslim world should aim at incorporating it into the globalization process together with its islamic values (legal and political among other things) that are compatible with the universal democratic principles and remodelled to fit contemporary reality. This can be achieved if the positive potential of islamic political and legal thought is tapped in a very active way and if the thinkers are encouraged to work on the problems connected with new realities and islam’s role in the globalizing world. it is impossible to solve this problem without referring to Said Nursi’s intellectual heritage.

** 14. Reflections on Prayer and Social Justice in the Thought of Thomas Merton and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

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it might seem surprising to hear Thomas Merton and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi mentioned together in the same breath. Merton, after all, was an american Trappist monk. Nursi, on the other hand, was a Turkish-Kurdish sunni Muslim theologian. There are, of course, obvious differences between these two thinkers. as a christian Merton is committed to the doctrine of the incarnation and conceives of god in Trinitarian terms. As a Muslim Nursi naturally takes the Qur’an as the definitive source of god’s revelation to humankind, and stresses the unity of god.

despite these differences, however, there are some interesting points of contact between Merton and Nursi. Both men were open to each other’s

respective faiths. Merton states in a letter to a Muslim friend that he “read the Koran with deep attention and reverence”[657] and was “stirred to the depths of my heart by the intensity of Moslem piety toward [god’s] names, and the reverence with which he is invoked as the compassionate and Merciful.”[658] Nursi, too, holds a positive view of true followers of Jesus christ and saw in christianity an ally in the struggle against aggressive atheism. since there is a solidarity of irreligion, he argues, there needs to be a solidarity of religion to oppose it. Nursi thus calls on Muslims and christians to unite against the forces of irreligion.[659] another point of contact between these two scholars is their concern at the increasing inroads materialism and secularism were making in their respective societies. Merton’s works are full of references to the impoverishment of spiritual life in Western society due to the increasing influence of materialism and the commodification of human beings through technology, while Nursi was concerned at the decision of the new, post-ottoman Turkey consciously and deliberately to turn its back on islam. Both men worked to make clear to their contemporaries the dire spiritual consequences of their respective society’s rejection of faith and the need to recover and cultivate the relationship with god.

Most important of all, both were men of prayer. Through his numerous writings on prayer Merton has become acknowledged as one of the great christian spiritual writers of the twentieth century. The biographies of Nursi indicate not only that he conscientiously followed the five obligatory prayers, but also, as Mosher points out, was “a man who spent legendary numbers of hours in supererogatory supplication.”[660]

Both men were aware of the problematic status of prayer in modern society. Prior to the rise of the modern scientific worldview, prayer took place against the backdrop of a theistic cosmology. The existence of god was taken for granted and the world and humankind’s place in it were understood in terms of the divine will. The rise of the scientific worldview, however, has shattered this easy confidence in the divine presence. Both Merton and Nursi are arguably struggling with the consequences of this for faith. in his writings Merton is attempting to show that we can still pray to a living god in a world dominated by secularism, individualism, technology, and commercialism, while one of the aims of Nursi’s Risale-i Nur is to defend the centrality of islam in a Turkey that was attempting to abandon its religious

past in favor of modern secularism. in this chapter i wish to explore the role of prayer in these two theologians' thinking. how do these two thinkers understand prayer and how does it provide a resource for their struggle against the threat of secularism?

This concern with the role of prayer in the struggle against secularism will in turn lead us on to consider the social dimension of prayer. as we shall see, prayer is not a private affair. it is not something reserved for the individual's interiority practised in private in the individual's own free time. on the contrary, genuine prayer must express itself in the individual's relations with his fellow human beings. genuine prayer has a social dimension. at the same time, however, this social dimension cannot be divorced from the individual's god-relationship. Prayer and social action exist in a dialectical relationship. The believer – whether christian or Muslim – lives in a relationship with god and cultivates this relationship in individual prayer. But this god-relationship is not a self-centered relationship. although true prayer has an introspective dimension, for in prayer the believer reflects on themself in the presence of God and how they have fallen short of God's will, the believer should not remain at the level of introspection. The believer's spirituality must manifest itself outwardly in the believer's relations with other human beings as suggested in the quotation: "To be with god with the people on your heart."[661] This phrase, taken from archbishop Michael ramsey's addresses to candidates for ordination in the church of england, expresses the dual task of the believer: to sustain a relationship with god and to express this relationship in his or her dealings with his fellow human beings. it is Merton's and Nursi's understanding of this relationship that i wish to explore in this chapter.

*** Merton on Prayer

For Merton, Western society has become increasingly affluent and technologically advanced, but these developments have been accompanied by increasing secularism, materialism, and moral and religious decline.[662] Indeed, for Merton "the affluent, secularized society of modern europe and america has ceased to be genuinely christian."[663] europeans and north americans now live in a society with "a worldview in which money and power are held to be of greater importance than man himself."[664] action in

modern society is governed not by morality, nor by the needs of human beings, but by political expediency and the demands of technology.[665] Modern society has reduced its citizens to cogs in an industrial machine, degraded them to the level of automatons, robbed them of their freedom, and stunted their spiritual growth.[666] in its most frightening form the soullessness of modern Western society expresses itself in the insanity of the arms race and humankind's potential for nuclear self-destruction. in such a society human beings have lost the ability to trust and consequently the capacity for faith. in this frenetic, faithless, soulless, egotistical society it is difficult for the individual to find the solitude in which he can discover the deeper sources of his self and become attentive to the voice of god. ours is an age when "the murderous din of our materialism" seeks to drown

out the independent voices of saints and sages of every faith.[667]

The moral and religious decline of Western society has profound consequences for social justice. Modern society's impoverishment of the spiritual and moral integrity of its citizens creates self-centered individuals incapable of loving their fellow human beings. Without this love, however, society disintegrates and can be held together only "by a violent and abusive authority."[668] The consequences for a society in which human beings have lost their spiritual interiority and the love which flows from it are severe: "When men are violently deprived of the solitude and freedom which are their due, the society in which they live becomes putrid, it festers

with servility, resentment and hate. no amount of technological progress will cure the hatred that eats away the vitals of materialistic society like a spiritual cancer."[669]

For Merton, the only cure to this crisis "is, and must always be, spiritual."[670] as he puts it in The Ascent to Truth, "The only thing that can save the world from complete moral collapse is a spiritual

revolution.”[671] What is needed is to recover “the desire for unworldliness, detachment, and union with god [which] is the most fundamental expression of this revolutionary spirit.”[672] This revolution, Merton argues, must begin with the individual. society, Merton notes, “does not exist all by itself in a void, but is made up of the individuals who compose it.” consequently, “the problems of society cannot ultimately be solved except in terms of the moral life of individuals. if the citizens are sane, the city will be sane. if the citizens are wild animals, the city will be a jungle.”[673] if the ills of society are to be addressed, then, we must begin with the moral and spiritual state of the individuals that comprise society.

This is where prayer becomes important. Prayer for Merton is a vital weapon in the struggle against the secularizing and dehumanizing forces of modern society. human beings have been made by god for god. We are thus only truly free and only truly ourselves when we live our lives in the knowledge and love of god. We must therefore be spiritually awake to his presence. Merton emphasizes that this does not mean that the human being must always and constantly be conscious of the divine presence. That, he claims, is not possible for “we cannot always, or even often, remain clearly conscious of him.”[674] spiritual wakefulness consists not in our constant consciousness of god, but “demands only the habitual awareness of him which surrounds all our actions in a spiritual atmosphere without formally striking our attention except at certain moments of keener perception.”[675] spiritual wakefulness, then, is a mode of being in which we orientate our lives according to the divine presence, even when we are not overtly aware of this presence. spiritual death is when we have lost our consciousness and love of god.[676]

Prayer is of the absolute essence for the cultivation of spiritual wakefulness. Prayer is both a “deep and vital contact” with god and also the means by which we are what we really are.[677] according to Merton, in prayer “our being is brought to a high perfection” and prayer “is one of the most perfect activities” our being can carry out.[678] indeed, Merton can claim that when we cease to pray we cease to exist in the deeper sense of the word. as Merton puts it, “When we cease to pray, we tend to fall back into nothingness.”[679] it is of course true that we do not physically cease to exist. Merton’s point is that without the contact with god that prayer brings

we lose touch with our reason for existing and with the deeper, most significant levels of our being.[680]

For Merton spiritual wakefulness and attentiveness to god in prayer have social consequences. Becoming our true selves in a prayerful relationship to god brings with it responsibility for our fellow human beings. Merton comments that it is god's will that each human being should become his or her true self. But, Merton adds, "since no man is an island, since we all depend on one another, i cannot work out god's will in my own life unless i also consciously help other men to work out his will in theirs."[681] Consequently, the divine will "is our sanctification, our transformation in christ, our deeper and fuller integration with other men."[682] our attentiveness to god's will must manifest itself in action. as Merton puts it: "Once we have heard the voice of the Almighty fulfilling his own command by speaking it in our hearts, we realize that our contemplation can never again be a mere looking or a mere seeking: it must also be a doing and a fulfillment."[683]

There are many different levels of prayer and spiritual wakefulness, and Merton is particularly skilful at exploring them and the challenges they present to us. in our exploration of the connection between prayer and social justice in Merton's thought we shall focus on the impact of prayer on the conscience, the role of petitionary prayer, and the relationship between prayer and social action.

Prayer, Freedom, and Conscience

Western society, Merton notes, makes much of "freedom." its understanding of freedom, however, is questionable. There are, Merton points out, two difficulties with the Western notion of freedom. Firstly, if our choices are really to be free, they "must perfect us in our own being."[684] That is, "we must make the choices that enable us to fulfil the deepest capacities of our real selves."[685] secondly, "we too easily assume that we are our true selves, and that our choices are really the ones we want to make."[686] Merton points out that what we believe to be free choices are "largely dictated by psychological compulsions, flowing from our inordinate

ideas of our own importance. our choices are too often dictated by our false selves.”[687] The fact that freedom is not self-sufficient and is frequently based on a false self is indicated by the fact that exercising free choice does not bring about our happiness. If freedom were absolutely self-sufficient we would expect that exercising our freedom would make us happy.[688] This, however, is not the case. on the contrary, according to Merton, “if i do nothing except what pleases my own fancy i will be miserable almost all the time.”[689] Merton takes this phenomenon as evidence that the human being’s will has been “created to use its own freedom in the love of other.”[690]

On the basis of these reflections Merton concludes that we are only truly free when we exercise our freedom not selfishly, but on behalf of others. As Merton puts it, “My free will consolidates and perfects its own autonomy by freely coordinating its action with the will of another.”[691] Merton takes this to indicate that, “There is something in the very nature of my freedom that inclines me to love, to do good, to dedicate myself to others.”[692]

Merton then turns to discuss the relationship between freedom and conscience. “conscience,” he writes, “is the soul of freedom, its eyes, its energy, its life. Without conscience, freedom never knows what to do with itself.”[693] it is conscience that provides the purpose for freedom, for without a purpose freedom degenerates into aimless choice. it is not enough, however, that our freedom has any purpose, it must have the right purpose. This is where the conscience plays an important role, for conscience is what “teaches us how to choose the right purposes.”[694] “conscience,” Merton writes, “is the light by which we interpret the will of god in our own lives.”[695] it is conscience that guides the freedom in making good choices.

The light that is the conscience has a twofold form. First, there is what Merton calls “the psychological conscience, which is better called consciousness.”[696] The psychological conscience “reports to us the actions we perform. it is aware of them, and through them it is aware of itself.”[697] second, there is what Merton calls the “moral conscience.” in contrast to the psychological conscience, the moral conscience “tells us not only that we act, and how we act, but how

well we act.”[698] The moral conscience thus has a judgmental function. For Merton “it judges the value of our acts.”[699]

Prayer plays an important role in the cultivation of the moral conscience. For Merton, “one of the most important functions of the life of prayer is to deepen and strengthen and develop our moral conscience.”[700] Prayer is the means by which the believer makes the transition from external to internal observance. The role of prayer is to strengthen the believer’s moral conscience so that the believer may come to express the divine law in his or her very being by living according to the divine will. as Merton puts it:

The whole function of the life of prayer is, then, to enlighten and strengthen our conscience so that it not only knows and perceives the outward, written precepts of the moral and divine laws, but above all lives god’s law in concrete reality by perfect and continual union with his will. The conscience that is united to the Holy Spirit by faith, hope, and selfless charity becomes a mirror of God’s own interior law which is his charity. it becomes perfectly free. it becomes its own law because it is completely subject to the will of god and to his spirit.[701]

The strengthening of the moral conscience necessarily has an impact on society at large. The moral individual does not live in a social vacuum, but must exercise his moral conscience in and for the society of which he or she is a member. The connection between prayer and social action is thus evident in the fact that prayer is a vital resource in strengthening the moral conscience in its action in society. Petitionary Prayer

it is in the context of the individual’s inner relationship with god that petitionary prayer has its place. For Merton “all true prayer somehow confesses our absolute dependence on the lord of life and death.”[702] it is this acknowledgement of dependence that accounts for the importance of petitionary prayer, which for Merton expresses the human being’s deep

need of God. Merton writes: “The man whose prayer is so pure that he never asks god for anything does not know who god is, and does not know who he is himself: for he does not know his own need of god.”[703] Petitionary prayer, however, should not be seen simply as asking god for things one wants. it is rather only an aspect of a much richer relationship with god. as Merton puts it, “celebration and praise, loving attention to the presence of god, become more important than ‘asking for’ things and ‘getting’ things. This is because we realize that in him and with him all good is present to us and to mankind: if we seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, all the rest comes along with it.”[704]

Petitionary prayer, then, is only one aspect of the more comprehensive relationship the believer sustains with god. But this deeper inner relationship with god brings with it responsibility towards other human beings. it is this responsibility towards others that leads the believer to bring both his own problems and the problems of the world to god. Merton writes: “this inner awareness and openness makes us especially sensitive to the urgent needs of the time, and grace can sometimes move us to pray for certain special needs.”[705] The prayerful individual, then, brings to god the troubles of the world and integrates them into his prayer. in doing so, the prayerful individual draws his society’s problems and troubles into his relationship with god.

Prayer and Social Action

For Merton, prayer is the source of christian action and the struggle for social justice. Merton rejects the notion that the contemplative can cultivate his relationship with god only by turning his back on the world, and stresses that “the active life is essential to every christian.”[706] action is not opposed to contemplation and prayer, but should be understood “as an expression of charity and as a necessary consequence of union with god by baptism.”[707] Merton cites several reasons for the necessity of the prayerful person’s engagement with the world.

Firstly, the spiritual person is a member of broader society and is thus caught up in society’s problems: “The christian cannot separate his life of faith from

the real world of work and struggle in which he lives."[708] This need for faith to manifest itself in concrete action applies also to the monk, for according to Merton, "even the cloistered 'contemplative' is inevitably implicated in the crises and problems of the society in which he is still a member (since he participates in its benefits and shares it responsibilities)." consequently, even the monk "must to some extent participate 'actively' in the church's work, not only by prayer and holiness, but by understanding and concern."[709] secondly, the christian is a member of the body of christ. cultivating one's god-relationship through prayer thus entails engaging with the problems of other human beings for they too are members of the body of christ or have the potential to become members of his body. indeed, the holiness of the spiritual individual is dependent upon this action towards others. as Merton puts it, "it can be said that our holiness is proportioned to our capacity to serve as instruments of [christ's] love in establishing his kingdom and building up his Mystical Body."[710] Consequently, "All the secret influx of mystical life into our souls is intended not only for ourselves but for others."[711]

Thirdly, since the god with whom i commune in prayer loves other human beings, so too am i called upon to love them. Merton writes: "There is … one universal basis for friendship with all men: we are all loved by god, and i should desire them all to love him with all their power."[712] My love of my fellow human beings stems from my awareness of god's love for my fellow human beings: "if i am to love my brother, i must somehow enter deep into the mystery of god's love for him."[713] indeed, "Without love and compassion for others, our own apparent 'love' for Christ is a fiction."[714]

This raises the question of how the prayerful individual should engage in action. For Merton "active life" means "the life which, in response to divine grace and in union with the visible authority of the church, devotes its efforts to the spiritual and material development of the whole human community."[715] But this must manifest itself in concrete action. Merton is scathing in his criticism of the common misconception of christian charity as "no more than gentleness, kindness, and affability."[716] True charity must go beyond these qualities and include justice. This will involve not token acts of mercy, which merely condone social injustice, but will require christians to "give not only our possessions but

ourselves to our brother.”[717] Merton warns that, “until we regain this deep sense of charity, we cannot understand the full depths of christian perfection.”[718] in short, christian social action “must be at the same time supernatural and concrete, practical and alive. and i mean these words in no metaphorical sense. The truth i must love in my brother is god himself, living in him. i must seek the life of the spirit of god breathing in him.”[719] social action must not be detached from the individual’s relationship with god,

however. For Merton genuine social action cannot exist independently of the godrelationship, but must be based on spiritual foundations. grace and interiority, not energy, will-power, and action, “are the true principles of supernatural activity.” Merton warns that, “an activity that is based on the frenzies and impulsions of human ambition is a delusion and an obstacle to grace. it gets in the way of god’s will, and it creates more problems than it solves.”[720] social and political action without a spiritual basis becomes hollow, frenetic activity.[721] indeed, if action is not rooted in the god-relationship, it can become positively harmful, not spreading social justice but imposing the sickness of the individual’s sinful ego on society at large. Merton comments: “What is the relation of [prayer] to action? simply this. he who attempts to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening his own self-understanding, freedom, integrity and capacity to love, will not have anything to give others. he will communicate to them nothing but the contagion of his own obsessions, his aggressiveness, his ego-centered ambitions, his delusions about ends and means, his doctrinaire prejudices and ideas.”[722]

Prayer and social action thus exist in a dialectical relationship. Prayer without social action is individualistic and egocentric, while social action without prayer results in the imposition of the individual’s damaged and sinful ego on society.

*** Nursi on Prayer

The centrality of prayer in Nursi’s life and theology is evident on virtually every page of the Risale-i Nur,[723] and we find a wide variety

of different types of prayer throughout Nursi’s writings.[724] here i wish to focus on his understanding of prayer as reform of the soul, his notion of prayer as supplication, his critical engagement with Sufi conceptions of prayer as an inner spiritual journey to God, and the connection he makes between prayer and social action.

Prayer as Reform of the Soul

For Nursi, the whole of creation is a mirror reflecting the divine names and attributes.[725] Thus he can describe trees and “the face of the earth itself” as mirrors “to the power and mercy of an absolutely Powerful one, the one of absolute riches.”[726] it is above all the human being, however, who plays the pre-eminent role in reflecting the divine names. The human being, Nursi writes, “is a most subtle and graceful miracle of [god’s] power whom he created to manifest all his names and their inscriptions, in the form of a miniature specimen of the universe.”[727] It is in this capacity to manifest and reflect the Divine Names that the meaning of human existence lies. as Nursi puts it in the eleventh Word: “now the true meaning of your life is this: its acting as a mirror to the manifestation of divine oneness and the manifestation of the eternally Besought one.”[728] it is this mirror role that accounts for what we might regard as the negative characteristics of human existence: poverty, misery, weakness, and so on. although Nursi describes the human being as god’s “work of art,” he also recognizes that the human being is “impotent, heedless, ignorant, diseased, abject, sinful, old, wretched and fugitive.”[729] These apparently negative attributes, however, allow human nature to reflect the divine glory. That is, the negative backdrop of human existence allows god’s presence to become all the more apparent when the human being allows the divine names to manifest themselves in his or her life. in the Fourth ray Nursi writes: “Through its impotence, weakness, poverty, and need, my life acts as a

mirror to the power, strength, wealth, and mercy of the creator of life.”[730]

To reflect the divine names, however, the human soul must be reformed. It must put aside its selfishness and make God the center and focus of its being. This reform must begin with the soul of each and every one of us. Before we embark on the task of reforming others, we must first ensure that our own individual souls are in order: “since my soul commands to evil, one who does not reform his own soul cannot reform others. in which case, i shall begin with my own soul.”[731] That is, i must begin with the reform of my soul before i presume to reform that of my fellow human beings.

it is in this reform of the soul that prayer plays an important role. Nursi describes the prescribed prayers and worship as like the training that the soldier undergoes in wartime. The war the believer is fighting consists of “struggles with Satan and his own soul in order to give up serious misdoings and not to commit sins.”[732]

Prayer as Supplication

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Nursi’s understanding of prayer is his notion of prayer as supplication. The starting-point for Nursi’s reflections on supplication is Sura 25.77: “say: no importance would your sustainer attach to you were it not for your supplication.” on the basis of this verse Nursi claims that supplication “is the basis of worship of god and servitude to him.”[733] among the clearest and most sustained expositions of Nursi’s conception of prayer as supplication are the discussions in the first addendum to the Twenty-Fourth Letter and in the Twenty-Third Word.

Nursi distinguishes between four types of supplication. The first sort of supplication occurs through what Nursi calls “the tongue of latent ability.”[734] This is the type of supplication offered up by the natural world and the animal kingdom. There are several different sorts of “tongue of latent ability.” The first of these is that “through which all seeds and grains supplicate to the all-Wise creator, saying: ‘Make us grow! Make our tiny truths sprout and transform us into the mighty reality of a tree, so that we may display the elaborate embroideries of your names!’”[735] a further type of “tongue of latent ability” Nursi describes as “the gathering together of causes [which] is a supplication for the creation of the effect. That is to say,

the causes acquire a position whereby they become like a tongue of disposition through which they supplicate for and request the effect from the all-Powerful one of glory.” as an example of this type of tongue of latent ability, Nursi cites the way water, heat, earth and light join together to petition to god to make a tree out of a seed.[736]

The second type of supplication is that which takes place “through the tongue of innate need.”[737] in the Twenty-Third Word Nursi writes that supplications through the tongue of innate need are “the supplications for all their essential needs – beyond their power to obtain – offered by animate beings.” Through this form of supplication “the animate beings seek certain things from the absolutely generous one for the continuance of their lives, like a sort of sustenance.”[738] in the Twenty-Fourth letter Nursi tells us that the tongue of innate need “is a sort of supplication made by all living creatures to the all-compassionate creator to give them the things they need and desire, which are beyond their power and will, from unexpected places and at the appropriate time.”[739]

These first two forms of supplication – supplication through the tongue of latent ability and supplication through the tongue of innate need – express the fact that the whole of creation exists in a relationship of supplication to the creator. as Nursi puts it, “all that rises to the divine court from the universe is a sort of supplication.”[740] in a footnote to the Tenth Word he comments that, “all the motions and workings of the cosmos are in their essence prayer. For example, the progress of a seed until it becomes a tree is a form of prayer to the creator.”[741] in the Twenty-Third Word Nursi adds to these two forms a third form of supplication, namely “supplication through the tongue of exigency,” which he defines as supplication “through which all beings with spirits who find themselves in some plight or predicament make supplication and seek urgent refuge with an unknown protector; indeed they turn to the all-compassionate sustainer.”[742] according to Nursi, “if there is nothing to prevent it, these three sorts of supplication are always accepted.”[743]

The fourth type of supplication is “the supplication of conscious beings arising from need.”[744] This form of supplication, Nursi says, “is the most well-known,”[745] and is the kind of supplication that is distinctive to human

beings. This form of supplication can be divided into two distinct sorts, namely supplication which is “active and by disposition,” and supplication which is “verbal and with the heart.”[746] in the Twenty-Fourth letter Nursi describes these two forms of supplication as supplication by action and by word. as an example of supplication by action Nursi cites ploughing. Ploughing, he writes, “is not seeking the sustenance from the earth, rather, the earth is a door to a treasury of mercy, and the plough knocks on the earth, the door to divine Mercy.”[747]nursi concentrates, however, on the second kind of “supplication of conscious beings arising from need,” namely supplication by word. in the Twenty-Third Word Nursi describes this type of supplication as “supplication with the tongue and the heart,” which “seek[s] certain wishes which the hand cannot reach. [748] The most important feature of this type of supplication, Nursi writes, is that: “The one who offers the supplications knows that there is someone Who hears the wishes of his heart, Whose hand can reach all things, Who can bring about each of his desires, Who takes pity on his impotence, and answers his poverty.”[749] When the human being makes use of this supplication, he rises above his poverty and need and ascends to the highest peaks of humanity. indeed, the human being comes to

represent the whole of the universe in his supplications to god.[750] in the Twenty-Fourth letter Nursi begins his exposition of this form of supplication by emphasizing its effectiveness. indeed, for Nursi the very existence of the universe is the result of supplication: “it may even be said that one of the reasons for the creation of the world was supplication. That is to say, after the creation of the universe, the supplications of chiefly mankind, and of them principally the islamic world, and mainly the sublime supplications of Muhammad the arabian

(upon whom be blessings and peace) were a cause of it being created.”[751] in view of the importance of supplication, it is clear, Nursi goes on to argue, that the supplications of millions of Muslims over the fourteen centuries of the Muslim era cannot have been without effect. it is inconceivable that they could have been rejected. indeed, “these supplications have acquired universality, extensiveness, and continuousness to this extent and have reached the level of tongues of latent ability and innate need.”[752] Nursi seems to be saying that not only was the universe created proleptically in

response to the supplications of humankind, but that these human supplications, led by the Prophet Muhammad, permeated to the unconscious levels of the universe. The whole of creation thus exists in a relation of supplication to god, a prayer which god in his mercy and compassion always answers.

This universal prayer of supplication is expressed in its fullest form by the Prophet Muhammad. in his discussion of the meaning of “salutations” in the tashahhud section of the prescribed ritual prayers, Nursi comments that, “with the word ‘salutations,’ god’s Most noble Messenger (PBuh) intentionally offered to god all the worship living creatures perform through the mode of their creation.”[753] Because Muhammad embodies and represents the fulness of creation’s supplication to god, he is able to make intercession for his community, for whose happiness he is concerned, [754] and is able to intercede for Muslims on the day of resurrection. consequently, Nursi calls on Muslims to follow Muhammad’s example. he writes: “in order to attract the intercession of this intercessor towards yourselves, follow his Practices!”[755]

A further question with regard to Nursi’s understanding of supplication concerns the fact that “sometimes supplications are offered for matters that are definite,” while on other occasions “supplications are made for things which will never come about.”[756] The point of this question seems to be: what should we make of supplications that do not appear to be answered during our lifetime? Nursi’s answer to this is first to point out that “supplication is worship.” Furthermore, “through supplication, the servant proclaims his own impotence and poverty.”[757] That is, one of the significant features of supplication is not what is asked for but the very act of asking itself. Nursi’s point seems to be that in supplication the believer acknowledges his need for and dependence on god. he then goes on to argue that in view of God’s omnipresence and omniscience we can be confident that god always responds to the prayers of believers. [758] god, however, Nursi points out, may choose to answer the supplicant’s prayers in unexpected ways: “if one does not obtain the result for which one prayed, one should not think that the prayer has not been accepted, but rather, that it was accepted in a better form.”[759] he cites as an example someone who asks god to give him a son, but whom “almighty god gives a daughter like Mary.”[760] in such a case, Nursi comments, “it may not be

said: his supplication was not accepted," but that "it was accepted in a better form."[761] Furthermore, if an individual's supplication for happiness is not actualized in this life, it may be because it has been accepted for the hereafter. consequently, when god appears not to answer prayer, it "should rather be said that the time for the supplication is not yet over."[762] in short: "To answer is one thing, to accept is something quite different. every supplication is answered, but its being accepted and exactly what was sought being given is dependent on almighty god's wisdom."[763]

Nursi's next point is that, "the best, finest, sweetest, most immediate fruit and result of supplication is this, that the person who offers it knows there is someone who listens to his voice, sends a remedy for his ailment, takes pity on him, and whose hand of power reaches everything. he is not alone in this great hostel of the world; there is an all-generous one Who looks after him and makes it friendly."[764] it is the comfort of knowing that one is in the hands of the almighty, all-generous god that is the greatest gift the believer receives in the act of supplication.

Finally, Nursi argues that "supplication is the spirit of worship and the result of sincere belief."[765] in making supplication the believer shows through his very act of supplication that "there is someone who rules the whole universe; one Who knows the most insignificant things about me, can bring about my most distant aims. Who sees every circumstance of mine, and hears my voice."[766] That is, supplication is the correct expression of the human being's relation to god. it is the human being's recognition of his status as a creature before his creator and an acknowledgement of his dependence on and need of god. Sufism and the Inner Spiritual Journey

Nursi recognizes the importance of going beyond the prescribed ritual prayers to an ever deeper personal relationship with god. This is evident in his recognition of the spiritual depth of Sufism. Nursi comments: "Underlying the terms 'Sufism,' 'path,' 'sainthood,' and 'spiritual journeying,' is an agreeable, luminous, joyful, and spiritual sacred truth."[767] The Sufi path, he writes, "is an elevated human mystery and human perfection."[768] in the ninth section of the Twenty-eighth letter Nursi is concerned to draw attention to "a few droplets" from the "vast ocean" of Sufism.

Sufism, Nursi argues, is concerned with journeying to God with “the feet of the heart under the shadow of the ascension of Muhammad” in order “to manifest the truths of belief and the Qur’an through illumination and certain states, and to a degree by ‘witnessing.’”[769] For Nursi, “The keys and means to this journeying of the heart and spiritual progress are remembrance of God and reflective thought.”[770] Nursi unpacks these ideas by considering the two ways on the Sufi path, which he denotes as “inner journeying” and “outer journeying” respectively.[771] he describes the inner journeying as follows:

The inner way starts from the self, and drawing the eyes away from the outer world, it looks at the heart. it pierces egotism, opens up a way from the heart, and finds reality. Then it enters the outer world. The outer world now looks luminous. it completes the journey quickly. The reality it sees in the inner world, it sees on a large scale in the outer world. Most of the paths which practise silent recollection take this way. The most important basis of this is to break the ego, give up desires of the flesh, and kill the evil-commanding soul.[772]

The outer journeying, on the other hand, “starts from the outer world; it gazes on the reflections of the Divine Names and attributes in their places of manifestation in that greater sphere, then it enters the inner world. it observes those lights on a small scale in the sphere of the heart and opens up the closest way in them. it sees that the heart is the mirror of the eternally Besoughted one, and becomes united with the goal it was seeking.”[773] Nursi recognizes the danger of the inner journey. it is all too easy for the “spiritual” individual to become puffed up with his alleged spiritual greatness. When this occurs, the inner spiritual journey is no longer a tool for taming the ego and placing it at god’s service, but has become an instrument for the ego’s selfishness. Nursi comments:

Thus, if people who travel on the first way are not successful in killing the evilcommanding soul, and if they cannot give up desires of the flesh, and break the ego, they fall from the rank of thanks to that of pride, then from pride to conceit. if such a person experiences a captivation arising from love, and a sort of intoxication arising from the captivation, he will pour forth high-flown claims far exceeding his mark, called ecstatic utterances (shatahat). This is harmful both for himself and for others.[774]

in the “eighth allusion” of the Twenty-eighth letter Nursi draws his readers’ attention to the “eight abysses” into which spiritual travelers can fall when they do not conform to the practices of Muhammad.[775] The shari‘ah and the instructions of great scholars of the past such as ghazali and rabbani act as a check upon such allegedly “spiritual” persons, whom Nursi calls upon to “constantly accuse their own souls, and attribute nothing to their souls other than fault, impotence, and want.”[776] Further dangers facing the spiritual traveler are that of converting experience into knowledge.[777] Nursi also points out that absorption into god and renunciation of the world has the danger of conceding the world to the materialists.[778]

Nevertheless, when properly understood and exercised, Sufism has important spiritual benefits. The Sufi path preserves the believer from the threat of atheism. indeed, “in the face of the stratagems of the atheists at the present time, it has become difficult for one who is not connected with the Sufi path and whose heart has not been brought to action, to preserve himself completely, even if he is a learned scholar.”[779] Furthermore, “It is the Sufi paths which are the first and most effective and fervent means of expanding and developing brotherhood, a sacred bond within the World of islam.”[780] in the struggle against modern secularism and in the cultivation of brotherhood among believers, then, the spiritual values of Sufism are of central importance. Prayer and Social Action

Nursi does not systematically develop a plan of social action on the basis of prayer. it is, however, often an issue which he touches upon or is implied by the thrust of his argument as he discusses other issues. it is implicit, for example, in his teaching concerning the solidarity of all believers. in their congregational worship believers are welded together into a community of mutual support. in the Al-Mathnawi al-Nuri Nursi compares the

solidarity of prayer with the solidity of a building: “Each believer resembles a brick in a firm building benefiting from the multiplied strength of innumerable fellow believers in their worship and supplication.”[781] in this community of prayer each believer supports the other by working and interceding for the other. Nursi writes:

When belief brings them together, each works for the whole, becomes an intercessor and supplicant for them, and asks mercy for them while declaring their innocence. Together, they extol the Prophet, their leader. every believer takes pleasure in others’ happiness, just as a mother, although hungry, takes pleasure in satisfying her children, or like a compassionate brother who takes pleasure in his brother’s happiness. as a result, people can worship the creator of the universe in a comprehensive way and earn eternal happiness.[782]

in the Twenty-Third letter, First Question Nursi provides guidance on the best way believers can pray for one another by laying down the following criteria for acceptable supplications on behalf of others.[783] First, the believer should prepare himself. For Nursi this preparation consists in asking for god’s forgiveness. as Nursi puts it, “a person should be purified spiritually by seeking forgiveness.” second, the believer “should recite benedictions (salawat) for the Prophet (PBuh).” These benedictions should be followed by “an acceptable prayer, for intercession.” Following his supplication the believer should again recite the salawat, “for a prayer offered between two such acceptable prayers itself becomes acceptable.” Nursi suggests that prayers from the Qur’an and the hadiths should be offered and recommends the following: “o god! i beseech you to bestow forgiveness and well-being on me and on so-and-so in religion, this world, and the hereafter;”[784] and “o our sustainer! give us good in this world and good in the hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire.”[785] When such prayers are offered sincerely and with humility and tranquillity of heart,[786] “it is to be strongly

hoped from divine Mercy that such supplications will be accepted.”[787]

Thus in contrast to “philosophy,” that is, Western secularism and atheism, faith draws people together. Nursi contrasts the divisiveness of secularism with the solidarity brought about by faith. in faith, the believer recognizes that all things are of value because all things make supplications to god. in the seventeenth Flash he writes:

The student of philosophy flees from his own brother for his own sake and files a lawsuit against him. Whereas, considering all the righteous worshippers in the heavens and on the earth to be his brother, the student of the Qur’an makes supplications for them in the most sincere fashion. he is happy at their happiness and he feels a powerful connection with them in his spirit, so that in his supplications he says: ‘oh god, grant forgiveness to all believing men and women!’ Furthermore, he considers the greatest things, the divine Throne and the sun, to be each subservient officials, and servants and creatures like himself.[788]

consequently, in contrast to the student of “philosophy,” the believer “does not see himself as superior to the lowest of almighty god’s creatures,” but “combines the utmost dignity with the utmost humility.”[789]

Faith, then, is radically democratic. it recognizes the dependence of all things on God. All things and all human beings exist in a solidarity of finitude and dependence on god. all things exist in solidarity by virtue of their capacity to act in their poverty and wretchedness as mirrors of the divine richness and glory. This has consequences for human beings’ use and enjoyment of property. Because human beings are creatures, we do not own our property. rather, property does not belong to human beings, but is placed in their trust by god.[790] another aspect of his thought that has implications for social action is Nursi’s teaching on love. in the Twenty-Fourth Word, Fifth Branch Nursi writes that “love is the cause of the universe’s existence, and what binds it; and it is both the light of the universe and its life.”[791] Because the human being “is the most comprehensive fruit of the universe,” Nursi continues, “a love that will conquer

the universe has been included in his heart."[792] This love, however, can be turned in two different directions. Nursi argues that the human being has been created with the two faculties of love and fear. These exist in a dialectical relationship which when directed towards their proper object are beneficial for human beings. as an example Nursi cites the mother who gently scares her child so that he clings more firmly to her loving embrace. Human beings have a similar relationship with god. Nursi comments: "Fear is a whip; it drives you into the embrace of his mercy."[793] love and fear can, however, be directed to the wrong objects. if love and fear are directed to creatures or to unreliable human lovers, the human being will be disappointed and will experience only calamity.

love of oneself is a particularly harmful misdirection of the human being's capacity to love, for to "ascribe to [one's soul] a sort of dominicality" is a fundamental misunderstanding of human nature. Time and again Nursi emphasizes that the human being's "essential nature is kneaded out of fault, deficiency, poverty, and impotence," qualities which should act as a mirror through which the divine perfection is reflected. The self-loving soul, however, has usurped God's place. Nursi comments: "your intense love for yourself and your soul is love for the divine essence which you misuse and spend on your own self."[794] Nursi calls upon the self-loving soul to rend its egotism and to show forth god. Worship plays an important role in this process for it places the human being in the correct relation to god. as Nursi puts it in the Twenty-Fourth Word, worship "is a line of union which turns [the human being's] face from transience to permanence, from creation to creator, from multiplicity to unity, and from the extremity to the source, or it is a point of union between the source and the extremity."[795]

When the human being directs both his love and fear toward the correct object, namely god, then he will also learn to love everything else in the proper manner. Nursi writes: "When you give [love] to its true owner, you will be able to love everything without distress in his name and as his mirrors. That means this love should not be spent directly on the universe. otherwise, while being a delicious bounty, it becomes a grievous affliction."[796] Nursi's point seems to be that the human being must learn to set the right priorities.

The center of the human being’s existence should be god and the human being should focus his energies on cultivating his relationship with god.

When we place god at the center of our lives, our other relations are placed in their proper position. in the Thirty-second Word, Third stopping-Place, Nursi enumerates the relations that proceed from the fundamental relationship between god and the believer: enjoyment of food as the bounty of god; love for parents, children, friends and acquaintances, wife, prophets and saints, life, youth, spring, and the world. in short, Nursi writes, “love this world and the creatures in it as pointing to a meaning beyond themselves, like a word. do not love them just for themselves… . do not give any opportunity to other loves to enter into your inner heart because the inner heart is the mirror of the eternally Besought one and pertains only to him. say, ‘o god, grant us love for you, and love for that which will draw us closer to you.’”[797] When the believer’s relationship with god is on the right footing, then all other relationships fall into place. The believer can again love the world, but not in and for itself, but because it expresses the divine presence.[798]

Finally, we might note that in Nursi’s notion of the whole of creation being in supplication to god we have the basis of an environmental theology. if all of creation is engaged in supplication to god, then we should take responsibility for creation, for all beings in creation are supplicants to the almighty, compassionate and merciful god.

*** Prayer as the Foundation for Social Justice

Both Merton and Nursi were concerned at the inroads secularism was making in their respective societies. Both men see prayer as an important resource in addressing the challenge of materialism and atheism. Both consider prayer to be the source of social solidarity, action, and justice. Both conceive of petitionary or supplicatory prayer not simply as asking god for things but above all as an acknowledgment of one’s creatureliness and eo ipso of the correct relationship of the human being to god. in short, for both Merton and Nursi, prayer is part of the solution to the crisis caused by secularism.

Both Merton and Nursi are committed to the notion of god as a personal god with whom each human being can and should sustain a relationship. indeed, the reason for existing at all is to exist in relationship with god. in this divine-human relationship prayer plays a central role, for it is through prayer that human beings open themselves up to the divine presence. Prayer involves self-transformation. This transformation has both personal and social consequences. it has personal consequences, because in prayer human beings break out of the confines of their egocentricity in order to become one with god. it has social consequences because the transformation of individuals has consequences for society. indeed, there can be no long term transformation of society without personal transformation. in prayer i open myself up not only to god but also to other human beings, for they too exist in relationship to god. They are my brothers and sisters in god to whom i, as a creature of god, have a duty of care.

Prayer and social conscience are thus intimately linked. There is no division between prayer and social responsibility. on the contrary, the former is an essential resource for the latter. Prayer without social action is individualistic and selfish. To cultivate one's god-relationship with no acknowledgement of the obligations which that relationship creates towards one's fellow human beings is not true worship of god, but is worship of the idol of one's egotism. Without prayer we have only frenetic action without focus. indeed, without prayer the individual's social action is corrupted by his egotistical, sinful self. Thus Nursi emphasizes the necessity of reform of the soul before one dares to embark on the reform of others, while Merton points out that without establishing a god-relationship through prayer, all the politically and socially active individual achieves is to spread the contagion of his own ego to others. Prayer is an important way not only of drawing closer to god but also of confronting the false selves that human beings construct for themselves.

This raises the question of political engagement. neither man set about implementing or recommending a specific programme of political action. although taking a lively interest in the great political questions of his day, Merton did not align himself with partisan politics. The Nursi of the Risale-i Nur believed that involvement in party politics would compromise his task and that of his followers of

serving the Qur’an and keeping the faith alive in an increasingly secular age. [799] nevertheless, Merton and Nursi can be said to be political in an apolitical sense. That is, they did not adopt a party line, but were concerned rather that politicians should be aware of the religious and spiritual sources of genuine political action. Their point is that political action must have its source in each individual human being’s relationship with God. The focus of Merton and Nursi is first and foremost on getting the god-relationship right. When this is right, then correct political action will follow as a matter of course. in getting right with god prayer is of the essence. only in a prayerful relationship with god can we overcome our egotism, turn in love to our fellow human beings, and truly begin to build a healthy and just society.

** 15. God’s Justice in relation to natural disasters

Thomas Michel, s.J.

In the name of god, the Merciful, the compassionate.

When the earth shall quake violently, and the earth shall bring forth its burdens, and man shall say: “What is happening to it?” on that day, it shall relate its tales; that its lord has inspired it (Qur’an 99:1–5).

at the time of the indian ocean tsunami on 26 december 2004, in which over 300,000 persons where killed, 168,000 in indonesia alone, i was lecturing in central Java in indonesia. The island of Java was relatively unaffected by the tsunami, since it is sheltered from the indian ocean by the larger island of sumatra. nevertheless, everyone in indonesia was shocked at the widespread destruction and loss of life, and there was much soul-searching in an effort to understand god’s will in such a terrible disaster.

For Muslims, the questioning was especially acute, because aceh, the north sumatran province most severely affected, was well-known as being the most pious and faithful islamic region of the country. aceh is known in indonesia as “the threshold of Mecca.” consequently, many Muslims were

asking how god could permit such an event to occur in the most god-fearing region of indonesia, and they wondered where god’s justice could be found in an event in which good and bad perished indiscriminately.

The experience of discussing with indonesian friends the mystery of god’s will in relation to the tsunami provoked me to learn what Said Nursi had to say about natural disasters and how he reconciled such events with faith in god’s justice and mercy. There is a passage in the Risale-i Nur[800] which specifically treats these questions. it was penned in response to many queries put to Said Nursi following upon a severe earthquake which occurred on 27 december 1939 in the Turkish province of erzincan. The quake, which caused more than 30,000 deaths, was actually a series of seven powerful shocks (the most violent registering 7.9 on the richter scale), that together went to produce the most lethal and destructive disaster to hit anatolia in modern times. in his response, Said Nursi treats seven questions which people had put to him in regard to the earthquake.

First Question. What is the reason for the anxiety that people experience as a result of the earthquake? They are terrified that there will be another one. While admitting that the physical destruction and loss of life caused by earthquakes and other natural disasters are matters of great distress, Nursi notes that the spiritual and psychological crises that follow upon such calamities are often more severe than the material damage. The reason for this is that people who have experienced this type of disaster are traumatized; they are fearful that another quake will occur, and they live in despair since they do not know how to avoid this imminent danger or save themselves from it. The result of this fear and despair is that people lie awake nights worried about another earthquake, losing sleep and becoming depressed.

Said Nursi’s answer is that licentious, blasphemous lifestyles lie at the heart of this fear and despair. he suggests that if people were truly engaged in pious behavior and faithfully living according to god’s will, they would not be caught in the grip of torment, fear, and despair. They would see the hand of god even in the occurrence of natural calamities. “The reins of all those things that are hostile to you, from microbes to plagues, storms, famine, and earthquakes, are in the hands of the compassionate,

Wise one. Being wise, he does nothing in vain. Being compassionate, his mercy is superabundant. There is a form of grace and favor contained in everything he does.”[801] if people were living in accord with god’s will, they would not fear death because they would have a peaceful afterlife to look forward to. They would have the inner resources to confront disaster realistically and rationally and in this way find strength to overcome their fear as well as hope to overcome their despair. Nursi says elsewhere in the Risale-i Nur that if one views natural events with the eyes of faith, “he will realize that the storms and earthquakes and tempestuous events are all submissive officials, and understand that they are the means for instances of wisdom which though apparently harsh are in fact most gentle.”[802] it is noteworthy that Said Nursi’s concern here is not to interpret the earthquake as a punishment for licentious living, but rather to note that the inner defects and inadequacies that people experience in confronting such disasters come from a lack of faithful, observant lives. however, the matter is complex. elsewhere in the Risale-i Nur, he makes clear that at least some of the disasters that befall humanity are indeed the result of pride and obstinacy, of people thinking they know better than god. certainly, this does not mean every individual is guilty, but it is the erroneous ideas and attitudes of the majority of people that bring down disasters upon the whole nation. Nursi states this view clearly in a dream debate with supporters of the secular state: “The error of the majority is always the cause of general disasters. Mankind’s misguided ideas, nimrod-like obduracy, Pharaohlike pride, swelled and swelled on the earth till it reached the skies. it upset the sensitive mystery of creation and it caused to descend from the heavens the plague and storm of the last war’s quakes; it caused a heavenly blow to be visited on the infidel.”[803] in other words, there is a mysterious connection between the way that humans live, exemplified in the Qur’anic narratives of prophets such as Noah, hud, salih, lot, and shuayb, the cosmic forces that sometimes “rebel” against human obstinacy and assail earthly society.

Second Question. Why don’t these disasters happen in countries populated by non-believers? Why do they seem to occur very frequently in Muslim regions?

Said Nursi’s answer is that chastisement for small sins and errors is made quickly, on-the-spot, while the punishment for great

matters is deferred to a more august assembly. For example, one might be forced to pay a trivial traffic fine immediately, but a serious case, such as that of homicide or sedition, will be deferred to an important tribunal. in the same way, god punishes Muslims' less grievous sins in this world immediately by disasters like earthquakes, while the more serious sins of evildoers are deferred to the Final Judgment.

Third Question. if an earthquake is a punishment for sin, why are the innocent also punished for the sins of a few? obviously, in any given region, not all people are evildoers, yet in a natural disaster, everyone suffers.

Said Nursi's answer is that it is not correct to say about any human society that only a few people have sinned. in every society, most people are in one way or another involved in the general wrongdoing. Whether it be the injustices visited upon the poor, the corruption of politicians and businessmen, public promiscuity, or general disbelief, many people cooperate silently in such misdeeds in various ways. Whether by complacently ignoring the wrong, by profiting from the wrongdoing in one way or another, by passively putting up with it and doing nothing to stop it, or by defending the rights of miscreants to carry out their offences, guilt is more widespread than that for which a relatively small number of perpetrators is responsible. Nursi here is raising the question of what might be called "social sin," the general wrongdoing of a society for which no individual is responsible, but in which all are to a greater or lesser extent complicit.

Fourth Question. it could be argued that disasters like earthquakes atone for the sins that the people have committed. in other words, they are occasions by which people begin in this world to atone for the punishment due to their sinful

deeds. But if this is so, it would seem unjust on the part of god to punish the innocent along with the guilty.

Said Nursi replies that the issue is bound up with the mystery of divine determining, that is, god’s omnipotent power over all things and the reality of human freedom to choose good or evil. he cites a Qur’anic verse to the effect: “Fear tumult or oppression, which affects not only those of you who do wrong (8:25).” Nursi interprets this verse to mean this world is like a proving ground or examination hall in which each person’s level of responsibility and accountability is being tested. if in the case of disaster the innocent were spared while the guilty were being punished, then evildoers would do what is right, not because they wanted to obey and believe in god, but simply out of self-interest, to avoid worldly destruction. The upright “abu Bakrs” of this world would have no opportunity to show their positive, god-fearing qualities, nor would the self-serving, evildoing “abu Jahls” be shown up for the cowardly, desperate people they had made out of themselves. Thus, it is necessary that in a disaster, both good and bad undergo the same misery, so that the spiritual stuff of which each is made will become evident.

Moreover, god does not forget his faithful, upright servants in time of disaster. god shows them mercy and treats their suffering as a type of martyrdom which will gain for them a great reward in the afterlife. Just as the deaths of innocent victims can be considered a kind of martyrdom, so also their property and livelihood which were destroyed in the disaster take on the status of alms, which will earn the faithful victims eternal benefit.

Nursi concludes that men have no right to complain in the case of disasters and illness, nor are they justified in accusing God of injustice. He gives three reasons for his view. Firstly, god as creator and Provider has disposal over his creation to do as he wishes. disasters provide an opportunity for god to display his beautiful names by consoling and caring for the innocent victims. secondly, “by means of disasters and sicknesses, life is refined, perfected, strengthened and advanced; it yields results, attains perfection and fulfils its own purpose. Life led monotonously on the couch of ease and comfort resembles not so much the pure good that is being, as the pure evil that is non-being.”[804] Thirdly, this world is a testing-ground where patiently

endured suffering purifies the person and becomes equivalent to an act of worship of god.

Fifth Question. Would it not be more in keeping with god’s justice and mercy for him to punish individual sins one-by-one, rather than by sending a general and indiscriminate punishment like an earthquake? Why doesn’t god step in preemptively to prevent an earthquake or similar natural disaster from happening before such widespread destruction occurs?

Said Nursi answers that there are times when god allows the natural elements to rise up in anger against human sinfulness. The Qur’an recounts, for example, the flood visited on the people of Noah, the anger of the air at the denial of the peoples of ‘ad and Thamud peoples, the fury of the sea and water at the people of Pharaoh, the rage of the earth at Qarun, and the anger of hell at the unbelievers in the hereafter.[805] obviously, Nursi is not claiming that the natural world has the capacity for an emotional response such as anger, but it is clear from the Qur’an that human sin is so disruptive of the cosmic order that on occasion the earth itself rebels against the corruption done by humans.

even though god sometimes permits an element of the natural world to rise up in rebellion against human sin, if god were then to step in and prevent that element from following its set course, then in the long run, as many instances of good as of evil would have been prevented. Nursi recognizes that it is the function of some elements of nature to control and balance others. he expresses this view in the form of a prayer and says: “Just as the seas with their strange creatures recognize you and make you known, so do the mountains through the wise services they perform. They ensure that the earth is released from the effects of earthquakes and internal upheavals, save it from being overrun by the seas, purify the air of poisonous gases, function as tanks for the saving and storage of water, and act as treasuries for the minerals and metals necessary for living beings.”[806] god’s intervention to contravene and override the processes of nature, which had been decreed by god from the beginning, would be contradictory to god’s own wisdom in creation.[807]

The function of a natural element cannot be canceled in order to prevent a possible unwanted result. This would mean canceling as well all the good results tied to the intended action of that particular element. if an element were thus prevented from carrying out its given duty, it might avoid bad results, but at the same time, would cause the cancellation of an equal number of good results. since god is good and without fault, such an action would not be in keeping with his divine nature. in his mercy and wisdom, god selectively allows the occurrence of lesser evils for the greater good. For example, a disaster like an earthquake, while it causes serious destruction, also produces positive results in keeping with divine providence, such as testing people’s faith, rewarding faithful believers to the status of martyrs, and serving as a salutary warning to miscreants.[808]

Sixth Question. Many modern people deny that divine intervention is in any way involved in earthquakes, tsunamis, floods and similar disasters. They hold that such disasters can be explained by purely natural causes, such as an earthquake occurring because of a shift in the rock strata inside the earth or architectonic plates sliding against each other. They see no need for recourse to god, sin, punishment or any other religious reference to explain these events. For them, the universe consists entirely of matter, and disasters are entirely due to an unfortunate combination of material factors.

Said Nursi answers that the marvellous complexity of creation shows that not even the tiniest element of the cosmos can be outside the control and awareness of the creator. god’s providence, decision, and purpose are sovereign, and nothing occurs in the universe that is outside of god’s determination. however, sometimes god in his wisdom conceals his power and acts through secondary causes. an earthquake is a case in point. it is in keeping with god’s habitual way of acting that he will on occasion command the terrestrial strata to shift at a fault line, thus producing an earthquake.

Nursi offers an image to illustrate his point that god’s ultimate agency must be affirmed for everything that happens in the universe. When a man is shot

with a gun, it is not the gun that is blamed but rather the person who fired it. To presume the gun as uniquely at fault is ridiculous, for common sense tells us that one has to go beyond the material instrument to discover the true agent who employed that instrument. similarly, to pretend that the earth is the ultimate cause of earthquakes and other natural events is to disregard the true actor, who is god the creator. nevertheless, those who do not believe in god are forced to relegate all natural events to the status of chance occurrences within the natural order, ignoring the one who set forth and directs the forces of nature.

Seventh Question. What lessons can people learn from an earthquake occurring in a pious region of a predominantly Muslim country? it looks like god was intentionally aiming this earthquake directly at them. Why would god not choose some more irreligious part of the world to inflict with an earthquake?

Said Nursi’s answer is that god sends such natural catastrophes in order to warn people that they should pray and avoid sinful behavior; moreover, god uses these occasions to punish wrongdoing and injustice. Nursi accuses the persecutors of the students of the Risale-i Nur of being responsible for a series of earthquakes which occurred in Turkey:

as is indicated by four severe earthquakes in four years coinciding exactly with the severe aggression against the Risale-i Nur students and their being persecuted, and on each occasion their occurring exactly at the time the students were attacked and their stopping when the attacks ceased, you are responsible for the heavenly and earthly disasters that have occurred on our being convicted![809]

This statement was misinterpreted, and Nursi was accused of claiming that the Risale-i Nur had some kind of magical power so that if it were attacked, natural disasters would occur in a kind of divine retaliation. Nursi denied that he stated this and clarified his point as follows:

The wrong meaning has been given in the indictment, for it has deemed an offence some instances of the Risale-i Nur’s “wonder-working” (kerâmet) which took the form of “slaps.” as though disasters like earthquakes that occur when the Risale-i Nur is attacked are blows dealt by the Risale-i Nur. god forbid! We never said such a thing, nor wrote it. What we said in many places was that like acceptable almsgiving, the Risale-i Nur is a means of repulsing disasters. Whenever it is attacked, it hides itself; then calamities seize the opportunity and assault us … i have formed the conviction that those “coincidences” are a divine bestowal indicating the Risale-i Nur’s acceptability and are a sort of wonder of the Risale-i Nur on account of the Qur’an.[810]

on the one hand, earthquakes occur in pious regions because in those places people have not sinned so seriously; consequently, through the natural disaster god is beginning to purify them from their sins. here the question is connected with the mystery of human suffering, which Nursi views as a blessing and opportunity sent by god to grow in patience and trust. elsewhere in the Risale-i Nur he offers twenty-five remedies for “the sick and those struck by disaster,” by which he seeks to show how persevering in faith amidst illnesses and disasters can be a source of blessing and grace for the believer.[811] on the other hand, upright lives can sometimes prevent such disasters: “Through the blessings of the Risale-i Nur, Kastamonu was preserved from the disasters [earthquakes] more than any other province.”[812] however, Nursi hastens to admit that these are mere human speculations and the truth remains hidden with god. he cites a Qur’anic verse which states: “all glory be to you. We have no knowledge except that which you have taught us” (Qur’an 2:32), thereby affirming that natural disasters are among those things about which humans can only conjecture, beyond the basic indications that god has revealed through the prophets.

*** Conclusion

I have no doubt that many modern people will find Said Nursi’s explanation of god’s justice in natural disasters unacceptable. his understanding of god’s sending or permitting disasters as a punishment for human sin they will

consider simplistic and outdated. his view that god is accustomed to make use of these tragic events to test people and to bring blessings upon his faithful, patient servants they will regard as wishful thinking and an unfeeling response to the reality of human suffering. however, Said Nursi could rightly respond to such criticisms of his faith-

based perceptions by challenging non-believers to come up with their own more satisfactory explanation. Nursi has already pointed out the inadequacy of “blaming the instrument,” and charts of architectonic plates, oceanic currents, and volcanic substrata will serve little to give hope to victims or make sense of the disasters that have afflicted human lives. Nursi, while admittedly trying to find the meaning contained in occurrences that surpass our human comprehension, at least provides people with a way to perceive the hand of a just and compassionate god in such events and offers guidance on the way to respond to the disaster so that it can be an occasion of growth and blessing, and not merely meaningless destruction. it is in such efforts to understand the workings of god that true human wisdom can be found.

** 16. Justice and Balance in creation: Said Nursi’s analysis

Bilal Kuşpinar

We should like to point out at the very outset that Nursi regards justice (al-‘adālah) as one of the four principal objectives (al-makasid al-arba‘a) and essential teachings of the Qur’an; the other three being tawhid [monotheism], al-nubuwwah [prophethood], and al-Hashr [the resurrection in afterlife].[813] he also believed that these four objectives prevail and penetrate the whole content of the Qur’an; so much so that, if looked at carefully, one can notice their manifestations almost in every chapter and their hints almost in every phrase and word. Moreover, every part of the Qur’an is considered by him as a mirror to the whole of the Qur’an. Because of that, even in the formula of Bismillah, “in the name of god, allMerciful and all-

compassionate,” as prefixed to every sura except that of alTawba, these objectives can be discerned. The word al-Rahman [all-Merciful], for instance, is an obvious indication, according to Nursi’s analysis, to the existence of the order and balance of justice (nizām al-‘adālah) in the universe.[814] it is this interesting approach that we aim to explore in this study with its various implications and ramifications as manifested in the Risale-i Nur; an approach which views justice and all its concomitants as originated from god by virtue of his names, such as all-Merciful, all-Wise, and all-Just. again, it is this approach whose genesis Nursi traces in the Qur’an, that he further develops, as we shall see here, into what we may call a metaphysical conception of justice in benefiting at the same time from the ideas of such great Muslim sages as alghazali, ibn al-‘arabi, and Jalal al-din rumi, who all hold the view that justice and balance have been originally implanted by god in all things and beings in the universe. This view Nursi crystallizes by saying that “the universe, as well as all beings therein, testify to the Justice and Wisdom of god.”[815]in what follows, therefore, we attempt to bring to light in a systematic fashion the most salient features of Nursi’s metaphysical conception of justice through a close survey of his Risale. Before embarking upon our survey, however, we should offer some clarification for the meaning of metaphysical conception of justice. By this expression we intend to convey two purposes: one is to distinguish this particular conception from all other ethical, theological, social, and political conceptions of justice. The other, as the phrase itself suggests, is to draw attention to the spiritual and universal dimensions of justice, which Nursi, like his aforementioned predecessors, examines in two realms: that of microcosm, human realm; and that of macrocosm, the realm of the universe. after all, it is the Qur’an that informs of the existence of these two realms, when it states, “We shall show them our signs on the horizons [viz. in the universe] and within themselves [viz. in human bodies and souls].” (41:53). Justice as seen in these two domains is nothing else than an obvious sign of god. The universe with the tongue of order and equilibrium testifies to the wisdom and justice of the All-Just and All-Wise God.[816]

*** The Definition of Justice and its Qur’anic Foundation

Nursi, to begin with, seems to adopt the widely-held definition of justice among philosophers as “putting a thing in its proper place” or “a middle path or a moderate action or a mean that lies between two extremes.”[817] To this literal meaning, he also adds his own elaboration by saying that that justice means to give everything its right or due and to give every being its due existence and form in well-balanced measure. it also means to give every being what it deserves in accordance with its aptitude and capacity, in consideration of its whole existence. There are, as we note, several necessary components of this definition: “right” or “due” (hakk), “aptitude” (istidat) and “well-balanced measure” (hassas mizan ve ölçü).[818] as such, it includes virtually all the possible dimensions that are implied in the concept of justice.

Nursi discusses the various implications of the above-cited components of justice in the light of several verses of the Qur’an, some of which are as follows: “such is the artistry of god Who has created everything with due wisdom, balance and perfection.” (al-naml 27:88) “it is he Who has created everything in the best form [or has given the best form to everything he has created.]” (al-sajda 32:7) “it is he Who has given to everything its due creation [that is its true nature and form] and then guided it.” (Ta ha 20:50)

“do they not look at the sky above them? how We made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it.” (Qaf 50:6) As has been indicated in this verse, in all beings, says Nursi, there is an observable balance and order, as well as a wellmeasured regularity and well-distributed sustenance, universal wisdom. all of them bear testimony to god’s universal knowledge, wisdom and justice.[819]

“There is not a single thing that does not have its [source and] treasures with Us; We send it down thereof only in accordance with a measure well-defined.” (alhijr 15:21) The explanation of this particular verse occupies considerable space almost in the end of the lem’alar (The Flashes), where we find Nursi furnishing a detailed analysis of god’s name, the all-Just (al-‘Adl). it is worth mentioning that he composed his reflections upon this verse while he was in Eskisehir prison, far away from the external natural environment; yet it is strange enough that

most of his interpretation, as we shall see later, seems to have revolved around the vivid descriptions of the natural phenomena as if he was observing them with his physical eyes.

By pondering over all the verses above and other similar ones, Nursi undoubtedly seeks to underline his foremost conviction as well as the conviction of many other religious thinkers like him that in the phenomenal world there is an apparent justice whose origin is god and hence it is called, accordingly, “divine Justice.” in fact, the divine Justice has ever been in operation as a universal law since the very beginning of creation. as such, it has numerous substantial implications for man’s own life and existence in this world as well as in the world to come. in order for man to appreciate the overall importance of this justice in the universe, he should in the first place observe and examine his own creation along with the creation of the physical world around him. in doing so, he will be able to grasp the meaning of this worldly life within the context of the divine Justice and then begin to assume more consciously his individual and collective responsibility in maintaining that justice in the world. From this point of view, therefore, Nursi’s analysis will provide us, among other benefits, with a framework by virtue of which we can better visualize the effects of the divine justice in the phenomenal world and better conceptualize its metaphysical implications within us and outside.

*** The Manifestation of the Divine Justice in the Macrocosm

Nursi suggests that man should first adopt a positive attitude towards things around him and look at everything with a penetrative or internal eye (basira) and not just with the physical eyes. only then he becomes aware of the balance of justice pervasive in all creation. For to such a spiritually powerful eye, all the creatures, he proclaims, will appear as an obvious sign of and hence a visible testimony to god’s wisdom, justice, generosity and mercy.[820] in this case, man’s mental state is extremely important in observing things and beings in the phenomenal world, which stands as a locus or a theater for the reflections and manifestations of God’s names, attributes and acts.

By reaffirming this well-known traditional Islamic view of nature, Nursi seeks to emphasize that everything should be seen as purposeful and meaningful, not in themselves, but rather in reference to their originator and creator. after all, “god is named with a thousand names each of which serves as the source of thousands of perfections and the means for thousands of degrees of beauty.”[821] in each of his names, Nursi continues, are hidden thousands of treasuries containing innumerable bounties. naturally, god, as the owner of these names, not only sustains all things in the world but puts them in order and regulates them with perfect wisdom.[822]

The name the all-Just (al-‘Adl) is a greatest name or what Nursi calls “one of the six lights of the greatest name.” The various manifestations of this name keep on occurring on the entire universe, which looks like a huge magnificent palace. In it, let us imagine, there is a city which is in constant processes of demolition and renovation. again, within that city is a country which is disturbed and stirred up because of ongoing war and emigration. still within the country there is a world which is continuously oscillating between death and life. despite all constant transformations and tribulations as such, Nursi proclaims, there is nevertheless an amazing balance, order and equilibrium that is prevalent in all of them, therefore in the palace, city, country and world. and even all the changes, emigrations, and deaths that are taking place in all beings in those places, appear to be wellmeasured and well-balanced on the scales of the absolute one, the all-Just who sees and monitors the whole cosmos. To think otherwise would be tantamount to denying this obvious reality. in other words, had it not been for the justice of god and his overseeing, all this apparent balance and order in the universe would have turned into total chaos, and as a result the world we live in would have suffocated because of such possible disastrous consequences.[823]

The seven heavens and the earth and all that are contained in them [constantly] glorify Him. And there is not a single thing but glorifies Him with praise. (Isra 17:44) Nursi, while interpreting this verse, draws our attention to a significant point: god has invested all beings, heavenly and earthly alike, with numerous meanings of wisdom, each extolling and expressing with its own peculiar tongue the diverse subtleties of god’s creative art and his all-encompassing mercy. each plant and each tree in this sense demonstrate, at various stages of their growth from seedling, shooting, flowering to

blossoming, not only the Oneness of their creator but also his wisdom and justice, all of which denote his perfection in creation. Thanks to god’s justice, indicates Nursi, every tree completes its full growth within well-ordered stages of evolvement and well-measured balance. For a discerning eye such perfect wisdom and justice of god, he declares, is visible in all particulars of creation.[824] it is through the manifestation of his name all-Wise that the universe, Nursi declares, has been displayed to us as a grand book in every page of which hundreds of books have been inscribed, and in every line of which hundreds of pages are contained. and in every word of it are included hundreds of lines, and in each letter of it are compacted a hundred words, and in every point of it is inserted a brief index of the book. When we carefully and closely examine this mighty book, we are astonished again at the spectacular balance and order of its content, so much so that even the smallest details of it are harmoniously connected with one another and no slightest disorder is to be seen anywhere. Moreover, such balancing and ordering in the universe, as Nursi affirms in clinging to Ash‘arite position, is ever dynamic and constantly renewed.[825]

This point Nursi further illustrates by offering an analogy between an army of soldiers consisting of four hundred different sections, which are, though intermingled, separated from one another with a different uniform, provision, weapon, and medicine, and an army of plants and animals comprising 400,000 magnificent species, each of which stands in their different tents that are pitched on the face of the earth in springtime. if we observe carefully, he declares, both of these two groups, namely an army of soldiers and that of plants and animals, we can see how the names of god, the Truth, all-Merciful, Provider, all-compassionate and all-generous are manifested on them with order and equilibrium and in accordance with his wisdom and justice and also we can notice how he sustains, regulates and administers them all without confusing and forgetting any of them.

This is because of his all-encompassing justice and wisdom.[826] so, the divine justice as it appears in the universe, for Nursi, is not something arbitrarily imposed; on the contrary, it is inevitable result of god’s wisdom (hikmet) and justice (adalet) which pervades and permeates all things from the tiniest atom to the sun. That is to say, by his very name all-Wise all things become meaningful and purposeful, while by his name all-Just all things receive their due form and creation. Moreover, it

is through God’s infinite wisdom and justice that all things as well as all beings—whether be they physical or immaterial, terrestrial or celestial—are arranged in utmost perfect order and regularity.

When we take a glance at the universe, we are struck, Nursi goes on to emphasize, with a universal perfect order existing in all things there. We always see that there is a delicate balance, a precise order and a sensitive equilibrium. Moreover, such an order and balance are continuous all the time and inclusive of all things, even the minutest particles. Behind all of these then there lies but god’s

universal wisdom and justice, as well as his universal knowledge.[827] according to that universal knowledge, wisdom and justice, everything is measured in perfect manner and with the finest artistry and in accordance with its innate capacity and put in perfect order in accordance with its most fitting place in the universe. Look at the clothes of the birds, Nursi exemplifies, how beautifully they are dressed! how easily and comfortably they move their feathers and how they use them all the time! all other things appear likewise in their well-balanced bodies and beautiful forms with no waste at all. nothing is in vain there. all of these point to the existence of an all-Wise creator and all-mighty and all-Knowing.[828] as we closely observe, Nursi aims to demonstrate that in the cosmos there is not even slightest room for any chance or any random affair and that there is instead an impeccable order in place. This can only be explained in reference to the operation and manifestation of divine wisdom and justice. To put it more precisely, it is god who plans everything with wisdom and executes every work with justice.[829] likewise, it is on the scales of his wisdom and justice that he measures all things and beings and spread them on the earth.[830] at this juncture, Nursi responds to an implicit theological question: can god act contrary to his wisdom and justice? his reply is of course negative. in no way can god, he asserts, act contrary to his wisdom and justice. For, since his wisdom and justice are absolute and perfect, all that stems from him must be wise and just, too. or as he articulates, “from the absolute good (Hayr-i Mutlak) emanates nothing but good and from the absolute Beauty (Cemil-i Mutlak) proceeds nothing but beauty. nothing absurd can ever come out from the absolute Wise (Hakim-i Mutlak).”[831] Man, however, who has a short life in this world, as Nursi states, can neither attain nor experience such a real justice as god

exhibits in this ephemeral world. That is why so many things are being postponed to the grand Tribunal.[832]

Be that as it may, it is an undeniable truth for Nursi as for many other great spiritual masters that the world of creation depends for its existence on the infinite generosity and compassion (rahma) of god, just as its order and shape, and hence its perfection, depends on His infinite wisdom (hikmet) and justice (adalet). it is on account of his wisdom and justice that god gives everything its own right and measure in accordance with its natural aptitude (istidat) or according to what its primordial disposition requires. Whatever a thing needs and demands in its own nature, in terms of the necessities for its existence and survival, god grants them in the most fitting manner to it. In other words, God always responds wisely and justly to every being which poses to him its needs either by the tongue of its aptitude (istidat) or by that of its primordial disposition (fitrat) or by the tongue of its necessity (iztirar).[833] as we have mentioned earlier, god's justice, according to Nursi, is universal and encompassing all things and all beings, plants, animals, mankind and jinn. Because of his love of all, says Nursi, god manifests on them his names, including allWise and all-Just. on this particular point he fully agrees with the view of the great Muslim mystics of the past and emphatically stresses again the importance of god's name al-Wadud [The loving one], while citing the anonymous saying of those mystics as follows:

love is the very leaven (or substance) of the universe. it is through love that all existing beings are in motion. it is again from love that emerge the laws of attraction, affinity, and ecstasy present in all beings.[834]

so, Nursi links god's wisdom and justice with his love, so much so that he firmly asserts that everything receives from the manifestation of Divine love and hence is intoxicated with it in accordance with its natural aptitude.[835] The apparent justice and orderliness in all beings in fact emanates from his names the Just and the Wise but because of His love of them. here it must be noted that Nursi characterizes such a wondrous balance and order pervading the entire universe and all beings as

compassionate (rahimane), as it springs forth from the allcompassionate (Al-Rahim). That is to say, the justice of god is at the same time a mercy for all beings.[836] hence his justice is identical with his mercy. if this is the case, then how can one explain the existence of evil in the world? To this crucial question Nursi affords a response, as expected, in connection with his metaphysical conception of justice, or say it more concisely, in terms of the divine Justice. in the existence of satan, he proclaims, there are numerous purposes. First of all man's attainment of perfection and happiness is possible through his struggle against the temptations of satan. Within man are lodged and deposited numerous potentialities and abilities, whose development depends on his action, which in turn occurs through his striving in the face of evil spirits and harmful things. Were it not for his striving, man would have been just like the angels. But it is already self-evident that man with his will and intelligence is distinguished from all other beings. This being the case, then, "divine mercy, wisdom, and justice," Nursi concludes, "have permitted the existence of satan, and allowed him to molest men."[837] as has been noted, the very creation of satan, according to Nursi, is for the moral progress and spiritual perfection of man and therefore its creation in this particular respect is not only good and just but beautiful, too.[838] The same brief rationale he furnishes for the existence of such phenomena as extinction (fena), disappearance (zeval) and death (mawt). But when he comes to grips with one of the most complicated questions of both philosophy and theology, he extends his discourse to a considerable degree of elaboration. "how is it that god, allInfinitely Good, Absolutely Beautiful, Absolutely Compassionate and Absolutely Just, inflicts calamities (musibet), evil (şerr), and ugliness (çirkinlik) on certain individuals?" Being entirely aware of the profound complexity of this question, Nursi suggests, though implicitly but for the sake of clarity, a practical distinction between that which emanates directly from the treasury of God's mercy and beauty and that which results occasionally from his universal laws, which are termed 'âdât Allâh and which are subjected to his Will (irade). The former comprises all that is good and beautiful, which god freely bestows out of his compassion and generosity for all, whereas the latter includes particular evils and calamities, which he creates them occasionally out of his Will in order to preserve and maintain the universal laws all of which in fact serve for universal purposes and benefits. In the face of such calamities, God responds to the cries of those inflicted

individuals with his merciful help and favor. after all, he, as the creator and sustainer of all, acts as he wills.[839]

you should know that no one has the right to complain about and raise objection to the Maker of the universe. For, in the order of the creation [of the universe], there are thousands of wisdom which are contrary to the whims of the complainer and which may therefore be sacrificed [and lost] if the complainer is to be satisfied. As the Qur'an testifies to it: "If the truth were in accord with their own likes and dislikes, the heavens and the earth would surely have fallen into ruin ..." (al-Mu'minun 23:71). o complainer! how dare you object and make your particular whims a tool to engineer the universal [principles] of the universe? how dare you set your spoiled taste as the yardstick to determine the degrees of [his] bounties? how do you know? [Who knows] what you see as a suffering may be the very blessing? how dare you change the motion of the wheels of the universe and the turning of the celestial spheres in order to gratify your desires which do not even amount to the wing of a gnat on a scale and nor yet fill the seed of a fig? Nevertheless, you can present your complaints to Him, but not about him, for what is allocated for you from the heaps [of wheat] is just a grain. Besides, he who is owned cannot own. in this case, you should know your limit and you should never go beyond your boundary.

[Again,] you should know that one who exercises control over a particular cell of the body should first conceive the body [as a whole] and then apply to it one's operation. This is so because the particular [cell] is connected with and related to the [minutest] details and the condition of the whole [body]. This being the case, then, to exercise control over a cell falls under the command of the creator of all, indeed.[840]

Nursi goes on to deliberate further on the manifestations of god's justice in the world and this time he prefers to express his firm conviction with more precise terms as follows:

everything from the cells of an animate body, the red and white corpuscles in the blood, the transformations of minute particles, and the mutual proportion and relation of the body's organs, to the incomings and outgoings

of the seas, the income and expenditure of springs under the earth, the birth and death of animals and plants, the destruction of autumn and the reconstruction of spring, the duties and motions of the elements and the stars, and the alterations, struggles and clashes of death and life, light and darkness, and heat and cold, are ordered and weighed with so sensitive a balance, so fine a measure, that the human mind can nowhere see any waste or futility, just as human science and philosophy see everywhere and point out the most perfect order and beautiful symmetry. indeed, human science and philosophy are a manifestation and interpreter of that order and symmetry.[841]

let us again consider the balance and order that exist within the system of the sun as well as in its twelve planets. Each one is reflecting as a mirror the justice of God. To be more specific, let us think, Nursi goes on with his illustration, of the speed of our globe, the earth and how it travels, like a ship, an orbit of 24,000 years in one year, without shaking or scattering any of the things stored therein. if its speed had been slightly changed, reduced or increased, then the outcome would have been unimaginably severe; it would have thrown off all its dwellers into the atmosphere and scattered them all through space. To put in a nutshell, if the just balance and equilibrium god has originally placed in the operation of the planets were to be changed a little or destroyed for a second, the whole universe would fall into ruin, like a doomsday.[842]

*** The Manifestation of the Divine Justice in the Microcosm

in Nursi’s view, the phrase al-sirat al-mustaqim [the straight path] in the first chapter of the Qur’an signifies justice which consists of three major virtues; wisdom, chastity, and courage, all of which in turn represent the mean or the middle way among the three groups of human faculties or powers. The first group comprising sensual and bestial faculties attracts all that is beneficial for man. The second group consisting of the faculties pertaining to anger and passion repulses all that is harmful and destructive. The last group which includes rational and angelic faculties distinguishes between what is beneficial and what is harmful.

since god placed all of these faculties and powers in man without any limit, they may cause disequilibrium and imbalance in man’s actions, unless they are regulated and balanced by the divine law, which always enjoins the principle of moderation and the middle path (al-wasat) and forbids “excess” (ifrāt) and “deficiency” (tafrīt). if no limitation has ever been imposed on these aforementioned powers and faculties, man’s behavior, Nursi warns, would be unjust towards himself and others. in other words, in the employment of these faculties by man, Nursi further elaborates, there arise three possible situations; the first is deficiency or insufficient use of these faculties which results in negligence; the second one is unlimited use of the faculties which results in excess and extremism; and the third possibility is their moderate employment which yields justice. Any deficiency in the rational faculty or its inefficient employment, Nursi exemplifies, causes stupidity and foolishness on the part of man. on the other hand, any excess in that faculty or its unreserved use may lead to “erroneous results” and “deceptions” or “over-meticulousness in trivialities.” But its balanced employment yields justice and wisdom. That is why the Qur’an, the primary source of the divine law, never tires of reminding man of being moderate in all of his actions. “Pursue the middle path as you have been commanded” (hud 11:112) is one of these frequent reminders, as Nursi cites it on several places.[843] as it is seen, the manifestation of divine justice in the microcosmic world, therefore in the realm of human body, means, for Nursi, the equilibrium and harmony that man establishes within his faculties and powers through the assistance of the divine law. he also understands justice in this sense as following the middle path and moderation in all human actions.

*** Maintenance of the Divine Justice

Nursi, towards the end of his exposition of god’s justice in creation, adopts, in today’s nomenclature, an environmentalist attitude, as if foreshadowing some of the genuine ecological concerns and challenges that humanity is presently facing.

He at first vehemently criticizes those who, being somehow oblivious of this extraordinary justice implanted by god in the world, act irresponsibly and show no respect for it and even violate it either inadvertently or knowingly.

he therefore warns man in the strongest term possible that he should not do injustice to all beings and all natural resources with his greedy and ambitious behavior. let us lend our ears to some of his admonitions on this important matter:

O profligate, extravagant, wrongful, unjust, polluted, impure, miserable man! Because you have not behaved in accordance with moderation, hygiene, and justice, all of which are principles governing the whole world and all beings, you have become the object of their wrath and hatred. on what ground [and how dare] do you incur the anger of all beings through your wrongdoing, imbalanced acts, wastefulness, and pollution? yes, the all-encompassing wisdom of the universe, resulting from the greatest manifestation of the name all-Wise (al-Hakim), operates within the realm of moderation and rejects waste, while commanding frugality (iktisad). likewise, the perfect justice in the universe, emanating from the greatest manifestation of the name all-Just (al-‘Adl), governs the balance and equilibrium of all things. as such, it enjoins justice on man.[844]

as is seen, Nursi connects in a rather subtle manner the metaphysical divine justice that is observable in the nature with the ethical human justice that is expected to be effective in human behavior. he conceives the former as god’s bestowal of due balance and justice in the nature of all things out of his two great names, allWise and All-Just and also His subjecting them in the service and for the benefit of all human beings, whereas he formulates the latter as man’s full conformity with the requirements of the divine justice in adopting a conscious-moderate attitude towards all these justly created beings and things in the universe. That is to say, the divine justice first teaches man that in the original creation of everything there is no absurdity, futility, and wastefulness at all[845] and that everything is created in a well-balanced order, and then guides him, even if it does not compel him, as to how to conduct himself in order to maintain this original creation and balance as is. if man ever wastes, Nursi cautions, all of these freely given natural bounties of god and violates the principle of moderation which is in fact one of the most fundamental teachings of the divine wisdom and justice, he would not only act in a way entirely contrary to the reality of his life but also cause disequilibrium and corruption in the world. The Qur’an, therefore, never tires of reminding man

to be moderate at all the time, as this verse alone sufficiently conveys it: “Eat and drink, but never waste.” (a‘raf 7:31)

Another significant yet mysterious aspect of the divine justice or eternal justice[846] is that in order to preserve all creatures and particularly living beings from the microscopic organisms to the largest animal god grants them what Nursi calls “the conditions for life” (şerait-i hayatiye), also well known as “the rights of life” (hukuk-u hayat). it means that god out of his compassion equips and empowers them with the necessary faculties and abilities but all “with perfect balance” and “within a mutual proportion and equilibrium” and with the aim at protecting the weak from the evil of the powerful. in one sense, the divine justice is universal; for it naturally covers all living beings, yet, in another sense it is partial, since it excludes wrongdoers.[847] again, because of such universal and eternal justice, good things always yield good results and bad things, always bad results.[848]

Be that as it may, for Nursi no one can escape from being captivated to such attractive wondrous beauty and immaculate balance as pervading the whole creation. even there is, he stresses further, a beauty within a beauty, a balance within a balance, and an order within an order. hence, all creatures from the most minuscule in size to the most gigantic in appearance stand shoulder to shoulder before the balance of justice. “if they were to lose their balance even for a split second, it would destroy the equilibrium of the world and doomsday would occur.”[849] in crystallizing his view, Nursi faithfully articulates the celebrated metaphysical doctrine of the Hujjat al-Islam al-Ghazali, which is briefly known as “most noble or most wonderful possibility” (al-imkan al-ashraf or al-abda‘) and which postulates explicitly the principle that “the world that actually exists is the most perfect of all possible worlds” and that “there is nothing in possibility more beautiful and more wonderful than what actually exists.” a doctrine as such has not only engendered serious debates in islamic philosophy and theology[850] but also inspired and influenced the theosophical views of many thinkers like Nursi who seems to have incorporated it into his current conception of “justice and balance” in creation. in fact, al-ghazali’s maxim just mentioned serves for him as an eloquent and rigorous translation of his conviction that the all-encompassing balance, the heart-captivating beauty, as well as the all-pervasive harmony

within the existing world, are much brighter than even the light of the sun at noon.[851]

Because of its supreme importance, Nursi goes on to elaborate, god makes mention of the word “balance of justice” (mizan) four times in chapter 15 of the Qur’an, al-rahman: “and he has raised the skies high, and has he set up [for all things] the balance of justice, so that you [o men,] may not transgress that balance. so weigh, therefore, [your acts] with justice and fall not short in the balance of justice.” (al-rahman 55:7–9) What appears quite clear to Nursi from this verse is that everything in creation, whether big or small, concrete or abstract, tangible or immaterial, follows the principle of justice. There is neither excess nor deficiency in any of beings. nor yet is there injustice or imbalance in them at all. This is one of the truths that has been repeatedly underlined throughout the Qur’an and to which god has constantly drawn the attention of his servants, while reminding them to be more heedful of it and adopt it in their individual and collective lives. Moreover, it is impossible, according to Nursi, to destroy all of these truths, just as it not possible to destroy the universe.

Therefore, man, instead of interfering with the balance of justice in the world and attempting to manipulate it by his imbalanced and unrestrained acts, should exert his utmost effort in preserving it. For the lives of many creatures, including those of human beings, as well as their sound and healthy growth depend on the preservation of this godly given justice, which is, as remarked above, a mercy for all, and man’s compliance with it all the time. it is no one but man alone who, equipped by god with unlimited potentials and faculties, can destroy, because of his unconstrained greed and uncontrolled ambition, this extraordinary justice in the world, and turn it from a mercy and blessing into a misery and suffering. in fact, Nursi, being fully aware of the possible consequences of such irresponsible human behavior, persistently reminds us of our dignified position on this planet as the vicegerent of god (khalifa), inviting all of us to assume our duties and responsibilities as diligently as possible in accordance with the requirements of that noble post. By his overemphasis on the preservation of the god-given natural justice in the universe, Nursi somehow intimates that the accurate comprehension of all other forms of justice, ethical, social and political, as well as their adequate implementation depends on the acknowledgement of the former justice. if god’s all-encompassing justice in

creation is given as a mercy for all beings, then man’s active participation in it would be equally a mercy for his own life and the lives of all others. in this sense, Nursi’s vision of justice is not only holistic but pragmatic, too, as it appeals man to be just and fair in his dealings with all and also urges him to take part in sustaining and maintaining the balance and justice in the world as god has originally invested in the natures of all as part of his mercy.

** 17. Nursi’s compassion and Kant’s categorical imperative: Justice and ethics in Building a Better World

Ian Kaplow

Justice is an incredibly complex concept. Before i discuss ways in which justice may play a part in building a better world, it seems sensible to first understand what we mean by “justice.” i will sketch only a brief outline of the history of this concept in the course of the chapter. as a correlate, it would also be wise to discuss what we mean by “building a better world” – but this will breach the scope of this chapter. some of the questions, however, that need to be asked include: What does “better” mean? should “better” be understood as a property which we can attribute to the world (and what exactly do we mean by that?) in which the bounties of nature are sustained for all generations? in which the bounties of nature, but also the fruit of human production (from goods to capital) are distributed in such a way that everyone has what she requires and none must live below or beyond her means? or in which individual differences are not levelled for the sake of the “common good” but in which all people have equal starting conditions and chances for attaining what they want or need? in which every person may practice and follow her individual beliefs and tastes? in which the peoples and nations of the world live in peace with their neighbors?

even these relatively simple questions lead us back to concepts of justice. Justice is intertwined with the concept of a better world. To the questions above, most people would answer by making recourse to intergenerational

justice, distributive justice, justice of equal chances, libertarian justice, or international institutional justice. It is difficult to understand how one can begin to conceptually distinguish what she means by “better world” without recourse to a form of justice.

The concept of Justice is probably as old as human language. We all know the feeling of the sense of injustice – this sense, many scientists in different disciplines have documented, is found in all cultures known to mankind, at least in its rudimentary, unreflected state.[852] The cry: “That’s not fair!” presupposes for its condition of utterance at the very least a sense (be it intuitive or otherwise unreflected) of justice. yet as common as the sense of injustice is, so also is its variance: even amongst one culture, individual conceptions of what is just or unjust differ vastly. When a person claims that some event or state is unjust, but another person claims that she is wrong, how do we know whom to believe?

attempts to answer these questions are as ancient as mankind itself. They are documented in our most treasured canons, such as the confucian analects, the Holy Qu’ran or the Bible. Yet quite obviously, the wisdom we find on the topic of justice here is neither systematic nor analytical; as a revealed text of holy scripture, the discourse on justice must be treated differently.[853]

Today, the concept of justice belongs to one of the most controversial and mostdiscussed topics in philosophy. its scope ranges from classical political rights theory (such as the debate on ius ad bellum and ius in bello) to social ethics (such as the debate on how to help those in need without “unjustly” sapping those who are not in need or who consider themselves not in need). having to oversimplify matters here greatly, i think one can say that views on justice tend to polarize around five main camps:

• contractualistic, hobbesian or quasi-utilitarian schools who see justice as a set of rules that rational individuals agree upon to further their own selfinterest.

• Teleological schools (often seen in the Platonic tradition) who see justice as the ordering principle of some final Good or Aim of all mankind.

• Conventionalism, which claims that what is due to an individual is defined by customs of that individual's community.

• Aristotelian or intuitionism, which may see justice as defined by empathic feelings we have for our other fellow human beings.

• Those who see justice as a type of "fairness" which sets a framework in which individuals are free to pursue their own idea of the good.

Let me state as shortly as possible my general stance. While almost all of these five main "schools" of viewing justice have their strengths, I find the last – justice as fairness – to be the most plausible for a number of reasons, some of which i hope will soon become apparent. My denial of contractualism and utilitarianism will soon become clear – here, it can be said that a concept of justice as a regulative moral principle becomes self-defeating if its goal is merely egoism. Teleological arguments all share the difficulty of having to make their own particular concept of the good plausible for all others, and i don't see how this can be done (outside of dogmatic recourse to revealed scripture). Conventionalism runs the risk of defining something as just which an unjust community sees as just – but this community would unjustly treat injustice as justice, which begs the question that we are trying to answer. intuitionism locates traditional recourse to the transcendent or the divine to the human intuition; unfortunately, intuitions are different and may not be universalizable, especially if there is a defect in our feelings.

Fairness, on the other hand, makes explicit reference to universalizable principles – it consists, one could say, of nothing else.[854] This idea of justice avoids the trap of having to formulate a teleological principle of goodness and is thus most adapt at encompassing debates on justice in our pluralistic world, since it explicitly makes tolerance of others' conceptions of the good a stabilizing principle of justice and thus a virtue in itself. it is, on the other hand, a relatively weak principle and its main tool – the so-called "veil of ignorance"[855] – requires much interpretation.

here, however, i will not be arguing for (or against) a particular view of justice, although i do hold a rawlsian position for one of the stronger ones. instead, i want to examine the situation in which justice comes into conflict with other ethically relevant moral principles. What happens, for instance, when in order to bring about a just situation, we feel that certain actions are necessary – but that these actions themselves may be morally reprehensible? is it "better" to forsake justice for the sake of a greater or ethical good?

While the questions were never posed in exactly this way, i think that both Said Nursi and immanuel Kant could give very good, and very similar, answers to them.

*** Nursi on Compassion and Justice

The Concept of Compassion

For Said Nursi, compassion is seen as a concept which plays a large role in his teleological conception of the good – and hence, in a way which differs from modern rawlsianism, has direct links to a (teleological) conception of Justice. Nursi writes that in supplication to the compassion and Mercy of the almighty, one can become "a true human being and well-accepted guest of the all-Merciful one."[856]

But instead of following a teleological framework of justice in Nursian thought (which does seem to be apparant – see, for instance, the many passages on mankind’s aim and goal, such as in The Words, p. 368f. and elsewhere), i would like to examine a deontological one. For Nursi, compassion is not only a fundamental principle of islam, but a fundamental category of ethical relevance. Şükran Vahide demonstrates how Nursi “draws moral lessons” from the points he makes about compassion.[857]

Many of these points can be summed up in his feelings about harm done to innocents. This was a central point in Nursi’s life [ibid.]. We can see this in diverse areas of his writings. Nursi writes, “compassion, truth and right, and conscience, the fundamental way of the Risale-i Nur, severely prohibit us from politics and from interfering in government.”[858] By interfering in politics, innocents could be harmed, and this would have an immense impact against compassion, which tells us that innocents may not be harmed – even if this brings about a boon for a vast majority. Nursi says: “it is because of this compassion that i absolutely never interfere in government or disturb public order.”[859] Public order, it appears, is something which must be upheld in order to guarantee the well-being of innocents. This is why he puts great emphasis on “respect, compassion, refraining from what

is prohibited, security, and the giving-up of lawlessness ... .”[860] understood in the context of his time, it is clear that Nursi can see no justification in the harming of innocents – compassion forbids us to let them suffer, for whatever particular reasons we may have, even if these seem to be “good” reasons. This – the avoidance of harm to others – is a principle which, it appears at first glance, even forbids us from making changes in the world, traditionally seen as the path to justice.

But what sort of justice would that have been? it is clear what Nursi does not mean. Nursi writes about the “law” he calls “basic to politics:” according to Nursi, it “may be expressed as ‘Individuals may be sacrificed for the good of the nation and for the well-being of the community’.”[861] Compassion vs. Consequentialism

in other contexts, Nursi portrays this as a maxim which he attributes to Western philosophy. he is correct in considering its source as one aspect of Western philosophy, the one which has given Western thought a bad name – namely: classical utilitarianism. This form of thought has given rise to the infamous dictum: “The ends justify the means.” as i will be showing, the ends can never justify the means; this form of thought is simply false, and Nursi recognized it very early.

one current within utilitarianism is the doctrine that an action can be rightfully judged as morally satisfactory if its completion brings about more net happiness (or “goodness”) in the world. This simplistic form of consequentializm gives weight to some abstract quantities of happiness, both difficult to measure and absurd to construct. if i can make ten young poor people very happy if i murder a rich old woman and distribute her money amongst the poor and young, is it thus morally right if her death causes less sadness (or harm) than their net happiness (or benefit)? Many utilitarians would probably affirm this question. What if she were so fantastically rich that i could help 100 people – or 1000 or 1,000,000? What if she were terminally ill and had no friends? For the classic utilitarian, the answer seems clear: “More” people are helped by the sacrifice of one, and the value or loss of this one is made out to be small because of certain characteristics she possess, most notably her age and social standing.

Unfortunately, there is no way to quantify “net happiness” or “benefit” – but even if there were, this could not make what is repulsive morally right. as i will show, utilitarianism, at least in this form, is a dead end.

Without explicit reference to hobbes, Mill, Bentham or other traditional “fathers” of utilitarianism and rational egoism, Nursi has grasped that this consequentialistic principle cannot be used to define justice. he writes: “and, without his consent, an innocent person may not be sacrificed, even for the whole of mankind.”[862] Even if all of mankind may benefit, this does not allow the harming of innocents to be morally justifiable.

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Nursi was correct to make philosophy, or at least a small segment of it,

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responsible for this misguidance. Thus when he writes that:

according to the principles of philosophy, power is approved. “Might is right” is the norm, even. it says, “all power to the strongest.” “The winner takes all,” and, “in power there is right.”[863]

Might doesn’t make right. Might makes for asymmetries by which rightness is hindered. Justice cannot be brought about by forcing one’s will upon another.

Compassion and Justice

Thus, compassion plays a direct role for Nursian Justice: The world would only seem to be a “better place” if this form of justice were to reign – an “apparent justice” only, as Nursi wrote.[864] it would lack, however, a central moral backbone and hence its richness and supposed happiness would rest on stolen goods – worse, on morally reprehensible goods, namely those taken by harming innocents. This is why Nursi writes: “one of the many other reasons for our avoidance [of political involvement] is one of the four principles of the Risale-i Nur, ‘to be compassionate, and not to act tyrannically nor cause harm.’ […] however, the rights of one innocent person may not be sacrificed because of a hundred criminals.”[865]

here and elsewhere, i think critical light need be thrown on the term “innocent” and what this means for determining who may be harmed under what conditions. yet leaving this aspect aside for the moment, let us conclude this section with the following summary: avoiding harming innocents is an ethical imperative in the Nursian understanding of morality and justice, an imperative which seems to carry the highest normative claim

possible – a claim, in fact, which (at least at first glance) may seem to be at odds with claims to justice in building a better world, since our utmost moral imperative forbids us from radically altering the ordering framework of society no matter what supposed “benefits” mankind may reap from this interference.

To this apparent conflict I shall return in the last section of my chapter.

*** Nursi and Kant: The Immortal Soul and the Categorical Imperative

Immanuel Kant

No one single thinker has influenced moral philosophy quite so radically as immanuel Kant. it is precisely the cold rationality of the consequentialist doctrine – that individuals may be sacrificed for the good of the whole – which caused Kant to break with the longstanding moral traditions of philosophy up to that point. Nursi seems to have internalized the insight into the moral repugnancy of consequentialism which led Kant on his search for a new ethical system. But how can Kant reach his conclusions without explicit reference to the Nursian concept of compassion?

Kant’s search begins with the dispatching of the old. The dangers of utilitarianism are demonstrated in typical reductio ad absurdum arguments.[866] Kant then asks: What principle can be the cornerstone of a system of ethics – the cornerstone of a system which enables people to judge which actions of theirs are justifiably permissible or forbidden? surely, he indicates [ibid], a principle which judges the ethical correctness of all possible actions must not be particular in nature; any principle which adheres to any particular value whatsoever risks setting this value – be it happiness, utility, love, security, health, a longer life, or what have you – up against all others in a way which may endanger these other values. if any principle may be able to fulfil this role, Kant argues, it must be a formal one – one which takes recourse to the very conditions of morality’s possibility and to these conditions alone. if ethics is to have any meaning whatsoever, if it is not a

“mere illusion,”[867] then it must hinge on a principle which (1) has universal validity, so that no one single group or value is privileged and so that no exceptions to its rule can subsist, and that (2) is legitimized by recourse to ethical motivation itself. This principle Kant called the Categorical Imperative, because its validity is universal and it designates a “must,” a duty which is to be followed. in its most famous formulation, the imperative reads: “act in such a way so that the maxim of your action can function as a universal law.”[868] This principle is not hypothetical but universal; it hinges upon the fact that human freedom and rationality is required to make sense of actions as actions (as opposed, say, to mere trophic reflexreactions): We need to be able to choose which action to perform if our actions are to have any moral value (be it honorable or abhorrent), and we need to be able to choose according to laws or principles which we can communicate to others (as opposed, say, to a mere whim, or to being forced, or to a natural predisposition). But as a principle of the highest order, any ethical dictum would be subservient to hypothetical whim itself were it to claim utmost ethical importance – hence the categorical imperative’s recourse to human being’s ability to give laws alone: the categorical imperative makes no claim as to what those individual maxims may be (such as mercy or compassion), but only that human beings give themselves a law to which they must adhere. What law could this be? only this, Kant says: That the law be given from and obey rational freedom. nothing more and nothing less does the categorical imperative claim. This is why Kant’s so-called “second formulation” of the categorical imperative is said to say nothing more than the first, only in different words: “Act so that you treat all of humanity – both in your own self as well as each and every other person – as an end in itself, never merely as a means to an end.”[869] human beings, Kant rightly notes, are the only things on earth which have, in a strict sense, no value – their worth cannot be traded in for something else of “equivalent” value, since there is no other object of equivalent value; human beings are not things.[870] a human being is the only entity on earth which is able to freely choose a law to which it can bind itself out of adherence to duty; this status may not be made subservient to any other principle, “always as an end in itself, never merely as a means.”

Nursi on Innocents and Human Dignity

Nursi’s ideas on compassion seem to correspond strongly to the Kantian intuition. For Nursi, no action could be considered morally acceptable if, by carrying it out, innocents were to be harmed, no matter what other “benefits” were to be gleaned from that action. hence, the highest guiding principle of his rational choices – in other words, the ethical principle which was used to judge the maxims of his actions – entails recourse to a process of universalization according to which the worth of human beings as free entities is considered something which cannot be exchanged for any other value. in other words, Nursi upholds the categorical nature of human dignity represented in Kant’s second formulation of the categorical imperative: human beings are always ends in themselves, never merely means to ends.

Emotivism vs. Rationality?

Before i move on to the interplay of justice and morality and my key theses, i would like to at least mention one problem my comparison of Nursi and Kant must surely raise. in short, the backbone of what i am calling the Nursian ethical principle is compassion, and compassion might best be called a feeling. doesn’t this point to a distinction between the Kantian categorial imperative, whose workings is recognized by reason? Wouldn’t this tend to put Nursi, should his thought be systematized, into the fourth group of thinkers, those in the aristotelian tradition?

despite the connections i am drawing between Nursi and Kant, differences will surely remain. But if the connections i am drawing between them prove valid, then it could shed light on the way that aristotelianism and Kantianism are traditionally seen: Perhaps the recourse to other forms of cognition which Kant himself claimed is necessary in order to understand how the categorical imperative is applied – Kant refers explicitly to empirically tuned judgment, or “durch Erfahrung geschärfte Urteilskraft”[871] – are more important than some Kantians would like to claim, and that emotions, in general, need a more solid founding in universal reason than most aristotelians would like to claim. Perhaps the age-old gap between “feeling” and “rationality” is not quite as large as many make it out to be.

interestingly enough, Nursi seems to support this point as well. in my next section, i will dwell on the section of the Words in which Nursi praises the rational cognitive powers of just rulers such as solomon in establishing virtue as a precondition for Justice;[872] rationality, and not merely “feelings,” are necessary for the virtuous person. But Nursi also makes a different, and perhaps stronger point – and one which both Kant and hegel found to be central in moral upbringing. Nursi writes that in bringing about (negative) justice, “both the spirit, and the intellect, and the conscience, and man’s innate subtle faculties are affected and influenced.”[873] This is why just punishment is so effective, because it does not touch solely upon a wrongdoers “imagination” [ibid.], as do punishments in unjust societies. This shows that understanding virtue as the cornerstone to ethics and the precondition for justice (as i will demonstrate in my next section) can be more than merely emotive, both for aristotle and for Nursi as well as for Kant. i would also like to briefly return to this below.

*** Justice and Morality in Building a Better World

Justice and the Pitfalls of Consequentialism

It may seem to be the case that a methodically justifiable system of ethics – such as Kantian ethics is – may be at odds with Justice in building a better world. This may seem to be the case because the concept of Justice often entails redistributing resources (goods, food, education, raw material, or other things) or restructuring society (so as to change political systems or to allow all of its members to have similar statuses) – and these are done, it is often said, according to principles of utility. Making the world a “better place” entails restructuring it in a “better” way. But which way is “better?” one person’s idea of “better” may not necessarily be another person’s idea of “better” – just this is the essence of Kant’s universalistic criticism of particularism. it opens the door to dogmatism, fundamentalism and intolerance.

While this really is a problem in formulating what people can (rightly, justifiably) consider to be “better” in the context of answering the question: “How can we make a better world?”, i do not think it is a cardinal problem of

the concept of Justice. This is also not to say that the question, What does “better” mean in the context of making the world a “better place?” is impossible to answer, just that it is very difficult and must be careful to avoid particularism and the pitfalls of dogmatism, fundamentalism and intolerance.

Justice vs. Ethics

At least at first glance, Nursi seems to be saying just this: to live as a morally upright person, it is necessary to follow a categorical principle which forbids engaging in politics, at least in the sense of engaging in political activism which demands radical changes in society – changes, however, which may be necessary for making the world a “better” place, a just place. This may be what Nursi means when he says:

But these last thirty years, for the sake of acting positively and not acting negatively and not interfering in god’s concerns, i have responded with patience and resignation to all the treatment i have received.[874]

it seems that Nursi is indicating that ethics entails forsaking justice in this world for some form of justice in the hereafter. suffering now will be given its “just deserts” in the next world. Nursi says: “governing the injustices and misfortunes you suffer is the justice of divine determining.”[875] Further, he states: “our duty is to serve; its results are almighty god’s concern. We are charged with carrying out our duty, and are obliged to do so.”[876] Nursi seems to be saying that true, or at least affirmative justice can only be carried out by God; humans can be morally responsible subjects, but not active participants in creating affirmative justice. Thus Nursi writes:

[…] justice demands that the rights of subjects be preserved, so that the splendour of the state should not suffer. But here in this land, not a thousandth part of the requirements of such wisdom and justice is fulfilled; for example, empty-headed people such as yourself usually leave this realm unpunished. so again we say, matters are postponed for the consideration of a supreme Tribunal.[877]

as i stated above, Nursi writes that the misled doctrine of “might makes right” cannot lead to Justice.[878] The philosophical principles he correctly identifies here are false. Nursi, however, expounds upon this and gives us a corollary truth; he writes:

The principle of prophethood says: “Power is in right; right is not in power.” it thus halts tyranny and ensures justice.[879]

in other words, bringing about justice is a demonstration of power indeed. not anyone can be fit to exhibit it. But power alone does not justify anything – let alone justice itself.

Yet Nursi does, at one point, distinguish positive or affirmative justice from negative justice. of the former, he writes:

The positive variety consists in giving the deserving his right. [suum cuique, remark by i.K.] This form of justice exists throughout the world in the most obvious fashion, because, as proven in the Third Truth, it observably bestows, in accordance with special balances and particular criteria, all the objects of desire requested by everything from its glorious creator with the tongue of innate capacity, the language of natural need, the speech of necessity, and all the requirements of life and existence. This variety of justice is, then, as certain as life and existence itself.[880]

This form of justice is exemplified in and demonstrated by the harmonious perfectitude of creation.[881] This type of justice might even be likened to divine justice, since human beings can obviously not bring it about; while they may be honored to be viceregents in creation, they themselves cannot duplicate the almighty’s wonders. it is no wonder that this type of justice is beyond human ken.

negative justice, however, Nursi describes as consisting in “chastising the unjust; it gives wrongdoers their due by way of requital and punishment.”[882] This type of justice would most certainly require power, but not necessarily divine power. For this reason, Nursi can write that negative justice “is not fully manifest in this world,”[883] although we can see signs of it. Wrongdoers are not always punished by god, but sometimes they are, while at the same time wrongdoers may be punished by their fellow humans – and in doing so, these act justly. But this does not always happen, for any number of reasons. yet this type of justice may be something towards which mankind may strive as a type of ideal – to this i would like to return in my last section.

Justice as Secondary to Ethics

This may be one way of interpreting Nursi and/or Kant. it may not, however, be the only way. i think there is more room for interpretation – room in which, i think, Nursi would feel at home. To formulate it positively: Nursi and Kant could be interpreted to mean that justice is a secondary principle, subordinate to the ethical category. according to this interpretation, justice and morality may be distinct, but not necessarily mutually exclusive. Justice, or at least justice amongst fellow human beings living in this world, may be obtained if and only if human beings act in a morally upright fashion with and amongst one another. Morality, living according to the categorical imperative, would hence be a necessary condition without which justice could not be instigated; morality is thus the framework within which a better world, a just world, can begin to be built. according to this interpretation, the answer to the question: “how can we build a better world?” may be a multi-step process. First, we need to ask the questioner: what do you mean by “better?” if you mean “better social conditions, better political systems, better economic framework,” then you must ask yourself At what price? The price cannot entail purchasing this world at the cost of something which, in itself, has a “value” so absolute that it cannot truly be called value (because it has no equivalent price), but rather: absolute worth, or dignity. Building a better world must first be made by ensuring the basic conditions of human interaction, of ensuring the ethical virtues of tolerance, respect and peace. in other words: the world might seem to be better if certain – particular – conceptions of distributive or social justice were to be

implemented, but this may be illusory: it would mean nothing if it were to exist in a framework of hatred, war, persecution, and disregard of human dignity and human rights.

i think this can be seen as a valid interpretation of the key importance of the categorical imperative in Kant’s thoughts as well as in modern interpretations of the applicability of justice. i also think it can be seen as a valid interpretation of Nursi’s understanding of justice and compassion. In a way, this is reflected in his statement regarding the type of virtues a just ruler must have:

if you wish to act with pure justice, endeavour to see and understand the face of the earth in all its details, like solomon. For, by rising to the level of being informed whenever he wishes about every part of his realm, a just ruler and king who cherishes his subjects will avoid inequity, and may rule with complete justice.[884]

here, Nursi might be interpreted as meaning that a ruler must grasp the manifold interconnectedness of all worldly things in order to judge correctly, wisely and justly (like solomon did, to whom Nursi, following the sources, also attributed great powers which transcend mere physical causality in a way that indicate divine favor, namely: miracles [ibid.]). in other words, a ruler’s justness manifests itself not necessarily in the rectification of all social wrongnesses or in the vain attempt at divine mimicry, but in virtue won through cognitive enlightenment. This may also be an indication that compassion, as a key Nursian virtue, is not totally emotive, but at least in some way connected with rationality.

Justice is hence a feature which may be brought about in the world, but only under certain conditions, namely upon the condition of ethical virtue. ethics as a primary principle and condition upon which Justice may be built is thus virtuebased and, much like solomon’s legendary properties, cognitive. By grasping the nature of the entire world at once, one grasps the very foundation by which all things interact and interdepend upon one another – including reasons. This, perhaps, is why Nursi writes of solomon in this

context: solomon’s worldencompassing wisdom allowed him to see past the mere particular and view the universal – much like the claim of Kant.

I would like to elucidate briefly with an anecdote of Nursi’s in the Damascus Sermon, in which Nursi describes how a nomad explains the effectiveness of just punishments in a just society to a foreigner. [885] Nursi correctly demonstrates that mere imagination of punishment is ineffective in curtailing crime, while true internalization of a deed’s wrongness – by the faculties of “the spirit, and the intellect, and the conscience,” as Nursi said, together with “man’s innate subtle faculties” – stop the potential wrongdoer from doing wrong before he completes the evil act. This is exactly how Kant pictured the development of moral behavior in a person who embraces the categorical imperative. Many researchers today make recourse to what they call the “categorical imperative processes” (or simply ciP), by which they mean the various cognitive processes by which a person attempts to determine whether the maxim of their potential action can be universalized as a law.[886] Much like the potential thief in Nursi’s anecdote, the potential wrongdoer in a Kantian society doesn’t confirm to some externally given law by means of his imagination of an external punishment, but rather is “restrained” (Nursi’s words) from acting wrongly because he understands and accepts the true law as just and valid, that is: his emotive inclinations to act wrongly are curtailed by other, higher and stronger cognitive elements, the faculties of which Kant took much time to differentiate. For Nursi, the internal acceptance and holistic cognitive understanding of the just law is central to its effectiveness, but also to its justness; this is exactly so with Kant, with the following difference: Nursi emphasized the source of the cognitive understanding as coming from revealed scripture and manifest in the shari‘ah, while Kant emphasized the autonomous nature of the source – that is, the very freedom to choose an action in accordance with (or conflicting with) the categorical imperative as a just law is called autonomy, the insight into one’s own lawgiving power. autonomy is freedom as self-lawgiving (from “auto” for “self” and “nomos” for law). Kant’s version of internalized cognition thus differs from Nursi’s in this respect.

This view of Justice is my interpretation of choice; I find it the most fitting and appealing. There may, however, be two other interpretations, one of

them very close to this one and another somewhat more distinct. Let me first address the very closely related interpretation. Justice as Supervenient on Ethics

according to this idea, answering the question: “how can we build a better world?” need not necessarily imply that justice and ethics be brought about in different steps, although they may be different entities. This could be seen as a “congruent” or a “supervenient” interpretation of justice and ethics. in other words, it would imply that “living ethically” or “being a morally upright, responsible agent” is the answer to the question: “how can we build a better world?” Building a better world would be brought about by being an ethically upright person. Justice would thus be equivocal to existing as an ethical agent, following the universal imperative to heed human dignity.

Justice as Free Rational Choice

concepts of justice have also been explicitly formulated in the Kantian tradition. instead of listing a value or set of values in answering the question: “What is just?”, philosophers in the Kantian tradition only take recourse to the conditions of being able to answer the question itself.[887] answering the question “What is just?” must hence entail a process by which human beings can freely choose in which society they would live and freely choose which laws they consider those which guide this society – without recourse to any benefit they may reap in society. This process of choice can only work, if the participants in such a process have no way of knowing which position they will hold in society – they cannot know, for instance, if in the society which they envision they would be masters or servants, oppressors or oppressed – and hence they could not rationally want to live in a society in which oppression exists. hence, participants in such a process would define justice in such a way so that no one would be subjected to the whims of another and so that no individuals be subjected to some abstract, general value which others may consider “good.” Nursi, it seems to me, could readily uphold this concept of justice. it avoids the traps Nursi identified in consequentialism – sacrificing individuals for the sake of the community, utilitarian calculations rather than the dignity of the human being – while allowing for a concept of

justice in this world to be formulated. as a concept spawned from universalization and reciprocity, this concept of justice – like all Kantian concepts – shows fundamentalism and intolerance to be inherently reprehensible.[888]

*** Closing Remarks

Western philosophy – or at least one of its greatest figures, Immanuel Kant – and Nursian thought are, as i have hoped to show, not as far apart as one might think. Nursi's conception of compassion is implemented in a way that demonstrates the apodictic-assetorical nature of the highest moral principle (of the Kantian system). This has implications for the way that justice needs to be understood in building a better world. Justice, if seen as a complex set of traits a society must have, cannot be established without first erecting the moral framework within which it can flourish; that moral framework is delineated by a single categorical imperative, insight into whose universalism Nursi gained by elucidating his view of compassion.

Justice can only be achieved in a framework of ethics. While my wording is that of Western philosophy, i think Nursi may embrace the thoughts presented within; perhaps, however, he might phrase them like this: The corrective to the common notion of Justice is called by Kant the categorical imperative, but its workings can be experienced as compassion, especially in the epistemological modus of submission. Kant attempted to systematize his understanding of a better world, the ideal of which he described as a "realm of ends;" for Nursi, a similar understanding emerges through revelation. Thus it may be the case that similar conclusions may be reached as to how to guide one's action in a morally upright way, as to what the "greater good" is according to which we judge maxims of action, as to what Justice is and how we must act accordingly to build a better world – similar conclusions, but different paths leading to them.

in other words, there may be different methods of attaining universal truths witnessed by these two great thinkers but, simultaneously, a language by means of which both of these methods may be expressed and

made understandable to one another. Kant and Nursi use different words and different methods, but come to similar thoughts.

This, i think, has great impact both on understanding great thinkers as well as on interdisciplinary and inter-faith dialogue.

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** Index

‘Abd al-Qadīr al-Gilānī, 55

‘abduh, Muhammad, ix

‘ad, 223 ‘ali bin abi Talib, 136 abdul razeq,Mustafa, ix abraham, 129, 143, 176, 177 abu-rabi‘, ibrahim, ix, 69, 81, 100 aceh, 219 adam, 15, 176

adam’s Fall from grace, 16 expulsion from paradise, 15 his vicegerent on earth, 16

aeneas, 170–73 al-afghani, Jamal al-din, ix al-ash‘ari, 12, 16, 113n10 Al-Ghazālī, x, 55, 67, 114n15, 119n42,

151, 155, 156, 158, 227, 238 al-hashr (the resurrection in afterlife), 74, 77, 81, 227. See also resurrection in afterlife

al-hudhali, abu dhu’ayb, 148, 149, 150,

152, 156

Al-Jurjānī, 53n1, 112n1, 125, 127, 228n5 al-Muhyī (the life-giver), 55, 56, 57, 65 al-Mumīt (the death-causer), 55, 56, 65 al-razi, Fakhr al-din, 12, 43 al-shahid al-Thani, 147, 148n2, 150,

151–8

al-shatibi, abu ishaq, 144 al-Tabari, abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir,

3, 10, 11 al-Tafsir al-kabir, 12 Al-Taftāzānī, 112n2, 113, 114 al-Zamakhshari, Mahmud ibn umar, 11–12,

151 andalusia, 144 angels, 3, 8, 12, 15, 42, 73, 116, 119, 234

existence of angels, 119

animal Pain, 111

in islamic thought, 112–14 in Nursi’s approach, 127–33 ankara, 162, 163

anselm of canterbury, 79 aquinas,Thomas, 79, 80, 85, 165 arabian Peninsula, 178 areopagus, 29 aristotle, 175, 249 Ascent to Truth, 200 atatürk, 22, 25, 99, 101 atheism, 23, 109, 131, 197, 213, 215, 217 augustine, Bishop of hippo, 2, 8, 9, 109 averrhoes, 175 avicenna, 175

Barla, 101, 156, 163, Beker, J. christiaan, 85 belief in life after death, 19, 26 Bellah, robert, 142

Benjamin, Walter, 104

Bible, 1, 2, 6, 10, 37, 102, 107, 242

British, 102, 144 empire, 100 philosophy, 19

Brothers Karamazov, 24, 147 Burrell, david, 85

canetti, ellias, 164n20, 178 caucasia, 144 christ, 8, 9, 79, 87, 92, 96–7, 103–2, 107–9,

110, 171, 176, 177, 197, 201, 205 body of christ, 91, 204 christ’s death, 8 christ’s descent, 171 christ’s redemption, 1, 9

christian theology, 1, 2, 8 adam and eve, 2, 8

christianity, 9, 194, 197

eve, 9 original sin, 8 the resurrection of the dead, 29, 96

christ’s redemption. See christ church of england, 199

creation, 25, 37, 40, 44, 207, 210 the second creation, 44, 73

god’s creation of humanity, 1 in Bible, 6 in Qur’an, 3, 10 in the Works of Nursi, 13–16, 217, 224 purposes in the creation, 116

creator, 22, 23, 51, 224

daedalus, stephen, 178 dante alighieri, i, 162, 166–8, 173, 174,

177, 178 darwin, 21, 27, 130

causes of death, 60 contemplation of death, 65 death, 8, 14, 15, 19, 53–60, 63

day of Judgment, 3, 38, 40, 206 Divine Comedy, 162, 166, 173, 177 divine names and attributes, 13–15, 39,

43, 44, 46–9, 56–9, 62–3, 115, 119,

</right>

122–5, 127, 133, 207, 213 dostoevsky, 147

earthquake, 131, 219–25 egypt, 144, 148 einstein, albert, 102 eliot, T.s., 162–6, 173–8 epicurus, 148 epistle to the hebrews, 37 erzincan, 219 eschatologically, 89 eternal Punishment, 40, 97, 106, 108 eternal reward, 29 eve, 1–3, 6–10, 16. See also hawwa evil, xi, xii, 1, 2, 21 in the Bible, 6–9 in the Qur’an, 3, 5 in the Works of Nursi, 13–16, 24, 27,

234

the acquisition (kasb) of evil, 15

evolution, 21

Fall of Man, 8

Final judgment, 29–30, 32–3, 37, 39–40,

105, 221

First World War, 160–62, 165, 178

Fitzgerald, 178

Free Will, 1, 8, 11–12, 15–16, 125–6, 132,

202

Freedom of choice, 1

Fuller, lon l., 137–9

garden of eden, 6 gillman, neil, 87 goethe, 102 gospels, 25, 96 great gathering, 35, 37, 39–40 greek philosophy, 12 gregory the great, 79

Habbah, 72

Hafız Halid Efendi, 154 hawwa, 10–13. See also eve heaven, 14, 58, 96

hell, 9, 14, 25, 48, 94–5, 109–10, 113, 169,

171–2, 187 hereafter, xii, 22–6, 35, 37, 42–9, 51–2,

<right>

54–5, 63, 67, 70–78, 90, 101, 114,

</right>

133–4, 154–5, 182, 187–8, 211,

215, 223, 250 hick, John, 130n111 holocaust, 24, 102 homer, 167–70 horace, 175 hud, the prophet, 221 Hujjat al-Islam, 238 hume, david, 148 Huzun, 159

iblis, 1, 3–4, 10–13. See also satan ibn al-‘arabi, 55, 227 ibn hazm, 152 ibn sina, 41, 156, Ihya’ ’ulum al-din, 151, 155 ijtihad, 184, 193 imam ‘ali, 189 Imam Rabbānī, 55 india, 144 indonesia, 219 interfaith dialogue, 83, 144 intermediate world (barzakh), 55 iqbal, Muhammad, ix islamic theology, ix, 54, 61

medieval, 2, 11

Jabriyya (Predestinationists), 16 Jahiliyya, 148, 154, 158

Jawshān al-Kabīr, 78

|

Jesus christ. See christ

Jewish scripture, 107

Jewish theology, 2

John of damascus, 79

Judaism, 8–9, 111, 172

Justice of god, 1, 230–31, 233, 235

Kafka, 178

Kant, immanuel, i, 243, 246–9, 251–5

Kastamonu, 225

Katre (A Droplet), 163

Khidr, 33, 57–8

Kingdom of heaven, 203

Kurdish, 137, 147n1

Lā Siyyamā (in Particular), 69–72 last day, 29, 33, 77–8 laws, 5, 51, 117

creational laws, 126 dominical laws (kavânîn-i rubûbiyet), 51 universal laws, 117–18, 124, 126, 134,

229, 234, 247 lévi-strauss, claude, 137 lot, the prophet, 221 lucan, 175

Madrasa nuriyya, 147

Mafatih al-ghayb. See al-Tafsir al-kabir

Manifest World (Âlem-i Şehâdet), 43, 90,

157

Mardin, serif, 102, 145–6

Marxist, 24

Mary, the mother of Jesus, 9, 211

Materialism, x, 197, 199, 217

Mathnawi al-Nuriye, 69, 70, 72, 80

Mcgrath, alistair, 81

Mecca, 135, 219

Merton, Thomas, i, 197–98, 202–6, 217–18

Middle east, 135, 140, 178

Modernism, 160, 167, 178,

Modernity, ix, 104, 135–6, 139–46, 164,

171

Moltmann, Jürgen, 87, 93, 99, 103

Morality, 3, 15, 32, 91, 96, 135–9, 141–5,

194, 198, 246, 248–9, 251

Moses, 29, 143, 176

Muhammad, the prophet, xi, 5, 14, 25, 27,

29–30, 38, 42, 44, 51, 66, 70, 72,

106, 133, 143, 182, 190, 194, 210,

212–13

Murphy, nancey, 86, 88, 90

Muslim World, ix, x, 135, 141, 143–4,

191–3, 195

Mustafa Kemal atatürk. See atatürk

Mu’tazilite, 11–12, 113–14, 151–4, 157 Mylae, 66–7

natural disasters, 111, 219–21, 225–6 nature of mankind, 1 nazis, 102 new said, x, 41, 66, 69, 142, 163, 174 new Testament, 8, 9, 107–8 nietzsche, 102, 171 noah, the prophet, 133, 176, 221, 223 Nursi, Bediuzzaman said, i, ix, 2, 10, 12, 16, 19, 22, 27, 30, 33, 41, 52, 69,

80, 147–8, 151, 154, 158, 160, 163,

182–90, 197, 219–26, 243

Odyssey, 167–8 old said, 41, 50, 66, 100, 142 origin of evil, 1, 2, 3, 6–9, 10, 13, 16 original sin, 2, 5, 8 ottoman, x, xi, 99, 100, 140, 161 ovid, 175

Paley, William, 26

Pamuk, orhan, 159–60, 166

Paul, the apostle, 8–9, 15, 90, 96

Perkins, Pheme, 86

Philosophy of religion, 19

Placher, William, 79

Planck, Max, 102 Plato, 174–5, 242

Polkinghorne, John, 78

Pound, ezra, 162, 164, 178

Prayer, 11, 49, 52, 92, 178–9, 188, 198,

200–214, 218

Prophethood (al-nubuwwah) 227 Prophet ilyas, 57

Qarun, 223 Quraysh, 29, 33

rahman, Fazlur, 143 ramsey, Michael, 198 rebellion of iblis, 3 resurrection, 14, 22–3, 25, 29–40, 42–53,

58, 69, 73–4, 76–80, 83–98,

99–107, 108–10, 113–14, 161–3,

169–74, 177–9, 210, 227 resurrection of the dead, 29, 34–9,

40–43, 45–9, 50–52, 99, 101, 103,

104–10, 161, 163, 170–72, 174,

177–9

resurrection of the soul, 33

revelation, 5, 25, 27, 39, 55, 79, 85, 109,

110, 121, 142–3, 197, 255 rida, rashid, ix

Risale-i Nur, ix, 13, 16, 22, 25, 30, 32–4,

38, 41, 42, 44–6, 50–52, 81, 101,

111–12, 116, 120, 135–7, 139,

141–5, 156, 160, 182–3, 198,

218–20, 224–5, 227, 243–5 rorty, richard, 141 rumi, Jalal al-din, 55, 57, 227 russell, Betrand, 19–22 russian prison camp, 163 rustem Pasha, 147

sadiq al-‘azm, 135 salih, 221 satan, 1–5, 7–8, 10, 16, 68, 130, 208, 233–4 second Vatican council, 142, 144 shari‘ah, x, 138–9, 182–4, 186, 188–94 shi’ite, 154–3 shuayb, 221 sicari, stephen, 171, 178 sin, 1–3, 5, 8–9, 11–12, 17, 37, 96, 109, 170, 176, 206, 208, 221–6. See also evil

smith, adam, 138 social Justice, 199, 201, 203–9, 252 soul, 84, 79, 84, 87–91, 93, 100, 106, 124,

134, 178–9, 246 suffering, 24, 103, 109, 147, 152, 225 Sufism, 212–14

Sulayman the Magnificent, 147

Summa Theologiae, 79 Sunna, 186, 190 swinburne, richard, 27

Tabari. See al-Tabari

Tawhid (monotheism), 118, 227

Tenth Word, 19, 22, 30, 46, 52, 80, 93, 104,

162, 166, 171–2, 174, 178, 209

Thamud, 187, 223

Theodicy, x, xi, xii, 1, 2, 14, 147–8, 156–8

Theology of hope, 107

Thornton, lionel, 92

Tiflis, 143

Torah, 10, 25, 27

Trinity, 170

Trust (al-amana), 5, 15

Tübingen, 103

Turkestan, 144

Turkey, i, ix, x, xi, 19, 101, 103, 135, 140,

144, 146, 159–62, 198, 224

Turkish republic, 41, 140 Twenty-Fifth Word, 44

universe, xii, 12, 15, 20–22, 30–32, 35,

40, 42, 44, 46–7, 50, 64, 67, 75–7, 79, 89, 92, 109, 116–20, 125–7,

130–31, 185–6, 207, 209–10, 212,

214–16, 224, 227–35, 237, 239

Vahide, sükran, xii, 78, 101, 161, 243

Van, 163

Vatican ii. See second Vatican council

Vicegerent (khalifa), 3, 4, 15–16, 239

Volf, Miroslav, 93

Waste Land, 165, 166–7, 173

Woman’s creational status, 2

Worlds of the unseen (Gayb), 43

Zayn al-din al-‘amili. See al-shahid al-Thani

[1] For a fuller appreciation of Nursi’s life, please consult the following works in english: Şerif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany, 1989); camilla nereid, In the Light of Said Nursi: Turkish Nationalism and the Religious Alternative (Bergen, 1997); Fred a. reed, Anatolia Junction: A Journey Into Hidden Turkey (Burnaby, 1999), and Şükran Vahide, The Author of the Risale-i Nur, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi

(Istanbul, 1992); Şükran Vahide’s Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany: state university of new york Press, 2005); ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘, Spiritual Dimensions of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’s Risale-i-Nur (albany: state university of new york Press, July 2008); and ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘, editor, Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany: state university of new york Press, 2003).

[2] Nursi mentions almost every major Muslim mystic in his Risale. For a list of the major Muslim mystics, see annemarie schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam (chapel hill: university of north carolina Press, 1978).

[3] yvonne y. haddad, “ghurba as Paradigm for Muslim life: a Risale-i Nur Worldview.” The Muslim World, volume lXXXiX, no. 3–4, July–october 1999, p. 309.

[4] Massignon thinks this is a hadith qudsi. see louis Massignon, Essay on the Technical Language of Islamic Mysticism, trans. Benjamin clark (notre dame, 1997) p. 165.

[5] Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, 1961, s.v. theodicy.

[6] The segments of this chapter that deal with adam and his wife in the Qur’an and the arabic Tafsir literature are based on my previous work published in Barbara Freyer stowasser, Women in the Qur’an, Traditions, and Interpretation (new york: oxford university Press, 1994), pp. 25–38. The numbers in parantheses after quotations of or references to the Qur’anic text indicate sura and verse.

[7] Was iblis an angel or one of the jinn? in his History of the Apostles and Kings (Tarikh al-rusul wal-muluk), the historian and theologian abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (d. 923) assembled a

number of hadith (traditions) that identify iblis as an angel, as a jinni, or as the leader of “a tribal group of angels called jinn,” The History of al-Tabari. vol. I: General Introduction and From the Creation to the Flood, ed. ehsan yar-shater, trans. and annotated by Franz rosenthal (albany: state university of new york Press, 1989), pp. 252 ff.

[8] For example, Theodor noldeke’s as analyzed in W. Montgomery Watt, ed. (Richard) Bell’s Introduction to the Qur’an, second edn (edinburgh university Press, 1970), pp. 206–13.

[9] Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, ed. Jane dammen Mcauliffe (leiden: Brill, 2002), vol. 2, p. 337.

[10] all Biblical quotations in this chapter are from The New Oxford Annotated Bible, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and roland e. Murphy (new york: oxford university Press, 1991).

[11] The Oxford Companion to the Bible, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael d. coogan (new york: oxford university Press, 1993), p. 246.

[12] Oxford Companion to the Bible, pp. 10, 338 and 567.

[13] Kurt Flasch, Eva und Adam: Wandlungen eines Mythos (Munchen: Beck, 2004), pp. 30, 51, 82–3.

[14] The Oxford Companion to the Bible, pp. 678–9.

[15] The Oxford Companion to the Bible, p. 208.

[16] The Oxford Companion to the Bible, p. 246. other interpreters of genesis 3 maintain that death itself was the punishment

for the primeval rebellion (The Oxford Companion to the Bible, p. 160).

[17] The Oxford Companion to the Bible, p. 223.

[18] Augustine Through the Ages, ed. allan d. Fitzgerald, o.s.a. (grand rapids: eerdmans Publishing, 1999), p. 610.

[19] Augustine Through the Ages, pp. 342, 351.

[20] Augustine Through the Ages, p. 610.

[21] Augustine Through the Ages, p. 611.

[22] Flasch, Eva und Adam, pp. 93–4.

[23] abu Ja’far Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, Jami’ al-bayan ’an tafsir al-Qur’an, ed. Mahmud and Muhammad shakir and ahmad Muhammad shakir (cairo: dar al-ma’arif, [1950s]–1969), which covers the Qur’anic text through sura 14:27; for the remainder, i have used the edition of Beirut: dar al-Ma'rifa, 1972.

[24] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, p. 532.

[25] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, pp. 513–14.

[26] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, pp. 525, 530.

[27] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, pp. 525–7.

[28] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, p. 528.

[29] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, pp. 529–30.

[30] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, p. 526.

[31] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, pp. 526, 531, and vol. 12, p. 356.

[32] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, p. 529.

[33] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, pp. 526, 530–31, and vol. 12, pp. 356, 358.

[34] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 1, p. 538.

[35] Tabari, Jami’, vol. 12, pp. 356 ff.

[36] Tarif Khalidi, Classical Arab Islam (Princeton: The darwin Press, 1985), pp. 82–6.

[37] Mahmud ibn umar al-Zamakhshari, Al-Kashshaf ’an haqa’iq ghawamid al-tanzil (Beirut: dar al-kitab al-'arabi, 1966), vol. 2, p. 76.

[38] Zamakhshari, Kashshaf, vol. 2, p. 76.

[39] Khalidi, Classical Islam, pp. 86–7.

[40] razi, Tafsir, vol. 3, p. 16.

[41] razi, Tafsir, vol. 14, p. 37.

[42] razi, Tafsir, vol. 14, pp. 46–8.

[43] razi, Tafsir, vol. 3, p. 26.

[44] razi, Tafsir, vol. 3, p. 17.

[45] razi, Tafsir, vol. 23, p. 125.

[46] razi, Tafsir, vol. 9, p. 161.

[47] razi, Tafsir, vol. 3, p. 12.

[48] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words, translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide (istanbul: sozler neşriyat, 2002), p. 806.

[49] Encyclopaedia of the Qur’an, vol. 2, p. 337.

[50] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words, trans. Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sozler nesriyat, 2002), pp. 133–42.

[51] Nursi, The Words, pp. 312–13.

[52] Nursi, The Words, pp. 240, 695.

[53] Nursi, The Words, pp. 708–9.

[54] Nursi, The Words, pp. 719–20.

[55] Nursi, The Words, pp. 254, 413.

[56] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, Letters, transl. Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sozler Neşriyat, 2001), p. 390, and Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Flashes Collection, transl. Şükran Vahide (istanbul: sozler neşriyat, 2000), p. 226.

[57] Nursi, The Words, pp. 557–61, and Letters, p. 390.

[58] Nursi, The Words, pp. 477–84 (the quote is from p. 480), and Letters, p. 62.

[59] Nursi, Letters, pp. 61–4.

[60] Nursi, The Flashes, p. 104.

[61] , p. 482, and The Flashes, pp. 110–11.

[62] The Flashes, pp. 21–8.

[63] see for example d.Z. Phillips in Death and Immortality (london: Macmillan, 1970) and stewart sutherland in stewart r. sutherland,

“What happens after death?” Scottish Journal of Theology 22 (1969): 404–16.

[64] Bertrand russell, “Why i am not a christian.” Taken from the website http://www. positiveatheism.org/hist/russell0.htm (accessed 21 october 2006).

[65] Bertrand russell, “a Free Man’s Worship,” in Mysticism and Logic (london:

longman, 1919).

[66] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words, translated by Şükran Vahide (Sözler Neşriyat, Ticaret ve Sanayi, A.Ş., 1992), The Tenth Word, p. 59.

[67] ibid., p. 103.

[68] bid., p. 103.

[69] ibid., p. 71.

[70] bid., p. 102.

[71] bid., p. 76.

[72] bid., p. 102.

[73] bid., pp. 108–10.

[74] The sophistication of Paley’s argument is often overlooked. he does consider a variety of scenarios including one where he does reflect on the possibility that the watch (his chosen human artifact) is a result of watch reproduction. see especially, Natural Theology: Evidence of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity (1809), chapter 2.

[75] see richard swinburne, The Existence of God (oxford: clarendon Press, 1979).

[76] Said Nursi, The Rays, The ninth ray, p. 205. cf. also, The Fifteenth ray – The shining Proof – First station, p. 578.

[77] Nursi later explains that the heedless companion indicates greedy, selfish human instinct, whereas the responsible friend corresponds to the human heart or conscience. at another level, the self-justifying rationalist indicates the student of human philosophy, while his upright companion is the student of the Qur’an; finally, the misguided individual stands for unbelievers, while the wise, thoughtful companion represents the community of faith. The Words, The Tenth Word, p. 70.

[78] The Words, The Tenth Word, p. 67.

[79] ibid., The Tenth Word, Tenth Truth, p. 102.

[80] ibid., The seventh Word, p. 41.

[81] ibid., The Tenth Word, Fifth Part of the addendum, p. 131.

[82] The Rays, The Fifteenth ray, The shining Proof, second station, p. 627.

[83] The Words, The Tenth Word, seventh Truth, p. 90.

[84] The Rays, The supreme sign, First chapter, p. 164; cf. also The Flashes, The Twenty-sixth Flash, For the elderly, p. 291.

[85] The Damascus Sermon, The seeds of reality, p. 97.

[86] The Words, The Twenty-fifth Word, First Light, Second Ray, p. 412.

[87] The Letters, seeds of reality, p. 542.

[88] The Flashes, seventeenth Flash, Fifteenth note, p. 187.

[89] The Letters, Twentieth letter, second station, p. 297.

[90] , The Fifteenth ray, The shining Proof, second station, p. 629.

[91] The Letters, Twenty-ninth letter, First section, p. 459; cf. also, The Rays, The supreme sign, First chapter, p. 164.

[92] , Twenty-ninth Word, second aim, p. 539.

[93] , The second ray, First station, p. 21.

[94] The Rays, The Third ray, p. 56.

[95] , Twenty-ninth Word, second aim, p. 543.

[96] , The supreme sign, First chapter, p. 193.

[97] The Words, The sixteenth Word, pp. 212–13.

[98] , The Twenty-fourth Word, second Branch, pp. 349–50.

[99] , The Fifteenth ray, The shining Proof, First station, p. 584.

[100] The Words, Tenth Word, ninth Truth, p. 94. cf. also, The Words, Twenty-fifth Word, second light, second Beam, p. 438.

[101] The Rays, The second ray, conclusion, p. 45. cf. also, The Rays, The supreme sign, First chapter, p. 183. “‘The hour shall be but a blinking of the eye, or even closer,’ that is, the bringing about of resurrection and the gathering that follows upon it shall take no longer than the opening and closing of an eye, or even less.” also, The Words, Tenth Word, Third Part of the addendum, p. 125.

[102] The Words, Twenty-fifth Word, Second Light, Second Beam, p. 439. Cf. also, The Words, Tenth Word, Fourth Part of the addendum, p. 129.

[103] The Flashes, The Thirtieth Flash, p. 409.

[104] Nursi, Letters 1928–1932 (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 2001), p. 438.

[105] Nursi, The Words (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 2004), 106. See also, Mehmet S.

Aydın, Din Felsefesi (Ankara: Selçuk Yayınları, 1992), p. 232, for Ibn Sina’s own words.

[106] , p. 491.

[107] see Nursi, The Rays Collection (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 2004), p. 241; The Words, p. 541.

[108] For discussions of this, see Nursi, The Rays, pp. 205–12, 257, 578–9; The Flashes Collection (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 2000), p. 291; Kastamonu Lahikası (istanbul: Envar Neşriyat, 1994), pp. 210–11.

[109] see, for example, Qur’an, 6:73, 59:72.

[110] Nursi, Signs of Miraculousness (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 2004), p. 246.

[111] Nursi, The Words, pp. 574–5.

[112] Nursi, Letters, p. 350.

[113] Nursi, Signs of Miraculousness, p. 215. See also, Bekir Topaloğlu, “Âhiret,” in Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1988), i, 544.

[114] , p. 106.

[115] see Nursi, The Flashes, p. 434; The Rays, pp. 257, 260–62; The Words, p. 734.

[116] Nursi, The Words, p. 541.

[117] For a lengthy and enlightening discussion of these, see Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 123–35.

[118] see, The Words, pp. 541–4. see also, Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 63–4; “nokta,” in İçtimâî Reçeteler (Istanbul: Tenvir Neşriyat, 1990), pp. i, 124–6.

[119] The Flashes, p. 292.

[120] Nursi, The Words, pp. 437–9.

[121] in sura 78, The great news; see The Words, p. 385.

[122] see, for example, The Words, pp. 92–4, 307–8, 392; The Rays, pp. 135, 164, 192–3, 232 ff.

[123] Nursi, The Rays, p. 135.

[124] , pp. 392–4.

[125] Nursi, The Rays, pp. 45–7.

[126] Nursi, The Words, pp. 549–56.

[127] see The Words, p. 642.

[128] The Rays, p. 257; also, p. 583.

[129] Nursi, Barla Lahikası (Istanbul: Envar Neşriyat, 1994), p. 320.

[130] The Words, p. 77 fn. 9.

[131] For this proof, see Aydın, Din Felsefesi, pp. 26, 68–70. Nursi also sets out his interpretation of it in his earlier work, Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 164–5.

[132] Nursi, The Words, pp. 77–8. For another piece describing the evidence for resurrection and the hereafter of some thirty-two divine names and their manifestations, see The Rays, pp. 230–41.

[133] Nursi, Letters, pp. 291–9. see also, The Words, pp. 103–4; “nokta” in İçtimâî Reçeteler, i, 127–31; Flashes, pp. 416–17.

[134] Nursi, Letters, p. 299.

[135] Nursi, The Words, pp. 545–9.

[136] Nursi, Signs of Miraculousness, p. 25. see also, The Words, pp. 75–6, 540–41; The Rays, pp. 208, 231, 248.

[137] Nursi, The Rays, pp. 247–8.

[138] Nursi, The Words, p. 514.

[139] Nursi, The Words, pp. 106–7; also, 349–50.

[140] Nursi, The Words, p. 555.

[141] see, for instance, 41:53.

[142] Nursi, The Words, p. 313.

[143] ibid., pp. 483–4.

[144] Nursi, Muhâkemat (Istanbul: Sözler Yayınevi, 1977), pp. 151–3; Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 59–65; “nokta” in İçtimâî Reçeteler, i, 121–7; The Words, pp. 538–42.

[145] see, for example, Nursi, The Flashes, p. 291.

[146] Nursi, The Flashes, pp. 538–9.

[147] Nursi, Letters, pp. 344–5.

[148] see, The Flashes, pp. 431–3.

[149] Nursi, Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 243–4.

[150] Nursi, The Rays, pp. 240–41, 578.

[151] Nursi, The Words, pp. 81–4, 248.

[152] Nursi, The Rays, p. 578; The Flashes, p. 403.

[153] We have consulted with two of these dictionaries: ‘Alī ibn Muhammad al-Jurjānī, al-Ta‘rifāt, ed. M. ‘Abd al-Hakīm al-Qādī (Cairo: Dar al-Kitab al-Masri, 1991), pp. 246–7; Muhammmad ‘Alī ibn Muhammad al-Tahānawī, Kashshāf Istilāhāt al-Funūn 4 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1418/1998), v. 4, pp. 106–8.

[154] Most of the Qur’anic verses dealing with death have already been examined in several academic writings in english, some of which can be cited for those who wish to explore further on this subject: Thomas o’shaugnessy, j.r., Muhammad’s Thoughts on Death: A Thematic Study of the Qur’anic Data (leiden: e.J. Brill, 1969); J.i. smith and y.y. haddad, The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection (albany: suny, 1981); William c. chittick, “eschatology,” Islamic Spirituality: Foundations I, ed. s.h. nasr (new york: crossroad Publishing company, 1991), pp. 378–409; ali Ünal, The Resurrection and the Afterlife (Virginia: Fountain, 2000).

[155] Al-Tahānawī, Kashshaf, v. 4, p. 107.

[156] Al-Jurjānī, al-Ta‘rifat, p. 246.

[157] Said Nursi, Sözler, 8, p. 15; cf. The Words, 8, p. 50.

[158] Nursi, Sözler, 10, p. 38; cf. The Words, 10, pp. 98–9.

[159] Nursi, Sözler, 17, p. 77; The Words, 17, p. 220.

[160] Nursi, Sözler, 23, p. 133; The Words, 23.

[161] Nursi, Sözler, 32, p. 290; The Words, 32, p. 664.

[162] The Qur’an, al-Kahf 18:7.

[163] Sözler, 17, p. 77; The Words, 17, p. 220.

[164] The Qur’an, al-an‘am 6:32.

[165] see for deatils, Nursi, Sözler, 17, pp. 77–8; The Words, 17, pp. 220–21.

[166] Nursi, Sözler, 26, p. 209; The Words, 26, pp. 488–9.

[167] Nursi here alludes to the famous Sufi teaching that man from the time of his fleshy stage in the womb to eternity travels a journey towards the

ultimate achievable human perfection. rumi, for instance, articulates this teaching in poetic form: “i died to the inorganic state and became endowed with growth, and (then) i died to (vegetable) growth and attained to the animal. / i died from animality and became adam (man): why, then, should i fear? When have i become less by dying? / at the next move i shall die to man, that i may soar and lift up my head amongst the angels …” (Mathnawī iii, 3901 ff. trans. R. Nicholson.) see for a well-written article on rumi’s understanding of death, W. chittick, “rumi’s View of death,” Alserat (1987) Xiii: 30–31.

[168] Nursi, Sözler, 26, p. 209; The Words, 26, p. 489.

[169] Nursi, Sözler, 26, pp. 209–10; The Words, 26, p. 89.

[170] Sözler, 32, p. 293; The Words, 32, p. 672.

[171] Nursi, Mektūbāt 1, pp. 347–8; Letters, 1, pp. 22–3.

[172] Nursi, Sözler, 29, p. 238; The Words, 29, p. 550.

[173] Nursi, Sözler, 29, p. 238; The Words, 29, p. 551.

[174] Nursi, Sözler, 29, p. 233; The Words, 29, p. 539.

[175] The Qur’an, al-Mulk 62:2.

[176] Nursi, Sözler, 33, p. 310; The Words, 33, pp. 706–7.

[177] , 1, p. 348; Letters, 1, pp. 24–5.

[178] Nursi, Mathnawī al-‘Arabī anl-Nūrī, p. 347.

[179] Nursi, Mektūbāt, 20, p. 457; Letters, 20, p. 284.

[180] Nursi, Mektūbāt, 20, p. 458; Letters, 20, p. 248.

[181] Nursi, Mektūbāt, 20, p. 450; Letters, 20, p. 268.

[182] , 20, p. 450; , 20, p. 268.

[183] , 24, p. 480; , 24, p. 337.

[184] , 24, p. 480; , 24, pp. 337–8.

[185] Nursi, Mektūbāt, 24, 48; Letters, 24, p. 340.

[186] , 24, pp. 482–3; Letters, 24, pp. 342–3.

[187] Nursi, Mektūbāt, 24, p. 483; Letters, 24, p. 343.

[188] Nursi, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī al-Nuri, p. 1360.

[189] The Qur’an, al-Baqara 2:156. see also al-Ma‘ida 5:18, al-ra‘d: 13:36.

[190] al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī anl-Nūrī, p. 50; cf. Mesnevi-i Nuriye, pp. 1282, 1399.

[191] Nursi, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī anl-Nūrī, p. 347.

[192] Nursi, Lem’alar, 11, p. 608; Flashes, 11, pp. 82–3.

[193] The Qur’an, al-Baqara 2:156.

[194] Nursi, Lem’alar, 17, pp. 645–6; Flashes, 17, p. 165.

[195] The Qur’an, al-imran 3:185.

[196] The Qur’an, al-Zumar 39:30.

[197] Lem’alar, 21, p. 670; Flashes, 21, p. 217.

[198] Lem’alar, 21, p. 670; Flashes, 21, p. 217.

[199] Lem’alar, 25, p. 699; Flashes, 25, p. 283.

[200] Nursi, Şualar, 1, p. 835.

[201] The Qur’an, al-i imran 3:185.

[202] Nursi, Lem’alar, 26, p. 706; Flashes, 26, p. 297.

[203] Nursi, Lem’alar, 26, p. 707; Flashes, 26, p. 298.

[204] Şualar, 1, p. 835.

[205] Şualar, 2, p. 853; The Rays, 2, p. 25.

[206] Şualar, 2, p. 859; The Rays, 2, p. 39.

[207] Şualar, 2, pp. 859–60; The Rays, 2, p. 40.

[208] Şükran Vahide, “A Chronology of Said Nursi’s Life” in Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, edited with an introduction by ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘ (albany: suny Press, 2003), xix. (hereafter: Vahide, Chronology.) some Turkish references to this work spell the title Mesnevî-i Nûriye. all citations of Mathnawi al-Nuriye will refer to the Arabic-language edition: Badī‘uzzamān Sa‘īd al-Nursī, Al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī al-Nūrī (Istanbul: Sözler Yayınevi, 1999)—hereafter, Mathnawi. unless otherwise noted, paraphrasing and translation of Mathnawi al-Nuriye is my own, with much assistance from hashim al-Tawil, Ph.d., of the faculty of henry Ford

community college, dearborn, Michigan. Where these paraphrases and translations are felicitous, dr. al-Tawil has my deepest thanks. Where there are errors, they are mine alone.

[209] Şerif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediūzzaman Said Nursi (albany: suny Press, 1989), p. 177.

[210] in order of length, Lama‘āt (no. 1), Shammatun (no. 9), and Nuqtah (no. 12) are 15 pages each; Lā Siyyamā (no. 3) comprises 20 pages (as we have said); Dharratun (no. 8), Rashahāt (no. 2), Shu‘latun (no. 11), Zahratun (no. 7), Habbah (no. 6), Habābun (no. 5),

Nūrun (no. 13), Al-Qit‘atu’l-Thalithatu min Shammah (no. 10), and Qatrah (no. 4) are 21, 26, 33, 35, 41, 43, 47, 51, and 69 pages, respectively in the Sözler Yayınevi (1999) edition used for this project.

[211] Mathnawi, p. 83.

[212] Mathnawi, p. 88.

[213] Mathnawi, p. 101.

[214] see Mathnawi, p. 85, Yā Sīn (36): 82–3; p. 86, al-Zumar (39): 38; p. 97, al-Qiyāmah (75): 36 and al-Nisā’ (4): 87; and p. 99, al-Rum (30): 50.

[215] anthroplogist claude F. Jacobs, Ph.d., director of the center for the study of religion and society at the university of Michigan-dearborn, made

this point in a conversation about Nursi’s Mathnawi al-Nuriye with dr. hashim al-Tawil and the author in dearborn, Mi, 27 June 2005.

[216] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words: On the Nature and Purposes of Man, Life, and All Things, translated from the Turkish Sözler by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözler Neşriyat, 1992), p. 77, note 9.

[217] Mathnawi, pp. 218, 480, as translated by redha ameur. see redha ameur, translator, “Preface to the Al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī al-Nūrī” in Islam at the Crossroads, op. cit., pp. 336, 337.

[218] Mathnawi, p. 35.

[219] Mathnawi, pp. 86 ff.

[220] Mathnawi, p. 94. literally, al-Thakalān means “Two Weighty Things;” it can refer to the Qur’an and the Prophet’s Family, or (as is probably the case here) to the two categories of creatures: human beings and jinn.

[221] Jane i. smith and yvonne yazbeck haddad, The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection (albany: suny Press, 1981), p. 1.

[222] ibid., p. 6.

[223] J. Windrow sweetman makes this point. see his Islam and Christian Theology: A Study of the Interpretation of Theological Ideas in the Two Religions (london: lutterworth Press, 1945), p. 189.

[224] in addition to smith and haddad, op. cit., see also, for example, Rasā’il Ikhwan as-Safā’, nos 39 and 43.

[225] in ali Ünal’s english translation of Mathnawi al-Nuriye, this treatise is titled, “Particular arguments for the resurrection.” see Said Nursi, Epitomes of Light (Mathnawi al-nuriye): The Essentials of the Risale-i Nur (izmir, Turkey: Kaynak, 1999). When i speak of resurrection as a christian theologian, i have in mind the greek term anastasis [a standing up (again)], which occurs thirty-four times in the new Testament to indicate life after life—not resuscitation, but entry into a new realm of existence. While it can be used in reference to a particular moment (especially when speaking of god’s having raised Jesus christ from the dead), it may also be used to speak overarchingly of a multi-stage process of collection, revivification, and judgment.

[226] see smith and haddad, op. cit., pp. 64–5; see also seyyed hossein nasr, A Young Muslim’s Guide to the Modern World (chicago: KaZi, 1994), p. 41.

[227] Mathnawi, pp. 86, 93, 100, and 101 (where it occurs twice in the same sentence).

[228] Mathnawi, p. 97.

[229] see pp. 86 and 99 (one iteration each); pp. 98 and 100 (two iterations each); p. 97 (three iterations). The noun also appears twice in a footnote on p. 81, and as a vocative verb in the closing supplication.

[230] *Mathnawi*, pp. 83–6.

[231] *Mathnawi*, pp. 86–7.

[232] *Mathnawi*, p. 88.

[233] Mathnawi, pp. 88–9.

[234] Mathnawi, p. 92; translation, Ünal, op. cit., p. 59, modified slightly.

[235] , pp. 94–5; translation adapted from ali Ünal, Epitomes of Light, pp. 62–3.

[236] , p. 96; translation, Ünal, op. cit., p. 63.

[237] , pp. 96f; translation, Ünal, op. cit., pp. 63–4.

[238] Al-Nisā’ [The Women] (4): 87. Mathnawi, p. 97.

[239] Mathnawi, p. 98.

[240] , p. 99.

[241] , pp. 94, 95, 96, 97 respectively.

[242] , p. 100.

[243] Mathnawi, pp. 100–101.

[244] Mathnawi, pp. 93, 100.

[245] Şükran Vahide notes that the Jawshān was readily available to Nursi by virtue of its inclusion in (and his access to) in Al-Majmu‘a al-Ahzab [a collection of litanies], a three-volume anthology of supplications and litanies compiled by Ottoman scholar and Sufi master ahmed Ziyauddin gümüshane (1813–93). see Vahide, Intellectual Biography, 11, 30. Vahide also notes Nursi’s role in popularizing the Jawshān. See the introduction Şükran Vahide, trans., A Supplication of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings be upon him): Al- Jawshān al-Kabīr (Istanbul: Sözler Neşriyat, 2003), 3. This supplication is also available as a small devotional manual in arabic alone, and in arabic with Turkish translation, as well as on the internet in english, arabic, and Turkish. There may be other editions.

[246] Thanks to the rev. W. Mark richardson, Ph.d., Professor of Theology, the general Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church, for his own reflections on this section. Where I have used his ideas and turns of phrase to sharpen my argument, i do so with much gratitude.

[247] John Polkinghorne, Quarks, Chaos & Christianity: Questions to Science and Religion (new york: crossroad, 1994), pp. 10, 11.

[248] Thomas aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Part i, Question 2, article 3. Thomas aquinas (c. 1225–74) composed his massive Summa from c. 1265 until 1273. he envisioned it as a handbook for friars, men who had joined the dominican religious order, but were not destined for university.

[249] Thomas aquinas, Summa Theologiae, supplement to Part iii, Question 75, article 1. Part III of Summa Theologiae was not yet finished when Thomas died. The discussion of matters relating to resurrection (Questions 69 through 99) was constructed by one of his companions, who drew the material from Thomas’s commentary on Peter lombard’s Fourth Book of the Sentences.

[250] “even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived,” anselm asserts. “For, when he hears of this, he understands it. and whatever is understood, exists in the understanding. and assuredly that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For, suppose it exists in the understanding alone: then it can be conceived to exist in reality; which is greater.”anselm, Proslogion, ii–iii, V; trans. richard Viladesau. see richard Viladesau and Mark Massa, eds, Foundations of Theological Study: A Sourcebook (new york: Paulist Press, 1991), p. 79.

[251] William c. Placher, A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983), p. 142.

[252] Viladesau and Massa, op. cit., p. 78.

[253] Translation by richard Viladesau in Viladesau and Massa, op. cit., p. 79.

[254] Thanks to Mark richardson for help in articulating this.

[255] Mathnawi, p. 83 (shirk), p. 84 (kufrān).

[256] Mathnawi, p. 83.

[257] Mathnawi, p. 87.

[258] Mathnawi, p. 100.

[259] The Words, pp. 71, 94.

[260] alister e. Mcgrath, An Introduction to Christianity (oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 180.

[261] The Risale-i Nur makes reference to about half of the items now comprising Mathnawi al-Nuriye. For example, in the seventeenth Flash (1933), Nursi explains that, in 1921, he had written in arabic about divine unity “in such treatises as Zühre, Şu’le, Habbe, Şemme, Zerre, and Katre.” The Thirty-Third Flash consists of a note that it should in fact be understood to be the six arabic essays mentioned in the seventeenth Flash, and their appendices; and, that a Turkish translation of this material has been “included in Mesnevi-yi Nûriye, part of the Risale-i Nur collection, and published.” The seventeenth Flash comprises “Fifteen notes taken from Zühre,” but not the entirety of this treatise. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Flashes Collection, translated from the Turkish Lem’alar by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözler Neşriyat, 1995), pp. 157, 461. Bediuzzaman’s Arabic essays here mentioned were translated into Turkish in the 1950s by Abdülmecid Nursi (his younger brother). See Şükran Vahide, Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, edited and with an introduction by ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘ (albany: suny Press, 2005), pp. 166, 323. Şükran Vahide tells us that “When completed [in the mid-1930s], The Flashes numbered thirty treatises.” ibid., p. 212. Thus the Thirty-Third Flash (with its reference to Mathnawi al-Nuriye) seems to be a later appendix to The Flashes Collection.

[262] a note to the Twenty-eighth Word informs us that it “consists of two stations,” the second of which consists of “firm and clear consecutive arguments in Arabic”—that is,

[263] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words: On the Nature and Purposes of Man, Life and All Things, revised edition (istanbul: sozler Publications, 2002), p. 76. “... there must therefore be a realm of blessedness appropriate to that generosity and worthy of that mercy. For irrevocable death would transform compassion into disaster, love into affliction, blessing

into vengeance, intellect into a tool of misery ... so that the essence of god’s mercy would vanish.”

[264] From The Words, Tenth Word: “it is not possible that the everlasting Maker of the fine but unstable cosmos, should not create another cosmos, permanent and lasting. It is not possible that the Wise, Powerful, and Merciful creator of this world, which is like an exhibition, or a testing-ground, or a field, should not create also a hereafter in which the purposes of this world shall be made manifest.” p. 74.

[265] see, Tenth Word, p. 86. see, also, his argument on pp. 97–9 wherein he asserts, in inverse direction, that we rely on the sense of ultimate meaning just to make sense of this finite world. If the eternal values are not trustworthy we are forced to radically alter our interpretation of experience in this world.

[266] David Burell states, “… the ‘proofs’ must invariably involve a reflexive moment, when one presumes to assess the way we consider whatever we consider, and this move cannot help but render them suspect as ‘proofs’ ... it turns out that we seldom, if ever, reason to god’s existence, but rather retrospectively retrace our tracks to satisfy ourselves of the cogency of the individual steps which cumulatively brought us to where we are.” Burrell, Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas (u. notre dame Press, 1986), p. 6.

[267] J. christiaan Beker, The Triumph of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990). see especially chapter 2.

[268] roger haight speaks of language about resurrection appearances as objective but trans-historical, and therefore symbolic. We have no linguistic categories for describing an occurrence which breaks the boundaries of ordinary experience. Whether one sees laws of nature as something discovered (realist), or something invented (instrumentalist), no theory of laws of nature includes the possibility of resurrection within its explanatory frame. as such, only symbolic and picture language can apply.

[269] nancey Murphy, “The resurrection Body and Personal identity,” in Resurrection: Theological and Scientific Assessments (grand rapids: eerdmans, 2002), p. 205. i am fascinated by the imagery of Nursi in The Words, Twenty-ninth Word, p. 524, where he speaks of this transformed body as something illumined and released from the limitations of this kind of world. his depiction is not unlike that narrated in christian gospel of luke regarding Jesus’ resurrected body.

[270] Pheme Perkins, Reading the New Testament: An Introdcution (Berkeley: university of california Press, 1988).

[271] This at first seems quite unlike what is affirmed in Nursi, but maybe it is not.

although Nursi uses the language of rational inference, it bears repeating that his line of argument shows the path of hope in the believers’ minds.

[272] “The death of death”, 262, quoted in Resurrection: Theological and Scientific Assessment, p. 207.

[273] The Words, seventh Truth, Tenth Word, pp. 88–9.

[274] as Nursi sees it, the material may undergo change, but nearly every reference to personal identity includes embodiment, even if a subtle body. identity presupposes embodiment for Nursi, but not necessarily a body as untransformed physical stuff. see The Words, Twenty-ninth Word, pp. 524–6.

[275] see The Words, Tenth Word, ninth Truth, p. 94.

[276] ibid., p. 89.

[277] ibid., see p. 551.

[278] ibid., Twenty-ninth Word, p. 551; Q. 14.48.

[279] lionel Thornton, The Incarnate Lord, 1928.

[280] The Words, Tenth Word, p. 82.

[281] ibid., Tenth Word, p. 92.

[282] ibid., Tenth Word, p. 111.

[283] see John Polkinghorne, “eschatology: some Questions and some insights from science,” in Polkinghorne and Welker, eds, The End of the World and the Ends of God (harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press, 2000).

[284] The Words, Twenty-ninth Word, p. 551.

[285] ibid., Tenth Word, p. 66.

[286] see p. 67, the Eleventh Aspect.

[287] Miroslav Volf, “enter into Joy! sin, death, and the life of the World to come,” in John Polkinghorne and Michael Welker, eds, The End of the World and the Ends of God (harrisburg: Trinity Press, 2000), pp. 256–78.

[288] First Indication, Tenth Word, p. 72.

[289] ibid., pp. 64, 74.

[290] Philippians 2, colossians 1, ephesians 1, i corinthians 15. in this last, Paul states, “... in christ, all will be made alive.” (vs. 22).

[291] Mark 9.16; Matthew 7.25; luke 16.

[292] Jurgen Moltmann, The Coming of God (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996) p. 238.

[293] Şükran Vahide, “Toward an Intellectual Biography of Said Nursi,” Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzamen Said Nursi, ed. ibrahim abu-rabi‘ (albany: state university of new york Press, 2003), p. 10.

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[294] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Flashes Collection, trans. Şükran Vahide (Istanbul:

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reyhan ofset a.s., 2000), pp. 81, 82.

[295] Nursi, Flashes, p. 82.

[296] Nursi, Flashes, p. 83.

[297] Nursi, Flashes, p. 83.

[298] Nursi, Flashes, p. 83.

[299] Vahide, p. 10.

[300] on this period of his life, see Şükran Vahide, Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, ed. ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘ (albany, ny: state university of new york Press, 2005), pp. 189–213.

[301] On the conflict between Nursi and the Turkish Republic, see Camilla T. Nereid, In the Light of Said Nursi: Turkish Nationalism and the Religious Alternative, Bergen studies on the Middle east and africa 4 (Bergen, norway: centre for Middle eastern and islamic studies, 1997), pp. 55–80.

[302] Şerif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi, suny series in near eastern studies (albany, ny: state university of new york Press, 1989), p. 37.

[303] Mardin, p. 37.

[304] Jürgen Moltmann, In the End—The Beginning: The Life of Hope, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), p. 33.

[305] Moltmann, In the End, p. 34.

[306] Moltmann, In the End, p. 35.

[307] Moltmann, In the End, p. 35.

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[308] Said Nursi, The Words: On the Nature and Purposes of Man, Life, and All Things,

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Risale-I Nur Collection, 1, trans. Şükran Vahide (rev. edn; istanbul: Teyhan ofest, a.s., 2002), pp. 104–6, 111, 112, 127–8. see also Said Nursi, Signs of Miraculousness: The Inimitability of the Qur’an’s Conciseness, trans. Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, A.S., 2004), pp. 245–50.

[309] Mustafa sungur, in sahiner, Aydinlar Konusuyur, 35; quoted by Vahide, Islam in Modern Turkey, p. 194.

[310] Nursi, The Words, p. 63, n. 3.

[311] Nursi, The Words, p. 76.

[312] Nursi, The Words, p. 59.

[313] Nursi, The Words, p. 60.

[314] Nursi, The Words, p. 61.

[315] Nursi, The Words, p. 61.

[316] Nursi, The Words, p. 78.

[317] Nursi, The Words, p. 64.

[318] Nursi, The Words, p. 91.

[319] Nursi, The Words, p. 111.

[320] Nursi, The Words, pp. 112–13.

[321] Jürgen Moltmann, Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology, trans. James W. leitch (new york: harper & row, 1967, 1975), p. 18.

[322] Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 18.

[323] Moltmann, Theology of Hope, p. 18.

[324] Jürgen Moltmann, The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology, trans. from the second german edn r.a. Wilson and John Bowden, 1974), p. 160.

[325] Moltmann, Crucified God, p. 161.

[326] Moltmann, Crucified God, p. 161.

[327] Moltmann, Crucified God, pp. 162, 163.

[328] Jürgen Moltmann, God in Creation: A New Theology of Creation and the Spirit of God, The Gifford Lectures 1984–85, trans. Margaret Kohl (san Francisco: harper & row, 1985), xii.

[329] Moltmann, Crucified God, p. 192.

[330] Moltmann, In the End, p. 162.

[331] early in the nineteenth century, Friedrich schleiermacher revived the hope of origen, arguing that the god of Jesus christ could not allow any human being to be separated forever. Twentieth-century theologians such as Karl Barth, hans urs von Balthasar, and Karl rahner have expressed hope in the salvation of all humans without teaching this as a doctrine.

[332] Jürgen Moltmann, The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), pp. 250–51.

[333] For similar questions look viz. (Al-Jurjānī, Al-Sayyid Sharīf, Sharh al-Mawāqif, alDimyātī, Mahmūd ‘Omar (ed.), Dār al-Qutub al-‘Ilmiya, Beirut, 1198, VIII/221).

[334] Compensation and Retaliation: The Mu‘tazilites believe that allah has created three uses for his creatures, namely, graciousness, compensation, and reward and explain the word “compensation,” which literally means “the thing which is given without any return” as: (a) a kind of reward given in return for the suffering and difficulties experienced unwillingly; (b) “the deserved use” without carrying the senses of exalting and honoring. (c) That which is given to both the responsible and irresponsible. There is controversy whether it is permanent or not in the Hereafter; al-Shahrastānī,

al-Milal wa’l-Nih□al, emir ‘Ali and ‘Ali H□asan (ed.), Dār al-Mārifa, Beirut, 1993, p. 57; Qādī ‘Abd al-Jabbar, Us□ūl al-Ḥamsa, Faysal Bedir ‘Avn (ed.) Kuwait, 1998, pp. 69–70, 84; S□a‘d al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī, Sharh□ al-Maqāsid, ‘Abd al-Rah□man Amīra (ed.), ‘Alam al-Qutub, Beirut, 1989, IV/323–8. on the other hand the Mutazilites assert that “compensation” disproofs the claims of the materialists who deny the existence of allah based on the existence of evil in the world. (Çelebi, İlyas, “İvaz,” Diyanet İslam Ansiklopedisi (DİA), Xiii/292–5, istanbul, 1996); by “retaliation” in relation to animal pain or suffering, they mean the animals taking back their rights in return for the evils done to them. Al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn, Mafātīh□ al-Ghayb (Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 1981), 31/27).

[335] Al-Taftāzānī, Sharh al-‘Aqāid al-Nasafī, Ah□mad Ḥijāzī al-Saqā (ed.), Maktaba alKulliyā al-Azhariya, Cairo, 1988, p. 66.

[336] Al-Ghazzālī, Kitāb al-Arbaīn fī Us□ūl al-Dīn, Dār al-Shāmiya, Beirut, 2002, pp. 33–4.

[337] Al-Rāzī, Al-Mafātīh□ al-Ghayb, 31/27; Çelebi, “İvaz” DİA, Xiii/292–5.

[338] “observing the best”: according to some Mu’tazilites, “observing the best” for the created both in the affairs of the world and hereafter, is an obligation for allah as a requirement of the Divine Justice. (Al-Shahrastānī, al-Milal wa’l-Nih□al, i/57); ‘abd alH□alīm T□ariq, al-Mutazila bayn al-Qadīm wa’l-Ḥadīth, Dār al-Arqam, 1987, p. 68); as for the Sunni scholars “observing the best” is not an obligation for Allah. (Al-Taftāzānī, Sharh□al-‘Aqāid, p. 66). even though the doctrine of the “observing the best” has been introduced in the context of the Divine Justice (theodicy), it is the first sistematic approach put forward in relation to the notion of purpose in the Science of Kalām. The Mutazilites have put in a teleological framework the thesis that “observing the best” is an obligation for Allah, associating it also with the notions of “providence” and “beneficial

aspects.” (Al-Taftāzānī, Sharḥ al-Maqāsid, IV/329–34; Kutluer, İlhan, “Gâiyyet”, DİA, Xiii/293, istanbul, 1996).

[339] “Justice” in the Mutazila: allah never does an ugly job, never orders the ugly, does not transgrass what is obligatory for him, never forbids the beautiful, all of his deeds are beautiful. (Qādī ‘Abd al-Jabbar, Sharḥ al-Usūl al-Ḥamsa, pp. 13, 66); all of the principles of the Mutazilites are combined in the “justice.” (Abd Al-Jabbar, Al-Qādī, ‘Us□ūl al-Ḥamsa, pp. 69, 72).

[340] abd al-Jabbar, Us□ūl al-Ḥamsa, p. 82.

[341] Us□ūl al-Ḥamsa, p. 84.

[342] Al-Taftāzānī, Sharḥ al-Maqāsıd, VI/303, 323–5, 328; Nāsir al-Dīn al-Ţūsī, Talkhīs alMuh□as□s□al, Dār al-Ad□vā, 1985, Tehran, pp. 342–3; Al-Ash‘arī, Abū’l-Ḥasan, Kitāb Maqālāt alIslāmiyyīn, Muh□yiddīn ‘Abd al-H□amīd (ed.), Maktaba al-Nahd□a al-Mis□riyya, 1950, I/293–4.

[343] Musnad, I/72; II/235. For a similar interpretation see Nursī, The Flashes Collection (Sözler Publications, Istanbul, 1995), pp. 339–43.

[344] Nursi, as will be explained later, defends a similar view. See Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī al-Nurī, al-S□alihī, Ih□san Qāsim (ed.), (Sözler Publications, Istanbul, 1994), p. 163.

[345] Al-Taftāzānī, Sharḥ al-Talwīh□ ‘ala al-Tawd□īh□, Zakariya ‘Amīrāt (ed.), Dār al-Kutub al-‘İlmiya, Beirut, 1996, p. II/102.

[346] Al-Ghazzālī, Kitāb al-Arbaīn, pp. 33–4.

[347] Al-Ghazālī, al-Iqtis□ad fī al-‘Itiqād, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiya, 1983, Beirut, pp. 114–15; Al-Ghazālī, Ihyā ‘Ulūm al-Dīn (Turkish trans. Ahmet Serdaroğlu) Bedir Yayınları, 2002, I/286–7; Eric Lee Ormsby, İslam düşüncesinde İlâhî adalet (Teodise) Sorunu (Theodicy in Islamic Thought, The dispute over al-Ghazāli’s “Best of All Possible Worlds”), (Kitabiyat, Avrasya Yayınları, Ankara, October, 2001), Turkish trans: Metin Özdemir, p. 182.

[348] The concept of “Purposes for the existence of everything” is one of the most important topics in Risale-i Nur. Nursi touches on this topic in some way in dealing with almost every problem. in relation to the concepts of “minor and major aims/goals”: “the duties of life and the necessities of life” see Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī al-Nurī, pp. 311–12, 279, 283, 341, 356, 363, 377, 428, 421, 450–51, 466, 477; Nursī, The Words (Sözler Publications, Istanbul, 1992), pp. 86–7; Nursī, The Rays (Sözler Publications, Istanbul), pp. 273–4. In the history of Islamic Thought this doctrine has been dealt with in the framework of causality, the divine Provision and wisdom, order and the proofs of purpose. in the western philosophy, the idea of purpose has been studied within teleology. on the other hand in the islamic philosophy Farabi binded the notion of giving existence to the divine generosity and imposing order and hierarchy to the existence to the divine Justice. in ibn sina, the divine Purpose consists of the generosity of allah in giving existence. In the time of the first cycle of the Asharites it was expressed that Allah’s actions were far away from following a purpose. (Kutluer, İlhan, “Gâiyyet”, DIA, Xiii/293–5, istanbul, 1996); It can be said that Nursi’s thought is closer to the thought of sufism rather than that of Islamic Kalām and philosophy, which is expressed in the Divine Hadith, “I was a hidden treasure, so I created creation that they might know me” (Al-‘Ajlūnī, Kashf al-Khafā, ii/132; as cited in Nursī, Ishārāt al-I‘jāz, al-Sa□ lihī□ , Ihs□ a□ n Qāsim (ed.), (Dar Sozler, Istanbul, 1994), p. 27; Signs of Miraculousness, trans. Şükran Vahide (Sözler Publications, İstanbul, 2004), p. 24.

[349] For the concept of “Indicative Meaning” (Mānā al-Harfī), see Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 72, 105, 168, 320–21, 328–9, 340–41, 346, 349, 352, 378, 404 vd.

[350] Nursī, The Words, pp. 492–3; Mermer, yamina B., The Hermeneutical Dimension of Science, international symposium (4), september 1998, istanbul, pp. 417–30.

[351] Nursī, The Words, pp. 86–7; see also, Nursī, The Rays, pp. 80–83; For “Universal Purposes for the existence of everything” see Nursī, The Letters, pp. 345–51; Nursī, alMathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 193, 450–51.

[352] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 214, 246, 465.

[353] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 243, 377, 465.

[354] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 450–51.

[355] Nursī, The Words, pp. 132–42, 556–9.

[356] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 243, 465.

[357] about the meaning and importance of “contemplation” in the Risale-i Nur Collection, see, Nursī, The Words, pp. 132–42, 191–2, 338–40, 521–2; For internal and external kinds of “contemplation” see, Nursī, al-

Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 32, 190, 214, 226, 256, 356, 369, 401, 406.

[358] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 284.

[359] Nursī, The Words, pp. 132–42.

[360] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 283.

[361] To Nursī “material causes” are superficial and they have no real influence/effect in he process of creation. They are just apparent curtains covering Divine Power and Dignity (Nursī, The Words, pp. 104, 173, 175, 176, 187, 195, 400, 435–7, 480, 481–2, 565, 569, 696, 704, 709; Nursī, The Rays, pp. 15, 32–4, 163, 173, 194, 281, 574, 617, 619, 625, 627, 629; Nursī, Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 26, 28, 83, 141, 157–9, 164–5, 166–7, 172, 179, 180, 227, 244, 247, 249–50; Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 18–19, 68, 151, 163, 181–3, 184, 233–6, 241–2, 244, 400, 405, 409, 431, 444, 448, amongst others).

[362] For the aspects of “the kingdoms of this world (mulk) and of heaven (malakūt)” see, Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 29.

[363] Nursī, The Rays, p. 22; also Nursi says in the same Treatise:

At one time, due to my excessive feelings of pity, sympathy and kindness, i was exceedingly touched and sorry for living beings, and of them, intelligent beings and man, and particularly the oppressed and disaster-stricken. i exclaimed from my very heart: “neither these monotonous laws which prevail over the world hear the woes of these powerless and weak unfortunates, nor do the overwhelming, deaf elements and events hear them. is there no one

who will take pity on their wretched state and intervene in their particular plights?” My spirit was crying out from its very depths. My heart called out with all its strength: “do these fine creatures, these valuable goods, these yearning and grateful friends, have no owner, no master, no true friend who will look to their business, accompany them and protect them?” The satisfying, soothing, and sufficient answer to the cries of my spirit and tumult of my heart was this: through the mystery of the Qur’an and light of belief, and the mystery of divine unity, i perceived the particular favours and special assistance of the all-glorious one, Who is all-Merciful and compassionate, above the law, to those lovable creatures who weep and lament under the pressure of universal laws and the assaults of events; and his particular dominicality towards everything directly; and the facts that he himself directs everything personally and listens to the plaints of all things; and that he is the true owner, protector, and master of everything. I felt an infinite joy in place of that endless despair. Being totally owned by such a glorious owner, and being connected to him, in my view all living beings gained in importance and value a thousand times over. (Nursī, The Rays, pp. 18–19.)

[364] Nursī, The Words, p. 646.

[365] Nursī explains evil and calamities as occasional results out of the many results of the general, universal laws: See Nursī, The Rays, p. 40; But When Nursi says:

allah then in a special way sent to the assistance of individuals crying out at the constraint of those universal laws his names of Most-Merciful and allcompassionate. That is to say, within those universal and general principles he has special succour, special manifestations, so that everything may seek help from him and look to Him at every time for every need (Nursī, The Words, p. 684). he then points out that partial evils, which come to being as results of regular continuation of universal laws are softened and made flexible by such Divine interruptions.

[366] Nursī, The Words, p. 684.

[367] Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 62–3.

[368] Nursī, The Words, pp. 536–7; Nursī, Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 127, 150, 152–3, 161, 170, 185, 263, 274, amongst others.

[369] In relation to objection to “Naturalism” in Nursī, see Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 232–54.

[370] Nursī, The Words, p. 528.

[371] Nursī, The Rays, p. 98; Nursī, The Words, p. 350.

[372] Nursī, The Words, p. 361.

[373] ibid.

[374] Nursī says: “... the Creator of the universe, the Monarch of Pre-Eternity and Posteternity, has made numerous causes and intermediaries a veil to his execution of affairs and has demonstrated the majesty of His Dominicality.” (Nursī, The Words, p. 647) and also, he (allah) creates cause and effect together directly. and in order to demonstrate his wisdom and the manifestation of his names, by establishing an apparent causal relationship and connection through order and sequence, he makes causes and nature a veil to the hand of his power so that the apparent faults, severities and defects in things should be ascribed to them, and in this way his dignity be preserved (Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 244).

in the terminology of Risale-i Nur “the sphere of causes” or “the realm of causality,” consists of the “order” generally dominant in the universe uniformly. This is what is meant in the books of Risale-i Nur, which is sometimes called the divine laws of nature, universal laws, cause-effect relationship, “the two things coming together or being together”, which is called “association” (Iqtirān-Muqāranat). On the other hand according to Nursī it is a requirement of the divine wisdom that the sphere of causes has upper hand over the sphere of belief. Nursī indicates that from the view point of the sphere of causes, mankind has been ordered to obey the order mentioned with their nature, illusion and imagination – since to Nursi, the relationship between cause-and-effect is completely based on illusion and imagination just as it is, to Al-Ghazalī, based on the delusion of feelings. On the other hand, from over the sphere of belief, since causes have no real influence/effect and they have been created as a veil to the affairs of the divine power, mankind must consider this order with their souls and conscience; that is men must understand that the real influence/effect and dominance belong to Allah. (Nursī, Signs of Miraculousness, p. 26; Nursī, al-Mathnawī al‘Arabī, pp. 49, 114, 252, 188–9; Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 182).

[375] Nursī, The Words, p. 362.

[376] Ibid. Additionally see, Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 479.

[377] Since Nursī deals with this issue in many places from different perspectives, it is impossible to cover it within the limits of this article. For example refer to Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 166–9; The Words, pp. 85, 516–17, 578, 361–7, and others.

[378] Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 173.

[379] ibid.

[380] Nursī, The Words, pp. 219–21; Nursī, The Letters, pp. 24–5.

[381] For this concept refer to Nursī, The Words, pp. 86, 219.

[382] Nursī, The Words, p. 220; Nursī, The Letters, p. 25.

[383] Nursī, The Words, p. 362. For two universal reasons of the activity see, Nursī, The Letters, pp. 113–14, 338–40.

[384] The Flashes Collection, pp. 169–71.

[385] (a) The delight in mothers' showing mercy to their children, (b) the enjoyment of male animals' reproducing activity, (c) the enjoyment of transforming from potential to activity, (d) the pleasure felt by some species such as bees in their complying with the divine revelations, and (e) the pleasure of eating, etc., are all similarly considered by Nursi as a sort of "wage" in return for their services, a summary of duties' index and driving force behind activities. (Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-'Arabī, pp. 465–6; Nursī, The Words, pp. 361–7.)

[386] Nursī, The Words, p. 220.

[387] ibid.

[388] Nursī, The Words, p. 578.

[389] The Words, p. 220.

[390] As an example see: Ibn Sīnā, Al-Ilāhiyāt, pp. 72, 116 (www.al-mostafa.com), Access date: 29 January 2008.

[391] Nursī in many of his works mentions “death” and “destruction.” The following sentence is an example:

... the destruction visited upon the beautiful creatures of summer and spring in the autumn is not for the sake of annihilation. instead, it is a form of dismissal after the completion of service. it is also a form of emptying in order to clear a space for the new creation that is to come in the following spring, of preparing the ground and making ready for the beings that are to come and assume their functions. Finally, it is a form of divine warning to conscious beings to awake from the neglect that causes them to forget their duties, from the drunken torpor that causes them to forget their obligation of offering thanks.” (Nursī, The Words, p. 88.)

[392] Nursī, The Letters, p. 336.

[393] Nursī, The Rays, p. 22.

[394] Nursī, The Letters, p. 81.

[395] Nursī, The Words, pp. 59–106.

[396] Nursī, The Words, p. 523.

[397] Nursī, The Rays, p. 65.

[398] To Nursī, creatures living in this material world have different lives in other worlds. This observed world is like a curtain pulled over those unseen worlds. For different spheres of existence see, Nursī, The Letters, pp. 340–41; also, pp. 342–3; Nursī, The Words, pp. 86–8; Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 435–6.

[399] Nursī, on this topic says that:

you will understand that things have been created for eternity, not for annihilation; and as for apparent annihilation, it has the sense of a completion of duty and a release from service, for every transient thing advances to annihilation with one aspect, but remains eternally with numerous other aspects. look, for example, at the flower, a word of God’s power; for a short time it smiles and looks at us, and then hides behind the veil of annihilation. it departs just like a word leaving your mouth. But it does so entrusting thousands of its fellows to men’s ears. it leaves behind meanings in men’s minds as numerous as those minds. The flower, too, expressing its meaning and thus fulfilling its function, goes and departs. But it goes leaving its apparent form in the memory of everything that sees it, its inner essence in every seed. it is as if each memory and seed were a camera to record the adornment of the flower, or a means for its perpetuation. (Nursī, The Words, p. 87.)

[400] For “Preserved Tablet” see, Nursī, The Letters, pp. 55–7.

[401] Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 173.

[402] Nursī, The Words, p. 535.

[403] Nursī, The Letters, p. 340.

[404] For example Nursī says: “Just as the Name of Healer makes it necessary that illness should exist, so too the Name of Provider requires that hunger should exist …” (Nursī, The

Flashes Collection, p. 33);

... throughout the stages of their lives, beings perform numerous varieties of dominical glorifications. They also demonstrate various situations that the Divine names necessitate and require. For example, the name of all-compassionate desires to be compassionate. The name of Provider necessitates the giving of sustenance. The name of gracious requires the granting of favours. and so on; all the divine names require and necessitate something. Thus, in addition to demonstrating the requirements of the names through their lives and existences, all living beings glorify the all-Wise Maker to the number of their members and faculties ... . (Nursī, The Letters, pp. 348–9.)

[405] The Letters, p. 340; “Whether the animals feel pain and whether they will be compansated or not in the hereafter in return for the pain they endured have been discussed in the Western thought. in this context, for instance Origen says that animals’ having soul, makes them ethical beings, therefore they are liable to endure sorrows.” (origen, De principiis, i:viii; iiix). in the nineteenth century John Wesley and in our day Keith Ward, have said that animals’ pains will be compansated in the hereafter by all means (John Wesley, “The General Deliverance,” sermon lX (in Works), 11. ed. (london: John Mason, 1856) Vi, pp. 226–37; Keith Ward, The Concept of God (oxford: Blackwell, 1974, p. 223).

[406] Al-Jurjānī, Sharh al-Mawāqif, i/29.

[407] Nursī, The Words, p. 363.

[408] Nursī says: “The Beauteous All-Merciful One, Who orders the sun and moon, the elements and minerals, plants and animals like the warp and weft of a vast woven tapestry through the rays of His thousand and one Names,and causes them to serve life.” (Nursī, alMathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 46–7; Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 136).

[409] Nursī, The Words, p. 564.

[410] ibid.

[411] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 163; Nursī, The Letters, p. 551 (aphorism no: 86).

[412] Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 341.

[413] For the divine name of “Most holy” (Quddūs) see Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 395–9.

[414] Nursī, The Words, p. 477.

[415] Nursī, The Letters, p. 553 (aphorism no: 106).

[416] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 163.

[417] ibid.

[418] Nursī indicates that the words of the Prophet (PBUH) about “retaliation” (“retaliation shall be made for the hornless sheep on the horned on resurrection day.” The Flashes, p. 341), point out that animals will be rewarded in return for their duties and that their souls will stay

immortal even if their bodies have turned to soil. on the other hand Nursi claims that the members of a species may be collected one by one or all together in “a blessed animal”. (Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 408.) Because, according to Nursī, very similar to pure matters such as air, electricity, magnetics, which can share the same place without any problem, the same situation is true for soul (Nursī, The Words, pp. 682–3, 686; Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 244–5).

[419] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 163.

[420] “in any event, calm, repose, idleness, monotony, and arrest from action are forms of non-existence, and harm. Action and change are existence and good.” (Nursī, The Letters, p. 65); see also, “… change and alteration arise from createdness, from being renewed in order to be perfected, from need, from materiality, and from contingency” (Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 454).

[421] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 450–51; Nursī, The Words, p. 241.

[422] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 450–51; Nursī, The Flashes Collection, p. 341.

[423] Al-Jurjānī, Sharh al-Mawāqif, Viii/221.

[424] Nursī, The Words, p. 220.

[425] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 346; For Nursi’s comparisons of animals and men see: Nursī, The Rays, p. 221; Nursī, The Words, pp. 332–6 and so on.

[426] according to Nursi, the limitation of animal feelings by the creation take place not only at the level of pleasure-pain but at every level. This is one of the most stressed topics in the Risale-i Nur Collection. For example look at Nursī, The Words, Twenty-third Word, chapters 1 and 2.

[427] Nursī in this context states that: “For man, even animals with young, receive pleasure at the pleasure and happiness of their relatives, offsring, and friends, and in one respect are happy.” (Nursī, The Rays, p. 249.)

[428] Nursī, The Rays, pp. 76–8; Nursī, The Words, pp. 369–70.

[429] Nursī, The Rays, p. 221.

[430] Nursī, The Rays, p. 374.

[431] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 410, 179.

[432] Nursī, The Rays, p. 374; Nursī, The Words, pp. 159, 334.

[433] Nursī, The Rays, p. 221.

[434] ibid.

[435] ibid.

[436] ibid.

[437] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 231.

[438] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 444.

[439] Nursī, The Letters, p. 24.

[440] Nursī, The Words, p. 240.

[441] ibid.

[442] al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 450–51.

[443] it can be claimed that one of the most serious contributions to the problem of “animal pain” has been made by John Hick. John hick’s famous teodise is based on the concept of “soul-making.” human suffering is explained with a comprehensive divine plan consisting of providing the appropriate environment and conditions, where human beings, in a total freedom, can improve themselves in terms of morality and soul. For hick the problem of animal pain is a part of the background where the man-centered plan is consecuted. Therefore the problem of animal pain is a part of the problem of naturel evil, which is a sort of obligatory evil to keep away human beings at an epistemic distance. This epistemic distance is necessary for human beings to do moral choices and choose allah freely. according to this idea the existence of allah should not be more obvious than it should, nor should it be impossible to believe. This idea is briefly expressed by Nursī as “the door of the intelligence must remain open, and its freedom must not be snatched from its hand.” (Nursī, The Letters, p. 122.) Furtheremore hick believes that “suffering” is something special to human experience, though “pain” is very comon in the nature. suffering requires such a complex cognitive awareness that can not be associated with animals. Therefore pain when compared to suffering corresponds to a simpler

level of mind. in short: “one must have certain mental attitudes, beliefs and desires and be able to conceptualize one’s experience.” in this respect pain, to hick must be considered as an “immediate sensory awareness.” hick, John, “evil and the god of love” (new york: harper and row, 1978), p. 313; Peter harrison, another philosopher, assumes that animals do not have a real consciousness, therefore they do not feel pain, harrison, Peter, “Theodicy and animal Pain”, Philosophy 64 (1989) pp. 79–92.

[444] For example, charles darwin claims that the world is full of countless evils and when other sentient beings than humans beings are considered, these evils can not be explained just by moral improvement. see, charles darwin, The Autobiography of Charles Darwin, nora Barlow (ed.), (new york: W.W. norton, p. 90).

[445] Nursī, Muh□ākamāt al-‘Aqliyya (Sözler Publication, Istanbul, 1995), p. 53; Nursī, The Letters, pp. 62–4; Nursī, The Rays, 39–40, 89–90; For example Nursī says:

… inductive reasoning and general experience show and conclude that evil, ugliness, defect, badness and futility are minor in the creation of the universe. They are not the aim; they are dependent and secondary. That is to say, for example, ugliness has not entered the universe for the sake of ugliness, but as a unit of measurement in order to transform a single truth of beauty into many truths. evil, and satan even, have been set to pester man in order to be the means of man’s limitless progress through competition. Minor evils and ugliness like these have been created in the universe in order to be the means of instances of universal beauty and good. Thus, according to inductive reasoning, the true aim and result of creation in the universe proves that good, beauty and being perfected are fundamental and that they are the true aim. (Nursī, The Damascus Sermon, sozler Publications, istanbul, 1989, p. 28).

[446] Ibid.

[447] Nursī, The Words, p. 28; Nursī, The Rays, pp. 648–55; for example Nursī says: “... For the country of an utterly just, compassionate, beneficent, powerful, order-loving, and kind king could not be in the way you imagined, nor could a country which demonstrated this number of clear signs of progress and achievement.” (The Words, p. 28) similarly he addresses in another place in that way:

Oh man! you do not own yourself. rather, you are totally owned by one Whose power is infinite, an All-Compassionate One of Glory Whose mercy is infinite. Therefore, do not trouble yourself by shouldering the burden of your life, for it is he Who grants you life and administers it. Furthermore, creatures such as men and animals have not been left to their own devices, rather, they are all officials with specific duties. They are watched over by an All-Wise and Compassionate One. Do not distress your spirit thinking of their pains and afflictions. Do not try to be more sympathetic and kind-hearted than their all-compassionate creator. also, the reins of all those things that are hostile to you, from microbes to plagues, storms, famine and earthquakes, are in the hands of that all-compassionate allWise one. Being all-Wise, he does nothing in vain. Being all-compassionate, his mercy is superabundant. There is a form of grace and favour contained in everything He does (Nursī, The Words, p. 665).

Again touching on the pain and sorrow felt by human beings who witness the evils befalling on animals, Nursī, claims that this sorrow comes from human beings’ empathy with animals and not knowing the reality. To him, if the real situation was understood the compassion felt for animals would turn into “a compassion deserving appreciation.” Nursī even says that, “not those animals but the souls having pity for them should be pitied.” (Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, pp. 450–51).

[448] Nursī, The Words, pp. 240–41.

[449] The Letters, pp. 62–3.

[450] Nursī, The Rays, p. 98.

[451] Nursī, The Words, p. 186.

[452] Nursī, The Words, p. 350.

[453] also John hick defends a similar opinion, see hick, John, Evil and the God of Love, p. 313.

[454] Nursī, al-Mathnawī al-‘Arabī, p. 40; Nursī, The Words, pp. 300–301; since there is the possibility for human mind to fail in seeing those beauties and regard them as ugliness, allah placed causes between those things and human mind, so that human beings should not give ugliness directly to Allah but to those causes, see Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 428–30. Therefore Nursī here directly correlates the problem of evil with “the theory of causes”, causation (Asbāb) and the notion of “unity of god” (Tawh□īd).

[455] Nursī, Emirdağ Lahikası, Söz Basım Yayın, Istanbul, 2005, I/57.

[456] Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 169–73.

[457] Nursī, The Words, p. 188.

[458] Nursī, The Flashes Collection, pp. 105, 118–19.

[459] Nursī, Kastamonu Lahikası, Söz Basım Yayın, İstanbul, 2006, pp. 96–7, 149, 253, 257, 279.

[460] Emirdağ Lahikası, i/57.

[461] halpern, Manfred, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa (Princeton: Princeton university Press, 1963), p. 129.

[462] lerner, daniel, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (new york: Free Press, 1964), p. 405.

[463] al-‘azm, sadik, “islamic Fundamentalism reconsidered: a critical outline of Problems, ideas, and approaches, Part ii.” South Asian Bulletin 13, no. 2: 73–98 (1993): 97.

[464] Nursi, B.Z., Letters, 1928–1932, second edn, translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sölzer Publications, 1997), p. 88.

[465] Nursi, B.Z., The Words, translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sölzer Publications, 1992), p. 265.

[466] Nursi, B.Z., Letters, 1928–1932, second edn, translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sölzer Publications, 1997), p. 74.

[467] ibid., pp. 74–5.

[468] ibid., p. 75.

[469] ibid., p. 547.

[470] Fuller, lon l., The Morality of Law, revised edition (new haven: yale university Press, 1969), pp. 14, 17.

[471] Nursi, B.Z., The Words, translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sölzer Publications, 1992), p. 97.

[472] ibid., p. 695.

[473] Fuller, lon l., The Morality of Law, 5.

[474] ibid., p. 7.

[475] ibid.

[476] ibid., p. 6.

[477] ibid., p. 9.

[478] ibid., pp. 5–6.

[479] Nursi, The Damascus Sermon, second edn, translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sölzer Publications, 1996), p. 68.

[480] Nursi, B.Z., Letters, 1928–1932, pp. 59–60.

[481] ibid., pp. 66–9.

[482] ibid., p. 69.

[483] ibid., p. 70.

[484] Vahide, Şükran, Islam in Modern Turkey: An Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany: state university of new york Press, 2005), pp. 42–7.

[485] Berkes, niyazi, The Development of Secularism in Turkey (Montréal: Mcgill university Press, 1964), pp. 106–10.

[486] duben, alan, and cem Behar, Istanbul Households: Marriage, Family, and Fertility, 1880–1940 (cambridge: cambridge university Press, 1991).

[487] Kirli, cengiz, “coffeehouses: Public opinion in the nineteenth-century ottoman empire.” in Public Islam and the Common Good, ed. armando salvatore and dale F. eickelman (leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 75–97.

[488] Frierson, elizabeth B., “gender, consumption, and Patriotism: The emergence of an ottoman Public sphere.” in Public Islam and the Common Good, ed. armando salvatore and dale F. eickelman (leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 99–125.

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[490] Keane, John, “The limits of secularism,” Times Literary Supplement, January 9, 1999, p. 12.

[491] Madan, T.n., “secularism in its Place,” Journal of Asian Studies 6 (1987): pp. 747–59.

[492] shils, edward (1972) The Intellectuals and the Powers (chicago: university of chicago Press, 1972), p. 17.

[493] Nursi, The Damascus Sermon, p. 67.

[494] Masud, Muhammad Khalid, “The scope of Pluralism in islamic Moral Traditions.” in The Many and the One: Religious and Secular Perspectives on Ethical Pluralism in the Modern World, ed. richard Madsen and Tracey B. strong (Princeton: Princeton university Press, 2003), pp. 181–5.

[495] Bellah, robert n., Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World (new york: harper & row, 1970), pp. 150–51.

[496] ibid., p. 151.

[497] little, david, “The development in the West of the right to Freedom of religion and conscience: a Basis for comparison with islam.” in Human Rights and the Conflict of Cultures: Western and Islamic Perspectives on Religious Liberty, ed. david little, John Kelsay, and abdulaziz a. sachedina (columbia: university of south carolina Press, 1988), p. 30.

[498] ibid.

[499] rahman, Fazlur, Major Themes of the Qur’an (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca islamica, 1980), p. 163.

[500] ibid., p. 164.

[501] Michel, Thomas, “Muslim-christian dialogue and cooperation in the Thought of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi,” Muslim World 86: 3–4 (July–october 1999): 325.

[502] Masud, Muhammad Khalid, Shatibi’s Philosophy of Islamic Law (islamabad: islamic research institute).

[503] eickelman, dale F., and James Piscatori, “social Theory in the study of Muslim societies.” in Muslim Travellers: Pilgrimage, Migration, and the Religious Imagination, ed. dale F. eickelman and James Piscatori (Berkeley and los angeles: university of california Press, 1995), pp. 15–18.

[504] Mardin, Şerif (1989) Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediüzzaman Said Nursi (albany: state university of new york Press, 1989), p. 6.

[505] Buti, saïd ramadan al- “Bediuzzaman Said Nursi’s experience of serving islam by Means of Politics.” in Third International Symposium on Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, vol. 1 (Istanbul: Sözler Publications, 1997), pp. 111–21.

[506] Nursi, said, Nature: Cause or Effect? translated from the Turkish by Ümit Şimşek (Istanbul: Yeni Asya Yanıları, 1985).

[507] Though of Kurdish origin, Nursi formally adopted Turkish nationality—later dropping the nisbah “al-Kurdi” from his name—and wrote in ottoman Turkish.

[508] For his biography, see e. Kohlberg, “al-shahid al-Thani,” in EI ², vol. 9, pp. 209–10.

[509] His struggles are recounted in the excellent biography by Şükran Vahide entitled Islam in Modern Turkey: an Intellectual Biography of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany:

suny Press, 2005); for a brief account, see Kemal Karpat, EI ², vol. 8, pp. 143–4.

[510] david hume, Dialogues concerning Natural Religion, ed. nelson Pike (indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1970), p. 88.

[511] alan Jones, Early Arabic Poetry: volume two: Select Odes (oxford: ithaca Press, 1996), p. 205.

[512] For the arabic text, a literal translation and word-by-word commentary, see Jones, op. cit., pp. 206–34. Jones's rendering of rayb as "mischief," though correct, sounds a bit too mild for the circumstances; lane (3:1198) gives "evil accidents" (of time or fate), which seems more apt.

[513] i cite from the edition printed in najaf 1342 [1923]; cf. Dhari'ah, 21:20 (no. 3747), and GAL ii: 425(3); s ii: 449(3). i am grateful to Mr. Bruce craig for providing me with a photocopy of this rare imprint from the collections of the university of chicago library.

[514] Musakkin, p. 3.

[515] For a discussion, see Vincenzo Poggi, Un classico della spiritualità musulmana: saggio monografico sul "Munqidh" di al-Ġazali. (rome, 1967), pp. 188, 203; and my own "The Taste of Truth: the structure of experience in al-ghazali's Munqidh min al-Dalal, in Islamic Studies presented to Charles J. Adams (leiden, 1991),

pp. 129–48; and, for a more recent brief discussion, my Ghazali: The Revival of Islam (oxford: oneworld, 2008), pp. 104–5.

[516] Musakkin, p. 4.

[517] ibid.

[518] on this, and the related problem of the suffering of animals, see my Theodicy in Islamic Thought: The Dispute over al-Ghazali’s “Best of All Possible Worlds” (Princeton, 1984), pp. 244–6.

[519] Al-Fisal fi’l-milal (Beirut, 1975), 3:121; see also, Theodicy, op. cit., p. 220.

[520] Al-Fisal fi’l-milal, cited in i. goldziher, The Zahiris, trans. Wolfgang Behn (leiden: Brill, 1971), pp. 141–2.

[521] Musakkin, p. 14.

[522] Musakkin, p. 9.

[523] ibid.

[524] Musakkin, p. 10.

[525] Musakkin, p. 14.

[526] Musakkin, p. 5.

[527] ibid., pp. 12–22.

[528] ibid., p. 14.

[529] Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, Letters 1928–1932, translated [from the ottoman Turkish] by Şükran Vahide (Istanbul: Sözler Neşriyat Ticaret ve Sanayi A.Ş., 1997), pp. 100 ff.

[530] Letters, p. 100.

[531] Letters, p. 102.

[532] Vahide, p. 5.

[533] ibid., p. 11.

[534] Vahide, pp. 198–9:

I saw myself to be in five exiles of varying hues. The first: due to old age, I was alone and a stranger, far from most of my friends, relatives, and close ones … . Then another sphere of exile opened up within this one: i felt a sad sense of separation and exile at having been left by most of the beings to which i am attached; like last spring, they have departed. and a further sphere of exile opened up within this, which was that i was away from my native land and relatives, and alone … then, too, the lonesomeness of the night and the mountains made me feel another pitiable exile. And finally, I saw my spirit in an overwhelming exile, which had been prepared to journey to eternity both from this exile and from the transitory guesthouse of this world.

[535] The Words (istanbul, 1998; trans. Vahide), p. 248 (nineteenth Word).

[536] see my Theodicy in Islamic Thought (Princeton, 1984), for a discussion of this statement and the controversy it provoked.

[537] Letters, p. 336.

[538] cf. the beautiful passage from The Fruits of Belief (Tenth Topic), quoted in Vahide, p. 268: “after our release from denizli Prison, I was staying on the top floor of the famous Şehir Hotel. The subtle, graceful dancing of the leaves, branches and trunks of the many poplar trees in the fine gardens opposite me, each with a rapturous and ecstatic motion, like a circle of dervishes, pained my heart … i so pitied those graceful poplars and living creatures swaying with perfect joyousness that my eyes filled with tears … .”

[539] Letters, p. 340.

[540] The Rays (trans. Vahide), p. 41.

[541] The Words, p. 219.

[542] cf. Qur’an 2:26 (trans. dawood): “god does not disdain to give a parable about a gnat”; for the gnat and other small creatures in Ghazāli, see my Theodicy in Islamic Thought, pp. 45–6, and Ghazali: The Revival of Islam, p. 111. in The Flashes Collection (Istanbul, 1995), p. 235, Nursi states, “The tiny body of a fly is connected with most of the elements and causes in the universe; indeed, it is a summary of them.”

[543] Musakkin, pp. 34–5.

[544] Qur’an, 30:50.

[545] orhan Pamuk, Istanbul: Memories of a City, london 2005, p. 81.

[546] Ibid. On the general historical background to Nursi’s work at this time, see Şerif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany, 1989). For the broader historical context from a western perspective, see david Fromkin, A Peace To End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East (london, 2000).

[547] Op. cit., p. 81. On the question of the relationship between Sufism and Nursi’s thought, see Şerif Mardin, “Reflections on Said Nursi’s Life and Thought,” in: Ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘, Islam at the Crossroads: On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (albany, 2003), pp. 45–50, particularly p. 45.

[548] There are passages in the Risale-i Nur where Nursi demonstrates an awareness of the character of modernist culture and discourse, although his real concern is always to reveal the nature of a more genuinely spiritual understanding of human existence. cf.

Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Words (istanbul, 1992) p. 99:

Brief gatherings and dispersions are arranged at great expense merely for the sake of taking pictures that can thereafter be shown in the cinema. so too, one of the reasons for our passage through individual and social life in this life, for a brief time, is to enable pictures to be taken and images formed, to enable the result of our deeds to be registered and recorded, for display on a day of accounting, for being shown to a vast gathering, and to yield the fruit of supreme happiness.

[549] Inevitably this short chapter will focus on this one very specific question and principally one key text from the Risale, the Tenth Word, and i will not, therefore, have the space to go into the fascinating question of the role of the resurrection of the dead in Sufi thought, and the fullest extent of this influence upon Nursi's own thinking on this question.

[550] orhan Pamuk's recent induction as the nobel laureate for literature demonstrates something of the potential that both Turkish and islamic thought and writings have for a profound and positive influence on western cultural identity.

[551] although in retrospect Western christian theologians invest the 1920s with great intellectual and moral significance, most notably because of the publication of Karl Barth's Commentary on Romans in 1919 and the subsequent establishment of dialectical theology, the facts are that the mainstream european churches remained largely committed to a discredited socio-cultural ideology, particularly in germany and england. on this question see gareth Jones, Critical Theology: Questions of Truth and Method (cambridge, 1995), pp. 11–38.

[552] Şükran Vahide, "Towards an Intellectual Biography of Nursi," in: Ibrahim M.

abu-rabi', op. cit., pp. 1–32; p. 10.

[553] i have avoided using the word "eschatology" in relation to Nursi's understanding of the resurrection of the dead because of uncertainty over the appropriateness of this concept in relation to islamic thought, although modern western christian ideas about resurrection are overwhelmingly eschatological. For a more confident view on this question, see Barbara Freyer stowasser, "The apocalypse in the Teachings of Said Nursi," in ibrahim M. abu-rabi', op. cit., pp. 229–36: stowasser draws out several key themes in Nursi's work on this question, though the distinction between apocalyptic –

the seeing of heavenly secrets – and eschatology – the seeing of heavenly secrets about the end time – is not entirely apparent. in this respect, it is unclear whether Nursi has any understanding of the seeing of heavenly secrets in the sense of Jewish apocalyptic, with its strongly mystical connotations.

[554] See again Şerif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey, op. cit.

[555] Verses of dante’s poem are cited from c.h. sissons’ translation: The Divine Comedy (oxford, 1993).

[556] Vahide, op. cit., p. 10.

[557] ibid.

[558] ibid., p. 11.

[559] Vahide, op. cit., p. 12. “Perspective” clearly is not the same thing as apocalyptic if the latter is indeed defined as the seeing of heavenly secrets, but similarities and tensions between different monotheistic faiths on this optical question are perhaps not irrelevant and deserve further study.

[560] d.d. Paige (ed.), Selected Letters of Ezra Pound (new york, 1971), p. 323.

[561] something of Nursi’s attitude to this new maps/old maps argument can be detected in a marvellous reference in The Rays, where he has this to say about the fruits of belief:

it shows its favourable effects in every group, particular and universal, and illuminates them. The sociologists and moralists, who are concerned with the social life of mankind, should take special note. if the rest of the thousands of benefits and advantages of belief in the hereafter are compared with the five or six we have alluded to, it will be understood that it is only belief that is the means of happiness in this world and the next, and in the lives of both, The Rays (istanbul, 1998), p. 247.

[562] Work is scarce on this aspect of Pound’s thought, but see Masimo Bacigalupo, The Formed Trace: The Later Poetry of Ezra Pound (new york, 1980).

[563] as with any judgement about modernity, however, Pound’s is fraught with difficulties. While it is true that, for example, Robert Musil’s The Man Without Qualities (london, 1979), and even more so elias canetti’s Auto-da-Fe (london, 1978), echo Pound’s sentiment about modernity, Thomas Mann’s The Magic Mountain (london, 1979) is almost entirely an attempt to find just such a particular understanding – and within a particular landscape, at that – and hermann Broch’s The Death of Virgil (london, 1983) and The Sleepwalkers (london, 1986) are also “grand” narratives in a philosophical sense counter to Pound’s instinct. on this criticism see george steiner, “dante now: The gossip of eternity,” in: On Difficulty and Other Essays (oxford, 1978), pp. 164–85, esp. p. 178: “it is the cunning genius of Pound’s Cantos (in this respect so intimately heir to Browning’s long poems) to quarry the epic convention while staying bitty, idiosyncratic, incomplete and radically egotistical in the modern anti-epic vein.”

[564] on this question in dante’s Divine Comedy, which is the intellectual background to Pound’s comments cited here, see Peter s. hawkins, “crossing over: dante and Pilgrimage,” in: Dante’s Testaments: Essays in Scriptural Imagination (stanford, 1999), pp. 247–64, esp. pp. 247–8.

[565] T.s. eliot, The Waste Land, in: Collected Poems 1909–1962 (london, 1963). The dedication to Pound is on p. 61. The dante reference is from the Purgatorio XXVi, line 117.

[566] eliot, op. cit., p. 65 (lines 60–69).

[567] on this question see david e. chinitz, T.S. Eliot and the Cultural Divide (chicago, 2005), esp. pp. 19–32.

[568] eliot, op. cit., p. 65 (lines 69–70).

[569] i should note at once here that my intellectual and theological interest in this contrast between Nursi, modernism and dante is methodological rather than substantive; i am not attempting to argue that Nursi was a modernist. nor would i seek to defend some of dante's reprehensible comments about the Prophet, comments that, whatever the historical context in which dante was writing, have no place and no defence in contemporary Muslim-christian dialogue. on this question and others, see Miguel asin, Islam and the Divine Comedy (new delhi, 2002). on the somewhat wider question of dante's intellectual relationship with the near east, see Brenda deen schildgen's Dante and the Orient (chicago, 2002), particularly chapter 4 on "dante and the indus: The salvation of Pagans," pp. 92–109. i am not certain that schildgen has entirely seen the theological and religious significance of some of Dante's omissions, but the work as a whole is an incisive analysis of the sources behind his text.

[570] Nursi, The Words, op. cit., p. 59.

[571] Nursi relates the same point directly to the Qur'an later in the Tenth Word: "Verses of the Qur'an, such as the oft-repeated, It will be naught but a single cry, and, The command of the hour of resurrection will be like the glance of the eye, show that the supreme resurrection will take place in a single instant, without the passage of any time. our

narrow intellects require some tangible parable to enable us to accept and assent to this infinitely miraculous and unparalleled statement.”

[572] eliot, of course, later became far more concerned with explicitly theological questions, most famously in Four Quartets: see chinitz, op. cit., pp. 153–4.

[573] ezra Pound, A Draft of XXX Cantos, london 1997, p. 7.

[574] see stephen sicari, Pound’s Epic Ambition: Dante and the Modern World (albany, 1991), p. 7: “The epic poem in the modern age with its extraordinary proliferation of detail and data which must be ‘contained’ is the attempt of the rash man who has no map to follow.”

[575] Pound, op. cit., p. 7.

[576] William cookson, A Guide to the Cantos of Ezra Pound (london, 2001), p. 3.

[577] Pound, op cit., pp. 8–9. cf. homer, The Odyssey, trans. e.V. rieu (london, 1946), pp. 174–5.

[578] dante alighieri, op. cit., pp. 158–9.

[579] See John Freccero, “dante’s ulysses: From epic to novel,” in: The Poetics of Conversion (london, 1986), pp. 136–51, particularly p. 138: “as in homer’s epic, so in dante’s story the journey of ulysses stands as an emblem of human time, but the homeric story is glossed from a linear, christian viewpoint, from the perspective of death. it is for this reason that dante’s ulysses ends as a shipwreck rather than at home with Penelope.” Pound’s odysseus also meets his end in a shipwreck, but the viewpoint is anything but christian, and Pound invests death with little of Freccero’s

“linear … perspective;” see sicari, op. cit., p. 21: “[Pound] … needs the homeric wanderer to emphasize that the modern journey to origins is an unmarked, unaided, and isolated endeavor … .”

[580] The key point here centers on a mistranslation in the latin version used by Pound; see carroll F. Terrell, A Companion to the Cantos of Ezra Pound (london, 1980), p. 2: “Pound’s translation of andreas divus’s latin translation of the greek word digonos which was apparently printed in place of the now accepted diogenes in line 92 of Book Xi of the Odyssey. divus was probably using a corrupt renaissance edition of the greek text… . Whereas digonos means twice-born or double, diogenes means ‘spring from Zeus or, in a general sense, ‘noble’ … .”

[581] The Words, op. cit., p. 95.

[582] ibid., p. 70.

[583] ibid., p. 74.

[584] There is also a very interesting sense in which the economy of translation in dante and Pound, from greek to latin to the vernacular, mirrors the economy of salvation as a journey of transposition. For dante, that salvation is christian; for Pound, secular – or perhaps better, poetic. Pound’s explicit citation of the divus translation in the text of canto i points in this direction, though it is impossible to be certain of his exact intention. see here daniel albright, “early cantos i–Xli,” in: The Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound, pp. 59–91, esp. pp. 60–64.

[585] dante alighieri, op. cit., p. 158. Pound’s attitude towards ulysses’ fate is typically idiosyncratic: “re. punishment of ulysses, no one seems to note the perfectly useless, trifling, unprovoked sack of the Cicones in the Odyssey. Troy was one thing, they were inveigled;” in: T.s. eliot (ed.), The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound (london, 1954), p. 212.

[586] This is not simply a general point. When Virgil reasons, “The human race should be content with the quia” (Purgatorio iii, 37), he makes a moral injunction that introduces an important argument from medieval scholasticism, one that dante knew well and one that is central to his entire anthropology. The argument focuses on the limitations of human reason and thereby knowledge, and informs the mechanics of theological argumentation. it is most clearly reasoned by Johannes scotus in his De divisione naturae, where he writes of god that we cannot know “quid est, sed quia solummodo est” [not … what god is but only the fact that he is] – quia est; De divizione naturae V, col. 919c. Properly understood, the quia est is applied to god’s effects in the world: such things exist because god created the world and perpetually governs it; from created order one understands, analogically, divine order. This reasoning provides the demonstratio quia, most succinctly expressed scholastically by Thomas in the Summa Theologiae:

There are two types of demonstration. one, showing “why,” follows the natural order of things among themselves, arguing from cause to effect; the other, showing “that,” follows the order in which we know things, arguing from effect to cause (for when an effect is more apparent to us than its cause, we come to know the cause through the effect). [Summa Theologiae i.2.a.2 resp.]

There is an absolutely fascinating article on theological method to be written, contrasting Nursi’s use of metaphor with this medieval christian understanding of analogy.

[587] see sicari, op. cit., pp. 1–16. The essential point, however, is hardly new to Pound: the modern sense of humanity’s Promethean ascent to its own absolute is central to hegel’s phenomenology, schelling’s philosophy of revelation, and nietzsche’s entire oeuvre.

[588] For an excellent treatment of this question, see Peter s. hawkins, Descendit ad inferos, in: op. cit., pp. 99–124. one of the many

fascinating contrasts here between the Aeneid and the christian tradition is that aeneas descends to hell to be reunited with his father. By contrast, christ’s descent is as a result of doing his Father’s will (see Mark 14.36), and involves their separation rather than reunion (albeit ultimate reunion lies beyond that separation). For the background to Virgil and dante on this question, see ronald r. Mcdonald, The Burial Places of Memory: Epic Underworlds in Virgil, Dante, and Milton (amherst, 1987).

[589] dante’s descent starts (allegorically) from the same place as christ’s; that is, golgotha (see Inferno i, 13).

[590] Nursi, The Words, op. cit., p. 106.

[591] ibid., p. 67.

[592] ibid., p. 64.

[593] ibid., p. 66.

[594] ibid., p. 90.

[595] ibid., p. 71.

[596] By “providence” here i mean the doctrine that god has ordered creation and that humanity has a designated place in such ordering, an expression of god’s will that conditions how one understands questions of humanity’s fate as well as its responsibilities.

[597] op. cit., p. 64.

[598] ibid., p. 75.

[599] ibid., p. 70.

[600] ibid., p. 94.

[601] dante alighieri, op. cit., p. 208.

[602] ibid., p. 61.

[603] ibid.

[604] one should note in passing that not only are these individuals all pagans, but avicenna and averrhoes were Muslims, too – albeit “gente di molto valore” for dante because of their translations of aristotle.

[605] dante alighieri, op. cit., p. 61.

[606] christ, being unknown in hell, is not named by Virgil. The question of the extent to which christ descended into hell; therefore, how “deep,” is a notorious conundrum in christian doctrine. For a different argument to dante’s, see hans urs von Balthasar, Mysterium Paschale (edinburgh, 1990), pp. 168–76.

[607] Thomas aquinas, In Ioan. Evangel. iii, iii, 5; see charles s. singleton (ed.), The Divine Commentary: Inferno 2: Commentary (Princeton, 1970), p. 59.

[608] “a more essential statement of the matter would be that the pagans did not have sanctifying grace or the three theological virtues that attend such grace, and without these ‘Deo cultus debitus’ is impossible;” Singleton op. cit., p. 60.

[609] op. cit., p. 70.

[610] ibid., p. 82.

[611] ibid., p. 87.

[612] From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Words, On the Nature and Purposes of Man, Life and All Things by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. Translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide, pp. 251, 460.

[613] From the Risale-i Nur Colection. The Rays Collection by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. Translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide, pp. 268, 310.

[614] ibid., p. 51.

[615] The Words, pp. 146, 421, 753.

[616] ibid., pp. 128–31.

[617] ibid., p. 112.

[618] The Rays Collection, pp. 267, 268; The Words, pp. 251, 460.

[619] The Damascus Sermon. p. 113; Letters, p. 553.

[620] From the Risale-i Nur Collection. The Flashes Collection by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi. Translated from the Turkish by Şükran Vahide, pp. 63–4.

[621] Letters, pp. 464–5; The Words, pp. 495–500, 738.

[622] ibid., pp. 317–18.

[623] The Flashes Collection, p. 374.

[624] The Words, p. 95.

[625] The Flashes Collection, pp. 400–401.

[626] The Words, p. 77; The Flashes Collection, p. 392.

[627] The Words, p. 78.

[628] The Words, p. 751.

[629] The Flashes Collection, p. 402.

[630] Letters, p. 549.

[631] The Rays Collection, p. 305.

[632] The Words, p. 78.

[633] ibid. p. 98.

[634] The Rays Collection, pp. 232, 250.

[635] The Flashes Collection, p. 363.

[636] The Damascus Sermon, p. 124.

[637] ibid., pp. 68–70.

[638] ibid., p. 103.

[639] Letters, p. 552; The Words, p. 761.

[640] Letters, p. 313; The Damascus Sermon, p. 127.

[641] The Rays Collection, pp. 401–2.

[642] Letters, p. 318.

[643] The Damascus Sermon, p. 70; The Rays Collection, p. 112.

[644] The Rays Collection, p. 372.

[645] The Damascus Sermon, p. 102; The Words, pp. 740, 753.

[646] The Damascus Sermon, pp. 33, 102; Letters, p. 545; The Words, p. 740.

[647] The Words, p. 739.

[648] The Damascus Sermon, p. 100; Letters, p. 544.

[649] The Damascus Sermon, p. 102; Letters, p. 545; The Flashes Collection, p. 225.

[650] The Damascus Sermon, pp. 72–5, 78–9.

[651] The Damascus Sermon, pp. 51, 56–8, 87.

[652] The Flashes Collection, pp. 92–3, 242.

[653] The Damascus Sermon, p. 104.

[654] ibid., p. 105.

[655] The Flashes Collection, p. 160.

[656] The Damascus Sermon, pp. 27, 28, 32, 38, 67–8; The Flashes Collection, p. 169.

[657] William apel, Signs of Peace. The Interfaith Letters of Thomas Merton (Maryknoll, ny, 2006), p. 21. see also Thomas Merton, Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, second edn (london, 1977), p. 17, where Merton speaks of his having been moved by sura xlii.32.

[658] letter written by Merton to abdul aziz in 1961, quoted in Thomas Merton, Thoughts on the East (new york, 1995), p. 55.

[659] Nursi, Twentieth Flash, second cause, n. 7; The Flashes, pp. 203–4.

[660] lucinde allen Mosher, “The Marrow of Worship and the Moral Vision: Said Nursi,” in ibrahim M. abu-rabi‘ (ed.), Islam at the Crossroads. On the Life and Thought of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (Albany, NY, 2003), pp. 181–97; 181. See also Şükran Vahide, The Author of the Risale-i Nur: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, second edn (istanbul, 1998).

[661] Michael ramsey, The Christian Priest Today, new revised edition (london, 1985), p. 14.

[662] see especially Thomas Merton, Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, Part Two: “Truth and Violence: an interesting era.”

[663] Thomas Merton, Life and Holiness (new york, 1963), p. 46.

[664] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 101.

[665] Merton, Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, p. 62.

[666] Thomas Merton, Thoughts in Solitude (Boston, 1993), x–xi; cf, Life and Holiness, p. 82.

[667] Thoughts in Solitude, ix.

[668] Thoughts in Solitude, x–xi.

[669] Merton, Thoughts in Solitude, x–xi.

[670] Merton, Thoughts in Solitude, x–xi.

[671] Thomas Merton, Ascent to Truth (london, 1994), p. 3.

[672] Merton, Ascent to Truth, p. 3.

[673] Merton, Ascent to Truth, p. 6.

[674] Thomas Merton, No Man is an Island (london, 1951), p. 37.

[675] , p. 37.

[676] , p. 37.

[677] , p. 37.

[678] , p. 37.

[679] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 37.

[680] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 37.

[681] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 56.

[682] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 56.

[683] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 60.

[684] , p. 20.

[685] , p. 20.

[686] , pp. 20–21, original emphasis.

[687] , p. 21.

[688] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 20.

[689] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 21.

[690] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 21.

[691] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 21.

[692] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 21.

[693] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 22.

[694] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 25.

[695] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 25.

[696] , p. 25.

[697] , p. 25.

[698] , p. 25; original emphasis.

[699] , p. 25; emphasis added.

[700] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 26; emphasis added.

[701] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 35.

[702] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 37.

[703] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 37.

[704] Thomas Merton, Contemplation in a World of Action (london, 1971), p. 162.

[705] Merton, Contemplation in a World of Action, p. 162.

[706] Thomas Merton, Life and Holiness (new york, 1996), p. 7.

[707] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 7.

[708] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 93.

[709] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 8.

[710] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 86.

[711] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 87.

[712] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 8.

[713] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 4.

[714] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 87.

[715] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 8.

[716] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 88.

[717] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 90, original emphasis.

[718] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 90.

[719] Merton, No Man is an Island, p. 4.

[720] Merton, Life and Holiness, pp. 8–9.

[721] Merton, Life and Holiness, p. 9.

[722] Merton, Contemplation in a World of Action, p. 164.

[723] Mosher has commented that, “a Nursi prayer manual would include at least two hundred entries.” a particularly favorite prayer, with which Nursi frequently concludes sections or chapters of his writings, is sura 2.32: “glory be unto you! We have no knowledge save that which you have taught us.” another favorite is 2.286: “our lord! do not take us to task if we forget or unwittingly do wrong.” of prayers from sources outside the Qur’an Nursi was particularly fond of the Jawshan al-Kabīr, which, according to Mosher, it was Nursi’s custom to rise at 3.30 to recite. Nursi also valued the prayers of uvays al-Qarani and frequently cited them in the Risale. see Mosher, “The Marrow of Worship,” pp. 181–2, for a discussion of the frequency of these prayers in Nursi’s writings.

[724] There are prayers of thanksgiving in which Nursi calls on his readers to give thanks to god for the great bounties he has bestowed upon them. There are also numerous prayers of confession and prayers for forgiveness. Nursi was conscious of his own sin and of his need for divine forgiveness: “o god! i wish i had thousands of tongues with which to ask you for forgiveness until the day of Judgment.” Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, Al-Mathnawi Al-Nuri:

Seedbed of the Light, translated by huseyin akarsu (somerset, new Jersey, 2007), ninth Treatise, 280. indeed, so necessary does Nursi feel it to be to confess his sins that he has decided to write them down, so that they can continue to appeal to god’s forgiveness after his death. He writes, “the repentance and regret of my short-lived tongue is insufficient to atone for my numberless sins. The tongue of writing is constant and permanent to an extent, and more effectual” (Nursi, seventeenth Flash, Twelfth note; The Flashes, pp. 176–7).

[725] Nursi, Twentieth letter, second station, eighth Phrase; Letters, pp. 286–7.

[726] Nursi, Twentieth letter, second station, eighth Phrase; Letters, p. 287.

[727] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, First Point; The Words, p. 320.

[728] Nursi, eleventh Word; The Words, p. 141. humanity as the mirror of the divine attributes is a major theme in Nursi’s writings. see: eighteenth letter; Twentieth letter, second station eighth Phrase; Letters, p. 286; Thirtieth Flash, The Flashes, p. 458.

[729] Nursi, Al-Mathnawi, seventh Treatise, quoted in Mosher, “Marrow of Worship,” p. 191.

[730] Nursi, Fourth ray, Fifth degree; Rays, p. 81.

[731] Nursi, Twenty-First Word, First station; The Words, p. 276.

[732] Nursi, Fifth Word; The Words, p. 35.

[733] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fourth Point; The Words, p. 323; cf. Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326; Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 353.

[734] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326; cf. Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 353.

[735] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 353; cf Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326.

[736] Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 353.

[737] Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 354.

[738] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326.

[739] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 354.

[740] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 354. The notion of the whole of creation worshipping god is a prominent theme in Nursi’s theology.

see also Twenty-Fourth Word, Fourth Branch.

[741] Nursi, Tenth Word, Fifth Truth; The Words, p. 82, n. 15.

[742] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326.

[743] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326.

[744] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 354.

[745] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326.

[746] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, pp. 326–7.

[747] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, First Point; Letters, p. 354.

[748] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 327.

[749] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 327.

[750] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 327.

[751] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, second Point; Letters, pp. 354–5.

[752] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, second Point; Letters, p. 355.

[753] Nursi, sixth ray, First Question; The Rays, p. 119.

[754] Nursi, sixth ray, First Question; The Rays, p. 122.

[755] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth etter, First addendum, second Point; Letters, p. 355.

[756] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, second Point; Letters, p. 355.

[757] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, second Point; Letters, p. 356.

[758] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 325.

[759] Nursi, Twenty-Third letter, First Question; Letters, p. 331.

[760] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, Third Point; Letters, p. 356.

[761] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, Third Point; Letters, p. 356.

[762] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 326; cf. Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, second Point; Letters, p. 356.

[763] Nursi, Twenty-Third Word, First chapter, Fifth Point; The Words, p. 325.

[764] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth etter, First addendum, Fourth Point; Letters, p. 356.

[765] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, Fifth Point; Letters, p. 357.

[766] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth letter, First addendum, Fifth Point; Letters, p. 357.

[767] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 518.

[768] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 518.

[769] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 518.

[770] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 519.

[771] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 521.

[772] Nursi, Twenty-eighth etter, ninth section; , p. 522.

[773] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 522.

[774] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 522.

[775] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, pp. 531–3.

[776] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 523.

[777] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 525.

[778] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 526.

[779] Nursi, Twenty-eighth etter, ninth section; , p. 521.

[780] Nursi, Twenty-eighth letter, ninth section; Letters, p. 521.

[781] Nursi, Al Mathnawi, Tenth Treatise, p. 353.

[782] Nursi, Al Mathnawi, Tenth Treatise, pp. 353–4.

[783] Nursi, Twenty-Third etter, First Question; , p. 330.

[784] Al-Nawawī, al-Adhkār 74; al-Hākim, al-Mustadrak i, 517; cited by Nursi in Letters, p. 330.

[785] Qur’an 2:201; cited by Nursi in Twenty-Third letter, First Question; Letters, p. 330.

[786] Nursi, Twenty-Third letter, First Question; Letters, p. 330.

[787] Nursi, Twenty-Third letter, First Question; Letters, p. 331.

[788] Nursi, seventeenth Flash, Fifth note; Flashes, p. 164.

[789] Nursi, seventeenth Flash, Fifth note; Flashes, p. 165.

[790] Nursi, seventeenth Flash, Fifth note; Flashes, p. 165.

[791] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth Word, Fifth Branch, First Fruit; The Words, p. 367.

[792] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth Word, Fifth Branch, First Fruit; The Words, p. 367.

[793] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth Word, Fifth Branch, First Fruit; The Words, p. 368.

[794] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth Word, Fifth Branch, First Fruit; The Words, pp. 368–9.

[795] Nursi, Twenty-Fourth Word, Fifth Branch, Fifth Fruit; The Words, p. 373.

[796] ibid., p. 368.

[797] Thirty-second Word, Third stopping-Place, The second Point of the second Topic, second Point; The Words, p. 670.

[798] see also Thirty-second Word, Third stopping-Place, The second Point of the second Topic, second Point; The Words, pp. 668–71.

[799] see sixteenth Flash, second curious Question; Flashes, pp. 143–4; Thirteenth letter, Third Question; Letters, pp. 68–70.

[800] , the Fourteenth Word, addendum, pp. 184–90.

[801] The Words, Thirty-second Word, Third stopping-Place, p. 665. cf. also, The Words, The eighteenth Word, p. 240: “Beneath the veil of events like storms, earthquakes, and plague, is the unfolding of numerous hidden immaterial flowers. The seeds of many potentialities which have not developed sprout and grow beautiful because of events which are apparently ugly.”

[802] , Twenty-Third Word, chapter 1, p. 322.

[803] , gleams, p. 748. cf. also, Letters, “seeds of reality,” p. 548.

[804] The Flashes, The second Flash, p. 23.

[805] The Flashes, The Thirteenth Flash, pp. 118–19.

[806] The Rays, The Third ray, p. 60.

[807] i am grateful to yunus cengel for his translation of this passage.

[808] i am grateful to Faris Kaya for this explanation.

[809] The Rays, The Twelfth ray, p. 312.

[810] The Rays, The Fourteenth ray, p. 407.

[811] The Flashes, The Twenty-fifth Flash, pp. 266–85. In my article, “For you, Illness is good health: Said Nursi’s spirituality in his approach to Physical illness,” i try to outline the spiritual benefits that, in Nursi’s view, can accrue to the believer in these moments of personal crisis. The paper is published in Turkish as “Hutbe-i Şamiye: Manevî Bir Doktorun, Çağımız Hastalıklarına Reçetesi,” in Bediüzzaman’a Göre Müslümanlık-Hıristiyanlık Münasebetleri, İstanbul: Etkileşim Yayınları, 2006, pp. 115–27.

[812] The Rays, The Twelfth ray, p. 298. cf. also, “so the exact coincidence of the two centres of the Risale-i Nur’s dissemination, isparta and Kastamonu, being preserved from disaster relative to other places … is belief and good works.” The Rays, The Thirteenth ray, p. 348.

[813] Bediuzzaman said al-nursi, Ishārātu’l- I‘jāz, ed. ihsan salih, second edn cairo: sozler nesriyat, 1414/1994, p. 24; Signs of Miraculousness, p. 19.

[814] Nursi deciphers the whole formulas as follows: The imperative “say,” which is implicit in the beginning of the formula, is an indication to [the necessity of] prophethood; “Allah” that comes right after the preposition “bi”, a sign to the oneness of god; “alRahman” (all-Merciful) as a reference to the existence of the

order and balance and justice in the universe; “Al-Rahim” (all-compassionate) as an allusion to the reality of resurrection. ibid.

[815] Ishārātu’l- I‘jāz, p. 66.

[816] Sozler, 26, p. 115; The Words, 26, p. 480.

[817] The same definition is found in almost all the classical technical dictionaries of Islam. see for instance, al-Jurjani, al-Ta‘rifat, p. 161. see for a general study of justice in islam, Majid Khadduri, The Islamic Conception of Justice, Baltimore: The Johns hopkins university Press, 1984; Mahmoud ayoub, “islamic concept of Justice,” Islamic Identity and the Struggle for Justice, eds n.h. Barazangi, M.r. Zaman, o. afzal, gainesville: university Press of Florida, 1996, pp. 19–26; salah al-din al-Munadjdjid, Le Concept de Justice Social en Islam, trans. into French by M. hadji sadok, Paris: editions Publisud, 1982; n.h. Barazangi, M.r. Zaman, o. afza, eds, Islamic Identity and the Struggle for Justice, eds n.h. Barazangi, M.r. Zaman, o. afzal, gainesville: university Press of Florida, 1996; sayyid Qutb, Social Justice in Islam, trans. John B. hardie, rev. with introd. by hamid algar, new york: islamic Publications international, 2000.

[818] Sozler, 10, p. 28.

[819] Lem’alar, 29, p. 769; The Flashes, 29, p. 389.

[820] Sozler, 10, p. 37.

[821] Sozler, 32, p. 285; The Words, 32, p. 653.

[822] Sozler, 32, p. 293; The Words, p. 672.

[823] Lem’alar, 30, p. 800.

[824] Sozler, 33, pp. 306–7; The Words, 33, pp. 700–701.

[825] Lem’alar 30, p. 802; The Flashes, 30, pp. 404–5.

[826] Sozler, 32, p. 294; The Words, 32, pp. 672–3.

[827] Mektubat, 21, p. 452; The Letters, 22, pp. 273–4.

[828] This is an approximate rendition of the passage from Sozler, 33, p. 304; cf. The Words, 33, p. 695.

[829] Sozler, 32, p. 276; The Words, 32, p. 634.

[830] Şualar, 9, p. 946; The Words, 10, p. 115.

[831] Sozler, 10, p. 37; cf. The Words, 10, p. 97.

[832] Sozler, 10, p. 28.

[833] Sozler, 10, p. 28; cf. The Words, 10, p. 78.

[834] Sozler, 32, p. 285; The Words, 32, p. 652.

[835] Sozler, 32, p. 285; The Words, 32, p. 653.

[836] Ibid.

[837] Lem’alar, 13, p. 618; The Flashes, 13, pp. 104–5.

[838] Şualar, 2, p. 859; The Rays, 2, p. 40.

[839] Şualar, 2, p. 860; The Rays, 2, p. 40.

[840] Al-Mathnawi al-‘Arabi al-Nuri, transcribed by ceylan caliskan, istanbul: sozler nesriyat, 2003, pp. 483–4.

[841] The Flashes, 30, p. 401; Lem’alar, 30, p. 800.

[842] Lem’alar, 30, p. 800; The Flashes, 30, p. 401.

[843] Ishārātu’l- I‘jāz, p. 32; Signs of Miraculousness, pp. 29–30

[844] Lem’alar, 30, pp. 800–801; The Flashes, 30, p. 402.

[845] Lem’alar, 30, p. 805; The Flashes, 30, p. 410.

[846] Şualar, 11, p. 956.

[847] Lem’alar, 30, p. 824; The Flashes, 30, pp. 452–3.

[848] Şualar, 11, p. 956–7; The Rays, 11, p. 231.

[849] The Rays, 2, p. 38; Şualar, 2, 859.

[850] see for an extensive study of this issue and its various implications in islamic theology, eric l. ormsby, Theodicy in Islamic Thought: The Dispute Over al-Ghazali’s ‘Best of all Possible Worlds’, Princeton: Princeton university, 1984, pp. 35–7.

[851] Şualar, 2, p. 859; The Rays, 2, p. 39.

[852] Here and in the following i refer to my work in German The Sense of Injustice: I. Kaplow, ed., Der Sinn für Ungerechtigkeit, Baden-Baden: nomos, 2005.

[853] It is thus no accident that this symposium has its own section on divine and worldly justice. I will thus limit my discourse to a more philosophical context.

[854] Here and in the following i will be drawing heavily on Rawls’ concept of justice as detailed in what has now become a locus classicus: J. Rawls, A Theory of Justice, Cambridge Ma, 1971. see also J. Rawls,

“Justice as Fairness: Political, not metaphysical,” in: Philosophy and Public Affairs 14, 1985.

[855] A Theory of Justice, ibid., p. viii and following.

[856] S. Nursi, The Words, istanbul, 2004, p. 664.

[857] See s. Vahide, “divine Mercy and compassion in the Risale-i Nur: The names of Rahman and Rahim,” paper delivered at the third Said Nursi symposium in Bonn, March, 2007, currently being made ready for publication. i quote here from page 5 of her manuscript.

[858] Nursi, The Rays Collection, istanbul, 2002, p. 372.

[859] ibid., p. 395.

[860] ibid., p. 372.

[861] Nursi, The Damascus Sermon, istanbul, 1996, p. 127.

[862] ibid.

[863] Nursi, The Words, ibid., 557.

[864] Nursi, The Damascus Sermon, First addendum, second Part, 67.

[865] see S. Nursi, Emirdağ Lahikası, i, istanbul, 1992, p. 38; here and in the following i cite an english translation by s. Vahide which is as yet unpublished.

[866] here and in following i will refer to the classic i. Kant, Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, hamburg, Meiner, 1994. i will use, however, the pagination of the uniform socalled “akademie ausgabe.” all translations into english are mine unless otherwise noted. i will often cite this text as [gMs] with the page number of the akademie ausgabe. For Kant’s repudiation of utilitarianism, see the second Abschnitt of the GMS, as well as the Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, hamburg, Meiner, 1993, p. 31 ff.

[867] Kant calls it a “chimärische idee ohne Wahrheit” [GMS, 445].

[868] GMS, 421: “handle nur nach derjenigen Maxime, durch die du zugleich wollen kannst, dass sie ein allgemeines gesetz werde,” or in a slightly different form: “handle so, dass die Maxime deines Willens jederzeit zugleich als Prinzip einer allgemeinen Gesetzgebung gelten könne:” I. Kant, Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, § 7.

[869] “handle so, daß du die Menschheit, sowohl in deiner Person als in der Person eines jeden anderen, jederzeit zugleich als Zweck, niemals bloß als Mittel brauchst,” GMS, 429.

[870] entities which have a mere “ relativen Wert, als Mittel,” are called “Sachen, dagegen vernünftige Wesen Personen genannt werden, weil ihre natur sie schon als Zwecke an sich selbst ... auszeichnet,” which is “ein gegenstand der achtung ist:” GMS, 428.

[871] see Kant, GMS, 389.

[872] see The Words, p. 265, and section iV iii below.

[873] Nursi, The Damascus Sermon, ibid., p. 67.

[874] S. Nursi, Emirdağ Lahikası, ibid., ii, p. 241.

[875] ibid., p. 183.

[876] ibid., p. 241.

[877] S. Nursi, The Words, ibid., p. 61.

[878] see above, p. 5.

[879] S. Nursi, The Words, ibid., p. 557.

[880] Nursi, The Words, ibid., p. 98, footnote 30.

[881] see here The Words, p. 77: “do you wish for a proof that all things are done with justice and balance? The fact that all things are endowed with being, given shape and put in their appropriate place in accordance with precise equilibrium and in appropriate measure, shows that all matters are done in accordance with infinite justice and balance.”

[882] Nursi, The Words, ibid., p. 98, as above.

[883] ibid.

[884] Nursi, The Words, ibid., p. 265.

[885] here and in the following, see the Damascus Sermon, ibid., p. 67 f.

[886] see, for example, o. o’neill, Acting on Principle, new york, 1975; J. rawls, “Themes in Kant’s Moral Philosophy,” in: E. Förster (Hrsg.), Kant’s Transcendental Deductions, stanford, 1989, or B. herman, The Practice of Moral Judgment, cambridge Ma, 1993.

[887] J. rawls, A Theory of Justice, ibid.

[888] see here the excellent work on tolerance by rainer Forst, Toleranz in Konflikt, Frankfurt am Main, suhrkamp, 2003.

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** [Front Matter]

*** [Synopsis]

The revival of madrasas in the 1980s coincided with the rise of political Islam and soon became associated with the ‘clash of civilizations’ between Islam and the West. This volume examines the rapid expansion of madrasas across Asia and the Middle East and analyses their role in society within their local, national and global context.

Based on anthropological investigations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Iran, and Pakistan, the chapters take a new approach to the issue, examining the recent phenomenon of women in madrasas; Hui Muslims in China; relations between the Iran’s Shia seminary after the 1979 Islamic revolution and Shia in Pakistan and Afghanistan; and South Asian madrasas. Emphasis is placed on the increased presence of women in these institutions, and the reciprocal interactions between secular and religious schools in those countries. Taking into account social, political and demographic changes within the region, the authors show how madrasas have been successful in responding to the educational demand of the people and how they have modernized their style to cope with a changing environment.

A timely contribution to a subject with great international appeal, this book will be of great interest to students and scholars of international politics, political Islam, Middle East and Asian studies and anthropology.

*** [About the Editors]

SAKURAI Keiko is Professor in the School of International Liberal Studies at Waseda University, Tokyo. The author of two books on Iran and a book on the Shia, her major interest lies in the analysis of social change in contemporary Iran, with special focus on the role of education.

Fariba Adelkhah is Senior Research Fellow at SciencesPo in Paris. An anthropologist, her main research interests focus on the relationships and interplay between social changes and political transformations throughout the second half of the twentieth century in Iran. She is the author of Being Modern in Iran, and her current research deals with the Iranian Diaspora.

*** [About the Book Series]

New Horizons in Islamic Studies (Second Series)

Series Editor: Professor SATO Tsugitaka

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This second series of ‘New Horizons in Islamic Studies’ presents the abundant results of the National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) program for Islamic Area Studies (IAS) carried out in Japan from 2006 to date. This program emphasizes multidisciplinary research on the dynamism of Muslim societies, in both Islamic and non-Islamic areas around the world. By taking a historical approach and adopting regional comparison methods in the study of current issues, the program seeks to build a framework of empirical knowledge on Islam and Islamic Civilization.

Islamic Area Studies is a network comprised of five research centers, at Waseda University, the University of Tokyo, Sophia University, Kyoto University, and the Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library). As of 2008, this network has been brought into the fold of a Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports,

Science and Technology (MEXT) program, with the Organization for Islamic Area Studies at Waseda University serving as its central office. As research centers recognized by the MEXT, we aim to promote the development of joint research institutions in the human and social sciences, thereby further developing fruitful joint research achievements.

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*** [Title Page]

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Islam and education today

Edited by Sakurai Keikoand Fariba Adelkhah

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*** Contents

1. Introduction: the moral economy of the madrasa

FARIBA ADELKHAH AND KEIKO SAKURAI

2. The rise of new madrasas and the decline of tribal leadership within the Federal Administrated Tribal Area (FATA), Pakistan

SO YAMANE

3. Women’s empowerment and Iranian-style seminaries in Iran and Pakistan

KEIKO SAKURAI

4. Contested notions of being ‘Muslim’

HUMAYUN KABIR

5. Islamic education in China

MASUMI MATSUMOTO AND ATSUKO SHIMBO

6. Religious dependency in Afghanistan

FARIBA ADELKHAH

7. Epilogue

DALE F. EICKELMAN

Glossary

References

Index

*** Illustrations

**** Tables

3.1 Four women’s madrasas in Lahore

3.2 What would you be doing had you not been admitted into the madrasa?

3.3 What do you want to do after graduation? (Multiple choices permitted)

3.4 Is there a madrasa graduate in your family and among your relatives?

4.1 Unfolding the school of thought of madrasas in Sunni Islam in terms of maslaki differentiations in South Asia

4.2 Types of madrasas in Bahmanbaria by management and level of schooling

4.3 Distribution of madrasas and students by management and gender in Brahmanbaria

**** Figures

2.1 Map of FATA

3.1 The number and year of establishment of Shia women’s seminaries in Iran

3.2 The women’s seminary system in Iran

3.3 Map of Pakistan’s provinces

3.4 The number and year of establishment of Shia women’s madrasas in Pakistan

4.1 Map of Bangladesh

5.1 Map of China

6.1 Shia places of worship and religious institutions in Kabul

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*** Note on transliterations

This book draws on source materials in Arabic, Persian, Afghan, Urdu, Chinese, Bengali, transliteration conversions preferred by Muslims as well as non-Muslims, writings in English or in French, and colloquial as well as literary uses in these languages. As consistently as possible, we use the system adopted by the International Journal of Middle East Studies, except for proper names, substantives such as titles (ayatollah), institutions (hoseynieh) and places (Karadj). These words are part of our daily usage on the Internet and for the sake of coherence we decided not to modify them. Also we omit diacritics. Although religious terms

often derive from Arabic—for example, the Arabic sunna (tradition) becomes sunnat in Persian—we decided not to impose the Arabic where it does not accurately reflect local or regional usage. When appropriate, the common origins of such terms are indicated in the glossary. Likewise, the plural of most foreign terms, especially those derived from Arabic, is indicated by the addition of an ‘s’ to the singular.

** 1. Introduction: The moral economy of the madrasa

Fariba Adelkhah and Keiko Sakurai

Learning the sciences and disseminating knowledge are important duties for Muslims, and this is why places of teaching have been given a special status in Islam. Irrespective of the name given (such as madrasa, hawza, maktab, kuttab, and jamia), the places where knowledge is imparted are highly regarded by Muslim communities around the world. In fact, numerous hadiths, or sayings of the Prophet, underline the need for knowledge: ‘Seek knowledge, from the cradle to the grave, even if it is to be found in a place as distant as China,’ although, as Keiko Sakurai rightly reminds us in this book (chapter 3), women were excluded until modern times.[1]

Since knowledge is considered a religious duty, mosques (masjids, literally, places of worship) were the first institution of learning in Islam (Makdisi, 1981: 10). Whether viewed as an institution or simply as a ‘venue of convenience’ (Berkey, 2007: 42), whether viewed as a formal or as an informal institution (Berkey, 1992a),[2] they play an important role in the organization of classes and lectures: two perfect examples are those of the Zeitouna mosque in Tunisia (established on 731) and the Sheikh Ansari mosque (also called Masjid-e torka)[3] in Najaf (Iraq), where Khomeini used to pray and impart his teachings during his long exile (1963–1977). Furthermore, other sites of education have come into existence over the centuries such as khanqah (Sufi hospice), maktab (place for writing) and, of course, madrasa[4] (literally place of teaching, or place for teaching law). Subsequently, larger and more

ambitious institutions like universities were also built, such as al-Azhar in Egypt (established in 972), Nizamiyya in Baghdad (established in 1067).[5] This multiplicity of institutions scattered all over the Muslim world has broadened the possibility of religious education and the development of different trends in the understanding and teaching of Islam, as Muslim scholars are traditionally encouraged to move from place to place in order to look for knowledge (Gellens, 1990). The renowned centers of Islamic knowledge have evolved over centuries in places like Kufa, Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, Tunisia, Cordoba, Najaf, Isfahan, Qom, Delhi, Deoband, Lucknow and, as desired by Afghan Shia quite possibly in the future, Kabul.

Although Islamic knowledge does not build a united umma by itself, it has always been used as an instrument of power. In fact, this is why knowledge has also been a subject of debate, rivalry and conflict among various religious authorities and believers throughout the centuries. To a great extent, this friction explains the variety of schools of fiqh (Islamic law): from the early stages of Islam they included the Hanafi, named after Abu Hanifa al-Numan (d.767); the Maliki, named after Malik ibn Anas (d.795); the Shafii, named after Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafii (d.820); and the Hanbali, named after Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d.855). The Shia and Ismaili communities follow the Jafari school, named after Imam Jafar Sadiq (d.765). Later the Wahhabi school, named after Muhammad Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1791) and the Bahai school, named after Bahaollah (d.1892), follow the reformist paths of their founders. One should also underline that the strengthening of one of the most prominent educational institutions, the Nizamiyya school in Baghdad, is the consequence of opposition to the divisions of that time, such as the Mutazalites in the eleventh century (Sikand, 2005: 27; Malik, 2008: 4). It worth adding that the term madrasa seems to fall within the scope of this Nizamiyya tradition (Fischer, 1980: 38–39). Besides, conflicts have not only existed between different schools of fiqh but also within each school, as people who were educated in the madrasa could take up positions that are important in any Muslim community: muftis, judges, bureaucrats working in religious institutions (such as waqf, or pious endowments), and others who are supposed to regulate everyday life (weddings, funerals, religious gatherings, pilgrimages, mosque). Moreover, conflicts could also be rooted in the economic power of the learning institutions as they often possess substantial financial resources (Berkey, 1992a: 112–116).

Religious learning institutions and the madrasa, despite being one of the oldest Islamic institutions—some date from the eleventh century—have often been looked on with suspicion by modern states, whether Western or Muslim. More recently, a not-so-interested or even ignorant international (i.e. Western) community also became openly distrustful of them when Islamic extremism was linked to the teaching of the madrasa. While this perception crystallized with the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the terrorist attacks that took place in the subsequent decade in Europe and the Middle East, it was strengthened by the takeover of Kabul in 1996, as the Deobandi madrasa provided the rank and file of the new Afghan regime—the well-known Taliban. The September 11th tragedy further radicalized this belief. The common understanding nowadays is that Islam is both a religion and a political entity, and that in order to control one of its dimensions, one has to control the other.

Numerous authors, many among those we are referring to in this volume, have argued against this view, showing it to be too simplistic and lacking any logical grounding. While sharing their concerns, we intend to change our analytical approach from the available literature on this subject today. Our intention is not to offer a discursive analysis of the syllabus of representative madrasas and how they have changed over time or in various social and political contexts. Our goal is not to illustrate their adaptation, flexibility or even modernity in order to contradict the criticism that views these schools as outdated institutions.[6] We do not deny that a disposition to violence has also been one of the possible outcomes of madrasa education, in the past as well as today, not because of poverty (Saleem, 2008), but because if knowledge means power, it is possible that power could spring from knowledge, including knowledge imparted within or because of these religious institutions. Our primary goal is to assess the activities of institutions dedicated to religious knowledge in the same way we assess other knowledge institutions that are influenced by their environment and try to change it, even though the agenda of madrasas is indeed broader. In other words, we would like to deal with what Dale Eickelman, following and commenting on Pierre Bourdieu, although very critical of his misrecognition of the historical context in which his work is produced, calls ‘the political economy of meaning,’ or ‘the reproduction and transmission of systems of meaning and how these shape and in turn are shaped by configurations of

power and economic relations among groups and classes in different societies' (Eickelman, 1979: 386; 2009). In this perspective we look at the inevitable interactions between more traditional (and religious) institutions and the more modern ones in order to grasp the dynamics at play. By illustrating their connections with the past and the scholastic tradition and their enrolment in modernity (Asad 1993), we intend to describe the historical context, during the last three decades, in which Islam contributes to integrating categories that were marginal for different reasons: pluralism, new identities, equality of rights and development. Following Dale Eickelman's seminal comments on the sociology of education, he writes, 'Durkheim in his Evolution of Educational Thought was explicitly concerned with the historical problem of change in dominant ideologies of higher education and how these ideologies were related to the conflicting interests of class and social groups and were manipulated by them' (1979: 392). These conflicts create opportunities that might lead to violent action but also to the improved communication and dialogue essential for creating a shared public space (Eickelman and Salvatore, 2004). We do not want to use dichotomies to analyze madrasas such as good versus bad, liberal versus totalitarian, or tradition versus modernity. One should not deny the continued relevance of these schools, whose impressive development over the last thirty years tells us much about the blind spots of our modern yet Manichæan understanding of religion and tradition (Hefner and Zaman, 2007).

In this perspective, analyzing madrasas necessitates a semantic clarification. These institutions lie at the crossroads between religious and secular realities, between the national and the transnational, or between faith, Islam and its desire to have dialogue with the rest of the world, including the West, as well as lay and secular milieus. Bear in mind that 'laicité,' as the French say, is a 'political choice defining the place of religion in an authoritarian and legal sense,' and that the phenomenon of secularization is first of all a process: 'it is when religion ceases to be the focus of men's lives, even when they still define themselves as believers [that] men's actions and the meaning they give to the world no longer come under the sign of the transcendental or the religious' (Roy, 2005: 19–20).

Madrasas are general training and educational (from elementary to tertiary) institutions, geared towards producing and transmitting knowledge. Are they

also institutions devoted to religious education, general instruction, or they are religious institutions devoted simply to religious instruction? Are they run by clerics, or can lay people also take a part in their management?

It will quickly become apparent that the answer is not in fact that simple. After all, a state-run university can offer theology courses, and religious schools can offer secular subjects. The terminology current in Muslim countries reflects this indeterminate state. In Arabic, the word madrasa signifies a teaching institution of various levels. As it happens, teaching and research institutions were religious in ancient Muslim societies, as were the first universities, such as Bologna and the Sorbonne, in Christian Europe. But the identification of the madrasa with the religious educational field is in a sense accidental, even though it is a constant in most South Asian countries. In Iran, for instance, the word madrasa refers generally to state schools, and religious schools are known as maktab or, for the training of clerics, madrasa-i ilmiyya or hawza-i ilmiyya. In this book, we will be dealing solely with contemporary madrasas in the religious sense of the word, as institutions in which students receive religious teaching, which can offer complementary modern teaching as well. The main point to grasp at this stage is that madrasas are geared first and foremost towards producing and transmitting knowledge, starting with reading and writing the language of the sacred book, the Quran. As such, they have a relationship with power. We could refer to them with the concept of ‘power-knowledge’ coined by Foucault, or we could speak of hegemony, citing Gramsci. Either way, madrasas have a role in defining and reproducing epistème, ‘sens commun,’ consensus and domination. This is what George W. Bush understood in his own way when he tried to force Pakistan to reform its madrasas in the wake of September 11th, within the framework of the strategy of ‘democratizing’ the ‘Greater Middle East.’ This will leave some people affirming that madrasas are one of the keys to the ‘clash of civilizations,’ likening them to recruiting offices for potential terrorists (Riaz, 2008: 20–51). It is true that madrasas are one of the issues—or even one of the causes—behind the often-violent clashes between Muslims and the West. But these conflicts initially tore apart Muslim societies themselves, by putting clerics and lay intellectuals at loggerheads with each other, but also by promoting discord among clerics or among lay intellectuals. The antagonisms that agitated madrasas were mainly internal Islamic ones. Some divided religious and secular people with respect to the content and direction of social change. Others carried the seeds of

theological, legal, confraternal and sectarian divisions sometimes leading to schisms, at the extreme exclusion and persecution, as with the Bahai in Iran and the Ahmadiyya in South Asia.

Working on knowledge and its production will not lead us to favour the role of ideas, belief or culture. As Paul Veyne (2007: 228–230) demonstrated with respect to ancient Christianity, people's ideas tend to match their practices, not the opposite. Granted, ideas have their own autonomous lives, which often last longer than those of the relevant practices and have their own validity. Knowledge contributes to creating or forming a tangible social situation. It is a speech act or 'speech event' (John Bowen, 1993: 9). From that perspective, madrasas should by their very nature be seen as part of a specific historic and social situation, that they themselves help define. On the one hand, they are not static, as they span the centuries. On the other hand, their course/development is not identical from one country to another. [7] In this book, we speak of the full diversity of contemporary madrasas in five different countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Iran and Pakistan. This will show that the lowest common denominator is to be found in their relationship with public, state or modern—i.e., non-religious—teaching.

Contemporary madrasas are educational institutions that are not disconnected from the transformation of society itself. So-called 'Muslim' societies have undergone profound change in recent decades: their demographics have changed, they have become more urbanized, state centralization and bureaucratization has progressed, the organization of economic life has changed, international migrations have taken place, and the list goes on.

For instance between 1980 and 2005, the population increased from 13 million to 24 million in Afghanistan, from about 90 million to 150 million in Bangladesh, from 980 million to 1.3 billion in China, from about 39 million to 70 million in Iran and from about 85 million to 159 million in Pakistan.[8] According to the latest data, adult literacy (15 years and over) has increased from 29.2 to 53.5 per cent (1981–2007) in Bangladesh, from 5.5 to 93.3 per cent (1982–2007) in China, from 52.3 to 82.3 per cent (1986–2006) in Iran and from 25.7 to 54.2 per cent (1981–2006) in Pakistan.[9]

The impact of these transformations on madrasas is evident, and madrasas can no more escape them than can state school systems. Moreover madrasas have been evolving by constantly supplying increasing demand for education, which in many cases was neglected by the state. The increase in the number of madrasas since the 1980s is clear evidence of how madrasas have evolved in line with the changing environment. Thus, madrasas are mass educational institutions all facing the economic disorder, and specifically the property speculation sparked by rapid urbanization. They must deal with states that have differing degrees of centralization and bureaucratization, but also with local government and NGOs that are emerging as a potent force in planning and development (Eickelman, 2007: 146). They have had to deal with major political events such as the consolidation of state power by the secularist Communist Party in China, the independence of Bangladesh, the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the ensuing civil war, or the 'fight against terror.' They have reacted to these upheavals or shocks by adapting themselves and innovating, in their organization, their teaching methods or their curricula. We describe diverse situations in this book, and one must bear in mind that contemporary madrasas have tended to adopt the bureaucratic model of modern state education, with the notion of courses and prerequisites, the spatial organization around classrooms, lecture theatres, libraries and IT rooms, the financing of study by means of scholarships granted by the bureaucracy on the basis of academic achievement, standardized and merchandised teaching manuals, the splitting of the school or academic year into semesters and vacations, and, in some cases, social protection akin to that of a Western welfare state.

Like the students of France's most prestigious higher education institutions, such as the Ecole normale supérieure or Polytechnique (Ecole nationale d'administration), the talibs (students of religion) are akin to civil servants, receiving wages, and also enjoying paid leave and other advantages that are no doubt not for nothing in the appeal of their courses. Thus, the teaching of Arabic, which provides access to the Quran, no longer involves the teaching of civilization, but rather the study of a grammar book, purely instrumental and disconnected from history. This makes Arabic a communication tool, a technique, on the same level as calligraphy, which is still widely taught, but

as an art, if not a handicraft. The Quran’s supporting material—printed version, CD-Rom, filmed version—is trivialized: the mass reproduction of holy books means that people take less care when handling them, and students can stop or fast-forward a recording or switch from one support to another as they please (Adelkhah, 1999a: 107–108). Religious knowledge becomes a corpus of practical and utilitarian solutions for the problems of modern-day life. Lastly, madrasa administration is increasingly influenced by management science, with accounting and financial rules, bureaucratic procedures, ledgers, human resources management, user-consultation processes. This makes them a competitive and challenging field occupied by players moved by different and varied contemporary motivations.

This means that madrasas are a reflection of the societies in which they have grown, while at the same time they contribute to building these societies. The most important point is that they help make education more widely available, to the point where it is now widely deemed to be essential. They offer access to knowledge that is all the more precious that the state school system cannot provide it, either because the financial resources are lacking or because of its outrageously elitist character, and because state schools, in insufficient numbers, are more often than not concentrated in the larger cities – and often in their center. In any event, madrasas often come across as better adapted to social conditions, and are considered effective because of their flexibility, a bit like hawala and the interest-free loan chests, which are better suited to the needs of the population, in some milieus, than banks. This reasoning goes for the education of the girls and young women sent to madrasas, if only because they represent a non-negligible slice of the school market. This is because madrasas, which help make education more widely available, also help make education a marketable commodity. For education is indeed a market, increasingly occupied by businessmen, often expatriates, or politicians. These people are sometimes looking to make a profit, against the backdrop of the deregulation and privatization of public services (Herrera, 2006: 39–42). Often, they are also looking to move up the social ladder, bearing in mind that the founders and benefactors of madrasas can generally hope to reap social recognition, or even electoral benefits. Thus private madrasas provide a link with globalization. At the very least, they relay the global lingua franca, English, as well as information and communication technologies, including audio, video, IT and the Internet.

As we will see, the development of madrasas is not simply a religious phenomenon in the strict sense of the term. In Pakistan for instance, the government’s goal of cheaply improving national educational statistics and to respect the desiderata of multilateral institutions has prompted it to foster the creation and development of madrasas, which have taken their place in the official teaching system (Saleem, 2009: 105–106). And in numerous least-developed countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as a lot of sub-Saharan African countries, Islamic teaching is the only sort available to poor people, and even some members of the middle classes (Rahman, 2004: 91–92). Periods of economic crisis and structural adjustments have reinforced their appeal. However, it would be a big mistake to reduce madrasas to schools for underprivileged people. Just as adherence to Islam is far from being restricted to desperate people and can extend into higher socioeconomic categories, including intellectuals, engineers, doctors and the owners of large stores, madrasas also take in children from the middle and even upper-middle classes, in addition to the fact that they help their promoters move up the social ladder, as we pointed out earlier. As social institutions, they illustrate and support the ascension of the middle class that has gone hand in hand with urbanization.

From this perspective the various chapters in this book will tend to imply that madrasas are not, or not only, the expression of an identity and a lack of openness specific to Muslims. They were open to the world, and vice versa, and some believe that their organization based on waqf provided the model of the university endowment in Oxford (Makdisi, 1981; Gaudiosi, 1988). Hawza in Iran has perpetuated the original scholastic tradition, by accepting the Greek philosophical heritage and the pedagogy of paideia, as demonstrated by Michael Fischer’s (1980) and Roy Mottahedeh’s (1985) impressive studies.[10] In India, at the end of the nineteenth century, madrasas opened up, albeit in a critical and reactionary manner, to Western thoughts (Metcalf, 1982), while in Najaf, in the 1970s, Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, the great theorist of Islamic economics, was not indifferent to the socialist way of thinking, something for which he was often criticized (Mallat, 1993: 142; Walbridge, 2001: 136–137). Madrasas are faced with the social, cultural, religious, and educational pluralism that characterizes contemporary Muslim societies. This interaction is not devoid of difficulties and occasionally degenerates into conflict, if only because of

the need for the reciprocal distinction that both systems suppose. Religious or secular radicalism is often the price to pay for this interaction. We do not see this in ecumenical terms. By definition, this interaction involves the antagonism and passion transmitted by difference, the competition for resources or access to power, and increasingly, proximity as religious teaching becomes more bureaucratic and rational. And paradoxically, madrasas, as a framework for teaching, end up by contributing in their own way to a certain secularization: by legitimizing the need for universal education, even for girls or for various ethnic or sectarian minorities; by competing against, complementing and offering synergies with state schools; by adjusting to a constant play between educational supply and demand; and by ‘nationalizing’ themselves and validating the established state framework.

The latter point is of particular interest. On the one hand, madrasas increasingly exist within a national space that bends them into compliance with public policy or ideology. These policies and ideologies in turn help affirm a national form of Islam. The identification of the Islamic Republic of Iran with Shiism and the transformation of Qom into a major holy city are an extreme example of this. Nevertheless, in Afghanistan, Shia madrasas also aspire to making the country a new magnet for Islamic teaching, comparable to Qom or Najaf. And in China, madrasas have appropriated the benefits of Communism, particularly in terms of the emancipation of women, and are in turn ‘nationalizing’ themselves.

On the other hand, madrasas continue to perpetuate the transnational dimension of the umma and to look abroad for models (Noor et al., 2008: 17–18). The al-Azhar in Cairo is legendary, in a positive sense in most Sunni countries, particularly in Southeast Asia, or in a negative sense, by dint of the contestation it inspires, as in Iran (Zaman, 2007: 251–252).

The ambivalent relationship between Shia madrasas in Afghanistan and Iran is also very telling with respect to the interaction between the nation state and the transnational dimension. The creative tension between Islamic teaching and state schools is compounded by tension stemming from the simultaneous desire to move beyond national borders and to reinforce them.

Contrary to what state authorities and some intellectuals contend, the transnational dimension does not necessarily preclude the nation and its state and it can contribute to state formation (Bayart, 2007). Obviously, the synergy between one and the other gives rise to numerous conflicts that in turn help turn madrasas into spaces of secularization.

Madrasa are a meeting place between the holders of state power and other members of civil society, particularly benefactors working to establish and run schools. The two can cooperate, but they can also be in conflict. This is not to say that managers and students of madrasas are particularly active in the political and electoral arena or in social organizations, if the Iranian example is anything to go by. But the status and financing of Islamic education informs a critical debate between the respective roles and responsibilities of state and madrasa, and the virtues of the market and the private sector. The question of schools, including madrasas, cannot be dissociated from the public debate on political economy, and beyond that, globalization. At the same time, madrasas, which are built on confidence—confidence of families vis-à-vis an institution deemed pious and not-for-profit, confidence of the state vis-à-vis an apolitical institution that is helping rebuild the nation's moral fiber in the face of the communist peril and secular materialism—are today faced with the vital need for accountability, not only in the face of the government, from which they must gain recognition and whose regulations must be respected, but also vis-à-vis students, who need to be able to use their education in the job market and who become users—or rather consumers—by virtue of the fact that they pay school fees. In other words the issue of madrasa is related to the concept of the moral economy in the sense it refers to the issue of legitimacy and social justice, their representation, the 'deep emotions' they raise, and their materialization (Thompson, 1963: chapter 3<nowiki>; 1993: 336ff). In fact, by using the concept of the moral economy of the madrasa, we would like to emphasize not only the 'moral' dimension of the economic practices, but also the economic dimension of cultural and religious practices. Here, Islamic education appears to be the ground of interaction between moral and political economy.</nowiki>

Given the prevailing polemical view of madrasas, it may appear surrealistic and naive to emphasize the interaction and complementary nature, albeit rooted in conflict at times, between madrasa and state schooling. Both these

systems now rely on each other, in some countries at least, and this interdependence is an opportunity as much as a constraint. It will appear even more surprising that we see in madrasa the possibility of ‘emerging from the minority,’ whether it be for women, ethnic or sectarian minorities, people from rural milieus or underprivileged families; and, from the perspective of the umma and each of the countries that make it up, a way of maintaining rank on the international stage by emphasizing its respectability and identity in the name of the legitimate and universal quest for knowledge.

However, post-revolutionary France has already shown us how outrageously religious teaching, the chief goal of which was to turn the republicans’ own cognitive arms against themselves, ended up by secularizing the very Catholic western provinces, and particularly Brittany (Lagrée, 1992). Comparisons have their limits. But this detour through history and religious sociology allows us to reintroduce the notion of duration. However diverse the social phenomena represented by madrasa, teaching, including Islamic teaching, is now a critical issue in political, social and theological debate in Muslim societies. Now that madrasas are part of mass education in countries where access to knowledge has become a vital need for families, offering a key to the world, they find themselves outside the strict religious and clerical boundaries, at the very heart of public life.

[1] It is by no means underestimating the importance of some rare exceptions such as the one during the Mamluk rule (1250–1517) in Egypt where religious education was never exclusively for the elite but was open to all—including women and the ‘common people.’ See Berkey (1992b).

[2] Jonathan Berkey describes the transmission of religious knowledge as a highly personal process, one dependent on the relationships between individual scholars and students. The great variety of institutional structures, he argues, supported educational efforts without ever becoming essential to them.

[3] We do not know when this mosque was built, but this place is closely associated to Sheikh Mortada Ansari, Ayatollah Khomeini’s most influential

mentor, who was born in Iran and buried in Najaf (about 1799–1864). He was also the first marja to develop the theory of Zeynabieh, see Momen (1985: 311).

[4] According to Jamal Malik, darasa, the root of the word madrasa, refers to an institution supporting Muslim scholastic philosophy and law (2008: 4–5, 49). This is a common idea among specialists of India.

[5] For an erudite development on educational institutions in Islam, see George Makdisi (1981).

[6] This period change is strikingly attested by the stance taken by one of the most brilliant scholars, Nikki Keddie, who, although very cautious, actually thought in the 1970s that religious institutions were rooted in the past of Islam and had little future as such, especially in the field of education in the Middle East (1978: 7). On a different note and analysing Islamic education, Dale F. Eickelman recalls the extent to which historians and sociologists have tended to take at face value the ideological claim in Islam of the fixed nature of religious knowledge (1978: 490).

[7] For instance and referring to Ibn Khaldoun, Dale F. Eickelman underscores that the role of memory was stressed more in Morocco than elsewhere in the Islamic Middle East (1978: 490).

[8] United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision Population Database. <http://esa.un.org/unpp> (accessed 10 January 2010).

[9] UNESCO. <http://stats.uis.unesco.org> (accessed 10 January 2010).

[10] Jonathan Berkey (2003: chapter 21) argues that much that we take as characteristic of Islam is in fact the product of the medieval period.

** 2. The rise of new madrasas and the decline of tribal leadership within the Federal Administrated Tribal Area (FATA), Pakistan

So Yamane

In 1996, in a Pakistani village known as ‘T’ within the Federal Administrated Tribal Area (FATA), around fifty Arabs, who wanted to control the area, suddenly entered the village and fought against the tribals who did not want the Arabs to control them. The Arabs were able to enter the area because some tribal youngsters let them in; these Arabs were fighting the internal war in Afghanistan with the Taliban and were looking for a place to hide. As the Arabs entered, they shot at the gate of the tribal chief’s residence killing some tribe members. The angry tribal chief ordered the entire tribe to fight the Arabs. As a result of the severe gunfight, the tribal members succeeded in killing some of the Arabs and got rid of them. According to the tribal chief, since then, neither the Arabs nor the Taliban have attempted to enter this area.

Twelve years later, in the spring of 2008, bombs fell on the jirga meeting in FATA, causing numerous casualties. It is said that those who opposed the traditional tribal system carried out this attack.

According to the tribal chief, the situation in the tribal area has now become unstable. The tribal leadership that had been traditionally held by the elders has been transformed into a newly-emerging religious leadership, and the new leaders are being trained at the newly-established madrasas in the area.

It is common knowledge that the ethnic majority of the Taliban is Pashtun: ‘The tribals of the area are known to be ethnically and ideologically linked to the Taliban and Pashtuns, and South Waziristan—with nearly three hundred kilometres of border with Afghanistan—has become the hub of the Al-Qaeda and Taliban elements’ (Nuri, 2005: 130).[11] Most of these soldiers, who had voluntarily joined, were once Afghani refugees belonging to the madrasas in

Pakistan. They were treated as guests by the local traditional society where the traditional tribal code of life—Pashtunwali—has been in effect. However, some of the mullahs and madrasa students opposed the traditional leadership. The above-mentioned cases are examples of such opposition.

The authority of the tribal leaders in FATA has been challenged by the mullas and the students of the newly-established madrasas in two ways. First, the students are not necessarily Pashtun, and they neglect the Pashtun tribal code and seniority system. Second, the students challenge the tribal peoples' understanding of the coexistence of Islam and the tribal code by introducing politicized Islam.

In this chapter, we intend to describe in details this dual challenge to the tribal elders' authority, by analyzing the context in which the madrasas have developed. Of particular relevance is the fact that the primary explanation encompasses political and financial aspects throughout the Soviet Union presence in Afghanistan that was reinforced by migratory dimension and not essentially linked to the resurgence of a trend of political Islam polarized by holy war. This analysis provides therefore a historical background that help us understand that madrasas are not only tools for mobilizing people but also give an opportunity to renew the political or religious hierarchies.[12]

*** Pashtun society and FATA

In 1947, Pakistan—a country that comprises different ethnic groups possessing their own language and cultural heritage, such as Panjabis, Pashtuns, Sindhis, Balochis, and Kashmiris—became an independent country. Currently, 96.28 per cent of the total population is Muslim (Population Census of Pakistan, 1998),[13] 75 per cent of the Pakistani Muslims belong to the Sunni sect,[14] 20 per cent are Shiite and the rest are mostly Hindus and Christians.

The North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), which borders Afghanistan, was created by British India under the FCR, Frontier Crimes Regulations, in 1901.

Pashtun is the major ethnic group in this border area. The 2,500 kilometer-long border, called the ‘Durand Line,’ between Pakistan and Afghanistan was set by the British and Afghanistan in 1893. This border was inherited by Pakistan; but when Pakistan became independent, after the ‘Pakistan Movement’, in 1947, the Pashtuns led a movement of their own toward autonomy, and this was called the ‘Pashtunistan Movement,’ which was supported by the government of Afghanistan. This movement rendered Pakistan’s situation extremely fragile. After several political discussions, some of the Pashtuns agreed with the ideology of the Pakistan Movement and decided to join Pakistan, while at the same time remaining autonomous in their tribal area that then became the ‘Federal Administrated Tribal Area’ (FATA; see Figure 2.1). It consists of seven Agencies and six Frontier Regions whose total population amounts to 3,138,000 with a low level of literacy of 29.5 per cent for males and 3 per cent for females (Zaman, 2005: 73).

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-5.jpg][Figure 2.1 Map of FATA]]

According to Article 1 of the Constitution of Pakistan, FATA is treated as a separate entity, and following Article 247, it is administrated by the Federal Government.[15] Therefore, although FATA is part of the NWFP, it is outside its executive authority, and the Governor of the NWFP, in his capacity as an Agent to the President, is in charge of regulating its affairs (Hussain, 2005: 5). Thus, we can say that there exist institutional differences between FATA and the NWFP. For instance, ‘a man who committed murder in broad daylight and in front of witnesses in the Tribal Areas would not be tried according to the laws of the land prevalent in the rest of the British Indian Empire. He would be tried according to the laws of Pashtunwali—the customary and traditional Code of the Pashtuns—as interpreted by the jirga’ (Ahmed, 1986: 135). During the British rule in India, the British left the tribal structure largely untouched (Ahmed, 1986: 135). Tribal structures were allowed to function uninterrupted and undisturbed; their tribal ‘purity’ was thus ensured (Ahmed, 1986: 131).[16] This is why the tribal areas have been called ‘the last free place on earth’ (Ahmed, 1986: 135). Every foreigner who intends to enter this area has to first obtain permission from the government of Pakistan. Even Pakistani governmental officials, including army personnel, cannot move freely inside the area. In contrast, the Pashtuns living in the NWFP can move about freely, as it is regarded as part of

‘Pashtunistan.’ For example, the Salarzai tribe lives across the border in Afghanistan. Until a few decades ago, kinsmen on both sides of the border followed the tradition of cross-migration every few years and used to live in the homes and lands of their cousins across the border. This was of course a tactic that was used to give the Pashtuns the opportunity to take advantage of the economic conditions that prevailed in the valley on the other side of the border (Hussain, 2005: 4).

Although the people in FATA and those living in South Afghanistan seem to share the same history, there are a few differences between them, especially in their degree of acceptance of modernization. People in South Afghanistan, especially those in the towns, enjoyed modern education until the 1970s, since King Amanullah had started to modernize the country in the early 1920s. In contrast, people in FATA were unable to obtain regular education in their area for a long time. This was due to the fact that since the area had been uninterrupted and undisturbed, in other words, since it was rather backward in terms of the social infrastructure, no modern educational system was introduced for a long time. Another difference between these two areas lies in the fact that the presence of Sufi Saints in South Afghanistan was traditionally accepted. This acceptance was demonstrated by the political system, which did not prevent the Sufi leaders from becoming political leaders.

The Pashtun society consists of clans and sub-clans comprising families and maliks, and the tribal chiefs head each sub-clan. The Pashtun are known for their tribal code of life, called Pashtunwali. This is not a written document, but a code of ethics understood by all Pashtun. Pashtunwali consists of the basic concepts of social life, including honor (nang), reciprocity (badal), compromise (nanawatay), hospitality (milmastiya), jirga (council of elders), and so on. In addition, the Pashtuns have a loosely collected set of old customs called riwaj. In the FATA area, both Pashtunwali and riwaj are the basic codes of life.

The federal civil bureaucrats or political agents represent the government in the area. They act as magistrates and are in charge of appointing the

members of the jirga. For instance, in South Waziristan of FATA, the political agent is called the ‘King of Waziristan’ (de Waziristan badshah) (Ahmed, 1986: 75). Nevertheless, in spite of his vast authority, he has to pay respect to the tribal code of life. The political agent controls the tribes and keeps a close eye on any particular ebb and flow of the tribal customs. He acts as an executive, a judge, and a revenue collector.[17] He does not often interfere with the domestic affairs of the tribes as these are regulated by a rigid, unwritten code of conduct or ‘code of honor’ (Khan, 2005: 89). Many important matters are decided according to the riwaj in contradistinction with the Islamic law or even the official law implemented by the government (Teepu, 2008: 101). In case of any problem in the society, the jirga examines the issue and presents the verdict before the magistrate. Then the magistrate examines the proceedings of the jirga to determine whether justice has been done as per the riwaj (Hussain, 2005: 5). The jirga, especially the tribal Wulasi Jirga, is strictly dominated by the local riwaj, and the Islamic law is rarely applied during its proceedings.[18] If the verdict seems to be correct, the magistrate announces it as a decision of the court; if not, he remands the case back to the jirga to ensure the correct and just application of the prevalent riwaj and holds a new jirga again. This traditional system of jirga has been paid utmost respect by the government. The government gives the jirga members the title of maliks or lungis and awards them regular allowances called mawajib (Hussain, 2005: 7). The maliks, or tribal chiefs, are paid a hereditary allowance of mawajib, whereas the lungis are given an allowance for services rendered at a particular time, and the allowance ends with the death of the individual concerned (Hussain, 2005: 7). Therefore, the status and authority of the elders of the Pashtun society was protected not only by their tradition but also by the government.[19]

According to Asta Olesen, although it may be argued that Pashtunwali formed the ideological basis of the Afghan state from 1747 to the mid-nineteenth century, this does not imply that Pashtunwali constituted the main ideological frame of reference of the ethnically heterogeneous and divided society (Olesen, 1995: 36). Anthropologists have often pointed out the coexistence of both Islam and the traditional codes of conduct in Pashtun life. Ahmed Akbar goes further and

underlines the fact that Islam and Pashtunness coalesce and overlap (Ahmed, 1986: 90). Although there is often a divergence or clash between the riwaj and Islamic law, in some matters, for example, in the case of giving a share of inheritance to the daughter, the edicts of the Islamic law are avoided under the riwaj (Teepu, 2008: 101). In fact, not only was Islam part of the legal and moral basis of society, mediated through and coexisting with the tribal code and local customs, but also, for many centuries, all learning and education in the country took place within an exclusively religious framework.

In the traditional hierarchy, both the elder jirga members and the religious leaders had their own authority. Islamic religious groups that provide leadership in society may be broadly divided into three categories. The first two are defined by their function in society and the third by its genealogical links with holy ancestors. The first, the ulama, is defined by religious and legal learning and includes a mufti, qazi, maulana, and maulvi. The second category, defined by esoteric, sometimes unorthodox practices, includes groups like the Sufis. The third category includes the sharif or sayyid (descended from the Prophet), and the mian (descended from holy men) (Ahmed, 1986: 85). However, one more religious authority—the mullah who appeared at the local level—is, according to Ahmed Akbar, difficult to list in these three categories because these individuals neither possess the sanad (certificate of religious education) nor are they a part of the descendents of holy men, and they can hardly be classified as sufis or esoteric men. This is why, when, in 1997, Mullah Muhammad Umar—the pioneer and leader of the Taliban movement—was nominated as ‘Amir al-Muminin’ or the Caliph of Umma, he was hesitant to accept the title since he was unable to complete his religious education and had no sanad when he joined the jihad of the anti-Soviet war. In other words, although an unclassified category, the mullas enjoy authority in the local areas and exert their influence especially upon the young people, both religiously and politically. In our discussion, we will further elaborate on this special context through which the Taliban, led by Mullah Umar, was able transcend the local border areas and seize power in Afghanistan.

*** Madrasas in FATA and its surrounding regions

The formation of madrasas underwent three phases in South Asia. The first phase is the era in which traditional Quranic studies were imparted at privately supervised madrasas.[20] Such madrasas have been seen in many places including the FATA, notably because young girls are allowed to learn only the basic religious principles and practices (Zaman, 2005: 8). The second phase started in the mid-nineteenth century. The modern educational system was introduced in traditional madrasas as part of the Islamic revival movement brought about by the ulama of the Deobandi seminary. Under the British government, Indian Muslims who were influenced by European science and knowledge sought a new manner of Islamic education. Some established modernized colleges; Sar Saiyid Ahmad Khan, who established Aligarh College in 1875, emphasized the merits of modern science. Others established madrasas where traditional Islamic education was imparted through the modernized system. The Dar al-Ulum madrasa in Deoband is the most famous one; it was established by Muhammad Qasim Nanotavi and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi in the village of Deoband, north of Delhi, in 1867 (Metcalf, 1982).

In the mid-nineteenth century, the British government requisitioned the awqaf, on which many madrasas have been financially dependent. Madrasas were then unable to obtain financial assistance from the awqaf without the permission of the British government. This meant that the religious institutions came under the control of non-Muslims. The Deobandi did not comply; they gathered financial assistance from not only the rich Muslims merchants but also common people. This gave the madrasas the ability to maintain their economic and religious independence. At the same time, the Dar al-Ulum madrasa started systematic education not only in Islamic studies but also in modern Western thought and philosophy (Khalid, 2002: 100). They created a council in the administration of madrasas, most of which were run by individuals. After several decades, the Deobandi seminary became popular in South Asia where the ulama and students were deeply involved in the anti-British political movement in the early twentieth century. Some Deobandi scholars started Islamic revival movements such as Jamiat al-Ulama-i Hind, which was established mainly by the Deobandi ulama in 1919, Tablighi Jamaat—a missionary movement started by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas in 1926—or Maulvi Ashraf Ali Thanavi’s religious education for Muslim

women through the book of Bihishti Zewar. In 1924, a Jamiat al-Ulama-i Hind committee was established outside Peshawar (Haroon, 2008: 51), and in order to focus on the national political objectives in the NWFP, it announced the establishment of the Jamiat al-Ulama-i Sarhad.

The main discussion in such madrasas was focused on the issue of jihad and its necessity at that time. Members of the Faraizi Movement in Bengal and those of the Deobandi seminary insisted that India was a dar al-harb (land of the war) and that the Indian Muslims should continue to wage jihad against non-believers, as Sayyid Ahmad BareIvi had done against both the Sikhs and the British in the mid-nineteenth century. In 1922, Abul Kalam Azad, a Deobandi scholar and politician of the Indian National Congress, declared a fatwa against the Indian Muslims, stating that India was no more dar al-Islam (land of Islam) but dar al-harb under the British control and that the Muslims should migrate to Afghanistan, which was dar al-Islam and had maintained its independence even after three wars against the British. In view of this order, more than 20,000 Indian Muslims attempted to migrate from India to Afghanistan; however, the Afghani government refused to allow their entry into the country. This incident implies that the Indian Muslims considered Afghanistan a dar al-Islam during the British rule. Muhammad Iqbal, the national poet of Pakistan, too praised the independence of Afghanistan in his poetry as the ‘Thought of Afghani Mihrab Gul.’ Moreover, others, like the members of the Bareli seminary, Sar Saiyid Ahmad Khan’s Aligarh Movement, and other Deobandis, claimed that as far as Muslims could complete their religious duties in a given land, as was the case in India, that land should be considered dar al-Islam. Later on, these independent madrasas made a great contribution to the independence movement by training many Muslim leaders at the beginning of the twentieth century.[21] Jamiat al-Ulama-i Hind played a major role in the independence movement and supported the Indian National Congress, whose assertion was opposed to the independence of Pakistan. In the mid-1940s, most of the Deobandi ulama in the NWFP were pro-Congress, but by 1947, the majority of NWFP ulama supported the Muslim League idea of Pakistan because of the long-standing relations between the Jamiat al-Ulama-i Sarhad and Muslim League (Haroon, 2008: 58). Finally, Jamiat al-Ulama-i Hind was divided into two groups—one stayed in India and the other established Jamiat al-Ulama-i Pakistan after the independence of Pakistan. Even after the independence of Pakistan, some

ulama studied in Deoband in India, but they were small in number. Despite making use of the Deobandi name, madrasas in NWFP developed according to the local politics after 1947. In the same manner, in FATA, madrasas began to be established, but most of them were under the control of the local authority—the maliks.

The third phase was the establishment of madrasas for political purposes as bases for mujahidin in the 1980s, which involved the training of religious students who would join the jihad movement of the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan. Most of the newly-established madrasas in both NWFP and FATA were called ‘Dar al-Ulum,’ which was also the name given to the traditional local madrasas since they also imparted Deobandi-style education. However, the nature of these madrasas differed from the traditional ones as they were established for political purposes and had close links with the Ministry of Interior, the NWFP government, Intelligence, or religious parties that had close links with the government. During the anti-Soviet war, the local maliks were quite satisfied with the support that they got from the western countries through the religious parties and intelligence of Pakistan. However, soon after the anti-Soviet war, with the cessation of support from other countries and the lack of attention paid to the area, social disorder, influenced by the internal war in Afghanistan, became a serious problem in FATA. The maliks were helpless in this situation and were rapidly losing their local authority. Soon, the ulama of the newly-established madrasas, instead of the maliks, began to emerge in the society.

*** Towards the increased institutionalization of madrasas

According to an economic survey published in 2001, 1,065,277 students in Pakistan attended 6,761 madrasas, while 6,089,139 students attended 36,096 private schools, and 16,213,438 students attended 199,676 public schools.[22] For public education, the government of Pakistan invested 34,872 million rupees—2.2 per cent of the GNP—in 1993–4 and 72,237 million rupees—2.3 per cent of the GNP—in 2000–1. It is worth mentioning that the registered madrasas received public subsidies from the government. In this manner, they were granted 137,000 million rupees in 1988–9 and 1,654,000 million rupees in 2001–2.

Following independence, fresh attempts were made to reorganize the madrasas, which were the legacy of the ancient religious education system, into five main organizations or boards:

1 The Wafaq al-Madaris al-Arabiya was established in Multan in 1959 and belongs to the Hanafi Deobandi seminary.

2 The Tanzim al-Madaris (ahl-i Sunna) was established in Lahore in 1960 and belongs to the Hanafi Barelvi seminary. All the madrasas that belong to this organization maintain a close relationship with each other and hold examinations at the same time.

3 The Wafaq al-Madaris al-Salafiya was established in Faisalabad in 1955 and belongs to the Sunni Ahl-e Hadith (Salafiya) seminary.

4 The Wafaq al-Madaris al-Shia, established in Lahore in 1959, belongs to Shii Islam.

5 The Rabita al-Madaris al-Islamiya was established in 1983 at Mansura, and its headquarters of Jamaat-i Islami are situated in Lahore. This organization does not belong to any particular branch of the religion.

The restructuring or institutionalizing of the madrasas through the establishment of these five madrasa boards seemed to be a real achievement after the establishment of the foundation of the Deobandi School in the mid-nineteenth century. It might also be considered a challenge to the modern educational system in Pakistan toward which the madrasas reacted.[23]

For instance the Rabita al-Madaris al-Islamiya consists of 531 madrasas in total. Although its headquarters are located at Mansura in

Lahore, its biggest madrasas are located in the NWFP and in Sind. Around 36,364 male and 13,190 female students attend these madrasas, while it has 1,754 male and 954 female teachers.[24] While around 27 per cent of the students are women, they compose 35 per cent of the teachers.[25]

It is also worth mentioning that the Rabita al-Madaris al-Islamiya has three committees: Majlis-i Umumi (General Body), Majlis-i Mushawat (Advisory Committee), and Majlis-i Intizamiya (Administrative Committee). The General Body consists of every representative of each madrasa and elects the members of the Advisory Committee, which covers the general activities of the organizations and elects the members of the Administrative Committee every three years. This committee can change the regulations of the organizations if two-thirds of all the members agree. The general meeting of the committee is held once a year. The Administrative Committee operates according to the regulations and discipline dictated by the Advisory Committee.

This organization set the educational curriculum in 1986. In this curriculum, subjects (Quranic study, Hadith Study, Arabic metaphysics and grammar, biography of the Prophet, logics, Islamic jurisprudence, history, etc.) and the titles and authors of textbooks are introduced. These subjects are added up into the number of marks that will be given during the examination. At the same time, some schools such as the Iqra Rozatul Itfal Trust (IRIT) combine government curricula or the elite private curriculum with elements of the formal Islamic-education curriculum (Fair 2008: 8). Algebra, Urdu, and English classes were also added to the curriculum. Urdu class is set according to the public school program, and all the Urdu textbooks are the same as those used in public schools.

On an official note, the government of Pakistan issued the educational policy in 1979, which explicitly recommended, for the first time, the establishment of religious institutions where modern subjects could be taught together with specializations in religious disciplines; the President of Pakistan, Zia al-Haq, appointed a Madrasa Reform Commission (Rahman and Bukhari, 2005: 65). Although the physical structure of the madrasas and their organization have been modernized, the basic curriculum of subjects remains more or less the

same despite the discussions with regard to the question of whether or not to add new subjects to the current curriculum. For example, this question arises in the necessity of education in science and English, as well as in the history of Islam and the philosophy of Shah Waliullah (Hashmi, 1987: 201). The need to teach history, geography, politics, Urdu and Persian poetry of Muhammad Iqbal or Akbar Alahabadi (Kakakhel, 1987: 207) and the utilization of computers for Quranic studies were all important issues discussed among madrasas' authorities ('Ali, 1987: 240).

*** Financial support for madrasas

Madrasas have various resources, of which the benefits from religious taxes such as zakat and ushr are a part. According to a report by the Ministry of Education in 1988, 935 madrasas (67.4 per cent) received a total of 25,591,200 rupees that year. Although under specific conditions, the government of Pakistan has also been providing financial support to madrasas. For example, in the years between 1985 and 1988, the government created a three-year project of education in English, social studies, and Pakistani studies for madrasas and contributed a sum of 1.9 million rupees to the project. In the same manner, six years later, it created a three-year project (1994 to 1997) for education in English, social studies, and Pakistani studies only for the ninth and tenth grades, which cost 19.95 million rupees. In order to promote the progress of education at madrasas at an intermediate level, the government provided each of the fifty major madrasas with computers and printers from 2000 to 2003, which cost 30.45 million rupees. In fact, it seems that this policy was generalized to other madrasas up to 2004 (Khalid, 2002: 184).

The establishment of the five madrasa boards, as mentioned earlier, was also an opportunity to settle financial difficulties as a result of the establishment of a strong accounts section. According to the Institute of Policy Studies in Islamabad,[26] the reason for the increase in the number of madrasas even after the anti-Soviet war and 11 September is that the newly established madrasas could easily obtain financial support through the section account.

The issue of the provision of subsidies from foreign countries had divided the mujahidin groups during the war. For instance those groups based mainly in the NWFP or FATA received huge support from Western and Middle Eastern countries through Pakistan. For instance, Abud al-Rasul Saiyaf, the head of Ittihad-i Islami bara-i Azadi-i Afghanistan, received financial support only from Middle Eastern countries, on the other hand, Yunus Khalis, the head of Hizb-i Islami, never rejected 'non-Islamic' Western aid through Pakistan, even though he insisted that financial and material support should only come from Islamic countries (Rais, 1994: 185–186). Gulbuddin Hekmatiyar, the head of another sect of Hizb-i Islami, who had separated from the Khalis' party, was openly supported by the government of Pakistan. As we said before, having a great concern about the 'Pashtunistan' issue, Pakistan wanted Hekmatiyar to be an influential pro-Pakistan Pashtun leader in Afghanistan. Jamiat-i Islami's Burhanuddin Rabbani was also not opposed to Western financial and military support via Pakistan but was not willing to get political influence from other countries. He argued that Afghanistan's political independence should be the major concern (Rais, 1994: 182–183).

One should not underestimate the support of the Tribal Areas, which assumed a new and extremely important role during the war where the entire regional administration and organization was subservient to its objectives (Khan, 2005: 38–39). The mujahidin, who were living in FATA and the NWFP, welcomed all financial support. This maintained the financial balance between the traditional leaders and newcomers. The newcomers in the mujahidin began to play a more effective role in the Tribal Areas with the help of outside financial and military support. After the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, some of the members of the mujahidin went back to their own homes, but some remained at the madrasas. Besides, some ex-mujahidin members in the Tribal Areas even became bandits during the internal war in Afghanistan with the help of their weapons. The internal war and brigandage brought about disorder in the Tribal Areas, and the tribal chiefs were unable to restore effective order in their areas. When the Taliban, instead of the local chiefs, established safe conditions in the border areas between Balochistan and Southern Afghanistan in November 1994, merchants at the bazaar in Quetta were asked if they supported the Taliban. The answer was, without any surprise, positive, since the promise of reopening a safe trade route to Central Asia was at stake. All the more, since the members of the Taliban in that area were considered innocent students with pure minds, they were

financially and emotionally supported through notable traders' donations to the madrasas.

*** Political background of the establishment of new madrasas

In 1973, a pro-Soviet government was established by a coup in Afghanistan. Western countries worried about the situation in Afghanistan and began to train anti-government elements in the country. The students, who had established Islamic study groups and prepared the anti-Soviet movement at Kabul University, escaped arrest by the Afghanistan government and moved to Pakistan. Most of them settled in Peshawar City, the capital of NWFP and the seat of the Pakistani government, led by Dhu al-Fiqar 'Ali Bhutto, who helped them. Nasrullah Khan Babur, who was the governor of NWFP at that time, helped and trained these Afghan refugees. The Western countries offered humanitarian assistance to those Afghani refugees through the Pakistani government, and part of the assistance was used to build madrasas not only in the border areas with Afghanistan but also everywhere else in the country.

For markedly different reasons, Western as well as Muslim countries subsidized the development of madrasas. The anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan was called a 'proxy war of the Cold War.' The issue of 'proxy' had been given a very precise meaning and no foreign country was officially allowed to send weapons and soldiers to Afghanistan. One should keep in mind that the real reason that many Afghans lived in refugee camps and participated in the jihad movement totally differed between Western and jihadist views of the proxy war. The latter was part of the elite crowd and very often either belonged to Kabul University, such as Gulbuddin Hekmatiyar and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, or were under the influence of Arab professors as some of them had been studying in Egypt, such as Abu al-Saiyaf and Burhanuddin Rabbani. While the leaders were concerned about the establishment of an Islamic state, which was entirely supported by Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia, the Afghani refugees in camps fought against the Soviet Union because the social revolution initiated under the influence of the Soviet Union had broken the entire traditional social hierarchy based on the feudal system. The jihad movement was even stronger since the new system was advantageous to neither the landowners nor the farmers. Moreover, the sufi

leaders and landowners participated in the movement, and both led the resistance. Since jihad was the top priority, everything else was subservient to its objectives; the administration and local resources were geared towards serving jihad (Khan, 2008: 41).

The presence of Afghani refugees became one of Pakistan’s major foreign policy planks (Ahmed, 1986: 166). In addition, the government led by Zia al-Haq promoted Islamization, including the introduction of zakat. The Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) and Jamaat-i Islami (JI)—the largest and most organized religious party in Pakistan, founded by the Islamic thinker and journalist Abu al-Ala Maududi in 1941—functioned as a gateway for international support from both Western and Arab countries.[27] Once the US began pouring in billions of dollars in order to finance the Afghani jihad movement, Pakistan became a hotbed of religious extremism and their main recruits were the youth, who very often come from deprived socioeconomic backgrounds with no prospect of finding jobs in a stagnant economy (Jalal, 2008: 274–275).

**** Newly developed madrasas

At the time of independence, only 245 madrasas were recognized in West Pakistan.[28] In 1960, this number increased to 464 and many of the madrasas were located in the countryside and rural areas (Jalal, 2008: 277).[29] A great increase in the number of madrasas occurred in the 1980s when the number reached 2,056—including 1,012 in Punjab, 426 in NWFP, 318 in Sindh, 1,135 in Balochistan, 29 in Azad Kashmir, 27 in Islamabad, and 47 in Gilgit-Baltistan formerly known as the Northern Areas. Although there is no data concerning the number of madrasas in FATA until 2000, it has been reported that two-thirds of the madrasas in Balochistan are located in FATA.[30] A very interesting report, using data from the 1998 Census, states that the top ten districts, in terms of the madrasa market share, are all situated in the Pashto-speaking belt along the Pakistan–Afghanistan border in Baluchistan and the NWFP.[31]

The number of madrasas doubled from 1988 to 2000 at each level, but the increase rate differed according to the madrasa board to which each

madrasa belonged. For instance, the number of madrasas in Wafaq al-Madaris al-Arabiya (Hanafi Deobandi) increased from 840 in 1988 to 1,947 in 2000—an increase of 232 per cent. On the other hand, the madrasas of Tanzim al-Madaris Ahl-i Sunna (Hanafi Bareli) increased from 363 to 717 (198 per cent), while the madrasas of Wafaq al-Madaris Salafiya (Ahl-i Hadith) increased from 161 to 310 (193 per cent); Wafaq al-Madaris Shia increased from 47 to 297 (632 per cent), and the rest increased from 96 to 2,653. The average increase in madrasas in Pakistan during that period was from 2,861 to 6,761 (236 per cent).[32] In this report, the increase in the number of Shia madrasas is remarkable.[33] It may be explained by the fact that in the democratic era, organizations could establish new madrasas more easily than during the marshal law regime (Khalid, 2002: 176).

This remarkable growth in madrasas was closely related to the external and internal politics of Pakistan. During the Cold War period, especially during the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan, Pakistani president Zia al-Haq supported the establishment of madrasas in the context of Islamization.[34]

*** The transformation of tribal leadership in FATA

Many Afghani refugees studied at the madrasas established in Pakistan in the 1970s and 1980s, of which 45 per cent belonged to the Deobandi or Hanafi Schools and were accordingly registered by the Ministry of Interior. [35]

At first, the madrasas and mosques in FATA were built by the local chiefs such as maliks (landowners), were located near their residences and were thus easily accessible to the children.[36] This indicated that the tribal leaders had considerable influence on religious affairs as well as traditional leadership as owners of religious institutions. However, the newly established madrasas for refugees and mujahidin in FATA were built and administrated by others who had no relationship whatsoever with the local authorities, for instance, governmental authorities or foreign NGOs. Therefore, these new madrasas were built far away from the local chiefs' residences. The local chiefs' administration became ineffective under the

sudden and huge increase in the population, as a result of the influx of millions of refugees from Afghanistan and fighters from other countries (Khan, 2008: 42).

During the anti-Soviet war, more than three million refugees from Afghanistan entered Pakistan. Those refugees were not only Pashtuns living in neighboring FATA, but also Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, and Arabs. As a result, the students and teachers of the newly established madrasas mingled with students and professors coming from outside the area from places such as Punjab and were deeply influenced by politicized Islam, which emphasized jihad.[37]

Therefore the Pashtun community in both NWFP and Balochistan, which traditionally welcomed many Pashtuns from Afghanistan, also received many foreigners. If the former refugees—most of whom belonged to their ethnic groups—were Pashtun, they were treated like relatives; yet, the aliens were very different from them. Many of these new students from outside were not necessarily familiar with the Pashtun tribal code. These young students, or mullas, came either from other parts of Pakistan such as Punjab or Kashmir, including university students, or from Afghanistan, Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, or Southeast Asian countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia. They, being influenced by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, felt the need for jihad and entered the FATA to join the holy war. After entering the area, they stayed at the newly established madrasas in the refugee camps or in the tribal, rural Pashtun area and studied the newly introduced concept of jihad. Many of them were then recruited as the most favorite by the Student Front, which belonged to traditionalist parties, notably that of Muhammadi.[38] These parties claimed that Islam and justice were not a radical political ideology and that these ideologies together helped unify all these different groups (Rubin, 1995: 140).[39]

However, as these students gradually accomplished their goals and studies and became mullas, they started addressing political issues and justifying the war against the Soviet in the light of Islam. These students went on to become the mujahidin—fighters of a holy war—and alternatively, we may say that the fighters in the battlefield were students of the madrasas. In the name of humanitarian assistance, the ulama and mullas gained

access to the huge financial and military help and also received political support from the government of NWFP, the government of Pakistan (Afghan Desk), religious parties such as Jamaat-i Islami or Jamiat al-Ulama-i Islami, and the international community. These mujahidin stayed at madrasas or mosques in FATA near the border of Afghanistan. They began to take leadership not only of the madrasas but also of the community itself.[40]

As mentioned previously, these madrasas and their students were first welcomed by the local community, who respected and supported them, because they were fellow Muslims (Ahmed, 1986:66). However, gradually, the antagonism between the local ulama, supported by the tribal authorities and the mujahidin, came out into the open and the two parties began condemning each other. The former claimed that the mujahidin ignored the value of Islam and disrespected the traditional society and tribal code, and the latter reciprocated and criticized the private and traditional madrasas for depriving the students of the acquisition of political consciousness and modern education.

In other words, as the young mujahidins strengthened their political power, they became critical of the conservative elders of the society. The newcomers and new generations, influenced by their theological education at the madrasas, discovered that the traditional tribal code and Islam were not fully congruent. For the tribal chief, it seemed that there were two kinds of madrasas and students; some were simple and good madrasas where poor children studied the Quran, and the others were madrasas established during and after the war for private benefits and were therefore considered illegal and far from being Islamic. As one might understand, despite the fact that there is no major contradiction between Pashtunness and Muslimness, this conviction has not prevented clashes between the traditional and religious authorities. The history of this area is full of such conflicts, which divided the population whenever there was such a clash.[41]

However, the consequences of the last conflict seemed to have brought about a dramatic change in the organization of the leaderships and the tribal authorities in this area, which led to the rise of the Taliban. Since the refugees became a major part of the total population of FATA,[42] the mullas became the legitimate authorities who could solicit aid for the refugees;

thus, they effectively emerged as new leaders in this area, and the local administration was helpless, especially because the newly emerged leaders (mullas) were heavily armed (Khan, 2008: 45).

The following interview with a tribesman can help understand this situation better. ‘After the so-called religious people arrived in the tribal territories, the routine of the once-peaceful common people of FATA was destabilized. On routes leading to the remote, inaccessible areas of the tribal territory, the Taliban, who are not appreciated by the local people, have established many unauthorized barriers. The people face tremendous difficulties while traveling within the tribal areas, passing through valleys and encountering barriers along roads. They are stopped, spoliated, terrorized, and insulted. Their belongings are checked and the Taliban hold innocent people for long periods under habeas corpus, against their will. The Taliban have never been a threat per se, but the militants are disrupting the organization of everyday life, which is no longer possible for the local tribal people. If Pashtunwali is facing difficulties that’s because the Taliban do not care about the jirga decisions, and they would rather destabilize the old traditional system in order to gain a vested interest in society. The Taliban do not bother to shed the blood of the innocent in order to create terror and intimidate the local community. At present, the jirga is disrupted and manipulated by Taliban militants established in the areas.’[43]

It seems obvious that what was at stake at that time was the elders’ authority and responsibility towards maintaining order in the society. Routine matters were tackled by those who were unaware of the traditional code of conduct of the tribal people. In fact, some local scholars were assassinated because they dared to openly preach against suicide bombing attacks, stating that these were non-Islamic. Some of the newly emerged mullas were not only against the modern school system but were also against the education of girls, and they intended to paralyze the social system.

*** The Taliban as a challenge to the tribal order

After the withdrawal of the Soviet army, there was hope for peace and rehabilitation in Afghanistan, but instead, the situation became worse. Despite the establishment of the mujahidin's government in 1992, the rivalry among different political and ethnic groups caused fierce fighting and brought about an era of civil war. The political vacuum led to an escalation in robbery and murder. During the summer of 1994, some of the students at madrasas near and around Quetta and Kandahar planned to establish a group for the recovery and restoration of law and order in the southern part of Afghanistan. It is said that this initiative was supported, if not planned, by the Pakistani ISI. On 1 November 1994, Pakistan's Interior Minister Nasrullah Khan Babur declared that the Pakistani government would reopen the road from Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan, to Turkmenistan through the southern area of Afghanistan.[44] The government of Pakistan sent thirty-one trucks full of goods to Turkmenistan, calling them 'a gift for the people of Central Asia.' Soon after their departure, however, these trucks were assaulted at the border town of Spin Bordak in the Kandahar Province of Afghanistan.

Around twenty Afghani students who were put up at madrasas in Pakistan—mainly based in Balochistan and NWFP—roused themselves to prompt action and rescued the aid trucks on 4 November. They executed the bandits in conformity with the Sharia Law. Then the Taliban gathered the weapons from the people and succeeded in demilitarizing the area. They instructed the bandits to obey them by saying that if they surrendered, they would only have to forfeit their arms; however, if they did not do so, the Taliban would impose a 'punishment' on them. During the first stage of their reign, the Taliban did not utilize their weapons very often, which is why the locals welcomed them as 'pure-hearted students.' Furthermore, the merchants supported the Taliban in order to get rid of the bandits who were often responsible for causing trouble in their business. They made donations to the madrasas in the name of Islam because the Taliban eliminated the bandits and assured them of secure trade with Central Asia.

In 1995, many students of the Dar al-Ulum madrasa, located at the corner of a refugee camp in a suburb of Peshawar city, arrived in Afghanistan to join the Taliban movement.[45] Many buses full of students crossed the bother to join the jihad movement. The movement was officially treated as a self-repatriation of refugees. A printed fatwa, signed by more than thirty local

mullahs, claimed, endorsed by Quranic verses, that the fight going on inside Afghanistan was against Islam and that the robbers should be executed. The fatwa was the sign of a new movement led by the newly-emerged mullahs who were distinguishable from the traditional leadership. When the Taliban captured the capital city of Kabul in September 1996, they established their own government in Afghanistan and set up the shura, a consultation assembly, which was entirely composed of mullahs. They set up local shuras in major villages for administration. The Taliban's shura system exercised a great influence over the neighboring FATA area, and the tribal leaders in this area claimed that the newly-emerged mullahs and students did not pay any respect to the jirga's decisions, that is, the new mullahs' decisions were not based on the traditional riwaj, which had long dominated the jirga's decisions. They also criticized the mullahs for challenging the traditional authority and social equilibrium.

Although, in 1997, the Taliban controlled almost 90 per cent of Afghanistan, the situation changed dramatically after September 11, 2001. Towards the end of that year, and in the name of anti-terrorism, the Taliban regime was ousted by the US military and a new Afghani government was established. Pakistan's debt was waived and the state even obtained financial assistance for cooperating in the anti-terrorism war; the US provided Pakistan with $700 million for this purpose. When the Pakistani government conducted investigations on the madrasas and launched an anti-terrorism operation against the Taliban in the FATA area,[46] the Taliban retaliated to the attacks both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Strangely, the students of the newly established madrasas, especially in Pakistan, who had joined the Taliban's jihad movement, were now described as the 'local Taliban.' Despite the heavy pressure on and the attacks against the Taliban, private support for new madrasas and the Taliban is still pouring in. Pakistani army has been continuing a sweeping operation against the Taliban especially in the South Waziristan area where the base of Tahrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is located. In January 2010, a political agent of South Waziristan called a jirga of about 300 Mehsud tribal elders to hand over 378 wanted militants, including the leader of TTP, to the government. But tribal elders did not promise to do so as according to the elders the issue was so complicated that it may involve a large conflict.

*** Conclusion

In brief, the rise of the Taliban movement in FATA might be related, firstly, to the arrival of emigrants and refugees from other regions of Pakistan and from Afghanistan since the 1980s, and, secondly, to the importance of Western and Arab aid in support of the Jihad movement against the former-USSR. This context has revealed and amplified a double rupture between the Taliban movement and the traditional, tribal Pashtuns in the one hand, and moreover, emphasizes their autonomization on one hand, and between the Taliban movement and the traditional religious hierarchy, on the other. The Taliban Movement, far from being the affirmation of the Pashtun tribal fact in FATA, seems to find its origin in the destabilization of the tribal leadership, notably the Pashtun leadership, and in the reconfiguration of what being a Pashtun means. Therefore, it seems that what is at stake, through the development of madness, is hardly Muslimness or Pashtunness, but the flow of merchants and the balance of power in this new context left behind after the war.

[11] NATO accused the people of FATA of providing shelter and support to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda (Gul, 2008: 68). Shinwari (2008: 12) writes ‘Poverty, illiteracy, lack of resources and opportunities and exclusion from the mainstream political process are the factors that provide an ideal scenario for extremism and militancy to take roots in a society.’ Although there are some tribesmen who joined the Taliban (Gul, 2008: 76), we should note the situation of severe fighting between the Taliban and the local tribal leaders in FATA in 2008 and 2009.

[12] Studies on madrasas in Pakistan have focused on their politicization. Rahman discussed how the politicized ulama’s rejection of traditional education of madrasas brought about the existence of militants (Rahman 2008) and Candland refers to the US policy of pouring dollars into madrasas at the time of anti-Soviet war (Candland, 2008: 104). But these articles have not discussed the transformation of tribal leadership we are focusing on in this chapter.

[13] The total population of Pakistan (which includes East Pakistan) was 93.83 million in 1961. The census of 1998 is the last one we have had access to. Moreover, one should mention that a census was conducted in 1980, before the war against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan, and since 1998 there has been no compiled census. Of course this might help us to better understand the context in which madrasa was developing in Pakistan, as the field which as early as 1980 became a supporting battlefield to the war in Afghanistan.

[14] Sunni Muslims in Pakistan mostly follow the Hanafi School of law, but they belong to different seminaries. Some belong to Deobandi seminary and others to Bareli seminary. There are many Muslims in Pakistan who celebrate the anniversary of Sufi Saints at their tombs. Those Sufi Saints belonged to four major sufi orders: Chishtiya, Nakshbandiya, Suhrawardiya, and Qadriya.

[15] Following the establishment of FATA, and according to Article 246(b), another subdivision was set in its neighboring area, PATA, Provincial Administrated Tribal Areas.

[16] Before the independence of Pakistan, on July 30, 1947, Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah made it clear that ‘as regards the tribal areas … the government of Pakistan has no desire whatsoever to interfere in any way with the traditional independence of the tribal areas. On the contrary we feel that as a Muslim state we can always count on active support and sympathy of the tribes’ (Bangash, 2005: 48).

[17] This strong role of the Political Agent was set in Sections 40 and 44 of the Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR), introduced by the British in 1901 and inherited by the Pakistani government. There are some arguments about amendments to FCR, for instance, about the separation of the Political Agent’s judicial and political powers (Shinwari, 2008: 4).

[18] There are three levels of jirgas, that is to say, the local Maraka Jirga, the tribal Ulasi Jirga, and Grand National Assembly Loya Jirga.

[19] At the independence of Pakistan, there were almost two hundred maliks in FATA (Shinwari, 2008: 3).

[20] It is said that madrasa education in South Asia started just after the establishment of Muslim rule, in the era of Qutb al-Din Aibak, who governed Delhi and died in 1210. Sultan Shams al-Din Iltmish (d.1236) established his own madrasas and Muhammad Muiz al-Din Ghori established a madrasa in Ajmer, which is famous for the tomb of Sufi Saint Muin al-Din Chishti. In this way, the number of madrasas increased as Muslim governments developed. Since Sultan Abu al-Qasim Mahmud Ghaznavi (d.1030) belonged to the Shafi school of thought, the madrasas also belonged to this school; later, the Hanafi School of Law became popular in South Asia and this School of Law became dominant in this area. The names of madrasas in South Asia are Jamia, dar al-Ulum, and Madrasa Arabiya (Ahmad 1986: 21). The curriculum of these madrasas has been edited by Allama Nizam al-Din Shahid Sahalvi (d.1747 / 1161H.); it was written in Arabic and consists of an eight- or nine-year course. Since the majority of Sunni Islam in Pakistan belongs to the Hanafi school of thought, it is traditionally led by ulama. These ulama are linked mostly to the Bareli branch of the Hanafi school, which accepted the Sufi network. The ulama regarded this Sufism as truly representative of Islam and the people have followed the sayings of pirs, the spiritual leaders of Sufism. Ulama teach Quranic studies at madrasas in a traditional system of individual tutoring. Most Muslims in Pakistan like to visit dargah or mazar, the tomb of a Sufi Saint, and enjoy the music of qawwali, the sayings of the Saint. People have learned religious teachings either through the qawwali or at madrasas. Olesen considers the madrasa students in rural Afghanistan, pointing out that those students come from poor, landless families with no other prospects in life than to become mullas. This can be seen in Pakistan as well. Thus, this kind of traditional Quranic education has been most active at madrasas in Pakistan.

[21] One of the most famous madrasas of the late Mughal period is Farangi Mahal in Lucknow. Farangi Mahal is highly developed in the study of law, philosophy, and theology and has produced a large number of qazis, judges and muftis. In addition, this institute fixed the religious curriculum systematically, called ‘dars-i Nizami.’ In the same period, Madrasa

Khairabad, led by Fazl-e Haq Khairabadi and his son Abd al-Haq Khairabadi, was established in northern India, where many scholars appeared. Thus, the nineteenth century was a very important era for Islamic study in South Asia. In 1893, Nadwat al-Ulama was established in Kanpur, where classic literature was translated and published in order for the people to understand the heritage of Islamic culture of the past. This institution transferred to Lucknow in 1898, where madrasa Dar al-Ulum was built and both Islamic and English education began. In this way, modern education was brought to madrasas through the British governance of India. Later, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Deobandi madrasas began to issue fatwa for the purpose of emphasizing Islamic teachings, preaching against the governance by the British, or kafir. They stressed the non-cooperation movement against the British. Thus, the Deobandi madrasas sometimes caused the political movements as well. Some famous activists of the Pakistani independence movement belonged to the madrasas of this seminary.

[22] There are 36,096 private schools in Pakistan, which include 28,811 privately owned schools, 2,580 NGO schools, 1,134 trust-based schools, 746 foundation-based schools, and 2,825 others (Economic Survey of Pakistan 2000–2001).

[23] It is unknown what the literacy rate was in Pakistan at the time of its independence, but in 1981, the total literacy rate was 26.2 per cent, within which male literacy was 35.0 per cent and female literacy was 16.0 per cent. In the report from 1998, the literacy rate in FATA was only 17.4 per cent; the rate for males was 29.6 per cent, while the one for females was only 3 per cent (Population Census Report 1998). Such a low rate of literacy is highly disappointing, but even this small degree of literacy can be regarded as progress. When the British left the area and Pakistan became independent in 1947, there was not a single school, dispensary, electric bulb, or government post in the Mohmad Agency (Ahmed, 1986: 121). Among these Agencies and Frontier Regions, the region with the highest literacy is Peshawar, but the total literacy rate is 29.31 per cent, within which the male literacy rate is 52.76 per cent, while the female one is 5.26 per cent. In all of Pakistan the total literacy rate was 45 per cent in 1998: 56.5 per cent for males and 32.6 per cent for females. 72.6 per cent of males and 55.6 per cent of females in urban areas were literate, while 47.4 per cent of males and 20.8 per cent of females in rural areas were. The number of schools in FATA in the year

between 2001 and 2002 amounted to 3,184 primary schools (1,931 for boys and 1,253 for girls), 367 middle schools (272 for boys and 95 for girls), and 197 high schools (179 for boys and 18 for girls) (Zaman, 2005: 74). The figure of enrolment at primary schools in FATA for 2001–2002 was 284,264 in total, within which 208,842 were male and 75,422 were female pupils (Bureau of Statistics NWFP). The enrolment in middle and high schools was 41,495 (male 36,903 and female 4,592). School enrolment increased by only 1.3 per cent from 1999–2000 to 2001–2002 (Zaman, 2005: 76). Enrolment is still low, as the rate of students who drop out before completing primary school is still high. This rate in Pakistan between 1998 and 1999 was 16 per cent in total, 11 per cent in urban areas and 18 per cent in rural areas. The most common reason for which 44 per cent of students drop out of primary school is that the students do not want to continue school life—this is true for 41 per cent of students in urban areas and 45 per cent of those in rural areas. The second most common reason is that parents do not allow their children to go to school; this applies to 25 per cent in total, 21 per cent in urban areas and 27 per cent in rural areas (Pakistan Integrated Household Survey 1998–1999). From these figures, it is obvious that the literacy rate is lower in rural areas than in urban areas in Pakistan, and that FATA is a backward area when it comes to education. Zaman (2005: 76–78) quoted Zeba Mehsood's pointed problems on education in FATA, such as staffing positions, unavailability of infrastructure for water, lack of latrines, boundary walls, and residential facilities, which amount to a problem in the quality of education.

[24] A report given by Jamaat-i Islami, Pakistan. This report shows that the organization has 113 madrasas in Punjab, where 8,627 male and 4,399 female students are taught by 387 male and 205 female teachers. The 183 madrasas in NWFP have 9,047 male and 3,504 female students, 431 male and 330 female teachers; the 124 madrasas in Sindh have 11,556 male and 2,703 female students, 584 male and 297 female teachers; the 21 madrasas in Balochistan have 1,355 male and 77 female students, 70 male and 15 female teachers; the 14 madrasas in FATA have 1,360 male and 77 female students, 113 male and 12 female teachers; the 4 madrasas in FANA have 175 male and 113 female students, 6 male and 4 female teachers; the 64 madrasas in Azad and Jammu Kashmir have 3,744 male and 1,702 female students, 143 male and 77 female teachers; and the 8 madrasas in Islamabad have 500 male and 413 female students, 20 male and 14 female teachers.

[25] Jamaat-i Islami has its own education office, namely Nizamat-i Islami, to favorably influence young people toward Jamaat-i Islami ideology. It oversees some 2,000 private schools throughout Pakistan and Jamaat-i Islami members may privately establish schools beyond the purview of the Nizamat-i Islami (Fair, 2009: 21).

[26] IPS was established by Jamaat-i Islami in the mid-1970s.

[27] 'Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the Jamaat-i Islami found the opportunity to make a decisive breakthrough in Pakistani politics. By throwing its weight behind the Afghan resistance movement, the organization catapulted itself onto center stage in the American-backed jihad orchestrated with the help of the Pakistani army and its intelligence services' (Jalal, 2008: 274).

[28] 121 in Punjab, 59 in NWFP, 21 in Sindh, 28 in Balochistan, 4 in Azad Kashmir, and 12 in the Northern Areas. Jalal gives another source, as there were only 137 madrasas in 1947. She adds, 'the number rose from 210 in 1950 to 563 in 1971, and during the early 1980s, 893 larger and smaller Pakistani madrasas were in existence, with a total of 3,186 teachers and 32,384 regular students' (Jalal, 2008: 277).

[29] 195 madrasas in Punjab, 87 in NWFP, 87 in Sindh, 70 in Balochistan, 8 in Azad Kashmir, 1 in Islamabad, and 16 in the Northern Areas.

[30] The report shows that the number of boys increased by 211 per cent and girls by 161 per cent. According to the records there are 300 madrasas. Among these, 72 were 'daura-i hadith,' 71 'moquf aliya,' 120 tahtati, 20 'hifz' or 'tajviz,' and 17 'nazira.' The report shows that the number of madrasa students almost doubled between 1988 and 2000: 'nazira' students rose from 296,090 (1988) to 611,165 (2000); 'hifz' madrasa students went from 91,224 to 204,230; 'tajviz' or 'qurat' from 45,719 to 83,015; 'tahtati' from 59,775 to 112,308; 'moquf aliya' from 12,363 to 29,714; and 'daura-i hadith,'

from 12,845 to 24,845. On average, the number of madrasa students increased by a factor of 204 per cent over a period of twelve years (Khalid, 2002: 170).

[31] The report is based on the investigation by Andrabi team. These districts are Lasbela, Kharan, Kalta, Kohlu, Loralai, Kila Abdullah, Khob, Pishin, Hangu, Zarak, Lower Dir, Shangla, Buner and Chitral. With the exception of Lasbela, in Balochistan abutting Karachi, all of these high-intensity madrasa districts are along the Afghanistan–Pakistan border. But Andrabi team could not evaluate the important areas of FATA because census data were not available for FATA (Fair, 2009: 36).

[32] Khalid explains that in the census of the year 2000, the number of madrasas belonging to any organization was 4,108 and the number of others was 2,701 (Khalid, 2002: 176).

[33] We do not know whether the increase in the number of Shia madrasas in Pakistan was influenced by the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran.

[34] Jalal also shows that once Pakistan was awash in greenbacks, maulvis rushed to fill the demand for recruits by offering their students for jihad. Since they are a means of establishing political dominance, self-proclaimed religious parties of all sectarian denominations, as well as the Jamaat-i Islami, set up madrasas in places where they saw opportunity to extend their influence (Jalal, 2008: 277).

[35] Most of the financial support was given to the madrasas of the Deobandi school, which upset the sectarian balance. State patronage of Deobandi imams in government-run mosques and the rise of the sect’s militias spurred both the Barelvis and the Ahl-i Hadith into action, and the contempt for secular and rational forms of knowledge transformed madrasas into factories for turning out a lethal kind of religious bigotry (Jalal, 2008: 276–277).

[36] Not only in FATA, but also in other rural areas of Pakistan, the distance between the children's residence and the madrasa has been a problem. In a 1966 report on education in FATA, the distances between the two middle schools or high schools are given as follows: 4 miles in Frontier Region Kohat, 5 miles in Malakand, 40 miles in Dir District, 5 miles in Kurram Agency, 8 miles in South Waziristan, 20 miles in Dera Isma'il Khan, 6 miles in Waziristan (Barelvi, 1980: 218–219).

[37] The concept of jihad was theoretically discussed in Urdu language by Maududi. Maududi justified the right of jihad in his book Al-Jihad fial Islam (Jihad in Islam) in 1930 in order to protect Muslims from the criticism of non-Muslims who said that Islam was related only to violence.

[38] Nabi Muhammadi, a famous Sufi in Southern Afghanistan, led the political party called the Islamic Front of Afghanistan.

[39] Rubin adds an example of one journalist as follows: 'If a reporter asks a Talib what kind of rule he wants in the future, he will answer "Islamic," because that is the only word he knows for the rule of law Afghanistan so sadly lacks. One might also note that Southern Pashtun tribes represented by the Taliban had little if any representation in the leadership of the parties that were involved in the negotiations. Few Qandaharis had attended the modern state educational system, and they were consequently absent from the principal political elites of the mujahidin, the Communists, and even the old regime' (Rubin, 1995: 140).

[40] According to the report of NGO, CAMP (Community Appraisal & Motivation Program) of 2008, in a response to the multiple choice question 'Law and Order in tribal areas can better maintained through … ', 44.7 per cent of respondents favored the Islamic law, while 36.2 per cent believed that jirga can effectively maintain the law and order situation in FATA (Shinwari, 2008: 59).

[41] For instance, in South Waziristan. In the late 1960s, a mulla who migrated from the neighboring Bannu District built a beautiful mosque and a

complex of schools and dormitories and began to grow powerful in local politics. A rivalry sprang up between the tribal leaders; both mulla and tribal leaders began to accuse one another, regarding each other as kafir. They even used the word jihad to refer to the tribal fight. At last, the mulla was arrested. Thus, the fact that religious and tribal codes complement each other does not prevent competition and conflict among tribal leaders and religious authorities (Ahmed, 1986: 77–82).

[42] For example, according to Ahmed (1986: 174), about 50,000 refugees were said to be living in South Waziristan Agency. Of these, about 20,000 are officially registered and are thereby entitled to standard measures of official aid. Out of a total population of 300,000 tribesmen, some 50,000 are ‘outsiders.’ A proportion of 1:6 of such outsiders in any total population is a high one to feed and support. The problem is more acute in North Waziristan Agency, where the number of officially registered refugees is almost 120,000 (making the refugee-to-local ratio 1: 2).

[43] Interview with a tribesman.

[44] Babur was the governor of NWFP in the 1970s. He played an important role in supporting Afghan mujahidin based in NWFP. When the Taliban emerged, he said in an interview that ‘the Taliban are my children.’

[45] In the 1990s several Jamiat al-Ulama-i Islami / Deobandi madrasas became notorious for education Taliban leaders and supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan politically, financially, and even militarily (Fair, 2009: 57).

[46] Education Sector Reform, which includes the reform project of madrasas, was launched by Musharraf’s government in January 2002. One of its major objectives was development of a more secular system to stave off the ever-mounting international pressure to counter Islamist extremism (Fair, 2009: 40).

** 3. Women’s empowerment and Iranian-style seminaries in Iran and Pakistan

Keiko Sakurai

Although an oft-quoted adage from the hadith states that ‘seeking knowledge is a duty of Muslim males and females,’ the access of Muslim women to education has historically been limited to the maktab (Quranic school) or private tutoring at home, and women have been excluded from attending Islamic seminaries[47] or theological colleges teaching Islamic science, though there were a few exceptional cases.[48] Therefore, female education has lagged far behind male education in Muslim societies such as Iran and Pakistan.

Ironically, the right of Muslim women to learn was officially acknowledged after the introduction of modern schooling, under the growing influence of the West. In Iran, Reza Shah, the founder of the Pahlavi dynasty, introduced state-controlled schooling in order to educate experts and bureaucrats who were loyal to the monarch. Under his reign, women were admitted to elementary and secondary schools, and for the first time in 1935, they were even allowed into institutes of higher learning (Menashri, 1992: 107–110). In Pakistan—a part of colonial India until India’s partition in 1947—a small number of private colleges offered education to Muslim girls, mostly from well-to-do families,[49] but Pakistan’s state-controlled education system has not contributed significantly to the improvement of women’s access to higher education.

In the process of the expansion of state-controlled schooling, the seminary system was marginalized and even stigmatized as out-of-date; however, the seminaries in both Iran and Pakistan, while remaining male-dominated institutions, continued their teaching activities. In Iran, where the majority of the population is Shia, the seminaries successfully evaded state intervention while claiming to be, after Najaf, the seat of higher learning and religious authority for the Shia. On the other hand, in Pakistan, where only about 15 per cent of the population is Shia (Momen, 1985: 282), the Shia seminaries could develop only to a limited extent, and they were obliged to send their

students to either Iran or Iraq for higher learning. This situation made Pakistani seminaries dependent on Iranian or Iraqi ones.

Half a century after female students were first admitted to institutes of higher learning under the reign of Reza Shah,[50] Khomeini decided to officially authorize the establishment of women's seminaries. Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was counted as one of the marja-i taqlid (source of emulation), or the highest clerical authority, when he overthrew the government and established a regime based on the principle of vilayat-i faqih (guardianship of the jurisprudent authority) in 1979. Armed with double legitimacies, he simultaneously represented the state and the clerical authority. He emphasized the role of women in society by stressing their three complementary roles of mother (madar), militant (mubariz), and Muslim (musalman) (Adelkhah, 1991: 42–43). It was under Khomeini that the first full-scale women's seminary, Jamiat al-Zahra, was established in 1984. In the 1990s, the concept of women's seminaries became increasingly popular and spread rapidly across Iran as well as to other countries, such as Pakistan. The development of this concept marked the beginning of a new chapter in the Shia history of Islamic studies on various levels.

In this chapter, I would like to analyze this new phenomenon of women's seminaries in order to gain a clear understanding of the extent to which the religious and traditional educational practices at the seminaries could, in fact, open the door to two major complementary innovations. First, through the establishment and development of women's seminaries, the Islamic Republic of Iran seemed to have developed a new seminary model that occasioned the transformation of the seminary—previously considered a stronghold of religious tradition—into a revolutionary agency whose primary role was to train propagandists (muballigh) of vilayat-i faqih both inside and outside the country, such as in Pakistan. As opposed to the men's seminary model, which had a long pre-revolutionary history and had enjoyed autonomy from the state for centuries, the Jamiat al-Zahra and other major women's seminaries in Qom were established under the initiative of the clerical leaders of the state, who were eager to mobilize the support of women in their political cause. This subordination of women's seminaries to the state and the 'étatisation of Islamic education' (Hefner and

Zaman, 2007: 13) facilitated the application of bureaucratic management and the adoption of modern school arrangements, such as common examinations, standard curricula, modules, semesters, an academic credit system in the seminaries, and a systematic acceptance of international students with special courses designed for non-Iranian students (tullab-i ghayr-i Irani).[51] These measures minimized the differences between the seminaries and the state-controlled university, reduced the burden of seminary studies, and popularized seminaries among young women as a new option for higher education.

The international students who graduated from the Qom seminaries are currently scattered all over the world, and many of them are actively engaged in activities focusing on education and propagation. Since the 1979 revolution, Pakistani students at the Qom seminaries have outnumbered those from other countries. The role of the Shia women's seminaries in Pakistan, mostly run by Pakistani female graduates from Iranian seminaries, will be subsequently examined in this chapter as an example of how the Iranian seminary model is implemented in places outside Iran, where the Shias are in a minority, in addition to how it functions in a different context.

Second, regardless of the initial reasons for the establishment of the women's seminaries, women's acquisition of the right to study at seminaries opened up new possibilities for them to change the balance of power, not only between men and women at the familial and societal level, and among clerical institutions, but also between women and the state in the context of the Islamic Republic of Iran, through becoming a strong social group.

The growing presence of seminary-educated women in the official religious sphere dominated by revolutionary discourses elevated the position of women in the largely male-dominated clerical hierocracy. Moreover, the active participation of seminary-educated women in the public religious sphere has made 'the women's issue' an important topic for clerical discussion and has initiated debates over Western versus Islamic ideas of women's empowerment.

*** Growth of the seminary

Before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, women had no official means of accessing seminary education, which was often limited to some maktab[52] for women, such as the Maktab-i Narjis in Mashhad;[53] the Maktab-i Tawhid,[54] and the women's section of the Dar al-Tabligh[55] in Qom; the Maktab-i Fatimah established in Isfahan[56] and the Maktab-i Zahra in Shiraz[57]—all of which were run privately, with little coordination. Although Ayatollah Qudsi and Hojjatoleslam Shari initiated some efforts towards the institutionalization of women's seminaries before the revolution, the full-scale institutionalization began only under Khomeini's sanction (hukm). Jamiat al-Zahra commenced in the academic year 1985\86, and all the existing maktabs in Qom were merged into it.[58]

Jamiat al-Zahra offers full-time study courses, ranging from secondary high school diplomas to doctorate degrees, for residential as well as non-residential students. Students can also avail of part-time study programs and correspondence courses. The Jamiat al-Zahra's Department of International Affairs manages courses for international students. Students are admitted on the basis of their performance in the entrance examinations, and all the courses, which are taught over two semesters, are modular. According to the 2006–7 brochure of Jamiat al-Zahra, the seminary has over 12,000 students studying in its various departments and over 16,000 students have graduated from Jamiat al-Zahra since its establishment (Jamiat al-Zahra, 2006–7: 5).

The establishment of Jamiat al-Zahra and its resounding popularity prompted the clerics to open other women's seminaries, thus boosting the number of women's seminaries in the 1990s. However, until the establishment of the Management Centre for Women's Seminaries (markaz-i mudiriyat-i hawzaha-i ilmiyya-i khaharan) in 1997, there were no statistics on women's seminaries available to the public. According to the data publicized in 1997, there were 11,255 students and 1,102 (685 female, 417 male) professors at 138 women's seminaries countrywide. In addition, Jamiat al-Zahra itself had approximately 8,000 students and 137 professors.[59] The number of students enrolled at the seminaries under the control of the Management Centre for Women's Seminaries rose to 20,000 in 2002. It

seems that Khorasan, the largest province before its division into three provinces, with 15 million pilgrims visiting it annually, enjoys a special status since it is not included in these statistics. In 2002, approximately 8,000 students were studying at 35 seminaries in Khorasan (Shirkhani, 2005: 100). The capacity of all these seminaries still appears to be insufficient, because in every academic year, the seminaries are unable to accept more than 10 per cent of the total applicants.[60]

Figure 3.1 shows the number of women's seminaries under the supervision of the Management Centre for Women's Seminaries by year of establishment. It also reveals that the real boom in women's seminaries began in the 1990s. We must bear in mind that along with the increase in the number of seminaries, female enrolment in government-run higher education institutes increased at a correspondingly rapid pace, to the extent that it exceeded male enrolment in 2003.[61]

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-6.jpg][Figure 3.1 The number and year of establishment of Shia women's seminaries in Iran]]

Source: adapted from http://www.whc.ir/forms/schoollist.php?start=6~267 accessed September 2007.

Unlike the men's seminary, with its long historical precedents, the women's seminary is a new phenomenon with few historical examples. The founders of women's seminaries are usually clerics who are eager to set up their own seminaries in their hometowns in order to reach out to the female population in the area. These seminaries often start out as small classes for imparting religious education and gradually expand in size and organizational scale. According to the directions for administrating women's seminaries issued in 2006, a seminary of the smallest scale comprises 15–30 students, one principal, one teacher, and one administrator.[62] This relative ease in opening women's seminaries provides opportunities for clerics living outside Qom to expand their range of social activities and consolidate their position in local settings.[63]

Women who wish to proceed to post-secondary education face many hurdles. The shortage of seats in universities faced by those with a strong desire to acquire a tertiary degree and the lack of public space to engage in meaningful activities are pressing matters for young women. Under such circumstances, seminaries are regarded not only as another option for those who fail to obtain a seat in a university—since the application of the university-style system to women's seminaries has made seminary education equivalent to secular higher education—but also as a suitable place for those who want to pursue religious knowledge, those who prefer to study in a 'segregated space,'[64] and those who prefer a more intimate study environment than a university.[65] In addition, the high demand for seminary graduates in the fields of education and religious propagation has provided a favorable environment for seminary expansion.

*** Towards an Iranian model of the seminary

Although seminaries were marginalized in the process of the expansion of state-controlled schooling that started in the 1920s, they survived as independent institutions falling outside state control and maintaining their own management and teaching style in Iran. In contrast to 'Western Europe's examination-giving and degree-granting universities' (Hefner and Zaman, 2007: 9), the seminary education system in Iran has been characterized by the lack of a defined curriculum or standardized examination and evaluation system. Neither were there any age restrictions on admission into these seminaries nor was the duration of study defined. Before the spread of universal primary education after the Second World War, boys who completed their basic studies at local quranic schools could enter the seminary in Qom at around 12–14 years of age. The first level of study in these seminaries is called 'preliminaries' (muqaddamat), comprising the study of grammar, rhetoric, and logic. The middle level of study is called 'texts' (sutuh), in which students learn theology, law, and jurisprudence, based on the textbooks.

Only a limited number of students are able to proceed to the third and most advanced level of education, called 'beyond texts' (dars-i

kharij), wherein they receive training to become a mujtahid, an expert who can issue an authoritative opinion on Islamic law (Mottahedeh, 1998:451–452). When a mentor is satisfied that his student has acquired the ability to issue a competent legal opinion, he issues an ijaza, a certificate authorizing the student as a mujtahid in his own name. Therefore, it is not the institution but an individual mujtahid who issues the certificate (Mottahedeh, 1998: 454).

The highest-ranking clerics were powerful enough to avoid state control and enjoy full independence owing to their independent financial resources, derived from religiously lawful funds such as the zakat, khums, waqf, and donations paid to their office to maintain seminaries and distribute scholarships. However, after Khomeini and his clerical followers seized power, they proclaimed that since an Islamic state had been established, the state would subsidize seminaries in order to meet the increase in the demand for religious experts who could engage in policy-making, deal with socio-economic problems in government organizations, and simultaneously propagate the official ideology of Islam (Shirkhani, 1384: 56–64). They also attempted to control seminary affairs by establishing the Management Council of the Qom Seminaries (shura-i mudiriyat-i hawza-i ilmiyya-i Qum) in 1980.[66] Although the council formulated various proposals for restructuring the management style of seminaries and their curriculum, it failed to occasion substantive changes in the face of resistance from the seminary heads who were circumspect about accepting grants from the state treasury in an effort to retain their autonomy (Shirkhani, 1384: 58).

In 1991, after the death of Khomeini, his successor, Khamenei, established the High Council of Seminaries[67] (shura-i ali-i hawza) and its executive organ, the Management Centre for Seminaries, which was another step towards the institutionalization and rationalization of seminary activities. Khamenei’s intention was to extend the state’s control over seminary affairs, which were still in the hands of senior clerics whose religious rank and prestige were much higher than his own. Backed by overwhelming resources, Khamenei’s policy was successful in unifying the management and applying the university-style education system to many seminaries; however, a few prestigious seminaries such as Ayatollah

Golpaygani’s seminary and the Fayziyya va dar al-Shifa seminary continue to remain independent.[68] Moreover, some mujtahids seem to have adopted a middle path and have accepted the centralized management and standardized selection, curriculum, and evaluation up to the intermediate level; however, they have reserved the right to manage the advanced courses and issue the ijaza in an individual’s name. This has resulted in a dual system of management, notably, in the men’s seminaries.

Unlike men’s seminaries, women’s seminaries—a relatively late phenomenon—have generally welcomed centralized management. In February 1997, the High Council of Seminaries established the Management Centre for Women’s Seminaries and gave it the mandate of developing the curriculum, conducting entrance examinations, and consolidating the unified program. Students are admitted in the seminaries on the basis of a combination of their scores in the common entrance examination, which consists of a written examination and an interview, and their high school grades (Markaz-i Mudiriyat-i Hawzaha-i Ilmiyya-i Khaharan, 1383–4\2004–5). The common entrance examination is conducted by the Management Centre for Women’s Seminaries, and applicants are required to take the examination on a particular date at the nearest examination centre, at least one of which is established in each province.[69] Currently, the courses offered at the women’s seminaries have been standardized, as shown in Figure 3.2.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-7.jpg][Figure 3.2 The women’s seminary system in Iran]]

Source: adapted from http://www.kowsarnoor.net//knn/html/moarefi/sakhtar.html accessed 25 April 2007.

The courses include a three-year preparatory course (daura-i pish hawzavi) for junior high school graduates and a one-year course for high school graduates. The four-year general course (daura-i umumi), divided into Levels 1 and 2, is equivalent to an undergraduate course. Level 3 covers the six areas: study of the Quran and

hadith, philosophy, tabligh, history, ethics, and Islamic education; this course is equivalent to a master course. After taking this master’s-level course, students can opt for another three-year special course (Level 4) and an even more advanced extra special course comprising ijtihad 1 (Level 5) and ijtihad 2 (Level 6).[70]

The academic year is divided into two semesters, each semester extending over 18 weeks. To pass examinations in each subject, a student has to obtain more than 12 points out of 20, and the acquisition of credits is a requirement for graduation.

An applicant to a seminary is required to have the following qualifications: be loyal to the vilayat-i faqih and the regime, a citizen of the Islamic Republic of Iran, not be ethically corrupt, and be physically and mentally healthy. Apart from these, there is an age restriction. Applicants for the three-year preparatory course should not be over 17 years and should have completed eight years of general education. Similarly, applicants for the one-year preparatory course need to have a higher secondary certificate and not be over 21 years. In the case of applicants who have finished junior college, the maximum age for application is 22; for those who wish to pursue a bachelor’s degree, it is 24; for the master’s degree, it is 26; and for the doctoral degree, it is 28. However, if the applicant is a wife or daughter of a martyr or someone wounded in war, or a sister of a martyr, the age restriction is extended by two years; for married women, it is extended by three years.

According to the application booklet of 2004, 16 seminaries offered a seven-year course to 266 local and 66 non-local applicants who had finished junior high school, while 163 seminaries offered a five-year course to 3,840 local and 394 non-local applicants with high school graduation certificates; the completion of these courses would be equivalent to attaining a bachelor’s degree. Judging from these numbers, the dormitories can accommodate only about 11 per cent of the total number of students, which presents a striking contrast to the men’s seminaries, where the students are mostly boarders. The number of applicants to women’s seminaries is twice the number of applicants to men’s seminaries, and in some provinces, the number of applicants may be as high as 15 times the number of seats. At present,

approximately 15 per cent of those who finish Level 2 (equivalent to a bachelor’s degree) proceed to Level 3, or the master’s degree course.[71]

Unlike men who, after a long period of study, assume a clerical role for a living, women are pressured to complete their studies in order to get married and have children. Therefore, a university-style system in which students can obtain a formal degree after the completion of each stage fits their needs. The formal degree also improves the employment prospects for women. Hence, it is not surprising that many of them work as religious teachers at various institutions, including schools, where such degrees are considered to be the basic requirement. Therefore, for graduates of women’s seminaries, a degree that certifies the completion of studies to a certain level is more valuable than the traditional ijaza that guarantees the transfer of knowledge from teacher to student.

**** Tabligh: Political mobilization

In the course of the revolutionary movement, the clerics and seminary students were also mobilized along with other social groups such as workers, students, and intellectuals. Although these experiences divided the clerics, they were convinced of the importance of gaining control over social affairs, including education. The Cultural Revolution that began in 1980 was considered as an opportunity to not only expel the anti-revolutionary elements from universities but also restructure the educational institutions in accordance with the official ideology, by controlling students and the contents of textbooks.

Ironically, it was easier for the new Republic to impose the official ideology on schools and universities than on the seminaries, since, at least in theory, the high-ranking clerics who taught at the seminaries were entitled to follow their own interpretations and could not be forced to follow Khomeini’s diktats.

This explains, in part, the necessity of the regime to create new institutions in order to support and disseminate Khomeini’s new Islamic ideology—the

philosophy of vilayat-i faqih. For example, Khomeini’s disciples, who were actively engaged in preaching during the revolution, established the Islamic Propagation Office of the Qom Seminaries (daftar-i tablighat-i hawza-i ilmiyya-i Qum) in 1979.[72] In 1984, in order to recruit qualified female preachers, this office opened a women’s section, offering a one-year short training program and a four-year long one.[73] In 1998, this branch, which was called the Women’s Education Centre (markaz-i amuzish-i khaharan), started a course entitled ‘Introduction to Islam and Its Propagation’ (daura-i maarif-i Islami va tabligh).[74] At present, the objectives of the Women’s Education Centre are to enhance women’s knowledge on Islam, and train preachers and dispatch them to various parts of the country. To this end, the centre’s activities include developing propagation programs and encouraging research on Islam. The basic requirements for applying to this centre are: the applicant should have completed high school graduation; should be a resident of Qom; should have passed the written and oral examination; and should have a husband, father, or brother who is a cleric. The motive of training women from clerical families is to dispatch them to places to propagate, along with their husband, father, or brother. The number of religious gatherings organized by the centre steadily increased from 314 in 1979 to 9,127 in 1992. On various occasions, the centre organizes and dispatches female preachers for religious gatherings at schools and other places.[75]

In 1991, in order to improve the training of experts in propagation, the Management Centre for the Qom Seminaries established an education centre specializing in propagation (markaz-i amuzishha-i takhassusi-i tabligh), thereby joining the domain of propagation activities (Shirkhani, 1384: 77). When the Management Centre for Women’s Seminaries was established in 1997, education, research, and propagation were identified as the major educational fields in women’s seminaries. Although the Shia seminaries have a historical presence of over a thousand years, many of the traditionally studied texts and curricula of these seminaries do not suit contemporary needs. Therefore, the women’s seminaries were specially equipped with 90 textbooks customized to suit modern requirements. Every year, approximately 3,000 students graduate from the seminaries, ready to carry out propagation activities; therefore, the development of an efficient curriculum for propagation is a very important issue. In addition to basic seminary studies, such as literature, the Quran,

Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), principles of jurisprudence (usul al-fiqh), ethics, theology (kalam), and logic (mantiq), seminaries teach subjects such as ‘introduction to the other religions,’ ‘the political system of Islam,’ ‘women in Islam,’ ‘introduction to Western culture,’ ‘Arabic literature,’ and ‘English communication skills.’[76]

Besides the propagation activities organized by the seminary and other organizations, the neighborhood religious gatherings held by traditional women at private homes or in the hoseynieh[77] provide a platform for seminary-graduated women. Traditionally, privately trained ‘freelance female preachers’ have led these gatherings (Adelkhah, 1991: 143–147; 1999a: chapter 3<nowiki>; Torab, 2002: 147). However, since the early 1990s, young seminary graduates with formal training have been gradually taking charge of such gatherings (Adelkhah, 1999a: 109; Kamalkhani, 1998: 63). These seminary graduates reconcile women’s non-formal religious activities with the</nowiki> official Islamic ideology dominated by male clerical authorities, thereby mobilizing women’s participation in the official cause (Torab, 2002: 153). In addition to this, a popular preacher can gain respect in society as well as economic independence (Adelkhah, 1999a: 109–110; Kamalkhani, 1998: 65); this provides women with a good incentive to pursue seminary education.

Besides Iranian women, international seminary students have become an important focus for propagation activities. Before the revolution, the Qom seminaries (hawza-i ilmiyya-i Qum) accepted students from across the border irrespective of nationality. However, after the Islamic revolution, the Qom seminaries became the stronghold for the ‘ export of the revolution’ and represented the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In this context, students from outside Iran were categorized as ‘non-Iranian students.’ Further, in order to facilitate the training program for potential non-Iranian preachers, the Council for Supervising Non-Iranian Seminary Students (shura-i sarparasti-i tullab-i ghayr-i Irani) was established in 1979.[78] This organization was reorganized as the International Centre for Islamic Studies (markaz-i jahani-i ulum-i Islami)[79] in 1986, and it played a prominent role in developing the

seminaries and their curricula, including Persian language training[80] for non-Iranian students, as well as recruiting students from various countries. Though the Qom seminaries are far from monolithic, the International Centre for Islamic Studies has been successful in representing the Qom seminaries in the international arena. The systematic acceptance of non-Iranian students has made these seminaries more accessible and has attracted many of these students. At these seminaries, non-Iranian students are first required to undergo intensive Persian language training, since most of the texts, including the writings of Khomeini and other Islamic revolutionary ideologues, are in Persian. This has inevitably enhanced the position of Persian as ‘the language of the revolution’[81] in the Qom seminaries and at other places, and has promoted the ‘Persianization’ of Shia sciences.[82]

Currently, the International Centre for Islamic Studies supervises more than thirty schools and affiliated educational, cultural, and research-oriented centers. Among them, Bint al-Huda in Qom is the first women’s seminary exclusively for non-Iranian female students. Bint al-Huda was established by a group of clerics under the leadership of Ayatollah Asefi in 1982, and it previously offered courses in Arabic mainly for students from Iraq and the Gulf region. However, it was placed under the supervision of the International Centre for Islamic Studies in 2000 (Markaz-i Jahani-i Ulum-i Islami, 2007: 251), following which it introduced courses in Persian to facilitate the acceptance of students from five continents. In 2006, 235 students of Bint al-Huda, most of them from Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, graduated from this seminary,[83] and in 2008, 550 students from 25 countries were engaged in studying various courses.[84]

Bint al-Huda offers a two-year post-high school course, undergraduate courses, and a master’s course. A doctoral course began in 2008. In order to obtain credibility abroad, the graduation certificate of Bint al-Huda is issued by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.[85] Even before graduation, the students of Bint al-Huda engage in propagation activities within as well as outside Iran.[86]

For example, one of the Pakistani students at Bint al-Huda visited the city of Sukkur in the Sindh province of Pakistan for 12 days during the month of Ramadan for propagation activities. According to her, Shia constitute 25 per

cent of the population in Sukkur; however, their knowledge of Shiism is minimal and most of them follow Sunni practices. She says that the men of Sukkur think that women have no right to education. In view of this situation, she organized many classroom-style meetings for the young women of Sukkur and discoursed on topics such as the religious connotations of fasting during the month of Ramadan, Islamic moral codes, and ideal Islamic women such as Khadija and Fatima Zahra.[87]

Another Pakistani student of Bint al-Huda talks about her experience of propagating in her native city of Skardu in Baltistan. Her father is a cleric who studied at Najaf for 14 years; he is a representative of Ayatollah Sistani and Ayatollah Khamenei at Skardu and has founded seminaries for men and women in Skardu.[88] According to the student, people in Skardu have immense respect for those who have studied in Iran. She gives an example: she was appointed to introduce the ‘feast of duty’ (Jashn-i taklif), a ceremony for girls who have reached puberty;[89] this ceremony was initiated and popularized in contemporary Iran. Girls who had recently reached the age of nine years were invited to the ceremony and were offered a headscarf and Khamenei’s canonical guide.[90]

To gain admission in Jamiat al-Zahra, foreign students are required to have completed high school and be aged between 17 and 25 years for residential students and 16 and 35 years for non-residential students; admissions are on the basis of the candidate’s documents and a personal interview. The applicants are required to complete a six-month Persian language program and a four-and-a-half- or five-month foundation studies program before enrolling for the two-year diploma or four-year bachelor’s course. A two-year master’s course is provided to those who are interested in advanced studies. Unmarried students can seek accommodation in the residential halls on campus; however, there are many non-Iranian students living in Qom with their husbands, who themselves study at one of the men’s seminaries in Qom.

According to the undersecretary of the international division of Jamiat al-Zahra, 900 non-Iranian students from 40 countries are currently enrolled in the institution.[91] Graduates from Jamiat al-Zahra have served as teachers

or principals in Islamic schools in their respective countries such as Pakistan, India, Bahrain, Lebanon, and Bangladesh.[92]

They belong to various backgrounds; for instance, a woman from Thailand, born in 1980, narrated her story as follows. Her family converted to Shiism when she was seven years old. She entered Jamiat al-Zahra in 1998 and studied there for a while. For the last five years, she has been teaching at al-Mahdi seminary (hawza-i ilmiyya al-mahdí) in Bangkok, which currently boasts 17 female students aged between 17 and 22 years; only local teachers are employed at this seminary, and some of them have graduated from Jamiat al-Zahra. When she was a student at Jamiat al-Zahra, she visited schools in towns such as Babol and Sari during the dah-i fajr-i inqilab,[93] where she, along with other foreign students, talked about the revolution and Islam—which was welcomed by the Iranians. These experiences helped her organize various propagation programs for the al-Mahdi seminary, in which both Shia and Sunni students participated.[94]

Maktab-i Narjis in Mashhad also accepts non-Iranian students. It was established in 1966 by Fatemeh Khamoushi; however, the Pahlavi regime grew suspicious about its activities and even forcibly closed it down for three years. After the revolution, Maktab-i Narjis was free to redouble its activities. Ever since, it has accepted 315 students from 21 countries and regions including Indonesia, Albania, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, the US, Myanmar, Pakistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, China, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Kashmir, Congo, Malaysia, India, and various Arab and African countries; of these, 230 students have already graduated. The students of Maktab-i Narjis have been dispatched to various places such as schools, offices, universities, and mosques for carrying out propagation activities. For example, in the 2003 academic year, a total of 2,635 gatherings were organized; these gatherings involved 97 preachers in propagation activities during the month of Ramadan. As many as 1,054 gatherings were organized by 56 students in the months of Muharram and Safar. A total of 680 students were sent to 18 places for youth recreation programs.[95] After graduation, most of the non-Iranian students return to their country of origin and engage in preaching and teaching in their community.[96]

**** Implementation of the Iranian model in Pakistan

Pakistan and Iran both have Shia populations; however, in contrast with Iran, where Shia form the majority, they constitute only 15 per cent of the population in Pakistan. The rest mostly comprise Sunnis, but they are divided into sub-sects, namely, Deobandi, Barlevi, Ahl al-Hadith, and Jamaat-i Islami. Each sect and sub-sect has its own madrasa board to recognize and supervise the madrasas belonging to its own sect.[97] Relations between the Islamic seminaries and the state-controlled schooling are different in both countries. In Iran, seminaries are regarded as institutes of tertiary education to which students may be admitted after the completion of compulsory education. However, in Pakistan, seminaries are called madrasas (dini madrasa, pl. dini madaris), and they range from institutes that offer primary- to tertiary-level education; moreover, most of the students attending these madrasas have never received any formal schooling.

At the time of India’s partition in 1947, there were 245 madrasas in Pakistan, of which 7 were Shia. By 1988, the total number of madrasas had risen to 2,861, of which 47 were Shia.[98] By 2002, the number of madrasas in Pakistan had increased to 9,880, with 419 of them belonging to Shia.[99] By 2004, there were 458 Shia madrasas, and 84 of these were for females (Kazmi, 2004; Durrrani, 2002). Pakistan is composed of diverse regions and various ethnicities (see Figure 3.3); the largest Shia population can be found in the Punjab province. In all, 58 per cent of the Shia madrasas for men and 65 per cent of those for women are located in the Punjab province, followed by the Sindh province and the Gilgit-Baltistan of Pakistan.[100]

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-8.jpg][Figure 3.3 Map of Pakistan’s provinces]]

The political situation surrounding the madrasas changed dramatically with the rise of Zia al-Haq, a general who seized power in 1977. Zia Islamized the legal system and implemented interest-free banking and the compulsory deduction of zakat from bank-account holders[101] in order to legitimatize his military rule. However, the Shia regarded Zia’s Islamization, which was based on the Sunni Hanafi school of law, as a threat to their beliefs. They

protested against Zia’s Islamization and eventually compelled Zia to exempt the Shia from the compulsory collection of zakat.[102] Zia also attempted to improve the economic conditions of madrasas so as to integrate them into formal schooling through financial assistance; to this end, he decided to distribute the collected zakat money to registered madrasas.[103]</sup> According to Islamic law, it is not permissible to use zakat money for funding madrasas; however, this sponsorship was justified because the majority of the students studying at madrasas came from families in need.[104] In addition, Zia tried to modernize madrasa education by granting formal recognition to the final examination certificates conferred by the madrasas.[105] In 1981, the highest of these certificates, issued by the board of madrasas, was recognized as being equivalent to a BA or MA degree in Islamic studies (Islamiyat) or Arabic, on the condition that the student should pass in the examination of these two subjects.[106]

Zia’s Islamization politicized a religious matter and aggravated sectarian divide and conflict. This situation was intensified by the establishment of a Shia theocratic regime in Iran and the 1979 invasion of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Due to these events, the Pakistani Shia were emboldened by the success of the anti-US Islamic revolution in Iran and politicized their identities (Nasr, 2000a: 175). On the other hand, the Zia government entered into an alliance with the US in support of the Sunni Afghans and mujahidin fighters who were fighting against Soviet troops in Afghanistan. These ongoing efforts to save their Afghan compatriots provided Pakistani Sunnis with a golden opportunity to augment their power in the religious and political arena.

Under these conditions, the madrasas, especially those of the Deobandi sub-sect, proliferated rapidly.[107] The Shia, whose positions were threatened by the Sunni-oriented Islamization, sought support and guidance from Iran. Many of the Pakistani and Afghani Shia youth, mostly Hazara[108] refugees living in Pakistan, were eager to study at Iranian seminaries; this led to an increase in the number of Pakistani and Afghani students in Qom.[109]

Shia youths in Pakistan usually begin their education at the local madrasa. The Shia madrasas in Pakistan are private organizations run by local clerics. Although the Shia Madrasa Board (Wafaq al-Madaris al-Shia, Pakistan) in

Lahore provides the curriculum, examination, and certification of the degree, other decisions, namely those regarding administration, recruitment, collection of alms, financial management, selection of textbooks, level of study, and criteria for the acceptance of students, are left to the discretion of each madrasa.

Shia students who wish to proceed to a higher level of study, which is beyond the capacity of Pakistani clerics, apply for the examination organized by the Shia Madrasa Board. Iranian delegates from the Qom seminaries visit Lahore to conduct interviews with students that have acquired the highest scores in the final examination and choose students on the basis of these interviews to admit into the seminaries at Qom. Many of the successful male students come to Qom along with their wives and daughters and let them study at Jamiat al-Zahra. Female students without a companion are offered rooms in the dormitory attached to the seminary.

The number of female Pakistani students at Jamiat al-Zahra and other Iranian seminaries increased rapidly in the early 1990s, and after returning home, many of them engaged in teaching at the women's madrasas. In many cases, the founders and principals of women's madrasas in Pakistan are male clerics; however, a substantial number of madrasa managers and teachers are graduates from women's madrasas.[110]

As shown in Figure 3.4, the number of madrasas increased in the 1990s, particularly in the mid-1990s; however, according to the directory of Shia madrasas in Pakistan, five women's madrasas were established in the 1980s. Among them, the Madrasa al-Zahra,[111] founded in 1988 by Husayn Najafi in Lahore, grew to be one of the best-organized madrasas in Pakistan. In the beginning, it was a small religious center offering basic teaching three days a week for boys and girls aged 10–12 years. Gradually, it developed into a madrasa with a hostel that could accommodate 12 students. In 1997, this center was named Madrasa al-Zahra, and it subsequently obtained a place within the premises of Jamiat al-Muntazar,[112] the best-organized Shia men's madrasa in Pakistan, in which the Shia Madrasa Board has its office. In 2006, Madrasa al-Zahra obtained a large plot for building classrooms and a hostel in the suburbs of Lahore.[113] Graduates from this madrasa contribute to promoting Islamic education for Shia girls in various parts of

Pakistan and have until today opened at least seven madrasas (Kazmi, 2004: 585–587). At present, this madrasa offers a five-year course focusing on religious subjects, and an applicant is required to have completed the tenth grade or preferably the twelfth grade from a government-controlled school.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-9.jpg

][Figure 3.4 The number and year of establishment of Shia women’s madrasas in Pakistan]]

Source: adapted from (Kazmi, 2004)

In addition to the Madrasa al-Zahra, the following three madrasas can be introduced as good examples of well-organized women’s madrasas in Pakistan. Jamia Zainabiyya is a women’s madrasa with a hostel that was established in Lahore in 1998 by Idara Minhaj al-Husayn.[114] It is a Shia organization founded by a Pakistani cleric, Muhammad Husayn Akbar, who studied at a Qom Seminary. His wife, who also studied at a Qom seminary, is the one who actually manages the daily classes at the madrasa. Applicants are required to have the minimum qualification of the completion of ten years of study, and students are accepted after a few months of provisional admission. Students have to appear for examinations twice a year, and one of these examinations is conducted by the Shia Madrasa Board. The madrasa is run using khums, zakat, and local donations.

Jamia Narjisiyya was established in Lahore in 1996. The founder of this madrasa was a Pakistani cleric who had studied at Qom for 12 years, and during that time, his wife studied at Jamiat al-Zahra. When he returned to Pakistan, he sold his property to purchase land in Lahore, where he built his home and a madrasa with a hostel. He has designated this madrasa as a waqf and runs it on khums and local donations.[115] Students receive free education at this madrasa, though they must provide for their own textbooks. The completion of the tenth grade is the basic qualification for applying to this madrasa, and students can study both religious and secular subjects in order to obtain a two-year higher secondary certificate, namely FA.[116] After the completion of four years of study,

students have to take an examination conducted by the Shia Madrasa Board to acquire a degree from the madrasa. Every year, 10–12 students graduate from this madrasa.

Sakina bint al-Husayn is a women's madrasa established in Lahore in 2000 by Ghulam Husayn Najafi, who completed his higher education at Najaf after six years of studying at Jamiat al-Muntazar. He returned to Pakistan in 1970, started teaching, and eventually became the vice president of Jamiat al-Muntazar. In addition to teaching, he wrote many books to counter the negative propaganda against the Shia. His daughter serves as a principal of Sakina bint al-Husayn. In April 2005, while travelling in a car along with his daughter,[117] Ghulam Husayn Najafi was shot dead in a sectarian attack that also injured his daughter.[118] However, his daughter, the principal of Sakina bint al- Husayn, coped resolutely with the tragedy, and her courage was widely admired and praised; this made the madrasa extremely popular among the Shia. This madrasa accepts students of all ages, regardless of their educational background, provided they show a strong will to study. The madrasa offers different courses for students in the primary, eighth grade, tenth grade, and BA levels.[119] Since the Shia are in a minority in Pakistan, this madrasa specially focuses on educating Shia women to defend Shiism and provides clear and logical answers on the differences between Shiism and other sects.[120] In order to achieve this goal, students are specially trained to perform the ceremony to mourn the martyrdom of the third Imam, Husayn, in which the tragedy of Karbala is described and re-enacted. The madrasa also provides short-term courses for not only school and college students but also housewives and working women, thus offering a learning opportunity to everybody. The madrasa is financed by local donations such as sadaqa, khums, zakat al-fitr, proceeds from the sale of skins of slaughtered animals, and monetary offerings to the twelfth Imam.[121]

Table 3.1 provides data regarding the four above-mentioned madrasas, collected by means of a questionnaire survey.[122] Except for a few local students, the majority of the students of the four madrasas reside in the respective madrasa hostels.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-10.jpg][Table 3.1 Four women’s madrasas in Lahore]]

Table 3.1 shows that the average level of students’ education before entering the madrasa is higher than the national average,[123] while Table 3.2 reveals that madrasa students have strong educational aspirations. Table 3.3 shows the breakdown of students hoping to serve as religious experts such as religious teachers, preachers, and zakiras,[124] or wishing to start their own madrasa. The reason why fewer students aspire to be zakiras as compared with those who wish to be preachers is partly because the role of a zakira has been traditionally assumed by women with no formal religious education and who have learnt the skill from other senior zakiras, thus leading to the development of views often bordering on heterodoxy (Abou Zahab: 128–129). Therefore, the conflict between the traditional and religiously trained zakiras has reduced the popularity of being a zakira as a career option among students. Several students stated that their goal was to be a scholar, which requires advanced education in Iran. Table 3.4 shows that a considerable number of students have at least one madrasa-educated person in their family or among their relatives.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-11.jpg][Table 3.2 What would you be doing had you not been admitted into the madrasa?]]

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-13.jpg][Table 3.3 What do you want to do after graduation? (Multiple choices permitted)]]

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-14.jpg][Table 3.4 Is there a madrasa graduate in your family and among your relatives?]]

In Pakistan, especially in the rural areas, women’s opportunities for social participation are extraordinarily limited; however, men can hardly find a pretext for restricting women from attending religious gatherings which provide them with a rare opportunity for socialization. Therefore, religious experts are in great demand in such areas, and women have very few culturally relevant options, such as being a preacher, a teacher, or a zakira. In addition, being a religious expert earns a person respect as well as economic benefits, since such women are remunerated for their religious services at women’s gatherings.

It is worth mentioning that these four madrasas are quite unlike the typical Pakistani madrasas. According to the statistics for 2000, 76 per cent of the female students enrolled at the madrasas of all sects attend primary-level courses (grades 1–5) and only 6.3 per cent of the female students pursue higher-level studies (grades 11–16) (Institute of Policy Studies, 2002: 31).

The founders’ educational experience at Qom or Najaf not only influences the educational arrangements of the madrasas but also reflects on the credentials and status of the madrasas they run. For this reason, some madrasas are adorned with pictures of high-ranking marjas such as Khomeini, Khamenei, Khui, or Sistani inside the building to signify their direct or indirect mentorship. However, under the growing influence of anti-Shia Wahhabism in Pakistan, these credentials can become a double-edged sword and inflame sectarianism. In view of this situation, in recent times, even the madrasa founders educated at Qom seminaries have begun to adopt a cautious attitude towards the vilayat-i faqih, so as to protect themselves from the accusation of being a subordinate of Iran or conspiring towards an Iran-inspired revolution.

*** Feminization of the seminary

The Islamic revolution transformed the ‘women’s issue’ (masala-i zanan) from being a ‘taboo subject’ to one that is widely discussed in the scholarly works of high-ranking clerics (Mir-Hosseini, 2002: 74). Since the Islamic Revolution, numerous articles and books on gender-based issues have been written from various viewpoints. These publications can be

roughly categorized into two groups: works written from an outsider's or secular perspective and those written from an insider's or participant's perspective, which regard Islam as the source of their legitimacy (Ahmadi, 2006: 34). However, this division is too vague to reflect the wide-ranging contemporary debates on gender-based issues in Iran, and it is beyond the scope of this chapter to deal with such details.

The dominant view on gender-based issues within the Qom seminaries is represented by the writings of influential clerics such as Morteza Motahhari, [125] Javadi-Amoli,[126] and Ebrahim Amini.[127] They justify the differences with regard to the rights and obligations of the sexes on the basis of innate gender differences. According to Motahhari, 'Islam does not believe in uniformity between men and women. But at the same time, it does not give preferential treatment to men in the matter of rights' (Mutahheri 1992: 65). Motahhari's assumptions have been widely used as the basis for arguments put forth by the clerical establishment. Khamenei shares this assumption: 'From the viewpoint of the value of human beings, Islam sees men and women as equal. However, from the viewpoint of assigned duties, this is not so. Islam believes in a special duty for women, which is not lighter than that for men' (Banki Purfard 2002: 24–25). On the basis of this assumption, he emphasizes that women should prioritize their roles of being a good wife and mother, even though scientific, economic, and political avenues are open to them (Banki Purfard, 2002: 30–31).

These clerical viewpoints on gender-based issues have been disseminated through various organizations associated with the Qom seminaries. The Islamic Propagation Office of the Qom Seminaries (daftar-i tablighat-i Islami-i Qum) advocates its view on gender-based issues through the Payam-i Zan (women's message), a journal seeking to explore an Islamic solution to women's issues (Mir-Hosseini, 1999: 84). In addition, the Office of Research and Study of Women's Issues (daftar-i mutaliat va tahqiqat-i zanan), which was established as an institution affiliated to the Management Centre of Women's Seminaries, publishes books and magazines.[128] The office has played an important role in advising the government on gender policies. The objective of the office is to present new methods of explicating the characteristics and rights of women from the following perspectives.

1 Equality of women and men in terms of humanity;

2 Equality of the ethical and social values of men and women;

3 Differences in God’s expectations from men and women;

4 Existence of innate differences between men and women;

5 The complementary nature of men and women at the familial and societal levels;

6 Existence of gender values;

7 Essential nature of the masculine and feminine gender roles and people’s obligation to protect the gender roles in that form;

8 Importance of maintaining a balance between rights and duties in a manner that assures the dignity and guarantees the equality of women and men.[129]

Even the clerics who admit the need for change in order to meet the requirements of contemporary society[130] dismiss the idea of gender equality as a Western concept and refute the feminists’ claim for equal rights. The head of the Office of the Research and Study of Women’s Issues, Zibainejad, insists that the ‘acceptance of the innate difference between men and women makes the Muslim view different from that of the feminists’ (Daftar-i Mutaliat va Tahqiqat-i Zanan, 2006: 11).

Although it is the male clerics who justify the differences regarding the sexes in Islamic law on the basis of innate gender differences, these viewpoints are widely accepted among the female seminary students at Jamiat al-Zahra, which is regarded as the stronghold of male-centric Islamic jurisprudence (Mir-Hosseini, 1999: 243).

As mentioned earlier, one of the primary motives for the establishment of women's seminaries was to educate women to become experts in propagation. Hence, female seminary graduates were trained to propagate the concept of women's rights within the Islamic context, as defined by the verses of the Quran and Islamic law, to a female audience. The aphorisms of Khomeini and Khamenei, which uphold the value of the family as a basic social unit and the role of women in the family, are often cited by these graduates; they also dwell on the scholarly works of theologians such as Motahhari, Amoli, and Ebrahim Amini. Accordingly, women's seminary graduates, who themselves constitute a part of the clerical establishment, are trained to defend the male theologians' interpretation of women's rights as being authentic from the religious point of view. The active participation of female religious experts in socio-religious activities is regarded as a success in the implementation of Islamic women's empowerment. For example, in the twenty years of its history, Jamiat al-Zahra has produced many female religious experts who are qualified to teach higher-level courses originally taught by male clerics. As a result, except for the board of trustees, whose members are all male ayatollahs, all the eleven members of the academic board of Jamiat al-Zahra are women who have mostly completed Level 3 of seminary education. Likewise, one-third of the members of the management board are women, and the nine research groups at the institution are all headed by women who have attained Level 3 or even higher degrees of education.[131] Consequently, the major activities of Jamiat al-Zahra are now carried on by women who are highly respected and recognized as religious experts.

However, their high educational achievement and important role in seminaries so far does not seem to be a threat to male dominance in the clerical hierarchy. The majority of female students leave the seminary after completing Level 2, and very few students proceed to Level 3,[132] which is still insufficient to be a mujtahid. Therefore, in spite of the rapid growth in women's seminaries, female mujtahids such as

Nosrat Amin[133] and Zohreh Sefati continue to be exceptional figures. Sefati complains about the current scarcity of female scholars who have the ability to issue their own legal opinion. She criticizes the fact that ‘many female scholars see no future in attaining the degree of ijtihad as long as they cannot be a source of emulation;’[134] however, ‘the responsibilities of a mujtahid are not only limited to being a source of emulation’ and ‘mujtahid women can serve society by helping Muslims interpret Islamic principles as well.’[135] Sefati is of the opinion that issues peculiar to women, especially matters pertaining to ‘purification’ (taharat), must be interpreted by female religious experts for their female followers.[136]

Whatever the reasons for this scarcity, the lack of female mujtahid limits women’s influence within the clerical hierarchy, and women’s seminaries continue to serve as platforms for the spread of religiously relevant social participation, which will not, at least for now, weaken the male-centric patriarchal system in contemporary Iran. As a result, so far, the women’s seminaries have served as a bulwark against the growing pressure exerted by secular feminists as well as Islamic feminists—most of them lay intellectuals and activists—who advocate gender equality through the reinterpretation of the sacred text (Ahmadi, 2006; Hoodfar and Sadr, 2009:29–30).

To assess the role played by the Shia women’s madrasas in Pakistan, it is important to take into account the contextual difference between Iran and Pakistan. First, female school enrolment in Pakistan is much lower than that in Iran. For example, the average enrolment rate for females at the ninth and tenth grades is 14 per cent, but this percentage dropped to 8 per cent in rural areas in 2001–02 (Qureshi and Rarieya, 2007: 13).[137] Generally, the lack of schools in the neighborhood or a suitable transport system for female students impedes female enrolment in schools, especially in the rural areas. Moreover, the concept of the parda, which means the seclusion of women from men, is widely observed in Pakistan, and the parda is used as a pretext for restricting women from studying in schools[138] and working outside the home. Therefore, the priority for Pakistani women is to acquire the right to education. Second, there is a deep rift between the Westernized elite and the religious majority in Pakistan. The

Westernized elite society follows the Western model of women’s lifestyle and social participation, which is not tolerated by the religious majority.

To sum up, the seminary education is in fact a ‘total social phenomenon,’ since the Pakistani women try to address the social and traditional difficulties they face in their everyday life. Therefore, with regard to women’s claims and aspirations, the seminaries in Pakistan play the same role as the public space in Iran. Curiously, these women are concerned not only about their own rights but also about the difficulties in their society with regard to the implementation of the Islamic ideals and principles. The way they evaluate the current problems faced by the Pakistani society reveals that women are becoming very active with a clear social consciousness and that they are assuming charge of the fate of both Islam and their national identity. With regard to this, one might gather three strong points from the life experiences of such women: first, although they are deeply attached to the traditional practice of parda and very critical of the Western way of life, they try to strike a compromise between Islam and their own traditions in order to prevent their seclusion and segregation; second, they criticize the traditional interpretation of Islam that restricts individual rights; and finally, they underscore the necessity of reforming Islam according to the developments in Iran.

In order to gain a better understanding of this situation, it is worth citing a few cases. In a rural area, a 19-year-old student said, ‘A woman can still study while remaining within the Islamic limitations of the parda. The parda does not stop women from getting an education.’ Another student believes that ‘Islam gives a high status and importance to women, and if that status is fairly and honestly given to her, she would be able to work side-by-side with men in our society.’ A 16-year-old first-year student from a town went further and said, ‘Our society today is in need of another Imam Khomeini. Just as Imam Khomeini declared a fatwa in Iran and ordered everyone to follow the right path, we need the same kind of guidance.’[139]

*** Conclusion

The establishment and subsequent rise of the women's seminaries in post-revolutionary Iran have dramatically changed the traditional framework of religious education in Muslim society in general and in Shia areas in particular. Although these seminaries were an outcome of the political ambition of the State in Iran, women's seminaries now seem to be unstoppable. In other words, women were not only at the core of the bureaucratization and rationalization of religious education (Adelkhah, 1999a: Chapter 5), but they extended its scope and reinforced its potential. That might explain, at least partly, the emergence of women's issues as a growing challenge for politicians in Muslim societies that have to deal with both Islamic feminists and the new female mujtahid as incontestable authorities in a male-dominated sphere, that is, the religious seminaries. As previously mentioned, this evolution does not undermine the overall religious hierarchy; however, there is no doubt that it has the capacity to affect and shift the emphasis of current issues. Paradoxically, through the reinforcement of Islamic discourse and religious practices, we are witnessing unprecedented transformations in Islam and these are mainly focused around two complementary observations:

• Religion is becoming a dynamic tool for reinforcing the social and political participation of women in society; this might eventually limit the present clerical domination over women's affairs in general and women's religious affairs in particular.

• The proliferation of the concept of seminary-educated women managing their own space, educating their own students, and mobilizing their own audiences will bring about a 'fragmentation of authority' (Eickelman and Piscatori, 1996: 131) that will reinforce at least pluralism, if not a kind of democratization of the religious sphere, by enlarging the circle and allowing women within it.

• Although we need time to better evaluate the possibilities and limitations of the Iranian religious education model, it appears, notably through the developments in Pakistan, that its consequences can hardly be the monopoly of the State or the leaders that have taken the first initiative.

[47] In Iran, the Shia Islamic seminary—and especially the seminary complex in Qom—is called ‘hawza’ or ‘hawza-i ilmiyya.’ Fischer defines the term as a centre of religious learning, composed usually of a group of madrasas (Fischer, 1980: 290). But in Pakistan, the word ‘madrasa’ is commonly used to refer to the seminary.

[48] For instance, women had access to mosques for higher education in the time of the prophet (Alatiqi, 2009). Another example can be found in the Mamluk era (1250–1517) in Egypt (Berkey, 1992: chapter 6).

[49] The Commission on National Education formulated the first significant educational policy in 1959, in which it recommended compulsory primary education for boys and girls and the provision of equal access to higher education, in general education, as well as professional colleges for women (Qureshi and Rarieya, 2007: 4).

[50] The first-ever admission of women to the Tehran seminary for high school teachers (Daneshsara-i Ali) in 1935 encountered fierce clerical opposition and Tehran University admitted its first female students in 1940–1 (Menashri, 1992: 108).

[51] For example, the Bint al-Huda seminary for non-Iranian female students and the Imam Khomeini seminary for non-Iranian male students were opened in Qom. Jamiat al-Zahra offers special courses for non-Iranian students.

[52] Tabatabai, the head of Jamiat al-Zahra, explained that before the Islamic revolution, the women’s seminary was called a maktab and generally, maktabs were established by unqualified persons and lacked supervision of marja and appropriate educational programs (Namih-i Jamia 1383\2004–5, No. 1). <http:/67.18.3.204\sections\mag\1\index1.htm> (accessed 25 May 2007).

[53] Maktab-i Narjis was established in 1345\1966–7.

[54] Maktab-i Tawhid was established in 1352\1973–4 by Ayatollah Qudsi, the founder of Haqqani seminary in Qom (Gulbarg, no. 32, Murdad, 1381\2002). <http://www.hawzah.net/Hawzah/Magazines/MagArt.aspx?id=46347> (accessed 21 February 2010).

[55] A women's section was established in 1973; two years later, it had 150 students (Fisher, 1980: 84–85).

[56] Maktab-i Fatima was established in 1346\1967 by the first female mujtahid, Nosrat Amin who was born in 1886 and died in 1983 (Huda, 1385\2006–7, 1 (1): 45).

[57] Maktab-i Zahra was established in 1973 (Kamalkhani, 1998: 48).

[58] Payam-i Hawza, no. 14, 1376 \1997. <http://www.hawzah.net/Per/Magazine/PH/014/ph01404.asp> (accessed 21 February 2010).

[59] Ibid. Jamiat al-Zahra is run independently and publicizes its statistics separately from those issued by the Management Centre for Women's Seminaries. The number of non-Iranian students enrolled in Jamiat al-Zahra was 660 in 1377\1998–9. <http://iranwomen.org/zanan/charts/Education/seminary/eh3-1.htm> (accessed 29 July 2007). This number increased to 900 in 1385\2006–7. The students hail from 40 different countries. For details see Ayandi-i Rushan, 17 Ordibehesht 1385 (7 May 2006). <http://www.bfnews.ir/vdch.mn-t23nixftd2.html> (accessed 25 February 2010).

[60] This information is from the home page of the Management Centre of Women's Seminary. News no. 150, 5 Ordibehest 1386 (25 April 2007) <http://www.kowsarnoor.net/> (accessed 10 March 2010).

[61] The total number of students at government universities and higher education institutes in the academic year 1370\1991–2 was 344,045—of which 28.2 per cent were female students. The number of female enrolments reached 549,570 (as compared to the male enrolment figure of 469,410) in the academic year 1383–4 (2004–5), so 53.9 per cent of students were female. In the case of bachelor's degree courses, the percentage of female students in that year was 61.5 per cent. In addition, 529,993 female students and 568,498 male students were studying at the Islamic Azad University, a huge nonprofit university with more than 300 campuses all over the country. These data are provided by the Statistical Centre of Iran (Statistical Centre of Iran 1383\2004–5: 655–656).

[62] 'Dastur al-amal-i ijra-i tasis-i madaras-i ilmiyya-i khaharan,' <http:/www.whc.ir/ index.php?action=article&id=625&artlang=fa > (accessed 27 December 2007). The minimum staff is prescribed based on the number of students. For example, 18 staff members must be appointed for a seminary with 271–300 students.

[63] According to the deputy of the Management Centre, as regards the ownership of the seminary, 84 of the 229 women's seminaries in the entire country are owned by waqf trusts, 55 are part of individual estates, 55 are owed by various institutions and 35 are rented (Rasa news agency, 14 Shahrivar 1386 \ 5 September 2007). See <http://www.rasanews.com/Negaresh_site/fullstory/?id=20511&Title=56> (accessed 18 December 2007).

[64] In Iran, according to government policy, co-education is prohibited from the primary to the higher secondary levels, but colleges and universities are mostly co-educational.

[65] Many seminary students informed me that in the seminaries, students form strong bonds and help each other master the texts, but this kind of co-operation cannot be found at the college and university levels.

[66] The council was composed of nine members, namely, three representatives of Khomeini, three representatives of Gulpaygani, and the remaining three were from the Society for Seminary Teachers (Jamia-i Mudarrisin-i Qum) (Shirkhani, 1384: 44).

[67] Makarem-Shirazi was assigned to the head of the high council of seminaries.

[68] In the directory of the Qom seminary, these independent seminaries are categorized as ‘free schools’ (madares-i azad). On the other hand, the seminaries that have accepted the supervision of the management centre are categorized as ‘official schools’ (madares-i rasmi), pp. 627, 629. Intisharat-i Markaz-i Mudiriyat-i Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Qum, Rahnama-i Jamia-i Moassasat-i Farhangi-i Ostan-i Qum, 1380 \2001. Ziba Mir-Hosseini writes that ‘the supporters of the old system … fear that reform is bound to result in the loss of independence and freedom of belief and speech in the Hauzeh’ (Mir-Hosseini, 1999: 17).

[69] There are 55 examination centers all over the country, except for the Khorasan province, which is not covered by the Management Centre (Markaz-i Mudiriyat-i Hawzaha-i Ilmiyya-i Khaharan 1383–4 \ 2004–5).

[70] For details, please visit the home page of the Management Centre for Women’s Seminaries: <http://www.kowsarnoor.net>. When Khomeini was asked, ‘Can women attain the position of mujtahid?’ he answered, ‘It is possible for a woman to become a mujtahid; however, she cannot become a marja-i taqlid for others.’ The Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini’s Works, The Position of Women from the Viewpoint of Imam Khomeini, p. 44. <http://www.iranchamber.com/history/rkhomeini/books/women_position_khomeini.pdf> (accessed 13 October 2009).

[71] Payam-i Hawza, 1382\2004, no. 38. <http://www.hawzah.net/Hawzah/Magazines/MagArt.aspx?id=44852> (accessed 30 August 2008).

[72] The forerunner of this organization was called ‘daftar-i tablighat-i imam’ (Sakurai, 2004: 72–73). From 1979 to 1984, the office organized 9,081 women’s religious gatherings and dispatched female preachers to conduct them (source: internal document of the Islamic Propagation Office of the Qom Seminaries).

[73] This branch provided a one-year duration short program and a four-year duration long program. By 1992, 1,550 students were accepted at this branch (source: internal document of the Islamic Propagation Office of the Qom Seminaries).

[74] This course has five majors, namely, the Quran, Islamic history, education, philosophy and Islamic law. Daftar-i Tablighat-i Islami Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Qum, Mushakhkhasat-i Kolli: barnama va sarfasl-i dorus, 17 Dei 1377 (7 January 1999).

[75] Daftar-i Tablighat-i Islami Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Qum, Ittilaat-i Pazirish-i Khaharan, 1378–9\ 1999–2000.

[76] Payam-i Hawza, 1382\2004, no. 38. <http://www.hawzah.net/Hawzah/Magazines/MagArt.aspx?id=44852> (accessed 30 August 2008).

[77] These are religious centers dedicated to Hussein, the third Imam of the Shia.

[78] Although the supreme leader Khamenei appoints the head of the centre and its education system and certification are verified by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, the centre remains an independent non-government university specializing in the education of non-Iranian students (Shenasan, 2007: 29–30). In order to propagate Shia education outside Iran, the Organization for schools and seminaries outside country (sazman-i

madaris-i hawzaha-i kharij az kishvar) was established in 1370\1991 the organization currently supports approximately 150 schools, providing education to about 10,000 students in more than 60 countries (such as Britain, Indonesia, Russia and Ghana) (Ghiasi, 1383: 179).

[79] The International Centre for Islamic Studies was reorganized again as al-Mustafa international university in 2008. For details, see <http://miu.ac.ir/>.

[80] It is obligatory to study the Persian language before starting the study of seminary subjects.

[81] The following is printed on the back cover of all the Persian language textbooks for non-Iranian students issued by the International Centre for Islamic Studies: ‘The Persian language is the most effective medium for conveying the message of revolutionary Islam. The diffusion of the Persian language does not imply Iranian nationalism at all.’

[82] In the early twentieth century, Najaf and Karbala in Iraq were truly the centers of Shiism. In 1937, Najaf had 8,000 students from all over the world, while Qom had only 1,000 students. However, this situation was completely reversed in the 1950s (Nakash, 1994: 259). We cannot overlook the fact that there is a growing antipathy among non-Iranian Shia against the overwhelming influence of Persian-speaking Iranian clerics.

[83] Among the 235 graduates, 112 were from Iraq, 59 were from Pakistan, 20 were from Afghanistan, 6 were from India and rest were from Nigeria, Thailand, Lebanon, Syria, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Tanzania, Mali, Congo, Indonesia, the US, Tajikistan and Iran. Huda, 1385\2006–7, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 56.

[84] Hawzahnews, 8 Ordibehesht 1387 (27 April 2008). <http://www.hawzahnews.com/printpage.aspx?dataid=4950> (accessed 4 June 2008).

[85] Ibid.

[86] According to the account of the principal of the Bint al-Huda, its students organized about 500 propagation programs in 400 cities in the last academic year (source: Hawzahnews, 19 Murdad 1387 (9 August 2008). <http://www.hawzahnews.com/printpage.aspx?dataid=6376> (accessed 14 August 2008).

[87] Huda, 1385\2006–7, vol. 1, no. 1, p. 41.

[88] According to the directory of Shia madrasas in Pakistan, the women's madrasa founded by her father is named Jamiat al-Zahra, and it was established in 1995. Three out of five teachers at this seminary have graduated from major Iranian women's seminaries, namely, Maktab-i Narjis, Bint al-Huda and Jamiat al-Zahra (Kazmi, 2004: 619).

[89] According to the note under Article 1210 of the civil code of Iran, the age of puberty for girls is nine lunar years (Taleghany, 1995). This ceremony was initiated in Iranian society in the early 1990s and was popularized through official channels such as TV and school programs. For details, see Adelkhah (1999a: 120).

[90] Huda, 1386\2007–8, vol. 2, no. 4, p. 61.

[91] Jamiat al-Zahra accepts foreign students not through the International Centre for Islamic Studies but through its own channels (Prospectus for Full- and Part-time Entry for Overseas Students 2006–7: 6).

[92] Ayanda-i Rushan, 17 Ordibehesht 1385 (7 May 2006), op. cit.

[93] These include the days between 12 and 22 Bahman in the Iranian calendar. On 12 Bahman, Khomeini returned to Iran from France after 15 years of absence, and 22 Bahman is the day of victory for the Islamic revolution.

[94] Nama-i Jamia, Ordibehesht 1384\2005, no. 8, <http://67.18.3.204/sections/mag/8/index8.htm> (accessed 25 February 2010).

[95] For details see <http://www.m-narjes.org> (accessed 25 February 2010).

[96] One of the Afghan students I met at Maktab-i Narjis in 1999 told me that she was a war refugee who came to Iran with her family. Due to her inadequate educational record, she could not apply to a government school in Iran; however, the Maktab-i Narjis gave her the opportunity to stay in its dormitory and continue her studies. When I visited a women's madrasa in Lahore in 2007, I found that two of its teachers had graduated from Maktab-i Narjis.

[97] There are four Sunni boards, namely, Wafaq al-Madaris al-Arabia (Hanafi, Deobandi, founded in 1959); Tanzim al-Madaris (Hanafi, Barelvi, founded in 1960); Wafaq al-Madaris al-Salafiya (Ahl al-Hadith, founded in 1955); and Rabita al-Madaris al-Islamiya (Jamaat Islami, founded 1983). The board for Shias is called Wafaq al-Madaris al-Shia and was established in 1959 (Institute of Policy Studies, 2002: 19–20).

[98] Out of the 2,861 madrasas, 1,840 belong to the Deobandi sub-sect; 717 to the Barelvi; 161 to the Ahl al-Hadith; and 96 to the other sects and sub-sects (Institute of Policy Studies, 2002: 26).

[99] From among these 9,880 madrasas, 7,000 were Deobandi, 1,585 were Barelvi, 367 were Ahl-e Hadith and 500 were Jamaat-i Islami (Riaz, 2005: 18).

[100] Among the 84 women's madrasas in 2004, 55 were situated in the Punjab province, 11 were in Sindh, 9 were in Gilgit-Baltistan formerly known as the Northern Areas, 3 were in Kashmir, 2 were in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and 1 was in Islamabad and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) (Kazmi 2004).

[101] The Zakat and Ushr Regulation was issued in June 1980. Originally, this regulation was intended to allow indiscriminate deductions from any account, including those of the Shias, non-Muslims and non-Pakistanis (Malik, 1998: 102).

[102] The Shia believe that the zakat should be paid on a voluntary basis and that it should be paid to the marja-i taqlid, not to the state (Ahmed, 1987: 281).

[103] To be eligible for receiving zakat, the madrasa had to be registered as a society and present accounts showing an appropriate use of the funds (Malik, 1998: 144).

[104] Although the Shia are exempted from the compulsory collection of zakat, the Ministry of Religious Affairs grants Shia madrasas part of the zakat proceeds (Malik, 1998: 143).

[105] Due to strong resistance from the clerics, the Zia government failed to modernize their curriculum (Malik, 1998: 133–139).

[106] Having a BA or MA degree is the basic requirement for obtaining a post in government organizations (Malik, 1998: 141).

[107] According to the official data for 1995, 2,010 new madrasas have been registered since 1979, and the total number of registered madrasas at present has reached 3,906 (International Crisis Group, 2002: 9).

[108] The Hazaras are mostly Shia, who are believed to have adopted Shiism at the time of Shah Abbas Safavid (1589–1629) (Mousavi, 1998: 73–74).

[109] Before the 1979 revolution, seminaries in Najaf, Iraq were the most popular destinations for Pakistani Shia. Therefore, the elder Pakistani clerics mostly received their advanced study at Najaf.

[110] Since the number of Pakistani students increased in Qom, the seminaries started restricting the entry of Pakistani students in order to secure the diversity of non-Iranian students in Qom. In the case of female students, Iran currently invites about ten female students per year, on the basis of the graduation examination conducted by the Shia Madrasa Board in Lahore. In 2005 and 2006, the selection was finalized through personal interviews conducted with the candidates in Lahore.

[111] Abou Zahab introduced this madrasa as ‘the girls’ section in the Jamiat al-Muntazar’ (Abou Zahab, 2008: 132).

[112] It was founded in 1954 and presently has 31 affiliated madrasas in Pakistan, Iran, the US and England. Madrasa al-Zahra is one of these affiliated madrasas. For details, please visit the madrasa’s home page at <http://www.jmuntazar.org/English.htm> (accessed 22 February 2010).

[113] The properties and buildings of the madrasas and their hostels were originally called ‘Baqiyyat al-Allah,’ owned by two Shia clerics who had studied at Qom. They started the men’s and women’s seminaries after returning to Lahore; however, they were unable to continue their project due to financial difficulties. I obtained this information on visiting Baqiyyat al-Allah and Madrasa al-Zahra in 2005 and 2006.

[114] Idara Minhaj al-Husayn was founded in 1990 and currently runs both men's and women's madrasas. For details, please visit its home page at <http://minhaj-ul-hussain.com> (accessed 22 February 2010).

[115] He explained that he was granted the use of khums for the madrasa by Sistani and other leading mujtahids.

[116] A full-time female teacher with an MA degree (14 years of study) teaches secular subjects to students preparing for the FA (12 years of study) examination at this seminary.

[117] She was still in her 20s when I met her in 2006 and had been educated in Pakistan.

[118] BBC News, 1 April 2005 <http://news.bbc.co.uk> (accessed 22 February 2010).

[119] The qualifications for acceptance into Sakina bin al-Husayn are apparently different from those of the other three madrasas, which follow the Iranian seminary model more directly.

[120] According to Tariq Rahman, the refutation of other sects has always been part of religious education in Pakistan. Therefore, preparing students to defend Shiism is regarded as an important course of study (Rahman, 2008).

[121] From the prospectus of the Sakina bint al-Husayn seminary.

[122] I first visited four madrasas in September 2005 and revisited them in September 2006 to distribute questionnaires and collect them (165 in number) with the consent of the Shia Madrasa Board and the principals of each madrasa.

[123] See <http://stats.uis.unesco.org> (accessed 22 February 2010). In Pakistan, the net enrolment of girls in primary schools was 57 per cent; in secondary schools, 26 per cent; and in tertiary education, 4 per cent in 2000.

[124] One who recites the tragedy of the Karbala at women's gatherings.

[125] Motahhari wrote that Islam 'has observed the principle of equality between man and woman, but it is opposed to the uniformity of their rights.' The English translation of Morteza Motahhari's work, Woman and Her Rights, can be obtained from <http://www.al-islam.org/WomanRights/> (accessed 20 February 2010).

[126] Motahhari's most important text on the gender issue is entitled System of Women's Right in Islam, and Javadi Amoli's book on the same issue is entitled Women in the Mirror of Glory and Beauty (Mir-Hosseini, 1999: 19, 83–84).

[127] The Urdu translation of his book is taught at Shia women's seminaries in Pakistan.

[128] The Office of Research and Study of Women's Issues was established in 1377 (1998–9).

[129] Daftar-i Mutaliat va Tahqiqat-i Zanan, Markaz-i Mudiriyat-i Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Khaharan, Rayhana, p. 1.

[130] For instance, Motahhari argues that ' it is essential that the position of woman should be reviewed, and the abundant rights which Islam has granted her and which throughout history have been denied to her, should be restored to her,' (Mutahheri, 1992:72).

[131] Intisharat-i Markaz-i Mudiriyat-i Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Qum, Rahnama-i Jamia-i Muassasat-i Farhangi-i Ustan-i Qum, 1380 (2001), pp. 662–663.

[132] Level 3 is offered only at a few seminaries such as Jamiat al-Zahra and Maktab-i Narjis. Maktab-i Narjis started a Level 3 course in 2007. <http://www.hawzahnews.com>27 Bahman 1386 (16 February 2008). <http://www.hawzahnews.com/showdata.aspx?dataid=4113> (accessed 25 February 2010).

[133] Nosrat Amin was born in Isfahan in 1886 and passed away in 1983. She is regarded as the first female mujtahid (Iran Daily, 18 October 2004). Zohreh Sefati was born in Abadan. In 1970, she moved to Qom to study and became a renowned female mujtahid (Iran Daily, 15 January 2007).

[134] According to Sefati, ‘A number of renowned Islamic scholars believe Islam does not ban mujtahid women from growing to be sources of emulation’ (Iran Daily, 15 January 2007).

[135] Iran Daily, 9 October 2006.

[136] Payam-i Hawza 1376\1997, no. 14. op. cit.

[137] Compared to the female enrolment figures for Pakistan and Iran based on the statistics taken by UNESCO, the gross percentage of enrolment into secondary education in Iran is 76 per cent, while that in Pakistan is 26 per cent. < http://stats.uis.unesco.org> (accessed 1 December 2009).

[138] The highest dropout rate for girls occurs at the stages of transition from lower to upper primary (class 3) and from primary to secondary school in Pakistan (Qureshi and Rarieya, 2007: 13).

[139] These women’s voices are all based on their essay written in the last part of the questionnaires distributed in September 2006. For details see, note 76.

** 4. Contested notions of being ‘Muslim’

Madrasas, ulama and the authenticity of Islamic schooling in Bangladesh

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The theoretical complexity of combining diversified facets of Islam into a ‘single entity called “Islam”’ (Graham, 1993: 495) lies in the challenge of blending the theological and contextual differentiation within Islam (Eickelman, 1982: 1). In that sense, the study of madrasa, the major religious institution playing the guardian’s role in ‘cultural reproduction and identity formation’ in the Muslim world (Metcalf, 2007: 104), faces the same challenge: how particular doctrinal inclinations and differentiation within the realm of the madrasas may be perpetuated in a certain historical and social context and conjoin each other, which would eventually lead to the creation of a wider context for Muslim cultural tradition. This study attempts to decipher the internal worlds of differentiation of the madrasas and the mechanism by which the differentiated worlds of madrasas interplay and connect with the external worlds of social space. Prima facie I try to illuminate the distinct functionality of the madrasas of Bangladesh by situating them in a broader South Asian context and suggest that internal motivations and divisions within Islam have important implications for understanding madrasas and their custodians—ulama, as Zaman (2002) dubbed—in contemporary Bangladesh. I argue that madrasas in Bangladesh are primarily concerned with the construction and reconstruction of Muslim cultural identity; however, the process of formation of such identity is not linear, but marked by a complex ‘web of interlocutors’ in which the madrasas propagate particular interpretative tenets of Islamic precepts, notions and ideas of being Muslim while their custodians contest for their authority by pursuing their own pedagogical methodology and by placing their voices in different madrasa-related religious forums and spheres (Taylor, 1989: 36). Such plural forms of contestations and notions are functional in Bangladesh

in relation to the tradition of Islam, a tradition that is inherently ‘discursive.’[140]

Historians and other scholars documented the internal differentiation of madrasas in South Asia in terms of sectarian, ‘quasi-sectarian’[141] or maslaki[142] differentiation (e.g. Metcalf, 1982; Zaman, 1998; Nasr, 2000b; Alam, 2008a, 2008b; Sanyal, 2008). Scholars explicate that the doctrinal differentiation of Islamic precepts leads to the formation of Muslim identity in a contested array of space within madrasas (e.g. Alam, 2008a, 2008b; Sanyal, 2008). However, the contestation is not merely marked by an interpretative differentiation of Islam (maslak), but rather by many other denominations and the forces of modernization. The challenges and forces of modernity certainly severely impinge on the religious institutions and their protagonists (Zaman, 2002: 1); at the same time, however, they facilitate the contestation within their internal and external worlds. Such contestation is also conspicuous in many Islamic forums and movements. Ahmad (2005, 2008) shows us how Jamaat-i Islam and its founder faced the challenges for a ‘total revolutionary reforms’ and moderation of the movement in a changing context of modernity and transnational interactivity. I contend that it is important to view madrasas’ functionality in relation to the changing circumstances in which they are embedded. In this study, I attempt to depict that the contestation involving madrasas and their custodians in Bangladesh is argumentative and discursive in nature, where many facets of modernity pose challenges and in turn facilitate the varied responses to the challenges.[143]

The study of madrasa in Bangladesh has been overlooked in the field of Islamic studies, although such studies are consequential.[144] Madrasas’ specific social and religious role in the Bangladeshi context cannot be properly understood if not situated in the wider social and historical circumstances of South Asia, which Bangladesh simultaneously shares and differs from. Cornell’s (1998) study is herein exemplary with reference to the manner in which he interrogates the specific meaning of Moroccan sainthood in a wider social and historical context which certainly differs from the other realms of Islamic mysticism. ‘The study of sainthood must reconcile both social and doctrinal perspectives if it is to have any lasting value’ (Cornell, 1998: 272). Even though the study of the madrasa cannot be equated with that of sainthood, what Cornell (1998) explicates is useful for our purpose to

reveal how both the doctrinal and social aspects of madrasas are operative in relation to the formation and reformation of Muslim cultural identity in a specific social circumstance. The aim of this study, therefore, is not only to elucidate the contestation of madrasas and ulama in terms of their ideological or doctrinal differentiation but also in terms of their contestation for gaining control over religious spheres, pedagogical superiority and religious authority.

The thesis of this chapter is informed by ethnographic fieldwork conducted in several phases in the Brahmanbaria municipal area, on the east-central district town of Bangladesh, a territory of 30.82 square kilometers (see Figure 4.1). My discussion is not based on the analysis of a particular madrasa in this area; rather, it is grounded in the analysis of different madrasas and their custodians, and therefore, I refer to various madrasas at several points in my discussion.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-14.jpg][Figure 4.1 Map of Bangladesh]]

*** Muslim selfhood, identity and madrasa

The ‘sources of self’ (Taylor, 1989) for being a proper Muslim lie not in the sources of Islamic tradition but in how such tradition is translated into institutionalized practices in the everyday lives of Muslims in a particular context ‘into which Muslims are inducted as Muslim’ (Asad, 1986: 23; emphasis original).[145] Various institutional sources such as maktab (elementary Islamic schooling), madrasas and mosques provide a primary induction into how to emulate Islamic practices in order to be a proper Muslim in Bangladesh. In that sense, Islamic schooling has a profound role in constructing Muslim selfhood in Bangladesh. Such institutionalizing endeavors are often confounded, however, by the question of which practices are authentically ‘Islamic’ since Islam in Bangladesh is historically configured by two major trends: reformist-revivalist and syncretistic tradition.[146] Because of these contradictory facets of Islamic tradition embedded in the history of Islam which is further intertwined with the contemporary societal changes brought about by modernization,[147]

the Muslim identity in Bangladesh becomes a matter of ambiguity and tensions where many individuals are just culturally Muslims,[148] or where many of them associate their identity with ‘Bengali-ness’ and others with ‘Muslim-ness.’[149] Though madrasas, in a general sense, advocate an identity associated with ‘Muslim-ness’ by indoctrinating Islamic practices and a sense of consciousness of Muslim selfhood, the process of formation of Muslim selfhood is highly debatable and contestable even within madrasas affiliated with different maslaki orientations or interpretative modes of differentiation of Islamic precepts, as I depict in the latter part of this chapter. The conceptualization of Muslim selfhood as envisaged in this chapter is tantamount to Bilgrami’s (1992: 824) contention that Muslims’ selfhood, even devout Muslims’ selfhood, is highly ‘differentiated internally into a number of, in principle, negotiable detailed commitments.’ By the same token I conceptualize that the selfhood produced through madrasa schooling, mostly by the ulama, is differentiated within a negotiable space of interpretation of Islamic commitments and convictions.

Merry’s (2007: 74–75) work also facilitates the understanding of how the madrasa functions for the formation of Muslim cultural identity which ‘is always relational and comparative to others’ in ‘a coherent sense of self within a particular cultural matrix’ (emphasis original). She considers the madrasas’ role in Muslim cultural coherence, in the context of some Western countries where Muslims are immigrant and minor in comparison with dominant Western values and schooling, as a prerequisite for the formation of Muslim cultural identity.

Cultural coherence points to an important aim in the process of passing on deeply held commitments, values, and beliefs that are necessary for sustaining identity formation and psychological health. Cultural coherence can, and often does, encompass religious identity; either way, it does refer to the shaping of one’s identity by a particular group. To speak of cultural coherence, then, is to refer to the shaping of one’s identity by a particular group (Merry, 2007: 77).

However, Merry does not consider how internal tensions and conflict within Islam shape the cultural coherence in relation to Muslim identity and how it is differentiated from one group to another and from one context to another.

Although his analysis provides a primary ground for understanding madrasas in relation to Muslim cultural identity, for the concept of identity, I rely more on the Holland et al. conceptualization (1998: 270): ‘Identity is one way of naming the dense interconnections between the intimate and public venues of social practice’ in which our selves and sets of actions are organized and being organized over the history of personal selfhood and social collectivities.

Identity is a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations. It is a key means through which people care about and care for what is going on around them. They are important bases from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being (Holland et al., 1998: 5).

The conception of identity allows us to interrogate the Muslim self, which the madrasas pursue in different contexts and different situations. It is seemingly applicable to understanding how the madrasa and the ulama are contesting for a cultural identity that configures with a newly ‘figured world’ in a social terrain in which they face challenges from various corners such as modernization or globalization as well as from different denominations of their own religion. Further such a ‘figured world’ of the ulama is ‘a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others’ (Holland et al., 1998: 52). To understand how the maslaki differentiation of madrasas engenders a differentiation of interpretation by which particular practices are valued over others for being a ‘proper’ Muslim, we need to consider the broader context of madrasas and their affinity to particular doctrinal interpretations and motivations.

*** Internal reasons of differentiation within madrasas: South Asian context

Interpretation is necessitated within Islam since it is a religion that is founded on the scriptural tradition. The ‘ethics of disagreement in Islam’ in terms of juristic methods including the prophetic tradition (hadith) and

intellectual reasoning (ijtihad) can be traced back to the early period of Islam (al-Alawi 1935). Such traditions of interpretative differentiation have led to the emergence of sectarian, ‘quasi-sectarian’ and different denominational groups’ (maslaki) orientation among the ulama and madrasas in South Asia (Table 4.1). Interestingly, in the nineteenth century, all the sectarian and maslaki offshoots such as Deoband, Ahl-i Hadith, Barelvi, Nadwah and Ahmadiyya originated in the northern part of India; these later proliferated all over South Asia (Metcalf, 1982: 266). Madrasas in Pakistan and India are divided by such sectarian and maslaki differentiation (Malik, 1999: 124; Alam, 2008a, 2008b).

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-15.jpg][Table 4.1 Unfolding the school of thought of madrasas in Sunni Islam in terms of maslaki differentiations in South Asia]]

Source: Field survey in Brahmanbaria municipality, March 2007

Of all sectarian and maslaki orientation, ‘Deobandi Islam’ gained momentum in South Asian history (Haroon, 2008). Deobandi thought is founded on Ahl-i Sunnat wal-Jamaat,[150] an allegiance to the Sunni Muslims which literally means upholders of Prophetic tradition, and on the jurisprudential method ‘Hanafiat,’[151] and conforms in thought to ‘Wallliullahian’ (Deoband homepage, 2007).[152] Though its teaching of Islamic content largely springs from dars-i nizami, the first structured form of its madrasa curriculum was devised by Mulla Nizam al-din Sahalawi (d.1748) in the eighteenth century;[153] later, its reform initiative underwent transformation of the nizami curriculum towards a greater focus on hadith-based teaching, and a shift from ‘rational sciences’ to ‘reveal sciences.’[154] As historian Robinson (2000: 105) contends, Deoband’s hadith-based, that is, revealed knowledge based reform can be seen as ‘a shift in traditional Islamic knowledge away from the rational towards the revealed sciences, and a more general shift in the sources of inspiration away from the Iranian lands toward the Arab lands.’

In contrast, the Barelvi, which is associated with the notion of its founder, Ahmad Riza Khan (1856–1921) of Barevli, India, and his movement Ahl-i Sunnat wal Jamaat, believes on intercession and prefers a ritualized form of devotion to the prophet and to other holy men of Islam (Zaman, 2002: 11).[155] The Barelvis believe that Muhammad is not a ‘role model’ only; rather, he is a man made of nur (light of Allah) who had no shadow. They also profess Muhammad as a possessor of the knowledge of the unseen (ilm-i ghayb), who is always hazir u nazir (Ar. hadir wa-nazir), a precept that asserts that the Prophet is able to be present at the same time in different places (Sanyal, 1998: 641–642; Alam, 2008a: 12). For the Deobandis, the Prophet is a human being who possesses knowledge to the extent given to him by Allah. For them, considering Muhammad as possessor of the knowledge of the unseen (ilm-i ghayb) is polytheism (shirk) since only Allah is omnipotent and thus able to possess such knowledge.

The Ahl-i Hadith, also a movement of the late nineteenth century, differs on the legitimacy of four classic juristic methods, unlike Deoband. They prefer a direct access to the Quran and the prophetic tradition (hadith) —a view that Deobandi ulama disparaged for the heavy responsibility it places on individual Muslims, which might cause discord over textual interpretations.[156] The Nadwatul Ulama has endeavoured to integrate all variant doctrinal interpretations, though it has failed to do so.[157] Whereas in terms of the sources of religious authority, Jamaat-i Islam shares many aspects of Deoband and Ahl-i Hadith by accepting the Quran and Sunna as sources of Sharia and the four classical mediaeval law schools, its view on implementing Sharia law is unlike that of Deoband and Ahl-i Hadith; these focus mainly on religious reform at the individual level.[158] On the other hand, the entire maslaki group within the Sunni sect and the Shia community are strongly antithetical to the Ahmadi tenets of Islam which deny the finality of Prophethood of Muhammad and accept the prophecy of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d.1908) (Zaman, 2002: 11).[159]

*** Madrasas in Brahmanbaria, Bangladesh

Brahmanbaria is one of the oldest towns to have received municipal status in 1869 during the British colonial period. At that time, it was under the control of the district of Tripura which is now a part of India. Brahmanbaria became a district in 1984. The district town is situated on the bank of the river Titas. The population of the town is 131,334, out of which the males represent 51.34 per cent of the population and the females, 48.66 per cent. The literacy rate among the towns' people is 52.3 per cent, which suggests that a preponderant number of people still lack access to formal education (Banglapedia, 2003: 273). Probably, 'Brahmanbaria' derives from Brahman, Hindu priests, though this has not been historically authenticated. The proportion of the Hindu religious community in the district is 9.07 per cent as compared with the Muslim population, which constitutes 90.73 per cent, while Buddhists constitute 0.05, Christians, 0.04 and others, 0.11 per cent (Banglapedia, 2003: 273).

**** Form and structure of madrasa schooling

The entire madrasa schooling in Bangladesh is broadly categorized in terms of government recognition into two types: Aliya and Quomi (also known as kharizia, and Arabic qawmi) madrasas (see Table 4.2). Aliya madrasas are those that are either fully government or government-registered madrasas operating under the prescription and supervision of the Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board, an autonomous body of the Ministry of Education. These madrasas represent the historical legacy of the British-patronized Aliya madrasa, that is, the Calcutta Aliya Madrasa established in 1780,[160] a portion of which was later shifted to Dhaka in 1947 (Ali, 1983: 160). On the other hand, Quomi madrasas are exclusively private having their funding from the local community, religious alms (zakat) and endowments (waqf), but seldom from expatriate Bangladeshis.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-16.jpg][Table 4.2 Types of madrasas in Bahmanbaria by management and level of schooling]]

The Brahmanbaria municipal area consists of 12 wards and almost every ward has a madrasa.[161]</sup> Maktab, nurani and furqania madrasas provide the pre-primary level of Islamic schooling and the primary objective of these schools is to introduce the rudiments of Islam and to acquaint the children with the sacred Quran. There are 58,124 such institutions in the country and many of these are attached to mosques or higher madrasas (BEPS, 2004: 8). Ebtedayee represents the institutional level of primary schooling both for Aliya and Quomi madrasas. The Aliya madrasas maintain a grade-based system of schooling, and hence, the naming of such madrasas denotes the level of grade or degrees up to which the madrasa imparts instruction such as Dakhil (10th grade), Alim (12th grade), Fazil (14th grade) and Kamil (16th grade).

In contrast, Quomi madrasas follow subject-based rather than grade-based schooling. The naming of Quomi madrasas, therefore, is determined by their level of subject-based schooling and teaching specialization. For instance, Darul Quran and Hafizia madrasas are concerned with the production of scholars who ‘embody’ the Quran through memorization ‘as a point of reference, a compass’ for moral and spiritual guidance (Boyle, 2006: 491–492; 2004: 134). On the other hand, the Qiratia madrasa, the name of which derives from Qiraat, literally meaning the proper reading and recitation method, is named for its specialization in teaching proper Quranic enunciation. The secondary level of Quomi madrasas such as Islamia’ and ‘Ulum’ madrasas focuses on subject-based teaching at varying degrees of schooling periods. These madrasas also use ‘Jamia’ as part of their names, though ‘Jamia’ refers only to those madrasas which impart all the kitabs, the texts at kitabkhana (division of text) up to the highest level of the Quomi madrasas—Daura-i Hadith or Takmil-i Hadith.

In many cases, the ‘ Jamia’ madrasas also interchangeably use the terms ‘ Islamia’ and ‘Ulum’ as part of their names. Suba-i ifta, a department of practical lessons for issuing religious verdicts (fatwa), is often established in these madrasas to cater to the students who obtain the highest degree of the Quomi madrasas. Although these features are characteristics of many Quomi madrasas in Brahmanbaria

and all over the country as well, the emergence of a ‘cadet’ madrasa at the secondary level is a recent manifestation of the ulama’s endeavour to orchestrate modern subject knowledge with Islamic religious lessons and sophisticated disciplinary practice for students. The central objective of these madrasas is to attract the guardians of the pupils by asserting that their pedagogical method is tantamount to that of the Cadet Colleges, one of the elitist categories of general schooling maintained by the armed forces.[162]

On the other hand, the emergence of independent girls’ Quomi madrasas in Brahmanbaria is a recent phenomenon. The first Quomi girls’ madrasa, Islamia Balika (Girls’) Madrasa, emerged in 1988, followed by Nadiatul Quran Kendrio Mohila Madrasa in 1993 and Al-Batul Mohila Madrasa in 1997. Out of a total of eight girls’ Quomi madrasas (Table 4.3), six were founded between 2000 and 2008. These madrasas challenge the ‘secondary status of all women’ in Islam where Islamic schooling is predominantly associated with males (Messick, 1988: 647–648).

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-17.jpg][Table 4.3 Distribution of madrasas and students by management and gender in Brahmanbaria]]

Within the scope of this chapter, it suffices to say that the nascent girls’ Quomi madrasas are engendered in a symbiotic social and economic matrix, for which the founders of these madrasas found their motivation in most cases. The ulama establish such madrasas as a way of earning their livelihoods; the learners are taught, housed and provided with meals usually on the same premises as the founder’s home, in exchange for a monthly fee. Because of these institutions’ flexible, loose and open system of student recruitment and shortened course-curriculum, [163] considerable numbers of students—including those who have crossed the standard age limit for or discontinued the study in public schooling—attend these madrasas as a means of securing marriage prospects and gaining empowerment in familial and social space.

**** Distribution of madrasa types and students

Until June 2006 there were 15,941 Aliya madrasas in Bangladesh; of these 6,711 were Ebtedayee madrasas, 6,745 Dakhil, 1,246 Alim, 1,062 Fazil and 177 Kamil.[164] In contrast it is not certain how many Quomi madrasas are currently operating in contemporary Bangladesh since no efforts have been made to monitor these madrasas. According to one source, there are more than 20,000 Quomi madrasas across the country and the number of students in these madrasas is not less than three million (Prothom Alo 2006).

The Brahmanbaria municipal area has 13 primary schools, seven high schools, two colleges and two educational institutes.[165] At the same time, there are 36 madrasas, two of which are government registered, that is Aliya, and the remaining 34 are Quomi madrasas at different levels, suggesting that madrasas constitute a substantial part of schooling options in Brahmanbaria. At the national level, Aliya madrasas constitute 27.61 per cent of all post-primary educational institutions in comparison with general educational institutions which constitute 62.98 per cent (BANBEIS, 2006: 25). In terms of enrolment rates, madrasa students (students of Aliya madrasas only) comprise 16.32 per cent of all post-primary general schools at the national level (BANBEIS, 2006: 26). As the case of Brahmanbaria suggests, the contribution of madrasa schooling in the entire education sector in Bangladesh would undoubtedly be higher if the number of Quomi madrasas and their students were statistically considered at official level.

According to the estimation of 30 out of 36 madrasas, the total number of students in Brahmanbaria is 5,880 (Table 4.3). Of these, the Aliya madrasas have 1,135 students while the remainder attend the Quomi madrasas. In contrast, in the Brahmanbaria sub-district (Upazilla), the municipal and its contiguous areas comprising 495.85 sq km, there are 59 post-primary schools and 17 Aliya madrasas in which the total numbers of students studying are 29,373 and 3,597 respectively.[166] Even though the Brahmanbaria municipality is a smaller geographical territory, 30.82 sq km, as noted earlier, the preponderant number of Quomi students suggests the significant contribution of these madrasas in educating the pupils alongside general schools in Brahmanbaria. However, to address the question why

these madrasas are gaining desirability as a social choice of educating Muslim pupils in Brahmanbaria we need to consider the aspects of the ulama who, equipped with certain religious techniques and tactics, try to ensure their existence as well as that of their primary institution—the madrasa—in association with which they became ulama. Apart from this, madrasa education might have a positive correlation to the sociology of employment in Bangladesh, which is predicated on an inordinate rate of unemployment, nepotism and politicization of employment. In many cases, the articulation of certain discourses by the ulama—which allege that public schooling is a machinery for the production of immoral values and its pedagogical process is inimical to being a proper ‘Muslim’—also influences many people who deem education as the functional base of moral construction and identity formation; thus, they choose madrasa schooling as an alternative.

*** How have madrasas evolved? Authorizing social and religious space

How madrasas evolved even after the introduction of Western-style schooling is a crucial question. Some observers might contend that poverty is a primary cause of the evolvement of Muslim religious education. Some might also argue that the evolvement of madrasas is the result of the failure of public schools to accommodate a mounting number of Muslim pupils. Irrespective of the degree of influence such factors have, on the basis of the Brahmanbaria case, I suggest that the transformation of madrasas is associated with the venture to expand the authorizing social and religious space, where the madrasa functions as a ‘space of authoring’ in which the ulama maintain the discourses of Islam in regard to the changes and challenges they receive.[167] Madrasa as an authorizing social and religious space is created for the ulama, and very often, by the ulama.

**** Creating avenues of social and religious space

The expansion of avenues of social and religious space as developed by the ulama is the result of a widened conception of knowledge about Islam (din). Islamic education became devalued in the colonial period because Western-style education was more closely associated with social advancement in the colonial era. The historical legacy in contemporary

Bangladesh is such that numerous Islamic scholars, mostly madrasa graduates, find their knowledge to be as less applicable and useful in many arenas of public life. This has led them to recreate their own avenues of social and religious space; the evolvement of the madrasa is one of many such avenues created mostly by madrasa-educated persons or the ulama.

In most cases, the social functions of Islamic-learned persons trained in religious educational institutions are restricted to the religious domain. They earn their livelihood in religiously workable jobs such as preacher, prayer leader at mosques, performer of certain religious rites and madrasa teachers. Their engagement with other arenas of public life is coterminous not only because of their limited adaptability but also because of the limited applicability of Islamic knowledge to public life, where adaptability is achieved through the acquisition of modern disciplinary knowledge. For example, there is no official recognition of the madrasas and their education is not certified. Quomi madrasas and the certification they offer are officially unrecognized, while the degrees at Bachelors and Masters levels of Aliya madrasas are yet to be fully recognized in Bangladesh.[168] The students who pass out from Quomi madrasas are educated Muslims but without formal recognition. Therefore, they are not eligible for any public or even private job regulated by the government rules. As such, the students have very limited options for making a livelihood. The ulama establish madrasas as a way of creating avenues of social and religious space where they can apply their religious knowledge of Islam (din), maintain their livelihood and establish an ongoing social interaction with the community, a space in which their voices can be heard. After my first field visit to Brahmanbaria in 2004, with every consecutive visit in 2005, 2007 and 2008, I found the establishment of new Quomi madrasas, a total of eight madrasas within four years. Most of the founders of the newly established madrasas assert that they establish the madrasa to spread knowledge on Islam (ilm), which they deem as an obligation for them, who bear such knowledge. However my field observation suggests that religious commitment is not the cardinal cause of evolving madrasas. By establishing a madrasa, in reality, they can on the one hand arrange their livelihood and on the other create a space for authoring, a context of identity in which they can negotiate their social identity through continued interaction with the community, sometimes by mastering social and religious networking in the locality and beyond.

**** Social and religious networking

In the contemporary Muslim world, networking has significant implications for understanding Muslim history, politics, movements and aspects of ‘mobilized Islam’ (Cooke and Lawrence, 2005; Wickham, 2002; Wiktorowicz, 2004). By the same token, networking is also important in understanding how the ulama create social and religious space. In the realm of a networked world, the ulama invite and communicate with ordinary Muslims, socially and politically influential persons and philanthropists, and hence proceed to founding madrasas, sometimes with new pedagogical methods and ideas. There are plenty of examples in Brahmanbaria where the evolvement of a madrasa is a result of orchestration of such social and religious networking. Consider the following background to the establishment of a girls’ madrasa, Al-Batul Mohila Madrasa, in 1997.

We, some Islamic learned persons [Maulana Abdus Sattar, Maulana Mahfuzul Hasan who is now the director, Hafez Maulana Zalal-ul-Islam], discussed with one another the necessity of a girl’s madrasa in Brahmanbaria town. We also discussed the need for one with a physician [Dr. Zahirul Haq], who is a generous donor. We mentioned that he had some lands at Collegepara and we were planning to establish a girl’s madrasa and therefore we were seeking his opinion. He donated four decimal [a unit of land area approximately equal to 1/100 acre or 40.46 square meters]. We invited Harun Islamabadi [an eminent Islamic learned person from Chittagong district, who is the brother-in-law of Maulana Zalal-ul-Islam], who is also a noble donor, to come here and see the land and its location. He appreciated the location and suggested that we establish a madrasa. He also helped to secure financial support. With his funds, we began to construct the madrasa, beginning with a five-storey building. Initially, we began to build the first floor and launched the madrasa at the house of the physician. The purpose of the initiative was to educate women in Islam, since the very beginning of a child’s education starts with the mother.[169]

Although religious motivation might have some causal effect on the establishment of a madrasa, it is not the foremost reason. Rather, the cause

is the social context in which the ulama have limited life choices. All the founder members of Al-Batul Mohila Madrasa are Islamic-educated persons from Quomi madrasas. Their individual networked worlds, both within and beyond their locality, serve as a useful means for founding a madrasa. The contact between the founding members of ulama of Al-Batul Madrasa and Maulana Harun Islamabadi, who was titled ‘Islamabadi’[170] (devotee of Islam) for his continuous economic and moral contribution to Islam—and who is credited and much revered among the Quomi ulama circle in Bangladesh for leading one of the country’s biggest and oldest Quomi madrasas at Patia in Chittagong district—is an example of how individual networking functions beyond a particular locality. The name of Harun Islamabadi, as mentioned on madrasa billboards and in other campaign materials, as the leading founder of the madrasa denotes how the ulama of Al-Batul Madrasa try to get authorization from a religious authority of the Quomi ulama circle in the country. Associating itself with the name of such a religious authority on the one hand increases the status and prestige of a madrasa and on the other facilitates the opportunity to gain pedagogical authenticity and authority from others in the Quomi ulama circle. The networked world of ulama, as the case of Al-Batul Mohila Madrasa demonstrates, is not restricted internally; many ‘Muslim modernists’[171] are included in this circle, such as the physician, who like the ulama, patronized such schooling not merely out of religious commitment but to gain a higher social status in the locality since the giving of donations for educational and religious purposes is hitherto revered and admired.

Occasionally, personal interest and affiliation with particular religious groups could inspire the foundation of madrasas through religious networking, as suggested by the case of Darul Ajkar Giasul Uloom Madrasa in Brahmanbaria. The founder of the madrasa is Sufi Giasuddin Khan of Datiara, Brahmanbaria. He is the district representative of a Sufi clan called furfura pir[172] (spiritual preceptor). On the occasion of a visit of his spiritual guide—furfura pir—in 1990, he arranged a public religious gathering (mahfil). After the gathering, the chief spiritual guide visited his house and encouraged him to establish a mosque in his locality. Inspired by his spiritual preceptor (pir), he decided to donate five decimal lands for building a mosque in his locality. Afterwards, again inspired by his spiritual guide, he established a madrasa in 1991 in the same place where he founded the mosque. The madrasa was named after him. When he established the madrasa, his Sufi master also allowed him to

practice different forms of Islamic healing such as amulets (tabiz[173] and maduli[174]) and sacred water (pani-pora[175]) as remedies for those who are sick or affected by evil spirits. His Sufi master suggested that out of the amount of gift (hadia) he earned through this practice he should spend half for maintenance of the madrasa and the other half for maintenance of his family.[176] When I made a follow-up visit on him in 2008, I learnt that he had founded another madrasa in the same locality, a girls' madrasa named the Fatima (R) Mohila madrasa. He explained that the reason for setting up the madrasa was to educate women in din just as males were educated: 'My furfura pir told me that we teach the male students, not the female. If we don't teach the females also we would not be able to make any progress in Islam. So the objective of establishing this girls' madrasa is to teach Islam to the females. We should teach Islam to both the male and female.'[177] The establishment of both these madrasas by Sufi Giasuddin sheds light on how religious networking and individual interest contribute to the evolution of madrasa schooling. Since Sufi Giasuddin was the founder of two madrasas, his identity has been transformed from an ordinary disciple of a spiritual preceptor to that of a promoter of Islamic education.

**** Interpretative contestation within madrasas: Who are proper Muslims?

What are the beliefs of a proper Muslim? The answer to the question varies with the internal differentiation of interpretations and with the maslaki orientation of Islam in some madrasas in Brahmanbaria. In this section, I will draw a comparative illustration of two madrasas—the Jamia Islamia Yunusia Madrasa (hereinafter YM), the biggest Quomi madrasa, and the Darus Sunna Kamil Madrasa (hereinafter DSM), the biggest Aliya madrasa in Brahamanbaria—showing how their maslaki orientation of Islam differ on the question of being an 'authentic' Muslim.

YM can be considered emblematic of the local version of Deoband in Bangladesh, which is indoctrinated with 'Deobandi Islam.' The madrasa was established in 1914 by a Deobandi alim (Islamic scholar), Maulana Abu Taher Muhammad Yunus, after whom the madrasa was named. He came from India to dissuade 'Qadiani' confusion (fetna)—a

Muslim religious offshoot anathematized by mainstream Muslim for their belief in the prophecy of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d.1908) after Muhammad—in Brahmanbaria.[178] All the muhtamims, the directors of the madrasa, were graduates of Deoband. The eligibility and responsibility of the directors (muhtamim) outlined in a booklet of the madrasa notes that the director is the custodian of the madrasa and Islam, and he is required to be a follower of the Hanafi school of law (majhab) and must follow the accord of the Deobandi ulama, depicting YM's concern for sustaining 'Deobandi Islam' down to this day.[179] Being founded and promoted by a number of Deobandi scholars from the early twentieth century, YM became a local version of the Deoband madrasa in Bangladesh which remains committed to its patron—Deoband.

On the other hand, DSM which is located some three kilometers away from YM at Vadugarh in the Brahmanbaria municipal area was established in 1964 by a group of ulama. One of the oldest mosques—Sahi Masjid—founded in 1663 during the Mughal period (1526–1858) is adjacent to the madrasa premises. The khatib (religious leader) of that mosque and the local municipal commissioner were the leading founders of this madrasa. Though it is an Aliya madrasa maintained and supervised by the government, some of the ulama serving as teachers in this madrasa have a close maslaki affiliation with Barelvi. They are indoctrinated with the theological precept of Ahmad Riza Khan (d.1921) of Bareilly and his movement—ahl-i sunnat wal jamaat, which places emphasis on intercession and Muhammad's life in a ritualized form of devotion, a stance which is antithetical to the ulama of YM, as it is to their patron Deoband. Though the ulama of YM, like Deoband, claim that their creed (aqida) is also based on the followers of the people of the prophetic tradition (ahl-i sunnat wal jamaat), the interpretative differentiation on the status of the Prophet markedly differs between the ulama of YM and those of DSM, while each asserts that its understanding of the Prophet is 'authentic' and in accordance with the scriptural guidance of Islam. The following assertion depicts the position of the ulama of DSM who are opposed to the theological precept of YM.

The Deobandi creed (aqida) is based on Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab of Arabia … They are not the true followers of the people of the prophetic tradition (ahl-i sunna wal jamaat) … Our creed is

founded on that belief that Rasul’s [the Prophet] position is just after Allah. And so do we believe. There are some other rules of guidance (masla) that differentiate between us and those [Deobandi followers]. For instance, they believe Rasul as a person who is made of mud but we believe he is a man made of light (nur). They negate the concept of spiritual preceptor (pir). They also believe that Allah’s holy men (wali) cannot help us and after their death they don’t have any power. But we believe that even after death we can seek help from them; they can mediate for us with Allah. Rasul is the messenger of gaeb [Ar. ghayib, unseen] … Our creed is Allah teaches Rasul the complete knowledge of the sky (asman) and the earth (jamin). He knows the knowledge of gaeb.[180]

The ulama associated with YM are strongly against such a doctrine. They assert that considering the prophet as a possessor of the knowledge of the unseen is unauthentic, according to the Quran and the prophetic tradition (hadith).

Allah observes what you and I are talking about, thinking and doing. As Muslims we usually believe that. What you bear in your mind and what you are supposed to say a few minutes later is known to Allah. And they (Barelvi) believe that it is known to the Prophet also. This is the difference (between us and them). It is the difference similar to the distance between land and sky … They believe that if we do something in the name of our Prophet he is able to be present with us. Islam does not hold such belief and thought. Concrete evidence from the Quran and the prophetic tradition rules out such belief.[181]

Although the ulama of both madrasas—YM and DSM—assert that their creed (aqida) is based on the Quran, the prophetic tradition, the Hanafi school of jurisprudence and the path of the followers of the prophetic tradition (ahl-i Sunna wal Jamaat),[182] some aspects of doctrinal differentiation lead these ulama to a contesting situation where both sides claim that their doctrinal stances are ‘true.’ The ulama of YM contemplate that it is their religious duty to protect the Muslim from any sinful innovation (bidat). In the preamble of a booklet on Bidati

(those responsible for sinful innovation), Maulana Mufti Mobarak Ullah, the deputy Islamic jurist-consultant (naib-i mufti) and scholar of prophetic tradition (muhaddith) of YM stated that a group of people in the country calling themselves devotees of the prophet (asiki rasul) are breaching the ‘true iman (faith on God) and the creed’ of common Muslims and are encouraging common Muslim people to perform polytheism (shirk) by misusing the name of Sunni (Kasemi, 2005). Though Maulana Mubarak Ullah does not refer specifically to those who are breaching the ‘true’ Islam, he certainly points his finger at the Barelvi followers. Citing several Quranic injunctions, prophetic tradition and jurisprudential interpretation, the booklet rules out all the doctrinal tenets of Barelvi followers. Referring to the Deobandi ulama, the booklet nullifies the notion of professing Muhammad as a possessor of the knowledge of unseen and hazir u nazir—the two principle theological precepts of Barelvi tradition. It reasons that the ulama who believe in such theological precepts are engaged in shirk, that is, associating Muhammad as the partner of Allah. This doctrinal interpretative contestation, therefore, is an example of understanding how the Deobandi ulama associated with a particular madrasa, in this case the YM, differentiate themselves from other denominational thought held by other ulama in the same locality by a process of ‘othering’ another doctrinal precept and its followers as if the (other) interpretation is ‘unauthentic.’ For the Barelvi, the same process occurs in reverse. Thus, madrasas are the functional bases for transmitting a group of ulama’s denominational orientation and its creed in which the conceptualization and formation of Muslim identity is always contestable and debatable.

*** Contestation for pedagogical and religious authority

The differentiation of madrasas is not only restricted to different denominational orientations but also to diverse pedagogical and institutional approaches. Ulama have their own reasons with regard to ‘positionality’[183] where they have the opportunity to cultivate their religious authority in their own domain of social and religious spaces with a plurality of notions, ideas and pedagogical conceptions of Islamic education.

**** Pedagogical contestation within madrasas

The primary pedagogical contestation within madrasas in Bangladesh is the difference between Aliya and Quomi. Each claims that their pedagogical method is the correct one. The Quomi madrasas' ulama argue that the religious education imparted in the Aliya madrasa is heavily burdened with modern disciplinary subjects, and hence is remote from a 'proper' Islamic education. On the other hand, the ulama of Aliya consider Quomi pedagogy as 'inferior' to the Aliya system because of their rigidity in maintaining a 'traditional' Islamic pedagogical learning system. Consider the following assertion of a teacher of the Aliya madrasa.

A Quomi madrasa is not better than an Aliya madrasa since the Quomi madrasa students' learning is one-sided; they know nothing about the other side [i.e. modern general education]. We allow the students who passed grade eight in a Quomi madrasa to be admitted to grade four in the Aliya madrasa. We allow the students who completed Daura-i Hadith in the Quomi system to be admitted to grade eight in the Aliya madrasa. They study the same Arabic text here that they studied before [in Quomi madrasa] but the difference is that they used to study in Urdu while we teach the same in Bengali.[184]

The ulama of the Aliya madrasas differ markedly from the Quomi ulama on the issue of Urdu and Persian lessons in madrasas. They argue that Urdu and Persian lessons are not necessary and should be substituted by Bengali. On the contrary, the Quomi ulama favor Urdu and Persian teaching in addition to Bengali. They contend that since in the past many seminal literary works on various aspects of Islam and its interpretation were written either in Urdu or Persian by many noble Islamic scholars, there is no choice but to study these languages. This pedagogical differentiation leads the ulama of both types of madrasas to a debate; the ulama of Aliya madrasas contend that the Quomi madrasas' ulama claim their pedagogy to be 'perfect' simply because of their inclusion of Urdu and Persian lessons, although there is no significant difference between the Aliya and Quomi madrasas in the teaching of the Quran, the prophetic tradition and fundamental tenets of Islamic knowledge.

But now we don’t need Urdu in Bangladesh and it is applicable in some parts of Pakistan. Persian is needed only if you go to Iran; otherwise nowhere else in the world is Persian necessary. I often suggest to the Quomi ulama that they could change their Urdu and Persian lessons. What is the necessity of these languages? Is Urdu necessary for studying three kitab (texts) to bother the students? We rejected Urdu. It is fully abolished. Persian is also rejected. It is just an optional subject. So far as I know no one studies Persian and in reality it is not necessary. Instead of Persian, one studies political science. Instead of Urdu, we teach social studies, political science, and psychology.[185]

The preference for sustaining the Urdu and Persian languages is intricately intertwined with the question of authorizing space for many Quomi ulama. Neither Urdu nor Persian is taught in any other educational institutions as they are taught from the very beginning of school life in Quomi madrasas in Bangladesh. Many Quomi madrasa ulama are still the bearers of these languages. If lessons in these languages are abolished, the ‘space of authoring’ of such ulama would diminish. In that sense, the preference for Urdu and Persian lessons in the madrasa is the expression of the ulamas’ struggle to maintain their authorizing space where they can cultivate and practice these languages in relation to Islamic knowledge.

**** Institutional differentiation of madrasas

The ulama compete within different institutional nexuses of madrasas. They have complex power relations and their ‘positionality.’ The case of the Bangladesh Jamiatul Madarisin, an association for Aliya madrasa teachers, located in the capital city, is here illustrative. The organization was established in 1937 with a view to developing madrasa education and tackling the problems and challenges the madrasas and their ulama face in modern times.[186] Today, it is a government-approved organization with a large complex of mosque and office premises and a network of offices throughout the entire country.[187] Though it is an association of more than 200,000 teachers who work in Aliya madrasas, it also functions as a public religious sphere where the voices of ulama are to be heard regarding the diverse aspects of Islamic subjectivities; an endeavor for reconciliation of differentiation within ulama circles. For instance, in an organizational

meeting, the ulama from all over the country made a declaration that recognizes differentiation within the ulama. According to the clauses of the declaration, all the pir-mashayikh (generally referred to as ulama; mashayikh pl. of sheikh, title of Sufi master or Muslim descended from the Companions) should work together with a view to spreading and implementing Islam for the sake of fostering greater interest in Islam; any law that goes against the tenet of the Quran and the role model of the prophet must be defended; Islamic scholars (alim, sing. of ulama) should avoid taking an oppositional stance with each other; and action should be taken against those ulama who brand many Islamic practices, such as observing the night of forgiveness (laylat-ul barat), the night of ascent of the prophet to Allah (laylat-ul miraj), the day of mourning the slaying of the prophet's grandson in Shia Islam (ashura), the birth anniversary of the prophet (id-i miladunnabi), visiting grave-shrines (majar) of the holy men in Islam (wali), as sinful innovation (bidat).[188] The ulama of the organization are also concerned with the 'propagation' of media, which are breaching the 'authentic' creed (aqida) of Islam and hence have argued for the establishment of Islamic TV in aid of the ulama (Inqilab, ud).[189] Even though the organization's primary concern is to unify the ulama, it generated further fissures, with the establishment of the Madrasa Sikhsok Parishad (Association for Madrasa Teachers) in 2006 which opposed the Jamiatul Madarisin on the grounds that it primarily fails to address the original purpose of the organization, that of serving the group's vested interests. The important facet of the newly established organization is that it was formed with the political leaders of Jamaat-i Islami,[190] an action unacceptable to the present ulama of Jamiatul Madrisin who oppose any political influence on their organization.

Our Jamiatul Madarisin is an apolitical organization. Jamaat-i Islam wants to use our teachers politically. We are against it. We, the madrasa teachers, have some differences with regard to the creed in Islam (aqida) with Jamaat-i Islami. In reality Jamaat-i Islami is a cadre-based organization. They operate according to their ideology and their operation is not limited, whether it is an Aliya or a Quomi madrasa. Especially, the ulama of Aliya have been speaking up against Jamaat since the British and Pakistan period. Here, a number of Islamic learned men and scholars differ with some writings of Maududi.[191]

The scope of this section does not allow for the discussion of the complex political differentiation within the ulama, but it is evident enough here to argue that the differentiation associated with Jamiatul Madarisin is the manifestation of how the ulama compete for their influence in the public religious sphere with different techniques of knowledge and power.

On the other hand, the institutional nexus of the Quomi madrasas also have important facets of differentiation. For instance, Bangladesh Befaqul Madarisil Arabia (Bangladesh Quomi Madrasa Education Board), which is known as the ‘Befaq Board,’ and which was founded in 1978 by a group of ulama, is trying to integrate all variants of Quomi madrasas within a common framework of schooling methodology, but they have failed to do so because of disavowal by different factions of the ulama within the Quomi madrasa. Nearly 2,000 madrasas are affiliated with the board, leaving a preponderant number of Quomi madrasas all over the country outside of its jurisdiction.[192] Many ulama prefer an individual authorizing space where they will have the autonomy of their own religious authority, maintaining the distinctiveness of their own madrasa. This position has led to the emergence of several Quomi madrasa boards, often centered on one madrasa founded by a local eminent Islamic scholar.[193] Such individually controlled madrasas assert their distinctiveness that differentiates them from others and, hence, prefer not to conform within a system. To substantiate this assertion the case of the Nurani and Nadiatul Quran system of madrasa schooling, both of which were innovated by an individual Islamic scholar, is illustrative here. Nurani refers to a particular system of primary level Islamic schooling, three years in tenure, which aims to produce ‘proper’ Muslim individuals from childhood by teaching lessons on basic Islamic rituals as well as 65 prophetic traditions (hadith) and 66 Quranic passages. Maulana Qari Belayet Hosan is credited for his innovation of the system. This system of madrasa schooling has since proliferated all over the country. Nearly 10,000 branches have a central board—Nurani Talimul Quran Board—in Dhaka.[194] On the other hand, like Nurani, the aim of Nadiatul Quran madrasa is to spread Quranic lessons into every Muslim house in order to produce ‘proper’ Muslims. Maulana Abdul Ohab, a Deobandi alim of Brahmanbaria, is credited for the proliferation of the Nadia system of madrasa schooling, of which there are nearly 10,000 branches, all over the country. The central board of these madrasas, Nadiatul

Quran Board, is situated at the house of Maulana Abdul Ohab at Bhuiyapara in the Brahmanbaria municipal area.[195] Both the Nurani and Nadia madrasas claim their system of madrasa schooling is distinct and righteous for the production of ‘proper’ Muslims and therefore are belligerent in their opposition to submitting to the oversight of the Befaq Board. This difference not only manifests the differentiation of madrasas’ institutions but also suggests how the ulama compete for their influence and authority in their own authorizing space.

*** The madrasa as a site for reconstructing Muslim cultural identity?

In many Western societies, the emergence and maintenance of Islamic education are associated with the preference of parents for their children to be attached to their Muslim cultural tradition, by which they can distinguish their identity in the multicultural societies where they live (Merry, 2007). Is the same assumption applicable in the context of Muslim societies, where madrasas function not only to teach Islamic religious knowledge but also to produce a cultural identity of being Muslim? Contemporary Muslim societies in the world are facing rapid changes through the process of globalization, ‘Westernization,’ modern mass education, new communication technologies, and above all, the threatening pressure of global culture. Since the cultural identity of being Muslim is associated with these complex changes, very often compounded, many Muslims consider the madrasa as an alternative way of nurturing their cultural tradition, one that connects them to an ideal past and Islamic role model (Graham, 1993: 522). This process of connection or the process of identification as being Muslim is neither uninventive nor unchanged, as suggested here; rather, it is constantly adaptive within the changing facets of their society and among madrasas and the ulama as well.

Although Islamic education is the doorway to being Muslim, in many cases the ulama also regard modern education as a pathway to compete with the modern world. As the principal of the Brahmanbaria Cadet Madrasa said:

I have two identities. First, I am a human being and then I am a Muslim. To lead life as a human being in the world, I need to acquire necessary knowledge both for myself and for the country. To lead my life as a Muslim, I

need Islamic education also … Religion shows the path. No one can define the destiny of life without religion. I am a Muslim and I feel the necessity for both worldly education and education after this world. My Hereafter (akhirat) will depend on how I am leading my life in this world. This world (duniya) is the working field of Hereafter (akhirat) … Thus, without this world Hereafter has no meaning … If Islam is claimed to be the most superior religion, how will the superiority come? Will it come by religion only? No. We have to achieve superiority in religion, science, and in all other fields. Then, we can be considered as one of the best nations in the world.[196]

During my fieldwork, I observed that many madrasas, particularly the Quomi ones, maintain strict discipline among students. Such discipline is closely associated with how madrasas shape the Muslim identity; by encouraging students to follow an Islamic etiquette and manner, that is, adab as well as by teaching them Islamic practice and doctrinal precepts. Maintaining such etiquette by madrasa students, in many cases, is obligatory. For instance, in YM, all the students before their enrolment are required to sign a paper outlining the disciplinary rules. According to this paper, all students should do their everyday activities in accordance with God's command and the role model of the prophet. They are required to abide by maintaining the attire and the haircut of the prophet (Sunnati-dress and Sunnati-haircut), reciting the Quran, performing prayer every day and so on. They are not allowed to smoke and to move around without prior consent.[197] In most cases students of Quomi madrasas follow an Islamic etiquette and manner, and many ulama deem it as the first and foremost identity marker of being a 'proper' Muslim. In contrast, most of the Aliya madrasas are not of the seminary type like their Quomi counterparts where the students attend the school from outside. In that sense, the Aliya madrasas are not able to maintain strict discipline like the Quomi or to impose Islamic etiquette and manners on their students due to which the ulama of the Quomi madrasas claim that their method of teaching is more 'authentic' than that of Aliya madrasas in terms of promoting a sense of Muslim identity among their learners. At the same time, the Aliya madrasa students' conceptualization of Muslim selfhood has been intermingled because of the intense focus on modern education, which leads the ulama of Quomi madrasas to censure the Aliya madrasas as teaching and promoting an 'improper' Islamic identity. In

response to such allegations, the ulama of the Aliya madrasas have their own arguments.

It is true that there are some differences regarding Islamic etiquette (akhlakh) between them [Quomi] and us. The reason is that our system is different. After graduation in Dakhil from an Aliya madrasa, students enter college. But the students of Quomi cannot enter any other institution even when they graduate with the highest degree. For students admitted here, the dress and etiquette of the prophet (sunnati lebas) is mandatory. But after graduation we cannot control what they will wear. We advise them to follow the dress and etiquette of the prophet. They [Quomi ulama] try to claim their system is a more righteous Islamic education … The point is they are also spreading Islam and so are we.[198]

Most of the Aliya madrasa ulama also contend that since their students are embracing modern education, they tend to wear ‘modern dress’ which does not necessarily mean that they are not observing the basic religious obligations as individuals. One Islamic scholar exemplifies that his son is studying for an MA in Political Science at Dhaka University after his Kamil graduation from an Aliya madrasa, and he has a daughter pursuing a Master of Business Administration after her Dakhil graduation. Though his son and daughter often wear ‘modern dress,’ they do not leave Islamic practices or stray from religious obligations. In this sense, he argues, Aliya students are also maintaining ‘proper’ Islamic good deeds-etiquette (amal-akhlakh).[199] The ulama’s contesting notions on how madrasas can produce a ‘proper’ Muslim selfhood through Islamic education and training Islamic manner and etiquette (adab), again, suggest that the concept of Muslim identity within the madrasas and within the ulama circle is marked by plural forms of argument and contention—that is refashioning with the changing facets of society.

*** Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to illuminate how madrasas and their custodians are fraught with competing doctrinal orientations to Islam, ideas,

conceptions and contentions. Considering the case of the Brahmanbaria municipality, this study explicates that the madrasas in contemporary Bangladesh share historically the different interpretative traditions, that is, maslaki traditions of Sunni Islam, originating in nineteenth and twentieth century South Asia. In varied circumstances, the contestation among different madrasa systems is not enlivened by the inclination to different Islamic denominational orientations and the manner in which such orientations are accentuated within the realm of madrasas. The contestation is conjoined with the techniques of social contention by which certain theological interpretations of Islam struggle for social legitimization in the sphere of Muslim cultural tradition. In that sense, the madrasas' functionality in Bangladesh is not only delimited to its existence as a social or spiritual entity which provides education with religious morality to the Muslims (Bano, 2007); rather, it is a primary site for facilitating and generating the internal reasoning, debates and contestation within Islam in a discursive manner wherein both religious and social issues intricately interplay in refashioning the larger context of Muslim cultural tradition. What follows from this is that madrasas promotes certain denominational aspects of Islam (such as Deobandi, Barelvi) as a way of guiding Muslim identity. I have shown in the above discussion that for many religious and learned Muslims or in a more generic sense—ulama—madrasas are those places where they can resuscitate the ways of being 'Muslim,' even though being a proper 'Muslim' is equivocal and contentious in terms of doctrinal inclination, social and behavioral etiquette. In equating Islamic religious education with the necessity of forming Muslim selfhood and identity, both the custodians of state-approved (Aliya) and non-state (Quomi) madrasas disparage each other on the question of pedagogical methodology that is germane to the process of constructing virtuous and devout Muslims. What follows from this, as I have argued, is that pedagogical exclusivity is not only associated ineluctably with the process of formation of 'proper' Muslim selfhood. It also seemingly associated to the other techniques of power—such as the ulama's individual fame and scholarly religious authority, social and religious networking and the discursive nature of madrasa-related religious forums. These techniques generate the contestation with regard to the formation of Muslim selfhood and simultaneously function as facilitators for securing the authorizing realm of social and religious space for many madrasa custodians. Through this contestation certain discourses of being 'Muslim' are not only given more weight over others but also permit the madrasa-educated Muslims in Bangladesh to relocate their social existence using their religious dexterity that is undervalued in the public space.

[140] The use of the notion of ‘discursive’ for understanding Islamic tradition in academic scholarship can be traced back to Marshall Hodgson’s seminal work Venture of Islam (1974). Eickelman (1982: 12) also pursued the utility of thinking Islam as discursive: ‘What is “traditional” in Islam is necessarily subject to ongoing debate and interpretation.’Asad (1986: 14) reiterated: ‘An Islamic discursive tradition is simply a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.’

[141] The term ‘quasi-sectarian’ refers to the doctrinal differentiation and interpretation of certain Islamic precepts within a Muslim sect such as Sunni. This is used by Metcalf (1982: 264).

[142] Alam (2008a) prefers the use of the word maslaki instead of sectarian commonly to denote such differences. According to Messick (2005), ‘maslak’ can be understood as an ‘interpretative community,’ the interpretation of which is founded on interpretative worlds by ‘othering’ other interpretative communities in Islam (cf. Alam, 2008a: 3, n.5). Like Alam I also prefer maslaki since it rightly denotes the interpretative differentiation even within a particular sect like Sunni or Shia.

[143] Huq’s (2008) explication is illustrative here to understand how the women of the leading female Islamist organization in Bangladesh are facing global cultural challenges as well as other challenges of modernity in their everyday lives and how they are propounded through Quranic reading circles to renew their ‘belief’ with a view to fending off such challenges.

[144] Eaton (1994), Roy (1983), Ahmed (1996/1981), Ahmed (1996), Uddin (2006) are some noted academic works on Islam in Bangladesh.

[145] Asad (1986: 24) defines ‘A practice is Islamic because it is authorized by the discursive traditions of Islam, and is so taught to Muslims—whether by an alim, a khatib, a Sufi shaykh, or an untutored parent.’

[146] For historical account of such trends in Bangladesh see Ahmed (1988) and Roy (1983).

[147] See Eickelman (1992), Eickelman and Anderson (2003/1999) and Robinson (1993) on how mass higher education and modern technology facilitate the transformation of Muslim societies.

[148] By ‘culturally Muslim’ I mean those Muslims in Bangladesh who are not regular in practicing Islamic practices such as daily prayers and Ramadan. These Muslims occasionally perform Friday’s congregational prayer and attend certain Muslim festivals such as id-ul fitr and id-ul-azha.

[149] Raju (2008: 125–126) contends that the identity of Muslims in Bangladesh is imbued with two contradictory facets: a ‘cultural-nationalist’ approach which prioritizes Bengalis’ indigenous cultural practices and considers Islam as alien, and a ‘pro-Islamic’ approach which considers Islam as part of the indigenous culture. According to Raju, within the backdrop of skirmishes the identity of ‘Bengali-ness’ and ‘Muslim-ness’ was always in motion. The notion of ‘Muslim-ness’ was a result of a growing communal consciousness among Bengali Muslim peoples that emerged in the wake of the nineteenth and twentieth century’s Islamic revivalist movement and on the backdrop of the formation of communal ideology between Hindu and Muslim. On the other hand, the notion of ‘Bengali-ness’ rooted with its ethno-linguistic identity had emerged particularly after the Bengali language movement in 1952 in Bangladesh against the Pakistani rulers’ decision to make Urdu a state language for both East (then Bangladesh) and West Pakistan. On the formation of a communal ideology in twentieth-century Bengal, see Datta (1999), and for how a sense of ‘Muslim-ness’ and ‘Bengali-ness’ influence the conflict of Bengali and Bangladeshi nationalism, see Uddin (2006: 117–153)

[150] Ahlus-Sunna wal-Jamaah denotes ‘a highly emotive emic identity marker, which in normative etic discourse means nothing more than a label

to denote allegiance to the Sunni or dominant grouping of Muslims' (Geaves 2005: 2).

[151] Hanafiate refers to the Sunni majhab, a system or school of Islamic jurisprudence, ascribed to Abu-Hanifah (699–767 CE) (Hodgson, 1974: 514).

[152] Shah Waliullah (1703–62) was a leading ulama of Delhi who laid emphasis on studying 'transmitted science' (manqulat) rather than 'rational science' (maqulat). He popularized the six canonical texts that are sihah sitta of Prophetic tradition in the Indian subcontinent (Sikand 2005: 48–49). On his life and influence on the Deoband Madrasa, see Metcalf (1982: 35–43) and Faruqi (1963: 135–136).

[153] On dars-i nizami curriculum, see Robinson (2001: 48–51).

[154] From its medieval heritage, Islamic education is bifurcated in manqulat/naqli (transmitted) and maqulat/aqli (rational) sciences. Transmitted or revealed knowledge refers to the knowledge of God and His messenger which is unchangeable such as Quran and the prophetic tradition, whereas rational knowledge denotes those branches of knowledge which are based on human intellect that is changeable. See Metcalf (1982: 19) and Nasr (1987: 126).

[155] For discussion on the life of Ahmad Riza Khan and his movement, see Sanyal (1996, 1998) and Metcalf (1982: 296–314).

[156] There is no significant academic work that illustrates a detailed account of the Ahl-i Hadith movement. See a prima facie discussion in Metcalf (1982: 268–296).

[157] On Nadwatul Ulama, see Metcalf (1982: 335–347) and Hartung (2006: 135–157).

[158] For how Jamaat-i Islami understands Islam, see the writings of its founder Mawdudi (1988); also see Nasr (1994).

[159] Ahmadiyya Muslims consider Prophet Muhammad as a law-bearing prophet (Shariati nabi) while accepting Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as ‘zilli nabi’, i.e. ‘shadow prophet’, who promotes the messages of Muhammad. For fuller discussion, see Friedmann (2003).

[160] For how the British patronized the establishment of Calcutta Aliya madrasa, see the ‘Minute by Warren Hastings, governor-general of Fort William (Calcutta) in Bengal’ in Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir (1999: 74–75).

[161] Ward is the smallest administrative unit of a municipality which is composed with several para or moholla, a cluster of homesteads.

[162] Cadet Colleges are considered one of the most important seats of general schooling in terms of their academic performance and sophisticated disciplinary practices of schooling. The prime objectives of these colleges are to produce prospective skilled army officers and hence the colleges are directly maintained by armed forces. The first Cadet College was established in 1958 at Faujdarhat in Chittagong district by the then Pakistan government. At present there are 12 Cadet Colleges in different regions of Bangladesh.

[163] In these madrasas the course duration of Daura-i-Hadith, the highest degree, is for eight years while it is 15–16 years in their counterpart boys’ Quomi madrasas. The custodians of these madrasas contend that if the female students cross their puberty period they could get married and hence would not be able to study further. Thus they shorten the duration of lessons in order to provide the advance religious education to the female students within a short time, particularly before their marriage.

[164] These data were provided by an officer of Madrasa Education Board, Dhaka in February 2007.

[165] According to the lists provided by the municipal office of Brahmanbaria, March 2008.

[166] According to the information provided by the Upazilla office of Brahmanbaria, September 2004.

[167] The term ‘space of authoring’ is one aspect of changing identity of human agency in the sense that Holland et al. (1998) argued. ‘Space of authoring’ refers to the ‘answerability’ of the world where ‘authorship is not a choice—but the form of the answer’ and ‘a matter of orchestration:’ of arranging identifiable social discourses/practices that are one’s resources (which Bakhtin glossed as ‘voices’) in order to craft a response in a time and space defined by others’ standpoints in activity, that is in a social field conceived as the ground of responsiveness (Holland et al. 1998: 272). In concordance with the meaning I view madrasa as a ‘space of authoring’ for ulama where their ‘voices’ are to be heard and where their responses are to be perceptible as form of answer resulting from the social field grounded on multiplied and multifaceted aspects of responsiveness. In that sense the evolvement of madrasa means the creation of social and religious space for ulama and by ulama as ‘ space of authoring.’

[168] Dakhil, equivalent to Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Alim, equivalent to Higher Secondary School Certificate of general schools, degrees of Aliya madrasa had been recognized officially in 1985 and 1987 respectively. The other two degrees, Fazil as equivalent to Bachelor level and Kamil as equivalent to Master level, are to be recognized as the government promised by amending two necessary laws—Islamic University Act, 1980 (Act XXXVII of 1980) and Madrasah Education Ordinance, 1978 (Ord. No. IX of 1978) (Bangladesh Gazette, 2006a, 2006b). On the other hand, though the government vouched for recognizing the Quomi system of education by establishing a separate board of Quomi madrasa, it is still uncertain.

[169] Interview of Maulana Abdus Sattar, founding member and teacher of Al-Batul Mohila Madrasa, Brahmanbaria, March 25, 2008.

[170] ‘Islamabadi’ as a title usually awarded to show respect to individual alim or even to other individual Muslim by his followers and subordinates or by other ulama or by local people for their donations and other contributions to Islamic institutions like mosque, madrasa, etc.

[171] Zaman (2005: 82) defines ‘Muslim modernist’ as ‘those who have been educated in modern Western (or Westernized) institutions of learning and have sought to rethink or adapt Muslim practices, institutions, and discourses in light both of what they take to be “true” Islam—as opposed to how the Islamic tradition has evolved in history—and of how they see the challenges and opportunities of modernity.’

[172] Furfura is the name of a clan of spiritual preceptors originating from the village of Furfura in Hooghly district in West Bengal, India. The clan is popularly known as furfura sharif, which has networked disciples in almost every district in Bangladesh. They had a central office at Mirpur in Dhaka. Details about furfura are unknown due to the paucity of any academic work on it.

[173] An amulet, which contains some sacred text or incantation for the cure of illness or to scare away evil spirits.

[174] Also a kind of amulet similar to tabiz.

[175] Pani refers to water and pora to utterance. It is a form of Islamic healing where Islamic preceptors utter some sacred passage onto water which is given as remedy for curing illness or evil spirits.

[176] Interview with Sufi Giasuddin Khan, September 2004.

[177] Interview with Sufi Giasuddin Khan, March 24, 2008.

[178] According to the recorded interview of Mufti Nurullah, now the muhtamim, director of the madrasa, September 2004, and conversations with several other ulama in the town.

[179] Nesabnama of YM, a booklet written in Urdu, where curriculum and duties and responsibilities of the directors and teachers are stated.

[180] Recorded interview of Md. Abdul Matin, Vice-Principal, Vadugarh Darus Sunna Kamil Madrasa, March 30, 2008.

[181] Recorded interview of Imam and teacher of YM, March 7, 2007.

[182] Ahl-i Sunnat wal Jamaat, Bangladesh, situated in Dhaka, is the central organization of Barelvi ulama of Bangladesh, though for the Deobandis so far there is no such central organization.

[183] According to Holland et al. (1998: 271) ‘positionality’ is a context of identity which refers to ‘the “hereness” and “thereness” of people; it is inextricably linked to power, status, and rank.’ In the modern era peoples’ identities, as Holland et al. (1998) suggests, are not fixed with particular social and cultural worlds, rather with different contexts of ‘figured worlds’. In that sense ‘positionality’ denotes how the people connect with their changing ‘figured worlds.’ I use the term in a similar sense to denote how the ulama configure their status of religious authority with positing different ‘positionality’ in a ‘figured’ Muslim cultural and social world that is refashioning.

[184] Interview with Md. Jalaluddin, teacher of Brahmanbaria Islamia Dakhil Madrasa, September 2004.

[185] Interview with Maulana Shibbir Ahmad Momtaji, Secretary-General of Jamiatul Madarisin Bangladesh, national association for Aliya Madrasa teachers, Dhaka, March 20, 2008.

[186] For instance, this organization is demanding the official recognition of Fazil (Bachelor) and Kamil (Master) degrees. It is also demanding a fully fledged government facility for all Aliya madrasas like other public schools, and for establishment of an Independent Public Islamic and Arabic University.

[187] The government gives the land on which the organization is situated. The complex of the mosque is funded by the government of Iraq from a religious endowment (waqf) fund of the Sufi master Abdul Quadir Jilani. According to the interview with Maulana Shibbir Ahmad Momtaji, Secretary-General, Bangladesh Jamiatul Madarisin, Dhaka, March 20, 2008.

[188] Laylat-ul barat refers to the auspicious night of 15 Shaban, the Arabic month. This night is observed largely by many pious Muslims in South Asia, though it is alien to many Arabic Muslim people. Some ulama claim that the celebration of this night is bidah (reprehensible innovation). Laylat-ul miraj refers to the night of Ascent, the 27th day of Rajab month of Arabic, when Prophet Muhammad undertook a journey to Allah. Ashura is the 10th day of Muharram, which is commemorated by the Shia as a day of remembering and mourning the martyrdom of the grandson of the Prophet, Husayn ibn Ali. Id-i miladunnabi refers to the day when the Prophet was born and died, 12th Rabiul Awal. Ulama are diverse in their opinion on the authenticity of celebrating the day.

[189] One of the popular daily newspapers in Bangladesh Dainik Inqilab, a pro-Islamic newspaper, is believed to have been established by Jamiatul Madarisin. The founder editor of the daily Maulana, Abdul Mannan, was also the founder member of the organization. His son A.M.M. Bahauddin is the current President of the organization.

[190] For instance, the current President of Madrasa Sikhsak Parishad is Maulana Delwar Hosain Saydee, an Islamic preacher and former parliament member of Jamaat-i Islami, Bangladesh. The Vice-President of the organization is Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, assistant secretary-general of Jamaat.

[191] Interview with Maulana Shibbir Ahmad Momtaji, Secretary-General, Bangladesh Jamiatul Madarisin, Dhaka, March 20, 2008.

[192] Interview with Maulana Abdul Jabbar, Secretary-General, Bangladesh Quomi Madrasa Board, March 24, 2007.

[193] According to estimates there are at least 13 such individual alim controlled boards, which are scattered in different regions of the country (Prothom Alo 2006).

[194] Interview with Maulana Qari Faizullah, director, Nurani Talimul Quran Board, Dhaka, March 31, 2008. The board also supervises annual examination in all the Nurani branches of madrasas. It also provides training to the unemployed madrasa educated students who seek teaching jobs in Nurani madrasas. There are two kinds of training for the prospective teachers—Arabic course training for two months and English course training for one month. During the field visit I found some hundreds of students having their training.

[195] Interview with a teacher of Nadiatul Quran Central Madrasa, Brahmanbaria, March 25, 2008. The founder of the Nadia board also established the Nadia Publishing house in Dhaka which published popular Islamic texts for pre-primary and primary level madrasa pupils such as nadia kayeda, a booklet on introducing Arabic alphabets, nadia ampara, a booklet on selected Quranic verses, the Quran etc.

[196] Interview with Mobarak Hossan Akand, Principal, Brahmanbaria Cadet Madrasa, March 24, 2008.

[197] The conditions required to be followed by the students of Jamia Islamia Yunusia Madrasa, a handout written in Bengali and collected from the madrasa.

[198] Interview with Md. Abu Taher, Super (head teacher), Brahmanbaria Islamia Dakhil Madrasa, March 23, 2008.

[199] Interview with Maulana Shibbir Ahmad Momtaji, Secretary-General, Bangladesh Jamiatul Madarisin, Dhaka, March 20, 2008; the allegation of Quomi ulamas is based on the conversation with different ulama of Quomi madrasas in Brahmanbaria.

** 5. Islamic education in China: Triple discrimination and the challenge of Hui women’s madrasas

Masumi Matsumoto and Atsuko Shimbo

No country has experienced changes as dramatic as China has throughout the last three decades. The World Bank predicts that by 2030, China will be the world’s most prosperous country in terms of its gross domestic product (GDP) and foreign currency reserves. These new economic dynamics have deeply affected the lifestyle of China’s Muslims, whose population reached 21 million in 2007. The development of western consumerism, the rise in literacy, and increasing contact with Muslim countries has brought about new ethno-religious consciousness and socio-political claims.

Western scholars who have studied Muslim minorities in China have focused mainly on the Turkish-speaking Uyghur, most of whom are settled in Xinjiang, because of their political grievances and the government’s use of coercion against them. It is not our intention to downplay the State’s repression of any

ethnic and religious group in China, but the Uyghurs' plight is not representative of all Chinese Muslim communities. Other Muslim minorities have tried alternative survival tactics to get themselves integrated or recognized in Chinese society; one such group is the Hui.

The Hui, estimated at around 9.8 million in the 2000 census (Zhongguo Renmin Gongheguo Guojia Tongjiju, 2008: 87), comprises almost half of the Chinese Islamic community but a mere 0.75 per cent of the total Chinese population. Religious claims have allowed them to enlarge their social autonomy and address issues such as marginality, inequality, and the acknowledgment of their ethnic identity, while contributing to better national integration. The Hui have been influenced by an Islamic awakening, or revival, the subject of this chapter. We focus especially on the development of Islamic education for Hui women. The expansion of educational opportunities in both Islamic and secular subjects for Hui women has contributed to lessening women's marginalization in both the Hui and Chinese communities in three spheres: economic underdevelopment, ethnic intolerance and neglect, and gender discrimination. Although the struggle against discrimination seems to reinforce religious particularities, it does not necessary lead to a strict and exclusivist Islamization of education. Most often, women simply intend to make strategic use of both their Chinese and Islamic legal statuses for their benefit.

While our respective fieldwork studies have broadly dealt with the marginalization of Hui women in Chinese society, our special focus is Islamic education and the hybridizing process involving the secular and authoritarian state on the one hand and the religious claims involving Islamic identity on the other. This dynamic tension is at the basis Hui distinctiveness and educational dynamics.

*** The Hui community and the establishment of an educational system

The most populous of the ten national Muslim groups in China, the Hui claim to be descendants of Central Asian and Middle Eastern Muslim traders, soldiers, bureaucrats, sailors, and engineers. According to historians (Ma Shinian, 1988: 224–227; Qiu Shusen, 1996: 7–31; Li Xinghua et

al., 1998: 3–50), the first Muslim traders came to China during the Tang Dynasty (618–907) and settled in the coastal cities and Chang’an, the capital city at that time. The Yuan dynasty (1271–1368), known as the Mongolian era, saw the massive immigration of Muslims from Central Asia who married native Chinese women. Their descendants were the Hui, who were conferred Chinese nationality in 1936. The Hui eventually stopped using their mother tongues—Persian, Turkish, or Arabic—and adopted Chinese for everyday conversations since the Ming era (1368–1644), partly because of their intermarriage with the local Chinese and partly because of the pressure to assimilate into Chinese society. However, they maintained their native languages to teach the Islamic faith up to the end of the Qing era (1911), while upholding their religious faith and observing Islamic practices in their everyday life. Their pious lifestyle remained unchanged even in the wake of the profound modifications wrought by the twentieth century. For instance, 94.7 per cent of the Hui who live in the poor mountainous region of southern Ningxia fast during Ramadan, 69.2 per cent offer daily prayers, and 46.8 per cent (72.7 per cent of the women) are taught religion at home (Wang Zhengming and Tao Hong, 2003: 147).

Hui communities can be found mainly in the impoverished northwestern provinces of China: the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Gansu, Inner Mongolia, and Qinghai (see Figure 5.1). Although the group’s largest concentration is in Ningxia—about 1/3 of the area’s population[200]—significant numbers of Hui live in Gansu, Qinghai, and Xinjiang in China’s northwest; Beijing, Hebei, Henan, and Shandong in the centre; and Yunnan in the southwest.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-18.jpg][Figure 5.1 Map of China]]

Through their involvement in the nationalist movement, Hui religious and ethnic leaders were able to obtain a very special status in 1936: China’s Communist authorities recognized the Hui as a national minority (Matsumoto, 1999: 215–216). As such, they became entitled to religious freedom and equality with other nationalities. However, ethnic discrimination remains deeply entrenched among ordinary Chinese and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which continues to repress religious leaders and

their activities. Up to now, therefore, the two national principles of ethnic equality and religious freedom have remained nominal. The communist regime, which promotes atheistic socialism, discourages people from wearing religiously symbolic attire in public, such as veils or Muslim caps. In particular, party cadres are prohibited from performing any kind of religious practices in public. Moreover, religious associations in China are kept under CCP's surveillance and inspection. All clerics must obtain approval from the CCP and are obliged to preach to their congregations the importance of patriotism and the legitimacy of the Communist party's governance.

Thus the Hui are marginalized both as a religious minority in secular communist China and as an economically disadvantaged people, doomed to live in very impoverished areas. One must add gender discrimination, which has long been forgotten or neglected in the context of the male-dominated Han and Hui societies. Thus, Hui women have been forced to live under strict patriarchal control. The status of rural Hui women resembled that of Han women until about 1949. They were compelled to have their feet bound and were not allowed to study or go out of their homes. Women were valued for hard domestic work, chastity, obedience as daughters-in-law, and good mothers to their sons (Harris, 1947). Even after the revolution in 1949, the Hui in Ningxia lagged in literacy compared with the rest of the Chinese ethnicities, and Hui girls fared worse than Hui boys. Many families could not afford textbooks and other school expenses, which sometimes exceed a quarter of their annual income (Shimbo, 1995). Other serious obstacles included the 'feudal' idea of the predominance of men over women; the lack of female teachers; the secular and Marxist educational system wherein girls and boys were supposed to attend the same class; an early marriage for girls (generally 15–17 years old); and the belief that education would pull girls away from Islam. Until the Compulsory Education Act was promulgated in 1986, the majority of Hui girls, notably those living in Ningxia, remained illiterate.

**** Hui modern education in Ningxia during the first half of the twentieth century

Modern western-style education was introduced in China at the end of the Qing Dynasty, but its development in the Ningxia region did not follow the

same path as in other regions. Hui education mainly took the form of religious education at madrasas[201] from the early Qing era (1644–1911) until around the beginning of the twentieth century.

During the Republican period (1912–1949), which was characterized by the promotion of modernity, ethno-consciousness, and nationalism, a few male religious and other local leaders in the region began to note the importance of female education in increasing the ethno-religious strength of their community. They established a few female madrasas to promote Arabic literacy and Islamic education. These exceptional female madrasas, located in Gansu, Ningxia, and Yunnan taught not only elementary Arabic but also elementary Chinese writing to Hui girls (Laycock n.d.; Pictures of Pickens Collection 1934–35; Yao Jide, 2005: 96–97). Generally known as nüxues,[202] these female madrasas became the prototypes of women's Islamic schooling in contemporary China. However, in spite of the dramatic efforts of some Muslim intellectuals to promote the education of Hui girls, the number of nüxue remained low because of the lack of funds and the parents' unwillingness to educate their daughters. Thus, there were few educated Muslim girls in the Northwest. Nevertheless, education became the main concern of Muslim ahongs (religious authorities) and local Hui political leaders. They established modern schools that taught both Chinese and Arabic.

For example, Su Le (1868–1950) belonged to the gentry and was a successful entrepreneur at Weizhou in Tongxin County, Ningxia. He studied Chinese classic literature in preparation for the imperial examination and graduated from the Advanced Elementary School, a public school for boys in Pingyuan County, in 1906. Su Le was one of the founders of the Weizhou Islamic Girls School in 1905 as an extension to a mosque. Ahongs were in charge of teaching Arabic at that time. The Weizhou Islamic Girls School changed its name to Weizhou Girls Normal School in 1933. Although this was a public school, the Qur'an and religious doctrine were taught alongside Chinese and mathematics. In 1939, the school's name was once more changed to the Weizhou Girls Junior Elementary School (Li Xinghua, 2008: 73–88; Li Zongdao and Wang Kelin, 2000: 62–64; Tongxinxian jiaoyuzhi bianzuan xiaozu/Tongxinxian jiaoyuju, 1991: 139).

After the revolution of 1949, the government adopted various measures to boost public education in the Ningxia region to promote national integration; the establishment of Hui ethnic elementary schools was one such measure. Hui elementary schools were public schools, and Muslim children obtained scholarships in a government drive to encourage schooling. There were 28 lower Hui primary schools (one was exclusively for girls) and three complete elementary schools in 1954. Although the ratio of girls' enrolment remained very low, the school attendance rate of Hui children gradually increased (Ding Guoyong, 1993: 269–270).

**** The paradoxical impact of the cultural revolution

The Anti-Rightist Campaign in 1957, the Anti-Religion Movement triggered by the Tibet Uprising in 1958, and the anti-religious Cultural Revolution (1966—1976) severely crippled the educational conditions in the Ningxia region. All religious activities, including schools and classes run by ahongs, were banned, and countless ahongs and madrasa students were persecuted and exiled to the countryside for compulsory work. Many did not survive the rigors of starvation and violence. Religious books and writings, including the Qur'an and hadiths' collections, were burned or thrown away, and many mosques were destroyed. Some Muslims were even forced to feed pigs—animals that Muslims shun. Men were prohibited from growing beards, and women from wearing veils (Ma Lan, 2001: 29–31). The government banned practically everything related to religion and ethnicity, trampling over Muslim pride and social relations. During this period, private lay and religious schools established and run by local Hui leaders were forced to either close down or transform themselves into secular public schools in which Arabic was no longer taught.

At the end of the Cultural Revolution, the ban on religion was lifted gradually, spurring an unprecedented educational reassertion in Muslim areas. Religious and political Hui leaders not only reopened the girls' madrasas, built exclusively for Islamic education, but also invested in the establishment of girls' public schools. In contrast to madrasas, these new girls' public schools developed both secular and religious curricula and promoted national identity, loyalty to the party, coeducation, and gender equality. The

government was also eager to develop public schools in the region in order to promote national integration, and the ahongs had to bear this in mind while promoting their own Islamic agenda. Secular schooling contributed to the integration of Muslim women, raising their visibility and acceptability in the public sphere and giving them access to job opportunities. Simultaneously, this situation contributed to enlarging debates on Hui identity and its stance on modern education and women’s economic autonomy.

*** Educational development after the Cultural Revolution

**** The expanded role of Hui leaders

Until the end of the 1980s, the number of enrolled Hui girls remained low compared with their male counterparts, but quickly increased afterwards (Ningxia nütong jiaoyu yanjiu ketizu, 1995: 56–95; Ningxia Jiaoyu Kexue Yanjiusuo, 2001; Zhouwei, 1997: 291–292). Ahongs and local Hui leaders exerted notable efforts to improve girls’ school enrolment in Ningxia, building schools and promoting female education. Together with the government, they established public schools to improve the educational standards of Hui while striving to make both secular and religious education coexist in order to preserve religion and ethnic identity. The experience of three secular public schools founded in cooperation with ahongs and local Hui leaders shows how this process worked.

The Weizhou Girls Junior Elementary School in Tongxin County, converted into a co-ed school in 1953, was re-established in 1985. Ma Xinlan, the granddaughter of Su Le (one of the school’s founders, as mentioned earlier), was its new principal (Ding Guoyong, 1992: 134–140). Taking advantage of their social prestige, liberal ahongs and Hui leaders advocated the importance of girls’ education at Islamic festivals and other gatherings (Ma Xinlan, 1995: 18–32). Their zealous persuasion had a powerful impact on the Hui, who had believed that public school education would weaken the girls’ Islamic faith. In order to sweep away parents’ fears, the curriculum was designed to meet the demands of devout Muslims who wished to make their daughters learn basic Arabic greetings and phrases.

Ahongs and teachers compiled a document called ‘Two Hundred Famous Phrases in Arabic,’[203] which was used by female ahongs in teaching students welcoming words and songs in Arabic. The textbook included the Arabic alphabet, Arabic expressions of greeting, time, the four seasons, family, the history of Ningxia, the general characteristics of the Hui ethnic group, religious beliefs, and excerpts from the Qur’an. The appendix contained tape recording of songs to welcome guests. Each lesson introduced particular contents, such as ‘Today’s words of wisdom,’ ‘Seeking knowledge is a Muslim’s mission,’ ‘Seek knowledge even unto China’ (hadith) and ‘Time is money’ (Ningxia jiaokesuo guojia nütong jiaoyu yanjiu ketizu, 1992: 3–42). Parents welcomed these efforts, which emphasized respect for the Islamic culture, and began to send their children to the school willingly. Meanwhile, educators saw to it that what was learned at school was useful for daily life and provided guidance for career choices. Vocational and technical training, such as sewing, embroidery, knitting, vegetable cultivation, and other practical courses, were included in the school’s curriculum.

In the 1990s, several public schools in the most disadvantaged north-western regions received subsidies from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other benefactors, as the establishment of gender equality and penetration of secularism was a goal shared by the government and the said international organizations (Li Xiaojiang, 2005; Aaftaab, 2005: 47–51, 57–60). The Weizhou Hui Girls Elementary School was a pilot project of UNESCO, and it affected eight other schools (Ningxia nütong jiaoyu yanjiu ketizu, 1995: 56–95; Xibu sishengqu nütong jiaoyu yanjiu zonghe ketizu, 1999: 29–36, 109), all of which participated in a girls’ education project sponsored by the Ningxia Institute of Educational Science from 1992 to 1995. Under the project, the schools’ curricula were redesigned to value Islamic culture as UNESCO was stressing respect for ethnic minorities.

A second institution, the Shizi-shan-zhuang Elementary School in Xiji County, was established by Ma Jiafu in 1980, at the end of the Cultural Revolution. He had been arrested in 1958 at the age of 23 and was released in 1980. Ma Jiafu, an ahong in the Xiji, used the money he received from the

government as compensation for his imprisonment to get the school started. Shizi-shan-zhuang was a public school, and the government shouldered the operating costs. The school also participated in the experimental project of the Ningxia Institute of Educational Science, which included Arabic lessons in the curriculum. The concept, which was very popular among students, increased enrolment.

A third school, the Hairu Girls Junior High School, handles secondary education. It was established in Tongxin County in 1986 by Hong Weizong, the Vice Chairman of the Tongxin County Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) (Mei jie 1999: 268–274). Hong Weizong was a religious leader—a murshid (jiaozhu in Chinese)—of Hongmen Menhuan (Sufi Order), who was banned during the Cultural Revolution. He was well aware of the obstacles encountered by teenage Muslim girls who wanted to continue studying after elementary school. In particular, co-ed boarding schools posed insurmountable problems. To help Hui girls overcome these difficulties, he founded the Hairu Girls Junior High School, an exclusive boarding school for girls. The start of the school's operation was most timely; the rising number of Hui girls graduating from elementary schools increased the demand for secondary education. The school also offered disadvantaged Hui girls the chance to continue studying by providing them grants and free textbooks and exempting them from various required fees.

As a secular public school, the Hairu Girls Junior High School offered no Arabic classes, but the founder made sure that religious education was not completely eliminated. The school taught Islamic wisdom to both Hui and Han students. The school also edited an extracurricular textbook on the history of the Hui and their heroes, such as Zheng He, who had travelled to the Arab countries up to the Somali coast in the Ming era, and Ma Benzhai, who had fought in the Anti-Japanese War. In teaching students the history, culture, and religion of the Hui, the textbook contributed to reinforcing their identity and promoting mutual understanding between the Hui and the Han. Vocational and technical training in sewing, embroidery, knitting, vegetable cultivation, and other practical courses was part of the school's curriculum. Many graduates of Hairu went on to state-founded secular normal schools or vocational schools for teacher training and eventually became secular elementary school teachers. The roster of graduates shows that 92 students

entered the school in 1986 and graduated in 1989; 22 became teachers at secular public schools (Hiaru Nüzi Zhongxue, 1996: 1–81).

In this respect and although the girls' schools founded by ahongs and murshids were successful at promoting education—basic literacy as well as Islamic teachings—they encountered a different challenge in the 1990s: the growing number of Hui girls enrolled in secular public schools towards the end of the 1980s.

Faced with the rising popularity of public schools among Hui girls, the schools that had participated in the project sponsored by the Ningxia Institute of Educational Science decided to remove Arabic classes from their curricula. One possible reason for the drastic turnaround was government's pressure to increase the percentage of students proceeding to junior high school. In China, the government runs all schools, even those built by private individuals or NGOs. In other words, even when the private sector supplies large initial investments to build the facilities, the government pays for the teachers' salaries and overhead costs and ultimately, defines the curriculum. As a result, the schools built by religious leaders for promoting education without sacrificing religious identity were eventually transformed into government schools that served its policy: national integration and secularization.

Because of the growing number of elementary school students wanting to enrol in junior high schools, parents welcomed the shift in the schools' curricula. They actually asked for a more ambitious learning agenda instead of basic education and emphasis on Islamic knowledge. Their motivations were pragmatic. For instance, the headmaster of an elementary school that used to teach Arabic told us, 'Studying Arabic takes time away from preparing for the junior high school entrance examinations.' In general, Hui pupils have no one in their families to help them with their studies as most parents are illiterate or semiliterate; therefore, schools play an especially important role in children's education.[204] The Shizi-shan-zhuang Elementary School established by Ma Jiafu ahong does not teach Arabic any more 'because there is no Arabic teacher.'[205] The Weizhou Girls Elementary School still offers Arabic classes, but only as an extracurricular activity.[206] In order to meet the changing demands of the

authorities and parents, Arabic classes were abolished and the curriculum was revised to fit in with national curriculum standards. In sum, the schools established by the religious leaders were obliged to spend more time on general subjects at the expense of Islamic teachings.

Adapting to the development of China’s market economy, Hui students also had to compete with their Han peers in school entrance examinations, an equivalent of the Keju test (the imperial examination in ancient China). Because those who couldn’t keep up fell by the wayside, Hui girls were forced to conform to the secular national requirements. Moreover, girls’ schools had to go co-ed in accordance with the government policy of state schooling and gender equality. One of them was the Hairu Girls Junior High School, which went co-ed in 2002. According to government officials, ‘Since there are both men and women in society, it is not good for women’s development to educate girls separately from boys.’ Yet, it seems that the primary purpose of making the Hairu Girls Junior High School co-ed was to increase the admissions to senior high schools and colleges among its graduates (2005 survey).

To sum up, after the Cultural Revolution, ahongs and local Hui leaders were actively involved in founding schools and promoting Hui girls’ education without sacrificing religious identity. However, bowing to the pressure from the government and the Hui community, they gradually converted their schools into secular public schools to raise their educational standards. Eventually, Islamic teaching was dropped from the curriculum and the exclusive girls’ schools became coeducational.

**** The expansion of secular schools for Hui girls

In the past, most parents considered girls’ education a waste of time because, once married, a daughter became part of her husband’s family. They also believed that public school education was anti-religious, as it weakened Islamic values. However, when confronted by the new socio-economic demands, parents re-evaluated the economic advantage of secular public school education and changed their attitude towards it. Today, the first choice of most Hui girls and their parents is a public school, even if they

know that the values taught at the secular public school are incongruous with Islamic values. The chief reason is economics. Education increases the girls' job options, improves their social mobility, and creates better marriage opportunities.

Teaching has been one of the most popular careers for young educated Hui women. Girls who are successful in their education at public schools are often eager to become teachers. A public school teacher earns a monthly salary and is even allowed to register as an urban resident. More importantly, the teaching profession is not regarded as against Islamic values. In addition, the Hui believe that a female teacher makes a better wife because she is a specialist in children's education. Therefore, becoming a teacher enhances the possibilities for young Hui women to find husbands with respectable social status, such as doctors and government employees.

A change in Hui perceptions of secular education opened the floodgates for public education among Hui girls. However, it was government initiative that produced the most important and influential measures; the Compulsory Education Act of 1986 and the Education Act of 1995 inspired students to attend secular government schools (Cui Xiangsu and Lao Kaisheng, 1995: 20). The Compulsory Education Act requires all children to complete nine years of schooling; Article 8 mandates the separation of education and religion. In 2006, the Compulsory Education Act was amended to eliminate all charges for textbooks and miscellaneous fees, dramatically reducing the dropout rate. Even the poorest Hui girls could now finish elementary and junior high school.

*** Faith and career in a secular society

Though some Hui women are aware of certain points of conflict between Islamic values and secular public education—specifically, the ban on religious education— they have nevertheless chosen to teach in public schools. In the past, the shortage of female teachers had been one of the major obstacles to female education in the Hui region. As a result, since the mid-1980s, teacher training for Hui females has been promoted in Ningxia by the government. We conducted a survey of 123 female Muslim students trained as secular

public school teachers at the Guyuan Normal School for Nationalities. This school provided upper secondary level education and aimed at training teachers for primary schools in Ningxia in the years 1995, 1996, and 1997. Most of the students were born between 1978 and 1980. It was in 1978 that the Reform and Open Policy started. The life course of those students has been synchronized with the progress of China's market economy. By 2008, almost all of them had become state schoolteachers in the southern region of Ningxia.

The Guyuan Normal School for Nationalities adopts a standard national curriculum that includes politics, Chinese, mathematics, calligraphy, music, speech training for teachers, psychology, painting, physics, chemistry, and basic linguistics. It should be noted that 'politics' includes philosophical education based on Marxism-Leninism and Maoism.

Female Hui teachers impart to their students what they learned at the normal school. What they teach follows the standard national curriculum, wherein anything related to the Han culture is the exemplar. Other regional or ethnic cultures are not taken into consideration. Portraits of Mao Zedong, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin are hung on the walls of rural elementary schools. Motivated by communist ideology, public education is aimed at cultivating loyalty to the communist regime. It could be said that the Hui are now almost fully integrated into the Han culture.

Some female Hui teachers are members of the Chinese Communist Party. They say, 'I will constantly strive for girls' education because I was educated and developed under the good policy of the Party.' They claim that 'villagers have an old-fashioned mindset' and 'believe that girls will be exposed to bad influences if they go to school.' Thus, these female teachers believe that it is their mission to eliminate these narrow-minded notions and 'sow the seed of love in poor villages.'[207]

Detached from their Islamic traditions, more and more female Hui teachers have achieved professional success. The absence of religious practices in their daily lives has blurred the distinction between them and female Han teachers. The only religious custom Hui teachers have preserved is the

Islamic dietary prohibition on eating pork. Female Hui teachers know about Islam but exhibit no interest in it. They do not read the Qur’an or go to mosques, although they attend Islamic events and festivals. They do not pray at home or fast during the month of Ramadan. They show no interest in female madrasas (nüxue) and the students enrolled there. They talk about their fathers’ visits to Mecca but seem to think that religion is for old people only and has nothing to do with them.

In sum, female Hui teachers seem to have lost touch with Islamic traditions, and many of them no longer care about practicing religion in a social context. For example, when summer training workshops were held in Yinchuan for female teachers working in the mountainous areas in South Ningxia in August 2002 and again in August 2004,[208] it was observed that an increasing number of teachers were fashion-conscious and wore accessories like necklaces and earrings. Of the 120 participants in the 2004 training, 64 were married Hui women, only 13 of whom (20 per cent) wore cups—the symbol of Hui women’s marital status. Instead of cups, some donned half-sleeved blouses and skirts with permed hair. Traditionally, Hui women do not express their opinions before a large group of people, but these teachers did so without hesitation in front of government officials. It seems that the Hui have gradually assimilated the Han code of conduct and values. They build their careers on their secular education by concentrating on professional pursuits.

Among the Hui, giving up one’s faith and blending into the host society is not on everyone’s agenda. Nonetheless, some female Hui teachers value their Muslim identity. Dejected about being isolated from their religion, a few teachers decide to shift to other jobs. For example, a Hui woman (Ms. M), who used to work as a Chinese teacher at a junior high school after graduating from Ningxia University, began to feel that she was gradually getting separated from her religious beliefs. Consequently, she quit the post to work as an interpreter at an Arab–Chinese trading company in Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, where her family had moved. Ms. M, wearing a veil, told us, ‘Working as an interpreter is tough, but I am satisfied with the job. All of my colleagues and friends are pious Muslims. It keeps me closer to my religious beliefs.’[209]

After retirement, many Hui cadres make the pilgrimage to Mecca, as did Mr. M, an official who founded the Xingyuan Women's Islamic School (madrasa or nüxue). It is possible, therefore, that female Hui teachers at secular schools will revert to being pious Muslims after retiring.

Far from being a simple case of conflict between Muslim and secular identities, debates on modern education have uncovered deeper concerns of Chinese society: state control versus the autonomy of private institutions, local/ethnic affiliation vs. national acceptance, and eventually, marginalization vs. better social and national integration. In the last part of this chapter, we will discuss the extent to which madrasa development is related to overcoming marginality.

*** Nüxue: Women's madrasas in China

**** The new female madrasas

State education is exclusively secular, so religious leaders see a need for Islamic teaching. Many devote themselves to running nüxue—private organizations that promote Arabic literacy and Islamic education for women (Jashock and Shui, 2000). These institutions have avoided government control and for this reason their numbers are increasing. Established mainly by ahongs (religious authorities), retired party cadres, or Muslim community leaders in the 1980s and 1990s, nüxue used to pursue a variety of goals, including the elimination of women's illiteracy, bottom-up Islamic education. They also advocated late marriage. Many contemporary nüxue originated in small Arabic study classes for girls and illiterate older women; several of these classes subsequently expanded into schools with high-quality equipment and facilities. The number of such schools and classes is growing yearly, although no official statistics to verify their growth are available.

In general, nüxue curricula include the Arabic language, the Qur'an, hadith, kalam, and morality. For example, Hong Yang, the murshid (religious leader) and son of Hong Weizong that we

discussed earlier, is venturing into new nüxue, such as the Beidasi Women’s School and the Haiyuan Women’s School for the training of female ahongs. He shoulders the teachers’ salaries and operational costs, thereby staying independent of governmental control. [210]</sup> Nüxue teachers emphasize the acquisition of religious knowledge and moral values. The curricula also include Chinese literacy, general knowledge (e.g., computer science), and occasionally, crafts (e.g., sewing). In general, a part of the schools’ expenses—teachers’ salaries and school equipment—is covered by endowments and donations from religious leaders and other Muslims, and tuition fees. Nüxue do not receive any government aid, although many students are exempted from paying tuition or are charged minimal tuition. Almost all students and teachers come from the Hui, Uyghur, and Salar ethnicities.[211] Some nüxue also accept a small number of non-Muslim students who wish to learn Arabic. The courses usually span two to four years. However, few students complete the four-year course because of economic difficulties, lack of motivation, and family pressure to get married.

In the 1980s and 1990s, nüxue accepted students who had dropped out from public schools or were home-schooled. For this study, we constituted a sample of female students, girls aged 7 to 12, and teachers from three nüxue in Weizhou (Ningxia) in 1999 (Matsumoto 2001). In Linxia (Gansu), the first nüxue opened as an Arabic class in the early 1980s. Twenty-five years later, the school had developed into the prestigious Linxia Zhong-A Nüxiao (the Linxia Muslim Women’s School) with more than 600 students, and is now nationally renowned (Ma Qiang, 2003). Since Linxia—called the ‘Little Mecca of China’—is the centre of Islamic culture in China, girls who study there are bestowed with prestige. The number of students that the nüxue could accommodate is more than in other areas.[212] The school’s success has far exceeded the expectations of its founders.

Since 2000, due to the rise in enrolment at public elementary schools, the role of nüxue in providing supplemental education has diminished, except in the most deprived regions of China. Most nüxue have become vocational schools for training Arabic interpreters and nüxue teachers, with 60–70 per cent of the students undergoing nine years of compulsory schooling. Some of the

students have failed high school or university entrance exams. Nüxue graduates pursue various careers. Most choose to become teachers in nüxue or in Muslim kindergartens, female clerics (nüahong), or Arabic interpreters. Some go abroad for further studies, whereas others work as clerks or senior managers; and a few become housewives.

According to our survey sample, 80 per cent of the students in Ningxia and Gansu and 50 per cent in Yunnan wished to pursue a religion-related career, such as teacher, nüahong, or tabligh (those who engage in the propagation of the faith). Only 3.5 per cent of the students from Ningxia and none from Gansu, Qinghai, and Yunnan wanted to be soldiers or police officers. More than 80 per cent wanted to go abroad on pilgrimage, especially to Mecca and Medina. Some wished to study in Islamic countries such as Malaysia and Pakistan, while others wanted to visit ‘advanced’ countries, such as Singapore, Japan, and Korea. Few girls expressed a wish to go to the US or Europe.

**** Strengthening adherence to Islam

The nüxue experience helps women develop self-esteem and enables them to choose a career. Girls who become teachers or nüahong improve their status and gain greater respect from their community. Female interpreters enjoy several economic advantages, as there is considerable demand for Arabic interpreters in the coastal cities (Tsukamoto 2006). For example, there are 20,000–30,000 migrant Muslims from the Northwest who reside in Yiwu and Guangzhou, which are world-famous wholesale trade centers. In these cities, several interpreters have established lucrative trading companies, and the success stories of poor nüxue graduates are well known. In a sense, nüxue help Muslim girls achieve their potential by strengthening their religious moorings, which complements the Maoist emphasis on the importance of careers for women.

Nüxue teachers and students insist that, while pursuing economic independence, the younger generation must resist atheism,

materialism, and nihilism—the alleged results of an expanding market-economy. This is evident in their answers to questions regarding the differences between public schools and nüxue. They view secular public schools as places of corruption, competitiveness, individuality, and fear; and nüxue, as places of fairness, cleanness, sisterhood, mutual assistance, and security. Nüxue also teach calmness of mind, politeness, self-reliance, self-control, enrichment of mind, and the woman's way of life.

The 'new' and modern Islamic views on gender held by China's Muslim society highlight the right of women to education, freedom of marriage, to buy and sell assets, and to work. At the same time, these views underscore the perceived biological and psychological differences between men and women, and gender separation. In this context, they draw attention to a mother's supposedly primordial and essential role: an educator. Female education is seen as crucial in the reformation of a polluted and contradictory world. A woman is taught to be a 'wise mother and good wife' in order to assure the equality of the two genders in front of Allah on the premise of the division of gender roles. The catchphrase 'wise wife and good mother' was popular in China during the Republican era—when female education was seen as a pivotal element in a productive nation's rejuvenation, a key to regaining national strength—but seemingly slid into oblivion after 1949.

After 60 years, the catchphrase reappeared in the context of Islamic revival in China's Muslim community. The discourse on the division of the genders was again strongly supported by the newly imported 'modern' theory on Islamic women. Authors like the Egyptian Sayyed Qutub, insist on the inherent biological and psychological difference between men and women. [213] In the 1990s, apparently eager to learn the authentic and popular views on Islam outside China, Muslim women in nüxue expended great efforts to translate the 'new' writings on Islamism from Arabic to Chinese and circulate them among Chinese Muslims.

Some Muslim women, following 'modern' Islamic interpretation, believe that women can realize submission to Allah through marriage (Wadud, 2006: 121, 161). They assert that the woman's role as spiritual educator of her family

and female students should be prioritized over social labor and secular self-realization. This leads us to the question of how women in nüxue rationalize the contradictions between such a doctrine, their faith, and future careers.

Today, the young girls' desire to learn Arabic and Islam can be attributed to an increasing awareness of their ethnic identity. A considerable number of the Hui have realized that even though they obtained the status of a specific group of Islamic faith, their religion, history, and traditions will remain neglected and marginalized in the Han-dominated secular public sphere. Thus, ashamed of their lack of Islamic knowledge, they have decided to attend nüxue.

Almost all nüxue students wear veils. According to the sample's survey, 73 per cent of students started to wear veils after their admission to the nüxue. Covering their head and wearing an Islamic dress are new practices for them. Another name for Islam in China is qingzhen or 'pure and true,' which represents the essence of Allah. Wearing a veil, they explain, makes them experience a real spiritual change and leads them from confusion and impureness to pureness and piety. In Chinese society, women with veils are often disdained or cast curious looks. In fact, veiling in public is banned. In this context, the veil becomes an icon of their pride in being 'new' Muslim women (Khadija, 1994; Ahmed, 1992: 164). Women's Islamic attire has multiple connotations, such as the expression of Islamic values and subtle resistance to the male-dominated existing order (El-Guindi, 1999: 177–185) or, in China, to the secular and Marxist CCP. Veils also imply a spiritual independence and solidarity with the weak (Wang Jianxin, 2001: 233–234).

**** Religious education and spiritual hijra

As a consequence of the development policy for the greater Northwest initiated in 2000, the flow of immigrants and money into the region has accelerated. In some nüxue in Linxia (Gansu), more than 80 per cent of the students stay in dormitories. Some, learning about the nüxue by word of mouth, come from distant parts of China. The

highway route and the development of bus services have made it possible for girls to travel independently. Migrant workers—from the Northwest to the coastal region—send money to their parents in their hometown, and a part of this money is given as sadaqa to the mosques that govern nüxue for further development.[214]

China is not an Islamic country. In countries such as Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, the status of women is stipulated by Islamic family law, which is not always beneficial to women. However, in China, Muslim women are protected by national family laws that promote gender equality. If China applied Islamic family laws and criminal laws, permitted polygamy, and legitimized domestic violence towards wives in its predominantly Muslim regions—as is the case in some Muslim countries—Chinese Muslim women would probably strongly protest against them. In China, Muslim women are pleased to follow the Islamic ideals of equality between men and women and take advantage of both the Chinese laws or their knowledge of Islam.

After graduating from nüxue, most Muslim girls obtain employment. Moreover, even after marrying and having children, they may wish to continue to work. Based on their ‘mission’ to convey the Islamic spirit, exercises, and ethics, nüxue graduates aspire to the duality of being educators of their children or husbands at home and teachers and role models for Muslim girls in society.

Their way of life is a far cry from the one propagated by the conservative division of gender roles, which turns a blind eye to women’s ignorance and stresses absolute submission to the husband. It is also different from the Maoist and Western feminist calls for absolute ‘masculine’ gender equality, which supports equal opportunities for women and men, including the right to serve in the military. Nüxue women are aware of the fragility of their social status, and they thus strive for religious self-formation and self-esteem in order to change the situation from within the framework of Islam. In this context, nüxue can be assessed as a safety net, channel for communication, human network, and sisterhood, which provides women with the power to confront difficulties on their own.

Muslim women are at the forefront of Islamic feminism in China. Mir-Hosseini from Iran defines feminism as ‘women’s awareness of discrimination in family and in society’ and ‘actions to improve their life and change the situation’ (Mir-Hosseini, 1999: 40). Nüxue women represent such feminism. Their Islamic faith and knowledge enable them to convey alternative values: ‘non-masculine’ gender equality that appreciates women’s biological characteristics as given by Allah, criticism of traditional and oppressive patriarchy, and fierce competitiveness. At the same time, nüxue women understand the meaning of piety and modesty.

Although they provide opportunities that benefit Muslim girls, nüxue face various structural and societal problems. A nüxue is often not recognized as a valid academic institution. Moreover, in China, religious study tends to be regarded with prejudice by the majority of the population. All Chinese universities are secular, and while the knowledge of English is compulsory for taking exams, the knowledge of Arabic is not always appreciated in the academic-career based society. Some nüxue prohibit girls from having mobile telephones, accessing the Internet, and even watching television. In fact, some nüxue ban all men, including male religious leaders (ahongs), from their premises. Thus, educated in a purified culture and an ascetic atmosphere, many feel that female students may not have the opportunity to develop their critical thinking skills.

Moreover, a nüxue’s typical admonition, ‘Being a responsible mother is superior to all other social responsibilities,’ might be regarded as irrational by teenagers who wish to pursue a career and are still too young to seriously think of raising children. Additionally, it is likely that government inspection and censorship will become stricter because the religion-centered curriculum of a nüxue does not include Marxist and Deng Xiaoping indoctrination.

Having being deprived of education and social participation for a long time, Muslim women in China have currently pinned their hopes on nüxue. To avoid becoming entangled in the trap of male-centered Islamism, Muslim women must closely monitor the management

and curricula of the nüxue and extend their willingness to work in the society and virtues to the public sphere.

**** Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined the ideals and realities of two types of schooling in contemporary China available to Hui women. One is secular public schooling and the other is nüxue, or Islamic religious, schooling. We described attempts made by the ahongs and Hui leaders to promote Islamic and secular education for Hui girls since the early twentieth century and at the beginning of the People's Republic of China. We also pointed out the partnership between ahongs and local Hui leaders in building public girls' schools in cooperation with the government after the Cultural Revolution ended. During this period, the CCP attempted to send Muslim girls to public schools, where religion-related matters were excluded from the curriculum. Helped along by the increase in the Party's administrative and monetary power, the vast majority of Hui girls now attend secular public schools.

It is crucial to understand how the spread of state schooling institutions changed the Hui girls who had lived in deprived conditions. State schooling enhanced their literacy and created new opportunities for them. Some became teachers at secular schools, able to support themselves and their families financially. Accordingly, their social status rose and they earned the respect of their community. In fact, they have become annoyed by the mental conflicts between their 'Muslimness' and secular identity.

On the other hand, the nüxue, established by religious authorities and local Hui leaders in the 1980s and 1990s as a supplementary educational institution, enabled illiterate or semiliterate girls to acquire Islamic knowledge, following a 30-year religious hiatus in the wake of the revolution of 1949. However, since the ratio of girls enrolled in secular public schools has reached almost 100 per cent since 2000, it would appear that the role of nüxue as providers of supplementary education has ended. The secular political power's victory over religious authorities in China is unequivocal.

However, nüxue have survived thanks to the options they offer to those who wish to continue their studies after the nine-year compulsory secular education—studying the essence of Islam and the raison d’être of their status as Hui and learning Arabic, which is believed to be the sacred language of Allah. Thus, nüxue serve as a safety net for poor and marginalized Muslim women and double as vocational training schools. At the same time, nüxue provide girls with a novel gender view that denies the official ‘masculine’ gender equality, which only aims to create excessive competition without imposing any conditions. The ‘new’ gender view stresses the ‘wise wife and good mother’ role in order to train women to be good educators of the next generation and to convey Allah’s messages to human beings. After understanding this new interpretation, they realize Allah’s will in bestowing womanhood upon them and thus take pride in their womanhood. In sum, nüxue empower Muslim women by encouraging them to build self-esteem and achieve self-affirmation.

The above-mentioned gender views on ‘essentialism,’ ‘motherhood,’ and ‘womanhood’ were the only means by which Hui women could re-evaluate and reform their fragile status. Such essentialism can be considered the strategy of the weak. Presently, the majority of the Han population is still dubious about the Hui because of their religion and their alleged relationship with Chinese separatists and Islamic extremists.

Given these circumstances, Muslim women in China have adopted Islamic feminism based on essentialism in an attempt to eliminate discrimination towards women and resist the patriarchy system. However, this requires that they retreat from the excessive competition prevailing in the current environment. Nonetheless, even though Islamic feminism appears to be different from Western feminism, previously muted voices for emancipation and development have prevailed, and Muslim women throughout China have been increasingly enthusiastic and active in this regard for a long time now. They believe that the contemporary nüxue education provides them with opportunities for emancipation. Their Islamic faith and piety make them feel empowered and contribute to their self-esteem. In defining feminism, we should not forget to take into account these women’s struggle

for a better life and their utilization of the biological attributes of a woman in achieving that goal.

[200] The total population of Ningxia is 6,102,518, of whom 2,182,260 or 35.76 per cent are Hui (Ningxia Huizu Tongjiju, Guojia Tongjiju Ningxia Diaochadui, 2008: 79). They are concentrated in the Huangtu Plateau region in southern Ningxia, including counties such as Guyuan, Xiji, Haiyuan, Tongxin, and Jingyuan.

[201] Madrasas are schools where Hui and other Muslim nationalities are taught Islamic knowledge, particularly Arabic and the Qur’an, usually in addition to other secular education.

[202] Zhong-A nüxiao, Zhong-A nüxue, and Islamic nüxiao are other names of female madrasas. Nüxue means ‘female school.’

[203] Hajj Yusuf, Liu Jinglong, who was the vice president of the Ningxia Islamic Association, edited this text.

[204] Shimbo’s survey in Ningxia, 15 September 2002.

[205] Shimbo’s survey in Ningxia, 15 March 2000.

[206] Shimbo and Matsumoto’s survey in Ningxia, 2 September 2007.

[207] Shimbo’s survey in Ningxia, 20 August 2004.

[208] The ten-day workshops were organized by the Ningxia Educational Agency, the Soong Ching Ling Foundation of China, and the Soong Ching Ling Foundation of Japan. The aim was to train female teachers in the rural area

of Ningxia to develop an understanding of the curricular reforms, as well as to improve their teaching and computer skills. About 120 female Hui teachers attended the workshops (Shimbo, 2007: 1–10).

[209] Shimbo and Matsumoto’s Survey at Yiwu, 25 December 2007.

[210] Shimbo and Matsumoto’s survey at Ningxia, 2 September 2005 and 4 September 2007.

[211] Some nüxue accept Uyghur students from Xinjiang, where the establishment of Arabic classes or mosques is under strict control. Some pious parents wish to send their children to Islamic schools in Ningxia and Gansu. In this sense, a nüxue has become a place in which to foster Muslim consciousness beyond the boundaries of ethnicity.

[212] Shimbo and Matsumoto’s interview with the principals (Ma Xiulan, Ma Chunxiang and Wang Zhongyi) of three nüxue in Linxia, 12 September 2006, 5 and 6 September 2007.

[213] His book, Jahiliyya of the Twentieth Century (Jahiliyat al-qarn al-‘ishrin), was translated into Chinese in the middle of the 1990s. Other very important books are those of Wahhabi Sulaiman, an Albanian Wahhabi Islamist, Muslim Women (n.d.) which were also translated in the mid-1990s by Ma Xiulan, the principal of the Linxia Muslim Women’s School that was discussed in this chapter.

[214] Shimbo and Matsumoto’s Interview with Ms. Ma Xinlan, the principal of the Weizhou Huizu Women’s Elementary School, 2 September 2007.

** 6. Religious dependency in Afghanistan

Shia madrasas as a religious mode of social assertion?

Fariba Adelkhah

Spaces devoted to religious observance—mosques, madrasa and pilgrimage sites—have become major phenomena in our societies. They are diversifying and multiplying; they are also being updated, being made bigger and more in tune with modern tastes. With the help of demographic growth, the faithful are frequenting them in their millions. They sometimes provide shelter to politicians, and can in such cases be taken by storm, occupied or even destroyed, either by dissidents or believers from other faiths, or by the security forces.[215]

Accordingly, religious spaces are not homogenous, instead they constitute a likely field for social and political interests to grow and clash. This is not to deny their role in religious engagement, with its specificity or autonomous nature.

The debates, tensions and conflicts crystallized by the religious arena call into play not only its relations with the outside world, notably the West, to such an extent that some intellectuals forecast an inevitable ‘clash of civilisation’ (Badie, 1987; Lewis, 1988),[216] but also, and perhaps primarily, relations between Muslim believers themselves, besides the not so contemporary conflict between lay and religious intellectuals.[217] In this way, and although religion is undergoing massive changes in all its main institutions, madrasa are usually considered these days as entirely unyielding institutions, impervious to any kind of communication with the outside world, whereas they have always been in touch with modernity or the West—at least through schooling. In fact, the madrasa, as they can be observed today, are the fruit of both colonial times (and the para-colonial period in the case of Iran, Afghanistan and Iraq), to the extent that they simultaneously resisted and collaborated with colonial authorities (Sikand, 2005: 81, chap.3<nowiki>; Malik, 2008),</nowiki>[218] and of the Islamic awakening/resurgence notably in the years 1980–2000. They have always offered an opportunity for trans-ethnic or trans-national relationships by accepting students and scholars from different areas (Berkey, 2003: 208).

They are therefore not the embodiment of a timeless or centuries-long tradition, but rather of the political and religious change of which they are part (Zaman, 2002). In particular, they contribute to the redefinition of what is or is not religious, the delimitation of what one could, in reference to Bourdieu, call the ‘problématique légitime du religieux,’ or as it is called by Dale Eickelman (1979), ‘the political economy of the meaning,’ which is not an essence but is historically constructed (Bowen, 2003). For instance, the veil, the proscription of interest-paying loans and teaching, particularly of girls, only became relevant religious topics in the twentieth century, in a context characterized by social transformation in Muslim societies.

This chapter, a study of Shia madrasa in post-2001 Afghanistan based primarily on a field trip carried out in 2007, obviously does not pretend to cover the entire breadth of these changes (and exchanges). The Shia minority represented from 10 to 20 per cent of a total population of about 30 million Afghans. According to Shia sources, this percentage could range from 25 to 30 per cent![219] This study will leave aside the question of theology, its variations and its pundits, the ulama, to focus on the context of religious practices by which madrasa develop, without however postulating that these three pillars (theology, ulama and madrasa) do not influence each other. It is intended to put the internal logic prevailing in Afghan society into the context of that society’s regional and international environment in order to question the claims, aspirations, mobilization, and, last of all, the social dynamics that subsume the madrasa and their emergence as a key provider of education in Afghanistan. Madrasa give rise to impassioned feelings and political confrontation. Their evolution follows the twin dynamics that Georges Balandier (1974) termed ‘outside’ and ‘inside,’ in a neo-Leachian perspective. Indeed, madrasa, as crossroads where diverse social groups engage one with another—by dint of the educational services they provide—structure networks that allow intellectuals from a given area to interact with others outside.

The need to stress this point is heightened by the fact that the denunciation or the legitimization of religious schools easily puts on the margin ‘insider’ debates and conflicts opposing local religious authorities and secular intellectuals. That said, today’s discussions on the clash of civilizations curiously echo those that accompanied the emergence of secular schools in

Muslim countries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, depending on the country, at a time when clerics did not have any outsider rivals in the field of knowledge and when literacy was in any event only embryonic and obviously unequally shared. While Muslim intellectuals, religious or lay, insist on the diversity and openness of Islamic education as a religious experience, echoing classic work in the social sciences, it must be borne in mind that a powerful current of ideas, with its roots in lay and public teaching, was quick to seize on the madrasas' obscurantism and has unceasingly cast itself as a rival to or opponent of clerical institutions.[220] The picture becomes even more complicated if one adds the fury of clergies, with their load of fatwas, condemnations and even executions of lay intellectuals for the sake of protecting Islam. The most telling example is the attempt made to assassinate the great historian Ahmad Kasravi by Navvab Safavi, a cleric, in Iran in the spring of 1945.[221] In the other side of the border, in Afghanistan, in recent years, one could also cite charges brought against Ayatollah Mohammad Mohagheghnasab, a Shia cleric, in 2005, for having shown disrespect for Islam by questioning whether it was right to stone adulterous women or put thieves and apostates to death, or those made in 2003 against Mir Hossein Mahdavi, a journalist, after he wrote 'Religious fascism,' an article in which he criticized clerical institutions.[222] The complex nature of these debates should put some perspective on the inability of people to hear each other on the clash of civilizations. It is true that religious-inspired violence, through fatwas, was already a notable feature of Muslim societies, even before it moved outside the Muslim world and became the issue it is today. A case in point is the confrontation with the Bahai movement, which called for equal rights and education for men and women as early as the mid-nineteenth century. It is important to observe both these types of violence, in that they are so closely entwined and prolong international conflicts and might even strengthen the conflict between religious and lay people, in particular around the question of schooling. If we limit ourselves to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, violence in the Muslim world comes across as being the result of pressure, either from Western military occupation, or from the centralization of the states themselves and their heightening compromising with European imperialism. The vigor of the resistance to Western intrusion has often drawn a veil over the violence used against some parts of Islamic societies, in the upheaval provoked by the new context. However, violence has not been the only response in the Muslim world to this change, namely modern education. There has also been a series of social and political innovations that have limited the scope of violence and brought about not only the collaboration

between religious and modern education, which was later termed, in the Islamic Republic, the ‘union between hawza and university,’ but also the formation of hybrid intellectual groups following the two curricula, who later become known as ‘Islamic intellectuals,’ ‘Muslim intellectuals,’ or even ‘Islamists’ and are nowadays the most important component of the reformist movement (Kepel and Richard, 1990; Zeghal, 2008). In Iran, the best known among these intellectuals were Jala Al-e Ahmad, Mehdi Bazargan, Ali Shariati, Abdolkarim Soroush, Reza Davari, and Mostafa Malekian, who followed the teachings of great clerics including Allameh Tabatabai, Ayatollah Taleghani and Ayatollah Jafari. Modern education was initially called the ‘sciences of the day’ (ulum-i ruz),[223] as opposed to the religious sciences, which were considered part of the classical sciences. Therefore, it was not necessarily thought to be antagonistic to the religious sciences, but to complement them. As of the 1950s and 60s, whatsoever against the repressive environment that came in the wake of the coup against Mohammad Mosaddegh, or because of rivalry with the modern intellectuals,[224] lay religious people and clerics took the initiative of founding schools devoted to ‘sciences of the day’ (ulum-i ruz). The most renowned of these private educational institutions in Iran were Kamal (lit. Perfection, founded by Yadollah Sahabi, an eminent leader of the National Liberation Movement, who later became an advisor to Mehdi Bazargan, the head of the provisional government in 1979), Din-u Danish (lit. Religion and Science, founded by Ayatollah Beheshti, who was later the founder of the Islamic Republic Party in 1979), Alavi (lit. related to Imam Ali, founded by allama Karbasian, Ayatollah Boroujerdi’s student), Mufid (founded by Ayatollah Moussavi Ardebili in memory of Sheikh Mufid (c.948–1022 CE)) and Rifah (lit. welfare, founded under Hachemi Rafsandjani’s advice), which was attended by a large number of the leaders of the 1979 Revolution, and hence the leaders of the Islamic Republic. Some of them also taught in their youth, including Ayatollah Beheshti, Hojjatoleslam Bahonar, Ayatollah Motahhari, Aallameh Mohammad Taghi Jafari and the very conservative Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi.[225] Symbolically, Ayatollah Khomeini took up residence in a girls’ school, Rifah, for few days when he returned to Tehran on 1 February 1979, before settling at Alavi’s School for security reasons.[226] This belief in a positive interplay between religious and lay education also exists in Afghanistan in that sense that Islamists have recruited in governmental schools and universities during the 1970s (Roy, 1985: 97), and, since 2001, madrasa are taking charge of building governmental schools to provide an equivalent to the necessary diploma to enter the University.

In any event, it is very important that we not get bogged down in the debate surrounding the supposed link between madrasa and violence, if only because most of the students who attend them, even Deobandis, do not resort to violence and because the Islamic school field is not synonymous with war, even holy war. Without citing the wealth of literature dealing with trends in madrasa, we would stress two findings that should help measure both the madrasas' complexity and vitality. On the one hand, they emphasize relationships—areas in which they compete and areas in which they complement each other—between religious schools and lay teaching. On the other hand, they show that religious teaching has responded in various ways to lay teaching, not only from one country to another, but also within a given country, within clerical institutions or between urban and rural areas.[227] It is not possible to stick simply with the 'reactive' view, namely the madrasas' 'response' to public schools. It would be more precise to speak of a 'configuration' (Elias, 1978) between them. Their links have changed depending on the time and the context. If religious and public schools need to be seen in the same light, this does not mean that they are identical and that they are not charting their own specific course. Similarly, the question of modernization cannot be brought down to the abstract question of its acceptance or rejection. It involves a contingent situation in which the plans in terms of which players define themselves, attitudes brought about by social change, the restructuring of hierarchies, the levels at which decisions are taken are multiple and to a great extent unforeseeable. What goes pompously by the name of modernity is no more than the result of such shake-ups.

It may be interesting here to draw a parallel with Catholic schools in western France, as brilliantly analyzed by historian Michel Lagrée, although naturally we would not imply that the reality of Shia madrasa can be compared to Catholic education in France. In order to meet the ideological and political challenge of the 1789 Revolution, the Church built a very dense school network that borrowed the teaching methods of the new public schools. Gradually, the school movement gave birth to new social institutions, ranging from the union of the Christian Youth Workers Movement (Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne) to the Christian Agricultural Youth association (Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne), the Seamen's Education Movement, a very strong Catholic press and an active business

movement. In the end these institutions pushed rural areas that were generally considered conservative to the left of the political spectrum (Lagrée, 1992). This is not to suggest that the madrasa are helping convert Afghanistan to social democracy. But the example of Brittany reminds us that God has indeed moved in mysterious ways throughout history and that religious movements are at the same time social movements, and must be studied as such. The logic of the connections between religions and politics is often paradoxical. For instance, Ernst Troeltsch, commenting on Max Weber, said that Protestantism encouraged capitalism 'in spite of itself and without knowing it' (Troeltsch, 1912).

In Afghanistan, Islamic teaching has also been combined with social, economic and cultural development, particularly with the development of modern schools in the twentieth century as well as with other transformations that are no less important: war, migration and the economic changes that accompany them, such as remittances, growth in the informal markets for goods and financial services, and even the increase in opium farming and the laundering of revenues derived from it. At the same time, it should be noted that the timeline favored by the Afghans themselves does not necessarily coincide with that used in the social sciences: for instance, the first rupture, for the madrasa, probably came as early as 1973, with Dawoud's coup against the reigning monarch,[228] five years before the communist coup against the regime in 1978, and the Soviet invasion which apparently did not interfere with religious observance by Shias. The period of the Jihad 'commanders,' after the Russian withdrawal, appears to have left more lasting scars than the Taliban regime, which it is generally agreed re-established a form of civil calm that was good for trade.

Even more fundamentally, madrasa have provided a melting pot. Granted, Shia madrasa foster a critical view of the 'West,' a term that in Afghanistan's historical context encompasses Russia via communism and the Soviet occupation, of sectarian pluralism in that Shiism is a minority in the country, of tradition or social conservatism; at the same time, they are tributary, through emigration, to the temporality of Dubai and its prosperity. Simultaneously, madrasa also contribute to the emergence or the re-establishment of a feeling of national belonging independent of ethnic or tribal descent. The religious reference comes across as a factor of de-ethnicization and de-tribalization. At the same time, religious practices have

a complex relationship with ethnicity, tribalism and localism: for instance, they can foster the desire for autonomy and broaden the scope for political negotiation of the Shia Hazaras with respect to the Afghan state.[229] In this context, the religious convictions that the madrasa carry and dispense, and the ethical discussions that they foster, bring about a social confidence that helps to legitimize change and innovation. However, and as we expand on below, this social confidence does not come automatically. It should be built or built again as it is the outcome of complex interactions between the historical background of religious ideas/thoughts, the intermediaries or ulama and Muslim intellectuals, and the material means that support their influence. For instance the relations that Shia Afghan madrasa maintain with their Iranian counterparts, for historical as well as geographical reasons, play a crucial role and help place them, and legitimize them, in the national context. But schools are nothing these days without rational management and important financial support, which should be provided from different social groups. Therefore Afghan Shiism, which was entirely dependent on Iran's religious historical experience, is today as much dependent on former jihadists, who now make up the majority of religious school managers, and on migrants because of the important financial resources they remit. At different times these three features, as elaborated below, may be the conditions for success of madrasa that in turn provide in this case the political autonomy of Shia, notably Hazara, not only inside Afghan society but also toward his Iranian brothers. In that sense the Afghan historical dependence on Iran constitutes a strong political resource to make up for the Hazaras' inequality with the Afghan political system, dominated by the Sunnis, or, more exactly, the Pashtuns. Reciprocally, the Hazaras' inclusion in the Afghan political landscape allows them to distance themselves from Iran and the vilayat-i faqih's model. However, while keeping at bay the vilayat-i faqih concept, or partly because of that, Afghans like Imam Khomeini, endorse the pre-eminence of politics on religion, a stance that is neither proper to Iran, nor Islamic movements in the Arab world, as Olivier Roy underlined (1995: 101–105; 2002: 36).[230] This is the context that ensures the viability of the affirmation of Shiism in contemporary Afghanistan.

The madrasa are pivotal to this assertion. They respond to a need for religious expression. They fulfill an educative function that public schools are unable to fulfill. They embody a model of cultural, social and economic modernization that has notched up at least a few successes in neighboring Iran, where numbers of Shia Afghans have spent time over recent decades.

They open the doors to global knowledge, starting with English and computers. They give women the opportunity to make something of themselves.

*** Pioneer Shia!

It is impossible to dissociate the place occupied by Shiism and Shia religious teaching in contemporary Afghanistan from Afghanis' representation of history. It gives rise to often-passionate accounts in which Shia Afghans willingly paint themselves as the victims. It is important to bear in mind the anachronistic nature of this view, if only because the distinction between Shia and Sunni Islam in its current configuration cannot be analyzed without reference to the formation of the nation-state, the crystallization of national consciences, and the institutionalization of the religious arena, notably the madrasa. Even today, overlaps are a lot more frequent than one may think, in ritual practice as well as in dogma. For instance, it is not uncommon to see sanctuaries frequented by the faithful of different denominations, such as those of Imam Reza in Mashhad, in Iran's Khorasan Province, or Sayda Zaynab in Syria. Despite the strongly held belief in Iran that Jamal al-Din al-Afghani was Shia, no one really knows whether he was Shia or Sunni;[231] similarly, the Saudis cannot really deny that Muhammad Ibn Abd ul-Wahhab, the founder of Wahhabism, was a regular attendee of Shia religious centers such as those in Najaf and Ispahan (Shoushtari, 1363/1984: 477). Even today, Afghan ulamas, in their desire to promote if not 'union' (vahdat), but at least 'rapprochement' (taqrib) and 'brotherhood' (ukhuvvat) between Muslim denominations, via the Council of Brotherhood,[232] focus paradoxically on looking for what differentiates them, following the traditional metaphor of the tree and its branches: the most important thing is the trunk, it being understood that each branch can be different, some longer or thicker, some with more or fewer flowers. It makes sense that an Ayatollah, Mohammad Assef Mohseni, should cite only the practice of temporary marriages as a factor that set the Shias apart from the Sunnis even though he is naturally aware of other differentiating factors that are not questions of law, but have to do with the convictions of the faithful as to the Prophet's descendants or their own experience. In truth, this in no way reduces the depth of the miscomprehension, animosity, or even conflict between people, nor the Shia claim (echoed by the Sunnis) to be the 'true defenders of tradition'

(sunnat), to quote the title of a book written by a Paris-based Tunisian author, Tidjani Tunissi (1383/2004), published in Qom and widely circulated in Afghanistan. But this brings us into the realm of what Freud termed the ‘narcissism of minor differences,’ historically constructed and, today, deconstructed by a reformist movement committed to contextualizing the divine word as it was taught by a man, the Prophet. Included in this movement in Iran are Abdolkarim Soroush, a secular intellectual, as well as Mojtahed Shabestari and Mohsen Kadivar, two clerics. Mohammad Mohagheghnasab is the main representative of this current in Afghanistan. In this respect one should not take too literally the discussion on Shiism: those who, in Afghanistan, cite distinctive or identifying factors in support of this claim do so less for reasons of religious hermeneutics or new well-argued speeches than because they are just repeating the same arguments as in the past.

Moreover, the history of Shiism in Afghanistan cannot be separated from a broader history of Islam, from the succession of kingdoms and empires in the region—especially the Moghol Emire, the Safavid domination over Herat and Kandahar into the eighteenth century and the rivalry between that dynasty and the Ottoman Empire—and from the imperial expansion of England and Russia, and then of the Soviet Union. We obviously cannot encompass this complex history in this chapter, but we will identify the stories to which it gave birth among Shia, and notably among the Hazara.

The most important point to note is the confusion that now exists between Shiism and the Hazara people, or the parallel that is drawn between them, and the fact that this association confirms the Hazaras’ feeling that they have been marginalized and victimized in Afghan society. So while the Hazara people may all be Shia,[233] it cannot be said that all Afghan Shia are Hazara nor that they have been persecuted. Also, the Qizilbash are Shia people according to common belief. There are also Pashtun Shia, just as there are Shia among the Sadat and Bayat peoples, and even among the Tajik (the Ismaili are also considered to be Shia, but stigmatized by the Twelvers, and surprisingly they are not considered Muslim by the Sunni). It should be remembered that the guards of the royal palace were Qizilbash. The basis for this parallel between Shiism and ‘Hazarism’ is the political, ethnic and agrarian conflict that prompted King Abdulrahman (1891–93) to chase the Hazara off their land in order to give it to the Pashtun tribes,

bringing their rebellion to an end in a bloodbath and forcing them into exile or to emigrate due to their so-called Iranian origins, during the formation and centralization of the monarchy under the auspices of the British Raj (Kakar, 1979). This was followed by a dolorist narrative surrounding the ‘genocide’ of the Shia and the persecution of the Hazara, in the context or rivalry between the Afghani monarchy, supported by Britain, and the Qajar, gradually pushed out of Afghanistan, and then the context of contemporary ethno-nationalism which came to the fore between the two World Wars in Afghanistan, as in Iran and Turkey.[234]

The sources vary as to the date at which the Hazara people converted to Islam. Three historically distinct moments are generally cited. Some say that Shia Afghans converted when Islam first penetrated the region, through Herat, by bowing before Ali as Caliph (35–40 AH).[235] Others date their conversion to the thirteenth century, under the Mongol empire of the Ilkhanate and the persecution of the Sadat, the Prophet’s descendants, in the Khorasan Province and their exile to Afghanistan, in the region of Ghowr, the contemporary Hazarajat. The predominant view is that the conversion to Shiism coincided, as it did for Iran, with the foundation of the Safavid Empire, in the sixteenth century, which expanded its sovereignty to Kandahar. [236]</sup> Sayed Askar Mousavi (1985) suggests that these three moments should be seen together and that they are not mutually exclusive. He does, however, stress that Afghanistan was the land of asylum of Shia persecuted in Iran, particularly at the outset of the Abbasid Caliphate, in the eighth century. In his view, this means that Shiism in Afghanistan can be traced back to a period before the Ilkhanate and the Safavid and that the refuge of the Sadat in Afghanistan suggests the presence of other faithful. Whatever the truth may be, all these authors agree that the Hazara and the Shia should be seen in the same light and that the marginalization of the Hazara people in Afghanistan’s political history should be interpreted as the expression of the religious domination of the Pashtun tribes, Sunni by a large majority. The Dawoud government and the revolutionary period prior to the Soviet intervention in 1979 were too brief to usher in any real or lasting change in the position of the Hazara and/or the Shia. In contrast, the anti-Soviet Jihad drew the Shia—mainly the Hazara—into the resistance and into the national political landscape.

According to various testimonies, it was not until the 1940s, when Seyed Mir Ali Ahmad Hojjat (1268–1353/1889–1974) was elevated to the rank of Ayatollah[237] and built a hoseynieh in Chindawul, in the outskirts, at that time, of Kabul, and rehabilitated an old mosque, Ghazi Chehab, that the Shia call to prayer was made for the first time and that the denomination came out of its taqiya (dissimulation) and Shia practices began to express themselves openly.[238] Since this time, the celebration of Nawruz, in Ziyarat-i Sakhi, a sanctuary dedicated to the Imam Ali located in Ali Abad, in the Kabul suburbs, gives Shia their main cause to pray in public, their hands open, prostrating with their foreheads touching a small earth stone from Karbala (Safdari, 1384/2006 :74–75; Muassisih-i amuzishi-i imam Khomeini, 1980/2001: 63–66). Even today, Shia remember a time when they were obliged to camouflage their funerals and renounce public mourning processions, during which they would have had to recite the call to prayer in accordance with the customs of their denomination.[239] Expressions such as ‘Hazara sitizi’ (Hazara phobia) and ‘Shia kushi’ (genocide of the Shia) spring to the lips or the pens of Afghans when they want to express the sentiment of frustration and marginalization felt by the Shia. Since the overthrow of the Taliban regime, the Shias have seen an improvement in their political and legal situation. Contrary to the 1964 Constitution, the 2003 Constitution gives Shia the right to be elected president and, since 2009, will allow the use of Jafari fiqh for questions relative to personal law (ahwal-I shakhsiyya),[240] as long as all parties are Shia—but not for business, commercial or penal law.

*** A revolution in education (1979–2007)

It is against this historical backdrop and in the light of this dual marginalization, ethnic and denominational, that the growth of Shia religious schools in Afghanistan should be seen. In the last thirty years, this growth has been marked by the conjunction of three events, all different in nature but in fact closely bound together: the Jihad against Soviet occupation and the subsequent civil war; emigration to Iran, Pakistan, the Gulf States or the West; and the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. In 2001, a fourth event added itself to this list: the US intervention, which in theory at least put an end to ethnic or denominational discrimination. Sticking to the period prior to this, religious authorities of all denominations were active against the Soviet Union and participated in the resistance by encouraging the faithful answer

the call to fight. They also obtained financial and logistic support from other Muslim countries, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran, and from various autonomous Muslim political bodies in these countries as well as in Algeria, Egypt and Palestine. A new social category, that of Jihad fighter, gradually emerged. This category partially transcended ethnic or denominational consciences and represented in a sense a generational phenomenon, even though the Jihad brought together fighters of different ages and prompted criticism or even hostility among the younger generation, which accuse the Jihad fighters of having blood on their hands and of having enriched themselves at the expense of the Afghan population with the war and foreign aid. (However the Modjahedins are still the majority of the new Parliment elected in September 2010).

Forced emigration left Afghan refugees with three options: camps in Pakistan; the most accessible economic opportunity, specifically in Iran or the Gulf States; or the traditional path out of the country, namely religious instruction in Mashhad or Qom. Lastly, the fact that the resistance and this wave of emigration coincided with the founding of the Islamic Republic and the development of religious schools in Iran made Persian-speaking and Shia Afghanis the prime beneficiaries or the natural users—at least until 2003, when Teheran implemented a more or less coercive policy of sending Afghani refugees or immigrants home (Adelkhah and Olszweska, 2007)—of the culture and institutions for promoting faith that sprang up there. These three moments allowed Afghan Shiism to return to its historical roots, and also to foster its singularity in a paradoxical manner, marking its contemporary destiny: dependence on Iran but also a trend towards autonomy in relation to Iran; reinforcement of localism and specificity under the guise of religious claims; and the defense of Afghan nationalism. The following pages try to shed light on the ambivalent trend of the religious school in Afghanistan. While they much imitate them in many regards concerning Islamic education and curriculum, Afghans also claim that they are by essence different from Iranian and do not for instance have to follow the concept of vilayat-faqih. This description indeed confirms the point made by Sabrina Mervin (2008) when she stressed that Iran is still a very effective test case for the Shiite world, though they do not obey and follow the same rules and regulations.

Shiite religious education in Afghanistan is dispensed in a variety of institutions: mosques, hoseynieh, madrasa, maktab, hawza, zeynabieh,

markaz, universities, and in one case, in a private house which is the property of the founders, a couple (the establishment is associated primarily with Ms Shahin’s name). There are 17 main institutions in Kabul, half of which were founded after the fall of the Taliban[241] (see Figure 6.1). These institutions were created by religious authorities, both clerical and lay. Political authorities, and particularly, Senator Ghorbanali Erfani, a member of parliament, have recently taken the initiative of establishing religious institutions in Dashti Barchi, a poor area in order to aid in their development, notably the west of Kabul which shelters predominantly Shia neighborhoods. Afghan emigrants (principally those living in Iran, Pakistan and Australia) are also keen to build up religious centers, which are managed remotely, both through intermediaries and thanks to modern telecommunications and/or regular trips.

[[s-k-sakurai-keiko-and-fariba-adelkhah-the-moral-ec-19.jpg][Figure 6.1 Shia places of worship and religious institutions in Kabul]]

For instance, Mohammad Javad Rajabzadeh and Ms Hemmati set up the Quran wa Itrat, Scientific and Cultural Institute, initially in Mashhad, in 1990, originally reserved exclusively for Hazara. They took it to Herat in 1992 after the victory of the Mudjahidin but in the face of the difficulties they encountered, they quickly put the Herat branch on ice before reactivating it in 2004 after the Taliban regime was overturned. The Institute has four departments: a religious school for men, Madrasa Ilmiyya-i Baqyyatalla; a religious school for women, Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Itratiyyih; the Koran school; and the local school, which is not for profit, even though it is compulsory to pay school fees. Two thousand people are enrolled at the Institute. Similarly, hojjatoleslam Mohammad Hossein Jafari, who spends part of the year in Mashhad, opened the Maktab Nargues in Kabul, which has two branches, one in Mazar-i Sharif (Maktab-i al-Zahra) and another in Kondouz (Maktab-i Hazrat-i Khadijah)[242]. After immigrating to Iran, where he founded his first school, Madrasa Ghaed, in the Silo quarter in Mashhad, before being opened to all Afghans, Ayatollah Sajedi subsequently went to live in New Jersey, in the United States, at the request of the local Afghani community, after first leaving the management of his school in Mashhad to his brother. Once firmly ensconced in the United States, he opened a Zeynabieh in Karta-i Char, in the Shia area of Kabul. As for Chindawul’s Hoseynieh, it was re-established by the nephew of Ayatollah Hojjat, who lives in Australia. More broadly

speaking, the role of the World Centre for Islamic Sciences in Qom deserves to be emphasized. Most of the founders or managers of these institutions passed through this Centre. The list includes Mr Rajabzadeh, Ms Hemmati, Mr Jafari and Mr Rezazadeh, the manager of the Koran teaching schools at the Quran wa Itrat Institute.

Funding of Shiite religious education is provided by resources collected during the Jihad against the Soviets, money raised by émigrés and those affected by the Diaspora, the Islamic Republic of Iran, business donations, religious taxes collected by Ayatollahs Kaboli, Mohseni and Salehi, not to mention the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, whose main Afghani interlocutor appears to be the old Ayatollah Moghaddasi, who has never set foot outside his country, and finally financial gifts from the faithful. The salient point here is the crucial importance of remittances sent by émigrés and refugees, or, more broadly, the Diaspora, in financing the madrasa. This is not exclusive to Afghanistan, but the phenomenon is possibly a lot greater there than in other countries. As it happens, virtually all the Shia schools I have seen are run by people who have lived, or are still living, abroad. It is impossible to dissociate the madrasas' political economy from import–export activities, the hawala system and, in all likelihood, the laundering of various revenues accumulated in the informal economy. Two questions remain on this topic. Why are the madrasa more suited to laundering than other activities, commercial or industrial for instance? And what are the social remittances that accompany financial remittances, in accordance with logics that have been described well in other migratory contexts (Levitt, 2001)? Although not able to provide a full answer to these two questions, we would like to elaborate on the moral economy of those madrasas that succeed to respond to social demands.

*** Madrasa, a response to social demand

Religious education comprises two degree courses: the first, generalist and preliminary, is called Darulquran (the home of the Koran). Its purpose is focused on guidance (irshad) or on doctrinal propaganda (tabligh) but, in reality, because of the dearth of public schools and access to instruction, it provides education. The second is theological (hawza or madrasa) and it addresses educated

believers who are, increasingly, subjected to bureaucratic rules like the possession of a high-school diploma, passing entrance exams and/or having to sit exams regularly throughout the school year.

It is impossible to assess the exact number of students studying in Shia religious schools due to the lack of statistics. First, most schools do not keep accurate records of those registered, even in well-known schools; second, teaching methods are traditional, which means there are neither exams nor regular roll-calling in some of these schools. Finally, women are not yet included in the statistics. Nevertheless, thanks to the recent bureaucratization, and notably to the foundation of Kabul's religious school on 2002 (Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Kabul), following the Iranian model (Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Qom), we know that there were 978 males registered as religious students (talabih) in October 2007—or rather, we know that 978 male students were entitled to receive a monthly grant. They were studying mainly at Hawza-i Risalat, Madrasa-i Madinatulilm, Madrasa-i Jamiatulislam, Madrasa-i Muhammadyyih, Hoseynieh Qala Fathullah. Another 1,000 or so students are studying in similar courses in other cities like Herat, Mazar Sharif, Daikondi, Ghazni and Kandahar.[243] In contrast, the number of female students studying in religious schools but not provided with a monthly grant due to the fact that they do not pass the obligatory exams to evaluate their abilities remains unknown, although we do know that 300 of them study at the khadijatalkubra school, the female branch of Khatamulnabyyin.

Students generally come from poor areas and/or rural families; for this reason, many of them board at the school where they are studying. However, and since 2001, a few of them, notably those who used to be emigrants to Iran, come from urban backgrounds, and they belong to the merchant class. The female students are unusual, in that many of them come from emigrant backgrounds (living notably in either Iran or Pakistan) and that the great majority, due to the lack of boarding facilities, hail from urban areas—which in this case study means Kabul. The important point is that an increasing number of students now come from émigré communities. For instance, it appears that most of the students of the Khadijatalkubra School, the female branch of Khatamulnabyyin, as well as numerous boys attending various establishments, who had to leave Iran under pressure of the government, are seeking to finish their studies and to obtain a diploma that would be

recognized there, allowing them to return legally as students. Migrants increasingly represent a social category in themselves, which transcends the traditional split between rural and urban categories, or between ethnic and denominational differences. The madrasa, which, as we have seen, they help finance, are an Islamic way in which to gain social advancement.

Although religious motivations are usually cited to explain a student's decision to study at a religious school, other strategies cannot be ruled out, including social or professional advancement through subsidized or free education and grants. The fact is that religious education is increasingly being used to gain qualifications and to allow access to university education.

As we will see, the links between religious instruction and lay school are clearer in Afghanistan than in Iran, where there is a large measure of differentiation between the two types of teaching, even though the Hawza has adopted a university-style organization and can demand that its diplomas be seen as the equivalent of a university degree. It is revealing that a single parliamentary commission is responsible for religious, cultural, educational and university affairs in Afghanistan, under the chairmanship of Hazara Jihad fighter Mohammad Mohaghegh.

Unfortunately, my fieldwork did not help me to discover more about the non-religious motivations of the students; it was difficult to get beyond the stereotypes and clichés of their religious ones. Nevertheless, it seems that students, both men and women, who have a mastery of the Koran are very much in demand during the religious months of the Islamic calendar, Muharram and Ramadan. They run prayer meetings and vigils, not only in their own neighborhoods, but also in other neighborhoods and even other cities. As such, and as in other Muslim countries, religious education is feeding other strategies like social ascension and fame. And in the context of the development of public schools in Afghanistan, religious schools have become one of the primary sources of teaching staff. Moreover, because of the rivalry and the on-going dialogue existent between different religious denominations in contemporary Afghanistan, the increasing prominence of women on the religion scene appears to be another tool for the Shiite community to assert its progressive outlook in regard to that of the Sunni. The presence of girls in the madrasa must be seen in the context of

migration: their local implantation and the flexibility of their administration allow religious schools to facilitate the insertion of young girls who attended school abroad when they return to Afghanistan, the recognition of courses or diplomas giving them entry into public schools; in addition, the Iranian model under which girls attend school becomes an important reference for families that have spent time in the Islamic Republic and for their extended families in Afghanistan.

Two points need to be underlined. First, most of the founders of religious establishments were Jihad fighters and spent some time in Iran or in Pakistan throughout the war that started in 1979. Second, the Shia religious schooling institutions have witnessed the growing ascendancy of a new category of relatively young managers, who share the latter's background. Taking into account my fieldwork, the kin or clientelist ties between the young managers and the founders, who usually are older and have fewer bureaucratic skills, reduce the possibility of conflicts between them. Moreover, both categories are made up of people who are generally used to traveling outside the country, especially in Iran, Pakistan and Germany.

Shia religious teaching seems to meet a genuine social demand rather than satisfying a taste for theological speculation or mysticism, although a few people do require this aspect to be taught. There is more synergy between the Shia religious institutions and the public or secular schooling institutions than competition. This is especially true for the latest created institutions, the Shia religious schools provide the students with courses that deal with matters beyond religion and intend to contribute to the overall education of the society. Hawza-i Ilmyya-i Khatamulnabyyin would like to be seen as a genuine university and agreements are currently being prepared allowing the students of Maktab-i Nargues to have their degrees recognized, to apply to the Afghan Ministry of Education, and in Iran to the World Centre of Religious Sciences, which has full university status. In the same way, 500 religious students in Hawza-i Kabul obtained a school diploma by being granted an equivalent, thus to be able to pass an exam to enter the University. Therefore more than 150 students follow the two courses, one at the University and the other at Hawza since 2006–2007.

In the same way and in a context characterized by an official acknowledgement of Shiism after the American military intervention and the establishment of the Karzai administration, the Shia educational sector entertains warm relations with the current political authorities: Ayatollah Salehi, founder of the Risalat School, was appointed special presidential adviser for Islamic affairs in 2007; Ayatollah Sheikh Assef Mohseni, founder of the Khatamulnabyyin, was honored by the Academy of Sciences in 2006; Ayatollah Mohaghegh Kaboli, founder of Jamiatulislam, obtained the state's financial commitment to build a new school in 2006.

We must now turn back to the madrasas' political and moral economy as centers of social change. It may be worthwhile to compare Afghani madrasa with the interest-free loan funds (qarzul hasanih) that developed in Iran even before the 1979 Revolution and which have prospered since then. These institutions obviously had a religious and charitable dimension, but also contributed to the penetration of banking services in Iranian society, at a time when a large part of the population did not have access to the modern banking system. From this point of view, they were relatively similar to savings and loan institutions or the monte di pietà. Given the amounts they collected and the loans they made, they helped society become less dependent on the state and restore the exchange value of money. Similarly, the Afghani madrasa by definition dispense religious teaching and remain faithful to the Timurid tradition of charity that is attached to them according to Said Amir Arjomand (1999): under the waqf in Islamic law, they previously had various other charitable works attached to them, such as orphanages, hospitals or caravanserais; today, they continue to welcome people, lodging and supporting students from rural families, housing orphanages and carrying out the bathing and enshrouding of the dead. But the madrasa also increasingly have a money-earning dimension. While money cannot be charged for teaching the Koran,[244] this is not the case for English or computer skills, and these revenue sources are all the more appreciable that it is hard to determine the true value of this type of service. The madrasa also rent out rooms for family meetings for various important occasions (funerals, return from pilgrimage—but not yet for weddings) or for major religious festivals (Ashura, Ramadan). This was taken to its extreme by the Khatamulnabyyin in Kabul, which in 2008 opened an international conference centre with booths for interpreters, sound and projection systems that not even the government had, and which it will now be able to use. In short, the madrasa are located at the junction of the

religious field, welfare and accumulation, or from another perspective the sacred, social economy (not for profit) and entrepreneurial activities. In this way, they stem, through their independence relative to the government, from civil society as well as from what goes by the term ‘development,’ without this prejudicing their orientation or the effectiveness of what they provide. The madrasa are today an undeniable force in favor of schooling, their constellation is one of the articulations between migrants and their homeland, and they have become a factor for urban development, in the western part of Kabul, for instance, where places like Pul-i Sokhta, Karta-i Seh and Dasht-i Barchi have benefited from investments in Shia religious schools and the capacity of the Risalat school to have the road linking two predominantly Hazara districts, namely Qala-i Shada and Qala-i Wazir, sealed.

*** Afghan Shiism in position of religious dependence

The Afghan current religious arena and especially its Shia component, has been reframed through three different moments: first, the jihad against the Soviet Union that provided an opportunity to get huge funding and pushed the commanders to behave as religious authorities wanted (some commanders being first religious authorities); second, the migration of five to six million Afghans, who subsequently sent home remittances and also promoted back home new social behavior and know-how (thanks to these aspects, many socio-ethnic categories—including Shia—were able to improve their daily life); third, the emergence due to the American intervention and the new political process, of new actors and new political references that have legitimized the acceptance of religious and ethnic pluralism and created new opportunities for female emancipation.

From this viewpoint, Afghan Shiism is in a very peculiar situation. As we have seen, having been marginalized and segregated since the early nineteenth century, it was unable to construct its own institutions and became dependent on Najaf and later Qom, in terms of both human resources and financing. The main sources of imitation (marja-i taqlid) for its believers were Hakim, Khoi and today Shirazi and Sistani. Imam Khomeini also had his supporters. From 1994 onwards, the Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, has offered himself as the marja-i taqlid for non-

Iranian Shia, including those living in Afghanistan (Adelkhah, 1995). Nowadays, Ayatollah Assef Mohseni intends to make Kabul inherit the Najaf and Qom periods. However, one must acknowledge the fact that this attempt at radical reform or renewal seems to rely heavily on the Iranian model of religious teaching, which is increasingly focused on its specialized sections and increasingly bureaucratized in order to improve its efficiency and to allow it to rise to the demands of the modern world, if Islamic. Moreover, while 978 theology students are registered in Kabul, more than 8,000 Afghans follow the same syllabus in Iran, according to official figures provided by Ayatollah Kaboli's office in Qom, in 2007; yet the latter figure is very likely underestimated, and one should add the students who have no grants—in particular women—and those who have no legal clearance to stay in Iran. The only two clerics who can be considered as marja-i taqlid, Ayatollah Fayyaz and Mohaghegh Kaboli, prefer to stay in Najaf for the former and Qom for the latter. There, they could enjoy a larger audience than in Kabul where students have in their view not yet reached a high enough level. Incidentally, most of the Afghans responsible for Shia religious institutions stay alternatively in the two countries and have settled their family in Iran, in Qom, Shiraz, Mashhad, Karadj or Teheran, which is a way to remind us that academic nomadism is not a secular privilege (Roy, 2002: 60). They just follow the example provided by other sections of the Afghan Shia political and economic elites. In any event, most of the latter have been trained in the Iranian educational system, either public or religious. The figure of 8,000 students should be seen in this context. Iran is not only one of the main contributors to Afghan Shia education, but also provides it with most of its teaching materials; books, cassettes, CDs, syllabus, teachers and lecturers. Afghanistan's dependency on Iran still functions beyond the Afghan borders and in the Diaspora. The places of worship and religious centers visited by Afghan expatriates in Europe, in Hamburg or Frankfurt, or in the USA, in New Jersey, are led by Afghans trained in Iran. In the Iranian Republic itself, Afghan students or lecturers have not been able to organize themselves in an autonomous way, as Arabs did: there is only one Afghan religious school in Mashhad, the Ghaem School, supervised by Ayatollah Jayyed Sajedi, and another for girls, the Itrat va Quran Centre, supervised by Hojjatoleslam Rajabzadeh, which moved to Herat in 2004 but still has a branch in Mashhad.

In this historical context, particular importance should be given to the Abbasgholi school in Mashhad and the World Centre for Islamic Sciences in

Qom, whose influence extends beyond the sole sphere of religion. We have seen how the latter is a major source for the training and recruiting of founders or managers of madrasa. In addition to that, numerous members of the Afghan elite attended them: these include Justice Minister Sarvar Danesh; two of the four parliamentarians from Bamian; two of the 17 parliamentarians from Herat; one parliamentarian from Kabul, Qazni, Sar-i Pul; governors and mayors, including that of Bulkhab; and, of course, academics.

Founded at the end of the seventeenth century by Abbasgholi khan Biglarbeygi in Mashhad and located at the start of Navvab Safavi Street (formerly known as Pain khyaban) in the Tullab quarter, which is also home to the famed Afghan Bazar, the Abbasghol school has been attended, at least since the end of the nineteenth century—we do not have sources for the period before this—by Afghan Shia students, providing a launching pad towards Najaf or, especially since 1922, Qom (Pasandideh, 1385/2006). It was a vital channel in the training of the Afghan clergy as well as the intellectual elite that were behind the country's political and religious movements, as well as its literary circles. It was the alma mater of Allameh Seyed Esmail Balkhi, born in Bulkhab, in Jozjan (1295–1347/1916–1968), the founding father of the modern Islamic movement to which we owe the revitalization of the alliance between Shias and Sunnis; Allameh Modarres Afghani (1284–1365/1905–1986), born in Kharbid, in Jaghouri, a highly respected professor of Arabic literature, who taught at Najaf and Qom; Ayatollah Sheikh Mohammad Eshagh Fayyaz (1314– /1935–), born in Sobeh, in Ghazni, one of the two greatest surviving students of Ayatollah Khoi, who lives in Najaf; Ayatollah seyed Sarvar Vaez Behsoudi (1295–1358/1916–1979), born in Behsoud, the director of Kabul's oldest religious school; Mohammadiyih Abdul Ali Mazari (1326–1373/1947–1995), originally from Balkh, founder of the Nasr Organization and leader of the vahdat (unity) party, founded in 1368/1989. It was also the focus of the main Shia political organizations in the Afghani Jihad movement, including Nasr Organization, Pasdaran-i Jihad, Harakat-i Islami (of Ayatollah Assef Mohseni), the unity party, as well as other cultural or religious institutions, including the Bureau of Afghan Literature, whose members, except Kazem Kazemi, were all Talabih, or the Durr-i Dari Institute, which publishes the journal Khatt-i Sivvum (literally The Third Line) (Olszewska, 2007).[245]

Last of all, one must not forget the role played by the city of Qom in the formation of intellectual Afghan circles,[246] politicians,[247] or even religious reform movements,[248] without forgetting the contribution made by Afghan students to the Iranian revolution, often serving as couriers between Najaf and Qom in the 1970s, as they were not under the same amount of surveillance by SAVAK (National Intelligendce and Security Organization).

Afghanistan's Shia religious dependency on Iran seems irreversible, especially since Afghan students and lecturers settled in Iran are unlikely to go back to their homeland, as job opportunities there are too few. Inexorably, the Iranian model asserts itself in Afghanistan through the religious schooling institutions and other forms of bureaucratization of the religious arena such as associations, Islamic NGOs, publications, boards of religious institutions. However, the success of the Iranian model is encountering resistance, bypasses or reinvention by Afghan religious actors. On the one hand, the Iranian model is prompting reactions of refusal and annoyance because of nationalistic feelings. On the other, it is creating social dynamics and social movements that cannot be reduced to the Iranian influence and has allowed the inclusion of the Afghan Shias in the state, an unprecedented phenomenon.

*** Religious differentiation as a national frontier

Shia Afghans—as others—prefer not to use Persian expressions coming from Iran, sometimes going so far as to substitute terms taken from English: driver, engineer etc.! They criticize people who return after spending time in Iran for their Iranian accent or the way in which they dress. The simple fact of having an Iranian accent can keep people off Tamaddon, a Shia television network controlled and funded by Ayatollah Mohseni, who is keen to mark his autonomy with respect to Qom and Tehran, despite the fact that he continues to live there part of the time. And as we have seen earlier, note 28, Mohammed Hossein Jafari was not able to legally register his religious school under the name of Maktab Najris (because too close to the Iranian model) and had to modify its name in Maktab Nargues to make its activity fully legal. Shia Afghans hide their relations with Iran or the aid they receive from there. They express their rancor at having been marginalized, or even

looked down upon, during their stays there. ‘The Iranians do not want us as teachers, only as students. It is not the same for Arabs, who are given classes to teach’, said Afghan students in Qom.[249]

But there is more to the problem than just frustration. The head of the Khadijatalkubra religious school, the female section of Khatamulnabyyin, expressed the discomfort felt by Shia Afghanis in their relations with Iranians:

Foreign students following the teaching of the Hawza are fed up with reading about or sitting exams on questions like The origins of the Islamic Revolution or The testament of Imam Khomeini. We want to learn and gain a better understanding of Islam, but all we get in Iran is tabligh (propaganda). What we need most of all is our independence. The Iranians go on and on about the hijab, but they don’t respect it. We don’t want to wear the chador, and especially not the Iranian one, we prefer our hijab. The maqnaih, as a souvenir, OK, but not as national dress. Young Afghan women need to cast it off. What Afghanistan needs is unity, in two areas: between Sunnis and Shias; between universities and religious schools. We don’t want to export the Iranian Islamic Revolution. Imam Khomeini was the Guide of the Iranian people, not ours. We don’t want to be a mouthpiece for an authority that is not ours, we want to remain independent. (Interview with author at Khatamulnabyyin in Kabul, 2007).

Words like this show that the Iranian situation is a problem at three levels: the fact that Shia Afghanis are in the minority, with at least 80 per cent of the population being Sunnis; the fact that they need to deal with the government which is more or less dominated by Pashtuns, who are also Sunnis; the fact that they do not share the conception of modernity that prevails in Iran, despite being big consumers—in the fields of architecture and urbanism for instance—and that they also depend on other references, including the West, beginning with England for obvious historical reasons. The theory of vilayat-i faqih crystallizes this distancing with respect to Iran: ‘It bears in itself its own limits. While the vilayat-i faqih signifies the structuring of a Shia society, it is impossible to see it without defining one’s interests and priorities. And the interests of Afghan society are not the same as those of Iranian society,’ said the head of the

Risalat school. ‘This year, we followed Iran in celebrating the end of the holy month of Ramadan, but if an Ayatollah from Afghanistan had seen the moon, we certainly would not have done so, and we would have avoided the problems this raised. It is not in the interests of Shia Afghan society to be dependent on Iran.’ (In 2007, the press was very critical of the Shia clergy’s reliance on Iran, a charge quickly taken up by Shia intellectuals.) Similarly, pro-reform jurist Abdulghayoum Sajjadi, a member of parliament representing Ghazni, a political scientist and a former student of the World Centre of Religious Sciences in Qom said:

We wanted to avoid adopting the Iranian system, and specifically the Guardian Council of the Constitution responsible for vetting laws to ensure they comply with Islam. In Afghanistan, there is no need for a law to comply with Islam, as long as it doesn’t contradict Islamic principles. A supervisory commission elected by parliamentarians from within Parliament should deal with this, but everyone, including the President, agrees that this is a matter for the judicial power. We wanted to avoid the presence of a body that would hinder the work of Parliament.[250]

As we have seen, the singularity claimed by Afghan Shia stems mainly from their minority status. Bearing this in mind, what they seek to highlight is ishtirakat, characteristics they share with the Sunnis: the Koran, the Prophet and the Kaba, obviously, but also the fundamental principles, the Oneness of God (tawhid), the Prophethood (Nubuvvat) and Day of Judgement (Maad). Shia Afghans, with the experience gained in Iran (or thanks to Iran) and the fact that this allowed them to cast off their minority condition, consider themselves to be the privileged messengers of union (vahdat) and brotherhood (ukhuvvat). They gather books, hold debates and draw up institutions preparing the road to rapprochement (taqrib), such as the Council of Brotherhood. But the desire for unity is probably less religious than it is national, in a society that is still traumatized by denominational discrimination and civil war. From this perspective, the US intervention was a veritable blessing, on the one hand by overthrowing the Taliban, who are Sunni and suspicious of any form of social mobilization, and on the other hand promoting political correctness favorable to multi-denominationalism. Dr Mohseni, brother of Ayatollah Mohseni and the executive manager of the Khatamulnabyyin

project, who lived in Iran for 30 years, for a long time working for the Reconstruction Crusade, says: ‘We are not afraid of anyone and we want to discuss our convictions even with atheists.’ In the face of ethnic demands and the rise of specificities, the Khatamulnabyyin school is aiming to become a tribune for competency and tolerance:

We do not want to go to war with all and sundry. The world will never be united. We are here to tell the Sunni that the Shia are not demons. Our school does not want to be a strictly religious establishment. It is a university of theological, social and economic science. Some books published in Pakistan are badly presented and describe us as infidels to our Sunni brothers. We do not want to practice our religion in secret. Since the adoption of the Constitution, which recognizes Shiism as it is and as the foundation of our personal rights (ahwal-i shakhsiyya), we have sought to make a public and official call for dialogue with our Sunni brothers. We want to be a meeting place for opinions of all sorts. We want to have exchanges with the outside world and send students abroad, to France for instance. We have used the expertise of many people, Americans for the library, Iranians for building design, and we are probably going to hand catering over to the French, as we have to feed 2,000 people on a daily basis.[251] We want to know and be known. We do not want to convert people to Islam, as no one can change our religion. We just want to live together.

The national dimension of this ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue comes out clearly when Dr Mohseni acknowledges that Iranians have ‘a certain intelligence when they have to define the boundaries between their own interests and national interests: … Iranians never stop complaining, but in time of crisis they stick together and support the state.’ His brother, Ayatollah Mohseni, the founder of the Khatamulnabyyin school, which he is building to plans by Iranian architects and the library of which benefited from the support of the Astan-i Quds,[252] regularly visits Islamic centers in Qom. He had no qualms about protesting to the clergy in the holy city following the publication of books that could have prompted discord with his Sunni brothers: his fear was that these works, if they came across the border, could lead to bloodshed and could ruin efforts made by the Islamic Republic of Iran to forge closer ties, and he warned against a possible crackdown in Iran itself, where the majority of Sunnis are losing patience about the

discrimination they are suffering; he demanded that all copies of these books should be recalled.[253]

Getting Shia Afghans out of their minority situation will require interdenominational emulation at the same time as the breaking-down of barriers between religious instruction and university teaching. The Khatamulnabyyin requires new students to have a secondary school diploma recognized by the Education Ministry, and now has the right to award both bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as doctorates. Its staff will readily tell you that the authorities consider it as a university, and that it receives funding from American and British money received during the Jihad, as well as from khums and zakat collected from the faithful. This means it is founded on a dual paradox: the West is financing an Islamic school, and the Muslim faithful an establishment with claims to being a university. In the same vein, the grandson of Ayatollah Mohseni, Javad Mohseni, head of the Tamaddon TV network and a former student of the American University of Beirut, says that a talabih must demonstrate not only religious sensibility, but also the will to gain scientific knowledge. The director of the Fatimyyun school in Kandahar says, 'We want to train experts, not just clerics. We need to introduce mathematics, geography and physics to understand the divine message. We cannot limit ourselves simply to purification. There aren't that many mice falling into wells these days. In fact, there isn't much water left in the wells, as it now comes out of taps. We need to learn to speak foreign languages, starting with Pashtun, Arabic and English.'

At the same time, the Shia are proud of the religious performances of their women preachers. The head of the Risalat school, Javad Salehi, said, 'Last year, at Mawlid, we asked Halimeh Hosseini,[254] a professor in the female school of Khatamulnabyyin and a former student of Jamiat al-Zahra in Qom, to present a paper. She was the only woman in a group of men, who were largely Sunni! It was a great success and we broke a taboo.'

If we had to summarize the ambivalent relations between Shia Afghanis and their Iranian brothers, we would say that while they both view each other with suspicion, it should not be forgotten that birds of a feather flock together. Shia Afghanis readily acknowledge their debt to Iran. Mrs Shahin,

who runs a family girls school in Kabul, says that ‘without Iran we would not have any schoolbooks.’ And the head of the Risalat school makes no bones about saying that the Iranian religious instruction model, bureaucratic and academic, is in his view unavoidable: ‘If we leave students to their own devices, they do not work properly and the Muslim treasury (bayt ol-mal) is squandered. The Iranian system of about eleven years’ study, the equivalent of a university system, featuring regular exams, is very successful, and we should apply it in Kabul.’ Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran is seen as an advanced model, particularly among émigrés or people in contact with the Afghan Diaspora across the border, with the respect for the treatment of women and the education of girls (Hoodfar, 2004, 2007; Rostami-Povery, 2007).

At the same time, however, Shia Afghans do not think that Iranians can be taken at their word. They say that they only ever made hollow promises during the Jihad. They preferred working with the mainly Sunni Tajik and put their political interests ahead of the Shia brotherhood. The head of the Fatimyyun school, in Kandahar, provides the perfect illustration of this sentiment. Wanting to double the size of his school under a five-year plan (should this be taken as a homage to the Soviet occupation or to the Iranian experience?), he has had ‘as usual, all nature of promises’ from the Iranians, but their only gift to date is a water cooler, which he is still waiting to have installed. This disillusionment has obviously been exacerbated in recent years by the fight in Iran against illegal immigrants coming from Afghanistan. ‘The Iranians aspire to being a nuclear power, but while they wait to achieve this goal they attack a few defenseless Afghan migrants,’ said Sheikh Moussa Rezai in a public declaration in March 2008, during the commemoration of the thirteenth anniversary of the death of Shahid Mazari, leader of the Hazara Unity Party, at the Afghan Consulate in Mashhad.[255]

The Iranians do not have a better opinion of the Afghans. ‘They don’t like studying. That’s why Afghan students in Najaf were used to getting smaller scholarships than other students. They study here in the morning, but they don’t deign to change their cleric’s robes for mason’s clothes to do building work in the afternoon. There are more Afghans than Arabs in Qom, but unlike the Arabs do not have any religious schools there,’ say people in Qom. However, Iran is in its own way dependent on its religious clientele. How brightly would the country’s educational and religious star shine without the

8,000 Afghan students that no doubt make up the biggest contingent of about 15,000 foreign students attending the International Center for Islamic Studies, not only in Qom, but also in Mashhad, Shiraz and Karadj?

*** Conclusion: complex relations

That is why the ‘dependency concept’ related to Latin America school that initially was framed by historians and economists, should be understood in its whole complexity. The dependence of the Afghan religious arena does not mean its submission to a foreign power. It can also be understood as a resource that Afghan actors mobilize for their own autonomous strategies. Relations between Afghan Shiism and its older Iranian brother should allow us to refine the concept of religious dependence that could be used in other contexts either in the Christian or Islamic World in a contemporary perspective.

Afghan Shia religious dependence on the Iranian religious experience is not just a two-way relationship. They also have other relationships, with Pakistan, for instance, or Najaf. Afghan religious authorities can cross Iran to go to Najaf or take the road to Pakistan. Conversely, they can move from Najaf into Iran. What we term ‘dependency’ in an abstract manner is in reality a series of routes taken by numbers of real people, in very specific historical contexts. The route taken by Ayatollah Mohseni—the founder of the Khatamulnabyyin school, and the embodiment of the three faces of madrasa’ legitimacy, namely the relationship to Iranian Shia theological teaching, jihad and emigration—is telling in this respect. Born in Kandahar in 1936, he started secondary school in Pakistan in 1949, where he learnt to speak Urdu. He then returned to Kandahar, but was quick to leave again, to study theology in the Hazarajat, in Jaghuri in 1952. He set off again for Najaf in 1953, where he attended classes by Ayatollahs Khoi and Hakim. In 1965, he returned home to look after the Shia minority in his hometown, founding the Fatimyyun hoseynieh. In 1978 he fled the communist police, he left to go to Mecca, then for Syria, before settling in Iran and setting up a political party, Harakat, in Qom. He again returned home after the Soviet withdrawal, but was unable to remain during the period of internal fighting among Jihad members, and returned to Pakistan. During the Taliban regime, citing ‘certain considerations’ (sic), he went to Iran and settled in Qom, where he taught.

He then returned to Kabul, dividing his time between the two countries, and founded his large Khatamulnabyyin religious school in 2005 in order to perpetuate the traditions of Najaf and Qom.

At the same time, it will be remembered that Ayatollah Mohseni has support from religious schools in Qom and in all likelihood Astan-i Quds in Mashhad, and funds from Afghans emigrates. His sons live abroad, in Pakistan, the United States, Germany and Saudi Arabia. As for Ayatollah Sajedi, he studied in Qom, Mashhad and Najaf before founding the Ghaed school in Mashhad and the Zeynabieh in Kabul, as we saw. Under the Taliban regime, he was invited to Quetta, in Pakistan, to assist the Hazara community living in that city, and it was while living there that he was asked to move to New Jersey, where he still lives. It is these serpentine routes that inform the religious relationship between Afghan madrasa and the Iranian religious field.

The second important point that we have stressed is the close relationship between Shia religious schools in Afghanistan and migration. We do not think it is far-fetched to see religious schools as a social expression of emigration. In any event, the madrasa should not be seen solely as local institutions, isolated and focused close in on themselves. They are key factor in the country's involvement in its environment, in the same way as NGOs or companies that work there, and they have to keep up with the social changes of the day. The importance given to broadcasting media, which is shared beyond the Afghan clergy, is telling (Louër, 2008: 271–272). Afghanistan's main TV networks are controlled by former Jihad members and all have a religious bent. The Shia have not been left behind on this count: they have Ayatollah Mohseni's Tamaddon (civilization) network, and Ayatollah Moghaddasi, despite being an aging traditionalist, has launched his Kowsar (paradise) network in Spring 2009. As these networks are trying to offset the often somewhat risqué influence of Bollywood, they are inevitably buying programs not only from Arab countries, but also from Iranian TV, which is tending to cement ties with the Islamic Republic even further.

Lastly, we noted that the madrasa movement, which stemmed from the Islamic movement in the 1980s, helps provide a boundary for a religious arena that shifts from one epoch to another. In this respect, the madrasa can help define what is public and what is private, for instance by schooling

young girls or people from rural areas, or by having their private school syllabus recognized by the public schools, or by having equipment provided by the public sphere; saying that the instruction of girls is a Prophetic tradition is in effect to bring girls out of the private or family sphere (or to legitimize their departure from the family) to attend a school, to move freely outside and, possibly, to obtain a public school diploma, giving them the possibility of achieving financial independence. This is how we must see the decision by the Khatamulnabyyin school to open a branch for girls, Khadijatalkubra, three years before its boys' branch, and to take in Shia as well as Sunni, going against family prejudice for each of these two denomination. What is also at stake here is the emergence of a civil society independent of the state, for which the madrasa are one of the main vectors. This brings us back to the notion of public denominational space. This notion is relevant in the context of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but it remains to be seen whether it corresponds to transformations in Afghan society.

More generally speaking, the Iranian religious instruction model, which Afghans helped greatly to emerge, has now been brought back home to Afghanistan. The question is now not so much whether it is viable as how it will change in a society in which the Shia have historically been in a position of inferiority compared with the Sunni, divided by political faction fighting, or even by war, and confronted by the problems of the creation of an independent central state. Perhaps Ayatollah Mohseni is correct when he asserts that it is Kabul's turn, after Najaf and Qom, to lead the future of Islam.

*** Acknowledgenents

Many thanks to Dorian Ryser for making the map on Shiite places of worship and religious institutions in Kabul.

[215] The most tragic of such events is the attack on the Babri mosque in the town of Ayodhya in India, in 1992, which left thousands dead, or the attack against the sanctuary of Imam Reza in Mashhad, in 1994.

[216] The two authors speak of Islam’s irreconcilable differences with modernity.

[217] Mehrzad Boroujerdi 1996, Negin Yavai 2003 and Yadullah Shahibzadeh 2008 describe the nature of this connexion between religious and secular intellectuals in Iran notably from 1950s till the 1979 Revolution.

[218] Jamil Malik (2008: 6) points out that, ‘with the introduction of new systems of education, madrasa largely lost its function as a general training institute and turned into an institution exclusively for religious education.’

[219] It is difficult to estimate the size of the Shia population in Afghanistan because of lack of statistics. Estimated as 15 per cent in the early 1980s (Roy 1984: 68), it represented 20 per cent of the total population of about 22 million in 2001 (Afghanistan Statistical Yearbook 2004, Central Statistics Office). Shia are composed mainly of Hazara, which represents the vast majority, Turkmen, Qizilbash, Bayat, and Sayyid.

[220] For instance, Yiki bud yiki nabud (Once upon a time), a book by Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh, published in Berlin on 1921, criticized clerics, attacking their distance from the people because of their use of Arabic. This book sparked a huge mobilization of ulama in Tehran. The book was burned and its author was excommunicated. <http://www.alefbe.com/articleDjamalzadeh.htm> (accessed March 25, 2009); see also (Katouzian 1382/2003).

[221] Ahmad Kasravi was born in a clerical family in Tabriz and was expected to take over his grandfather’s mosque, but he became the most virulent critic against the clergy. He was eventually assassinated in the winter of 1946 by people close to Navvab Safavi, when he was leaving a court that had been hearing charges that he had shown ‘disrespect to Islam,’ before the ruling had been handed down. Roy Mottahedeh (2000: 104) wrote about him: ‘Kasravi’s autobiography, for all his interest in “scientific history,” is in some ways sectarian history in which the role of progressive mullahs,

essential to the success of the first phase of the constitutional movement, is noticeably played down.’ See also (Pakdaman 1380/2001).

[222] Mohagheghnasab was sentenced to two years in prison, but was freed after 86 days. Concerning Mir Hossein Mahdavi, see his leading article in Aftab (no 20, 28 Joza 1382/2003).

[223] That seems to be the Iranian version of what Deobandis call ‘asri ‘ulum (Sikand 2005: 74–75).

[224] These new schools intend to offer educational opportunities for children coming from religious families and an alternative to modern institutions such as Alborz, Hadaf, and Kharazmi high school that were founded by lay intellectuals whose goal was sending students to Europe.

[225] One might also recall Mrs Seyed Nosrat Beygom Amin, the first mojtahad, or recognized as such, who in competition with modernists of her time, founded in 1965 a girl high school where all professors were women in order to convince reluctant traditional families to send their daughters to a modern school.

[226] These two schools are where the first executions after the Revolution took place. <http://www.aftabnews.ir/vdcceoqp.2bqem8laa2.html> (accessed March 26, 2009).

[227] Although it is not possible to quote all recent works that emphasize these connexions and diversities, we would like to illustrate this trend by a few examples of publications (Robert H. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (eds) 2007; Cahiers de la Méditerranée 2007; Sikand and Youginder 2005; Eickelman 1992).

[228] Even throughout his mandate as Prime Minister (1953–1963), Dawoud was hostile toward the Shia population but the coup against his uncle, Zaher

Shah, seems to have been the turning point to Hazar departure to Iran (Roy, 1985: 70–71). For a good description of the Islamic movements and their diversity during the 1970s, see Kakar (1995: chap. 4).

[229] In the same manner, the madrasas' role in politically integrating Muslim Indians throughout the British colonial period has been underlined by Barbara Daly Metcalf (1982).

[230] Concerning the Islamic Shi'a movements in the Gulf, Laurence Louër goes as far as underlining an 'Unavoidable attraction of the political movement and activists towards the domestic space' (2008: 259).

[231] This kind of discussion and disagreement extends to other Islamic scholars and quite often readers send comments that underline a clear opposition to the fact that sunni ulamas are hijacked by shia ones. See Muasisih amuzishi-i imam khomeini (1980/2001: 63–66).

[232] Founded by Ayatollah Mohseni in 1382/2003 with Ustad Burhaneddin Rabbani's (the former President of Afghanistan) support, the Council publishes a quarterly review Payam-i ukhuvvat (The fraternity's message).

[233] According to Gilles Dorronsoro, because of the usual confusion between Shia and Hazara, and with the stigma resulting from the Sunni people, the non-Shia Hazaras generally tend to reject their ethnic belonging and declare themselves to be Tajik (2000: 56).

[234] The value placed on the Pashtuns' identity and culture by the monarchy was concurrent with the exaltation of the aryanity of the Persians and the Turks against the backdrop of nationalist movements in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in Iran and Turkey. It is a modern phenomenon of inventing a tradition linked to the emergence of a nation-state.

[235] Islam also penetrated Afghanistan through Zaranj, later, in the third century of the rule of Hijra under the Saffarid dynasty. It appears that the entire country was converted to Islam at that time, with the exception of Nuristan Province, which remained Buddhist until the nineteenth century.

[236] According to Monsutti Hazara, conversion to Shia could be a way to distance themselves from the surrounding populations (2004: 45).

[237] Born in Kabul, he followed the standard route for Afghani students of religion. He emigrated at the age of 11 to Mashhad in the early twentieth century, studying at the Abdal Khan school. He left Mashhad, apparently to attend classes held by Abdolkarim Haeri, the founder of the religious school in Qom. Then he left for Najaf to complete his studies, returning home in around 1930 after having become an Ayatollah <www.hojjat.net/zendeginamah> (accessed January 24, 2009).

[238] It is interesting to note that Ayatollah Assef Mohseni also recently announced that the Shia call to prayer on TV dates from 2007, which corresponds to the inauguration of his own TV network, Tamaddon. (Interview with Payam-i Aftab, 1386.09.14/ Dec. 2007) <http://afterwar.blogfa.com/post-17.aspx> (accessed March 5, 2010).

[239] Interview, a member of the Sadat family.

[240] According to Sarvar Danish, Minister of Justice, the difference between Shias and Sunnis is not related to their fiqh which are very similar but it concerns precisely a very limited section of it, personal law, which covers notably prayers, marriage, divorce, inheritance, guardianship. <http://www.moj.gov.af/?lang=da&p=events&nid=221> (accessed March 25, 2010).

[241] Afshar and Hoseynieh in Qala-i Fathullah (1341/1962), both founded by Ayatollah Mohammad Amin Afshar (1288–1357/1909–1979); Muhammadiye in Karta-i Sakhi (1347/1968), founded by Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad

SarvarVaez Behsoudi (1295–1358/1916–1979); Madinatulilm, Pul-i Sokhta (1344/1965), founded by Ayatollah Taghaddosi. The school remained open during the Soviet occupation, the civil war and the Taliban regime; Jamiatulislam, Pul-i Sokhta (1351/1972), founded by Ayatollah Ghorbanali Mohaghegh Kaboli; Risalat, Qala-i Shada (1373/1994), founded by Ayatollah Salehi Modarres; Baghirululuum, founded by Senator and Ayatollah Erfani (1318– /1939–); Khatamulnabyyin, in Karta-i She (1383/2004), founded by Ayatollah Mohseni (1314– /1935–). Various schools such as Maktab-i Nargis in Karta-i Sakhi, founded by hojjatoleslam Ali Jafari, Ayatollah Sajedi's Zeynabieh School in Kartai-i Char, and Ayatollah Hojjat's Hoseynieh in Chindawul must also be added to this list.

[242] The school should have been recorded under the name of Maktab Narjis, following the Iranian model, which is analysed by Keiko Sakurai in this volume, but under pressure and in order to emphasize his autonomy toward Iran, hojatoleslam Jafari had to give it up and he modified the name to Maktab Nargues. It is worth mentioning that the manager of the school, Mrs Fouzieh Nemati, is a former student of Maktab Narjis in Mashad during the Taliban.

[243] Source: interview with Javad Salehi, head of the Risalat school (Kabul, October 2007). In September 2010 the student number reached 1127.

[244] Actually, Iranians seem to have recently broken this taboo when they published the tariffs of what is called 'Quranic activities.' Lecturers are divided in three categories; furthermore, oral and written teachings are not paid for in the same way. National and international exams do not cost the same. <http://www.farsnews.net/newstext.php> (accessed September 15, 2009).

[245] In fact, the journal, Durr-i dari, was published by the Cultural Centre for Afghan Writers, which, for financial reasons, was unable to publish beyond issue number 13. But the chief editor, Seyed Aboutaleb Mozaffari, and his editorial staff decided to extend the experience by founding the Dorr-i Dari Cultural Institute, which gave birth to the journal Khatt-i sivvum in autumn 1381/2002.

[246] These include the Valiasr Cultural and Scientific Circle, the Yassin Cultural Association, the Institute for Fundamental Research, the Bisharat Cultural Institutes and the Cultural Foundation of Afghanistan, which respectively publish the following quarterlies: Ummat, Payam-i Yasin (the Yasin message), Andishih-i Farda (tomorrow's thought), Bisharat (the happy promise) and the bimonthly Parwaz (flight).

[247] We could cite some of the former students of the World Centre for Islamic Education: apart from Gholam Sarvar Danish, the Justice Minister and Abdolghayoum Sajjadi, the parliamentary member for Ghazni and editor of the only—and very good—quarterly political journal, Discourse, Karim Khalili, the advisor of Afghan President Hamed Karzai and Ghorbanali Erfani, member of meshranu jerga, the Senate.

[248] This is the case of Ayatollah Ali Mohagheghnasab, who, it will be remembered, was arrested in Kabul, in October 2005, following complaints made against him by Shia as well as Sunni clerics, as well as by President Karzai's religious affairs advisor, Muhyiddin Balouch. Chief Editor of the journal Huquq-i zanan (women's rights), Mohagheghnasab was accused of having defended declarations deemed disrespectful to sacrosanct Islamic principles in his writings.

[249] For a total number of 115,000 foreigners who are living in Qom, the population is made up of 59,000 Afghans, 8,000 Arabs. Cf. <http://ghom.ir/old-sit> (accessed November 12, 2008).

[250] This is a very clear allusion to the situation prevailing in Iran, where there is recurrent conflict between the Majlis and the Guardian Council of the Constitution, necessitating constant intervention by the Expediency Discernment Council, even though the parliamentarian for Ghazni that we cite readily acknowledged having to 'fight against the vacuum of bad interpretation' created by superposing the parliamentary commission and the judicial power with respect to constitutionality. (interview with the author at the Journal Quarterly discourses HQ in Kabul, 2007)

[251] Dr Mohseni was obviously aware of the fact that I come from France.

[252] <http://Shianews.org> (accessed February 7, 2007).

[253] <http://Baztab.com> (accessed on May 15, 2006).

[254] She is, with Tahereh Rohani, one of the authors of Azadi wa iradih-i insan dar kalam-i islami (Freedom and will in the Islamic words) (1381/2002).

[255] http://katebhazara.blogfa.com/post-433.aspx (accessed March 25, 2010).

** 7. Epilogue

Madrasas – vitality and diversity

Dale F. Eickelman

The Moral Economy of the Madrasa takes a fresh approach to the madrasa tradition by focusing principally on its contemporary social and political roles. All the chapters in this book are based on recent field research—often in places where North American and European social scientists are reluctant to tread. The book focuses on the contemporary role of madrasas in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and China. Adelkhah and Sakurai’s introductory chapter places the contributions in an appropriate historical and social context equally relevant to the general reader and to the specialist familiar with the Muslim world. Even for such specialists, however, Moral Economy stands apart because of its comparative approach in highly diverse contexts and the

editors' ability to indicate how the study of contemporary madrasas informs studies in history, politics, and social thought.

For example, Adelkhah and Sakurai's focus on 'moral economy' is distinctly modern, although the term invokes its antecedents in the heyday of the Scottish Enlightenment in the late eighteenth century. E.P. Thompson (1971) projected the term into common usage in the 1960s and 1970s, and it has since become a point of departure for scholars in contexts as diverse as Indochina in the 1930s (Scott 1976) and Iran in the 1940s (McFarland 1985). Thompson's use of the term was avowedly Marxist, but the concept as now used, including in this book, reaffirms the religious practices, habits of thought, and the deep and popular roots of madrasas. Even as some Muslims and others claim that madrasas are rooted in a nearly timeless past, others see them as short-term opportunistic fronts that disseminate militant radicalism. In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, George Bush, Dick Cheney, and Donald Rumsfeld all claimed at one time or another that 'madrasas' were a threat, and the conservative Insight Magazine at one point in 2007 claimed that Barack Obama had actually attended a 'radical' madrasa as a child (http://www.cnn.com/2007/POLITICS/01/22/obama.madrassa/). At least Fox News, which gave a wider audience to Insight's reporting, distinguished between radical and non-radical madrasas.

Yet in both the Sunni and Shi'a religious traditions, madrasas have a strong resilience. Najaf, long the major center for Shi'a religious learning, survived the first decades of Ba'th rule in Iraq, but after the collapse of the American-encouraged uprising against the Saddam Hussein regime in 1991, its leadership and institutions suffered savage reprisals. After 2003, however, the hawza (as the major centers of learning are called in the aggregate), began quickly to rebuild both as centers of religious pilgrimage and of learning, attracting students at all levels from Iraq, Iran, South Asia, and elsewhere, as well as donations from the faithful (author's interviews with hawza leadership, Najaf, November 20–21, 2009). As madrasas in Iran come under increasing government state restrictions, Najaf is bound to regain its prior role as the major center of Shi'a religious learning, complete with multilingual websites and ready Internet access to the outside world to counter the continued difficulties of physical access.

In social anthropology, formal education has long been stepchild until recently to studies of childhood and child socialization, and the study of madrasas, mosque-universities, and the habits of thought inculcated in them have been no exception. Most studies have focused on madrasas in the Arab world and their Indonesian equivalent, the pesantaran (Eickelman 1985; Hefner and Zaman 2007; this volume, Chapter 1).

Rather than seeing madrasas in South and Southeast Asia as a pale reflection of a historically known or imagined past, these studies begin with the present or the near-present. As the editors of The Moral Economy of the Madrasa remind us, the term madrasa taken at its most basic, means (in Arabic) a place of learning, and this learning is not now and never has been exclusively Islamic. Since the nineteenth century, madrasas have existed alongside secular and state institutions. Throughout the Muslim world, from the late Ottoman Empire, British India, Egypt, to Morocco, madrasa leadership has sought since the nineteenth century to innovate and adapt—and such adaptation is integral to madrasa structure, not solely a reaction to Western encroachment.

In some contexts, as in Bangladesh (this volume, Chapter 5), governments have in recent years sometimes seen madrasas as a low-cost way of extending mass education, especially in remote regions, a notion to which UNESCO contributed in the 1980s (Eickelman 1987). Madrasa education, like state-supplied mass education, has become ‘objectified’ at all levels—a commodity that, as the editors indicate (Chapter 1), is as subject to ‘management science’ and ‘human resource management’ as any other institution or organization. Yet like the hawwala system for the transfer of money and messages over great distances and into remote areas which is more adaptive, trustworthy, and flexible than the modern banking system (see Monsutti 2005), so madrasas are often more adaptive and flexible in the educational sphere than are modern state schools or many of their secular private counterparts.

So Yamane’s chapter on Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) gets immediately to the heart of the political role of madrasas in contemporary Pakistan. In the time of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Pashtun refugees from Pakistan were in refugee camps in Pakistan, and with American, Saudi, and Pakistani support they were encouraged to join the anti-Soviet Taliban. In 1996, Arabs, together with young Pashtun supporters fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan, entered a village and tried to kill the traditional tribal leadership. This leadership resisted and successfully drove the invaders away. In Spring 2008, ‘those who opposed the traditional tribal system’ were ‘said’ to have caused bombs to fall on a tribal jirga, or gathering of its senior leadership. Yamane is circumspect on who could cause bombs to fall, but forcefully presents this leadership as related to ‘newly established’ madrasas. In these schools, the students are not necessarily Pashtun or respectful of Pashtunwali, the tribal code of honor, nor do they accept the coexistence of their politicized version of Islam with the tribal code.

As in many other parts of the Muslim world, the idea of Islamic law, the shari‘a, encompasses those aspects of local custom (Ar., ‘adat) that are compatible with formal Islamic law. In social practice, the Pashtun of Afghanistan’s south share much in common with their kin in Pakistan’s FATA, although by the 1970s the Pashtun of Afghanistan had more access to education than their Pakistani counterparts.

Pre-1980s madrasas in the FATA remained largely under local control, although they were strongly influenced by wider intellectual and political currents, notably the Deobandi movement. In the newly established madrasas of the 1980s, just as with the Deobandi-inspired predecessors of the 1920s, doctrines of jihad were emphasized. With massive foreign and state support, including from Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the new madrasas thrived, and Pakistan, according to Yamane, became a ‘hotbed’ of religious extremism. Some madrasas are under state supervision, while others remain independent, and they vary in their acceptance of external support. Traditional notables were not neglected in the distribution of state and private largesse during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. After the Soviet withdrawal, however, this funding suddenly ceased, the region was abandoned, and the youth attracted to the jihad movement were left to fend for themselves.

The growth of madrasas in Pakistan since 1947 is stunning. From 245 registered in West Pakistan at the time of independence, Yamane reports that their number reached 2,056 by the 1980s, with many of those in the FATA located along the Pakistan–Afghanistan border. Unlike their older counterparts, the newer madrasas of the 1980s tended to be built away from the residences of local tribal leaders, and the influx of refugees also made these new schools, including their teachers and their leadership, independent from local authorities. Antagonism between the traditional leadership and the mullahs of the new madrasas grew. As the mullahs, including Taliban militants, were also heavily armed, they could paralyze the more moderate leadership of the traditional tribal elders and ignore the decision making of the jirgas. Ironically, the traditional leadership was more open to the introduction of modern education and the education of girls, but was also powerless to act effectively.

Southern Afghanistan lapsed into lawlessness following the Soviet withdrawal. By 1994 the Taliban (‘students’), many of whom were trained in madrasas in Quetta and Kandahar, were initially welcomed. The ‘pure-hearted,’ as they were called at the time, reduced banditry in the region and merchants supported them. By 1997, the Taliban controlled 90 per cent of Afghanistan. Following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, the Americans ousted the Taliban government. Nonetheless, as Yamane points out, the Pakistani government declared that the students in the newly established madrasas in Pakistan were ‘local’ Taliban and therefore not subject to attack. Private support for these madrasas and for the Taliban continued to pour in.

Yamane’s argument highlights the underlying conflict between the existing religious hierarchy and tribal leadership in the FATA region and southern Afghanistan and the increasingly powerful Taliban movement. Implicit in his argument is the powerful challenge that the Taliban posed to the legitimacy of the existing political and religious order, both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is convenient to claim that the Taliban became ascendant through fear and external support alone, but as Yamane argues, some villagers and external supporters welcomed them in the early 1990s as a stabilizing force based on the shari‘a as villagers and tribesmen understood it. In this

respect, the Taliban are distinctly modern and may prove more resilient than outsiders and state authorities care to admit.

Sakurai’s discussion of women’s seminaries in Iran and Pakistan gets to the heart of popular legitimacy. Most contemporary conservative Muslims in these countries acknowledge that women’s opportunities for education have until recently lagged behind those of men, although modern state schooling, at least in Iran, has been more open to them. In both Iran and Pakistan, the religious seminaries were marginalized in favor of state schooling, with its opportunities for employment and state advancement. In 1968, I had an opportunity to visit several male madrasas in various parts of Iran. The most striking thing about them was the significant number of students who had failed the highly competitive entrance examinations for lycée education or the subsequent examinations for entrance to Reza Shah Pahlevi University. The graduation rate for lycées hovered around 10 per cent, and many failed students then shifted to religious education. The consequence, however, was that many madrasa students were thoroughly familiar with secular subjects. In this way, the Iranian state indirectly contributed to the health of the women’s seminaries. In Pakistan, in contrast, at least for the Shi‘a population (15 per cent of Pakistan’s population), the seminary system there is more dependent at the advanced level on studies in Iran and Iraq.

In 1984, Ayatollah Khomeini established Iran’s first full-scale women’s seminary, and the idea spread throughout Iran and into Pakistan. Unlike the male madrasas, largely independent of the Iranian state, female seminaries were creations of the state. Their curriculum, an academic credit system, and formal ways to accept non-Iranian students made the seminaries increasingly attractive because such manifestations of bureaucracy and management enhanced the ‘modernity’ of the institutions.

Women seminary graduates formally participate in education and propagation (tabligh) implicitly to alter the balance between male and female authority in domestic settings. Sakurai reports that the seminaries have become so popular that they can accept only 10 per cent of their applicants. As in Indonesia and elsewhere, seminary education is

equivalent to secular higher education, and also attractive to students who prefer a gender-segregated environment.

The administrative and curricular details that Sakurai provides indicate how women's seminaries are fully the equivalent of secular institutions in organization and administration. Her example of how graduates of these institutions work in Pakistan also indicates the pervasiveness of both male and female religious networks. The father of one student from Skardu in Pakistan, for example, studied in Najaf for 14 years, represents Ayatollahs Sistani and Khamenei, and has founded seminaries in Skardu, where his daughter, having studied in Iran, is accorded prestige in her own educational and tabligh activities.

An important byproduct of the women's seminary movement has been to encourage the explicit discussion of women's rights in the Islamic context. Although not an explicit threat to the male hierarchy, there is now a critical mass of women with advanced scholarly credentials, although they still are not regarded as capable of issuing legal opinions on their own. Mir-Hosseini (1999) argued nearly two decades ago that educated women often assumed male names to enter into debates in religious magazines. This practice now seems to yield to direct participation. In Pakistan, where there are fewer educational opportunities for women and men, as in Iran, women are concerned with implementing all Islamic ideals and practices, not just those that apply to gender issues.

Adelkhah has had a long-standing interest in religious space as part of social space, and draws attention to the growing proliferation of religious spaces. Yamane's chapter documents the different forms that madrasas can take, and Adelkhah focuses on how madrasas encapsulate and sometimes advocate religious and social change, redefining the role of religion in society. In post-2001 Afghanistan, madrasas have become a key provider of education. To adapt a phrase from the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin (1990), madrasas provide a space for an 'excess of seeing.' Foreigners and locals mingle in them, outsiders see or misperceive their activities, and they provide networks for wide-ranging intellectual contacts and networks if trust.

Shi‘a madrasas are places where highly diverse groups can interact, debate, and respond to innovation—and adjust their actions both to what works and how others see them. The Shi‘a madrasas are also cosmopolitan, both in Iran and in Afghanistan, where they have strong ties with their Iranian counterparts. What is new since the 1990s is the accelerated pace at which accommodation to changed circumstances occurs and the wider range of audiences that must be taken into account. Adelkhah also underscores the ‘hybrid’ nature of religious and state education, where the more successful Islamic intellectuals effectively connect many audiences.

Since 2001, she argues that the same holds for Afghanistan, and that the Shi‘a madrasas there provide a model for ‘cultural, social, and economic modernization.’ The model includes English language acquisition, the use of computers, and as in the past, participation with the Sunni majority in discussions of national and ethnic identities—most Afghan Shi‘a are Hazara while most Pashtun are Sunni.

Both Sunni and Shi‘a participated in resistance to Soviet rule after 1979, and by the 1980s the category ‘Jihad fighter’ emerged, in which ethnic and sectarian identities became less important. Emigration to Iran for religious learning was earlier for Shi‘a seminarians. Afghan seminaries have benefited intermittently from Iranian government and private funding. The channeling of such funds is made easier by the networks of personal ties that leading scholars have built up from the time of their own studies outside of Afghanistan. Madrasa students often come from poor backgrounds, but religious studies often are a form of upward social mobility facilitated by the regular stipends and lodging for which madrasa students are eligible. Many, as former anti-Soviet jihadis, have added leadership credentials, and some have traveled to Iran, Pakistan, and Europe. The Iranian model of bureaucratized Islamic associations and schooling predominates, but in terms of language, dress, and the use of media, Afghan Shi‘a seek to distance themselves from their Iranian counterparts in order to attenuate accusations of antagonism to the Pashtun and Sunni majorities.

As Adelkhah concludes, dependence on Iran does not mean submission to a foreign power. The Afghan Shi‘a minority also has ties with Najaf in Iraq and

with its counterparts in Pakistan. Migration, both for the purpose of knowledge and for commerce—the two often are intertwined—plays an important role in defining the complex roles that madrasas and religious education play. As with minorities elsewhere, transnational educational networking, migration, and increasingly the new communications technology contribute to allowing Afghanistan’s Shi‘a minority more complex forms of empowerment and participation in religious and social fields.

Madrasas in Bangladesh also play pivotal roles in defining and contesting what it means to be Muslim. As with the other chapters in this volume, Bangladeshi madrasas vary from state-subsidized to independent and in terms of sectarian, or maslaki, orientation. Aliya madrasas are regulated and often funded by the Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board, part of the Ministry of Education. Quomi (Arabic qawmi) madrasas are privately funded, perhaps in emulation of the Aliya madrasas, those have also sought to organize since 1978. In the Brahmanbaria municipality, the subject of Kabir’s study, the Aliya schools are grade-based, as are most secular schools; Qoumi schools are subject-based, although the subjects are also partly organized in a grade-based way. Thus Quranic memorization and recitation constitutes the first stage of learning, followed by more advanced subjects.

Since the 1980s, schools for girls have also been formed. These Quomi schools are fee-based and provide religious scholars with a livelihood. The number of students enrolled in Quomi schools is uncertain, but Aliya madrasas nationwide constitute around 27 per cent of national enrolment, with secular schools constituting the rest. As with other parts of the Muslim world, the introduction of state-sponsored Western-style schooling has not eclipsed madrasa education.

Madrasas, and the religious scholars associated with them, continue to play vital public roles. The state does not fully recognize degrees earned at Aliya madrasas, but this is better than the Quomi degrees, which receive no state recognition. Nonetheless, Quomi students can achieve community recognition and network in their own community and beyond to maintain a livelihood.

This notion of networking is salient in the context of Bangladesh and beyond. As Stefan Reichmuth (2000) has shown for other contexts, tracing the regional and transregional networks now and in the past sheds significant light on the spread of ideas, practices, and identities. Understanding these networks, as Kabir reminds us, sheds light on how the ‘ulama create social and religious space. Sponsoring madrasas can also influence social advancement. Among ‘ulama, debate over doctrinal points also serves to delineate market spheres and solidify one’s primary base. Quomi ‘ulama can argue that the modern disciplinary subjects of the Aliya schools detract students from a ‘proper’ Islamic education. Aliya teachers in turn can argue that the Quomi rigidity is preserving tradition that detracts students from proper critical thinking. These debates remind us of British philosopher Walter Gallie’s notion of ‘essentially contested concepts,’ notions that are so value-laden that agreement on alternate interpretations is impossible. Yet such debates, when carried out in public space, have the potential to transform that space.

The Shimbo and Matsumoto chapter on Hui women’s Islamic education in China traces the rise and fall of its subject. Estimated at 9.8 million in China’s 2000 census the Hui are perhaps half of the Chinese Islamic community and 0.75 per cent of China’s total population. The Hui are marginalized by reason of language, religion, and economic disadvantage. In addition, Hui Muslims were reluctant to educate their girls alongside boys or to have them mix in public places. Nonetheless, in the Republican era (1912–1949) some male religious and other community leaders noted the importance of female education and established several female madrasas (nüxue). After 1949, the Communist government enhanced public education to promote national gender integration, although both religious and secular schooling ground to a halt during the 1966–1976 Cultural Revolution.

At the end of this period, Hui leaders worked with the government to make secular and religious education coexist and to integrate women into it. Even UNESCO provided funding, indicating how Hui leaders could use international concerns about gender equality to leverage international private contributions. The result was a shift away from nüxue to state schooling. Although nüxue were built by the private sector to

promote women’s education ‘without sacrificing religious identity,’ the government paid overheads and teachers’ salaries and demanded a shift away from Islamic subjects and toward ‘national integration and secularization’ and a demanding curriculum geared to national school entrance examinations.

The reluctance to allow women to be educated early in the twentieth century has now been replaced by agreement on the economic advantages of secular schooling, with secular schools as the first choice and the possibility of teaching as a career. Although nüxue have been marginalized, they remain privately supported. Their focus has shifted to the study of Arabic and to eliminating illiteracy among older women. Many pursue religion-related careers, and some older women study in preparation for the pilgrimage to Mecca. The study of Arabic offers others the possibility of serving as interpreters in the business world and at the same time cementing their credentials as ‘Muslim feminists,’ playing greater roles in society while adhering to Islamic values.

Several underlying themes emerge from these chapters. The first is that madrasa education everywhere remains important and is strongly shaped by national policy or, as in the case of Pakistan, the lack of a clear national policy or interest in educational reform (Witte 2010). Second is the growing globalization of madrasa education. This does not lead to a greater homogenization, but to the ability to learn from successful madrasa models elsewhere and to seek to emulate the most successful innovations of state-sponsored education. At the same time, madrasa students and their teachers are increasingly aware of alternative ideas of education and their ‘market value’ both in terms of social status and of locally and regionally shared Islamic values. Third is the extent to which madrasa education shapes pervasive notions of what is right and just in both Muslim and non-Muslim societies. These notions are contested and have been subject to strongly competing claims.

The role that madrasas play in society remains highly varied and is sensitive to the societies in which they are embedded. Madrasas everywhere continue to shape religious, social, and political beliefs and practice.

** [Back Matter]

*** Glossary

<biblio>

adabmanner or proper rules of conduct

ahung, akhundIslamic religious leaders or experts

ahwal-i shakhsiyyapersonal law

akhiratlife after death, hereafter

akhlaqgood qualities, virtue

akhundsee ahung

alim, pl. ulamareligious scholar

Alimdegree obtained after completion of grade 12 at Aliya madrasa

aqidafaith, creed

aseke rasuldevotee of the Prophet

ashuraday of mourning for the martyr Imam Hossein on tenth of Muharram

awqafplural of waqf, religous endowment

ayatollahlit. sigh of God. Modern honoric title in the Shia clerical institutions

Bahaifollowers of the reformer movement in the mid-19th century related to the religious dissidents Mirza Husain Ali Nuri, known as Bahaullah (1817–1892), and his son (1844–1921)

bayt ul-malhistorically, it was a financial institution responsible for the administration of the treasury (taxes or spoils of war) belonging to muslims in Islamic states, particularly in the early Islamic Caliphate; public or national treasury

bidaatreprehensible innovation often considered as heretical and sinful

BrahmanHindu priests

Dakhildegree obtained after completion grade 10 at Aliya madrasa

dar al-harbland of the war

dar al-Islamland of Islam

dars-i nizamisyllabus of Islamic education devised by Mullah Nizamuddin (d.1748) which continues to influence religious education in South Asia

Daura-i Hadiththe degree for obtaining expertise on the Prophetic tradition

dinreligion; often refers to Islam

duasupplication and invocation to Allah for seeking favor from Him

eid-e miladunnabicelebration of the birth of the Prophet

fatwareligious expertise or verdict based on Islamic legal schools

Fazildegree obtained after completion of grade 14 at Aliya madrasa

fiqhIslamic jurisprudence

fitnasecession, disorder and chaos; also refers to disagreement and division in Islam

furfura pira clan of Sufi master originated from the village of Furfura in Hooghly district in West Bengal, India

hadiagift often given to a Sufi master in exchange of healing

hadithtradition of the words and deeds attributed to the Prophet

Hanafiateschool of Islamic law ascribed to Abu Hanifa (699–767)

hawalalit. transfer of funds; informal network of payment system

hawza, hawza-i ilmiyyaShia religious school

Hazara kushito bring down the Hazara

Hazara sitizito make war with the Hazara

hazir u nazir, hadir wa nazirtheological precepts that allow the barrier of time–space, able to be present at one time in different places

hijabveil; set of moral or Islamic rule to dress or to behave

hoseyniehplace dedicated to Imam Hossein for the use of religious meetings

Hossein, Husaynthird Shia imam, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (d. 680)

HuiMuslim people in China

ijazalit. authorization; a certificate enabling a clergy to exercise ijtihad

ijtihadindependent reasoning in the interpretation of Islamic law; effort to interpret the Islamic laws

ilmknowledge; also it refers to religious knowledge

ilm-i ghaybthe knowledge of the unseen

imanfaith

irshadput on track; give the correct orientation

ishtirakatlit. common ground; principle based on making common ground between Shia and Sunni to prevent tension

itratProphet’s lineage

jamiacenter of higher education

jihadlit. exertion; holy war

Kamildegree obtained after completing 16 grade, similar to Masters degree, at Aliya madrasa

khanqahsufi meetinghouse

khatibthe prayer leader of a mosque who provides khutbah, congregational religious sermon; also refers to religious leader

khumsreligious tax

kitabkhanathe division of text, usually begins at post-primary level at Quomi madrasas

kuttabreligious school

lailat-ul baratnight of forgiveness, the night preceding the 15th day of Shaban month in Arabic calendar

lailat-ul mirajthe night of ascent of the Prophet to Allah, the 27th day of Rajab month in Arabic calendar

lungislifetime tribal chiefs

maadresurrection

madarisplural of madrasa

maduliamulet containing sacred text or incantation for healing illness or evil spirits

mahfilpublic gathering, especially where religious sermons and opinions are delivered

majarSufi shrine or spiritual preceptor’s grave

majhab, mazhabthe four schools of law considered as legitimate in Sunni Islam; often also refers to religion in South Asia

maktabreligious school

malikshereditary tribal chiefs who receive allowances from the government

marja-i taqlidthe highest authority in Islamic law among the Shia clergy

markazcenter

mashayekhpl. of sheikh, a religious scholar or Sufi master

maslarules of guidance

maslakiparticular interpretative aspects of Islamic doctrine

maulanascholar of religious learning

maulvi, maulavischolar of religious learning

mawajibregular allowances paid to maliks and lungis

mawlidprophet’s birthday

Menhuansufi orders in China

miandescended from holy men

muftijurist qualified to issue fatwas

muhaddithscholar of prophetic tradition

muhtamimmanager or director; often refers to the head of a madrasa

mujtahidhigh-ranking cleric who has the authority to interpret religious laws according to his judgment

murshidleader or teacher in a sufi order; They are often called laorenjia, which is the translation of Pir

naeb-e muftideputy Islamic jurist-consultant

nowruznew year

nüahongfemale teachers in women’s madrasa; some of them conduct religious rituals for women

nubuvvat, nubuwwatprophecy

nurlight, illumination

nüxuelit. women’s school; in the context of Islam in China, women’s madrasa

pani-poraform of Islamic healing where Islamic preceptor utters some sacred passages onto water, as remedy for curing illness or evil spirits

pardalit. separation; it is related to gender segregation

Pashtunwalithe Pashtun’s basic concepts of social life

pirspiritual preceptor, a Sufi master

qarzul hasanalit. loan made with no interest; Islamic banking

qazijudge applying Sharia

qingzhenlit. ‘pure and true’; it evokes Islam in China

QuranKoran, the Islamic sacred book

riwaja loosely collected set of old customs

sadakavoluntary religious donation

sadatplural from Sayid; family descends from Prophet Mohammed

saiyid, sayyid, sayda, sayiddescended from the Prophet

sanadroyal ordinance

sharifnoble, descended from the Prophet

shirkpolytheism

suba-i iftadepartment of practical lessons for issuing religious verdicts

sunna/sunnatthe normative practices of Prophet’s deeds and actions or traditions

tabizamulet containing sacred text or incantation for healing illness or evil spirits

tablighpropagation of the faith

talib, talabih, pl. talibanmadrasa student

taqiyalit. to conceal, to hide; principle based on denial of one’s religious views when it is necessary to protect oneself

taqriblit. rapprochement; principle to bring together the Islamic denominations, notably Shias and Sunnis

tawhidunicity; the first principle of the five pillars of Islam

ukhuvvat, ukhuwwatbrotherhood

ulum-i ruzmodern sciences

ummaMuslim community

ushrreligious tax

vahdat, wahdatunity

vilayat-i faqihthe government of jurist consult

waliholy men

waqf, pl.awqafreligious endowment

zakatobligatory almsgiving/religious tax; one of the five pillars of Islam

zakat al-fitrreligious tax to discharge at the end of Ramadan

zakirathe female religious authority in charge of reciting the story of the martyrdom of Husayn at Karbala

Zeynabiehplace dedicated to hazrat-i Zeynab for the use of religious meetings

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</biblio>

*** Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version]

<biblio>

Abbasgholi school 119

Abbasid Caliphate 110

Abdulrahman 109

accountability 8

accounting 6

adab 78–9

adaptability 69

Adelkhah, F. 1–10, 103–30, 134–5

administration 6

Advanced Elementary School 88

Afghan Desk 23

Afghani, A.N. 119

al-Afghani, J.D. 108

Afghanistan 1–2, 5, 7–8, 11–12, 15, 17, 20, 22–3, 25–6, 41–2, 44–5, 103–35; civil war 25; coup 21; Diaspora 114, 118, 123; Southern Afghanistan 14, 20

Africa 42; sub-Saharan Africa 7

Ahl al-Hadiths 43

Ahl-e Hadith (Salafiya) seminary 18, 22

Ahl-i Hadith 63–4

Ahl-i Sunnat wal-Jamaat 63–4, 72–3

Ahmad, Jala Al-e 105

Ahmad Khan, Sar Saiyid 16–17

Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam 64, 71

Ahmadi tenets 64

Ahmadiyya 4, 63

ahongs 88–9, 91–3, 95, 99–100

Akbar, A. 15

Al-Batul Mohila Madrasa 66, 69–70

Al-Qaeda 11

Alahabadi, A. 19

Alavi 105–6

Albania 42

algebra 19

Algeria 111

Ali 110

Ali Abad 110

Aligarh College 16–17

Alim 66–7

Aliya 65–9, 71–2, 74–5, 78–9, 135–6

Allah 64, 73, 75, 97–101

Amanullah 14

American University of Beirut 123

Amin, Nosrat 51

Amini, Ebrahim 49, 51

Amoli 49, 51

ibn Anas, M. 2

anthropology 131

Anti-Japanese War 91

Anti-Religion Movement 89

Anti-Rightist Campaign 89

Arab countries 64, 108, 125, 131

Arabic 4, 6, 41, 86, 88–92, 95–100, 119, 123, 136

Arabic literature 40

Arabs 11, 21, 23, 26, 42, 118, 124, 131

Arjomand, S.A. 117

Asefi 41

Asia: Central Asia 20, 25, 86; South Asia 4, 16, 59–60, 63–4, 79, 131; Southeast Asia 8, 23, 131

assassinations 24, 104

Astan-i Quds 122, 125

Australia 112

authenticity 61, 71–2, 75, 78

authorizing 68–77, 80

awqaf 16

Azad, Abul Kalam 16

Azad Kashmir 22

Azerbaijan 42

al-Azhar 1, 8

Babol 42

Babur, Nasrullah Khan 21, 25

bachelor’s 38, 42, 69

Baghdad 1–2

Bahai 2, 4, 105

Bahaollah 2

Bahonar, M.J. 106

Bahrain 42

Bakhtin, M. 134

Balandier, G. 104

Balkhi, A.S.E. 119

Balochis 12

Balochistan 20, 22–3, 25

Baltistan 42

Bamian 119

banditry 20, 25, 132

Bangkok 42

Bangladesh 5, 42, 59–84, 130–1, 135; distribution of madrasa types/students 67–8; form/structure of madrasa schooling 65–7

Bangladesh Befaqul Madarisil Arabia see Befaq Board

Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board 65, 135

banking 6, 43, 117, 131

Barelvi, S.A. 16, 63–4, 72–3, 79

Barelvis 17–18, 22, 43

Barzagan, M. 105

Ba‘th Party 130

Bayat 109

beards 89

Befaq Board 76–7

Beheshti, M. 105

Behsoudi, S.V. 119

Beidasi Women’s School 96

Beijing 86

Bengal 16

Bengali 74

Bengali-ness 62

Bengladesh Jamiatul Madarisin 75

Bhuiyapara 77

Bhutto, D.A. 21

Biglarbeygi, A. 119

Bihishti Zewar 16

Bilgrami, A. 62

Bint al-Huda 41–2

boarding schools 91

Bollywood 125

Bologna 4

Bourdieu, P. 3, 103

Brahmanbaria 60, 65–8, 135

British 12–13, 16, 65, 110, 131

Brittany 9, 107

Buddhists 65

Bulkhab 119

Bureau of Afghan Literature 119

bureaucratization 5, 52, 114, 118, 120, 133, 135

Bush, G.W. 4, 130

Cadet Madrasas 66, 77

Cairo 1, 8

Calcutta Aliya Madrasa 65

capitalism 107

caps 87

careers 94–5, 100

Catholic schools 106

centralization 5, 105, 110

Chang’an 86

charity 117

Cheney, D. 130

China 5, 8, 42, 85–102, 130, 136

Chindawul 110, 112

Chinese 88, 94–6, 98

Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (see also Communists) 86, 94, 98, 100

Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) 91

Chittagong 70

Christian Agricultural Youth Association 106

Christian Youth Workers Movement 106

Christians 4, 12, 65

civil war 25, 111

clash of civilizations 4, 103–5

Cold War 21–2

colonialism 65, 68, 103

communications technology 6, 135

Communism 8, 107

Communists (see also Chinese Communist Party) 5, 86–7, 136

Compulsory Education Act 88, 93

computers 19, 108, 117, 134

confidence 8

Congo 42

consumerism 85

contestation 59–84

Cordoba 1

Cornell, V.J. 60

Council of Brotherhood 108, 121

Council for Supervising Non-Iranian Seminary Students 41

cultural coherence 62

cultural identity 62, 77–9

cultural reproduction 59

Cultural Revolution [China] 89, 91, 93, 100, 136

Cultural Revolution [Iran] 39

Daikondi 114

Dakhil 66–7, 78

Damascus 1

Danesh, S. 119

dar al-harb 16–17

dar al-Islam 17

Dar al-Tabligh 34

Dar al-Ulum 16–17, 25

Darul Giasul Uloom Madrasa 70

Darul Quran madrasas 66

Darulquran 114

Darus Sunna Kamil Madrasa (DSM) 71–3

Dasht-i Barchi 112, 117

Dataria 71

Daura-i Hadith 66

Davari, R. 105

Dawoud, M. 107, 110

Day of Judgement 121

Delhi 1, 16

democratization 4

demographics 5

Deng Xiaoping 100

Deoband 1–2, 16–17, 63–4, 71, 73

Deobandis 17–18, 22, 43, 45, 72, 76, 79, 106, 132

dependency concept 124

deregulation 6

development 3, 5, 107, 117

Dhaka 65, 76, 78

differentiation 59–60, 62–4, 71; institutional 75–7; religious 120–4

din 68–9, 71

Din-u Danish 105

discipline 78

discrimination 85; ethnic 86; ethnic/denominational 111; gender 87

doctoral courses 41

dress 78–9, 135

Dubai 107

Durand Line 12

Durkheim, E. 3

Durr-i Dari Institute 119

duties 50

ebtedayee 66–7

Ecole normale sup,rieure 6

economic crisis 7

economic motives 93

economic power 2

Education Act 93

Egypt 1, 21, 111, 131

Eickelman, D.F. 3, 103, 130–7

elders (see also jirga) 11–12, 14–15, 24, 26, 132

emancipation of women 8, 101, 118

employment 68, 99, 133

endowments see waqf

Engels, F. 94

England 109, 121

English 6, 19, 40, 99, 108, 117, 120, 123, 134

enunciation 66

epistème 4

equality 3, 49–51, 85–6, 89, 92, 99, 101, 136

Erfani, G. 112

essentialism 101

ethics 37

ethnicity 85, 107

ethno-consciousness 88

ethno-nationalism 110

etiquette 78–9

Europe 2, 16, 97, 118, 130, 135; Christian Europe 4; imperialism 105; Western Europe 36

Evolution of Educational Thought 3

examinations 18–19, 33–4, 36–8, 40, 45–6, 88, 92, 96, 99, 114–15, 133, 136

extremism 2, 21, 132

Faisalabad 18

Faraizi Movement 16

fasting 41

Fatima (R) Mohila madrasa 71

Fatima Zahra 41

Fatimyyun hoseynieh/school 123–4

fatwas 17, 25, 52, 66, 104–5

Fayyaz, S.M.E. 118–19

Fayziyya va dar al-Shifa 37

Fazil 66–7

feast of duty 42

Federal Administered Tribal Area (FATA) 11–31, 131, 133

fees 8, 96

female education (see also girls’ education) 32–58

feminism 50–1, 53, 99, 101, 136

feminists 136

feminization 49–52

feudal system 21

fiqh 2, 40, 111

Fischer, M. 7

Foucault, M. 4

Fox News 130

fragmentation of authority 53

France 6, 9, 106

Frankfurt 118

Freud, S. 109

Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) 12

funding 43–4, 46, 135–6

furfura pir 71

furqania 66

Gallie, W. 136

Gangohi, R.A. 16

Gansu 86, 88, 96–8

gender 49–51, 85, 87, 89, 92, 97–9, 101, 136

geography 19

Germany 116, 125

Ghaed school 125

Ghaem school 118

Ghazi Chehab 110

Ghazni 114, 119, 121

Ghowr 110

Giasuddin Khan 71

Gilgit-Baltistan 22, 43

girls’ education 6, 16, 24, 45, 87–94, 96–9, 104, 106, 116, 118, 123, 125, 132, 135–6

globalization 6, 8, 63, 77, 137

Golpaygani 37

grades 66

grammar 36

Gramsci, A. 4

Greeks 7

Guangzhou 97

Gulf 41, 111

Guyuan Normal School for Nationalities 94

Habul 119

hadith (see also Prophetic tradition) 1, 32, 37, 63–4, 72, 76, 89, 96

Hafizia 66

Hairu Girls Junior High School 91–3

Haiyun Women’s School 96

Hakarat 124

Hakarat-i Islami 119

Hakim, M.B. 118, 124

Hamburg 118

Han 87, 91–2, 94–5, 98, 101

Hanafiat 64

Hanafis 2, 18, 22, 43, 72–3

ibn Hanbal, A. 2

Harun Islamabadi, M. 70

hawala 6, 131

hawza 7, 105, 112, 114–15, 131

Hawza-i Ilmiyya 4

Hawza-i Ilmiyya-i Itratiyyih 112

Hawza-i Ilmyya-i Khatamulnabyyin 116

Hawza-i Kabul 116

Hawza-i Risalat 114

Hazara 23, 45, 107–10, 112, 115, 117, 125, 134

Hazara sitizi 111

Hazara Unity Party 124

Hazarajat 110, 124

Hebei 86

hegemony 4

Hekmatiyar, G. 20–1

Hemmati, 112

Henan 86

Herat 109–10, 112, 114, 119

High Council of Seminaries 37

Hindus 12, 65

Hizb-i Islami 20

Hojjat, S.M.A.A. 110, 112

Holland, D. 62

Hong Weizong 91, 96

Hong Yang 96

Hongmen Menhuan 91

honor 14

Hosan, M.Q.B. 76

Hoseynieh Qala Fathullah 114

hospices 1

hospitality 14

Hosseini, H. 123

Hui 85–102, 136

human resources management 6, 131

Hussain, S. 130

identity 3, 59–85, 100, 134

ijaza 36–7, 39

ijtihad 37, 51, 63

Ilkhanate 110

Ilyas, M.M. 16

imperialism 105

India 7, 12–13, 16–17, 32, 42–3, 63–5, 71

Indian National Congress 17

Indochina 130

Indonesia 23, 42, 131, 133

information and communication technologies 6, 135

inheritance 15

insider 104

Insight Magazine 130

Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad 20

institutionalization 18–19, 37

integration 85, 92, 95

Intelligence 17

Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) 21, 25, 132

interest 6, 43, 103, 117

International Centre for Islamic Studies 41, 124

Internet 6, 99, 131

interpretation 52, 63–4, 71, 98, 136

interpreters 95–7, 136

intolerance 85

Iqbal, M. 17, 19

Iqra Rozatul Itfal Trust (IRIT) 19

Iran 4–5, 7–8, 32–58, 64, 99, 103–5, 107–12, 114–15, 117, 119–26, 130–1, 133–5; Ministry of Science, Research and Technology 41

Iranian model 114, 116, 118, 120, 126; implementation in Pakistan 43–9

Iraq 1, 32, 41–2, 103, 130–1, 133, 135

Isfahan 1, 34, 108

Islamabad 22

Islamia Balika (Girls') Madrasa 66

Islamia madrasas 66

Islamic awakening/resurgence/revival 16, 85, 98, 103

Islamic economics 7

Islamic law (see also fiqh) 14–15, 36, 51, 117

Islamic Propagation Office of the Qom Seminaries 39, 50

Islamic values 93–4, 136–7

Islamists 98, 100, 105–6

Islamization 21–2, 43–5, 85

Ismaili 2, 109

Itrat va Quran Centre 118–19

Ittihad-i Islami bara-i Azadi-i Afghanistan 20

Jafari, M.H. 105–6, 111–12, 120

Jafari school 2

Jaghuri 119, 124

Jamaat-i Islami 18, 21, 23, 43, 60, 64, 76

Jamia 66

Jamia Islamia Yunusia Madrasa (YM) 71–3, 78

Jamia Narjisiyya 46

Jamia Zainabiyya 46

Jamiat al-Muntazar 45, 47

Jamiat al-Ulama-i Hind 16–17

Jamiat al-Ulama-i Islami 23

Jamiat al-Ulama-i Pakistan 17

Jamiat al-Ulama-i Sarhad 16–17

Jamiat al-Zahra 33–4, 42, 45, 50–1, 123

Jamiat-i Islami 20

Jamiatul Madrisin 76

Jamiatulislam 116

Japan 97

jihad 15–17, 21, 23, 25–6, 107–8, 110–11, 114–17, 119, 123–5, 132, 134–5

jirga 11, 13–15, 24, 26, 132

Jozjan 119

jurisprudence 36, 40, 50, 73

Kaba 121

Kabir, H. 59–84, 135–6

Kaboli, M. 114, 116, 118

Kabul 1–2, 21, 25, 110, 112, 114–15, 117–19, 123, 125–6

Kadivar, M. 109

kalam 96

Kamil 66–7, 78

Kandahar 25, 109–10, 114, 123–4, 132

Karadj 118, 124

Karbala 47, 110

Karta-i Char 112

Karta-i Seh 117

Karzai, H. 116

Kashmir 12, 23, 42

Kasravi, A. 104

Kazemi, K. 119

Keju test 92

Khadija 41

Khadijatalkubra 115, 120, 125

Khalis, Y. 20

Khamenei, A. 37, 42, 49, 51, 114, 118, 134

Khamoushi, F 42

Kharbid 119

Khatamulnabyyin 115–17, 120, 122–5

Khoi, A.Q. 49, 118–19, 124

Khomeini, R. 1, 32–4, 36, 39, 41, 49, 51–2, 106, 108, 118, 133

Khorasan 34, 108, 110

khums 36, 46–7, 123

kitabs 66

Kondouz 112

Koran see Quran

Korea 97

Kowsar 125

Kufa 1

Kyrgyzstan 42

Lagrée, M. 106

Lahore 18, 45–7

Latin America 124

laundering 114

learning see knowledge

Lebanon 42

legitimacy 8

Lenin, V.I. 94

Linxia 96, 98

Linxia Zhong-A Nüxiao 96

literacy 5, 12, 65, 85, 87–8, 92, 96, 100, 104, 136

livelihoods 69

loans 6, 103, 117

logic 36

Lucknow 1

lungis 15

lycées 133

Ma Benzhai 91

Ma Jiafu 91–2

Ma Xinlan 90

Madrasa al-Zahra 45–6

Madrasa Ghaed 112

Madrasa Ilmiyya-i Baqyyatalla 112

Madrasa Reform Commisssion 19

Madrasa Sikhsok Parishad 75

Madrasa-i Ilmiyya 4

Madrasa-i Jamiatulislam 114

Madrasa-i Madinatulilm 114

Madrasa-i Muhammadyyih 114

Mahdavi, M.H. 104

al-Mahdi seminary 42

Majlis-i Intizamiya 18

Majlis-i Mushawat 18

Majlis-i Umumi 18

maktab 1, 4, 32, 34, 36, 60, 66, 112

Maktab-i al-Zahra 112

Maktab-i Fatimah 34

Maktab-i Hazrat-i Khadijah 112

Maktab-i Nargues 112, 116, 120

Maktab-i Narjis 34, 42–3

Maktab-i Tawhid 34

Maktab-i Zahra 34

Malaysia 23, 42, 97, 99

Malekian, M. 105

Maliki 2

maliks 14–15, 17, 22

Management Centre for the Qom Seminaries 40

Management Centre for Women’s Seminaries 34–5, 37, 40, 50

Management Council of the Qom Seminaries 37

management science 6, 131

Manicheanism 3

Mansura 18

Mao Zedong 94

Maoism 94, 97, 99

marginalization 85, 95, 109, 111, 118, 120, 136

marja-i taqlid 32, 118

marjas 49

markaz 112

market economy 8, 92, 94, 97

Marx, K. 94

Marxism 88, 98, 100, 130

Marxism-Leninism 94

Mashhad 34, 42, 108, 111–12, 118–19, 124–5

Masjid-e torka see Sheikh Ansari mosque

maslaki 59, 62–4, 71–2, 79, 135

master’s 37–9, 41–2, 69

Mas‘ud, A.S. 21

mathematics 88, 94

Matsumoto, M. 85–102, 136

Maududi, A.A. 21

maulana 15

maulvi 15

mawajib 15

Mazar Sharif 112, 114

Mazari, M.A.A. 119

Mazari, S. 124

Mecca 94–5, 97, 124, 136

Medina 97

Mehsud 26

memorization 66, 135

merchants 16, 20, 25–6, 132

Merry, M.S. 62

Mervin, S. 112

mian 15

Middle East 2, 20, 23, 86; ‘Greater Middle East’ 4

migration 107, 115–16, 118, 124–5, 135

militancy 130

Ming era 86, 91

Mir-Hosseini, Z. 99, 134

mobilized Islam 69

modernity 3, 103

modernization 14, 60–1, 106, 108

Moghaddasi, 114, 125

Mohaghegh, M. 115

Mohagheghnasab, A. 104

Mohagheghnasab, M. 109

Mohseni, M.A. 109, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122–6

money 117

Mongol Empire 109–10

Mongolia 86

Mongolian era 86

moral economy 8–9, 114, 117, 130

Morocco 60, 131

Mossadegh, M. 105

Motahhari, M. 49, 51, 106

motherhood 101

Mottahedeh, R. 7

Mousavi, S.A. 110

movements 106–7

muballigh 33

Mufid 105

muftis 2, 15

Mughal period 72

Muhammadi 23

Muharram 115

mujahidin 17, 20, 22–5, 44, 112

mujtahids 36–7, 51, 53

muliculturalism 77

mullahs 11, 15, 23–6, 132

Multan 18

murshids 92, 96

Muslim League 17

Muslimness 62, 100

Mutazalites 2

Myanmar 42

Nadia 77

Nadiatul Quran 76–7

Nadiatul Quran Kendrio Mohila Madrasa 66

Nadwah 63

Nadwatul Ulama 64

Najaf 1, 7–8, 32, 42, 47, 49, 108, 118–19, 124–6, 130–1, 134–5

Najafi, Husayn 45, 47

Nanotavi, M.Q. 16

Nasr Organisation 119

national curriculum 92, 94

National Liberation Movement 105

nationalism 88, 112

‘nationalization’ 7–8

Nawruz 110

neo-Leachian perspective 104

nepotism 68

networking 69–73, 79, 135–6

New Jersey 112, 118, 125

new madrasas 11–31; political background 21–2

Ningxia 86, 88–91, 94–7

Ningxia Institute of Educational Science 91–2

nizami 64

Nizamiyya 1–2

non-governmental organizations (NGOs) 5, 22, 90, 92, 120, 125

North America 130

North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) 12–13, 16–18, 20–3, 25

Northern Areas 22

nüahong 97

al-Numan, A.H. 2

Nurani 66, 76–7

nüxues 88, 94–101, 136

Obama, B. 130

obscurantism 104

Office of Research and Study of Women’s Issues 50

Ohab, Abdul 76–7

Olesen, A. 15

Oneness of God 121

opium 107

Ottoman Empire 109, 131

outsider 104

Oxford 7

Pahlavi see Reza Shah

paideia 7

Pakistan 4–7, 11–58, 63, 97, 111, 115–16, 124–5, 130–5, 137; debt waiver 26; implementation of Iranian model 43–9; Ministry of Interior 17, 22; West Pakistan 22

Pakistan Movement 12

Palestine 111

Panjabis 12

parda 52

Pasdaran-i Jihad 119

Pashtunistan 12, 20

Pashtuns 11–15, 20, 22–4, 26, 108–10, 121, 123, 131–2, 134–5

Pashtunwali 11, 13–15, 24, 132

Patia 70

Payam-i Zan 50

pedagogy 74–5

Persian 19, 41–2, 74–5, 86, 111, 120

pesantaran 131

Peshawar 16, 21, 25

pilgrimage 97, 136

Pingyuan County 88

planning 5

pluralism 3, 7, 53, 118

political correctness 122

political economy 8–9, 117

political economy of meaning 3, 103

politicization of employment 68

politicized Islam 12, 23, 132

Polytechnique 6

polytheism 64, 73

population see demographics

pork 94

positionality 73, 75

poverty 3, 68

power-knowledge 3–4

preparatory courses 37–8

primary schooling 36, 66, 89

privatization 6

propagandists 33

propagation (see also tabligh) 39–40, 42, 50, 75, 97

property speculation 5

Prophet 1, 15, 64, 72–3, 75, 78, 109–10, 121

Prophetic tradition (see also hadith) 63–4, 72–4, 76, 125

Protestantism 107

proxy war 21

public schooling 68, 88–90, 92–4, 97, 100

public services 6

Pul-i Sokhta 117

Punjab 22–3, 43

purification 51, 123

Qadiani 71

Qajar 110

Qala-i Shada 117

Qala-i Wazir 117

qazi 15

Qazni 119

Qing Dynasty 86, 88

Qinghai 86, 97

Qiratia 66

Qizilbash 109

Qom 1, 8, 33–7, 40–2, 45–6, 49–50, 109, 111–12, 118–26

Qudsi, 41

Quetta 20, 25, 125, 132

Quomi 65–71, 74–6, 78–9, 135–6

Quran 4, 6, 24–5, 37, 40, 51, 64, 66, 72–6, 78, 88–90, 94, 96, 115, 117, 121, 135

Quran wa Itrat Institute 112

Quranic schools see maktab

Quranic studies 16, 19

Qutub, S. 98

Rabbani, B. 20–1

Rabita al-Madaris al-Islamiya 18

radicalism 7, 130

Rajabzadeh, M.J. 112, 119

Ramadan 41, 43, 86, 94, 115, 121

rational sciences 64

rationalization 37, 52

reciprocity (badal) 14

recognition 69, 116, 135

Reconstruction Crusade 122

Reform and Open Policy 94

reformism-revivalism 61

refugees 11, 21–6, 45, 111, 114, 131–2

Reichmuth, S. 135

religious dependency 103–29

remittances 107, 114, 118

Republican era 88, 97, 136

revealed sciences 64

revolution 42, 44, 89; French 106; Iranian/Islamic 2, 5, 34, 40, 49, 105, 111, 117, 119

Reza Shah 32, 42

Reza Shah Pahlevi University 133

Rezai, S.M. 124

Rezazadeh, 112

rhetoric 36

Rifah 105–6

rights 3, 49–50, 52, 105, 134

Risalat School 116–17, 121, 123

riwaj 14–15, 26

Riza Khan, Ahmad 64, 72

Robinson, F. 64

Roy, O. 108

Rumsfeld, D. 130

Russia (see also Soviet Union) 107, 109

sadaqa 47, 98

Sadat 109–10

Sadiq, J. 2

al-Sadr, M.B. 7

Safavi, N. 104

Safavid Empire 109–10

Sahabi, Y. 105

Sahalawi, N. 64

Sahi Masjid 72

sainthood 60

al-Saiyaf, A. 21

Saiyaf, A.R. 20

Sajedi, J. 112, 118, 125

Sajjadi, A. 121

Sakina bint al-Husayn 47

Sakurai, K. 1–10, 32–58, 130, 133

Salar 96

Salarzai tribe 13

Salehi, J. 114, 116, 123

sanad 15

Sar-i Pul 119

Sari 42

Saudi Arabia 21, 23, 99, 108, 111, 125, 131

SAVAK (National Intelligence and Security Organization) 119

Sayda Zaynab 108

sayyid 15

schisms 4

scholarships 5, 89

scholastic tradition 7

schools of Islamic law see fiqh

sciences 1, 16, 19

sciences of the day 105

Scottish Enlightenment 130

scriptural tradition 63

Seamen’s Education Movement 106

seclusion 52

Second World War 36

sectarianism 49, 59, 63

sects 43, 47

secularization 3, 7–8, 90, 92, 136

Sefati, Zohreh 51

segregation 52, 118

selfhood 60–3, 78–9

seminaries: feminization 49–52; growth of 34–6; Iranian model 32–58

September 11, 2001 2, 4, 20, 26, 130, 132

Shabestari, M. 109

al-Shafii, M.I. 2

Shahin, 123

Shandong 86

Sharia 25, 64, 1323

Shariati, A. 105

sharif 15

Sheikh Ansari mosque 1

Shia kushi 111

Shia Madrasa Board 45–6

Shia/Shiites 2, 8, 12, 18, 22, 32–3, 40–1, 43–7, 49, 51–2, 64, 75, 104, 106–7, 109–12, 116–17, 119–21, 123, 125–6, 130–1, 133–5

Shiism 8, 42, 107–11, 114, 117–20, 124

Shimbo, A. 85–102, 136

Shiraz 34, 118, 124

Shirazi, M.H. 118

Shizi-shan-zhuang Elementary School 91–2

shuras 25

Sikhs 16

Silo 112

Sindh 12, 18, 22, 41, 43

Singapore 97

Sistani, A. 42, 49, 118, 134

Skardu 42, 134

smoking 78

Sobeh 119

social advancement 115

social justice 8

social studies 19

sociology of education 3

Sorbonne 4

Soroush, A. 105, 109

Soviet Union 5, 11–12, 15, 17, 20–3, 25–6, 44, 107, 109–10, 114, 117, 124, 131–2, 134–5

speculation 5

Spin Bordak 25

Stalin, J. 94

stoning 104

structural adjustment 7

Student Front 23

Su Le 88, 90

suba-i ifta 66

subsidies 18, 20–1

Sufis 1, 14–15, 21, 71, 91

suicide bombing 24

Sukkur 41

Sukurai, K. 134

Sunna 64

Sunnis 8, 12, 18, 41–5, 64, 73, 79, 108–10, 116, 119, 121–3, 125–6, 130, 134–5

syncretism 61

Syria 108, 124

Tabatabai, A. 105

tabligh 37, 39–43, 97, 114, 133–4

Tablighi Jamaat 16

taharat 51

Tahrik-i Taliban Pakistan (TTP) 26

Tajiks 23, 109, 123

Takmil-i Hadith 66

Taleghani, M. 105

Taliban 2, 11, 15, 20, 24, 107, 111–12, 122, 125, 131–3; challenge to tribal order 25–6

talibs 6

Tamaddon 120, 123, 125

Tang Dynasty 86

Tanzim al-madaris (ahl-i Sunna) 18, 22

teachers 93–7

Tehran 106, 111, 118, 120

television 75, 99, 120, 123, 125

terrorism 2, 4, 26

Thailand 42

Thanavi, M.A.A. 16

Thompson, E.P. 130

Tibet Uprising 89

Timurid tradition 117

Titas 65

Tongxin County 88, 90–1

Tribal Areas 20

tribal system 11, 13, 22–5, 132

tribalism 107

Tripura 65

Troeltsch, E. 107

Tunisia 1

Tunissi, T. 109

Turkey 110

Turkish 85–6

Turkmenistan 25, 42

Twelvers 109

‘Two Hundred Famous Phrases in Arabic’ 90

ulama 15–17, 23, 104, 107–8, 136

Ullah, Mubarak 73

Ulum madrasas 66

Umar, M. 15

umma 1, 8–9

underdevelopment 85

unemployment 68

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 90–1, 131, 136

United States (US) 21, 26, 42, 44, 97, 111–12, 116, 118, 121, 123, 125, 131–2

unseen 64, 72

urbanization 5, 7

Urdu 19, 74–5, 124

ushr 19

USSR see Soviet Union

Uyghur 85, 96

Uzbeks 23

Vadugarh 72

veil 87, 89, 95, 98, 103

venue of convenience 1

Veyne, P. 4

victimization 109

vilayat-i faqih 33, 38–9, 49, 108, 112, 121

violence 2, 105–6

al-Wahhab, M.A. 2, 108

Wahhabism 2, 49, 108

Waliullah, S. 19, 64

Waqaf al-Madaris al-Arabiya 18, 22

Waqaf al-Madaris al-Salafiya 18, 22

Waqaf al-Madaris al-Shia 18, 22

waqf 2, 7, 36, 46, 65, 96, 117

Waziristan 11, 14, 26

Weber, M. 107

Weizhou 88, 96

Weizhou Girls Elementary School 92

Weizhou Girls Junior Elementary School 88, 90

Weizhou Girls Normal School 88

Weizhou Hui Girls Elementary School 91

Weizhou Islamic Girls School 88

West 2–4, 32, 34, 40, 62, 77, 103, 107, 111, 121, 123, 131; aid/subsidies 20–1, 26; and gender equality 50; military occupation 105; way of life 52; Western consumerism 85; Western feminism 99; Western thought/philosophy 7, 16; Western-style schooling 68, 135

Westernization 52, 77

womanhood 101

Women’s Education Centre 39

women’s empowerment 32–58

workers 39

World Bank 85

World Centre for Islamic Sciences 112, 119

World Centre of Religious Sciences 116, 121

Wulasi Jirga 14

Xiji County 91

Xingyuan Women’s Islamic School 95

Xinjiang 85–6

Yamane, S. 11–31, 131–4

Yazdi, M. 106

Yinchuan 95

Yiwu 95, 97

Yuan dynasty 86

Yunnan 86, 88, 97

Yunus, Abu Taher Muhammad 71

zakat 19, 21, 36, 43–4, 46, 65, 123

zakat al-fitr 47

zakiras 47, 49

Zaman, M.Q. 59

Zayarat-i Sakhi 110

Zeitouna 1

zeynabieh 112, 125

Zhejiang Province 95

Zheng He 91

Zia al-Haq 19, 21–2, 43–4

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*** Contents

Acknowledgments vii

Note on Transliteration ix

Contributors xi

1. Introduction: Modernity and the Remaking of Muslim

Politics

Robert W. Hefner 1

2. New Media in the Arab Middle East and the Emergence of

Open Societies

Dale F. Eickelman 37

3. Pluralism, Democracy, and the ‘Ulama

Muhammad Qasim Zaman 60

4. The End of Islamism? Turkey’s Muslimhood Model

Jenny B. White 87

5. Dilemmas of Reform and Democracy in the Islamic

Republic of Iran

Bahman Baktiari 112

6. Thwarted Politics: The Case of Egypt’s Hizb al-Wasat

Augustus Richard Norton 133

7. Rewriting Divorce in Egypt: Reclaiming Islam, Legal

Activism, and Coalition Politics

Diane Singerman 161

8. Empowering Civility through Nationalism:

Reformist Islam and Belonging in Saudi Arabia

Gwenn Okruhlik 189

9. An Islamic State Is a State Run by Good Muslims: Religion

as a Way of Life and Not an Ideology in Afghanistan

Thomas Barfield 213

10. Islam and the Cultural Politics of Legitimacy: Malaysia in

the Aftermath of September 11

Michael G. Peletz 240

11. Muslim Democrats and Islamist Violence in Post-Soeharto

Indonesia

Robert W. Hefner 273

12. Sufis and Salafis: The Political Discourse of Transnational

Islam

Peter Mandaville 302

13. Pluralism and Normativity in French Islamic Reasoning

John R. Bowen 326

Index 347

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Robert W. Hefner

<right>

Boston, January 2004

</right>

*** Note on Transliteration

[[This book is intended for a wide readership, nonspecialists as well as specialists. As a result, we have used minimal transliterations of Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and other foreign language terms. No sub- or superscripts have been used, except where an individual author deemed them absolutely necessary. Arabic words have been transliterated and spelled in a manner consistent with national usages rather than an international standard.]]

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** Chapter 1: Introduction: Modernity and the Remaking of Muslim Politics

Robert W. Hefner

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq placed the question of Islam and Muslim politics squarely in the American public’s mind. In bookshops and classrooms, and on radio and television talk shows, Americans were treated to crash courses on the history of Islam, Muslim attitudes toward democracy, the reasons (some) Muslim women veil, and the question of whether the Western and Muslim worlds are indeed fated to a “clash of civilizations.”

The impact of this heady media brew was decidedly mixed. In February 2002, a half year after the 9–11 attacks, the liberal-minded leader (imam) of one of Washington D.C.’s largest mosques told me that the number of invitations he had received to speak at churches and synagogues had increased twentyfold from the year before, and the number of American citizens whom he had helped to convert to Islam had

quadrupled. “Never in my eighteen years of living in the United States have I encountered such an outpouring of interest in Islam, most of it quite sympathetic!” On the other hand, in the months following the 9–11 attacks, there were dozens of unprovoked assaults on Americans of Muslim and Middle Eastern background. Several prominent conservative evangelists blamed the 9–11 attacks not just on individual extremists, but on Islam itself, which they decried as worship of a false god (Cooperman 2003). More alarming yet, surveys conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public life revealed that, two years after the terrorist attacks, growing numbers of Americans believed that Islam encourages violence among its followers (Pew Forum 2003).

In a society as culturally diverse as the United States, it was inevitable that there would be contrary pushes-and-pulls to the post 9–11 reaction. With the passage of time, it was not surprising too that the events of September 11 came to be seen against the backdrop of other events: the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the conflict in Chechnya, border skirmishes between India and Pakistan, the war in Iraq, and continuing strife between Israelis and Palestinians, among others. Other than the fact that, somehow, they all involved Muslims, there was no agreement on the narrative thread with which to tie these events together. What was clear was that the question of Muslim politics loomed larger than at any time in modern American history.

As public discussion continued, two broadly opposed positions emerged concerning Islam’s compatibility with democracy and civic pluralism,[1] one pessimistic, the other cautiously optimistic. Prominent in the former camp was the distinguished senior historian of the Middle East, Bernard Lewis. Written just prior to the September 11 attacks, Lewis’s best-selling What Went Wrong? attributed the Muslim world’s turbulence to the fact that, in the course of its encounter with Western modernity, “[t]he Muslim attitude was different from that of other civilizations that suffered the impact of the expanding West” (Lewis 2002, 36). In particular, Lewis argued, the premodern history of Muslim confrontation with Europe insured that in the modern era Muslims showed a defensive or even hostile attitude toward things Western. Muslims were “willing enough to accept the products of infidel science in warfare and medicine, where they could make the difference between victory and defeat.... However, the underlying philosophy

and sociopolitical context of these scientific achievements proved more difficult to accept or even to recognize." This rejection, Lewis concluded, "is one of the more striking differences between the Middle East and other parts of the non-Western world that have in one way or another endured the impact of Western civilization" (Lewis 2002, 81). The difference ensures that it is unlikely that Muslim societies will embrace democracy and pluralism any time soon.

Certainly there is no dearth of jihadi militants willing and able to enunciate the starkly anti-Western rhetoric Lewis has in mind.[2] But other observers wonder whether it is fair to take such individuals as representative of Muslim opinion as a whole. There is compelling evidence that many among the world's Muslims endorse no such rejection of modernity and democracy. To take just one example, Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris's recent World Values Survey compared opinion in eleven Muslim-majority societies with several Western countries and found in all but one of the Muslim countries (Pakistan) public support for democracy was equal to or even greater than in Western countries (Inglehart and Norris 2003). Where Muslim and Western attitudes diverged was not on matters of democracy, but in relation to "self-expression values" only recently ascendant in the West, such as gay rights and full gender equality.

Recent developments in Turkey, Iran, and Indonesia offer an even more striking indication of Muslim interest in democracy and civic pluralism. On November 3, 2002, voters in Turkey gave their overwhelming support to a new, Islam-oriented party, known as the Justice and Development Party (JDP). The JDP is a reformist party that traces its origins back to a series of Islamist parties banned by secular Turkish authorities in previous decades (White 2002). Despite rumblings from the country's secular-minded Constitutional Court, the JDP managed to escape the wrath of authorities while broadening its appeal among Turkish voters, many of whom had previously been skeptical of Islamic parties. It did so in large part by tapping voter resentment over corruption and the country's continuing economic crisis, while distancing itself from the Islamist rhetoric of its predecessors. More significant yet, as Jenny White explains in chapter 4 in this volume, the party leadership made clear its commitment to principles of human rights, the rule of law, and pluralist democracy. The leadership explained that rather than providing an alternative to democratic institutions, Islam should deepen

the values of justice, equality, and human dignity on which those institutions depend.

The terrorist attacks on synagogues and British-owned buildings in Istanbul in November 2003, in which dozens died and more than five hundred were injured (Smith 2003), showed that not all Turkish Muslims agree with Justice and Development's democratic commitments. But the Turkish public's horrified reaction to the bloodshed showed just where most citizens' sympathies lay. In this sense, events in Istanbul were illustrative of a struggle for the hearts and minds of Muslims taking place not just in Turkey but around the world. The contest pits those who believe in the compatibility of Islam with democracy and pluralist freedom against those who insist that such values and institutions are antithetical to Islam.

Events in Iran since 1997 offer a second example of a similar plurAl-ization and contestation of the forms and meanings of Muslim politics. Iran is especially interesting because it is the only country in the Muslim world to have undergone the political metamorphosis from an Islamic revolution to the establishment of an Islamic Republic and, finally, the emergence of a postrevolutionary society (Brumberg 2001; Hooglund 2002). During its first quarter-century, the republic was seen by Islamist activists around the world as proof of their religion's ability to provide an alternative to Western-style democracy. As Bahman Baktiari explains in chapter 5, however, the third, or postrevolutionary, phase of the Islamic Republic's evolution has yielded some surprises. Events since the election of the reform-minded President Khatami in May 1997 show that the youth, women, and professional wings of Iran's new middle class have grown disenchanted with the reigning repressive interpretation of Muslim politics. They seem more interested in the creation of a civil society with genuine pluralism and freedoms than they are the shibboleth of velayat-e faqih (lit., "rule by the religiously learned," i.e., clerics; see Arjomand 1988, 148–59). As yet the dream of a democratic spring in Iran remains unfulfilled, and, as in Turkey, the long-term success of efforts to remake Muslim politics is far from guaranteed. But what is clear is that, in Iran as in Turkey, a growing number of faithful have concluded that there is no contradiction between their great religion and civil-democratic decency.

The Southeast Asian nation of Indonesia offers a third example of a Muslim politics as plural and contested as its counterparts in Turkey and Iran. Although often overlooked in discussions of Muslim societies, Indonesia is the largest Muslim-majority country in the world. In the final years of the Soeharto dictatorship (1966–98), a powerful movement for a democratic Muslim politics took shape. In alliance with secular Muslims and non-Muslims, the movement succeeded in May 1998 in toppling the long-ruling Soeharto. No less remarkable, Muslim participants in the democracy campaign dedicated themselves to devising religious arguments in support of pluralism, democracy, women's rights, and civil society (Abdillah 1997; Barton 2002; Hefner 2000). Unfortunately, as I discuss in chapter 11, in the months following Soeharto's overthrow, Indonesia was rocked by outbreaks of fierce ethnoreligious violence. Some of the violence showed the telltale signs of ancien regime provocation. But other acts were linked to independent extremists, including one group with ties to al-Qa'ida. The violence slowed the reform movement and put the Muslim community's pluralist experiment in question.

Notwithstanding these and other setbacks, events in Turkey, Iran, and Indonesia have proved that Muslim politics is not monolithic, and that there is more to its contemporary ferment than the bleak alternatives of secularist authoritarianism or extremist violence. Less widely noted but no less important, there is an effort underway in many countries to give Muslim politics a civic, pluralist, and even democratic face. In some nations, perhaps the majority, the initiative is still so preliminary or disorganized as to hardly merit the label "movement." Elsewhere, as in Saudi Arabia (chapter 8), the reformers are not clamoring for full-fledged party democracy, but greater pluralism and citizen participation. In these and other Muslim countries, however, there are hints of change in the air, and hope of better things to come.

*** The Modern Maelstrom

It was with an eye toward exploring these changes that the Institute on Culture, Religion, and World Affairs at Boston University, with the generous support of the Pew Charitable Trusts, brought together fourteen specialists of Muslim politics for three meetings, in May 2002 and in January and

September 2003. The meetings were part of an eighteen-month program of research and analysis on social supports for, and obstacles to, pluralism and democratization in the Muslim world. The project was not intended to address the September 11 violence as such. Having directed a small program on Islam and Civil Society for the previous nine years, I had submitted the project proposal to the Pew Trusts in August 2001, a few weeks prior to the events of September 11. The aim of the "Working Group on Civic-Pluralist Islam," as our project came to be known, was to look at Muslim politics from within, examining the local roots for a pluralist public sphere and a democratic politics. In undertaking this program, we also hoped to bridge the gap between, on one hand, academic scholars and, on the other, policy makers and a general public increasingly concerned about developments in the Muslim world.

The contributors to this volume are first and foremost scholars of Islam and Muslim politics. But all share the conviction that policy-oriented public scholarship is intellectually important in its own right. Some of our colleagues in academia may not share this conviction; even those who do often regard public scholarship as a lesser intellectual genre. What this viewpoint forgets is that most of the great Western social theorists of the nineteenth and early-twentieth century were public intellectuals as well as or even more than they were academics. They understood well the rhetorical demands and intellectual benefits of having to communicate specialized insights to general audiences. What this perspective also overlooks is one of the most impressive aspects of cultural life in the contemporary Muslim world: its proud legacy of public intellectualism (see Abaza 2002, 55–74; Eickelman and Anderson 1999). All this said, the main motive for bringing together the authors who contributed to this volume was our shared conviction that efforts to understand events in the Muslim world can succeed only if we move beyond sound bites and stereotypes and acknowledge the plurality and contest of modern Muslim politics.

To begin to appreciate this variety, and to understand the background to the essays in this volume, we need to look beyond the categories of Western liberal history and recognize several distinctive concerns of Muslim politics. Three are particularly relevant to the chapters that follow. First, far more than is the case in contemporary Western democracies (but not unlike some Western subcultures; see Casanova 1994; Wuthnow 1988, 173–214), Muslim

politics is informed by the conviction that religious scholars, the ulama (literally, “those who know,” sing., alim), have the right and duty to make sure that all major developments in politics and society are in conformity with God’s commands. Notwithstanding a few radical experiments like revolutionary Iran or Afghanistan’s Taliban, this first feature of Muslim politics is not typically understood as an imperative for theocratic rule. Religious scholars do not govern and, again, notwithstanding certain utopian Islamisms to the contrary, real-and- existing Muslim polities are not characterized by a seamless fusion of religion and state or a dictatorship of “clerics” over a supine civil society (see Arjomand 1988, 147–63; Brown 2000; Zubaida 2003). Indeed, in a manner that may at first appear paradoxical, most Muslim societies are marked by deep disagreements over just who is qualified to speak as a religious authority and over just how seriously ordinary Muslims should take the pronouncements of individual scholars.

Rather than an all-powerful theocracy, then, the more general effect of this first principle of Muslim politics is diffusely cultural. The principle makes it difficult for public political deliberation to lapse into laissez- faireism, leaving urgent ethical questions to individual choice or the marketplace of public opinion alone. As Muhammad Qasim Zaman (chapter 3) and John Bowen (chapter 13) illustrate in their discussions of “normativity” in this volume, social and political initiatives are in principle subject to ethical assessment by scholars whose charge is to assure that the developments are consistent with God’s commands. The latter are in turn understood in relation to the body of revealed regulations or Islamic “law” known as shari‘a (lit., “the path,” “the way,” as in divine regulations or law; see Murata and Chittick 1994, 25–27). In this sense, contemporary Muslim politics operates on two levels: a generalized or mass level driven by the actions and concerns of ordinary Muslims, and a restricted or specialized track involving the efforts of religious scholars to respond to modern problems within the normative horizons of the shari‘a and Islamic tradition as a whole.[3] Much of the fevered argument of contemporary Muslim politics centers on questions as to how these two tracks are to be harmonized.

Although this first concern informs Muslim political ideals today just as it did during Islam’s classical age, its social urgency has varied over time. As occurred with the rise of secular nationalism in the middle decades of the

twentieth century, there are times in Muslim history when popular culture drifts away from normative-mindedness, and the public appears less concerned with justifying its political choices with reference to religious ideals. However, when, as in much of the Muslim world after the 1960s, a society experiences a period of deepening Islamization, the concern for religious legitimation will rebound into public awareness, unleashing a torrent of debate on what is and what is not in accord with God's commands.

This social fact points to a second feature of Muslim politics, this one related to contemporary efforts to remake that politics in a pluralist and democratic mold. A key requirement for such a reorientation will be the emergence of public intellectuals backed by mass organizations with the social and discursive resources to convince fellow Muslims of the compatibility of Islam with pluralism and democracy. It goes without saying that the formulation of such religious rationales would have been unnecessary had Muslim societies undergone the process of radical secularization Western theorists had predicted back in the 1950s. But the resurgence of the 1970s and 1980s ensured that contemporary politics in most Muslim societies shows a deep concern with religious powers and discourses.

Viewed from another perspective, this second concern of Muslim politics might seem like a particular example of a general theme in contemporary democratic studies. In recent years "democracy in the vernacular" has been a new and welcome focus of attention in political studies, in large part as a result of efforts to extend that theory's cultural horizons beyond the Atlantic-liberal West (see, for example, Bhargava, Bagchi, and Sudershan 1999; Hansen 1999; Kymlicka 2001). As with Kay Warren's (1998) examination of Mayan activist intellectuals in contemporary Guatemala, or Robert Weller's (1999) study of village temples and women's networks in Taiwan, vernacular approaches emphasize that democratization needs local roots if it is to grow. While recognizing that there are, in the Wittgensteinian sense, "family resemblances" to democratization across cultures, vernacular studies insist that such resemblances are not proof of an end of history or a culturally homogeneous modernity. Notwithstanding certain family resemblances, modernity is multiple in its organizations and meanings (Eisenstadt 2000; Hefner 1998c; Knauft 2002). Democracy and democratization will be as well.

In the case of Muslim societies, there is a distinctive organizational tension to the requirement that pluralism and democratization have vernacular roots. Although Islam has jurists and religious scholars, it has no pope, sacerdotal priesthood, or ecclesiastical hierarchy to coordinate their actions. In most times and places, religious scholars (ulama) claimed the main responsibility for fulfilling Islam's prime ethical imperative, "commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'l-nahy 'an al-munkar; see Cook 2000). They did so on the grounds that they were most knowledgeable in the sciences of the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet.

Even in premodern times, however, just how scholars carried out this duty and who among them was most qualified to do so were questions on which consensus was often difficult. The ulama might recognize an informal hierarchy in their ranks, and, in the Shi'a Muslim world in particular, at times the hierarchy's behavior bore a passing resemblance to the ecclesiastical disciplines of Western Christianity (see Arjomand 1988, 177–188; Cole 2002, 189–211). In many countries, however, Muslims recognized more than one school of religious law (madhhab). Even where a community adhered to just one school, individual jurists (fuqaha) could reach different conclusions on matters of social importance, and the most expert reserved the right to issue opinions of their own. Although they usually shied away from interfering directly in debates on the shari'a, rulers, too, did not hesitate to meddle in religious affairs indirectly. They patronized scholars and mystics who voiced opinions on shari'a similar to their own. They supported shrines to Sufi saints and sponsored religious festivals that, while avoiding comment on the details of the law, nonetheless enacted a visual model of the way religion, politics, and the social were to be imagined (see Eaton 1984, 334; Hammoudi 1997, 68–80; Woodward 1989, 199–214). Rulers also appointed court jurists to serve as spokespersons before the scholarly community. It is telling, however, that the latter experts were viewed as having "no monopoly of giving fatwas [religious opinions], and the practice of consulting private scholars of high reputation has never ceased" (Schacht 1964, 74). Stories of holy men resisting rulers' interference were a classic theme in the popular religious imagination (Messick 1993, 143; Munson 1993, 27). Not the centralized Church of Roman Christendom, religious authority in the Muslim community as a whole tended toward a fissiparous pluricentrism.[4]

As Zaman illustrates in his discussion of modern Pakistan (chapter 3; see also Zaman 2002), in most contemporary Muslim societies the ulama still play a role in public ethical discussion. However, modern pressures for pluralism and popular participation are increasingly apparent as well. They can be seen in the fact that the precise influence of ulama on public discussion varies widely, as do local understandings of just who is and who is not qualified to provide informed religious opinion. In recent years, then, the long established pluricentrism of religious authority has been compounded by a participatory revolution transforming Muslim culture and politics as a whole.

As Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori have observed (1996, 13; cf. Abaza 2002; Esposito and Voll 2001, 3–22), one of the most significant elements in this transformation has been the emergence of “new Muslim intellectuals” across the Muslim world.[5] Although some are graduates of religious schools (madrasa) and are familiar with classical commentaries, the majority of new Muslim intellectuals are alumni of national educational systems who acquired their religious knowledge through self-study or participation in small discussion groups (halaqah). As recent events in Zaman’s Pakistan, White’s Turkey, Eickelman’s Morocco (chapter 2), and Michael Peletz’s Malaysia (chapter 10) all illustrate, one characteristic of their autodidactic education is that the new Muslim intellectuals tend to be more interested than their classical predecessors in linking their religious studies to nontraditional concerns. Some of these are of a loosely populist nature, touching on questions of how to raise one’s children, how to live a good life, or how to make household ends meet. At the elite end of the public spectrum, however, others among the new intellectuals grapple with the question of Islam’s relation to science, democracy, human rights, and globalization (cf. Abdillah 1997; Eisenstadt 2002; Esposito and Voll 2001; Meeker 1991). Religious conservatives may reject such reflexive extensions of the tradition as “innovations” (bid‘a) incompatible with God’s law. But other Muslim thinkers, as well as masses of ordinary believers, will beg to differ.

There is an additional organizational feature to these efforts to press public culture and politics into a more participatory mold. The Islamic resurgence

took place in the aftermath of a great social and cultural transformation across most of the Muslim world. Urbanization, migration, and growing socioeconomic differentiation combined to undermine received and often village-centered religious disciplines. The state's inability to meet all but a portion of the needs of the new urban masses also created a demand for alternative providers of public services in the fields of health, education, and public security. Finally, mass education, literacy, and a growing network of mosques and Islamic schools combined to strengthen the determination of ordinary Muslims to exercise choice and take charge of their faith (Eickelman 1992). Together, these developments generated a great popular appetite for a more participatory practice of public life and religion. Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori (1996) have rightly seen these events as a potential foundation for a democratic reformation of Muslim politics.

This democratic potential is real enough. However, its realization will depend upon more than the mere fact of heightened popular participation. As events in Europe during the first half of the twentieth century showed all too tragically, mass participation under conditions of ethnoreligious pluralism can generate enormous social tensions, the effects of which may be anything but democratic. As with European fascism and communism, if popular participation and social competition are not embedded in cultures and powers of a civic-pluralist sort, the result may be more polarizing and violent than it is democratic. There is no dearth of such examples in today's world (Brass 2003; Hansen 1999; Hefner 2000; Mamdani 2001). Whether the mass participation that so marks the modern age is democratizing, then, depends on not just participation or associations in civil society, but the higher-level cultures and organizations to which ground-level mobilizations are linked.

In the case of Muslim societies, in particular, the outcome of the new pluralist participation will depend upon a third feature of contemporary Muslim politics: the efforts of rival groupings to "scale up" their influence by strengthening their organizations in society and forging pacts or alliances with influential actors and agencies in the state. Mobilizational initiatives like these usually begin at the local level, with efforts to bring together like-minded actors in associations dedicated to some social, religious, or welfare task. It is activities like these that recent studies of civil society have tended to privilege as the spring from which democratic cultures flow. However, if they are to have a lasting influence in society as a whole, at some point

these activities and networks must be drawn into what the sociologist Peter Evans (1996) has described as collaborations “across the state-society divide.” As Theda Skocpol has also observed (arguing against Durkheimian portrayals of civil society as entirely independent of the state), civic groups in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century America were not merely local and not always nonpolitical. Many were linked to translocal organizational networks that sought to forge ties with national leaders and associations so as to influence state policies (Skocpol 1999, 33).[6] There are myriad reasons for civic groups in modern Muslim societies to want to do the same. From the perspective of prodemocracy groupings in particular, it is clear that without some measure of coordinate support from the state and the legal system, democratic elements in society remain vulnerable to attack by uncivil elements in state and society (Hefner 2001; Keane 1996).

It goes without saying, of course, that collaborations across the statesociety divide can be put to nondemocratic ends as well. As in Zia ul- Haq’s Pakistan (chapter 3), post-Nasser Egypt (chapter 6), modern Saudi Arabia (chapter 8), and post-Soeharto Indonesia (chapter 11), some state officials may conclude that it is in their interest to make common cause with ultraconservative Islamists, rather than Muslim democrats. At other times or in other places, however, ruling elites may choose to lend a hand to the reformist cause. Whatever the political establishment’s tack, the prevalence of such mobilizations and alliances in countries across the Islamic world shows that contemporary Muslim politics has changed. It is no longer restricted to a handful of elites, religious dignitaries, and representatives of the privileged classes. The age of mass mobilization has dawned, and with it has come not merely a pluralization of the political field, but a contestive pluralization centered on rival interpretations of Muslim politics, and rival efforts to organize in society and across the state-society divide.

In the competitions that ensue, Muslim parties and organizations sometimes enjoy a distinctive advantage over their secular rivals. As Jenny White (2002) has demonstrated for Turkey and Carrie Rosefsky Wickham (2002) in Egypt, some of the most successful of today’s Islamic mobilizations owe their success not to formal ideology or top-down party organizations, but to the local networks and relationships from which they draw their membership. Muslim mobilizations often take preexisting religious networks built around neighborhood mosques and religious schools and weave them together into

a parallel Islamic sector. As in the Egyptian case (Wickham 2002, 93–118), some Islamic organizations do so by offering educational and health services the state is unable or unwilling to provide. However, the really decisive advantage enjoyed by these mobilizations is their ability to organize their constituencies “on an individual level through known, trusted neighbors, building on sustained, face-to-face relationships, and by situating its political message within the community’s cultural codes and norms” (White 2002, 7). While government parties show a preference for a top-down and bureaucratic organization, the new Islamist mobilizations are a politics in the vernacular par excellence.

Again, whether this participation in the vernacular is democratizing is another, more complex question. The contrast between the Egyptian and Turkish examples on this point indicates that the political outcome of the effort can be varied, to say the least. Egypt’s Islamists have tended to be conservative on matters of democracy, pluralism, and women’s rights, although there are signs this may be changing. Turkey’s Islamic parties have tended to look more favorably on democracy and pluralist freedoms. The difference reflects not merely basic cultural differences between these two societies, but, as Richard Norton shows in his chapter, the Egyptian state’s unfortunate habit of combining the repression of democracy activists with mobilization of conservative Islamic clients (cf. Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999, 126; Wickham 2002, 21–35).

These and other examples illustrate once more that there is no uniform Muslim modernity, nor a monolithic Muslim politics. What Muslim- majority societies do have in common, however, is a new dynamic of popular participation and contestive pluralism. In a growing number of nations, this condition is not merely challenging the old ways of doing things; it is inspiring dreams of a Muslim politics that is civil and democratic.[7]

*** Remaking Muslim Politics

Against the backdrop of these three features of contemporary Muslim politics, it is perhaps easier to understand the distinctive aims and methods of the groups discussed in this volume, most of whom hope to bring about a

civic-pluralist reformation of Muslim politics. In light of the first concern of Muslim politics, the concern for religious legitimation, we should not be surprised to see that reformers devote what is, from a Western utilitarian perspective, an inordinate amount of time and energy to coming together to read, write, and formulate the terms for a new practice of Muslim politics. Some reformers do little more than share their reflections with a handful of like-minded intellectuals; others may have access to public platforms in institutions like universities and research institutes. Some, too, may take advantage of new publishing technologies and the Internet to disseminate their writings to larger and more anonymous publics. As Dale F. Eickelman and Peter Mandaville show in their essays on media and transnational Islam (chapters 2 and 12; see also Anderson 2003; Eickelman and Anderson 1999), modern print and electronic media have allowed for the transmission of new ideas even into communities once walled off by established guardians of the faith.[8]

Where conservatives still command a significant mass following, these tentative probes toward pluralist reform may often display a “nonpolitical” guise. As in Diane Singerman’s discussion of legal reform in contemporary Egypt (chapter 7) or Gwenn Okruhlik’s analysis of pluralism in Saudi Arabia (chapter 8), proponents of reform in such circumstances may choose to focus their efforts not on formal politics, but on educational programs, incremental legal reforms, and public discussions that offer ordinary Muslims an element of choice and participation. Sometimes they also do so because, as Okruhlik makes clear, the reformers are not clamoring for a full-fledged party democracy as much as they are simple pluralist freedoms. Not public spheres of citizen participation in the modern sense of the phrase (see Calhoun 1992; Habermas 1989), the limited-access nature of these activities may also be intended to reduce the risk of conflict with conservative opponents. If and when these “nonpolitical” initiatives begin to make headway, however, the effort almost always goes public, and, as with Singerman’s legal activists, is accompanied by attempts to forge alliances with sympathetic actors in state and society.

But going public has its risks. It may only galvanize the ultraconservative opposition and increase the likelihood of confrontation. Committed as they are to a less state-centric practice of their faith, civic-pluralist Muslims may feel torn when confronted by conservative violence and intimidation. Some

are willing to, and do, give their lives for the pluralist cause. Recognizing that the success of their efforts depends on long-term changes and the demobilization of “uncivil” groupings, others may quietly retreat to the security of private life and friendships, away from the threat of state repression or public confrontation, praying the storm will pass. Satellite dishes, Internet connections, and the quiet circulation of pamphlets and books may be the only signs of a profession of the faith at odds with those in the commanding heights of religious society.

In the best of circumstances, however, the reformists may succeed at building social coalitions and even creating collaborations across the state-society divide. If and when they achieve the latter, they may get access to the legal and educational resources needed to scale up their influence well beyond the limited-access groupings of society (Eickelman and Anderson 1999, 14; Bowen 2003, 258–68; Hefner 1997). A process of this sort is already underway in countries like Turkey, Iran, Morocco, Malaysia, and Indonesia. In these countries, the movement for a civic- pluralist Islam is no longer just a matter of limited-group discussions, Internet chat groups, or tacit pacts with sympathetic government officials; it has become a powerful stream in public politics and culture. The setbacks that have occurred in several of these countries cannot hide the fact that the struggle to remake Muslim politics is here to stay, and that the circumstances and desires to which it responds are widespread across the Muslim world.

With some 1.3 billion of the world’s 6 billion people professing Islam, the outcome of this struggle to reorient Muslim politics is likely to be one of the defining political events of the twenty-first century. As a result of globalization and immigration, the contest will also impact Western societies directly. As John Bowen and Peter Mandaville’s essays make especially clear, several Western countries are themselves in the midst of a great Muslim immigration, and their strategies for accommodating the new immigrants vary. Already there are 5 million to 7 million Muslims in the U.S., and no fewer than 30 million in Western Europe, where their numbers are growing more rapidly than the general population (Cesari 1994; Nielsen 1992). As Bowen and Mandaville both show, many among the new population are grappling with the question of what it means to be European or American and Muslim (see AlSayyad and Castells 2002; Ramadan 1999). Although, as Mandaville’s essay also illustrates, a few have lent their support to

international jihadi causes, the more prominent have begun to play a central role in the pluralist stream of transnational Islam (see Mandaville 2001). Their ability to do so effectively over the long run, however, will depend on the willingness of Western societies to accord Muslims full rights of citizenship. This will demonstrate more effectively than any media campaign that there is no clash of civilizations between Islam and the West, but a convergence of interests among people of civil-democratic conviction.

*** Conditions of a Modern Possibility

There is a broader background to this volume’s examination of contemporary efforts to remake Muslim politics. It bears on the question of how we are to understand that politics in relation to processes of participation, pluralization, and democratization seen in other parts of the world. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the successful transitions from authoritarianism in Korea and Taiwan inspired optimism about the prospects for transitions of a similar nature in other non-Western societies, including Muslim ones. A host of political scientists, sociologists, and anthropologists threw themselves into the task of determining just why authoritarian regimes collapse and what their fate says about the conditions that might allow for transitions elsewhere.

As is not uncommon in such high-stakes endeavors, the academic community never reached a consensus on most of these questions. Pressed by real-world problems, however, Western policy analysts had no such luxury. They were compelled by force of circumstances to come up with actionable guidelines for democratic transitions. Unlike their obstreperous academic counterparts, then, policy circles soon settled on a few rival models, each with a very different view of the cross-cultural prospects for democracy.

The first model emphasized that the key to democracy and sustainable prosperity lay with the bedrock institutions emphasized by Western Cold Warriors during their half-century of battle with Soviet totalitarianism: free markets and fair elections. In 1993, the historian and policy analyst Francis Fukuyama presented one of the more celebrated versions of this argument.

He suggested that the modern world had arrived at “the end of history,” in the sense that it was no longer possible for any serious person to believe that there were weighty alternatives to liberal democracy and capitalism. Each time Fukuyama voiced his views, of course, one could hear the sighs of British social democrats, Christian conservatives, deliberative democrats, and American communitarians, all of whom (from different perspectives) lamented what they regarded as a slighting of their recommendations for amendments to liberalism’s orthodoxy.

For several years in the early 1990s, however, the Fukuyama formula had an air of commonsense inevitability about it, at least in American policy circles. This was the case not so much because policy makers subscribed to the Hegelian claim that history had ended, but because in anxious circumstances like those of postcommunist Europe, Fukuyama’s model was one of the few that seemed to offer a workable guide for the future. The key to sustainable democracy was, simply enough, free elections and “getting markets right.”

It was not long, however, before the din of real-world events began to raise questions about the adequacy of the markets-and-elections model. It was not that free elections and equitably competitive markets are not useful things. The problem was that knowing that they are useful is not quite the same as understanding what is required to get them up and running and sustainable. As a series of setbacks in Eastern Europe and Russia during the 1990s showed (Gray 1993), free markets are not “free” in the sense that they are the spontaneous product of unconstrained social exchange. Their free and fair operation depends upon a host of resources in state and society that together “embed” the marketplace (Granovetter 1985; Hefner 1998b; Hollingsworth and Boyer 1997). To build trust, enforce contracts, control crime, and, in a word, make a modern market work, a good deal more is needed than self-interested exchange among so many Robinson Crusoes (Clegg and Redding 1990; Hamilton 1998).

This same qualifying note is all the more relevant when it comes to understanding what is required to make pluralist democracy work. Ethnoreligious violence in Yugoslavia, the genocide in Rwanda, Hindu-Muslim strife in India, racial attacks on immigrants in Germany—these and other developments during the 1990s demonstrated that, at least outside of

Washington’s Beltway, there were a fair number of people who had yet to learn that history had ended. Indeed, rather than the end of history, outbreaks of communal violence in the 1990s seemed to indicate that, with the Cold War over, “local” histories and cultures had reasserted themselves with a vengeance.

One response to this disturbing realization was to throw up one’s hands and conclude that democracy is, above all, a Western institution that depends on Judeo-Christian values; as such, it can take root only in societies of Judeo-Christian background. The most influential statement of this position was that of the Harvard political scientist Samuel P. Huntington, first in a widely read article (Huntington 1993) and then in a later book, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (1996). Whereas Fukuyama had implied that Muslim societies were unlikely to resist the great wave of democratization (Fukuyama 1993, 45–46), Huntington argued that democracy depends on a complex of values and institutions lacking in many non-Western societies, not least of all Muslim ones. The list of requisite values and institutions included “individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free markets, the separation of church and state” (Huntington 1993, 40).

Huntington’s pessimism represented a departure from his earlier views on the “third wave” of democratization (Huntington 1991). In writings subsequent to his 1993 article, as well as a two-year monthly seminar on cultural globalization at Harvard University that I was invited to attend, he softened the argument somewhat, recognizing that its strict cultural assumptions might be taken as a counsel of relativist despair. European and American policy analysts shared this reservation. In these and other circles, pressure mounted for an alternative to the clash-of-civilizations model.

The alternative was forthcoming soon enough. Setting aside generalizations about civilization and top-down emphases on markets and elections, the new paradigm stressed the importance of grassroots initiatives for building democracy. There were many variations on this model, but perhaps the most influential was Robert Putnam’s Making Democracy Work: Civic Institutions in Modern Italy (1993). In this engagingly well written book, Putnam took a page from Alexis de Tocqueville’s nineteenth-century

Democracy in America (1969) and argued that civil society and social capital are “the key to making democracy work” (1993, 185). Drawing on, but also narrowing, a theoretical concept earlier developed by the sociologists Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman, Putnam defined social capital as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam 1993, 167). Putnam’s main thesis was that it was in these voluntary, “horizontal” networks that citizens develop the trust, cooperative skills, and egalitarian attitudes required for democracy. Within these analytic horizons, it was hard to resist Putnam’s bold conclusion: “Membership in horizontally ordered groups (like sports clubs, cooperatives, mutual aid societies, cultural associations, and voluntary unions)” is “positively associated with good government,” while “membership rates in hierarchically ordered organizations” are “negatively associated with good government” (Putnam 1993, 176). For one brief shining moment, it seemed as if the long-sought recipe for democracy had been found.

The press of real-world events made the concepts of civil society and social capital all the more appealing in policy circles. With several postcommunist states teetering on the edge of collapse, and with the awful evidence that rulers in some countries had deliberately provoked acts of ethnoreligious violence to neutralize rivals, the state in some post-Cold War countries had begun to look like a part of the problem rather than the solution. The idea of civil society provided policy makers with the license they needed to look beyond the halls of state for partners in society.

However beneficial its program impact, the idea of civil society was just not strong enough to stand up under the weight of the theoretical burden it had been assigned. Irrigation associations, small-credit cooperatives, and women’s crisis centers are one thing, but what about racially based secret societies, civilian militias, or fundamentalist cults? Sociologically speaking, the latter are all voluntary organizations situated in the space between the family and the state. As such, they qualify for membership in civil society, at least according to the definitions most widely used during the 1990s (see Hall 1995; Hann 1996; Hefner 1998a; Rot- berg 2001; Skocpol and Fiorina 1999). However, as with Hindu nationalists in India mobilizing their networks to attack Muslims (Brass 2002, 6; Hansen 1999, 203–14), or Rwandan priests using their leadership capital to goad parishioners to kill Tutsis (Mamdani

2001, 226), the idea that all civil society associations and all social capital are “good” for democracy runs up against one unnerving complication: social capital can be used for all manner of ends, including antidemocratic ones.[9]

All this is to say that associations that are, locationally speaking, part of civil society are not always “civil” in terms of the attitudes they inspire or the political culture they promote (Hefner 2001; Keane 1996, 10). Some forms of social capital and some civic organizations are democracyfriendly, but others —Hutu death squads, the Ku Klux Klan—are not. Robert Putnam’s 1993 work attempted to anticipate this objection by emphasizing that it is horizontally organized civic associations that are democracy-friendly, while vertically controlled ones are not. Associations of a horizontal sort, he argued, foster “robust forms of reciprocity” and communicate mutual expectations in “reinforcing encounters,” thereby enhancing trust and increasing the flow of communication (1993, 173–4). But many of America’s extreme right-wing militias, as well as religious extremists in many parts of the world (Juergensmeyer 2000), show these same robustly reciprocal qualities. And, unfortunately, they do so without producing habits of the democratic heart.

In a subsequent study of social capital in the United States (Putnam 2000), Putnam introduced a useful qualification on his earlier argument, one broadly consistent with the lessons from several essays in this volume. Recognizing that not all social capital is democracy- or pluralismfriendly, Putnam distinguished what he called an exclusive or “bonding” social capital from an inclusive or “bridging” variant. Bonding organizations, he observed, are “inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups” (Putnam 2000, 22). By contrast, bridging social capital tends to “generate broader identities and reciprocity” (23). The latter may be well suited for mediating ethnic and religious divisions.

Another way of saying this is that real-and-existing civil societies are always rife with social tensions, not least of all because, rather than being blissfully homogeneous, they are crosscut by divisions of religion, ideology, ethnicity, gender, and class (Hefner 2001; Keane 1996; Stolle and Rochon 2001). Unless counteracted by more encompassing organizations and discourses that extend participatory rights beyond the ingroup, these divisions can generate social tensions that are anything but democratic. Moreover,

notwithstanding the romantic view of civil society as entirely independent of the state, the development of these stabilizing arrangements depends not only on forces in society, but on symbiotic collaborations across the state-society divide (Evans 1996; Hefner 2001; Skocpol 1999).

Here, then, are a few lessons from recent discussions in democratic theory relevant for understanding events in the Muslim world. They provide important clues as to when the participatory revolution transforming contemporary Muslim politics may be democratizing, and when it may not.

*** Resurgence and Democratization

As noted above, during the 1970s and 1980s, the Muslim world witnessed a resurgence of piety and public religious activity unprecedented in modern history. The physical signs of this change were ubiquitous: in mosque construction, the proliferation of religious studies circles, crowded Friday worship, pilgrimages to Mecca, bearded men, veiled women, and the growth of Islamic publishing. Earlier, during the heyday of modernization theory in the 1950s, Western analysts had forecast that Muslim societies would inevitably experience the same processes of privatization and decline that, it was assumed (too simplistically), religion in the modern West had undergone. Muslims might be latecomers to the secularization process, the argument went, but they too would succumb to the secularist juggernaut (Lerner 1958). By the time the Islamic revolution swept Iran in 1978–79, this forecast had begun to look jejune. By the early 1990s, it seemed simply absurd.

Ironically, part of the foundation for the resurgence had been laid back in the 1950s and early 1960s not by pious Muslims, but by the secular nationalist leaders who governed most of the newly independent countries of the Muslim world. However meager their achievements in economic policy, the nationalists made headway in the field of general education. Certainly, their record was still modest by comparison with educational programs in East Asia, not least of all because in some Muslim societies women’s education lagged significantly behind that of men. In addition, in a few poor countries, like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Sudan, rates of education even for males

remained stubbornly low (UNDP 2002). Notwithstanding these qualifications, nationalist governments in the majority of countries succeeded in creating the first generation of Muslim youth with general literacy and educational skills (see Eickelman 1992).

During these early years, most among the newly educated applied their skills to more or less secular ends, exactly as nationalist leaders had hoped. From Morocco to Indonesia, socialist and secular nationalist slogans predominated among the educated middle class. With the notable exception of Saudi Arabia, where the state was officially based on shari‘a law, Islamist issues and parties seemed to have been outflanked by their secular rivals, and seemed marginal to the central currents of postcolonial Muslim politics.

Although their specific views varied from country to country, nationalist ideologues agreed in asserting that folk culture was to blame for the Muslim world’s backwardness, and popular culture would have to be aggressively recast if society were to progress. In this regard, the nationalists shared an elite-modernist impulse with Mustafa Kemal, the secularizing founder of modern Turkey (see Berkes 1998). However, with the exception of Kemalist Turkey, nationalist leaders hesitated to launch a too-direct attack on religious institutions. Recognizing Islam’s crowd appeal, leaders instead cloaked their secularist programs in a nationalist garb that “retained a modest Islamic façade, incorporating some reference to Islam in their constitutions such as the ruler must be a Muslim or that the shariah was a source of law, even when it was not” (Esposito 2000, 2).

Soon, however, the nationalist edifice began to weaken. Having raised popular expectations to such unrealistic heights, the nationalists only insured the population’s greater disappointment as it became clear that the state was unable to deliver on its promises. The sense of crisis was exacerbated by a demographic transition taking place across the Muslim world. From 1950 to 1990, the proportion of the population living in urban areas swelled, as a result of rural-to-urban migration and, especially in Africa and the Middle East, some of the world’s highest fertility rates. In forty years, urban populations grew 200 to 300 percent, without a corresponding expansion in urban infrastructures. Still predominantly rural in 1950, by 1990 all but a

handful of Muslim countries saw 35 to 55 percent of their population residing in cities and towns. There residents suffered the usual ill effects of pollution, crime, unemployment, and poor state services (see Brown 2000, 123–30).

By the early 1970s, then, the secular, socialist, and nationalist stars that had once shone so brightly had begun to lose their luster. Yet the need for some kind of public ethical compass was more compelling than ever. With masses of people from different ethnic and regional backgrounds packed into slums, the old ways of village and town had become obsolescent. The impersonal and often corrupt bureaucracies of state and party inspired even less confidence.

It was during this period, then, that neighborhoods across the Muslim world witnessed a steady expansion in the number of mosques and madrasas. Americans familiar with the role played by urban churches in their own country during the late-nineteenth century, when ethnically based congregations helped to integrate foreign immigrants into American society, should find little startling in this phenomenon (Finke and Stark 1992; Wuthnow 1988). Researchers who have examined the wave of Protestant conversion in urban Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s (Martin 1990; Stoll 1990) will also recognize parallels. For the urban poor and lower-middle class, mosques and religious schools offered islands of civility and moral clarity in a turbulent sea. In the face of growing class- and status-differentiation, these institutions provided avenues of participation for believers otherwise consigned to society’s margins. As in the late-nineteenth-century United States, the pervasiveness of religious associations gave a deeply religious hue to interactions in civil society. That society was not made up of modern liberalism’s individuals freed from ethnoreligious bonds, but individuals and groups bound by crosscutting ties of kinship, ethnicity, and religion.

One telling indicator of the public’s heightened interest in religion was the rapid development of a market for inexpensive Islamic books and magazines. The literature provided a means for people who had never had an opportunity to study in religious schools to familiarize themselves with the fundaments of their faith (Gonzalez-Quijano 1998; Eickelman and Anderson 1999). The opportunity also stimulated the emergence of a new class of

teachers and preachers, with target audiences different from those of the classically trained ulama (Eickelman and Piscatori 1996). Most of the preachers had only a vague familiarity with classical religious scholarship, although, as in Egypt, a few were unemployed graduates of religious colleges (Gaffney 1994). More important yet, the new preachers made their message relevant in ways different from the scholastic preaching of mainstream ulama, adapting their topics to the concerns of urban publics. Such were the demands of entrepreneurial success in an increasingly competitive religious market.

Here then was the background to the great religious resurgence seen across the Muslim world in the 1970s and 1980s. Described in the language of modern political theory, the resurgence was primarily an affair of civil society, not the state.[10] Equally important, notwithstanding its impact on rural society, its leading lights and organizations were urban in ethos and organization. The resurgence created a great reservoir of social capital, comprised of networks and solidarities dedicated above all else to public piety and expressions of Islamic identity. As with denominational Christianity in America in the nineteenth century (Finke and Stark 1992; Hatch 1989), the heightened religiosity was accompanied by fierce competition among purveyors of different religious messages. Among the case studies offered in this book, only Afghanistan stood apart from the general pattern of a public Islam redefined by the interests and choices of urban consumers (see Barfield’s chapter 9).

Although the cultural temperament of the Islamic resurgence varied from country to country, the process as a whole shared three basic characteristics. The first was that, in scope and density, the resurgence represented a historically unprecedented mobilization of civil society, one that created vast new reserves of social capital—“features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks” for “facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam 1993, 167). In the first instance, the networks and energies of this Islamic social capital were primarily dedicated to public religious activities. Mosques and madrasas became the anchors for new forms of public association. The call to prayer marked the rhythms of the day. More women began to veil. Greetings and other everyday commen- salities were peppered with Islamic gestures and phrases.

A second observation is equally important, although it is sometimes overlooked in commentaries that overemphasize the politics of the resurgence or, worse yet, confuse it with radical Islamism. In its early years, the resurgence was a profoundly public event, but not one that was especially political in any formal sense of the term. Most of the newly pious were primarily interested in just what they claimed to be: religious study, heightened public devotion, expressing a Muslim identity, and insuring that public arenas were subject to ethical regulation. The key symbols of the resurgence were similarly pietistic: reciting the Qur'an, keeping the fast, wearing the veil, avoiding alcohol, giving alms. The Muslim world was not alone in witnessing a resurgence of public religion in these years. As Jose Casanova has noted, a similar "deprivatization" of religion took place among Hindus in India, evangelicals in Africa and the Americas, and in many other countries (Casanova 1994; cf. Berger 1999, Martin 1990; van der Veer 1994). Many of the faithful in these settings were as much concerned with creating islands of civility and piety as they were anything strictly political.

The third feature of the resurgence, however, raises a more sobering question concerning its long-term political impact. In light of its scale and the competition among its promoters, it was inevitable that at some point religious entrepreneurs would move to channel the resurgence's social capital into political ends. The process was made all the more likely in that religious associations were among the few public arenas in which ordinary people could make their voices heard.

Again, however, it is important to emphasize that the range of political ideals voiced varied enormously. Some believers insisted on the compatibility of Islam with pluralism and democracy. Others called for a totalizing transformation of the social order according to an unchanging plan, modeled on an ideal of pristine unity identified with the first generation of Muslim believers (see Voll 1991). Nowhere was the tension between these two visions of Muslim politics more apparent than in matters of women's rights and personal status law. In some countries, conservative Islamists tried to mobilize their membership to reverse legislation on women's rights dating from the earlier nationalist period, on the grounds that it was un-Islamic

(Keddie 1991; Kandiyoti 1995). At the same time, developments in education and employment continued to draw growing numbers of women, even from conservative Islamist families, into public life. The result has been an ambiguous and unfinished remaking of women’s roles. In all but the most conservative organizations, women today are more prominent than ever in the workforce, public religious life, and even political parties (see Abu-Lughod 1998; White 2002, 52).

At the same time, in many societies conservative Islamists militate in support of polygyny, gender segregation, and mandatory veiling. In short, women’s participation in public life has increased in most of the Muslim world. Whether that participation is to take place on the basis of equality and democratic dignity is a question that has yet to be resolved.

Whatever its social ambiguities, the resurgence has clearly acquired a new and, in at least some circles, more political tack. The question now is which among the variety of Muslim politics is to prevail.

*** At the Crossroads

To understand why some resurgents would turn to an undemocratic interpretation of Muslim politics, it is helpful to recall that although the radicals’ ideas represented a break with mainstream Muslim politics, they did not emerge from a cultural vacuum. Most radical Islamists justify their actions with reference to the ideas of a few seminal thinkers who rose to international prominence in the 1950s and 1960s. The most influential of these are the Egyptian literary critic turned Islamist, Sayyid Qutb (1906–66; see Moussalli 1992), and the Pakistani theorist Mawlana Sayyid Abu’l-A‘la Mawdudi (1903–79; see Nasr 1996). Both of these writers were in turn influenced by the earlier, ultraconservative reformism of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab in what is today Saudi Arabia (Voll 1991, 345–52).

A key theme in these writers’ works is that God alone has sovereignty (hakimiyya) over the world, and that he has provided Muslims with what amounts to a complete (kaffah) ethical model for

social and political life. This guidance, these authors claim, is contained in a religious law for all times, the shari‘a. Whereas classically trained scholars regarded the law as complex, subtle, and always in need of expert exegesis (Zubaida 2003, 24–27), modern Islamists tend to insist that the law’s meaning is transparent to all willing to submit to its commands. The fact that even radical Islamists cannot agree on the law’s myriad details does not diminish this faith in the clarity and singularity of divine command. Inasmuch as God’s law is clear, those who refuse its implementation are seen as having allied themselves with the forces of godlessness (jahiliyya). Muslims, even the masses of ordinary Muslims, are to be shunned if and when they fall into such error. Through injunctions like these, radical thinkers provide a cultural rationale for a “bonding capital” that is “inward looking and tend[s] to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups” (Putnam 2000, 22). At the limit, where rulers and publics are deemed in violation of God’s command, armed struggle against both may be required.

According to these same writers, a key feature of Islam’s comprehensiveness is that Islam does not recognize a separation of religion and state, but demands their unitary fusion in an “Islamic” state. This formula is said to be based on the model of the Prophet and his rightly guided successors. As a number of writers have observed (Brown 2000; Roy 1994; Zubaida 1993), this alleged precedent actually neglects as much as it claims to recall. It forgets that, historically, the great majority of Muslim jurists believed that “the law is God’s law, not to be harnessed to the needs and the interests of the state” (Tucker 1998, 37). The conservative formula also fails to recognize that a richly differentiated political landscape took shape even during the Prophet’s lifetime, and developed all the more after his death, as the Muslim community evolved from a small charismatic movement to a great world civilization (Lapidus 1975; Zubaida 1993, 2). For it to have been otherwise, for Muslim society and politics to have remained an undifferentiated totality, would have meant the impoverishment and inevitable collapse of Muslim civilization. Muslim societies thrived precisely because their leaders adopted a flexible and differentiated approach in matters of governance, culture, and society.

Rather than fidelity to prophetic precedents, then, the Islamist dream of an all-encompassing religious governance bespeaks a modern bias, one all too

familiar in the twentieth-century West. It is the dream of using the leviathan powers of the modern state to push citizens toward a pristine political purity. As the author of an excellent biography of Mawdudi has remarked, there is little in this vision that is specifically Islamic:

Mawdudi’s assimilation of Western ideas in his discourse flowed without interruption. The Islamic state duplicated, assimilated, and reproduced Western political concepts, structures, and operations, producing a theory of statecraft that, save for its name and its use of Islamic terms and symbols, showed little indigenous influence. (Nasr 1996, 90)

Another stream in modern Muslim politics, however, has spoken out against an etatist and essentializing interpretation of politics, calling instead for a pluralistic organization of state and society. Whether with Ab- dolkarim Soroush and the reformists in postrevolutionary Iran (Soroush 2000), Nurcholish Madjid and the “renewal” (pembaruan) movement in Indonesia (Hefner 2000), or Rachid Ghannouchi in Tunisia (Tamimi 2001; cf. Kurzman 1998, 19), a central theme of civil Islam has been the insistence that some degree of separation of state and religious authority is necessary to protect the integrity of Islam itself. The point is not that religion should be a purely private matter, but that its values are more susceptible to corruption if responsibility for religious affairs is surrendered to state elites.

“Religion forbids us from assuming a God-like character,” writes the Iranian dissident (and former anti-American militant) Abdolkarim Soroush (Soroush 2000, 64). He goes on: “This is especially true in politics and government where limiting the power of the state, division of powers, and the doctrine of checks and balances are established in order to prevent accumulation of power that might lead to such Godly claims” (64). Like many Muslim reformers, Soroush’s formula borrows some of its vocabulary from Western democratic theory. But it also speaks in a movingly evocative vernacular, invoking the example of Islam’s great jurists, who protected Islam’s ideals by refusing to grant rulers a monopoly over religious truth. Rather than a pristine fusion, then, civil Islamists relocate the center of public religion to the associations and dialogue of civil society, while also pressing for a system of pluralist government subject to effective checks and balances.

Whether the civic-pluralist stream in contemporary Muslim political culture will spread and become the model for a broader, pluralistic reformation of Muslim politics will depend upon more than the cogency of a few intellectuals' arguments. Since September 11, 2001, in particular, Muslim and Western scholars alike have realized that the civil Islamic effort faces a new and unexpected challenge. The September attacks showed that an armed fringe in the radical Islamist community is attempting to overcome its disadvantage in numbers by pressing its one comparative advantage. Groups like the al-Qa'ida and the Jema'ah Islamiyah in Southeast Asia have taken advantage of globalization to link their finances and military resources to local conflicts to which Muslims are party (see Gu- naratna 2002; ICG 2002; see chapter 11 below). Prior to the overthrow of the Taliban in late 2001, the arms, training, and ideological guidance provided at al-Qa'ida camps in Afghanistan added fuel to some of the Muslim world's most flammable conflicts. As Barfield's essay illustrates (chapter 9), the Taliban and al-Qa'ida made an odd couple indeed. Al-Qa'ida is an internationalist organization led by well-heeled dissidents from the ranks of the Muslim upper-middle class, while the Taliban were a ragtag gang of parochial ethnics who emerged from the ruins of the most backward state in the Muslim world.

Unfortunately, as recent attacks in Indonesia, the Philippines, Turkey, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia have shown, al-Qa'ida and like-minded groupings seem intent on extending odd-couple collaborations like these to other parts of the world. They have made their methods clear. They channel transnational flows of money, arms, and fighters into local conflicts. In so doing, they also portray these conflicts not as local, but as part of a global clash of civilizations pitting Christians, Jews, Hindus, and other "crusaders" against Muslims. Having described the struggle in these Manichaean terms, the radicals provide a moral rationale for attacking the enemies of Islam everywhere they are to be found. For Western readers of the present book, it is essential to realize that the violence is targeted not only at Western interests, but at pluralist and moderate Muslims. The violence aims to polarize local conflicts and, in so doing, destroy the political center.

In a few instances, these tactics have succeeded in giving local jihadis an influence greatly out of proportion with their actual

numbers in local society (see chapter 11). In all but the most desperate circumstances, however, most Muslim publics have been repelled by these actions. They recognize that the threat to the West posed by the globalization of jihadi adventurism is minor compared to the threat such violence poses to Muslims and Islam.

*** Conclusion

The long-term outcome of this struggle for the heart and soul of Muslim politics will depend on not only the clarity of rival visions, but concrete balances of power in state and society. The strengthening of the civil democratic stream in Muslim politics will also depend on a long-term collaborative effort by governmental and nongovernmental agencies in the Muslim and Western worlds.

Owing to, perhaps, an unfamiliarity with the nuances of Muslim politics, as well as regrettably short-term policies, governments in the West have not been as consistent as they should be in their policies toward the Muslim world (Gerges 1999; Hinter 1998). One especially unhelpful factor has been a concern in Western policy circles that if the democratic dam is opened wide, the groups most likely to rush in will be authoritarian Islamists little interested in pluralism or democracy. “One vote, one time,” was the phrase that summarized this anxiety in Western circles at the time of the Algerian elections in 1991. The fear led French and American officials to side with the forces of military repression in Algeria, after the electoral triumph of an (admittedly complex) alliance of moderate and militant Islamists (Willis 1996).

It does little good simply to wave this anxiety aside. As in the early-twentieth-century West, there are political radicals eager to take advantage of democratic openings so as to pursue undemocratic ends. However, it is helpful to remember that rulers in most Muslim societies have not gone so far as the Algerian authorities to repress moderate opponents and, in so doing, paint the political process into a corner. The essays in this book provide numerous examples of societies in which a vigorous measure of grassroots pluralism is still available for, so to speak, scaling up. Equally

important, as noted above, there is a wealth of evidence indicating that most Muslims yearn for democracy and civic decency. They do so not because these ideals were “made in the West,” but because they are the most effective and just response to problems of pluralism and participation widespread in our age.

If Muslim governments and their Western friends do not take the steps needed to promote civic pluralism and democracy, the result will likely be only more radicalism and popular disenchantment with the West. The main reason reform must not be delayed is that Muslim societies are already sociologically modern. They are modern in the sense that they are well on the way to developing the characteristics distinctive to the condition of modernity: a pluralization of life-worlds, heightened pressures for participation, and a growing popular demand that the script for coordinating roles on the public stage be, in some vernacularized sense, civil and democratic.

This is not to say that democratization is inevitable or that efforts to support Muslim democratization have to be all or nothing. The history of democratization in the modern West shows that the process is enduringly incremental, always incomplete, and, alas, reversible even where it is achieved (Keane 1996). The process typically unfolds in a piecemeal and domain-specific manner, its course specified not just by the brilliance of its ideals, but by concrete balances of power and participatory struggles. The most effective way for Western agencies to support the process in Muslim societies, then, is to invest in those spheres where local actors are already pressing for heightened participation and civic decency. In efforts like these, civil society groupings will be crucial. But programs in civil society will remain vulnerable and incomplete unless complemented by democratic reforms in the state. Democratization is sustainable only when based on leveraged collaborations between state and society that scale up the democratic powers of each.

In light of the centrality of education and public discussion in the Islamic resurgence, investment in general education represents a second and no less critical support for a pluralizing Muslim politics. Skeptics might point out that some of the more violent radicals in recent years have come from the ranks

of well-educated youth. The militants who carried out the attacks of September 11, 2001, were not the illiterate offspring of an impoverished underclass. But it is far more noteworthy that some of the most gifted proponents of Muslim pluralism come from the ranks of public intellectuals and religious scholars with a great knowledge of the law, and a habit of enriching its insights by juxtaposing it to other traditions of knowledge (see Abou El Fadl 2001; An-Na'im 1990; Safi 2003). More, not less, education is the key. And education has a greater democratic benefit when it conveys a spirit of intellectual "bridging" rather than exclusive "bonding."

There are two additional reasons for focusing investments in education, including, especially, women's education and higher education. First and most important, this is what the great majority of modern Muslims yearn for. Studies like the recent Arab Human Development Report 2003 provide vivid demonstrations of the depth of this desire, and the calamity its nonfulfillment has created. The deficit is no more tragically apparent than in the continuing exclusion of women and girls from equal access to education (UNDP 2003, 31).

A second reason for highlighting investment in education is that education is the most paradigmatic of modern cultural institutions. Today no society can compete even in the lower rungs of the global order without a well-run educational system. In its diverse specializations, its encouragement of innovation, its (relative) gender equality, and its culture of civility-in-plurality, higher education is a shimmering example of all that is best about modern freedom and civic decency.

The recent revolutionary experiments in Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan demonstrate that attempts to use the state to deny modern pluralism, and to implement a totalizing (kaffah) practice of the faith, run contrary to the demands of modern education and society as a whole. Again, in sociological fact, Muslim societies are already modern. The growth of the professions, the expansion of the press, the fascination with the Internet, the demand for women's education—these and other pluralizing developments are well under way in all but the poorest Muslim nations. Religious radicals may deny the public's hunger for pluralist fruits. No doubt the Taliban in Afghanistan went to the greatest lengths to deny this interest and press

society back toward a pristine, undifferentiated whole. But this only reminds us that Taliban programs bore a more striking resemblance to Pol Pot's Cambodia than they did the model of the Prophet.

Here, then, is the strongest support for democracy and civic decency in the Muslim world. The support is especially significant because it comes from Muslims themselves, not from a West that, unfortunately, has been less than consistent in its attitudes on Islam. The support originates in Muslims' recognition that efforts to impose a repressive homogeneity on a diverse society only damages their faith and consigns believers to backwardness. This latter conclusion will be rejected, of course, by those who insist that Islam has unchanging instructions for everyone and all aspects of social life. Just as was the case with totalitarian schemes in the modern West, efforts to implement such totalizing programs will do great harm to society. Even more serious from believers' perspective, the more radicals press for a fusion of religion and state, the more they remove the checks and balances necessary for maintaining the integrity of not only the political process, but of religion itself. The urge for absolutist union creates the conditions for religion's abuse. Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely. And nothing more certainly degrades religion than human absolutism in God's name.

These are the lessons that give the civil Islamic project its historic urgency and relevance. Recent events have demonstrated that it is in the best interest of Islam itself that Muslim politics be plural and democratic. In an age of mass participation and powerful states, to do otherwise is to guarantee religion's subordination to the powerful and corrupt. "The modern world has also undermined a right that has always been a source of evil and corruption," writes Abdolkarim Soroush (2000, 64), "that is, the right to act as a God-like potentate with unlimited powers." This is the conviction, so historic and deep, from which civil democratic Islam flows. Originating at the heart of the Muslim experience of modernity, the conviction is becoming more, not less, widespread in our world. Its diffusion ensures that the struggle for a civic-pluralist politics will remain a central stream in Muslim civilization for years to come.

[1] “Civic pluralism” refers to a public culture and social organization premised on equal rights, tolerance-in-pluralism, and a legally recognized differentiation of state and religious authority (see Eickelman and Piscatori 1996, 158; Hefner 2000, 12). Where such a civic pluralism is in turn linked to a system of free and fair elections, a separation of powers in the state, the rule of law, and human rights we may speak of a civic pluralist democracy. As I have discussed elsewhere (Hefner 1998a), the benefit of this phrase is that it makes clear that there are versions of modern democracy other than liberal variants alone. Much like the civic republicanism Charles Taylor has described (1989, 1995), Muslim civic pluralism may well dedicate greater attention to the cultivation of public values, including religious ones, than is deemed appropriate by modern liberal democrats. However, even some of the latter have recently begun to reexamine their heritage’s secularist premises. See Rosenblum 2000.

[2] For a sample of some of the more radical denunciations, see Parfrey 2001.

[3] It goes without saying, of course, that this effort to engage the modern within the horizons of a religiously grounded discourse is by no means unique to Islam. Charles Taylor (1999) and Jose Casanova (1994) provide compelling reflections on such efforts within modern Catholicism; Tu Wei-ming’s (1996) volume provides a richly nuanced sense of the effort in East Asian Confucianism. Thomas Blom Hansen (1999) provides a powerful overview of the politics of the process in contemporary Hinduism.

[4] In addition to the varied legal schools, the relative autonomy of religious scholars, the popularity (after the eleventh century) of Sufi mystical orders, and imperial support for shrines and festivals, another institution that served [[to pluralize practical religious authority among the community of believers was the institution of philanthropic endowments known as]]waqf (pl. awqaf). A waqf is a property set aside in perpetuity to provide revenues or resources for the maintenance of institutions such as mosques, religious schools, or charities for the poor. In some precolonial Middle Eastern countries, vast expanses of agricultural land were designated as nonperishable property of this sort. Although rulers might play a role in the management of larger waqf properties, religious law set strict limits on the rights of these and other waqf

stewards. In premodern Muslim societies, the pervasiveness of such lands was an integral economic support for the autonomy of key Islamic institutions and the pluricentrism of religious authority. On waqf, see Kahf 1995; on waqf and religious authority, see Hoexter 2002.

[5] Thomas Barfield's discussion of Afghanistan in chapter 9 offers an example of a starkly conservative society in which new Muslim intellectuals are few in number; war-ravaged Afghanistan is, however, the exception to the modern Muslim rule.

[6] Skocpol's conclusion resonates with the non-Durkheimian view of civil society I am emphasizing here: "The story of American voluntarism has been clearly one of symbiosis between state and society—not a story of society apart from, or instead of the state" (Skocpol 1999, 70). This "historically evolved symbiosis of federal democracy and federated voluntary associations," she explains, "created a very special matrix for American citizenship and popular civic participation" (70–71). The synergistic approach to state and society developed in Skocpol and the present chapter implies that democratization is less the result of particularistic trust than it is efforts to build confidence in public institutions by, among other things, creating concrete checks and balance among power holders in state, society, and the market. Such leveraged influence can help to pacify and democratize the competition that occurs in all societies. Unlike the romantic characterizations widespread in 1990s literature, real-and-existing civil societies are not calmly consensual, but marked by "organized conflict and distrust" (Skocpol and Fiorina 1999, 14; cf. Hefner 2001; Keane 1996).

[7] Although the contributors to this book are primarily concerned with its contemporary sociology, the intellectual roots of civic pluralist Islam were laid well before contemporary times. For overviews of these intellectual antecedents see Esposito and Voll 2001; Moussalli 2001; Rahman 1982; and Sachedina 2001. Charles Kurzman's Liberal Islam (1998) offers a superb selection of primary materials from some of the most important pioneers.

[8] For an analysis of the role of new media in Saudi politics, see Fandy 1999.

[9] It is useful to recall that, as originally developed by Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman, the idea of social capital made no such assumption that the ends to which it is applied are always democratic. Bourdieu defines social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group” (Bourdieu and Waquant 1992, 119). In other words, social capital refers to the power and influence created by virtue of membership in a network or group, and these powers can be applied to all manner of ends. See also Hefner 2000, chap. 2.

[10] This generalization would have to be qualified in several countries, where embattled regimes responded to leftist and Islamist oppositions by sponsoring programs of conservative Islamization. Carrie Rosefsky Wickham (2002) provides a brilliant analysis of just such a tactic in Mubarak’s Egypt, resonating with Norton’s essay in this volume. See also Zaman on Pakistan, Peletz on Malaysia, and my own chapter on Indonesia.

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** Chapter 2: New Media in the Arab Middle East and the Emergence of Open Societies

Dale F. Eickelman

The New Arab “Street”

The “war in Iraq,” as CNN calls it, is the “war against Iraq” or the “aggression against Iraq” in most of the local and international Arabic print media. Al-Sharq al-Awsat (London) is the only exception, calling it the “war of Iraq” (harb al-‘Iraq) in Arabic, but the “war in Iraq” in English. Other newspapers, such as Morocco’s al-Ittihad al-Ishtiraki, add “No War” in English to the banner of each page of Iraq-oriented news.

For most people, however, newspapers are lagging behind television (and to a much lesser extent radio, at least in cities) as a source for war news. The coalition’s military action against Iraq, unlike its 1990–91 predecessor, is fully dominated by television in the Arab Middle East and, for the first time, much of the television coverage is generated by Arab satellite television rather than by European news organizations. Even the quality print media is reduced on many days to using the photographs of televised images. The Arab “street” is fueled by satellite television images and commentaries, and from multiple sources.

I am writing these lines from the madina, the old walled city, Fez, Morocco, in April 2003. I arrived in Morocco one day after the beginning of overt hostilities on March 19. Darb Bishara, the neighborhood where I live, is twelve minutes by fast walk to the nearest motor roads and taxi stands, a walk that takes me along Tal‘a Sghira, one of the main madina thoroughfares, crowded most of the day with donkeys, mules, pushcarts, peddlers, and pedestrians. The larger cafes along the way have television sets and the smaller ones radios. Everyone avidly follows the news reports, but few of the sets are tuned to the Moroccan state media.

State television and radio have lost the battle for eyes and ears except for the countryside, where there is no alternative. Most of the sets are tuned to al-Jazeera Satellite Television or one of the newer Arab satellite channels. Medi 1, the private North African radio station broadcasting from Tangiers with a mix of Arabic and French, dominates the radio sets. Not just among the intelligentsia but also among the shopkeepers and the street peddlers who stop for tea, the state-controlled broadcast media are listened to primarily for the “official story.” Its limitations are recognized by virtually its entire audience. Even in the economically “on-the-edge” parts of the old city, such as my quarter, satellite dishes dot the rooftops. Not everyone has satellite TV, but everyone gets exposed to it in the course of the working day.

Although most people do not use the full spectrum of available channels, all major European and Arabic satellite channels can appear on many sets at the press of a button. Everyone compares stories, and there is an understanding of the approaches that different media take. Everyone has been skeptical of the changing U.S. official story of why the “coalition” invaded Iraq. Cheers occasionally were heard up and down the street, as for a soccer match, when Saddam made a live-on-videotape appearance on Iraqi or al-Jazeera Satellite TV. By April 10, there was a general recognition that the “war” had turned against Saddam Husayn. The front page of al-Sharq al-Awsat was dominated by a huge photograph of a statue of Mr. Husayn being toppled from its pedestal, with the large-type headline, “and the Regime of Saddam Is Toppled” (wa-yasqut nizam Saddam), but the party-sponsored local press confined itself to saying that “obscurity” prevailed in what was happening in Iraq. Satellite television was unambiguous.

There were some street demonstrations through the end of March, culminating in a united call from all Moroccan political parties for mass demonstrations on Sunday, March 30 in the major cities, with the largest taking place in Rabat. After these demonstrations, the relatively minor violence went unreported in the next day’s local print and broadcast media—although it was reported (together with a photograph of demonstrators burning an American flag) in the March 31 al-Sharq Al-Awsat.

After the fall of Baghdad, discussion along this particular Arab “street” in the Fez madina was eerily like discussions in the Western press: What happens next? Will America (Britain is scarcely mentioned) bring a better government? What will be the Turkish reaction, especially if Iraq’s Kurds are given voice in government? The term “democracy” (Al-dimuqratiya) is used only by the educated, but a greater number are aware of the restrictions placed on their genuine political participation. Discussion is more animated in private homes. In other words, the Arab “street” is rapidly evolving from the shapeless and manipulable image that it possesses in the West, and there is a more concrete awareness than in the past of the benefits of more open societies.

*** Discovering Open Societies

The substantial growth in mass education over the last three decades, the proliferation and accessibility of new media and communications, and the increasing ease of travel make it impossible for state and religious authorities to monopolize the tools of literate culture. The ideas, images, and practices of alternative social and political worlds have become a daily occurrence. They enter domestic space through satellite and cable television, and the alternate realities are better understood than in the past. Rapidly rising levels of literacy and familiarity with an educated Arabic formerly restricted to an elite facilitate this better comprehension. They also rehearse viewers to respond to those in authority in the common language of the Arabic of the classroom and the media.

Mass education was important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era (Gellner 1983, 28–29)) In recent years, the proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, fragmenting religious and political authority, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance, and opening new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition) Combined with mass higher education, the increasing accessibility of the new media facilitates the collaboration of like-minded people across national and regional boundaries) This also facilitates the scaling up of civic-pluralist forces in society)

To be sure, the power of new media to challenge and fragment claims to religious and political authority had become evident at the time of the 1978–79 Iranian revolution) Audiocassettes—easy to smuggle and duplicate—were then the subversive media of choice) Since then, the accessible nature of newer media and rising levels of education have increasingly blurred the boundaries between producers and consumers) Fax machines, desktop publishing, photocopying machines, the Internet, and new uses of older media make communications more participatory and create new audiences) The greater ease of travel—for education, pilgrimage, tourism, labor migration, and emigration—also accelerates the flow of ideas and practices)

More important, some new media seen as innovative in the early 1980s are now almost taken for granted) In countries such as Saudi Arabia, the same fax machines that rapidly disseminate criticisms of the regime from opposition groups abroad are also essential to the conduct of business) The state is powerless to limit their use without disrupting the economy, and attempts to counter “faxed criticisms” in other media—such as the press—by warning readers against disseminating them further merely draws subsequent attention to their existence (for example, “Shaykh Muhammad” 1994))

Elsewhere in the Middle East, since Iran’s May 1997 presidential elections, some Iranian intellectuals and Western observers have gone so far as to speak of a new era of “post-Islamism” in the Islamic Republic in particular and the rest of the Muslim world in general due in large part to the rise of educational levels and new forms of communication (Roy 1999). Clearly, this post-Islamism is defined by the widespread awareness of alternatives to existing dominant ideologies and institutional arrangements. Fariba Adelkhah, for example, argues that this transformation is as significant as the original Islamic revolution. It is fueled by the combination of rising levels of education and the coming of age of a new generation of Iranians—now the majority of the population—not even born at the time of the 1978–79 revolution. This new generation, she argues, is creating an Iranian “religious public sphere” (espace public confes- sionel). In spite of resistance from conservatives, many in this generation publicly employ reasoned argument that, even if developed primarily in private or semiprivate settings, also has political repercussions (Adelkhah 2000, 177). Likewise, after many fits and starts in Turkish electoral politics throughout

the 1990s, a political party inspired by religious values has persuaded the Turkish electorate—and the military guardians of the secularism enshrined in the Turkish constitution—in 2002 that one can be religiously motivated and adhere to the principle of secularism in the public sphere at the same time (White 2002).

In most Arab states, discussions concerning the nature of just and appropriate governance and the role of religion in politics is not as foregrounded and public as in Iran and Turkey, although debates in newspapers—which reach far fewer people than the broadcast media in the Arab world—are often spirited and hotly contested, even in the Arabian Peninsula. The legitimacy of royal authority and challenges to incumbent rulers are taboo subjects, but on other matters, including legislative reforms influencing the rights of women, the rapidly expanding range of public discourse about politics and religion is quickly outdistancing the pace of change in formal institutions.

A public sphere is emerging throughout the region in which messages and images in face-to-face conversations, newspapers, books, magazines, anonymous leaflets, video- and audiocassettes, and satellite and regular television crisscross, overlap, and build on one another. When censored or suppressed in one medium, such messages recur in another. Images of alternative institutions and practices, once on the periphery of the social imagination of much of the public, are now concrete and foregrounded. Even silence contributes to the public sphere, when some topics are avoided because of real or imagined penalties for direct public expression. Authoritarian limitations on participation in discussions and debate over public issues are resented and increasingly easy to evade. These discussions are not confined to immediate locality but increasingly include attention to wider regional and transnational issues.

Not surprisingly, some critics downplay the emergence of the public sphere in the Arab world. Seymour Martin Lipset (1994, 6), for example, asserts that Muslim, “particularly Arab,” notions of political authority are especially hostile to democracy because Islamic political doctrines are “alien” to political freedom. The result is to assume that Muslims, more than the

followers of other religions, are guided by religious doctrines that inhibit a shift to democratic rule.

Others argue that the authoritarian “cultural schemas” that pervade expectations of authority throughout the region have hardly changed over centuries. These schemas supposedly privilege hierarchical masterdisciple relations in the religious and political spheres, severely limiting alternative political and institutional styles (for example, Hammoudi 1997, 8; Sharabi 1988).

In this respect, Samuel Huntington’s (1993, 24–255 crisp “West versus rest” argument that “non-Western civilizations” have increasingly become political actors is as deceptive in its Manichaean simplicity as Daniel Lerner’s earlier “Mecca or mechanization” (1964 [1958], 4055 and Manfred Halperin’s (1963, 1295 argument that the Muslim world faces an unpalatable choice: either a “neo-Islamic totalitarianism” intent on “resurrecting the past,” or a “reformist Islam” which would open “the sluice gates and [be] swamped by the deluge.” This essentializing of civilizational traditions deflects attention from the internal and historical variations among Muslim societies past and present and from the vigorous internal debates that have taken place in the past and that are shaping the present of Muslim-majority societies.

This chapter offers an alternative to such bleak assumptions. It compares the rapidly changing contexts in which political and religious authority and “information” is structured and disseminated in the Arab Middle East. The emphasis is less on formal political institutions—Al-though such institutions as elections play a major cultural role—than the commonly shared, often implicit, ideas of what is right, just, or religiously ordained and on which any community or group of individuals form cooperative relations.

*** The New Media and Mass Higher Education

Even before the events of September 11, 2001, it was already becoming clear that rapidly increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media were developing a public sphere in

Muslim-majority societies in which large numbers of people—not just an educated, political, and economic elite—expect a say in religion, governance, and public issues. State authorities continue in many ways to be arbitrary and restrict what is said in the press, the broadcast media, and in public, but the methods of avoiding such censorship and control have rapidly proliferated. Today, silence in public no longer implies ignorance, and it is the conjuncture of rising levels of education, new communications media, and increased mobility that have created new forms

Silence, or apparent acquiescence, is often a weapon of the weak. In some countries of the Arabian Peninsula, a “politics of silence” in which audiences applaud tepidly rather than with enthusiasm, is one of the few forms of public protest available, despite the simulacra of democratic forms offered by repressive and authoritarian governments (Waterdrinker 1993). For instance, Tunisia’s President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali was reelected with 99 percent of cast ballots in 1994, but few Tunisians took at face value his response to a French journalist’s question that such results, far from being “a bit too good,” merely reflected “the profound realities of the Arab-Muslim world,” and the vote results “a massive adhesion to a project of national salvation” (Ben Ali 1994). Public silence in Tunisia in the face of such claims does not equal agreement with them.

An exclusive focus on religious extremism deflects attention from the more profound changes taking place throughout Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and other places in the Arab world which are correlated with mass higher education and the new media, factors that have begun profoundly to affect how people think about authority and responsibility in the domains of religion and politics.

Throughout the Arab world, mass higher education has expanded significantly since the 1960s. As elsewhere in Muslim majority states, mass higher education has reshaped conceptions of self, religion, nation, and politics. It is as significant as the introduction of printed books in sixteenthcentury rural France. Ironically, however, we know more about literacy in medieval and premodern Europe than in the contemporary Muslim and Arab worlds. Many scholars have noted linkages between advanced education and religious activism, but the focus on extremism and terrorism

deflects attention from conceptual innovations and emerging networks for communication and action (Eickelman 1992).

Religious activism in the political sphere, the claims of its adherents notwithstanding, is a distinctively modern phenomenon, and its supporters are principally the beneficiaries of mass higher education. Mass education may be important in itself, but it also suggests basic transformations in ideas of what people accept as legitimate political authority.

For the most part, mass higher education is a recent phenomenon in the Middle East and North Africa. It began in earnest only in the 1950s, with Egypt's commitment to universal schooling following the 1952 revolution. Fifteen to twenty years later—that is, by the 1970s—after large numbers of students began to complete the advanced educational cycles, its consequences can be more clearly discerned. The timing of educational expansion varies for other parts of the Middle East. Major educational expansion in Morocco began after independence in 1956, accelerated in the 1960s, and today almost matches the rate of population growth. From 1957 to 1992, university enrollment grew from 1,819 to 230,000 students. Fifty times as many women are being educated today in Morocco as in the early 1960s.

A complementary measure of change is the circulation of books and magazines. The Moroccan writer Mohammed Bennis (interview with the author, in Mohammediya, July 16, 1992), recalled his student days in Fes in the 1970s, when the first "little" intellectual journals began to flourish in Arabic, rather than French, which had been the dominant language of the educated elite. In lectures and public meetings, students began to insist that teachers and their classmates express themselves in Arabic and not use French words in Arabic syntax when Arabic words and phrases were available. The shift from French to Arabic and the growing enrollments in higher education significantly increased participation in debates about politics, culture, and society. The intellectual effervescence of the 1970s that Bennis describes saw the emergence of the first cohort of Moroccans to acquire their pervasive "habits of thought" in Arabic, the country's national language (Bourdieu 1988). As elsewhere, pressure from this cohort created a demand for "re-imagining" Islam and politics and produced a significant

readership for “quality” books in Arabic. In spite of the rising rate of unemployment among university graduates, reading is for them a means of “appropriating,” organizing, and making objective ideas of society, politics, and self (Chartier 1987, 6–11).

As a result, new books and new markets for them have developed, which suggests a sea change in the images and vocabulary that affect the prospects for political thinking. Egypt, one of the few countries where there are figures on readership, provides an excellent case study of the changing market for books and magazines. Although studies of readership in Egypt, as elsewhere in the Arab world, are weak, the few that are available suggest that only 1 to 2 percent of the population read books regularly. But discussions about books—through word of mouth, the broadcast media, or widely read newspapers and magazines (Gonzalez- Quijano 1998, 398–408)—reach much larger segments of the population. Even censors draw attention to books by banning them or attempting to restrict their circulation. The most rapid growth is occurring in publications with religious content: the growth of secular mass education has increased attachment to Islamic culture. As Gonzalez-Quijano (1998, 15960) explains, during the Nasser era in Egypt, religious books were of marginal importance, at least in terms of official production figures. With the opening of the book market in the 1970s, the relaxation of censorship controls, and subsidies from the oil-rich states, religious books became much more common. In recent years, books have become a part of mass culture in Egypt, and “products” intended for the consumption of a literary elite have become an endangered species.

Especially important is the growth in popularity of “Islamic” books. These are inexpensive, attractively printed texts, accessible to a readership that lacks the literary skills of the educated cadres of an earlier era. The style is often a breezy mix of oral style and colloquial diction. The covers take advantage of modern printing technologies and are designed to be both readily accessible and eye-catching. Thus the cover of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hamid Kishk’s Ayyuha l-Muslimun, ufiqu (O Muslims, awake) (1989) shows a bearded Muslim (bright blue), seated at a table in front of a red-covered Qur’an, closing his eyes (perhaps in fatigue or distraction) as a serpent (orange and blue) hovering over him prepares to strike. Other covers are reminiscent of pamphlets distributed by the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Layla Mabruk’s Rihla ila ‘alam al-khulud: ‘Adalat yawm Al-qiyama (A

trip to eternity: Justice on judgment day) (1989) shows a weakened hand sticking out of a bright red pool, while above the title, encircled by a green garland and oblivious to the scene below, two Muslims pray. A Saudi pamphlet with a curious cover showing a bright red ball plunging into a well in an otherwise parched desert explains that democracy, which is “creeping” (tatasarrub) into the Muslim world, is incompatible with Islam because Islam offers governance by the Creator (al-khaliq), as understood solely by a properly instructed religious elite, whereas democracy, a non-Arabic term, necessarily implies rule by the created (al-makhluqin), in which unbelievers and the ignorant have an equal say in governance and usurp God’s rule (Sharif 1992, 16–18). In many parts of the Muslim world, including North Africa, this style of argument—in some respects a mirror image of Huntington’s—is regarded with amusement by many, but it also offers a style more accessible than that sustained by Muslim moderates such as Binsa‘id (1993), who argue for political pluralism in the mainstream Arab print media.

“Islamic” books seek to capture the religious—and, with increasing explicitness, the political—imagination of a new generation. In these books, readers find echoes of what they already know and have their questions about religion and conduct answered. Conventional intellectuals may accord no legitimacy to the commercial entrepreneurs who benefit from a market that allows Shaykh Sha‘rawi to sell 250,000 copies of a book when the sale of 10,000 books is regarded as a success and 50,000 as a best-seller. However, few can fail to recognize the significance of an emerging and distinctive “popular culture” in which the “Islamic” book has become a commodity for a mass audience (Gonzalez-Quijano 1998, 270, 412).

In retrospect, the 1952 Egyptian revolution appears less a break with the past than an intensification of the existing monarchical vision of directing change from above. This notion is visualized by King Farouk’s personal bookplate (in Gonzalez-Quijano 1998, 96), which shows a printing press directly under Farouk’s name and a crown, with a city and minarets in the background. A learned man in front of the press passes a book to a peasant kneeling next to his plow and oxen. This self-image of the distribution of knowledge was not significantly challenged in the years of the military junta and Nasser’s presidency. The real revolution came later, as mass education created a new public for the printed word. In retrospect, the economic

reforms set in motion in the 1970s unintentionally created the space for a cultural and intellectual reorientation through “market forces” which favored “Islamization from below”— uncontrolled and uncontrollable by state forces.

The implications of mass higher education and mass communication include (1) a changed sense of authoritative discourse, (2) the emergence of a sense of religion and politics as system and object, and (3) altered conceptions of language and community. First, mass education fosters a sharp break with earlier traditions of authority, with a direct, albeit selective, access to the printed word. With mass education, belief and practice increasingly become expressed publicly without reference to the authority of traditionally educated religious elites and relate more directly to political action than was earlier the case. The rise of this new dominant discourse affects both the expressive forms of the state and its religious and secular opposition. Mass education enables citizens to talk back to state authority, and this changes how the state can represent itself.

Second, mass education and mass communication encourage the conception of religion and politics as self-contained systems that can incorporate features from other systems. Mass education encourages this by treating Islam as one subject among many in the curriculum, even as students learn that “Islam is one” and encompasses all. The successive editions of Sayyid Qutb’s Social Justice in Islam, (first edition 1949; seventh edition 1974) show how he refined his view of Islam as “an inwardly consistent and harmonious ‘system,’ ... making it possible for it to be at once flexible, comprehensive, and distinctive” (Shepard 1992, 200, 211). Even radical Islam “accepts much that is borrowed from the West” (Shepard 1987, 315; see also Shepard 1989), with the borrowing facilitated by the fact that religion is seen as a “system” (nizam), although such borrowings are often denied or unrecognized. Moderates, as opposed to radicals, are more likely to acknowledge such borrowings, arguing that while Islamic principles are eternal, the way they are implemented can be adjusted to historical context. This point was brought home by a religious activist in the Arab Gulf who explained in 1978 how democracy could never take hold in the Muslim world because it was a concept alien to shura, which was Qur’anic and Islamic. In 1990, he asserted that Al-dimuqratiya was compatible with Islam. When I reminded him of what he said a decade earlier, he replied: “Now we know better.

Shura is not a major concept in the Qur’an and its few usages there are ambiguous. Democracy can be adapted to Islamic ideals.” Likewise, when Islamic activists in Morocco declare that they are engaged in the “Islamization” of their society, they make explicit their sense of one system of ideas and practices—theirs—acting against the system of beliefs and practices held by other members of society.

Finally, the standardized language of mass higher education encourages new senses of community and affinity. In India, the temple-mosque dispute at Ayodhya in December 1992 went from a local matter to a national crisis in Hindu-Muslim relations because of “a massive expansion in the availability of television and the ending of the Indian government’s carefully managed news monopoly.” The narrative of the BBC World Television reporting of the incident, widely followed by English speakers in India, was a model of balance, but the pictures acted “as recruiting banners for the militants on both sides” (Economist 1993). The video clips fed to Oman television by an American network at the time of the massacres in the Sabra/Shatila refugee camps in Beirut in 1982 had a similar effect, as has footage of the Hebron/al-Khalil killings and their aftermath in February 1994, and the live coverage of the 2003 war in Iraq by journalists working for Arab satellite television.

Benedict Anderson (1991) argues that the rise of written vernacular languages in Europe and the spread of print technology have created language communities wider than those of face-to-face interactions yet narrower than the communities created by shared sacred languages. With modifications, this premise can be transposed to the Arab world, in which there has been intensified access to the printed word, and, in terms of the spoken word, to a more standardized Arabic.

One indication of shifts in the religious and political imagination of a younger, educated generation in many parts of the Middle East is the effort of the state to co-opt religious discourse. In Morocco in the 1960s and early 1970s, both the monarchy and its political opposition employed a “developmentalist” idiom in which “religious” issues were separated from “political” ones. By the late 1970s, the public language of the monarchy’s supporters was much more religiously oriented, and the monarch asserted

that he was developing a cadre of Ministry of the Interior officials trained in administration and Islamic thought, claiming that his actions were modeled on those of the Prophet Muhammad (Hassan II 1984, 162).

*** Satellite Television Content and Open Societies

Satellite television has been able to make a strong impact on public space in the Arab Middle East because of the shared “modern standard” Arabic of the classroom and the major broadcast media. This conjuncture becomes especially evident when unimpeded live televised debates are combined with call-in questions and comments. Such uses of the media bring speakers and listeners closer together, allowing authorities to be questioned. Uncensored satellite television in Arabic creates ready and open alternatives to the “official story” promulgated by state-controlled broadcast and print media, challenging other media, obliging them to respond with editorials or rebuttals, and entering many different domains of discussion.

In short, satellite television is contributing to the emergence of a “network” society (Castells 1996). Even if only 10–15 percent of Middle Eastern Arabs regularly watch satellite broadcasts (Alterman 1998, 15), the issues and commentaries on uncensored satellite television increasingly shape regional discussions and debate, linking these discussions to those held among Arab professionals in Europe and North America.

As a contributor to the expanding public sphere, Qatar’s al-Jazeera Satellite Channel remains paramount, although it is facing increasing competition from rival transnational satellite channels based in the United Arab Emirates and in Lebanon. There are numerous other Arab satellite channels, but most stick to entertainment because of political constraints. Al-Jazeera began broadcasting in November 1996.

The Al-Jazeera formula resembles the one pioneered by CNN, although its discussion programs are more vigorous and controversial. One example is the weekly program, “al-Ittijah al-Mu‘akis” (The Opposite Direction), moderated by Faisal al-Kassim. A Syrian by origin, al-Kassim graduated at the

top of his class in English from the University of Damascus in 1983 and won a scholarship for graduate studies in Britain. His doctoral thesis at the University of Hull was on political iconoclasm in modern British drama. He began working part-time for the BBC in 1988 and made the shift from BBC radio to television in 1994, a position that lasted until the collapse of the BBC's Arabic satellite transmissions in May 1996.

In "The Opposite Direction," two guests with contrary views square off in the Qatar studio, although occasionally the program broadcasts from elsewhere in the Arab world. With al-Kassim moderating, the guests talk to one another for about an hour, followed by telephone call-ins. The program is live, including the telephone calls, which are not prescreened or subject to the "time delay" technology common in American broadcasting. The topics and the broadcasts join the central debates of the Arab world—the Arab-Israeli crisis, the state of the economy, Iran and the Gulf, Kuwait-Iraq animosity, polygamy, Turkey-Israel relations, human rights and Islam, Syria's negotiations with Israel over the Golan Heights, and democratization.

Thus a broadcast on Islam and secularism featured a heated discussion between Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a leading religious conservative, and Syria's Sadeq al-Azm, a committed secularist. For many in the audience, Al-Azm's presentation was the first time they heard a "secularist" argument. Another program featured a debate on polygamy between Toujan Faysal, the first woman in Jordan's parliament and a secularist, and Safinaz Kazim, a religiously conservative Egyptian. When Faysal said at one point that Qur'anic doctrine was out of date, the Egyptian accused her of blasphemy, ripped off her microphone, and got up to leave. Al-Kassim reminded her that she was on live television. She shot back: "I don't care if we're on Mars. I'm not tolerating this blasphemy," and left the studio. The incident also suggests how satellite television is allowing women to join public religious discussions, albeit cautiously, as "The Opposite Direction" never pairs women with men. In October 1999, a former Algerian prime minister, Reda Malek, unhappy with a particularly sharp telephone question, asked al-Kassim to stop the tape. Al-Kassim replied, "I can't. We broadcast live. You're not in Algeria." Furious, the Algerian cursed on air and stormed out of the studio (author's interview with Faisal al-Kassim, Doha, October 30, 1999).

Al-Jazeera programs also focus on regional issues. Thus Abdallah Nafisi, in a program discussing economics, blurted out an attack against the then head of Saudi Arabia's Supreme Council of Ulama, Shaykh Ibn Baz (1912–99), when he declared:

I defy Bin Baz to say something about royal corruption in Saudi Arabia. His country is infested with corruption. He can do fatwas on Viagra, but not mention [regime opponents like] Safar al-Hawali, people languishing in prison. We cannot separate politics from money in the Arab Gulf. "The rulers"—he used the insulting phrase, "the shopkeeper rulers" (al-hukkam al-tujjar)—"only care about opening bank accounts in the West." (author's interview with Faisal al-Kassim, March 20, 1999)

Although accused of bias against the Saudis, a Saudi specialist in media studies recently published a program-by-program analysis of "The Opposite Direction," concluding that it showed no political or religious bias (al-Shamri 1998). The publication of such a book in Saudi Arabia itself suggests the rapidly evolving public sphere, as the "craft" of censorship becomes increasingly public.

The contribution of al-Jazeera to the public sphere is manifested in the speed with which videotapes of its programs circulate freely in the shops and private homes in Damascus, Casablanca, Muscat, Amman, Riyadh, and elsewhere, among those without direct access to satellite television. For many viewers, its Arabic news broadcasts have become the standard against which other broadcasters are judged. Given that reliable surveys of viewing habits and trust in the televised media are lacking for the Arab world, the evidence is largely anecdotal. Yet, dependable figures for Gaza and the West Bank place Qatar's al-Jazeera TV as the most reliable source for information (33.7 per cent), followed by other satellite channels (26.0 per cent), with local Palestinian authority (14.0 per cent) and Israeli television (8.9 per cent) lagging far behind, but still ahead of MBC, Egyptian, and Jordanian broadcasts (Jerusalem Media and Communication Center 1999: 9).

Moreover, satellite television tilts the balance of public argument in favor of ideas and practices that can be explained, defended, and foregrounded. The

speed and intensity with which it facilitates the circulation of ideas, images, and practices also distinguishes contemporary public spaces from those of the past. Likewise, journalists and newspaper editors can comment almost simultaneously on events because they can read any of the rapidly growing number of Arabic newspaper Web sites for reactions to current events. Uncensored satellite television enables a wider public to participate in such discussions.

Arabic language satellite channels, like the other new media, including the Internet, have had profound consequences for the political and religious imagination. First, they create and sustain a new public. Modern mass education means not only more widely spread skills than prior patterns of elite education, but also offers wider, competing repertoires of intellectual techniques and authorities and the erosion of exclusivities that previously defined communities of discourse, extending them also to women and minorities.

Second, viewers can now watch religious and political authorities and commentators explain their views and answer questions more as equals than as distant orators who cannot directly be challenged. Moreover, it is not just religious specialists who debate religion, but other educated persons and public figures. The distance between authorities and their audiences is diminished, and claims to the mantle of authority become more open. Finally, satellite television introduces audiences to new ways of thinking, in favoring effective and reasoned presentations. Satellite television is also immediate. Thus Arab opinion makers and television journalists were almost unanimously opposed to the “coalition” invasion and emphasized Iraqi resistance and civilian casualties. They did not flinch, however, from showing U.S. forces vanquishing the last vestiges of the Saddam Hussein regime, forcing readers and viewers immediately to confront the new situation and the impotence of the Iraqi regime (Morley 2003).

Satellite television thus plays a major role in creating and sustaining a new public sphere and brings to it a new objectivity. Satellite television and other new media contribute to turning anonymous or unknown contemporaries into consociates that share common assumptions of civility and morality. Not everyone can telephone guests on politically and religiously sensitive talk

shows, and the number of callers from outside the Arab world still outnumber regional callers. But even this fact reminds people of the limits to expression in the Arab Middle East and North Africa. The viewing public, however, is no longer mass and anonymous, but defined by mutual participation—indeed, by performance. In this sense, which Benedict Anderson (1991, 37–46) refers to as a growing sense of reading together, the public sphere emerges less from associations, more strictly the domain of civil society, than with ways of dealing confidently with others in an expanding social universe of shared communication.

*** Making Openness Work: Media, Authority, and Elections in Morocco

Although mass education and mass communication are profoundly changing political expectations and ideas of legitimate rule throughout the Middle East, the prospects for democracy vary with the political institutions specific to each country. This is not to say that developments in one country do not have significant repercussions in another. For example, the radicalization of Algerian politics since 1989 led directly to Morocco's October 1992 municipal elections and the June 1993 parliamentary ones. Prior to these elections, the specter of intolerant religious radicalism and equally violent state responses in neighboring Algeria were reported daily in the press and television, and the truth of the violence was confirmed by the many Moroccans with cross-border ties. As in Egypt, assassinations and violent clashes between radical Muslim and state-sponsored hit squads had become commonplace, and the growing Algerian crisis triggered Hassan II's April 1992 decision to hold elections. Although there were reported instances of fraud in both elections, they were generally perceived as "more fair" than preceding ones (International Foundation for Electoral Systems [IFES] 1993, 3; Eickelman 1994). Until the January 1992 military takeover, Algeria followed the "big bang" model of democratization—rapid and direct implementation of decision making on the basis of popular vote. In contrast, Morocco's approach has been incremental, with elections irregularly held since 1963. As was the case for the 1992 municipal elections, the June 1993 parliamentary elections for 222 of the 333 parliamentary seats did not result in a clear victory for any party.

Elections for the remaining 111 indirectly elected parliamentary seats took place on September 17, 1993. On April 26, 1994, “partial” municipal and parliamentary elections—for fourteen seats—were held in the electoral districts where earlier results were invalidated.

The reasons for the large number of invalid votes in the June 1992 elec- tions—13 percent of the 7,153,211 votes cast nationally, with up to 50 percent in some towns, such as Tangier—vary with region, but a high rate of invalid votes can be read as a sign of greater willingness to use the tools of the “system,” flawed as it is, and an awareness that the system can be manipulated not only by the government—which acknowledged prior to the September 2002 parliamentary elections that all prior Moroccan elections had been rigged in one way or another—but also by voters. As with the October 1992 municipal elections, some candidates reportedly purchased votes. In some towns, including Casablanca and Khouribga, the “market value” for votes varied between 50 and 100 Moroccan dirhams ($5-$10), roughly the same as for the October 1992 municipal elections. Unfortunately, polling station reports (taqarir ‘an ‘amaliyat ihsa’ al-aswat) did not distinguish between empty envelopes and votes invalidated for other causes. However, interviews I conducted with polling station officials and party observers in one locality the day after the 1992 elections suggest that the majority of invalid votes were due to blank envelopes, and a survey of election results in one area where detailed results were accessible suggested a correlation between a high incidence of “null” votes and votes for a candidate—who lost—reputed to have purchased votes (see also IFES 1993). In some areas, such activities were limited because candidates engaged attorneys to monitor the practices of rivals and the efforts by opponents to secure the support of local officials. Rival parties threatened to report illegal practices to local electoral commissions and to other authorities. This response in itself indicated a greater confidence in the “rule of law” and the electors’ growing sophistication and awareness of the gap between the rhetoric of the state and its practices.

An exclusive focus on election results deflects attention from major changes taking place beneath the surface. The state needed to make complex arrangements to set the 1992 and 1993 elections in motion and to convince Morocco’s political parties that the elections would be fair. The behind-the-scenes negotiations were not secret—the fact that they were taking place

was widely known and reported in the national press. Among the issues involved were (1) the creation of national and regional electoral commissions, including procedures for handling instances of fraud and abuse; (2) computerized election registration to reduce the possibility of electoral fraud; (3) lowering the voting age from twenty- one to twenty; and (4) granting political parties access to television for the first time.

Other changes were more subtle. By mid-1992, the activities of human rights groups were regularly reported in the national press. Even when newspapers refrained from publishing details of human rights abuses because of censorship rules, some national newspapers referred to banned books and to the continued concerns of foreign human rights groups. Another innovation followed Hassan II's August 20, 1992, speech from the throne in which he called for a major reexamination of the rights of women and a revision of the mudawwana, the shari'a-based legal code governing family law administration in Morocco. Even if the results were modest, it set in train conferences and drafting sessions that gave the appearance of improved conditions, especially when coupled with the election of two women to parliament. Finally, press laws were liberalized. The relaxed restrictions culminated in a major scandal in mid-February and March 1993, when Moroccans were treated to daily accounts— a morality play for Ramadan, as it were—of the trial of a senior Casablanca police official for sex crimes involving an estimated fifteen hundred female victims, all of whom he videotaped having forced sex with himself. Although the broadcast media remained silent, the print media covered the trial extensively. For the month of Ramadan, the circulation of Moroccan newspapers soared, as journalists honed their tabloid skills and newspapers regularly sold out (Rocco 1993; Mayer 1993, 93–105). With a total blackout on the subject in the broadcast media, the print media enjoyed a brief renaissance and the event as a morality play was likewise conveyed via audiocassette tapes in Arabic and Berber to wider audiences throughout Morocco (Lakhsassi 1998).

Morocco's September 27, 2002, parliamentary elections offer an interesting contrast to previous ones. They were the first to be held under the rule of Muhammad VI, who assumed the throne after the death of his father in July 2000. On the day before the elections, the prime minister announced that these elections would be a "complete break with the past" and acknowledged that prior ones had been manipulated (cited in Ksikes 2003,

29). In fact, strong efforts were made to eliminate the purchase of votes for cash, the offering by candidates of meals, and other forms of pressure. Prior to the election, the government commissioned television commercials in Arabic and in Berber intended to show illiterates how to vote, and others, featuring a rough-voiced man of authority in a jallaba, promising swift and sure punishment for electoral fraud.

With twenty-six political parties and a system of proportional voting for both a national list of candidates for each party and another “local” list, the voters needed all the help that they could get. As a promissory note on the new “transparency” (shafafiyya), voters were promised a televised counting of the ballots beginning as soon as the doors shut at the country’s thirty-seven thousand polling stations. In the events, only “partial” results were announced after a day’s delay, with complete results announced only four days after the elections and an unexplained blackout of the Ministry of the Interior’s election Web site (Le Journal Hebdo- madaire 2003, 13).

The effort at “transparent” elections was a chastening experience for the government, the political parties, and politically aware Moroccans. The government learned that transparency cannot be achieved by topdown orders alone. The complex system of proportional voting proved so complex that local officials hired to tally the votes acknowledged that their cursory training proved inadequate to the task (interviews in Tanger, September 29, 2003; Mohamed Brahimi, cited in Ksikes 2003, 31). Moreover, the tenor of the televised commercials, showing illiterates how to hold a pen and mark ballots for the one of the twenty-six parties of their choice, proved an embarrassment for educated Moroccans. The very effort to communicate such a complex system of voting to Morocco’s illiterates—60 percent of the female population and roughly 40 percent of the males—highlighted one of the country’s national educational failures. Finally, at the time of the elections and in subsequent published analyses, the government’s concern to diminish the “Islamist” vote was evident. Although the breakup of an al-Qaida cell in the summer prior to the elections and the arrest of a religiously motivated criminal in Casablanca in August 2002 were not fabricated incidents (Oberle 2002), many felt that the government made special efforts to publicize these events and cast Morocco’s Islamists in a bad light. Although the followers of Abdesslam Yassine, grouped into a movement

known as “al-‘Adl wa-l-ihsan” (Justice and Benevolence) are neither recognized as a political party and do not recognize the legitimacy of the elections, another Islamist group, “al-‘adl wa-l-dimuqratiya” (PJD, Justice and Democracy) made a strong showing in the circumscriptions where they were allowed to field candidates. The fact that the government had negotiated in advance the numbers of circumscriptions where they were allowed to field candidates was an open secret (Jama’i 2003, 18). The government was afraid that they would make major gains and disrupt the balance of Morocco’s recognized, and balkanized, political landscape. The government, allegedly at the instigation of the king, also reserved seats of the national parliamentary list for women, guaranteeing that women would hold at least 30 of parliament’s 325 seats.

As in the past, the parties also recognized their limitations in communication. All parties were permitted access to television, but as in prior elections, few possessed the ability to use the medium effectively. Parties also received subsidies for campaign literature and for workers, as in prior campaigns, but these were active only in the days immediately prior to the elections. Most leaflets were confined to showing a candidate’s photograph, and the color and symbol allotted to them. Some reports suggested that the Islamist PJD used the pulpits of mosques to get out the vote (Ksikes 2003, 32), but this claim, made only anonymously and after the elections, may have been made only to “explain” the strong turnout for the PJD in contrast to the other political parties.

From the point of view of many voters, the “transparency” of the elections took away from some of the appeal of earlier ones. For many Moroccans who do not understand the electoral process or are not persuaded that they benefit from it, the lack of cash traded for votes may have taken away an incentive to participate in the elections. By 4:00 p.m. on election day, the Ministry of the Interior announced turnout as only 30 percent of the registered voters. By the close of the polls at 7:00 p.m., some 56 percent had voted, one of the lightest turnouts in Morocco’s electoral history.

The September elections did not therefore constitute a major transformation for Morocco, although the number of violations of electoral procedures was light compared with prior elections (Le Journal Hebdo- madaire

2003, 28–299) From the perspective of Tangier, where I observed the elections, the prevalence of cellular telephones by party activists did much to limit opportunities for abuse) Party sympathizers could call headquarters within moments of suspected infractions to report them, so that observers or negotiators could be sent to the scene) Some parties also pooled their efforts to report infractions or problems on a timely basis, and shared information between towns and regions was the norm and not the exception) In past elections, only the government possessed the ability to communicate rapidly, at least between major centers) The government hot line (numero verte) to report violations also functioned, but appeared to function only to record complaints and not to act on them) In the past, such reports might have taken hours or even a day to be communicated)

*** “Scaling Up” for More Open Societies

Elections such as Morocco’s require a conjuncture of “scaling up” and “scaling down)” The “scaling up” involves using informal background understandings of trust and cooperation to envisage participation linking persons, localities, and regions to wider society) “Scaling down” entails recognition on the part of the state that elections, like effective plural political participation, require not just a top-down order, but also a recognition of an inevitable trial-and-error as new forms of political organization become part of local background understandings of community and trust. Flaws remain in Morocco’s electoral process, but in contrast with past elections, they cannot be imputed exclusively to a grand design from the center. Despite their claims to the contrary, Moroccan political parties unevenly cover the country, and none has a universal appeal. Unlike the situation that existed immediately after independence in 1956, no party has deep roots in all the rural areas, where local candidates with no committed party affiliation other than cooperation with the government, usually in the form of local officials, still prevail. The poor showing of many parties in many regions suggests that Morocco’s political parties have only begun to master the techniques needed to secure mass support.

Yet significant political change is taking place. Politically active Moroccans began in 1992 to signal significant long-term political change. As one “opposition” political leader suggested:

We are seeing the first stage in the breakup of the system of power in Morocco. In the 1970s and 1980s we asked the question, “What is the role which political parties can play in the monarchy?” Now the question has changed to “What is the role of a monarchy in a modern society?” Technically this is a forbidden question, but Hasan knows that this is the issue on everyone’s minds. (interview with author, Rabat, June 11, 1992)

Nonetheless, most Moroccans are convinced that the conduct of the current elections breaks with past practices, allowing “democracy” to begin to acquire a specific substance and the “rule of law” to become more than a slogan, in large part because of at least some of the media and the new forms of communication.

Elections cannot be understood or implemented in a cultural vacuum, but take place in a web of significance that includes the background understandings and shared assumptions of a people. In the case of Morocco, as elsewhere in the Arab Middle East, moral authority does not derive from elections alone. In many rural parts of Morocco, voting still takes place along tribal lines. Sometimes this is interpreted as the local manipulation of voters. An equally plausible explanation in many regions is that voters consult with one another and decide collectively prior to elections how they will cast their ballots, although such votes were not always cast along tribal lines.

Linda Layne describes a similar situation for tribal Jordan, where people in tribal areas often voluntarily declare their vote to bystanders because of the cultural sense of dishonor at acting in a covert manner. In the Jordanian tribal context, giving “voice” (sawt) to one’s vote—the literal meaning of vote in Arabic—meant refusing to separate the role of voter from that of person (Layne 1994, 112–23).

Such background understandings are also evident in the tribal areas of Yemen where, rather than belong to just one political party, most people belong to several even when such political identities are mutually contradictory (Dresch and Haykel 1995). The paradoxical effect is to sustain civil society. Dresch and Haykel argue that understanding the prospects for democracy in the Yemen requires a “local knowledge” that cannot be subsumed by any single, culturally universal instrument such as elections. Elections acquire an importance only when interpreted in context of political understandings derived neither from an overly determined metatheory —“elections are the only means to determine the people’s will”—nor from directly “observing the flow of Yemeni social life without the benefit of dialogue with informed Yemenis.” Moreover, in the Yemen, as elsewhere, the limits to what are considered “political” are in flux.

Progress toward representative government has been slow in the Arab world, but an awareness of what is lacking has become increasingly evident due to the new media, mass higher education, and the experience of large numbers of people in the region with life elsewhere. During the Cold War years, the United States—to contain the presumed Soviet threat, secure the free flow of oil to the West, and defend Israel’s secu- rity—systematically opposed popular nationalist leaders, regimes “willing to experiment with political freedom,” and those which moved too quickly to replace the old order (Cottam 1993, 20, 32–33). In some cases, these concerns continued after the end of the Cold War—in the case of some oil-rich states, the United States has spoken softly about human rights abuses. Likewise, U.S. concern about promoting democracy was far from prominent when the Algerian military canceled the January 1992 elections.

In the field of the history of science, one major advance has been to break with the assumption that there is a fixed, hierarchical relation between theory, the instruments of perception, and experiment, but rather a wide variety of interactive relations among them (Galison 1988, 208, 210). Setting aside such fixed measures of democracy as proposed by Lipset can offer an ability to understand the complex background understandings needed to make elections work in the different contemporary contexts of the Arab Middle East.

A first step is to learn to elicit the cultural notions of legitimate authority and justice and to recognize the multiple voices of the Muslim and Arab world attuned to these issues. Ideas of just rule, religious or otherwise, are not fixed, even if some radicals claim that they are. Such notions are debated, argued, often fought about, and re-formed in practice. Such debates are occurring throughout the region. Recognizing the contours, obstacles, and false starts, both internal to the different countries of the region and external, to making governance less arbitrary and authoritarian is a needed first step. One observer of Moroccan politics, commenting on the shortcomings of Morocco's September 2002 elections, recently wrote:

I am no longer interested in transparency as an end in itself, but rather as an instrument of political negotiation to brandish several months prior to [our] local elections. In fact, the [government] communications campaign for these coming elections has already begun. (Ksikes 2003, 29)

"Communication does not necessarily mean credibility," concludes Ksikes. Perhaps not. However, communicating in a common language and being able to confront authority in it, comparing multiple sources of information on other people's experiences with similar issues elsewhere, and possessing rapid means of information and communication held until recently only by state authorities or a political elite have dramatically changed shared understandings of religion and politics throughout the Arab Middle East—and altered the prospects for open societies and democracy. Such challenges are not regional alone, and foreign powers who act in the region to encourage more open societies must now match deeds with words. Successes, like shortcomings, will now become known in real time.

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** Chapter 3: Pluralism, Democracy, and the ‘ulama

Muhammad Qasim Zaman

The question of how Islam and Muslims view democracy, pluralism, and modern understandings of the rights of human beings has been much discussed, with varying degrees of pessimism and optimism (e.g., Esposito and Voll 1996; Mayer 1999; Humphreys 1999; Hefner 2000; Sache- dina 2001). Muslim scholars like Abdulaziz Sachedina (2001) have argued vigorously that a careful reading of the Qur'an as a whole provides strong grounds for "democratic pluralism" and for a civil society in which Muslims and non-Muslims enjoy equal rights. Sachedina's argument is premised on a disjunction between the original teachings of the Qur'an and the historical development of juristic and political thought. While the Qur'an, on his reading, is strongly supportive of human rights irrespective of creed, Muslim jurists and rulers of Muslim majority states typically privileged Muslims over non-Muslims, just as they privileged men over women. The challenge faced by the Muslim scholars, the "Muslim religious establishment," is to rethink Islamic law and legal theories on the basis of the Qur'an in the modern world, he says, and he laments that the religious establishment has yet to show any serious engagement with this enterprise.

Others have taken a less severe view of the premodern history of Islamic law and jurisprudence, arguing that even as a sacred law, the shari'ah preserved many crucial elements of flexibility in its norms and that the manner and scope of their implementation could vary considerably at different times and places (see, e.g., Tucker 1998; Hallaq 2001). While underlining certain basic inequalities in the moral universe of the medieval jurists, Baber Johansen has shown that the jurists of the Hanafi school of Sunni law were careful to protect the rights of the individual against the claims of the state (Johansen 1999). The jurists worked with the two overarching categories of the nonnegotiable "rights of God" (such as certain punishments mandated in the Qur'an and in the normative example of the Prophet) and the "rights of man." While the latter were a matter of private negotiation between the parties affected by an infraction, the former—the rights of God—were upheld by the state on behalf of God and of the entire community. But the jurists worried that the state could infringe on the rights of the individual under the guise of protecting God's rights and sought therefore to restrict the laws pertaining to those rights to the barest minimum, even as they extended the scope of the rights of the human being. As one nineteenth-century jurist, Ibn 'Abidin (d. 1836) of Damascus, had put it, "This is not so because we are

treating the claims of law [regarding the rights of God] lightly, but because the human being is in need and the law is not" (cited in Johansen 1999, 214).

Such juristic concerns suggest their possible relevance to projects of rethinking individual rights and civil society in both a modern and an Islamic context. Mohammad Fadel has offered another illustration of how there might be unexpected concordance between the concerns of many Muslim "modernists" and the arguments of medieval jurists. In interpreting Qur'an 2.282, which speaks of the need for two female witnesses to replace a single male witness, certain Sunni jurists explained this inequality in what Fadel characterizes as "sociological" terms: what made a woman's testimony less valuable was the result not of any "natural" deficiency (as many others argued), but of the fact that she had less exposure to the outside world and thus presumably had less to say about disputes that arose there; in matters of which she might be expected to have a more intimate knowledge, her testimony was not half that of a man, just as in matters of narrating and transmitting religious texts, the authority of her word was no different from a man's. In the presence of such sociological explanations, Fadel concludes:

one can no longer simply assume that modernist interpretations of Qur'an 2.282 represent a radical break from Islamic law; indeed, from the perspective of fiqh, the sociological interpretation ... is the only plausible reading of the verse ... [T]his suggests that Muslim modernism in general, and

Muslim feminism in particular, might profit from exploiting problems and tensions that have long been recognized to exist within Islamic law. In the long run, this strategy may be more successful than claiming the need for a "new" jurisprudence that is to be derived ex nihilo from the original sources of Islamic law. (Fadel 1997, 200)

While Fadel's concern is to recommend this strategy to the modernists, might something similar be considered with reference to the traditionally educated Muslim religious scholars, the 'ulama, as well? Scholars of contemporary Islam have often seen the 'ulama as a mere relic of the past, as having been

entirely co-opted by the ruling elite, as altogether mired in an unchanging view of both Islam and the world and, in any case, as having little of interest or importance to contribute to contemporary Islamic discourses. But, as I show elsewhere (Zaman 2002), the ‘ulama have not only undergone significant changes in the modern world, they have often also adapted in a variety of ways to the transformations around them and have thereby come to play roles of considerable importance in countries like Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and elsewhere. These roles are varied and, while they can be usefully compared across Muslim societies, they are, in each instance, the product of particular configurations of local, national, and international factors. In each case, moreover, the ‘ulama compete for influence and authority with other actors in the public sphere—for instance, with Muslim modernists and Islamists of various stripes.[11] Yet far from marginalizing the ‘ulama, it is precisely in the framework of an ongoing public contestation—over religious authority, politics, the proper orientation of their societies, the common good—that many of their new roles and their discourses have often been articulated (Zaman 2004). At the same time, however, it is typically with reference to the Islamic religious and especially the juristic tradition that they have continued to define and express themselves. The prospect of (re)discover- ing hitherto ignored positions within this tradition should, then, appeal to them more than it does to anyone else.

Whether the shari‘ah has the resources at all that can lend themselves to the building or strengthening of a civil, democratic society in the contemporary world is an important and difficult question. And while many scholars deny that such resources exist (cf. An-Na‘im 1990), the foregoing illustrations should at least indicate that the question is by no means a settled one and, indeed, that it can be answered in the affirmative. Yet this is not the only question worth asking. We also need to ask, as I do in this chapter, whether, in seeking to maintain a continuing link with the premodern juristic tradition, the ‘ulama are willing to draw on that tradition’s resources in a way that might be conducive to a civil, democratic Islam. A common answer to my question is a simple “no” (e.g., Sache- dina 2001, 132). There is, indeed, much in the rhetoric and actions of the ‘ulama to warrant such a judgment. But as I would argue in this chapter, in focusing on the ‘ulama of South Asia and more specifically on those of Pakistan, the answer is in fact much more ambiguous. To appreciate why this is so, we need some understanding of the discourses of the contemporary

‘ulama, the ways in which they engage with and build on the premodern Islamic tradition, and the pressures and contradictions of the political context in which these discourses have found expression.

Though they share a colonial legacy, the two nation-states that emerged with the partition of British India in 1947 have evolved along very different paths: India is the largest democracy in the world, whereas Pakistan’s experiments with democracy have been interrupted, and marred, by long periods of military or quasi-military rule. The population of India is predominantly Hindu, and Muslims comprise approximately 12 percent of the total population; yet, even this relatively small proportion makes the Muslim population of India larger than that of most predominantly Muslim states (Hasan 1997, 1–3). The population of Pakistan, on the other hand, is overwhelmingly Muslim. And while India is a secular state—although led, since the late 1990s, by a Hindu nationalist government—Pakistan professes to be an “Islamic Republic.” All these and other differences notwithstanding, ‘ulama and their institutions of learning, the madrasas, have thrived in both postcolonial India and in Pakistan.

Most South Asian Muslims are Sunnis, though there is a substantial Shi‘i population in both India and Pakistan (about 15 percent of Pakistan’s Muslim population is Shi‘i). It was under British colonial rule that the major sectarian orientations within South Asia’s Sunni Islam crystallized, in part as a response to the challenges facing the Muslim community with the end of the centuries-long Muslim rule in India, the advent of a colonial power, and the massive economic, social, and technological changes that colonialism brought in its wake. One of the most important of these sectarian orientations is associated with the madrasa of Deoband, which was founded in 1867 in a small north Indian town (Metcalf 1982). The “Deobandis” represent a self-consciously “reformed” Islam, firmly rooted in the foundational texts and in the Hanafi school of Sunni law and defining itself in opposition to “popular” forms of belief and practice they often associate with the veneration of shrines and holy men. The madrasa of Deoband soon had affiliate madrasas, all called “De- obandi,” in different parts of South Asia, even as it attracted many students from outside the Indian subcontinent. The “parent” madrasa remained in what became postcolonial India, where numerous other madrasas have emerged since independence. But it is in Pakistan that the madrasas belonging to various sectarian orientations—

Barelawi, Ahl-i Hadith, Shi‘i and, most notably, Deobandi—have grown most dramatically. Altogether, in 2001, there were 2,715 madrasas in the Punjab alone, the most populous of Pakistan’s four provinces; and the number of madrasa students, which was said to be 249,534 in this province in 2001, had multiplied by more than ten since 1960 (Zaman 2002, 2; cf. 126). The products of these madrasas are very unequal in their grounding in the Islamic religious tradition: they range from highly sophisticated scholars of Islamic law and exegetes of the Qur’an and of the traditions of Muhammad (hadith) to those barely able to fulfill their functions as prayer leaders and preachers. Yet for all the differences in the stature and credentials of their graduates, it is in these madrasas that those who emerge as “‘ulama” become ‘ulama; and, as I would argue later in this chapter, madrasas are crucial sites for thinking about at least some facets of pluralism and democracy in relation to the Islamic tradition.

*** The ‘Ulama’s Islamic Tradition and Muslim Politics

The Muslims of South Asia faced one of the most critical moments in their modern history when, as the end of British colonial rule came in sight, they had to decide how their future as a religious and political community was best secured. One group of Muslim leaders, led by the All-India Muslim League, had come to advocate the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims, seeing in this the best guarantee for escaping permanent domination by a Hindu majority in postcolonial India. But other Muslim leaders, and these included many prominent Deobandi ‘ulama, resolutely opposed the demand for a separate Muslim state. These ‘ulama were led by Husayn Ahmad Madani (d. 1957), who argued that Muslims throughout the world constituted a single global community, a community that could not legitimately be carved into separate Muslim nations. Conversely, he held, Muslims living in particular regions—in this case, South Asia—could be part of a composite nation with other religious communities in that region. That is, “nations” were based on ethnicity, language, and territory, whereas “communities” were defined by ties of faith. The Muslims of India therefore formed an Indian nation together with the Hindus, even as they remained part of an indivisible, global umma (Madani n.d. [1938]).

The position of these “nationalist ‘ulama,” as represented by Madani, was much derided by its critics for its failure to appreciate the dangers Muslim identity would face in a Hindu-dominated India. Such criticism was not without basis but, irrespective of it, two things are worth noting in the position of Madani and the nationalist ‘ulama. First, there are, in fact, important precedents in the premodern juristic discourses on the question of Muslims living in territories governed by non-Muslims. While many jurists were resolutely opposed to such a possibility, others allowed it (Abou El Fadl 1994). And though Madani did not explicitly invoke these debates in defence of his own “nationalist” position, his views unmistakably echo some of these premodern juristic discussions. Second, and no less importantly, he insisted on the “flexibility” of Islam and of the shari‘ah in adjusting to different social configurations and in interacting with non-Muslims (Madani n.d. [1938], 39–40, 49–51). To him, there was nothing in Islam that inherently disallowed such interaction, and it is clearly on this understanding of the shari‘ah that he, as a leading religious scholar, based his remarkable opposition to the creation of a Muslim (or “Islamic”) state in favor of a united, secular nation-state.

Even as the Muslims of postcolonial India profess their allegiance to the secular nation-state, their leaders have continued to debate how best to protect the interests of the community. Sayyid Abu’l-Hasan ‘Ali Nadwi (d. 1999), the best known of the Indian ‘ulama of the latter half of the twentieth century, argued, for instance, for the need for greater political mobilization by Indian Muslims as a way of safeguarding their religious and cultural identity (Zaman 2002, 160–70). Conversely, ‘ulama like Wahid al-din Khan (b.1925) have argued that the interests of India’s Muslims are best served by renouncing political activism and instead by focusing on building better ties with the non-Muslim majority, while also striving for strengthening the religious foundations of the Muslim community (Khan 1994). Wahid al-din Khan is highly critical of ‘ulama like Nadwi, as well as of Islamist ideologues like Abu’l-A‘la Mawdudi (d. 1979) of Pakistan for seeking solutions to the contemporary ills of the Muslims in politics (Khan 1996, 163–217, and especially 196–97, 199–207, 210–11). Rather than political activism, he advocates peaceful proselytism at the grass roots of society as the proper path to Islam’s reinvigoration (cf. Khan 1986). But unlike Madani, Nadwi, and most other ‘ulama, in South Asia or elsewhere, he also advocates a radical critique of the Islamic tradition in the contemporary world (Khan 1996, 31–95). This tradition, he argues, is largely the product of a time when

Muslims were politically dominant in the world, with the result that it has little to guide them in drastically changed contexts. Rather than draw their resources from the existing body of premodern juristic debates, he urges Muslims to energetically engage in rethinking Islam to arrive at solutions that are genuinely compatible with the needs of their time. He is not alone among the ‘ulama in advocating the need for systematic reflection on the foundational texts for solutions to new legal problems (ijtihad) but, unlike many of them, Wahid al-din Khan does not see the premodern juristic tradition as necessarily defining the perimeters within which any further juristic exertion ought properly to be undertaken.

While the minority position of the Indian Muslims led ‘ulama like Madani and Wahid al-din Khan to argue for a pluralistic, multifaith society, others outside India have also attended to the question of pluralism within the ranks of Muslims themselves. The best known among them is the Qatar-based Egyptian scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi, one of the most influential of the ‘ulama in the contemporary Muslim world (Zaman 2004). Qaradawi invokes the long recognized area of “disagreement” in the premodern juristic discourses to argue that a plurality of views within the Muslim community is no threat to Islam and that it ought to be perfectly acceptable (Qaradawi 2001). Given the long history of juristic disagree- ments—which often provided the jurists and the judges some space for flexibility in the articulation and implementation of the law—Qaradawi’s point is anything but novel. It is significant nonetheless, for invoking this history allows Qaradawi to try to carve out some pluralistic space in contemporary Muslim societies. At the same time, it reminds us that, in the culture of the ‘ulama, novel or at least present-minded concerns continue to be couched in terms of their tradition.

The foregoing examples tell us something about how the ‘ulama have, in their different ways, sought to accommodate Islam to a changing world. Yet none of these illustrations is free of ambiguity. Even as he extols the juristic tradition’s tolerance for disagreement, Qaradawi makes a distinction between disagreement that constitutes “variety” and that which he labels “opposition” or “contradiction.” The former kind, of which the juristic disagreements on subsidiary matters of the law are the prime instance, is not merely tolerable but a source of the tradition’s richness of intellectual resources. But the latter kind of disagreement—by which he presumably

means disagreement on the very foundations on which the Muslim society is to rest, or disagreement on whether that society is to rest on Islamic foundations at all—is, for him, intolerable (al-Qaradawi 2001, 210–15). In effect, then, the only sort of “pluralism” that is acceptable to Qaradawi is pluralism within the ranks of those who already agree on the fundamentals of belief and practice in their community. Madani, on the other hand, did clearly envisage a society in which Muslims and non-Muslims would be equal citizens, though he did so, of course, in the context of a state where Muslims were to be a minority. And, as historian Peter Hardy has observed, Madani clearly did not envisage a nation-state in which the Muslim community, qua religious and cultural entity, would altogether merge itself. He appears, rather, to have conceived of a free, united India where Muslims would be autonomous as a cultural entity, to be guided by their own religious leaders, the ‘ulama, within the framework of the secular state (Hardy 1971, 38–41). Viewed thus, the significance of Madani’s “united nationalism” and its potential for adapting Islam to a pluralistic India is by no means negated, but it does appear less far reaching than it did at first sight. Wahid al-din Khan, for his part, calls for a more vigorous participation of Muslims in weaving India’s cultural fabric and in taking seriously the promises of India’s secular pluralism. Yet, as noted earlier, his position is articulated on the basis of a thoroughgoing critique of the Islamic intellectual and juristic tradition, one verging on claims of its irrelevance in the modern world, and this exacts a considerable cost in terms of the resonance of his potential appeal for many Muslims, let alone for other ‘ulama.

If there are ambiguities in formulations such as the foregoing, there appears to be considerable clarity in the stridency of the antipluralist and antidemocratic positions that one encounters in the discourses of many contemporary ‘ulama. For instance, for all their other disagreements, there is little to distinguish the ‘ulama of Pakistan (or of India, for that matter) so far as their attitudes toward the Ahmadi community are concerned. The Ahmadis are anathematized by most other Muslims, and not just in South Asia, for their belief that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), the founder of their community, was a prophet. This assertion contravenes the fundamental Islamic belief that Muhammad was the last of God’s prophets and, under pressure from the ‘ulama and the Islamists, the government of Prime Minister Zulfiqar ‘Ali Bhutto (1971–77) amended the constitution of Pakistan to expressly declare the Ahmadis as nonMuslims. Many Sunni ‘ulama are no less hostile to the Shi‘a than they are to the

Ahmadis, however, and since the early 1980s, Pakistan has witnessed widespread sectarian conflicts between the Shi‘a and the Sunnis (Nasr 2000; Zaman 2002, 111–35). This sectarian militancy has been led by lower-ranking ‘ulama, who have tended to combine a humble socioeconomic background and madrasa training with, often, military training in Afghanistan in the course of the Afghan struggle against Soviet occupation or during the subsequent civil war. However, many leading figures among the ‘ulama of Pakistan and India have also urged the sectarian foot soldiers on, even as their own political influence has been enhanced by the activities of these sectarian militants. There is more to the context of sectarian hostilities in Pakistan than the discourses and activities of the ‘ulama, though these do suffice to raise serious questions about the ‘ulama’s toleration of difference.

Nor do the ‘ulama’s discourses give solid proof of their commitment to what they often pejoratively refer to as “Western-style democracy” (e.g., ‘Uthmani 1993a, 41, 111–16). The most basic of their discomforts on this score lies in what they see as the conflict of such democracy with the immutability of the shari‘ah: given that God’s law is for all times, no hu- mans—even if they all agree—can have the authority to alter it, let alone to decide whether or not this law ought to be implemented. While Muslims may well debate and disagree on precisely how God’s law is to be implemented, for this does admit of many different possibilities, they cannot, by definition, disagree on whether it ought to be implemented (‘Uthmani 1993a, 49–50). Yet it is precisely the ability to debate the very foundations of a society and polity that a “Western-style democracy” confers on the citizens. So while most of the ‘ulama typically endorse such features of a democratic system as regular and free elections and public accountability, they fervently deny that the authority of the elected representatives of the people extends, even in principle, to all areas of public or religious life, just as they deny that democratic inclusiveness can encompass everyone. Thus “heretical” Muslims, let alone those who are not—or are refused recognition as—Muslims, can scarcely be equal citizens with Muslims in an Islamic state.

Even more troubling than a rejection of, or serious limitations on, democratic pluralism is the view, espoused by many ‘ulama, that jihad against unbelievers is a continuing obligation. The literature on jihad is voluminous, but I want to briefly take up a single example of the contemporary (but pre-September 11, 2001) discussions on it. This relates to one of the most

prominent of Pakistan’s contemporary Deobandi ‘ulama, Mawlana Muhammad Taqi ‘Uthmani, a former judge of the Shari‘at Appellate Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the vice president of the Dar al-‘Ulum of Karachi, one of the largest of Pakistan’s madrasas. In a written question which, together with his detailed response, was later published in a book by Taqi ‘Uthmani, Islam and Modernism (1999), he was asked about the legal status of “aggressive” as opposed to “defensive” jihad in the modern world. The questioner himself was of the view that armed struggle by Muslims is only justified in self-defense, and that Muslims are not to open hostilities against any state which has no aggressive designs against them. The proper path for promoting the interests of Islam, the questioner believed, was that of peaceful proselytism, and there could be no justification for aggression against a non-Muslim state that allowed opportunities to Muslims to preach their faith within it. The questioner wanted to know whether Taqi ‘Uthmani agreed with this view, or on what basis he disagreed.

In his response, Taqi ‘Uthmani disputed the idea that opportunities for peaceful proselytism constituted sufficient grounds for regarding a nonMuslim state as friendly. The crucial issue, he argued, is the “might” (Urdu: shawkat; Arabic: shawka) of the non-Muslim states, which, being presently greater than that of Muslim states, is by itself an obstacle on the path to proselytism (‘Uthmani 1999, 102). Formal permission to preach Islam in such a situation becomes meaningless, he says, for the might of the state so conditions people as to make them incapable of becoming receptive to Islam. It is this might that jihad seeks to undo, Taqi ‘Uthmani argues, and he concludes his response with contemptuous disdain for the view that the sort of expansionism aggressive jihad represents has no place in the modern world (‘Uthmani 1999, 107–9))

It is impossible to neatly classify the Pakistani ‘ulama between the “extremist” and the “moderate,” the activist and the quietist, the political and the apolitical) Even many leading figures among them, who have largely devoted their careers to scholarly pursuits, maintain varied links with the radical sectarian militants and benefit from the latter’s successes, as noted earlier) Taqi ‘Uthmani himself is one of the most prolific of ‘ulama—not just in Pakistan but anywhere in the contemporary Muslim world—in terms of his writings on society and politics, his commentaries on classical collections of hadith, and on a range of subjects relating to the interpretation and the

implementation of Islamic law) His is far from being the most radical voice among either the Islamists or the ‘ulama, and yet, as the foregoing views suggest, it is hard to classify him as a “moderate” in any meaningful sense)

How then do we interpret Taqi ‘Uthmani’s views on jihad? I would argue that despite the seeming clarity of his position, there is, in fact, considerable ambiguity in it—an ambiguity that sheds some light on the contemporary ‘ulama’s discourses in general. We should bear in mind that Taqi ‘Uthmani’s position here is a theoretical defense of the idea of jihad, not a call on Muslims to embark upon it. His concern is to safeguard what he sees as Islam’s timeless verities—including what the Qur’an or the Prophet’s example has to say about jihad—against efforts by Muslim modernists to reinterpret or repackage Islam in light of their liberal values. (Recall that Taqi ‘Uthmani’s essay on jihad is part of a collection of his essays in a volume entitled “Islam and Modernism.”) The real issue here seems to be that of defending jihad because it has all along been part of the Islamic juristic and historical tradition. If the Islamic tradition provides the resources on which to conceive of a pluralistic world, as the tentative attempts of Madani and Qaradawi suggest, that tradition equally constrains the possibilities in contemporary discourse. The constraints are not necessarily disabling, however. Indeed, much of the growth and change in premodern Islamic law took place through a careful negotiation between the existing constraints and the available mechanisms for ingenuity and innovation (cf. Jackson 1996; Hallaq 2001); and ‘ulama like Taqi ‘Uthmani and Qaradawi continue to argue for the possibility of adaptation, growth, and change in that law. Even so, what typically distinguishes the ‘ulama from other religious intellectuals in contemporary Muslim societies is precisely their insistence on taking the tradition, or large parts of it, along with them; and it is this concern, more than any other, that underlies Taqi ‘Uthmani’s alarming, and deceptively unambiguous, defense of jihad.

There is often also a considerable disjunction between the formal discourses of the ‘ulama and the range of political and other practices in which they participate. Despite his seeming disdain for the opportunities for proselytism that Western democracies offer to Islam, Taqi ‘Uthmani has in fact been a frequent visitor to Europe and North America, and he has published detailed accounts of his travels on these continents (‘Uth- mani 1996). Sunni and Shi‘i organizations have engaged in systematic, targeted killings of their rivals,

yet their leaders have not been above tactical alliances against what they perceive as common foes. Thus, the leader of the Tahrik-i Ja‘fariyya-i Pakistan, Pakistan’s premier Shi‘i political organization, which had been banned alongside radical Sunni organizations by the government of General Pervez Musharraf in January 2002, was part of the alliance of religiopolitical parties in the general elections of October 2002 (The News, September 6, 2002). This alliance included factions of the Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam, the political organization of the Deobandi ‘ulama and the parent body of the Sipah-i Sahaba (also banned in January 2002); and it included Pakistan’s premier Islamist organization, the Jama‘at-i Islami, which in the past has often had difficult relations with the ‘ulama.[12] The earlier alliance of one faction of the Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam with the government of Benazir Bhutto during her second tenure as prime minister (1993–96) offers another instance of the ‘ulama’s pragmatic politics. This alliance was remarkable in view of the ‘ulama’s widespread discomfort with the fact that a woman headed the government and that it projected a largely Westernized image. My point here is that irrespective of what many ‘ulama would say about secular, liberal regimes, about the Shi‘a, about “Western-style democracy,” and about proselytism in Western societies, they have seldom allowed their formal discourses to foreclose the range of political options that might be open to them. If the ‘ulama’s invocation of pluralist ideas continues to have much ambiguity about it, their rejection of such ideas is often no less ambiguous.

This ambiguity is important to underscore for at least two reasons. First, it already suggests, of course, that it would be a mistake to characterize the ‘ulama as uniformly or irremediably hostile to democratic pluralism. Such a simplistic characterization would not be conducive to an understanding of Muslim politics any more than it would to improving the prospects for a civil, democratic Islam. Second, at least some of the ambiguity we encounter in the world of the ‘ulama, in their discourses and practices, is a studied ambiguity,[13] one they have often allowed to exist because it facilitates greater maneuverability for them as well as more diverse but simultaneous choices in the public sphere. Yet it is not the ‘ulama alone who have allowed the ambiguities and, indeed, the contradictions of their own position, and that of Islam in the public sphere, to exist unremedied. The state itself has played a large role not just in tolerating many of these contradictions but even, in case of Pakistan in particular, in fostering them.

*** Islam and the State

In an important review of the strategies through which “state-society synergy” might be promoted in the interest of social and institutional development, political sociologist Peter Evans notes the importance of focusing on “positive cases”—instances that indicate how the state and society have, despite meager resources, reinforced each other in helping build institutions rather than those where their mutual suspicions have impeded the cause of social development (Evans 1997, 205; cf. Tendler 1997). Attractive as his proposal is, this section would largely ignore his advice. While Evans is interested, inter alia, in identifying local resources which can be “scaled up” for development through multifaceted forms of interaction between public and private actors, I hope to demonstrate how the Pakistani state has often provided critical opportunities for scaling up antidemocratic and antipluralist trends in society. The justification for this line of argument is not to add to the literature on the failings of the state (cf. Evans 1997, 205), but to arrive at a better understanding of the career and contradictions of Islam in Pakistan. Nor does my discussion presume that the Pakistani state is itself necessarily a cohesive or coherent entity. As Robert Hefner has shown with reference to Indonesia, in his chapter in the present volume and elsewhere (Hefner 2000, 65, 142–43), a recognition of the factionalism within the ranks of the ruling elite offers considerable insight into the contradictory ways a state might act on particular occasions. Even with such a recognition, however—which I will assume rather than illustrate here—we still need to understand how those who comprise the ruling elite might themselves contribute, in the name and through the instruments of the state, to the scaling up of uncivil norms and practices.

Long before the first of Pakistan’s three constitutions (1956, 1962, 1973) was promulgated, the Constituent Assembly of the new state had, in 1949, adopted the Objectives Resolution, which set out the principles on which the state was to be based. The Resolution declared that sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to God, and the people of Pakistan are to exercise this sovereignty as God’s legatees. While Pakistan’s successive constitutions have often been seen as largely enshrining the vision of a modernist political

elite—and some observers of the long debates over Pakistan's first constitution have wondered why the religious groups conceded so much to the worldview of that elite (Binder 1961)—a recognition of the sovereignty of God already gives a decisive rhetorical advantage to those who wish to take that claim seriously. It is hard to imagine that the modernist elite saw this as anything more than an affirmation of the state's overall Muslim identity; and yet the claim remains a very powerful one. Nor was the Objectives Resolution the last instance of the fostering of extravagant expectations about the role of Islam in public life without much accompanying evidence of the state's commitment to live up to those expectations. Nonetheless, such claims and expectations have created an Islamic space where the modernist elite is forced to be constantly on the defensive against the 'ulama and the Islamists.

That Pakistani governments have, more often than not, come to power through undemocratic means reinforces this defensiveness, even as it enhances the temptation to continually put their Islamic commitments on display. The "Islamization" campaign carried out during the eleven-year rule of General Muhammad Zia al-Haqq (r. 1977–88) was by far the most vivid of such displays. Where the Objectives Resolution had previously been a preamble to the constitution, it now became its integral part. The zakat-tax, one of the basic Islamic obligations, was officially enforced by the state; new institutions, such as the Federal Shari'at Court, were created to oversee the implementation of Islamic law; and stringent measures were adopted against an indigenous religious community, the Ahmadis.

The case of the Ahmadis, which we have already touched on, illustrates much more than the range of issues affected by the Islamization campaign; it also reveals how the state has allowed antipluralist tendencies in society to thrive and to be scaled up. The 'ulama, and many others, have actively polemicized against the Ahmadis virtually since the emergence of this community in the late-nineteenth century. Yet Pakistan's first foreign minister, Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, was a member of the Ahmadi community; calls for his dismissal were among the reasons for widespread riots in the Punjab in 1953. Though the rioters had demanded at that time that the Ahmadis be officially declared "non-Muslims," it was not until 1974 that the government of Zulfiqar 'Ali Bhutto brought about a constitutional amendment to meet that demand. Yet, once this battle was won, the

assertion of the Ahmadis' otherness took the form of the demand that they be forbidden to use any Islamic symbols whatso- ever—such as referring to themselves as "Muslims," or their places of worship as "mosques," or using the call to prayer like other Muslims, and so forth. In 1984, the state obliged again, this time with a presidential ordinance that more or less translated these demands into articles of Pakistan's penal code (Waqar-ul-Haq [1994], 100–101 [Articles 298B&298C of the Pakistan Penal Code]).

Though Shi'i 'ulama had themselves supported demands for the Ahmadis' exclusion from the community, many of the Sunni 'ulama who had honed their skills at agitational politics against the Ahmadis later turned them against the Shi'a themselves. Since the 1980s, Pakistan's radical Sunni organization, the Sipah-i Sahaba, has spearheaded the demand that, like the Ahmadis, the Shi'a too ought to be declared a non-Muslim minority for only then would Pakistan's character as a truly "Islamic state" be affirmed. The state has resisted this demand, though that has not prevented widespread sectarian bloodshed over the past two decades.

One further instance of how the state's own illiberal measures are then scaled up in alarmingly strident directions should suffice here. This concerns the infamous "blasphemy law," which, too, was made part of the Pakistan Penal Code during the reign of General Zia al-Haqq. Under this law, it is a capital offense to "defile" in any way—"by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by any imputation, innuendo, or insinuation"—the Prophet Muhammad (Waqar-ul-Haq [1994], 99 [Article 295C of the Pakistan Penal Code]). With this law on the books, a number of people, Muslim and non-Muslim, have been accused of "blasphemy," and those so accused have been sentenced to death by Pakistani courts (Dawn, September 10, 1998, March 14, 2001, August 19, 2001; The News, July 19, 2002). The capital punishment itself has never been carried out on grounds of blasphemy. Yet the existence of this law (together with extremely fluid conceptions of just what is to count as blasphemy) has led to many acts of vigilantism, and this is aided by the perception that the agencies of the state are themselves less than eager to actually carry out what the law requires of them. The government of General Pervez Musharraf (1999-) attempted to repeal this law, but strong opposition from the religious groups forced it to abandon the effort (Bearak 2001a, 2001b; The News, February 19, 2002).

But while many ‘ulama have been at the forefront in opposing any change in the law on blasphemy, just as they have been among the most active in calling for the exclusion of particular religious groups from the community of Muslims, it is important to emphasize that the state itself is at least as complicit in carrying through such measures as the ‘ulama are in agitating for them. If the ‘ulama have made strident demands, particular governments —popularly elected (Zulfiqar ‘Ali Bhutto’s) or military (Zia al-Haqq’s)—have gone along with them; and that, in turn, has provided the ground on which even more stringent demands have been made. If elements within the ruling establishment contribute to the scaling up of an uncivil society, of antipluralist sentiments, it is not difficult to understand the severe constraints the state faces when it seeks to “reform” particular institutions in the interest of creating a “good” civil society.

There is no better illustration of such constraints than official attempts toward the regulation of the ‘ulama’s institutions of learning, the madra- sas. The regulation or reform of madrasas raises questions that pertain to more, however, than the contradictions of governmental policies or the influence of the ‘ulama in society. More centrally for our concerns here, they also have some bearing on the problems and prospects of thinking about a civil, democratic Islam in relation to the ‘ulama.

*** Reforming Madrasas in Pakistan

The madrasas of Pakistan have received unprecedented media attention in the aftermath of the September 2001 terrorist attacks. It was in Pakistani madrasas, after all, that many of the Taliban of Afghanistan— including a substantial proportion of their top leadership—were educated (Rashid 2000, 90). As the United States prepared for military action against the Taliban, thousands of Pakistanis, many of them associated with madrasas, decided to go to Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban, even as other ‘ulama and madrasa students actively sought to rally support against the policies of General Pervez Musharraf. A number of militant Pakistani organizations blamed for terrorist activities both before and after the September 2001 attacks have likewise been closely allied to madrasas; and in January 2002,

General Musharraf not only banned these organizations but also declared a new resolve to better regulate the affairs of the madrasas.

That resolve has remained largely unimplemented so far. While a number of madrasas in Pakistan are large institutions with thousands of students—like Karachi's Dar al-'Ulum, or the Dar al-'Ulum Haqqaniyya in the North-West Frontier Province, where many of the Taliban had stud- ied—there is no parallel to a central institution like the millennium-old Azhar University of Egypt. Pakistani madrasas of different sectarian affiliations are affiliated to one another through madrasa boards, but this connection is at best a loose one. Unlike in Egypt, therefore, it has not been possible for the government to regulate the religious schools through a centralized bureaucratic structure, though even in Egypt many dimensions of the religious sphere remain outside of governmental regulation (Wickham 2002). Madrasas are often largely financed by private donations, which again makes it difficult to regulate their affairs.[14]

Official committees have periodically been constituted by the government to suggest ways of reforming the madrasas (Zaman 2002, 60–86), and these have typically been led by bureaucrats. They outnumbered the 'ulama on the madrasa reform committee of 1962 and they were marginally fewer than the 'ulama on the 1979 committee, though even the latter was presided over by a Western-educated bureaucrat; the more recent and ongoing initiatives toward madrasa reform are likewise overseen by bureaucratic officials. To such committees, reforming madrasas has essentially meant the introduction of "useful" subjects (a notion with deep roots in British colonial discourse) into the curriculum of these institu- tions—that is, modern science, the English language, and other disciplines that comprise the country's educational "mainstream." Reform also signifies doing away with the study of the "ancillary" subjects like Islamic philosophy, which for centuries has formed part of the madrasa curriculum but which the bureaucratic committees do not see as properly "religious" subjects. The 'ulama, however, not only take a more expansive view of the Islamic tradition than do the modernist ruling elite; to them governmental initiatives toward integrating madrasas into the educational mainstream are but a thinly veiled effort to undermine their status as bastions of an "unadulterated" Islam in society and polity. As some of the more strident critics of the effort to reform madrasas have argued, what would result from "mixed" secular and religious

education of the sort the government has envisaged are “loyal civil servants,” not ‘ulama of any significance or stature (Zaman 2002, 79–81; The News, July 7, 2002). In the 1990s, when government officials repeatedly pointed to links between madrasas and sectarian terrorism in Pakistan, the ‘ulama often labeled any effort toward reforming their institutions as an excuse to shut them down altogether. In the aftermath of the September 2001 terrorist attacks, the government’s renewed efforts to regulate madrasas came to be seen as the result of international, and especially American, pressure to do so as part of the global War on Terrorism;[15] and while the ‘ulama had long equated the defense of the madrasas with the defense of a beleaguered Islam, they now strove—and not without some success— to make that equation more palpable to their audiences.

The contradictions of government policies have, meanwhile, remained unresolved. It is not a little ironic that the government of Benazir Bhutto should have sought to reform madrasas even as elements within the same administration oversaw the rise of the Taliban through Deobandi madra- sas in Pakistan. And even members of the government of President Pervez Musharraf have continued to praise the role of madrasas in Pakistan (e.g., The News, June 24, 2002b) at the same time as they express their resolve to reform them. But the problem is not merely one of contradictions in governmental rhetoric or even a certain discordance within the ruling elite. Indeed, it extends even beyond the issue of addressing the contradictions of Islam in Pakistan’s public life. The issue also relates to the severely limited alternatives that the state itself offers to some of the services the madrasas provide. In a country where almost half of the population is still illiterate, madrasas often provide all the education that many from the poorest segments of the population will ever have. Such education is typically free, as are the food and boarding that madrasas provide to their students. Quite apart from the social mobility that religious learning has often facilitated in many Muslim societies (Edwards 2002, 292), graduates of madrasas are frequently able to earn a livelihood as religious functionaries. Again, in a state with large-scale unemployment, this is not an inconsiderable achievement. It is doubtless such services that government officials have in mind when they acknowledge the “valuable” functions that madrasas serve in society. Yet their aspirations to reform madrasas appear all the more weak in the face of such acknowledgments, and this because such reform proposals offer few credible alternatives to the provision of some

of the people’s basic needs. The point here is not that madrasas provide most of such needs, or that they provide them well. It is, rather, that in an arena largely left vacant by the inefficiency and perceived corruption of the state, madrasas have, in many cases, offered services that are not otherwise available; and such services may arguably seem the more attractive to at least some segments of the population because they are provided in the name of Islam.

Considering their successful resistance against governmental regulation, their independent economic base, their deep roots in local communities, and their engagement with the affairs of society, might we think of Pakistani madrasas and the ‘ulama associated with them as sharing certain features often held to be the basis of a “civil” society? Jose Casanova has spoken of the roles that “public religions” can play in contemporary Western societies once those religions accept the functional differentiation of spheres in society —that is, once they accommodate themselves to the fact of secularization in this crucial sense (Casanova 1994). The ‘ulama typically don’t accept secularization in this or most other senses. Yet it is worth noting that they, too, play roles not dissimilar to the kind of roles Casanova envisions for public religions. Reflection on the normative foundations of the polity, on the moral and religious dimensions of public policy, and on the common good as being distinct from merely the aggregate of individual interests (Casanova 1994, 228–29) are to be found in the discourses of the contemporary ‘ulama as well (Zaman 2004).

Yet, many Pakistani madrasas often also maintain ties with militant sectarian organizations in the country, as already noted, and the views of the ‘ulama on such things as the position of women or on pluralism are often far from being conducive to a democratic society. In and of themselves, however, such illiberal proclivities do not exclude the ‘ulama and their madrasas from the landscape of civil society. Rather, they remind us that not all civic associations are necessarily committed to democratic civility; some, indeed, help foster a “bad” civil society (Chambers 2002, 100–105; Berman 1997). Though usually not articulated in quite these terms, at least part of what motivates governmental and other modernist criticisms of madrasas is the perception that they retard the growth of a good civil society or that they foster precisely the wrong kind of attitudes in society—attitudes that are xenophobic, antipluralist, antidemocratic. But what governmental

initiatives toward madrasa reform also claim is, of course, that even this institution can be scaled up in ways that would promote a “good” civil society and the common good; indeed, the very aspiration to reform rather than, say, to shut down madrasas bespeaks such a claim. The ‘ulama have, of course, typically seen such statements of intent as a thin veneer for an all-out assault on the integrity of religious education and on the institutions associated for centuries with providing it. Yet it is worth asking whether madrasas can, in fact, be scaled up in ways that might promote a “good” civil society. More specifically, under what conditions might such an effort successfully take place?

*** Madrasas and a “Good” Civil Society?

Having illustrated earlier in this chapter some of the ways in which the state itself collaborates in scaling up illiberal religious trends in society, I will now assume, for purposes of argument, that the ruling elite does in fact have a genuine interest in fostering a “good” civil society and in promoting a tolerant, pluralist, and democratic culture. This is obviously a problematic assumption. It is contested by the historical record of how that elite has conducted itself, as well as by questions about the inner cohesion of that elite (see Hefner, in this volume). Yet my interest in the remaining part of this chapter is not with how to ameliorate the behavior or cohesion of that elite but, rather, with what it would take to reform the ‘ulama’s institutions. Part of the answer to my question here is, of course, that the institutions of the ‘ulama might have better prospects of being scaled up in the direction of democratic pluralism once the polity in which they are located comes itself to be genuinely committed to a democratic culture. But this is only part of the answer, and to highlight other aspects of it, I intend to take this part as a given and to proceed accordingly.

In very broad terms, there are at least two conditions for the scaling up of madrasas to have some reasonable prospects of success: first, the state must act together with the ‘ulama, in a genuinely synergistic effort, to canalize the madrasas’ activities in particular directions; and second, any reform of the madrasas ought to involve a serious grappling with the Islamic tradition of which the ‘ulama see themselves as the custodians. It might seem that the various initiatives that have addressed issues of

madrasa reform in Pakistan have already fulfilled the first condition. After all, prominent ‘ulama have served on the committees entrusted with reform in numbers comparable to or even exceeding those of the government officials. Yet, irrespective of the actual composition of such committees, the initiative has typically rested with the government rather than the ‘ulama in all practical respects. Governmental efforts at reform have therefore been seen with great suspicion by many ‘ulama, and this even when some have gone along with the governmental recommendations for reform. A genuinely synergistic effort requires that those governmental officials who are concerned with the madrasas—for example, by way of suggesting reforms in them, or in actually overseeing particular facets of a madrasa’s activities—be perceived as at least not hostile or indifferent to the madrasa’s welfare. That the government would have the accounts of madrasas audited, or give special perquisites only to the madrasas which conform to its guidelines, or that it would even create “model,” state-sponsored madrasas —all of which is stipulated by the most recent iteration of proposals for madrasa reform (Zaman 2002, 221 n. 75)—can go a long way toward regulating the affairs of the madrasa. But, to many among the ‘ulama, these stipulations also easily translate into the efforts of an inefficient, corrupt, and hostile bureaucracy to stifle not just the autonomy of their institutions but their very existence. And it is such suspicions that have often been among major stumbling blocks on the path to reform. If, on the other hand, government functionaries at the local levels work with the ‘ulama and madrasas in their communities (that is, with many of the same ‘ulama with whom these officials might already interact in their local mosques, or in other ways), it might be possible to create and broaden significant forms of trust between the ‘ulama and the representatives of the state. This would be one manner of bridging the much debated state-society divide, whereby the state is able to shape the direction in which institutions of civil society move while remaining responsive to the particular concerns of those institutions (Tendler 1997, 135–65, esp. 146).

The second condition which ought to attend upon any effort to scale up madrasas is that this be done, at least in some measure, by engaging with the resources provided by the Islamic tradition. What does such engagement mean? To the ‘ulama, either the invoking of certain isolated passages of the Qur’an in support of a particular argument or even the claim that the Qur’an, “taken as a whole,” necessarily supports a certain position is usually less than sufficient justification for that position. Nor do incidental,

decontextualized parallels between contemporary and earlier views suffice. To take the tradition seriously is, for them, to engage with the existing record of authoritative juristic or exegetical dis- courses—which go well beyond the foundational texts—in a way that acknowledges the assumptions and methods informing those discourses, and then to show how they bear on the problem at hand. From the perspective of many contemporary ‘ulama, such a procedure does not necessarily exclude evolution and change in the law (cf. ‘Uthmani 1993b, 85–108 and passim); but it clearly does rule out radical critiques of or departures from the shari‘ah just as it rules out ways of approaching the Qur’an that have scant earlier precedent or authority.[16] But taking the tradition seriously also means, to the ‘ulama, that they be recognized as “experts” in all matters Islamic, on a par with experts in any other area of modern life (Zaman 2002, 99–100). This is a patently exclusionary position, of course, but it becomes the more insidious in that, in the ‘ulama’s theory at least, “Islam” relates to all facets of life. That the ‘ulama have often espoused highly illiberal views on a range of issues does not make this position any more palatable.

Might there be a way, however, to take the tradition seriously—in reforming existing institutions or creating new ones—but to do so while bypassing the ‘ulama? Though my discussion of madrasas has hitherto been concerned only with Pakistan, it is worth considering a highly interesting proposal put forth by philosopher Akeel Bilgrami regarding the reform of certain Muslim institutions in contemporary India (Bilgrami 1999). Bilgrami seeks to find a path that steers clear of two unsatisfactory approaches to reform: the liberal and the communitarian, as he characterizes them. In the context of contemporary India, the liberal approach refuses to recognize the validity of negotiating with the separate religious communities that constitute the Indian union, or to accept that members of these communities can have valid reasons for resisting certain initiatives which the state sees as essential to a unified nationhood and to the common good. Such initiatives include the necessity for a uniform civil code, which the constitution of India has long promised but which many Muslims have continued to resist because they see it as a challenge to their religious and cultural identity. On the liberal view, the state ought to enact this uniform civil code because it is desirable to do so, and because this measure is resisted only by “reactionary element[s]” within the Muslim community while the “moderate” majority within that community seems to be in its favor (Bilgrami 1999, 199). Opposed to this liberal view is what Bilgrami labels the

communitarian position, which also laments the reactionary elements within the Muslim community but remains resolutely opposed to a statist intervention against them. The communitarian position holds that the state should encourage democratization within the Muslim community, so that the influence of the reactionary elements is broken; but apart from this facilitating of intracommunity democracy, the state ought not to interfere in telling the community how to behave. Bilgrami, for his part, proposes that the state ought to act by proposing to the community internal reasons for reform:

[T]he state can bring about reform in a way that appeals to (some of) the value-commitments of communities whom it is seeking to reform, in particular by appealing to values which stand in ... tension with those values and practices which it seeks to reform. In other words it is the state which addresses them internally in a way that they themselves might have done on intra-community sites And if the notion of coercion is contrasted with

the notion of reason-giving, a state which arrives at secular outcomes in this way need not be seen as any more coercive than the procedures by which these outcomes are delivered on intra-community sites. To see things this way is to see the liberal state as being able to provide a field of force of internal reasons addressing different communitarian perspectives from within their own internal substantive commitments and unsettling them into awareness of their own internal inconsistencies so as to eventually provide for a common secular outcome each on different internal grounds. (Bilgrami 1999, 195; emphasis in the original)

Yet Bilgrami gives no example of internal reasons for reform that the state (or anyone else) might proffer. This may well be because he offers his argument at a highly abstract level (Bilgrami 1999, 211). But the lack of specific examples of externally given internal reasons may also underscore the difficulties that arise when the project is predicated on excluding or marginalizing the ‘ulama. It is the ‘ulama, though not just the ‘ulama, that Bilgrami seems to have in mind when he refers to the “reactionary element” whom the government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had heeded during the Shah Bano Controversy in the mid-1980s (cf. Bilgrami 1999, 199). The issue was whether a destitute divorced woman had the right

to be financially supported by her former husband after the expiry of the three-month-long “waiting period” following her divorce. The standard interpretations of the shari‘ah held that she had no such right, but the Hindu-dominated Indian Supreme Court had presumed to offer a new interpretation of the Qur’an to argue that the shari‘ah’s position was not really in accord with the Qur’an itself. While many Muslim modernists applauded the Supreme Court’s verdict as upholding the best interests of Muslim women, the Indian ‘ulama led what turned out to be a successful mass campaign to have the decision reversed through parliamentary legislation (Engineer 1987; Lawrence 2000, 131–49; Zaman 2002, 167–70; also cf. Nussbaum 2000, 167--20))

There have been occasions, in late-colonial as well as contemporary India, when internal reasons were, in fact, given to seek much needed legal reform involving Muslim women (Zaman 2002, 21–31; 2004). But these instances have typically involved internal reasons being given by the ‘ulama with reference to their juristic tradition, rather than such reasoning taking place on a site that excludes the ‘ulama. My point is not, of course, that the ‘ulama alone are qualified to offer such reasons. It is, rather, that any appeal to the need for internal reasons would be shallow and unconvincing if it doesn’t seriously engage the Islamic religious tradition, and to try to do so means (among other things) being able to converse with those who see themselves as the representatives of that tradition rather than excluding them from any conversation for being “reactionary.” As noted at the beginning of this chapter, such a conversation might involve reminding them that their own religious tradition is rich enough to allow arguments against some of the views they now hold, that their premodern precursors have held positions that amount to a greater variety of options than the modern ‘ulama are often willing to acknowledge, and that even many modern ‘ulama have themselves appealed to that variety of options in trying to get out of some particularly difficult situations.

The state does have a role in this effort to find internal reasons for reform, for instance by creating “model” madrasas as proposed by the government of President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan (The News, January 30, 2002; Dawn, April 3, 2002). Yet the purpose of governmental reform, and even the logic behind the proposed “model” madrasas, has typically been to introduce modern, Western sciences to the

‘ulama, and thereby to integrate their institutions into the educational mainstream (cf. Dawn, June 20, 2002; Dawn, July 5, 2002; The News, July 12, 2002).

While that objective remains worth pursuing, it does not necessarily offer the panacea to the ills that the ‘ulama’s detractors see them as representing. Reform in this sense has little direct relevance to building resources for democracy and pluralism except inasmuch as it ultimately seeks to remove the ‘ulama—Bilgrami’s “reactionary element”—from the scene altogether. For all the governmental denials that this might be the purpose behind the reformist project, this at least is how the ‘ulama perceive it, which is primarily why they have so vociferously opposed madrasa reform in Pakistan.

Some of the other proposals for sponsoring change in and through madrasas seem even less satisfactory insofar as the ‘ulama’s likely responses to them are concerned. In late 2002, the U.S. Department of Defense briefly contemplated the promotion of favorable views of the United States in certain countries through local religious and other institutions. As reported by the New York Times, “[s]uch a program ... could include efforts to discredit and undermine the influence of mosques and religious schools that have become breeding grounds for Islamic militancy and anti-Americanism across the Middle East, Asia, and Europe. It might even include setting up schools with secret American financing to teach a more moderate Islamic position laced with sympathetic depictions of how the religion is practiced in America” (Shanker and Schmitt 2002; cf. Schmitt 2002). A little less than a year later, a memo from the U.S. Secretary of Defense, Donald H. Rumsfeld, addressed to some of his closest advisers but leaked to the national press, asked if the United States ought to “create a private foundation to entice radical madrassas to a more moderate course” (Los Angeles Times, October 23, 2003; also cf. Pincus 2003). That such initiatives would dislodge extreme interpretations of Islam more effectively than they undermine the effort to locate and justify “moderate” ones remains, at best, uncertain.

But a different sort of reform might also be worth considering—a reform for which the state-sponsored “model” madrasas can very well be one possible site. This reform involves, as I have suggested earlier, encouraging the

‘ulama to have a more vigorous engagement with facets of their own tradition, and encouraging them to debate among themselves and with others on these grounds. The idea of reform in this sense has largely remained foreign to many Muslim modernist intellectuals and policy makers; and the reasons for this are not far to seek. These reasons have much to do with the dim view of the Islamic legal tradition that many of these modernists hold, which in turn is often a product of the limited acquaintance they have with that tradition. As its self-professed legatees and guardians, the ‘ulama of the contemporary world have themselves often done little to improve the others’ appreciation for, let alone their grounding in, the Islamic tradition. A result of this set of circumstances is for Muslim modernists and policy makers to often begin their reformist arguments by effectively writing off the tradition rather than viewing it as an arena from where (or in which) varied internal reasons for reform might in fact emerge. Yet it is in such internal reasons, with the ‘ulama as crucial but scarcely the exclusive interlocutors, that the best prospects for reform might lie—reform that can have very considerable implications for democracy, pluralism, human rights, as well as for a whole range of other pressing issues confronting Muslim societies today.

[11] In broad terms, I mean by Muslim “modernists” those who have been educated in modern Western (or Westernized) institutions of learning and have sought to rethink or adapt Muslim practices, institutions, and discourses in light both of what they take to be “true” Islam—as opposed to how the Islamic tradition has evolved in history—and of how they see the challenges and opportunities of modernity. The “Islamists” share much with the modernists in their intellectual backgrounds and in the novelty of the positions they advocate; but they do not share the modernists’ enthusiasm for the need to adapt Islam to the conditions of modernity, just as the modernists don’t share theirs for the public implementation of Islamic norms. For a discussion of the modernists, the Islamists, and the ‘ulama, and how they might be characterized in terms of their attitudes toward the Islamic discursive tradition, see Zaman 2002: 3–11.

[12] This alliance, known as the Muttahida Majlis-i ‘Amal (The Unified Association for Action), won 59 out of a total of 342 seats in the National

Assembly, the lower house of the Pakistani parliament. In an electoral success unprecedented for the religious parties, the alliance not only emerged as the third largest group in the National Assembly but also won a majority of seats in the legislative assembly of the North-West Frontier Province and was the second largest group in the provincial assembly of Baluchistan. For the results of, and reactions to, the elections to the National and the provincial assemblies, see Dawn (Karachi) and The News (Islamabad), October 11, 2002, and subsequent days.

[13] For other assessments of the ambiguities in the discourses of the ‘ulama, though with reference to premodern juristic thought, cf. Johansen 1999, 216–18; Kerr 1966, 21–32.

[14] A study conducted in 2002 found that private donations to mosques and madrasas amounted to over $1 billion annually, and that an overwhelming proportion (94 percent) of all charity goes to ventures identified as “religious” (Dawn, July 29, 2002).

[15] For some examples of the resistance along these lines to the government’s proposed reform of the madrasas, see Dawn, June 23, 2002, June 30, 2002, July 7, 2002, July 19, 2002; The News, July 25, 2002, November 22, 2003.

[16] The ‘ulama’s view of tradition can therefore have little room for, say, An-Na‘im (1990), who proposes new legal norms derived exclusively from those verses of the Qur’an that were revealed to Muhammad in Mecca, that is, during the first thirteen years of his prophetical activity, but not during the last decade of his career in Medina. An-Na‘im’s justification for the outright exclusion of the Medinan materials is that their social and political content, unlike the ethical verities of the Meccan period, have long since lost their utility. It should be clear from my discussion throughout this chapter that no argument developed on the basis of such radical premises can count, for the ‘ulama, as valid. Also cf. the comments of Abou El Fadl (2002, 109–10) on Bilgrami 2002.

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** Chapter 4: the End of Islamism? Turkey’s Muslimhood Model

Jenny B. White

The radical period is over, predicted Akif Beki, Ankara correspondent for the Islamist television station Kanal 7.[17] Islamism has become “religion,” relegated to the civil realm, found only in religious communities, no longer in the state. “There has been a civil-ization. Islamism has become Muslim hood.” This diagnosis was echoed by Mehmet Aydin, noted Islamic scholar and minister in the new Justice and Development Party (AKP) government. The formerly Islamist AKP won national elections on November 3, 2002, with enough votes to form a government.[18] The party, Aydin insisted, no longer accepts the label “moderate Islamist.” Rather, party members consider themselves to be “moderate Muslims” whose religious ethics inspire their public service as individuals but cannot be construed as part of their identities as political actors in the public sphere. “AKP is a political movement and the movement’s actors have a very warm, close relationship, primarily as individuals, to ... religious experience At the moment, I believe that all the ministers

are fasting ... We are religious people, but our actions in the public

sphere ... do not have a religious side or theological meaning. Where is there a religious side? There’s a link in our values. Just because I’ve become a politician, I’m not about to leave the values I believe in by the wayside.” As parallels, he noted President George W. Bush’s personal religiosity and championing of “faith-based programs,” as well as the close relationship between church and state in some European countries. He pointed out that the noted Islamist scholar Ali Bulaç had distanced himself entirely from Islamism, saying that it was a period that was now over, as people lived their beliefs within a pluralist framework.

Has Islam become individual, personal practice distinct from the public and political realms, as these voices claim, despite the presence of Islam-inspired devout Muslims in those realms? If so, how does this compare to the vision of the followers of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, founder of the Turkish Republic, of a pristinely secular, modern public and political realm, with religion relegated to the private sphere? In Turkey, a series of secularist governments, backed

by a fiercely Kemalist military, have implemented this model by setting legal curbs on religious expression in public. Religious insignia of all kinds, whether turban or Roman collar, are forbidden on the streets; women's head coverings, while tolerated on the street, are banned in government offices, the civil service, and many university classrooms, and more subtly discouraged in other workplaces and arenas. The state has replaced the ulema with a Ministry of Religious Affairs that trains and oversees all religious specialists, vets sermons, supervises mosques and religious schools, and issues advice about how to be a good Muslim that the state feels is compatible with a rational, scientific, secular society. The new AKP government challenges this by agreeing that religion is personal but arguing that, as such, it can be incorporated into the public and political spheres without compromising the secular state system. Kemalists, however, would likely conclude that the secular nature of the state is not safe in the hands of individuals in whose lives religion plays such an important role that they feel the need to fast and pray while doing their public duty (for instance, in the prime ministry).

Thus, the issue that has emerged as a major area of dispute under the new government is the boundaries of the private and the public, the personal, the civil, and the political. The Kemalist model seems to imply that a modern, secular democratic system requires not just certain practices in the public arena, but also a certain kind of person. When a secular person enters the political realm, she becomes secularist; when an Islamic believer enters the political realm, she becomes, by definition, Islamist. The Muslimhood model challenges this by asserting that believing Muslims can be secular politicians, that their qualities of personhood not only do not disqualify them from running the secular governmental machinery, but may even benefit the political realm by inserting personal ethics and a moral stance. On November 3, 2002, Turkey's voters seemed to agree when they elected the Islam-inspired AKP to head the government and threw out the corrupt and ineffectual centrist parties.

What is the evidence for the death of Islamism in Turkey and the rise of a personalized Muslimhood? Can this work as a political formula? If so, can this serve as a more general model for Islamic (or "Muslim") governance, or does it reflect characteristics and circumstances unique to Turkey? Are there alternative trends and actors that might contradict or undercut the

personalization and privatization of Islam and the Muslim- ization of politics and the public sphere?

*** The Personalization of Islam

Günter Seufert has suggested that Islam in Turkey has become increasingly detached from personal identity and become a means of expres- sion.[19] He linked this to the development since the 1980s of a consumer society in which identity can be demonstrated through purchased goods, and items are advertised by playing on identities. This implies a change in political focus as well. He argued that, whereas in the past, Turks might have asked, “What does an Islamic identity say about national identity?” now they are asking, “What does the nation mean for a Muslim?” “How does democracy fit with Islam?” has become “What does Islam mean for democracy?”

While the Kemalist state has long laid claim to the right to define Islam through its Ministry of Religious Affairs, the new AKP government is challenging this definition, and the market and media are wresting control over defining a “Muslim” away from the state and, perhaps, even away from Islamic groups and movements. Navaro-Yashin (2002) describes the fashion industry that has grown up around a form of veiling, tesettür, that has been associated with political Islam. At a tesettür fashion show, a woman watching the veiled models striding down the runway told Navaro-Yashin that she welcomed the elaboration of an explicitly middle class form of veiling. She had recently begun to veil, she revealed, and the sales staff in her usual shops no longer recognized her, treating her as if she couldn’t afford to shop there. If she wore couture tesettür, she reasoned, that wouldn’t happen (Navaro-Yashin 2002). The 1990s saw the spread of Islamist gated communities and department stores. During Ramazan in November 2002, the special holiday pages in major newspapers gave advice on such topics as whether or not sushi and lobster were permitted foods and how to take care of the skin while fasting. Subjects generally were approached from a pluralist angle, pointing out different Islamic interpretations and variations by region and country. Scientific explanations were amended to religious ones; for instance, explaining that research by veterinarians had revealed substances harmful to human beings in the flesh of animals like pigs, dogs, and lions. This was true as well for

newspapers, like Zaman, associated with the Islamic movement. At the mammoth annual Fatih Book Fair, held in the courtyard of the Sultan Ahmet Mosque, people crowded the stands. The book fair is self-consciously Islamic and the patrons dress the part. The book displays, however, sometimes present surprising contrasts, with translations of Dostoyevski, Gogol, Turgenev, and Jack London next to The Big Islamic Catechism, and Steinbeck and George Orwell sharing a shelf with Islam's Smiling Face and Army and Commander in Islam. One stand advertised a sale on Malcolm X, another a computer program for learning prayers in Arabic, a problem for most Turks, who do not understand Arabic. Shoppers, however, often reached over more esoteric offerings and picked up books like Test Your Child's IQ and slim, colorful volumes for children about Islam and prayer, including talking books that made the sounds of the Arabic alphabet.

Recently, the Mevlevi, or whirling dervishes, have begun appearing in popular music and video clips and on entertainment shows on television.

This is a radical departure from their previous public performances in which the public was told not to clap, since this was a religious ceremony, not a form of entertainment. On a late-night program on Show TV in November 2002, the female host exchanged light banter with a sexy, blonde Turkish singer, both in low-cut evening gowns, then introduced a small group of young men dressed as (and presented as) dervishes, along with a musician who played Sufi music to accompany them while they whirled for the cameras. One of the dervishes was a young boy of seven, the son of the musician. (Classic Mevlana performances also often included at least one young apprentice dervish.) When the whirling ended, the hostess asked the boy to announce, "Stay tuned. After the commercials, we'll be right back." This was still unusual enough to merit a lightly shocked article on the entertainment page of Sabah newspaper, where the journalist Yüksel Aytug criticized the show's host for asking the young dervish, "How long have you been turning?" Spinning-tops "turn," he admonished, but dervishes "whirl" and they do so in a ceremony with deep religious and philosophical meaning. They are not dancers or entertainers (November 24, 2002, 30).

Despite unease with the desacralization of religious practices, it appears to be becoming more common. An article in the newspaper Milliyet featured a musician that taught children Sufi whirling as a game and planned to put together a show around Sufi whirling and music by a South African singer (November 14, 2002). A more Islamically oriented newspaper advised women to finger prayer beads to reduce stress (Zaman, October 28, 2002). Another newspaper showed an actress wearing a muska, or amulet, as a fashion accessory over a tight bathing suit. Cultural and musical syncretism is not new in Turkey, but the incorporation of religious practices into such risque formats would have been thought highly inappropriate until recently and unleashed a negative reaction. As Seufert pointed out, however, over the last four or five years, objects and practices associated with an Islamic identity have come to be dislodged from their religious moorings and become available, primarily via the marketplace and media, to those whose primary identity is not Islamic, but who are interested in demonstrating that they are Muslim. Muslim- hood, in other words, has become fashionable.

*** The Death of Islamism

What has become of the much-discussed Islamism of the 1980s and 1990s? According to Ak Beki, it is a failed project, a trend that has played itself out. Until the 1970s, he explained, Islam was understood as orthodox religious tradition, not as an ideology, or something that belonged in the political or civic realms. During that decade, influences from India and Egypt made themselves felt with the translation of Maw- dudi, Hasan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb. This brought with it a sense of alienation from and reaction against the West. Their ideas gained a following and began a radical trend that advocated a political project, control over the state so as to set up an Islamic government. By the 1990s, however, this state-centric approach had shown itself to be a dead end in Turkey. It proved impossible to gain control of the state except by political struggle, and radicals were not prepared to wage an armed fight. The final failure was on February 28, 1997, when the National Security Council, the liaison institution between the military and the government, pushed the Islamist prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan (Welfare Party) out of power in what has come to be known as a “soft coup.” Erbakan himself, Beki went on, had irritated many in the Muslim community with his confrontational politics, and they were glad to see him go. Islamist ideas,

along with the anti-Western “complex,” began to be reevaluated and rejected. Another factor was the increasing cultural interaction between Islamist and non-Islamist intellectual circles that led Islamists to be influenced by multicultural approaches. In the 1990s, Beki argued, Islam as ideology was replaced by Islam as religion, centered on the Qur’an.

One of the main arenas for the interaction of Islamists and nonIslamists have been the annual Abant meetings, sponsored by the followers of Fethullah Gülen, an Islamic movement centered on education. These meetings brought together Islamist and secularist intellectuals and politicians from across the ideological spectrum, as well as representatives of Turkey’s other major Islamic sect, the Alevi. Since 1998, they have gathered for several days each year in the picturesque mountain town of Abant, halfway between Ankara and Istanbul, to hash out positions on topics like the relation of Islam to laicism (1998), religion and society (1999), state and law (2000), pluralism and social reconciliation (2001), and globalization in light of the “spirit of Abant” (2002). A book of proceedings is published after every meeting and a joint position statement is issued. The platform expresses support for democracy, human rights, and individual freedoms, arguing that these are entirely in accord with Islamic principles. There is no contradiction between religion and rationality: divine inspiration can better be understood in the light shed by the rational accumulation of knowledge. “Religious identity is individual” (Abant Platformu 2000, 316–17). It is communal insofar as religion is a component of a person’s culture and a source of common values. Mehmet Aydin, one of the organizers, defined the “Abant spirit” as respect for different bodies of knowledge and ideas in Turkey and an attempt to see them represented; respect for the “honor” of knowledge and ideas, even if different, and a willingness to let the discussion go wherever it leads; an open mind and heart, being democratic and courageous; giving importance to the logic of the dialogue; and attempting, at the end of the discussions, to capture a shared common denominator that may not represent everyone’s views in their entirety, but enough to recognize their contribution. The Abant meetings are designed to make of this “spirit” of reconciliation a “usable” model (2002, 101–2))

*** Muslim Actors: Groups

Participants in the Abant meetings comprise organized religious sects or groups as well as individual thinkers who may or may not be associated with particular strains of thought about Islam and its place in the public sphere) Some prominent secularist thinkers also participate) First I will discuss two Muslim groups, the Fethullahlar and the Alevi, quite different, but well represented in Turkish society and the public sphere and both arguably representative of moderate streams in Turkish Islam) The sponsors of the Abant meetings, the Fethullahc 1, are followers of the retired preacher Fethullah Gülen) Gülen's movement consists of a network of nominally independent organizations in Turkey's major cities united around Gülen's teachings and supporting a publishing and media empire and educational initiative) Gülen's movement is an offshoot of the Nurcu movement, based on the writings of Said Nursi (1877–1960) that argue that there is no contradiction between religion and science) The Nurcu spread in Turkey in the 1950s and held a particular appeal for those educated in the secular school system) Gülen's followers include many teachers, students, businessmen, and educated professionals)

Gülen seeks to "Islamize Turkish nationalism; recreate a legitimate link between state and religion; emphasize democracy and tolerance; and encourage links with Turkish republics" (Aras 1998, 29)) He believes that Turks share with Central Asian Turks a knowledge-based, nonpolitical form of Islamic interpretation, influenced by Sufi tradition) He differentiates this "Turkish-Muslim identity" from Arab Islam, arguing that Turkish Muslims are more tolerant and open to dialogue with all parts of society, including other religions and sects) He promotes the seeking of knowledge as a religious value and integration with the Western world, even if that means incorporating Western technology, clothing, and, to some extent, lifestyle) In his writings, he emphasizes that religion is a private matter and its requirements should not be imposed on anyone) Instead, the Fethullahlar spread their message by sponsoring schools, dormitories, summer camps, and reading circles) Gülen-financed schools can be found in Turkey and abroad, primarily in Central Asia and the Balkans) The Fethullahlar put on conferences to which they often invite internationally known scholars to discuss themes like Islam, democracy and civil society. They own a popular television station (STV) and a newspaper (Zaman) and publish large numbers of books and periodicals.

In the 1980s, the Turkish military and government encouraged a model of nationalist religion, which came to be known as the Turkish-Islamic synthesis, in a bid to counter the appeal of leftist ideologies. Gülen's brand of Turkish Islam, with its emphasis on Islamic education and belief in the compatibility of religious ethics and modern state institutions, seemed ideal and initially was supported. Major politicians accepted invitations to dine and speak with Gülen. However, as Islamist politics grew in popularity through the 1990s, especially at the ballot box, Gülen and his followers were accused of dissembling and, in reality, wishing to turn Turkey into an Islamic state. For the past several years, the frail leader has lived in the United States, where he initially came for medical treatment, unable to return to Turkey under threat of arrest. His movement, however, retains its momentum. It is too early to say whether the AKP government will allow him to return, since the military, the courts, and, to some extent, the police, have acted relatively independently of the government in the past. However, the prime minister in 2002, Abdullah Gül, and other members of his government have attended Abant meetings in the past, and Minister Mehmet Aydin was one of the organizers.

The Alevi are a non-Sunni syncretistic Muslim minority estimated to make up between 20 and 25 percent of the Turkish population. For centuries, they have been marginalized and sometimes persecuted by the Sunni majority for their beliefs, which some consider heretical. They do not subscribe to the Sunni requirements regarding prayer and fasting, and their ceremonies, at which music plays a prominent role, are not gender segregated. Although traditionally socially liberal and politically to the left of center, the Alevi are often overlooked in discussions of moderate Islam in Turkey. This may be due to their association with leftist activities in the turbulent 1960s and 1970s. In the 1980s, however, the Alevis, much like the Fethullahcilar, were perceived to be allies of the state in countering the perceived new threat of Islamism. They were granted permission to reopen their lodges, closed along with other Islamic institutions after the founding of the Republic, and to practice and hold their cem ceremonies openly. This has led to what some have called an Alevi revival or repoliticization, including the founding of numerous Alevi associations and foundations and local and national radio stations. In 1989, they issued an "Alevi Manifesto" in which they demanded unconditional acceptance of their religious community and their specific culture by the public and the state, and an end to all discrimination.

That discrimination at times has been severe. The Ministry of Religious Affairs is Sunni-dominated and disproportionately supports Sunni education and activities. As recently as 1995, several people in a cafe in an Alevi neighborhood were killed in a drive-by shooting, probably by right-wing nationalists. When community residents marched on the police station to protest their inactivity, the police, many of whom are sympathetic to the nationalists, retaliated, killing several residents. The ensuing riots left at least a dozen people dead and over a hundred wounded. That same year, outsiders broke into several university campuses and beat up students eating lunch during Ramazan, the month of fasting. When students protested police inactivity, they were beaten. When a guest on a television entertainment show made a joke that the Alevi have no morals and have group sex during their ceremonies, Alevis tried to set the television station on fire. A former high official at the Ministry of Religious Affairs, himself an Alevi, went on television to calm the situation and reassure the Alevi that they were integrated into Turkish society.

Since the end of the 1980s, however, the Alevis, under the leadership of an educated and politically active Alevi elite, organized in powerful associations, have become a force in Turkish politics and society. The explosion of interest in Alevis by the Turkish media, scholars, and politicians in Turkey and abroad raised Alevi visibility in the public sphere. Participation in Alevi activities increased, particularly in the cities. People were more willing to present themselves as Alevi (Erdemir 2002, 2). These events led to ongoing discussions about what exactly Alevi religion and culture are, particularly among younger, urban, educated Alevis who have lost touch with the inward-looking tribal traditions of traditional religious leaders, the dedes (Vorhoff 1997, 56).

Like the Sunni Islamist movement, Alevi presence in the public sphere has taken the form of mass demonstrations, civic organizations, and media publications—books, periodicals, and newspapers. Some of these publications have changed their content to cater to the move in reader interest from socialist politics to cultural commentary about Alevi rituals, music, and personalities (Vorhoff 1997, 57). This has fed a crisis in authority within the Alevi community. The analytical dissection and publi- cization of

Alevi identity and the creation of Alevi civic institutions over the last decade has created a public body of knowledge about Alevi identity that is often at odds with the more esoteric knowledge of the dedes and threatens their authority, based on their membership in holy lineages (Massicard 2001). The new public represents what one might call a different market, representing many different interests, including a desire for religious consumption. Unlike the more intimate ceremonies of the past, the new urban cems, held in great, modern halls, may involve hundreds of people, many strangers to one another. Although they provide a welcome opportunity to establish networks that cross village, lineage, and regional ties, some participants are disturbed by their “folkloric” aspect, viewing urban cem ceremonies as nothing more than public performances that have lost the authenticity of traditional ceremonies (Erdemir 2002, 9).

Thus, the new Alevi presence in the public sphere is characterized by internal generational, rural/urban, and ethnic divisions, but also by the desacralization of religious ceremonies as Alevi Muslimhood becomes a fashionable identity. What this identity entails will likely be the result of competition in the marketplace of religious consumption, rather than of tradition or politics. Erman and Göker remain skeptical about whether “the recognition of Alevi difference(s) will aid the creation of a more pluralistic political system” (2000, 115). Like Sunni Islamists, Alevis are now riven by social class divisions that may make it impossible to develop an identity politics founded on cultural and religious aspects that address all the needs and interests of a diverse following.

The Justice and Development Party (AKP) seems, at first glance, the most successful manifestation of Islam in the public and political realm. The party is the latest in a series of overtly Islam-inspired parties since the 1960s, each, in turn, closed down by the state (in the 1980s and 1990s, these were the Welfare and Virtue Parties). With each new party, the platform changed and constituency broadened until, by the 2002 election, the AK Party was supported by a spectrum that included peasants and urbanites, poor and wealthy, as well as intellectuals. Its success at the polls was due, in part, to an intensive, personalized method of mobilizing and to an ability to translate its platform of social justice into a local cultural language of neighborliness and mutual obligation (White 2002). Islam as an ideology played a relatively

restrained supporting role in Virtue Party mobilization, quite different from the strident Islamism of its predecessor, Erbakan's Welfare Party.

This evolution toward moderate, nonconfrontational Islamic participation was the harbinger of a further receding of Islam into a cultural, ethical stance under the AKP. What caused this moderation and movement from a strident Islam oriented toward changing the state to a model of Muslims doing politics within the state? The chastening effect of continual closings played a role, as did the ability of banned parties to reconstitute themselves to compete again. The decline of other political parties opened the field to competition by a younger generation of politicians. The AK Party is led by the charismatic Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a former soccer player, businessman, and mayor of Istanbul, who replaced the patronage-based politics of Necmettin Erbakan, leader of the previous Islamist parties, with a more participatory, populist grassroots political style. Market and media created crosscurrents of ideas and practices, uprooting previous meanings.

In the remainder of this essay, I will focus on the special circumstances of Turkish Islamic thinkers that led to a rejection of Arab reformist Islam in favor of what they consider to be a Turkish brand of Islamic philosophy that influences the present government. The movement toward a Turkish Islamic philosophy in some ways parallels the personalization and privatization of Islam and desacralization of Islamic practices discussed above, allowing a fractured new public to position themselves in a variety of ways within an Islamic idiom. In other words, the Muslimhood model does not create a unitary body of thought, goals, or practices, but projects a pluralist vision of an Islamic public sphere that reflects more closely the diverse nature of Islam in Turkey, but also contains within it contradictions that may sow the seed of dissent.

*** Muslim Thinkers: The Reformists

The annual meetings of intellectuals at Abant and a number of AKP, Alevi, and Gülen sponsored publications, meetings, and educational events have reinforced the Abant model that promotes compatibility with and, indeed, the necessity of pluralism, democracy, and individual rights in a Muslim society.

A group of prominent reformist intellectuals, based at Ankara University's School of Theology, has developed a stream of Islamic thought that seeks to develop a new form of interiority of Islamic belief in Turkey—religion as human nature or an internal state, not society's religion or tradition.

This puts them in an ambiguous relationship with some orthodox and overtly political forms of Islamism, but very much in line with the Abant model and the trends of personalization of Islam and Muslimization of the public and political spheres discussed above. In other words, reformist intellectual currents and the effects of market and media seem similarly aligned in encouraging a movement toward personalization of Islam, or Muslimhood, and away from a politicized Islamism.

Some of the main figures among the Reformists (Yenilikçiler), as they call themselves, are Mehmet Aydin, Mehmed Said Hatiboglu, M. Hayri Kirbasoglu, Ömer Özsoy, Salih Akdemir, Yasar Nuri Öztürk, and Hidayet Sefkatli Tuksal one of the few women prominent in the movement. Mehmet Aydin was born in Elazig in 1943. He graduated from Ankara University's School of Theology in 1966 and the following year, with support from the Turkish Ministry of Education, went to Edinburgh University in England for a doctorate in philosophy. When he returned in 1972, he began teaching in the School of Islamic Sciences at Ankara University and also taught philosophy at Middle East Technical University. In 1984, he moved to Dokuz Eylül University, where he was dean from 1993 to 1999. In fall of 2002, he became a minister in the new AKP government. He is considered to be a modernist and has published ten books on Islam and philosophy, including Turkish Contribution to Philosophy (in English, 1985), and Why? (in Turkish, 2002), which consists of reflections on September 11. In this collection of his newspaper columns, he suggests that rather than a clash of civilizations, the attacks of September 11 and Muslim responses to it are symptoms of the Muslim world's inability to get its own house in order, understand the West, and explain Islam to the West. This is exacerbated by the Muslim world's lack of understanding of Western languages and, thus, of the West's sociology, social psychology, politics, ideology, and strategic vision. The same, he continues, can be said of the West with regard to the Muslim world.

Many of the Reformists are professors at Ankara University's School of Theology, known as a hotbed of modernism, and most have published extensively. Ömer Özsoy is considered by some to be an Islamic feminist. M. Hayri Kirbasoglu, born in Manisa in 1954, specializes in the study and exegesis of hadith, the sayings of the Prophet Muhammed as handed down by chains of more or less reliable sources. His "scientific" evaluations of several popular collections of hadith have led him to doubt their veracity.

Salih Akdemir represents the less orthodox stream of the Reformists. He does not believe that Islam requires women to cover their heads; he supports gender-mixed student housing and the controversial Muslim practice of temporary marriage. Unlike some of his colleagues, he reportedly does not live an orthodox Islamic lifestyle. He practices an individualistic approach to Islam and argues that Islam is "human nature," not tradition. He is inspired by Jung's notion of collective conscience and he believes that, in this regard, all religions are the same. "Allah is inside all of us You use a computer, don't you? ... Allah put inside the angels

a diskette; they say whatever is on the diskette; but inside Adam he put a copy of his own hard drive. This potential, this humanity created by Allah, can develop into something like Nietzsche's superior man. The last human being will carry all the godly characteristics ... But with ... our

two-faced leaders in Turkey, in America, in Europe, this humanity isn't going anywhere. It's really all slavery. They lift the chains a bit and give them a bit of bread and their eyes widen." The requirements of the Qur'an, he argues, cannot simply be brought into the present. One has to make changes, adapt it to new situations, bring new solutions to bear. He reinterprets Islamic texts by means of semantic analyses. One of his new projects is called the "Transcendental Unity of Semitic Religions."[20] Although shari'ah law has been a basic Islamist goal, the Reformers focus on the Qur'an, rather than on the more questionable "Arab" interpretations. Their own analyses draw on eclectic methods and sources. Among Islamist activists, there is no consensus over the meaning of shari'ah, with some using it simply as a metaphor for a just

society with no change in laws required, while others focus on the legality of marrying four wives.

Another heterodox scholar is Yasar Nuri Öztürk, born in Bayburt in 1945. He has degrees in law, theology, and Islamic philosophy and, after practicing law for a time, joined the faculty of Marmara University. In 1993, he was appointed dean of the School of Theology at Istanbul University. He is the author of nineteen books and, through his newspaper columns and television appearances, has a broader presence in the public arena than most other Reformists. In the 2002 elections, he was a candidate not for the AK Party, but for the left-of-center and traditionally secularist Republican Peoples' Party (RPP); he is now a member of parliament. His ideas are especially popular with elite secularists. That and his reputation as a gadfly has somewhat tarnished his repute as an Islamic scholar.

Two other names deserve mention here, those of Ismet Özel and Ali Bulaç. representing what some have called Left Islam. (See Meeker 1991 for analyses of their writings and a list of publications.) Their publications and public appearances have been influential among believers and secularists alike. Ismet Özel is a well-known poet and columnist in several radical Islamist newspapers. He teaches French and comparative literature at Bilgi University, an institution known for the left or liberal orientation of its faculty. He was born in 1944 in Kayseri, in central Anatolia, the sixth child of a police official. He studied political science at Ankara University and French literature and language at Hacettepe University. In the 1960s he was well known as a leftist, but by the 1980s had begun to look to Islam instead for solutions. In his first book, Three Problems: Technique, Civilization, Alienation (in Turkish), he argues that the central problem for contemporary Muslims is not whether and how "Western science and technology can be integrated with Islamic belief and practice," but rather "the reconstitution of an Islamic way of life, an objective that begins with the individual reconstituting his personal thought and practice" (Meeker 1991, 211). His writings rely heavily on Western philosophers and thinkers. One young theology student admitted to me that he finds Özel's writings "impenetrable."

Ali Bulaç was born in 1951 in Mardin. He spent seven years in a madrasa receiving an Islamic education and later studied sociology at Istanbul University. He knows Arabic and is familiar with classical Islamic writers. His first book, Concepts and Orders of Our Times (in Turkish), in the late 1970s became what Meeker calls a "kind of manifesto for Muslim intellectuals" (1991, 197–98) and has sold over forty thousand copies. In the book, Bulaç analyzes capitalism, scientific socialism, and fascism as attempts to come to grips with class conflict. At the end of the book, he suggests that Islam provides a means to cope with contemporary conditions by forming the basis of an alternative "moral social order in which property rights are recognized but the rich become the willing guardians of the poor" (Meeker 1991, 200). Bulaç argues that it is not necessary to use Western principles and institutions to confront the Western challenge. The task of the Muslim intellectual "is not to rework Islam so that it takes the form of yet one more modernist construction, but to show how its beliefs and practices remain a sufficient foundation for community in contemporary life" (Meeker 1991, 201). Although Bulaç is heavily involved in Gülen-sponsored publications and the Abant meetings, his and Özel's work represents a distinct stream of Islamic Reformist thought that rejects Western solutions, despite reference to Western authors in making this argument.

As befits a modernist institution, Reformist debates are carried out over the Internet, and some of these intellectuals have personal Web pages. The Reformists also publish a well-respected journal, Islamiyat, described as modernist liberal. The journal is the brainchild of Mehmet Aydin and his graduate students. The journal first appeared in 1998. Each issue is centered on a theme; some of the most influential issues have taken up Islam and democracy (1999), increasing worldliness (2001), religion and violence (2002, no. 1), and the Islamic Left (2002, no. 2). The issue on religion and violence included articles about violence in Judaism and Christianity, as well as Islam, with separate evaluations of jihad and wife-beating in light of the Qur'an. Writings by Fazlur Rahman appear in several issues, translated from English. Islamiyat is linked to a publishing house that issues Turkish-language books by reformists, including translations of contemporary Arab authors like Muhammed Âbid el-Câbirî (Restructuring Contemporary Arab-Islamic Thought), Emîn el-Hûlî (Reformist Approaches to Arab-Islamic Culture), and Ahmed en-Naîm (Reform in Islamic Law). The publication list also includes a book on semantics as a new science of meaning (by F. R.

Palmer) and a book on Islamic views on reincarnation. There is little reference to classic Arab Islamic writers. Both Aydin and Özsoy confirmed that the translation of works by Fazlur Rahman in the 1970s “started the ball rolling” and that his remains the decisive imprint on the Reformist movement. Through Rahman, Özsoy explained, “the Turks gained access to Muhammad ‘Abduh and other Arab Islamist thinkers.”

However, Aydin explained that recent transnational Islamic rethinking had little impact in Turkey “because Turkish Islamic scholars and writers haven’t traveled much and many don’t speak English or Arabic Few

outsiders understand Turkish ... Professor Kirbasoglu is known in the

Arab world to some extent because he taught in Saudi Arabia. However, for the most part, none of our publications have been translated into other languages I believe there are significant numbers of people who

think along the same lines, but we are not aware of them.” As a result of their training at Turkish and European universities, Reformists tend to be fluent in French, English, and other European languages. Aydin, Özsoy and Akdemir told me that they read Arabic. However, their conversations were peppered with examples from the Western canon, ranging from Freud to Heidegger, not Arab sources.

The Reformists’ emphasis on Muslim interiority requires them to differentiate between religion and culture. It is here that perceived differences from Arab Islam become most apparent. Özsoy: “Since Islam has been an imperial religion from the beginning, it has the capacity to take on different cultural forms. This allows nations to preserve their characteristics after becoming Muslim. This is, in fact, the result of Islam being a humanistic and realistic religion. Of course, we should not make the mistake of equating ethnic and national character with Islam. In the final analysis, Islam is nothing but the average of what contemporary Muslims are. However, I have always weighed the significance of this. I mean, while reading the Qur’an, to what extent am I

facing an Arab reality and to what extent the demands of Allah? We have to distinguish between these.”[21]

Arab Islam acts as a foil, highlighting the greater democratic potential of Turkish Islam. Salih Akdemir explained that in the Middle East religion was understood as a relationship of slavery between God and man, so no democracy was possible. Turkish Muslimhood, on the other hand, “is moderate, comfortable,” according to Mehmet Aydin. “[We have] a rooted history Ifyou ask me, religious tolerance was greater in Ottoman times than in the present ... It didn’t emerge with the Republic;

there is an 800 to 900 year history.” He gave as an example the acceptance of Jews after the founding of the Republic. “Secondly, Turkish Islam was, of course, culturally influenced to some extent by its Central Asian roots. [For this reason,] in my youth relations between men and women in the villages were extremely comfortable.” He suggested that, although one says “Islam” very easily in English, in fact, for Turkey a better word might be “Muslimhood.”

Islamiyat is read by other intellectuals and has little currency beyond the circle of theologians and Islamic scholars, yet is one of the most vibrant arenas for new Islamic thinking in Turkey. This begs the question of why we should care about a group with such a limited audience. This is perhaps best answered by pointing to Aydin’s new position as minister in the prime minister’s inner circle. While disclaiming Islamism, these intellectuals have brought their Muslim approach and Muslimhood model into the government, albeit as individuals. As we shall see below, this does not solve the problem presented by Muslim ideas and practices spilling into public and political space in an entrenched secular (or laicist) system. However, it suggests new possibilities for negotiating these contradictions that would have been impossible with an overtly political Is- lamism, which would only have been able to resolve the problem by replacing the secular system with an Islamic one.

Reformist influences have been felt in the most unlikely places in the political sphere. During the election campaign, Deniz Baykal, the leader of the RPP,

Turkey’s most secular, socialist-oriented party, founded by Ataturk himself, created a media stir when he said, “From Muhammad Iqbal to Sayyid Qutb, Islamic thinkers have been social democrats” (Sabah, October 28, 2002). Forced to respond to media outrage that he would put the Egyptian “founder of political Islam” on the same level as Mevlana and Haci Bektas, Baykal explained that he was not interested in Qutb’s political views, but in his ideas about social justice and anticapitalist views and belief that “social democracy is Islamic.” In his response, he referred to the Reformist Yasar Nuri Öztürk, who had translated Qutb and who was standing as an RPP candidate for parliament. Far from helping the RPP gain votes in the more orthodox countryside, Öztürk may have lost some of those votes by suggesting that the call to prayer be changed from Arabic to Turkish. Nevertheless, the party stood by him as a bearer of enlightened and modern religious knowledge (Milliyet, November 12, 2002). Another party member insisted defensively that “[i]n our youth, we didn’t just read [Qutb]; we read Marx too!” (Sabah, October 28, 2002). After the election, the presence of an Islamic scholar representing the RPP in parliament presented a slightly humorous benefit when a new independent candidate from the rural east balked at wearing the traditional gold jacket pin given him when he entered parliament. Öztürk was able to reassure him that gold was not haram, religiously forbidden (Milliyet, November 14, 2002).

The relation of Reformists to Islamic political movements varies. Özsoy takes a critical stance with respect to the conservative Islamist parties under Erbakan, but is more favorably inclined toward the AKP, not because it is Islamist, but because it is not. “In Turkey, only a fraction of the so-called Islamists regards [Erbakan’s political Islamist] tradition with sympathy. A significant portion has joined other religious communities and the larger body is loyal to the state and regards [the Ministry of] Religious Affairs highly Just as a party that defends solely the rights

of Kurds or a party that promotes the Alevis is not healthy, an Islamist party is [not healthy either] AK Party [on the other hand] has votes

coming from people from different walks of life [and] a diverse body of deputies in the National Assembly. For instance, we have scholars from our

faculty [in parliament]. People who are very enlightened; following a reformist interpretation of Islam, and not as a fantasy but as people who have internalized this and know what they are doing ... Professor Mehmet

Aydin is the most prominent of them. [This is not just] about the AK Party. The people walking down the street have a conception of Islam as well, which is partially influenced by reformist Islam. Islam never stops." Not surprisingly, Reformist ideas have faced criticism from more orthodox Muslims and Islamists, but their influence with AKP inserts their ideas into the mainstream. Their ideas also seem to find support in the general population. A national poll showed that while most Turks considered themselves to be devout Muslims and prayed regularly, most also believed that Islam had no place in politics (Çarkogu & Toprak 2000).

*** Public and Private Spheres

Politics is contestation over what is private and what is public or political. That is, it is an interpretive struggle, not just an issue of control over space. How is that space defined? What are its boundaries? How are the ideas and practices that take place there evaluated? One might consider this a subset of a larger contestation over the place of "tradition" and "modernity," or Islam and secularism. In Turkey, these issues are front and center, as reformist Muslims try to bring their personal Muslimhood onto the public stage in schools, in government, in the streets, and within a laic system. While a secular system requires the separation of matters of church and state, a laic system commands secularism and forbids religion in the public and political spheres and is set up to enforce it. Özsoy describes this form of laicism, as it is practiced by the Turkish state, as a form of atheism, where religion is expected not to exist at all in certain arenas. Islamists and "public Muslims" have come up short against this seemingly immovable barrier. Erdogan's two daughters study in the United States because they would not be allowed to cover their heads in Turkish schools. Özsoy complained that "this is a faculty of theology [but] our students ... have to uncover their heads. A large number of our students can't attend classes; others attend wearing wigs. No separation between public and private sphere is left. [The classroom] is defined as public sphere." When it was founded in 2001, the AKP had been warned by the Constitutional Court that it faced closure

because six of the party founders wore head scarves; it is illegal for women wearing head scarves to found a political party. Just two weeks after coming to power, the AKP government faced the first major challenge to its Muslimhood model. Protocol required Bülent Arınç, the new speaker of parliament, to see secularist President Ahmet Sezer off at the airport. Since Mrs. Sezer would be there, protocol required that Arınç bring his wife as well. The following day, the photo on the front page of all the major newspapers showed President Sezer shaking hands with a veiled Mrs. Arınç. It did not take long for Sezer to remind the AKP government that this had been an illegal act, not to be repeated. Veiling is not permitted in the political arena, whether in parliament or on the airport runway. Several days later, the heads of the branches of the military paid the new government a routine welcome visit. After spending twenty minutes with the prime minister, they spent exactly two minutes, as timed by waiting journalists, in the office of Mr. Arınç. The message was clear. AKP was not to step over the line again.

This presented an interesting dilemma and occasioned a great deal of public debate in the media and in people's homes about whether and under what circumstances religious symbols like the veil could appear in the public sphere and what exactly constituted the public sphere. Some suggested that a differentiation should be made between those who provide service on behalf of the state (like teachers and members of parliament) and those who receive services (like students and ordinary citizens), with only direct representatives of state service being required to adhere to the restrictions on religious symbolism. This debate has opened a hitherto closed door to redefining the meaning of the public arena by differentiating between society and the state. For many Turks, however, the public is irrevocably political. At present, Kemalist opposition to contracting the parameters of the public sphere retains the upper hand. The Kemalists are concerned to ensure that society remains secular, at least in its public face. The Muslimhood model provides both a challenge and an opportunity to rethink these policies. In so doing, it is useful to point out that the meanings of the concepts of public and private and veiling itself already are contested and have begun to change.

Within the Islamist movement itself, the differentiation between a public and private sphere also has become negotiable and ill-defined. Aggressive marketing has created a middle-class and elite Islamist style that sets itself

off against the “unconscious” veiling of the masses. The “new Islamic woman” takes part in previously male-dominated activities in the public sphere, whether political activism or shopping. Veiled political activists from working-class backgrounds also aspire to the well-publicized role of “new Islamic woman,” dressing the part as prescribed by advertisements and Islamist magazines aimed at women. Eventually, however, many are forced by economic circumstances to retreat into seclusion within the patriarchal family and the home, an arena set off in Islamist ideology as private in opposition to public. This “private” arena itself has been valorized by the market, resulting in a new bourgeois Islamic home environment marked by certain purchased commodities. This stands in contrast to an Islamic home marked primarily by religiously supported female virtues (like virginity, motherhood, housekeeping, and seclusion). A woman may move between being a “new Islamic woman” and being a secluded housewife, depending on her class and education. Both are legitimated with reference to Islamic doctrine. Veiling itself is a powerful symbol both of Islamist women’s right to act in public as well as their duty to remain secluded in the home. Male Islamist activists are more likely than their female colleagues to emphasize the latter over the former. While the veil acts as a visible, unifying political symbol under certain circumstances, the heterogeneity of economic circumstances and motivations of its wearers indicates potential fractures within the movement, particularly along lines of social class and gender, about Islamic definitions of the proper constitution of public and private and women’s place within them.

Özsoy believes that “the differentiation of a public and private sphere may be a legal and sociological necessity, but with regard to religion, it is an anachronism There is a famous story told about the Prophet

Muhammed’s companion, Omar ... It is said that Omar, the Caliph,

had two groups of candles. During working hours when he was caliph, he would use the state’s candle, but from the moment he thought he had moved to his private life, he used his private candle. Although this doesn’t give us a technical way to separate private from public sphere ... it gives us some clues that can be pursued. [We can find such clues] in the life of the Prophet (PBUH) as well.” His point is that Muslims can reconcile themselves

to laicism[22] if they understand it as simply a “technology” (which candle do I use where?), rather than as an ideology (am I a laicist or Islamist?). “When laicism is presented as a paradigm against religion it is not possible to say that religious people are at peace with it. However, when it is perceived as a detail, a technique of state formation, in that sense, we don’t see that they have a problem together.” The question of who will be allowed to use both candles, however, is not addressed.

This functional view of secularism and laicism is echoed by both Tayyip Erdogan and Mehmet Aydin. “Islam is a religion, and a party is just a political institution,” Erdogan explained. “Secularism is just a style of management. When a person chooses Islam, he becomes Muslim, but he can choose secularism as a style of administration ... Secularism is

an important part of democracy. [It] establishes the administrative structure of this country” (Washington Post, November 10, 2002, B1-2). Aydin agrees that secularism is compatible with democracy in a Muslim society, but insists on defining secular in a nonideological sense as working in conformity with the rule of law in a fully functioning democracy. “I do not want it in other terms. If you say, I will secularize the culture, for instance, [and impose] an educational model in which religious terminology has no place; this doesn’t work.”

Many people believe that defining public and private by differentiating between service giver and service provider might be a “technical” solution to the seemingly intractable question of whether veiled women may attend

schools. Özsoy, however, does not agree. “I do not think this is right in principle because I believe dress is a fundamental right. There are definitely some criteria that will define and limit it For instance, I must

not have the freedom to come here totally naked ... This can be called

custom, tradition, or moral appropriateness. But it must be regulated by law. [Otherwise,] I believe such restrictions are wrong in principle, whether it be for a service provider or service taker in the public sphere."

Aydin accepts some form of laicism as necessary in a Muslim country to guard the state against a chaos of Islamic interpretation. He believes that laicism is natural to the Turkish interpretation of Islam, because a laic state, for instance, ensures that men and women are equal (as he believes they were in early Central Asian Turkic communities). He argued that the state must be laic because [otherwise] there would be too many people who would claim the right to interpret the law. The result would be a situation like that of "the Vatican and Protestants, or the Reformation and counter-Reformation." For a Muslim country like Turkey, he said, he would advocate laicism "as it is meant in Holland." By this he means a more benign and liberal definition of what is allowed in public space, rather than a redefinition of the space. I suggested the term "secularism," but he didn't like it and suggested "secularity" as something more "natural."

*** Public Culture

The present debates about what form of clothing and behavior belongs where might well be less a clash of distinct secularist (or laicist) versus Islamist ideologies than the most recent manifestation of a long process of differentiation of personal experience from provincial propriety versus urban mores. As Meeker points out, as a result of continual two-directional urbanization, Turkish citizens, whether in village or city, have been required more and more to differentiate between family space and social space, social and public space, school and work, weekend and weekday, community of origin and community of migration (which could include places as far away as Germany and Saudi Arabia), and to adjust their behaviors and attitudes appropriately (1994, 40). Official Kemalism did not provide many answers to the dilemmas faced by people trying to come up with a moral roadmap for unfamiliar contexts, and left- and rightwing political ideologies of the 1960s and 1970s were suppressed. In the 1980s and 1990s, many Turks focused their hopes on developing civil society; for others, the answers lay in provincial modes of propriety that were common even in cities, unacknowledged by secular nationalist ideology. These norms and patterns

of speech and behavior involved, among other things, rituals of cleanliness, distinct ideas of personal status and rights, and a focus on “intimacy, loyalty, interpersonal transparency and affection” and mutual support (Meeker 1994, 37), and were anchored in a local and oral Islamic ethic.

This widespread language and ethic, unacknowledged and even demonized by the Kemalists, served as a powerful foundation for Islamist politics. It is important to note that early Islamic parties, like the National Salvation Party (NSP) in the 1970s, did not do well in elections. Toprak (1981, 101) suggests that this is because religion by itself was not a sufficient factor for mobilization. It was not until the 1990s that an Islamic party began to organize and mobilize people on the basis of what Meeker calls a provincial “Islamic language of being” (1994, 31), rather than on the basis of local interests. (The NSP catered to provincial small businessmen fearful of big business). That change allowed Islamic politics to expand beyond specific interests to attract people across a wide spectrum who perceived in the party a familiar and time-honored strategy for dealing with life’s difficulties and change.

These developments have been exacerbated by economic decline and privatization of state industries in the 1980s and 1990s. There is a perceptible nostalgia for traditional strategies and institutions that, in retrospect, seemed to provide solutions. There is a diffuse but discernible nostalgia for a sheltering authority. This can be seen in the recent popularity of films and film series about rural aghas who are gruff and demanding, but care about their people, protect them, and meet their needs. The Ottoman Empire, moth-balled since 1923 by the Republic, has been dusted off to provide models for everything from tolerant multiculturalism to veiling styles and architectural models for summer resorts. The Welfare and Virtue Parties that preceded AKP put forward Ottoman- inspired ideas ranging from Bulaç’s scheme for millet-style religious federalism to charity programs in which wealthy families, in effect, “adopt” poor families. AKP was successful primarily because it organized and mobilized people on the basis of neighborhood networks built around the very characteristics described in Meeker’s provincial propriety. The links between neighborhood networks, civic organizations, and political party—a powerful nexus I call vernacular politics (White 2002)—created a broad national movement, flexible enough to incorporate a great variety of people. The masses, in

effect, were mobilized on the basis of familiar personal ties and obligations, and their energies and interests channeled into a national political program. Vernacular politics made the line between personal and political, and between local and national, obsolete.

The rehabilitation of provincial modes of propriety as the bases for new urban, modern Muslim identities and national political mobilization became possible with the development of an aggressive media. Television and radio were effectively deregulated in the 1980s as cable and satellite television made it impossible to control. There also was a publication explosion. The Turkish-Islamic synthesis of the 1980s meant that the government allowed a great variety of Islamic ideas and material to be published and broadcast. The newly opened economy of the 1980s brought wealth to conservative and provincial entrepreneurs. The Özal government brought them into the bureaucracy. All of these things led to the development of a new Islamist public culture. Almost immediately, it came into conflict with official public culture. Veiling developed a popular, chic style and began to appear in areas of the city, particularly middleclass areas, formerly the exclusive realm of secularists, and Islamic ideas were debated in the media.

*** Muslimization of the Public

There are, in other words, multiple challenges to the laicist definition of the boundaries and content of the public sphere, from media and market forces, from Muslim intellectuals and politicians, and from ordinary citizens looking for strategies for self-expression. Yet, at the same time, there is widespread concern about the social manifestations of other kinds of difference that seem to be on the rise: an acceptance of lifestyle differences only if they are segregated; a politically unmoored and intolerant Muslimhood that divides people within the same social class, the same neighborhood. A secularist friend worried that AKP’s plan to move authority for such things as education and health care from the central state into the hands of local authorities would lead to dangerous differences between, say, school districts, with one allowing head scarves and the other not. He worried it would lead to segregation, “like U.S. blacks,” but based on lifestyle. Ayse Böhürler, the Islamist writer and television personality, complained about Negrofication (zencilestirme).[23] Two relatively new terms,

“white Turks” and “black Turks,” have come into wide use to refer to urban, secular, left-of-center Turks, on the one hand, and rural (or “reactionary,” uncivilized) Islamist conservatives on the other. A middle-aged desk clerk in a touristic hotel who has lived his entire life in Fatih, arguably Istanbul’s most religiously conservative neighborhood, described a creeping division between residents who are more devout and those less observant. Whereas in the past, they lived mixed together, he explained, now there is less tolerance. More religiously observant residents are disturbed by the more open clothing and lifestyles of their neighbors. They have, over time, become geographically segregated, so that those living behind the mosque tend to be more observant than those living in front of the mosque.

*** Is Islamist Politics Dead? Some Questions

Many politicians and intellectuals argue that Islam has ceased to play a direct role in politics, other than inspiring direction. They claim that Islam in both the public and private spheres has become pluralist, multicultural, and modern. The meanings of Islamic symbols and practices seem to be diffusing as they are marketed and popularized. Yet society seems ever more rent by differences that people associate with differing positions with regard to Islamic lifestyle. Also, real forces (the military, the secularist/laicist establishment, beginning with the president and the courts) dispute the presence of what they consider political symbols, like the veil, in public and civic space. That is, they point to a continuation of Islam in politics. Is this simply a matter of definition—Where is the public sphere? Is the veil really a public symbol or just a personal fashion choice? Is Islamic ideology truly dead? —Or is the redefinition of public and private a sleight of hand that makes Muslim values and practices appear to be personal choices even when government ministers are seen to fast and pray together?

The Muslimhood model and Abant model of reconciliation are promising, but without a viable political framework, the problem is not solved. A young urban planner at Middle East Technical University in Ankara compared this to the conundrum of the famed Gordian Knot. Alexander the Great cut the Gordian Knot, which could not be undone, with his sword. “It’s a solution,” said the urban planner, “but a trivial one. The knot is not undone. In other words, it’s not really a solution.” This is true whether the army intervenes to

keep the government free of Islamic politicians, or whether Muslim politicians bring their ideas and practices into the secular government. To undo the Gordian Knot, he said, one needs democracy. For Özsoy, this does not pose a problem. “Once a fellow citizen asked me if Islam and democracy are compatible. I answered him as follows ... If Muslims want it, it is. [This is] because

there is no such abstract Islam outside of the way in which Muslims have shaped and brought it to the historical scene.” This interpretation reflects both the individualism of the Reformist position and the differentiation of religion from its traditional and cultural historical baggage, separating a Turkish from an Arab Islam. The November 2003 car bombings in Istanbul, apparently planned by Al-Qaeda with the assistance of a local, hitherto unimportant radical Islamist group, can be expected to reinforce this suspicion of Arab Islam and lead AKP to further distance itself from any radical Islamic elements that might still remain within the party.

*** Can the Muslimhood Model Travel?

The Abant model is seen by many as something that can travel, if only other Muslim countries could overcome their internal barriers (attributed to culture, bad governments, etc.). The Muslimhood model, on the other hand, even though it is based on a universalist conception of human character, is perceived to be more strongly expressed in Turkey because of the characteristics of Turkish Islam (Central Asian Sufism) and Ottoman history. Aydin, however, has a more optimistic view: “If we stay in power another five years ... there are some things we need to fix in Turkey ...

Turkish society is religious. If we can put into place the best model of a democratic law state in a religious Muslim society, then it’s impossible for Syria and Iraq not to be affected by this Much radicalism derives from

politics, from economic problems. If you have a very narrow definition of nationalism, ethnicity goes up in flames. If you interpret Islam as allowing only this, and all the rest is forbidden, you will have serious problems. In the

Islamic world, radicalism derives from fifty years of politicians who have not solved people's economic problems and now try to use religion to clear the way before them. Also, the appearance of radicalism in the Islamic world is linked to Israel's politics, which desperately needs to be solved."

Certain elements present themselves, however, that may be less transferable. Radical Islamism in Turkey as inspired by transnational trends died because of a general realization that a shari'ah-based state was not a practicable goal due to state and military resistance, a popular lack of support for Islam in politics, and the recognition that Arab Islam differs from Turkish Islam, which is more individualistic and moderate. There was an all-around moderating effect as representatives of different groups and positions communicated at Abant meetings and in the media. These trends were reflected intellectually by theologian Renewers and politically by AKP. AKP's model of Muslimhood limits Islam in politics to ethical and moral inspiration of individual behavior and individual choice. The party supports democracy because it guarantees freedom of individual belief and expression and, thus, religious expression and its own survival.

Repression of Islamist participation in public life has not led to movement away from a civil sphere to violent radicalism because (1) the repressing mechanisms of state and military enjoy widespread legitimacy and support; the military (in polls ranked the most trusted institution) and the state are both entwined with the heroic nationalist legacy of Ataturk; (2) repressed political figures and parties generally are able to reconfigure and struggle for a new place within a competitive political system. This leads to two questions: (1) whether, in the absence of repression, the other factors mentioned above would have been sufficient to moderate the Islamist impetus; (2) whether the Muslimhood model could survive a system without such repressive mechanisms (an AKP aim). It is conceivable that Muslim ideals might become absorbed and diffused in the secular "technology" of state, or that Muslims might be outflanked by less liberal elements of society.

AKP came to power in part because its message matched religiocultural provincial ethical and behavioral norms that, despite the universalist and individualist claims of the Muslimhood theorists, are not necessarily liberal or based on individualism. Rather, rights in this social paradigm are derived

from community membership and obedience to communal norms. While the provincial code protects guests and travelers, it is not particularly conducive to tolerance of behavioral aberration among fellow residents. Due to urbanization and the growth of both Islamic and non-Islamic commercial media, what had been a provincial code has become elaborated into nationally valorized identities, linked in a diffuse way to Islam, with differences among people encoded in symbols like the veil and terminology like black and white Turk. The divisiveness is expressed most obviously in a continuing battle over what constitutes public space (parliament? university classrooms? the street? state occasions?) and who controls what can and cannot appear there. This comes out in such disputes as the permissibility of veiling or, in neighborhoods like Fatih, secular dress in public places, whether women's proper place is in parliament or in the home, and whether or not alcohol sale and consumption should be prohibited in sidewalk restaurants (where nondrinking Muslim passers-by might be offended at the sight).

These dilemmas illustrate an interesting difference between social and political trends. While politics and intellectual discourse on Islam seem to be moving into the realm of democracy, tolerance, and individualism, society is becoming more polarized along the lines of perceived lifestyle differences. Speaker Arınç's protocol dilemma was the first sign of the legally entrenched nature of secularist practices and definition of the public sphere, heedless of the new government's attempts to explain Islami- cized practices as individual, rather than public, choices.

[17] Interview with author, Ankara, November 30, 2002. (Unless otherwise specified, further quotations will refer to the interview first referenced.)

[18] Interview with author, Ankara, November 25, 2002.

[19] Interview with author, Istanbul, November 23, 2002.

[20] Interview with author, Ankara, November 29, 2002.

[21] Interview with author, Ankara, November 29, 2002.

[22] The Turkish term laiklik has been translated as both “laicism” or “secularism.”

[23] Discussion with author, Istanbul, November 28, 2002.

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** Chapter 5: Dilemmas of Reform and Democracy in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Bahman Baktiari

In May 1997, political dark horse Mohammad Khatami surprised his clerical colleagues and international analysts with a landslide win in the presidential race over the establishment candidate, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri. Khatami's election signaled Iranians' expectations that their new president would ease the Islamic Republic's restrictions on cultural production and social interaction in the name of religion, execute the rule of law consistently, and strengthen civil society. Four years later, in June 2001, the electorate, skeptical about the pace of these reforms, voted in lower numbers. Nevertheless, Iranians reelected their president by an even wider margin, showing their patience with Khatami, who still confronts intense opposition from the Islamic Republic's conservatives worried about the erosion of clerical supremacy and the advent of secularism.

During both presidential campaigns, Khatami appealed to four constituencies: the middle class chafing under Islamic constraints on social life and frustrated by Iran's international economic isolation; intellectuals objecting to the ruling clergy's violations of human rights; women resisting the clerics' efforts to limit their rights and roles in Iranian society; and youths hungry for cultural and social freedoms and in need of higher education and jobs. These constituencies formed the core of the reformist movement, or Jonbesh-e Dovom-e Khordad, which captured not only the presidency twice but also majorities in the municipal council elections of February 1999 and in parliamentary races a year later. However, reformists in government have not succeeded in fully implementing their platform. They have so far been unable to guarantee freedom of expression (the centerpiece of Khatami's domestic agenda), to repair Iran's broken economy, or to take full advantage of the president's call for a "dialogue of civilization" to normalize relations with the United States.

This stalemate in Iranian politics inspires three questions: Given its victories at the ballot box, why has the reformist movement stalled? How long will Iranians—particularly youths—wait for reforms to have a tangible impact on

their lives? And do Khatami’s constituents have any alternatives to waiting for the success of reforms?

Arguably, the reformist movement has stumbled over three obstacles: First, the bifurcation of executive power renders gridlock more likely in the Islamic Republic’s policy making. Furthermore, President Khatami lacks the personal qualities and skills needed to push reform past conservative opposition; he is a humanist intellectual with a passion for ideas but has sided with the system’s preservation in moments of crisis. Thus, in the marathon run toward reform, Khatami’s constituents, especially Iranian young people, are out ahead of him. Yet these constituents too have a long way to go before crossing the ever-elusive finish line— formulating policies to delineate the role of religion in public life, to democratize the procedures and substance of Iranian politics, and to engage Iran in a constructive network of foreign relations.

*** Conceptualizing State-Society Relations in the Islamic Republic of Iran

State and society are important concepts in everyday life as well as in political analysis. But the concepts are elusive and hard to define. One of the most perplexing problems is distinguishing between the two. Where does the state “end” and society “begin,” and vice versa? State and society are different, yet they are not entirely separate.

Rather than trying to say that one entity is part of the state and another entity is part of society, a more fruitful approach is to think of arenas in which boundaries, rights, jurisdictions, and power distribution between state and societal agencies are debated, contested, and resolved (at least temporarily). These arenas can be within physical institutions, including those that, structurally speaking, clearly belong to the state—for example, government ministries and militaries. But the arenas can be other institutions, like parliament or universities, entities whose locations in the state structure are ambiguous. Arenas can be groups and organizations not part of a state structure yet in one degree or another are penetrated by state rules and regulations—for example, families, villages, and religious groups.

Arenas may also be problems and controversies that are not confined to a particular institution.

In the Iranian case, many questions can be raised about relations between state and society in Iran. A single chapter cannot explore them all. In this chapter I shall concentrate on relations between government authorities and people living within the jurisdiction of that government. In particular, two kinds of questions will be addressed. The first concerns how the political system works: How, if at all, does the state allow or encourage citizens to be involved in the process of setting and implementing rules and policies of the country? How, if at all, do people in society affect or try to affect what state authorities do? And to what extent do people abide by what authorities say? The second are normative questions. What should be the relations between state authorities and people in society? What involvement should the state have in people's economic, social, cultural, and political affairs? And what involvement should groups and individuals in society have in state affairs?

In Iran, a current contentious state-society issue is the role of religion and the ulema. The question is whether the ulema, as represented now by an unelected Supreme leader, should have the final word on all matters of state? Or should the final word rest with elected officials—that is, the president and the parliament? This question has gained greater significance as Iranian society has undergone significant demographic changes. More than 60 percent of the population are under twenty-five years old; they have no memory of the prerevolutionary era, or the first decade of the revolution. They aspire for greater personal and social freedom, and demand jobs and a better standard of living.

Sovereignty in the Islamic Republic—Divine or Democratic?

The Islamic Republic's Constitution, as amended in 1989, stipulates a bifurcation of executive power, which is invested in the presidency and the institution of velayat-e faqih. The president is popularly elected for a term of four years; Iranians sixteen years and older are eligible to vote. The president's responsibilities include the appointment of a cabinet to do

the nation’s business, the proposal and negotiation of a legislative agenda with the parliament, and the conduct of Iran’s foreign policy.

The institution of velayat-e faqih, or guardianship of the jurisconsult, is Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini’s legacy to Shi‘i political theory and praxis. The jurisconsult, or Supreme Leader, is a highly esteemed cleric chosen by his peers on the eighty-six-member Assembly of Experts in recognition of his knowledge of fiqh, or Islamic jurisprudence, and his other religiopolitical credentials. The Supreme Leader’s role is to guide Iranians (and, in theory, other Muslims) toward the just government of God. His powers are wide ranging. He is the commander-in-chief of Iran’s armed forces, may veto the president’s decisions, and is charged with protecting the government’s Islamic character.

After Khomeini’s death in 1989 and especially since Khatami’s election in 1997, this dual executive has inspired lively debate over the meaning and workings of an Islamic republic. Iran’s government may be Islamic, it may be a republic, but can it remain both at the start of the twenty-first

century? The inheritors of Khomeini’s ideological legacy have not answered this question definitively, with advocates of opposing perspectives vigorously justifying themselves and, in so doing, pushing open the space for public discourse.

In many ways, the state of political competition in Iran in recent years can be characterized in terms of the complex relationship of the so-called religious intellectuals (Roshanfekraneh Dini) and the ruling clerical establishment (Rouhaniyouneh Hokumati). The religious intellectuals’ challenge against the establishment centers on engaging the establishment clerics in debates over doctrinal, political, and sociocultural issues. The most critical component of this debate has had practical consequences on postrevolutionary Iranian polity, because by focusing on the relationship between religion and the state and the role of the clergy, these religious intellectuals seek to strengthen the cause of reform by opening the doors for other intellectuals and defenders of civil society.

*** Debating the Relationship between Religion and Political Authority

The twentieth century has brought change to the world at a rapid and unprecedented rate. These changes have swept the Muslim world, leading to various responses. The struggle for reform and democracy has been a major component of Islamic resurgence in the twentieth century. As one scholar has stated, “[S]ocial change in our age has drawn great masses of Muslims onto a teeming public stage As in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century West, one response to these changes has been a call for equality, freedom, and democracy” (Hefner 2000, 8). Like citizens elsewhere, modern Muslims have had to define their relationship to the Islamic past, looking to their religion to provide some answers to the relative values of modernity and authenticity (asala). In this connection, one Western writer has drawn attention to the desire of many Muslim religious intellectuals not to “suffer” modernity but actively accept and foster modernization, and to do so in a religious context that is in harmony with the indigenous culture (Stowasser 1994, 5).

In the last half century, a variety of circumstances have forced this quest for authenticity to the center in many areas in the Islamic world, but nowhere more evidently than in Iran. At the core of the discourses among Iranian intellectuals is the perception of an anxiety-laden dichotomy between a Muslim’s individual and social life, influenced on many levels by science, technology, and Western political thought, and what is expressed as the civilization of an almost bygone era, many of whose elements continue to influence Muslim thought.

President Mohammad Khatami provides a good example of this search for cultural autonomy. Khatami considers himself a scholar and thinker. He is a man steeped in the revolution and the clerical establishment. He is related by marriage to the late Ayatollah Khomeini, served as a minister of culture in the l980s, and was a close associate of Khomeini’s son Ahmad until his death in 1995. He is a man of integrity, palpably honest, intelligent, and shrewd, as well as being well read and modest. In his intellectual development (within a Shi‘i theological framework) Khatami has signified a new brand of clerical

thinking, one that is not averse to acknowledging the importance of civil society, as well as the need for a better understanding of Western civilization. He speaks English, Arabic, and German, and can converse on the works of Alexis de Tocqueville and Immanuel Kant. He has published several books, one of them on Western political thought.

There are three pillars of Khatami's thought: (1) a cosmopolitan Islam, the product of his conviction that Islam must be creatively and at times substantively reinterpreted or reformulated in order to be responsive to the demands of modern life; (2) the belief that Iranian Islam must reflect and respond to a diverse population that includes several ethnic groups; and (3) the conviction that in the postrevolutionary Iranian polity, Islam should not be the state religion but rather an inclusive religious, democratic, pluralistic force. As an ideology of government alone, Islam cannot solve the problems of a world that, for better or for worse, is dominated by the West. In one lecture, Khatami declared bluntly, "We Muslims once had a dominant civilization and were shaping human history in a way that we are no longer capable of today. We want to regain our place in history and, if possible, build a future that is different from our present and even our past, without rejecting those who are different from us, and without ignoring scientific thought and the practical achievement of humanity" (Khatami 1997, 91).

In a recent interview, Khatami stated that Iran is suffering an "identity crisis" brought on by its "failure to understand the freedoms at the heart of Western civilization The two contradictory attitudes of love and

hatred toward the West have blocked us from accurately understanding the West Our identity crisis can be said to be the most serious

predicament in the country in the past 200 years." As a religious thinker, Khatami is fiercely devoted to his faith and Iran, but at the same time, he attempts to realistically appraise both of their places in the modern world. He asks the question posed by so many other Islamic thinkers: How can a society whose identity is religious guarantee freedom, democracy, and social justice?

If the Iranian Revolution of 1979 solely sought a return to an earlier Islamic civilization, a golden age, then it failed because that civilization, in

Khatami's eyes, is an anachronism. It no longer exists in practical terms and, if it did, it could no longer meet the needs of the modern era. In making this argument, Khatami makes a subtle but compelling distinction between Islamic traditionalists, who seek a return to what Islam once had, and Islamic reformists in Iran and elsewhere, who seek to progressively reshape the faith into a viable, modern approach to government and society. The latter, he believes, is the only option, and he envisions it as the true legacy of the revolution:

Religiosity had always existed, but a religious revolution was something else, and this took place in our time. The essence of the religion which the Imam [Khomeini] spoke about was no different to the essence of the religion which had prevailed since the early days of Islam ... However, there was a

difference, and this was the factor which led to the revolution. The difference was that this time [with the Islamic revolution], this religious essence—which had been around since the advent of Islam—began to concentrate once again on the realities of society and represent the historical wishes and demands of the nation. It was in this way that this great and magnificent event took place. In their religion and in the face of their Imam, the nation saw the fulfillment of their historical wishes, which could be summed up as independence, freedom and progress. (Khatami 2001a)

In this context, Khatami's vision of Islam is not so different from that of other reformist Muslim thinkers. Abdurrahman Wahid, leader of Indonesia's Nahdatul Ulama (Renaissance of Religious Scholars), has espoused a reformist intellectual synthesis and social agenda that distinguish between unchanging religious doctrines or laws and legitimate accommodation to social change. Like Khatami, Wahid is among a generation of Muslim reformists who advocate a progressive Islam, one that is democratic, pluralistic, and tolerant. In contrast to those who have advocated the

Islamization of Indonesian society, Wahid emphasizes the Indonesianization, indigenization, or contextualization of Islam (Hefner 2000, 31–36; Barton 1996, 213–14; Brumberg 2001).

Khatami and other reformist thinkers have also emphasized indige- nization. In one passage, Khatami argues that “dismantling aspects of tradition must be based on indigenous models, not imported and artificial. Indeed, Westerners at the dawn of modernity were awakened by delving deeply into their tradition. Thinkers revisited the artistic tradition of the Greeks and the social traditions of Rome. Religious believers returned to what they considered to be the most authentic aspects of Christianity, and hence the Reformation. And these returns to tradition and reappraisals ushered in the new epoch” (Khatami 1998, 33).

Hence, one does not need to opt for a solution that calls for a break with the past, accepting a secular world that rejects any constructive role for religion. The challenge is to create a balanced vision that incorporates one’s past without ignoring the complexities of modern existence: “Democracy is a vital need of today’s mankind, including Iran. In my opinion, democracy has only one alternative. That is, seeking self-interests. And no one would choose seeking self-interests over democracy. If I were to summarize the roots and essence of the people’s reformist movement for the past 100 years, I would say that the movement is aimed at the establishment of democracy” (Khatami 2001c).

Khatami is a skillful politician. He recognizes that he is venturing into uncharted territory, issuing calls for religious reform and democracy that could only come from a cleric who speaks the language of the educated clergy. Often he uses selective quotes from Khomeini to bolster his position. In one passage, Khomeini asserts that in Islamic government “there should always be room for revision. Our revolutionary system demands that various, even opposing viewpoints be allowed to surface ... It is

here that traditional religious leadership prevalent in our seminaries will not suffice” (Khatami 1998, 39). In one speech, Khatami asserted that “if we limit ourselves to the appearances of and have a narrow view of religion, then the

concept of ‘Islamic Republic’ itself will mean separation from Islam. Where did you ever have anything called a republic in Islam? Where in Islam—the beginnings of Islam—do you find anything called a parliament?” (Khatami 1999)

At a forum convened in June 2001 by the pro-reform Islamic Iran Participation Party (IIPP) entitled “Imam Khomeini’s Reforms and the Concept of Republicanism,” parliamentary deputy Elahe Koulahi commenced the deliberations: “The situation in the past was such that experienced pro-reform individuals did not dare to talk about reforms ... The late

Imam Khomeini paid due attention to the gap between the people and the government, believing that the latter’s legitimacy depends on its relation with the people and on the good trust they have in each other” (Baktiari and Vaziri 2002, 18).

Significantly, Ayatollah Khamene’i disagrees with Khatami’s understanding of the Islamic Republic’s essence and objectives. Commemorating the twelfth anniversary of the passing of the “father of the Islamic Revolution and Founder of the Islamic Republic, the late Imam Khomeini,” the Supreme Leader claimed that his mentor was

the symbol of Islam and the people, because by relying on Islamic sovereignty and power, he founded an Islamic society on the basis of spirituality and justice Like any person who is acquainted with Islam, the late

Imam believed, as we continue to today, that it is Islam and Islamic principles that ensure the happiness, welfare, freedom and dignity of a nation. It is Islam that ensures that justice is upheld in society. Reliance upon the people, in the true sense of the world, is made possible only in the context of upholding Islam and Islamic principles. (Khatami 2001b)

As different as these two interpretations are, they offer a greater insight in that they speak to the prestige Ayatollah Khomeini still commands in

postrevolutionary Iran. Yet, to create the flexibility in theology pursued by reformers like Khatami means to break the clergy's monopoly on religious interpretation—a right held by the ulema in Shi'i Iran to a far greater extent than by their Sunni counterparts elsewhere in the Muslim world. Despite their theological disputes, the Shi'i clergy have historically considered themselves the spiritual guardians of the community; their spiritual prestige was the foundation on which Khomeini built the Islamic state. Khatami and other reformist thinkers see a danger in that same prestige, the prospect of a single, infallible interpretation, made even more formal when it becomes an ideology of government. Nevertheless, both Shi'i and Sunni ulema have faced challenges by new Muslim intellectuals whose work and activities appeal to a broader public audience. These Muslim intellectuals engage in a discourse that presents their faith in quasi-ideological terms, as a source of practical knowledge (An- toun 1989).

The Iranian thinker Abdol Karim Soroush is an example of this sort of new Muslim intellectual. He is the most senior intellectual identified with the reform movement, having raised many of the questions mentioned by Khatami years before the elections of 1997. Soroush has been one of the most vocal critics of what he calls "the insular dogmatism of the clergy." His argument is essentially simple, but devastating. It starts by distinguishing Islam as a religion from those who interpret it, and claims that much of what has been handed down through the generations and articulated as the faith is in fact little more than human interpretation, and therefore subject to human fallibilities (Soroush 1994, 414). In a lecture entitled "What the University Expects from the Hawzeh" (religious seminaries), Soroush criticized the ulema for reproducing ideological positions to justify their political power. He called on the seminaries to "abandon the habit of stealth and concealment in matters of religious knowledge; desist from treating questions as scandalous; and refrain from expedient speech and action that subserves political power" (Soroush 2000, 174). In another work, Soroush makes the point that the association of religious scholarship with political and economic power is bound to affect that scholarship and could not be considered in the best interests of theological and philosophical investigation. He goes on to argue that "religion is greater than the ulema, that Islam as a faith is greater than jurisprudence (figh)." He adds that the ulema could not in any case be considered universally worthy of respect, because "the truth is that among the ulema (or

those who call themselves ulema) those who are impious, poorly educated ... are not few” (Soroush 1997, 27). In a more direct attack on the clerics who serve in positions of power, Soroush states that “the matter of religion is too great an issue to be exclusively entrusted to the clergy. A clergy that supports itself through religion will gradually be converted to a body whose work will be aimed at preserving itself. When a person’s livelihood depends on confirming and supporting the organization of clergy, how can he think freely?”(Soroush 1995, 26).

Soroush’s project is a familiar one to those acquainted with Jamal Al-Din al-Afghani, or more recently, Ali Shari‘ati. Islam to both of these thinkers was foremost a belief in the transcendence of God and in reason. Ijtihad (independent judgment, interpretation) was a necessity, and the duty of man was to apply the principles of the Qur’an to the problems of the time. If society does not do this it will stagnate or merely imitate (authorities), and imitation corrupts society. The problem then, as Khatami and Soroush have emphasized, is a static society, one that can no longer meet the psychological, material, and social needs of the people but, more dangerous, obstinately refuses to acknowledge its failings. Iran, Khatami has suggested, falls into that category, and the dangers posed by it could undo the vision of a religious society. In another address, Khatami urges people not to follow the dictates of the clergy blindly, pointing out that even Khomeini himself was not infallible. Again and again, he remarks on the danger posed by “unenlightened religious dogma,” and, in a way, puts forth his own eclectic education, one both religious and secular, as a model. “A moral person who is a moving encyclopedia but lives outside his time,” he said, “for whom the most pressing problems are for example the second and third Islamic centuries, cannot solve even the smallest of today’s problems, for today’s problems do not interest him.” Interestingly, Khatami praises Ali Shari‘ati, an influential Iranian sociologist who tried to synthesize socialism with traditional Shi‘ism and adapt the theories of Marx, Fanon, and others to a prerevolutionary Iranian environment. Shari‘ati, who died in 1977 at the age of forty-three, was criticized by some clergy who suggested he had a poor grounding in Islamic thought and accused him of propagating anticlerical views (Mortimer 1982, 335–46). In hindsight, aspects of Shari’ati’s thought have an obvious overlap with Khatami (a cleric) and Soroush.

In making their arguments for a more pluralistic interpretation of Islam, Soroush and Khatami are joined by other thinkers from important theological centers—clerics like Mohsen Kadivar and Ayatollah Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari. Both of these clerics are very popular among students and the educated class in Iran. These reformist thinkers do not want to do away with religion in civic and political life. They are not against the idea of an Islamic Republic. But they want to blend it with democracy, individual freedom, civil society, and tolerance. By the late 1990s they had drawn many of the revolution's staunchest defenders to their ranks. As stated eloquently by Shabestari:

The conclusion I would like to make is that if we are supposed not to take the approach suggesting that the values of democracy are something that exists in religious texts, there will remain another option and that is the true meaning of religious democracy. In this case, we will look at the issue of religious democracy from an angle which is different from the others. From this angle, Muslims living in a religious society will ask themselves, "Are our lives under a democratic system of government more compatible with our religion than our lives under a totalitarian or despotic regime?" Here we are not going to change the meaning and content of democracy or accept it from a position of noncompliance with religion. In other words, we, as committed Muslims should ask this question, "If we accept these values on a contractual basis, establish a form of democratic system of government and live with it, will this be more compatible with our Islamic faith than other methods?" (Shabastari 2002)

For Mohsen Kadivar, a popular professor and a middle-ranking cleric who was sentenced to eighteen months of prison in April 1999, "the political and cultural struggle between proponents of religious democracy and those of religious autocracy has become the most important battle in Iran" (Kian-Thiebaut 1997, 14). According to Kadivar, the dominance of the authoritarian tendency in the early stages of the revolution can be attributed to a number of factors. However, the most important was a tendency toward authoritarianism among the ulema who found themselves in powerful positions in the government, because not long prior to the revolution, these same ulema were staunch pillars of the monarchy (Kadivar 1999, 200).

As if this statement was not enough to draw the wrath of his opponents, Kadivar follows it up by saying that in the eyes of many people who had fought in the revolution for the right to make their own decisions and control their own destinies, there was little difference in their experience of the monarchical regime and that of the Islamic Republic. It was, he noted, “as if it were an Islamic monarchy.” Then, to clerics who justify their involvement in the government by saying it is their “Islamic duty to serve the people,” Kadivar poses the question, “[I]f Islam as an ideology is the only solution to a nation’s problems, political, economic, social, and of course, moral, who is to blame when the same ideology brings misery?” (Kadivar 1999, 210).

The establishment ulema have countered these arguments by accusing religious intellectuals of “sloganeering.” They maintain that these intellectuals have little understanding of their aims and ambitions, or the

consequences of their words. Ayatollah Taqi Mesbah-Yazdi, a member of the Assembly of Experts and a lecturer in the holy city of Qom, has responded that “the prophets of God did not believe in pluralism. They believed that only one idea was right.” He goes on to say that “the prophets believed that the right idea must be identified and promoted … And op

posing ideas must be rejected through logic. However, if the opponents of the right idea were to decide to impose their own ideas to rule, then tolerance would become meaningless and they must be confronted” (Mesbah-Yazdi 2002).

Mesbah-Yazdi has been the most vocal defender of the clerics’ involvement in politics, and has not shied away even from encouraging acts of violence against religious intellectuals. In one passage he directs his comments to Khatami and the latter’s assertion that Ayatollah Khomeini supported popular sovereignty, stating that “the Imam [Khomeini] used to say that he was concerned about Islam’s future. And we see that today the old slogan of ‘independence, freedom and Islamic Republic’ is replaced with

‘independence, freedom and progress.’ That is, the name of Islam is gradually removed from our slogans The slogan of ‘independence,

freedom and progress’ is a distortion of history and it is a lie. It is regrettable that the passage of time has made some people so presumptuous that they dare forget the fundamental principles of the state” (Mesbah- Yazdi 2002).

Other conservative personalities have accused the religious intellectuals of being “intoxicated with Western liberal ideas,” and simply interested in “imitating Western concepts.” Mahmaud Fathali, a midranking cleric who teaches in Qom, uses the term “pseudo-intellectuals” when referring to people like Soroush:

In my opinion, these gentlemen do not have correct and transparent bases and swallow what they get from the West without digesting it. This is due to the hunger they have for the West. Therefore they have no reform thought to put forward in the Islamic sense of the word. The tolerant ideology is very pleasant to some youths who are in the grips of emotions and physical desires and are very attractive to the liberals and the supporters of liberal thought. They think they can take advantage of the situation, but for the masses of the people, who are at one with Islam, it is very hard to accept this kind of talk and it seems that the ideology of tolerance—the way they want it —will never be established in Iran. (Fathali 2000)

If elections results are any indicator, the majority of eligible Iranian voters agree with the president’s emphasis on the republican quality of the Islamic Republic, yet during every election since 1997, the conservatives have done their best to skew the process and outcomes. The Council of Guardians disqualified prominent reformists, especially women, from the parliamentary and presidential races, and the conservatives demanded recounts of votes in localities where they lost by narrow margins. These measures seemed counterproductive, because the parliamentary contest of February 2000 gave the reformists some two-thirds of the seats.

However, if reformists have the heart and mind of most Iranians, conservatives control all the important instruments and levers of power. When the newly elected reformist deputies sought to amend restrictions on the press passed by the previous parliament, the conservatives flexed their muscle. Reformist legislators wanted to revoke a law preventing once banned publications from reopening under new names and barring the reemployment of journalists from such publications. As the reformist majority passed a bill repealing these stipulations, the conservative minority appealed to the Supreme Leader, who took the unprecedented step of intervening in the legislative process. Ayatollah Khamene'i vetoed the more liberal press law on the grounds that its text contradicted the precepts of Islam. The parliamentary majority and the popular will were trumped by the appeal to divine sovereignty. According to one scholar, these actions demonstrate that contrary to the revisionist approach of the reformists, the founding fathers of the Islamic Republic had rejected democracy. "Radical Islamists (some of whom have turned reformists today) in the early 1980s argued that there were two kinds of state, i.e., ideological and non-ideological, and placed the Islamic Republic in the former category, together with the Soviet Union. And in their political writings, the supporters of the Iranian regime argued that the main difference between democracies and the Islamic Republic is that the former laws are made by the people, whereas in the latter they were provided by God" (Chehabi 2001, 51).

During the Persian calendar year 1379 (March 2000-MarrC 2001), as Khatami's first term was ending, Iranians witnessed a campaign of repression unprecedented since Khomeini's death eleven years earlier. Conservative leader Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi went as far as to preach that recourse to violence is "obligatory" if the Islamic Republic cannot otherwise defend itself, "even if thousands of people must perish." Devout Muslims must "kill on the spot" anyone who "insults Islam or the Prophet" (Mesbah-Yazdi 2002). Ayatollah Khamene'i also declared unequivocally that violence was a legitimate tactic to oppose the flouting of Islamic precepts.

The press stood at the front lines of the conservative assault against the reformists. During ten days in April 2000, the judiciary, headed by Ayatollah Hashemi Shahrudi, closed sixteen reformist newspapers without any hearings. Conservatives forced all the pro-press officials out of the Ministry of Islamic Guidance and Culture, with the result that requests for publications

were increasingly refused. Between April 2000 and March 2001, roughly two thousand requests to publish were filed with the Press Supervision Council; only sixty-two publications received licenses. In March 2000, Iran's newspapers had a total daily circulation of approximately 3.12 million, which dropped to 1.75 million a year later— a 45 percent decline.

While readers watched pro-reform newspapers disappear, other members of Iran's fledgling civil society also faced the conservatives' wrath. Academics, journalists, lawyers, liberal clerics, publishers, student leaders, and even some midlevel officials were arrested. Charged with seditious activities, some were sentenced to lengthy jail time following public or closed-door trials, while others, not yet tried, are still held in secret confinement, their whereabouts unknown to their attorneys or families.

Among those arrested was eminent theologian Hassan Yussefi-Eshkevari, for the crime of apostasy; he defended the principle of separation between mosque and state, and contended that Islam does not require women to veil. Although he was condemned to death in a closed-door trial, the Court of Appeals overturned Yussefi-Eshkevari's sentence. Mashallah Shamsolvaezin, the bold editor-in-chief of several banned dailies, is now serving a thirty-month prison term for publishing an article urging the death penalty's abolition in the name of Islam. In April 2001, the judiciary accused and jailed some forty nationalists for conspiring to overthrow the Islamic Republic, including Ezzatollah Sahabi— in his eighties and in frail health, a former member of Khomeini's Revolutionary Council, a member of the Freedom Movement (Nezat-e Azaadi), and editor of the weekly Iran-e Farda.

When the parliamentary majority argued that Ayatollah Shahrudi had violated the Islamic Republic's laws and, even worse, the constitution, he rejoined that only clerics are entitled to interpret these texts. What he meant was that only his colleagues, mostly clerics from the Haqqani theological school in Qom, were qualified to do so. Once a prestigious institution led by relatively enlightened ayatollahs, the school has more recently become a hotbed of reactionaries, scorned as "the Iranian Taliban" by other clerics.

Reformists questioned Shahrudi’s loyalty to Iran, because he was born in Iraq and was a founding member of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) opposing the Ba‘athist government in Baghdad. The daily Hambastegi proclaimed, “The founder of the Islamic Republic and the Commander of the Revolution (i.e., Khomeini) was opposed to the idea of employing ‘returnees’ (those of Iranian origin expelled from Iraq) in positions and areas of government responsibility.” Hambastegi was then shut down.

During this wave of repression, President Khatami was reduced to voicing his disapproval, since the reformers were powerless to protect those whom they had urged to speak freely. Khatami could only weakly protest: “Three and a half years, and still one has not enough authority for the accomplishment of such a grave responsibility!” Without sufficient authority to redress violations of the constitution, some of Khatami’s aides suggested that he may not run for reelection. “As long as the president does not have the power to carry out what he is supposed to do, he will have real reservations about contesting the elections” (Iran Daily, December 21, 2001).

*** Youths Politicized—Resentment, Rebellion, and Revelry

As the presidential race of 2001 neared, reformists worried about the impact of this repression on voters. With more than two-thirds of Iranians under thirty, young people form the largest voting bloc. Youths under thirty comprise 52 percent and those fifteen to twenty comprise 22 percent of eligible voters, respectively. Most young people have little if any memory of the Islamic revolution, did not participate in the referendum establishing the Islamic Republic, and did not vote to ratify its constitution in 1979. However they have long had to deal with the consequences of these events, which their parents’ generation celebrated at least initially.

Iranians sixteen years and older have numerous reasons for being skeptical of Khatami in particular and resenting the Islamic Republic more generally. Not forgotten is the campus rioting of July 1999, sparked when police and vigilantes attacked a Tehran University dormitory as students protested the closure of a pro-reform campus newspaper. One student was killed and at

least twenty were injured, igniting the most significant unrest in Tehran and other cities since the revolution in 1978–79.

Students around the country chanted pro-Khatami slogans, but the president cautioned that violence would not expedite reform, which must come slowly and deliberately. Although at first caught off guard by the students' demands, the ruling clerics quickly closed ranks. Khamene'i and Khatami authorized the suppression and arrest of student rebels while assuring the nation that the entire episode, including police misconduct and vigilantism, would be investigated. Many young people initially felt betrayed as Khatami sided with the preservation of clerical supremacy. Meanwhile, students have not shied away from politics, joining Islamist and reformist organizations. The largest student group, the pro-reform Office to Foster Unity, is some 500,000 strong.

Even without joining such organizations, however, the under-thirty generation is marked by its political consciousness. Practically every aspect of a young Iranian's daily existence is political and politicized. Youths lead a double life in Iran. Publicly, they must obey the ruling clergy's prohibitions against socializing with the opposite sex, listening to pop music, consuming alcoholic beverages, men wearing shorts, women using cosmetics, and so forth. In the privacy of their own homes, they pursue intimate relationships with the opposite sex, enjoy parties where alcoholic drinks flow and Iranian and Western pop music plays, experiment with dress and cosmetics as a form of self-expression, and the like. However, youths consistently fear being caught even behind closed doors.

Young Iranians aspiring to a university education must endure a grueling entrance examination, knowing that their prospects for matriculation are slim. Out of 1.5 million high school seniors who took this exam in 2001, the university system accepted a mere 150,000. University graduates then struggle to find employment. For every twenty-three graduates, there is one job; 85 percent of Iranians under twenty-five are unemployed. Without earning steady income, young people literally cannot afford to marry, despite the cultural value invested in matrimony.

Arguably, these bleak prospects for economic stability, self-actualization, and companionship have intensified other social maladies among youths. Psychiatrists have seen cases of depression, schizophrenia, and substance abuse multiply. Mohammad-Ali Zam, director of the Tehran Municipality Cultural and Art Organization, disclosed that roughly 5,000 kilograms of narcotics are used in Tehran daily, and that drug addiction has now even afflicted the schoolchildren. Zam also indicated that prostitution is on the rise, with the average age of a prostitute dropping from twenty-seven to twenty.

In the absence of better alternatives and still hopeful that Khatami could improve their lives, two years after the student rebellion young Iranians are still the most vocal about how Iran is governed—not just systemically, but on a daily basis. Watching Iran's promise thwarted by widespread corruption, high unemployment, global isolation, and repression, youths have demanded accountability and, ultimately, democracy from the reformists. During campaign rallies a week before the 2001 presidential race, students carried placards with such slogans as: "Khatami the hero, the hope of the young," "Freedom of thought, always, always," "We will make the crisis-makers despair by voting for Khatami again," "Human beings must be allowed to ask questions," and "We have come to renew our allegiance to reform" (Khatami 2001c).

Khatami's reelection, while hailed by young Iranians, provoked some conservatives' ire. Upon the order of judiciary chief Ayatollah Shahrudi, security forces launched a wave of public floggings targeting youths. During August-September 2001, more than four hundred people, most under twenty-five, were flogged publicly, accused of "consuming alcohol, having illicit sex, or harassing women." Outraged, Khatami warned that in a "society where discrimination, poverty and graft abound, one cannot expect youngsters not to break the law With tough punishments, you cannot remove social corruption." Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi also denounced the floggings, concerned about harm to the Islamic Republic's international image.

However, conservative clerics applauded this type of punishment. Chief Justice Ayatollah Mohammad Mohammadi-Gilani even claimed that the

Supreme Leader had approved the floggings, insisting that the offenders "should be beaten to the point where the whip breaks the skin and scars the flesh underneath." Conservatives cared little about the Islamic Republic's image abroad; nor would they cave in to domestic critics of the beatings. They believe that flogging is a deterrent against un- Islamic behavior and rising crime rates. Defending this form of punishment, Ayatollah Shahrudi stated, "All should be sensitive toward the issue of the promotion of corrupt means and fight against the enemies' efforts to deprave our children" (Baktiari and Vaziri 2002, 18).

The wave of floggings heightened tensions on the streets of Iran's major cities, where youths have pushed the limits of those cultural and social freedoms that have increased during the Khatami years, despite the conservative backlash. During October-November 2001, boisterous soccer fans, mostly young men, poured into the streets, particularly in Tehran, to celebrate victories and lament losses by Iran's national football team as it struggled to qualify for the World Cup. When young women joined the men in reacting to their team's fluctuating fortunes and some revelers became rioters, the ruling clerics called on security forces to patrol the streets. The lack of occasions for young people to be simply who they should be— carefree and joyful when they are not at school or at work— creates frustration. One twenty year old reveler's comments about the ruling clerics' restrictions captured the sentiments of Iran's youths: "If they had taught us from the beginning how we can have fun, maybe it would turn out to be more constructive than breaking windows. When we only have one time every four years where we can go out and express our happiness, riots happen" (Nelson 2001).

After two of the games, fans rioted, breaking windows and shouting antigovernment slogans, mostly directed at the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamene'i. The security forces responded by arresting some twelve hundred youths in Tehran alone, most of them under eighteen. The mounting frustration of youths is eroding not merely the conservatives' credibility, but also the legitimacy of the theocracy as a whole. The soccerspectatorship-turned-protest provoked the daily Nowruz to sound an editorial on October 8, 2001, warning: "If we are not intent in deceiving ourselves, if we do not wish to reduce the protests of the young generation to the plots of the enemies inspired and guided from the other side of our borders, we must

admit that the gulf between the desire for social freedoms and the restrictions and limitations imposed by the government has been turned into the most active form of social conflict. The generation between 15 and 25, which was born and brought up after the Islamic Revolution, is dissatisfied with the limitations and prohibitions that have been imposed on it, not on the basis of the Constitution, but rather on the basis of the wishes and demands of a small minority, and is resisting these pressures and compulsions."

Prominent pro-reform personalities have urged Khatami to change his strategy toward the conservatives, demanding that the president be more assertive or resign. Perhaps the most significant protest to Khatami's passivity was Ayatollah Jalaleddin Taheri's resignation from his post as Isfahan's Friday prayer leader in July 2002. The Ayatollah lamented watching "the flowers of virtue being crushed, and values and spirituality on the decline" among Iranians. In a scathing resignation letter, Taheri condemned the ruling clerics' corruption and greed: "[W]hen I hear that some of the privileged progeny [aqazadeh] ... some of whom don cloaks and turbans, are competing among themselves to amass the most wealth and to achieve their own ends, I recall that there are many dervish's cloaks that are best thrown into a fire" (Taheri 2002).

Reformist officials had hoped that Taheri's resignation would spark sustained demonstrations by their sympathizers. Yet after two days of rioting in Isfahan, the judiciary forbade the press from reporting any news about Taheri's letter or the rioting. When Nowruz printed the cleric's letter in full, the daily was shut down. Khatami's quiet during this controversy prompted the newspaper Etemad (July 21, 2002) to ask, "[A]mid all this, we are wondering: Where is Khatami? We are all amazed at Khatami's absence ... from the [political] scene. Clearly, a silent Khatami is a Khatami who serves the conservatives' interests."

Emboldened by Taheri's resignation, Iran's main pro-reform party threatened to quit the Islamic Republic unless the conservatives stopped undermining the elected administration. Mohammad-Reza Khatami, the president's younger brother and the Islamic Iran Participation Party (IIPP) chief warned: "We want to work towards agreement ... But if

[the conservatives] do not heed the people’s demands ... then we can only withdraw the reformist presence—that it is to say the legitimate elected representation—from the regime” (Etemad, July 21, 2002).

As clerical factionalism intensified, President Khatami proposed two controversial pieces of legislation in September 2002. Directly challenging the conservatives’ power, one bill would enhance the president’s ability to take on officials who violate the Islamic Republic’s Constitution, and the other would curb the Council of Guardians’ role in vetting candidates for elections. With a reformist majority in parliament, these bills will probably become law by the end of 2002 or in 2003, increasing Khatami’s prerogatives, at least on paper.

Soon after the submissions of the bills, conservative elements attacked Khatami for “attempting to change the constitution.” Even prominent reformists doubt the initiative will bring about any significant change in the balance of power. Tehran MP Ali Reza Nouri said he expected the Council of Guardians to reject both Khatami bills. Others echoed his view. “Khamene’i may pay some lip service, but I have not heard any public statement in favour of the president,” stated another reformist MP. “Nothing is going to change” (Mesbah-Yazdi 2002).

Even if the bills are enacted, conservative officials are unlikely to pay more than lip service to these laws. More than the reformists, conservatives enjoy control over the coercive arms of the state—the judiciary and various security forces—and are willing to resort to force when they perceive their interests are at stake. Khatami is a lame duck whose presidency will end with the 2005 election. His legislative proposals will benefit his successor, but Khatami may have to resign himself to the pattern of one step forward toward reform, and two steps back as conservatives have persisted in thwarting any moves toward pluralism.

*** Conclusion—From Revolution to Reform and Back Again?

Observers cannot deny that Iran's politics, and particularly the ruling clergy's interaction with society, are complex but also fascinating. The Islamic Republic is a case study of a revolutionary government attempting to reform itself in the face of increased popular appeals for participation in the country's cultural, political, and socioeconomic development.

As a reformist journalist, Hamid Reza Jalalipour remarked, "We are witnessing the decline of the fundamentalist movement in Iran. Two decades ago, we had our fundamentalist experience, and we saw the outcome. Fundamentalism is good for protest, good for revolution and good for war, but not so good for development. No country can organize its society on fundamentalism." Iranians, especially youths, may not wish to forsake religion altogether. Arguably, they hope to see religion returned to private realm, where one can worship and experience his/her relationship to God without compulsion—not necessarily a post-Islamic Iran, but rather an Iran where the citizens may decide freely what role faith plays in their lives.

However, the future of the reformist movement and its goals remain unclear and even debatable due to the interaction of structural, societal, and human factors. Structurally, the Islamic Republic is for now more Islamic than republican. The constitution enshrines both democratic and theocratic elements, but gives the latter dominance in the management of the state. The exercise of divine sovereignty has so far obstructed the democratic will. Revisions to the constitution are required to reverse this trend, and the conservatives would surely fight this suggestion.

Within society, President Khatami still enjoys support, despite weariness with the pace of reform. Even after their disappointment with the outcome of the 1999 student revolt, youths returned to Khatami, praising him in heroic terms. Yet young people, including the student movement, lack a coherent leadership and a common strategy. They belong to numerous pro-reform parties and organizations but have not come together to forge a conscious majority. Youths have engaged the conservatives in a cat-and-mouse game, because they are still not capable of orchestrating a sustained campaign for the cultural and social freedoms they desire. Young Iranians may have to endure more painful confrontations with conservative clerics on the judiciary in order to gain the experience and will needed for such a campaign.

Nevertheless, youths as well as Khatami's other constituents have gone beyond their president in their conception of reform. In a precarious position vis-â-vis his conservative rivals, the president has tried to ensure his own political survival as well as that of the Islamic Republic. He is thus more the spokesman rather than the leader of the reformist movement. A humanist intellectual with a passion for theology and philosophy, he entered the upper echelons of Iran's political arena with some reluctance and little personal ambition. In this sense, Ayatollah Khamene'i was perhaps correct when, exasperated by "illusions fostered abroad," he recently explained that Iran is not the former Soviet Union and that Khatami is not its Gorbachev.

Under President Khatami, Iran's international image has improved greatly. Iran's foreign policy has in recent years been focusing on dismantling the wall of isolation that has been built around it. However, repeated setbacks for the reformists have led to alienation and hopelessness today as pro-reform constituents outpace their president in seeking reform. Khatami may eventually have little choice but to rise to the occasion in a moment of crisis and reckoning with the conservatives. If the president does not seize the moment and conservatives continue to resist change, Iranian citizens themselves will grow increasingly impatient. Whatever the fortunes of particular government officials, Iranians have come to view reform—indeed, even democratization—as inevitable, and they no longer ask "Why reform" or "What kind of reform?" but "How?" and "When?" In a way, Iran is on a long journey of learning how to develop democratic institutions and pluralism based on its own culture, religious and historical traditions.

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** Chapter 6: THWARTED POLITICS: THE CASE OF EGYPT’S HIZB AL-WASAT

Augustus Richard Norton

What happens when Islamists go against the grain, and declare their commitment to pluralism and their acceptance, if not endorsement, of secular political principles? This is a study of exactly such a party, the Hizb al-Wasat, or Center Party, a remarkable attempt by a group of moderately oriented Islamists to play by democratic rules of the game in Egypt. The initiative was not the product of Western-designed projects of reform; to the contrary, it grew from debates within the Islamic tayyar, or current. This is a case in point for the reflexivity in ideology that one encounters routinely in Egypt and in the broader Muslim world.[24] The impediments that are routinely placed in the path of nonviolent oppositional voices are also illuminated. Finally, while the purpose of the study is not primarily prescriptive, the realms for potential reformation become obvious as the story unfolds.

Despite its failure to gain legal status, Hizb al-Wasat is noteworthy for its embrace of religious toleration and its rejection of a privileged interpretation of religion. Hizb al-Wasat was not only opposed staunchly by the Egyptian government, but the official suppression of the fledgling party was emphatically endorsed by Egypt's venerable Islamist organization, the Ikhwan al-Muslimun (the Muslim Brethren). The Ikhwan's own efforts to lawfully participate in politics have been frequently sabotaged over the past two decades by the same government apparatus. Many of the proponents of the fledgling party had roots in the Ikhwan, but, quoting a cofounder, the party was an attempt "to go beyond the slogan 'Islam is the solution'" (Murphy 2002). The motives of the Ikhwan in joining in the suppression of the party prove quite mundane—namely, to eliminate a potential political competitor. Thus, this is a spectacle of a new generation attempting to play by new rules but being held at bay by an old guard that will only retire in the grave.

In encounters with the middle-aged professionals in Egypt, it is common to hear complaints about the domination of the political system by septuagenarians and even octogenarians. The legal opposition parties, the

Wafd and Tagammu, are obvious examples. In both cases, the emerging younger elites are in their seventies. Hizb al-Wasat illustrates a quest of thirty- and forty-somethings for a hand in the game, and as one supporter said, “[I]t’s about time that this middle generation carries the flag and does its duty for the nation.” He is not alone. A leading regime intellectual recalled a metaphor used by Mustafa Fikhi to observe that he was part of the “mezzanine generation,” sitting just above the ground floor filled with surging young people intent on a place in the system, but closed out of the cohort that wields power on the floors above (author’s interview with ‘Usama al-Ghazali Harb, November 7, 1999). Mustafa Bakri, the editor of al-‘Usbu‘, an independent weekly, remarked somewhat wistfully in 1998, “I think it is natural that any political party demanding that the president of the republic shouldn’t be allowed more than two terms in office should also do the same in its own party” (Schemm and Apiku 1998).

The plan of this chapter is to offer an overview of Egyptian politics that addresses patterns of control that the state has used to regulate dissent in recent years, followed by a discussion of the attempt to register Hizb al-Wasat as a lawful party. Then the reader is introduced to a collection of Egyptian personalities who either played key roles in the Hizb al-Wasat episode or offer uncommonly valuable insights on the case. These personalities include a former chief justice of Egypt’s Constitutional Court, an Islamist engineer and cofounder of the party, a Christian intellectual and cofounder of the party, the Ikhwan’s Supreme Guide, and a key political adviser and one of the most powerful men in Egypt. These materials are based on interviews conducted by the author in Egypt from 1995 to 2003. Concluding comments highlight the implications of this case study and suggest a few broader lessons that may be relevant in a period when major attention has been focused upon the challenge of political reform in the Middle East.

*** Background

Since 1928, the quintessential Islamist movement in Egypt has been the Ikhwan al-Muslimun. After a period of phenomenal growth in the 1930s and 1940s, the Muslim Brethren seemed to be on the threshold of seizing power from the decrepit Egyptian monarchy. Indeed, embassy reports in the late

1940s anticipated the end of the monarchy and the emergence of the Ikhwan as the dominant political force in Egypt. In contrast to the army, the Ikhwan distinguished itself in the Arab-Israeli war of 1948–49. Indeed, years earlier the army had been described as “a decrepit thing” by none other than the Commander of the Army. As a group of unlikely young officers (led by the son of a village postmaster, Gamal Abdel Nasser) plotted to topple the monarchy, they worked hand-in-glove with the Ikhwan. Anwar Sadat, the future president, was the Free Officers’ liaison to the Ikhwan, with whom he enjoyed amiable relations (Sadat 1957). Sayyid Qutb, later to pen arguably the most accessible and most influential Islamist polemic, collaborated closely with the officers and emerged as a functionary in the new regime in 1952.

Within two years of the coup the erstwhile allies flew apart. It is striking that many educated Egyptians pointedly refer to the 1952 event as an inqilab (coup), not a thawrah (revolution). Even President Husni Mubarak’s closest political adviser emphasizes the former terminology (author’s interview with Osama al-Baz, November 11, 1999). Lieutenant Colonel Nasser remained in the shadows, deferring to General Muhammad Naguib, who was recruited to serve as nominal head of the revolutionary government. Naguib was gradually nudged aside, and then placed quietly under house arrest as Nasser emerged from the shadows to lead Egypt (Neguib 1955). Meanwhile, the Ikhwan felt its claim to power slipping away and attempted to assassinate Nasser in 1954, during a visit to Alexandria. Sadat’s friend and Ikhwan-member Abdul Monein Abdul Raouf was implicated, and the Ikhwan was outlawed.

Until Nasser’s death in 1970, the Ikhwan remained a constant target for state repression. Nasser’s conception of the state was organic-corporatist and modernist, and the Ikhwan posed a threat to the state’s hegemony. As a result, the record of the 1950s and 1960s, the Nasser years, is a disgraceful chronicle of horrendous prison camps where the Ikhwan honed their opposition to the state. The full history of this period remains to be written, but one legacy of the period is the work of Sayyid Qutb (hanged 1964), especially the lucid and polemical Ma’alim fi al-Tariq (Milestones; Qutb 1988). Jahiliyyah, the core concept of Qutb’s prison-written tract, lies at the very heart of the ideological construction of ‘Usama bin Laden. (Cf. Du’aa La Qadat or “Preachers not judges” by Hassan al-Hodeibi, the Ikhwan’s contemporaneous rejoinder to

Qutb). Muhammad Qutb, the brother of the hanged writer, later taught ‘Usama bin Laden. If bin Laden later used the notion of jahiliyyah to refer to Western powers, and especially the United States, this was certainly not Qutb’s primary intent. Though Qutb was contemptuous of the United States (he was disillusioned by his exposure to the United States in the late 1940s, not least because of racial discrimination and sexual permissiveness), he very much had contemporary Egypt in mind when he honed the concept, which he borrowed from the work of Mawlana Sayyid Abul A’la Mawdudi, the Muslim thinker and founder of Pakistan’s Jama’at-I Islami.

Nasser’s successor, Anwar Sadat, calculated that he needed a counterweight to the Arab socialist and nationalist bedrock that extolled the late president and abhorred Sadat. His fateful decision was to build his legitimacy formula on the right, reflecting his own ties to the Ikhwan in the 1940s. The outrageous repression of the Ikhwan ended, and the Islamists moved from the shadows to the open spaces of the university and the public arena. In particular, the 1970s witnessed a rapid growth in Islamic groups (jama’aat) on the university campuses, and the jama’aat were the seedbed for the generation of Islamists that sought to create al-Wasat. Eventually, Sadat grew apprehensive of the growing criticism of his power and attempted to reverse the mobilization of dissent. However, it was too late to stem the tide, and in 1981 Sadat died in a hail of bullets provoked in significant measure by the repression born of his second thoughts.

Husni Mubarak (1981-) has long surpassed Nasser (1954–70) as the longest-serving president in the history of the Egyptian republic. Following the assassination of President Sadat in 1981, Mubarak conceded political space to the Islamists and experimented with the controlled inclusion of mainstream Islamist opposition forces in parliament. Although the Ikhwan have had no legal standing in Egypt for the past half century, Islamist candidates were permitted to use secular parties as ships of convenience in 1984 and in 1987, thereby winning an impressive number of seats in parliament.

By the early 1990s, the experiment had run its course, much to the regret of many members of the intellectual elite in Egypt, who argued that the experiment was succeeding. As one respected insider noted in a 1995 interview, “political pluralism can exist without changing the basic power structure” (author’s interview with ‘Ali al-Din Hillal Dessouki, July 9, 1995). The government was intent to maintain the upper hand, and even in the elections of 1984 and 1987, which were relatively free, there was never any doubt that the progovernment candidates would maintain a dominant voice in the People’s Assembly (the lower house of the parliament; the upper house, or Shura Council, is composed of 140 appointed members). Thus, in the May 1984 balloting, the regime’s National Democratic Party won 72.9 percent of vote and 87 percent of the seats (389 out of 448 seats). In a distant second place, the resurrected Wafd Party, running in alliance with the Ikhwan, captured 15 percent of votes and 13 percent of seats (59 seats, of which 8 were Ikhwanis) (Ayubi 1991).

In the April 1987 elections, the high point for the opposition parties in parliament, 30 percent of the voters cast their vote for the opposition candidates, and 17 percent of all votes went to the tripartite alliance of the Liberal (al-Ahrar) and Labor Parties with the Ikhwan. The coalition won 60 seats, including 36 Ikhwan and 4 Islamist independents. The Wafd captured slightly fewer than 11 percent of all votes, or thirty-five seats. Considering the extensive scope for electoral manipulation by the government, and the extremely low participation rates in middle-class urban districts where cynicism about elections runs deep, the opposition success offered a stunning riposte to one-party rule in Egypt (Ayubi 1991).

The parliamentary elections of 1990 were the beginning of the end to Mubarak’s experiment in inclusionary electoral politics. The 1990 elections were mandated by Egypt’s high court, which ruled that the 1986 electoral law discriminated against independent candidates and thus violated the constitution (Auda 1991). Although the Egyptian judiciary remains a bastion of independent thinking, it obviously lacks the power to implement its mandate. Heavy gerrymandering and the state’s refusal to accept judicial oversight of the elections prompted the major opposition parties, including the Islamic Alliance and the New Wafd party, to conclude that despite major changes of the election law the electoral system still grossly disadvantaged the opposition. As a result, the major opposition parties boycotted the

election. When the elections were conducted, there were customary cases of fraud and intimidation, but the balloting was also marked by an unprecedented level of violence, leading to opposition claims that the 1990 election was “the worst in Egyptian history” (Farag 1991).

The dominant position of the NDP in the parliament should not be allowed to mask an essential weakness of the party, its fundamental lack of grassroots support. As one close observer noted, the ruling party is fictitious. It is a façade. Its structure is weak. The government has not succeeded in creating a strong party. This is one reason that the government is afraid of elections. Only with a strong progovernment party can the government permit a strong opposition (author’s interview with ‘Ali Al-Din Hillal Dessouki, July 9, 1995).

If there was any hope that 1990 was an aberration in a process of democratization, the hope was dashed in the November 1995 elections, when the opposition parties won only 14 seats in all. Opposition poll watchers were routinely harassed and detained; candidates, especially Islamists, were arrested; and ballot boxes were crammed filled to overflowing with bogus ballots. Although the government was able to engineer a sweeping electoral victory, it did not succeed in masking its extensive manipulation of the results. Though ominous attempts were made to dissuade them, three prominent secular activists, Said al-Naggar, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, and Milad Hanna, still succeeded in mounting a major monitoring effort to report on the widespread irregularities in the election. Their unofficial report highlighted electoral irregularities that discredited the government’s “victory” and led to yet another judicial overturning of an election.

At no time during Mubarak’s presidency was there any doubt that the ruling party would maintain control of parliament capable of passing virtually any law that it wished. What appeared in the 1980s to be an effective process of controlled inclusion later became an engine for cynicism and contempt as the regime became increasingly intolerant of dissent, reflecting what many Egyptians refer to as its sclerosis. In the 2000 elections, the Ikhwan managed to gain 17 seats compared to NDP’s 388, making it the largest opposition block in parliament. Notably, the Ikhwan was careful to calibrate the

candidacies of its members to avoid posing too wide a challenge to the regime.

*** The Battle for the Syndicates

More impressive than the limited electoral success of Islamist candidates were the inroads that they made in the professional syndicates (niqabat), which have been mainstays of the regime since the Nasser period. As the syndicates fell to Islamist control, Mubarak and company sensed that the hegemony of the regime was being challenged.

In Nasserite Egypt the syndicates were expected to be obedient appendages to the state. In contrast, the syndicates in recent years have been an arena for political debates. Unlike the associations and groups that fell under the heavy hand of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the stringent dictates of infamous Law 32 (the law of associations), the syndicates usually enjoyed considerable freedom of action and have been less subject to manipulation by the government than political parties and other overtly political organizations.

There are twenty-one professional syndicates, encompassing about 2.5 million members (Zaki 1995). The largest are the teachers and graduates of faculties of commerce, both of which tend to be supportive of government policy. The signal success was in the Medical Association, where in 1986 Islamists secured a majority of seats on the executive board of the association. In 1988 they built on their success to win in a landslide, capturing all seats except the chair, which was preserved for the NDP candidate—a calculated sop to the government. The same pattern persisted in the 1990 elections. Even in the Pharmacists' syndicate the Islamists captured all but three executive board seats, as well as the chair, despite the fact that the majority of the syndicate's members are Coptic Christians.

The Muslim Brotherhood was concurrently building a strong base in the Engineers' syndicate and among university professors, but the development that reportedly stunned Mubarak was the result of the 1992 executive board

elections in the venerable Bar Association. The Islamists captured 75 percent of the seats in an election in which only 10 percent of the association membership participated.

The Islamists successes reflect the changing sociology of the syndicates, their relative autonomy of the government, and the voting behavior of their members. Perhaps most important, the youthful profile of the syndicates implies that rank-and-file members are deeply affected by the arduous economic struggle that confronts most Egyptians. In contrast to the older and established syndicate members who often benefit significantly from their connections to the state, the younger members must eke out their own economic solutions. Reliable observers estimate that about 35 percent of the members are less than thirty-five years of age. Since little was done by established syndicate members to assist their younger colleagues, there was a considerable resentment, which was exploited by the Muslim Brotherhood (Ibrahim 1996).

At the same time, only a small number of syndicate members participated in syndicate affairs, including elections. Thus, fewer than one-quarter of all members participated in the four Medical Association elections from 1980 to 1990, and, as noted above, only 10 percent of the Bar Association membership voted in the fateful 1992 elections. Islamist members of the syndicates were able to capitalize on the low turnout by mobilizing their members, some of whom were unemployed and were able to join their occupational syndicate only with financial help from the Ikhwan. Where the turnout was higher, as in the Journalists' Syndicate and the Union of Social Professions, the Islamists did not fare nearly as well.

The government responded to the Islamist foothold in the syndicates by quickly pushing a new law through the parliament in February 1993. Elections within professional syndicates would now require a quorum of 50 percent of all registered members for the first ballot, and a quorum of 30 percent of all registered members for a subsequent election to be held two weeks after the first ballot. If no quorum could be produced, then the syndicate was to be run by an appointed council of senior members, chaired by a judge. As though the government's intention was to thwart the

achievement of a quorum, elections were banned on weekends or official holidays (Ibn Khaldun Center 1993; al-Sayyid 1995).

As the authoritarian state attempted to loosen the influence of the Ikhwan in the syndicates, the Islamists continued to build support on Egypt's campuses. By the early 1990s many university faculty clubs were under Islamist domination, and the Ikhwan appeared poised to extend its influence to the leadership of major universities. The state responded on May 30, 1994, with an amendment to the Universities Law that provided for an end to the practice of electing deans, despite the loud clamor of dissent from the professorate.

If the controlled opening of the 1980s offered some hope that the state would grant more political space, the evidence of the 1990s offered a different lesson. The response of Egyptians was mixed. On the one hand, resentment of the arrogant exercise of power by the state was rampant. On the other hand, extremist Islamist groups (Jihad and the Gam'at Islamiyya) embarked on a campaign of violence and terrorism, designed, in part, to interdict the tourist trade and weaken the state financially. Many Egyptians found these tactics opprobrious and supported a vicious state response. While the curtailment of the experiments in controlled inclusion and the government's autocratic riposte to the Islamists' successes in the syndicates did not seem to augur well for a new experiment in peaceful participation, this is precisely what a number of younger Islamists were pondering in the mid-1990s, both within and on the periphery of the Ikhwan.

*** Hizb al-Wasat

In April 1995, the Ikhwan signaled a major departure from the teachings of its founder, Hasan al-Banna (assassinated 1949) when it declared its acceptance of a multiparty politics.[25] The Imam, as al-Banna is often called, railed against hizbiyya ("partyism") with the argument that political parties breed divisiveness (Commins 1994). (In this sense, al-Banna's perspective is consistent with the organic-corporatist bias of today's regime, which refuses to countenance a serious challenge to effective monopolization of politics by the ruling party.) Nonetheless, his successors in

the Ikhwan leadership issued an important document in April 1995, which embraced parties as instruments of shura (consultation), while reiterating that power may not be taken by the sword (al-Hudeibi 2000). The statement was intended to be a clear signal of the Ikhwan's willingness to play by democratic rules, but the rejoinder from the regime was studied silence. The political climate of the mid-1990s was one in which a number of efforts were underway to find entree into the political system, especially since the regime was moving aggressively to tighten its control of the political system.

Liberal reformers, such as the respected economist Dr. Said al-Naggar, president of the Civic Forum, worked energetically to promote a "civic compact" (mithaq madani) in 1995. The compact emphasized many of the values embraced the following year by the Hizb al-Wasat, including freedom of belief, democratic participation, and women's rights. This writer (along with Farhad Kazemi) happened to be meeting with the late 'Adil Hussein (died 2001), a leading figure in the Labor Party, an ally of the Ikhwan, on July 11, 1995, when al-Naggar visited party headquarters on Port Said Street to seek Labor's endorsement of the compact.[26] The Labor Party, now suppressed by the government, has veered from left to right, and by the 1990s enjoyed an Islamist ambience, yet faded signs from the 1970s testified that these were the offices of the Socialist Labor Party. Hussein excused himself to join the negotiations, and upon return revealed that he wanted to sign the civil compact along with other members of his party. His view was that the Ikhwan "would lose, if they did not sign it." In the end, the Ikhwan refused to sign because the document did not declare that the shari'ah was the sole basis of law.

This was also a period of calibrated government persecution aimed precisely at the Ikhwan, the most potent opposition group. In 1995, the middle-level leadership was savaged by arrests. In all, fifty-four were arrested and sentenced to three-to-five year terms, including many of the rising young 'amirs ("princes"), such as 'Issam al-'Iryan. Among other motives, the government sought to eliminate many of the most credible candidates for parliament, thereby sabotaging any attempt by the Ikhwan to repeat their electoral successes of the 1980s. Intimidation at balloting sites was widespread as well.

Among younger members of the Ikhwan, many of whom were actively involved in public and professional life, especially in the syndicates of doctors, engineers, and other professions, these discussions were a culmination of many dialogues (Wickham 1996). These dialogues were part of a centrist trend that is sometimes referred to as al-wasatiyya (Baker 1997) or ‘jil al-sab’inaat (the seventies generation), as reflected in recent debates within the Ikhwan (Hamzawy 2003). It is also common to hear references to the renewal trend (al-tayyar al-tajdidi).

Against this backdrop of repression, political foment and debate, a large group broke away from the Ikhwan to form Hizb al-Wasat in late 1995. The name serves a dual purpose. Not only does it emphasize the role the party seeks to place as a mediatory element in society, but it is instantly recognizable to many Muslims because it invokes Qur’anic injunction to be an ‘umma wasat (a justly balanced community). “Thus have We made of you a justly balanced community. That ye might be witnesses over the nations” (Qur’an 2:143). The name implies the project of mediation by a younger generation intent to emphasize a connection to society and to Islam in a modern civilizational context. Of the seventy- four original founding members of al-Wasat, sixty-two came from the ranks of the Brotherhood (Stacher 2002). Many of the founding members had been active in the professional syndicates where they honed political skills and developed a taste for political struggle. By January 1996, they presented an application for legal party status to the governmental Political Parties Committee.

Mustafa Mashur (1919–20022) then newly ascended to the post of Supreme Guide (murshid) of the Ikhwan, and his associates reacted swiftly and furiously to al-Wasat’s display of independence. Mashur) by profession a meteorologist at Egypt’s National Weather Forecasting Center) joined the Ikhwan in 1938. Like many of his colleagues) Mashur had paid his dues—in his instance) eighteen years in prison. In an April 1996 interview) he simply observed that al-Wasat did not display a “pure image of Islam” (Murphy 2002). Behind the scenes, the Ikhwan moved quickly to quell the rebellion in its ranks.

Many members of the founding cohort left the new party under threat and returned to the Ikhwan's fold. In May, the government committee rejected the party's petition on the procedural grounds that they lacked the requisite fifty members to constitute a party (under the terms of Law 40/1977). For its part, the government believed that the party initiative was a scheme by the Ikhwan to find a side door into legitimate party status. Three founding members along with nine others were then arrested for attempting to reorganize the Ikhwan and for plotting against the government; the al-Wasat members were released three months later without being tried or even charged.

What followed was extraordinary. The Hizb al-Wasat filed an appeal, and in 1997 the Ikhwan openly opposed the application during formal hearings (Shadid 2001). Abu al-'Ala Madi, a founder member of Al-Wasat, complained to a newspaper:

This small group of people waged a war on us that we did not expect. We expected them to say we disagree with you or we have nothing to do with this project. But waging a comprehensive war against us on all levels was a big shock that took some time to absorb ... Their attack was even worse than what the government did with us. (Murphy 2002)

The following May, the Political Parties Tribunal rejected the application on familiar grounds. Under the terms of Law 40/1977, a new party must fulfill a legitimate purpose not met by an existing party. Since the ruling National Democratic Party claimed to do all and more that Egypt requires, the standard is virtually impossible to fulfill. The al-Wasat is one of at least thirty-two parties that have failed to meet the standard.[27]

Among leading independent Muslim thinkers, the Ikhwan's riposte to al-Wasat was described as heavy-handed and unfortunate. For instance, Shaikh Yusif al-Qaradawi, one of the leading reformist thinkers, argued that al-Wasat was a way to break the isolation that the government imposed on the Islamic movement. "I fear that the Islamic movement constrains the liberal thinkers among its children and closes windows of renewal (tajdid), interpretation (ijtihad), and stands on one side of ideas and

thought while not accepting the other point of view or those holding different opinions about objectives or the means to accomplish them.” Others, such as Tawfiq al-Shawi, endorsed al-Qaradawi’s criticism and urged that rather than stifling dissent, initiatives like al-Wasat should be encouraged.[28] There is an intellectual link joining both al-Shawi and Al-Qaradawi to Sheikh Hassan al-Ashmawi, who died in 1972 in Kuwait. Al-Ashmawi had been the Ikhwan’s major link to the Free Officers, but he is remembered as an influential reformist thinker who rejected in principle the idea of religious government.

Following its first failure, the aspiring party was reorganized as the Hizb al-Wasat al-Masri (i.e., the Egyptian Center Party). Over ninety members were listed in the “new” party’s petition, of which only twenty- four were former members of the Ikhwan. The founding men and women include a number of younger professionals, teachers, students, and tradesmen. There were nineteen women listed, and a total of three Christians (‘Abd al-Karim 1998). In September 1998, this attempt to register also failed on the grounds that the new party did not contribute anything new. By June 1999, the second round of appeals ran their course.

Two years earlier, the party had filed an application with the Ministry of Culture to start a newspaper, al-Mustaqbal (The future), but the application simply disappeared into the bowels of the ministry. There has been no response whatsoever to the application.

The al-Wasat program has been published in two versions.[29] The first was authored by a leading Protestant intellectual (Habib 1996a) and the second by a former Brother and professor of aeronautical engineering at Cairo University (‘Abd al-Karim 1998). Both versions of the program are strikingly free of jargon. The program urges a modernist interpretation of Islamic law and argues that the shari‘ah should be interpreted and applied in a way that does not hinder progress. Indeed, shari‘ah is conceived as a valuable collection of flexible principles, whereas the implementation of those principles requires the crafting of laws by people. There are several novel elements of the published program. While secularism (al-’ilmaniyya) is rejected on principle, the thrust of the program is decidedly complementary to toleration, diversity, and pluralism (ta’addudiya). In particular, pluralism is understood to

correspond to a society in which religion remains a fundamental component, but religious practice as well as political orientation vary as a matter of course. “National unity and religion as one unit are of extreme importance whereby each Muslim and Christian, through their own religion, would comprise this national unity. Religion is one of the strongest sources of moral commitment” (Habib 1996a, 32):

Islamic scholarship affirms that too much religion on its own does not insure justice and not enough religion does not prevent acquiring what is just. Invoking what is just in the political arena or exercising authority on behalf of a particular religious faction in a religious pluralistic country is a claim that has no judicial base. The ‘ulama emphasize that the objective of life and political participation does not come about by having too much religion but through the proper and civil behavior in order to achieve the goals and interests of the nation. With that, we emphasize that the Copts enjoy the rights of citizenship and nationality. This is an issue that is both legally and functionally decided and agreed upon without a disagreement among the nation in that regard.

The unity of religion and state is a dogmatic truth for many Islamic movements, but reformist thinkers increasingly shift from the concept of din wa dawla and emphasize that Islam is marked by din wa ‘ummah (religion and community). This is very much the focus of the al-Wasat program. In this sense, the usual Salafi focus on the period of al-Rashidun as an exemplar for contemporary Muslim societies is rejected. Thinkers such as the octogenarian Gamal al-Banna, the younger brother of the late Hasan al-Banna, are part of the tayyar. Al-Banna argues that the unity of din wa dawla was unique to the Golden Era in Islam and may not be recreated. Instead, the appropriate focus is to foster the promotion of religion and community (al-Banna 2002). What then becomes problematic is the definition of community. In the instance of al-Wasat, the community is defined inclusively so as to encompass Muslims and Christians. While secular reformers such as al-Naggar judged the party to be a significant initiative, at least a point of departure for discussion, concern remains that rather than embracing an Islamic ethos, the shari‘ah remains central in the party’s ideology (Stacher’s interview with Said al-Naggar, December 19, 1999, in Stacher 2001).

The second version of the program by ‘Abd al-Karim adds material on pluralism and representation. While substantial sections of the first program are rewritten or condensed (some general comments on freedom and human rights are omitted), the substance of the two documents is consistent. Both versions deal with widely discussed questions such as corruption and violence and both urge adherence to the constitution, free elections, and an effective parliament, concerns that link al-Wasat to a variety of opposition groups across the political spectrum. There is equal, if not greater emphasis on social justice and reducing economic inequality (during a period when the gap is actually widening). “One of the worst problems associated with unemployment is the feeling of injustice and lack of opportunity that cause depression, resentment, anger, hatred, lack of loyalty or belonging. The extravagant life lived by a certain class provokes the negative feelings of the poor and the unemployed” (‘Abd Al-Karim 1998). This signals a need to encourage charity (zakat) as a means of reducing the disparity, as well as a normative commitment to social justice that contrasts with the indifference of the government.

It is noteworthy that the role of women in society receives significant attention, and the idea that women may fill any role in the political system is remarkable by Egyptian standards. “The party emphasized the women’s equal right and equal commitment in civil and political matters.

It is therefore her right to hold any position, to vote or get elected or become a member of the parliament and to perform all public and professional functions. She is also required to commit to her participation the work force” (Habib 1996a, 58; ‘Abd al-Karim 1998, 29).

In April 2000, the government tacitly defined the boundaries of permissible opposition by permitting the establishment of an NGO (nongovernmental organization) in which many of the al-Wasat organizers were key participants. Under the terms of Law 153, since overturned, an NGO would be deemed licensed in sixty days absent an explicit disapproval by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Hence, the government permitted Misr: Lil- Thiqafa wa Hiwar (Egypt: For culture and dialogue) to emerge. A deal with the government was widely

suspected, and there is certainly no reason to take seriously Muhammad Salim al-‘Awa’s claims that there is no connection between Wasat and the creation of the NGO. The new society aims to “support the culture of dialogue in a society in which violence prevails” (Cairo Times 2000). The major participants are a who’s who of respected independents, including liberals such as Atif al-Banna, editor of al-Ahram Center Strategic Report; Wahid ‘Abd al-Majid from al-Ahram; and Amani Qandil, a sui generis NGO guru and also a woman. Other members of the society include Engineers’ Syndicate member Salah ‘Abd al-Karim; author of the first al-Wasat program, Rafiq Habib; attorney ‘Issam Sultan (and, initially, chairman of the NGO); publisher Muhammad Abd al-Latif; and Abu al-‘Ala Madi. Muhammad Salim al-‘Awa, a constant intellectual presence in al-Wasat, was elected chair of the new NGO’s board at the first annual conference in May 2001 (al-‘Awa’s wife Fatima, herself a lawyer, was a founding member of al-Wasat).

Although Madi periodically declares that al-Wasat will once again apply for legal recognition, his energies and those of his colleagues appear to be largely focused on holding seminars on themes such as Islam and the West, the Islamic movement and education, or, perhaps most re- vealingly, “Professor al-Banna: Fifty Years after His Martyrdom What Remains of His Call?”

The unsuccessful attempt by Madi and his collaborators to break new political ground with al-Wasat is further unpacked in the interview vignettes that follow, each revealing a different perspective on the episode.

**** The Judge

Now retired, this distinguished attorney was the chief justice of the Constitutional Court, one of two bulwarks against arbitrary rule by the state. The other is the Court of Cassation. On two recent occasions, in 1987 and 1995, the Constitutional Court ended the tenure of the parliament due to electoral irregularities or unconstitutional electoral procedures and mandated new elections.

The comments here are a composite of two interviews lasting more than four hours, one conducted in September 1999 and the other in February 2003. The judge is a contemplative and humble man. His office has none of the trappings of accumulated adulation that people of accomplishment tend to collect. His broad desk is piled high with reference works, an Egyptian text on civil society, a book on the U.S. Constitution, titles in French on free speech and assembly. He is reading a book on U.S. constitutional law, specifically First Amendment law and the right of assembly. This man loves the dignity of the law fairly administered, and he does not hide his contempt of “rubbish judges” who seek only to toe the government’s line.

One topic among many we discuss is the legal standard for the creation of political parties in Egypt. The judge’s reasoning is lucid and to the point. The people are permitted under the constitution to form associations. A political party is an association, and there is no language in the constitution that can be construed to authorize or require resort to a Political Parties Committee or Tribunal. In other words, the process that Al-Wasat has had to navigate is questionable on constitutional grounds.

As for the requirement that an aspiring party must meet a legitimate need unfulfilled by extant political parties, the judge reflects, “If a marketplace of ideas is a right, then what is the logic for this restriction? Plus, there are many different ways to reach the same aims.” To his regret, the Constitutional Court has considered this requirement to be valid. As a result, “political life is paralyzed.” Although the judge notes his conviction that the constitution protects the right of assembly, in practice the law allows any party to be barred from forming. The state imposes “undue restrictions” on political life by restricting the formation of new parties.

Legally speaking, people may gather together for political purposes even if they are not constituted in a legal party. The right to form political associations derives from the right of assembly, the judge emphasizes. Nonetheless, this is an issue that has been adjudicated on appeal by the Supreme Administrative Court in the case of Hizb al-Wasat, yet the court refused to see the clear logic of the constitution.

Before I can fully articulate the question, he anticipates it. “Why doesn’t the government open up?” “Sometimes people are haunted by fear not by hopes.” He argues that Mubarak is popular and would win a competitive election, but he is afraid of something. Mubarak believes that the answer is to be in control, to control everything. The government restricts political activity out of insecurity. “Measures are taken to tame the tiger, even though there is no tiger in Egypt.” As result, Egypt loses the opportunity to strengthen its power through democracy. “If democracy and civil society were stronger in the Middle East, the governments would be more

powerful to face the USA.” This from the lips of a man who knows America well, has traveled to Washington as a VIP guest of the U.S. government, but who is pained by America’s then looming invasion of Iraq. His prime despair is reserved for his own government, which he both fears and despises. “I don’t know why some people feel safe, and we do not have that simple right. I don’t feel safe talking to you. I do not know what to do.”

**** The Engineer

Al-Qasr al-Aini is a long, bustling Cairo avenue with one menagerie after another of shops, peddlers, offices, government agenices, and apartments. This is commercial Cairo, perfumed less by the scent of food and the stink of urban waste than the acrid scent of automobile exhausts. The engineer’s office is nearby a well-known pharmacy, in an apartment building that has been converted to office space. The suite is labeled “Al-markaz al-dawli lildaraasat” (the International Center for Studies) and the bustle of half a dozen clerks and assistants greets the visitor in February 2003. His is the generic office of the middle class professional. A pair of facing overstuffed chairs and a low table for water and coffee are placed in front of a desk large enough to signal that this is a man with a title, in this case, muhandis—engineer. We sit, exchange greetings, and efficiently elide into the familiar ritual of interview.

Abu al-‘Ala Madi was a university student in the 1970s in Minya, one of the upper Egyptian towns that has been a seedbed for Islamist recruitment. Like other students at Minya University, he participated in a campus Islamist group, one of many that owed their existence to Sadat’s flirtation with the Islamic right. He joined the Ikhwan in 1979, and as the Ikhwan moved into the syndicates in the 1980s, he became one of the leaders of the Engineers’ Syndicate, rising to assistant secretary general.

In one interview, Madi bluntly emphasized that his connection to the Ikhwan followed his engagement in campus politics, which had little to do with the Ikhwan either operationally or ideologically:

In order to describe the correct situation you have to know that we had an Islamic vision before we entered the Muslim brotherhood. And this point is very important. Before we were silent about this, out of courtesy and respect to the brotherhood. We remained silent when some claimed that the brotherhood were the ones who established the Islamic students’ movement in the 70s, we were silent out of respect because we later became members of the brotherhood. And the truth was that the brotherhood was completely far away and distant from this student movement. And after the Islamic factions [kawaadir] joined the brotherhood, a blending of thought took place.

And we accepted some of those ideas inside the brotherhood and rejected others. And this reaction persisted in a quiet manner but those leaderships were faced with a severe shock when we discovered the real condition of the brotherhood where we found out that the big picture we imagined the brotherhood to be was not true. And this shock kept reacting until we left the brotherhood (Madi ca. 1999)

As for the Ikhwan, there is a reform current, but the conservatives still hold sway in the leadership. While Madi claims to have very good relations with the middle leadership, where he has “secret support,” relations between him and the old guard are bad. He was taken aback by the counterattack of the old guard, which he argues is out of step with changing times. He has, of course, quit the Ikhwan.

Madi distinguishes between Hasan al-Banna's two legacies: the school and the organization: "As for the organization, it is in its worst shape due to the change in the behavioral understanding and moralities established by al-Banna. Due to the absence of freedom of expression and a freeze in the movement's intellect at the time when individual thinking and the concept of hear and obey without questioning hindered us from changing some of the teachings of al-Banna to suit our time" (Labib 1998).

He emphasizes his own links to a variety of non-Islamist intellectuals, including the lawyer 'Atif al-Banna, and several independent Muslim intellectuals, especially Muhammad Salim al-'Awa, whose wife was a founding member of the party, and Hasan Hanafi, who like al-'Awa is a respected professor at Cairo University. For the aged generation of tajdidi intellectuals, men like Gamal al-Banna, al-'Awa's name evokes enthusiasm. ("He is one of the best ones," al-Banna remarked in February 2003.) Hanafi enjoys a worldwide reputation for his prolific writings and his modernist orientation in the tradition of Muhammad 'Abduh, but his influence on al-Wasat was immanent, not strategic. In contrast, al-'Awa has lent a strong hand to the party. The party platforms are certainly consistent with his own ideas, and it is easy to imagine that he played a role in drafting al-Wasat's programmatic documents. Al-'Awa's perspective is nicely summarized in the following comment: "the problem of government resides upon two primary, complementary tenets: the belief in Divine existence and faith in individual freedom. Individual freedom must assert itself before the challenges of both the metaphysical and tangible worlds" (al-'Awa 1999).

Secularly oriented skeptics, as well as leading government officials, argue that Madi and his colleagues are simply masking their real views, namely their aim to seize power and establish a system of Islamist rule ('Abd al-Karim 1998; Abdel-Latif 1999). "We are not using taqiya," Madi insists. "We are not seeking to establish a religious party per se. We are talking about a civil party with an Islamic frame of reference We

know that the hardest choice is moderation, and the easiest choice is extremism We form part of Egypt's political landscape in the coming

century.”

While Nasser horribly repressed the Ikhwan, Madi, like many of his generation, reveals a wistful nostalgia for the equalitarian elements of Nasser’s programs. “The positive aspects of the Nasser era cannot be denied. Social reforms, free education and medical care allowed a new elite to emerge, one rooted in the humblest social classes” (Labidi 2002).

Simultaneously, Madi has a nuanced appreciation of the West, and like many Muslim intellectuals he was deeply impressed by the antiwar demonstrations that preceded America’s invasion of Iraq. The antiwar demonstrations in 2003 prompted him to reflect that the West is not America, and the U.S. public is not the U.S. government. He reasons that this means there must be dialogue at all levels. Madi underlines that Egypt’s relations with the United States discourage reforms, because reform would contradict U.S. interests, yet serious efforts by the United States to broker reform would be well received, he argues.

**** The Party Intellectual

The son of a revered Protestant minister, the late Samuel Habib, Rafiq is one of the intellectual architects of Hizb al-Wasat, one of a handful of Christians who became founding members. His books are well known in Egypt and he has written on faith and politics, history’s legacies in Egypt, and democracy (Habib 1996b, 1996c, 1998). His office is in the headquarters of the Coptic Evangelical Organization, in al-Nuzha al-Jadida, an obscure suburb of Cairo where this interview took place on November 9, 1999. After a few moments of shared reminiscences about Reverend Habib, we launch directly into the substance of the interview.

The political problem lies with the administrative and military origins of the state. Over time there has been a decrease in the quality of political figures in the system. The country is led by a military administrator, and there is no

site for real politics. The army is the source of the problem. Mubarak's only fear is that the army is not with him. He does not understand the language of reform. Habib reflects that the problem is like trying to talk about engineering to someone who only knows administration. Technical issues are reduced to management problems, which means that you never get to the root of the problem at hand:

So Egypt is left with a political system without real politics. Political space is depoliticized. After 1992 [when the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front won a sweeping electoral victory and stood on the threshold of power only to be denied by a coup], Mubarak became afraid of everything. There is no serious political thought and the government has had no real success against the opposition. Mubarak's attitude is that the Islamic parties are a threat, just as in Algeria. Thus, the Islamic movement has been suppressed and political life is frozen.

Since 1995, no new parties have been allowed, though many parties effectively exist. In fact, Islamic thinking is in flux. Hizb al-Wasat has new ideas; so does the Ikhwan. But the Ikhwan cannot deal with the emergence of the Wasat movement, so things have slowed down. In time, the fear will decline (and the old men will die) and an optimistic vision of the future would see the "silent ummah" take power from the government in a context of passive resistance. Habib argues that the successful Ikhwan businessmen, who have large constituencies, will lend their hefty weight to politics. The mentality of business is practical and the liberal wing of the business community wants a political party. Others, who are linked to the state sector, will not be enthusiastic, but an optimistic vision would point to more influence for the chambers of commerce and the power of private capital.

As for "the system," all the eggs have been put in one—reform—basket, namely, reform only within the context of state control. Habib is alluding to the discussions about Hizb al-Mustaqbal, a failed initiative to create a new party under the leadership of Gamal Mubarak, the president's son. Mubarak closed the door on this venture in 1999, perhaps after he sensed negative views emanating from the army. (Since then, Gamal Mubarak has been ensconced as chair of the NDP policy committee, and he has been warmly

received on three official visits to Washington, D.C., as though he is the anointed successor to his father.)

On his role forming the Hizb al-Wasat, Habib notes that he was isolated by the move among Copts, whereas he expected to be joined by others. They need to reach more people, he notes. He observes that the first rejection noted that the party was not different from other extant parties. As for the second effort to gain recognition, which culminated in an appeals ruling on June 5, 1999, Habib argues this was handled illegally by the government. There were new ideas. Al-Wasat proposed a different government system, including two councils—one for politics, another for constitutional matters. The representatives in the council would be agents of the ‘ummah not representative of the people. The government said these were old ideas, derived from outside Egypt. They even asserted, inexplicably, that the ideas stemmed from “iqta” (feudalism).

In one of his books, al-Muqadas wa-al-Hurriyah (The sacred and freedom), Habib argues that the nation is defined by its sacred consciousness (al-muqadas) and its fixed principles (al-thawabet). The problem arises when the sulta (or authority, by which he means the government) seeks to impose beliefs (namely, secularism) by force and law. In doing so, the people’s freedom is taken away in the interests of foreign values. This leads to a situation in which groups become convinced that the only way to preserve al-muqadasat and al-thawabet is to acquire power. While people are free not to believe, not to accept the sacred truths, they may not destroy the nation and its beliefs. What is needed, he argues, is a rediscovery of the sacred and the renewal of the principles that underlie the nation. This must be done peacefully, as through parties like al-Wasat, because if it is done violently, the nation will only be weakened and will only be more vulnerable to Western interference. Egypt is a conservative society and Habib’s argument resonates with many Egyptians, whether Christian or Muslim (Habib 1998).

**** The Guide

Islamic circles (nadwas) in Cairo intersect and intertwine. The interlocutor was a venerable independent thinker in Cairo, a man known for his criticism of the Ikhwan; but, knowing that an appointment with the Supreme Guide was desired, he set it up in a few hours' time. His assistant 'Adil, described warmly as a man "with one foot inside the Ikhwan and another outside it," serves as a friendly escort. The meeting is with Muhammad Ma'amoun Hudeibi, an eighty-one-year-old former judge. He has been the Ikhwan's murshid (Guide) for less than a year, though his rise to this post has been a foregone conclusion for a decade. The session is in a shabby apartment building in al-Manya, a very ordinary Cairo neighborhood. There is no doorman or policeman in sight, just a peasant woman who looks on beseechingly as we pass. Then I recall an interlude in Upper Egypt, years before in an Assiut police station, where a cast of informants, a profile of everyday Egypt, sat on narrow benches waiting to be paid. A policeman opened a desk drawer to reveal a fat pile of bank notes. Then again, this may just be an old woman.

One removes his shoes on entering the headquarters, not out of piety but respect for the premises, a common practice in old Cairo. We are ushered in to see Hudeibi almost immediately. The murshid has the physique of a snowman and the friendly smile of a grandfather.

The Guide begins by noting that Islam is belief and ritual plus shari'ah. "My religion orders me to insist that I be governed by shari'ah." But Hudeibi is intent to note that while personal status matters (such as inheritance) are fixed, and while relations between men and women are defined clearly, there are many areas where there are differences (ikhtilaf) within the Qur'an and the Sunna.

We have to be creative. "There is a difference between two hundred years ago and today." He notes that at the time of the founding of the Ikhwan only 7 percent of men were literate, and even fewer women:

Hasan al-Banna was only forty-two years old when he was martyred and he did not see his daughters grow up. We believe that women have a right to work, and to education, but they may not be forced to work. When they are

married, this is an issue that is settled within the family. We recommend that children have the attention of their parents but, in fact, many women work.

“I find that eighty percent of Ikhwan are married to women who have finished their education.” Citing his own family, Hudeibi noted he had four children, all of whom are doctors. In one case, the daughter (married to an engineer) is still practicing medicine. In the other, the daughter has given up her professional work (her husband is also a doctor). “This is a family choice,” he comments.

Hudeibi notes that the husband is the head (ra’is) of the family, but when I question him on this, noting that the man might be nominal head while the wife has extensive influence, he responds with what he calls a pre-Islamic proverb from Arabia: “‘awana ammat lahu yakun ‘abdan laki” (if you are a slave for him, he will be a slave for you).

With regard to elections, “we encourage women to vote and we depend on their votes.” He stresses that “women have the right to run for election.” Hudeibi complains that were it not for the manipulation of the government in Alexandria during the 2000 elections, a sister named Jihan Khalifawi would have won a seat.

As for contemporary questions of governance for society, he emphasizes the import of shura and ‘ijma, and recalls that the first khalifa, Abu Bakr, did not force himself upon the community but was widely accepted as head of state. Applied to modern times, when literacy is much more widespread, representation requires free elections. Thus, people have the right to select the government. Principles and values determine how people vote. In contrast to questions of family law, which are more or less fixed, ijtihad suggests elections. As far back as 1936, Hassan al-Banna approved representation, but “we live in different times,” Hudeibi declares. Not only was the public less well educated, but al-Banna’s time was marked by occupation and monarchy.

The position that Hudeibi describes is an important departure from the fixed positions that prevailed for half a century until the 1980s. Hudeibi declares that “one party means dictatorship.” The hard-won lesson of the Ikhwan is that there must be a multiparty system with a turnover of representatives (“three or four year terms”) and “the will of the majority must be respected, including the peaceful transfer of power.”

The discussion then shifts to the case of al-Wasat. He listens calmly as I outline the events, more or less as summarized in this chapter. Then he responds directly: “[A]ll of the information that you have is wrong in terms of the role of the Muslim Brethren.”

The decision to form the [al-Wasat] party was not approved beforehand. As long ago as 1986 we decided to have a party. We felt that all leadership in the party should be known. We know that giving a license for a party is the will of one person [President Mubarak]. All procedures leading up to the president’s decision are just for the sake of appearance.

We knew that the president would not allow a party to be formed. Mubarak has said, “even if the Constitutional Court allows a party, I will not allow it.” We would not try to form a party because the decision would seem to be rational and fair, whereas it is the decision of one man. It leaves the deceptive impression that it is possible to form a party.

We are a political party in reality. We have our structures, we have announced policies and we are the largest party in parliament … No one said

we were unethical. Hence, the issue is just applying the law to reality.

Hudeibi observes that it is natural that others will oppose the Ikhwan. “We want Muslims to have the right to practice shari‘ah.” Hudeibi recalls the parliamentary elections of 1995, when 165 Ikhwanis ran for election and not a single one won. “This event shook our confidence.” In the

same year, the government was arresting brothers and sentencing them to jail terms. “People were astonished. They did not know what to do.”

“The people in al-Wasat were accused by the government of representing the Ikhwan. Some people decided to embarrass the government by claiming a party was being formed.” At the same time, he acknowledges that “within the ranks of the Ikhwan, a number of people started to ask to create a party.” He notes that there was a modified program being developed, one that kept the core values of Islam. “Always, when we see people who are enthusiastic, why not? They are our sons.”

Unfortunately, when they wrote the program we did not approve it. They took an unethical position. They communicated with other members and told people that they were acting on behalf of the Ikhwan. The murshid asked for the al-Wasat people to appear. They refused to come to the office. They went to the home of the murshid and told him that they had already written the program and submitted it to the Political Parties Committee, which [we knew] would then transmit it to intelligence. We sought to avoid guile. The murshid was shocked that seventy-five Muslim Brothers were aligned with al-Wasat. When the issue came up, especially the participation of Ikhwan, I was shocked. If you really work in politics, if you really are a politician then you have to be more professional, not amateurish. It was only by coincidence that I found out about it just before the program was submitted. If reporters had come, I would know nothing. [Hudeibi handled press relations at that time.] I took a decision to put an end to this embarrassing decision, to announce that this is a group outside the Ikhwan.

As for the al-Wasat people, Hudeibi told them:

You, if you are asked, your answer will be limited to your program, and you are not from the Ikhwan. Of course, I knew there would be talk about internal divisions. We did not want to have media looking at divisions. Unfortunately, they did talk about the Ikhwan in the press. After that, most brothers who had supported it returned to the Ikhwan when they discovered the leadership did not approve.

Reliable reports indicate that serious pressure was applied to convince al-Wasat supporters to return to the Ikhwan. “They objected to the use of their names and refused further participation. They said we are ready to do whatever you wish. We then decided to go to the Political Party Tribunal and say that the Muslim Brothers do not approve of any party. In any case, we were one hundred percent sure that the party would not be approved.” Hudeibi urged al-Wasat not to pursue an appeal. In front of the world, it would be the court that would vote against the party, whereas, in reality, it was Mubarak who vetoed the party. After the initial application was disapproved, “we were surprised to find that they had filed an appeal with the tribunal.”

“Since the people who had given names now refused, their lawyer should have said that he is representing five people.” Instead, “the lawyer said that he was representing all of the people on the list. Therefore, other people [viz, the Ikhwan] had to present their own papers.”

“We did not stand with the government. We just objected that seventy people would have their names used. We are not against any party. They were unethical.”

**** The Adviser

Dr. Osama al-Baz is a thin man with a somewhat nasal voice and great power. In November 1999, I am meeting him for the third time. The interview begins punctually in the Foreign Ministry building. The spacious corner office befits one of the two or three most powerful men in Egypt. The opening comments focus on modernist trends in Islam and Al-Baz volunteers that he read al-Kitaab wa al-Qur’an (The book and the Qu’ran) by the Syrian engineer Muhammad Shahrour, which he notes was excellent. Shahrour’s rationalism appeals to established educated professionals, but few of the Islamists seem to have read Shahrour. They prefer work that is more focused on the problematics of contemporary society and politics than Shahrour’s tedious but modernist tafsir.

The conversation turns to Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis. Al-Baz likes Huntington's book. He especially appreciates "the acceptance of diversity," the idea that globalization is not going to erase cultural dissimilarities. He has not read the original article it seems, only the more nuanced book.

After the interruption of a phone call, marked by the use of short generic phrases intended to signal the caller that a visitor may be listening, the discussion continues and turns to Egypt. He talks about widespread complaints about deepening government corruption, even from people who are not shrill critics of the regime. He picks up on the question of decorum, not corruption. "Yes, this is very important. People must be respectable." Even as we are speaking the government is pursuing the persecution of several figures in the Islamist-aligned Labor Party, including Magdi Hussein, the editor of al-Sha'b, the party newspaper that has been doggedly attacking the then Minister of Agriculture Yusif Wali for corruption, malfeasance, and contacts with Israel. (The Labor Party has since been dismantled by the government.)

People were looking for new faces in government, but the government announced following Mubarak's reelection in September 1999 is packed with familiar faces. Al-Baz acknowledges that people feel frustrated, but he says the problem is that they themselves raised unreasonable expectations. "They were making lists of all the people they expected to see removed from the cabinet. Of course, this did not occur." What they do not realize is that some of the people they condemned were constrained in the last government. People don't realize that the ministers were often blocked. In any case, "just wait for three months," he says. "There will be very important improvement."

Although he does not mention the name of Saad Eddin Ibrahim, the activist think-tank head who created a tempest of debate by writing about discrimination against Coptic Christians, it is clear that he has Ibrahim in mind when he complains about people making broad charges of systemic discrimination. The Copts did suffer discrimination, al-Baz acknowledges,

“especially in the first years following the 1952 revolution. These injustices should and must be corrected.” As for NGOs, the answer is not to engage in sweeping accusations. In his eyes, the problem lies largely with foreign-funded human rights organizations. If there are problems, he complains, these groups should identify them and they will be dealt with. Given Egypt’s dependence on U.S. assistance ($2 billion annually), it is easy to imagine that questions about Christian mistreatment would jeopardize Egypt’s standing on Capitol Hill. There is little question, based on al-Baz’s comments, that he would like to see Egyptian NGOs brought to heel. The following year, in fact, the government closed Saad Eddin Ibrahim’s Ibn Khaldun Center, and jailed Ibrahim and a score of his associates. The crackdown followed months of character assassination in the press, including accusations that Ibrahim was a spy. Only in early 2003 was Ibrahim freed from jail, after his case was overturned on appeal to the Constitutional Court, where the appeal was argued by Dr. ‘Awad al-Murr, a former president of the court.

As for the Islamists, “they want power. That is their goal.” Al-Baz recalls the earthquake of October 1992. (The earthquake killed more than 550 Cairenes.) He was in Turkey when it happened. “When there was a small earthquake here, the Islamists responded very quickly, but the government agencies were slow to react. Not surprisingly, the people said, ‘fuck the government.’ They did not do this out of the goodness of their hearts; they did it to convince people to support them so they can seek power. That is their goal.” He cites the case of Iran where the mullahs were only one of the groups that toppled the Shah, but they took over. “They want to take over.” In short, this is a zero-sum game.

As for the idea that the Islamists can form a legal party, “No way ...

I will speak to them as individuals, as I will speak to anyone, but we will not recognize them as an organization.” He gives the example of a recent funeral where he was approached by several of them, and he was willing to talk to them as individuals. On the specific case of the Hizb al-Wasat, al-Baz responds that this is just a front for the Ikhwan.

Only months before we met, there was discussion of a new party, the Hizb al-Mustaqbal, or the party of the future. Gamal Mubarak was mentioned as prospective head and al-Baz a leading member, but the possibility was squashed by no less than the president. Al-Baz dismisses these reports as rumors and emphasizes that he had nothing to do with the party. He goes on to argue that the president needs a constituency, and any new party would weaken his constituency. If President Mubarak is weakened, “what will his base be?” “I will tell you,” and he points at his shoulders, and crosses his fingers as though tracing the crossed rifles of officers’ military insignia. Even now, a half century after Lieutenant Colonel Nasser and the Free Officers rose to power, the power of the army retains a trump card. This leaves little real room for maneuver. The result is that no opposition political parties can be allowed to evolve, Islamist or otherwise.

*** By Way of a Conclusion

On the face of it, Hizb al-Wasat is a case study in failure that illustrates that arduous path that any aspiring opposition group must confront in Egypt, or in many of the other authoritarian states in the Middle East.

The zero-sum mentality that often informs ruling circles permits little scope for other than decorative and tame opposition groups with narrow political bases. What is missing, alas, is reflexivity in the regime. Though some bright regime intellectuals would dearly like to see change, few new ideas bubble to the upper reaches of the regime. When new ideas do surface they are merely melded into regime rhetoric, as in 1999 when Mubarak’s embrace of “institutions” spawned momentary hope of serious reform but was quickly forgotten.

Nor is zero-sum thinking unique to those in power, as the example of the Ikhwan’s reaction to al-Wasat illustrated. In an important sense, reform needs to begin at home—namely, within the long-entrenched opposition elites who fear the dissipation of their authority and privileges.

Certainly, there has been little external pressure on the Egyptian government to embrace reform. One is left to wonder whether a well-placed nudge in 1996 might have eased the path for al-Wasat, but the focus in Western capitals at that time, and certainly in Washington, embraced static stability, not reform (Indyk 2002). Now the mood seems to have changed dramatically, spurred significantly by the horrific events of September 2001. In November 2003, President George Bush eloquently embraced the project of democratic reform in the Middle East and pointedly rejected the longstanding penchant of the U.S. government for supporting stable autocracies:

Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe—because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. (Bush 2003)

One wonders whether the embrace of democracy extends to selfconsciously Islamic groups such as al-Wasat. Important policy statements by Bush and others seem to envisage a secular model of political parties that might not only exclude the Ikhwan, but even parties like al-Wasat emphasizing the shari‘ah as a collection of principles (Powell 2002). In high profile presentations U.S. officials note warily that democratic elections will bring greater power to “parties with an Islamic character” (Haass 2003). Yet, the al-Wasat example illustrates that “parties with an Islamic character” may well invoke creative political ideas and pragmatic principles. These are parties that deserve to be embraced and encouraged, not marginalized and feared.

Al-Wasat was not a shot out of the blue, but a culmination of tajdidi trends that have been developing dramatically since the 1980s (al-Mawla 2000; Norton 2002). It is a modern manifestation of liberal Islam, but its commitment to interpret shari‘ah flexibly flows also naturally from the modernism of Muhammad ‘Abduh, almost a century ago. When he created the Ikhwan in 1928, Hassan al-Banna was more comfortable with Rashid Rida’s conservative Salafism than with ‘Abduh’s modernism. Now the paths are recrossing, as reflected even in the comments by the Supreme

Guide. The emergence of al-Wasat does not mark a new azimuth as much as a new context and a new era in Islamist politics. In this sense, it is an instructive sample of modern political parties that will appear with increasing regularity throughout the Muslim world.

[24] These trends are described in a lecture broadcast on WBUR (Norton 2002a), and the contending perspectives on these trends in Islamic thinking are the subject of a Ford Foundation-funded project on Tajdid (or renewal) that the author cochaired with Bahman Baktiari in 2001. The project will resume in 2004.

[25] Four authors provide informative accounts of Hizb al-Wasat. Joshua Stacher (2001, 2002) has done yeoman service by putting together a valuable collection of factual material, as well as offering his own insights. Caryle Murphy (2002) reflects on her contemporaneous reportage of the Hizb al-Wasat and contextualizes the party in the broader Islamic debate over reform. Anthony Shadid (2001) offers crisp and thoughtful reportage, and Sa'ud al-Mawla (2000) successfully analyzes the case (in Arabic) in the broader historical context of the Ikhwan.

[26] Professor Farhad Kazemi and I collaborated on several research projects during this period, notably the Civil Society in the Middle East project at New York University, which we directed together. My conclusions from the mid-1990s reflect fieldwork that Kazemi and I conducted together, and I could not have developed some of these ideas without his inspiration.

[27] Three years after al-Wasat filed its first application, two more Islamist parties were proposed, but they had a very different pedigree from al-Wasat's. The two, respectively, were drawn from the Gama'at Islamiyya and al-Jihad, both notorious for antigovernment violence and acts of terrorism. Kamal Habib's Reform Party (al-Islah) and the Islamic Law Party (Hizb al-shari'ah) were both denied legal status in 1999 (Murphy 2002).

[28] See Islam on Line (in Arabic): [[http://www.islamonline.net/Arabic/contemporary/politic/2000/article30S.shtml][http://www.islamonline.net/Arabic/contemporary/]] [[http://www.islamonline.net/Arabic/contemporary/politic/2000/article30S.shtml][politic/2000/article30S.shtml]]. The author is indebted to Maha ‘Eid, who located some of these materials.

[29] Amani Abu-Shakra’s assistance in translating the program was indispensable, especially in those sections that stymied my ability in Arabic.

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** Chapter 7: Rewriting Divorce in Egypt: Reclaiming Islam, Legal Activism, and Coalition Politics

Diane Singerman

The New Marriage Contract Initiative adopted a strategy of engaging religious discourse, based on the women's reading of their rights under the principles of Sharia. We reclaimed for the first time our right to redefine our cultural heritage, as Muslim women under the principles of Sharia. It was evident that we could not rely on modern constitutional rights of equality before the law, as these did not equally apply under Family Law, which claimed to be based on the principles of Sharia. We could not afford to shy away from the challenge and continue using solely a strategy based on constitutional and human rights. We had to prove that the religious discourse could also be used by women to defend their cause.

—Mona Zulficar, THE ISLAMIST MARRIAGE Contract in Egypt

In January 2000, after a month-long period of controversial, often vitriolic debate and media attention, the Egyptian parliament passed "The Law on Reorganization of Certain Terms and Procedures of Litigation in Personal Status Matters" (Law No. 1, 2000). Personal Status Law (PSL) regulates marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance issues, but this law only ushered in procedural changes rather than basic changes in PSL law itself. In short, this legislation was controversial because it provided a woman with the right to initiate a "no-fault" divorce against her husband, in return for giving up her financial claims upon him, including the deferred part of the dower, or mu'akhar saddaq.[30] This type of divorce is known as khul' and is religiously legitimated because of fears that a

woman will not be able to “keep within the limits of the law” if she finds her husband so repulsive or incompatible. Thus, a Qur’anic verse (Surah 2:29) allows her to “give something up to her husband [the deferred dower] in exchange for her freedom” (Awde 2000, 25). Procedural changes also consolidated all disputes associated with divorce in a new Family Court system, while disallowing further appeal in khul’ divorces (reducing the period of litigation associated with divorce). The legislation also created a Sanduq al-Usr, or “Family Fund” to provide child support for impoverished families, giving authority to the government to garnish the wages of recalcitrant husbands who renege on alimony and child support. Finally, another important revision in the law provided more flexible criteria to facilitate divorce in urfi or unregistered marriages, as well as procedures for proving paternity for their offspring (Allam 2000; Shahine 1998; Ezzat 2000).

This legislation was the culmination of a fifteen-year campaign to facilitate divorce for women, orchestrated by a coalition of activists, lawyers, government officials, civic leaders, legislators, and scholars. It was but the most recent chapter of a century-long battle by women and sympathetic men to reform personal status law. The quote above, by one of the key activists in the Personal Status Law coalition, Mona Zulficar, reveals the self-conscious and strategic thinking innovative leaders developed to provide women with access to divorce. While leadership was absolutely key to the ultimate passage of Law No. 1 in 2000, along the way hundreds of meetings, interviews, conferences, strategy sessions, phone calls, lobbying efforts, and studies generated enough support across diverse constituencies for the bill to succeed.

More importantly, this coalition represented a convergence of several innovative projects within the contemporary Middle East that deserve far more attention because of the way in which they are creating new political alliances and possibilities, legitimated by an Islamic, indigenous, religious frame. These initiatives, deliberately and militantly rooted in the rule of law and sound legislative practices, may gradually be leading to the further institutionalization of democracy, while widening the spectrum of what “Islam” means to various constituencies engaged in collective action. The embrace of Islam by the PSL coalition leaves some women activists and leaders ambivalent or critical, however, because they are skeptical of the

inegalitarian or patriarchal aspects of Islam. Some of these activists promote secular ideals as a solution while others promote a more progressive Islam that rearticulates fundamental concepts of belief and traditions (see Safi 2003; Ali 2003). Yet a growing number of activists in Egyptian civil society, and beyond, are making convincing popular arguments that Islam is a source of positive social and political change.

In this coalition, a divergent group of postcolonial scholars of history, law, sociology, religion, and philosophy, motivated by their professional identities and training, challenged the predominant religious discourse on women, as well as the historical record of women in the Islamic and precolonial era. They are part of a larger movement of postcolonial scholars who are reclaiming subjugated knowledge, buried and disguised or disqualified and marginalized over the centuries (Bond and Giliam 1994, 8; Foucault 1980, 78–109).

While these women are themselves the demographic and political product of an independent postcolonial Egypt that increased public education and professional opportunities for women, granted them suffrage, and encouraged them to contribute to Egypt’s development, they are nevertheless still constrained in their daily and professional lives. Women could become ambassadors, deans of Islamic philosophy, international corporate lawyers, wealthy businesswomen, leaders of organizations, scholars, and politicians, yet they still feared divorce, financial ruin, and losing the custody of their children if they worked, wanted to further their education, or traveled without the permission of their husband. Personal Status Law still allows a man to claim his wife has been “disobedient” and if she works, seeks education, or travels without his approval, he is not obligated to support her after a divorce. Thus, although much of the international and national direction of the women’s movement has been to promote female education, political rights, and equality for women, the Egyptian women’s movement and others across the Muslim world also understand the need to change the balance of power within marriage, through legal change, if they are truly to benefit from these other changes (see Sonbol 2003).

Gerda Lerner argues that although women have been enduring patriarchy for millennia, at certain moments in time the “contradiction between women’s centrality and active role in creating society and their marginality in the meaning-giving process of interpretation and explanation” encourages women to perceive deprivations that they wish to change. This “coming-into-consciousness ... becomes the dialectical force moving them into action to change their condition and to enter a new relationship to male-dominated society” (Lerner 1986, 5). The women and their male supporters in the PSL coalition not only tried to overcome the contradictions of their daily and professional lives through this campaign, but in the process they became part of a new transnational movement of Muslim intellectuals and activists that are reimagining the past and the Islamic canon, contesting dominant frames legitimated by religious authorities who often have indirect or direct ties with the more conservative Islamist groups (see Bowen; Baktiari; and Peletz in this volume).

This said, the work of the PSL coalition demonstrates that more than scholarship and ideas are needed to win a hotly contested battle where powerful constituencies have every reason to maintain the status quo. Coalitions need powerful supporters, resources, and tactical innovations to succeed, as social movement theorists remind us. “Movement entrepreneurs” not only need to motivate diverse groups to work together, but they must cast unpopular ideas in a more acceptable light, exploit political opportunities, and enlist some sector of the elite in their project (see McCarthy and Zald 1977; Tarrow 1994). This new coalition was ultimately successful because it scaled across to that part of the religious establishment that would concur with their religiously framed policies, it scaled up with political elites in the executive branch, legislators and officials in the ruling National Democratic Party, and high Ministry of Justice Officials, and it also scaled down to gain support from a variety of organizations in civil society and their memberships (see Hefner 2000, and in this volume).

This chapter tells part of the story of this coalition by exploring the innovative strategies utilized by the women’s movement in Egypt to guide the passage of important new procedural guidelines for Personal Status Law. In particular, I will highlight the prominent role of largely female lawyers, who rallied broad elite support across a number of important NGOs, the religious community, and within the government, and utilized a relatively new

strategy of legal activism in the realm of administrative law to realize their objectives. A commitment to the rule of law and sound legislative practices directed the coalition to eventually take up the challenge of engineering legislative reforms of Personal Status Law through the Egyptian parliament. The unintentional consequences of this legislative initiative, which was very controversial and contested by legislators, strengthened the links and the relevance of parliament to civil society. But this case also demonstrates that working within civil society is not enough. Coalition members succeeded because they realized that they needed to play with the “big boys,” and enlist the president, the law, parliament and, most importantly, religious authorities in their campaign. We need to recognize, as Jenny White argues about the Turkish case in this volume, that meaningful change can proceed only if activists have begun to assert themselves in national politics and in legitimate arenas of political contestation. In Egypt, activists are beginning to take legislatures more seriously. They are lobbying, holding legislators accountable, and building constituent politics. Although Parliament has been constrained by authoritarian politics, the domination of the National Democratic Party, and questionable electoral practices, it is an increasingly important arena of contestation and an architect of public policy.

The coalition developed new lobbying strategies so that the legislative campaign represented a learning curve for the women’s movement in democratic and representative politics. The case also provides valuable lessons for others working for social change within the Islamic context. Of special interest is the manner in which the activists in the PSL coalition turned religion into an asset, rather than a liability, beating the religious traditionalists at their own game while engaging in civil, legal, rightful collective action that was acceptable within the constrained space of illiberal rule in Egypt. It was a campaign that could not have been successful without its Islamic frame.

*** Divorce: The Egyptian Context

In Egypt, men have a unilateral right to divorce that they can exercise without being obliged to enter into a court proceeding. A woman has traditionally only been able to seek a divorce in court (tatliiq or tatfriiq) by presenting proof that her husband has “harmed” her

in specific ways that qualify as grounds for divorce (desertion, imprisonment, sterility, sexual deviance, lack of financial support, “harm” due to a husband taking a second wife).[31] Most divorce cases initiated by women have languished in the courts, taking as long as eight to ten years to resolve, and husbands have had many legal and indirect ways to prolong the process, causing great anguish for the wife and often the family. Each divorce case, one study suggested, produces at least five other cases in different courts over child custody, nafaqa (financial support/alimony), obedience (ta’a), the marital abode, and dispersion of the couple’s assets and property (Zul- ficar and El-Sadda 1996, 251). In addition, due to the appeals process in Egyptian courts, some women have finalized their divorces only to have the decision reversed years later, after they have already remarried and had children. Such a reversal effectively renders the women bigamists, making them legally vulnerable in multiple ways.

Quite apart from the social costs of protracted lawsuits, the judiciary and international business interests have long expressed concern about the situation, since divorce cases and personal status disputes overwhelm the court system in Egypt’s already extremely litigious society. While caseload statistics on divorce vary, one source suggests that 1.5 million divorce cases are filed each year in a population of 64 million (Shah 2000; Hammond 2000). A quarter of a million Egyptian women visit the courts annually (Tadros 2000a; Sakr and Hakim 2001) producing a huge caseload of approximately 5 million cases before the Egyptian courts (Soliman and Saleh el-Diin 2002). One estimate suggested that in 1997, 14 million lawsuits were in the court system and only four thousand judges were available to review them.[32] Another source claimed that 12 million new cases were brought before various Egyptian courts each year, or that the number of new court cases a year approaches one per household! (Brown 1997, 189–99) The judiciary is paralyzed by these cases and the backlog they produce, and political forces have been disappointed by the lack of “judicial reform” in Egypt, which they see as an essential precondition for and component of Egypt’s growing involvement in the global economic order.

Even with the presence of these concerns, large-scale changes to personal status laws have been slow in coming. While Personal Status Law has been codified since 1929 (though a law of procedure was codified earlier, in 1897), modest reforms were achieved in 1979 and 1985 after popular controversy

and vigorous debate (Brown 1996; al-Atraqchi 2992). The legal and historical dimensions of this debate are complicated and fascinating; new scholarship continues to emerge to explain the changing nature and context of this body of law and practice (see Sonbol 1996; Brown 1997; Afifi 1996; Zilfi 1997; Abu-Odeh 2992, n.d.; Ali 2993). These historical debates will barely be discussed here, but it is critical to understand that debates on personal status law since the nineteenth century have been framed around Islam, the religious community, and Westernization. At the same time, as Moors explains, family law is “central to the reproduction of the social and cultural order: it arranges for the transfer of material resources from one generation to the next (succession), it organizes the care for and socialization of the next generation (custody and guardianship), and it regulates sexual relations (marriage and its effects)” (2993, forthcoming).

The inroads of centralizing Ottoman codes and colonial, Western, secular law made religious authorities and indigenous political elites guard even more jealously the terrain of Personal Status law. While criminal and civil codes were greatly influenced by European codes, despite the abolishment of separate Personal Status courts in 1955 after the Free Officers Revolution, shari’a remained the source of law for Personal Status issues. “Bits and pieces of Western law” and interpretations from various madhahib (schools of law) were merged together to create “a new system” bundled into a “legitimate Islamic package” (Sonbol 1996, 277). This link between personal status law and religious legitimacy made changing these laws particularly difficult. And while female employment, education, and economic activity gradually improved, personal status laws remained discriminatory toward women. Furthermore, when women challenged those laws they were derided as secular, westernized, or immoral (see al-Ali 2999; Badran 1995).

*** A Strategy Emerges

It was against this complex backdrop that a broad coalition formed to usher Law No. 1 of 2000 through the Egyptian parliament. From the outset, key activists recognized the importance of the challenge presented by the overtly religious basis for Personal Status Law. It was understood that if women were to change the laws, they had to formulate their legal and

ideological challenge on Islamic grounds as well. Each Egyptian man, according to one key activist, walks around with a little pyramid inside of him, thinking and acting as if he is a pharaoh, and Islamic law can restore the balance in the Egyptian family that has been unfairly tipped toward patriarchy. Their position was simple: in Egypt, tradition and custom are stronger than religion, and a patriarchal Islamic tradition has deprived women of the protections and rights that Islamic law is supposed to give them. The coalition argued that Personal Status Law has already been distorted by secular, customary, Western, and Ottoman influences, and that Muslim women should reexamine the historical record of this body of law and restore the rights that Islam really affords them. Husn Shah, whose film Uridu Halan (I want a solution) brought the legal limbo of divorced women "out of the closet" and provoked widespread public debate in the 1970s, argued more recently in an interview that "people act like they understand Islam or they act like they don't, but people don't know Islam; they say we must do this and that, but really they are very selective in what they identify as Islamic." The coalition thought they might as well turn the selective interpretation of Islam to their own advantage.

The dual need to base a strategy for change on legal and religious grounds, incorporating a subtle critique of Western colonial or imperial Ottoman influences on national traditions, places this coalition within a much broader international movement of activists "reclaiming Islam." Like many of their counterparts in Morocco, Iran, Palestine, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, or Malaysia, this coalition continued to promote a "rights discourse" but veered away from the liberal, individualistic, secular framework of feminism associated with the West and women's "liberation" (see Peletz in this volume on the efforts of Sisters in Islam in Malaysia). Rather, they utilized the sacred texts of the Qur'an, the hadith (the "sayings" of the Prophet), and Islamic jurisprudence to legitimize their actions. "Re-imagining foundational narratives" lies at the center of what Cooke calls Islamic feminism (Cooke 2001, xxv). Joining a transnational movement of women who are reinterpreting Islamic texts and traditions (Carroll and Kapoor 1996), Egyptian women have begun to legitimize their activism by studying the Prophet Muhammad's life and the women around him who were important figures in Islamic history; engaging directly in Qur'anic textual analysis, adopting a historicist perspective to critique patriarchal trends that negatively influenced Islamic traditions and texts, and reconsidering the appropriate application of the Qur'an to the contemporary situation; and

finally, and most radically, engaging in ijtihad (relying on independent reasoning on issues which are not clear from the text) (Cooke 2001, 62; Abou El Fadl 2001).

Zainab Redwan, the dean of the College of Philosophy at Cairo University, Fayoum branch, member of the Shura Council (upper body of the Egyptian parliament), and scholar of Islamic philosophy, was a critically important and publicly prominent member of this coalition. As she explained, women realized that if they sought change from a religious foundation, based on religious principles, the change could not be refused. This new idea and new strategy became the grounds for a reform movement that was legitimate and far more popular, or acceptable, than earlier approaches of the women's movement (Redwan 2000). Another activist in this coalition outlined the strategy this way: "Many female elites used the rhetoric and language of fiqh discourse (the Islamic canon) in their defense of khul', as a way of preventing objections to the bill. They did this to give people 'no excuse to object' to the new law." While one can debate whether this "strategic move" was only tactical and instrumental or whether it represented a deeper commitment to Islamic tenets and values by these activists, it was indisputably a successful strategy. Hoda El-Sadda, a key activist in the coalition, professor of English literature at Cairo University and daughter of a professor of Islamic law, emphasized in her account of this coalition that she and others recognized there is a "Big Middle" of practicing Muslims in Egypt who are the majority. These women and men are ordinary, faithful people who want freedom, but they get lost between two radical poles. This silent majority, she and others believed, would welcome further freedom and opportunities for women (and men) if they were religiously legitimate.

The Personal Status Law coalition used both Qur'anic texts and hadith to legitimize the new law. Khul' is referred to in hadith collections in the story of Gamila, the wife of Thaabit ibn Qais, who went to the Prophet and explained that she simply hated her husband and could not fulfill her [sexual] obligations to him, although he was not an immoral or horrible person. The Prophet, in accordance with the Qur'anic verse, asked her to return her dower of a garden to her husband and she was divorced (Awde 2000, 25).

The coalition activists commissioned studies of the historical record of shari’a courts, marriage contracts, and divorce disputes in Egypt and other Muslim countries to understand how earlier periods had afforded women more rights, or at least more room to contest their situations, than were currently available and/or socially acceptable. Scholars met in international conferences and exchanged ideas and research, making alliances while refining and articulating their theory so it could emerge as “praxis.” By presenting the historical record of women’s greater access to divorce and the courts’ greater flexibility and more sympathetic tolerance for the dissolution of marriages in earlier historical periods, they questioned common perceptions of Egyptian “progress” and “development” over the last century (Sonbol 1996, 1995; Hanna 1995). Furthermore, they demonstrated that the historical record was diverse and complex, and argued that if women may have fared better centuries ago, then surely there was not a single, fixed, essentialist religious or legal “position” on Personal Status issues. At the very least, there was room to reinterpret their own traditions to restore the rights that women had enjoyed in earlier period of Islamic history.

*** Legal Activism

Before moving to a specific discussion of the substance of changes under Law No. 1, 2000, it is important to note that this coalition could not have succeeded without the participation of trained lawyers (both women and men) and an explicit strategy of legal activism. This strategy is becoming more important as a political weapon throughout the Middle East as tentative experiences with illiberal democracy gradually yield a modicum of political space (Kienle 2001). As with many other women’s movements around the globe, the Egyptian movement faced a hostile public in a nation where women are politically and economically underrepresented. Even in this environment, the passage of the Personal Status Legislation demonstrates that “legal activism” can produce substantial change.

Useful comparisons can be made with American women and African Americans in the 1960s, and gays and lesbians in the 1970s and 1980s, who

also faced overwhelming institutional, legal, and cultural discrimination and held little electoral power. With only a small elite of highly successful, experienced, professionals (particularly lawyers) to wage their battle, activists were able to effect radical change through a civil campaign that used the courts to end discriminatory laws and practices, eventually forcing legislators to enact new laws (O'Connor 1980; Mueller 1997).

In Egypt, parliamentary politics has remained very constrained by executive influence over the dominant party, the National Democratic Party (NDP). Yet despite the record of authoritarian politics in Egypt and political repression stoked by the challenge of radical Islamists, Makram-Ebeid argued recently that "the judiciary has replaced the opposition." It has been the judiciary that has issued a spate of court rulings enhancing democratization, as its decisions have reigned in executive authority and protected legislative and bureaucratic authority and procedure (2001, 7). It was the judiciary that the PSL strategically incorporated into its coalition.

The coalition's activities showed the efficacy of a legal challenge as a "rightful" form of resistance, within the bounds of law, articulated by some of the most respected members of the local legal community and state bureaucracy (O'Brien 1996). Legal challenges have been used in a variety of fashions by a wide range of political movements, from contemporary challenges to centralized communist party elites from rural Chinese villages, to the Charter 77 movement in Czechoslovakia, which demanded that the communist government in the 1980s follow its own laws. In Egypt, ironically, the success of Islamist lawyers in promoting their cause through controversial and sensationalist court cases inspired lawyers in the PSL coalition to try a similar strategy of legal activism. Resisting political authority on its own terms and grounds can offer greater protection and legitimacy to political activists, particularly in contexts where many varieties of "normal" politics are constrained by authoritarian policies and violence. It is also difficult for the government to strike out against respected members of the judiciary who may have issued decisions that the government dislikes because these same lawyers also often work on behalf of the government to mediate political conflict or represent the government before various international bodies.

O’Connor’s discussion of amicus curiae (friend of the court) litigation seems to most closely resemble the strategy used by Egyptian women activists and lawyers in the PSL coalition. In this strategy, experts submit extensive and well-reasoned amicus curiae briefs to fully inform the court of the legal challenge’s implications and validity (1980, 3). The PSL coalition’s particular legal strategy was to operate not just through the courts, but to work together in a coalition with government sympathizers and the Ministry of Justice to rewrite administrative law and personal status law. The presentation of historical, religious, and strategic arguments and evidence convinced government insiders to join their effort. This strategy of organizing “talking shows” and nadwat (seminars and conferences) encourages informal networking, politicking, and alliance-formation (Al-Ali 2000). The state regulates the establishment, finances, and activities of associations very strictly in Egypt, so that forming fluid, ad hoc, temporary “single-issue” coalitions is more appropriate and less risky (see Norton in this volume). The Group of Seven, which published a booklet in 1988 outlining women’s rights in Egypt and promoted the initial marriage contract project, is a great example of an ad hoc coalition that circumvented the lengthy, bureaucratic, and politically delicate task of building a new organization, since the main players already had a well- established associational or professional base. The negative side of “conference politics” is that discussions can alienate potential coalition members, personality and leadership conflicts can worsen, and the coalition actors may not contribute sufficient financial and organizational resources from their groups to the coalition’s goal (al-Ali 2000, 171–72; Costain and Costain 1983).

The PSL coalition began this new tack after Law No. 44 of 1979 was declared unconstitutional in 1984 due to procedural irregularities, and a largely hostile parliament refused to reinstate the controversial articles in the new Law No. 100 of 1985. In an interview, Mona Zulficar described her disappointment when the 1979 reforms were abrogated, recognizing that Egyptian men continued to benefit from a long patriarchal tradition where they simply had more control over women. Women’s advocacy and organizations needed to break that control. However, in 1984, the gains of the recent past were suddenly and easily obliterated on “procedural” grounds that were difficult to contest (and in fact, many supporters of the 1979 reforms were themselves distressed by Sadat’s abuse of executive authority). Zulficar realized that advocates could no longer take shortcuts and that they had to be “consistent” and make sound laws that could withstand legal challenges.

The women’s movement learned in the 1980s that their plans for reform were not only thwarted by traditional ‘ulama (religious scholars and jurists) from Al-Azhar university but also from what Zhegal has called “peripheral” ‘ulama, who were critical of Anwar Sadat’s supposed commitment to reconcile Egyptian law with the shari’a and who had become increasingly allied with various popular Islamist movements in Egypt. By the time the Supreme Constitutional Court declared the 1979 reforms unconstitutional after Sadat’s assassination in 1981, Islamists had gained more ground in the parliament; in an alliance with the Wafd Party, they were able to weaken the provisions of the substitute 1985 reforms.

*** A New Strategy: The Marriage Contract Project

With neither a presence in parliament nor popular support for reforms, several women activists hatched a new approach that concentrated on legal and bureaucratic changes, circumventing the parliamentary process in order to avoid the vocal Islamist element. In 1985, a small group of women decided to pursue the idea of drafting a new marriage contract that would allow room for a couple to “check-off” certain voluntary stipulations. This new marriage contract, they reasoned, would replace the standard contract (unchanged since 1931) that each couple signs before the ma’zun (marriage registrar). Because the Ministry of Justice issues the standard contract (aqd al-jawaz), the coalition soon began to work with the Ministry of Justice, particularly a high-ranking official who is currently chief justice of the Supreme Constitutional Court, Fathi Naguib (see Zulficar 1999, 9). He is recognized by many activists in the coalition as one of its prime “architects” and strategists, who for a variety of reasons that are both professionally and personally motivated, believed that women should have greater access to divorce and that Personal Status Law needed substantial reform on a variety of fronts. Naguib argued:

When we assess the benefit of the law we have to consider the position of those women who were trapped either in a miserable marriage or in the vicious circle of court procedures over the years, before and after the new

law. Khul' cannot be assessed through the eyes of those who suffer no problems and yet disapprove of its use by the ones who are suffering. All this results from the culture that regards women as inferior to men and not entitled to the same rights. This same culture blocked the legalisation of khul' for a long time although it is compatible with Shari'a. Islam is fair and balanced in the rights and duties it stipulates. (Sakr and Hakim 2001)

The marriage contract "project," as it was referred to by its proponents, was designed as a consciousness-raising tool. The idea was not only to educate women about rights that they were already entitled to, but also to encourage them to insert new stipulations in the contract that enhanced their power in the marriage. Activists hoped that a discussion before the marriage of each partner's expectations and registration of them in the contract would avoid problems farther down the road, and if divorce ensued, this new contract would allow women to easily extricate themselves from the marriage and avoid complicated, costly legal battles.

A small group of women, already linked by professional, political, family, educational, and economic networks, published a pamphlet in 1988 entitled the "Legal Rights of Egyptian Women in Theory and Practice." The document discussed the status of women in Egypt and the problems they faced, and made a series of recommendations, including the proposed new marriage contract. Social historians and legal historians had laid the groundwork for this endeavor by engaging in archival studies of the courts and the evolution of Personal Status Law (see Son- bol 1995, 1996; Zulficar 1999; Zilfi 1997; Hanna 1995). They then networked with other activists, academics, and lawyers to ensure that their efforts would not be summarily rejected by their traditional antagonists: the religious establishment, Islamist groups, and a government that abhorred public controversy.

The religious justification for the project was clear: throughout Islamic history, from its very beginning, women have included conditions in their marriage contracts that have been widely recognized as legitimate, if at times uncommon. The most famous historical example is the marriage contract of Sakina, the daughter of Hussein ibn 'Ali Talib, who stipulated conditions in her marriage contract that her husband could not restrict her

freedom, could not marry another woman, and could not prohibit her from attending poetry and literary salons (Zulficar and El-Sadda 1996).

The new draft marriage contract included a “recommended” list of conditions that would be part of the contract and simply “checked” if mutually agreed upon. These recommendations included the couple’s agreement on the possession of the furniture in case of divorce, and the inclusion of the bride’s rights to education, to work, and to travel without her husband’s permission. The bride could also stipulate that she retained the right to divorce herself in her “hand” (‘isma bi-iidiha). One study suggested that only 325,000 women out of 18 million women of marriageable age in Egypt had included this right to divorce in their marriage contracts (Ezzat 2000, 43). If a woman stipulates this right in her marriage contract, it does not cancel the man’s right to unilateral divorce, but only facilitates the divorce procedures for wives since it alleviates the wife from the burden of proving legal “harm” before a court (Zulficar and El-Sadda 1996, 253). The second relevant clause in the list of recommendations that had a central role in the PSL coalition’s eventual, and successful, legislative strategy, was khul’ divorce. Many other Arab and Muslim countries have historically allowed khul’ and ‘ibraa’ divorces, but these have necessitated gaining the consent of the husband (Welchman 2000; Moors 1995; Haeri 1990; and Mir-Hosseini 1999, 1993).

While activists worked closely with religious authorities, lawyers, professors of Islamic law and philosophy and government officials to promote this new marriage contract, the project itself was eventually postponed, for three reasons. First, activists realized that even if these conditions were legally accessible to any woman, social convention still prevented women from using them. These new conditions in the marriage contract were only voluntary, and if it was scandalous actually to utilize them, then immense political capital and strategic efforts would be wasted on only a few women. The vast majority of Egyptian men would never accept these conditions, and even if a groom might consider them, their families (who are intimately involved with, if not orchestrating, their marriages) would not allow it, since they invest huge financial resources in a marriage.[33] As one ma’zun working in Imbaba (a poor area of Cairo) argued, “No man who deserves to be called a man can accept this: a woman to decide for him or to divorce him” (Ezzat 2000, 43).

Second, many women’s groups and activists objected to including a right of work, education, and travel for women in the marriage contract, because they believed they were already protected under the Egyptian constitution’s protection of equality and they did not want to be party to weakening their claim to formal legal authority under national and international law, particularly the U.N. Convention on Eliminating Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which Egypt signed in 1981.

The third reason that the coalition abandoned the Marriage Contract initiative was the largely negative nature of the public discourse surrounding it, particularly from conservative religious forces. By 1991, the Ministry of Justice and Fathi Naguib had already become deeply involved in the project and revised the recommendations for the new contract. Supporters of the project had received tentative positive responses to the basic model of the new marriage contract from some religious authorities; the Grand Mufti, Shaykh Mohamed Sayed El-Tantawi, approved the third draft of the marriage contract. Despite his approval, others criticized it, and some who approved of the religious legitimation for the new contract still opposed it on other grounds. For example, after fierce attacks by more conservative ‘ulama both inside and outside of Al-Azhar, the Shaykh al-Azhar, Gad al-Haqq, rejected the marriage contract idea—not on religious or legal grounds, but because he argued it would discourage marriage between young people and cause social problems (Zulficar 1999, 9).[34] The support for the project was waning as opposition to it arose from various quarters.

*** Scaling Up: A Turn toward the Legislative and Executive Branches

By 1993, preparations were already under way for the 1994 U.N. Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to be held in Cairo. In Egypt, Aziza Hussein, a longtime activist, sociologist, and head of the Family Planning Association (and also a relative of Mona Zulficar’s) was chosen to head the National Preparatory Committee for NGOs for the ICPD. Informants suggest that she ran the forum in a very inclusive manner, encouraging activists and their organizations to cooperate and strategize cooperatively about promoting their agenda before the ICPD and the Egyptian government.

The Egyptian government was pleased to have Cairo chosen as the site of the ICPD and saw this conference as an opportunity to play a leadership role in the international community. At the same time, it wanted to counter the image in the West that Egyptian women were oppressed. The forum created a Gender Equality Committee, which organized symposiums and commissioned a number of legal and social studies, eventually embracing the new marriage contract as its own. One study demonstrated that most men and women were not aware that including stipulations in the marriage contract was legitimate under shari'a principles (Zulficar and El-Sadda 1996, 255–59). It is at this juncture that the "social imaginations" designed for the marriage draft law project were appropriated for a larger, more ambitious project (Zakaria 2002). As one activist explained, "Women thought law—wow! We should target the Personal Status Law itself, but that was too big of a project and perhaps we should begin with something small, with which we had some experience, and it was here that the procedures surrounding Personal Status Law were targeted. We really needed something that was 'doable.' Just to succeed in anything would be great, but we needed some achievable goal, some success, something concrete." A focus on procedural changes in Personal Status Law involved only administrative changes, rather than changes in the basic law, and could be "marketed" as such. It was doable, it could be historically and religiously legitimated, and at the same time, the debate and discussion that the new law would provoke could be useful as "consciousness raising."

Although the new marriage contract project was not abandoned (and many of its provisions were eventually included in the new marriage contract issued by the Ministry of Justice in June 2000), the focus of the coalition turned toward rewriting the procedural regulations for Personal Status issues (Leila 2000). New support came from a very important quarter: Suzanne Mubarak, Egypt's First Lady. Partially as a response to the renewed attention on women and development sparked by the ICPD, as well as her own commitments to gender equality and development, the National Commission for Women, originally established in 1978, was revitalized in 1993 under the leadership of Suzanne Mubarak. A series of well-publicized national conferences were held in succeeding years, and this new commission embraced the procedural law changes and the new marriage contract.

This support from the First Lady was critical to the PSL coalition, providing protection and an indirect message to all other government actors that the president was behind the reform effort, and thus the campaign could now move to the parliamentary realm. Some activists critiqued the PSL coalition for being too close to the government and even condemned activists for "selling out." While it is clear that the coalition had the personal support of Suzanne Mubarak and probably the president, the First Lady remained discreetly behind the scenes. The more visible role of mobilizing supporters for the initiative was played by prominent and well- respected lawyers such as Mona Zulficar, Tehani El-Gebali, Fathi Naguib, former parliamentarian Fawziyya Abdel-Sattar, and Amira Bahieldin, as well as leaders such as Aziza Hussein and Iman Bibars, and academics such as Zainab Redwan and Hoda El-Sadda. The "liberal" Islam promoted by the PSL coalition strengthened the government's centrist position and even demonstrated to its critics in civil society that gradual change was possible if groups would only agree to work with the government, rather than against it. Yet, the organized and activist conservative religious forces had not yet finished their attack.

*** The Parliamentary Surge

The ability of this coalition to weave Law No. 1 of 2000 through parliament, I would argue, represents not only a significant legislative victory but also an important learning process for women's rights activists and NGO leaders. While the coalition's gradualist approach might have frustrated many of its supporters, it carefully laid the groundwork for success by outmaneuvering and anticipating its opponents' moves and enlisting the support of the leadership of the People's Assembly and National Democratic Party. The coalition benefited particularly from Dr. Fawziyya Abdel-Sattar's leadership, since she was a respected professor of law at Cairo University, had served in the People's Assembly from 1990 to 1995, and was the first female chair of its legislative committee. This gave her essential experience and the respect of her colleagues in parliament— key attributes that the coalition was able to utilize. Abdel-Sattar argued that women, who had first entered parliament in 1975, were now becoming experienced enough to attempt such initiatives even though their members were still small and only 7 women deputies (out of 444) had won office in the last national election (Elbendary 2000a, 2000b). Most of the women in parliament remained silent on this issue, maintaining, as another activist put it, their status as "decor." But since she was no longer

in parliament, Dr. Abdel-Sattar was probably more valuable to the coalition, since she could plan parliamentary maneuvers and run interference for the coalition with her former colleagues.

The bill was presented on January 16 to an unusually packed house with 70 percent of the representatives in attendance. The session was opened by Justice Minister Farouq Seif al-Nasr, who declared that “marriage should not be a prison for women, but a blessing” (Abdel Hamid 2000, 10). The Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Shaykh Mohammed Sayed El- Tantawi, was also present; he reminded the Assembly that the bill had been thoroughly examined by the Academy for Islamic Research and that it had been approved by thirty-five of the Academy’s forty members (Atiya 2000). Despite these efforts to publicly demonstrate the ‘ulama’s support of the bill, opposition to the legislation was intense and came from a wide array of legislators. While the controlling National Democratic Party was supposed to support the legislation, most members of the party still fought it in the People’s Assembly. This legislation, according to one source, represented only the second time that the NDP seriously opposed government policy, but in the end, party discipline won the day and the bill passed by a majority. A newspaper that presents the Islamist perspective complained that “only a few members were allowed to criticize the law while the majority had to stick to the government’s position while voting” (Khalil 2002). At one point, the Wafd Party, objecting to the NDP’s attempt to limit and cut off debate and force a vote, walked out of the parliament. Since it has been increasingly aligned with Islamists, the Wafd stated it would not take part in this “crime against Egyptian society,” arguing that the legislation was contrary to shari’a, and that it would only help rich women who could afford to give up their financial claims in a divorce (Al-Abd 2000). The leader of the Wafd party, Isma’il Serag El-Din, accused the government of lying about how many members of the Academy of Islamic Research in Al-Azhar had approved the draft legislation (the government said thirty-five out of forty had; he suggested it was only twenty-three and thus not a majority) and accused the government of following improper procedures when the upper house of parliament, the Shura Council, vetted the legislation (al-Abd 2000). One column in the Wafd Party’s newspaper argued that “it is strange that the government ignored the ‘ulama and the legislators and left the task of reform to a female Egyptian lawyer,” clearly a negative reference to Mona Zulficar (al-Hayawaan 2000). In general, and along with other legislators opposing the bill, the Wafd objected to the haste with which

the government guided the bill through parliament. (This is a typical ruse of the government to avoid public contestation and the limited maneuverability that the small opposition forces have at their disposal.) One member of parliament accused the Minister of Justice of implementing the law, interfering in the domain of the parliament, but of course the Minister of Justice denied the charge (Fikry 2002). The Nasserists and the Left were silent in parliament, though they ultimately supported the bill. One impassioned newspaper columnist criticized the parliament for its double standards—despite their demands to impose the shari'a and give religious authorities more political power, these same MPs attacked this legislation even though it had been vetted by the Shaykh al-Azhar and the Academy for Islamic Research. He suggested, "I fear that some of those opposed to khul' are the ones who walked the ways of corruption and escaped with what they had earned illegally [haram] and are therefore afraid that their wives would take it and go" (Hammouda 2000).

The nature of the debate was quite misogynist in tone, revealing the fear, if not terror, that many men associate with women's rights. Constant references to the fickle, impressionable, emotional nature of women, and women as betrayers (kha'iina) were made, which derided their ability to make as important a decision as filing for divorce, according to Hoda Zakaria's analysis of the legislative sessions. For example, even Dr. Aisha Rateb, the former Minister of Insurance and Social Affairs and one of the few women to reach Cabinet rank in the government, questioned the legislation, stating, "Some might say that this gives women from a certain class the right to change their husbands the same way they change their dresses. We have to make sure that this is going to benefit a lot of middle class women, and even the lower class" (Abdel Kader 2000, 3). In addition, legislators were alarmed by a provision in the bill to allow women to travel abroad without the approval of a male guardian. Resistance to this clause was so intense that it was ultimately sacrificed for the sake of compromise and the bill's passage. One member of parliament from Upper Egypt, a traditionally more conservative part of Egypt, said that male and female equality was like ignoring the differences between a turkey and a chicken. Ali Nasr, a member of parliament from Beni Suef in Upper Egypt, objected to the draft law, asserting the supremacy of men over women and citing an example from the animal world: "A rooster can have 40 hens and a lion marries more than four wives, but it has never happened that a hen married

two roosters” (Tadros 2000b). Saad Eddin Ibrahim suggested that “the fears of the Sheikhs [and parliamentarians] is nothing but classical authoritarian Masculine fear from the partial equality that is advocated by the new law” (2000). Fayda Kamel was one of few women parliamentarians who spoke up on behalf of women. She reminded her male colleagues about the vital roles that women played at the birth of Islam, when they served in battle, yet their position had deteriorated since then and change was needed.

Fathi Surour used the derisive descriptions of women as an excuse to halt debate on the bill, arguing that parliament should not be in the business of “punishing” women. Closing off debate certainly enhanced the bill’s chances to survive a vote. As another concession to mollify the bill’s critics, a clause was written into the procedural law that mandated a twomonth period to reconcile the couple with the aid of court-appointed social workers and family representatives. If the couple had children, mediation would be mandated for a four-month period. While divorce would not be immediate, Law No. 1 did not allow any appeal for khul’ divorce.

Clearly, the most vociferous attacks still came from diverse groups inside and outside the religious establishment, despite the long history of Al-Azhar’s involvement with this project and coalition. Members of parliament looked to their allies among the ‘ulama to sanction their critiques and tried unsuccessfully to send back the legislation to the Academy of Islamic Research, an official body within Al-Azhar University, for further study. Although information about some of the details is contradictory in the press, the publication of a “Manifesto” by “High Ranking ‘Ulama from Al-Azhar” laid out a complex rationale to reject the draft law. It

was published as a letter to President Mubarak and suggested that the government was rushing through the legislation; it claimed that “khul’ is not supported by evidence from God’s book, from the sunna or from the Islamic schools of law”; it argued that the irrevocable nature of khul’ divorce and the lack of appeal was contrary to shari’a; that the law canceled the husband’s will and ignored his “guardianship” over women; and that khul’ necessitated the husband’s consent and could not be a unilateral act by the wife. Finally, the “Manifesto” linked the current Personal Status Laws to the

colonial era, suggesting that this reform was similar to earlier Western manipulation of shari’a law, even if it was done in the name of religion (Al-Usbu’a 2000). One of the scholars who signed the plea, Yehya Halboush, argued that the Shaykh of Al-Azhar did not adequately discuss the law with Islamic scholars, “especially when many of the forty members of the Academy [for Islamic Research] are not shari’a experts” (Tadros 2000b). The authors of this Manifesto have a long history of critiquing both the government’s commitment to Islam and leaders among the religious establishment who have close ties to the government and are not as radical as they are (see El-Nahhas 2002; Moustafa 2000, 16; and Zeghal 1999).

There are clearly multiple claimants for religious authority in Egypt, though they do battle with vastly different war chests, supporters, and alliances. As Zaman notes, “[A]mbiguities about the place of Islam in the polity have ... contributed to strengthening the ‘ulama’s public roles” even though both the state and the ‘ulama “regularly fail to live up to the logic of their own premises” (Zaman 2002, 151; and in this volume). The PSL coalition and its project of reinterpretation of the Islamic canon is a new claimant to religious authority, but this approach can only work hand-in-hand with more traditional authorities while treading very carefully. There are others in the women’s movement who are still very skeptical of this approach, fearing it will only give more power to religious authorities. As Nadia Wassef, an Egyptian women’s activist and anthropologist argued, “You can play their game, but you’ll never win, because it’s their game” (Gauch 1998 as quoted in Pavalko 2002).

*** Civil Islam in the Public Interest?

A final and more general consequence of the coalition’s activity was that women activists and some NGOs began to take parliament, legal activism, and rightful resistance more seriously. While many women’s organizations and activists felt that this law did not go nearly far enough and worried that the women’s movement had wasted precious political capital on so marginal a return, other organizations realized the potential of engaging the parliament and sympathetic legislators. Iman Bibars, director of the Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women (ADEWS),

praised Mona Zulficar’s efforts to direct organizations, like her own, to lobby some legislators who were sitting on the fence. Their efforts had an effect as, eventually, more legislators supported the law, perhaps as a result of pressure from the NDP or due to these modest lobbying efforts. Iman Bibars emphasized that the experience in lobbying for Law No. 1 in 2000 was a model for successive legislative initiatives, particularly in support of the Citizenship Law that would give Egyptian citizenship to the children of Egyptian women married to foreign men. In this other struggle, which is currently winding its way in a positive fashion through the government and parliamentary arenas, ADEWS and other NGOs orchestrated a full-scale lobbying effort, sending literature, films, and constituent letters to members of parliament. They also began organizing constituents to lobby their parliamentary representatives directly, which was also a fairly new development. While it would be excessive to read too much into these parliamentary initiatives, since Egypt remains tightly controlled by its executive and its political life is still highly constrained, they remain credible examples of the possibilities for legal activism and coalition politics in Egypt. In other countries of the Islamic world, such as Jordan, it is already possible to perceive a demonstration effect from the Egyptian PSL coalition as other legislative initiatives use Law No. 1 and its provisions for khul’ as their model (Sonbol 2003).

As in all political coalitions that mobilize a considerable array of interests behind them, this campaign took advantage of a particular time in Egypt’s political, social, and demographic history. Here, it is important to recognize the fruits of the Nasserist revolution, which greatly increased public educational opportunities for all, but particularly for women. While female illiteracy rates remain almost twice as high as male illiteracy (50 percent female illiteracy, 29 percent male) younger urban women are drawing much closer to their male counterparts and 45 percent of all university graduates from nine disciplines in 1996–97 were women (Shafey 1999, 11). The push for public education in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the opportunities for more lucrative international networking and business opportunities after Egypt opened up its economy in the 1970s and 1980s, have produced a generation of highly successful, prominent, middle-class and wealthy female leaders. Many of these women, including activists from the PSL coalition, were invited by the government and its chair, Suzanne Mubarak, to join the National Council of Women, established by Presidential Decree 90, shortly after the passage of Law No. 1 in 2000.

Tehani El-Gebali, one of the lawyers involved in the coalition, notes that 23 percent of all lawyers in Egypt are women, and some of them hold high positions in the government and the judiciary, in corporate law practices, in the media, in human rights organizations, and in civil society. A new generation of female lawyers, concerned with development and women, she argued, want to work on concrete solutions and are available as allies to the women's movement, working from both within government and civil society. As one obvious manifestation of this trend, young lawyers can now volunteer in legal literacy programs sponsored by a range of institutions or help produce pamphlets on legal literacy, such as the one on khul' in the "The A, B, [Cs] of Law" series from the Egyptian Center for Women's Rights (Mohsen and Abu al-Komsan 2000; Al-Ali 2000, 166). The role of prominent female lawyers in the PSL coalition is critical to the women's movement's growing ability to engage in legal activism through the courts and political activism in the legislature.

While women schooled in Islamic sciences are far less numerous in the coalition and among leading women activists, their knowledge of Islamic law and tradition means that they are nevertheless essential players in the coalition. They provide the expertise to argue about the space within Islam for women's rights and can, more importantly, defend their rationale in front of the well-organized and more traditional conservative religious forces and political groups who use their notion of Islam for quite different ends. Very slowly, women are also entering the ranks of Al-Azhar jurists and have begun to participate in councils such as the Dar Al-Ifta' which issues fatwas, or religious opinions (Abou Bakr 2002).

The same forces represented in the PSL coalition are now attempting to push the envelope of legal reforms and administrative changes in other ways in Egypt. Another provision of Law No. 1 in 2000 was to consolidate all cases related to divorce and place them in a new Family Court. While the court has yet to be established as of early 2003, activists had suggested that this might be the first court where female judges would be appointed. There were no female judges in Egypt, though they preside over courts in many other Arab and Muslim countries. In January 2003, however, Tehani El-Gebali became the first female judge, appointed not to the Family Court but to the

highest court in Egypt, the Supreme Constitutional Court, where her PSL coalition ally Fathi Naguib serves as the Chief Judge (Leila 2003). Their interaction in the coalition was no doubt germane to El-Gebali's appointment, which was warmly welcomed by the government, the women's movement, and international human rights and women's organizations.

Despite this appointment, the courts still remain a somewhat hostile environment for women seeking a khul' divorce. Recent studies of the implementation and consequences of Law No. 1 are disquieting, since they describe the sexism and bias of many judges toward women. In some courts, particularly in rural areas, judges have put pressure on women to withdraw their khul' cases by suggesting that they will have to give their husbands the deferred dower, return their shabka, generally increasing their financial losses beyond the intention of the law (Soliman and Saleh el-Diin 2002).

Social movement theorists underscore the importance of the link between identity and activism (Melucci 1995). They note that submerged networks of people from different communities can utilize "weak ties" to build a new sense of identity as well as their own capabilities to enact change. It is always easier to build movements among people who know each other as long as they bring their communities and networks into the mix. Knowing someone engaged in activism is the clearest route to involvement (see McAdam 1988; McAdam and Paulsen 1997; and Melucci 1995). At the same time, activists' commitments are reinforced by their own sense of self, and in the case of the PSL coalition, it is largely the professional commitments of activists that motivate them. In other words, there is a strong link between their professional identity and their role as activists. They are only doing what they have been trained to do: moving into higher and higher ranks of law, development, the academy, and parliament, for example. This coalition thrived on these weak ties, reinforced by the commitments of the scholars to public education, by the historians' motivation to set the historical record straight, by the philosophers' need to reaffirm the equity and equality of Islam, and by the lawyers' commitment to the rule of law and its transformative potential. Islamist politicians use the slogan "Islam, huwwa haal" (Islam is the solution) for their political agenda in elections, and the PSL coalition seems to have been inspired by it, as they used Islam as a solution to their problems. The lessons of politics that direct

activists to seize new opportunities and imagine a different order can be drawn from anywhere, but within the Islamic world, Egypt and the PSL coalition may serve as a successful model, whose modest aims and innovative legitimating strategy to improve the power and position of women finally prevailed.

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[30] Typically, a divorced woman is entitled to whatever property she brought into the marriage as well as the mu'akhar saddaq, or the deferred part of the dower that is stipulated as a payment to the wife in the advent of divorce or death of the husband (Welchman 2000, 247).

[31] According to the 1979 Personal Status Law reforms, orchestrated through a coalition of women and the leadership of Jihan Sadat, a wife would

have the automatic right to divorce when her husband informed her of his intent to marry a second woman. However, Law No. 100 in 1985 forced a wife to prove “harm” before a court from the second marriage in order to gain a divorce (Al-Atraqchi 2002).

[32] Interview with Atef Shahat Sayed, American University in Cairo, October 2002.

[33] The national cost of marriage in Egypt, according to a 1999 survey, equals four and a half times per capita GNP (gross national product) or $5,957 (Singerman and Ibrahim 2001, 92).

[34] The Shaykh al-Azhar, Gad al-Haqq, had by this time grown more critical of the President’s policies and the Egyptian government’s position at the United Nations’ International Conference on Population and Development. He had allied himself with some of the more activist radical ‘ulama and against the Mufti, Shaykh El-Tantawi, whose fatwas legitimated controversial government policies. The former Mufti is now the Shaykh al-Azhar himself, which has ushered in warmer relations between the government and Al-Azhar, thereby setting the ground for the passage of Law No. 1 in 2000 (Zeghal 1999, 388; Moustafa 2000, 13).

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** Chapter 8: Empowering Civility Through Nationalism: Reformist Islam and Belonging in Saudi Arabia

Gwenn Okruhlik

A Moment of Opportunity: Finding Civility in Crisis

The politics of Islam and reform in Saudi Arabia generate enormous interest. Though its internal landscape is rich with nuance, one would think otherwise when viewed through the lens of the mainstream narrative within the United States in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. This narrative has not always been helpful because much of it merely skims along the surface of Saudi Arabia’s political waters, which is a mistake. Internal contests are not simply about a choice between revolutionary theocracy and royal absolutism. Political struggles are more complex than that, reflecting a large and diverse population. My purpose here is to look more deeply at the internal context of Saudi Arabian politics to better understand the roots and repercussions of Islamist dissent there.

It is a time of serious ferment in Saudi Arabia. This has been a turbulent year of petitions presented to the Crown Prince, shootouts throughout the country, protests in the streets of Riyadh, a new dialogue of tolerance among people who usually do not even acknowledge one another, massive arrests, and the discovery of arsenals of weapons in every nook and cranny of the

country. Political, economic, and social problems in the country have provided a fertile field for dissent; it can no longer be “managed” from above. If problems are addressed in a meaningful manner, the attraction of the radical flank of Islamists is likely to diminish in the presence of credible alternatives. If serious structural reforms are not implemented, the call from the most radical flank will almost certainly find an audience among the population. This is a defining moment, and the task is not an easy one. It is incumbent upon the al-Saud to accept political expression that is critical and vibrant in order to provide an alternative to the militants. In this time of ferment, political space and voice must be given to social forces that are reformist in nature.

Many Saudi Arabians hope that the tragedy of September 11 accelerates meaningful and difficult domestic reforms. The country faces formidable challenges, all of which have been further complicated by the war in Iraq. Internally, the country must implement serious reforms in politics, economics, and social relations, reforms that have been studiously avoided for two decades. Grievances include authoritarianism, maldistribution, and exclusion. Externally, Saudi Arabia also faces challenges from the United States and United Kingdom for allegedly funding terrorism, from global capital interests to throw open its economy, and from transnational groups that seek to promote human rights.

More than anything, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon prompted a period of intense and critical self-scrutiny in the kingdom, with Saudi Arabians confronting the harsh reality that many of the hijackers came from within their own borders. As ordinary Saudis and prominent spokespeople alike turn their attentions inward, this is an opportunity to redefine the contours of what it means to be a good Muslim in Saudi Arabia. This is a “moment” for believers in civil, tolerant Islam to assert their positions in national debates. It is, after all, the Islam of millions of Saudis.

*** Promoting Reform without Backlash

Contentious social and political voices resonate in Saudi Arabia because the exclusionary structure of governance does not reflect the reality of a diverse

population. From above, the sprawling religious and political bureaucracies do not represent the heterogeneity of ordinary Saudis, but the hegemony of an empowered minority. From below, there is precious little room for social forces to organize, debate, or contest the state. In between, the old social contracts that implicitly linked ruling family to citizenry are now deemed irrelevant. All of this is further complicated by demographic, economic, and social problems. For two decades, there has not existed a safe political space for civil Islam to assert itself or selves.

Crown Prince Abdullah, the de facto ruler of the country, must contain the radical religious right as he simultaneously institutes reform. This is key. He must move quickly enough to satisfy the many disgruntled elements in the country, yet with enough sensitivity to prevent a far-right backlash and thereby enhance the power of the religious extremists. This is no easy task given that the al-Saud historically based their right to rule largely on Islamic legitimacy. Indeed, the al-Saud walk a fine line: pushing the religious right too far may destabilize the regime, but not pushing at all will surely do so. [35] Even a hereditary monarch must respond to the contests among different domestic constituencies that seek to influence national policy. But Abdullah also has competitors within the ruling family who seek to stave off reform, cater to the religious right, and contain his power.

The social carriers and the cultural resources that could promote civil Islam permeate the country. The problem is that civil Islam is not politically empowered. The carriers must be politically and institutionally empowered. A fruitful way to do this is to thoroughly integrate civil Islam into the debate over “who we are” so that civility is part of the newly emerging, but still embryonic, national identity that is taking shape. I address this opportunity for “scaling up and across” in the conclusion to this chapter. First, however, I explain the relationship between religion and state, and how a very narrow practice of Islam became empowered in the first place. Political debates must be understood within their fuller context.

*** The Myth of Homogeneity

The central developmental challenge in Saudi Arabia is that the exclusionary structure of governance does not incorporate the diversity of the population. Contrary to popular images, Saudi Arabia is not a homogeneous country in religion, ethnicity, or class. Saudis are not all tribal, Najdi, rich, male, and “Wahhabi.”[36]

**** Religious Practice

The vast majority of the Saudi population is Sunni Muslim. But the plurality of Sunni religious practice, while long denied, is rich, including mainstream Hanbali, Wahhabi orthodoxy, Maliki, Hanafi, and Shafi’i. There are Sufi communities throughout the Hejaz. The largest Shi’a community is in the Eastern Province, but there are other Shi’a communities in Mecca and Medina. The southern region of Najran is overwhelmingly Ismaili. The challenge is not, as many Westerners believe, to promote tolerance for Christianity in Saudi Arabia. The first challenge is to promote tolerance for non-Wahhabi Muslims in Saudi Arabia. The problem is that only Wahhabis have been rewarded with institutional and bureaucratic positions of authority. This very narrow, and often intolerant, practice of Islam dominates the public discourse even as private practice is diverse. Islam will continue to be a part of private and public life in Saudi Arabia. The key to reform is an emphasis on a more tolerant, plural Islam. Wahhabi doctrine will continue to be important among parts of the population, but if alternative political space grows, Wahhabism may return to private socioreligious expression rather than the explicitly political manifestations of recent years.

**** Ethnicity

Despite increasing internal mobility, the different regions of Saudi Arabia are still characterized by ethnic distinctions among local populations. The population and economy of the Eastern Province have for centuries been related to merchant activities, and later to the oil industry, as families from Iran, Bahrain, and India migrated to the east with work. Concomitant with this, Shi’i religious affiliation is prominent in the east, unlike in the rest of the Sunni affiliated country. In the west, the Hejaz is noted for a multiplicity of ethnic identities for two reasons: a long history as the center of commerce

and as the site of the annual religious pilgrimage, the hajj. Families that came to the region to perform religious rituals stayed over and established thriving businesses. Some of the most prominent Hejazi families are from Persia, Indonesia, India, or other Arab states. In addition, there is a notable and fairly cohesive Hadrami community in the Hejaz, originally derived from the Hadramawt region of Yemen. In the southwest of the country, the Asir region shares more in common culturally, ethnically, geographically, and architecturally with the neighboring state of Yemen than with others parts of Saudi Arabia. Finally, the central region, the Najd, is home to many indigenous tribes. It was less common for foreign families to settle in the heartland than in the coastal regions and as such, the Najd remained insulated from migration flows for a longer period of time. This rich ethnic diversity is permeated as well by distinctions and barriers between people of tribal and nontribal lineage. Of course, approximately one-third of Saudi Arabia's total population is foreign labor, made up of people from diverse ethnic and national backgrounds.

**** Class

There are also new class distinctions among the Saudi population. Historically, class lines were clearly demarcated—between citizen and foreigner. The underclass was composed of the millions of foreign laborers imported to staff the oil-driven economy. Today, however, there is poverty among Saudi citizens. Crown Prince Abdullah's now famous walk through impoverished slums of Riyadh in November 2002 was the first public acknowledgment of the breadth of the problem. This poverty is coupled with significant cuts in state subsidies for many basic goods, subsidies upon which Saudis rely. Unemployment is high and sustained.

This complex diversity of people must be incorporated into governance. This means that men and women, rural and urban, rich and poor, bureaucrats and shop owners, Shi'a and Sunni (of all practices), and people from all the regions of the country must be represented in government, in the economy, and in the sprawling religious bureaucracy. The regime in Saudi Arabia must respond to multiple domestic constituencies—Islamists, women, the unemployed, intellectuals, nationalists, and business people, many of whom

have competing interests. How did such a richly diverse country come to empower a very narrow strand of religion?

*** Contextualizing Islam: Power, Religion, and State

The foundation on which contemporary political contests rest did not form suddenly. The al-Saud base their contemporary claim to legitimacy on the success of military conquests in the 1920s and 1930s and on their alliance with religious authorities. They rule in an uneasy symbiosis with the clergy. This relationship dates back to the 1744 “alliance” between Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab and Muhammad ibn Saud, a sort of merger of religious legitimacy and military might that has been lionized in the country’s civic mythology. The descendants of al-Wahhab, now known as the al-Shaykh family, still dominate the official religious institutions of the state. But Islam remains a double-edged sword for the Al-Saud. It grants them legitimacy as protectors of the faith, yet it constrains their behavior to that which is compatible with religious law. When members of the family deviate from that straight path, they are open to criticism, since the regime’s “right to rule” rests largely on the alliance with the al-Wahhab family.

Today, the “alliance” between the regime and official clergy is much contested by dissidents because the parties no longer serve as “checks” on each other. The official clergy are said to be dependent upon the Al-Saud for their existence. They regularly issue fatwas (religious judicial opinions) that justify the policies of the al-Saud in Islamic vocabulary, even when such policies are deplored by the people. Although the ruling family still needs the legitimation conferred by the clergy, the clergy have become subservient and bureaucratized in the last twenty-five years.

Resentment of abuse of state authority has long simmered just beneath the surface in Saudi Arabia, but the regime has historically been denounced only in private conversation, with criticism rarely erupting into public confrontation. But two important historic moments of opposition provide striking parallels with today’s Islamist opposition movement: the 1929 Ikhwan rebellion and the 1979 seizure of the great mosque in Mecca. In both instances, the Islamic legitimacy of the al-Saud family was seriously

challenged by movements that emanated from the heartland of their traditional support, the Najd. This meant that both movements were composed of “Wahhabis,” who follow a particularly austere and puritanical belief system.[37] In both uprisings, opposition was justified because the regime deviated from the straight path of the Qur’an and Sunna. Corruption was a common theme, as was dependence on the West.

During the conquests of the peninsula in the early part of the twentieth century, the founder of Saudi Arabia, Abdulaziz, depended on the formidable fighting force of the Ikhwan, tribal muwahhidun warriors, to extend the borders of his kingdom. When the strength on which he had depended turned against his leadership, Abdulaziz crushed the Ikhwan as a military force at the Battle of Sabalah in 1930. Nearly fifty years later, in 1979, Juhaiman al-Utaibi and his followers forcibly took control of the sacred mosque in Mecca in an effort to topple the ruling family. He was the grandson of an Ikhwan warrior; his charges against King Fahd of corruption, deviation, and dependence on the West echoed his grandfather’s charges against Abdulaziz. Al-Utaibi did not garner much popular support because he chose a holy venue rather than a palace, but the incident exposed the vulnerability of the regime. It took several weeks and the assistance of French special units to root the rebels from the mosque.

*** Resistance and the Empowerment of the Religious Right

There are deep historic roots to the empowerment of the religious right, but the contemporary turning point was 1979. The takeover of the Great Mosque was coupled with other tumultuous events. The Islamic Revolution in Iran had just toppled the shah’s government and initiated new institutions in the country. The long-oppressed Shi’a minority in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia organized open demonstrations (known as the intifada, or uprising) in the streets of several towns. The confluence of these three important developments led to greater surveillance over the populations, more power for the mutawwa (a sort of “police” responsible for enforcing public virtue), new constraints on mobility and expression, and simultaneous promises of reform.

The panicked response of the regime produced two decades of political paralysis in the country. The regime responded first by executing the rebels and then by instituting ever-tighter controls over social and political life in the country. Since they had been accused of deviating from Islam, the regime sought to justify itself by allowing the religious right ever more maneuver in Saudi life. Rather than confronting the religious right, King Fahd wrapped himself ever more securely in the mantle of official Islam, changing his title from Your Majesty King Fahd to Custodian of the Two Holy Cities, King Fahd. He sought to bolster the legitimacy of the ruling family by appropriating the power of Islam. Religious educational institutions were funded throughout the country, even during the oil bust of the mid-eighties when other projects were scaled back. There were new restrictions on women's mobility and employment. Women covered more, ventured forth less, and were prohibited from appearing in newspapers or on television. Gender segregation was profound and enforced in public. There were "men" and "family" sections established in restaurants and parks. The black paint that had covered the windows of girls' school buses had been removed in the mid-seventies, but the windows were repainted after 1979. Women were barred from their old jobs in shops and salons. Scholarships for women to study abroad were severely cut back. The mutawwa were granted more leeway in their oversight of behavior in the public realm. Tiny shops and fancy malls closed tightly several times a day for prayer. Music could be played only in the privacy of homes. The heavily censored media became a mouthpiece for the government. Always and everywhere, the mutawwa were ubiquitous. A narrow and intolerant interpretation of Islam dominated the national discourse. Sulaiman al-Hattlan explained: "Different groups ended up competing with fundamentalists over who can appear more conservative in the public eye." After 1979, only one very particular practice of Islam was empowered. Excluded from public discourse were the many Sufi, mainstream Sunni, and Shi'i populations.

During the 1980s, an expanded Islamic education system fostered a new generation of sheikhs, professors, and students. The regime sought to legitimate itself during hard times by binding religion and state institutionally. Imam Mohamed bin Saud University in Riyadh, the Islamic University in Medina, and Umm Al Qura University in Mecca continued to grow even as other programs were cut back. By 1986, over 16,000 of the kingdom's 100,000 students were pursuing Islamic Studies. By the early 1990s, one-fourth of all university students were enrolled in religious

institutions. They had ideas and resources: intellectuals, computers, fax machines, libraries and everything necessary for mobilization. This generation of students serves as bureaucrats, policemen, mutawwa, shari’ah (religious law) judges, or preachers in some of the twenty thousand mosques in the country.

An Islamic resurgence swept the country during the 1980s. It was not about politics nor was it directed against the regime. This resurgence was about private belief systems and the comprehensive message of Islam. Several nonviolent, nonpolitical Islamist groups took root during this time. The embrace of Islam that they advocated was about a spiritual awakening. They were not formal organizations but they did inculcate a sense of group identity. What began as small closed circles grew gradually into large loose underground groups. The resurgence was also propagated by the newly returned Arab Afghan mujahidin (holy warriors). About twelve thousand young men from Saudi Arabia went to Afghanistan to fight the Soviets; perhaps five thousand were properly trained and saw combat. At the time, no one ever thought the mujahidin would fight their own regime; the state had supported them. All of this cultivated a fertile field for political dissent into which Islamism effectively tapped. Empowered during the 1980s, the religious right was further transformed with the Gulf War.

*** Islam and the Gulf War

These developments culminated in the rise of an Islamist opposition movement during the Gulf War (Okruhlik 2003). The 1990s were a difficult decade in Saudi Arabia. Festering anger suddenly exploded with the stationing of U.S. troops in the country. Opposition groups organized domestically and abroad, most under the rubric of Islamism. For decades, there had been sporadic resistance, but with the war it changed to continuous resistance. Individuals emerged as symbols of resistance to the corruption of the al-Saud. The resistance accelerated the debates that were long under way in private. A new generation of clerics voiced strident political opinion in sermons, calling for the removal of U.S. troops and the overthrow of the ruling family. Friday sermons became an occasion for political criticism. Tapes of sermons and underground leaflets were circulated

in the streets, schools, and mosques. Opposition to the presence of U.S. military bases reached a fever pitch.

Several prominent preachers were jailed. Salman al-Awdah, an influential leader in Buraydah, was arrested by police for criticism of government policy. He was forbidden to deliver sermons. In Riyadh, a popular preacher, ‘Aidh al-Qarni, was detained for criticizing the foreign military presence. Safr al-Hawali, an intellectual from Imam Mohamad bin Saud University, was harassed and eventually jailed for publicly arguing that the al-Saud had deviated from the straight path of the Qur’an and sunna. During this turmoil, Islamists charged King Fahd with deviation from the straight path of Islam. He was criticized for his personal behavior, methods of governance, domestic and foreign policies, and, of course, his decision to allow the stationing of American troops. Such criticisms echo the historic predecessors of 1929 and 1979.

Popular imams offered fatwas that effectively countered the fatwas of the official clergy. For example, when the official, state-appointed clergy issued a fatwa that justified the presence of U.S. troops in Islamic vocabulary, the popular clergy responded with fatwas that condemned the presence of U.S. troops, also grounded in Islamic vocabulary and reasoning. The popular opinions often carried more credibility than did the official opinions. The alternative clergy decried waste and imprudence in government expenditures; it highlighted the absence of a capable military despite massive expenditures on weaponry. This charge resonated among the population.

Several petitions were presented to King Fahd that demanded structural reforms in the kingdom. The very dialogue of political intercourse changed. Before the war, criticism could be offered only in private and on a one-to-one verbal basis. Now it was transformed into a public discussion—much of it written, signed, and documented. The most influential petitions were from opposition Sunni clergy. In spring 1991, religious scholars, judges, and university professors issued a petition that in strong and direct language called for a restoration of Islamic values. The petition asked for twelve

political reforms, focused on the judiciary, foreign policy, a redistribution of wealth, an end to corruption, and above all, the primacy of religious law.

In September 1992, 107 religious scholars signed a “memorandum of advice (muzakharat al-nasiha) to King Fahd. He refused at first to receive the forty-six-page document. It was even bolder and more defiant than the petition drafted the previous year. Its tone was straightforward; its charges, specific. The petitioners deplored the “total chaos in the economy and society ... widespread bribery, favoritism, and the extreme feebleness of the courts”; criticized virtually every aspect of domestic and foreign policy; and demanded a more rigorous application of Islamic law. The government was shaken because the people thought to be its pillar of support had endorsed such sweeping changes. The ruling family was concerned not only by the petition’s content, but also by the very public way in which it was circulated, making the rounds of schools and mosques before the king saw it. Because it abrogated the norm for privacy in political discussion, the Supreme Council of Scholars, the elite of the official clergy, condemned the publication and circulation of the petition (but not its substance).

Pressures for reform were not limited to Sunni Islamists. Representatives of the Shi’a Reform Movement (an umbrella organization of several Shi’a opposition groups that press for the rights of the minority Shi’a community) continued to call for a consultative council that included representatives of their community. The business community submitted a so-called liberal petition that demanded structural reforms. Forty-seven women kicked their foreign male drivers out of their cars and drove through the streets of Riyadh.

*** From Wahhabism to Neo-Wahhabism: The Socioreligious Becomes Political

By 1993, numerous organizations had been formed to disseminate the opposition message. Demonstrations—largely unheard of under this authoritarian regime—erupted to demand the release of the imprisoned sheikhs, the most significant occurring in Buraydah in September 1994, the very heartland of the ruling family’s support. The al-Saud regime

simultaneously denied the existence of an opposition movement, co-opted semiloyalists, and initiated a massive crackdown on dissent.

Though the universities closed for much of the Gulf War, the mosques became centers of sermons, ideological debate, and political opposition. Mosques and private homes served as safe havens for opposition activists during this turmoil. In their sanctuary, people wove narratives that provided them with a vocabulary to utilize in distilling their discontent. The dominant history and prevailing ideology could be questioned in these safe spaces, and oppositional alternatives could be constructed. Social intercourse and sermons provided alternative historic narratives that made sense to people and empowered them.

Although Islam has often been used by the ruling family to bolster the prevailing order, it can also be used to oppose that order. During the Gulf War, the call to Islam was especially vibrant and empowered sympathizers. Islamists are by far more coherent, powerful, and organized than any other social force in Saudi Arabia, including those based on nationalism, liberalism, regional identity, or business activity. Islamism provided the vocabulary, symbols, and historic reference points that resonated with the population. A coherent set of ideas provides the populace with common scripts and symbols to utilize when confronting the overwhelming power of state and social institutions (Swidler 1995). Only Islamism did so in Saudi Arabia. It is the only movement able to cut across multiple cleavages there.

With the stationing of U.S. troops during and after the Gulf War, what had been an inchoate resurgence of Islam was transformed into an organized and explicitly political movement. In short, many Wahhabi believers became neo-Wahhabi activists.[38] The resurgence of Wahhabism in the previous decade was largely private, inwardly focused, and concerned with the purity of religious practice and social norms. Believers were identified by short thobes (the customary dress for men), beards, and the lack of an agal (rope) to hold their ghutra (head cloth) in place. The women of their families likely covered more and were strictly segregated, often even within the home. Now the private became public; the spiritual became political; the intrafamilial norms became enforced on others; and the individual became organized. What was an inward focus on

the just believer became an outward vision of the just state and just society. The Wahhabi da'wa (call) that had been social and religious became political with the Gulf War.

The social origins of radical Islamists remains a sensitive topic within Saudi Arabia. The subject is avoided as it is potentially explosive. Some liberal intellectuals suggest privately that the members of Najdi religious groups are primarily from a nontribal (non-asil or khadiri) background.

Thus, they cannot demand things through a tribal identity, as so many others are able. But they can demand things through Islam. Islam is a protective umbrella and an equalizing force that allows them to compete with the tribes in Saudi Arabia. An observer explained: "Buraydah has too many sheikhs. So I asked myself, Where do all these sheikhs come from? These are men who needed Islam as a power base. They are khadiri. Unsure of their social roots, they seek authority and respect through Islam. Politicizing Islam gave them influence. Radical Islam has become a tribe for the tribeless."

*** Possibilities for Pluralism

Believers in a civil and tolerant Islam can take advantage of the existence of multiple clergies, socioeconomic distress, and the convergence of dissent to position themselves as the voice(s) of the wide middle ground, and the future, of Saudi Arabia.

**** Multiple Clergies

Historically, the king dealt primarily with the official clergy (ulama). During the Gulf War, the state-appointed official clergy were supplemented by an empowered popular-level alternative clergy that was vocal and articulate. A dissident explained: "The previous al-Saud regimes had legitimacy conferred on them by one religious establishment [the state appointed]. The regime [of Fahd], though, has two religious establishments to contend with." It is even

more complicated now as Crown Prince Abdullah has the official clergy and multiple layers of alternative clergy with which to contend. The multiple clergy complicates governance for the al-Saud. The divide between official Islamic authorities and popular Islamic leaders is great. The dissident continued: “The old clergy believe that the ruler is the vice-regent of God on earth. Advice can only be given in private and in confidence. The new clergy reject the idea of vice-regency. Rather, it is the duty of the clergy to criticize the ruler and work for change.” Popular fatwas that counter the official fatwas are a means to do so.

Many Islamists argue that the official clergy should be abolished or that it should include representatives of all Muslim practice in Saudi Arabia. They advocate the existence of contending clerical voices in the country. They argue that debate would be healthy and that each believer could choose to abide by the clergy he or she considers most legitimate. The point is that the ruling family would not control the clergy through the appointment of a single nonrepresentative official voice.

The rhetoric of jihadis and of salafis does fall on sympathetic ears. Nevertheless, though zealots exist, most people long for leaders who offer them hope for the future, that have an impact on their everyday lives. It is a hope devoid of both royal and religious authoritarianism.

**** Social and Economic Distress

Islamism taps into an already distressed social and economic environment. Demographic problems are well documented: high and sustained unemployment, a very high birth rate, a youth bulge, the exclusion of women, dependence on foreign labor, and declining per capita income. The economy is still overwhelmingly dependent on oil, foreign labor, and state support. It must be made more diverse, local, and private. Since the heyday of the oil boom, per capita income has plummeted by two-thirds, from about $18,800 in 1981 to $6,700 in 1995. For a long time, the birth rate was a very high 3–3.5 percent, though it is said to be declining now. There is an age bulge, with the majority of the population under fifteen. These young adults

will register their demands for education, jobs, and housing at the same time. But the kingdom’s once fabulous infrastructure, constructed during the boom, is now crumbling. This is especially true in schools, hospitals, and municipal services, things that touch the everyday life of people. Unemployment in the general male population hovers around 10 percent, but it soars to around 30 percent among recent male college graduates. Yet Saudi Arabia remains utterly dependent on foreign workers, who constitute perhaps 90 percent of the private sector and 70 percent of the public sector labor force. Social norms militate against the participation of local women in many economic activities; women constitute over half of the local population. While there is a glut of university graduates, only 49 percent of the appropriate school age population enrolls at the high school level. Despite an extensive, impressive, and free public education system, 37 percent of the population was illiterate in 1995. There are reports of new social problems such as guns, drugs, and crime. Also troublesome is the apparent alienation or anomie that many young Saudis feel, made evident in rampages after football games, roaming street thugs after eid celebrations, and women being heckled at shopping malls. Civil Islamists can position themselves as problem solvers, and creators of a moral economy, an attractive option in an oil economy.

**** Convergence of Dissent

Despite their very significant differences in ultimate agenda, many social sources of dissent now converge on three central points: calls for the redistribution of wealth, procedural social justice, and regime accountability — in essence, the rule of law. Thus, the state can no longer resort to its time-honored strategy of playing one group against another and thereby avoid all reform. This convergence cuts across cleavages of region, gender, class, school of Islam, ethnicity, ideology, and rural-urban settings. Private businessmen and public bureaucrats, industrialists and mom-and- pop shop owners, Islamists and secularists, Sunnis and Shi’as, men and women share core grievances. People are weary of ad hoc and arbitrary personal rule. There is a pervasive sense of frustration.

The incremental response of King Fahd to popular dissent satisfied no one. In 1992, he appointed a nonlegislative consultative council and gave more

power to provincial governments, where other family members ruled. These “reforms” disappointed some and angered others. They had the effect of consolidating the ruling family’s centrality to political life, rather than broadening meaningful participation. Civil Islamists can champion meaningful and enduring reform.

*** Social Opponents and Structural Obstacles to Civil Islam

The obstacles to civil society and representative governance in Saudi Arabia are many. Of course, most obvious is the rise of the jihadi movement, or the radical religious right, in the country. There are other problems as well.

First and foremost is the entrenchment of the religious right in institutional positions throughout the country. From low to high bureaucracy, from education to the judiciary to the mutawwa, the religious right is overrepresented. Certainly, the idea of having a single state-appointed ‘ulama that is granted vast authority (the official ‘ulama) stifles social and religious debate. The many layers of alternative clergy must be heard.

Second, a potential obstacle to civil Islam are power struggles within the al-Saud. The country is fortunate that Abdullah is a strong nationalist. He is also relatively unblemished by charges of deviation, and is thus able to confront, theoretically at least, the religious right. Abdullah has the personal legitimacy to reign in the radicals and initiate reform that will empower civil Islam. He has such instincts, but for now, he lacks the capability. He is hemmed in by less-reformist members of the al-Saud (such as Prince Nayef), who use the religious right to solidify their own power base in governance, and that of their sons. The intolerant right may be solidified in future succession struggles that empower less-reformist members of the al-Saud family.

Third, though the ongoing domestic debate indicates that there is indeed an important opening in Saudi Arabia, the reforms are not yet institutionalized.

In the end, this new leniency is dependent upon the person and leadership of Abdullah. He is cognizant of the importance of national development. He is also one person and is elderly. As a Saudi remarked, “We are capable of identifying the problems. But solving them will require more than a reform minded sovereign. It will require an army of reformers.” If reforms are to endure beyond Abdullah and if they are to survive extremist backlashes, then they must be given institutional grounding. Otherwise, the effort may backfire.

But institutional grounding will backfire if not accompanied by normative foundations. In short, norms must accompany forms. Norms of tolerance must be the foundation for various forms of social and political organizations. Too often, the inculcation of norms is left behind in the rush to create organizational form. For example, the current majlis Al-shura (consultative assembly) is not broadly representative, and it has no legislative power. The majlis is indicative of organizational form without a foundational norm of pluralism. In Saudi Arabia, norms of tolerance for diversity are central to the civil society project because otherwise it cannot be sustained when challenged. Diversity is the reality of the Saudi Arabia population. It must be appreciated as a strength of the nationstate rather than perceived as a threat to it.

Fourth, international imbroglios deflect attention away from pressing domestic concerns and particularly from the empowerment of civil Islam. Such things as Israeli aggression against Palestinians, the U.S.-led war in Iraq, and the incessant Saudi-bashing in the United States tend to divert energies from reform of politics, economics, and society in Saudi Arabia. Instead, such actions fuel anger and humiliation, a dangerous combination that propels young people to the jihadist cause.

Fifth, a backlash from the religious right will immediately inflict damage in two realms: the status of women and in education. Women are especially vulnerable during times of crisis, as evidenced in both 1979 and 1991. Each time there is a serious domestic or international crisis, the position of women deteriorates. Women are symbolic markers of much larger political issues in Saudi Arabia. Also, the intense international pressure for reform of the education system in the wake of September 11 (sometimes misguided) first

resulted in the affirmation of the health of the current national educational system rather than renewed efforts to evaluate it.

Sixth, the unyielding pressure to join the World Trade Organization is not helpful to the development of a strong local economy at this time. The local private sector, composed primarily of small- and medium-sized businesses, will be eaten alive should unfettered foreign investment be welcomed in Saudi Arabia. They simply are not yet competitive, though vital to a vibrant civil society.

Seventh, and importantly, the religious right has an organizational base that liberals lack. Even if it is fluid, the right has leadership and organizations that allow it to promote an agenda. Their social connections, through mosque and family networks, are also stronger than the social connections of liberal reformists. The assertiveness of the religious right was long matched by the hesitancy of the liberals. Only now are the liberals beginning to coalesce and construct leadership.

Finally, a further complicating variable in the reformist movement in Saudi Arabia is that—even if they attain success in implementing social, political and economic reforms for Saudi citizens—the peculiar nature of an oil-based rentier economy means that about one-third of the total population is still left out of such reforms. The massive population of foreign laborers will remain largely unaffected by such reforms in the short term.

*** Prospects for a Civil Society

The prospects for a vibrant civil society in Saudi Arabia are quite good, though it is not likely to “fit” the standard definition. Civil society is often defined in terms of voluntary associations, business organizations, labor unions, and other entities that are located between the household and the apparatus of the state. In Saudi Arabia, familial and religious networks are part and parcel of civil society and will not wither as more formal organizations take root. The rich cultural resources of Saudi Arabia—what may be called social capital—must be harnessed to nurture civil society. This

means using the fluidity and strength of family and religion to construct a strong civil society, and thus a strong nation-state. Though highly patriarchal, family and religion are otherwise quite civil and tolerant.

Civil society exists in homes, mosques, and suqs (traditional markets), and increasingly in professional associations of lawyers and journalists, chambers of commerce, philanthropic organizations, universities, and the media. Many observers of the developing world believe that religious and familial (or tribal) identities threaten civil society. Such identities do not necessarily do so in Saudi Arabia because they will continue to coexist alongside newer affiliations rather than be supplanted by them. If religion and family were ever threatened in Saudi Arabia by more anonymous organizations, the backlash would be swift and sure. Some liberal Saudis report a fear of joining civil associations after the experience of Saad Eddin Ibrahim in Egypt (see the essay by Richard Norton in this volume). Whether his release emboldens people remains to be seen.

Saudi Arabia has long been an intensely private society in which behavior is severely circumscribed in order to protect the ideals of consensus and familial loyalty. Newly emerging is a small but broadening public sphere in which ideas can be traded and people can simply talk without threatening the integrity of the family unit or state. The very idea of a public space or public culture is a welcome and radical innovation in Saudi Arabia.

The Internet may ultimately be a transformational tool in Saudi Arabia but for now, it is both liberating and limited. Activists and intellectuals regularly disseminate information on a number of popular Web sites and participate in discussion groups. Chat rooms are quite popular, especially among the young. In general however, it is not distributed widely enough and it is censored, although code-breaking is a lucrative job. Users remain solitary and anonymous; many are automatically suspicious of political Web sites. The print and broadcast media, however, create a community of public discourse—citizens who share a common image or word. It may be more powerful in the near term as editors and writers continue to take risks in their work. Satellite television has clearly reinforced a pan-Arab identity among viewers and promoted a larger community of discourse. This new opening is not a direct consequence of September 11. While that may have

accelerated the pace, a process of critical self-examination began unfolding in Saudi Arabia in late 1998, once Abdullah found his footing.

*** Public Carriers and Sociopolitical Supports of Civil Islam

In order to promote a healthy civil society, the social carriers of civility that already exist must be empowered in institutions so they gain the confidence necessary to challenge the entrenched religious right. The social carriers of civility are already there, including outspoken journalists, women, large and small business owners who are tired of politics as usual, artists, and writers who continually push the envelope, academics who test the waters, mothers and fathers who recognize that the world of their teenagers is quite different from their own historic memory, and civil sheikhs. The key is whether the social carriers who value the norms of tolerance, criticism, and inclusion are rewarded. They also need the religio- normative backing of clergy, whether dissenting or official, to lend them social weight so they may speak out consistently and without retribution.

**** Clergy

Interestingly, the clerics called “radical” before September 11 turned out to be “reformists” after September 11. For example, Sheikh Salman Al-Awdah, a fiery opposition preacher who spent five years in a Riyadh prison after the Gulf War turmoil, denounced the attacks and admonished Saudi youths against heeding calls for jihad. Rather than calling for the overthrow of the al-Saud, he now calls for “more avenues for people to express their opinions, and more opportunities available ... to engage in fruitful and constructive dialogue.” Sheikh Safar al-Hawali, out of jail for three years, also now speaks of reforming the system rather than overthrowing it. He also released a six-page, single-spaced “Open Letter to President Bush” in October 2001. To be fair, many Saudis charge that some of the former radicals turned reformists have come full circle, and are now simply co-opted by the government and have become a tool of the regime. Because some individuals appear to be opportunists, it is unclear what role they will play in Saudi political development.

The Gulf War sahwaeen[39] were bypassed by a more radical, fiery group of jihadi sheikhs including Nasser al Fahd, Ali al Khodair, and Ahmad al Khalidi, whose fatwas inspired many young people to violence. In the wake of terror, the government instituted a program to rationalize and professionalize the mutawwa and removed hundreds of sheikhs from the mosques. The government now allows the reformists in Saudi Arabia to speak with relative freedom in the media (direct criticism of the ruling family is still off limits). The al-Saud realized, too late, that exclusion promotes radicalization; inclusion may moderate political positions. For meaningful reform to blunt the call of the radical flank, it requires that the regime allow a vibrant political space to grow, a space that can be filled by tolerance.

There is much discussion about limiting the power and scope of the religious authorities in Saudi Arabia. There are people who call themselves secularists, but secular humanism, however compelling, remains for now on the fringe of the discussion. Clergy, even if circumscribed and disempowered in some activities, will continue to play an influential role in Saudi life. They cannot be ignored, as they have followers and influence. The debate over the future of Saudi Arabia is not about whether or not Islam is an important part of the country. That is an artificial argument that plays into the fears of everybody and empowers the religious right, and is disseminated by them for that purpose. There are many sheikhs and thoughtful Islamists who are not jihadi, neo-Wahhabi, or sahwaeen. The rich array of civil Islamists must be a part of the new dialogue in Saudi Arabia. The National Dialogue Forum, a state-sponsored meeting of Moslem leaders, was a first step toward tolerance, but participation must be expanded further to encompass civil Moslems who are openly critical of authoritarianism.

**** Educators

Curricular reform will occur. Contrary to the wishes of some strident foreign observers, the government cannot (and should not) simply delete Islamic subjects from the curriculum. It can, however, mandate inclusion of the richness and diversity of Islam in order to promote greater social tolerance. It

is also critical, in my view, that the formal curriculum be reformed so that Islam is not positioned as antithetical to the nurturing of national pride. Further, in the emphasis on curricular reform, other pressing issues are overlooked: teaching pedagogy, dropout rates, teacher attitudes, and an inadequate infrastructure. They are at least as important. Children are still taught by rote memorization and repetition rather than problem solving and creative analysis.

**** Women

Changing stringent social norms that mandate gender segregation, the covering of women, and sometimes their seclusion in the domestic realm will require sensitivity and time. Abdullah, a champion of women's rights in the Saudi context, has moved cautiously to grant women a bit more mobility and a few more rights while avoiding a backlash from the religious right. After the tragic fire in a girl's school that claimed fifteen young lives, a cleric was sacked and educational bureaucracies were reorganized so that the same authority now administers both male and female education. Control over girls' education was one of the last bastions of unfettered religious authority. It may be that this incident was so heinous and indefensible that it actually provided Abdullah the space to rein in the religious right. It remains to be seen if any substantive changes follow the administrative reorganization.

Importantly, the issues that matter to Saudi Arabian women are less about covering and segregation (though still important to some) and more about equal resources in education and employment; training the next generation of girls; reining in the religious police because they degrade and humiliate women; equality in legal proceedings (e.g., appointing women attorneys to represent women clients); mandatory premarital genetic testing and counseling; and abolishing the requirement that businesswomen have a male representative (wakeel) to conduct business. Women who seek empowerment now utilize the traditional philanthropic associations (which can be quite untraditional); stipulations to marriage contracts to protect themselves; computers to bypass concerns about physical interaction; and the women's sections of chambers of commerce to network among themselves.

**** Business

The mega-issues of the WTO and foreign investment opportunities do not insure a sustainable future for Saudi Arabia. More important is an emphasis on building a local private sector that is competitive. More of the economy is composed of small- and medium-size firms (70–80 percent of trading, services, and industry). They are not well represented in the chambers of commerce nor in discussion with the World Trade Organization. There are no linkages between the multisectoral megaconglomerates and the plethora of smaller businesses that are the reality of the economy. Small and medium businesses need new resources in management, technology, marketing, and financing. As is, they will be severely hit when globalization hits full force, as they are unable to withstand rigorous competition without linkages. Yet small and medium business networks are vital for building a civil society.

Further, though the fact that the chambers of commerce do not really represent “the little guy in the suq,” they are the site of the only protodemocratic elections in the country. For several years, part of each board of directors has been elected by secret ballot after contested campaigns. “Parties” declare themselves with agendas and followers. These elections are the closest that Saudi Arabia comes to the common expectations of democracy. Though friends tend to conglomerate together and the positions of some groupings are not in conflict, these bodies may represent an embryonic democratic form in an authoritarian state. Unfortunately, electoral activities were circumscribed recently.

**** Intellectuals and Media

There are many Saudi journalists and writers who take risks each week to push the boundaries of permissible expression ever further. Writing from a variety of perspectives, there are many critical voices of civility and reform during a time of crisis including Mohamed al Salahudin, Jamal al-Khashoggi, Khaled Batarfi, Hussein al Shobokshi, Mansur al Nugaidan, Nawal al Yousef, Mishari Zaydi, Abdelaziz al Gassem, Jameel al Farsi, Sulaiman al-Hattlan, and

Alia al Fraid. At universities, there are fewer brave voices today to speak up for civil rights because earlier they were severely reprimanded when they spoke out. If there is any silver lining to the tragedies of September 11 and the war in Iraq, it is that many Saudi scholars now also write strong articles in the local newspapers (e.g., Matrook al-Faleh, Turki al-Hamad, Fowzia Abu Khaled). There is more crossover between the universities and the media than previously. Of course, it is “safer” to speak about Palestine, the U.S., or Iraq than about local politics.

Nevertheless, in January 2003, 104 Saudis, representing different regions, occupations, and ideologies, signed a petition to Crown Prince Abdullah that sought liberalizing domestic political reforms. Within the year, the National Reform Document was followed by four other petitions to Abdullah, each seeking reform. There are new human rights groups and regionally based political groups that demand the rule of law in Saudi Arabia. Among Islamist scholars and activists, it is imperative to allow and reward the voice of tolerant, plural, reformist Islam. There must be a countervailing force to the weight of intolerant extremism that has become entrenched in institutions.

*** Negotiating a Social Contract

An Irrelevant Triad

The al-Saud have historically based their “right to rule” on a triad of legitimizing factors: victory in military conquests (coercion), Wahhabism, and, much later, the distribution of oil revenues. In retrospect, we understand today that conquest bred resentment, Wahhabism never reflected the diversity of the population, and oil revenues shrank as the population mushroomed.

Likewise, the traditional social contracts (or political pacts) that Saudis refer to in conversation have lost their relevance. These are the agreements made between Abdulaziz, the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, and the Hejazi

notables; between Abdulaziz and the ‘ulama of the Najd; and between Abdulaziz and representatives of major families, sects, and tribes in the eastern and southern regions. These pacts were thought to define the relationship between religion, state, and society. They protected private citizens and clergy from the reach of the state by providing a separate space for them. In the eyes of many Saudis, all three pacts have been violated. Later in the country’s development, a fourth “pact” was added to the mix, an implicit understanding that the ruling family would administer and distribute oil revenues in return for political acquiescence (though this pact was always more important to foreign theorists than to ordinary Saudis). The old triad and the old pacts are no longer sufficient to govern a complex, smart, and diverse population.

At this time, a pacted transition to civility and pluralism cannot simply be assumed. The radical religious right has far more organization and ideological attraction than any other social force. At this writing, they are the only viable alternative to the al-Saud (though the emerging coalition of reformists is gaining ground). The reverberations of the war in Iraq will surely affect the domestic struggles. If there is a pacted transition to civility, participation, and pluralism, then the radical right will diminish in its magnetism. If there is no pacted transition, then Saudi Arabians are left in the unenviable position of either an unacceptable status quo (an authoritarian ruling family) or the triumph of the radical right. The middle ground must be empowered.

A healthy civil society will have a direct and positive effect on the prospects for more representative governance. Some analysts contend that a strong civil society would oust the al-Saud family. For now, it is more likely that the al-Saud will continue in some positions of authority, but their authoritarian tendencies will be countered. Their ostentatious behavior will almost certainly be curtailed. The ruling family may continue to rule but increasingly make compromises with the demands of social forces. If the al-Saud are to retain their power, the government must become more representative and inclusive of the diversity of the population. Simply put, if the al-Saud wish to retain power, they must relinquish power. The conundrum is that if the al-Saud do allow greater diversity, the far right backlash will be difficult to counter. It is, indeed, a difficult period in national development.

While the al-Saud will likely continue as primary decision makers for quite a while, they must now bargain with civil forces over the nature and degree of representative governance. Eventually the family as a unit may serve to symbolize the unity of the nation-state while individual family members still function in government alongside other citizens. It is ironic that liberals who used to stridently criticize the ruling family (and even call for their ouster) now begrudgingly acknowledge their position, in fear of the ascent of the religious right. And it is the al-Saud who empowered the religious right!

Absent upheaval (a big assumption), the al-Saud are not going away, though they must answer to the full population in ways they have not been expected to previously. That is, if civil Islam is empowered, we should expect a transition from subjects to citizens in the coming years. It is in this transition that the voices of civil Islam can have the greatest impact. The pull of radical Islam would likely diminish in the presence of meaningful participation and reform. It is not yet clear whether the ruling family has the skill or desire to empower civil Islam in the same way that it empowered the religious right after the tumultuous events of 1979.

**** What Many Saudis Want

It is not that the majority of Saudis are clamoring for full-fledged, partybased competitive electoral democracy. They are, however, clamoring for freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and representation. They resent the exclusionary nature of governance. Toward this end, political institutions and religious bureaucracies must be reformed to incorporate different regions, ethnicities, religious branches, and both genders in order to cultivate the wide middle ground between the extremes of radical Islam and royal authoritarianism. Neither extreme reflects the aspirations of most Saudis. Ordinary Saudis want to participate in the development of their country, particularly in meeting the needs of a young, booming population for education, housing, and employment.

The turbulent debate that unfolds is over the proper relationship between state, ruling family, clergy, and citizen. This is a struggle to constitute a social contract in Saudi Arabia. What many ordinary Saudis want are a negotiation of the social contract and a definition of the rules of the game. The process is just beginning. It is a contest over the terms of “belonging” to the nation-state. The contest over the terms of the emerging social contract is mediated by region, sect, gender, age, class, and principled beliefs. The terms of the contract would be written differently by, for example, clergy, liberals, jihadis, or princes.

The new pact will require that the al-Saud broaden the basis of their “right to rule” by ensuring at least four things: the representation of divergent social forces, some form of meaningful participation, regularity and predictability in the conduct of business and politics, and the guarantee of new civil rights such as mobility, expression, and assembly. In exchange, the al-Saud retain their roles as representatives of the unity of the nation and the unity of the Islamic community (umma). The al-Saud are not irrelevant in the new pact by any stretch of the imagination. In the longer term, the contract will delineate the proper relations between religion and state, a hotly debated subject. I expect it to be more inclusive of non-Wahhabi Muslims.

*** Conclusion—Scaling up and across Cultural Resources:

A National Conversation about Identity and Citizenship

Any sense of national identity in Saudi Arabia is embryonic. People have always identified themselves by other, multiple layers of identity based on region, religion, and family. With the oil boom and the influx of foreign workers in the 1970s and 1980s, “being Saudi” became defined by what it was not (a foreign laborer). Thus, identity and citizenship had a negative referent. There is now an effort to define “being Saudi” in terms of what it is, or by a positive referent.

Today—after the turmoil of 1979, the rise of the radical right in the 1980s, the politicization of Wahhabism with the Gulf War, the events of September 2001, and the war in Iraq—Saudis from all regions and walks of life are actively engaged in debate about their future. The larger debates in Saudi Arabia today are about the construction of meaning as a nation. People are talking about the terms and content of their belonging together, and about the right to talk about such sensitive topics. The contemporary debate is about what it means to "be Saudi," that is, the meaning of citizenship. What does it mean, if anything, to belong to this nation-state called Saudi Arabia? What do we share in common; why are we together? What is our relationship to the larger Arab and Islamic

world? The tremendous political ferment that exists in Saudi Arabia today is part of an effort to define the proper relations between religion, state, ruling family, and citizenry.

Social forces are vibrant and engaged in Saudi Arabia. People talk passionately about religion and politics, corruption, the economy, their children not working, and the future of their daughters. It was the Islamists who began this national conversation about what it means to belong and about the relationship of ruling family, state, citizen, and religion. This is no small accomplishment in Saudi Arabia, where only a decade ago, the most controversial criticism that could be published in the papers were parental complaints about school lunches. But this conversation must occur on multiple levels between different kinds of people. There must be collaborations between state and social forces for the rich cultural resources of Saudi Arabia to be harnessed. Civility and tolerance must be "scaled up" to bridge state and society and included in any construction of citizenship and belonging to the nation-state. The Saudi Arabian case is further complicated because civility and tolerance must simultaneously be "scaled across" populations that historically do not interact much— across genders, regions, sects, tribal and nontribal, and across principled beliefs.

From this critical self-examination and debate will likely emerge a new sense of national identity. The manner in which Saudi civil Islamists assert themselves (or do not) and the coalitions they forge (or do not) will help shape the contours of this new identity. If they gain political voice and space,

then the national identity is more likely to be Islamic, tolerant, plural, and representative. Though it may not be exactly democratic, it can be increasingly capable of fostering pluralist and democratic ideas. The new social contract will define the relationship between religion, state, ruling family, and citizenry.

[35] The term “religious right” incorporates two groups in Saudi Arabia; the radical, violent jihadists and the traditional state-appointed ulama (religious authorities), the very conservative men who have written many social absurdities into law and routinely write fatwas that further restrict social life. Both are religious right, and both are problematical, but they are very different.

[36] A linguistic note: “Wahhabi” seems to have taken on a hegemonic meaning in the international press that does not accurately reflect its usage in Saudi Arabia prior to September 11. Believers would never refer to themselves as Wahhabi, as that implies worshiping someone, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Al-Wahhab, other than God. They prefer instead to call themselves muwah- hidun or ahl al-tawhid, to emphasize the centrality of monotheism, or Salafi, to emphasize the purity of their beliefs based on the precedent of the Prophet. Usually, Salafi is a broader category than Wahhabi, and the latter implies less tolerance of diversity than the former. The term “Wahhabi” was used by “liberals” in a derogatory manner, but it now appears that the word Wahhabi is entering the Saudi Arabian vocabulary and press in fairly regular usage. It does not necessarily imply links to al-Qaeda, as is often implied in Western media. It is a confusing state of affairs, as the term means different things to different people. It may be useful to think of three meanings of Wahhabism: as a religious practice grounded in time and place; as a set of social norms dominant in the Najd; and as broader political aspirations directed against the hegemony of the West.

[37] Wahhabism has existed in Saudi Arabia for centuries and is most prevalent in the Najd, the central region of the country. It is an offshoot of the Sunni Han- bali school of Islam that assumed a local specificity. Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Al-Wahhab (d. 1792) drew his inspiration from Hanbali scholars Ibn

Tamiyya (d. 1328) and his disciple, Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 1350). Monotheism is carefully defined by what it is not, i.e., there is an emphasis on what actions are prohibited (haram) or bid’a (innovations). Wahhabism is opposed to extreme Sufism, saint worship, and folk religious traditions. It is exclusionary, carefully delineating boundaries that distinguish believers from others. Believers reject sectarian divisions and perceive Wahhabism as the one, true Islam.

[38] Contemporary political activists who draw inspiration from Wahhabi traditions are often referred to as either neo-Wahhabi or neo-Salafi to capture their explicitly political orientation.

[39] The sahwaeen are those sheikhs who “awoke” at the time of the Gulf War and became openly critical of the regime (e.g., al Awdah, al Hawali).

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** Chapter 9: an Islamic State is a State Run by Good Muslims: Religion as a Way of Life and Not an Ideology in Afghanistan

Thomas Barfield

Few places in the Muslim world present more paradoxes than Afghanistan. The country has one of the most thoroughly Islamic societies in the world, but has no significant institutions of Islamic learning. It has experienced failed governments driven both by radical socialists and puritanical Islamists and yet has a population that has never been moved by ideologies of any sort. It is place where the concept of Islamic politics is little debated, but only because its people assume there can be no other type. It was home for many years to Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda training camps, yet almost no native-born Afghans ever participated in the movement's terrorist actions abroad. It is a country that fought a ten-year jihad to expel the Soviet Union but then deserted the Islamic Taliban within weeks to support an American invasion.

One explanation for this is that Afghanistan represents an older form of Islamic society in which religion is not considered a form of ideology but remains an all-encompassing way of life. Issues that spark debate in other Islamic countries that originated in experiences of their colonial pasts, mass education, urbanization, rapid economic changes, and mass mobilization through explicitly political parties had little resonance in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was never a colony, has low levels of literacy, has an economy that is still overwhelmingly rural, and is a country where kinship and ethnic ties have always trumped political relations based on ideologies.

In this context a pluralist Islam is not likely to emerge in Afghanistan as part of a formal political structure or through an intellectual debate. It may emerge through negotiation among all the different regional and ethnic groups that are currently seeking to share power in a new government. Since each has its own variety of Islam, and the government lacks the power to define or enforce a single set of beliefs, then pluralism will be a natural by-product. On the other hand this will not be a secularized civil society in which religion is compartmentalized and accepted as an individual's voluntary choice. Liberalism in the immediate Afghan context will be the acceptance and noninterference among the different types of Islam in the country. It will not go as far as allowing individuals to choose non-Muslim faiths or atheism, forms of apostasy that will remain criminal offenses.

*** Background: Geography and Economy

Afghanistan is a mountainous semiarid country in Central Asia about the size of France, divided north and south by the Hindu Kush and Pamir mountain ranges. Before the Soviet invasion of 1979 it had an estimated population of 16 million people, almost exclusively Muslim, about 85 percent of whom were Sunni. The vast majority of the population was rural, engaged in subsistence agriculture and pastoralism, and there was historically poor integration between local and national institutions. The capital, Kabul, was (and remains) home to the largest urban population and the center of national politics. Other important cities such as Herat in the west, Kandahar in the south, and Mazar-i-sharif in the north were given little autonomy until recently but now have become centers of regional power.

Afghanistan’s lack of integration was in part the result of geographic obstacles. Its mountain ranges bisect the middle of the country, and much of the south is desert. The country’s transportation system consists of little more than a single two-lane all-seasons paved road that links most major towns, but it was not completed until the mid-1960s and now lies in partial ruin. The country has never had a rail system and has only minimal air transport facilities. Being landlocked, it has no ports, although a few ferry landings and a bridge cross the Amu Darya north to Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Its social structure has been resistant to political integration because no overarching national identity or ideology has ever supplanted regional tribal and ethnic identities.

*** Cultural, Religious, and Ethnic Factors

Few peoples in the world, particularly the third world, have maintained such a strong and unproblematic sense of themselves and their culture as the Afghans. In abstract terms all foreigners, particularly non-Muslims, are viewed as inferior to Afghans. Although the great powers might be militarily, technologically and economically stronger, as nonbelievers and infidels, their values and way of life are naturally suspect. Afghanistan’s

Muslim neighbors, however, fare only slightly better in Afghan eyes. The Uzbeks must have been asleep to allow the Russians to occupy Central Asia for more than a century; Pakistan is a land of recent Muslim converts from Hinduism that never should have become a nation; and Iran is a nest of Shi’ite heretics who speak Persian with a ludicrous accent. This sense of commonality against the outside world is leavened by the fact that Afghanistan is itself divided among a large number of different ethnic, religious, and regional groups.

**** Ethnic Groups

The most important ethnic groups in Afghanistan are the Pashtuns, Tajiks, Hazaras, Uzbeks, and Turkmen, although a number of smaller ethnic groups have regionally important roles (most notably the Nuristani and Baluch). However, the range of diversity at the local level, where social organization is based on smaller kinship groups or regional communities, reduces the utility of the major national ethnic labels as clear units of political analysis because these large groups do not act in a unitary fashion.

The country’s Pashtuns, about 40 percent of the population, historically inhabit the area south of the Hindu Kush. Some were later resettled (or deported) north of the Hindu Kush Mountains to increase Pashtun representation in border areas of Afghan Turkestan. The imposition of the so-called Durand Line divided the Pashtuns between British India and Afghanistan in the late-nineteenth century, and so a larger number of ethnic Pashtuns probably reside in Pakistan in the Northwest Frontier Province and Baluchistan. The Pashtuns are tribally organized, all claiming descent from a common ancestor, but they are divided into a large number of clans and lineages. The largest division among Pashtuns in Afghanistan is between the Ghilzai, who straddle the Pakistan border, and the Durrani, who are settled between Kandahar and Herat. Although the Ghilzais have historically been the larger group, for most of the country’s history the Durrranis have been politically preeminent. They maintained an exclusive hold on political leadership through the Muhammadzai dynasty that was only displaced by the communist coup of 1978. Even at that time, however, power remained primarily in the hands of the Ghilzai Pashtun faction of the Afghan communist party. With few exceptions Pashtuns are exclusively Sunni Muslims. In rural

areas, however, there is such melding of their tribal law (the Pashtunwali) with Islamic religious law that the two are often viewed as inseparable and mutually supportive. Local charismatic religious leaders, known as pirs, played important roles in politics historically because they and their disciples crossed tribal lines and could act as counterweights to the landowning tribal khans who dominated Pashtun clans and lineages.

The Tajiks are Persian speaking Sunni Muslims who make up about 30 percent of Afghanistan's population. They do not have a tribal organization and identify themselves by locality. They make up the bulk of Kabul's urban population and dominate the mountainous regions of the northeast, where their co-ethnics inhabit Tajikistan and parts of Uzbekistan. Persian speakers also dominate western Afghanistan, but they have closer cultural and economic links to Iran. The Afghan Tajiks were particularly important as a group historically because Persian was both the lingua franca of Afghanistan and the language of government. If the Pashtuns dominated the leadership positions, it was the Tajiks who ran the bureaucracy. As a more urbanized and literate population, they were also more strongly represented in the ranks of the 'ulama who received state stipends or held state positions. They also tended to dominate the ranks of clergy who had received advanced religious training.

Uzbeks and Turkmen of northern Afghanistan are the two major Turkish-speaking groups in Afghanistan. They are extensions of ethnic groups that now dominate the adjacent Central Asian states of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The Turkmen, like the Pashtuns, are tribally organized and maintain elaborate genealogies that divide them into a series of named clans. The Uzbeks, by contrast, have a weaker tribal organization with less political significance. Both groups are Sunni Muslims but were influenced by the Sufi orders of Central Asia, such as the Naqsh- bandiyah. Before the Soviet war these Turkish populations had little visibility nationally.

Non-Sunni populations inhabit very mountainous regions of central Afghanistan and urban enclaves in major cities, particularly Kabul and Mazar-i-sharif. The largest are the Shi'i Hazaras, but there are some Is- mailis as well. Although Persian speaking, they claim descent from the Mongol armies

that invaded the region in the thirteenth century and now constitute perhaps 15 percent of Afghanistan’s total population. Before 1978 they made up about one-third of Kabul’s population. They traditionally had hostile relations with the Pashtuns and faced considerable discrimination from Pashtun-dominated governments. Iran developed close ties to the Hazaras during the Soviet period and has retained considerable influence among some groups there. A small population of Is- maili Muslims inhabit a series of valleys in the remote Pamir regions of northeastern Afghanistan. Often referred to in the Russian literature as “mountain Tajiks,” in fact they speak a number of old Iranian languages, not Persian. Through the leadership of the Aga Khan they have more links to the outside world and neighboring communities in northern Pakistan and Tajikistan than one would normally expect for people living in such isolated locations.

**** Religion in Government

Sunni Muslims have led all of Afghanistan’s governments, and the Hanafi legal tradition set the country’s legal framework (Kamali 1985). The religious establishment consisted of orthodox clerics who served on the government payroll as qazis (judges) or were supported by religious foundations (waqf) and less orthodox Sufi pirs who were supported by donations to their orders or individual Sufi saints. Historically clerics who wished to receive advanced religious training went abroad to study in madrasas in Delhi, Bukhara, or Cairo. Afghanistan itself had no traditional centers of advanced learning. This is not surprising since the country was the borderland that separated Central Asia and India, places that had long been centers of Islamic higher learning. Shi’i clerics usually studied in Iran but were generally excluded from Sunni government posts. Village mullahs, the bulk of the religious class, were supported and recruited by local communities and had a relatively low social status and poor religious educations.

Attempts to bring the ‘ulama under tight state control began with Amir Abdur Rahman (1890–1901), who created the modern Afghan state. The most powerful tool at his disposal was financial. He nationalized the formerly independent waqfs and administered them himself. This undercut the autonomy of the clergy and allowed the Afghan

government to decide who would get support. He also put the qazis on the state payroll as a means of controlling them and their decisions. He was at odds with the Sufi saints because they remained beyond his direct control, and he saw them as instigators of opposition against government policies and even fomenters of revolt (Kakar 1979). It was Sufi orders and their saintly leaders who were most independent of Afghan governments and who often wielded considerable political influence. They were particularly popular in rural regions, but some of the established saintly lines had many urban followers (Olesen 1995). One reason for their political importance was their ability to transcend tribal boundaries, particularly among the Pashtuns.

Historically Islam was used among Pashtuns as a way to get around the structural problems inherent in getting rival tribes to cooperate. There were two patterns. In the first rival tribes would agree to cooperate in the name of Islam to expel non-Islamic invaders. Resistance fighters became known generically as mujahidin, or holy warriors, a title that obscured tribal differences. Though their rhetoric was Islamic, the key leaders were not themselves clerics. However, there was a second religious model of warfare practiced by Pashtuns in which clerics, usually Sufi saints (pirs), took command and organized armies in which they were the leaders. They could work around the tribal system because they owed their power to religious charisma, and could claim their authority was through God and not any tribal affiliation. These groups arose primarily to lead rural revolts against the Kabul government’s attempts to centralize power and in frontier areas before 1947 against the British (who labeled them “mad mullahs”). The first type of war was approved by the state because it served to keep the country free of foreign occupiers. The second was treated much more unfavorably because these revolts were directed against its own authority. Such revolts rarely proved successful when the central government was strong and could suppress uprisings with a regular army. But when governments were weak (such as during the civil war against King Amanullah in the late 1920s) they had better success. It was the first tradition that underlay the Afghan resistance against the Soviet Union’s occupation and it was the second that created the climate for the emergence of the Taliban.

*** Modernists versus Islamists

For the past one hundred years Afghan politics has been split between those who wished to see Afghanistan transformed and those who opposed the process. While this has often been portrayed as a battle between modernists and Islamists, the division was more complex. It has had as much to do with conflict over the limits of power of the central government, the cultural gap between elites in Kabul and the inhabitants of the countryside, and questions of taxation and conscription. It is this very crosscutting set of issues that prevented Islam from becoming a distinct ideology. Factions that would raise the Islamic banner in one context would ignore it in another. For example, rural revolts against changes in the legal status of women imposed by urban-based Kabul governments would be decried as un-Islamic. But the same people studiously ignored complaints by orthodox clergy that many their own tribal customs concerning women's inheritance rights and marriage procedures violated shari'ah law.

Neither the status of Islamic tradition nor social change was a pressing issue when Abdur Rahman created the Afghan state in the late-nineteenth century by building a strong national army equipped with modern weapons: he was interested in building state power, not transforming the Afghan people. He centralized Afghanistan to an extent never seen before, and over the twenty years of his reign he crushed all opposition to his government. While reining in the autonomy of the 'ulama, he carefully portrayed himself as a defender of Islam because he had kept Russia and Britain out of Afghanistan. He was also careful to have the 'ulama issue fatwas giving justification for all of his acts, including wars of conquest against the Shi'i Hazara in central Afghanistan. In contrast to his active state building (Kakar 1971), Abdur Rahman was keen to see that his modernizations have as little impact on the population as possible. He imported foreign experts into Afghanistan to provide technical aid but did not introduce Western styles of education into Afghanistan itself. The economy actually declined as a consequence of the Amir's policies of taxing and controlling international transit trade and banking himself. He had a deliberate policy of keeping the country's natural resources undeveloped and refused to allow railroads in order to keep Afghanistan isolated (Hanifi 2001). By the end of his reign the former crossroads of Central Asia had developed the reputation of a hermit kingdom.

Although isolated, Afghanistan was caught up in the ferment of the Islamic world after the First World War and the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Under King Amanullah (1919–28) Afghanistan saw itself in two different ways. As the only Muslim state not under colonial domination (the country had gained complete independence from the British Raj in 1919), the religiously minded pushed Amanullah to proclaim himself successor to the Ottoman sultan as leader of world's Sunni Muslims. On the other hand, the world around Afghanistan was presenting new models. A revolution had destroyed the czars and created a new Soviet Union to the north. Turkey and Iran in the west had new leaders who declared that Islam was not the solution but the problem that had led to the region's loss of power. It was these latter movements that soon fascinated Amanullah. Following the lead of Ataturk and Reza Shah, Amanullah decided that Afghanistan needed to be modernized. By contrast with Ataturk's radical secularism that attempted to expel Islam from the public sphere in the Turkish Republic or Reza Shah's use of the military and economic projects to transform Iran, changes in Afghanistan were minimal but significant. Amanullah declared that state law would supersede religious law in his new law code, he sent Afghan students abroad for Western education, and he began some economic development programs. Religious opponents argued that his changes to family law were un- Islamic and he was abandoning his role as defender of the religion. Such social issues figured prominently in a revolt by the eastern Pashtuns in 1924 that forced Amanullah to pull his reforms when the army proved too weak to put down the revolt without mobilizing the tribes for help (Nawid 1999). It should be noted, however, that these reforms were never implemented in the rural areas and that new taxes, as opposed to social issues, were more likely the spark of the revolt. While issues of taxation may also have sparked the American revolution, in Afghanistan the religious justification for revolts always took precedence even when the fundamental issue was in fact economic or political.

Amanullah was inspired to make another attempt at reforms immediately after he took a world tour in 1928 that included stops in India, Egypt, Britain, Italy, Germany, Turkey, the Soviet Union, and Iran. Upon his return he declared a whole host of reforms but was immediately faced with revolts by the eastern Pashtuns. This time he was unable to put down the rebels, and as other ethnic groups rose up to oppose his government, he abdicated the throne (Poullada 1973). A bandit Tajik rebel from north of Kabul, Habibullah, took the throne for nine months and rescinded the former king's attempts at

modernization. This was seen as a victory for conservative elements in the country, but the old elite reasserted itself when Nadir Khan deposed Habibullah in 1929 and restored the royal dynasty to power with himself as king. During his short reign (he was assassinated in 1933) he took a more conservative approach, putting contentious reforms aside and rebuilding the state's armed forces. Only when the state power was more secure in the 1950s did reforms begin again.

During the long reign of Zahir Shah (1933–73) government power was largely in the hands of his father's brothers and his cousin Daud Khan, who was prime minister from 1963 to 1973. It was during this period that Afghanistan underwent a major transition. The Cold War conflict provided the Afghan government with aid from both the Soviet Union and the United States. The army was modernized by the Soviets and the West provided aid in the fields of education. Both helped build the first paved roads in Afghanistan and created its first system of communications. Daud's policy was to make changes quietly, beginning in Kabul, and then see them spread to the provincial cities and rural areas over time. For example, policies that encouraged the end of veiling in the 1960s protected women who dropped them and jailed clerics that openly opposed the policy, but did not make veiling a political issue as had been done in Iran and Turkey. Similarly, Western-style education was expanded and included women, but this was voluntary. In dealing with the clerics, the state began to demand certification through training at the state-run Kabul University if they wished to be employed by the government. The 1964 constitution also exemplified the gradual policy of modernization by declaring that all state laws must be compatible with Islam, but that in the event of a disagreement, the state laws would take precedence. But no court had the power to nullify state laws on the grounds that they violated Islamic principles (Dupree 1978, 559–69).

It was at Kabul University where these policies were most hotly debated. Afghanistan has always had a very small elite, and while the expansion of education brought many new people into politics, the numbers involved were only in the thousands and almost all of them resided in the capital. At the university politically active students divided into two opposing factions. The leftist faction favored faster reform and a greater break with Afghanistan's past. They formed two parties, Khalq (Masses) and Parcham (Banner), which became the core of the future People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan

(PDPA). Islamist students who wanted to move the government in a more religious direction opposed them. Given Afghanistan's history Daud's government was more concerned about opposition from the religious right than the secular left. In 1973 when Daud overthrew Zahir Shah in a coup and declared himself president of a new Republic of Afghanistan, the leftists initially supported him. The Islamists attempted to move against him in 1975 by mounting some small revolts against the government in the rural areas. Because they had no local support these quickly failed and the most prominent Islamists fled to Pakistan while others were jailed. However, the leftist parties were soon disappointed in Daud and his failure to take more radical steps to change Afghanistan. In 1978 they mounted their own coup, murdered Daud, and declared their intention to create a new socialist Afghanistan (Dupree 1978, 761–68).

*** The Soviet Invasion, Defeat, and Its Aftermath

The radical Khalq party was the dominant faction in new PDPA government, and they were not just interested in ruling Afghanistan but in transforming the country through revolutionary policies of land reform, education, and changes in family law. They moved to destroy all who opposed them, including many of their leftist Parcham rivals, the traditional rural landowners, the old military establishment, and the Islamic clergy. They abandoned Afghanistan's historic policy of neutrality for a direct alliance with the Soviet Union. The regime also rejected the country's traditional Islamic symbols of legitimacy by striking religious salutations from their speeches and decrees and changing the color of the flag to red. As revolutionaries they justified themselves and the legitimacy of their government in Marxist terms. This rhetoric was alien to most of the rural population, except in the north, where it was all too familiar to the descendants of refugees who had originally fled from Soviet Central Asia in Stalin's time. The Khalq regime was the first (and only) Afghan government to explicitly reject Islam within its governing framework. This proved an unwise move since the PDPA membership numbered fewer than ten thousand countrywide and made it an easy target to attack not just by Islamist parties but by ordinary Afghans for whom no government was legitimate if it was not run by believing Muslims (Arnold 1983).

When the PDPA went beyond policy pronouncements and attempted to implement its policies in the countryside, it met with resistance. The government responded with military force and the country's provinces erupted in rebellion. These uprisings were uncoordinated and tended to focus on local rather than national issues, but they soon became widespread (Shahrani and Canfield 1984). The Soviet Union, which distrusted the Khalq leadership and had attempted to remove it, became concerned that the situation was getting so out of control that the regime itself was in danger of collapse. In an attempt to restore stability the Soviet Union invaded at the end of 1979, deposed the ruling Khalq faction after murdering its leader, Hafizullah Amin, and installing a Parchami, Babrak Karmal, as his replacement. The Soviets then engaged in a wholesale war against the Afghan population in an attempt to force it into submission or to run the resistance out of the country. Eventually 3 million Afghans fled to Pakistan and Iran, over 1 million were killed, and millions of others were displaced internally. In spite of having no centralized command, being divided by ethnic and sectarian differences, and being hopelessly outmatched in equipment by Soviet and Afghan government forces, a war of resistance—financed with billions of dollars in aid and training obtained from the United States and Saudi Arabia and administered by Pakistan—wore down the Soviets, and in 1989 they withdrew. Their regime in Kabul collapsed three years later.

The Soviet invasion created a national opposition unlike any seen before. The collapse of central authority and the rise of locally based resistance groups transferred real power into the hands of local communities previously ruled by distant officials assigned by the central government. By framing the conflict as a jihad, a holy war, it was possible to unite a very large number of people and to deprive the Kabul government of legitimacy. While the Afghan resistance was unable to win set-piece battles against its Soviet enemy because of its better organization, firepower, and air superiority, the Russians found it impossible to permanently suppress the opposition in spite of inflicting heavy casualties. Since the Afghan definition of victory consisted of a Soviet withdrawal, all the resistance needed to do was to make the country ungovernable and a drain on Soviet resources. With the acquisition of American-supplied Stinger antiaircraft missiles in 1986, the rebels were able to reduce a key Soviet advantage and drive the price for staying even higher. By the late 1980s losses in men and material were enough to make the war profoundly unpopular in Moscow. The Soviets under

Gorbachev concluded that the best policy was just to let the Afghans keep their country and bring the troops home (Hyman 1992).

The Soviet occupation lasted a decade and did immense damage to the country and its people (Kakar 1995). More significantly, both sides in the anti-Soviet war were to a large extent creations of their funders rather than mass indigenous political movements. The PDPA received its support from the Soviet Union, a cost estimated at about $5 billion a year during its occupation period. The mujahidin would not have been competitive without access to similarly large sums of money and arms, which were supplied by the United States and Saudi Arabia. This meant that the Afghan resistance was as dependent on international aid as its Soviet supported rival was. As a result the Afghan mujahidin found themselves sucked into two larger conflicts: the ongoing Cold War struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union, and a new struggle by Saudi Wahhabis to make the war in Afghanistan the vanguard of a transnational jihad that they hoped would bring about Islamic revolutions in the Sunni Arab world and beyond. Unfortunately for their patrons, the Afghans had little interest in either struggle. In particular the only jihad the Afghans were willing to fight was in Afghanistan itself, and that would end when the Soviets withdrew.

The interference of outsiders was clear in the organization of the resistance. While there was a broad coalition of Afghan parties opposed to the Soviet invasion that included royalists, nationalists, and regional groups and even non-PDPA leftists, only the Islamist parties had access to money and arms. This was because foreign aid to the resistance was distributed through the Pakistan government, and only the seven Sunni Islamist parties it formally recognized were eligible for support. (The Shi’i parties received aid from Iran’s Islamic government.) These parties had not been particularly influential inside Afghanistan before the Soviet invasion. Indeed, many of their leaders had been living in exile in Pakistan because of their participation in a series of failed Islamic uprisings against the Daud government in the mid-1970s that had received little or no popular support. By making them conduits of aid, Pakistan raised their profile and power. Local resistance groups within Afghanistan had to affiliate with one of these Islamist parties in order to get weapons. Because the groups fighting in Afghanistan had little or no interest in the political ideologies of these parties

or their leaders, party affiliation was most often based on personal relationships or regional and ethnic ties. Thus in choosing between the two most powerful parties, the Tajiks and northerners in general tended to align them themselves with Rabbani’s Jamiat- i-Islami while Pashtuns and others in the south and east joined more often with Hekmatyar’s Hizb-i-Islami. But given the complex nature of Afghan politics, locally rival groups would often join different mujahidin parties regardless of ethnic ties or would defect from one party to another if they could get a better deal (Roy 1990).

Because outsiders financed the war, they naturally interpreted the struggle in Afghanistan as a Manichaean conflict of competing ideologies (e.g., Islam vs. atheism, socialism vs. capitalism, freedom vs. oppression, feudal reactionaries vs. progressive patriots, modernists vs. traditionalists).

The lack of ideology that underlay traditional Afghan politics was thereby hidden. The mujahidin parties, for example, had good connections with Kabul government bureaucrats throughout the war and could generally get any information they needed from them. PDPA troops struck deals with local resistance groups to avoid fighting. Even at the national level the philosophical differences between the resistance and the Kabul regime that had originally sparked the war were soon blurred. The PDPA government itself denounced its earlier radical policies as mistakes after the Soviet invasion. They rid themselves of the Soviet style red flag, pointedly reintroduced Islamic phrases into their decrees and speeches, and made sure their leaders were seen at prayer with supportive clergy. But the continuing opposition to the legitimacy of the PDPA government was not based on its policies but because it allowed the occupation of the country by Soviet troops who remained actively at war with the population.

When the Soviet Union withdrew in 1989 this bedrock objection to the PDPA’s legitimacy was removed but so also was the protection of their troops. At the time it was assumed (even by the Russians themselves) that the Kabul regime would fall within weeks or months. However, its leader, Najibullah (who had replaced Karmal in 1986), proved surprisingly successful at keeping his troops intact and holding the regime together. This support was based not on ideology but on Najibullah’s continuing access to Soviet money,

weapons, and food that he could distribute to his followers. This included a large growth in the regime’s rural militias that numbered over 100,000 people. Many former mujahidin groups defected in return for arms and money. They saw little reason to fight against his regime if their own needs were met and the Soviets were gone. Najibul- lah even reorganized his administration by opening it up to noncommunists and proposed reserving positions for mujahidin leaders in a future coalition government (Giustozzi 2000).

Pakistan and the United States, both of which wanted to see an outright mujahidin military victory, rejected Najibullah’s overture. But although they had expected to topple the PDPA government easily when the Russians withdrew, the mujahidin proved unable to take fixed military positions and that failure produced a stalemate. With the Soviets gone, far fewer Afghans were willing to take up arms against the government as long it did not trouble them. It was only when the Soviet Union disintegrated and Russia refused to continue large-scale aid that Najibul- lah’s government collapsed in April 1992. Although it was still well armed, had its forces intact, and had enough stored supplies to survive in the short term, factions within the PDPA decided that their long-term prospects were bad. Now was the opportune moment to negotiate their futures from a position of strength, and they all cut deals and switched sides largely on the basis of ethnic ties. Thus the PDPA regime was less defeated militarily than reorganized as its components defected to various mujahidin factions.

With the fall of the Kabul regime the last remaining thread that had bound the mujahidin into a marriage of convenience snapped. Their leaders had no clear goals because their unity had been based on resistance against the Soviet Union and its client Afghan government, not on any common political platform (Roy 1995). Perhaps more important, none of the seven recognized faction party leaders who were supposed to form a new government had done any significant fighting inside Afghanistan themselves or created a national political base. They were naturally opposed to any open system of government that might expose their unpopularity or narrow base of support. They were particularly vehement in their insistence that the former king, Zahir Shah, should play no role in government, not even a symbolic one. Royal legitimacy through recognized tribal lineage still held

enough sway among ordinary Afghans so that it threatened to undermine the Pakistani backed mujahidin party leaders because the most powerful of them (Rabbani, Hekmatyar, and Sayyaf) lacked prestigious social origins.

A mujahidin power struggle was therefore inevitable once the PDPA dissolved. Each faction leader realized that if he did not obtain power now, he never would. And since the parties were based more on personality than ideology, there was very little basis for compromise, particularly since the rise of a predominate leader would mean an end to all the smaller factions. Thus the agreed-upon distribution of power failed almost immediately. The “prime minister,” Hekmatyar, refused to enter the capital and remained encamped on the hills south of Kabul from where he shelled the city, and the troops of his “president,” Rabbani. Kabul, which had been spared any fighting during the war because of its many lines of defenses, was devastated over the next three years and large parts of the city were reduced to rubble. As a result many of its residents fled the city seeking safety elsewhere and twenty-five thousand people were believed to have died as a result of the fighting. A stalemate ensued in which neither side was able to dislodge the other. In an attempt to break the deadlock Hekmatyar cut a deal in January 1994 with the Uzbek leader Dostam, who once again betrayed former allies to join what he hoped would be the winning side. This was an odd couple: the most fundamentalist mujahidin commander embracing the former communist general. The venture failed to bring down Rabbani’s government, and the fighting in and around Kabul intensified as the Tajiks led by Masud in one part of the city continued to fight bitter battles with the Hazaras led by Ali Mazari in the other (Barfield 1996).

The inability of the factions to find any common agreement about what a future government should look like, let alone who should run it, made it impossible to unify the country politically. And because each of the factions was strong only in its home region and could not displace its rivals elsewhere, there was no real prospect of unifying the country militarily. Nor did the any of the factions have the same access to resources as they did during the anti-Soviet war for coalition building. The swift end of Najibullah’s regime after the Soviet Union collapsed demonstrated dramatically how dependent he was on outside funding to stay in power. Less well noticed was

that the victorious mujahidin parties soon faced the same problem. The United States, which had been matching Soviet aid to Kabul with its own support to the mujahidin (negative symmetry), was only interested in funding a Cold War struggle that had suddenly been rendered moot. Saudi Arabia was generous in funding a jihad against unbelieving invaders, but showed little interest in the civil war that was now raging among fellow Muslims. The international community that might have stepped in to help with rebuilding the country instead focused on the more the immediate problem of relieving the suffering caused by faction fighting in the country (Rubin 1995, 2002).

*** The Rise and Demise of the Taliban

In previous periods of turmoil Afghan leaders had arisen to reestablish political order in the country by combining some recognized claim of political legitimacy with substantial aid from the outside world. Because Afghanistan had been a rentier state whose successive central governments (regardless of ideology) had all been dependent on extracting outside resources to maintain their stability for close to two centuries, attempting to create a new central government without substantial outside aid would have been a daunting task under the best of circumstances. In their absence it proved impossible.

The Taliban leader, Mullah (later Amir) Omar, was a local cleric in Kandahar with an honorable war record in the anti-Soviet jihad, but he was neither an important figure in that war nor a player in any of the postwar factions. In 1994 a group of Pashtun Islamic students, trained in Pakistan but having moved to Kandahar, complained to Mullah Omar about the local warlords who had abused the population by committing crimes that included robbery, rape, and extortion. Omar instructed his student followers (or taliban, hence the name) to confront these bands and disarm them. After capturing and executing some of the most notorious of these groups they then unblocked the roads around Kandahar, seized power from other local warlords, and brought a high degree of order to the territories they took under their control. The movement was widely popular locally because it promised security of life and property to a region that lacked both. Its ideology was of secondary importance. Upon seeing the Taliban’s strength

among the Pashtuns, Pakistan switched its backing to the new movement with the hope that it would have more success than its previous clients. After helping them take control of Kandahar, the Taliban expanded quickly with additional Pakistani aid and destroyed Hekmatyar's Hizb-i-Islami to become the dominant Pashtun faction in 1995. A year later they seized Kabul, and by 1998 all but northeastern Afghanistan was under their control. While the Taliban were initially lauded for bringing peace and security to the regions they captured, their social and religious policies were widely unpopular. In some ways they were a mirror image of the PDPA, intent on imposing radical doctrines of foreign origin (this time religious) on a population that was strongly opposed to them (Rashid 2001).

Although the Taliban was a religious movement, its attraction to the Pashtuns as opposed to other ethnic groups was not surprising. While their emergence was sudden, their movement's dynamic followed a well- worn path: scholars have long noted that religious leaders could transcend tribal boundaries and unite people in the name of religion who would not otherwise cooperate. Commenting on the structurally similar Bedouin tribes (in the thirteenth century!), Ibn Khaldun argued that religion was uniquely suited to bringing tribes together:

The Bedouins are the least willing of nations to subordinate themselves to each other, as they are rude, proud, ambitious, and eager to be leaders. Their individual aspirations rarely coincide. But when there is religion [among them] through prophethood or sainthood, then they have some restraining influence on themselves. The qualities of haughtiness and jealousy leave them. It is, then, easy for them to subordinate themselves and unite (as a social organization). (Ibn Khaldun 1967, 120)

The Taliban had used the failures of the mujahidin warlords to attract a wide following among the Pashtuns. An advantage of a religious movement for rival Pashtun leaders was that there was no honor or prestige lost in subordinating oneself to the will of God or God's agents. The movement also served to give the Pashtuns the dominant role they expected to play in Afghan politics without having to cede any ground to rival tribes. The Taliban expansion into Pashtun areas was largely peaceful, with tribal leaders and local mujahidin commanders defecting to their

cause in return for maintaining their local power under a Taliban administration. When they moved out of Pashtun regions they relied more on force. But, after losing a series of battles in 1995 that forced them to retreat back almost to the gates of Kandahar, they reverted to a policy of co-optation and bribery that resulted in the rapid fall of such major centers as Herat, Kabul, and then Mazar-i-sharif without major fighting. Their attempts to implement policies based on genuine military coercion generally failed, as when their heavy-handed occupation of Mazar in 1997 led to a disastrous defeat in which they were driven out of the region with the loss of an estimated three thousand troops. Their second occupation in 1998 was much more cautious and successful. However, even with outside support they were unable to completely displace Ahmad Shah Masud's Northern Alliance in northeastern Afghanistan in the years that followed (Goodson 2001).

*** The Taliban in Historical Perspective

The Taliban brought something new to the Afghan scene. Although they proclaimed themselves to be the defenders of traditional Islamic values, their movement marked a clear break with the past in that it was the first successful political movement in the country led by clerics. All previous Afghan regimes of whatever orientation had secular leaders.

Two types of charismatic leaders had led previous Afghan religious movements. The first were long established holy figures, sometimes representing a long lineage, who could draw on a network of disciples and relationships with particular tribes or ethnic groups to become the focus for organizing opposition to a central government. Visionaries who claimed to be acting on God's command to bring about some radical and divinely inspired change led the second type of more ephemeral movement. The leaders of the first type of movements held recognized positions of influence that persisted regardless of whether their opposition was successful. The leaders of the second had no such recognized positions (indeed, their socially marginal origins often were taken as a sign that they must be inspired by God). Failure of their movements ended their careers and often their lives. The Taliban was a larger and unusual variety of the second category. They began not in opposition to a central government or an invader but rather in

response to the anarchy that enveloped Afghanistan with the fall of the PDPA regime.

*** Breaks with the Afghan Past

The Taliban broke with Afghan tradition not only in the clerical origin of its leaders, but perhaps most importantly in its refugee origins. The Soviet war lasted for so long and the refugee flow into neighboring countries was so great that over time it created a new class of people: refugee Afghans born in Pakistan or Iran who had never seen the country or experienced life there. Refugee camps are notorious hotbeds for radical movements of all types because they are generally poor, they provide few opportunities for young people, and the political factions that control them can manipulate their populations. The hope of recovering a lost homeland is a particularly powerful ideal, but as time passes the view of this homeland becomes more and more mythic because refugee children know of it only by hearsay. The past is idealized because the present is so miserable and the future is so uncertain. Groups with extreme messages, whether their ideologies are political, ethnic, or religious, galvanize their followers not only with the visions of reclaiming a lost homeland but of then transforming those followers. Examples of such movements are numerous and include the radical political movements of the PLO among the Palestinians, exile-based movements of both the Tutsi and Hutu in Central Africa, or sectarian movements such as the Taliban. In all of these cases, the groups involved focused on what they had lost because they were not incorporated into the areas to which they had fled. They sustained a separate and distinct identity in part because the world community isolated them and fixed them in space and time with permanent refugee or alien labels that may have been appropriate initially but that became more problematic as the decades wore on.

Refugees in Afghanistan did better than most: they experienced a tactical victory when the Soviets withdrew and, in theory, they could return to their homeland. But the fighting among the mujahidin meant that for most the option of returning home was difficult. Even when they did arrive, the homeland was not what they had known when they left it. Although poor before the war, the Afghan economy at least functioned and there was

general security for life and property. Now there was none. The mujahidin, who had been heroes in the anti-Soviet jihad, lost respect when they became faction leaders engaged in self-interested and violent struggles for power with other similar groups. The Taliban drew on this discontent in two ways. First, they recruited young men who had been too young to participate in the anti-Soviet war and gave them an opportunity to participate in a new jihad, one that would bring a “truer version” of Islam to Afghanistan. Jihad had been the focal experience for young men throughout the Soviet war, and those too young to participate were looking for a goal that was equally as idealistic. That the Taliban’s view of Islam was far more radical and conservative than any existing in Afghanistan previously meant little to people who had nothing to compare it with. For them it was far easier to imagine an ideal Afghan way of life, and to enforce it on others, because they drew their lessons from religious schools and not the give and take of everyday life. Second, the Taliban drew on the discontent of the population at large with the continuing anarchy in the country. Any ideology and regime that promised stability would be given the benefit of the doubt if it could bring about that stability. For most Afghans, it was the success of the Taliban in bringing about order that mitigated the fact that it was both a clerical movement and one whose vision of Islam (particularly its puritanical banning of practically all forms of entertainment) was not widely shared or appreciated.

The Soviet war and the mujahidin civil war that followed left Afghanistan devastated, not only physically but also in its social and political structure. Before the war it would have been very difficult for any movement of the Taliban type to cover so much territory so easily. The power of local landed elites, rival tribes, and the power of a functioning central government prevented the easy spread of any national movements. The war and the massive outflow of refugees disrupted traditional Afghan society to such an extent that it was now vulnerable to rapid changes because the local power structures now lacked cohesion. To use an ecological analogy, the old Afghan system was a climax state: a selfperpetuating stable set of political relationships in which rival forces in the country remained in equilibrium until they were disrupted by an outside force. Such climax states, once destroyed, take a long time to rebuild or reach a new climax state. The Taliban represented a political movement characteristic of such a transitory phases where anarchy is the greatest problem and political power is weak. Although

in power for more than five years they did little to transform themselves into a government. The only new institution they introduced was a religious police force that took charge of enforcing the regime’s draconian policies.

*** Continuities with the Afghan Past

If the Taliban did represent one great continuity, it was in continuing the long-standing struggle for power between Afghan modernists and the Afghan traditionalists. The modernists were primarily urban based and sought a more secular and socially liberal environment that would integrate Afghanistan into the larger world community. The traditionalists had a more conservative vision based on a combination of deeply rooted rural values and traditional religious beliefs. The twentieth century was a continuing struggle between them in which neither was able to eradicate the other, and over time each got more extreme. The communist parties that overthrew Daud in 1978 argued that he had not been radical enough in pursuing a modernist vision. When their own attempts at a radical transformation of society failed and the Soviet Union invaded to keep Afghanistan socialist, the modernists were discredited in the eyes of most Afghans. Islamist parties that had failed to arouse much sympathy when they were persecuted by Daud’s government rode high in opposition to the Soviets and reinvigorated Islam as a political force in Afghan national politics. But both sides had in common a mission to transform a population that had no desire to be transformed. The opposition between the Taliban and the local populations was therefore most intense in cities such as Kabul and Mazar that were the strongholds of the modernists, in part because Taliban policies drew as much inspiration from rural Pashtun Afghan values as they did from Islam.

*** The Taliban and JIHAD

The Taliban made jihad one of the strongest elements of their struggle. It provided a religious justification for warfare against their enemies. But the Taliban were quite careful to restrict their jihad to one country: Afghanistan. They attempted to reassure the secular post-Soviet Central Asian states that they had no intention of spreading their struggle northward. While such a promise might seem simple

good politics (the Taliban were isolated enough without making new enemies), it also reflected an Afghan ethnocentrism. They had contempt for most of their neighbors and did not really care what they did. It was certainly not their responsibility to change them. And far from identifying with the many Muslim foreigners who fought in Afghanistan, the Taliban appeared to take the view that if they wanted to conduct a jihad against their own governments that was their own affair, but it had nothing to do with the Afghans. Indeed the only place that a Taliban style jihad was likely to spread outside of Afghanistan with Taliban support was Pakistan because that was where it had originated. Because Pakistan had its own large population of co-ethnic Pashtuns, there was a close connection with Islamist parties there who were part of an existing debate within Pakistan itself on how much more Islamic the country needed to become. Successive Pakistani governments played with fire by so closely identifying themselves with such a radical Islamist movement in order to influence Afghanistan’s politics when its own society was more vulnerable to its spread than any of the other neighboring states.

*** Islam as the Only Way

The Taliban saw Islam and its shari‘ah law as the fundamental basis for proper social life. They also believed that since God’s law was superior to state law, the state itself was not ultimately sovereign. Thus to their way of thinking, only Islamic principles could be used to judge rights. If these came into conflict with internationally recognized norms, such as the treatment of women, the Taliban argued that Islam must be followed. The difficulty was that Islamic scholars in other countries did not accord their interpretation of Islam much validity. Their interpretations were often idiosyncratic and tended to dress local custom in the guise of religion. On the other hand, many aspects of Taliban policy were not local custom at all. The puritanical strain of Wahhabism that induced them to ban all forms of entertainment, seclude women, enforce beard codes, and demand the harshest forms of Islamic punishments were all alien to Afghanistan. It was here that the influence of foreign Muslims, conservative Pakistani madrasas where the Taliban had been trained, and the financial support of the movement by the Gulf Arabs introduced an ideological edge to the movement that ultimately undermined its legitimacy.

This could be seen when the Taliban ordered the destruction of the standing Buddhas in central Afghanistan in March 2001 (Barfield 2001). The decree was issued by an assembly of clerics and confirmed by Mullah Omar as a religious issue and did not appear to have been run past any Taliban government officials before it was announced. The logic behind the decision was explained in a Taliban newspaper editorial in Shari'at (February 28, 2001) published just after the edict was issued. It stated that "the objects of worship, which had been considered as sacred and worshipped in their time in the past, are filthier than everything else and thus it is necessary that our beloved country should be cleansed of the existence of such false objects." That other Islamic scholars rejected this line of interpretation had no impact on Mullah Omar. When informed that of their objections he boasted that "Muslims should be proud of smashing idols. It has given praise to God that we have destroyed them" (Times, March 6, 2001). But the Taliban regime's inability to justify their action in strict Islamic legal terms undermined their claim. A set of Egyptian clerics who went to visit Mullah Omar in Kandahar were later scathing in their opinion of Taliban legal reasoning and condemned the decree as fundamentally flawed:

because of [the Taliban's] circumstances and their incomplete knowledge of jurisprudence they were not able to formulate rulings backed by theological evidence. The issue is a cultural issue. We detected that their knowledge of religion and jurisprudence is lacking because they have no knowledge of the Arabic language, linguistics, and literature and hence they did not learn the true Islam. (Al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 23, 2001)

But who were they to tell Mullah Omar, the man who named himself Amir-ul Momineen, or Commander of the Faithful, that he did not know his business? Omar's only overt response to all the criticism was to order the sacrifice of one hundred cattle and to give the meat to the poor to express his regret for taking too long to get the job done and not having done it earlier.

The Taliban were also hostile to other religions. Earlier, in December 2000, they had issued a decree declaring that that "any Afghan who converts to

the rescinded religion of Christianity will be sentenced to death.” The Afghan newspaper Hewad (January 13, 2001) had gone on to warn, “Anyone caught selling literature promoting Christianity or Judaism or degrading Islam, its personalities would be subjected to five years’ imprisonment.” After they had destroyed the Buddhist monuments, the Taliban turned their attention to the small Kabul Hindu community in May 2001 and demanded that they wear a badge to distinguish themselves as non-Muslims. In June the Taliban announced that at all non-Muslim international aid workers and journalists must agree to abide by their version of Islamic law (including punishments such as stoning for adultery) and accept the authority of the Taliban religious police. In August they arrested a group of foreign aid workers and charged them with being Christian missionaries. But in September 2001 the Taliban found themselves confronted by an enraged United States when its Arab Afghan allies launched attacks on Washington and New York and they were driven from power before the year ended.

*** The End of the Taliban

Over the course of their rule in Afghanistan the Taliban had become more and more dependent on al-Qaeda and the Pakistani government for financial and military support. Unlike other Afghan factions, the Taliban was willing to lose large numbers of men in battle. This created a manpower shortage as losses mounted and they found it harder to recruit Afghans into their ranks. Instead they depended more and more on the so-called Arab Afghans (foreign Muslims mostly from the Arab Gulf states and Central Asia) and Pakistanis. The use of these troops in an Afghan civil war alienated the local population. They saw these troops as foreigners who had no business in Afghanistan. Because they were engaged in a war of Muslims against other Muslims, the Taliban portrayal of their struggle as a type of jihad was seen as illegitimate. Pakistan’s role was particularly distrusted because they were seen as invaders keen to incorporate Afghanistan into Pakistan.

On a cultural level the Taliban’s increasing adoption of Wahhabi interpretations of Islam also alienated the population. Afghan Islam had never been dogmatic. Strong Sufi influences, the veneration of saints and

their tombs, and poor religious education gave Islam in Afghanistan an eclectic flavor. Even the Taliban had difficulties in sorting out what was religiously based and what came from Pashtun custom because they rarely bothered to learn Arabic. The success of the Wahhabist movements in other countries had played on people's insecurity and the role that religion should play in society. In Afghanistan, where religion was still seen as a natural way of life and not a political ideology, attempts by visiting Arabs to tell the Afghans how to be better Muslims fell on deaf ears. Afghans were so secure in their faith that they could not be bullied into believing that they needed to be better Muslims. And their contempt for foreigners meant that they were least likely to take advice from Arabs or Pakistanis on what they saw as their own religion.

The roots of this cultural certainty, that they knew Islam better than anyone else, went deep, and I had often observed it during my own anthropological fieldwork in Afghanistan during the 1970s. One small example I remembered vividly occurred when I was living in a summer nomad camp and discussing religion with a young shepherd because there was nothing else to do and this was always considered a good subject for conversation. We were debating the comparative advantages of Islam over other religions when he moved into a favorite topic of plural marriage. "Yes," he declared, "one of the advantages of Islam is that a man can have seven wives." And I replied, "No you can't; the shari'ah limits a man to only four wives." "No, you're wrong," he objected. We continued to argue back and forth with no resolution when who should happen along the trail but a mullah whom we immediately invited to drink tea with us. The shepherd then said, "Mullah, sir, this foreigner says that a Muslim can't have seven wives! Go on. Tell him he is wrong." But the mullah replied, "Well he can't. The foreigner is right. You can only have four." Now, you might have thought that an answer by an authoritative religious figure would have ended the argument, but it did not. The shepherd paused only to sip some more tea and then countered by declaring that Haji so-and-so had seven wives. The mullah said he must be mistaken, "Perhaps some died or he divorced some, but I am sure he has no more than four wives." The shepherd was not deterred. "No, no, I know it to be true. Besides, it is well known that those Muslims who may have to fight jihad are allowed three extra wives." Now, the mullah practically choked on his tea and said, "No, there is no jihad exception in shari'ah!" But the shepherd simply declared, "Oh yes there is," and that ended the discussion. The shepherd was illiterate and

had no formal religious education, but he was quite sure of what he knew about his own religion, and having a mullah contradict him was merely an annoyance that had no effect on his belief.

Thus although the Taliban were known to the outside world for their imposition of a puritanical Islam, the assertion that only their interpretation of Islam had validity did not take root in Afghanistan. Instead people looked upon these new rules as a form of oppression. This was reinforced by the traditional Afghan prejudice against village mullahs, who generally lacked social prestige, and the ruling Taliban councils consisted almost entirely of ill-educated mullahs whose knowledge of Islamic theology and the wider world was very limited. Had they had better information, they would likely have been more aware of the risks they took in allowing Osama bin Laden to use Afghanistan as a base for his international jihad against the United States and the West in general. However, the Taliban had shown little interest in the affairs of al-Qaeda. Although it was the training base for that movement, few Afghans were involved. Afghans were willing to die in a jihad to free their own country, but they were unwilling to die in other people's jihads. Also, because they saw martyrdom as a consolation prize and not a goal to be sought, they had no use for plots that were suicidal.

Even before the 9–11 attacks on the United States, the Taliban were isolated by the world community for harboring terrorists and their dependence on revenue from the international drug trade. As a result they became even more dependent on financial and political support from Pakistan and Osama bin Laden. This was to prove their undoing following the September 11 attacks on the United States. Pakistan immediately deserted them, and their alliance with al-Qaeda made them a direct target of the United States. At the beginning of the war Mullah Omar threatened the United States with the same fate as the Russians and British if they dared to enter Afghanistan and called on the Afghan people to rise up against an American attack. The Western press ran many stories of "unconquerable Afghanistan" and the invincibility of Afghan guerillas. However, within weeks of war's beginning, Taliban positions unraveled completely. They first collapsed in the north and west, where Pashtun control had always been most resented. Kabul fell immediately after the Taliban abandoned the city, hoping to regroup in the Pashtun heartland. But this proved no sanctuary when the traditional Pashtun

tribal leaders used the opportunity to regain power and expel the Taliban from Kandahar. While Mullah Omar has attempted to rally Taliban remnants who fled to Pakistan, their major tactic has been one of terror: to disrupt attempts to reconstruct Afghanistan and prevent the return of civil order. Far from heeding the Taliban call to rise up en masse against the infidels and demanding the foreign troops leave, the Afghan population appeared more inclined to ask for a larger international force to ensure stability and prevent the country's return to anarchy and civil war.

One reason that United States forces failed to draw the same level of resentment that Soviet troops had received was that the Taliban had already introduced foreign forces into the county: those of the so-called Afghan Arabs and Pakistanis. These groups were widely resented in

Afghanistan, so it was not hard for the United States to build a coalition against them. The American invasion also exposed the weakness of the Taliban even in the Pashtun region. At the time the Taliban collapsed there were probably fewer than a thousand American troops actually inside Afghanistan. In a very real sense this was merely a continuation of an Afghan fight where the winning side now had access to enough American cash to buy out most of its opponents and enough American air power to decimate the Arab Afghans and Pakistanis who chose to fight. Using one foreign invader to rid the country of another fell well within the Afghan political tradition. And the Americans could be counted upon to leave the country at some point, while it was widely feared that Pakistanis and Arabs would not, so in this case using a non-Muslim power to rid the country of unwelcome foreign Muslims was deemed acceptable. In the short run at least the pragmatism of the Afghans proved more significant than any religious ideology.

*** Rebuilding Afghanistan

In spite of its many problems, the current political leadership of the Afghanistan has proved remarkably pragmatic. The Bonn Accord meetings and the subsequent Loya Jirga in 2002 laid the foundation for a government

that incorporated all major ethnic and regional groups. In this process, choosing cooperation rather than conflict was not a vote for idealism.

Rather, the decision was forged by necessity: in nearly a quarter century no faction ever proved capable of dominating the whole country on its own militarily, even with outside help. This experienced reality means that the chances of actually creating a broad-based government are much better than they were in 1992 when the Soviet-backed Najibullah regime collapsed and each faction struggled for supremacy. What will be the role of Islam or Islamists in this process?

Although the number of clerics was far fewer than in previous national Loya Jirgas, conservative Islamists still demanded explicit recognition of shari‘ah law and the creation of Afghanistan as an Islamic state. Their demands were not rejected outright but instead were finessed. Of course the government could be called an Islamic state; was it not a nation of Muslims? As to shari‘ah law, the new government pointed to the 1964 constitution, which had been reinstated and had already declared that all national laws would be in accord with Islam, so that issue was moot as well. Both in the 1964 constitution and in the new draft constitution, this assertion that a government run by Muslims is an Islamic government remains a typically Afghan way of avoiding conflict on this issue. The reason that it serves as an acceptable compromise is rooted in Afghanistan’s maintenance of an older form of Islamic society in which it is not easy to tease out separate strands of religious belief from other aspects of life. The very importance of Islam as parts of people’s everyday identity paradoxically reduces the power of the ‘ulama because most Afghans reject their claim of having a monopoly on defining religious orthodoxy to the rest of society. This allows political leaders, as long as they stay within the broad outlines of the faith, considerable flexibility in the policies they pursue. For example, for the first time in Afghan history, Shia legal schools are recognized in the draft Afghan constitution for disputes among Shias where no national law applies, although the Hanafi legal interpretation retains its dominance elsewhere. This increased recognition of minority rights, however, has less to do with a newfound tolerance than a recognition of the de facto autonomy of the country’s regions and religious minorities.

There are great difficulties, however, in looking at the prospects for democratic pluralism because the one set of key players in civil society, political parties, are still lacking. Political factions of course exist, but these are based primarily on personal, regional, or ethnic interests. There is a striking absence of the intellectuals who formerly played a strong role in laying out their visions for an Afghan future, and the former political elite in Kabul that used the ideological party model is all but defunct. While parties will emerge in time, they are not players now. And with all current factions claiming some Islamic justification for their actions, Islam itself becomes a locus of contest and not the basis of a distinct political ideology. As a result, civil society in Afghanistan is still very much a work in progress. The idea of popular sovereignty and individual civil rights are far from being accepted as a given, let alone firmly established. In this regard most Afghans are more in sympathy with the traditional ‘ulama view that no democratic majority, however large, can change laws established by God (Zaman, this volume). But precisely because of the wide variety of crosscutting ties that make politics in the country so complex, this respect for God’s authority does not immediately transfer itself to the Islamic parties or leaders as God’s agents. As long as Islam is seen as bound into Afghan life at every level, it will be difficult to tell any individual Muslim how to live his life. While respect for individual autonomy is far from the extensive sets of individual rights embodied in various international human rights conventions, the Afghan view of the individual’s role in society does provide a space for debate and contest that is very real.

However the country develops, Afghanistan is likely to march to its own drummer to a tune of its own making.

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** Chapter 10: Islam and the Cultural Politics of Legitimacy: Malaysia in the Aftermath of September 11

Michael G. Peletz

Four weeks after the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon that occurred on September 11, 2001, the American government began a massive bombing campaign in Afghanistan to dislodge the Taliban and root

out and destroy the al-Qaeda network that was believed to be responsible for the September 11 carnage. As was widely expected, the days immediately following the beginning of the U.S. bombing saw major protests throughout the Muslim world. October 12, for example, witnessed a demonstration involving over three thousand people in front of the heavily fortified U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, the federal capital of the Muslim- majority nation of Malaysia. By the time the demonstrators attained a critical mass, they were dispersed with water cannons and the threat of rubber bullets and other forms of retaliation by security forces under the direction of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, a (relatively) secular nationalist who is well known throughout the world for his liberal economic reasoning and authoritarian governance. Also by this time, leaders of the major Islamist opposition party (the pan-Malaysian Islamic party, or PAS), whose supporters include over a million registered voters, had called for a jihad or “holy war” against the United States. Not surprisingly, sidewalk vendors in certain parts of the country boasted brisk sales of T-shirts bearing Osama bin Laden’s face and the phrase “Man of the World.”

Many Americans who followed these stories on CNN or through sen- sationalistic reports in the New York Times and other media outlets experienced an unsettling sense of dejâ vu. To them—and of course to many others—it seemed that with regard to attitudes toward the West and America specifically, Muslims in Malaysia partake of the same sensibilities as “fundamentalist” or “extremist” Muslims associated with al-Qaeda, the Taliban, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the like.

These impressions were reinforced in the months that followed when intelligence experts and media specialists repeatedly referred to Malaysia in the Western press as a “staging area” or “launching pad” for terrorist attacks against the United States. To bolster this claim, Western intelligence officials invariably point to the existence of (classified) photographic evidence of a January 2000 meeting in Kuala Lumpur at the condominium owned by a Malay Muslim (Yazid Sufaat) and his wife (Se- jahratul Dursina). The thirty-eight-year-old Yazid, a biochemist turned businessman trained at California State University-Sacramento as well as a former captain in the Malaysian army, is believed to be a local supporter of al-Qaeda and to have hosted a meeting in his condominium with at least three al-Qaeda operatives. Two of these latter men (Nawak Alhazmi and Khalid al-Midhar) were among the

hijackers of American Airlines Flight 66, which crashed into the Pentagon. The third, Zacarias Moussaoui, is the Moroccan-born French citizen who is assumed to have been “the twentieth hijacker” and is currently on trial in the United States on charges of conspiring in the September 11 attacks.

Yazid, who was arrested in Malaysia in December 2001 and has been in detention ever since, is often referred to as the “money man,” since he is believed to have supplied Moussaoui with the funds and official papers that enabled him to travel to the United States and collaborate with the other hijackers. Yazid’s wife was arrested along with thirteen others in April 2002, in a series of raids by Malaysian authorities that are said to have turned up military training notes, computers, and a map of Malaysia’s largest port (Port Klang). These arrests were widely reported in the Western media. So, too, were the arrests of alleged Islamic militants in neighboring Singapore in December 2001 and August 2002, which yielded information suggesting they intended to bomb U.S. interests and a variety of “soft targets” in Singapore, Malaysia, and beyond.

The sense one might get from afar that Malaysia is a hotbed of terrorist activity and that large numbers of Malaysia’s Muslims are violent militants is bolstered by government accounts of the organization known as Jemaah Islamiyah, roughly, “the Islamic group” (see Hefner, this volume). The sixty-five-year-old Indonesian-born cleric who is the spiritual leader of this group, Abu Bakar Bashir, is an unabashed admirer of Osama bin Laden. Perhaps more germane is that he seeks the creation, by whatever means necessary, of a territorially expansive Islamic state in Southeast Asia that includes southern Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, and the southern Philippines. Abu Bakar Bashir fled his Indonesian homeland during the early 1980s, at which point he settled in Malaysia, where he is believed to have begun recruiting local Malays, Indonesians, and others—some of whom fought alongside Mujahidin forces against the Soviets in Afghanistan—and training them in the basics of guerrilla warfare and terrorism. The fact that Abu Bakar Bashir lived in Malaysia for some fourteen years has taken on new meaning following the deadly blasts in Bali on October 12, 2002, which many authorities in Southeast Asia and the West attribute to his organization (Jemaah Islamiyah). Indeed, it is widely assumed, at least in government circles, that Jemaah Islamiyah has numerous cells in Malaysia, and that the

months and years ahead could see bombings in Malaysia on a scale as devastating as those in Bali.

The accounts of government officials and journalists are by no means the only phenomena that might give the outside observer cause for alarm. Even the casual traveler to Kuala Lumpur will come across bookshops and sidewalk vendors selling pamphlets, books, audiocassettes, and CDs depicting Osama bin Laden in heroic terms. Similarly, anyone wandering around the Masjid India area of Kuala Lumpur is likely to encounter sidewalk merchants selling Osama bin Laden T-shirts emblazed with images of the fiery explosion and collapse of the World Trade Center. Amid the endless variety of cell-phone holders and other cheap plastic goods hawked on sidewalks throughout the city, one can also find toy tanks marketed as replicas of the tanks used by the Taliban. Impressions along these lines are likely to be reinforced if one journeys to the east coast state of Terengganu, which, like the neighboring state of Kelantan, is under the control of PAS. In Terengganu one cannot miss the billboards along the roadside that endorse the local government's efforts to implement laws known as hudud. These laws entail the harsh punishments specified in the Qur'an for certain criminal offenses, such as amputation of limbs for theft, flogging and imprisonment for fornication, stoning to death for adultery, and so on.

Appearances, though, are not always what they seem. One of the main points I emphasize in this chapter is that despite the embassy demonstration and other external signs that might suggest a radicalization of Islamic sensibilities in Malaysia in the wake of September 11, most Muslims in Malaysia continue to be quite moderate and democratically oriented. A second point is that global dynamics set in motion by the events of September 11 have altered the political playing fields in Malaysia in a variety of deeply significant ways, some rather predictable, others definitely not. On the one hand, they greatly strengthened Prime Minister Mahathir's hand vis-â-vis his political opponents, including PAS supporters and others committed to the creation of an Islamic state as well as those of a more liberal and cosmopolitan bent who have focused their reformist energy on restoring the integrity of the secular judiciary and expanding the space of civil society. In the process these dynamics have undercut opportunities for the expansion of civil society and the pluralistic sensibilities underlying them. On the other

hand, dynamics associated with September 11 and its aftermath have enhanced the legitimacy of increasingly high-profile Muslim feminist organizations, such as Sisters in Islam,

who have worked to bring about reforms in the Islamic courts and other Islamic institutions so as to improve the legal options and overall living standards of Muslim women. This is an exceedingly important development, but it has come at considerable cost to the most visible spokespersons of such groups and others who have questioned one or another official version of Islam.

A third point I underscore is that analysis of the larger context in which the embassy demonstrations occurred indicates that Muslims in Malaysia are not all that concerned with positioning themselves against the West. More pressing than any such “inter-civilizational” clashes, to invoke Samuel Huntington’s (1996) highly problematic terminology and prophecy, are the struggles over which contested visions of Islam should prevail in Malaysia in the present and the future. The key debates—and certainly the ones that are most intensely felt—in other words, bear on intra-civilizational clashes, not those of an inter-civilizational variety. The same is true of neighboring Indonesia and many other parts of the Islamic world (Hefner 2000; Eickelman and Piscatori 1996; Lawrence 1998; Kepel 2002).

To put some of this in slightly different terms, the politics of legitimacy has reached unprecedented levels of intensity in Malaysia. One result has been the intensification of discursive wars of position built around Manichaean contrasts between “good Muslims” on the one side and “bad Muslims” on the other. Partly because certain categories of “bad Muslims” are defined as apostates, infidels, or both, these wars of position have heightened the salience of divides between Muslims and nonMuslims. More generally, all such dynamics make clear that the main challenges to the state come not from territorial or other claims made by ethnic or religious minorities, but from competing claims within the de- mographically and politically dominant Malay Muslim community.

*** Background and Context

Malaysia is frequently described in travel brochures and academic treatises as “the crossroads of Asia,” owing to the country’s rich cultural and ethnic diversity. The ethnic mosaic is usually discussed in terms of four major categories.[40] “Malays,” all of whom are Muslims, make up about 51 percent of the total population. “Chinese,” who are usually described as practicing a syncretistic blend of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, compose about 26 percent. “Indians,” most of whom are Hindus, though some are Sikh, Christian, or Muslim, account for about 7 percent. And “Others,” including hill-dwelling aborigines, Eurasians, and the like, make up the remaining 16 percent (Government of Malaysia 2000).

The legal system is frequently glossed as pluralistic to highlight the diversity and variegated provenance of its three major traditions of law: Malay customary law (adat), which pertains only to Malays; Islamic law (Malay, syariah, Arabic, shari’a), which is relevant to Malays and all other Muslims, albeit to a limited range of their affairs; and national (statutory) law introduced by British colonists in the nineteenth century, which bears on all citizens and others in Malaysia. Malaysia’s political institutions include a system of parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy, much like the British system upon which it is modeled. They also include an indigenous (Malay) polity of precolonial origin, which has been stripped of most of its power but is formally intact.

Malaysia has a population of some 24 million people. I would argue, though, that the Malaysian case is of much greater significance than the country’s demographic girth might suggest at first glance. One set of reasons for this is that Malaysia is among the most successful of the “non-Confucian” Asian tigers and has also sustained a pace of rapid development that is probably second to none in the Muslim world. Another is that Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir (r. 1981–20033) far more than any of his predecessors, successfully projected both the Malaysian case and his particular ideas on political-economic modernization as an emulable model for other regions of the world. The seventy-eight-year- old Mahathir has frequently claimed) for example) that the Malaysian model of growth-led development that is simultaneously informed by transcendent Islamic values and “smart partnerships” linking the civil service) the private sector) and political

leaders is a preferred alternative to Western-style development in other Muslim-majority nations and in much of the southern hemisphere as a whole. In his “role as ‘emissary’ for the South)” Mahathir has also offered “a post-Bandung discourse of Malaysian-style ‘economic nationalism’ for peripheral states to follow [that is] fashioned around themes of political solidarity with poor and developing countries” (Hilley 2001) 99). Mahathir’s messages have been well received in many quarters) both at home and abroad. This is partly because in the course of a mere generation or so Malaysia has catapulted itself into the slender ranks of Muslim countries with appreciable middle classes and burgeoning if still precarious civil societies (Abdul Rahman Embong 2002). Circumstances such as these help explain why Malaysia has become a locus of nationalist) transnational) and academic discourses concerning “Muslim modernities)” “Asian modernities)” and “alternative modernities” generally (Ong 1999; Peletz 2002; see also Appadurai 1996; Eickelman and Piscatori 1996; Rofel 1999; Hefner 2000).

It remains to emphasize that ethnic distinctions and antagonisms in Malaysia are infused with far-reaching religious) political) and economic significance and have been exacerbated by development strategies of the postcolonial government. This is most evident with the New Economic Policy (NEP, 1971–90), which sought to eradicate poverty among all Malaysians and to “restructure society” by undermining the material and symbolic connections between ethnic categories on the one hand and economic standing and function on the other. By pursuing policies to help the predominantly rural and agricultural Malays “catch up” economically with Chinese and Indians, the government has placed tremendous emphasis on “race” (on being a Malay or a non-Malay) as a criterion in allocating government loans and subsidies and other scarce resources (university scholarships, contractors’ licenses, start-up funds for businesses, etc.). These policies have heightened the awareness of distinctions between Malays and non-Malays and made them all the more politically and economically salient.

The NEP also exacerbated class antagonisms within the Malay community. Although its programs helped create a Malay middle class and enriched some Malays quite substantially, they left other Malays no better (and, in some cases, relatively worse) off than before in terms of material standing and access to social justice. Reactions to the NEP have taken many forms, including active and passive resistance to the Green Revolution implemented

as a key feature of the NEP in many areas, and disaffection from the central clique of the ruling political party and from the party in its entirety.

Dissatisfaction with the government’s commitment to modernity and the NEP in particular has fueled Malaysia’s Islamic resurgence. The resurgence is known as the dakwah (Arabic da’wa) movement. The term dakwah means to invite or call one to the Islamic cause, or to respond to the invitation or call, hence missionary work, including making Muslims better Muslims. The resurgence is usually said to date from the early 1970s, even though it is most appropriately viewed as an outgrowth of earlier developments in Islamic nationalism and reform, such as those associated with the Kaum Muda (Young Group) movement of the 1920s and 1930s (Roff 1967). The dakwah movement is thoroughly homegrown but has also been inspired by Islamist groups and Islamic revivalism in Indonesia, Pakistan, Egypt, Libya, and other parts of the Muslim world.

Most scholars approach the resurgence as response, indeed a form of resistance, to one or more of the following analytically related and culturally interlocked sets of developments. The first development concerns the postcolonial state’s Western-oriented modernization policies (noted above), which entail a heavily interventionist role for the state with respect to economic planning, distribution, and capitalist processes as a whole. These policies are widely seen as contributing to Malaysia’s overdependence on Western capital; to the economic success of Chinese and Indians relative to Malays; and to upper-class corruption as well as deracination and moral and spiritual bankruptcy throughout the Malay community. The second development involves the simultaneous shifting and hardening of class interests and animosities, especially between the newly emerged middle class and an entrenched (aristocratic) ruling class. The third development is the tightening of ethnic boundaries, particularly those separating Malays and Chinese. These boundaries have become increasingly pronounced and freighted in recent decades, owing largely to NEP-era practices highlighting race in the allocation of scarce government resources. The NEP is commonly regarded as having encouraged cultural assertiveness—some would say chauvinism—among Malays (Chandra Muzaffar 1987; Zainah Anwar 1987). This cultural assertiveness is especially evident as regards Islam, the practice of which, along with speaking the Malay language and observing

Malay “custom” (adat), is a defining feature, and increasingly the key symbol, of Malay- ness. More broadly, scholars generally view the dakwah movement as a powerful vehicle for the articulation of moral opposition to government development policies, traditional as well as emergent class structures, other ethnic groups, or some combination of these or related phenomena (Shamsul A.B. 1983; Nagata 1984; Chandra Muzaffar 1987; Zainah Anwar 1987; Muhammad Abu Bakar 1987; Husin Mutalib 1993; Peletz 1997, 2002).

Dakwah organizations are highly diverse and their objectives are in certain respects mutually incompatible. However, they all share an overriding concern to revitalize or reactualize (local) Islam and the (local) Muslim community by encouraging stronger commitment to the teachings of the Qur’an and the hadith, in order to effect a more Islamic way of life (din). The main groups have included the following: (1) Darul Arqam, a communal, land-based organization that enjoined its members to emulate the life of the Prophet and that strove for economic selfsufficiency by establishing its own schools, clinics, mosques, business enterprises, and shopping centers; it was banned by the government in 1994; (2) Jamaat Tabligh, a loosely structured Delhi-based missionary organization seeking to revitalize the spirit of Islam by means of one-on- one contacts, informal discussion groups, and the personal examples set by its itinerant missionaries; and (3) ABIM (Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia; the Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia), which emphasizes formal education and is extremely popular among university students, former student leaders, and youth generally, and encourages lobbying efforts, active participation in party politics, and otherwise “working within the system.”

Also worthy of mention here is the major opposition party, PAS (Parti Islam Se-Malaysia; the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party), the successor to the Hizbul Muslimin (Islamic Party) formally inaugurated in 1948, which has a decidedly populist orientation and has been a key player in Malaysian politics since shortly after its formation in 1951 (Kessler 1978; Safie bin Ibrahim 1981; Firdaus Haji Abdullah 1985). Strictly speaking, PAS is not part of the dakwah movement, though many of its objectives are espoused by some segments of the movement. The most basic of these objectives is the creation of an Islamic state with the Qur’an and the Sunnah as its constitution.

The relationships between the various segments of the movement and the state merit careful consideration, for they have fueled many political and religious dynamics in contemporary Malaysia. As far as most scholars are concerned, Darul Arqam has never posed an appreciable threat to the state (its banning by the government in 1994 notwithstanding). But ABIM and PAS clearly have, particularly since their leaders have frequently charged the ruling party (UMNO, the United Malays National Organization) with failing to safeguard the interests and well-being of the Malay community, especially with regard to Islam. PAS in particular has also claimed that the ruling party has sold out to local Chinese and Indians as well as foreign capitalists, all of whom are seen as having contributed both to Malaysia's underdevelopment and dependence on foreign markets and to its moral decadence and spiritual bankruptcy.

In such a religious and political climate the ruling party has to work overtime to validate its Islamic credentials—relegitimize the party and the state—and thus co-opt, or at least undercut, both the Islamic resurgents and the opposition party. This means going forward with its own far-reaching but ultimately rather moderate Islamization program, which is simultaneously a consequence of the dakwah phenomenon and a key factor in its promotion along state- and regime-friendly lines. This program to "out-Islamicize" the opposition, which does at times have those qualities of an arms race that Gregory Bateson (1936), in a very different context, referred to as "schismogenesis," has included: the creation of an international Islamic university, an Islamic stock market, and a nationwide system of Islamic banking and insurance (all geared ultimately toward meeting the material and other needs of the urban middle classes and assuring them that one can be both authentic Muslims and members of a modern middle class); the building and refurbishing of prayer houses and mosques; and the passage of myriad legislative measures bearing on Islam and Islamic law specifically. The government's Islamization program has also entailed the co-optation of charismatic Muslim intellectuals, partly by offering them influential posts in the administration. The most stunning success in this regard occurred in 1982 when Mahathir succeeded in converting then ABIM President Anwar Ibrahim to the cause of UMNO, thus fracturing the Islamist opposition. (In subsequent years Anwar rose through the ranks to become deputy prime minister, a position he held until he was ousted and jailed in 1998). Broadly

speaking, state strategies overseen by Mahathir have succeeded in undercutting PAS and ABIM, and in retaining the support of urban middle-class Malays who are most responsive to dakwah appeals. But they have also seriously alienated non-Malays, who make up nearly half of Malaysia's multiethnic population, just as they have intensified ethnic antagonism. Indeed, Chinese and Indians see the Islamic resurgence as an overtly political movement with strong xenophobic overtones bent on eroding the rights of non-Muslims and subjecting them to the dictates of Islam.

As should be clear, many of the organizations associated with Malaysia's Islamic resurgence are embroiled in struggles with different groups of national elites concerning the role, scope, and force of Islam in Malaysia's modernity project, as is the main Islamic opposition party (PAS). Also centrally involved or directly implicated in such struggles are activist-oriented Muslim feminists who reject PAS-style Islamization as misguided and misogynist; and "ordinary Muslims" (or "ordinary Malays"; the two terms are used here interchangeably), who are not in the forefront of contemporary religious or political developments but are among the more enduring targets of resurgents' efforts at cultural cleansing. Ordinary Muslims compose the majority of the Muslim population and are most directly affected by the changes sought in Islamic law, though the themes of broader significance are the pluralistic nature of Malaysian Islam and the highly contested nature of Islamic legal institutions and their role in modernity in contemporary Malaysia.

*** The Aftermath of September 11

I noted earlier that the events of September 11 greatly strengthened Mahathir's hand vis-â-vis his political opponents, especially the Malay Muslims among them. This is largely because in the weeks and months following September 11, Mahathir and his ruling party deftly painted their PAS adversaries as "extremists" with Taliban, if not al-Qaedastyle, sensibilities and aspirations. In addition, Mahathir and other UMNO elites engineered the high-profile arrests of dozens of political opponents—nearly all of them Malay Muslims—who were detained under the dreaded Internal Security Act (ISA), on the grounds of "national security." Some of those

arrested may have been passive supporters or active members of Jemaah Islamiyah or a shadowy organization known as the Malaysian Militant/Mujahidin Group (Kumpulan Mili- tan/Mujahidin Malaysia, KMM), whose professed goals resonate in important ways with those of al-Qaeda (Abuza 2003). But many of the arrests seemed to have had little if anything to do with real or imagined threats to national security and everything to do with Mahathir's obsessive concerns to undercut his political rivals and silence the rest of the population via self-censorship.

Overall, Mahathir's actions helped convince the electorate that PAS supporters are dangerous, violent extremists capable of harboring if not working directly with groups such as al-Qaeda. But UMNO still has to work very hard to win elections. Indeed, some knowledgeable observers contend that they must work ever more strenuously—by hook or by crook—in each election in order to emerge victorious. So the point here is not that because of September 11 and its aftermath the ruling party has been in a position to sit back and coast. It is, rather, that the dynamics of September 11 enabled UMNO to stem the electoral shift toward PAS that occurred as a result of the enduring crises that Mahathir created in the latter part of 1998 by his sacking, jailing, and pillorying of his former heir apparent, Anwar Ibrahim, on largely trumped-up charges of sodomy, corruption, and bribery. As many readers may recall, Anwar was convicted in the secular courts and sentenced to fifteen years in prison after a mockery of a trial characterized by gross irregularities on the part of government prosecutors and judges. The Anwar trial and the ensuing crises it created dealt a serious blow to the independence and integrity of the judiciary, and were partly responsible for the electoral shift toward PAS—and the growth of a multiparty opposition coalition consisting of PAS, the National Justice Party (Parti Keadilan Nasional, headed by Anwar's wife, Wan Azizah Wan Ismail), the (predominantly Chinese) Democratic Action Party, and the socialist-oriented People's Party of Malaysia (Parti Rakyat Malaysia, or PRM)—that was evident in the national elections of November 1999. But the more relevant point, to repeat, is that September 11 halted the electoral shift toward PAS just as it undercut the opposition alliance and the reformasi (reform) movement associated with it. The paramount dilemma for PAS, as one of the party's intellectuals expressed it to me in an interview in August 2002, is that "people are afraid of us now." The understandably triumphant UMNO perspective is succinctly conveyed in the words of the press secretary of an

UMNO politician from Kelantan whom I interviewed (in August 2002 as well); “September 11 was a godsend for us.”

UMNO’s ascendancy since September 11 has contributed to heightened political stability, at least in the short run. It also signals the willingness of Malaysians to work with the United States in pursuing policies of mutual interest, some of which reflects the more pervasive sense that UMNO and its national leaders speak for the majority of Malays and the majority of Malaysians; and that the fortunes of Malays and Malaysians as a whole are very much intertwined with those of the United States. The

United States is Malaysia’s largest trading partner and largest foreign investor, and many people in Malaysia are well aware that they benefit directly from the stability and strength of America’s economy and other institutions.

There is, however, a major downside to the closer relationship that has developed between U.S. leaders and Mahathir since September 11. The unprecedented coziness that now characterizes relations between Washington and Kuala Lumpur has dealt a terrible blow to local and international campaigns geared toward pressuring Malaysian authorities to reduce corruption, restore the integrity of the judiciary, and clean up their record on human rights. One of the consistent themes that emerged from my (August 2002) interviews with lawyers, judges, and other professionals is that when it comes to Malaysia, U.S. policy makers are single-mindedly preoccupied with insuring that its leaders join the U.S. “war against terror.” Consequently, the United States stopped exerting pressure on Mahathir to reestablish the autonomy and integrity of the judiciary and to expand human rights and civil society. Haji Suleiman Abdullah, who is one of the most prominent legal experts in the country as well as the head of the Syariah Bar Council and former head of the Malaysian Bar Association, told me quite emphatically that with little or no U.S. pressure on the prime minister to “clean up his act,” the judiciary will be further eroded and human rights will continue to suffer. He added that in the aftermath of the Anwar affair, reformers had attained a critical momentum, which had dissipated in the wake of September 11. Worse, though, is what Suleiman and some of his colleagues ruefully refer to as the “ASEANization” of basic Malaysian

institutions. What is meant by this turn of phrase is that once reputable Malaysian institutions like the judiciary and the civil service have deteriorated to the levels characteristic of their counterparts in neighboring ASEAN countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines.

Suleiman and many others see the U.S. Patriot Act as a complete vindication of Mahathir's heavy-handed use of the dreaded ISA to deal with his critics. One pro-Mahathir line of reasoning I encountered runs as follows: "The United States has been a democracy for over two hundred years and you still need these kinds of laws. Malaysia has only been independent and democratic for about fifty years, so of course we still need them." Mahathir was in fact emboldened by U.S. policy to the point of claiming that the Patriot Act is modeled on Malaysia's ISA! Many Malaysians, moreover, see the Patriot Act and related measures as profoundly hypocritical, and as one more example of U.S. hostility toward Muslims. Perhaps more important, they emphasize that the prolonged detentions of Muslim minorities, without trial or specific charges, sets an abysmal example and sends a terribly disheartening message to those throughout the world who are engaged in struggles to enhance pluralistic sensibilities and democratic institutions. With regard to these issues, then, and perhaps more obviously U.S. cocreation and support of Israeli policies toward Palestinians, the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan, and the U.S.- led war against Iraq, Muslim professionals and others in Malaysia evince significant hostility toward the United States that could easily grow and solidify in the months and years ahead. This is all the more likely if the United States proceeds with the establishment of a regional counterterrorism center on Malaysian soil and the promotion throughout the Muslim world and beyond of Mahathir as an exemplary Muslim leader who represents the best of Islam and modernity if not "the shining light of moderate Islam" (Shamsul A.B. 2001, 4709, emphasis added).

**** Muslim Feminists and the PUM Controversy

I mentioned earlier that events since September 11 have augmented the legitimacy of high-profile Muslim feminist organizations like Sisters in Islam. In the process these events have drawn positive attention to the activities and agendas of such groups, which are geared toward improving the legal options and living standards of Muslim women in accordance with

contemporary reinterpretations of sacred religious texts. The enhanced legitimacy has come about partly because organizations like Sisters in Islam have long been highly critical of PAS and other Islamist groups on the grounds that they are backward-looking, intolerant, misogynist, extremist, and otherwise dangerous. As a result of post-September 11 developments, Muslims and non-Muslims alike are listening more carefully to what the Sisters in Islam have to say about the Qur'an, Islam, and policies toward women, as well as issues of equality, justice, and democracy generally. Dynamics such as these bode well for Muslim and other women in Malaysia, particularly since they are drawing women into public and specifically political arenas in new and productive ways.

Like university-educated Muslim feminists in many other parts of the world (Ahmed 1992; Afkhami 1995), the women involved in Sisters in Islam have endeavored to promote alternative readings of foundational Islamic texts such as the Qur'an and the hadith. These scholarly efforts are aimed at recuperating the egalitarian ethical and legal sensibilities of early Islam that were stifled by more hierarchical readings of classic texts, the latter of which gained ascendancy in the course of the formal codification and official elaboration of Islamic law and "custom" that occurred in the centuries after the deaths of the Prophet and his companions. Drawing also on the liberal sensibilities of global feminism and transnational NGOs concerned with women's issues and human rights, Sisters in Islam have campaigned vigorously to insure greater legal and basic human rights for Muslim women. They have done so mostly by organizing high-profile workshops and conferences, by writing letters to the editors of major dailies, by publishing pamphlets and books (with titles such as Are Muslim Men Allowed to Beat Their Wives?), and by formal and informal lobbying efforts of various kinds. Much of their energy has been devoted to ameliorating problems associated with polygyny, abandonment, and the mistreatment of women in the context of marriage and divorce. They have also forced the government to respond with various legislative and policy measures, including the passage in 1994 of a national law against domestic violence that has informed judicial process in the Islamic courts and has also had salutary effects in Malaysian society as a whole.

Sisters in Islam is a very small organization with perhaps only a dozen or so formal members (part of a deal struck with the government that they would

not attempt to create a mass movement). Despite their small numbers, the Sisters in Islam have extensive networks with other progressive NGOs, both local and transnational, and are frequently featured in the local media. The bottom line is that because of their adept engagement in coalitional politics, their influence is enormous (see also Singerman, this volume). They work closely with officials in various ministries, including but not limited to the Ministry of Women and Family Development, and they are in direct communication with the prime minister himself on legislative and policy matters concerning women and religion. The Sisters in Islam are also taken quite seriously by high-ranking officials in the indigenous polity, like the Sultan of Selangor, though some ordinary Muslims regard them as too radical, too feminist, and/or too Western in their approaches to textual interpretation, advocacy, and reform. More generally, the Sisters in Islam promote a vision of Islam that is highly principled, inclusive, and pluralistic. In these and other ways they have contributed a great deal to the cultivation and "scaling up" of sentiments and dispositions that are conducive to the expansion of civil society. In all likelihood, they will continue to do so in the months and years ahead.

To better appreciate where the Sisters in Islam are situated in the playing fields of contemporary Malaysian Islam, we might consider some of the points that emerged in interviews I conducted with members of the organization in August 2002. One of the program directors, Ruzana Udin, underscored that the Sisters in Islam is the only group in Malaysia that is fighting within an Islamic framework for women's rights; that they are caught in the middle of the struggle between UMNO and PAS; and that Mahathir and UMNO are not really "pro-women" but are quite liberal compared to PAS. Mahathir "gave space" to Sisters in Islam partly because the government needs moderate voices like theirs to help them undercut PAS. This relationship leads moderate Muslims to support Sisters in Islam, but it also contributes to the view that Sisters in Islam is "linked to" (managed by) the government.

My conversation with Zainah Anwar, the extremely articulate and highly personable executive director of the organization, focused largely on PAS. This is not surprising since like many others involved with Muslim feminist groups and progressive NGOs, she sees PAS as the chief impediment to the realization of her objectives to win the hearts and minds of the new Muslim

middle classes. “We were against the World Trade Center bombings, but we are also against the U.S. bombing in Afghanistan. [That said,] most moderate Muslims do not support PAS’s call to jihad against the U.S.” By way of contextualizing PAS’s foreign policy views in more expansive terms, she mentioned that “Harakah [the PAS newspaper] is very anti-American,” to which she added, “PAS felt that the Taliban were a good Islamic government, partly because they ‘protected’ women”:

Since September 11, many human rights NGOs that had been allied with PAS have abandoned them [because] much that PAS has done has backfired: the declaration of jihad against the U.S.; the PUM controversy [about which more below]; and the hudud law issue ... Their positions on music, women, culture, dance, hudud—all of this puts them on the intolerant, extremist side of Islam. They have unleashed and helped legitimize a [Malay] mindset of ‘everyone has to defend Islam,’ that ‘Islam is under siege.’ They don’t believe in ijtihad [independent reasoning], ... have medieval, ahistorical minds ... [and] no ability to deal with differences of opinion within Islam.

Turning to some of the broader issues, Zainah observed that “there is a huge middle class here. With so much at stake, they don’t want to take to the streets [like Indonesia]; they’re committed to the democratic process ... [even though] both PAS and UMNO have in different ways tried to break the social contract ... The Sisters in Islam want a consis

tent, principled, liberal, progressive Islam,” a goal shared by some in the government. The problem, though, is that due to “police abuse, corruption, the ISA,” and the like, “the government lacks the moral authority to bring about change.” So “we are building a broad base through public education, working with single mothers, Puteri UMNO [the wing of UMNO devoted to young women], young lawyers, religious people, and others, and targeting future leaders.”

Despite their enhanced legitimacy in many circles, the leaders of groups like Sisters in Islam have paid a heavy price for their high-profile critiques of the Islamic courts and various other contemporary Islamic institutions that they see as having developed in ways that are out of keeping with the egalitarian

sensibilities of the Prophet’s original message. Zainah Anwar in particular has come under repeated fire from PAS leadership as well as the Persatuan Ulama Malaysia (Association of Malaysian Ulama; PUM), which claims to be a national organization of ‘ulama, or religious scholars. In the early part of 2002, leaders of the PUM—the majority of whom appear to be PAS stalwarts—accused her and five other public intellectuals of insulting the Prophet and disgracing Islam, both of which are grave offenses according to Islamic doctrine and Malaysian state law alike and could result in lengthy prison sentences.[41] In addition, the PUM petitioned the sultans, who are the official heads of Islamic affairs in their respective states, to have religious experts issue an authoritative legal opinion, or fatwa, that would condemn all six of the individuals involved and declare that the five of them who are Muslims are guilty of apostasy, an offense that many Muslims in Malaysia and elsewhere feel should result in the death penalty. The individuals thus targeted include (in addition to Zainah Anwar): Patricia Martinez, a well regarded scholar of Islam; Kas- sim Ahmad and Akbar Ali, both of whom are respected journalists; Malik Imtiaz Sarwar, an accomplished lawyer specializing in human rights; as well as Farish Noor, an incisive and outspoken political scientist, human rights activist, and journalist who perhaps more than any of the others has been vilified for his controversial remarks about the need for an Islamic reformation in Malaysia and elsewhere in the Muslim world. Some of these individuals have had their cars vandalized and have received anonymous threats that they will be raped or killed or both if they persist in their criticisms of official views of Islam. Needless to say, this kind of retaliation has taken a tremendous toll. Certain of the individuals thus targeted are understandably loath to remain in Malaysia, and at least one of them has become despondent to the point of contemplating suicide.

**** Hudud Law and Moral Reasoning

A related but analytically distinct dynamic has to do with the previously noted fact that in the aftermath of September 11, Mahathir along with other UMNO leaders and the heads of various NGOs including but not limited to Sisters in Islam have successfully painted PAS and other Islamists into a corner. One consequence has been a hardening of PAS’s positions on many fronts, including the necessity of creating a state apparatus of Islamic design (an “Islamic state”). As a step in the direction of establishing a system of

Islamic government and spirituality in Malaysia, the PAS-controlled state government of Terengganu passed legislation in July 2002 to implement hudud law, much as the PAS-controlled state government of Kelantan did in 1993. Hudud law deals with crimes and punishments that Muslim jurists have conventionally viewed as derived from foundational Islamic texts such as the Qur'an and the hadith. In Malaysia, the main crimes include theft, highway robbery, fornication, adultery, and apostasy. The key punishments are corporal: amputation of limbs for theft, whipping and imprisonment for fornication that does not involve adultery, stoning to death for adultery, and so forth.

The current hudud controversy is exceedingly complex, partly because many textual, interpretive, procedural, evidentiary, and jurisdictional issues are both unsettled and very much contested (An-Na'im 1990; Rose Ismail 1995; Mohammad Hashim Kamali 1995, 2000). Most important to bear in mind here is that the Terengganu legislation to introduce hudud law is state-level legislation; in order for it to become effective law, it must be approved by the federal government. The federal government vehemently opposes PAS's version of hudud for all sorts of reasons; hence the situation is stalemated, with a showdown likely to develop between the state and federal governments that could well trigger a constitutional crisis.

The hudud controversy is also contributing to a politicization of the otherwise generally nonpoliticized police forces. This is because PAS officials in Terengganu have made clear to local police that they must enforce all religious and other laws passed by the state. Federal officials, for their part, have reminded the police in no uncertain terms that they are federal employees and thus beholden to the federal government's laws and directives, which forbid them enforcing hudud laws. PAS leaders have declared amid much fanfare that they expect the cooperation of local-level police and prison officials, and that if such cooperation is not forthcoming, they will train and deputize volunteer forces both to enforce the law and to build the jails necessary to hold suspects and convicted criminals.

The building of such new penal facilities seems unlikely; but not surprisingly, proclamations pro and con hudud laws are in the papers daily

and very much on people’s minds. The more general point is that the largely politically driven circulation of impassioned and dichotomous discourses on hudud is contributing to further polarization within the Muslim community. The cultural political situation that has developed in this community is such that one’s stance on hudud law has become the litmus test of whether or not an individual is, depending on one’s perspective, either an authentic or legitimate Muslim or a backward-looking, dogmatic, and bigoted one.

To refer as I have to the largely politically driven circulation of impassioned discourses on hudud is not to reduce one’s position on hudud to a narrow political calculus. Powerful moral sensibilities animate many of the debates at issue. Both for this reason and because there is a significant and perhaps growing minority of Muslims—both among PAS supporters and among Malays who do not necessarily line up behind PAS platforms—who endorse the implementation of hudud law, it is important to understand hudud’s moral appeal, especially the symbols and idioms in which it is cast and interpreted.

Consider, for example, the views of a middle-aged Malay taxi driver, whom I shall refer to as Ahmad. Concerning Ahmad’s background and social location, I know only a few of the basics: that he served for many years in and is now retired from the armed forces, that he earns a living driving a taxi in and around Kota Baru (Kelantan’s capital), that he has two wives and ten children, and that he solemnized his second marriage across the border in Thailand so as to circumvent state laws requiring that he obtain the permission of the local Islamic court to take a second wife. He was later fined M $300 (U.S. $79) for this breach of state law, but in recounting the circumstances of this marriage to me, he shrugged off the fine as a token fee. More relevant in the broader scheme of things is that his violation of the law did not invalidate the second marriage—a situation that is particularly distressing to Muslim feminists and others who have sought, with mixed success, to reform laws bearing on polygyny (Peletz 2002).

Ahmad, who identifies with and votes for PAS, welcomes the implementation of hudud law primarily because “these are God’s laws, not human laws; they are written in the Qur’an and people cannot tinker with

them.” More generally, according to Ahmad, he and others support the laws for two reasons. The first is that “this is what God wants; hence the laws must be followed.” The second is that introduction of the laws will help eliminate corruption and vice. He added that women are safer under hudud, presumably because of the deterrent effect of harsh penalties for rape, but we did not pursue this matter. When I asked about UMNO’s stance against hudud, Ahmad replied that many “ministers, rich guys, and big shots,” including Prime Minister Mahathir, do not back the introduction of hudud laws because the enforcement of such laws would result in their being arrested and punished for the crimes they habitually commit, like adultery (zina) and drinking alcohol.

One of the basic topoi that emerged from our conversation is that UMNO is an organization of “ministers, big guys, big shots,” corruption, and vice, and that PAS takes a principled stand against corruption, vice, and abuse of privilege. The populist critique that runs throughout these comments merits note (Kessler 1978, 1980), as does the fact that such critiques have broad resonance in areas like Kelantan and Terengganu that have been marginalized or largely bypassed by state-sponsored modernity. “Per capita income in Kelantan [is] only a quarter that of the national average, and foreign investment one-tenth the size of adjoining Perlis” (Hilley 2001, 190); things are not much better in Terengganu. The broader theme is that the climate of corruption, vice, and abuse of privilege created by UMNO politicians and their policies goes a long way toward helping to explain why so many Malays support PAS candidates and/or the Islamic resurgence, and the implementation of hudud laws in particular.

Let us proceed to a consideration of the perspectives of an extremely urbane up-and-coming PAS politician, Haji Husam Musa. The forty- four-year-old Husam graduated from the University of Malaya (with a degree in economics), is a member of parliament from a rural district of Kelantan as well as political secretary to Haji Nik Aziz bin Haji Nik Mat (chief minister of Kelantan) and chief of PAS Youth in Kelantan, who occasionally writes for Harakah, PAS’s bimonthly newspaper. When I asked Husam to describe PAS’s major objectives, his short answer was “justice and brotherhood [keadilan and persaudaraan] throughout society.” He went on to explain that “justice must be based on

divine instruction, and that the Almighty is the most just in the universe." People "must base their struggle on the Holy Books ... be they the Qur'an, the Bible, or the Old Testament; ... for Muslims [it must be] the Qur'an." Husam added that in contemporary Malaysia, corruption and other crime are endemic; hence there can be no justice. "Look at all the rapes and murder reported in the newspapers. The existing laws do nothing; they are rubbish ...

There is no justice without hudud ... The idea of deterrence is very im

portant here; [hudud laws] put fear in the hearts of criminals." Husam also spoke of protection, of the protection that Islam affords to nonMuslims: "liberty, freedom of belief, the right to speak, the right to lead social lives [to socialize and fraternize] as they wish. Mutual respect. We want to establish that again. Brotherhood and justice have been destroyed by UMNO ... because of its emphasis on pragmatism, nationalism, racial sensibilities, and discriminatory affirmative-action policies. The Chinese, for example, have suffered greatly ... But we all come

from Adam."

Husam's belief that the existing laws "do nothing" and "are rubbish," coupled with his view that corruption and crime are endemic in Malaysia partly because extant laws have no bite, is obviously key to his support of hudud, which he sees as a gift from God that can serve as a powerful deterrent to corruption and criminality of other kinds. Support for hudud is all the more critical since criminality precludes the development of the peace, justice, ("pan-racial") brotherhood, and universalistic mutual respect that God offers not just to those who have submitted to Islam but to the human community in its entirety.

A broadly congruent set of rationales for the support of hudud is espoused by Haji Suleiman Abdullah who is in his early sixties and, as mentioned earlier, is the former head of the Malaysian Bar Council and one of Malaysia's most respected lawyers. Our conversation turned to

hudud law after a discussion of what Suleiman sees as overwhelmingly negative developments in the secular judiciary since the Anwar crisis and September 11 in particular. This context must be borne in mind, for as Husam Musa's previously noted comments make clear, one's position on hudud needs to be examined in the light of one's perspectives concerning the relative integrity of the secular judiciary and the state apparatus in its entirety, including its capacity to create a social and spiritual climate conducive to a moral reign of "law and order."

Hudud "is a covenant with God; if you question it, you're an apostate The adultery and theft provisions of hudud address the sanctity

of the family and property, the security of an individual in society, which are core values in most if not all societies. The penalties are not all that severe if they are viewed in light of the damages to society that would occur if the crimes [they are meant to deter] were committed." The crimes are "a major outrage to society, hence you must have a punishment that is comparable Drug use, incest—in Malaysia, these are

highest among Muslims ... [They are an] index of 'progress.' ... Our

leaders see privatization and economic development ... [but] I worry about the future of society, the drift, and deculturalization, ... [the consequences of] policies of unmitigated economic development." To understand support for hudud we need to bear in mind that "most [people] prefer the framework and certainties of religion; it provides answers and enables people to be part of a community of believers [In Malaysia]

most people are basically good, but [we] must strengthen [that]; society needs reminders."

At this juncture I would like to step back from the specifics of the three sets of comments discussed here and draw attention to the strong emphases

(however variably inflected) on restorative—as opposed to retributive—justice. I underscore this theme for three (related) reasons. First, it is of central importance both in Islamic doctrine bearing on jurisprudence and in the actual workings of Islamic law “on the ground,” in Islamic courts (Rosen 1989; Hirsch 1998; Sachedina 2001; Peletz 2002). Second, it is usually overlooked in Western discussions of Islamic law, which typically focus on vengeful, maiming retribution. And third, if we fail to appreciate the moral appeal of restorative justice, we will also fail to grasp why Muslims in Malaysia and elsewhere are increasingly supportive of local and transnational programs aimed at introducing Islamic laws and Islamic states apparatuses in their entirety.

Some of the more general dynamics at issue here have been well described in a recent article on Islam and globalization by Farish Noor (who, as we have seen, has been targeted by the PUM and others owing to his outspoken views on the need for Islamic reformation). Since Far- ish’s commentary is relevant both to Malaysia and far beyond, I quote at length:

Sharia laws and hudud criminal punishments [are] finding increasing appeal in the Islamic world ... [due to] the collapse of the secular development paradigm in so many post-colonial Muslim states. Despite the economic gains from globalization in many countries, in some post-colonial states globalization has taken a toll on the state’s capacity to govern and manage society Externally imposed structural-adjustment policies, a growing

dependence on foreign capital and relentless pressure on local governments by global agents have all helped to discredit many Muslim governments—because they failed to reform domestic arrangements adequately to address the ... issues that globalization demands. The net result is they are no longer able to cater to the interests and welfare of their respective constituencies... The encroachment of market forces and neoliberalism turns

the secular legal system into a market for goods and services ... Moreover,

corruption endemic in poorer countries takes a large bite out of justice.

By contrast, traditional religious courts appear accessible, cheap, reliable, and consistent. The beauty of sharia law—as seen by many ordinary Muslims—is that it at least offers some legal protection with clear verdicts. While many ordinary Muslims will not agree with the actual punishments, and few would relish the thought of ... watch[ing] convicted criminals whipped, stoned, or mutilated, the fact remains that sharia is seen as a credible alternative to a civil/secular legal system alienated from the masses.

This, then, is the predicament faced by many Muslim governments and activists who want to hold back the calls for strict sharia laws and hudud punishments. By failing to improve on the secular legal system ... , they find themselves bereft of an alternative when confronted by ... hardline Islamists who call for religious law The way out of this impasse is obvi

ous: reform the civil-law apparatus and make courts open, transparent, just and accessible This in turn should be linked to the wider project of re

forming the structures of the post-colonial state itself, so that the other institutions of government—the police, legislature and executive—all perform their respective duties as well Failure to reform would mean opening

the way for more demands for an alternative paradigm. The rise of political Islam, which was an urban, global, and modern phenomenon from the beginning, reads as an index to the failure of many modern post-colonial Muslim states. Rather than demonizing hudud, the political elites of much of the Muslim world would do well to take care of the mess in their own backyards. Only then will faith in the civil legal system be restored. (Farish Noor 2002, 23)

The essay by Farish quoted here makes no specific reference to Malaysia, even though the Malaysian-born Farish has written much about cultural politics and religion in his homeland. The essay is framed instead in relation to Pakistan, Iran, Sudan, Nigeria, and the Muslim world as a whole. That said,

there is much in Farish’s social scientific framing of the globalizing dynamics at issue that resonates with the remarks of the three Malaysian Muslims cited earlier (Ahmad, Husam Musa, Suleiman Abdullah)—though the latter individuals also invoke issues of sanctity, divine will, God’s covenant, and so forth whereas the more secular Farish does not.

**** Hudud, Apostasy, and the Cultural Politics of Legitimacy and Enforced Quietism

As should be clear, there is much heartfelt and powerful debate in Malaysia on the subject of hudud. Somewhat less obvious but no less crucial to appreciate is that most of the public debates concern certain issues and dynamics but not others. The focus is typically on one or more of the following themes: whether the laws should be introduced; why they should or should not be introduced; how and when they might be effectively implemented; what the implications of the laws will be for Muslim women; whether non-Muslims should or will come under their jurisdiction; and why certain groups and broad sectors of society support or oppose the laws. Conspicuously absent from (or at least rather far down toward the bottom of) this list are debates on the ontological status of the laws in quintessentially foundational Islamic texts such as the Qur’an.[42]

There are many reasons for this absence. One has to do with the fact that the Qur’an tends to be available in Malaysia only in Arabic, which the vast majority of Malays cannot actually read (as opposed to recite). Another exceedingly important one in terms of its cultural salience is suggested by Suleiman’s remark that to question God’s covenant in the form of hudud is to be guilty of apostasy (keridahan, kemurtadan), a crime of such gravity that (as noted earlier) it merits the death penalty as far as many Muslims in Malaysia and beyond are concerned. The irony here, though, is that while apostasy is invariably subsumed under the rubric of hudud, scholars of Islam do not universally agree on the precise entailments of apostasy or whether the Qur’an specifies in unqualified terms that apostasy is (or should be) a capital offense. Some learned scholars of Islam in Malaysia and elsewhere, for instance, contend that the Prophet’s message on the latter issue has been distorted by centuries of conservative juristic interpretation and political

expediency, and that the Prophet intended the death penalty for apostasy only when it also involved “blasphemy and rebellion against the [Islamic] community and its legitimate leadership” (Mohammad Hashim Kamali 2000, 29, passim). According to this view, the death penalty is not mandated by the Qur’an or any other Islamic source if apostasy does not entail such blasphemy and rebellion, especially if the only transgression at issue involves philosophical or other questioning of one or another conventional or official interpretation of Islam. That said, there is a strong current throughout the entire Muslim community in Malaysia that questioning any aspect of Islam could well lead to divisions within the ummah, and that exposing or widening divisions of the latter sort amounts to “letting down the side” and thus an erosion of Muslim (hence Malay) sovereignty, which is necessarily tantamount to treason. The scope and force of this constrictive current are amplified by the secular policies and strategies of UMNO, including not only Mahathir’s use of the ISA to quell real or imagined dissent cast in religious or other terms, but also the government’s well-honed strategy of convincing the Muslim electorate that Malaysian Islam is always under siege and that extraordinary policing measures are perforce always justified. This is to say that there is an overdetermined reluctance to debate the ontological status of apostasy and many other issues linked to religion.

Another reason for the general absence of debate in Malaysia about the ontological status of hudud in sources such as the Qur’an has to do with matters of intellectual and moral authority and legitimacy. These themes suffused an interview that I conducted in August 2002 with Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, one of the leading intellectuals in Southeast Asia and one of the world’s most accomplished and respected scholars specializing in Islamic philosophy and metaphysics, Islamic education, and “the Islamization of knowledge.”

Al-Attas is the founder and director of the Kuala Lumpur-based International Institute for Islamic Thought and Understanding (ISTAC), a highly influential (and architecturally stunning) degree-granting institution whose daily classes, weekly seminars, and other activities are devoted to “analysing, clarifying, [and] elaborating ... the key terms ‘relevant to the cultural, educational, scientific, and espistemological problems encountered by Muslims in the present age’ ” (Wan Mohd. Nor Wan Daud 1998, 99–100). He

is also the main spiritual and intellectual inspiration for the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM), which has been one of the most powerful and high-profile of the organizations promoting Islamic resurgence in Malaysia since its founding in the early 1970s. In this connection it warrants emphasis that ABIM provided the institutional context in which a steady stream of charismatic Muslim intellectuals who went on to make their mark in national political arenas honed their organizational and other skills and otherwise "cut their teeth." Such intellectuals include: Anwar Ibrahim, who (as mentioned earlier) was head of ABIM before Mahathir recruited him to UMNO and rewarded him with a succession of prestigious political posts; Fadzil Mohamed Noor, the longtime leader of PAS and the head of the opposition alliance in its entirety at the time of his death in June 2002; Haji Abdul

Hadi Awang, the chief minister of Terengganu who assumed the mantle of PAS leadership on the death of Fadzil Mohamed Noor; and scores of other nationally prominent Muslim intellectuals who command important positions both within and outside state-run (or state-friendly) Islamic institutions. In sum, Al-Attas's ideas and sensibilities have played a dominant role in shaping the intellectual and political contours of contemporary Malaysian Islam.

The author of more than two dozen books and monographs and scores of articles (many translated into Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, French, German, Russian, etc.), the seventy-two-year old Al-Attas has a commanding presence but is also both charming and avuncular. Among the first questions he put to me after confirming that I had written scholarly works about Islam in Malaysia were, "Who are your authorities? Which authorities have you been speaking to? And why have you never come to see me until now?"

While Al-Attas was extremely cordial and generous with his time, he spent most of the interview railing against the West, specifically "the Orientalists, positivists, relativists, secularists, post-modernists, and social scientists, all of whom distort and diminish Islam" and presumably religion, spirituality, and ethics in general. His main objection to positivism has to do with "its insistence that God can only be known or proven to exist through the senses," though he added that "we oppose positivistic, post-modern, and

secular perspectives that view religion as nothing more than culture. It is not modernity per se [that we oppose].”

One of his initial remarks had to do with Westerners trying to understand why “we [Muslims] behave the way we do; it’s not because we are ‘fundamentalists’ or ‘hate the West.’ ” He went on to say, “It’s not our problem, it’s your problem, a Christian problem,” the “it” here referring to Westerners’ difficulties understanding “the lack of separation between church and state in Islam,” which from Al-Attas’s perspective means primarily that “there can be no separation of the ethical and the political.”

The conversation turned to September 11. “The moment it happened your president started talking about [the need for] a crusade; he’s an idiot, and so is Margaret Thatcher [And then there is] the Italian Prime Minister who said we’ve produced no Cellinis, no Michelangelos, no Mozarts.” Mentioning that he had heard something about Michelangelo being homosexual, Al-Attas remarked, “Your church ... , the robes, the music; so much paganism, isn’t it?” adding “[Western] scholars are spreading much of the havoc You need to ask the right authorities. Otherwise, you confuse and destroy and set up false authorities among Muslims ... The scholars one should study and respect are the al-Ghazalis, the Sufis—the higher ones—[and] Ibn Khaldun, the father of modern sociology,” though he was quick to underscore that “too many books can also confuse.”

“There are [in any case] different kinds of knowledge: true knowledge, useful knowledge, and dangerous knowledge. We want to concentrate on useful knowledge. We [humans] are only here for a few years. Some knowledge is for one’s own salvation; some is for development in subsequent generations. Muslims must know about their history [and] civilization, and culture, [about] what happened to them. It’s all been confused by the colonialists. [But] we oppose extremism.”

Al-Attas brought up the idea of “Islams” (in the plural), rejecting outright that any such phenomena exist. By way of illustration he insisted “there is no such thing as a Malaysian Islam that is distinct from other kinds of Islam. There are only different levels of intelligence.” In an effort to more

thoroughly address the relationships that exist in different societal contexts between local culture on the one hand and Islam on the other, I cited an aphorism I heard many times in the course of fieldwork in the state of Negeri Sembilan during the late 1970s and 1980s: adat bersendi hukum, hukum bersendi kitabullah, which means (roughly) “custom/tradition” hinges or depends on [God’s] law, just as [God’s] law hinges or depends on the book or word of God. This aphorism was often cited by villagers as a way of asserting what they took to be the broad compatibility between their matrilineally inflected kinship institutions and the basic values (if not specific legal injunctions) of a patricentric Islam. While much ink has been spilled on such matters (see Peletz 1988), the most germane issue here is that the vast majority if not all of the villagers I encountered in over two years of fieldwork consider themselves to be “good Muslims,” despite what their detractors may say. Yet Al-Attas’s reactions to my invocation of this expression was unequivocal and altogether dismissive: “These people don’t understand.” He proceeded with a critique of British and Dutch colonial scholars, and of Orientalism generally, intimating that any local variation in the practice, experience, or understanding of Islam was due to Orientalist distortion. Implicitly acknowledging that not all such distortion need be intentional, he delineated some of the challenges of translation in the study of religion, adding that “academics, journalists, and politicians” are also part of the problem, as are “lax Muslims.” Al-Attas went on to register an exceedingly important point, which he effectively retracted a few moments later (as we shall see): “But as long as they don’t actually deny they’re Muslims, then they’re still Muslims,” to which he added, it’s “not like ... [your] Inquisition.”

Al-Attas’s solution to these problems and to the dilemmas of marginalization and injustice encountered by Muslims the world over is to promote the development of sound pedagogy and scholarship: to provide the Muslim community, especially at the university level, with “an education that is religiously self-conscious and conservative, yet prescriptive, practical and futuristic” (Wan Mohd. Nor Wan Daud 1998, 169); to decolonize knowledge and create truly Islamic understandings of metaphysics, ontology, and epistemology; and thus to restore adab, which he defines as recognition “that knowledge and being are ordered hierarchically according to their various grades and degrees of rank, and ... [that one has a] proper place in relation to that reality and to one’s physical, intellectual and spiritual capacities and potentials” (137). These goals are not surprising, given Al-Attas’s life’s work and the nature of the teaching and research institutes into

which he has poured so much of himself. Education clearly has the potential to liberate Muslims in Malaysia and elsewhere from the circumstances in which they find themselves, but the relationship between education and liberation or freedom is complicated, partly because, in Al-Attas's opinion, those who lack education should not be accorded the same basic freedoms as those who are educated. Justice, not equality, is his overriding concern, and a reign of justice defined in terms of adab and things being in their "right and proper place" need not entail equality as understood in the West. He elaborated briefly on whether "an ignorant person" had a right to speak and whether a journalist would have enough sense to recognize that such an individual did not deserve a forum. Though he did not state explicitly that those without religious knowledge of the sort he deemed legitimate should be prevented or discouraged from expressing their views in public, his position on such matters was obvious: "Yes, there should be freedom of expression, but not on certain matters," the bottom line being, "and if you're in doubt, you're not a Muslim."

What is especially revealing about this latter statement is not that it contradicts Al-Attas's earlier contention that "as long as Muslims don't deny they're Muslims, they're still Muslims." It is, rather, its illustration of the tension and exceedingly thin line between religiously or existentially inflected doubt on the one hand and denial and renunciation of one's faith, loyalty, identity and membership in a moral community (defined both locally and transnationally) on the other. Of particular interest here are the remarks Al-Attas offered to help convey his position: even "to pose the question, 'How do I know that God exists?' requires proper understanding—a proper understanding of who God is, of what knowing is, and of what existence means." These remarks were followed by, "If people are honest and sincere, they will stop asking such questions."

To summarize these perspectives: anyone who asks questions of the latter ("doubting") sort risks being considered an apostate (murtad) and a dishonest and insincere one at that. Dynamics such as these help explain why many members of the Muslim community in Malaysia display a marked reluctance to engage in debate concerning the ontological status of hudud laws in the Qur'an or to question other aspects of conventional or official interpretations of Islam. So too of course do mutually reinforcing dynamics of govermentality emanating from the upper echelons

of the executive branch, such as the well-documented willingness of Mahathir and his supporters to define “unorthodox” religious beliefs and practices as treasonous, seditious, or simply “deviationist” and thus best dealt with through the use of the ISA, which can result in indefinite detention without specific charges or even the pretense of a trial.

It remains to underscore that the themes to which Al-Attas returned again and again were those bearing on knowledge and power; more precisely, the key theme that Al-Attas emphasized in our conversation was that textually based knowledge of Islam is a prerequisite for the authority to speak. To this I would add two points. First, that Al-Attas’s scholarship and teachings have played an extremely influential role in the development of the variably inflected organizations and movements whose institutional structures and ideologies help define the contours of contemporary Malaysian Islam—the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia, the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, the Association of Malaysian Ulama, and the International Institute for Islamic Thought and Civilization, among others. The second point is more general and more directly relevant to the central thesis of this chapter: most of the struggles over Malaysian Islam that we see at present are being waged via pen, discourse, and debate, not through physical coercion or violence. This has always been true of Malaysia and has not changed since September 11, notwithstanding recent media and intelligence reports depicting angry demonstrators at the U.S. embassy in Kuala Lumpur and suggesting that Malaysia is a “staging ground” or “launching pad” for terrorist actions against the US.

**** Mahathir’s Islamic State

No account of changes in the fields of Malaysian cultural politics since September 11 would be complete without brief mention of the now famous comments about Malaysia being an Islamic state that were made by Prime Minister Mahathir on September 29, 2001, just a few weeks after the attacks of September 11. Mahathir’s pronouncements were intended partly as a response to President Bush’s derogatory and inflammatory generalizations concerning the extremism and other dangers of Muslim regimes, rogue states, and the like. The gist of Mahathir’s remarks was that Malaysia is a predominantly Muslim nation that embraces a moderate, forward-looking,

and inclusive Islam, and that Bush's generalizations were thus both empirically problematic and deeply offensive to Malaysian Muslims and moderate Muslims the world over. The problem, though, is that Mahathir's comments included the arguably ambiguous assertion that "Malaysia is an Islamic state." The latter assertion was immediately reported by local and international media and quickly became the focus of intense, overdetermined debates among Malaysia's public intellectuals, as well as political and religious elites, and ordinary Muslims and non-Muslims from all walks of life. Many of the Muslims who participated in the debates at issue are not recognized as traditional 'ulama and do not have extensive scholarly familiarity with Islamic religious texts or the Arabic language, which religious experts and scholars of Islam (like Al-Attas) generally regard as an absolute necessity if one is going to offer legitimate perspectives on Islam. The views of all such individuals are thus deeply suspect as far as 'ulama and other religious scholars are concerned—as of course are the commentaries and analyses of all non-Muslims (such as Patricia Martinez) who have weighed in on the issues. Worse, since all such views have the potential to create divisions within the ummah or Muslim community, they raise the twin specters of sedition and treason. The more encompassing dynamic here is what Eickelman and Piscatori (1996) refer to as the "fragmentation of authority," which, as they make clear, has occurred throughout the Muslim world during the twentieth century. In the Malaysian case, as elsewhere, this fragmentation of authority is a consequence of the erosion of traditional class and religious hierarchies coupled with the spread of mass education and modern media and technology that have gone hand in hand with the ascendance of new, predominantly urban middle classes and the attendant emergence of new loci of power, prestige, and moral anchorage.

Mahathir's pronouncements about Malaysia being an Islamic state signaled a major watershed in Malaysian politics. The comments themselves, along with the discourses they spawned, exacerbated fears and anxieties among non-Muslims in particular that the ruling party is willing to abandon its support of long-established multicultural and multireligious practices in its efforts to fend off Western rhetoric and outmaneuver PAS. In some ways far more distressing to non-Muslims is their feeling that the social contract among the major ethnic groups that was engineered with the help of the British as they relinquished their colony in 1957 might be tossed to the wind for the sake of political expediency.

To convey a sense of non-Muslims' feelings of distress concerning their secondary status vis-â-vis Muslims I might mention the thoughts expressed to me in the course of a two-day conference by a distinguished Sikh gentleman whose extensive engagement in civic affairs includes high-level involvement in the Malaysian Consultative Council of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Sikhism, as well as leadership roles in various NGOs concerned with the educational well-being of the Sikh

community. A highly respected religious official who is thoroughly conversant in Malay, English, Punjabi, Hindi, and Urdu, Mr. Singh (as I shall call him) spoke to me in whispers, all the while looking over his shoulder to make sure that no one else could hear what he was saying. "I'm a taxpayer and citizen too. But we [Sikhs and non-Muslims generally] get no airtime In America, Muslims [religious minorities] have outlets, the

government supports them. In Malaysia there is nothing like that. Once a year we can have cultural events, but we can't talk about religion ...

And the government has admitted that most of the tax revenue comes from non-Muslims [Do they give us] land and money for temples?

No. But the government will contribute how many hundreds of thousands [of ringgit] for mosques in places like New Zealand? The Muslims want equality and justice, but where is the justice?"

Singh's heavily freighted misgivings are all the more instructive when we bear in mind that he is decrying a state of affairs under a relatively secular (but nonetheless strongly pro-Malay Muslim) regime. Given the justifiable concern on the part of non-Muslims that the imposition of hudud law and the creation of an Islamic state will exacerbate NEP-type policies that discriminate against all non-Muslims, it stands to reason that there is virtually no support among non-Muslims for hudud law or the creation of an Islamic state. Sensibilities

expressed along the following lines are typical: the “DAP [the predominantly Chinese Democratic Action Party] fervently opposes the setting up of an Islamic state. We will never assist PAS in the setting up of an Islamic state”; and “If we allow these Islamic fanatics to rule the country, the peaceful and harmonious country ... built by our predecessors will be destroyed.”[43]

One could easily provide numerous other examples of non-Muslims’ views in the same vein, but this seems unnecessary. Suffice it to say that the fallout from Mahathir’s remarks about Malaysia being an Islamic state (along with other dynamics described here) have sharpened the lines and antagonisms between Muslims and non-Muslims. They have also helped bring about a situation in which distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims have come to override all other axes of difference and inequality, including those cast in ethnic, racial, and class terms. This is all the more significant since by most accounts the last few decades, and the last few years in particular, have seen an increased segregation and polarization of Malays, Chinese, and Indians. Owing to September 11 and its aftermath, the pronounced racialist discourses that long framed all such dynamics have given way to deeply divisive discourses of Muslim versus non-Muslim, many of which are animated by contestations among different groups of Malays over which deeply contested version of Islam should be accorded legitimacy.

*** Conclusion

On October 31, 2003, as this essay was moving toward publication, Mahathir made good on his pledge (variably articulated since mid-2002) that before the general elections scheduled for 2004 he would step down as Malaysia’s head of state and hand the reins of governance to Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the soft-spoken, nationally prominent career civil servant (and former head of the ministries of defense and foreign affairs, among others) whom Mahathir had carefully groomed as his successor since the sacking of Anwar in September 1998. In some ways the formal retirement from public life of one of the longest serving elected leaders that the world has ever seen marks the end of a truly remarkable era in the history of Malaysia and the broader region. It is obviously too soon to tell, though, if the ritualized transfer of authority signals a real passing of the baton let alone a true changing of the guard. For Mahathir may well remain

on (or behind) the scene as an extremely influential player, assuming a role analogous perhaps to that played by Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew, who after relinquishing the post of prime minister, which he held for over three decades, became "senior minister" in the famed city-state.

It is clear, however, that the direction of future political and religious developments in Malaysia will depend a good deal on how sixty-four- year-old Prime Minister Abdullah and his entourage and successors handle the challenges to their authority that arise in the months and years ahead. This in turn will depend in no small measure on U.S. policies in the region, including those associated with our current administration's "war on terror." These latter policies could well prompt ruling elites in Indonesia, the Philippines, and elsewhere to introduce sweeping versions of Malaysia's ISA, thus further emboldening both their Malaysian counterparts and their supporters and successors.

Another set of variables figuring into the future in rather unpredictable ways has to do with the existence of an estimated 2.1 million Malaysian youth who are eligible to vote but are currently unregistered (New Sunday Times, August 11, 2002). Large numbers of these youth live in the multiethnic and heavily urban Klang Valley region, which includes Kuala Lumpur, and which tends to benefit more from state-driven development than PAS-controlled areas of the Malay heartlands, such as Kelantan and Terengganu. All things being equal, one might therefore expect this critically important group of young Malaysians to lean toward UMNO rather than an opposition party like PAS, which has long derived much of its support from predominantly Malay rural areas (such as Kelantan and Terengganu) that are marginalized or largely bypassed by state-sponsored modernity. On the other hand, the massive increase since September 11 of Muslim tourists visiting Malaysia from Middle Eastern countries like Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, and the like (Prystay 2002), could result in a partial "radicalization" of youthful sensibilities, especially if, as has occurred in neighboring Indonesia since the fall of Suharto in 1998, well-connected proponents of one or another variant of Salafi-Wahhabism are able to make common cause with groups of disaffected youth.

As for the recent past and the present, it is worth stepping back from all the discursive and other divisiveness that I have outlined here in order to appreciate an exceedingly important generalization bearing on the major carriers of Malaysian Islam (UMNO, PAS, ABIM, Sisters in Islam, Al-Attas/ISTAC, etc.). The majority (though clearly not all) of the contests over Islam and other key symbols and institutional resources that we see in Malaysia are occurring in relatively democratic ways: through elections, court battles, weekly seminars and educational outreach, legitimate lobbying efforts, PR blitzes, letters to the editors of local newspapers, and so on, not through disappearances, torture, assassinations, suicide or other bombings, coup d'etat, and the like. PAS, for example, which promotes and seeks to instantiate a very conservative "syariah- oriented" vision of Muslim society and politics and has enjoyed successes at the polls partly because of a reputation for clean government, fair play, and relative transparency, tends rather consistently to play by the rules of the electoral game, though this is not to suggest that party leadership has embraced—or in the future would seek to nourish—a culture of democratic pluralism. Some of these generalizations also apply to Al-Attas/ ISTAC and ABIM, who are strongly committed to education and justice, though not necessarily to equality as commonly understood in the West. The Sisters in Islam, for their part, as well as many of the other NGOs and political parties that I have glossed over here, have established viable working relationships with the ruling party and have capitalized on the administration's efforts to portray itself as the carrier of a progressive Islam. The more salient point, though, is that these organizations have pledged themselves both to electoral politics and to the "scaling up" of values and sensibilities conducive to democratic pluralism. The same cannot always be said of UMNO, or at least of Mahathir and his inner circle, which in recent years has certainly included Abdullah, who now stands at the helm of the ship of state. While Mahathir deserves much credit for Malaysia's stunning economic transformation and merits inclusion among the burgeoning ranks of the Muslim world's relatively progressive prodevelopment modernist leaders, he and his inner circle have a well-deserved reputation for ruthlessness both in their dealings with rivals and detractors and in their willingness to subvert democratic systems of checks and balances when they feel the need to do so. One can hope that newly anointed Prime Minister Abdullah will build on Mahathir's reputation as the proponent of a relatively progressive Islam and simultaneously distance himself from the antidemocratic practices for which Mahathir has also long been well known.

There is no simple black and white here, and as in many other parts of the Muslim world (Indonesia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Kuwait, Egypt, and Turkey come quickly to mind), the main obstacles to the expansion and strengthening of pluralist sensibilities and democratic institutions have little if anything to do with Islam per se. Scholars and others concerned with identifying impediments to reform-oriented policies might thus focus their attention elsewhere. It might be most productive to begin with questions about the institutionalized arrangements that enable political elites in control of top-heavy executive branches to manipulate overwhelmingly secular organs of governance and all varieties of cultural phenomena. One part of the puzzle is the critically important symbolic capital and institutional support provided to such elites by American and other Western allies. Without such capital and support, things would look very different. But that is another essay.

*** Notes

This essay draws on extensive fieldwork (1978–80, 1987–88) and subsequent research in Malaysia (1993, 1998, 2001, and 2002). Robert Hefner and Shamsul A.B. provided helpful comments on an earlier draft of this essay, for which I am most grateful. I spell Malay terms in accordance with the conventions of standard Malay, but alternative spellings are still found in the literature and in contemporary Malaysia. Thus syariah (Islamic law) is sometimes rendered as shari‘a, syari‘ah, or shari‘at. When quoting published material, I retain the author’s original spelling.

[40] Some of the material in this section is adapted from Peletz 2002.

[41] Many of the charges are outlined in PUM/PUK 2002.

[42] See An-Na’im 1990, chap. 5; cf. Rose Ismail 1995 and Mohammad Hashim Kamali 2000.

[43] The first quote is from Chen Man Hin, DAP Chairman (1991); the second is from Chan Kong Choy, MCA [Malaysian Chinese Association] Youth President (1992); they appear, along with mostly similar views, in an anonymous (1999) pamphlet, “Islamic State”: What Are We Afraid Of?

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** Chapter 11: Muslim Democrats and Islamist Violence in Post-soeharto Indonesia

Robert W. Hefner

When, in another generation, historians look back at the end of the twentieth century in search of historical antecedents to Muslim democratization, Indonesia probably deserves to be given a pride of place on par with countries like post-Khomeini Iran and contemporary Turkey. Although often overlooked in surveys of the Muslim world, the Southeast Asian country of Indonesia is the largest Muslim-majority country in the world, with some 88.7 percent of its 215 million people professing Islam. Equally important, in the final years of the authoritarian Soeharto regime (1966–98; see Elson 2001), Indonesia witnessed the creation of a movement for a democratic Muslim politics that was second only to postKhomeini Iran in scale and intellectual vigor. The coalition that united to topple President Soeharto in May 1998 included Indonesians from varied religious backgrounds (Forrester and May 1999; Hefner 2000). Among its Muslim proponents, however, a key role was played by a new class of intellectuals intent on devising solid Islamic grounds for democracy and civil society (see Abdillah 1997; Barton 2002; Effendy 1994). Although philosophical materialists may dismiss such things, a key feature of Muslim politics everywhere is that, at some point, political initiatives must be justified in relation to religious discourses that comprise the “underlying framework that, while subject to contextualized nuances, is common to Muslims throughout the world” (Eickelman and Piscatori 1996, 5).

Indonesia in the 1990s had a wealth of activists and intellectuals involved in this effort to effect a foundational reorientation of Muslim politics. Moreover, the initiative showed one of the main features political theorists like Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter identify as most important for a successful transition to democracy: a coalitional structure linking “exemplary individuals” and intellectuals to massbased organizations in society (O’Donnnell and Schmitter 1986, 48–56). By these measures, Indonesia in the late 1990s was one of the most important centers of Muslim reformation in the world.

Sadly, Indonesia’s achievement may never be widely recognized because the movement for a democratic Muslim politics was soon overshadowed by a rash of sectarian violence. From 1999 to 2002, battles between Christians and Muslims in the eastern province of Maluku took some eight thousand lives (Klinken 2001). During roughly the same period, the central highlands on the nearby island of Sulawesi saw bloody skirmishes between Muslim and Christian gangs, causing a thousand deaths (Aragon 2001; Human Rights Watch 2002). Equally alarming, in the months following Soeharto’s resignation in May 1998, radical Islamist paramilitaries sprang up in cities and towns across Indonesia. Although democratic Muslims and progressive nationalists had hoped to press for deeper reforms after Soeharto’s resignation, by late 1998 they found themselves outflanked and outgunned by the radicals. Many of the latter made no secret of their ties to powerful patrons from the ancien regime.

Although the Islamist paramilitaries were best known in the international press for vandalizing bars, discotheques, and other alleged centers of vice, their more decisive political effect was to take back the streets from democratic Muslims and blunt the drive for political reform. In November 1998, the armed forces commander, General Wiranto (a Soeharto ally), worked with radical ulama to mobilize 100,000 Islamist militiamen, in an effort to prevent prodemocracy students from disrupting the special session of the People’s Consultative Assembly, which had convened to set the ground rules for special parliamentary elections to be held the following year (Dijk 2001, 340–50). On June 23, 2000, hundreds of activists from one of the largest paramilitaries, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), ransacked the headquarters of the National Commission on Human Rights. Their action just happened to coincide with the commission’s opening of investigations into the involvement of the Indonesian military in the 1999 violence in East Timor. On other occasions, the paramilitaries raided bookstores for left-wing literature, intimidated unveiled women, and used machetes to break up prodemocracy meetings. Although the sectarian violence in eastern Indonesia showed that non-Muslims too played a major part in post-Soeharto violence, the ascendance of the Islamist paramilitaries, and the seeming inability of the country’s large moderate groupings to contain them, greatly tarnished Indonesia’s reputation as a center of civic-pluralist Islam. The Bali bombings in October, 2002, in which two hundred people died, and the bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta in August 2003, in which thirteen more were killed, seemed only to confirm the impression

that Indonesia was no center for progressive Islam, but was on the verge of becoming a second front for Osama bin Laden's al-Qa'ida (Abuza 2002, 2003).

In this chapter, I will suggest that things were not quite so grim as the second-front thesis implies. However, although relatively small compared

to their mainstream rivals, parmilitarized Islamists did seize the initiative from moderate and prodemocracy Muslims in the months following Soeharto's overthrow. This chapter aims to examine just why this occurred, and why a country with such a promising legacy of democratic Muslim politics has had such difficulty in its post-Soeharto transition. The example of armed Islamists outflanking a moderate majority has relevance for the study of Muslim politics in other parts of the world as well.

The evidence I present here suggests that the most critical obstacle to the democratic transition has had as much to do with the legacies of Indonesian state and society as it has any specific quality of Muslim politics. Certainly, some features of contemporary Indonesian politics, such as the ideals of the jihadi movement, can only be fully explained with reference to the pluralism and contests of Muslim politics. But the specific effect of these variables was determined by two more general features of state-society relations: the relative weakness and segmentary divisions of civil society, and the habit of some in the political elite (both at the national and provincial level) of neutralizing their opposition by inflaming sectarian passions and mobilizing supporters along ethnoreligious lines. During the post-Soeharto period, this sectarian trawling across the statesociety divide, as I shall call it, allowed otherwise small groups of armed militants to exercise a political influence disproportionate to their numbers in society.

Since the late 1990s the struggle for the hearts and minds of Indonesian Muslims has been complicated by a third development: the expansion of armed Islamist groupings with ties to the al-Qa'ida into the country. Reports in the Western media have made much of al-Qa'ida's infiltration into the Southeast Asia region. There is such a presence, and, as was amply demonstrated by the Bali and Jakarta bombings, some of its promoters have

the desire and capacity to make bloody mischief indeed. Nonetheless, in Indonesia if not the southern Philippines (cf. Chalk 2002), al-Qa‘ida has until recently been a secondary influence on Islamist paramilitarism by comparison with the paramilitarists’ domestic sponsors. The rapid spread of religious violence and the state’s inability to contain it caught the mainstream Muslim leadership off guard and momentarily allowed the radicals to scale up their influence in society. But this contest is far from over.

Ironically, the Bali and Jakarta bombings may prove to have been a blunder as far as the radicals are concerned. The attacks were linked to one of the smaller paramilitaries, the Jema‘ah Islamiyah, an organization that, as my own interviews in Central Java have indicated, has indeed had contacts with al-Qa‘ida. By unleashing a bombing campaign, however, the Jema‘ah Islamiyah galvanized the moderate Muslim leadership into action and dispelled moderates’ reluctance to accept U.S. claims that terrorist networks were operating in Southeast Asia. Whether this shift proves to be enduring and allows a sustained scaling up of Muslim resources for civil peace and pluralism, however, will depend on domestic political developments, as well as the outcome of ongoing international conflicts.

*** Sectarian Trawling, Unsolidary Surges

In their Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter (1986, 54) have noted that some transitions from authoritarianism are eased by a “popular upsurge” in which interest groups in society put aside their differences and rally to the idea that they are a people united by a common commitment to democratic reform. In Indonesia after the fall of President Soeharto, observers had hoped for just such a solidary surge. However, the hope was dashed with the outbreak of bitter factional squabbles among members of the political elite and, shortly thereafter, of communal violence between Christians and Muslims in several parts of the country.

The elite factionalism and communal tensions had complex genealogies, elements of which date back to the colonial period and imbalances between Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as Javanese (Indonesia’s largest and most

politically influential ethnic group) and non-Javanese. However, the more immediate influence on these tensions was the fact that rather than building a consensus on the terms of citizenship or the procedures of public politics, Soeharto's "New Order" regime (1966–98) kept contenders for power off balance by playing rival ethnic, religious, and ideological groups against each other. From this perspective, there was a vast difference between the inclusively pluralist spirit of the country's official doctrine, the Pancasila (Five Principles), of which Soeharto was an avid promoter, and the blatantly sectarian practice of state politics (see Aragon 2000, 309–13; Bowen 1993, 125; Kipp 1990). The Soeharto regime played ethnoreligious groups against each other, moreover, at a time when migration, population growth, and economic development were straining ethnic relations in several provinces. In Maluku, Central Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Papua, in particular, hardworking Muslim migrants from Java and Sulawesi displaced indigenous people, many of whom were non-Muslim, from their once-dominant position in the marketplace and society. This displacement caused great resentment among indigenous peoples, Christian as well as Muslim, and in some provinces fueled tensions that were to figure in the post-Soeharto violence.

Another influence on this volatile mix of elite factionalism and communal tension was that the New Order government also conducted much of its political business offstage and extralegally rather than through official channels, relying on an odd assortment of gangsters, local toughs, and paramilitaries (see, e.g., Cribb 2000; Ryter 1998). Soeharto and his allies had first honed this tactic during their rise to power in 1965–66, in the aftermath of a failed left-wing junior officers' coup against the country's senior military leadership. The Soeharto group portrayed the coup as an irreligious communist plot against the nation, and mobilized the country's Muslim organizations, as well as smaller groupings of Christians and Hindus, into an efficient campaign of mass killing (Cribb 1990; Hefner 1990, 193–227; Robinson 1995). No sooner had Soeharto come to power, however, than he marginalized the Muslim parties on whom he had earlier relied, surrounding himself with advisers drawn from the secular Muslim, Christian, Chinese, and Javanese mystical communities. Western analysts were so struck by this preference that they concluded Soeharto was a nominal Muslim or "Hindu-Buddhist," more interested in a conservative variant of Javanese tradition than in Islam (see Emmerson 1978; Pemberton 1994).

Although he dabbled in Javanese mystical arts, however, Soeharto's primary concern was never Javanese tradition as such, even in its conservative forms. His passion was power, and he showed considerable ideological flexibility in pursuit of that end. When political circumstances demanded he change his public religious garb, he did so unhesitatingly. In the late 1980s, the Roman Catholic commander of the armed forces, Benny Moer- dani, expressed reservations about the scale of first-family corruption. The challenge infuriated Soeharto, and, true to his divide-and-conquer manner, he responded by ousting the Catholic general and promoting conservative Islamic officers in place of Moerdani's secular Muslim and Christian allies (Schwarz 2000, 146, 175). During these same years, an Islamic resurgence gathered momentum across Indonesia. My interviews with Soeharto advisers during these years showed that the president was keenly aware of the change, as well as the news of radical Islamist challenges in Iran, Algeria, and Egypt. The president responded by throwing himself into Qur'anic study, deserting his Javanese-mystical friends, and launching a series of cooptative ventures in the Muslim community (Hefner 2000, 19, 71).

When, in the course of the president's outreach to the Muslim community, some in the moderate Muslim leadership indicated they were as interested in democratic reforms as they were in Soeharto patronage, the president again changed tack. Rather than wooing moderate Muslims, he reached out to hardline Islamist groups, including some that had been previously among Soeharto's most virulent Muslim opponents (Bruines- sen 2002; Hefner 2000, 59–93, 167–207). In addition to keeping his opponents in the armed forces and moderate Muslim elite off guard, the president's turn to conservative Islam had the additional benefit of throwing an obstacle in the path of the country's fledgling democracy movement. In the 1990s, that movement was gaining momentum, buoyed by the end of the Cold War and transitions under way in East Asia and Eastern Europe. Although its leading lights were Muslim, the Indonesian movement was exuberantly pluralist in spirit. The president and his allies responded by portraying the democracy movement as the creation of an international cabal of Jews and Christians. The sectarian trawling for an uncivil Islam had taken a new and darker turn.

The president's new alliance with conservative Islamists caused great unease in elite political circles, including the ruling party, Golkar. Although for most of its history Golkar had been a broad alliance that included Christians and

secular nationalists as well as pious Muslims, in 1994 President Soeharto awarded control of the party's powerful "strategy bureau" (Litbang Golkar) to conservative hardliners who, not coincidentally, had close ties to the small Islamist faction in the armed forces. In collaboration with these commanders, the strategy bureau helped craft the most spectacularly sectarian propaganda tracts ever deployed by the Soeharto regime. Several widely circulated documents accused the United States, the Vatican, Israel's Mossad, nominal Muslims, and Chinese Indonesians of engineering the 1997–98 financial crisis so as to ruin the economy and drive Soeharto from power. In the final months of the Soe- harto era, Chinese Indonesians were the target of fierce attacks, with several Soeharto aides describing Chinese Indonesians as "disloyal rats"; one regime document called for the Chinese to be driven from Indonesia once and for all. During the riots of May 13–14, 1998, Chinese Indonesians were the victims of awful social violence, including mass rapes and killing (Hefner 2000, 201–7). An independent commission established in the aftermath of the violence accused a cabal in the armed forces of having played a role in the organization of the violence (TGPF 1998).

If indeed it was organized by Soeharto supporters, the May violence proved to be a serious strategic blunder. The riots provoked mass resignations by unhappy members of the Soeharto cabinet, and eventually led to the president's resignation on May 21, 1998. But the president's ouster did not put an end to elite factionalism or sectarian trawling. No sooner had the president stepped down than street battles broke out between prodemocracy students and ultraconservative Islamists; some of the latter had direct ties to military hardliners. Moderate Muslims and the democracy students soon discovered that, however broad their support in the Indonesian public, they were no match for the urban toughs mobilized by conservative Islamists.

*** The Great Hope

In June 1999, Indonesia held its first parliamentary elections since Soe- harto's fall. The results of the elections showed that there was still little public support for conservative Islamism. Only about 16 percent of the national vote went to parties advocating the establishment of an Islamic state. By comparison, during the country's last free and fair elections in

1955, 44 percent of the electorate cast their vote for parties advocating some form of Islamic state (Feith 1957).

The contrast in the outcome of the two elections is all the more interesting when one recalls that the Muslim public in contemporary Indonesia is, by most measures, considerably more pious than in the 1950s, when Clifford Geertz and Robert Jay carried out their pioneering research on Islam and politics (Geertz 1960; Jay 1963). In an important unpublished survey of several thousand voters taken just after the 1999 elections, the political scientists William Liddle and Saiful Mujani (2000) found that only 3.6 percent of those surveyed self-identified as syncretic or nominal Muslims (known as abangan in Javanese). In the 1950s about half of the country, and a full two-thirds of all Javanese, were thought to be nominal or syncretic Muslims. An additional 17.3 percent of the Muslims in the 1999 survey identify themselves as secularists who never or rarely perform Islamic devotions. Conversely, a full 81 percent of respondents claimed to be faithful in the performance of religious obligations. These data resonate with ethnographic studies that confirm that there has been a resurgence in public piety since the late 1970s (see Bowen 1993; Bruinessen 2002; Hefner 1987, 2000; Woodward 1989).

Notwithstanding this great change in religious attitudes, Liddle and Mujani (2000, 17) found that some 60 percent of pious Muslims cast their vote for non-Islamic or secular parties. Indeed, a full two-thirds of the voters who chose the biggest vote getter in the 1999 elections, Megawati Sukarnoputri's secular nationalist Democratic Party-Struggle, identified themselves as pious Muslims (Liddle and Mujani 2000, 37). This information suggests that the elite squabbling and street fighting taking place in late 1998 and early 1999, pitting conservative Islamists against Muslim democrats and progressive nationalists, did not reflect an equally pervasive sectarianism in the public as a whole.

The People's Consultative Assembly's election of Abdurrahman Wahid to the presidency in October 1999 raised hopes that this factional divide might yet be bridged and the moderation reflected in the elections could be channeled into a revived program of political reform. Leader of the prodemocracy Democracy Forum during the 1990s, Wahid had long been regarded as a

democratic nationalist and Soeharto opponent. Eccentric in manner and independent in spirit, the near-blind leader was also popular among Chinese, Christians, and Hindus as a result of his statements on ethnoreligious tolerance (Barton 2002). What made Wahid an especially attractive choice for the presidency, however, was that he was also the chief executive of the country's largest Muslim organization, the 35 million strong Nahdlatul Ulama, a traditionalist organization with roots in the country's great network of Qur'anic schools (pesantren; see Feillard 1995). In the MPR elections of October 1999, then, Wahid edged out Megawati Sukarnoputri, the leader of the secular-nationalist Indonesian Democracy Party-Struggle. He did so in part because, after the defeat of Soeharto's hand-picked successor (B. J. Habibie), conservative Muslims opted to cast their votes for Wahid rather than Megawati, a secularnationalist and a woman (Barton 2002, 264–84; Doorn-Harder 2002).

Rather than abating, however, infighting among the political elite only increased after Wahid's election, as Muslim conservatives joined forces with remnants of the ancien regime to scuttle Wahid's efforts at political reform. Tactical blunders by the new president helped to solidify the antiWahid alliance. Three measures had a particularly deleterious impact. First, the president's plan to establish limited commercial relations with Israel infuriated even moderate Muslims. Second, his effort to lift the ban on the Indonesian Communist Party mobilized old regime conservatives and even many moderate Muslims, for whom fierce anticommunism had long been a guiding principle. And third, his unsuccessful effort to reform the armed forces, beginning with the removal of the powerful armed forces commander (and Soeharto ally), General Wiranto, stiffened antireform resistance in the military. Combined with the president's intemperate habit of taking swipes at even his own allies, these measures cemented the anti-Wahid alliance of Islamists, old-regime anticommunists, and antireform military commanders. Well before the People's Consultative Assembly formally ousted him in July 2001, Wahid's coalition had disintegrated, and he had effectively ceased to govern.

With the democracy movement stalled, efforts to reform the political establishment weakened, and most of the old regime remained securely in place. This was especially true in the provinces, most of which had experienced less reformist tumult than Jakarta. Despite the continuity in the

state apparatus, however, the impact of Soeharto’s departure and continuing discord in the armed forces heightened tensions among rival provincial elites. Rather than strengthening “civil” society, local bosses took to squabbling among themselves for the spoils of state and market. More alarming yet, in regions divided along ethnoreligious lines, some leaders exploited sectarian tensions to mobilize their base. In this way, the sectarian trawling already practiced in the New Order came to be deployed in an even more pervasive and destabilizing form—not just by Jakarta actors and “the state,” but by provincial elites and nonstate actors.

This, then, was the background to the ethnic and religious violence that broke out in parts of Indonesia in the early post-Soeharto period. In a few provinces, like Yogyakarta and East Kalimantan, local administrators worked hard to keep the populist rivalry within bounds, and incidents of violence were few. However, in regions that had experienced widespread immigration and demographic change, like Maluku, Central Kalimantan, and Central Sulawesi, many contenders for power showed no such hesitation, exploiting ethnic and religious tensions with a verve that made Soeharto look like a moderate.

The populist sectarianism was exacerbated by local bosses’ reliance on another category of actor to have come of age during the Soeharto era: the organized gangsters known as preman. Soeharto and his allies had made regular use of preman throughout the New Order period. Most groupings were given an ideological makeover so as to look like ardent regime supporters, but their underworld ties remained operative just the same. It is notable that whereas the dominant gangs in the early New Order were nationalist (Ryter 1998), by the end of the region the largest groups were radical Islamist (Yunanto 2003). Where, as in Maluku or Central Sulawesi, post-Soeharto contention involved this flammable mixture of elite factionalism, gangsterism, and ethnoreligious tensions, the result could be deadly indeed.

*** Uncivil Society

One reason it is important to understand this background to the recent spate of violence in Indonesia is that, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States, some foreign analysts have assumed that Indonesia's main problem is radical Islam, and that the most important influence on radical Islam was al-Qa'ida. Armed Islamist radicals have indeed been part of post-Soeharto Indonesia's problem. As the above discussion indicates, however, many (though not all; see below) of the radicals had initially benefited from the support of regional bosses and remnants of the Soeharto regime more than they had any international Islamist network.

Equally important, the politics of divide and conquer (known in Indonesian as politik pecah-belah, lit., "slice and separate" politics) did not just have a baleful effect on political Islam. This uncivil legacy also reinforced paramilitarist tendencies among Christians and other minorities in provinces like Maluku, Central Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, and Irian (Papua). Indeed, in the first three of these provinces, non-Muslim paramilitaries sprang into action shortly after Soeharto's departure. One of the worst initial outbreaks of violence took place in the province of Central Kalimantan on the island of Borneo, where hundreds of hapless Madurese immigrants, who happened to be Muslim, were massacred by gangs of indigenous Dayaks, who happen to be nominal Christians or animists (ICG 2001; see Schiller 1997 for background). The fact that Dayaks involved in the campaign did not drive Muslim Malays from these same territories shows that the violence was not primarily a Christian-Muslim conflict. In fact, in some instances Malays joined Dayaks in attacking Madurese villages.

The worst violence pitting Muslims against Christians occurred in the eastern Indonesian province of Maluku. In the beginning, this conflict looked as if it might avoid the abyss of Christian-Muslim communalism, and unfold according to a more complex ethnic logic, similar to that seen in Central Kalimantan. During the first phase of the Maluku violence, for example, Catholics were able to hold themselves apart from the conflict, which pitted local Protestants against Muslim immigrants. In the northern portion of the old province, local Protestants had become involved in conflicts over land with Muslim refugees from Makian Island, recently relocated to the region. However, illustrating the crosscutting nature of local alliances, the Protestants were themselves longtime supporters of the Muslim Sultan of Ternate (see Klinken 2001, 6).

Sadly, however, as the Maluku conflict escalated, local bosses discovered that it was easier to mobilize large followings by portraying the conflict in religious terms, rather than political-economic. The resulting communalization of the violence was, of course, not an entirely empty invention. Tensions between Christians and Muslims had long been growing in the province, especially around the capital city of Ambon. As Gerry van Klinken (2001) has shown, these tensions had risen steadily in the 1980s and 1990s with the migration of Muslim Buginese, Butonese, and Makassarese to the once-Christian territory. In the late-nineteenth century the province was almost exclusively Christian; it was still majority Christian as late as 1971. By the early 1990s, however, the influx of migrants had created a Muslim majority. Worse yet in the eyes of indigenous Christians, the hardworking immigrants had the networks and commercial acumen to displace locals in the marketplace. By 1990, it was only in government and the police that local Christians still enjoyed an edge over Muslims. With the Soeharto regime's shift toward a more pro- Islamic policy during the 1990s, however, even this changed. The appointment of the first Muslim Ambonese to the governorship of Maluku in 1992 "coincided with a new readiness on the Part of President Soe- harto, who felt under pressure from the armed forces, to play the religious card" (Klinken 2001, 18).

In his study of ethnonationalist conflicts and collective violence in South Asia, the Harvard anthropologist Stanley J. Tambiah has observed that if scattered incidents of local violence are to become full-blown communal wars, the tensions and resentments of everyday life must be removed from their place of origin and generalized into encompassing narratives of ethnic victimization and enmity. Tambiah refers to this process as "focalization" and "transvaluation." "Focalization progressively denudes local incidents and disputes of their contextual particulars, and transvaluations distorts, abstracts, and aggregates those incidents into larger collective issues of national or ethnic interest" (Tambiah 1996, 81). It is precisely this process that gave the conflict in Maluku such an incendiary quality after 1999. What had begun as local grievances and a patchwork of alliances was gradually abstracted and focalized into a narrative of a clash of religious civilizations.

In Maluku as in South Asia, state officials played a central role in some of the violence, but it would be a gross oversimplification to ascribe the conflict to an all-powerful state. Such blame-the-state generalizations are especially unhelpful here in Indonesia, because a key symptom of the post-Soeharto crisis was that the state itself had lost its cohesiveness, as opposed factional elites struck coalitional bargains with rival entities in society. A similar segmentary fissioning of state and society, known in Indonesian as aliranisasi (lit., “streaming”), had taken place earlier in the country’s history, in the period leading up to the mass killings of 1965–66 (see Hefner 2000; Schrauwers 2000).

Equally important, and contrary to a certain romanticism widespread in the 1990s (see chap. 1), it is clear that actors in “civil” society were also complicit in the violence. Whether in Indonesia, India, Rwanda, or the United States, real-and-existing civil societies—the realm of voluntary associations between the household and the state (Hall 1995; Hefner 1998)—are always, not merely occasionally, crosscut by ethnic, religious, class, and gender tensions (see Hansen 1999; Hefner 2001; Keane 1996, 10). Although in the 1980s democratic activists had hoped that civil society might provide a kinder and gentler road to democratization, civil society is no more capable of fulfilling the democratic dream on its own than the communities earlier assigned that same mythically heroic role: the community of believers, the proletariat, the middle class, the nation.

If elements of both state and society were complicit in the Indonesian violence, the role of the Islamist paramilitaries nonetheless merits special mention. This is so not because the Islamist paramilitaries played a larger role in the violence than non-Muslim bosses, but because the former dealt such a severe blow to the hopes of democratic Muslims. Tambiah’s remarks on focalization and transvaluation are again helpful in this regard (see also Hansen 1999). Focalization and transvaluation require the active presence of agents who have the discursive resources and social authority to disseminate a metanarrative of communal peril and riposte. This discursive legerdemain also requires that voices of moderation within the target community be silenced. What made the Islamist paramilitaries such a potent force in post-Soeharto Indonesia is that, for a while, they seemed close to meeting both of these conditions.

**** The JIHADI Advance

In the months following Soeharto’s fall, hundreds of Islamist paramilitaries sprang up in cities and towns across Indonesia. In the city of Solo alone (a hotbed of political activity in Central Java), there were more than seventy militias operating by late 1999. Most of these paramilitaries had no more than a few dozen members recruited from among neighborhood youth. The largest, however, mobilized tens of thousands of followers in cities and towns across the country. Armed Muslim activism on this scale had not been seen since the anticommunist killings of 1965–66. Unlike the mobilization during that period, however, state patrons had direct influence over only the largest paramilitaries. Many smaller paramilitaries rejected the post-Soeharto state outright, demanding it be replaced with an Islamic state.

The three largest paramilitaries of the post-Soeharto period provide a clear illustration of the varied ideologies and alliances that underlay Islamist paramilitarism. The three are the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI, Front Pembela Islam), the Jihad Paramilitary, or Laskar Jihad, and the Laskar Mujahidin, the paramilitary wing of the Council of Indonesian Mujahidin (MMI, Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia).[44] In early 2003, the leader (emir) of the last group, Abu Bakar Ba‘asyir, was accused by Indonesian authorities of complicity in the Bali bombings, as well as earlier attacks on dozens of Christian churches on Christmas eve 2000. Although he was eventually cleared of these charges (though convicted for a lesser infraction), activists linked to his organization were found guilty of the Bali bombings. The bombings and subsequent trials were eventually to bring about a tectonic shift in the paramilitarists’ public fortunes.

**** The Islamic Defenders Front

Until its suspension in October 2002, the Islamic Defenders Front, or FPI, was the largest of Indonesia’s Islamist paramilitaries. On several occasions the FPI leadership boasted that they had a half million fighters, but my own observations suggest the active membership was actually closer to forty

thousand to fifty thousand, most of it concentrated in a handful of large cities. Five thousand of the best-coordinated and aggressive FPI units, however, operated in and around the capital city of Jakarta. From its founding on August 17, 1998, to its “suspension” in October 2002 (see below), the Jakarta FPI was the most potent paramilitary force in the capital, striking fear even among the local police.

Unlike their Jakarta counterparts, FPI units outside the capital had a reputation for militancy combined with poor coordination and indiscipline. The provincial units’ recklessness reflected the fact that the national organization was stitched together in the months following Soe- harto’s downfall through alliances between bosses from already-existing paramilitaries, many of which had only nominal ties to the FPI’s Jakarta leadership. Another complicating influence on the FPI was that, unlike the Laskar Mujahidin and the Laskar Jihad, the FPI recruited much of its membership from poor urban neighborhoods and, in particular, from the ranks of petty gangsters and ready-for-hire political hooligans. The FPI leadership made no secret of its rank and file’s populist background, since this only enhanced the militia’s image as a formidable street force. But the gangland reputation also fueled allegations that some of the organization’s celebrated attacks on bars, discotheques, and brothels were as much concerned with securing protection money as they were controlling vice.

Although the rank and file come from lumpenproletariat backgrounds, the FPI’s national leadership consists of middle-age religious scholars of Hadrami-Arab background. The FPI’s founder, Al-Habib Muhammad Rizieq bin Hussein Syihab, is a Hadrami Arab, as are his lieutenants. The supreme commanders of the other two large paramilitaries, the Laskar Jihad and the Laskar Mujahidin, also happen to be Hadrami Indonesians. However, unlike the FPI, these organizations recruit most of their officers from among people of non-Arab background.

Of all Indonesia’s large paramilitaries, the FPI has also been the least reluctant to advertise its ties to high-ranking security officials, including the commander of the post-Soeharto armed forces, General Wiranto, and the police chief for the capital district, Nugroho Jayussman. Jakarta journalists whom I interviewed in 1999 and 2000 stated flatly that Wiranto and

Jayussman were responsible for creating the FPI. Wiranto and Jayussman themselves, however, have repeatedly denied having any more than a friendly relationship with Rizieq.

Despite the denials, there is ample evidence of elite backing for at least some of the FPI's actions. It was at the invitation of General Wiranto, for example, that the FPI in November 1998 helped to mobilize a 100,000-strong "voluntary security force" (pam swakarsa) to protect the Consultative Assembly and the Habibie government from prodemocracy demonstrators (Dijk 2001, 341). In June 2000, the FPI ransacked the headquarters of the National Commission on Human Rights when the latter body issued statements implicating members of the armed forces command in the 1999 violence in East Timor. Police stood by during the attack, and later made no attempt to arrest the action's organizers, although their identity was widely known. In March and April 2001, finally, the FPI joined with conservative members of the military and former ruling party, Golkar, in a campaign of "anticommunist" actions that attacked leftist students and ransacked bookstores selling socialist literature, accusing President Wahid of sanctioning both.

However extensive the FPI's ties to military and civilian elites, it is nonetheless clear that the FPI leadership always had its own interests and ambitions. On November 2, 1999, several hundred FPI activists burned a Protestant church south of the capital. On December 13, 1999, four thousand FPI militants broke into and occupied Jakarta City Hall, demanding that the city government close discos, cinemas, restaurants, and massage parlors during the Muslim fasting month. On October 10, 2000, hundreds of FPI militants announced their intention to kill a delegation of Israelis scheduled to visit Indonesia for the 104th Inter-Parliamentary Union conference. (The Israelis withdrew from the conference.) The FPI also spearheaded fierce demonstrations against the United States after the attacks of September 11, 2001. In October 2001, the FPI chief even threatened to shut down the American embassy and conduct sweepings of hotels to flush out Americans and British "spies."

These latter actions led to several violent confrontations with the police. In December 2000, the police command in Jakarta announced that it would no

longer tolerate FPI’s unilateral actions against cafes, restaurants, and bars. A day later, machete-wielding FPI members invaded a government housing complex in North Jakarta, only to be repelled by its residents. On December 11, 2000, the police took firmer measures, firing bullets into the tires of a van carrying attackers who had just ransacked four entertainment centers in West Jakarta and were hauling away booty (five air conditioners). Angered by the police action, on December 13 hundreds of FPI militants attacked a police station east of the capital, seriously injuring three officers. The next day FPI members attacked a prostitution complex in Subang, West Java, killing a guard. Angry locals reacted by burning down the house of the district FPI leader.

As police pressure increased in early 2001, the FPI scaled back its attacks on alleged centers of vice, concentrating its energies on the campaign against President Wahid. Once Wahid was forced from power in July 2001, however, the FPI ratcheted up its public actions again, sponsoring demonstrations in support of the implementation of Islamic law. In the weeks following September 11, 2001, the FPI also led the fiercest demonstrations against U.S. actions in Afghanistan, and publicly declared its willingness to attack Americans. By this time, however, it was becoming clear that many government officials were growing tired of FPI recklessness. When, in early 2002, American officials raised the issue of renewing limited collaboration with the Indonesian armed forces (contacts that had been frozen for several years), many Jakartan observers predicted—rightly, as it would turn out—that the FPI’s days were numbered.

**** The Laskar Jihad

The Yogyakarta-based Laskar Jihad (jihad militia) has had a similar history of on-again-off-again cooperation with establishment figures. Until its sudden dissolution three days after the Bali bombings in October 2002, the Laskar Jihad (LJ) was the second largest of Indonesia’s paramilitaries. It was also the best funded and best coordinated, and it was well armed. Although the LJ cooperated with other paramilitaries in attacking alleged centers of vice, its primary concern was always to respond to what were described as Christian acts of aggression against Muslims in Maluku and Central Sulawesi. When I interviewed the Laskar Jihad leader, Jafar Umar

Thalib, at the end of July 2001, he said quite bluntly that he intended to extend this armed jihad to other areas of the archipelago, including Central Kalimantan, Aceh, Papua, and “anywhere else the enemies of Islam have not learned they must relent.” At its peak in September 2001, the organization had two thousand fighters in Maluku, eight hundred to one thousand in Central Sulawesi, and several hundred operating under a different Islamist uniform in Papua.[45]

The Laskar Jihad grew out of an earlier conservative religious movement known as the Sunna Communication Forum (FKAWJ, Forum Ko- munikasi Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah), founded in Yogyakarta in 1994. The founder and spiritual leader of the FKAWJ was a young (b. December 1961) Arab Indonesian by the name of Jafar Umar Thalib. Thalib’s career began in Saudi-backed Salafiyah organizations, including the Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies (LIPIA) in Jakarta, where Thalib studied in the early 1980s, and the Indonesian Council for Islamic Predication (DDII), where he worked in 1983–84.[46]

Awarded a scholarship by the DDII, Thalib traveled in 1986 to Saudi Arabia. From there, under the sponsorship of the Saudi-based Muslim World League, he traveled to Afghanistan, where he met briefly with Osama bin Laden. In his interview with me, Thalib insisted he never directly collaborated with bin Laden, choosing instead to join a faction of the Afghan mujahidin with ties to the Saudi government. After the events of September 11, 2001, Thalib publicly distanced himself from bin Laden. He did so, however, not because of the attacks on the United States, but because of bin Laden’s opposition to the Saudi government.

Between 1989 and 1993, Thalib made several trips back to Yemen to continue his salafiyah studies. Upon returning to Indonesia in 1993, he founded a religious boarding school (pesantren) north of the city of Yogyakarta. Unlike most pesantren, Thalib’s school catered not to adolescent youth, but to the middle-class university students active in the Islamic study circles (halaqah) for which Yogyakarta was famous. The more radical among these students were organized into not only religious study groups, but secretive political cells known as usrah (lit., “family”). Modeled on the radical wing of

the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (Mitchell 1969; Wickham 2002), the usrah were small operational cells consisting of five to fifteen people linked to a vertical command structure. The senior command coordinated the usrah that made up any single organization; they also directed the membership's weekly religious and political lessons. Some groups also engaged in paramilitary training. The usrah movement as a whole instilled a spirit of militancy and exclusivity, emphasizing that Islam is a total way of life. Members dressed in a distinctive South Asian salafiyah style, and shunned contact with "nonbelievers," an expansive category that included ordinary Muslims regarded as insufficiently pious. Although their memberships were distinct, both the Laskar Jihad and the Laskar Mujahidin (below) mobilized their membership using this pattern of secretive usrah cells.

Although some writers have insisted that Thalib was "nonpolitical" until he founded the Laskar Jihad in February 2000, in separate interviews with me, he and one of his chief lieutenants, Ustadh Umar Budi- hargo, acknowledged their ambitions were political as well as religious from the start. Their purpose, both said, was to counteract the stream of "deviationist" thinking being propagated by Muslim democrats in the university town. Yogyakarta in these years was second only to Jakarta as a center of prodemocracy Muslim activism. During 1999, when I lived in the city, no Muslim activists with whom I spoke had any illusions about Thalib being apolitical. Thalib was known not only for his opposition to democratic Muslims, but for his cordial ties to hardline patrons in Jakarta. The more specific charge leveled at Thalib was that a member of the Soeharto family, who also happens to own a home near Yogyakarta's sultan's palace, had provided the financing for Thalib's pesantren in 1994. In his interview with me, Thalib flatly denied this charge.

Whatever the truth of this accusation, what is clear is that from late 1999 on there were regular and high-level meetings between Thalib and representatives of a faction of the armed forces. A former midlevel field commander of the Laskar Jihad, whom I interviewed on August 3, 2001, just after he had left the organization, explained that discussions had increased in January 2000, when retired members of the armed forces, with ties to a still-active commander, approached Thalib indicating they were prepared to support his efforts to mobilize Muslims to respond to Christian attacks in

Maluku. Like Thalib, these agents blamed President Wahid for the Maluku conflict and accused the embattled president of being a communist sympathizer. The terms of cooperation were agreed on in February 2000. Soon thereafter a campaign was launched among leading Muslim families in Jakarta, directed by two former Soeharto ministers, to raise money for arms and medical supplies.

The International Crisis Group's report on the violence in Maluku, "Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku" (issued on February 8, 2002), notes that after the founding of the Laskar Jihad in February 2000, out-of-uniform members of the Indonesian National Military (TNI) helped to train its fighters at a camp outside of Bogor, West Java. Tactical support of this sort was also apparent in the Laskar Jihad's startling display of weapons in front of the presidential palace on April 7, 2000, as well as the militants' unimpeded travel across Java to the port of Surabaya several weeks later. Although the president, minister of defense, and governor of Maluku province all appealed to security officials to stop the militia from traveling to Maluku, the militants not only moved freely but were given security escorts along much of the route. In Surabaya they boarded state-owned ferries for Maluku. A Muhammadiyah activist who was in the province at the time told me in July 2000 that upon their arrival in Maluku, the fighters were escorted into the port city of Ambon and provided with weapons shipped in separate containers from Surabaya. Showing once again that there was no consensus among security officials on policy toward the Laskar Jihad, however, provincial police seized one of the weapons containers upon its arrival in the port.

Tactical collaboration between factions of the elite and the Laskar Jihad was also apparent in the "antivice" campaigns in which the organization participated in Yogyakarta during early 2001. As with the FPI's attacks in Jakarta, the Yogyakarta campaign targeted discotheques, bars, brothels—as well as meetings of prodemocracy activists. By July 2001, attacks by machete-wielding militants had paralyzed the local democracy movement. In their antivice actions, Laskar Jihad militants were joined by militants from the Movement of Ka'abah Youth (GPK), an affiliate of one of the country's largest Muslim parties, the United Development Party, or PPP. In Yogyakarta in August 2001, a former officer of the GPK who disagreed with the campaign's targeting of democracy activists described its origins:

The whole strategy to use the GPK to attack places of immorality and the democracy movement wasn’t something simply tolerated by security officials. It was designed by district officials in a series of meetings I attended during early 2001. The meetings involved officials from Golkar, military officials, Laskar Jihad, and the PPP [the Islamic party]. The campaign’s purpose wasn’t just to combat vice. It was also intended to mobilize conservative Islamists and undermine support for Abdurrahman Wahid and the democracy movement.

If there is evidence of a coordinate relationship between the Laskar Jihad and at least some members of the security elite, the organization’s three- year history also offered numerous examples of conflict with security officials. In June 2000, responding to what it claimed was police bias, the Laskar Jihad mounted an armed assault on a mobile police armory in the Tantui region of Ambon, Maluku, seizing ammunition and seven hundred automatic weapons. In August 2000, a special “Joint Battalion” made up of soldiers drawn from the army, marines, and the air force exchanged gunfire with Laskar Jihad fighters. Other clashes took place in January 2001 and, most seriously, June 14, 2001, when Joint Battalion soldiers attacked a Jihad polyclinic, killing twenty-three militants. Thalib responded to this incident by posting a fatwa on the Laskar Jihad Web site calling for the Maluku military commander to be killed. Shortly thereafter, the commander was transferred and the Joint Battalion was replaced by army special forces (KOPASSUS) regarded as more sympathetic to the Laskar Jihad.

Despite these last actions, official opposition to the Laskar Jihad continued to grow. On May 4, 2001, Thalib was arrested after returning from Maluku, on grounds of inciting religious hatred (a prosecutable offense in Indonesia) and condoning the execution by stoning of a Laskar Jihad fighter accused of adultery (the militant had conceded the accusation and agreed to the punishment). In the face of protests from Muslim conservatives, Thalib was quickly released. A year later, however, he was arrested again. This time Thalib was charged with defaming the president and fomenting hatred, in relation to remarks that he had made opposing a recently negotiated peace settlement for Maluku.

Thalib’s arrest sparked bitter accusations in the Muslim community that Indonesian authorities were caving in to U.S. pressures. But the incident also revealed growing divisions in the Laskar Jihad leadership itself. These pitted a hard core determined to press forward with the jihad campaign against accommodationists, including Thalib, who insisted that there was no point to armed struggle if the group no longer enjoyed the backing of politicians and military officials. In the aftermath of the Bali bombings in October 2002, this split grew, with hardliners deserting Thalib’s organization to form militias dedicated to continuing jihad. By July 2003, Thalib was speaking openly of his disenchantment with politics and his determination to dedicate himself to religious education. My interviews with former Laskar Jihad militants in that month indicated that militant defectors from Thalib’s organization had regrouped into separate usrah cells. They made no secret of their determination to renew armed jihad when circumstances allowed, with or without Jafar Umar Thalib.

**** The Laskar Mujahidin

Unlike the Laskar Jihad and the Islamic Defenders front, the leadership of the third and smallest of the Islamist paramilitaries to be discussed here, the Laskar Mujahidin, has long had an antagonistic relationship with Indonesia’s armed forces and political establishment. The Laskar Mujahidin is the armed wing of the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (Ma- jelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI). The MMI was founded in Yogyakarta in August 2000, and is dedicated to the implementation of Islamic law and the establishment of an Islamic state. The council includes among its leadership a heterogeneous assortment of intellectuals and politicians from mainstream pro-shari‘a groupings as well as armed militants. However, some officials in the organization are regarded as having sympathies for the Jema‘ah Islamiyah, a group with ties to al-Qa‘ida and blamed for the Bali and Marriott bombings.

In their earlier years, the men who were to become the leaders of the MMI were associated with the Darul Islam (DI, “abode of Islam”) movement. The DI is an old armed Islamist movement that declared an Islamic state in 1948, and then did battle with government forces until 1962 (Dijk 1981). In military circles, even pro-Islamic ones, the Darul Islam has long been regarded as a

traitor to the national cause because it turned against the Republican government when the latter was struggling against the Dutch. This legacy did not prevent the military from making occasional use of DI activists. In the anticommunist campaign of 196566, DI veterans were recruited to assist in the roundup and killing of communists in West Java. As anticommunist forces in Vietnam teetered toward collapse in the early 1970s, Soeharto's intelligence chief, Ali Mo- ertopo, sponsored the revival of clandestine DI networks, with an eye toward mobilizing them should there be a renewed communist threat (Feillard 1995, 119; ICG 2002, 5). During the 1970s and early 1980s, there were allegations that several bombings blamed by the government on a shadowy Islamist group, the Komando Jihad, may really have been the work of Ali Moertopo double agents working with the DI.

During the 1970s and 1980s, a new network of DI activists gradually came into existence, organized around the activities of an influential Qur'anic boarding school, the Pesantren al-Mu'im, in the village of Ngruki outside of Solo, Central Java. The school was founded in 1973 by two ulama of Hadrami-Arab descent, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. Neither man had been directly involved in the Darul Islam rebellions, but both shared that movement's ambition of replacing Indonesia's existing government with an Islamic state. In the 1970s, both men threw themselves into the task of creating communities of believers, or jema'ah, dedicated to the implementation of Islamic law. Much like the founders of the Laskar Jihad, the two men relied on an underground network of training cells (usrah) to achieve this aim. As the Soeharto regime ratcheted up its pressure on Islamic groupings in late 1978, both men were arrested and accused of involvement in Komando Jihad violence. Held in prison for four years, they were tried and eventually released on time already served. Three years later, when they got wind of government prosecutors' plans to rearrest them, the pair fled to Malaysia. There they continued to raise funds and recruit members to their network, focusing much of their effort on Malaysia's large expatriate Indonesian community (ICG 2002, 12). In the 1980s, some activists in the Jakartan wing of the movement were linked to acts of criminal violence, including bank robberies and murder, but these actions were condemned by Sungkar and Ba'asyir.

In the final years of the Soeharto regime, Sungkar and Ba‘asyir are said to have come under the influence of the Egyptian al-Jama‘a al-Islamiyya, a breakaway faction of the Egyptian Islamic Brotherhood committed to armed struggle (Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999, 82–86). Not everyone in the Indonesian JI network agreed with the leadership’s more militant tack. However, in the mid-1990s, as hardline groupings like KISDI and the DDII, to which Sungkar and Ba‘asyir had once been close, reconciled with President Soeharto, the two men remained unreconstructed critics of the president. Together with the prominence of veterans of the Darul Islam rebellion in the organization’s leadership, this legacy explains why Ba‘asyir and the MMI have always been regarded with suspicion in military and old regime circles.

Another consequence of the hardening of Sungkar and Ba‘asyir’s position, however, was that during the late 1990s, several hundred Jema‘ah Islamiyah militants traveled to camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan to receive guerrilla training with internationalist jihadis supporting the Afghan mujahidin. In his study of al-Qa‘ida networks in Southeast Asia, Zachary Abuza makes the prescient observation that these years happened to coincide with the expansion of the al-Qa‘ida into Southeast Asia. Al-Qa‘ida agents had first appeared in the region in the early 1990s. By 1995, they were participating in secret preparations to bomb U.S. airliners over the Pacific (the attack was thwarted). Al-Qa‘ida operatives also traveled to and fought in Maluku and the southern Philippines in the late 1990s and 2000s (Abuza 2003; ICG 2002, 12).

One issue that came to divide JI activists centered on whether the state to which the movement aspires is to coincide with Indonesia’s present territorial boundaries, or will include Malaysia, the southern Philippines, and southern Thailand as well. The dispute split the organization in two, but the factions are said to have reconciled shortly after Ba‘asyir and Sungkar returned to Indonesia in 1999. Both groups participated in the Mujahidin Congress in Yogyakarta on August 5–7, 2000, at which the Indonesian Mujahidin Council was formed (see Awwas 2001). Both also endorsed the formation of a Laskar Mujahidin to fight Christians in Maluku and Central Sulawesi.

Although their electronic media facilities are not as sophisticated as those of the Laskar Jihad, the MMI and Laskar Mujahidin have nonetheless

demonstrated an aptitude for print and electronic media. Most of their media activities have been concentrated in Yogyakarta, at the Wih- dah Press. The Wihdah Press was founded and is today still directed by Irfan S. Awwas (born Irfan Suryahardi in 1960), whose brother has been identified as a major JI operative. An intelligent and fiercely independent militant who served nine years in prison for opposing Soeharto policies, Awwas was the prime force behind the convening of the August 2000 congress that led to the establishment of the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia. During the first three years of the post-Soeharto period, Awwas's press published some of Indonesia's most influential radical tracts. Wih- dah Press was the publisher, for example, of one of the most influential hardline accounts of the Maluku violence, Rustam Kastor's The Political Conspiracy of the South Maluku Republic and Christians to Destroy the Muslim Community in Ambon Maluku (Kastor 2000). This work and two sequels make the case that the violence in Maluku was instigated not just by Maluku Christians, but by Israel and the United States. This, of course, was an Indonesian variant of the conspiracy theories common in jihadi circles around the Muslim world since the 1980s. Equally telling, while laying blame for the Maluku violence on Christians, Kastor—him- self a former army officer—also accuses the democracy movement of having prepared the ground for the conflict by weakening the army.

Although after its founding in August 2000 the MMI established branches across Indonesia, Jema'ah Islamiyah cadre tied to the organization fell into factional infighting shortly thereafter. A faction led by Rid- uan Isamuddin, alias Hambali, pressed for armed struggle against the United States in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, bombings. In February 2002, Hambali was identified by Singapore authorities as one of the masterminds of a plot to attack Western embassies and U.S. naval ships in the Singapore region. Malaysian authorities have also identified Hambali as the person who, in January 2000, arranged accommodations in Malaysia for two of the hijackers of the American Airlines Flight 77 that crashed into the Pentagon on September 11. Philippine authorities have also alleged that Hambali was involved in the 1995 plot to bomb U.S. passenger jets. Finally, the International Crisis Group also implicated the Hambali wing of the Jamaah Islamiyah in a series of bombings of Christian churches across Indonesia on Christmas eve 2000, in which some nineteen people died (ICG 2002, 12). In February of 2003, Indonesian authorities brought formal charges against

Ba‘asyir and his colleagues for these actions (Ba‘asyir was eventually cleared of the charges).

It was the bombings in Kuta, Bali, on October 12, 2002, however, that finally brought the JI into glaring public scrutiny. Individuals linked to the JI confessed to the attacks, explaining the action was designed to kill Americans and American allies. Police interrogations confirmed that after Abdullah Sungkar passed away in November 1999, many of the organization’s younger militants were unhappy with the selection of Abu Bakar Ba‘asyir as the JI leader. Although Ba‘asyir agrees with the long-term necessity of armed struggle and was alleged to have approved the Christmas 2000 church bombings, he is said to have disagreed with the plan for escalated violence after September 11, 2001. The disagreement was one of tactics, not principle. Ba‘asyir worried that an escalation of the violence would only invite a government crackdown and push the Megawati government toward closer cooperation with the United States.

In retrospect, if these were Ba‘asyir’s fears, they appear well founded. Three days after the Bali bombings, the Laskar Jihad announced its dissolution. Although several Western analysts claimed the organization’s dissolution was caused by financial problems, sources close to the organization told me in October 2002 that the organization had come under “intensive pressure” from former supporters in the armed forces. Two weeks later, the Islamic Defenders’ Front suspended its activities as well.

Abu Bakar Ba‘asyir’s Laskar Mujahidin, however, remained defiant, rejecting government demands that it dissolve. Press coverage of JI involvement in the Bali violence, however, shocked and angered the mainstream Muslim public. Until the Bali bombings, the Indonesian public had been skeptical of Western, Malaysian, Singaporean, and Philippine claims of the Jema‘ah Islamiyah’s existence and its alleged campaign of violence. The Bali bombing dispelled some of that skepticism and galvanized Indonesia’s two large mainstream organizations, the Nahdlatul Ulama and the Muhammadiyah, into a concerted campaign against extremist violence. The violence also shifted the balance of opinion among political leaders in Jakarta. Prior to Bali, they too had been skeptical of charges that the Jema‘ah Islamiyah was planning acts of violence.

By early 2003, then, the Islamist paramilitaries' fortunes had declined drastically, and Muslim moderates were reasserting themselves with a new vigor, hopeful that the paramilitaries' backers had deserted the organizations once and for all. Nonetheless, militants in the national Islamic leadership, including a few well-placed figures with ties to Golkar, continued to speak of an international conspiracy of Jews and Christians against Islam and against Muslim Indonesia. The U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was universally condemned by Muslim moderates, not least of all because they feared the American campaign would put new wind in extremist sails. Moderates in the NU and Muhammadiyah moved quickly to take control of the antiwar movement, however, and the success of their efforts insured that the impact of the war proved less destabilizing than many had feared.

*** Conclusion

The Indonesian example reminds us that for a transition from authoritarianism to take hold, it is not enough that there be a tolerant and participatory civil society. For the transition to succeed, democratic actors in society need partners in the state to work with rather than against society's civil currents. It is this positive synergy across the state-society divide that has proved so elusive in post-Soeharto Indonesia. Rather than building on resources in the Muslim community for moderation and participation, political bosses in the state and local society engaged in sectarian trawling that provided Islamist paramilitaries with an influence greatly out of proportion with their numbers in society.

In light of the top-heavy and state-centric analyses long popular in Indonesian studies, it is important to emphasize that this failure was not just a matter of an all-controlling and ne'er-do-well state. State-based actors may have played a central role in some of the worst trawling, such as that which fueled the street battles in the capital in the months just after Soeharto's resignation. But these elite-sponsored intrigues were soon followed by equally bitter trawling expeditions by "civil-societal" actors in the provinces.

There is a larger political lesson here. Contrary to the romanticized characterizations commonplace in the 1990s, civil society in Indonesia and elsewhere has long been crosscut by ethnoreligious divides. In Indonesia during the 1980s and 1990s, economic growth and migration reshaped the social landscape, and pushed ethnoreligious tensions in some provinces to heights that would have strained the capacities of even the most democratic state. The Soeharto regime's habit of playing ethnoreligious groupings against each other compounded these social tensions considerably. However, the regime did not invent societal tensions where otherwise there would have been none. On the contrary, "civil" society itself was torn by sectarian resentments and divisions. Even worse, in the aftermath of Soeharto's resignation, aspiring bosses in state and society did not hesitate to exploit these uncivil divides for their own ends.

There were, however, other vulnerabilities in Indonesian society more specifically related to features of Muslim politics. One was that, during the 1980s and 1990s, the Muslim community's great mass organizations, the Nahdlatul Ulama and the Muhammadiyah, had protected themselves from Soeharto manipulation by distancing themselves from formal politics and deepening their commitment to civic and educational tasks. When, a few month's after Soeharto's fall, radical paramilitaries arose on the fringes of the Muslim community, the NU and the Muhammadiyah moved quickly to call for peace, the rule of law, and civic moderation. However, neither of these organizations was organized in such a way as to allow it to act as a centrally coordinated political machine. Neither, then, was able to fill the vacuum created by, so to speak, the regime's desertion of its civil functions.

There was another aspect of the Indonesian crisis also related to the peculiarities of Muslim politics. Like most of the Muslim world, Indonesia had been swept by an Islamic resurgence in the 1970s and 1980s. The resurgence took place in the aftermath of growing popular disillusionment with a long-dominant secular nationalism. It also occurred, however, after programs of mass education made ordinary Muslims eager to assume responsibility for their religion (Eickelman 1992). As discussed in the introduction and several other essays in this book, one consequence of the resurgence was a great pluralization in popular understandings and social professions of Islam. In most countries, the majority of resurgent Muslims were moderate or apolitical in their views. However, often there was also an

ultraconservative minority eager to respond to the competitive pluralism of public life by playing up divisions between Muslims and non-Muslims, as well as Muslims regarded as less than pious in their profession of the faith. Among other things, the conservatives demanded that Muslims turn their back on citizenship ideals and avoid all contact with “infidels.” Fueled in part by publications and predication programs sponsored by Salafiyah organizations in Saudi Arabia (see Abuza 2003), this conservative stream also insisted that Islam is a total and “complete” system, alone capable of resolving the modern world’s problems. This claim effectively denies the relevance of other forms of knowledge for dealing with social problems. Not coincidentally, the claim also legitimates patriarchal and authoritarian arrangements antithetical to democratic citizenship.

During the early years of the Soeharto regime, the Indonesian Council for Islamic Predication (DDII, Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia) was the main conduit for Saudi-Salafiyah ideas. Soon after its establishment in 1967, the DDII forged close ties with the Saudi-sponsored Islamic World League (Rabitat al-‘Alam al-Islami). Already in the 1970s, the DDII had begun to translate and publish Saudi-Salafiyah tracts, some of which were notable for their anti-Christian and anti-Jewish diatribes (Bruinessen 2002; Hefner 2000). With the jihadi mobilization against the Soviets in Afghanistan, and with the growing irritation in many Arab capitals with U.S. policies in the Middle East, this propaganda took on an even more militantly jihadist tone. With the end of the Afghanistan campaign and the outbreak of violence in Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya, and other Muslim lands, the literature escalated its critique into a full-blown attack on alleged “Jewish and Christian” conspiracies against Islam. Although for most of the Soeharto era proponents of these theories remained marginal to the mainstream Muslim community, they nonetheless survived. More serious, their theories came to play a central role in the ideological training of the secretive usrah cells that sprang up in cities and on campuses across Indonesia in the 1990s.

For Indonesia’s moderate and democratic Muslims, then, a central challenge of postresurgence politics was the effort to pacify the sectarian and authoritarian fervors of the jihadi fringe so as to channel the energies of the resurgence in a pluralist and democratic direction. Whether in contemporary Turkey, post-Khomeini Iran, or elsewhere, one of the most

common instruments for resolving this problem involves efforts by members of the educated new Muslim middle class to demonstrate the compatibility of Islam with modern democracy and pluralism. In other words, a key feature of modern Muslim politics involves moderates' efforts to constrain and "civilize" the patriarchal and authoritarian tendencies of conservatives unconvinced of the benefits of modern pluralism.

Unfortunately, in the case of Indonesia, the economic crisis of 1997–98 converged with the collapse of state authority and the outbreak of ethnoreligious violence to make this civic-pluralist project deeply problematic. With the country facing a dual political and economic crisis, the jihadis' claim that the country's plight was the result of an international Jewish and Christian conspiracy began to resonate with some angry urban youth. In a nation of almost 200 million Muslims, the total number of jihadis remained minuscule. But antidemocratic violence is not a matter of majority rule. The jihadis' militancy and secretive usrah organization gave them an enormous advantage over their civic pluralist rivals. Worse yet, the jihadis' willingness to collaborate with provincial bosses and old regime conservatives provided them with access to a social and political capital with which they could scale up their influence and strike at their moderate rivals.

What went wrong in post-Soeharto Indonesia had some Islamist colors, then, but its driving force also showed something all too familiar from other troubled settings: a transition from authoritarian rule staggering under the weight of economic crisis, a corrupted political culture, and, finally, rampant violence stoked by unscrupulous political bosses. There was indeed a measure of international terrorism laced into this potent brew, and it helped to provoke some of the most awful acts of recent terrorist violence. It may yet again. But any analysis that sees Indonesia's crisis as primarily the result of al-Qa'ida or other internationalist machinations will have missed the more serious lesson to be learned from the Indonesian example. It is that the seeds for Indonesia's difficulties, and, in particular, the seeds for the jihadis' post-Soeharto ascent, were sown by thirty-two years of divide-and-conquer authoritarianism. This politics wreaked havoc with Indonesia's tradition of moderate Islam, and destroyed public trust and pluralist collaborations at a time when, as a result of the changes sweeping

Indonesia, the country needed new avenues of participation and citizenship more than ever.

Despite the violence of the past few years, the social resources for a culture and practice of citizenship have not been exhausted. Although each faces opposition from a hardline minority within, the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama remain pillars of Islamic moderation and civic-pluralism. In parliamentary debates that raged in the National Assembly in 2001 and 2002, both of these organizations took principled and courageous stands against proposals that would have obliged the state to implement Islamic law. The two organizations did so on the ground that such a measure would damage the country's pluralist heritage.

As this example shows, Indonesia still commands significant resources for democratic citizenship and pluralist participation. The main challenge in the years to come—and it is a serious one—will be whether actors in civil society can at last find democratic partners in the state and among the country's fractious political parties. If such a coalition across the state-society divide can be devised, then this troubled nation may yet make good on its civil-Islamic promise.

[44] I carried out interviews on and with the membership of the Laskar Jihad and Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia in Yogyakarta Indonesia during July-Auguss 2000 and 2001, and again during June-July 2003. My Indonesian research assistant conducted an additional forty interviews from October 2001 to June 2003. The information I present here on the Islamic Defenders Front is based on press reports, interviews with Muslim activists (none of whom were members of the FPI), and an important report by the Research Bureau of the Center for Language and Culture at the National Islamic University in Jakarta (Tim Peneliti 2000).

[45] The Laskar Jihad had also planned to send troops to the province of Aceh, where separatists were gaining ground against the government. With the clear backing of elements in the armed forces command, in January 2002

Jafar Umar Thalib traveled to the troubled province to establish his forces. His presence was denounced by the Acehnese fighters, who accused him of being a stooge of the armed forces command.

[46] Although its meanings have changed over time, “salafiyah” in the Indonesian context refers to a variant of puritanical Islamic reform ostensibly modeled on the first generations of Muslims. On the term’s varied meanings see Shahin 1995.

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** Chapter 12: Sufis and Salafis: the Political Discourse of Transnational Islam

Peter Mandaville

The nature and character of contemporary transnational Islam defy easy description. Recent coverage of this topic in both the popular media and in academic discourse has tended to emphasize the prevalence of highly radical and militant tendencies at the core of those Islamic movements

whose activities cross national borders. Some of the more alarmist voices today go so far as to claim the existence of something like an “Islamic Comintern” set on the destruction of Western society and its allies in the Muslim world. In the wake of September 11, the rush to identify enemies and targets—particularly among policy makers and media pundits in the United States—has produced an image of transnational Islam as inherently malignant. Occasionally accurate in their analyses, such depictions of transnational Islam are, however, highly partial and often presented outside of context and in a worryingly dehistoricized manner. We are sometimes given to believe, it seems, that a highly coordinated global network of militant fanatics sprang up fully formed in diverse locales across the Muslim world on September 10, 2001.

Such accounts do much to obscure the complex realities of Muslim transnationalism. It is certainly fact that there exist today Islamic movements—and, moreover, lines of communication and coordination between them—with the willingness and capacity to use violence in the name of religion. It is also the case, however, that the vast majority of transnational connections between individuals and groups in the Muslim world have nothing whatsoever to do with militancy and revolution. Indeed, in global communications forums on the Internet, and in the activities of a growing number of Muslim NGOs, we find evidence of a transnational Islam whose agenda is organized instead around themes such as education, human rights, and gender equality. Even more perplexing it would seem is the fact that the boundaries between these two categories of Muslim transnationalism are not always clearly delineated. Funds from otherwise legitimate charities, for example, can through the exigencies of global exchange find their way into nefarious hands. In short, to understand transnational Islam is, by necessity, also to be comfortable with manifold shades of gray.

This chapter will provide a comparative overview of several manifestations of contemporary transnational Islam. By examining the history, ideology, and practices of several movements—including both “radicals” and “moderates”—I will engage the widely held assumption that transnational Islam is not conducive to discourses of political civility, pluralism, and democracy. In contrast to many of the other contributions in this volume, I will be covering groups who reject religious and political pluralism as it has

been defined for the purposes of this project. My aim in doing so stems from the assumption that calculating the most effective way to “scale up” moderate discourses in the absence of an understanding of why more radical tendencies find significant transnational appeal will never produce a comprehensive analysis. Indeed, the ability of radical groups to articulate themes that resonate at times with large portions of worldwide Muslim audiences needs to be regarded as one of the chief obstacles to the wider dissemination of civil, pluralist Islam. In this regard it becomes vital to understand the complex interplay between various groups and movements of sometimes quite different dispositions—or, more properly, to understand that these dispositions, always contingent and subject to rapidly changing and fluid circumstances, often escape easy characterization. The approach I adopt must also therefore reject easy categorizations of “good” and “bad” variants of Islam and, moving away from an exclusively geopolitical orientation, it will seek instead to provide something closer to a discursive analysis of the intellectual and social dimensions of Muslim transnationalism in a globalizing world.

The general plan and structure of the chapter is as follows. I begin by identifying some of the major trends in transnational Islam today. Developing a specific focus on European-based sociopolitical movements, I offer a description and analysis of three of the more radical groups— Hizb ut-Tahrir, al-Muhajiroun, and the Supporters of Shari’ah—who claim significant transnational support for their political agendas, all of which are organized around the principle of reestablishing a global Islamic polity. While these groups are only tangentially linked to networks such as al-Qaeda, there is a large degree of intellectual and ideological overlap between the former and latter. They are hence worth studying in order to better understand the “precursor” social sources of support for transnational militant Islam.

The chapter next moves on to an examination of social movements that represent trends in transnational Islam far more compatible with civil, pluralist norms—and, as I will argue, better socially positioned to scale up their influence over the next generation. This section describes and analyzes social and educational movements, such as the Gülen and Nur groups organized out of Turkey, whose religious orientation draws heavily on modernist neo-Sufi (mystical) sources. I also examine Tariq Ramadan’s

discourse on European Islam and the jurisprudential bases for communal pluralism and coexistence with non-Muslim others.

I conclude by, to some extent, deliberately disrupting the ideal type categories of “radical” and “moderate” Islam developed in preceding sections in order to make the point that the reality of contemporary transnational Islam is such that it resists the analyst’s and policy maker’s desire for straightforward typologies. The program of scaling up transnational civil Islam, I argue in the end, is one that cannot be definitively located. It is a quite literally movable feast, and one that requires a sensitivity to rapidly changing contingencies within and across numerous layers of Muslim society. In this regard, also, we are required to rethink the conventional notions and boundaries of what constitutes democratic politics.

*** Contemporary Muslim Transnationalism

The scope and diversity of the Muslim world, combined with technologies of communication and travel, produce enormous variety in transnational Islam today. This runs the gamut from highly personalized intellectual linkages between individuals to the high diplomacy of Islamic intergovernmentalism in the OIC and state-sponsored da’wa (Arab, “call,” religious propagation) work via organs such as the Muslim World League (Schulze 1990, 213–65). When it comes to the question of transnational social movements, there is not only a wide range to contend with, but considerable variation in scale, style, and activities. We can think, for example, of the enormous Tablighi Jama’at, a largely apolitical faith movement whose annual conferences in India represent the second largest world gathering of Muslims after the hajj. Transnational da’wa work is one of the group’s main pursuits, and to this end it maintains coordination centers in South Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America (Masud 2000). Other groups are oriented toward social and economic development issues. Women Living under Muslim Law and Sisters in Islam (see Peletz, this volume), for example, style themselves as international solidarity networks. MuslimAid is a leading global charity. Far-flung diasporas, such as the Chinese Uygar community in Turkey, organize on behalf of Muslim kin and brethren back home (Shi- chor 2003), while new media spaces provide

opportunities for discussion and debate among Muslim youth groups in the European Union and the United States (Mandaville 2001; Allievi 2003).

The political forms of contemporary Muslim transnationalism—that is, those groups whose explicit aim is the establishment of Islamic polities— are somewhat less diverse. Olivier Roy identifies two major networks that encompass many of the nationally oriented Islamist movements: one affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and covering mainly the Arab Middle East (e.g., HAMAS in Palestine, al-Nahda in Tunisia) and the other organized around Pakistan's Jama'at-i Islami (Roy 1994). It is more accurate, however, to say that these connections, for the most part, are ones of general ideological orientation and intellectual lineage rather than active, coordinated sponsorship and coordination. It should be emphasized again that these groups are, in the main, working locally to establish Islamic states in particular countries. Their political aspirations do not extend beyond national borders, and in this sense I do not regard them as transnational movements per se. However, this does not mean that certain of these groups —particularly the more radical among them—are not at times implicated in the agendas and activities of actors whose political aspirations extend beyond the state. Ayman al-Zuwaihari, for example, former leader of Egypt's Islamic Jihad, effectively folded his group into Usama bin Laden's al-Qaeda in the mid-1990s. The Brotherhood and Ja- ma'at both also have a history of ties to and sponsorship of groups abroad.

When we move on to deal with transnational political movements whose goals are more global in scope, things become murkier still. Linkages and relationships can be highly informal, nebulous, and rather ad hoc, contributing to an aura of uncertainty in terms of scale and breadth of geographic coverage. That groups such as al-Qaeda appear to be constituted by cells on virtually every continent, cropping up in such seemingly unlikely locales as South America (Whitbeck and Arneson 2001), lends their activities an aura of omnipresence. By cultivating this image of ubiquity, and through a careful public relations strategy involving media sound bites that seemingly appear out of the ether, a relatively small number of such groups have managed to catapult themselves to the forefront of transnational Islam in the eyes of the public. The spectacle of September 11 and a series of smaller-scale attacks in multiple countries have all served to reinforce this image in recent months. Since these events, the public discourse on transnational

Islam has focused almost exclusively on shadowy militant networks, many of which are described as inspired by Wahhabism, a hardline variant of Islam usually seen to emanate from Saudi Arabia. In the wake of the October 2002 bombing in Bali, Indonesia, for example, significant attention focused on Jemaah Islamiah, described as an al-Qaeda “franchise” seeking to establish a Pan-Islamic state encompassing Muslims in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Brunei (Abuza 2003; Wain and McBeth 2002; see also Hefner and

Peletz in this volume). Much is made of the fact that ideologues associated with the group had studied Islam in Saudi Arabia or other parts of the Middle East, supposedly confirming the transnational Wahhabi agenda.

While speculation about transnational Islamic militancy has reached a fevered pitch, our understanding of these groups and the individuals (often only tangentially) affiliated with them has progressed very little. While it should be clear by now that radical groups with violent agendas constitute the marginal fringes of transnational Islam, this does not mean that they should be dismissed as insignificant. It is in part their willingness to adopt extreme methods that compensates for their relatively small numbers. Likewise, skillful use of rhetoric and symbols that resonate with Muslims worldwide affords them a constituency that, while not always supportive of their militant tactics, identifies with many of the issues that constitute their discourse of resistance. While groups such as al-Qaeda have been analyzed extensively from strategic, security, and geopolitical perspectives (Alexander and Swetman 2001; Gunaratna 2002; Paz 2003), relatively little attention has been paid to them or their affiliates as social phenomenan (cf. Bruinessen 2002). At the outset of this chapter I sought to argue that before moving to an analysis of how civil, pluralist Islam might be more effectively scaled up, we need first to understand how the discursive landscape of political Islam—particularly in its transnational aspect—has seemingly come to be so dominated by radical tendencies. In the next section of this chapter, therefore, I will undertake to describe and analyze a complex of sociopolitical movements based largely in the United Kingdom whose goals for the establishment of Islamic polity are more global in scope, and which represent a hardline, conservative approach to religion. Because these groups are peripheral to the activities of an organization such as al-Qaeda—while still sharing many of the same general ideological orientations—they represent

interesting examples of the “intermediate milieu” of radical Islam. Their activities constitute a space in which antiplu- ralist agendas can be organized and propagated, while stopping short (for the most part) of adopting coercive methods. These groups vary greatly in terms of the support they command (rarely, it would seem, nearly as much as they claim) and the extent to which they are able to coordinate transnational activities, yet they are certainly qualitatively, in terms of their ideological appeal, if not necessarily always quantitatively, significant.

*** Diasporas of Radical Islam

Over the last decade several social movements espousing radical political agendas have emerged as a small but vocal camp within the British Muslim community. These groups are similar enough in their general aims

and in the tenor of their discourse to be commonly lumped together as a single tendency. While elements of a shared agenda can indeed be identified, a closer examination soon reveals considerable differences in emphasis and method. Furthermore, some among their leaderships go to considerable lengths to differentiate themselves from each other—partic- ularly insofar as in one case at least, a group was founded as an offshoot of one of the others following a significant disagreement over matters of theology. Shared between them in terms of political vision, however, is an emphasis on the need to eventually reestablish the Islamic caliphate (khi- lafah), the original Muslim polity that existed in one form or another until its abolition at the hands of Mustapha Kemal Ataturk in 1924. In other words—and this is in part why I treat them as transnationally oriented groups—these groups seek to achieve not isolated Islamic states, but rather a global Muslim polity under a single caliph (khalifah) charged with the duty of ensuring the practice and enforcement of shari’ah (religious law). All three have, or claim to have, branches and followers in multiple countries and their U.K.-based leaderships have all been involved in political activism in the Middle East, South Asia, and elsewhere. Because their programs depart from a different aqeedah (tenets of belief or “creed”), the location and importance of the caliphate varies between their respective discourses. In seeking to identify an emphasis on the caliphate as the distinguishing aspect of their political agendas, however, I use the

generic label khilafist to set these groups apart from those Islamists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood or Jama’at-i Islami, seeking to establish individual Islamic states. In what follows I shall provide a description account of the background, intellectual orientation, political program, and transnational reach of each group, followed by an analysis of why and how their political discourses have selective appeal today.

**** Hizb ut-Tahrir

Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation—hereafter HT) is the oldest and probably the most widespread in its transnational activities of the three groups under examination in this section. Founded in Jerusalem in 1952 by Taqi ud-Din al-Nabhani, HT emphasized from the beginning the importance of establishing a single party (hizb) through which Muslims could work for the reestablishment of khilafah. In the eyes of Nabhani and his followers, it was only through revolutionary action in concert that the world’s Muslims could restore themselves to a position of global power. In this sense, the founding of Nabhani’s movement marks a reincarnation of certain elements found in earlier discourses on Pan-Islam, yet with a stronger emphasis on the importance of a single Muslim polity. Nabhani faced considerable opposition from the Jordanian state (which still controlled Jerusalem at that time), and also found it difficult to develop a mass following for his party. With Arab nationalism gathering strength as the dominant political ideology of the day, appeals for a new caliphate fell largely on deaf ears. HT found itself moving underground at the same time as it began to establish small footholds in other Arab countries. Noted to be particularly strong in Turkey, where memory of the Ottoman caliphate still endures to some extent, the group’s activities in the Middle East and Asia (outside the reach of anti-HT propaganda in the Arab world) have been well documented during the first decades of its existence (Taji-Farouki 1996).

The structure of HT, while highly fluid in practice, is organized around a series of hierarchical committees. The party maintains a worldwide central leadership committee headed by an amir (leader), currently Abdul Qadeem Zalloon. The group does not disclose the location of the central committee, but it is widely believed to reside in Lebanon. Each nation (or “province” since the party does not recognize the validity of the nation-

state model) in which HT operates possesses a five-to-ten-member committee headed by a mu’tamad. These national leadership councils subspeciate into smaller local (usually urban) committees under a naqib and neighborhood study circles guided by a mushrif. In countries where it has been subject to persecution by authorities, HT has been known to adopt a rigorously enforced cell structure.

Sporadic references to crackdowns on HT branches in North Africa and Turkey can be found throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and the group resurfaced to a torrent of negative publicity in Britain in the early- to mid-1990s. Having engaged in a heavy recruiting drive at U.K. universities, HT found itself banned from British higher education campuses by the National Union of Students following accusations of anti-Semitic activities. The group’s mu’tamad in the United Kingdom, Shaykh Omar Bakri Muhammad, emerged during this time as a controversial public figure, challenging all Muslims in the United Kingdom to adopt the pursuit of khilafah as the only possible authentic course of political action available to Muslims. Although its beliefs and program remained a minority tendency, the radical political position adopted by the group managed to effectively polarize the British Muslim community for a short period (Mandaville 2001). Seeking to label all who rejected the caliphate as Western collaborators—or in Bakri’s terms, “chocolate Muslims”—HT prompted a vigorous debate about the political imperatives of Islam as a minority community. In 1996, after significant disagreements arose within the U.K. leadership of HT as to the theological basis for the group’s political activities and the scope of its work, Bakri left the group to found al-Muhajiroun (see below). Severely discredited in the eyes of Muslims and non-Muslims alike, HT retreated from the public eye for several years, leaving the limelight in the United Kingdom to groups such as Al-Muhajiroun. Attention to HT’s activities increased again in the summer of 2001, but this time centered on Central Asia, where reports had emerged of active cells organized out of Uzbekistan that authorities were trying to link with al-Qaeda (Rashid 2002: 135). Although London remains an important site of fund-raising, recruitment, and coordination for the group, HT’s political activism seems increasingly to be focused elsewhere, with Pakistan, Jordan, and Palestine claimed as major areas of focus at the present time.

Sources of support for HT vary considerably from context to context, and in this sense it is difficult to produce something like a profile of a “typical” party member. It has proven itself skillful in adapting its discourse to local conditions and at appealing to particular grievances. In the early 1990s, for example, it was particularly successful in recruiting among second- and third-generation South Asian immigrants in the United Kingdom, many of whom had been raised with a form of Islam they regarded as disengaged from worldly issues and political imperatives. Alienated by their parents’ “village Islam” (i.e., oriented toward the sectarian idiosyncrasies of the villages in Pakistan and Bangladesh from which they had migrated) and socially adrift in a society into which mainstream integration proved difficult, the discourse of radical resistance offered by HT appeared highly attractive. By placing khilafah—a marginal ideal at best in mainstream Muslim political thought—firmly at the center of its religious discourse, HT was able to take advantage of a relative lack of religious knowledge on the part of its young recruits. When asked about the extent of desire in the ummah for a new caliphate, group members often give a general answer about Muslims desiring greater unity. When it is put to them that such a desire does not necessarily translate into support for khilafah, and that those seeking a political order based on Islam might prefer groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood (the most popular Islamist tendency in the Arab world), HT supporters tend to explain that Muslims will eventually realize that the correct political implementation of Islam must necessarily lead to khilafah.

So how, in HT’s view, will this new caliphate come about? The party’s political discourse begins by recognizing the lack of any “executive structure” in the Muslim world as a major problem and one that must, according to a shari’ah obligation impingent upon all Muslims, be rectified. In terms of its methods, it seeks to style itself as nonderivative in the sense that it does not study and emulate the approaches taken by previous Islamist movements. Instead, it seeks to go back to the basic legislative sources of the religion—the Qur’an, hadith, and usul al-fiqh. The correct method for establishing khilafah is fixed and can, it claims, be found in the shari’ah, but this should be distinguished from “means and style,” which are necessarily specific to place and time. HT, at least in the United Kingdom, explains that its work is intellectual and political, and in this regard they reject militant methods. Realizing the close relationship between

force and power, however, HT does speak of actively seeking nussrah— support from the armed forces or those responsible for the security of citizens—in countries where it operates, but claims that this is a form of activity controlled exclusively by the party's central leadership. While appealing to a young and generally well educated audience, the group finds support for its program by simultaneously adopting a populist rhetoric designed to link socioeconomic disenfranchisement to religiosity. For example, HT's publicity literature in the United Kingdom defines capitalism as "the detachment of religion from life." Regarding the geographic scope of its activities, the group expresses a willingness to work anywhere and everywhere, but suggests that the caliphate has the best chance of being reestablished in those lands where a precedent already exists (i.e., the Middle East and former Ottoman territories). While global khilafah remains the party's ultimate goal, it espouses a gradualist approach.

**** Al-Muhajiroun

Al-Muhajiroun emerged publicly in Britain 1996 after its founder, Omar Bakri Muhammad, split with HT. A Syrian by birth, Bakri gained his qualifications as an 'alim in Damascus and Beirut, where he was affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood and several other Islamist tendencies before joining HT. Bakri spent several years in Saudi Arabia in the 1980s, until his ties with HT landed him in trouble with the kingdom's authorities.

Many broad aspects of HT's program are duplicated in al-Muhajiroun's political discourse, including the emphasis on khilafah and the movement's general organizational structure (not to mention several key HT texts, which Bakri presumably authored during his time with the party). There are, however, also several significant points of divergence. First, Bakri cites HT as following a fundamentally different aqeedah—in other words, of subscribing to separate tenets of religious belief. Al-Muhajiroun, he claims, is a salafi group, meaning that it orients itself with the traditional teachings associated with the first few generations of Muslims after Muhammad. Developments in theology and jurisprudence that came later are regarded by this school of thought as dangerous innovation (bid'a). Bakri's teaching identifies

salafiyya as a methodology or way of thought rather than a tendency associated with any particular group or movement. Central to salafi thought is an emphasis on tawhid, the unity of God, a trait shared by the revivalist project of Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab in eighteenth century—hence the tendency for many contemporary salafi groups, particularly those advocating the strict application of shari'ah, to be labeled Wahhabi. Bakri accuses HT, by contrast, of following an "Asha'ri" creed, meaning that they subscribe to latter theological innovations that allow for a modicum of human reason to enter into matters of religion. In Bakri's view, what passes for reason is usually nothing more than selfish desire, and hence inherently dangerous. A literal application of jurisprudential knowledge produced by the earliest generations of Muslims is therefore the only safe method by which to conduct human affairs. For the salafiyyun, in Bakri's view, Islam was not a text or culture that can be objectified (as Muslims try to do today); rather, theirs was a living, active knowledge. The doctrinal orientation of HT, according to Bakri, means that they have developed an incorrect obsession with khilafah and have lost sight of tawhid as the central duty of all Muslims.

The second major difference between HT and al-Muhajiroun concerns the geographic scope of their activities. Bakri criticizes the gradualist tendencies of HT that permit it to focus on one particular country or mijaal ("area of work") at a time. By contrast, al-Muhajiroun, he claims, works throughout the ummah, seeking nussrah at all times. Bakri's group, he claims, does not actively pursue jihad (religious struggle—which for Bakri carries a militant connotation in this context), although he be- lieves—unlike HT—that Muslims have a duty to support jihadi groups wherever they may be fighting. He criticizes HT's claim that jihad is an activity that can only be legitimately promulgated by a caliph and hence cannot be supported until such time as khilafah is reestablished. That said, Bakri is careful to distance himself from some of the contemporary jihadi-salafi groups. He argues that some among them do not have sufficient regard for the sanctity of all human life and are wrong to regard the entire world, including non-salafi Muslim regimes, as dar al-harb (i.e., the abode of war—lands in which Muslims are engaged in violent struggle with unbelievers). Regarding its global support, al-Muhajiroun claims to have members and affiliated groups in Saudi Arabia,

the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Yemen, Lebanon, Sudan, Pakistan, South Africa, Mauritius, Central Asia, and the United States. Da'wa links to Southeast Asia are also cited. The group declines to put any numerical figure on the level of its support, claiming only that it is "growing significantly." Bakri has actively sought to forge alliances with other movements in the United Kingdom and abroad, another point of disagreement between him and the leadership of HT at the time of their separation. On its publicity literature, for example, the group lists twenty-seven "organs" of al-Muhajiroun. It actively seizes opportunities to appear with other Islamist groups, even those that do not share a strictly salafi orientation. In this regard there is a sense in which al-Muhajiroun can also be thought of as an umbrella group.

The political discourse of al-Muhajiroun shares much with HT, although Bakri goes to considerable lengths to articulate a salafi basis for the khilafah. Invoking the notion of tawhid al-hakimiyyah (oneness of the law) as the link between the unity of God and governance on earth, he outlines various forms of authority (sultah) which translate, according to his interpretations, into legislative, executive, and judicial functions. Democracy, however, is identified as the opposite of that for which Al-Muhajiroun (and, incidentally, HT) strives. Asserting that the notion of rule by the people contradicts the Islamic dictum that sovereignty is reserved for God alone (Qur'an 6:57, 12:40), Bakri emphasizes that ultimate authority must always lie within the divine alone—or, on this earth, within the shari'ah that represents divine will. Al-Muhajiroun, like many contemporary Islamist—and particularly khilafist—movements, is subject to considerable criticism that suggests their program consists of nothing beyond vague appeals to a rather utopian vision of the caliphate. What would this look like in institutional form? How would it be structured? How would issues of economic regulation, taxation, and international relations be dealt with? Realizing that a lack of specifics has been a shortcoming of Islamist groups in the eyes of many, Bakri has sought to answer some of these questions in a recent pamphlet that tries to outline in greater detail the structure of a khilafah-style government (Bakri Muhammad 2002).

As with many salafi scholars, Bakri is exhaustive in terms of laying out the concepts, categories of analysis, and textual evidence in which

he finds support for the positions he advocates. Indeed, this sort of rigorous taxonomy is a hallmark characteristic of salafi discourse, and one of the many points of criticism leveled at it by opponents. Salafis, in the eyes of many, are obsessed with establishing hard-and-fast categories and labels that differentiate in stark terms between “good” and “bad” beliefs and practices. There seems to be little gray area, in Bakri’s discourse, for example, between heaven’s eternal reward and the damnation of hellfire. While this rigidity—and, at times, obscurantism—is alienating to most Muslims, leaving as it does little room for ambiguity, reflection, or creative interpretation, its moral clarity nevertheless proves appealing to others.

**** The Jihadis: Abu Hamza al-Masri and the Supporters of Shari’ah

The third and final group to be examined, the Supporters of Shari’ah (SOS) is also the most highly personalized of the movements. It centers almost exclusively around Shaykh Abu Hamza al-Masri, imam, until recently, of the North London Central Mosque in Finsbury Park—widely held to be the leading center of radical Islam in Britain. A group described by its leader as “deliberately diffuse and loosely organized,” SOS is the U.K.-based public relations face for a wider transnational network with connections to Algeria’s Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA) and other jihadi movements. Abu Hamza, born in Alexandria, Egypt, fought alongside the Afghan mujahideen against the Soviet occupation. He came to the United Kingdom in 1979 and took British citizenship. Along with Abu Qatada, another jihadi shaykh recently arrested by the U.K. authorities, Abu Hamza is generally regarded as the figure most likely to be involved in active recruitment for militant groups abroad. September 11 suspects Zacharias Moussaoui and James Ujaama as well as attempted shoe-bomber Richard Reid are all said to have been under his tutelage at some point in recent years.

Insofar as the move from Hizb ut-Tahrir to al-Muhajiroun contained elements of both continuity and rupture, we find the same dynamic at work in the shift from Bakri’s group to Abu Hamza’s SOS. Where HT emphasizes a gradualist approach to establishing khilafah via persuasion before

jihad can be legitimately enjoined, Abu Hamza represents the opposite end of the spectrum. Khilafah per se is not so much his concern; rather, the active propagation of shari'ah—by jihad if necessary—is the political imperative. The caliphate, in Abu Hamza's view, will flow naturally from correct implementation of the shari'ah. In this regard he is more concerned with general religious orientation than any one specific institution, bringing his approach closer to that of al-Muhajiroun. The triumph of righteous Muslims, in other words, will naturally bring about righteous governance.

That is not to say, however, that Abu Hamza and Omar Bakri Muhammad see entirely eye to eye. Although the two appear together frequently at rallies and press conferences, one also gets the sense that they position themselves with respect to each other somewhat tactically. An association with SOS allows Bakri to emphasize his transnational activist credentials, while al-Muhajiroun provides Abu Hamza the opportunity to articulate his agenda alongside an umbrella of social movements with a predominantly intellectual orientation. Bakri has at times criticized aspects of the jihadi agenda, while Abu Hamza has let it be known that he has not always been satisfied with the aqeeda of al-Muhajiroun's leader. That said, cooperation between the two groups and joint public appearances have increased significantly of late, and they are increasingly identified as advocating the same general political program.

It is difficult to make any definite determination as to the extent of any linkages between these movements and the more actively militant networks such as al-Qaeda. Accusations of recruiting for terrorist training camps in Afghanistan have been leveled at both groups at various times, and some reports have their leaderships boasting of sending thousands of eager volunteers to jihad in Chechnya, the Philippines, and elsewhere (see also Robert Hefner's discussion of jihadi groups in Indonesia in this volume). Omar Bakri and Abu Hamza, for their part, deny being involved in any such activities. When asked about this topic, they emphasize their role as religious scholars, saying that they offer nothing more than opinions as to whether jihad in a particular country or situation is justified. The choice to enjoin jihad is, in their claims, left entirely up to the individual in question. Regardless of whether or not SOS and al-Muhajiroun function as active recruiters, it is undoubtedly the

case that the forums and spaces they occupy are known as places people can go to find likeminded individuals and to become affiliated with figures whose public persona is not so prominent as Bakri's or Abu Hamza's. It is in the sense of a legitimizing intellectual discourse, then, that the activities of the more active khilafist groups become most interesting. They provide ideologues and an intermediate social milieu—an interstitial space of sorts— that seeks to organize Muslim consciousness toward, in their view, "higher" (and often transnational) purposes.

Several points emerge out of this overview of the main tendencies within the U.K.-based radical movements. While all three share a broadly khilafist orientation, and have at various times been described as "Wahhabi," there exist significant differences between them in terms of the relative importance of the caliphate in their discourses and the correct means of achieving it. Hizb ut-Tahrir might be seen as the advocates of "khilafah in one country" in contrast to the Trotskyite al-Muhajiroun and SOS, who favor something closer to a permanent worldwide revolution. Some among the leadership of these movements have also traveled ideologically over the course of their careers. Omar Bakri Muhammad, for example, has been fairly comfortably associated—it would seem— with a diverse range of political movements and doctrinal orientations. Looking at their overall political goals, however, certain common themes certainly arise. It can be said that all three groups seek to render the worldviews of local Muslims more global, but not in a cosmopolitan, tolerant sense. Promulgating Islam as a higher order identity, would-be supporters are asked to deemphasize national affiliations in the name of the ummah and to understand the suffering of Muslims in other lands as their own—and as circumstances into which they are obliged by their religion to intervene. In this sense, the khilafist-jihadi agenda might be said to hold the greatest appeal for those whose sense of belonging is already in flux—those disjunct from mainstream society and somehow adrift. Radical Islamist discourses structured around a strong antagonism to prevailing social orders hence serve to crystallize political identities and affiliations. The clarity of vision and moral certainty of salafi Islam becomes more attractive to some than the indeterminacy and relativism of more moderate, pluralist approaches.

The political discourse of all three groups also makes frequent use of the notion of kuffar (unbelievers, infidels) as a technique of moral other- ing. This is where the obsession with normative categories begins to take on a social reality. Non-Muslim others are figured as those beyond the pale of social responsibility. Although, contrary to popular belief, salafi discourse does not require Muslims to engage in armed conflict with kuf- far wherever they may be found (unless they are themselves laying siege to Muslims—which, today, in the view of many salafi groups they are), unbelievers are understood to be located outside the normative remit of social relations. By placing the unbeliever in a category of radical difference, the possibility of coexistence premised on cultural pluralism and political civility is precluded.

*** Toward Islamic Cosmopolitanism

When we move on to deal with the moderate discourses of Muslim transnationalism, our task becomes considerably more difficult due to the sheer volume of linkages that exist. It is not at all difficult today to identify an enormous number of Muslim intellectuals engaged in an assertion of pluralism and sensitivity to the other as the bases of an Islamic social ethics. From the hermeneutics of tolerance and gender characterizing the work of Khaled Abou El Fadl (2002) and Amina Wadud (1999) to the democratic pluralism of Abdolkarim Soroush (2002) and the Islamic liberation theology of Farid Esack (1997) to the cosmopolitan human rights of Chandra Muzaffar (2002), Islam is rife with discourses that seek to protect spaces of alterity. It also gives renewed credence to the notion of the ummah that a mapping of the names just mentioned would trace a line from Los Angeles to Virginia in the United States across to Iran down to South Africa and over to Malaysia. It is also interesting to note that the bulk of these intellectuals are operating in environments that are highly multicultural and transnational in nature—the problem of difference is hence necessarily one of their primary concerns.

In order to limit my discussion for purposes of a meaningful comparison, I will focus in this section on several social and intellectual networks that might be understood to represent the contours of an Islamic cosmopolitanism. These groups can be differentiated from the salafis in three important

respects. First, their discourse is characterized by an inherently pluralist orientation to religious sources and their interpretation. In contrast to the salafi emphasis on hard-and-fast categories, these moderate tendencies are much more eclectic in their reading and understanding of textual sources—a fact that also permits enormous latitude in the social dimensions of their work. Second, the discourse of the pluralist groups is characterized by a rather different conception of “politics.” Rather than locating the correct and necessary practice of the political within a Muslim state of universal jurisdiction (khilafah), these moderate groups seek to foreground Islam’s emphasis on individual morality and responsibility toward others—the idea being that good governance, regardless of what institutional form it takes, will naturally emerge from such an orientation. Finally, and in another direct contrast to the salafi groups, the non-Muslim other occupies a fundamentally different place in pluralist discourse. Rather than serving to disrupt the moral order, the non-Muslim in pluralist Islam figures as an invitation to responsible social (and political) engagement. Coexistence within a civil society premised upon notions of tolerance becomes the sociopolitical imperative.

**** Fethullah Gülen’s Transnational Education Network

The best example today of a successful transnational effort to “scale up” moderate Islam is probably to be found in the network of educational institutions associated with Fethullah Gülen’s movement in Turkey. Gülen’s work, in the eyes of one observer, is tantamount to a replacement of political Islamism with an “educational Islamism” (Agai 2002, 29). The overall orientation of Gülen and his groups draws heavily on the thought and teachings of Said Nursi (1876–1960), a reformer and pan-Islamist who stressed the compatibility of modernity and religion. Contrary to many of his contemporary Islamists who sought to reject the West, Nursi taught that there was much of value to be learned from Europe. Stressing individual piety in the context of reaching toward others, pluralist interpretations of the Qur’an, religious knowledge as “light,” and an understanding of nature and materiality as evidence of the presence of God, Nursi can be seen to draw strongly on the mystical tradition within Islam. According to Hakan Yavuz (2000a, 7), “Nursi’s teachings have helped to create a neo-Sufism in Turkey.

His books have freed Islamic knowledge from the hegemony of the ulema and have thus democratized this knowledge."

Gülen's movement has placed Nursi's emphasis on education and knowledge firmly at the center of its discourse on Islam. Having established a series of private schools and colleges throughout Turkey starting in the 1970s, Gülen began reaching overseas during the last decade. There are now close to three hundred educational institutions affiliated with the movement operating across the world, with particular strength in the Middle East, Central Asia, the Caucuses, and many areas of Central and Eastern Europe. Particularly notable about these schools is the fact that they are not primarily —and some not even at all—in the business of religious education. Rather, they stress a modern curriculum and the notion that all knowledge, whether religious or otherwise, brings one closer to God. The teachers in these schools are normally pious followers of Gülen, seeking to set an example through their relatively socially conservative lifestyles. The model that Gülen adopted for these schools in the 1970s was deliberately designed to carve out a new space for religion in Turkish society. By adopting the official state curriculum, Gülen's movement managed to avoid invoking the wrath of the heavily secular state. His goal was to produce a generation of highly educated (according to modern norms) young Turks who were also religiously oriented and who would be able to go on and constitute a new professional class. In this sense, Gülen is commonly seen to have succeeded in creating a middle path between the more overt political Islamism of the Refah party (and its successors) and the official secular orientation of the Turkish state. Gülen's sights seemed more set on gaining influence among the "businessmen, teachers, students and journalists" (Yavuz 2000b) of Turkish society rather than on occupying the organs of state power.

Indeed, it was an emphasis on transnational philanthropy that first allowed him to expand operations beyond the confines of Anatolia. By deemphasizing the nationalist dimensions of his early discourse, Gülen has become an effective global operator over the past decade. He has always stressed the importance of reaching out toward and exchanging ideas with other faith systems and non-Muslim peoples. For him knowledge serves as an intermediary space in which disparate communities are able to coexist—even if one is simultaneously grounded as a Turk and a Muslim. "The movement argued," according to Bekim Agai, "that one who has a firm sense of identity

based on knowledge does not fear contact with others. Thus, a solid national and religious identity was not seen as being in contradiction to participation in the process of globalization" (Agai 2002, 34).

In recent years, Gülen has sought to duplicate his Turkish successes elsewhere. These efforts, combined with a significantly higher profile in Turkey itself, have made him a rather controversial and polarizing figure. Not only the Turkish authorities, but a number of other governments have investigated his network, looking mainly for evidence of attempts by Gülen to "infiltrate" the state (Semyonov 2002). Yet there is also a sense in which his movement has been embraced both at home and abroad as a positive force working for Turkish Islam. Former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit has praised Gülen for his efforts in raising the profile of Turkish Islam as tolerant and moderate, and the governments in a number of countries in which his schools operate have, after an initial period of suspicion, realized that his schools provide a high quality education and important social services. In Central Asia, for example, the schools enjoy widespread support among parents due to their success rates in preparing students for the entrance exams required to gain entrance to prestigious universities (Balci 2002, 21).

One of the most successful aspects of Gülen's approach in terms of scaling up the propagation and influence of his movement has been the extent to which sharp divisions between Muslims and non-Muslims are absent from his discourse (cf. the salafi approach, discussed above). While firmly grounded in Islam and with religiosity as a major animating impulse, the Gülen movement's emphasis on education as a global space of interfaith ecumenicism has allowed its appeal to extend not only to Muslims outside of Turkey, but even to non-Muslims, many of whom are enrolled in its schools. The group's immediate prospects in Turkey seem promising given the recent success of religiously oriented (but, again, not necessarily politically Islamist) parties in recent elections. There have been a few observers, including some whose voices figure in policy-making circles in Washington D.C., claiming that Gülen and the Nurcu movement (i.e., those based on the teachings of Said Nursi) more generally represent the future of a moderate social Islam (Fuller 2002). If able to allay the fears it sometimes prompts abroad as insidious "Turkish religious radicals," the Gülen movement also has good transnational prospects—particularly in postsocialist countries seeking to complete the transition to fully functioning civil societies.

**** Tariq Ramadan’s Europe as Dar ash-Shahadah

A somewhat different trend, yet with a similar emphasis on the need for coexistence and social integration alongside non-Muslims, is to be found in the work of the Swiss-based philosopher Tariq Ramadan (see Bowen, this volume). Called at times a “Muslim Martin Luther” (Donnelly 2002), he has been at the forefront in recent years of an emerging, deeply hybridized idiom of European Islam. Ramadan’s work, best typified by his To Be a European Muslim (Ramadan 1999) calls for a new pragmatism in Muslim thought and jurisprudence, particularly among Muslims living as minorities in the West. He encourages young Muslims, in particular, to regard their position in non-Muslim homelands not as one of weakness, but rather as a source of strength. He observes that in many Muslim majority countries (e.g., Turkey and Iraq), the state is actually more militantly secular than in the West—hence the position of diaspora becomes one that allows for greater freedom in the practice of religion. This point of view is certainly to some extent a product of Ramadan’s own background and upbringing. He is the grandson of Hassan Al-Banna, founder in 1928 of the Muslim Brotherhood —one of the Islamic world’s largest and most influential sociopolitical movements. Ramadan’s parents had to leave Egypt precisely because of the idea, so dominant in Nasser’s Egypt of the late 1950s, that religion should have no place in public discourse.

Yet Ramadan’s emphasis on the European Muslim is not an invocation to insularity and “ghettoization.” Rather he suggests that as a minority community, Muslims possess a set of responsibilities and duties as regards their relations with non-Muslim others. Through what amounts to a radical reinterpretation of the traditional Islamic dichotomous cosmology that divides the world into dar al-Islam (lands where Muslim rulers and shari’ah law are in place) and dar al-harb (those lands in which Muslims struggle to achieve the former), Ramadan refigures the political and ethical geography of minority Islam. If Islam in Europe is seen instead, he would argue, as an example of dar ad-da’wa (the abode of call)—or, better yet, as dar ash-shahada (the space of testimony)—then we have a situation in which Muslims are required to interact responsibly and equitably with non-Muslims

(cf. Bowen’s discussion of Ramadan elsewhere in this volume). Withdrawal and introspection are not options; rather, civic participation, coexistence, and outreach all become imperative. As Ramadan puts it:

[This] approach ... therefore enables us to define the European environment as a space of responsibility for Muslims ... Muslims now attain, in

the space of testimony, the meaning of an essential duty and of an exacting responsibility: to contribute, wherever they are, to promoting good and equity within and through human brotherhood. (Ramadan, 1999, 150, emphasis added)

Accompanying this call for political engagement is an emphasis in Ramadan’s work on the need to reinvigorate and reinterpret the classical sources of Islamic jurisprudence such that the emphasis is not on blind adherence to dogmatic tradition, but rather on a pragmatic search, above all, for the achievement of maslaha—“public good.” In this scheme, one or another interpretation of Islamic textual sources is not correct simply because it accords with the classical tradition, but rather is only correct if it speaks to the issues and problems of the present time (cf. the salafi emphasis on jurisprudential immutability). The good of the community— and this community must be understood to encompass not only Muslims, but also non-Muslims—is, in the end, of paramount importance. As Ramadan writes:

Muslims will henceforth have to ask questions, not alone, not against the whole society, but now with their fellow citizens through a sincere and genuine shared preoccupation The Muslims’ religion commands them to

strive for more justice, but this certainly does not mean that they should be concerned only with themselves and not collaborate with all those who try

to reform society for the better, in the name of human dignity and respect.

(Ramadan 1999, 230–32)

This trend in Ramadan’s work represents what I have elsewhere termed “critical Islam” (Mandaville 2003), a dual connotation that suggests a need for historicism with regard to Islamic tradition but which also presents the possibility of regarding Islam as a form of critique (vis- â-vis, for example, Western neoliberalism). Ramadan’s idiom of Islam, I think, helps us to transcend the impasse between critique and solidarity, where the former is figured as a threat to the latter. Rather, he demonstrates that a new hermeneutics of the other in Islam—necessarily, at times, entailing critique—can actually produce a variant of solidarity premised upon coexistence and testimony to core ethical values: the actuality of dar ash-shahada.

It is important to note, then, that Ramadan’s is not an ethics based on sameness. It is quite insistent on the fact that Islam is different, and in some cases, critical of the norms of mainstream Western society. Although cognizant of the fact that proximity breeds responsibility, it nevertheless seeks to pose Islam as an alternative vision. This ability to engage in a spirit of civility while maintaining a critical distance from certain Western norms is perhaps the greatest strength of Ramadan’s approach. Where Gülen is perceived by some to be insufficiently critical of the West and too strongly influenced by the relative heterodoxy (by traditional Sunni standards) of Nurcu thought, Ramadan’s work—solidly based in mainstream sources of jurisprudence (and hence more difficult for traditionalists to dismiss outright)—represents the possibility of recovering from the usul al-fiqh the contours of a pluralist, democratic Islam.

Taken together, Gülen and Ramadan offer us the intellectual and social foundations for a new form of Islamic cosmopolitanism—and, moreover, one that has the potential to be attractive to a wide range of religiopoliti- cal orientations in the Muslim world. Pluralism and social civility figure prominently in the religious discourses they embrace, and both have found a growing audience in recent years. The approach they represent, however, takes root and blossoms most effectively in those contexts where the

religious landscape is less developed or already significantly pluralized. The greatest challenge these discourses face is to supplant ingrained orthodoxies and the vested interests of the religious establishment in those Muslim majority countries dominated by other varieties of Islamism.

*** Conclusion: Neither SALAFI nor Sufi

What I have really done in this chapter is to describe something closer to two ideal types of transnational Islam: one seeking the establishment of a global Muslim polity through a strict interpretation and implementation of jurisprudential sources, the other promulgating a pluralist discourse that emphasizes dialogue and coexistence with the non-Muslim other through a tradition of intellectual reformism. While each of these two poles certainly has its adherents within the ummah today, the future of transnational Islam actually lies in the far more ambiguous religiopoliti- cal landscape occupied by the Muslim masses. In this regard our attention returns very quickly to the question not only of what kind of Islam “travels” best, but the need to (re)contextualize even the more cosmopolitan orientations as we see they take hold within specific societies. Teachers in conservative Deobandi madrasas in Pakistan, while they may share certain of his views, do not disseminate the fatwas of Omar Bakri Muhammad from London. Student reading groups at universities in Indonesia, while they may share Tariq Ramadan’s emphasis on the democratic, multicultural possibilities of Islam, have never read his books. We are, in other words, reminded that it is important not to overstate the case when it comes to transnational Islam. While we can identify tendencies and general varieties of discourse, it becomes much more difficult to establish direct causal linkages.

When we want to understand, for example, why the salafi project that commonly goes by the name of “Wahhabism” seems so successful in reproducing itself internationally, I would argue that it is much more important to concentrate on the conditions of its reception in a particular setting rather than on the supposedly intrinsic qualities of its discourse. This means that we need to spend as much time studying the local circumstances that allow violent discourses of antihegemonic resistance to gain a foothold in distance climes. While Wahhabism can certainly be seen

to contain the intellectual resources, we need to ask how it is—by particular actors in particular social locations—that this orientation becomes articulated to specific political projects. What I am arguing for, then, is an approach to transnational Islam that is highly sensitive to the interplay of global and local: one that understands the mechanisms through which universal normative discourses are rendered meaningful to the predicaments of a particular social milieu.

The temptation to comprehend the transnational Muslim world according to sharply delineated notions of “good Islam” and “bad Islam” must also be resisted. In so politically charged a climate, such strict divisions can produce dangerous polarizations and create an environment in which it becomes even more difficult for moderate, pluralist discourses to find a voice. Even the seemingly quite specific themes of transnational salafism and sufism that structure this chapter are, in reality, far messier than my easy categories would suggest. Sufi movements have certainly figured historically in violent political struggles (Kemper 2002), while in some cases social movements of a generally salafi orientation represent the only available form of democratic resistance to highly authoritarian governments in the Middle East (as is the case in Saudi Arabia; see Okruhlik, this volume) and elsewhere. Muslims themselves tend not to define each other in such stark terms, and in this sense the ethos of the ummah can be said to have some meaning today. The crosscurrents of transnational Islam mean that these various tendencies sometimes flow through each other, with radical agendas transmitted via moderate circuits. Islam teaches one to aid and assist a fellow Muslim rather than to evaluate and categorize—particularly among the more moderate tendencies, and hence the ease with which they can be exploited by those with more sinister agendas.

This intermingling or hybridity even finds an intellectual expression in particular religious figures today. Indeed, there is a sense in which the most successful contemporary transnational Islamic discourse might be identified with Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, an Egyptian religious scholar based in Qatar. His work is to be found, literally, everywhere in the Muslim world. Through popular religious programs on al-Jazeera and via the translation of his books into languages such as Bahasa Indonesia and Urdu, Qaradawi has found a truly global audience. What appeals, it would seem, is the way he brings

traditional methods of Islamic scholarship to bear on the complex issues of global life (e.g., multicultural marriages, medical ethics, the Internet). Qaradawi produces a discourse that seems modern and moderate at the same time as its formal dimensions (utilizing traditional fatwa methodology) retain the authenticity of Islamic traditionalism, winning him admirers from the banlieus of Paris to the pesantren of Southeast Asia (see John Bowen on Qaradawi elsewhere in this volume).

What emerges from this chapter, then, is the importance of a sense of caution when dealing with transnational Islam. By placing radical and moderate discourses side by side, I have sought to make the point that it is not and will never be possible to identify a single form of civil, pluralist Islam that can be promoted globally. While there do exist important moderate discourses that produce the kind of social capital that Putnam and others have identified as a cornerstone of civil societies (Putnam 1993), other individuals have found it equally expedient to invest themselves in groups for whom democratic pluralism represents the greatest of dangers. In short, even as we discuss the grander contexts of transnational networking and global communications, attendance to local circumstances becomes all the more important. This is why it becomes important to understand how it is that the more radical Islamist groups manage to exploit some Muslims' desire for resistance against corrupt governments, foreign hegemony, and socioeconomic deprivation. The transnational propagation of a civil democratic Islam will hence depend upon having spaces into which it can flow. This means understanding and extinguishing the conditions that feed support for radical militancy while simultaneously encouraging the spread of a religious pluralism and a "civil Islam" (Hefner 2000) that speaks directly to the pragmatic concerns of daily life in the increasingly global ummah.

As regards the future of radical and moderate tendencies, particularly among Muslims in the West, much will depend on the changing circumstances of both local and global contexts. The comments and pronouncements of public officials and other opinion makers are carefully monitored by Muslims in the West, and these contribute significantly to the discursive environments in which social movements and political groups of all persuasions operate. September 11 polarized Muslim communities in the United States and Europe

—an effect rendered even more extreme, perhaps unconsciously, by the official rhetoric emanating from policy makers in Washington, D.C. While the Bush administration went to considerable lengths to emphasize that a “War on Terrorism” should not be understood as a war on Islam, it simultaneously recast the world in Manichaean terms, seeking unequivocal statements of support for the United States (“with us or against us”). Such worldviews leave no room for the shades of gray that characterize Muslim transnationalism. It becomes difficult for Muslims—or anyone, for that matter—to criticize aspects of U.S. foreign policy without appearing suspicious to newly hyperactive security regimes in Washington. In short, if one does not leave space for Muslim opponents of Usama bin Laden to voice complaint (and to be heard rather than dismissed as “unpatriotic”) about other aspects of American conduct abroad, one creates an environment that favors recruitment by the radicals. Likewise, short-sighted and ignorant comments by American right-wing religious leaders, such as Pat Robertson, Franklin Graham, and Jerry Falwell (Barisic 2002), about the violent nature of Islam serve only to confirm the suspicions of Muslims in the West that they are a misunderstood and alienated segment of society.

As had been made clear in the latter half of this chapter and by other contributors to this volume, there exists significant scope for the scaling up and propagation of civil pluralist variants of Islam in the West and in the wider Muslim world. There is also good reason to argue that the moderate orientation represents Islam’s “natural” course. Yet this process proceeds relationally within wider global contexts. In this sense, then, we are not charged only with seeking to shift Islam toward a more progressive orientation, but rather—and perhaps more importantly—we are also seeking to create the conditions that allow Islam’s rich history of pluralist tolerance to flood into the present. This task requires us to be attentive to the paths that enable the spread of civil Islam, but also to recognize that public and policy discourses can simultaneously serve to hinder pluralism.

*** Notes

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** Chapter 13: Pluralism and Normativity in French Islamic Reasoning

John R. Bowen

As Muslims create new, stable communities in Europe and North America, they have asked how best to adapt their normative and legal traditions to their new settings. These traditions are central to Islam. The root meaning of islâm is “submission” to the will of God, and scriptures communicate to humans the norms and forms for that submission. These norms have multiple sources, from the Qur’ân (the revealed word of God), to the collections of hadîth (the reports of statements and actions of the Prophet), to the decisions of qualified jurists and judges. In Muslim-majority countries they have been the basis for creating political, legal, and social institutions: councils of jurists, courts of law, mosques for worship, places for ritual sacrifice. Muslims living in countries without such institutions have begun to reconsider these norms. Should there be new sets of norms for Muslims living as minorities? Is Islam a matter of general principles that one might find to be common across Muslim and non-Muslim societies? Or is Islam perhaps best understood as a matter of individual, ethical behavior rather than compliance with legal traditions?

I consider a range of Muslim responses to these questions in France, a country of relatively new Muslim immigration. I focus on the ways in which the social and political structures of that country have shaped the direction of Islamic reasoning, and to underscore this shaping effect I consider the contrast between British and French experiences. In each country certain

directions of reasoning are, I argue, more likely to be adopted and accepted by Muslims. I also emphasize that Islam has faced issues of pluralism from its beginning. Early Muslim authorities acknowledged the legitimacy of multiple traditions or schools of normative reasoning (madhhab)—before Christian jurists did so, one might well add. Muslim jurists see normative or legal reasoning, fiqh, as a human, fallible practice, an inevitably partial effort to comprehend God's plan for humans, the sharî'a. Judges took into account local values and practices to the extent that these did not violate God's commands. It is thus perfectly within the historical legacy of Islamic reasoning to develop norms that would accord with life in new social situations.[47]

*** Contrasting Conditions for Muslims in Europe

That said, the sudden growth of resident populations of Muslims in Europe has presented new challenges for Muslim scholars. Since the 1960s, considerable numbers of Muslims have immigrated to countries in Western Europe.[48] Most of these Muslims have come from the countries of northern and western Africa, Turkey, and southern Asia. During the 1950s and 1960s, European governments encouraged the immigration of workers to serve the expanding industrial sector as inexpensive laborers. Many of these early immigrants were single men or married men whose families remained behind. Both the immigrants and the host countries thought that the stay was temporary. Some governments built large housing projects, both in city suburbs and in relatively isolated areas, to encourage the eventual repatriation of the immigrant workers and, indeed, to encourage their isolation from the cultural mainstream. France, for example, offered instruction in languages of origin for immigrant children in order to facilitate their expected "return" to their countries of origin.

Two things went wrong with this policy. First, the host economies suffered recession in the 1970s, and the immigrants quickly went from being useful instruments in national growth to hostile competitors for low- paying jobs. Political parties of the far right played on these sentiments. Secondly, and notwithstanding the economic reversals, many immigrants stayed on in their new countries and either brought their families to Europe or created new families in Europe. The children were Europeans in culture and language,

whether or not they were granted citizenship. They began to demand rights of citizenship, including their right to practice their religion unimpeded: to build mosques, to carry out public rituals, and to dress in an Islamic way. These demands were not always welcomed by other residents, and the resentment over economic competition that fueled the far right in the 1970s and early 1980s had become, by the late 1980s and 1990s, resentment over cultural difference, an unalterable newness on the part of the Muslim families.

This economic, cultural, and political conflict was increasing in intensity at the moment when “political Islam” took world center stage. The Islamic Revolution in Iran and the rise and repression of Islamic parties in North Africa and Turkey led to a worldwide excitement among younger Muslims about the possibilities for constructing new kinds of nations, ones in which Islam would play an important public role. These same possibilities frightened ruling parties in these same countries, and they found sympathetic listeners among political leaders in Europe and the United States. Violence increased in the 1990s, carried out by Muslims and non-Muslims. In France, the military wing of the Algerian Islamist movement planted bombs in public places; in Germany, neo-Nazi groups attacked Turks. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, popular fears of Islam focused on the network of al-Qaeda supporters that extended through Asia, North America, and Europe, and on the growing problems of violence in poor areas of the larger cities.

Less noticed during this period have been the creative efforts by European Muslims to adapt religious practices to their new social conditions. These conditions include distinct political cultures: laws regarding who may form what sort of association, policies about state recognition of and aid to religious groups, and norms about where and when one may publicly express religious beliefs (Rath et al. 1999).

The contrast of France and Britain serves to illustrate the relevant differences. In France, a long struggle between the Catholic Church and partisans of a secularist and revolutionary heritage eventuated, early in the twentieth century, in the regime of laicite. The political culture of licite requires the elimination of religion from public forums: from schools,

state enterprises, and government. This culture also suffuses teacher education, creating not only a heritage of militant anticlericism, but also a militant antireligious stance that often goes well beyond the strict requirement of French law. Parallel to the history of laicite is that of francite, “Frenchness,” the idea that full citizenship requires cultural assimilation to a French model of comportment: European dress, good command of French, and socialization with French people (Bowen 2003a). The close association of laicite and Frenchness helps explain the strong support in France for laws banning girls from wearing head scarves in public schools, despite the equally strong French political support for freedom of religious expressions (Bowen 2004).

Laicite and francite in turn shape French ideas of citizenship. Despite the fact that commentators often emphasize the distinction of legal nationality (nationalite) and citizenship (citoyennete)—the former merely indicating the government to which one owes obedience, the latter indicating a willingness and capacity to participate in civic life—throughout French history the two have been intertwined. As a general rule, to be given nationality one has had to demonstrate citizenship, and, conversely, full rights of civic participation have been limited to French nationals.[49] Prior to 1981 and the ascension of François Mitterand to power, it was relatively difficult for noncitizens to form legally recognized associations and thus to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the state. Moreover, until 2003 no national Islamic body existed that could take part in the national-level decision making so critical to French affairs.[50]

On the dimensions signaled in France by licite and francite, Britain offers a marked distinction. Religion is present in public life; indeed, Tariq Modood (1993) has argued that maintaining the established Church of England keeps secularism from controlling public space (he might have had the negative example of France in mind). The demands made on residents or subjects are minimal, consistent with Hobbes’s ideas about the proper role of the state in guaranteeing order (Favell 2001). Indeed, to speak of “the state” makes much less sense in Britain than France; residents encounter myriad local agencies and boards. Immigrants from South Asia to Britain began forming diverse associations soon after their arrival, and some of these associations have worked with local school boards to press for changes in diet, religious

education, and so forth, with little direct appeal to officials in London (Lewis 1993; Vertovec 2002; Werbner 2002).

In these and other countries, Muslims have correctly seen that they must forge collaborations with non-Muslim political leaders if they are to develop workable Islamic social and religious institutions: schools that need recognition and financial aid; Islamic chaplains to prisoners and soldiers who require state certification; the simultaneous sacrifice of thousands of animals on the Feast of Sacrifice that requires state health board approval. The relationships between Muslim public intellectuals and political leaders may be uneasy and unstable, but they shape the direction of Muslim social, political, religious, and intellectual life in each country. Muslims in France have become used to looking for a single, national resolution to a problem; Muslims in Britain value allowing local accommodations to resolve disputes. As Muslims develop more effective Europe- wide institutions, they probably will realize that they have become less “European” than they have become French, British, Danish, and so forth, and that they have adapted their religious and cultural institutions to these respective political cultures.[51]

*** The Sociology of Islam in France

Although France keeps no statistics on the religious beliefs or practices of its inhabitants, estimates of the number of Muslims resident in France range from 4 to 5 million people, nearly all of them immigrants and their children.[52] About 60–70 percent of Muslim immigrants to France have come from three countries of North Africa, the Maghreb: Algerians and Moroccans have contributed the largest numbers, followed by Tunisians. Turks and West Africans form the next largest groups.[53] The dominance of North African Muslims in the public sphere is even greater than these numbers might suggest, for a number of reasons. The North African countries had historically close colonial ties to France, and Algeria was part of France until 1962. North African immigration in the 1960s and 1970s was massive and concentrated in industrial cities.[54]

Muslim men who came to France in the 1960s and 1970s found themselves living with Muslims from a variety of countries, often in large public housing

units. In urban neighborhoods as well, or in the poorer suburbs of Paris or Lyon, one finds Moroccans, Malians, and poorer French families living together. Certain ties can reinforce country allegiances, as when an association or a mosque is predominantly associated with one country, or a Sufi order preserves ties to a particular saint. Algerians may vie with Moroccans for control of a mosque, or each, along with Comorians and others, may have their own mosque and associations. Foreign countries (in particular Morocco, Algeria, and Saudi Arabia) have financed mosques, reinforcing country-based rivalries. But even those mosques, religious schools, or associations sponsored by Muslims from a particular country rarely are exclusivist, because they usually do not seek to reproduce a particular theological or ritual tendency. Moreover, for many in the generation of Muslims born in France (the beurs), it is the experience of being discriminated against as “Maghrebin” or “Arab” that creates their sense of “ethnicity” (Cesari 1998, 56–57).

The common Arabic language has facilitated some degree of cooperation across the three North African communities, as has a relatively shared degree of religious jurisprudential reasoning (following the Mâliki madhhab) and religious practices. This cooperation exists both at the national level—for example, in the activities of the largest national organization, the Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (UOIF)— and in some cases at the local level in the forms of shared worship in mosques. In cities or neighborhoods where cross-ethnic cooperation is high, the shared Arabic language facilitates common participation by North Africans (but not others) in congregational prayers. Indeed, the growing distinction, and sometimes tension, is between the Arabic of the older generation and the French of the younger Muslims as the language of the sermon.

By contrast, Turks have not had the same historical ties to France, and the centers of Turkish diasporic activities are in Germany. Many of the Senegalese and Mali immigrants have distinct forms of religious practice and social organization, in particular the Sufi orders focused on specific teachers in West Africa. Other Muslims, from the West Indies or the Indian Ocean islands, for example, have organized into ethnically specific associations and formed a grab-bag national organization to represent their interests as “non-Maghrebis.”

Within the North African category, although Algerians are numerically dominant (one-half of North Africans, one-third of all Muslim immigrants), and they control the important Paris mosque, Tunisians and Moroccans play important leadership roles in a number of national organizations. Tunisians have taken on major roles as leaders of religious schools, particularly around Paris. Moroccans make up 40 percent of all imams (sermon givers at Friday prayers) in France.[55] Thus in France no one country group is predominant across categories, the way that Pakistanis dominate Muslim affairs in Britain and Turks play the predominant role in Germany.

Who are the authorities among these Muslims? Because the traditional Islamic institutions that defined the roles of specific authorities are virtually absent from Europe, it is difficult to use the Islamic vocabulary of muftis, ulamâ, or faqîhs. I prefer to speak of Muslim public intellectuals, each with specific claims to legitimacy and specific bases in social institutions. Teachers at religious schools, mosque officials, and leaders of Islamic associations all can claim some degree of legitimacy as Muslim public intellectuals because of their institutional roles—but ratification of those claims by ordinary Muslims depends on the religious knowledge these intellectuals can demonstrate. The public realm of Islamic knowledge in France is characterized both by the importance of these religious institutions and by the refusal of ordinary Muslims to assume that someone has Islamic credibility just because he (or she) occupies a leadership position in a religious institution.

Private Islamic schools or institutes offer classes on weekends and evenings for Muslims who wish to learn more about their heritage. Those who occupy the principal positions at these schools usually also contribute to public discussions about Islam, for example, by writing in magazines or speaking at gatherings. They may have training in Islamic jurisprudence, but they are evaluated by other Muslims more in terms of their abilities to plausibly represent themselves as learned in Islam matters than in terms of their formal training. In any case, none have the level of formal Islamic education that would earn them a position as a jurist or expert in a Muslim-majority country.[56] Some of these teachers also developed a second, advanced

track within their schools that is intended to train future scholars, teachers, and religious officiants for mosques.[57]

Mosques may be directed by persons with or without a high degree of religious training. Some mosque officials occupy entirely administrative roles; such is the case with the heads (recteurs) of the Paris “great mosque” and the largest mosque in Lyon, both of whom have the ear of the state and the French media. Other mosque officials also act as imams, as ritual leaders for prayer and other ritual events, as in the case of the large mosque in Paris’s Nineteenth arrondisement, the Mosquee Ad-Dawa, and for major mosques in Marseille and Toulouse. These imam-officials often develop large and stable followings, and sponsor an array of associated activities, including religious courses, neighborhood associations, and women’s groups. In a third category are the vast majority of mosques, including the many small ones housed in nondescript settings, where imams come and go, subject to the support of a mosque committee and the will of the regular worshipers. In the smaller mosques something like a free market in imams prevails: someone may appear and give Friday sermons for several weeks or months, until he loses local support. It is the coming and going of these imams, particularly those who have received training in Saudi Arabia and have brought “radical” salafiste ideas to France that most concerns both the French state and the more established mosque leaders. Because mosques now have become the basic electoral unit for the national Islamic representative body, the control of mosques has taken on great political importance.

Finally, there are leaders of the many local and national organizations and federations claiming to represent the interests of Muslims. Their legitimacy in the eyes of the state rests on the numbers of followers or affiliated mosques they can claim; their legitimacy in the eyes of those followers has to do with their ability to show themselves as having a political voice in France and to present an attractive version of Islam. A few can claim nationwide standing; most important are the Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (UOIF), and the “great mosque” of Paris, which functions as an umbrella organization as well as a mosque. The Paris mosque is controlled by Algeria, although it also receives Saudi funds. The UOIF leadership comes from Morocco and to a lesser extent Tunisia and Algeria. The popular legitimacy of the UOIF lies less in its political role than in its success in sponsoring the annual “Islamic fair”

north of Paris at which are displayed books, videos, and clothing, and at which speak religious authorities from throughout the world (Bowen 2004).

A very few Muslim public intellectuals operate in a free-floating way, seeking financial support where they can find it. The best known speaker on Islam in Europe, Tariq Ramadan, derives his authority from his personal gifts at speaking to the social concerns of everyday Muslims, while drawing on the intellectual and to some extent political legacy of his grandfather, Hassan al-Banna, a founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. Ramadan delights audiences by cutting to the chase: urging Muslims to get involved in schools, neighborhoods, and elections. In 2003, his argument that one can be completely Muslim and European also has earned him the suspicion of an increasingly secularist and unified French media. And yet even Ramadan's success proves the rule concerning the importance of religious and social institutions to the new Muslim public intellectuals, in that he has benefited from the wide promulgation of his audio- and videocassettes through the Tawhid publishing network and the local organizing activities of his several support groups, especially Presence Musulmane in the Paris region.

The ordinary Muslims who attend lectures, listen to cassettes, or ask advice of these public intellectuals are preoccupied by the question with which I began this chapter, reformulated for the individual Muslim: How should I live my life in France so as to not violate Islamic norms? Must I wear a head scarf in school? How should I find a spouse? Is it accepted to work at a bank, to eat in a non-Muslim home, to perform the sacrifice by sending money to Algeria? Precisely because the norms of Islam can no longer be taken for granted, because each individual both can and must make choices, ordinary Muslims are demanding that public intellectuals give them guidance. In order to offer that individual guidance, however, Muslim intellectuals in France are themselves searching, and debating, about the directions and limits of Islamic normativity in a secular, pluralist society.

*** Reworking Fiqh to Fit France

In their writings and public discussions on normative questions, Muslim intellectuals in France have followed one of two broad two types of

reasoning: one that starts from the traditions of practical jurisprudence (fiqh), and another that seeks to ground Islam on general principles. As I will discuss below, this division is not specific to France or to Europe; indeed, parallel discussions are to be found throughout the Islamic world. However, these lines of reasoning take on socially specific values in the French context, as the example below illustrates.

One of the more pressing questions for Muslims who are planning to reside permanently in Europe is whether they may take out loans at interest to purchase homes. The Islamic prohibition against lending or borrowing at interest would seem to prevent them from so doing, but in the late 1990s some Muslims living in Europe put the question to the European Council for Fatwa and Research, a collection of jurists of various nationalities who now reside in Europe.[58] The council is led by the highly influential Egyptian jurist Sheikh Yûsuf al-Qardâwî, who lives in Qatar. In 1999, the council responded to the question in the form of a fatwâ, a nonbinding legal opinion issued by a qualified person or group. The jurists stressed that the prohibition on usury does mean that Muslims everywhere should take steps to avoid borrowing from banks that charge interest, and should devise alternative ways of financing homes, such as paying more than the stated price but in installments. However, if Muslims in Europe could not practice such alternatives, then they could take out a mortgage for a first house.

In their argument the jurists cited two considerations. First, the doctrine of extreme necessity (darurat) allows Muslims to do what otherwise is forbidden under compulsion or necessity. Why is it a necessity to own a house? Renting keeps the Muslim in a state of uncertainty and financial insecurity, stated the council. Owning a house allows Muslims to settle in close proximity to a mosque, and to modify their house to accommodate religious needs. Moreover, Muslims living in Europe had reported to the council that mortgage payments were equal to or lower than rents. The jurists also referred to the idea that while in non-Muslim countries, Muslims may make contracts that violate Islamic law. In support of this argument they cited the opinions of past jurists who belonged to two of the traditional schools of Sunni legal interpretation, the Hanafî and the Han- balî.[59] Muslims cannot change the institutions that dominate life in their host countries, stated the council members, and thus Muslims are not responsible for the existence of an interest-based financial system. If they were

forbidden to benefit from banking institutions, then Islam would have weakened them, a result that would contradict the principle that Islam should benefit Muslims.

The ruling did not change the traditional prohibition of lending at interest, but exempted Muslims living in Europe from the prohibition because of a combination of empirical circumstances: the importance of owning a house, the high level of rents, and the absence of viable alternatives. These circumstances allow the jurists to apply the principles that necessity allows for exemption, and that Muslims may use otherwise invalid financial instruments when they live in “non-Islamic countries.” The ruling generated considerable interest among Muslims living in Paris, even though many of them either were not in a financial position to apply for a bank loan or, because they were in Europe only for a brief period of study, would probably return to their home country to seek work and raise a family. Muslims found the ruling important because it implied that Muslims in Europe could legitimately create a new set of Islamic rules, valid only in Europe. This heady possibility excited some and disconcerted others.

In 2001 and 2002 I sought the opinions of Islamic scholars in France on the ruling. I began with one of the jurists making up the European Council, Dr. Ahmed Jaballah, who now is recognized as the chief jurist for the UOIF. Jaballah explained that the council decided that Muslims could best provide for their children by moving out of poor neighborhoods and buying houses. “The only way to improve family life is to move out, and the loan helps them do that. But many in the Muslim world objected to the fatwa because it approved interest. They do not understand what social life is like here.” Later the same day, I attended Ja- ballah’s evening class on fiqh. He directs and teaches at the Paris branch of the Institut Europeen des Sciences Humaines, an evening school for Muslim men and women sponsored by the UOIF. The school is located in Saint Denis, an easy train ride from Paris. That evening, Jaballah emphasized the flexibility of the sharî’a. Islam is “valid for all places and times,” he explained (writing out the phrase in Arabic), but it is also adaptable to all contexts. There are universal elements and those which we change. Most things are neither prescribed nor proscribed, thus they are in the large domain of le licite, the permitted, which in his model constituted a legal vacuum. He drew a circle, with a shaded portion

being those acts for which there are texts, and the much larger remainder being that vast area of “le licite.”

This general approach to understanding Islamic norms emphasizes the place within Islam for creativity. However, other Muslim scholars were opposed to the ruling precisely because it stifled creativity among Muslims. Hichem El Arafa is the director of another school in the Paris region, CERI, the Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches sur l’Islam (formerly the Institut des Etudes Islamique de Paris), also located in Saint Denis. He was asked frequently to speak about the council’s ruling. “Everyone had heard about it; if you played ‘micro on the sidewalk’ and asked people coming out of a mosque if they had heard of it [the fatwa] they would have. So they asked me about it.” [JB: And were you opposed?] “I am not entirely against it, but I wanted to consider other arguments. I think that it does not lead to creativity in thinking about these issues. For example, the few experiments we do have in Islamic banking, we would not have had them if Muhammad ‘Abduh [the important late-nineteenth-century reformer] had said that you did not need to come up with something new. And the experimentation is good, many fail and some succeed and we have new institutions” (interview 2001). In his classes on fiqh (which I have attended beginning in 2001), El Arafa stresses the importance of looking for the consensus of Islamic scholars, ulamâ, in deciding on a difficult question, an approach that in this case leads him to remain on the side of the majority of Muslim scholars in the world who oppose these concessions to banks and mortgages.

Echoing El Arafa’s pragmatic arguments were those proposed by Dhaou Meskine, a scholar who also runs an evening and weekend school, “La Reussite,” in Aubervilliers, north of Paris and east of Saint Denis. “There are too many families in France who live in debt,” he said, “and four million who have been unable to repay their debts.” He went on to explain that there are other, creative ways of obtaining money, such as repaying the seller of the house gradually, perhaps at a higher price, and that he had successfully experimented with such arrangements. Meskine also objected to the very idea of different laws for different places: “Syeikh Qardâwî says that interest in Europe is acceptable because Europe is not a Muslim land. But laws must be universal: if it is forbidden to steal, or lie, or falsify papers, or to make illegal marriages in Muslim lands, then it is also the case for Muslims living in

Europe, in the “dâr al-‘ahd,” land of treaty. That is the nature of religion; it is intended to apply everywhere” (interview 2001).

Although they all agreed that statements about Islamic norms should be based on jurisprudential reasoning, these scholars emphasized not the legal arguments but the socially pragmatic ones. What would be the social consequences of permitting mortgages or forbidding them? Some hold that bank mortgage gives Muslims the ability to realize their duties to their families, a positive value in Islam. Others counter that retaining the prohibition leads to fruitful experimentation and maintains the moral power of the law. For someone such as Dhaou Meskine, who has lived through years of difficult negotiations with a left-wing local government, many of the problems faced by Muslims come from their not following the rules that are common to Islamic law and French state law.

The claim that there could be distinct Islamic norms for Europeans draws on an old debate in Islamic jurisprudence as to whether differing social conditions justify creating new or different Islamic rules. In the early centuries of Islam scholars developed a distinction between two realms, the dâr al-islâm, or abode of Islam, versus the dâr al-harb, or abode of war. The former included the countries ruled under Islamic principles; the latter referred to all other places, where, presumably, Muslims would not be free to worship. Today, many Muslims find discomfort in this way of viewing the world. How is one to define “Muslim societies,” the dâr Al-islam? Does one look to the correctness of the government, the piety of the people, or simply the fact that most people living in the country profess Islam as their religion? Is a majority-Muslim country whose government represses its people and prevents the free expression of religious ideas to be considered part of dâr al-islâm? Conversely, why should countries not governed by Islamic laws but where Muslims are free to worship be considered as belonging to an “abode of war?”

Some Muslims have proposed alternatives. Referring to the protection given to religious minorities by international law, some scholars have proposed dâr al-‘ahd, “abode of treaty,” as a better way of designating non-Islamic states that offer religious freedom. Others have proposed

dâr al-da‘wa, “abode of predication,” or dâr ash-shahâda, “abode of witness,” emphasizing the possibilities open to Muslims in these lands (Ramadan 2002).

*** Reasoning from Islamic Principles

The range of alternative interpretations discussed above remains quite narrow, and the accommodations made to European social conditions remain negative ones, under which one does (or does not) allow an exemption to an otherwise universally valid rule. A second, quite different way of adapting Islamic norms to European social life is to shift focus from rules to principles or general ethical values. This shift leads some Muslim scholars to ask whether a positive Islamic value can be accorded features of French, and more broadly European, social life. Should Muslims consider certain French institutions to be valuable in Islamic terms, to provide legitimate answers to problems of social life? Perhaps these institutions provide moral and legal equivalents of Islamic institutions. So arguing would require emphasizing the general meaning or intent of an Islamic rule rather than the social form that a rule has taken in what are considered as “Muslim countries.”

Approaching Islamic norms in this way is hardly unique to Europe; throughout the Muslim world, scholars interested in reforming Islamic law often have based their arguments on claims about the principles or general intentions behind Islamic rules. Of continuing importance to modern debates is the work of the fourteenth-century scholar al-Shatibi, who distinguished between the timeless principles, maqâsid, found in the Qur’ân, and the historically changing products of jurisprudence (Masud 1977).[60] In Indonesia, generations of legal scholars and historians have argued that one must separate the Arab cultural content of Islamic law from the universal principles contained in the Qur’ân and hadîth (Bowen 2003b).

In Europe, scholars who take this approach often criticize the approach taken by the Council of Qardâwî as too unimaginative, overly trapped in an old style of fiqh. Tariq Ramadan, for example, considers the council as engaging in a juristic bricolage, an effort to lighten fiqh without rethinking it in European terms. Ramadan agrees with Meskine that

fiqh should be universal, but he would locate the universal dimension at the level of general principles.[61] Consider, for example, Ramadan’s approach to the question of marriages performed according to European law. Many Muslims in Europe consider marriages to be religiously valid only if performed in a private, “Muslim” context, after the legal marriage has been performed at city hall. For Ramadan, thinking in this way is to preserve the traditional forms of marriage without examining the nature of marriage itself, which is a contract. “A civil marriage already is a Muslim marriage, I think, because it is a contract, and that is what a Muslim marriage is.” More generally, the European law of contracts corresponds to the Islamic law of contracts, and Muslims are just as obliged to respect contracts with non-Muslims as with Muslims; “that is a universal element of fiqh, valid anywhere. If we take this step then we can accept much of European law” (interview, 2001).

A similar approach, but with a slightly different conceptual base, is taken by the director of the Bordeaux mosque, Tareq Oubrou. In an innovative interpretation of the basic structure of Islamic normativity, Oubrou distinguishes between obligatory ritual (ibâdât) on the one hand, and social norms (mu‘âmalât) on the other. The former does not change, but the latter may be realized either as law (droit) or as ethics, depending on the political context within which one lives. In a country with Islamic law and social institutions, social norms are realized as law. In countries such as France, where such realization is impossible, Muslims must “ethi- cize” these norms. He offered an example: “If a woman comes to me and says, ‘My husband beats me; do I have the right to ask for a divorce,’ I say yes, divorce; and when the judge pronounces the divorce they are divorced, ethically speaking, religiously speaking. So we ‘ethicize’ the Islamic law on divorce, same values, but we choose the idea from one or another of the legal schools that is more subtle, for example from the Mâliki, or another, which ever can best respond to the spirit of the sharî’a and also to the society into which Muslims integrate sociologically and anthropologically in French citizenship” (interview, 2002).

This search for general principles as a bridge across cultural and legal divides sometimes is developed as the study of the “reasons, objectives, goals” of the sacred texts, the maqâsid of the Qur’ân. Scholars such as Oubrou suggest the idea of a hierarchy or priority of obligations and norms,

and ask whether we may discard certain lower-order obligations in order to better accomplish higher-order ones. Oubrou has applied this approach to a range of questions. For example, he (2000) has argued that a Muslim may eat meat whether or not he or she knows that it was killed according to Islamic procedures, because the purpose of the dietary rules were those of health and hygiene. “Why does Islam refuse to eat meat that has not been cleansed of its blood? Precisely because the blood contains unhealthy germs” (2000, 43). If one is assured that a butcher is an honest person and follows health rules, then the meat is acceptable.

This second approach to norms is hotly contested by those urging continued reliance on the traditions of fiqh. For example, from their positions at the University of Damascus, Sheikh Ramadân al-Boutî and his son, Tawfik al-Boutî, condemn roundly the idea of an Islamic law based either on the special conditions confronting Muslim minorities in Europe or on the principles of the Qur’ân, which they call “this new Islamic ‘jurisprudence’ that has never been a part of Islamic law.”[62]

*** The Future of Islamic Normative Reasoning in France

The development of one or more distinctive French, or European, approaches to normativity is at its beginning. I believe that the particular form of political culture in each country will continue to shape Muslims’ responses to specific social problems. For example, in France the taken-for- granted importance of the central state in regulating social life has led Muslims to automatically turn to Paris to demand assistance in obtaining halâl food, ensuring safe travel to Mecca, creating religious schools, and so forth.

Despite the strong mutual suspicions professed by the many associations and public figures in France, most have supported, in principle, the efforts to create a national Islamic body. That the state would have the right and the obligation to “organize Muslims” is accepted by most Muslim public intellectuals. This acceptance will continue to shape the way scholars carry out normative innovation, by exerting pressure for nationwide, uniform decisions to be taken about issues affecting Muslims, and pressure for these decisions to conform to French social norms. Such pressures are less felt in,

say, Britain, and a greater range of normative positions are publicly promoted. (One cannot imagine a French Hizb ut- Tahrîr publicly urging all Muslims in France to refuse all participation in politics, as their British counterpart did at the 2002 assembly I attended.) Put another way, Muslims living in France experience more political and social pressure to “scale up” their institutions to a national level than do Muslims living in Britain (or, probably, Muslims living in any other European country).

The pressure for national uniformity makes it quite difficult to propose that Muslims in France should follow a particular Islamic legal school, or even that a subgroup should do so. It also lends support to those scholars who urge Muslims to draw on several legal schools or to employ an approach to normativity that is not confined to the traditional methods of jurisprudence. If there is a consensus among the new generation of teachers, it is on this point. Dhaou Meskine, who was trained in Tunisia where the Mâliki legal school is followed, described the situation: “In fiqh there are legal schools, and in the Muslim world each country follows one, but there is none for France, so you have to teach all of them, even though that is not a very good solution. You cannot just choose one. So, we leave it up to the teacher. He can either choose one school and then also teach some of the comparisons, or teach fiqh based on the hadith. Last year we had a Hanbalî teacher, this year we had a Mâliki one” (interview, 2002).

In his plans to create a new institute to train religious scholars, Tareq Oubrou proposes a similar approach: “We will teach them law as well as the other topics; law will include French law. It is eclectic, with sociology, theology, law, with the hope that the imam will have some classical knowledge, but that he will have a very specific orientation. We have no specific books or references; we work on the texts, practical work, looking at all the possible sources, Hanafî, Hanbalî, etc., and also knowing French law.”

But how does a jurist or other scholar then choose among the several legal schools? Oubrou’s answer to this question reveals the particular effects of the pluralism in social institutions on normative reasoning. This pluralism introduces new constraints, in this case those of French social norms and law, and possibilities, into jurisprudence. Oubrou reasons by beginning with

the norms of French culture and requirements of French law, and then looks for the Islamic legal alternative that offers the best fit with these parameters. In many cases it is the Hanafî or Mâliki school that meets this conditions, and the Hanbalî legal school that is the strictest (the Saudi Arabian jurists follow that school), but Oubrou pointed out that sometimes this is not the case: “Sometimes there are zones in Hanbalî law that are more supple than in Hanafî or Mâliki law, for example on polygamy. Mâliki law says the husband has to receive the permission of the first wife [to take a second], but the Hanbalî position is by way of the needs of society (maslahat), that if the culture is monogamous, then so is the sharî’a on this point. I always say, if the first wife accepts the second, then why should I interfere? We accept homosexuality, polyandry, why not a man and a woman? It is scandalous.”

Oubrou’s argument on this point exemplifies what we might call the bidirectional reasoning pursued by many of these scholars. He and others seek to develop an Islamic normative base for a way of life that would be in accord with French social norms and French law. Thus, if the broad society is monogamous, then Islamic norms also point toward monogamy as the appropriate marital form. But he also insists that Islamic norms might on some counts improve on French ones. If French men can have mistresses as well as wives, as do many prominent public figures, then would it not be better to legalize these relationships by permitting polygamy?

Within what might become a consensus there are, however, some important tensions. One lies between those scholars who identify with North African legal traditions and those who advocate looking directly at the Qur’ân and hadîth. This tension is not as sharp as that which, in some majority Muslim countries, has opposed advocates of taqlîd, following a specific madhhab, to advocates of a direct reinterpretation, an ijtihâd, based on Qur’ân and hadîth. In contemporary France, none of the public scholars and teachers can advocate taqlîd, for the reasons pointed out by Me- skine. Nor is it possible to reject legal schools per se, because those schools have become part of the background heritage of many immigrants, because the foreign states that provide financial assistance would not look kindly upon such rejection, and because those French scholars who did have training in jurisprudence generally were trained within a madhhab.[63] The difference among scholars

is more one of relative emphasis, as I will try to convey with some excerpts from interviews.

Dhaou Meskine, for example, prefers to remain within a madhhab, and complains that those teachers who teach only from Qur'ân and hadîth, and those who teach the stricter Hanbalî madhhab, are less likely to be criticized by younger Muslims than are those who teach from within the more "flexible" Hanafî or Mâliki schools (the fourth, the Shâfi'î, is not taught by North African Muslims): "The problem is that if you teach Hanbalî or salafite [meaning strict, approximately Hanbalî] approaches to fiqh, it is all right, but if you teach Mâliki or Hanafî, people object. There is a wind from the Orient bringing texts and television programs from Saudi Arabia, all of which promote Hanbalî or worse, all of which is quite different from Maghrebin fiqh. The Medina and Meccan scholars are dominant, even in the style of reading the Qur'ân. The worst approach is in the book of fiqh by aljazari, who was born in Algeria but then moved to Saudi Arabia. [JB: Is he a Hanbalî?] He is worse than Han- balî, because he has to show that he is even more strict than the Arabian scholars, as he is from elsewhere."

His former co-teacher of fiqh classes (until the early 1990s) and fellow Tunisian, Hichem El Arafa, criticized Meskine's preference for Mâliki texts, and preferred the fiqh book by aljazai'ri, as "not good but better than Meskine's preferred text." El Arafa's method of teaching fiqh (as I have followed it in his courses in Saint Denis) is to base instruction directly on Qur'ân and hadîth, as do al-Qardâwî and aljazari. He studied in Saudi Arabia, and although he describes ways of thought there as very rigid, this experience may have made teachings "from the Orient" more palatable to him than to Meskine.

And yet others find that these disagreements ignore the larger context of Islamic thought. "We cannot just work with fatwâ," argues Tareq Oubrou, "because we have to think not just normatively but in terms of theology, tolerance, the person, the society, liberty and determinism, and ethics. We are required in emergencies to respond to questions about what is harâm and halâl, but we have to carry out a long term effort to rethink what

Islam should be in a very secularized society, as France, which is not like in the US. The normative has to respond to what I call the maqâsid, the broad vision of Islam, design, objectives; this goes beyond the normative. Ethics are central to Islam. We did not have to undergo what Christianity did to overthrow the power of the Church; it was already people who developed Islam; it is Protestant" (interview 2002). Although in print (Babes and Oubrou 2002) he has been more cautious, insisting on the continued importance of Islamic norms for all Muslims against a more secularized, one could say Kantian, view, Oubrou's position could lead to a more rationalized and internalized version of Islam than most European Muslim scholars would publicly favor.

In this review of some of the more prominent scholars and teachers active in France today, I have emphasized the positions taken with respect to two distinct, but related, questions. The first question concerns whether different norms should apply either ethically or in some sense legally in different countries. This question is an old one, but it has renewed immediacy as Muslims set out to rethink the proper form of social life in countries of new immigration. It admits of a wide array of responses. Some of these responses, such as those given by Dhaou Meskine, Hichem El-Arafa, and Yûsuf al-Qardâwî on the issue of mortgages, fit into longstanding ways of thinking about Islamic normativity in terms of jurisprudence. One may argue that norms ought to differ in Europe, or that they ought to be the same as in, say, Qatar, but in either case the argument is based on principles of jurisprudential reasoning.

And it is here that the second question arises: Should normative reasoning be carried out in that manner or should it be based entirely on the general values or objectives of the Qur'ân? Tariq Ramadan argues that general principles contained in scripture or in the traditions of fiqh often find their equivalents in European social norms or law, and that this equivalence should be the starting point for rethinking normativity. Tareq Oubrou emphasizes the ethical dimension of norms, but his conclusions resemble Ramadan's. Other scholars, especially those based outside Europe, find this way of thinking to be too radical a departure from the traditions of Islamic jurisprudence; the Syrian scholars Ramadan and Tawfik al-Boutî, for example, explicitly take the emphasis on "objectives" to task.

I find that it is the answers to this second question that most fundamentally divide Muslim scholars in Europe—and not only in Europe. Those scholars who emphasize their roots in the traditions of jurisprudential reasoning argue that Muslims, and not only Muslims, have a lot to learn from the traditions of Islamic normative thought. Those scholars who emphasize the points of convergence between European and Islamic traditions argue that Muslims need to creatively and continually adapt their religion to their conditions of social life. These positions inevitably orient their advocates differently: in the first case, toward the classical sources of authoritative Islamic jurisprudence; in the second case, toward other public intellectuals, Muslim and non-Muslim, in Europe and North America. In France, at least, it is this choice of starting point—fiqh or France—that provokes the loudest cries of approval or suspicion from Muslims and non-Muslims. For some Muslims, at least, the greatest challenge is to find a way of doing both at the same time, to rhetorically as well as substantively root reasoning in both the traditions of fiqh and those of Europe.

[47] On the development of the theory of jurisprudence in Islam, see Hallaq 1997, 2001; on the practice of rendering judgments in early modern Muslim societies, see Johansen 1999 and Powers 2002.]]

[48] Many recent works provide overviews of Muslims in Europe. Among the most interesting in English, see the following: Vertovec and Peach 1997, for a collection of studies on processes of adaptation; Nielsen 1999, for an analysis of issues facing Muslims in Europe, with a focus on Britain; Kasto-ryano 2002, for a comparative study of immigration to France and Germany; and (in French) Roy 1999, for a French view on what Muslims ought to do to become European.

[49] See Brubaker 1992 and Kastoryano 2002; this close association has impeded efforts to give nonnational residents the right to vote in local elections.

[50] In April 2003, a new body, the Conseil Français du Culte Musulman (CFCM), was organized and charged with coordinating policy regarding the training of imams, the certification of halal food, the provisions for Muslims in cemeteries, and other matters.

[51] For an extended contrast of Britain and France see Bowen 2003c.

[52] On Islam in France see Cesari 1998; Souilamas 2001; and Venel 1999 for interviews with younger Muslims, and Cesari 2002 for a brief English-language article. The somewhat older work by Kepel (1991) retains a great deal of interest for its fine attention to sociological detail.

[53] Haut Conseil 2001, 36–39 follows earlier scholars in estimating the number of Muslims at slightly over 4 million but insists that the number of people “of Muslim religion” would be closer to 1 million the rest being “of Muslim culture.” They base their estimate of religious Muslims on surveys concerning how often Muslims pray in mosques. Because the census is not allowed to gather data on “faith,” figures in France always have to do with immigration history and various religious practices as determined by surveys.

[54] Contrast the pioneering and thus socially salient role played by “black” West Indian immigrants to Britain (Modood et al. 1997).

[55] It is very difficult to generalize about these three populations, since in fact there have been distinct migrations, each involving different socioeconomic segments, from these countries. A group at INED (Institut National des Etudes Demographiques) is currently developing the relevant analyses. Also shaping these histories are the very different orientations of the three governments. Both Algeria and Morocco have strong, direct presences in France, through local “amicales,” through funding of mosque projects, and through direct negotiations with the French government. Algeria’s relationship is particularly direct because of its role in directing the Paris mosque.

[56] Tunisians play a preponderant role as teachers for reasons not yet well analyzed, but which probably have to do with the suppression by the Tunisian government of Islamic education, and the fact that far more Moroccans and Algerians came as unskilled workers to France.

[57] Examples of teachers developing this dual track are Tareq Oubrou in Bordeaux, Ahmed Jaballah and Hichem El Arafa in Saint Denis, and Dhaou Meskine in Aubervilliers, all mentioned below.

[58] A French-language collection of the council's fatwâs recently was published (Conseil 2002); the fatwa discussed here appears on the council's Web site in the list of resolutions taken at the 1999 session: [[http://www.fioe.org/ask_the_scholar/fourth%20statement.htm][http://www.fioe.org/ask_the_]] [[http://www.fioe.org/ask_the_scholar/fourth%20statement.htm][scholar/fourth%20statement.htm]].

[59] On the early modern Hanaf position, see Abou El Fadl 1994, 173–74.

[60] As a rough and ready indication of continued importance, the Web site islamonline.net has nine fatwas in its current fatwa bank that refer to Al-Shatibi as an authority.

[61] See Ramadan 1998 for his most extensive analysis of the heritage of Islam.

[62] Al-Bouti 2001; I have seen the two al-Boutîs, at different times, make this argument in conferences at a major Paris mosque; see Bowen 2004.

[63] It is thus not accidental that the teachers in France who place more emphasis on questioning the assumptions behind jurisprudence, such as

Tareq Oubrou and Tariq Ramadan, were not themselves trained as jurists, whereas teachers who emphasize working within legal schools to the extent possible, such as Dhaou Meskine and Ahmad Jaballah, did have such training.

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** Index

<biblio>

[[Abant meetings (Turkey), 91–92]]

Abant model (Turkey), 91–92, 108, 109

Abdel-Sattar, Fawziyya, 176

Abdulaziz (founder of Saudi Arabia), 194 Abdullah, Crown Prince (Saudi Arabia), 190–91, 192, 201, 202, 207

ABIM (Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia), 261, 265, 269

Abu Hamza al-Masri, Shaykh, 312, 313, 314

Abuza, Zachary, 292

Adelkhah, Fariba, 40

ADEWS (Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women) [Egypt], 180

Afghanistan: cultural, religious, and ethnic factors of, 214–18; geography and economy of, 214; impact and aftermath of Soviet invasion of, 221–26; modernists vs. Islamists in, 218–21; paradoxes and uniqueness of, 213–14; PDPA (People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan) of, 221, 222–23, 224–25, 227; rebuilding of, 236–37; U.S. bombing campaign following September 11th, 233, 235–36, 240. See also Taliban

Afghanistan invasion: aftermath of, 22126, jihad response to, 222–23, 229; refugee populations created by, 228–30; religious model of warfare used in, 21718; response to, defeat of Soviets

Agai, Bekim, 317

Ahmadi community (Pakistan), 66–67, 72

Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam, 66

Akdemir, Salih, 97, 100

AKP (Justice and Development Party) [Turkey]: development and success of, 95, 110; founding of, 3; Muslimhood model used by, 109; Reformists' influence on, 101–2; voter support of, 2–3, 88; warnings regarding veiling of members made to, 102–3

"Alevi Manifesto" (1989), 93

Alevi sect (Turkey), 91, 92, 93–95

Algeria: democratization process in, 50;

Islamist movement in, 328

All-India Muslim League, 64

Amanullah, King (Afghanistan), 219–20

Anderson, Benedict, 46, 50

Ankara University's School of Theology

[Turkey], 96, 97

Arab Human Development Report 2003, 27

Arab-Israeli war of 1948–49, 134

El Arafa, Hichem, 335–36, 341, 342

Arinç, Bülent, 102

al-Ashmawi, Sheikh Hassan, 142–43

Ataturk, Mustafa Kemal, 18–19, 87

al-Attas, Syed Muhammad Naquib, 261, 262–64, 265

al-Awdah, Sheikh Salman, 196, 204–5

Awwas, Irfan S., 293

Aydin, Mehmet, 87, 91, 93, 96–97, 99

100, 101, 104, 105

Ayodhya temple-mosque dispute (India, 1992), 46

Aytug, Yüksel, 90

al-Azhar, Shaykh, 177, 178

Ba’asyir, Abu Bakar, 291–92, 294

Bakri Muhammad, Shaykh Omar, 308, 311, 312, 313, 314, 321

Bakri, Mustafa, 134

Baktiari, Bahman, 3, 112

Bali bombings (2002), 275, 287, 293–94, 305

al-Banna, Atif, 145

al-Banna, Gamal, 144

al-Banna, Hassan, 91, 318, 332

Barfield, Thomas, 213

Bashir, Abu Bakar, 241–42

Bateson, Gregory, 247

Baykal, Deniz, 101

al-Baz, Osama, 154–56

Baz, Shaykh Ibn, 48

Beki, Akif, 87, 90

Ben Ali, Zine el-Abidine, 42

Bennis, Mohammed, 43

Bhutto, Benazir, 70, 75

Bhutto, Zulfiqar ‘Ali, 72

Bilgrami, Akeel, 78, 79–80, 81

Binsa‘id, Sa‘id, 44

“blasphemy law” (Pakistan), 72–73

Böhürler, Ayse, 107

Bourdieu, Pierre, 16

al-Boutî, Sheikh Ramadân, 338

al-Boutî, Tawfik, 338

Bowen, John R., 6, 13, 326 ‘braa‘divorce, 173

Brahimi, Mohamed, 53

British Muslim community:

commonalities among radical movements of, 314–15; contrasting conditions for French and, 327–29;

Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) and, 307–10, 311–12, 313; khilafist label for, 307, 309–10, 311, 312, 314; al-Muhajiroun and, 310–12; religion as present in public life of, 329; social movements within, 306–7; SOS (Supporters of Shari‘ah), 312–14

Bulaç, Ali, 98–99

Bush, George W., 87, 157

CEDAW (U.N. Convention on Eliminating Discrimination Against Women), 174

Chinese Uygar community (Turkey), 304 civic pluralism: definition of, 28n.1; positions of Deobandi ulama on, 65–70; positions regarding compatibility of Islam with democracy and, 2–4; possibilities for Saudi Arabian, 199–201; PSL (Personal Status Law) [Egypt] reform and, 179–82; al-Wasat program (Egypt) on, 144–45

civic pluralist Islam: conditions of modern possibility of, 13–17; crossroads and moving toward, 22–25; intellectual roots of, 29n.7; positions of Deobandi ulama on, 65–70; Qur‘an as supportive of, 60, 78; remaking Muslim politics into, 1113; resurgence/democratization movements leading to, 18–22; role of Pakistani madrasas in creating “good,” 7682; Saudi Arabian opponents/structural obstacles to, 201–3; Saudi Arabian supports of, 204–8; separation of state and religious authority theme of, 23–24; shar‘ah as contributing to, 62. See also Islam

civil society: Indonesian divisions within, 295; moral and political authority sustaining, 56; prospects/social contract for Saudi Arabian, 203–4, 208–10;

role of Pakistani madrasas in creating “good,” 76–82; Skocpol’s synergistic approach to, 10, 29n.6

The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (Huntington), 15

Cold War: Afghanistan invasion during, 223–26; political freedom experiments discouraged during, 56

Coleman, James, 16

Concepts and Orders of Our Times (Bulaç), 98

Council of Qardâwî, 337

dakway movement (Malaysia), 245–47 Dar al-‘Ulum Haqqaniyya (Pakistan), 74 dar ash-shahada (core ethical values),

320

da‘wa (call, religious propagation), 304 DDII (Indonesian Council for Islamic

Predication), 287, 296

democracy: civil pluralist, 28n.1;

Fukuyama formula on markets-and- elections model, 14–15; Judeo-Christian values of, 15; positions regarding compatibility of Islam with civic pluralism and, 2–4; potential reformation of Muslim politics into, 9–11; voluntary “horizontal” networks required for, 16

Democracy in America (Tocqueville), 16 “democracy in the vernacular”: contrast

between Egyptian/Turkish, 10–11;

described, 7

democratic pluralism. See civic pluralism democratization: comparing path of

Pakistan and India toward, 62–63; “democracy in the vernacular” study of, 7; process of Algeria and Morocco’s approach to, 50–53; “third wave” of, 15

Deobandis ulama (India and Pakistan): minority pluralistic society position of some, 65; positions on civic plurality by, 64–70; training of, 63

DI (Darul Islam) movement [Indonesia], 291

din wa dawla concept, 144

din wa ‘ummah (religion and community), 144

divorce: ‘braa‘, 173; coalition supporting Egyptian PSL “no-fault,” 161–65; Egyptian context of, 165–66; khul‘, 161–62,

168, 173, 178, 179, 181; Shah Bano Controversy (mid-1980s) regarding, 80; Sisters of Islam concerns regarding, 252. See also marriage; PSL (Personal Status Law) [Egypt]

East Timor violence (1999), 285

Ecevit, Bulent, 317

“educational Islamism” movement

(Turkey), 92–93, 316–18

education. See mass higher education Egypt: April 1987 elections of, 136–37;

context of divorce in, 165–66; contrast between democratizing participation of Turkey and, 10–11; Hizb al-Wasat’s reform attempts in, 133–58; inqilab (coup) of 1952, 134–35; Islamic inroads in professional syndicates (niqabat) of, 138–40; Law 40/1977 regarding new political parties, 142; NGO (nongovernmental organization) establishment in, 145. See also Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt); PSL (Personal Status Law) [Egypt]

Eickelman, Dale F., 8, 9, 12, 37

Erbakan, Necmettin, 91, 95

Erdogan, Recep Tayyip, 95, 102, 104 Esack, Farid, 315

European Council for Fatwa and Research, 333

European Muslim approach, 318–20 European Muslims. See British Muslim community; French Muslims

Evans, Peter, 10, 70

Fadel, Mohammad, 61

Fahd, King (Saudi Arabia), 194, 197, 201

Falwell, Jerry, 323

Farish Noor, 258–59

Farouk, King (Egypt), 45

Fathali, Mahmaud, 122

Fatih Book Fair (Turkey), 89

fatwas (religious opinions): issued during Gulf War in Saudi Arabia, 196, 199; multiple sources of, 8; on taking out loans to purchase homes, 333–35

“faxed criticisms,” 39

Faysal, Toujan, 48

Fethullahcilar sect (Turkey), 92–93

Fikhi, Mustafa, 134

fiqh reasoning: future of Islamic reasoning in France and, 339–42; reworking to fit French Muslims, 333–36

FKAWJ (Sunna Communication Forum) [Indonesia], 287

FPI (Islamic Defenders Front) [Indonesia], 274, 284–86

French Muslim reasoning: future of Islamic reasoning in context of, 339–42; from Islamic principles, 337–38; reworking fiqh reasoning to fit, 333–36

French Muslims: contrasting conditions for British and, 327–29; economic, cultural, political conflict faced by, 327–28;

fatwas on taking out loans to purchase homes by, 333–35; leadership of Tunisians and Moroccans among, 331; mosques attended by, 331–32; political culture of la’1’cite and, 328–29; private Islamic schools attended by, 331; sociology of Islam in France and, 329–33

Fukuyama, Francis, 14, 15

Gamila (wife of Thaabit ibn Qais), 168

Gandhi, Rajiv, 80

El-Gebali, Tehani, 180–81

Gender Equality Committee (ICPD), 174 Ghannouchi, Rachid, 23 “God’s rights,” 60–61

Golkar (Indonesia), 278, 294

Gonzalez-Quijano, Yves, 43

GPK (Movement of Ka‘abah Youth) [Indonesia], 289

Graham, Franklin, 323

Great Mosque takeover (Saudi Arabia, 1979), 193, 194

Group of Seven (Egypt), 170

Gül, Abdullah, 93

Gülen, Fethullah, 91, 316–18

Gulf War, 196–97, 198, 199, 204–5, 210

Habib, Rafiq, 149–51

Habibullah, King (Afghanistan), 220 hadith (sayings of Muhammad), 97, 167, 168, 326

hajj pilgrimage (Saudi Arabia), 192

Halboush, Yehya, 179

Halperin, Manfred, 41

Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin), 293 Hambastegi (Iranian newspaper), 124 Hanafî legal school, 340–41 al-Haqq, Muhammad Zia, 71

Hardy, Peter, 66

Hassan II (Algeria), 50, 52

Hebron/al-Khalil killings (1994), 46 Hefner, Robert W., 1, 71, 273, 314 Hewad (Afghan newspaper), 233 Hizb al-Wasat (Egypt): “civic compact” embraces by, 140; historical background of, 134–38; implications and significance of, 156–58; interview vignettes regarding, 145–56; NGO (nongovernmental organization) establishment and, 145; origins and attempts to legalize, 140–45; remarkable reform attempts of, 133–34; reorganized as Hizb al-Wasat al-Masri, 143; two versions of reform program published by, 143–45

HT (Hizb ut-Tahrir): compared to SOS, 313; comparison with al-Muhajiroun, 311–12; overview of, 307–10

Hudeibi, Muhammad Ma‘amoun, 151–54 hudud laws. See Malaysian hudud laws Huntington, Samuel P., 15, 41, 243 Husam Musa, 257, 258

Hussein, Saddam, 38, 49

Ibn Khaldun, ‘Abd al-Rahman b. Muhammad, 227

Ibrahim, Anwar, 249

Ibrahim, Saad Eddin, 178

ICPD (U.N. Conference on Population and Development), 174, 175

IIPP (Islamic Iran Participation Party) [Iran], 118

Ikhwan al-Muslimun (the Muslim Brethren). See Muslim Brotherhood

Ikhwan rebellion (1929) [Saudi Arabia], 193

India: comparing democratization of Pakistan and, 62–63; Deobandis ulama of Pakistan and, 63, 64–70

Indonesia: Bali bombings (2002) by JI individuals, 275, 287, 293–94, 305; civil society divisions experienced in, 295; dealing with elite factionalism/communal tensions in, 276–78; democratization coalition of, 273; evidence of support for democratic pluralism in, 278–81; lessons learned about transition from authoritarianism from, 295–98; Maluku conflict in, 282, 283, 288, 289–90; Musliim politics in, 4; New Order government of, 276–77, 280; preman (organized gangsters) of, 281; “renewal” (pembaruan) movement of, 23; rise of paramilitaries in post-Soeharto, 284–94; sectarian violence (1999–2002) in, 274, 275–76; sources of civil unrest in, 281–83; state persecution of Chinese Indonesians, 278;

tensions between Christian-Muslim in, 281–82; ties between al-Qa‘ida and extremist groups in, 4, 274, 275–76, 292

Indonesian paramilitaries: FPI (Islamic Defenders Front), 274, 284–86; jihad (holy war) conducted by, 284–94, 29698; Laskar Jihad, 284, 287–90; Laskar Mujahidin, 284, 290–94; plans for increased violence following September 11th by, 293–94; rise of, 284

Inglehart, Ronald, 2

Institute on Religion, Culture, and World Affairs (Boston University), 4–5

Institut Europeen des Sciences Humaines (UOIF), 335

International Crisis Group’s report (2002), 289

Iran: conceptualizing state-society relations in, 113–14; future of political reform in, 129–30; IIPP (Islamic Iran Participation Party) of, 118; Jonbesh-e Dovom-e Khordad reformist movement in, 112, 113; Khatami’s presidency/critical thinking on, 112, 113, 116–19, 120, 123, 124–25, 126–27, 128–29, 130; political consciousness of under-thirty generation in, 125–29; political metamorphosis of, 3–4; “post-Islamism” era since 1997 elections in, 40; relationship between religion and political authority in, 11525; religious intellectuals (Roshanfekraneh Dini) of, 115; requests to publish by publications in, 123–24; sovereignty in the Islamic Republic of, 114–15; Supreme Leader cleric in, 114; velayat-e faquih (rule by the religiously learned) institution in, 3, 114

Iran-e Farda (Iranian weekly), 124

Iranian Press Supervision Council, 124 Islam: contextualizing in Saudi Arabia, 193–94; Hanafî and Mâliki legal schools of, 340–41; impact of Gulf War on

Saudi Arabian, 196–97; Khatami’s vision of, 116–17; mass education’s treatment of, 45–46; multiple schools of religious law recognized in, 7–8; Muslim transnationalism of, 92–93, 302–23; new Muslim intellectuals’ pluralistic interpretation of, 120–22; Pakistan state policies regarding state and, 70–73; Pew Forum surveys on American beliefs about, 1; positions regarding compatibility of democracy/civic pluralism with, 2–4; separation of state and religious authority theme of civil, 23–24; sociology of Islam in France, 329–33; submission norms/forms in, 326; Taliban view of shari‘a (“the path or way”) and, 23133; Turkish Muslimhood model and, 90–92, 102–5. See also civic pluralist Islam; religious authority

“Islamic” books, 44–45

Islamic Jihad (Egypt), 305

Islamic law. See shari‘a (“the path or way”)

Islamic Reformists (Yenilikçiler) [Turkey], 96–102

Islamic state: demands for unitary fusion religion and, 22–23; Iranian conceptualization of relations between society and, 113–14; Mahathir’s Malaysian version of, 265–67; “organize Muslims” obligation of, 339; recent experiments denying modern pluralism by, 27; Turkish Mus- limhood model separating religion from, 87–110

The Islamist Marriage Contract in Egypt (Zulficar), 161

Islamiyat (journal), 99, 100

Islam Left, 98, 99

Jaballah, Ahmed, 334–35

Jakarta bombing (Indonesia), 275 Jalalipour, Hamid Reza, 129 Jama‘at-i Islami (Pakistan), 69–70, 305, 307

Jam‘iyyat al-‘Ulama-i Islam (Pakistan), 69 al-Jazeera Satellite Television, 37, 47–49 Jemaah Islamiyah (Indonesia), 241, 242, 305

Jema‘ah Islamiyah (Indonesia), 275–76 jihad (holy war): Afghanistan response to

Soviet invasion, 222–23, 229; called against United States, 240; conducted by Indonesian paramilitaries, 284–94, 29698; contemporary discussions on, 67–69; Taliban use of, 231; Taqi ‘Uthmani’s

views on, 68–69; transnationalism

groups regarding, 314

Johansen, Baber, 60

Jonbesh-e Dovom-e Khordad (Iran), 112, 113

Judeo-Christian values, 15

Kadivar, Mohsen, 120, 121

Kamel, Fayda, 178

Kanal (Islamist TV station), 87

al-Kassim, Faisal, 47, 48

Kastor, Rustam, 293

Kazim, Safinaz, 48

Kemalist model of government (Turkey),

87–88, 89, 105–6

Kemal, Mustafa, 18–19, 87

Khan, Muhammad Zafrullah, 72

Khan, Wahid al-din, 65, 66

Kharrazi, Kamal, 127

Khatami, Mohammad, 112, 113, 116–19,

120, 123, 124–25, 126–27, 128–29, 130

Khatami, Mohammad-Reza, 128

khilafist (universal jurisdiction) movement,

307, 309–10, 311, 312, 314

Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah, 114, 115,

116, 118–19, 122

khul‘divorce, 161–62, 168, 173, 178, 179, 181

Kirbasoglu, M. Hayri, 97, 99

Ksikes, ‘Abd al-Hamid, 57

Laden, Osama bin, 213, 241, 287

laicism practice (Turkey), 102–5

laicite political culture (France), 328–29

Laskar Jihad (Indonesia), 284, 287–90

Layne, Linda, 55

Left Islam, 98, 99

“Legal Rights of Egyptian Women in Theory and Practice” (Egyptian pamphlet, 1988), 172

Lerner, Daniel, 41

Lerner, Gerda, 163

Lewis, Bernard, 2

Liddle, R. William, 279

LIPIA (Institute for Islamic and Arabic Studies), 287

Lipset, Artin, 41, 56

Madani, Husayn Ahmad, 64, 66

Madi, Abu al-‘Ala, 147–49

Madjid, Nurcholish, 23

madrasa of Deoband, 63

Mahathir, Prime Minister, 242, 244, 247, 248–49, 250, 251, 265–67, 268, 270

Makbruk, Layla, 44

Making Democracy Work: Civic Institutions in Modern Italy (Putnam), 15–16

Malaysia: aftermath of September 11 in, 242, 248–67; background and context of, 243–48; contrasting impressions of, 242–43; dakway movement of, 245–47; future political and religious developments of, 268–70; hudud laws of, 242, 254–65; Mahathir’s Islamic state of, 265–67; Muslim feminists and PUM controversy, 242–43, 251–54; NEP (New Economic Policy) [1971–90] of, 245, 246; three main traditions of law in, 244; U.S. concerns with terrorism from, 240–42

Malaysian hudud laws: cultural politics of legitimacy and debate over, 260–65; described, 242, 254–55; Farish essay on, 258–59; interviews with different individuals regarding, 256–58; moral reasoning and, 254–60

Malek, Reda, 48

Mâliki legal school, 340–41

Maluku conflict (Indonesia), 282, 283, 288, 289–90

Mandaville, Peter, 12, 13, 302

“Manifesto” by “High Ranking ‘Ulama from Al-Azhar” (Egypt), 178–79

markets-and-elections model, 14–15 marriage: Ramadan’s approach to Euro

pean law and Muslim, 337–38; Sisters of Islam concerns regarding, 252. See also divorce

marriage contracts: PSL (Personal Status Law) reform strategy using, 171–74; of Sakina (daughter of Hussein ibn ‘Ali Talib), 173; similarities between European and Islamic law of, 337–38

Mashur, Mustafa, 141–42

maslaha (public good), 319–20

mass higher education: development of nationalism and, 39; emergence of new media and, 39, 41–46; history of Middle East, 42–45; implications of new media and, 45–46; treatment of Islam by, 4546

Mawdudi, Mawlana Sayyid Abu‘l-A‘la, 22, 65, 91

media. See new media

Meeker, Michael, 98, 105, 106

Megawati Sukarnoputri, 279, 280 “memorandum of advice” petition (Saudi

Arabia, 1992), 197

Mesbah-Yazdi, Ayatollah Taqi, 122 Meskine, Dhaou, 339, 341, 342

Milliyet (Turkish newspaper), 90 Mitterand, François, 328

MMI (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia), 291, 292, 293

Modood, Tariq, 329

Moerdani, Benny, 277

Moertopo, Ali, 291

Mohamad, Mahathir, 240

Moors, Annelies, 166

Morocco: democratization process in, 5053; mass higher education in, 43; “scaling up” of elections in, 54–55; September 2002 elections in, 57; shifts in religious/political imagination in, 46

Moussaoui, Zacharias, 313

Mubarak, Husni, 136, 137, 179

Mubarak, Suzanne, 175, 180 al-Muhajiroun, 310–12

Muhammad: hadith sayings of, 97, 167, 168, 326; story about companion (Omar) of, 104; story of Gamila and, 168

Muhammadiyah (Indonesia), 294, 295–96, 298

mujahidin (holy warriors), 195

Mujani, Saiful, 279

Musharraf, Pervez, 69, 73, 74, 75, 80

Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt): building base in professional syndicates, 138–39; differentiating khilafist groups from, 307; early history of, 134–36; founded by Hassan al-Banna, 318, 332; Muslim transnationalism networks affiliated with, 305; opposition to Hizb al-Wasat by, 133, 141–43. See also Egypt

Muslim intellectuals. See new Muslim intellectuals

Muslim politics: conditions of modern possibility for, 13–22; crossroads of, 2225; “democracy in the vernacular” focus of, 7, 10–11; as diffusely cultural, 6; efforts of rival groupings to “scale up” influence, 9–11; lack of monolithic, 11; long-term outcome of struggles of, 2528; new Muslim intellectuals influence on, 8–9, 119–25; organizational features of efforts to combine public culture and, 4–11; potential democratic reformation of, 9–11; religious writers’ on ethical model for, 22–23; remaking of, 11–13

Muslim societies: disagreements over religious authority in, 6, 7–8; maslaha (public good) achievement by individuals and, 319–20; new media and emergence of open, 37–57; religious writers’ on ethical model for, 22–23; resurgence of piety and public religious activities in, 17–22; “War on Terrorism” by U.S. and response by, 323

Muslim transnationalism: British Muslim community involvement in, 306–15; complex realities of, 302–4; contemporary, 304–6; diasporas of radical Islam and, 306–15; Fethullah Gülen’s educational Islamism movement (Turkey), 9293, 316–18; ideal as neither Salafi nor Sufi, 320–23; image following September 11th, 302; moving toward Islamic cosmopolitanism/moderate discourses of, 315–20; regarding jihad (holy war), 314; Tariq Ramadan’s European Muslim approach to, 318–20; ties between Al-Qa‘ida and groups of, 305, 309, 313–14

Muslim transnationalism groups: HT (Hizb ut-Tahrir), 307–10, 311–12, 313; al-Muhajiroun, 310–12; SOS (Supporters of Shari‘ah), 312–14

Muslim women: Afghan tribal customs regarding, 218; disqualified from running in Iranian elections, 122–23; increasing number of Egyptian lawyers among, 180–81; much needed legal reform involving, 80; Muslimhood model (Turkey) and veiling of, 102–4, 107; passage of Egyptian PSL granting “no-fault” divorce by, 161–65; Saudi Arabian, 194–95, 202, 206; Shah Bano Controversy (mid-1980s) regarding divorced, 80; Sisters in Islam (Malaysia) reform efforts for, 242–43, 251–54, 304; al-Wasat program (Egypt) on role of, 144–45; Women Living under Muslim Law efforts for, 304. See also PSL (Personal Status Law) [Egypt]

Muslim World League, 304

mutawwa (Saudi Arabian public virtue police), 194, 195, 201

Muzaffar, Chandra, 315

Nadwi, Sayyid AbulHasan ‘Ali, 64–65 Naguib, Fathi, 172, 174, 181

Naguib, Muhammad, 135

Nahdlatul Ulama (Indonesia), 279–80, 294, 295, 298

Nasr, Ali, 178

Nasser, Gamal Abdel, 135, 136 Navaro-Yashin, Yael, 89

NEP (New Economic Policy) [Malaysia, 1971–90], 245, 246

new media: Ayodhya temple-mosque dispute (India, 1992) coverage by, 46; emergence of new books/markets as part of, 43–44; impact on public discussion by, 40–41; implications of mass education and, 45–46; increasing popularity of “Islamic” books, 44–45; mass education and emergence of, 39, 41–46;

power to challenge/fragment religious and political authority, 39; requests to publish by Iranian publications, 123–24; support for Saudi Arabian civic Islam by, 207–8; “war in Iraq” coverage by, 3738, 46

new Muslim intellectuals: counter sloganeering argument against, 121–22; described, 8–9; influence on Iranian political reform by, 119–25; “organize Muslims” obligation by state accepted by, 339; pluralistic interpretation of Islam by, 120–22; sociology of Islam in France and, 332–33; support for Saudi Arabian civic Islam by, 207–8

New York Times, 81, 240

NGOs (nongovernmental organizations): Egyptian laws governing establishment of, 145; Egyptian PSL coalition including, 164, 179–80; relationships between Sisters in Islam and, 252

Norris, Pippa, 2

Norton, Augustus Richard, 11, 133

Nouri, Ali Reza, 129

Nowruz (Iranian newspaper), 127–28

NSP (National Salvation Party) [Turkey], 106

Nurcu movement, 92

Nursi, Said, 92, 216, 318

Objectives Resolution (Pakistan, 1949), 71

O’Connor, Karen, 170

O’Donnell, Guillermo, 273, 276

Office to Foster Unity (Iran), 125

Okruhlik, Gwenn, 12, 189

Omar, Mullah (later Amir), 226, 232, 235

Omar story, 104

open societies: discovering the experience of, 39–41; impact of media, authority, and elections on Moroccan, 50–54; increasing awareness of benefits of more, 38; new media, mass higher education and emergence of, 41–46; satellite television content and, 47–50; “scaling up” for more, 54–57

“the Opposite Direction” (Al-Jazeera weekly program), 47–48

Ottoman Empire, 106, 167, 219

Oubrou, Tareq, 338, 339–40, 341

Özel, Ismet, 98, 99

Özsoy, Ömer, 97, 100, 101, 102, 104, 105, 108

Öztürk, Yasar Nuri, 98, 101

Pakistan: Ahmadi community of, 66–67, 72; antidemocratic and antipluralist trends scaled up by, 71–73; backing of new Taliban movement by, 227, 231; “blasphemy law” of, 72–73; comparing democratization of India and, 62–63; conflicts between Shia and the Sunnis in, 67, 69–70, 72; Deobandis ulama of India and, 63, 64–70; “Islamization” campaign (1977–88) in government of, 71–72; Jama‘at-i Islami of, 69–70, 305, 307; Objectives Resolution (1949) adopted by, 71; Punjab riots of 1953 in, 72; role in Afghanistan resistance to Soviets by, 223, 224; Shi‘i and Sunni organizations of, 69–70, 72

Pakistani madrasas: government efforts to reform, 74–76; limited government regulation of, 74; role in creating “good” civil society, 76–82; Taliban educated in, 73–74; terrorist ties with, 73–75, 76

Pashtuns (Afghanistan), 215, 217–18, 226–22

PAS (Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party), 24647, 252, 253, 254, 255, 265, 267, 268

PDPA (People’s Democratic Party of

Afghanistan), 221, 222–23, 224–25, 227

Peletz, Michael G., 240

Pew Charitable Trusts, 4, 5

Pew Forum surveys, 1

Piscatori, James, 8, 9

PJD (Justice and Democracy) [Islamist group], 53, 54

pluralism. See civic pluralism political authority: Arab notions of, 41;

debating relationship of Iranian religious and, 115–25; mass education and perceptions of legitimate, 42; power of new media to challenge/fragment, 39; public discussion on appropriate, 40; recognizing cultural notions of, 56–57; satellite television exposure of religious and, 49; sources of moral and, 53–54

The Political Conspiracy of the South Maluku Republic and Christians to Destroy the Muslim Community in Ambon Maluku (Kastor), 293 politics of silence, 42 preman (organized gangsters) [Indonesia], 281

professional syndicates (niqabat) [Egypt], 138–40

“Professor al-Banna: Fifty Years after His Martyrdom What Remains of His Call?” (seminar), 145

PSL (Personal Status Law) [Egypt]: bill presented to/debated by parliament, 176–79; civic Islam movement and role in reform of, 179–82; coalition supporting passage of, 161–65; codified (1929) and reforms (1979 and 1985) of original, 166; formation of coalition for reform of 2000 of, 167–69; legal activism used for passage of, 169–71; marriage contract project strategy for reform of, 171–74; use of religion to pass, 167–69; role of NGOs in reform of, 164, 179–80; strategies regarding legislative/executive branches, 174–76. See also divorce; Egypt; Muslim women public discussion: on appropriate governance and role of religion, 40; impact of mass higher education/new media on, 41–46; new media and increasing, 4041; promoted through satellite television, 47–50

PUM controversy (Malaysia), 253–54 Punjab riots of 1953 (Pakistan), 72 Putnam, Robert, 15, 16, 322

al-Qa‘ida: Afghanistan site for training camps of, 213; association between Taliban and, 24, 233, 235–36; Indonesian extremist groups with ties to, 4, 274, 275–76, 292; lack of analysis as social phenomenon, 306; postSeptember 11 fears of Islam focused on, 328; targets of violence by, 24–25; ties between transnationalism groups and, 305, 309, 313–14

al-Qaradawi, Shaikh Yusif, 142 al-Qaradawi, Shaykh Yusuf, 322

al-Qaradawi, Yusuf, 65, 69

al-Qardâwî, Sheikh Yûsuf, 333, 336, 342

Qur‘an: Egyptian PSL coalition use of, 167–68; future of French Islamic normative reasoning of the, 339–42; Reformers’ focus on the, 97; Shah Bano

Controversy (mid-1980s) and interpretation of, 80; as supportive of civic pluralist Islam, 60, 78

Qutb, Sayyid, 22, 45, 91, 135

Rahman, Amir Abdur, 217

Rahman, Fazlur, 99

Ramadan, Tariq, 318–20, 321, 332–33, 337, 342

Raouf, Abdul Monein Abdul, 135

Rateb, Aisha, 177–78

Redwan, Zainab, 168

Reformists (Yenilikçiler) [Turkey], 96–102 religious authority: civil Islam’s theme of separation of state and, 23–24; debating relationship of Iranian political and, 115–25; disagreements over who is qualified as Muslim, 6, 7–8; Muslim disagreements over, 6, 7–8; power of new media to challenge/fragment, 39; satellite television exposure of political and, 49; supporting Marriage Contract initiative (Egypt), 174. See also Islam

religious intellectuals (Roshanfekraneh Dini) [Iran], 115

“renewal” (pembaruan) movement [Indonesia], 23

“rights of God,” 60–61

Robertson, Pat, 323

Roy, Olivier, 305

RPP (Republican Peoples’ Party) [Turkey], 98, 101

Rumsfeld, Donald H., 81

Sabah (Turkish newspaper), 90

Sabra/Shatila refugee camps massacres (Beirut, 1982), 46

Sadat, Anwar, 135–36

Sakina (daughter of Hussein ibn ‘Ali Talib), 173

Salafi: ideal transnationalism as neither Sufi or, 320–23; moderate discourses of transnationalism compared to, 315–16; transnationalism groups articulation of, 310–11, 312

satellite television: open societies and content of, 47–50; public discussion promoted by, 47–50

al-Saud family (Saudi Arabia), 193–94, 208, 210

Saudi Arabia: contextualizing Islam in, 193–94; convergence of dissent in, 200201; empowerment of the religious right in, 194–96; ethnic distinctions among population of, 192; “faxed criticisms” of, 39; Great Mosque takeover (1979) in, 193, 194; Gulf War impact on Islam in, 196–97; increasing activities by radical Islamists (1990s) in, 197–99; myth of homogeneity in, 191–93; national conversation about identity and citizenship in, 210–11; new class distinctions in, 192–93; officially based on shari‘a (“the path or way”), 18; opponents/ structural obstacles to civil Islam in, 201–3; possibilities for pluralism in, 199–201; promoting reform without backlash, 190–91; public carriers/ sociopolitical supports of civil Islam in, 204–8; September 11 and hopes for domestic reforms in, 190; social and economic distress (1990s) in, 200; Sunni Muslim majority in, 191; time of serious ferment in, 189; trend toward multiple clergies in, 199–200; Wahhabi resurgence in, 198, 212n.3, 305, 306

Saudi Arabian civic Islam: business opportunities and, 206–7; clergy reformists supporting, 204–5; educators supporting, 205–6; intellectuals and media support for, 207–8; negotiating a social contract for, 208–10; prospects for a civil society and, 203–4; public carriers/ sociopolitical supports of civil society and, 204–8; social opponents and structural obstacles to, 201–3; women’s rights movement and, 206

Saud, Muhammad ibn, 193

“scaling up/down,” 54–57

Schmitter, Philippe, 273, 276

September 11, 2001: Aydin’s explanation on causes of, 97; challenge face by civil Islamic efforts since, 24–25; fears of Islam focused on al-Qaeda following, 328; hopes for Saudi Arabian domestic reforms following, 190; image of transnational Islam following, 302; impact and aftermath in Malaysia, 242, 248–67; Indonesian paramilitaries’ plans for increased violence following, 293–94; mainstream narrative following, 189; public reactions to, 1–2; Taliban driven from power by U.S. following, 233, 235–36;

terrorist acts associated with Pakistani madrasas following, 7375, 76; well-educated militants who carried out, 26. See also United States

Seufert, Günter, 88–89

Sezer, Ahmet, 102

Shabestari, Ayatollah Mohammad Mojta- hed, 120–21

Shah Bano Controversy (India, mid- 1980s), 80

Shah, Husn, 167

Shahrudi, Ayatollah Hashemi, 123, 124, 126

Shamsolvaezin, Mashallah, 124

shari‘a (“the path or way”): Afghan tribal customs violating, 218; described, 6; different schools of, 8; Hanafî and Mâliki legal schools of, 340–41; lack of consensus regarding, 97; mass education and perception of, 46; new Afghanistan government and, 236–37; possibility of contributing to civic Islam, 62; premodern history of, 60–61; revision of Moroccan version of, 52; Saudi Arabia state officially based on, 18; Shah Bano Controversy (mid-1980s) and interpretation of, 80; Taliban view of Islam and, 23133; al-Wasat reform program regarding, 143–44

Shari‘ati, Ali, 120

Al-Sharq al-Awsat (London newspaper), 37, 38

Shi‘a Reform Movement (Saudi Arabia), 197

Shi‘i Hazaras (Afghanistan), 216

Shi‘i Muslims: challenges regarding new Muslim intellectuals faced by, 119; Pakistan organizations of, 69–70, 72

silence (politics of), 42

Singerman, Diane, 12, 161

Sipah-i Sahaba (Pakistan), 69, 72

Sisters in Islam (Malaysia), 242–43, 251–54, 304

Skocpol, Theda, 10, 29n.9

social capital: definition of, 29n.9; identities and reciprocity generated by, 17

social contract triad (Saudi Arabia), 208–10

Social Justice in Islam (Qutb), 45

Soeharto, President (Indonesia), 273, 274, 276, 277, 278, 292

Soroush, Abdolkarim, 23–24, 28 Soroush, Abdol Karim, 119–20 SOS (Supporters of Shari‘ah), 312–14 Soviet Union: Afghanistan response to invasion by, 221–26; Afghanistan use of religious model of warfare against, 217–18; jihad response to invasion by, 222–23, 229

state. See Islamic state

Suleiman Abdullah, 250, 257, 258 Sungkar, Abdullah, 291–92

Sunnis Muslims: calls for reform by Saudi Arabian, 196–97; challenges regarding new Muslim intellectuals faced by, 119; conflicts in Pakistan between Shia and, 67; madrasa of Deoband association with, 63; as majority of Saudi population, 191

Supreme Leader cleric (Iran), 114

Surour, Fathi, 178

Tablighi Jama‘at movement, 304 Taheri, Ayatollah Jalaleddin, 128 Tajiks (Afghanistan), 216

Taliban: association between al-Qa‘ida and, 24, 233, 234–36; breaks with Afghan past by, 228–30; continuities with Afghan past by, 230–31; destruction of standing Buddhas ordered by, 232; driven from power by United States, 233, 235–36, 240; educated in Pakistani madrasas, 73–74; historical perspective of, 228; use of jihad by, 231; regarding non-Muslims and other religions, 233; religious radicals of, 27; rise and demise of, 226–28; view of shari‘a (“the path or way”) and Islam by, 23133. See also Afghanistan

Tambiah, Stanley J., 282–83

Taqi‘Uthmani, Mawlana Muhammad, 6869

tawhid (unity of God), 310

tesettür fashion movement (Turkey), 89 Thalib, Jafar Umar, 287, 288, 290 Three Problems: Technique, Civilization,

Alienation (Özel), 98

To Be a European Muslim (Ramadan), 318 Tocqueville, Alexis de, 16

Transitions from Authoritarian Rule

(O’Donnell and Schmitter), 276

Turkey: Abant meetings of, 91–92; Abant model of reconciliation in, 91–92, 108, 109; AKP (Justice and Development Party) of, 2–3, 88, 95, 101–2, 109, 110; Alevi sect in, 91, 92, 93–95; contrast between democratizing participation of Egypt and, 10–11; evolution of public culture of, 105–7; Fethullahcilar educational Islamism movement in, 92–93, 316–18; future of Islamist politics in, 108; Kemalist model of government in, 87–88, 89, 105–6; laicism practice in modern, 102–5; Muslimization of the public in, 107; NSP (National Salvation Party) of, 106; public reaction to terrorist attacks (2003) in, 3; RPP (Republican Peoples’ Party) of, 98, 101; Turkish Islamic philosophy of Reformists of, 96102; Turkish Islamic synthesis model (1980s) of, 93

Turkish Contribution to Philosophy (Aydin), 96

Turkish Muslimhood model: assertions regarding believing Muslims in government, 88; future of Islamist politics under, 108; overlapping of public and private spheres under, 102–5; participants in, 92–96; personalization of Islam under, 88–90; practice of Islamism and, 90–92, 102–5; Reformists' exploration of, 100–102; transferability of, 109–10

Turkish National Security Council, 91 Turkmen (Afghanistan), 216

Ujaama, James, 313

ulama: Afghan policies designed to control autonomy of, 218–19; counter sloganeering argument against religious intellectuals by, 121–22; emerging from Deobandis, 63, 64–70; informal hierarchy in, 7; as Iranian state-society issue, 114; legal reforms and role of, 79–81; modern adaptation of, 61–62; new class of teachers different from, 20; opposition to Egyptian divorce reform by, 171, 178–79; public ethical discussion and role of, 8

Ulama, Nahdatul, 117

UMNO (United Malays National Organization) [Malaysia], 247, 249–50, 252, 256–57, 268, 269

U.N. Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 174, 175

U.N. Convention on Eliminating Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 174

United States: concerns with terrorism from Malaysia against, 240–42; jihad called against, 240; role in Afghanistan resistance to Soviets by, 223, 224; Taliban driven from power by, 233, 23536, 240; "War on Terrorism" by, 323. See also September 11, 2001

UOIF (Union des Organisations Islamiques de France), 332, 335

Uridu Halan (film), 167

al-‘Usbu‘ (Egyptian weekly), 134

U.S. Patriot Act, 250

al-Utaibi, Juhaiman, 194

Uzbeks (Afghanistan), 216

veiling issue (Turkey), 102–4, 107 velayat-e faquih (rule by the religiously learned), 3, 114

Wadud, Amina, 315

al-Wahhab, Ibn Abd, 22, 193

Wahhabi resurgence (Saudi Arabia), 198, 212n.3, 305, 306

Wahid, Abdurrahman, 117, 279, 280, 285, 286, 288

waqf (property used for religious institutions), 29n.4

“war in Iraq” media coverage, 37–38, 46

Warren, Kay, 7

“War on Terrorism” (U.S.), 323

Wassef, Nadia, 179

Weller, Robert, 7

“What the University expects from the Hawzeb” (Soroush lecture), 119–20

What Went Wrong? (Lewis), 2

White, Jenny B., 3, 10, 87

Why? (Aydin), 97

Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky, 10

Wihdah Press (Indonesia), 293

Women Living under Muslim Law, 304 women. See Muslim women

“Working Group on Civic-Pluralist Islam” project, 5

World Values Survey, 2

Yassine, Abdesslam, 53

Yavuz, Hakan, 316

Yemen political authority, 56

Yussefi-Eshkevari, Hassan, 124

Zahir Shah (Afghanistan), 220, 221

Zainah Anwar, 253–54

zakat-tax (Pakistan enforcement of), 71–72

Zalloon, Abdul Qadeem, 308

Zaman, Muhammad Qasim, 6, 8, 60,

179

Zaman (Turkish newspaper), 89, 90, 93

Zam, Mohammad-Ali, 126

Zhegal, Malika, 171

Zulficar, Mona, 161, 162, 171, 177, 180

al-Zuwaihari, Ayman, 305

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**** Contents

Acknowledgments vii

A Note on Transliteration ix

List of Tables, Figures and Maps X

Contributors xii

Preface xxi

List of Abbreviations xxiii

PART I—INTERNAL CONCERNS

THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

1. Tensions and Options among the Iranian Clerical Establishment, Olivier Roy 3

2. Reformists, Conservatives and Iran’s Parliamentary Elections, Shaul Bakhash 13

3. Civil-Military Relations in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ahmed s. Hashim 31

THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

4. The Position of the Iraqi Clergy, Joyce N. Wiley 55

5. Domestic Politics in A Post-Saddam Iraq, Laith Kubba 65

6. The Military in Iraqi Politics, Andrew Parasiliti 83

THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

7. Assessing Saudi Susceptibility to Revolution, Mark N. Katz 95

8. Image, Imagination And Place: The Political Economy Of Tourism In

Saudi Arabia, Gwenn Okruhlik 111

9. Saudi Arabia: Measures Of Transition From A Rentier State, Robert E. Looney 131

THE ARAB GULF STATES

10. Domestic Politics in the United Arab Emirates: Social and Economic Policies, 1990–2000, Fatma AlSayegh 161

11. Kuwait and Bahrain: The Appeal of Globalization and

Internal Constraints, May Seikaly 177

12. Kings And People: Information and Authority in Oman, Qatar, and the Persian Gulf, Dale F. Eickelman 193

PART II—REGIONAL CONCERNS

BORDER DISPUTES

13. Down to the Usual Suspects: Border and Territorial Disputes in the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf at the Millennium, Richard Schofield 213

14. The Kuwait-Iraq Border Problem, Hussein Hassouna 237

15. Yemeni-Saudi Relations Gone Awry, Mohammed A. Zabarah 263

RELATIONS BETWEEN GCC STATES

16. Unity on the Arabian Peninsula, Joseph A. Kechichian 281

17. Forging Institutions in the Gulf Arab States, R. Hrair Dekmejian 303

18. The GCC States: Internal Dynamics and Foreign Policies, Muhammed Saleh Al-Musfir 313

THE GULF STATES AND WESTERN POWERS

19. Constants and Variations in Gulf-British Relations, Gerd Nonneman 325

20. The Impact of US. Policy on the Stability of the Gulf States: A Historian’s View, Rosemarie Said Zahlan 351

21. Gulf States’ Links with Their Post-Soviet Northern Neighbors, Theodore Karasik 367

PART III—TRENDS FOR THE FUTURE

22. The UAE Vision for Gulf Security, Sultan bin Zayed bin

Sultan Al Nahyan 383

23. The Gulf Cooperation Council: Future Trends, Saif bin HashilAl-Maskery 393

24. The Arabian GulfAt The New Millennium: Security Challenges, Hassan Hamdan Al-Alkim 407

25. Outlook for Iranian-Gulf Relations: Greater Cooperation or Renewed Risk of Conflict?, Shireen T. Hunter 427

26. What Makes the Gulf States Endure?, J.E. Peterson 451

Bibliography 461

Index 464

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Both the conference and this book were made possible through the generous support of His Highness Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the president of the United Arab Emirates. Much like his contribution on “Gulf Security: The View from Abu Dhabi,” which was published in A Century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and the United Arab Emirates و (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Policy Council, 2000), that of his

son, Shaykh Sultan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the deputy prime minister of the UAE, adds value to it by contributing yet another comprehensive essay on the critical subject of Gulf security. To my knowledge, these two essays are the only ones written by high-ranking Gulf officials, to clarify evolving perspectives on regional security affairs. I thank His Highness for his sustained efforts and foresight.

His Excellency Shaykh Saif bin Hashil Al-Maskery, the former assistant secretary-general of the Gulf Cooperation Council, graciously agreed to travel from Muscat to Los Angeles to participate in the conference and write a paper that highlights the genuine search for peaceful resolution of conflicts within the region. By doing so, he joins several Gulf diplomats and scholars who seek to reverse the complacency trend by sharing their unique perspectives with a wider audience.

Several individuals at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in Abu Dhabi, including His Excellency Sultan bin OmeirAl Mashgouni and his assistant office director, Khalifah bin SabhaAl Qubaisi, were gracious with their time and hospitality. Mr. Muhammad Khalifah, the multitalented executive director of the Zayed Center for Coordination and Follow-Up, was equally cordial. To them, and many others, I owe a special debt of gratitude.

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To Angelica—my inspiration—I owe deep gratitude for accepting her father’s many absences from home.

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Last, but not least, I thank my colleagues who first accepted the invitation to participate in the conference, wrote superb original papers, answered my repeated queries, and considered many of my emendations. This collective book is testament that each and every one has added value.

**** A Note on Transliteration

A modified version of the Library of Congress transliteration system has been adopted throughout the book. In rendering Arabic words and names, however, and because several authors use various spellings, I relied on the style used by the International Journal of Middle East Studies. Thus a name that is commonly rendered in English, for example Mohammed, becomes Muhammad, and Mecca becomes Makkah. Whenever known, I used the common English spellings for proper names, as well as for names of countries. Thus Fahd rather than Fahad (although the latter is used if the individual writes his name with that spelling) and Oman rather than ‘Uman. Although special care was devoted to standardize the spellings of as many transliterated words as possible, there are—inevitably—a few inconsistencies which, I trust, readers will understand. For practical purposes, all diacritical marks for long vowels and velarized consonants have been eliminated. Arabic and Persian speakers will know the correct reference for the transliterated words throughout the text.

**** List of Tables, Figures and Maps

9.1 Saudi Arabia: Rates of Growth, 1964–1998.

9.2 Saudi Arabia: Economic Structure, 1970–1998.

9.3 Saudi Arabia: Public Sector Budget, 1979–1998.

9.4 Saudi Arabia: Influence of Public Expenditure on the Private Sector Economy.

9.5 Saudi Arabia: Summary of Results.

19.1 UK Imports from the Gulf States, 1991—1999 (in مم Million).

19.2 UK Visible Non-Defense Exports to the Gulf States, 1991–1999, (in مم Million).

19.3 UK Visible Non-Arms Exports to the Gulf States, by Broad Commodity Group, 1998 (in مم Million).

19.4 Recent And Current Arms Contracts UK—GCC.

25.1 Persian Gulf: Size of Countries.

25.2 Persian Gulf: Population of Countries.

25.3 Persian Gulf: Ethnic Composition of Non-Nationals in Percentages.

25.4 Persian Gulf: Proven Oil Reserves.

Figures

9.1 Saudi Arabia: Evolution of the Non-Oil Economy, 1964-.

9.2 Development Model 1: Saudi Arabian Development during the Oil Boom Years.

9.3 Development during the Post—Oil Boom Years: Pessimistic Assessment.

9.4 Development during the Post—Oil Boom Years: optimistic Assessment.

9.5 Saudi Arabia: Future Virtuous Cycle.

12.1 Faisal al-Kassim Broadcasting from Al-Jazeera.

12.2 Palestinian News Reporting.

Maps

13.1 Territorial and Maritime Boundaries in the Gulf Region.

13.2 Saudi-Yemeni Boundary.

13.3 Bahrain Boundary Issues.

14.1 Kuwait-Iraq Border.

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Peaceful Coexistence? 1أ١١ Central Asia Since Independence

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**** Preface

Two decades after the epoch-making 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and an eight-year-long (1980–1988) protracted war between Iran and Iraq, and a decade after the historic War for Kuwait (1991), the Persian Gulf region remains mired in conflict and uncertainty. Few doubt the importance of the area to its inhabitants as well as to the economic welfare of industrialized societies. Yet, despite momentous—even cataclysmic—events and unabated concerns, few can forecast that the area will be free of additional convulsions.

For decades, the entire region was pigeonholed in terms of how “vital” it was and, within the East-West contest for world hegemony, how critical to the survival of a certain “way of life.” In the event, and despite the Christmas Eve 1979 invasion—and decade-long occupation—ofAfghanistan, the Soviet Union failed to gain a foothold in the area. Moscow’s lukewarm relations with Iraq and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) did not get the Soviets what earlier tsarist intentions had long craved. Both Iraq and the PDRY fared poorly too. Western powers, led first by the United Kingdom and later by the United States, emerged as the dominant outside forces that shaped the course of events. Washington weathered the repercussions of the Iranian Revolution—especially the humiliating 444-day-long hostage crisis—strengthened its presence on the Arabian Peninsula, and fought a regional hegemon under a United Nations— sanctioned intervention. It deployed more than halfa million troops and a unique armada to ensure, inter aha, the territorial integrity of Kuwait and the sovereignty of the conservative Arab Gulf monarchies. Although the United States neutralized putative Iranian and Iraqi capabilities, it failed to accelerate political changes—especially of the regime variety—in both countries and, in early 2001, was still confronted by political forces deemed too hostile for comfort.

To be sure, Iran and Iraq opposed the perceived American hegemony throughout the Persian Gulf region, even if Teheran longed for improved relations and Baghdad yearned for a speedy departure. Many Iranians remained apprehensive of American intentions notwithstanding limited but positive contacts. Many Arabs, including in the Gulf Cooperation Council states, harbored uneasiness as well. A majority rejected the strangulation of the Iraqi population but failed to persuade their Western allies to lift UN-imposed economic sanctions on Baghdad. Most aimed to find a balance among internal, regional, and international commitments, to ensure their survival. Both Iranians and Arabs aimed to regain the upper hand in determining their respective destinies even if more powerful forces shaped them. In the end, all feared the spillover effects of regional instability, a burgeoning arms race, and dramatic economic and social changes. Indeed, they were all confronted by new paradigms that challenged traditional interpretations and threatened to alter the body politic of each regime.

Against this background, what are the political, military, religious, and socioeconomic trends for Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen? Will internal, regional, and international tensions threaten existing regimes, or will the latter survive growing pressure points? Will Gulf states' incredible endurance capabilities be altered? Will the next decade witness fundamental changes that could destabilize the Persian Gulf, or will new institutions equip each state with the wherewithal to function and grow more effectively?

These are the fundamental questions and issues that the following 26 contributions attempt to answer and analyze. They articulate American, European, and Middle Eastern perspectives to widen the ongoing debate among scholars and decision makers. Indeed, by discussing issues from several perspectives, these essays aim to elucidate rather than sermonize.

The integrated papers that follow are divided into three parts. Part One provides an overview of Gulf states' internal concerns—focusing on political, military, economic, religious, and social matters. While the focus of the first papers are on Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the smaller Gulf states, these are not intended as country profiles. Rather, they purport to analyze currents and trends, to alert the reader to fundamental changes. Part Two offers detailed examinations of three of the most significant issues that presently affect the area. Despite recent progress on several fronts, including a significant accord between Bahrain and Qatar as well as intense negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, thorny border disputes are analyzed to identify significant trends for future political behavior. Regional issues, including institution-building measures, are also analyzed to identify groundbreaking sociopolitical changes throughout the region. Finally, key relations with Britain, the United States, and Russia are assessed, to weigh their repercussions both for indigenous leaders as well as for their Western counterparts. Part Three consists of overview essays of the Gulf region in terms of the changing foreign policy environment. They provide fresh appraisals of Gulf security and conflict resolution.

As the bulk of these essays were written almost a year before the book appeared in print, what follows may well have been overtaken by time. Nevertheless, it is fully expected that the underlying analyses and

interpretations will continue to serve useful purposes, to encourage debate among scholars, and to provide policymakers with concrete reference points.

**** List of Abbreviations

| ACC | Arab Cooperation Council |

| APIA | Abu Phabi Investment Authority |

| AIPAC | American Israel Public Affairs Committee |

| AMU | Arab Maghreb Union |

| APC | Armored Personnel Carrier |

| APOC | Anglo-Persian Oil Company |

| ASEAN | Association of South East Asian Nations |

| BPP | Barrels Per Pay |

| CPLR | Committee for the Pefense of Legitimate Rights |

| PRY | Pemocratic Republic of Yemen |

| ECO | Economic Cooperation Organization |

| ESPI | European Security and Pefense Identity |

| EU | European Union |

| FLOSY | Front for the Liberation of South Yemen |

| FNC | Federal National Council [UAE] |

| GCC | Gulf Cooperation Council |

| GPP | Gross Pomestic Product |

| GNP | Gross National Product |

| GPC | General People’s Congress [Yemen] |

| IAEA | International Atomic Energy Agency |

| ICJ | International Court ofjustice |

| ICP | Iraqi Communist Party |

| ILSA | Iran-Libya Sanctions Act |

| IMF | International Monetary Fund |

| INC | Iraqi National Congress |

| IRGC | Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps [Pasdaran-e Engelabe-e-Islami |

| IRNA | Islamic Republic News Agency [Iran] |

| ISA | Internal Security Agreement [of GCC] |

| LAS | League ofArab States |

| LNG | Liquefied Natural Gas |

| LSY | League of the Sons of Yemen |

| MBPD | Million Barrels Per Day |

| MBT | Main Battle Tanks |

| ITO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |

| NDF | National Democratic Front [Yemen] |

| NIS | New Independent States [former Soviet Union] |

| NLF | National Liberation Front [Yemen] |

| NPT | Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty |

| OIC | Organization of Islamic Conference |

| OPEC | Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries |

| PDRY | People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen |

| PLO | Palestine Liberation Organization |

| RCC | Revolutionary Command Council [Iraq] |

| RUSI | Royal United Services Institute |

| SAVAK | National Organization of Information and Security [Sazeman-e Amniyat-e va Ettela’at Keshvar] |

| see | State Consultative Council [Oman] |

| SCIRI | Supreme Council of the Islamic Resistance in Iran |

| UAE | United Arab Emirates |

| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |

| UNIKBDC | United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission |

| UNMOVIC | United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission |

| UNSCOM | United Nations special Commission [for Iraq] |

| USSR | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |

| WEU | Western European Union |

| WMD | Weapons of Mass Destruction |

| WTO | World Trade Organization |

| YAR | Yemen Arab Republic |

| YSP | Yemen Socialist Party |

* Part I: Internal Concerns

** The Islamic Republic of Iran

*** Chapter 1: Tensions and Options Among the Iranian Clerical Establishment

Olivier Roy

It may be argued that the Iranian revolution is the only “religious revolution” in the modern world. Whether a religious revolution is even possible, however, is an entirely different question. Still, it is clear that any transition in post-revolutionary Iran, as embodied by the spring 2000 elections, will have to deal with the religious legacy and legitimacy of the regime.[1] What

to do with the clergy and how to interpret Islam in Iran are two of the most critical questions facing any analysis of the Islamic republic.

Given the country’s recent history, it is clear that the two issues are intermingled, as any form of secularization has to find some support among clerical circles. And the clerics, whatever their political positions, have to express these positions in terms of Islam. Inasmuch as these questions are critical, it is equally important to ask why the debate among clerics is vital for the future of the Iranian Islamic republic. Without a doubt, it is not so much because the clergy rules. In fact, the Iranian revolution has been far less clerical than many assume. Rather, the real stake is the role played by the Guide, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, based on the concept of Velayat-e Faqih (or “rule of the jurisconsult”).[2] To be sure, this is not an abstract theological debate, but a key issue for the future of democracy in Iran. Any political evolution depends on the Guide, which in large part explains why the debaters are divided between those who would limit the principle of Velayat-e Faqih (liberals as well as some traditionalists) and those conservatives who see in the Velayat-e Faqih the last vestige of the Islamic regime.

**** Defining the Issues

Instead of empowering the clergy, the Islamic Revolution has in fact limited the traditional autonomy of the high clergy, in favor of the state. During his tenure, Ayatollah Khomeini bypassed the traditional clerical institutions and eliminated or sidelined all of the Great Ayatollahs of his generation, including Ayatollahs Mohammed Qazem Shariat-Madari, Mohammed Reza Golpaygani, Mohammed Qomi, and Abol-Qazem Khoi, among others. Khomeini established his rule through a body of lay intellectuals, figures like Ali Akbar Velayati and Mir Hossein Musavi, and mid-level clerics like Hojjat-ol Islam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Ali Hossein Khamenei. The real hierarchy was political, even for the clerics, which meant that religion was subordinated to politics. In fact, the clergy lost its financial autonomy, as religious taxes were collected through the state. Ayatollah Khomeini also balanced the clergy’s academic freedom, as censorship on religious seminaries became common, while clerical courts were established to control dissident clerics.

Ironically, traditional rules of succession and the devolution of authority among Great Ayatollahs were ignored by the state when appointing the new Guide. Moreover, the “clericalization” of the state apparatus promoted middlelevel clerics (Hojjat-ol Islam), to the detriment of the Great Ayatollahs. Today, the Guide holds a political and ideological position, more than a religious one, as it is explicitly stated in the constitution amended in 1989. Thus, the Guide is not necessarily the highest religious authority, although he should be “politically conscious” and “aware of his time” (agah be zaman). It must be noticed that this contradiction has been unraveling after the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, and particularly since the election of President Mohammed Khatami.[3] These emendations indicated that ideological considerations, and sheer political debate, were more relevant than the strict theological debate. Consequently, the crisis of religious legitimacy in the Islamic Republic led to a growing discrepancy between “religion” and “religious ideology” In turn, the crisis meant a reshuffling of political alignments, in which clerics were found on all sides.

**** The Role of the Clergy

In the years since, it has become amply clear that the clergy does not control the state apparatus. To be sure, they dominate the Council of Guardians and the judiciary (whose current head, Mahmud Hashemi-Shahrudi is appointed by the Guide), and control family courts. Still, their position within the state apparatus is defined by the state itself. The Guide appoints clerics, who are not necessarily entrusted to their influential posts by their peers. Simply stated, there is no autonomy for the clergy in the political field, as most institutions that are strongholds of conservative elements are not headed by clerics, including the Guardians of the Revolution, the various foundations, and the political Motalefe coalition that supports conservative candidates. Interestingly, the number of clerics elected as members of parliament has regularly decreased since the first elections in the mid-1980s. Of course, state mollahs, who occupy key positions in the judiciary and the Council of Guardians, and who sit in parliament, or who are appointed by the state—-as are most of the Friday preachers (.Imam-ejome)— are members of conservative factions. Yet, even if they defend the ideological nature of the

regime, they act more as members of an interest group rather than as a clerical faction.

In addition to state mollahs, two other categories of clerics fall outside the state apparatus: first, the bulk of the clergy—many of whom are apolitical—and,

Tensions AND Options Among THE Iranian Clerical Establishment 5 second, all of the remaining Great Ayatollahs, who keep aloof of daily politics but are preoccupied with their religious duties. Usually very traditionalist on social issues, they are increasingly in favor of a full rehabilitation of the clergy's autonomy, some voicing their criticism of Ayatollah Khamenei's position as Guide. Many do not have a political movement of their own, and the more vocal among them are now under pressure from the state.

If senior clerics are mildly engaged, a new school of thought has emerged among younger clergymen, including Mohsen Kadivar, Hassan Yusuf Eshkevari, and Mohsen Said Zadeh, who advocate a rethinking of Islamic law and a revival of Islamic philosophy. Several younger clerics have publicly discussed secularism (Kadivar), but they do not hold institutional positions within the clerical hierarchy—by having a specific affiliation with a specific mosque, for example. Most are preoccupied with their writings and are closer to secular/liberal intellectuals than to the traditional clergy.

Under these circumstances, if the clergy is no longer as important as a corporate institution in Iranian politics, to what extent is the internal debate relevant? For some time now, any reform in Iran has necessitated a formulation in terms of fidelity to the legacy of Imam Khomeini. A reformist leader needs to find vocal support among clerical circles and cannot risk a confrontation with the clerical coalition. The alliance of traditional ayatollahs and liberal clerics with the reformist coalition is a prerequisite for a smooth transition toward a more democratic system. But such a transition would

require—at the very least—the neutrality of the Guide to withstand a conservative backlash. The key for the transition is the attitude of the Guide, Ayatollah Khamenei, whose position embodies the prevalence of religious ideology over religion.

An important feature of Shia Islam—which clarifies the role of the clergy—requires attention. There is a well-known specificity of the Twelver-Imami Shia clergy that looks like a corporate institution, with unified aims and a hierarchy centered on a collegial leadership embodied by the Great Ayatollahs. But this corporatism in fact failed to translate itself into politics because the clergy was not instrumental in controlling the state. Moreover, and despite this structural cohesion, the Shia clergy is far from being homogeneous in terms of political alignments and philosophical conceptions. Thus, the conflict between liberals and conservatives—which divides the Iranian political establishment—does not translate into a conflict between laymen and clerics. On the contrary, the conflict is to be found within the clergy itself. This anxiety between the ideal of a corporate institution and existing tensions is anecdotally expressed in the names of various factions, as they all bear almost similar appellations. For example, the Jame-ye Ruhaniyyat-e Mobarez-e Teheran (Teheran Militant Clergy) gathered clerics who were pro-revolution. Yet, a leftist—and now liberal—breakaway adopted the name Majma-ye Ruhaniyyun-e Mobarez (Militant Clerics Association) in the late 19805.

As this example illustrates, the situation is rather complex, because existing political alignments do not necessarily reflect religious and ideological ones. In support of President Mohammed Khatami, for example, one finds “liberal” clerics favoring a rethinking of Shariah (Mohsen Kadivar, Mohsen Mojtahed

Shabestari, Hassan Yusuf Eshkevari); “traditionalists,” many of whom are unhappy about the extreme politicization of the clergy and the decline of the traditional spiritual leadership (Fazel Lankarani, for example, who refused to endorse the candidacy of the conservative Ayatollah Nateq Nouri against Mohammed Khatami in the 1997 presidential race); and, finally, “Islamic

leftists," who, on the contrary, stress the social and anti-imperialist dimension of the revolution and its purely political message (Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, Mohammed Sadeq Khalkhali, Youssof Sana'y). These three groupings disagree on various issues, including the "fatwa" against Salman Rushdie, the role of Shariah, the meaning of democracy, the need for privatization or for support of a state-controlled economy, among others. Traditionalists, for example, maintain that Shariah should be implemented and are rather reluctant supporters of the concept of democracy. Leftists, on the other hand, favor elections, because the "peopie's will" is far more important than a strict interpretation of the Shariah. Liberals, for their part, have accepted the concept of secularization. Other complications exist as well, including the fact that several leading figures, after 20 years of militancy, have almost crossed the whole political spectrum, usually from radicalism to liberalism (Hossein Ali Montazeri, Mohammed Khoeiniha).

Thus, the division is both religious and political, as the role of the Guide, or more exactly the nature of the Velayat-e Faqih, is increasingly questioned. This unique institution embodies the complex relationships between religion and politics that, in the end, subordinates religion to politics through the ideologization of the former. As long as all the institutions of the Islamic Republic were held by individuals sharing similar views, that is, until the end of President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's term in 1997, the Velayat-e Faqih was not an issue as such. Since the 1997 election of President Mohammed Khatami, and the parliamentary election of 2000, liberal elements have come to power, which in turn have propelled conservatives to rally around the Velayat-e Faqih. Conservatives, then, perceived the Velayat-e Faqih as their last leverage to prevent a drastic evolution toward liberalization. Without a doubt, the importance of the conceptual debate on the Velayat-e Faqih is now directly linked to the political stakes of the day. The conservatives can oppose the democratic evolution of the republic only by calling for the predominance of a strong Velayat. What is even clearer is that the intellectual debate is linked to very concrete and short-term political issues. Simply stated, conservative elements cannot wage a coup—-either military or constitutional—against President Khatami without the full approval ofAyatollah Khamenei. This fact leads to an ambiguous situation. The Guide can act as an arbiter and protect Mohammed Khatami against a coup. On the other hand, and because he heads the military and appoints senior members of the judiciary, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei can legally dismiss the president and dissolve parliament.

What this means is that the position of the Guide is the cornerstone of the institutions of the Islamic Republic. Yet, as the constitution of Iran explicitly mentions two sources of sovereignty, namely God's will, expressed by the Guide, and the people's will, any process of democratization will of course tend to assert the second. This would occur not necessarily against God's will, but by voiding the power of the Guide and relegating him to a more symbolic position. If the

Velayat-e Faqih is thus weakened, the present constitution could provide an institutional framework for full democracy, and a de facto secularization. Conservative forces cannot, naturally, manage a coup against President Khatami without the explicit approval of the Guide.

This centrality of the Guide explains why the debate in Iran today is centered on the concept of the Velayat-e Faqih. Paradoxically, it is rarely addressed as such, because that debate would be labeled an open assault against the Islamic Republic, and would be immediately treated as political rebellion if not treason. Therefore, many clerics avoid the issue of the Velayat-e Faqih either because they do not want to be branded as opponents of the regime or because they fear the consequences. One of the few to speak on the subject has been Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, the former heir to Imam Khomeini.

Although critics of the Velayat-e Faqih underlined most of the debate among clerics, two other issues are openly debated, that of the redefinition of the Shariah and that of secularization, understood not as separation of church and state, but as a separation between politics and religious activities.

**** The Velayat-e Faqih

The concept of Velayat-e Faqih is not really new in Shia thought, even if it was never considered as being a very practical theory. Of course, it has been established as the cornerstone of the Iranian political system, immediately

following the 1979 revolution. It took on a political and ideological position, as enunciated in the constitution, and was no longer a purely religious reference.[4] In the previous religious literature, the Faqih was no less than the hidden Imam, or His representative on earth, that is, the most learned alim. Yet, according to the 1980 constitution, the Faqih is not necessarily the highest religious authority, although he is above that learned scholar. Such a concept, by definition, has met from the very beginning a strong opposition among many high-level clerics, including those who favored the concept of an Islamic State. The reason for this opposition was the undeniable fact that it introduced a competing hierarchy to the clerical one. Traditionally, the Iranian clergy was led by a college of Great Ayatollahs, known as the marja'e taqlid (sources of imitation). Ayatollah Khomeini was both a marja' and the Guide, and his proclamation as Guide did not contradict the traditional hierarchy, even if it introduced another hierarchy among the marja'. At his death in June 1989, however, the question as to which was prevalent arose: the religious legitimacy or the political one? The appointment of the then Hojjat-ol Islam Ali Khamenei, who not only was not a marja' but not even an ayatollah, highlighted inherent contradictions. The discrepancy unraveled in 1993, at the death of the last marja' of the time,Ayatoilah Araki. Of course, the only way to reconciliate both would have been to declare Hojjat-ol Islam Khamenei a marja', but the majority of the ayatollahs reacted negatively to such a proposal discreetly advanced by Khamenei's allies. The proposal was quietly withdrawn. Today, and although the marja'iyya has not been abolished, and some Great Ayatollahs are said to be marja's, the institution itself does not seem to function as originally intended.

It must be recalled that several leading ayatollahs were reluctant, even at the time of the revolution, to endorse the Velayat-e Faqih. This list included such major learned clergymen as Ayatollahs Shariat-Madari, Mahmud Taleqani, Mohammed Tabatabai Qomi, and others. In addition, alims like Nasir Makarem Shirazi preferred to limit the power of the Vali.[5] This reluctance became more vocal after the appointment of Hojjat-ol Islam Khamenei and was shared both by liberal clerics, like Ayatollah Montazeri, and by some very conservative clerics, like Ayatollah Azeri-Qomi (d. 1998). In fact, the Velayat-e Faqih came under attack both from liberals, who pushed for more democracy, a greater role for parliament, and a rethinking of the Shariah, and by traditionalist clerics, who advocated the implementation of Shariah under clerical supervision, even if they preferred to see the restoration of the

traditional marja’iyya system, that is, the appointments of the supreme religious authority by a college of equals with no meddling of politics and ideology. Fazel Lankarani and Makarem Shirazi regularly criticized Abdul-Karim Soroush, and leading liberal clerics, about their conception of Fiqh (jurisprudence) and Shariah, but at the same time, they opposed Ali Khamenei. Ayatollah Taqi Bahjat, another leading traditionalist, protested in 1997 to the closure ofAyatollah Montazeri’s seminar.

The parallel evolution of Montazeri and Azeri-Qomi is interesting and must be discussed in detail to highlight the crisis within the ma a iyya. Both were staunch supporters of the revolution, Montazeri more “leftist” and Azeri-Qomi more “conservative.” Azeri-Qomi, who published a very traditionalist newspaper, Resalatو approved the eviction of Montazeri in 1989, and supported the then Hojjat-ol Islam Ali Khamenei to succeed Ayatollah Khomeini, arguing that the leader need not be a Great Ayatollah, or even a marja’. At the time, he was the theoretician of the “absolute rule of the jurist,” or Velayat-e Motlaq-e Faqih, which was inserted into the revised 1989 constitution. But, in the early 199015, Ayatollah Azeri-Qomi distanced himself from Ali Khamenei. The gap that emerged between the two men’s views grew so wide that Azeri-Qomi even questioned the concept of absolute Velayat-e Faqih in 1997, which promptly earned him house arrest. In 1994 he supported Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Bahjat rather than Ali Khamenei for the marja’iyya. Three years later, Azeri-Qomi published an open letter in which he blamed Ayatollah Khamenei for accepting the position of Guide.

Ayatollah Montazeri, who was a supporter of the Velayat-e Faqih, changed his mind as well, not about the function of the institution, but about its role. He publicly opposed the concept of “absolute” Velayat-e Faqih and proposed, instead, a “supervisory” role for the Faqih (Nazarat).[6] This concept is also developed by the young Hojjat-ol Islam Mohsen Kadivar, recently jailed by a clerical court.[7] Under this interpretation, the role of the Faqih should only be to check the conformity of the laws with Islam. Kadivar even shows that Khomeini himself was in favor, before the revolution, of Nazarat and not Velayat, which was probably his worst crime in the eyes of conservatives. To buttress his claims, Kadivar provided critical inquiries about key references on the Velayat-e Faqih in Shia thought, and illustrated how none of them could establish the present definition.[8]

Thus, what emerges is a convergence of the critics, against the Velayat-e Faqih. Yet, to abolish it would trigger a political conflict and entail a severe backlash from the Guide and his supporters. Consequently, what seems to be developing is a gradual amalgamation of views between traditionalists and liberals, to slowly void the position of most of its power and confer upon the Guide a role of “moral consciousness.” In other words, the Guide is evolving into the guarantor of the institutions that have limited his role, as the British and Scandinavian monarchies did some time ago. The result might be a kind of“constitutional theocracy.” Opponents of the Velayat-e Faqih rely on the fact that the concept, as established by the constitution, stresses more than ever the political nature of the Islamic Revolution. They claim that if politics were to prevail, then democracy would be the best regime.

Faced with this growing criticism, the conservative faction has adopted a clear strategy to counter-attack. To concentrate the debate on the defense of the Velayat-e Faqih, and to establish its prevalence against all other institutions, namely the presidency and the parliament, conservative leaders have adopted new strategies. In short, their aim is to dissociate “God’s sovereignty” from the people’s sovereignty, whereas the constitution is based on the idea that there can be no real rift between the two. A call for the restoration of the absolute Velayate Faqih is a convenient way for them to dismiss or ignore the massive electoral support for liberal forces and to openly call the Guide to dismiss the president and dissolve parliament. Thus, defense of the Velayat-e Faqih is the only way to play on constitutional tools to defeat liberal arguments. Conservatives would favor a “constitutional coup d’etat,” because the Guide—presumably accepting this strategy—has the constitutional right to dismiss both president and parliament. Indeed, Ayatollahs Emami Kashani and Misbahi Yazdi are leading a vocal campaign in support of the Velayat-e Faqih, precisely to achieve such an outcome. Ayatollah All Akbar Meshkhani went so far as to declare that the Guide had the same powers that the Prophet and the imams enjoyed,[9] whereas Ayatollah Javadi Amoli claimed that people needed a tutor cqayyem) and that democracy was not in Islam.[10]

**** The Debate on Islam, Fiqh, and Secularization

Another issue of concern to the current debate is the one around various interpretations of Fiqh. Ayatollah Mojtahed Shabestari, Hojjat-ol Islam Mohsen Kadivar, Hassan Yusuf Eshkevari, and Mohsen Said Zadeh, in particular, have initiated a debate about the need to “modernize” Fiqh. To buttress their arguments, they rely on an already classical feature, namely the distinction between the “message” of Islam and the sociopolitical conditions of its expression. The present Fiqh, they argue, has largely been inherited from an Arab Bedu (tribal and patriarchal) society and should be rationalized through ijtihad, taking into account sociocultural changes. Said Zadeh, for example, has concentrated on laws pertaining to women, and insists on the absolute equality between the sexes.[11]

Interestingly, enough of these “new theologians” (.Kalam-e Nd) are close to a fundamental principle of the Iranian revolution, namely the historicization of Islam. Still, the Guide, who should be conscious of his time (agah he zaman), and even Imam Khomeini—who stressed the prevalence of politics over the pillars of religion—seem to have been overtaken by the new theologians.[12] Importantly, the new theologians rely on the intellectual tools familiar to Shia religious thinking, namely reason, ijtihad, maslahah, to further strengthen their various interpretations.

But they also go further than advocating a mere reformation of Fiqh. Without a doubt, they argue that secularization is not contradictory to Islam, but good for it. By advancing such arguments, they clearly cut whatever ties they may have had with the Islamic Revolution. Mojtahed Shabestari claims the sacred should be spared from involvement in daily politics. For him, the mundane is the realm of imperfection, fmitude, errors, and approximation, and since all prophets tried to disentangle the sacred from the customs and institutions of a given society, so must the Iranian. Moreover, the relation to God is a purely spiritual one, and it is a matter of faith—even of individual faith. It is based on a personal choice, and its values are solid because it is a personal choice, a selfconscious choice (entekhab-e agahane).[13] It is clear that this theological vision of religion, as a personal and free choice, is congruent with the political choice of democracy and elections. In this connection, President Mohammed Khatami’s reference to “puritans” stresses what is common between democracy and religion: that a religious

civil society, which agrees that politics and religion should be separated, but where everybody is supposed to a believer, is the preferred option.

Against this strong argument, conservative elements within Iranian society could not tolerate such a blatant attack, not only against the concept of an Islamic State, but also against the traditional perception of Fiqh. A clerical court quickly sentenced both Kadivar and Said Zadeh to jail terms after they publicized their “heretical” views—as was Abdollah Nouri, the former minister of the interior, in October 1999. The fact that Nouri was a cleric did not spare him from the wrath of religious puritans.

Nevertheless, the reliance on clerical courts has also drawn criticism from traditional circles, even if few endorse the ideas of the “new theologians.” Ayatollahs Youssof Sana’y and Abdol Karim Musavi Ardebili, for example, condemned the sentencing ofAbdollah Nouri. Perhaps this was due to the tradition of intellectual debates among Shia clergymen, but it was also a sign of the excesses many perceived. In this instance, as well, it is easy to identify a rapprochement between traditionalists and liberals, to resist conservative encroachments on civil liberties.

**** Conclusion

As a consequence of the overlapping debate between the Velayat-e Faqih and Fiqh, conservatives appear effectively conservative in terms of religious thinking, although they themselves refer to a new concept, that of the Velayat-e Faqih. Without explicitly declaring it, conservative arguments differ from Ayatollah Khomeini’s well-known views, with Shariah being subordinate to the political context. Hence the difficult position of the conservatives who tend to fall back on perennial arguments, or who stress the fidelity to a historical event, the Islamic Revolution, to buttress meager claims. What they engage in, however, is a pure oscillation between political ideology and mere neo-fundamentalism.

During the course of the past few years, the debate between so-called liberals and conservatives in Iran has been sharper because of the input that

lay philosophers, like Abdul-Karim Soroush, have introduced. Today, religious thinking is encroaching on the clergy's monopoly of religious discourse. The "corporate" identity of the clergy is again at stake, given that the religious debate is no longer a monopoly of learned—and not so learned—clerics. The fact that some clerics express their views in the dozens ofjournals and magazines that flourish in Iran has also contributed to "de-specialization" of the religious debate. It has also opened it for public discussion. Even if liberal clerics are sometimes ambivalent about such a level of openness—Mohsen Kadivar rarely misses the opportunity to stress his religious credentials against the lay Abdul-Karim Soroush, for exampie, even when their views are not dissimilar—it is clear that the religious debate is linked to the political one, not only because of the conceptual issues involved, including the thorny Velayat-e Faqih, but also because it has now spread outside traditional religious schools. It must be emphasized that secularization and democracy have permanently changed the patterns of religious debates.

In this context, the conservatives, by definition, lack a popular and secular audience. Many tend to entrench themselves in their religious institutions. An ultra-conservative cleric, like Misbahi Yazdi in his "rah-e haqq" religious school, for example, advocates violence against the new enemies of Islam (mahareb). Importantly, Misbahi Yazdi has been challenged by the minister of culture—and was invited to face a televised public debate with him on the topic—which, in and of itself, is another break with the traditional pattern of dispute settlement among clerics.

Thus, and although the Iranian context is very different from currents in the rest of the Muslim world, it is clear that the debate among fundamentalists, traditionalists, and liberals in the Islamic Republic touches on the same issues: the evolving roles of the Shariah, women, individualization, the crisis of religious education, and self-proclamation of religious competence, among others. Nevertheless, the Iranian debate is not reflected in the rest of the Muslim world. While the revolutionary writings of Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Morteza Mottahari, for example, have been largely translated and published (by the Iranian state itself, specifically in Arabic), nothing has actually happened—as far as the liberals are concerned—to encourage change. No translations of Mohsen Kadi-var or Abdul-Karim Soroush seem to be available in Arabic as of today, thereby limiting the exposure of non-Persian-speaking Muslims to this lively debate. Still, the revolution in Iran is

too embedded in the political discourses to appear as a reflection on Islam, but it is clear that the ongoing intellectual contentions have a more general meaning for the whole Muslim world.

[1] Scholars like Said Arjomand would probably refuse to call “revolutionary” what they see as a conservative movement. See Said Amir Arjomand, The Turban and the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. But for others, and me, the Islamic Revolution is much more. It is the heir to Third World progressive movements of the mid-nineteenth century rather than a mere product of a clerical movement.

[2] For a thorough discussion of the Velayat-e Faqih, as well as the bases for the present discussion, see Shahrough Akhavi, “Contending Discourses on Shi’i Law on the Doctrine of Velayat-e Faqih,” Iranian Studies 29:3–4, summer-fall 1996, pp. 262–65.

[3] Olivier Roy, “The Crisis of Religious Legitimacy in Iran,” The Middle East journal 53:2, spring 1999, pp. 201–16. See also Akhavi, op. cit., pp. 262–65.

[4] Roy, op. cit., pp. 201–16.

[5] On the published proceedings of the committee in charge of drafting the constitution and on its internal debates, see Asghar Shirazi, “The Constitution of Iran,” Politics and the State in the Islamic Republic, London: I. B. Tauris, 1998, chapters 2 and 3. On Makarem Shirazi’s views, see page 46 in ibid.

[6] Hossein Ali Montazeri, Derasat fi Velayat-e Faqih va Fiqh-ol Dowlat-ol Eslamiya [Lectures on the Velayat-e Faqih and Islamic State Law], published in Qom, and summarized in “Nazarat-e Faqih”

[Supervision of the Jurisconsult], Rahe Now, number 18,31/5/1377 (1998).

[7] Mohsen Kadivar, Nazarieha-ye Dowlat Dar Fiqh-e Shie [The Views on the State in Shia Law], Ney Publishers, 1376 (1996–97). See also Mohsen Kadivar, “Hokoumat-e Valai,” Rahe Now, number 15,10/5/1377 (1997–98).

[8] Mohsen Kadivar, “Hokoumat-e Valai, Barrasi-e Maghbouley-e Omar Ibn-e Hanzale,” Rahe Now, number 18,31/5/1377 (July 1998).

[9] Resalat, 16/10/1376 (January 1998).

[10] Keyhan, 24/8/1376 (November 1997).

[11] For a summary of his views, see Seyyed Mohsen Said-Zadeh, “Man-az Moddaiyane Eslam Vahame Daram” [I Am Afraid of Those Who Claim (to Know) Islam], Jame-ye Salem, 8/1376. See also “Beja-ye Tamdid, Dar Qanoun-e (Diyeh) Tajdid-e Nazar Konid” [Do Not Extend but Reconsider the Law of Diyeh (blood-price)], Zanan, 5/1376 (1996).

[12] A famous case is that of the prohibition of the pilgrimage in 1987, to protest the alleged killings of Iranian pilgrims by the Saudi police.

[13] In this instance, entekhab means “election.” See Mohammad Mojtahed Shabestari, “Shera Bayad Andishey-e Dini ra Naghd Kard?” [Why Should One Apply Critical Analysis to Religious Thinking?], Kian, number 18,1-2/1373 (1994).

*** Chapter 2: Reformists, Conservatives, and Iran’s 2000 Parliamentary Elections

Shaul Bakhash

In February 2000, a reformist coalition supporting President Mohammad Khatami won a sweeping victory in Iran’s Majlis, or parliamentary, elections. The reformists in the incoming Majlis seemed strategically poised to carry out an ambitious agenda to expand political freedoms, strengthen oversight of governmental organizations, and break the monopoly exercised by a small faction in the ruling group over power and the economy. But within weeks of the election, and even before the new Majlis convened, the country experienced a powerful conservative backlash. Virtually the entire reformist press was closed down, reformist journalists were arrested, and institutions such as the judiciary, the Council of Guardians, and the authority of the Leader himself were brought into play to block the reformist agenda. The Majlis election thus proved to be a key moment in the contest between reformers and conservatives that had been triggered by Khatami’s election as president in 1997. The election and its aftermath, in addition, proved a revealing moment in the history of the Islamic Republic. Political factions articulated their ideologies, programs, and visions for Iran’s future. In voting, Iranians expressed their preferences among these competing visions. In both the election and the fierce political tug of war that followed it, political factions and the institutions of the state tested their relative strengths and political acumen. The post-election political struggle exposed the political and constitutional fault lines in the Islamic Republic.

**** The Khatami Presidency

The issues at stake in the Majlis election are best understood against the background of developments during the first three years of Khatami’s presidency. Khatami was elected president in 1997 with a substantial majority. He galvanized voters by stressing the rule of law, protection of the rights and privacy of Iranians, tolerance for a variety of views, and openness

to the outside world. As president, he eased restrictions on the print media, while his minister of culture, Ataollah Mohajerani, issued dozens of licenses for new newspapers and magazines, giving rise to a flourishing and vibrant press in which major political issues were debated. Book publishing and cultural activity received a new lease on life. Greater freedom of association allowed older political and professional associations to renew activity and new ones to be established. In 1999, for the first time in the history of the Islamic Republic, elections were held for village, town, and city councils, creating thousands of representative bodies at the local level, although it remained to be seen how effective these councils would prove in practice. Khatami insisted on the removal of the notorious minister of intelligence (state security), Ali Fallahian, who had been implicated in the assassination of Iranian dissidents abroad and intellectuals and opposition figures at home.

Khatami also brought about significant change in foreign policy. He improved relations with the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia’s Heir Apparent Abdallah became the highest Saudi official to visit Iran since the Islamic Revolution when he attended the Organization of Islamic Conference summit in Teheran in December 1997—an indication Khatami was able to generate much greater trust in Iran’s intentions among the Gulf states. In September 1979, Khatami paved the way for improved relations with European countries by giving the EU written assurances that Iran had no intention of enforcing the death sentence that Iran’s late leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, had pronounced in 1989 against the British writer Salman Rushdie. Rushdie’s novel, The Satanic Verses, contained passages Khomeini had deemed insulting to Islam. The “death edict,” which no previous Iranian leader had dared explain away, had bedeviled Iran-EU relations for nearly a decade. In a television interview with CNN in January 1998, Khatami invited Americans to join Iranians in a “thoughtful dialogue,” clearly an attempt to begin the process of repairing an 18 ear estrangement between the two countries.

Except for improvement of relations with Europe and the Persian Gulf states, these measures met with stiff resistance from the clerical conservatives and their allies. Khatami faced opposition in the Majlis, where conservatives could usually muster a majority. Although Khatami named the cabinet, the principal levers of power, including the judiciary, the intelligence agencies, national radio and television, and the military and security services—the ministry of

intelligence, the police, the Revolutionary Guards, the army and the Basijو a paramilitary force used for crowd control and internal security—came under the purview of the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Khamenei tended to side with the conservatives.

Teheran’s powerful and popular mayor, Gholam Hosain Karbaschi, who had helped engineer Khatami’s electoral victory, was put on trial in 1998 on specious corruption charges, sentenced to five years in jail, and barred from holding public office for 20 years. In June 1998, the Majlis by a no-confidence vote secured the dismissal of Khatami’s interior minister, Abdollah Nouri. The conservatives considered him too lenient in issuing permits for public meetings and the formation of political and professional associations. When Nuri went on to publish a new and outspoken newspaper, Khordadو he was tried and sentenced to five years imprisonment for violating Islamic sanctities. The Majlis also attempted but failed to oust Khatami’s minister of culture, Mohajerani. The clerical thinker Mohsen Kadivar was tried and sentenced to 18 months in jail for articles that questioned the extensive powers and prerogatives claimed for the Leader in the Islamic Republic.

The judiciary closed down several of the new reform-minded papers supportive of Khatami, although the clampdown initially proved ineffective due to Mohajerani’s liberality in granting newspaper publishing licenses. For example, when the first of the popular reformist papers, Jameeh, was closed down in summer 1998, it reappeared in two days with an identical format, editorial staff, and reporters but under a different name, Tus. When Tus was shut down, it reappeared under yet a third name. (The newspaper was to undergo five name transformations before the judicial authorities shut it down for good in the year 2000.) The conservatives deployed a club- and chain-wielding vigilante group, the Ansar-e Hezbollah, or the Helpers of the Party of God, to break up reformist meetings and lectures. Nouri and Mohajerani were assaulted and insulted by Ansar operatives in September 1998, after leaving Friday prayers on the Teheran University campus.

In winter 1998 a number of intellectuals and opposition leaders were mysteriously killed, some in their own homes. However, the press persisted in pursuing the issue of the “serial killings,” as they came to be called, and Khatami insisted on an investigation. The intelligence ministry was finally forced to admit its own agents were responsible for the murders, although it claimed these operatives were acting without authorization. The principal intelligence agent accused in the case, Said Emami, was in jail awaiting trial when the authorities announced he had committed suicide by drinking a bottle of hair removal preparation. The secret killings stopped, but in March 2000 there was a nearly successful assassination attempt against Said Hajjarian, a key adviser to Khatami and one of the leading thinkers of the reform movement. Earlier, in July 1999, when students protested the closure of another reformist newspaper, Salaamو police forces and Ansar club-wielders joined in an attack on Teheran University dormitories. The dormitories were trashed and several students injured. Meantime, Leader Khamenei largely aborted Khatami’s initiative toward the U.S. by ruling out negotiations or relations with America.

The conservatives also used the pulpit, Friday sermons, and newspapers to denounce Khatami’s policies, although the president was rarely mentioned by name. One leading cleric suggested that those defending freedom really wanted a passport for sexual license. “In legislation, Islam and democracy cannot in any way be reconciled,” he asserted. Another cleric accused the supporters of the president of pursuing “Satanic” goals. In remarks made to a closed meeting of Revolutionary Guards officers and leaked to the press, the Guards commander, General Rahim Safavi, said liberals were in control of the universities, clerics had become agents of deceit, and the liberal press was undermining national security. “Our tongue is our sword,” he said, and warned that the Guards would have to “cut the throats and tongues” of those who were undermining the regime.[14]

The country prepared for the election to the sixth Majlis against this background of intense rivalry between elements supporting and opposing Khatami and his reforms.

**** The 2000 Majlis Election

The 2000 election was mainly a contest between two loose coalitions. Some 18 political parties and groups came together as the 2nd Khordad Front, taking their name from the date in May, 1997 when Khatami was elected president. Some 15 conservative organizations came together as the Followers of the Line of the Imam and the Leader, indicating by their choice of name their devotion to both the founder of the Islamic Republic, Imam Khomeini, and the current leader, Khamenei. The 2nd Khordad Front was led by the Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF), headed by Reza Khatami, the president's brother. It included the Executives of Construction, a centrist political group of high-level civil servants and technocrats with close ties to former president Rafsanjani.

The Executives of Construction had come together to contest the 1996 Majlis elections and supported Khatami's 1997 presidential bid. Although they joined hands with other Khatami supporters for the 2000 election, there were differences between the Khatami camp and the Rafsanjani "Executives." Unlike those closest to Khatami, the Executives of Construction emphasized economic rather than political reform. Rafsanjani and a number of other prominent figures supported by the Executives were not popular with the Khatami reformers. Khatami's Islamic Iran Participation Front and the Servants of Construction agreed to support common lists of candidates in the provinces; but they went their separate ways on candidate lists in Teheran. The 2nd Khordad Front also included the Society of Militant Clerics, one of the two principal clerical organizations in the country, and the Mujahedin of the Islamic Revolution. In the past, both these groups had been identified with the left, were hostile to the private sector, and favored strong state control of the economy and wealth-distribution measures in favor of the poor. But both groups claimed they had moved to center in their political and economic views.

The Followers of the Line of the Imam and the Leader were led by the country's principal clerical organization, the Association of Combatant Clerics of Teheran (not to be confused with the Society of Militant Clerics), which had dominated the Majlis and the principal offices of state for a decade and more and included various Islamic associations. The coalition also included other groups and organizations: the Mo'talefah group, the Moderation

and Unity Party, Ckekad-e Azad-Aniskan, 6-اهلالاس۱ھل Isafran-e Enqelab-e Islami.

A third group, calling itself the “nationalist-religious union” and composed primarily of centrist intellectuals and professionals who were not at home (or not accepted in) either of these two large coalitions, also contested the election. The group included many prominent figures, including those associated with the Iran Liberation Movement. But its candidates did not make a strong showing in the subsequent balloting. A number of independents also ran for seats.

Each of the two large coalitions represented a spectrum of political views, and neither coalition issued a detailed platform. Nevertheless, for the voters, the choices were, in a general way, clear. The 2nd Khordad reformists ran as the agents of change, the conservatives as the defenders of the status quo. The reformists promised an expansion of press and political freedoms; the conservatives opposed such a policy. The reformists emphasized the primacy of the Majlis, political parties, and civic associations; the conservatives emphasized the authority of the Leader and institutions under conservative control, such as the Revolutionary Guards, the Council of Guardians, and the judiciary. The reformers wished to curb, the conservatives to maintain, the power of the Council of Guardians to bar “unqualified” candidates from running for elected office. The reformers appeared to desire an official dialogue with America; the conservatives opposed such talks.

On voting day, the voter turnout, at around 70 percent, was high; voters by a large majority supported the Khatami reformists.

**** The Conservatives Feel Threatened

The conservatives had good reason to feel disquiet at the election results. They reflected an almost wholesale rejection of the conservatives and the status quo and an embrace of the idea of change and reform. Of 290 Majlis seats, 224 were decided in the first round. (Candidates need 25 percent of the vote to win in the first round; if there is no clear winner, the two top vote-

getters for each seat go on to a second round.) The 2nd Khordad coalition and the centrist Executives secured a majority of seats and were expected to solidify this majority in second-round elections in the 66 constituencies where there was no clear winner.[15] The Islamic Iran Participation Front, the political group headed by Khatami's brother, and its allies secured the largest single bloc of votes in the new Majlis. In the all-important Teheran constituency, the reformist coalition won 29 of 30 seats. It made almost a clean sweep of other large cities, including Isfahan, Mashad, and Shiraz. The protest nature of the vote was unmistakable, at least in Teheran. The candidate with the highest number of votes in the capital, with over 60 percent of the total votes cast, was President Khatami's brother, a political unknown until the election campaign. The second highest number of votes in Teheran went to another political novice, All Reza Nouri, brother of former interior minister Abdollah Nouri, who had lost his ministerial post and subsequently went to prison for his liberal policies and views. Jamileh Kadivar, who secured the third highest number of votes, was the sister of the dissident cleric Mohsen Kadivar.

Even more striking was the rout of the conservatives and the rejection of the status quo. Only 70 incumbents were reelected. Fewer than 35 of those elected were clerics. Some of the most prominent conservatives, including Mohammad Reza Bahonar, Hasan Ruhani, and Mohammad Ali Movahedi-Kermani, all three- and four-term Majlis deputies, failed to be reelected. Bahonar was deputy Speaker and a majority leader in the fourth and the outgoing fifth Majlis. Ruhani was an influential member of parliament's foreign affairs committee and secretary-general of the powerful National Security Council. Generally respected, he too fell victim to the anti-establishment sentiments of the electorate. Movahedi-Kermani, the Leader's personal representative to the Revolutionary Guards, was defeated, as were several other multi-term deputies, singled out because they had led the opposition to Khatami's policies and ministers.

Former intelligence minister Fallahian and former Revolutionary Guards commander Mohsen Rezai culled few votes.

Particularly striking was the fate of Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The two-term former president (1989–97) and former speaker of the Majlis (1980–89)

was until 1997 regarded as the second most powerful man in Iran. As president, he had nurtured a reputation as a pragmatist and a centrist; and in his first term as president, he liberalized economic policy and eased up on social (but not political) controls. He helped keep out of parliament and eventually neutralize the radicals on the left. But his policies were not always popular with the hardliners in the Majlis. Rafsanjani's lieutenants formed the Executives of Construetion to contest the 1996 Majlis elections because the conservative and politically dominant Association of Combatant Clerics of Teheran refused to allow Rafsanjani to include a few of his own choices on a common list of candidates for Teheran. As already noted, the Executives, headed by Teheran mayor Karbaschi, had helped ensure Khatami's electoral victory in 1997.

However, Rafsanjani's standing among reformists and Iranians hungry for change deteriorated during his second term as president, when he failed to stand up to the conservatives as they tightened political and social controls. His family was believed to be involved in lucrative business enterprises. He had done nothing in 1994–96, when several prominent writers were found dead in mysterious circumstances. He grew critical of the reformers, and identified increasingly with the conservatives, as the reformist movement gained breadth and depth under Khatami and reformists began to talk of fundamental change in the political system. When he announced his candidacy for the 2000 parliament, he claimed to be above factional politics. But reformers saw him as the conservatives' secret weapon. They believed he would be elected speaker of the new Majlis and rein in the reform movement. The identification with the conservatives badly hurt Rafsanjani. He barely squeaked into the Majlis, coming in 27th among Teheran's 30 deputies. Widespread rumors suggested that only tampering with the vote count allowed him to be elected at all. His daughter, Faezeh Hashemi, who in 1996 secured the second highest number of votes in Teheran, failed to get elected at all, finishing a humiliating 54th, primarily because during the campaign, she had supported her father and attacked her father's critics in the reformist camp.

**** The Reformist Agenda

Two other sources of concern for the conservatives were the reformist agenda and the role of the reformist press. Members of the reformist majority in the incoming Majlis announced an agenda that threatened to consolidate the political opening made possible under Khatami and to challenge the centers of power still controlled by the conservatives, including the judiciary, the intelligence agencies, the Council of Guardians, the Revolutionary Guards, and the bonyads, the parastatal foundations that own hundreds of expropriated industries and enterprises. The bonyads played a significant role in the economy. Reluctant to give up their own lucrative holdings, they acted as a barrier to privatization. They were suspected of siphoning off funds to leading clerics, which were then used for patronage purposes. Yet they gave no public accounting of their operations.

Reports in the reformist press and statements by incoming reformist deputies suggested that the new Majlis would pass laws to guarantee greater freedom of the press, assembly, and association and to ease the formation of political parties; exercise Majlis oversight of the ministry of intelligence and national radio and television, whose news coverage was one-sided and favored the conservatives; look into the sources of wealth of high officials (many of whom were clerics); insist on transparency and accountability in the bonyads; and end involvement of the security agencies, the Revolutionary Guards, and other organizations in business and profitmaking operations. Deputies suggested the Majlis would conduct its own investigations into the “serial killings” of 1998, the attack on Student dormitories in the summer of 1999, and the March 2000 attempt on the life of Said Hajjarian.

The new Majlis was also expected to attempt to de-politicize the judiciary and to reform or do away with the special press and clerical courts—institutions used by the conservatives to shut down newspapers, jail dissidents, and stifle criticism; to eliminate what they described as “multiple centers of power,” a clear reference to the tendency of official and quasi-official organizations and individual clerics to pursue private agendas not approved by the cabinet; and to restrict the authority of the Council of Guardians to disqualify candidates running for public office.[16]

**** Role of the Press

The reformist press had become a powerful instrument in the reformers' arsenal. True, several newspapers, including Resalat و Jomhuri-ye Islami, Kayhan و and Abrar, spoke for the conservative cause. But the new reformist papers dominated the political discourse and captured the readers' imagination. Despite bans and closures, the circulation enjoyed by a succession of reformist newspapers— jameek, Neshat, Kbrdad, Bahar, Entekkab, Gunagun, Sobh-e Emruz, 'Asr-e Azadegan, Fath, Mosharekat, and others—far exceeded the circulation of the conservative dailies. A group of articulate and talented commentators wrote for the reformist press. These commentators helped popularize ideas regarding civil society, individual rights, judicial reform, accountability of officials and state institutions, transparency of government operations, and a degree of separation of state and religion. They called for an end to the clerical monopoly of power. They played an important watchdog role, drawing attention to excesses of the security agencies or what they regarded as the politicized nature of the courts. For example, unlike the conservative newspapers, the reformist press gave wide publicity to Nouri's spirited defense during his trial, and they extensively reported the wreckage caused by security forces at Teheran University student dormitories during the summer 1999 attack. When the police commander and 17 officers charged and tried for the dormitory attack were acquitted, the reformist press expressed astonishment and outrage.

These newspapers served as quasi-official party organs (as did those on the right), publicizing the reformist cause and helping bring about the reformist victory. Broadly speaking, the reformist press, along with the reformist parties, offered an alternative to the ruling conservative clerics and their system of rule. Articles by the well-known commentator Akbar Ganji, in Sobh-e Emruz and Asr-eAzadegan, appeared to have particularly grave implications for the regime and some of its most prominent figures. Ganji indirectly implicated shadowy elements in the ministry of intelligence, other security agencies, and the Revolutionary Guards, as well as unnamed senior officials and clerics, in the 1998 "serial killings," the attempt on Hajjarian's life, and earlier murders of intellectuals and political dissidents. Ganji hinted at clerics who issued

fatwas, or religious decrees, sanctioning killings and wrote of “grey eminences” and “shadowy figures” who met in dark rooms to agree on eliminating intellectuals and political figures. Ganji seemed specifically to target Rafsanjani, during whose presideney, unresolved killings had taken place.[17]

After the Majlis election, several other journalists took up this issue. The well-known columnist Emad ad-Din Baqi extensively echoed Ganji’s charges in Fath. Hamid-Reza Jala’ipur, criticizing the judiciary for lack of objectivity in trials of journalists and dissidents, referred to attempts of a “secret government” and “a government within a government” to stifle reform.[18] Addressing Rafsanjani, Sadeq Zibakalam wrote in another article: “The nation wants to hear from you [as to] what happened to 70–80 [killed] writers and political opponents over the last ten years. On the command of which person or official were they murdered?”[19] Such charges found their way into the provincial press.[20] Even an adviser to President Khatami talked of “forces unknown to the president” who, he said, were carrying out actions that damaged the government at home and abroad.[21]

Finally, a freer press posed the danger that the extensive powers and prerogatives of the Leader himself would become a subject for discussion, giving rise to demands to circumscribe them. Early in the Khatami presidency, student leaders and columnists had spoken of the desirability of curtailing, or defining more clearly, the powers of the Leader, limiting his tenure (he is now selected for life), and subjecting his conduct in office to greater scrutiny. Although public discussions of this highly sensitive and explosive issue had practically ended by 1999, nevertheless the question of the Leader’s virtually unlimited powers loomed in the background; and there was fear in the Leader’s and the conservative camp that it would be raised again. In 1997, for example, Rahe Now published an essay by Ayatollah Qasem Khoi that seemed to question the need for a supreme religious guide. In 1998, the reformist press carried a statement by Ayatollah Hossein-Ali Montazeri, a cleric prominent in the first decade of the revolution but now out of favor and under house arrest, criticizing the extent to which the Leader interfered in state affairs. In February 2000, in an interview with an Arabic-language newspaper, Sharq al-Awsat, Montazeri condemned “dictatorship by a certain faction that has monopolized Islam and taken to describing its opponents as heretics and

infidels," and said the people have a right to elect, depose, limit the term of, and restrict the power of the Leader.[22]

**** The Conservative Response

Initially, the conservatives appeared to be licking their wounds, disoriented by the sheer size of their electoral defeat. The conservative parliamentary leader, Bahonar, said he and his colleagues needed to take stock of the election results, review the mistakes they had made, and prepare for the next elections. In a Friday sermon on March 3, Ayatollah Jannati, the secretary of the Council of Guardians, urged all Iranians to accept the election verdict: "Some will be satisfied ... and some will be unhappy," he said, "but everybody should accept the results without 'ifs' and 'buts'."[23]

But hardliners in the conservative camp appear to have concluded that the threat posed by the reformist victory and its implications was too serious to be ignored and to have succeeded in shaping the conservative response. The sharp conservative backlash that began in the spring took several forms. The conservatives used the judiciary to close down reformist newspapers and to jail, harass, and silence reformist journalists, intellectuals, and lawyers. The outgoing Majlis put in place supportive legislation. The Council of Guardians attempted to alter the election results and weaken the reformist control of the new Majlis. Conservative clerics and newspapers launched a propaganda campaign designed to depict the most outspoken reformers as a threat to Islam, the revolution, and the security of the state. Finally, the Council of Guardians and the Leader came up with constitutional interpretations and claims designed severely to curtail parliament's authority.

Aware that Khatami and the reformers were very popular among the younger generation, the outgoing Majlis had already raised the voting age from 16 to 17 in the lead-up to the election. In its dying days, in early April, the Majlis approved a new and highly restrictive press law. The judiciary then used this law to move against the reformist press. On April 23, the judicial authorities closed down eight dailies, four weeklies, and one monthly, including Sobh-e Emruzو Fathو and Iran-e Farda. On April 27, they

shut down Asr-e Azadegan and Mosharekat, followed by Bayan in June and Bahar in August. A number of provincial papers were closed as well. In a period of ten weeks, over 20 publications, virtually the entire reformist press, were suppressed. On June 18, over 150 deputies, a majority, in the new Majhs, signed a letter to the chief of thejudiciary asking him to end the newspaper closures, to reverse orders of closure, and to respect the right of journalists to freely express their opinion (by now several journalists had been arrested or faced charges). But the judiciary chief rejected their demands.

In addition to closing down publications, the judiciary tried and jailed several of the most outspoken journalists and editors, including Mashallah Shams ol-Va’ezain, editor of ‘هرSH Azadegan; Latif-Safari, the editor of the banned newspaper Neshat; and Emad ad-Din Baqi of Fath. Shams ol-Va’ezain was sentenced to 30 months, Latif-Safari to 27 months, Baqi to five and a half years. Ganji was jailed in June, pending trial. These journalists generally faced a clutch of charges for writing or publishing articles that allegedly violated Islamic sanctities, undermined state security, incited readers against the institutions of the state, and “confused” public opinion. Often, a complaint by another (conservative) newspaper, or an institution like the Revolutionary Guards, claiming it had been misrepresented or defamed, was enough to trigger charges, arrest, and trial. Between March and August, several other editors and journalists were summoned by the judicial authorities to answer charges or questions in the preliminary stages of an investigation.[24] Although these preliminary interrogations did not necessarily lead to formal charges and trial, they were clearly intended to intimidate the journalists and warn off others.

In April, judicial officials also cracked down on ten or more Iranian intellectuals, lawyers, and journalists and one cleric who attended an academic conference on Iran at the Heinrich Boll Institute in Berlin. At the conference, several of the participants made remarks mildly critical of aspects of the Islamic Republie or conservative policies. For example, Mehrangiz Kar, a lawyer and women’s rights activist, spoke of legal discrimination against women in Iran. Hassan Yusef Eshkevari, the cleric, argued for the possibility of an Islam compatible with pluralism, democracy, and religious tolerance. Ganji spoke of the agenda and prospects of the

reform movement in Iran. All had expressed similar views, orally or in writing, in Iran. But the judiciary now found their views grounds for possible prosecution. In addition, Iranian exiles and dissident groups in Europe had crashed the conference, attempted to disrupt it with verbal interruptions and displays of nudity, and expressing strong opposition to the Islamic Republic. (They also condemned the Iranian participants as collaborators in a reprehensible regime.) Film footage of these activities was widely disseminated on Iranian television; and the participants were condemned by clerics and the conservative press for attending a conference featuring “immoral” activity and attacks on the Islamic Republic. All this served as grounds for additional charges. Almost all the participants were interrogated upon return. Several spent various periods in prison. Over ten of the participants were subsequently put on trial. Six were sentenced to prison terms of 4 to 10 years. Eshkevari was separately tried by the special clerics court and found guilty of “waging war against God” and insulting Islam, crimes that carry the death sentence. Ganji, tried separately by the press court, was sentenced to 10 years in prison and an additional 5 years in internal exile, although an appeals court reduced the prison term to 6 months and overturned the judgment on internal exile. Conservative clerics, politicians, and press used the conference for a broader attack on the whole reform movement.[25]

In June, two lawyers, Shirin Ebadi and Mohsen Rahami, were arrested on charges of taping and disseminating allegedly false allegations made by Farshad Ebrahimi, a self-confessed member ofAnsar-e Hezbollah. In the long and rambling tape (whose contents subsequently received wide publicity), Ebrahimi described his own participation and that of other Ansar elements in breaking up student and reformist meetings. He alleged that in the early 1990s, the Ansar received encouragement and financial assistance, variously, from senior clerics, nationally prominent leaders of hardline conservative political groups, and senior interior ministry officials. He claimed presence at meetings, or personal knowledge of meetings, at which senior clerics and police and security officials had discussed means of causing unrest to undermine Khatami and the 2nd Khordad movement and where the killing of reformists and dissidents was described as religiously permissible.[26]

None of the allegations could be independently confirmed; but the tape or its transcript, clandestinely and widely disseminated, caused a sensation. Ebrahimi appeared to corroborate the allegations made by Ganji, Baqi, and others of clandestine groups in the security agencies and government, or close to the centers of conservative power, who were plotting against the reform movement. Ebadi had agreed to serve as Ebrahimi's lawyer. Rahami (who had served as Nouri's lawyer) was acting on behalf students injured by the police during the summer 1999 Teheran University dormitory attack. Both lawyers cited duty to clients to explain why they taped Ebrahimi's remarks. By their own account, they had in any case immediately turned over Ebrahimi's tape to the authorities. But Ebadi and Rahami were tried behind closed doors in July on charges of disseminating falsehoods and endangering the security of the state, and were each barred for 5 years from practicing law.

The Council of Guardians meantime nullified the election results in nine constituencies, all seats won by reformists. In three other constituencies, it cancelled a number of ballot boxes, throwing the election to the conservative rather than the previously announced reformist candidate. These decisions led to disturbances in Gachsaran, Arak, Firuzkuh, Khalkhal, and other towns. The Council of Guardians also alleged improprieties in the Teheran elections, where the interior ministry had given the reformist list 29 of the 30 Teheran seats. It began a time-consuming and indecisive recount of the ballots, which it proved unable to complete, and repeatedly delayed announcing the Teheran results. Finally, on May 18, three months after the election and only a week before the new Majlis was to open, the Council of Guardians wrote the Leader that it was unable to validate the Teheran ballot due to irregularities. Khamenei, however, citing time constraints and other considerations, instructed the Guardians to announce the Teheran results on the basis of their best information to date. The Teheran results, finally endorsed by the Council of Guardians and based on the Guardians' own partial recount and investigation, differed only in two respects from the results originally announced by the interior ministry: A candidate of the "nationalist-religious union" who had been previously confirmed was dropped in favor of a conservative candidate, and Rafsanjani was bumped up from 29th to 20th on the Teheran list. Rafsanjani, unpopular with the reformists and certain he would not be elected speaker, resigned his seat before taking it up.

The interventions of the Council of Guardians reduced the reformist majority but did not materially affect the balance of forces in the new Majlis. In the runoffs, held in early May, the 2nd Khordad Front had won 47 of 66 seats, the conservatives 10, and independents 9, giving the reformers solidly in the Khatami camp a comfortable majority. Estimates differed as to the size of this majority. But when parliament convened at the end of May, with 248 deputies present, analysts generally agreed that the Islamic Iran Participation Front, the president's own party (and itself something of a coalition), had by itself won over 150 seats.[27] The reformers appeared in a position comfortably to shape the legislative agenda.

**** The Ideological Counter-Offensive

In the months following the February election, conservative clerics and political figures also used the pulpit and the press to wage an extensive war of words against the reformers. This ideological counter-offensive preceded, then accompanied, the crackdown on the reformist press journalists, and intellectuals and was designed in part to set the stage and provide the rationale for it. The themes of sermons, newspaper articles, and statements by official spokesmen— for example, of the judiciary or the Revolutionary Guards—were similar: Internal enemies posed a threat to Islam, the revolution, and the country's independence. The reformist press was intentionally or inadvertently undermining the people's faith in religion, the institutions of the state, and the revolution itself. The ultimate aim was to divorce religion from governance, to destroy the revolution, and to open the door to foreign domination of the country. "Reform," however attractive in principle, was often a cover for these dangerous ends.

A number of clerics, newspapers, and political figures led this campaign. But the campaign was shaped primarily by Khamenei himself. As Leader, he spoke with the most authoritative voice. In a series of major statements between March and August 2000, he set the tone for the campaign, articulated its major themes, and elaborated its rationale. He clearly feared that the momentum and demand for reform would get out of hand, lead to unrest, or threaten the very essence of the Islamic Republic. Over a period of

several months, he gradually elaborated an extensive argument against the drive for a freer press and a more open political system. His speeches and sermons often set the stage for direct action by the judicial authorities. He set down the red lines beyond which criticism would not be tolerated. He said he welcomed competition and reasonable rivalry between the two parliamentary factions. But he took the lead in emphasizing the distinction (common in conservative discourse) between khodi and or “US and them,” “insiders and outsiders,” and “supporters and وghayr-e khodi enemies” of the system. He endorsed the idea of freedom of the press and open debate, but he harshly condemned the reformist press and praised the judiciary that had crushed it. Khamenei initially appeared to support Khatami’s call for economic and administrative reform, but by the summer he was labeling the call for reform a foreign plot to dominate Iran.

In a Friday sermon in April, Khamenei drew a distinction between “legitimate” and “illegitimate” violence. He condemned lawlessness and thuggery as illegitimate uses of violence. But he said the state is justified in using “legitimate violence,” even in applying the death sentence, against lawbreakers and trouble-makers.[28] The sentiments he expressed appeared on the surface unexceptionable—a routine justification of the legal use of force by the state and perhaps even a condemnation of the vigilantism of the right. But Khamenei was also responding to critics of alleged police and judiciary brutality (and perhaps to critics of capital punishment) and laying the ground for the arrest ofjournalists, lawyers, and intellectuals that followed.

Ten days later, Khamenei launched a sharp attack on the press. A dozen or 15 Reformists, Conservatives ... Parliamentary Elections 25 papers, he said, had become the “bases of the enemy” and were “directed from one headquarters.” They were causing “discord and division, spreading disorder, and implanting confusion and pessimism among the people.” They were undermining Islamic sanctities. They were promoting the cause of “enemy agents” and “attempting to discredit faithful, loyal and useful persons” in the Revolutionary Guards, the army, and the Basij forces.[29] The crackdown on the reformist press followed hard on the heels of these remarks. In May, in a sermon devoted largely to the theme of “insiders” and “outsiders,” and in what appeared as an attempt to split the reformist ranks,

Khamenei demanded that loyal political groups distance themselves from those he described as enemies of the Islamic Republic. “Dregs of the former regime,” secularists who hadjoined the revolution but never believed in Islamic government, and Iranians supported by “spy networks,” foreign radios, and foreign money, he said, were now “chanting reformist slogans” and talking about “freedom and the rule of the people and democracy.” Their real aim was to change the Islamic nature of the regime and allow “the American masters to take control of our economy, our culture and our social affairs.” Political factions loyal to the regime, he said, “must make their stance clear ... define their borders.”[30]

In other statements, Khamenei defended Council of Guardians’ rulings invalidating elections in certain districts; and he defended the judiciary against critics who questioned its neutrality. These critics, he said, “intend to weaken the judiciary in order to ensure it will not have the power to act.”[31]

In his various statements, Khamenei remained careful to appear supportive of the president, describing him as a pious Muslim, a disciple of Ayatollah Khomeini, and a cleric dedicated to the principles of the Islamic Republic. In the spring, he endorsed the principles of Khatami’s reform program. Although he said nothing of expanding the political space, he underlined the need for administrative and economic rationalization and for dealing with red tape, the over-staffed bureaucracy, and official corruption. However, returning to the reform theme in July, his tone was far less supportive. He cast doubt on the purpose of reforms that, he alleged, were being enthusiastically supported by outside powers, including the United States and England. “What is the enemy’s objective when he expresses support for Iranian reforms?” he asked. The answer: Foreign enemies sought to destabilize and destroy the Islamic Republic, just as they had helped destroy the Soviet Union through Gorbachev’s reforms. Khatami and other officials, he noted, “have repeatedly said our reforms are Islamic and revolutionary. Very well, that is fine. But we need more precise explanations and a clearer picture.”[32]

These themes were reiterated by conservative spokesmen. Rafsanjani defended the newspaper closures. “They are putting freedom before Islam, freedom before faith,” he said. By belittling the regime’s accomplishments,

journalists “pave the way for those who want to come in and take over the country.”[33] The Association of the Seminary Teachers ofQom described the reformist press as “mouthpieces and stooges of foreign powers.” In a Friday sermon, Ayatollah Ebrahim Amini asserted, “these newspapers call the Islamic system into question. They call the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult into question. They sometimes even call Islam into question.”[34] Another senior cleric invited believers to kill unnamed reformers.[35] After Khamenei’s remarks on “legitimate violence,” the Revolutionary Guards issued an official statement calling for unity and warning unnamed “enemies” opposing the regime that they “will feel the reverberating impact of the hammer of the Islamic revolution in their skull ... they will never [again] be able to engage in hatching plots.”[36] The declaration caused considerable alarm. Rumors that the Guards intended to overthrow Khatami grew so widespread that the Guards had to issue a second statement denying they were planning a coup. Clerics and the conservative press took up the distinction Khamenei had made between “Islamic-style” reform which was right for the country, and “American-style” reform which they condemned.

**** A New Constitutional Theory

The Council of Guardians and Khamenei also advanced novel interpretations of the constitution. These were designed to curtail the authority of the new Majlis in the crucial areas of legislative powers and oversight. In April, in response to a move by some members of the outgoing Majlis to exercise oversight of the judiciary, the Council of Guardians ruled that the legislature had no authority to look into the affairs of institutions that came under the purview of the Leader. This meant that, in addition to the judiciary, the Majlis was barred from investigating or scrutinizing the operations of the armed forces and Revolutionary Guards, the broadcast media and the bonyads. The chief officers of all these organizations are appointed by the Leader. When members of the Majlis demurred, the Expediency Council, a body that adjudicates differences between the Council of Guardians and the Majlis, upheld the Council of Guardians in its novel interpretation of the constitution.

On August 6, Khamenei himself intervened to bar the new Majlis from overturning or revising the repressive press law that the judiciary had used in

its press crackdown. Revision of the press law was the first order of business on the agenda of the Majlis when it opened for formal business. In asking the Majlis to drop the matter in a letter he addressed to the Majlis speaker, Khamenei cited a danger that the print media would fall under foreign influence or control and the threat this posed to Islam and to national security.[37] Khamenei did not cite any constitutional grounds for this almost unprecedented attempt at extension of the Leader's authority. Nor did he explicitly instruct the Majlis to drop the press law. But his language pointed in that direction and was so interpreted by Kar-rubi and Khamenei's other clerical supporters. By citing a threat to Islam and state, Khamenei was implicitly invoking his duty to protect both. Moreover, the Speaker made the constitutional argument for Khamenei that Khamenei did not explicitly make for himself. He described Khamenei's letter as a hukm-e huku-mati, a term applied to rulings by the Leader involving matters of high state interest. Karrubi also reiterated a claim advanced, but also challenged, in the past, that the Leader has absolute power and is owed absolute obedience. He admonished deputies unhappy with Khamenei's directive that they owed the Leader such obedience.

These two rulings were fraught with implications for the Majlis and the constitutional order. The idea that the Majlis lacked authority to scrutinize organizations that came under the Leader's purview was entirely novel and bound to prove problematic. In the 1990s, the Majlis had in fact investigated the largest of the bonyads, the Foundation for the Disinherited, and the operations of national radio and television. The report resulting from the latter inquiry led to the dismissal of the broadcast media chief. The Majlis enacted the laws that governed each of these organizations. The bonyads aside, each year it voted the budgets of the institutions coming under the Leader's purview. Even the bonyads received various forms of assistance by the acts of the Majlis. Article 76 of the constitution empowers the Majlis "to investigate and examine all the affairs of the country." To place a group of state institutions beyond the scrutiny of the Majlis was bound to raise practical and constitutional issues.

The expanded claim implicitly made for the Leader's prerogatives in the press law case was likely to prove equally controversial. The constitution empowers the Leader to set the broad policies of the Islamic Republic. But the authority of the Leader to dictate to the Majlis even on major legislation

was by no means an established principle. The constitution lays down a procedure for dealing with “problematic” legislation. The Council of Guardians can veto legislation it considers in violation of the constitution or Islam; and if the Majlis disagrees with the ruling, the Expediency Council has authority to adjudicate differences between the Guardians and the deputies. It remained unclear why Khamenei chose to bypass this process. Khamenei’s intervention left the Majlis with two unpalatable choices. The majority could pursue the press law and invite a confrontation with the Leader or cause the Leader to lose face; or the Majlis could abandon the press law and implicitly concede that the Leader had the power to dictate to the Majlis the issues it could discuss and the bills it could enact into law. Such a concession could gravely diminish, if not emasculate, the Majlis’s powers.

In February 2000, the reformist coalition, riding the wave of an impressive electoral victory, seemed poised to change in significant ways the political landscape in Iran. At the very least, the reformers and their supporters expected greatly to expand the political space that Khatami’s election three years earlier had made possible. By August, a bare six months later, the balance of forces seemed dramatically altered. The reformist press was shut down, reformist journalists and intellectuals were in jail, Khamenei had sided decisively with the antireform forces, and new interpretations of the constitution, if allowed to stand, threatened greatly to diminish the role and authority of the Majlis.

The reform movement itself was at a critical crossroads and faced difficult choices. In addition, the confrontation between reformers and conservatives had raised fundamental constitutional issues regarding the extent and limits of the authority of the Leader, the Majlis, the Council of Guardians, and other state institutions. To whom, Iranians were bound to ask themselves, was the government ultimately accountable? If not in the immediate future, then in the longer term, these unresolved issues threatened to plunge the country into a serious constitutional crisis.

[14] For these citations and further details, see Shaul Bakhash, “Iran’s Unlikely President,” The New York Review of Books, 5 November 1998, p. 50.

[15] Estimates of the exact breakdown of seats among the reformists, conservatives, and independents differed, depending on whether the Executives of Construction and smaller groups believed sympathetic to but not directly affiliated with the 2nd Khordad Front are included in the reformist totals. However, there was general agreement that the reformers had a comfortable majority in the first round, although this was no guarantee they would vote as a bloc on every issue. For a more detailed breakdown of final figures, see further in the contribution and note 14.

[16] The agenda of the reformists can be culled partly from statements made during the election campaign, numerous scattered statements made by reformist leaders and individual deputies after the election, and commentary by newspaper editors and columnists associated with the reformist cause. For a reference to some of the issues on the reformist agenda, see “Ideology is Dead: Now the Rule of Law Will Prevail,” an interview with Hamid Reza Jala‘ipur, editor of ‘Asr-e Azade-gan, in La Republica, 22 February 2000, cited in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Near East and South Asia (hereafter FBIS/NESA), 22 February 2000. Also interview with Majlis deputy Karbalai, “We Will Definitely Not Vote for Hashemi-Rafsanjani as Majlis Speaker,” Asr-e Azadegan, 4 March 2000, cited in FBIS/NESA, 4 June 2000ː and Howard Schneider, “New Parliament Readies Changes in Iran,” Washington Post, 8 July 2000.

[17] See, for example, Ganji’s interview, “Serial Murders, Elections and Threats,” with Sobh-e Ernruz, 21 February 2000; “Akbar Ganji: Assassination Attempts Cannot Be Prevented as Long as Naqdi Is Head of the Intelligence and Security Branch,” Sobh-e Ernruz, 2 April 2000, as cited in FBIS/NESA, 2 April 2000. In addition to his articles, Ganji published a collection of his essays in a book, Tarik-khaneh-ye Ashbah [The Dark House of Ghosts] (Teheran: Tarh-e Now, 1378/1999), elaborating on these charges. For a summary and an interview with Ganji, see Robert Fisk, “The Untold Story of President Rafsanjani of Iran

and the Killing of Intellectuals” and “Revealed: Role of a President in the Murder of His People,” The Independent, 8 March 2000. In addition to Ganji, at least two other journalists wrote books in a similar vein. See Shahram Rafi’zadeh, Shilik be Eslahat [Firing (a Bullet) at Reform], (Teheran: Aknun Publications, 1379/2000), and Hamid ٦ لأً ؟>حةلأًَ\ Dat jostekju-ye Mahjel-e jenayat-karan: Baz-khani-ye Patvandeh-ye Qatl-ka لأًةةئ١ keza of the Society of Criminals: A Review of the File of Political Murders] (Teheran: Negah-e Emruz, 1378/1990).

[18] Baqi was arrested and tried for these allegations. Forjala‘ipur, see his article, “A Secret Government,” in Gunagun, 13 July 2000, cited in FBIS/NESA, 21 July 2000.

[19] Sadeq Zibakalam, “Hashemi Rafsanjani and Another Look at 29 Bahman,” Asr-e Azadegan, 28 February 2000, cited in FBIS/NESA, 6 April 2000.

[20] For the provincial press, see, for example, ئءء Final Curtain’ for ‘Gray Cardinals’,” Otnid-e Zanjan, 10 May 2000, cited in FBIS/NESA, 20 June 2000.

[21] Susan Sachs, “As Ballots are Counted, Iran’s Moderates Fear Backlash,” an interview with presidential adviser Hosain Valeh, NewYork Times, 22 February 2000.

[22] Cited in FBIS/NESA, 25 May 2000.

[23] FBIS/NESA, 3 March, 2000

[24] These included the president’s brother, Mohammad Reza Khatami, of Mosharekat; the Leader’s brother, Hadi Khamenei, of Hayat-e Now; Jala’ipur of Asr-e Azadegan; Ali-Akbar Mohtashami of Bayan; Morteza Alviri of Hamshahri; and Fereydun Valinejad, the managing director of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA). Unlike the state-controlled broadcast media, IRNA did not slant its reporting in favor of the conservatives. At least two provincial journalists were also jailed, but reporting on provincial newspaper closures and arrests were not always comprehensive.

[25] In addition to Mehrangiz Kar, Eshkevari, and Ganji, the Iranian participants who subsequently got into trouble with the authorities (as far as could be determined from published reports) included Shahla Lahiji, a publisher; Ali Afshari, a student leader; Ezzatollah Sahabi, publisher of the subsequently banned Iran-e Farda and a member of the Iran Liberation Movement, a centrist political movement barely tolerated by the authorities; journalist Jala’ipur; writer Ali-RezaAlavi-Tabar; and Changiz Pahlavan, an academic, sociologist, and writer. Kar, Eshkevari, Ganji, Lahiji, Afshari, and Sahabi all spent various periods in jail. At the time of writing, Alavi-Tabar and Jala’ipur had both been summoned for questioning. Pahlavan did not immediately return to Iran.

[26] Two versions of the transcript of the tape appeared to be in circulation, although differences between them were not major. One version, translated from AlSharq al-Awsat, 4 June 2000, appeared in FBIS/NESA, 6 July 2000.

[27] Behzad Nabavi, a leader of the Mujahedin of the Islamic Revolution and one of the architects of the 2nd Khordad Front, calculated after the runoffs in May that the 2nd Khordad coalition, its affiliates, and supporters held 200 seats, the conservatives 58, and independents 18. (The religious minorities accounted for 5 seats, while 9 additional seats, in constituencies where the vote had been invalidated by the Council of Guardians, remained to be filled.) See FBIS/NESA 7 May 2000, quoting Nabavi’s remarks published in Iranو and FBIS/NESA, 8 May 2000, citing the same Nabavi interview as

reported by IRNA. According to other reports, seats in 11 constituencies had been invalidated and remained to be filled in runoffs. Nabavi suggested that some 150 deputies were members of the Islamic Iran Participation Front (IIPF), the party run by Khatami's brother, which constitutes the core Khatami group in parliament. I have added the results of the Teheran vote (not finalized when Nabavi spoke) to Nabavi's figures to get the above totals.

But Nabavi's figures appear inflated. The votes cast in the House in elections for the officers of the new Majlis seemed to provide a better gauge of the distribution of forces in the new parliament. Mehdi Karrubi of the Militant Clerics Society, a compromise and supposedly centrist candidate that the Khatami camp was persuaded to accept even though he was not their first choice, became Speaker, with 186 out of 249 votes cast. Karrubi could count on conservative votes but probably lost some reformist ones. Behzad Nabavi and Mohammad Reza Khatami were elected first and second deputy Speakers, with, respectively, 155 and 135 votes, which suggests that, the conservatives aside, the substantial bloc of some 50–60 votes of deputies affiliated with the Militant Clerics Society, the small bloc of about 15 deputies belonging to the Executives of Construction, and some independents would not always vote with the Khatami people. The usually reliable Payam-e Emruz (Tir/Mordad 1379, p. 40) reported that 150) of the deputies were fully committed to the 2nd Khordad agenda. This is very close to the number that Nabavi, in the remarks cited above, described as members of Khatami's own party, the IIPF. In a May 31 despatch to Agence France-Presse, Kianouche Dorrani also gave the IIPF 150 seats in the new Majlis. Even 150 votes would give the pro-Khatami faction a solid majority, with likely additional votes coming from affiliates and supporters.

[28] Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, cited in FBIS/NESA, 14 April 2000.

[29] Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, cited in FBIS/NESA, 20 April 2000.

[30] “Khamenei Sermon Stresses Islam, Unity,” FBIS/NESA, 12 May 2000.

[31] “Khamenei Addresses Judicial Officials,” FBIS/NESA, 27 June 2000. I have slightly corrected the translation.

[32] “Khameiei’s 9 July Address to Scholars, Senior Officials,” FBIS/NESA, 11 July 2000.

[33] Susan Sachs, “Top Iranian Cleric Defends Closing of Reformist Publications,” New York Times, 29 April, 2000.

[34] Seminary teachers, in ‘Asr-e Azadegan, 8 April 2000, cited in FBIS/NESA, 13 April 2000. Ayatollah Amini, in FBIS/NESA, 8 May 2000.

[35] See reference in Susan Sachs, “Iran Reformers Feeling Pressed by Hardliners,” New York Times, 25 April 2000.

[36] “IRGC Issues Statement Supporting Khamenei,” FBIS/NESA, 16 April 2000.

[37] The text of the letter appears in both Hamshahri andjomhuri-ye Islami of 7 August 2000.

*** Chapter 3: Civil-Military Relations in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Ahmed s. Hashim

The role of the military in Iranian politics seems essentially unexplored when examined against the backdrop of the enormous output of literature on civil-military relations generated in the past four decades on societies as disparate as Argentina and Zimbabwe. Studies of Iran have consumed a great deal of scholarly energies. Historians, sociologists, and political scientists have applied their diverse skills to reach some sort of reasonable understanding concerning the origins and consequences of the Pahlavi dynasty for Iran; the 1979 Iranian revolution; and the evolution of the Islamic Republic since then. Over the past decade and a half, there has been a proliferation of works dealing with the performance of the Iranian military during the Iran-Iraq War, the post-war modernization programs of the Iranian armed forces, and Iran's attempts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

However, the actual link between politics and the military appears to have been generally neglected in the literature. Iran has never of course enjoyed the dubious distinction of constant military intervention or rule along the lines of so many post-WWII "developing" states. Indeed, it stands in stark contrast to its immediate neighbors, such as Pakistan, Iraq, and Turkey, where military establishments have repeatedly intervened in the political process over the course of the past several decades.

Few scholars in the field of comparative politics or of Iranian studies saw the necessity of studying the sociopolitical role of the Iranian military when they examined the monumental 1979 revolution.[38] The lack of attention given to the military dimensions of revolutions arises out of the tendency among most scholars to believe that once the underlying socioeconomic and political causes of revolution are in place, revolution is practically inevitable.[39] This is ahistorical. No one disputes that short-, medium-, and long-term causes of revolution are key to an understanding of why a revolution occurs. Indeed, revolutions have been one of the most fruitful areas of study in comparative politics. Scholars have constructed elaborate theories and then applied them to case studies.[40] Still, students of revolutions should pay closer attention to the fears of revolutionaries—often available in their writings after they have seized power—who have to deal with the potential backlash of military power as they set out on their endeavor. It was Lenin, the archetypal revolutionary, who stated: "No revolution of the masses can triumph without the help of a portion of the armed forces that sustained the old regime."[41] This help can range from actively siding with the

revolutionaries to merely standing by and watching the ancien regime succumb to the revolutionary tide.

There is little that represents a consistent and analytical attempt to look at the Iranian military in its own political and social right. More broadly, there is little that attempts to link the Iranian military experience to the universal literature on military sociology and politics, with its emphasis on how and why soldiers are drawn into the political process and the way they act on this involvement. Finally, what little that exists on Iranian civil-military relations fails to compare or contrast the Iranian military experience with that of other Middle Eastern states and other developing countries.

There are, of course, many societies in which civil-military relations remain unexplored. In some societies, where the potential for serious domestic conflict is all too real, the neglected link between the military and politics is especially surprising. The Islamic Republic of Iran is currently in the midst of domestic turmoil; if the legitimacy of the state and its ideology were to witness a catastrophic collapse, much of politics would then be reduced to the exercise of coercion. All social structures are dependent to some degree on the use of force, but there is a difference between putative and applied force, and the distinction is eroded where the state faces a crisis of legitimacy. In these circumstances, individuals and institutions with access to the instruments and technologies of violence—the military being in the forefront—can, and often do, play a decisive role in the political process. As Alfred Stepan notes in his study of the Brazilian military, the response of soldiers to conflict in divided societies provides “a large part of the answer to the question of who wins and who loses, who has power and who has not.” He adds further:

When the armed forces prevent the winner of a presidential election from taking office, when they remove a government whose economic policies favor one class at the expense of another, or when they stage a coup to preserve the dominance of a racial, religious, tribal or linguistic group in a communally divided society, their actions clearly help determine which social groups will gain or lose some of their most important values. Even those coups that are unrelated to group conflicts, primarily involving the defense of corporate interests, are likely to affect political and economic outcomes.[42]

This chapter is an analytical history of civil-military relations in the Islamic Republic of Iran. However, the country's past history of civil-military relations is critical to an understanding of the more recent evolution of civil-military relations. In this context, the Iranian military has been key in the process by which power has been seized in the past (Reza Shah in 1921), and by which power has been retained (again, Reza Shah between 1921 and 1941, and Mohammed Reza Shah between 1941 and 1979). Its inability, or failure, to support the Shah in 1978–1979 proved to be a critical factor in the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty. If the Islamic Republic of Iran does not succeed in resolving its domestic problems, the military is likely to play an increasingly critical role in the political life of the country.

While space will prevent a lengthy theoretical analysis of civil-military relations, the most salient aspects of the voluminous literature need to be addressed to provide a framework for our analysis of civil-military relations in the Islamic Republic.[43] Civil-military relations represent an enduring problem in politics. Over the course of human history, states created military forces to protect them and their people, from both external and internal enemies. Yet, states have also grown to fear that very instrument of violence that they created, and on which they often spent vast resources.

The military does not have to intervene overtly in the political process (i.e. taking over power by means of a coup d'etat) for it to have an important behind-the-scenes role. For example, the mere expression of opinions by the senior officer corps on any topic of national import constitutes intervention in the political process. On the other hand, there may be situations in which the civilian authorities do their utmost to prevent the military from intervening in the political process. Yet, these very same civilian authorities may ultimately rely on the military for much of their legitimacy or power. Shah Mohammed Reza, for example, totally muzzled his senior officer corps and forbade the officers from playing a role in the political process. Yet, the Imperial Iranian military was a key institution of the state, because the Shah relied on it so much.

Thus the Imperial Iranian military was always a political force. In this context, this chapter will posit that the military has played an important political role in Iran ever since the 1920s.[44] Moreover, the fact that the Iranian military has not yet mounted a coup attempt—at least in recent years—does not mean that it has not tried to do so in the past or that it may not try to do so in the near future. Furthermore, non-intervention in the political process, particularly during times of crisis—including revolution—is as meaningful a statement as actually taking direct political action either against or for the revolutionary forces. On the other hand, inaction on the part of the military during a revolutionary situation almost always by default favors revolutionary forces.

**** Historical Background

Iran is an ancient state with a respectable and sophisticated military tradition that goes back many centuries.[45] In ancient times the military was under the control of a high-ranking official, the Iran-sepahbadh, who was the minister of war, the highest-ranking officer of the army, and a senior diplomat who could also negotiate peace treaties. He reported directly to the emperor and was part of the small circle of royal councilors.

Unlike several of its neighbors, however, neither ancient nor early modern Iran developed a unified military establishment under national control. The lack of a national army was particularly evident as Iran entered the early modern era. From the seventeenth century onward, Iranian rulers, particularly those of the Qajar dynasty, relied on tribal levies or small and ineffective quasi-regular forces that were haphazardly trained by European officers on loan. Both the tribes and the European officers intervened in the Iranian political process with depressing regularity. In the mid-nineteenth century, defeats at the hands of Ottoman and Russian forces persuaded the rulers of the Qajar dynasty that they needed to create a modern military institution that would not be dependent on the tribes or European powers.[46]

While the Qajari rulers managed to break their link with and dependence upon the tribes for military power, they were largely unsuccessful in their

endeavors to create a single unified and modern national military force. Moreover, the attempts to create a modern military establishment merely increased the roles of foreign powers. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Iran witnessed the emergence of several quasi-national military forces that were trained, led, and influenced by different European countries. Among the most important were the Cossack Brigade, whose senior officers were Russian; the Gendarmerie, led by Swedes and Germans; and the South Persia Rifles, under the command of British officers.[47] These forces played significant roles in the political process, including the Constitutional Revolution, but always with mixed results. More often than not, these European-trained and officered forces placed the interests of their own respective countries above those of the Iranian monarch whom they ostensibly served.

By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, many Iranian nationalists had become affronted by the precipitous decline in the political fortunes of their country. In particular they resented the influence of so many powers in the court at Teheran, an influence that was often exercised by means of their control of the quasi-independent military forces. Indeed, some of these forces were used by the Iranian monarch with the connivance of foreign powers to put down progressive forces seeking to do away with tyrannical and arbitrary government and establish some semblance of constitutional order in the country.[48] One such individual was a senior Iranian officer in the Cossack Brigade, Colonel Reza Khan, who ultimately rose to the rank of commander of the brigade.

Reza Khan used that position to stage the first modern coup in Iranian history, on 21 February 1921. This move was undertaken against the corrupt politicians in the capital, Teheran, and was not aimed at overthrowing the Shah. Reza Khan helped a reformist civilian, Sayyid Zia Tabatabai, come to power as prime minister. In turn, Sayyid Zia promised many reforms, but managed to alienate key people in the process, including the man who had brought him to power, Reza Khan himself. Following the elimination of Sayyid Zia in May 1921, Reza Khan was elevated to the position of minister of war. He used this position to cement his control over the various security forces in the country— by merging them into one force and removing foreign officers —and to put down various dissident and separatist movements throughout the country.

Over the years, Reza Khan steadily accumulated power, as he set about creating a unified national army out of the disparate military forces in the country. In the process, he quashed a serious threat from the Gendarmerie, whose officers resented the rise of Reza Khan.[49] Five years after his first coup, Reza Khan undertook the second coup in Iran's history when he overthrew the moribund Qajar dynasty and had himself crowned Reza Shah of the Pahlavi dynasty in late 1926. Without a doubt, the army constituted the key institution in the new Pahlavi dynasty, and the new ruler relied on it to maintain his power and enhance his legitimacy.[50] Yet, at the same time, Reza Shah tried to keep the army officers as far away from the political process as possible. This, of course, stands in marked contrast to the period when he merely headed the army and used it to promote his political agenda. By late 1926, he was the civilian authority, and the undue influence of the army in the political process was clearly unwelcome.[51]

In this context, to keep the army loyal and satisfied that its corporate interests were being taken care of, Reza Shah devoted considerable attention and resources to the army. He continued to enlarge and modernize it, so that, over time, it became quite professional. He paid particular attention to the senior officer corps, whom he kept loyal by means of promotions and lavish benefits. However, Reza Shah purged, dismissed, or rotated those who he thought were too independent or who constituted a potential threat to the dynasty. Last but not least, he kept the army preoccupied with putting down domestic threats to internal security.[52]

Despite its early successes, the new unified national army failed one key test: defense of the homeland against foreign invaders. During World War II, Iran adopted a pro-German neutrality that was opposed by both Britain and the Soviet Union. Furthermore, Iran was an important producer of oil and a supply route to the Soviet Union. In the event, Teheran's haphazard policies during the war placed the country on a collision course with the les. This was ultimately resolved by a joint Anglo-Soviet invasion in 1941. Following the defeat and utter collapse of his army, Reza Shah abdicated in favor of his shy and reserved son, Mohammed Reza, on 16 September 1941. The new Shah had to rebuild the legitimacy of the Pahlavi dynasty if he was to survive. To

succeed, he needed to rebuild the armed forces and establish his and the monarchy's political ascendancy and control over them.

To his credit, Mohammed Reza Shah managed to persuade the Americans, not without some reluctance on their part, to rebuild and modernize the Iranian armed forces. However, as far as the issue of civilian or, more accurately, monarchical control over the armed forces, Mohammed Reza Shah was to face considerable difficulties for a long period of time. In this context, in the early 1950s, a "recalcitrant" nationalist prime minister, Mohammed Mossadeq, challenged the monarch for control over the armed forces, among other things. Mossadegh made plenty of promises to the armed forces, but he was never able to swing the officer corps to his side. Lacking an institutional power base, Mossadegh was removed from power by the Shah and his Western allies. Nonetheless, over the course of a decade, that is to say, between 1953 and 1963, the Shah's authority over the armed forces was challenged on three separate occasions, each time with serious implications for the stability of civil-military relations.[53]

These crises underscored to the Shah the centrality of the armed forces in Iranian political life. The Shah concluded that the military must remain under tight monarchical control, that it must not interfere in political life, and that it must be carefully monitored for unlawful political activities. Toward that end, he took his title of supreme military commander very seriously and, as he once put it: "In this country, if the king is not the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, anything can happen."[54] By the late 1960s, the Shah had succeeded in establishing full control over the armed forces. The process actually began with the creation of an internal security organization to monitor the military. In the event, an elaborate state security and intelligence organization (,Sazeman-e-Amniyat-e-va Ettela'at Keshvar, or SAVAK) was developed. Other organizations, such as military intelligence and the special Bureau of Intelligence, also kept close watch over the armed forces.

Neverthless, the Shah did not merely rely on security organs to control and maintain the loyalty of the armed forces, he also tightly involved himself in the most routine of military administrative matters, such as vetting the promotion of officers above the rank of major. He encouraged rivalry among

senior officers and prevented the emergence of a cohesive officer corps. Officers from different branches of the armed forces rarely met one another except in the presence of the Shah. The monarch satisfied the corporate interests of the armed forces. No elite group in the political establishment was more favored than the officer corps. They were provided with special privileges that included augmented pay, subsidized housing, free education for offspring, and heavily subsidized military stores. Finally, the Shah engaged in a furious military build-up from the early 1970s onward that gave Iran one of the most impressive military forces in the developing world by 1979.

None of this mattered much when the Iranian revolution destroyed the Pahlavi dynasty in 1979. Many analysts have convincingly argued, on the basis of historical evidence, that if a beleaguered government manages to maintain the loyalty of the armed forces and uses it decisively, no revolution can succeed.[55] The Shah neither retained the loyalty of the armed forces—the senior officer corps remained immobile, proving to be incapable of action, and the rank and file fraternized with the revolutionaries—nor was himself able to act decisively to stem the tide of revolution. Furthermore, the revolutionaries, particularly the clerical establishment under the charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, targeted the armed forces, imploring them not to support the tyrannical rule of the Pahlavis by shooting their fellow countrymen. Soldiers were also encouraged to desert and go home. They were even provided with cash and civilian clothes to do so. Finally, by the late 1970s the military had little experience in dealing with domestic discontent. This is ironic in light of the fact that the military had been an instrument of domestic control from 1945 to the early 1960s.

The Shah left Iran in January 1979 as his army collapsed around him. A care-taker government under Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar was unable to retain the loyalty of the senior officers, many of whom followed the Shah into exile or began negotiating with the revolutionaries. On 1 February 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran to a tumultuous welcome. For a while the army remained precariously balanced between the revolutionaries and the disintegrating government of Shahpour Bakhtiar. On 11 February, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces met one final time. After heated discussions between moderates (those who favored a deal with the revolutionary forces) and hawks (those who favored supporting Bakhtiar),

leading senior officers decided to declare the military neutral in the struggle between the Shah’s last government and the revolutionaries. Perhaps realizing the futility of the struggle, Prime Minister Bakhtiar fled, and the revolution triumphed.

***** Clvll-Mllitary Relations after 1919

The Islamic Republic has gone through three phases. The “first republic” (1979–1989) was a period characterized by extreme revolutionary turmoil, internal opposition, threats, and war. The military had ample opportunity to try and intervene in the political process, but it either could not or chose not to— notwithstanding a number of amateurish and poorly planned coup attempts. Nor did it choose to intervene in the political process at the height of the bloody war with neighboring Iraq. The “second republic” (1990–1997) under President Rafsanjani, was a more stable period in Iranian political history, but was characterized by some serious tensions in civil-military relations. Under the “third republic” (1997-present), Iran has been trying to move toward a postrevolutionary era of constitutionalism and normalcy with President Mohammed Khatami. These attempts have, however, met with strenuous opposition on the part of entrenched conservative forces who fear that liberalization could lead to the unraveling of the Islamic Republic. Conservative forces rely on a number of civilian institutions, and legal means, to stymie further efforts to bring about progressive change in the country. Ultimately, they may try to rely on sympathetic forces within the military establishment to eliminate any “breakdown in law and order.”

***** Civil-Military Relations:The First Republic, 1979–1988

Once the victory against the Shah had been consummated, the various revolutionary parties fell out among themselves. They had very different agendas from one another. It was the clerics who emerged as the ultimate victors of the revolution. One of the reasons they succeeded in “hijacking” the revolution was because of better organizational skills, but also because they managed to gain control over the remnants of the armed forces. If there is one thing that Iran’s clerics do not suffer from, it is naivete, or idealism.

Iran’s revolutionary clerics recognized the importance of military power in Islamic history. Indeed, to a large extent Islamic history is military history, and no other religion has been so intricately tied with military endeavor. From the very outset of the revolution, the clerics understood the role of the military as a key instrument of the Pahlavi state. Not surprisingly, during the course of the revolution, they devoted considerable effort to detaching that instrument of state power from its moorings. Following their revolutionary victory, the task was to ensure control of the armed forces so that it would not succumb to “counterrevolutionary” tendencies (i.e., try to bring the Shah back) or become an instrument in the hands of other revolutionary parties with whom the clerics had differences.

In this context, the clerics set out to purge the armed forces. This has been extensively analyzed in various studies. Suffice it to state that the purges had three specific goals: (a) punish the military for its “sins” against the people during the course of the revolution; (b) remove all vestiges of Pahlavism and imperial culture; and (c) “Islamize” the military (i.e., create an ideological force). To consolidate their ideological control over the armed forces, the clerics also set up the Ideological-Political Directorate of the Armed Forces (IPD), or Modiriyat-e-Aghidat-e-va SiyasiArtesh. The IPD infiltrated its clerics and agents from the Joint Staff down to the platoon level. One of the more effective tactics of the IPD clerics was to promote officers from religious families or from those with familial ties to clerical families. The clerics also ensured that a wide variety of security and intelligence services maintained close watch on the armed forces.

Last but not least, the clerics created their own military force, the Pasdaran-e-Engelab-e-Islami, or the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), in early May 1979. The missions of the IRGC were to protect the revolution, maintain domestic law and order, fight dissident movements, and balance/watch the regular armed forces, of whom the clerics maintained a healthy suspicion. Recruits tended to be ethnic Persians or Azeris between the ages of 17 and 28 and generally hailed from poorer or religious families. Applicants had to undergo a rigorous test of their religious and spiritual credentials. Once an applicant was approved for membership in the IRGC, he was sent to a military installation for training in basic fieldcraft and small unit tactics.[56] To put down separatist movements in the various peripheral regions of the country, the revolutionary government used both

the regular army and the IRGC extensively. Much like the Pahlavis before them, the clerics were a nationalistic elite that believed in a centralized government, and frowned extensively on the autonomist aspirations of the country's ethnic minorities. Consequently, both the regular army and the Revolutionary Guards were dominated by Persians and Azeris, the two dominant ethnic groups in the country, and thus did not object to their use as forces for centralization. Both groups cooperated to put down a Kurdish insurgency in Iranian Kurdistan.

Still, both regular army-Revolutionary Guards cooperation and civil-military relations were put to the test during the sanguinary Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988). Early in the war, Iran's response to the Iraqi invasion was haphazard and uncoordinated, which in turn added to the mistrust already existing between the military and the Pasdaran. Furthermore, attempts by revolutionary Iran's first president, Abol Hasan Bani-Sadr, to promote the regular military as the premier force in the struggle against Iraq roused the ire and suspicions of the clerical establishment and of Revolutionary Guards officers. Senior government officials concluded that Bani Sadr suffered from Bonapartist tendencies and was hoping to march back to Teheran at the head of a military column to claim political power for himself, after claiming success on the battlefield. For its part, the IRGC accused Bani Sadr of trying to make the regular army "a tool in his own hands, so that he could wield it as a powerful weapon against the Imam's Line."[57]

The demise of Bani Sadr in 1981 was followed by the creation of a unique military structure that was able to appeal to and mobilize different segments of the population in the struggle against Iraq. This three-tiered military structure was divided into the regular army, the Revolutionary Guards, and the Mobilization of the oppressed, or Basij. Middle-class nationalists found their place in the technologically developed regular army. For this group, the war was a national struggle to defend Iran's territorial integrity and honor against a despised enemy, the Arab. Islamic revolutionaries and religiously oriented youth from more humble backgrounds flocked to the Revolutionary Guards. Young and old from rural areas volunteered for the Basij. For members of these two latter organizations, the struggle against Iraq was a "holy war" in defense of Islam against the atheists of the Iraqi Baath Party.[58]

This three-tiered military structure represented the high point in the emergence of harmonious civil-military relations during wartime, and it was responsible for the Iranian victories in Khuzistan in the spring and summer of 1982. Once Iran sought to move into Iraq in its own counter-invasion, the threetiered military structure began to unravel and problems reappeared in civil-military relations. The regular army was not too enthusiastic about invading Iraq in 1982. However, it chose not to oppose the wishes of Ayatollah Khomeini. The Revolutionary Guards showed more enthusiasm for the crusade, but as Iranian offensives into Iraq failed in the teeth of Iraqi defenses, the Guards' leadership complained about lack of support from the regular army. The Basij proved unequal to the task of supporting an endeavor as complicated as the invasion of Iraq. Indeed, it ended up being a burden on the Revolutionary Guards, which was responsible for its training and logistical needs. As Iran's war effort faltered in 1987, the Revolutionary Guards Corps not only lost large numbers of well-trained soldiers but also its enthusiasm for the war. The complete unraveling of the three-tiered military structure into three uncoordinated forces fighting their own separate wars aggravated matters. Iran was decisively defeated on the battlefield in the summer of 1988 by superior Iraqi forces. Last-ditch efforts to create better and more effective coordination between Iran's forces failed to stem the tide of defeat. In early June 1988, Ayatollah Khomeini appointed Majlis Speaker Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani—a man heavily involved in Iran's war effort— acting commander-in-chief of the armed forces. His mission was to ensure full coordination among the various forces and to eliminate waste and inefficiency in the conduct of the war.[59]

Although armies returning home in defeat almost invariably pose a threat to the stability of civil-military relations, the Iranian case illustrated fundamental changes in this outlook. To their credit, the clerics managed to quickly and effectively thwart any threat to their power in the aftermath of defeat, by rapidly addressing and rectifying its causes.

***** Civil-Military Relations:The Second Republic) 1989—1996

Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani was elected president of the Islamic Republic twice. His first term ran from 1989 to 1993, and the second from 1994 to 1997. Both terms were characterized by some very tense periods in civil-military relations. At one point the tension in civil-military relations stemmed from Revolutionary Guards fears that its corporate interests—embedded in its sense of identity as a separate entity from the regular army—were in the process of being threatened by civilian authorities. In the mid-1990s the tension in civil-military relations resulted from the state's request that the military establishment put down growing urban disturbances.

***** Revolutionary Guards: Corporate Interests

The Iran-Iraq War ended in a catastrophe for the country's armed forces. In the aftermath of the war, Teheran had to allay the suspicions of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) that they would bear the brunt of the blame for operational failures at the front, particularly those during 1988. While the regular army had always counseled caution, and had adopted a conservative and methodical approach to operations, the IRGC was always more confident of victory in the face of Iraq's growing technological superiority. Needless to say, this confidence proved misplaced in the wake of humiliating defeats suffered at the front between April and July 1988. Not surprisingly, much of the blame for Iran's precipitous collapse at the front in the final months of the war lay with the Revolutionary Guards. Indeed, at one stage, Revolutionary Guards commander Mohsen Rezai was publicly humiliated when he was forced to admit to certain mistakes at the front. Even the regular army was not spared the purging of some of its senior officers. Nonetheless, to their credit, the ruling clerics admitted that the government made mistakes over the course of the war as well. In this context, the ruling clerics did not go out of their way to blame the armed forces for the defeat.

In a speech to IRGC commanders in October 1988, then-President Rafsanjani tackled the issue—of the post-war Revolutionary Guards Corps—head on, as IRGC commanders were seriously worried that their prospects were injeopardy. Rafsanjani sought to allay such fears, assuming they existed, and

praised the IRGC. He stressed that they were, indeed, an integral element in Iran's conception of national defense. He also emphasized their role in the defense of Iran's territories when the Iraqis invaded Iran in 1980. Rafsanjani went so far as to clarify that the IRGC excelled in its defensive activities against the invader, stating:

There is a time when the enemy comes to fight against us; when he brings about conditions like those in Afghanistan; when someone comes and occupies your land; occupies your homes; or like Palestine; or like in parts of Lebanon; or like ourselves at the beginning of the war when they attacked our homes and brought the war deep into our country. Under those conditions one may say that one should fight with Molotov cocktails or with stones or by strapping bombs around our waist and going under the tanks, as some people say. This is one kind of situation ... [60]

Still, Rafsanjani added—somewhat cautiously—that the IRGC has to change with the times. In the early stages of the Iran-Iraq War, the IRGC was characterized by a loose and informal structure, but developed into a more structured and better-disciplined force over the course of the years. The end result, Iranian leaders anticipated, would be the emergence of a formal military institution that was more disciplined, better trained, and able to handle heavy weapons. In Rafsanjani's own words:

The IRGC now is not as it was in the early days. Now it has organization; its units and departments are also organized. However, these organizations should be completely military organizations.... This is one of the responsibilities of the IRGC commanders, to think and to change their organization into a military one, a completely military organization. Training should be taken very seriously. I spoke earlier about the time when we were attacked. Well, with only a few hours preparation the least one could do was to equip oneself with G-3s or Kalashnikovs and to fire them. However, that is not sufficient for US now. We have gradually come to realize—the IRGC commanders have realized—that matters such as rank and hierarchy, salary —a just level of pay—and so on constitute the necessities for an armed force ... if we are to rely on the IRGC as an armed force, if the regime is to serve God, the IRGC must not think that when it is attacked it can fight with Molotov cocktails.[61]

Following Rafsanjani's election to the presidency, Teheran prudently decided that it would drop the idea of merging Iran's wartime forces into a single, large operation. Yet, it also became clear that Iran could never have efficient and organized forces if the three-tiered structure was maintained intact, without changes. As it stood, the structure fostered massive waste and unhealthy competition between regular troops and IRGC units, and brought about duplication of efforts in the defense industries.[62] Rafsanjani was determined to bring about greater efficiency to Iran's military forces, even if they were to remain divided into three separate organizations. The IRGC would become more efficient by becoming a professional force with ranks and a hierarchical structure similar to that of the regular armed forces. Most of the new IRGC ranks were equivalent to those of the regular army, a fact that may have generated some unease among both forces. Ayatollah Khomeini's designated successor, Ayatollah Khamenei, echoed and supported Rafsanjani's view that the Revolutionary Guards Corps must professionalize itself and pay attention to training and modern and scientific methods of warfare.[63] However, to allay putative fears of the Revolutionary Guards Corps concerning its future, Ayatollah Khamenei declared that the IRGC would remain in existence to "carry out its crucial responsibility of militarily defending the Revolution."[64]

Finally, in order to maintain the loyalty of the armed forces as well as to ensure the country's national security, the ruling clerics moved with surprising alacrity following the end of the war with Iraq to cater to the military's corporate interests, emphasizing benefits and modern weaponry. As the 1990's progressed, and the country suffered economic crises and isolation, it became clear that the Islamic Republic would have serious problems in meeting these rekin-died corporate interests. Given the fact that a major cause of dissatisfaction on the part of senior officers in any army is the lack of an adequate supply of weapons and resources, this could constitute a problem for the civilian authorities in Iran. Yet, it is not clear that the armed forces have blamed the civilian authorities for Iran's inability to arm itself properly, with sufficient sophisticated conventional weapons, over the past decade. Indeed, the civilian authorities have successfully managed to argue that too much reliance on foreign weapons is contrary to the national interest, and that such weapons do not add much to national security. Noticeably, and while one should be aware of propagandistic claims,

Iran has made tremendous strides in the development of its own domestic arms industries. This has been a source of considerable pride for Iranian officers, many of whom extol the virtues of domestically produced weapons quite openly.

***** The Armed Forces and Law and Order

By the mid-1990s President Rafsanjani's position in the structure of the ruling elite had been weakened as a result of manifest failures in many areas. First, his socioeconomic programs that had managed to cause considerable distress to the lower classes—but did not manage to set Iran on the road to economic recovery—proved problematic. Moreover, many within the ruling hierarchy opposed the president and his technocratic, "Western-oriented" advisers. Second, Rafsanjani failed to significantly improve Iran's relations with the outside world. Third, he became embroiled in political infighting with conservative elements, at the expense of implementing his programs. The clearest symbol of his decline came in the June 1993 presidential elections when he was re-elected for his second and final term. Whereas Rafsanjani had received 95 percent of the votes in 1989, he managed a mere 63 percent in 1993.

To make matters worse, riots and demonstrations in shantytowns that crowded the major urban centers became regular occurrences during the course of 1994. To be sure, the worsening economic and social conditions during Rafsanjani's second term presented a situation that was fraught with potential dilemmas between the civilian authorities and the armed forces. A decline in law and order, especially in the volatile urban areas, constituted a dangerous situation for civilian authorities precisely because the armed forces could have stepped in. As military leaders frown on the task of putting down domestic grievances, the threat of a coup looms large.

In this context, both the IRGC and the regular army played critical roles during the August 1994 uprising in Qazvin, which alarmed the government. The refusal of the Qazvin garrison's IRGC commander to put down rioting by the city's population was endorsed by senior officers from both the regular army and the IRGC. Teheran airlifted a special internal rapid deployment

security force to quell these disturbances, which they did rather brutally. Not long afterwards, a letter written by four senior officers representing the ground forces, the IRGC, the air force, and the paratroop/special Forces was sent to the political leadership. It called upon the leadership not to rely on or use the armed forces to quell popular manifestations of discontent.[65] The letter expressed the officers' deep concern over the "growing political, economic and social chaos in Iran."[66] Almost a month later, a respected former police-general, Azizollah Amir Rahimi warned the clerics that the continuation of their rule would lead to the "total annihilation of Iran and Islam." Furthermore, he called upon the Rafsanjani government to step down and organize free elections.[67]

While Teheran may have been alarmed by the reluctance of the armed forces to crush domestic discontent, it did not show it. Instead, it moved swiftly to ensure that the Basij would don the mantle of internal security force. In terms of size and commitment to the revolution, the Basij constitutes a formidable force. There are 300,000 full-time members, and in times of crisis, the government may be able to call upon another 1 million part-timers. The organization's budget was reportedly increased dramatically over the course of the mid-1990s.[68] Its members were provided with greater benefits and privileges to ensure their continued loyalty to the Islamic Republic.

In spite of severe socioeconomic and political problems that beset the country in the first half of the 1990s, the armed forces never directly intervened in the political process in the country, no doubt to the considerable relief of the ruling clerics. Under the circumstances, it was highly unlikely that the military ever thought of intervening to overthrow the political system. Senior officers probably sensed that any hasty actions would add to the country's political difficulties. Moreover, most probably realized that they had neither the political nor the administrative expertise—not to mention technical skills ranging from economic expertise to political savvy—to put Iran on the road to recovery and stability. Indeed, it was left to the existing civilian political system to find a way out of the impasse starting in the mid-1990s.

***** Civil-Military Relations: The Third Republic, 1997–2000

In May 1997, Iranians elected a little-known cleric, Mohammed Khatami, to the presidency of the Islamic Republic. When Iranians went to the polls, citizens and foreign observers alike expected the conservative candidate, Majlis speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri, to win the election hands down. Instead, the underdog, Khatami, overwhelmingly defeated his opponent, winning 70 percent of the 29 million votes cast. Khatami's victory was facilitated by the desire for change on the part of millions of Iranians. They were encouraged by Khatami's promises to change Iran peacefully, and by his calls for limiting the influences of various power centers throughout the country, institutionalizing the rule of law, and ending Iran's regional and international isolation.[69]

On a superficial level, the military played no role in this election, as the overall reaction was supportive of the assumptions made earlier, that military intervention in the political process need not be measured solely by displays of military might in the streets or, in extremis, by undertaking a coup. Nevertheless, disturbing signs of politicization within the armed forces, particularly in the Revolutionary Guards, were apparent during the presidential elections. Against a ban on the involvement of the armed forces in politics, Pasdaran chief Mohsen

Rezai, along with other senior Guards officers, sided with the conservative candidate. Inasmuch as the radical right or conservatives viewed the rise of reform-oriented moderates as paving the way for the revolution to deviate from its true path, this frightened senior Revolutionary Guards leaders, because of their extensive socioeconomic stake in the system. This political partisanship on the part of the Revolutionary Guards leadership led to criticism of the force in the pro-Khatami press. Moreover, it roused the fear of the ruling clerical establishment that any political partisanship on the part of the armed forces during the elections could open the floodgates to further armed forces politicization. What aggravated the situation further was that the Revolutionary Guards had developed, over the years, a strong tendency toward politicization. Ayatollah Khomeini and other senior members of the clerical regime from the early days of the creation of the Revolutionary Guards had noticed this tendency.[70] As the political situation in Iran took a

direction that was less and less to its liking, the IRGC began to exhibit greater signs of involvement in the process.

In an effort ostensibly designed to soothe people's fears, Mohsen Rezai stated that the Revolutionary Guards should refrain from involvement in politics and from taking sides between political groups. Nonetheless, he felt compelled to issue a warning: "(But) if domestic political issues end up as threats against the Islamic Revolution, in that case the Basij and revolutionary forces will also carry out their task within the framework of the law."[71] It is not quite clear what Rezai meant by his statement. Did he mean that if the political situation between the reformers and the hardliners worsened, the Revolutionary Guards would step into the political arena? Under such circumstances, and if they were to be that involved, would that not constitute a partisan involvement on the side of conservative elements? Or, did he mean that the Revolutionary Guards would move to re-establish law and order, if there were a danger of political violence erupting in the urban centers? Finally, could he have meant that the Revolutionary Guards would step into the political arena if there were a threat to the corporate interests of the Revolutionary Guards?

***** Khatami and the IRGC

President Khatami's political, socioeconomic, cultural, and foreign policy agenda, briefly discussed above, represented a threat to both the ideological and corporate interests of the Revolutionary Guards. It also endangered the Guards' conception of Iranian national security and its global orientation. To be sure, Khatami used the Guards' expressions of hostility to criticize what he perceived as a dangerous process of politicization. On 15 September 1997, for example, he exhorted the country's armed forces to stay out of politics, adding that the armed forces should abstain from factional politics. A few days later, Mohsen Rezai stepped down from his post, as a result of pressure exerted by the Supreme Leader, who—presumably—wished to avoid a potentially disruptive tug of war between hardliners and reformers.

Yet, on two separate occasions, the new commander of the Guards, General Rahim Safavi, issued some strongly worded comments against the policies of

President Mohammed Khatami. In April 1998, at a meeting of IRGC navy commanders held in the holy city of Qom, Safavi was quoted as saying that the Islamic Republic should “cut off the heads” or “tongues” of its opponents. The meeting was supposed to be confidential and off the record. However, a journalist from the state-owned Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) leaked its contents. In turn, this generated a storm of controversy in various political circles throughout the country. Some even feared that Safavi’s confidential statements were not just merely symbolic of the IRGC’s deep politicization, but indicated that hardliners in the organization were considering active intervention in the political process to reverse the reform tide.[72]

Safavi countered that his confidential statements concerning the threat to Iranian national security posed by Khatami’s policies were taken out of context and distorted by enemies and counterrevolutionaries. To clarify his position, Safavi gave a lengthy interview to the IRGC’s magazine, Payam-e-Enqelab (Message of Revolution), in which he emphatically stated that it was the business of the Guards to pay particular attention to all threats to the national security of Iran and to the security of the Islamic Republic, no matter where they may come from. As Safavi pointed out, the IRGC focused its attention on “ensuring and safeguarding the security and confronting the counter-revolution and internal threats.”[73]

Importantly, Safavi implicitly criticized the cultural aspects of Khatami’s policies, drawing—once again—sharp differences between the two agendas. Safavi believed that threats to Iran’s Islamic culture would come from opening up to the West in an indiscriminate manner as envisioned by Khatami supporters. This, he argued, would constitute a serious threat to “our national security”[74] because many Westerners—and he quoted several—believed that the Islamic Republic could be overthrown only by changing the cultural mores of the population.

As the interview illustrated, Safavi was not one to shy away from controversy. In early June 1998 he made additional inflammatory remarks in front of 2,000 Basij students, when he issued venomous statements against the pragmatists and reformers:

The nation must be vigilant. A third current [jaryan-esvvom] is lying in wait and is trying to pit forces loyal to the revolution against each other. This third current, which is sponsored by foreigners, intends to destroy the foundations of religion in this country.... The IRGC is keeping this third current under observation and will not allow soiled hands to steal the Islamic revolution from the Iranian nation.[75]

Not surprisingly, these comments created a stir in Iran, and not only among the pragmatists/moderates who were the intended target, but also among leftists and the ruling circles. The pragmatists called upon the government to dismiss General Safavi. Leftist commentators suggested that the general change his military uniform for civilian attire, arguing that this would enable him to enter the political arena. The Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, was profoundly disturbed by Safavi's verbal onslaught, not only because he supported the reformist policies of Khatami and his circle, but because of his deep fear of overt politicization of the armed forces. Khamenei called upon Safavi to desist from making any more political statements. The IRGC leadership issued its own warning that attacks on its commander should be halted.

Not only was the IRGC wary of Khatami's ideological platform, his calls for administrative and bureaucratic reforms to eliminate corruption and nepotism in the system of governance and from various government organizations could not have been viewed with anything but alarm by organizations like the IRGC. By the time Khatami had been elected to the presidency, the IRGC had added economic enterprise to its impressive credentials as a military and law enforcement force, as well as a civic organization that constructed railways and roads. The appointment of Mohsen Rafiqdoust, a former minister for the Revolutionary Guards Corps as head of the Bonyad-e-Mosta (azaJin, or Foundation of the Oppressed—a charitable organization that looked after the needs of the poor but also managed a large economic corporation—fostered close links between the two organizations. This enabled the IRGC to expand its economic activities beyond the defense industry and into shipping, commerce, agriculture, industrial manufacturing, banking, and cross-border trade.

***** Khatami and the Regular Armed Forces

Very little data exists on the views of the regular armed forces toward the Khatami “phenomenon.” To be sure, President Khatami does not have control over the armed forces, whereas Ayatollah Khamenei, as Supreme Leader, does. It is interesting to note, in this context, that Major General Hasan Firuzabadi, until recently the Iranian Armed Forces chief of staff, expressed sympathy for Safavi’s أل١ه١١لادلأأم only in the sense of saying that he believed that Safavi’s remarks in Qom were distorted by the media. Irrespective of who controls what institutions, Khatami has shown that he is very much worried by the politicization prospects of the armed forces. Clearly, an overt military involvement in the political process would make a mockery of Khatami’s plans for the establishment of the rule of law. In the president’s own words:

Our armed forces should refrain from political tendencies and preferences, and instead, engage in the daily improvement of their scientific, organizational, and operational capabilities. This has been the case up to now and will remain so, with the blessings of God, in the future.[76]

In the final analysis, however, it is unlikely that the senior echelons of the armed forces perceived Khatami as a threat to their corporate interests or as a threat to Iran’s national security. There were a number of reasons for this.

First, Khatami is unlikely to reduce the budget or fringe benefits of the armed forces, despite his many calls for economic reforms. In fact, members of the regular armed forces receive pitiful salaries. Interestingly, the regular army is so over-staffed and underpaid that it welcomes the $16,000 from those who choose to avoid the draft. Thus, Khatami does not control the purse strings of the armed forces—that means that he is not capable of treading on the army’s corporate interests in any major way.

Second, Khatami is a nationalist, and has come out in favor of enhancing Iran’s defensive capabilities on numerous occasions. This position is similar

to that ofAyatollah Khamenei, the Supreme Leader and the man who commands Iran’s armed forces.

Third, notwithstanding the scare of war with the Taleban in Afghanistan, Khatami’s foreign and security policies have actually led to some enhancement of Iran’s security. Ironically, if Khatami were to succeed in ending the country’s isolation, such a result may not be perceived with a degree of equanimity by different sectors of the armed forces. We may, indeed, see a revival of the differences between a technically oriented regular army and a less technically oriented Revolutionary Guards Corps. Inasmuch as the regular armed forces are more likely to welcome the end of Iran’s isolation, they would most likely support a regime that would provide new access to high-tech conventional weapons. The situation may be further complicated by the existence of proponents of non-conventional weapons, who might see the reversal of the country’s quest for “weapons of mass destruction” as a condition for the re-integration of the country into the international arena.

**** Future Scenarios

In February 1999 the Islamic Republic entered the third decade of its existence. A year has gone by since the thirtieth anniversary of the Islamic Republic. This is a critical period in the history of the Republic and, indeed, of Iran itself. Still, it remains an open question as to whether the Islamic Republic under Mohammed Khatami has the ability to draw up and implement domestic and foreign policies that would lead to the emergence of a flourishing and vibrant open society, worthy of emulation by the rest of the Islamic world.

A number of scenarios are offered in which the armed forces are likely to play an important role.

***** Continuation of the Status Quo

Under this current scenario, Iran lurches from one political and socioeconomic “mini-crisis” to the next without either the pragmatists or the conservatives being able to consolidate power. Street violence and riots remain at a low and stable level that does not threaten public law and order or the security of the Islamic Republic. Furthermore, and as long as there is no further political polarization, there may be very little room for the armed forces—or Guards—to intervene politically in any meaningful way. If the Guards’ leadership were to weigh in on the side of the conservative faction, they could set off a chain of events that would be far worse than if they were to refrain from open political intervention. Any overt Guards intervention in the political process could invite warnings from the regular armed forces to heed the leadership’s calls for political neutrality on the part of all armed forces. Similarly, overt Guards intervention in the political process could ratchet up the level of political violence in the country, particularly in major urban centers. Simply stated, and in the long term, this scenario is simply unrealistic and it implies that Iran is going to continue indefinitely in a state of unresolved political and socioeconomic turmoil.

***** Pragmatist Consolidation versus Conservative Backlash

Khatami and the reformers could slowly but surely consolidate their power and ultimately supplant the conservatives as the dominant political group. In this context, Iran would move further along toward the desired end-state of pragmatists. Several events seem to confirm the view that the pragmatists are entrenching themselves. Khatami and his supporters made significant advances with their victory in the local council elections of 26 February 1999. These elections proved to be a key stage in the realization of Khatami’s presidential aspirations to liberalize the political climate. These local elections gave reformers a strategic advantage for the 2000 parliamentary balloting. The pragmatists and reformist camp gained control of the Majlis in the parliamentary elections of February 2000.

Yet, this runaway success for the reformers is not necessarily a healthy sign, because political parties are non-existent and the climate is heavily polarized. In the past, the conservative faction was able to effectively use

state judicial and revolutionary institutions to thwart any pragmatists' consolidation. If the pragmatists deprive them of those non-violent methods, there is the possibility of a dangerous right-wing backlash that could be initiated by the Hizbullahi youth. To restore law and order, conservative elements might then call upon the IRGC to intervene in the political process. To date, notwithstanding the overwhelming victory of the reformist camp in the parliamentary elections, the conservatives still have considerable resources at their beck and call. They have used these resources to intimidate prominent liberals, to shut down reformist newspapers. Furthermore, they have the resources to put obstacles in the way of the reformist Majlis. Ultimately, the conservatives have a long way to go before they openly call upon segments of the armed forces to step in and restore "law and order." They also realize that political intervention by the military, or at least elements sympathetic to the conservative agenda, should be the last resort.

***** From Spontaneous Urban Uprisings to Revolutionary Outbreak: "It's the Economy, Stupid!"

The intense struggles between pragmatists and conservatives are struggles between elites and the politically aware segments of the population over the future direction of the country, indeed, over the heart and soul of the Iranian "nation." Both sides attempt to mobilize various socioeconomic strata within society. Increasingly, what motivates the lower classes into political action most is the status of their short-term economic position, not esoteric debates over the direction of the country. If the economic situation were to worsen and begin to look anything like the situation in the early 1990s, chances of a resurgence of spontaneous urban riots, demonstrations, and even small-scale uprisings cannot be ruled out. These have often been complemented by numerous assassination attempts against public officials and seemingly random acts of terror bombings. Ever since the emergence of the Islamic Republic in 1979, Iran has had its fair share of these acts.

Still, the 1990s witnessed the outbreak of serious disturbances in a number of urban areas that had the potential of spreading. These began in Shiraz in April 1992 when war veterans rioted against government corruption. A month later, citizens of Arak, protesting the treatment of destitute citizens,

attacked various symbols of government power. These attacks were replicated in various other cities throughout Iran, including Teheran and Mashad. The year 1994 was a particularly troublesome one for Teheran, as serious riots and assaults on state property occurred in Zahedan, Mashad, Qazvin, Islamshahr, and Akbarabad.

Such incidents by themselves are spontaneous and cannot lead to the overthrow of the system. Outbreaks of urban violence, however, have potentially serious repercussions for any government. If regular police forces are unable to put urban disturbances down, the government is often forced to call upon the military establishment. In some of the incidents in 1994, rioters managed to disarm the police, thus forcing authorities to deploy Revolutionary Guards and regular army units. It is an undeniable fact, as noted earlier, that military establishments do not like to take on the role of policing domestic opposition. In the case of Iran, even the Revolutionary Guards—one of whose tasks is maintenance of domestic security—have questioned their use as a police force against the people.

If Iran succumbs to another series of urban outbreaks, the implications for the government could be more serious than in the past. It is unlikely that any future disturbances will be limited to the expression of pent-up social frustration and rage on the part of the lower classes over economic deprivation. More ominously, there has been considerable erosion in the scale and scope of social support for the regime among lower-class elements, whose expectations have not been met.[77] But as Leon Trotsky once observed: “The mere existence of privations is not enough to cause an insurrection; if it were, the masses would always be in revolt.”[78] One could be less charitable and quote Lenin’s famous statement that, left to themselves, the masses are capable of no more than “trade union consciousness,” that is to say, that they are incapable of concerted and sustained revolutionary action. In other words, the masses need to coordinate their actions with other social forces. These other social forces—the middle classes and the intellectuals—often provide the ideological justification for opposition to the existing state of affairs. Significant elements of Iran’s politically aware and literate population are increasingly expressing their discontent as the Islamic Republie struggles through its third decade. The debates over Iran’s future direction are no longer esoteric ones confined to a narrow group of the political elite, especially the ruling clergy.

The legitimacy of the system that Ayatollah Khomeini left in place is increasingly under threat. Indeed, if the declining political and religious legitimacy of the system is paralleled by the coordinated social action of opponents, then opposition may start expressing itself in seemingly spontaneous urban uprisings. Teheran may then be forced to deploy its armed forces to quell the threat to “law and order.” Initially, the armed forces may acquiesce in this role, but if the “disturbances” are not quelled in a timely manner, even the senior officer corps may begin to sense that something is wrong, particularly if civilian authorities have become increasingly dependent on the military for advice and formulation of crisis policies. This moment of recognition by senior officer leaders, that the situation is more serious than a law and order problem, also constitutes the recognition that their country is in an acute revolutionary phase. What the armed forces choose to do next will have a critical bearing on the continued existence of the political system and hence the success or failure of a revolution.

**** Unraveling of the State and Re-emergence of Centrifugal Forces

Just as war expands the powers of the state over society, revolutions, as Alexis de Tocqueville put it, end up “augmenting the power and rights of the public authority.” In this context, the Islamic revolution was very much a centralizing phenomenon, just as was the Pahlavi dynasty in the 1920s. Indeed, one of the major reasons that Reza Khan marched on Teheran was due to his fear that Iran was about to disintegrate as a unitary state. From the early days of the Islamic Revolution, it rapidly became clear that the ultimate victors of the revolution, the clerical establishment, had no intention of presiding over the devolution or decentralization of the state. Rather, the 1979 constitution adopted the nationalist creed of the 1906–7 Basic Law, declaring Iran a united state. In fact, the 1979 Iranian constitution was more uniformly centralizing than its older model. In retrospect, it can be seen that the Iranian clerical establishment was as nationalistic as the dynasty that it replaced. Toward that end, maintaining intact the central state was fully endorsed and supported by the armed forces, from the earliest days of the revolution. Neither the regular army nor the Revolutionary Guards showed any compunction in putting down the various outbreaks of ethnic dissidence in peripheral provinces. Under the circumstances, and given this legacy, if the armed forces were to perceive that civilian authorities were incapable of

maintaining intact the state, then a takeover by a military strongman in the mold of Nader Shah or Reza Khan would not be as remote a possibility as may be believed. In fact, one of the main reasons given by Reza Shah for his seizure of power with the help of a unit of the army, the Cossack Brigade, was to prevent the physical and moral collapse of Iran. Reportedly, Reza Shah opined:

There are two sorts of misfortunes either one of which, if not remedied, is able to destroy the national identity of any deteriorating race of people. These are domestic disorder and insecurity, and chaos of thoughts, ideas and morals.[79]

**** Conclusion

Iran stands at a very critical stage in its political history. The Islamic Republic is undergoing considerable domestic turmoil. There is every indication that the vast Iranian military establishment may play a growing role in the future of the country. Yet, observers of the dynamic Iranian political scene will not be especially well positioned to provide analyses or interpretations of civil-military relations in that critical country. The reason is not difficult to fathom: There is little available literature on civil-military relations in Iran. While some excellent studies have been written about aspects or important periods in Iranian civil-military relations, very little has been written on the evolution of civil-military relations in Iran that can provide a guide to an understanding of possible changes in, or breakdowns within, stable civil-military relations as the country stumbles politically from crisis to crisis. This is not surprising given the fact that the Iranian military has not often or successfully intervened in the political process of the country.

This stands in stark contrast to its neighbors, where the overt intervention of the militaries in the political process by means of the classical instrument of the coup d’etat has generated a considerable body of work on each country. Consequently, a number of primary sources have been made available during the past two decades to undertake full studies of the nature of civil-military relations in Iran. This brief essay was never intended to be one of those studies. Rather, this chapter merely sought to present some of the

highlights of a lengthier analysis. The major theme of this chapter is that there is a distinction between a politicized and a political military. While politicized militaries can enter the political arena by means of voicing opinions or preferences, their hallmark is to engage in overt interventions in the political process of their respective countries. In short, they engage in coups that replace a civilian government with a military one, or even an existing civilian one with another, more to their liking. Not surprisingly, the phenomenon of the coup has generated a large body of literature that has been applied to numerous case studies. Still, the Iranian military has been a political military for almost all of its modern existence, and has been one of the bulwarks—if not the main bulwark—of the political system. However, it has been effectively prevented from emerging as a political force that can play an independent role in the political system.

Mohammed Reza Shah’s system was not a military dictatorship, since the Shah ultimately relied on the military, even if he utterly controlled it. It is difficult to study the nature of civil-military relations in the so-called developing world, where the military is a political but not a politicized force. The question that now arises and that needs to be answered in any study of the evolution of civil-military relations in the Islamic Republic is whether the military will continue to be a governmental institution or will emerge as a politicized force.

[38] A number of well-known scholars who have addressed the Iranian Revolution have written small sections on civil-military relations in their studies, e.g., Said Amir Arjomand, TheTurbanfor the CrownzThe Islamic Revolution in Iran, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 119–128.

[39] Mark Hagopian, The Phenomenon of Revolution, New York: Dodd, Mead, 1974, especially chapter 4.

[40] For an introduction to revolutions, see Chalmers Johnson, Revolutionary Change, 2nd edition, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1982.

[41] Quoted in Anthony Joes, From the Barrel of a Gun: Armies and Revolutions, McLean, Virginia: Pergamon-Brassey’s, 1986, p. xi.

[42] Alfred Stepan, The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971, p. 7.

[43] I have rehed in particular on the following works: Eric Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977;Amos Perlmutter, The Military and Politics in Modern Times, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977; and Samuel Finer, The Man on Horseback.The Role of the Military in Politics, Harmondsworth: Peregrine, 1976.

[44] Mark Roberts, Khomeini’s Incorporation of the Iranian Military, McNair Paper number 48, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1996, p. 5.

[45] Arthur Christensen, LTran sous les Sassanides, Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1944, pp. 130–32.

[46] For more details, see Robert McDaniel, The Shuster Mission and the Persian Constitutional Revolution, Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1974, p. 22.

[47] The South Persia Rifles played the least important role in the political process in Iran. In fact, it was raised, trained, and officered by the British to protect their investment in the lawless but oilrich semi-autonomous region of

Arabistan (Khuzistan). The Gendarmerie and the Cossack Brigade competed with one another in their attempts to influence the political process at the center in Teheran.

[48] For more on the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 and on the role of military forces, see, inter alia, Djafar Shafiei-Nasab, Les Mouvements Revolutionnaires et la Constitution de 1906 en Iran, Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1991, pp. 497–520.

[49] On 6 December 1921 Reza Khan issued Army Decree Number One, which called for the merger of the Cossack Brigade and the Gendarmerie, as the first step toward the creation of a unified national army.

[50] The following studies are important sources on the development of Reza Shah’s military: ١أأة!لأ ةاًة٦ةلكلأ Sunrise at Abadan: The British and Soviet Invasion of Iran, 1941, ٦ذ١حجعةاًلآ New York, 1988; and General Hasan Arfa, Under Five Shahs, London: John Murray, 1964.

[51] For more details on the military under Reza Shah, see, inter alia, Ahmad Mahrad, Iran unter der Herrschaft Reza Schahs, Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 1977, pp. 91–133.

[52] See Alvin Cottrell, “Iran’s Armed Forces under the Pahlavi Dynasty,” in George Lenczowski (ed.), Iran under the Pahlavis, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1978.

[53] In 1954 the government discovered that the Iranian Communist Party, the Tudeh, had infiltrated the armed forces since 1942. It had created a formidable network of 600 officers. In 1960 the Shah was faced with opposition from a variety of secular political forces as a result of widespread economic discontent. In 1963 it was the turn of the religious right to voice its opposition to far-reaching changes proposed by the Shah. Each time, the Shah relied on his military for support.

[54] Quoted in Anselmo Avenido, The Role of the Iranian Armed Forces in the Fall of the Shah, Master of Military Art and Sciences, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1984, p. 82.

[55] Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, New York: Viking, 1963; Katherine Chorley, Armies and theArt of Revolution, Boston: Beacon Press, 1973, p. 16.

[56] For more details on the IRGC, see James Dingeman and Richard Juppa, “Iranian Elite: The Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps,” Marine Corps Gazette, March 1988, p. 74.

[57] A Glance at Two Years of War, Political Office, Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, Teheran, n.d., p. 33.

[58] For more details on the development of this military structure, see Arnold Hottinger, “Der Iranische Feldzug in Khusistan” [The Iranian Victory in Khuzistan], Neue Zurcher Zeitung, June 20–21,1982,0. 6.

[59] “Rafsanjani Kundigt Neordnung des Militars im Iran an,” Nahost Monitor Dienst, June 6, 1988, pp. 1–4.

[60] “Hashemi-Rafsanjani Speaks on Future of IRGC,” Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Near East/SouthAsia (henceforth FBIS-NES), October 7, 1988, p. 50.

[61] Ibid.,pp. 52—53.

[62] Andrew Gowers and Sheherazade Daneshku, “A war machine split into two camps,” Financial Times, June 28, 1988, p. 4.

[63] For Ayatollah Khamenei’s statements, see FBIS-NES, May 13,1991, p. 57.

[64] “Revolutionary Guard accepts new role,” Iran Focus, November 1991, p. 8.

[65] Rainer Hermann, “Von der Wirtschafts-zur Legitimationskrise: Die Ara Khamenei/Rafsanjani in der Islamischen Republik Iran,” Orient 35:4, 1994, p. 545.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Safa Haeri, “Iranian general calls for end of rule by clerics,” The Independent, September 28, I994,p. 11.

[68] Andrew Rathmell, “Khamenei Strengthens His Grip, Jane’s Intelligence Review, October 1995, p. 450.

[69] For more details, see Michel Naufal, “Iran: Khatami joue a quitte OU double,” Arabics, November 1997, pp. 20–24; Nairi Nahapetian, “Iran: Nouvelles Constantes Politiques en Gestation,” Ara-bies, March 1998, pp. 20–26.

[70] For more details, see the definitive work on the Pasdaran by Kenneth Katzman, The Warriors of Islam: Iran’s Revolutionary Guards, Boulder: WestviewPress, 1993.

[71] Kar-o-kargar, 30 April 1997.

[72] “Military Offensive in the Political Arena,” Mobin, 2 May 1998, p. 5.

[73] “General Safavi Chooses Dialogue,” Akhbar, June 1,1998.

[74] Ibid.

[75] “IRGC’s Safavi Urges Vigilance against ‘Third Current,’” Islamic Republic News Agency, June 2,1998.

[76] “Iran’s Khatami on Military Issues, Missiles,” speech by President Khatami, Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1709 Greenwich Meantime, MfX ١١ 399؟), in Foreran لآ٠أ٢١اذلآءهة Information Service-Near East/SouthAsia, on-line.

[77] Ahmed Ghoreishi and Dariush Zahedi, “Prospects for Regime Change in Iran,” Middle East Policy 5:1,January 1997,12. 86.

[78] Leon Trotsky, The History of the Russian Revolution, translated by Max Eastman, New York: Monad Press, 1961, p. 249.

[79] Quoted in Donald Wilber, Reza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran, New York: Exposition Press, 1970, p. 73.

** The Republic of Iraq

*** Chapter 4: The Position of the Iraqi Clergy

Joyce N. Wiley

The Iraqi Muslim clergy, or ulama, minister to a population that is about 60 percent Shia and 35 percent Sunni. Both Sunni and Shia clergy are in weakened positions, the Sunnis because of extreme government control, the Shias because of severe government oppression. Neither is able to exercise shura, i.e.,to advise the government on what is permitted and what is forbidden in Islam, which has traditionally been a major function of the Muslim clergy. Neither any longer controls pious endowments, which have traditionally provided financing for clerical disbursements to seminarians and the needy. There are no more Shariah courts, where the clergy have traditionally adjudicated family law. Neither can preach at will because Friday prayers, being public gatherings, are monitored by government agents to ensure clerical compliance with government policies.

The Sunni clergy take their salaries and their assignments from the government. As state employees, they follow government guidelines in their sermons and choose their sermon topics from a book of Friday speech themes issued by their non-clerical supervisors in the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs. The Shia clergy still take their salaries and their assignments from the marja ‘iyya, the Shia religious authority in Najaf [80] —although at least since 1979 when Saddam Hussein assumed the presidency, Iraq’s Baath regime has been trying to get the same control over the Shia clergy that it has over the Sunni clergy. In the process it has killed an enormous number of them.

In response to the Shia clergy’s resistance to government control, the government has moved to curb contact between them and the public. Some mosques have been closed; publication of Shia books has been banned; processions to commemorate Shia holy days have often been prohibited. Attendance at mosques has been deterred through harassment and arrest of worshipers. Financial sponsors of mosques have been persecuted. The highest-ranking Shia clergyman in Iraq, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, is under house arrest in Najaf.

**** Traditional Role of the Clergy in Iraq

The present circumstances of the Iraqi ulama are far removed from their traditional role in Iraqi society. Iraq has historically been governed by Sunnis, and a small number of Sunni clerical families were part of the ruling elite. The Shias were not part of the ruling class, but senior Shia clerics functioned as liaisons between the Shia community and successive Sunni-dominated governments. Religious elites in both communities maintained their positions through intermarriage and, when appropriate, by directing their sons into religious studies.

Starting in the late nineteenth century, the attraction of religious studies for elite Sunni families eroded as the Ottoman Turks enacted reforms aimed at modernizing their empire and increasing the power of the central government at the expense of regional elites.[81] With their authority and privileges being reduced, families in the Sunni religious elite began, with Ottoman cooperation, to send their most promising sons into the upper levels of the bureaucracy and the professions, in essence moving their families into the modern middle class.

In the subsequent period under Iraq's Hashemite monarchy (1921–1958), the government paid the salaries of Sunni ulama and supported religion. The ulama advised the government on what was permitted and forbidden in Islamic law and exercised authority in Shariah courts. In the 19505 there was some religionbased political opposition in Iraq's Sunni Arab community, but it was from the Muslim Brotherhood, a primarily lay organization, not from the clerical establishment.

The Shia clergy, under both the Ottomans and the Hashemite monarchy, were an important part of the political leadership of the Shia community. Their financial support came from the Shia community, and an individual clergyman's means of rising to prominence depended upon the number of his followers and the amount of religious taxes paid to him. This system gave Shia clerics a large degree of autonomy from the government and injected

responsiveness into their relationship with influential members of the Shia community.

The relationship between the Shia ulama and the country’s political authorities was one of mutual sufferance. Religious studies continued to attract capable young Shia, both Iraqi and non-Iraqi. A decade before the Baathists came to power in 1968, there were nearly 2,000 students in Najafs seminaries.[82] In contrast, at the beginning of the year 2000, there were only about 300 Shia clerics, including non-Iraqi seminarians, in all Iraq, a number grossly inadequate to minister to the 12 million Iraqi Shia.[83]

**** Political Activism by the Shia Clergy

Excluded from governmental power for most of their history, the Shias for centuries maintained a millenarian attitude toward government, waiting patiently for God to return the Hidden Imam to establish justice and ideal government for them. In the 1950s, however, the attitude of many Iraqi clerics toward non-involvement in politics changed, a consequence of their struggle to counter the appeal of secularism and Western ideologies to their flocks. Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (d. 1980) and other prominent clerics in Najaf came to believe that Muslims had an obligation to establish legitimate government themselves. The ideal form of government for the clerical activists became public knowledge in the late 1970s when Ayatollah al-Sadr issued his conception of a modern Islamic government.[84] The plan called for a government of three branches, with the executive and legislative branches elected via a system of universal suffrage. The judicial branch was to be appointed. The highest court was to consist of clerics, presumably including both Shias and Sunnis in Iraq, where the Muslim community consists of both sects. The court was to be charged with making sure that laws enacted by the legislature did not contravene Islam. This proposal was a much thought about attempt to create a modern system of Shura in which the governors consult with the governed via elections.

Two Quranic verses (Sura 3, verse 159, and Sura 42, verse 38) directed the Prophet Muhammad to Shura. In the past, Muslim governments

were considered to have met this requirement by consulting with high-ranking clerics or other notable citizens. Ayatollah al-Sadr posited that such limited consultation with the people was no longer adequate, given the high level of education in the modern world and people's expectation of self-government. He believed that to be accepted, modern governments had to consult with their citizens through elections; hence the system of Islamized democracy that he proposed.

The political system outlined by Ayatollah al-Sadr was not inspired by Arab nationalism, an ideology that had the obeisance of many Iraqi Arabs but had no appeal, for obvious reasons, to Iraq's large Kurdish population. The Islamic activists expected a representative system of government to accommodate a variety of religious and political beliefs and to resonate favorably with the Muslim Kurds. Citing the Quran's warning against compulsion in religion, Ayatollah Al-Sadr stressed that government should not attempt to impose religion on individuals. Non-Muslims were to be free to practice their religion and to take part in political activities, rights guaranteed to them by Quranic injunctions. They were to be afforded the protection and services received by Muslims.[85]

Along with their plan for representative government, the activist ulama and their supporters formulated a strategy for achieving it, a way of moving the Iraqi people from the minority-dominated, authoritarian government that they had, to this modern system of Shura. The plan required political assertiveness on the part of the Shia laity, and the creation of an alliance with those Sunnis willing to work for a modern Islamic government. To this end, Shia Islamists formed several clandestine political groups, the largest and best known of which was Hizb alTawa (Party of the Call to Islam). They also joined forces with Iraq's Sunni Islamists, namely the Muslim Brotherhood, whose original leader, Muhammad Mahmud al-Sawaf, strongly supported cooperation between Sunnis and Shias.[86] The most important Shia supporter of the Shia-Sunni alliance was the Shia marja al-taqlid (supreme authority or source of imitation), Ayatollah Muhsin Al-Hakim. One manifestation of the alliance was the recruitment of Shias to membership in the Brotherhood. Likewise, an estimated 10 percent of the members of Hizb al-Da'wa were/are Sunni.[87] There was a geographical dimension to recruitment for most Islamic groups. Shia Islamists in Sunni

areas would join the Brotherhood; Sunni Islamists in Shia areas would join Hizb al-Da’wa.

Iraq’s Sunnis and Shias have never fought each other on religious grounds, and this political cooperation between the two communities had precedents; for example, in opposition to British colonial domination, Sunni and Shia clerics and laymen from both communities allied in the 1920 revolt. To be sure, some Sunni tribes and leaders did not join that effort, a fact that greatly helped the British to prevail. Indeed, a similar division in the Sunni community manifested itself regarding the Islamist alliance of the 1950s. After Shaykh al-Sawafleft Iraq in 1959, the Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood stopped accepting Shia members.[88]

It should also be noted that there was division in the Shia community, although it was not over cooperation with the Sunnis. The Shia division was over whether or not they should be politically active at all. Quietist clergy, both in the 1920s and later, interpreted their clerical responsibility narrowly, believing that their obligation was only to say what was right, not to take action to try to achieve it. The foremost of the quietist clerics in the 19705 and thereafter was Ayatollah Abol-Qazem Khoi. Ayatollah Khoi, who became the marja ‘ al-taqlid after the death of Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim in 1970, upheld Shia political quiescence, which in Iraq meant leaving government to the Sunni Arab minority.

**** Baath Policies toward the Clergy

The relationship of both Sunni and Shia clergy to the government changed substantially when the Baathists came to power in 1968. Within a year, Shaykh Abdul Aziz al-Badri, the Sunni alim (cleric) most associated with the Islamic movement, was arrested and killed in prison. Sunni mosques that had been independent of the government were closed. This early show of ruthlessness against the Muslim Brotherhood essentially eliminated religion-based opposition in the Arab Sunni community. The Sunni clergy confined themselves to carrying out their strictly religious duties of advising individual believers on Islamic law and comforting them with hope for life in the next world. The regime discouraged regular prayers by both

Sunnis and Shias, but Sunnis fared better because they had family connections in the upper echelons of government.

The government targeted activist Shia ulama, but also endeavored to bring the entire clerical establishment to heel. In 1969 the government arrested and tortured two Shia clerics, Sayyid Mahdi al-Hakim and Sayyid Hassan Shirazi, who, like Shaykh al-Badri, were politically active Islamists.[89] At the same time, the Iranian seminarians in Najaf were arrested, and Shia endowment funds were confiscated. In the 19705 there were more arrests of Islamists. In 1980, the government arrested, tortured, and executed Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr and his sister, the ’alima (cleric [feminine]) Bint al-Huda. In 1983 over 100 members of the clerical al-Hakim family were arrested by the government. Six of them were executed immediately, and the fate of most of the rest remained unknown.

During the eight-year Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988), Kurdish Islamists, who were Sunni and associated with the Muslim Brotherhood, participated in the armed opposition to the Baathist government. One of the prominent Kurdish Islamists, Mullah Uthman Abdul Aziz, fled to Iran with some 5,000 of his supporters, then returned to confront government forces shortly before the government’s gassing of the Kurdish town of Halabja in March 1988.

The Shias were severely targeted again after the March 1991 intifada that occurred at the end of the Gulf War. Among the clergy arrested at that time were 16 members of the clerical Bahr al-’Ulum family, including Ayatollah ‘Ala’ al-Din, Ayatollah Izz al-Din, Ayatollah Jaafar, Hujja.[90] Hassan, Hujja Muhammad Hussein, Hujja Muhammad Rida, and a number of their sons.[91] No account of their fate after arrest was given.

The 93-year-old marja ‘, Ayatollah Khoi, despite his abjuration of politics, was also arrested at that time, along with 108 of his followers, most of whom were not heard of afterwards.[92] The ayatollah may have aroused government wrath through his commitment to maintaining clerical autonomy and advising believers on Islamic law. After Iraq’s 1991 invasion of Kuwait, Ayatollah Khoi declared it a sin for believers to buy goods brought back from Kuwait, a ruling based on his determination that the goods were

stolen. Ayatollah Khoi died under house arrest in 1992, and his eldest son died in highly suspicious circumstances in 1994. The ayatollah's youngest son, Abdul Majid, escaped Iraq and now directs the Khoi Foundation, a large and active benevolent organization headquartered in London.

The most recent government campaign against the Shia clergy began in 1998 with the assassinations of Shaykh Mirza Ali al-Gharawi and Shaykh Murtada Al-Borujerdi. In January 1999 a grenade attack against Shaykh Bashir Hussein Al-Najafi and his seminary wounded the ayatollah and killed three others. In February, Ayatollah Sadiq al-Sadr and two of his sons were assassinated as they left Friday prayers, which the government had ordered the ayatollah not to lead. Ayatollah al-Sadr expected to be killed and was wearing a death shroud as he led his last prayers and at the time of his assassination. Another of the ayatollah's sons, along with a large number of seminarians who studied under the ayatollah, were arrested later in the year.

In the weeks preceding Ayatollah Sadiq al-Sadr's assassination, many of his aides were arrested and their houses demolished. The whereabouts and fate of most of the arrestees remained unknown.[93] In January, Shaykh Awas, imam of the Nasriyah city mosque, was arrested. When an unarmed crowd of his supporters demonstrated to demand his release, security forces killed 5 and arrested 300.[94] The imam of al-Thawrah mosque in Baghdad was reportedly killed in demonstrations protesting the death of Ayatollah al-Sadr, as was Shaykh Ali Al-Sahlani, imam of the main mosque in Amara. The chief Shia clerics in Basra and Nasriyah were arrested, apparently to prevent their leading religious gatherings.

When some pious Shias started attending prayers at Sunni mosques after their own mosques were closed, the government began checking food ration cards at mosque entrances and meting out severe penalties to people who attempted to pray at unauthorized locations.[95] Toward the end of 1999, 19 of Ayatollah Sadiq âl-Sadr's followers were executed, including Shaykh Muhammad al-Numani and Shaykh Abdul-Razzaq al-Rabi'i.[96]

As of 2000, there were almost no Shia ulama from the venerable clerical families left in Iraq. Some members of the prestigious Shia clerical families

have survived by leaving Iraq. The Sunni clerical institution is not faring much better. Because religious studies are under government control, pious young Sunnis are avoiding religious careers.

Religious studies continue to attract Shia Arab students to the seminaries in Qom, Iran, and the small centers in Lebanon, but clearly the loss of senior clerics is problematic. Arab Shias have always sought to have at least one Arab among the Grand Ayatollahs in order to make sure their distinct interests are not over-looked by a totally Iranian leadership. To have an Arab among the Grand Ayatollahs, Arab Shias have had to give overwhelming support to one candidate— which has become very hard to achieve given the present paucity of Iraqi clerics and the circumstances in Iraq, where the majority of Arab Shias live. Shaykh Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah in Lebanon has considerable support, but only Iraq has an Arab Shia population large enough to provide the base for a marja ‘. Arab Shia clerics and Iraqi merchants have a strong interest in maintaining Najaf as the site of the marja‘iyya, given that most of the shrines that attract Shia pilgrims and therefore generate revenues are in Iraq.

**** Surviving Religious Leaders

Although there is a ranking cleric inside Iraq for each religious community, neither man has any freedom of action. The ranking Shia, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, was born in Mashad, Iran, in 1930 and took his early studies there. He then enrolled in Qom for advanced jurisprudence courses. From Qom, he moved to Najaf to study in the seminaries there. At the age of 31 he received his ijaza (certification as a mujtahid) from both Ayatollah Khoi and Shaykh Hussein Al-Hilli. Sistani began teaching Islamic jurisprudence in Najaf and continued to do so until placed under house arrest by the Baathist government. Although Ayatollah Sistani is forbidden to lead prayers and is severely circumscribed in his activities, his liaison office in London undertakes religious and educational projects in his name.[97]

The ranking Sunni cleric inside Iraq is Abdul Karim al-Mudarris, the qadi (religious judge) of Baghdad. One expects a qadi to

enforce Islamic law, but Shaykh Mudarris's authority is confined to pedestrian decisions such as declaring when Ramadan begins.

Outside Iraq, several Iraqi religious authorities are active and influential. One of them is Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, who was born in Najaf in 1939 into a prominent Iraqi clerical family, his father Ayatollah Muhsin Al-Hakim being the leading mujtahid from 1955 to 1970. Sayyid Muhammad Baqir was educated in the hawza (center of religious studies) at Najaf and became a leader in Iraq's Islamic movement, writing books and articles for the call to Islam. He was imprisoned and tortured by the Baath government in 1972 and 1977. When public pressure effected his release in 1979, he fled to Iran. He has been chairman of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq (SCIRI) since its establishment in 1982. During the Iran-Iraq War, he supervised the 15 Iraqi refugee camps in Iran and SCIRLs military forces.[98] Importantly, Sayyid al-Hakim has cooperated with Sunni Arab and Kurdish groups and has supported the election of a consultative assembly to write a new constitution for Iraq.

A second prominent Shia cleric is Dr. Muhammad Bahr al-'Ulum, who was born in Najaf in 1927 into a prominent Iraqi clerical family. His ancestor Ayatollah Mahdi Bahr al-'Ulum was the leading Shia mujtahid of the late eighteenth century. Dr. Bahr alUlum was educated in the hawza at Najaf and was among the first to graduate from Iraq's College of Theology after it was established in the early 19605. As one ofAyatollah Muhsin al-Hakim's staff, he was obliged to flee Iraq in 1969 after the Baath government accused the ayatollah's staff of conspiracy. Sayyid Bahr al-'U!um proceeded to obtain a master's degree from the University of Teheran and a Ph.D. from the College of Sciences at Cairo University.[99] Today he directs Ahl al-Bayt, a London-based organization ministering to Iraqi refugees.

Among Iraqi Sunni clerics outside Iraq, Dr. Taha Jaber al-Alwani, president of the Graduate School of Islamic and Social Sciences in Leesburg, Virginia, is highly respected. He is from Ramadi and took his early education in Iraq in the classical Islamic disciplines. His master's and doctoral degrees are from al-Azhar in Cairo, the foremost school for Sunni clerics. He is an authority on Shaffi law, and in his many books and articles, he addresses such varied subjects as the rights of the accused in Islam and the social implications of

Islamic law.[100] Dr. al-Alwani has support from prominent Saudis and Jordanians and is not very involved with specifically Iraqi affairs.

Dr. Usama al-Tikriti, age 60, is another respected Sunni religious leader. He is not a clergyman but is president of the Iraqi Islamic Party, that is to say, of the Iraqi Muslim Brotherhood. He is a radiologist, practicing in Leeds, England. Dr. al-Tikriti completed secondary school in the town of Tikrit and medical school at the University of Baghdad. He joined the Muslim Brotherhood in the 19505 and was the leader of the Brotherhood in the United Kingdom from 1972 to 1978. From 1978 to 1991 he worked in the United Arab Emirates. On his return to England in 1991, he became president of a center for political studies and research and initiated publication of the Islamic Party's monthly magazine, Dar al-Salaam (House of Peace).[101]

Finally, it is important to note that the Kurdish population has its own clergy and two Islamic parties. The Islamic Unity Movement, Harakat Al-Wahda, is a union of several smaller parties and is headed by Salah al-Din Baha al-Din. The other party, the Revival Movement, Harakat al-Nahda, is headed by Mullah Ali Abdul Aziz. Both parties maintain a working relationship with the Arab Muslim Brotherhood.

**** Conclusion

The activist Shia clergy have written and spoken fairly often about their vision for a future government in Iraq. They are committed to a democratic system with an Islamic sifa (flavor), to use their word. They stress that in the long term any non-democratic government in Iraq would have to stay in power through coercion, and that Iraq has had enough government by coercion. They contend that minority government is not feasible in the modern world with its educated masses and modern telecommunications. As for Sunni Islamists, some of Iraq's Muslim Brotherhood also advocate a democratic government for Iraq. They say that the religiosity of the Iraqi people will add the Islamic "flavor" they too hope to see in a future political system. Because of the Baath regime's brutal

suppressions, the Brotherhood has no organization left in the Arab part of Iraq, although some individual members remain.

Iraq's quietist Shia clergy continue to acquiesce to minority Sunni government, but reject the totalitarian government they have had under Saddam Hussein and his clan. This also seems to be the position of Iraq's Sunni ulama. Recent visitors to Iraq report Sunnis want Saddam's government replaced by that of a Sunni military officer who is able to control the street and prevent retribution against Sunnis.

Inasmuch as some Sunnis may fear the Shias would dominate a democratic system, it is important to ask whether the Shia community is politically homogeneous. In fact, it is quite unlikely that the Shias would vote as a bloc. More likely they would divide in the way that Iranians are dividing. In the 20—odd years of elections in Iran's Islamic Republic, generational differences and other interests have created a nascent multi-party system. Since Iraqi Shias run the gamut from left to right, from urban sophisticate to rural traditionalist and from affluent to poor, it is very likely they would divide into parties with both Sunni and Shia members—as they actually did between the time the British set up a constitutional monarchy in Iraq and the Baathists took over the Iraqi government, ending Iraqis' right to join parties other than the Baath Party.

The position of the clergy will remain important because both Sunni and Shia clergy are valued by observant Muslims for their knowledge of Islamic law and their ability to interpret the Shariah. The Iraqi people are going through a time of severe trial, a time when human beings tend to turn to religion. As might be expected, visitors to Iraq report increasing religiosity, as well as fear and depression, in both the Sunni and Shia communities. In the first months of 2001, the numbers of Iraqis visiting the mosque/shrine in Karbala far exceeded previous numbers.

Because Islam has deep, validated roots in Iraq, the regime of Saddam Hussein has gone to great lengths to muzzle the clergy and to eliminate clerics it cannot manipulate. At tremendous cost to themselves, the Shia clergy have resisted being brought under government control. Through their

sacrifices, they have retained their leadership function and their credibility with believers. The fact that democracy is the aspiration of many educated Iraqis and of activist Shia clerics means a democratic government would have major support in the Shia community. It would probably have some Sunni support as well.

Whatever form of replacement government Iraq gets, many of its exiled clergy will return to rejoin the clerics who have survived the brutality of the last few decades within the country. Although sorely reduced in numbers, the Iraqi ulama can be expected to serve a positive, reconciliatory role in their ravaged country.

[80] Najaf is the southern Iraqi city that has, since the eleventh century, often been the preeminent locus for Shia jurisprudence and theology.

[81] The clergy became subject to certain taxes and lost their control over education. In many cases, their landed estates became government property. For a detailed account of the late-nineteenth-century losses to Iraq’s clergy, see Hanna Batatu, The Old Social Classes and Revolutionary Movements of Iraq, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1978, chapter 7.

[82] Fadil Jamali, “The Theological Colleges of Najaf,” The Muslim World 50:3, 1960, p. 15.

[83] Written communication from Muhammad Sadiq Bahr aluium, February 2000.

[84] Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, Islamic Political System, translated by M. A. Ansari, Karachi, Pakistan: Islamic Seminary, 1982.

[85] Murtada Mottahari, Jihad, translated by Muhammad Salman Tawhidi, Teheran, Iran: Islamic Propagation Organization, 1985, p. 65. Although Iranian, Ayatollah Mottahari was closely associated with the activist Iraqi Shias.

[86] Tarik Hamdi al-Azami, “The Emergence of the Contemporary Islamic Revival in Iraq,” Middle East Affairs Journal, volume 3, number 1—2, winter/spring 1997, p. 132.

[87] For an account of the Islamic movement of Iraqi Shi’as, see Joyce N. Wiley, The Islamic Movement of Iraqi Shi‘as, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

[88] Al-Azami, op. cit., p. 14On.

[89] Sayyid is the honorific for a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad.

[90] Hujja is the reduced form of Hujjat al-Islam, Proof of Islam, the title of a mujtahid, i.e., a cleric authorized to issue authoritative opinions on Islamic law.

[91] Mohammad Sadiq Bahr al-’Ulum١ “The Tragedy of the Bahr al-’Ulunı Family,” Iraqi Islamic Association of America, 1998, pp. 5—13.

[92] “U.S. Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 1999: Iraq,” p. 4. On the World Wide Web at [[http://www.state.g0v/www/global/human][http://www.state.g0v/www/global/human]] rights.

[93] US. Department of State, “Human Rights Reports for 1999,” pp. 12–13. At http://www. state.gov/www/global/human rights/1999 hrp report/iraq.html.

[94] Ibid., p. 16.

[95] Ibid.,p. 25.

[96] Ibid.,p. 5.

[97] “Ayatollah al-Sistani,” [[http://www.najaf.org][http://www.najaf.org]]. See also “Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Sistani,” http://playandlearn.org.

[98] Ayatollah Sayyed Mohammad Baqir al-Hakim,” [[http://playandlearn.org] [http://playandlearn.org]].

[99] Bahr al-’U!um, op. cit., p. 4.

[100] Written communication from Dr. al-Alwani’s office.

[101] Written communication from Dr. al-Tikriti.

THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

*** Chapter 5: Domestic Politics in a Post-Saddam Iraq

Laith Kubba

Trends amongst Iraq’s diverse ethnic and religious communities are critical factors for power projections and political predictions. The two devastating

Gulf Wars, the March 1991 uprising, as well as the prolonged sanctions, have polarized Iraq’s communities and weakened the prospect for democracy in a postSaddam Iraq. Consequently, and for the foreseeable future, Iraq’s stability may well require an authoritarian government, even if structural reforms are essential. In fact, the provisions for a modern, secular, and national framework are not sufficient to accommodate cultural and national aspirations of Iraq’s diverse communi ties. Inasmuch as the failure of consecutive governments—to meet the aspiration of Iraq’s vibrant communities—is rooted in the constitution and state institutions, the legacy of the past few decades necessitates fundamental reforms. A strong state and effective institutions are crucial to Iraq’s stability.

**** Introduction

Up until 1958, Iraq posed little threat to its neighbors, and was of little interest to policymakers and international institutions. The 1973 oil boom, and the two Gulf Wars, projected Iraq as a regional power. Still, research on contemporary Iraq is hindered by two factors. First, the Iraqi government carefully guards the flow of information and forbids independent research on its domestic affairs. The state’s annual budget, for example, has been classified information since the early 19705, and state employees who communicate general information to outsiders—without prior permission—are charged with treason. Foreign researchers who were permitted to move freely within the country faced a cautious and self-censored populace. Second, the numerous articles, papers, and books that have been published on Iraq since 1990 continue to be driven by the ongoing conflict between Iraq and the United Nations. Such material focuses mainly on the regime, its organizations and behavior, the mechanics of repression, and the impact of sanctions on the economy and social fabric. Little attention has been paid to the political impact of three decades of Baath Party rule, the two Gulf wars, and their associated sanctions on the inner dynamics of Iraq’s various communities. In an attempt to develop an insight into the future dynamics of Iraq’s domestic politics, and by relying on ongoing contacts and close association with Iraqis within the Diaspora, this chapter identifies and explores key trends for the future.

**** The State and its Citizens

Iraq is predominantly Arab, with the exception of three provinces in the north (out of a national total of eighteen) that are predominantly Kurdish. Both Arabs and Kurds have strong tribal and religious loyalties that often override ethnic identities. Within these Arab and Kurdish provinces, there are cities with predominant ethnic communities that are bonded to Iraq through culture and religious beliefs. Iraqis differ amongst themselves in their many claims and counter-claims of the real percentages of the ethnic and religious composition of Iraq's population, as well as their share of its history and cultural identity. Iraq is truly mosaic in its composition, and it is not feasible to restructure a political system based exclusively on ethnic lines, or even along lines of religious belief.

Consecutive Iraqi governments sought to nurture a national identity through social development under the auspices of strong centralized state institutions. Post-Ottoman Iraq was multiethnic and tribal and lacked national identity. Nevertheless, Iraq was constituted as a unitary modern state with centralized executive, legislative, and judicial bodies. Moreover, British colonial leaders envisaged Iraq as an Arab state, headed by a constitutional monarchy, run by an elected government, and protected by a national army. In the event, Sunni elites in Baghdad, and tribal Arab Sunni leaders throughout the country, were better positioned to benefit from the new state structure. Some of Iraq's communities initially challenged consecutive governments to demand a special status and better services from the state. Prior to Iraq's independence, the Kurds, for example, pressed for a separate nation-state and later modified their demands to an autonomous region within Iraq. The Shia clergy, for their part, led the Arab tribes in challenging the British influence over the country and boycotted the government, thereby weakening their overall participation in state institutions. Initially, the state prevailed over Kurdish national aspirations and Shia demands, but the pressures of these communities for participation remained driving forces behind domestic political developments.

Iraq's stability hinged on the ability of the state to accommodate the aspirations of its overwhelming majority, the Arab and Kurdish tribes. Under the monarchy, there was an imbalance of power, in favor of the elites in Baghdad. Later, this imbalance tilted in favor of tribal Arab Sunnis. To be

sure, the monarchy struggled to accommodate the politicd forces of its three main communities, and the rights and aspirations of other minority groups. There were minor conflicts and periodic tensions between Baghdad and many such entities, as state institutions were too weak to remain neutral. Few leaders could withstand the conflicting demands of Iraq's communities for political recognition and participation. The modern secular state provided key services and offered opportunities to all citizens but was not neutral in addressing communal aspirations. Eventually, the state caved to tribal Arab Sunni pressures, whose influence became dominant in the army and security organizations.

Not surprisingly, a popular military coup ended the monarchy in 1958, replacing its fragile democratic institutions with a military dictatorship. The state became the vehicle for senior army officers, mainly Arab Sunnis, to consolidate and expand their respective power bases. A decade of instability ended in 1968 with a coup that converged the Baath Party, the Iraqi army, and the tribal Arab Sunni leadership into a strong central government under the leadership of the Tikriti clan. The 19705 oil boom multiplied Iraq's income by several fold, and the state became central to the lives of most Iraqis. In turn, the regime developed full control over the state, by transferring its power structure from that of a traditional army rule into an intertwined trilateral combination of the army, the Baath Party, and a minority ofArab Sunni tribes. Within a relatively short period of time, and through complex security networks, the family of Saddam Hussein then led the regime.

The state of Iraq, as a constitutional monarchy and later as a republic, provided a national framework for the integration of Iraq's communities: Shia, Sunni Arab, and Kurdish tribes, and its other significant minorities of Assyrians, Turkomans, Caldeans, Sabians, Armenians, and Yazidis. Importantly, the state's main institutions, such as the armyjudiciary, bureaucracy, parliament, and political parties, had the potential to provide full political integration, social development, and the emergence of a national identity without threatening sub-national identities. In fact, the development of an Iraqi national identity took place through the evolution of the economy, the growth of the middle class, and the development of a welfare state. State education and the integration of Iraq's communities in national politics further provided some of the most important elements of the emerging Iraqi national identity.

Despite these institutional changes, the main fault line of the Iraqi state remained in the disproportionate participation of its two largest communities, the Shias and the Kurds, in the leadership of its institutions. Since the early 19705, it may be accurate to posit that the leadership of the army, state bureaucracy, security, and other state institutions developed in an uneven manner. Worse still, the state took sides in accommodating conflicting communal interests. Consequently, a majority of Iraqis today identify the state and government with Arab Sunnis. This perception has reinforced the reality and polarized Iraqi communities even further. In the case of a future inter-communal conflict, it is likely that the military as well as most security services—the state's main institutions—will identify themselves as the defenders of Arab Sunnis. Instead of attempting to include Iraq's two largest communities into the system, Baghdad camouflaged its narrowly based Sunni tribal power structure with national rhetoric, which played down communal sub-identities. Moreover, the totalitarian government of Saddam Hussein forced Iraqis to compromise their sub-identities in favor of an Iraqi national identity. Thus, the Iraqi state reached its peak rhetoric as a nation-state on the eve of Saddam Hussein's claim to the presidency in 1979, when Iraq had a strong welfare state and a booming oil-based economy that broadened its middle classes and enhanced its national identity. Although the system was open to all Iraqis, power remained unquestionably in the hands of a few. The government bought their loyalty through jobs, free education, health care, and other benefits.

Under normal circumstances, there should be legal and political distinctions between the state, the government, and the president of Iraq, but in reality, all have been reduced to the entity of the president. Today, Saddam Hussein and his family run a "security regime" that, in turn, manages the Baath Party, the military, and the bureaucracy. Although these power bases vary in their responsibility for initiating or implementing Saddam Hussein's policies, Baghdad is perceived by a majority of Iraqis as an extension of Saddam Hussein's regime. The ills of the policies of Saddam Hussein became the ills of the state itself. Irrespective of academic arguments about such distinctions, the end result of three decades of Baath rule brought to question not only the future of Saddam Hussein's regime but the future of the Iraqi state itself. Kurds tend to blame the state and Sunni Arabs for the emergence of the ultimate dictatorship of Saddam Hussein, while Shias tend

to blame Sunni tribes for their support of the regime. So far, the problematic relationship of the Iraqi government with its communities has not led to inter-communal conflicts, but it certainly has undermined the credibility of the government in developing a national identity.

**** State Relationships with Ethnic Communities

It is difficult to assess in detail the impact of the past three decades on the attitudes and dynamics of Iraq's ethnic communities without an assessment based on field research. To some extent, it is evident that Iraq's three main communities now diverge in their political perspectives, interests, and attitudes on a number of key issues and have developed different political agendas.

Shia Arab tribes, who are concentrated in relatively deprived areas of Baghdad and most southern cities, are perceived as a threat to the government. Sunni Arab tribes form the power base of the regime and, consequently, enjoy unique privileges. Still, Shia and Sunni Arab tribes are divided more by their contrasting realities than by their confessional beliefs. Indeed, the two Gulf Wars and their aftermath have divided and polarized the Arab tribes along Shia-Sunni lines, up until 1990, the Shias, who form the majority of Arabs in Iraq, had no specific political demands beyond broad national reforms. Despite their religious bonds with Iranian Shias, for example, they fought a national war against Iran. However, a serious fault line between Shias and Baghdad emerged in the aftermath of the March 1991 uprising against the regime. To quell this opposition, the regime targeted Shias through indiscriminate attacks on their religious institutions. As a result, some Shias have now joined Kurdish leaders in demanding a decentralized state structure for a future Iraq.

The Kurds have an older and a more complex relationship with the state. Kurdish national aspirations were not met after the First World War, and since then, it may be accurate to posit that the Kurds have been struggling for national recognition. They were the first to be at odds with the newly established state and demanded autonomous rule. Their demands for self-rule resulted in a March 1970 agreement, but despite the progress reached

then, they fought several wars with Baghdad for the realization of an autonomous region. Given this background, Kurdish successes in maintaining a de facto self-rule in northern Iraq since 1991 have far-reaching consequences on Iraq and its neighbors. In fact, it is difficult to reconcile the autonomous Kurdish region with an authoritarian centralized unitary state with an Arab national identity. Iraqi Kurds have opened a Pandora's box on future alternatives in Iraq that will have far-reaching effects on both Iran and Turkey.

In addition to the failure of the state, Iraq's national unity has been weakened due to the effects of the UN sanctions. To be sure, sanctions increased Iraqi dependence on the state, in securing food allocations through the miserly coupon distribution system known as the oil-for-food program. On the other hand, such dependency neither compensates for the diminishing role of the state as a framework for national integration nor contributes to the development or maintenance of a national identity. Moreover, sanctions have undermined the urbanized middle classes—especially in Baghdad—who are the real product of an Iraqi national identity. The destruction of the urbanized middle classes, the lack of state services in key sectors, such as health, education, and employment, and the inability of Iraqi polity to provide national alternatives have all contributed to the fragmentation of Iraq's national identity—with dire consequences.

**** The Fragmentation of National Politics

Up until recently, the Iraqi polity was neither ethnic nor confessional. The political discourse was national and reflected the main political trends in the region, which are liberal, leftist, nationalist, and/or Islamist. These diverse political trends spread throughout Iraq and among its main communities, Shias, Sunnis, and Kurds. Some ethnic and marginalized communities leaned more toward national and secular political trends that held broad appeal, while others sought radical reforms to improve intrinsic conditions. Indeed, these variations in political tendencies were complex, and could not be reduced to mere ethnicity or religious confessions. For example, the Shia Maadan in the south, and Shias in the poorer Baghdad districts, were attracted to radical leftists, as well as Islamic movements. Kurds were attracted to nationalist, tribal, communist, and Islamic movements. Although

Islamic and Kurdish movements seemed to be confessional and ethnic, respectively, they were better understood in the ideological and national context. For many decades, Iraqi politics had remained national and provided a framework for the emergence of a national identity and the integration of its communities.

Recently, however, Iraqi politics was reshaped by the emergence of ethnic and religious sub-identities and tribal loyalties, which overrode the traditional national discourse. Despite claims to the contrary, the most recent meeting of these groups in New York under the umbrella of the Iraqi National Congress (INC) amply illustrated the lack of this national discourse. The various groups expressed general aspirations for peace and respect for human and community rights, but did not opt to develop a genuine national agenda. More importantly, the politics of the exiled groups indicated that there has been a clear surge in ethnic sentiments, communal loyalties, and regional agendas. To some extent, the assertion of ethnic and communal identities may be understood as a backlash against three decades of a state policy that sought to promote a uniform identity and enforce a state version of sub-identities. Expressions of strong ethnic sentiments may also be understood in view of the fear of communities being left out, if and when the state is restructured and reformed. It may also be argued that the trends amongst the ethnic exile groups are not indicative of the real communal aspirations inside the country. Nevertheless, the narrow sectarian agendas of these self-proclaimed and exiled political groups cannot be dismissed. Their failure to provide an alternative national framework, as well as their active participation in the promotion of ethnic-confessional political options, will surely undermine further Iraq’s national identity. Nowhere was this trend clearer than within the military.

***** The Military

Under the monarchy, consecutive Iraqi governments used the army to quash community rebellion of Kurds, Assyrians, and Shias. The role of the military increased with its frequent interventions in politics as an instrument used to end chaos and restore order. The bloodless 1968 military coup was followed by a violent systematic campaign against dissidents. Since then, the Iraqi army has fallen under the tight control of emerging security agencies, which

have become the key institutions buttressing the regime. Over the past three decades, the military's officer corps has been selected from Sunni tribes loyal to Saddam Hussein. Although the military ceased to intervene in politics, it retained its loyalty to the regime, thus becoming its ultimate line of defense.

***** Prospectsfor Political Violence

The biggest threat to Iraq's long-term stability is its potential for communal and political violence. Over the years, Iraq's security agencies and the military have repressed Iraqis on a wide scale and increased their capacity for brutality, which can only lead to more injustice. Ironically, although overwhelming force succeeded in undermining armed resistance and deterred dissent, it has increased and developed the capacity for violence amongst Iraqis.

Yet, despite this tendency, there has been no inter-communal violence amongst Iraqis over the past few decades, with the exception of a few, low-key, inter-tribal confrontations in rural areas. These non-political incidents, which lasted a few days at the most, were resolved within tribal norms and did not develop into lasting disputes. In the years 1958–1963, Iraq's main cities witnessed serious political violence, the most evident of which were the infamous massacres in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Baghdad. Indeed, Iraq's short-lived episodes of political and tribal clashes drop to insignificant levels in comparison to its serious episodes of state-community violence. Although communal and political disturbances seem to be negligible—especially when compared to other countries, such as Lebanon, Somalia, and Afghanistan—the level of violence initiated and orchestrated by the state against its own citizens is one of the worst throughout the region.

In the early 1970s, the Baath government contained a major Kurdish rebellion in the north, as well as a small-scale communist guerrilla movement in the marsh areas in the south. Both operations were successful. In 1979, Iraq witnessed an upsurge of political violence triggered by the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the rise of Saddam Hussein to power, and the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War. Shia demonstrations in Baghdad were followed by an

attempt on the life of Iraq’s deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, that threatened the stability of the entire regime. These events led to a government-sponsored terror campaign that specifically targeted two political parties, the Islamic Dawah Party and the Iraqi Communist Party. In the event, two Shia communities were singled out as fifth columns: the Faili Kurds, and Shias of Iranian origin. Later, Baghdad targeted the Kurdish Democratic Party, led by the Barazani clan, and then targeted the second largest Kurdish party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. Before long, the leading revolutionary council passed a capital punishment decree on all members of the Islamic Dawah Party, and public executions of opponents were ordered by special committees. Importantly, summary sentences were administrated by low-level Baath Party members, further drawing them into the regime’s nest. Extra-judicial killings and executions did not spare religious men, tribal chiefs, army officers, or academics. A vicious cycle of violence, which was led by the state and followed by the opposition, was concluded in 1989 in favor of the state. During the eight-year-long Iran-Iraq War, Baghdad carried out thousands of public executions of dissidents and army deserters. As the high toll of war casualties synthesized violence and made death a normal part of life, the invasion of Kuwait the intensity and ferocity of the second Gulf War and its widespread destruction—further diminished the value of life.

***** Rating the Survivability of the Regime

If anything, Saddam Hussein has been consistent in his use of excessive and decisive force against his opponents. To date, his regime has been successful in using force and terror to secure stability, but whether it can survive for another decade through terror alone remains to be determined. Moreover, and in the event of the collapse of the regime, is it likely that violence will spread throughout Iraq and escalate through revenge, reprisals, foreign involvement, and easy access to weapons? Can the Iraqi state survive the downfall of the regime without breaking apart? In case Iraq survives the initial chaos, can this generation of Iraqis develop alternative structures based on democracy and the rule of law, or are they doomed to fail because of the many years of terror and repression that have deeply impoverished their political culture?

To be sure, Iraq's future is clouded with more uncertainties than that of any other nation of the Middle East, speculation on Iraq's future ranges from the continuation of Saddam Hussein's dynasty for the foreseeable future to a prolonged civil war and an eventual fragmentation of the country.

In the short term, observers can only speculate on a wide range of possible scenarios such as a regional misadventure by Saddam Hussein, an escalation of violence between Iraq and the United States, the assassination of President Saddam Hussein, the crowning of one of his sons, a coup from within, an uprising, and so on. Yet, despite the regime's firm grip on power, Saddam Hussein's astonishing survivability, the firmness of the United Nations sanctions, and the Iraq-US. policy deadlock, Baghdad's siege cannot be maintained over the long term. Either Baghdad or Washington will agree to a more flexible position and move beyond the current deadlock. It is also possible to envisage another future in view of two likely scenarios. Indeed, a departure from the current deadlock would lead either to the revival of the regime or to its breakdown.

The first scenario could occur if and when there is change from within the regime, and it assumes that the country would remain intact through the use of force. It further assumes both the continuity of the regime and its ability, under present or a different leadership, to meet American and United Nations requirements for lifting sanctions. Finally, it also presupposes that the regime has the capacity to administer change and reforms, which would—eventually —rehabilitate it back into the world community.

A more realistic scenario is that of a defiant Saddam Hussein who would hold on to power until the country breaks down into chaos. Under this view, a new regime would emerge, perhaps out of the remains of surviving state institutions, with the ultimate result of communal conflicts. The collapse of the regime could unleash complex dynamics of change in which both state and social institutions become the determinants of Iraq's future. Of course, it is highly speculative as to whether or not Iraq's neighbors would be directly involved in its domestic affairs, but it is fairly certain that they will be indirectly involved through proxy militias and political groups.

**** Prospects for Self-Reform and Rehabilitation

Whether Saddam Hussein's regime can in fact reform itself, and whether it would survive such reforms, are key questions as well. There have always been pragmatists within the current regime who argued for reforms, as is evident in numerous public statements by some of the top officials in 1989, 1991, and 1999. To be sure, such statements may be part of a sinister ploy to engage the international community in dialogue, with the false hope of achieving modest reforms. Tariq Aziz, for example, declared that Baghdad—under the present siege—would not proceed with plans for political pluralism, out of fear that such reforms may well undermine internal stability. Members of various exiled Iraqi groups reported that indirect mediation with Qusay Hussein, the president's powerful son and probable heir, aimed to open a dialogue, but most judged these as sham and insincere. Ultimately, it is Saddam Hussein who decides the extent to which such risky policies may be pursued, and, so far at least, he seems to reject genuine reforms, openly and defiantly, the Iraqi strongman defies the Security Council in its numerous disarmament programs for Iraq, mistrusting even his closest "reformist" allies.

A good case in point is the lack of a response to Iraq's repeated "gestures" for a rapprochement with Washington. If there were to be a favorable change in the American political climate toward Iraq, then the regime would presumably posture more on reforms, engage itself with reform rhetoric, and push for normalization and a speedy suspension of sanctions. This would be a short-lived affair because the United States, even if it is under pressure to relax sanctions, is unlikely to change course, depart from its staunch anti—Saddam Hussein position, or engage itself in any dialogue with the current regime in Baghdad.

Moreover, as a time-tested leader, Saddam Hussein seems to have more faith in the effectiveness of his Stalinist-style rule, which has kept him in power— against all odds—for over 30 years. Under the circumstances, risky reforms may not be favored, especially since the ethos of the regime is based on fear and terror. For Saddam Hussein, the lessons of the Eastern Bloc clearly demonstrated that reforms weakened authoritarian regimes, and led to their meteoric collapse. Therefore, and unless reforms may be

introduced at low risk—and high returns—Saddam Hussein will not allow any consideration. At present, the regime perceives the “reforms option” as a threat rather than an opportunity, and even if its benefits were to outweigh costs, Saddam Hussein will simply not permit it.

The reforms option is possible but it requires a change in the leadership. Over the past 30 years, Saddam Hussein has outmaneuvered his rivals, and hence a change from within is remote even if it cannot be ruled out. Conspirators against Saddam Hussein must not only have the capacity to physically remove him from office, but should also have certain assurances that they would be able to survive him, and retain power. Under such an outcome, the new leaders of Iraq would need Western—especially American—support to buttress their regime and allow the introduction of long-term reform programs. Moreover, the regime-reform agenda of a post-Saddam Hussein leadership would primarily focus on issues of mutual concern to Iraq and the United States, including attention to the Kurdish question, relations with Iran, the Palestinian refugee issue, regional security, oil policy, various military programs, and the rights of religious and ethnic minorities. Given this critical list of concerns, any regime in Baghdad would be reluctant to accommodate all of the American concerns, including the undefined role of the military—as the guarantor of internal stability—the power share of tribal Arab Sunnis, and the restraints on political and religious freedoms. Given the history of the country, such a leadership would surely be a softer version of Saddam Hussein’s regime, willing to fulfill some of the aspirations of the Kurdish community, but refusing to honor Shia longings.

***** The Chaos Scenario

There are many scenarios of how this regime might end, but none of them would be without chaos and bloodshed. Indeed, developments immediately following the March 1991 war shed considerable light on the patterns of revolt, and their likely targets. The uprising started in Basra by retreating soldiers who shot at Saddam Hussein’s statues in anger. That symbolic act triggered groups of daring youth to take to the streets with light machine guns. In response, senior members of the Baath Party and security men, Shias and Sunnis alike, were handpicked by angry mobs before being killed in summary executions. Then local offices of the Baath Party and other

security organs were destroyed. Hundreds of officers, soldiers, junior members of the Baath Party, government employees, Shias and Sunnis alike, who were fortunate to escape the onslaught of the war, joined rebel factions, assuming leadership roles when necessary. The news of the rebellion spread and triggered similar defiance in most southern cities, with identical patterns.

Over time, and as rebellious Iraqis started to believe that the regime would collapse, many more joined the armed groups, formed their own checkpoints, and searched for state targets to vent their anger. Outrage was necessary to maintain the momentum of the rebellion. Local dignitaries and tribal leaders assumed leadership roles, but by the end of the first week, ordinary Iraqis—who were dazzled by decades of harsh authoritarianism—were in search of broader-based and collective leadership. Most Shias, for example, gravitated toward known religious figures and rallied behind Ayatollah Khoi, the 90-year-old spiritual leader in Najaf. Others called for Ayatollah Al Hakim, the exiled religious leader in Iran, to assume his rightful place. Neither of them was in a position to fill the emerging leadership vacuum or lead the country on a national level. Given such uncertainties, the uprising withered at the vine and, after a few days, ended in a bloodbath.

Within a very short period of time, Republican Guard units crushed the rebellion with merciless and indiscriminate force, as the uprising in the south was crushed. Southern Shias were frightened, a phenomenon that shaped their political outlook. Since 1991, the south has not witnessed any signs of popular unrest. When Mohammed Al Sadr, a senior clergyman, was assassinated in Najaf in 1991, it was not the Shias of the south but those in the poor districts of Baghdad who rebelled. So-called emergency forces in Baghdad moved swiftly to crush the unrest, and were kept at full display for several weeks as a deterrent.

The March 1991 uprising in the predominantly Kurdish north and Shia south targeted the regime’s party and security institutions and made its men scapegoats. To be sure, the dynamics of the rebellion at the micro level were similar in both regions, although the eventual outcome in the north was drastically different from that in the south. It was days after the relatively successful uprising in the south that the Kurds mobilized against the state.

This uprising, ironically, was initiated and led by Kurdish tribal leaders known as thejohoosh, who had been, until that day, collaborators of the Iraqi regime. On balance, the Johoosh decided to switch allegiances and declared their support for the exiled Kurdish leaders, Barazani and Talabani. What followed was nothing short of dramatic, as over a million Kurds drove across the borders to Iran and Turkey. Under international pressure, the Iraqi military withdrew from the three Kurdish provinces, where Kurds have been running an autonomous region ever since.

Whether a similar breakdown scenario is likely to occur again is difficult to anticipate. Neither Operation Desert Fox in 1998 nor the assassination of a Shia leader in 1999 was sufficient to trigger a mini-uprising. But if Shias perceive a breakdown in the authority of the regime, then an uprising could occur, with a slower pace but with a pattern similar to the March 1991 uprising—spontaneous, local, and unorganized. Yet, and to secure the loyalty of its troops, Baghdad eliminated their options to switch sides by implicating them in widespread war crimes and human rights violations. Active members of the Baath Party, special elite units within the military, and the security forces know that they will not be safe if they abandon the regime, or switch loyalties at the last hour. This knowledge substantially limits the various chaos scenarios one may fathom.

***** The Kurds

Inasmuch as the March 1991 events clarified certain points, Kurdish attitudes would—presumably—be very different in the event of a new breakdown. Throughout the 1990s, the Kurds lived without Baghdad’s day-to-day supervision, going so far as to declare a federal state within Iraq. Today, Kurds enjoy some international recognition, are sufficiently armed, and administer their own affairs. As a result, the prospect for another uprising in the north is not a salient issue, although it could affect politics in Baghdad. Simply stated, the Kurds could play Arab communal and political disputes to their advantage. The two Kurdish groups, led by Barazani in the provinces of Irbil and Dahuk, and Talabani in the province of Sulaymaniah, differ in their perspectives on how best to serve their long-term interests. They also differ in their immediate needs as well as narrowly defined tribal interests. In the past, they disagreed in their positions toward Iran and Turkey, the opposition

and Baghdad, American covert operations, and so on. Barazani has been consistent in avoiding a confrontation with Baghdad and preserving the de facto autonomous state acknowledged by both Washington and Baghdad. Talabani, a close ally of Iran, is a risk taker who would seek more say in Baghdad, to buttress his limited influence in “Kurdistan.”

***** The Northeast

In addition to the Shias and the Kurds, tribal Arab Sunni groups in three provinces northeast of Baghdad—who did not rise against the regime in March 1991—deserve attention. It may be possible to impute that no uprising occurred there out of fear that a regime breakdown would result in a takeover by Shias and Kurds, presumably not in their best interests. In return for their loyalty, Saddam Hussein shielded them from the impact of sanctions. Today, tribal Arab Sunnis enjoy a standard of living better than that found in the capital and, not surprisingly, most do not wish to alter the existing balance of power. They contribute to elite military units, lead the state bureaucracy, manage various security organs, control portions of the economy, and identify their interests with that of the state. Importantly, and although several Arab Sunni mavericks attempted to assassinate Saddam Hussein, they have not joined others to undermine the regime. Most endured the cruel reprisals after each failed attempt, but continued to be loyal to preserve intrinsic interests. They see a national agenda led and defined by the military as their best vehicle for the future. It may be worth repeating that most tribal Arab Sunni elements maintain a high degree of cohesion, form a well-defined interest bloc, are properly armed, display some experience in governance, and may be ready to defend basic interests at all costs. In the case of another Shia uprising in the south or even in

Baghdad, for example, Arab Sunnis may be expected to close ranks. In the case of a breakdown of the regime, they may be expected to defend the integrity of the military and the state against all others.

***** The Capital

Baghdadis, Shias and Sunnis alike, feared the impact of a breakdown in law and order and did not rise in March 1991. In the event, middle-class residents in and around the capital rejected a putative mob takeover. The most volatile district of Baghdad, Al Thawrah, which is carefully watched by the government and feared by Baghdadis (inhabited by an estimated two million deprived Shias), was relatively subdued in March 1991, sparing itself a brutal slaughter at the hands of Saddam Hussein's so-called emergency forces. Since then, conditions in Baghdad have gotten worse because of the sanctions and the overall lack of services. Importantly, middle-class elements are the worst hit by sanctions, and many seem to have little or no choice but to emigrate or wither silently.

If another uprising were to occur, Shia districts in Baghdad such as Al Thawrah could conceivably be optimal venues. Yet, the military and security forces would also fight hard to keep control over Baghdad, with or without Saddam Hussein in power. Without the leadership of Saddam Hussein, the military would find support among Baghdadis at grassroots level, but it would —conceivably—be a nightmare to imagine Baghdad without a forceful authority.

**** From Chaos To Order

The demise of Saddam Hussein and the collapse of the regime would push Iraq into a new era. It would introduce a new set of dynamics and force most Iraqis to address issues other than Saddam Hussein. In fact, the new dynamics in a post—Saddam Hussein era are unpredictable, and its ultimate outcome is highly speculative. An authoritarian government supported by Iraq's main communities, or a prolonged civil war, and/or a possible fragmentation of Iraq define the upper and lower bounds of these speculations. These bounds exclude the emergence of a liberal democratic system in the short term.

Events that might follow the breakdown of the regime could be envisaged in two phases. The first phase assumes inevitable anarchy, with bloodshed, cycles of vengeance, and violent quests for power. Worse still, there is a danger that the military would disintegrate as a national institution and

emerge as the spearhead of tribal Arab Sunni elements. Soldiers, who could access sophisticated weapons, including the country's chemical and biological arsenals, may well use them in their communal wars. Iraq's estimated one million men under arms might well be sucked into the cycle of violence and vengeance. It would not be surprising that violence would lead to additional conflict that would result in an orgy of inter-communal bloodshed. Extremists and provocateurs would be out of control and would lead their communities into anarchy. Tribal leaders, political groups, army officers, and foreign-backed groups would all compete to fill the void and expand their power bases. Under such circumstances, the period of bloodletting and the extent of violence are thus unpredictable, as the brutality would lead to an ongoing anarchy, especially in Baghdad. The Iraqi military, which has the capacity to "settle" military battles, would not be able to end political and communal violence without support from community leaders and political figures.

A second phase would emerge if and when Iraqis could put an end to lawlessness, control communal violence, and acknowledge the need for consensus and compromise. Outside the capital, where there are predominant and homogenous communities, there would be a quick end to anarchy. Moreover, community leaders would reach consensus on local issues but would differ on how to proceed further and address national issues. It must be clearly stated that today Iraq has no national organization, or known leaders, that could assume a leadership role on a national level, beyond existing ethnic and religious loyalties. Truth be told, the new-generation leaders lack mutual trust and political experience to conclude lasting compromises. Their exposure to regional influence would prolong the period of instability and muddy its ultimate outcome. Without a doubt, operatives from the communist, Islamic, and Baathist groups could all prove to be effective in serving others, but they would not be capable of leading the country. The least effective would be the American-backed exiled Iraqi opposition, who, ironically, may well be despised by most factions.

Nevertheless, and if all goes well, Iraqis would eventually come to terms with their collective needs, accept compromises, and develop aggregate measures to restore order. Although Iraqis could build confidence in reaching agreements on the future role of the state and acquiesce to various methods

to develop the constitution, it is unlikely that they would proceed beyond law and order concerns into long-term national issues.

**** An Agenda for the Future

There are no signs as of yet of meaningful dialogue or of setting a working agenda for political discourse in Iraq. Efforts to develop consensus, define an agenda, or agree on a new constitution are at their infancy. Iraq's various communities have not yet had the chance to exchange views and compromise their differences on the future.

Given that the majority of Iraqis are of tribal origins, with authoritarian leaders who acknowledge the need for consultation and consensus building but not democratic traditions of elections, accountability or participation is not impossible to fathom. Consecutive military rulers and political parties alike cashed in on Iraq's tribal authoritarian culture and discouraged the emergence of democratic traditions. Leaders often use the pretext of necessity, stability, and unity to justify the need for excess authority. A post-Saddam Hussein regime would be in real need of such stability and unity, and consequently a fresh agenda would be dominated by short-term concerns for security. Under the circumstances, few should anticipate a long-term agenda that aspires to democracy and an open society.

Still, Iraqis would attempt to reconstruct the country under a new constitution and restructure its many institutions. Naturally, Iraqis share aspirations and ideals for a peaceful country, but they lack the mechanisms to proceed on a number of key issues. So far, the debates amongst exile groups—which took place under the auspices of foreign powers and lacked credibility—clarified the need to develop consensus on a number of critical issues.

First, Kurdish demands for a federal state. Although Arabs endorse the need for self-rule and an autonomous status in "Kurdistan," they do not share with the Kurds an agenda for a federal state.

Second, the role of the army. Shias and Kurds alike will seek to limit the role of the military and broaden its base. The Iraqi army is supposed to be a national institution meant for the defense of the country, but the bulk of its officers are compromised tribal Arab Sunnis.

Third, the state structures. A decentralized structure appeals to Kurds, but some Arabs may reject it in defense of a strong central Iraq. The administration of the country from a central government in Baghdad has led to the marginalization of the regions and to fierce competition by Iraq's main communities.

Fourth, numerous foreign influences. Iraq's communities feel the need for foreign support, including demands for foreign assurances of rights and agreements. Moreover, many communities have been exposed to a high degree of foreign influence, which is perceived by leading Iraqis as undermining the country's national interest. Kurds, in particular, will insist on conducting their own foreign affairs and will seek foreign underwriting of their deals with other Iraqis.

Fifth, political participation. The main communities need to agree on an agenda concerning the principles of participation, governance, and accountability at local, regional, and central level. Although these may be agreed upon on a regional level, there are profound differences on how to proceed with respect to the central administration.

Sixth, developing the economy. The main communities need to agree on Iraq's central and regional economy, the allocation of resources, and the role of the state in providing welfare services.

Finally, civil liberties. The main communities need to agree on human and civil rights, minority status, freedom of expression and association, and other related issues and the extent to which these rights should be secured by international laws and agreements.

***** The Shia Political Agenda

The 12 million Shias make up over 60 percent of Iraq’s population and over 80 percent of its Arab population. Assuming that Iraq resolves the Kurdish demand for an autonomous federal region, it would be left with a minority of Arab Sunnis in government and an increased majority of Shias who will certainly demand wider participation in the decision-making process. Consequently, the Shia political agenda is crucial to Iraq’s stability.

***** Who Are the Shias?

The Shias of Iraq form neither a homogenous religious community nor a massbased society. The majority are tribal Arabs, mainly concentrated in southern Iraq. Baghdad has influential Shia families and a highly urbanized Shia population, and more than half of its inhabitants are of tribal Shia origin. They constitute the poorest and most deprived citizens. Non-Arab Shias are better understood as ethnic communities in clearly defined districts; the Kurdish Failis in northeastern provinces, Turkomans in Kirkuk and Mosul, and Iraqis of Persian origin in the holy cities of Najaf, Karbala, and Khadmiya. Most of the latter are concentrated in specific districts, and their attitudes and interests differ from the majority tribal Arab Shias. Still, the three most influential Shia communities are those in Baghdad, the Arab tribes in southern Iraq, and the religious communities in the holy cities of Najaf, Karbala, and Khadmiya.

Shias are sub-divided on class, ethnic, and tribal lines, but they are bonded through shared beliefs, initiation rituals during the month of Muharam, and leadership by the ulama and the marja’. Shia’s adhesion to religious institutions is deeply rooted in their communal traditions. These bonds, however, are not sufficient to make them a distinctive bloc like tribal Sunnis, Assyrians, or other minorities. Their religious affiliation plays little role in defining their daily interests but becomes of great significance during national crises.

The impact of Saddam Hussein's era on Iraqi Shias varied across the communities. In the 19805, Faili Kurds and Iraqis of Persian origins, for example, were prime victims of the regime. Following the March 1991 uprising, the main victims were the Arab tribes in southern Iraq and those in the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala. Shias in Baghdad have suffered too, because of state neglect of their neighborhoods, but have not been targeted by the government. Baghdadi Shias suffered from a serious breakdown in their social fabric, unlike those in southern Iraq, because most lost their religious linkages with the south. The March 1991 uprising further illustrated that the Shias rallied around the traditional marja'iyya and other ulama in Najaf. They formed local communities to reflect parochial interests but could not lead or perform on a national level, because their capacity to organize and form effective structures was weak.

In this respect, it is criticd to note that there are two important factors in defining the role of the clergy in Iraqi politics. First is the ethnic origin defined by the Arab-Persian element of the leadership. The religious hierarchy in Najaf has taken on a serious theological leadership role vis-â-vis Qom. However, Najaf has increased its Iraqi identity and enhanced its leadership amongst Iraqi Shias. Sayyed Sistani, for example, a non-Arab marja', commands influence amongst Shias outside, rather than inside, Iraq. The late Sayyed Sadr was a rising leader, and his assassination in 1999 left a political vacuum. In case of a future communal crisis, Iraqi Shias may well be galvanized toward an Arab Shia marja' from one of the known religious families, such as members of the Al Hakim family in Najaf.

The second factor is the political outlook of the marja'. As the highest religious authority in Najaf, the marja' stays out of politics, unless there is a national or religious crisis. In such times, Shias throughout Iraq tend to bypass their political and local leaders and abide by the direction of the marja'. This trend is neither religious nor political but cultural, and it is likely to continue. It is unlikely that the marja' of the Najaf school of thought will push for a political role, and if he did, Shia Iraqis would not necessarily accept his extended political leadership. Other clergymen are likely to seek a political role in conjunction with parties and alliances, and this too bodes ill for the future.

***** Shia Politics

Political trends amongst the Shias reflect the national spectrum. These variations reflect class, communal, and educational pressures, as well as exposure to outside influences, the capacity of various players to accommodate regional demands, and the overall conditions within the region. For example, the Iraqi Communist Party and its members remain active and rooted in Shia communities. Fundamentalist Islamic (Shia) groups, such as the Islamic Dawah Party, are also active in secular communities throughout Baghdad. Even the Baath Party has a large Shia membership. These three parties are rooted in Shia communities and have the capacity to re-organize and re-enter the political fray as serious contenders for power. Their weaknesses, however, have led to the emergence of new leaders and alliances amongst the non-politicized sectors. New groups have emerged with local leaders, smaller groups, and social dignitaries. The clergy, tribal leaders, businessmen, and community leaders now provide a second tier of political players who can seek to aspire to national politics through broader alliances.

***** Shia Sentiments

There are as many political views amongst the Shias as there are political groupings, and it is difficult to simplify the attitudes of Iraqi Shias on these matters. In a rare 1993 meeting hosted by the Al Khoi Foundation in London, more than 150 Shia intellectuals of different political affiliations met and expressed their views on a number of issues. The proceedings of these meetings have not been published as of yet, but a number of key issues were debated: the political crisis in Iraq, communal trends among the clergy, attitudes toward other communities, and those toward the state, Iran, and various Arab countries.

First, Shias—especially in the holy cities—resented the war with Iran on religious grounds. Some clergy and Islamic groups opposed the war, expressed sympathy to Ayatollah Khomeini, and sided with Iran. SCIRI continues to represent and lead that trend. Today most of the clergy and many of the Islamic groups in exile see Iran as a state that allows Iraqi Shias

to advance their own interests. Shia members of the Baath Party and the ICP tend to be more hostile to Iran and cynical of its concerns about religious affairs. Iraqi Shias who took refugee in or were deported to Iran still perceive themselves as Iraqis and remain bitter over being in Iran.

Second, Shias have no religious or confessional problem with their Sunni brethren. This, they argue, is a cultural issue with Arab Sunnis. Shias feel bitter against those who held and abused power, and see their problem as being with the government, and not with Sunnis as such. They wish to foster good relations with Sunnis and seek assurances against power abuse.

Third, Shia political groups differ in their political programs, but they all agree on the need for broad political participation and call for the protection of civil rights. Islamic groups in particular call for an elected government based on Islamic referendum and seek an alliance with Sunnis and Kurds to accomplish such an objective. Liberal, secular, and leftist groups advocate a temporal democratic system with a decentralized government. Arab nationalists and Baathists see the need for a reformed centralized government backed with national reconciliation.

Fourth, Islamists do not have clear-cut views on the future of the Kurds. During the INC meetings, ten different views were expressed from amongst Islamist delegates. Shia liberals and nationalists, and even some leftist elements, saw the need for an autonomous Kurdish region and did not object to its creation.

Fifth, all Shia constituents look to Iraq’s affiliation with Arab causes and concerns, but differ to the extent that such affiliations may compromise the country’s intrinsic interests. Nationalists pursue Arab unity, Islamists pursue Muslim unity and closer ties to Iran, and liberal and leftist groups focus on a purely Iraqi identity.

Finally, there is also a strong cynicism of, and resentment toward, American policy vis-â-vis Iraq. In particular, many Shias resent the sanctions, Washington’s obduracy toward the Iraqi population, and its inconclusive

measures against Saddam Hussein. Shias do not object to the American regional policy even if the majority favors positive relations with the United States. Undoubtedly, Iran will continue to influence some of the Islamic groups, which might seek power by radicalizing public opinion against U.S. policies on Arab and Iraqi issues.

***** The Political Future of the Shias

Shia communities are thus vulnerable and exposed to a wide range of influences. They face tough choices with serious consequences and have neither developed a political agenda nor identified a new political leadership. The most likely outcome is that they would go through a leadership crisis, which would be fulfilled by traditional clergymen in the short term. The marja' would be in a position to lead the community and restore a sense of direction. Nevertheless, it should come as no surprise if and when extreme and radical politics would flourish amongst Shias, during the transition period in Baghdad. The ICP and the IDP, for their part, would not be in a position to lead but they could be disruptive. Tribal leaders may well fill the power vacuum during any transition period in the south, and they would have the capacity to build bridges with Sunni elements, but in the long term, Shias would find—out of necessity—that it is in their best interests to reform the state and work within it.

**** Conclusion

The two Gulf Wars, the United Nations sanctions, and the ruthlessness of Saddam Hussein's regime have all polarized Iraq's main communities—the Shias, the tribal Arab Sunnis, and the Kurds—along ethnic and confessional lines. The effects of this polarization are deep and irreversible, and will probably reshape both the roles of the state vis-â-vis Iraq's main communities and the country's inter-community relationships. Saddam Hussein's domestic policies, coupled with the decade-old sanctions regime, have weakened Iraq's national unity and identity, revived ethnic and religious sentiments, raised communal tensions, and undermined the role of the state.

What is truly undeniable is that relying on state institutions to benefit a minority of tribal Arab Sunnis, at the cost of Iraq's main communities—the Shias and the Kurds—has resulted in dire consequences. Saddam Hussein may survive sanctions or be survived by a relative in power, but ultimately the regime will face violent confrontations with the Shias and will make serious concessions and compromises. Irrespective of what eventually transpires in Baghdad, the Kurds will continue to maximize their returns, push for less central government, and seek constitutional concessions to and guarantees for their de facto autonomous region. The majority of Iraqis, including Shias, will settle for a broader political system and a centralized government. And tribal Arab Sunnis will most probably retain power through the military after they resist a larger share for Shias and Kurds in state affairs.

Today, Iraqi politics have been transformed, from those of competing ideologies to those that emphasize ethnic-tribal expediency. An entire generation of Iraqis no longer relates to traditional political parties and is influenced by foreign forces, communal rather than national interests, and even narrow perspectives.

The current deadlock in Iraq will surely end by either the revival of the regime or its breakdown. Either way, the prospects are bleak. Iraq's concerns may well be limited to its immediate needs for security and stability—rather than its long-term aspirations for democracy, development, or prosperity—but much of what will occur depends on existing institutions. The military and other state institutions are critical in ensuring stability, even if they cannot lead by force alone, or implement lasting reforms without the consent and cooperation of Shias and Kurds. If the regime can survive a change in its leadership, then it can carry out only reforms that would fall short of demands made by a majority of Iraqis. If Baghdad survives the bloody aftermath of the regime's removal, then it would either accommodate far-reaching reforms or risk fragmentation. Its chances for survival would then depend on the ability of Iraqi community leaders to reconcile existing differences. Can Iraqi Shia leaders, tribal Arab Sunni officials, and Kurdish chieftains agree on constitutional, state, and economic reforms? The

prospects are indeed bleak, but many may well be prodded by their constituents to compromise and chart a new direction for the country.

*** Chapter 6: The Military in Iraqi Politics

Andrew Parasiliti

Iraq’s military has been and remains the final arbiter of political power, the key to a regime’s survival or its demise. A legacy of military intervention underscores the lack of democratic institutions and processes in modern Iraqi politics and complicates the prospects for a democratic transition after Saddam Hussein. In order to draw the appropriate lessons from the past, political-military relations in modern Iraq should be understood in a broader historical context that takes into account the effects of ideology, colonialism, and dictatorship on Iraq’s political development.

This chapter examines the role that the military has played in modern Iraqi politics; the influence of ideology in shaping that role; civil-military relations under the Baath, including both Gulf Wars; and some concluding thoughts about what this might mean for Iraq’s military in the future.[102]

**** Ideology and the Military in Modem Iraqi Politics

Arab nationalism has played an instrumental role in shaping the interventionist bent to Iraq’s military. The problem in civil-military relations in Iraq can be understood, in part, as a result of the influence of a powerful anti-colonial and pan-Arab ideology on a developing state with weak political institutions.[103]

The first decade of independence gave the Iraqi monarchy and the traditional ruling classes no quarter from the revolutionary ideologies and movements of the day. A close association with Britain, the mandatory power until Iraqi independence in 1932, diminished the Iraqi monarchy's credibility among many Iraqi and Arab nationalists. Furthermore, the radical and nationalist ideologies that swept both Europe and the Arab world during the inter-war period contained a strong element of militarism. Iraq's education system, the Military College, and associated institutions propagated these ideas among Iraq's youth. In turn, many young Iraqi nationalists proved receptive to a way of thinking that stressed both pan-Arab identity and animosity toward a "colonial" Britain.

A central figure in introducing these ideas into Iraq's national education program was Sami Shawkat, who served as director-general of education (1931–33: 1939; 1940) and minister of education (1940). Shawkat is well known for, among other things, his 1933 speech "The Manufacture of Death," in which he argued that the ability to cause and accept death in pursuit of pan-Arab ideals was the highest calling. He was a prominent member of the Muthanna Club, which sponsored many talks and lectures on pan-Arabism. Under Shawkat's guidance, the Iraqi education curriculum introduced military-style instruction, including uniforms for both teachers and students. In 1939, he instituted Al- Futuma, a paramilitary youth organization named after a social organization of the Abbasid caliph al-Nasir al-din Allah. Shawkat's promotion of a nationalist education system and vanguard youth organization foreshadowed the Popular Army and youth organizations of the Baath Party four decades later. [104]

The curriculum at Iraq's Military College, which opened its doors in 1924, reinforced the nationalist, and anti-British, pedagogical approach of Sami Shawkat and his associates. Although British and Iraqi officers taught the classes, and used British manuals translated into Arabic, young cadets became exposed to the radical and revolutionary Arab ideologies of the time. Tawfiq Husain, a lecturer in military history, indoctrinated young Iraqi military officers into the ways of Arab nationalism, Iraqi-style. Husain, who was educated in the Ottoman military system and had served in the Turkish army, encouraged an activist role for the military in Iraqi political affairs. He soon gathered a coterie of military officers around him weaned on nationalist

doctrine. He influenced, among others, officers who supported both Bakr Sidqi and the “Four Colonels” who backed Rashid Ali in 1941.[105]

Over time, the pan-Arabism of Iraq’s educational and military systems encouraged an activist worldview centered on Arab unity, anti-imperialism (read anti-British), and the Palestinian issue. Young military officers and students of the period became indoctrinated in an ideology that challenged the pro-British inclination of the Iraqi monarchy and the pre-revolutionary era’s most formidable politician, General Nouri Al-Said. The nationalist, ideological bent of Iraq’s new officer classes eventually influenced both the Free Officer movement that overthrew the monarchy in 1958 and the Baath officers who took power in 1963 and 1968.

**** The Assyrian Affair and Its Repercussions

The embryonic nature of Iraq’s political institutions, the increasing restlessness of its officers and students, and the weakness of the Iraqi monarchy ushered in the era of military interventions. King Faysal Fs death in September 1933 and the succession of Ghazi bin Faysal, his only son, to the throne signaled this new period in Iraqi politics. Ghazi had attended Iraq’s Military College and identified with the nationalist spirit there. He also laid Iraq’s first public and official claim to Kuwait.[106]

Ghazi had foreshadowed his nationalist inclinations during the “Assyrian affair” in the months prior to his ascension to the throne. Despite his general indifference to his responsibilities of governance, Crown Prince Ghazi had made known his disregard for Britain’s role in Iraqi politics and thereby earned himself a following among those officers and students advocating a more independent line in Iraq’s political affairs. Ghazi was a vocal advocate of the Assyrian campaign. The Assyrians were easy targets for nationalist provocateurs in both the government and the military. The architect of the eventual massacre was General Bakr Sidqi, who, though of Kurdish origin, espoused the demagogic nationalist rhetoric of the day.[107]

The Assyrian affair is noteworthy for three precedents that it set with regard to the role of the military in Iraq's politics.

First, it provided both the precedent and the raw material for the interventionist role that the army would eventually play in Iraqi politics. The government sought to capitalize on popular support for the Assyrian pogrom to expand the size and influence of the military, in the guise of containing possible threats in both the north and the south of the country. In fact, the Iraqi parliament passed the first mandatory conscription bill in 1934, against opposition from both tribal leaders and the British government. Soon thereafter the military became a career path for a generation of young men from all classes and regions of Iraq, who, concurrently, became exposed to the nationdist ideologies of the day. The advent of conscription broke down traditional bonds of loyalty based upon tribe and religion, replacing them with secular notions of national and, especially, pan-Arab identities. The ideological indoctrination of Iraq's officer class undermined the state-building role that militaries have traditionally played in developing some societies.

With conscription, "the military" could no longer be viewed as a "unitary actor" in Iraqi politics, as the armed forces became a favored institution for those of various ideological stripes committed to an independent and nationalist path for Iraq. Nationalists within the military included both the Iraq-first and panArab currents, a tension and schism that has colored Iraqi nationalist movements ever since. In addition to the nationalist parties, the Iraqi Communist Party also had its followers among Iraq's new officers.[108]

These developments allowed Bakr Sidqi to parlay his hero status and undertake the first military coup in Iraq in 1936, beginning a period of coups and counter-coups that ended in 1941, when British forces intervened to overtake the Rashid Ali government. Not surprisingly, General Sidqi soon faced chailenges of his own from competing nationalist quarters in Iraq's military, as well as from Nouri Al-Said, who waged his campaign against Bakr Sidqi from exile in Egypt. Bakr met an assassin's bullet less than a year after seizing power.

The second lesson from the Assyrian affair was that the popular support for the campaign displayed the depth ofanti-British sentiment in Iraq, as well as the centrality of anti-imperialism in Iraq’s Arab nationalist parties and movements. Fifteen years later, in 1948, Nouri Al-Said’s re-negotiation of the 1930 treaty with Britain, known as the Portsmouth Treaty, provoked the largest anti-regime demonstrations to date, the so-called watbah, or uprising, of 1948, which brought down the new cabinet.[109]

Third, the Assyrian affair set a precedent for the military’s role as guardian of Iraqi unity from domestic enemies, rather than neighboring powers. For here is where the army would have its most notable “successes,” such as the subsequent campaigns against the tribes of southern Iraq and the Kurds of the north. In a similar vein, another tragedy of the Assyrian affair is that it foreshadowed the tactics of a later era, portraying an act of political violence under the guise of nationalism as an anti-imperialist crusade. The precedent of “foreign enemies” necessitating extreme actions at home became an unfortunate and regular feature of Iraqi, and especially Baath, politics.[110]

The role played by ideology in the pre-revolutionary era cannot be emphasized enough. Political developments regarding the formation of the state of Israel and the question of Palestine further shaped the Iraqi outlook, and offered politicians several opportunities to thwart rivals, under the guise of adherence to a pan-Arab idea or cause. The defeat ofArab forces in the 1948 War intensified calls in certain ideological circles for greater Arab unity. Nationalist sentiments grew, particularly among young Iraqi and Arab officers, who blamed the Arab governments for the defeat in the war. The situation of Iraqi Jews also became increasingly untenable, in part because they became scapegoats for the economic duress caused by the conflict, and their exodus from Iraq began. The economic and political challenges of 1948–49 forced the imposition of martial law and the return of General Nouri, who took the opportunity to move against the Iraqi Communist Party, which he blamed for ongoing strikes and demonstrations.

**** Civil-Military Relations under the Baath

The relationship between the Iraqi military and the Baath Party is complex and related in ways that are often overlooked. Despite well-documented conflicts, purges, and regular coup attempts, the Baath and the military draw from an interconnected nationalist background and experience. Indeed, the Baath Party could not have pulled off two coups and two wars without the cooperation and complicity of its members in Iraq's armed forces. Hanna Batatu suggests that the rise of Baath Party members in the military hailing from Tikrit (the hometown of Saddam Hussein and Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr, among others) has to do with the positioning of Tikriti men in the Royal Military Academy, and their ability, through their Party and family connections, to outlive rival parties and clans.[111]

Foreshadowing the events of five years hence, the Baath Party allied itself in 1963 with nationalist military figures to bring about the removal of Abdul-Karim Qassem from power. Although Staff Marshal Abdul Salam Aref ruled in title if not deed as president of the republic after the Baath coup, real power rested in the hands of Baath Party figures, especially Ali Saleh Al-Sadi and his colleagues from the civilian wing of the Party. Al-Sadi sought to curtail the Aref-military power base to give more weight to the National Guard. As many officers betrayed Nasserite leanings, a popularly based paramilitary force placed under the command of Colonel Munir al-Wandawi, a trusted officer-Baathist, was rapidly created and beefed up to act as a balancer. The Guard, which grew from a force of 5,000 in February to 34,000 by August 1963, challenged military officers and their authority, and its actions and abuses earned it a nefarious reputation. When political rivalries spilled into open conflict in November 1963,

Aref, who had for a time stood a middle ground, finally called out his troops and put an end to the excesses of the Baath Party and its paramilitary wing. This swift action ended the short, brutal history of the first Baath regime.[112]

In reviewing the lessons learned from 1963, the Party articulated its troubled relationship with the military by blaming the demise of the first Baath regime on "a dominant rightist military aristocracy, cut off from the army, the people and the national movement."[113] Baathist ideology gave "urgent" priority to consolidating its leadership in the Iraqi military, purging "suspect

elements," and integrating the "armed forces with the people's movement, directed by the Party, and [ensuring] its effective contribution to the revolutionary enterprise."[114] Toward this end, the Party "managed ... to install its own, very substantial and effective organization in the armed forces. Supervised by the Party leadership, it has played its part as an avant-garde."[115] The Baath regime also established the General Intelligence Directorate, composed of Party members and apparatchiks, to consolidate its power over internal police and security operations.

Once in power again in 1968, the Baath Party sought to subordinate the Iraqi military to the government, and keep it out of domestic politics. Toward that end, Iraqi leaders, led by then-vice president Saddam Hussein, sought to reduce the influence of military officers in Iraqi politics. What followed was a re-ordering of the Baath Party hierarchy, including the elimination of rivals and perceived rivals, including many of the old-guard Baathist officers who had been the backbone of the Party and the 1968 coup d'etat. The new regime stressed civilian leadership of the government and the Party, and looked to strategic tribal affiliations and patronage networks when staffing senior leadership posts. Immediately after the July 1968 coup, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) consisted entirely of military officers. By 1986, career officers played no significant role on the RCC, replaced by civilian party officials who owed their allegiance to Saddam Hussein.[116]

In 1970, the Baath Party transformed the National Guard into the Popular Army, which operated as a militia independently of the regular armed forces.[117] Four years later, Deputy Prime Minister and RCC member Taha Yassin Ramadan took over as its commander-in-chief. The Popular Army (also known as the People's Army or Party Militia) assumed responsibility for internal security, propagation of Baathist ideology, and protection of the regime from subversion by the regular armed forces. It included the Youth Vanguard, a paramilitary organization for secondary school students founded in 1975. By 1982, the Popular Army reportedly had 450,000 "active participants," both men and women, located in towns and villages throughout Iraq.[118]

The "Baathization" of Iraq's officer corps undermined morale and professionalism. Party apparatchiks in the armed services challenged traditional military lines of authority. In the late 1970s, the regime also set

about purging Communist cells in the military as part of its brutal crackdown on the Iraqi Communist Party.

The Baath Party had thus recognized and implemented a strategy to deal with the dual roles of the armed forces: as a partner in achieving and holding onto power, and as an element of potential subversion against those in power.

Batatu argues that although the civilian wing of the Party sought and achieved primacy over the officer corps by the mid-1970s, it would be a mistake to view this as a zero-sum contest. Instead, despite the clear tensions in these competing wings of the Party, he perceives the civilian wing of the second Baathi regime as more, not less, reliant on the officer corps for maintaining power. He concludes that “so long as the Baath continues to be characterized by the insubstantiality of its ideological links and the volatility of its mass support, its ultimate reliance on the army is inescapable.”[119]

**** Saddam Hussein and the Expansion of Iraqi Military Power

Saddam Hussein utilized Iraq’s oil wealth to fund an expansion of the Iraqi military’s size and capabilities, seeking to make the armed forces an instrument of his strategic ambitions. Iraqi governments had historically talked a good fight regarding pan-Arab ideals and interests, but performance hardly matched rhetoric in 1948, 1967, and 1973. The second Baath regime articulated a more elaborate and refined ideological position toward Iraq’s international and pan-Arab roles and responsibilities, but this time around, with expanded oil revenues after 1973, the regime set on a course to develop the economic and military capability to undertake a regional bid for dominance.

The ideological stance of the Baath emphasized what Ofra Bengio has labeled “three cycles of hostility,” all rooted in the revisionist pan-Arab politics that have come to define Iraqi regimes since the time of the monarchy. The first cycle focused on the Arab struggle against “imperialism,” both British and عجالآ The Central Education Program

(al-Minhaj al-Thaʕajɿ al-Markaxi), الآتاه- lished by the government in 1977, included a chapter on “The Arabs and Imperialism.” This official document stressed the need for Arab strategies to thwart Anglo-American bids to frustrate Arab unity and control the region’s oil resources.[120] The second cycle dealt with the Arab struggle against Israel and “Zionism,” which is of course linked to the struggle against imperialism; and the third on the threat from Iran, including Teheran’s alleged coordination with Israel in its presumed aggressive designs against Baghdad and the Arab world.[121]

The more elaborate and externally-focused worldview of the Baath coincided with an expansive economy. By 1980, Iraq had become OPEC’s second largest oil producer, its income from oil exports exceeding $26 billion. The Iraqi economy grew apace with the rise in oil export revenues. GNP per capita increased in real terms, from $729 in 1973 to 5,639 in 1979, before dipping to $4,465 in 1980.[122] Buoyed by positive economic developments, Saddam Hussein—who believed that a strong military was essential for Iraq to play a leading role in international relations—accelerated his ambitious programs. In a June 1975 speech, he stressed both “the decisive weight of... a solid economic base and an effective military capability” in Iraq’s regional role.[123] Between 1973 and 1980, Iraq’s annual military expenditures averaged 18.4 percent of GNP. The size of the armed forces in terms of military personnel increased from 105,000 in 1971 (1 percent of the total population) to an estimated 430,000 in 1980 (3.3 percent of the total population).[124]

Iraq also expanded and diversified its arms procurement policies at this time, as Saddam Hussein orchestrated the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Iraq and the Soviet Union in 1972. The treaty provided Baghdad with a valuable patron for arms supplies, military advice, and training. At the same time, Iraq cultivated France, Argentina, and several other countries to diversify sources of military technology and weaponry.

Iraq’s economic and military ties with the Soviet Union, France, and other Western powers played a vital role in another military priority—the development of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. In 1976, Iraq purchased the Tammuz 1 (Osiraq) nuclear reactor from France, in its quest

for a leading role in regional affairs. Saddam Hussein determined that a regional role required a strategic capability to challenge Israel and Iran.

Given this strategic objective, Saddam Hussein sought to complement his expansion of the Iraqi military with major political initiatives within the region and, to a lesser extent, at home. In 1975, the then—vice president of Iraq negotiated the ·iers Agreement with Iran, to end Iranian —and by extension American and Israeli—support for a Kurdish insurrection in Iraq that had been consuming the military's time and resources. While the Iraqi leader described the decision as "bitter and grave," because of the perceived injustice of Iraq's territorial concessions to Iran, he also defended the treaty as vital, at the time, to Iraq's development and reconstruction. [125]

**** Saddam Hussein and the Iranian Revolution

The Iranian revolution presented Saddam Hussein with a challenge to his regime's security and an opportunity to expand Iraq's power, with implications for the course of civil-military relations in Iraq.

The overthrow of the Shah and the coming to power of Iran's revolutionary government in 1979 ended the relative peace and stability that had existed between the two neighbors since the Algiers Agreement. Iran's revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini supported and encouraged Islamist Opposition to Saddam Hussein's regime inside Iraq. Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr Al-Sadr, a distinguished and charismatic Iraqi cleric and jurist, galvanized Shia-based opposition to Saddam Hussein in the late 1970s. Not surprisingly, the Iraqi regime responded with customary brutality, arresting, executing, and expelling thousands of Iraqi Shias. In April 1980, Saddam Hussein ordered the execution of Bakr Al-Sadr and the ayatollah's sister, the Islamic feminist Bint Al-Huda, as part of a severe crackdown on regime opponents. Simultaneously, Teheran's military and revolutionary units engaged in border skirmishes with Iraqi forces, and re-established ties with various Kurdish opposition groups in northern Iraq.

Against this background, Saddam Hussein sensed opportunity, while perceiving a threat emanating from Islamic Iran to his regime's security. He came to believe that the revolutionary government in Iran was fragile, and that a decisive military blow would end the revolutionary challenge once and for all. By attacking and defeating Iran, the Iraqi president could establish full Iraqi sovereignty over the Shatt al-Arab waterway dividing the two countries, reversing what was agreed to in Algiers. Finally, a victory over Iran would secure Iraq's place atop the Arab order, and leave it the preeminent power in the Persian Gulf. To peddle its design, the Baath regime cast its conflict with Iran as a pan-Arab obligation, claiming that Baghdad was the eastern flank of the Arab frontline against combined "Persian" and Israeli efforts to thwart pan-Arab ambitions.[126] Offering yet another justification for this ill-fated decision for war, Tariq Aziz posited that Iraq's experience in the war with Iran "providefd] the Iraqi Army with the qualitative experience needed for the next battle against the Zionist enemy."[127]

The war with Iran dramatically influenced the course of civil-military relations in Iraq. The Baath Party credited the war for the emergence of a "deep, strong and creative Iraqi nationalism ... for the first time linked to the Arab nationalist bond. "[128] That war plays a vital role in the development of nationalism is a common theme in the international relations literature dealing with state development and evolution. Raymond Aron wrote that "nations have rarely achieved an expression of their will as states without the intercession of force. "[129] In observing the situation in Iraq, Frederick w. Axelgard hypothesized that the war with Iran might have indeed contributed to a "potential transformation of political-military relations" in Baghdad because it forced the military into a newfound role: to defend the country against a foreign enemy, rather than to meddle in domestic politics. [130] Not surprisingly, the increase in the military's size and capabilities that began in the 19705 continued and expanded during the eight-year conflict. Furthermore, that Iraq's Shia community stood and fought, and did not cut and run, signaled to Axelgard and other observers that "the war has probably exerted a decisive, consolidating influence on Iraqi politics by cementing the national loyalty of Iraq's Shi'is."[131]

While the experience of war with Iran led to greater civilian control of the Iraqi military, the tension between Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi professional officer class worsened, rather than improved, as a result of the

war with Iran. The Iraqi president regularly dominated the decision-making process regarding the conduct of battlefield operations, with less than glorious results, while purging and executing those senior officers deemed incompetent or disloyal. The resulting fear of retribution from above hindered the performance of the military, especially early on in the war. Reports of attempted coups and assassinations originating from the military against Saddam Hussein surfaced during and after the war, as did the subsequent purges and executions that would follow. Setbacks on the battlefield encouraged Saddam Hussein to give his generals more decision-making authority in the final years of the war, leading to some improvements in performance and adaptability in Iraq's military campaigns against Iran.[132] When celebrating Iraq's successful military campaigns against Iran, however, Saddam Hussein made sure that the final credit was his alone, reminding one of Edward Gibbon's observation that the first Caesars were not "disposed to suffer that those triumphs which their indolence neglected should be usurped by the conduct and valor of their lieutenants. The military fame of a subject was considered as an insolent invasion of the Imperial prerogative."[133]

That Iraq won the Iran-Iraq War also requires qualification. The eight-year war, started by Iraq, set back, rather than enhanced, Iraq's economic power and regional standing. The economic and human cost of the war signaled a decline in Iraq's power relative to its Gulf neighbors and rivals. This awareness of relative decline influenced Saddam Hussein's decision to invade Kuwait in 1990). After the war, Iraqi military officers and servicemen returned home to a broken economy with high unemployment. There appeared no "peace dividend" for Iraq's sacrifices. The Arab Gulf states, for example, were loath to recognize Iraq as preeminent Gulf power based upon Iraq's military sacrifices.

On another score, Saddam Hussein sought to use military power to solve the Kurdish problem in Iraq once and for all. Here, as in the Assyrian affair and the Kurdish insurgency of 1974–75, the army played its role as guardian of Iraqi unity against enemies from within the state. That both leading Kurdish opposition groups—the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Kurdistan Democratic Party—had sided with Iran by 1986 allowed the regime to raise questions about the overall loyalty of Iraqi Kurds to the Iraqi state. In February 1988, the Baath government launched a brutal counter-insurgency

military campaign, the Anfal (or “spoils”), against the Kurds, replete with village destruction, use of chemical weapons, and forced resettlement of Kurdish citizens.[134] Human Rights Watch/Middle East estimated that Iraqi forces destroyed 2,000 Kurdish villages and caused the disappearance of as many as 200,000 Kurds, most of them civilians. When asked about the regime’s complicity in the Kurdish disappearances, Ali Hassan Al-Majid, secretary-general of the Northern Bureau of the Iraqi Baath Socialist Party and paternal cousin of Saddam Hussein, replied: “It couldn’t have been more than 100,000.”[135]

In the context of the complicated experience of prosecuting the war with Iran, including the developments and setbacks in civil-military relations and the qualified nature of the Iraqi victory, the Iraqi military had again turned its attention to the matter of defending the state from enemies within, prosecuting the anti-insurgency campaign against the Kurds with infamous ferocity.

**** Saddam Hussein and the War for Kuwait

The second Gulf War raises further questions about the position of the Iraqi military in a post-Saddam transition. First, Iraq’s professional military leaders appear to have played marginal roles in the decisions that led to the invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent confrontation with United Nations coalition forces. After the Iran-Iraq War, Saddam Hussein’s decision-making circle had narrowed even further, granting pride of place to those trusted insiders, such as Husayn Kamil Al-Majid and Ali Hassan Al-Majid, whose loyalty was reinforced by family ties and tribal networks. Professional military officers, for the most part, were on the outside looking in, although the Republican Guard, the most elite and formidable branch of Iraq’s armed forces, assumed greater prominence and, correspondingly, increased responsibility for regime security. Prior to and during the war, Iraqi generals had little opportunity for honest consultation and advice; Saddam Hussein countenanced no dissenting view. They prosecuted the war against the U.S.-led international coalition as best they could, given both the failings of Iraq’s political leadership and the overwhelming superiority of American and coalition technology and military power.[136]

Second, the actions of Iraq’s armed forces after the war both reinforces and complicates the military’s legacy. The anti-regime rebellions in 14 of 18 Iraqi provinces following the Gulf War included many bitter and aggrieved soldiers returning from the front lines. But it was the Republican Guard, the best trained and most loyal of Iraq’s military, which ruthlessly crushed the rebellions in both northern and southern Iraq. The actions of both rebellious soldiers and loyalist troops reflect the paradox of the military as both enemy and guardian of the Baath regime.

Third, whatever role Iraq’s commanders may have played in the decisions that led to war, the military suffered a devastating blow to Iraq’s sovereignty that included the loss of control over most of Iraqi Kurdistan, the establishment of no-fly zones in the north and south of the country, and the introduction of United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) weapons inspectors, who, from 1992 to 1998, documented and destroyed the major share of Iraq’s proscribed non-conventional weapons systems.

As has been documented elsewhere, the cycle of mistrust between Saddam Hussein and the military continues, with reported coups and assassination attempts coming from within the armed forces, followed by the predictable purges and executions. In 1996, Saddam Hussein foiled a u.ş.-backed coup attempt by Iraqi military officers that included members of the elite special Republican Guard, the General Security Service, and the Republican Guard. In response, and since the 1991 Gulf War, Saddam Hussein has undertaken a series of measures to make his regime as secure as possible from military coups.[137]

**** Conclusion

The Iraqi military continues to be the key to Saddam Hussein’s survival and the best hope for his departure. This seemingly contradictory yet self-evident observation means that after Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi military remains the primary arbiter of Iraq’s political future, as it has been throughout the country’s modern history. Saddam Hussein’s policies of intrigue, reward, and

punishment have not resolved the dilemma of all modern Iraqi governments regarding the military's role in Iraq's domestic politics.

That said, the Baath Party's relationship with the military has been interrelated in ways that are often overlooked, a kind of "can't live with them, can't live without them" approach to politics. The Baath could not have engineered two coups and prosecuted two wars in the absence of an alliance with partners in the military. At the same time, the experience of both Gulf Wars deepened the hostility and mistrust between the Baath Party and the armed forces, while increasing the degree of civilian control over the military.

The challenges of a democratic transition in Iraq are greater because of the legacy of Baath rule and the complicated role of the military in modern Iraqi politics. In thinking about any post-Saddam scenario, the Iraqi military appears as the most likely agent of political change. While it may be difficult to foresee the political dispositions of future military figures, it is not hard to imagine a post-Saddam scenario that involves a military leader, a contender for power, who portrays himself and his followers as the guardians of Iraqi sovereignty and unity. The resolution to the problem of civil-military relations in Iraqi politics will therefore come only in the context of an eventual democratic transition and with the establishment of institutions and mechanisms that allow for both popular participation in Iraqi politics and the peaceful transfer of power. The transition in Iraq from dictatorship to democracy will not take place overnight. However, once these institutions and mechanisms are in place, the military may assume its proper role as defender of the country's borders, rather than as a power broker or partner in the intrigues of regime-minded politicians.

[102] An earlier version of this chapter appeared as Andrew Parasiliti and Sinan Antoon, "Friends in Need, Foes to Heed: The Iraqi Military in Politics," Middle East Policy 7:4, October 2000, pp. 130–140. Some of the material in this chapter is also adapted from Andrew T. Parasiliti, Iraq's War Decisions, Ph.D. dissertation, Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University, 1998.

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[107] Stephen Hemsley Longrigg, Iraq, 1900 to 195O:A Political, Social, and Economic History, London: Oxford University Press, 1956, pp. 229–37; and R. s. Stafford, The Tragedy of the Assyrians, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1935, especially pp. 159–81.

[108] See the relevant sections of Hanna Batatu, The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Ided and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Baathists, and Free Officers, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

[109] The events surrounding the Portsmouth Treaty and the uprising of 1948 are discussed in Phebe Marr, The Modern History of Iraq, Boulder: Westview Press, 1985, pp. 101–6; and Batatu, op. cit., pp. 545–66.

[110] Al-Khalil, op. cit., pp. 166–76.

[111] Batatu, op. cit., pp. 1088—93.

[112] On the first Baath regime, see ibid.,pp. 1003–26.

[113] . The 1968 Revolution in Iraq: Experience and Prospects: The Political Report of the Eighth Congress of the Arab Baath Socialist Party in Iraq, January 1974, London: Ithaca Press, 1979, p. 103.

[114] Ibid.,p. 103.

[115] Ibid.,p. 105.

[116] Isam al-Khafaji, “War as a Vehicle for the Rise and Demise of a State-Controlled Society: The Case of Ba’thist Iraq,” in Steven Heydemann, ed., War, Institutions and Social Change in the Middle East, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000, pp. 267–8: and Amatzia Baram, “The Ruling Political Elite in Baathi Iraq, 1968–1986: The Changing Features of a ColXeaive ProfAe,” International Journal of Middle East Studies 2A·A١\I>,pp• لو—٢٦رە

[117] Arab Baath Socialist Party, Iraq, The Central Report of the Ninth Regional Congress, June 1982, Baghdad:January 1983, pp. 204–9 (translated by SARTREC, Lausanne, Switzerland).

[118] The estimates of active members are from Christine Helms, Iraq: Eastern Flank of the Arab World, Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1984, pp. 99—100, based upon her interview with ةاألا1لةةاأل لآةلافآ. The Central Report of the Ninth Regional Congress, June 1982, dtts ة ًلالع١لآح of “120,000 fighters” involved in the

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[119] Batatu, op. cit.,p. 1079.

[120] Ofra Bengio, Saddam’s Word: Political Discourse in Iraq, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, pp. 12734.

[121] Ibid.,pp. 134–45.

[122] U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, variOUS issues.

[123] Saddam Hussein, “The National Potential and International Politics,” On Iraq and International Politics, Baghdad: Translation and Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1981, p. 17.

[124] U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, variOUS issues.

[125] See Saddam Hussein’s speech on the eve of Iraq’s invasion of Iran in Baghdad Domestic Service, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Daily Report: Middle East and North Africa, 18 September 1980, p. E4.

[126] For an official Iraqi articulation of this idea, see Saad al-Bazzaz, Gulf War: The Israeli Connection (translated by Namir Abbas Mudhaffer), Baghdad: Dar Al-Ma’mun, 1989.

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[129] Raymond Aron, Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations, Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Co., 1981, p. 355.

[130] Frederick w. Axelgard, A New Iraq? The Gulf War and Implications for U.S. Policy, New York and Washington, D.C.: Praeger and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1988, pp. 48–55.

[131] Ibid.,p. 29.

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[133] Edward R. Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, London: Penguin, 1980, p. 29.

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[135] Cited in ibid.,p. 230.

[136] For an account of the role of the military in Iraqi politics prior to and during the Gulf War, see Saad al-Bazzaz, The Generals are the Last to Know?, 2d Arabic ed., London: DarAl-Hikma, 1996.

[137] See Andrew Cockburn and Patrick Cockburn, Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of Saddam Hussein, New York: HarperCollins, 1999, pp. 218–30; and Amatzia Baram, BuildingToward Crisis: Saddam Husayn’s Strategy for Survival, Washington, DC.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998, pp. 47–9.

** The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

*** Chapter 7: Assessing Saudi Susceptibiiity to Revolution

Mark N. Katz

An anti-Western revolution in Saudi Arabia would have severe negative consequences for the West, as the Kingdom possesses more proven petroleum reserves than any other country in the world. Indeed, the Saudi government has closely cooperated with the West in economic, political, and military affairs, and the United States has greatly benefited from its close partnership with the Kingdom ever since the discovery of oil there in the first part of the twentieth century. In fact, the strength and duration of Saudi-American cooperation has been remarkable, considering the many anti-American political movements and governments that have risen up during this period in the Middle East.

Should the Saudi monarchy ever be overthrown and replaced by an antiWestern revolutionary regime, several negative consequences might quickly arise. First and foremost, the price of oil could rise dramatically. Second, the vulnerability of pro-Western governments in the smaller Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states—Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Oman—would increase immediately, further driving up the price of oil if they too were overthrown. Third, a prolonged dramatic oil

price increase would cause a worldwide economic crisis that could give rise to instability in many countries, which an economically weakened West would be hard-pressed to deal with.

Revolution in Saudi Arabia, then, is something that Western governments—along with the Saudi monarchy itself—understandably wish to prevent. But how susceptible to revolution is Saudi Arabia? On the one hand, Saudi Arabia seems more stable now than it was during the heyday ofArab nationalism in the 19505 and 1960s, or in the wake of either the 1979 Islamic fundamentalist revolution in Iran or the 1990–91 conflict with Iraq. If the Saudi monarchy could survive all these traumatic events, why shouldn't it continue to survive, especially in calmer circumstances?

Perhaps it can. However, the history of the twentieth century showed that non-democratic regimes are inherently unstable, displaying a marked tendency to fall sooner or later. Although the Saudi monarchy has avoided this fate to date, can it reasonably be expected to continue doing so? The question appears to be especially relevant to the Kingdom considering that absolute monarchy— the type of government in Saudi Arabia—has almost disappeared over the past two and a quarter centuries, a seemingly inexorable trend if ever there was one!

Although it would be a difficult task even under the best of circumstances, assessing the Kingdom's vulnerability is an assignment made all the more difficult by the opaqueness and secretiveness of Saudi politics• One possible means to compensate for this difficulty is to apply some of the theoretical literature on revolution to what is known about Saudi Arabia.

There are, of course, many contending theories of revolution, which focus on different factors as either the most important cause or determinant of it. [138] The purpose of this chapter is not to engage in the ongoing debate among proponents of these theories about which of them should take precedence, but to examine, instead, the implications of several theories with regard to Saudi Arabia.

Among the different theories of revolution that will be looked at here are those that focus on state breakdown, the nature of the opposition, the mobilization potential of the opposition, external intervention, democratization and revolution, and the internal military factor. It is, of course, impossible to predict whether revolution will actually occur in Saudi Arabia. Still, the analysis presented here may provide some indication of the extent to which the Kingdom appears to be (or not to be) susceptible to revolution.

**** State Breakdown

The most influential perspective on revolution over the past two decades has been theorization focusing on the process of “state breakdown.” According to this perspective, examining why opposition movements become strong is less important than analyzing why the power of the state declines. According to Theda Skocpol (one of the pioneers of the state breakdown theory of revolution), potential revolutionaries are always present. They are not able to achieve much, though, when the state they seek to overthrow is strong. It is only when the state becomes gravely weakened that it becomes vulnerable to overthrow by revolutionary movements. Skocpol further emphasizes that it is not the activity of revolutionary movements that leads to the weakening of the state; they are not sufficiently strong on their own to accomplish this. State breakdown results, instead, because of problems that are far more difficult for a regime to deal with effectively than the suppression of opposition movements. The breakdown of the state, then, is something revolutionaries do not cause themselves but take advantage of when it occurs.[139]

What is it that causes state breakdown? In Skocpol’s case studies, the ancien regime was drawn primarily from an elite social class. Although Marxist analysis claims that the state is the instrument of the predominant class, Skocpol observed that while individuals running the states she examined were drawn from a predominant social class, the state itself had interests separate from that class. It is when the interests of the state and the elite diverge sufficiently sharply, Skocpol argued, that state breakdown can occur.[140] Skocpol herself saw this process occurring in predominantly traditional, agrarian societies, and thus not as something

likely to occur in more modern, urban ones.[141] Other scholars analyzed how this process occurred in more urban settings.[142]

What could cause a sharp divergence between the state and the social class it was drawn from? Skocpol saw international military “pressures and opportunities” as an important cause of this phenomenon for two reasons. First, the state may engage in foreign conflict to the extent that this drains away domestic resources, thus undermining the strength of the hitherto dominant social class. Second, a state may respond to threats from abroad by attempting socioeconomic reforms, which strengthen it but weaken the dominant social class.[143] Resenting the ruler already, the elite resists increased taxes to the extent they fall on it (which they necessarily must if less privileged sectors of society are already “taxed to the max”). As the situation deteriorates, disaffected elites might attempt to thwart the ruler or seize power themselves through exploiting the long-standing grievances of non-elite segments of society, which, once aroused, may be impossible for disaffected elites to control.

An alternative, and in many ways more precise, state breakdown theory of revolution was articulated by Jack Goldstone. According to Goldstone, revolution is most likely to occur in countries experiencing rapid population growth that are unable to adequately respond to the challenges this poses due to decline in state capacity, elite conflicts, and mass mobilization potential.[144] According to Goldstone, it was this combination of circumstances that led to revolution in early modern Europe and in many countries of the contemporary developing world.[145] To be sure, the rapid growth of the non-elite population has negative consequences in Goldstone’s model, but the rapid growth of the elite population has even more serious ones. In a country where it is primarily the state that employs and provides transfer payments to the elite, a crisis is inevitable when the ranks of the elite are growing but the discretionary resources available to the state are either stagnant or shrinking. If conflict erupts among the elite and order breaks down, a revolutionary situation will then emerge.[146]

Are any of the elements that the theories of Skocpol or Goldstone see as leading to state breakdown present now in Saudi Arabia?[147] Some, indeed, either appear to be present or may be in the process of developing.

Since the dramatic 1973 rise in oil prices, the Kingdom has maintained an ambitious spending program, which has included outsized expenditures on military hardware, expensive development projects, an extensive social welfare system, and massive transfer payments to the large ruling family. Riyadh has relied primarily on oil revenues to fund its expenditures, but these revenues have experienced downward pressure, due to the sustained decline in the price of oil occurring in the 1980s and throughout much of the 19905. Although it has cut expenditures, the Kingdom's outlays have been greater than its revenues for several years. Some of these stubbornly high expenditures stemmed from the heavy cost of expelling Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991 as well as subsequent military expenditures aimed at deterring another Iraqi attack. While cutbacks have been made, Saudi Arabia has maintained high levels of social welfare expenditure on its rapidly expanding population—a price that the monarchy appears to see as necessary for maintaining social peace.[148] Accurate figures are not available on how much of Saudi income goes to the ever-growing ruling family. Whatever amount—undoubtedly substantial—goes to the Al Saud, nevertheless, is obviously unavailable to be spent on the non-royal population, whose standard of living appears to have stagnated or even declined in recent years.[149]

As a result of its expenditures being chronically greater than its revenues for the past two decades, the Kingdom has run up a massive budget deficit.[150] Although oil prices rose dramatically in 2000, it is doubtful that these can be SUStained for long because the discovery of large quantities of oil in areas previously inaccessible to the West, such as the Caspian basin, is adding pressure on traditional oil exporters. Saudi Arabia's long-term financial situation, then, appears unlikely to improved.[151] Moreover, pumping significantly more oil for export is counterproductive in a glutted market where other producers can do the same, resulting in lower oil prices. Nor does the Kingdom appear willing to risk altering the tacit "no taxation, no representation" compact it has with its citizens, for fear that demands for the former will lead to demands for the latter.[152]

As far as conflict among the elite is concerned, there does appear to be a growing lack of "suitable positions," especially ones with real authority, for

the ever-increasing number of princes. One of the reigning norms among Saudi princes is that “those with and without jobs are entitled to equal respect.”[153] As the number of royal aspirants per position increases, whichever branch of the family holds the kingship may come to have increasing significance, due to the king’s ability to favor his own branch, up to now, succession to the throne has generally passed to the “eldest able” sons of Saudi Arabia’s founder, King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud. Determining who this is, of course, could easily become contentious. And as Abdul Aziz’s remaining sons age, succession will, at some point, have to pass outside this group—most likely to one of the founder’s grandsons. There are many of these, however. The choice of any one could leave competing branches highly dissatisfied, especially if they fear their permanent exclusion from the succession process.[154] This is the sort of conflict among the elite that, if allowed to get out of hand, could lead to state breakdown.

This is not to say, however, that Saudi Arabia is at present anywhere near experiencing the sort of state breakdown that could lead to revolution. What is being argued here instead is that some of the factors Goldstone identified as leading to state breakdown, including rapid population growth and the inability of the state to match revenues with the mounting expenditures it has led to, are currently present in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the conflict within the elite that Skocpol and Goldstone both see as part of this process also appears increasingly likely. The factors Skocpol and Goldstone identified as leading to state breakdown appear to be getting stronger, not weaker, in Saudi Arabia.

**** The Nature of the Opposition

Some theories of revolution see opposition activity as playing a far more important role in bringing about revolution than state breakdown theories of revolution suggest.[155] Yet, even assuming that the state breakdown approach is valid, studying the role of the opposition is important, since it is the opposition—or, more accurately, some part of it—that will shape the new regime if revolution successfully topples the old one. And while the opposition to the Saudi monarchy may be weaker now than in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War—as a front-page article in the Washington Post enthusiastically reported in January 2000—this perspective

suggests that if state breakdown occurs, a much stronger revolutionary opposition will arise.[156]

Under the circumstances, what is the nature of the opposition that might arise in Saudi Arabia, if conditions were ripe? The question is important, since it is not so much any attachment to the Saudi monarchy—whose undemocratic government is repugnant to Western values, if not Western interests—as it is fear of what might replace it that makes revolution in the Kingdom such a frightening prospect. The reason this is so, of course, is due to Western fear that, unlike several countries where a strong pro-Western democratic opposition came to power through revolution in the past two decades, revolution in Saudi Arabia would result in the rise to power of anti-Western undemocratic forces.

Indeed, this fear appears to be well founded. From what is known about the Saudi opposition, it overwhelmingly consists of anti-democratic Islamic "fundamentalists," angry with the West for propping up the Saudi monarchy and similar pro-Western Arab regimes (which they believe the West controls), as well as for supporting Israel. This is amply documented in Mamoun Fandy's thorough study on the ideology of leading Saudi opposition figures.[157]

It may be worth noting that while democracy may have replaced its nondemocratic rivals as the political system that most of the rest of the world regards as ideal, this does not appear to be true in the Arab world. There, authoritarian political ideologies, particularly "Islamic fundamentalism," appear to be genuinely popular. Still, as NazihAyubi has argued, "the more Irans and Sudans you get, the less impressive and appealing the Islamists' call will become."[158] Like their developing-world "Marxist" counterparts—fighting against colonial or rightwing regimes during the Cold War era—who ignored all evidence of the political and economic failure of Marxism-Leninism where it was in power, "Islamic fundamentalist" opponents of pro-Western (or secular anti-Western) dictatorships in the Middle East are either oblivious to, blame the West for, or otherwise explain away the glaring failures of existing "fundamentalist" regimes.[159] Whether or not one regards state breakdown theories of revolution as valid, it appears that the most active opposition movements at present in Saudi Arabia are

anti-Western, “Islamic fundamentalist” ones. Nor does this appear likely to change in the foreseeable future.

**** Mobilization Potential of the Opposition

Even more important than the existence of revolutionary opposition movements is, as Charles Tilly has argued, their mobilization potential.[160] It is first of all necessary to say something about the circumstances under which individuals support revolutionary opposition movements. Those who engage in revolutionary activity incur enormous risks, including imprisonment, severe injury, and death. While there may be a few risk-tolerant zealots willing to engage in revolutionary activity at any time, most people are risk averse and will not do so except under two extraordinary circumstances. The first arises when people are being oppressed so severely —that is, when they are being imprisoned, injured, or killed anyway—that engaging in revolutionary activity is either no more or actually less risky than not engaging in it. This, for example, is the circumstance that the Kosovar Albanians were placed in by the Serbs, and the Chechens by the Russians. The second such circumstance arises when the risks normally involved in engaging in revolutionary activity decline due to a reduction in the ancien regimes ability or willingness to impose these risks on its opponents. The failure of the state to use force against its opponents, of course, is one of the most important stages in state breakdown (how it can occur will be discussed below). As the success of the revolution appears increasingly likely, the potential benefits of “joining the winning side” held out by the revolutionary opposition may appear increasingly attractive to large segments of the population with grievances against the ancien regime.[161]

Neither of these two circumstances is now present in Saudi Arabia. But if either or, perhaps, a combination of both ever are, then the possibility of mass mobilization would arise. Several scholars have noted that revolutionary opposition groups frequently attempt to mobilize support by promising to improve the status of hitherto deprived groups.[162] Saudi opposition groups, of course, could seek to mobilize support in this manner too. The question, then, is: Are there dissatisfied groups in the Kingdom that opposition movements could draw upon for support?

There appear to be four such possible groups: 1) non-royal Saudis; 2) nonSaudi Arabs; 3) non-Saudi Muslims; 4) non-Muslim non-Saudis. Each of these groups has reason to resent the Saudi monarchy. Non-royal Saudis (Hejazis, Asiris, Shias) have virtually no say in their government and, undoubtedly, resent the diversion of so much of its oil income to the large—and largely unproductive—ruling family.[163] Gwenn Okruhlik has vividly described the harsh conditions endured by the non-Western foreign workforce in Saudi Arabia.[164] Furthermore, there appears to be a strong sense among many non-Saudi Arabs that this country, including the two holy cities as well as its vast oil wealth, is the common property of all Arabs and not just the Saudi ruling family.[165] Thus, elements of each of these might well see rebellion against the monarchy as both desirable and advantageous, under conditions of state breakdown.

Given the “Islamic fundamentalist” political ideology of Saudi opposition groups, the fourth group—non-Muslim non-Saudis—is not one they are likely to even try to mobilize. Indeed, the expulsion of this group may well be a goal that helps to mobilize and unite the others. “Islamic fundamentalism,” nevertheless, is an ideology that could help overcome divisions among Muslims, forging an alliance among non-royal Saudis, non-Saudi Arabs, and non-Saudi Muslims—an alliance that could potentially be quite powerful.

It must be emphasized, though, that disaffection among the deprived by itself is not a sufficient condition for revolution. Although they suffered mightily because of it, the over 750,000 Yemenis ordered out of the Kingdom in 1990 had no choice but to comply. Nor were there any other groups—Saudi or non-Saudi—that were willing to defend or champion them. Opposition mobilization is extremely difficult if disaffection among the elite and/or state breakdown has not occurred.

***** External Intervention

Just because powerful revolutionary opposition movements come into being, of course, does not mean that they are destined to succeed. They can be

thwarted. One possible means of doing so is through external military intervention, which could probably be undertaken in this case only by the United States, either alone or in conjunction with other Western powers.

As is well known, externally mounted counter-insurgency efforts to suppress revolutionary opposition forces have proven to be costly failures in several instances, including the French interventions in Indochina and Algeria, the American one in Indochina, the Soviet one in Afghanistan, and the first post-Soviet Russian intervention in Chechnya.[166] On the other hand, externally mounted counter-insurgency efforts have succeeded in several instances, such as the British interventions in Greece, Malaya, and Oman.[167] Furthermore, the U.S.-led military operations resulting in the expulsion of Iraqi forces from Kuwait in 1991 and Serbian forces from Kosovo in 1999 hold out the prospect of rapid successful intervention elsewhere.[168]

Despite this history, what are the prospects for a successful American-led military intervention to suppress revolution in Saudi Arabia? There are many imponderables and at least one huge assumption—namely, that revolution in Saudi Arabia will break out—that make addressing this question extremely difficult. Should revolution break out in the Kingdom, however, this is a question that policymakers will have to address despite several imponderables, and so it is worth attempting to address it here.

Besides specific circumstances that cannot be foreseen under which revolutionary activity may grow serious enough to raise the question of whether external intervention should be undertaken to suppress it, there are two related factors affecting the probable success of any U.S.-led military intervention in Saudi Arabia to prevent revolution there. These are: first, the willingness of the American public to support such an intervention and, second, the effect of such an intervention on the political dynamics of the country it would occur in.

To be sure, the U.S. experience in Indochina as well as the belief in the existence of a “Vietnam syndrome” arising from it suggests that the American publie would not be willing to support a long-term, costly intervention that does not succeed. On the other hand, the U.S. experience

in both Kuwait and Kosovo illustrates that the American public would support, or at least tolerate, a short-term albeit costly military intervention that succeeds rapidly. As Bruce Jentleson put it, the American public is “pretty prudent”; it supports interventions that appear to have a reasonable prospect of rapid success (especially where it sees the stakes involved as significant) and opposes those that do not (especially where it sees the stakes involved as marginal). The type of military intervention that the American public appears least willing to undertake is an open-ended commitment aimed at propping up an unpopular dictatorial regime against its internal opponents.[169] What this implies for the willingness of the American public to support U.S. military intervention against revolutionary forces in Saudi Arabia is ambiguous. The public undoubtedly recognizes that Saudi Arabia is important to the global economy. On the other hand, the public may be less than enthusiastic about the prospect of losing American lives to protect the Saudi ruling family against its own people. And as occurred vis-â-vis Indochina,[170] initial public support for intervention can erode if the intervention is not seen to be successful.

This leads US to a consideration of the effect of external intervention on the country in which it occurs—a factor that has an important impact on whether external intervention succeeds or fails. In his comparative study of several revolutionary struggles waged by guerrilla forces, Timothy Lomperis concluded that the most important factor determining whether external intervention against them succeeds or fails is the effect of the external intervention on the legitimacy of both the regime it seeks to defend and the revolutionary forces opposed to it. Both the French and American interventions in Vietnam, for example, served to undermine the legitimacy of the regimes they sought to defend and to burnish the nationalist credentials of the Vietnamese communists. In Malaya, by contrast, the fact that the revolutionary opposition was drawn from an ethnic minority (the Chinese), combined with the promise of independence, served to legitimize British military intervention with the Muslim Malay majority.[171]

Importantly, assessing the potential impact of a U.S.-led military intervention to protect the Saudi monarchy is made somewhat easier by the fact that one has already occurred, in 1991. What was amazing about this experience was the extremely negative reaction by significant elements within Saudi Arabia to the presence of Western troops, even though they were there to defend

the Saudi monarchy, whatever its faults, from being overthrown by what was widely known to be the far, far worse regime of Iraq's brutal dictator, Saddam Hussein.[172] Moreover, this experience also suggests that a U.S.-led intervention to protect the Saudi monarchy against its internal opponents would probably lead to an even more negative reaction than the one that occurred in 1990–91 against an external threat. Indeed, a strong U.S. role in defending the monarchy against "Islamic fundamentalist" revolutionaries could be expected to severely de-legitimize the former as well as legitimize the latter. Either anticipating or realizing this state of affairs, the American public is unlikely to support the initiation or continuation of U.S. military intervention in defense of a regime that the people living under it overwhelmingly appear to regard as illegitimate—unless the intervention can succeed rapidly and/or the regime can somehow be legitimized. As far as rapid military intervention is concerned, and while the U.S. and its allies have succeeded stunningly at this in Kuwait and Kosovo, in both cases this was done to remove occupying forces that the local populace clearly did not want there—a task far more amenable to rapid accomplishment than defending a government whose citizens either actively oppose or are unwilling to defend it. This is exactly the sort of military task that the American public—and Congress—appear most unwilling to undertake.

It is possible, of course, that a country other than the United States might intervene militarily to protect the Saudi monarchy. It is difficult, however, to imagine any other Western government being willing to do so except in conjunction with Washington. Military intervention by any other Western—or, for that matter, non-Muslim—state is unlikely to be considered any more legitimate than U.S. intervention by the Saudi population anyway. This also suggests that intervention undertaken by a Muslim country might be considered more legitimate, and hence have greater prospects for success. In the event, there are two problems with this potential. First, it is highly doubtful that any other Muslim government would be either willing or able to undertake this task—even with US. and Western support. Second, while troops from Western or other nonMuslim countries are unlikely to find "Islamic fundamentalism" appealing, troops from Muslim countries could well be susceptible to it, clearly reducing their reliability as defenders of the Saudi monarchy.[173]

In sum, external intervention to protect the Saudi monarchy against a revolutionary opposition would be fraught with difficulty.

There also exists, of course, the possibility that external powers could support Riyadh’s internal opponents. While this is something that the Saudi as well as Western governments fear, several studies suggest that attempts by external powers to foment revolution in another country usually fail. It is when conditions are ripe for revolution internally that external support for a regime’s revolutionary opponents can play an important role—though not always.[174] Since there are currently no strong internal opposition movements in Saudi Arabia, the subject of what external powers might support them and how effectively will not be addressed here.

***** The Democratic Bypass

It was noted at the beginning of this chapter that the twentieth century showed that non-democratic regimes are inherently unstable, displaying a marked tendency to fall, sooner or later. Still, violent revolution is not the only means by which dictatorships have fallen. Some have been transformed via a fairly orderly democratization process, while others have succumbed to non-violent democratic revolution.[175] Could this happen in Saudi Arabia?

Up to now, of course, the Saudi ruling family has displayed precious little willingness to allow any meaningful democratization to occur. The appointed Consultative Council, possessing no authority to legislate and only a limited range of issues on which it may even offer advice (that the government may simply ignore), can in no sense be considered a representative, democratic body.[176] Nor does the Saudi monarchy appear willing to countenance anything like one, under current conditions. Under the circumstances, what are the prospects for democratization in Saudi Arabia if serious revolutionary activity breaks out there?

Jeane Kirkpatrick asserted over two decades ago that democratization could not occur when a regime is fighting for survival against “totalitarian” Opponents.[177] Robert Pastor, though, has shown that the democratic

transformation of an unpopular dictatorship can occur even when non-democratic revolutionary forces seeking to overthrow it have grown quite powerful. He has also shown, however, that democratization efforts under these circumstances can fail.[178] What, then, accounts for whether they succeed or fail? The crucial factor, according to Pastor, is not American foreign policy. American administrations, whether Democratic or Republican, all encourage democratization when antiAmerican revolutionary opposition forces seriously threaten pro-American dietatorships. What is the crucial factor, according to Pastor, is the reaction of the middle classes to these democratization efforts. If the middle classes embrace them, then non-democratic revolution can be averted, as occurred in the Philippines in 1986 and Chile in 1988–89. If, however, the middle classes reject such efforts, and choose to ally with an anti-Western, non-democratic revolutionary opposition instead, then the prospects for democratization are poor and those for non-democratic revolution, good—as in Cuba in 1958–59 and Iran and Nicaragua in 1978–79.[179]

Naturally it bears asking, why would the middle classes embrace the nondemocratic opposition, seemingly in contrast to both their interests as well as the expectations that outside observers might have? Pastor cites the presence of a number of factors that could allow this to occur: regime resistance to democratization, middle-class mistrust of American support for democratization after years of U.S. support for dictatorship, and perhaps most important, a naive faith on the part of the middle class that if it allies with the revolutionary opposition to get rid of the ancien regimeو it will be able to co-opt the opposition and dominate the new regime afterwards.[180]

There is no way, of course, to accurately forecast how middle-class elements in Saudi Arabia would behave in the event of a revolutionary situation arising. There are, however, several reasons to suspect that they might not embrace democratization but side with the non-democratic opposition instead. To begin with, Pastor notes that the middle-class is more likely to embrace democratization in countries that have had previous experience with it, and less likely to do so in those that have not.[181] Saudi Arabia, of course, falls into the latter category. In addition, while Marxism-Leninism was a revolutionary ideology that privileged the interests of the “workers” and “peasants” above those of the middleclass, several scholars have argued

that “Islamic fundamentalism” is a middle-class ideology.[182] It is well known that the Teheran merchant class—the bazaaris—were among the most important supporters of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Ervand Abrahamian has argued that Khomeini saw himself as the defender of the Iranian middle-class, of which the Shia clergy was very much an integral part.[183]

The Islamic opposition in Saudi Arabia is also a middle-class movement. As Joseph Kostiner observed, “the new fundamentalist opposition’s most important characteristic has been its educational and socio-economic base. Its members were neither lower class nor tribally identified. Instead the common denominator was membership in the new middle class: graduates ... working as professionals or administrators.”[184] It must not be forgotten that Usama bin Laden, the alleged Saudi mastermind behind various attacks against American targets, himself hails from this background.[185]

Because of Saudi Arabia’s lack of experience with democracy, the improbability of the Saudi monarchy ever allowing meaningful progress toward it under any circumstances, the resentment that non-royal Saudis undoubtedly harbor toward the U.S. for supporting the anti-democratic Saudi monarchy so firmly, and the demonstrated appeal of Islamic fundamentalism to middle-class audiences in the Middle East, there is strong reason to doubt that the Saudi middleclass would embrace whatever belated efforts to encourage democratization Washington would probably make if a revolutionary situation arose in the Kingdom.

***** The Internal Military Factor

A country’s military may not be able to prevent revolutionary activity breaking out. However, its actions—or lack thereof—play a crucial role in determining whether or not revolutionary activity succeeds. In his classic book, TheAnatomy of Revolution, Crane Brinton argued this point forcefully. “No government has ever fallen before attackers,” concluded Brinton, “until it has lost control over its armed forces or lost the ability to use them effectively—or, of course, lost such control of

force because of interference by a more powerful foreign force ... and conversely ... no revolutions have ever succeeded until they have got a predominance of effective armed force on their side."[186] Timothy Wickham-Crowley advanced a similar argument in his study of Latin American insurgencies. He pointed out that established militaries are almost always stronger than guerrillas fighting against them in terms of manpower, weaponry, and overall resources. This superiority, however, will not prevent revolution unless the military is loyal: "Loyalty to the government is the most critical qualitative characteristic of armed forces, for the outcomes of rebellions and revolutionary wars hinge on that loyalty."[187] Wickham-Crowley went on to describe how foreign assistance to a regime's military does not enhance its ability to prevent revolution if the military (or key elements of it) is disloyal. Foreign arms transfers intended to strengthen the government side, for example, can be either diverted to the revolutionaries or used by the army against the government. Wickham-Crowley also cites instances of Latin American officers who had received U.S. military training later defecting to rebel forces and putting their training to effective use for them.[188]

It should also be noted that an army does not have to (even partially) defect to the opposition in order for revolution to succeed. Just the refusal of the armed forces—for whatever reason—to fire upon the opposition may assure its victory. There have also been instances, such as in the period just before the Shah of Iran was driven out of power, when the ancien regime refused to allow the use of force against its revolutionary opponents for fear of its own armed forces using the occasion to seize power.[189]

It is, therefore, important to ask: Would the Saudi armed forces remain loyal to the monarchy if revolutionary activity broke out in the Kingdom? We cannot really know the answer to this question unless and until such activity occurs. There is no conclusive indication that they would be disloyal. On the other hand, there is no guarantee that they would be completely loyal either. Indeed, there is at least some reason to question whether everyone in the Saudi armed forces would be so under these circumstances. There is also reason to doubt the effectiveness of Saudi forces against a strong opposition. Toward that end, it is worth recalling that soon after Arab nationalist revolution broke out in neighboring North Yemen in 1962, nine Saudi air force

pilots defected, with their aircraft, to Nasser's Egypt (which was then Riyadh's rival).[190] In 1979, some Saudi troops reportedly refused to fire on the rebels who had seized the Grand Mosque in Makkah.[191] Since then, several observers have also claimed that the Saudi army exhibited an aversion to engaging in conflict with Iraqi forces during the 1990—91 crisis over Kuwait.[192] This certainly raises the question of how willing Saudi forces would be to fire upon fellow citizens.

Besides these indications from the past—which may, or may not, have relevance for the future—there is a more important reason to question the continued loyalty of the Saudi armed forces to the Al Saud. As is well known, many of the most important positions in the Saudi armed forces are reserved for Saudi princes. Indeed, there are Saudi princes at various levels throughout the officer corps.[193] Human nature being what it is, there can be little doubt that non-royal Saudi officers must resent the fact that their own promotion prospects are limited due to the policy of favoring princes for top positions. This resentment is only likely to increase if the Saudi ruling family sees the armed forces as a convenient means of employing even a portion of the ever-growing number of young princes it is producing.[194]

Assuming the existence of resentment against the princes on the part of Saudi non-royals in the armed forces, it is not too difficult to imagine how they might actually be attracted to the ranks of a revolutionary opposition—especially if they could cut a deal with it whereby they obtain from the new regime those positions now held by members of the ruling family. Such a deal is conceivable. A revolutionary regime would, after all, need trained officers far more than revolutionary militants for managing its armed forces. And even if the revolutionary opposition had no intention of honoring such a deal once in power, making it might prove very effective in helping them seize it.

Like many other Arab armed forces, Saudi Arabia's appear to be designed less for use against external enemies than internal ones, including from within the armed forces themselves.[195] One of the principal missions of the Saudi National Guard, for example, appears to be to prevent the regular armed forces from seizing power.[196] This may serve as one more factor demoralizing the non-royal officer corps. Under the circumstances, if a

leadership struggle arose in the Kingdom resulting in the army and National Guard being controlled by rival princes, this could contribute to state breakdown and the rise of revolution. On the other hand, if the non-royal officer corps feared that a revolutionary opposition force would eliminate their positions (or even their lives) once in power, it may well remain loyal to the monarchy despite whatever grievances it felt.

One possibility for the non-royal officer corps is to attempt to solve both problems by overthrowing the monarchy and seizing power itself. Still, as Michael Herb has pointed out, Saudi princes already permeate the officer corps so extensively that it would be extremely difficult for non-royal officers to organize sufficiently to mount a coup without being detected.[197] But while the Al Saud may be able to prevent disgruntled non-royal officers from mounting a coup, they may not be able to make them fight effectively against, or not defect to, internal opposition forces, should any rise up. Again, it cannot be foretold with any degree of confidence how the Saudi armed forces would react to the emergence of a revolutionary situation in the Kingdom. If a significant portion defected, this could provide a tremendous windfall in weaponry and trained military manpower to the opposition as well as serve as a catalyst for further such defections. Likewise, if the Saudi armed forces cannot or will not defend the monarchy against a revolutionary opposition, it is highly doubtful that the monarchy could survive.

**** Conclusion

The above analysis suggests that several factors that various theories have identified as being strongly associated with the occurrence of revolution are either already present or could arise in Saudi Arabia. This does not mean, however, that revolution is destined to occur there—even in theory.

David Kowalewski’s macro-analysis of revolutions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries demonstrated that while the outbreak of revolutionary activity has occurred frequently, “successes are rare and show no ‘megatrend’

-Goldstone has also argued that “state resource fail[198]”.corresponding to activity

ures, elite alienation and divisions, and popular mass mobilization potential” are the three key factors that lead to revolution. The presence of just one or even two of these factors would cause problems for any government, but would not necessarily lead to its overthrow: “Only when all these conditions come together do they have sufficient force to shatter existing institutions and create a revolution.”[199] For his part, John Foran has argued that revolution is most likely to occur when five factors are present: (1) dependent development; (2) “a repressive, exclusionary, personalist state”; (3) a powerful culture of resistance; (4) an economic downturn; and (5) “a world-systemic opening.”[200] According to Foran, the absence of any two of these factors is highly likely to prevent revolution from succeeding. Indeed, even the absence of one of them may be enough to do SO.[201]

To the extent that the factors leading toward revolution—assuming they have been accurately identified in the theories examined above—are now present in Saudi Arabia, they do not appear to be so in sufficient magnitude to bring about the conjuncture of factors that both Goldstone and Foran see as necessary. On the other hand, the analysis presented here indicates that if things do start to go wrong in Saudi Arabia, the monarchy and its external supporters may not be able to repair them. Revolution in Saudi Arabia is hardly inevitable but neither is its absence.

[138] This literature is far too voluminous to cite in its entirety. Essays discussing contending theories of revolution can be found in Theda Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; Nikki R. Keddie (ed.), Debating Revolutions, New York: New York University Press, 1995;John Foran (ed.). Theorizing Revolutions, London: Routledge, 1997; and Mark N. Katz, Reflections on Revolutions, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999.

[139] ةهعاו SkocpoV, States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp. 14–18.

[140] Ibid., pp. 24–33.

[141] Skocpol, Social Revolutions in the Modern World, chapter 9. Skocpol acknowledged, nevertheless, that the urban-based Iranian revolution of 1979 was an exception; ibid., chapter 10.

[142] Eqbal Ahmad, “Comments on Skocpol,” Theory and Society 11:3, 1982, pp. 293–300; Jeffrey D. Simon, Revolution without Guerrillas, R-3683—RC, Santa Monica: RAND, 1989: and Farideh Farhi, States and Urban-Based Revolutions: Iran and Nicaragua, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990.

[143] Skocpol, States and Social Revolutions, p. 31.

[144] Jack A. Goldstone, “Population Growth and Revolutionary Crises,” in Foran, Theorizing Revolutions, pp. 102–20.

[145] Ibid. See also Jack A. Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991.

[146] Goldstone, Revolution and Rebellion, pp. 24,117—19,228–32, 395—6.

[147] It must be emphasized that there are other such theories, but they are essentially variations on the same theme; see Jeff Goodwin, “State-Centered

Approaches to Social Revolutions: Strengths and Limitations of a Theoretical Tradition," in Foran, Theorizing Revolutions, pp. 11–37.

[148] Rayed Krimly, "The Political Economy of Adjusted Priorities: Declining Oil Revenues and Saudi Fiscal Policies," The Middle East Journal 53:2, spring 1999, pp. 25467. See also Nawaf Obaid and Patrick Clawson, "The 1999 Saudi Budget: Reform in the Face ofAcute Problems," Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Policywatch, number 359, January 5, 1999.

[149] For just one of many recent articles on declining standards of living in Saudi Arabia, see Douglas Jehl, "Life in Saudi Arabia Is Transformed by Hard Times," The New York Times, 20 March 1999.

[150] "Analysis: Saudi Seen Keeping Most Debts at Home," Reuters, 2 September 1999.

[151] Heir Apparent Abdallah was quoted as saying, "The years of the boom are over and will not return," see Obaid and Clawson, op. cit. The recent rise in oil prices has only enabled the Kingdom to reduce its current budget deficit. See "Saudi Arabia's Deficit to Drop 66%," Agence France-Presse, 13 September 1999.

[152] While Qatar and Oman introduced income taxes in 1994, and the Kuwaiti parliament is reportedly considering them, this is not a step that the Saudi government has yet been willing to take. See Krimly, "The Political Economy of Adjusted Priorities," op. cit., p. 267.

[153] Michael Herb, All in the Family:Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999, p. 32.

[154] On how the Saudi ruling family has so far dealt with the succession issue, see ibid., pp. 87–108. Although Herb argues that the Al Saud are unlikely to allow succession disputes to become crises, he does note the existence of rivalry between King Fahd and his full brothers on the one hand and their half brothers, including Heir Apparent Abdallah, on the other (pp. 105–106).

[155] See Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1978. See also Jack A. Goldstone, “The Comparative and Historical Study of Revolutions,” Annual Review of Sociology, 1982, pp. 192–194.

[156] Howard Schneider, “Saudi Arabia Finds Calm after Storm,” The Washington Post, January 9,2000, pp. A1,A23.

[157] Mamoun Fanny, Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999.

[158] Nazih N. Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World, London: Routledge, 1991, p. 238. For a similar argument, see Found Ajami, “The Summoning,” Foreign Affairs 72:4, SeptemberZOctober 1993, pp. 2–9.

[159] Mark N. Katz, Revolutions and Revolutionary Waves, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997, p. 113.

[160] Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution.

[161] On the changing risk-reward structure individuals face with regard to supporting a revolutionary opposition movement as the latter’s influence increases, see Timothy]. Lomperis, From Peopled War to People’s Rule: Insurgency, Intervention, and the Lessons of Vietnam, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996, pp. 74—82.

[162] On the promises that were made to such groups in the Western Hemisphere’s revolutions, see Lester D. Langley, TheAmericas in theAge of Revolution, 1750–1850, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996, passim; see also Christopher McAuley, “Race and the Process of the American Revolutions,” in John Foran (ed.). Theorizing Revolutions, pp. 168–202. On the promises made to non-Russian groups by the Bolsheviks during the Russian Revolution, see Bohdan Nahaylo and Victor Swoboda, Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR, New York: The Free Press, 1990, chapters 2–5. Needless to say, the revolutionary movements that made these promises did not necessarily keep them.

[163] Fandy, Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent. See also Herb, All in the Family, op. cit., pp. 168–73: and Graham E. Fuller and Rend Rahim Francke, The Arab Shi‘a: The Forgotten Muslims, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999, chapter 8.

[164] Gwenn Okruhlik, “Excluded Essentials: The Politics of Ethnicity, Oil, and Citizenship in Saudi Arabia,” in Pinar Batur-Vanderlippe and Joe Feagin (eds.). The Global Color Line: Racial and Ethnic Inequality and Struggle jifom a Global Perspective (Research in Politics and Society, حهل١ة لآ ford, Connecticut: JAI Press, 1999, pp. 215—55.

[165] I have heard this viewpoint expressed repeatedly and vehemently by Arabs from relatively poor countries.

[166] Lomperis, From People’s War to People’s Rule, chapters 4–5, 10. See also Andrew Bennet, Condemned to Repetition? The Rise, Fall, and Reprise oj Soviet-Russian Military Interventionism, 1973–1996, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1999.

[167] Lomperis, From People’s War to People’s Rule, chapters 7,9. See also John Akehurst, We Won a War: The Campaign in Oman, 1965—1975, Wilton, United Kingdom: Michael Russell, 1982.

[168] William J. Taylor Jr. and James Blackwell, “The Ground War in the Gulf,” Survival 33:3 May/June 1991, pp. 23045; and Adam Roberts, “NATO’s ‘Humanitarian War’ over Kosovo,” Survival 41:3, autumn 1999, pp. 102–23.

[169] Bruce w. Jentleson, “The Pretty Prudent Public: Post Post-Vietnam American Opinion on the Use of Military Force,” International Studies Quarterly 36:1, March 1992, pp. 49–74.

[170] For an analysis of the evolution ofAmerican public opinion on the war in Vietnam, see Guenter Lewy, America in Vietnam, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, pp. 432–7.

[171] Lomperis, From People’s War to People’s Rule, pp. 265–87.

[172] Herb, All in the Family, p. 171; Fandy, Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent, passim; and Schneider, “Saudi Arabia Finds Calm after Storm.”

[173] Nor is it clear how effective Arab armies would be at undertaking this mission. As Risa Brooks put it, the means employed by Arab regimes to maintain control over them “often undermine the combat potential of the armed forces.” See Risa Brooks, Political-Military Relations and the Stability ofArab Regimes, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998, p. 10.

[174] Timothy p. Wickham-Crowley, Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America: A Comparative Study of Insurgents and Regimes since 1956,

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992, pp. 85–91 Stephen M. Walt, Revolution and War, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996, pp. 18–43: Mark N. Katz, Revolutions and Revolutionary Waves, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997, pp. 25’54; and Fred Halliday, Revolution and World Politics: The Rise and Fall of the Sixth Great Power, Durham: Duke University Press, 1999, pp. 94–132.

[175] On the different ways in which democratization occurred in late-twentieth-century authoritarian regimes, see Samuel p. Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991, chapter 3.

[176] R. Hrair Dekmejian, “Saudi Arabia’s Consultative Council,” The Middle Eastjournal 52:2, spring 1998, pp. 204–18; and Herb, All in the Family, pp. 169–70.

[177] Jeane Kirkpatrick, “Dictatorships and Double Standards,” Commentary, November 1979, p. 44.

[178] Robert A. Pastor, “Preempting Revolutions: The Boundaries of U.S. Influence,” International Security 15:4, spring 1991, pp. 54—86.

[179] Ibid.

[180] Ibid., pp. 77–9.

[181] Ibid.

[182] See, for example, Nazih Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in theArab World, London: Routledge, 1991, chapter 7; and

Olivier Roy, The Failure of Political Islam, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994, chapter 3.

[183] Ervand Abrahamian, Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993, chapter 2.

[184] Joseph Kostiner, “State, Islam and Opposition in Saudi Arabia: The Post Desert-Storm Phase,” The Middle East Review of International Affairs, June 19, 1997, p. 4.

[185] Fandy, Saudi Arabia and the Politics of Dissent, p. 180.

[186] Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution, 3rd ed., New York: Vintage Books, 1965, p. 89.

[187] Wickham-Crowley, Guerrillas and Revolution in Latin America, p. 64.

[188] Ibid., pp. 68–75,77–80.

[189] Gary Sick, All Fall DownzAmericTs Tragic Encounter with Iran, New York: Penguin Books, 1986, pp. 165, 198–201.

[190] Fred Halliday, Arabia without Sultans, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974, p. 67. Halliday also reported that opposition movements were discovered within the Saudi armed forces in 1968 and 1969: Ibid.,p. 68.

[191] Herb, All in the Family, p. 171.

[192] U.S. News & World Report noted the following in regard to the late January 1991 battle over Khafji (a Saudi border town): “When the Iraqis surrendered ... the victorious Saudis swaggered through the streets shouting and waving their national flag. It was the first land battle that Saudis had fought in the modern history of their kingdom. Some observers, though, said the tough fighting was led by the Qataris (whose ground forces were largely Pakistani mercenaries).” U.S. News ١أآ٠لآعا ةلأ1 حع Triumph without Victory.The Unreported History of the Persian Gulf War, New York: Times Books/Random House, 1992, p. 270. Anthony Cordesman assessed Saudi military performance more positively, but in a back-handed manner: “£T]he Saudi Army did well during Operation Desert Storm—very well if its low pre-war readiness is considered.” But even after the experience of the Gulf War, Cordesman noted that the Saudi army takes “a minimum of 7–10 days to redeploy a brigade to a new front or city,” questioned the effectiveness of its organization, training, and equipment, and concluded that “the Saudi Army is still too static and defensive in character and lacks strategic focus.” See Anthony H. Cordesman, Saudi Arabia: Guarding the Desert Kingdom, Boulder: Westview Press, 1997, p. 135.

[193] Herb, All in the Family, pp. 34—5.

[194] According to Cordesman, “senior Saudi officers unrelated to the royal family have been denied promotion because of a wide range of internal political disputes.” See Anthony H. Cordesman, After the Storm.The Changing Military Balance in the Middle East١Bou\der’1es٢.\٦e\v Press, أ99ذآ,د٦.

[195] ل١دةا., هاأة Brooks, Political-Military Relations and the Stability of Arab Regimes.

[196] F. Gregory Gause III, Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in the Arab Gulf States, New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1994, p. 68.

[197] Herb, All in the Family, pp. 345.

[198] David Kowalewski, “Periphery Revolutions in World-System Perspective, 1821–1985,” Comparative Political Studies 24:!,April 1991, p. 92.

[199] Jack A. Goldstone, “An Analytical Framework,” in Jack A. Goldstone, Ted Robert Gurr, and Farrokh Moshiri (eds.), Revolutions of the LateTwentieth Century, Boulder: Westview Press, 1991, p. 40.

[200] John Foran, “The Comparative-Historical Sociology of Third World Social Revolutions: Why a Few Succeed, Why Most Fail,” in John Foran (ed.). Theorizing Revolutions, p. 228.

[201] Ibid.,pp. 259–61.

*** Chapter 8: Image, Imagination And Place: The Political Economy Of Tourism In Saudi Arabia

Gwenn Okruhlik

Sandwiched in the travel brochure between advertisements for trips to the Himalayan Kingdoms of Nepal and Bhutan, a Kenyan Christmas Family Safari, and a Summer in Tuscany, the alluring teaser reads: Saudi Arabia’s recent decision to welcome select groups of travelers to the Kingdom affords a thrilling opportunity to those seeking a truly unique travel adventure. In an age of eco-tourism, adventure travel, and culturally sensitive travel, Saudi Arabia is truly one of the last frontiers in international tourism. As a latecomer, Saudi Arabia offers an especially interesting vantage point from which to observe how politics and tourism intersect. The consumption of tourist services (including the choice of sites) cannot be

extracted from the social and political relations in which they are embedded.[202]

Tourism is at the nexus of global capitalism and national identity. Global capitalism, as articulated by the World Trade Organization (WTO), mandates a freer flow of information, capital, and people. A national identity is one that transcends family and region, and gives content to the idea of self. Identity, and particularly a national identity, is not simply inherent or primordial. Indeed, it can be strategic and positional.[203] Thus, what becomes important are the facets of identity that one chooses to emphasize, or de-emphasize, in the construction of a nation's image. Most interesting is understanding the variability in what is included and what is excluded from this representation.[204]

Tourism, as a dynamic of capital accumulation, is about creating and marketing experiences, in which place is commodified and reduced to an image for consumption.[205] Tourism suggests an invitation to come in and view yourself, so it prompts various questions: What image of self is offered for viewing? What representation of self is projected? These are important questions because the production of a national image has internal and external components[206] that can be negotiated and revised, even as the producers of the dominant image promote its authentic essence.

The focus of this chapter is to inquire how tourism exposes contested voices over identity issues within Saudi Arabia, where the state pursues two objectives simultaneously—it seeks, on the one hand, to accommodate global capitalism (by joining the WTO) as it attempts, on the other hand, to forge a national identity that responds to domestic struggles and voices (such as Islamism, class, gender, and region). Clearly, the pursuit of the former exposes tender spots in the pursuit of the latter. Saudi Arabia is simultaneously defining a national identity while opening itself to foreign investors, international institutions, and tourists. A particular representation of "what it means to be a Saudi" has been shaped and is being marketed to foreign audiences even before it is fully accepted (or experienced) by Saudi Arabian citizens.

Indeed, tourism in Saudi Arabia reveals much about the articulation of a truly national identity at a time of global imperatives, because it exposes “muddy edges.” These reflect the tensions that emerge from competing preferences of the state and of the tourist. In Saudi Arabia, it is the state that defines tourism (through representatives of the ruling family working with private Saudi operators), rather than independent, individual private entrepreneurial citizens. Several members of the Al Saud family spearhead the effort to promote tourism. For now, tourism is tightly controlled and the state is constructing the image to be marketed abroad, to private tourists. Thus, the itinerary is highly structured, and it is impossible to deviate from it. It is not quite containment tourism or enclave tourism, but it is very much controlled tourism. Still, there are inevitable encounters between tourist and inhabitant —encounters that can (re)shape “image.” And it is these encounters, or “muddy edges,” experienced by people paying for the privilege of observation and participation, that make it hard for the state to completely control a discourse on identity and development. The muddy edges exemplify the maneuvering and contestation over such things as photography, dress, and mobility that go on between international tourists and national voices that seek to define and protect an identity. The way in which the muddy edges play out, and the skill with which they are handled, will affect the future of tourism in Saudi Arabia; and from those edges, one may indeed learn something about the emergent national identity by examining the outcomes of such encounters.[207]

The politics of tourism are evident throughout the world; in the Middle East it is certainly so in Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Morocco. What makes Saudi Arabia especially interesting is timing. Saudi Arabians are only now struggling to (re)construct the content of national identity (including citizenship and belonging) quite independently of tourism or the WTO. The coincidence of the two processes provides a fertile field for examining relations between the definition of self and other.

Throughout this chapter, an effort is made to analyze the politics and power of the touring experience in Saudi Arabia. How and why Saudi Arabia recently opened its gates to tourism; who participates in the experience as producers or consumers; and how Saudi Arabia is officially represented through the itinerary are together revealing of national image and international imagination.[208] An analysis of these important variables,

along with a discussion of the “muddy edges” of tourism, highlights how tourism contributes to a loss of the state’s

Image, Imagination, and Place ...Tourism in Saudi Arabia 113 monopoly on discourse. Such an analysis is situated in the literatures of both politics and cultural anthropology.[209]

**** The Politics of Place: Image and Imagination

Tourism has been formally introduced into a country that was previously off-limits to travelers. The only way to access Saudi Arabia was through Hajj (pilgrimage), visitation of relatives, or employment. In 1991, while still prohibiting tourism, Saudi Arabia sent abroad a fabulous exhibit of itself, entitled “Saudi Arabia: Yesterday and Today.” For some observers, it conveyed the statement “You can’t come to Saudi Arabia, so we will come to you.”[210]

To appreciate the power and significance of the tourism opening, one must comprehend the long-standing regulations against mobility and travel in Saudi Arabia. Every foreigner (approximately 6.2 million, about one-third of the estimated total population) is required to be “sponsored” by a Saudi Arabian citizen, who in turn holds legal, financial, and social responsibility for the behavior of the expatriate. This means that sponsorship is extraordinarily difficult to attain, except in the case of simple employment or to conduct the religious rituals of the Hajj in Makkah and Madinah. Expatriate workers have restricted mobility; they are not allowed to travel more than 50 kilometers from their place of residence without the written, signed, and dated permission of their sponsors. This extensive system of regulation and oversight ensures appropriate conduct while in country, and has acted in many ways as an extension of the authoritarian state. Until very recently, tourist visas did not even exist.

There has been no transition period in which individual travelers or small independent groups negotiated their way through Saudi Arabia. In Egypt, for example, individual travelers choose among their activities. They decide

where to stay, what to eat, which sites are worthy of their time, what souvenirs to purchase, and how to negotiate the costs of their experience. In contrast, in Saudi Arabia, several government entities have been established to manage such dilemmas about sites, representation, costs, accommodations, and interaction between locals and tourists. There is less individual experimentation in encountering Saudi Arabia. This means that questions regarding authenticity are not going to be answered slowly and over time in a give-and-take process between tourist and local culture; rather, choices must be made up front because of the formal, structured nature of tourism in Saudi Arabia.[211]

**** The Politics of Place: Conflict Avoidance

The tourist opening is purposefully slow, cautious, and targeted for social and political reasons. According to a Saudia Airlines tourism manager, “the Saudis have received religious traffic and Gulf visitors for hundreds of years. It’s not a new thing. But Saudi tourism will not be for the masses. It will be well targeted.”[212] A travel marketer in Jeddah was more explicit: “We want to be more open, but not like Dubai.” That city, in addition to serving alcohol and allowing freedom in dress and mobility, also has a significant trade in prostitution. A marketing director for a resort hotel was also cautious, “[T]his will happen in small doses in a very controlled way. It should be a gradual transition as we don’t want to shock anyone.”[213] Prince Bandar bin Khaled, who works with tourism in the Asir region, was straightforward about the political implications of tourism: “Hundreds of thousands of people from different cultures could offend the local population without even knowing it.” A public backlash “could delay (foreign) tourism for years.”[214]

For those advocates of tourism, the challenge is to gently promote tourism (and the hoped-for accompanying opening of society) while avoiding a crackdown from socially conservative forces. It is a delicate balancing act because in other Middle Eastern countries, the tourist sector has become a rallying point for opposition forces, most notably in Egypt, with serious consequences.

Saudi Arabian officials refer to their approach as “clean tourism,” travel without negative environments such as gambling, casinos, alcohol, or prostitution. There are, of course, no public entertainment venues, clubs, cinemas, or discotheques in Saudi Arabia. Rather, tour groups will visit archeological sites, historic locations, lakes, festivals, and museums. To be sure, there are plans for eco-tourism, snorkeling in the coral beds of the Red Sea, and treks in the Empty Quarter desert. In fact, bedouins are apparently “gearing up to take tourists to desert encampments.” A new hotel and golf course are planned on the sea with a private beach where Westerners can swim.[215] The latter is relevant because it expands the distinction between behavior in the private and in the public space to encompass the tourist trade. Foreign women could wear bathing suits on such a private beach that was designed and maintained strictly for tourists. Such a resort is similar to enclave tourism; but unlike enclave tourist development in much of the developing world, where separation is required by the increasing disparity between the wealth of tourists and the poverty of the countries they visit, [216] such separation in Saudi Arabia would be prompted by normative differences.

**** Why Now, Why Tourism?

In a region of majestic pyramids, winding suqs, Islamic architecture, and pre-islamic ruins, the Saudi Arabian decision to finally encourage tourism was a response to domestic needs.[217] The context of the ‘90s was difficult for Saudi Arabia, both politically and economically. Begun with the turmoil of the Gulf War, the decade was a time of Islamist opposition forces on the ascendancy, King Fahd’s illnesses, succession struggles in the Al Saud family, and new social problems. Guns, drugs, and crime were increasingly reported in Saudi Arabia. The population continued to grow at an astounding rate of about 3.5 percent per year. Unemployment figures among Saudi citizens spiraled. Among recent college graduates, the unemployment rate was about 30 percent. Yet there was a continuing dependence on an imported foreign labor force, which constituted between 95 percent of the private sector force. The once-fabulous infrastructure was deteriorating; this was especially true of schools and hospitals. Oil prices hit a ten·year low in 1998. Per capita income had tumbled from $16,650 in 1981 to 86,526 in 1998. The ratio of public sector debt to GDP was more than 120 percent in late 1999, the seventeenth straight year of deficit. Clearly, Saudi Arabia

needed a new source of revenues that could buffer the economy from the volatility of oil prices. It also needed a new source of employment.

By the end of the decade, Heir Apparent Abdallah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud had introduced a series of reform measures designed to build confidence in his leadership and foresight. He continued King Fahd's program of deporting illegal expatriate workers, doubled visa fees on foreign labor, slashed subsidies on electricity and petrol, and instituted limits on princely prerogatives (use of phone, planes, and electricity). Abdallah established a Supreme Economic Council to regulate the shares market, revamp the tax code, and amend property and employment laws in order to gain membership in the WTO, for which Saudi Arabia had applied in 1993. Its membership application had been adversely affected because, as representatives of the WTO argued, the Saudi economy was too heavily subsidized and the market too protected. Troublesome issues included the lack of transparency in public procurement, intellectual property rights, investment rules, and tariff rates.

In response to these problems, Saudi Arabia announced in 2000 a series of sweeping economic changes intended to facilitate its membership in the WTO.[218] For the first time, 100 percent foreign ownership of companies is allowed; foreign companies will have access to favorable loans from the Saudi Industrial Development Fund, and foreign investors can now invest in the local bourse. To further assist the business community, the General Investment Authority (GIA) was established as a one-stop shop to issue licenses and to incorporate foreign and joint ventures, and importantly, it appears that the old requirement that all foreigners have a Saudi sponsor will be altered. There is discussion that foreigners will be allowed to own property in Saudi Arabia, that judicial protection will be strengthened, and greater public disclosure for investments will be fostered. It is into this ferment and "opening" that busloads of tourists are arriving for the first time ever in Saudi Arabia.

The state seeks to achieve several objectives through the new promotion of tourism. As a demonstration of openness, it will facilitate application to the WTO. The development of the tourist infrastructure in Saudi Arabia will also increase investment opportunities, attract select groups of foreign visitors,

and encourage Saudi citizens to remain in country for their holidays. Unofficial estimates are that Saudi citizens spend more than $16 billion on vacations abroad annually.[219] Furthermore, this economic activity will not only create jobs in this growing service sector, but importantly, the jobs that are created will be acceptable positions for many unemployed Saudis. In addition to formal training, two of the primary attributes required of Saudi Arabians who are employed in the tourism trade are a) generosity of hospitality and b) a proud self-image. That is to suggest that the newly created positions will be compatible with social norms. This matters because the effort to “Saudiize” the economy has long been hindered by the fact that many positions held by foreign laborers are unattractive to citizens due to social norms and incentive structures.

A challenge for Saudi Arabia will be to keep profits from tourism in the country, and to circulate that capital throughout the various regions and economic sectors. The state and private business communities must build backward and forward linkages throughout the economy (in construction, services, agriculture, and transportation) so that Saudi citizens benefit from the new activity. In short, tourism must stimulate the local economy, develop capital-producing activity that is independent of oil cycles, and provide acceptable jobs. Unfortunately, experience elsewhere suggests that increasing international integration of the tourist industry decreases the amount of expenditure that remains in the host country. The broad-based relaxation of foreign investment regulations in Saudi Arabia, which has accompanied its application to the WTO, will further weaken local control over capital. Indeed, four of the six hotels that were utilized in a recent tour included an Intercontinental, a Meridien, a Sheraton, and a Marriott. It may well be that the economic imperatives of joining the WTO mitigate against the diversification, privatization, and Saudiization of the economy, all long sought after goals in the country.

Aware of the sector’s potential benefits, many Saudis want tourism to work, and tremendous resources are being expended. Since 1995, Saudi Arabia has invested an estimated $6.66 billion on tourism projects, mostly geared toward internal tourism (Saudis and citizens from neighboring states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, who do not require visas).[220] The tourist infrastructure is most developed in the southwestern province of Asir: in the resort town of Taif and in Yanbu on the Red Sea, both favored spots for

holidays. It remains to be seen whether the needs of tourists from the Arabian Peninsula are similar to those of tourists from farther-flung origins. In the event, Saudi Arabia forecasts 3 million visitors in the next five years and, once the infrastructure is complete, expects 1 million tourists per year. A new Prince Sultan School for Tourism and Hotel Sciences opened in Abha to train Saudi citizens for roles in the tourism sector. At the helm of all of this is Sultan bin Salman—a former air force pilot who flew on the Space Shuttle Discovery in 1985—newly appointed secretary-general of the Higher Organization for Tourism (HOT). Salman al Sudairy assists him. In his capacity as minister for civil aviation, Defense Minister Sultan bin Abdul Aziz supports this venture as well, especially as Saudia Airlines serves as sponsor of tour groups. The HOT is responsible for tourism policy in the country and will evaluate infrastructure, “remove whatever obstacles might hamper tourist activity,” and survey and protect tourist sites and folklore items such as handicrafts, markets, and cottage industries.[221]

***** Cultural Markers That Entice

A primary lure to tour Saudi Arabia is the sense that it is somehow shrouded, off-limits, and secretive. Pre-trip literature clearly states that all female tourists must wear an abaya and cover their hair with a scarf for the duration of the trip. Furthermore, all participants are required to sign a document that details extreme political restrictions in Saudi Arabia to which they must abide, or be held liable. To my knowledge, no tourist on the January 2000 tour expressed concerns about waiving the right to expression. Though many of the tourists complained often about the constraints that were placed on them in the country (regarding dress, photography, mobility), the restrictive quality might also have been the same reason they paid for the experience. The slightly taboo nature of Saudi Arabia is a primary attractant to tourism. Image and imagination fertilize each other here, and trips continue to fill at this time. It is not yet clear how long this can be sustained; as more tourists experience Saudi Arabia, the country will indeed be less “shrouded in secrecy.”

The “off-limits” character of Saudi Arabia is utilized as a selling point for the tour. The advertisement letter notes that, even now, no tourist visa exists for entry to the country; each visitor must be sponsored by an influential Saudi

and approved by the ruling family. Saudi Arabia is introduced as “mysterious and exotic,” a “blank spot on the map for most travelers.” The pioneering opportunity to be among the first in the door of the country is heralded. In fact, the tour “offers a rare chance to explore a country before the imprint of tourism changes it forever.” Clearly, the primary draw is to be first, a pioneer traveler to a previously closed Kingdom, which has long resisted outside influence. The image of a pristine country, blessed by oil and urban centers but grounded in the desert and tradition, is articulated. The day-by-day itinerary, with a description of each day’s activities, follows the letter of introduction.

***** Producers and Consumers of Place

The introduction of tourism in Saudi Arabia necessitated a major change in the long-standing system of sponsorship and oversight of foreigners in the country. In an early concession to tourism in September 1999, the state approved a plan that allowed Muslims coming to Saudi Arabia to perform umrah (minor pilgrimage) to travel around the country instead of being confined to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.[222] In April 2000, the state announced it would issue tourist visas that allow foreigners access to the country for reasons other than Hajj or employment.[223] While this is a major step in “opening up,” it is not as though the Kingdom will be overrun by legions of backpacking college students anytime soon. The new visa will apparently require tourists to travel in the country through a local company that will take charge of the trip in its entirety and will ensure that all tourists leave the country after their visit. The visa will be valid for one month and will be issued only for group entry rather than for individual travel. The visas are so new that during a January 2000 tour, there was still no “tourist visa” box to check off on the airline form. Yet in the first four months of formal availability, between April and July 2000, 6,546 tourist visas had been issued, mainly to tourists from Europe, Japan, and the United States.[224]

It is important to note that participation in tourism is quite selective in Saudi Arabia, and the “producers of knowledge” include a wide range of professionals. Each tour group is led by a foreign tour operator (thus far, American, German, Italian, or Japanese) who manages all logistics and

organization. That foreign operator works in conjunction with local tour guides, who are critical to the success of the venture. The Saudi Arabian guides bear responsibility for negotiating, representing, and interpreting their country. They, in turn, work closely with key princes who oversee tourism. The tour I accompanied also benefited from the participation of a representative of the United States museum that sponsored the trip and two study leaders, there to provide expertise.

Participants in the tour were fairly homogenous in demographic traits, and this makes intuitive sense, given that such tourism requires two things: time and money. By and large, the 30 consumers were white, elderly, well-to-do and retired (or able to turn their business affairs over to someone else for two weeks). As a group, they were extraordinarily well traveled. The participants had walked on the Great Wall of China, wandered around Red Square in Moscow, hunted on African safaris, and relaxed on Caribbean beaches. Touring Saudi Arabia was one of many travel adventures in their lives. The price of access was $7,200 for 13 days in the country, inclusive of all travel, food, accommodations, and tips. No monetary transactions were necessary once in the country (except for personal shopping). A Saudi Arabian newspaper has already reported that tourists are complaining about the high price of trips, writing that “a large number of tourists believe that tour operators are charging exorbitant prices to arrange trips to the kingdom. Tour operators will have to bring down prices to attract more tourists.”[225]

In the event, the schedule for the January 2000 tour was highly structured, and demanding. One could not deviate from the pre-planned schedule or strike off on one’s own to explore different sites. The only exception to this was within the Aramco compound in Dhahran, where ex-Aracoms, as they refer to themselves, were allowed to search out their old homes from years past. Even there, several Aracoms had a run-in with security guards patrolling the compound. Participants were always free to stay behind in the hotel if they chose (but that too was difficult, as there are not yet swimming pools or gyms available to women travelers).

As guides always serve an important role in the success of the touring experience, the experience of this tour was no exception. They are “vilified and praised, lampooned and treated with respect and generally emerge as

critical figures in the minds of tourists.”[226] Tour guides are simultaneously pathfinders, mentors, brokers, educators, and interpreters.[227] In countries like Saudi Arabia, where basic information is at a premium, the role can feel overwhelming in its power. Tour guides serve as mediators between foreign consumers and the local environment. All information is processed. The Saudi Arabian tour operators were crucial in their ability to relay explanations of behavior in a way that was often humorous and non-threatening to the tourists. Both local guides were superb in their skills; their personalities were engaging. Interestingly, one guide spoke exquisite English, but did so with an accent. He was perceived by some tourists to be not as skilled as the other guide, whom they embraced more openly.

In my role as study leader, and as an educator by profession, I sought to explain the nuance and complexity of dress, social norms, and behavior. Most of the tourists had little patience for meaningful discussion and preferred instead clear, and vastly over-simplified, answers. The risk is that cultural markers and symbols are de-contextualized. Their meaning and place become secondary to the visual image absorbed through the tourist gaze.[228] Of course, scholars always influence the construction of knowledge by the questions they choose to pursue or exclude. I was cognizant, and wary, of my own role as mediator and interpreter of knowledge about a place in which I, too, was the Other.[229]

***** Representation and the Itinerary

The representation being sold to these pioneering tourists actually covers a wide swath of Saudi Arabia (see Appendix for sites). It will be important over time to observe which sites are added, or deleted, as the touring process is refined. Saudi Arabia must find the places and experiences that will, in MacCannell’s words, animate a “simultaneous caring and concern for another person and for an object that is honored and shared but never fully possessed.”[230] Toward that end, it is important to briefly discuss both the inclusions and the exclusions from the itinerary, the latter obviously being as important as the former.

The tour focused on six primary regions, each typified through the compacted lens of tourism. Riyadh, a huge, bustling city, is the foreign affairs center, the national archive, and the center of history and the origins of the state. The portrait ofDhahran in the Eastern Province was high technology, petrochemical industry, Aramco, expatriate faces, oil, and consumerism. The days up north in al Jouf, by the border with Jordan, left an impression of the importance of extended family, new central pivot agricultural lands, and the transitions that settied Bedouins make. The experience in the marvelous Red Sea city ofjeddah is difficult to typify, but likely was perceived as cosmopolitan and commercial. The image of the Asir was of traditional dance, unique architecture, and ruins. The tour group was actually exposed to a fairly broad spectrum of Saudi Arabia; they certainly experienced much more than some may have appreciated.

Among the landmarks worthy of attention was the National Museum in Riyadh—spectacular by any stretch of the imagination-which opened in 1999. Given that particular chapters of Saudi Arabian history have long been taught in the school curriculum,[231] it was important to see how history had been assembled methodically and displayed in a way that conveys a message through visual, tactile, and aural mediums. The history of Arabia has been distilled into a national narrative [232] The exhibit carefully combines religious development, economic activities, technological advancement, climate, and peoples to weave a fabric in which the threads of continuity and traditions of the past are stitched together to produce a spiritual, industrial, and educated place of the future. That is, it offers a construction of identity derived from an exemplary past, which will bring the state into the age of “modernity with meaning.” The museum constructs and institutionalizes a particular telling of history, as has been common in national museums.[233] The Saudi National Museum conveys a story about the founding of the Kingdom and its development over the decades, which emphasizes the power of Islam, the wisdom of King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman, and the unity of peoples under the Al Saud family The official narrative presents the historical past, from which it can selectively appropriate, and an optimistic vision of the future.

This official representation of self and history is not always congruent with what one hears in private conversations. The museum does not reconstruct the many alternative tellings of history that exist throughout the country It

does not recount episodes that were painful for many people during the formative years of the country, such as the massacres in the south, or the walls of bodies at Taif. It does not speak about the negative impacts of the oil boom of the 1970s that reverberated throughout the country, or about obsequious consumption.

Importantly, the museum does acknowledge a pre-Islamic history. Only a decade ago, this was not openly discussed; now a large section of the museum is devoted to it. The architecture and ambience of the museum are remarkable. An observer moves literally from the age of ignorance and darkness via escalator into the brightness and illumination of the age of Islam. To foreign tourists, this museum accomplished a great task; as I had been asked repeatedly about the impending clash between religion and science—and how a faith like Islam could possibly survive in the age of computers—the museum answered many of these questions indirectly. Indeed, the entire complex constitutes a high-technology exhibit of Islam, and Saudi Arabia. Sultan bin Salman, the new secretary-general of tourism, stresses that cultural heritage is preserved while not impeding the path of progress. He recently underscored that Saudi Arabia “believes in change for the sake of progress, and not for the sake of change.”[234]

This remarkable exhibit notwithstanding, the representation of Saudi Arabia portrayed by the itinerary excluded two important parts of the population. First, tourists did not see the underbelly of Saudi Arabia. This would be expected in any tour of any country[235]; it is just that in Saudi Arabia the underbelly is really quite large, even if hidden from view. There was no discussion of the 7.2 million foreign laborers on whom Saudi Arabia depends to staff the economy. The tourists were not exposed to the self-contained housing compounds, designed to group workers together by nationality and to prevent mobility. They did not see the sub-standard living conditions of millions. Saudi Arabian guides did, however, explain that because of the change in oil markets, the country does have different economic classes for the first time. In fact, Saudi Arabia has always been home to different economic classes; it is just that structurally the underclass has always been composed primarily of foreigners.

Second, except for pre-planned excursions, the tour group did not encounter any Saudi Arabian women, fully half of the population. Although the group visited a school for girls, and had dinner in two Saudi homes at which women were present, the absence of women on the streets, in the markets, or in the hotels, troubled several. When I lectured on the ways in which women work within and around the norm of gender segregation in order to achieve their ends, several individuals were genuinely troubled, some were offended. To others, the physical absence of women in the public realm was equated with total and complete oppression and servility. Rather than examine the ways in which women creatively negotiate their lives and empower themselves to survive and, perhaps, prosper in constrained circumstances, some participants sought reinforcement of pre-existing images.

Finally, were it not for my lectures, members of the group would not have been exposed to the myriad ways in which oil affects society, politics, and economics. The official sites trumpeted the technological glories of oil production; I discussed the ways in which oil affected urbanization, social change, and norms.

**** The Muddy Edges of Controlled Tourism: Globalism and Identity

To be sure, internationd group tourism is highly structured, with every minute of every day accounted for by planners. There is lacking spontaneity, flexibility, and indigenous interaction. The most revealing moments of tourism occur, then, when the pre-planned itinerary does not proceed as scheduled, or when participants refuse to abide by the rules of the game. These “muddy edges” provide rich soil for analysis of the interplay between globalism and identity, or between the needs of tourists and the protection of domestic jurisdiction.

There are three such intersections in Saudi Arabia, at which there is some tension, but where national identity clearly has the edge—that is, globalism will accommodate identity and tourists will abide by local rules and norms. These concern prayer times, religious separation in the holy cities, and the death penalty waiver.

First, within the constructs of a tour, regular prayer time plays havoc with tour itineraries. In my role as study leader, I sought to explain the power and simplicity of community prayer, and to suggest that the call to prayer was part of the fabric of daily business. The tour operator, however, as I was cognizant of, had to time to the minute every route and every stop to work around prayer times. Two minutes late and the group would miss entering a museum on time; they would have to cool their heels inside a parked bus in a lot. Or, should a suq be closed for prayer, the delayed shopping excursion would have repercussions for the remainder of the day, since it would then be too dark to see, for example, the world's largest oasis. Therefore, tour operators will have to learn to build exciting and feasible tour schedules around prayer times; prayer will not, and of course should not, accommodate tourism.

Second, non-Muslims are not allowed into the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah. The tour group utilized a nice hotel on the outskirts ofMadinah as a departure point for a long bus ride north to the magnificent ruins of Madain Saleh. The architecture of the hotel where the group was confined was interesting, designed so that most windows faced inward toward a courtyard. Tourists could barely catch a glimpse of Madinah from their hotel room windows. The hotel, while comfortable, was silent and solitary. Again, tourism will accommodate identity. Perhaps as more international tour groups go to Saudi Arabia, the atmosphere of the hotel will become more lively and interactive—a way station for non-Muslim tourists.

Third, the state requires that all tourists sign a waiver before a visa is issued. Being asked to sign a document that you will abide by all laws of a state while you are there is acceptable. This particular document, however, stipulates as well that tourists "shall respect the morals, customs, values and feelings of Saudi society." It further stipulates that the signatory is "aware that alcohol, drug narcotics, pornographic materials, and all types of religious, political or cultural leaflets, pamphlets, magazines, books, audio tapes, video tapes, films, or other references of all sorts, contradictory to Islam are prohibited from entering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whether for personal use or otherwise. Any types of illegal drugs and narcotics smuggling in, and distribution inside, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is punishable by

DEATH.” Although the language of this document may be revised, tourists will still be required to sign something before entering Saudi Arabia.

***** “Muady Edges”

In addition to the three clean intersections of globalism and identity, there are four “muddy edges” in Saudi Arabia that are the sites of maneuvering and contestation between international tourists and national identities. These concern photography, security, social norms/dress, and foreign labor. The way in which these issues play out and the skill with which they are handled will affect the future of tourism in Saudi Arabia. The individuals who champion a very gradual opening are cognizant of the possibility of a “backlash” from socially conservative forces, which could be precipitated by such incidents.

***** The Photography Muddy Edge

As stated above, the participants in the tour were exceedingly well traveled, and all were experienced at hosting travel slide shows for their friends. All had beautiful photo albums of their international adventures. It became very difficult (and taxing) to explain repeatedly, and often to no avail, why an expenditure of 7,200 for this experience did not entitle them to snap pictures freely. The trip was perceived as a transaction in which the admission price entitled them to the privilege of contravening local norms. The truth is that opening the country to tourism is one thing; reproducing images freely is quite another. Although an effort was made to carefully explain the source of constraints on photography in Saudi Arabia—which stem from considerations of religion (only God can produce a human), social norms (to protect the privacy of women and family), and security (broadly construed)—several tourists could not comprehend them. Others simply thought it was silly and chose to disregard the constraints. No matter how many cautions, prohibitions, and explanations were articulated, many tourists continued to snap photos, often with telephoto lenses. It was a constant bone of contention, and became a serious issue at a museum stop in a small town on the way to Madain Saleh. One woman, having just been told that photographs were prohibited in this town, walked to the far side of the bus

and began to snap away. The mutana (loosely translated as “morals security”) approached her. She simply turned and walked away, making the situation even worse. It appeared that she not only violated the agreements, but then added insult to injury by rebuking local authorities. The Saudi tour operators were placed in a very uncomfortable position of having to negotiate themselves out of this situation. In the event, the process was long and difficult, and required the intervention of the local museum director.

In Dhahran, the men and women tourists split into groups so that each could observe a private primary school in operation, the men attending the boys’ side, the women going to the girls’ section. Not surprisingly, a male participant asked a female cohort to slip a camera under her abaya, to take a picture of unveiled females. This apparently happened on another tour as well, as recorded in a recent photo-essay.[236] Neither of the two was, apparently, successful.

On another occasion, when an older woman consented to have her photo taken by tourists, she kept her face covered as she posed by a fire in a tent. But after countless poses and photos, her scarf would fall from her face and participants would try to sneak a peek of a Saudi Arabian woman. It is not clear to me how long this kind of cat-and-mouse game can continue. Will the family put its collective foot down and forbid photos of women while still graciously hosting tour groups? Or, alternatively, was this acceptable and perhaps indicative of the beginning of photos of women outside of the family unit?

In Dhahran, the group stopped with some fanfare to see the first well in Saudi Arabia from which oil flowed in the 19305. Well #7 is a symbol of the fabulous boom of Saudi Arabia—it captures a mythology about the transformation of a country from tribal desert beginnings to bustling urban centers, from a nomadic people to a state at the heart of the global economy. Everyone disembarked to snap this fabled place, only to be told—in no uncertain terms—that photos of the well were not permitted. Clearly, one is able to explain constraints on taking pictures of women, the human form in general, and military installations, but frankly, this was difficult to spell out. A capped hole in the ground behind a fence does not appear to

constitute a security installation, but, as this case illustrated, security is broadly defined in Saudi Arabia.

Yet, the real concern is less over the private memories of individual tourists and more over potential reproductions on the Internet, what if a tourist surreptitiously photographs a beheading—will tour group itineraries affect executions? What if a tourist posts on his Web site travel photo gallery pictures that were secretly snapped of unveiled Saudi women? It is not clear how long Saudi Arabia can invite foreign tourists to visit and yet restrict their memory banks. With tourism at the intersection of globalism and national identity, how long can restrictions be placed on paying tourists? Lest one conclude that these are mere academic concerns, a debate on the issue is under way in Saudi Arabia, as evidenced in an editorial in which the author searches for an explanation of the many restrictions on photography.[237] The observer argues that forbidding photography serves no real purpose, and in some cases actually creates ill will, bad publicity, and misunderstanding. He makes repeated references to incidents involving foreign tourists.

***** The Security Muddy Edge

The second, and closely related, muddy edge is that of security and permissions. During the January 2000 tour, the bus arrived at the Jeddah airport Hajj Terminal—a structure that has won many awards and is striking in its open, stark beauty, with rows of white “tent peaks” arrayed against a brilliant blue sky—and tourists walked freely about the open-air facility, taking pictures even after the local guide asked them to refrain. The discussion went back and forth; tourists simply disregarded his words. Finally, exasperated and uncomfortable, he pleaded with me, “This is serious. We do not have permission. Make them stop.” Protracted negotiations took place between the local tour operators and terminal security guards. There was a good deal of running between offices and there was much permission to seek. Curiously, the tourists and the U.S. operator were blissfully unconcerned with the delicate position in which the local guides were placed. The U.S. operator assured me, “We are OK. We have permission.” Ironically, the difficulty might well be a difference in nuance, as few recognize that in Saudi Arabia, not all permissions are equal. And sometimes, one needs

several permissions. This incident reinforced an earlier observation that it is neither the tourists nor the foreign operators who pay the price for such incidents. It is the local tour guides who are put in precarious positions that require social skills and negotiating abilities.

***** The Social Norms Muddy Edge

The third muddy edge concerns social norms and proper covering of women. Not surprisingly, female tourists chafed constantly about having to wear an abaya and headscarf. Rather than simply assume that it must be worn (as they had agreed prior to the trip), many constantly asked, “Do we have to wear this thing?” The endeavors to explain how different styles and degrees of covering reflect differences in ideology, class, and region were not enough. Most participants never did appreciate the significant variations that exist within the general norm of covering; it was just all black and it was all hot. One foreign tour company put what they believe is a positive spin on the dress requirement in their press coverage. They suggest that rather than taking away from the experience of traveling to an exotic place, such rules on covering reinforce the exoticism. “There aren’t that many places in the world where you have to mesh yourself into the country to see it. It adds an interesting perspective.”[238]

Most women grudgingly wore the abaya; however, one woman was particularly troublesome. At the old suq in al Hofuf, where group tourism really is a new thing, she paraded through the narrow rows of stalls with her abaya unsnapped, so that it flowed open toward the back as she walked. She wore a bright white, tight T-shirt and strolled with her hands in her pockets, calling attention to herself. As if to provide a double insult, she purchased a bedouin burqa, a particular style of face veil. When she wore the burqa, her face was fully covered in black, yet her hair was uncovered and her abaya flapped open as she walked through the rows of merchandise.

Another encounter with different social norms became evident after a dinner in a private home. Interestingly, as the group boarded the bus to return to the hotel, one of the tourists was wearing something new. She had

apparently walked out of the home with the personal coat belonging to a family member. One can only assume that she complimented the coat, and in turn the host insisted that she keep it. Saudi Arabians take the social norms of hospitality to new heights. When guests compliment an item, hosts may feel obligated to give the item to the admirer, even if the family is not wealthy. The tourist wore this coat proudly for the duration of the trip, in place of her abaya. But one wonders how long families can play hosts to tourists if they lose their private possessions. There is a steep learning curve involved for all participants.

***** The Expatriate Muddy Edge

The fourth muddy edge is one that is hidden from the tourist gaze; i.e., living conditions of the foreign labor force. At a road security stop in the Hejaz, it became clear in watching the animated discussion between security and the local guides that the bus driver lacked a proper ikama (residency/work permit). Had the local operator not been so skilled at negotiation, the group would have had to turn around and scrap the days' itinerary. On another day, a Filipino bus driver accidentally caught the bus on a large boulder that had tumbled onto the edge of the street during construction. As he could not maneuver the bus, we were stuck, and while he followed the instructions of the Saudis to disengage from the rock, the side mirror then caught on a tree branch. It was hot and humid. The all-important closely timed itinerary was in jeopardy. Tempers flared in a quietly contained manner. The bus would not budge; the group sat inside the bus as the men tried to remedy the situation. Several tourists inquired, with genuine sincerity, "What will happen to the driver now? What will they do to him?" There was some unease that he would be deported, refused salary, or worse. When these concerns were relayed to the Saudi guide, he explained into the microphone that the firm had to fill out insurance forms in triplicate to submit their claims to get the repairs done. Hearing this, the tourists sighed with relief. This muddy edge was just barely and accidentally exposed. It cannot be hidden forever.

**** Tourism and Sociopolitical Discourse: Losing the Monopoly

Nevertheless, even with such nuanced characteristics, Saudi Arabia hopes to promote old-fashioned, private, for-profit tourism. This is an important distinction to understand because it fundamentally affects control of the discourse. Saudi Arabia has long hosted visiting delegations of specialized groups, e.g., non-specialist scholars.[239] These delegations have traveled under the auspices of cultural and educational exchange; the trips are significantly subsidized, so those travelers are essentially guests of the country. In exchange for the trip, participants are normally expected to contribute different kinds of community outreach upon their return, including talks or newspaper articles on the country. Private tourism is quite different; anyone with time and money can sign up for the excursion. Since they paid a hefty price for the tour, no expectations are incumbent upon participants. They may write or evaluate the experience in whatever ways they choose. There is no pretense of scholarly or cultural exchange; these are simply tourists seeing the world. Consequently, the phenomenon fundamentally changes the dynamics of travel because the state can no longer control the discourse about its development.

Already, within this first year of tourism, the impact is clear. Two full pages of a newspaper were devoted to Saudi Arabia after a writer joined a tour and wrote an account of his experience.[240] Interestingly, these articles are not in the travel section, but comprise the cover story of the “Perspective” (editorial) section, and are headed “Foreign Affairs.” The essay opens with this rather strong sentence, “Stand the U.S. Constitution on its head, and you have Saudi Arabia,” and it continues, “Absent the oil equation, it’s a fair surmise that U.S. policy toward this desert kingdom would manifest—at least to some degree—the abhorrence aimed at such repressive regimes as communist North Korea and the Taleban fundamentalists of Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia has ample trappings of a police state.” The writer goes on to detail the absence of press freedom, constraints on women, the absence of any free expression, the absence of basic political rights, as well as the lack of movies and concerts.

The first major coverage of tourism in Saudi Arabia appeared in Travel & Leisure, a glossy monthly magazine that caters to the industry and to well-heeled tourists. The magazine sent a writer and photographer to accompany one of the first U.S. tour groups. In this instance, the table of contents reads, “Shifting Sands: One of the most secretive of the OPEC

members, Saudi Arabia has finally decided to open its doors to Westerners. Hitch a ride with the first American tour group to visit a kingdom that still isn’t sure that tourists are a good idea.”[241] In reference to a brief stay on the outskirts of Madinah, the writer asks, “Since the fall of the Soviet Union, how many places are left on earth where you can be restricted to your hotel?” Newsweek, too, carried a very brief blurb on “Touring Muslim Style,” in which the author suggested rules of the road for visits to Islamic countries. The only mention of Saudi Arabia was that all female tourists would be issued a black abaya, the voluminous cloak Saudi Arabian women wear.[242]

It is apparent from these reports that the state will lose its monopoly on the discourse; permitting tourism and the construction of tourist memories, then, is actually a rather bold and risky move on the part of its sponsors.

**** Identity and Tourism: On Being and Belonging In Saudi Arabia

The complexity of the political economy of tourism in Saudi Arabia is demonstrated in its muddy edges. It is also illustrated in the loss of the state monopoly of discourse, the inclusions and exclusions in representation, and the motivations of tourists to travel there. The tourist experience demonstrates how quickly things are changing in Saudi Arabia. Sites that were pristine ten years ago are now ringed in tourist villas and amusement parks. Ruins that were poignant in their worn majesty have been restored to gleaming newness. Suqs that were off the beaten track are now on international itineraries.

Yet, it is also evident that new spaces for public discourse are cautiously opening in Saudi Arabia. There simply is more discussion about more subjects in public than previously. Saudi Arabian society is opening faster than state structures. For the first time in recent memory, there is acknowledgment of differences among Saudi Arabians. That is, different regions, costumes, and customs are acknowledged and even celebrated in museums and shows. Together with a dominant narrative of Islam and Abdul Aziz, there also exists acknowledgment of diversity. In addition, there is for

the first time a new comfort level in acknowledging the pre-Islamic past. Rather than denying it, it is analyzed in museums.

It must be underscored that there is a tremendous upside to the fact that Saudi Arabia is such a latecomer to international tourism and to archeology. Rich ruins that lay beneath the desert are so late in being discovered—archeology is just unfolding—that the sites are protected. Shards and monuments will certainly be documented by a new generation of Saudi archeologists. They will not be looted and taken to capital cities on other continents. The sense of self and domestic jurisdiction (vis-â-vis foreigners) is embedded strongly enough to protect national resources. Furthermore, tourism was only initiated in the year 1999, long after the jargon of "sustainable development" became a part of our lexicon.[243] Indeed, the late-late incorporation into the global tourism economy may prove to be a benefit and allow Saudi Arabia to avoid pitfalls that marred tourist development in the years prior to cognizance of sustainability.

In a tangential but parallel vein, the massive recently published encyclopedia of Saudi Arabian folklore is described as "a truly nationalist project." Its contributors claimed that such an endeavor could not be undertaken until the last decade because tribal and regional divisions continued to plague the country. One of its contributors recognized that "until Saudis spoke the same Arabic dialect and tribal and regional cultural differences diminished, a project examining the country's heritage would have been too contentious to be approved by the censors."[244] Again, the country was late in preserving its heritage, but the long delay also made preservation feasible.

"Being a Saudi" has been defined in recent years vis-â-vis the other—the other being the millions of foreign laborers who staff the economy. Identity and citizenship were about belonging to a community that was distinguished from expatriates by particular social norms and by economic privilege. Over time, the rights and obligations of citizenship have been defined in social and economic ways to encompass Islamic values, loyalty to the ruling family, conformist social behavior, and the centrality of the family unit. This construction of citizenship is being challenged as more people seek representation. Tourism, situated at the nexus of global capitalism and identity, is very much about this evolving national narrative on being and

belonging. As discussed above, the muddy edges of cultural representation reflect contested voices within Saudi Arabia, about gender, religion, ethnicity, and social norms.

**** Appendix: Description of Tour Itinerary

In Riyadh, located in the Central Province, participants visited the stunning new National Museum, the fortress-like Diplomatic Quarter, Qasr al Tuwaiq, al Dir’iyah (the ancestral home of the Al Saud family), Mismak Fort (where Abdul Aziz and his band of 40 men captured the Najd back from the Rashids), and a camel market. In Dhahran, in the Eastern Province, participants visited the high-tech exhibit at Aramco, Well #7 (where oil was discovered in 1938), the infrastructural wonder of the causeway that links Saudi Arabia to the island state of Bahrain, and a private school. An excursion to the old suq in al Hofufwas also on the itinerary, as was a stop at a date market. The wonderful stay in aljoufwas shaped by our experiences with the family of the Saudi Arabian tour guide. Also there, tourists saw many ruins, including Domat al Jandal, Sakaka, Qasr Zabel, Qasr Marid, the mosque of Omar, and Rajajil, a small Stonehenge-like monument of standing rocks. The group then used a hotel on the outskirts of Madinah proper as a point of departure for a trip up north to see the remnants of the Hejaz Railway and the tombs cut into rock in the dramatic landscape of Madain Saleh. In the beautiful port city of Jeddah, tourists visited the Abdul Raouf Khalil Museum (a private collection of artwork of varied quality and origin), the Greek Island Restaurant (to which Saudis would never go), the Hajj Terminal, the historic home of the Naseef family, and the old Jeddah suq. The highlight of the city was a dinner in the backyard of a private villa, complete with laser and sound show as well as a fashion show. Finally, the days in the Asir included stops at the National Park, Habala Village, Rigal al Ma, and the market of Khamis Mushayt.

[202] J. Urry, “The ‘Consumption’ of Tourism,” Sociology 24:1,1990, pp. 23–35.

[203] Stuart Hall, “Introduction: Who Needs Identity?” in s. Hall and p. DuGay (eds.) Questions of Cultural Identity, California: Sage, 1996.

[204] For discussion of identity and tourism, see Simone Abram, Jaqueline Waldren, and Donald هعحكلأيج Tourists andTourism: Identifying with People and Places, 0١99٦ ,<؟٢ل٢ة٦أحةاً؟ ل.

[205] Colin Michael Hall, Tourism and Politics: Policy, Power and Place, Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1994, p. 194.

[206] Susan Ossman, “Boom Box in Ouarzazate: The Search for the Similarly Strange,” Middle East Report 25:5, September-October 1995, pp. 12–14.

[207] I do not suggest that tourism has shaped identity or prompted social change; rather, that it exposes ongoing internal debates.

[208] The empirical part of this analysis is based on my participation in one of the first study tours of Saudi Arabia in January 2000. I served as the study leader for a private tour group from the United States that traveled under the auspices of a national museum. This analysis is in no way associated with the tour operators, nor does it reflect upon their performance, which was outstanding in every respect. Rather, it is an attempt to grapple with new and complex sociopolitical issues that emanate from tourism. The author is solely responsible for the views expressed herein.

[209] In the former state socialist countries of eastern Europe, Hall has suggested, tourism acted, among other things, as “a catalyst for social change, by permitting greater and closer interaction between host populations and those from the outside world, particularly as constraints on tourist accommodations and itineraries [wejre eased.” See Hall, op. cit., p. 109.

[210] Susan Slyomovics, “Tourist Containment,” Middle East Report 25:5, September-October 1995, p. 6.

[211] On authenticity, which I think will be an important question in Saudi Arabia, see Donald Getz, “Event Tourism and the Authenticity Dilemma,” in Global Tourism: The Next Decade, William Theobald (ed.) Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996; see also s. Lash andj. Urry, Economies of Sign and Space, London: Sage Publications, 1994; Erik Cohen, “Contemporary Tourism-Trends and Challenges: Sustainable Authenticity or Contrived Post-Modernity,” in Richard Butler and Douglas Pearce (eds.). Change in Tourism: People, Places, Processes, London: Routledge, 1995;John Hutnyk, “Magical Mystery Tourism,” in Raminder Kaur and John Hutnyk (eds.). Travel Worlds: Journeys in Contemporary Cultural Politics, London: Zed Books, 1999; and Hazel Tucker, “Tourism and the Ideal Village,” in Abram, op. cit.

[212] “Saudis Seeking Tourists, Preferably the Well-Off,” Agence France-Presse, Dubai, 11 May 2000.

[213] “Hotel Operators Eye Opportunities in Saudi Arabia,” Reuters, Dubai, 16 May 2000.

[214] Eileen Alt Powell, “Saudi Tourism: Conservative kingdom is finally opening its door to foreign visitors,” Associated Press, Abha, in the Northwest Arkansas Times, 16 May 1999.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Tim Mitchell, “Worlds ApartrAn Egyptian Village and the International Tourism Industry,” Middie East Report 25:5, September-October 1995, pp. 8–11.

[217] For a critical analysis of tourism in the Middle East, see “Tourism and the Business of Pleasure,” Middle East Report 25:5, September-October 1995.

[218] “James Gavin, “Saudi Arabia: All Change,” Middle East Economic Digest 44:26, 50 June 2000, pp. 19–20.

[219] Abdullah al Shihri, “Saudis Establish Tourism Body,” Associated Press, Riyadh, 17 April 2000. Such figures suggest that Saudi Arabia is not simply a receptor destination, as is the case for much of the developing world; rather, Saudi Arabians themselves are active travelers elsewhere.

[220] “New Challenge for Riyadh,” GulfNews (editorial), 8 April 2000.

[221] “New Council to Promote Tourism,” Saudi Arabian Embassy Newsletter 17:5, May 2000.

[222] “Hotel Operators Eye Opportunities in Saudi Arabia,” Reuters, Dubai, 16 May 2000.

[223] “Saudi Tourism Will Have Slow Start,” GulfNews, 6 April 2000; see also “Saudi Minister Says Sponsorship to be Scrapped,” Reuters, 27 April 2000.

[224] (6,500 Tourists Get Saudi Visas,” Agence France-Presse, 31 July 2000.

[225] Arab News, 30 July 2000.

[226] Philip L. Pearce, The Social Psychology of Tourist Behavior, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1982, p. 137.

[227] Ghana Gurung, David Simmons, and Patrick Devlin, “The Evolving Role of Tourist Guides: The Nepali Experience,” in Thomas Hinch and Richard Butler (eds.). Tourism and Indigenous Peoples, London: International Thomson Business Press, 1996, pp. 107–28.

[228] The phrase was coined by John Urry, The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies, London: Sage, 1990.

[229] Saudi Arabian colleagues, who have long criticized my scholarship as being too harsh, might be interested to learn that some tourists perceived me as “seeing Saudi Arabia through rose-colored glasses.”

[230] Dean MacCannell, The TouristzA New Theory of the Leisure Class, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999, p. 203.

[231] Madawi Al Rasheed, “Political Legitimacy and the Production of History: The Case of Saudi Arabia,” in L. Martin (ed.). New Frontiers in Middle East Security, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999, pp. 25–46.

[232] As well as a 12-volume Arabic-language Encyclopedia of Folklore of the Kingdom of SaudiArabia that was published in 1999. See Judith Miller, “Encyclopedia Raises Veil on Ancient Saudi Culture,” New York Times, 20 June 2000.

[233] On museums, see Michael Hitchcock, Nick Stanley, and Siu King Chung, “The South-east Asian ‘Living Museum’ and Its Antecedents,” in Abram, op. cit.

[234] “Tourism Secretary General Praises Riyadh in London Speech,” Saudi Arabian Embassy, Washington, DC., press release, 10 May 2000.

[235] Though there now appears to be a new mode of international voyeur tourism, in which the itineraries of foreign tourists are purposely designed to bring busloads into the ghettos and shantytowns of the developing world.

[236] Ted Conover and Brown w. Cannon III, “Shifting Sands,” Travel & Leisure, March 2000, p. 228.

[237] Khalid al Maeena, “Clicking Off the Curbs of Out-dated Practices,” GulfNews, 24 May 2000.

[238] Powell, op. cit.

[239] Gwenn Okruhlik, “Bringing the Peninsula in from the Periphery: From Imagined Scholarship to Gendered Discourse,” Middle East Report 27:3,July-September 1997, pp. 36—37.

[240] Jack Schnedler, “Saudi Arabia: Our Strange Bedfellow,” Arkansas Democrat Gazette, 16 April 2000, Section J, pp. 1,8.

[241] Conover and Cannon III, op. cit., p. 154.

[242] Carla Power, “Touring Muslim Style,” Newsweek, 10 July 2000, p. 70.

[243] Peter E. Murphy, “Tourism and Sustainable Development,” in Theobald, op. cit., pp. 27490.

[244] Sa’ad al Sowayan, in Judith Miller, op. cit.

*** Chapter 9: Saudi Arabia: Measures of Transition From a Rentier State

Robert E. Looney

The purpose of this chapter is to assess the extent to which Saudi Arabia's longterm economic development strategy is meeting its objectives. Early on after the 1973–74 oil boom, the government decided that a high proportion of the country's oil revenues should be spent in a manner that would encourage private sector investment and production.[245] Part of a larger political/military strategy,[246] the economic component was to diversify the economy away from oil to the extent that self-sustaining growth could occur in the major non-oil sectors of the economy. Clearly, the goal is the creation of an economy capable of functioning independently of developments in the oil sector. This strategy was intended to provide more stability to the country's pattern of economic growth and development, and while several oil-producing countries express this desire, the Kingdom's planners put together a coherent investment strategy, focused on achieving this result.[247] At least publicly, the strategy has remained in place since the early 1970s.

While goals of this strategy seem straightforward, arriving at an objective assessment of progress made to date is extremely difficult. Examining the patterns of private sector growth does not necessarily come to grips with the issue. Output can expand simply through a continuation of government expenditures or momentum from past public allocations. If one could show that, over time, a linkage from private expenditures to private output was growing stronger than that of public expenditures to private output, then one might argue that the economy had evolved a bit, but that private expenditures themselves could not be sustained without a steady infusion of government funds. Conceptually, therefore, the methods by which one defines and measures oil independence are at the crux of assessing the success of the country's development accomplishments.

The chapter is divided into several parts. The first sections provide a brief overview of the macro-economy. Trends in output and expenditure are examined, and the more relevant patterns identified. Several linkages are

made to earlier studies of the country’s growth mechanisms.[248] The second part of the study develops an operational test for measuring the extent to which the private sector is replacing government expenditures as the prime mover of the non-oil sector. Relatively new statistical techniques are introduced, including co-integration and error correction, to shed light on various issues. Based on this discussion, particular statistical tests are devised to measure changes over time in the Kingdom’s economic mechanisms. Ultimately, these tools are used to ascertain whether the public sector is becoming less dominant and in what sense, and whether the private sector is showing that it is now primarily responsible for large segments of non-oil sector growth. Once these questions are properly assessed, and based on the results of this analysis, the final section discusses several policy implications.

**** Patterns of Growth and Expenditure, 1964–1998

Saudi Arabia has experienced periods of remarkable growth and other periods of relative stability and even decline. For the 1964–98 period as a whole, gross domestic product (GDP) at constant prices increased at an average annual rate of 5.7 percent, but with private sector GDP and non-oil GDP increasing at an even faster 6.8 and 6.7 percent, respectively (Table 9.1). Public expenditures experienced a sharp deceleration, increasing by double digits in the 1964–80 period, but with negative rates associated in investment and non-defense disbursements during the subsequent period. Private expenditures were a bit more stable, but these too experienced a general downtrend in the latter time periods.

Several other patterns emerge out of these data. First, after an initial surge following the 1973–74 oil price increases, public sector investment/infrastructure expansion was flat, actually experiencing a fairly large (-6.4 percent per annum) contraction over the 1980–98 period. Second, public consumption was the only major category of governmental expenditures to indicate a positive rate of growth in the post-1980 period. Third, of major government expenditure categories, defense was the fastest-growing sector during the last decade (1989–98). Fourth, and in contrast, private sector investment generally expanded more rapidly than consumption over the 1980–98 time frame. Fifth, the general pattern of

private sector expenditures was considerably more stable than those of the public sector. Sixth, construction was by far the most volatile sector, growing at an average annual rate of 42.5 percent during the 1964–80 period, but at a -0.3 percent rate during the 1980–98 period. Finally, and ironically, one of the fastest-growing sectors, agriculture, was the one in which the country enjoyed the least natural advantages.

Despite Riyadh’s persistent efforts to diversify the economy away from oil, the hydrocarbon industry is still dominant in several important regards. Oil production still accounts for roughly 30 percent of GDP, 90 percent of exports, and 70 percent of budget revenues. Therefore, the economy remains highly vulnerable to fluctuations in international oil markets. This is readily apparent, as in 1998, when nominal GDP contracted by 12 percent, mainly due to a 25-year low price of Arabian Light, the benchmark Saudi crude, averaging below $12 a barrel. After the early 1999 market rally, the whole atmosphere of the country has dramatically changed, from one of frustration and despair to that of confidence and optimism.[249]

Table 9.1 Saudi Arabia: Rates of Growth, 1964–1998 (average annual %)

| Sector | 1964 | 1998 | 1964 | 1980 | 1964 | 1989 | 1974 | 1998 | 19801998 | 19891998 |

| SECTOR OUTPUT | | | | | | |

| Agriculture | 5.3 | 3.4 | 6.7 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 1.5 |

| Mining | 6.7 | 12.9 | 8.8 | 3.9 | 1.6 | 1.2 |

| Manufacturing | 9.4 | 14.8 | 12.0 | 7.4 | 4.9 | 2.6 |

| Electricity, Gas, Water | 6.3 | 13.6 | 7.8 | 7.0 | 0.3 | 3.2 |

| Construction | 14.8 | 42.3 | 18.4 | 7.9 | -0.3 | 4.3 |

| Wholesale, Retail Trade | 7.6 | 14.6 | 10.1 | 6.5 | 1.7 | 1.1 |

| Transport, Communications | 11.8 | 23.9 | 15.9 | 5.7 | 7.8 | 1.3 |

| Ownership of Dwellings | 5.5 | 13.1 | 7.1 | 2.3 | -0.8 | 1.2 |

| Finance, Insurance | 5.6 | 9.6 | 7.8 | 4.5 | 1.0 | 0.7 |

| Services | 5.3 | 7.2 | 72 | 4.7 | 2.9 | 1.2 |

| TOTAL OUTPUT | | | | | | |

| GDP | 5.7 | 11.0 | 6.7 | 3.1 | 1.2 | 3.0 |

| Oil GDP | 4.3 | 10.0 | 3.8 | 0.7 | -0.5 | 5.8 |

| Non-Oil GDP | ר.6 | 11.7 | 8.5 | 5.2 | 2.3 | 1.8 |

| Private Sector GDP | 6.8 | 11.4 | 8.7 | 5.6 | 2.9 | 1.5 |

| Public Sector GDP | 6.4 | 12.5 | 7.8 | 4.4 | 1.2 | 2.6 |

| PUBLIC EXPENDITURES | | | | | | |

| Investment | 5.8 | 21.4 | 8.9 | 0.4 | -6.4 | -2.3 |

| Infrastructure | 5.7 | 19.2 | 7.6 | 2.2 | .5.0 | 0.6 |

| Consumption | 7.8 | 15.0 | 10.6 | 4.3 | 1.8 | 0.5 |

| Defense | 8.7 | 21.0 | 11.1 | 4.7 | -1.1 | 2.5 |

| Non-Defense | 5.1 | 15.7 | 8.5 | 3.2 | 3.5 | -3.7 |

| Total National Account | 6.3 | 14.6 | 8.6 | 3.9 | -0.5 | 0.1 |

| PRIVATE EXPENDITURES | | | | | | |

| Investment | 72 | 5.9 | 8.4 | 4.1 | 2.3 | 1.2 |

| Consumption | 6.4 | 12.5 | 8.6 | 5.0 | 1.3 | 0.5 |

| Total Private | 6.6 | 12.6 | 8.6 | 4.8 | 1.5 | 1.2 |

Source: Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, Annual Report, various issues.

On the other hand, the differential growth rates noted above have created major structural shifts in the Saudi economy during the last several decades. In particular, the share of agriculture in (non-oil) GDP increased, from 8.1 percent in 1975 to 13.4 percent in 1998. This stands as a clear difference, with similar trends in most developing countries. Similarly, manufacturing showed a steady expansion, from 5.5 percent of non-oil GDP in 1975 to 9.5 by 1998. Non-oil GDP also experienced a steady expansion, increasing from 36.5 percent of GDP before the 1970 oil boom to nearly 70 percent by 1998. With regard to public expenditures, investment showed the most dramatic change, falling from 12.9 percent of GDP in 1980 to 5·9 percent in 1998. In contrast, public investment was only 5.3 percent of GDP before 1970, and public consumption increased from 16.8 percent of GDP in 1970 to 33.1 percent in 1998. As noted above, defense expenditures remained relatively high, at 12.6 percent of GDP. This was up from 7.4 in 1970 but down from 16.0 in 1990. Non-oil revenues were still quite low, accounting for only around 8.7 percent of GDP, although this was up from 0.9 in 1970. Private investment showed good progress, increasing from 5.1 percent of GDP in 1970 to 12.6 percent in 1998. Still, compared with countries in the same income range, Saudi Arabia has a higher share of GDP allocated to consumption and a lower share to investment when private and public expenditures are combined (Table 9.2).

The public sector budget has also undergone considerable structural change, with detailed and consistent budgetary data available starting in 1979 (Table 9.3).

The most dramatic gains in budgetary share were in the area of human resource development. This expenditure category increased its budgetary share from around 8.5 to over 23 percent by 1998. Health and social development expanded faster than the overall increase in budgetary allocations as well, increasing their share from 4.6 in 1997 to 8.4 in 1998. Interestingly enough, these two categories were the only ones averaging a positive growth rate (2.8 for human resource development and 0.6 per annum for health). The biggest budgetary declines were in transport and communications (-7.3 percent per annum), economic resource development (-6.8), and infrastructure (-7.7). Other major contractions were in government lending institutions (-20.2 percent) and public administration (-4.3 percent). Defense, although growing at an average annual rate of—0.3,

still increased its share from 26 percent in 1979 to nearly 40 percent by 1998. Given these patterns, and together with the fact that the total budget contracted at an average annual rate of 2.5 percent, several sectors were clearly more “protected” than others. According to reliable studies, the manner in which countries protect selected components of the budget during periods of austerity indicates that defense and civil service sectors are far more vulnerable.[250]

In fact, the average decline in the growth of real government expenditures was 13 percent.[251] Associated with this decline was a contraction of only 5 percent in the social sectors (producing a vulnerability index of 0.4). By contrast, the index was 0.6 for the administrative and defense sectors, and over 1 percent for production and infrastructure. In short, the various social sectors were less vulnerable to cuts than defense and administration, which, in turn, were considerably less vulnerable than production and infrastructure, contrary to the generally accepted view.

The fact that social sectors and defense were both relatively protected suggests that there were high political costs associated with reducing them. On the other hand, several countries in various case studies appeared to have been more willing to cut spending on infrastructure and production, which, of course, is likely to have adverse implications for longer-term growth, but few early direct and immediate costs.

Saudi Arabia appears to fit this pattern fairly well, although some of the Kingdom’s budgetary categories do not overlap with the standardized International Monetary Fund (IMF) categories used by Hicks and Kubisch. In the Saudi case, three groups of budgetary items emerge, starting with highly favored categories, including those in the bottom part of Table 9.3 (in brackets), which actually expanded in real terms while the budget contracted; second, sectors that contracted at a slower rate than the overall budget and had an elasticity of less than 1; and finally, sectors that contracted at a rate more rapid than the overall budget (having an elasticity of greater than 1).

Table 9.2 Saudi Arabia: Economic Structure, 1970-1998 (average annual %)

| Sector | 1970 | 1975 | 1980 | 1990 | 1995 | 1998 |

| SECTOR OUTPUT (% NON-OIL GDP) | | | | |

| Agriculture | 12.7 | 8.1 | 6.1 | 13.9 | 13.6 | 13.4 |

| Manufacturing | 6.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 8.6 | 8.8 | 9.4 |

| Mining | 0.6 | 0).7 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |

| Refining | 16.9 | 9.0 | 6.2 | 9.1 | 12.9 | 13.0 |

| Electricity, Gas, Water | 3.7 | 2.3 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 3.7 | 3.85 |

| Construction | 11.9 | 21.9 | 20.0 | 9.1 | 8.8 | 9.0 |

| Wholesale, Retail Trade | 13.1 | 15.4 | 22.4 | 20.5 | 20.2 | 20.1 |

| Transport, Communications | 18.3 | 10).4 | 11.9 | 11.6 | 11.5 | 11.3 |

| Ownership of Dwellings | 8.6 | 12.88 | 11.5 | 6.6 | 66 | 6.6 |

| Finance, Insurance | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.9 |

| Services | 3.1 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.2 |

| TOTAL OUTPUT (%/ GDP) | | | | | | |

| Oil GDP | 63.5 | 71.1 | 69.6 | 385.0) | 37.2 | 30.2 |

| Non-Oil GDP | 36.5 | 28.9 | 30).4 | 62.0 | 62.8 | 69.8 |

| Private Sector GDP | 25.9 | 17.3 | 17.1 | 36.1 | 36.5 | 40.6 |

| Public Sector GDP | 107 | 11.6 | 13.3 | 25.9 | 26.1 | 29.2 |

| Public/Private Output (% non-oil | GDP) | | | | | |

| Private Sector GDP | 102 | 59.8 | 56.3 | 58.3 | 58.1 | 58.2 |

| Public Sector GDP | 29.80 | 40.2 | 43.7 | 41.7 | 41.6 | 41.8 |

| PUBLIC FISCAL (%/ GDP) | | | | | | |

| Investment | 5.3 | 10.7 | 12.9 | 11.0 | 5.3 | 5.9 |

| Consumption | 16.8 | 17.6 | 15.8 | 31.2 | 26.1 | 33.1 |

| Defense | 7.4 | 9.1 | 13.3 | 16.0 | 10).5 | 12.6 |

| National Account Expenditures | 22.2 | 28.3 | 288.7 | 42.2 | 31.4 | 39.1 |

| Budgetary Expenditure | 26.9 | 19.5 | 36.4 | 46.7 | 31.8 | 34.9 |

| Oil Revenues | 24.2 | 57.5 | 36.5 | 288.7 | 21.5 | 28.9 |

| Non-Oil Revenues | 0.9 | 3.6 | 4.2 | 12.4 | 7.1 | 8.7 |

| PRIVATE EXPENDITURES (%/ GDP) | | | | |

| Investment | 5.1 | 6.5 | 5.5 | 7.0 | 11.4 | 12.6 |

| Consumption | 28.4 | 14.6 | 222 | 40.5 | 411 | 42.2 |

| Total Private | 33.5 | 21.1 | 21.1 | 47.5 | 52.5 | 54.8 |

Source: Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, Annual Report, various issues.

Table 9.3 Saudi Arabia: Public Sector Budget, 1979–1998 (average annual %%)

| Sector | 1979 | 1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 1998 |

| BUDGETARY SHARES (%/ TOTAL BUDGET) | | |

| Human Resource Development | 8.46 | 12.27 | 15.58 | 17.94 | 23.21 |

| Transport & Communications | 11.31 | 7.25 | 4.70 | 4.13 | 4.35 |

| Economic Resource Development | 6.89 | 4.54 | 2.56 | 2.57 | 2.97 |

| Health and Social Development | 4.55 | 6.45 | 6.82 | 6.17 | 8.36 |

| Infrastructure Development | 3.13 | 3.46 | 1.37 | 0.93 | 1.1 |

| Municipal Services | 5.88 | 5.95 | 3.31 | 3.25 | 3.34 |

| Defense and Security | 26.12 | 31.98 | 34.32 | 33.00 | 39.91 |

| Public Administration | 18.04 | 19.29 | 27.96 | 26.47 | 12.79 |

| Government Lending Institutions | 11.46 | 4.65 | 0.59 | 0.32 | 0.26 |

| Local Subsidies | 4.16 | 4.17 | 2.8 | 4.61 | 3.71 |

| BUDGETARY GROWTH (% AVERAGE ANNUAL RATE) | | |

| Human Resource Development | 2.8 | 2.6 | 3.1 | -4.1 | 3.3 |

| Transport & Communications | -7.3 | -10.5 | -9.0 | -9.2 | -21 |

| Economic Resource Development | -6.8 | -10.0 | -13.2 | -6.1 | 0.1 |

| Health and Social Development | 0.6 | 2.2 | -1.5 | -6.9 | 0.8 |

| Infrastructure Development | -7.7 | -1.9 | -19.1 | -13.7 | -4.3 |

| Municipal Services | -5.4 | -3.4 | -13.4 | -7.1 | -1.6 |

| Defense and Security | .0.3 | .0.3 | -1.2 | -7.5 | 0.2 |

| Public Administration | -4.3 | -2.5 | 4.9 | -7.8 | -10.9 |

| Government Lending Institutions | -20.2 | -17.0 | -35.5 | .17.7 | 0.0 |

| Local Subsidies | -3.1 | -3.5 | -10.1 | 3.0 | 1.8 |

| Total Budget | -2.5 | —3.6 | -2.6 | -6.8 | -1.7 |

| BUDGETARY GROWTH (ELASTICITIES) | | |

| Human Resource Development | 00.511 | 00.72] | [1.19] | 0.60 | [1.94] |

| Transport & Communications | 2.92 | 2.92 | 3.46 | 1.35 | 1.59 |

| Economic Resource Development | 2.72 | 2.78 | 5.08 | 0.11 | [0.06] |

| Health and Socid Development | [0.24] | [0.61] | 0.58 | 1.01 | 00.471 |

| Infrastructure Development | 3.08 | 0.53 | 7.34 | 2.01 | 2.53 |

| Municipal Services | 2.16 | 0.94 | 5.15 | 1.04 | 0.94 |

| Defense and Security | 0.12 | 0.08 | 0.46 | 1.10 | [0.12] |

| Public Administration | 1.72 | 0.69 | [1.88] | 1.15 | [6.41] |

| Government Lending Institutions | 8.08 | 4.72 | 13.65 | 2.60 | 0.00 |

| Local Subsidies | 1.24 | 0.90 | 3.88 | 10.44 | [1.06 |

| Source: Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, Annual Report, various issues. |

For the period as a whole, and for most of the sub-periods, human resource development, health, and social development fall in the highly favored category. Defense is usually favored, and in the 1990s it, along with public administration, was highly favored. Most of the economic sectors were not favored, with contradictory budgetary shares.

The patterns reported above are consistent with an earlier study of Saudi Arabian budgetary allocations using regression analysis.[252] That study concluded that only several sectors were able to increase their budgetary shares during periods of unintended budgetary deficits. These were: human resource development, health, and social development. They were also the only sectors to have their budgetary shares increase during periods of increased actual (realized) budgetary deficits. Moreover, human resource development and health did not have their shares expanded with increases in expected revenue. This finding is consistent with the notion that their funding levels were assured just because of high priority. Thus, marginal increases in revenue could be safely used by the authorities to fund lower-priority projects.

Equally important, the deficit-related expansion in human capital seems to have come in part at the expense of longer-term investment in economic capacity. Specifically, transportation and communications, economic services, and infrastructure all had their budgetary shares contract during periods of unexpected and actual deficits. In general, the main findings of this study confirm the high priority granted human resource development by Saudi authorities. Resources allocated to this sector have been preserved, relative to competing sectors, during periods of austerity. To be sure,

budgetary cuts have occurred in Saudi Arabia, but education has been spared. The long-term nature of this commitment is further evident by the fact that it appears relatively safe from budgetary cuts when overall disbursements cause deficits. The same could be said for health and social expenditures. Finally, while defense has regained its leading share of the budget during the recent period of relative fiscal austerity, Riyadh does not appear to have fallen into the guns versus education syndrome. In fact, both types of expenditures appear to complement each other in the minds of Saudi budgetary authorities.

Because of its importance to the economy, budgetary dynamics and tradeoffs associated with defense expenditures have received special attention. In particular, the impact of defense expenditures on the economy revealed that budgetary tradeoffs were often more complex than those associated with other categories.[253] In part, this simply reflects differences in budgetary priorities across countries. However, this complexity also stems from the fact that increased levels of government deficits can offset or reinforce the impacts that expanded defense expenditures have on other budgetary shares. Further analyses indicate that defense/socioeconomic tradeoffs varied considerably depending on whether the country had an environment characterized by high or low levels of military expenditures. This usually occurs in both the central government budget and in relation to the overall size of the economy. During the 1980s, for example, defense expenditures in these two environments had a differential impact on economic growth as well. In high defense expenditure countries, increase in the share of resources allocated to that sector did not provide any appreciable stimulus to the economy. For those countries, defense increases in central government budgets actually tended to reduce the overall rate of growth. In low defense countries, however, defense increases did provide a positive stimulus to economic growth. Furthermore, increases in the share of defense did not retard that growth.

There are several explanations for these patterns. In the Middle East at least, high defense countries appear to cut economic expenditures, to free up resources for further expansion of the military. This may occur because of the political costs in cutting non-defense expenditures, particularly over long periods of time. Again, with several exceptions, low defense countries seem to have more flexibility in accommodating increased levels of military

expenditure. As a result, economic programs may not be as susceptible to cuts in these instances. Long-run costs, associated with the manner in which Middle Eastern countries alter budgetary shares—to accommodate increased military expenditures—may also be a key factor. For high defense countries as a whole, increased budgetary shares throughout the 1970s had a positive impact on growth in the 19805. Yet, increased shares to defense in the ‘80s impacted negatively. Given the observed lagged nature of many negative impacts in these countries, this may indicate the neglect of economic services, infrastructure, and the like. If that is the case, countries like Saudi Arabia may be finding that high defense burdens are starting to take a heavy toll on economic growth. If these lagged impacts are stable, one can expect non-oil GDP growth to expand at rates somewhat below its long-run growth path. Indeed, for the Kingdom, a reorientation of budgetary priorities may not provide an immediate stimulus to the economy.

Although a leading Saudi political economist has painted a slightly brighter picture than the one summarized above, our findings are consistent with each other.[254] In the Saudi analyst’s own words,

What was surprising in Saudi Arabia’s response to the challenges of the past decade is not merely the relative effectiveness of the state’s responses but the minimum political costs they entailed. This suggested a degree of resiliency by the Saudi state that was much greater than could be expected for rentier states.

The author also noted that three areas in particular required further attention, including,

(1) The domestic extraction capabilities of the state, [which] are still insufficient [and] almost entirely dependent on indirect taxation. Other Gulf states have already taken the important step of introducing personal income taxes to much demands; (2) the legal system and the official statistical base need[ed] urgent reforms if official plans to invite external investments [we]re to be realized; and (3) there [wa]s a need for the privatization program to proceed at a quicker rate and with greater transparency.”[255]

Clearly the Saudi budget has changed considerably over the years. While the fall in expenditures is the most dramatic manifestation of this phenomenon, the more subtle and less publicized shift in the composition of expenditures is perhaps just as significant in our understanding of the country's growth dynamics. If, for example, a decline in the ability of governmental expenditures—to stimulate the non-oil sector—was recorded, it would be logical to ask whether this occurred because of some sort of diminishing returns to public expenditures. Equally important, was the cause of such a decline the result of changes in the composition of specific expenditures?

**** Criteria and Tests of Non-Oil Development

To examine the possible linkages between public and private sector expenditures on non-oil production in Saudi Arabia, a co-integration error-correction analysis was undertaken. While mathematically technical, this method has a straightforward intuitive appeal.[256] Co-integration/error-correction formulae are attempts to determine whether two series (such as private expenditures and sector output) move together over long periods of time.[257]

The analysis accepts the fact that short-run shocks can occur, whereby rapid increases (i.e., public sector investment) in one variable cause movement in the other (i.e., construction). However, if the two variables have developed a long-run linkage, whereby an ongoing stable set of links have been established, then equilibrium will be restored, with the speed of adjustment affected by the deviation from that long-run pattern, specifically, the speed of the longer-term adjustment will be dependent on the magnitude of the deviation from the long-run equilibrium pattern, as well as the strength of the linkage between the two variables. In short, the year-to-year growth of a sector such as non-oil manufacturing can be divided into two parts: the first associated with a short-run shock (increased public-sector consumption), and the second drawing on the longer-term linkages established with the causal variable (here public sector consumption).

The technique has been used successfully to assess several other facets of Gulf economies. For example, Al-Yousif s study of exports and economic growth in the region found that in the case of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, and Oman, there are no long-run relationships between exports and economic growth.[258] On the other hand, the study found that exports have had a positive and significant shorter-run impact on growth in all four countries. No doubt, one reason the long-run relationship did not hold up is because the significant relationship is not between exports per se, but how receipts are spent (invested) by respective governments. Moreover, and while highly dependent on oil, these Arab Gulf countries have been engaged in efforts to diversify their domestic economies and the structure of their trade. Apparently, these efforts have been successful in the sense that the economies are now capable of some measure of growth, independent of developments in the oil sector.

In another study of Saudi imports, the duration of import volume adjustments to changes in the explanatory variable was determined to be approximately two years.[259] This interval seems to be longer than that obtained by others. In one leading analysis, the long-run money demand function of GCC countries, using Johansen’s co-integration methodology, was determined to have a nominal effect.[260] However, this occurred only in the Saudi case. In contrast, the results indicate the presence of a long-run demand function for broad money for Saudi Arabia and the UAE, when real GDP, interest rates, price levels, and nominal effective exchange rates are included in the system. Thus, the modeling of money demand in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, should be done in real terms. In other words, the additional international interest rate variable plays an important role in determining the demand for money in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain.

In general, these studies demonstrate that the technique is capable of yielding insights not often captured by the more conventional regression methods. A common theme is that economic development in the Gulf is becoming a more complex process as the economies mature and begin to diversify away from a complete reliance on oil revenues and associated public sector expenditures. For the purposes of this study the technique appears capable of developing a new, operational way to assess the extent of diversification from a rentier state.

In the early phases of economic development in oil-based countries, the expansion of many types of sectoral growth is highly dependent on government expenditures. One sign of achieving a diversified, self-sustaining economy should therefore be the severing, or at least the weakening, of the longer-term linkage with public expenditures. Ideally, these would be replaced by a similar linkage to the expansion of private sector production, specifically, when and if the Saudi non-oil economy develops to the point at which its growth can occur independently of government expenditures, then one may conclude that it has graduated from a pure oil economy. Conventional regression analysis would not be able to make these distinctions, because short-run growth spurts associated with government expenditure shocks often mask the possible weakening of its longer-term links to the non-oil economy.

Accordingly, a proposed development classification scheme for non-oil sectors in Saudi Arabia may include four specific constants: first, beginning stages, when weak or non-existent long-term links with public and private expenditures affect non-oil output (short-term links may be present in this constant); second, a partial integration stage, when development of longer-term links with public expenditures, and possibly short-term links with private expenditures, further affect non-oil output; third, an integrated stage, when strong links are established with private expenditures (in this instance, possible government involvement with strong links to one or more major expenditure categories may be present. The result would be a possible weakening of short-term links); finally, a mature stage, which weakens long-term government linkages and maintains long-term linkages with private sector production.

To these we might add a final self-sustaining stage in which all long-term links to the public sector have been broken, while at the same time strong long-run links have been forged with private sector demand and/or output. As with all stage theories of economic development, a major area of controversy might center on how one moves from one stage to another. Is economic reform a key element? Is the composition of private sector investment critical, and if so, in what way? While these questions are largely

beyond the scope of this study, the results below do shed some light on the subject.

**** Results

The first step in the analysis was to examine the impact that various types of public expenditure, including investment, consumption, defense, and total budgetary allocations, have had on private sector GDP (Table 9.4).[261] The main findings revealed that:

- patterns have varied over time, with a general weakening of links to public expenditures;

- in particular, and with the exception of public investment, no type of public sector expenditure was statistically significant (at the 95 percent level) in the most recent (1974–98) time period;

- in contrast, public investment, defense, and total public expenditure’s shortterm link with private GDP had been statistically significant at the 95 percent level in the earlier (19641989) period;

- the long-term impacts also show a weakening. This is evidenced by the declining size of the coefficient on the error-correction term (the size of the coefficient indicates the strength of adjustments to the long-term pattern). For total public expenditures, the 1974–1998 coefficient was over half (0.33 vs. 0.15) of its 1964–1989 value. Moreover, long-term private investment gross domestic product was barely significant at the 95 percent level, while it had been highly significant in the earlier period;

- coinciding with the weakening of longer-term public sector links (a major source of private sector demand), private consumption was strengthened, increasing the statistical significance of its long-term adjustment with that variable from 90 percent in the first period to over 95 percent in the second.

Table 9.4 Saudi Arabia: Influence of Public Expenditure on the Private Sector Economy

| | Short-Run Impact | Error-Correction Term |

| Variable | 1964--1989 | 1974--1998 | 1964--1998 | 1964--1989 | 1974--1998 |

| Private Sector GDP | | | | |

| Public Investment | † | † | -0.03
(-4.74)† | -0.04
(-4.10)† | -0.03
(-2.12)† |

| Public Consumption | ★ | ins | -0.10
(-3.59)† | -0.24
(-6.93)† | -0.10
(-3.03)† |

| Defense | † | ★ | -0.04
(-2.61)† | -0.11
(-7.28)† | -0.07
(-5.12)† |

| Total Public Expenditures | † | ★ | 0.14
(-2.50)† | -0.33
(-7.26)† | -0.15
(-2.37)† |

| Private Consumption | ★ | ★ | -0.11
(-2.10)† | -0.15
(-1.95)★ | -0.15
(-2.50)† |

Notes: Data from Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority, Annual Report, various issues. All variables in constant 1969 prices. Error-correction estimations equilibration performed using Pesaran, M. H., and B. Pesaran. Microfit 4.0: Interactive Econometric Analysis. Cambridge: Camfit Data Ltd, 1997.

() = t-statistic; ins = statistically insignificant; ★ significant at the 90% level; † = significant at the 95% level.

To assess the extent to which this general pattern held up across various non-oil sectors of the economy, a similar analysis was undertaken for the various sectoral components of GDP, including agriculture, mining,

construction, manufacturing (non-refining), transport, power, finance, services, and the like. For purposes of classification, our examination also focused on whether or not public expenditures were losing their stimulating effects on output, as well as whether these expenditures were being replaced by private expenditures. In the latter case, which type of private expenditure proved most effective was also deciphered. Of course, if private sector expenditures themselves remain highly linked to government disbursements, then the economy is not really becoming all that self-sufficient. Hence, a final set of error-correction tests were performed on the links between public and private expenditures, to assess the extent to which private sector expenditures have become less dependent on public expenditure allocations.

***** Agriculture

For the agricultural sector, the analysis suggests a general weakening of public sector expenditures with time. This is evidenced by the statistically significant short-term impacts of non-defense expenditures and total budgetary expenditures in the 1964–89 period, giving way to statistically insignificant impacts in the 1974—98 period. In fact, in no case did any of the major categories of public sector expenditures have a statistically significant impact on short-run output during the 1974–98 period.

The longer-term pattern was even weaker. While consumption and defense appear to have a stable long-term pattern for the period as a whole, their links with the pattern of long-term agricultural growth during the 1974–98 period is only marginally (90 percent level) significant.

Anyone remotely familiar with Saudi Arabia knows the extent to which government subsidies and other supports have helped expand the Kingdom’s agricultural sector. As noted in Table 9.3, there is a good chance that many of the government’s initial programs have been scaled back. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that public expenditures are currently playing only a tangential role in stimulating further agricultural output. This may have been the case for some time.

A very different picture emerges for private expenditures. Here, all of the major categories—investment and consumption as well as total expenditures — increase their statistical significance with time. This is particularly true for short-term impacts in which all three categories had a statistically insignificant jolt on agricultural production in the earlier period. This changed to a positive and highly significant impact in the latter period. In addition, the long-term coefficients of adjustment did not decline with time, indicating that output in this sector has maintained a fairly constant expansion in line with private expenditures.

It is not clear whether this is a success story for the government. One interpretation might be that the declining government short-run (subsidy) impact is no longer necessary, after accomplishing its original objectives. These programs have hence been cut back and are no longer necessary to assure that sector’s continued expansion. Looking at expanded non-oil output as a source ofstimulus for the agricultural sector, it appears that none of the major categories—non-oil GDP and its components, private GDP and public GDP—have had a short-run impact on agricultural output. Yet, all three have established a longterm relationship with the sector. The coefficients on the error adjustment term suggest however that the links with private sector GDP are much stronger than those associated with increases in public sector GDP. In addition, the private sector coefficients have strengthened over time (increasing from 0.10 in 1964–89 to 0.15 in 1974—98), while public sector links have remained rather constant (at 0.03 to 0.04).

***** Nn-OU Manufacturing

A fairly clear picture unfolds for the critical non-oil manufacturing sector. Here, a general weakening of links between public expenditures and output was observed. The pattern has developed in both the short and the longer term. For the short term, only defense remained statistically significant (95 percent level) in the latter period. For the longer-term patterns, consumption, defense, nondefense, and total budgetary expenditures formed a statistically significant longterm relationship with non-oil manufacturing in the 1964–89 period. By 1974—95 these patterns had broken down, with no statistically significant (95 percent level) links remaining.

The role of defense is hard to explain. Links may be associated with the Kingdom’s defense procurement offset program and might account for the short-run impact, but with little carry-over to a stable long-term connection.

A totally different picture emerges for the private sector. Not only were the three main expenditure categories—investment, consumption, and total expen- ditures—statistically significant in both short-term periods, they were also statistically significant in the long term as well. Here, however, it should be noted that there was a general weakening of the longer-term links with time, supported by the decline in the value of the error-correction coefficient. Again speculating, the very limited impact of public sector investment in affecting growth of the non-oil manufacturing sector may, in turn, be a reflection of the limited role of this type of expenditure in increasing the productivity of private sector investments. This being the case, the productivity of private sector investments in this sector may be declining. For the major components of GDP, another picture emerges, with increases in private sector GDP providing a short-run stimulus to non-oil manufacturing output. Yet, private sector GDP has failed to establish any long-term stable pattern of expansion with non-oil manufacturing. Given manufacturing’s stable long-term relationship with the private sector, one must conclude that the Saudi Arabian non-oil manufacturing sector largely caters to final demand, with little output entering into intermediate stages of private sector production. This pattern is fairly common at early stages of industrialization. No doubt the true test of the success of the country’s industrialization program will be whether or not activity spreads into the intermediate and capital stages of production. There is little evidence of this occurring to date.

***** Minerals and Mining

Saudi Arabia’s mineral and mining sector is still a negligible segment of the non-oil economy. However, it does have the potential for rapid growth, as new mineral and ore discoveries are beginning to attract considerable attention. Historically, the public sector has had strong ties to this area, although there are signs that these may be weakening. Public investments, for example, which had statistically significant links to the sector in the

1964–89 period, found these disappearing in the more recent 1974–98 period. There were also fairly considerable declines in the size of the error-correction coefficient over time for both public consumption and defense expenditures. Private expenditures, on the other hand, appear to have strengthened their ties to the mineral and mining sector. Both private consumption and total private expenditures evolved from no short-run statistical links in the early period to highly significant ties in the latter. In contrast to the general pattern experienced by public expenditures, the size of the error-correction coefficient increased considerably in the case of private consumption and total private expenditures.

***** Construction

No other sector epitomizes oil-fueled expenditures more than construction. Few can forget the images of 24-hour crash building programs in the years immediately following the 1973–74 oil boom. There is no doubt that in these initial years, output was driven almost exclusively by government infrastructure expenditures. This is clearly confirmed by the error-correction analysis indicating a strong link between public sector investment and construction activity. Still, contrary to what one might imagine, this association appears to be strengthening with time, as indicated by the fact that the size of the coefficient— on the error-correction term—nearly doubled during the latter 1974–98 period. Moreover, government consumption formed an extensive, albeit weak, long-term link in the latter period, where one was not present earlier.

An even more interesting situation arises with private sector expenditures. Here, it appears that for the first time, construction activity was not just fueled by government expenditures. Private investment, consumption, and total expenditures shifted from a strong long-run statistical link with the construction sector in 1974–98, where none had existed previously. Construction’s links with real output also appear to have strengthened over time. Both public and private GDP formed no strong long-term links with the sector during the 1964–89 period. Nevertheless, both developed these patterns in the subsequent period. Based on the size of the error-correction coefficient, the link with private sector GDP was considerably stronger than that associated with public sector output. In addition, both public and private

sector GDPs maintained strong short-term links to construction activity during both time periods.

Summing up, construction is not dominated by public sector activity, as in the past. Yet, it is apparent that in many ways the sector is still quite closely tied to the fates of government expenditures. On the other hand, there are clear indications that important links are being forged with the private sector. In the future, greater diversification of sources of stimulus should provide the sector with more stability than it has had in the past. While the boom-or-bust days are not completely over, it is apparent that the private sector is now able to pick up some of the slack when government expenditures contract sharply.

***** Wholesale and Retail Tale

The trade sector also shows the declining influence of government expenditures. During the 1964–89 period, public investment, consumption, defense, and (at the 90 percent level) total budgetary expenditures all formed long-term relationships with the sector. By 1974–98, however, only consumption retained its links, and, based on a decline in the error-correction coefficient from 0.25 to 0.10, at a considerably weakened amount. Still, several public sector expenditures, including investment, defense, and total budgetary expenditures, were able to affect output in the sector over the short run.

Surprisingly, private sector patterns did not strengthen with time. This is an area in which one might anticipate that increased incomes and spending patterns throughout the Kingdom would be reflected in a rapidly expanding demand for retail goods and services. While it is true that the private sector did create ties to this sector early on, there is little evidence that they have strengthened with time. In fact, the long-term links between private sector investment consumption and total expenditures actually weakened during the latter 1974–98 period, though not quite to the extent of those expenditures associated with the public sector. Similar patterns occurred with real output. Both private and public GDP formed short- and long-term

links with the sector, but there was a decline in the strength of the long-term relationship with the passage of time.

***** Electricity, Gas, and Water

This sector is currently experiencing great changes with privatization, together with plans for increased investment and output. A complicating factor is that investment in the sector has lagged in recent years. Indeed, Riyadh now estimates that this industry alone will require an investment of $80 billion over the next 20 years, to cater to the country’s rapidly growing population,[262] meaning that demand factors per se have been modified by capacity constraints.

As with several of the other sectors, public expenditure appears to be having less and less of a long-term effect on the sector’s fortunes. Early on, the sector had formed statistically significant long-term bonds with government investment, consumption, defense, non-defense, and total budgetary expenditures. By 1974–98, only consumption maintained this link at a 95 percent level of confidence (and then at greatly diminished strength).

Private expenditures also formed early links with the sector. While these declined slightly in the second time period, they are currently much stronger than those derived from public expenditures. In recent years, private consumption has also forged a strong short-term bond with the sector. As for production links to the sector, the pattern is clearly one of strengthening longer-term ties with time, for both the non-oil economy as well as public GDP. Non-oil GDP lost its short-term link with the sector, even if this was clearly offset by the dramatic increase in the sector’s long-term coefficient (0.22 to 0.73). The power sector stood out as the most promising for private investments. While public expenditures still play a role in stimulating output, private sector demand, along with non-oil GDP, appears to provide a capacity to rapidly control the pace of expansion.

***** Transport and Communications

The patterns of expenditures/output on the transport/communications sector resemble those characterizing the power sector. Both public and private expenditures have played and continue to play an important role in affecting their expansion. There are several subtle differences, however. The short-term links associated with public sector expenditures have been consistently strong and are present more or less across the board. With the exception of defense expenditures in the earlier period, every type of public expenditure has had a strong short-term link to the sector's output. The long-term impact of public expenditures has somewhat weakened with time, in the sense that fewer categories have retained their statistical association with the sector's output. By 1974—98, public investment was no longer statistically linked with the sector's long-run movements. Also, in the latter period, non-defense expenditures declined in statistical significance. Offsetting these developments has been the slight increase in public consumption's long-term impact on the sector's growth.

Private sector links to the transport/communications area have, in general, strengthened over time. While the long-term link to private investment has weakened in recent years, both private consumption and total private expenditures have strengthened their long-term links to the sector's output. The latter two expenditure categories have also maintained their strong short-term links to the sector. Output links also appear to be strengthening. Non-oil GDP, public GDP, and private GDP have all experienced increases in the size of their long-run coefficient. At the same time, public GDP no longer has a short-term impact on the sector's output. The transport and communications field is another sector that appears to be undergoing a gradual shift from public sector demand-led growth to that associated with developments in the private sector. This development is occurring both in terms of expenditures as well as in terms of the strong links being forged with private-sector GDP.

***** Financial Sector

Since the end of the 1991 Gulf War, the consolidated balance sheet of Saudi Arabia's banks has grown steadily, at an average annual rate of around 6.2

percent. Balance sheets grew by about 6.6 percent in 1997, and a further 2.9 percent to mid-year 1998, in line with the long-term trend. Leading this growth was the expansion of capital accounts, which increased at an average annual rate of more than 14 percent. The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) estimates that the capital adequacy ratios of Saudi banks as a group are upward of 16 percent, more than twice the BIS minimums.

The Saudi Arabia stock market is by far the largest in the Middle East, with a capitalization exceeding $50 billion. The World Bank has given the Saudi market high marks for its efficiency, transparency, and quality of regulation. Except for investment by GCC nationals in selected shares, and a single closed-ended fund, the Saudi market is largely closed to foreign investors. New measures to open the market are under review. Clearly, even small steps in that direction would buoy investor confidence. An even more aggressive opening could bring about the re-rating of the market, where investors come to evaluate share prices in terms of their relationship to earnings growth expectations, as opposed to the prevailing approach that focuses on dividend yields.[263]

This is an interesting sector in that expenditures associated with both the public and private sectors are highly significant in the longer term. Furthermore, and based on the expanded size of the long-term coefficient, there is clear evidence that these links are increasing with time. The short-run effects of publie and private expenditures are also generally quite strong, especially the aggregate figures of total budgetary expenditures for the public sector and total private-sector expenditures for the private sector. Several of these patterns carry over into the sector’s link with non-oil output. In particular, private-sector GDP has achieved strong links to the sector, in both the short and the long term. These links also appear to be strengthening with the size of the long-term coefficient, more than doubling (0.18 to 0.38) between 1964–89 and 1974–98. Still, there is evidence that links with public-sector GDP, while strong, are weakening a bit. Although public-sector GDP had a statistically significant short-run impact in the earlier period, the latter period showed no such link. Moreover, the long-run impact of the sector on public-sector GDP declined, with the size of this coefficient falling from 0.38 to 0.21.

Summing up, the sector as a whole appears to be gradually more dependent on private-sector activity, in terms of both direct demand and output. While the public sector still plays a major role, there is no reason to expect a reversal of these patterns in coming years.

***** The Service Sector—Community, Social, and Personal

This is a diverse sector that has experienced relatively rapid growth in recent years. Like the finance sector, it has established a number of links with the public and private areas. The public sector's immediate expenditure stimulus appears to be weakening a bit. In recent years, public consumption, investment, total nondefense allocations, and, possibly, total budgetary allocations have all lost their respective abilities to provide a short-run stimulus to the sector. Yet, defense expenditures have maintained their strong short-run ties to the sector, while longer-term linkages are strengthening, specifically, there has been an increase in the statistical importance of the long-run coefficient associated with public consumption, non-defense expenditures, and total budgetary allocations. At the same time, there has not been a significant change in the value of the long-run coefficients relative to the earlier (1964–98) period.

In contrast to the public sector, private sector consumption and total expenditures have maintained their strong short-run links to the sector. In addition, they have experienced the same stability over time in their long-run coefficients. It should be noted that the size of these coefficients are considerably larger, expenditure category by expenditure category, than those associated with public sector expenditures. This suggests, of course, that "riyal-for-riyal" private sector expenditures have a considerably greater long-run impact than those associated with public sector activity. This same pattern carried over to the links between the various categories of non-oil output and the service sector. As with private expenditures, all major categories of non-oil output experienced strong and continuous short-run links with service output. Output's longer-term impacts also showed considerable stability, with the size of the public sector's coefficient increasing significantly (0.13 to 0.23). It should be noted, however, that as

with expenditures, the private sector appears to be considerably more efficient in stimulating longer-run output.

Summing up, the various components of non-oil GDP have shown considerable change over time. Each sector has moved up the scale of integration (Table 9.5). These patterns confirm the hypothesis that the government’s development strategy to date has been successful in creating an environment conducive to SUStained growth in the non-oil portions of the economy (Figure 9.1).

**** Factors Affecting Private Sector Expenditures

While the previous sections have documented the increasingly important role of private sector expenditures in stimulating sectoral output, it is not completely clear, as noted earlier, that the private sector itself is all that independent of a steady infusion of funds originating from various government budgetary categories. Clearly, if the source of private expenditures is largely from public rather than private output, the ability of the private sector to provide adequate purchasing power independently of developments in the oil sector would be greatly reduced.

***** Total Private Expenditures

Combining private consumption and investment provides a summary figure for private sector activity. Without a doubt, public sector expenditures have had a great influence on the pattern of private sector expenditures. Yet, it is quite apparent that that linkage is weakening.

Between 1960 and 1989, the main categories of public expenditure included investment, defense, non-defense, and total budgetary expenditures, which provided a strong short-run stimulus to the private sector. Over time, however, several of these short-run linkages (defense/non-defense and investment) have weakened to the point (1980–98) where they have ceased to operate. More importantly, the longer-run linkages between public and

private expenditures are weakening. In 1960–89, public investment, defense, and total public expenditures had formed long-term linkages with private expenditures, and in turn these weakened considerably in the 1975–98 period. By 1980—98, none were statistically significant at the 95 percent level. Surprisingly, changes in oil's contribution to total GDP has not had a significant short-run impact on total private expenditures, even if oil has formed a stable long-term link with private expenditures. Based on the increasing size of this long-run coefficient, this link may well be increasing in importance. Nevertheless, private-production GDP has maintained strong short-run links to expenditure, and in addition, the longer-run links are highly significant and are strengthening with time.

Table 9.5 Summary of Results

| Sector | Time [Classification] Period | Public/Private Linkages |

| Agriculture | | |

| 1964–89 | Slight public sector short-run impact, no long-run impact
Weak private sector long-run expenditure links, no short-run link
No non-oil short-run production link, established long-run production link | [Beginning Stages] |

| 1974–98 No public-sector expenditure impact
Creation of strong short- and long-term private expenditure links
Strengthening of long-run non-oil production link
Non-Oil Manufacturing | [Partial Integration Stage] |

| 1964 89 Strong public sector short- and long-term links Strong private expenditure, short- and long-term links
Strong non-oil output, short- and long-term links | [Integrated] |

| 1974–98 Significant weakening of public short- and long-term links
Slight weakening of private sector demand links
Slight weakening of long-run non-oil production links | [Mature] |

| Mineral/Mining |

| 1964–89 Several long- and short-run public sector links
No short- or long-run private sector links
Weak short- and long-run non-oil production links | [Initial Integration Stage] |

| 1974–98 Slight weakening of public short- and long-term links
Development of private short- and long-term links
Strengthening of production short- and long-term links | [Integrated Stage] |

| Construction |

| 1964–89 | Strong long- and short-run links to public investment
Short-run link to private investment, no long-run links
Strong short- and long-run links to non-oil output | [Initial Integration Stage] |

Table 9.5 Summary of Results (continued)

| Sector | Time [Classification] Period | Public/Private Linkages |

| Construction (continued) |

| 1974–98 | Strengthening of public investment linkages, weakening public non-investment links Development of private long-term links, weakening of short-term links
Strengthening of non-oil short- and long-term production links | [Integrated Stage] |

| Trade Sector |

| 1964–89 | Strong long- and short-run links to public expenditures
Strong long- and short-run links to private expenditures
Strong short-run link to non-oil production | [Integrated Stage] |

| 1974—98 | Weakening of public sector’s short- and long-term links
Slight weakening of private sector long-run expenditure links
Development of non-oil production links | [Mature Stage] |

| Power Sector |

| 1964-89 | Moderate short-term, strong long-term public expenditure links
Strong long-term, moderate short-term private expenditure

links
Strong short-term non-oil production links no long-term links | [Integrated Stage] |

| 1974–98 Weakening short- and long-term public expenditure links
Slight weakening of private long-term/ short-term links
Development of long-term non-oil production links, loss of short-run link | [Mature Stage] |

| Transport/Communications |

| 1964–98 | Strong short- and long-run public expenditure links
Strong short- and long-run private expenditure links
Strong short- and long-run non-oil production links | [Integrated Stage] |

Table 9.5 Summary of Results (continued)

| Sector | Time [Classification] Period | Public/Private Linkages |

| Transport/Communications (continued) |

| 1974-98 | Weakening of long-run public expenditure links
Strengthening of private expenditure long-run links
Strengthening of non-oil long-run production links | [Mature Stage] |

| Finance/RealEstate |

| 1964–89 | Strong short- and long-run public expenditure links
Strong short-, no long-run private expenditure links
Strong short- and long-run non-oil production links | [Integrated Stage] |

| 1974—98 | Strengthening of public long-term expenditure links
Strengthening of long-run private expenditure links
Maintenance of short- and long-term production links | [Mature Stage] |

| Service Sector |

| 1964–89 | Strong short-run public expenditure links, Weak long-run links
Strong short- and long-run private expenditure links
Strong short- and long-run non-oil output links | [Integrated Stage] |

| 1974–98 | Weakening short-run public expenditure links, strengthening long-run links
Maintenance of long-run private expenditure links
Maintenance of short-, slight strengthening of long-run non-oil output links | [Mature Stage] |

It should be noted that the relative size of the private sector output coefficient dwarfs that associated with the oil sector. This suggests that while developments in the oil sector continue to have an important impact on private sector expenditures, they may account for a fairly low percentage of the year-to-year movement in this series.

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-2.jpg][**Figure 9.1** Saudi Arabia: Evolution of the Non-Oil Economy, 1964-]]

**** Private Investment@@@

Following Hirschman’s unbalanced growth strategy,[264] the Kingdom’s planners have attempted to stimulate private sector activity through developing and extending major infrastructure projects.

Between 1960 and 1989, this strategy appeared to be paying high dividends, with a strong short- and long-term link to private capital formation. Over time, however, this link has been severed to the extent that by 1980–98 no statistically significant links existed between the two forms of investment. This weakening is not really related to the sharp decline in public investment in recent decades. Rather, it simply signifies that public investment has become much less effective in stimulating follow-on private sector activity. A somewhat similar pattern has occurred with defense, non-defense, and total public expenditures. These began (1960–89) with strong linkages and finished (1980–98) with little influence on private capital formation decisions. The links between output (oil GDP and private sector GDP) and private investment are interesting in that oil GDP has not had much of an effect on the private sector’s pattern of short-run investment. Again, and over time, private investment has adjusted to developments in the oil sector. In contrast to its links to the oil sector, private investment has been stimulated by short-

run movements in private GDP, as well as adjusting to the expansion over time in that series.

As noted earlier, it should be clear that based on the size of the long-run coefficient, private investment responds much more dramatically to changes in private sector GDP than to changes in oil GDP.

***** Private Consumption

Since private consumption is the major component of private expenditures, the observed patterns are similar to those described above. Initially, public-sector expenditures across the board provided a strong short- and long-run impetus to this expenditure category. With time, these links have weakened to the point that, with the possible exception of short-run shocks associated with total budget allocations, private consumption patterns are affected by developments outside those controlled by the pubhc sector. Therefore, private sector GDP appears to be a major factor determining the extent to which private sector consumption evolves over time. Yet, it is apparent that these lines are not nearly as strong as those associated with total private sector expenditures.

**** Conclusions

The findings of this study have a number of implications for Saudi Arabia’s future growth. In a sense, the results suggest that the Kingdom’s development strategy of diversification has been a success. The private sector appears to be playing a more productive role with time in that many of the non-oil sectors appear capable of sustained growth without a steady infusion of government expenditures. More importantly, it is clear that the private sector is not just filling a vacuum left by the contraction in government expenditures.

However, there are several negative sides to these findings. First, if the private sector stumbles, it is not clear that the public sector will have the

ability (even with increased funding) to jump-start the economy and sustain growth until private activity recovers. That growth will have to rely more and more on private sector activity and less on fiscal stimulus provided by the various types of government allocations. While effective in the past, these expenditures, with several exceptions, appear to no longer have a major impact on many of the key non-oil sectors of the economy. The underlying causes of the shifts in relative economic power are difficult to pinpoint, at least within the scope of the present study. Several plausible explanations exist for this development. As noted above, Middie Eastern countries with high (and sustained) levels of defense expenditures are beginning to pay the price for cutting back on economic expenditures to fund their military burdens One might speculate that the defense-driven shift of Saudi expenditures away from economic to non-economic allocations has weakened the direct economic strength of public expenditures.

Another possibility is that the changing domestic and world environment requires a different composition of policies/expenditures and that perhaps many of the ongoing programs have simply hit diminishing returns. For example, it is clear that recent technological revolutions and the importance of rapid exchanges of massive amounts of information are incompatible with a state-led economy. In addition, the diversification of the economy has reached a point where Riyadh must consult with private sector leaders on the breadth and depth of any policy or—as was the case with the failed 1988 attempt to tax foreign businesses—suffer public embarrassment as well as the potential loss of valuable investment/technology.

A variant of this explanation is that while there has been a shift away from direct subsidies, in favor of an attempt to rely more on market-driven solutions, it is not apparent that Riyadh has fundamentally altered the manner in which it designs and carries out its economic programs. Ideally, as the private sector evolves from one stage to another (beginning stages, partial integration stage, integrated stage, mature stage), government policies would also shift in a manner designed to capitalize on their capability to tap private sector resources.

The second negative aspect of these results is that once the mature stage is reached, there is no assurance that the private sector, on either the

expenditure or the production side, will be able to maintain established links. Weakening ofprivate links has apparently occurred in the non-oil manufacturing, trade, and power sectors. Again, the co-integration/error-correction analysis cannot pinpoint the exact cause of this phenomenon. Still, there is no doubt that government regulations may have stifled investment and limited the ability of firms to adapt to changing circumstances. Over time, restrictive government programs might well weaken ties between private sector demand and non-oil sector output.

In particular it is safe to say that with a freer flow of international investment and market access, non-oil output might have performed even better than it did. An encouraging sign are a series of economic reforms initiated in 1998.[265] First, telecommunications was corporatized in spring 1998 as a prelude to a sell-off; a decision to merge all electricity companies as the first step in a similar process was approved in November of the same year. The electricity reforms included tariff increases that will reduce consumer subsidies and help limit the huge losses run up by the electricity companies. Operations at the ports and some local services were turned over to the private sector as well. A revised, less restrictive foreign investment code has been enacted.

Clearly, the key to the country’s economic future is the manner in which economic reforms proceed. One observer has noted that the “dance” of Saudi economic reform often resembled a waltz—slow, slow, quick, quick, slow.[266] Yet, the numerous announcements made since mid-October 1999 suggest that reforms, such as the foreign investment initiatives noted above, are now well into the implementation phase. The mutual fund market has been opened to foreign investors, and non-Saudis will be allowed to own real estate and take unpenalized majority stakes in local joint ventures. The sixth round of negotiations for membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) is moving forward, privatization is seen as a strategic choice, and, most importantly, the tax regime is under review for radical change.[267]

Expanded inflows of foreign investment are critical. Levels of foreign investment in the Kingdom have been very low in recent years. In 1996 and 1997, there were net foreign capital outflows of $1,877 million and $1,129 million respectively. Cumulative inflows in 1984–87 totaled a mere $4,317

million, compared to $36,020 million in Malaysia or $51,412 million in Singapore—both countries with smaller GDPs than Saudi Arabia's. Analysts who point to the punitive Saudi tax system and a restrictive regulatory environment as the main factors responsible for this poor performance agree that recently promised reforms could do much to reverse the trend and attract capital to the country.[268]

The empirical results presented above show that the private sector is capable of forging strong links to the non-oil economy. However, the results also indicate that in the mature phase into which some sectors (manufacturing, trade, power, for example) are moving, these links may also be weakening. What Saudi Arabia needs to do is draw on the progress made to date through developing a virtuous cycle. Specifically, the Saudi share market is already well managed, but it currently lacks the necessary depth or liquidity. A virtuous circle needs to be developed in which open capital markets, with a strong regulatory framework, can support the rapid growth of private sector investments. Higher levels of foreign direct investment (FDI) will be facilitated and will encourage further growth, of markets as well. It is through mechanisms like this that the process of increased private sector integration can be strengthened and extended to the next stages of self-sustained development.

Perhaps most importantly, the error-correction results noted above, together with the distinct possibility of developing a virtuous cycle, allow one to be much more optimistic about the Kingdom's economic prospects. Several years ago, the conventional wisdom was that the oil boom years produced an economic expansion that was not sustainable. The key components of this line of argument are laid out in Figure 9.2, which shows the close links between government expenditures and private investment, with non-oil output strongly linked to government consumption. The key element here is the declining effectiveness of government expenditures in stimulating output. Still, with high levels of government expenditure, the economy was able to expand during this period, with many of its structural weaknesses masked behind expanding budgetary allocations. Falling profitability of private investment and an apparent increase in capital outflows were ominous signs of what was to follow the end of the boom.

As noted, the conventional interpretation (Figure 9.3) of the economy during the post—oil boom years was quite pessimistic. Here, the focus has been on budgetary cutbacks, the seeming inability of the government to push through economic reforms, increased public sector debt, the drying up of credit to the private sector, capital outflow, and declining rates of private sector capital formation.[269] The conventional wisdom usually concluded that nothing positive was occurring in the non-oil economy. Furthermore, the non-oil economy would not be able to overcome mounting obstacles and constraints impeding its growth. The end result of this process were few accomplishments in terms of economic diversification and self-sufficiency. Instead, the economy was said to face years of increased unemployment, declining incomes, and eventual political and social instability.

The error-correction results noted above paint a somewhat different picture. Despite the decline in government expenditures, and the relatively slow pace of economic reforms, the private sector was still able to evolve in a positive manner, forging a complex set of links to key non-oil economic segments. At the same time, the private sector appears to have reduced its extreme dependency on governmental expenditures and direct subsidies. These developments and their possible causes are summarized in Figure 9.4. As for the future, a possible virtuous cycle model (Figure 9.5) may well allow the Kingdom to take advantage of rapid growth patterns.

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-3.jpg][Figure 9.2 Development Model 1: Saudi Arabian Development during the Oil Boom Years
Source: Looney (1997, p. 49)]]

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-4.jpg][Figure 9.3 Development during the Post—Oil Boom Years: Pessimistic Assessment
Source: Looney (1997, p. 50)]]

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-5.png][Figure 9.4 Development during the Post-Oil Boom Years: optimistic Assessment]]

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-6.jpg][Figure 9.5 Saudi Arabia: Future Virtuous Cycle]]

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** The Arab Gulf States

*** Chapter 10: Domestic Politics in the United Arab Emirates Social and Economic Policies, 1990–2000

Fatma al-Sayegh

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is at an exciting crossroads in its short development. Thirty years since its establishment as a federation, its leaders have spent considerable energy to foster a unified and stable political system, support traditional yet modernizing social and economic structures—capable of adapting to dramatic and fast changes—and fund a diversified economy that is less dependent on fluctuating oil prices. Since 2 December 1971, two significant steps have marked the development of this country—first, a political union of the former Trucial States against some odds, and second, the genuine development of the less fortunate Northern Emirates. [270]

This chapter traces the UAE’s domestic policies, as well as its tribal, social, and economic development paths, and identifies the transformation of the Emirates from a purely tribal system into a modernizing venture. Having constructed a remarkable infrastructure and shaped an impressive economy, the UAE is reassessing its experiences to ensure that its citizens are adequately prepared for the new millennium. The chapter further explores internal forces that might hinder unity. Factors such as domestic cohesion, proper planning, and economic integrity are of major concern to

policymakers. Although the UAE is still a fairly new experiment in federation, the circumstances of its emergence, its economic prosperity, and its social structures define its unique environment. To be sure, UAE leaders relied on much of their traditions to forge union, but they also contributed much to its current success. It is through a historical perspective that current achievements are best appraised.

**** Historical Background

The seven Emirates, prior to their independence and federation, had undergone a long history of British occupation dating back to 1820.[271] Though fundamentally of imperial nature, the British control in the lower Gulf differed in many respects from that exercised in Africa or India.[272] Britain, for the duration of its protective status in the area, showed no interest in the internal and tribal structures of the Emirates, except in cases where British interests were directly threatened. Although this policy resulted in a great measure of autonomy for the individual Emirates, it isolated the area from any form of internal progress and non-British external influences. Britain assumed full responsibility for foreign affairs, even if it promised not to intervene in the internal affairs of the Emirates.

Economically, the vast majority of the population of the Trucial States (a mere 180,000 in 1971) lived at subsistence level, virtually indistinguishable from that which they had reached centuries earlier. Pearling was important to the economies of the Trucial States before oil was discovered. Whereas pearl diving allowed most to survive on meager subsistence levels, living very modestly with few “luxuries,” the direct benefits from oil income—distributed rather well and fairly rapidly—made a substantial difference. Overnight, the subsistence economy, based principally on pearl diving, the cultivation of dates and a few other locally consumed vegetables, as well as the raising of livestock, was literally transformed into an Eldorado.

The development of the pearl trade created a group of merchant entrepreneurs, some of whom utilized their innate skills in other businesses when the market for pearls collapsed.[273] This was especially true in Dubai, which built an entrepot trade at the end of the nineteenth century, diverting

traffic from the Persian port of Lingah after high customs duties were imposed there. Dubai, thus, became a major Gulfport, enjoying a rather considerable pre-oil prosperity from exports and re-exports. The contrast with its neighbors, whose economic eclipse was reversed only with the advent of oil income, was noticeable.

When the pearl industry fell on hard times during the early 1930s, as a result of the worldwide economic depression and the Japanese cultured pearl innovation, the Trucial States slid backwards in their progress. Reduced demand for pearls from key markets in Europe and the United States translated into substantial losses. The fatal blow came in 1946, when India, until then a large market for pearls, imposed heavy taxes that crippled the Gulf pearling industry. As a result of this overall decline, the number of boats proceeding to the pearling banks gradually decreased. The Trucial States' contacts with the rest of the world began to shrink at an ever-increasing rate, as the industry faltered and World War II entered its crucial phases.

It is important to emphasize that Britain played a key role in this respect. As British commitments—at least prior to World War II—were limited to the enforcement of a "maritime truce and peace at sea," London was not concerned with the implications of this decreasing source of income at the local level. To be sure, Britain avoided interference in the area's social and economic development, but, equally important, it demonstrated a lack of interest that bordered on negligence. It was almost a century after they first occupied the Lower Gulf, in 1939 to be precise, that British officials favored the opening of the first medical dispensary in Dubai. Wretched living conditions would then improve, at least for a few, as the rate of development progressively improved.

Abu Dhabi was the largest and strongest of the seven Emirates. Tribal and somewhat less cosmopolitan than Dubai, the Emirate had a smaller population, and experienced slower development. Ruled by the Al Nahyan family, Abu

Dhabi harbored the ambition to unify and rule the entire Trucial Coast for decades. These aspirations never developed, in part because British

authorities were adamantly opposed to the idea.[274] Economically, life in Abu Dhabi at the turn of the twentieth century was virtually the same as it had been a hundred years earlier. Shipping, trading, and seafaring capabilities had been gravely crippled by the world economic depression, and by the absence of a major economic resource. With trading prospects severely curtailed, people were forced to rely upon meager earnings derived from the pearl industry.

Essentially a commercial city-state, Dubai was less affected by this economic depression. With its harbor facilities and its sophisticated merchant community, the Emirate quickly developed its entrepot facilities and earned a key position in the overall Middle East transit trade. Less tribal and, perhaps, more urbane than the others, Dubai largely depended on trade and re-export of goods to Persia and the Indian subcontinent. In fact, the majority of its merchants were of nonArab origin, coming largely from Iran or the Indian subcontinent, though most had been longtime residents.[275] These merchants played critical roles in helping the Al Makhtoum shape the Emirate’s political and economic judgments. Guided by their consideration for the state’s trade links with the outside world, many of these merchants added value to the emerging vision in Dubai and, if most benefited from their associations with the Al Makhtoum, the rewards were evenly divided. Sharjah, on the other hand, enjoyed a high level of intellectual and cultural life guided by the legacy of the Al Qawasim. Its inhabitants were— and remain—very proud of their history, especially their opposition to British military incursions. Still, although Sharjah was once the seat of the British political and military authority in the area, its modern development occurred well after independence.

The other Emirates, including Ras al-Khaimah, Fujairah, Ajman, and Umm al-Qiwain, were once part of the Qasimi empire. Most of the ruling families, as well as their populations, exhibit a delicate balance within the various Qasimi branches. Their infrastructures reflect poorer conditions that have dictated smaller, even simpler, governments and administrations. In these instances as well, federation benefited many, creating vital links with the larger Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

**** The Birth of the UAE

On 2 December 1971, the UAE was declared independent following three years of extensive negotiations among the nine Emirates of the Gulf: the seven Trucial shaykhdoms, along with Qatar and Bahrain. As the latter two opted for separate independence, a federation of the remaining seven was declared after considerable discussions.[276] A historic first meeting of the Supreme Council of the Federation of the UAE was then convened. During the meeting, Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, ruler of Abu Dhabi, was elected president. It was also announced that Shaykh Rashid bin Said Al Makhtoum, the ruler of Dubai, would be the country's first prime minister. Equally important, the Supreme Council declared that a provisional constitution would be drafted without delay.[277] Abu Dhabi was ostensibly identified as the capital of the state, although that decision would not be finalized for several years.

Since its establishment as a federation, the UAE has forged a distinct national identity through consolidation of its federal status, and now enjoys an enviable level of political stability. The UAE's political system, which is a unique combination of both traditional and modern laws, has underpinned this remarkable political success, enabling the country to develop a fresh administrative structure while at the same time ensuring that the best of its traditions are maintained, adapted, and preserved.

Given that the seven members of the federation vary in size and in economic resources—while Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and, to lesser extent, Sharjah have oil, the other four Emirates live virtually on subsistence economies—unification required certain adjustments. It was enough that the Emirates shared historical, sociopolitical, and cultural ties, as what was needed was a fairer distribution of wealth, development, and political power. Since 1971, and notwithstanding inevitable political skirmishes, Emirati leaders have amply demonstrated that their development and modernization paces were, indeed, fair and comprehensive. The first five-year plan, like the initial development schemes, was deemed a success. That the UAE has grown and prospered as a federation in the face of internal rivalries, external threats, and antipathies is clearly due to Shaykh Zayed's commitment to the concept of federal union, and his generous dispensing of Abu Dhabi's financial support to those less fortunate. On 20 May 1995, the Supreme Council of the

Federation, at its historic meeting under the presideney of Shaykh Zayed, approved an amendment to the provisional constitution that deleted the term “provisional” from its clauses. The amendment also identified Abu Dhabi as the permanent capital of the state. During the meeting, Shaykh Zayed declared that “since the income of the UAE’s citizens was among the highest in the world, no one in the Emirates should be in need.”[278] Even in its simplest meaning, this statement identified the core of the UAE’s domestic policy, namely that the country’s resources would be shared across the board throughout the land. Few found fault in its premise. Even fewer could offer alternatives. Zayed’s bold initiatives ensured that the legacy of the UAE would be rooted in economic fairness and justice for all UAE citizens.

Yet, despite this unique legacy, the UAE is undergoing rapid socioeconomic changes, with various strains and stresses that such phenomena entail. This process, along with the non-plurality of the social structure, as well as the low level of political participation, gives the UAE a special status.

**** Economic Development

Until a decade ago, the structure of the Emirates’ income, which mainly depends on oil, made it one of the least economically diversified states in the world. Unlike other developing countries, the UAE relies on a single resource, oil, whose value is determined by international markets. In other words, Abu Dhabi, along with its fellow oil-producing states, cannot control all three aspects that make a cartel, namely, production, prices, and markets. To be sure, the UAE’s proven crude resources are estimated at around 98 billion barrels, representing 9.5 percent of world reserves and placing it in third position in terms of reserves—not an enviable spot. Capacity is currently estimated at around 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd), which will rise to 3 million by the end of 2000.[279] However, building a healthy and stable economic base requires the diversification of economic resources. Therefore, over the past decade, much has been made of the UAE’s need to reduce its economic dependency on oil. In fact, officials drew sharp lessons from the mid-to-late 1980s period, when oil prices crashed to as low as $8 per barrel. Rates of growth domestic product (GDP) since 1988 confirm that the UAE’s diversification plans are now paying dividends. Since 1988, there has been a steady increase in contributions from the non-oil sector to the GDP,

estimated at around 64 percent in 1996, which is a far cry from the 1972 rate of 36 percent.[280]

The nature and structure of the economy suggests that the UAE's economic integration largely depends on federal rather than local policies. While Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah are oil-producing Emirates, their smaller partners have no major economic resources. Still, the latter have benefited from federal development initiatives. For example, in the field of education, the Northern Emirates have hired federally funded and trained personnel to satisfy local requirements. Another area in which federal assistance was concretely displayed was tourism. Yet, much of these initiatives were the result of Abu Dhabi's financial largesse, which in turn dragged the Northern Emirates out of their pre-independence levels. In exchange for this largesse, Abu Dhabi secured substantial political power. Indeed, it might not be an overstatement to assert that Abu Dhabi has paid in the past—and is paying today—to stabilize the federation. By subsidizing the federation, Abu Dhabi helps the socioeconomic and political settings of the Emirates and asserts for itself a powerful role as a leader of the federation. From a purely financial perspective, nevertheless, the sensitive question of financing the union has only recently been settled, when each Emirate agreed to contribute a specific percentage of its national income to the federal budget. In 1995, the Federal National Council (FNC) endorsed a proposed 1996 expenditures bill, in which individual Emirate allocations were specified. The FNC advised that each party's share be based on estimated annual incomes and, in accordance with past provisions, that federal authorities make up deficits.[281]

In line with this general trend, development projects were designed to serve several Emirates, to further consolidate the nascent federation. Etisalat, the Emirates Telecommunications Company, for example, is a good illustration of this phenomenon. Over the years, Etisalat has become one of the strongest service companies in the UAE. A similar endeavor is the Water and Electricity Company, which has earned various accolades across the country. In 1997, it was announced that work would commence on the construction of the electric power grid that will connect various cities throughout the country, to prevent power shortages.[282] Meanwhile, privatization in public services is well under way. Greater involvement by the private sector in all aspects of the UAE's continued development remains a key plank of government policy.

In fact, the move toward privatization of state-owned utilities forms an important element in this strategy. Privatization could enhance the quality of service to consumers, give a tremendous boost to domestic and foreign investors, and unburden the state from routine responsibilities. Having ensured viable institutions, the state is eagerly looking forward to distributing responsibilities on as many of its citizens as possible. The strategy is nothing short of gradual empowerment.

Local governments have also taken a number of key steps aimed at stimulating the economy. In Abu Dhabi, the development of the Saadiyat Free Zone, envisaging investments in excess of $21 billion over a ten-year period, was an imaginative step that is expected to play a significant role in business development in the future.[283] To be sure, Abu Dhabi's own expenditures exceed those of the federal budget, but that was primarily the result of how the Emirate's substantial revenues were dispersed. Abu Dhabi financed massive public service projects such as water resources, electrical power plants, and petrochemicals, which literally transformed the barren desert into a developing economy. Dubai, for its part, was equally clairvoyant, and invested in ambitious projects. Even if its methods differed, often securing necessary funds by borrowing from international and domestic sources, the end results were clearly illustrated in the massive expansion of several sectors, ranging from industry (Jabal Ali Free Zone) to tourism (luxury hotels and annual festivals).[284] Two of Dubai's projects, well under way in 1999, are Project Millennium and the expansion of the airport, vital to further attract international investors. But by far the most ambitious project in Dubai, which is hoping to transform the small Emirate into a regional technology hub, is the Dubai Internet City initiative that began in October 1999. This project aims at making Dubai the technological center of the entire Middle East. It is hoped that technology will provide a unique platform for the UAE, to further diversify its economy away from heavy dependence on hydrocarbon exports, and provide employment for nationals. Dubai already plays a powerful role in the information technology field, having been selected by almost all major international companies as their Middle East headquarters. To fulfill these ambitious initiatives, local authorities created the Dubai Technology, Electronic Commerce and Media Free Zone Authority, to draw up strategies and polices and encourage the business community to implement all projects in a timely fashion. Clearly, the purpose is to promote Dubai as a center for technology, electronic commerce, and media.[285] Diversifying into such ventures is further testament to the urgent needs—

especially in the Northern Emirates— that local economies may face, especially after 2010, when both Dubai and Sharjah will receive very limited oil income.

Meanwhile, the smaller Emirates of Ras al-Khaimah and Ajman, with even fewer resources at their disposal, have drawn up equally ambitious domestic plans, even if more suited to their needs. Ras al-Khaimah authorized the construction of a cement factory to produce an estimated 200,000 tons per year. Ajman, famous for its fine marble, plans to enlarge its marble manufacturing plant. More modest activities are under consideration in both Emirates. Importantly, a new federal law has been proposed that would require every new industrial scheme of any type or size to obtain a federal license before it can be implemented. The main objective of this law is to ensure that new schemes

serve the interests of the federation as a whole rather than those of an individual Emirate. The law would also prevent unnecessary duplication of industrial projects within the federation, as was the case in the 197Os.[286]

In the event, government intervention in connection with business development has been directed toward diversification, making the economy less dependent on oil. Toward that end, attracting international investors is high on the agendas of the rulers, who must approve most transactions.[287] The market in the Emirates has bent toward modernization in which keen competition has evolved, a mixture of traditional mercantilism and rapid adjustment to vastly widened business horizons.[288] Toward that end, free trade zones provide a significant impetus to further accelerate the process. Jabal Ali, for example, opened for business in the mid-1980s, and was an immediate success. Since then, free zones have been created at ports across the UAE: in Sharjah, Fujairah, Ajman, Ras Al-Khaimah, and Umm al-Qiwain.[289] A similar effort was made to promote the tourism industry. If the idea of a tourism industry in the UAE seemed farfetched in the 1980smore of an aspiration than a real possibility—much has changed since then. In less than

a decade, tourism has taken center stage in the country's economic development. In fact, in the case of Dubai, where greater efforts have been applied to this sector, revenues from tourism will overtake those from oil within a few years. Tourism's contribution to the UAE's GNP was expected to reach 10 percent by the end of 2000.[290]

This strategy of economic diversification, coupled with an upturn in oil prices in the latter half of 1999, has pushed the UAE GDP by 10 percent to 190.4 billion dirhams (Dhs) in 1999 (it stood at 173 billion Dhs in 1998).[291] The economy's strong performance led to a jump in reserves to 13.4 billion in 1999 against 3.5 billion in 1998. National savings reached 34.4 billion Dhs in 1999, up from 26 billion Dhs in 1998. The rate of inflation remained flat at 2 percent. However, inflation was projected to rise to 2.5 percent in the year 2000.[292]

These figures do not begin to decipher the complexities of the UAE economy. For example, while the majority of developing countries are confronted with a shortage of skilled manpower, in the UAE the problem assumes quantitative as well as qualitative dimensions. In an attempt to redress the imbalance in the workforce, the government adopted an "Emiratization" of certain professions, to encourage citizens to assume key posts. In line with government policy on increased participation of UAE nationals in the labor force, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) endorsed the recommendations of the human resources development committee on the proposed phased increases in national banking personnel. It was agreed that from 1998, national participation in the banking sector would be increased to 4 percent annually, with the objective that in ten years, nationals would constitute 40 percent of the banking sector labor force. A number of well-planned training programs have been put in place to achieve Emiratization of almost half of the workforce by the year 2020. To date, however, these efforts have not produced the desired results, although special emphasis is placed on reducing the overall percentage of expatriates (from an all-time high of over 85 percent of the population).

To be sure, the active promotion of capital-intensive industries may somewhat ameliorate the quantitative shortages of unskilled labor but will certainly exacerbate the shortage of skilled workers so necessary to the

efficient operation of such industries. Clearly, the encouragement of skilled or capital-intensive enterprises will rectify the labor imbalance, but only in the long run. In the short term, the adoption of a liberal immigration policy is a feasible, even if partial, solution to the labor shortage. In fact, various Emirates have chosen such a policy and are prepared to confront the risks it entails to the small indigenous population. This influx of foreign workers has and probably will continue to encounter political as well as social constraints, which will eventually place limits on immigration and diminish its effectiveness in this regard.[293] New regulations were necessary if for no other reason than to limit substantial state expenditures.

During 1998, the UAE economy benefited from continued government spending, which supported domestic economic activities. Meanwhile, the country's economic policy, which aims at diversifying sources of revenues and increasing growth rates for non-oil sectors, resulted in noticeable fluctuation. Inasmuch as improved oil revenues helped increase income and reduce deficits, the UAE could raise liquidity and support credit expansions. In doing so, Abu Dhabi matched the ongoing expansion within the non-oil sectors with significant GDP growth rates, which resulted in reducing local prices for goods and services.

Finally, it is also important to briefly discuss the UAE's agriculture policy, given remarkable achievements for a country that is physically inhospitable. Despite unfavorable soil and extremely difficult climatic conditions, the UAE has made major strides in developing a thriving agricultural industry, which defies all fallacious preconceptions. By using modern technology, the agriculture sector has made considerable progress in the past two decades, producing 2.64 billion Dhs worth of goods in 1995. Compared to an output of a mere 116 million Dhs in 1972, this reflects a growth rate of almost 15 percent per annum. Significant achievements in the field of agriculture continue to play a key role in securing the UAE's declared objective of full self-sufficiency in food production. In attempting a greater balance through economic diversification, the state is obviously encouraging the sector, not only for financial reasons but also for national security purposes. During the past three decades, the UAE's citizens have displayed a deep interest in agriculture, especially in Abu Dhabi. This has been reinforced by the personal attention that Shaykh Zayed showed to this field. Plots of land were distributed to citizens of Abu Dhabi, in addition to satisfactory loans to help

farmers irrigate and manage their farms. In Liwa and Buraimi, plots of land were distributed freely, for both economic as well as political reasons.[294] Shaykh Zayed was greatly aware that UAE citizens needed to place “markers” throughout the country, to foster a sense of belonging and of strengthening existing roots. As a bonus to these initiatives, the progress that was achieved, according to various estimates, not only met basic local consumption needs but those of neighboring countries as well. From a situation of subsistence in the early 19705, the agriculture sector has grown rapidly to become one of the most sophisticated in the region, in the process transforming the country into a fruit and vegetable exporter. In 1995, the UAE produced almost 720,000 tons of vegetables, worth 1.14 billion Dhs, which was indeed a significant accomplishment.[295]

**** Social Development

Although social changes in the UAE are less visible than economic changes, the country is considered one of the key Arab Gulf crucibles for social change. Less than half a century ago, the area that comprises the ٨1٢ـ was one of the least developed areas in the whole region. Tribalism had been a feature of this land since time immemorial. Of the many different tribes that made up the country’s population, very few were ever wholly nomadic, as the bulk were settled. The tribe has traditionally served as a cultural and ethnic frame of reference for the individual and often provided him with identity and social security. This was true then and it is true today.

Still, the country has one of the world’s fastest growing populations and, even if most of the increase is due to foreign immigration, the land is now home to over 2.5 million people (1996 estimate) hailing from over 100 countries. The UAE, like most of the Arab Gulf, has a youthful population, of which almost 40 percent are under 25 years old. Those in the older age groups, who often require more health care, are the UAE nationals, given that labor permits restrict residence in the Emirates only while employed. As with most Arab Gulf countries, the UAE relies heavily on foreign manpower, and as discussed above, the government is making a concerted effort to reduce the imbalance. In addition to financial considerations, the purpose of boosting the national percentage and improving citizen participation in the

workforce is to address the country’s various social needs. A committee formed to address demographic issues, such as loopholes in the immigration laws, recommended a number of legislative changes to achieve these ends.[296]

Since independence, government investments in social development projects took on a semi-sacred role. UAE leaders emphasized various social issues that required rapid attention, including education, social security, health, and housing. Over the years, these sectors received the lion’s share of the total federal budget, thus rivaling all other Gulf states in this field.[297]

To be sure, rapid improvement of human capital is a crucial element in the development process. The long-held notion that capital is the engine of growth has given way to the idea that investment in education and training—both formal and informal—is also a precondition for successful development. Indeed, many Emiratis consider that education is their best investment, for themselves and the community at large. Importantly, until independence, Kuwait had provided funding for educational facilities to several Emirates. Indeed, lack of resources had prevented the “dependent” shaykhdoms from establishing formal educational systems. The idea was virtually inconceivable. Indeed, not until 1955 was there a modern school in the area again, it may be worth repeating, despite over a century of British presence in the Lower Gulf. The marginal status of education in the former Trucial States was accurately reflected in the illiteracy rate, which exceeded 90 percent in 1968 among men and almost 99 percent among women.

However, since independence, education has been made a key priority. At first, only a tiny number enjoyed access to formal schooling, and of those the majority were boys. The great importance placed by the UAE government on building a system that would provide education for all is amply reflected in the fact that education allocations within the budget have increased 23-fold since 1973. In 1997, education consumed 3.19 billion Dhs, constituting more than 16 percent of the federal budget. The number of public schools in the UAE rose from 132 in 1972 to some 668 in 1997–1998, and the number of students increased from 40,115 in 1972 to 312,000 in 1997–1998.[298] The process of bringing the modern educational system in line with the requirements of the new millennium is supervised by the Ministry of

Education, which is preparing a “2020 plan,” to re-evaluate the existing educational system and introduce changes suitable for the requirements of the economic market and whatever challenges may arise in the twenty-first century. Indeed, it may be safe to conelude that education has become a far more important commodity in the Emirates, reflected in annual capital outlays—to remedy physical shortages for appropriate facilities and to fully eradicate illiteracy—that, without a doubt, reflect UAE leaders’ vision for the future.

Following the successful establishment of the طلا University in 1977, the Higher Colleges of Technology in 1988, and Zayed University a decade later, the UAE government is now re-evaluating their curricula to ensure that they meet with the country’s requirements. With female students numbering almost 75 percent of these institutions, certain social and economic changes are on the horizon. Until 1997, the UAE University awarded more than 17,267 diplomas to both genders, but only 800 graduates of the Higher Colleges of Technology joined the workforce.[299] Meanwhile, a number of private universities opened their doors in 1997–1998, among which the American University in Sharjah, Sharjah University, and the American University of Dubai stand out. These universities are considered as significant additions to existing educational facilities, but, unlike state universities, private institutions have open-door policies toward non-nationals. Consequently, they can attract certain students who, in turn, may contribute in different ways to the Emirati labor pool.

Housing is another area of social services in which the federal government is visibly active. Housing for UAE citizens has been a major concern of the government, believing as it does that it is one of the essential requirements for a stable family life and for society as a whole. Toward that end, and to meet various housing needs, federal and local departments as well as individuals and private firms jointly implemented an ambitious plan.[300] The plan extended to rural and urban areas in a bid to help Emiratis remain in their localities and to create balanced social and economic links between the regions.

For example, in Dubai, and aside from long-term no-interest loans provided by local authorities, the federal government initiated a new housing project to provide complimentary housing. The establishment of the Shaykh Zayed Housing Program in June 1998 was intended to address significant difficulties in the housing market—further complicated by premium rates on local facilities—to help UAE citizens improve their living standards. Besides low-income housing, the program provides no-interest loans for nationals for the purpose of building their own homes, repayable over a 20-year period. Meanwhile, the government of Abu Dhabi has launched a program of its own called the Social Services and Commercial Buildings Office, whose purpose is to build and manage the commercial buildings granted to citizens of the Emirate. In 1995, this program funded 230 commercial buildings, at a cost of 202 billion Dhs.[301]

If several generations ago there was an overwhelmingly rural population in the Lower Gulf, the UAE population has been mostly urbanized by the qualitative changes that have occurred since 1971. By 1995, almost 90 percent of the population were urban. In the span of a few short decades, the greater part of the population has been displaced from traditional rural modes of existence, to artificial urban settings. In like fashion there has been an equal acceleration in the everyday movement of people. Easy access to technology has made those distant places and foreign ideas familiar to Emiratis whose parents never ventured more than a few miles from their place of birth. Universal education, the availability of domestic and foreign goods with relative ease, and the constant exposure to foreign media outlets have all provided a constant barrage of new ideas, images, and tastes.

Although the basic elements of UAE society remain intact, several signs of the disruptive forces of accelerated modernization are visible. One index is the noticeable change in social habits, behavior, and values, with serious implications for the future, that is affecting the young and the old. It has been necessary in recent years to establish homes for the elderly and rehabilitation centers forjuvenile delinquents, two phenomena that are necessary but alien to the culture. These developments are, thus far, modest in scope, but they represent, in a society as profoundly family-centered as the UAE, a disturbing sign.

While tribal values are fading fast in Dubai, they still play a strong role in Abu Dhabi and some of the Northern Emirates. Meanwhile, changing attitudes among the UAE's youth should provide one of the obvious indexes to anticipate variations in social behavior patterns. Many young Emiratis who studied in Western countries are returning with a palpable appreciation for Western values and culture. In addition, the opening up of UAE society—in which, it may be worth repeating, most cultures are well represented and interaction is inevitable— has created a taste for such forms of social behavior. Others vociferously object to such behavior and call on UAE officials to curtail available freedoms. Why some Emiratis are drawn to the teachings of militant Islam while others partake in more tolerant social behavior is certainly a key development for the country's future stability. In fact, such potential social confrontations cannot be ruled out, further illustrating current dilemmas.

To be sure, most Emiratis value and respect traditional forms of authority, familial and governmental. Yet, it seems certain that deference to the past paternalistic ways is slowly becoming less pervasive.[302] In any event, what has perhaps been most surprising in the course of the UAE's greatly accelerated development is the capacity of traditional society to absorb massive change. Social institutions and cultural patterns have preserved their essential vitality. Perhaps more important is the role of Islam, which continues to serve as the stable foundation of society. Islam both provides the essential explanation of the meaning of individual and collective existence, and serves as a safety valve.

It cannot be doubted, nevertheless, that significant social changes are occurring that will greatly alter the basic values of UAE society. Unlike developed and relatively wealthy countries, there is little connection between wealth and work in the UAE. The message is clear: "Without efforts of self-denial, one can expect nothing in return." To remedy this lacuna, Dubai authorities initiated a scheme to help young people start their own businesses and taste the rewards of incrementalism. Designed to help young nationals stand on their feet, the program— which is called "Tamouh," or "enterprise"—has helped hundreds of young Emiratis. Any young national with experience but lacking capital can indeed benefit from the program. As a result, many small businesses have sprung up in Dubai during the past few years. This vital project helped to ease pressure on the public sector by

channeling the growing pool of talent to the private sector. In addition, training courses for nationals are being offered to educate young Emiratis in their new responsibilities.

Parallel to the education, housing, and labor initiatives adopted by the UAE within its Emiratization program, Abu Dhabi introduced a unique new agenda in 1993 to encourage citizen matrimony. The Marriage Fund Program provides national men with a grant to enable them to meet the high cost of marriage to national women. It is also designed to limit UAE males' marrying foreign women. Between 1993 and 1995, the fund benefited over 3,084 citizens, with a 20 percent increase in 1995 over 1994. The 3,084 "grants" amounted to a total of 220 million Dhs, certainly a significant investment in the citizen population, and yet another illustration of the state's plan.[303]

One of the most noticeable changes in the UAE is the position and status of women. This is amply evidenced by the United Nations Development Program's Human Resources Development Report for 1997, which pointed out that women in the UAE have achieved the highest rate of development in all Arab countries. Indeed, the expanding role of women within UAE society over the past 30 years is largely due to a fundamental commitment made by senior government officials to promote women in all fields.

In the past, while some women were active outside of the home, most were primarily homemakers. Their contributions had never been considered as "organized employment." Since independence, the UAE constitution has granted women equal employment opportunities and equal wages, and those with marketable skills were encouraged to participate in the public sector. Government national policies helped bring women out of their seclusion and into the modern market. Once women attained the right to equal educational opportunities, they became further aware of the importance of their social roles and their contribution to the economy. As a result, women's participation in the UAE workforce has risen from 29,548, or a mere 5 percent of the total labor force of 577,521 in 1980, to 79,971, or 8 percent in 1994 (out of 994,844). By 1995, the figure stood at 119290, or 12 percent of the UAE's total labor force.[304] As the country enters the twenty-first century, many UAE women are employed in the government sector, particularly in traditional areas such as education and health, although they

are now spreading across the federal civil service. Nevertheless, schoolteachers still account for around 40 percent of the total women's workforce.

It is important to note that within the civil service, women have reached the rank of ministerial undersecretary and assistant undersecretary. Women are also breaking new ground in the police forces, with a growing number of officers performing various functions, from criminal investigations to customs control. In addition, hundreds of women are working side by side with their male compatriots in the armed forces, filling all types of posts except those involving front-line combat. If substantial progress has been accomplished in this area, credit must be given to the UAE First Lady, Shaykha Fatima bin Mubarak, wife of Shaykh Zayed, and chairwoman of the UAE women's association. Although women's societies have played a major part in galvanizing society at large, the role and influence of the First Lady proved critical. To their credit, dozens of specialized associations throughout the country helped reduce illiteracy among women, which dropped to just 11.3 percent in 1995 from a high of 77.6 percent in 1980. In particular, the Abu Dhabi Women's Federation, chaired by Shaykha Fatima, has led a strong campaign to help women fight illiteracy, and along with appropriate state resources, it aimed to achieve total literacy among women by the end of 2000.

Naturally, a near-future political role for women would be the obvious reflection of this increasing position within society. Following calls by Shaykha Fatima that local women be encouraged to join the Federal National Council (FNC), women began to prepare themselves for parliamentary life. As equal opportunities are safeguarded within the constitution and there are no articles that prevent women from parliament, or discriminate against them in their duty for political participation, it will not be long before the UAE adopts ventures similar to the ones under development in Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait.

**** Conclusion

Three decades after independence, what are the UAE's prospects for political survival, and hopes for stability and prosperity?

In 2000, the seven Emirates and their rulers were more committed to the suecess of the federation than when the “experiment” first began. Steps to preserve the unity of the country have been taken in a multitude of ways. Wealth distribution, social security, and economic prosperity, all vital factors for political stability, are ensured. UAE citizens have seen progress in all aspects of development, from the burgeoning economic sector, through social and cultural initiatives, to international ties. In fact, the country’s functioning development programs have provided UAE citizens with all the benefits of modern society. At the same time, both the government and Emiratis in general are determined that their political

experience should be preserved. There is a widespread belief throughout the country that by holding on to their unity, they will be able to survive in a world that does not encourage small entities.

There are, without a doubt, formidable challenges ahead, including external threats to the UAE in particular and to Gulf security in general. The issue of unbalanced social structures is also perceived as major threats to the UAE. Nonetheless, the UAE is still holding on to its “experiment.” Internally, the degree of mutual suspicion and distrust has diminished considerably, and the perceived benefits of federal union far outweigh fears. Emiratis are keenly aware of their “interests” that can best be preserved through union. What is a problem, however, is the difficulty in overcoming individual Emirates’ prerogatives and preferences. As discussed above, immigration is one such concern, with each لاط federation member adopting a separate policy to satisfy local labor needs.[305] Surely the day will come when immigration rules will be regulated across the board.

In the end, the UAE has an international stature far greater than its physical size, population, and breadth of resources would seem to indicate. Like many other traditional states, it is facing the dilemma of combining its rich cultural heritage with elements of modernization, and despite evidences of success, only time will tell whether the “experiment” will evolve. Much like the country’s first provisional constitution, which eventually became a

permanent political document, the Union may yet surprise many by growing in stride.

[270] Although the development of the country was planned in Abu Dhabi, and because the largest Emirate was the wealthiest, many assumed that the poorer Northern Emirates would be neglected. To be sure, Abu Dhabi stood to gain more, but, to their credit, its leaders shouldered federal responsibilities with aplomb. Even if the standards were uneven, the Northern Emirates benefited from Abu Dhabi’s largesse, a record that compared well within similar federal set-ups.

[271] Ali Mohammed Khalifa, The United Arab Emirates: Unity in Fragmentation, London: Croom Helm, 1979, p. 9.

[272] Ibid., p. 9.

[273] Both town dwellers along the coast and Bedus from the interior manned the hundreds of ships that put out to sea to harvest the pearl banks. Expeditions were harsh and lasted almost six months, starting in May and ending in October each year. This was a significant resource and literally defined the area’s economic life. Pearl diving benefited few, even though a large number of locals were thus “employed.” See Hassan M. Al-Naboodah, “From a Traditional Society to a Modern State,” in Joseph A. Kechichian (ed.), A Century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and the United Arab Emirates, Washington, DC.: Middle East Policy Council, 2000, pp. 9–30.

[274] Mohammed Al-Fahim, From Rags To Riches.A Story of Abu Dhabi, London: The London Centre of Arab Studies, 1995, p. 34.

[275] Malcolm Peck, The United Arab Emirates:A Venture in Unity, London: Croom Helm, 1986, p. 127.

[276] Ras al-Khaimah did not join the union until 10 February 1972. There were several reasons for Ras al-Khaimah’s early decision, including Iran’s occupation of the Tunb islands, the question of representation within the Federal National Council, as well as the role played by Saudi Arabia. A few months after the UAE was created, Shaykh Saqr Al Qasimi was persuaded by his own subjects to join the nascent federal entity. See Frauke Heard-Bey, From Trucial States to United Arab Emirates:A Society in Transition, 2nd edition, London: Longman, 1996; and Fatma ALSayegh, Al-Imarat al-Arabiyyat al-Muttahidat: Min al-Qabilat ila-daudat [The United Arab Emirates: From Tribalism to Statehood], Dubai: Markaz al-Khalij lil-Kutub, 1997.

[277] Ibrahim Al Abed, Paula Vine, and Abdullah Al Jabali (eds.). Chronicle of Progress, 25 Years of Development in the United Arab Emirates, London: Trident Press for the Ministry of Information, 1996, p. 14.

[278] Al-Abed, op. cit., p. 412.

[279] Ibrahim Al Abed, Peter Hellyer, and Paula Vine, UnitedArab Emirates, Yearbook 1998, London: Trident Press for the Ministry of Information, 1998, p. 72 (hereafter Yearbook 1998).

[280] It is also important to note that the gap between the UAE’s oil production and exports, as in most Arab Gulf states, is extremely narrow. This is an indication of how little oil was consumed locally. While total UAE oil exports in 1976 were 710 million barrels, the figure for 1996 reached 2.23 million bpd. Moreover, oil exports reached 54 billion Dhs in 1996 against 44.6 in 1995. Oil provides for approximately 75 percent of the UAE’s public revenues. Meanwhile, UAE national economic policy, which took shape roughly in 1973, has endeavored to introduce some sense of balance between the oil-producing Emirates and the less fortunate ones. In addition, the UAE operates a very open trade policy and is committed to trade

liberalization as a means of encouraging industrial growth. See Ibrahim Al Abed, Peter Hellyer, and Paula Vine, UnitedArab Emirates, Yearbook 1997, London: Trident Press for the Ministry of Information, 1997, pp. 66, 78 (hereafter Yearbook 1997).

[281] Al-Abed, op. cit., p. 411.

[282] Al-Abed, op. cit., p. 410.

[283] Yearbook 1997, p. 97.

[284] Khalifa, op. cit., p. 70.

[285] GulfNews, 6 February 2000.

[286] Kagaei El Mallakh, The Economic Development of the UnitedArab Emirates, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1981, pp. 58–9.

[287] While it is not a requirement to choose a local agent (kafi) in every transaction, the practice is widely followed, to limit foreign exposure to a minimum.

[288] El Mallakh, ibid., p. 160.

[289] Yearbook I997,p. 103.

[290] Yearbook 1997, p. 108.

[291] GulfNews, 30 January 2000.

[292] Gulf News, 31 January 2000.

[293] El Mallakh, op. cit., p. 60.

[294] This step has political implications, since Saudi Arabia claims this land.

[295] Yearbook 1997,p. 117.

[296] The perceived political and security threats from the huge numbers of migrant workers in the UAE (around 1.13 million in 1997 and predicted to increase by 2 percent annually) is a widely discussed subject. For example, a fairly typical editorial in Al-Khaleej, a leading UAE daily, described the issue as a serious threat to external and internal security, and called on the government to take major steps to solve it. In a country where foreigners outnumber natives by more than one to five, such fears are natural. See Al-Khaleej, 17 April 1999.

[297] Khalifa, op. cit., p. 75.

[298] Yearbook 1997,p. 178.

[299] Ibid.,p. 179.

[300] Every UAE male national is entitled to a free house. However, only females in need are given free housing. See Yearbook 1998, p. 124.

[301] Al-Abed, op. cit., p. 404.

[302] Peck, op. cit., p. 73.

[303] Al-Abed, op. cit., p. 405.

[304] Yearbook 1997, p. 194.

[305] Peck, op. cit., p. 132.

*** Chapter 11: Kuwait and Bahrain: The Appeal of Globalization and Internal Constraints

May Seikaly

Political observers and economic analysts on the Gulf are agreed that the whole Arabian Gulf region is undergoing a crisis demanding basic changes that should impact the basic fabric of Gulf society. Although such voices, and often the same ones, have been giving these premonitions of impending disasters and the urgent need to remedy them for a long time, their quest seems more desperate and their fears substantiated at this stage. Economic but also political and social indicators of this condition are clear and spell serious repercussions for the near future. The most recent literature on the subject, internationally and from the Gulf region, clearly emphasizes the theme that this condition, spawned by the nature of the regimes in the region and now sparked by regional and international events, has accelerated its pace, reaching irreversible proportions. The threat to the stability of the region and its societies has become serious. This “crisis in slow motion,” as Gary Sick calls it, has reached full bloom.[306]

One Kuwaiti writer portrayed the region as a fragile oasis of relative tranquility that has become the eye of the storm, surrounded by a turbulent sea of demographic explosion and mobility. In this he was referring to the economically poor human masses encircling the region. He estimates that in one decade, population in the Indian subcontinent will reach a billion; at the

same time, that of Iran will swell to 120 million, in Egypt to 100 million, and in Yemen to 50 million. Yemen alone would have a population exceeding that of all the GCC countries put together.[307] Today the estimated total number of Gulf nationals is below 18 million, and even with the very high demographic growth of 3.5 percent per year, the region will need much more than a decade to catch up with its neighbors. Such statements express deep-seated vulnerability and insecurity about what the future holds for the Gulf nations, but also significantly telling is the awareness and sense by people in the region that their nations are demographically small, perceived as wealthy, and targeted by the waves of globalization.

Today the region finds itself part of a world that is growing smaller, where resources are fewer, where inequities are contested, and where human rights are internationally approved and proclaimed. Taking into consideration the phenomenal social and material achievements that societies of the Gulf states have accumulated during the last 50 years, this feeling of claustrophobia, threat, and impending disaster is understandable; especially when these nations are pressed to change and to open their societies and economies to the waves of global change.

Since the 1991 War for Kuwait, the Gulf states as a whole, including Kuwait and Bahrain, the subjects of this chapter, have survived under an umbrella of two conflicting pulls: externally the hegemonic Western impact toward globalization, and internally the increase of ripples and roars within these societies calling for economic and social rationalization, cautious liberalization, and even introversion. These internal pulls have triggered a process often ambiguously expressed by domestic religious, traditional, tribal, familial, and economic reactions.

The military advent of Western powers into the region, particularly that of the U.S., in 1991 brought home the reality of the new world order. While CNN introduced every home to “American-style and slanted” media information on the war, it also informed about U.S. culture and lifestyle. The people in the Gulf were not immune to the technological revolution and all its implications; however, at that time it reached all and affected all aspects of their lives. The dramatic impact of the war, its expense, and their entanglement in it became a reality. In addition to the trauma of war, Gulf governments and

societies had to squarely face the possibilities of economic loss and indebtedness, and the need to reassess resources, achievements, and challenges. Khaldoun al-Naqeeb in his latest article entitled “The Gulf... where to?” does exactly that in his usual trenchant style, however with clear tones of exasperation and desperation.[308] He repeats and endorses the opinions and concerns of a growing number of Gulf writers and intellectuals, now a second generation of Gulf nationals calling for change.

While the war and its legacy shook the basic pillars of the state systems in Kuwait and Bahrain, it also awakened and gave life to historically present but muted and diverted popular demands. Today the voices coming from these two countries reflect the exact nature their two regimes have evolved into, the freedom they accord their citizens, and their response to the situation. While Kuwaiti analysts boldly criticize and demand fundamental changes, Bahraini voices, on the other hand, are ambivalent and use riddles and allegories to propose the same changes. However, there is a consensual view on the roots of the crisis and the overall outline for its remedy.[309] The foremost demand is for accountability of national economic management. Demands are for rationalizing development by balancing projections for future growth with diversified investment, balancing military expenditures with realistic strategic and security needs, and balancing national wealth distribution with a gradual phasing out of the pervasive welfare system. Under discussion are employment policies to take into account the demographic balance between Gulf nationals and foreign workers, thus involving labor legislation and enforcement. Another concern has been with education and the need to promote a modern generation with social and political consciousness, ready to assume an active role as responsible citizens.

All these needs, while recognized on the official level as expressed through

 government promises and statements, have been impossible to implement; although some half-hearted, partial attempts have been noted. Such demands

challenge the fundamentals on which these family states are based and the type of relationships they have forged with their subjects. It is clear that the problem rests in the structural foundation of these states, within which their societies have been nurtured for the last 50 years. The Gulf state formation depended on two basic structural pillars: first and foremost, a wealthy rentier economy leading to a rentier societal “ethos” (if we could use the term in this way), and second, the gradual evolution of the regimes into authoritarian, mostly militarist/police-state apparatuses that fully controlled all resources, their distribution, and channels of power. These two pillars complement each other and feed upon each other.[310] Furthermore, this type of economy has been instrumental in altering the value system of Gulf societies, creating a mentality and attitude of dependency that explain the reaction to the crisis today. Resistance to facing the realities of this crisis is not only by the regimes who are reluctant to apply obviously unpopular economic policies as solutions, but also by the people, who have come to expect welfare benefits as their birthright.

This is the situation that both Kuwait and Bahrain find themselves in. The oil sector dominates revenue of both countries in the form of royalties or rents to cover the major part of their national income. For Kuwait, over 97 percent of revenue comes from oil sales and investment of oil money. Bahrain, the poorest of the oil-producing countries, depends on oil for 50 percent of its immediate national income. Other revenues come from domestic investment in industries and in services and from Saudi subsidies, again all indirectly dependent on the same commodity. Oil prices fluctuated from over 40 to less than 810 a barrel from the 1970s to 2000, and with them the economies and fortunes of these countries swayed. Oil prices hit record lows in the mid-to-late 1980s and in the late 1990s.[311] There are no indications that the present low prices can attain the boom levels of the 1970s or will change in any drastic fashion for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, both countries have been operating at a deficit since the 1991 war and have depleted their reserves as well as taken out loans. Albeit, it should be noted that due to some improvement in oil prices in 1999, this budget deficit has been reduced from $5.5 billion to $3 billion as specified by official government reporting.

Kuwait bore the heaviest load of the war drama and its repercussions, such as the violence of occupation, of flight, and of human and economic loss. It is estimated that the GCC countries paid heavily to cover the expenses of

liberating Kuwait, at least $65 billion in 1990 and $70 billion in 1991.[312] The Kuwaiti share in the war was approximately $65 billion. This, along with various expenses as a result of war ramifications, has sliced Kuwait's national reserves by over 60 percent. Out of $100 billion in reserves in 1980, the value has dwindled to $35 billion in 1995, with $30 billion in outstanding foreign debt.[313] Furthermore, the immediate economic consequence of the war has held the Kuwaiti economy hostage to increasing demands for arms and security and protection expenses, as well as the burdens of innumerable expenses for the sake of recovery. The social and political developments in Kuwait during the last decade have been colored by these consequences and explain the complex accommodations, adjustments, and achievements that Kuwaiti society is undergoing.

Bahrain too, similar to the whole region, experienced many immediate realities and results of the war—in the form of Kuwaiti refugees and U.S. forces and maneuvers as well as Iraqi Scud missiles. Along with other Gulf governments, Bahrain's had to tighten its belt, which meant constricting the welfare benefits of society while at the same time pursuing a race to purchase arms and tighten security. But the long-range economic effects were tremendous on Bahrain, the worst hit of the Gulf states; it took the form of unemployment, social and political unrest, and a serious environment of malaise.[314]

Thus in Bahrain, the poorest and least endowed of the Gulf states and the one that suffers most from economic distress, this malaise has been most vocally illustrated. It has translated into a violent sustained uprising that has claimed lives and property and pitted a population demanding economic fairness against a political system projected as withholding equality and justice.[315] Within the Gulf system, Bahrain's condition is the most intense case, but there are signs that opposition demanding economic fairness, equitable sharing in the wealth of the country, and a say in its fate has emerged in other areas too.

**** Historical Background

While it is beyond the purview of this paper to detail the development of political society in these two states, it is pertinent to briefly review the historical precedents for sociopolitical development in both. It should be noted that in both Bahrain and Kuwait a movement of nationalist consciousness started earlier than in any other region of the Gulf, and their societies have been strongly impacted by that. The political discourse in Kuwait and Bahrain still reflects a legacy of nationalist activism, experience of some democratic life, and undercurrents of opposition to the ruling regime.[316]

We can distinguish two developmental stages in the two states where economic and social structures were directly affected by the oil industry: The first started in the 1950s and culminated in the late 1970s, and the second unfolded in the 1990s. While the first stage was the founding period for the economic basis of society and molded its sociopolitical character and direction; the second stage has been and still is the period in which these societies search for an identity and grounding within a regional and a global settmg.[317]

Particularly in the 19705, the tremendous growth in oil wealth successfully built up the infrastructure and other manifestations of the state along modern lines and provided citizens with a wide range of services such as education, health, social services, even entertainment. These were centralized projects by the state, the supreme employer and provider of benefits to this welfare system. Therefore the ruling institution played the major role in creating and withholding opportunities. It also rationalized its legitimacy through these achievements and by building a network of alliances based on tribal, sometimes religious, and/or economic interests.[318] Economic favors in the form of money or land

Kuwait and Bahrain ... Globalization and Internal Constraints 181 donations or control of power-generating posts have been some of the means by which these alliances were and are cemented. During this period, the state evolved

into a powerful apparatus with the technology and measures of control and coercion.

This process created modern-looking societies without solving the dilemmas of rapid Western modernization and the persistence of traditional cultural values with political tribal/sectarian relations. All modernization techniques introduced into Kuwait and Bahrain since the inception of the state have been tailored to endorse this relationship and confirm these roles. Modernization also meant the creation of departments and an apparatus to ensure control and order, such as the Central Statistics Department. This system successfully kept taps on every citizen and resident in the state through a sophisticated computerized network linked to police surveillance. The police/internal-control and security systern became closely identified with the ruling institution and its apparatus.

On the social and political levels, the 1960s and 1970s were decades of nationalism, liberation, and enthusiastic development. They were the boom years in the oil economies, affecting the whole region: both producers and benefactors of oil economic growth. This put in motion many societal developments that were to affect all sectors of society: mass education, employment, protective legislation and organized lobbying for labor representational rights. Most achievements were state sponsored and were considered essential when the state was forming its power bases. This period also witnessed urbanization/sedentarization, high fertility, and mobility.

By the 1980s the economies of the Gulf as a whole, including those of Bahrain and Kuwait, had become incorporated into the global capitalist structure and were affected by the general drop in real prices of primary commodities, including oil. When oil prices fell in 1986 (from $28 to $7), the whole region was adversely affected, and this was reflected in economic and political difficulties. The region had become indebted to international lenders. Austerity measures were instituted and social upheavals became common; also, repression intensified.[319] The governments of both states found themselves in the position of balancing and accommodating their survival on the basis of the demands of the various sociopolitical forces that these societies had produced in the decades of oil wealth.

During the late 1960s and the 1970s—a period of sharp economic prosperity—a large middle class, mainly urban, concentrated in the metropole, and Sunni, emerged. The late 1980s saw these developments, in varying degrees, reach the rural and tribal sectors of society, both Sunni and Shia as well as those of some of the ethnic minorities (the Beduns, the Balushis, and the Persians). Educational, health, and other services to both rural and urban areas were built, along with high-rise office buildings and other modern outlets. The local economic market expanded, as various corporations (monopolies by certain families of established status and wealth) were set up and employment in the service sector increased. It was a period of major material expansion that raised the economic and social expectations of people; however it also happened at a time when signs of econornic contraction as well as class and sectarian differences were felt.

Gradually in the 1980s and 1990s, the social structure in both states began coalescing into two economically homogenous classes with a growing gap between them. This was more pronounced in Bahrain than in Kuwait due to higher resource wealth in the latter and a historical legacy that permitted a somewhat more equitable wealth distribution in Kuwait than in Bahrain. Nevertheless, a stratum of glaringly wealthy merchant and technocrat families and high government officials, mostly from traditional merchant families and a few newly elevated families, particularly Shias of Arab or Persian origins, grew. These made up the upper middle class. Also, a conglomerate of various ethnic groups coalesced into a professional salaried and broker merchant stratum whose power was dependent on income from government-sponsored services or economic opportunities.

The lower middle class developed from another very large combination of mostly ethnic/religious groups with minimal education whose standard of living had been forcibly raised and who found themselves constantly in search of more income while anxiously protecting what they had already acquired. This class was more closely aligned to the lowest economic stratum, with little substantial difference in their economic or conservative

structure. This poorest stratum, having benefited from the enlarged education and health services of the state, acquired more political awareness and expectations for development, with no corresponding opportunities.

Similar to what occurred in other Arab and Gulf states, the oil revolution of the 1970s in Kuwait and Bahrain left a very conservative social order characterized by a laissez-faire capitalist, open-door economic policy; a policy that did not democratize opportunity and had no contingencies for the period of reversed fortunes. While the business community, the upper classes, and the upper middle class merchant strata experienced a boom with proliferation of visible accumulated wealth—palatial houses, residential compounds, spectacular business centers, and a wealthy lifestyle—as well as the mushrooming of Western enterprises (Kentucky Fried Chicken, McDonald's, Woolworth's, etc.), by the 19805 the lower middle class was experiencing a contraction in its purchasing power, and vulnerability in its employment. It was worst among the lower classes, whose expectations had been whetted through education and through the obvious signs of prosperity at its doorstep,[320] a prosperity denied to it by the contracted resources, growth in population, heightened expectations, and demand for employment. This situation was more pronounced in Bahrain than Kuwait. However, by that date, the political order in both states, with its paternalism, welfare policy, and limitation of popular participation, had become the norm and only sporadically contested.

Nevertheless, the reversal in the fortunes of the oil-producing nations and the Gulf War brought contractions in the economic strength of Kuwait and Bahrain and the available funds for state-sponsored projects. By this phase, state budgets had to heed the danger signs and limitations imposed by their global financial liabilities while at the same time temper demands and sensibilities of the citizens. For the last decade, the economic crisis, detailed at the outset of this paper, has intensified and reluctantly pushed the regimes and their citizens into new forms Kuwait and Bahrain ... Globalization and Internal Constraints 183 of relationships and accommodations. While economic constraints are being defined by the incorporation of local economies into the wider global financial networks, their application on the ground has to accommodate sociopolitical realities on the national, i.e., local, level.[321]

It should be noted that Western influence and the infiltration of Western social behavior and economic presence, as well as the unfolding of a lesser Arab nationalist discourse and an implied acceptance of the American sponsorship for normalization with Israel, all promoted socially and morally laden controversies and elicited the anger of the conservative and religious sensibilities in both countries. The quiet endorsement by officials of Western projects, their presence, and influence deepened popular anti-Western and anti-government feelings.[322] All this had been festering and circulating even before the war in 1991 and the peace initiatives (the Oslo Accords) that followed. Such moods hit a basic chord particularly within the economically depressed strata and those who felt the impact of official restriction and monitoring.

It was in these conditions and through the feelings of frustration and discontent they generated that the Islamist movements found adherents and support. The Islamist discourse provided the opposition with refuge and response to its outcry against conceived injustices as well as the unresolved dilemma of reconciling tradition to the flood of Westernization. Furthermore, with the complete absence of legal political channels for expressing grievances, revitalized popular Islam filled the vacuum. All through the 1980s the Islamic idiom was inching in on all levels of life and most particularly among the lower middle classes and the lower strata of society. The religio-political thrust of these movements stimulated a discourse of hope and redemption induced by the modern crisis on the moral, economic, and political levels.[323] In view of the previously mentioned transformations in society, the social implications of revived Islam gradually became pervasive and it acclimatized itself to the particular grievances of the moment and the dilemmas of identity that these societies were undergoing.

It was the 1991 Gulf War, with its dramatic impact of occupation, flight, fragmentation of Kuwaiti society, and Kuwaitis’ sense of extreme dislocation, vulnerability, and disarray, that finally initiated a new stage in the process of introspection, analysis, and reaction among Gulf societies. The war and its aftermath brought to the fore pre-existing societal controversies, intensified and compounded economic hardships, and provided an outlet for popular reaction. Kuwait and Bahrain became the platforms for the most intense

reactions, one as the scene of the war and the second as the scene of an ongoing popular uprising. In both, the legitimacy, sovereignty, and legislative power of the tribal/familial government has been challenged by the growing calls for accountability and economic rights, and the demands by Islamists for power sharing. In both states, the movement for women's empowerment as well as the move toward freedom of expression, democratization, and human rights have become the stage in which society faces its history, its traditions, its social evolution, and its relationship to the political establishment and ultimately to the new economic forces impacting its future.

**** The Unfolding of the Current Crisis in Kuwait and Bahrain

Economic and political indicators make it clear that Kuwait and Bahrain are in the front line of all the Gulf states facing economic problems, but more clearly both are facing the inevitability of political change and possible explosions. National revenue has reached a ceiling and both governments have already dipped into their reserves. The welfare bill is growing and is weighed down by demographic increase and a new generation of graduates ready for employment. At the same time, these countries are continuously urged by international monetary commitments to streamline their budgets and expenditure and to balance their finances by involving their citizens in both revenue generation and decision making. Although these are the obvious necessary steps in the process to fall in line with global economic systems, such a formula of action would entail drastic revision of the basis and the status quo on which these societies have been remodeled since the discovery of oil. In other words, a change in the economic relationship between the ruling institution and the citizens means a fundamental reassessment on the part of the ruling families and the people of these Gulf states; a reassessment of the power system that governs their lives, its permanence and continuity. This is the crux of the dilemma that both the society and the regimes are facing, a situation that is hard to accept and harder to apply.

While the regimes are hard-pressed to lower the welfare bill, they are very reluctant to give up their prerogatives of absolute control over the sources of wealth and power. Citizens of these states, for their part, seem to expect a more open political system, with authoritative and institutionalized legislature as a basic right for their involvement in the economic burdens of the state. While voices of criticism and demands are loud and more persistent from within these societies, there has been no consensus on issues of fundamental significance to their future, whether that concerns the future and nature of the welfare system or the ideological identification of society. The issue of identity, the pull between tradition and modernity and the obsession with authenticity are of particular concern, in view of Western economic hegemony and influence. In both Kuwait and Bahrain these issues are the focus of debate that is shadowed by the controversy of state economic dependency on the global/Western economic system.

What will the future character of these states and these nations be? Is it Islam or secularism? The debate is particularly intense between the Islamists and the secular liberals. These are concerns that are debated in the Kuwaiti parliament, in the professional clubs, in the streets, diwaniyas, and mat’ams of Kuwait and Bahrain as well as among the opposition camps abroad. Nevertheless it is important to reinforce the point that these debates, whether Islamist or liberal, do not demand the drastic change of the political system, or the overthrow of the ruling families; at least that is what they officially declare; nor are they agreed on the principle for changing the welfare system or the form it should take.

***** The Sh^khdom of Kuwait

In Kuwait these debates have acquired serious tones in recent months, indicating a more intense stage in the socioeconomic crisis. Since the war, Kuwaiti society has been consumed by recovery from the trauma and making good on the opportunity to institutionalize democratic politics. Armed with previous parliamentary experience and a relatively open political atmosphere, Kuwaitis valued that right and established it as the most precious national recompense after the war. Thus a return to the constitution was universally demanded during the hottest period of the conflict, making the return of the ruling family contingent upon it. As promised by the ruler,

though reluctantly, at his meeting with Kuwaiti citizens in Jeddah, which has been held to be the new covenant between the government and the people for the post-war era, the constitution and free elections were re-established.

The first elected parliament brought representation of all political currents, with a strong deputation of Islamist groups. Although the numerical strength of the elected Islamists in the parliament of 1992 was large, there was no coordination among the various groupings representing Islamic ideological currents then. During the sessions of that parliament, energies were devoted to the many problems and vendettas left over from the occupation, with pitched battles against the ruling family, particularly over their financial role and accountability during and after the war. On the whole, achievements of the parliaments since 1992 have not been very significant, and their efforts have been taken up with petty squabbles among members and no substantial results.[324]

As for the latest parliament, elected in July 1999 with 80 percent turnout, and coming after six years of inertia, it promised a lively political life with more seriOUS debates and actions.[325] This was at a time when the economic and political crisis had intensified and its ramifications had become more commonly discussed. Unlike its predecessor, in this parliament three Islamist groupings were able to form a coalition with the tribal blocs, thus controlling one-third of the Majlis al-Umma (the parliament). Soon after that and through a deliberate policy of muscle flexing, the Islamists were able to plunge the country into a state of political excitement by challenging public secular liberties.

By the end of the year 2000, infringements on publically accepted social norms attributed to the Islamists had accumulated and reached explosive dimensions. These had come in the wake of various incidents of physical attacks, supposedly by Islamists, on video shops considered to be upholders of loose morals and non-Islamic propaganda, as well as legal attacks on women writers and publishers accused of immoral and irreligious views, up to February 2001, the Islamists vigorously pushed their moral-laden agenda by demanding control of socioeconomic activities, as in the banning of entertainment activities associated with the traditional trade festivals mounted during the month of February. Such ideological platforms were and

are meant to convey to the public the new image the Islamic currents in Kuwait wish to project; that is, their role as custodians of moral and social behavior, whether on public dress, comportment, lifestyle, or thought. In this challenge, the Islamists have opened wide the door of debates on identity, authority, and democracy within the framework of the economic situation and its constraints.

This situation has raised the fear of a powerful Islamist bloc using its position in the new parliament, and the democratic process, to impose its own social and cultural definition of society on all citizens. Since liberation, Islamists have attracted popular support; however, these more recent activities have incited fears among the secular liberals and others. These events have shown that the Islamists have become the strongest political bloc in the parliament and are capable of imposing their definitions and solutions to the ills of society. It was within this challenge that the Islamic bloc took a stand to defeat the Amiri decree of October 1999 that gave women the right to vote and run for office. On one hand, the blocking of that law was meant to prove the application of constitutional power over that of the ruler—in other words, that the ruler's decree could no longer be held above the constitution—and, on the other hand, its defeat was to confirm the ideological line of the Islamic current. In fact this exhibited their capacity to impose their religio-cultural interpretation upon social development and women's rights.[326]

In view of the very feeble and lukewarm reaction from the ruling family, it is clear that that partner in the political process took a backstage position, that of an observer more than that of a participant. Again, this role has evolved gradually since the end of the war and the family's less than courageous stance then. Furthermore, rumor has it that the Al Sabahs are, similar to other Gulf ruling families, undergoing dynastic competition and the emergence of younger members with ambition and more modern projects. The ruler himself, Shaykh Jaber, has been absent from the scene for a long time; the crown prince—prime minister is reportedly seriously ill; and Sabah al-Ahmad Al Sabah, who has been running the affairs of governing, has also kept a low profile. The family is facing a growing popular demand to separate the role of the prime minister from that of the heir apparent, clearly with the intention of having the future prime minister come from the nationals and not from the ruling Al-Sabahs, thus gradually confining them to a more nominal political role.

Since June 2000 the situation has galvanized political life in Kuwait in reaction to the growing Islamist influence and control of the democratic process. Al-Quds newspaper of 1 May 2000 reported, from the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Ra’y alAmm that a group of intellectuals, writers, and politicians (30 of them) representing Kuwaiti liberals and old politicians, among whom were Jasim al-Saqr, Yacoub Jani, Awad Al-Humoud, Khalifa Loujian, and Muhammad al-Rumaihi, met and declared their pessimism, despair, and opposition to the growing atmosphere of political regression and religious fanaticism within the parliament (Majlis). These views have also been transferred to the newspapers, where they have expressed the public loss of confidence in its elected body—the parliament—as well as fears for the future. This group of 30 called for a popular committee to represent all national elements opposing what they consider the coercive trend in the parliament.

Within the folds of this struggle, however, is the matter of power that all currents of the political society covet. It is the power to define the direction of social and economic development at this stage when economic strains and reduced resources have become a threat to all. Although liberal politicians started fighting back against the growing Islamist influence and power, this will probably trap society into a protracted struggle that will only detract from facing the serious economic crisis and its social repercussions. Furthermore, these latest events of confrontations with the Islamists are bound to trigger negative results for the constitutional movement as a whole, and undermine efforts within that work toward transforming the economy and hopefully society. Nevertheless, there are new voices from within the Islamist currents expressing more moderate views concerning gender issues and women’s voting rights.[327]

In the latest events unfolding since the New Year, Kuwaiti political life has been slightly shaken out of its inertia and paralysis. While the absence of royal family leadership has become an accepted reality, the popular voice has coalesced between moderate Islamists and some of the traditional liberal symbols to form an active opposition front. The demand for change by this front resulted in the dissolution of the government in late January 2001 and has now raised the hopes that the new government will embody serious and

essential changes, such as distancing the royal family from executive power and giving credence to democratic demands.[328] However, only time will tell how such a front, made up of discordant ideological elements, will fare when and if reforms for socioeconomic transformations are finally put on the table.

***** The Shaykhdom of Bahrain

As for Bahrain, where a grassroots anti-government protest uprising (an intifada) has been going on since the summer of 1994, the economic crisis has been translated into this explosive situation. The socioeconomic history of Bahrain is testimony to the role that economic property, distribution of wealth, and the emergence of sharp economic differences have played in creating an opposition. The basic motivation for this movement is economic, and the common solution demanded by the protestors is a return to the constitution, to the democratic process scrapped by the ruling family in 1975.[329] a constitutional rule is seen as the panacea that would heal the evils of an absolutist, self-interested regime. Thus the implications of these demands are that in times of economic depredations, the political contract with a paternalistic, authoritarian rule becomes null and void.[330] Although the articulation of these demands has come from various currents, elements, groups, and strata of the Bahraini society—Shias and Sunnis, liberals, leftists and Islamists, workers, professionals and intellectuals, men and women—it is the Islamic currents that have given cover to the largest and strongest thrust of this opposition movement.

Today there are some signs of innovative measures to alleviate the tense atmosphere in the country resulting from the crisis it has been enduring for the past decade. While the outward impression has been that of a state of political paralysis where nothing seems to be happening, more recently there have been feeble indications of shifts and alternative propositions. Nevertheless, as is usual in countries where the police machinery is overly oppressive, one has to observe the unimportant and the trivial in order to get at the underlying currents and signs of political and social stirrings; furthermore, official proclamations and proposals should be seriously but very critically analyzed.[331]

Information from the opposition still claims continued brutal police treatment, arrests, imprisonment, and infringement of basic human rights. These happenings are rarely commented upon officially, especially concerning the claims from the Shia rural opposition. Although a good number of political prisoners have been released and some who had been exiled have been pardoned, the opposition still claims continued police supervision and re-internment of some of those released. Every now and then, Sunnis renew their voices of Opposition, complaining of economic and social deprivations. These have come from the pulpit of the mosques in Muharaq, a traditional stronghold of the ruling Al Khalifah family. Clerics are taking exception to the life of luxury and entertainment that some sectors of the society live by and have access to, such as car and horse races, golfing and surfing, art and trade exhibits; while, as they claim, peopie go hungry and economic conditions are worsening. Furthermore, secular professional unions, such as the General Union of Bahraini Workers, in the hope of a more open political environment under the new ruler, Hamad bin Isa, attempted to reorganize, but opposition reports indicate that they were immediately threatened and silenced.[332]

On another level, many of the younger members of the Al Khalifah family are actively sponsoring and hosting cultural and trade programs, all part of an obviOUS campaign to drive home their role and staying power. Succession has been confirmed in the Amir’s son, a graduate ofAmerican schooling but fully steeped in the political culture of the family. Other sons, cousins, nephews, and even nieces are promoted as carriers of the banner for the ruling family and its role in the country. The younger generation of educated family members are awarded the most prestigious positions: women as ambassadors, all the key ministerial roles, as well as the sensitive military posts. Most of the deputy ministerial positions, the second in line commanding the executive power of these ministries, have been assigned to young Al Khalifahs. Since his accession a year ago, the ruler has also increased the monthly stipends doled to each family member, approximately 3,000 of them. Such a clear policy of “Khalifahization” ofjobs is meant, on one hand, to consolidate the new Amir’s position vis-â-vis his family, the main supporters of the regime, to score internal political victories against his uncle, the prime minister, but even more significantly in order to confirm and entrench the position ofAl Khalifahs as the ruling institution in Bahrain.

A few measures of appeasement have been introduced by the new Amir, such as bestowing Bahraini passports upon and giving naturalized status to some 850 Beduns, people who had been living in Bahrain for generations with no legal documentation. This had been long due and its implementation now does not threaten the state or the demographic balance between Sunni and Shia, and therefore is politically acceptable. Other signs of opening up, and what the government considers liberalizing measures, included the promise by the ruler, during the National Day celebrations, to initiate municipal elections giving even women the right to vote, but not to run for office, as was the case in Qatar; this, when Bahraini women had been among the earliest and most active in the nationalist and constitutional movements of the 1960s and 1970s. In this latest uprising, women have also been active in petition writing and demanding constitutional rights. However, in order to placate an insistent demand by women for participation, it is ironic that a few of them were appointed to the latest Consultative/Shura Council.

In an attempt to appease and divert the demands for reinstating the constitution, in line with other Gulf states and following the war in 1992, the government has appointed this Shura/Consultative Council. However, this council as well as the proposed municipal elections did not measure up to the demands for real democratic political rights, and opposition remained adamant in its demands for a constitutional parliament similar to that of Kuwait. While there have been a few official announcements in the international media promising the return to constitutional life and a more democratic political atmosphere, this has not been translated into reality yet.

The final and most recent stage in the proposed reforms by the Amir was the call for a referendum to be held on February 14–15, 2001, on a national charter (;mithaq) meant to change the suspended constitution. In this charter, a bicameral assembly is proposed that is made up of two bodies: an appointed upper house and an elected house, both with equal legislative powers. Also an independent judiciary is accounted for as well as full suffrage for all citizens, including women. As for the ruler, his powers remain above all authorities, the legislative, executive, and judiciary. Furthermore, the “Charter describes Bahrain as a hereditary monarchy,” implying transforming Bahrain into a monarchy[333] presumably on the

model of Jordan, which the Amir is known to admire. Such measures, and at this time, fall in with the general trend adopted by most Gulf ruling powers, which are grappling with the dilemmas posed by global demands for democratization, human rights, and recognition of women's rights but looking on these demands through the prism of their dynastic rule.[334]

The opposition has expressed its serious misgivings over the proposed charter and its generalities and ambiguities, especially concerning the powers assigned to the ruler and the Shura Council. Such a proposal imposed from above is seen as circumventing the sovereignty of the people as the base of authority specified in the original Bahraini constitution. Furthermore the lack of transparency attributed to the government in the initiation, elaboration, and plans for execution of this proposal exacerbates the situation and adds to the list of grievances against the government. These overtures seem to be measures to buy time and procrastinate a democratic resolution of the crisis.

**** Conclusion

It is clear from all this that both the regimes and the public in Kuwait and Bahrain are aware of a developing economic crisis and that the solutions have to be both economic and political. The public outcry for change has taken many forms, mostly sharp and forceful because of the intense effect of conditions in both countries, one still reeling from the war and the other from strongly felt poverty. It is also clear that while the problems are recognized, there is no consensus on solutions, and whatever these are, they are acknowledged to be difficult, painful, and therefore easier to be ignored for a little while longer. Demands for remedy, however, have been colored and tempered by conservative as well as liberal views and concerns. In the competition that these two discourses generate, the public is confused and a solution is delayed. In the last decade the public reaction to the crisis has been reflected sometimes in indecisiveness and domestic squabbles, as was the case in Kuwait for a few years after the 1991 war, and in Bahrain in a violent reaction bordering on revolution.

The nature of the crisis demands a revision of the structural base on which power and society rest. Because this crisis ultimately threatens all components of these societies, the ruling institutions and the people, solutions have to be comprehensive. All changes of political and social norms are difficult, especially if the process endangers the status of the power that needs to carry it out. But also the uncertainties involved in its application play on the fear and concern of all. An essential part of the process is to bring about change in the meaning of citizenship, which needs to be reinvested with rights and responsibilities: a new definition to belonging and identification.[335] In spite of a growing awareness by the regimes that resolving the malaise in their societies has become urgent, they still look for solutions that perpetuate their dynasties and power bases. At the same time, the new generation of young Gulf nationals who aspire to a modern meaning of citizenship have become more forceful in demanding change. Political and social analysts continue to press for recognition of the enormous, slow crisis that is unfolding and the need to meet its challenges. Maybe it will need much more drastic shocks than just the war to bring about the realization that to survive it will be necessary for both the people and the regimes in the region to cooperate in transforming the economic and political structures of society.

[306] Gary G. Sick, “The Coming Crisis in the Persian Gulf,” in Gary G. Sick and Lawrence G. Potter, eAs., The Persian Gulf at the Millennium: Essays in Poiitics, Economy, Security, and Religion, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997, pp. 12–13. See also the latest literature coming from Gulf intellectuals published mainly in Arabic periodicals and publications, such as Al-Arabi, Al-Mustaqbal Al-Arabi, Majalat al-Dirasat al-Ijtima‘ya. In particular see: Abdul-Khaliq Abdulla, ed., Al-Khaleej al-Arabi wa-Furas wa-Tahadiyat al-Qarn Al-Wahid wal-Ushrun [The Arabian Gulf and the Chailenges of the Twenty-first Century], annual meeting of the Muntada al-Tanmiya, Abu Dhabi, 1 099909.

[307] Muhammad al-Rumaihi, Al-Khaleej al-Arabi wal-Furas, wal-Tahadiyat al-Hadariya wal-Ma riftya hi-Qarn al-Wahid wal-Ushrun [The Arabian Gulf: Opportunities and Cultural and Informational Challenges for the Twenty-first Century], in Abdulla, ed., Muntada Al-Tanmiya 1999, op. cit., pp. 112–113.

[308] Khaldoun Hasan al-Naqeeb, “Al-Khaleej ... ila-Ayn?” [The Gulf... where to?], Al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi 22:253, March 2000, pp. 4–22.

[309] Abdul-Khaliq Abdulla, ed., Al-Khaleej al-Arabi wa-Furas wa-Tahadiyat al-Qarn al-Wahid wAl-Ushrun. This book published the deliberations of the twentieth annual meeting of the Muntada al-Tanmiya, in 1999, in Abu Dhabi, and was dedicated to the study and analysis of the crisis facing the Gulf states and proposals for its solution. The Muntada is a forum of Gulf thinkers who have been meeting yearly for the last two decades, in different cities of the Gulf states, in order to discuss and share their concerns and proposals for the future of their region. Five prominent Gulf scholars—-Abdul-Khaliq Abdulla, Adnan Shihab al-Deen, Hasan Hamdan Alkim, Muhammad Al-

Rumaihi, and Abdulla Ibrahim al-Quwaiz-—contributed to this publication’ Each scholar dealt with one angle of the challenge facing the Gulf states and suggested solutions for its remedy. See also Khaldoun al-Naqeeb, Al-Mujtama‘ wal-Dawla fil-Khaleej walfazira al-Arabiya [Society and State in the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula], Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1987؛ Baqer Al-Najjar, Sociologia al-Mujtama‘fil-Khaleej al-Arabi [Sociology of Arabian Gulf Societies], Beirut: Dar al-Kunouz al-Adabiya, 1998.

[310] For a thorough and interesting discussion of this relationship and its significance to the development of the Gulf societies see Khaldoun al-Naqeeb, “Al-Khaleej ... ila-Ayn?,” op. cit., pp. 4, 9–11: see also: E Gregory Gause III, Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in the Arab Gulf States, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1994, pp. 42–44؛ al-Rumaihi, in Muntada al-Tanmiya, op. cit., pp. 106—109.

[311] Gause, op. cit., pp. 44–58. See also The Economist, 14 March 1998, and 6 June 1998.

[312] See graph showing military expenditures for the GCC countries for the period 1990–1998 at [[http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/allied_contrib2000/allied2000-chp3.pdf] [http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/allied_contrib2000/allied2000-chp3.pdf]] Saudi Arabia alone has paid an estimated $70 billion as contribution to the coalition allies and $10 billion for the oil spill. See John Thomas Haldane, Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, December/January 1991–1992, p. 89.

[313] Sick, “The Coming Crisis,” in Sick and Potter, op. cit., p. 14; and Gause, “The Political Economy of National Security in the GCC States,” in Sick and Potter, op. cit., p. 68.

[314] The discussion in the two articles referred to in the previous note (Sick and Potter) on belt tightening in the whole Gulf region applies to Bahrain too. See May Seikaly, “The Economy ofPolitical Opposition in Bahrain: The Post-Gulf War Period,” unpublished lecture presented to the MESA Conference in Providence, Rhode Island, 22 November 1996. Reports on the negative economic conditions in Bahrain come from various sources, from international scholarship and organizations as well as from local opposition groups.

[315] Munira A. Fakhro, “The Uprising in Bahrain: An Assessment,” in Sick and Potter, op. cit., pp. 167–88.

[316] For the history of this development, see Fuad Khoury, Tribe and State in Bahrain, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985; see also Muhammad al-Rumaihi, Al-Betrol walTaghayur al-IJtimTifi al-Khaleej al-Arabi [Oil and Social Change in the Arabian Gulf], Kuwait, 1984; Abdulhadi Khalaf, “The New Amir of Bahrain: Marching Sideways,” in Civil Society 9:100, April 2000, and Fakhro, op. cit.

[317] The Gulf states produce a tremendous amount of materials to stress the issue of identity, loyalty, and belonging to the region. This takes the form

of literature, educational materials, films, propaganda, and floods of television programs. More recently Al-Jazeera, the Qatari-based satellite channel, has also televised some talk shows in which inter-Gulf relations and contentions are debated.

[318] Baqer al-Najjar, “Ma’uqat al-istikhdam al-amthal lil-Qiwa Al-’Amila al-wataniyya fl al-khaleej Al-Arabi wa-imkaniyat al-Hall [Drawbacks to the Proper Utilization of National Manpower in the Conjerence of Experts on PoUdesfor Arab Labor Mobility and ؟>٢ذ١لآةذااد٢ا e\vأة١ة ٠١٥ £\Gu ل٢ة١ه١ة٣ا Utilization, Kuwait: Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA) and Kuwait Institute of Planning, 1985: Muhammad al-Rumaihi, “Athar al-naft ‘ala wad’ al-mar’a alArabiyyah fl al-Khalij” [The Effect of Oil on the Condition of Arab Women in the Gulf], in al-Mafa wa-Dawruha fi Harakat Al-Wehda al-Arabiyya [Woman and Her Role in the Arab Unity Movement], Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1982; May Seikaly, “Women and Socio-Political Change ’١ممفاًلأةذآم١ International Journal of Middle East Studies 26٦2١K١fA. ١126١لآللآ. ه١ج.

[319] Under the subtitle “The Myth of Wealth,” Gary Sick details the unsubstantiated mirage of wealth that the Gulf states find themselves in today. See Sick, “The Coming Crisis,” pp. 15–22.

[320] Particularly in Bahrain, what exacerbated conditions for the lower classes and rural communities was the encroachment of“garden residential compounds” onto the heart of the villages. In those ultra-luxurious living compounds, mostly foreign communities resided, oblivious to the squalor and poverty surrounding them and insensitive to the conservative traditional lifestyle of the villagers. The current intifada was ignited by an incident in these villages when some foreign residents were taking part in a running marathon and crossed these villages wearing what was perceived as indecent sports clothes.

[321] Sick, “The Coming Crisis,” pp. 16–21: see also Gause, op. cit., pp. 42–118.

[322] The anti-Western feeling is quite pervasive among the poorer strata and the more conservative strata of the middle classes. It is also a clear political stand of the intellectual circles, mainly the progressive currents among them. This is endorsed by overt expressions as well as attitudes of these elements vis-â-vis the wealthier and more powerful strata of society and the policies of their governments. Very recently a new association has been set up by groups of progressive thinkers in the Gulf to oppose the policies of normalization with Israel. The religious currents in both states, as well, see the signs of Western economic and educational influence as a threat to religion, culture, and the future identity of their societies. Furthermore, in places where Western presence is directly associated with the government’s repressive machinery, such as in Bahrain, this adds to popular complaints against the West. The fact that Ian Henderson is a British subject but was also the commander of the police in Bahrain did not sit well; he is still seen as the person responsible for building and training the system of brutal investigation of internees. There has been direct references to his role in the protest petitions sent to the Amir during this uprising.

[323] Eqbal Ahmad, “Islam and Politics,” in Haddad, Haines, and Findly, eds., The Islamic Impact, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984, p. 25;A1-Naqeeb, “Al-Khaleej ... ila Ayn,” p. 15: Gause, op. cit., pp. 31–41.

[324] Roy p. Mottahedeh and Mamoun Fandy, “The Islamic Movement: The Case for Democratic Inclusion,” in Sick and Potter, op. cit., pp. 34—35; see also The Economist, 6 June 1998.

[325] For the development of Islamist groups in Kuwait, see Falah al-Mudairis, Jama ‘: al-Ikhwan al-Muslimeen fil-Knwait [The Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait], Kuwait: Dar Kurtas, 1999; and Falah al-Mudairis, Al-Jama‘a al-SalaJiya Jil-Kuwait [The Salafiya Muslim Group in Kuwait], Kuwait: Dar Kurtas, 1999. See also The Economist, 10 July 1999.

[326] The Economist, 22 May 1999, 27 November 1999; see also Al-Naqeeb, “Al-Khaleej ... ila Ayn,” p. 15.

[327] A special report from Kuwait aired by CNN news on 5 August 2000 reported that women will be given their democratic rights to vote and run for office. It was also reported that this move was heralded by Islamist women as a right within the precepts of Islam.

[328] See Al-Quds, January 30, 2001; Hasan Omar reporting from Kuwait.

[329] Khalaf, “The New Amir,” in Civil Society; Ahmad al-Shamlan, ed., Al-Haraka al-Dusturiya: Nidal Sha‘ab al-Bahrain min ajl al-Dimokratiya [The Constitutional Movement: The Struggle of the Peopie of Bahrain for Democracy], Beirut: Dar al-Wihda al-Wataniya, 1997; Seikaly, “The Economy of Political Opposition” (unpublished).

[330] Since the beginning of this uprising, it has been widely reported in the press, regionally and internationally. See Rose al-Yusif, 16 January 1995; Crescent International, 16—31 January 1995; Le Monde Diplomatique, March 1995; Al-Sharq al-Awsat, last week of April 1995 (series of five articles by Fouad Matar); The Wall Street Journal, 12 June 1995; The Washington Post, 13 June 1995; The Economist, 6 April 1996, 12 April 1997, 23 January 1999; to name a few only. In all the articles reporting on this crisis, the economic factor is attributed to be the major cause, as well as the worsening condition of the poorer strata of society. The Shia population, especially the village dwellers representing the more economically depressed elements with particular grievances against the government, became associated with the most vocal and, gradually, the violent aspects of the protest. Sunnis have also taken part in this protest movement since its inception, although haltingly at different stages of its development.

[331] One of the methods used by the opposition to publicize its case and propagate its grievances has been through fax and audio recording. In fact this has informed supporters and sympathizers abroad of events as they were happening.

[332] Human rights abuses have been reported by international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International and reported in their annual reports and in the press. Furthermore, the Voice of Bahrain, the mostly Shia voice of the opposition based in London, has been active in disseminating information on what they consider as infringements on the democratic and basic human rights of the Bahraini people, both Shia and Sunni.

[333] Amy Hawthorn, “Bahrain’s National Charter and Political Reform in the Gulf,” in PolicyWatch, number 514,25 January 2001.

[334] Khalaf, op. cit.; accounts of these happenings in Bahrain are also circulated orally among people in Bahrain and abroad. For a fresh analysis of the role of monarchical rule in the Gulf states, see Michael Herb, All in the Family, New York, SUNY Press, 2000.

[335] For insightful discussions and analyses of this necessity, see Sick, “The Coming Crisis,” pp. 24–25; and al-Naqeeb, “Al-Khaleej ... ila Ayn,” p. 11.

*** Chapter 12: Kings and People; Information and Authoority in Oman, Qatar, and the Persian Gulf

Dale F Eickelman

For the Arabian Peninsula, the substantial growth in mass education over the last three decades, the proliferation and accessibility of new media and communications, and the increasing ease of travel make it increasingly difficult for state and religious authorities to monopolize the tools of literary

culture. The ideas, images, and practices of alternative social and political worlds have become a daily occurrence. They enter domestic space through satellite and cable television, and are better understood than in the past. Rapidly rising levels of literacy and familiarity with an educated Arabic formerly restricted to an elite facilitate this better comprehension. They also rehearse viewers to respond to those in authority in the common language of the Arabic of the classroom and the media.

Mass education was important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era.[336] In recent years, the proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, fragmenting religious and political authority, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance, and opening new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition.

To be sure, the power of new media to challenge and fragment claims to religious and political authority had become evident at the time of the 1978–1979 Iranian revolution. Audiocassettes—easy to smuggle and duplicate—were then the subversive media of choice. Since then, the accessible nature of newer media and rising levels of education have increasingly blurred the boundaries between producers and consumers. Fax machines, desktop publishing, photocopying machines, the Internet, and new uses of older media make communications more participatory and create new audiences. The greater ease of travel—for education, pilgrimage, tourism, labor migration, and emigration—also accelerates the flow of ideas and practices.

More important, some new media seen as innovative in the early 19805 are now almost taken for granted. In countries such as Saudi Arabia, the same fax machines that rapidly disseminate criticisms of the regime from opposition groups abroad are also essential to the conduct of business. The state is powerless to limit their use without disrupting the economy, and attempts to counter “faxed criticisms” in other media—such as the press—by warning readers against disseminating them further, merely draws subsequent attention to their existence.[337]

Since Iran’s May 1997 presidential elections, some Iranian intellectuals and Western observers have gone so far as to speak of a new era of “post-Islamism,” in the Islamic Republic in particular and the rest of the Muslim world in general.[338] Clearly, this post-Islamism is defined by the widespread awareness of alternatives to existing dominant ideologies and institutional arrangements. Fariba Adelkhah, for example, argues that this transformation is as significant as the original revolution. It is fueled by the combination of rising levels of education and the coming of age of a new generation of Iranians—now the majority of the population—not even born at the time of the 1978–1979 revolution. This new generation, she argues, is creating an Iranian “religious public sphere” (·espace public confessionel). In spite of resistance from conservatives, many in this generation employ the public use of reasoned argument, which, even if developed primarily in private or semi-private settings, “also has repercussions on the political scene.”[339]

In most of the Arabian Peninsula Gulf states, discussions concerning the nature of just and appropriate governance and the role of religion in politics is not as foregrounded and public as in Iran. Kuwait is a partial exception, although the legitimacy of royal authority in Kuwait is not a subject for public debate. Other matters, even legislative initiatives by Kuwait’s ruler, have been hotly contested, including women’s right to vote in parliamentary elections.[340]

Nevertheless, the rapidly expanding range of public discourse about politics and religion within the Arabian Peninsula is rapidly outdistancing the pace of change in formal institutions. A public sphere is emerging throughout the region in which messages and images in face-to-face conversations, newspapers, books, magazines, anonymous leaflets, video and audiocassettes, and satellite and regular television criss-cross, overlap, and build on one another. When censored or suppressed in one medium, such messages recur in another. Images of alternative institutions and practices, once on the periphery of the social imagination of much of the public, are now concrete and foregrounded. Even silence contributes to the public sphere, when some topics are avoided because of real or imagined penalties for direct public expression. Authoritarian limitations on participation in discussions and debate over public issues are resented and increasingly easy

to evade. These discussions are not confined to immediate locality but increasingly include attention to wider, regional, and transnational issues.

Not surprisingly, some critics downplay the emergence of the public sphere in the Arabian Peninsula, as well as elsewhere in the Arab world. Seymour Martin Lipset, for example, asserts that Muslim, “particularly Arab,” notions of political authority are especially hostile to democracy because Islamic political doctrines are “alien” to political freedom.[341] The result is to assume that Muslims, more than the followers of other religions, are guided by religious doctrines that inhibit a shift to democratic rule. Others argue that expectations of authority throughout the region are pervaded by “cultural schemas” that have hardly changed over centuries. These schemas supposedly privilege hierarchical master-disciple relations in the religious and political spheres, severely limiting alternative political and institutional styles.[342]

This chapter challenges such bleak assumptions. It compares the changing context in which “information”—political and religious—is managed in two contrasting Gulf states, Qatar and the Sultanate of Oman. The emphasis is less on formal political institutions than the commonly shared, often implicit, ideas of what is right, just, or religiously ordained—those taken-for-granted ideas upon which any community or group of individuals form cooperative relations.

Qatar and Oman show marked dissimilarities in state attitudes toward information, the media, and control over public expression. Qatar abolished censorship in 1995 and its Ministry of Information in 1996, although a high degree of self-censorship continues in Doha. Qatar’s Al-Jazeera satellite television has emerged as the flagship for uncensored news and discussion throughout the Arab world. Media market forces oblige other satellite media, sometimes with reluctance, to emulate Al-Jazeera’s lead.

Oman has no such unfettered media. Its 1996 Basic Charter allows freedom of opinion expressed in words and writing, but in the circumspect 1999 State Department report on Human Rights Practices, “these provisions have yet to be implemented.”[343] No fewer than three government agencies censor

books and magazines in the Sultan Qaboos University library. Nothing controversial or critical of the government or religiously controversial appears in the local print or broadcast media. Unabashedly, Muscat practices an older form of control and supervision over what is said in public. Yet, even if formal Omani information practices change at a glacial pace, Omanis, like the citizens of other Gulf states, have ready access to alternative sources of information. As elsewhere, anonymous faxed messages and photocopied leaflets have emerged to contest the ruling elite and state decision making. Such developments point to basic transformations in the collective imagination of religion and politics that permeate the entire region, regardless of specific government policies.

**** Mass Higher Education, Language, and Community

Mass education is a more recent development in the Arabian Peninsula. Elsewhere in the Middle East, it began only in the 1950s—1952 for Egypt and 1956 for Morocco, for example. In Kuwait, the commitment to universal education began shortly after 1961, and in Oman only in the early 1970s. In all cases, it was only 15 to 20 years after the introduction of mass primary education that large numbers of students began to complete the advanced cycles of secondary and post-secondary education. It was only at this point that the consequences of widespread education could be clearly discerned. [344]

Omani figures offer a sense of the compressed period in which the rise of mass education occurred. In 1975–76, a mere 22 students attended secondary school. Little more than a decade later, in 1987–88, 15,500 did. In 1997, there were 77,000, and there were more than 8,000 students in post-secondary institutions, including the national university, which opened in 1986.[345]

A major distinction between the Arabian Peninsula Gulf states, blessed with oil wealth, and the rest of the Arab world is that educational expansion has kept up with population growth in quantity if not always in quality As a consequence, large numbers of citizens, especially those born in the last three decades, speak the common language of formal Arabic, the language

of schoolrooms, newscasts, political and religious discussions, and other public speech. There often is a great divide in Arabic between the colloquial speech of everyday use and the formal, standard language of newspapers, radio, and educated public speech. Education, especially higher education, in the language of formal, literary Arabic, allows people to “talk back” to religious and political authorities in this public language.

Education, like mass communications, also makes citizens more conscious of their political and religious beliefs and practices and encourages thinking of them as a system, allowing for comparison with other ideas and practices. Education and the greater ease of communication also erode intellectual and physical boundaries and enable connections to be made across formerly impenetrable boundaries of class, locality, language, and ethnic group.

**** Satellite Television: Qatar

Even if political institutions in the Arabian Gulf are slow to change, Qatar’s ruler, Shaykh Hamad bin Khalifah Al Thani, takes almost the attitude of Prussia’s Frederick the Great (1712–1786) in fostering open information and debate and offering a model for what might become prevalent in regional and local contexts. Thus, as a leading television commentator in the Arab Gulf recently observed, “Satellite TV has become as important a symbol of sovereignty as having a flag or a national airline.”[346]

Indeed, satellite television has contributed to creating new public spaces in the Arab Middle East, especially when unimpeded live televised debates are combined with call-in questions and comments. Today, such uses of the media bring speakers and listeners closer together, allowing authorities to be questioned. Uncensored satellite television in Arabic creates ready and open alternatives to the “official story” promulgated by state-controlled broadcast and print media, challenging other media, obliging them to respond with editorials or rebuttals, and entering many different domains of discussion.

In short, satellite television is playing an increasing role in redefining public space in the Gulf and elsewhere, contributing to the emergence of a

“network” society.[347] Only 10—15 percent of Middle Eastern Arabs regularly watch satellite broadcasts,[348] although the issues and commentaries on uncensored satellite television increasingly shape regional discussions and debate, linking these discussions to those held among Arab professionals in Europe and North America.

It must be emphasized, nevertheless, that distinguishing between ideas of the public sphere and civil society facilitates the understanding of the rapidly changing “background” significance of politics and religion in Arabian Peninsula societies.

The idea of the public sphere implies a space separate from the formal structures of religious and political authority and the space of households and kin. Ideally, in this space, ideas are presented on their own merits, rather than as emanating from such authoritative intermediaries as preachers, judges, and rulers. Although this notion can be traced back to Immanuel Kant, it currently is closely associated with the work of Jürgen Habermas. His development of the idea of the public sphere is largely based on the historical emergence in Europe of “rational-critical” discourse within bourgeois society.[349]

Habermas, like others who have developed the notion of the public sphere, downplays the role of religion in its development and expansion. Yet, one of the most important developments in the contemporary Arab world and other Muslim-majority states has been the increasingly open contest over the authoritative use of the symbolic language of Islam and its implications for religious and political authority.[350]

The term civil society is used in a narrower contemporary sense. In fact, it has rich connotations dating back to the sixteenth century in Europe, when it was contrasted to “fanaticism.”[351] As used by political scientists and policymakers since the 1980s, however, the term refers to the creation of organizations subject to the state’s “rule of law” and recognized by the state but otherwise independent of state initiative and control. By most measures, the status of civil society in most of the Arab world,

including the Arabian Peninsula, remains precarious. Nonetheless, the public sphere is rapidly expanding.

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-7.jpg][Figure 12.1. Egyptian religious conservative Safinez Kazim (standing, right) accuses Toujan Faisal (left), the first woman member ofjordan's parliament, of blasphemy during a live broadcast of The Opposite Direction on Al-Jazeera satellite television in 1997. Moderator Faisal al-Kassim (center), thrives on open, uncensored debate, which has made The Opposite Direction one of the most successful television formats in the Arab world.]]

As a contributor to the expanding public sphere, Qatar's Al-Jazeera satellite channel remains almost unique in the Middle East. The announced April 2000 move of some of its operations to Egypt's "free media" zone indicates the volatility of contemporary communications, and also suggests how "market forces" place significant pressure on existing government restrictions.[352] There are numerous Arab satellite channels, but most stick to entertainment because of political constraints. Al-Jazeera began broadcasting in November 1996. The core of its personnel were imported from a failed BBC effort, backed by a Saudi company, Orbit Communications, to expand into satellite broadcasting. The BBC effort failed in part because the satellite dishes and decoders needed to receive its signals were prohibitively expensive, thus limiting its potential audience.[353] Additionally, the BBC's Saudi backers objected to its unflattering news coverage of Saudi Arabia and wanted content control. Not surprisingly, the BBC refused, so Orbit cancelled its annual $35 million payment, and BBC Arabic programming stopped after 20 months of broadcasting. Twenty of the BBC's Arab editors, reporters, and technicians were quickly hired by Qatar and formed the core of Al-Jazeera's team.[354])

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-8.jpg][Figure 12.2. In recent years, reliable public opinion polling has become possible in some Middle Eastern contexts, as with this survey of Palestinian views of the most "independent" television news reporting.]]

The Al-Jazeera formula resembles the one pioneered by CNN, although its discussion programs are more vigorous and controversial. One example is the weekly program Al-Ittijah al-MiTakis [The Opposite Direction], moderated by Dr. Faisal al-Kassim. A Syrian by origin, al-Kassim graduated top of his class in English from the University of Damascus in 1983, and won a scholarship for graduate studies in Britain. His doctoral thesis at the University of Hull was on political iconoclasm in modern British drama. He began working part-time for the BBC in 1988 and made the shift from BBC radio to television in 1994, a position that lasted until the collapse of the BBC's Arabic satellite transmissions in May 1996.

In The Opposite Direction, two guests with contrary views square off in the studio in Qatar, although occasionally the program broadcasts from elsewhere in the Arab world. With al-Kassim moderating, the guests talk to one another for about an hour, followed by telephone call-ins. The program is live, including the telephone calls, which are not pre-screened or subject to the "time delay" technology common in American broadcasting. The topics and the broadcasts join the central debates of the Arab world—the Arab-Israeli crisis, the state of the economy, Iran and the Gulf, Kuwait-Iraq animosity, polygamy, Turkey-Israel relations, human rights and Islam, Syria's negotiations with Israel over the Golan Heights, and democratization. At least one program dealt with Qatar's municipal elections.

As an example ofAI-Jazeera's style, an early program on Islam and secularism featured a heated discussion between Yusuf al-Qaradawi, a leading religious conservative, and Syria's Sadeq Al-'Azm, a committed secularist. For many in the audience, al-'Azm's presentation was the first time they heard a spirited "secularist" argument. Another program featured a debate on polygamy between Toujan Faysal, the first woman in Jordan's parliament and a secularist, and Safinaz Kazim, a religiously conservative Egyptian. When Faysal said at one point that Qur'anic doctrine was out of date, the Egyptian accused her of blasphemy, ripped off her microphone, and got up to leave. Al-Kassim reminded her that she was on live television. She shot back:" I don't care if we're on Mars. I'm not tolerating this blasphemy," and left the studio. The incident also suggests how satellite television is allowing women to join public religious discussions, albeit cautiously, as The Opposite Direction never pairs women with men. In October 1999, a former Algerian prime minister, Reda Malek, unhappy with a

particularly sharp telephone question, asked al-Kassim to stop the tape. Al-Kassim replied, “I can’t. We broadcast live. You’re not in Algeria.” Furious, the Algerian cursed on air and stormed out of the studio.[355]

Al-Jazeera programs also focus on regional issues. Thus Sudan’s Hasan Al-Turabi, paired with Saudi Arabia’s Turki Suhaili, the editor of a Riyadh newspaper and a member of the ruling family, described the Saudi political system as a “plague” (bilwd). Abdallah Nafisi, in a program discussing economics, blurted out an attack against the then head of Saudi Arabia’s Supreme Council of Ulama, Shaykh bin Baz (1912–1999), when he declared:

I defy bin Baz to say something about royal corruption in Saudi Arabia. His country is infested with corruption. He can do fatwas on Viagra, but not mention [regime opponents like] Safar al-Hawali, people languishing in prison. We cannot separate politics from money in the Arab Gulf. The rulers [he used the insulting phrase “the shopkeeper rulers” cal-hukkam Al-tujjar)] only care about opening bank accounts in the West.[356]

Such comments sometimes draw strong reactions from official circles outside of Qatar, and Al-Jazeera has been denied membership in the Union of Arab Broadcasters because it violates the “brotherly” code of conduct in which political opponents are never allowed to criticize incumbent rulers. Although accused of bias against the Saudis, a Saudi specialist in media studies recently published a program-by-program analysis of The Opposite Directionو concluding that it showed no political or religious bias.[357] The publication of such a book in Saudi Arabia itself suggests the rapidly evolving public sphere, as the “craft” of censorship becomes increasingly public.

Undoubtedly, the contribution of Al-Jazeera to the public sphere is manifested in the speed with which videotapes of its programs circulate freely in the shops and private homes in Damascus, Casablanca, Muscat, Amman, Riyadh, and elsewhere, among those without direct access to satellite television. For many viewers, its Arabic news broadcasts have

become the standard against which other broadcasters are judged. Given that reliable surveys of viewing habits and trust in the televised media are lacking for the Arab Gulf states, the evidence is largely anecdotal. Yet, dependable figures for Gaza and the West Bank place Qatar's Al-Jazeera TV as the most reliable source for information (33.7 percent), followed by other satellite channels (26.0 percent), with local television from the Palestinian National Authority (14.0 percent) and Israeli television (8.9 percent) lagging far behind, but still ahead of MBC, Egyptian, and Jordanian broadcasts.[358]

Moreover, satellite television tilts the balance of public argument in favor of ideas and practices that can be explained, defended, and foregrounded.[359] The speed and intensity with which it facilitates the circulation of ideas, images, and practices also distinguishes contemporary public spaces from those of the past. Likewise, journalists and newspaper editors can comment almost simultaneously on events because they can read any of the 34 Arabic-newspaper Websites for reactions to current events. Uncensored satellite television enables a wider publie to participate in such discussions.

Arabic-language satellite channels, like the other "new" media, have had profound consequences for the political and religious imagination. First, they create and sustain a new public. Modern mass education not only means more widely spread skills than prior patterns of elite education, but also offers wider, competing repertoires of intellectual techniques and authorities and the erosion of exclusivities that previously defined communities of discourse, extending them also to women and minorities.

Second, viewers can now watch religious and political authorities and commentators explain their views and answer questions more as equals than as distant orators who cannot directly be challenged. Moreover, it is not just religious specialists who debate religion, but other educated persons and public figures. The distance between authorities and their audiences is diminished, and claims to the mantle of authority become more open. Finally, satellite television introduces audiences to new ways of thinking, in favoring effective and reasoned presentations.

Satellite television thus plays a major role in creating and sustaining a new public sphere. It expands the space of public dealings beyond one's face-to-face consociates to those whom Alfred Schutz called contemporaries.[360] Satellite television and other new media contribute to turning anonymous or unknown contemporaries into consociates that share common assumptions of civility and morality. Not everyone can telephone guests on politically and religiously sensitive talk shows, and the number of callers from outside the Arab world still outnumbers regional callers. But even this fact reminds people of the limits to expression in their immediate locality. The viewing public, however, is no longer mass and anonymous, but defined by mutual participation—indeed, by performance. In this sense, which Benedict Anderson refers to as a growing sense of reading together, the public sphere emerges less from associations, more strictly the domain of civil society, than from ways of dealing confidently with others in an expanding social universe of shared communication.[361]

**** Religious and Political Expression in Oman

Oman, after virtually no publicly expressed political dissent since the early 19705, began in 1996 to witness public expressions of discontent in the form of occasional student demonstrations, anonymous leaflets, and other rather creative forms of public communication. Only in Oman has the occasional donkey, as in coastal al-Suwayq in spring 1998, been used as a mobile billboard to express anti-regime sentiments. There is no way in which police can maintain dignity in seizing and destroying a donkey on whose flank a political message has been inscribed.[362] Oman is in no imminent danger of being swept away on a tide of radical Islam. Nonetheless, Oman has an elaborate state apparatus that attempts to control religious expression. A review of Omani efforts suggest how states have lost the ability to control the public sphere, even if they have retained control of the formal communications media.

The rapid rise of mass education over a short time span in Oman has already been noted. Nearly 80 per cent of the population has basic literacy skills, with near-universal literacy for the younger generation.[363] The exposure of large numbers of young Omanis to a written, formal, "modern standard" Arabic through schooling and the mass media has altered the style and

content of authoritative religious discourse and the role this discourse plays in shaping and constraining domestic and regional politics. One sign of this shift has been the re-emergence of sectarian discourse.

In Oman, like most other countries of the Arabian Peninsula, explicit controversy over political and religious issues does not form part of the standard fare of local newspapers or the broadcast media. The ruler's National Day speeches, the major annual occasion on which he addresses the Omani people, scrupulously avoid religious issues except to invoke "our heritage" (ٱturathuna) and to pray to God "to guide US for the glory and prosperity of our dear countrymen."[364] Likewise, Islam forms part of the school curriculum at all levels, but the mention of sectarian differences is carefully avoided, as is also the case for the model Friday sermons that have been distributed for the guidance of preachers in Oman since 1985.[365] Reticence in articulating sectarian matters would at first appear to be prudent in Oman. Roughly 50—55 percent of its citizen population is Sunni, 40–45 per cent is Ibadhi, and less than 2 percent is Shia.

Direct, state-sanctioned discussion of sectarian issues occurs only rarely. A pivotal instance was a two-hour television "lesson" (dars) by Oman's Grand Mufti, Shaykh Ahmad bin Hamad al-Khalili, on 2 February 1987.[366]

To emphasize the event's significance, it was broadcast live from Sultan Qaboos University at "prime time," nine in the evening. The mufti's appearance on weekday television—his Friday sermons are broadcast regularly—was an unusual event, signaling approval at the highest levels of the state. The subsequent distribution of videotapes of the mufti's "lesson" to Omani student communities throughout the Arab world, Europe, and the United States further suggests the significance attributed to it. The content, context, and style of his lesson offer an exemplar of contemporary authoritative religious discourse and its role in domestic and regional politics. It also indicates the limits of state-authorized discourse.

Basically, al-Khalili was responding to a Saudi religious opinion ءfatwa) issued 12 December 1986 (8 Rabia II 1407) by a senior Saudi religious scholar and member of the Saudi Supreme Council of Ulama, Abdulaziz bin Abdallah bin Baz. The issue at hand is obscure to secular modernists—whether or not the faithful would see God on Judgment Day. In essence, bin Baz argued that those who say that God will not be seen on Judgment Day—the Ibadhi perspective— deserve to be put to the sword.[367] Bin Baz wrote that the "mufti of the Ibadhis [a derogatory way of referring to the mufti of Oman] told me personally that the Ibadhis do not believe that God will be seen on Judgment Day. I tried to advise the Ibadhis to abandon this belief' In his televised lesson, al-Khalili read bin Baz's virulently anti-Ibadhi decree in full, even though it doubled as a personal attack on his scholarly integrity. The result was an unprecedented act of religious drama on Omani television that has not been repeated since.

Throughout his lesson—broadcast 15 years ago—Shaykh al-Khalili shifted between two levels of Arabic: a classical Arabic, full of citations from theological treatises, which even members of his audience educated in modern, secular Arabic admitted that they could not readily follow, and an Omanized but correct modern standard Arabic. Unusual for an Omani public appearance, the mufti used gestures, and his voice registered anger as he recounted his visit with a delegation of other Omanis to the office of Shaykh bin Baz on 13 January 1986 (2 Jumada I 1406), their second day in Saudi Arabia:

We were anxious to benefit from [Shaykh al-Baz] and to listen to his advice and to learn from his words, but we were taken by surprise.... Immediately upon entering his office he took US to a narrow place and began ...to shout [about] what he had heard [of my fatwas]... . He referred to Ibadhism as astray and far from the truth that was brought by the prophet from God. I replied first by thanking him for his advice and then said:

"Truth is claimed by everybody, and everyone who opposes his Opponent claims that he is right and his opponent is wrong. But truth is not arrived at through presumptions but through correct proof. It is therefore our duty to reveal the truth through quite objective discussion to be transmitted to the

people through the voice of the Quran in Makkah, and through the Saudi Television. Also other radio stations and television stations....

The Shaykh strongly refused this suggestion. I asked him what he wanted and he said he wanted US to abandon our [beliefs] ... and to adopt their [beliefs].... I told him that if a Christian or a Jew or a Magian came to you and criticised Islam, would you refuse to discuss with him before listeners and viewers? He replied that Islam obliges such discussions only with non-Muslims.[368]

As one Shia Omani commented: “All Omanis stood with the mufti after his televised address. Before it, we heard rumors of what happened between him and bin Baz. The attack on him had nothing to do with sects in Islam. He was attacked as an Omani, and that is how we understood bin Baz’s words. It was a national issue.”[369]

The mufti repeated this dramatic confrontation many times in public appearances over the next two years, until the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait silenced virtually all public religious expression.[370] One such repetition of his controversy with bin Baz was an audiocassette subsequently translated into English and published in booklet form as Who Are the Ibadhis? Like the televised address, the booklet demonstrates a strong sense of an oppositional Ibadhism, elaborated in the explicit context of beliefs challenged by other Muslims. For the first time in modern Oman, the booklet offered a comprehensive account of contemporary Ibadhi belief, practice, and history.

The cassette/booklet responded to a letter from an Omani student in the United States. He wrote the mufti that some “Sunni brothers” in America warned against allowing Ibadhis to lead prayers or participate “in the administration of our mosques and Islamic Centers in this place on the claim that they are a section of the Khawarij.”[371] The student asked for guidance in responding to such claims and “the reason for not circulating [Ibadhi] books and references in the libraries and in the Muslim Universities.”

The mufti’s televised address, like the pamphlet in English, is part of a more widespread movement throughout the Muslim world compelling the objectification of religious thought and practice. It is no longer sufficient to practice Islam; one must now be able to explain beliefs. Hence the utility of catechism-like documents such as Io Are the Ibadhis?

Clearly, mass education has had a major impact upon the style of religiosity of younger Omanis, even as state authorities seek to use education to preserve “traditional” values and to distance education from the political sphere. An unintended consequence of making Islam a part of the curriculum is implicitly to make it a subject alongside others that must be “explained” and “understood.” However, treating Islam as a system of belief and practice implicitly highlights differences within the Muslim community. Before 1982, students from many of Oman’s provinces had to complete the final years of secondary education in dormitories in the capital area. Moreover, outside of the classroom, students who were engaged in long discussions and debates on sectarian differences—however generic the formal curriculum may have been—were under pressure “not to convince the others to change their sect (,madhhab), but to maintain our side (tarafina)”[372] Such discussion requires participants to emphasize the distinctive features of their respective beliefs. As the student’s letter to Shaykh Ahmad indicates, the awareness of sectarian differences is accentuated even more when Ibadhi Muslims are juxtaposed with their counterparts from other Muslim groups, sometimes perceived as hostile or misinformed outside of Oman.

Participation in Muslim societies and study groups, and exposure to video and audiocassettes and the books and literature of various groups, shifts shared perceptions of Islamic thought and the context in which it is shaped. Although a seemingly obvious point, it should be kept in mind that ready access to the printed word, or to expositions of Islamic doctrine in a modern standard Arabic, again largely derived from modern education and radio and television, is a recent development for most Omanis.

**** The Limits of State Guidance

In Oman, a significant shift in religious and political sensibilities began in the early 1980s, when young Omanis throughout the country began to ask for such seemingly apolitical amenities as libraries in the youth clubs associated with every major town and village, and for provisions to be made for Friday sermons. The move to open libraries was often met with suspicion, as those most interested were university students active in various Islamic community organizations outside of Oman. Permission was often denied under various pretexts.

The movement to institute Friday sermons at mosques throughout the Sultanate constituted a more subtle challenge to state authority. The reasons given for the movement are impeccably Islamic. As one of Oman's first generation of village schoolteachers observed of the northern Oman interior in the mid-1980s, "People here do not know Islam; they pray and sacrifice, but they do not know why."[373] Before the mid-1970s, such a statement would have been almost incomprehensible in most of the towns and villages of the Omani interior and coast. By the late 1980s, however, such statements had become common.

When the movement to institute Friday sermons began, persons with a sufflcient command of formal Arabic to engage in public speaking sought access to the pulpits in some communities. Such uses of the minbar (pulpit) aroused considerable concern in official circles. As one official explained, if access to the minbar is not controlled, then the "uneducated," who are not aware of what is and is not appropriate to sermons, will take anything said in the sermon to be authoritative. Because a good preacher can sway emotions, it is all the more important to ensure that what he says is based upon "sound" religious knowledge: "The preacher (khatib) can draw upon his own experience for his sermons, but he must elaborate only the ideas of Islam, not other ideas, so no mention of television programs, of AIDS, or of political issues."[374]

Friday sermons now fall under state supervision, albeit usually through the adroit use of local kinship and community ties so that this supervision does not appear entirely alien or intrusive. In the process, state authorities are becoming aware that their actions can shape religious discourse but not control it. In many regions, the consequence of state intervention has been

to shift more radical religious discourse away from mosques and into informal discussion groups among trusted peers. In this respect, the proliferation of teachers' training schools and other forms of education have played an important role in creating cross-regional ties of village teachers and others who influence events in their respective communities and share information on implicit government policies and personalities.

Formal political authority in Oman remains as it was before the coup: an absolute monarchy—the Omani state encourages modernization, renewal, and transformation in all other spheres except that of selection for rule at the top. Even in this sphere, the rhetoric of modern legitimacy requires a commitment to change. The Sultanate's slow progress through State Consultative Councils, initiated in the early 1980s and gradually expanded, gives a semblance of transparency to governmental actions.[375] Since 1997, limited protests have taken place in Oman, the first since the early 1970s. These serve as a reminder that even when the state controls expression in the formal media, the movement of ideas and people means that state authorities are losing their hold over people's imaginations. Indeed, even if consultative councils such as Oman's are regarded by some of the newly educated as "talking shops" with no real decision-making authority, their very presence suggests an awareness on the part of the government of the need for greater transparency.[376] Televised questions to ministers are never spontaneous, and most members of the audience are aware of this limitation. These broadcasts, contrasted with what is known of comparable bodies elsewhere, remind viewers of the differences between their consultative council and similar bodies in the region.

As Oman's ruler has said, "It will be a very happy day for me when more people will take responsibilities from my shoulders. But we have to take into consideration the situation of our culture, our religious heritage and guidance, our traditions."[377] At another level, there is blunt and open criticism of the state and its key personnel, in the form of anonymous pamphlets and leaflets circulated by fax and left throughout the capital area.[378] Such documents show the raw edges of the "new era" of unfettered information.

Another less sensational but equally significant indicator of change beneath the surface is exemplified in such documents as a modest booklet by an Omani municipal judge, What Knowledge of the Law Means toYou. [379] In a catechism-like question-and-answer format, the first of its kind for Oman, the booklet sets out a citizen’s basic rights, and the limits of police authority. Such a document requires judges who can write accessible prose and assumes a readership. Such initiatives are becoming more common throughout the Gulf, and presage a change in ideas of rule and authority both profound and far-reaching, implying the growth not only of the public sphere but also of civil society.

**** Conclusion

In the end, these shifts in background understandings of religion and politics may not always appear dramatic, but they suggest sea changes in understandings of legitimate authority. Until the eighteenth century, most of the world’s population was subject to royal authority. Since then, the number of ruling monarchs has steadily declined, with their replacements claiming authority directly from “the people.”[380] However, with the exception of the Yemen Arab Republic, the states of the Arabian Peninsula remain monarchies. Unlike earlier times, however, both rulers and their subjects are profoundly aware of competing principles for justifying authority, and the shifting contexts in which royal authority is asserted, thus creating new and significant challenges.

Ruling monarchs have not become an endangered species on the Arabian Peninsula. Yet, in sharp contrast with past epochs, their subjects are profoundly aware of alternatives to dynastic rule. Even if some monarchs privately assert a divine mandate, publicly they stress their unique vocation to guide the nation’s destiny. The late Shah of Iran went so far as to assert that Persian kingship was based on the will of the people, and that Iran would never be devoid of a monarch because of his people’s “customs, habits, history [and] religion.”[381] Slogans such as the late Shah’s “Revolution of the Shah and the People” and Hassan H’s (Morocco) “Revolution of the King and the People” may have been considered banal by some subjects and hypocritical by others. Still, the existence of these slogans a quarter century ago implicitly acknowledged that claims to legitimacy increasingly intimate

the ability of monarchs and ruling families to self-transform and widen the base of participation in government.

Consultative councils and national assemblies, both appointive and elected, have proliferated throughout the Arabian Peninsula as a result of changing domestic attitudes and the need to persuade Western supporters of local regimes

that they are capable of self-transformation. Nevertheless, the pace of institutional change may not match that of the background understandings of civil society and democracy now current in the public sphere of the Gulf states, but both rulers and subjects are increasingly aware of the disparity between the publie sphere and the current prospects for civil society.

[336] Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalistn, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983, pp. 28–29.

[337] “Shaykh Muhammad al-Utayman, “A Discussion of Incendiary Publications: Whoever Publishes These Leaflets and Pamphlets, Copies Them, or Distributes Them Commits a Major Sin and Bears Responsibility for His Own Crime and for the Crime of All Those Influenced by Them,” (in Arabic), Alsharq aLAwsat, 20 November 1994.

[338] Olivier Roy, “Le Postlslamisme,” Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Mediterranee, numbers 85/86 (1999),01.11–30.

[339] Fariba Adelkhah, Being Modern in Iran, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000, p. 177.

[340] Mary Ann Tetreault, “Just Say No: Women’s Rights in Kuwait,” Current History 99: 699, January 2000, pp. 27–32.

[341] Seymour Martin Lipset, “The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited,” American Sociological Review 59:1, February 1994, p. 6.

[342] For example, Abdallah Hammoudi, Master and Disciple: The Cultural Foundations of Moroccan Authoritarianism, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1997, p. 8; see also Hisham Sharabi, NeopatriarchyzA Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988

[343] U.S. Department of State, “1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Oman,” at <[[http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/oman.html][http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1999_hrp_report/oman.html]]>

[344] Dale F. Eickelman, “Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies,” American Ethnologist 19:4, November 1992, pp. 643–55.

[345] Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Development, Statistical Year Book, 1996, Muscat: Ministry of Development, 1997, p. 541, and prior editions.

[346] Interview with Dr. Faisal al-Kassim, Doha, 20 March 1999.

[347] Manuel Castells, The Rise of the Network Society, Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1996.

[348] John B. Alterman, New Media, New Politics? From Satellite Television to the Internet in theArab World, Washington, D.C.: The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1998, p. 15.

[349] Craig Calhoun, “Introduction,” in Habermas and the Public Sphere, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991, p. 7.

[350] Dale F. Eickelman and Jon w. Anderson, “Redefining Muslim Publics,” in New Media in the Muslim WorldzThe Emerging Public Sphere, Dale F. Eickelman and Jon w. Anderson (eds.), Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999, pp. 1–28.

[351] Dominique Colas, Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1997.

[352] Andrew Hammond, “Al-Jazeera to Set up in Egypt,” Reuters, 17 April 2000.

[353] Alterman, New Media, pp. 26–29.

[354] John F. Burns, “Arab TV Gets a New Slant: Newscasts without Censorship,” New York Times, 4 July 1999, pp. A1,A6.

[355] DFE interview with Faisal al-Kassim, 30 October 1999.

[356] DFE interview with Faisal al-Kassim, 20 March 1999.

[357] Sulayman bin Jazi’ al-Shamri, Barnamij al-Ittijah al-Mu‘akis: Dirasa ‘Ilmiyya Akadamiya [The “Opposite Direction” Program: An Academic Study], Riyadh: Department of Information, King Saud University, 1998.

[358] Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, Palestinian Opinion Pulse 1:33, November 1999, p. 9 based on JMCC polls carried out on 21 and 22 October 1999.

[359] Charles Taylor, “Modernity and the Rise of the Public Sphere,” in The Tanner Lectures on Human Values, volume 14,1993, p. 213.

[360] Alfred Schutz, Collected Papers I: The Problem of Social Reality, edited by Maurice Natanson, The Hague; Martinus Nijhoff, 1967, pp. 15–19.

[361] ئك١ةحاًحلأآ Anderson., Imagined Communities: Rejections on the Origin and Spread ofNationalism, Lon- don; Verso, 1991, pp. 37–46.

[362] An incident reported to have happened in al-Suwayq, an oasis in the Batinah region, March 1998.Interview, Muscat, 19 June 1998.As economic conditions improved in Oman, donkeys became redundant to the local agricultural economy, and increasingly were set free to forage on garbage and other “found” sustenance. Hence their availability for displaying political messages inscribed on their flanks. An Iraqi colleague challenges the uniqueness of this Omani initiative, saying that the same vehicle was earlier used in southern Iraq, following the Iraqi defeat in Kuwait in 1991.

[363] U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook 1999, “Oman,” at <[[http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/mu.html][http://www.cia.gov/cia/ publications/factbook/mu.html]]>.

[364] Text of the seventeenth annual National Day speech, 15 November 1987, as reported in the Times of Oman, 19 November 1987, p. 2.

[365] For textbooks, see, for example, Sultanate of Oman, Ministry of Education, Al-Tarbiyya Al-Islamiyya [Islamic Education], 1st intermediate level, 4th ed., Muscat; Ministry of Information, 1985.The 1983 sermons have been collected in a book, Al-Muwahab al-Sunniyya fil-Khutab Al-fam ‘iyya [The Sanctioned Traditional Gift of Friday Sermons], part 1, edited by Ahmad bin Hamad al-Khalili, Muscat; Ministry of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, 1983.Later sermons have been issued in monthly booklets.

[366] Videotape supplied by the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman, Washington. For a detailed analysis of this talk and its significance, see Dale F. Eickelman, “Identite nationale et discours religieux en Oman,” in Gilles Kepel and Yann Richard (eds.), Intellectuels et militants de ITslam contemporain, Paris: Seuil, 1990, pp. 103–28.Part of this account is a revised version of this earlier analysis.

[367] Shaykh Ahmad identified bin Baz’s fatwa as number 772, dated 8/3/1407.

[368] Ahmed bin Hamed al-Khalili, I Are the Ibadhis? translated by Ahmed Hamoud al-Maamiry, Zanzibar; Al-Khayira Press, n.d. [1988?]), pp. 23—24.This pamphlet repeats the passages of the videotape almost verbatim.

[369] Interview, London, 16 June 1987.

[370] Harith al-Ghassany, “Kitman and Renaissance; Domination and the Limits of Development,” doctoral dissertation presented to the Departments of Middle Eastern Studies and Anthropology, Harvard University, 1995, p. 2.

[371] The letter is reproduced on p. 1 of the pamphlet. The charge that the Ibadhis are part of the Khariji movement originating in the first Islamic

century is standard in sectarian polemic. Actually, the Ibadhis originated as a breakaway sect from the Khariji movement and rejected the Khariji tenet that all non-Kharijis were infidels who merited death. Except for strict Ibadhi adherence to the early traditions of the Muslim community and the Sunna, and Ibadhi views on religious and political leadership, Ibadhi and Sunni doctrine coincide in most major respects. Other minor differences include the required movements during the obligatory prayers, the lack until recently of minarets in Ibadhi mosques, and the absence, again until recently, of Friday sermons (khutbas). See Dale F. Eickelman, “Ibadhism and the Sectarian Perspective,” in B. R. Pridham (ed.), Oman: Economic, Social and Strategic Developments, London: Croom Helm, 1987, pp. 31–50.

[372] Interview with an Omani student, New York, 20 May 1985.

[373] Interview, Nizwa region, 9 March 1988.

[374] Interview, Ministry of Justice official, 22 March 1988.Many younger officials have studied in Europe and the United States and are fully aware of competing Muslim discourses.

[375] Dale F. Eickelman, “Kings and People: Oman’s State Consultative Council,” The Middle East fournal 38: 1, winter 1984, pp. 51–71.Initially appointive only, the Council was later relaunched, with limited suffrage, which continues to expand.See “Oman Widens Council Ballot, More Women Get Vote,” Reuters, 15 April 2000.

[376] Interview, 21 June 1998.

[377] “How the Sultan Sees the Tasks Ahead,” The Financial Times, Oman Survey, 13 January 1983.These comments are identical to ones published earlier in Arabic in “Sultan Qaboos to Al-MajallaAl-Majalla (London), 1 May 1982, p. 17.

[378] Undated, anonymous leaflet beginning (in Arabic) with “The fury is unleashed, o Qaboos, and the time has come for the people to rise up ...”

[379] Khalifah bin Muhammad bin Abdallah al-Hadhrami, Ma Yuhimmak Ma‘rifatihi Min al-Qanun [What Knowledge of the Law Means to You], Muscat: privately printed, 1999.

[380] Reinhard Bendix, Kings or People: Power and the Mandate to Rule, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978.

[381] Cited in E. A. Bayne, Persian Kingship in Transition: Conversations with a Monarch, New York: American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 1968, p. 61.

* Part II: Regional Concerns

** Border Disputes

*** Chapter 13: Down to the Usual Suspects: Border and Territorial Disputes in the Arabian Peninsula and Persian Gulf at the Millennium{1}

Richard Schofield

{1} This paper was written in the spring of 2000. Since that time, there have been important developments, such as the conclusion of a Saudi-Yemeni boundary treaty in June 2000 and, more recently still, the issue by the International Court ofjustice of an award for the Bahrain-Qatar maritime boundary in March 2001. These developments are covered in the conclusion to this chapter.

Many of the contemporary headlines dealing with Arabian land boundary issues (with the exception, perhaps, of the Saudi-Yemen boundary question) should be seen in a regional context in which states are striding actively to finalize the political map. It should be remembered that the majority of Arabian states have experienced full independence only very recently and that, in most cases, territorial limits have had to be negotiated and finalized. Indeed, the relevance of the postmodern discourse on territory and boundaries to this area seems spurious at best. Never mind de-territorialization (as some would argue is occurring within the European context) or re-territorialization (as has clearly occurred with the collapse of empire and the rise of ethno-nationalism in the Caucasus and the former Yugoslav federation); the prerequisite process of territorialization has not yet been completed among the states of the region. While four GCC states have fully implemented that regional organization's customs union agreement—in a sense, a step toward de-territorialization—the eastern three-quarters of the boundary between Saudi Arabia and Yemen has only just been established, and the Oman—United Arab Emirates land border remains to be absolutely finalized.

In many ways, another set of considerations applies to the seemingly intractable set of disputes surrounding or lying across Gulf waters. Arab-Iranian rivalry has often found expression in territorial disputes, and in this respect, it is probably little coincidence that the Shatt al-Arab dispute between Iraq and Iran and the Lower Gulf islands dispute between Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) remain alive to varying degrees. Cynics in the region and elsewhere tiring of a half-decade of stalemate in the latter dispute might ultimately question the desire of each party to see it settled. After all, there is an element of safety and convenience in channeling regional rivalries through island sovereignty disputes and therefore, some might argue, a possible value in keeping them less than fully settled. As Victor Prescott commented in 1987, an international boundary always represents the potential for both conflict and cooperation,[382] though its utility will normally be greatest in this respect if it is not subject to a binding agreement that has been signed, sealed, and delivered.[383]

When considering Arab-Iranian boundary and territorial disputes, it is well to recall Jacques Ancel’s perennially applicable observation that “there are no problems of boundaries, only problems of nations.”[384] In other words, disputes over boundaries and territory are frequently little more than the physical manifestation of wider but perhaps less tangible differences and rivalries between states. While this view might be accurate when looking at these disputes in isolation, it does little to explain Iraq’s long-established dissatisfaction with its narrow shoreline and its lack of access to Gulf waters, a geostrategic predicament that has clearly been a factor in recent decades of conflict in the northern Gulf. Here, the positioning of its international boundaries with both Iran and Kuwait has given rise to a negative Iraqi mentality concerning access and communications, even if most of the problems historically may have been more perceived than real. Stephen Jones’s rather gory imagery of 1945 helps shed more light on this perspective, whereby “a boundary, like the human skin, may have diseases of its own or reflect the illnesses of the body.”[385] Boundaries can therefore be both the source and the symbol of disputes.

**** Behind the Headlines in 2000

A brief tour d’horizon is necessary to establish the contemporary importance of territorial questions in the Gulf (Map 13.1).

***** The Saudi Arabia—Yemen Border

Serious incidents continued recently to occur along the Saudi-Yemeni borderlands, most notably and recently the military clash of january 2000 in the mountains of Asir, which resulted in two Yemeni fatalities.[386]

Before June 2000, one could make a strong case for arguing that, of all Arabian territorial issues excepting the Iraq-Kuwait boundary, the Saudi-Yemeni boundary question presented potentially the greatest challenge to regional stability. It may still (see conclusion). Bilateral negotiations have

been ongoing (if intermittently) since the summer of 1992 toward finalizing Arabia's last indeterminate territorial limit. Although progress toward nominating the last missing fence in the desert has been painfully slow, there have been some notable developments, especially in the half-decade since the 1994 Yemeni civil war. First, the February 1995 memorandum of understanding (MoU) recommitted the two sides to the existing 1934 Treaty of Taif line in the west, while establishing a procedural framework for addressing the remainder of the border to the east. In the summer of 1996, during a session of the joint committees introduced by the 1995 MoU, Yemen forwarded a traditional boundary claim, the first occasion upon which a Sanaa government had ever issued a cartographically depictable claim to the indeterminate borderlands. The result was a considerable overlap in Saudi and Yemeni territorial claims (Map 13.2). There were reports that the basis of an agreement had been reached on the shores of Lake Como in late 1997, which would apparently have seen a line introduced to effectively bisect the area of overlapping claims. This would have been a delimitation that would have run in a straight line westward from the Saudi-Yemeni-Omani tripoint in the east to a point to the northeast of jabal al-Thar (the eastern terminus of the 1934 Taifline) in the west.

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-9.jpg][Map 13.1 Territorial and Maritime Boundaries in the Gulf Region]]

Yet, with time, it seems clear that the Como agreement was not the breakthrough that it portended to be. Serious incidents continue to occur along the length and breadth of the borderlands on land and sea. Furthermore, these incidents have been violent, with significant losses of life —best illustrated by the Duwaima island episode in the summer of 1998, and the renewed hostilities along the Taif line in January 2000. Though all the right diplomatic signals are issued about progress having been made in sessions of the boundary delimitation committees, the reality confirms that a negotiated settlement of the boundary is still some way off. Hence the surprise generated by the June 2000 agreement (see conclusion). Noticeably, in the half-decade since the 1995 MoU, a pattern has emerged of impasse, incident, and high-level patch-up. Impasse will be reached in the routine sessions of the boundary committees. This will typically be broken by a violent flare-up somewhere along the borderlands, after which senior political figures from Riyadh and Sanaa will convene to address the immediate

negative political fall-out and to re-inject some momentum into the border negotiations. It is to be hoped that this largely negative and unproductive cycle can be broken in the future.

***** The Iran-UAE Islands Dispute

There continue to be occasional reports of possible initiatives to free the Iran-UAE dispute over the Lower Gulf islands of Abu Musa and the Tunbs from its current stalemated status. Just as often, the war of words associated with this dispute periodically becomes heated, though this is hardly a new phenomenon.

Soon after its resurrection following Iranian heavy-handedness on Abu Musa island in 1992, the Iran-UAE dispute over the sovereignty of the Lower Gulf islands crystallized into a stalemated war of words. Support lent to any peaceful efforts the UAE might undertake to restore its sovereignty over the three islands (typically by the GCC at year-end summits) would ordinarily be greeted in Teheran by trophic blasts of defiance. The assertion that the UAE would have to “cross a sea of blood” to recover the features has been an almost standard Iranian counter-statement, albeit a particularly graphic and symbolic one designed predominantly for domestic consumption.

In the mid-1990s the UAE enjoyed real success in internationalizing the Lower Gulf islands dispute, but, ironically, its chances of regaining full control over the islands probably diminished. For the UAE’s very success would engender a defensive posture in Iran, and the adoption of the islands question as a national issue, one inextricably linked to regime legitimacy. Indeed, for much of the 1990s, the Lower Gulf islands dispute would play a symbolic role as the focus of Arab-Iranian rivalries across Gulf waters. This was a position traditionally experienced by the Iran-Iraq dispute over the Shatt al-Arab river boundary, but with Iraq’s regional and international isolation since 1990, the gaze moved southward.

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-10.jpg][Map 13.2 Saudi-Yemeni Boundary]]

To be sure, there has always been a strong “window of opportunity” aspect to the resurrected Lower Gulf islands dispute. In the medium term, presuming Iraq’s eventual re-integration within the Arab fold, it seems likely that the Shatt al-Arab dispute (currently dormant rather than resolved) will resume its traditional symbolic role as a barometer of Arab-Iranian relations, and the current concentration on the islands dispute will dilute. The focus on the islands dispute is already blurring, however, as a consequence of a tentative but tangible shift in the power dynamics of the region—best illustrated by the emerging Saudi/Iranian entente of the last two years. It is within this bigger regional picture that the ٢JA٨ط has charged Riyadh with failing to fully support its claims to the islands. Notwithstanding the creation of a special GCC subcommittee (that includes Qatar and Oman), whose task is to promote a peaceful settlement of the dispute, there is a feeling amongst some UAE officials that the window of opportunity is narrowing and that, after eight years in the limelight, the islands question is not the regional issue it once was.

***** The Bahrain-Qatar Row

In December 1999 Bahrain and Qatar pledged to conduct full diplomatic relations for the first time and, since that time, have made encouraging noises about trying to reach an “out of court” settlement of their dispute over the sovereignty of the Hawar islands, the Dibal andjaradeh shoals, and the locality of Zubarah.

Since December 1999, at least on the formal level, relations between Manama and Doha seem to have improved dramatically. While this has led some to speculate that the long-established and intransigent dispute over the Hawar islands might be settled bilaterally, it is probably more accurate to assert that these are moves typical of states whose disputes are about to be decided upon by international courts. Though many verdicts passed down over the years by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have been characterized by a degree of fudging, every case—to a lesser or greater extent—has a winner and a loser. The recent “breakthrough” in Bahraini-Qatari relations should be seen, therefore, as an acknowledgment that each

side realizes that it may lose, and that it is prepared for such an outcome. Court hearings in The Hague were scheduled for late May 2000 and ran for five weeks. The ICJ verdict would ultimately be issued on 16 March 2001 (see conclusion).

Importantly, the dynamics seemed to have changed in this boundary dispute as well. For the three years before the ICJ ruled—in July 1994—that it did, after all, possess jurisdiction to try this dispute (and for at least a year thereafter), Bahrain stalled. As the court was about to rule on ownership of the features—while the Hawar islands (save for Zubarah) were occupied by Manama—which Britain had previously recognized as belonging to the island state, Bahrain had everything to lose and Qatar everything to gain. Indeed, Bahraini perceptions were clarified when, in February 1995, a senior government official commented that the features in question would be relinquished to Qatar (should the ICJ have ruled in its favor) “over our dead bodies.” Yet, recent developments have given Bahrain a greater appetite for the fray, notably Qatar’s request that the ICJ “disregard” 82 pieces of documentary evidence contained within its memorial and counter-memorial, after their provenance had been questioned by Manama. Never before has the authenticity of evidence played such a prominent role in the history of boundary cases before the ICJ.

***** The Oman-UAE BorderAccord

In the last week of March 2000, Oman and the UAE announced the ratification of the May 1999 Oman-UAE (Abu Dhabi) boundary agreement and added that the territorial limit would be demarcated in the near future. [387]

This development should be seen in the context of the great strides made to finalize the Arabian territorial framework during the last decade. It represents part of the process of rounding off sharp edges that has continued since the mid-1990s, following the large-scale material progress achieved through the conclusion of international boundary agreements in the first half of the decade. There are other recent developments that can be placed in this “icing on the cake” category. For instance, there were relatively lavish

celebrations during 1994 and 1995 to greet the completion of the demarcation of the Oman-Yemen land boundary and the production of a detailed series of maps by a joint Omani-Saudi survey team of the delimitation agreed back in 1990. Further north, it would not be until June 1999 that the demarcation of the Qatar—Saudi Arabia delimitation would be completed, despite this measure having been agreed upon seven years earlier (December 1992), in the context of Egyptian mediation of the Khafus incident in September of that year.

As for the Oman-UAE boundary, it must be stated that while there are no major issues in dispute between the two states, the delimitation has not yet been wholly finalized. It has evolved in a piecemeal fashion since the late 19505, with agreement having been reached at various stages on various parts of the boundary, especially during the period before the proclamation of the UAE in Decernber 1971. The May 1999 agreement concerning the Abu Dhabi-Oman border was in itself a delayed implementation of the announcement, made some six years earlier by the Omani government, that this delimitation had been settled as the result of”a lasting agreement” between the two states. A final agreement has apparently still to be reached on delimitation between Oman and the Qasimi emirates of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah, after which time one might expect to see a further and final Oman-UAE agreement, ratifying all the earlier agreements and understandings reached since the late 19505.

***** The Iraq-Kuwait Boundary

In recent months, there have also been a number of comments in the Gulf media recognizing that the question of Iraqi access to the Gulf may well resurface, notwithstanding the May 1995 United Nations award for the Iraq-Kuwait boundary.

Understandably, given its hugely traumatic experience at Iraqi hands, Kuwait adopted—at least officially—something of an ostrich mentality with respect to its northern neighbor for much of the 1990s. Yet if Baghdad considers itself a geographically disadvantaged state with its meager shoreline in the northern Gulf, Kuwait, too, can claim to be locationally challenged,

surrounded as it is by the dominant regional powers of Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

Exceptionally, the Iraq-Kuwait boundary is guaranteed against physical infraction by the United Nations, as Baghdad accepted—without equivocation—the UN ruling in November 1994. In terms of international law, this territorial limit is finalized, but the degree to which it can therefore be considered as a “solved” regional problem is open to question, especially since Iraqi claims on Kuwaiti territory had such a vexed history before they culminated in the disastrous 2 August 1990 move.

Moreover, and despite a history of dispute and conflict, Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations have also been characterized by limited functional cooperation in the economic sphere. Consequently, a much greater measure of regional economic integration in the northern Gulf than has hitherto been achieved seems the best means to ensure against future conflict. This is the emerging consensus among Gulf intellectuals addressing the question of Iraqi access to the Gulf.

**** Finalizing the 1990s Arabian Political Map

Having undertaken this regional review, it is important to underline the degree and nature of progress made toward finalizing the Arabian political map during the 1990s.[388]

***** Bilateral Boundary Agreements

Through the conclusion of bilateral boundary agreements, especially within southeastern Arabia—Saudi Arabia—Oman (1990), Oman-Yemen (1992), and Oman-United Arab Emirates (1999)-Muscat, Riyadh, and Abu Dhabi have gone a long way to finalizing their boundary delimitation. Oman’s recent boundary agreements have also rightly been lauded for their sophistication in providing for free trans-boundary movements for the nomadic populations of southeastern Arabia. Likewise, the Iraq-Kuwait boundary has been settled

in international law, while the ICJ will probably deliver its verdict in the Bahrain-Qatar case by the end of 2000. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia and Yemen continue to negotiate their respective territorial limits astride the Rub al-Khali. As discussed above, the progress of the late 1990s consisted of tidying up loose ends following the conclusion of bilateral treaties earlier in the decade, or rounding off key sharp edges created by boundary incidents (e.gKhafus in September 1992) that had occurred during the process of finalizing limits to state territory.

Compared to this momentum toward finalizing Arabian land boundaries, there has been nowhere near as much progress in completing the maritime political geography of the Gulf. Excluding the 1993 United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission award of a median line along the

Khor Abdallah (which, for some reason, was not extended fully to the mouth of that water inlet proper), there have been no continental shelf boundary agreements concluded since 1974 (Map 13.2). Although there are a number of reasons for this state of affairs, the existence of territorial disputes over three groups of islands (Umm al-Maradim and Qaru in the northern Gulf between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, the Hawar islands and shoals dispute between Bahrain and Qatar, and the Lower Gulf islands dispute between Iran and the UAE) is clearly preventing the conclusion of maritime boundary delimitation between these states. Indeed, after their eight-year long war, Iran and Iraq have failed to conclude a maritime boundary agreement of their own.

Still, there is (and has been for some time) the promise of progress. The International Court of justice would not only adjudicate on the ownership of various insular formations lying between Bahrain and Qatar, but would also announce a maritime boundary delimitation between the two states, later in 2000. For their part, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have repeatedly stated that the announcement of a maritime boundary delimitation is imminent. It was back in October 1995, in point of fact, that delegations from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia began the latest round of discussions toward this end, though it would seem that the two sides have so far failed to reach agreement upon how the sovereignty of Umm Al-Maradim and Qaru should be broached in advance of the drawing of any maritime delimitation. Importantly, in May 1995, the

Iranian ambassador to Kuwait also announced Teheran’s preparedness to tackle the problem of finalizing maritime boundaries in the northern Gulf. In the fall of 1995, the Kuwaiti government confirmed that an agreement had been reached in principle to commence negotiations toward this end. The onset of these agreements is dependent upon a successful conclusion of the ongoing (and seemingly stalled) negotiations between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on national maritime limits.[389]

When discussing existing maritime boundaries within Gulf waters, the point also needs to be made that the agreements that introduced them are dated by modern standards. There is no single agreement in which a geodetic datum set is specified. Datums in all cases are spheroidal/ellipsoidal, reflecting Britain’s long influence and continuing presence in the region. In fact, the crudity and paucity of the information that comprises the datums used to draw charts upon which maritime boundary delimitation have been drawn indicate that there is, in practice, a huge error factor in physically locating exactly where these limits lie in Gulf waters.[390] This is a problem that is distracting oil companies when identifying seismic lines or drilling for oil. Where exactly is the boundary? In short, it is currently impossible to determine. Since the conclusion of maritime boundary agreements in the Gulf, the advent of global positioning systems has made possible the realistic relation of national datums to an appropriate global reference within acceptable limits of accuracy. Thus, the margin for error in trying to physically locate a maritime delimitation has potentially been reduced from hundreds of meters (as is now the case with the region’s agreements) to a matter of centimeters. There is a strong case, therefore, for suggesting that all existing maritime boundary agreements be modified in light of these technological advances.

***** Norms of International Law

The texts of agreements reached in the early 1990s (and some agreed at a much earlier stage, e.g·, Saudi Arabia-Qatar [1965]) have increasingly been registered at what the international legal community regards as the appropriate international institutions—typically the United Nations Secretariat in New York. This is, indeed, a recent phenomenon. One observer commented as early as 1991 that the Saudis, for example, had

been “reluctant to finalize their agreements according to those international rules which would entitle them to consider that their arrangements constituted a permanent feature of the international map.”[391] The position has now changed to the degree that Riyadh can now point to the fact that it has renegotiated or modified all of the territorial understandings concluded between Ibn Saud and the British (or frequently imposed by the latter) during the early part of the century. This is doubtless of importance to the Kingdom. The growing evidence that the territorial framework has evolved to a point of no return should also reassure Saudi Arabia’s small but historically mindful neighbors along the western/southern Gulf littoral. Iraq has not been the only territorially acquisitive state within the region!

***** Regional and Institutional Considerations

GCC states have been preoccupied, since 1991, with the further entrenchment, institutionalization, and, where appropriate, finalization of the Arabian territorial framework. GCC policy toward the resolution of Arabian disputes, and the finalization of the political map of the region, has not been proactive but reactive. In fact, it has been, and will probably continue to be, a response to regional instability. Moreover, GCC states have focused on the need for the tidy appropriation of natural resources.

Against this background, the March 1991 Damascus Declaration (concluded among the six GCC states, Egypt, and Syria) remains an important statement of policy, principle, and intent, as far as the regulation of state territory in the region is concerned. To further strengthen their rapidly evolving positions, the following measures were explicitly promoted: greater regulation of existing borders; the peaceful resolution of disputes; respect for international law, mutual non-interference and good-neighborliness. In the aftermath of the “resurrection” of the Lower Gulf islands dispute in 1992, a further principle was added to these: the “inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force.”[392] Noticeably, the fifteenth Manama GCC summit meeting (December 1994) was not so clear on the enunciation of any new principles regulating limits to state territory, reitera ting the apparent keenness of the Supreme Council to see territorial disputes between member states and neighbors settled peacefully. Yet, and significantly in relation to the ICJ’s

recent treatment of the Bahrain-Qatar territorial dispute, the GCC appeared to favor bilateral negotiations, as opposed, for instance, to arbitration or judicial settlement. With time, however, these developments would prove to be less significant than they had initially appeared. This had everything to do with the discernible tendency for statements of GCC territorial policy to reflect the immediate and foreign policy concerns of the states hosting annual summit meetings. Thus Bahrain's "interest" in keeping the

Hawar dispute from being treated in The Hague had been instrumental in late 1994.

It should also be stressed that pragmatic considerations have been fueling much of the progress toward finalizing the political map during the last decade. Beginning in the early 19905, several Arabian states embarked upon exploration drives for hydrocarbons in border regions, many of which were still indeterminate. Because of their politically sensitive location and general remoteness, these fields had generally been ignored prior to this point, but the economic imperatives of maximizing production in a flat oil market and of compensating for the maturing of older fields were now to outweigh such considerations. In such circumstances, the need for precise and unambiguous boundary definitions was clear, so that states could safely prospect and develop resources right up to the limits of their territories. This process has also produced boundary incidents (e.g., the 1992 Khafus border post incident between Saudi Arabia and Qatar) and disputes over how existing treaties cater to trans-boundary resources—best illustrated by the UAE's boycott of the opening of the trans-boundary Shaybah (Saudi Arabia) oil field in 1999. Only four-fifths of this field lies within Saudi territory, but the 1974 boundary treaty between the two states specifies that the Kingdom has the rights to all of its resources.

**** Down to the Usual Suspects

The disputes that confront the region in 2000 are generally the ones that have lingered, which Britain recognized to be problems during its rule over the region, yet ones for which it could apparently find or broker no effective and lasting solution. Thus, the usual suspects under discussion here are

Iraq’s boundaries at the head of the Gulf, and the Lower Gulf islands dispute, while some might add the Bahrain-Qatar island and shoal disputes to such a category. While no one can downplay the continuing violence of repeated Saudi-Yemeni border incidents, it is difficult to characterize this dispute as a “usual suspect,” since bilateral negotiations toward establishing a boundary in the desert wastes of the Rub al-Khali have been ongoing, and then intermittently, only since 1992.

Moreover, to classify the Iraq-Kuwait boundary as a “usual suspect,” in a category of ultimately unresolved disputes, is also contentious and technically wrong. Given that the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved the secretary-general’s demarcation team’s award for this territorial limit in May 1993—while the governments of Iraq and Kuwait had effectively lent their approval two years earlier to any arrangement that would ultimately be arrived at—it must clearly be placed in a unique category. The fact that Iraq formally and fully accepted the UN award without equivocation in November 1994 and that the integrity of this demarcation is physically guaranteed against infraction by the Security Council reinforces the notion that this boundary has been finalized and is here to stay Certainly it has now fully evolved in international law. Yet, to assume that a historically explosive regional problem has thereby been removed is dangerous. How many experienced observers of northern Gulf affairs could confidently predict that the last has been heard of a plea by successive Baghdad governments for greater access to Gulf waters at the expense of Kuwait?

Historically, therefore, what has made this persistent group of usual suspects so resistant to permanent and final settlement has been their cyclical nature. Until very recently, it has often seemed that however these boundaries or territorial questions were regulated in international law at various points in their history, and whether or not the territorial limits introduced have been delimited and/or demarcated, they have tended to move from long periods of dormancy to much shorter and intense periods of activity. Often, the principal determinant or trigger that activates these disputes from dormancy has been intrinsic or perceived shifts in the regional balance of power. Where the history of the Lower Gulf islands is concerned, as well, this would also seem to have been proven right, as illustrated by:

1. The 1887 assertion of more direct control by the Persian Qajar government over the eastern Gulf littoral, and the banishment of the northern flank of the Qawasim (the ruling families of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah) from their semi-autonomous base in southern Persia at the port of Lingah and the nearby Sirri island;

2. The British government's advice to the Qawasim in 1903 to emplace flags on Abu Musa and Greater Tunb. The Belgian-run Persian customs police, who hoisted the Persian flag instead on the features, then removed these. When it finally realized what had happened—some months later—Britain used the threat of force to get Persia to climb down, with the result that in 1904 the Al Qasimi flags were re-hoisted on the islands;

3. Iran's move on the islands on the last day of November 1971, the day before Britain departed Gulf waters as protecting power. Prior accommodation had been reached with Sharjah (reluctantly but voluntarily on behalf of its ruler) for the shared administration of Abu Musa, though the Tunb islands were taken forcibly from Ras al-Khaimah;

4. The period from 1992 to the present, which has witnessed the reactivation and internationalization of the Abu Musa/Tunbs dispute. Iran's clumsy reactivation was almost certainly attributable to its frustration at its regional isolation and its exclusion from post—Gulf War plans for regional security.

***** Long-established and appreciated nature of disputes

The crux of each dispute within this "usual suspect" category has long been recognized by those who have been involved in efforts to try and resolve them. As far as the protecting power, Britain, was concerned, certain of these disputes presented different problems, ranging from territorial questions that genuinely posed a potential threat to regional stability, to those that were regarded as, above all, tedious spats between neighboring ruling dynasties. Several quotations from British government records illustrate this point.

In 1939 the Foreign Office commented in the following manner upon Iraq's desire for greater access to Gulf waters, placing this dispute firmly into the former, more serious category:

It is understandable that the state which controls the Mesopotamian plain should desire to have undivided control of at least one good means of access to the sea and [British foreign secretary] Lord Halifax thinks that on a long view, it is likely that, if Iraq were given this access, it would make for steadier conditions in that part of the world for years to come.[393]

The irritant caused by the persistence of other disputes, however, is the most distinctive feature of the following comments:

Having been involved at various levels in efforts to resolve the Lower Gulf islands dispute while serving as a diplomat along the Western and Southern Gulf littoral, Sir Glen Balfour-Paul would comment in his book of 1991 that the dispute had, by the turn of the 1970s, assumed a scale in Anglo-Iranian relations "grossly disproportionate" to the islands' size and importance.[394]

Likewise, former British resident Sir William Luce, having been brought back at around the same time specifically to broker a settlement of outstanding issues with Iran in the face of Britain's imminent departure from the Gulf, allegedly uttered, in a moment of obvious exasperation:

The Persians took Sirri while we weren't looking in 1887. I sometimes wish they had taken the Tunbs and Abu Musa as well.[395]

In his heavily anecdotal account of his years as "Adviser to the Ruler of Bahrain," Sir Charles Dalrymple Belgrave would recall the enduring symbolic significance attached by the ruling Al Khalifah family to the locality of Zubarah, little more than a set of ruins lying on the northwestern coastline of

the Qatari peninsula. Claims were maintained with a conviction and intensity that completely baffled him:

When Shaykh Hamad died in 1942,1 remembered the words which were attributed to Queen Mary Tudor: “When I am dead ... you shall find Calais lying on my heart,” but in this case the word would have been Zubarah.[396]

A candid, recently declassified Foreign and Commonwealth Office memorandum by Donal McCarthy was equally revealing. The 1969 memorandum reviewed the status of various unresolved boundary questions that Britain would bequeath to the region when it left in December 1971. Following in similar vein to many of the above observations was the remark that:

[t]he mentality of these rulers is such that they are prepared to dispute a barren sand dune till judgement day, while tribal views on e.g., access to wells are pressed with an urgency which does not comprehend Western ideas on rigid frontiers.[397]

In a sense, of course, this last quote was a bit rich. Having introduced a Westernstyle consciousness of territoriality to Arabia (or at least to its rulers), it ought not really have been a cause for complaint when the ownership of specific localities became the subject of fierce contention, albeit usually for reasons best explained as personal or dynastic rather than national rivalries. All of this is interesting and informative, but in the end, however Britain and others since have characterized the conflict potential of these cyclical disputes, it does not necessarily make any of them easier to settle.

***** Limitations of International Law

Observers of the Gulf region were jolted when a prominent American international lawyer asserted in New York that, owing to the deliberations of the UN demarcation team and the Iraqi government’s unequivocal acceptance of its findings, the Iraq-Kuwait boundary had been “settled for all

time.”[398] While it is to be hoped that peace and stability will characterize these borderlands in decades to come, there is clearly a danger of creating hostages to fortune for the future. A few miles to the northeast, the Shatt al-Arab dispute has proven resistant to its own supposedly final settlement in international law.

Nowhere were the limitations of international law more accurately illustrated than with the fate of the 1975 Algiers Accord and follow-up bilateral treaties between Iran and Iraq of the same year. The package of agreements that defined and regulated the Shatt al-Arab river boundary was, by common consent, the most sophisticated ever to be concluded for a divided river boundary in international law, containing every conceivable safeguard against future disputes over the alignment and status of the territorial limit. Yet it demonstrably failed to prevent conflict, when Iraqi president Saddam Hussein graphically tore to pieces—before an Iraqi television audience—the original he had signed as vicepresident. That was the prelude to the invasion of Iran in September 1980. Within a few weeks of the onset of the Iran-Iraq War, the wreckage of abandoned or burnt-out vessels blocked the Shatt al-Arab, and Iraq was effectively landlocked. It seems likely that the Iraqi president had calculated (wrongly as it turned out) that circumstances were favorable for the restoration of the Shatt Al-Arab to its “rightful owner.” This served to demonstrate that no comprehensive territorial settlement is a panacea if one of the signatories remains unconvinced of what it has committed itself to, and is ultimately prepared to use force to change the geographical facts that the legal instrument has introduced. The whole episode provides an important and painful lesson of which Kuwait must be only too aware.

Thus, a reflection upon the convoluted history of the Iraq-Kuwait boundary and sovereignty disputes in the period before 1990 identifies a number of critical factors and constants. Indeed, the future treatment and management of the dispute may well determine whether or not territorial stability will characterize the borderlands of the northwestern Gulf, notwithstanding the recent accomplishment of the لت٢ demarcation team. What do these critical factors and constants mean?[399]

First, that the Iraqi access to the Gulf is limited. Iraq is classifiable as a geographically disadvantaged state. Its meager coastline is largely undevelopable, and the state was effectively landlocked during the recent wars of its own making in the northern Gulf. It has consistently sought territorial concessions from Kuwait that might improve this access, typically involving requests for Kuwait's cession or lease of the islands ofWarbah and Bubiyan and a strip of land territory south of Iraq's second dry-cargo port, Umm Qasr.

Yet the politics of access have been equally important, engendering from Iraq a certain historical restlessness, or negative consciousness. Baghdad has always believed itself to be squeezed out of the Gulf. History affords partial if indirect support for such a viewpoint inasmuch as it was the genesis of Britain's treaty relationship with Kuwait at the turn of the century, and its urgency not to allow imperial rivals a foothold upon what it regarded as a British lake at this time, that would result in a fairly explicit policy of minimizing the Ottoman shoreline in the northern Gulf.[400] Britain's success in squeezing out the Ottomans from the Gulf has certainly contributed to Iraq feeling squeezed out ever since.

Historically, too, there has been some sympathy for Iraq's arguments for greater access to Gulf waters. This extended at various stages to the British government itself, while it was responsible for the conduct of Kuwait's foreign affairs. Lacy Baggallay's important 1939 quote has already been presented, but a Foreign Office telegram wired to Bahrain in 1957 would make much the same point:

In my view it would be in Kuwait's interest to make an earlier frontier setdement at the cost of ceding the territory necessary to provide Iraq with a deep water channel to Umm Qasr under Iraqi sovereignty.[401]

Amazingly, international sympathy did not totally disappear, even with Iraq's disastrous move on Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Leaving aside whatever Ambassador April Glaspie did or did not say in the immediately preceding weeks, Thomas Pickering, the then U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations,

apparently relayed the following message on 6 August 1990 for delivery to the Iraqi government via the ٢.5. Ambassador to Jordan:

We acknowledge your need for an opening to the Gulf, and the issue of access to the islands is one we could look upon favorably.[402]

Ironically, international sympathy for Iraq's arguments for greater access would certainly disappear once the Baghdad government announced the annexation of Kuwait a week into its occupation. For this Iraq obviously had only itself to blame.

Second, the Iraq-Kuwait territorial disputes are inter-related with the Shatt al-Arab question. There is a proven historical pattern, with the triangular relationship usually expressing itself during those periods in which Iran has held the upper hand in the Shatt al-Arab dispute. Inasmuch as Iraq has looked south to Kuwait to compensate itself for its geostrategic misfortune, four historical phases are particularly noteworthy to establish the linkage.[403] In 1938, Iraq requested port facilities outside the Shatt al-Arab for the first time, and Britain decided that its gaze should be focused upon the Khor Zubair rather then Kuwait Bay. Iraq argued several reasons for the request, including that the Shatt al-Arab was becoming unreliable, because of its status as a disputed international river boundary; that the waterway was becoming congested, because of river traffic levels (a debatable charge at this point); and that Iraq wanted to extend its railway beyond Basra to the coast. Moreover, Iraqi troops advanced a few miles into Kuwaiti territory south of Umm Qasr in 1969 (and would remain there until the thaw in Iraqi-Kuwaiti relations of 1977) following the Shah's abrogation of the 1937 Teheran treaty. During the 1980–1988 Iran-Iraq War, with the Shatt Al-Arab blocked and the planned large-scale expansion of Umm Qasr postponed, Iraq twice requested the use ofWarbah and Bubiyan islands even if Kuwait did much to bolster its own presence on the features during this time. Two weeks into its occupation of Kuwait, Iraq surprised many observers by apparently abandoning territorial claims to the whole of the Shatt al-Arab river when accepting Iranian terms for a final settlement of the Iran-Iraq War. This understandably raised questions as to how, if at all, the two events were related.[404]

Third, the Iraqi government had abrogated supposedly final international boundary agreements, as discussed above.

Fourth, the Iraqi state and population have developed a sense of “territorial consciousness.” That Kuwait “rightfully” belongs to Iraq is almost certainly a prevailing view on the streets of Baghdad and elsewhere within Iraq. Ironically, it was probably much easier for Saddam Hussein to recognize the UN verdict on the boundary than it would have been for Iraqi opposition groups ultimately desirous (but obviously incapable) of replacing the current Iraqi regime. The UN decision on the course of the Iraq-Kuwait land boundary, when first announced in April 1992 (albeit not in its final detail), was denounced not only by the current regime but also by these exiled opposition groupings.

Fifth, the (in)ability of Iraq, Kuwait, and Iran to cooperate in the management of the borderlands of the northwestern Gulf has created certain undeniable conditions. Occasionally, Iran and Iraq have agreed to boundary delimitation along the Shatt al-Arab river, but never have the two sides managed to agree upon a sustainable joint program for the conservancy of the waterway. Earlier, Britain and the Basra Port Authority had found such a goal elusive as well.

While effective cooperation in the management of the Shatt al-Arab has always eluded Iran and Iraq, the treaties, protocols, and annexes of 1975 ironically provided elaborate guidelines in this direction. With some irony, Iran and Iraq had also agreed upon a scheme for clearing and cleansing the Shatt al-Arab just a few weeks before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Clearly, if one accepts that in the medium term, the thalweg has to be regarded as the definitive boundary, Iran and Iraq will have to cooperate in the conservancy of this shared river.

To make matters worse, the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission (UNIKBDC) award of 1993 for the Iraq-Kuwait boundary has left the navigation channels along the Khor Abdallah dredged,

cut, and deepened by Iraq since the early 1960s, entirely within the Kuwaiti territorial sea.[405] Despite statutory rights of passage for Iraqi vessels, the need for cooperation in the future management of this stretch of the borderlands would seem all too clear. As things stand, for instance, Iraq cannot maintain its navigation channels along the Khor Abdallah.

Importantly, a history of sporadic though significant functional cooperation has been highlighted between Iraq and Kuwait.[406] In the twelve-month period before the 1990 Iraqi invasion, the two states had agreed to integrate their electricity grids, while the go-ahead was given for a limited supply of Iraqi freshwater from the Shatt al-Arab to be supplied to Kuwait via a pipeline traversing the Faw peninsula. This admittedly small-scale level of limited functional cooperation had paralleled the two traditional Iraqi claims on Kuwait and its territory before 1990. Since there is a certain logic to it, it should come as no surprise if and when it is resurrected in the future.

***** Legal Dilemmas and Political Realities

States of the Arabian Peninsula/Persian Gulf region have displayed a particular penchant and determination in recent years for concluding boundary agreements that affect precise divisions of sovereign territory. Yet, with the apparent intractability of the “usual suspects,” as identified above, it might be worth considering whether there is no greater scope for looking at arrangements that might fall short of a full sovereign solution of the territorial dispute in these cases. Furthermore, in the 1971 Iran-UAE and the 1934 Saudi-Yemeni cases, arrangements along these lines were already in place. The 23 November 1971 Iran-Sharjah memorandum of understanding regarding Abu Musa was an imaginative agreement that reflected the regional realities pertaining at the time of its conclusion but which, while introducing the shared administration of the small island, deliberately ducked the question of its sovereignty. The May 1934 Taif treaty (or the Saudi-Yemeni “Treaty of Islamic Friendship and Brotherhood”) remains in force, largely because it is an agreement that provides sufficient grey areas for each party to maintain divergent interpretations about the status of the boundary it introduced.

***** The 1971 Ivan-Sharjah Moll

The essentially pragmatic Iran-Sharjah MoU was most notable for the manner in which it accommodated the full sovereign claims of both Iran and Sharjah to the island. Its preamble stated that “neither Iran nor Sharjah will give up its claim to Abu Musa nor recognize the other state’s claim.”[407] In other words, the question of sovereignty was completely fudged in the agreement —·it merely provided for the divided administration of the island. The MoU, nevertheless, provided for the positioning of Iranian forces in key strategic areas—basically, around the hill called Mount Halvah in the northern reaches of the island— defined on a map attached to the text of the agreement. Within this designated area, the Iranian flag flew and Iran possessed full jurisdiction, but outside, the

Sharqawi flag remained hoisted and jurisdiction fell to Sharjah as before. Iran and Sharjah each recognized a territorial sea for the island with a breadth of 12 nautical miles in which nationals of both parties would enjoy equal fishing rights. The Buttes Oil Company (which succeeded Occidental as holder of the Sharjah offshore oil concession) would continue to exploit hydrocarbon reserves from the nearby Mubarak oil field (now operated by Crescent of Sharjah) under the conditions specified in its existing concession agreement with the ruler of Sharjah—for as long as these were acceptable to Iran. Lastly, Iran was to give Sharjah ‘1.5 million annually in aid until such time as its oil revenue reached ‘3 million annually, which in practice would take about three years. Given the previous impasse in this dispute, an arrangement that allowed for the flying of each party’s flag on the island seemed, on the surface, a fairly logical and sustainable compromise.

***** The 1934 Saudi-Yemeni Taif Treaty

The 20 May 1934 Saudi-Yemeni “Taif’ accord was a peace treaty following the Saudi-Imamate war earlier that year. It introduced boundary delimitation from the Red Sea margins in the west to Jabal al-Thar in the Asir Mountains in the east. The “grey area” provided in this treaty is the rather bizarre obligation contained within its text to renew it every 20 lunar years, operative again since 1995, this provision allows the Yemeni government to

argue to this day before its own domestic constituency that no boundary line can be considered “permanent and final” if the treaty that introduced and governs the said territorial limit itself requires renewal. Despite this, Saudi Arabia can argue that the agreement to physically brick up and re-demarcate the Taif line contained within the February 1995 Saudi-Yemeni memorandum of understanding will, when it is finally implemented, give the said line a physical permanence on the ground.[408]

To be sure, neither of these agreements is particularly meritorious, and they are certainly not models for the governance of international boundaries or territorial disputes. Rather, the premise that lies behind them is worth noting, however. These agreements are obviously deficient in terms of international law, but they do, in sum, seek to govern or manage disputes rather than resolve them, while both were clearly the product of the regional realities pertaining at the time of their conclusion.

***** Shared Political and Economic Space

Thus, not only is the precedent of existing boundary/territorial agreements that are short on law clearly established, but these are more geared to regional realities than many of their more legally sophisticated counterparts. Shared political and economic space has a proven utility in Arabia and the Persian Gulf.[409] Two such cases are the Kuwait-Saudi Arabia and Iraq-Saudi Arabia neutral zones that were introduced by the Uqair Protocol late in 1922 and that survived as unique features of the Arabian political map until new bilateral agreements were drawn up to partition them in 1969 and 1981 respectively. However, the area of the former Kuwait-Saudi Arabia neutral zone is still subject to the joint economic regime that dates from the era of the neutral zones.[410] A small neutral zone continues to exist between individual emirates of the UAE (Abu Dhabi—Dubai since 1961), while a shared zone existed for at least the late 19505 between Fujairah and Sharjah. Similar features existed between Oman and Ajman and Sharjah respectively during the 1960s, while the bizarre arrangements for the shared administration of Abu Musa with the MoU of 1971 have already been discussed. Given the recent predilection of Arabian states for arriving at fully sovereign settlements of territorial questions and the genuine progress made toward this end, the further appearance of shared political space in Arabia

seems unlikely. The eastern three-quarters of the Saudi-Yemeni border remains, as already established, the last missing fence in the desert. It is known to this author, however, that the possible institution of such a feature in the area east of the Yemeni Mashreq—an area for which there are few historical precedents in terms of claims or evidence of effective occupation—has at least been discussed during the last eight years of negotiations between the two states.

If little progress was reached on shared political space in the one and a half decades before Britain vacated the Gulf as protecting power, a great deal of progress was made in drawing up national zones of maritime jurisdiction in or underlying that water body itself. Some of the arrangements drawn up for continental shelf boundary delimitation were innovative and influential, such as the 1968 Iranian-Saudi agreement with its treatment of the islands of Farsi and Arabi. Importantly, however, the Persian Gulf would also be the major testing ground for the institution of joint economic space. The first continental shelf boundary agreement to be concluded in this region was between Bahrain and Saudi Arabia on 22 February 1958. The boundary agreement recognized a simpie median line delimitation that in effect disregarded all interlying (and previously disputed) high- and low-tide elevations. This had been one of several possible boundaries mooted in Anglo-Saudi negotiations convened in August 1951 to discuss the seabed question. The main problem to be sorted out in the years following these negotiations was the northern terminus of the Saudi Arabia-Bahrain maritime boundary in the vicinity of the Bu Saafah shoal, the disputed status of which was accentuated by the presence of an underlying oil field. Instead of opting to share ownership of the feature by instituting a neutral zone, the 1958 agreement provided that Bu Saafah be ceded to Saudi Arabia but specified that in future Bahrain would receive half of the revenue accruing from the exploration of the associated oil field.[411]

The March 1969 Abu Dhabi-Qatar maritime boundary agreement resolved the dispute over ownership of the offshore Bunduq oil field in a similarly imaginative manner. Terminal point B on the maritime boundary was offset slightly from the true equidistant lines between the adjacent coastlines to coincide directly with the location of the oil field. For practical reasons it was specified that only one concessionaire (representing Abu Dhabi) be allowed

to develop the field, though, importantly, all revenue from Bunduq was to be shared in perpetuity.[412]

The joint sharing arrangements agreed in 1971 for the Mubarak oil field between Sharjah and Iran have been detailed above, but, given that Abu Musa has been and remains a symbol of Arab-Iranian rivalry, it is important to repeat that some cooperative measures are in place across Gulf waters. Officially, this seems to have been the only example of Arab-Iranian joint development of disputed mineral resources at sea. However, during the course of legal proceedings before the Iran—United States Claims Tribunal in The Hague, a copy of a continental shelf delimitation agreement negotiated between Abu Dhabi (UAE) and Iran was produced. Although there is nothing officially on the record to suggest the existence of this maritime boundary, it seems certain that the text (coneluded in the mid-1970s) formed the basis of a working arrangement at least. The agreement/arrangement is interesting for the manner in which it deals with the trans-boundary offshore Salman (previously referred to as Sassan) oil field. With respect to the joint management of the Salman field, the agreement did not set any production limits or quotas on either party. Still, before the onset of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980, there were a number of meetings convened to exchange technical information on the field between the parties.[413]

Clearly, not only has there been a history of cooperation in dealing with territorial and resource issues in Gulf waters, but also a history of Arab-Iranian cooperation in these issues. There is no reason whatsoever why these precedents cannot be expanded upon in future years and decades as the offshore political map of the Gulf is finalized.

**** Conclusion

Article 10 of the GCC charter, signed on 25 May 1981, defined the responsibilities of that organization’s “Commission for the Settlement of Disputes.” To date, there is no evidence that it has ever met, to treat territorial disputes between member states. Ironically, it seems conceivable that the commission could finally be activated to deal with boundaries at some future point (following the likely deliverance of the ICJ’s judicial award

in the Hawar case later in 2000) when there are no disputes remaining between member states. In March 1997, it was suggested to this author that the commission might yet play a monitoring role in this regard, a promising idea that deserves to be developed. After all, the Gulf Cooperation Council is likely to play an important role in promoting regional territorial stability. It is worth recalling that there is no equivalent region/ continent-wide convention aiming for the preservation of the prevailing framework of state territory, as there is in Latin America with the institutionalized acceptance of the principle of uti possidetis, and as there is in Africa following the Organization ofAfrican Unity’s “sacrosanctity” declaration, delivered in Cairo in 1964.

Yet, if the GCC states themselves have done much to get their own house in order in the last decade or so, real territorial challenges surround this regional grouping of states. Although progress towards finalizing the political map on land and sea in the region continues to gather pace in the early spring of 2001, problems linger.

In June 2000, Saudi Arabia and Yemen finally (yet rather suddenly) agreed

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-11.jpg][Map 13.3 Bahrain Boundary Issues]]

upon the course of what until then had been Arabia’s last indeterminate land boundary.[414] Then, in July, the same, decisive momentum that Heir Apparent Abdallah of Saudi Arabia had brought to bear in boundary negotiations with Yemen seemingly also broke the long stalemate in the Kingdom’s negotiations with Kuwait over a lateral maritime boundary delimitation in the Persian Gulf. The two sides signed such an agreement on July 2, 2000. The final resolution of Kuwaiti-Saudi maritime disputes also opened the door to the onset during September 2000 of formal negotiations between Iran and Kuwait over an opposite maritime boundary delimitation in northern Gulf waters. Last but not least, the ICJ delivered its verdict on Bahrain-Qatar island and maritime disputes as recently as 16 March 2001.

Here, Bahrain emerged largely as the winner since the sovereignty of the Hawar island group—unquestionably, the chief bone of contention in the case— was confirmed as lying with the island state. Effectively, the ICJ has therefore recognized the status quo as far as ownership of the Hawar group is concerned in ratifying Britain's earlier ruling of July 1939. True, Qatari sovereignty over the locality of Zubarah on its north-western shoreline was confirmed though this part of the ruling was every bit as predictable as the court's treatment of the Hawar group. Although including Zubarah in the range of questions to be decided had originally appeared a boon for Bahrain, it is probably more realistic to surmise that by doing so, the ICJ was ensuring that Qatar would at least go home with something when judgement was made. So much for reaffirmation of the status quo in the ICJ judgement.

What about the court's treatment of the disputed shoals and its announcement of a maritime boundary delimitation between the two states? In dealing with these issues, the court arguably had a little more flexibility. Until the judgement of mid-March, both the Dibal andjaradah shoals have been occupied by Bahrain and had previously been recognized as belonging to the island state (albeit within a seabed area provisionally characterized as Qatari) after a British ruling in 1947. The court has now ruled that the Dibal shoal belongs to Qatar but that Jaradah belongs to Bahrain as an island. Such a distinction is important forjaradah's newly-recognized island status has projected the maritime boundary between the states further eastward than would otherwise have been the case. Bahrain probably has more reason to be satisfied with ICJ's maritime delimitation than Qatar.

These positive developments notwithstanding, Iraq's unequivocal acceptance during November 1994 of the earlier UNIKBDC verdict—on the course of its land boundary with Kuwait—will continue to be the subject of close scrutiny. Continuing dialogue is thus needed to ensure that the Lower Gulf islands dispute never becomes more than a symbol of Arab-Iranian rivalry, while the same might be said for the future treatment of the Shatt al-Arab dispute, currently dormant rather than finally settled.

In the end, all of these challenges need monitoring and managing. In addition, substantial attention must also be devoted to the maritime political map, a process that has basically stalled since the mid-1970s. Arguably,

there needs to be an inclusive regional structure within which the requisite cooperation to broach these territorial challenges can be nurtured and developed. As discussed above, there are significant existing precedents for cooperation in the area, even if it might probably be asking too much to ever seriously entertain any enlargement of the GCC. Recent Yemeni applications for membership have basically been shelved, while Iran and all GCC member states would probably never be able to agree on the vexed issue of nomenclature. Yet perhaps Iran, Yemen, and, in time, Iraq could realistically play a beneficial role in the GCC's Commission for the Settlement of Disputes, initially as observers, presuming the body is eventually activated. This might just provide the forum needed for closer coordination in territorial and resource issues. It might also provide an inclusive structure in which the more destabilizing aspects of the old "usual suspects" can be closely monitored and freely discussed. After all, if you can't solve them, then manage them!

[382] J.R. V. Prescott, Political Frontiers and Boundaries, London: Unwin Hyman, 1987.

[383] This possible symbolic worth is obviously not a phenomenon restricted to the Gulf, as can be seen by the way the Senkaku/Diaoyutai and the Tok-Do (Liancourt Rocks) disputes are respectively utilized as an outlet for the expression of nationalistic rivalries between Japan, China, Taiwan, and Korea.

[384] Jacques Ancel, Lesfrontieres, Paris: Delagrave, 1938.

[385] .ذا لاًحلألآعلأ, Boundary-making:A Handbook for Statesmen, Treaty-editors and Boundary Commissioners, Washington, DC.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1945.

[386] "Bloody clashes reported on Saudi-Yemen border," in Yemen News, 28 January 2000.

[387] “UAE, Oman ratify partial border agreement, 27 March 2000,” Reuters, 29 March 2000.

[388] For greater detail, see Richard Schofield, “Boundaries, Territorial Disputes and the GCC States,” in David E. Long and Christian Koch (eds.) Gulf Security in the Twenty-First Century, Abu Dhabi: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1997, pp. 133–168; see also Richard Schofield, “Finalizing the Arabian Territorial Framework,” in Geopolitics and International Boundary Studies 2:3, winter 1997, pp. 90–105.

[389] Richard Schofield, “Border Disputes in the Gulf: Past, Present and Future,” in Gary G. Sick and Lawrence G. Potter (eds.). The Persian Gulf at the Millennium, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997, p. 129.

[390] Hand-drawn lines linking geographic coordinates on British admiralty charts have generally been appended to maritime boundary delimitation treaties.

[391] John c. Wilkinson, Arabia’s Frontiers: the Story of Britain’s Boundary-Drawing in the Desert, London: I. B. Tauris, 1991, p. xi.

[392] Gulf Cooperation Council, “Closing Statement,” thirteenth annual GCC summit, Abu Dhabi, UAE, December 1992.

[393] Dispatch dated 16 December 1939 from Lacy Baggallay, Foreign Office, to the India Office in the following file held at the Public Record Office, Kew, London: co 732/86/17.

[394] CAen BA£owr-V۵١A١ The End of Empire in the Middle East: Britain’s Relinquishment of Power in Her Last Three Arab Dependencies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, p. 127.

[395] Richard Schofield, Unfinished Business: Abu Musa, the Tunbs, Iran and the UAE, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2000 (forthcoming), chapter 4.

[396] Charles D. Belgrave, Personal Column, London: Hutchinson, 1960, p. 156.

[397] Foreign Office Research Department, “Frontiers in the Lower Persian Gulf,” 16 June 1969, in PROfile: FCO 8/965 (Persian Gulf—territorial problems and boundaries).

[398] Concluding/summarizing remarks made at a conference entitled Security Flashpoints: Oil, Islands, Sea Access and Military Confrontation, convened by the University of Virginia’s Center for Oceans Law and Policy, UN Plaza-Park Hyatt Hotel, New York, 8 February 1997.

[399] For a more detailed exploration of these issues, see Richard Schofield, “Finalizing the Arabian Territorial Framework,” in Geopolitics and International Boundaries 2:3, winter 1997, pp. 98–103.

[400] Richard Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1993, pp. 24–47 (Hereafter Schofield-Kuwait and Iraq).

[401] Richard Schofield (ed.), The Iraq-Kuwait Dispute, volume 2, Farnham Common: Archive Editions, 1994, pp. 255–358.

[402] David H. Finnie, Shifting Lines in the Sand: Kuwait’s Elusive Frontier with Iraq, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992, p. 175 (note 2).

[403] For greater detail, see Richard Schofield, “The Historical Problem of Iraqi Access to the Persian Gulf: The Inter-relationships of Territorial Disputes with Iran and Kuwait, 1938–1990,21 in Clive H. Schofield and Richard N. Schofield (eds.). World Boundaries 2: The Middle East and North Africa, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 158–172.

[404] Schofield-Kuwait and Iraq, pp. 127–132.

[405] Schofield-Kuwait and Iraq, pp. 186–191.

[406] Gerd Nonneman, “The (Geo)political Economy of Iraqi-Kuwaiti Relations,” in Geopolitics and International Boundaries 1:2, autumn 1996, pp. 178–223.

[407] Facsimiles of the original text and associated correspondence reproduced in Thejournal of Foreign Policy, the Institute for Political and International Studies, Tajrish, Teheran, volume 6, 1993, pp. 193–208.

[408] Richard Schofield, “The Last Missing Fence in the Desert: The Saudi-Yemeni Boundary,” in Geopolitics and International Boundaries 1:3, winter 1996, pp. 247–299. For a shorter revised and updated summary of its content, see Richard Schofield, “The International Boundary between Yemen and Saudi Arabia,” in Renaud Detalle (ed.), Tensions inArabia:The Saudi-Yemeni Faultline, Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2000, pp. 15–51.

[409] Gerald Blake, “Shared Zones as a Solution to Problems of Territorial Sovereignty in the Gulf States,l’ in Richard Schofield (ed.). Territorial Foundations of the Gulf States, London: UCL Press, 1994, pp. 200–210 (hereafter Schofield-Territorial Foundations).

[410] For further details, see Richard Schofield, “Borders and Territoriality in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula during the Twentieth Century,” in Schofield—Territorial Foundations, pp. 1–77.

[411] Ibid.,pp. 55–56.

[412] Ibid.,p. 52.

[413] Rodman Bundy, “Maritime Delimitation in the Gulf,” in Schofield—Territorial Foundations, pp. 182–183.

[414] The Saudi-Yemeni boundary settlement was certainly hailed as a victory for Yemen by its President, Ali Abdallah Saleh. For a map of the delimitation, the text of the agreement, and various upbeat commentaries see Al Thawrah (Sanaa), 22 June 2000. As for the delimitation itself, in the east, it was not incredibly dissimilar to Britain’s old claims for the northern boundary of the Aden Protectorate. This made sense for any delimitation decided upon was always likely to reflect the degree to which territory had been effectively occupied. It was also noticeable that the locality of Wadia in the central borderlands (the scene of a violent border incident in 1969) was confirmed as belonging to Saudi Arabia, while the Red Sea island ofDuwaima (the scene of a much more recent but equally serious clash) was defined as belonging to Yemen. Maybe there was some sort of trade-off in this respect. As for the agreement between the two states, it was notably short in detail when specifying turning points for the delimitation of which—considering the length of the borderlands—there were surprisingly few. Perhaps the window of political opportunity had come before the technical teams were strictly ready to announce the finer detail of any agreement. Here one recalls Yemeni President Saleh’s pragmatic assessment of the Saudi-Yemeni border negotiations back in 1996. He had noted that the territorial dispute would probably only ever be settled by a political decision made at the highest level.

*** Chapter 14: The Kuwait-Iraq Border Problem

Hussein Hassouna

This chapter deals essentially with the legal aspects of the Kuwait-Iraq border problem, though it also raises other related regional and worldwide issues of current importance. Reference is first made to the history of the Kuwait-Iraq boundary problem in the light of the 1913, 1923, 1932, and 1963 agreements concerning that boundary. In that context, Iraq's sovereignty claim over Kuwait, which provoked both the 1961 and 1990 crises, is examined in some detail. A description then follows of how the international boundary between Iraq and Kuwait was demarcated in 1993, by the United Nations Boundary Demarcation Commission, established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 687 of 1991.[415] A special effort is also made to assess the impact of such demarcation on Kuwaiti-Iraqi ties and the restoration of peace and security in the area. Finally, the remaining contentious issues between the two countries are analyzed, including the consequence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, the imposition of sanetions on Baghdad, and the topic of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing individuals. The position of both the United Nations and of the League of Arab States on these matters is highlighted.

The chapter concludes with a general appraisal the situation in the region in light of these developments.

**** Historical Background of the Border Problem

The Shaykhdom of Kuwait, situated at the head of the Gulf and encircled by Iraq and Saudi Arabia, was under the suzerainty of Ottoman rulers during the nineteenth century. Faced with a growing threat by Russia to their "position" in the Gulf, British authorities secured a general engagement from the ruler of Kuwait, which greatly enhanced their posture in the area. The 1899 agreement— which spelled out London's conditions—required the ruler of Kuwait to obtain British consent prior to ceding, selling, leasing, or giving for occupation any portion of territory to the government or subjects of another power.[416]

Under the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29 July 1913, the British and Ottoman governments reached agreement on their respective spheres of influence in the Gulf As part of the accord, Turkey recognized the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement and pledged not to try to change the Kuwaiti “status quo,” whose northern and western boundaries were formally defined in that Convention for the first time.[417] Thus, Kuwait was separated from the adjacent province of Basra within the Ottoman Empire to the north and west by two lines: a Green Line running from the coast at the mouth of the Khawr Al-Zubair in a northwesterly direction, passing immediately south of Umm Qasr, Safwan, and Jabal Sanam to the Batin, and then southwest down the Batin; as well as a Red Line down the Khawr Abdallah. Both lines depicted the limits of Kuwaiti authority and territorial powers. While the Convention envisaged the creation of a delimitation commission, ostensibly to demarcate the ground boundaries thus defined, such a commission was never set up.[418] In the event, the Convention was never ratified, only to be relegated into oblivion by the outbreak of World War I. Therefore, its boundary definitions were never legally binding on either Britain or Turkey (and, consequently, neither on Kuwait nor Iraq), although they became the basis of future boundary “agreements.”

With the declaration of World War I between Britain and Turkey in November 1914, the Shaykhdom of Kuwait was accorded recognition as “an independent government under British protection.”[419] At the end of the war, the Ottoman Empire was dismembered and a mandate system instituted under Article 22 of the League of Nations Covenant. The three districts of Mosul, Basra, and Baghdad, which formed a part of Mesopotamia, were merged together to constitute the Kingdom of Iraq. The mandate over this “Kingdom” was conferred on Britain. Importantly, in its administration of the mandate, London sought to define Iraq’s boundaries, and, to that end, Sir Percy Cox, then British high commissioner for Iraq, suggested that the Green Line—of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913—be confirmed as the boundary between the two “countries.” This was achieved in 1923 through an exchange of letters between the ruler of Kuwait, the British political agent in Kuwait, and the British high commissioner for Iraq, which described the frontier as identical with the frontier indicated by the Green Line in the 1913 Convention.[420]

Just before its admission into the League of Nations in October 1932, Iraq's mandate was "terminated." At the same time, British authorities opted to "reaffirm" the existing frontier between Iraq and Kuwait and, to that end, prodded both Iraqi and Kuwaiti officials to exchange letters. The frontier was "reaffirmed" on the basis of the 1923 definition, through an exchange of letters in July and August 1932 between the Iraqi prime minister and the ruler of Kuwait.[421]

On 19 June 1961, Kuwait's official accession to independence was marked by yet another exchange of letters between the ruler of Kuwait and the British political resident in the Arabian Gulf, Sir William Luce. By virtue of that exchange, Britain conceded the abrogation of the 1899 Anglo-Kuwaiti agreement, which had become "obsolete and inappropriate" and "inconsistent with the sovereignty and independence of Kuwait. "[422] The agreement was replaced by a new accord of friendship and assistance.

On 25 June 1961, six days after the signing of this latest compact, the Iraqi prime minister, General Abdul Karim Qasim, announced his claim to Iraqi sovereignty over Kuwait.[423] He declared that Baghdad refused to recognize the 1899 agreement, on the ground that it was imposed by Britain on Kuwait. Iraq further claimed all of the territory belonging to the district of Kuwait, ostensibly associated with the province of Basra, which should therefore come under its authority. Faced with this situation, the ruler of Kuwait requested British assistance, under the provisions of the 1961 Anglo-Kuwaiti accord. A similar request was made to Saudi Arabia. In response thereto, British and Saudi military forces were dispatched to Kuwait, to defend it from an "imminent assault."[424] When Kuwait subsequently requested support from the League ofArab States (LAS) in defense of its independence, a League force was constituted and sent to Kuwait to replace British troops.[425]

While the presence of the League's force contributed to preserving Kuwaiti independence, the root of the problem, namely Iraq's territorial claims, was only dealt with through a change of government in Baghdad. Starting with the February 1963 change of regime, the Iraqi government adopted—ever so gradually—a new policy toward the Shaykhdom. As a result of improved relations between the two countries, an agreement was concluded between

them on 4 October 1963, under which Iraq recognized the independence and sovereignty of Kuwait—and its boundaries—as specified in the 1932 exchange of letters between the then prime minister of Iraq and the ruler of Kuwait.[426]

Although Iraq has occasionally questioned the legal validity of the various international agreements defining its boundary with Kuwait, this issue was squarely addressed by Security Council Resolution 687, on 3 April 1991. To be sure, the resolution was adopted in the aftermath of the Gulf War—that is, after the restoration of Kuwait's sovereignty and independence, which were clearly violated by the 1 August 1990 Iraqi invasion and occupation. Yet, the Security Council noted in its resolution that Iraq and Kuwait had signed specific "MinUtes" on 4 October 1963 formally recognizing the boundary between the two countries, and allocating certain islands to each party. Resolution 687 further acknowledged that Iraq had accepted the independence and sovereignty of Kuwait within defined borders as specified in the 1932 exchange of letters between the then prime minister of Iraq and the ruler of Kuwait.[427] Consequently, the Security Council demanded that Iraq and Kuwait respect the inviolability of the international boundary—and the allocation of islands set out in the 1963 Agreed Minutes—and decided to guarantee the inviolability of that boundary. In his subsequent report to the Council, the United Nations secretary-general reported that Resolution 687 had been accepted by the parties, signifying Iraq's formal acceptance of its international boundary with Kuwait based on the 1963 agreement. Nevertheless, and despite the Security Council's pronouncement— that the 1963 agreement was binding—the affirmation was somewhat unprecedented, which led to the assertion that a legal tribunal such as the International Court ofjustice should have more appropriately determined the validity of such an agreement.[428] Only such an attestation would avoid potential legal or political controversies between the parties.

**** Demarcation Of The Iraq-Kuwait Boundary

The Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission was established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 687 of 3 April 1991, which called on the secretary-general of the United Nations to lend his assistance to and make arrangements with both protagonists to demarcate their mutual

boundary. As already noted, that boundary had formally been agreed upon, but had never been demarcated.

After consultations with the governments of Iraq and Kuwait, the secretarygeneral did in fact establish the Demarcation Commission, composed of five members—three independent experts appointed by the secretary-general, and one representative each of Iraq and Kuwait—to carry out the necessary technical tasks. The Commission held its first session in New York on 23 May 1991. It presented its Final Report, dated 20 May 1993, to the secretary-general with a list of geographic coordinates demarcating the boundary, along with an “authoritative” map of the area (see Map 14.1).

A preliminary assessment of this United Nations-appointed body reveals that the Commission performed a technical rather than a political task. It has not reallocated territory between Kuwait and Iraq but has carried out the technical task necessary to demarcate—for the first time ever—the precise coordinates of the international boundary, as reaffirmed in the 1963 Agreed Minutes. Thus, the Commission demarcated, in geographic coordinates, the latitude and longitude of the boundary described in the 1963 Agreed Minutes. It also made arrangements for the physical representation of the boundary through the emplacement of a number of boundary pillars or monuments. Finally, it provided for the arrangement, as well as the continued maintenance and accurate location, ofsurface markers.

The Commission therefore successfully completed its task of final demarcation of the international boundary between Iraq and Kuwait, the inviolability of which both countries are committed to respect, and which the United Nations Security Council has pledged to guarantee. Indeed, this particular demarcation has allowed the realignment of the demilitarized zone established along that border, precisely within the newly demarcated international border. Without a doubt, such a demarcation will significantly enhance—in the long term—the stability of the border, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security in the region.[429]

Not surprisingly, Kuwait was the first to welcome the Commission’s report, maintaining that the end results represented an important achievement for the United Nations. Kuwait perceived the results as a contribution to the promotion of international peace and justice. Iraq, for its part, expressed initial reservations, describing the Commission’s decisions as purely political. Baghdad emphasized that the results were incompatible with international law and justice.[430] Subsequently, the Iraqi government formally confirmed Baghdad’s “recognition” of Kuwait and of the international boundary between the two countries, as demarcated by the Commission.[431] The Security Council in turn welcomed this development.

[[d-j-dr-joseph-a-kechichian-iran-iraq-and-the-arab-12.jpg][**Map 14.1** Kuwait-Iraq Border]]

**** Remaining Contentions

Despite this successful outcome of the search for a final settlement of the border contest between Iraq and Kuwait, several important questions-arising out of the 1990 crisis—remain as sources of contention not only between Kuwait and Iraq, but also between the latter and the international community. These controversial issues include Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction, the festering implications of the United Nations-imposed sanctions against Baghdad, and the troubling consequences of Kuwaiti citizens either taken as prisoners or missing since 1990.

***** Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Security Council first addressed this thorny problem in 1991, under Resolution 687, when it “imposed” strict conditions. Indeed, Iraq was ordered to destroy any such weapons—under international supervision—and not acquire, or develop, new systems. Toward that end, significant progress has been achieved to comply with the provisions of that resolution, although that headway has been deemed as being insufficient. In its Resolution 1284 (17 December 1999), the Security Council concluded that Baghdad failed to meet those conditions that would lift relevant prohibitions imposed against it.

In the opinion of the Security Council, Iraq has failed to implement the United Nations resolutions in full.

The League of Arab States, for its part, has continuously called upon Iraq to carry out its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions, including those pertaining to the issue of weapons of mass destruction. Still, the LAS advanced that the removal of all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East region, and above all the Israeli nuclear arsenal, was indispensable for maintaining peace throughout the region.[432] To be sure, this position was similar to the declared intention of the Security Council, as underlined in Resolution 687. In fact, this critical resolution specified that the “actions” requested from Iraq represented steps toward the goal of establishing a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the entire Middle East.

Yet, and while it has formally denied possessing weapons of mass destruction after its arsenal was destroyed, Iraq has refused to accept the Security Council’s 17 December 1999 resolution 1284. The latter established a new reinforced systern of monitoring, verification, and inspection. Ironically, Kuwait perceived—as declared before the Security Council in December 1999—that Baghdad still possessed weapons of mass destruction and that this remained a source of great concern to the Shaykhdom. Naturally, Kuwait did not trust Iraqi intentions, and believed that such weapons posed a threat to its security and the stability of the Gulf region.[433]

***** Sanctions Imposed against Iraq

Equally important, and since 1991, Iraq has been subjected to widespread sanctions that, in turn, have drawn the ire of the international community. Senior leaders in a number of countries have publicly expressed their concerns about the deterioration of the economic and humanitarian conditions of the Iraqi population. Such concerns have led the Security Council to adopt new measures aimed at improving the system established under the so-called oil for food program, to meet the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people (Resolution 1284). The Council further expressed its intention, once satisfied of Iraq’s full cooperation with the reinforced system

of ongoing monitoring and verification, to suspend for a period of 120 days—renewable by the Council—prohibitions against the export of civilian commodities and products to Iraq.

Baghdad has so far rejected this overture. In fact, Iraq has refused to accept a mere suspension of sanctions, insisting that they should be lifted in their totality because Baghdad allegedly fulfilled previous obligations in toto. In addition to key Western powers, including the United States and Britain—which rejected Baghdad's claims—Kuwait has also expressed certain reservations. Although Kuwait has supported the Security Council's calls for an improvement of the humanitarian situation in Iraq, it has laid full responsibility for the continuation of that suffering on the government of Iraq.

The plight of the Iraqi people, and the urgent need to alleviate their suffering, has been a source of particular concern to the League ofArab States. For the past decade or so, the issue has received constant attention by the League's secretarygeneral, who reports to the LAS Council of Ministers on whatever developments or progress may be observed. For their part, Arab foreign ministers expressed their full solidarity with the suffering Iraqi people, stressing the urgent need to lift sanctions as soon as possible. To that end, the ministers decided at their specially convened meeting of 24 January 1999 to exert collective efforts, in cooperation with the United Nations and especially with the members of the Security Council, to lift economic sanctions imposed on Iraq. LAS foreign ministers proposed a timetable that would rescind sanctions concurrently with a comprehensive review of sanctions, and in accordance with the international obligations, referred to in Security Council resolutions on Iraq. A follow-up committee was established to take concrete action in that regard, but partly due to Iraq's boycott of the process, limited common action has been achieved to date.

***** Kuwaiti Prisoners and Missing Persons

A third contention has been the fate of several hundred Kuwaitis missing in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War. The Security Council first raised this question of "humanitarian" concerns when it affirmed, under Resolution 687,

Iraq’s commitment to facilitate the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals. The specific language of the resolution called on Baghdad to extend all necessary cooperation to the International Committee of the Red Cross in carrying out its mission. Nine years later, no significant progress having been achieved on that score, the Council reaffirmed in Resolution 1284 Iraq’s obligations regarding the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals—or their remains. The firm language of the Security Council reiterated Baghdad’s obligation to return all Kuwaiti property including archives seized during the 1990–1991 occupation. Finally, the Security Council requested the secretary-general to report thereon periodically, and to appoint a high-level coordinator for these issues.[434]

The League of Arab States attached similar importance to this thorny contention. In March 1999, the League’s Council of Ministers requested SecretaryGeneral Esmat Abdul Magid to establish a specific mechanism—within the framework of the Security Council resolutions—to help settle the Arab humanitarian problems between Iraq and Kuwait on the one hand, and those between Iraq and Saudi Arabia on the other. The goal of that mechanism was to better support the International Committee of the Red Cross and best assist the latter’s efforts in settling remaining matters.[435]

Various consultations were held under that League mechanism with all parties concerned, but no progress has so far been achieved. To date, Iraq has denied the existence of any remaining Kuwaiti prisoners, and has refrained from providing information about known missing individuals. This has led Kuwait to assert—before the Security Council—that Baghdad was not serious about resolving this humanitarian contention. It called on the Council to pursue the issue with vigor.[436]

**** General Appraisal

Clearly, the Kuwait-Iraq border problem—like other border disputes in the Gulf region—not only draws its distant roots from the colonial history of the Middle East but is also laden with serious political rivalries. Most of the Gulf states’ borders have never been accurately demarcated. Not surprisingly, several have turned into sources of conflict between neighboring countries

that, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, remain unresolved. Noticeably, the preservation of borders drawn or imposed by colonial powers—on the basis of the principle of uti possidetis—has often failed to ensure regional stability.

Inasmuch as the demarcation of the Kuwait-Iraq border was successfully coneluded by the United Nations—after the 1991 Gulf War—a critical new precedent has been set to diffuse a major source of conflict. Still, several controversial contentions remained, and on their resolution will largely depend the restoration of good-neighborly relations between the two protagonists. This remains a precondition for recovering Arab solidarity among LAS member states. Indeed, few crises have undermined the LAS as severely as has the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. No matter how controversial their differences, or how expedient United Nations-imposed solutions, the reality of the Arab world surely necessitated a fundamental political reappraisal of ties between the warring parties.

Among those pending issues, a solution to the problem of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons would open the door for restoring better Kuwaiti-Iraqi relations, and improving the general atmosphere in the Gulf region.

On the other hand, a final resolution of the issue of Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction—in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions—would certainly increase pressure on Israel to adhere to the 1968 Treaty on the NonProliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Such an action would greatly facilitate the creation of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction throughout the Middle East, a goal constantly reaffirmed by the United Nations. It might be added that a fair settlement of the “weapons” and “prisoners” problems would undoubtedly lead to the long overdue lifting of United Nations sanctions against Iraq, which in turn would greatly alleviate the serious economic conditions of the Iraqi population.

Finally, the Kuwait-Iraq border problem underscores once more the need to create new regional legal mechanisms for settling legal issues of such nature. Current efforts by the League of Arab States to create an Arab Court ofjustice, for example, and its March 2000 approval to establish a new

mechanism for conflict prevention, management, and resolution constitute important steps in that direction.

**** United Nations Security Council

RESOLUTION 687 (91)

S/RES/687 (1991)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 2981st meeting, on 3 April 1991.

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 660 (1990) of 2 August 1990,661 (1990) of 6 August 1990,662 (1990) of 9 August 1990,664 (1990) of 18 August 1990,665 (1990) of 25 August 1990, 666 (1990) of 13 September 1990, 667 (1990) of 16 September 1990,669 (1990) of 24 September 1990,670 (1990) of 25 September 1990,674 (1990) of29 October 1990, 677 (1990) of28 November 1990, 678 (1990) of29 November 1990 and 686 (1991) of 2 March 1991,

Welcoming the restoration to Kuwait of its sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and the return of its legitimate Government,

Affirming the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Kuwait and Iraq, and noting the intention expressed by the Member States cooperating with Kuwait under paragraph 2 of resolution 678 (1990) to bring their military presence in Iraq to an end as soon as possible consistent with paragraph 8 of resolution 686 (1991),

Reaffirming the need to be assured of Iraq’s peaceful intentions in the light of its unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait,

Taking note of the letter sent by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq on 27 February 1991 and those sent pursuant to resolution 686 (1991),

Noting that Iraq and Kuwait, as independent sovereign States, signed at Baghdad on 4 October 1963 “Agreed Minutes Between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq Regarding the Restoration of Friendly Relations, Recognition and Related Matters,” thereby recognizing formally the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait and the allocation of islands, which were registered with the United Nations in accordance with Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations and in which Iraq recognized the independence and complete sovereignty of the

State of Kuwait within its borders as specified and accepted in the letter of the Prime Minister of Iraq dated 21 July 1932, and as accepted by the Ruler of Kuwait in his letter dated 10 August 1932,

Conscious of the need for demarcation of the said boundary,

Conscious also of the statements by Iraq threatening to use weapons in violation of its obligations under the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War ofAsphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925, and of its prior use of chemical weapons and affirming that grave consequences would follow any further use by Iraq of such weapons,

Recalling that Iraq has subscribed to the Declaration adopted by all States participating in the Conference of States Parties to the 1925 Geneva Protocol and Other Interested States, held in Paris from 7 to 11 January 1989, establishing the objective of universal elimination of chemical and biological weapons,

Recalling also that Iraq has signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, of 10 April 1972,

Noting the importance of Iraq ratifying this Convention,

Noting also the importance of all States adhering to this Convention and encouraging its forthcoming Review Conference to reinforce the authority, efficiency and universal scope of the convention,

Stressing the importance of an early conclusion by the Conference on Disarmament of its work on a Convention on the Universal Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and of universal adherence thereto,

Aware of the use by Iraq of ballistic missiles in unprovoked attacks and therefore of the need to take specific measures in regard to such missiles located in Iraq,

Concerned by the reports in the hands of Member States that Iraq has attempted to acquire materials for a nuclear-weapons program contrary to its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1 July 1968,

Recalling the objective of the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

Conscious of the threat that all weapons of mass destruction pose to peace and security in the area and of the need to work towards the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of such weapons,

Conscious also of the objective of achieving balanced and comprehensive control of armaments in the region,

Conscious further of the importance of achieving the objectives noted above using all available means, including a dialogue among the States of the region,

Noting that resolution 686 (1991) marked the lifting of the measures imposed by resolution 661 (1990) in so far as they applied to Kuwait,

Noting also that despite the progress being made in fulfilling the obligations of resolution 686 (1991), many Kuwaiti and third country nationals are still not accounted for and property remains unreturned,

Recalling the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, opened for signature at New York on 18 December 1979, which categorizes all acts of taking hostages as manifestations of international terrorism,

Deploring threats made by Iraq during the recent conflict to make use of terrorism against targets outside Iraq and the taking of hostages by Iraq,

Taking note with grave concern of the reports of the Secretary-General of 20 March 1991 and 28 March 1991, and conscious of the necessity to meet urgently the humanitarian needs in Kuwait and Iraq,

Bearing in mind its objective of restoring international peace and security in the area as set out in recent resolutions of the Security Council,

Conscious of the need to take the following measures acting under Chapter VII of the Charter,

1. Affirms all thirteen resolutions noted above, except as expressly changed below to achieve the goals of this resolution, including a formal cease-fire;

2. Demands that Iraq and Kuwait respect the inviolability of the international boundary and the allocation of islands set out in the “Agreed Minutes Between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq Regarding the Restoration of Friendly Relations, Recognition and Related Matters,” signed by them in the exercise of their sovereignty at Baghdad on 4 October 1963 and registered with the United Nations and published by the United Nations in document 7063, United Nations, Treaty Series, 1964:

3. Calls upon the Secretary-General to lend his assistance to make arrangements with Iraq and Kuwait to demarcate the boundary between Iraq and Kuwait, drawing on appropriate material, including the map transmitted by Security Council document 5/22412 and to report back to the Security Council within one month;

4. Decides to guarantee the inviolability of the above-mentioned international boundary and to take as appropriate all necessary measures to that end in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, after consulting with Iraq and Kuwait, to submit within three days to the Security Council for its approval a plan for the immediate deployment of a United Nations observer unit to monitor the [Khwar] Abd[a]llah and a demilitarized zone, which is hereby established, extending ten kilometers into Iraq and five kilometers into Kuwait from the boundary referred to in the “Agreed Minutes Between the State of Kuwait and the Republic of Iraq Regarding the Restoration of Friendly Relations, Recognition and Related Matters” of 4 October 1963; to deter violations of the boundary through its presence in and surveillance of the demilitarized zone; to observe any hostile or potentially hostile action mounted from the territory of one State to the other; and for the Secretary-General to report regularly to the Security Council on the operations of the unit, and immediately if there are serious violations of the zone or potential threats to peace;

6. Notes that as soon as the Secretary-General notifies the Security Council of the completion of the deployment of the United Nations observer unit, the conditions will be established for the Member States cooperating with Kuwait in accordance with resolution 678 (1990) to bring their military presence in Iraq to an end consistent with resolution 686 (1991):

7. Invites Iraq to reaffirm unconditionally its obligations under the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925, and to ratify the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, of 10 April 1972;

8. Decides that Iraq shall unconditionally accept the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless, under international supervision, of:

(a) All chemical and biological weapons and all stocks of agents and all related subsystems and components and all research, development, support and manufacturing facilities;

(1) All ballistic missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometers and related major parts, and repair and production facilities;

9. Decides also for the implementation of paragraph 8 above, the following: (a) Iraq shall submit to the Secretary-General, within fifteen days of the adoption of the present resolution, a declaration of the locations, amounts and types of all items specified in paragraph 8 and agree to urgent, on-site inspection as specified below;

(b) The Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate Governments and, where appropriate, with the Director-General of the World Health Organization, within forty-five days of the passage of the present resolution,

shall develop, and submit to the Council for approval, a plan calling for the completion of the following acts within forty-five days of such approval:

(i) The forming of a Special Commission, which shall carry out immediate on-site inspection of Iraq's biological, chemical and missile capabilities, based on Iraq's declarations and the designation of any additional locations by the special Commission itself;

(ii) The yielding by Iraq of possession to the special Commission for destruction, removal or rendering harmless, taking into account the requirements of public safety, of all items specified under paragraph 8 (a) above, including items at the additional locations designated by the special Commission under paragraph 9 (b) (i) above and the destruction by Iraq, under the supervision of the special Commission, of all its missile capabilities, including launchers, as specified under paragraph 8 (b) above;

(iii) The provision by the Special Commission of the assistance and cooperation to the Director-General of the InternationalAtomic Energy Agency required in paragraphs 12 and 13 below;

10. Decides further that Iraq shall unconditionally undertake not to use, develop, construct or acquire any of the items specified in paragraphs 8 and 9 above and requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Special Commission, to develop a plan for the future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with this paragraph, to be submitted to the Security Council for approval within one hundred and twenty days of the passage of this resolution;

11. Invites Iraq to reaffirm unconditionally its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1 July 1968;

12. Decides that Iraq shall unconditionally agree not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons or nuclear-weapons-usable material or any subsystems or components or any research, development, support or manufacturing

facilities related to the above; to submit to the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency within fifteen days of the adoption of the present resolution a declaration of the locations, amounts, and types of all items specified above; to place all of its nuclear-weapons-usable materials under the exclusive control, for custody and removal, of the International Atomic Energy Agency, with the assistance and cooperation of the special Commission as provided for in the plan of the Secretary-General discussed in paragraph 9 (b) above; to accept, in accordance with the arrangements provided for in paragraph 13 below, urgent on-site inspection and the destruction, removal or rendering harmless as appropriate of all items specified above; and to accept the plan discussed in paragraph 13 below for the future ongoing monitoring and verification of its compliance with these undertakings;

13. Requests the Director-General of the Internationd Atomic Energy Agency, through the Secretary-General, with the assistance and cooperation of the special Commission as provided for in the plan of the Secretary-General in paragraph 9 (b) above, to carry out immediate onsite inspection of Iraq's nuclear capabilities based on Iraq's declarations and the designation of any additional locations by the special Commission; to develop a plan for submission to the Security Council within forty-five days calling for the destruction, removal, or rendering harmless as appropriate of all items listed in paragraph 12 above; to carry out the plan within forty-five days following approval by the Security Council; and to develop a plan, taking into account the rights and obligations of Iraq under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1 July 1968, for the future ongoing monitoring and verification of Iraq's compliance with paragraph 12 above, including an inventory of all nuclear material in Iraq subject to the Agency's verification and inspections to confirm that Agency safeguards cover all relevant nuclear activities in Iraq, to be submitted to the Security Council for approval within one hundred and twenty days of the passage of the present resolution;

14. Notes that the actions to be taken by Iraq in paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of the present resolution represent steps towards the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery and the objective of a global ban on chemical weapons;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the steps taken to facilitate the return of all Kuwaiti property seized by Iraq, including a list of any property that Kuwait claims has not been returned or which has not been returned intact;

16. Reaffirms that Iraq, without prejudice to the debts and obligations of Iraq arising prior to 2 August 1990, which will be addressed through the normal mechanisms, is liable under international law for any direct loss, damage, including environmental damage and the depletion of natural resources, or injury to foreign Governments, nationals and corporations, as a result of Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait;

17. Decides that all Iraqi statements made since 2 August 1990 repudiating its foreign debt are null and void, and demands that Iraq adhere scrupulously to all of its obligations concerning servicing and repayment of its foreign debt;

18. Decides also to create a fund to pay compensation for claims that fall within paragraph 16 above and to establish a Commission that will administer the fund;

19. Directs the Secretary-General to develop and present to the Security Council for decision, no later than thirty days following the adoption of the present resolution, recommendations for the fund to meet the requirement for the payment of claims established in accordance with paragraph 18 above and for a program to implement the decisions in paragraphs 16, 17 and 18 above, including: administration of the fund; mechanisms for determining the appropriate level of Iraq's contribution to the fund based on a percentage of the value of the exports of petroleum and petroleum products from Iraq not to exceed a figure to be suggested to the Council by the Secretary-General, taking into account the requirements of the people of Iraq, Iraq's payment capacity as assessed in conjunction with the international financial institutions taking into consideration external debt service, and the needs of the Iraqi economy; arrangements for ensuring that

payments are made to the fund; the process by which funds will be allocated and claims paid; appropriate procedures for evaluating losses, listing claims and verifying their validity and resolving disputed claims in respect of Iraq's liability as specified in paragraph 16 above; and the composition of the Commission designated above;

20. Decides, effective immediately, that the prohibitions against the sale or supply to Iraq of commodities or products, other than medicine and health supplies, and prohibitions against financial transactions related thereto contained in resolution 661 (1990) shall not apply to foodstuffs notified to the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) concerning the situation between Iraq and Kuwait or, with the approval of that Committee, under the simplified and accelerated "no-objection" procedure, to materials and supplies for essential civilian needs as identified in the report of the Secretary-General dated 20 March 1991, and in any further findings of humanitarian need by the Committee;

21. Decides that the Security Council shall review the provisions of paragraph 20 above every sixty days in the light of the policies and practices of the Government of Iraq, including the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the Security Council, for the purpose of determining whether to reduce or Uft the prohibitions referred to therein;

22. Decides also that upon the approval by the Security Council of the program called for in paragraph 19 above and upon Council agreement that Iraq has completed all actions contemplated in paragraphs 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 above, the prohibitions against the import of commodities and products originating in Iraq and the prohibitions against financial transactions related thereto contained in resolution 661 (1990) shall have no further force or effect;

23. Decides further that, pending action by the Security Council under paragraph 22 above, the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) shall be empowered to approve, when required to assure adequate financial resources on the part of Iraq to carry out the

activities under paragraph 20 above, exceptions to the prohibition against the import of commodities and products originating in Iraq;

24. Decides that, in accordance with resolution 661 (1990) and subsequent related resolutions and until a further decision is taken by the Security Council, all States shall continue to prevent the sale or supply, or the promotion or facilitation of such sale or supply, to Iraq by their nationals, or from their territories or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of:

(a) Arms and related materiel of all types, specifically including the sale or transfer through other means of all forms of conventional military equipment, including for paramilitary forces, and spare parts and components and their means of production, for such equipment;

(b) Items specified and defined in paragraphs 8 and 12 above not otherwise covered above;

(c) Technology under licensing or other transfer arrangements used in the production, utilization or stockpiling of items specified in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above;

(d) Personnel or materials for training or technical support services relating to the design, development, manufacture, use, maintenance or support of items specified in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above;

25. Calls upon all States and international organizations to act strictly in accordance with paragraph 24 above, notwithstanding the existence of any contracts, agreements, licenses or any other arrangements;

26. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with appropriate Governments, to develop within sixty days, for the approval of the Security

Council, guidelines to facilitate full international implementation of paragraphs 24 and 25 above and paragraph 27 below, and to make them available to all States and to establish a procedure for updating these guidelines periodically;

27. Calls upon all States to maintain such national controls and procedures and to take such other actions consistent with the guidelines to be established by the Security Council under paragraph 26 above as may be necessary to ensure compliance with the terms of paragraph 24 above, and calls upon international organizations to take all appropriate steps to assist in ensuring such full compliance;

28. Agrees to review its decisions in paragraphs 22, 23, 24 and 25 above, except for the items specified and defined in paragraphs 8 and 12 above, on a regular basis and in any case one hundred and twenty days following passage of the present resolution, taking into account Iraq's compliance with the resolution and general progress towards the control of armaments in the region;

29. Decides that all States, including Iraq, shall take the necessary measures to ensure that no claim shall lie at the instance of the Government of Iraq, or of any person or body in Iraq, or of any person claiming through or for the benefit of any such person or body, in connection with any contract or other transaction where its performance was affected by reason of the measures taken by the Security Council in resolution 661 (1990) and related resolutions;

30. Decides that, in furtherance of its commitment to facilitate the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third country nationals, Iraq shall extend all necessary cooperation to the International Committee of the Red Cross, providing lists of such persons, facilitating the access of the International Committee of the Red Cross to all such persons wherever located or detained and facilitating the search by the International Committee of the Red Cross for those Kuwaiti and third country nationals stiU unaccounted for;

31. Invites the International Committee of the Red Cross to keep the Secretary-General apprised as appropriate of all activities undertaken in connection with facilitating the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third country nationals or their remains present in Iraq on or after 2 August 1990:

32. Requires Iraq to inform the Security Council that it will not commit or support any act of international terrorism or allow any organization directed towards commission of such acts to operate within its territory and to condemn unequivocally and renounce all acts, methods and practices of terrorism;

33. Declares that, upon official notification by Iraq to the Secretary-General and to the Security Council of its acceptance of the provisions above, a formal cease-fire is effective between Iraq and Kuwait and the Member States cooperating with Kuwait in accordance with resolution 678

34. Decides to remain seized of the matter and to take such further steps as may be required for the implementation of the present resolution and to secure peace and security in the area.

**** United Nations Security Council

RESOLUTION 1284 (99)

S/RES/1284 (1999)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4084th meeting, on 17 December 1999.

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous relevant resolutions, including its resolutions 661 (1990) of 6 August 1990, 687 (1991) of 3 April 1991, 699 (1991) of 17 June 1991,707 (1991) of 15August 1991,715 (1991) of 11 October 1991,986 (1995) of 14 April 1995, 1051 (1996) of 27 March 1996, 1153 (1998) of 20 February 1998, 1175 (1998) of 19 June 1998, 1242 (1999) of 21 May 1999 and 1266 (1999) of 4 October 1999,

Recalling the approval by the Council in its resolution 715 (1991) of the plans for future ongoing monitoring and verification submitted by the Secretary General and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in pursuance of paragraphs 10 and 13 of resolution 687 (1991),

Welcoming the reports of the three panels on Iraq (5/1999/356) and having held a comprehensive consideration of them-and the recommendations contained in them,

Stressing the importance of a comprehensive approach to the full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq and the need for Iraqi compliance with these resolutions,

Recalling the goal of establishing in the Middle East a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and all missiles for their delivery and the objective of a global ban on chemical weapons as referred to in paragraph 14 of resolution 687 (1991),

Concerned at the humanitarian situation in Iraq, and determined to improve that situation,

Recalling with concern that the repatriation and return of all Kuwaiti and third country nationals or their remains, present in Iraq on or after 2 August 1990, pursuant to paragraph 2 (c) of resolution 686 (1991) of 2 March 1991 and paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991), have not yet been fully carried out by Iraq,

Recalling that in its resolutions 686 (1991) and 687 (1991) the Council demanded that Iraq return in the shortest possible time all Kuwaiti property it had seized, and noting with regret that Iraq has still not complied fully with this demand,

Acknowledging the progress made by Iraq towards compliance with the provisions of resolution 687 (1991), but noting that, as a result of its failure to implement the relevant Council resolutions fully, the conditions do not exist which would enable the Council to take a decision pursuant to resolution 687 (1991) to lift the prohibitions referred to in that resolution,

Reiterating the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Kuwait, Iraq and the neighboring States,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, and taking into account that operative provisions of this resolution relate to previous resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter,

1. Decides to establish, as a subsidiary body of the Council, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) which replaces the special Commission established pursuant to paragraph 9 (b) of resolution 687 (1991):

2. Decides also that UNMOVIC will undertake the responsibilities mandated to the special Commission by the Council, with regard to the verification of compliance by Iraq with its obligations under paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 of resolution 687 (1991) and other related resolutions, that UNMOVIC will establish and operate, as was recommended by the panel on disarmament and current and future ongoing monitoring and verification issues, a reinforced system of ongoing monitoring and verification, which will implement the plan approved by the Council in resolution 715 (1991) and address unresolved disarmament issues, and that UNMOVIC will identify, as

necessary in accordance with its mandate, additional sites in Iraq to be covered by the reinforced system of ongoing monitoring and verification;

3. Reaffirms the provisions of the relevant resolutions with regard to the role of the IAEA in addressing compliance by Iraq with paragraphs 12 and 13 of resolution 687 (1991) and other related resolutions, and requests the Director General of the IAEA to maintain this role with the assistance and cooperation of UNMOVIC;

4. Reaffirms its resolutions 687 (1991), 699 (1991), 707 (1991), 715 (1991), 1051 (1996), 1154 (1998) and all other relevant resolutions and statements of its President, which establish the criteria for Iraqi compliance, affirms that the obligations of Iraq referred to in those resolutions and statements with regard to cooperation with the special Commission, unrestricted access and provision of information will apply in respect of UNMOVIC, and decides in particular that Iraq shall allow UNMOVIC teams immediate, unconditional and unrestricted access to any and all areas, facilities, equipment, records and means of transport which they wish to inspect in accordance with the mandate of UNMOVIC, as well as to all officials and other persons under the authority of the Iraqi Government whom UNMOVIC wishes to interview so that UNMOVIC may fully discharge its mandate;

5. Requests the Secretary-General, within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution, to appoint, after consultation with and subject to the approval of the Council, an Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC who will take up his mandated tasks as soon as possible, and, in consultation with the Executive Chairman and the Council members, to appoint suitably qualified experts as a College of Commissioners for UNMOVIC which will meet regularly to review the implementation of this and other relevant resolutions and provide professional advice and guidance to the Executive Chairman, including on significant policy decisions and on written reports to be submitted to the Council through the Secretary-General;

6. Requests the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, within 45 days of his appointment, to submit to the Council, in consultation with and through the Secretary-General, for its approval an organizational plan for UNMOVIC,

including its structure, staffing requirements, management guidelines, recruitment and training procedures, incorporating as appropriate the recommendations of the panel on disarmament and current and future ongoing monitoring and verification issues, and recognizing in particular the need for an effective, cooperative management structure for the new organization, for staffing with suitably qualified and experienced personnel, who would be regarded as international civil servants subject to Article 100 of the Charter of the United Nations, drawn from the broadest possible geographical base, including as he deems necessary from international arms control organizations, and for the provision of high quality technical and cultural training;

7. Decides that UNMOVIC and the IAEA, not later than 60 days after they have both started work in Iraq, will each draw up, for approval by the Council, a work program for the discharge of their mandates, which will include both the implementation of the reinforced system of ongoing monitoring and verification, and the key remaining disarmament tasks to be completed by Iraq pursuant to its obligations to comply with the disarmament requirements of resolution 687 (1991) and other related resolutions, which constitute the governing standard of Iraqi compliance, and further decides that what is required of Iraq for the implementation of each task shall be clearly defined and precise;

8. Requests the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC and the Director General of the IAEA, drawing on the expertise of other international organizations as appropriate, to establish a unit which will have the responsibilities of the joint unit constituted by the special Commission and the Director General of the IAEA under paragraph 16 of the export/import mechanism approved by resolution 1051 (1996), and also requests the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC, in consultation with the Director General of the IAEA, to resume the revision and updating of the lists of items and technology to which the mechanism applies;

9. Decides that the Government of Iraq shall he liable for the full costs of UNMOVIC and the IAEA in relation to their work under this and other related resolutions on Iraq;

10. Requests Member States to give full cooperation to UNMOVIC and the IAEA in the discharge of their mandates;

11. Decides that UNMOVIC shall take over all assets, liabilities and archives of the Special Commission, and that it shall assume the Special Commission's part in agreements existing between the special Commission and Iraq and between the United Nations and Iraq, and affirms that the Executive Chairman, the Commissioners and the personnel serving with UNMOVIC shall have the rights, privileges, facilities and immunities of the special Commission;

12. Requests the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC to report, through the Secretary-General, to the Council, following consultation with the Commissioners, every three months on the work of UNMOVIC, pending submission of the first reports referred to in paragraph 33 below, and to report immediately when the reinforced system of ongoing monitqring and verification is fully operational in Iraq;

13. Reiterates the obligation of Iraq, in furtherance of its commitment to facilitate the repatriation of all Kuwaiti and third country nationals referred to in paragraph 30 of resolution 687 (1991), to extend all necessary cooperation to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and calls upon the Government of Iraq to resume cooperation with the Tripartite Commission and Technical Subcommittee established to facilitate work on this issue;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council every four months on compliance by Iraq with its obligations regarding the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third country nationals or their remains, to report every six months on the return of all Kuwaiti property, including archives, seized by Iraq, and to appoint a high-level coordinator for these issues;

15. Authorizes States, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraphs 3 (a), 3 (b) and 4 of resolution 661 (1990) and subsequent relevant resolutions, to permit the import of any volume of petroleum and petroleum products originating in Iraq, including financial and other essential transactions directly relating thereto, as required for the purposes and on the conditions set out in paragraph 1 (a) and (b) and subsequent provisions of resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions;

16. Underlines, in this context, its intention to take further action, including permitting the use of additional export routes for petroleum and petroleum products, under appropriate conditions otherwise consistent with the purpose and provisions of resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions;

17. Directs the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) to approve, on the basis of proposals from the Secretary-General, lists of humanitarian items, including foodstuffs, pharmaceutical and medical supplies, as well as basic or standard medical and agricultural equipment and basic or standard educational items, decides, notwithstanding paragraph 3 of resolution 661 (1990) and paragraph 20 of resolution 687 (1991), that supplies of these items will not be submitted for approval of that Committee, except for items subject to the provisions of resolution 1051 (1996), and will be notified to the Secretary-General and financed in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 8 (a) and 8 (1) of resolution 986 (1995), and requests the Secretary-General to inform the Committee in a timely manner of all such notifications received and actions taken;

18. Requests the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) to appoint, in accordance with resolutions 1175 (1998) and 1210 (1998), 2 group of experts, including independent inspection agents appointed by the Secretary-General in accordance with paragraph 6 of resolution 986 (1995), decides that this group will be mandated to approve speedily contracts for the parts and the equipment necessary to enable Iraq to increase its exports of petroleum and petroleum products, according to lists of parts and equipment approved by that Committee for each individual project, and requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide for the monitoring of these parts and equipment inside Iraq;

19. Encourages Member States and international organizations to provide supplementary humanitarian assistance to Iraq and published material of an educational character to Iraq;

20. Decides to suspend, for an initial period of six months from the date of the adoption of this resolution and subject to review, the implementation of paragraph 8 (9) of resolution 986 (1995):

21. Requests the Secretary-General to take steps to maximize, drawing as necessary on the advice of specialists, including representatives of international humanitarian organizations, the effectiveness of the arrangements set out in resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions including the humanitarian benefit to the Iraqi population in all areas of the country, and further requests the Secretary-General to continue to enhance as necessary the United Nations observation process in Iraq, ensuring that all supplies under the humanitarian program are utilized as authorized, to bring to the attention of the Council any circumstances preventing or impeding effective and equitable distribution and to keep the Council informed of the steps taken towards the implementation of this paragraph;

22. Requests also the Secretary-General to minimize the cost of the United Nations activities associated with the implementation of resolution 986 (1995) as well as the cost of the independent inspection agents and the certified public by him, in accordance with paragraphs 6 and 7 of resolution 986 (1995):

25. Requests further the Secretary-General to provide Iraq and the committee established by resolution 661 (1990) with a daily statement of the status of the escrow account established by paragraph 7 of resolution 986 (1995):

26. Requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements, subject to Security Council approval, to allow funds deposited in the escrow

account established by resolution 986 (1995) to he used for the purchase of locally produced goods and to meet the local cost for essential civilian needs which have been funded in accordance with the provisions of resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions, including, where appropriate, the cost of installation and training services;

27. Directs the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) to take a decision on all applications in respect of humanitarian and essential civilian needs within a target of two working days of receipt of these applications from the Secretary-General, and to ensure that all approval and notification letters issued by the Committee stipulate delivery within a specified time, according to the nature of the items to be supplied, and requests the Secretary-General to notify the Committee of all applications for humanitarian items which are included in the list to which the export/import mechanism approved by resolution 1051 (1996) applies;

28. Decides that Hajj pilgrimage flights which do not transport cargo into or out of Iraq are exempt from the provisions of paragraph 3 of resolution 661 (1990) and resolution 670 (1990), provided timely notification of each flight is made to the Committee established by resolution 661 (1990), and requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements, for approval by the Security Council, to provide for reasonable expenses related to the Hajj pilgrimage to be met by funds in the escrow account established by resolution 986 (1995):

29. Calls upon the Government of Iraq:

(i) to take all steps to ensure the timely and equitable distribution of all humanitarian goods, in particular medical supplies, and to remove and avoid delays at its warehouses;

(ii) to address effectively the needs of vulnerable groups, including children, pregnant women, the disabled, the elderly and the mentally ill among others, and to allow freer access, without any discrimination, including on the basis of religion or nationality, by United Nations agencies and humanitarian

organizations to all areas and sections of the population for evaluation of their nutritional and humanitarian condition;

(iii) to prioritize applications for humanitarian goods under the arrangements set out in resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions;

(iv) to ensure that those involuntarily displaced receive humanitarian assistance without the need to demonstrate that they have resided for six months in their places of temporary residence;

(v) to extend full cooperation to the United Nations Office for Project Services mine-clearance program in the three northern Governorates of Iraq and to consider the initiation of the de-mining efforts in other Governorates;

30. Requests the Secretary-General to report on the progress made in meeting the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people and on the revenues necessary to meet those needs, including recommendations on necessary additions to the current allocation for oil spare parts and equipment, on the basis of a comprehensive survey of the condition of the Iraqi oil production sector, not later than 60 days from the date of the adoption of this resolution and updated thereafter as necessary;

31. Expresses its readiness to authorize additions to the current allocation for oil spare parts and equipment, on the basis of the report and recommendations requested in paragraph 28 above, in order to meet the humanitarian purposes set out in resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions;

32. Requests the Secretary-General to establish a group of experts, including oil industry experts, to report within 100 days of the date of adoption of this resolution on Iraq’s existing petroleum production and export capacity and to make recommendations, to be updated as necessary, on alternatives for increasing Iraq’s petroleum production and export capacity in a manner consistent with the purposes of relevant resolutions, and on the options for

involving foreign oil companies in Iraq’s oil sector, including investments, subject to appropriate monitoring and controls;

33. Notes that in the event of the Council acting as provided for in paragraph 33 of this resolution to suspend the prohibitions referred to in that paragraph, appropriate arrangements and procedures will need, subject to paragraph 35 below, to be agreed by the Council in good time beforehand, including suspension of provisions of resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions;

34. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the implementation of paragraphs 15 to 30 of this resolution within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution;

35. Expresses its intention, upon receipt of reports from the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC and from the Director General of the IAEA that Iraq has cooperated in all respects with UNMOVIC and the IAEA in particular in fulfilling the work programs in all the aspects referred to in paragraph 7 above, for a period of 120 days after the date on which the Council is in receipt of reports from both UNMOVIC and the IAEA that the reinforced system of ongoing monitoring and verification is fully operational, to suspend with the fundamental objective of improving the humanitarian situation in Iraq and securing the implementation of the Council’s resolutions, for a period of 120 days renewable by the Council, and subject to the elaboration of effective financial and other operational measures to ensure that Iraq does not acquire prohibited items, prohibitions against the import of commodities and products originating in Iraq, and prohibitions against the sale, supply and delivery to Iraq of civilian commodities and products other than those referred to in paragraph 24 of resolution 687 (1991) or those to which the mechanism established by resolution 1051 (1996) applies;

36. Decides that in reporting to the Council for the purposes of paragraph 33 above, the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC will include as a basis for his assessment the progress made in completing the tasks referred to in paragraph 7 above;

37. Decides that if at any time the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC or the Director General of the IAEA reports that Iraq is not cooperating in all respects with UNMOVIC or the IAEA or if Iraq is in the process of acquiring any prohibited items, the suspension of the prohibitions referred to in paragraph 33 above shall terminate on the fifth working day following the report, unless the Council decides to the contrary;

38. Expresses its intention to approve arrangements for effective financial and other operational measures, including on the delivery of and payment for authorized civilian commodities and products to be sold or supplied to Iraq, in order to ensure that Iraq does not acquire prohibited items in the event of suspension of the prohibitions referred to in paragraph 33 above, to begin the elaboration of such measures not later than the date of the receipt of the initial reports referred to in paragraph 33 above, and to approve such arrangements before the Council decision in accordance with that paragraph;

39. Further expresses its intention to take steps, based on the report and recommendations requested in paragraph 30 above, and consistent with the purpose of resolution 986 (1995) and related resolutions, to enable Iraq to increase its petroleum production and export capacity, upon receipt of the reports relating to the cooperation in all respects with UNMOVIC and the IAEA referred to in paragraph 33 above;

40. Reaffirms its intention to act in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 687 (1991) on the termination of prohibitions referred to in that resolution;

41. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter and expresses its intention to consider action in accordance with paragraph 33 above no later than 12 months from the date of the adoption of this resolution provided the conditions set out in paragraph 33 above have been satisfied by Iraq.

Notes

This paper was prepared by its author in his private capacity.

[415] United Nations, Security Council, Resolution 687 (1991), New York, 1991. The resolution is reproduced as Appendix 1.

[416] Jill Crystal, Kuwait: The Transformation of an Oil State, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992, pp. 11–13.

[417] J· B. Kelly, Arabia, the Gulf and the West, New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1980, pp. 168–72.

[418] Frederick F. Anscombe, The Ottoman Gulf: The Creation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, New York: Columbia University Press, 1997, pp. 113–42.

[419] لآ. Hui. للأفدالة, The Arabian Gulf States:Their Legal and Political Status and Their International Problems, Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1978, p. 254.

[420] Ibid.,pp. 254–57.

[421] Ibid.,p. 256.

[422] David H. Finnie, Shifting Lines in the Sand: Kuwait’s Elusive Frontier with Iraq, London: I. B. Tauris and Company, Ltd., 1992, pp. 126–32.

[423] Ibid.,pp. 132–34.

[424] Charles w. Koburgerjr., “The Kuwait Confrontation of 1961,” United States Naval Institute Proceedings 100:1, January 1974, pp. 42–9.

[425] Hussein A. Hassouna, The League ofArab States and Regional DisputeszA Study of Middle East Conflicts, Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana, 1975, pp. 98–107.

[426] Finnie, op. cit., pp. 149–51.

[427] Resolution 687, op. cit.

[428] M. H. Mendelson and s. c. Hulton, “The Iraq-Kuwait Boundary: Legal Aspects,” Revue Beige de Droit International 2,1990, p. 294.

[429] United Nations, Security Council, “Final Report on the Demarcation of the International Boundary Between the Republic of Iraq and the State of Kuwait by the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation Commission,” S/25811 (20 May 1993), New York, 21 May 1993.

[430] United Nations, Security Council, “Letter dated 21 May 1992 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations,” 5/24044 (1999), New York: 17 December 1999.

[431] “Letter dated 12 November 1994 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations,” 5/19994/1288, New York: 14 November 1994. The content of this letter may explain the reason why Iraq changed its position on the issue. As stated, it proceeded from the premise that the Security Council would follow up in the implementation of its resolutions, based on the principles ofjustice and fairness, principally through the lifting of the comprehensive embargo.

[432] League of Arab States, “Statement adopted by the Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs,” Cairo, Egypt: 24 January 1999.

[433] United Nations, Security Council, “Statement by the Representative of Kuwait before the Security Council,” 5/4084, New York: 17 December 1999.

[434] United Nations, Security Council, S/RES/1284 (1999), New York: 17 December 1999 (see Appendix 2). Ambassador Yuri Vorontsov was appointed for that purpose, and the first report on his activities was submitted to the Security Council on 26 April 2000. See United Nations, Security Council, 5/2000/347, New York: 2000.

[435] League of Arab States, “Council Resolution Number 5837,” 3rd Ordinary Session, Cairo, Egypt: 18 March 1999. Pursuant to this resolution, the League’s secretary-general has conducted high-level consultations on that issue with the United Nations secretary-general, the special United Nations coordinator Ambassador Vorontsov, the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Kuwaiti, Saudi, and Iraqi officials.

[436] “Statement by the Representative of Kuwait,” 5/4084, op. cit.

*** Chapter 15: Yemeni-Saudi Relations Gone Awry

Mohammed A. Zabarah

The Yemeni-Saudi relationship has been a major topic to scholars, policy decision makers, and legalists for several reasons: first, because of the enormous amount of oil on the Arabian Peninsula (nearly 57 percent of the world's oil originates from the littoral states of the Arabian Gulf) and the intense world interest in maintaining security and stability in the region; second, because of the need to see that the "new world order," which calls for the normalization of relations between states, progresses; and third, because Yemeni-Saudi relations have been kept a hostage to the border dispute between them for the past six decades. This has occurred despite the fact that both Arab states have attempted to downplay their contentiousness by emphasizing their intrinsic cultural bonds and their Islamic roots.

It is within this context that the Yemeni-Saudi border dispute is best analyzed. This chapter does not purport to examine the legal aspects of the dispute. Rather, it evaluates its implications in the formulation and conduct of the two states' policies toward each other. Toward this objective, the study analyzes the relationship between the two states by identifying the perceptions each state has of the other, and how those perceptions influence the course of their relationship. The hypothesis contends that the perceptions of the Yemeni governments of Saudi Arabia—which evolved after the Yemeni revolution of 26 September 1962—have been less coherent and more antagonistic.

Following a brief background of the Yemeni-Saudi relationship immediately after the two states became independent, the study will focus on the 1934 Taif Agreement, and how it impacted the relationship between the two neighbors. It will then devote its attention to the ramifications of the political changes that evolved in Yemen, and their impact on the Yemeni/Saudi relationship. Finally, it will examine the consequences of the Yemeni policy during the second Gulf Crisis and the subsequent Gulf War (1991), and how that policy affected the border issues between the two.

**** The 1934 Taif Agreement

The 1934 Taif Agreement between Yemen and Saudi Arabia officially ended the brief war between the two states. It is considered the benchmark that has defined their relationship since then. In fact, the war was the culmination of initial confrontational contacts, which began as soon as the Ottoman rule of the Arabian Peninsula ended in 1918. Importantly, the agreement was the first treaty between two Arab states, and it impelled both to curtail their differences to ensure their security and independence.

Inasmuch as the confrontational aspect of Yemeni/Saudi ties was directly related to mutual claims on Asir, the province situated south of the Hejaz in the southwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula and bordering on the Red Sea, all subsequent contacts may be understood through the value attached to that strategic territory. The area is larger than Jordan and Lebanon put together. In 1828, Asir fell to Ottoman occupation, and was treated as a semi-autonomous region. When Ottoman rule ended in 1918, Muhammed al-Idrisi, then ruler over the territory, became titular head of the province. Encouraged by both Italy and Britain, which provided him with arms and money, al-Idrisi adopted a policy aimed at establishing Asir as an independent, sovereign state. Britain went so far as to hand al-Idrisi the port city of Hodeidah after bombarding and occupying it in 1918. As a result of al-Idrisi's policies, an open conflict ensued with Imam Yahyah of Yemen, who ruled over the Mutawakilite Kingdom of Yemen.[437]

Imam Yahyah quickly sent his armies to recapture Hudaydah, and began his march into Asir. Ali al-Idrisi, who succeeded his father in 1922, was unable to forestall the advances of the Imam's forces. He, thereupon, proposed an agreement to the Imam recognizing the latter's interests in Asir. Al-Idrisi was willing to pay homage to the Imam and defer to him the rights to be an arbitrator on all issues other than political questions. Still, his proposal fell short of accepting the Imam's outright political control over Asir Province. [438] In the event, and when the Imam rejected this proposal, al-Idrisi entered into negotiations with King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud in Saudi Arabia. King Abdul Aziz, like Imam Yahyah, had been preoccupied with the pacification of the Hejaz. He had marched westward from Riyadh, his capital, to recapture the entire Hejaz, including Makkah and Madinah, the two holiest cities in Islam. In doing so, he established himself as a major power player on the Arabian Peninsula.

These “negotiations” between al-Idrisi and King Abdul Aziz resulted in the 1926 Makkah Treaty that transformed Asir into a “Protectorate.”[439] Al-Idrisi waived an independent foreign policy, but retained autonomy in internal affairs. Although Imam Yahyah eventually rejected the Makkah Treaty, he was careful not to provoke King Abdul Aziz. In fact, the Yemeni leader was involved in border clashes with British forces stationed in Aden and the Protectorates. These clashes persuaded the Imam that the British presence in Aden was far more dangerous to his independence than King Abdul Aziz. To his credit, nevertheless, Imam Yahyah was cognizant of the close relationship between the Saudi leader and London, and fearful that the Saudi-British connection could possibly target his rule in Yemen.

The Yemeni-Saudi relationship took a turn for the worst in 1930, when Al-Idrisi began to renege on his commitments to the Makkah Treaty. He also began to move closer to Imam Yahyah. In response, King Abdul Aziz was impelled to abrogate the treaty, and al-Idrisi sought political asylum from Imam Yahyah. The latter granted this request and, thus, became al-Idrisi’s protector. Encouraged by this new development, Imam Yahyah seized the opportunity to help the Yam tribe in Asir, an offshoot of the Yemeni Hamdan tribe, and sent his troops into the province to occupy the city ofNajran. Attempts by both sides to resolve this dispute continued through 1933. Both the Imam and King Abdul Aziz exchanged letters and sent delegations to each other’s capitals. All attempts ended in failure. By the end of 1933, tensions between the two countries intensified, largely because al-Idrisi raised the banner of revolt against King Abdul Aziz and, not unexpectedly, Saudi forces in Asir were reinforced. In early 1934, a Saudi ultimatum was sent to the Imam. It demanded the immediate evacuation of all Yemeni forces from Asir, the restoration of the earlier “borders” (implying Yemeni evacuation from Najran), and the extradition of al-Idrisi to Saudi Arabia.

Imam Yahyah ignored the ultimatum as clashes erupted between the two protagonists. The brief war led to the defeat of Yemeni forces and induced the Imam to accept the Taif Agreement, which was mediated by several Arab states. The agreement itself comprised 23 articles and included the three points contained in the Saudi ultimatum. Al-Idrisi was extradited to Saudi Arabia, Yemeni forces were evacuated from Asir, and Najran was relinquished

to the Kingdom. Article 22 specifically stated that the agreement was binding for 20 years, subject to renewal.[440]

During these early contacts between Imam Yahyah and King Abdul Aziz, the two men exchanged several communications concerning the border disputes. All exchanges reiterated the Muslim character of both states and emphasized the need for an amicable resolution of existing differences. Still, each ruler perceived the other as too closely associated with an outside power, as Yemen was uneasy over the close Saudi ties to Britain. The Yemeni leadership believed that King Abdul Aziz would not have defeated Sharif Hussein of the Hejaz had it not been for British military and political support. Indeed, the Yemeni government further believed that King Abdul Aziz relied upon British support to “deal with Al-Idrisi.” According to the Imam, London welcomed the Makkah Treaty, because it absolved the British from honoring their commitments to al-Idrisi.[441] Moreover, the border clashes between Yemen and British forces in Aden and the Protectorates helped King Abdul Aziz consolidate his control in Asir. At the same time, it augmented the Saudi’s military capabilities, vis-â-vis Yemen. According to the Yemeni leadership, the tone of the ultimatum, and the quick Saudi military victory over Yemen, indicated close Saudi-British cooperation.[442]

Saudi Arabia was similarly convinced that there was close cooperation between the Yemeni government and Italy. Riyadh considered Italian-Yemeni relations as a threat to the interests of Saudi Arabia and a destabilizing factor in the region, specifically, King Abdul Aziz was troubled by the Italian assistance to the Imam, in the form of arms and money.[443] He was convinced that Rome was eager to supplement its colonial possessions on the other side of the Red Sea (in Eritrea), by enhancing its putative influence in Yemen. The King was politically astute enough to place blame—for the differences between him and the Imam— on the Italians. He insisted, for example, that Italian influence on the Imam’s government was hindering attempts by the two neighboring governments to formulate a border agreement.[444]

Consequently, the Taif Agreement settled Saudi-Yemeni differences in Asir, and occasioned a relationship based on mutual recognition of their interests. From 1934 until 1962, Yemen and Saudi Arabia cooperated in

formulatingjoint Arab policies and maintained healthy ties. The exception occurred in 1958 when Yemen joined the United Arab Republic in a confederation. The alignment between Yemen and revolutionary Egypt made Saudi Arabia somewhat uneasy, but it did not negatively affect their relationship. This can be attributed to the fact that both political systems were traditional and monarchical. As a leading Saudi scholar observed,

The political system of a country is undoubtedly a major determinant in its foreign policy behavior. Accordingly, the more closely one country's political system resembles that of another, the greater the degree of mutual understanding which can be expected between them. Conversely, as the differences between the political systems widen, so do their chances for misunderstanding.[445]

Indeed, neither Saudi Arabia nor Yemen viewed each other with hostility, or with misgivings. On the contrary, King Abdul Aziz felt that the Yemenis were "brothers" to the Saudis, and deserving of his support. He maintained that attitude throughout the remainder of his life. When Imam Yahyah was killed in the abortive 1948 coup d'etat, King Abdul Aziz was furious. Shortly thereafter, he formulated a policy that was antagonistic to the insurrectionists, and favorable to Imam Yahyah's successor, Imam Ahmed. [446] The 1934 Taif Agreement was renewed in 1954, further illustrating the strong ties between the two countries. Throughout this period, Riyadh represented Sanaa's diplomatic interests where Yemen had no established missions.

**** Political Changes in Yemen

The Yemeni revolution of 26 September 1962 profoundly changed the political landscape on the Arabian Peninsula. It ushered into the region a new form of government, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), and a new era of configurations and new concepts that wreaked havoc with regional security. In short, it made the area susceptible to incoherence, initially introduced by the revolution itself, and shortly thereafter by the introduction of Egyptian troops into Yemen on behalf of the revolutionaries. The relationship between republican Yemen and Saudi Arabia became strained and antagonistic. The

YAR was now an ally of the “progressive” revolutionary Arab movement. Led by Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, the Arab movement called for pan-Arabism and the overthrow of the monarchical systems throughout the Arab world, which were defined as reactionary, anachronistic, and not representative of Arab masses. Republican Yemen was, like Egypt, calling for the overthrow of the Saudi establishment.

During the Yemeni civil war, which lasted from 1962 to 1970, the YAR and Saudi Arabia were at loggerheads. Although both states viewed each other with suspicion and misgivings, Yemeni perceptions of Saudi Arabia proved to be more volatile and highly emotional. Yemeni revolutionary leaders lambasted Saudi Arabia with vehemence, portraying it as anachronistic, reactionary, and a puppet of the United States. They even threatened Riyadh with a massive air strike. Saudi leaders, on the other hand, were far more concerned with the estimated 80,000 Egyptian troops in Yemen. By 1965, the Egyptian presence in the YAR represented the greater threat to the security and interests of the Kingdom. According to a well-placed Saudi analyst,

The presence of Egyptian forces in Yemen was perceived by Saudi Arabia as an act of aggression aimed at more than merely controlling Yemen or even driving the British from Aden and the Protectorates. The troops, especially in view of Nasser’s verbal attacks on monarchical systems in the Arab world, and his threat to attack Saudi Arabia, represented a clear danger to SaudiArabia.[447]

Saudi fears of whatever intentions Egypt and republican Yemen represented were heightened when President Abdallah Sallal of the YAR “publicly announced his intention to extend a republican form of government to the entire Arabian Peninsula. ”[448] Saudi policy, as formulated by Riyadh two years after the Yemeni revolution, was to contain the conflict to Yemen proper, thereby avoiding a spillover into Saudi Arabia.

Following the 1967 Six-Day War, Egyptian troops were withdrawn from Yemen, and in accordance with the 1968 Khartoum Agreement between Egypt and Saudi Arabia, Riyadh focused greater attention on events occurring in Aden. Earlier, Britain had agreed to withdraw from Aden and the

Protectorates by 1968, which, not surprisingly, led to a struggle between two rivals for power in South Yemen. Starting in 1964, the Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY) and the National Liberation Front (NLF) gained in popularity and influence. The contest culminated in the defeat of FLOSY, whose members fled to North Yemen. The NLF was quick to form a new government, which was Marxist in orientation and antagonistic to all the states in the region. Aden then called for the spread of socialism throughout the Arabian Peninsula, a development that clearly implied the region would be unstable. To Saudi Arabia this was a foreboding trend that threatened intrinsic regional interests. Indeed, Riyadh drew clear lessons from the Egyptian intervention in Yemen, and was persuaded that its “security and that of the Red Sea would be threatened if Sanaa were controlled by an unfriendly regime.”[449] There was a perceptible recognition by the Kingdom to adopt a conciliatory stand vis-â-vis the YAR. Sanaa had also viewed events in South Yemen with alarm. Both states’ apprehensions were further intensified when the radical wing of the South Yemeni Communist Party, led by Salem Rubai Ali and Abdul Fattah Ismail, took power in 1969. Ali and Ismail formed a radical political organization, the National Democratic Front (NDF), composed of North Yemeni leftists, to undertake subversive activities against the YAR. On the heels of epoch-making developments in South Yemen, Riyadh and Sanaa adopted a policy of rapprochement. Eventually, this led to diplomatic recognition of the YAR by Saudi Arabia, in 1970.

In the end, the conflict between the YAR and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) was essentially a political and ideological rivalry. Both regimes emerged from similar roots and both shared a nation. In fact, both regimes had attempted to unite in one form or another ever since the British withdrawal from Aden. Nonetheless, the complexity in their rivalry stemmed from the fact that the PDRY became a Marxist-Leninist system closely associated with the Soviet Union and antagonistic to both the YAR and Saudi Arabia.[450] The YAR, on the other hand, had become less revolutionary and less radical, and far more cooperative with Saudi Arabia.

To counter the PDRY’s enmity to both Sanaa and Riyadh, both states agreed to form a counter-insurgency movement in South Yemen, composed of former members of FLOSY. Before long, South Yemeni dissidents spread havoc in Marxist PDRY. The situation deteriorated rapidly and developed into an open war between the two Yemens in September 1972.[451]

This latest confrontation was short-lived and was fought to a military standstill. Both parties had overtaxed themselves with continuous military challenges and were, to put it mildly, unwilling to pursue such a path. Under the auspices of the League ofArab States (LAS), both Yemens signed the Tripoli Agreement on 28 October 1972, whereby both Sanaa and Aden agreed to a cease-fire. A proviso calling for unity between the two states within one year of signing was also initialed. The agreement, however, failed to achieve stated objectives because of: ε’(1), the ideological chasm separating the PDRY and the YAR, (2), the clash of personal rivalries between their leaderships for dominant political influence in any settlement, and, (3), opposition within each state to the unification in any settlement.”[452] More importantly, the Soviet Union stood against such a union. In the event, the Kremlin believed that unity between Sanaa and Aden could conceivably lead to the termination of Soviet influence and prestige on the Arabian Peninsula. It became, therefore, a fundamental Soviet policy to oppose any unification movements between the two Yemens. Yemeni leftists and Baathists in prominent government position were encouraged by Moscow to place the onus of the failure to unite on Saudi opposition. Leading Arabist writers fueled this contention further by insisting that Saudi Arabia was opposed to unity. They also projected Riyadh as being “insensitive,” “heavy-handed,” and “indifferent” to Yemen.[453] Not surprisingly, such views influenced Yemeni perceptions of Saudi Arabia, especially when the border issue was raised.

In compliance with Article 22 of the Taif Agreement, Riyadh raised the renewal issue with Sanaa in 1974. Since Saudi Arabia and the YAR were on excellent terms at the time, the renewal question was not seen as being a problem. Prime Minister Abdallah al-Hajri, who was on good terms with leading Saudi officials, did not hesitate to agree to renew the Taif Agreement. Al-Hajri went so far as to accept that the Saudi-Yemeni border dispute was over and that the frontier between the two states was permanent. This point was made explicitly clear in a joint communique issued on 17 March 1974. [454] Moreover, al-Hajri and his Saudi counterpart were in complete agreement regarding the threat emanating from Yemeni leftists and communists. They collaborated in curtailing the latter’s advances and nascent influence in the YAR.

Still, the YAR Consultative Assembly rejected the renewal agreement as well as the communique. Shortly thereafter, agents of the PDRY, while visiting London, assassinated al-Hajri. These two events magnified Saudi perceptions of Yemen as a volatile nation, prone to radical changes. Indeed, Saudi perceptions were further reinforced when, within one year, President Ibrahim al-Hamdi and President Ahmed al-Ghashmi of the YAR were assassinated.[455] Al-Ghashmi was known as a staunch anti-communist. Like Saudi leaders, he viewed communism as a threat to the security and stability of the Arabian Peninsula. His assassination brought to an abrupt end the close cooperation between the YAR and Saudi Arabia, especially on political matters, including the encroachment of communist ideas throughout the region. Without a doubt, his untimely death left an impact on the Sanaa-Aden relationship.[456] Al-Ghashmi's successor, Colonel Ali Abdallah Saleh, had no previous experience in government. He came to power during a most tenuous time, and his initial inability to calm differences between Sanaa and Aden led in February 1979 to open conflict between the two Yemens. This intra-Yemeni border war was "a mirror image" of the 1972 conflict.[457] It was short-lived but far more favorable to the PDRY, which, along with the National Democratic Front, was able to capture large stretches of North Yemeni territory. Under the auspices of the LAS, a cease-fire was arranged, which was followed by a commitment by both protagonists to work toward unity.

Like the 1972 Tripoli Agreement, this latest LAS mediation, known as the Kuwait Agreement, failed to achieve stated objectives for roughly the same reasons. Evidently, the insistence of the PDRY to have its proteges within the NDF included in the Sanaa government did not help assuage the painful experience of the North Yemeni government. President Saleh showed a resilience that belied his age (he was 34 at the time) and experience. Saleh had overcome, in his first year in office, a Nasserite coup plot, assassination attempts, domestic disturbances, and war with the PDRY. In August 1979, he concluded an arms arrangement with the Soviet Union worth an estimated 700 million, which angered and dismayed Saudi Arabia. To be sure, Riyadh's ire was not without justification, as it had just underwritten a $390 million YAR purchase of American arms. More important, Saudi Arabia had invested substantial capital with the Carter administration to satisfy congressional opposition to the purchase. President Jimmy Carter went so far as to invoke the waiver provision of the Arms Export Control Act to expedite urgently needed deliveries. When Sanaa, however, agreed to the cease-fire, Saudi

Arabia held up delivery of the arms earmarked for Yemen. To the Saudis, Yemen's purchase of Soviet weapons was contrary to the "trustworthy" Yemeni-Saudi ties. The motive behind Saleh's move was to illustrate genuine Yemeni independence. For Sanaa, improved relations with Moscow, at the expense of Saudi-Yemeni good relations, was worth the effort. Consequently, Saudi Arabia threatened to withhold all of its financial and economic assistance to the YAR, which obliged President Saleh to quickly send diplomatic envoys to Riyadh. Saleh became engaged in a concerted effort to convince the Saudis that the nascent Yemeni-Soviet connection would never be allowed to become a threat to any state in the region. Once Riyadh was mollified, Yemeni-Saudi relations improved.

Despite this significant effort, regional trends affected the rapprochement between Riyadh and Sanaa. In 1981, the conservative Arab Gulf monarchies formed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), in response to the Iranian revolution and the Iran-Iraq War. Soviet expansionism in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan further threatened to change the geopolitical equation throughout the region. World concerns over these dynamic developments concretely manifested themselves in the attitudes of Muslim states as well. On January 1980, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit, meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan, condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and strongly criticized Moscow's presence in the Horn of Africa.[458] Arab participants, with the exception of the PDRY, condemned Moscow's actions in Afghanistan in even stronger terms.[459] GCC leaders were particularly perturbed by the Kremlin's incursions into the region and believed it to be a menace to their security.

To be sure, the Arab Gulf monarchies' decision to form the GCC reflected their shared concern over their inability to protect themselves from both external as well as internal threats. The formation of the GCC, a military, economic, political, and cultural association, was viewed as a necessary mechanism to defend the region from all forms of threats. It was also formed to protect member states from Iran and Iraq. Most feared that once the Iran-Iraq War was over, the two warring states would attempt to re-establish their predominance over the region.[460] Indeed, "the distinguishing features of the GCC were that it was composed of monarchical political systems, traditionally conservative, rich in oil, weak in military strength, relatively

unpopulated, and allied to the West."[461] In other words, the GCC was endowed with unique features that naturally excluded Yemen.

Sanaa was angered by its exclusion from the Riyadh-based regional organization. The YAR accused GCC states of forming a regional grouping that was contrary to the solidarity ofArab states.[462] Inasmuch as the exclusion of the YAR was a political decision, it was equally applied to the PDRY In fact, GCC rulers recognized that both Yemeni regimes chose "the course of political development through revolutionary coups—a method unacceptable to the six members of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council."[463] Nevertheless, Riyadh rapidly pacified the YAR's injured perceptions, as it increased Saudi economic and financial assistance through the joint Saudi-Yemeni Cooperation Council (formed in 1976). Sanaa was mollified, and its opposition to the GCC was terminated, even if it felt slighted. This perception festered in the mind of President Saleh and his government, and by 1984 their views of the Kingdom became far more negative.

It is important to emphasize that while overall contacts improved ever so slightly, they in fact deteriorated throughout the rest of the 198O's for two specific reasons: first, because the 1984 discovery of oil enhanced Sanaa's negotiating posture, thereby altering the existing levels of dependency; second, because Sanaa established closer ties with Baghdad, which in turn further tilted the balance of power on the Arabian Peninsula.

When oil was discovered in the YAR, many believed the economic plight of the country would improve. Still, the amounts were relatively minute, compared to the vast reserves in Saudi Arabia. But, they proved enough to catapult the border dispute between Riyadh and Sanaa to the forefront. With these discoveries, the border dispute was no longer related just to the clauses contained in the 1934 Taif Agreement. It now included more than 1,000 miles of undefined frontier, stretching from the demarcated line with Asir, eastward along the Rub al-Khali to the boundary with Oman. Significant oil led Sanaa to assume that it would no longer be financially dependent on Saudi economic assistance, and that it could now conduct its foreign and domestic policies independent of Saudi pressures.[464] This thinking was linked to attempts by Sanaa to promote relations with Baghdad. Having been

excluded from the GCC, Sanaa opted to improve ties with Saddam Hussein, in an attempt to improve and foster its regional significance. There is no doubt that the Baathist members of the Saleh government, who viewed Iraq as a viable alternative ally to Saudi Arabia, motivated this policy. Saddam Hussein was quick to respond in kind. Iraq provided Yemen with financial and economic assistance, in addition to technical assistance to the military. It also helped train Yemeni Republican Guard units and helped in the formation and training of the national security apparatus. Both the Republican Guard and the national security apparatus were modeled after Saddam Hussein's. Naturally, this new Iraqi-Yemeni cooperation was of deep concern to the Saudi government. When Yemen became a member of the Arab Cooperation Council, formed in 1988 by Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Yemen, Saudi apprehensions were intensified. Saudi alarm was pervasive and salient, especially since Ali Abdallah Saleh and Saddam Hussein had developed a close personal relationship. To Riyadh's dismay, the official mass media of the Saleh government inferred that Saudi Arabia was against Yemeni national interests.[465] One observer concluded that "having to contend with restive Iraq and Iran in the north, Riyadh has compelling reasons to contain its enemies and obviate the specter of being pressured on two sides."[466] Baghdad's increasing influence on the Arabian Peninsula was clearly evident as Saddam Hussein nudged both the YAR and the PDRY toward unity.

**** Consequences of the 1991 Gulf War

The decade of the 1990s began on a high note for North and South Yemen. On 22 May 1990 the two states united to form the Yemen Republic. It was an accomplishment of historic proportion in contemporary Yemeni history. Unity was accompanied by the adoption of constitutional democracy as the basis of its political framework. Political parties, which had been outlawed in both North and South, were allowed to function freely within the parameters of the new political ethos. Liberal laws calling for respect for freedom of thought and expression were enacted. A proliferated mass media came into existence. Remarkably, the exultation and euphoria over unity was exhibited not only in Yemen, but also throughout the Arab world. Leading Arab scholars were persuaded that Yemeni unity was a prelude to Arab unity

Although Yemeni unity was regionally and internationally encouraged and accepted, incoherence in Yemeni decision making—vis-â-vis Saudi Arabia—was evident in two specific events. Indeed, the incohesive policies left the impression that Sanaa was muddling through, unable or inept to adjust its decisions. Consequently, the country’s economy, regional standing, and ever so fragile ties with Riyadh all suffered. They also intensified the negative perceptions each state had of the other, which frustrated any attempts to resolve the festering border dispute.

***** The 1990 Iraqi Invasion of Kuwait

Less than three months after the two Yemens united, Iraq invaded Kuwait and, subsequently, incorporated the Shaykhdom as its nineteenth province. The invasion was traumatic to all Arab Gulf states and a rude awakening to the world. It directly threatened Western national interests and portended ill for the sovereignty of the conservative Arab Gulf monarchies. The Bush administration quickly initiated a bold policy aimed at rolling back the Iraqi army from Kuwait, restoring the independence of the Shaykhdom, and re-establishing the status quo ante in the region. Washington considered these objectives as prerequisites to regional security. It was, therefore, essential to enlist Arab as well as non-Arab states in forming the international coalition against Baghdad. Enlisting Yemen in the nascent coalition was determined to be important. The American secretary of state, James Baker, visited Sanaa to seek Yemeni support and participation in the coalition. Sanaa rejected the overture, insisting that the crisis, as an Arab problem, required an Arab solution. Yemen emphatically asserted that the League of Arab States possessed the wherewithal to deal with the crisis. This Yemeni opinion was not shared by most Arab Gulf states or by key Western powers. In the event, Saudi Arabia was incensed by Sanaa’s position, since it believed that collective Arab action was not sufficient to dislodge Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.[467] Moreover, the Yemeni position was regarded by several Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria, as well as by major Western powers, as a clear indication that the Saleh regime endorsed Saddam Hussein and his regional policies.

Regardless of what conclusions many drew, Saudi Arabia did not forgive the Saleh regime, especially since the latter benefited from Riyadh's financial largesse. An estimated $100–350 million in financial aid was annually transferred from Saudi Arabia to the YAR at the time. Such amounts were disbursed to ease Sanaa's balance of payments deficits.[468] Equally important, Riyadh had vastly assisted Yemen by granting more than a million Yemenis the right to work freely in Saudi Arabia, and repatriate hard-currency earnings. The privileges given to Yemeni workers in Saudi Arabia were many. They were allowed to travel freely around the country and to own businesses. They were not required to be sponsored by Saudis nor were they forced to carry their residency papers with them. Indeed, Yemeni remittances "fueled growth in all levels of the private sector"[469] and, together with aid, "permitted the government to relax all kinds of economic regulation."[470]

Given this legacy, Saudi Arabia had assumed that Yemen would support it in its hour of need. When Sanaa sided with Baghdad, however, Riyadh and the Gulf Arab states concluded they had been "stabbed in the back." In response to Yemen's position, the Kingdom, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates evicted all Yemeni workers from their respective countries. Over one million Yemenis were forced to return to Yemen. The economic hardships on Yemen doubled as the Yemeni riyal began a steady decline in its value vis-â-vis the dollar. Inflation and unemployment rates increased dramatically, further compounded by the fact that practically all aid from Western states was terminated.

What ensued was not surprising. A steady stream of acrimonious exchanges became the trademark between the Yemeni and Saudi governments. Each accused the other of undermining its national interests, and each seethed with anger over the other. Yemen's position was, however, more antagonistic to Riyadh. The discord was illustrated by massive demonstrations against Saudi Arabia, which were clearly staged by Sanaa. Students from the military academy, government employees, and members of national security were encouraged to demonstrate in front of the Saudi embassy in the capital. Government employees were provided transportation to rally the masses in a timely fashion. Some of the demonstrations became vociferous and ugly. Stones, shoes, and sandals were catapulted onto the embassy grounds. King Fahd's pictures were thrown on the ground and trampled upon. Saddam Hussein's photographs, on the other hand, were raised above the crowd.

Adding insult to injury, the demonstrations were publicly aired on Yemeni television, even though counter-demonstrations—in support of Saudi Arabia—were not televised or mentioned by the government mass media. Saudi Arabia's wrath intensified when Sanaa denied that the government staged anti-Saudi demonstrations. Riyadh became convinced that the Saleh government could no longer be trusted, and squarely placed the blame for the deterioration in relations on Saleh himself as well as his foreign minister, Dr. Abdul Karim al-Iryani. According to reliable sources, al-Iryani had formulated Yemen's policy during the Gulf Crisis, and may have orchestrated the idea that Saudi Arabia strongly opposed Yemeni unity. It was widely rumored that Saudi Arabia had offered Aden a billion dollars to terminate unity discussions with Sanaa in 1990.[471] Whether these reports were true or not, they reinforced Yemeni perceptions of Saudi Arabia as being opposed to unification.

Against this thorny background, the border issue was shelved, essentially from 1990 until after the Yemeni civil war in 1994. Routine ministerial meetings convened, but far more serious concerns dominated the moribund dialogue.

First, Sanaa and Riyadh engaged in a pervasive antagonism. Their relationship during this period was similar to ties after the Yemeni revolution and the subsequent Egyptian involvement in 1962.[472] In such an atmosphere, the border issue became more of a point of contention between the two sides, made more salient by the fact that 1,000 miles of borderline had not been demarcated. The area stretched along the desolate Empty Quarter to the boundary with the Sultanate of Oman. It was in this vicinity that oil companies were prospecting for oil. Saudi sensitivities further motivated Riyadh to send a warning letter in April 1992 to oil companies warning them not to infringe on its territories.[473]

Second, both Yemen and Saudi Arabia failed to agree on what criteria should be applied to resolve the dispute, as "the principle of self-determination was not applicable in unpopulated areas, and in most parts neither side had a history of local administration, which might reinforce a claim."[474] The two states based their claims on several lines on maps that were drawn as far back as 1914: the so-called Violet Line, drawn in 1914 by the British

government and the Ottoman Empire, to separate their areas of influence; the Riyadh Line, drawn by Saudi Arabia in 1935 to separate areas under British control in South Yemen from Saudi Arabia; the 1934 Taif Agreement, which delineated the border line between Yemen and Asir; and the 1938 Philby Line, which marked the line east of Asir, stretching in a southeasterly-northern direction toward Shabwa Province.

Third, Abdul Karim al-Iryani, in the latter part of the 1980s, postulated a theory—later adopted by members of the Yemeni government—that asserted that Saudi Arabia was susceptible to the same contradictions that afflicted the Kingdom of Yemen. As these intrinsic contradictions had led to the demise of Imamate political institutions, the postulate assumed, so would they affect the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.[475] Yemen, according to this perspective, should not attempt to resolve its border dispute with Saudi Arabia in haste, because there was a likelihood that violent political changes would bring forth a more arnicable political system in Riyadh, one that may be willing to be far more flexible in its strategic regional ambitions. Still, this perspective did not imply that the Yemeni government would cease publicizing its readiness to negotiate in good faith with the Kingdom. Rather, it had to improve relations with all Arab Gulf states—and dispel the notion that it had supported Iraq's invasion of Kuwait— even if Yemeni leaders were not ready to pay the price to achieve this aim. GCC states demanded Sanaa admit its policy was a mistake, and that it stop cooperating with Saddam Hussein, whereas Ali Abdallah Saleh's government was not willing to meet such demands. On the contrary, Yemeni leaders invited Iraq's deputy prime minister, Tariq Aziz, in August 1992 to visit Sanaa. In an official policy statement, President Saleh strongly denounced the international sanctions on Iraq, maintaining that they represented violations of Baghdad's sovereignty.[476] Moreover, Ali Abdallah Saleh's close cooperation and friendship with Saddam Hussein did not endear him to Arab Gulf rulers. The Al Saud feared that Saleh, backed by Saddam Hussein, would attempt "to subvert Saudi Arabia in the Asir border area, the target of possible irredentist ambitions by Yemen dating back to the occupation of the region by Saudi Arabia in 1934."[477] To be sure, "there are Saudis who not only still fret over Yemen's ambivalent stance towards Saddam Hussein but who regard the country's republican, multi-party political system (with all its flaws) as subversive in a peninsula dominated by traditional monarchies. "[478]

***** The 1994Yemeni Civil War

The civil war erupted in the first week of May 1994 and lasted for 70 days. It was short but devastating. It was a natural outcome of the rivalry for power between the country's two leading political parties, the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) and the General People's Congress (GPC). To be sure, the war unleashed regional involvement, specifically from Saudi Arabia. Two reasons account for the Saudi involvement in support of the YSP.

First, Riyadh had come to believe that President Saleh was the man most responsible for the Yemeni policy adopted during the Gulf Crisis.[479] Indeed, Saudi leaders were convinced that it was Saleh and his foreign minister, Dr. Abdul Karim al-Iryani, who insisted on its execution. When war broke out between government forces in Sanaa and the YSP, the Yemeni leadership believed that Riyadh physically, and financially, supported southerners. In fact, the Saudi effort to achieve a cease-fire was also viewed by Sanaa as sustaining the south.[480] To some extent, these perceptions were easy to formulate, especially after Saudi Arabia intensified its attempts to have other Arab governments recognize the so-called Democratic Republic of Yemen (DRY). Sanaa perceived this Saudi policy as clear evidence that Riyadh was against Yemeni unity. Whether Saudi Arabia had encouraged the south to proclaim its independence to make it "possible for Saudi leaders to refer the Yemeni war to the United Nations" is difficult to determine.[481] Nevertheless, the argument presented to substantiate this view rested on the premise that Saudi Arabia would—ostensibly—campaign for international support for the south far more vigorously if Sanaa invaded a neighboring "independent state."[482] In the event, this was the argument presented by Riyadh to Washington, although the latter insisted that "no political party such as the YSP had the right unilaterally to declare secession."[483] There is no doubt that the secretary-general of the YSP, who was then the vice president of the Yemen Republic, believed that declaring secession would relieve the south from Sanaa's military advances. Yet, the declaration—made reluctantly— was primarily "for external reasons, when it became clear that his forces were losing the war and he badly needed international support." "The timing of the announcement," almost three weeks after hostilities had broken out, "was linked to diplomatic activity and was aimed at securing international recognition, so that sympathetic states could provide arms openly rather than secretly."[484]

Ironically, the same Yemeni perceptions of Saudi Arabia—which emerged during the Yemeni civil war—appeared again during the Yemeni-Eritrean discord over the island of Greater Hanish, a Yemeni island on the Red Sea that Eritrea invaded and occupied in December 1995. Eritrea later invaded and occupied the island of Small Hanish. To be sure, Sanaa had not taken any precautionary measures to protect the islands, even though Eritrea had expressed its “intentions” as early as August 1995. Caught by surprise, the Yemeni leadership quickly placed “the blame for its failure to protect the sovereignty of its territories on Saudi Arabia and Israel. Sanaa accused Saudi Arabia and Israel of arming the Eritreans, thus giving Eritrea the wherewithal to attack and occupy Hanish.”[485] No matter how convoluted, these perceptions were widely rejected by the Yemeni citizenry, as opposition parties accused Sanaa of dereliction in protecting the sovereignty of the state. They also portrayed the Yemeni leadership as being too preoccupied with enhancing its self-interests, rather than protecting and promoting the national interest.

The second reason for the Saudi involvement in support of the YSP was Riyadh’s “imperative” need to have a land corridor south to the Arabian Sea, to ensure that its oil exports would not be subject to a blockade. Saudi Arabia may have access to blue waters but only through three narrow waterways: the Suez Canal, Bab al-Mandeb—both on the Red Sea—and the Straits of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf. More important, Riyadh had no control over either of the three narrow waterways. To alleviate this shortcoming, Saudi Arabia approached both Oman and the PDRY, to solicit their approval for a corridor plan. Both refused, because Riyadh insisted on having the corridor declared as Saudi sovereign territory. When the Yemeni civil war erupted, many observers viewed Saudi support of the secessionists as strategically significant. If the south became an internationally recognized independent entity, a grateful South Yemen could have accepted the Saudi corridor plan.[486]

Against this background, and from 1990 until early 1995, the Yemeni-Saudi relationship was acrimonious and belligerent. It experienced a temporary thaw when both states agreed to resolve their border dispute after an American mediation session, which resulted in a memorandum of

understanding signed at the home of Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz in Makkah. The 11—point document reaffirmed the commitments of both states to the 1934 Taif Agreement. Both promised not to allow their territories to be used as centers of aggression— against each other—or for carrying out any political, military, or information activities.[487] Committees were also established and charged with determining land and sea frontiers, developing economic cooperation, and preventing troop movements near disputed areas.

Although Yemeni opposition parties criticized this latest accord, the agreement did not specifically renew the Taif Agreement, nor did Sanaa make any major concessions. On 23 June 1995, President Ali Abdallah Saleh visited Jeddah, raising hopes that the bruised relationship would—once again—be beneficial to both sides. Saleh went so far as to state that the 1934 Taif Agreement would be renewed without amendment. Unfortunately, the relationship soured once again in December 1995, when Sanaa accused Riyadh of encouraging Eritrea to invade and occupy Greater Hanish. From that point on, the Yemeni-Saudi relationship reverted to being belligerent, as Yemeni officials initiated a concerted effort to portray Saudi Arabia as the cause of all of Yemen's problems, ranging from limited economic development to kidnappings to corruption.[488] No doubt Yemen appears to be winning the public relations battle, by portraying itself as the victim of Saudi aggression and meddlesome interventions, as it was able to convince Washington to mediate. In turn, the United States responded positively, irrespective of the fact that the State Department was warning American citizens to reconsider traveling to Yemen to avoid "kidnappings" and other assaults on foreigners. The American administration seemed to disregard the views of scholars who contended that the Saleh regime lacked the competence necessary to enforce law and order in the country. Lastly, Washington seemed to have ignored the statement made by Prince Naif bin Abdul Aziz, Saudi Arabia's interior minister, when he declared that "Saudi Arabia is convinced that the dispute with Yemen is in no need of international arbitration."[489]

Washington's readiness to mediate stemmed from its resolve to achieve normal relations between various Arab states and Israel. Given that Saudi Arabia is considered pivotal in the eventual success of this policy objective, it became essential to employ Yemen as a pressure point against the Kingdom.

Sanaa seized on this American initiative by adopting a more flexible policy toward Israel. In fact, the Yemeni government’s quick response had two primary objectives: to reinforce the view held by many Westerners that Riyadh was strongly resisting the policy of “normalization” (between the Arab states and Israel), and to portray Saudi Arabia as being opposed to resolving festering border disputes. Sanaa hoped that such a policy would gain Western economic and political assistance. To achieve these two objectives, Yemeni officials met secretly with prominent Israeli government officials and initiated a dialogue. Israeli “tourists” were granted Yemeni visas, coincidentally as President Ali Abdallah Saleh was visiting Washington, in April 2000. During Saleh’s tour in the United States, he visited the Middle East Center for Peace and Economic Cooperation, a well-known Jewish organization promoting Israeli interests. On the heels of this latest development, the Jordanian newspaper Al-Majd, in its 25 April 2000 issue, quoted Western reports and several foreign sources that a military and security pact was indeed signed between Yemen, Israel, and the United States.[490] The newspaper asserted that “actual implementation of the deal began three weeks ago.” Without a doubt, such cooperation would affect the security of Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Peninsula, given that it may well allow Israel a non-negligible role in Red Sea.

**** Conclusion

The Yemeni-Saudi relationship began on a sour note in the 1920s because the two sides perceived each other as expansionist and a threat to their newly created states. Their antagonisms stemmed from their inability to resolve a border dispute and counter-claims over Asir. Once that issue was resolved, albeit through a war, the discord between the two states evaporated. For nearly 30 years, Yemen and Saudi Arabia experienced an admirable relationship that was based on cooperation and trust. Saudi Arabia became the most reliable ally of Yemen during this period. Naturally, the fact that both countries were monarchies helped them to coexist in relative harmony.

This period was followed by a turbulent era in Yemeni political history born out of the 1962 revolution. The subsequent Egyptian intervention and the introduction of Egyptian troops into Yemen were causes for concern to Saudi

Arabia. Facing an aggressive Yemeni government, allied to a similarly aggressive Egypt, Saudi Arabia sought and received American assurances of its sovereignty and independence. Once Egyptian troops withdrew, Saudi Arabia and Yemen forged closer links largely because of the threat emanating from the newly established communist political system in the PDRY. This cooperation lasted throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. When Aden's putative threat diminished, and when Sanaa became an oil producer, the YAR began developing and enhancing its relationship with Iraq. A reinvigorated Yemeni leadership no longer perceived the Al Saud as essential to its regional significance and economic development. Saudi Arabia, in turn, perceived the close Yemeni-Iraqi connection as a threat to its national security. The border dispute between Yemen and Saudi Arabia thus stood out as a sore point. On its own merits, it did not affect negatively the long-established contacts between the two states. However, in conjunction with the improved and personalized relations between Saddam Hussein and Ali Abdallah Saleh, it preoccupied Saudi Arabia. During this period, Sanaa perceived Riyadh as opposing Yemeni unity. That perception increased in intensity in the latter part of the 19805.

The final period witnessed further impairment in the Yemeni-Saudi relationship, caused by the Yemeni decision to side with Saddam Hussein during the 1990–1991 Gulf crisis. GCC states, especially Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, which had generously supported Yemen's economic development, felt betrayed by Sanaa. In turn, Yemen was shunned and isolated for almost three years, as its refusal to recognize and admit that it had made a policy mistake only reinforced Saudi misgivings of the Saleh regime. The fact that the Yemeni government's negative perceptions of Saudi Arabia were widely publicized in the official media troubled Riyadh further. To the Saudis, Ali Abdallah Saleh and Dr. Abdul Karim al-Iryani were the two political leaders most responsible for the deterioration of relations between Riyadh and Sanaa. Although a memorandum of understanding was signed by both parties in early 1995, both sides remained belligerent toward each other simply because the Yemeni leadership was no longer seen by Riyadh as trustworthy. Irrespective of that, the two nations signed a border and maritime agreement in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 12June 2000. Although the text and the details of the border agreement have not been made public, both nations expressed their optimism that their relationship has taken a turn for the best.[491] It is, however, too early to conjecture as to whether the incoherence of the Yemeni political decision-making body will be able to

chart a more rational policy vis-â-vis Saudi Arabia. Improved Yemeni-Saudi relations depend on the ability of the Yemeni political leadership to persuade the Gulf Arab states, especially Riyadh, that it can be trusted.

[437] Al-Sayyed Mustafa Salem, Takwin al-Yaman al-Hadith: Imam Yahyah Bayna 1904–1948 [The Formation of Contemporary Yemen], Cairo, Egypt: The League of States, Center for Arabic Studies, 1963.

[438] Issam Dhia al-Din al-Sayyed, Asirfll-Takat al-Siyassiyah al-Saudiyyah al-Yamaniyyah: 1919–1934 [Asir in the Saudi-Yemeni Relationship], Cairo: Dar al-Zahrah lil-Nashr, 1989, p. 107.

[439] Turkey Muhammad al-Madhi, Al-llakat al-Saudiyyah al-Yamaniyyah: 1904–1954 [Saudi-Yemeni Relations], Riyadh: Dar al-Shail lil-Nashr, 1997, pp. 44–47.

[440] Ibid.,pp. 227–42.

[441] Muhammad al-Shahari, Al-Matami‘ al-Saudiyyah al-Tawasuiyyah fil-Yaman [Saudi Ambitious Expansionism into Yemen], Beirut: Dar ibn Khaldun, 1996, pp. 144158. I

[442] Al-Sayyed, op. cit.,p. 160.

[443] Ibid.,pp. 17475.

[444] Ibid.,p. 174.

[445] Saeed M. Badeeb, The Saudi-Egyptian Conflict over North Yemen: 1962–1970, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1986, p. 92.

[446] Mohammed A. Zabarah, Yemen: Traditionalism vs. Modernity, New York: Praeger, 1982, pp. 27–29.

[447] Saeed M. Badeeb, op. cit., pp. 49–50.

[448] Manfred Wenner,ModernYemen: 1918–1966,Baltimore:Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967,p. 195. See alsoj. E. Peterson, Yemen:The Search for a Modern State, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982: and F. Gregory Gause III, Saudi-Yemeni Relations: Domestic Structures and Foreign Policy, New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

[449] M. s. El Azhary, “Aspects of North Yemen’s Relations with Saudi Arabia,” in B. R. Pridham (ed.). Contemporary Yemen: Politics and Historical Background, London: Croom Helm, 1984, p. 197.

[450] Abdallah al-Sultan, Al-Bahr al-Ahmar wa Assira’a al-Arabi al-Israili [The Red Sea and the Arab-Israeli Conflict], Beirut: Markaz al-Dirassat al-Arabiyyah, 1984, p. 156.

[451] El Azhary, op. cit.,p. 197.

[452] Robert Litwak, Security in the Persian Gulf: Sources of Inter-State Conflict, number 2, London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981, pp. 81–82.

[453] Leading Arabists considered the Saudi monarchical system as being outdated. They assumed that such a system did not represent the aspirations of the Arab masses.

[454] Gause, op. a‹., pp. 105–106.

[455] “Anonymous” individuals assassinated al-Hamdi along with his brother, Abdallah. Al-Ghashmi was assassinated by an explosive device in a briefcase carried to him by a messenger sent by Salem Rubai Ali of the PDRY When the briefcase was opened, both al-Ghashmi and the messenger were killed. See Manfred Wenner, “South Yemen since Independence,” in Pridham (ed.), op. cit., p. 126.

[456] Although al-Ghashmi was a strong ally of Saudi Arabia, he was believed to be cruel and oppressive. He had the misfortune of succeeding al-Hamdi, who was respected as an avowed supporter of Arab nationalism and a political leader of exceptional intelligence.

[457] Gause, op. cit.,p. 40.

[458] Al-Sultan, op. cit., p. 146.

[459] Ibid.,p. 148.

[460] Hamid al-Moufi, “Majlis al-Ta’awun al-Khaliji” [The Gulf Cooperation Council], Majalat Al-Siyasah al-Dawaliyyah, number 65, October 1981, p. 127.

[461] Mohammed A. Zabarah, ‘‘Yemen and Regional Security,” Al-Masar, 1:1, winter 2000, p. 6. See alsoAbdu H. Sharif, “Yemen and Arabian Peninsula Security: Quest for Inclusion, Consequences of Exclusion,” paper presented at the 1994 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, New York, 14 September 1994, pp. 4–5; and J. E. Peterson, The Arab Gulf States: Steps Toward Political

Participation, Washington D.C.: Praeger, published with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1988.

[462] Al-Moufi, op. cit.,p. 131.

[463] This conclusion, by Majid Khadduri, is indeed all-encompassing. See Peterson, op. cit., p. viii.

[464] For more details, see Joseph Kostiner, Yemen: The Torturous Questfor Unity, 1990—1994, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1996. See also Petroleum Finance, Ltd., “AlYaman: Al-Kilaf al-Hududi wal-llakat ma’a al-Saudiyyah,” [Yemen: The Border Dispute and Relations with Saudi Arabia], paper presented to the Seminar on the Border Dispute between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, Sanaa, Yemen, 7 August 1997.

[465] Al-Thawrah and 26 September, various issues from 1988 and 1989.

[466] Jamal s. al-Suwaidi (ed.),TheYemeni War of 1994: Causes and Consequences,Abu Dhabi: The Emirate Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1995, p. 98.

[467] Mark Katz, “External Powers and the Yemeni Civil War,” in ibid., p. 83. See also Zabarah, Al-Masar, op. cit., pp. 4–5.

[468] Under the National Reconciliation Agreement signed by the YAR and the royalists in 1970, Saudi Arabia agreed to pay Sanaa $100 million annually in budgetary support. See also Caroline Drees, “Saudi Says Acted in ‘Self-Defense’ in Yemen Clash,” Infoseek News Channel, 20 July 1998. More concretely, Saudi economic assistance to Yemen was also apparent in the construction of mosques, schools, and roads.

[469] Kiren Aziz Chaudhry, The Price of Wealth: Economies and Institutions in the Middle East, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997, p. 196.

[470] Ibid.,p. 206.

[471] Yemeni newspapers spread the idea that Saudi Arabia was working against Yemeni unity. It used Foreign Minister Prince Saud bin Faysal's visit to Aden and his alleged offer as such an example.

[472] Ahmad Nu'man al-Mathhaji, "Ta'dudiat Marakiz al-Quwa al-Yamaniyyah wa Atharaha alAl-Ilaqat al-Yamaniyyah al-Saudiyyah fl Asr al-Dimukratiyyah" [Multi-political Forces in Yemen and Their Influence on the Yemeni-Saudi Relationship in the Era of Democratization], paper presented at the Conference of the North American Association for Middle East Studies, Washington, D.c.,8 December 1995, p. 12.

[473] Ibid. p. 12.

[474] Brian Whitaker, "The International Dimension," Yemen Gateway, 18 February 2000, p. 3.

[475] Colleagues at Sanaa University reiterated that they heard Dr. al-Iryani state his theory at "Qat" sessions in Sanaa before and after the Gulf crisis of 1990–1991.

[476] Kostiner, op. cit., p. 54.

[477] Ibid.,p. 52.

[478] Brian Whitaker, “Crisis over the Border,” Middle East International, number 492, 20 January 1995,1.11.

[479] Zabarah, “Yemen and Regional Security,” p. 11.

[480] Katz, op. cit., p. 82.

[481] Kostiner, op. cit., p. 95.

[482] Ibid.,p. 95.

[483] Michael Hudson, “The Evolution of US Policy Toward Yemen: Seeking Stability in Arabia,” paper presented to the Conference on the Future of Yemen, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, London, 25–26 November 1995, p. 10.

[484] Brian Whitaker, ‘‘National Unity and Democracy in Yemen: A Marriage of Inconvenience,” Yemen Times, 27 November 1995, p. 11.

[485] Mohammed A. Zabarah, “The Role of Yemeni Policymakers,” Focus Yemen, commentary delivered at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1999, p. 20.

[486] Whitaker, “Crisis over the Border,” p. 11.

[487] The memorandum of understanding can be found in Al-Hayat, 27 February 1995, p. 5.

[488] Al-Quds al-Arabi, Al-Sharq al-Awsat, Shu ‘un Arabiyyah, various issues, 1998–1999.

[489] Ain al-Yaqeen, “Detailing Yemeni Aggressions and Border Movements,” 22 July 1998, p. 4.

[490] As reported in Yemen Times, volume 10,1–6 March 2000, p. 1.

[491] Yemen Times, volume 10, 19–25 June 2000, pp. 1–2.

** Relations Between Gcc States

*** Chapter 16: Unity on the Arabian Peninsula

Joseph A. Kechichian

When the six conservative Arab Gulf monarchies (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates [UAE]) established the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981, they specifically identified their “common characteristics and similar systems founded on the creed of Islam” as the defining reasons for their effort.[492] The foreign ministers of the six member states provided even clearer justification for their endeavor at their first pre-summit meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia. The 4 February 1981 communique read, in part, that the conservative monarchies wished to unite “out of consideration of their special relations and joint characteristics stemming from their joint creed, similarity of regimes, unity of heritage, similarity of their political, social and demographic structure, and their cultural and historical affiliation.”[493]

Similar statements followed but what they all purported to declare was that unity on the Arabian Peninsula was widespread and, more important, that potentially negative underlying currents—including ethnic and religious differences—were the figment of “Orientalist” imaginations.

Still, the reality of the GCC in 1981 was evident: The six countries embarked on a helter-skelter unity bandwagon because of perceived threats—especially from the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Nevertheless, and although unity was brought on the Peninsula, it was not in it.

Without a doubt, the creation of the GCC represented a momentous step toward unity on the Arabian Peninsula, as was the 1990 effort in Yemen. To be sure, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) united by necessity—perhaps to "correct" the 1962 division that separated them—but the end result was substantial.[494] Undeniably, both the GCC and unified Yemen achieved much, but, as events since 1981 in every Gulf state amply illustrated, major differences among Gulf states remained. Some of these differences were grave, especially in Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, where dormant ethnic and religious divisions awakened. In Yemen, internal tensions threatened to unravel the meager achievements of unification. Little of what ailed these societies was well understood. Even less was known about the long-term repercussions of domestic conflicts.

**** The Political Arena on the Peninsula

Except for Saudi Arabia, an independent country for over 50 years, GCC states were very young sovereign actors in the international political arena. Kuwait gained its independence in 1961, and Bahrain, Qatar, and the ﷺ in 1971. Although Oman's sovereignty was exercised for several centuries, the Sultanate did not enjoy autonomy before 1970, when Sultan Qaboos acceded to the throne and literally opened his country to the outside world.

In the 19805 and 1990s, several GCC rulers attempted to enlarge popular participation in their political systems, recognizing that internal stability strengthened regional security. Indeed, the absence of effective political participation presented a catalyst for potential upheavals and instability, and the demise of the Shah of Iran in 1979 reminded GCC rulers that no regime, no matter how strong, could remain in power if a population rejected its ruler's legitimacy. While the impact of the Iranian revolution could not be

overemphasized, GCC states' political systems amply indicated that authority and legitimacy were institutionalized quite differently than in Iran. Ruling families in the Lower Gulf consolidated power and authority over their subjects through historical tribal allegiances. Moreover, economic and social changes experienced since the discovery of petroleum, as well as the resulting rapid pace of modernization, accelerated the demand for political participation. The pivotal question, as one observer concluded, was "whether change in Arab Gulf societies would be gradual and peaceful, or whether it would produce instability and violence."[495]

Change, of course, meant that the stability of GCC regimes was far from guaranteed. Since political stability required that a system, or sub-system, in the international arena maintain equilibrium among its members, GCC states' search for stability necessitated political cooperation among the six regimes. This was especially significant because the Arabian Peninsula and the Persian Gulf were at the center of international and regional conflicts that threatened both GCC rulers and their subjects. Thus, how conservative regimes absorbed and processed change, while continuing to function normally by stressing their religious and ideological values, remained the key "stability" question. In the absence of mass political participation, stability in GCC states also required that the rulers satisfy certain popular requirements. Among these were the political and socioeconomic needs of their populations, both indigenous and expatriate, and the safeguarding of their citizens from external and internal sources of threat, as well as supporting basic freedoms for all.

Yet, the legitimacy of GCC rulers rested on norms adopted in different times, when the world was not preoccupied with the Persian Gulf. In fact, their relative political successes were largely accomplished through the use of coercion, in a relatively isolated environment.[496] In the post-oil boom era, however, when all six states were endowed with small intelligentsias and when education levels were rapidly rising, political coercion was no longer the most effective tool to achieve stability. Therefore, GCC rulers were faced with new challenges calling for further tolerance of peaceful internal dissension, to strengthen their legitimacy and sources of authority. This was certainly the case with the Shias, whose grievances surfaced with a vengeance after 1979, in large part inspired by the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

How Shias were treated in GCC societies illustrated the dilemma of unity on the Arabian Peninsula.

**** Shia Communities in the GCC States

To fill its divinely inspired mandate, the Khomeini regime attempted to export its “revolution” within the boundaries of Shia legal thought. Admittedly, it would have been inconsistent for Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to advocate belligerent policies, when Shia religious and legal interpretations prohibited offensive wars. An armed attempt by Muslims to subjugate unbelievers, according to Shia jurisprudence, may only be declared by the imam or his immediate deputy after obtaining permission from the Prophet. Such a conflict would be an offensive jihad. A defensive jihad, on the other hand, did not require the imam to ask for the Prophet’s or, for that matter, anyone else’s permission.[497]

Significantly, all four types of defensive jihads applied to Khomeini’s views in exporting the revolution and influencing Arab Gulf societies.[498] Furthermore, since in Shia doctrine it was essential that all Muslims (particularly Sunni Muslims) eventually become true believers, and join the Dar-al-Imam, it was logical to assume that Khomeini considered Gulf Sunni Muslims as apostates even though they were born Muslims (murtaddjitri).[499] Indeed, these religious and legal interpretations shed light on Khomeini’s understanding of defensive jihad, and, beyond Iran’s territorial entity, defensive jihad encompassed the entire Muslim world. Such fundamental assumptions justified Teheran’s foreign policies, including Iran’s response to the war with neighboring Baathist, but nonetheless Muslim, Iraq.[500] Of course, after 1982, the war with Iraq was no longer a territorial dispute, but a clear attempt to export the nascent revolution to Baghdad.

Thus, except for the war with Iraq, Iran did not attempt to export its revolution through coercive methods. Rather, it endeavored, with limited successes, to invite sympathetic Shias and Iranian nationals in GCC states (and elsewhere) to become true Muslims by simply joining the Dar al-Imam. Toward the fulfillment of this goal, economically and politically deprived Shias

were also called to rebel against conservative Sunni GCC governments by demanding that the influence of “Westernization” be curbed. A return to true religious fundamentalism was the order of the day.

Shias across the Gulf formed an integral part of the settled populations and worked their way up the social ladder, enjoying economic prosperity. Yet, despite these gains, Shias throughout the lower Gulf region were always perceived as a distinct group both socially and politically. An additional source of tension was their overwhelming numeric advantage among nationals in Bahrain, Qatar, and, to some extent, the UAE.

Beyond the numbers, however, serious sociopolitical cleavages scarred Sunni-Shia relations in every GCC state. For example, with a large Shia middle-class population, which comprised 70 percent of the island’s citizens, Bahrain was a fertile ground for dissent. Since 1978, revolutionary leaders in Teheran frequently called on Bahraini Shias to revolt against Manama, which in turn angered the Sunni-led government. Although an effort was made, at least after the early 1970s, to bring elements of the Shia middle class into the government, tensions did not subside. Nevertheless, Shia officials filled a number of cabinet positions, and in December 1972, 14 out of the 22 elected members of the National Assembly were Shias. Bahrain’s experiment with parliamentary life highlighted underlying tensions between reform-minded Shia deputies and more conservative Sunnis, leading the ruler to dissolve the chamber in 1975.[501]

What worked elsewhere in the Gulf could not be applied in Bahrain. Indeed, the dynamic island-state was different because the serious sociopolitical cleavage between the two Muslim communities could not be resolved by mere “deportations,” as in the case of expatriate laborers. Most Bahraini Shias were citizens and enjoyed full privileges under the laws of the state, which protected them from summary deportations. The challenge facing Manama, therefore, was how to meet the rising expectations of Shia Bahrainis. Moreover, Manama’s task was complicated given that Bahraini Shias enjoyed freedom of worship, and the commemoration of Ashura (celebrating al-Husain Ibn Ali’s martyrdom—a political as well as a religious phenomenon) was a national holiday. The government, while lenient to religious freedoms, objected to Shia political manifestations, particularly

during Ashura, dealing harshly with demonstrators. Noticeably, this trend continued into the mid-1990s, with heavy casualties.[502]

The Kuwaiti Shia population was estimated to hover around 25 percent of the total indigenous population in 1995 (perhaps 250,000 out of an estimated 1 million citizens). In addition, an estimated 80,000 Iranians lived and worked in Kuwait, where few residents were granted citizenship even after decades of successive habitation.[503] A number of pro-Iranian demonstrations were staged beginning in 1979, although the Al Sabah regime did not hesitate to put them down rapidly and severely. Ironically, the conservative Sunni government in Kuwait had an especially difficult task in monitoring the activities of its politically motivated Shia citizens and Iranian residents. Since religious and political meetings occurred in mosques that were under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Endowments and Islamic Affairs, it was especially significant that in the early 1980s, 9 out of the 25 Shia mosques in Kuwait did not fall under this category and, therefore, lacked governmental oversight. Furthermore, it was assumed that political meetings and paramilitary activities occurred in some of the 60 Shia centers of religious education and propagation (Husayniyahs). [504] Recent events in the Shaykhdom, including the devastating Iraqi invasion and subsequent liberation, did not fundamentally alter perceptions of inequality between Shias and Sunnis. By the mid-1990s, Kuwait’s Shia population—both Arab and Persian—had gained little additional influence, either in parliament or in the government. In October 1996, several Sunni Islamist groups, led by the Salafiyah Movement, won National Assembly seats that left Shias—once again— out of the political arena.[505]

In Oman, where the majority of the population were Ibadhis, an offshoot sect of Shia Islam, less than 7 percent of the indigenous population was Shia, most of whom were concentrated in the capital city of Muscat. Although the Sultanate did not experience many violent clashes or opposition from its Shia population in the 1980’s and 1990’s, Muscat was understandably concerned with rapid developments across the strategic Straits of Hormuz and, more important, about the spillover effects of the Iranian revolution. In mid-1994, Omani authorities arrested several hundred “Islamists” who, according to official sources, “had external connections, both financial and organizational.” Although the majority of those arrested—and eventually

released—were Sunnis, several Shia and Ibadhi Omanis were among those that intended to “overthrow the regime.”[506]

In Qatar, the only other state in addition to Saudi Arabia that accepted the call to the Doctrine of the Oneness of God (al-Daawah ila al-Tawhid), the number of Shias hovered between 15 and 80 percent of the citizen population, depending on sources.[507] Despite this major discrepancy in statistical estimates, few Qatari Shias were politically active, although it would be a mistake to conclude that the Al Thani did not have to take them into account.

Finally, in the UAE, the native Shia population was estimated to be as high as 41 percent among the Federation’s citizens. In this instance, as well, statistical discrepancies abounded.[508] Interestingly, in Dubai 30 to 40 percent of the population were of Iranian origin, most of whom had settled in the Shaykhdom around the turn of the century. Other large Shia populations in Sharjah and Abu Dhabi made the UAE the truly cosmopolitan country it was. Much as in other Gulf states, pro-Iranian demonstrations were staged periodically after 1979, which prompted UAE internal security forces to keep close surveillance of Shias and deport—on a regular basis—convicted violators of UAE laws.

Despite clear gains in certain economic fields, Shias remained essentially outsiders in the sociopolitical arenas of GCC states. The fact that most Shia citizens provided needed assistance in the oil industry was largely and conveniently overlooked because ruling Sunni governments would not absorb them as full participants in GCC states’ political life. With the notable exception of a few wealthy merchant families in Oman and Bahrain (by no means representing the large Shia populations in the region), Shias in the Gulf were mostly on the lower social and economic strata. Conversely, almost two decades after the Iranian revolution, Shias failed to develop strong bonds of allegiance to their respective states, and many continued to draw inspiration from the Iranian revolution in their efforts to assert undeniable self-identities.

While the overall number of Shias in the six GCC states hovered around one million, GCC rulers feared a potential alliance between Shias and disenfranchised Sunni groups—presumably with the express support of the revolutionary regime in Teheran—to threaten internal stability. This certainly was the contention of senior Bahraini officials who maintained that disturbances on the island after 1995 were fully supported by Iran.[509] Throughout the 1980s, the Arabian Peninsula experienced the successive jolts of Iran's revolutionary shocks, including the 1981 Bahrain coup attempt, the 1983–1985 multiple bombings in Kuwait, the 1987 Makkah bloodshed (repeated on and off since then), and, of course, the severe jolts of the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. These events intensified GCC states' fear of the Iranian and Iraqi regimes, leading to routine expulsions of expatriate workers (mostly Iranians) believed to have been involved in anti-regime disturbances. In turn, Teheran perceived these actions as pro-Western, unjust, and, in the revolutionary jargon, un-Islamic.

Saudi-Iranian relations went from bad to worse throughout the 1980s but, miraculously, improved in the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Riyadh re-estabhshed its broken ties with Teheran in March 1991 and encouraged its GCC partners to improve ties as well. The Kuwaitis hired several Iranian oil-well capping enterprises, for example, to help Western corporations extinguish some of the 600+ fires set by retreating Iraqi troops. Heir Apparent Abdallah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud attended the 1997 Organization of Islamic Conference summit meeting in Teheran, where he received special attention. For its part, Riyadh welcorned former President Rafsanjani and sent Foreign Minister Saud al-Faysal for high-level discussions in 1998 with Ayatollah Khatami.[510] Of course, Oman and the UAE, which had nurtured their contacts with Iran even during the most difficult period, were instrumental in the rapprochement under way. GCC states even contemplated security discussions with Iran as a balancing factor vis-â-vis Iraq.

Despite these noticeable changes, the rapprochement between the GCC states and Iran was only an antidote for a serious and, perhaps, permanent disagreement. Relations between Sunni Arab rulers and Shia Persian revolutionaries were too divergent to ensure an enduring truce. GCC states were literally caught in the Saudi-Iranian legitimizing vortex and were, as a result, almost always prey to political and religious pressures from either

side. In the past, the small shaykhdoms had looked to Baghdad as a third alternative pole, but in the wake of recent events, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for GCC states to rely on that source in toto—-as long as Saddam Hussein remained in power. Still, GCC rulers and populations alike opposed the various embargoes that hurt helpless Iraqis and, to address their concerns, provided material assistance. Nevertheless, and because GCC states knew that Teheran—especially if it formed close ties with its brethren in Iraq—could easily resort to its “Shia” card to influence internal political developments in the shaykhdoms, they looked to Baghdad as a perpetual balancer. This proposition was valid as long as Shias remained disenfranchised, which, subsequently, perpetuated the lack of unity on the Peninsula.

**** Evolution of Class Structure in the GCC States

Although any scheme of social stratification on the Arabian Peninsula blurred the lines between social, economic, and political elites and groups, the end result was not always unity. It was important to note that poverty and marginal political power, for example, sometimes accompanied the social status enjoyed by badu tribes. Similarly, the ulama in Saudi Arabia or in Qatar—who enjoyed considerable political influence—did not always enjoy high economic standing. Still, the ruling families remained at the top of the Gulf paradigms because they were the only elites into which members were born. Moreover, due to their high social positions, wealthy Gulf ruling families experienced unprecedented enhancements of their political and social clout. Many members exploited their standings by allocating to themselves a portion of the state oil income, involving themselves in their country’s commercial enterprises, and using their spending powers to exercise direct influence on the state.

Yet, even within groups of high standing elites, there was disenchantment. In the post-oil boom era, younger, more educated princes demanded greater participation in the running of their country’s internal and foreign affairs. Likewise, Westernized elites in search of an effective voice were increasingly dissatisfied with the established consensus-reaching approaches designed and supported by their elders. Naturally, some senior officials were aware of these subtle changes, and several among them understood that their

societies could experience serious upheavals if dissenting calls were not heeded. Still, although key officials were aware of changes within their own ranks, few knew how to address them. If Gulf ruling families could satisfy the genuine needs of younger princes—that is, without jeopardizing the established cohesion at senior levels—then chances were good that the disenchantment within their ranks would be limited.[511]

**** Political Participation in the GCC States

Neither the situation of Shias nor the evolution of class structure in GCC societies affected unity on the Arabian Peninsula to the same degree that the call for genuine political participation did. Despite the many accomplishments of the 1970s through the 1990s, GCC citizens demanded even more, insisting that their voices be heard loud and clear. Such calls illustrated GCC citizens' aspirations for genuine unity, and several Gulf rulers responded.

Even before the War for Kuwait, the small northern Shaykhdom was engaged in a political participation experiment, in the form of an elected parliament. Similarly, Bahrain was also a "parliamentary" government, although the institution was suspended in 1975. For its part, the UAE's National Assembly aimed—for many years—to ratify a "provisional" constitution. Oman and Qatar experimented with consultative councils, each with concrete accomplishments to its credit. The winds of change were indeed blowing across the Arabian Peninsula, and by osmosis, war, or both, the trend was for more political participation. Although the conservative Arab Gulf monarchies were perceived as "anachronistic absolute monarchies," in reality they were confronting sociopolitical challenges and, in many respects, growing stronger.

Despite their many shortcomings, Gulf rulers were keenly aware of social developments requiring their attention, ranging from the evolution of class structure to the impact of modernization. In the oil-boom era, GCC rulers assumed that providing the highest possible incomes for their citizens would keep the lid on social problems. In reality, direct and indirect aid taxed services, increased manpower imports, and eroded the value of work. The

search for “instant wealth became an end in itself. ”[512] But when the novelty faded, people turned to the more fundamental questions affecting their lives.

The 1970s—the oil decade-synthesized a new class structure in which the ruling families “enhanced their status as a social and economic elite while retaining political monopoly.”[513] This phenomenon was paralleled by the emergence of a secondary elite—akin to a middle class—that benefited from the economic boom and, not surprisingly, became much more differentiated. With better education levels, middle-class members were ideally suited to exploit opportunities as they arose. But the economic recession of the 1980s limited government capabilities to satisfy heightened expectations. And, rather than pursue painful economic policies, Gulf rulers continued to provide free services to maintain the social balance.[514] By failing to swallow the painful economic pill of the past decade, GCC states literally created a post—oil boom generation, whose objective was to maintain its high standard of living at all costs.

The post—oil boom generation gave the rulers legitimacy as long as the latter provided them with material possessions. At some point, it may well be next to impossible to provide everyone with everything, and the middle class will grow and expand its influence in ways that might not be welcomed by the ruling families. It is indeed conceivable that an eventual alliance between middie and lower classes may emerge “to break the oligarchic social and political power of the elites.”[515] Signs of this alliance were visible in GCC states’ national assemblies and consultative councils, where middle-class members were increasingly popular.[516] Moreover, calls for genuine political participation were emanating from all directions, including from within the ruling families, where younger members, especially from cadet branches, were marginalized with little or no influence on political issues. Although difficult to anticipate with certainty, it may be accurate to conclude that ruling families that failed to heed these calls for political participation could indeed face the ire of their “subjects” in the not too distant future.

**** Trends in Arab Gulf Unity

Assuming that the Iranian revolution was the catalyst—and the Iran-Iraq War the excuse—for the six conservative Arab Gulf states to set up a regional security organization without the participation of the two northern Gulf states, what was the nature ofArab Gulf unity? Moreover, whereas prior to November 1980 most Gulf rulers acknowledged that the Gulf region represented the strategic depth for the Arab world facing Israel, developments in both Iran and Iraq—amply demonstrated by the Iran-Iraq War and the War for Kuwait—transformed the confrontation states into the strategic depth of the Gulf countries, vis-â-vis Iran and Iraq. Political and military changes in the Gulf strengthened Arab Gulf rulers' perceptions that the Islamic Revolution was as tangible a threat to their political survival as the Israeli threat was to their physical well-being. Of course, the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was even more pronounced, since it affected each and every conservative Arab Gulf state. Consequently, and out of necessity, Gulf rulers were forced to come out of their shells and shoulder the responsibility of providing—collectively—security in the Persian Gulf region. As one observer noted:

To understand the tremendous change that has swept through the Gulf countries, one must realize that a clearer comprehension of the fundamentals of international power plays has become fixed in the minds of Gulf rulers. In consequence of their efforts and commitments towards the nonoil Arab countries, the Gulf producers' intentions must be given very seriOUS weight.[517]

Still, the War for Kuwait altered the balance of power in the region, and further narrowed the parameters of unity on the Peninsula. Once again, necessity was the primary reason for all regional attempts that boxed—as best as possible— those that were in the unity scheme (the so-called GCC+2 [Egypt and Syria]) versus those that were excluded from it, namely Iran and Iraq.[518]

What prompted Gulf rulers to feel secure enough to take a plunge into the GCC+2 scheme varied. First, it was clear that politically they were better entrenched than most other Arab states. Second, their achievements in enhancing the quality of life in their countries, and the desire to develop their societies' potential, permitted them to count on deeds and results.

Third, the availability of vast resources obviously allowed Gulf rulers to invest in the future and shed their shyness cloak. Finally, their regional strengths emerged, without ignoring deeply felt commitments to the Arab world, from a sharpened appreciation of what the Iranian revolution and the Baathist regime in Baghdad potentially represented to their way of life. This appreciation coalesced divergent views and, under Saudi leadership, galvanized GCC states to form a genuine alliance against Iran and Iraq. It was not the Yemen but the Iran-Iraq War that motivated GCC rulers into action. Moreover, after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, GCC states were further motivated to enter into new alliances with Western powers. In short, both Iran and Iraq helped GCC states to seek a unity of necessity on the Arabian Peninsula. All of their defensive cooperation efforts focused on the two major hegemonic powers. Indeed, Gulf rulers recognized that “Iraq had been a threat before the Iranian revolution and that Iran has been a danger since.”[519] They feared these two powers most and knew what the risks were. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, one of the GCC rulers’ worst fears materialized. With weak military capabilities, the reliance on Western allies was a foregone conclusion. GCC forces responded as well as they could, but in the two-month-long “war,” they were not the critical factor. In fact, the return of the Al Sabah to Kuwait raised the fundamental “outside military support” question forcefully for the GCC alliance. Under the circumstances, it would indeed be quite difficult to shake it off for some time to come. Simply stated, conservative Arab Gulf rulers shed all pretenses and opted for survival when their regimes were at stake. The trend was for more of the same.

Because GCC societies opted to focus on regional and international threats, their quest for unity on the Arabian Peninsula was only partially achieved. Festering internal tensions have meant that every Gulf state has experienced significant social upheavals during the past few years. At least four main sources of instability (or relative stability—depending on how governments responded) can be identified as future indicators of dramatic change:

1. disenchantment with the ruling family,

2. demands made by the intelligentsia,

3. pressures imposed by an increasingly professional military, and

4. competition for power by religious extremists.

Although social upheavals were not intrinsic to the Gulf region, the oil boom of the 1970s disrupted the nature of personal and family relationships, introduced consumerism, subordinated the Islamic principle of egalitarianism to more formal authority structures, and created an economic dependency on the government.[520] Moreover, the oil-boom era literally tore at the fabric of the most traditional societies on earth, where values were measured and implemented by entirely different social yardsticks than the ones practiced in the West. Ironically, most GCC citizens perceived the turbulent decades of the 1980s and 1990s as a reprieve from the chaos of the 1970s. Many compared the 19705 to an age of drunkenness and the period afterwards to a recovery from it. The return, of course, was to the more traditional values one could find in religion, society, and family, even if the more evident signs of modernization were readily espoused. Thus, seemingly contradictory forces in GCC societies coexisted, and the debate was over the level of comfort that these powerful forces—traditions and modernization—imposed on them.

Finally, and although the exploitation of oil produced undeniable economic benefits for a majority of GCC states' populations, a level of disorientation was also apparent because they were thrown into a very complex international arena of politics, economics, and finance, without adequate preparations.[521] Given the speed with which "modernizing" factors were introduced, some of the social changes were clearly instigated by eager governments. Others were unforeseen. A transformation of the economy; the creation of a bureaucracy to allow for new functions; the provision of extensive and mostly free social services; the adoption of all-inclusive development programs; the emphasis on education for manpower development; the shift to and extent of urbanization; the massive influx of close to 5 million expatriate workers; and the considerable defense needs of vulnerable countries all complicated matters for every GCC government.[522]

These social changes left dramatic imprints on GCC societies. Without exception, the badu were partially detribalized as a new national political culture emerged. A more nuclear family arose, leading as well to changes in relations between the sexes. The exposure to alien values and norms meant that a cultural erosion was under way that, in turn, allowed for the evolution of class structure and a greater social stratification. Finally, the changing outlooks of the younger generation raised serious dilemmas for conservative governments. Their response was the adoption of more aggressive policies at the regional level. To be sure, wary rulers addressed internal concerns but only with hesitation and, it seemed, always with a certain level of reluctance. In the long run, GCC internal issues were far more important than any regional hegemonic threats, and it was by addressing intrinsic demands for change that conservative Arab Gulf governments ensured their survival in power. In the meantime, unity on the Peninsula was assumed to exist, since most GCC governments focused on achieving regional cohesion.

**** The Political Arena of the Yemen

Unlike GCC states, where unity efforts were the result of necessity, the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR) and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) coexisted helter skelter, despite serious clashes spanning the period between 1962 and 1990. The fact remained, however, that Yemen was—at one point in history—a united entity, and six decades of wars (civil, regional, and international) notwithstanding, Yemenis craved unity.

***** Pre-Unification Efforts

Both the YAR and the PDRY sat at the strategic edge of the world’s richest petroleum peninsula for years before the discovery of their own oil reserves. Although poor, the two were not friendly, even though together they formed a buffer zone between the Horn ofAfrica and Arabia. For years, the Soviet Union backed the PDRY to foster Soviet policy in the whole Middle East, and the last thing Moscow wanted to see was a re-unification with the “capitalist” North. Saudis were also against unification, as they feared that a unified

Yemen could end up being dominated by Southern Yemeni communists. Yet, among ordinary people on both sides of the border, pressures for a united Yemen were surprisingly strong.[523] Unification was an emotional issue that transcended economic and global politics. Southerners often spoke of family and friends in the North. Many, including government officials, quietly admitted to a hope that unity would be achieved by political compromise on both sides. In Sanaa, public and private opinions were more guarded (reflecting the area's tribal traditions), but ministers reminded outsiders that the people ofAden were Yemenis just like themselves. In the late 1970s, an economic expert in Sanaa explained a typical personal dilemma by stating:

My mother and father both came from the North, but I was born in Aden. When the socialists came to power, I came North and stayed ever since. My wife and two children remained in the South and if circumstances changed I would certainly go back. Eighty percent of my business friends come from the South and they would like the opportunity to return.[524]

Periodic outbreaks of violence in both North and South exacerbated these difficulties. But after the February 1979 hostilities, a new government to address intrinsic political and social issues reached a tentative agreement.

President Ali Abdallah Saleh (YAR) was invited by Aden to be the first head of the united nation, and joint committees were created to examine ways of integrating education, currency, and transport. Certainly, the industrialization of the South and the relatively efficient agriculture of the North promised a good economic mix. Moreover, a major stumbling block was removed with the announcement that the socialist PDRY would accept a unity government, which would follow Shariah laws. As the 19705 closed, the political will to unite was present, on both sides. South Yemenis, for example, celebrated the ten-year anniversary of the 1962 coup that had brought the northern regime to power. In 1975, Aden also identified re-unification as a primary goal of the Marxist regime.[525] Although many Northern officials were suspicious of the South's willingness to let President Saleh rule the united country, the latter's personal commitment to unification was strong. In 1978, Saleh overcame two attempted coups by anti-unity groups. The first, in October 1978, resulted in the execution of several army officers, and the second, in May 1979, remained shrouded in secrecy. Shortly thereafter, Lieutenant Colonel

Muhammad Yahyah al-Anisi, chief of the Amaliga (an army special forces group), Major Muhammad Sanabani, the commander of the Seventh Armored Brigade, and Major Ali Mahdi Sanabani, the commander of the Reserves, were all removed from their posts, allegedly because of their involvement in the two coup attempts. Such high-level support for coups indicated that the Saleh government was weak. Nevertheless, the president neutralized a large section of the opposition by purging high-ranking officers, which left him fairly free to pursue his own policies.

Over the years, Yemeni leaders' personal commitments to unification changed little. In 1979, for example, Foreign Minister Abdallah al-Asnaq, a prominent opponent of the PDRY government, was downgraded to the position of presidential adviser in the North. Saleh's counterpart in the South, Abdel Fattah Ismail, who came to power in a June 1978 coup when he deposed President Rubai Ali, was by no means a puppet of the USSR, even though Aden accepted considerable aid from Moscow. The PDRY embarked on a five-year plan (1979–1984) that intended to build on an already developing industrial base.

For the leader of a supposedly socialist state, Ismail encouraged several aggressive capitalist schemes. Aden sponsored joint development projects between the public and private sectors; authorized the British Crown Agents firm to continue purchasing for and advising it; maintained telephone links to London, which was Aden's best technical link to the outside world; allowed British Petroleum to fly its flag; and insisted that young men in the civil service and nationalized banks receive Western training. But despite all of these efforts, "unification talks" did not proceed well. Most were held at the informal level, with little progress made on substantive issues.

The underlying external pressures against unification remained and were exacerbated by the February 1979 war in the North.[526] Saudi Arabia's concern over Soviet influence in the region essentially meant that Riyadh remained active in derailing the fledgling talks in the first place. North Yemen was viewed as a buffer state between Saudi Arabia and the PDRY, and every successful unifIcation meeting was looked on with alarm. But, despite the fact that Riyadh provided almost all the cash injected into the YAR, and that Sanaa's armed forces were equipped and trained with Saudi finances, it was

difficult to find North Yemenis who spoke favorably of their generous neighbor.[527]

For their part, the Soviets—who provided much of the finances to keep the

PDRY afloat—sought the strategic advantages of a satellite state that provided access to the Arabian Gulf, as well as facilities for a deep-water port at Aden. Despite this close relationship, ties were never cemented between Aden and Moscow. In looking at the Soviet relationship with the PDRY, it is important to examine the former Soviet Union's ties with the YAR as well. Significantly, the USSR was the principal supplier of military and financial aid to republican forces throughout the civil war, even if Soviet relations with the YAR were abruptly broken in 1972. By the end of the 1970s, and although Moscow maintained a very large trade mission in Sanaa, the Soviet influence on the YAR was limited. There were few indications that Moscow understood the Arab world any better in the late seventies than it had prior to the 1972 Egyptian debacle.[528] Slow unifIcation talks made it abundantly clear that the Soviet Union's greatest gain from the February 1979 war was not any direct military successes by the South, but the damaging long-term effects on the Northern economy. Far more important, Arabs who suffered the consequences of economic dislocations were not ready to support, or even tolerate, an outside power bent on regional domination.

No matter how influential outsiders were, or tried to be, and no matter how difficult it was to achieve progress in unification, many North Yemenis claimed that Yemen was one country divided by two governments. What prevented unification, they argued, were the two countries' economic positions and the assiduous work of the Saudis and the Soviets to keep the two sides apart.

If Riyadh and Moscow were too obsessed with Sanaa and Aden, Kuwait was especially interested in fostering reconciliation. Kuwaiti officials helped negotiate a merger agreement in 1979 even if they acknowledged that ideological and other differences between the two countries appeared to be major obstacles to unity. These differences, officials then claimed, were not dealt with by those charged with putting the agreement into effect. Kuwaiti

negotiators encouraged the adoption of a Yemeni draft constitution—with 136 articles—expected to be submitted to a referendum after consultations between the two presidents and their legislative bodies. To their credit, the Kuwaitis expected little, as the 1972 agreement stood in stark contrast to the newfound optimism. They certainly favored the union as a means of reducing tension in the Gulf region but also wished to create an alternative source of influence to balance Saudi Arabia’s growing pressures on them. Moreover, the Al Sabah hoped that the PDRY, within the framework of a unified state, would feel less threatened by its neighbors and might even loosen its ties to the Soviet Union. Ironically, these ties were substantially strengthened after the 1978 signing of a 20-year friendship treaty between Moscow and Aden.[529] Still, the two Yemens, dominated by socialist and tribal backgrounds, failed once again to heed friendly “pressure,” preferring to determine the ideology of their projected unified state themselves. This was a major realization that strengthened both leaderships in ways that few outsiders accepted or understood.

***** Unification

Unification became a realistic prospect in the late 1980s when oil prices dropped and, more important, when the Soviet Union teetered on the brink of economic collapse. The PDRY lost its principal benefactor, which in turn meant a halt in the country’s economic development. Aden’s port could not be developed into the world-class facility many hoped for, and lack of cash postponed much-needed repairs to the country’s oil fields and assorted infrastructure. A merger, South Yemeni leaders posited, would encourage Western oil companies to return and invest in the nascent Shabwa fields. After the initial step, the reasoning concluded, pre-revolutionary landowners and entrepreneurs who had fled the country years earlier would return and bring back sorely needed capital. Similarly, opportunities derived from a merger appealed to the YAR, after oil exploration in the Maarib area proved to be less promising than originally anticipated. By accepting the merger, Sanaa would double its reserves and acquire of one the best natural ports on the Arabian Peninsula. An accord was reached on 30 November 1989—in Aden—and the two states formally united on 22 May 1990, six months ahead of schedule, into the Republic of Yemen.[530]

Within two months of this dramatic development, Iraq invaded Kuwait, an event that plunged the entire region into a crisis situation. Except for Iraq, no other country suffered more from the War for Kuwait than Yemen. Sanaa opposed the Iraqi invasion but vociferously objected to the U.S.-led foreign intervention. As a result, Yemen received the ire of regional and international actors, led by Saudi Arabia, from where an estimated one million Yemeni workers were hurriedly expelled.[531] Yemen lost its much-needed remittances. It also lost concessionary oil supplies from Iraq, its Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) partner, which forced Sanaa to divert production for internal use. Foreign exchange revenues were halved overnight. GCC states, along with the United States, cut their own financial assistance programs. A relatively poor country sank even lower, which, not surprisingly, added to the strain on internal stability.[532]

***** Post-Unification Efforts

Several years after unification, disenchantment was still greater in the south than in the north. The Sanaa government edged out Aden, and many southerners regretted the “de-socialization” of the southern part of Yemen. The last of the countless red stars that used to adorn Aden’s official buildings vanished, and the slogans of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) were carefully washed off city walls. Most portraits of the four “historical” leaders, including Abdel Fattah Ismail, whose assassination on 13 January 1986 had triggered a bloody internal civil war, were also removed.

On the hills that overlooked the harbor, an imposing peace dove replaced the huge color picture ofAbdel Fattah Ismail, the martyr ideologist of the YSP. The Abdel Fattah Ismail and Ali Antar Museums, and the museum where the assassination of the four leaders was reconstituted—in the former headquarters of the political bureau—were in a state of neglect for lack of funds and visitors. A recent report claimed that a single building devoted to South Yemeni history would be created to preserve Aden’s rich traditions. The monumental complexes housing the YSP and the Institute for Scientific Socialism—gifts from East European countries built in the purest Soviet style—looked like ships adrift abandoned by their crews and passengers. Before leaving for Sanaa, YSP leaders kept their promise and did all they could to clean Aden of anything that might remind Yemenis that it once was a center

of socialist influence. Most Yemenis who believed that a new era of prosperity was about to begin enthusiastically welcomed this “de-socialization.”

Disenchantment soon set in, however, as southerners discovered that interventionist socialism was gradually replaced by the wild capitalism of the north. “Before, our socialist leaders would exploit US,” a worker complained. “Now, the northerners are systematically bleeding the country,” he asserted. [533] Northerners traveled to the south loaded with riyals exchanged on the black market, never intending to invest in their country. Engaged in speculation and buying anything that might someday increase in value, they brought with them all of the vices of the north. After 1990, Aden market stalls, which used to be hopelessly bare, overflowed with vegetables, fruits, and other essentials. But prices were prohibitive since subsidies had been abolished immediately after unification, and few could afford them. The market where “qat” (the local euphoric drug) was sold, which did not exist in 1989, looked exactly like its counterparts in Sanaa working-class neighborhoods. It drained a considerable part of the meager wages of southern Yemenis, who were now free to use the substance even if it became a burden on the family budget. “The former South Yemen,” an academic opined, “has become the East Germany of re-unified Yemen. ”[534]

What followed for several years was a price explosion that affected southerners more than northerners, because the latter found ways to double or even triple their salaries, by moonlighting or engaging fiercely in the black market and smuggling. An attempt to introduce an unofficial foreign-currency marketeering in the south was thwarted by the police, now headed by a northerner. There was every indication that officials in Sanaa wanted Aden to become a provincial town. Even government employees’ salaries were paid late—in extreme cases up to seven months late—all of which led southerners to lose confidence in unity, and especially in their new leaders in Sanaa. Thus, invectives against YSP officials were a common occurrence, and former PDRY leaders betrayed Yemenis by abandoning them: “We are disappointed and were better off before unification,” a disgruntled southerner acknowledged. The high cost of living affected everyone, especially after the subsidization policy was scrapped. Others compared the YSP to “a figurehead on a shelf,” without any real control over what was happening in Sanaa.[535]

Southerners, who rejected the YSP in the hope that President Saleh's General Congress Party (GCP) would improve their lot, were clearly "worse off," and totally adrift. They did not know where to turn, especially when they saw corruption setting in—slowly but surely—through northerners working at customs, port, and airport facilities. A new "northern" customs director imposed arbitrary duties on Somali women carrying parcels of clothing for the local markets, which enraged all those who heard about the incident. Diplomatic missions were not immune to such arbitrary decisions. The majority accepted these unofficial rules if they wanted to get their diplomatic bags quickly. Outraged by such occurrences, many Yemenis remained faithful to socialism, which the peopie of Aden saw disintegrating among the widespread laxness of the re-unified Yemeni society.

The general breakdown of law and order continued unabated as an intense arms smuggling campaign from Saudi Arabia to the Shabwa and Hadhramaut Governorates intensified. Gangs spread havoc on Aden beaches at night, and the number of break-ins increased markedly. Car owners who never bothered to lock their vehicles were taking additional precautions. In order not to be bothered, women increasingly wore a veil. Many dreaded the promulgation of the law allowing polygamy and divorce, both of which had been banned in the south since the 1960s. But some South Yemenis no longer waited; they traveled one hour to Taiz in the north, where a legal second marriage, or a quick divorce from a religious judge, was easily arranged. "The impression was that [northerners] [we]re systematically destroying anything that was good in the South," and many believed that this was Sanaa's doing, to keep the former PDRY in a state of permanent underdevelopment. A United Nations Development Program (UNDP) employee confided how UNDP officials refused to allocate to the south credits that were not used in the north.

Sanaa's oft-repeated promise to turn Aden, which at the time of unification was called "Yemen's commercial and economic capital," into a free port capable of competing with Dubai or Hong Kong remained unfulfilled. After it was postponed several times, the law turning Aden into a free port was scheduled to be promulgated on 22 May 1991. Several years later, the project was still at its initial stages, with an official stating, half-jokingly and half seriously, that it was as difficult to turn Aden into a free port as it was to "turn a church into a night-club."[536]

Ironically, the committee in charge of studying the project was named the Committee for the Development of Free Ports in Yemen, which hinted that Aden might not necessarily be chosen as the site of the future free zone. There was increasing talk that Hodeidah, in the north, was best located to play that role. The very active “Hodeidah lobby” praised its advantages, arguing that it was already equipped with modern facilities, effective communications means, and a skilled labor force, all of which allegedly was lacking in Aden.

Other concessions were made to Islamists, who proved their strengths in the north at the time of the referendum and remained faithful in opposing the secularism that was rooted in the south.[537] Nevertheless, the Isiah, the union grouping the religious and the tribal leaders, achieved a breakthrough in the south after unification, with the help of the League of the Sons of Yemen (LSY).[538] The LSY constituency, repressed under the socialist regime, reorganized with the help of the Isiah, creating a formidable alliance between tribes and Islamists. Whether this alliance could impose itself in Aden, where secular traditions were stronger, was difficult to determine. What was clear, however, was that northern Islamists lost a substantial part of their influence after a year of campaigning against the Aden beer brewery, which they called “a center of communism.” This battle was lost in part because many of these fierce enemies of the diabolical brew spent weekends in Aden to enjoy such forbidden pleasures. Still, the struggle against the tribal-Islamist alliance was a trump card in the hands of southern leaders, as it enabled them to boost popularity among traditional constituents who were in a state of utter confusion.

***** Political Stability In Yemen

After 1990, a series of convulsive bloodbaths preoccupied the Yemeni body politic.[539] At the same time, the legacy of this history mobilized Yemeni leaders in their quest for effective government, and despite clashes, real progress was achieved. Yemeni leaders applied what they preached by holding elections and, equally important, by tolerating opposition forces.[540] A new level of political stability was attained as Sanaa struggled to

uphold minimum human rights standards and raised the level of tolerance for open political discourse.

The London-based human rights organization Amnesty International confirmed that all known political detainees and prisoners were released prior to unification. In its 1991 report, Amnesty claimed that one prisoner of conscience in North Yemen was released in January 1990, but it was not possible to confirm the release or continued detention of another 26 suspected political opponents. Released detainees from both former states alleged torture and ill treatment. Amnesty maintained that the cases of 50 people who “disappeared” in Yemen before unification remained unresolved. Since unification, however, no death sentences were known to have been ratified by the presidential council (although an estimated 300 Yemenis were detained after the 1994 civil war), which commuted eight such sentences in November 1990.[541]

For all the progress that such developments introduced into the political systern, Sanaa faced considerable difficulties as challenges emerged from both left and right following several assassinations. For example, a group of political parties, trade union leaders, and prominent personalities called on the government to launch a full investigation into the killing of Hassan Huraybi, director-general of the Central Highlands rural development project, on 10 September 1991.[542] In a statement issued within hours after the assassination, the group insisted that the authorities were responsible for this incident and demanded that the criminal(s) be apprehended and brought before a court of law. They also warned that lack of government cooperation would open the floodgates of political unrest throughout the country.[543]

When no progress was made in identifying Huraybi’s murderer(s), riots swept the capital in late 1991. Violence raged in Sanaa on 19 October 1991 after an army colonel shot dead a traffic policeman who had pulled him over for failing to stop at a red light. The incident took place in the center of the capital, outside the central bank building, in an area where large numbers of unemployed men sat in cafes. Observers said the shooting acted as a catalyst for rising frustrations at the level ofjoblessness and price increases. Cars and military vehicles were set on fire, and a building in front of parliament was burned. Police used tear gas to quell the demonstrations, and

one report from a Western observer claimed that as many as nine people were killed. The government denied this, although demonstrations continued the following day as political parties called for a march to commemorate the fortieth day since the killing of Hassan Huraybi.

A number of political parties, including the League of the Sons of Yemen and the Nasserites as well as the government Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) and General People's Congress, called on citizens not to take part in view of the previous days' events. Nevertheless, the demonstration went ahead with the Tajammu (Yemeni Unionist lance) at its head. Other protesters returned to the central bank area, where they held a rival demonstration. A number of arrests were reported, but the government also announced that it would put the colonel on trial for the incident that had sparked the riots. Since the colonel was from President Saleh's own tribe, the latter was under pressure not to show any signs of favoritism.

It also emerged that Sadiq Abdallah bin Husain, a Republican Party representative and the son of the influential Shaykh Abdallah bin Husain al-Ahmar, escaped an assassination attempt outside Sanaa on 18 October 1991. His car was ambushed and three of his companions were injured. Shaykh Abdallah was head of the Hashid tribe and a leading national figure. Shaykh Naji Abdel-Aziz Al-Shayef, head of the neighboring Baqil tribe, condemned the incident, and Internal Affairs Minister Mujahid Abu Shawarib called for the issue to be sorted out in a neighborly way. Others maintained that the incident was the latest in a series of attempted political assassinations, with the League of the Sons of Yemen blaming the YSP for failing to maintain law and order.[544]

Acts of violence were not limited to major cities. Two groups of heavily armed saboteurs were arrested in Hadhramaut, the official Sanaa weekly 26 Septemher revealed in late 1991, asserting that the groups were discovered with machine guns, land mines, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and communications equipment.[545] In December 1991, two YSP members were assassinated while attending the opening session of a national conference in Ibb. Naaman Qasim Hassan, a member of the local party secretariat, and Nabil Ghaleb were the latest victims of the ongoing spate of violence in the country. Al-Thawrah, the YSP official

magazine, published a report of their killing, which further increased tensions in the country.[546] In fact, between 1990 and 1994, an estimated 150 YSP members were killed in and around Sanaa.[547]

What these disturbances indicated was that unification did not alleviate Yemen's chronic tribal disputes. They also stood as a stark warning to President Saleh and his successors to assume control over internal stability if outside powers, in particular Saudi Arabia, were not to use this excuse to increase their involvement in internal Yemeni affairs. Consequently, and unless Sanaa gained the upper hand in domestic matters, it faced clear threats to its political stability.

Because President Saleh and Vice President al-Baid could not settle their differences, a growing political rift emerged by 1995, when the latter moved back to Aden. Al-Baid asked for specific reforms, and on 20 February 1994—in Amman, Jordan—a "Document of Bond and Agreement" was signed to bury the hatchet. On 3 April, Sultan Qaboos of Oman welcomed the two Yemeni leaders to Salalah, in yet another effort at reconciliation. Little did the Omani know that within a day of that fateful meeting, military confrontation between northerners and southerners would re-start in earnest.[548] Simply stated, the power game was too well entrenched for any document, or handshake, to carry the day.

The 1994 "civil war" that followed caused serious harm to unity but, in a convoluted way, addressed two perennial problems: outside meddling in internal Yemeni affairs and the legitimacy of state institutions. On both scores, unified Yemen's President Saleh won the day, by holding his ground against Saudi support to the YSP and by staking his rule on "total victory."'[549] When, on 21 May 1994, Ali Salem al-Baid announced the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Yemen (DRY)—in effect seceding from the union that was barely four years old—Saleh launched his troops against the "traitors."[550] The move proved to be a last-stand effort that failed, and on 4 July 1994, northern forces occupied Aden and Mukallah. Separatists fled either to Djibouti or Oman, from where they retrenched to other safe havens.

To his credit, President Saleh consolidated his position by proposing several constitutional amendments that strengthened the country's fledgling institutions. Few expected him to challenge the single most powerful organization— the military—reasoning that he could not weaken his own power base. In the event, Saleh de-politicized the armed forces—forcing army officers to resign their party memberships—because he realized that not "uniting" the military after 1990 had been a grave error. Shortly thereafter, the ill-fated Presidential Council was abolished and replaced with an upper house of parliament composed largely of shaykhs and other dignitaries.

Ali Abdallah Saleh managed to reconcile with many southern ex-socialists, who, for one reason or another, accepted to join his successive cabinets after mid-1995. Even Riyadh retrenched and sought to reach an agreement over the long-festering border dispute between the two countries. Although no final accord was signed by mid-1998, Sanaa was confident that one would indeed come about, in the not too distant future. More important, Saleh gained support from various groups that, for a variety of reasons, accepted the inevitability of pluralism. For the first time in several decades, Yemeni leaders accepted to live by democratic rules, opting to gain the consent of the governed.[551]

In the end, unity was ensured, even if the reliance on violence revealed that the union was far from being absolute. Assassinations and an outright civil war underscored Sanaa's inability to impose permanent stability and security without resorting to force. What they indicated was that over six decades of warfare did not diminish the Yemeni appetite for unity. By upholding the rule of law, Saleh surprised many—including himselR—by demonstrating that unity could indeed function, even if it were not perfect.

[492] "Charter of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf," inJohn A. Sandwick, The Gulf Cooperation Council■. Moderation and Stability in an Interdependent World, TSouXAer anAHi؟,- ton, D.C.: Westview Press and American-Arab Affairs Council, 1987, p. 217.

[493] “Foreign Ministers’ Statement on the Founding of the Gulf Cooperation Council,” Al-Hadaf (Kuwait), 5 February 1981, p. 5.

[494] It is not the purpose of this essay to assess the relative successes of the GCC and the post-1990 Yemeni unification but to infer from both whether they increased—or decreased—unity on the Peninsula. Much has been written on the GCC and Yemen in recent years. For a sampling, see: R. K. Ramazani, The Gulf Cooperation Council: Record and Analysis, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1988; Sandwick, op. cit.; Erik R. Peterson, The Gulf Cooperation Council: Search for Unity in a Dynamic Region, Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1988; Emile A. Nakhleh, The Gulf Cooperation Council: Policies, Problems and Prospects, New لآأأةد١د٢علآ٠^٠</sup>لا١ آحلججةآ١(اأا-ل Burrowes, The Yemen Arab Republic: The Politics of Development, 1962—1986, Boulder: Westview Press, 1987; idem, “Prelude to Unification: The Yemen Arab Republic, 1962–90,”) International Journal of Middle East Studies 23:4, November 1991, pp. 483–506; idem, “The Yemen Arab Republic’s Legacy and Yemeni Unification,” Arab Studies Quarterly 14:4, fall 1992, pp. 41–68; Charles Dunbar, “The Unification of Yemen: Process, Politics, and Prospects,” The Middle East Journal 46:3, summer 1992, pp. 456–76; and Eric Watkins and Patrick Makin, “Yemen’s Crisis Threatens the Country’s Unity,” Middle East International, number 463, 19 November 1993, pp. 18–19.

[495] Emile A. Nakhleh, The Persian Gulf and American Policy, New York: Praeger, 1982, p. 22.

[496] For a brilliant essay on this key issue in the conservative Arab Gulf states, see Frank Stoakes, “Social and Political Change in the Third World: Some Peculiarities of Oil-Producing Principalities of the Persian Gulf,” in Derek Hopwood, The Arabian Peninsula: Society and Politics, London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1972, pp. 189–215.

[497] W R. Campbell and Djamchid Darvich, “Global Implications of the Islamic Revolution for the Status Quo in the Persian Gulf”. Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 5:1, fall 1981, pp. 31–51

[498] The four kinds of defensive jihads are: (!)jihad to preserve the territory and community of Islam during an attack by unbelievers; (2) jihad to prevent unbelievers from gaining control over the persons of Muslims; (3) jihad to repel a particular group of unbelievers when it is feared that they might gain ascendancy over a particular group of Muslims; and (4) jihad to evict unbelievers where they had succeeded in conquering Muslim territories. For a full discussion, see ibid.,p. 33. See also E. Kohlberg, “The Development of the Imami Shii Doctrine ofjihad,” Deutsche Morgen Undischen Gesellschaft Zeitschrift 126,1976, pp. 64—86.

[499] Manoucher Parvin and Maurie Sommer, “Dar al-Islam: The Evolution of Muslim Territoriality and Its Implications for Conflict Resolution in the Middle East,” International Journal of Middle East Studies 11:1, February 1980, pp. 1–21.

[500] Iranian sources referred to the 1980–1988 Iran-Iraq War as “imposed,” not only to buttress Iranian innocence but, more important, to solidify the fledgling revolution. In other words, the war allowed clerics to rally public support by combining revolutionary rhetoric with nationalist tendencies. See Dilip Hiro, The Ungest War: The Iran-Iraq Military Conflict, New York: Routledge, 1991, pp. 7–39.

[501] Nakhleh, The Persian Gulf and American Policy, op. cit., pp. 26–40.

[502] For a thorough analysis of internal developments in Bahrain, see Joe Stork, RoutineAbuse, Routine Denial: Civil Rights and the Political Crisis in Bahrain, New York: Human Rights Watch, 1997; see also Bahrain Freedom Movement, Facts About Bahrain, London: BFM, 1997.

[503] Ramazani, ap. cit., pp. 38–42, 200.

[504] Abdallah Muhammad Gharib, Wajaa Dawr al-Majus: Al-Ibad al-Tarikhiyah wal-Aqaidiyah wAl-Siyasiyah lil-Thawra al-Iraniyah [The Iranian Revolution’s Impact on the Historic, Religious and Political Tensions between Sunnis and Shias], Cairo: Dar al-Jil lil-Tabaat, 1981, pp. 320, 323–28.

[505] Faris Glubb, “Kuwait: New Parliament,” Middle East International, number 536, 25 October 1996, p. 14; see also “Fears of Sectarianism Lead to Protest,” Country Report—Kuwait 4: 1996, London: The Economist Intelligence Unit, p. 14; and Shafeeq N. Ghabra, “Balancing State and Society: The Islamic Movement in Kuwait,” Middle East Policy 5:2, May 1997, pp. 58—72.

[506] Abdullah Juma Al-Haj, “The Politics of Participation in the Gulf Cooperation Council States: The Omani Consultative Council,” The Middle East journal 50:4, autumn 1996, pp. 566–68; see ١ة٢د ة SAem J؛ü\, Omani Islamism:An Unexpected Conjrontation with the Government, OccanX Papers, number 8, Annandale, Virginia: UASR, September 1995.

[507] One source advanced the 80 percent figure for 1980. See R. K. Ramazani, Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East, Baltimore and London:Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, p. 259. Elsewhere, we have a figure as low as 16 percent. See James A. Bill, “Islam, Politics, and Shi’ism in the Gulf,” Middle East Insight 3:3, January/February 1984, p. 6. Since all demographic figures on the Gulf region are suspect, caution must be exercised in evaluating them.

[508] In Ramazani, the figure is 41 percent, whereas in Bill it stands at 18 percent: see ibid., pp. 259 and 6, respectively.

[509] Graham E. Fuller, “Storm Clouds in the Gulf,” The Los Angeles Times, 3 May 1996, p. B13.

[510] Jubin Goodarzi, “Iran’s Arab Policy: A Thaw in the spring,” Middle East International, number 577, 19 June 1998, pp. 18–20. See also R. K. Ramazani, “The Emerging Arab-Iranian Rapprochement: Towards an Integrated U.S. Policy in the Middle East?” Middle East Policy 6:1, June 1998, pp. 45–62.

[511] Peter Ford, “In Saudi Arabia, Political Ferment Bubbles Quietly,” The Christian Science Monitor, 5 June 1991, p. 3. See also Peter w. Wilson and Douglas F. Graham, Saudi Arabia: The Coming Storm, Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1994, pp. 60–82; and F. Gregory Gause III, Oil Monarchies: Domestic and Security Challenges in theArab Gulf States, New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1994, pp. 78–118.

[512] J. E. Peterson, “Social Change in the Arab Gulf States and Political Implications,” inj. E. Peterson (ed.), Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, Washington, DC.: Defense Academic Research Support Program and The Middle East Institute, 1988, p. 54.

[513] Ibid.,p. 55.

[514] Mohammad Rumaihi, Beyond Oil: Unity and Development in the Gulf, London: Al-Saqi Books, 1986, pp. 42–43: see also Gause, op. cit., pp. 58–62 and 7075.

[515] J. E. Peterson, op. cit., p. 56.

[516] J. E. Peterson, TheArab Gulf States: Steps Toward Political Participation, New York: Praeger and the Center for Strategic

and International Studies, 1988, pp. 12–26; see also Al-Haj, op. cit., pp. 559–71.

[517] Marwan Iskandar, “A New Approach to Gulf Security,” An-NaharArab Report and MEMO 5:7, 16 February 1981, p. l;see also Joseph A. Kechichian, “The Polarization of the Arab World: The Emergence of a New Regional Order,” Middle East Insight 7:5, fall 1991, pp. 20–23.

[518] For two of the better think-pieces on this key issue, see Tim Niblock, “Arab Losses, First World Gains,” and Youssef Choueiri, “Syria and Egypt and the Spoils of War,” both in John Gittings (ed.), Beyond the GulfWarzThe Middle East and the New World Order, London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1991, pp. 77–85 and 92–94, respectively.

[519] Joseph Wright Twinam, “The Gulf Cooperation Council: The Smaller Gulf States and Interstate Relations,” in Charles F. Doran and Stephen w Buck, The Gulf Energy, and Global Security: Political and Economic Issues, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991, p. 115.

[520] Levon Melikian, “Arab Socio-Political Impact on Gulf Life-Styles,” in B. R. Pridham (ed.). The Arab Gulfand theArab World, London: Croom Helm, 1988, p. 115.

[521] Levon Melikian, “Gulf Reactions to Western Cultural Pressures,” in B. R. Pridham (ed.). The Arab Gulfand the West, London: Croom Helm, 1985, p. 205.

[522] J· E. Peterson, Social Change in the Arab Gulf States and Political Implications, op. cit., p. 48.

[523] For a thorough analysis, see J. E. Peterson, Yemen: The Search for a Modern State, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University

Press, 1982. For a broad analysis of Yemeni society, covering historical, social, religious, political, linguistic, economic, and ethno-musical features, see “Le Yemen, Passe et Present de runite,” Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Mediterranee, number 67, 1993.

[524] “A Country Divided: Yemen Unity Talks Falter,” 8 Days, 8 September 1979, pp. 6–9.

[525] Robert w. Stookey, South Yemen: A Marxist Republic in Arabia, Boulder and London: Westview Press and Croom Helm, 1982, p. 68.

[526] Robin Bidwell, The Two Yemens, Harlow, Essex, and Boulder: Longman and Westview Press, 1983, pp. 294–306.

[527] Abd al-Rahman Al-Baydani, Azmat al-Umma al-Arabiyyah wa Thawrat al-Yaman [The Arab Union Question and the Yemeni Revolution], Cairo: n.p., 1984, especially pp. 787–816.

[528] Norman Cigar, “South Yemen and the USSR: Prospects for the Relationship,” The Middle East fournal 39:4, autumn 1985, pp. 787–92.

[529] “Ideology Blocks Yemens’ Merger,” NewYork Times, 28 January 1982, p. A17.

[530] Abu Bakr al-Saqqaf, “Problemes de FUnite Yemenite,” in Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Mediterranee, number 67, 1993, pp. 95—108.

[531] Gause, op. cit., pp. 161–62.

[532] Simon Edge, YemenzArabian Enigma, MEED Profile Number 7, London: EMAP Business Information Limited, 1992, especially pp. 5–14.

[533] Jean Gueyras, “Yemen: Fragile Unite,” Le Monde, 10 July 1991, p. 7.

[534] Ibid.

[535] “Official Reports 35 Percent of Workers Unemployed,” Joint Publications Research Service Near East and South Asia 91–063, 13 September 1991, pp. 81–83.

[536] Gueyras, op. cit., p. 7.

[537] Abd al Aziz Ibn Qa’id al Masudi, “The Islamic Movement in Yemens,” Middle EastAffairsJournal 2:2–3, winter/spring 1995, pp. 26–55.

[538] Renaud Detalle, “Les Islamistes Yemenites et 1’Etat: Vers “Emancipation,” in Bassma Kodmani-Darwish and May Chartouni-Dubarry, Les Etats Arabes Face â la Contestation Islamiste, Paris: Armand Colin and Institut Francais des Relations Internationales, 1997, pp. 271–310.

[539] Robert D. Burrowes, “The Other Side of the Red Sea and a Little More: The Horn of Africa and the Two Yemens,” in David A. Korn (ed.). The Horn ofAfrica and Arabia, Washington, DC.: Defense Academic Research Support Program and The Middle East Institute, 1990, pp. 63–74; see also Charles F. Dunbar, “Internal Politics in Yemen: Recovery or Regression?” in Jamal s. Al-Suwaidi (ed.), TheYemeni War

of 1994: Causes and Consequences, London: Saqi Books for the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1995, pp. 57–70.

[540] Matthew Gray, “Electoral Politics and the 1997 Elections in Yemens,” Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 21:3, spring 1998, pp. 31–47.

[541] Middle East Economic Digest (hereafter MEED) 35:28,19July 1991,p. 32.

[542] “Government Reacts to Sanaa Assassination,” Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Near East and SouthAsia (hereafter FBIS-NES), 91–177,12 September 1991, pp. 19–20.

[543] Fadyah al-Zubi, “Al-Jawi Says: We Have Entered Period of Political Assassinations,” Saivt Al-KuwaytAl-Duwali, 15 September 1991, pp. 1,6, in “Spate of Political Assassinations Predicted,” FBIS-NES-91—184, 23 September 1991, p. 31. Huraybi was shot dead in an ambush in a Sanaa suburb on 10 September 1991. Officials believed that the real target of the killers was Omar Al-Jawi, leader of the Yemeni Unionist Alliance, with whom Huraybi was traveling at the time of the attack. Al-Jawi was wounded. Huraybi’s son believed that his father was targeted in a tribal dispute, however, and the killing caused widespread shock in the capital. There were immediate calls for a ban on firearms in Sanaa even though it was considered impractical, since it is common practice throughout the country to carry guns. But it was likely that the government would consider some form of weapons control legislation to address this growing problem. The strong statement by political leaders—including the representatives of both pre-merger ruling parties— reflected the widespread anxiety about the vulnerability of the country’s fledgling democracy. AL-Jawi’s party was sharply critical of Iraq, and took a more explicit stance against the invasion of Kuwait than the government. Although President Saleh instructed the interior ministry to undertake a full inquiry into the murder, no culprits were arrested. See “Kilhng Shocks Political Leaders,” MEED 35:38, 27 September 1991, pp. 32–33.

[544] “Riots Hit Sanaa as Tensions Mount,” MEED 35:43,1 November 1991, p. 24.

[545] MEED 35:48, 6 December 1991, p. 39.

[546] “Two Members of the YSP Assassinated,” MEED 35:50, 20 December 1991, p. 30.

[547] Patrick Makin, “Yemen: Unlikely Panacea,” Middle East International, number 469, 18 February 1994, pp. 15–16.

[548] Patrick Makin, “Yemen: Regressive Road to Divisions,” Middle East International, number 473, April I994,p. 12.

[549] Mark N. Katz, “External Powers and the Yemeni Civil War,” in al-Suwaidi, op. cit., pp. 81–93.

[550] Alfred Hermida, “Yemen: The South Secedes,” Middle East International, number 476, 27 May 1994, pp. 8–9. Four years after these developments, President Saleh continued to use the “traitor” epithet when referring to al-Baid. Interview with President Ali Abdallah Saleh, Sanaa, Yemen, 31 May 1998.

[551] Ian Williams, “Yemen Comes in from the Cold,” Middle East International, number 538, 22 November 1996, pp. 17–18.

*** Forging Institutions in the Gu Arab States

R. Hrair Dekmejian

The quest for legitimacy, in order to provide a moral basis for the retention and exercise of power, is an ongoing process in the evolution of political systems. In today's milieu of increasing globalization, the need for political legitimization has assumed a new urgency, particularly in the modernizing states of the developing world. In its Weberian formulation, legitimization involves the transformation of rule based on power into authority, where rulership is made popularly acceptable through a combination of charismatic, traditional, and legal rational modalities of legitimacy. Such transformation becomes necessary because rulership based on power alone is manifestly inefficient, costly, and undependable in assuring political longevity and stability.[552] Thus, the central problem of rulership becomes how to find the right legitimacy mix—in the words of Mosca and Lasswell—a "political formula" of "stable governance."[553]

In the newly independent developing states, the usual modalities oflegitimization consist of reliance on the charisma of revolutionary leaders and movements and/or appeals to traditional norms and practices, especially in deeply conservative societies, where tribal and religious cultures are prevalent. In the Arab world, Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman AI Saud's legitimacy formula was embedded in the Saudi Arabian traditional nexus of tribalism and Wahhabi Islam, reinforced by his heroic charisma as a victorious prince. A somewhat modified formula obtained in Egypt's non-tribal setting, where Nasser's rule rested on his personal charisma and the pharaonic tradition of omnipotent authority.[554] A host of other developing world leaders, with lesser degrees of success, including Nkrumah (Ghana), Sukarno (Indonesia), Castro (Cuba), Qadhafi (Libya), Mobutu (Zaire), and Numayri (Sudan), used similar formulae. Yet with the passing of the charismatic era, the challenges of modernization have had a withering effect on the old mechanisms of legitimacy, especially because of the reluctance and/or failure of many leaders in building institutions of governance. Such reluctance or failure, to fill the legitimacy vacuum left by the erosion of charisma and tradition, combined with the declining capabilities of ruling elites to provide for the basic needs of rapidly growing populations, has had a destabilizing effect on many emerging societies.

In the Arab context, the building of political institutions has been a tortuous process, often featuring one-party rule backed by the military, or monarchies based on traditional consensual institutions. Thus, political institutionalization based on conciliar bodies and parliaments have been an incremental and cyclical process in most Arab countries.[555] According to Baaklini, Denoeux, and Springborg, however, the situation began to change in the 1990s with a general resurgence of legislative bodies in several key Arab states, which appears to have had a diffusive influence in the Arab orbit.[556] This chapter is an attempt to comparatively assess the emergence and institutional role of assemblies in Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.

**** Common Factors

Despite their obvious commonalities as Arab states, which share cultural bonds and membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council, the four monarchies possess significant differences in wealth, size, and political system. Each constitutes a unique polity formed under particular historical circumstances. Kuwait developed under British tutelage, and soon after independence in 1961, adopted a constitution with an elected parliament. Oman’s modernization was begun after the accession of Sultan Qaboos,who set the stage for experimentation with several advisory institutions, culminating in 1991 with the adoption of a quasielectoral process for a Consultative Council (Majlis al-Shura). In Saudi Arabia, from its founding by Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud, several deliberative mechanisms were used until 1993, when King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz decreed the appointment of a Consultative Council as an integral part of his Basic Law of Governance. Qatar has been engaged in a liberalization program in recent years. These countries represent four distinct gradations along the “institutionalization spectrum,” phases of a process in institutional development corresponding to the changing political and social environment of each country, and its modernization tempo.

Yet, a unique feature of the Arab Gulf monarchies is that traditional institutions continue to have considerable social vibrancy and political utility, despite the impact of modernization. Therefore, it would be incorrect to posit that the new legislative/consultative organs are meant to radically replace

traditional institutions such as tribal councils, religious organizations, or royal conclaves. Rather, the new institutions should be viewed as functioning in tandem with existing institutions or in a supplementary capacity.

Another politically salient feature in the four polities is their internal social complexity. Although culturally united under dual overarching identities as Arabs and Muslims, these societies are highly heterogeneous along tribal, sectarian, and ideological lines.

**** Kuwait

The political system of modern Kuwait harks back to the mid-eighteenth century, when the oligarchy of notable families chose the Al Sabah family as

rulers. Based on the practice of tribal consensus and consultation (ijma al-qabaili), this system broke down in the late nineteenth century. The growth of Arab nationalism and the rise of a new merchant class prompted Al Sabah Amirs to set up an ineffectual council in 1920. In response to renewed demands, Shaykh Ahmad, the Amir in 1938, consented to the formation of a 14-member National Council elected from 150 families, which drafted an interim constitution to limit the ruler’s power. Shaykh Ahmad rebuffed these efforts and replaced the National Council with an advisory body, which he soon dissolved for its attempts to limit monarchical power. In 1950, the new Amir set up a new assembly of 20 elected and 11 appointed members, to draft a permanent constitution. The document, which provided for a hereditary monarchy (amirate) based on popular sovereignty and certain restrictions on the ruler’s power, was formally adopted in 1962, a year after Britain pulled its military forces out of the northern Gulf. Importantly, the constitution is defined as a “contract” between the ruler and the people, who are represented by the National Assembly; it guarantees personal liberties, the right to social and economic welfare, and freedoms of press, residence, and communication. The National Assembly consists of 50 members, elected for a four-year term, in addition to the cabinet members, who are appointed by the Amir. Members of parliament may question any minister and votes of no-confidence are taken, although only the Amir has the right to call for the prime minister or cabinet to resign. Moreover, the

Amir has the power to suspend or dissolve the National Assembly in times of crisis, a prerogative exercised twice since independence. The National Assembly may override the Amir’s veto by a two-third majority.[557]

Despite its small size, Kuwaiti society is segmented along tribal, confessional, and ideological dimensions.[558] The Kuwaiti polity consists of eight tribes, two religious sects, two branches of the ruling family, and several ideological factions and interests, with considerable crosscutting cleavages and overlapping loyalties among them. Since independence in 1961, and the adoption of a constitution in 1962, vigorously competing subgroups and interests within the National Assembly have marked Kuwaiti politics. The 50 members of the National Assembly and the 16 members of the cabinet, 4 of which are elected National Assembly members, constitute a power coalition —which brings together the representatives of virtually all the segments of the Kuwaiti electorate, except women. A detailed breakdown of the affiliations of the 1996 National Assembly members would reflect the diversity of groups, constituencies, and interests that are represented.

***** TheTnbal Factors

Tribal representation is one of the most salient dimensions of Kuwaiti politics. In the modern context, tribal membership still constitutes a primary source of identity and pride for a large percentage of Kuwaitis. No less than 28 (56 percent) Assembly members came from various tribal backgrounds. Of the 25 electoral constituencies, tribal majorities populate 13. In 5 of these constituencies, both Assembly members belonged to the same tribe: Awazim (#12, #25), Mutayr (#17), Rawashid (#16), and Ajman (#21). Seven tribal constituencies had split representation, reflecting cohabitation by two dormant tribes: Utaybah/Mutayr (#14), Rawashid/Mutayr (#15), Anaza/Awazim (#18), Mutayr/ Anaza (#19), Ajman/Mutayr (#22), Mutayr/Awazim (#25), and Hawajir/ Dawasir (#24): one tribal constituency elected two non-tribal deputies. In aggregate tribal representation, the Mutayr controlled 7 seats, followed by the Awazim (6), Rawashid (5), Ajman (5), Anaza (2), Utaybah (1), Hawajir (1), and Dawasir (1), although four additional tribal members were elected from the nontribal constituencies. The number of those elected from each of the eight tribes roughly reflected their respective numerical strengths in each constituency because of the

tradition of tribal solidarity (asabiyyah), whereby members are expected to vote for their tribal kinsmen.

***** Non-Tribal Factors

The non-tribal population, commonly referred to as hadar, includes the traditionally urban merchant class, early immigrants from neighboring countries, and families lacking strong tribal attachments. In all, 12 constituencies were in the hadar category, where diverse tribal individuals constituted a minority population. While non-tribal elements lack the inner solidarity of the tribes, they participate in the political process through membership in a plethora of ideological, religious, and socioeconomic groupings.

***** The Sunni vs. Shia Factor

An equally important, and politically significant, factor was the sectarian divide between the Sunni majority (75 percent) and the Shia minority (25 percent). The Sunni majority includes all of the major tribes as well as some of the nontribal population. The Shia population was mostly concentrated in non-tribal constituencies, with a total of 5 Assembly members: 2 members from the mostly Shia constituency (#15), and 5 from the Sunni/Shia split constituencies (#1, n>ו.

***** Ideological Groups and Interests

To the right of the ideological spectrum are two Sunni Islamist groups that favor conservative lifestyles and full implementation of Islamic law. Of the two groups, the Salafi Movement is the more conservative, representing the puritanical Wahhabi Hanbali creed associated with the teachings of Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Wahhab of Saudi Arabia. A less conservative faction, the Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM) is the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood. The combined strength of the Salafi and the Islamic Constitutional Movements, along with a half-dozen pro-Islamists, was about

56 percent of the Assembly’s membership, representing a cohesive opposition bloc to the government and the advocates of liberalization, particularly those pressing for women’s right to vote.

The non-Islamist segment of the Assembly’s ideological spectrum consists of “independents” and supporters of the government, as well as the Kuwait Democratic Forum, which advocates liberalization and government accountability.

About half of the non-Islamic members could be considered government loyalists, the rest being independents and liberals.

Class interests also found representation in the Assembly. While Sunni Islamists provided a representation for less affluent Bedouins, the affluent nontribal districts and the wealthy business families were represented in the Assembly by about a half-dozen deputies.

**** Oman

In contrast to the long-term development of Kuwait’s parliamentary system, Sultan Qaboos Al Bu Said promulgated Oman’s Consultative Council (Majlis Al-Shura) only a decade ago. Indeed, the accession of the youthful Sultan to the throne in 1970 marked the onset of unprecedented political and socioeconomic change for one of the world’s most traditional monarchies. The British-educated Sultan decreed a far-reaching modernization program that included the progressive institution of a Majlis system, designed to endow what had been an absolutist monarchy with a degree of popular legitimacy

The first step in opening up the political process was the Sultan’s appointment, in 1981, of a 45-member State Consultative Council (see). The sec consisted of 17 government officials, 11 businessmen, and 17 tribal leaders. In 1983, the SCC’s membership was increased to 55, with the aim of broadening its dual roles as a consultative and a representational

mechanism.[559] In their consultative role, the members would provide the Sultan with expert advice on the country's development programs. Equally significant was the Council's representational role in bringing together three of Oman's major constituencies— senior officials, the urban-based business interests, and the tribal elite from small-town/rural areas. Thus, in his choice of Council members, the Sultan had implicitly acknowledged the segmented nature of Omani society and sought to accord representation to each of the three parts.

In December 1991, the Sultan initiated a new "experiment" by establishing a Consultative Council (Majlis al-Shura), the members of which were chosen through a two-phase electoral-appointive mechanism based on "the proportion of members necessary for striking the required nationwide representational bAl-ance."[560] The Majlis was constituted as an independent legal and financial entity, with administrative independence from the rest of the government. Each of its 59 members was chosen by the Sultan from a list of three candidates selected by conclaves of provincial notables. The Majlis membership was raised to 79 for its second term in 1994, in which constituencies of 30,000 or more received two seats, in keeping with the fall 1995 national census.[561] For the first time, women were allowed to stand as candidates from the Muscat area, two of whom were eventually elected as Majlis members.

In preparing for the selection of members for the third Majlis, the government sought to build upon the experience of the previous two terms, by instituting measures that ensured "free and fair" voting. In this instance, nevertheless, suggestions for holding direct elections were rejected. In the words of the interior minister, "We have not yet reached that stage in our step by step approach."[562] On 16 October 1997, about 51,000 voters went to the polls to vote by secret ballot for 756 candidates, including 27 women, who were allowed to run in all the provinces for the first time. The nomination of candidates in the 59 provinces was limited to individuals of "social standing" such as tribal leaders, intellectuals, and businessmen, whose names would be submitted to the interior ministry for final approval.[563] Voters could select four candidates from among the participants in each of 23 provinces with over 30,000 people, two of whom would be eventually selected by the Sultan as Majlis members. The 36 less populous provinces would choose two candidates each, one of whom would be tapped

for Majlis membership. The final result of this rigorously controlled system of election and selection was an 82-member Majlis representing different segments of Omani society.

A social background analysis of Majlis members reveals the representational sweep of this institution and the great diversity of constituencies represented therein. These include representation based on Oman’s regions, tribes, and sects, as well as gender.

***** The Regional and Tribal Factors

All 59 of Oman’s wilayas were represented by one or two members, depending on the size of the population. In view of the geographical comprehensiveness of the representational structure, both urban and rural populations were included, particularly the rich variety of Oman’s tribes.

Tribal representation in the Majlis al-Shura is significantly large, including individuals belonging to both the Ghafiri and Hinawi tribal confederations. Among the 82 Majlis members, at least 75 have tribal identities such as Wahaibi, Hinai, Hikmani, Kaabi, Harthijunaybi, Shuhi, Riyami, Rahbi, Kalbani, Ghaythi, and Ibri. A comparison of the tribal names of Majlis members and a tribal map of Oman reveals a high degree of representation from the country’s tribal roots. In fact even some urban constituencies are represented by members with tribal identities due to the ongoing urbanization of tribal populations in recent decades. In view of the role played by tribal alignments in the history of Oman, a high degree of tribal representation should be considered an essential element to promote national unity and political legitimacy.

***** The Religious and Gender Factors

Closely related to tribal representation is the sectarian breakdown of Majlis members. Oman’s indigenous population consists of an Ibadhi majority, a large Sunni minority, and a small Shia community. Considering that the ruling

Al Bu Said family is Ibadhi, balanced sectarian representation becomes a key factor in maintaining national unity and, hence, political legitimacy. There were a total of 48 Ibadhis, 33 Sunnis, and 1 Shia in the 1997 Majlis. These numbers may roughly approximate the sectarian breakdown of Oman's population. It should also be noted that the Majlis speaker, Shaykh Abdullah Al-Qatabi, is Sunni.

Unlike its GCC neighbors, Oman has been a pioneer in introducing female roles into its political system. In the 1997 Majlis, two women made their mark, in keeping with Sultan Qaboos' repeated efforts to increase female involvement in the political process.[564]

**** Saudi Arabia

In the Saudi context, the consultative process developed in an uneven fashion, beginning with the eight-member Shura Council of Hejaz in 1927 under King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud.[565] In 1956, King Saud bin Abdul Aziz (1953–64) decreed an expanded Council of 25, but its functions were soon transferred to the cabinet?[566] Nevertheless, traditional forms of consultation, based on tribal consensus, were followed at different levels of Saudi governance.

In August 1995, King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz appointed 60 members to a new Majlis al-Shura, expanded to 90 members in July 1997. The establishment of the Majlis represented an important step toward institutionalizing a consultative process in the Kingdom, at a time of mounting challenges triggered by the 1991 Gulf War, a sharp economic decline, and pressures from Islamist and nationalist critics for reform and political participation. As prescribed by royal decree, the main purpose of the Majlis is to provide advice (nasiha) to the King and otherwise contribute to the development of the Kingdom. The Majlis meets bi-monthly, and its deliberations and advice are held in confidence. There is some evidence that the Majlis has had a considerable impact in shaping the King's decisions.[567] Beyond its general advisory role, the Majlis is permitted to assume a potentially important mediation role between the authorities and the Saudi citizenry. It receives petitions, complaints, and suggestions from the general

populace, through its Committee of Petitions (Lajnat al‘Araid), formed in 1995.[568]

In addition to its consultative/legislative and mediative roles, the Saudi Majlis also serves an important representational function, which can be gleaned from a social background analysis of its members. Indeed, King Fahd’s decree identifies certain categories of citizens as participants in the consultative process-—the ulama (Islamic scholars and clergymen), Ahl al ‘Ilm (people of learning), Ahl al-Ra’i (shapers of opinion), and Ahl al-Khibra (experts).[569] These categories are well represented in the Majlis, although a closer scrutiny of the King’s appointments reveals a strategy of wider inclusion aimed at strengthening Saudi legitimacy

***** The Conservative and Liberal Factors

The Majlis membership reveals the King’s intent to seek a balance to accommodate both the religious and liberal constituencies of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. About 17 percent of 1997 Majlis members are religious conservatives, most of the rest being liberals or politically colorless.[570] Among conservatives, several Salafis stand out, even if some had protested the Kingdom’s foreign and domestic policies in the early 1990s. Clearly, the King’s intention was to co-opt key Islamist critics, along with some liberal nationalists.

***** The Religion Factor

The 1993 Majlis included one Shia member, whereas in the 1997 Majlis, there are two. Although this is not representative of the size of the Shia minority, it demonstrates an important element in the Saudi political process. The two Shia appointees are from the top ranks of academia and the bureaucracy, with doctorates from Western universities. They represent the moderate wing of the Saudi Shia community, and their appointment signals the state’s ongoing policy of accommodating its Shia population—a policy that was initiated in 1993 to satisfy their aspirations for equality and to neutralize the appeal of pro-Iranian revolutionary groups.

***** The Regional Factor

An important aspect of the 1997 Majlis is the large group that hails from Najd (44 percent), in view of the political centrality of Riyadh, and the importance of Najd as the ruling family’s home base. The Hejaz claims the second largest group of members (29 percent), most of whom are from the holy urban centers of Makkah and Madinah. The Eastern Province is home to about 9 percent of the members, followed by Asir with 3 percent, and the rest coming from Hail, Jizan, Tabuk, and Al-Baha.[571]

***** The Tribal and Class Factors

Although tribal leaders are not by themselves present in the Majlis, about 35 percent of the members come from such major tribes as Anaza, Mutayr, Utaybah, Shammar, Ghamid, Harb, Zahran, and Dawasir. To some extent, the tribal and rural origins of Majlis members indicate that many hail from relatively modest socioeconomic backgrounds, even if most of them may now be considered from the upper middle class. Importantly, the Majlis includes members of notable families and wealthy businessmen, as well as less affluent bureaucrats and academics.[572] No member of the ruling family has been appointed to the Majlis.

**** Qatar

Under its new Amir, Shaykh Hamad bin Khalifah Al Thani, the State of Qatar has made unprecedented strides toward democratization through the liberalization of its media, the municipality elections of 1998, and the planned parliamentary elections in the year 2003. Meanwhile, the Qatari Majlis al-Shura has functioned since 1995, as an appointive body.

The Qatari Majlis consists of 35 members who are appointed by the Amir and enjoy parliamentary immunity. It brings together prominent individuals, tribal leaders, businessmen, and senior bureaucrats.[573]

A social background analysis of Majlis members reflects a very large tribal presence—over 80 percent. In addition, several ranking government officials, as well as representatives of some of Qatar's large families and kinship networks, are also represented. Also included are several well-known businessmen. It is notable that one Majlis member is Shia, representing Qatar's minority population.

**** Conclusion

Political institutionalization centering on legislative/conciliar assemblies is part of the new wave in the Gulf Arab monarchies. Bahrain and UAE appear to be preparing to follow the pattern set by their neighbors in forming such conciliar bodies. Although the ruler suspended an earlier "experiment" in Manama, and the UAE's federal requirements complicate the appointment of Majalis by individual Emirates, the trend is for more representation. Still, by all accounts, this process of institutionalization is irreversible, even if it is unclear how far it will be permitted to proceed in each country.

Clearly, the Shura Councils of Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia are not as far advanced as the Kuwaiti parliament; and indeed, may develop along different directions. Yet, aside from blatant differences and peculiarities in each case, it is possible to reach a preliminary assessment.

It is clear that beyond their advisory and legislative functions, these "conciliar" bodies play a mediative function between the rulers and the ruled. Moreover, they also play an honorific function to bestow importance upon prominent citizens, and a symbolic function—both domestically and internationally-to "show off' each country's advancement toward modernity. Nevertheless, two further functions emerge from the data presented above that appear in all four of the case studies. These are the representational and co-optative functions, reflecting the consociational nature of these conciliar

bodies, which directly contribute to the social stability and political legitimacy of the Gulf Arab monarchies.

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[561] Ibid.,p. 23.

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[563] Ibid.,p. 23.

[564] See Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman, “News From Oman: Special Basic Statute Issue,” Washington, D.C.: 1998, p. 4.

[565] Al-Jazirah, 7 July 1997, p. 10.

[566] Al-Riyadh, 8 July 1997, p. 16.

[567] AlSharq al-Awsat, 15 July 1997, p. 5.

[568] Al-Riyadh, 7July 1997,p. 15.

[569] Madawi al-Rasheed, “God, the King and the Nation: Political Rhetoric in Saudi Arabia in the 19905,“1 The Middle Eastjournal 50:3, summer 1996, p. 371.

[570] R. Hrair Dekmejian, “Saudi Arabia’s Consultative Council,” The Middle East journal 52:2, spring 1998, p. 211.

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[572] Ibid., p. 214.

[573] Dawlat Qatar, Majlis Al-Shura, Doha, Qatar, December 1998, pp. 27–29.

*** The GCC States: Internal Dynamics and Foreign Policies

Muhammed Saleh Al-Musfir

Throughout history, the Arabian Gulf region has been an area of contention among various aggressive international powers, which have sought to control this strategic location to safeguard their own vital interests. Alexander the Great was the first to realize the strategic value of the Gulf for the preservation of his vast empire. After conquering Egypt, he reportedly declared: “I shall never be certain of my army’s security in Egypt and the Mediterranean basin as long as the Persians have extended their domination to the Gulf region.”[574] The Macedonian emperor’s pronouncement marked the beginning of the international struggle for the Gulf area, which continues at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the political evolution of the GCC, and the multiple relationships among its six member states, to assess whether Council members are capable of preserving and shaping their own destinies. An effort is also made to assess the GCC's effectiveness and future viability. The analysis that follows is not intended to be comprehensive but to highlight, from an indigenous perspective, various contentions among the six conservative Arab Gulf monarchies. Intrinsic sociopolitical issues are also discussed to identify regional trends that may further shape GCC states' policies toward each other. How the six rulers responded to underlying currents, and how they factored in changing social pressures in their respective societies, mattered far more than many assumed.

**** Historical Overview

Because of fundamental changes in the post-1973 period—when substantial increases in the price of oil created significant financial windfalls in the Gulf—Iran, Iraq, and the conservative Arab Gulf monarchies assumed great economic and strategic importance both in regional and international affairs. With the great wealth from oil came increased feelings of insecurity, as several hegemonic powers threatened the stability of the area. Even earlier, especially after the 1968 British announcement that London would leave the Gulf by late 1971, the smaller Gulf states began to seriously examine mutual cooperation and collective self-defense schemes. During the late 19705 and early 1980s, seven major regional and international developments pushed the Arab Gulf states further to accelerate their search for regional cooperation. In May 1981, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-Majlis al-Taawun li-Duwal al-Khalij al-Arabiyyah—was established, at the GCC states' first summit meeting, in Abu Dhabi. The significant developments that persuaded Gulf rulers to accelerate their search and settle on specific steps included:

1. the insecurity generated by the world energy crisis,

1. the anxiety resulting from the new wealth of the Gulf countries,

1. the epoch-making 1979 Iranian revolution,

1. the December 1979 Soviet invasion and occupation ofAfghanistan,

1. the rise of “Islamic militancy” in several countries,

1. the start of the Iran-Iraq War in September 1980, and

1. the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, especially the repercussions of Israeli power throughout the Middle East, painfully displayed in Lebanon.[575]

In response to these significant developments, the six GCC countries—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—embarked on their boldest initiative yet. While the actual and minute accomplishments of the GCC since May 1981—ranging from common postal accords to increased investment laws for GCC citizens—are too numerous to cite, the most important exploit has been the mere fact of joining six competitors into a regional alliance. Given the legacy of the region, especially after centuries of foreign control, GCC rulers made conscious efforts to slowly trust their counterparts. In time, and non-negligible shortcomings notwithstanding, they certainly displayed a willingness to cooperate in many important areas. During the last two decades of the twentieth century, the GCC’s numerous steps strongly influenced—in some cases, directly affected—both internal and external politics in all six member states and, in doing so, created an entirely new environment for their successors. Inevitably, their emerging outlooks affected all GCC states’ foreign policies, security affairs (both internal as well as external), and economic methods.

It is important to emphasize that while GCC states did not always adopt identical policies, they were more structurally immersed in formulating closer steps than heretofore experienced. In other words, while each member state exercised a degree of independence in formulating a specific policy, over

time far more coordination occurred among all six than anyone anticipated or believed possible.

Among the more important foreign policy accomplishments, for example, GCC rulers coordinated their opposition to the Israeli presence in Lebanon, the West Bank, and Gaza; rejected the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and South Yemen in toto; backed the Fahd peace plan (also known as the Fez Plan) to settie the Arab-Israeli dispute; and adopted joint policies vis-â-vis the Iran-Iraq War. All four were laden with controversy, but, at least on this score, GCC rulers found common ground as they formulated appropriate responses. In fact, the nexus that emerged—on these four issue areas—stood out within the larger Arab world, further illustrating GCC states' political advances.

Still, GCC states were far less successful in defense cooperation, an area that touched upon their very survival.[576] What was agreed upon were vague notions calling for defense cooperation to deny the area to "foreign" powers. To be sure, there were sharp disagreements among members on GCC states' relations with the great powers. While some called for non-alignment in defense matters, others were pressing for specific accords with Western powers, including the United States.

Another important area of limited GCC accomplishments was internal security. By all accounts, GCC states were unable to agree on full cooperation in internal security matters, as a draft internal security agreement (ISA)prepared in 1982-—could not be implemented. In the event, the ISA could not be adopted because several states, including Kuwait, found it to be too restrictive on their individual freedom. ISA rules called for cross-border pursuits that were frowned upon for potential violations of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Because all six could not adopt the ISA, member states entered into watered-down bilateral accords, with mixed results.

Somewhat more successful were the GCC's efforts to promote economic cooperation.[577] In late 1982, an economic agreement was approved, which provided for joint planning and development in several sectors—petroleum, investments, and housing. Even more successful were the GCC's efforts in social cooperation. As tribally based Arab countries, the GCC states enjoyed

the advantages of common culture, language, and religion. On these scores, at least, progress could be—and was—forthcoming in the development of mutually beneficial social, cultural, and educational programs. Conferences, festivals, and regular scientific exchanges became the norm rather than the exception. Given the substantial progress in these areas, one may indeed anticipate that continued social and cultural integration could increase opportunities for more successful efforts in establishing political and economic unity.

**** The GCC Structure

The expressed structural aim of the GCC is to achieve a “confederal” union through coordination, integration, and amalgamation in different fields of human endeavor. As such, the organization is hierarchical in nature, presided over by a Supreme Council, itself composed of the heads of states, who rotate as president on an annual basis. At the second level, where most of the organization’s joint decisions are reached, is the Ministerial Council, consisting of the foreign ministers, who meet periodically throughout the year. A secretary-general appointed to renewable three-year terms and six directors supervising 23 departments lead a Secretariat, headquartered in Riyadh. Because of the requirement of unanimity in the GCC’s charter, all substantive matters discussed in the Supreme Council and the Ministerial Council are subject to mutual veto. Hence, GCC operations are usually carried out through consensus, and rely on incrementalism.[578]

**** Relations among GCC States

If the organization is somewhat handicapped by internal decision-making requirements, member states are free to conduct bilateral relations unhindered. There are, nevertheless, several factors that shape those ties that, in turn, affect both bilateral as well as multilateral contacts. These include the key inter-dynastic ties that pepper the Arabian Peninsula, long-standing tribal relations, festering boundary disputes that prevent coordination and cooperation, narrow foreign policy orientations that may be temporary in nature (but that affect one or more members directly), wider Arab policy obligations, sectarian limitations that handicap both rulers and

subjects, economic ties and oil policies, and, finally, strategic and arms procurement policies.[579] These contentions direct how GCC states behave with each other and, in turn, how such contacts affect the region as a whole. Some of these major bilateral issues—in no specific order—are highlighted, to better identify specific trends on the Arabian Peninsula.

***** Saudi Arabia-Kuwait

This relationship is cemented by the common Anazi tribal roots of the Al Saud and Al Sabah ruling families, as well as their shared apprehensions of non-GCC powers. Despite common characteristics, differences remain, including Kuwait's refusal to sign the GCC's internal security agreement, and Saudi Arabia's consternation with the Shaykhdom's somewhat liberal social and political outlook. Moreover, Kuwait is opposed to accepting the Saudi predisposition to ignore past inter-Arab tensions, particularly the enmities generated by Iraq's 1990 takeover of Kuwait. Although the Kingdom supported the 1991 war against Iraq, the Al Sabah remain apprehensive of their hegemonic neighbor. The unsettled status of two islands—Umm al-Maradim and Qaru—that may hold substantial oil deposits is a further potential source of conflict between the two.[580]

***** Saudi Arabia-UAE

Although the disputes over the Buraimi Oasis and the Khawr al-Udayd inlet were resolved in the mid-1980s, additional boundary problems remain to be settled between the two countries. The UAE's leading ruling families—Al Nahyan, Al Makhtoum, and Al Qawasim—are non-Najdi an, thus not tribally linked to the Al Saud. Among the various contentions between the Kingdom and the AE, none were as problematic as the 1999 discord, over the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement. Because of Iran's continued occupation of three strategic UAE islands (Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunbs, which were first occupied in 1971), Abu Dhabi vociferously protested Riyadh's "friendly" discourse with Teheran. Indeed, the Emirates demanded that a settlement of the Islands issue be a precondition for establishing closer ties with Iran by any of its GCC partners. Faced with the continued normalization of Saudi (and other GCC states') relations with Iran, the UAE responded by

accelerating its decision to reopen its “suspended” diplomatic mission in Baghdad, in April 2000.

***** Saudi Arabia—Bahrain

The historical ties between the Al Khalifah and the Al Saud ruling families is based on their common membership in the Utub branch of the Anaza. Over the years, and primarily because of Manama’s security concerns—about revolutionary Iran and the domestic turbulence of the mid-1990s—Bahrain has come to rely on Saudi Arabia for protection. Equally important, Riyadh provided substantial economic assistance, in the form of crude oil and significant trade. In turn, Manama, which was physically attached to the mainland through a bridge in the mid-1980s, provided the Saudi Eastern Province population additional trade outlets. A point of friction remains between the two sides, over the status of Abu Saafah island, claimed by both.[581] Although Bahrain’s recent liberalization policies may arouse some concerns in the more conservative Kingdom, Saudi Arabia’s rapprochement with Iran over Gulf security has had a calming influence on Shia opposition groups in both countries.

***** Saudi Arabia—Qatar

By all outward indications, Saudi-Qatari relations appear to be amicable. Yet, there remain a cluster of border disputes that are unresolved. One potentially troublesome issue is that of the Khawr al-Udayd inlet—providing the Kingdom access to the Gulf—which was ceded to Saudi Arabia by the UAE, without Qatari consent. As to the disputed Khafus area on the land boundary, the treaty negotiated in the mid-1990s has not been made public, a fact pointing to remaining disagreements. Equally important, several foreign policy differences exist, as Qatar maintains normal ties with Iraq and has developed trade contacts with Israel, both unwelcome in Riyadh. In addition, and surprisingly, Doha sided with the Yemeni president Ali Abdallah Saleh in the 1994 civil war in that country. Senior Saudi officials perceived that development in negative terms. When Qatar took a leading role in hosting the 1997 Middle East Economic Summit, Saudi Arabia led a concerted boycott. Moreover, Qatar’s decision to take its border dispute with

Bahrain to the International Court of Justice was also opposed by Saudi religious authorities, indicating Riyadh's disapproval.[582] Since 1996, Qatar's liberalization efforts have also met with Saudi displeasure, particularly the epoch-making Al-Jazeera television broadcasts that have galvanized public opinion throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds. Adding insult to injury, "elections" to the municipal council, as well as suffrage for women—even important appointments to positions of leadership by several women—were met by Saudi officials with some apprehension. In a surprise move, in March 2001, Doha and Riyadh signed a pact to end various border disputes even if no details were made public.[583]

***** Saudi Arabia—Oman

In its relations with the Kingdom and other GCC states, Oman has been considered as the sharik al-mukhalif (the contrarian partner), particularly in foreign policy. Oman's ties to Israel, Iraq, and Iran have been at odds with the general direction of Saudi foreign policy. On the matter of Gulf security, the Kingdom opposed the 1994 Omani proposal for an integrated GCC force of 100,000 troops, fearing that a majority would be volunteers from the Sultanate.[584] Similarly, Oman expressed misgivings about Saudi defense minister Prince Sultan's Dara al-Jazirah (Peninsula Shield) scheme as a viable Gulf defense mechanism.[585] Although the two countries demarcated their borders, the Kingdom has expressed concerns about the 1992 Oman-Yemen border treaty, which, allegedly, grants Yemen questionable concessions that, from the Saudi perspective, may be Saudi land. Another potentially troublesome issue is the doctrinal antipathy between Saudi Unitarianism (the Muwahhidun creed within the Sunni Hanbali school of religious doctrine) and Omani Ibadhism, which briefly flared up in the early 1990s.[586]

***** Kuwait-UAE

Relations between Kuwait and the UAE have been generally amicable, in part because the two countries do not share borders, and because Kuwait devoted substantial financial resources to the seven Emirates starting in the 1950s. While Abu Dhabi acknowledges the financial assistance provided by Kuwait well after the UAE's 1971 independence, the two countries differ on

several foreign policy matters. For example, the recently re-established diplomatic ties between Abu Dhabi and Baghdad were not well received in Kuwait. Furthermore, Al Sabah officials have questioned Shaykh Zayed's repeated calls for a rapprochement with Iraq, notwithstanding any humanitarian motives that the latter may have expressed.

***** Kuwait—Oman

Although the Sultanate and Kuwait have had generally amicable relations, several issues divide them, particularly in foreign and security policy. Muscat's uninterrupted diplomatic tie with Iraq, despite the 1990 Iraqi invasion and takeover of Kuwait, has met Kuwaiti disapproval. The Shaykhdom had also opposed Sultan Qaboos' 1994 proposal to establish a GCC defense army of 100,000 troops, because of the likelihood that Omani soldiers would make up a large portion of this force. Even Oman's close relations with Egypt were not looked at with favor, given Kuwait's 1991 objections to an Egyptian military presence in the Gulf—the Egyptian assistance to liberate the Shaykhdom notwithstanding.

***** Kuwait—Qatar

Although there are no major contentions between Kuwait and Qatar, their relationship lacks both depth and warmth. Despite the performance of Qatari troops against Iraq during the 1991 war—at the battle of Khafji in particular—Kuwait has tended to downplay the Qatari role, evoking disappointment and even some anger from the Qatari media. In addition, Kuwait has been critical of Qatar's liberalized media policies because of the latter's sympathy with the suffering Iraqi people. In late 2000, Kuwait temporarily suspended the Al-

Jazeera television correspondent's broadcasting privileges from the shaykhdom, further increasing Qatari antipathies. Nor does Kuwait approve of normalized ties between Doha and Baghdad. Finally, Kuwait has traditionally sided with Bahrain on the latter's territorial conflict with Qatar, which, understandably, further muddies diplomatic waters between the two GCC partners.

***** Kuwait—Bahrain

This has been an amicable relationship in recent years, mainly because of the absence of territorial disputes. Kuwait has extended to Bahrain considerable economic aid and appears to favor Manama in its territorial dispute with Doha. Yet their close ties did not prevent Bahrain from re-establishing diplomatic relations with Baghdad in March 2000.

***** Oman—Qatar

Omani-Qatari ties are normal in the absence of border disputes and other fundamental contentions. Qataris admire the Omani administrative system, although the two states are competitors in the rapidly emerging East Asian energy markets, as both states intend to sell substantial quantities of natural gas to India and other developing markets.

***** Oman—Bahrain

Relations between the Sultanate and Bahrain date from the nineteenth century, when Bahrain was under Omani rule. No major issue has divided the two sides in recent years, and normal relations have prevailed between the two ruling families.

***** Oman—UAE

In historical terms, and despite certain interpretations, the UAE constitutes an extension of Oman. To be sure, normal relations have prevailed, especially after the two countries became truly independent after 1971, although several border “disputes” between various Emirates and the Sultanate remain unsettled. Oman’s boundary disputes with the Emirates of Ras al-Khaimah, Umm Al-Qiwain, Ajman, Sharjah, and Fujairah remain in limbo. Still,

Abu Dhabi and Oman did reach a resolution of their overall border concerns in February 2000, with the exception of the Umm al-Zumun enclave, which is claimed by Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, and Oman.[587] In the event, the latest accord was not made public, which may bode ill. Another foreign policy contention is Oman's close relations with Iran, which was formalized into a security treaty in April 2000. Not surprisingly, the treaty is opposed by the UAE, because of the Iranian occupation of Abu Musa and the two Tunb islands. Equally unsettling, at least for Muscat, is Abu Dhabi's acquisition of advanced US. weapons systems (especially 80 F-16s) that are perceived by Oman as potentially provocative.

***** Qatar-Bahrain

Relations between these two small states are the most disruptive within the whole GCC structure. At the root of their differences is the eighteenth-century Al Khalifah family "occupation" of Zubarah, in northern Qatar, and the subsequent British control of the region. What had been a dormant issue under British rule flared up after independence in 1971. Today, a group of 16 islands, including Hawar, Fasht al-Dibal, and Fashtjaradah, all of which are controlled by Manama on the grounds of historical sovereignty—but claimed by both—stand as concrete evidence of conflict. In both 1978 and 1983, the two countries engaged armed confrontations, after which they requested Saudi mediation. Faced with lack of progress, in 1994 Doha appealed to the International Court ofjustice (ICJ), a plea that was rejected by Manama.[588] When the ICJ agreed to take on the case, Bahrain reluctantly accepted to participate, but made a counterclaim citing its historical right to rule Zubarah and its inhabitants, mostly of the Nuaym tribe, most of whose members lived in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE. Signaling its displeasure with the Qatari appeal to the ICJ, the Bahraini chief justice (a religious cleric) expressed his full support of the late Shaykh bin Baz's fatwa (published in Saudi Arabia), on the illegality of a non-Muslim court to decide on a matter between Muslim states.[589] These differences notwithstanding, Qatar and Bahrain have sought reconciliation through mutual visitations and economic and cultural cooperation, especially after the accession of two young rulers in 1996 and 1998, respectively. In early 2000, the ICJ rendered a decision agreeable to both countries, granting the Hawar islands to Bahrain and Zubarah to Qatar. Several reefs will be divided among the two countries.[590] Although some Gulf observers anticipate further difficulties, both rulers

have embraced the peaceful resolution of this longstanding dispute, even if the ruling was bittersweet. In Shaykh Hamad’s own words:

Allow me to be frank with you as I have always been: The court award in this respect was not easy upon US. These Islands have a great standing in the hearts of our people, a standing that is deeply rooted in the history of this country and the keenness of its sons to be bound to each grain of its soil. However, despite the pain we feel we think that the court award has, anyway, put an end to the dispute between the two states, and we can now put that dispute, which has become part of history, behind US.[591]

***** Qatar-UAE

Most contentions between Qatar and the UAE have been amicably settled. The major exception is the dispute over the Khawr al-Udayd inlet, which was ceded by Abu Dhabi to Riyadh without consultations with, much less approval from, Qatar. In the foreign policy arena, the UAE has had strong reservations about Qatar’s ties with Iran, and nascent commercial ties with Israel.

***** Bahrain—UAE

Good political and economic ties exist between these two states. Manama is especially close to Abu Dhabi because of the latter’s financial assistance and, over the years, encouragement to employ Bahrainis in various UAE government positions.

**** Assessments and Conclusions

Any assessment of the GCC’s effectiveness, on both the bilateral as well as multilateral levels, must first and foremost analyze the behavior of its members since its founding two decades ago. The regional organization was conceived as an alliance even if it portended to behave as a collective

security system, which, in summary, reveals far more than most GCC states' citizens and officials were willing to acknowledge.

***** Foreign Policy

In the foreign policy arena, the GCC states declared that they aimed to coordinate and unite their foreign policies, although coordination proved far more difficult than anticipated. With the exception of their united positions to oppose the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the GCC states could not realize pressing issues, including their perspectives on Iran and Iraq. To be sure, member states had major foreign policy differences during their first decade as an alliance—Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman were pro-West, while the UAE and Kuwait tended toward non-alignment. As the Soviet Union collapsed and the Socialist bloc declined in numbers and value, it was not surprising to witness an American victory—by leading a formidable coalition to liberate Kuwait—that, without a doubt, led to the rise of the United States as the sole hegemon in the Gulf region. Ironically, the GCC states have accommodated themselves to the expanded U.S. presence in the region, despite earlier reservations. While the U.S. presence had been limited to Bahrain and Oman until the 1991 war, since then it has expanded as well to include Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait. This victory and considerable presence notwithstanding, GCC member states, individually, reassessed their regional ties. In fact, a mere decade after the War for Kuwait, the GCC s united front against Iraq has broken up, with only two sovereign states (Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) without direct diplomatic ties with Iraq.

***** Defense Policy

If progress in major foreign policy issues was limited, little has also been achieved in formulating a unified GCC defense policy, especially after the 1991 Kuwait conflict. The pre-war GCC defense project—Dara al-Jazirah (Peninsula Shield)—was too small for an integrated force. Moreover, it was inadequately trained to constitute a viable military organization, especially after GCC heads of state rejected Sultan Qaboos' 1994 recommendation to enlarge it to a 100,000-rnan army. Instead, Saudi Arabia proposed the expansion and modernization of the Dara al-Jazirah.[592] Because both

defense schemes have proven to be stillborn, each GCC government has relied on its bilateral defense ties with key Western powers. At their December 2000 summit in Riyadh, GCC heads of state approved a new defense accord homing on the establishment of an updated rapid deployment force along with coordination of military training and expenditures.[593] It may be too early to determine how fruitful this new cooperative venture might be.

***** Economic and Oil Policies

Although a unified economic agreement was accepted and implemented starting in 1982, there has been far more planning and analysis than actual implementation in unifying the GCC states' economic and oil policies. Indeed, it has been difficult to achieve economic cooperation because GCC economies are not complementary, and member states often engage in mutual competition in their industries. The customs union, for example, which was approved by the 1999 summit meeting, is not to be implemented until the year 2005. In setting oil production and pricing policies, GCC states are often in disagreement and, as such, are unable or unwilling to forge a common front to meet constant Western pressure.

***** Arab Policies

Finally, in the all too vital Arab political arena, and since the War for Kuwait, GCC member states' ties to the larger Arab sphere have generally declined. Except for the UAE and Qatar, which have called for Arab summit meetings to prevent a full Arab fragmentation, the other GCC states have discouraged attempts at unified Arab action. Since Kuwait's reluctance to adhere to the 1991 Damascus Declaration, for example, no joint Syrian-Egyptian military presence in the Gulf could be exercised. In the alternative, no effort to forge a viable Arab security program emerged, thereby ensuring a Western presence in the region. Support for the Palestinian cause notwithstanding, particularly after the second intifada, the Amman League of Arab States summit meeting in March 2001 unraveled over the adoption of a unified Iraq policy.[594]

**** Future Trends

Given present power realities within the GCC framework, it is clear that the member states will be unable to provide for their individual or collective security in the foreseeable future.[595] Thus, the presence of foreign forces is likely to become a permanent feature in most GCC countries. The GCC's security dilemma is further complicated by the looming threat of a full-scale nuclearization of the region, where Israel, India, and Pakistan are already adequately equipped, and Iran aspiring to the same status. Parallel to this measurable development, GCC states' citizens perceive with great apprehension the growing Israeli presence in the Gulf area, as well as the large number of foreigners in the workforce.

Due to the phenomenal growth of educational institutions and universities, coupled with the perceptible impact of the communication revolution, a far better informed citizen pool has now emerged in the Gulf. As a result, public opinion has become a significant factor, impacting on government decisions in various ways. Undeniably, public opinion is being shaped by satellite television stations like Al-Jazeera from Qatar, one consequence of which is a growing desire for greater political participation. Cases in point are the 1998 Qatari decision to grant women full rights to participate in municipal elections, as well as Shaykh Jaber Al Sabah's decree to grant Kuwaiti women the right to participate in National Assembly elections starting in 2003. Oman took similar decisions in the early 1990s.

Under the circumstances, and according to Ibtisam Suhail al-Kutbi, a well-known feminist scholar and commentator, the necessity of constitutional reforms, including women's rights, has emerged as a major factor shaping public opinion in the GCC states, including Saudi Arabia.[596] In turn, a growing public interest in political participation translates into pressure upon GCC regimes to democratize, reduce corruption, achieve a fairer distribution of wealth, and make themselves more accountable to their citizens. With the rapid growth of GCC populations, and the reduction of economic benefits by all six regimes, public demand for political participation and government accountability is expected to increase even further.

In response to changing popular attitudes, several GCC states have taken some tentative steps toward greater openness. Qatar has begun a far-reaching effort to draft a permanent constitution and hold parliamentary elections in 2003. Bahrain, under the leadership of Shaykh Hamad bin Isa, has freed political prisoners as a prelude to a return to constitutionalism. Even in Saudi Arabia, and ever since 1993, the Majlis al-Shura has shown some promise of expanded participation, which may include women members in the near future.[597] Likewise, Oman's liberalizing experiment since the early 19905 and its semi-elected Majlis al-Shura constitute important steps in building a new type of political systern. Finally, in the Emirates, there has been a significant liberalization of the press and electronic media, as well as a greater role played by women in the state bureaucracy and the private sector.

Thus, in the context of the contemporary milieu of globalization, the diverse trends—social, political, economic, and cultural—throughout the six conservative Arab Gulf monarchies are bound to transform the GCC states to various degrees. What the full impact of these changes will be is difficult to forecast. Suffice it to say that the GCC, as a regional organization, is probably unlikely to prove its full capabilities. In the end, it will be up to each individual state to accomplish finite objectives, while balancing the needs of the regimes with those of citizens.

[574] Dawlat al-Imarat al-Arabiyyah al-Muttahidah, Al-Kitab alSanawi [United Arab Emirates Yearbook], Abu Dhabi, UAE: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1972, p. 94.

[575] Muhammad al-Sayyid al-Said Idris, Iqlim al-Khalij [The Gulf Region], Beirut: Markaz Dirasat Al-Wahdah al-Arabiyyah, 1999, p. 162.

[576] Abdallah al-Nafisi, Majlis al-Taaumn al-Khaliji [The Gulf Cooperation Council], London: Ta-Ha Press, 1982,pp. 16–17.

[577] Al-Said Idris, op. cit., p. 162.

[578] R. Hrair Dekmejian, “Prospects for the Growth and Influence of the Gulf Cooperation Council,” Washington, DC., 1985, pp. 58–77.

[579] Ibid.,p. 13.

[580] Nisrin Murad Taqi, Al-Ittihad (Abu Dhabi), 20 February 2000, p. 8.

[581] Ibid.

[582] Riad Najib El-Rayyes, Riyali alShamalAlSaudiyyah wal-Khalij wal-ArabjiAlam al-Tisinat [North Wind: Saudi Arabia, the Gulf and the Arabs in the Nineties], London: Riad El-Rayyes Books Ltd., 1997, p. 60.

[583] “Saudi, Qatar end border dispute, sign pact,” Reuters, March 21,2001.

[584] El-Rayyes, op cit., p. 60.

[585] Ibid.

[586] R. Hrair Dekmejian, Islam in Revolution, 2nd edition, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995, p. 159.

[587] Nisrin Murad Taqi, op. cit., p. 8.

[588] El-Rayyes, op. cit., p. 54.

[589] Ibid., p. 62.

[590] “Gulf Arabs welcome ruling on Qatar, Bahrain dispute,” Reuters, March 17, 2001.

[591] AlSharq (Doha),March 17,2001,p. 1.

[592] El-Rayyes, op. cit., pp. 61–62.

[593] Rawhi Abeidoh, “Gulf council states discuss rapid deployment force,” Reuters, December 30, 2000.

[594] Suleiman Khalidi, “Arab summit, split on Iraq, backs Palestinians,” Reuters, March 28, 2001.

[595] Muhammad Saleh Al-Musfir, “Security Challenges in the Gulf Cooperation Council,” Majallat Kulliyat al-Idarah wal-Iqtisad, University of Qatar, 1998, pp. 10–15.

[596] Ibtisam al-Kutbi, Al-Ittihad (Abu Dhabi) 2 March 2000, p. 16.

[597] R. Hrair Dekmejian, “The Saudi Consultative Council, ’و The Middle East Journal 52:2, spring 1998, pp. 204–218ː see also Amir Talal Al Saud in Al-Quds al-Arabi, 27 March 2000, p. 7.

** The Gulf States and Western Powers

*** Chapter 19: Constants and Variations in Gulf-British Relations

Gerd Nonneman

Past and future trends in British-Gulf relations need to be seen in the context of (1) British foreign policy interests at the global and regional levels and (2) the broader foreign policy interests of the Gulf states. It needs to be recognized that these interests are multiple and varying—both between countries and across time. The context also has to encompass changes in the regional and global systerns. While all of this has brought differences and variations in policy output, and therefore in relations, there are nevertheless a number of larger themes that can be identified.

Key categories to be factored in when considering the Gulf side of the equation are (1) the nature of the Gulf regimes and economies, (2) the nature of the regional system in the Gulf, and (3) the changing nature of the global system. Within these categories, two observations stand out. First, there is a clear difference between (i) Iraq, (ii) Iran, and (iii) the other Gulf states. Second, in all three, there has been a shifting balance between external constraints and relative autonomy.

The aims pursued on both sides have been and will continue to be driven by pragmatic calculations of raison d’etat. In the case of the Gulf states, these center on (1) economic interest, (2) external security, and (3) domestic security. For the Gulf states, in fact, the concern with both external and internal security is key, and indeed arguably encompasses economic matters.

In the case of Britain, the main, inter-related concerns are economic interest and considerations of global politics and security. Three particular contextual

features stand out: (1) Britain’s historical connection with the Gulf, (2) the increasingly significant European dimension, and (3) the British relationship with the United States—both ally and rival in the Gulf.

**** British Foreign Policy and the Gulf

British foreign policy has of course undergone a dramatic shift in the post-1945 era. The loss of empire—starting in India and virtually ending with the withdrawal from the Gulf in 1971—brought with it attempts to find a new role, chiefly to adapt to the country’s post-imperial status’ In a sense, the entry into the European Community and the withdrawal from the Gulf can be seen as two sides of this coin, along with the construction of the Commonwealth and, probably more importantly, the development of the “special relationship” with the United States. Two key elements underlying policy were, unsurprisingly, the pursuit of economic advantage and the achievement of security. These were accompanied, however, by a third: the maintenance of a semblance of Britain’s Great Power status, both because this helped in the achievement of the first two goals and because of a historical sense of Britain’s place in the world, which continued to inspire many policymakers. The development of the “special relationship” served the security and status objectives. The belated entry into the EC was recognition that the developing grouping had become a complementary avenue toward securing the status objective as well as that of economic security. A specific, and unquestioned, aim has been maintenance of Britain’s status as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. There is a mutual (if partial) link between this aim and Britain’s retention of its comparatively large military establishment and capability in force projection.

As the post-war era progressed, the economic and security aims became increasingly intertwined in the area of energy supplies, especially from the Gulf. After India’s independence, the British presence in the Gulf served both the economic interest and a lingering imperial ambition. From the 1970s, British interests in the Gulf were pursued through maintenance of traditional links with the conservative ruling regimes, and through an increasing reliance on the United States. This latter relationship, however, remained competitive as much as cooperative, especially in the commercial field—

London having already largely lost out in oil concessions to Washington and the local states themselves.

In the pre-1945 era (and indeed up to the independence of India), Britain's key reasons for its Gulf presence also included strategic considerations. Indeed, the Gulf was half-way on the routes to the empire's jewel in the crown; this meant it was not only a useful stopover and refueling point, it also brought greater concern over competition for the region from other powers, such as Holland, Russia (later the Soviet Union), and Germany. But in this period too, commerce and, increasingly, access to resources were central to Britain's interests in the Gulf. As has been observed elsewhere,

it was the British that were most effective at controlling the sea routes and trade to the Indies. As one of the northernmost European countries, Britain paid the highest prices for spices and therefore had major incentives to control the trade. The British ... established workable relationships with local rulers.[598]

In the latter point, one theme of this chapter is already foreshadowed: Britain was successful, in part, because it managed relations with the local rulers successfully. In other words, local actors, even if much the weaker party, did have a certain level of autonomy.

With the shift from coal to oil, which got under way from the First World War, Britain was faced with two countervailing forces. On the one hand, it did not dominate oil sources to the extent it had done for coal and coal trading stations. On the other, oil was becoming crucial to economic activity and military deployment—and Mesopotamia and Persia had shown great promise of reserves. An early decision to try and achieve independence from American oil resulted in a pursuit of exclusive control of these oil fields, and in the link-up with the then small, private Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), which swiftly became a major, government-backed player. Yet Britain never succeeded in controlling the level of oil reserves that could have become the basis for the sort of dominance it had enjoyed in the days of coal. The crucial role of oil was highlighted by Britain's military operations in the Middle East during World War II: These were to a large extent aimed at securing allied oil

supplies.[599] The war would also mean economic exhaustion for Europe (including Britain). Just as important, the post-war reconstruction and development needs led to an energy crisis in Europe, “dramatically increasing Europe’s dependence on Middle Eastern oil.”[600] This is the context in which Britain’s opposition to the Iranian nationalist government of Mossadegh and its nationalization ofAPOC must be understood. At the same time, of course, Middle Eastern oil was now increasingly seen as of strategic importance even for the United States. With the emergence of the Cold War and with Britain a close NATO ally, the security of oil supplies from the Gulf remained a matter of global strategic importance. Even with the development of Britain’s own oil resources, this indirect economic and strategic interest, in a global context, remained.

From the second half of the nineteenth century, the effect of British protection, subsidies, and boundary drawing in the Gulf can hardly be overstated. In the shaykhdoms of the Gulf, official dealings with, recognition of, and help for, particular shaykhs and families, through the series of exclusive agreements concluded between 1820 and 1916, transformed the nature of politics, strengthening the position of those so recognized and laying the foundations for the modern states now in existence. In Kuwait, for example, the de facto autonomy of the Shaykhdom was made secure and subsequently given juridical confirmation as a result of Britain’s protection from 1899. Several shaykhdoms owe their independent existence to a British decision to recognize a ruling shaykh as partner in an exclusive agreement—thus, for instance, the decision to deal with the Al Thani of Qatar from 1916 (independently from Bahrain). In Oman, the rule of the Al Bu Said dynasty was rescued from the interior’s challenge by British assistance between 1955 and 1959. In several cases (most notably the succession of Shaykh Shakhbut by Shaykh Zayed in Abu Dhabi, and that of Sultan Said by Sultan Qaboos in Oman), Britain played a central role in internal transfers of power. Even the construction of the third Saudi state in the first two decades of the twentieth century was assisted by British acceptance and subsidies—assiduously sought by Abdul Aziz Al Saud (“Ibn Saud”).

Likewise, a wholly new state was created in Mesopotamia and a monarchy imposed. Boundaries were drawn between these various emerging states. In some cases (such as the later UAE), this process meticulously adhered to local realities on the ground but, nevertheless, thereby “froze” them. In other

instances it arguably changed the course of history by stopping Saudi expansion into Kuwait and Iraq (as well as, more indirectly, deterring Ibn Saud from extending his control to the other shaykhdoms). Several British decisions are contested to this day, including the Iraqi-Kuwaiti boundary, placed far enough north to keep the Ottoman Empire or any of its allies or successors from acquiring a secure naval base on the Khor al-Zubair, and the award of the Hawar islands to Bahrain.

In the Arabian Gulf states, this history left Britain enjoying good relations with the ruling regimes and playing a role in domestic and external security issues as well as some other aspects of government. The effect of this link is still visible at the start of the twenty first century. In Saudi Arabia too, Britain retained good links, although here they were soon eclipsed by the United States.

On the other hand, their involvement in the two more populous states of Iraq and Iran in the end helped their demise through the nationalist backlash it erected. In these cases too, therefore, the British role had a historic impact on the subsequent nature of politics in the region. In Iraq, this happened swiftly in 1958. In Iran, the Second World War brought British (and Soviet) intervention, and the forced abdication of the nationalist Shah Reza Khan, followed by the accession of his young and inexperienced son, Muhammad Reza. Britain was also instrumental, later, in the overthrow of the nationalist Mossadegh government. All this sowed some of the seeds of the backlash that would, in 1979, overthrow the pro-Western Pahlavi regime altogether.

As one observer has pointed out, the period of British paramountcy and protection

saw an outside power playing the role of manager, guardian and arbiter of the region. Intervention by outside powers was deterred, piracy and smuggling were suppressed, interstate conflicts were frozen, and coups were either vetoed or encouraged pre-emptively. As a result of the UK’s presence, disruptive forces were contained and their manipulation by outside forces prevented. Saudi Arabia was prevented from acquiring the Buraimi oasis; and Iran was denied Bahrain. Iraq’s claim to Kuwait (1961) was balked ... by a

British military response ... Territorial claims between Iran and Arab states were likewise shelved.... [A]lso in the thwarting of internal developments, the British exercised a veto. Sheikh Shakhbut in 1966 and Sultan Said in 1970 were ousted to forestall internal discontent. The British role as protector thus guaranteed internal and external security in a region largely insulated from other inter-Arab pressures.[601]

Even if such pressures from Arab politics further afield did begin to make some inroads in the 19605, this did not lead to any strong domestic demands for British withdrawal. The British decision in 1968, rather, must be seen in the context of a reassessment of the country's overall place in the post-war world by a new Labour government concerned with both resource allocation at home and the worldwide anti-imperialist mood. Indeed,

paradoxically the British withdrawal from the Gulf came at a time when growing Western dependence on the region was becoming evident, with projections that it would become acute in the next decade. The financial cost of the UK's presence was negligible ('12 million) and, although the smaller littoral states offered to pay that cost, the UK's imperial era was terminated with a minimum of attention to future policy interests.[602]

Since 1971, Britain has managed to maintain excellent relations with the six monarchical Arab states of the Gulf, and in the case of the five smaller ones, as already indicated, even a significant direct involvement at the security, military, and high official levels. This has been based on the strength of the historical connection perceived by both sides, but also on the British view of how the country's post-imperial interests, as part of the Western economy and the NATO alliance, could be attained. This is best summed up in the words of the late Sir Anthony Parsons, one of Britain's most senior former diplomats, when commenting on the fact that there are "more Britons in the Gulf now than at any time during the heyday of Britain's presence East of Suez":

To put it bluntly, Britain ... sees the Gulf in terms of oil, finance and commerce. [Although self-sufficient in oil,] ... we are a member of the European Community, which is not.... We are conscious of the fact that the

cumulative importance of the Gulf for the industrialised economies of the Western world as a whole is such that radical changes ... would, by extension, be seriously damaging to Britain. [Hence, we have a] strong interest in the stability of the Gulf, that is to say in the continued existence of political structures which will ensure an uninterrupted supply of crude oil at stable prices, a rational policy of investment of surplus funds from the Gulf in the West and steady progress in the implementation of social and economic development programmes.[603]

Sir Anthony did not, of course, leave the extensive commercial involvement of British companies in the Gulf unmentioned either. An account of British-Gulf relations in trade, investment, and arms supplies is provided later in this chapter.

***** Key Factors in British Gulf Policy Today

The concerns underlying Britain’s foreign policy in the Gulf today and for the foreseeable future can be summarized as follows: first, direct British economic interests in terms of British exports and possible investments in the Gulf, and the attraction of public or private Gulf funds to the United Kingdom; second, the indirect economic interest that the UK has in maintaining a secure flow of oil at acceptable prices for the world economy as a whole; third, as a consequence, the maintenance of security in the Gulf region, both to deter external interventions and to maintain domestic stability in the friendly states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

These concerns are pursued in the context of three particular features of British involvement in the region. The first is the historical link that Britain has retained, especially with the smaller states of the GCC, and with their ruling families in particular. This continues to inform aspirations and expectations both in London and in Gulf capitals. At the same time, it still leaves London with an (albeit diminishing) advantage over competitors, because established patterns of personal relationships, trade, policy advice, and military and security assistance have had a persistent quality. The second feature is that since the 1970s, Britain’s foreign policy has increasingly taken into account the European—or rather European

Community/European Union—dimension. Although this has developed only very gradually, and often hesitatingly, it has become a recognizable element in British policy. Even when not managing to adopt common positions, there has been an increasingly marked attempt at least to coordinate policy with the rest of the EU. The fledgling Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), and the albeit modest attempts at the construction of a European defense identity, can only further enhance this trend.

In contrast, the third feature is that British policy is also constrained by the "special relationship" with the United States, and the dependence on US. power projection capability. The latter can only increase as Britain's own capabili ties diminish in line with cutbacks. Washington has been a rival in the Gulf since the 19305, when American rather than British companies won lucrative Saudi oil concessions. This rivalry continues over arms supplies and trade—a feature that will persist. At the same time, however, in major security issues of global concern, Britain will continue to forge policy in close coordination with Washington. The best recent example is British policy on Iraq, which has been driven at least as much by the American agenda as by Britain's own analysis and interpretation of local political dynamics. Indeed, officials at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have at times been heard to quip that, on Iraq, Britain "does not have a foreign policy of its own." This does not quite reflect the whole picture, of course. British politicians can on occasion be quite as gung-ho as others.[604] And Britain has, in some areas, pursued policies at variance with American preferences. This should not come as a surprise, given the different interests at stake, to which must be added differing interpretations of Middle East and Gulf political dynamics, as well as the absence in Britain of the sort of pro-Israeli lobbying power associated with the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and others. In the Middle East at large, this has been apparent in differing approaches to the Arab-Israeli conflict, although London has been cautious to avoid policies that would run directly counter to those pursued by Washington. In the Gulf, the most interesting cases are those of Iran and Iraq. The link between Palestine and the Gulf has also been perceived in different ways on both sides of the Atlantic, which has led to policy differences—not least on weapons supplies to the conservative Gulf states—but this factor has diminished in salience since the 1990–91 Gulf War.

Iran. The most obvious clash between British and American policies in the Gulf has been over Iran. London, of course, also had its problems with Teheran, not least over the Salman Rushdie affair. Yet, contrary to the U.S. approach—which attempted to isolate Iran altogether—during the 1990s Britain opted squarely for the European “critical dialogue” solution. It consistently preferred “the overall EU approach to the US boycott for fear of driving the Iranians into a position where they have nothing to lose by being more hostile to the West.”[605] There was an appreciation that Iran had itself reason to feel threatened, and that much of its rearmament and rhetoric could be seen in that light. At the same time, at least some foreign “actions” attributed to Iran were seen to be the work of non-governmental organizations, such as a variety of Bonyads, as well as of particular elements within the regime’s various institutions. Overall, the view was that while this was reprehensible, there was enough evidence of a powerful strand of policy in Teheran aimed at normalizing Iran’s international relations. Thus, the decision was made to cultivate this trend rather than undercut it. This view was seen to be validated even on the Rushdie question, when President Rafsanjani tried to disband the Bonyad-e-15 Khordadر which had offered a reward on the author’s head. When this proved out of reach, the Iranian government eventually “circumvented the obstacle by declaring that no official organ of the state would carry out the sentence.”[606]

In other words, the analysis that London, along with the rest of the EU, settied on was similar to that arrived at by many academic analysts of Iranian foreign policy, as well as several former government policymakers in the U.S.[607] Britain and the EU were, of course, in part driven by commercial considerations, but this was no unthinking or unprincipled policy. To quote a 1997 American analysis: “On balance, the evidence does not describe a nation which can best be dealt with as a pariah state. Iran does not seem so rigid and inflexible that political dialogue and economic incentives will have no effect.”[608] Along with British policymakers, these analysts concluded that while military containment had some value, “dual containment” was ill-advised since it “seems more likely to lock Iran into a pattern of hostility ... [and] leaves the US with no clear way to respond to any signals from the Iranian leadership.” Hence, the authors posited, “a strategy of constructive engagement ... seems more likely to enhance regional stability.... [It would also] offer a greater chance of consensus between the 5٢Ĵ and its allies while allowing

for the fact that Europe and the Gulf states have already adopted many aspects of this policy."[609]

It may be worth recalling that Britain, together with its European partners, branded the American Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA, expanded to include Cuba) "illegal," in its insistence on extraterritorial legislation to punish foreign companies doing business with these countries. Another, less overt and less acrimonious, difference has existed over the issue of oil pipelines from the Caspian Sea. While Washington has maintained its insistence on a Baku (Azerbaijan)-Ceyhan (Turkey) route, and/or alternative lines that also avoid Iranian territory, there has at least been a willingness in Britain to consider the merits of the proposal of a link through Iran to the Gulf. Arguably, such a direct line makes considerably better economic sense, as well as avoiding the security problems posed by the volatile Caucasus region. In this instance as well, European companies have run up against the risks posed by ILSA.[610]

Since the election of Muhammad Khatami as Iran's president in May 1997, and especially since the parliamentary election victory of the pro-Khatami camp in 1999, this policy was felt to have been vindicated. Full diplomatic relations were restored in September 1998, with an agreement to exchange ambassadors (even if the actual exchange did not occur until May 1999). Generally, a positive tone has predominated since then, both in official and business circles. The visit by Iran's foreign minister Kamal Kharrazi to London in March 2000 was hailed by both sides (and by the British business community) as a success. The following month, it was announced that Foreign Secretary Robin Cook was to return the visit later in the year, the first such visit since the 1979 Iranian revolution.[611]

None of this means that Britain has no reservations about Iran or about aspects of the latter's policies. As a publication of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) points out, "an aggressive WMD [weapons of mass destruction] programme for which there is solid evidence would cause the UK to take a much tougher line." Implicitly, however, this recognizes that there is not in fact such evidence. Hence, "in common with other Europeans, Britain sees its role more as a facilitator of enhanced understanding of Teheran's concerns, as well as those on the other side of the Gulf." The piece,

written by the head of RUSI's Middle East program, adds: "There is some frustration in European and Gulf quarters with the regular recitation of the 'mantra' of 5 ٢Ĵ concerns about Iran, especially with regard to sponsorships of groups actively opposed to the peace process." The author concludes by stating that "without a resumption of Iranian-sponsored terrorism in Europe, or direct threats to the Gulf, there will not be a major adjustment in European policy towards Teheran."[612] It is, perhaps, partly in recognition of this fact that US. policymakers since 1999 have embarked on a significant adjustment in their own policy toward Iran.

Iraq. By contrast, American and British policy on Iraq has been striking in its coordination. Indeed, Britain has been the only country to stand by the United States in the enforcement of the no-fly zones in Iraq.[613] On sanctions, London has remained close to Washington, notwithstanding increasing criticism from within and outside the Middle East. Indeed, most British military, intelligence, and diplomatic officials are thought to concur with their American colleagues in believing that "while Saddam [Hussein] remains in power, any outside attempts to record and destroy Iraq's still-unaccounted-for hidden stocks of biological and chemical weapons and ballistic missiles will fail."[614] Hence, both British and American officials "insist that although the current situation is far from ideal, the broad aims of the Iraq strategy have been met."[615]

Nevertheless, the countervailing pressures on Britain's policy that were referred to earlier—including the increasingly significant European dimension of foreign policy—along with the different policymaking context, have made themselves felt. Prior to the 1995 defection of Hussein Kamil, British policymakers were already looking for "an orderly way to ease the embargo in due course."[616] This position changed, however, after the revelations that followed the defection. The fact that the "oil-for-food" Security Council resolution was approved that same year took some further pressure off British policymakers on the question of sanctions. Until 1999, Britain along with the United States stood firm against any significant relaxation of the sanctions regime—with the exception, once again, of the expansion of the oil-for-food deal—and the conditions for lifting them. London has also been at the sharp end of accusations over the inflexible position of its representative on the sanctions committee, when it came to clearing Iraqi imports under the oil-for-food program. Yet it remains true that, on the whole, Britain has tried

to maintain a common position with the other EU states over Gulf policy.[617]

There is an awareness in British policymaking circles, in part fed by European concerns, of the need to avoid a “Carthaginian peace.”[618] In fact, the new Security Council resolution establishing the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), finally approved in April 2000, was in large measure the result of dogged British diplomacy.[619] The effort was aimed at producing a more realistic option for dealing with Iraq and, at the same time, rebuilding support in the Gulf itself for the international containment of the regime in Baghdad. Indeed, “Britain’s patient pursuit of the diplomatic option in drafting and building support for what became Resolution 1284, played well in the Gulf where the return of the initiative of the UN was welcorned.” Britain, one analyst has commented, “will take a middle road in ... [Security Council] deliberations [on Iraq], in contrast both to the French, Russian and Chinese belief that there is little left for the inspectors to do, and the 5٢Ĵ desire to make the standard of compliance high enough for it to withstand pressure for sanctions to be lifted.”[620]

The Link between Palestine and the Gulf. The combination of the policymaking context, geographical location, and economic interests, all further reflected in the European dimension of British policy, has produced a different approach to the linkage between the Palestine question and the Gulf.[621] British policy has, to a greater extent than was apparent in the United States, reflected awareness that the concern with a just solution of the Palestinian question that existed among Gulf elites, but especially among the populations of the region, was an issue that could potentially undermine British interests. Hence, Britain’s—and Europe’s— changing policies on the Arab-Israeli question after 1973. At the same time, this policy also reflected a different perception of Gulf Arab intentions vis-â-vis Israel, and, perhaps most crucially, a much lower identification with the security concerns of Israel and the pro-Israeli lobby in the United States. London and its European partners remained committed to a secure Israel, but did not necessarily swallow all of the Israeli arguments about the threat posed by the Arab states—least of all by the six conservative GCC states.[622]

Together, these features led to a British (and French) ability to supplant the American role as a key supplier of weapons to the Gulf states on several occasions. The most striking example was the conclusion of the so-called Al-Yamamah agreement between Britain and Saudi Arabia in 1985. Concluded after five years of Saudi attempts to buy F-15 fighter-bombers were defeated by effective opposition from the pro-Israeli lobby, this became, at an estimated ‘20 billion ($30 billion), the largest single defense contract in British history.[623] (Al-Yamamah II, signed in 1993, brought the total value to some ‘35 billion [$52 billion].) The Al-Yamamah program sustained “an estimated 30,000 jobs in Britain and a few thousand more in Saudi Arabia” over the next 15 years.[624] The deal, which remains in force at the time of writing, has included the supply of 120 Tornado aircraft and Hawk and PC-9 trainers, as well as naval equipment, construction, and a range of related supply, service, and training contracts. Saudi Arabia pays much of the cost in oil (dealt with by British Petroleum and Royal Dutch-Shell), while the British side pledged to reinvest a portion in the Kingdom under the so-called offset agreement. Under the arrangement, seven joint companies were set up by the end of 1999.[625] This was not the last time that Britain (or France) benefited from the blocking of U.S. arms sales to the Gulf states: further difficulties were created for the U.S. administration by sustained pro-Israeli lobbying in Congress in the years that followed. As a result, Washington was unable to supply Stinger missiles even to friendly Bahrain in the latter stages of the Iran-Iraq War, or indeed to conclude any major arms sales with other GCC states prior to the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.[626] Meanwhile, the Al-Yamamah contract had “shifted the entire structure of the Saudi Air Force from dependence on the US to dependence on Britain.”[627]

The aftermath of the 1990–91 Gulf War has produced significant change in the dynamic just discussed. This has been driven by a number of factors. Progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process has somewhat reduced the salience of this issue as a spoiler for U.s.-Gulf relations, and consequently Britain lost some of its advantage. Moreover, the importance of US. equipment and power projection capability were demonstrated beyond doubt. Finally, the conflict also gave the US. administration (in casu President Bush) the power to waive the congressional bans and limitations on the transfer of F-15s and Stingers to GCC states.

**** The Gulf States’ Foreign Policy and Britain

The Gulf states’ policy toward and relations with Britain cannot be understood without taking account of the context that has shaped these states’ overall foreign policies. In this instance as well, the key categories are the natures of the Gulf regimes, the nature of the regional system in the Gulf, and the changing nature of the global system.

***** Nature and Needs of the Gulf Regimes

All are rentier states of one sort or another, highly dependent on the revenue generated by the sale of hydrocarbons. Control over these resources has given them a measure of leverage and influence on the world stage, as well as the ability to buy large amounts of weapons. By the same token, especially after the oil boom of the 1970s, which further increased such influence and resources, their dependence increased as well: dependence on the revenues themselves, on the consuming markets, and on the suppliers of goods and technology for the spending plans that this wealth made possible. Inevitably this also influenced foreign policy, as none of the Gulf states could opt for autarky, and none—at least since the market effects of the double oil shock in the 1970s became clear—wished to risk endangering continued oil revenue or disrupting industrialized economies.

The GCC States. The GCC states consistently aimed for moderate prices in coordination with the main consumer countries. This can be traced to a number of factors, in addition to their historical pro-Western orientation. They are dependent on world markets for the demand and supplies referred to above, and in particular on the West for protection. Approximating ideal-type “rentier state,” their regimes are highly dependent on government largesse for political survival. Finally (with the exception of Bahrain, which is in effect subsidized by Saudi Arabia), they are low-population, large-reserves producers, which means they need secure long-term prospects for oil markets but can afford to forgo immediate price maximization.

With specific regard to Britain, the ruling families retained extensive links with their former protector, both practical and personal. Saudi Arabia was never officially a protectorate, and soon veered toward reliance on the United States. But it is worth recalling that the founder of the modern Kingdom actively pursued British protection against both the Ottomans and his rivals, the Al Rasheed, in the first two decades of the twentieth century, and established very close relationships with a number of British figures.[628] Britain, along with the United States, remains a destination of choice for the education of many among the GCC elites. Several members of ruling families—including the rulers of Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain—graduated from Britain's Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst.

There have been areas of tension, too, in particular with Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. In the case of the former, the 1980s episode over the film Death of a Princess showed a level of mutual incomprehension.[629] Throughout the 1990s, the presence and activity of the Saudi opposition Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR), led by Muhammad al-Masaari, brought Saudi demands for its expulsion from Britain. The Conservative John Major government attempted to deport al-Masaari, only to be stopped by legal challenges.[630] Similarly, the Bahraini government, until the political reforms of 2001, objected to the activities of the opposition Bahrain Freedom Movement, and London very diplomatically indicated to its Bahraini equivalents the British concerns over the systematic crackdown on the opposition during the 19905. Yet these episodes did not undercut the basic positive outlook from the GCC states toward Britain.

For these states, Britain, while not a significant importer of Gulf oil and gas, remains an important source of technical, administrative, and military assistance, as well as of services, high-technology goods and equipment, and arms. It is also an arena offering opportunities for investment and, more generally, recycling of surplus petrodollars—in part through the City of London. Britain is further seen as an important member of the European Union. This link is valuable because the EU represents a crucial market for GCC states' exports, as well as being their main supplier of technology, goods, and services, and offering an arena for investment. Finally, Britain provides a partial alternative to the United States. This is useful for domestic and regional political and commercial reasons, as well as in cases where American policy is constrained by pro-Israeli voices in Congress.

That is not to say that the GCC states have simply adopted British commercial or policy preferences. Rather, Gulf leaders have generally kept their options open, continuing a pattern set in the latter part of the nineteenth century and perfected by figures such as Kuwait's Shaykh Mubarak the Great in 1899, and Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud in the first half of the twentieth century. They have themselves used outside powers as much as they have accepted significant elements of dependence on them, and they have preferred, wherever possible, multi-dependence over mono-dependence. This continues to be reflected in Saudi, Qatari, and UAE arms purchases, for instance, and is unlikely to change. Hence, just as London lost out to Washington over Saudi oil concessions, so America lost out to Britain on various occasions in arms deliveries to the Kingdom. Contrary to what dependency theorists used to hold, therefore, these states, considering their basic weakness, have shown a surprising level of relative autonomy.

As one Gulf-based scholar has shown, GCC voting patterns at the United Nations General Assembly provide an interesting illustration of this phenomenon. They reflect, he argues, a foreign policy in which the influence of the relationship with an ally—in this case Britain—is balanced with any other national interest at stake. Voting over the Falkland Islands dispute between Britain and Argentina in the 1980s may serve as a good example: Of the six states, only Oman consistently voted with Britain against the resolution demanding a negotiated settlement; the others abstained—not wishing to take sides—but Kuwait in 1985 switched to voting in favor of the resolution, reflecting the Shaykhdom's then typically independent-minded foreign policy orientation.[631]

Iran and Iraq. On the other hand, Iran and Iraq both have nationalist and somewhat anti-Western foreign policy traditions. Their regimes have, especially in the case of Iran, been able to use ideological and non-welfare means, rather than merely relying on oil revenue, to shore up their popularity at home. Moreover, because both have larger population-to-reserves ratios, the dynamic in favor of lower prices does not function quite the way it does for the GCC states. Hence, Iran and to a lesser extent Iraq (which has larger reserves) have shown a tendency to push for relatively

higher prices—quite apart from other foreign policy rhetoric critical of the West. Nationalist assertion and suspicion of the West (not least Britain) is an inevitable part of the modern history of both states. Iraq, an artificial British creation, has suffered from insecurity over its borders, its very existence, and the survival of its successive regimes. The phenomenon of Saddam Hussein's dictatorship has merely further illustrated and reinforced these characteristics and their foreign policy implications. Iraq displays some features of a "quasi-state,"[632] with a justifiably paranoid regime relying on both rhetoric and foreign policy action to secure its survival. In Iran, the weakness of the Qajar regime (long "penetrated" by Britain as well as by Russia), gave way to Reza Khan's nationalist search for strength—until Britain and the Soviet Union forced his abdication during the Second World War, for his unwillingness to expel the German presence. The foreign-imposed crowning of his son, followed in 1955 by the British-American-orchestrated coup against the nationalist prime minister Mossadegh, further strengthened underlying nationalist trends, as well as fueling suspicion of Britain in particular. The Islamic Revolution was, in part, a further expression of this trend. Nationalist assertion and wariness of foreign domination remain very much part of Iran's foreign policy culture. Britain, in particular, then, has none of the historical advantages in these two countries that it has enjoyed in its relations with the GCC states.

Yet it has been striking that both Iran and Iraq have been quite restrained in their oil price demands or export conditions, even at the most politically difficult moments. It was, for instance, Washington rather than Teheran that stopped Iranian oil exports to the United States. As for Iraq, in the tense weeks before the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, and even in the immediate aftermath, Baghdad reiterated its willingness to export oil to the U.S. and the West in general, at prices around $22-25/barrel. Additionally, both states have been eager to do business with countries whose policies they have otherwise been critical of. It has in the main been sanctions by other states that have curtailed such links. Politi ical links have been more problematic in the case of Iran, but here too the evidence since the mid-1980s has shown a trend toward normalization, albeit somewhat constrained by the Khomeini legacy.[633] While this legacy has been most visible in relations with Washington, its most obvious illustration with regard to Britain was the Rushdie case. Even in the case of the United States, however, the improvement in relations has been striking since 1999—Dual Containment notwithstanding. Yet the

development of British-Iranian relations since the de facto resolution of the Rushdie affair illustrates that London has realized and exploited the extent of Iranian pragmatism sooner and more fully than has Washington.

Ideology Takes Second Place. Clearly, then, the main driving force for Gulf relations with Britain (or, for that matter, with most of the world) has been a pragmatic calculation of national interest, centered around economic and security interests and regime survival—in other words, raison d'etat and raison de regime. Gulf states' previous ties with Britain, and, in the case of Iran and Iraq, the nationalist reflex, remain significant, but do not normally swamp those calculations. Ideology, including its Islamic and Arab themes, has taken and will continue to take a secondary role. The only exceptions are in early revolutionary stages (as in the first decade or less of Iran's Islamic Republic) and as a residual category in nationalist form.

Iraq under Saddam Hussein might seem to contradict this pattern.[634] Yet this is true only for the period since the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The anomaly is linked to the nature of this particular ruler's regime, in the particular circumstances he found himself after the end of the Iran-Iraq War.[635] Moreover, it should be clear that even in the case of Iraq, much of the ideological rhetoric deployed has been used instrumentally. This is not to deny the relevance of the nationalist reflex, but none of this need obstruct good relations with the West, as Iraqi policy from 1975 to 1989 illustrated. Given a change in the regime, Iraq would doubtless fit back into the pattern.

This analysis does not imply that the "regional" element, especially over values thought of as important in 'Arab' or 'Islamic' terms, has lost its importance altogether. Indeed, both outsiders and local regimes ignore it at their peril—not least precisely because pragmatic calculation of regime interests means these governments cannot afford to be seen blatantly failing to observe such values. Britain's keen appreciation of this fact has at times given it an advantage over the United States, relative to what both states have had to offer in military or economic terms.

***** The Regional and Global Systems

There are two regional systemic levels: the Middle East at large, and the Gulf in particular. It is from the wider, Middle East level that the above observation takes its relevance.

The Middle East System. In Arab foreign policies generally, the “Arab system” has become gradually less dominant as a determinant since the 19705. Pan-Arabism as an ideology has virtually vanished from the scene. Arab themes in general no longer have the force they had from the 1940s until the use of the oil weapon in 1973. State and regime interests have become predominant, in a context of interdependence both within the region and with the world beyond it—even if this interdependence is skewed in favor of the industrialized economies. Yet an Arab dimension persists. In part this is true because of residual convictions among ruling elites, but probably more so because many perceive the danger of ignoring what remains a potent, albeit no longer dominant, value among their populations. [636] The Palestine question is still an issue to be reckoned with in this respect. Consequently, close collaboration with the United States retains elements of political risk. This is also true for non-Arab, but Muslim, Iran given that the issue has Islamic as well as ethnic dimensions. In the case of Iran, too, genuine concern with the asymmetrical nature of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is reflected in its foreign policy stances. Although these perceptions are no longer translated in official support for the eradication of the Jewish State, Iran (and not merely that country’s “conservative” factions) still reserves the right to disagree with the nature of the process, outside pressure notwithstanding. This, just like the whole question of outside involvement in the first place, ties in to the nationalist reflex. Teheran also reserved the right to support, for instance, Hizbollah, as a Lebanese movement resisting foreign occupation. Iranians reasonably argue that this is quite different from “sponsoring terrorism.” The British position has recognized this distinction. In turn, such recognition facilitates Iranian relations with London, although Britain does retain concerns over actions by radical factions in Iran, and over WMD questions.

The Middle East system also contains straightforward strategic features, quite separate from Arab or Islamic values, which impact on Gulf states’ foreign policies. The key elements can be grouped in three categories. First,

Israel’s regional superpower status and nuclear capability remains a central concern. It is at least part of the reason for feelings of insecurity and attempts to ameliorate this. By the same token, Israeli objections to Gulf states’ acquisitions of sophisticated weaponry have long bedeviled U.s.-Gulf relations, hence giving opportunities to Britain and other competitors. Second, the growing influence of non-Gulf powers in the expanding Middle East impacts on the Gulf states themselves. Turkey and Syria present threats and opportunities for Iraq and Iran, while Iran, as already pointed out, faces a range of potential threats along its northern and eastern borders. In turn, such factors inevitably influence perceptions in the Gulf, and beyond. Third are the implications of the rich-poor divide in the region—with the Gulf states, and the GCC in particular, falling into the rich camp. This has long been a source of potential insecurity for the latter, again feeding into their foreign policies both toward the Middle East and potential protectors elsewhere.

The Gulf Sub-System. The sub-system of the Gulf has featured several types of clashes. The most obvious have been the ideological ones pitting Arab nationalists, secular republican Iraq, and revolutionary Islamic republican Iran against the neo-traditionalist conservative pro-Western GCC monarchies. It should go without saying that this forms a large part of the explanation for the monarchies’ continued desire for outside protection—not least by Britain. It also helps explain the support Britain and others gave Iraq during the 1980s against the perceived threat emanating from Iran’s revolution. The nature of the ideological question has been changing, however. By the turn of the millennium, Iran had matured into essentially a status quo power and was increasingly being perceived as such. Instead, a common concern about Iraq united Iran and the GCC states—and arguably helped bring Iran closer to Britain and the West as well.

Ideology, then, was only one factor in Gulf tensions, as plain geostrategic interests were also at stake. Iraq continues to face a problem of access to the Gulf. It has to share the Shatt al-Arab with its main rival Iran, and, since the delimitation of the maritime border by the United Nations in 1993, has lost even most of its navigation channel in the Khor Abdallah to Kuwait.[637] By the same token, Kuwait will always see a threat from its northern neighbor, and all of the GCC states perceive a potential threat from their larger, more populous republican neighbors.

A third type of clash has already been referred to in a different context: that based on differential economic needs. Iran has relatively lower oil reserves and a very large population, and will therefore be relatively less interested in the very-long-term future of the oil market. Moreover, it faces higher immediate needs than Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE, where the opposite applies. Iraq falls in between these two ends of the spectrum, although its reconstruction and eventual rearmament needs (or desires) will, for the foreseeable future, nudge it toward a higher-price stance.

The Changing Global System. Arguably, the change in the international system represented by the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the Soviet Union was always likely to increase pragmatic policies toward Britain and the West, by taking away a key option for playing off East against West. Except for Iraq, that has indeed appeared to be the result. Iran, although not simply for this reason, has moved closer to the United States, having already established strong relations with Britain and the rest of Europe. The GCC states have moved closer to an explicit reliance on Washington and other Western protectors—although this has been mainly the result of the Kuwait crisis. The resolution of that crisis could perhaps also be seen, however, as demonstrating just how unipolar the new world disposition had become.

Yet this is not the whole picture. Among the background causes of Saddam Hussein’s Kuwait debacle was precisely his fear that, in the new world order, he and Iraq were being encircled by the United States as the new global hegemon. This had already begun to worsen relations with Britain as well prior to the invasion. In Iran, the foreign policy adjustment has not meant a less critical position on the policies of Israel or her supporters, nor a departure from the country’s insistence that Gulf security be left to Gulf states alone. Teheran, moreover, has been moving closer to the GCC states (most strikingly to Saudi Arabia), regardless of the state of its relations with Washington—indeed, quite contrary, at least until 1999, to US. desires expressed to those states. This in itself indicated that America’s allies in the Gulf still maintained their relative autonomy. It seems plausible that Washington’s own mellowing toward Teheran since 1999 was in fact helped along by Riyadh. In addition, although the post—Kuwait War period has seen

a resurgence of the US. as the largest player in the local arms market, it is striking that the six states have to varying extents maintained the multiplicity of sources for their defense. Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE all signed defense agreements with London and Paris, as well as with Washington. Saudi Arabia continued with the Al-Yamamah agreement, Qatar with its purchases of French equipment, and the UAE with its own diverse procurement, while Oman’s arms imports too continue to be mainly European.[638]

**** Trade and Investment

In what follows, a summary overview is offered of Gulf-British economic interaction and, in the subsequent section, of the arms trade in particular, to underpin some of the analysis above.

The UK’s trade relationship with the Gulf stands out, when compared to other EU trade partners, by its large surplus, running at between ‘2–4 billion ($3–6 billion) a year during the 1990s—even without arms and services exports. Given Britain’s own oil reserves, its imports from the Gulf consist mainly of petroleum products and re-exports via Dubai. Only a little over 10 percent of its imports from Saudi Arabia—the largest source, followed closely by the UAE— are made up of oil, in the framework of the Al-Yamamah arrangement. Total imports from the Gulf states during the final decade of the twentieth century ran in the region of ‘1.5—2 billion per year, the vast majority corning from the GCC (see Table 19.1). In 1996, the United Kingdom was the GCC’s eleventh largest export destination, accounting for some 1.6 percent, far behind Japan

(827 billion), the United States ($11 billion), South Korea ($11 billion), and Singapore ($8.5 billion).[639]

Detailed available statistics about British exports to the Gulf states only record about one-third of the actual total. Services and arms exports are usually excluded, even if some non-arms but defense-related items do at times feature. Visible non-arms exports from Britain to the Gulf ran at

between ‘4—6 billion per year ($6–9 billion) during the 1990s (see Table 19.2). Figures for 1996 imports into the GCC are representative. They show the United Kingdom in second place with 11 percent, after the United States (16 percent), but ahead of Japan (10 percent), Germany (7 percent), Italy (6 percent), and France (5 percent).[640] The most recent figures that indicate 1999 was the worst year in the decade, with visible exports just topping ‘4 billion (after a peak of 7.4عد billion in 1997). Sir David Wright, the chief executive of British Trade International, a government export-promoting agency, blamed this on the overall “cautious economic and commercial climate” in the region, created in the wake of low oil prices. As he also pointed out, however, exports of services were worth about another £4 billion, leaving the trade surplus at well over ‘5 billion, “and this in as bad a year as we’ve had in recent times. ”[641] The largest single category of nonarms visible exports from Britain to the Gulf was “machinery and transport equipment” (see Table 19.3).

Britain also ranks as the second largest exporter to Saudi Arabia, after the United States. While the Kingdom represents the fourteenth largest market for British goods (1998 figures, not counting arms), it has become the ninth largest market for British services.[642] Arms exports, fluctuating significantly, probably averaged up to £2 billion per year, with over three-quarters going to Saudi Arabia. This means that about half of British visible trade flows to the Kingdom have consisted of defense-related exports, which have to be added to the figures listed in Table 19.2 (roughly doubling them) to obtain a realistic (if no more than indicative) picture.[643] The Saudi arms market has been crucial to Britain’s defense industry—even though some contracts under the Al-Yamamah deal were rescheduled and experienced payment delays following the 1998 oil price collapse.

Table 19.1 UK Imports from the Gulf States, 1991–1999 (in £ Million)

| | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |

| Saudi Arabia | 964 | 964 | 1,274 | 740 | 721 | 753 | 997 | 892 | 875 |

| Kuwait | 30 | 127 | 236 | 239 | 151 | 180 | 201 | 186 | 181 |

| Bahrain | 39 | 50 | 52 | 25 | 26 | 21 | 33 | 67 | 25 |

| Qatar | 5 | 10) | 20 | 7 | 15 | 11 | 16 | 30 | 40 |

| Oman | 74 | 83 | 83 | 78 | 74 | 87 | 105 | 92 | 78 |

| UAE | 232 | 332 | 251 | 231 | 281 | 3881 | 516 | 559 | i |

| GCC | 1,344 | 1,566 | 1,917 | 1,321 | 1,269 | 1,432 | 1,868 | 1,826 | 1,866 |

| Iraq | 3 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 2 | ... |

| Iran | 158 | 164 | 245 | 133 | 126 | 119 | 36 | 36 | 37 |

| Total | 1,505 | 1,730 | 2,162 | 1,454 | 1,395 | 1,551 | 1,904 | 1,883 | 1,903 |

Note: ... = less than £0.5 million

Source: COMET (Committee for Middle East Trade, London)

Table 19.2 UK Visible Non-Defense Exports to the Gulf States, 1991-1999, (in £, Million)

| | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 |

| Saudi | 2,229 | 1,968 | 1,826 | 1,516 | 1,644 | 2,483 | 3,800 | 2,690 | 1,529 |

| Arabia | | | | | | | | | |

| Kuwait | 178 | 262 | 312 | 312 | 551 | 679 | 504 | 3885 | 302 |

| Bahrain | 147 | 167 | 151 | 150 | 151 | 161 | 158 | 144 | 118 |

| Qatar | 109 | 118 | 143 | 1280 | 146 | 192 | 584 | 293 | 169 |

| Oman | 238 | 241 | 306 | 362 | 448 | 416 | 370 | 2855 | 231 |

| UAE | 760 | 927 | 1,315 | 1,114 | 1,184 | 1,394 | 1,547 | 1,563 | 1,403 |

| GCC | 3,662 | 3,682 | 4,052 | 3,581 | 4,124 | 5,225 | 6,963 | 5,360 | 3,752 |

| Iraq | 4 | 34 | 12 | 10) | 5 | 11 | 6 | 26 | 36 |

| Iran | 512 | 568 | 4997 | 289 | 333 | 397 | 396 | 331 | 245 |

| Total | 4,178 | 4,284 | 4,561 | 3,880 | 4,462 | 5,633 | 7,365 | 5,717 | 4,033 |

Note: ... = less than £0.5 million

Source: COMET (Committee for Middle East Trade, London)

Beyond this, British companies in 2000 were also hoping to benefit from the cautious opening to foreign investment in Saudi Arabia.[644] At the time of writing, the Al-Yamamah offset arrangement had already resulted in the creation of seven joint ventures. In addition, there have been cross-investments by British Aerospace and Rolls Royce in two U.S.-sponsored offset investments under the U.S. Peace Shield program. Total British investment in the Kingdom as of 1999 stood at around $3.5 billion, much of it in the Al-Yamamah framework. Nevertheless, as one report noted, “there is still a mountain to climb before the Al-Yamamah offset requirement is met.” Outside this framework, much depends on just how open the Saudi economy will in fact become, although there are already an estimated 100 joint

ventures.[645] Saudi Arabia’s importance in British foreign economic relations is further illustrated by the fact that some 30,000 Britons live and work in the Kingdom.

Elsewhere in the GCC, tentative openings to foreign investment were also being watched closely by British business, in addition to export opportunities.[646] Kuwait’s prospective opening of some of its oil sector to outside investment led to the holding of a British Oil and Gas Show there in March 2000. As already mentioned, the UAE is the UK’s second largest trade partner in the Gulf. To a large extent this concerns re-export trade through Dubai. In 1998, the UK was the third largest importer of goods from the Emirate. In addition, an estimated 12 percent of the 1,500 companies based in the Jabal Ali Free Zone in 1998 were British.[647]

Outside the GCC, Iran has been a significant market, albeit dwarfed by Saudi Arabia, taking some ‘500 million in UK exports annually in the early 1990s. Notwithstanding improving political relations, however, a sharp drop in 1994 has failed to be reversed: The 1999 figure of ‘245 million was the lowest of the decade. This appears to have been in part the result of Iran’s own economic difficulties. British companies remain keenly aware of the possibilities of the Iranian market, however.[648] Apart from exports, a key area of mutual interest is British investment in the country, both in the oil industry and elsewhere, as the new investment law of 2000 is expected to remove some of the obstacles in the earlier Law 81.[649]

Table 19.3 UK Visible Non-Arms Exports to the Gulf States, by Broad Commodity Group, 1998 (in £ Million)

| Saudi Arabia | Kuwait | Bahrain | Qatar | UAE | Oman | GCC | Iran | Iraq | Total |

| 0 | 58.1 | 20.3 | 7.2 | 2.7 | 64.4 | 5.0 | 157.7 | 3.4 | ... | 161.1 |

| 1 | 499.5 | 10.5 | 11.6 | 6.9 | 48.8 | 9.2 | 136.4 | 0.1 | ... | 136.5 |

| 2 | 5.1 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 4.4 | 0.5 | 11.9 | 2.0 | ... | 13.9 |

| 3 | 2.1 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 3.0 | 0.4 | 6.3 | 1.1 | ... | 7.4 |

| 4 | 0.9 | 0.5 | | | 0.5 | ... | 1.8 | 0.3 | ... | 2.1 |

| 5 | 279.1 | 38.5 | 15.9 | 22.4 | 150.7 | 29.7 | 536–2 | 60.3 | 5.8 | 602.3 |

| 6 | 167.4 | 36.2 | 18.0 | 36.7 | 193.1 | 50.1 | 481.5 | 24.8 | 0.8 | 507.1 |

| 7 | 1,602.3 | 152.2 | 57.2 | 101.0 | 648 1 | 1583.1 | 2,718.9 | 206.0 | 15.1 | 2,940.0 |

| 8 | 554.9 | 67.5 | 32.5 | 55.9 | 267.3 | 33.7 | 811–7 | 31.2 | 4.0 | 846.9 |

| 9 | 170.1 | 7.8 | 1.2 | 67.0 | 182.2 | 185.3 | 447.3 | 1.7 | ... | 449.0 |

| 10 | 2,403.7 | 294.2 | 125.6 | 216.2 | 1,259.1 | 251.6 | 4,548.3 | 522.4 | 25.6 | 4,896.3 |

| 11 | 2,690.2 | 294.2 | 123.6 | 2116.2 | 1,259.1 | 251.6 | 4,548.3 | 330.9 | 25–6 | 4,904.8 |

Categories:

0 Food and live animals

1 Beverages and tobacco

2 Crude materials, except fuels

3 Mineral fuels, lubricants etc.

4 Animal and vegetable oils, fats and wax

5 Chemicals and related products

6 Manufactures classified chiefly by material

7 Machinery and transport equipment

8 Miscellaneous manufactured articles

9 Articles not classified elsewhere

105+67+8- Manufactures

11 Total

Note: ... = less than ‘50,000

Source: UK Overseas Trade Statistics December 1998

There remains an interest in the potential of Iraq, but this is recognized to be an uncertain prospect as long as sanctions remain. Yet, even though British companies have been “bound by the constraints of British government policy” and were thus long “deterred from conducting exploratory discussions with embargoed Iraq,”[650] by early 2001 it was clear that they too were straining at the leash.

**** Arms Trade and Britain in Gulf Security

The key themes and underlying dynamics of Britain’s evolving role in arms supplies and Gulf security have already emerged from the foregoing analysis. Apart from its overall influence on developments in the Gulf for the past 150 years, Britain has long had a prominent role in security matters in particular. After the official withdrawal from East of Suez, British personnel remained involved in the Omani armed forces—with several hundred still seconded there in the 1990s—and military and security cooperation remained noteworthy elsewhere in the region too. Omani and British forces continue to exercise together regularly, and, since the Gulf Crisis, joint training has also been undertaken with Kuwait. British advisers were active throughout the 1970s and 19805 in Bahrain and Qatar. Indeed, Bahrain had a former British colonial police officer, Ian Henderson, in charge of its internal security until 1999.

From 1987, U.S. naval forces formed the bulk of the protective shield extended to safeguard shipping in the Gulf from Iranian attack. Nevertheless, British and several other European forces played a significant role too. By the summer of 1988, the United States had 32 warships in the Gulf, compared to the Soviet Union’s 8, Britain’s 8 (the “Armilla patrol”), France’s 7, Italy’s 6, and 2 each from Belgium and the Netherlands (in 1987 the European figures were nearly double, including 18 British ships).[651]

This foreign protection changed both its composition and its target between the August 1988 cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq War, and the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The Iraqi invasion led to a declaration by the European Community of

solidarity with the United Nations and the United States in their demands for Iraqi withdrawal. Britain, Italy, and France immediately froze Iraqi assets. This was also one occasion where the Western European Union (WEU) adopted a slightly higher profile than usual, agreeing on 21 August 1990 to step up and coordinate European naval operations in the Gulf. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia accepted the help of American forces on 7 August 1990, and also formally requested forces from Britain, in a conversation with Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd. On 8 August, London announced that several aircraft would be flown to the Kingdom, and the Armilia patrol was strengthened. On 14 September, Britain decided to send ground troops and tanks (the 7th Armoured Brigade, known as the Desert Rats), plus additional Tornado squadrons.[652] As Operation Desert Shield gradually changed into preparations for Operation Desert Storm, troop levels rose. In the eventual attack against the Iraqi forces, Washington was obviously the dominant partner, but the British Royal Air Force participated extensively in the air war (taking relatively heavy losses), while both British and French troops were engaged in the short land war that followed.[653] It is worth recalling the role Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher appears to have played in firming U.S. President Bush's resolve to react by military means if necessary.

There were three further elements to London's importance for Washington in the Kuwait crisis. First, simply by not being the United States, Britain could add political credibility and acceptability to the undertaking, as well as influence other European powers. Second, it was a permanent member of the Security Council. Third, in military terms, it had useful capabilities and, as a base, a location much closer to the theater of operations than the US. itself. These three elements remained significant after the war, when Britain proved a key ally of Washington in the maintenance of sanctions and the no-fly zones over Iraq.[654]

Britain also signed ten-year memorandums of understanding on defense cooperation with Kuwait, Qatar, and the UAE, although decision makers in London were more circumspect than their French colleagues, making these memorandums less explicitly "defense agreements" than was the case with those signed by France. British foot-dragging over UAE preferences in this regard led to French defense suppliers, whose government had acted more swiftly, getting most of the spoils (at least until the decision in March 2000 to purchase 80 F-16s from Lockheed-Martin, worth up to $7 billion).

From a British perspective, such intervention and security cooperation fitted in with the country's European and U.S.-Iked interests, as outlined earlier in this chapter. But there was also a direct British economic interest at stake, viz. the gaining and maintaining of a British share in the regional arms market. In this field, Britain will continue to compete vigorously with the U.S. and European suppliers (chiefly France, Italy, and Germany).

In this competition, two main factors have stood out. The first is the constraints imposed on U.S. arms supplies to the region by the pro-Israel voice on Capitol Hill. As outlined above, in the 1970s and 19805 repeated inability to overcome such constraints helped lead to a preeminent position for European suppliers, including Britain. The Al-Yamamah deal, which made British equipment central to the Saudi air force, was a direct result of this dynamic. Only since the 1991 Gulf War has Washington been able to waive such objections from Congress, hence making the U.S. once again a much more formidable competitor. The second factor is evident precisely in the GCC states' reaction to this U.S. constraint. Most have consistently tried to keep their options open, sometimes demonstratively so. Britain, France, and the U.S. have been played off against each other, while other suppliers have also been brought in. Even Oman, which has traditionally bought most of its arms from Britain, has expanded its range of suppliers.[655]

In the course of the 1990s, a further factor took on added importance, although the effect is not yet fully clear. Britain's declining power projection capability, which is recognized by decision makers in the GCC, may mean that British suppliers may encounter greater difficulties in the future.[656] As has been pointed out elsewhere, "recent British force cuts mean that the British Army cannot deploy the kind of armored forces to the Gulf that it deployed in 1990,"1 and U.S. suppliers of main battle tanks and other equipment may therefore have a potential advantage, since buying American would ensure inter-operability with armored forces that are brought in during a crisis.[657]

Saudi Arabia has been, and will continue to be, by far the most important arms market for Britain. Over the period 1976–1994, UK arms exports to the

Kingdom totaled some $23 billion, not very far behind the U.S.’s $28 billion. This hides major fluctuations, with the UK taking first place in the periods 1989–1991 (an estimated $8 billion, or 40 percent of the market), and 1992–1994 ($9.4 billion, or 46 percent of the market).[658] Britain, therefore, remains a very important source for Saudi defense imports, even if the first decade of the twenty-first century may well see a reassertion of the U.S.’s preeminent position.

Elsewhere in the GCC, the only buyer looking mainly to Britain has been Oman. Bahrain has bought very little military hardware from the UK, instead sourcing its needs primarily to the United States. Qatar, for its part, has turned to France. Kuwait, with its varied procurement pattern, has been dwarfed by Saudi Arabia as a market for British defense exports. The UAE (with the exception of Hawk training and combat aircraft) has looked more to France and, as of 2000, to the United States. A list of recent British arms supply contracts with the GCC states is given in Table 19.4.[659]

**** Conclusion

Relations between Britain and the Gulf states have been driven by pragmatic calculations of raison d’etat, far more than by ideological considerations. In the case of the Gulf states, this has been focused on economic interest, external security, and regime survival. In the case of Britain, the key concerns have been the opportunities for the economy and, as an indirect but nevertheless crucial interest, the safeguarding of predictable and moderately priced oil supplies to the world economy and to Europe in particular.

British policy has derived both difficulties and opportunities from its historical relations with the region—the difficulties arising mainly with Iran and Iraq, the opportunities with the GCC states. British policy has also been constrained and shaped by its special relationship with the United States and its integration into the European Union. The predominance of pragmatic self-interest over ideological themes, at least since the second half of the 1970s, has been one of the more striking features of the relationships. Another has been the extent to which even the smallest states of the Gulf have

continuously striven to balance their dependence on the outside world with the pursuit of a degree of autonomy. This has been clear in the way they played off Britain, even while submitting to varying levels of dependence on it, against other powers—be it the Ottoman Empire prior to World War I, Iran or Iraq afterwards, or the United States during the 1970s and 1980s. At the same time, other powers were played off against Britain. This began under Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud, with Russia, the Ottoman Porte, and later the United States. It continues today, with, for example, Qatar and the UAE consciously aiming at multi-dependence to lessen the asymmetry in their interdependence with the West. It is probable that with the dwindling of Britain's military projection capability relative to the United States, the GCC states will, albeit to varying extents, drift closer to Washington for military supplies. Nevertheless, the drive for relative autonomy, observed thus far in the foreign policies of these states, will undoubtedly persist, thus keeping opportunities for Britain very much alive.

Table 19.4 Recent and Current Arms Contracts UK-GCC

| Country | Contract/ date | Description | Start Delivery | Completion |

| Saudi Arabia | 1988 | 3 Sandown mine-hunters | 199? | 2003 |

| | 1993 | 48 Tornado IDS | 1993 | 1998 |

| | 1993 | 20 Hawk 65 | 1993 | 1997 |

| UAE | 1998 | 18 Hawk fighters | 1998 | 2001 |

| | 1989 | 26 Hawk trainers | 1992 | 1996 |

| Oman | 1992 | 2 Corvette VT-83 | 1996 | 1997 |

| | 1997 | 20 Challenger tanks | 1997 | ? |

| Qatar | 1992 | 2 Barzan fast attack boats | 1997 | 1998 |

| | 1996 | 15 Hawk-100 trainers | 1996 | 1999 |

| | 1996 | Starburst SAMs | 1996 | 1996 |

| Kuwait | 1997 | 60 Sea-Skua SSMs | 1997 | 1998 |

| | 1993 | 254 Warrior AIFVs | 1995 | 1998 |

Source: IISS, The Military Balance 1998/99

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[598] Geoffrey Kemp and Robert E. Harkavy, Strategic Geography and the Changing Middle East, Washington, DC.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Cooperation with the Brookings Institution Press, 1997, pp. 28,34.

[599] Ibid.,p. 41 ff.

[600] Ibid., p. 49.

[601] Shahram Chubin, Security in the Persian Gulf 4:The Role of Outside Powers, London: Gower for the International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1982,p. 111.

[602] Ibid.,p. 112.

[603] Anthony Parsons, “A British Perception of the Gulf,” paper presented to the Symposium on The Gulfand the West, Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, Exeter University,July 1984, pp. 2–3.

[604] Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher’s role in firming up President George Bush’s resolve to act against the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is now well recognized. In 1999, the Blair government is known to have been just as irritated with the American unwillingness to consider the use of ground troops in Kosovo, as U.S. policymakers were annoyed with it.

[605] Rosemary Hollis, “Europe and Gulf Security: A Competitive Business,” in Christian Koch and David E. Long (eds.). Gulf Security in the Twenty-First Century, Abu Dhabi: Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, 1997, p. 86.

[606] Anthony Cordesman and Ahmed Hashim, Iran: Dilemmas of Dual Containment, Boulder: Westview, 1997, p. 125. As the authors point out, Iran’s strategic environment is anything but secure. On various sides, the country faces: its former invader Iraq, with whom it shares a vital shipping channel; Turkey; the issue of the Kurds straddling borders with both these powers; the unsettled region of Armenia and Azerbaijan (with the attendant ethnic questions within Iran itself); a nuclear-armed Pakistan; unsettled and unfriendly Afghanistan; and a huge coastline (p. 126).

[607] One of the most notable among the latter has been Gary Sick, formerly of the National Security Council.

[608] Cordesman and Hashim, op. cit., p. 146.

[609] Ibid., pp. 320–1. The authors add: “The key reason for pursuing ‘constructive engagement’ is that policy must have an endgame. Hostile regimes not only need to be contained; they need to be encouraged to change. ‘Dual containment’ has no endgame other than a blind hope that the 5ʏJ can persuade its allies to join it in a policy of isolating Iran, and that this will lead to political upheavals that will somehow produce a moderate regime. The West never attempted such a strategy of isolation in dealing with the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact” (p. 322).

[610] See Kemp and Harkavy, op. cit., p. 151. See also Cordesman and Hashim, op. cit., p. 15, and IRNA dispatches, London, 5 November 1998.

[611] “UK and Iran Restore Diplomatic Ties,” The Financial Times, 25 September 1998. See also “Britain Exchanges Ambassadors with Iran,” The Independent, 18 May 1999; and “Cook Sees Improvement in Relations with Iran,” The Financial Times, 22 September 1999; Deutsche Presse Agentur dispatch, 17 April 2000.

[612] Neil Partrick, “The United States, Europe and the Security of the Gulf,” in RUSIJournal 145:2, April 2000, pp. 4748.

[613] France pulled out in 1998.

[614] Bryan Bender and Adrian Koch, “Poisoned Cigars, perhaps? Briefing: Iraq,” in Jane’s Defence Weekly 33:15, April 12,2000, p. 22.

[615] Ibid. p. 25.

[616] As pointed out by Hollis, “Europe and Gulf Security”, p. 86.

[617] Ibid.,p. 87.

[618] An expression used also by Anthony Cordesman and Ahmed Hashim, Iraq: Sanctions and Beyond, Boulder: Westview, 1997, pp. 158–160, where they argue, at some length, the need for adjusting the sanctions regime.

[619] See Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) 43:16, 17 April 2000, for an initial assessment.

[620] Partrick, op. cit., pp. 45–46.

[621] For a brief examination of the linkage itself, see Gary Sick, “The Ghost at the Table,” in The World Today, February 1999, pp. 15–17.

[622] See also Bichara Khader, “The Gulf, Palestine and the West,” paper presented to the Symposium on The Gulf and the West, Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, Exeter University, July 1984, pp. 18—19.

[623] See Anthony Cordesman, Saudi Arabia: Guarding the Desert Kingdom, Boulder: Westview, 1997, pp. 155—58. See also Anthony Cordesman, The Gulf and the West, Boulder, Westview, 1988, p. 291.

[624] Hollis, “Europe and Gulf Security,” p. 83.

[625] Cordesman, Saudi Arabia, pp. 155–158; and idem, The Gulf and the West, p. 291. See also Gulf Business 4:6, October 1999.

[626] Cordesman, The Gulf and the West, pp. 283–295,361, 419.

[627] Ibid.,p. 291.

[628] The best known of these were perhaps Captain Shakespear, the explorer Philby, and, in a different way, Sir Percy Cox. For an insightful study of the early days of Saudi foreign policy, see Jacob GdqEp The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia:The Formative Years, 1902—1918, حعةل,ةلآلآةةلإ- chusetts: Harvard University Press, 1986. See also Gary Troeller, The Birth of Saudi Arabia, London: Frank Cass, 1976, which focuses, in particular, on the Saudi-British relationship up to the Saudi conquest of the Hejaz.

[629] A British TV dramatization of the events results in the execution of a young Saudi princess and her lover. The screening brought vehement Saudi protest. See Robert Lacey, The Kingdom.Arabia and the House of Saud, New York: Avon Books, 1981, p. 458.

[630] For a thematic review and analysis of Saudi relations with Britain and the rest of Europe during the twentieth century, see Gerd Nonneman, “Saudi-European Relations 1902–2001: A Pragmatic Quest for Relative Autonomy,” International Affairs, July 2001, pp., 631–661.

[631] Hassan Al-Alkim, The GCC States in an Unstable World, London: Saqi Books, 1994, p. 96.

[632] The term coined by Robert Jackson, Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. In terms of the implications for regime behavior, Nazih Ayubi’s label of “fierce states” is apposite here (even if he coined it with a view mainly to such states’ domestic behavior). See Nazih N. Ayubi, Overstating the Arab State: Politics and Society in the Middle East, London: I. B. Tauris, 1995.

[633] See Anoushiravan Ehteshami, After Khomeini: Iran’s Second Republic, London: Routledge, 1995. See also Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch, Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System, London: Routledge, 1997.

[634] For an assessment of Iraq’s foreign policy since the 1990–91 Gulf War, see Cordesman and Hashim, Iraq, chapter 9.

[635] Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Gerd Nonneman, War and Peace in the Gulf Reading: Ithaca Press, 1991, chapter 3.

[636] For contrasting views on this question, see Michael Barnett, Dialogues in Arab Politics, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998. See also Stephen M. Walt, The Origin ofAlliances, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987: and the very useful overview article by F. Gregory Gause III, “Systemic Approaches to Middle East International Relations,” in International Studies Review 1:1, spring 1999, pp. 11–31. See also the forthcoming collective work coordinated by Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond Hinnebusch (eds.). The Foreign Policies of Middle Eastern States, Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001.

[637] Richard Schofield, Kuwait and Iraq: Historical Claims and Territorial Disputes, second edition, London: Royal Institute for International Affairs, 1993, pp. 163–198, and p. 206.

[638] Anthony Cordesman, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the UAE, Boulder: Westview, 1997: International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 1998/99.

[639] Bob Edwards, “Balancing Act: The Gulf s Top 10 Trading Partners,” GulfBusiness 3:3,July 1998, pp. 32–37. See also International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics yearbooks, various issues.

[640] Ibid.

[641] Speech given by Sir David at the London Gulf spotlight gathering in London on 17 February 2000; edited version published in comet’s Opportunity Middle East, number 28, March 2000.

[642] “A Tale of Two Kingdoms,” Gulf Business 4:6, October 1999, p. 45.

[643] Hollis, “Europe and Gulf Security,” p. 82.

[644] See “Big boost for UK-Saudi business,” in Opportunity Middle East, number 29, May 2000, pp. 1,6.

[645] “A Tale of Two Kingdoms,” p. 45.

[646] This is illustrated in a series of UK-GCC mission and roundtable reports, in comet’s third-quarter Bulletin for 1999. The Gulfs overall importance within Britain’s Middle East trade is further illustrated by the fact that all but one (Egypt) of the events reported concern the Gulf. See COMET Bulletin, number 52, September 1999.

[647] “A Tale of Two Kingdoms,” p. 45.

[648] An Iranian-British Trade and Investment Mission took executives of 33 companies to Iran in June 1999. A British delegation attended the Iran Oil and Gas event in Teheran in April 2000, and the Iran Trade and Investment Conference was advertised among British firms for May 2000.

[649] Already, the Iranian National Oil Company has offered some 40 buy-back contracts. At the time of writing, Shell and Enterprise Oil were leading bidders. See the report of the June 1999 mission in COMET Bulletin, number 52, September 1999.

[650] Hollis, “Europe and Gulf Security,” p. 81.

[651] Nadia El-Sayed El-Shazly, The GulfTanker War, London: Macmillan, 1998, pp. 239, 256.

[652] France followed suit the following day, committing ground troops after its ambassador’s residence was assaulted.

[653] For an overview of the role of the various WEU states, see Nicole Gnesotto and John Roper, Western Europe and the Gulf, Paris: The Institute for Security Studies, Western European Union, 1992. A listing of individual contributions to the campaign up to 6 February 1991 is on pp. 170–180.

[654] Britain has contributed 12 Tornado aircraft based in Kuwait, and another 6 in Saudi Arabia, along with an estimated 800 Royal Air Force personnel and hundreds of related non-military personnel.

[655] Cordesman, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the UAE, pp. 171–72.

[656] Feisal Al Mazidi, The Future of the Gulf, London: I. B. Tauris, 1993. See also Cordesman, Saudi Arabia, p. 129.

[657] Cordesman, ibid.

[658] Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers, issues for 1985—1995, Washington, DC.: Government Printing Office, 1985–1996. See also Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1987—94, Washington, DC.: Congressional Research Service, 4 August 1994, as quoted in Cordesman, Saudi Arabia, pp. 108–111 (Cordesman’s own use of the data is, in this case, rather confusing).

[659] International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 1998/99, London: IISS, 1999.

THE GULF STATES AND WESTERN POWERS

*** Chkvvvk 20

*** The Impact of ﻻﺩ. Policy on the Stability of the Gulf States: A Historian’s View

Rosemarie Said Zahlan

Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman are the product of a special historical process that would be difficult to find in any other modern state.[660] Their political systems, social order, demographics, and economic situations are indeed unique to them.

A mere 50 years ago, the Gulf states enjoyed very loosely defined international standing, and they were poor, isolated, and unknown. British Foreign Office files of the 19405, and even the 1950s, reveal countless references to Britain’s inability to continue protecting them forever. They also reflect a general recognition that Saudi Arabia was Britain’s natural successor in the area. As recently as 1961, when the Foreign Office was considering an imminent withdrawal from Qatar, it foresaw its acquisition by Saudi Arabia as a strong possibility.[661]

Such a possibility is no longer valid. During the past 30 to 40 years, the Gulf states have taken enormous steps forward, and have become an essential component of the region. Together, they constitute an economic force arguably equal to those of the other countries of the region. Their population hovers around 8 million (including expatriates) and is forecasted to grow to around 26 million by 2030. Their combined GNPs exceed those of any other Arab state, including Saudi Arabia, making them the largest economic and trading bloc in the modern Arab world. Various institutions have been created and developed at a dramatic pace in each, although generally speaking, most have not received the recognition they justly deserve.

In 1989, for example, on the eve of the Iraqi invasion, scientific output per capita in Kuwait was the highest in the Arab world, and on an absolute level, the University of Kuwait produced more scientific refereed papers than any other Arab university.[662] Moreover, scientific publications from the UAE in refereed journals in 1995 were close to the Korean level, on a per capita basis.[663] Other accomplishments include the creation of the Jabal Ali Free Zone in Dubai, which is one of the largest commercial and industrial establishments in the world, and the maintenance of the offshore banking sector in Bahrain, which plays a substantial regional and international role. The list is long and growing briskly.

This transition from obscurity to prominence was made possible, of course, by the vast wealth that was bestowed on these states as a result of their large oil and gas revenues. It facilitated the swift implementation of new infrastructural, social, educational, and other programs that became the foundations of the modern states. A vital point to bear in mind, however, is that such a striking transfermation was achieved without upheavals, and without significant changes in either political structure or geographical boundaries. Equally important has been the influence of the past on the sociopolitical fabric of the Gulf states. Indeed, the historical legacy has been central to their modern development, and will remain essential in any consideration of their long-term stability. Because so much has changed so swiftly, it is easy to lose sight of this reality.[664]

This chapter examines those specific aspects of American policy since 1990 that have left an impact on the stability of the Gulf states. Such an examination requires the benefit of historical analysis, without which no understanding of the dynamics of these unique states would be complete.

**** The British Legacy: Maintenance of the Status Quo

A striking feature of the contemporary map of the Gulf region is the wide variety of countries that lie around it: Iran and Iraq, two ancient and densely populated countries with substantial human and natural resources; Saudi

Arabia, a vast country covering most of the Arabian Peninsula, with a low-density population and strong dependence on one natural resource; and the five smaller Gulf states precariously located between them, more limited in population but exceptionally well endowed with the same natural resource.

Another notable characteristic is the level of stability that pervaded the region for the first 80 years of the twentieth century and that has been steadily eroded since. During the former period, the three regional powers of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran underwent massive internal changes, whereas—by contrast—the five smaller states lived in quiet isolation until the production of oil began around the second half of the century. This stability was the product of deliberate British policy that resulted in a geopolitical balance between these eight countries of such different size, power, and political culture.

At its core was Britain’s maritime control of the Gulf, including the maintenance of the status quo. This was an integrated twin-track approach that extended to the small British-protected states on the one hand and to the three regional powers on the other.[665] The security system it set up, for example, resulted in the emergence of the Gulf states as separate and independent units. The states themselves evolved from the small tribal groupings of the early nineteenth century into modern contemporary entities in a singular process that acted and interacted with the requirements of British policy.

The most outstanding of these requirements were the treaties that Britain signed with specific tribal leaders whose authority in the coastal areas was recognized by their subjects. The treaties became the mainstay of Britain’s power base in the region, ultimately providing it with exclusive rights, and undisputed supremacy. It must be acknowledged that the cumulative effect of the treaties was the sealing off of the small states from the outside world, watched over with great jealousy by Britain. In fact, any hint of possible non-British interest in the area, regardless of how trivial, could provoke a serious crisis. This provided the states and their rulers with external protection and security, while at the same time, it acted as a cocoon that allowed local political systems and social traditions to be preserved.

A peculiar feature of the Gulf states has been the repetition of the same type of events, the same type of protagonists, and the same type of outcome throughout most of the twentieth century. In Bahrain, for example, the major crises and confrontations that occurred at depressingly frequent intervals from the early 19205 continued unabated throughout the 19905. Another example can be found in the events leading up to the Kuwait-Iraq crises of 1961 and 1990. Many aspects of the first are strikingly similar to those of the second, so much so in fact that 1961 could well have been a rehearsal for 1990, particularly since Iraqi claims to Kuwait had always been contained but never resolved. The periodicity and repetitive nature of behavioral patterns can likewise be found in Al Thani feuds in Qatar that were exacerbated by elderly rulers who invariably became recluses and delegated their own duties to appointed successors. Naturally, this led to power sharing between the two, and resulted in an absence of effective leadership.

To be sure, this repetitive feature was a by-product of the British objective of maintaining the status quo, as illustrated by two specific policies.

***** Triple Containment Policy

When Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Iraq threatened its supremacy, Britain introduced what in modern parlance could be referred to as a “non-military triple containment policy.” The three regional powers had first actively sought to define their international relations, particularly regarding their smaller neighbors, during the 1930s. They manifested their foreign policy objectives in competing with each other for influence in the Gulf. Each made claims to different areas firmly under British protection: Iran to Bahrain as well as the Tunb and Abu Musa islands; Iraq to Kuwait; and Saudi Arabia to parts of Abu Dhabi, Qatar, and Oman. Britain contained these claims in a variety of measures that are in strong contrast with the procedures of contemporary dual containment. Bilateral diplomatic negotiations, the swift admonition of Gulf rulers for having contact with foreigners, and the firm refusal to sanction the establishment of diplomatic relations with any of the Gulf states themselves were some of the measures introduced. Others included a complex set of procedures to balance the conflicts and interests of

the three powers and, if necessary, to intervene militarily. This policy achieved two objectives: It protected the Gulf states from the forward policies of the regional powers, and it maintained the balance of power between all three.

***** Micro-Interference in Internal Affairs

British interference in the internal affairs of the Gulf states was limited to cases in which its own interests were at stake.[666] “Government” was generally left to the rulers, who were personally responsible for fulfilling their treaty obligations, and they alone had dealings with the political agents and residents. In turn, this gave the rulers a generally free hand, and in keeping with tradition, they remained accessible to their subjects at all times. Hearing petitions and grievances on a daily basis was the norm. In principle, the rulers had absolute power, but this was tempered by a process of consultation with senior notables before decisions of any consequence were taken. “Governments” in the Gulf states today have retained many of these features, despite the complex and formal government machinery that has since been set up.

Nevertheless, British interference remained on a micro level, to reinforce its potency and effectiveness. In 1938, for example, reformist movements in Kuwait and Dubai led to elections of quasi-representative assemblies. These were led by men who relegated their respective rulers to positions of nominal authority and then proceeded to embark on ambitious programs for social and economic development.[667] The British political agents regarded the reform movements as internal matters but were primarily concerned with the implementation of British treaty conditions. Thus, they warned rebellious leaders that they would not interfere in their assemblies but would continue to deal and communicate exclusively with the rulers whose sovereignty Britain had acknowledged and recognized. This inevitably weakened the opposition and the possibility of reform, while consolidating the position of the rulers.[668] The reform movements collapsed shortly thereafter. The status quo had been maintained with only minimal British involvement.

**** In Britain’s Shadow: 1971,1990

When Britain withdrew unilaterally from the Gulf in 1971, there were two immediate consequences that are of relevance to this discussion. First, most of the Gulf states had only just acquired independence and were still in the very early stages of state formation, and second, the United States was poised to replace Britain in the area. Official US. interest in the Gulf states had first been expressed during the 194Os,[669] but Britain had consistently prevented Washington from gaining much influence. As late as 1968, for example, Britain persisted in its refusal to sanction the opening of a U.S. consulate in Dubai.[670]

***** Stable Dynamics of Change

Notwithstanding such machinations, independence brought feverish activity to the Gulf states, as government departments were set up, infrastructure planned and constructed, laws promulgated, and international relations established. During this time, the Gulf states were subjected to a wide variety of external forces, each of which was potentially capable of destabilizing them. But they remained firm in the face of the surrounding maelstrom. Without a doubt, the strength of their own sociopolitical fabric, supported by the long years of British external protection, had provided them with the ability to withstand the consequences of momentous events. In addition to the sudden and dramatic rise in oil prices, following the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, which brought an avalanche of revenue to tiny entities, the Gulf states were certainly ill-equipped to manage the massive changes that followed. Other developments, including the 1975 Algiers Agreement between Iraq and Iran, which contributed to the end of the war in Dhuffar, the fall of the Shah of Iran and the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1979, the November 1979 seizure of the Grand Mosque in Makkah, and the Shia riots in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia the same year, all contributed to the rulers’ rapid political growth.

Equally important, the Gulf states survived the large-scale fighting of the Iran-Iraq War relatively unscathed. Although Kuwait was drawn into the periphery of the conflict, and other states witnessed local reactions to the war, the essential features of the states remained intact. The durability of

their social structures, their political systems, and their boundaries were tested and amply reaffirmed. Indeed, their capacity to “cope” with crises of considerable magnitude strengthened their ability to manage externally induced forces to their respective advantages.

***** Twin Pillar Policy

Even the twin pillar policy, based on a putative alliance between Iran and Saudi Arabia, did not faze them. Adopted by the Nixon administration after the British withdrawal, the policy remained in place until the Shah was overthrown in early 1979. Its primary motivation was the fear of Soviet encroachment on a region of vital importance to industrialized economies.

Iran was regarded as a militarily capable state, able to secure Western interests, and the Shah was seen as a strong and assertive figure, who could play the role of “policeman of the Gulf’ in return for substantial American support. Saudi Arabia, for its part, was viewed as the stabilizing influence on the Gulf states, the true successor to Britain in that sense. The support it received as one of the two pillars of U.S. policy enhanced its position locally and throughout the rest of the Arab world. Inasmuch as this policy was a departure from the days of the Raj, when the twin-track approach had maintained the balance of power between the regional powers and safeguarded the small Gulf states, it held great potential for destabilization. First, it de-coupled the regional balance of power from the security of the small states. Second, it placed one of the regional powers in a position of enormous strength and influence. The triple containment policy had sustained the Pax Britannica, but its nascent variations would lead to cleavages in the security framework within a matter of a few years.

Iraq, which was then receiving significant Soviet aid, quietly sought to counteract Iranian influence, by trying to foster some form of regional integration with the smaller Gulf states. Together they established a Gulf University in Bahrain, and implemented a number of economic and social projects. Yet, the American support to Iran was overwhelming, and included covert Central Intelligence Agency assistance to the Kurds in their rebellion against Baghdad. Not unexpectedly, this provided Iran with great leverage

over Iraq, enabling it to impose the 1975 Algiers Agreement whereby Baghdad conceded part of the Shatt Al-Arab waterway to Teheran.[671] It may therefore be correctly argued that the agreement contributed to the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War five years later.

***** Collapse of the Twin Pillar Policy

Nevertheless, when, in January 1979, the Shah’s regime collapsed, so too did a vital component of American policy in the region. The establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran represented a major shift in the regional power structure. Other events caused Washington to search for an alternative policy: the hostage crisis in Teheran, the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Makkah, and the Soviet invasion ofAfghanistan, to name just three.

Within a very short period of time, the Rapid Deployment Force was established—also in 1979—as a major step toward an emerging new policy that was based on direct U.S. intervention in the region. This was underlined by the Carter Doctrine, which warned: Any attempt to gain control of the Gulf region would be regarded as an assault on U.S. interests. The new policy was reconfirmed by the Reagan corollary, which extended the Carter Doctrine to include local destabilization. Indeed, the reliance on American armed forces, rather than those of a regional power, grew as the RDF Joint Task Force was created, and later when it was transformed into the U.S. Central Command.

Noticeably, the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War in 1980 was the first major conflagration in the region since the days of the Raj. It was also a victim of the twin pillar policy, as one of the many reasons for the conflict was the Iraqi attempt to be rid of binding clauses in the Algiers Accord. Another was a Struggle for hegemony in the Gulf. In the event, the conflagration lasted for eight long years, with an estimated million casualties and both belligerents left dramatically impoverished. Within a short period of time, the arena of war extended beyond the borders of Iraq and Iran and began to pose significant threats to the Gulf states themselves. Their initial response was to establish the Gulf Cooperation Council in May 1981. Although this provided some security, it did not protect them entirely, as the 1983 bomb attacks in Kuwait amply demonstrated. Other problems increased tensions, and by

1984 the Iran-Iraq War had entered its “tanker” phase, which included direct assaults on Kuwaiti ships.[672]

It may be worth recalling that several Western and many other states were providing mihtary assistance to both sides, in a cynical attempt to keep them engaged, ostensibly to safeguard the stability of the Gulf states and their markets. Significant U.S. military involvement, however, only began to take shape after a Kuwaiti request to re-flag its tankers. In 1987, a powerful fleet of the U.S. navy, together with the frigates, destroyers, and minesweepers of a variety of other states, began escorting the re-flagged tankers and sweeping the Gulf waters for mines. Within a year, Iran accepted a cease-fire, and the war ended in August 1988.

**** Challenges to Stability since 1990

Given this background, when Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait in August 1990, it was not surprising to see Washington lead the international response, thereby establishing its hegemony in a very public and assertive manner. The symbolism with, and differences between, Lord Curzon’s imperial visit to the Gulf to establish British hegemony at the beginning of the twentieth century and General Norman Schwarzkopfs reliance on state-of-the-art technologies to project U.S. power at the close of the century are especially poignant.[673] In fact, the high-profile U.S. presence during Desert Storm can be viewed as an affirmation of the state security system that had been so dramatically challenged by the Iraqi invasion, and which U.S.-led forces fought on such a large scale to uphold. It can also be viewed as the first and major step in a new and different direction.[674]

In restoring Kuwait to its former status, Washington underlined its adherence to the state system and political structures that London had put in place earlier. The United States reaffirmed the international boundaries of Kuwait, left its political system intact, and strengthened as well as enhanced the position of the ruler. A corollary of these “achievements” is the cohesiveness of Kuwaiti society. Throughout the Iraqi occupation, all Kuwaitis, including leading members of the opposition, remained loyal to the political system, regardless of their own personal convictions. In one sense, therefore, the U.S.

upheld the old order to ensure the external security of the Gulf states. In another sense, it introduced undercurrents of change whose impact on both internal and external stability is potentially negative.

The most obvious of these undercurrents is the introduction of the dual containment policy. Indeed, the dramatic isolation of both Iraq and Iran, coupled with the relentless punitive measures against Iraq, have had disastrous repercussions on the societies, economies, and international relations of both countries. Earlier, the twin pillar policy had provided Iran with considerable leverage over Iraq. Similarly, dual containment proved to be equally divisive. It is earning two potential enemies for the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia. Moreover, it has delinked the security of the Gulf states from that of the rest of the region, abandoning geopolitical realities and releasing forces that threaten stability. Six major concerns, which stand out as potential irritants, are identified and examined below.

***** Unpopular US Policies

The Gulf states have all entered into bilateral defense agreements with the United States, reviving the old treaty system. As a result, they are very publicly and openly allied with Washington. The recent visit to Sultan Qaboos of Oman by President Clinton—on his return from the Indian subcontinent—reaffirmed the emerging relationships. The American alliance, however, has further exposed the governments of the Gulf states to the inequities of U.S. policy throughout the Arab world. These include, on the one hand, persistently punishing the Iraqi people for the actions of their government, continuing the bombing raids, and sustaining the sanctions. On the other hand, turning a blind eye to Israel’s continued violations of international law and United Nations resolutions earned many Gulf rulers the opprobrium of some of their citizens.

Indeed, these inconsistencies are not lost on the people of the Gulf states, as their dissatisfaction with these—and other—aspects of American foreign policy could polarize nascent opposition groups. This possibility has been amplified by high-profile events propagated by the media, which report on events as they occur, bringing home the visual experience of Iraqi civilian

casualties, and burgeoning Israeli settlements. Ironically, the proposed Cooperative Defense Initiative would call for even stronger links with the United States, placing Gulf governments in even weaker positions vis-â-vis their citizens.

In the past, unpopular alliances have left their impact on Gulf states' internal affairs. In Kuwait, for example, the frustrations caused by the ruler's open association with Britain during the 1936–1939 intifada in Palestine crystallized into the reform movement two years later. The men who had gathered together to express their anger at the ruler's pro-British attitude toward the Palestinians became the protagonists of the 1938 reform movement.[675] The same situation occurred in Bahrain a decade later, when the United Nations partition plan for Palestine became known and, once again, there was a fusion between the Palestine problem and anti-British sentiments that targeted the ruler and his British adviser.[676]

***** Arab Relationships

During their long isolation under British rule, the Gulf states were deprived of strong and free relationships with the rest of the Arab world. Once the barriers were lifted, an extensive and widespread interchange began. On the private level, this took the form of visits, professional meetings, and conferences, as joint ventures and investments flourished. On the governmental level, this included membership of Arab regional organizations, donations, and support for major Arab causes, to name just a few examples.

During the past decade, however, a new separation between the Gulf states and the rest of the Arab world is palpable, echoing many of the features of the old days of isolation. Increasingly, the Gulf states are regarded as supportive of US. policies against fellow Arabs that, once again, create unmistakable tensions. Some vocal leaders as well as ordinary citizens are blaming their governments for acquiescing to non-Arab and non-Islamic concerns.

***** Dynamics of Decision Making

Because American management systems are quantitatively oriented, and largely based on sophisticated intelligence, they tend to result in rapid decisions. They are in sharp contrast with the procedures that are integral to decision making in traditional societies. The Gulf states are small and slow moving. Management of their affairs is negotiated at an unhurried pace by leaders who value traditional mechanisms. Rulers and governments alike enjoy effective but narrow power bases that have survived through the lengthy processes of discussion, negotiation, and consensus. Each state has its own dynamics and responds in its own way to external pressures. Under the circumstances, the nature of the new relationships with the United States does not allow such discussions and consensus to occur. The result may well translate in undermining internal relationships and time-honored processes.

***** Macro-Pressure on InternalAffairs

At least six variables may also be identified to describe the various macropressures on Gulf states' internal affairs.

Arms Sales. Since the end of Desert Storm, the United States has adopted forward policies to promote the sale of costly weapons systems, civilian aircraft, telecommunications gear, and other civil and military hardware. President Clinton's personal interventions regarding these procurements are well known. In many cases, the Gulf states have made the purchases reluctantly, as their strong financial burdens have been compounded by the ongoing slide in oil prices. These vast expenditures constitute nothing less than macro-pressure. They are draining valuable financial resources and removing a powerful source of socioeconomic stability. As already mentioned, the great wealth of these small societies made the transition from tribal shaykhdoms to modern states a relatively smooth process. Time-tested welfare systems shielded individuals and governments from the uncertainties and vicissitudes of their newfound prominence. An apt example of how government bounty could salvage financial disasters is provided in the 1985 collapse of the Suq al-Manakh in Kuwait. To settle the morass of bad debts and stabilize the badly shaken

national economy, the government came up with a wide-ranging package to bail out all individuals and institutions that had been involved in the Suq. [677]

This deus ex machina approach is no longer possible, as dwindling national reserves have inevitably induced reductions in subsidies, benefits, and guaranteed public sector employment. The financial shield that has buttressed the societies of the modern Gulf states, which has been an integral part of their development, cannot be relied on as such in the future. Without it, internal tensions can be expected to rise. Expensive mistakes, such as those made in hitherto subsidized private businesses, will have to be covered by their owners. Competition between nationals in the various economic sectors will increase, as will the rivalries within ruling families.

Militarization. When Britain withdrew from the Gulf in 1971, the region was largely demilitarized. Iran was just beginning to expand its land, air, and sea forces, but the remainder of the region was largely free of heavy armaments. This is in strong contrast with the situation today, whereby the smallest Gulf states have sophisticated weapons systems, which they are unlikely to ever use. The origins of this transformation into a heavily fortified camp can be traced directly to the twin pillar policy, which relied substantially on building up Iran’s military capabilities. Inevitably, this factor reverberated on Iraq’s security requirements, as Baghdad had little choice but to counter the putative Iranian threat. The long Iran-Iraq War further involved the purchase of massive amounts of military hardware by both sides, encouraged by governments and arms suppliers around the world. Saudi Arabia was not left out of this diabolical process at the same time.

Only the Gulf states themselves remained relatively unhampered by this trend until 1990, when events overtook them. Before and since the 1991 war, it seems that American policy has been to market its weapons systems, which consequently resulted in the heavy militarization of all the states of the region—for the first time in history. This is over and above the substantial pre-positioning program of American military need, personnel, and facilities that merely add to the growing military nature of the region. It must be emphasized that this militarization is taking place in societies that are not ready for such sophisticated and highly technical armies. It is engendering a

false sense of security and, perhaps inadvertently, making the use of force an available alternative to diplomacy as a problem-solving method.

Uncertainties of US. Policies. The methods of implementing British policy throughout the twentieth century were generally well known and remained reasonably constant. This enabled rulers to evolve a corresponding pattern for negotiation and response. By contrast, the frequent changes in American policy have been very pronounced, including the shift from twin pillar to the Carter Doctrine to dual containment; more recently, the trend seems to be toward some kind of normalization with Iran —all of which have taken place within a short time span of 30 years. These changes obviously immobilize a sustained pattern of response, and call for constant adaptation, which places considerable pressure on regional governments.

Increasing Unemployment. A corollary to the expensive weapons sales, and the consequent decline in national reserves, has been the increasing unemployment among Gulf nationals. Although this process began before the 1990–91 war, it has been exacerbated ever since. The dramatic increase in university enrollment, for example, has resulted in a record number of graduates whose expectations are not being satisfied as the job market has been shrinking. Moreover, the exceptionally high population growth rates (around 3.3 percent and above) have exacerbated the problem by several fold. It has been estimated that the labor force (aged 15—64) has been increasing at rates that vary from country to country between 0.7 percent and 1.6 percent per year.[678] Access to international media and the Internet[679] has also been growing, compounding the frustrations of young graduates.[680] These issues, if not addressed, will ultimately induce calls for transparency and accountability regarding national expenditure, a hitherto taboo subject.

Residual Internal Tensions. In each of the Gulf states, there is some residual internal tension, often several decades old. Factionalism within the ruling family (Qatar), uncertainties over succession (Abu Dhabi, Oman), and opposition to the government (Kuwait) are well known examples of this phenomenon. Inter-State border disputes are also several generations old: The Bahrain-Qatar conflict has been ongoing since the 19305, although the

March 2001 ruling by the International Court of Justice on their borders seems to have solved the problem. To be sure, some of these problems have been contained; others have been receiving the attention of the GCC in an effort to solve them quietly and, perhaps, expeditiously. An essential component of these efforts, nevertheless, is the slow and gradual level of social change that has served all five states well and contributed to their survival against some odds. U.S. macro-interference could force the pace and act on these smoldering tensions, possibly resulting in open internal conflict.

Institutional Interference. The U.S. relationship with the Gulf states has been formalized in a series of bilateral agreements and joint exercises and through an ongoing flow of visits and consultations between their respective leaders and governments. An integral part of a long-term formal association with Washington is the institutionalization of its concern for, amongst others, the Middle East Peace Process, women's rights issues, the protection of intellectual property, environmental concerns, and many other similar affairs.

These have been extended to the Gulf states and, as such, constitute a form of institutional interference in their internal affairs. The establishment by Oman and Qatar of relations with Israel, for example, can be seen in this light, particularly in the face of non-negligible local opposition. Likewise, the Doha Economic Summit (for the Middle East and North Africa region), which was held in November 1998 despite a noisy Arab boycott—as a protest against Israeli obstruction of the Peace Process—saw six Arab countries in attendance, three of which (Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait) were Gulf states. Another example is the high-profile U.S. support for Kuwait's Amiri decree regarding the enfranchisement of women, to which has been attributed its rejection by the National Assembly.

***** Changing Patterns

Among the significant challenges facing Gulf states are those that concern the ruling families themselves. Recent events in Qatar indicate major changes from established patterns. Contrary to tradition, the present Amir

deposed his father, which is unique in the history of Qatar (and in most Gulf states), because such behavior does not extend to the father-son relationship. Today, the conservatism of Qatar stands in strong contrast with the avant-garde Al-Jazeera television station, which was established just as the Ministry of Information was abolished. Another break with the past is the relationship with Israel. The recent abduction of an aircraft carrying the Amir's cousin, accused of involvement in an attempted coup, is closer to fantasy than to Qatari tradition. US. support for the Amir in these and other innovations, including the much-discussed municipal elections, has been open and public.[681]

All of these initiatives have been taken in an ultra-conservative society, and represent the first manifestation of substantial internal change since Operation Desert Storm. In the past, the periodicity of events had a predictable element to them, but the departure from traditional Qatari patterns of behavior is a move into uncharted territory. Some of the new measures have introduced flexibility, new opportunities, and possibilities, while others hold potentialities for isolation and tension.

***** The Special Case of Bahrain

Finally, and while it is outside the scope of this paper—which sets out a broad framework for all of the Gulf states—it is necessary to briefly focus on Bahrain to illustrate the impact of U.S. policies on the island-state's internal stability.

Of all the Gulf states, Bahrain is the weakest and most vulnerable, and the reasons—many of which are unique—are well known. Manama's ruling family did not emerge from within the society, as in the other states, where a social contract with the rulers has maintained stability. The country has a strong confessional (Shia-Sunni) divide, as well as a strong rural-urban divide. It is densely populated and has a white- and a blue-collar labor force. Most importantly, it is not oil rich.

Less well known, perhaps, is the high level of British interference in its internal affairs, particularly during the twentieth century. This contributed in large measure to the pattern of unrest that has plagued the country for decades and that is still ongoing. In 1923, Britain imposed a number of political, legal, and administrative changes that resulted in the enforced abdication of the ruler.[682] In 1938, there were additional impositions, this time regarding employment opportunities, and again in 1954, 1956, and 1965, for different reasons. Opposition leaders were invariably arrested; some were deported, usually to an island in the Indian Ocean.[683] The government made few serious attempts to reach an accommodation with the opposition. London's policy of supporting the rulers strengthened their position vis-â-vis their people.

The election by male suffrage of the first (and only) national assembly, in 1973, looked set to reverse past trends of tension and confrontation with the government. Yet, the Jufair agreement, giving the United States access to naval facilities on the island, became a major stumbling block when the nascent Assembly rejected it. By 1975, it had become such a contentious issue that the Amir suspended the Assembly altogether. Thus, it may be safe to argue that the close U.S. alliance, particularly since Operation Desert Storm, has perpetuated the old patterns of tension. In fact, the movement calling for greater participation, as well as the restoration of the Assembly starting in 1994, has led to a long period of renewed confrontation. Manama's heavy-handed response and the widespread arrests and ill-treatment of prisoners (some of whom have been deported) have attracted regional and international attention, including calls by many human rights organizations for the cessation of repression and torture.

Sadly, the late Amir, Isa bin Salman (1961–99), was unresponsive to the mounting unrest and international criticism of his rule. He was so in the firm knowledge that official and public American support sustained him.[684] This affirmation strengthened the Amir, allowing him to pursue his repressive policies amid local and internationd clamor for political reform.[685] His son, Shaykh Hamad bin Isa, who succeeded him in 1999, looks set to reverse his predecessors' uncompromising attitudes: the most striking indication has been his repeal in February 2001 of emergency laws, the release of all political prisoners, the sanctioning of a referendum, and other measures that promise to introduce the rule of law to the country.

**** Conclusion

Britain’s triple containment policy preserved the status quo in the Gulf region, but left many problems frozen and unresolved. Although it imposed stability, it left behind a large number of grievances, which were not overcome. These included territorial claims and border disputes. Indeed, Britain missed a number of opportunities to solve the Tunbs and Abu Musa dispute[686] before it became a stumbling block in Arab-Iranian relations.

Almost as soon as Washington sought to replace London in the Gulf, it initiated a process of militarization with Iran, and to a lesser extent, with Saudi Arabia. During the 1980s, it extended this policy to include Iraq. Until then, the Gulf states had had only limited military means, but since Operation Desert Storm, their burgeoning arsenals are in striking contrast to their earlier levels.

It is safe to argue that many aspects of superpower rivalry have been transplanted to the Gulf. Rather than being shielded from the Cold War, the region gradually absorbed some of its traits, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1948, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff secretly considered the destruction of Middle Eastern oil fields if it became impossible to defend them against Moscow.[687] Cold War policies were manifested once again in Iran with the infamous 1953 CIA plot to overthrow the Mossadeq government.

Current American policies are driven by a preponderance of military considerations as well. Finding solutions to the intrinsic problems of the region is not a priority. Although the resolution of these problems, through diplomatic channels, would be far more conducive to the security of the region, the current discourses on weapons of mass destruction and inter-ballistic missiles seem to dominate. Under the circumstances, and given their relatively weak positions, the Gulf states remain vulnerable to powerful external forces. Not surprisingly, Washington has succeeded in incorporating

them into its own system, which, by all accounts, has severely stressed their economies, labor forces, social structures, and political traditions.

The resulting militarization has been absorbing Gulf states' financial and human resources, as the recruitment of substantial numbers of young men into their military—to manage and maintain the newly acquired sophisticated armaments—is weakening the new generation. It is also weakening its effectiveness to plan and prepare for the post-oil phase. Moreover, the high levels of military procurement will inevitably create new centers of non-productive power. The transformation of these centers into institutional forces, which could polarize the opposition, mostly within the ruling families, could also become significant in future political developments.

In the end, because the Gulf states are young and small, and because they are still undergoing so many dramatic and rapid changes, their futures remain fragile. They have established an enabling environment to manage the process of change, which is demonstrated in their commitment to invest in human resources. The adoption of environmental protection policies, the introduction of quality telecommunication services, and high levels of Internet and computer penetration systems all illustrate Gulf leaders' quest for excellence. Thus, as they enter the new century, the Gulf states bring with them many of the attributes that could propel them into a knowledge-based society, enabling them to become members of the global economy. This would be contingent, however, on the introduction of substantial changes in American policy, whose means do not serve proclaimed objectives. Unless the means are reconciled with objectives, the long-term stability of the Gulf states will, indeed, be imperiled.

[660] In placing together these five different states for this chapter, there will be inevitable generalizations. Oman, in particular, does not fit entirely into the first part of the paper, since it was technically an "independent" state. But it was bound by other obligations to Britain that resulted in sharing many of the features discussed in this chapter.

[661] Public Record Office, London, FO371/156977: FO Minute (Green File), 15 November 1961.

[662] A. B. Zahlan, Al’Arab wa Tahadiyyat al’Um wal Taqanah:Taqaddum min dun Taghayyur [The Chailenge of Science and Technology in the Arab World: Progress without Change], Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 1999, pp. 63–9.

[663] Ibid.

[664] This aspect is discussed at length in Rosemarie Said Zahlan, The Making of the Modern GulfStates: Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, Reading, United Kingdom: Ithaca Press, 1998.

[665] To quote a political resident in 1931, British policy in the Gulf was “to maintain the independence of the Arab Shaykhdoms and at the same time to prevent any other foreign power from dominating them or obtaining special privileges in the Gulf.” British Library, India Office Collection, L/P&S/12/3727, Political Resident to Government of India, 24 November 1931.

[666] This is best illustrated by the fact that there were only four British officers stationed in the entire Gulf region until World War II. Rosemarie Said Zahlan, The Origins of the United Arab Emirates: A Political and Social History of the Trucial States, London: Macmillan Press, Ltd., 1978, p. 162.

[667] For an account of the events leading up to and following the establishment of the Dubai Majlis, see Rosemarie J. Said, “The 1938 Reform Movement in Dubai,” Al-Abhath 23:1–4, December 1970, pp. 247 318. There are a number of studies that compare the Kuwait movement with those of Dubai and Bahrain, which also took place at the same time. One of the earliest was Muhammad al-Rumaihi, “Harakat 1938 al-Islahiyyah fil Kuwayt wal Bahrayn wa Dubayy” [The 1938 Reform Movements in Kuwait,

Bahrain and Dubai], Journal of the Gulf and Arab Peninsula Studies 1:4, October 1975, pp. 29–68.

[668] By the same token, Britain could also remove rulers when it found it expedient to do so. The enforced abdication of the ruler of Bahrain (1923) and the British-backed palace coups in Sharjah (1965), Abu Dhabi (1966), and Oman (1970) are apt examples.

[669] For an account of the early years of US. interest in the region, see Rosemarie Said Zahlan, “Anglo-American Rivalry in Bahrain, 1918—1947,” in Shaykh Abdullah bin Khalid Al-Khalifah and Michael Rice (eds.), Bahrain through theAgeszThe History, London: Kegan Paul International, 1993,pp. 567–87.

[670] Public Record Office, London FCO8/37, (5ɛɹل Interest in Persian Gulf Political Affairs.” The document advanced the same excuse it had given a U.S. request in the 1940s to establish a consulate in Bahrain, namely, that it would set a precedent that other countries would seize on as an excuse to enter the region.

[671] Shortly afterwards, Iraq discontinued aid to the Dhuffar revolution in Oman, a major step toward the collapse of that movement.

[672] Nadia El-Sayyed El-Shazly, The Gulf Tanker War: Iran and Iraq’s Maritime Swordplay, London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997.

[673] Ziɹɹıl Making of the Modern Gulf States,p. و۱ ۱.

[674] There are of course many well-known studies and publications on the current security situation in the Gulf. See Muhammad Al-Said Idris, Al-Nizam al-Iqlimi lil Khalij al-Arabi [The Regional Security System of the Arab Gulf], Beirut: Centre for Arab Unity Studies, 2000.

[675] For the details of the leaders of the anti-British movement and how they later formed the nucleus of the 1938 opposition, see Rosemarie Said Zahlan, “The Gulf States and the Palestine Problem, 1936—48,” Arab Studies Quarterly 3:1, winter 1981, pp. 1—21.

[676] Ibid.

[677] This included paying off small investors, including those with losses of up to $7 million, partially guaranteeing bank losses, providing ten-year interest-free promissory notes, writing off debts that could not be repaid, and buying shares in the stock market to bring up prices.

[678] Nadia Sayyed Ali, “Demography and Development in Three GulfStates,” unpublished doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 1998, p. 180. For an examination of the problems of localization and restructuring of the labor force, see Andrzej Kapiszewski, NativeArab Population and Foreign Workers in the Gulf States: Social, Economic and Security Issues, Krakow: Taiwpn Universitas, 1999.

[679] The Gulf states have the highest number of computers per capita in the Arab world. Moreover, preparations under way—such as those for establishing an Internet City in Dubai—are expected to transform the economies of the different states even further.

[680] The remarkably high enrollment figures in all the states reflect the fact that education, particularly higher education, is of relatively recent vintage. In 1970, there were only 30 graduates in the UAE; by 1975, they had increased to 589, a 19-fold increase in just five years. Today, it is estimated that the annual number of graduating engineers alone doubles every four years.

[681] After the 1996 attempted coup against the Amir, the U.S. State Department publicly supported the sovereignty and independence of Qatar. A spokesman claimed that the coup could not be likened to the Amir's overthrow of his father, since the Amir had had legitimate concerns.

[682] Interference by Major Daly, the political agent, was on such a high level that it is still recalled today in the vernacular as "Daly's rules," an expression of severity in some Gulf states.

[683] There are a number of relevant studies on Bahrain. See M. G. Rumaihi, Bahrain: Social and Political Change since the First World War, London: Bowker, 1967: and Mahdi Abdalla Al-Tajir, Bahrain 1920–1945: Britain, the Shaikh and the Administration, London: Croom Helm, 1987. The harsh treatment of political prisoners became an embarrassment to the British government during the 1960s, when a press campaign in London highlighted their plight. The British government had no choice but to release them. For an overall account of Bahraini unrest up to and including 1995, see Munira A. Fakhro, "The uprising in Bahrain: An Assessment," in Gary Sick and Lawrence G. Potter (eds.). The Persian Gulfat the Millennium, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997, pp. 167–188.

[684] In May 1996, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff stated that the United States was "most supportive of Bahrain's efforts to ensure its stability." Reuters, 29 May 1996. This theme was reiterated by President Clinton, who assured the Amir that Washington supported his government and sovereignty.

[685] In March 1996, despite the anti-government rallies and street riots, the Clinton administration once again praised Bahrain, this time for its support and attendance at the anti-terrorism summit in Egypt.

[686] Rosemarie Said Zahlan, "Al-Niza'a Hawi al-Juzur al-Arabiyyah fil Khalij 1928–1971: Dirasat lil 'Alaqat al-Arabiyyah al-Iraniyyah wa Dawr Britaniya Fiha" [The Role of Britain in the Conflict over the Tunb Islands, 1928—1971],

Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies 2:6, April 1976, pp. 9–32.

[687] After some debate, they decided to limit the destruction to refining, loading, and transportation systems. There were no plans to consult any of the governments involved. U.S. National Archives, General Records of the Department of State, box 4, “Preparation for Demolition of Oil Facilities in the Middle East,” 25 May 1948.

*** Chapter 21: Gulf States’ Links with Their Post-Soviet Northern Neighbors

Theodore Karasik

The late-1989 collapse of the Soviet Union has left a noticeable impact upon and within the Persian Gulf region that deserves special attention. A decade after significant changes in the global balance of power, the legacy of the Soviet system in creating new national leaders is still visible, as a new leadership emerges in Moscow. How these new leaders behave in the Gulf and how they conduct meaningful decision making toward the region are of critical importance because north-south security and trade relations are in full swing. Whether the Gulf States can rely on stable political, economic, and security relationships with Central Asia—while countering the still influential Russian Federation— deserves attention. In recent years, the relationship between Gulf states and several New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union has shaped slowly evolving security and commercial ties.

Even if Soviet educated, the vast majority of the governing elites in the Caucasus and Central Asia are clan based, which inevitably alters their independent approaches. Under the old Soviet system, local party bosses reigned over their respective republics largely unchallenged, as long as they held to Moscow’s guidelines dutifully enforced by Russian first secretaries. After the Soviet breakup, the Russian deputies went home, but left the local

Communist hierarchies and the privileges associated with power, complete with their leaderships, intact and in place. The underlying political structures, and the way in which elections were run, retained their previous blueprints in the decade after the area entered its post-Soviet period. Even if these methods gave NIS officials a Western orientation, most local leaders behaved in typically non-Soviet modes, perceiving their independent republics as far closer to traditional entities. Indeed, discarded concepts, ranging from clan fiefdoms to khanates and emirates, were once again in vogue. Several leaders perceived themselves as custodians over substantial mineral resources, which, noticeably, underscores the dormant similarities between them and the Gulf states. At least on this score, the two regions shared much in common, which further endeared leaders to each other.

In addition to this fundamental characteristic, two other salient concerns shaped the overall impact between Gulf states and leading post-Soviet republics: security and commerce.

The newly engaged Central Asian leaders shared similar perceptions of internal and external threats.[688] In some ways, inexperienced leaders—-at least by international standards—saw foreign interference through political violence, proxies, assassination, rival governments, and introduction of radical ideologies as potential warnings. In this respect, their views mirrored those shared by several Gulf leaders. Not surprisingly, many developed counter-strategies relying on strong security services. Like their Gulf counterparts, they quickly learned to co-opt dissent, practice divide-and-rule strategies, allow ideological flexibility, and permit, when feasible, pseudo-participation in the political systems.

Equally important is the impact that the emerging north-south commercial nexus has had in a very short decade. Early in the 90s, leading Gulf states sought to invest heavily in the former Soviet Union to secure lucrative commercial returns, advance cultural and religious coalitions, and develop joint strategies to market raw materials in mutually beneficial ways. Outside the Soviet orbit, few realized that these objectives would be difficult to accomplish, because the overall physical conditions in the north were comparable to those found in developing countries. The region lacked a proper infrastructure, which severely prevented trade. In fact, the area in

general lacked long-distance highways, a situation that has changed little in the decade since independence. Existing roads remained in poor condition, railroads were underdeveloped, and airports were sub-standard. These transportation settings made it difficult to move goods both north and south. Moreover, and because they shared similar types of economies, in that leading countries in both areas produced a limited range of commodities—such as cotton, minerals, oil, and gas—their narrow export bases meant that Central Asian and Gulf states competed.[689] Indeed, the direction of trade in the decade since 1990 has recorded substantial advances, as many anticipated, but progress has been slow, leading to substantial reassessments of future trends.

**** Gulf States' Impact on Central Asia

The idea of the Central Asian states being pulled away by either Moscow or Teheran seems far-fetched. To be sure, Russia continues to exercise substantial influence in Central Asia, but the latter is loath to sustain umbilical cords when so little benefits come their way. Likewise, many realize that their religious ties run through Makkah, not Qom. Consequently, neither Russia nor Iran has recorded significant advances in Central Asia. The so-called Islamic threat proved to be vastly exaggerated given that few Central Asians were inspired or mobilized to political action. Opposition figures in Central Asia could not rely on religion to catapult themselves to power given the overwhelming secularization process introduced during the Soviet era. Contrary to widespread assumptions, the common Islamic identity in Central Asia remained too vague and too abstract to challenge nationally defined state authority, and boundaries.

Assuming an Islamic challenge, however, has been used as an excuse to justify authoritarian tendencies throughout the region.

Instead, the region was dominated by an entrenched clan structure, which proved critical throughout the 1990s. Importantly, the intricate clan patterns and associations—so necessary to establishing a realistic blueprint of power structure in Central Asia—proved difficult to decipher. As the establishment of Soviet power corrupted most Central Asian societies, and all social

structures were preserved by collective forms, little evidence—save for occasional anecdotal vignettes—was available. Still, the Communists altered Central Asia by working within the framework of traditional hierarchies inadvertently failed to dismantle existing clan structures. An alien ideology could not dismantle in 70 years what took centuries to assemble. Central Asia was clan based before 1917 and, despite Communist authoritarianism, would revert to it in 1990.[690]

Of course, the impact of Communist authoritarianism was substantial, as Central Asia experienced undeniable hardships. Remarkably, and despite the extreme political fluidity that marked their recent behavior, several republics successfully re-drafted their own cultural identities, formed new alliances and associations, identified new friends, and forged important ties with their southern neighbors in the Gulf. Regardless of the kind of arrangements that emerged among the Central Asian states, fresh identities, concrete interests, and long-term objectives were all far more likely than generally assumed.

To some extent, the reasons for these positive developments were directly related to strong tribal and clan alliances in Central Asia. The tendency to remain loyal at the local, rather than the national, level dominated. Tribal, ethnic, and clannish associations were favored because they sought to attach loyalty to dominate the economic, political, and security landscape. In such instances, not a single institution, whether it governed economics, politics, or security affairs, was immune from tribal and clan influences.

Given this background, how have local leaders behaved in the decade since independence? Have they altered the ways through which most controlled the region’s economic assets—especially within their fiefdoms? To be sure, clan politics, combined with entrenched Russian norms, dominated the political landscape. In fact, a distinctive Russian background among Central Asian societies influenced foreign policy formulation and articulation toward the Gulf states. Moreover, the unique mix found among the Central Asian leadership structure also affected the growth and management of Islamic linkages, economic connections, and regional cooperation. Noticeably, Central Asian leaders approached their Gulf counterparts with both delight and apprehension; they were free to conduct international diplomacy to boost links outside Central Asia, while being limited in their abilities to

become part of the greater Middle East. The Russian-trained, clannish leaderships still perceived Moscow—despite the trauma and anxiety of the Soviet collapse—as a patron that, in the long run, ensured continuity.

In the end, Central Asia's Soviet-style patrimony included daunting problems that made Gulf policy objectives difficult to manage. Political elites in each new

republic, which had grown accustomed to single-party, winner-take-all systems, wrestled with the myriad problems that came with independence. Like their Gulf counterparts, most preferred central control, thereby limiting political competition and creating opposition groups seeking external support. Rivalries revolved around regional or clan contests, rather than institutions that purported to represent class interests or other ideologies. In similar fashion to their Gulf counterparts, Central Asian leaders resorted to lengthy quotations that emphasized the obligations of the leader, portraying the chief executive as the sole decision maker. Most regarded their citizens as subjects, or passive objects of authority, rather than as sources of legitimacy.[691]

**** Iran, Russia, and Saudi Arabia in Central Asia

Within the Gulf, Iran wrestled with the notion that it ought to be the single most important country to Central Asia, if for no other reason than geography and history. Yet, Iran emphasized its religious credentials and attempted to redirect the Central Asian republics away from Russia and the West, by encouraging mutually beneficial trade contacts. In fact, Teheran re-launched the moribund regional Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and signed several lucrative oil accords.[692] Inasmuch as developing competing oil producers would affect the entire region, Iran's role in forging safe and secure oil lifelines from this critical region to industrialized countries became critical. Nevertheless, Teheran's various activities—in encouraging Central Asian republics to behave in specific ways—meant that revolutionary leaders were keenly aware of how lucrative the area was. Even if the ECO effort failed to produce desired effects in a timely fashion, Iran was still

interested in forging close ties with leading Central Asian states, especially over the long term.[693]

Throughout the ‘90s, Iran reasserted its historic and cultural influence in Central Asia, even if Ayatollah Khomeini’s teachings and interpretations were not popular among northern-tier leaders. Likewise, Saudis relied on their religious credentials to influence Central Asian masses, if not the leaders themselves. Independent elements within the Gulf were also interested in enlisting Central Asian support against Western—including Russian—interests. But activity alone did not ensure influence. Indeed, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and others failed to exert real authority in Central Asia, because they themselves were weak and divided.[694] More important, the republics, long viewed as falling within the Russian Empire’s grip, remained vulnerable in both the Soviet as well as post-Soviet eras. In fact, Communist leaders throughout the region would have probably preferred to delay any breakup of the empire, if only to gain breathing space to resolve some of their problems. Because of the proximity to Moscow, especially in political and economic terms, the Central Asian states have had no breathing room of their own.

Therefore, Russia remained powerful because Iran and Saudi Arabia suffered certain foreign policy limitations. Neither Teheran nor Riyadh could compete with Moscow in terms of military, or even economic, means to carve out a sphere of influence. In addition, each state had its own special shortcomings. Although Iran’s location could—in time—mean commercial and transportation links to the southern tier, the country’s international isolation reduced its attraction for states just emerging from three generations of colonialism and political quarantine. Moreover, Teheran’s severe religious order intimidated those accustomed to secularism. Saudi Arabia competed, but its limited population, remote location, and conservative religious traditions made it less than a formidable contender.[695] As important, the northern tier remained a cauldron of real and potential tribulations. Afghanistan’s civil war, which started in the aftermath of the 1979 Soviet invasion, continued, and Tajikistan’s civil war, which began in 1992, was in abeyance. Border problems retained their embarrassing values as well, further compounded by ongoing religious, ethnic, and ideological problems that afflicted the region throughout the decade.[696]

In short, the Muslim populations of the northern tier were unlikely to leave Russia's orbit and rejoin the Middle East anytime soon. The experience of such former colonies, as well as the history of Muslim-Christian relations in this part of the world, supported this conclusion. The hyperbole aside, for 70 years the Muslim republics were Moscow's colonies, and it may prove difficult for them to move away from the imperial center. Moreover, Russia differed in important ways from other European colonizers, having demonstrated a greater willingness to use force to cement closer ties. It should come as no surprise if these intense ties with the former colonies continue for the foreseeable future.

**** Why the Two Systems are Different

As the Middle East witnessed the creation of a modern state system starting immediately after World War I, Central Asia was forcibly integrated into the newly created centralized authoritarian state of the Soviet Union. Therefore, by the time newly independent state actors had begun to emerge in the Middle East, Central Asia was already off-limits.[697] Not surprisingly, political elites in most Central Asian republics were subdued faster than their Slavic counterparts, whereas Middle Eastern elites quickly became preoccupied with the superpower status of the USSR. Under the circumstances, there was little attempt to develop genuine bilateral relations between Central Asia and the Middle East.

Thus, the actual development of the "state" in the Middle East and in Central Asia was quite dissimilar. If the Gulf states consolidated their power and developed competing claims on the loyalty of the population, such was not the case in Central Asia. In many ways, the way Britain and France "re-invented" the political map of the Middle East stood in sharp contrast to the "creation" of Soviet Central Asia. The vulnerability that almost inevitably accompanies the creation of states with small populations and little sense of territorial unity proved especially egregious in the USSR. Smaller Central Asian republics, many with re-drawn internal borders that further separated ethnic populations into non-homogeneous entities, became susceptible to sustained interference by larger neighbors. For example, the recent Russian presence in Tajikistan stood in sharp contrast to the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.[698] Some Tajiks perceived Moscow as a genuine asset—whereas

Baghdad was perceived as a hegemon determined to re-draw the regional map.

The literature concerning transitology, the study of how governments evolve from Communist dictatorship to democracies, may be helpful in understanding why the two state systems were so different. Transitologists argue that the Central Asian states were able to move from authoritarianism to democracy. Where were these phenomena evident in the Persian Gulf? With a single exception— Saudi Arabia—all were former colonies, and, while similar in that sense, many more dissimilarities existed. For example, ethnic diversity stood out as a case in point, a phenomenon that was quelled in Central Asia. The sheer magnitude of diversity in the Gulf region and its correlation with religious, political, socioeconomic, and spatial markers stood in sharp contrast to Central Asian states. Similarly, powerful historical meanings attached to ethnicity, nation, religion, and state (all negative under the Soviet system), as well as the role played by socialist regimes in developing a new national consciousness, further separated Central Asia's unique characteristics. To this list of fundamentals, it is also important to add the development of "Sovietized" elites—institutions and proto-states within the "independent republics"—to appreciate how difficult the proposition facing Central Asia at the dawn of the twenty-first century appears to be. [699]

**** Consequences of Regional Isolation on the Northern Tier

To be sure, the Central Asian republics may be somewhat isolated from the Gulf states, even if the consequences of that indifference—especially for elites—are non-negligible.

***** Impact on Islam

Although external influences from the Persian Gulf could play a crucial role, internal political dynamics among individual Central Asian republics were far more significant. Large-scale Islamic fundamentalist movements, which harbored anti-Western sentiments and sought to achieve political power in

lieu of the current nomenclatura, were unlikely. Importantly, the Hannafi school of Islamic jurisprudence dominated throughout Central Asia, which translated into a way of life rather than any ideological creed.[700]

What few of Central Asia's leaders were willing to acknowledge was that Islam did not stand as an agent of instability. In fact, religion per se did not offer competition, but stood as an alternative to their inability to rule. How Central Asian leaders managed their economies and governed mattered far more than the populations' religious beliefs. As a consequence, in all of Central Asia, the relationship between Islam and the state remained tense, just as it was during Soviet rule. Noticeably, Central Asian leaders and elites remained far more concerned with the task of restricting the potential spread of "radical Islam" than ruling. Just as some Westerners equated "political Islam" with "fundamentalist" behavior, so did Central Asian elites, and unlike the unique Iraqi case—where religion has been used as an adjunct of extreme nationalism—Central Asian officials did not profess similar beliefs.[701] Islam, in Central Asian mainstream society, became a symbol of cultural freedom, not a movement to reject leadership policies.

***** Economics and Trade

Much of Central Asia has still not fully recovered from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of Russia. For over a decade, few became aware of the importance of markets, and many experienced firsthand the negative consequences of centralized systems. In fact, prior to the 1998 Russian economic crisis, relaxed border security allowed merchants who wanted to buy and sell goods to move across the borders of the new Central Asian states without much hindrance. Since 1998, Uzbekistan has intensified border controls, particularly in the most militantly Muslim and economically despondent region in all of Central Asia, the Ferghana Valley.[702] The greater its restrictions on cross-border interactions, the more steeply regional trade seemed to decrease, which, in the process, subverted the economic development of the region. Yet, the Russian economy was closely tied to the Central Asian cotton economy, which further illustrated existing links between Central Asia and Russia.[703] Undoubtedly, the Soviet legacy lived on.[704]

In the event, at least five agreements existed within Central Asia and the Caucasus to facilitate trade—with each other and Russia—and avoid confusion. Likewise, approximately six international conventions have been developed by the United Nations to ease transit through the landlocked countries of Central Asia. If these agreements were fully implemented, trade might run much more smoothly, as virtually every Central Asian republic prefers to trade with the West. Ironically, most have found little interest in the West, opting to fall back upon their hitherto tested and reliable Eastern partners. In the case of Kazakhstan, for example, trade with China increased substantially. Indeed, Shanghai may be said to have become Kazakhstan's major port.[705]

Because of this Eastern outlook, trade between Central Asia and several Gulf states increased. The United Arab Emirates' Ras al-Khaimah airport, for exampie, expanded facilities to accommodate a large number of tourists specifically from the region, who stocked up on electrical appliances and other "white goods," which they flew back on chartered aircraft.[706] Iran, for its part, exported more than $30 million in natural gas, vehicles, textiles, and foodstuffs to Central Asian republics in 1993, triple the figure for the preceding calendar year.[707] Still, these figures were nowhere as impressive as they portended, given the "abundance of resources."

Saudi Arabia continued to push for economic ties with Kazakhstan—even as modest as they seemed—after several failed attempts. In October 1999, over 40 prominent Saudi business leaders visited Astana to discuss bilateral projects.[708] In July 1997, joint meetings between Saudi and Iranian officials occurred in Almaty, then the Kazakh capital, when the two ambassadors stressed progress in economic relations.[709] It was a symbolic passing of the torch to Saudi Arabia. Several months later, Riyadh promised to finance the construction of a diplomatic village in Astana, to host nearly all foreign embassies.[710]

It is also important to note that personal interests often motivated Central Asian leaders. Many preferred the confusion of multiple agreements—to further their own economic and political agendas—which did not necessarily

advance the interests of the area’s populations. Clearly, with the vast majority of that population tied to agriculture and the trading of goods, the implications of declining Central Asian integration, and away from Iran or the Gulf, were ominous.

***** Petroleum

In the second half of the 1990s, international interest in the exploration and production of oil in the Caspian Sea region brought great attention to the oilrich republics of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. In turn, this activity increased the assertiveness of officials in all three republics to move out of Russia’s shadow. At the same time, Washington’s efforts to diminish the historical influence enjoyed by Moscow over the area—by supporting the construction of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, an export oil pipeline that would run through the Caucasus to Turkey, for example—met with approval throughout the area.

Yet, the whole affair remained a doubtful proposition, because the Caspian Sea bonanza may not have been as credible as initially thought.[711] Consequently, the rivalry between Turkey, Russia, and Iran over Caspian Sea mineral resources, and oil and gas export pipelines, weakened the ability of the southern Gulf states to become involved in petroleum economy.[712] Gulf investments in Central Asia could, potentially, produce competition, a proposition that was certainly considered carefully by savvy Gulf merchants. Moreover, both Russia and Iran increased pressure, positing that they must be accommodated in some fashion, for effective and secure regional participation. Under the circumstances, the southern Persian Gulf countries may be left out,[713] especially as several Central Asian states are far more interested in self-sufficiency than exporting crude.[714]

***** Transportation Problems

Starting in June 1996, Iran voiced certain complaints that its abilities to operate fully functional rail operations to and from Central Asia had encountered specific problems. These included travel through a number of

former republics, emerging customs restrictions, mountainous terrain, and areas of instability— including the Ferghana Valley. Moreover, Teheran confirmed that the area's overall infrastructure was in poor condition, and that there was a lack of new investment for repair and maintenance. In fact, the Soviet network could not be used with the Iranian rail system, because of gage differences. Geography played a major role as well, since traffic was routed through desert, steppes, and mountainous regions, all of which required security. In the event, internal conflicts greatly disrupted the Iranian mission.[715] Still, in May 1998, Iran completed the Mashad-Sarakhs-Tedzhen railway, a development that supported claims that the Islamic government could facilitate all transportation requirements between the Persian Gulf and Central Asia.[716] Encouraged by this significant advance, Iran opened discussions on building a canal from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf.[717]

***** Leadership Traits: The Turkmenistan Example

Turkmenistan represented the ideal case that supported cooperation between Central Asia and the Gulf states. Starting in 1990, Turkmen leaders embarked on a concerted policy to reduce dependence on any one country for the transportation of oil and gas resources. Ashkhabad advocated building multiple pipelines, running in different directions—to the north, south, east, and west. Turkmenistan, as one of the most repressive of the successor states of the Soviet Union, and one of the poorest, was not hesitant in this oudook.[718] Yet, Turkmenistan was rich in natural resources, as its known reserves of natural gas placed it fourth in the world—behind Russia, the United States, and Iran—with an estimated six- to eight-billion-ton oil reserve. Still, geography and politics dictated how it conducted its foreign affairs, and the type of inducements it sought to present to international investors.

Bordering on the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Iran, Turkmenistan occupies an important strategic position. That very position, however, makes it vulnerable. With a population of fewer than five million, and a very limited pool of educated individuals, Turkmenistan has been unable to make much economic or social progress since 1991. Its

governmental practices and attitudes have remained largely Soviet in substance and style, particularly in urban renewal projects.[719]

Under the circumstances, and because Turkmenistan has never been a genuine nation, the nomadic tribes that inhabited the area east of the Caspian have not rejected Ashkhabad's rule. There is no tradition of government and no legal institutions, except what has been inherited from an alien colonial power. It was, therefore, not surprising that Turkmenistan was ruled by a president whose authority was not limited by laws. As under the Soviet Union, Turkmen elections and referenda were nothing but public endorsements of the ruler's decrees. Finally, the government perceived any religious organization as a potential threat to the stability of the state. It should be noted that the Turkmen Muslim population in its vast majority was tolerant and showed no signs of wishing to establish a theocratic state on the Afghan or Iranian models. This archetype of state-Islamic relations serves as a model for other Central Asian states that suffer from militant Islamic insurgencies from abroad.

**** Conclusion

The Central Asian region represented a vast potential political, cultural, religious, and economic gain for the Gulf states. Yet, the political and religious turmoil often associated with the region was sometimes considered a serious impediment to the expansion of economic or cultural ties. Three specific factors that rejected Persian Gulf interests were especially noteworthy: the clan system, age-old ethnic conflicts, and religious revivalism or political Islam derived from old cultural links. For the Gulf, these factors complicated or even endangered potential business contacts, sometimes creating protracted conflicts and deteriorating standards of bilateral development and lost opportunities for legal financial gain.

Russia's ability to prevent the emergence of an Islamic country in Central Asia is an important geopolitical concept. Tsarist Russia, the Soviet Union, and its successor have succeeded in suppressing this objective through diplomacy and force. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Russian Ministry of Defense succeeded by building a new security system in the

northern band of the Islamic crescent and expanding Kremlin defense policy in the Persian Gulf. It is only natural for the political Islam represented by non-state actors such as Usama bin Laden to replace official Iranian or Saudi cultural religious links in Central Asia.

Moreover, cultural Islam failed, because of Russia's age-old impact on Central Asia, to absorb the teachings and lessons of the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the more potent late 1990s-early 2000 Afghan Taleban or Wahhabi influence, with its overt challenge to Russian imperial authority for political and spiritual control. Russia was astute enough to recognize that when anti—Central Asian subversive activities in the Gulf countries occurred, including the establishment of international networks of clerics against Russian interests and anti—Gulf policy statements and interpretations among the Central Asian elites, an unpleasant side effect was occurring. The driving force behind these feelings of cultural and religious linkages was that clans, ethnic groups, and religious communities involved in challenging state systems were unique in Central Asia, and alien to Persian Gulf religious and political forces. If some believed that the Soviet Union was the continuation of imperial rule, then Russia in the early twenty-first century behaved like its predecessors without question.

For Iran and Saudi Arabia, Central Asia remains impenetrable on the state level because of Russia's strong pull. Unstable conditions faced by the postSoviet rulers in the Central Asian republics converged with the crisis conditions encountered by the post-Khomeini leadership in Iran and the internal and external threat perception problems in Saudi Arabia. These circumstances led to a growing number of contacts that allowed for the development of an increasingly complex set of economic relationships between Iran and Russia, and not Teheran's northern neighbors. For the most part, Iran's efforts to engage the Central Asian states continued to be a good showing, even if Teheran could not play a major role because of internal pressures. Clearly, Teheran denied the possibility that its involvement with northern neighbors could be anything more than predatory or destabilizing simply because Iran faced huge obstacles in Central Asia.

Likewise, although Saudi Arabia had a good start in Central Asia in both religious and economic affairs throughout the early 1990s, it lost steam

because of its own economic problems and its ability to maintain domestic stability.[720] Instead, non-state Saudi actors took advantage of Riyadh’s weaknesses. Usama bin Laden and the Arab commander Kattab in Chechnya did not help Central Asian leaders accelerate their ties with the Gulf states. Non-state actors in Chechnya, Afghanistan, and the Gulf began to replace official Saudi ability to export Islamic influence, economic assistance, and diplomatic support.

Finally, in the 1990s, Russia and the Central Asian states were more concerned with their respective policies toward each other then toward Iran. In

1997, Moscow began to pursue military coordination in Central Asia, best illustrated by its substantial involvement in Tajikistan. Later, Russia expressed special interest, and provided substantial assistance to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan to fight non-state Islamic actors.[721] Russia was using its intelligence capabilities and new security agreements, similar to the Soviet period, to prevent a full disintegration of its security and intelligence influence.[722] Vis-â-vis the pro-Western GCC states, Russia was keen to ensure that its rapprochement with Iran was not gained at the expense of its political and economic interests in the Arab Gulf states, or offended southern Gulf states’ relations with their northern neighbors. Central Asian republics, despite a strong effort to build new linkages with several neighbors, still find their past, present, and future tied to Moscow.

[688] Russian arms sales of both conventional and nuclear-biological-chemical (NBC) technologies played-—and continue to play—-important roles in the evolving relationships between the Gulf states and their northern neighbors, but the focus here is solely on the Central Asian-Gulf states, with a minimal focus on Russian arms sales behavior.

[689] Carol Henderson, “Grass Roots Aspects of Agricultural Privatization in Kyrgyzstan,” CentralAsia Monitor, number 5, 1993, pp. 29—35. See also Don Van Atta, “The Current State of Agrarian

Reform in Uzbekistan," Post-Soviet Geography 34:9,1993, pp. 598–606.

[690] Kadir Alimov, "Are Central Asian Clans Still Playing a Political Role?" CentralAsia Monitor, number 4,1994, pp. 14–15.

[691] Edward Allworth, "The Cultural Identity of Central Asian Leaders: The Problem ofAffinity with Followers," CentralAsia Monitor, number 6,1993, pp. 29–30.

[692] Eric Hooglund, "Iran and CentralAsia," in Anoushiravan Ehteshami (ed.). From the Gulf to Central Asia: Players in the New Great Game, Exeter, United Kingdom: University of Exeter Press, I994,pp. 114–28.

[693] Mahrdad Haghayeghi, "Economic Cooperation Organization^ Preliminary Assessment," Central Asia Monitor, number 1, 1995, pp. 14–19. The conclusion reached by ECO announced that the discussion and thinking about advantageous oil and gas routes was "a matter for the future." ECO officials did not specify whether they meant the distant or near future, but existing projects still needed technological feasibility studies, and "additional consultations." The main subject of the consultations, understandably, was the lack of financial resources. See Izvestiya, 27 February 1998, p. 2, in "CentralAsia Put Off Pipeline Route Decisions," FBIS-NES, FTS1998O227OO1O47, 27 February 1998.

[694] Daniel Pipes, "The Event of Our Era: Former Soviet Muslim Republics Change the Middle East," in Michael Mandelbaum (ed.). Central Asia and the World, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1994, pp. 48—49.

[695] Ibid. See also Mark Katz, “Emerging Patterns in the International Relations of Central Asia,” CentralAsia Monitor, number 2,1994, pp. 23–27.

[696] Pipes, op. cit.

[697] Philip Robins, “The Middle East and Central Asia,” in Peter Ferdinand (ed.). The New States of CentralAsia and Their Neighbors, New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1994, p. 55.

[698] The putative Iraqi influence in Central Asia has been largely neutralized since the end of the War for Kuwait. In fact, the War for Kuwait shaped conservative Arab Gulf states’ attitudes toward the Central Asian republics because Iraq no longer represented a regional threat. Iran, on the other hand, was perceived as a “destabilizer,” a threat to Gulf security but a necessary regional power to act as a local counter-balance to the northern Gulf. Under the circumstances, turning to Russia presented far better odds, especially if Central Asian leaders did not wish to be dragged into Persian Gulf conflicts.

[699] Valerie Bunce, “Should Transitologists Be Grounded?” Slavic Review 54:1, spring 1995, pp. 125–126. See also Edward w. Said’s Orientalism. The book explores the problems of relying on European historical traditions (including the growth of a Western-based culture, religion, etc.) for understanding the Middle East. Said traced its origins from Hellenistic roots, including the perennial European fear of Islam by the seventh century, the emergence of the “us versus them” ideal through the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the subsequent growth of a discourse in Europe and, later, the United States that placed “the Arab” or “the Muslim” in a second-rate position versus a “much-superior” Westerner. Simultaneously, Said argued that Middle Eastern intellectuals adopted Orientalism, which further solidified the notion of the “evil Arab.” Orientalism, published in 1978, perceived Middle Eastern studies in need of a fundamental overhaul. See Edward w. Said, Orientalism, New York, Random House, 1979.

[700] Richard B. Dobson, “Islam in Central Asia: Findings from National Surveys,” Central Asia Monitor, number 2, 1994, pp. 17–22. See also Mahrdad Haghayeghi, “Islamic Revival in the Central Asian Republics,” Central Asian Survey 13:2, 1994, pp. 249–266.

[701] Shirin Akiner, “On Its Own: Islam in Post-Soviet Central Asia,” Harvard International Review, spring 1993, p. 21.

[702] The Ferghana Valley has been in chaos since before the Soviet implosion. Gulf influence seems to be wholly lacking in addressing the decade-old disorder. The events in Ferghana today seem completely outside the Gulf s orbit of foreign relations. For the evolution of events since 1990, see Theodore Karasik, Azerbaijan, Central Asia and Future Persian Gulf Security, Santa Monica: RAND, 1993. Most of the disputes in the Ferghana Valley focus on land distribution for economic development. See “Unrest In Kyrgyzia,” Central Asia and Caucasus Chronicle 9:3, June 1990, p. 1.

[703] Igor Lipovsky, “The Central Asian Cotton Epic,” Central Asian Survey 14:4, 1995, pp. 529—542; s. Zhukov and o. Reznikova, “Tsentralnaia aziia V mirovoi politike i ekonomike,” Mirovaia ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia (MEMO), December 1994, pp. 26–39.

[704] Nazif Shahrani, “Central Asia and the Challenge of the Soviet Legacy,” CentralAsian Survey 12:2, 1993, pp. 123–135.

[705] Robin Wright, “Beliefs Take a Back Seat to Business as Iran Raises Its Regional Profile,” Los Angeles Times, 1 January 1995, p. 14.

[706] “Those Russians Are Everywhere,” Foreign Report, 1 June 1995, p. 7.

[707] Wright, op.cit.,p. 14.

[708] SPA, 13 October 1999, as cited in “Nazarbayev Receives Visiting Saudi Industry Minister,” FBIS-NES, FTS19991O13OO1965, 13 October 1999.

[709] IRNA, 29 July 1997, as cited in “Saudi, Iranian Officials Hold Cooperation Talks in Almaty, FBIS-NES, FTS1997O٦29OO(1O, 29 ١٠ 399٦.

[710] Interfax, 9 December 1998, as cited in “Saudi Arabia Ready to Finance Building of Kazakh Capital,” FBIS-NES, FTS1998121OOOO463,10 December 1998.

[711] For the optimistic view, see Judith Robinson, “Caspian Export Markets Grow,” Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, BISNIS Bulletin, June 1998, p. 1. For the pessimistic perspective, see Martha Brill Olcott, “The Caspian’s False Promise,” Foreign Policy, summer I998,pp. 95—113; and Amy Myers Jaffe and Robert A. Manning, “The Myth of the Caspian Great Game: The Real Geopolitics of Energy,” Survival 40:4, winter 1998—1999, pp. 112–129.

[712] Suha Bolukbasi, “The Controversy over the Caspian Sea Mineral Resources: Conflicting Perception, Clashing Interests,” Europe-Asia Studies 50:3, 1998, pp. 397414.

[713] Elshan Alekberov, “Despite Political Obstacles, Energy Work Progresses around Caspian Sea,” Oil & Gas journal Special, 15 June 1998, pp. 47.

[714] James p. Dorian, Tojiev Utkur Abbasovich, Mikhail s. Tonkopy, Obozov Alaibek Jumabekovich, Qiu Daziong, “Energy Investment and Trade Opportunities Emerging in Central Asia, Northwest China,” Oil & Gas journal, 15 June 1998, pp. 48–60.

[715] Eqtesad-e Khorasan Economic Weekly, 15 June 1996, in “Pros, Cons of Central Asian Rail Noted,” FBIS-NES,FTS1996\5OOOOlO,35\t 3996.

[716] IRNA, 20 May 1998, in “Iran Offers Transport, Trade Link to Central Asian States,” FBIS-NES, FTSl9980521000275, 21 May 1998. India was one of the first to support such a route. See The Hindu, 21 May 1996, as cited in “Opening of Ancient Links With Central Asian States Viewed,” FBIS-NES, FTS1996O521OOO4O1, 21 May 1996.

[717] Aleksei Baliyev, “Volga Flows into Indian Ocean? Large-Scale Geopolitics—In Our Hands,” Rossiiskaya gazeta, 3 April 1998, p. 11; Aleksei Chichkin, Tatyana Smolyakov, and Aleksandr Shinkin, “Sensation! Sensation? Will the Volga Flow into the Persian Gulf?” 5 August 1996, as cited in “Officials Said Ignorant of Caspian-Gulf Canal Scheme,” FBIS-NES, FTS1996O8O5OOO535, 5 August 1996.

[718] John Anderson, “Authoritarian Political Development in Central Asia: The Case of Turkmenistan,” Central Asian Survey 14:4, 1995, pp. 509–527. See also Shahram Akbarzadeh, “National Identity and Political Legitimacy in Turkmenistan,” Nationalities Papers 27:2,1999, pp. 271–290. Tribalism was given serious consideration as a destabilizing factor in this case. See especially pp. 282–283.

[719] The political and economic impact of the Russian legacy on Turkmen water supplies and distribution illustrated the types of problems Central Asian countries suffered from. See Sarah L. O’Hara and Tim Hannan,

“Irrigation and Water Management in Turkmenistan: Past Systems, Present Problems and Future Scenarios,” Europe-Asia Studies 51:1,1999, pp. 21—41.

[720] Shireen T. Hunter, “Central Asia and the Middle East: Patterns of Interaction and Influence,” Central Asia Monitor, number 6, 1992, p. 14.

[721] Nezavisimaya gazeta, 20 December 1997, p. 3, in “Closer Military Integration in c. Asia Eyed,” FBIS-NES, FTS19971224OOO2O3,24 December 1997.

[722] Theodore Karasik, “Rising Russian Security and Intelligence Objectives in Central Asia,” Central Asia-Caucasus Monitor, 15 April 2000 via wwwcacianalyst.org.

* Part III: Trends In Gulf Affairs

*** Chapter 22: The IE Vision Jot Guif Security

Sultan bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan

Although the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a medium-size power with several regional contentions, it has a keen sense of history and, more importantly, fully understands its anticipated role in the Gulf region. Much is expected from Abu Dhabi as a “State”—especially from Emiratis who look to their leaders to fulfill the legacy that Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan and his fellow rulers set some 30 years ago. Our responsibilities to our citizens are clear and must be satisfied in toto if we are to meet our regional role. That purpose, to foster positive ties with our neighbors and play a moderating

leadership role in the international arena, is not easy to accomplish. But we do not choose to follow the easy path. On the contrary, we choose the difficult course because that gives US the motivation to excel. At times, our intentions and capabilities may seem disjointed, but our vision for Gulf security is certain. Because the Gulf is our home, and allies and neighbors surround US, our ultimate goal is to strengthen existing bonds, and establish closer associations in the few cases where past differences separated US from each other. Abu Dhabi looks at the region with hope, not fear. We intend to increase confidence-building measures to further narrow sociopolitical gaps, all to better serve Emiratis. We owe it to the next generation to set new markers of friendship and cooperation, not just in words but also in deeds.

What Abu Dhabi hopes in its relations with Iran, Iraq, and the other states on the Arabian Peninsula are measured and reciprocal ties, which support mutually beneficial policies. We do not crave territory nor seek to acquire material goods or resources. On the contrary, as Shaykh Zayed has amply demonstrated, we are prepared to share our wealth and resources to achieve regional stability. Still, we are also firmly determined to defend ourselves and our interests—which, hopefully, are identical to those of our allies and neighbors—at all costs, because it is through self-reliance and confidence that we can be good neighbors. Of course, we rely on our allies—both regional and international—to preserve our freedoms, but those associations are defensive in nature and spirit. There is no denying that our region has, unfortunately, experienced two recent bloody confrontations whose legacies will mark all of our societies for years to come.

The Iran-Iraq War and the War for Kuwait are stark reminders of how elusive the search for regional security might be. Nevertheless, we are determined to pursue our objectives no matter how difficult these challenges may be. We are equally determined to find positive language with both Iran and Iraq, the two northern Gulf powers with regional hegemonic aspirations. Our long-term success, or failure, will surely be determined by our abilities to persuade Iran and Iraq to abandon these elusive hegemonic ambitions and to join US in building for the future.

Still, we are under no illusions. Iran is reeling under the unfolding repercussions of the 1979 Islamic Revolution that changed the ideological nature of the area's most populous country. Although President Mohammed Khatami continues to espouse moderate policies that are encouraging and engaging, Teheran's rhetoric outpaces its actions. Naturally, we in the UAE are impressed by President Khatami's desire to extend bridges of cooperation and, toward that end, want to work closely with his administration to help resolve—once and for all— our territorial dispute. Similarly, we intend to establish bridges of friendship with Iraq, especially the beleaguered Iraqi people, who are victims of mistaken policies—both by Baghdad as well as major Western powers who seek to influence President Saddam Hussein by punishing a hapless population—because Iraq is our neighbor and because the Iraqi people are part and parcel of our societies. We must forgive past errors, open new pages, and eradicate the scourge of war from our area. To accomplish those objectives, it is essential that we look at Iraq with a human face rather than the cold and calculating real-politick perspectives that seek to reward the strong and punish the weak.

Finally, the UAE must also concentrate on the Arabian Peninsula by forging even ties with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. As the UAE considers the Arabian Peninsula its natural cocoon, our alliances with fellow Gulf Cooperation Council members are "partnerships-in-peace." Likewise, Abu Dhabi looks to Sanaa with a clear perspective, to include Yemen in the Peninsula's sociopolitical life, even as it has been in it all along.

The UAE can indeed achieve all of these objectives by remaining true to its character and by pursuing the wise policies established by Shaykh Zayed bin Sultan. Our vision is that of peacemakers who are committed to freedom, the pursuit of cooperative ventures, and the establishment of permanent foundations for the next generations ofEmiratis.

**** Key Strategic Aims

The paramount strategic objective of the UAE in the Gulf region is to preserve and protect the country's independence and territorial integrity from regional foes. Toward that end, and while Abu Dhabi looks at its

neighbors with respect, it has no illusions about intentions that run contrary to neighborly connections. In addition to Iran and Iraq, the UAE aims to improve ties with Yemen, and within the GCC. Our recognition that relations can and must be improved implies that they are not ideally suited. In fact, and despite gargantuan efforts made by Shaykh Zayed, problems linger. Some of these deserve careful assessments, and it is up to US to strengthen existing intra-GCC closeness, to better accomplish our objectives.

***** UAE Intentions

Since its inception in 1971, the UAE has fostered two fundamental principles, namely the development of the country's human capital and the wise use of its limited natural resources. Our history defines us and we are aware of the tremendous opportunity that the discovery and exploitation of oil has given US. Yet, as Shaykh Zayed and his fellow rulers understood, without intrinsic human capital, all of that wealth might just as well be left underground. We are dutybound to equip our citizens with the best know-how that we can muster at all costs. Indeed, that is what we are doing, and are committed to for the foreseeable future.

Because the country lacked the human capital to best exploit its resources and build from the ground up, the ﷺ welcomed a huge number of hardworking expatriates from around the world. Their sacrifices and contributions are undeniable and Emiratis are grateful that so many did so much. While most were financially compensated, what is far more important and must be acknowledged, is that the vast majority were separated both from their families and from their countries. These tremendous sacrifices helped the UAE, and every expatriate resident of the ﷺ has his or her name etched in our honor rolls. Equally important, and because we welcomed individuals from so many countries, this international presence influenced our foreign and defense policies.

To be sure, the UAE has pursued an Arab foreign policy agenda because it is an Arab country with established social, cultural, and religious ties with the rest of the Arab world. We never doubted or questioned our intrinsic

credentials. Even if we fell on the periphery of the Arab world, almost on the edge of the Arabian Peninsula, our Arab credentials were impeccable. Starting in 1971, we stood by our brethren in the Levant and, after the 1973 October War between Israel and several Arab states, Shaykh Zayed initiated the selected oil embargo against the United States and the Netherlands. At the time, our aim was to instill a sense of urgency and, in no uncertain terms, to help persuade major Western powers that Arab views deserved consideration. Even if our successes in this respect were limited, long-held attitudes—ranging from the Orientalist perspective to the “missionary” variety—began to change, and for the better. We played a modest role in shaping Arab policies that added value to the Emirates while it enhanced the overall Arab position. The hundreds of thousands ofArab expatriates, who resided in the UAE, certainly played significant roles in our direction, even if we were in total agreement with their perspectives.

Within the larger Gulf region as well, the UAE’s established linkages with Omanis, Pakistanis, Indians, Baluchis, Iranians, and many other nationalities before 1971 certainly guided Emirati leaders’ foreign policies after independence. Our tribal inclinations for tolerance and mutual respect were further enhanced by the many contacts that we have had with our neighbors. Long before the Arab Gulf countries joined into an alliance, Emiratis appreciated the tremendous sacrifices that so many of its residents made in fostering closer associations with their respective states.

***** The GCCAlliance

Given this legacy, it was natural that the six Arab Gulf countries would join ranks in the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981. Although the GCC was constituted to meet the challenges created by the 1979 Iranian revolution, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the 1980 Iran-Iraq War, it was also a natural progression. Going back centuries, Gulf populations shared far more in common than generally assumed. Tribal ties and migrations did not recognize artificial boundaries. Contacts between various communities were ongoing irrespective of what tribal or colonial leaders wished. No matter how determined outsiders were to divide and rule, their reach did not go beyond the surface. Deep-seated bonds that united—and separated—the populations of the Lower Gulf could not be erased.

Still, political necessity brought the six Arab Gulf states together. Prodded by some, and encouraged by others, they embarked on a unique alliance in modern Arab affairs. The GCC states faced clear and specific threats and were determined to address them without hesitation. Much was expected from each member state and even more from GCC leaders. Against some odds, the GCC accomplished a great deal, even if the progress was not always properly measured. The type of political coordination that occurred for the better part of the last two decades was also unique in Arab annals. Because Arab leaders have not publicly revealed their approaches and strategies, the general assumption has been that the GCC was nothing more than a paper tiger, whereas, in reality, the GCC became a stream of political consciousness. Undeniably, the member states held on to their cherished policies and only supported the GCC when it suited them, but on major foreign policy questions, GCC states agreed to preserve the alliance at all costs. GCC leaders learned to trust and, over time, rely on expert opinion as they formulated foreign policy initiatives. In that sense alone, the GCC's accomplishments must rank very high indeed. As far as the UAE is concerned, the GCC proved to be a valuable forum for debate, and while major differences remained, Abu Dhabi perceived the organization as a useful alliance.

If in recent years the UAE failed to gain the GCC's undivided support—regarding its territorial dispute with Iran—Abu Dhabi ascertained that the primary reason for that deterioration was directly related to the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement. Although the UAE supported an overall harmonization with Iran, it preferred a more comprehensive approach, one that would focus on the territorial integrity of every member state. In the event, different interpretations emerged that contradicted previous GCC declarations. Still, the UAE relied on its internal strengths to help resolve its dispute with Iran, without abandoning the GCC mechanism.

***** Iranian Cooperation

Short of the GCC mechanism, the UAE has three basic options to settle its dispute over the Iranian occupation of Abu Musa and the two—Greater and

Lesser—Tunb islands, namely reliance on the International Court of Justice (ICJ), reliance on third party mediation, and direct negotiations. Because direct negotiations and third party mediation proved to be elusive, Shaykh Zayed has repeatedly called on Iranian leaders to seek the IÇJ's intervention, to permanently solve this festering problem. Naturally, the ideal would be for the UAE and Iran to negotiate in full, and reach a mutually satisfactory solution. The UAE is prepared to embark on such negotiations as well as eager to welcome genuine third party mediation efforts. Yet, because Teheran remains adamant and refuses to engage the UAE on an equal footing, it has become next to impossible to decipher a way out. Shaykh Zayed's consensus-driven policy, which is the unanimous policy of the UAE, has emphasized the need for a peaceful settlement and, short of a mutually agreed solution, to rely on the expertise and justice of the ICJ. The UAE will remain optimistic that such a conclusion may indeed be possible and will continuously urge Teheran to reciprocate.

Lest one conclude that the UAE-Iran islands dispute is the only concern between the GCC states and their northern neighbor, it is important to emphasize that the GCC was created, first and foremost, to meet the challenges posed by the 1979 Islamic Revolution and its potential spillover effects on the Arabian Peninsula. Over the years, the UAE, along with several other Gulf states, played a vital role in limiting the spillover effects of the revolution. At a time when Iran was isolated from the rest of the world, and under an economic and military embargo—at least for most of the 1980s and early 1990s—the UAE played the vital role of retaining certain channels open. We encouraged trade—limited as it was—because it was not in the interests of the Gulf states to strangulate Iran. To be sure, the UAE paid a heavy price for that policy, including assorted smuggling activities that drew the ire of the international community, but we did not punish the suffocating Iranian people. As neighbors and fellow Muslims, we simply could not turn a blind eye on their pain, and did whatever we could to help alleviate it. It is, therefore, doubly stressing to find ourselves at different ends of the spectrum.

Still, the UAE hopes that President Mohammed Khatami will welcome Shaykh Zayed's overtures for peace and the settlement of the islands dispute, either directly or through the ICJ. At the end of the day, what matters is to resolve this festering contest, and establish proper bonds with Iran. We genuinely

care about the welfare of the Iranian population and wish to extend our hands in friendship even if we will not surrender one square inch of our national territory. Iran and the UAE have rich historical ties and we must start re-acculturating our respective societies to step away from the xenophobia that allows outsiders to exploit existing differences.

***** Iraqi Cooperation

Just as we could not turn our backs on the distress of the Iranian populace, we adopted and followed a similar approach with respect to Iraq, even if the UAE stood with Kuwait and the rest of the GCC states against Saddam Hussein. Clearly, the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait altered the regional balance of power, which could not be tolerated. It was a foregone conclusion that the UAE would stand with its beleaguered GCC ally. In the event, Kuwait was liberated and Baghdad soundly defeated, even if few Arabs—including Gulf Arabs—rejoiced at the wholesale destruction of Iraqi society, which bore a heavy burden for its leaders' mistakes. After a decade, and at the dawn of the twenty-first century, it is vital that we re-evaluate the current United Nations—imposed policy that is literally choking Iraqis.

Naturally, GCC states' financial assistance to Iraq, which over the years amounted to substantial sums, did not moderate Baathi hegemonic aspirations. Nevertheless, Iraq was and remains of strategic value to the Arab world because it offers geographic depths, provides trained manpower, and controls substantial natural resources, including water and oil. We value Iraq as a determinant factor in Arab affairs. As stated above, the UAE has become a cradle of liberty in the Gulf region, because our varied inhabitants determine the course of its actions. What we clearly object to is stripping any Arabs, including Iraqis, of their religious and political freedoms.

UAE strategic interests require that Iraq be brought out of its current doldrums and be re-integrated in the family of nation-states. While recognizing that the tasks ahead are gargantuan, it is still essential to establish the basis for consultation and cooperation, whenever possible. Every day that Iraq is isolated is a day lost for Arab unity. Every day that Iraq is ostracized is a day that adds to the roster of future opposition forces.

Every day that Iraq is cornered is a day that increases the pain of its population. Our objective is to bring Arabs closer to each other. We value the Iraqi populace and wish to cooperate with it to foster mutually beneficial policies, enhance trade opportunities, and intensify our cultural, educational, and scientific links. In addition to these concerns, our openness to Iraq is also a matter of basic human rights, for it is unconscionable to allow Iraqi men, women, and children to wallow in misery, the way they are through no fault of their own. Future generations ofEmiratis and Arabs will not look kindly on leaders who turned their backs to the sufferings of the Iraqi population, and this too must change, if long-term Emirati interests are to be preserved.

***** Relations with Major Western Powers

Because of well-known Iranian and Iraqi hegemonic aspirations in the Gulf region, eminently displayed by various invasions and occupations, the UAE and its GCC partners turned to key Western powers for security assistance. Over the years, that natural turn of events promoted close ties between Abu Dhabi and London, Washington, and Paris. Although the UAE was served well by such security assistance, it must be clearly acknowledged that Western powers did not miss opportunities to advance their own narrow interests either. For most, access to secure sources of petroleum was the paramount reason for whatever human and material sacrifices they made. There was little attention to local needs, especially before 1990, when the Gulf region fell within the Western orbit of the larger East-West divide. After 1990, Western powers could no longer ignore intrinsic Gulf interests, some of which stood out as peculiarly different. For example, the ٢JA٦ and its regional partners keenly supported the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples, and opposed Washington’s approach in helping settle the Arab-Israeli conflict. Whenever we expressed our views to our interlocutors, chances were excellent that we would be ignored, even if eloquent promises were made. Times have changed and, although our views are still not given the serious attention they deserve, at least they are no longer ignored. In recent years, we have been successful in creating linkages between our security needs and whatever may be on the agenda with major Western powers. Security interests were no longer the purview of an association with a single power, and following in the wise policies of Shaykh Zayed, we adopted a multi-pronged approach to balancing our commitments with the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

This is a fundamental principle of UAE foreign policy, that our strategic interests require cooperation with several allies, and that we are beholden to none. Toward that end, Abu Dhabi has established and supports the development of proper ties with Beijing, London, Moscow, Paris, and Washington. We seek enduring associations even if we realize that states have raw interests. We are beholden to our principles of fair play. And we are committed to basic Arab causes with all the baggage that such support carries. Not doing so would betray our commitments to ourselves and to the larger Arab and Muslim worlds of which we are an integral part.

**** Vision for Gulf Security

To be sure, our cooperative strategic aims have not always been accomplished and, in the process, our vision for Gulf security has not always been applied. A number of extraneous forces pre-determined the extent to which these aims were implemented, including the presence of major powers in the area, and Gulf states' dependence on foreign forces for security. Nevertheless, and despite many shortcomings, the UAE and its GCC partners pursued independent foreign policies—especially after the establishment of the GCC in May 1981. For small and relatively weak states, these convergences proved far more difficult to implement than generally assumed, because conflicting views shaped emerging perceptions.

For centuries, extraneous forces controlled the destinies of the tribal entities that covered the Arabian Peninsula, because the latter were relatively weak. Long-term occupiers included the Ottomans, Portuguese, French, and the British. More recently, American forces established an over-the-horizon presence, and after the 1991 War for Kuwait, a more direct—though United Nations-sanctioned—presence. It is an undeniable fact that all littoral countries, including Iran and Iraq, share specific navigation and exploitation responsibilities within the Gulf. Simply stated, the waterway is our lifeline, and although the UAE and the Sultanate of Oman have alternative accesses to the Arabian Sea, part of the UAE strategic aim focuses on freedom of navigation through it. Abu Dhabi encourages all littoral states to settle their

territorial disputes peacefully and to concentrate on improved trade ties between all concerned.

The UAE and its GCC allies opted to build intrinsic defensive capabilities and deter potential aggressors. Abu Dhabi has no territorial claims on any state and only intends to defend itself from regional hegemons or opportunistic aggressors. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that its first line of defense is the Gulf itself.

***** Defense Policy

To deter regional hegemons and opportunistic aggressors, the UAE has devoted a substantial portion of its financial resources to acquire defense-related weapons systems. Moreover, and especially after the 1991 War for Kuwait, Abu Dhabi signed several agreements with key Western allies to help the country defend its territorial integrity. Even if some of these purchases or defense accords seemed exaggerated, the country's overall position required them. Against some odds, when so little existed on the ground at independence, the UAE managed to establish a basic defense infrastructure. Its citizens found merit in defending the Emirates because most concluded that the UAE was truly their nation even if the concept was recent and still "under construction." Without any illusions, Abu Dhabi realized that transforming seven uniquely defined Emirates into a federated state necessitated serious commitments, and it is to its founding leaders' credit that so much was accomplished over so little time.

It is important to emphasize, once again, that UAE defense policies were only unified in recent years, after the strains of early federation were overcome. Confidence-building measures within the federation finally matured to a level that allowed all of its member states to adopt identical policies. In fact, Dubai agreed to integrate its separate units within the UAE Armed Forces in 1998, further illustrating the major advances that were achieved on this front.

Given these policy formulations, the federal government assumed the full gamut of all its member states' many contentions with regional powers,

including the Abu Musa and the two Tunb islands altercation with Iran, and the variOUS border variances with Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. In other words, and although the Abu Musa and the two Tunb islands were issues of concern to Ras al-Khaimah and Sharjah, Abu Dhabi did not forgo its federal responsibilities. Toward that end, it assumed the leadership mantle, as Shaykh Zayed championed various solutions to reach a peaceful settlement with Teheran. Finally, and after several years of constant negotiations, Abu Dhabi reached an understanding with Oman to negotiate on behalf of the six federation members whose territories touched the Omani border.

While these mutually beneficial steps enhanced our relationships with key neighbors, and while Shaykh Zayed has repeatedly called on Iran to settle the islands dispute peacefully, the UAE required defense alliances with major Western powers to deter any force from endangering our independence. Naturally, that pursuit meant that the UAE would depend on these extraneous forces, even if that dependence carried certain consequences on internal UAE affairs. Emiratis reject most Western powers' so-called Middle East policies and fail to understand how local leaders stand by such naive and shortsighted interpretations. In truth, UAE leaders navigate these waters with the utmost care, to protect their legitimacies while honoring various defense commitments.

***** Foreign Policy

Although we rely on our friends and our allies to provide US with the support and wherewithal required to defend our country, we realize that we must, first and foremost, rely on ourselves. Toward that end, the UAE has forged an independent foreign policy, to better serve its citizens and promote its interests throughout the world. The major principles of that foreign policy are centered around our commitment to freedom, the pursuit of cooperative ventures, and the establishment of mutually beneficial ties, with all.

Naturally, as an Arab country, we strive to coordinate our foreign policy initiatives within a well-defined sphere. Arab concerns are dear to US and we seek to implement what we determine to be in the interests of our nation. Within the Gulf region, more specifically, we are committed to bridging all

existing gaps with Iran and Iraq. We do not crave territory and genuinely seek cooperation with our northern neighbors. We adhere to the principles of mutual interest with all, but especially with our neighbors, because what may affect them could have serious repercussions on our society. Foreign policy coordination within the GCC alliance is even more important because we share so much with our friends on the Arabian Peninsula. It is worth repeating that while GCC states may interpret specific concerns from various angles, our views on fundamental issues are identical. We very much hope that joint foreign policy initiatives that serve all member states will be adopted even if narrower matters linger. Our intention is to strengthen the alliance, and even if periodic disagreements or contradictory interpretations arise, we do not let these deter us from the May 1981 march.

As stated above, we also rely on our Western allies and, toward that end, consider their interests carefully. Britain, France, and the United States, in particular, clearly share in the objective to maintain stability throughout the Gulf region. We are amply aware of how major powers, especially the United States, perceive us and devise foreign policy initiatives that serve specific interests. It is for this reason that we constantly sensitize Washington to the many vagaries of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Shaykh Zayed and his fellow rulers trust that the United States, as well as all of our Western allies, will consider these issues more carefully and reciprocate.

**** Conclusion

UAE leaders are peacemakers and, as repeatedly demonstrated by Shaykh Zayed, our vision for Gulf security is to preserve every state’s interests. Our country harbors no ill will and has no territorial ambitions of any kind. We aim to foster close associations with our neighbors and seek to trade with the rest of the world in an atmosphere of peace and prosperity.

What we strive to accomplish is to provide for the welfare of our people, add value for future generations ofEmiratis, defuse regional tensions once and for all, encourage the creation of wealth both at home and throughout the area, and pursue noble objectives for abundant life, increased freedoms, and augmented happiness. These are not easy to attain and we are aware of the

many dangers looming over the horizon. Yet, we chose to initiate such objectives because Emiratis deserve nothing less. Our history compels US to overcome hardships no matter how strenuous and, as UAE leaders have illustrated since 1971, assume enormous responsibilities. Relying on our people and ourselves, we hold our heads high, as we forge ahead.

*** Chapter 23: The Gulf Cooperation Council: Future Trends

Saif bin Hashil Al-Maskery

The Gulf region has been important to world powers—economically, politically, and militarily—long before the discovery and exploration of oil. In fact, the region was a major transit point for trade from Europe to Asia and Africa that, over the centuries, developed into unique patterns. Portugal, Holland, France, and Britain competed for influence by dominating, at one point or another, the entire region. Still, with the discovery of oil, and starting in the 19605, the Gulfs economic importance increased dramatically. The region gained additional value for key industrial countries—in particular the United States—after 1973, when oil prices rose from $3 a barrel to almost $35. This concrete demonstration highlighted the level of dependence in the clearest terms yet. In turn, industrial countries perceived the region as a “national security” arena, warranting a series of doctrines and assorted policies. As former U.S. president Jimmy Carter declared in 1979, any outside power attempting to gain control of this region would be regarded as a threat to Washington’s vital interests, facing potential retaliation, with force if necessary.

To fulfill specific doctrines, successive American administrations aimed to partially accomplish their objectives—denying the area to outside forces and benefiting from its natural resources—by providing sophisticated arms to several Gulf states that, presumably, would ensure stability and guarantee the free flow of oil at reasonable prices. Yet, this approach backfired, when the Shah of Iran was overthrown in early 1979. Iran, which was regarded by

the West as a major stabilizing force in the Gulf region, became a far greater threat than anyone in Washington or London ever anticipated. Even when the two major Gulf powers, Iran and Iraq, engaged in an eight-year war that stopped in August 1988, few anticipated the economic strangulation that resulted especially for Baghdad. Less than two years later, Iraq invaded Kuwait, which, ironically, ensured a permanent American regional presence. Consequently, Washington, London, and Paris became the arbiters of Gulf security and stability. Together, these two wars provided major powers the justification to adopt specific foreign policy initiatives that did not always coincide with, or best serve, the interests of the Gulf states.

Today, the Gulf states face new challenges to counter not only external threats but, more important, several internal challenges. To their credit, several Gulf leaders have indeed recognized a few notable challenges and have started acting on them, even if the initiatives are slow or sometimes adopted just for cosmetic purposes. How Gulf leaders understand the present situation, and prepare for future challenges, deserves attention if genuine stability is to be secured throughout the region.

**** The Vacuous Pre-1971 Period

Given the legacy of British rule that lasted over a century and a half, it is critical to briefly discuss the consequences of this presence, and to highlight key developments before London withdrew its military forces from the area. Prior to 1971, the region was relatively stable, even though the states and shaykhdoms— as well as the sultanate—on the Arabian Peninsula lacked the amenities of modern countries. There were no schools. There were no hospitals. The economy was dependent on narrow trade activities, mostly pearl diving, and some fishing. At that time, the Gulf countries had no independent political activities worthy of any consideration because of various clauses in so-called treaties of amity signed with Britain. Shortly after the 1952 Egyptian revolution, and the rise of pan-Arabism, a few political movements started to flourish in Iraq, Bahrain, and Yemen.

Iraq, at that time, was not a stable country because of military coups and counter-coups. Bahrain faced various labor disturbances, and Yemen was

very weak, with unending internal tribal wars. In Iran, Prime Minister Mossadeq organized a sustained shake-up, but was ousted in no time. By 1953, Shah Muhammad Reza, who was assisted by the West to become a watchdog in the Gulf, regained his throne. The other Gulf States had political movements in various stages of development, often trained and backed by East European countries in the name of world socialism.

When Britain declared its intention to withdraw from East of Suez in 1968, the region entered into a frenzied search for adequate security, ostensibly provided in toto by London. The 1968 declaration, made as the Labour government of Prime Minister Harold Wilson faced financial catastrophe, was implemented within three short years. Even if Gulf leaders intended to assume their fair share of responsibilities or enter into arrangements with other Western powers, the 1971 military withdrawal created a political vacuum. The region was literally left vulnerable to outside threats. In the event, Iran took the opportunity to control the Gulf, by occupying the UAE islands ofAbu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs. In fact, and partly as a result of earlier Iranian declarations, several Gulf rulers attempted to persuade Britain to delay its withdrawal, offering to financially compensate London. Although the request was couched in appropriate diplomatic language, the offer was genuine because Gulf rulers appreciated their limitations, and because of existing perceptions of the putative Soviet threat to the area. It may be worth recalling that Moscow’s presence in Iraq and South Yemen, themselves revolutionary regimes in their own rights, shaped Gulf rulers’ evolving security perceptions.

As these understandings evolved, Gulf rulers also reacted to the Western—especially American—view that considered the Shah of Iran as a “suitable” partner, to maintain regional stability and protect intrinsic Western interests. Inasmuch as the Cold War divided the world into a bipolar system, Gulf rulers reacted to the great divide emerging throughout the area. They knew that the Soviet Union perceived revolutionary Iraq as an ally—and armed that country with sophisticated weapons—even if the West paid lip service to their legitimate needs. Equally important, Gulf rulers were wary of Soviet support of domestic “political” movements that aimed to destabilize their regimes. Finally, Gulf rulers retained their skepticism of Iran—because of the Shah’s expansionist ambitions—even if they accepted the Shah as a fellow anti-communist monarch with whom they could do business.

The multiplicity of, at times contradictory, views that Gulf rulers held left most of them “unprotected.” What emerged, therefore, were fragile political entities, best exemplified by the 1971 Iranian invasion of the three UAE islands, against which little could be done.

**** The Menacing 1971tö-1979 Period

If the pre-1971 period produced fragile political entities that faced the dual challenges of state and nation building, the next decade underscored the almost obsessive approach to Gulf security that Arab Gulf rulers embarked upon.

In 1968, Baghdad entered into its Ahmad Bakr/Saddam Hussein era, which provided stability in Iraq, albeit through brutal means. Supported by the Soviet Union and several Western powers—including the United States, Britain, and France—Iraq built its armed forces, as well its economy. Although key Western countries first opted to isolate Baghdad—thereby leaving the field wide open to the Soviets—most courted Iraq after the Shah’s throne started to vacillate. Moscow benefited from its prowess, however, by entering into a valuable strategic alliance with Iraq that certainly served its interests well. Simultaneously, this presence in a major Arab state provided the opportunities to pressure Gulf rulers by organizing, training, and financing so-called opposition political movements. Many flourished in various Gulf countries with support channeled via Baghdad and, in time, Aden in the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen.

The decade’s other major development with a clear impact on the Gulf area was the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War. As a direct consequence of this epochmaking confrontation, leading oil producers initiated an embargo against the United States and the Netherlands, specifically to counter the accelerated military transfers approved by Washington to Israel. Within a very short period of time, the price of oil rose from $3 to $35 a barrel, with an immediate transfer of large financial resources to oil-producing countries. In turn, these transfers ereated a large surplus of funds, which helped Gulf

states build modern institutions and sorely lacking infrastructures. In the event, significant expenditures quickly turned the Gulf states into Western “clients,” especially for sophisticated—and expensive—weapons systems.

Within less than a decade, the Gulf states’ large oil and financial reserves altered their positions in the world economy. Ironically the added notoriety, as well as enhanced capabilities—as limited as they were—did not dramatically improve regional stability. On the contrary because the whole international economy was disrupted, Gulf states were perceived as a burden. The entire region became “vital” to the rest of the world.

To ensure their intrinsic interest—a guaranteed free flow of oil at reasonable prices—key Western powers, led by the United States, increased their sales of sophisticated weapons systems: to Iran without much hesitation, and to the Gulf states with some restrictions. The American assistance to Saudi Arabia was a tricky proposition because Washington did not want to upset Israel. This was amply clear during the long and truncated congressional debate over the sale of F-15s and AWACS sentry aircraft, although Riyadh paid for the platforms and committed not to transfer the technologies to third parties. Far more important, Western sales to Iran and Saudi Arabia further isolated Iraq, and encouraged its gradual migration toward the Soviet camp. The 1970s ended with the Soviet invasion ofAfghanistan, placing Moscow less than 500 kilometers from the Gulf region. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union built a strong presence in South Yemen, posing a real threat to the Gulf states.

All of these factors ripened the Gulf states for potential conflicts, nestled between two international superpowers on the one hand, and two regional superpowers (Iraq and Iran) on the other.

**** The Turbulent 1980-ε0-1988 Period

Just before the Shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979, his Western allies realized that they would eventually have to deal with a very independent Peacock Throne were he to remain in power. Simply stated, the Pahlavi

dynasty’s hold on Iran and, indirectly on the Gulf region was powerful. Although the subject of heated debates, it now seems certain that Western elements, if not governments, encouraged opposition forces. By welcoming Ayatollah Khomeini into France, ostensibly on the grounds of human rights concerns, the West provided the austere cleric with a base of operations and quality media coverage of all of his activities. Even if Western governments believed that the Shah, with further assistance from Washington, would be able to contain the growing uprising, few were actually persuaded that returning him to Teheran—as in 1953-would save the Peacock Throne. In the event, Western hesitancy and miscalculations of the Khomeini fervor ensured the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It is important to state without any ambiguity that the 1979 revolution distorted most Western calculations in the Gulf region. In fact, the revolution was perceived as the greatest threat to Western interests in the Gulf, even if later developments would alter this obtuse view. To be sure, the slogans of the new Islamic regime—to export the revolution to the Lower Gulf and, eventually, to the rest of the world—preoccupied many. In time, the revolution was accepted as a genuine domestic Iranian phenomenon, with legitimate aspects.

Still, to placate their miscalculation, Western powers, led by the United States, slowly developed a dual perception of threat by lumping Iran with Iraq in their regional formulations. Given that both countries expressed expansionist ambitions toward the Gulf, starting with the 1980 Iran-Iraq War, the dual approach seemed to function well. Moreover, with significant internal turmoil, it was reasoned that Iraq needed an external foe. As Baghdad did not detect any Western opposition to its choreographed intentions toward Iran—ostensibly to limit the spillover effects of the Islamic Revolution—Saddam Hussein’s regime committed one of several major blunders by invading its large and powerful neighbor.

The Iran-Iraq War lasted a full eight years before Teheran accepted a United Nations Security Council-brokered cease-fire resolution. Because so many events were directly tied to the war, a brief discussion of its three distinct phases is warranted.

1. In the first phase of the war, which lasted from 1980 to 1982, Iraq attacked Iran, voraciously destroying many Iranian border cities. Baghdad gained full control over the 30 kilometer Shatt al-Arab waterway, which it had agreed to share with Iran pursuant to the 1975 Algiers Accord, hastily arranged to end Iranian support to Kurdish separatist movements in the north. Between 1980 and 1982, various reports implied that Washington shared advanced satellite-gathered data with Iraq, ostensibly to “better defeat the Iranian foe.” In response, Iran threatened to close the strategic Straits of Hormuz, by sinking one or more ships that would have strangulated the oil lifeline.

The Gulf states, for their part, felt threatened by the war. Although they had no trust in the belligerents, they nevertheless were obligated to support Iraq financially—and in some instances, logistically—because Arab Iraq was engaged in a conflict with Persian Iran. If the 1979 Iranian revolution motivated Gulf rulers to act, the 1980 Iran-Iraq War provided them with the excuse to allay whatever mistrusts they may have had, to finally act collectively. Hence, in May 1981, Gulf rulers gathered in Abu Dhabi to formally announce the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Importantly, the first heads of state statement—as expressed in the founding charter of the institution—called on all six states to cooperate in all fields (eventually leading to a political unity). Not surprisingly, the language of the charter, and the resolutions and communiques that followed, were intentionally vague. Yet, security matters were the GCC’s primary concern, as the organization’s “efficacy” depended on fears of external threats. In times of peace, the mistrust and sensitivities among GCC states grew, but disappeared during periods of tension. Unfortunately, and because of evolving perceptions, there were no clear collective agendas, nor a shared vision for regional security among all member states. Each Gulf state looked at the GCC from a different angle. Several perceived the GCC as a tool to legalize their statehood. Others concluded that it was as good a platform as any to realize their political ambitions, while still others found it a useful vehicle for economic prosperity. Still, the Iran-Iraq War helped GCC states bring their concerns to the table, even if all of the many concerns that existed in 1981 were still present two decades later.

2. The next phase in the Iran-Iraq War, from 1983 to 1985, witnessed a relative lull in the fighting. Still, skirmishes continued, fueled by various efforts to avoid a settlement. Irrespective of motives, the war provided lucrative opportunities to sell arms and, as a strategic bonus, to weaken both antagonists. Under such circumstances, oil prices should have risen, but they tumbled instead. GCC countries, especially Saudi Arabia, increased their oil production to cover Iraqi and Iranian shortfalls. It was then argued that additional sales were required to meet financial obligations for massive weapons purchases, but in reality the increased production came to mollify American pressure. Washington persuaded GCC producers that lower prices would undermine the Iranian economy, further weakening the Iranian revolution and limiting the spillover effects on the Arabian Peninsula.

Throughout this period of time, and having realized its colossal error, Iraq desperately sought to end the war. As a tactical step, and in yet another mistake, Baghdad targeted Iranian oil installations. Teheran retaliated by launching attacks on Iraqi tankers in the north, thereby initiating the so-called tanker war, which in turn rekindled industrial countries' interest in the conflict.

3. Heavy fighting between the belligerents marked the last phase of the war, between 1986 and 1988. Various reports implied that the United States provided some sort of assistance to both countries—to Iraq because Washington still perceived the Islamic Revolution as a threat, and because of lucrative opportunities in a post-war environment; to Iran to wiggle through the murky Iran-Contra machinations, which promised to free Western hostages in Lebanon. In the event, in August 1988, Iran accepted Security Council Resolution 598 and agreed to a cease-fire.

Throughout this period, GCC states provided substantial financial, political, and logistical assistance to Iraq. In return, Iraq successfully portrayed itself as the defender of GCC states—from Iranian expansionist ambitions—even if Gulf rulers were always wary of President Saddam Hussein. Naturally, GCC financial and political support to Iraq antagonized Iran, whose regional ambitions remained intact.

**** From One War to Another: The 1988-t·-1991 Period

Iraq portrayed itself as a winner in the long and protracted Iran-Iraq War. Millions of Arabs concurred. To be sure, the Iraqi army, straddled with an estimated million-strong population, emerged as a non-negligible force, with more experience than any of its neighbors. As a result of this “legacy,” President Saddam Hussein was expected to play a greater role in the region, even if the Iraqi economy was in ruins. Despite GCC states’ substantial financial support, Iraq demanded additional compensation for the alleged role played to defend them from Iran.

Simultaneously, Western countries, led by the United States, began to express their growing concerns about the world’s “fourth largest army.” This “anxiety” gained additional emphasis after Saddam Hussein’s April 1990 declaration when the Iraqi strongman threatened to destroy half of Israel by using his super-gun. Iraq further hinted that GCC countries, led by Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, were pumping additional oil to purposefully keep oil prices low— thereby undermining the already weak Iraqi economy. Baghdad demanded appropriate financial compensation.

Naturally, this situation was not acceptable to GCC states or leading Western countries, because any control over the lucrative oil reserves of Arabia would mean that almost 60 percent of the world’s oil reserves would be under Iraqi control. Hence, a new tactic was pursued by the West to frustrate Iraq and isolate it politically and economically from the Gulf states. Western powers accentuated the fear of a putative Iraqi takeover of the Gulf states. In turn, these steps enhanced existing tensions between Iraq and various GCC countries, as both sides fell into a trap. Accusations and counter-accusations among them ended in the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, plunging the whole region into a much greater disaster than the Iran-Iraq War had produced. Once again Baghdad miscalculated, since Iraqi officials believed Western countries would turn a blind eye and allow the invasion to proceed unchecked.

Against this most ominous threat, GCC rulers placed aside differences and united to face the aggression. In the months preceding the 1991 War for

Kuwait, Baghdad returned large portions of the Shatt al-Arab waterway to Iran— ostensibly to win Iranian support—but, at very high financial and political costs, Iraq was defeated and ejected from Kuwait in March 1991.

**** The Post-1991 Period

The War for Kuwait established certain concrete truths in the Gulf region that must be acknowledged if future similar tragedies are to be avoided:

First, the dangers to regional states come from within the region. Although the Soviet Union and the United States attempted, at one point or another, to interject the Cold War into the area, the two contemporary and devastating wars were initiated by a Gulf state.

Second, GCC states remained vulnerable to outside threats, whether they originated from Iran or Iraq, as corollary, regional antagonisms accelerated foreign deployments on the Arabian Peninsula, further increasing tensions.

Third, GCC countries cannot protect themselves without substantial foreign assistance.

Fourth, all of the weapons systems that were procured by GCC governments —at substantial costs—did not prevent an actual invasion.

Fifth, GCC states were too politically weak to face the challenges posed by the two regional powers without foreign assistance.

Sixth, GCC countries lost confidence in each other, given fundamental differences on how best to tackle domestic and regional threats. In the event, GCC governments could not react positively to emerging situations, falling back on Western policies that were not always in their best interests. The fact that the United Nations sanctioned the War for Kuwait did not diminish

the veracity of this variable, as subsequent entanglements between Iraq and United Nations inspectors amply demonstrated. While divisions and mistrust existed throughout the Arab world, what distinguished GCC states was precisely the promise that there was far more among them that existed in common than separated them. A full decade after the end of the War for Kuwait, both Iraq and the GCC countries are still paying a heavy price, given that both are relatively isolated from each other, Baghdad is under severe economic sanctions (with devastating consequences for its population), the adjusted real price of oil is at an aH-time low, and GCC states are straddled with considerable financial burdens. Without any regional stability.

**** The Elusive Search for Stability

After the War for Kuwait, GCC states entered yet another stage in their elusive search for regional stability. Three specific outlooks may be identified to analyze this investigation.

The first outlook depends primarily on key Western powers to prevent any Iraqi and Iranian expansionist ambitions from materializing. This is the most realistic outlook because of the balance of international and regional powers in favor of the West. Given that the current international system hovers around a unipolar orbit, regional initiatives will not be encouraged or tolerated with ease. Washington’s so-called dual containment policies—toward Iran and Iraq—fall within this outlook. As clear evidence of the approach, both Iran and Iraq suffer under strict embargoes. For their part, Gulf states expressed a similar position, albeit in different ways, by accepting “security pacts” and “military exercises” with the United States and other Western powers. To be sure, these recent developments marked a sharp improvement in military equipment and training for GCC countries, but Western powers benefited as well because of rapid deployment opportunities for their air, land, and naval forces.

The second outlook is that the security of the Gulf is part of Arab national security. In the post-1991 period, this approach was articulated through a very limited Arab participation, namely by Syria and Egypt. The so-called GCC2 approach was to “reward” Damascus and Cairo for their participation in

the liberation of Kuwait. Given fundamental differences between the Gulf and the Levant, the “Damascus Declaration” is now almost forgotten, except on rare occasions when a shadowy and inconsequential meeting occurs. The reason for this lapse is due to the fact that most signatories have lost the initiative to search for an Arab solution to what ails Arab states. Moreover, not only was the declaration’s timing ill-considered—made at the height of the crisis, when the region was in a state of doubt and insecurity—but it was also shepherded by Americans rather than Arabs. At the time, and since then, both Egypt and Syria pursued their own private agendas, which did not coincide with those of GCC states. Not surprisingly, the GCC+2 outlook caused uneasiness in Iran, which regarded this new Arab alliance as a danger to her putative role in the Gulf region.

The third outlook, though least accepted, is in fact the most realistic because of geographical and historical truths as well as the lessons learned from both wars. This outlook states that the threats come from within the region and that the security of the GCC is the responsibility of the six member states themselves. Oman championed this perspective during His Majesty Sultan Qaboos’ chairmanship of the GCC Security Committee (formed in 1990 after the Kuwaiti invasion). The proposal called for a global security concept that would be based on an independent deterrent capability—an army under a professional leadership. More importantly, the proposal called for the creation of a regional cooperation mechanism to include all Gulf countries. In the event, the proposal was not accepted because of past failures, especially under Saudi leadership, within the modest Dara al-Jazirah (Peninsula Shield) force that is based in Hafr al-Batin, Saudi Arabia. It must be clearly stated that one of the major reasons that the concept was not seriously considered, despite its merits, was due to Saudi Arabia’s keen desire to retain the leadership of the force. There was also the fear of additional financial responsibilities, to be borne mostly by Saudi Arabia, even though the proposal rested on a large Omani constituency.

The dangers of all the above three outlooks are clear. The first tolerates and encourages Western powers to secure their interests in the region without necessarily protecting or serving Gulf states. The danger of dependency on outside forces to provide security does not agree with the fact that the real threat to regional stability comes from within the region. Therefore, the continuous reliance on outside powers actually increases tensions, by

jeopardizing the interests of local populations. Clearly, various social and financial implications exist that make such a continuous reliance extremely costly. One example of this phenomenon is the comparison of Gulf financial reserves before and after the 1991 war. Another is the addition of regular invoices submitted by Washington to GCC capitals for various American attacks on Iraq.

**** Challenges and the Lack of Stability

Against this background, it is criticd to identify the challenges facing Gulf states—as seen by a GCC citizen—to decipher how best to address them and secure effective stability. Two specific types of challenges, internal and external, are identified to better ascertain what needs to هط done.

***** Internal Challenges

Among the more important concerns that face GCC leaders and populations are:

1. Border disputes and differences that have led to mistrust between member states. Lingering disputes, which are periodically resurrected, tend to create a sense of instability that does not endear GCC citizens to each other.

2. Vacillating economic conditions that prevent the development of longterm policies. In the aftermath of the 1974 oil boom period, and the advent of genuine free trade, GCC citizens seek to increase their access to local, regional, and international markets. They aim to eliminate existing restrictions that prevent genuine expansion. The economic structure, which currently depends on only a single source of income—oil—cannot be in GCC citizens’ long-term interests.

3. Fast-rising demographic conditions. Increases in GCC populations, with a high percentage of teenagers with minimal job opportunities, will surely mean severe socioeconomic problems unless such needs are addressed in toto.

4. The quantitative and qualitative demographic differences that should be managed and, over time, addressed honestly. The makeup of populations throughout the region reveals that vast gaps exist between “neighbors.” Iran, Iraq, and Yemen enjoy large populations, compared with much smaller figures for GCC states. Equally important are the large percentages of expatriate workers, especially from Asia, who are a potential security risk because of cultural, political, and socid implications. Outside forces, ranging from international organizations to human rights movements, are pressuring GCC countries to provide their labor pools with political rights. Such developments may well leave serious political, as well as cultural, legacies that could ultimately change the Arab Islamic culture of the region.

5. Education throughout member states that should encourage modernization, substantial economic knowledge, and versatility to allow each citizen to reach his or her full potential.

6. The need for accelerated economic integration, as well as a collective strategy and vision among GCC states, to eliminate narrow and obtuse individual country initiatives.

***** External Challenges

Equally important are the external challenges, which are complex in nature compared with internal ones:

1. The need to recognize that globalization, with its various and evolving conditions, will provide international enterprises far better opportunities than any single GCC entity might be capable of. Therefore, it is vital that GCC states enter the global environment united, to better serve their citizens.

2. Human rights concerns. As alluded to above, leading industrialized countries, especially in the West, are constantly coercing GCC governments to address these matters in haste. While human rights issues are critical, GCC governments and populations cannot be expected to shepherd any policies with the speed or emphasis not of their choosing. It is important to nurture—through education—a sustained effort to have real and effective human rights initiatives.

3. Middle East peace activities, and what they imply as a new map of the region emerges, giving Israel a major role to play in regional affairs. The Gulf states are part and parcel of the Arab world and have a real stake in a just and lasting peace settlement that will not infringe on Palestinian rights.

***** A Future Stability Outlook

Undoubtedly, the lack of a clear collective vision is one of the main reasons why GCC efforts—to achieve regional stability—have not been successful, to date. A successful effort to achieve a fair regional security system necessitates a clear vision, to differentiate between static and dynamic factors and to balance regional and international responsibilities.

Clearly, the chief regional static factor is geography Despite changing political systems, economic conditions, and the formation of alliances, regional geographic units remain the same. For example, while the political system in Iran changed, the country remained intact. Even if its putative alliance with the West was dropped by the Islamic regime, Teheran sought to trade with its neighbors, and beyond. Thus, regional political units require that stability be made in relation to, and in cooperation with, all states. Short of that, any long-term regional stability system will be impossible to achieve.

Moreover, it is also necessary to recognize the ability of GCC countries to play a regional role to achieve such stability, which would not be possible without their full participation. In other words, and while GCC governments

face various internal challenges, nothing prevents them from active participation in genuine and effective regional initiatives to include Iran, Iraq, and Yemen. Naturally, the more GCC countries have confidence in themselves, the more they can contribute to regional stability. Still, it is important to translate this confidence to a clear and collective vision on the basis that every party in the region, irrespective of its political system and the consequences of previous conflicts, carries its responsibility toward achieving peace and security.

The idea of direct and open discussions—with full transparency—between regional countries is of paramount importance in achieving region' harmony and stability. GCC states should not wait for outside powers to come and act as mediators for solving local issues, including critical border disputes, demographic challenges, and joint economic policies. Conflicts between regional countries, such as the islands dispute between the UAE and Iran, or the conflict between Iran and Iraq, can indeed be resolved with direct diplomatic discussions. What are simply required are firm commitments to rapidly translate agreements into tangible realities.

**** Conclusion

Although what follows are not intended to be final positions, an effort is made to raise certain ideas for discussion, to further gel the stability and security concerns identified above. Without a doubt, effective and long-term solutions will necessitate the participation of all Gulf citizens in frank discussions. As discussed above, three specific areas require Gulf states' attention, to bring prosperity and peace in the region.

1. Internal actions within individual states. All Gulf countries are vulnerable to international pressure, as their economies depend on one source of income. Clearly, each GCC state should put far more effort into diversifying its economy. Toward that end, it has to be realized that the private sector has reached a certain stage of maturity, and its leaders recognize their responsibilities. To date, private sector leaders have not been involved in decision making, which affects their performances. In some cases, the public sector acts as a competitor to the private

sector, a situation that is prevalent in several GCC countries. Such practices should stop, to let captains of industry assume their fair share of responsibility for their economies. In turn, private sector leaders should take an active role in whatever negotiation may be under way, including the various applications to the World Trade Organization. In short, the public sector should no longer be a sole player in shaping GCC states' economies, a role that may have been justified three decades ago but is no longer sustainable. By unleashing the private sector to perform at its optimum rate, GCC governments would greatly alleviate the existing burden of "guaranteeing" a job for every citizen. Rather, the onus should be on the individual to take part in the economy, add value, and preserve the state's resources.

Equally important in every GCC country are the critical demographic imbalances due to percentage of expatriate workers in the labor pool. It is a fundamental requirement that measures must be taken to encourage citizen participation in the labor pool, while every effort must also be made to guarantee the social rights of expatriate workers. Moreover, specific policies must be adopted to secure their safety while in the Gulf, and to further encourage spending a greater percentage of what they earn locally rather than transferring huge financial resources out of GCC economies. Parallel to these effects, GCC governments must encourage the flow of human resources among GCC states, and provide equal rights to all GCC citizens. This would encourage the movement of local manpower among GCC countries, thus reducing the reliance on expatriate workforces.

On the political side, a lot needs to be done as well, led by institution building. Parliaments must be elected to exercise a fair share of responsibilities. Existing Shura Councils must be strengthened and their jurisdictions expanded, to allow these nascent institutions a larger and more active role in governing the affairs of GCC states' citizens. Freedom of expression and a free press should not only be guaranteed but also encouraged. These tools in the hands of responsible citizens will ensure that decision makers are performing at their optimum, especially within the bureaucracy, where auditing initiatives must be introduced to eliminate corruption. As important, GCC officials and citizens must welcome the

creation of research centers to harvest the intellectual capital to better serve their respective societies. GCC intellectuals should be encouraged to voice their opinion freely to better serve their societies and leaders.

All of these actions would help to build a strong state where every citizen would feel that he/she is part of the decision-making process.

2. Intra-GCC actions. Similarly, action would be required among GCC states to encourage collective initiatives, because the six member states share far more in common than almost any other regional grouping. Toward that end, there should be concerted efforts to diversify GCC sources of income, by encouraging private institutions to amalgamate. Competition between GCC industries should be lifted. Instead, GCC industries should complement each other, led by petrochemical conglomerates that would coordinate and cooperate to compete internationally. The transport service, including airlines, should also be coordinated and possibly amalgamated to form stronger competition on a worldwide scale. Telecommunication is yet another field in which cooperation and coordination would bring greater benefit to all GCC countries.

On the social side, the free flow of population among GCC countries should be allowed to flourish, with equal rights guaranteed to all GCC citizens. This would truly create equilibrium in the labor force.

As discussed earlier, and despite the wealth they derive from petroleum sales, GCC countries are weak and must cooperate to thrive. Measures need to be taken to bring about confidence and trust among states by eliminating “sensitivities.” These include solving border disputes irrespective of their historical legacies, given that lingering disputes prevent genuine cooperation in so many vital areas.

In short, there should be real transparency among GCC states in all sectors, including the military. It is necessary to have a real defense strategy to defend the region, based on genuine needs, not only on high spending

programs. Coordination on such levels is indeed possible, as GCC military programs, though modest, have demonstrated.

3. Intra-regional. Finally, to ensure genuine regional stability, GCC leaders and populations must recognize both their specific strengths and weaknesses.

Three important neighbors with varying interests in the Arabian Peninsula must be recognized. Iran, the largest in terms of size and population, with its undeniable economic capabilities, has its own ambitions in the Gulf. Iraq, the second largest country, also with its economic strengths, may be currently strangulated but cannot be denied a long-term role—despite a very narrow access to the sea. It has been proven throughout history that every Iraqi government has treated this issue as a strategically vital one. Yemen, though economically weak, has the largest population of any Arabian Peninsula state; its instability would directly affect every Gulf state.

To attain any semblance of prosperity and peace, it is necessary for the GCC to have a common policy to deal with the many challenges it faces. This policy should originate from within the Gulf states themselves, without any third party involvement. All three neighbors—Iran, Iraq, and Yemen—should be greeted and entrusted with a role in regional affairs. Ideally, there should be transparency among the GCC states and the three neighbors, especially in the military sector. The purpose of such open dialogue would be to eliminate any apprehensions that one party might harbor against another. Such open dialogue would encourage the resolution of all border disputes among the eight countries.

To achieve harmony with and the confidence of their neighbors, GCC states must therefore create a new regional entity consisting of Iraq, Iran, Yemen, and the six Arab Gulf states. The emerging entity should first concentrate on economic activities, similar to ASEAN or even the Common Market in its earlier periods. The new regional bloc would dispose of significant financial resources, population, and economic potential and would represent a great market for industrialized economies. In turn, major industrialized powers will

take local needs into special consideration, as they do with the Southeast Asian consortium.

In general, there should be concerted efforts in closing the gaps among the nine regional states, to establish prosperity and stability throughout the region. This task mainly lies in the hands of intellectuals, who will need to have frank and direct discussions to influence decision makers in their respective countries. Delays in starting such debates will further postpone the time when the interests of all nine countries—without the need for external mediators—may be best served. In the end, such an effort will prove to be far less expensive, not only in financial terms but also in terms of human lives.

*** Chapter 24: The Arabian Gulf At The New Millennium: Security Challenges

Hassan Hamdan Al-Alkim

Gulf security has been a major concern for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, Iran, Iraq, and the West, especially the United States. Perspectives on Gulf security, however, have always differed, and while analysts argue that there are three general categories of threat that could disrupt Arabian Gulf oil supplies, the dangers that loom over the horizon are far more serious than generally assumed. To be sure, “the overt use of force by regional hegemons armed with WMD [weapons of mass destruction]; domestic instability and terrorism within the Gulf states themselves; and conflict between regional and outside powers over control and access to the Caspian Basin” are all potential instigators of instability.[723] Yet, the GCC countries themselves, until the 1990–1991 Gulfcrisis, were never united in their perceptions of threats to regional security. Earlier, that is, prior to the 1979 Iranian revolution, they accepted the American perception, and relied on the U.S. security doctrine. Nevertheless, the collapse of the Shah’s regime and the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War, as well as the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, brought the security dilemma to the surface.

**** Regional Security

A specific apprehension of the Iranian revolution inspired greater cooperation between Iraq and the Arab Gulf states, compelling the latter to accept the Saudi perceptions of both external and internal threats. Indeed, the formation of the GCC, as an umbrella for cooperation and coordination of defense and security policies among member states, was seen as the ideal vehicle to fill the power vacuum and maintain the status quo. Yet, the Kuwaiti predicament has presented the GCC states with a new security conundrum. On the one hand, it exposed the unreliability of the Baathist government, while it offset the balance of power in the sub-region, presenting Iran as the most powerful country in the area.

On the sub-regional level, therefore, GCC states faced a triple security dilemma: Iran, Iraq, and Yemen. To be sure, maintaining warm bilateral relations with the three sub-regional states would be the appropriate option, but in fact, relations between the GCC states and both Iran and Iraq have never been stable. Iran's perception of Gulf security is based on the idea that it is the sole responsibility of littoral states. Iranian officials believe that there are three states of importance for any Gulf security arrangement, namely Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. Thus, any arrangement that does not coincide with this perspective would not be acceptable to Teheran, and this, in turn, explains Iran's opposition to the Damascus Accord (or the GCC 2 scheme that purported to invite Egypt and Syria to help defend the conservative Arab Gulf monarchies), as well as all U.S. regional security doctrines.[724]

In the event, a basic element in a post-war security structure was likely to be an improved and expanded GCC force, probably incorporating contingents from Egypt and Syria, to serve as a partial deterrent or trip-wire against future aggression from Iraq or conceivably Iran. Simultaneously, and directly due to the 1991 war, U.S. foreign policy has shifted from paying lip service, to the notion of genuine collective security. As a result, "the Pentagon pays out between $30 billion and $60 billion a year to defend the Gulf, a formidable sum for protecting the import into the U.S. of some $30 billion worth of oil."[725] Importantly, North American and western Europe

respectively import a mere 20 percent and 29 percent of their oil needs from the Gulf, whereas Asia imports a whopping 74 percent. World demand for oil is projected to increase from 71.6 million barrels per day (mbpd), in 1997, to over 115 mbpd by the year 2020. While the Gulf region can meet much of the industrial world's growing demand for energy, such unfettered access requires a modicum of regional stability.[726] Toward that end, Washington proposed several steps to promote stability in the Gulf, including

- improving GCC states' overall defensive capabilities and accelerating the integration of their plans and programs for territorial defense;

- strengthening U.S. military ties with the GCC states;

- maintaining a limited military presence on the Peninsula;

- working with the GCC states to develop a greater role for regional and extra-regional powers such as Egypt, Syria, Britain, and France.

For its part, the Clinton administration proposed a new regional security policy, dual containment, which could just as well be labeled the Clinton Doctrine. Dual containment, ostensibly of both Iran and Iraq, was followed by former New York senator Alphonse D'Amato's congressional resolution that further tightened the economic noose around Iran's neck. As a result of these policies, hardliners in Teheran shrugged off economic stagnation, blaming Washington for all their ills.[727] Ironically, dual containment focuses on both Iraq and Iran, as the main sources of the threat to Gulf security—while nothing is mentioned of Israel—even if the 1991 War for Kuwait militarily neutralized Iraq.[728] Strangely, during his visit to the UAE in October 1999, Secretary of Defense William Cohen stated that Israel posed no threat to the states of the region.[729] Yet several GCC states do not share this American perception.[730] The UAE deputy prime minister, for example, argues that both Iraq and Iran must be engaged. In Shaykh Sultan bin Zayed's own words, "At the end of the day, GCC states are faced with the simple fact that both Teheran and Baghdad are neighbors, even if several of their current policies pose serious challenges."[731]

Still, and despite these measured assessments, Iran continues to pursue a policy of military intimidation toward the GCC countries, all to achieve specific economic objectives. This argument is further substantiated by the fact that Iran's proven reserves amount to about 9 percent of world oil reserves, and 15 percent of world proven gas reserves."[732] By announcing a 12—mile nautical zone, Iran claimed sovereignty over the oil fields on and around various islands that pepper the territorial waters of several Arab Gulf states.[733] It also initiated a $1.7 billion development program on the Iranian side of an oil and gas field that is predominantly under Qatari territorial waters.

These developments notwithstanding, the end of the Iran-Iraq War and Iraq's encroachment on Kuwait provided specific incentives for Teheran to reassess its foreign policy initiatives. In fact, both conflicts played a significant role in Iran's rapprochement with the Arab Gulf states, further accelerated by the May 1997 election of Mohammed Khatami as president. Khatami succeeded in restoring Iran's ties with several Arab neighbors, especially Saudi Arabia, where he paid a state visit in 1999. The AE, though maintaining diplomatic ties with Iran at the ambassadorial level, is the only GCC member state to be left with political differences, due to the latter's 1971 occupation of three disputed islands, namely Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs.[734] Despite this new thinking, Khatami's initiatives did not clear existing ambiguities in Iran's foreign policy.[735] Abu Dhabi holds the view that "Iran poses a significant and growing military challenge to Gulf security. By holding regular military maneuvers in Gulf waters, most of which test Teheran's offensive capabilities, Iran sends the wrong message."[736]

Given these recent developments, and the existing gap between the parties, foreign powers, including the United States, found it easier to act as suppiementary forces to enhance GCC states' intrinsic capabilities. An "over-the-horizon" American presence, and access to local bases, has been agreed to on a bilateral basis between Washington and several GCC countries. In the aftermath of the 1991 War for Kuwait, leading commentators have argued that a more prominent role by Arab states such as Yemen, Jordan, Egypt, Syria, and a rehabilitated Iraq, would be an alternative to total dependence on the West. Moreover, the absence of a stable balance of power in the Arab

Gulf region has also necessitated the integration of Yemen within the sub-regional system, to further enhance GCC states' ability to maneuver. Although Sanaa could not be seen as a supplementary power, it could be part of future arrangements for sub-regional security set-ups. Other alternatives may well include a fourfold security arrangement, to maintain the status quo. Rather than concentrate on a GCC+2 scheme, this arrangement may require a six plus three (6+3) equation that would include the GCC states as well as Iran, Iraq, and Yemen.[737] Under such an arrangement, a genuine equilibrium of power in sub-regional politics may well emerge in the Arab Gulf region. Such a scheme is certainly intended to offset Iran's numerical superiority over individual Arab Gulf states, by creating an Arab axis, but it would also deter Yemen from cooperating with Iraq, or vice versa, if either decided to advance its national interests at the expense of any GCC member state. The proposal here is not to minimize the Arab role in Gulf security arrangements, or to call for isolationism. Rather, because Gulf security and Arab unity are interdependent, a GCC+3 arrangement would meet the needs of all three concentric circles, namely the Gulf circle, the Arab circle, and the international circle.

**** Harmony and Conflict

Gulf states' relations with each other have never been stable. In fact, political interactions have gone through different phases, as the rivalry for hegemony among sub-regional powers—Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia—proved to be a constant irritant to the smaller shaykhdomsd[738] For most, the absence of a regional balance of power inspired policies toward each other, and the outside world. Furthermore, Iran's relations with the Arab states of the Gulf demonstrate the complexity and multidimensional aspects of Arab-Persian interregional relationships. On the one hand, "the connection includes cultural and social ties as well as active and substantial trading links. On the other hand, the relationship faces mutual distrust and misperception."[739]

Among the major determinants that affected the area's harmony was the American "twin pillar" policy that purported to bring Saudi Arabia and Iran into an alliance that would secure the region from outside threats. Nevertheless, the 1979 revolution shifted this balance of power to a Saudi-

Iraqi association that was devised to frustrate the objectives of revolutionary Iran. Saudi Arabia and the states of the Lower Gulf, with the exception of Oman, took sides and supported the Iraqi war efforts against Iran. Most supported Iraq's war efforts both politically and financially. In fact, the GCC states contributed an estimated $200 billion to Iraq, with Saudi Arabia alone assuming the lion's share—a whopping $25 billion.[740] In addition, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia allocated 300,000 barrels of oil per day for Iraq, to compensate for the decline in the latter's exports. Riyadh even permitted the construction of an Iraqi pipeline across the Kingdom to carry 19.5 million barrels a day to the Red Sea to avoid the Iranian blockade.[741]

Although leading Gulf officials maintained that Iraq presented intrinsic value, the GCC-Iraq relationship was valuable but perplexing. As the UAE deputy prime minister, Shaykh Sultan bin Zayed, argued, "GCC states' objectives were clear: support Baghdad because of its intrinsic strategic value and foster ties between Arab Gulf societies and the Iraqi people."[742] In the event, the nascent GCC-Iraq alliance was short-lived, due to the latter's invasion of Kuwait.

Another key determinant was the Iran-Iraq War, which led Saudi Arabia and its neighboring Arab Gulf states to increase cooperation not only for mutual defense and security, but also on a broad spectrum of political and economic issues through the formative years of the GCC. The Iran-Iraq War provided the Arab Gulf states with an opportunity to check the new Iranian "threat" and, simultaneously, exclude Iraq on account of its confrontation. By agreeing to form the GCC at the time they did, member states removed the potential fear of domination that either Iran or Iraq could have exercised on the regional security body. Indeed, GCC states addressed on 21 May 1984 a collective letter to the president of the United Nations Security Council, calling on the latter to shoulder its responsibilities envisaged under the UN Charter, further illustrating the value of their arrangement without either Iran or Iraq.[743] They condemned Iran's provocative acts of aggression and warned against its recurrence. It is interesting to note, however, that the 1 June 1984 resolution condemned the attacks—and demanded that they should cease forthwith—without mentioning Iran by name.[744] On the other hand, the GCC states, out of their desire to keep open channels with Teheran, pursued a dual policy toward Iran. As one observer concluded, "GCC states did not want to abandon all means of contact with Iran, a long-term

insurance policy with their larger neighbor."[745] In fact, the Saudi fear of potential Iranian retaliation against GCC states' oil installations may have even encouraged Riyadh to export refined products to Iran to make up for the shortage of petrochemicals.[746]

It must also be added that Baghdad's preoccupation with the war helped Riyadh nudge the Gulf security organization under its protective umbrella, even if Saudi Arabia had concluded an important "bilateral" agreement with the Iraqi government. In 1989, King Fahd and president Saddam Hussein agreed in Baghdad to delineate the territorial boundaries between the two countries and coordinate various security ties. At the time, this accord was heralded as an epoch-making event, given the paucity of such harmony between the two largest Arab Gulf states. Baghdad, however, unilaterally nullified the agreement after the eruption of the second Gulf Crisis.

Today, territorial problems present the most important contentious issues hindering the development of stronger relations among Gulf states. In part, the region witnessed two devastating wars in the last decade, as testified to by how short-lived the "coalition" between Iraq and the GCC countries was. Kuwait's production of $25.5 billion worth of oil from the disputed al-Rumailah oil field, for example, proved to be one of the major Iraqi grievances in the recent crisis. This concrete illustration further revealed the extent to which ostensibly minor disputes took on gigantic proportions, with devastating consequences. To be sure, the Iraqi-Kuwaiti territorial dispute is a long-standing one, and successive Iraqi governments—ever since the 1920s—have laid claim on the Shaykhdom. Though the Iraqis have consistently laid their claim on historical grounds, the geographical location of both countries played paramount roles in shaping both states' foreign policies toward each other. For all practical purposes, without Kuwaiti territorial concessions, Iraq is a landlocked country. Its outlet to the Gulf is a 26—mile narrow corridor, mostly made of shallow waters that are unsuited for port construction or navigation except for small vessels.[747]

This unsettled border dispute, coupled with the 1989–1990 increased oil production by several Arab Gulf oil-producing countries, prompted the Iraqi government to adopt a hostile posture toward the GCC states. In his 17 July 1990 Revolution Day speech, the Iraqi president blasted Kuwait and the UAE

as American stooges, allegedly for pumping additional crude to keep prices low.[748] Even if this bombastic statement was rhetorical in nature, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990 forced GCC countries to shift their foreign policy orientations from an "alliance" with Iraq to an "alliance" against it. Saudi Arabia was determined not to let Saddam Hussein dictate war or peace in the future. King Fahd, for one, was adamant during the GCC 1990 Doha summit conference, stressing that there could be no "compromise" with Baghdad on the territorial integrity of Kuwait or on political concessions that could be seen as a reward for the aggressor."[749] It must be emphasized that the outcome of the 1991 Gulf War, as well as the UN-orchestrated territorial agreement delineating the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border, does not put an end to this festering territorial dispute. The fact that the agreement was imposed on Iraq carries within itself a proven recipe for failure.

It may also be useful to state that the Iraq-Iran, Iraq-Kuwait, and Iraq-Saudi Arabia border disputes are by no means the only territorial problems in the area. The UAE, for example, has territorial disputes with Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Iran, even if the latter's occupation of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb is the most serious. Ironically, and by failing to reach an arrangement with the UAE over the three disputed islands, Teheran delays the normalization of its relations with Abu Dhabi. Noticeably, Iranian intentions were clarified with the August 1992 Abu Musa encroachment, when Teheran took several unilateral actions. By engaging in such acts, the Islamic government showed continuity with its monarchical predecessor in its claim to be the region's paramount power.

Finally the Bahrain-Qatar territorial dispute was brought to an end. Fortunately, both countries accepted the International Court ofjustice (ICJ) ruling in April 2001. The penultimate chapter of this territorial dispute reflects the new spirit brought about by the new leaders in both Bahrain and Qatar and marks the beginning of a new era in the two countries' bilateral relations. The two Amirs expressed their desires for closer cooperation, exchanged state visits, and established a joint committee—under the leadership of the Heir Apparents—to delineate their borders accordingly. Other positive developments include the settlements of the Saudi-Qatari and Saudi-Yemeni territorial disputes through bilateral negotiations. Oman and the UAE, for their part, are in the process of finalizing pending territorial

differences. Nevertheless, despite recent developments, territorial problems continue to be the major obstacle facing regional integration and security.

Perhaps the most striking illustration of how these unsettled border disputes create an environment of continued political tension is the ongoing regional arms race. Increased defense budgets in every Gulf state provide ample evidence for this trend. Throughout the 1990s, Gulf states imported advanced weaponry, at extremely high costs.[750] Importantly, the United States—despite earlier commitments to freeze military shipments to the Middle East as a whole—ranked ahead of France, Russia, and China in terms of its military contracts.[751] By encouraging these sales, Washington benefits far more than the Gulf states, given the myriad problems in absorbing such sophisticated systems. It is worth underscoring that the direct result of this approach contradicts solemn American commitments to de-militarize the region, and encourages the use of force in foreign policy, which, in turn prompts greater regional instability.

***** The Iranian Challenge

As analyzed above, revolutionary Iran displayed continuity with its monarchical predecessor in its claim to be the region’s paramount power.[752] According to one observer, and despite the great shift from a monarchical to a revolutionary republican system, Iran’s goals in the region have neither shifted nor changed.[753] Moreover, the new Iranian government posed a threat of a different nature to the Arab Gulf states, as it emphasized its commitments to various Shia communities sprinkled throughout the region. It is alleged that several Shia “disturbances” may have been orchestrated from Teheran.[754]

To be sure, Iran’s foreign policies are not minimalist, and continue to be bellicose, “animated by general and diffuse ambition, and ... reactive and opportunistic.”[755] Undoubtedly, the advent of the revolution confronted the Arab Gulf states with new problems: It transformed Iran from a strategic shield to a potential threat and placed the smaller states between two mutually hostile regimes. Other equally distressing activities and policies included:[756]

- Iran’s continued occupation of the islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs;

- Ongoing Iranian programs to develop a conventional military arsenal and to acquire weapons of mass destruction, including the ambition to acquire nuclear weapons;

- Iranian sponsorship of extremist groups and covert operations around the world;

- Iran’s active role in attempting to destabilize Arab Gulf governments;

- Iran’s attempt to dominate the Gulf region as the sole hegemonic power.

To be sure, “the very size and weight of Iran will keep alive fears of a constant ambition to exercise Iranian hegemony in the Gulf,”[757] and in light of Iraq’s uncertain future, Iran’s potential role in Gulf politics cannot be neglected.[758] In the aftermath of the Iraqi defeat, Gulf states in general and the UAE in particular concluded that Teheran was trying to see how far it could push its luck as the emerging dominant regional power. The fear is that Iran, in a bid to establish its dominance over the region, may install Silkworm missile batteries on Abu Musa with which it could control the entrance of the strategic Straits of Hormuz.[759] On 16 November 1996, the former Iranian navy commander Ali Shamkhani acknowledged that Iran had placed missile batteries on the disputed islands.[760] It was also alleged that Iran would use Abu Musa as a base for the three submarines obtained from Russia, to command the entrance of the Gulf. Satellite images of the three disputed islands, however, refuted U.S. allegations that they were militarily fortified.[761] Still, the Iranian military build-up enhances such apprehensions.

Despite GCC states’ accelerated military purchases of sophisticated weapons systems, the Iranian military build-up—and its oft-declared and discussed

policy to acquire a nuclear capability—increases overall suspicion on the Arabian Peninsula. Iran's defense budget for 2000, for example, stood at $7.5 billion, up from $5.7 billion in 1999—a nominal increase of some 25 percent. Official figures indicate that Iran's defense spending has almost tripled since 1993.[762] Although Iran may well be engaged in a re-building policy in the aftermath of its losses during the Iran-Iraq War—when it allegedly lost an estimated 40–60 percent of its military arsenal—Teheran has opted to pursue a 15—year military build-up program with an emphasis on air defenses.[763] The Iranian armed forces personnel in 2000 was around 515,000. An additional 125,000 troops were available within Revolutionary Guards units, with reserves estimated at 550,000.[764] It may be useful to underscore in this respect that both Russia and China, in part responding to the 5.ў. so-called dual containment policy toward Iran, have made a strong bid to restore and expand their involvement in the Gulf sub-region by opening up to Iran.[765] In recent years, Iran thus became capable of producing Russian-designed T72 main battle tanks (MBTs) and BMP-derivative Boragh armored personnel carriers (APCs), under Russian license based on a 1988—89 agreement.[766] The arms-package deal with Russia, signed in 1989, included 200 aircraft, 500 tanks, 5 submarines—carrying sophisticated sonar systerns and specialized mine-laying equipment and up to 24 mines, each with 1,000 pounds of explosive—and patrol boats armed with torpedoes.[767] In a further step, Iran and China concluded, in September 1992, a nuclear energy cooperation agreement under which Beijing undertook to provide a Qinshan-l—type 500 megawatt pressurized water reactor.[768] Moreover, the Pentagon believes that Iran is receiving radar testing devices, navigation and avionics equipment, oscilloscopes, logic analyzers, fiber optic cables, digital switches, high-speed computers, remote sensors, and jet engines, all of which have dual military uses.[769] Some observers have further concluded that Iran obtained missiles of different types.[770] What is important in this respect is that the overall significance of the Iranian rearmament initiatives lies in the fact that Teheran ordered equipment designed to take control of the waterway. Clearly, such a projection of power could enable the Islamic Republic to secure its position as the sub-regional superpower of the Gulf.

The Iranian nuclear program constitutes another controversial issue between Iran and the GCC countries. While some analysts argue that Iran is not in a position to finance a large nuclear project,[771] because of the difficulty in acquiring the necessary technology—and because allegedly it does not have

a sufficient number of scientists—Teheran surely reached the conclusion that it must acquire such weapons at all costs. This conclusion was made even more urgent after the Iraqi defeat at the hands of the UN-sanctioned U.S. led coalition.[772] One can argue that the American policy toward Iran is unworkable. A clear parallel may be drawn with the American containment policy applied over half a century against the former Soviet Union. In the event, the success of that containment policy was due to Soviet domestic factors rather than any other initiatives. While it could be argued that the Soviets were forced to reallocate their resources and heavily invest in the military establishment—at the expense of political, economic, and social development—many other forces were at play as well. Likewise, one could posit that a world economic recession, coupled with increasing demand for oil, the desire for hard currency by the newly independent former Soviet republics, the absence of an effective world government, and the post-war situation in both Iran and Iraq, will also ensure that dual containment will not be effective either.

The hesitation and the lack of leadership demonstrated by the Clinton administration enhance the argument that American policy toward Iran proved to be inappropriate. Leading American analysts have labeled dual containment more of a slogan than a strategy,[773] while others concluded that the policy was a geopolitical gimmick.[774] In fact, dual containment has had a minor effect on Iran’s foreign relations, because the American identification of Iran as one of the chief threats to global security has not prevented leading world powers from developing close ties with Teheran.[775] In 1999, Iran succeeded in nornulizing ties with several Arab Gulf states, European countries and Japan, most of which are U.S. allies that opted to pursue independent approaches. Another reason why U.S. foreign policy has not been successful in addressing its outstanding conflict with Iran —-let alone to make a breakthrough toward it—can be attributed to the duality in Washington’s perception of how to properly handle relations with Teheran. While the Clinton administration sent cooperative signals to the Iranian government, official American statements about Iran were, nonetheless, more frequently tainted with negative attitudinal connotations. While hawkish congressional stances compounded the difficulty with which Washington was contriving a coherent policy toward Teheran, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright seemed to be bridging the gap with Iran. To be sure, the State Department could not ignore the missive that 28 congressmen sent, when they emphasized that “American policy toward Iran should make

significant steps in the direction of supporting democracy and human rights in Iran. In addition, increased potential for instability in Iran should lead US to encourage Iranian opposition forces that are conducive to consolidating stability in the long-run."[776] On the other hand, Madeleine Albright expressed her dovish attitude in a March 2000 address to the American-Iranian Council. She expressed the U.S. administration's intention to relax the unilateral American economic restrictions imposed against Iran on importing certain products, including Persian carpets, caviar, and cashew nuts. Albright further expressed regret that past U.S. policies had been designed to side with Iraq during the latter's war with Iran, and for the U.S.-engineered coup d'etat against Dr. Mohammed Mossadeq to reinstate the Shah in 1953.[777] These were significant admissions that revealed far more than was generally acknowledged.

***** Winds of Change

Democratization and human rights issues acquired significant importance in the post-1990 "new world order." In fact, they came to be the main source of political legitimacy, at least as perceived by the United States. The Gulf states, as part of the global village, could not afford to remain indifferent to the political changes influencing world politics even if democratization presented a further challenge to the regime's security. With the exception of Iran, none of the other Gulf states could be viewed as being "democratic." Whereas Iraq is ruled by a totalitarian regime, Iran seems to be on the road to democracy. Though political parties continue to be controlled, and candidates for official posts are carefully scrutinized in the Islamic Republic, Iranians have the right to elect their representatives and president. The degree of freedom enjoyed in Iran was amply revealed in the aftermath of the 1997 presidential election that catapulted Mohammed Khatami to the highest non-religious post. The choice of Khatami, against the will of the Faqih and the religious establishment—who lent their support to Parliament speaker Ali Akhbar Nateq Nouri—enhanced the argument that Iran was on the road to democracy. In the words of one observer, "Iran's savvy population is taking stands, making demands, and even defying the ruling theocrats."[778] As if it were the icing on the democratization cake, the Iranian parliament approved, in August 1999, a bill limiting the power of the Council of Guardians to exclude candidates for future parliamentary elections.[779] The results of the February 2000 parliamentary elections,

which ushered in a slew of reform-minded candidates, further strengthened this phenomenon.

In contrast, GCC political systems are closed and based on hereditary rule, and while the winds of change seem to have affected the people of the Gulf, they have yet to influence their governments. Since the second Gulf Crisis, Gulf citizens have started to question the “wisdom of their far-sighted leaders,”[780] raise the necessity of political reforms, and encourage more political liberalization. The governments’ responses to such public demands have differed from one country to the other, with some embarking on parliamentary experiences (Kuwait) and other adopting less radical initiatives by setting up consultative bodies (Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE).[781]

Under the circumstances, the prospects for democracy in the GCC states, at least within the coming decade, are not promising. Measures adopted by some governments do not meet the aspirations of the masses. Gulf citizens are not optimistic about a gradual and peaceful transition to a power-sharing form of government because regimes “think only of how to maintain power.”[782] Yet, the decline in oil revenues, as a result of oil market instability and the fluctuation of the price, coupled with the financial and social costs of the second Gulf Crisis, convinced several GCC states to address serious budget deficits. Others assumed debts that, at least in recent memory, were not common. Only the UAE seems to have emerged unscathed by these economic pressures. In this case, the country’s position as the financial power center flows from massive holdings of liquid unofficial overseas assets, rather than from income exclusively generated from oil products. The precise size of these sources of income are not made public, but Western sources estimate that in 1999 the figure hovered around 350 billion, with a return income in the same year around $15 billion.[783] Except for the UAE, therefore, and to cope with mounting deficits, GCC states must either increase taxation, or look for the private sector to assume a greater burden. In both instances, governments would have to concede some of their prerogatives to the private sector, following the well-known adage that there can be “no taxation without representation.” Hence, the source of income that enabled ruling families to deny their subjects basic political rights is slowly “persuading” them to concede to future public demands for political participation. Consequently, it should come as no surprise when major

political and social changes occur that, by definition, may be destabilizing. [784]

Examples of first changes are numerous. Qatar recently experienced an election at the local government level when, for the first time, Qataris were given the right to choose their representatives to the Municipality Council. As a follow-up, the Amir set up a committee to enact a constitution for the country, which would include a freely elected council with legislative powers. The Qatari ruler spoke privately of no other alternative but democratization as the only viable option for future security. Similarly, Bahrain is experiencing a period of transition toward democratization. Likewise, the new Emir of Bahrain, Shaykh Hamad bin Isa, promised to start a new mode of governance based on the principles of democratization and mutual respect for human rights. He pardoned most political dissidents, freed all political prisoners, and called for the creation of elected local councils. The composition of the Bahraini appointed National Council included for the first time a Christian, a Jew, an Indian dissident, and women. In April 2001, a national referendum on the proposed charter was held, marking the beginning of a new era in Bahraini political life. In the event, Bahrainis voted overwhelmingly—by a whopping 98 percent—in favor of these proposed reforms. Consequently, Heir Apparent Shaykh Salman bin Hamad, presided over a 12 member committee to finalize the application of the National Charter by 2003. These epoch-making developments notwithstanding, Bahrain is also experiencing genuine freedom of speech and associations, long denied for various reasons. In the spring of 2001, a human rights committee was also officially "licensed" to operate freely in the shaykhdom. Despite these positive steps on the road to democratization in both Bahrain and Qatar, much remains to be accomplished, with Saudi Arabia carefully assessing and—to date—tolerating the level of liberalization in the smaller Gulf states.

Ironically, and although the Kuwaiti parliament denied women the right to vote, Bahrain and Qatar decided to grant women equal political rights.[785] The UAE, though continuing with its appointed Federal National Council (FNC), recently tolerated for a while a certain degree of media freedom. The new trend rattled a few ministerial cages in the process by allowing the media to "criticize freely."[786] Still, the move was short lived as more than 18 members of the educated elite were denied access to contribute to local newspapers. Indeed, the democratization process in the UAE is slow, and the

government—perhaps because of the country's demographic composition—is reluctant to follow the Bahraini and Qatari approaches. Nevertheless, discussions on the necessity to open up the political system are gaining momentum. Ras al-Khaimah Heir Apparent Shaykh Khaled bin Saqr Al Qasimi called in January 2000 for an elected FNC. It must be pointed out that women in the UAE enjoy almost equal rights and opportunities with men, although there is still room for progress. In the event, the U.S. annual congressional report on human rights praised the way women were treated in the UAE, certainly in comparison to neighboring countries.[787]

Although democracy must find its roots internally, the role played by the United States in the Gulf region easily lends itself to accusations of a double standard on the issue of democracy. Undeniably, the U.S. presence in the area is perceived as a protective shield for GCC political systems. In the past, Gulf regimes relied on the British to secure their survival, whereas today Washington is the guarantor of their destinies. Intentionally or not, the United States is providing these regimes with a security umbrella, rather than helping an evolutionary change toward democratization. Indeed, as several analysts have argued, Washington may well have an extremely limited ability to shape or respond to internal developments affecting Gulf regimes.[788] Yet, the hesitation to encourage democratization may well be designed to prevent Islamist forces from coming to power, on the assumption that they will be against U.S. vital interests in the region. Still, as the only U.S. vital interest in the area is oil, it may be worth repeating that any and all who rule will have little choice but to export the commodity if for no other reason than national survival. This truism notwithstanding, both Americans and Gulf Arabs are victims of false analogies made by the pro-Israel lobby in Washington. It would be unforgivable if America's commitment to democratic principles in the region were in vain. Although leading analysts posit that Washington should adhere to its democratic principles and encourage the development of democratic institutions and practices in the area, the American policy—defending regimes in the Arabian Gulf—is placing American prestige and credibility on the line.[789] Lest one overlook certain basic principles, the lack of accountability, checks and balances, the rule of law, political freedom, and respect for human rights would all inevitably cause domestic instability. One may accurately argue that many of the crises experienced in the region arose because authoritarian regimes did not encourage the steady development of political rights and privileges.[790]

In the end, “constitutional democracy” based on the principles of Shariah (Islamic law) could be seen as detrimental for security and stability for countries in the Gulf sub-region. A real and effective democracy in the GCC states requires the fulfillment of three concentric conditions:

- the redefinition of ties between rulers and the ruled;

- the separation of private and public wealth; and,

- the institutionalization of the democratic process.

The achievement of these goals is not feasible unless these countries undergo a social and political transformation of their governing values. Nevertheless, a reading of current political developments reveals that although democracy may not be realized within the coming decade, it is acquiring a significant importance in GCC states’ political lives, further adding challenges to each regime.

**** U.S. GulfPolicy

The linkage between vital U.S. interests and Arabian Gulf security construed greater American involvement in the Gulf sub-region.[791] The American policy toward the Arabian Gulf is driven by two factors: securing the free flow of oil and ensuring Israeli security. Gulf countries have perceived the American presence in the area differently. While Iran and Iraq view the American presence in the Gulf as a destabilizing factor, GCC states perceived Iranian and Iraqi regional policies as the catalysts that brought American forces into the region to act as their security shield. Following the collapse of the Shah’s regime in 1979, Washington initiated and refined a set of new policies, to further secure its national interests in the Arab Gulf.

To be sure, the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait prompted greater U.S. involvement in the Gulf sub-region when, for the first time, American-GCC security linkages were publicly acknowledged. On 7 August 1990, President George Bush ordered the deployment of U.S. military aircraft and troops into Saudi Arabia, ostensibly to defend it against potential Iraqi incursions. On 19 August, Bahrain and the UAE permitted the deployment of Arab and "friendly" forces on their soil.[792] Within a few weeks, US. allies pledged $54 billion to offset deployment costs, led by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE, which, together contributed $56.9 biHion.[793] Undeniably, the crisis provided the U.S. president with the justification to send American troops to the Gulf and waive the congressionally imposed cap on deliveries ofF-15 aircraft to Saudi Arabia.

Since 1991, Washington has become the first arms supplier to GCC states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. The U.S. adopted a comprehensive approach to strengthening their capabilities as the Bush administration argued that a comprehensive program of well-conceived arms sales would contribute to their stability. The emphasis was on collective action to promote standardization and inter-operability.[794] The US. commitment to enhance GCC states' defensive capabilities is a presumptive indication of the concern for GCC-US. political and military ties. In March 2000, Washington further agreed to the sale of 80 F-16 fighters to the UAE, worth an estimated $6.5 billion.[795] Continuing U.S. arms transfers to the GCC states, however, could well undermine Washington's credibility as it calls for restraint on the part of other arms suppliers to the Middle East.[796] Ironically, the infusion of arms deliveries to Iran, by a variety of exporters, will almost certainly ensure greater instability.

There is no doubt that successive American presidents have reiterated the U.S. commitment to defending Gulf allies. By January 1999, U.S. forces in the Gulf included the U.S. Fifth Fleet, various amphibious vessels with an estimated 27,000 American military personnel, and 126 combat aircraft. In addition, Washington was capable of calling on its naval assets deployed in the Mediterranean and at incirlik Air Base in Turkey.

This overt U.S. involvement in the Gulf presents another challenge for future regional security and stability. While the U.S. military presence invigorated

tensions between the GCC states and their larger neighbors, Gulf analysts have warned that the military deployments could shift into a permanent residence.[797] The strong 5.لا. military presence and the subsidies incurred by local governments, coupled with unstable oil prices and the arms race, limit local resources, affect development, and threaten legitimacy. They also instigate power struggles within ruling families on the assumption that the U.S. will side with those who support U.S. Gulf policy. Following the second Gulf Crisis, Washington became more committed to maintaining the status quo than to promoting democracy in the area. In fact, the U.S. concluded bilateral security and defense agreements with individual GCC states, creating greater dependency on the US. for each regime's security. Consequently, GCC ruling families became more reluctant to accept concessions and introduce democratic measures.

On the global level, the American hegemony over the Gulf area produced wide-range international criticism. The European Union (EU) deplored U.S. Gulf policies and concluded that the "dual containment" policy was dangerous and self-defeating.[798] For their part, the Chinese regarded "dual containment" as a unilateral initiative, and they, jointly with Russia, disapproved of the American military presence in the Gulf.[799] Given the area's resources, and the increasing dependence of leading world economies on Gulf oil, this may well lead to a renewed competition among the main international actors, ensuring further instability.

**** The Israeli Connection

As stated above, the pro-Israel lobby in Washington, aiming at securing greater U.S. commitments for Israeli security, is exaggerating the linkages between the latter's security and American vital interests in the Gulf. As a result, Washington is devoting more resources and time than is required. In fact, the U.S. is taking Israel's side in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and is accused of a double standard. Although the United States is free to pursue its desired policies, its commitments to the Middle East peace process are distorted, precisely because of the influence of a very strong pro-Israel lobby.[800] Notwithstanding this truism, leading analysts have cautioned that "Israeli security, however important, does not represent an extra dimension of U.S. Gulf policy."[801] According to another astute observer, "Europeans blame

the U.S. for making Israel its primary interest in the Middle East, raising serious Arab concerns about U.S. even-handedness."[802]

Given these interpretations, and based on the overwhelming sentiments throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds, few should be surprised that the seenario anticipated in the case of failure (of the peace process) would be a radicalization of Arab politics. An Islamist tendency is currently sweeping the region and will surely gain in strength. Although it may be possible to contemplate a "geometric progression," through a unity scheme between the Islamists and residual pan-Arab nationalists against their political regimes, such a union is not required for serious if not cataclysmic changes. For millions of Arabs and Muslims, regional stability in the Gulf is tightly connected to the progress achieved in the Middle East peace process. The GCC states could not be immune from such political turmoil if such a scenario were to manifest inflicting serious instability throughout the area.

The 1990–91 Gulf crisis caused a change in GCC countries' attitudes toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. Both the stance of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and the American role in restoring Kuwaiti sovereignty inspired permanent changes. These changes were best manifested in their acceptance of the American Middle East peace initiative. They attended the October 1991 Madrid Peace Conference and participated in the various multilateral peace talks. When relations with the PLO became strained, GCC states decided to freeze their annual financial assistance, following the American advice to enlist PLO support. In the event, the ninth round of bilateral peace talks, held in Washington in April 1993, promised to resume financial assistance to the PLO, further illustrating the close cooperation between GCC states and the United States. The Palestinians were wooed back to the peace table.[803] Shortly thereafter, GCC states—except for Saudi Arabia and the UAE—began to relax their boycott laws imposed against Israel. Oman was the first GCC country to start formal contacts with Israel dating back to 1985. Since 1991, relations between the two countries have been promoted to a commercial level. Likewise, Qatar decided to exchange formal commercial ties with Israel, and it was reported that Doha would sell natural gas to Tel Aviv. In fact, and despite regional pressure on Qatar, the latter kept its official contacts with Israel. The Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad bin Jaber Al Thani met, in May 2001, with his Israeli counter part Shimon Peres in Washington, DC. and offered to host a meeting

in Doha between Arafat and Peres to discuss the peace process. Kuwait, for its part, decided to lift the names ofAmerican companies from the boycott list. According to well-placed sources, most of the minesweepers operating after the Kuwait liberation were brought from Israel through Germany. In February 2000, Shaykh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifah, the Bahrain Heir Apparent, spoke of a possible opening of ties with Israel.

Despite the peace agreements concluded between some Arab countries and Israel, and the ongoing negotiations between Syria and Israel, the Arab-Israeli conflict continues to be a further challenge to Gulf security. The linkage between Gulf security and the Palestinian question has multiple dimensions. On the one hand, there is the Israeli threat to the vital installations of the Gulf states. On the other hand, there is the fear that a deadlock on the Palestinian issue could cause Palestinian movements to take subversive action against the Gulf countries.[804] To be sure, Israel includes Saudi Arabia in its strategic attention, as it fears that the Saudi arms build-up could end in unfriendly hands.[805] A well-argued study has concluded that such military wherewithal may well have encouraged Israeli forces “to frequently over-fly the area, occasionally going to such lengths as dropping empty fuel tanks on [Saudi military air fields to demonstrate their capabilities.”[806] In fact, Israel threatened on 26 March 1988 to launch a pre-emptive air strike against the Saudi Silkworm missiles.[807] In turn, the Saudi monarch declared on 8 April that “the missiles do not carry nuclear warheads and they will not be used against Israel.”[808] Riyadh, upon American advice, decided on 26 April 1988 to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, largely to ease Israeli anger.[809]

As these brief illustrations indicate, the outcome of the Middle East peace process would inevitably affect GCC states’ foreign policy orientations. The success of the peace talks would mean that, at least for GCC governments, the conflict is essentially over.[810] On the other hand, the success of the peace talks does not mean simply reaching a peace accord. Rather, it requires normalization of relations in all fields, including the political, economic, and cultural spectrums. In other words, accepting Israel as part of the Middle East region will not be an easy task. This would require changes in both the Arab and Jewish perceptions of each other. Such changes would further require a review of “information” about each other as well as dramatic alterations in textbooks that are replete with erroneous data and

analysis. In short, the requirements are a “peace of cultures” as well as the settlement of festering but manageable disputes.

Simultaneously, normalization might stipulate political discontent among social forces, especially among Islamists and residual pan-Arab nationalists. It would ultimately lead to a radicalization of Arab politics and probably the demise of existing political regimes. In turn, such dramatic developments could bring the peace agreement to a standstill and possibly revoke it. Clearly, the Israeli refusal to concede to Palestinian calls for self-determination ignited the intifada twice, in 1987–1994 and again starting in September 2000. Under the circumstances, Gulf states had few options and, to buttress the Arab position, supported the Palestinian resistance. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE transferred more than 200 billion dollars to the Al-Aqsa Fund. It is now amply clear that Prime minister Ariel Sharon’ s policy of escalation—and Washington’s unequivocal support to Israel—will ultimately affect GCC-US. relations. On May 18, 2001, Heir Apparent Prince Abdallah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud turned down an invitation from President George w. Bush to visit Washington. Likewise, GCC governments are increasingly under pressure to adopt specific measures against the US., for siding with Israel. Arab media sources are, once again, discussing how oil may be used as a strategic weapon.

These developments notwithstanding, and despite the possibility of an eventual peaceful settlement, a taboo would continue to exist, namely the Israeli nuclear capability. It could be argued, however, that, the Israeli nuclear capability would act as a deterrent force to preserve Israeli security and territorial integrity. On the other hand, maintaining an Israeli military superiority would fuel further arms races in the region, justifying radical forces to oppose the putative peace accord.

**** Conclusion

The different challenges facing Gulf security reveal that democratization presents the most important challenge facing Gulf states at the turn of the millennium. Changes in Gulf states’ political systems seem to be inevitable. In fact, it is amply clear that long-term regional security and stability cannot

be fostered through a dependence on foreign powers. Stability is invariably connected to democratization and political legitimacy. Ideas of political participation, democratization, the necessity to reform, and social justice are spreading among Arab Gulf elites. At present, citizen demands for the reduction of ruling-family privileges meet deep resistance, but it is in the interests of the US. to encourage an evolutionary political development throughout the Gulf region. While the Islamist threat to the free flow of oil is a myth—it is an Israeli invention supported by the pro-Israel lobby in Washington—the fact remains that popular demands are based on genuine needs. Future leaders—who come to power as a result of democratization or who evolve and introduce genuine reforms—would still have to sell their oil since there are no alternatives. Thus, a constructive engagement of moderate Islamist forces may well be an alternative option to prevent extremism. At the same time, the U.S. is required to review its Middle East policy and pressure Israel to fulfill its obligations, as well as accept the right of the Palestinians for self-determination to limit growing tensions within allied Gulf societies. By pursuing such policies, Washington will ensure its access to the Gulfs petroleum resources while remaining true to its cherished principles, and at a smaller financial burden.

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*** Chapter 25: Outlook for Iranian-Gulf Relations: Greater Cooperation or Renewed Risk of Conflict?

Shireen T. Hunter

Since President Muhammad Khatami came to power in Iran in August 997:, there has been a noticeable improvement in the character of Iran's relations with the Gulf Arab states, after nearly two decades of intense mutual animosity and acrimony caused by the 1979 Islamic Revolution and its fall-out. The only exception to this general trend has been the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which, because of sharp disagreements over the disputed islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, still has tense relations with Iran. However, this is not an unusual circumstance. Historically, while certain common factors have affected Iranian-Gulf relations, the character of Iran's ties with individual Gulf states has had its own special characteristics. Iran's ties with Iraq are also very tense. Iranian-Iraqi relations have their special dynamics, whose discussion is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, it is impossible to analyze the future of Arab-Iranian relations in the Persian Gulf without accounting for the Iraqi factor.

Notwithstanding tensions with Iraq and the UAE, amelioration in Iran-Gulf relations, and especially Iranian-Saudi links, has been particularly impressive. In view of the legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini's deep aversion toward Saudi Arabia and its leaders, improvement of Saudi-Iranian relations has been a significant development, especially since this policy has had the support of all of Iran's major political factions, including the supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.[811] This means that the improvement in Saudi-Iranian relations need not be contingent on the absolute ascendancy of reformist elements. The first important manifestation of improved Iranian-Gulf relations—and Iranian-Arab relations— was the December 1997 summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in Teheran during Iran's presidency of OIC. A large number ofArab and Islamic heads of state and prime and foreign ministers took part in the conference. Most significant was the presence of Saudi Arabia's Heir Apparent, Prince Abdallah bin Abdul Aziz, because it signaled Saudi Arabia's seriousness to respond positively to President Khatami's declared policy of "tension reduction" (tashanoj-

zadai) and the replacement of a posture of confrontation with that of dialogue, both regionally and internationally.[812]

The next important step was the visit of former president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to Saudi Arabia in February 1998, during which he met with key Saudi leaders. The only discordant note throughout the trip were some antiShia comments made by a Saudi cleric. Rafsanjani also made a side trip to Bahrain. Given the strained Iranian-Bahraini ties since the advent of the Islamic Revolution, this visit was quite significant. Between 1994 and 1996, Bahrain experienced difficult social and political developments, notably agitation by its Shia population. Iran was accused of encouraging and helping these disruptive elements and, according to some, instigating them. Rafsanjani's visit was intended to indicate that Iran was willing to open a new chapter in the two countries' relationship. By agreeing to receive Rafsanjani, the Bahrainis showed their willingness to put ties on a new footing. In view of significant Saudi influence over Bahraini policies, the trip also indicated Riyadh's tacit approval of better Iran-Bahrain ties.

Rafsanjani's trip was the culmination of a decade of slow but consistent efforts by Teheran to improve relations with the Gulf states. These efforts were the outcome of a process, of questioning the wisdom of past policies that Iran underwent, following its defeat by Iraq and the signing of the humiliating ceasefire agreement of August 1988. As a result of this process Iran realized that its ideologically driven regional policies, and its provocative actions and rhetoric against its Gulf Arab neighbors, had calamitous consequences, notably the extensive financial, political, and military support that the Gulf Arabs extended to Iraq during its eight-year-long war, even though Iraq was the aggressor.

After the end of the Iran-Iraq War, Ayatollah Rafsanjani admitted that Teheran had created unnecessary enemies—more by its rhetoric than by its actions, since, as Professor R. K. Ramazani has pointed out, often Iran's bark was worse than its bite. During the 1990s Iran pursued less ideological policies in general toward its Gulf Arab neighbors. For most of the 1990s, however, neither Iran's domestic politics nor regional and international conditions permitted any major breakthrough in Iranian-Gulf relations. Rather, relations were marred by the slow pace of the de-ideologization of Iranian foreign

policy and continued disagreements within the Iranian leadership. Other constraints included sharpening dissension about post-Gulf War security arrangements in the region, especially the role of extra-regional powers, and most notably that of the United States; the continuation of certain Iranian actions, such as the holding of anti-American political rallies during Hajj ceremonies, which were jarring to Saudi sensitivities; the revival of the dispute with the UAE over the three Persian Gulf islands; and growing tensions with Bahrain because of allegations that Iran was involved in anti-government disturbances. The victory of the anti-Saddam Hussein coalition in the 1990–91 Gulf War—by drastically weakening Iraq—followed by the collapse of the Soviet Union, reduced the necessity of placating Iran. Between 1991 and 1994, with progress on the Arab-Israeli peace, prospects for regional cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) also improved, thus further diminishing the urgency for the Gulf and other Arab states to improve relations with Iran.

**** Shifting Political Landscape

By 1996 three major developments had altered the strategic landscape and had caused the Arab states to reassess their policy options, including their approach toward detente with Iran. First, the assassination of the Israeli prime minister, Itzhak Rabin, and the rise to power of Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu set back progress on the Arab-Israeli front because Likud historically has had a less flexible approach toward peace with the Arabs. The slowing of the peace process undermined the credibility of ideas regarding region-wide economic cooperation schemes.

The second development was the growing economic, political, and military cooperation between Israel and Turkey, which has developed into a strategic partnership.[813] This development is potentially threatening both to Iran and to the Arab states. This partnership initially caused serious alarm in Egypt and several other Arab countries. But, Egyptian anxieties later subsided following President Mubarak’s meeting with Turkish president Suleiman Demirel.[814] Jordan is a de facto member of the Turkish-Israeli partnership, and Turkish-Jordanian relations were further cemented by the visit ofjordan’s King Abdallah II to Ankara on 7 March 2000.[815] Whatever the long-term ramifications of the Turkish-Israeli alliance for Iran and the

Arab states, its immediate impact was to enhance their desire for improved relations.

The third development was the coming to power of President Khatami, whose new policy of “tension reduction” provided a more auspicious atmosphere for improved ties with Arab states. The relative thaw in U.S.-Iranian bonds following Khatami’s victory meant that Washington would not oppose better Iran-Arab ties. The assumption of a more significant role in managing Saudi policies by Heir Apparent Prince Abdallah, who is more interested in improving intra-Muslim cooperation, was also a contributing factor.

***** Acceleration of the Pace of Improvement

The second important milestone on the road to better Iranian-Gulf relations was President Khatami’s visit to Saudi Arabia and Qatar in May 1999. Following these visits, the Iranian side was initially eager and optimistic about the speed with which it wanted to ameliorate relations, including in such controversial areas as defense. The Arab side, however, was more cautious. Thus, Saudi authorities, although characterizing Khatami’s visit as very positive, cautioned that time and effort were needed to restore confidence in the relationship. However, by July 2000, Saudi Arabia and Iran were reportedly close to signing an agreement on security cooperation. But Prince Naif, Saudi Arabia’s minister of interior, emphasized that this agreement was aimed at fighting crime, terrorism, and drug trafficking, and should not be viewed as a regional defense pact.[816]

President Khatami’s visit was followed by return visits to Iran by senior Saudi and other Gulf officials. Defense Minister Sultan bin Abdul Aziz—who, according to some reports, was initially lukewarm toward establishing better ties with Iran—visited Teheran in May. Other Gulf dignitaries who visited Iran in 1998—99 included Kuwait’s Heir Apparent and prime minister, Shaykh Saad Abdallah Salim Al Sabah. In the event, Shaykh Al Sabah cut his formal state visit short, because of the death of the ruler of Bahrain. Thus, he made a brief stopover at Teheran airport on 6 March 1999, but the gesture clarified Kuwait’s willingness to further explore the Iranian reconciliation strategy.

Bahrain’s foreign minister visited Teheran in May 1999, when the two countries agreed to exchange ambassadors. There have also been reports that Omani and Qatari leaders intended to visit Iran. In fact, the Emir of Qatar visited Iran in July.[817] The process of Iranian-Gulf reconciliation, however, has not extended to all countries. An especially sour note was the continuation of the frigid and acrimonious relationship between Iran and the UAE, which disapproved of Iranian-Gulf relations before the issue of the three disputed islands was resolved. The ط٨لآ clearly expressed its displeasure to its GCC partners. Reportedly, the ط٨ل٢ foreign minister said that Iranian-Gulf reconciliation would come at his country’s expense; this view was rejected by the Saudi defense minister.[818] In order to prove that what Arab countries view as the UAE’s sovereign rights over the disputed islands would not be sacrificed for the sake of better relations with Iran, the GCC and the League ofArab States (LAS) reaffirmed their support for the UAE’s claim to the islands in various communiques. The victory of Iranian reformists in the February 1999 parliamentary elections was positively received by the Gulf states, on the grounds that this would strengthen President Khatami and would enable him to continue his reconciliation policy. Still, several Gulf states, notably the UAE, have unreasonable expectations about the effects of the reformists’ victory. Even the most liberal parliament would not be capable of relinquishing what Iran considers to be its sovereign rights over the two Tunbs and part of Abu Musa.[819] Yet UAE newspapers, such as Al-Khaleej, opined that for the reformists, “the key test will be whether Iran revises its policy toward the three UAE islands and accepts a political dialogue on the issue.”[820] However, not all channels of communication between Iran and the UAE are closed.[821]

***** A Still Fragile Reconciliation

Recent improvement in the atmospherics of Iranian-Gulf relations, although a considerable achievement after two decades of intense animosity, is still fragile. A return to the high tensions of the first decade of the revolution and the misgivings of the 1990s is unlikely, but the establishment of full trust and the setting up of a solid framework for cooperation between Iran and the Gulf states will take time and effort. Especially important will be the evolution of Iran’s domestic politics, notably whether reformists will be able to translate their popular support into institutional power, thus enabling them to pursue

their conciliatory policy toward their neighbors. In view of the Persian Gulfs special strategic situation, which attracts intense interest by extra-regional powers, the future of Iranian-Gulf relations will also depend on the impact of exogenous forces, which historically have determined the character of Iranian-Gulf relations more than the indigenous dynamics of the Persian Gulf region. Given the U.S. preponderance in the Gulf, the state of U.S.-Iranian relations and the American approach toward Iran’s regional role will be decisive.

In view of the foregoing, it is necessary to analyze those underlying forces before sketching potential courses that Iranian-Gulf relations may follow in the foreseeable future and assessing prospects for cooperation or risk of renewed discord. These underlying forces can be divided into the following categories: (1) factors indigenous to the Persian Gulf region; (2) factors related to the broader Middle East region and its eastern and western peripheries, including the dynamics of Arab-Iranian interaction and the character of intra-Arab relations; and (3) factors related to the characteristics of the international political system and the policies and interests of its principal actors.

**** Indigenous Dynamics of the Persian Gulf Region

Certain specific characteristics of the Persian Gulf region have historically exacerbated the conflictual dimensions of Gulf-Iran relations. In general, they have constituted an undercurrent of suspicion that has made cooperation problematic and, whenever achieved, limited and short-lived. The following are the most significant of these characteristics:

***** Physical Disparities

The Persian Gulf littoral states vary greatly in their size, their population, the magnitude and diversity of their natural resources, and their diverging economic needs. Tables 25.1 and 25.2 illustrate the extent of these disparities. Three countries—Iran, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia—dominate the northern and southern littorals of the Gulf in terms of size and population.

The high percentage of non-indigenous population in some Gulf states is a source of discomfort and a potential security concern as illustrated in Table 25.3. With the reduction in the number of non-Gulf Arabs, this security dimension of non-indigenous populations has somewhat lost its importance. In some of the Gulf states, such as Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and Bahrain, Iranians form part of this non-indigenous population.[822]

Since the movement of peoples and cultures across the Persian Gulf has historically been a two-way traffic, there are also Arab elements on the Iranian side of the Gulf, with the highest concentration in Khuzistan Province. People from the southern coasts could freely travel to Iran and live there without any limits as late as 1945. It was only in the 19505 that Iran introduced border controls in the Persian Gulf.[823] The disparities have had significant implications for Gulf states' security concerns and perceptions of potential threats, and their views regarding the most appropriate national and regional policies. The two largest Gulf states, Iran and Iraq, have favored the development of strong national defense capabilities and have opposed the presence of extra-regional forces. Smaller Gulf states, which, because of indigenous manpower problems, are not capable of creating sufficiently strong national defense forces, have welcomed the presence of friendly extra-regional forces as counterweights to the power of larger regional states.

With the increase in its indigenous population, Saudi Arabia has gradually come to favor a stronger national defense, despite some lingering ambivalence. Following the 1991 Gulf War, King Fahd stated: "We in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have made a decisive decision to immediately embark on expanding and strengthening our armed forces, and providing them with the most effective and most advanced land, sea, and air weapons the world has produced."[824] Nevertheless, even in Saudi Arabia's case, close defense cooperation with major powers remain an important component of national defense strategy.[825]

Table 25.1 Size of Countries

| Country | Size in Sq. Kilometers |

| Bahrain | 620 |

| Iran | 1,648,000 |

| Iraq | 437,162 |

| Kuwait | 17,820 |

| Oman | 212,460 |

| Qatar | 11,437 |

| Saudi Arabia | 1,960,582 |

| United Arab Emirates | 82,880 |

Source: CIA World Fact Book

Table 25.2 Population of Countries

| Country | Population |

| | Nationals | Non-Nationals |

| Bahrain | 629,090 | 227,801 |

| Iran | 65,179,752 | |

| Iraq | 22,427,150 | |

| Kuwait | 1,991,115 | 1,220,935 |

| Oman | 2,446,645 | n.a. |

| Qatar | 18,885 | 542,657 |

| Saudi Arabia | 21,504,613 | 5,321,938 |

| United Arab Emirates | 2,344,402 |

Source: CIA World Fact Book

This fact became quite clear during the Iran-Iraq War, when Iran’s reliance on its larger manpower potential proved no match for Iraq’s more plentiful and modern weaponry. Currently, GCC countries possess more sophisticated weapons and spend more on defense than does Iran. Nevertheless, it is still a fact of international life that smaller and less populous countries feel wary of their larger neighbors. As a large country, Iran has often suffered from this basic characteristic of international relations, when its legitimate defensive actions have generated equally legitimate and understandable concerns among its southern neighbors. In the past the existence of Iranian communities in the Gulf Arab states has caused concern that they might act as a fifth column for Iran, or, as some radical Arab states claimed, try to undermine their Arab character. In the 19605, Egypt’s Nasser claimed that Iran wanted to create another Palestine in the Gulf. Indeed, as pointed out by two keen observers, “the theme constantly emphasized by Cairo was the similarity (explicitly stated) of the Iranian and

Table 25.3 Ethnic Composition of Non-Nationals in Percentages

| | Bahrain | Kuwait | Oman | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | UAE |

| South Asian | 13 | 99 | n.a.{2} | 36 | 20) | 60 |

| Iranian | 8{3} | 4{4} | 1 | 10) | — | 11{5} |

| Other Arab | 10 | 55 | — | — | 6 | 12 |

| Other | 1 | 17 | 27 | 28 | 2 | 3 |

Sources: CIA World Fact Book and from Anthony Cordesman’s calculations.

{2} Cordesman does not cite South Asians for Oman, but according to the CIA World Fact Book, there are Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, and Bangladeshis in Oman.

{3} If it is considered that a good portion of native Bahrainis are of Iranian origin (David Holden, Farewell to Arabia), the percentage of Iranians in Bahrain increases.

{4} In Kuwait, too, some Kuwaiti nationals are of Iranian origin.

{5} Cordesman does not mention any Iranians in the UAE, but according to the CIA World Fact Book, 23 percent of the UAE population is other Arab and Iranian. Since Cordesman puts the other Arabs at 12 percent, this means that 11 percent are Iranians, which is a conservative estimate. According to the CIA World Fact Book, Persian is the second (after Arabic) most widely spoken language in the UAE.

Israeli states, their alleged collusion, and the analogies between Iranian immigration to the Gulf States and the Zionists’ earlier immigration to Palestine. This posed, it was alleged, a threat to the Arabism of the Gulf.”[826]

After the Islamic Revolution, Iranian communities were viewed as a source of subversion. Iran’s efforts to export its revolution, and some Iranian involvement in subversive activities in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia, strengthened these feelings. Thus, during the 19805, a number of Iranians residing in Kuwait were expelled. The significant Arab population in Khuzistan created the misinterpretation in Baghdad that, in case of conflict with Iran, it

would enjoy the support of Khuzistani Arabs. Iraq, however, was sorely disappointed in this expectation. The vast majority of the long-established Iranian communities on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, too, have either supported the established order or been politically quiescent. They did not respond to the Iranian revolutionaries' calls for the overthrow of the Gulf Arab governments.

Therefore, it could be argued that under the right circumstances and with the elimination of other sources of tension, these communities could contribute to Iranian-Gulf reconciliation and cooperation.

***** Disparity in Energy Resources and Economic Needs

Currently, the principal source of wealth in Iran and in the Gulf Arab countries is their energy resources. However, there are vast disparities among them in terms of the ratio of reserves to population and economic needs. Iran's position stands in sharp contrast to that of other Gulf states, including Iraq, as Table 25.4 illustrates. Iran's oil resources are not insubstantial, variously estimated at between 90 and 100 billion barrels, but they are minuscule in terms of size of population, which is still growing, albeit at a slower pace. Therefore, unless Iran reduces domestic oil consumption and revitalizes its fields, it will run out of petroleum resources in two or three decades.[827] Consequently, since the late 19605, Iran's preference has been for an oil pricing policy that would maximize revenues and provide it with sufficient investment funds, reducing dependence on oil through industrialization, while Gulf Arabs have tended to favor lower oil prices.[828]

Table 25.4 Persian Gulf: Proven Oil Reserves. (As of the End of 1997)

| Country | Reserves in Billion Barrels |

| Iran | 89.7 |

| Iraq | 112.0 |

| Kuwait | 96.5 |

| Oman | 5.1 |

| Qatar | 3.7 |

| Saudi Arabia | 261.5 |

| UAE | 97.8

| Total | 666.5 |

Source: BP/Amoco Statistical Review 1999

Countries like Saudi Arabia, with much larger resources and smaller populations, have favored relatively lower oil prices. Saudi Arabia has used this advantage as a means of putting political pressure on Iran. This was the case during 1985–86, when Riyadh used its “oil weapon” as a means to weaken Iran. The impact of these basic differences was quite evident during the latest meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in March 2000, to decide on the timing and extent of changes in production, ostensibly to lower oil prices further. Thus, Saudi Arabia was more willing to increase production sooner, while Iran favored a more limited increase at a later date.

***** Sectarian Differences

The Persian Gulf is also a cultural and religious frontier, with Shia/Iranian elements dominating the northern shores and Sunni/Arabs the southern parts. Two factors complicate the sectarian picture in the Gulf and accentuate its potential for creating discord between Iran and the Gulf Arabs. First, in some Gulf states, notably Saudi Arabia, the dominant creed is the strict Wahhabi school of Sunni Islam, after its founder Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab, which views Shias not merely as misguided Muslims, but as

apostates. The politically disruptive potential of such sentiments became clear during Iran's then—President Hashemi Rafsanjani's trip to Saudi Arabia in February 1998, when, during his visit to the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, the Saudi shaykh called Shias worse than infidels. Rafsanjani left the mosque, but continued his visit—a move that was criticized by conservative newspapers in Iran. They argued that Rafsanjani should have immediately returned home. Some even alleged that powerful circles in Saudi Arabia opposed to the rapprochement with Iran had instigated the shaykh's comments.[829] In return, Ayatollah Khomeini had accused the Saudis of not practicing real Islam, but what he labeled "American Islam." By applying such labels, he and other Iranian revolutionaries have wanted to delegitimize the Saudi leadership, and to question its pretensions to lead the Muslim world and to act as guardians of Islam's holy sites at Makkah and Madinah. Such statements, together with anti-American political rallies during the Hajj, exacerbated sectarian tensions.

Second, most of the Gulf Arab countries have substantial Shia minorities (close to 40 percent in Kuwait); and, in the case of Bahrain and Iraq, Shias constitute a majority. In Saudi Arabia the Shia minority, although relatively small, is concentrated in the oil-rich and economically important Eastern Province. Elements within these minorities harbor social, economic, and political grievances against the ruling elites, a situation that arouses the authorities' mistrust and leads them to view Shias as potentially vulnerable to Iranian manipulation. Indeed, whenever there have been disturbances by Gulf Shias, all the blame has been laid on Teheran's doorstep, and there has been little willingness to admit that Shias in several countries have real grievances. For example, during 1994–96, when Bahrain was faced with widespread political turmoil, despite the involvement of both Shia and Sunni groups in these troubles, Shias were mainly blamed for them. Bahrain's leadership also accused Iran of complicity in these difficulties and alerted U.S. officials. However, many observers have noted that "no proof existed that Tehran supported Hizbollah Bahrain or any other organization trying to overthrow the Al-Khalifas [sic]."[830] It is possible that Iran had a hand in these disturbances, but it could hardly have created them if local conditions had not been propitious. Several foreign observers and diplomats tended to believe that Bahrain's problems had more home-grown roots, and even some Bahraini Sunnis shared demands for political liberalization, the resumption of parliamentary politics, and the need to address grievances regarding their difficult economic and social conditions.[831]

Even in Kuwait, where the Shias are in a relatively better position, many suffer from discrimination.[832] The Iraqi Baathist regime’s anti-Shia policies had begun long before the Iranian revolution. Yet, during the Iran-Iraq War, especially the decisive battle for Basra, Iraqi Shias demonstrated that they were loyal Iraqi citizens.[833] However, it must be stressed that sectarian differences have never by themselves been sufficient to prevent amicable coexistence and even cooperation, when other conditions have been favorable.

***** Arab-Iranian Cultural Rivalry

Cultural competition between Arabs and Iranians has deep and complicated historical roots, although there has also been much mutually beneficial interaction between the two peoples that few are willing to acknowledge. Indeed, during a January 2000 conference in Teheran on the Persian Gulf, one of the Omani participants admitted that “from the historical point of view, rivalry between Arabs and Persians goes back many centuries.”[834] Culture and politics are never totally separate, but with the rise of nationalism, they became particularly intertwined in the second half of the twentieth century. Both Iran and the Arab states experienced a period of intense cultural and political nationalism between the 1930s and the 1970s. The rise of pan-Arabism as a political and cultural ideology aimed at uniting the Arab world, but also with irredentist dimensions, adversely affected Iranian-Gulf relations.

The Persian Gulf, with its unique strategic position and its vast oil reserves, became a special focus of interest for Arab nationalists in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. The result was a growing linkage between the Persian Gulf region and the rest of the Arab world, ultimately leading to the full integration of the Gulf Arab states into the Arab political system. This development had serious security implications for Iran, and wide-ranging, and at times contradictory, ramifications for the nature and pattern of Iranian-Gulf relations.

At one level, anti-Iran activities in certain countries caused tensions in Iran's relations with key Gulf states, such as Kuwait, where the large Palestinian community was highly receptive to Egyptian president Nasser's pan-Arab and antiIran propaganda. At another level, the common threat that radical Arab states in the 1960s and 1970s posed both to Iran and to the Gulf Arab monarchies enabled the latter to put aside their other differences and reach a degree of cooperation on security matters that they might not have otherwise achieved. The best example of such cooperation was that between the Shah of Iran and King Faysal of Saudi Arabia against the common "threat" ofArab socialism and ultranationalism aligned with the Soviet Union.[835]

The growing intrusion of other Arab states into the Persian Gulf region made Iran realize that it did not face merely the regional countries but a much wider Arab world. This fact became clear during the Iran-Iraq War, when all Arab countries—Syria and Libya being the only exceptions—lent their financial and military support to Baghdad. Two consequences have flowed from this reality. First, given the close connection between the Gulf region and the rest of the Arab world, the physical and power disparities between Gulf Arabs and Iran became less significant. Second, Iranian-Gulf relations became more vulnerable to the dynamics of intra-Arab politics, and subject to the requirements ofArab nationalism and Arab solidarity. A recent example of this situation was the 25 March 1998 resolution of the LAS, regarding the three disputed islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs. According to the LAS resolution, "the Arab Foreign Ministers underlined the sovereignty of [the] United Arab Emirates over its three islands." The Council also denounced Iran's occupation of these islands and determined to keep the issue on the agenda of the United Nations Security Council until "Iran ends its occupation and the UAE restores full sovereignty over them."[836]

***** Territorial Disputes

A number of territorial disputes and conflicting claims over various Persian Gulf islands have for a long time been a principal source of discord in Iranian-Gulf relations. The roots of many of these disputes lie in the very long history of Iran, with its many dramatic ups and downs, alternating periods of grandeur and decline, the intrusion of European powers—Dutch, Portuguese

—into the region in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and, most importantly, British colonial policies over a period of nearly 150 years.

A detailed analysis of the historic and other causes of these disputes is beyond the scope of this chapter. Suffice it to say that, at least from Iran's perspective, since the late eighteenth century, the dominant trend has been a steady reduction of Iranian cultural and political presence in the Persian Gulf. Still, it should be noted that the British policy of a "systematic de-Persianization" of the region has played an important role in this retrenchment.[837] Indeed, this was reflected in such actions as closing Persian-language schools in Bahrain, importing teachers from Iraq and Egypt, and preventing the Iranian consulate in Baghdad from issuing identity cards to the large Iranian community residing in Iraq, especially in the holy cities of Karbala and Najaf.[838]

Nothing illustrates Iranian retrenchment in the Gulf better than the challenge posed to the historic name of this body of water. Yet Iran's sensitivity regarding the name of the Persian Gulf is often viewed as proof of its aggressive and hegemonic intentions toward its neighbors, rather than the natural reaction of a country that sees the delegitimation of its presence in a region with which it has interacted for nearly 3,000 years.[839] The de-Persianization effort did not start with the Iranian revolution, or even during the later years of the Shah's rule, when Iran assumed a more assertive posture in the region. While concern over the name of the Gulf may be an irritant, the following territorial disputes have had a more serious adverse effect on Iranian-Gulf relations.

Khuzistan/Arabistan. In the nationalist Arab mythology, after Palestine, two parts of what it sees as the Arab homeland have been usurped from Arabs because of foreign intrigues. One of them is the so-called Arabistan. The following statement made by Iraq's deputy premier and interior minister Salih Mahdi Ammash in 1969 illustrates this line of thinking. According to Ammash, "Iraq has never seriously differed with Iran over the Shatt al-Arab: it is Iraqi territory [emphasis added]. The difference should have been over Arabistan which is Iraqi territory annexed to Iran during the foreign mandate and which is called Ahvaz against the will of the Iraqi people."[840] Throughout the 1970s, Iraq sponsored a number of

so-called liberation fronts, including the Ahvaz Liberation Front and the Arabistan Liberation Front. Baghdad Radio continued to push this theme through its reports from “occupied Arabistan.”[841]

Nor was this perception limited to Iraq. Indeed, even close Arab allies of Iran such as Jordan subscribed to this view. Thus, while the Shah of Iran and the late King Hussein maintained friendly ties, Jordanian schoolbooks showed Khuzistan as part of the Arab world, thus showing that Iran’s relations with the Gulf region cannot be separated from its broader interactions with the Arab world.

Several factors prompted Iraq to invade Iran in September 1980—including the fear of a spillover of the Islamic Revolution—but the belief in the “Arabness” of Khuzistan and the notion that a wrong was done to Iraq by not incorporating it into the new state that came out of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, along with the desire to remedy this perceived injustice, played a significant role in Baghdad’s decision. This belief led Iraq to wrongly assume that Khuzistani Arabs would join Iraqi soldiers against their “Persian oppressors.”

Although the Khuzistan issue is not an immediate problem, it could become one once again, as long as there is no peace treaty between Iran and Iraq. Baghdad has not unequivocally renounced its claim to Khuzistan, and the Arab view is that the region remains a usurped part of the Arab homeland.

Bahrain. Next to Khuzistan, conflicting Arab and Iranian claims toward Bahrain were a major source of discord in their relations until 1971, when Iran abandoned its claim to the island under British pressure, and because it lacked the means either of enforcing its claim by force or of changing the British view.

As a face-saving device, Teheran accepted a referendum carried out under the auspices of the United Nations to determine the will of the Bahraini people. In reality, however, Iran was not consulted on the arrangements for the island’s future. This was in sharp contrast to the activities under way

between Bahrain and other Arab states. Even before the announcement of the British decision to withdraw its military presence, visits were exchanged between Bahraini leaders and other Gulf officials, all of whom, especially Saudi Arabia, pledged their support to Manama. Still, Iran contributed to the failure of various Arab schemes to create a more robust federation in the Lower Gulf. In addition to the shaykhdoms that finally formed the UAE, and left on their own, chances were good that the federation would have also included Qatar and Bahrain. By opposing the latter's incorporation in such a scheme, the federation of nine was reduced to a federation of seven. Nevertheless, the impact of Iranian opposition should not be exaggerated. Rather, differences among the Gulf shaykhdoms, notably Bahrain and Qatar, and the ambivalence, and perhaps even opposition, of Britain and Saudi Arabia to the emergence of a potentially more powerful Arab grouping were the primary reasons for the failure of the more ambitious federal scheme.

In the event, the political and emotional cost of "abandoning" Bahrain has never been fully appreciated by outsiders, since they considered Iran's pretensions for calling Bahrain its fourteenth province something of a sad joke or a sign of the Shah's growing megalomania. Yet, the costs have been heavy, especially in light of events that followed Iran's relinquishing of its claim to the island-state, most notably the physical and political linking of Bahrain to Saudi Arabia. From the Iranian perspective, the building of a causeway linking Manama to Dammam has made it a Saudi appendage. Indeed, at the time, Iran's news media characterized the building of the causeway as "the annexation of Bahrain by Saudi Arabia."[842] Such developments, coupled with the absence of any significant Iranian presence in Manama, intensified the feeling that this loss was another stage in the long process in the Iranian political and cultural retrenchment on all its frontiers, including the Persian Gulf. Meanwhile, on the other side, there is a feeling that Iran is still hankering after Bahrain, and would like to increase its influence there. After the Islamic Revolution, some unfortunate statements were made by a minor religious figure, Ayatollah Sadegh Rouhani, to the effect that he would lead a movement to annex Bahrain unless its rulers adopted an Islamic form of government. Although these comments were immediately repudiated by the Mehdi Bazargan government, they intensified misgivings about Iranian aspirations.[843]

Yet, for Iran, the Bahrain problem as a territorial question is settled, and any effort by Iran to reverse Manama's independence would not only end any hope of Iranian-Gulf reconciliation, but would also subject Iran to severe international pressures, especially from the United States, given Bahrain's importance as the home of the U.S. Fifth Fleet. It would also justify the worst fears of Iran's neighbors about its expansionist nature. Nevertheless, within an atmosphere of reconciliation, and in conjunction with confidence-building measures, it would not be unreasonable for Iran to expect to have a more substantial and legitimate economic and cultural presence in the country.

Troublesome Islands. With the Bahrain issue settled and Iraq incapable of launching another attack on Iran in the foreseeable future to take over Khuzistan, the only remaining territorial conflict that has the potential of delaying, and perhaps even stopping, the process of Iranian-Gulf reconciliation is the Iran-UAE dispute over the three islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs. The roots of this dispute also lie in British imperial policies and their efforts at controlling as many of the Persian Gulf islands as possible, as well as expanding British control in southern Iran. This British policy was prompted by two aspirations: 1) to gain total control of sea approaches to India; and 2) to prevent any risk that Russia might gain a foothold in this region.[844] The Anglo-Iranian crisis over the Tunbs and Abu Musa began in 1903, when the government of India ordered the occupation of Greater Tunb and Abu Musa by and in the name of the Shaykh of Sharjah. According to British Foreign Office documents, the occupation took place in late June and early July in the form of instructions to the Shaykh of Sharjah to hoist his flag there.[845] This British action was clearly taken out of concern for imperial purposes and not out of a belief in the sovereignty of the Shaykh of Sharjah over the islands. Indeed, it is ironic that the action should have taken place under the orders of Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, who in 1892 had produced a map that clearly showed the islands as belonging to Iran. Later, of course, the British tried their hand at historical revisionism.[846]

At any rate, this action created a dispute between Iran and Britain that lasted until 1971. Weak as Iran was, it never abandoned its claim to these three islands. As one Iranian scholar has pointed out, "Britain wanted the islands to belong to the Shaykhdoms more than the Shaykhdoms themselves. For example, in 1939, the Shaykh of Ras al-Khaimah decided to surrender the possession of the Tunbs to Iran, as he thought that they were legitimate

Iranian territory. The British intervened to disallow the move, forcing the Shaykhdom to keep its flag on the island."[847] The need for a solution became more urgent in the late 60s, when Britain decided to withdraw from East of Suez.

Iranian diplomacy in handling the Bahrain and three islands questions was not particularly skillful. At a minimum, Teheran should have insisted on clear and legally binding agreements with Britain on the islands, rather than accepting informal or semi-formal compromises, before settling the Bahrain question and the whole issue of creating a federation out of several shaykhdoms. Iran surrendered its leverage by giving up its claim to Bahrain and by recognizing Qatar's independence. In exchange, it only "repossessed" the Tunbs with tacit British approval. By agreeing to vague arrangements and taking possession of the Tunbs, Iran thus made itself vulnerable to charges of unlawfully occupying Arab lands. In the case of Abu Musa, by contrast, there is at least a memorandum of understanding.[848] This is in total contrast to the resolution of the Abu Dhabi-Saudi Arabia dispute. The British convinced Abu Dhabi to give up its claim to areas coveted by Riyadh so that it could have access to the Persian Gulf. Indeed, Saudi Arabia had made it clear that it would not agree to the formation of the UAE federation without the satisfaction of its demands.[849]

The dangers inherent in the ambiguous Anglo-Iranian arrangements have become clear in the last eight years, as the UAE has launched an all-out campaign against Iran. The event that triggered the latest crisis was the decision of the Iranian authorities in Abu Musa to expel 100 foreigners working for the UAE in April 1992. Iran justified this action on the grounds that the foreigners were involved in espionage and, moreover, that they did not have Iranian visas in their passports. In August 1992, Iranian authorities refused to allow foreigners without Iranian visas to enter the island, thus forcing a UAE vessel to turn back.[850]

The Iranian foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, tried to soothe the UAE's concerns and attributed the Iranian actions to junior officials. Teheran also offered to engage in bilateral negotiations to untangle any differences and to clarify procedures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.[851] Still, Iran was adamant about its sovereign rights over the islands. In the event, the

UAE seized on these incidents to reopen the whole issue of the islands, and brought the question to the United Nations.[852] Some Arab countries, including Egypt, became involved in the controversy as well. Radio Cairo compared Iran’s actions to the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Western media outlets adopted a similar line, as demonstrated by the NewYork Timesر which maintained that “Abu Musa is the largest of the three islands belonging to the Emirates occupied by Iranian troops in 1971,” thus implying that Iran should give them up.[853] Several Iranian scholars have maintained that the Bush administration supported the UAE’s claim.[854] This would not be surprising, because it fits well within the overall hardening of the U.S. position toward Iran, which began under the Bush administration. Although the worst fears of a possible military confrontation have not materialized, the UAE has maintained its stand. Currently, it claims that all ofAbu Musa’s inhabitants are Arab and, moreover, that Iran is building underground military fortifications on the island.[855]

Given the strength of feelings of both sides, the risk of military conflict should not be dismissed. At the very least, serious Iran-UAE tensions would put severe limits on the extent of Iranian-Gulf reconciliation and the stabilization of the region. Already the UAE has begun to improve its ties with Iraq in order to counter Iran’s reconciliation with the Gulf states.[856] Moreover, this issue could be manipulated as justification for a more severe punitive policy toward Iran, such as military strikes against key installations.

**** Forces Related to the Broader Middle East Region and Its Periphery

The foregoing has illustrated that, historically, forces and dynamics exogenous to the region have affected Iranian-Gulf relations. In particular, these ties were affected by the dynamics of intra-Arab politics and the Arab-Israeli conflict, including, since 1991, improved prospects for Arab-Israeli peace. Gulf Arab states’ energy resources had since the 19505 made them a focus of attention and a target of envy for more powerful, but economically less endowed, Arab countries. The dominant Arab nationalist view in the period from the 1950s to the 19705 was that the oil resources of the Persian Gulf Arabs belonged to the whole of the Arab nation and should be equally shared among it.[857] Gamal Abdel Nasser’s efforts to destabilize the Saudi monarchy and his forays into Yemen were, in part, prompted by a desire to

gain access to the Gulf region’s oil resources. Other revolutionary regimes, including that ofAbdul Karim Qasim in Iraq, intimidated Kuwait and extorted large amounts of financial assistance.[858] During the 1990–91 Gulf crisis, Saddam Hussein exploited the theme of rich versus poor to garner additional sympathy for Iraq and increase resentment for Kuwait and the conservative Gulf monarchies among Arabs and Muslims.

Iran was not immune to the animosity, negative propaganda, and even active subversion of radical Arab states, most notably Nasser’s Egypt, as well as Iraq, Syria, Libya, and the Palestinian movement. One aspect of this propaganda was to portray Iran as a threat to the Gulf Arab states, a danger to the Arab character of the Persian Gulf region, and, in general, an enemy of Arabs because of its close ties with Israel. Yet, the argument is not convincing because Turkey has had closer relations with Israel and, indeed, had recognized it, while Iran had not done so. Yet, Turkey was never the subject of intense Arab animosity, as was Iran. Even today, close Israeli-Turkish relations, the massing of Turkish troops on the Syrian border over the Ocalan affair, and Turkish threats to curtail water supplies to Syria and Iraq have not ignited similar Arab passions. Nor do many Arabs worry about the fate of Iskanderun Province and its Arab inhabitants (an estimated 3 million), in sharp contrast to the case of Khuzistan or the uninhabited Tunbs. The main reason for such diametrically opposing perceptions of Iran and Turkey lies in the geopolitical and economic characteristics of the Persian Gulf—hence the eagerness of major Arab countries, notably Egypt and Syria, to establish their presence in the region and to acquire influence over Gulf Arab states. This desire became quite clear following the end of the 1991 Gulf War, when various schemes were considered for the post-war security structure of the Persian Gulf. One suggestion included the stationing of Egyptian and Syrian troops in some Gulf states.

The GCC-+-2 scheme did not materialize, but both Syria and Egypt have become involved in Gulf security affairs in the context of the March 1992 Damascus Declaration. By contrast, there has been no structured process of dialogue between Iran and the Gulf states on Gulf security, what this attitude amounts to is the denial of a legitimate role for Iran in the Gulf and the contention that the Persian Gulf is an integral part of a purely Arab geographic sphere in which Iran has no place.

Ironically, since the end of the 1991 Gulf War, and improving Arab-Israeli relations, Iran's excessive zeal to support the Palestinian cause has become a source of irritation in the latter's relations with some Arab countries. This may be one reason why Cairo has been at best ambivalent about better Iranian-Gulf relations. Surely cordial Iranian-Gulf relations—should they be achieved— would reduce Egypt's overall regional importance and its influence in the Gulf.[859] Syria has parlayed its good relations with Iran into greater influence throughout the region, by playing the role of mediator and conciliator. Yet even Syria has not favored very close Iranian-Gulf relations, since this would reduce its own regional weight, and, despite its so-called strategic alliance with Iran, it has also supported UAE claims to the three islands.

There is another way in which intra-Arab politics affect Iranian-Gulf relations, and that is related to intra-Arab political and economic institutions, notably the League of Arab States. These institutions' main goal has been the greater integration and eventual unification of the Arab states in the framework of something akin to the European Union. Therefore, they are not open to non-Arab countries. These are regional Arab organizations, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), which have their own specific dynamics, although they are considered as building blocks of this broader intra-Arab network.

This situation makes Iran's inclusion in regional schemes of economic and security cooperation quite difficult for the Gulf Arab states, even if Teheran's policies were to radically change. Iraq, an Arab state, does not suffer from this handicap, and would be a natural candidate for inclusion in the GCC under a different regime. The obstacles for such a union would be intra-Arab rivalry and/or opposition from Western powers, which might conclude that a GCC that included Iraq would be too strong and, hence, undesirable even if friendly toward them. Nor are these merely theoretical issues. In the last few months, there have been reports in the Iranian press that Qatar has expressed the opinion that Iran should be invited to join the GCC.[860] The accuracy of such reports is doubtful. But they reflect the reality that such notions are not beyond the realm of the possible, although because of intra-Arab politics and international systemic factors, quite unlikely even in the

long term. Problems, disagreements, and diverging interests in the close periphery of the Gulf region, such as South Asia, between Iran and some key Gulf Arab states, including Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have in the past added to tensions between them and could hamper the future reconciliation.

***** Impact of International Factors: Great-Power Policies

Because of the high degree of outside interest in strategically important regions such as the Persian Gulf, the great powers exert a determining influence in shaping the dynamics of regional politics, choices, and options available for local actors. The foregoing has illustrated how, during the past 150 years, outside interests and great-power rivalries have shaped the political geography of the Persian Gulf. But the most intense period of great-power rivalry in the Persian Gulf region was the Cold War era.

The dynamics of the Cold War, especially the balance of terror between East and West, affected the strategies of the two competing camps toward the region. Unwilling to risk a direct confrontation, both camps tried to establish their own special partners. The series of alliances that the Soviet Union developed in the Arab world with Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, and the Democratic Republic of South Yemen were balanced by the U.S. policy of creating “regional pillars”— especially in the Persian Gulf—-stark examples of competition by proxy. Since the Soviet Union championed the cause ofArab nationalism, Cold War rivalries had a deleterious effect on Iran’s relations with a number of Gulf states, notably Kuwait. Western promotion of Iran as a principal pillar of Gulf security in the late 19605 and early 1970s had adverse consequences for both its internal stability, as demonstrated by the 1979 revolution, and its relations with the Gulf Arab states. Ultimately, it even created tensions in Iran’s ties with its main allies, notably Britain and the United States, because it gave the impression that Teheran was becoming too ambitious, eager to be treated as an ally and not a surrogate.

This perception was inevitably brought to the fore by the conflict that exists between the interests of a great power with global interests and those of a regional power—actual or potential—because secondary powers tend to limit

great powers' freedom of action. The Shah's insistence that the security of the Persian Gulf should be the responsibility of "riparian states" was a good example of a policy favored by a potential regional power but objectionable to great powers because as a rule they are averse to regional collective security and defense systems in which they have no role, or only play the role of primus inter pares. For example, when Malaysia hinted at the idea of creating a collective security system for the ASEAN countries in the early 1990s, Washington opposed the concept. Similarly, the US. is ambivalent about an independent European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI), if it were to develop in a way that would dilute the role of NATO and hence U.S. influence on the Continent.

Therefore, Iran's pretension to play the role of ally rather than surrogate led radical Arab countries to intensify their subversive activities against Teheran. Moreover, although several Western and Arab commentators maintained that the Gulf states perceived pre-revolutionary Iran as a "shield" against radicalism, at the time they did not express this opinion openly. Rather, they interpreted Iran's new role as an indication of the reawakening of its expansionist impulses. When Iranian troops assisted Oman in combating Dhuffari rebels, the Gulf states did not react with appreciation but, like radical Arabs, interpreted the actions as further signs of its imperial ambitions.

***** Post-Soviet System

The bipolar international system of the post-war world and the existential and global East-West competition had many negative effects for Iran, which was a focus of the East-West rivalry because of its unique position as a formidable buffer between the Soviet Union and the Persian Gulf, and a viable counterweight to Iraq, then a close Soviet ally. Yet the intense great-power rivalry offered Iran room to maneuver, and limited the major powers' ability to pressure it beyond a certain point. This logic was apparent in the U.S. reaction, at least from 1979 to 1986, when Washington treated Teheran with a good deal of forbearance, and even tried a rapprochement, which ended in the Iran-Contra debacle.

It was not until 1987, when East-West relations had already begun to thaw, that the U.S. position decidedly shifted in favor of Iraq—in the Iran-Iraq War—since Washington no longer feared potential Soviet inroads in Iran. The Gulf states were conscious of this fact, despite all the difficulties that the revolutionary regime created for them. The existence of the Soviet counterweight also placed limits on the ability of Western powers to project force, or to pre-position weapons, to areas located in the proximity of the Soviet Union—the only exception being the main Central European theater.

In the context of the Persian Gulf, and because of the Soviet-radical Arab forces connection, the Gulf Arab states did not desire a direct Western presence. Rather, they pushed for an “over the horizon” strategy. It is worth noting that the first major foray of U.S. naval forces into the Persian Gulf—to escort Kuwaiti tankers—began in 1987, when East-West relations began to improve. The East-West progress of the 1980s and the early 1990s certainly facilitated military operations during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In short, even before the collapse of the Soviet Union, sharp improvements in East-West ties had vastly improved the geostrategic position of the West and its regional allies.

The Soviet Union’s collapse in December 1991, coupled with the steady erosion of Russia’s military and economic powers, further enhanced Western advantages. In the Middle East/Persian Gulf regions, this dramatic systemic shift weakened the position and influence of radical pro-Soviet countries and those hostile to the West such as Iran, while enhancing the positions of pro-Western states such as those of the Gulf Arabs.

First, the elimination of the Soviet counterweight enabled Washington to establish its military presence in the Persian Gulf, in the form of the Fifth Fleet and the pre-positioning of military hardware and personnel in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain. Second, it enabled Washington to pursue a severe punitive policy toward Teheran, despite the fact that there had been some moderation in Iran’s external behavior. Third, and despite Iranian neutrality during the 1991 Gulf War—as well as its unqualified support for Kuwaiti independence and territorial integrity—the U.S. position toward Iran hardened almost immediately after the allied victory, when President George Bush did not follow up on his promise that “good will begets good will.” Thus,

the foundation of what came to be known as the policy of “dual containment” in the Clinton presidency was laid during the Republican administration.

Iran’s Gulf neighbors benefited from these systemic shifts in several ways. First, they no longer needed to worry about the reaction of Arab radical forces in charting their regional and international policies. Second, they could openly enter into military and security arrangements with Western powers. Third, the U.S. military presence became a deterrent against Iran and Iraq. Fourth, Washington’s containment policy meant that Iran could not effectively rebuild its military forces.

All these factors contributed to the cool response that the Gulf States offered to Iranian overtures, despite the fact that Iranian neutrality had contributed to the allied victory. These changed circumstances also contributed to the UAE’s decision to reopen the islands issue and pursue it as far as necessary, short of military confrontation, at least in the immediate future. Indeed, according to one observer,

His [Shaykh Zayed’s] choice of 1992 to make an issue out of Abu Musa was dictated more لأ the circumstances in the region than لأ Iranian actions [emphasis added]. The Iranians had been militarizing the islands throughout the eighties, during the Iran-Iraq War, and he did not make an issue out of it. He did not even make an issue out of it during the Kuwait crisis of 1990–91. He waited until all that was over, and in 1992, when he had the support of the international community, he made an issue ofAbu Musa and the Tunbs.[861]

Systemic factors, especially the policies and attitudes of the current dominant international actor—the United States—will play a crucial role in either encouraging or hampering better relations between Iran and the Gulf Arabs. At present, the American attitude seems to be ambivalent. On the one hand, a more positive and friendly Iranian attitude toward the Gulf states would ease their security concerns and enhance their stability, something that Washington would favor. A sharp improvement in such relations, on the other hand, could reduce the need for a large-scale U.S. presence in the

region and erode its ability to pressure Gulf Arab governments on issues such as levels of oil production, prices, and purchases of US. military hardware. It is perhaps with these concerns in mind that the U.S. secretary of defense, William Cohen, on a visit to the Persian Gulf in April 2000, warned Gulf Arab leaders about the continued security threat that Iran posed to them and, therefore, the need for better defense technology in the region. Cohen's visit and his statements came at a time when Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Oman were beginning a dialogue on security and defense issues.[862]

**** Conclusions and Outlook

The character of relations between Iran and the Gulf Arab states, since they began to interact regularly starting in the late 19505, has been determined by the interaction of a complex set of factors—ethnic, cultural, religious. Other factors, including ideological and political consequences of the process of development and modernization such as the revolutions that swept the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s and the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979, also left their impact. Since the Arab part of the Gulf is organically linked with the rest of the Arab world at various levels, these relations have also been subject to the dynamics of intra-Arab politics. Most important, however, in the last two centuries the nature of the international political system and the policies and practices of its principal actors have affected the character not only of Iranian-Gulf relations but also of the basic political patterns of the region. In coming years, systemic factors will surely continue to impact Iranian-Gulf relations. The key factor will be whether current U.S. supremacy will continue or whether counterweights—or at least serious competitors—will emerge to balance the sole remaining superpower. Equally important, policies pursued toward Iran and the Gulf states, at least for the foreseeable future, are not likely to change, because no such counterweights are on the horizon. Therefore, U.S. policies toward the region, the role of Iran, and the state of U.S.-Iranian relations will play key roles in determining the extent and pace of improvement in Iranian-Gulf relations. Should there again be a crisis in US-Iranian relations, in all likelihood the process of improving Iranian-Gulf ties would be halted. Such a development might even involve a risk of conflict. A crisis over the three islands could provide the spark for such a contest.

Because the state of U.S.-Iranian politics will be affected to a great extent by the state of Iranian internal politics, the evolution of the latter in the direction of reform and liberalization would have a crucial impact in determining the course of Iranian-Gulf ties. Developments in the broader Middle East region, especially the fate of the Arab-Israeli peace process and the prospects for Arab-Israeli economic cooperation, will also affect the course of Iranian-Gulf relations. Brighter prospects on this front might dampen enthusiasm for better ties with Iran. Finally, the fate of the Iraqi regime is another factor with considerable implications for Iranian-Gulf relations. The displacement of Saddam Hussein and the installation of a moderate, pro-Western regime in Baghdad could reduce the impetus for the Gulf states to improve ties with Iran.

In short, the future of Iranian-Gulf relations is contingent on many imponderables. What is certain is that the establishment of mutual trust and the development of an appropriate framework for cooperation will be a lengthy and uneven process. It is highly unlikely that Teheran will be incorporated into some kind of new security structure in the Gulf. Yet, under a positive scenario, mechanisms for consultation and cooperation on security matters and conflict prevention and resolution of disputes could certainly be envisaged. Yet even if the pace of Iranian political reforms were to remain slow, a return to the tension-ridden period of the 19805 and 19905 is very unlikely. Still, real and lasting reconciliation, and the creation of a true Arab-Iranian cultural, economic, and political zone of cooperation, will be a lengthy process. Nevertheless, the continued trend toward reconciliation during 1999–2001, exemplified by the signing of a security agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia—as well as the visit of Prince Naif to Teheran in the spring of 2001—coupled with expressions of regret by Kuwait for having supported Iraq during the Iran-Iraq War, justify a degree of optimism about the future.

[811] In his last testament, Ayatollah Khomeini stated that Iran might one day even make peace with Saddam Hussein, but never with Saudi Arabia.

[812] For an excellent analysis of the ideological foundations of President Khatami’s foreign policy, see R. K. Ramazani, “The Shifting Premise of Iran’s

Foreign Policy: Towards a Democratic Peace," The Middle East journal 52:2, spring 1998, pp. 177–87.

[813] On Israeli-Turkish cooperation and its ramifications, see Daniel Pipes, "A New Axis: The Emerging Turkish-Israeli Entente," The National Interestو number 50, winter 1997–98, pp. 31–36

[814] On the evolution of Egypt's views on closer Turkish-Israeli ties, see "Egyptian Foreign Minister on Peace Process, Other Issues," Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBISf-NESA, 98—093, 4 June 1998. On this occasion, Foreign Minister Amr Musa said that "Turkey knocked on the wrong door when it wanted to return to the Middle East and committed a strategic error with the Arabs when it concluded its strategic alliance." The League of Arab States (LAS) also expressed hope that "Turkey will reconsider the relations of military cooperation with Israel, particularly at a time when the Middle East Peace Process is clearly facing a logjam because of Israel's policy," FBIS-NESA 98—084, 27 March 1998. According to the leading Egyptian analyst, Dr. Abdel Monem Said, while speaking on 24 March 2000 in Washington: "Initially there was a big alarm in Egypt about the so-called alliance between Israel and Turkey. After studying it, Egypt realized that it is simply a normal level of military cooperation between states that does not fnretn هاًل١١ا لالأة party. That helped smooth problems in the relationship between Egypt and Turkey [emphasis added]," Washington Institute for Near East Studies, PolicyWatch, number 442, 24 March 2000. Other meetings included that between Turkish foreign minister Ismael Cem and President Husni Mubarak, as well as several exchanges between Turkish and Egyptian military officers.

[815] On King Abdallah's visit to Turkey and the wide-ranging discussions that took place between him and President Demirel, covering a wide spectrum from water to joint investment and security cooperation, see "Demirel, Jordanian King Address Business Council," FBIS-NESA 2000–0208 8 March 2000.

[816] “Iran’s Shamkhani: No Limits to Ties with Saudi Arabia,” FBIS-NESA 1999–050, 1 May 1999. And on Prince Naif s statement, see “Saudi Interior Minister on Yemeni Treaty, Security Pact with Iran,” FBIS-NESA, 11 June 2000.

[817] “Iran: upcoming Visits by Qatar, Oman Leaders Eyed,” FBIS-NESA 2000–0127, 27 January 2000. According to the English-language daily Teheran Times, “Omani Sultan Qaboos and Qatari Emir Shaykh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani have expressed their intention to visit Iran.” On the Amir’s visit, see various FBIS/NESA reports on 17 and 18 July 2000.

[818] Douglas Jehl, “Overtures from Iran Ignite a Bitter Debate among Arab States,” NewYork Times, 9 June 1999.

[819] Since the 18 February 1999 “reformist” victory, the conservative-dominated Council of Guardians has been canceling the results of many elections. These actions have caused popular protest throughout the country. See “Guardians Council Defends Vote Cancellation,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Iran Report 3:15, 17 April 2000, p. 2.

[820] “Islands Dispute Will Prove Acid Test for Iran’s Reformers: UAE Paper,” Agence France-Presse (AFP), 22 February 2000.

[821] On Iran-UAE contacts, see “Iranian Official Meets UAE Defense Minister in Dubai,” BBC Worldwide Monitoring/Middle East, 3 February 2000. The Kuwaiti paper al-Qabas reported that according to the UAE defense minister, Shaykh Muhammad bin Rashid Al Makhtoum, the Iranian-UAE relation “was and still is very good.” Xinhua News Agency, 18 January 2000.

[822] The exact number of Iranians among those who have kept their distinct characteristics and those who have become “Arabized” is not known. What is known from Arab and other sources is that Iranian communities have existed

in the Lower Gulf for a thousand years. For more details, see Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh, “Perspectives on the Territorial History of the Tunb and Abu-Musa Islands,” Hooshang Amirahmadi (ed.). Small Islands, Big Politics, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996, p. 36. Exact current figures for Iranian communities in the Lower Gulf are not available. Moreover, there is a general tendency in recent Arab and Western assessments to give a low estimate of the number of people of Iranian origin. But the pre—late 1960s literature indicates the existence of large Iranian communities. According to David Holden, “a strong strain of Persian blood among Bahrain’s people and a majority of Shiites over Sunni Muslims both derive from the Persian years.” See David Holden, Farewell to Arabia, London: Faber & Faber, 1966. In Kuwait, an Iranian community had existed since 1776. According to H. R. p. Dixon, in 1953, the Persian community numbered 30,000. There have also been substantial numbers of Iranians in Dubai and Qatar.

[823] Rupert Hay, The Persian Gulf States, Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1959, p. 148.

[824] “King Fahd Speaks on War Outcome, Government,” FBIS-NESA 91–073, 16 April 1991.

[825] For an excellent discussion on Saudi Arabia’s evolving national security strategy, see Joseph A. Kechichian, “Trends In Saudi National Security,” The Middle East journal 53:2, spring 1999, pp. 232–53.

[826] Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, The Foreign Relations of Iran: A Developing State in a Zone of Great Power RivalryBerkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974, p. 148.

[827] See the interview with Iran’s deputy oil minister, “Iran News Say Domestic Oil Consumption Too High,” FBIS-NESA 95–070, 25 March 1998.

[828] William Drozdiak, “Bowing to US, OPEC Agrees to Hike Output; Saudi Arabia, Iran Divided,” Washington Post, 29 March 2000.

[829] On the Iranian reaction to anti-Shia comments, see Seyyed Mohammad Safizadeh, “Diplomacy with a Smile,” Abrar, as reproduced in FBIS-NESA, 13 March 1998. The author argues that since the Wahhabi shaykh called Shias worse than infidels, Rafsanjani should have cut his visit short. See also “Iranian Clerics Sanei, Lankarani Respond to Saudi Shaykh,” FBIS-NESA 95–071, 13 March 1998.

[830] Mark J. O’Reilly, “Oil Monarchies without Oil: Omani and Bahraini Security in a Post-Oil Era,” Middle East Policy 6:3, February 1999, p. 78.

[831] David Gardner, “A Raise of the Stakes: Neighbors and Allies are Watching Closely as Bahrain’s Rulers Resist Demand from Shia Moslems for Democratic Reforms,” The Financial Times, 12 April 1996. According to the London-based paper, “the gap is growing between the rulers and the people of this island, and not only the Shias, says one Sunni businessman.”

[832] Shafeeq Ghabra, “Kuwait and the Dynamics of Socio-Economic Change,” The Middle Eastjournal 51:3, summer 1997, pp. 367–68.

[833] On Saddam Hussein’s anti-Shia policies, see Hanna Batatu, “Iraq’s Underground Shia Movements: Characteristics, Courses and Prospects,” The Middle East Journal 35:4, autumn 1981, pp. 57894.

[834] “Omani Air Force Official on Iran, Gulf States’ Ties,” FBIS-NESA 2000–0205, 5 February 2000.

[835] Judith Perera, “Together Against the Red Peril: Iran and Saudi Arabia, Rivals for Super-power Role,” The Middle East Magazine, number 43, May 1978, pp. 16–25.

[836] On the LAS resolution, see “Egypt: Arab League Resolutions, Recommendations,” FBIS-NESA 95–054, 25 March 1998.

[837] Davond H. Bavand, “Bar-rosie-Mabani Tarikhi va Hoquqi-e-Jazayer-e-Irani-eTonb va Abu Musa” [The Investigation of the Historical and Legal Foundations of the Iranian Islands of Tunb and Abu Musa],Jmeh-eSalem 11:7, December 1992-January 1993, pp. 6–19.

[838] Fereydoun Adamiyat, Bahrain Islands: A Legal and Diplomatic Study of British-Iranian Controversy, New York: Praeger, 1955.

[839] “An Egyptian official yesterday criticized statements made recently by President Khatami that the [Arabian] Gulf will remain ‘Persian.’” See “Egypt: Official Critiques Khatami over ‘Persian’ Gulf,” FBIS-NESA 2000–0121.

[840] Quoted in Chubin and Zabih, op .cit., p. 183.

[841] Ibid.

[842] FBIS-MEA, 28 January 1982.

[843] R. K. Ramazani, Revolutionary Iran: Challenge and Response in the Middle East, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, p. 49.

[844] Pirouz Mojtahed-Zadeh, op. cit., p. 46.

[845] Ibid.

[846] The following is an example of such an endeavor. “In the second half of the XVIIIth century, the Arabs of the Pirate (later called the Trucial) Coast of Arabia occupied the islands of Tonb (also called Tunb, Tamb, and Tomb) [and] its dependency, Nabiyu Tanb Abu Musa and Sirri; it seems probably they did so in the very confused period subsequent to the death of Nadir Shah.” Quoted in ibid., from the Confidential Document (17188) of H.B.M. Government “Persian Frontiers,” 1947, par. 72.

[847] Ibid.,pp. 48–51.

[848] Mohammad Reza Dabiri, “Abu-Musa Island: A Binding Understanding or a Misunderstanding,” The Iranianjournal of International Affairs 5:3 and 4, fall/winter 1993/94, pp. 575–83.

[849] Bruce R. Kuniholm, “Great Power Rivalry and the Persian Gulf,” in Robert F. Helms II and Robert H. Dorff (eds.). The Persian Gulf Crisis: Power in the Post-Cold War World, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1993, p. 50.

[850] “Iran Silent on Expulsions,” NewYorkTimes, 16 April 1992. See also Youssef M. Ibrahim, “Iran Is Said to Expel Arabs from Gulf Island,” NewYorkTimes, 16 April 1992.

[851] Iran Focus, November 1992.

[852] General Assembly Document A/47/316, Resolution 5223/98/3, New York: United Nations, 13 September 1992.

[853] “Iran Silent on Expulsions,” NewYorkTimes, 16 April 1992.

[854] Hooshang Amirahmadi, “The Colonial-Political Dimension of the Iran-UAE Dispute,” in Amirahmadi (ed.). Small Islands, Big Politics, p. 14.

[855] The UAE foreign minister Rashid bin Abdallah Al Nuaymi “urged Al-Sharq al-Awsat not just to publish the pictures of the surface of the Abu Musa (as it did in its issue last Tuesday 9th March) but to show the military fortifications underneath the surface of the island. He asserted that there is not a single Iranian on the three islands, whose inhabitants are one hundred per cent Arab” added]. This statement is astonishing after 30 years of joint Iranian-Sharjah administration of the islands. See “UAE to Accept Iran’s Offer of Island Talks If Put to Tripartite Commission,” BBC Worldwide Monitoring/Middle East, quoting Al-Sharq al-Awsat, 12 March 2000.

[856] “Paper Views Gulf States Move Toward Closer Ties with Iraq,” FBIS/NESA, 27 April 2000: “The ceaseless efforts by the Emirates to get closer to and elevate ties with Iraq are in a way looking for new allies among Middle Eastern countries hostile to Iran.”

[857] On the Arab nationalist view on oil, see Emile Bustani, Marche Arabesque, London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1961. See also David Hirst, Oil and Public Opinion in theArab World, London: Faber & Faber, 1966.

[858] According to David Holden, the Kuwait Fund loans were “unofficially but with perfect clarity understood from Casablanca to Baghdad to have been the first installment in Kuwait’s protection money.” See Farewell to Arabia, p. 169. For more details on the use of financial assistance to enhance security, see Shireen T. Hunter, OPEC and the Third WorldzThe Politics ofAid, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

[859] On Egypt’s aversion to better U.S.-Iranian relations that would positively impact on Iranian-Gulf ties, see Eric Hoagland, “US Perspectives on Persian Gulf Security,” The Iranian Journal of International Affairs 5:3 and 4, fall/winter 1993/94, p. 664.

[860] “Iranian Official on Iran-Gulf Cooperation,” FBIS-NESA 2000, 7 February 2000.

[861] William A. Rugh, “Past, Present, and Future Leadership,” in “Symposium: A Century in Thirty Years: Shaykh Zayed and the United Arab Emirates,” Middle East Policy 6:4, June 1999, p. 31.

[862] Howard Schneider, “Cohen Warns Gulf States on Dealing with Teheran,” Washington Post, 10

*** Chapter 26: What Makes the Gulf States Endure?

J. E. Peterson

What has been—and, for that matter, will continue to be—the path followed by the Gulf monarchies, and why has it been so successful? That is the key question that drives any consideration of the strength and durability of the six states that make up the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates (AE), and Oman. Ironically, many observers have long regarded the Gulf states as anachronisms, propped up only by oil money and overdue to disappear into the dustbin of history at any time. Yet, the Gulf states not only have survived, they have endured and prospered. Why is this the case?

The central question of this essay is not easy to answer. A simple answer might be that the Gulf states have endured because they are sound regimes based on durable political construction. When compared to their neighbors in the Gulf, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, there is more than a modicum of truth in this response. Yet, it simply restates the obvious. At the risk of sounding tautological, the Gulf states are likely to endure because they have endured already. Over a few short decades, they have faced down successive challenges of modernization, radical pan-Arab nationalism, and Islamic revivalism. They have demonstrated that they possess the qualifications necessary for survival.

Still, they are monarchies in a world that has rejected monarchies. Granted, there is much about these states that does seem anachronistic and part of a bygone era. For example, the conservative and largely traditional societies, the uncertain criteria for succession, the favored—and resented—status of the ruling families, and the combination of rule by and benefits to what is essentially an oligarchy of political and economic elites. Still, it is also true that these states have seen unprecedented political and social change. The newly built cities of the Gulf, with their expansive boulevards, modern buildings, and crowded shopping malls, vividly illustrate the types of changes that have occurred. At the same time, however, conclusions drawn from these more superficial transformations may give a misleading impression of the persistent continuity in Gulf society.

From another angle, the region’s media emphasis on the daily “court report” and the outwardly unaltered structure of the regimes undoubtedly obscures the great extent of change that has occurred already. The first step in properly answering the question of what makes the Gulf states endure must, therefore, be to examine the intrinsic nature of these regimes and the characteristics that set them off from other countries.

**** The Fate of Monarchies in the Gulf, 1900–2000

It is worth restating the obvious in a slightly different context. The Gulf states are both Arab and Muslim states, which has endowed them with a profound legacy of political and social norms. Significant among these are Arab and

Islamic concepts of legitimacy being invested in rulers who are strong and capable, who govern according to the precepts of Islam (i.e., they permit that which Islam allows and prohibit that which Islam forbids). In this sense, contemporary Arab monarchies can be seen as the heirs to the Umayyads and the Abbasids. The test of legitimacy therefore lay as much in the power and capability of the regime as in its inherent right to rule. When regimes became weak or ineffective, rulers who were stronger and more capable replaced them, as happened in this century across the Gulf with the replacement of the Qajar regime by Reza Shah and the creation of his own Pahlavi dynasty. The emergence of the Gulf states in the last century or more owes much to the appearance of strong leaders, who were able to forge durable tribal coalitions and establish dynastic rule over the proto-states they had formed.

Britain encouraged the existing inclination toward hereditary rule, in imitation of its own monarchy. At the end of the First World War, Britain attempted to replace weak Ottoman authority in the areas under its control with local monarchies—such as the Hashemites in the Hejaz, and subsequently in Trans-jordan and Iraq, the Sanusis in Libya, and the descendants of Muhammad Ali in Egypt. These particular experiments were not very successful, as illustrated by the disappearance of four of the five monarchies. In Arabia, the Hashemite Kingdom of the Hejaz failed because of the emergence of a stronger regime, the resurgent Al Saud under the redoubtable Abdul Aziz bin Abd al-Rahman (more commonly known in the West as Ibn Saud). In Oman, Britain encouraged the evolution of a hereditary monarchy out of the historical tradition of a sectarian imamate. Elsewhere along the Arab littoral, Britain fashioned treaty relationships with the shaykhly families of the predominant tribes, and these gradually meta-morphosed into monarchical forms of government, particularly after rulers became the direct recipients of oil revenues.

Until just a few decades ago, all the littoral states of the Gulf were monarchical. But in 1958, a military coup produced an Arab nationalist, socialist regime in Iraq, and in 1979 political and social upheaval forged an Islamic revolution in Iran. Nevertheless, and despite the divergent ideological threats posed by these changes to the north, aided at various times by active intrigues of new regimes in Baghdad and Teheran, the Gulf states survived, prospered, and endured. Predictions that they would disappear

have been ubiquitous over the past decades— particularly from the time of British withdrawal through the Iranian revolution. Luck may, in part, be responsible for their persistence, but a more fundamental reason lies in the deep differences between the Gulf states, on the one hand, and Iran and Iraq on the other.

**** What Makes the Gulf States Different?

There are many fundamental reasons why the Gulf states are different from their northern Gulf neighbors. Inherent differences overlaid with variant historical experiences—even when just the twentieth century is considered—have determined evolutionary divergences in social and political organization. Both Iran and Iraq evince complex societies with many different sectarian, linguistic, ethnic, and occupational communities—in contrast to the relatively uniform societies in the Gulf states. Even more obviously, the Gulf states tend to be much smaller in both geographical size and population. As a consequence, societies have been more homogenous, cohesive, and, in a sense, more controllable. Smaller populations also meant that the impact of oil wealth was felt more strongly and positively throughout the population.

Furthermore, Iran and Iraq long enjoyed, at least in relative terms, a measure of economic diversity and development, enabled by such factors as natural resources and education. On the other hand, a principal distinguishing characteristic of the Gulf states before oil was extreme poverty, which retarded economic development and severely restricted education. The Gulf states remain poor in natural resources—with the notable exception of crude oil and in some cases natural gas—and this factor restricts both the direction and the scope of their post-oil development.

Consequently, delayed development in the Gulf states allowed little scope for ideological ferment and discontent. It is no accident that Bahrain is the only country in which serious discontent has occurred. Bahrain was the first country among the Gulf states to enjoy the oil income that prompted significant socioeconomic change. At the same time, however, Bahrain’s oil

bonanza has been modest and so the distribution of oil wealth has been the slightest there.

Until recently, only Iran and Iraq could be classified as nation-states because of their size, sophistication, experience, interaction with the outside world, and so on. This not only meant that ideologies found fertile ground but that the simultaneous suppression of social complexity and political participation resulted in the revolutionary experience in Iran and in the emergence of a repressive dietatorship in Iraq. The Gulf states, on the other hand, retain many aspects of the traditional nature of their societies, accompanied by an attendant patrimonial form of politics. Rulers are essentially regarded as legitimate, and protests by intellectuals and others discontented with the political systems generally focus on the elimination of imperfection and injustice in the existing systems. Most are not demanding a change of systems.

**** How Did the Gulf States Change?

Despite their outwardly traditional character, the regimes in the Gulf states have undergone considerable change in the last half-century. While less altered in appearance than other Middle Eastern entities, Gulf regimes are far from the traditional forms of government that existed before oil. All have undergone roughly similar phases in the transformation from minimalist polities to full-fledged national governments.

The first of these steps was the pre-oil conversion of tribally based systems into quasi-state entities. Broadly speaking, the process was similar in all six states, although the path followed in each country was unique. For Saudi Arabia, the transformation came about through the pivotal role of King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman. Basing his claim to leadership—and legitimacy—on the historical role of his family, the Al Saud, and in spreading the message of reformist Wahhabi Islam, young Abdul Aziz recaptured the family’s capital of Riyadh from his enemies and set about constructing a new state. Within a few decades, his new state had spread from its Najdi center to the shores of the Gulf in the east, and to the Red Sea in the west. Further expansion to the north, east, and south was prevented by the British presence, direct or

otherwise, on these land frontiers, as well as by Yemen’s mountain fastness (even though Abdul Aziz incorporated much territory along the border).

Oman too underwent transformation. Although comprising a unique national identity and effectively independent for more than a thousand years, the country’s political system evolved from the more traditional Ibadhi imamate to a more purely secular-based sultanate, nurtured at first by its overseas interests and then kept alive largely because of British support. Even though Oman retained its independence, tenaciously at times, Britain played an important role in forging a new expression of statehood through its financial and military support during two civil wars on the threshold of the oil era. Like Saudi Arabia, Oman had its own strong ruler in Said bin Taymur, who held the country together during trying times by force of personality as much as anything else.

The smaller states, the emirates, grew in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, more directly out of tribal politics. The emergence of dominant tribal clans and their supremacy was solidified through British recognition of Trucial shaykhs in the nineteenth century. New territorial states coalesced around these shaykhs, their clans, tribal allies, and small but pivotal settlements with significant merchant communities. By the dawn of the oil era, a clear-cut system of small states, under British protection but responsible for their own internal affairs, had put down roots.

Although the basic political outlines remained set, with hereditary rulers drawn from fixed families, the introduction of oil income dramatically enlarged the role of the sovereigns, set ruling families apart from the rest of the population, and consohdated power in their hands. Payments made to rulers, first as concession fees and then as royalties on oil production, reinforced the shaykhs’ traditional role as benevolent fathers of their communities, responsible for members’ material needs. It affirmed the rulers’ position as the paramount political authorities, stronger than ever before. It consolidated the primacy of the ruling families—officially in the government and unofficially in their economic prosperity and social elite status.

Oil income provided the opportunity for established merchant families and then for new entrepreneurs to expand their businesses and acquire unheard-of wealth, but always in cooperation with ruling families. It also had the side effect of cementing ties between ruling families and merchants whose origins lay outside the tribal community—such as the Shia in Kuwait, the Hawala in Bahrain, and Iranian and Indian merchants throughout the Gulf. Thus, the ruling families provided the protection that these groups needed to conduct their business, and in return, rulers and ruling families often exploited them for loans. Importantly, many rulers conducted their own commercial interests through these merchants.

Not least of course, oil income to the Gulf states percolated throughout the small populations and raised standards of living immeasurably. This, in turn, strengthened the loyalty of populations to rulers who seemingly had fulfilled their part of the “social contract” by distributing oil benefits and maintaining an atmosphere conducive to the pursuit of material ends within a traditional framework.

Another profound effect of oil revenues was the creation of modern governments. The traditional situation whereby individual rulers were able to oversee the behavior and welfare of all their constituents, and to respond with financial assistance or punitive measures whenever required, soon disappeared. The initial rush to create infrastructure improvements—including roads, harbors, schools, dispensaries, bridges, and airports—created a demand for qualified individuals, beginning with expatriates, to supervise foreign contractors. As projects grew in number and in scope, government departments were created and training and educational programs for Gulf citizens initiated. Where rulers were unable to bridge the chasm between minimalist forms of governing and the delegation of authority to formally constituted and specialized bodies, they were deposed, as in the cases of Shaykh Shakhbut bin Sultan ofAbu Dhabi and Sultan Said bin Tay-mur of Oman.

**** Why Have the Gulf States Endured?

Given the unique and legitimate origins of the Gulf states, and their adaptability, the next obvious question is how have they managed to endure throughout the dual pressures of external ideological challenges and internal socioeconomic changes? Perhaps the first relevant factor is that, above all, the Gulf regimes have been competent. They have been responsive—or at least have sought to be responsive—to the needs and demands of their constituents. Just as the shaykh of the tribe assumed the function of, and was regarded as, a father for the members of the tribe, the rulers of the Gulf states have assumed the role of fathers of their national communities. Continued legitimacy depended on protecting the position of the community vis-â-vis the outside world as well as providing protection and justice for members of the community. Just as the head of a family, the shaykh/ruler was responsible for the material well-being of his constituents, which meant sharing his prosperity when appropriate. In the oil era, this responsibility translated into the construction of universal social welfare systems.

At the same time that rulers and regimes sought to preserve the traditional basis of legitimacy, they also endeavored to create a newer, more modern basis by satisfying new demands and criteria on the part of their constituents. Regimes were not shy about impressing their virtues in the minds of their people. Citizens were buffered from the chaos surrounding the Gulf. Within limits, regimes generally permitted their people to conduct their lives and business in relative freedom. The alternative to their benign paternalism, they suggested, was the oppression and uncertainty found in neighboring countries.

Although ultimate decision making in all these states was restricted to the rulers and their immediate families, the small population base and emphasis on education combined to allow talented individuals from many different backgrounds to participate in all levels of government. On many issues, these individuals shaped the debate, and lent their weight to the selection of optimal choices. Above all, the regimes benefited from an emerging culture of materialism and the resultant popular perceptions that the existing systems were responsible for the comfortable standards of living created in the 1970s. The failure of some groups to participate equally in the new prosperity and then the decline of benefits relative to expectations in the 1980s and 1990s have typically resulted in the criticism of certain abuses within the existing systems, not for their wholesale replacements.

The banding together of these six states into the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1981 also has played a supporting role. Despite the early protestations that the GCC was formed to address a multitude of economic, social, and political concerns, it is clear that the primary motivation was to create a defensive alliance in the face of worrisome events in Iran and Iraq. Regional security issues continued to predominate in GCC agendas, especially during and after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, even though effective security integration still eludes the Riyadh-based organization. Although GCC security arrangements play only a minor strategic role in the defense of the region, they have imparted a strong psychological impact that, arguably, has carried over into other spheres.

A generation or more of Gulf citizens has grown up with the GCC and the idea that the group of six Gulf states comprises a common identity nearly as profound as the underlying Arab and Islamic identities. Individuals visit and mix with their neighbors in the GCC far more than in the past. People are more inclined to travel within the Gulf for business, shopping, entertainment, and sightseeing, thus adding local destinations to the older ones of Cairo, Beirut, and London. Ties between social and public entities such as professional organizations, universities, and athletic teams have become the norm.

In the economic sphere, the drive toward integration has been long and rocky, and even the interim goals of common tariffs and a common market have yet to be achieved. Nevertheless, barriers are falling and the rights of travel, residence, employment, and ownership between GCC states have taken strong root. Intra-GCC investment and joint business opportunities are on the rise, stimulated perhaps equally by government encouragement and commercial promise. Government reluctance to end protection and subsidization of internal industries appears to be the single most restricting factor in further economic cooperation, but even this is under pressure. In this respect, such an attitude perhaps reflects a more fundamental concern over the submergence of national sovereignty, so recently attained, in an uncertain GCC entity that must inevitably be dominated by Saudi Arabia at the expense of the interests of the other, smaller five.

It must also be said that the durability of the Gulf states has been enhanced by their strategic alliances with the West. This should not be allowed to obscure the deep and profound interaction between the Gulf states and the rest of the Arab world, nor the position of the Gulf states in the Islamic world. After all, much of the wisdom and sweat expended on creating the recent appearance of the Gulf states belongs to expatriate Arabs and Muslims. Yet, the relationship of the Gulf states with these spheres has been troubled, and frequently marked by mutual suspicion. While grateful for the assistance provided, the Gulf states remain wary of adverse political trends emanating from the region. The persistent divisions between the Gulf states and the northern Arab world were vividly illustrated in 1990 by the affirmative reaction of many Arabs to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

On the other hand, the Gulf states have continued to develop and strengthen relations with western Europe and the United States. The interlocking occurs on many levels. While the uninterrupted supply of oil is the West's most obviOUS interest in the Gulf, the region depends on that same oil for the lion's share of its income and prosperity. For decades, a pattern has been established for the recycling of oil income into infrastructural development, consumer goods, and arms that in turn benefits Western economies. Even before the Kuwait War, the Gulf states' purchase of Western arms and military equipment strengthened the perceived guarantee that the West would intervene to defend the Gulf states against all threats. In fact, payment of top price for materiel, the purchase of more arms and especially equipment than can be used profitably by indigenous forces, and agreements for American and other Western uses of local facilities are all aspects of the formal and/or implicit contract between protectors and protectees.

Thus, it can be said that the military or security connections drive the political relationships, particularly at the top levels. But it should not be forgotten that many of the political, military, and commercial elites of the Gulf received their education or training in the West and retain strong cultural affinities with it. There exists considerable cause for disagreements; still, there is little doubt that Gulf states' populations often regard the West in positive terms.

The price regimes have paid for their reliance on Western governments has been relatively mild—so far. They have suffered some abuse for being American lackeys and must fight off both external and domestic criticisms of continued close alliance with Israel's biggest supporter at a time when Middle Eastern peace prospects appear to flounder. Most have steadily distanced themselves from the UN sanctions regime on Iraq. Indeed, Western criticisms on concerns such as human rights, the lack of formal democracy, and poor treatment of expatriate workers has been largely muted and has not affected government-to-government relations between the GCC and the West.

**** What Must the Gulf Monarchies Do to Survive in the Future?

Success in the past of course is no guarantee of survival in the future. To retain an approximation of their present form and function, Gulf monarchies must continue to adapt and change. Regime responses must include the recognition that their populations are changing. The rapid growth of population, with annual rates approaching 4 percent in all the Gulf states, means that emphasis on the personal touch—so important in relations between ruler and ruled, as well as between any two Gulf citizens—will no longer suffice. Growing numbers of people and divergent patterns of education mean that younger generations no longer know all their counterparts. The physical spread of Gulf cities, sprouting ever farther flung housing areas and choked by automobiles, means that traditional daily visits between family members are observed less. Even the personal contact between citizen and his or her government weakens, as busy bureaucrats end up dealing with streams of visitors they do not know. Thus, the growing complexity of government and of public issues means that rulers and senior officials become increasingly over-worked and that rulers and their families grow more distant and aloof as monarchical trappings put down roots.

But Gulf populations are changing in more ways than just sheer size. The expansion and encouragement of education inevitably changes perception of government-constituent relations. Increasing numbers of educated, middle-class, and politically aware citizens are no longer content with the father-child model, and demand greater say in the increasingly difficult choices their countries must make. Throughout the Gulf, one universal source of

friction is the privileged status of ruling families, which number in the thousands in some Gulf states. The need to curb the excesses of some family members, and to restrict their many privileges, is not only demanded by political sensitivities but also required by changing economic circumstances.

Ruling families, elites, and general populations alike must deal with the fact that the rush of wealth of the ‘70s was an aberration, and sounder policies must apply on a permanent basis. It is understandable that societies suddenly exposed to immense wealth after long periods of poverty should embrace materialism so fiercely. But it is also clear that the existing emphasis on materialism must be tempered with more spiritual, intellectual, and artistic aspirations. Furthermore, insofar as oil is a depreciating asset, Gulf societies must evolve from rentier societies to productive ones. The example of how Japan developed with few natural resources often has been invoked in the Gulf but rarely examined seriously, let alone acted upon. Instead, all too often, Gulf societies betray an extreme dependence on the state, the result of the government being the source of almost all income and the orchestrator of the social welfare system.

Given these key factors, what productive role can the GCC play in this process? Can the GCC be a tool of integration, allowing countries to achieve a sort of social “economy of scale”? Can the opening of borders result in healthier competition and the emergence of the fittest and best qualified? Or will the Saudi big brother crush independent initiative and resolve? So much of what has preoccupied the GCC has remained unfulfilled rhetoric, and the actual accomplishments have been so far achieved through the time-consuming and costly process of consensus building.

Looking farther afield, while there apparently is no other choice than to maintain the strategic alliance with the West, and especially the United States, it is also important to ask whether such a dependent relationship is healthy in the long run. It can only be noted with uneasiness that the United States, as the world’s lone superpower, has begun to act more like the global bully. A fundamental emphasis on preserving the status quo has discouraged Gulf rulers from initiating significant reform, while U.S. politicians, seeking to maintain an undisturbed strategic relationship, look at the short-term

advantages of dealing with the status quo and avoid the long-term quandaries of pressing for change no matter how necessary.

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait illustrated how little had changed in Gulf/Arab relations in half a century. The same battle lines were drawn, the same divisions between “haves” and “have-nots” came to the fore, and the same slogans were shouted. While the bonds between Gulf Arabs and northern Arabs are indisputably fundamental, the relationship in practical terms is fraught with suspicion and often disdain. As an integral part of the Arab world, the relationship between Gulf Arabs and northern Arabs must be propelled to a more harmonious and mutually beneficial level.

Finally, the essential relationship between the Gulf states and the rest of Asia needs re-examination. For the most part, relations with Asia remain minimal or circumscribed. East Asia is a trading partner and only occasionally enters into strategic calculations, such as the Saudi purchase of Chinese missiles as a counter to dependence on the West. South Asia is the source of labor—professional, skilled and unskilled—without which the citizens of the Gulf states would find it difficult to maintain their lifestyles. But Gulf societies have developed a deep prejudice against South Asians, and the only strategic relationship, shaky as it is, is with Pakistan. That, however, is a relationship without much hope for conCrete benefits, given the history of chronic political turmoil in Pakistan and its embroilment in crises closer to home.

Furthermore, economic factors—the trade of crude oil and LNG exports for consumer goods, technology, and industrial involvement—necessitate a closer, permanent relationship with Asia. Already, Dubai looks to the example of Hong Kong and Singapore as a model for its development. Political considerations apply as well, ranging from concern over developments in Muslim areas such as Chechnya, Afghanistan, and Kashmir, to emerging perceptions of an Indian Ocean Rim identity.

Not surprisingly, the Gulf states must look to their own devices when assaying their future. Dire predictions of doom, collapse, and revolution have

swirled around the Gulf states since before British withdrawal from the region in 1971.

Without a doubt, they will continue into the future. What the Gulf states must therefore do is continue building on the traditions of the past to transform themselves into entirely new entities in the future.

Undoubtedly the grip of rulers and ruling families on their countries will loosen,just as it has occurred already with the rocky but entrenched institution of the Kuwaiti National Assembly, the introduction of new consultative councils in Oman and Saudi Arabia, the reforms of cabinet composition in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and the emergence of the first wave of a new generation of rulers in Bahrain and Qatar. Even the paternalistic role of ministries of information will continue to be eroded by the effects of increased travel and greater penetration of societies by satellite television and the Internet. Old-fashioned bureaucrats are gradually being supplanted and younger scions of family firms are branching out into new and uncharted commercial waters. The Gulf states will change, but chances are that the change will be gradual, consensual, and peaceful.

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</biblio>

* Index

<biblio>
Abaya 116, 123,124,126

Abdallah II, King of Jordan 429

Abdul Aziz, Mullah Uthman 59, 61

Abrahamian, Ervand 104

Abu Dhabi 162, 164, 232, 285, 360, 383, passim .

Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) 167

Abu Musa Island (UAE) 216, 225,231,316,319,353,

363, 387, 394, 409, 427, 439, 440, 445, passim

Adelkhah, Fariba 194

Al-Din,Ayatollah ‘Ala’ 59

Al-Jazeera (television network in Qatar) 195,197–198,

319,322

Afghanistan 47, 71, 101459 ,396 ,370 ,356 ,314 ,270 ,126 و

Ahvaz Liberation Front 437

Al-Ahmar, Abdallah bin Husain 298

Ajman 163,166, 319

Albanians (Kosovar) 100

Albright, Madeleine 415

Algeria 83,101

Algiers (1975) Agreement 8990, 226, 355,356

Ali, Rashid 84,85

Ali, Salem Rubai 267, 292

Almaty 373

Alwani, Taja Jaber 61

Amara (Iraq) 59

American Iran-Libya Sanctions Act (ILSA) 331

American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) 330,

333,345

Amini, Ebrahim 25

Ammash, Salih Mahdi 437

Amnesty International 297

Amolijavadi 9

Ancel, Jacques 214

Anderson, Benedict 20)1

Anfal campaign (Iraq) 92

Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) 327

Al-Anisi, Muhammad Yahyah 292

Antar, Ali 294

Arab Court ofjustice 245

Arab Cooperation Council 271,294

Arab League. See League of Arab States

Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) 442

Arabian Peninsula

and bilateral boundary agreements 220–221

and border disputes 213–235

and internal political affairs 282–283

Arabistan Liberation Front 437

Arak 23,49

Araki, Ayatollah 7

Aramco 118,119

Ardebili,Abdol Karim Musavi 10

Aref, Abdul Salam 86, 87

Argentina 89,336

Armenians (in Iraq) 67

Armilia patrol 344, 345

Aron, Raymond 90

Asabiyah (in Kuwaiti politics) 306

Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) 405, 443

Ashura 284

Asir Province, Asiris 100, 114, 11 6277 ,230 ,214 ,119 و

Al-Asnaq, Abdallah 292

Association of Combatant Clerics of Teheran 16,18

Association of the Seminary Teachers of Qom 25

Assyrians 67, 79, 84–86, 91

Astana 373

Axelgard, Frederick w. 90

Ayubi, Nazih 99

Al-Azhar University (Cairo) 61

Azerbaijan 331

Azeri-Qomi, Ayatollah 8

Azeris 388

Aziz, Tariq 71,72, 90, 274

Al-’Azm, Sadeq 199

Baath Party (Iraq) 39, 56, 59, 60–61,62, 65–66, 68,71, 73–74, 84, 86, 87, 88, 90 and policies towards Shia clergy 58–60, 80

Bab al-Mandeb 3

Baghdad 66, 70

Bahjat, Mohammed Taqi 8

Bahonar, Reza 17, 21

Bahrain 95, 139, 163, 281,417,428, passim

and 1981 coup attempt 285

and consultative council (majlis) 189, 284, 323

and economic dependence 179

and Hawala 455

and integration in global economies 181—182

and internal constraints 177–190

and nationalist consciousness 180–181

and political crises 184

and political reforms 187–189

and Qatar border dispute 218–219

and relations with UAE 320

Bahrain Freedom Movement (BFM) 335

Al-Baid,Ali Salem 299

Bakhtiar, Shahpour 36–37

Baker, James 272

Al-Bakr, Ahmed Hassan 86, 395

Balfour-Paul, Sir Glen 225

Baluchis 181

Bani Sadr,Abol Hassan 38–39

Bank for International Settlements (BIS) 146

Baqi, Emad ad-Din 20, 21,23

Barazani 71,74,75

Basij [Mobilization of the Oppressed/paramilitary force]

14,25,39,43–45

Basra 59, 73,238, 435

Batatu, Hanna 86, 88

Bazaar, Bazaaris 104

Bazargan, Mehdi 438

BBC 199

Beduns 181

in Bahrain 188

Belgrave, Sir Charles Dalrymple 225

Bengio, Ofra 88

Bin Baz, Abdul Aziz (theologian) 200, 202–203, 306, 320

Bin Laden, Usama 105, 376

Boll, Heinrich [Institute in Berlin] 22

Bonyad-e Mosta’azafin [Foundation of the oppressed, or

Bonyads] 18,19,26,27,331

Border and territorial disputes in the Arabian Peninsula

213–235

Al-Borujerdi, Murtada 59

Brinton, Crane 105

Bubiyan island (Kuwait) 227, 228

Buraimi 168,328

Burqa 124

Bush, George H.w 345,419, 444

Bush, George w. 422

Caldeans (in Iraq) 67

Camp David agreements 54–55,164

and Al Saud reactions to 54

Carter Administration/Doctrine 269,356,360,393

Caspian Basin/Sea 98, 331,374, 407

Caucasus 213, 374

Central Asia

and economic and trade ties with Gulf states 373–374

and Islam 372–373

and petroleum 374

and transportation problems

Chechnya, Chechens 100, 101,376, 459

Chile 104

China 373,412,414

CNN [Cable News Network] 14,178,199

Cohen, William 408,445

Co-integration error-correction (of Saudi economy)

139–140

Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights

(CDLR) 335

Commonwealth 326

Cook, Robin 332

Cossack Brigade 34, 50

Cox, Sir Percy 238

Cuba 104

Curzon, Lord 356, 439

Dahuk (Iraq) 75

Damascus Declaration 222, 322

D’Amato, Alphonse 408

Dara al-Jazirah (Peninsula Shield) 318,321,401

Âl-Da‘wa Party 57,58,71,80

Democratic Republic of Yemen (DRY) 275, 299

Desert Shield, Operation 345, 444

Desert Storm, Operation 345, 357,444

Dhahran 118,119,122–23

Diri’yah 127

Diwaniyas 184

Dual containment 331,337, 357, 360, 400,408,415,420, 444

Dubai 113, 162, 163,164,285, 342,354,459, passim

and Internet City 166

Duwaima Island 216

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) 370

Egypt 85,106,112, 113,114, 177,195, 266, 313, 400, 408, 429, passim

and 1960s presence in Yemen 266–268

Ebadi, Shirin 22,23

Ebrahimi, Farshad 22, 23

Emami, said 15

Empty Quarter (Rub al-Khali-Saudi Arabia) 114, 220, 223.273

Eritrea 266,275

European Community 326, 329, 344,420

Eshkevari, Hassan Yusuf 5–6,9,22

Fadlallah, Muhammad Hussein 60

Fatimid dynasty (909–1171) 12

Fallahian,Ali 14,18

Fandy, Mamoun 99

Fasht al-Dibal 218, 234,320

Faysal I, King 84

Faysal, Ghazi bin 84, 85

Faysal, Toujan 199

Faw Peninsula 229

Ferghana Valley 373, 374

Fiqh (jurisprudence) 8

Firuzabadi, Hasan 46

Firuzkuh 23

Foran,John 107

France 89,412

Frederick the Great (1712–1786) 196

Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY) 267

Al-Futuwwa [paramilitary Iraqi youth organization] 84

Fujairah 163,319

Ganji,Akbar 20,21,22,23

Gachsaran 23

General Congress Party (GCP) 295, 298

Germany 326,336

Al-Gharawi, Mirza Ali 59

Al-Ghashmi, Ahmed 269

Gibbon, Edward 90

Glaspie, April 227

Goldstone, Jack 97–98,107

Golpaygani, Ayatollah Mohammed Reza 3

Gorbachev, 25

Greece 10)1

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) 95,116, 139, 140, 147

<right>
,442 ,432 ,407 213,216,270, 281,335, 356, 397و
</right>

451,456, passim

and 1971–1979 period 395–396

and 19801988 period 396–398

and 1988–1991 period 398–399

and Arab politics 322

and challenges and the lack of stability 401–403

and class structure 286—287

and confederation 315–316

Gulf Cooperation Council (continued)

and economic and oil policy trends 322

and external challenges 402

and elusive search for stability 400–401

and foreign policy trends 321

and future trends 322–323, 393–406

and impact of U.S. policies 351–363

and internal dynamics and foreign policies 313–323

and internal challenges 401–402

and internal security agreement (ISA) 315

and intra-member state ties 316–320

and outlook 402–403

and political evolution 313–323

and political institutions 304

and political participation 287–288

and post 1991 period 399–400

and pre-1971 period 394–395

and Shia communities 283–286

and structure 515–316

and trends in unity 288–291

GCC 289,400,408, 409,441

<right>
410 3 ;GCC
</right>

Gulf Security

and the UAE vision of 383–392

Gulf States

and Britain 334340

and Commission for the Settlement of Disputes 232,234

and democratization 416–418

and disparity in energy resources and economic needs 433–434

and endurance 451460

and fate of monarchies 452—453

and internal pressures/arms sales 359

and institutions 303–311, 361, 404

and Iranian challenge 413–415

and Israel 420422

and link with Palestine 333–334

and militarization 359–360

and political tensions 360361

and population figures 177

and physical disparities 431–433

and regime competence 455–458

and regional stability 356–362

and sectarian differences 434–435

and security challenges 407–423

and territorial disputes 436–440

and ties with Arab World 358

and ties with Central Asian Republics 367–377

and ties with Russia 367–377

and unemployment 360

and US. policies 360, 418–420

and U.S./U.K. rivalries 330

Habermas,Jiirgen 197

Hafr al-Batin 401

Hajj 113, 117,428,435

Hajjarian, Said 15,19, 20

Al-Hajri, Abdallah 268

Halabja (Iraq) 59

Al-Hakim, Sayyid Mahdi 58

Al-Hakim, Sayyid Muhammad Baqir 60

Al-Hakim, Ayatollah Muhsin 57, 58, 6061, 74

Al-Hamdi, Ibrahim 269

Hanafi (doctrine) 372

Hanbali (doctrine) 306,318

Hanish islands 275, 276

Hashemi, Faezeh 18

Hashemite (monarchy in Iraq) 56

Hassan II, King of Morocco 206

Al-Hawali, Safar 200

Hawar islands 218,221, 232,234, 320, 328

Hezbollah, Ansar-e [Helpers of the Party of God] 15, 22, 338,435

Hejaz Province, Hejazis 100, 125

Henderson, Ian 344

Al-Hilli, Hussein 60

Hormuz, Straits of 276,285, 397, 413

Al-Humoud, Awad 186

Huraybi, Hassan 297

Hurd, Douglas 344

Husain, Sadiq Abdallah 298

Husain, Tawfiq 84

Hussein, Hujja Muhammad 59

Hussein, King (ofjordan) 437

Hussein, Qussay 72

Hussein, Saddam 55, 62, 67,68, 71,72, 73, 76–77,79, 81,

,336 83,86,87و 90, 102, 271,272,278,286, 332و

337,384, 395, 411,428, 446, passim

and expansion of Iraqi military power 88–89

and the Iranian Revolution 89–91

and the War for Kuwait 91–92

Ibadhi, Ibadhism 202–203, 285, 308, 454

Al-Idrisi,Ali 264

Al-Idrisi, Muhammad 264

Ikama 125

Image (in Saudi socio-political context) 111

Imam-ejome (Friday preachers) 4

incirlik, (Air Base-Turkey) 419

India 161–162,177,322,326

Indochina 101—102

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 243244

International Court ofjustice (ICJ) 218,220, 221,232, 239,317,320,360,387,412

International law, limitations of 226–229

International Monetary Fund (IMF) 135

Iran 68, 69, 73, 75, 80, 89, 90, 104,163,177,322و

passim

and 1997 presidential elections 194

and 2000 parliamentary elections 13–27

and Anglo-Soviet invasion of 1941 35

and Arab cultural rivalry 435–436

and Arab Gulf States 14, 427446

and armed forces 34

future outlook 47–50

and Bahrain 438–439

and law and order 42–43

and role of clergy in 38

and Central Asia 370–371

and civil-military relations 31–51

the first republic, 1979–1988, 37–39

the second republic, 1989—1996, 4043

the third republic 1997–2000,43–47 and clerical establishment 3–11 and Council of Guardians 4,13,17,18,21,23,25,26,

and conservatives in 2000 elections 17–18, 21–26

and constitutional revolution 34

and constitutional theocracy 9

and debate on Islam, Fiqh and secularization 9–10

and democracy 3

and Executives 6, 17,18 19

and Expediency Council 26

and Majlis 13,14–15,16–17, 20,21, 23,26, 27, 48

and military affairs 31–51

and power of “Guide” 4

and press under Khatami 14

and putative defense cooperation with Saudi Arabia 126–127

and reformists in 2000 elections 18–19

and (1979) revolution 387

and role of clergy in politics 4–7

and role of press in 2000 elections 19–20

and Servants of Construction 16

and Sharjah Memorandum of Understanding 229–230

and Supreme Council of Armed Forces 37

and (new) theologians 9–10

and treaty of friendship with USSR 89

and ٢ل٨ط islands disputes 216–218,439–440

Iran Liberation Movement 16

Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988)31,38,41,59,71,91,226,

232,397, passim

Iraq 31,277, 428, 457, passim

and 1990 invasion of Kuwait 272–274

and the Assyrian affair 84—86

and Baath Party role in civil military relations 86—88

and clergy 55–63

and domestic politics 65–82

and France 89

and General Intelligence Directorate 87

and ideology in military 83–84

and Jews 86

and Kurds 75,78, 81

and Kuwait boundary 219–220

and the military 70, 83–93,

and ministry of endowments and religious affairs

and non-aggression pact with Saudi Arabia 124

and “oil-for food” regime 332

and Royal Military Academy 86

and security apparatus 70–71

and Shia clergy 55–56

political activism of 56–58

population 78–81

and Shias of Iranian origin 71

and Soviet Union 89

and State relationships with ethnic communities 68–69

and Sunni elite 66

and Sunnis 55

and ulama 55

and weapons of mass destruction 242–243

and youth vanguards 87

as a landlocked country 227–228

Iraq-Kuwait boundary 240–242

Iraqi Communist Party 71,80, 85, 86, 87

Iraqi Islamic Party 61,81

Iraqi National Congress (INC) 69, 81

Irbil 75

Al-Iryani, Abdul Karim 273–274, 275, 278

Islam and democracy 194—195

Islamic Unity Movement [Harakat al-Wahda] 61

Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) 45

Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, see Revolutionary Guards

Ismail, Abdul Fattah 267294 ,292 و

Israel 86, 89,99, 112,275, 322, 338, 395, 408, 429, 457, passim

Jaafar, Ayatollah 59

Jala’ipur, Hamid-Reza 20

Jani,Yacoub 186

Jannati, Ayatollah 21

Jaradeh shoals 218,234,320

Jeddah 113, 119,185, 276

Jones, Stephen 214

Jordan 112, 119, 189, 429, 437

Kadivar,Jamileh 17

Kadivar, Mohsen 4–5, 8, 9,10,11,15, 17

Kamil, Hussein 332

Kant, Immanuel 197

Kar, Mehrangiz 22

Karbala 62,79,437

Karbaschi, Gholam Hosain 14,18

Al-Kassim, Faisal 197, 199

Kashani, Emami 9

Kazakhstan 373, 374

Kazim, Safian 199

Al Khalifah (Bahrain) 188, 225, 317,320, 435

لم٨ Khalifah, Hamad bin Isa 323,362

Al Khalifah, Isa bin Salman (1961’1999) 362

Al Khalifah, Salman bin Hamad 421

Khadmiya (Iraq) 79

Kha(ji 318

Khafus incident 219, 220, 317

Khamenei, Ayatollah Ali Hossein 3–4,5, 6,7,8, 14, 15,

16, 23, 24, 25,26, 41, 45, 46–47, 427

ALKhalili, Ahmad bin Hamad 202

Khalkhal, 23

Khalkhali, Mohammed Sadeq 6

Kharazi, Kamal 332

Kashmir, 459

Khatami, Ayatollah Mohammed 4–5, 6, 7, 10,13,15,17,

<right>

,331 ,286 ,46–47,48 ,43 ,37 ,25,26 ,24 18, 20, 21, 22و

</right>

384, 387, 409, 416, 427, passim

and presidency 13—16

and revolutionary guards 44–46

and 1999 visit to Saudi Arabia 429–430

Khatami, Reza 16

Khuzistan (Arabistan) 39, 431,433, 437–438

Khoeiniha, Mohammed 6

Khoi, Abdul Majid 59

Khoi, Ayatollah Abol-Qazem 4, 20, 58, 59, 60, 74

Khoi Foundation 59, 80

Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11,14, 16, 25, 36, 37, 39, 41,49, 80, 89, 104, 337, 370, 396, 427, 434, passim

Kirkuk (Iraq) 70, 79

Kirkpatrick,Jeane 103

Korea (North) 126

Kosovo 101–102

Kostiner,Joseph 104

Kurds 57,59,61,66,69,71,72, 92,passim

and Failis 71

and insurgencies in Iran 38

and Johoosh (tribal leaders) 74

Kurdistan Democratic Party 91

Kuwait 84, 91,95354 ,281 ,195 417 ,409 ,360 ,و 101, 102و 106, 139, 173و, passim

and economic dependence 179

and integration in global economies 181–182

and internal constraints 177–190

and Iraq border problem 237–245

and Islamists 185–186

and “liberation” cost 179–180

and nationalist consciousness 180–181

and parliament (National Assembly) 185, 305–306, 460

and political crises 184

and political institutions 304307

and political reforms 185–187

and prisoners/missing persons in 1991 War 243–244

and relations with Bahrain 319

Kuwait (continuedj

and relations with Oman 318

and relations with Qatar 318–319

and relations with UAE 318

and tribal factors in political life 305–306

Lankarani, Fazel 6, 8

League of Arab States 237,242–243, 245, 268, 272, 322,

430,442, passim

and military intervention in Kuwait 238–239

Lebanon 71,314

Libya 104,164

Lingah 162

Liwa 168

Lomperis, Timothy 102

Loujian, Khalifa 186

Luce, Sir William 225,238

Maadan (Iraq) 69

Maarib 294

Madinah 11 3126,264,434,435 ,117,121 و

Magid, Esmat Abdul 244

Maidan Saleh 121,122

Al-Majid,Ali Hassan 91

Al-Majid, Husayn Kamil 91

Al Makhtoum 163

Al Makhtoum, Rashid bin Said 163

Makkah 113,117,121, 264, 355,356, 368,435

Malaysia 155

Malek, Reda 199

Marja’e, Marja’, Marjal al-taqlid, Marja‘iyya [Imitation,

Imitator] 7, 55, 57, 58, 60, 79, 81, passim

Al Masaari, Muhammad 335

Mashad 17,49,60

Mat’ams (in Kuwait) 184

MBC (Middle East Broadcast Corporation) 200

Media in the Arab world 193–195

Meshkhani,Ali Akbar 9

Militant Clerics Association 5

Minbar 205

MohajeranAtaollah 13,15

Mohtashemi, Ali Akbar 6

Montazeri, Hossein Ali 6, 720 ,8 و

Morocco 112,195,206

Mossadeq, Mohammed 35, 327, 328,337, 363, 394, 415

Mosul (Iraq) 70,79, 238

Mottahari, Morteza 11

Movahedi-Kermani, Mohammad Ah 17

Al-Mudarris, Abdul Karim 60

Musavi, Mir Hossein 4

Muscat 195

Muslim Brotherhood 56, 57, 58,306

Muslim Brotherhood (in Iraq) 61, 62

MuslimWorld League 137,163

Mutawwa (“morals” security forces in Saudi Arabia) 122

Muthanna Club 84

Muwahiddun (Wahhabis) 318

Nafisi, Abdallah 200

Al Nahyan 162, 327

Al Nahyan, Shaykha Fatima bint Mubarak 173

Al Nahyan, Sultan bin Zayed bin Sultan 408,410

Al Nahyan, Zayed bin Sultan 163,164,168, 173,318,

327, 383, 387,391,445, passim

Najaf (Iraq) 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 74,79,437

Al-Najafi, Bashir Hussein 59

Najran Province 265

Al-Naqeeb, Khaldoun 178

Nasriyah (Iraq) 59

Nasser, Gamal Abdel 106, 266,303, 432441 و

Nateq Nouri, Ayatollah 6,43, 416

Netanyahu, Benjamin 429

Nicaragua 104

Nouri,Abdollah 10,14,17, 19,23

Nouri, Ali Reza 17

Oman, Sultanate of 95,101,139, 173, 195,273, 281,360, 443, passim

and consultative council 307–309, 460

and Dhuffar/Dhuffari rebellion 443

and gender factors in Shura council 308

and information and authority 193–207

and mass higher education, language and community

195–96

and political authority 205

and relations with Bahrain 319

and relations with Israel 361

and relations with Qatar 319

and relations with UAE 319

and religious and political expression 201–204,308

and state consultative council 205,304

and tribal factors 308

and UAE border accord 219

The Opposition Direction 197, 199,200

Orbit Communications 199

Organization of African Unity (OAU) 232

Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) 270

and 1997 Teheran Summit 14,427

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) 88,126,434

Oslo Accords 183

Ottoman Empire 56,347

and succession patterns 12—13

and Iraq 66

Pahlavi, 31,34,38, 50

and Mohammed Reza Shah 3389,105 ,51 و 37-38و,

206,228, 282,328, 355, 393, 394, 415, 437, passim

and role in Iranian military 35–36

and Reza Shah, 32–33,3435, 50,328, 336

Pakistan 31, 270,322,459

Palestine 73442 ,338 ,330 ,84,86 و

Palestine Liberation Organization 420

Palestinian National Authority 200

Parsons, Sir Anthony 329

Pasdaran, see Revolutionary Guards

Pastor, Robert 104

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan 71,91

People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) 268,

269,270,281,295,395, 443,passim

and Communist Party 267

Peres, Shimon 421

Persia, Persians 38206 و

Philippines 104, 125

Pickering, Thomas 227

Portsmouth Treaty 85

Prescott, Victor 214

Qaboos, Sultan of Oman 282, 298, 303,307, 327,357,

400, passim

Qaboos, Sultan (University) 195,202

Qajar 34,224,336

Qat 295

Al-Qatabi,Abdallah 308

Qatar 95, 163,173,281,360, 409,430, passim

and censorship 195

and consultative council 310311

and information and authority 193–207

and mass higher education, language and community 195–96

and ministry of information 195

and relations with Bahrain 319–320

and relations with Israel 361

and relations with UAE 320

and satellite television 196–201

Al-Qaradawi, Yusuf 199

Qassem (Qasim), Abdul Karim 86, 239,441

Al Qasimi,Al Qawasim, 163,219, 224

Al Qasimi, Khaled bin Saqr 417

Qazvin 42, 49

Qom, 45, 46, 60, 79,368

Qomi, Ayatollah Mohammed Tabatabai 3–4,7

Al-Rabi’i, Abdul Razzaq 60

Rabin, Itzhak 429

Rafiqdoust, Mohsen, 46

Rafsanjani, Ali Akbar Hashemi 4, 6,16, 18, 20, 23,25, 37, 39,42–43,286, 428, 434, passim

Rahami, Mohsen 22, 23

Rahimi, Azizollah Amir 43

Ramadan, Taha Yasin 87

Ramadi (Iraq) 61

Ras al-Khaimah 163,166,219,224,319,373,417,439, passim

Al Rasheed 335

Red Sea 114,116,119

Regression analysis (of Saudi economy) 131–158

Representation (in Saudi socio-political context) 111,

Republican Guards (Iraq) 74, 91–92

(Special) Republican Guards (Iraq) 92

Revival Movement [Harakat al-Nahda] 61

Revolutionary Command Council (RCC-Iraq) 87

Revolutionary Guards [Iran], 14,15,17,18,19, 20,21,

24,25, 26, 38,39, 4444,46,47, 49, passim

and corporate interests 40–42

Rezai, Mohsen 18,40,44

Rida, Hujja Muhammad 59

Riyadh 119

Rouhani, Sadegh 438

Royal Military Academy (Sandhurst) 335

Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) 105, 149

Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) 332

Rub al-Khali. See Empty Quarter

Ruhani, Hasan 17

Al-Rumaihi, Muhammad

Al-Rumailah oil field 411

Rushdie, Salman 6,14,330, 337

Russia, Russians 100

Al Sabah (Kuwait) 186,284,289,318,322, passim

ʌJ Sabah, Saad Abdallah Salim 430

Al Sabah, Sabah al-Ahmad 186

Sabians (in Iraq) 67

Al-Sadr, bint al-Huda 58, 89

Ai-Sadr, Muhammad Baqir 57, 58,74, 79, 89

Ai-Sadr, Sadiq 59,60

Safari, Latif 21

Safavi, Rahim 15,44

Al-Sahlani,Ali 59

Al Said, Said bin Taymur 454

Al-Said, Nouri 8485 و

Salafiyah Movement 284, 306

Saleh,Ali Abdallah 269,271,274,276,277,278,291–292,

298,317, passim

Sallal, Abdallah 267

Sanaa 216,294

Sanabani,Ali Mahdi 292

Sanabani, Muhammad 292

Sana’y, Youssof 6, 10

Al-Saqr,Jasim 186

Al Saud 98,107,119,277

Al Saud, Abdallah bin Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman (Heir Apparent) 14,115,234,286, 422, 427, passim

Al Saud, Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman (King 1932–1954) 98, 119,126,264, 303,304,309,327, 336,347,452, passim

Al Saud, Bandar bin Khaled 114

Al Saud, Fahd bin Abdul Aziz (King 1982·) 114,273, 304, 309,344,411,431, passim

Al Saud, Naif bin Abdul Aziz 276, 429,446

Al Saud, Saud bin Abdul Aziz (King 1954–1964) 309

Al Saud, Saud bin Faysal bin Abdul Aziz 286

Al Saud, Sultan bin Abdul Aziz (Defense Minister) 116, 276,429, passim

Al Saud, Sultan bin Salman 116,120

Saudi Arabia, 193,199,203,234,269,275,277,281,292, 396,409, 434, passim

and agriculture 142–143

and Central Asia 370–371

and clean tourism 114

and construction 144–145

and conservative forces 309

and consultative council 103, 309–310, 460

and consumption 153

and defense expenditures 132–139

and economy 131–158

and electricity, gas, and water 145–146

and expatriate workers 120,125

and financial sector 146–147

and global capitalism 111–113

and Gulf region (leadership role in) 351

and investments 152–153

and liberal factors 309

and minerals and mining 144

and “muddy edges” of controlled tourism 121–125

and National Guard 106

and national identity 111—113

and national museum 119–120

and non-oil development issues 139–140

and non-oil manufacturing 143–144

and oil boom 131–158

and opposition forces 98–107,114

and patterns of growth and expenditures 132–139

and photography 122–123

and private expenditures 148–153

and regional factor in Shura 310

and relations with Bahrain 317

and relations with Oman 317–318

and relations with Qatar 317

and relations with UAE 316–317

and relations with Yemen 263–278

and religious factor in Shura 310

and “rentier” state 131,158

and role of military in future uprising’s 105–107

and role of women 120,124125

and role in 1994 Yemen civil war 275

and security issues 123–124

and service sector 147–148

and State breakdown 96–98

and susceptibility to revolution 95–107

and tourism 111—128

and tourism itineraries 119–121

and tourism monopoly 125—126

and transportation and communications 146

and wholesale and retail trade 145

Saudi Arabia (continued)

and Yemen border dispute 214–216

SAVAK 36

Al-Sawaf, Muhammad Mahmud 57, 58

Schutz, Alfred 201

Schwarzkopf, Norman 356

Serbs 100

Shabestari, Mohsen Mojtahed 5–6, 9, 10

Shamkani,Ali 413

Shariah (Islamic) law 418

Shariat-Madari, Ayatollah Mohammed Qazem 3, 7

Sharjah 163,164, 166, 219, 224, 319, passim

and 1971 Memorandum of Understanding with Iran

2299

Sharon, Ariel 422

Shatt al-Arab 90, 213, 218,226, 227, 228–229, 234,339و

355,397,399,437

Shaybah (UAE-Saudi Arabia border oil fields) 223, 294

Al Shaykh family, 15,35, 84

Al Shaykh, Saleh bin Abdul Aziz bin Muhammad bin

Ibrahim 35

Shawkat, Sami 84

Shia 104, 181,203, 455, passim

and clergy (in Iran) 5

and riots in Saudi Arabia 355

Shiraz 17,49

Shirazi, Sayyid Hassan 58

Shirazi, Makarem 8

Shura, 55

Sidqi, Bakr 84,85

Singapore 155,459

Sirri island 225

Sistani, Ayatollah Ali 55,60,79

Society of Militant Clerics 16

Soroush Abdul-Karim 8,11

Soviet Union 25, 35, 268, 326, 336,428, passim

and role in Yemen 268—269

Stockpol, Theda 96–98

Sudan 104

Al-Sudayri, Salman 116

Suhaili, Turki 200

Sulaymaniah 75

Sunni 181, passim

Sunni-Shia factor (in Kuwaiti politics) 306, passim

Sunni clergy 55

Supreme Council of the Islamic Resistance in Iraq

(SCIRI) 61,80

Syria 339,400,408

Tabatabai, Sayyid Zia 34

Taif, 1934 Treaty of214, 229,230, 264–266,274

Tajikistan 371

Talabani 74, 75

Taleban 47,126,376

Taleqani, Mahmud 8

Tammuz 1 (Osiraq nuclear reactor) 89

Teheran 17,49

Teheran Militant Clergy 5

Teheran University 19, 23

Thatcher, Margaret 324

Al Thani (Qatar) 196,285, 327

Al Thani, Hamad bin Khalifah 196, 310,320,421, passim

Tikrit 61,67,86

Al-Tikriti, Usama 61

Tilly, Charles 99

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons 244, 421

Tunb Islands (UAE) 216,225, 316,319, 353, 363, 387,

394, 409, 427,439, 440, passim

Al-Turabi, Hassan 200

Turkey, 31, 69, 75, 331, 339,429, passim

Turkmenistan 374

and leadership 375

Turkomans (in Iraq) 67, 79

Ulama (plural of‘alim-religious scholar), 55, 58,200,202, 286, passim

‘Ulum, Bahr Al-(family) 59

‘Ulum,Bahr Al-,Ayatollah Mahdi 61

‘Ulum, Bahr Al-, Muhammad 61

Umrah (minor pilgrimage) 117

Umm Qasr (Iraq) 227,228

Umm al-Qiwain 163, 319

United Arab Emirates (164,273,281 ,95,139,140 (427 ,383 ,345,373 ,تلهلآ,
passim

and birth of 163–164

and British rule 161–163,351

and defense policy 390

and economic development 164–169

and education 170

and Federal National Council (FNC) 165,173

and foreign policy 391

and GCC alliance 386

and intentions in Gulf region 385–386

and Iran 386387

and Iraq 387–388

and islands disputes 216–218

and Jabal Ali Free Zone 166,167

and role of women 172–173

and Palestinian Question 388–389

and Saadiyat Free Zone 166

and social development 169–173

and social and economic policies 161–174

and strategic aims 384–389

and territorial disputes 412

and vision for Gulf security 389–391

and Western powers 388–389

United Kingdom [Britain] 35, passim

and arms trade with Gulf states 344–346

and foreign policy in Gulf 325–334, 329–330

and legacy in Gulf region 352–354

and policy differences with 5.J. over Iran 330–332

and policy similarities with U.S. over Iraq 332–333

and relations with Gulf States 325–347

and role in Bahrain 361–362

and role in Gulf boundary disputes 224–229

and triple containment policy 353

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) 296

United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Boundary Demarcation

Commission 220, 228–229, 234,237

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection (UNMOVIC) 333

United Nations Security Council 223, 239,345,411

and Resolution 687 240, 243, 245–253 (text)

and Resolution 1284 242–243,253–260 (text), 333

United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) 92

United States, passim

and Fifth Fleet 419, 439, 444

and Gulf policies 418–420

and policy perceptions in Gulf region 357–358

and presence in Gulf (1971–1990) 354–356

and “Twin Pillar” policy 355–356,360, 410

United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) 356

Uzbekistan 373,374

Va’ezain, Mashallah Shams ol- 21

Velayat-e Faqih (Rule of the Jurisconsult) 3, 6, 7–9

Velayat-e Motlaq-e Faqih (Absolute Rule of the Jurist) 8

Velayati,Ali Akbar 4, 440

Versailles 881

Vietnam 102

Al-Wandawi, Munir 86

War for Kuwait

and socio-political implications 183

Warbah island (Kuwait) 227, 228

Western European Union (WEU) 344

Wickham-Crowley, Timothy 105

Wilson, Harold 394

World Bank 147

World Trade Organization (WTO) 111, 154, 404

Wright, Sir David 341

Yahyah, Imam of Yemen 264–165

Al-Yamamah (arms program) 333,340–342,345

Yanbu 116

Yazdi, Misbahi 9,11

Yazidis 67

Yemen, Republic of 177, 206, passim and 1990 unification 271–172, 291–299 and 1994 civil war 214, 274—277 and fate of its expatriate workers 272—273 and impact of oil 271

and impact of War for Kuwait 271—274 and relations with Saudi Arabia 263–278 and ties with Israel 277

Yemen, Arab Republic 106, 266, 270, 281, passim

and 1962 revolution 266–271

and political stability 297–299

Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) 294,298

Zadeh, Mohsen Said 5, 9, 10

Zahedan 49

Zibakalam, Sadeq 20

Zubarah 218,225,234,320

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in Muslim Societies

Miriam Hoexter, Shmuel N. Eisenstadt,

Nehemia Levtzion

Editors

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*** Contents

Acknowledgments vii

Note on Transliteration ix

Foreword: The Religious Public Sphere

in Early Muslim Societies 1

Dale F. Eickelman

Introduction 9

Miriam Hoexter and Nehemia Levtzion

1 The MIHNA (Inquisition) and the Public Sphere 17

Nimrod Hurvitz

2 Religious Leadership and Associations in the

Public Sphere of Seljuk Baghdad 31

Daphna Ephrat

3 Religion in the Public Sphere: Rulers, Scholars, and

Commoners in Syria under Zangid and Ayyubid Rule (1150–1260) 49

Daniella Talmon-Heller

4The Public Sphere and Civil Society in the Ottoman Empire 65

Haim Gerber

5The QA’DI ‘‘S Role in the Islamization of

Sedentary Tribal Society 83

Aharon Layish

6The Dynamics of Sufi Brotherhoods 109

Nehemia Levtzion

7The WAQF and the Public Sphere 119

Miriam Hoexter

8 Concluding Remarks: Public Sphere, Civil Society, and

Political Dynamics in Islamic Societies 139

Shmuel N. Eisenstadt

Works Cited 163

List of Contributors 185

Index 187

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The present volume is the outcome of a two-year workshop held at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, as part of a program on “Collective Identity, Public Sphere, and Political Order,” under the auspices of the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences in Uppsala, and the Max Weber Kolleg at Erfurt University.

The papers elaborated at the workshop were presented in their final form at an international conference held at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute in October 1997. The participants of the workshop were joined at this conference by Professor Ellis Goldberg of the Center of International Studies, Princeton University, Professor Dale F. Eickelman of Dartmouth College, Professor Wolfgang Schluchter of the Max Weber Centre for Cultural and Social Study, Erfurt University and Heidelberg University, and Professor Bjorn Wittrock of the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences in Uppsala.

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*** Note on Transliteration

As the book is intended for a wide audience, including non-Middle East and Islam specialists, we used minimal transliteration for Arabic names and terms. All Arabic terms appear in italics, ‘ is used for the Arabic letter ‘ayn and ‘ for hamza. No sub- or superscripts are used, except in Aharon Layish’s essay, where full diacritical transliteration is required because of the legal nature of the text. Turkish words and names were usually transliterated according to the system used in modern Turkish.

** Foreword: The Religious Public Sphere in Early Muslim Societies

DALE F. EICKELMAN

The search for distinctive public spheres in premodern Muslim majority societies is a relatively recent undertaking. Until recently, historians and social theorists alike were deflected from considering such a possibility by conventional assumptions concerning the characteristics of “traditional” societies in general, and Muslim societies in particular. The contributors to this volume argue that “traditional” Muslim society had diverse and changing varieties of public spheres, the manifestations of which have been as far-ranging as the ideas and expression of Islamic civilization itself.

So pervasive was the impact of the early or “classical” formulations of modernization theory from the 1950s until the 1970s that they blocked more nuanced social and historical thought about the nature of the religious, educational, social, and economic structures in “premodern” societies. Thus, one leading modernization theorist in the 1960s saw the Muslim world as facing an unpalatable choice between a “neo-Islamic totalitarianism” intent on “resurrecting the past” or a “reformist Islam” that would open “the sluice gates and [be] swamped by the deluge.”[1] In the late 1970s, assumptions about Islam’s role in the development process remained similarly unnuanced: “In an industrializing nation, the gap between political and religious authority ... becomes progressively greater,” whereas “Islamic influence and control are strongest when maintaining the status quo in a backward community.”[2] Such ideas have retained their vigor in some circles. In Ernest Gellner’s Conditions of Liberty, the last book published during his lifetime, he reiterated his long-standing convictions about “Muslim society.” He preferred the single, society, to the plural, societies, in writing about Islam because he regarded Islam as imposing “essential” constraints on the conduct and thought of those committed to it.[3]

Modernization theory framed not only the work of social theorists but also blocked historians from imagining the possibility that “traditional” empires, societies, and religious formations could be as dynamic as their presumed

“modern” counterparts. Thus, in both popular thought and in many historical analyses, a prevalent negative view of the possibilities of evolution of the Ottoman Empire discouraged consideration of possible continuities between the religious empire and the ensuing secular republic. Few considered the possibility that the former, even though demonized by early modernizers, may have contained many of the seeds for the development of the latter. Recent studies of the dynamics and demographics of Ottoman households, for example, show significant and gradually evolving continuities in the transition from empire to nation. There was no sharp break as asserted by reformers such as Mustafa Kemal Atatirk (1881–1938) and those influenced by the implicit and explicit assumptions of modernization theory.[4]

The notion of the public sphere, much like the narrower but more pervasive concept of civil society, reemerged as a key concept only in the past decade.[5] Some social theorists trace its origins to the eighteenth century. In Immanuel Kant’s essay on the Enlightenment, for example, the notion of “public” is represented by the words of a writer appearing before readers independent of authoritative intermediaries such as preachers, judges, and rulers. “Public” thoughts and ideas presented in this manner are thus judged on their own merits. Implicit in this notion is the idea of a public space separate from both the formal structures of religious and political authority and the space of households and kin.[6] The notion is closely associated with the work of Jirgen Habermas, although his development of the idea is largely based on European societies and in the eyes of many is linked to the emergence of a certain form of bourgeois society and the “rational-critical” discourse possible within it.[7]

Habermas’s approach to understanding the idea of the public sphere is closely tied to developments in Europe since the early sixteenth century. More directly useful for understanding the public sphere in other regions of the world—including premodern Muslim societies—is the approach of Eisenstadt and Schluchter.[8] In developing the notion of early modernities—note Eisenstadt and Schluchter’s use of the plural—they stress that culture is created, contested, and in flux for both “traditional” and modern societies. Societies and civilizations develop not autonomously, but through a “continuous interaction between the cultural codes of these societies and their exposure to new internal and external challenges.”

Such an idea is not entirely novel. Eisenstadt and Schluchter note that Max Weber's discussion of the role of sects in generating heterodoxies and movements of protest took account of the tensions internal and external to given social settings that gave rise to new cultural interpretations and practices. This understanding of the dynamics of "traditional" societies fits well with contemporary understandings of "classical" Muslim civilization. For example, a recent majesterial study of urban forms in Islamic countries argues that the urban process during the first four Islamic centuries was one of "adaptation and accretion rather than creation." This process resulted in highly complex and diverse forms generally adapted from preexisting Hellenic-Byzantine, Iranian, and other traditions.[9]

Nimrod Hurvitz (this volume) offers a strong historical analysis of a key incident in early Islamic history, the inquisition (mihna) of 833–848. His analysis foregrounds the contours of a religious public sphere. Hurvitz reminds us in the process that the existence of a religious public sphere involves not only a struggle over people's imaginations, but a contest over boundaries—in this case between the ruler and his subjects. In the fifteen years of the mihna, four successive caliphs supporting the scholastic theologians' faction among the 'ulama', decreed that Muslims had to accept the belief that the Qur'an was created in spite of intensely held popular support for the traditionalist view that it had always existed. This authoritarian imposition of doctrine through state violence and torture met fierce resistance and the effort was abandoned after 848. The result was to enlarge the space in which 'ulama' defined religious doctrine and set limits to a field of public action in which subsequent caliphs and other temporal rulers intervened only with caution, but generally left alone.

Hurvitz's narrative points to the existence of a religious public sphere offering a wide-ranging flow of "discursive social action" in which all members of the social community continuously observed one another, enforcing orthodoxy through informal consensus and an informal shared hierarchy of leaders of influence. The mihna sought to destroy the shared understandings and expectations of this religious public sphere but in the end failed to do so. As in the Buyid dynasty of tenth- and eleventh-

century Iran and Iraq, recurring crises of royal authority coexisted with economic prosperity and an orderly social life made possible by shared understandings of trust, loyalty, and patronage. These understandings and networks of obligations implied a moral order distinct from state or royal authority that extended beyond the bonds of family, tribe, and loyalty.[10] These networks of obligations and their associated moral order imply the existence of a public sphere that is stable, but not static. This public sphere offered a framework for discourse and practice beyond shared households and immediate localities, and facilitated discussions of the common good and of boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. Similar arguments can be made for Cairo as depicted in the Geniza documents[11] and for the informal understandings and shared sense of community based on religious learning as portrayed by Michael Chamberlain for medieval Damascus.[12]

Daphna Ephrat’s account of Seljuk Baghdad (this volume) also points to the existence of a religious public sphere in which a diversity of communities participated. This sphere was defined by the participation of Sufi orders, khanqahs, and intertwined networks of madrasas and madhhabs at the intersections of religious, political, and social life, largely distinct from formal, state-controlled institutions, and capable of maintaining the social order and preserving stability.

The network of understandings she describes was fixed and enduring in overall structure, but not without creative and occasional destructive tensions. The various madhhabs varied in their internal coherence and organization, and relation to political authority. In general, however, she argues that rulers refrained from taking a stand in theological controversies among the various schools and factions, intervening only when such disputes led to public disturbances. By the end of the eleventh century, inter-madhhab rivalries weakened, and the religious elite informally combined to set the tone for the public order. By the end of the twelfth century, however, Sufi orders began to replace the madhhabs in providing a pervasive framework for communal action and social affiliations, often cutting across ties of language, community, and class.

Both the madhhabs and the Sufi orders shared a common element. Ephrat writes of the “informality” of the traditions of learning and the enduring ties between masters and disciples in both institutions as a key to understanding how social action was legitimated. In a parallel fashion, Daniella Talmon-Heller (this volume) explores patterns of leadership within the Hanbali community in Syria under the Zangids and Ayyubids. In her case, the direct evidence for “popular” religious understandings and the full extent of understandings and practices in the public sphere is uncertain. Yet her account of the Hanbali community is made all the more dynamic and vivid by a fresh exploration of the available evidence.

The new approach she takes reminds me of a conversation in the early 1980s with Peter Brown, the historian of early Latin Christianity. I mentioned how surprised I was to find references in his Cult of the Saints to Moroccan saint cults of the twentieth century.[13] He replied that his reading of these ethnographic texts stimulated him to look in new ways at the sparse and often recondite evidence available to him for early Christianity. Similarly, the idea of the public sphere—in this case a religious public sphere—has allowed historians of premodern Muslim societies to make better sense of the underlying social and normative patterns embedded in often difficult source material.

The significance of “informal” ties for creating a stable religious public sphere becomes more salient when the concept of “institution” is taken at its root meaning—an accepted and socially legitimated means of accomplishing a task—rather than as a formal, chartered group “authorized” by some central authority. Seen in this light, the ties between master and disciple acquire a substance and concreteness as basic as that exemplified by such legally recognized institutions as waqfs or madrasas. In this respect, anthropologist Abdel- lah Hammoudi argues that the master-student tie in Sufism serves as the key metaphor and practice by which authority is legitimated throughout the Arab world in general, and Morocco in particular, to the present, notwithstanding the formal trappings of parliamentary and other representative institutions.[14]

Emendations and additions to the purportedly invariant and complete shari’a have occurred throughout Islamic history, particularly

since the midnineteenth century. Muslim jurists have rigorously maintained the pious fiction that there can be no change in divinely revealed law, even as they have exercised their independent reasoning (ijtihad) to create a kind of de facto legislation.[15] In practice, however, this "independent" judgment was linked to a community of juridical peers and the shared norms and understandings of the community. As Haim Gerber (this volume) says of the public sphere in Ottoman society, the shari'a as practiced varied considerably from locality to locality because of these local understandings and judges, although appointed by the ruler, operated in a manner that was free from the intervention of the central government. Moreover, qadis exercised an influence that ranged beyond the shari'a itself, and could appeal to the whole of Islamic history and to popular usage to enforce an Islamic moral order as locally understood. Guilds, although recognized by the Ottoman administration, similarly operated in an autonomous manner, punishing infractions by their members, defining acceptable practice, and settling disputes. Pious foundations (awqaf) enjoyed a similar autonomy.

Aharon Layish's description of the role of the qadi in the process of sedentarization in modern Libya and the Judean desert shows structural parallels to Gerber's account. Again, he stresses that the shari'a as practiced developed outside the control of the ruler. Qadis were enjoined to enforce a codified statutory law—in the Judean desert: the Ottoman Family Rights Law of 1917, the Jordanian family laws of 1951 and 1976; and in Libya from 1972 onward, when the first codification of the law of personal status took place. Nonetheless, qadis still had a measure of autonomy with regard to noncodified elements of the shari'a, especially in matters of marriage and divorce. The contexts described by Layish are ones in which the implicit assumption is that tribal practice is removed considerably from the shari'a. Qadis in practice used their own discretion to bridge shari'a and social reality. Although this bridging is more pronounced in tribal settings such as Libya and Judea, qadis in settings as distinct as urban Saudi Arabia and Iran (where, however, judges apply a codified family law) employ a similar discretion.[16] Layish's discussion suggests that the role of qadi is a central one in creating a public sphere in a tribal society, and that the public sphere has expanded with Islamization since the

nineteenth century. Qadis are appointed by the state, but they have a moral autonomy and their legitimacy in the eyes of the public is based on the perception that they operate in an autonomous sphere.

The complementary discussions by Nehemia Levtzion on Sufi orders and Miriam Hoexter (this volume) on waqf indicate the new ways in which historical evidence is analyzed in light of concepts such as the public sphere. Levtzion argues that in the eleventh century the roles of Sufi shaykh and shari'a scholar began to be seen as compatible. In some respects, the synthesis that he describes echoes Peter Brown's account of saints in early Latin Christianity.[17] Levtzion reminds us that beliefs held by the elite are significantly constrained by popularly prevailing ones—a point also raised in Hurvitz's discussion of the mihna and, more particularly, in Talmon-Heller's description of the role played by the general public in shaping religious practices.

In a masterful account that traces the changing form of Sufism over the centuries, Levtzion indicates how Sufi shaykhs and Sufi orders mobilized popular support, operating variously as a source of stability, as an outlet for personal and collective grievances, and as a means of articulating social and religious norms. For some, this pervasive popularity constituted a betrayal of the spiritual promise of Sufism. The late Fazlur Rahman went so far as to say that the popular mystical understandings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries gave rise to charlatans and "spiritual delinquents."[18] Levtzion describes the major shifts of some Sufi orders toward more formal and hierarchical organization in the eighteenth century, allowing some orders to serve as vehicles for social and political change.

Notwithstanding these transformations, the common element in Sufi organizations before and after the "watershed" transformations of the eighteenth century was the tenacity of the master-disciple relationship and its potential for legitimating wider various forms of religious and political authority. As Levtzion emphasizes, Sufi orders reached out to a variety of constituencies— traders, townspeople, peasants, and people of varying social classes, regions, and economic condition—using not only madrasa Arabic but also the vernacular languages of the region. Ruling authorities were often deeply suspicious of the orders because

of their autonomy and capacity for independent action, linking the local with much wider spheres of influence. In a remarkably parallel fashion, Vincent Cornell’s work on sainthood in Morocco similarly indicates how saints or “pious ones” (salihun) involved not only a closeness to the Divine presence (walaya) but also the exercise of worldly authority (wilaya). Saints embodied a just moral order, and both in action and as cultural metaphors set limits to the abuse of authority and contributed to the creation of Morocco’s sharifian state.[19]

Finally, Miriam Hoexter’s analysis of waqf suggests how this pervasive institution was multifaceted and voluntary, creating a public space that was independent from that of state authority. Her useful review of trends in waqf studies in recent years indicates their multiple dimensions for understanding everything from gender roles to the creation of public space, affirming a space for social and economic action situated between households and the ruling sphere alike and generating revenues to sustain autonomous institutions.[20]

One interesting issue that her study delineates is the pervasiveness of a tacit bargaining between rulers and society, generally but not exclusively through the ‘ulama’. “Tacit bargaining” in this case does not mean a direct ongoing contest between rulers and ruled, but a recognition of the widespread popular support for waqf as an institution and the implicit limits that it placed on the scope of royal authority. As Hoexter explains, rulers were major donors and used awqaf as an instrument of public policy. However, because of the rules of the institution, the ownership of endowed assets was withdrawn from the donor and placed (according to the Hanafis) in God. The rule of inalienability, the necessity to secure the authorization of a qadi for any transactions in waqf property (such as exchanges or long-term deals), and the community’s vested interest in the institutions created by endowments gave rise to a continuous discourse, or tacit bargaining, between rulers and society. The administration of the largest endowments was controlled by the state, but even the state was subject to scrutiny and moral approbation.

Because of the proliferation of endowments and their prominence in the public space, this implicit discourse, or tacit bargaining, formed a major

element of the public sphere. Much of this discourse was instigated by the community and the solution to problems involved a combined effort of the community, the ‘ulama’, and the rulers. This ongoing discourse and the fact that rulers constructed a large number of endowments with their own funds, rather than simply using state revenues to build mosques or other public buildings, created a bond of shared values between rulers and society. This bond was based on the ideology and practice of waqf—serving the interests of the umma and defining the proper social order. It also contributed to legitimating the ruler in the eyes of society. In exploring this theme, Hoexter thus challenges an earlier widespread conception of a complete separation and estrangement between rulers and society—as embedded in the idea of “Oriental despotism.” Creating and respecting waqf properties proved a ruler’s concern for the needs and well-being of the umma.

The contributors to this book document the existence of a religious public sphere in premodern Muslim societies, one neither fixed in content or boundaries, but fluctuating significantly over different historical periods. The actors in these religious public spheres were not always united and the boundaries of this sphere were often permeable, but it was set apart from the sphere of royal authority and more diverse than a single household, extended family, or kin group. In most Western contexts, religion has been formally consigned to the private sphere. In Muslim majority societies, the boundary between public and private is often more blurred than in Western societies and rarely fixed.

Such blurring of lines—or, intermediate, connective spaces—reminds us of the impossibility of distinguishing sharply between public and private and point to more important continuities between one sphere and another. The result is to suggest new understandings of the role of religion in society. A long tradition of Western scholarship has recognized the role of the ‘ulama’ in Muslim majority societies as intermediaries between royal authorities and localities. The notion of the religious public sphere expands and completes this picture and suggests the basis of autonomous moral authority on which this public sphere was based. It also suggests the ways in which this religious public sphere varied over time, linking diverse communities in a common social imaginary.

[1] Halpern 1963, 129.

[2] Bill and Leiden 1979, 69.

[3] Gellner 1994, 211.

[4] Duben and Behar 1991.

[5] For example, see Colas 1997.

[6] See Chartier 1991, 23–28,

[7] Calhoun 1992, 7.

[8] Eisenstadt and Schluchter 1998, 5.

[9] Wheatley in press.

[10] Mottahedeh 1980.

[11] See Goitein 1967 for a depiction of the complex and wide-ranging trade patterns based on such shared understandings.

[12] Chamberlain 1994.

[13] Brown 1981.

[14] Hammoudi 1997.

[15] See Eickelman and Piscatori 1996, 26, and Vogel 1999.

[16] Vogel 1999; for Iran, see Mir-Hosseini 1999.

[17] Brown 1981.

[18] Rahman 1979, 185.

[19] Cornell 1998.

[20] Hoexter 1998b.

** Introduction

MIRIAM HOEXTER AND NEHEMIA LEVTZION

The essays included in this volume were presented and discussed at an international workshop on the Public Sphere in Muslim Societies, held at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute in October 1997. The workshop concluded two years of deliberations on the public sphere in general and its application to Muslim societies in particular, by a study group whose participants then presented their papers. They were joined by international scholars represented in this volume by Dale F. Eickelman. Their comments added

substance to the project’s aim to develop the concept of the public sphere in Muslim societies.

For the purposes of this volume we have adopted the definition of the public sphere put forward by Shmuel N. Eisenstadt and Wolfgang Schluchter. They define the public sphere as a sphere located between the official and private spheres. While both the official and the public spheres work for the common good, the public sphere recruits its personnel from the private sphere, not from the ruler’s domain. The public sphere is thus autonomous from the political order, and “its influence rests on interpretations of the common good vis-ȯ-vis the ruler, on the one hand, and the private sphere, on the other.”[21] The concept of the public sphere adds a new dimension to the discourse on civil society. It shifts the emphasis from the political authorities to society and stresses the close connection between the autonomy of this sphere and the idea of the social order as promulgated in a specific society or culture without necessarily developing in the direction of Western political institutions.

The foreword and concluding chapter expand on the theoretical and comparative perspectives. The other chapters are case studies stretching from the ninth century to the twentieth. They certainly do not cover all periods or all regions of the Islamic cultural area; but they all refer to institutions that were central to Muslim societies during most periods and in most parts of the Muslim world. Each chapter deals with a specific period and region and treats specific aspects of the public sphere. Much of the discussion centers around issues, events or institutions connected with Islam. However, rather than a system of worship, confined to the private sphere,[22] the emphasis in all chapters is on Islam as a regulator of the social order. We thus focused on the role of the shari’a as an autonomous civic force; the ensuing autonomy of institutions and social groupings based on the shari’a and their dynamics; the role of the community in the public sphere; and the nature of the interaction between the society and the ruling authorities. We have been inspired by the approach of Marshall Hodgson, who identified three religiously sanctioned institutions that held together all groupings of the umma (the community of believers) in the town: the shari’a laws, the waqf foundations, and the Sufi brotherhoods

(tariqa, pl. turuq).[23] All three institutions figure prominently in the essays.

Umma and shari’a are central conceptions running through the discussion in virtually all the chapters included in the present volume. The umma—the community of believers—was accorded central importance in Islamic political thought. Not only were the protection and furthering of its interests the central concern of the ruler, the individual Muslim, and the ‘ulama’; the umma‘s consensus (ijma’) on the legitimacy of the ruler as well as on details concerning the development of social and cultural norms was considered infallible. The community of believers was thus placed as the most significant group in the public sphere, and above the ruler (see Miriam Hoexter).

The shari’a—the sacred law, or the rules and regulations governing the lives of Muslims, derived in principal from the Qur’an and hadith[24]—was developed by fuqaha’ (jurists) and was basically an autonomous legal system, independent of the ruler’s influence. Above and beyond being a legal system, the shari’a embodied the values and norms of the social order proper to the community of believers and became its principal cultural symbol. The sacred nature of the shari’a is deeply entrenched in the public sentiment of Muslim societies. The sanction of the sacred law has contributed to the formation of a Muslim public opinion and endowed institutions and social groupings based on the shari’a—such as the qadi, the mufti, the schools of law (madhahib)— with a high degree of autonomy vis-0-vis the ruler. It has also accorded moral authority to the ‘ulama’—the shari’a specialists-who have asserted their position as authorized interpreters of the shari’a law and custodians of the moral values underlying the ideals of social order of the umma.

As Nimrod Hurvitz shows, the ‘ulama’ secured themselves this role early in Islamic history. In his reinterpretation of the inquisition (mihna) he argues that already in the early ninth century the articulation of religious dogma was the domain of the ‘ulama’.

The failure of the mihna, in which caliphs attempted in vain to enforce acceptance of the theological view of one faction of the ‘ulama’, gave further substance to the division of responsibilities between the ‘ulama’ and the rulers. It also secured the autonomy of the ‘ulama’ in centuries to come.

The large measure of autonomy enjoyed by ‘ulama’ in subsequent centuries—not only in matters of doctrine, but also in the exercise of their daily duties—is demonstrated in a number of papers. Daphna Ephrat relates that once an ‘alim in Seljuk Baghdad was appointed to teach in a madrasa endowed by a ruler, he enjoyed “academic freedom” in the admission of students and in all matters related to the content of his teaching. He could even influence the selection of his successor. The independence of the ‘ulama’—whether or not they held official positions—in the context of the Ottoman Empire is discussed by Haim Gerber. Although dependent on the ruler for his appointment, the qadi enjoyed a large measure of autonomy in the administration of justice in his court. In both substance and procedure, he followed the shari’a law and the ruler did not usually intervene in its day-to-day administration (see Ephrat, Gerber, and Aharon Layish). An in-depth analysis of the qadi’s function is given in Layish’s chapter. Discussing the role of the qadi in the process of sedentarization of tribal societies in Libya and the Judean Desert, he explains how the qadi’s court became a distinct arena of the public sphere, free from the ruler’s intervention. He demonstrates the measure of discretion of qadis in reconciling shari’a and custom, thus creating a favorable climate for members of a tribal society to apply to shari’a courts and eventually bringing tribal society within the orbit of normative Islam.

Ephrat, Layish, and Daniella Talmon-Heller articulate the broader public mission of the ‘ulama’ and their ethic of public service, which consisted of providing guidance to the community concerning the proper norms of social, moral, and legal behavior. Indeed, their manifold functions—as judges, muftis, teachers, guardians of orphans, leaders of prayers, preachers—brought the ‘ulama’ into daily contact with the people and made them natural leaders of public opinion and informal representatives of the community.

‘Ulama’ sometimes converted their charisma into social, economic, and even political power, and became leaders of autonomous organizations. Two categories of such organizations are represented in the present volume: the schools of law (madhahib) and the Sufi brotherhoods (turuq). As Ephrat and Nehemia Levtzion demonstrate, these organizations performed a variety of social functions and became major foci of communal life. They developed and restructured themselves according to their own dynamics, and their relative importance in the public sphere changed in the course of time.

Ephrat dwells on the change from factionalism and violent clashes among adherents of the different madhahib from the ninth century onward, to a spirit of cooperation and tolerance in the twelfth century. By that time the social importance of the schools of law had diminished, and their place as principal actors in the public sphere was gradually taken over by the Sufis. Only the Hanbalis retained a high degree of cohesive communal life in later periods. This is also illustrated in Talmon-Heller’s study of a Hanbali community, whose members migrated from their villages in the region of Jabal Nablus to Damascus in the middle of the twelfth century, where they continued to lead their own organized community life, led by authoritative shaykhs. Under Zangid and Ayyubid rule she found no similar organization of community life among the adherents of the larger Shafi’i and Hanafi schools of law in Syrian cities. Relations between schools of law in that period were definitely less strained and violent than in Seljuk Baghdad.

The integration of Sufism into the mainstream of Islam in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was marked by the emergence of Sufi brotherhoods (turuq) as new social institutions, where disciples were inducted and trained by their masters. Gradually, Sufi brotherhoods also recruited lay people, and Sufism moved from the private to the public sphere. For six centuries, from the twelfth century to the eighteenth, Sufi brotherhoods were central to the life of the individual and the community. Levtzion analyzes the development of Sufi organizations and structures at different periods, as well as patterns of relationships between Sufi brotherhoods and the state, ranging from withdrawal and autonomy to dependency. In the eighteenth century, Sufi brotherhoods transformed into

large-scale, cross-regional organizations. Brotherhoods penetrated into the countryside and mobilized the common people by addressing them in the vernacular language and articulating their grievances. As this process seems to have been associated with the decline of states, one may say that the public sphere created by the brotherhoods expanded at the expense of the official sphere.

The role of waqf foundations in the public sphere is discussed by Gerber and Hoexter. Throughout the premodern Islamic world, endowments were made by all strata of the Muslim population. They provided for the financing and maintenance of a host of public services and did so through an institution whose rules had remained, across the centuries, an integral part of the shari’a. Following Hodgson, Hoexter describes the waqf as a major tool through which the Islamic idea of the social order proper to the umma was implemented. She discusses the ideology underlying the Islamic endowment institution, its impact on the formation of the urban public space, its contribution to the crystallization of autonomous groups within the community of believers, and the nature of the discourse between the society and the ruling authorities generated by the waqf.

The role of the community in the public sphere and the nature of the interaction between the society and the ruling authorities are of central importance to an understanding of the dynamics of Muslim societies. They are discussed in virtually every chapter.

The community of believers exercised its influence in the public sphere in several ways. Gerber discusses the measure of autonomy of more or less structured organizations, such as professional guilds and neighborhoods. He and Hoexter dwell on the importance of endowments made by members of guilds and neighborhoods, groups of common origin, the ashraf (descendants of the Prophet), etc., in providing them an independent economic basis. Furthermore, they show how, through endowments, these groups enhanced group identification and social interaction among their members and became influential factors in the public sphere.

The concept of the public sphere may address also the role of the common people, or the uninstitutionalized community, and its participation in molding or changing social and normative practices. Talmon-Heller gives several examples of the active participation of the general public in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Damascus in the shaping of religious practices that became sunna for most believers. The community often succeeded in doing this in the face of initial strong opposition of ‘ulama’ backed by the ruler. One of the most striking examples is that of saint worship and the visitation of tombs, which in turn contributed greatly to the growing popularity of devotional Sufism, as argued by Levtzion. Gerber shows how popular support contributed to the rise of the shari’a in the Ottoman Empire in the course of the fifteenth century, at the expense of the criminal law enacted by the state (qanun). The role of the community in the process whereby cash endowments were legalized in the Ottoman Empire (Gerber and Hoexter) is another case in point. All these examples point to the dynamics of a living tradition influenced to a large degree by public opinion. In addition, Gerber and Hoexter emphasize the variations in legal practice within the Islamic cultural area, influenced by local circumstances or resulting from different approaches to certain points of law prevalent among various local population. They also discuss some of the mechanisms that enabled the incorporation of changes in the shari’a: the ijma’-t—e consensus of the community of believers; the legitimization of custom (‘urf, ta’aruf, ta’amul) —both general and local; and appealing to the best interests of the community of believers. The central position in the public sphere accorded to the community of believers in Islamic thought and practice is thus highlighted.

The importance of the shari’a—not only as a practical guide encompassing the moral values and norms of the public order proper to the umma but also as a symbol of cultural identity—and the central position of the umma in the public sphere were found to have been crucial factors affecting the relations between rulers and society.

While the ruler was devoid of authority to determine the norms governing the public sphere, his responsibility to uphold the shari’a was the condition for the legitimization of his rule. This responsibility implied an obligation on the part of the ruler to make sure that the public sphere in the

territory under his control was construed in conformity with the basic moral norms and values of Islam, and that the law was administered according to the specific rules of the shari’a. The ruler’s adherence to these norms and rules was the touchstone of his relations with the community under his control (see Hoexter).

To a large extent these principles determined the nature of the ruler’s involvement in the public sphere. The rulers’ degree of involvement in the public sphere and the nature of their relations with the community varied of course over the centuries and were largely dependent on their strength and the type of political regime.[25] Hurvitz shows how, as a result of the mihna, the space in which ‘ulama’ defined the doctrine was enlarged and limits were set to future intervention of rulers in this field of action in the public sphere. Indeed, except in cases in which a ruler claimed special spiritual powers— that is, declared himself a mahdi (a divinely guided ruler who would restore Islam to its original perfection)—instances of personal involvement by rulers in matters of doctrine in periods subsequent to the mihna must have been very rare. Discussing Seljuk Baghdad, Ephrat dwells on the nature of rulers’ intervention in the important ongoing debate between the schools of law (mad- hahib). The rulers kept aloof of the doctrinal debates; nor did they interfere in the formation or activities of social organizations based on madhhab adherence. Only when the rivalry between ‘ulama’ and their supporters took a violent turn and public order was threatened did rulers step in to restore peace and order. Interestingly enough, as Ephrat shows, while preferring Hanafi or Shafi’i ‘ulama’ in official positions, rulers often sided in such conflicts with their rivals, the Hanbalis—obviously because of their greater popular appeal and the large following they succeeded in mobilizing.

Rulers in all periods certainly issued decrees relating to the shari’a. However, as Hoexter points out, these decrees were not the result of a ruler’s own discretion, nor was he involved in the preceding doctrinal debate. The ruler’s decision was needed in order to clinch a lengthy discussion among the ‘ulama’; the decree was issued at the instigation of chief ‘ulama’ and was always based on a legal opinion (fatwa) given by a chief mufti.

As part of their duty to uphold the shari’a in the territories under their control, rulers certainly cooperated with ‘ulama’ in many ways. TalonHeller describes various aspects of such cooperation during a period in which Islam and shari’a were still in the process of taking root in the population and the orthodox doctrine was in danger of succumbing to various kinds of heterodox views, deviant groups, and eccentrics. She stresses the close cooperation of Ayyubid and Zangid rulers with ‘ulama’ in enforcing Sunni orthodoxy (ihya’ al-sunna) in their domains.

The personal piety or learning of a ruler, his public deference to revered ‘ulama’ and to religion in general, and, mutatis mutandis, victories in the name of Islam certainly contributed to public legitimization of a particular ruler. Endowments by rulers and their entourages for public purposes had a similar effect on the attitude of the community to its rulers (see Hoexter and Gerber). They symbolized the adherence of the endowing ruler to the norms of good order inherent in the ideology of the waqf, created a bond of shared values between the ruler and the community, and contributed to public legitimization of the endowing ruler. Here, as in other cases, the role of the shari’a as a symbol of cultural identity is highlighted.

Moreover, the rules of the waqf—which withdrew ownership of the endowed assets from the endower and placed transactions relating to the endowed properties under the authorization of the qadi—the proliferation of endowments, and the community’s vested interest in the institutions created and supported by waqfs brought about the active involvement of the ‘ulama’ and the community in the way large foundations were administered, and generated a continuous discourse between community, the ‘ulama’, and the rulers concerning major issues in the public sphere (Hoexter).

The picture that emerges from the contributions to this volume is that of a vibrant public sphere, accommodating a large variety of autonomous groups and characterized by its relatively stable yet very dynamic nature. The

community of believers was the center of gravity around which activity in the public sphere revolved. Its participation in the formation of the public sphere was a matter of course; its well-being, customs, and consensus were both the motives and the main justifications for the introduction of changes in social and religious practices, in the law and policies governing the public sphere. The independence of the shari’a and the distribution of duties toward the community between the ruler and the ‘ulama’, established very early in Islamic history, were crucial factors in securing the autonomy of the public sphere and putting limits on the absolute power of the ruler.

The implications of these findings for earlier theories as to the nature of relations between society and its rulers are discussed by Gerber and Hoexter. Gerber disputes the concept of the Ottoman Empire as a state of unbridled Oriental despotism. Hoexter challenges the idea embedded in the “Oriental despotism” thesis—the notion of a total separation and estrangement of the society from its rulers, and the latter’s lack of concern for the community and its needs. Both point to the existence of a kind of social contract or a bond of shared values as the basis of state-society relations.

The absence of formal institutions in early Muslim societies has been the cornerstone of the thesis postulating a lack of civil society in premodern Muslim-majority societies and an extreme despotism on the part of the rulers. The papers that make up this volume demonstrate that formal institutions are not necessarily the only, and perhaps not even the most efficient way of securing an autonomous public sphere and mitigating the despotism of rulers. Indeed, informal relations and an ongoing discourse between society and its rulers governed the public sphere in Muslim societies. Social order, the dynamic participation of the community and its spokesmen in the public sphere, and discourse with the rulers rested on shared norms and values that created a bond of common cultural imaginary between ruler and society and placed limits on the absolute power of the ruler.

[21] Eisenstadt and Schluchter 1998, 10.

[22] For theoretical discussions of the religious public sphere and the blurred boundaries between private and public spheres—see Eickelman, Eisenstadt, and Hoexter in this volume.

[23] Hodgson 1974, vol. 2, 119.

[24] Calder EI².

[25] See Arjomand 1999 on the relationship between types of political regime and the use of endowments as instruments of public policy.

** Chapter One: The MIHNA (Inquisition) and the Public Sphere

NIMROD HURVITZ

The term public sphere acquired its currency and importance in the framework of European historiography, which focused on the formation of a bourgeois society.[26] However, the concept can take on a more general meaning if we extend it beyond any specific temporal and geographic features such as the European bourgeoisie in the modern era. The theoreticians and historians who coined this term and used it in their writings refer to the public sphere as a social space in which discursive interactions between large segments of the public take place. In his exposition of the multiple meanings of the term public, Jtirgen Habermas has emphasized that aspect of publicity in which the public functions as the “carrier of public opinion.”[27] In a study of the French revolution, Roger

Chartier has referred to the public sphere as “a space for discussion and exchange removed from the sway of state power.”[28] The shaping of public opinion and autonomy from state influence are issues that need not be limited to the European experience. They are in fact also relevant to developments in Islamic societies. The concept of the public sphere can prove particularly useful in an exposition of the forces that shaped public opinion, laid the principles of religious discourse, and affected the efforts of scholars to maintain their intellectual independence.

In this chapter I will touch on these questions by focusing on a period of crisis that has been named by Muslim historians the mihna (inquisition). The mihna was initiated by the caliph al-Ma’mun in the year A.H. 218/ A.D. 833. Al-Ma’mun’s sympathy towards the mutakallimun (scholastic theologians) moved him to attack their intellectual opponents, the muhaddithun (traditionists). Using the caliphal role of defender of the true faith of Islam, he interrogated individual ‘ulama’ (scholars of religious sciences) with regard to their theological beliefs. The inquisitorial question touched on the createdness of the Qur’an. Each ‘alim (sing. of ‘ulama’) was asked if the Qur’an was created. Those who answered in line with al-Ma’mun and the mutakallimun’s point of view, that it was created, were released. Those that refused to state explicitly that it was created were put in jail, threatened, tortured, and even executed. Al-Ma’mun died four months after initiating the mihna, but the interrogations lasted fifteen years. Its administrators, after al-Ma’mun’s death, were a group of mutakallimun influential in the caliphal court. The mihna was brought to a halt during al-Mutawakkil’s reign (c. a.h. 234/ a.d. 848).

The unprecedented involvement of the rulers in the controversies of the ‘ulama’, and their attempt to influence the articulation of theological doctrine, raises a number of questions. To what extent did the ‘ulama’ actually have discursive autonomy during the first three centuries of Islam? What were the issues they discussed and what were the underlying premises of their discussions? How did the ‘ulama’ shape public opinion—both within their own ranks and throughout the community? In other words, what modes of supervision and

coercion did the ‘ulama’ employ among themselves? I hope the ensuing analysis of the mihna will make it possible to sketch the contours and contents of the ‘ulama’‘s internal discourse in the early part of the third century A.H. and shed light on the contribution of the ‘ulama’ to the public sphere in Islamic societies.

*** The Extent of the ‘Ulama’’s Discursive Autonomy

The study of the mihna is relevant to the inquiry into the public sphere because it enables us to examine the extent to which the ‘ulama’ were independent of the caliphs when forging Islamic doctrine. I would like to state from the outset that the present interpretation of the mihna differs from most accounts of this event.[29] In contrast to the predominant trend in modern historiography, which views the mihna as a clash between the caliphs and the ‘ulama’ over spiritual authority, I view the mihna as the culmination of a controversy within the ranks of the ‘ulama’. During the last decades of the second century A.H. and the first decades of the third century A.H., the ‘ulama’ were divided into two major trends, the proto-Sunni muhaddithun on the one hand and the mutakallimun on the other, each of which tried to shape Islam according to its own religious outlook. In the first stage of this struggle, the closing decades of the second century a.h. and the opening decades of the third century a.h., the muhaddithun placed tremendous pressure on the mutakallimun, refusing to associate with them or exchange religious ideas with them.[30] After decades of suffering at the hands of the muhaddithun, the mutakkalimun attained the active support of al-Ma’mun and implemented a new religious policy in which they interrogated, jailed, tortured, and even executed their opponents. I therefore view the mihna as the second phase in a decades-long struggle over the nature of Islam.

Al-Ma’mun’s intervention in the affairs and debates of the ‘ulama’ was a departure from the longstanding position of neutrality that previous caliphs had maintained.[31] However, according to my understanding of the mihna, Al-Ma’mun did not claim to be

the sole guide in the sphere of spiritual matters, and did not see himself as opposed to the ‘ulama’. Rather, as will be demonstrated, he identified a clash between two factions of the ‘ulama’, in which he supported one of the sides and joined it. More specifically, the mihna was not perceived by its administrators as a challenge on the part of the caliphs against the ‘ulama’ but as an alliance between the caliph and the mutakallimun against the ascending proto-Sunni muhaddithun.

Another aspect of the mihna that had a bearing on the question of the caliphs’ relations with the ‘ulama’ is the change that occurred during the mihna.[32] The mihna ought to be divided into two stages. During the first, which lasted only four months, al-Ma’mun initiated the interrogations and conducted them. Either he or his political representative in Baghdad, the governor Ishaq b. Ibrahim, questioned the ‘ulama’ personally. After four months al-Ma’mun died. His four-months-old religious policy cannot be ascribed to his successors during the next fourteen years of the mihna. The next caliph, al-Mu’tasim, relinquished the position of interrogator, and from that point on, the mihna was run by the chief qadi, Ibn Abi Du’ad, who was a Mu’tazili.[33] He and a handful of pro-kalam (theology) qadis interrogated and tortured the mihna’s victims, while the caliph neither put an end to the policy nor participated actively in it. As a result, shortly after the mihna was instigated by Al-Ma’mun, the caliphs receded to the background and it took on the features of a struggle of the muhaddithun against the mutakallimun.

An important aspect of this reinterpretation of the mihna is the history of the relations of the ‘ulama’ and the caliphs in the early ‘Abbasid era. The prevalent view, which assumes a history of subdued tensions, has lately been challenged by M. Q. Zaman. In his analysis, Zaman writes about the superiority of the ‘ulama’‘s spiritual status over that of the caliphs. The ‘ulama’ are described as being competent, while the caliphs attempt to acquire such competence;[34] the ‘ulama’ “are the locus of religious authority,” while the caliphs aspire to gain such authority.[35] Following Zaman’s analysis, I would like to emphasize the status of ‘ulama’ as the spiritual authorities of

the Islamic community and argue that by the second century A.H., the ‘ulama’ were sitting securely at the top of the Islamic spiritual hierarchy. The ‘ulama’ were by far the most important participants in legal or theological discussions; they compiled the canonic collections of traditions deriving from the Prophet (hadith), made the legal decisions, and articulated doctrine. Perhaps the most important feature of their spiritual authority is that it was recognized by the caliphs themselves. Abu Yusuf’s introduction to the Kitab al-Kharaj serves as a fine example of the ‘ulama” s widely recognized spiritual supremacy.[36]

In Abu Yusuf’s opening statement of the Kitab al-Kharaj, he presents himself as more knowledgeable than the caliph, Harun al-Rashid: “The Commander of the Faithful, may Allah strengthen him, has requested me to compose for him a comprehensive book... A book for him to study and act upon.”[37]

According to this remark, Abu Yusuf wrote, and the caliph studied his writings. A few pages later, this subtle hierarchy of religious knowledge and spiritual authority is reiterated: “Yea, I have written for you what you have commanded, and have expounded and explained it to you. Learn it, ponder it and re-read it until you remember it.”[38] Abu Yusuf’s conception of his own intellectual superiority comes across quite clearly in this remark. He knows and explains, while Harun al-Rashid listens, reads, and studies. He concludes in the authoritarian tone of classroom teacher: “Learn it, ponder it, and re-read it.”

Abu Yusuf’s tract is full of comments about the ruler’s wisdom. Nevertheless, as we read the introduction we can discern that he considered himself superior to the ruler in spiritual and religious matters. Abu Yusuf creates an implicit dichotomy between the spiritual and the sociopolitical spheres. He places the ruler at the top of the political one, but political clout does not entail religious knowledge nor spiritual authority. Furthermore, it does not ensure the best rewards in the world to come. On the Day of Judgment the caliph’s social and political standing will be of no importance. Says Abu Yusuf: “He [Allah] judges people on the Day of Judgment, according to their actions and not according to their status.”[39] In the final analysis religious

and spiritual uprightness will determine the caliph’s fate in the next world, and these depend on his knowledge and understanding of religious and spiritual matters, which he can acquire from such scholars as Abu Yusuf. This view was not limited to Abu Yusuf. We have every reason to believe that Harun Al-Rashid read this introduction and agreed with its premises. On the basis of this example, as well as others, I conclude that the caliphs did not consider themselves to be competing with the ‘ulama’ for spiritual authority. There was a clear division of labor and responsibility, and the caliphs did not infringe on the ‘ulama’ ‘s status as the community’s spiritual guides.

The mihna and its background, according to my understanding of this event, reveal that for the most part the caliphs were reluctant to get involved in doctrinal controversies and incapable of imposing their will in the rare instances they did interfere. The reluctance of the early ‘Abbasid caliphs to intervene in the elaboration of doctrine, and the failure of those that tried, reveal the strength of the ‘ulama”s hold in this arena. They articulated doctrines, determined the principles of religious discourse, and decided on the reputation and standing of religious leaders. One of the most valuable insights to be acquired from the mihna is that the ‘ulama’ had vast areas of intellectual maneuvering in which they were practically unchallenged.

*** Controversy Within Autonomy: Determining Islamic Religious Discourse

Autonomy hardly implies harmony. A prevalent notion about the ‘ulama’ that needs to be rectified relates to their unity. Most accounts of the mihna describe the ‘ulama’ as a unified body that opposed the rulers and strove to attain an agreed-upon political aim. This is hardly the case. ‘Ulama’ is a label that refers to learned individuals who were members of a number of intellectual and ideological movements. Each of these movements was busy debating other groups of ‘ulama’, articulating its own theological doctrine, jurisprudential outlook, views on Qur’anic exegesis, and other contested issues. Not only were the ‘ulama’ splintered into numerous intellectual and ideological groups and movements, they did not

establish any overall organization. As a consequence, they could not reach an agreed-upon decision or lead a concerted struggle against the rulers.

Islamic doctrine is, in large part, the outcome of the controversy between these trends and groups; their ability to persuade one another or defeat one another in the battle for public opinion determined the Islamic belief system. Barring ideologies that jeopardized the regime, such as certain Shi’i and Khawarij sects, the rulers did not intervene in the struggles that took place between these groups. In the course of their internal debates, the ‘ulama’ of the formative period decided on the issues of contention, determined the means of proof, articulated the beliefs, and wrote the books that would become canonic in Islam.

In the letter that set the mihna rolling, al-Ma’mun is clearly conscious of these rivalries between the different strands of the ‘ulama’. He is also painfully aware that the faction he supports, the mutakallimun, is losing out to the muhaddithun in the battle for public opinion. He begins his discourse on the muhaddithun by describing the incompetent masses whom they lead astray. The “lower strata of the commonality,” he lashes out, are incapable of comprehending religious truths.[40] He then shifts his focus to the intellectual leadership of the masses, those people who “consider themselves adherents of the sunna.”[41] Al-Ma’mun is clearly disturbed by the success of these self-styled “adherents of the sunna” and dedicates a large part of his letter to outlining how they arrived at this position and how they abuse it.

These self-styled “adherents of the sunna” have consolidated their social and spiritual position by winning over influential groups among the people, one such group being individuals “who lead an ascetic life.” The ascetics’ tendency to support the self-styled “adherents of the sunna” has enhanced the latter’s position and placed them in a position of “leadership and [won them] a reputation of probity.”[42] Furthermore, “their testimony had been accepted because they [the ignorant ones or the people of false belief] have declared them [those who claim to be the people of truth] to be veracious witnesses, and the prescriptions of the

Book have been put into effect through [those who claim to be the people of truth].”[43]

The meaning of this comment is not quite clear. Al-Ma’mun makes the point that his opponents enjoy the standing of religious authorities. What does he mean, however, by “testimony”? My understanding of the term is in the context of hadiths and the developing ‘ilm al-rijal- a branch of knowledge

concerning information about hadith transmitters.[44] Since one of the crucial aspects of a hadith is its transmitters, the “testimony” that al-Ma’mun mentions may be the evidence touching on the trustworthiness of the transmitters of hadith. In other words, al-Ma’mun is complaining that it is his opponents who determine what is authentic and what false in the vital field of hadith due to their ability to determine who are “veracious witnesses.” Alongside that, because they have become the authoritative interpreters of the Qur’an, it is they who put the “prescriptions of the Book ... into effect.” In other words, al-Ma’mun is linking his initiation of the mihna with his opinion that the selfstyled “adherents of the sunna” have come to dominate the religious scene of Islam.

Like al-Ma’mun, Hanbali sources describe the mihna as part of a debate between two factions that have opposing views about theology. On the surface stood the inquisitorial question: was the Qur’an created? But the powerful undercurrent that raised this question to the surface was the profound disagreement over the status of theology. In the course of Ibn Hanbal’s interrogation—a rare record of a direct exchange between the muhaddithun and mutakallimun—we come across such remarks by Ibn Hanbal as: “Give me anything from the Book of Allah or the sunna of his messenger.”[45] Such a remark is a reaction to his interrogators’ efforts to draw him into a theological debate. Ibn Hanbal’s refusal to participate in the debate and his insistence on remaining within the confines of scripture indicate that he does not think his opponents’ conclusions constitute articles of faith. Ibn Hanbal insists that his interrogators should base their opinions on the Qur’an and sunna, the sanctified sources of Islam. In other words, Ibn

Hanbal and his mutakallimun interrogators were debating the very principles of theological inquiry.

Ibn Hanbal’s obstinacy stretched Ibn Abi Du’ad’s patience to its limits; at a certain point the chief qadi retorted: “And you, do you limit yourself to the Book of Allah or the sunna of his Messenger?”[46] Ibn Hanbal replied: “Of what is Islam made besides the Book and the sunna ? You have invented (ikhtara’ta) a personal opinion and interpreted an interpretation which you propagate [lit. to which you call] to the people.”[47]

Ibn Hanbal’s reply does not address Ibn Abi Du’ad’s accusation. It merely emphasizes the dichotomy of scripture and personal opinion. Theological investigation falls under the rubric of personal opinion. Ibn Hanbal is willing to accept theological truisms if, and only if, they are clearly stated in the Qur’an and sunna. However, he is unwilling to consider the results of theological investigation as theological truth, precisely because they do not derive directly from a sanctified text. If a particular theological problem has to be investigated, it means that it did not appear in a clear manner in the texts. Consequently, the conclusions of such an investigation cannot be considered an article of faith. From this point of view, personal opinion—which is the human imagination that concocts theological questions, the human faculties of reason that answer these questions, and the human vanity that embraces these answers and promotes them to the status of absolute truth—cannot be put on a par with scripture. Ibn Hanbal was concerned with demarcating the sphere of articles of faith, not with proving his own opinion correct. He ignored Ibn Abi Du’ad’s impatient accusation because he thought it did not matter how he or his opponents built their arguments. By definition, the whole discussion, including Ibn Hanbal’s own opinion, could not be treated as a component of faith.

In contrast to Ibn Hanbal, who was not concerned whether a believer understood the articles of faith, al-Ma’mun thought that comprehension of the articles of faith is the most important aspect of belief. In his first mihna letter, al-Ma’mun writes: “For there can be no good works except after sure faith, and no sure faith except after fully apprehending the true nature of Islam.”[48] For a mutakallim

such as al-Ma’mun, true Islam hinges on apprehension. It is not enough to follow the ordinances of Islamic law and morality. If believers do not understand what they are doing and why they are doing this, if they do not use their minds, then their faith is incomplete. The contrast between the muhaddithun and mutakallimun is stated by the Mu’tazili al-Jahiz:

And the traditionists (ashab al-hadith) and the masses (wa’l-‘awamm) are those that follow blindly (yuqallidun) and do not infer (wa-la yuhassilun), and they do not choose, [yet] blind acceptance is objectionable according to rational reasoning, and forbidden by the Qur’an (manhi ‘anhu fi a-Qur’an), as you can see they [traditionists] have reversed (‘akasu) the matters, and violated norms. We have no doubt that he who examines and investigates and compares is in the better [position] to understand and arrive at the truer argument.[49]

Al-Jahiz is pointing here to the heart of the matter. He contrasts blind following with rational reasoning. Blind following, which he ascribes to the muhaddithun, means relying on scripture without straying off into the terrain of theological speculation. To some extent, Ibn Hanbal would agree with this description of the muhaddithun. However, whereas he would feel that to “follow blindly” the scripture is to take the right path, al-Jahiz assumes that this is “forbidden by the Qur’an.” Al-Jahiz argues that “rational reasoning” is the utmost expression of belief, whereas Ibn Hanbal believes that true doctrine is in the canonized books of Islam and cannot be uncovered by rational speculation.

Although Ibn Hanbal and Jahiz discuss the mihna from contrasting points of view, and although each of them tries to promote his understanding of the event, both of them associate the mihna with the debate over theological proof. Despite their disagreement over the status and importance of theology, they agree that it is their disagreement over what constitutes an article of faith that lies at the foundations of the mihna. Al-Ma’mun’s harsh denunciation of his opponents’ inability to handle theological subtleties is in line with Ibn Hanbal’s and al-Jahiz’s view of the mihna’s causes.

The sources that describe the mihna, be they Hanbali or Mu’tazili polemics, emphasize two crucial points. First, the mihna was a consequence of a debate over the standing and importance of theological investigation. It seems clear to writers of both persuasions that the inquisitorial question only opened a door that led to a much wider and more meaningful issue: the nature and standing of theology. Second, the debate was between two camps of ‘ulama’. Most caliphs, including some of those that reigned during the mihna, were either too ignorant of and disinterested in such matters or too smart and politically savvy to get involved in the cross fire of the ‘ulama’. It was the ‘ulama’, knowing enough and caring greatly about Islamic religiosity, who battled among themselves over the premises of religious discourse.

*** Discourse Into Power

The violent religious policy of the court and the mutakallimun was not merely a reaction to the debates that raged over the nature of theology. It was also a response to the heavy price that the mutakallimun had paid in the period preceding the mihna.

Al-Ma’mun’s criticism of the self-styled Sunnis in his first mihna letter hints at these persecutions. One of his most important observations is that in the years preceding the mihna an aggressive campaign was waged against his allies. This point is raised in several parts of the letter, though in a somewhat obscure manner. In his descriptions of the self-styled “adherents of the sunna,” Al-Ma’mun points out two of their characteristics: First, they falsely believe themselves to be “people of divine truth.”[50] With this, I presume, Al-Ma’mun could live. The second characteristic, his enemies’ assertion “that all others are people of false beliefs, infidelity and schism,”[51] was much more difficult to put up with. These accusations, which the muhaddithun aimed at their intellectual opposition, indicate that the muhaddithun were intolerant of interpretations of Islam other than their own, and that they

played a zero-sum game: either a scholar accepted their religious outlook or he was excluded from the scholarly milieu and, in certain instances, from the Islamic community altogether. In more concrete terms, al-Ma’mun’s remark refers to a protracted campaign on the part of the self-styled Sunnis, who accused their intellectual and ideological rivals of infidelity (kufr).

Al-Ma’mun was outraged by the self-styled Sunnis’ conduct, and in his fury he wrote that they are “the tongue of Iblis, who speaks through his companions and strikes terror into the hearts of his adversaries, the people of God’s own religion.”[52] Here, as before, al-Ma’mun divided the Islamic community into two factions. The bad guys, whom al-Ma’mun labels self-styled “adherents of the sunna” and I identify as muhaddithun, are described as “the tongue of Iblis.” The good guys, to whom al-Ma’mun belonged and I identify as the mutakallimun, are described as “the people of God’s own religion.” The new piece of information that al-Ma’mun adds to this dichotomy is a reference to the terror that the companions of Iblis (i.e., the muhaddithun) struck in the hearts of “the people of God’s own religion.” This is a dramatic accusation and a key to understanding the mihna’s background. What did al-Ma’mun have in mind when he used the word “terror”?

I believe that when al-Ma’mun accused his opponents of terrorizing his allies, he was referring to the attempts by the muhaddithun to marginalize and discredit the mutakallimun and exclude them from the professional milieu and even from the overall Islamic social fabric. The muhaddithun used two forms of sanctions. First, they put up social barriers between the mutakallimun and the rest of the community. For example, there were pronouncements by proto-Sunni ‘ulama’ that prohibited marriage or praying behind theological deviants.[53] Second, they applied professional sanctions against the mutakallimun. By resorting to a mechanism of supervision known as ‘ilm al-rijal, they succeeded in weeding out from the circles of hadith transmitters the followers of various theological and political trends—Qadaris, Murji’is, Shi’is, and Khawarij.[54]For example, around the end of the second century a.h., they discredited numerous Qadaris such as Mu’adh b. Hisham (d. 200/815), ‘Abad b. Mansur

(d. 152/ 769), and Thaur b. Yazid (d. 155/ 774), and in some cases brought to their eviction from the ranks of hadith transmitters.[55] After marginalizing scholars that ascribed to theological and political ideas that clashed with evolving Sunni ideas, the muhaddithun were able to shape the pliant religious doctrine of Islam.

According to our present state of knowledge it seems that the first books on ‘ilm al-rijal were composed during the first decades of the third century A.H.[56] However, scholars that have studied the development of ‘ilm al-rijal have observed that expertise in this field and the circulation of information about transmitters of hadith began in the second century a.h. In his monumental study, Muslim Studies, I. Goldziher writes:

Only when the invention of partisan and tendentious traditions had prevailed did anxious theologians pay closer attention to the informants of each saying with a view to making the validity of the hadith dependant on their quality. It seems to have been in the time of Ibn ‘Awn (d. 151), Shu’ba (d. 160), ‘Abdallah b. Mubarak (d. 181) and others of their contemporaries that criticism of the authorities begins.[57]

The founders of this branch of knowledge, which examines transmitters of hadith critically, died in the middle of the second century a.h., suggesting that criticism of transmitters was circulating between experts in the first half of the second century a.h. Much in line with this periodization that Goldziher offers, G. H. A. Juynboll assumes that “the starting date of systematic rijal criticism in Islam” was at about 130/747.[58]

The information that hadith critics collected about transmitters was of various kinds: biographical details (birth, death, teachers, disciples); intellectual ability (memory or loss of memory, the branches of knowledge mastered (hadith, fiqh, and ‘ilm al-rijal); theological beliefs; and jurisprudential approach. Clearly, anyone who mastered this field of knowledge had tremendous power in his hands because he could determine the professional reputation of each and every

scholar and bring about his expulsion from the ranks of the scholarly community.

A brief glance at three scholars who died before the mihna was initiated can give us an idea of how ‘ilm al-rijal experts discussed the theological beliefs and jurisprudential outlook of their colleagues.

Abu Yusuf (d. 182), the chief qadi under Harun al-Rashid, was Ibn Hanbal’s first teacher. Nothing about Abu Yusuf’s behavior seems to have bothered Ibn Hanbal when he began his career. Later in his life, however, Ibn Hanbal was not very comfortable with this biographical detail and he remarked: “Abu Yusuf is the first (teacher) on whose authority I wrote hadith and I do not transmit on his authority.”[59] Ibn Hanbal distanced himself from his teacher because of Abu Yusuf’s jurisprudence: “Abu Yusuf is truthful (saduq) but it is inappropriate to transmit anything on the authority of the pupils (ashab) of Abu Hanifa.”[60] These remarks give us some idea of the scrutiny that each scholar underwent. But more important, they reveal the danger of being affiliated with the ahl al-ra’y (adherents of private opinion) who were often associated with the ashab of Abu Hanifa.[61] For certain scholars, even those who had been his students, Abu Yusuf’s jurisprudence was reason enough to marginalize him retrospectively.

Another problematic teacher was ‘Ali b. Hashim al-Burayd (d. 179).[62] Al-Burayd was known to have Shi’i sympathies. Some scholars, among them Ibn Hanbal, considered this a problem but were willing to transmit on his authority. Others thought his Shi’i sympathies went too far and, as a result, included his name in the Kitab al-Majruhin, a book that surveys problematic transmitters and elaborates their faults.[63] Another teacher whose ideological affiliation was problematic was Abu Mu’awiyyah (d. 185/195), the leader of the Murji’a in Kufa.[64]

The biographical dictionaries, which furnish us with information about these three scholars as well as thousands of others, drew information from numerous contributors. They are the written residue of ceaseless oral

exchanges. ‘Ilm al-rijal constituted a constant flow of information that was verified and put to use in a manner that determined the professional relations between scholars. It is safe to assume that every scholar contributed to it, that every scholar was scrutinized by it, and that it touched on every issue that was deemed relevant to a scholar’s career. These discussions, in which scholars examined their colleagues, constituted a field of internal discourse, and served as a means of ensuring that unacceptable beliefs would not enter the belief system of Islam. If new beliefs were introduced, the scholars who embraced them knew they risked exclusion from the scholarly community. I would therefore conclude that ‘ilm al-rijal was a highly effective means of shaping the belief system of the ‘ulama’ and, as a consequence, the opinions and beliefs of the public. Al-Ma’mun realized that the muhaddithun’s control of ‘ilm al-rijal was the reason behind the mutakallimun‘s defeat in the battle over public opinion and thus initiated the mihna.

*** Conclusion

Historians of the early ‘Abbasid era have noted that during that period the relations between the caliphs and the ‘ulama’ were, for the most part, untroubled. Some of these historians assume that behind the serene facade lurked hidden tensions, while others emphasized the cooperation between the caliphs and the ‘ulama’.[65] The revisionist interpretation of the mihna presented here is close to the latter. It assumes that the caliphs and ‘ulama’ acquired for themselves a hold on different spheres of influence and that both sides understood that the articulation of religious dogma was the domain of the ‘ulama’. In light of this division of influence and the cooperation between the caliphs and ‘ulama’, it is argued that the mihna is the outcome of religious clashes between different trends of thought among the ‘ulama’, and much less so, a consequence of the caliphs’ will to shape doctrine.

This interpretation emphasizes factional strife among the ‘ulama’ and the efforts of each trend to forge public opinion. It assumes that the articulation of doctrine by the ‘ulama’ was

not a serene process since it was accompanied by confrontations between the varying ideological movements. Therefore, to understand the mihna and the dynamics within the public sphere, it is crucial to uncover how the different factions of ‘ulama’ built their power and how they used it.

Power in ‘ulama’ circles, was based on control of ‘ilm al-rijal. This was the medium by which scholars determined the status of their colleagues, and in some cases it was used to exclude scholars from the scholarly community. It was a fascinating system of self-supervision, in which every scholar was both supervisor and supervised. As details about scholars were passed by word of mouth, scholars who accumulated this knowledge and were considered authoritative experts in this field, had in their hands a devastatingly powerful tool. One of the consequences of this activity was the exclusion of whole groups and ideological trends from the community of believers.[66]

‘Ilm al-rijal was an effective tool for the shaping of public opinion. It determined the standing of scholars, and as a consequence the validity of the ideas they propounded, as well as the reception and dissemination of these ideas within the whole community. Historically, caliphs and their officials did not participate in this arena, as their opinions carried no weight in such matters. Against this background, the mihna can be perceived as an attempt to diverge from this policy of nonintervention and to retaliate against the effects of ‘ilm al-rijal, by supporting its victims. However, the caliphs failed, and their unsuccessful intervention in ‘ulama’ politics backfired on two levels. The first, it probably served as a warning sign to future caliphs and led to the decrease of their involvement in the partisan politics of the ‘ulama’. The second, the mutakallimun, whom the court supported throughout the mihna, were dealt a decisive political blow from which they never recovered. Though their doctrine and intellectual tradition were kept alive two or three centuries after the mihna, their leaders rarely acquired political influence after this episode. As a consequence, the hold of the ‘ulama’ on doctrinal aspects of the Islamic public sphere was strengthened, and within the ‘ulama’, the burgeoning Sunni element also grew stronger.

*** Notes

I would like to thank the participants of the workshop “The Public Sphere in Muslim Societies,” held at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, for their remarks and comments.

[26] Habermas 1989, Calhoun 1994, Chartier 1991.

[27] Habermas 1989, 2.

[28] Chartier 1991, 20

[29] For a general overview of mihna see Hinds, EI²; on the interrogation of Ibn Hanbal during the mihna see Patton 1897; on the controversy over the createdness of the Qur’an see Madelung 1974; for a survey of modern historiography of the mihna see Nawas 1994.

[30] For a survey on Sunni attitudes toward kalam see Pavlin 1996. On the pre-mihna era see idem. 105–106. For a short remark on the tensions between the mutakallimun and muhaddithun see Pines 1996, 74. On this subject see also below.

[31] Crone and Hinds 1980, 93, observe that there were no confrontations between the caliphs and the ‘ulama’ in the early ‘Abbasid period, although they believe a confrontation was in the cards during that period. Zaman 1997, 102, 105, points out that up to al-Ma’mun, ‘Abbasid caliphs did not challenge the authority of the ‘ulama’.

[32] The caliphs’ change in attitude toward the mihna is noted in Zaman 1997, 112.

[33] On Ibn Abi Du’ad see K. V. Zettersteen and Ch. Pellat, EI²; for an interesting presentation of his contribution to the Mu’tazila see Ibn al-Nadim (d. end of fourth century a.h.; tenth century a.d.) 1970, 409. For an argument that he was not a Mu’tazili see Van Ess 1992, 481.

[34] Zaman 1997, 105.

[35] Ibid.

[36] For a similar reading of Abu Yusuf’s (d. 182/798) tract see Zaman 1997, 91–101.

[37] Abu Yusuf 1969, 35.

[38] Ibid., 39

[39] Ibid., 37.

[40] al-Tabari (d. 310/923) 1987, 200.

[41] Ibid., 201.

[42] Ibid., 202.

[43] Ibid.

[44] For a more detailed presentation of ‘Im al-rijal see below.

[45] Ibn Ahmad, Salih (d. 266/880) 1981, 56, 59, 60; Ibn Ishaq, Hanbal (d. 273/886) 1977, 49; for a Mu’tazili description of this interrogation see al-Jahiz, Abu ‘Uthman ‘Amr b. Bahr (d. 255/869) 1979, vol. 1, 292–96.

[46] Ibn Ishaq, Hanbal 1977, 51; Ibn Ahmad, Salih 1981, 56.

[47] Ibn Ishaq, Hanbal 1977, 51; a similar reply appears in Ibn Ahmad, Salih 1981, 56.

[48] al-Tabari 1987, 203.

[49] al-Jahiz 1979, vol. 1, 298.

[50] al-Tabari 1987, 202.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 203.

[53] Ibn Ahmad, ‘Abdallah (d. 290/903) 1986, 103–106.

[54] For a statistical study of the decline in sectarian transmitters of Prophetic traditions see Melchert 1992. On the pressure that was placed by the muhaddithun upon the mutakallimun see the remarks by the Mu’tazili writer al-Jahiz 1979, vol. 3, 283–89. Even though al-Jahiz and al-Ma’mun do not mention ‘Im al-rijal, the practices

that they attribute to the muhaddithun and their consequences fit this label.

[55] On all three see Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 852/1449) 1984. For Mu’adh b. Hisham see vol. 10, 196–97; for ‘Abad b. Mansur see vol. 5, 104–105; for Thaur b. Yazid see vol. 2, 33–35.

[56] Juynboll 1983, 164, 165.

[57] Goldziher 1971, 135.

[58] Juynboll 1983, 20.

[59] al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463/1072) 1966, vol. 14, 259.

[60] Ibid., 259, 260.

[61] Abu Hanifa and many of his disciples were reputed to have embraced theological ideas of the mutakallimun.

[62] Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi 1966, vol. 12, 116, 117; Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Ahmad b. ‘Ali 1984, vol. 1, 63.

[63] Ibn Hibban, Muhammad (d. 354/965) 1976, vol. 2, 110.

[64] Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani 1984, vol. 9, 120–22.

[65] On hidden tensions see Crone 1980, 77; On cooperation see Zaman 1997, 12.

[66] Melchert 1992.

** Chapter Two: Religious Leadership and Associations in the Public Sphere of Seljuk Baghdad

DAPHNA EPHRAT

During the eleventh century emerging social associations and institutions developed in Islamic societies to disseminate religious knowledge (‘ilm), apply the Islamic religious law (the shari’a), and harness mysticism. During this century, a period often called the “Sunni revival,” the four Sunni schools of law (the madhahib, sing. madhhab) were consolidated, the nuclei of the Sufi brotherhoods were formed, and the religious sciences colleges (madaris, sing. madrasa) and Sufi centers for devotion and learning (khawaniq, sing. khanqah, or rubut, sing. ribat), were founded. These developments took place against the background of the ‘Abbasid caliphate’s disintegration— process that began as early as the late ninth century—and the subsequent rise to power in the early eleventh century of a new Turkish sultanate, the Great Seljuks.[67]

This chapter, in seeking to evaluate the significance of religious leadership and associations in the public sphere, addresses several questions: to what extent did the religious leadership and the groupings that grew up around it enjoy autonomy vis-0-vis the central authorities, that is, develop and restructure according to their own dynamics, independent of the official sphere? Did the political rulers intervene in religious matters at all? Were the madhahib the nuclei of public sphere arenas and the focus of solidarity for local communities? What were the bases of solidarity that bound members of the legal schools together? Did the character and

operation of religious association as an arena of public sphere undergo changes over time? These questions will be dealt with in the particular context of Seljuk Baghdad (from the Seljuk conquest of the city in 1055 to the dissolution of the Great Seljuks' empire in the mid-twelfth century). Significantly, the city of Baghdad, which more than any other Islamic city suffered from the upheavals and instability of this century, featured prominently in the madhahib's process of consolidation and the development of the madrasa into its "mature" form. Indeed, the madaris founded in Baghdad in the late eleventh century represented a new form of organization. For the first time schools were founded on the large Islamic endowments (waqfs) that had been given in perpetuity for the teaching of the law according to one of the four Sunni madhahib (the Shafi'i, Hanafi, Hanbali, and Maliki). The substantial waqfs endowed by the founders, often the Seljuk viziers and sultans, paid the salaries of the teachers and stipends for students, thereby increasing the new schools' attraction.[68]

Eleventh-century Baghdad, it is also important to note, was a city in which all four Sunni law schools were represented, and which retained its position as a major religious and intellectual center, a magnet for aspiring students, even as its central political and economic role was eroded. As the seat of the 'Abbasid caliphs and representatives of the Seljuk sultans, the caliphal city remained a major center of government as well.

*** The 'Ulama' and The Official Sphere

Historians of medieval Islamic societies have largely agreed that with the emergence of the Seljuks as the new ruling elite in the central lands of Islam, patronage and sponsorship of Sunni religious institutions and the religious scholars, the 'ulama', reached unprecedented heights. This policy was nowhere more clearly revealed than in the foundation of madaris on substantial endowments, and the employment of their graduates as religious and civil officials. Given their traditional status in Islamic societies and the nature of the ruling elite during this period, the choice of the 'ulama' as benefactors of state patronage should not seem surprising. Deriving their moral authority and their standing from the shari'a, they were the sole civilian elite that could bridge

the gap between the alien Turkish military elite and the indigenous population. Moreover, the ‘ulama’ could legitimize the Seljuk regime by enjoining obedience on the local population, as well as by performing a host of tangible and intangible services for the government. The heterogeneous character of their socioeconomic background and networks, and their close ties with the urban populace, further strengthened the position of the ‘ulama’ as a “glue,” intermediaries between the rulers and their subjects. For the ‘ulama’ came from, or had representatives in, all segments of the society, including the ruling elite.[69]

The ‘ulama’ of Seljuk Baghdad appear in our sources as administrators of mosques, schools, and orphanages—functions that put them in control of great corporate wealth. Occasionally, they also acted as patrons of local groups and spokesmen of the populace. They were, on several levels, a powerful political presence, taken very seriously by the political rulers, who sought their advice and support. Their ties with the urban populace took a variety of forms. As teachers they instructed the general Muslim community in the fundamentals of their religion. As qadis they administered religious law; as muftis they expounded this law by issuing fatwas (legal opinions). As pious and charismatic leaders they considered themselves responsible for correct Islamic behavior. As a group they shared an ethic of public service, providing educational, religious, and legal guidance for the Muslim community. Phrases such as “he informed the people” (afada al-nas), “the people derived benefit from him” (intafa’a al-nas bihi), and “he educated the people with fatwas” (‘arafa al-nas bi’l-fatwa) appear frequently in the biographies of ‘ulama’ of this period.[70] Accounts of ‘ulama’ deeply dedicated to public service further convey the impression of a group closely linked to the urban populace and playing a vital role in daily community life. Many ‘ulama’ are praised for their generosity to the poor. They are reported to have supported the needy from their own pockets or given them a portion of their income, and to have collected the poor tax (zakawat) and alms (sadaqat) and distributed the money to their poor followers (ashab).[71]

In the view of several scholars, while enhancing the position of the ‘ulama’ in the public sphere, state patronage—primarily

through the foundation of madaris and employment of their graduates—sowed the seeds for the creation of a religious establishment incorporated into the governmental apparatus and dependent on the military ruling elite. To fulfill their religious and social roles, the ‘ulama’ depended not only on the central government for protection against external enemies but also on gifts and endowments supplied by the military elite, who controlled and manipulated the main resources of the society. The underlying assumption here is that the madaris were state instruments intended to control institutions of learning that would give the political rulers influence over the ‘ulama’.[72]

An inquiry into the pattern of appointment to lucrative posts—qadis in the main courts, teachers (mudarrisun, sing. mudarris) in the great colleges — and the prerogatives of their holders, is one way to assess the autonomy of ‘ulama’ placed at the head of the religious institutions vis-ɒ-vis the political rulers. To be sure, in theory, it was the political rulers—Seljuk sultans and their viziers—who appointed the qadi and the mudarris, paid their salaries, and dismissed them at will. However, the pattern of appointment, if there was any definite pattern, seems to have depended on personal ties between an individual patron and a particular religious scholar, rather than on ties of patronage binding the ‘ulama’ as a group to the official sphere.[73] Moreover, the biographies of the appointees reveal that in practice these appointments confirmed an existing leadership rather than created a new one. A considerable number of scholars who taught in the madaris of Seljuk Baghdad and served as qadis in the city’s courts had already acquired renown as great scholars of religious law in their time; these included the heads of the schools of law and the chief qadis of Baghdad and its environs. In fact, appointments to the posts of qadi and mudarris may even have been subject to the decision of the holders of these positions, who would naturally recommend their most qualified and closest disciples. Whether or not mudarrisun and qadis actually nominated their own successors, our sources attest that many disciples who were closely associated with their masters did eventually succeed them in their positions.[74] Yet the involvement of the ‘ulama’ in the appointment process could go beyond mere suggestions regarding which of their disciples were appropriate for teaching or judicial positions. In their endeavor to

further their control over such important sources of patronage, the most reputable and powerful scholars passed their positions on to their own sons and relatives. This phenomenon of inherited high-ranking religious posts, already apparent in the late eleventh century, became more evident in the course of the subsequent century, the period that initiated the decline of the Seljuk Empire. Members of the ruling elite continued to build and endow madaris and assign scholars to religious institutions. However, as a result of the growing weakness of the central authorities, the ties of patronage between the rulers and the ‘ulama’ loosened and Baghdadi ‘ulama’ came to enjoy greater freedom in the choice of their successors and the administration of the religious institutions in general.[75]

Once a scholar was appointed to the post of teacher of the law in the madrasa he seemed to enjoy complete freedom in the admission of students, the sequence and method of all instruction, and the choice of treatises. Although the madrasa was founded for the teaching of the traditional religious and legal sciences (to the exclusion of the so-called “ancient,” rational sciences), what a professor taught was not closely regulated. He would teach what he knew, and there are no examples of a trustee (nazir, mutawalli)—the administrator of the waqf by which the madrasa was founded—complaining about the study content or reprimanding or dismissing a mudarris because he taught the “wrong books” or in the “wrong way.” Thus, there were teachers who, in their partiality to the rationalist fields, would teach them under the guise of the traditional Islamic sciences or through the ancillary subject of the popular sermon (wa’z), which in the Shafi’i madaris bore a theological message of a rationalist Ash’ari message. We can learn about such attempts primarily from accounts of the objections of the Hanbalis, who headed the movement of “the people of hadith” (ahl al-hadith).[76]

Although more dependent than the mudarris on the political rulers for his employment and status, the qadi enjoyed no less freedom in the administration of the shar’i court and the judicial procedures than did the mudarris in the instruction of the law in the madrasa. The sultan would appoint the

qadi over the shar’i court while exercising “administrative” justice in the civil court (the mazalim) personally or through his agents. The law administered in the qadi’s court, as well as the rules of evidence and procedure, were those laid down in the shari’a. The qadi enjoyed full freedom in the administration of the shar’i law; there is no evidence of members of the ruling elite intervening in the application of the law. Held in a mosque, in his residence, or in some other duly appointed place, the qadi’s court was concerned primarily with family lawsuits and matters of personal status: the settlement of litigation, the execution of testaments, and matters of inheritance, escheat, and transfer of property. Taken together, the qadi’s roles and prerogatives made him a crucial figure in the public sphere of Seljuk Baghdad. Apart from his strictly judicial functions, the qadi was responsible for the administration of the affairs of orphans, widows, and others legally incapacitated. Moreover, the chief qadi (qadi al-qudat) was usually entrusted with the “general supervision” (nazar ‘amm) of pious endowments, in particular in mosques, and the estates of orphans and other persons, as well as with the supervision of officials in the legal administration, notably the market inspector (muhtasib). His supervision of the mosques sometimes included the power to nominate the preacher of the Friday sermon (khatib) and leader of the public prayer (imam), though in Baghdad the khatibship was often secured for the Hashimites, descendants of the clan of Muhammad. With regard to the administration and supervision of the endowments supporting madaris, there were a variety of practices during the Seljuk period. If the founder had not appointed a controller-supervisor of the endowment (nazir), the chief qadi administered the waqf directly; if, however, as happened in Seljuk Baghdad, each of these endowments had its private controller, the chief judge merely exercised general supervision over the administration of the waqfs.[77]

Due to the prestige and public respect enjoyed by the chief qadi, and the qadis in general, they occasionally acted as envoys and mediators. Already in 433/1041 the caliph, al-Qa’im, sent the famous qadi Abu al-Hasan Al-Mawardi as his envoy to the Seljuk chieftain Tughril Bey to inquire into conditions in the domains

conquered by the Seljuks or the object of their future expansionist intentions.[78] After the establishment of Seljuk rule in Baghdad, leading ‘ulama’—chief qadi s, in particular-wee sent by the caliphs to intercede with state officials who overstepped their authority in Baghdad or oppressed the local population. For example, in 495/1101, when strife between the Baghdadi populace and the head of the local police (shihna) broke out, the caliph sent ad-Damaghani, the chief judge, to intercede.[79] In addition, chief qadis came to be involved in the contraction of marriage alliances between the houses of the caliph and the sultan, a matter that had significant political implications. Still, the most significant political role of the chief qadi was his participation in the oath-taking ceremony (bay’a), which confirmed the appointment and authority of a new caliph, at the side of the vizier, the head of the army, and other high military dignitaries. Following the conquest of Baghdad by the Shi’i Buyids (in 945) and throughout the Saljuk period, the chief qadi maintained this prerogative.[80]

If not through official appointment to high-ranking positions, was it through the incorporation of the ‘ulama’ into the official sphere that the political rulers created and dominated a religious establishment? My investigation has shown that apart from the ‘ulama’ assuming offices in the qadi- ship—a special category between religious scholarship and governmental service—the number of religious scholars who entered state bureaucracy as chancery and fiscal officials was relatively small. Thus, the ‘ulama’ of Seljuk Baghdad were far from being entirely integrated into the official sphere.[81] Rather, the overwhelming majority of the Baghdadi ‘ulama’ during this period were not employed by the state and did not hold any official religious or administrative positions. Among them were hundreds of hadith transmitters and teachers of the law in a variety of educational forums, who lived on individual donations and gifts or sustained their teaching activities with other professions (notably trade), and the muftis, who acted independently of all outside powers, especially governmental power. Muftis were not appointed by the state, their authority was based on their reputation as learned and pious men, their opinion had no official sanction, and a layman might resort to any scholar he knew and in whom he had confidence. During the Seljuk period the individual soliciting the mufti for his legal opinion remunerated him; but many

muftis performed the service without charging a fee, especially when they had other means of support.[82]

Doubts about whether to associate with the government at all, which had characterized their predecessors under the ‘Abbasids, continued to disturb many ‘ulama’ during the Seljuk period and probably increased as a result of the nature of the ruling elite and the growing ties of patronage between the political rulers and the ‘ulama’. Such reoccurring phrases as “to pursue worldly success” (talab al-dunya), “to meddle in worldly matters” (dahkhl fi ashghal al-dunya), or “to mingle with the people of the world” (khalt abna’ Al-dunya) convey the criticism and disrespect felt toward ‘ulama’ who associated with men of wealth and power. In contrast, refusal to accept the financial patronage of the rulers, and abstention from any connection with them, became a source of pride, respect, and prestige. In their competition for public esteem many ‘ulama’ thus placed a high value on separating themselves from the moral corruption that tainted the state’s acts. Indeed, even those who benefited from state patronage by accepting paid positions, such as that of qadi, distanced themselves from the political rulers and from court life. At the same time, in their endeavor to draw themselves closer to the urban population, these religious and civil officials would use the endowments and gifts supplied to them to assume the role of patrons and benefactors of the people.[83]

It may thus be argued that in the long run, rather than increasing their dependence on the political rulers, state patronage allowed the ‘ulama’ to carry out their social roles independently of the official sphere. They enjoyed autonomy not only in the institutions related to the application and transmission of Islamic religious law but in the public sphere of Seljuk Baghdad as a whole. Moreover, due to their centrality in the public sphere, the ‘ulama’— both those who benefited from state patronage and those who refused any endowments or gifts from the rulers—could put pressure on the political authorities to enforce the norms of the Islamic community (the umma) laid down in the shari’a, of which they were the acknowledged interpreters.

*** The Madhahib as Arenas of Public Sphere

By the twelfth century the four Sunni legal schools, the madhahib, had been consolidated as networks of masters and disciples, united on the ideological level by their adherence to the doctrines of their school’s founder and tied together socially by a variety of personal ties.[84] By that time Baghdad had become a major scene in the process of the crystallization of the Hanafi, Shafi’i, and Hanbali schools, both as legal bodies and as social networks. Members of these three legal schools dominated the application of religious law and transmission of the religious and legal sciences, though prominent representatives of the Maliki and Zahiri schools were still present in the city.[85] Most Shafi’i scholars in Seljuk Baghdad were transients and immigrants, drawn to the city primarily from Iran, as were many ‘ulama’ of the Hanafi school. In contrast, the Hanbali school in Baghdad during this period was dominated by native-born ‘ulama’ .[86]

Except for the ‘ulama’ of the Hanbali school of theology and law, which was often identified with the theological stream of ahl al-hadith, references to the theological inclinations of ‘ulama’ of the different legal schools are rare. What we do know, however, indicates that for the most part Ash’ari theology, which was often regarded as a compromise between rationalism and traditionalism, appealed to the Shafi’is, while those who inclined toward Mu’tazili rationalist theology were more likely to be Hanafis.[87]

Another difference among the Baghdadi madhahib relates to the kind of offices their scholars held and to their consequent relationships with the political rulers. Nearly a third of the Shafi’i and Hanafi scholars held paid civil and religious offices, often as professors in the madaris founded by the political rulers for legal scholars of the two schools, as well as various positions in the judiciary. The Shafi’is, who gained power under the vizierate of Nizam al-Mulk, predominated in the office of the mudarris. But after his death (in 1092), and up to the mid-twelfth century, the Hanafis were the most favored. The Hanbalis, who normally refrained from seeking the financial patronage of the political rulers, largely controlled the professorships in the great mosques as well as

the khatibships, positions that were not subsidized by the state.[88]

That by the twelfth century the majority of the Baghdadi ‘ulama’, and probably those of other Islamic cities as well, belonged to one or another of the legal schools is evidenced by the growing number of scholars who are referred to in biographical dictionaries by their affiliation (nisba) to a madhhab. However, there is as yet no way of estimating what percentage of lay persons identified themselves with a specific school, nor of estimating exactly what this affiliation meant. Did they look to its scholars for guidance on proper Islamic conduct, its witnesses to register contracts and marriages, and its judges to mediate disputes? Did they have customs, leaders, and patrons of their own?[89] Nor do we know much about the internal structure of the madhahib. Circles of teachers and their students, along with legal functionaries such as deputies, notaries, and clerks in the service of the qadis, probably made up the core of the schools. It is also possible that from this core membership the law schools branched out to include a larger number of people who adhered to them on the basis of birth or the traditional membership of their quarter; they may have prayed in the same mosque, studied in the same Qur’anic school or madrasa under the teachers of their respective madhahib, even married each other. Bab al-Basra is a good example of a quarter associated with a particular school of law. Yet, though generally considered to be the Hanbali section of town, members of all legal schools taught or studied in the quarter’s mosques as a matter of routine.[90] Only when attempts were made to preach Ash’arism in the mosque of al-Mansur—the stronghold of the Hanbali community—did it become an arena of conflict between the religiously defined factions.[91] Moreover, people tended to settle in quarters according to common professional pursuits and/or geographical origins.[92] The issue of the various schools as social organizations in specific residential quarters is thus complex, and the resulting picture unclear.

In trying to evaluate the extent to which the legal schools in Seljuk Baghdad became the organized bodies in which society was structured, however, a distinction should be made among the three legal schools dominating religious learning in the city. The difference between the madhahib in terms of geographical origins, theological

inclinations, and office holding must have affected the networks of social relations into which the schools' 'ulama' entered, and consequently their status and roles in the public sphere.

Since there are few biographical dictionaries of Hanafis, it would be difficult to describe any general features of this school in Baghdad. The many Shafi'i biographies, however, convey the portrait of an exclusive, elitist group of legal scholars, immersed in intensive study and transmission of the law in their study circles, teaching mosques, and madaris. It is also important to bear in mind that the majority of Shafi'is in Baghdad came from elsewhere, primarily the provinces of eastern Iran. Some settled in Baghdad and gained a reputation in their own small scholarly groupings, others moved to other Islamic cities or returned to their hometowns. To judge from the letter sent by al-Shirazi, the leader (imam) of the Shafi'is in Baghdad, to the Seljuk vizier (cited below), the school remained a minority community, unable to put down roots in the caliphal city and attract a large local following. The inclination of some leading 'ulama' of the school toward Ash'arism, and even more important, their financial patronage by the political rulers primarily through the foundation of madaris, certainly did not contribute to their popularity, serving instead as a pretext for their criticism by the Hanbalis and their followers. Naturally, the acceptance of paid religious and civil positions by many scholars of both the Shafi'i and Hanafi schools involved a certain degree of association with the political rulers. In contrast, only rarely do we find any references in their biographies to their association with other social groups, such as merchants or the common people.

Hanbalism—a school of law and theology—was the most localized and inclusive of the Baghdadi schools.[93] Preserving the old, informal style of scholarly association, the school was open to a relatively large number of part-time scholars, from various professional and social "classes," committed to the study and transmission of the Prophetic traditions. From its circles of masters and disciples, Baghdadi Hanbalism thus reached out to include a community of followers from among the unlearned people to become a genuinely popular movement.

Driven primarily by religious motives, Hanbali preachers and theologians sought a remedy for the decline of the ‘Abbasid caliphate and its capital by insisting on morality and individual action to combat religious and social unwarranted innovations (bid’a). It was this view of Islam’s glorious past, as well as the distance many kept from the government, that helped their movement gain many supporters.[94] Phrases such as “he guided the people” (sada Al-nas), “the people adhered to him” (‘akafa al-nas bihi), and the “Sunni gained victory with him” (intasara bihi ahl al-sunna), which appear in biographies of Hanbali ‘ulama’ as a matter of course, convey the impression of a group highly regarded by the populace and cultivating a large following.[95] Since they avoided the patronage of the political rulers, the Hanbalis depended on personal support among the school’s adherents to finance their activities and help the needy. Shaykhs with private means and wealthy patrons and supporters of the school founded educational institutions and provided financial support to teachers and students. Among the most generous benefactors of the Baghdadi Hanbalis was the wealthy merchant Shaykh al-Ajjal Abu Mansur b. Yusuf. Upon his death, a group of Hanbalis went to his grave, rubbed their cheeks against it, and cried: “O Master! ... Whom do we have who will assist the Muslims after you? In whom shall we seek refuge after seeking it in God?”[96] Designed to cater for the everyday needs of the school’s followers, such patronage undoubtedly reinforced the social identity and unity of the Hanbali school. Hence the importance of investigating the informal social practices that lie beyond the organizational forms.

Several historians have suggested that the foundation of the madrasa as a formally organized college for a particular school of law might have lent the madhahib a greater unity and identity, thereby contributing to their process of consolidation. United hitherto by the international system of scholarly connections, the legal schools found a new mode of organization for their legal instruction, religious propaganda, and political action.[97] Obviously, this interpretation of the social effect of the establishment of madaris is at odds with the view—frequently repeated in the literature—describing the transmission of religious lore as a highly personal process, one dependent entirely upon the relationships between individual shaykhs and their disciples.[98] Given this primary characteristic of the transmission of ‘ilm, scholarly groupings that constituted the core of the madhahib

constructed their identities and loyalties around renowned shaykhs, rather than around educational institutions.[99] The situation in Seljuk Baghdad seems to have conformed to the latter description; the madaris had not yet come to monopolize or even dominate religious learning. Nor were the new schools centers around which scholarly networks were formed and crystallized. Rather, the transmission of Islamic learning and the social ties that grew up around it took place in a variety of study circles (halaqat, sing. halqa) convened wherever a celebrated shaykh sat.[100] It is noteworthy that the ‘ulama’ of the Hanbali school, the most coherent madhhab of all, were the last to adopt the madrasa as a teaching institution, and even when they did, most of the school’s teaching and preaching activities continued to take place outside the madrasa. As for the Shafi’is, given the absence both of traditional, well-established Shafi’i forums in Baghdad, and a large following amongst the Baghdadi urban populace, the madaris founded for them probably played a role in establishing and ensuring the position of their madhhab in the city. The Shafi’is and their local followers would rally around their madaris, thereby stressing their madhhab affiliation in the face of threat and danger— notably when the Hanbalis mobilized their following to wage a struggle against the Shafi’is following the latters’ attempt to preach Ash’arism in their madaris. In a letter sent by al-Shirazi (the schools’ leader) to the caliph’s vizier Fakhr Al-Dawla on one of these occasions, he complained, “[The Shafi’is] are but a small community, which enjoys neither sufficient followers nor governmental support to challenge their opponents. They therefore gather in their madrasa [the Nizamiyya madrasa], which was erected to serve their small community as a home (dar) and a place of refuge (malja’) in good and bad times.”[101]

Indeed, it was primarily on shared theological and moral concepts that the ties of social solidarity among the adherents of a madhhab were based, rather than, as one might have expected, on legal interpretation per se.[102] This further explains why the Hanbalis achieved greater coherence. While within the other legal schools there was still dissension between the rationalists (ashab al-ra’y, or Mu’tazilites), and the traditionalists (ahl al-hadith), the Hanbalis formulated a rather uniform position in matters of theology, dogma, and morality. Consequently, Hanbali preachers and theologians succeeded in becoming the dominant

force in the movement for the restoration of Sunnism from its beginning in the late tenth century.

Thus, the Hanbalis, who were relatively removed from the ruling elite and its resources, developed to a greater extent than the other madhahib in

Seljuk Baghdad a social organization around their networks of masters and disciples. This is not to say that the Shafi’i and Hanafi schools did not develop and restructure according to their own dynamics, or that their scholars did not play significant social roles as teachers, muftis, and qadis, as well as patrons and leaders of local groups.[103] Still, given their association with the political rulers, the elitist nature of their scholarly networks, and the theological dissension within their ranks, they did not develop into social organizations similar to that of the Hanbalis in Seljuk Baghdad.

*** The Dynamics of Religious Factionalism

During the eleventh century the city of Baghdad still suffered from the severe religious factionalism whose origins can be traced back to the time of the “inquisition” (mihna) in the early ninth century. By the tenth century the Hanbalis had become the most vigorous and dynamic sub-faction among the Sunni population of Baghdad. At the heart of the conflict between the Hanbalis and their rivals in the caliphal city was the old disagreement between ahl al-hadith and ahl al-ra’y over the status of rational investigation. Fearing that rational inquiry into divine revelation would detract from the perfect integrity of the simple original faith, the Hanbalis led the movement of ahl Al-hadith, which insisted on finding hadith solutions to legal and theological questions whenever possible. Hence, in addition to taking it upon themselves to persecute the Shi’a, Hanbali popular leaders and theologians were occupied in fighting rationalism of all shades, trying to enforce their rigid orthodoxy on Baghdadi society, and honing the boundaries between the religiously defined groups. During the second half of the

eleventh century the Hanbalis of Baghdad fought against the Ash’aris, deriving their support primarily from among the city’s lower classes.[104]

One of the most violent attacks of this kind occurred when the famous Ash’ari theologian and preacher Abu Nasr al-Qushayri al-Nishapuri arrived in Baghdad on his way to the hajj in 469/1076 and preached in the Nizamiyya madrasa, mixing theological remarks with his sermon. Mobilizing the masses, a group of Hanbalis waged a merciless war against the Shafi’is, accusing them of leaning toward Ash’arism. The riots were so violent that they are described in the sources as a fitna (lit. civil strife, rebellion). As the fitna intensified and a member of the Shafi’i school was killed, the Shafi’is fled to the Nizamiyya and closed its gates.[105] One poet, a witness to the violent riots, wrote to Nizam al-Mulk pleading with him to put an end to the fitna. “Order and security in the city have crumbled,” the poet warned, “... the soldiers are fighting one another ... and the people of Baghdad are oppressed and their honor has been trampled.”[106] The vizier then ordered that the Ash’ari preacher be removed from his lectern in the Nizamiyya and sent back home.[107] Again, in 475/1082, the Ash’ari theologian al-Bakri, who had previously accused the Hanbalis of heresy, was prevented by order of the vizier from preaching Ash’arism in the mosque of al-Mansur.[108] Several years later, in 484/1091, while visiting Baghdad, Nizam al-Mulk convened a group of Hanbalis to inquire into the theological debate between the Shafi’i and Hanbali schools regarding the Divine attributes. Ibn al-Jawzi, the Hanbali historian, responded to the accusation by the Shafi’is of the Hanbali anthropomorphization of God (tashbih, tajsim): “Those who associate with the political rulers and seek worldly benefits (talab al-dunya) have no right to fight us over theological questions.”[109]

These and similar accounts raise the question of the intervention of the political authorities in the internal debates between the religiously defined factions in Seljuk Baghdad. In contrast with several ‘Abbasid caliphs before them, Seljuk sultans and their viziers rarely participated in religious life; they knew very little about theological and legal controversies and did not strive to define Sunnism according to a centrally espoused dogma.[110] After all, as an alien political elite, the Seljuks could not raise similar religiously based claims to authority in religious matters. Indeed, except for one effort to exert religious control during the vizierate of Amid al-Mulk al-Kunduri, who in 1048

charged all proponents of Ash’ari theology in Nishapur with being heretical innovators, the Seljuks refrained from taking a stand in matters of local religious authority.[111] In other words, they did not strive to change the balance of power of the local factions. In a similar vein, Nizam al-Mulk’s preference for the Shafi’is as candidates for religious and civil offices was not intended to establish the Ash’ari “middle-road” orthodoxy, as has been asserted.[112] Nor was this preference designed to encourage the rivalries between the religiously defined factions in Baghdad, thereby strengthening the position of the central government vis-0-vis the ‘ulama’ .[113]

The main objective of Nizam al-Mulk and other members of the ruling elite was to put an end to, or at least reduce, the turmoil caused by debates among the local factions over proper creed and behavior. Hence, only when such debates involved large segments of the population posing a threat to public order, did the rulers step in to restore peace and order. On such occasions, they usually acted in favor of the religious faction that had already gained the largest local following. This may explain why, while patronizing the Shafi’is, Nizam al-Mulk took the side of the Hanbalis, their rivals in Baghdad, yielding to their demand to frustrate any attempt to preach Ash’arism in the city’s madaris and mosques.

During the last decades of the eleventh century, though still constituting a source of factionalism and causing occasional riots, the struggle against rationalism seems to have lost the vigor it had early in that century and consequently, its centrality in the public sphere. Simultaneously, a trend toward cooperation between ‘ulama’ of different schools of law and thought began to develop. In the unstable milieu created by the breakdown of the ‘Abbasid caliphate and the rise to power of an alien Turkish elite of military lords, there were ‘ulama’ who sought to maintain a unified Islamic community by delimiting a commonly accepted Sunni form of Islam and acting as a unified group. One of the most telling accounts attesting to collaboration for a common cause is that describing how al-Sharif Abu Ja’far, the head of the Hanbali faction, and Abu Ishaq al-Shirazi, the leader of the Shafi’i faction, struggled together against the spread of immorality, which was regarded as the reason for the great inundation of the year 464/1071. Mobilized by their shaykhs, the Hanbalis gathered in al-Qasr Mosque and called al-Shirazi and his followers to join

them in their struggle against prostitution, the charging of interest, and the drinking of wine. The two shaykhs demanded that the caliph, al-Qa’im, destroy the brothels and uproot the other iniquities of the local population. At the same time, a letter was sent to the Seljuk sultan informing him of this demand.[114]

The creation of a commotion by people or groups with common interests distinct from those of the ‘ulama’ was another cause for collaboration between ‘ulama’ of different schools. This was the case when in 473/1080 the cloth merchant ‘Abd al-Qahir al-Hashimi became leader of the local futuwwa (association of young men, fityan). Having proclaimed himself the chief secretary (katib) of the fityan, he tried to control membership in the association by issuing a certificate of admission to each new member and even attempted to extend his leadership over futuwwa organizations in other Muslim cities. Urged by a group of Hanbalis, the caliph’s vizier ordered the head of the police (shihna) to subdue the leader (ra’is) of the fityan. Several fuqaha’ from different schools then issued a legal opinion ordering the fityan to end their disturbance (fasad) .[115] While reflecting the fear of leading ‘ulama’ that the association might become a source of factionalism and public disorder, this sole account of their attitude toward local popular forces may also testify to their endeavor to control the public sphere in the face of emerging rival groups.

In the course of the twelfth century the spirit of tolerance among members of the madhahib grew, and their popular activism began to fade away. A more equal distribution of remuneration by the political rulers among the schools contributed to the reduction of tensions among them and to a mutual recognition of legitimacy. The foundation of educational institutions for the instruction of the Qur’an and the hadith (dar al-Qur’an and dar al-hadith) during the late twelfth century stressed the shared traditions of the legal schools. Finally in 631/1232-1233 the Mustansiriyya madrasa was founded in Baghdad, comprising four madaris for the teaching of the law according to the four madhahib. Although the madaris remained open to their own adherents, the advent and spread of the multiple-system

madrasa undoubtedly reduced the tensions among the schools and added a sense of unity among Sunni ‘ulama’.[116] However, given the weakness of the political authorities during the twelfth century, and the Seljuks’ noninterference in religious matters, the growing tolerance among the madhahib must have stemmed from a change in the internal dynamic of the ‘ulama’ themselves.

By the time the multisystem Mustansiriyya madrasa was founded in Baghdad, the debates over proper Islamic creed and behavior among the factions, named after the legal schools and led by their shaykhs, had faded away. Consequently, affiliation with the legal schools became increasingly formal, confined to the legal context. This change in the character and operation of the madhahib must have changed their position and role in the public sphere of Baghdad. Though leading ‘ulama’ within one or another of the madhahib continued to provide a variety of religious and social services for the Baghdadi Muslim community, at the end of the twelfth century the legal schools were no longer the leading factor in providing social affiliation and identity, and in creating a basis of factionalism.

*** Conclusion

While focusing on the character and operation of religious leadership and associations in Seljuk Baghdad, this chapter has attempted to foster an understanding of the forces and dynamics of the public sphere in Islamic societies of the post-‘Abbasid era. At first glance, Baghdad was governed by an alien elite of military lords who, in their endeavor to establish their position in the caliphal city and ensure the obedience of its populace, tried to gain influence over the ‘ulama’ at the head of religious institutions and associations. However, a closer examination of the triangle formed by the rulers, the ruled, and the ‘ulama’ yielded a much more complex picture. Religious leadership and ‘ulama’-led associations were little affected by the policies of the Seljuks. Indeed, even ‘ulama’ who were incorporated into the official sphere carried out their religious and social roles independently of the political authorities. Being the sole group that could legitimize the alien regime, and as mediators between the rulers and the ruled, the position of the ‘ulama’

vis-0-vis the political authorities in the city’s public sphere was enhanced. Though lacking formal organization and means of coercion at their disposal, leading ‘ulama’ (the Hanbalis in particular) played a major role in the organization and shaping of communal life and became the foci of associations. The character of religious leadership and associations underwent changes in the course of the Seljuk period. At the heart of this process was the transformation of the legal schools from social solidarity groups into rigid professional bodies engaged in rigorous instruction and application of the Islamic religious law. By granting equal remuneration to the madhahib’s scholars in order to reduce the tensions among them, the rulers played a role in this process. But changes in the character and operation of religious leadership and association resulted from the changing dynamics within this group of ‘ulama’ itself.

In the late twelfth century a new religiously based social organization— the Sufi (mystic) brotherhoods, the turuq—assumed importance in the Baghdadi public sphere. Their beginnings had been modest, as religious and social life orbited around shaykhs who led an ascetic and exemplary life, refusing any worldly benefits. Significantly, authors of biographical dictionaries speak more about the outstanding zuhd (piety, asceticism) of these men than about their learning. They were endowed with baraka (divine blessing), performed miracles (karamat), and turned their residences (rubut) into centers of public preaching and distribution of charity as well as of pilgrimage to seek divine blessing.[117] Obviously strong links existed between a shaykh’s activities and his recognition in society; the more he provided for the spiritual and nonreligious needs of the common people, the more they gathered around him; the larger his following became, the more he was admired. Eventually, in the course of the thirteenth century, the Sufi brotherhoods were to replace the madhahib as the most significant religiously based and led social organizations in the public sphere. [118]

[67] For a perception of the eleventh century as a transitional period during which new forms of organization of religious and social life were laid see especially the introductory remarks and articles by Bosworth 1973, Bulliet

1973, Laoust 1973, and Mottahedeh 1973. See also Hodgson 1974, vol. 2, esp. 3, 8–9.

[68] The most important works on the madrasa are Makdisi 1961; 1971; 1981a.

[69] This is in concordance with the observations of Lapidus, who has offered us perhaps the most significant interpretation of the role and status of the ‘ulama’ in the later Middle Ages. Lapidus 1967, chapters 4 and 5; 1969, esp. 52–60. For a different interpretation see Bulliet 1972. Bulliet describes the ‘ulama’ of tenth-eleventh-century Nishapur as a civilian elite with “class” interests separate from those of other social categories, such as merchants and landowners. Made up of a small number of local families, this elite succeeded in guaranteeing its continuity by heredity. The different interpretations of the role and status of the ‘ulama’ must be related, at least to some extent, to the different political conditions in these cities. In contrast to Mamluk cities of the high Middle Ages, medieval Nishapur was placed under relatively indirect political control. Consequently, a “patriciate” evolved that enjoyed a greater degree of freedom and autonomy.

[70] For examples see Ephrat 2000, 136–37.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Watt 1968, 75–76 was the first to point out that education in the Nizamiyya madrasa (the most important madrasa of all) was designed to create an “orthodox bureaucracy.” Bulliet 1972, 73–75, claims that the Nizamiyya madrasa became a vital instrument of the policy of its famous founder, Nizam al-Mulk, in controlling what Bulliet labels the “patriciate” of Nishapur; and Leiser 1986, 18, notes that one of the reasons for founding madaris “was the desire of the ruling authorities to dominate, to a considerable degree, the religious elite.” Regarding the use of the waqf of the madaris as a political tool see also Arjomand 1999.

[73] The most telling example of such close association is that between Nizam Al-Mulk and the celebrated al-Ghazali. Upon the death of his master, the Shafi’i Ash’ari scholar al-Juwayni (known as Imam al-Haramayn) in 478/1085, al-Ghazali went to Nizam al-Mulk’s court at Isfahan and was sent by order of the vizier to occupy the chair of law in the Nizamiyya madrasa. Nizam al-Mulk inclined to Shafi’ism and, like al-Ghazali, was born and raised in a small village in eastern Iran. For the ties between al-Ghazali and Nizam al-Mulk see especially the biography of the former by al-Subki (d. 771/1370) 1966–1967, vol. 4, 101–22. Abu Bakr al-Khujandi (d. 552/1157), another mudarris in the Nizamiyya madrasa, also had close relationships with political figures. His biographer relates that he was so closely associated with them that “in the respect he gained he was more like a vizier than like an ‘alim.” Ibid., vol. 6, 134.

[74] For details see Ephrat 2000, 121–22.

[75] Ibid., 122–23.

[76] See for example the story below about the preaching of the Ash’ari Al-Qushayri in the Nizamiyya madrasa.

[77] For a general discussion of the prerogatives of the qadi under the Seljuks see Lambton 1968, 213, 227ff.; 1988, 72ff.

[78] Ibn al-Athir (d. 631/1233) 1965–1967, vol. 10, 28.

[79] Ibid., 117–18. One of the main functions of the shihna was to carry out the decisions of the qadi’s court when coercive force was necessary. On the office of the shihna see Lambton 1968, 244.

[80] See Saadeh 1977, 255–58.

[81] Of the total number of 121 ‘ulama’ whose religious or administrative positions are indicated in their biographies, only twelve held purely administrative positions. See Ephrat 2000, figure 6.1 (in chapter 6).

[82] For the position of the mufti during the Seljuk period see Makdisi 1981a, 197–200.

[83] The piety and generosity of the Shafi’i jurist and vizier Abu Shuja’ Al-Rudhrawari (known as Zahir al-Din), as related by Ibn Khallikan, serves as a good example: “He never left his house without having first read a portion of the Qur’an, paid the required alms-tax on all his property, and gave generous alms anonymously. After receiving a note informing him of a widow with four needy children, he ordered one of his servants to provide them with clothing and food. He then removed his own clothes and vowed neither to dress nor warm himself until the order was carried out.” Ibn Khallikan (d. 681/1282) 1970, vol. 5, 137.

[84] Studies on the consolidation of the legal schools up to the twelfth century include: Laoust 1959; Makdisi 1963; 1981a, 3–9; Bulliet 1972.

[85] During the eleventh century the Maliki school had its main centers in North Africa and Spain. In this century the Zahiri school’s importance gradually waned in Baghdad, and by the beginning of the subsequent century, it had disappeared completely from the city (the last representative of the school died in Baghdad around 475/1082). Its extinction in Baghdad, the cultural center of the Muslim world, marked a crucial phase in the process by which only the four schools that have survived down to our time remained. For the history of the Zahiri school in Baghdad see Makdisi 1963, 278–79.

[86] See Ephrat 2000, figures 2.2–2.7 (in chapter 2).

[87] Ibid.

[88] See ibid., figure 6.1 (in chapter 6).

[89] For historians who have tried to show that the schools of law were indeed meaningful social organizations in tenth to fifteenth-century urban Islamic societies, see Lapidus 1969; Bulliet, 1973; Makdisi 1981b. For a different interpretation see Chamberlain 1994, 2. It was the elite household, according to Chamberlain, that constituted the prime, if not sole, meaningful social framework in the high medieval Middle East.

[90] The most important mosque in Bab al-Basra, frequently mentioned in the sources as a meeting place for instruction and other scholarly pursuits of ‘ulama’ of all three legal schools, was the Friday mosque of al-Mansur. See Makdisi 1961, 4–6.

[91] See, for example, the story below about the preaching of the Ash’ari theologian al-Bakri.

[92] For example, according to al-Ya’qubi (d. 897/1491) 1892, 248, the entire area surrounding Bab al-Sham was inhabited by people from Balkh, Marv, and Bukhara. For other examples see Makdisi 1959, 180–88.

[93] Of the total number of 176 native-born ‘ulama’ in Seljuk Baghdad whose legal school affiliation is indicated in the sources, 91 were Hanbalis, compared with 38 Shafi’is, 24 Hanafis, 5 Malikis, and 2 Zahiris. See Ephrat 2000, figure 2.7 (in chapter 2).

[94] For the Hanbalis in Baghdad during the Seljuk period see Makdisi 1963; 1973; 1981b.

[95] See, for example, the descriptions of public demonstrations led by the Hanbali scholar Ibn al-Wafa’ in Ibn Rajab (d. 796/1393) 1952–1953, vol. 1, 52.

[96] Ibn al-Banna’ (d. 471/1078) 1956, part. 3, no. 100, 26.

[97] See, for example, Lapidus 1988, 165–66. Makdisi, 1981a, esp. 1–3, makes a clear distinction between schools of law and colleges of law. However, he too presents a parallel and interrelated development of the two types of institutions.

[98] Tibawi 1962 was the first to note that, for all the establishment of endowed and structured institutions of learning, Islamic education remained essentially informal, flexible, and linked to persons rather than to institutions. Most recently, Berkey 1992 has provided us with an extremely detailed and illustrative description of the informal character of Islamic education in Mamluk Cairo.

[99] This is in line with Mottahedeh 1980, which represents the most comprehensive study of the creation of networks of informal, personal ties (defined by family, ethnic origins, or sectarian homogeneity, or by a shared professional background) in the Buyid and early Seljuk periods. Taking over the role of formal and stable institutions, these networks constituted the nucleus of the social structure in the post-‘Abbasid era.

[100] For details see Ephrat 2000, 69–71. As Chamberlain 1994 has shown, even at a later period the madaris played a marginal role as far as the transmission of ‘ilm and the social relationships among the ‘ulama’ were concerned. Chamberlain 1994, esp. 69–90—referring to the period 1190 to 1350-stresses the marginality of the madrasa in the world of the ‘ulama’. The madrasa, Chamberlain asserts, was essentially a center for financial patronage, and, as such, had many uses that had nothing to do with education and the forging of relationships among the religiously learned.

[101] Sibt b. al-Jawzi (d. 654/1256) 1968, 187–88.

[102] Bulliet 1972 and 1994, focusing on the ‘ulama’ of medieval Nishapur, is probably the most important contribution toward the understanding of the meaning of affiliation to the legal schools and the source of conflicts between them. See his concluding remarks in Bulliet 1994, 110–11.

[103] For example, Abu Hamid al-Isfahani (d. 406/1016), who at the beginning of the eleventh-century instituted the Baghdadi method or system (tariqa) of Shafi’i law, is said to have been deeply committed to the spread of religious learning (nashr al-‘ilm) and other community services. People used to bring him their payments of the poor tax (zakawat) and alms (sadaqat) so that he could distribute the money. Besides distributing a monthly allowance to his poor followers (ashab), he donated money for the pilgrimage caravans. Eventually, “he became a leader in religious and worldly matters” (intahat ilayhi riyasat al-din wa’l-dunya). See Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200) 1940, vol. 7, 277. Abu Ishaq al-Shirazi, the leader of the Shafi’is in Baghdad up to his death in 467/1083 and the first mudarris in the Nizamiyya madrasa is also said to have combined the two leaderships. See Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1951, part. 8, vol. 1, 83.

[104] See especially Makdisi 1963; 1973; 1981b.

[105] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1968, 187.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid., 188; and see also Ibn al-Jawzi 1358/1940, vol. 8, 305–306.

[108] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1968, 217–18; Ibn al-Jawzi 1358/1940, vol. 9, 34; Ibn Al-Athir 1965–1967, vol. 10, 124–25.

[109] Ibn al-Jawzi 1358/1940, vol. 9, 484.

[110] Chamberlain 1994, 167–78, makes the same observation with regard to the Mamluk authorities in high medieval Damascus. His examination of the contest over correct belief in Damascus during this period allows a great advance of our understanding of the relationships between the scholarly and ruling elites in pre-Ottoman Islamic societies.

[111] Al-Kunduri’s official ban forced hundreds of Ash’aris out of their posts and put many of them on the road to exile. For a detailed account of this episode see Bulliet 1973, 80–85.

[112] Watt 1968, 75–76, was the first to point out that by supporting Ash’arism, the Great Seljuks played a significant role in the process of Sunni revivalism. This view has been disputed by Makdisi 1973, 155–68, who argues that the renewed activity of Sunni Islam was independent of the Seljuks and Ash’arism.

[113] For a different view see Laoust 1973, 175–85.

[114] Ibn al-Jawzi 1940, vol. 8, 272; Ibn al-Athir 1965–1967, vol. 10, 99; Ibn Kathir (d. 774/1372) 1966, vol. 12, 105.

[115] Ibn al-Jawzi 1940, vol. 8, 326–27.

[116] For the foundation of the various educational institutions see Makdisi 1971, 83.

[117] For the proliferation of rubut in Baghdad and their consolidation as Sufi centers where a variety of educational and social activities took place see Amin 1965, 239–41. See also Jawad 1954.

[118] For the proliferation of the Sufi brotherhoods see Levtzion in this volume.

** Chapter Three: Religion in the Public Sphere: Rulers, Scholars, and Commoners in Syria under Zangid and Ayyubid Rule (1150–1260)

DANIELLA TALMON-HELLER

At least five tracts composed around the middle of the thirteenth century criticize the people of Damascus for preferring superogatory public prayers to the obligatory daily prayers: a manual for the inspector of public morality (muhtasib), polemical works against unwarranted innovations (bida’), and legal responsa (fatwas). The tracts mention salat al-tarawih—long nocturnal prayers held during the second half of Ramadan—the celebration of laylat Al-nisf min sha’ban—the night of the fifteenth of the month of Sha’ban, perceived as a time of judgment and mercy—and salat al-ragha’ib—a prayer said on the first Friday night of Rajab, on which it was also customary to fast and to light candles in mosques.[119]

Of the three practices it was salat al-ragha’ib that was attacked most vehemently, the main argument against it being the lack of evidence that the Prophet ever performed it or approved of it.[120] Scholars’ endeavors to stop this popular practice failed. They themselves admit that mosques were full and brightly lit on the night in question. One of the leading polemicists against salat al-ragha’ib quotes contemporary imams complaining, as it were, that they were actually forced to lead the prayers—commoners (al-‘amma) were so keen on

performing them. A decree issued under the pressure of the ‘ulama’ by the Ayyubid ruler al-Malik al-Kamil (615/1218-635/1238) banning this prayer in 632/1235, must have been disregarded, as five years later one of the prominent scholars of Egypt and Syria at that time, ‘Izz al-Din al-Sulami, was still engaged in denouncing the prayer.[121] Apparently, people refused to give up what they thought to be a correct and meritorious act of religious devotion, in spite of scholarly reservations. Finally, the sultan permitted it anew, receiving authorization from the mufti Ibn al-Salah al-Shahrazuri (d. 643/1245), a scholar who was known to approve of a variety of modes of piety.

Al-Shahrazuri had simply labeled the prayers bid’a hasana (welcome innovation), admittedly on basis of a “weak” hadith (that is, a tradition deriving from the Prophet supported with a not very reliable chain of authorities). He explained that he would rather see the crowd praying than doing anything else.[122] Hence, as a result of pressure from below, the questionable prayers were legitimized through the orthodox mechanism of ifta’ (the issuance of a legal opinion), and a sultanic decree.

The whole episode offers us an opportunity to reexamine the complex relationships and interactions between four participants in the public sphere of medieval Muslim societies: rulers, scholars, the common people, and the religious law. The following study is an attempt to do so, focusing on religious life in the public sphere in Syria, from its unification by Nur al-Din b. Zangi (549/1154) until the Mongol conquest and Mamluk occupation (658/1260).[123] Two points will be stressed: the contribution of commoners and rulers to the shaping of religious norms, and the pious atmosphere prevalent in the public sphere.

Michael Chamberlain, who studied the inner dynamics of Damascene society between 1190 and 1350, claims that the rulers of Damascus usually refrained from taking a stand in matters of religion, and whenever they did step in, it was to end riots and secure peace and order, not to reestablish orthodoxy or to enforce a doctrine.[124] This chapter argues that Zangids and Ayyubids did take a stand in matters of doctrine and of popular practice, and played an active role in all types of religious institutions of their times.

Contemporary historians quote Nur al-Din (d. 569/1174) making a commitment to defend religion against anything opposed to it, and to “the spread of religious knowledge, the refutation of innovation and the manifestation of religion in all these lands.”[125] Both he and Saladin (570/1174-589/1193) were dedicated to jihad against Shi’is and Franks, referred to within the wider framework of ihya’ al-sunna —the revivification of Sunni Islam in face of enemies from within and without.[126] Their successors adopted this program, and implemented it (albeit with varying degrees of enthusiasm), pursuing various lines of action. It should be noted that most Ayyubid princes enjoyed a thorough religious education to begin with, and some of them even had justified scholarly pretensions.[127] Saladin was a firm supporter of Ash’ari theology.[128] Al-Malik al-‘Adil (592/1196-615/1218) opted for the strict enforcement of Muslim prohibition of liquor, moral laxity and non-shar’i taxes (to the degree that in his days Damascus was said to be “clean and pure”);[129] al-Malik al-Mu’azzam (615/1218-624/1227) vigorously advanced the position of his adopted Hanafi school of law;[130] al-Malik al-Ashraf (626/1229-635/1237) nurtured a somewhat populist public veneration of the Prophet and took to the persecution of dissenters from what was considered to have been the Prophet’s proper path.[131]

Most of them tended to intervene in cases of socioreligious conflict: tension between Hanbalis and Shafi’is[132] and between Sufis and anti-Sufis,[133] quarrels between two Hanbali factions,[134] or opposition to established leadership inside the Jewish community.[135] As we saw above, even the liturgy in the mosques was not beyond their sphere of influence.

More often than not, ‘ulama’ and rulers cooperated in order to strengthen what may be labeled the mainstream Sunni camp: shar’i-minded and paradoxically inclusive of Ash’ari theology, moderate Hanbali theology, and moderate Sufism.[136] Radical Hanbali theologians, ecstatic and antinomian Sufis, religious skeptics, Shi’is, so-called zanadiqa (heretics),[137] and plebeian claimants to prophecy were doomed to marginalization, if not punished in a more severe manner.

A dramatic example is the assembly (majlis) that convened in the citadel of Aleppo to decide the fate of the prominent Sufi and theosophist Yahya b. Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi. Al-Suhrawardi was accused of deliberately violating the shari'a (inhilal), holding heretical theological views and treading the path of the pagan philosophers. The faylasuf (Arabic word for philosopher) was regarded as a threat to the authority of the 'ulama', thereby threatening the political establishment as well. Al-Malik al-Zahir of Aleppo (582/ 1186-613/1216) was well inclined toward him, but 'ulama', and following them Saladin, al-Zahir's father and superior, ordered his execution. Graced with making the choice of the method of his own execution, al-Suhrawardi starved to death in the citadel of Aleppo.[138]

The execution of a scholar was an extremely rare event under the generally tolerant Ayyubids, but an unfavorable attitude toward those suspected of philosophical inclinations was to spread in their domains, easy to detect in the discourse of contemporary biographers and chroniclers. Some such suspects were barred from teaching, or banished from town.[139] An acclaimed scholar of law and theology, Sayf al-Din al-Amidi (d. 631/1233), was accused of incorrect theological beliefs and slack practice. He lost his positions in madaris in Cairo and Damascus, on the orders of al-Malik al-'Adil and Al-Malik al-Ashraf.[140]

The provocative Hanbali scholar 'Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi may be located on the other end of the intellectual spectrum. A majlis that convened in the citadel of Damascus in the presence of the local governor in 596/1199 turned into an investigation of his theological beliefs by hostile Shafi'i jurists. 'Abd al-Ghani was accused of teaching gross anthropomorphism (tajsim) in his lectures, and pronounced an "innovator." The governor sentenced him to exile, and ordered that the pulpit upon which he used to teach be demolished. In addition to that, the Hanbalis lost the privilege of prayer behind an imam of their own in the great mosque.[141]

Shi'is were more vulnerable. Shortly after the conquest of Aleppo in 541/1147, Nur al-Din warned the local religious authorities that if anyone dare to pronounce the Shi'i version of the call to prayer, he would be thrown

from the minaret, head down. Eleven years later, when Nur al-Din lay severely ill, the Shi’is did dare again. Unfortunately for them, Nur al-Din recuperated and immediately enforced the proper Sunni call to prayer again. As far as we know, no Shi’i muezzin climbed to the top of that tower.[142]

The most important representative of antinomian Sufism in Syria during Ayyubid times, ‘Ali b. Abi al-Hasan al-Hariri (d. 645/1247), had spent a few years in prison. Finally he was banished from Damascus, along with the Qalandar dervishes. He and his jama’a (group, community) of young people— a mixed crowd of ahdath (rabble, in this case) and members of Damascene elite families—were accused of moral laxity, negligence in prayer and scandalous attire. Their expulsion marks the disappearance of heterodox Sufism from Damascus for some thirty years, as far as we know.[143]

We know even less about uneducated, non-establishment charismatic figures that appeared on the Syrian scene once in a while. Sources tell us mainly about their persecution, if they mention them at all. One of them was an ‘ajami (foreigner) who appeared in Damascus claiming to be ‘Isa b. Maryam (Jesus). He is said to have “corrupted [the belief of] a multitude of the commoners” (afsada jam’an min al-‘awamm). In compliance with a fatwa that sentenced the man to death, the governor of Damascus ordered his crucifixion in 595/1199.[144] A “crazy prophet,” known for his power to grow fruit out of season, made similar claims to prophethood in the late 630s/1230s. Many villagers followed him until he chose to retreat to the village of Sifsaf.[145] A Maghribi who showed up in the village of Mashghara in the province of Damascus shortly before the death of Nur al-Din (569/1174) and declared himself a prophet, caused much more trouble, and was treated accordingly. His rural followers rebelled against their landlords and fled to the mountains. They were tracked down by the army in Northern Syria during the month of Ramadan 570/1175 and killed in a cruel manner.[146]

For mainstream ‘ulama’, however, it was a period of unprecedented prosperity, particularly in Damascus and Aleppo. Dozens of new religious institutions were established and hundreds of posts became available for men of religious training. Numerous well-known teachers and

aspiring students from other Muslim countries visited these cities and often remained in them, to become teachers and religious functionaries, or to serve in the state administration.[147]

In our sources, rulers are depicted—whether by way of faithful recording or by way of skillful reconstruction (probably both)—as careful to demonstrate deference toward the authority of the mufti, the qadi, and the shari'a.[148] Nur al-Din is said to have insisted upon strictly enforcing shar'i regulations concerning hearing witnesses in court and limitations on punishment, to the extent that contemporaries in Mosul complained of an increase in crime in their locality.[149] More specifically, when he undertook the reconstruction of the great mosque in Aleppo, and the work involved demolishing a nearby market owned by a religious endowment, he first consulted a mufti.[150] Sibt b. al-Jawzi, a contemporary of al-Nasir Yusuf (648/1250-658/1260), the last Ayyubid to have had ruled over Damascus and Aleppo, claims that al-Nasir governed "according to the regulations (qawanin) of the religious law."[151]

In the period that stretches between those two rulers, Saladin had a qadi certify that he used his private money to purchase from the bayt al-mal (the treasury) property that had been Frankish prior to his reconquest of Jerusalem, before endowing it as waqf.[152] Al-Malik al-'Adil listened to the moralizing of 'Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi, who made bold and even violent criticism of any sign of moral laxity in Damascus, as defined by the strictest Hanbali standards.[153] Al-Malik al-Ashraf, who was eager to keep a sandal considered to be the Prophet's, waited until its holder bequeathed it to him upon his death (restraining himself from getting possession of it in other ways), and finally placed it in a public institution—the dar al-hadith—so as to make it accessible to all.[154] The puritan qadi, mufti, and khatib 'Izz al-Din al-Sulami (d. 660/1262) ruled against the interests of the military elite twice, but was heeded nonetheless. In the first case he disqualified the 'itq (manumission) of high-ranking Egyptian mamluk emirs. Reluctantly, they went through the ceremony again, this time "performed in a shar'i manner." He spoke out again in Aleppo, before a meeting of the members of the military and scholarly elite, convened in the face of the Mongol threat of 657/1259. The issue under

debate was raising money for the defense of the city, and al-Sulami held that the people should be asked to finance the army only if the soldiers had already sold their silver and gold.[155] One must not conclude that freedom of speech in politicoreligious matters was unrestricted: an earlier conflict between ‘Izz al-Din Al-Sulami and the political authorities ended with his dismissal from the pulpit of the Great Mosque of Damascus, his imprisonment, and finally—his exile from the city. On that occasion he had used his Friday sermon to attack the ruler’s lenient attitude toward the sale of arms to the Franks, and the territorial concessions that he had agreed to make.[156]

To end this survey of pious behavior let us take a look at the conduct of al-Malik al-‘Adil in 596/1200, as it offers a fine example of a well-publicized show of respect toward the religious law, and of the intricate reciprocal relationship between rulers and ‘ulama’. In the course of securing his domination over the confederation his brother Saladin left behind, al-Malik al-‘Adil disinherited Saladin’s ten-year-old grandson from the sultanate of Egypt. He then brought together a group of fuqaha’ and asked for their legal opinion regarding the right of a minor to rule. They issued a legal opinion asserting that he was unfit. The chronicles do not speculate on their motives. They do tell us that Malik al-‘Adil’s address to the emirs began with the words: “You have heard the decree of the ‘ulama’, ” and ended with a demand for their oath of alliance.[157]

Respect aside, the livelihood of thousands of scholars depended on state pensions and awqaf endowed by rulers, or by members of their families, in favor of madaris,[158] assemblies for scholarly disputation (majalis al-‘ilm),[159] and the composition and dissemination of religious literature.[160] Patronage was selective, of course, and was used to enhance the position of certain groups, or to divide power. Affiliation with the “right” school of law at the right time, and proper familial ties, seem to have been major factors in determining an ‘alim‘s chances of finding favor with a patron.

Once in control of Syria, Saladin replaced Hanafis by Shafi’is in the senior religious posts of chief qadi, head of Sufi lodges (shaykh

al-shuyukh), khatib, and nazir (inspector) of the great mosque. Shafi’is continued to hold those posts throughout the Ayyubid period, except under al-Malik al-Mu’azzam (615/1218-624/1227), who promoted members of his adopted Hanafi madhhab. Less prestigious posts, those of the muhtasib and the assistant to the chief qadi, were usually given to Hanafis, as were many positions in madaris and on diplomatic errands.[161]

Of major relevance to the central themes of this chapter is the fact that Ayyubid rulers extended their patronage to institutions of religious education and learning intended for the community of believers in general, thus benefiting in particular ‘ulama’ of lower rank and laymen. They endowed Qur’anic schools for children (makatib),[162] Sufi lodges (khawaniq),[163] shrines (mashahid and maqamat) and sacred relics, mosques, public assemblies of exhortation (majalis al-wa’z), and gatherings for hadith recitation.

A series of public recitations of the Musnad of Ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855) by Hanbal al-Rusafi (d. 604/1207) from Baghdad were supported by al-Malik al-‘Adil, and honored with his presence. Al-Rusafi was merely a minor functionary at one of the mosques of his home city, one “accustomed to a poorman’s diet of oats,” who happened to be the last person to have heard the entire Musnad from a well-known deceased scholar, and took to the road in order to pass it on. Although the text he recited—a compilation of hadith classified according to its transmitters, rather than by subject matter—can hardly be considered as ideal for popular consumption, a multitude of laymen showed up, rubbing shoulders with the sovereign and his entourage and with all the leading scholars of Damscus.[164]

Rulers contributed to the establishment, upkeep and growth of shrines, established throughout Syria during the twelfth and thirteenth century. Some were built on recently “rediscovered” ancient graves of prophets and sahaba, others on the graves of popular scholars, shaykhs, and martyrs. The initiative for the inauguration of new sites came from men and women of diverse social standing, military and civilian functionaries and

members of their household, and common folk in the towns and villagers (often inspired by dreams).[165] Once erected, sites were preserved and continued to develop thanks to awqaf dedicated by rulers or members of the elite, and contributions of goods and labor offered by local residents and visitors.

The story of Mashhad Ruhin in northern Syria is a fascinating example. A clerk in the administration of al-Malik al-Zahir of Aleppo (582/1186-613/1216) happened to find himself at the site of what was then a deserted sanctuary, considered to be the grave of Quss b. Sa’ida (an early Arabian monotheist), on one of his business trips. Miraculously cured of a lingering disease, he thereon decided to dedicate his time and money to the rehabilitation of the sanctuary. After some time al-Malik al-Zahir paid him a visit, and endowed the site with the revenues of a nearby village. His heir provided for the salaries of caretakers. A cistern, a bath-house, and a khan were endowed by an emir, a daughter of some other emir, and the supervisor of the waqf, while a wall was added on by villagers.[166] It should be noted that in twelfth century Syria, personal pilgrimage (ziyara) to graves of holy men, and to shrines built to honor them or their relics, was hardly controversial. Most scholars allowed prayer, Qur’an recitation, dhikr (Sufi litany), votive offerings of oil and lamps, and service to other pilgrims in mashahid.[167] They themselves often sought the baraka (blessing) of such sites and recognized the possibility of encountering a mystical, or at least a highly emotional religious experience at them.[168] Yet while it is clear that rulers and scholars visited sanctuaries and played a role in the intensification of the cult of saints and pilgrimage to holy sites, they did not take the lead. Here, as in the case of the superogatory prayers, they joined in, or were led in, perhaps so as not to abandon the arena and let popular forces control it unchecked. Only in Mamluk times, particularly with the advent of mawalid (communal celebrations of the birthdays of saints), do we hear of vehement attacks on practices and excesses related to the cult of saints, but even then, outright denial of the legitimacy of grave visitation is rare.[169]

An arena more securely controlled by ‘ulama’, though by no means exclusively by them, was the mosque. Mosques were a favorite construction project of the Ayyubids, especially of al-Malik al-Ashraf. Seven

out of fourteen religious institutions he had founded between 626/1229 and 635/1237 were mosques, three of them Friday mosques.[170] Yet mosques and mausolea with a prayer niche (sometimes even an imam) were also established by members of the urban elite, emirs and their wives, and even by shop owners and artisans who constructed or renovated small mosques with their own hands.[171] An uncommonly detailed and vivid account of such a project depicts a group of Hanbalis who had emigrated from villages around Nablus, then under Latin occupation, and resettled on Jabal Qasyun on the outskirts of Damascus. It will be discussed below.

But first we should pause to scrutinize our sources for information that may allow us to assess how accessible mosques were to laymen in towns and villages, and to what extent laymen indeed frequented them. Historiographic and epigraphic evidence tells us that a thick network of mosques was spread over Syria already in the sixth/twelfth century. Ibn ‘Asakir (d. 571/1176), the city’s leading historian and geographer, lists 420 mosques in Damascus and its suburbs. A list prepared by the later Ibn Shaddad (d. 684/1285) includes 660 mosques in Damascus, sixty-one of them in the suburbs.[172] Aleppo could boast of about two hundred mosques at that time; smaller towns and many villages of one or two.[173]

Direct information on mosque attendance in towns or villages is rare in our sources. Some chroniclers mention in passing that the great mosque (jami’) in a certain town or village was full for the Friday prayer.[174] Ibn Jubayr, the Maghribi traveler who visited Damascus in 580/1184, gives a lively description of gatherings in and around the great mosque of Damascus: people came and went the whole evening, some strolling along, some talking with friends, others reading. According to him, standing there, one could get the impression that any ordinary evening was the twenty-seventh of Ramadan.[175]

Prayer was but one of several activities conducted in the mosque. People assembled in mosques for the recitation (qira’a) and for the study (ta’lim) of Qur’an. According to Ibn Jubayr’s estimate, some five hundred men took part in a daily reading of a few short suras in the Friday Mosque of Damascus, and received a small allowance for it. Similar information can be found in Ibn Shaddad’s historical-

geographical work, written ninety years after Ibn Jubayr's Rihla. He mentions children, among them orphans, who recited "Say: He is Allah, the One!" (the short sura 112) every evening.[176] On Fridays, Qur'an recitation was also held in khawaniq. Again, commoners took part. This can plainly be deduced from the bonus offered at the khanqah al-Sumaysatiyya to those who prayed for its founder at the end of the reading: loaves of white bread.[177] In the village of Busra (in the Hawran) a well-known exegete, Abu al-'Abbas al-Harbi (d. 600/1204), would explain Qur'anic passages after prayers.[178] Another scholar, 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Sakhawi (d. 643/1245), claimed that thousands of people read the Qur'an from cover to cover under his direction.[179] The pious and emotional 'Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi (d. 600/1203) read hadith in the jami' of Damascus on Thursday nights and on Fridays, moving the audience to delightful tears.[180] Half a century earlier his uncle, Shaykh Ahmad b. Qudama, had read hadith to villagers in the vicinity of Nablus,[181] and there are numerous other examples of such popular classes that were held in central and in peripheral mosques.

On top of all that activity, relics and sacred objects—such as the original copy of the Qur'an, supposedly sent by the Caliph 'Uthman to Syria,[182] the skull of Yahya b. Zakariyya' (John the Baptist),[183] or a few lines in the handwriting of 'Ali b. Abi Talib[184]—were kept in mosques, as repositories of divine blessing for the faithful. Thus, Muslims of diverse levels of religious learning could and did engage in the devotional and educational activities carried out in the precincts of the mosque, whether patronized "from above," or initiated "from below."

Similar things may be said about majalis al-wa'z-assemblies for public exhortation that were held on weekdays, or on special occasions, in mosques and in the courtyards in front of them, but also in cemeteries and various other open spaces. Chroniclers and biographers agree that their audiences were large and heterogeneous, composed of "the great and the humble," the young and the elderly, rulers and commoners, scholars and Sufis.[185] The preachers who delivered those sermons in Syrian towns in the Ayyubid period (and reached posterity in the writings of their contemporaries) were almost uniformly established scholars. They had acquired their preaching skills from respectable teachers, together with other branches of religious learning.[186] Often they had close relations with

rulers, who graced their sermons with royal patronage and presence, and sometimes even dictated the subject matter.[187]

Sibt b. al-Jawzi (d. 654/1256), a grandson of the famous Baghdadi preacher and scholar Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200), was known as the most prominent wa’iz of his times. He settled in Damascus in 1206, and until his death fifty years later, Damascenes spent their Saturdays listening to his sermons (except when he traveled to preach elsewhere in Syria and the Jazira).[188] People refrained from work on those days. Some men and women, eager to secure themselves a good seat, even would spend the night before the assembly in the proximity of the Great Mosque, engaging in devotional practices. Sometimes only the musalla (a vast enclosure for special communal prayers) could accommodate the multitude.

According to Sibt b. al-Jawzi himself, in 607/1210 for example, he spoke in front of an audience of thirty thousand people, including the governor of Damascus and its dignitaries. Hundreds of youths, moved deeply by his words, repented, or at least made the symbolic gesture of clipping their nasiya (forelock) in public.[189] The pile of hair from the heads of penitents reminded him of a story told on the authority of Abu Qudama al-Shami a third/ninth century ghazi (raider), and he narrated it to his audience. A brief version of the rather lengthy story goes as follows. On his way to the Byzantine front, Abu Qudama met a woman who begged him to take her long beautiful hair and plait it into a rein for his horse, going to battle fi sabil Allah (for God). Abu Qudama hesitated, but could not resist her desperate insistence. Months later, he discovered that she had also sacrificed her husband and two sons for the sake of holy war.

This wonderful and terrible tale inspired the people, and filled them with religious emotion. The crowd surrounded Sibt b. al-Jawzi and escorted him to the musalla, where he continued his preaching. At the end of the day they were all on their way to raid Frankish territory.[190]

Sibt b. al-Jawzi was again asked by al-Malik al-Mu’azzam to rouse the people to jihad in 616/1219 (after the fall of Damietta to the Franks).[191] In 626/1229 al-Malik al-Nasir Dawud sponsored a sermon against the

concession of Jerusalem to the Franks in a contract his brother, al-Malik al-Kamil, signed with the German emperor Frederick II. Somewhat apologetically Sibt b. al-Jawzi complied, and at the explicit request of the ruler of Damascus reduced “all the people of Damascus” to tears.[192] A few years later he led a rally of support for al-Malik al-Ashraf, then combating Jalal al-Din Mingburnu Khwarizmshah in Eastern Anatolia, and was just as effective.[193] Safely back, Al-Malik al-Ashraf urged Sibt b. al-Jawzi to propagate his favorite work on prayer and its merits (the Maqasid al-Salat of the contemporary ‘Izz al-Din Al-Sulami) through one of his sermons.[194] No doubt he, like many others, had appreciated the mobilizing power of the topics that Sibt b. al-Jawzi addressed— jihad, martyrdom, Sunni revival, and personal piety—and of the assemblies themselves, as powerful manifestations of unity and consensus within the public sphere.

Indeed, relationship between groups with conflicting theological views and between the four schools of law, were less strained, definitely less violent, than in ‘Abbasid or Seljuk Baghdad (discussed earlier in this volume). Subdivisions of the community of faithful continued to exist of course. Groups whose particular religious affiliation was contested, to some degree or other, by the majority, often had the advantage of a higher degree of organized communal life, self-conscious identity, group solidarity, and self-help. Religious leadership of such groups tended to be more involved in the lives of their followers, in matters both sacred and mundane.[195] That, as is well known, was typical of non-Muslim minorities, particularly of the Jews, [196] but Muslim minority groups exhibited similar characteristics. In twelfth and thirteenth century Syria the Hanbalis stood out in this respect, as I intend to show now.

In the middle of the twelfth century 160 men, women, and children left their villages in Mt. Nablus (Palestine), then under Frankish occupation, to journey to Muslim-ruled Damascus. They all shared an affiliation with the Hanbali school of law, and a trust in a local religious leader, Shaykh Ahmad b. Qudama. Upon their arrival in Damascus they enjoyed the hospitality of local Hanbalis. During the summer of 555/1160 Shaykh Ahmad visited what was to become the community’s new abode on Mount Qasyun on the outskirts of Damascus. After the landowner had showed him the site of an ancient mosque on the spot, Shaykh Ahmad went down to the river, performed the

ritual ablutions, and returned to symbolically establish a mosque: he laid several stones on the place of the qibla (niche pointing toward Mecca), prayed and blessed the place. Only then did he order his people to begin construction work on the site. Working together, in an organized manner, they built their own homes and a mosque.[197]

Some forty years later, the people of that neighborhood undertook the establishment of a Friday Mosque. This ambitious project, however, was completed only after the governor of Damascus and the ruler of Irbil established awaqf to help finance the works.[198] By then, Shaykh Ahmad's son, Abu 'Umar, had inherited his father's formal roles of imam, khatib, and religious instructor, and his informal functions of intercessor with God, arbitrator in cases of inner strife, and pleader for his people at the courts of the rulers. It should be noted that this last function was probably not a particularly demanding one, as on the whole the relationship between the Hanbalis and Nur al-Din, and later with the Ayyubids, was good, and they were well integrated into Syrian society.

When Abu 'Umar's time came, other members of the community, either from among the emigrants or from the local Hanbali families, assumed leadership. Thus, for several generations to come, there was a continuous line of persons enjoying religious and secular authority in the community, to secure its marked Hanbali identity, shared performance of religious rites, and strong internal social bonds.[199]

I have not found evidence pointing toward similar organization of community life among the more numerous adherents of the larger Shafi'i and Hanafi schools of law in Damascus, or in other Syrian cities. Nor did the scholars who were considered to be the heads of those schools (ru'asa' al-madhhab) function like their Hanbali colleagues; they were mainly busy with scholarly work, writing, and teaching, and not with catering to the everyday spiritual and mundane needs of a community of believers.[200] Other minority groups, such as Sufis and small heretical groups that appeared from time to time on the margins of society, as we have seen earlier, seem to have resembled the Hanbalis in this respect. But this is an issue that deserves further study.

*** Conclusion

Rulers, scholars, and commoners contributed to the construction of religious life in the public sphere in twelfth-thirteenth century Syria. Zangid and Ayyubid sultans and princes supported a wide range of religious institutions — majalis al-‘ilm, madaris and khawaniq, majalis al-wa’z, mosques, mashahid, and makatib— thereby nurturing various types of devotion and learning. They served not only as patrons (who selected their clients with care), but also as arbitrators. Rather than maintaining a “laissez faire attitude towards civil society,”[201] they pursued a quite consistent policy of supporting mainstream Sunnism and suppressing its rivals (referred to as ihya’ al-sunna and imatat Al-bida’ by contemporaries).

Rulers cooperated closely with ‘ulama’, bolstering their role as guardians of the religious law, and as propagators of Islamic norms in wider social circles. In their capacities as khatibs, qadis, muftis, and jurisconsults, as well as prayer leaders, popular preachers, reciters of the Qur’an, and humble transmitters of hadith in mosques, cemeteries, open public spaces, and the courts of rulers, ‘ulama’ secured the place of the shari’a as the symbol of the proper social order in the public sphere.

The air of piety, advocated by the ‘ulama and supported by the religious elite, seems to have been truly popular, and shared by members of society at large. Moreover, Muslims of different social strata, with or without proper religious education, participated in the ongoing process of the formation of religious belief and practice. Thus, what puritan ‘ulama’ might have defined as bid’a (and the modern scholar might label as “popular religion”), gradually became sunna for most believers.[202] The outcome of the debate over salat Al-ragha’ib discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the construction of mosques, mausolea, and shrines with the resources of

individuals that did not belong to ruling military or scholarly elites, and the promotion of the cult of saint, are indicative of both phenomena.

*** Notes

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[119] Ibn al-Athir (d. 637/1239) 1939, vol. 2, 150; Abu Shama (d. 665/1268) 1990, 124–261; al-Sulami (d. 660/1262) in al-Subki (d. 771/1370) 1971, vol. 8, 251–55; al-Nawawi (d. 676/1277) 1999, 34–35. About the prayers see Kister 1971, 206–207; Wensinck EI and EI²; Fierro 1992, 224–26; al-Albani 1960–1961, 29–30, and Lazarus-Yafeh 1981, 39.

[120] Other arguments being that it was wasteful and extravagant, that people were misled into believing that it was a sunna (rather than an optional pious deed), that there were numerous shortcomings in specific details of its liturgy, and, notwithstanding, that it was prohibited to single out certain days for special worship. I am inclined to regard these claims as an expression of a deeply conservative impetus, engaged in the ongoing struggle against change and innovation (rather than seek for some hidden political motivation).

[121] Al-Subki 1971, vol. 8, 210. In another case, al-Malik al-Kamil demanded that members of all four schools of law perform the evening prayer in the Great Mosque of Damascus together rather than separately, as had been the norm (Abu Shama 1947, 166).

[122] Abu Shama 1990, 196, 209, 215; al-Albani, 1960–1961, 14–18.

[123] For a concise history of the Ayyubid confederation see Cahen EI²; for a full account see Humphreys 1977. Recent studies of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Damascus and Aleppo include the works of Gilbert 1980; Pouzet 1986, Chamberlain 1994, Morray 1994; Mouton 1994 and Edde 1999.

[124] Chamberlain 1994, 168–72.

[125] He is also quoted rating the rulers' duty of protecting religion above that of securing the roads against thieves and robbers (Abu Shama 1991, vol. 1, 363, 372, 377).

[126] An ideology promoted by 'Abbasid caliphs under Buyid rule at the beginning of the eleventh century and picked up by Seljuk sultans half a century later: see Mak- disi 1973; Humphreys 1989, 166; Ephrat 2000, 2–3.

[127] Al-Malik al-Mu'azzam was especially learned, as noted by Ibn Wasil (d. 697/1298) 1972, vol. 4, 208–18. So was al-Malik al-Mansur prince of Hama (587/1191617/1220): see Hartmann EI². See also Humphreys 1989, 167; Chamberlain 1994, 49, 169–70.

[128] Madelung 1985, 159.

[129] Sibt b. al-Jawzi (d. 654/1256) 1954, vol. 8, 640; Humphreys 1977, 146.

[130] Pouzet 1986, 69.

[131] Humphreys 1977, 209–13.

[132] Ibn Kathir (d. 774/1373) 1932, vol. 13, 38–39; Dhahabi (d. 748/1348) 1984, vol. 21, 463; Ibn Wasil 1977, vol. 5, 142.

[133] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 690.

[134] In the time of Nur al-Din: Ibn Tulun (d. 953/1546) 1949, 36; under al-Malik al-‘Adil: Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 469.

[135] Goitein 1970, 109 and 1971, 406.

[136] See an elaboration of this argument in Talmon-Heller 1999, 159, 165.

[137] For the terminology regarding heresy and the treatment of heretics in medieval Islam see Kraemer 1982; Lewis 1993; Pouzet 1986, 256–57.

[138] The case of al-Suhrawardi appears in several variations, in most contemporary and later biographical dictionaries, the earliest source being al-Bustan (Cahen 1937–1938). See in some detail Ibn Khallikan (d. 681/1282) 1972, vol. 6, 268–74; Dhahabi 1984, vol. 21, 207–11. Suhrawardi’s theosophy and fate have attracted a number of modern scholars, see bibliography in Ziai EI².

[139] See for example Ibn al-‘Adim (d. 660/1262), 1988, vol. 3, 1325; Abu Shama 1947, 216; Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 427.

[140] Ibn Khallikan 1972, vol. 3, 293–94; al-Subki 1971, vol. 8, 306. See also Ibn al-Athir 1939, vol. 2, 148–49 for instructions for the muhtasib dealing with similar cases.

[141] Abu Shama 1947, 16; Ibn Rajab (d. 795/1392) 1953, vol. 2, 22–24.

[142] Ibn al-‘Adim 1968, vol. 2, 294, 308–10.

[143] Dhahabi 1985, vol. 23, 224–28; Ibn Kathir 1932, vol. 13, 173–74, 148; Humphreys 1977, 209–10; Bosworth 1976, 114. For information on the Qalandariyya see Karamustafa 1994, 39–44, 52.

[144] Abu Shama 1947, 16.

[145] See Bosworth 1976, 113.

[146] There are at least three versions of this story (Cahen 1937–1938, 140–41; Ibn al-‘Adim 1968, vol. 3, 25–26; Ibn Kathir 1932, vol. 12, 291).

[147] Elisseeff 1949; Gilbert 1977, 70–76 and 1980; Humphreys 1989, 164–65.

[148] A recent study of qada’ in Syria in a slightly later period confirms those findings, suggesting that there existed an efficient judicial system, entirely determined by Islamic law (Jokisch 1999, 514).

[149] The local shihna (head of police force) complained that al-zu’ar wa’l-mufsidin wa-qutta’ al-tariq qad kathuru (Abu Shama 1991, vol. 1, 376). See also ibid., 363–66, 373.

[150] Ibn Shaddad (d. 684/1285) 1953, 32.

[151] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 785.

[152] Frenkel 1992, 66.

[153] Ibn Rajab 1953, vol. 2, 13–14.

[154] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 713. Chamberlain suggests that he was simply too weak to act against the ‘ulama’ (Chamberlain 1994, 49).

[155] Al-Subki 1971, vol. 8, 216; Ibn Kathir 1932, vol. 13, 215.

[156] Al-Subki 1971, vol. 8, 243; Humphreys 1977, 266.

[157] Ibn Kathir 1932, vol. 13, 22.

[158] That was Ibn al-Jubayr’s impression: Ibn Jubayr (d. 614/1217) 1907, 275. It is thoroughly documented in all studies of the period. See in particular the detailed works of Humphreys 1989 and 1994, providing qualitative and quantitive data on patronage in Damascus.

[159] See examples in Abu Shama 1991, vol. 1, 327; Ibn Wasil 1972, vol. 4, 213.

[160] Saladin ordered an Ash’ari ‘aqida (creed) from a Shafi’i scholar (Abu Shama 1992, vol. 2, 302); al-Malik al-Mu’azzam financed a large compilation of Hanafi law and the teaching of Hanafi works (Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 427, 647; Pouzet 1986, 68); Al-Malik al-Ashraf sponsored the reading of the Maqasid al-Salat of Iz al-Din Al-Sulami (see below).

[161] See several examples in Pouzet 1986, 75–76, 66; Edde 1999, 366, 617; Humphreys 1994, 38–39.

[162] Elisseeff 1972, 138.

[163] See the testimony of Ibn Jubayr 1907, 275. Khawaniq probably accommodated elite and lower-class mystics and ascetics; a few were designed for women. We actually have very little information on this subject.

[164] Ibn al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 6, 2972–88. On the continuous value of the oral transmissions of written texts in later medieval Islamic culture see Ephrat 2000, 68–69.

[165] For some interesting examples see Ibn Shaddad 1991, 131, 152–55; Abu Shama 1947, 108; Ibn al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 1, 467, vol. 7, 3381–82, RCEA vol. 10, 66; Sauvaget 1941, 131; Humphreys 1994, 38.

[166] Ibn al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 1, 466; Sourdel 1953; Edde 1999, 433.

[167] Abu Shama 1947, 75; al-Nawawi 1999, 94; al-Sulami 1996, 325, 330. See also Taylor 1998, chapters 5 and 6, for a nuanced discussion of scholarly attitudes.

[168] See also autobiographical notes in Abu Shama 1992, vol. 2, 128; Ibn Al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 1, 462–66, vol. 7, 3440, vol. 9, 4062, vol. 10, 4419, 4621.

[169] See Taylor 1998, 64–65.

[170] Humphreys 1977, 211–12; Ibn Shaddad 1953, 59–60; 1956, 87; Gilbert 1977, 137.

[171] Morray 1994, 49, 94; Ibn al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 6, 2908; Abu Shama 1947, 29, 157; RCEA vol. 9, 32; vol. 10, 40, 142, 156, 183.

[172] Gilbert 1977, 80; Ibn Shaddad 1956, 91–166; Pouzet 1986, 143.

[173] Ibn al-‘Asakir (d. 571/1176) 1995, vol. 2, 288–321; Ibn Shaddad 1953, 59–93. For other towns and villages see Talmon-Heller 1999, 36–39. On the close links and cultural continuum between towns and adjacent villages in the medieval Middle East see Lapidus 1969, 54–57.

[174] Ibn al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 10, 4416; Ibn al-‘Asakir 1995, vol. 2, 321; Drory 1988, 95; Talmon-Heller 1994, 112.

[175] Ibn Jubayr 1907, 266. Ramadan 27th (laylat al-qadar) is held to be the night of the first Qur’anic revelation and a time of judgment.

[176] Ibid., 271–72, 291; Ibn Shaddad 1956, 81–83.

[177] Ibn Jubayr 1907, 289–90.

[178] Ibn al-‘Adim 1988, vol. 2, 764.

[179] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 759–60.

[180] Dhahabi 1984, vol. 21, 452. For more on the transmission of knowledge to commoners in Ayyubid and early Mamluk Damascus see Leder 1997.

[181] Ibn Tulun 1949, 27.

[182] Al-Harawi (d. 611/1215) 1953, 5; Ibn Jubayr 1907, 268.

[183] Ibn Shaddad 1991, 123, 459, 461; al-Harawi 1953, 4.

[184] Ibn Shaddad 1991, 131–32.

[185] Abu Shama 1947, 104, 195. On popular preaching (as opposed to the official sermon delivered by the khatib in the Friday mosque) see Pedersen 1948, 234–36; Pedersen 1953; Swartz 1982; Makdisi 1990, 173–75, 182–87; Berkey 2000; Talmon-Heller (forthcoming).

[186] Although medieval didactic literature sometimes attacks uneducated wu’az who spread unauthorized and incorrect religious learning (as stressed by Berkey 2000, 54–55), historical sources read for this study make no mention of sermons that communicated an unorthodox religious opinion, or a politically rebellious message. Quite the contrary.

[187] Dhahabi 1985, vol. 23, 97; Ibn Rajab 1953, vol. 2, 194–95.

[188] Ibn Kathir 1932, vol. 13, 58; Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 701.

[189] Ibid., 530; Abu Shama 1947, 48–49. On the nasiya see Goldziher 1967, vol. 1, 227.

[190] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 545. For a detailed account of this sermon and a few other sermons see Talmon-Heller (forthcoming).

[191] This bid was unsuccessful, however (Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 604; Abu Shama 1947, 17).

[192] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 654; Ibn Wasil 1972, vol. 4, 245; Humphreys 1977, 203. On propaganda for jihad against the Franks see Sivan 1968, 142–50. On earlier qussas and wu’az who promoted holy war see Pedersen 1948, 232; Berkey 2000, 57.

[193] Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 662.

[194] Al-Subki 1971, vol. 8, 239.

[195] Useful definitions of a “religious community” may be found in Weckman 1986–1987, and in Marshal 1994.

[196] For an exposition of this theme see Goitein 1971, introduction and 42–43; Cohen 1997, esp. 80–81.

[197] Ibn Tulun 1949, 37.

[198] Abu Shama 1947, 29; Sibt b. al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 510. RCEA vol. 9, 241–44, vol. 10, 90.

[199] Sourdel 1972; Talmon-Heller 1994, 107; 1999, 80–83.

[200] For biographical entries on prominent Shafi’i and Hanafi scholars see Al-Subki 1970, vol. 7, 132–36; Sibt ibn al-Jawzi 1954, vol. 8, 630; Ibn Abi al-Wafa’ (d. 775/1373) 1993, vol. 1, 337, vol. 3, 467; Abu Shama 1947, 167.

[201] Janet Abu-Lughod’s assessment of most medieval Muslim political authorities (Abu Lughod 1987, 162).

[202] See Jonathan Berkey’s thought-provoking discussion of sunna and bid’a in Berkey 1995, 40–41, 49–50.

** Chapter Four: The Public Sphere and Civil Society in the Ottoman Empire

HAIM GERBER

One of the more popular topics in historical sociology in recent years has been that of civil society or, more precisely, the attempt to trace autonomous aspects in earlier societies. Strong impulses in this direction have been the globally felt drive toward democratization and, more recently, the democratization of Eastern Europe. A useful added dimension to the discourse on civil society has been the topic of public sphere, which may be loosely defined as the area of societal activity that is relevant to the social and political order in general.[203] This addition links the sphere of autonomous social institutions and groups to the state in a more direct manner, and makes the topic of greater interest to the political sociology-inclined social historian. The idea of public sphere is also important in that it allows areas of social activity to be brought into the discussion, rather than just groups in the narrow sense.

These new approaches make the society itself the focus of study, though historians prefer to look at the political side of that society. Another approach that is striving to capture adjacent territory is the “new cultural history,” which seeks to assign an enhanced place to the symbolic and cultural aspects of a society and see them as the constitutive elements of the social structure, rather than as unimportant derivatives of material conditions, as was customary a generation ago.[204]

The Middle East is unquestionably an important focus for such studies. On the one hand, the number of studies anticipating democratization of Middle Eastern regimes is growing, though limited for the time being to explaining the difficulties involved in this process.[205] I have also tried my hand at such explanations. In my Social Origins of the Modern Middle East[206] I argued that it was social relations rooted in agrarian practices that determined the rise of a landed magnate class in the Middle East since the mid-nineteenth century and its fall shortly after World War II. I also attributed the democratic developments in Turkey to the absence in that country of a nationally important landed ruling elite comparable to those that appeared in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. While these arguments seem to me as cogent today as they were ten years ago, I admit that this explanation is only partial. Other sociocultural institutions and traditions must also be investigated and brought into the picture. Thus, in the study of the social origins of Western democracy no one can afford to neglect the role of chartered medieval towns in creating the preconditions for the emergence of modern Western democracy. Such considerations make comparable Islamic institutions of evident interest to the social historian. This chapter will seek out such institutions and spheres in the history of the Ottoman Empire, and will make an effort to look at them through the eyes of the new cultural history rather than of the traditional social historian.

*** State and Society in Classical Islam and the Ottoman Empire

I shall suggest here a new conceptualization of the role of the state in the Ottoman Empire vis-ɒ-vis civil society. In some important ways this relationship between the state and the society constitutes a major break with traditional Islam, a break that has not hitherto been fully analyzed.

On the whole, the pre-Ottoman Islamic Middle East was characterized by alienation and deep animosity between the political authority and the society-— at least its prominent representatives, the ‘ulama’. This alienation was due to structural causes that are rather well known, so that a summary of the issue will suffice here.[207] The starting point is that the state had no independent basis in Islam. An independent basis was

accorded only to the umma, the community of believers, which was supposed to live not by the commands of the ruler but by the shari’a, the sacred law of Islam. This law was to be known through the Qur’an and the deeds and sayings of the Prophet, as reported by his Companions. The ruler had no role in this theoretical framework, though the situation was complicated by the fact that the first four rulers, or caliphs, were also Companions, who certainly did exert an effort to gain a say in fixing the contours of the community.[208] The religious nature of these rulers was accentuated by the fact that it was they who won for Islam the main body of its empire, thus proving the veracity of the Islamic message in the world. But soon afterward the conquests came to a halt, the rulers lost any direct connection to the Prophet, and on top of this, the law started to acquire professional characteristics, to be mastered only through arduous study. The ‘ulama’ on the whole won the day as far as the definition of the community was concerned, though the rulers often ignored this law in real life.

The rift created in this way was disastrously widened when the position of sultan came into being. While the sultan was the real ruler, it was the caliph who held a semblance of legitimacy, though it was realized by all that he was no more than a puppet. On the other hand the sultans wielded naked power, without any semblance of purpose or ideology.

These political developments were reflected in the political theory. The rift between the ‘ulama’ and the ruler created a strong sense of uneasiness on the part of the former in their relation to the latter, which reflected negatively on the legitimacy they were willing to accord him. Hence derives the scathing criticism of the rulers and of all those willing to serve under them as qadis or in any other capacity. Government employees were considered by many jurists to be corrupt to the point of being unfit to give testimony in court. On the other hand, the disintegration of the caliphate created a state of political instability and frequent changes of government everywhere. Strife and civil wars increased as the moral caliber of the rulers deteriorated. It was under these circumstances that the final stage of medieval Islamic political theory came into being, whereby the Muslim was called upon to realize that moral worth was no longer to be expected of any government, that rulership belonged to whoever managed

to seize it by force, and that to prevent civil war it was best to obey any such ruler.

The Ottoman Empire presents us with a new political reality, one that can be summarized as: 1) The historical caliphate disappears, and there is no question that the Ottoman sultan is the successor of the caliph. 2) On the other hand, the rift at the top between an actual and nominal ruler has ceased to exist. The sultan is the real and nominal ruler, even at the nadir of the empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. 3) There is political stability as never before in Islam, particularly since the late fifteenth century: there is no change of dynasty; no instance of power usurped by force; no known plot to effect such a usurpation; not one real break in the orderly succession of rulers. All this is unprecedented in Islam, and extremely rare in world history. 4) With the rift between ‘ulama’ and ruler completely gone, the Ottoman state is on the whole highly legitimate. There are no known ideological attacks on its validity, whether by ‘ulama’ or by other intellectuals; no governor of any province is known ever to have entertained formal separation from the empire; no rebellion ever broke out that was directed against the state per se (the Christians in the Balkans are a case apart).[209] In fact, as remarkable as the low level of legitimation of the late classical Islamic state is the high level of legitimacy of the Ottoman state, even in its latter days. It certainly does not leave much room for the myth that “Islam cannot tolerate the state”; the far-reaching legitimation enjoyed by the Ottoman sultans is undoubtedly one of the most puzzling enigmas of Ottoman history. The explanation is to be sought, I believe, in the special role played by the empire in the history of Islam. 5) The Ottoman Empire never saw itself, or depicted itself to others, as just another state, certainly not as just another Turkish state (dawla turkiyya).[210] On the contrary, it was somewhat akin to a reenactment of the polity of the rightly guided caliphs, inasmuch as Islam never again, after its initial success, spread its message geographically in such tremendous strides as under the Ottomans. It is unlikely that the symbolism of the similarity between the first caliphs and the first Ottoman sultans was lost on Muslims everywhere, or on the dynasty itself. Moreover, even in relative decline, the Ottoman Empire stood as the only bulwark against the infidels. In other words, the Ottoman Empire was unique in Islam in being throughout its history the cutting edge between the dar al-Islam and the dar al-harb. This role was naturally an extremely potent factor in its legitimation. For the Ottomans, naked

rulership, rulership for its own sake, would be repellent. Small wonder that from early on the Ottoman sultans considered themselves as caliphs, avoiding the subtle question of Qurayshi descent.[211] Small wonder, too, that sultans such as Selim I (r. 1512–1520) and Suleyman the Lawgiver (r. 1520–1566) had the audacity to see themseves as mahdis, or messiahs, saviors of Islam.[212] We have here a new model: the non-caliphal, religiously relevant state.

Strong leverages of legitimation, and a sort of semi-permanent state of emergency, certainly allowed the Ottomans to create a relatively strong and centralized state. But two factors worked against this. One was the technological limitation on the ability to control extended areas in the sixteenth century; the other was that a strong ideological-Islamic core (and commitment) necessarily meant something also in terms of internal organization. The outcome was a series of important social institutions that gave substance to the Ottoman public sphere and to civil society.

*** Ottoman Law as Public Sphere

Looking at processes going on in the Ottoman public sphere, particularly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there are two important areas of interface between the public and the government that I propose to deal with —law and waqf. I propose first to analyze the structure of Ottoman law as it existed in the central area of the empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[213] I shall then trace the trajectory traversed by this law from marginal significance in the fifteenth century to centrality in the later period; and lastly, I shall try to trace the social force, or forces, that brought about this change.

Ottoman law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be analyzed under three headings: the nature of law actually enforced; the tribunal where the law was applied; and the procedure by which this tribunal enforced the law. A useful theoretical basis for this analysis is Max Weber’s scheme of the basic forms of law: Sultanistic law is seen as unstable law, dependent on the whim of the ruler at any given moment, utterly despotic in nature. Patrimonial law is defined as law that is the will of the ruler, though enacted

in the form of stable and predictable law.[214] Even more famous, and just as pertinent, is Weber’s ideal type of qadi justice, which was seen as informal adjudication based on generalized ethical-political considerations, not on systematic reasoning and the application of a body of law.[215] It goes without saying that Weber’s model for Sultanic law was the Ottoman legal system, and that qadi justice was based on Islamic countries, among them the Ottoman Empire. I shall argue here that Weber was factually mistaken, although that does not detract from the brilliance of his models.

The picture that emerges from the actual documentation is that Ottoman law was neither sultanic nor patrimonial, but more reminiscent of Weber’s model of bureaucracy—characterized by objective rules, predictability, etc. The law that was enforced in Ottoman courts during this period was on the whole the shari’a, Islamic law.[216] This was especially so in areas of the law concerned with personal status, family, marriage, divorce, and inheritance. It is usually agreed that in the Islamic Middle East these areas were always taken care of by the shari’a. But surprisingly, areas of the law connected with economic life were also covered by the shari’a, with some local variations that may be deemed minor in nature. Bankruptcies, sureties, unpaid debts, partnerships, etc., were handled by the shari’a, despite the widespread consensus, formerly prevailing, that these areas of the shari’a were never part of living law in Muslim countries. Even more surprising, the main body of what may be loosely (and incorrectly) defined as the penal parts of the shari’a were in fact being enforced. The Ottoman state may well be the first state in Islamic history where this was the case.

The import of this finding for the topic at hand is that the main areas of the law enforced in Ottoman courts had nothing to do with the sultan—at least in the sense that he was not the source of legitimation of this law. At most, the sultan might help make the law effective in his state, but he was by no means considered above it, much less its source. Also of crucial importance is that what we have here is stable law—law liable to change over time but certainly not erratically, from day to day.

An important area of Ottoman law in this period was guild law, an institution not existing in classical Islam and therefore not forming part of the shari’a.[217] Today there is a widening consensus that guilds were nongovernmental institutions invented by the populace and thrust on the Ottoman state, which was forced to ratify and endorse them, at least as long as they did not directly contradict state interests.[218] Short of full-fledged charters, Ottoman guilds resemble medieval European guilds to a surprising degree.[219] Most guilds had a basic deed of agreement between the members, referred to in the documents as ‘ahd, mithaq, ittifaq, all conveying the idea of a pact, where guild regulations were set forth. These rules are always said to have been drafted by the members voluntarily and unanimously. There is no suggestion that they were imposed by the state. Many of these pacts even included clauses authorizing the collective to punish offenders. When a point of guild law was discussed in court, it was always a respectable member of the community who was called upon to state the law in the matter. Analytically, guild law was and remained an unwritten law (although written documents were extensively used to verify its content), but it was nevertheless stable and well structured, extremely important in the life of ordinary people living in the Ottoman city. And although it was often enforced by a state court, its legitimacy came from below, from artisans and merchants. The state was called upon to enforce these agreements because, as was endlessly reiterated, they expressed old relationships and old privileges. Sometimes privileges (such as nominations to head a guild) were awarded by the state under the false pretense that they were based on guild members’ agreement. When such cases were brought before the qadi, he had no hesitation in declaring the sultanic order baseless and void, and in all the cases I have seen, the central government fully concurred. The “old” had stronger legitimacy than the word of the sultan, so long as public order and war against the infidel were not involved. The guild constitutes a remarkable example of Ottoman law that was both well structured and not imposed from above by the state. As an institution, it is a major case disproving the claim, associated again mainly with Max Weber, that there were no corporate communities in Islam, and a major proof that some real autonomies did exist in the Ottoman Islamic city.[220]

Another area of Ottoman law that should be mentioned here is land law, which on the whole might be deemed to constitute an Ottoman invention, and as such, a sort of imposition from above. But it has to be borne in mind

that in actuality, Ottoman land law was far from an Ottoman state invention. Formally it was an imposition, but in real life every province had its own preOttoman land law, which was confirmed after the occupation and simply went on being applied. It is possible that as time went by, a convergence took place. In any event, in the first Ottoman century wide differences existed in the nature of the land law from one region to another, attesting that even here the Ottomans were not driven by any “totalitarian” intentions. [221]

A second issue concerning the working of the Ottoman legal system in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the nature of the tribunal that enforced this law.[222] While in earlier Islamic states the ruler had various personal tribunals invented and nominated by himself,[223] under the Ottomans the qadi, the Muslim judge, officiated as the sole authority in all legal matters. There is no trace of other state tribunals, and it is interesting that even old Islamic tribunals such as the mazalim and the muhtasib disappeared from the scene, the mazalim altogether[224] and the muhtasib as the performer of a judicial function. There are some hints that provincial governors sometimes performed ad hoc judicial functions, but rarely, and only as a usurpation of authority. The importance of this point in discussion of the public sphere lies, again, in that the qadi, though nominated by the sultan, is an old Islamic institution, whose legitimation did not derive from the ruler but from much deeper cultural sources—sources that the sultan could exploit but could not disregard or belittle. In fact, the Ottomans not only granted the qadi a monopoly over the judicial function, they also used him as the chief administrator of the Ottoman city. Almost every order addressed to the provinces that did not deal with military matters was addressed to qadis. The beauty of the arrangement from the point of view of the central government was that because of the technical-legal nature of the qadis’ education, they usually did not develop political ambitions within the city itself (they reserved such ambition for their career in the ‘ilmi way). For the Ottomans the outcome within the city was certainly efficacious, but it entailed a price—qadis and potential qadis had to be handled with great care and reverence. Hence, qadis enjoyed a wide measure of autonomy. Orders addressed to them never contained detailed instructions as to how to carry out their duties. They were instructed only to take care that justice was

not obstructed or violated. Some of the tasks with which qadis were entrusted are truly awesome. An example is the distribution among the population of Bursa, for the year 1087/1676-1677, of a certain extraordinary tax. What transpires is that only the overall sum was set by Istanbul. Its actual distribution had to be worked out locally, among members of twenty-four central guilds, twelve hans, eleven collective residences (odaha), and fifty-five villages, obviously involving a major bargaining process. The court records of Bursa overflow with documents relating to this process. Important, and in my view highly symbolic is that the document presenting the final distribution in the qadi records shows it as having been reached ba ittifaq-i cumhur—that is, "by agreement of the public."[225] A tacit social contract surfaces here, something I shall return to later on. But the point is that somebody had to preside over the political process involved, and this was certainly the qadi, aided by other members of the ilmiye—no doubt, a key social group in the Ottoman city.

A third aspect of Ottoman law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is the procedure used. An interesting discussion in the anthropological and sociological literature is this: Did the qadi actually enforce and apply the substantive law he was supposed to apply, or did a political and social bargaining process take place ending up in a compromise no more than marginally connected to the law. While the latter may apply in the case of Morocco[226] it certainly does not seem valid in our case. It is evident from the sources that we are much nearer to the pole of substantive law than to free-floating bargaining. Although we do not have transcripts of the deliberations but only after-the-fact summaries, it is important that the qadi puts the entire proceeding into the Islamic legal mold and treats it as a legal issue rather than as a subject of compromise. Sometimes compromise did interrupt the court proceeding, but it is indicative that it was never the qadi who effected the deal but always people from the outside. The importance of this point for the topic at hand is that a free-floating process of bargaining might easily mask sultanic elements of adjudication. Such a situation would also undermine the conclusion that Ottoman law was well structured and stable.

I want now to outline the historical process whereby Ottoman law developed from the fourteenth or fifteenth century to the eighteenth.[227] It is apparent

from the sources that in the fifteenth century predominance of the qadi and the shari’a is absent. For example, the qadi, as in earlier Islamic states, did not deal with criminal matters but merely heard such cases and then transferred the matter to some other authority, the nature of which is not made clear in the sources. It must be assumed that this other authority was the provincial governor, simply because there seem to be no other candidates for the job.[228]

It is interesting of course to speculate what caused the rise of the qadi. My hunch is that as the evolution of the Ottoman Empire as a bureaucratic state went much farther than that of former Islamic states, it needed more highly articulated legal institutions than were formerly extant within Islam. It was no doubt in this way that the institution of Seyhtilislam developed as the head of the religious institution, and it was in this way, too, that the institution of ifta’, legal consultation, became part of the state bureaucracy, for the first time in the history of Islam. By the same token, a more highly structured judicial institution was needed, and the Islamic judge was readily available. It is also possible that the Ottomans elevated the qadi as part of their undoubted (though as yet insufficiently proven) concern to create a regime of checks and balances within their administration. The qadi was certainly a highly effective check on the power of the provincial governor.

That the qadis rose in status does not automatically mean that the shari’a rose with them. It certainly is not self-evident that the shari’a was strengthened from above, as one might expect in the context of the relations between state, law, and society. The fact is that at the same time that the role of the shari’a would seem to have been expanding the Ottomans enacted the criminal qanuns, so it would appear that they expected the qanun to serve as the state law for at least some time. But this never happened. I found that the penal qanun was never really applied. Heyd claims that in some cases qanun penalties were demanded but admits he did not see any evidence for this in practice except in rare cases.[229] Recent studies and collections of fifteenthcentury documents support this conclusion: not a single case of qanun penalty has been discovered.[230] It seems reasonable to suppose, then, that the shari’a rose because the qadis and the

‘ulama’ in general pushed it forward, and the Ottoman government did not see the issue as important enough to engage in an all-out conflict over it. It is my belief that this whole process of the rise of the shari’a was an expression of the deepening Islamic lifestyle that had probably been under way since the advent of Islam.

Some parts of this process clearly represent politics of law involving elements of the civil society that deserve a closer look. A major example is interest, a well-known anathema to traditional Islamic law. Somewhat enigmatically, the prohibition on interest was relaxed in the Turkish-speaking area of the empire at

a very early period, sometime in the early fifteenth century; interest was accepted as legal, provided that the yearly increment was not called riba but muamele, nama, or rabh—all neutral terms conveying the meaning of profit. The new habit originated especially in the context of the cash waqfs that began to appear in the burgeoning empire in the fifteenth century. Legally these neutral concepts were considered valid tricks, though they were shockingly transparent. In any event, for the people of the time the legally problematic issue was that since waqf assets were supposed to be eternal and the value of money was notoriously unstable, cash money was not considered an appropriate object of endowment. It is here that early Ottoman jurists took the liberty of introducing a change and relaxation in Islamic law. The reasoning used by these jurists and other intellectuals of the time shows quite clearly that the innovation was accepted through pressure from below. Summarizing the position of Ebu Suud Efendi, the Ottoman Seyhlislam, Mandaville says: “What appears is an appeal to continued popular usage (ta’amul and ta’aruf), to the welfare of the people (istihsan), and to both throughout with a tone of ‘Let’s be practical,’ an appeal to common sense.”[231] What these fine words meant in real terms is made clearer in the detailed letter of a Sufi shaykh to the sultan, specifying that the cash waqf was the basis of the economic existence of the entire institution. Without cash waqfs Friday mosques would be deserted. More generally, says this shaykh, the law should be especially responsive to the people’s feeling: “God’s legislation has no other purpose than to ease the way of His servants through the exigencies of the time... One uses

inadmissibility at times because it is better for the people of that time, at other times one does the opposite."[232] He further cites an opinion that says: "Be guided by whatever is more harmonious with how the people are living, what is kinder, better for them."[233] There is no doubt that the government was fully aware that tampering with the cash waqfs would cause severe social disruption; so despite the severe juridical controversy surrounding them in the sixteenth century, they continued to flourish until the end of the empire.[234] This entire issue goes a long way to show that popular feeling probably played a certain role in the rise of the shari'a, and the exact form this rise took.

The exact opposite occurred in Syria.[235] When the Ottomans came in 1516, they brought legal interest charging to a country unacquainted with developments in fifteenth-century Anatolia. The Syrian 'ulama' were outraged by the innovation and protested it to provincial governors, even to the sultan himself. When interest cases came before the courts in Syria it was specifically pointed out that the interest charged was on the sufferance of the sultan—in other words, that the court had nothing to do with it. More important, says Rafeq, the objection of the population and 'ulama' of Syria to the liberalization of interest accounts for the fact that the employment of interest was quite rare, and that cash waqfs did not appear in Syria. Rafeq's study is important in showing that popular as well as 'ulama' feeling played a role in the form the law was taking. It also shows that groups within the civil society were fully aware that what they thought about the law was meaningful, and that the central government was morally and politically obliged to take their view into consideration. Two other examples in the study are mentioned in this context: taxes on marriage contracts and the law imposing fines on villagers quitting their villages. In both cases the Syrian 'ulama' were publicly and vehemently critical of the Ottoman government. Another important point in Rafeq's study is that groups within the civil society were not afraid to speak out and criticize the Ottoman sultan over central state issues, and interestingly enough, nothing happened to them.

It might be claimed at this point that the 'ulama' did not really constitute an element of the civil society, but rather were part of the

Ottoman government. I do not accept this suggestion. In my view, the state in the Ottoman Empire is the sultan. Any other starting point necessarily leads to a theoretical and methodological impasse. It is to be borne in mind, for example, that two parallel ‘ulama’ networks existed in the empire: one was an internal, Istanbul-based, madrasa system that led to the higher qadi-ships and thence to the office of Seyhtlislam; the other was a provincial, low madrasa, and low ‘ulama’ setup that led nowhere, recruited only local people, and had a very dubious formal standing, if any at all. The Syrian ‘ulama’ cited by Rafeq certainly did not see themselves as forming part of the Ottoman state, and this they explicitly declared. In fact under the Ottomans there are some remnants of the classical-Islamic pattern of complete dissociation between the state and the ‘ulama’. A remarkable seventeenth-century Palestinian example is Khayr al-Din al-Ramli, a mufti who held no official position yet issued a large number of fatwas to people who asked his opinion on all kinds of legal matters.[236] Moreover, his opinions attained fame, which in the course of time made him one of the most important intellectuals in the entire Middle East.[237] All along he remained completely unconnected with the state, though he fully acknowledged the legitimacy of the Ottoman dynasty, whom he saw as the legitimate upholders of Islam “in the present time.” Nevertheless, an important aspect of his legal activity is scathing criticism of various legal policies of the Ottoman state, such as tax farming—which in his view was tantamount to gambling and hence illegal enrichment[238]—and the prohibition on peasants leaving their villages without paying a fine to the fief holder.[239]

It might be contended that since al-Ramli only gave private written opinions, he did not have to fear the government. But this view seems to me unconvincing. Bearing in mind that he was already famous in his lifetime, it stands to reason that his fatwas would be well known over substantial areas of the Middle East. Yet, he himself did not seem to be under any threat or danger, and in fact no evil ever befell him. Were the Ottomans unaware of his criticism? Unlikely, in my view. Their restraint must be interpreted as an unwillingness to penetrate too deeply into the fabric of the civil society they governed.

It is questionable whether even the higher ‘ulama’ are to be viewed as forming an integral part of the state. In the eighteenth century this group formed a sort of ‘ulama’ aristocracy, which held a monopoly over high ilmiye posts in the face of resistance from all quarters.[240] In this connection it should be recalled that one of the more important phases in the rise of English democracy was the split between the English monarchy and the aristocracy. Analytically, it is hard to see the English aristocracy as less part of the central government than the Ottoman high ‘ulama’.

*** The Waqf Institution as Public Sphere

The waqf [241] is clearly one of the most important public institutions in the Ottoman city, as in Islam in general. From very early on, people from all walks of life bequeathed all types of property to diverse beneficiaries, familial or charitable, for motives ranging from a deeply religious desire to perform charitable acts to a narrow, selfish wish to disinherit one’s daughters. Sociologically, it makes sense to talk about big waqfs and small waqfs; but whatever their size, they constituted important elements of the public sphere and of social organization that gave substance to civil society in the Ottoman Empire. So pervasive was the waqf institution in Ottoman society that one is almost tempted to view it as a key institution in the way the cockfight was seen by Geertz to be a key institution in Balinese society.[242] As such, it represents a theoretical problem to traditional social historians, who have tended to view society as an arena of purely selfish interests, with every action of the individual motivated by selfish, material interest. I believe the waqf institution was a major casualty of such an approach, a situation that can no longer be maintained.

Some of the big waqfs in an Ottoman town look more like a branch of the central government than an autonomous public sphere, but in reality the situation was much more complicated. Founded by the sultan himself, usually after the conquest of the place or upon ascending to the throne, every substantial Ottoman city had several such waqfs. Each contained, on the one hand, several villages (sometimes as many as twenty-five) and, on the other, several revenue-consuming institutions, such

as the Friday mosque, poor kitchen, Qur’an school, madrasa, etc.[243] It must be significant that sultans opted to provide basic services in the form of personal bestowal rather than through a faceless bureaucracy, and it seems that the explanation must be sought in the symbolic link between the ruler and the ruled. The fact that these services also included food rations in the imaret (soup kitchen) is all the more symbolic here. By the Islamic law of waqf, all these institutions were knit together in one institution by a founding deed that was designed to ensure the perpetuity of the waqf. Once established, the waqf could not be annulled nor its funds diverted to any purposes other than those set out in the founding deed. These institutions provided the main services in the Ottoman city, and the main civic activity was obviously focused around them. True, they retained a strong connection to the central government, which nominated the managers. Nevertheless, these waqfs provided room for intensive civic activity, since the discretion of the managers was severely restricted by the founding deed and by considerations of Islamic equity and decorum. If the manager failed to provide food measuring up to the traditional standard in the waqf ’s kitchen, he immediately found himself sued in court by a group of respectable citizens, invariably headed by ‘ulama’, usually teachers in madrasas, the real public opinion leaders in a city such as Bursa. Every now and then waqf properties needed repairs, often of major proportions. To guard against accusations of corruption, managers—at least in seventeenth-century Bursa—carried out renovations only with the prior detailed authorization of the court, based on inspection of the site by a special committee in which ‘ulama’ always took part. Thus, although the manager was nominated by the central government, the local community, headed by the ‘ulama’, exercised a supervisory function every step of the way. The qadi records overflow with cases where citizens brought cases involving the waqf and not one ever suggested that it was not their business to do so. My understanding of this situation is that local communities saw themselves as having the de facto right to ensure that the affairs of the sultanic waqfs were run in the interests of the city’s inhabitants, and even by them.

Another important group of waqfs were those established by members of the Ottoman elite on their own initiative.[244] In fact, most of the big waqfs not founded by the sultans themselves were

apparently founded by askeris, members of the ruling institution. It was widely believed in the past that such waqfs were not real charitable waqfs, as they tended to present themselves, but rather constituted a stratagem by the elite to divert state funds and privatize them. The main suggestion was that a substantial part of the revenues was earmarked for the family, including the practically unlimited cut of the manager, always a family member.[245] This view no longer seems tenable, at least on a statistical basis. In early Ottoman Edirne waqfs by askeris were patently charitable, seemingly no tricks involved.[246] Likewise, in Istanbul waqfs of the sixteenth century the private elements can be separated from the public ones, with no less than 80 percent of the revenue of waqfs established by askeris earmarked for public purposes.[247] It is thus simply not true that waqfs by askeris were designed to divert public funds. So how are they to be explained? Edward Thompson provides a possible clue in his explanation of the eighteenth-century English moral economy, as does Natalie Davis of the rites of violence in sixteenth-century France;[248] that both were designed to strengthen communal bonds. I suggest that something similar is to be observed in the Ottoman waqf institution. Members of the bureaucratic elite established charitable institutions to foster bonds of social connection based on sharing with the lower classes, to enhance feelings of community and ultimately legitimacy. While such an approach of government to the civil society is not particularly surprising or even noteworthy, for a regime as supposedly despotic as that of the Ottomans such an approach seems to me quite remarkable.

Small waqfs were also an important element of the public sphere, many of them being after all charitable by nature. A survey of small waqfs conducted in Bursa in 1077/1666-1667 may serve as an example.[249] It contained 374 separate waqfs, all purely charitable, many of them defined as an amalgamation of several small waqfs. The entire list may in fact represent up to two thousand separate endowments. For a city of some thirty thousand residents this is a huge number (the implied comparison is with a modern Western city of the same size, but that of course is a problematic comparison). Some are defined as mosque waqf, since of course every city neighborhood had a mosque and all were by definition maintained by waqfs. Most or all quarters also had what was called

waqf-avariz—that is, waqf donated for the purpose of paying the avariz tax of the quarter, a tax levied on real estate and the main regular tax paid by the urban population in the Ottoman Empire during this period.[250] The fact that these waqfs were specifically established for the benefit of a group of people defined by a residential quarter is to my mind an indication that the quarter was considered a corporative group—by the populace, if not by the government. Similarly, many waqfs in sixteenth-century Istanbul not only were for the benefit of a quarter, but even nominated the entire body of the quarter's residents as collective inspectors, thus underpinning an obviously existing meaningful community in that city.[251] Moreover, unlike the Haramyn administration in Algiers,[252] in Bursa these waqfs were administered individually by managers, the great majority of whom were 'ulama'; the qadi exercised only a general supervisory function, this survey being itself an example of that supervision. Thus, we have here a large network of waqfs providing various services for the public and run by the public itself, with a minimum of intervention on the part of the central (or local) government. Assuming that all substantial towns in the Ottoman Empire had such extensive networks, it is obvious that small charitable waqfs constitute a major example of the autonomous working of civil society and the public sphere in the Ottoman Empire.

*** The Historiographic Debate About Ottoman Civil Society

The existence of a public sphere and civil society in the Ottoman Empire is still debated among scholars. Sherif Mardin, in a study on Islam and civil society,[253] sets the West against the East in an all-embracing dichotomy. Western civil society is seen as a dream and a postulate, which consisted in "the idea that social relations are both sustained and energized by autonomous, secular collectives with legal personality operating within a frame of rationalized self referential law."[254] Since nothing of this was found in Islam, there was thought to be no trace of an autonomous civil society. The problem with this analysis is first of all that Mardin seems to idealize developments in the West. Yet civil society and secular and self-referential law were not born the mature concepts they are today; they developed only gradually, for the most part as ad hoc practical compromises between competing forces—as in the case of the monarch versus the

aristocracy in England. It was a centuries-long battle between these two forces, and later a real fear of the power of the proletariat, that produced the English compromise, not a rosy liberal dream.[255] And just as Mardin’s picture of the West is idealized, so his view of the Ottoman Empire seems to be exaggeratedly negative.

Recent studies have done much, however, to dispel such old theories, according to which the Ottoman Empire was a state of unbridled Oriental despotism; the sultan had total power and the entire state was his personal oikos, to use the Weberian term for personal estate. Gilles Veinstein, who studied the sultanic orders of Suleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–1566) noted the gap between the first part of the decrees and the second, more substantial, part.[256] In the first part, the sultan presents himself as a magnificent ruler, the like of whom the world has never seen, in terms of both strength and virtue. Clearly implied is that it is unthinkable that anyone implicated in an order will not do his utmost to carry it out to the full. But a careful reading leads to a different conclusion. Orders were very often not carried out and had to be repeated again and again. There is no telling how many of these orders were in fact never implemented. The author rightly concludes that the sultan’s ability to turn his words into actions was much more limited than he would have cared to admit.

Surprisingly, an earlier study by Sherif Mardin provides another basis for the realization that there were serious cracks in the wall of Ottoman despotism.[257] Here Mardin claims that a notion of implied social contract between the ruler and the ruled was embedded in the Ottoman political formula. This contract, which in his view was Islamic in nature, connected with the idea of hisba—that is, the obligation on the ruler to do what is right and forbid what is wrong—a well-known code in the classical Islamic outlook on life, at least as expressed by the ‘ulama’. Mardin adds that a component of this theory is that if the ruler does not perform this duty, the obligation passes to the community. He further claims that this implied contract is expressed in the revolts of soldiers and elements of the lower social classes that one encounters in the chronicles of the empire. But the truth is that these revolts do not usually invoke Islamic forms of legitimation; more often than not they make reference to violations of the old and accepted ways. For example, the reason for the killing of Seyhtilislam Feyzullah Efendi in 1703 was presented by the rebels as his violation of the

traditional code of behavior expected of an Ottoman Seyhtilislam—that is, nonintervention in state politics.[258] Hence, while I fully accept Mardin's suggestion of the existence of an Ottoman social contract as the fundamental basis of state-society relations, the basis of this theory probably goes deeper: Barrington Moore saw such a contract as a universal component of the relations between rulers and ruled in all or most polities,[259] and this seems more appropriate for what we see in the Ottoman Empire.

That the sultan was not considered an unpredictable despot can also be gauged from a look at the Vienna Sikayet Defteri, a book containing some 2,500 complaints, all relating to the year 1675, sent by citizens from all over the empire to the sultan, about wrongs committed mainly by officials.[260] This book is but one of an entire series of such books, preserved in the Ottoman archives, attesting that the genre of complaint writing was extremely popular with the subjects of the Ottoman sultan. While this indicates that there were wrongs to be complained about, it is even more important that there existed channels to reach the highest possible authority in order to complain, and hope for the redress of wrongs. How many wrongs were actually righted we do not know, but that so many thousands of citizens in the empire each year tried this course indicates that they continued to see the sultan as a source of justice, over and above local power holders. Also important: the complaint was not thrown away but carefully written down, along with an order to the resident qadi to look into it and do what is right and just. That the flow of complaints did not dry up over the years must be interpreted to mean that at least a certain percentage of the complaints were resolved. Above all, nowhere in the entire body of complaints in the Vienna Sikayet Defteri is there any instance of the sultan defending an officeholder or giving his backing to suspected wrongdoing. The language of the orders impeccably follows Ottoman and Islamic law. Against the theory that the sultan was restricted by nothing[261] stands the theory that the sultan was severely restricted by the concept of adalet, justice. Judging by the public record, the second concept seems stronger.[262]

Another study highly pertinent to our discussion is a recent article by Halil Inalcik, which explicitly takes off from Max Weber's concepts of sultanism and patrimonialism, only to claim that while the official Ottoman discourse

depicted the sultan as unfettered by any law or authority, reality was much more complicated. The masses possessed means to influence the sultan—for example, by deserting villages—and the government was not beyond heeding such possibilities.[263] The study also draws attention to an important though little studied Ottoman institution—the mesveret, a large-scale ad hoc consultative body of dignitaries that the sultans used to convene at times of serious international emergencies. Though these bodies had no official grounding, the right to express opinions on such occasions was free, and there is no doubt that an emergent consensus in such assemblies had a bearing on the sultan's subsequent decisions.[264]

However, it is a study by Suraiya Faroqhi that bears most directly on the topic at hand.[265] It is in fact a conscious effort to look for autonomous sociopolitical institutions in Ottoman society, and the outcome of the search is that autonomous elements were certainly not lacking. The janissaries and 'ulama' before the nineteenth century constituted semiautonomous forces; the provincial notables (a'yan) of the town of Ankara in the late sixteenth century got together to carry through a substantial civic project—the construction of a city wall; the a'yan of the little town of (orom convened and launched a complaint to the central government on town matters. These and a plethora of other examples show that cities and towns saw themselves as meaningful collectives, possessing a certain amount of authority and legitimate political power. In the face of this rich documentation, the old idea that the individual was only a member of the umma seems oddly simplistic, an ideological construct at best, that if not false in itself, overlooks other social and psychological levels of existence.

To conclude, there is ample evidence that Ottoman society featured several institutions that worked on the basis of autonomous powers and initiatives. A prime example is the case of the guilds, which developed voluntaristic regulations that only later were confirmed by the government. Such is also the case of socially central institutions such as the waqf and even of a politically central institution such as the law in general. Furthermore, towns and quarters emerge as collectives possessing meaning and value in the eyes of their members and even in the eyes of the government. The guild was the paradigmatic institution, expressing the

entire gamut of the relations between the Ottoman government and the populace. By a tacit, symbolic, social contract, the government refrained from countering, undermining, or disregarding customs, privileges, and rules of conduct favored by the citizens, as long as these did not directly contradict the security of the state or Islamic moral conduct in general.

[203] See Somers 1995; Calhoun 1993.

[204] Hunt 1989; Somers 1995, 127–29.

[205] See Norton 1995; Deegan 1994.

[206] Gerber 1987.

[207] See Siegman 1964; Crone and Hinds 1986;Lambton 1981; Lindholm 1996.

[208] This is the specific topic in Crone and Hinds 1986.

[209] This is particularly true from about the mid-sixteenth century on. See Fleischer 1992.

[210] See Haarman 1988, who correctly emphasizes the big difference between the role of “Turkish” states versus that of the Ottoman state in Islam.

[211] See Imber 1992.

[212] See Fleischer 1992.

[213] See Gerber 1994.

[214] Weber 1964, 347.

[215] Weber 1969, 213, 229, 264, 317, 351.

[216] Gerber 1994, chapters 1 and 2.

[217] Gerber 1988, chapter 3; Gerber 1994, chapter 4.

[218] Ze’evi 1996, 154ff.

[219] The next paragraph is based entirely on Gerber 1994, chapter 4.

[220] See Eickelman 1964 for a good example of the literature using the supposed lack of guilds in Islam as a springboard for the argument that it is pointless to seek autonomous institutions under Islam.

[221] See Gerber 1987, chapter 2.

[222] Gerber 1994, chapter 2.

[223] Ibid., 60–61.

[224] It is true that the imperial divan also functioned as a court, but this took place only on rare occasions.

[225] Bursa Sicilli (hereafter BS), B103/316, 91b, 1087/1676-1677. There are many such lists in the qadi court records of seventeenth-century Bursa, and all take care to note that public agreement was involved in their preparation. Obviously, people in Bursa at the time considered this highly important, and it is of course also noteworthy that there was a stock phrase to relate to that “public.” For other examples of such lists see B112/326, 83b, Safar 1090/1679; B83/284, 88b, 1085/1674-1675.

[226] See Rosen 1989.

[227] Gerber 1994, chapter 2.

[228] Inalcik 1980–1981; Jennings 1986; Ongan 1974.

[229] Says Heyd: “In most criminal cases recorded in the court registers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries ... no penalty is mentioned at all. Often it is not even stated whether the cadi found the defendant guilty.” See Heyd 1973, 254.

[230] Jennings 1986; Ongan 1974; Inalcik 1980–1981.

[231] Mandaville 1979, 298.

[232] Ibid., 302–3.

[233] Ibid., 303.

[234] See ʕizakija 1995.

[235] See Rafeq 1994.

[236] Al-Ramli (d. 1081/1670). 1893–1894.

[237] For a biography of al-Ramli see Gerber 1999, 19–20.

[238] Al-Ramli 1893–1894, vol. 2, 178.

[239] Ibid., vol. 2, 184–85.

[240] Zilfi 1983.

[241] The bibliography on the waqf institution is rapidly proliferating. As a token only see Marcus 1989, passim; Roded 1989; Schwarz and Kurio 1983; Winkelhane and Schwarz 1985; Gerber 1988; Hoexter 1998b.

[242] See Geertz 1979.

[243] Gerber 1988, chapter 8.

[244] Barkan and Ayverdi 1970; Gerber 1988; Marcus 1989.

[245] Gibb and Bowen 1957, 169.

[246] Gerber 1983.

[247] Barkan and Ayverdi 1970.

[248] See Desan 1989.

[249] BS, B135/350, 1077/1666-1667.

[250] 1995 aːizak48 ʕ. See also

[251] Barkan and Ayverdi 1970, passim.

[252] Hoexter 1998a.

[253] Mardin 1995.

[254] Ibid., 278.

[255] Skocpol 1973.

[256] See Veinstein 1992.

[257] Mardin 1988.

[258] Zilfi 1988, 198--9.

[259] Moore 1978.

[260] Gerber, 1994, chapter 5.

[261] Inalcik 1993, though it should be noted that the theory is raised only to be rejected.

[262] Important information on complaint activity via the muhimme defterleri is also presented in Faroqhi 1986.

[263] Inalcik 1993, 16.

[264] Ibid., 12–13; also Aksan 1993.

[265] Faroqhi 1986.

** Chapter Five: The qa’di ’‘s Role in the Islamization[266] of Sedentary Tribal Society

AHARON LAYISH

*** Introduction

The discourse pertaining to such terms as civil society and public sphere is closely connected with the history of Western society and state.[267] This point should be borne in mind when attempting to translate these terms into the reality of Muslim society and state. In theory, there is no separation of state and “church” in Islam.[268] Although theocracy is not the commonest political system in modern Islam,[269] significant remnants of this religio-political system have survived in some

contemporary Muslim countries. For instance, the 1980 Egyptian Constitution maintains that the sharia (the non-codified Islamic law) is the main source of legislation (Article 2).[270] Muslim countries have adopted Western conceptions of political system, including the separation of powers—a principle totally alien to Islamic classical theory. However, it seems that the process of internalizing this principle has not so far been completed. Moreover, since the early 1970s there has been an increasing tendency toward the Islamization of the legal system in such countries as Libya, Iran, the Sudan, and Pakistan by means of statutory legislation and court decisions making the validity of statutory provisions conditional on their conformity to the sharia .[271]

Taylor distinguishes three modes of civil society in the West: the first exists in societies where there are free associations, not under tutelage of state power; the second (with a wider sense) exists where society as a whole can structure itself and coordinate its actions through such associations, which are free of state tutelage; and the third (which is an alternative or supplement to the second) exists where the ensemble of associations can significantly determine or inflect the course of state policy.[272]

The premodern Muslim society seems to fit in with the first (the narrowest) mode of civil society. Prior to the integration of the ulama (sing. al'im; scholars of religious sciences) in the state establishment one could trace in the Muslim society substantial elements of civil society. Levtzion analyzes the ulama's role as intermediaries between the rulers and their subjects to the extent that the ulama enter the definition of "free association, not under tutelage of state power": on the one hand, they bestowed legitimacy using their religious prestige to secure the obedience of the masses to the ruler's authority; on the other hand, they acted as representatives of the masses communicating to rulers the popular grievances. The ulama's attitude toward the political authorities was ambivalent: they recognized the need for a strong government to defend Islam from external and domestic threats; but as an independent (also in economic respects) class or association they considered almost every government by definition as oppressive and declined to cooperate with it or accept governmental nominations so as to avoid being corrupted. As guardians of the sharl>a and the public morals it was their duty, they believed, to guide the political rulers, from outside, on

how to apply the sharl>a properly.[273] In this respect one may compare the role of the uninstitutionalized ulama to that of the intellectuals in Western civil society.

The process of integration of the ulama into the state establishment, which had started already in the Middle Ages, has been completed in the twentieth century. The mufti (a specialist in sharia who gives authoritative legal opinions), perhaps the most important agency for the development of the sharl>a and the preservation of its vitality, the qadl (the judge of a sharl>a court), in charge of the application of the sharl>a in day-to-day reality, and other religious functionaries have been incorporated into the civil service with a view to implementing the government’s policy.[274] It goes without saying that the loss of independence from the political authority diminishes the ulama’s ability to fulfill their traditional role as intermediaries and guardians of the sharia and the public morals. In this respect contemporary Muslim society has lost a vital element of civil society, though the function of the ulama may have been taken over by secular intellectuals and other associations. _’

*** The Function of the shari’a in Sedentary Tribal Society

**** The Qadi’s Autonomy

This chapter is concerned with the role of the qadls, an essential part of the ulama<, in contemporary Muslim society. To what extent is the sharia court a “public sphere” in the sense that the qadl is capable of formulating norms of social, ethical, and legal behavior independently—that is, outside the control of the political authority—and of imposing them on Muslim society? An attempt will be made below to assess the sharl qadl‘s autonomy and his impact on tribal society in the process of sedentarization in modern Libya (broadly speaking from the early 1930s to the early 1970s) and the Judean Desert (from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the early 1970s) on the basis of legal documents collected from the sharl>a

courts of Ajdabiya and Kufra in Libya and of Bethlehem, and tribal arbitrators in the Jerusalem-Bethlehem region.[275] The case pertaining to denial of paternity, which appears at the end of this chapter is meant to provide an illustrative notion of the qadi s scope of autonomy, which is significant in the context of public sphere.

On the face of it the question seems to be irrelevant since the qadl is part of the state apparatus. He is a delegate of authority invested with the power of jurisdiction (qada'<). He is nominated either by the caliph himself (who, in theory, retains the power to exercise justice in person) or by his intermediate representatives (wazl'r, governor of a province, etc.).[276] In other words, the ruler appoints the qadi, pays his salary, and dismisses him from office when he deems it necessary. One might be tempted to conclude that this pattern of delegation intrinsically does not allow the qadi a wide measure of autonomy.

Moreover, among the ulama and fuqaha' (sing.: faql'h; jurists, experts in fiqh, the science of the sharl'>a, the sacred law of Islam) it is the muftl', rather than the qadi, who best represents the class of (religious) intellectuals of premodern Muslim society. This assertion refers first and foremost to the original concept of the muftl dating back to the >Abbasids (750–945), before he became integrated into the the political establishment.[277] Even today there are—alongside nominated muftl's— independent muftl's whose status is a function of their learned reputation.[278] Indeed, muftl's, not qadis, were the creators and exponents of the sharl'>a, which is a set not only of legal norms but also of ethical values. The sharl'>a is a "jurists' law"—that is, a system of law that developed outside an official legislature and the control of the executive authority. All the efforts of rulers—during the formative period of the sharl'>a—to institutionalize the independent fuqaha' in order to shape the legal norm to suit political purposes were in vain. The sharl'>a did not undergo a formal process of codification until the late nineteenth century. The first codification was the Mejelle, the Ottoman Civil Code (1869–1876). From the strict shar l' point of view, codification itself implies the

transformation of the sharl’>a from a jurists’ law to statutory law, with all the attendant consequences: departure from the religious-legal literature; disruption of the shar l’ legal methodology of sources of law (us’u’l al-fiqh); and collapse of the legal professional class of the fuqaha’ and muftl’s, the authorized exponents of the sharl’>a.[279]

On the other hand, the judicial practice of the qadis was never regarded as a formal source of law. The historical contribution of qadis to Islamic law took place during the Umayyad Empire (661–750), prior to the emergence of the class of muftl’s. By using unrestricted personal reasoning or discretion (ra<y) and religious ethical norms derived from the Qur<a’n, the qadis succeeded in assimilating elements of foreign legal systems that gradually penetrated into legal practice. In this respect they laid the foundations for the

creation of the sharl>a; but case law—that is, law settled by precedent[280]— never recognized by Islamic legal theory as a source of law. Islamic law developed as an expression of a religious ideal in contrast to practice.[281] A sophisticated legal methodology was created later by the muftis. The “judicial practice” (>amal) that emerged in Morocco beginning in the late fifteenth century seems to be a single instance of a “realist” form of Islamic jurisprudence that was intended to bring custom within the orbit of Maliki law. Its significance from the point of view of legal theory is, however, disputed by scholars.[282]

Although the qadi is subject to the ruler who appoints him to the office and can dismiss him at will, he nevertheless enjoys a measure of autonomy with regard to the application of the non-codified shari’a in matters that are within the shari’a court’s jurisdiction. The qadi is subject to the ruler only administratively; otherwise—that is, as far as the substantive law applicable in court is concerned—he is subject to the shari’a alone.[283] From the point of view of the qadi, codification implies subordination to legal norms shaped by earthly legislature outside the control of the fuqaha’ . Thus, with regard to the

shari’a courts of Ajda’biya and Kufra from the early 1930s to the early 1970s, the qadi was totally independent in this respect. The first codification of the law of personal status in Libya took place in 1972 (but unfortunately, its application is not reflected in the decisions available to me).[284] In case of doubt in any substantive or procedual matter the qadi might—though this happens quite rarely—consult any Ma’liki ‘ mufti’ or a legal treatise, according to his free choice.[285] The ruler had no standing in this matter. Moreover, the ruler was concerned in the first place with the maintenance of public order (including cases of homicide or bodily injury, which are in fact within the domain of Islamic private rather than public law) and, as might be expected, matters of personal status were not usually of great concern, unless a certain legal norm disturbed public order.[286] On the other hand, the law applicable in the shari’a court of Bethlehem, under whose jurisdiction the Bedouin of the Judean Desert fall, underwent codification. The shari’a applying to matters of personal status was replaced by the Ottoman Family Rights Law of 1917 and by the Jordanian family laws of 1951 and 1976, successively.[287] The qadi’s autonomy in this court, as far as the material law is concerned, is less than that of the Libyan qadi in the period under review.

**** Sedentary Tribal Society, Custom, and Shari’a

The population of Cyrenaica and the Judean Desert, which is the object of this study, is different with respect to social, economic, and political conditions, and school of law and material law applicable in the shari’a courts. Moreover, substantial differences exist even within Cyrenaica itself between the regions of Ajda’biya and Kufra. In spite of these differences, Cyrenaica and the Judean Desert share one fundamental feature: in both cases tribal societies in the process of sedentarization are being brought within the orbit of the sharia.[288]

Ajda’biya, a district center in the cultivable plain near the Mediterranean coast, has always been an important center, owing to its location at a strategic junction of roads leading to Tripoli in the west, Benghazi, Alexandria, and Cairo in the east, and Kufra and Khartoum in the south. The town was the seat of the SanUsl government during the short period of

indirect rule under the Italians. The people in this area are part of the Sa’adl confederation of tribes, the principal tribes being the Magha”riba and Maja’bira. In the town of Ajda’biya, however, they are outnumbered by members of other tribes and clans. Kufra, far in the south, consists of oases, and is also located on trade routes. Kufra was the administrative center for the Sanu’siyya and a command headquarters during the resistance to French expansion. The Zuwayya tribe is the largest population group and the dominant one; but there are other tribes, black-skinned and white-skinned, immigrant laborers from Chad and the Sudan; Ikhwa’n (“brothers”—that is, descendants of officials and servants of zawiyas of the SanUsl order who remained in Kufra after the abolition of the order); and emancipated slaves integrated into the Zuwayya genealogy. The tribes in these two regions are in different stages of sedentarization.[289]

The Bedouin in the Judean Desert are a group of tribes in the Jerusalem-Bethlehem region: al-Sawa’h’ira east of Jerusalem, al->Ubaydiyya east of Bayt Sa’h’u’r, the al-Ta’a’mira tribes extending from Bayt Sa’h’u’r in the north to Bayt Fajja’r in the south, and al-Rasha’<ida southeast of Taqu’>a. The settlement of these Bedouin, which began in the 1920s and was almost complete by the 1970s, was accelerated by proximity to Jerusalem and Bethlehem and by domestic security policy. Al-Ta’a’mira tribes have established settlements of their own in existing Judean villages and in the suburbs of Bethlehem. About half of these Bedouin no longer live within a tribal framework.[290]

As is known, normative Islam, with its system of beliefs, institutions, and laws, plays no central part in the shaping of a nomadic society.[291] Folk religion, including saint worship and intercession, still predominates. Moreover, in Cyrenaica vestiges remain of the Sanus’ iyya, an instance of S’u’fl ‘ order, adapted to the institutional and normative system of a tribal society—although the Sanu’sl’ establishment started to disintegrate after the Italian invasion in 1911.[292] Custom survived even when its followers had nominally adopted Islam. Western and Muslim scholars have observed that although Bedouin in various parts of the Muslim world consider themselves to be Muslims, their knowledge of Islamic doctrine, worship, and ethics is modest (this applies also to the Cyrenaican Bedouin even after the Sanu’sl’ revivalist movement had become established in their midst). Thus, they are

negligent in the carrying out of such religious obligations as perfoming public prayer in the mosque on Fridays, and customary law has the upper hand in its encounter with Islamic law. Their acceptance of Islamic law is partial and slow. Although the Islamization of the

Bedouin has been going on for centuries it has not yet been completed in every respect.[293] As might be expected, the Bedouin are not fully aware of this process. They identify themselves as Muslims. They believe in Alla’h and resort to him in various circumstances.[294] They regard tribal law as part of their Islamic heritage, although some of the customs are inconsistent with normative Islam.[295] The fact that the Bedouin identify their daily practice with the sharl>a in every respect is naturally of great significance. The outside observer, however, cannot and should not stop at this point but rather must make a clear distinction, devoid of value judgment, between orthodox sharl>a and tribal custom.[296] There is ample evidence to the effect that the Libyan qadls themselves are fully aware of the distinction between sharia, custom (>ada) and statutory law (qanun). The wakll qadl (the qadl‘s deputy) of Bethlehem, Shaykh Muhammad Sa>ld Jamal al-Rifa>1, maintains that “custom (>urf, ada) is binding law (hukm mulzim), provided that it does not conflict with an explicit provision (nas’s’) of the Qur<a’n and the sunna.”[297]

The sedentarization of the Bedouin in modern times brings them under the control of the central government, one aspect of which is the sharl’>a court. Under Italian rule the Bedouin of Cyrenaica applied to the sharl’>a courts only to a limited extent, preferring to settle their affairs according to tribal custom.[298] In the early 1970s their recourse to the sharl’>a courts increased although they did not cease to apply concurrently to the tribal courts.

Researchers have suggested several explantations for the Bedouin’s application to the sharl’>a courts:[299]

1. Sedentarization, which brings the Bedouin closer to normative Islam and hence increases their respect for the qadi’’s moral and religious authority and his function as the nominal head of the school of law (madhhab).

2. The spread of religious education and modern means of communication.

3. Geographical proximity to urban, religious, administrative, and economic centers.

4. The imposition—on the initiative of the central government—of shar>l’ jurisdiction on the Bedouin along with the abolition of statutory tribal jurisdiction (in the case of Jordan),[300] with a view to strengthening the Muslim establishment as a means to consolidate the government’s position in tribal society. From the point of view of the central government, it is easier to rule through its control of institutionalized normative Islam rather than trying to control popular religion and customs that vary from one place to another and are dominated by indigenous leaders competing among themselves for power.

5. Administrative exigencies in a modern state. Thus, for example, confirmation of marriage by a qadi’ or a shar>l’ solemnizer is required to ensure that no impediments to marriage exist between the parties that may render the marriage irregular (fas’id) or null and void (bat’i’ l). Registration of changes in marital status by the sharl’a court is also required to secure social allowances and education and medical care for children, and a shar>l’ order of succession is required to effect property rights and transactions in the land registers.

6. Equality of all parties, regardless of their tribe, origin, color, or legal position in the sharia court. (There is evidence of the rights of manumitted slaves being protected there).[301] True, the position of women

and cognates under the sharia is not equal to that of men and agnates, respectively. However, their position under the sharia is much better than under tribal customary law. Indeed, some evidence suggests that the sharia court is preferred especially by people whose position in traditional society is weak and who therefore cannot realize their rights under the tribal customary system. Thus, the sharia court is applied to by divorced women who have been denied their financial rights or by heirs deprived of their share in the estate under customary law. The applicants expect the sharia court to determine their rights under the sharia .[302]

7. The executive power of the sharia court provides legal security for the realization of legal and financial rights between the parties.

Although there can be no doubt that application by sedentary Bedouin to the sharia court reflects to some extent a genuine religious transformation,[303] administrative exigencies and practical considerations are no doubt the main causes of this phenomenon. In any case, once the process of sedentarization starts, normative Islam gradually becomes a more binding lifestyle as regards worship, religious duties, and law in those domains with respect to which the sedentary Bedouin apply to the shar>l judicial system and the exponents of the sharl>a—namely, in matters of personal status and succession.

**** The Qadi, Custom, and Shari’a

From the sijills of the sharl>a courts and the documents collected from tribal arbitrators, one may conclude that the more the Bedouin become sedentarized the closer they are brought within normative Islam.[304] The complex of relations between sharl>a and tribal custom may be divided into two main categories. In one custom reigns supreme, outside the control of the sharia, with only minor concessions to the sharl>a. Included in this category are “gift” (>ata<) marriages[305] that do not meet the shar>l requirements for contractual validity (offer and

acceptance, etc.) and other residual traces of customary marriage according to which a woman is not a party to the marriage contract, such as the marrying off of a girl by her guardian (wall) against her will (wilayat ijbar), contrary to the Hanafl doctrine with respect to a girl who has reached maturity. Also in this category is exchange marriage (taba'dul zawja't, shigha'r)—that is, the mutual waiver of the payment of dower for the two brides, each of them representing the dower of the other;[306] customary legal maxims couched in rhyme pertaining to deferred dower payable upon divorce or death of one of the spouses;[307] khul> ("divestiture," divorce by agreement, by which the wife redeems herself from the marriage for a consideration), in which a promissory note (qus'sa) in the amount of the dower is drawn up and made payable to the divorcing husband upon the marriage of the divorced wife to another man.[308]

Other cases in this category are divorce by means of the archaic z'iha'r oath, which renders the wife a blood relative within the forbidden degrees for marriage[309] and homicide and bodily injury regulated by pure customary law.[310]

The other category prominently displays the impact of the sharl>a in areas in which it wields assimilative power over custom. In this category, the qadls play a decisive role in bringing a Bedouin population within the orbit of the sharl'>a. Unlike the independent muftl', the qadi is directly and constantly confronted by the Bedouin; his ability to display a tolerant attitude toward custom, to compromise with it while adopting and absorbing it into the sharl'>a, may create a favorable climate in which a custom-bound population will apply to a shar l' judicial authority. On the other hand, a qadi's uncompromising effort to enforce the sharl'>a in letter and spirit, regardless of the modest Islamic knowledge of those applying to the court, may turn the Bedouin population away from its jurisdiction. It has been observed in various regions of the Islamic world that nomads accept the shar l' qadis' decisions only insofar as such decisions agree with the customary norm.[311]

How do the qadis react to the confrontation between the sharl’>a, which they are expected to apply, and tribal customary law dominant among the Bedouin? Do they uncompromisingly impose the sharl’>a on the Bedouin, thus risking the latter’s withdrawal from the sharl’>a court? Do they submit to tribal custom, thus abusing their role as exponents of the sharl>’ a? Or do they seek a golden path between the two and meet custom half way, knowing this to be the only way to bring the Bedouin closer to the sharl’>a? Naturally, much depends on the education and professional training of the qadi, his religious and social backgound, and his personal motivation. Unfortunately, I have no such information regarding the Libyan qadis.[312] There is no indication in their decisions that they were influenced or inspired by the legal methodology of the Grand SanUsl. Although the SanUsl belonged to the Maliki school, he felt free to deviate from it with respect to some issues. Moreover, under the influence of Ibn Taymiyya he did not regard himself as bound by taql’l’d, the established body of law, of the Ma’likl’ school, and claimed for himself some freedom to exercise personal ijtiha’d (reasoning).[313] The qadis of Bethlehem, who are bound by the H’ anafl’ school of law, seem to have a formal and solid education in Islamic law, both codified and uncodified.

Several tendencies can be distinguished in the judicial practice: the qadis’ reconciliation with custom (as, with regard to customary khul>, reinstatement of the divorced wife unrestrictedly regardless of the waiting period and the quota of three divorces; the circumvention of the shar l’ rules of inheritance; and customary “Jah’ill’” will) and enforcement of the sharl’>a while rejecting custom completely (as with regard to the legal consequences of divorce).[314] In Libya, dar’adl, a tribal arbitrator who has been incorporated in the sharl’>a court to the extent that he is treated by the qadi as a shar l’ notary (adl) of the court, is a unique example of the symbiosis of custom and sharl’>a to which the

qadl makes a vital contribution. This institution, which provides a mechanism for handling marital disputes, falls within the gray zone between custom and sharl’>a.[315] The qadis of

Bethlehem give retroactive effect to customary marriages of Bedouin not performed by a shar l’ ma<dhu’n (solemnizer) and accept the testimony of Bedouin shaykhs certifying that the marriage was performed by a valid (sa’ h’l’h’) shar l’ union “in accordance with the custom of >Arab al-Sawa’h’ira.” This phenomenon has also been observed among some of the Israeli qadis.[316] Shaykh >Abd al-Qadir >Abd al-Muhsin >Abidin, the qadi of the Sharl’>a Court of Bethlehem, would say: “Since reconciliation is stronger than the qadi (al-s’ulhyuqawwi’ al-qadi), because it is based on agreement between the parties, it effects the qadi’s decision.” Moreover, he would attest that an arrangement by mutual agreement (bi<l-tarad”i’) was frequently achieved with the help of tribal notables (wuju’h al->asha’<ir), and that when a qadi was unable to solve a particular problem, he would refer the parties to an arbitrator. Among the Bedouin of the Judean Desert it has been observed that the parties appoint arbitrators to prepare the ground (tamhi’dan) for the settlement of financial matters between them and then rush to the shari’a court to obtain shar i’ legitimation for the proposed settlement. There is ample evidence for the close cooperation between the customary arbitrator and the shar i’ qadi.[317] Customary substantive and procedural law still plays an important role in the Judean Desert.[318]

The qadis’ tendency to reconcile with custom may bring about deviations from orthodox shari’a, as in the case of a khul> agreement (endorsed by court) in which it is stipulated that the divorced wife is prohibited from marrying someone before her ex-husband has been compensated by the dower of the future husband.[319]

The Maliki school, like other Sunni schools of law, does not recognize custom (>ad’a, urf) as a formal source of law. Yet custom has a solid basis in the Ma’liki’ corpus of law due to the fact that the Medinese practices (>amal) were incorporated into that school and granted the status of Prophetic sunna. In other words, custom has been absorbed into the oral traditions; hence its status as a formal source of law has ceased to be relevant.[320] This may explain why the Ma’liki’ school applicable in Libya is more inclined than any other school to compromise with custom. The eclecticism of the Ma’liki’ school found, since the fifteenth

century, sophisticated expression in the judicial practice (>amal) of the shari’a courts in North Africa, which in the view of some observers became a source of law in its own right.[321]

The Libyan documents do not point to a sophisticated, systematic approach by the qadis aimed at absorbing custom by the shari’a. Moreover, there is no significant evidence in our documents of the qadis’ recourse to religious-legal literature,[322] which may imply unwillingness on their part to invoke the fuqaha’<, who are charged with the task of adapting the shari’a to changing social conditions by means of expert legal opinions (fatwa’s). On the other hand, some evidence in Libya suggests that the qadl is occasionally approached in his capacity not as a judicial authority but rather as a mufti competent to issue a legal opinion (jawa’b) in matters pertaining to divorce, succession, validity of a conversion into foreign currency, and the apportionment of tax burden among the parties to a camel-hiring contract.[323] When acting in his capacity as a mufti the qadl functions by virtue not of his nomination by the ruler but rather of his reputation as an independent faqlh.

The qadls’ decisions in Libya are generally characterized by a formalistic approach.[324] Occasionally, however, while imposing the religious-legal consequences derived from any given act, they may reproach a party to a dispute who has violated a religious-legal norm. In one case, in which a husband divorced his wife by five repudiations at one session, the qadl ruled that the first three exhausted the husband’s shar>l quota and the rest made a mockery of the Qur<anic verses.[325] This style of the qadl was meant to strengthen awareness of the sharl>a in a custom-bound population applying to the sharl>a court out of practical considerations.

As mentioned earlier, an agreement between the parties is “stronger than the qadl.” However, in the absence of such an agreement, the qadls of Bethlehem, charged with adjudicating matters of

personal status and succession of the Judean Desert Bedouin, reject custom altogether and apply the sharl>a in its codified version under Jordanian family law, even when they know this will involve intolerable hardship.[326] It is interesting to note in this connection that some of the Israeli shar>l qadls dissolved marital unions on the ground that they had been concluded according to tribal custom rather than the Ottoman Family Rights Law of 1917 (which was adopted in Palestine in 1919) and ordered the parties to conclude shar>l marriages.[327] Deviation from statutory provisions of the family law would create grounds for appeal to the Shari>a Court of Appeal. The scope of judicial discretion available to the qadls of Bethlehem that could be used to bridge the gap between sharl>a and custom was by the nature of things restricted to cases where there was no need to hand down a decision based on statutory provisions—that is, cases that were settled by mutual consent of the parties. Among the Bedouin of the Judean Desert, some evidence points to a kind of sophistication designed to facilitate the adoption of the sharl>a by means of Shafi>1 fatwas—that is, outside the control of the sharia court. This applies, for example, to cases of reinstatement of a triply divorced wife. Under the H’ anafi’ doctrine, which is dominant in the Shari>’ a Court of Betlehem, the intent (niyya) of the husband to divorce his wife is irrelevant, and the triply divorced wife is therefore not legally permitted to her ex-husband unless an intermediate marriage to a third party has taken place. Under the Sha’fi>i ‘ doctrine, on the other hand, lack of intent to divorce the wife is taken into account (mu>tabara) and thus may spare the inconvenience involved in an intermediate marriage.[328] The Libyan qadls use their discretion to invoke the principle of maslaha (public interest) to bridge the gap between sharl>a and custom. In the twentieth century, the ability of the sharia court to bring the Bedouin within the orbit of normative Islam has declined due not only to the codification of the sharia but also to the competition of civil courts and the process of secularization.[329]

As noted earlier, in classical theory, the qadl is a delegate, either direct or indirect, of the caliph. The findings accumulated from the sijills of the sharl>a courts suggest, however, that the qadls regard themselves rather as representatives of the Muslim community at large by virtue of their commission to apply the

sharl’>a. Their moral integrity and inner conviction of fulfilling a public mission is in the best tradition of the muh’tasib, the Islamic inspector of the market, anchored in the religious command: “to promote good and discourage evil” (al-amr bi<l-ma>ru ‘ f wa<l-nahy an al-munkar). In other words, the qadi regards himself as responsible for enforcing Islamic morals and behavior in the Muslim community. Such a function is incumbent on any individual who seeks to gain religious merit by his zeal for the sharl’>a, due to the limited role of the public authority in Muslim society (thus, there is no office of public prosecution in Islam).[330] It is interesting to note in this connection that in a land dispute settled in a Sudanese court by mutual consent of the parties and made effective by judicial decision (h’ukm rida<‘l’), the court was inspired by the Qur<a’nic commandment “to promote good and discourage evil.” Later, one of the parties changed his mind, but the judicial decision was sustained by the court of appeal on the grounds that “the statutory law (qa’nu’n) and the sharl’>a authorize [the qadi] to combine the office of the judge with the function of the muh’tasib (al-jam bayna waz’l’fatay al-qada’< wa<l-h’isba).”[331]

*** Denial of Paternity—a Decision Handed Down by the Shari’>a Court of Ajda’biya

**** Summary

The case discussed below[332] is meant to illustrate the qadi’s scope of autonomy to the extent of deviating from the strict shar l’ norm and adopting local customs and institutions. In doing so the qadi was inspired solely by the welfare of all the parties concerned. Yet he used his judicial discretion and religious authority to resolve the dispute within the bounderies of the sharl’>a court, thus bringing the sedentary Bedouin closer to normative Islam.

After a series of disputes between the spouses that resulted in the wife leaving her husband’s house and moving to her father’s house as “an angry

woman,” the court instructed the spouses to stay with a certain tribal notary (dar’adl) so that the latter might report to the court about their behavior. After some time it became apparent that the woman was pregnant. Her husband denied paternity of the child. The woman at first acknowledged that she was pregnant by a stranger. Later, however, she claimed that her husband had intimidated her into making this acknowledgment. She explained that while she had been “an angry woman” in her father’s house, before moving to the dar’adl, her husband had continued to visit her in secret and have sexual relations with her at will; moreover, he had acknowledged having caused her pregnancy, and later on, while under the protection of the adl, they had lived together in complete harmony until her father-in-law showed up and incited her husband against her.

The adl confirmed in court that the couple’s mutual relations had been normal until her father-in-law appeared on the scene, after which the husband denied his part in the pregnancy. After the wife had acknowledged that she was pregnant by a stranger, the adl summoned her and, pointing at a saint’s tomb, enjoined her to tell the truth. Recourse to the sanction of the holy man’s tomb had its effect: the woman withdrew her first acknowledgment and attributed her pregnancy to her husband. The latter, however, persisted in denying paternity.

The qadl rejected the husband’s denial, apparently on the grounds that the li>an’ procedure had not taken place. According to this procedure, in cases of unproven charges of adultery against the wife it is possible to dissolve the marriage through a process of mutual imprecation; while paternity is denied, the parties are not subject to the Qur<a’nic sanctions prescribed for adultery (zina)’ and unproven charges of adultery (qadhf). The qadi ascribed paternity to the husband and enjoined him to return the wife to his house, to treat her well, restore her dower, her trousseau, and her jewelry, and pay her maintenance retroactively for the period during which he had neglected to do so.

**** Legal Background[333]

Denial of paternity, as in the case under review, is tantamount to an accusation of adultery (zina)’ . The offense can be established either by the wife’s acknowledgment (four acknowledgments are required) or by the testimony of four eyewitnesses to the act of sexual intercourse. Once the offense has been established, the wife is liable to Qur<a’nic punishment (hadd)—that is, death by stoning (rajm)—provided she is muh’sana—that is, that the marriage has been consummated. If, however, the husband fails to establish the offense, he is liable to the Qur<a’nic punishment for unfounded accusation of adultery (qadhf), eighty lashes and removal of the right to testify until he repents.[334]

If the husband cannot prove his allegation but nevertheless continues to deny paternity, he is expected to initiate the procedure of li>an’ . According to this procedure, which is based on the Qur<an (24: 4, 6–99 and the hadlth, the husband must swear four oaths (by analogy to four witnesses required to establish adultery9 in which he invokes the name of God to the effect that he is telling the truth, and a fifth oath to the effect that if he lies he will be liable to God’s imprecation. If he fails to swear these oaths after having accused his wife of adultery, he will be liable for the hadd-punishment for qadhf. The wife must swear four oaths in which she invokes the name of God to the effect that her husband is lying and that she is innocent, and a fifth oath to the effect that if her husband is telling the truth she will be liable to God’s anger. If she fails to swear these oaths she will be liable to the hadd-punishment for zina.’ If the husband keeps silent while pregnancy becomes apparent, he is liable to the Qur<a’nic hadd and may not resort to the li>an’ procedure. The hadd applies also in the event that he retracts from his denial of paternity.

For the li>an’ procedure to be effected, the marriage must be valid or presumed (h’ukman) to be valid. If the marriage is irregular (fas’id) the woman is regarded as a stranger. If both the husband and wife adhere to the li>an’ procedure, then they are exempt from the Qur<a’nic punishments—lashes and stoning,

respectively (li>an’ averts [yadra<u] the hadd); they are not allowed to have sexual relations with each other (istimta>’) even before the marriage is dissolved by court. According to the Maliki school the marriage is dissolved (furqa) by the act of mutual imprecation (mula’ana), and the qadl‘s decision is required only to make dissolution effective (munaffadh). Li>an’ is regarded as judicial dissolution (faskh) rather than (as under Abu’ H’ anifa’s doctrine) irrevocable (ba<‘in) unilateral repudiation (ta’ laq’); in fact, it is tantamount to eternal (mu<abbad) dissolution, which creates a permanent prohibition for marriage, as in the case of prohibition on grounds of fosterage (rada>’).

Li>an’ precludes the husband’s paternity of the child (the child is related only to his mother), and there exist no mutual rights of inheritance (but the child and his mother inherit each other) or maintenance. If the procedure of li>an’ takes place before consummation, the wife is entitled to half of her dower. Nevertheless, some of the legal effects of paternity are left intact as a precaution in case paternity between the husband and child is established in the future: no option of retaliation (qisas”) exists if one of them causes the death of the other; they and their relatives are prohibited from marrying each other on grounds of affinity (musah’ara). And finally, the child who is the object of the denial is not regarded as a child of unknown paternity and therefore may not be claimed for the purpose of paternity by a stranger.

**** The Qadi’s Decision

In this case, the qadl rejected the husband’s denial of paternity and ruled that paternity should be attributed (ilhaq’) to him (court’s decision, line 33). There is a clear indication to the effect that the qadl was aware of the li>an procedure, and one wonders why he did not mention it explicitly. After having established the validity (thubu’t) of the marriage between the spouses, their intimate association (mu>as’hara), and their legal marital relations (khulta’), the qadl drew attention to the

fact that the husband had not invoked the procedure especially laid down in the sharia for the denial of paternity (nafy Al-haml) (lines 31–32). There can be no doubt that he was referring to li>an.

As noted, denial of paternity is tantamount to an accusation of adultery, and if it is not proven either by four acknowledgments or by eyewitnesses—as in the present case—a ground is created for the hadd punishment for qadhf— that is, eighty lashes. Yet the qadl totally ignored the Qur<anic sanction without attempting to explain his omission. One possible explanation is that the sharl>a court in contemporary Libya has no jurisdiction over matters pertaining to shar>l penal sanctions (hudud).[335] However, this does not provide a fully satisfactory explanation. Paternity and its denial are matters of personal status within the sole jurisdiction of the sharia court,[336] although this court may not effect the attendant penal sanction if the husband cannot prove his accusation. One would expect the qadl to draw attention to the shar>l legal norm involved, or at least to make some value judgment regarding the fact that the husband has violated the Qur<a’nic prohibition of qadhf. Nothing of the kind is to be found in the judgment.

A more satisfactory explanation is that the qadl was motivated by the interests of the wife and, even more so, the yet-to-be-born child. He was fully convinced that the wife was pregnant by her husband and hence there was no reason, in his mind, to dissolve the marriage. As a result, he decided to concentrate on rehabilitation of the marriage in spite of the husband’s continued denial of paternity. It goes without saying that the li>an’ procedure was not helpful to this end. Moreover, an accusation of adultery, even if unproven, may cause severe damage to the reputation of the wife in addition to the dissolution of the marriage. Similarly, denial of paternity may affect the child’s right to receive maintenance from his father and to inherit from his estate. Instead, the qadl enjoined the husband to take his wife back to the conjugal dwelling, restore all her financial rights and personal effects, and pay her maintenance retroactively. One should bear in mind that maintenance includes maskan shar l—that is, legal conjugal dwelling “in the

neighborhood of virtuous persons” (bi-jiwar qawm salihln)[337] rather than in a desolate dwelling (line 1)— which may have been the initial cause of the dispute between the spouses. If this explanation is correct, we have to do here with a clear instance of applying the principle of mas’laha, public interest, in judicial practice.

The qadl here does not regard himself as being bound by the sharl norms pertaining to the denial of paternity. In fact, he seems to be guided purely by pragmatic considerations. He has no inhibitions whatsoever about resorting to a tribal notary (dar’adl) for handling this particular marital dispute. As explained elsewhere, dar’adl is a tribal customary institution that became incorporated in the sharia court. The sharl qadl makes a decisive contribution to this end in his efforts to bring tribal society within the orbit of normative Islam.[338] The adl, on his part, enlists the sanction of a holy man’s tomb[339] to cause the wife to withdraw her first acknowledgment according to which she was pregnant by a stranger. The qadl does not seem to be disturbed by this procedure while assessing the accumulating evidence for rejecting the husband’s denial of paternity. Indeed, the court’s decision demonstrates the consolidated status of tribal custom and popular religion in the daily life of a tribal society in the process of sedentarization.

The case under review illustrates the extent of the qadl‘s judicial discretion to accommodate the sharia to social reality. In theory, he is bound by the sharl>a in its Maliki version. In practice, he uses his own discretion to bridge the gap between idealistic sharia and custom. Unless a violation of public order is anticipated as a result of the qadl‘s decision, no intervention on the part of the ruler is expected. Such an intervention is unlikely in matters of personal status. Hence, one may conclude that the sharl>a court fulfills a vital role in the public sphere in the sense that the qadl is capable of formulating norms of social, ethical, and legal behavior independently—that is, outside the control of the political authority.

*** Appendix: The Court’s Decision and Its Translation

**** The Arabic Text

[[m-h-miriam-hoexter-shmuel-n-eisenstadt-nehemia-lev-1.png]]

[[m-h-miriam-hoexter-shmuel-n-eisenstadt-nehemia-lev-2.jpg]]

[[m-h-miriam-hoexter-shmuel-n-eisenstadt-nehemia-lev-3.png]]

[<verbatim>1</verbatim>] [...]{1}{2}{3}{4}{5}{6}] ادعت الزوجة في
كانت تعول نفسها (نفقة) على ما تلتقطه من حصاد حقل من [الموسم] الذي سبق [المحكمة أنها
التاريخ، وذلك لأن [زوجها] قد أودعها في مسكن مهجور (استودعها) واستولى على [ممتلكاتها]
وعندما كشفت لأبيها عن عدم رغبتها في [<verbatim>2</verbatim>] .(غاصبها) ظلماً
على هذه [<verbatim>3</verbatim>] إعالة نفسها (نفقة) من الحصاد، لم يوافقها
النقطة. ثم أمرت المحكمة السيد المذكور إبراهيم بإعادة الزوجة [من مسكن الزوجية] إلى بيته
وإعادة النظر في قضية عودة والدها من الكفرة. [<verbatim>4</verbatim>] الخاص
فأجابه بأنكر (نفيان) [<verbatim>5</verbatim>] وبعد ذلك وجه القاضي سؤالاً إلى الزوج
الحمل (حمل)، وأقر بأنه وأخوه >عبد الرازق قد انتزعا منها (سلباً) ثوبها،
مئزرها، وسوارها. “وبعد ذلك، في 11 فبراير 1948، [<verbatim>6</verbatim>]
استدعت المحكمة الزوجين [<verbatim>7</verbatim>] الموافق 30 ربيع الأول 1367 هـ
والسيد المذكور إبراهيم، وسألتهما: ““هل تريدان الإدلاء بأقوال (أقوال)
تتناقض مع ما قلتماه سابقاً [في المحكمة]؟”” “أجابت [<verbatim>8</verbatim>]
[<verbatim>9</verbatim>] الزوجة على هذا بأن قولها الأول (تقرير) كان باطلاً (باطل)
.لأنه كان تحت ضغط (ضغط) وترهيب من زوجها، وأنها في الحقيقة حملت من زوجها
ولم يكن لديها شك في ذلك لأن زوجها استمر في الاتصال [<verbatim>10</verbatim>]
[<verbatim>11</verbatim>]، بها خلال الفترة التي كانت فيها “مغتاظة” في بيت أبيها
ولم يكف عن ممارسة الجنس معها كلما سمحت المناسبة؛” في الواقع، حتى بعد ظهورها لأول
وبيانها السابق الأخير، زارها ليلاً في [أمام المحكمة] [<verbatim>12</verbatim>] مرة
التي نامت فيها ومارس معها الجنس (خلعها). [<verbatim>13</verbatim>] الغرفة
[<verbatim>14</verbatim>] [وقالت أيضًا إن] زوجها كان يعلم بحملها واعترف بذلك
وأنه عاش في حميمية منسجمة (معشرة) معها [بعد انتقاله إلى دار العدل] حتى زاره والده
تغير سلوكه تجاهها [<verbatim>15</verbatim>] وعقدا اجتماعًا طويلاً؛ وعندها.

وسئل السيد المذكور إبراهيم الخليل عما يعرفه بين الزوجين المذكورين، فأجاب قائلا: بعد أيام “ قليلة من عودتهما إلى علاقاتهما الزوجية تحت حمايتي قررت الذهاب إلى أجدابيا وسألت كل منهما على حدة عن علاقتهما الحميمة، حيث كان هناك احتمال أن أمر على المحكمة الشرعية لتقديم الأخبار عن الزوجين تحت حمايته.” “وكانت إجاباتهما تدل على أن بينهما انسجاماً تاماً. ولكن عند عودتي من أجدابيا وجدتهما في حالة نفسية [<verbatim>19</verbatim>] وأبلغت أنه في غيابي جاء والد الزوج إلى [<verbatim>20</verbatim>]، متناقضة ليخبرني بحمل زوجته، [<verbatim>21</verbatim>] المرعى. وبعد ذلك جاءني الزوج [<verbatim>22</verbatim>] السيد “.وأنها عزت ذلك إلى شخص آخر قال إبراهيم أيضا: “أحضرت الزوجة إلى منزلي، وأشرت إلى قبر سيد جبريل، وحثثتها على ألا تقول إلا الحقيقة. ولكنها غادرت منزلي دون [<verbatim>23</verbatim>] وبعد ثلاثة أيام جاءني زوجها وأخبرني [<verbatim>24</verbatim>] .أن تقول كلمة واحدة وأكدت [<verbatim>25</verbatim>] أن زوجته أقرت بحملها منه. فصحبته إلى المنزل الزوجة ما أقرت به من قبل [أنها حامل من زوجها]. ورد زوجها على ذلك بالإصرار على ما أقر به أنكر [أمام المحكمة] [<verbatim>26</verbatim>] .”من قبل [أي أن الحمل لم يكن منه] أن والده جاء لزيارته وهو تحت حماية السيد إبريك (جوار). [وأصر على] إنكاره (نافي) للحمل عندما غادرت زوجتي منزلي العام الماضي “ [<verbatim>27</verbatim>] :[الأبوة] قائلاً [وانتقلت إلى منزل والدها كـ”امرأة غاضبة”] كانت حائضًا (هائجة). بعد ذلك لم يكن لدي أي اتصال بها حتى [وضعنا أنفسنا] تحت حماية [<verbatim>28</verbatim>] السيد إبريك (جوار). “حماية السيد إبريك (جلرا)”.

[<verbatim>29</verbatim>] ،وبعد ذلك، في الثاني عشر من شهر فبراير من هذا العام حضر الوكيلان المذكوران [أمام المحكمة]، وسئلا عما إذا كان لديهما [أي شيء ليقولاه] يتناقض أمر السيد إبريك بنقل حمايتها [<verbatim>30</verbatim>] .مع ما قيل. فأجابا بالنفي (حمايتها) إلى أبيها وأمر الأخير بقبولها (استلامها).

بناءً على ما قيل في المحاضر السابقة (محاضرة) ومع [<verbatim>31</verbatim>] مراعاة شهادة (ثبوت) عقد الزواج، وعلاقة الزوجين الحميمة (معاشرتهما)، وجماعهما (الخلعة)، [ومع مراعاة حقيقة أن] الشرع وضع إجراء (حدات ... تهدل) لنفي الحمل (نفى الحمل) — ولم [<verbatim>33</verbatim>] يقدم أي دليل [يظهر أن هذا الإجراء قد تم تنفيذه] في هذه وعلى هذا الأساس حكم القاضي بأن الحمل يجب أن ينسب إلى الزوج، وألزمه أن يرد إلى “ زوجته كل ما أخذه غصباً: مهرها، وثيابها، وحليها التي هي ثيابها، ومئزرها، وسوارها المذكور. وألزمه كذلك أن ينفق عليها من الوقت الذي أهمل فيه دفعها.” وقد قدرت هذه القيمة بـ بجنيهين ونصف لمدة خمسة أشهر حتى فبراير 1948. [كما [<verbatim>36</verbatim>] ومعاملتها معاملة حسنة. وقد أصدر [<verbatim>37</verbatim>] ألزمه] باستعادة زوجته الحكم على النحو الواجب، وأمر بتسجيله، وطلب من [الشهود] أن يشهدوا عليه في 16 فبراير 1948.

[<verbatim>38</verbatim>] (شهدوا الحال) شهود على الإجراءات.

[<verbatim>39</verbatim>] الأمر كما تقدم [<verbatim>40</verbatim>] قاضي رافي> >عبد الرحمن القاضي [<verbatim>41</verbatim>] أجدابيا

{1} Regrettably, the beginning of this document is not available for inclusion here. However, on the basis of a preceding document, it is possible to conclude that the matter was decided by Shaykh Rafi> Abd al-Rahman al-Qadi, the Qadi of the Sharia Court of Ajdabiya. See Layish and Davis 1988, 89, no. 115 (taken from the sijill of Shara Court of Ajdabiya, p. 188, no. 185 of 12 February 1948).

{2} The words ‘.L ...-د -.د s’:’‘ , have been corrected in the document and appear in the margin of the document.

{3} The grammatical form of the imperfect verb with n- in the first person singular reflects spoken usage in the Maghrib. For further details see Blanc 1974, 206 and 209.

{4} This word was copied twice in the original, the second time at the beginning of line 35. A note to this effect (j ظ:.) is mentioned in the margin of the document, which implies that the repetition is cancelled.

{5} Some words were omitted from line 37 in its original version. This line has here been reconstructed on the basis of corrections in the margin of the document.

{6} The conclusion to this document is not available to me. See fn. 1 above.

**** Translation[340]

[<verbatim>1</verbatim>] [...][341] [the wife had claimed in court that she] was supporting herself (tun-fiq) on gleanings from the harvest of a field from the [season] that preceded the date,[342] due to the fact that [her husband] had lodged her in a desolate dwelling (istawhadaha)’ [343] and unlawfully seized [her belongings] (ghasabaha)’ .[344] [<verbatim>2</verbatim>] When she revealed to her father her unwillingness to support herself (nafaqa) on the harvest, he did not agree with her [<verbatim>3</verbatim>] on this point.[345] Then, the court instructed the aforementioned sayyid Ibrlk to return the wife [from the conjugal dwelling] to his own private home[346] [<verbatim>4</verbatim>] and to reexamine the case on her father’s return from Kufra. Afterwards, the [qadl] addressed a question to the husband [<verbatim>5</verbatim>] who responded by denying (naf’iyan) the pregnancy [paternity] (haml),[347] and acknowledging that he and his brother >Abd al-Ra’ziq had taken away from her by force (salaba’) [her] garment, [<verbatim>6</verbatim>] her apron, and [her] bracelet. Subsequently, on 11 February 1948, which corresponds to the 30th of Rabl> Awwal 1367, [<verbatim>7</verbatim>] the court summoned the two spouses and the aforementioned sayyid Ibrlk, and both [spouses] were asked: “Do you want to make statements (aqwal’) [<verbatim>8</verbatim>] that contradict what you have previously said [in court]?”[348] To this, the wife answered that her first statement (taqrlr) was null and void (bat’i’ l) [<verbatim>9</verbatim>] because it had been given under pressure (daght)’ and intimidation from her husband, and that in reality, she had been made pregnant by her husband. [<verbatim>10</verbatim>] She had no doubt concerning that fact because her husband continued to maintain contact with her during the period when she was “an angry woman” (mughtad’a) [mughtaz’a][349] in her father’s [<verbatim>11</verbatim>] house, and he did not cease having sexual relations (mukhal’ata’) with her whenever the occasion allowed; indeed, even after her first appearance [<verbatim>12</verbatim>] [in court] and her recent preceding statement, he visited her at night in the room [<verbatim>13</verbatim>] in which she slept and had sexual relations with her (khal’ata’ ha)’ . [She also said that] her husband knew about her pregnancy and acknowledged it [<verbatim>14</verbatim>] and that he had lived in harmonious intimacy (mu>as’hara) with her [after having moved to the

dar’adl] until his father visited him and they had a long meeting; whereupon [<verbatim>15</verbatim>] his behavior toward her changed.[350]

The aforementioned sayyid Ibrlk’ was asked [to state] what he knew [concerning the relations] between the aforementioned couple. [<verbatim>16</verbatim>] He answered, saying: “A few days after they resumed their conjugal relations (muraj’a’atihima)’ under my protection (jiwar’),[351] I decided to go [<verbatim>17</verbatim>] to Ajda’biya, and I asked each of them separately concerning their initimate association (mu>as’harati-hima)’, since there was a possibility that I might pass by [<verbatim>18</verbatim>] the Sharl>’ a Court in order to report information (ikhbar’) [concerning the spouses under his protection]. Their answers indicated that there was complete harmony between them. [<verbatim>19</verbatim>] However, on my return from Ajda’biyya I found the two of them in an opposite frame of mind, [<verbatim>20</verbatim>] and I was informed that in my absence the husband’s father had come to the pasturage. Subsequently, the husband came to me [<verbatim>21</verbatim>] to inform me of his wife’s pregnancy, which she attributed to someone else.” Sayyid [<verbatim>22</verbatim>] Ibrlk also said: “I brought the wife to my home and, pointing to the tomb (darlh) of Sid1 Jibril, [<verbatim>23</verbatim>] I exhorted her to say nothing but the truth. [352] However, she left my house without saying a word. [<verbatim>24</verbatim>] Three days later, her husband came to me and informed me that his wife acknowledged (i>tiraf’) [that her pregnancy was by him]. I accompanied him home [<verbatim>25</verbatim>] and the wife confirmed what she had previously acknowledged [that she was pregnant by her husband]. To this her husband responded by insisting on what he had previously declared [viz., that the pregnancy was not by him].” [<verbatim>26</verbatim>] He [viz., the husband] denied [in court] that his father had come to visit him while under sayyid Ibrik’ ’s protection (jiwar’). [He persisted in his] denial (nafy) of the pregnancy [paternity] saying: [<verbatim>27</verbatim>] “When my wife left my home last year [and moved to her father’s house as “an angry woman”] she was menstruating (ha<‘id’). After that [<verbatim>28</verbatim>]

I had no contact with her until [we placed ourselves] under sayyid Ibrik’s protection (jlra).”[353]

Afterwards, on the 12th of the month of February of the current [year], [<verbatim>29</verbatim>] the two aforementioned proxies (wakllan)[354] appeared [in court], and they were asked if they had [anything to say] that contradicted what had been stated. They answered negatively. [<verbatim>30</verbatim>] Sayyid Ibrik’ was ordered to transfer (tasllm) her protection (hamiyatiha) <himayatiha>[355] to her father and the latter was ordered to accept (istilam’) it [viz., the protection].[356]

[<verbatim>31</verbatim>] On the basis of what had been said in the preceding depositions (mahad”ir) and with due regard to the certification (thubu’t) of the marriage contract, the spouses’ intimate association (mu>as’hara),[<verbatim>32</verbatim>] their sexual intercourse (khulta), [and also with due regard to the fact that] the sharl>a established a procedure (haddadat ... tahdldan) for the denial of pregnancy [paternity] (nafy al-haml)—no proof of which had been produced [showing that this procedure had been carried out][357] in these [<verbatim>33</verbatim>] dispositions—[on the basis of all these,] his honour the Qa ‘d’i ‘ ruled that the pregnancy should be attributed (ilhaq’) to the husband,[358] and he obliged him to restore [<verbatim>34</verbatim>] to his wife everything he had taken by force: her dower, her clothing and her jewelry which are her garments, her apron, and her bracelet which have been mentioned. [<verbatim>35</verbatim>] He likewise obligated him to provide [arrears] maintenance from the time that he had neglected to pay it (nafaqat ihmal’iha)’ . This was valued [<verbatim>36</verbatim>] at two and a half pounds for a period of five months until February 1948. [He also obliged him] to take his wife back [<verbatim>37</verbatim>] and to treat her well. He duly handed down [the verdict], instructed that it be entered, and required [the witnesses] to testify (ishhad’) to it on 16 February 1948.

[<verbatim>38</verbatim>] Witnesses to the proceedings (shuhu’d al-hal’).

[<verbatim>39</verbatim>] The matter being as indicated above

[<verbatim>40</verbatim>] the Qadi’of Ajda’biya

[<verbatim>41</verbatim>] Ra’fi> >Abd al-Rah’ma’n al-Qadi ’

*** Notes

My colleagues Miriam Hoexter, David Powers, Frank Stewart, and Knut Vik0r read an earlier version of this essay and made useful comments for which I am most grateful.

[266] “Islamization” in this essay denotes the process of bringing tribal society closer to normative Islam, not conversion. Cf. Levtzion 1979a, 19, 21; 1981, 78.

[267] See e.g. Taylor 1990; Calhoun 1992; Cohen and Arato 1992. I am indebted to Professor S. N. Eisenstadt for these references.

[268] Mayer 1987, 130–39.

[269] Layish 1984b; 1987.

[270] Some Egyptian judges in civil courts, by invoking Article 2, refused to apply statutory provisions contradictory to the shan‘a. See Layish and Shaham EI²b.

[271] Mayer 1987, 150–66.

[272] Taylor 1990, 98.

[273] Levtzion 1979b.

[274] Layish 1989, 5.

[275] The Libyan legal documents were placed at my disposal by Professor John Davis of Oxford University. The legal documents from the Judean Desert were collected with the assistance of my colleague, the late Dr. Avshalom Shmueli of Tel Aviv University. I am profoundly grateful to both of them. The findings and conclusions below are drawn freely from my previous research conducted on the basis of these material sources with a view to presenting them within an integrative thesis on shan‘a and custom in tribal societies and within the context of public sphere.

[276] The most authoritative source on the history and organization of the office of the qadl is Tyan 1960. See esp. 100f. For a short survey see Tyan EI². Cf Levtzion 1979b, passim.

[277] Masud, Messick, and Powers 1996b.

[278] Layish 1996.

[279] For details see Layish and Shaham EI²b.

[280] Cf. Black 1990, 216.

[281] Schacht 1964, 19–22; Coulson 1964, 28–33; Layish 1984a, 54. For a different view see Crone 1987, 15–16.

[282] Milliot 1953, 156–69, 167–78; Berque EI²; Coulson 1964, 143ff.; Schacht 1964, 61–62; Serrano [Ruano] 1996; Layish 1984a, 55.

[283] The qadI‘s autonomy is greater than that of the civil judge, who is bound by statutory legislation and by precedents of the supreme court.

[284] For further details see Layish 1991, 14–15; 1998, 19–20.

[285] The Islamic legal treatises most commenly cited in the courts’ record were written by Ibn >Asim (d. 829/1426) 1958, Illaysh (d. 1299/1881-1882) n.d., and Al-Sawl (d. 1241/1825-1826) 1806. Cf. Powers 1994.

[286] The Italians sought to retain a certain measure of normative supervision over the decisions of the qadIs in matters that were contrary to public policy. The “sleeping embryo” (haml na<im) is a case in point. For details see Layish 1991, 5—; 1998, 57 doc. 38.

[287] Anderson 1976, 41; Layish and Shaham EI²a; Layish EI²c, EI²b, EI²a.

[288] Cf. Levtzion 1981, 80.

[289] The assessment regarding sedentarization is disputed by J. Davis. See Davis 1998, 11. Cf. Layish 1991, 15–18 and the sources indicated there.

[290] For further details see Layish and Shmueli 1979, 29.

[291] Cf. Gellner 1969, 8ff., 135–33; 1984, 23–24, 30; Levtzion 1979a, 20; 1981, 79; Shaham 1993, 192–93 and the source indicated in n. 3.

[292] Davis 1987, 110 n. 15.

[293] Cf. Levtzion 1979a, 7, 19–20; 1981, 78.

[294] For details see Layish and Shmueli 1979, 4142.

[295] For details see Layish 1991, 170–71; Gellner 1939, 47; 1981, 100; 1984, 38; Evans-Pritchard 1949, 62; Colucci 1927, 24; Milliot 1953, 157, 166; Layish and Shmueli 1979, 31; lAbbadl 1988, 133, 179–83, 198–99, 403–7, based on Oweidi 1982, 121, 134–37, 149, 321–22 and Coulson 1934, 135–33; Laoust 1939, 519ff.; 1965, 323, 324; Smith 1963, 48ff.; Goldziher 1981, 238ff.; Baer 1964, 132 and the sources indicated there; 1939, 13, 14; Henninger 1959, 125ff. and the sources indicated there (I am indebted to Professor M. J. Kister for this last reference).

[296] Cf. Gellner 1939, 38, 105ff., 129ff., 135; Rosen 1995, 194–97, 201, 203; Davis 1998, 12.

[297] For Libya see Layish 1991, 175–73, 185–91. For Bethleham see Layish 1984a, 41–42.

[298] Cf. Gellner 1939, 105ff.; Lewis 1984, 153.

[299] For details see Davis 1987, 223–25, 228; Layish 1991, 127, 182–83; 1984a, 39–44 and the sources indicated there. Cf. Levtzion 1979a, 21; 1979b; 1981, 79.

[300] The statutes pertaining to the establishment of tribal courts, including the Tribal Court of Appeal of 1933, were abolished in 1973. Jordanian law still applies in the West Bank. See al->Abba’dl ‘ 1988, 114ff., 445. In Israel, the tribal courts in the Negev, which had been established during the British Mandate, were abolished though their judicial basis has been left intact. I have found no indication in Libyan shari>a courts of the existence of statutory tribal courts, but there is ample evidence that matters were settled out of shari>a courts in accordance with tribal law, most probably by tribal arbitrators on a voluntary basis and with the mutual consent of the parties, as is the case in the Judean Desert. Tribal arbitrators (with no formal status) in the Judean Desert deal with issues pertaining to matters of personal status and succession (in competition with the sharFa courts), penal matters (homicide and bodily injury), property, obligations, and contracts (in competiton with the civil courts).

[301] See Layish 1998, 78–79 doc. 32.

[302] Cf. Shahar 1997, 2422. Cf. Kressel 1992, 9495, 133, 184.

[303] There is evidence that already in the nomadic period Bedouin of the Judean Desert would visit the al-Aqsa’ ‘ Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and the markets of the old city of Jerusalem on Fridays. Layish 1980–1982, 220; 1993, 273 and the source indicated in n. 25. On the performance of religious obligations among the Bedouin of central Sinai see Stewart 1988, 7, 17, 44, 53n., 194; 1987, 53; Lewis 1984, 152–55. I have found no evidence in the sijills (court records) to the effect that the Bedouin resort to the shari>a court is inspired by their desire to belong to the Islamic body politic; such a possibility, however, cannot be ruled out.

[304] Cf. Levtzion 1981, 78.

[305] For details see Layish 1995b; Cf. Nat r 1991; Lewis 1984, 145–44, 152–54.

[306] Layish and Shmueli 1979, 35–37. Cf. Kressel 1992, 223, 230 (waiver of sharl inheritance rights).

[307] Layish 1998, 29–30 docs. 5--.

[308] Ibid., 4544 docs. 25–27. Customary khul> has also been observed among Israeli Muslims. See Layish and Shmueli 1979, 37–38.

[309] See Layish 1998, 38 doc. 15.

[310] Ibid., 72–73 docs. 55–54; Layish 1980–1982, 211.

[311] For additional details see Layish 1991, 185–84 and the sources indicated there; 1980–1982, 218, 221; Cf. 1975, 334; 1974, 407ff.; alAbbadl 1988, 123–25; Oweidi [alAbbadi] 1982, 88–89.

[312] For the name index of the qad 1s and the na<ibs (deputy qad 1s) see Layish 1998, 103.

[313] On the legal methodology of the Grand Sanu’sl’ with special reference to ijtihad and ijtihad f1<l-madhhab see Vik0r 1994; 1995. See also Layish 1991, 204 and the sources indicated there.

[314] For more details see Layish 1991, 172ff.; Layish and Shmueli 1979, 37ff.

[315] For details see Layish 1995a.

[316] Layish 1984a, 42; 1974, 398–99, 4023.

[317] I was present at a meeting in court between the qadi and a tribal arbitrator, who discussed ways of settling a family dispute that was to have been heard in court. For details see Layish and Shmueli 1979, 44; Layish 1984a, 41.

[318] Layish 1980–1988, 211–12.

[319] For details see Layish 1991, 184–99.

[320] Libson 1997, 13337.

[321] See also p. 84 above and the references in n. 17. Cf. Layish 1991, p. 204. Ibn >A’ s’im 1958 (see n. 20 above) incorporated in his al->A’s’imiyya or Tuh’ fat al-h’ukkam’ (see bibliography) the Andalusian judicial practice (>amal). The Libyan documents contain some evidence of the impact of the Ma’likl ‘ judicial practice on day-to-day reality. See Layish 1998, e.g., 80 doc. 45 (musaq’at’), 82 doc. 49 (shahad’at al-laf1’f).

[322] Layish 1998, 24 doc. 1, 49 doc. 31, 47 doc. 50; 1991, 14544.

[323] Layish and Davis 1988, 122 doc. no. 154, 123 doc. no. 157; Layish 1998, 84 docs. 71–72.

[324] Layish 1991, 204–7.

[325] Layish 1998, 55 doc. 34.

[326] Layish 1984a, 41ff.

[327] See Layish 1974, 399.

[328] For further details see Layish 1994.

[329] Layish 1984a, 55–54; 1980–1982, 221 and the references indicated there. Cf. Shaham 1993; Shahar 1997.

[330] See Schacht 1944, 52, 207; Cahen and Talbi EI². Cf. Layish 1984b, 3537. Similarly, conversion to Islam can take place by the mere recitation of the shahad’a (Muslim creed) in the presence of witnesses without resorting to any public agency (Anderson 1970, 235, 374). It is significant to mention in this connection that the concept of public law is not developed in Islam. Thus homicide and bodily injury fall within the domain of torts—that is, private law to which the state is not a party (Schacht 1944, 75; Anderson 1951a, 811–28).

[331] al-Sahaf’a, 5 August 1984, 2.

[332] Layish 1998, 40 doc. 41 (taken from the sijill of Shar1’a Court of Ajda’biya, 189–91 no. [184/7], 14 February 1948).

[333] Unless stated otherwise, this survey is based on Shall 1973, 597–660; Ibn As’im 1958, 76–79 lines 502–17, 246 line 1694; al-Sa’wl’ 1806, vol. 1, 456–61; Ma’lik (d. 179/796) 1989, 228–30; >Illaysh n.d., vol. 2, 76.

[334] Peters 1996.

[335] Layish 1991, 4ff.

[336] Cf. Powers 1994; Shaham 1997, 158–59.

[337] See below, n. 78.

[338] See Layish 1995a, 198ff.

[339] On the saint’s role as an agent of Islamization in tribal society see Gellner 1969, 9ff. 135; 1984, 38; Morsy 1984, 48; Levtzion 1979a, 16ff.

[340] Lines are not numbered in the original text. Numbers in [ ] brackets have been introduced in both the Arabic printed text and the English translation in order to facilitate comparison between the two. Omitted words in the facsimile production have been reconstructed and inserted in { } brackets. In cases in which a particular word appears to have been written incorrectly, thereby yielding a meaning incompatible with the context, a corrected version has been suggested in < >brackets. My student Muhammad Ta’tu’ ‘r read the document and made some useful suggestions for which I am most grateful.

[341] The missing beginning of the document seems to include some details on the dispute between the spouses, a reference to a previous court meeting in which the wife acknowledged that she was pregnant by a stranger, the qadl‘s appointment of Ibri k as a notary (dar >ad)

to examine the issue, and the qadI‘s instruction that the spouses stay with this notary. See below, lines 7–8, 11–12, 15ff.

[342] The reference is probably to the date on which she proclaimed herself “an angry woman” and moved to her father’s house. See below, line 10.

[343] Instead of lodging her “in the neighborhood of virtuous persons” (bi-jiwar’qawm salihln) or “in the midst of virtuous trustworthy neighbours” (wast jtran salihln ma<munln) within the meaning of “legal conjugal dwelling” (maskan shar>l). See Layish 1995a, 205–6 and Shalabl ‘ 1973, 436, respectively. “Virtuous neighbors” are needed so that the wife does not feel lonely (la’tastawh’ish) and lose her sanity. See Meron 1971, 210–11. Another possible translation of istawhadaha:’ “sought to isolate her” or “sought to be alone with her.” _’

[344] See Ibn >As’im 1958, 218, lines 1498ff. Cf. lines 5–6 below. ghasabaha ‘ means also “raped her,” but this connotation does not fit the present context.

[345] In other words, the woman expressed her desire to leave the conjugal dwelling but her father discouraged her from doing so.

[346] It appears that the couple had already stayed in the same dar’adl, whose function is to observe the couple’s behavior and submit his report to the court. See Layish 1995a. Cf. dar amln in Fierro 1985, 86ff.

[347] As we shall see later, this is a case of a pregnancy begun while the woman was “angry” living in her father’s house before moving to dar’adl.

[348] This seems to refer to the wife’s first admission that she was pregnant by a stranger.

[349] The status of “an angry woman” seems to be common practice in Cyrenaica. See, e.g., Sharl’>a Court of Ajda’biya, 176 no.172 of 30October 1947 (mughad’aba); 27 no. 52 (date not available); Mohsen 1975, 114. Cf. Layish 1975, 98 n. 66 and the references indicated there.

[350] Due to the fact that the intimate relations between the spouses (while the wife was living in her father’s house) were kept secret, the father may have convinced his son that the wife’s pregnancy would be attributed to a stranger and that it was appropriate for his son, to safeguard family reputation and honor, to deny paternity. Had it not been for the status of “the angry woman” the presumption would have been that “paternity belongs to lawful wedlock” (al-walad li<l-firas’h). See Coulson 1971, 23; Peters 1980, 126–27 145.

[351] For details on jiwar see Layish 1995a, 206--.

[352] The Bedouin believe that holy men and their tombs are sources of baraka, divine blessing. The adl here enlists the sanction of the local Sufi saint’s tomb as a means of deterring the wife from lying about her pregnancy; the expedient proved successful. Cf. Layish 1998, 21 doc. 54 (Si’di’ >Abd al-Sala’m al-Asmar); Layish 1995a, 204 and the references indicated there; Davis 1982, 146–42; Mohsen 1925, 52–59 (according to the customary law [dara<‘ib] of Awla’d >Ali ‘ in the Western Desert, if the defendant refuses to take an oath at the saint’s tomb he loses his case in favor of the claimant); al-SUri 1984, 395–96; Gellner 1969, 9ff.; 1984, 28; Evans-Pritchard 1949, 8–9, 65, 82–83, 112; Levtzion 1929a, 12–18; Hart 1996, 360; Morsy 1984, 49; Ginat 1982, 84, 120.

[353] Cf. jiwar, lines 16, 28 above; al-QusUs 1922, 52; Layish 1995a, 202–8.

[354] Their identity may have been mentioned in the missing beginning of the document.

[355] Cf. al-Qusu’s 1922, 52.

[356] The ‘add‘s function ends after he has reported to the qadl concerning the essence of the dispute between the spouses and their respective responsibilities vis-r-vis the dispute. The wife returns to her father’s house before the qadl‘s verdict is effected.

[357] It appears that the qadi’ here is referring to the procedure of li>an’ .

[358] Cf. Shari ‘>a Court of Kufra, no. 23 of 14 April 1933 (the qadi attributed the pregnancy of a divorced woman to her ex-husband on the basis of the testimony of witnesses); no. 28 of 18 July 1933 (a woman claimed to have been raped by a stranger; the qadi refused to attribute her pregnancy to this stranger because she had failed to notify someone of the rape immediately after its occurrence).

** Chapter Six: The Dynamics of Sufi Brotherhoods

NEHEMIA LEVTZION

*** Shari’a and Mysticism in The Public Sphere

Islamic religious law is the totality of God’s commands that regulate the life of every Muslim in all its aspects. Islamic law is the most typical manifestation of the Islamic way of life, the core and kernel of Islam itself. Theology has never been able to achieve a comparable importance in Islam; only mysticism was strong enough to challenge the ascendancy of the Law over the minds of the Muslim, and often proved victorious.[359]

The shari’a, a God-ordained law, is entrenched in a deep-rooted public sentiment and forms the basis for the Muslim social order. Sanction of the religious law contributed to the formation of a Muslim public opinion that accorded the shari’a and the ‘ulama’ near monopoly of legal and moral legitimization, and endowed the qadi with a degree of autonomy vis-0-vis the rulers. The shari’a was developed as an autonomous legal system by fuqaha’ (jurists), who asserted their position as the sole interpreters of the Prophet’s heritage.

Since their formation in the eighth and ninth centuries, the various legal schools not only represented different interpretations of the law but were also solidarity groups. Only the Hanbali school of law retained these characteristics over a long period; the other schools of law ceased to function as mobilizing social movements after the twelfth century, and this role was taken over by Sufi brotherhoods and related organizations.

Islamic orthodoxy emphasizes the distance between God and man, as comparable to that between a slave and his master: like a slave, a man can please God only by strictly observing his commands. Sufi mystics developed alternative ways of approaching God, through spiritual and physical exercises. Sufis therefore do not have to observe the precepts of the religious law, as do others.

Islamic mysticism began as a marginal esoteric movement, considered heretic by the jurists. The rupture between jurists and mystics reached a dramatic peak with the execution in 922 of al-Hallaj, who claimed to have

reached a complete union with God. But in the tenth and eleventh centuries more Sufis accepted the Islamic law as binding. Sufism became integrated into the mainstream of Islam, and before long religious leaders (‘ulama’) were simultaneously Sufi shaykhs and legal scholars.

*** The Organization and Structure of Early Sufi Brotherhoods

Small communities of a master and his disciples (murids) replaced the loose master-disciple relationship of early Sufism. These entities continued to be known as tariqa (plural: turuq), but the literal meaning of “a devotional path” gave way to such terms as brotherhood or order.

Before the eighteenth century, however, brotherhoods did not have a central organization and were not actually self-supporting social organizations.[360] The loosely structured Sufi brotherhoods nevertheless became active in the public sphere, by allying themselves with more structured social organizations. In the countryside they became embedded in tribal or territorial units, which charismatic shaykhs were able to manipulate. In urban societies the brotherhoods were linked to voluntary organizations, like the futuwwa, the urban movement of young men. Later, in the Ottoman Empire, the Sufis were allied with the akhi association of young men and the trade guilds, as well as with ghazis (warriors on the frontiers of Islam) and the Janissaries.

For most Muslims the connection to Sufi brotherhoods was through the cult of saints (awliya’), which from the twelfth century on became central to the religious experience of Muslims. It was through the shaykh and the tomb, rather than through the ‘alim and the mosque, that Islam reached the common people. One was born and socialized around the shaykh’s tomb and the baraka (divine blessing) that emanated from it, and each village, town ward, and tribe had its saint’s tomb. Visitations to saints’ tombs were the highlights of religious life, particularly for women, who went to the saint’s tomb on Fridays, when the men went to the mosque for the Friday prayer.[361] By giving confidence to individuals,

through the power of their protective amulets, the saints helped to maintain social stability.[362]

Sufis were deeply concerned with the life of the community. Shaykhs voiced the people’s grievances and condemned tyranny and oppression. They played a part in conciliation and arbitration, and their houses were sanctuaries.[363]

Individual Sufis and brotherhoods oscillated between individualistic denunciatory piety and community-oriented legalistic world affirmation. Pious withdrawal from the world was characteristic of the more popular and less orthodox brotherhoods. The more legally shari’a -oriented brotherhoods were “this world” oriented. A positive attitude to “this world” also provided the framework within which political engagement became licit and spiritually acceptable.[364]

*** Sufis and the State

Most ‘ulama’ depended on the state, either because they held appointed positions or because they were associated with institutions supported by the state. On the other hand, Sufi shaykhs were not economically dependent on the rulers, because they received gifts and contributions from the people.

Not being dependant on the state, Sufis operated beyond the frontiers of dar al-Islam. From the tenth century on Sufi shaykhs lived among the infidel Turkish nomads of the steppes and were instrumental in converting them to Islam. Following the Mongol conquest and the destruction of the Muslim state, only the Sufi shaykhs of all men of religion continued to provide leadership to the Muslim communities. They also associated themselves with the Mongol rulers, and by the end of the thirteenth century had converted them to Islam.

The institutionalization of Sufism advanced when rulers began to endow hospices (khanqahs) for Sufis. The khanqah organized Sufism under the control of the state, aiming to foster the type of Sufism that conformed with the teachings of the shari’a .[365]

Besides the state-supported khanqahs there were completely independent, modest personal lodges (zawiya or ribat) of shaykhs. The zawiya served both as the residence of the shaykh and as a meeting place for members of the tariqa. The shaykh was buried in his zawiya, which then became a place of pilgrimage, with an annual festival.

Sufi lodges at strategic positions helped the expansion of Muslim commercial networks within and outside of dar al-Islam. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a number of tekkes (lodges) were established on major roads in the Balkans to serve as inns. These inns accommodated poor scholars, military personnel, and wayfarers and received financial support from the central administration.[366]

Muslim rulers sought the favor of saints, built lodges and mausoleums for them, and made public pilgrimages to their tombs. Sufis justified royal patronage by their duty to guide the rulers.[367] Some sultans became murids of shaykhs, which implied a spiritual submission to the latter. When the shaykh ‘Izz Al-Din b. ‘Abd al-Salam died, the Mamluk sultan Baybars (1260–1277) said: “Only now has my authority been consolidated,”[368] so powerful was the influence of the Sufi shaykh over the Sultan. From the Sufi viewpoint, the rulers hold power only through the grace (baraka) of the saint; indeed, powerful saints might be influential in making and unmaking kings.[369]

Association with the court brought deviant Sufi brotherhoods closer to orthodoxy in practice and in doctrine.[370] Compared to the problematic relations of the Chishti Sufis with the political authorities in India, the leaders of the Suhrawardiyya were always enthusiastically involved with Muslim rulers and accumulated great wealth and landed interests.[371]

When Christians invaded dar al-Islam, Sufis rallied rulers with the spirit of jihad. This was the case of one ‘Abdallah al-Yunini (Asad al-Sham) who joined Salah al-Din’s campaigns, and of Ahmad al-Badawi, who called for jihad at the time of the Crusade of Louis X. In fifteenth-century Morocco Al-Jazuli and his followers joined the jihad against the Portuguese. In the first half of the fourteenth century Sufis accompanied the Muslim armies in their advance southward into the Indian subcontinent.[372] Wandering dervishes, the babas from Central Asia, were the spiritual guides of the Turkish ghazis in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Sufi shaykhs consecrated the ghazis as warriors in the cause of Islam.[373]

The Ottoman sultans tolerated socially deviant dervishes, who often also exhibited Shi’i-oriented beliefs and practices; but this attitude changed at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Ottomans were threatened by the Shi’i propaganda of the Safawids. Political pressure on suspected dervishes then increased, and dervish groups sought respectability by joining the ranks of the Bektashiyya brotherhood, which itself became more orthodox at that time, at least outwardly.[374]

The Janissaries became formally associated with the Bektashis at the end of the sixteenth century. The supreme Bektashi shaykh was appointed “colonel” of a Janissary unit, and eight Bektashi dervishes were assigned to Janissary units as chaplains. In formal parades the Bektashi shaykh marched in front of the agha of the Janissaries. The Janissaries adopted the uniform of the Bektashiyya and participated in their ceremonies. They were called “the children of Haji Bektash.”[375]

Khalwati shaykhs were invited to Istanbul in the sixteenth century to join the fight against the heretics, particularly on the western frontier of the Balkans. Close relations between Khalwati shaykhs and Ottoman sultans continued until the middle of the seventeenth century, and for almost two centuries the Khalwatiyya had the largest number of tekkes and affiliates in the Ottoman capital.[376]

*** The Conversion of Charisma to Economic and Political Power

In the seventeenth century the Ottoman central authority weakened in Anatolia, and people turned to religion in search of stability. In such circumstances Sufi shaykhs became influential by converting their charisma to economic and political power. But the Ottoman state never became weak enough to permit the rise of Sufi shaykhs to such powerful positions as in certain parts of Morocco.[377]

In the segmentary political and social system of Morocco, where the central authority is too far away to be effective, holy men who live near the tomb of a saintly ancestor provide the continuity and the stable framework for that political system. Their moral authority helps to guarantee political, legal, and ecological arrangements reached through their arbitration. The saints also play an important role by anchoring the local society in the wider system of Islam. For the local tribesmen, they represent the religion of the central tradition, and guarantee the tribesmen’s incorporation into it.[378]

The situation in Sind seems to have been somewhat similar to that in Morocco. Since temporal authority was a distant force with which they had little contact, local tribes in Sind tended to follow Sufi pirs, whose power base was in the countryside. Pirs of important shrines possessed substantial land holdings and political power, and wielded great influence over the lives of the people. Like the saints of the Atlas in Morocco, pirs in Sind acted as “professional neutrals” to balance opposing interests. Indeed, the social order was based on the bond between pir and murid, because individuals felt more secure under the patronage of a powerful pir. It is significant, however, that both in Morocco and in Sind, individual shaykhs, not brotherhoods, wielded real power.

One of the most powerful individuals was the Naqshabandi shaykh ‘Ubaydallah Ahrar (1404–1490) in Samarqand, who converted the charisma of a Sufi shaykh to economic and political power. He exploited the decline of

the authority of the Timurid sultans and gained almost absolute influence over the sultan Abu Sa’id (1451–1468), who was his murid. Ahrar also accumulated considerable landholdings, as a result of peasants selling their holdings to him in order to become his disciples and enter under his protection (himaya). Ahrar protectedthem from taxation, as wellas other excessive and arbitraryburdens deemedcontraryto Islamic principles, bythreatening emirs with his spiritual powers. In typical Naqshabandi fashion, Ahrar reconciled his worldly engagements with a state of mind of being mentally disengaged from worldlymatters. Wealth in the context of his spiritualworld symbolized a favor bestowedbyGod.[379]

*** Initiation and Dhikr

Sufi congregations in hospices andaround tombs attracted the common people. Theysought access to the baraka of the shaykh, and to participate in the collective sessions of the dhikr. Such affiliates needed only the simplest form of initiation and a basic mystical training. They took the oath of allegiance (bay’a) and accepted the shaykh as teacher and leader, but continued their normal life. As the circle of devotees grew, Sufi brotherhoods became devotional movements where lay affiliates found relief from worldly anxieties.[380]

The most important part of Sufi liturgy is the dhikr (literally: the act of remembering). It is a litany tirelessly repeated, consisting of formulae containing the names of Allah. There are two modes of dhikr: the silent dhikr, known as khafi (hidden) or qalbi (by the heart) and the vocaldhikr, known as jahri (public) or lisani (by the tongue). The two modes are equally legitimate, and both have authoritative traditions;[381] but the silent dhikr was thought to be more respectable and was practiced by those who were more advanced along the spiritual path. The vocal dhikr, considered more popular and practiced in a collective ceremony, helped to induce a mystical experience in the ordinary man relatively quickly, through rhythmical exercises.

The silent dhikr was typical of the more orthodox shari’a-oriented brotherhoods. Mustafa al-Bakri (1688–1749), who inspired the reform of the KhAl-watiyya in Egypt, adopted the vocal dhikr and presided over vocal dhikr ceremonies in Jerusalem, where participants would faint from excitement and exhaustion. His disciple al-Hifni conducted ceremonies of vocal dhikr in Cairo. These ceremonies became so popular he had to repeat them for days and nights to admit the many thousands who wanted to attend.[382]

One may speculate as to why Mustafa al-Bakri, whose reform of the KhAl-watiyya was toward greater orthodoxy, changed to the more popular form of dhikr. The reason was probably that the vocal dhikr offered greater scope for the participation of common people in the rituals and helped to popularize the tariqa and win adherents. This move might be better appreciated in the wider context of the structural, organizational, and ritual changes that Sufi brotherhoods experienced in the eighteenth century.

*** Structural, Organizational, and Ritual Changes in the Eighteenth Century

In the eighteenth century, brotherhoods transformed from old patterns of decentralized diffusive affiliation into larger-scale organizations, more coherent and centralized. Led by charismatic shaykhs, the reformed Sufi brotherhoods cut across regional, ethnic, and political boundaries to mobilize wider popular support,[383] and they incorporated local saintly lineages. Local shaykhs, who had controlled the spiritual life of the common people, became regional representatives, muqaddams and khalifas in hierarchically structured organizations.[384]

Before the eighteenth century, Sufi shaykhs obtained initiation into several turuq, and often shifted their principal allegiance from one tariqa to another.[385] But Mustafa al-Bakri insisted that his own disciples be affiliated exclusively to the Khalwatiyya and ordered them to break their former allegiance to other turuq and shaykhs.[386] Exclusivity gave greater cohesion to the tariqa, and added to the commitment of its adherents. The Tijaniyya, an offshoot of the

Khalwatiyya, adopted the concept of exclusive affiliation with even greater zeal. The Tijaniyya, in its turn, influenced rival turuq in the Maghrib and in West Africa, in particular the Qadiriyya, which also became more assertive and cohesive.[387]

The restructured Sufi brotherhoods reached out to the common people and mobilized popular support, thus contributing to the penetration of a more meaningful religious experience into the lower levels of Muslim society and spreading from the urban to the rural population.

In the countryside of West Africa, the growth of Islam from the seventeenth century brought about a new rural religious leadership. Unlike the urban scholars, who had been spokesmen of the merchants, the new leadership articulated the grievances of the peasants. They criticized the rulers and contributed to the radicalization of Islam, thus preparing the ground for the great reformist movements, better known as the jihads.[388]

*** Mystical Verse in Vernacular Languages

Looking for common features of Sufi movements across the Muslim world I have observed that written Islamic literatures in the vernacular languages appeared simultaneously all over the Muslim world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and that the predominant literary genre in all the vernacular literatures was the mystical verse. This development is explained by the expansion of Islam to the countryside, where the knowledge of Islam could be disseminated to the illiterate peasants and herdsmen only in the vernacular languages.

The need to write down oral mystical poetry in folk idioms arose also with the growth in scale of the brotherhoods, whose leaders sought to communicate with affiliates living in remote communities. Poems in the vernaculars, which had earlier been transmitted and recited orally, were committed to writing in the Arabic script, and copies of the written texts were sent out to the literate representatives of the shaykh in different localities, who then recited these texts to an illiterate audience.

In India, Sufis turned to the regional idioms—Urdu, Sindhi, and Punjabi— for preaching and teaching because the sacred languages—Arabic and Persian—were inaccessible to the masses.[389] The discourse of the elite continued in Arabic and Persian, the classical languages of Islam, whereas the vernacular literature was important in building bridges to the common people.[390]

Muslim literature in China, written mostly in Chinese characters, developed from the middle of the seventeenth century. As elsewhere, mystical works were important. This literature was composed in an easy style, inclining toward the spoken language because it addressed the masses.[391]

The preaching of Imam Mansur in 1785 in the Caucasus is said to have been in simple language and directed to the peasants.[392] In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a period of literary decline in Egypt, works of theology and law were written in bombastic style, but Sufi texts were composed in the simple down-to-earth language of the people.[393] Sufis all over the world then began to adapt their idiom and style to achieve efficient communication with the people they sought to mobilize.

The efficiency of preaching and exhortation in the vernacular to mobilize popular support is described in the case of ‘Uthman dan Fodio, the leader of the jihad in what is today Northern Nigeria: “Then we rose up with the

Shaykh, helping him in his mission work for religion. He traveled for that purpose to the east and west, calling people to the religion of God by his preaching and his poems (qasidas) in a non-Arabic language (‘ajami).”[394] When ‘Uthman dan Fodio saw that his community was ready for the jihad, “he began to incite them to arms ... and he set this in verse in his non-Arabic Qadiri poem (qasida ‘ajamiyya Qadiriyya).” This mystical verse had a hypnotic effect on devotees on the eve of the jihad.[395]

*** Sufi Brotherhoods in the Public Sphere

Mysticism, an inward and individualistic mode of worship, is unlikely to create a social space. After the tenth century the esoteric form of piety, elitist in nature, gradually became the most popular mode of devotion in Islam, mainly through the contribution of brotherhoods. It was the brotherhoods that brought Sufism from the private to the public sphere, to play an important sociopolitical role in the communal and religious life of the Muslims for a period lasting seven centuries.

Before the seventeenth century most of the brotherhoods had been loosely organized and localized, and had not been self-supporting social organizations. Brotherhoods reached all social strata through the cult of saints. The baraka (grace) of the saints imbued individuals with confidence and helped maintain social stability. Commercial fairs and religious festivals took place around saints' tombs. Moreover, Sufism offered a social space of religious experience to women, who had hardly enjoyed any place in formal religious life.

The political authorities sought to control the activities of the Sufis by the endowment of hospices (khanqahs), which organized Sufism under the control of the state and fostered shari'a -abiding Sufism. Some Sufi brotherhoods avoided the courtly scene and cultivated the ideal of ascetic poverty. But other brotherhoods were closely associated with rulers and accumulated great wealth. Even socially deviant dervishes were attracted to the rulers' courts, where they were pressured to conform to the shari'a. According to the Sufi vision of authority, rulers were entrusted with a temporary lease of power through the baraka of a saint. Muslim rulers thus sought the favor of saints, and sometimes became disciples of Sufi shaykhs.

Sufis, unlike other 'ulama', could function also outside the Muslim state, and Sufi lodges helped the expansion of Islam beyond the frontiers of dar Al-Islam. Where the central authority was weak, people sought security with Sufi shaykhs, who transformed their charisma into economic and political power, gaining possession of substantial land

holdings and wielding great influence over the lives of the people. Wealth represented a blessing bestowed by God, and such shaykhs managed to reconcile the possession of worldly assets with mental disengagement from this world.

Sufi brotherhoods being esoteric organizations, induction into them needed an initiation ceremony, not only for those wishing to become murids but also for those who only sought access to the blessing of the shaykh. A collective dhikr evolved to induce a mystical experience for the ordinary man in a relatively short space of time. With a much larger circle of devotees, brotherhoods became more a devotional than a mystical movement.

Sufi brotherhoods thus fulfilled multiple roles in Muslim societies; they provided moral guidance to voluntary associations, opened opportunities for release from the hardships of everyday existence, gave confidence to individuals, and helped sustain social stability. They also maintained lines of communications between the common people and the authorities.

Before the eighteenth century these brotherhoods had been localized and had influenced only their immediate communities. But in the eighteenth century Sufism experienced a radical change, when brotherhoods transformed from old patterns of decentralized, diffusive affiliations to larger-scale organizations, more centralized and coherent.

Changes in rituals emphasized the hierarchical and centralized nature of the reformed tariqa and the expanded role of the shaykh. Brotherhoods offered larger scope for the participation of the common people in their ceremonies, facilitating the recruitment of new adherents.

A new Muslim leadership emerged that articulated the grievances of the masses, criticized the rulers, and contributed to the radicalization of Islam. The discourse of the public sphere in Muslim societies addressed social and political issues, and in order to reach the illiterate it was written in the vernacular languages. In this way, written Islamic literatures in the

vernacular languages developed simultaneously all over the Muslim world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with mystical verse as the predominant genre.

Reformed brotherhoods gave rise to movements of renewal and reform in the eighteenth century. One may be tempted to speculate that these reformed premodern movements could have led Muslim societies into the modern period with a sense of revival. But this process was truncated when leaders of these movements redirected their major efforts from internal reform to defending dar al-Islam against the invading European powers. Ultimately they were all crushed by the overwhelming military power of the Europeans.

[359] Schacht 1974, 393.

[360] Karamustafa 1994, 88–89; Levtzion 1997.

[361] Trimingham 1971, 232.

[362] Ibid., 220–21, 234; Karamustafa 1994, 87–89.

[363] Trimingham 1971, 27, 230, 237–38.

[364] Algar 1976, 44; 1990, 152.

[365] Fernandes 1988, vol. 1, 24.

[366] Faroqhi 1976, 73–75; 1981, 99–101, 113; Norris 1993, 101–2, 109.

[367] Eaton 1993, 94.

[368] Quoted in Abu Zahra, 1953, 143.

[369] Eaton 1993, 31, 83.

[370] Eaton 1978, 45–48, 50–53; Ernst, 1993, 47.

[371] Ansari 1992, 5, 30.

[372] Eaton 1978, 284.

[373] Trimingham 1971, 83; Faroqhi 1993, 197; Zarcone 1993, 71.

[374] Ocak 1993, 249–51; Trimingham 1971, 83; Faroqhi 1981, 92; Karamustafa 1993, 243; 1994, 83–84, 94–95.

[375] Birge 1937; Zarcone 1993, 71; Goodwin 1994, 148–52.

[376] Trimingham 1971, 75; Zarcone 1993, 80; Clayer 1994, 65–67, 70.

[377] Faroqhi 1993, 197, 205–6.

[378] Gellner 1969, 41ff; 1981, 114–30.

[379] What is offered here is a preliminary analysis of the role of Ahrar as a charismatic shaykh, based on Paul 1991; DeWeese 1993; Gross 1988; 1990.

[380] Trimingham 1971, 27–28, 186, 199–200; Eaton 1978, xxxi.

[381] See Gardet EI².

[382] al-Jabarti (d. 1240/1825-1826) 1879–1880, vol. 1, 300; Weigert 1989, 109–11.

[383] For a more detailed analysis see Levtzion 1997 and Levtzion and Voll 1987.

[384] Clancey-Smith 1994, 41–45; Karrar 1992, x, 20; Algar 1990; Abu-Manneh 1990, 295; Hofheinz 1990, 28–29; Grandin 1990, 645.

[385] Eaton 1978, xxxi-xxxii, 207; Winter 1982, 92, 97.

[386] al-Jabarti, 1879–80, vol. 1, 295; vol. 2, 61; Weigert 1989.

[387] Abun-Nasr 1965, 15–57; Martin 1969; Brenner 1988.

[388] Levtzion 1987, 23–26.

[389] Schimmel 1975, 131, 135, 163; Shackle 1993, 163, 265, 285–88; Roy 1984, 58; Eaton 1978, 91. It is significant that in the independent state of Bijapur, where, being far from the Mughal court, the influence of Persian culture was weaker, literature in Dakhni developed from the fifteenth century, more than two centuries before the appearance of Urdu literature.

[390] Schimmel 1973, 48–50; 1976, xi, 11.

[391] Aubin 1990, 496–97.

[392] Bennigsen 1964, 195.

[393] Winter 1982, 27.

[394] Ibn Fudi (d. 1245/1829) 1963, 85.

[395] Ibid., 51; see also Hiskett 1975.

** Chapter Seven: The WAQF and the Public Sphere

MIRIAM HOEXTER

Much of the discussion on whether Middle Eastern states have the necessary ingredients for the development of democracy has centered on the questions of civil society and the nature of relations between the state and society. The “Oriental despotism” thesis, long in vogue in the literature, saw these two questions as inseparable: the despotism that characterized the Oriental state precluded the existence of any autonomous organization or civil society; or as Turner put it, “The concept [of civil society] has been used as the basis of the notion that the Orient is, so to speak, all state and no society.”[396] The absence of a civil society thus constituted the principal theoretical postulate of the “Oriental despotism” case, which, according to Turner, was “a reflection of basic political anxieties about the state of political freedom in the West.”[397] By now, the existence of a plethora of civic associations in the Middle East, though not structured on the Western model, seems to be widely recognized.[398] However, emphasizing the despotic nature of rulers,

their lack of legitimacy, and their lack of concern for the welfare of the public, the predominating picture in the literature concerning the relations between state and society is that of a more or less total separation and estrangement of the two.[399]

I propose to challenge this rather unsatisfying picture by looking at the relations between rulers and society from the broader perspective suggested by the concept of the public sphere. The importance of this concept—defined as a zone of autonomous social activity between the family and the ruling authorities—lies largely in that it goes beyond appeals to the formal institutions of the Western civil society model, to address the entire realm of societal and cultural life that has relevance to the social and political order.[400] It thus broadens the scope of discussion to include aspects that have hitherto been largely neglected, such as informal ties, the moral-ethical values that form a society's image of the good order, and the symbols that reflect the common values and social ideals of the particular society.[401] I shall look at the relations between society and its rulers through a particular prism—that of the Islamic endowment institution, the waqf.

Hodgson, in his discussion of the shari'a as a civic force, lists the waqf foundations, along with the shari'a laws and the Sufi (mystic) orders, as the three religiously sanctioned integrative institutions holding together all Islamic groupings in the town.[402] Within this framework the waqf fulfilled a particular role: it became the vehicle for financing Islam as a society,[403] or, as I prefer to formulate it: the waqf served as a major means through which the Islamic idea of the social order proper for the umma (the community of believers) was implemented. Throughout the premodern Islamic world, endowments (waqfs) were made by rulers as well as by all strata of the Muslim population. They provided for the financing and maintenance of a host of public services and did so through an institution that, across the centuries, had retained its basic characteristic as an institution whose rules were an integral part of the shari'a—the sacred law.[404] The waqf is thus an ideal prism through which to examine both the moral values underlying the Islamic perception of the public sphere and the ways they were put into practice.

This chapter is divided into two parts. In the first I shall discuss some doctrinal points that I believe are relevant to the perception of the public sphere characteristic of the Islamic cultural area and their reflection in the waqf. In the second part, I shall examine the impact of the waqf on the formation of the public sphere and the nature of the discourse it generated.

*** The WAQF and the Perception of the Public Sphere

**** Umma and Shari’a

The central importance accorded in Islamic political discourse to the community of believers (the umma) is perhaps the most significant difference between the way Islamic culture and Western culture view the nature of the public sphere and the relationship between the rulers and society.

The interests of the community of believers and the norms that should guide the lives of individuals and the community were the main concerns of Muhammad. After his death, public life was, to a large extent, posited as the collective responsibility of the umma. The Qur’an and Muhammad’s sunna (practices established by the example of the Prophet’s life) provided the norms of public life and served as guidelines for the community as to how to discharge its responsibilities.[405] The umma inherited the task of spiritual guidance of the community after Muhammad, and its consensus (ijma’) on the legitimacy of the ruler as well as on details concerning the development of social and cultural norms was considered infallible.[406]

With the elaboration of the shari’a—the sacred law, or the rules and regulations governing the lives of Muslims, derived in principal from the Qur’an and hadith[407]—the role of interpreters and custodians of Muhammad’s legacy of the norms and ideals of good order proper to the community of believers passed, in the main, to the shari’a specialists—the fuqaha’, or, more generally, the

‘ulama’. However, the umma-in its original meaning of the entire community of believers as well as in its more restricted meaning of the community of believers living under one of the legitimate Islamic rulers—never lost its central position as the moral community. Moreover, the umma retained its right and ability to influence the public sphere, although this did not necessarily imply participation in daily policymaking.

Umma and shari’a were thus the center of gravity around which all activity in the public sphere revolved. Their central position in the premodern Islamic world created a situation radically different from the one prevalent in Western civilization: it placed the umma as the most significant group in the public sphere, and above the ruler. The shari’a embodied the norms of public order, and its preservation was the main moral obligation of both the community and the ruler.

Some implications of these basic tenets of the Islamic view of the public sphere and their reflection in the endowment institution will be discussed in the sections that follow.

**** The Individual and the Public Sphere

Creation of a waqf has always been the act of an individual. The endowment itself as well as all the details embodied in the endowment deed were determined by the individual endower, who alone was promised a reward for his good deed in the hereafter.[408] Endowments by rulers and their entourages are perhaps the best example, emphasizing the individual responsibility of the endower. When endowing an asset, a ruler never did so as a representative of the realm. His act of endowment, like that by anyone else, was the act of a private individual. An endowment by the realm, the political system as a body or institution, let alone an endowment by any other body or group, is simply unknown to Islam and unacceptable according to the terms of the law of waqf. Thus, an endowment of arable land, which in the Ottoman Empire belonged to the state, was preceded by a procedure of temlik—a procedure whereby ownership of the

land to be endowed was passed to the person, usually a member of the ruler’s family or entourage, who intended to create a waqf. [409]

While the act of creating an endowment was that of a private individual, the beneficiaries of the endowment were always located in the public sphere, whether in the first stage (the endowment would then be described as a waqf khayri) or in the last stage of the devolution of beneficiaries, after the extinction of the primary and intermediary private beneficiaries (the endowment would then be described as a waqf ahli). By endowing his property the individual participated in the formation of the public sphere, thus expressing his sense of belonging to the community of believers and his identification with its values.

The waqf, then, reflects the basic Islamic notion concerning the relation between the individual and the community: in contrast to West European culture, where the distinction between private and public acts was very pronounced, what Hodgson termed “the unitary contractualism of Islamdom” “denied any special status to public acts at all ... to the point where it ruled out all corporate status and reduced all acts to the acts of personally responsible individuals.” [410] The public sphere in Islam was thus conceived of not as an antithesis to the private individual but as an integral or synthetic component of his life as a Muslim.[411]

**** The Conception of Charity

Endowing one’s asset has always been considered a sadaqa—an act of charity recommended by the shari’a that entitled the founder of the endowment to recompense in the world beyond. In fact, the term waqf, by which the Islamic endowment institution is known, is an abbreviation of the original sadaqa mawqufa.[412] The basic idea of the endowment as a continuous or eternal charity is reflected in the definition that appears in virtually every waqf manual: al-waqf sadaqa jariya fi sabil Allah ta’ala—the waqf is a continuous charity for the sake of God and his religion.[413]

The institutionalization of the waqf called for a definition of a charity and thus a legitimate beneficiary of endowments. A valid purpose for the benefit of which one could endow the produce of one's property was defined as qurba—that is, anything likely to bring the founder nearer to God.[414] Obviously this was a very broad definition, reminiscent of what Hodgson called "occasionalism," which he considered one of the hallmarks of the Islamicate social order (as against Occidental "legitimism"), symbolized by the arabesque and representing "an elaborate surface formalism, adaptable to any substance."[415] This broad definition allowed for the inclusion, as beneficiaries of an endowment, of family members, freed slaves, the poor in general, or the poor belonging to a specific social group, even a group of animals, side by side with mosques, madrasas, Sufi orders, the water supply system, bridges, etc. This broad definition ensued from the most basic conception of Islam, which, from its inception, never conceived of itself as a religion regulating only the sphere of worship but as a political community guided by and devoted to Allah in all spheres of human activity.[416] According to this conception a contribution toward the welfare of the community, just as care for one's own family, was considered an act likely to bring a person closer to Allah.

The idea of charity, then, was defined in Islam in a much broader and more flexible manner than in other cultures.[417] The definition of qurba does not differentiate between private and public well-being; each is assigned equal value and importance in furthering the interests of the community of believers.

**** The Umma, the Ruling Auhhotes, and the 'Ulama'

The way waqf foundations—conglomerations of large numbers of endowments serving a public purpose—were handled reflected the basic islamic perception of rights, responsibilities, and competencies in the public sphere. An acquaintance with its major characteristics is therefore indispensable to an understanding of the subject.

sunni doctrine distinguishes between two spheres of claims or rights: those of men, known as huquq al-‘ibad, and those of God, termed huquq Allah. The first covers claims of private individuals in their dealings with one another and was always recognized as belonging in the sphere of jurisdiction of the ‘ulama’-t—e specialists in shari’a law. Huquq Allah, the claims of God, are traditionally identified with the general interests of the community of believers (the umma).[418]

The point to be borne in mind concerning this distinction is that claims or rights accrued to only two categories: the individual and the umma.[419] insistence on the rights of private individuals and on the primacy of the umma- not the state or the ruler-in the public sphere was thus at the very root of islamic political thought.

However, the umma-the entire community of believers as well as the local Muslim community in a specific region or town-was an uninstitutionalized reference group. A kind of latent competition ensued between the ‘ulama’ and the rulers as to who was entitled to represent the interests of the umma and stand up for the community’s rights. The modus vivendi in this competition may be summarized as follows: From quite an early stage in islamic history,[420] the ‘ulama’, not the rulers, were recognized as the bearers and interpreters of the norms and basic values of the proper islamic social order. The rulers, on their part, were made responsible for the implementation of these norms, the protection and promotion of the general interests of the community of the faithful. They were to attend to these responsibilities in fulfillment of their obligation to ensure the rule of the shari’a in the territories under their control-an obligation that alone legitimized their rule. They did so under the watchful eyes of the ‘ulama’, and in cooperation with some of them. It is important to remember that the ‘ulama’ very rarely acted as a concerted group. They were hardly a group in the sociological meaning of the term. Usually it was the expertise in the shari’a of the individual ‘alim, not his membership in a specific group, that gave him the authority and the backing of the umma to speak up in defense of islamic norms and social values against rulers who deviated from these norms.

As early as the classical period, rulers were granted extra-shar’i authority to take political and administrative considerations into account in their pursuance of the interests of the islamic community. However, one important reservation was attached to the ruler’s discretion: his actions could in no way be in blatant contradiction of the substantive principles of the shari’a .[421] Rules and regulations promulgated by rulers in this capacity were considered ad hoc measures. They were binding in the territory under the particular ruler’s control but usually did not assume normative character. Since they were not considered an integral part of the shari’a, they are almost totally absent from the legal literature (fatwas, furu’).

How did this modus vivendi work in practice? Endowments serving general public and charitable purposes belonged in the realm of huquq Allah.[422] The modus vivendi therefore applied in their case. In pursuance of their extra- shar’i prerogatives, rulers asssumed direct or indirect responsibility for the administration of many of the largest and richest public foundations. Also, in a number of cases they allowed for the diversion of some of the income of these rich foundations to purposes other than those designated by the founders of the endowments. Sometimes this deviation from the strict letter of waqf law led to outright abuse of endowed property; but this was not the rule. Usually, the money diverted from its original purpose helped rationalize the management of foundations in general, by providing the means necessary for costly periodic restoration work in major mosques, expenses that could not have been met solely from the annual income of these mosques. In other cases, sums were spent on distributing charity to the needy or on furthering other general interests of the Islamic community.[423] Although a deviation from the strict letter of waqf laws, spending money to meet these needs was very much in line with waqf ideology and has never, as far as I know, met with objections or criticism from the ‘ulama’.

In all other matters the rich foundations controlled by the ruling authorities remained within the jurisdiction of the ‘ulama’. The assets making up their patrimonies never lost their waqf status, which meant that all these properties were non-negotiable in principle and subject

to the laws of waqf. The interpretation of these laws and their implementation remained in the hands of the specialists—the ‘ulama’—not the ruler. Instances of rulers who blatantly violated waqf property or manipulated waqf rules in cooperation with some qadis are recorded in the literature. [424] The fact is, however, that the supreme authority of waqf laws has never in premodern times been questioned outright or even tampered with. The above modus vivendi was thus maintained for centuries in principle and to a very large extent also in practice.

The picture that emerges from the above discussion is that of rulers responsible for the organization and daily functioning of the public sphere but devoid of authority to determine the basic values governing many of its aspects. The norms, the ideals of good order, and the basic rules expressing them were laid down in the shari’a and left to the interpretation of the ‘ulama’. The legitimization of the ruler depended on his observation of these rules, and the umma, usually through the intermediacy of the specialists, had the right and the obligation to supervise the manner in which he fulfilled his obligation. In other words, the community of believers had built-in claims on its rulers concerning the nature of the public sphere. If the protection against arbitrary acts by rulers was the main purpose of the chartered rights granted in Western civilization to various corporative organizations, the commitment of the Islamic ruler to uphold the shari’a had a much broader significance. It implied an obligation on the part of the ruler to make sure that the public sphere in the territory under his control was construed in conformity with the basic moral norms and values of Islam, and that the law was administered according to the specific rules of the shari’a. The ruler’s adherence to these norms and rules was the touchstone of his relations with the community under his control.

**** The Dynamics of Change

In terms of the above-mentioned modus vivendi the ‘ulama’ were entrusted with the mission of preserving and protecting the Islamic norms embedded in the waqf institution and embodied in the detailed and intricate laws of the waqf.

This, however, did not mean that these laws remained unchanged throughout the centuries. Research in the past few years has largly dealt the coup de grtce to the notion that dominated the literature for a long time—to the effect that Islamic law was unchanging and immutable. This notion is certainly unacceptable concerning the Islamic endowment institution, with its obvious practical economic and social implications and with a record of survival over many centuries and throughout a vast cultural area.

Some of the basic questions relevant to any discussion of the dynamics of change in the domain of Islamic law concern the nature of change, the mechanisms used, and the people responsible for its introduction. The subject certainly deserves more detailed study.[425] Only a few points can be raised here. I shall concentrate on the role played in the process of change by the rulers on the one hand and custom (‘urf, ta’aruf, ta’amul) on the other. I believe that these two aspects of the dynamics of Islamic law have particular relevance to our understanding of the nature of the discourse between rulers, ‘ulama’, and the general public.

The need to take into consideration social and economic realities was the principal incentive for the introduction of change in laws in general and in those regulating the waqf in particular. Generally speaking, this was done by allowing a flexible interpretation of operative details while taking great care to preserve the basic principles or norms underlying the law.

Actual change, adopted and approved by the shari’a court—with or without prior consultation with a mufti[426]—usually preceded its legal formulation and adoption as a rule binding on all adherents of the school of law. The latter was a lengthy process, during which ‘ulama’ from all over the Islamic world expressed their learned opinion on the subject until, at a point that is difficult to determine, a change was accepted as “the preferred view” (al-rajih) or “the sounder view” (al-asahh al-mukhtar) of a particular school of law.[427] The participation of rulers in these scholarly discussions seems to have been extremely rare.[428] I have not come across a single case in which the ruler actually initiated a change in a basic waqf law.

However, intervention by a ruler was sometimes called for in order to clinch an issue that had given rise to a lengthy and indeterminate debate among the ‘ulama’. It was thus that in 951/1544-1545, following a long debate of the issue by the specialists, the Ottoman sultan Sulayman I Kanuni (r. 1520–1566), at the obvious instigation of the chief mufti, issued an order limiting substantially the scope of exchange transactions in endowed properties.[429]

The history of cash endowments is another, better-known case in point, combining custom, a learned debate by the ‘ulama’, and a decision by the ruler. Cash endowments appeared in the Ottoman Empire as early as the first decades of the fifteenth century.[430] Although the endowment of cash money is problematic in many ways from the point of view of the shari’a, it became a custom or, as Mandaville put it, “it seems to have been an indigenous product of the flexible Ottoman judiciary.”[431] When, in the course of the first half of the sixteenth century, cash waqfs became the dominant mode of endowment, they gave rise to a vehement debate among the ‘ulama’, which soon spread to broader circles of the Ottoman public. The debate was settled by an imperial order, issued to all qadis of the empire, to approve endowments of cash. Some points in this story are relevant to our discussion. First, it helps us gauge correctly the role of the ruler in this process. The sultan was not actually involved in the learned debate and did not express his opinion on the points of law. His decision in the form of an imperial decree to the qadis of the empire was needed in order to clinch a lengthy discussion, put an end to the confusion it caused, and ensure uniformity of adjudication on the issue in the territories under his rule.[432] Second, the case of cash endowments demonstrates the great influence of custom and public opinion on the process of change. In his decision, the sultan was certainly influenced by his chief mufti—the famous Ebu Suud (d. 1574)—who, in addition to a fatwa he issued, composed a long treatise on the subject, which Mandaville summarizes as “an appeal to continued popular usage (ta’amul, ta’aruf), to the welfare of the people (istihsan), and to both throughout with a tone of ‘Let’s be practical,’ an appeal to common sense.”[433] However, one may assume that the voice of the people carried no less weight with the sultan. This was typically expressed by a scholar who did not belong to the official ‘ulama’ hierarchy. Bali Baba was a representative of a settler family in Sofya, where he built a Sufi (mystic) lodge, became the

leader of the Halveti Order, and was known for his scholarship and sanctity. He wrote a letter to the sultan describing the confusion resulting from the conflicting views on the subject of cash endowments and supplicating him to issue an order that would cut throught the doubts. Dwelling on the actual consequences the annulment of thousands of cash waqfs would have on the practice of religion, on welfare, on education, and on other vital interests of the community of believers, he explained, quoting famous ‘ulama’, that “God’s legislation has no other purpose than to ease the way of His servants through the exigencies of the times. Some rules of the sharia are overturned by changes through time, out of necessity and to ease difficulties.” On these grounds Baba Bali pleaded with the sultan to decide for the admissibility of cash endowments “because it better suited the conditions of the people of our time.”[434] Long-established custom and the interests of the community thus carried the day and brought about what obviously was a substantive change in the law of waqf.

Change in a particular stipulation of the law was not necessarily applicable in the entire Islamic cultural area. The ‘ulama’ distinguish between two types of custom: general custom, applicable in all parts of the Islamic world, and local custom, applicable only in a specific region.[435] Indeed, many changes in waqf laws had a distinctive local coloring.[436] Thus, we know of a large number of long-term or permanent leases of endowed properties within the same school of law. These arrangements differ in detail from one another, have different names in different regions of the Islamic world, and represent local custom.[437] We know little of how such customs came into being. There can be little doubt, however, that their purpose was to provide solutions to existing local problems and their conflict with stipulations of the law. It seems reasonable to assume that the local population actually affected by the situation induced many of these changes. It is hard to determine whether the local community merely exerted informal pressure or actually petitioned for a specific change. It certainly expected its leaders— ‘ulama’ and/or rulers-— come up with solutions in response to its changing needs. Whatever the case might have been, the local solution was the product of a joint endeavor by the local population demanding a change, some ‘ulama’ formulating the change, and the local ruling authorities endorsing the new ruling.

The need to introduce changes in the law thus often gave rise to a discourse in which the ‘ulama’ played an important role but which involved both the community and the rulers. This discourse was based on the recognized need for a change. No less important, for all participants in this discourse the only conceivable change was such as would conform to the rules of the shari’a and be approved by its protectors-—at is, one that remained within the framework of the Islamic norms and values that all of them shared.

*** The Impact of the WAQF on the Public Sphere

The second part of the discussion will focus on three main subjects: the impact of endowments on the formation of the urban public space; their contribution to the crystallization of autonomous groups within the umma; and the nature of discourse between the rulers, the ‘ulama’, and the community generated by endowments.[438]

**** The Urban Public Space

The waqf’s contribution to the shaping of the urban public space can hardly be overestimated. A major part of the public environment in towns actually came into being as a result of endowments. This was true for new cities as well as for those parts of existing towns that developed under Islamic rule. Mosques, madrasas, zawiyas, caravanserais, as well as the town’s water supply systems, etc., were built as endowments. No less important, the building of a mosque or madrasa was often accompanied by the construction of large parts of the town’s economic infrastructure, particularly shops and sometimes even whole markets, which were part of the endowment and whose rentals were intended to finance the salaries of the mosque’s or madrasa’s staff, the daily functioning of the institution, and the cost of maintenance, repairs, etc. In other cases already existing immovables of all sorts (usually located in the neighborhood of the mosque) were acquired by the founder of the mosque and endowed for these purposes.[439] Indeed, one can hardly imagine the public space of any large town in the Islamic cultural area without these contributions based on endowments.

**** The Crystallization of Autonomous Groups

The waqf also served as a vehicle for the crystallization of various autonomous groups in the space between the private individual and the ruling authority. The broad definition of charity, enabling the endower to select a particular public segment of his choice as beneficiary of his endowment, made this possible. On many occasions endowers selected as public beneficiaries of their endowments not a general Islamic purpose but a more limited one to which they felt personally attached, such as a specific school of law, a zawiya, a Sufi order, a professional guild, the inhabitants of a particular neighborhood, the ashraf (descendants of the Prophet), groups of common origin such as the Andalusians in Algiers, etc. The waqf thereby withdrew from the ruler’s influence properties that served to finance the independent interests of various groups within the community. These endowments were usually administered by the head of the group: the guild’s leader (amin), the leader in the town of the descendants of the Prophet (naqib al-ashraf), or a resident of a neighborhood chosen by its inhabitants. The income from the endowments served to finance charity within the group, help needy members with payment of their taxes, assist in organizing and financing social activities, maintain places of worship and meeting for the members of the group, such as neighborhood zawiyas or mosques.[440] In other words, the waqf served as a vehicle whereby a given common identity, based on common origin, profession, or residence, was enhanced and assumed the nature of an autonomous social group, keen on protecting and advancing the particular interests of its members and thus an influential factor in the public sphere.

In much the same way endowments served to enhance the social standing of notable families-—e a’yan—who, through endowments, succeeded in drawing into the orbit of their influence a large number of clients, thus ensuring the longevity of the family’s influence in the town. This was done by establishing waqfs for public purposes—for example, a mosque or a zawiya—and securing their administration for generations to come to a member of the family, who, by

the terms of the endowment deed, was given the responsibility to appoint the personnel, decide their salaries, etc.[441] Similar aims were achieved by creating endowments known as khayriyya khassa. Particularly important in this category were endowments providing resources to finance the activities of the family's guest house. These guest houses served for social gatherings, especially the celebration of religious holidays, which were usually accompanied by preaching, prayers, and sometimes dhikrs (collective Sufi litanies). On these occasions food and even some clothes were handed out to large numbers of people, and the officiating preachers, teachers, etc., were each rewarded for their services, the endowment deed specifying the sums to be spent on each item.[442] Endowments of this nature were one of the important tools whereby local families secured themselves a power base independent of the ruling authorities, a leading position within the local community, and the necessary backing to stand up to the rulers in protection of the community's interests.

The waqf thus played an important role in turning the amorphous umma into a society composed of autonomous interest groups that, although they never acquired the status of legal entities, exercised much influence in the public sphere. The waqf also fostered the development of an autonomous leadership that could and often did speak up for the local population. Indeed, the distribution of endowments among the various public purposes in a given town reflected its social fabric and the special character of the local umma, as well as the relative social importance attached to neighborhoods, professional guilds, schools of laws, or groups of origin. Examination of endowments for various public purposes in a given town over time can reveal changes in the relative importance of disparate groups in the population. It can also help identify the local leading families and indicate changes in their social standing in the town.

**** The Relations between Rulers, 'Rlama', and Community

I shall focus on three aspects of these relations: the bond between rulers and the community created by endowments made by rulers; the discourse generated by the proliferation of endowments; and the involvement of the

‘ulama’ and the community in the administration of large public foundations.

Many of the largest public foundations all over the Islamic world were endowed by rulers, their immediate entourages, and senior members of the ruling elite. They served a variety of political and social purposes, including promotion of the colonization and Islamization of conquered territories and the establishment and maintenance of such public services as welfare, social, religious, educational, and general municipal services. They were often used as instruments of public policy and helped enhance the ruler’s power and prestige.[443] As in the case of gift relationships in other civilizations, endowments by rulers also served to establish bonds between the ruling authority and the general population, based on appreciation and gratitude, and generating a measure of loyalty on the part of the beneficient population. Considering that the same purposes could have been attained by simple “gifts”—that is, by allocations out of the state’s resources controlled by the rulers—the fact that in the cultural area we are concerned with these “gifts” were given in the form of individual waqfs had, I believe, a particular significance: They symbolized the adherence of the endowing ruler to the norms of good order inherent in the ideology of the Islamic endowment. Thus, while the solidarity the ruler strove to create by the “bread and circuses” evergetism was described by Veyne as a wish by the ruler “to offer symbolic proof that they [the rulers] were in the service of the ruled,”[444] the waqfs endowed by rulers in the Islamic cultural area established a much more significant bond of shared norms and moral values between rulers and their subjects. The irreversibility of the act of endowing one’s property and the basic notion of the waqf as an eternal charity conferred upon this moral bond an element of permanence and continuity. Also, above and beyond a certain feeling of gratitude generated by the “bread and circuses” evergetism, the message of shared values, or the message of a shared “lifeworld” of Islam projected by rulers’ endowments, generated a public opinion that approved of, even legitimized, the rule of the endowing ruler.

The proliferation of endowments brought about a situation where not only public buildings but also a large proportion of the real estate in towns and in many cases in the rural areas as well, acquired waqf status. This meant that the laws of the endowment institution determined major

issues relevant to the urban economy—such as the nature and details of the leasing arrangements of principal parts of the urban properties. Moreover, important issues concerning the town's development—for example, the need to recycle properties in order to provide the space necessary to accommodate new economic enterprises, for the extension of the town's water system, for population increases, and the like—often necessitated transactions in endowed properties, which were subject to waqf rules. This implied that all these issues were determined independently of the rulers' wishes. They were handled by the 'ulama', who alone were in charge of interpreting the law and determining how it would be implemented. Because of its impact on the town's economy and development, and its influence on the daily life of the local population, the waqf thus generated an ongoing discourse involving the local community, the 'ulama', and the rulers. I have already alluded to the nature of this discourse and the role of each of the participants in bringing about important changes in waqf laws.[445] Details concerning the regular leases of endowed properties, the type of local long-term leases, as well as local policies geared to either limiting the scope of such leases, and also of exchange transactions, or allowing for their proliferation, were often determined to suit local social and economic circumstances and were the result of a similar discourse. It was thus that specific local circumstances in Ottoman Algiers brought about changes of policy concerning regular leases as well as long-term and exchange transactions of endowed property. Pressure from below, a dynamic approach of the 'ulama' toward the interpretation of waqf laws, and the rulers' cooperation combined to bring about solutions whereby the letter of the law was made to coexist with the requirements of real life. Although these solutions allowed for a relaxation of some of the rules of the endowment institution, they did not clash head-on with its basic rules. Moreover, while accommodating the needs of the town and its inhabitants, special care was taken to protect the financial interests of the waqf.[446]

The administration of public foundations generated a lively discourse in the public sphere. Many of these foundations, which served the entire local population or catered to general Islamic purposes—for instance, the holy places of Islam—were made up, wholly or principally, of endowments by rulers and their entourages. In other cases their patrimony comprised a large number of private endowments that reached their final khayri

stage after the demise of their primary and intermediary beneficiaries.[447] All such endowments whose khayri beneficiary was the same—e.g., the holy places of Islam—were lumped together and administered jointly. The ruling authorities had an obvious interest in these large agglomerations of properties, which produced a very considerable income. They therefore kept either direct or indirect control of their administration.[448] However, once endowed, the property no longer belonged to the founder, but, according to the prevailing view of the Hanafi school of law, to God. The ruling authorities thus controlled these public foundations, including those endowed by rulers, not as owners but in their capacity as guardians of the interests of the umma. As in other matters of public interest, the responsibility of rulers in the case of these foundations was considered part of their basic duties to ensure observation of the shari'a, the norms of social order proper to the community of believers, and the furthering of the general interests of the umma in the territories under their control.

Obviously, the local community had a vested interest in the way the rulers carried out their duties concerning the waqf. Some of its members— mainly 'ulama' but also the many others who provided the various services a mosque or a madrasa required—were employed in the establishments maintained by waqfs and depended on them for their salaries. The poor and the needy for their part depended on public foundations that provided charity, clothes, and food. The religious and municipal services maintained by public foundations were of direct concern to the entire urban population. Last but not least, the general attitude displayed by the ruling authorities toward the public endowments they administered indicated to the local population the way the waqfs they themselves had established, or were likely to establish in the future, would be treated.

In concrete terms, the local community expected the rulers to make sure that the waqf status of endowed properties was honored—that is, to protect the properties from such arbitrary acts as confiscation or embezzlement by officeholders or abuse by those who wielded power; to ensure the regular distribution of public foundation income among the legal beneficiaries (e.g., salaries to the servants of the foundation, distribution of charity or food to the poor); and to see to it that ahli

endowments arrived at their ultimate destination. Rulers were also expected to see to the periodic repair and renovation of major establishments maintained by endowments whose cost involved sums over and above the income produced by their patrimony. As a matter of course the ruler was expected to contribute his share to the community by making his own endowments and encouraging his household and entourage to do the same.

As special guardians of the shari’a, ‘ulama’ had the important task of keeping a watchful eye on the way rulers discharged these duties. Indeed, there are many examples of initiatives taken by ‘ulama’ and of their cooperation with the ruling authorities to introduce measures geared to protecting the interests of public foundations. Followup on the line of private beneficiaries of ahli endowments and ensuring that upon their extinction the endowed property entered the patrimony of the public foundation designated by the founder was certainly one of the thorniest problems facing many charitable foundations. It could hardly have been handled without the qadis’ cooperation. One of the earliest reports mentioning this problem dates from the eighth century. Kindi (d. 350/961) tells us that in 118/736 the qadi of Cairo, Tawba b. Nimr realized that many endowments were being usurped and passed on as regular inheritances. Since the ultimate beneficiaries of these endowments were to be the poor and the destitute (not the heirs of the founder), the qadi decided to take these endowments under his wing so as to protect them from usurpers.[449] Measures designed to meet this difficulty were undertaken by various rulers before the nineteenth century. One example, reported in some detail in the sources, is that of the reforms carried out in Algiers toward the end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century[450] and in Constantine in 1776.[451] The rulers, in concert with the local ‘ulama’, issued orders to prepare special registers that would include all public foundations supported by endowments. Alongside the name of each foundation were to be listed all endowment deeds made in its favor, particularly those in which the foundation appeared as ultimate beneficiary. The document produced as a result of these orders was known as “the waqfiyya of Algiers,” and served as an efficient tool in enabling Algerian public foundations to carry out the necessary followup on ahli endowments. In addition to this immediate aim, the very initiative as well as the efforts involved in preparing the document served a broader aim: to signal to the local population that its rulers were intent on protecting endowed assets in

general. Indeed, this initiative played an important role in the substantial rise in the rate of endowments in Ottoman Algiers in the ensuing period.[452]

Qadis in the Ottoman Empire were assigned specific duties concerning public foundations. They were ordered to keep an eye on the administrators of such foundations and to audit the financial statements the administrators appointed by Istanbul were obliged to prepare annually. Qadis were also required to assist in the preparatory work preceding major repair and maintenance work on waqf property, on which the Ottoman center decided from time to time.[453]

The local population was sometimes directly involved in the administration of public foundations. This was the case in Ottoman Algiers, where for a long time the administration of the largest of all public foundations in the town—the Waqf al-Haramayn—was entrusted to a governing body of four, including two representatives of the local population.[454] In other instances, the local population exercised a more informal supervision over the administration of public foundations. An example that reports in some detail the manner in which such an informal supervision was carried out in Jerusalem at the end of the eighteenth century is given by Peri. In a number of cases beneficiaries of the two largest public foundations in Jerusalem complained to the ruler of improper management; the complaints attest to the detailed acquaintance of the petitioners with the foundation's situation and their close watch over the administrators.[455] Given the stake members of the local population had in the proper working of public foundations, one is justified, I believe, in assuming that such informal supervision was not confined to Jerusalem but was in fact carried out in other places and periods as well.

In extreme cases of outright violation of public waqfs by rulers—involving the diversion of income from their charitable or educational purposes, or the withholding of salaries, stipends, and food rations from 'ulama' and students— the local population, led by the 'ulama', reacted with violent outbursts, riots, and outright revolt and instigation against the rulers.[456] As in the case of the "moral economy," these riots should not be seen as merely spasmodic outbursts motivated by economic plight. Thompson's interpretation of the food riots in eighteenth-century England as an expression of grievances operating within

a popular consensus based on moral and social norms as to what were or were not legitimate economic practices,[457] applies in our case as well. The norms in our case were those of the shari’a in general and waqf laws in particular, which enjoyed a high measure of consensus among the population and thus helped mobilize large proportions of the Cairene population to side with those directly affected by the ruler’s violation of these norms, which were considered an integral part of the ruler’s “contract” with the community.

The endowment system also made it possible for the community to express its criticism by means of exit rather than voice.[458] The local population’s rate of endowment for public institutions, and particularly for foundations catering to general Islamic concerns—such as the poor of the holy places of Islam—was an important criterion by which the prestige of the town and its rulers were judged by the general Islamic community. Refraining from creating new endowments or keeping their rate at a low level reflected unfavorably on the ruler’s renown and thus provided the local community with an effective means of expressing its distrust of the ruler’s performance of his duties toward the community and its general discontent with the ruling system. A fairly high level of endowments by the local population, on the other hand, implied general confidence of the public in the rulers’ intentions and ability to protect their waqfs and abide by Islamic norms of proper public order.[459] The proportion of endowments by a local population over a period was thus an excellent indicator of the kind of relationship between a local community and its rulers and the existence or absence of discourse between them.

Thus, although the local umma was an uninstitutionalized body with no voting rights, it had a variety of informal but efficient ways to claim what it considered its rights.

*** Conclusion

Perhaps the most important difference between the Western civil society model and the public sphere in pre-nineteenth-century Islamic societies was the informality of the latter. While the discourse between ruler and society in

the West was based on a formal relationship rooted in the well-defined rights of autonomous groups, the discourse in the public sphere in the Islamic cultural area was based on informal understandings rooted in the basic adherence of all to common moral values and social norms.

Study of the waqf reveals a very lively public sphere, involving rulers, governors, and senior officials, side by side with all strata of the Muslim community— rich and poor, male and female—all of them participating in the creation and improvement of the public space. Indeed, through the waqf all elements of society, including its rulers, were mobilized in the service of the umma—that is, in the service of implementing the Islamic conception of the public sphere, which focused on the community of believers and the norms appropriate to its social order.

The broad definition of charity—that is, of what constitutes a legitimate beneficiary of endowments—allowed for the use of waqf to sustain a great variety of recipients, from family members to a plethora of institutions serving the entire community. It also helped crystallize interest groups in the space between the household and the ruling authorities, thus creating arenas of the public sphere independent from the official sphere.

The rules governing the endowment institution, combined with the proliferation of endowments, their predominance in the public space and their social and economic importance, actually deprived rulers of the exclusive prerogative to decide on a large number of issues concerning the interests of the community, and triggered a continuous discourse with the community, and its representatives concerning the administration and policies of major issues in the public sphere. This discourse had its own dynamic, instigated by the practical economic and social implications of the waqf and determined by a joint effort of the community, the ‘ulama’, and the rulers.

The waqf thus served as an important integrative institution holding together the society and its rulers. Rather than separation and estrangement, it established a strong bond of shared values, common

cultural symbols, and common language between rulers and society. The participation of rulers in the creation of endowments symbolized the bond of values shared with the society under their rule and conferred a measure of legitimacy on the rulers. Moreover, the many public foundations created by rulers and their entourages obviously refute the thesis that rulers were careless of the public, its needs, and its well-being.

[396] Turner 1984, 39.

[397] Ibid., 40. On the “Oriental despotism” thesis see also Springborg 1987, esp. 414–31; 1992, esp. 18–20.

[398] Ibid.; For more recent summaries of this point, connecting it to the question of democracy, see Lindholm 1996, esp. 33848; Sadowski 1997; Eickelman 1996, esp. x-xi.

[399] E.g., Lambton 1981; Vatikiotis 1987; Lapidus 1996; Lindholm 1996 and further literature there. See also Sadowski 1997 for a criticism of the research on this topic.

[400] Somers 1995, esp. 123--7; Calhoun 1993, esp. 269.

[401] These have been particularly emphasized and developed by political anthropology and the new cultural history. See Hann and Dunn 1996; Hunt 1989.

[402] Hodgson 1974, vol. 2, 119.

[403] Ibid., vol. 2, 124.

[404] As to the difficulty of rendering the term shari’a into English, see ibid., vol. 1, 334, n. 1. For a more detailed definition see below.

[405] Mottahedeh 1980, 7.

[406] See, e.g., Lambton EI² and bibliography there.

[407] Calder EI².

[408] For the basic rules governing the waqf see Heffening EI.

[409] See, e.g., Inalcik 1973, 148; Gerber 1983, 38–39.

[410] Hodgson 1974, vol. 2, 346–47.

[411] The same idea was reflected in the idea of the hisba — see Cahen and Talbi, EI².

[412] See Schacht 1953, 443–52; Heffening EI; Cahen 1961, 44–45, 56.

[413] E.g., al-Kasani (d. 585/1189) 1910, vol. 4, 221. The idea, as well as the terms sadaqa jariya or sadaqa mawqufa appear in virtually every treatise on the waqf. See, e.g., al-Shaybani (al-Khassaf) (d. 261/875) 1904, passim.

[414] On the notion of qurba see Anderson 1951b, 292–99.

[415] Hodgson 1974, vol. 2, 345–46.

[416] See Pruett 1984, whose article revolves around the idea that “for the Muslim, Islam is the command to submit to Allah in every aspect of his life,” and a critique of the Orientalist who “has dismissed this fundamental consideration from his reading of Islam. That is to say, he fails to see the transcendent truth and good in the Muslim tradition and thinks of it as a cultural artifact only” (44).

[417] See Baer 1981; Hoexter 1987. A comparison of the meaning of charity in Islam and in other cultures awaits serious study and is beyond the scope of this paper. For some beginnings in addressing this comparative aspect see, e.g., Jones 1980.

[418] See, e.g., Johansen 1981, 298, quoting Kasani; Heyd 1973, 204–7, 209, quoting Mawardi; Inalcik EI².

[419] Sometimes a third categoryof rights, haqq al-saltana (the right of the state) is mentioned in the sources. It certainlydid not grant the ruler or the state anyintrinsic rights of their own. What it did was to grant the ruler the right to prescribe extra-shar’i punishments, in protection of the rights of society. As Heyd shows, in the object of punishment and its general thrust, haqq al-saltana was rather similar to haqq Allah, both being identified with the rights of the Islamic communityand the public interest. See Heyd 1973, 204–7. For further details see below.

[420] Crone and Hinds 1986, esp. 80–97, place the victory of the ‘ulama’ and the rejection of caliphal guidance in spiritual matters in the ‘Abbasid period, and its formal acknowledgment in the period after the mihna in 234/848. See also Hurvitz, this volume.

[421] On siyasa shar’iyya see Coulson 1964, 129–30,172; 1957, 51. The most comprehensive exposition of the doctrine is Heyd 1973, 198–207. For the dating of the process whereby siyasa was incorporated in the shari’a see Johansen 1979, 54–61; 1981, 302.

[422] For the combination of huquq Allah and huquq al-‘ibad in the waqf institution see Hoexter 1995. This paragraph is based on ibid.

[423] On this subject see Hoexter 1998a, chapter 6.

[424] See e.g. Hoexter 1997, esp. 322 and n. 10. Despite instances of corruption among them, the ‘ulama’ as a reference group were never discredited to the point of actually losing their role as transmitters and interpreters of the norms of the proper social order.

[425] On the mechanisms of change see, e.g., Johansen 1993b; Hallaq 1994; Gerber 1998.

[426] On the role of the muftis see, e.g., Hallaq 1994; Powers 1990; Masud, Messick, and Powers 1996a. In some places, e.g., Ottoman Algiers, a formal institution— the majlis ‘ilmi, composed of the Hanafi and Maliki qadis and the muftis of the two schools of law—was set up to deal with major or difficult points of law—see Hoexter 1984, 256–58.

[427] On tarjih and tashih see Hallaq 1994, 5155. See also n. 30, above.

[428] This, as well as the basic division of responsibilities between rulers and ‘ulama’ discussed above, held true except in cases in which a ruler claimed special spiritual powers—i.e., declared himself a

mahdi—a divinely guided ruler who would restore Islam to its original perfection.

[429] Horster 1935, 42–43; Ibn ‘Abidin (d. 1252/1836) 1966, vol. 4, 388–89.

[430] The history of cash endowments is dealt with in detail in Mandaville 1979. What follows is based on this article.

[431] Ibid., 290, n. 3.

[432] See Heyd 1973, 185–87.

[433] Mandaville 1979, 298.

[434] On Baba Bali and his views as quoted above see ibid., 301–4.

[435] On ‘urf see Libson 1997; Ibn ‘Abidin (d. 1252/1836) 1883–1884; Johansen 1993a.

[436] For the opposition in Syria to a number of changes introduced by the Ottomans, on the grounds of these changes being based on local custom prevalent in Anatolia and Rumeli but not in Syria see Rafeq 1994.

[437] For a short description of the various leases see Baer EI².

[438] Manyof the examples cited in this part are taken from the Ottoman Empire. I believe, however, that the general conclusions hold true for other periods and regions of the premodern Islamic world as well.

[439] Actually, quite a number of urban studies, particularlyin the past few decades, are mainlybased on waqf documents. For some of the more recent studies pertaining to the subject under discussion see Hoexter 1998b, 482, n. 25.

[440] For further details, examples, and literature on endowments for these purposes see Baer 1997, 279–85, 288, 291–97; Hoexter 1998b, 481, n. 22.

[441] For further details, examples, and bibliography see Baer 1997, 265–69; Hoexter 1998b, 481, n. 22. On endowments, particularlyfor madrasas bythe patrician class in Iran see Arjomand 1998; 1999 and further bibliography there.

[442] For further details, examples, and bibliography see Baer 1997, 273–75.

[443] For further details and literature see Hoexter 1998b, 47677, nn. 6, 7, 8. For the use of endowments as an instrument of public policy see Arjomand 1998.

[444] Veyne 1990, 418.

[445] See above.

[446] For further details see Hoexter 1998a, chapter 5.

[447] Contrary to what has been the accepted wisdom, ahli endowments reached their khayri stage quite often and within a relatively short span of time. See ibid., esp. 90–99; Baer 1983, 21–22; Ben Achour 1992, 61; Yerasimos 1994, 45.

[448] For details see Hoexter 1995.

[449] Kindi (d. 350/961) 1912, 346. See also Tyan 1960, 380 and n. 3.

[450] The exact date is not clear. See Devoulx 1863, 104–5.

[451] Feraud 1868, 12122.

[452] Hoexter 1998a, esp. 22–23, 83–86.

[453] Peri 1983, 32–36; Gerber 1988, 164–66; Marcus 1979; 1989, 307.

[454] See Hoexter 1998a, chapter 3.

[455] Peri 1983, 42–45.

[456] See Raymond 1973–1974, vol. 2, 794; Crecelius 1995, 257--5. Both relate to the eighteenth century—a particularly corrupt period in Egypt.

[457] Thompson 1971.

[458] On voice and exit see Hirschman 1970.

[459] For an example of how this worked in Ottoman Algiers see Hoexter 1998a.

** Chapter Eight: Concluding Remarks: Public Sphere, Civil Society, and Political Dynamics in Islamic Societies

SHMUEL N. EISENSTADT

*** I

The chapters collected in this volume were presented and discussed in a workshop that took place in Jerusalem at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. The workshop constituted part of a program on “Collective Identity, Public Sphere, and Political Order,” under the auspices of the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences in Uppsala, and the Max Weber Kolleg at Erfurt University, its major aim being to reexamine critically some of the basic assumptions of recent studies of the topic as they bear on the dynamics of different civilizations and contemporary societies.

*** II

Notions of civil society were proposed and elaborated in different European contexts in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially within the intellectual tradition of what came to be termed the Scottish Enlightenment, but also earlier by such scholars as Pufendorf. However the revival of interest in this concept in contemporary social science has been largely and somewhat curiously limited to the rather particular conceptualization of civil society, formulated mainly by Hegel, in a continental European setting in the period of transition from absolutist monarchies to nations and states. This conceptualization certainly did not apply to other European societies, such as the Scandinavian countries, Holland, or even England, where, in the relations between “state” and “society,” the influence of the latter on the former was much greater than in the German states or even in France.[460]

Whatever its strengths and limitations, the discourse on civil society was for a long period dormant in the social science literature—to be revived again only after the breakdown of the Soviet Empire and the promulgation of the concept of civil society as a norm for Middle and East European societal reconstruction. This revived discourse was connected with greater attention to the concept of “public spheres” in the period after World War II—a concept presented in Jurgen Habermas’s Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere, a book that gained additional recognition in the contemporary discourse.[461] In this discourse, the concepts of public sphere and civil society tended to be coupled, overlapped, almost conflated, often without any clear distinction between them. Moreover, in this contemporary discourse a very strong assumption emerged that the development of a public sphere and a civil society constitutes a critical condition for the formation and continuity of constitutional and democratic regimes.[462]

The available historical and contemporary evidence shows these assumptions to be very problematic. First, the relations between civil society, public sphere, and the political arena are much more variable than is implied in these assumptions. The concept of a public sphere entails that there are at least two other spheres—the official sphere and the private sphere—from which the public sphere is more or less institutionally and culturally differentiated. It is, therefore, a sphere located between the official and the private spheres. It is a sphere where collective improvements, the common good, are at stake. This holds also for the official sphere; but in the public sphere such business is carried out by groups that do not belong to the ruler’s domain. Rather, the public sphere draws its membership from the private sphere. It expands and shrinks according to shifting involvements of such membership, as Albert O. Hirschman has demonstrated with regard to modern development.[463]

The public sphere is the place of voice rather than of loyalty, to use Hirschman’s famous distinction. Its strength depends on its institutional locus, whether it is dispersed or unified, whether it is close to the center or on the periphery. It is based on oral or written communication. Its influence rests on interpretations of the common good vis-ð-vis the ruler on the one hand and the private sphere or spheres of different sectors of the society on the other.

The term public sphere therefore denotes the existence of arenas that are not only autonomous from the political order but are also public in the sense that they are accessible to different sectors of society. Public spheres are constructed through several basic processes—namely, those of framing, communicating, and institutionalizing. The first process is one of categorization; it defines a discourse beyond face-to-face interaction. The second process is one of reflexivity; it invites a debate on problems of the common good, on criteria of inclusion and exclusion, on the permeability of boundaries, and on the recognition of the "other." The third process stabilizes this sphere. Public spheres tend to develop dynamics of their own, which, while closely related to those of the political arena, are neither coterminous with nor governed by the dynamics of the latter. They develop in different ways in different societies, and they differ in their relations not only to the rulers but also to what has been often designated as civil society.

Hence, second, these two concepts—public sphere and civil society— should not be conflated. Public sphere must be regarded as a sphere between the official and the private. And it must be regarded as a sphere that expands and shrinks according to the constitution and strength of those sectors of society that are not part of the rulership. Civil society entails a public sphere, but not every public sphere entails a civil society, whether of the economic or political variety, as defined in the contemporary discourse, or as it developed in early modern Europe through direct participation in the political process of corporate bodies or a more or less restricted body of citizens in which private interests play a very important role. We do indeed expect that in every civilization of some complexity and literacy a public sphere will emerge, though not necessarily of the civil society type.[464]

Even this broad definition of the public sphere seems to be culturally bound, however. As Benjamin Schwartz once remarked in a rejoinder to Hannah Arendt's distinction between the public and the private, a number of important societies such as the Chinese "had long done quite well without any conception at all of the public as distinct from the private good."[465] And indeed, the notion of private interests as distinct from public interests—especially the idea that private interests could serve as a solid base for the pursuit of public interests—seems to be European. It is tied to a legal

tradition that endows the individual with subjective rights and defines many associations as corporate bodies with legal rights, to an economic tradition that relies on the rational pursuit of self-interest; and it belongs to an institutional tradition that emphasizes the separation between state and civil society.

But whatever the differences with respect to the relations between public sphere, civil society, and the political arena, in all societies these relations have entailed continual contestation about power and authority, their legitimation and accountability.

In recognition of the very complex and variable relations among public sphere, civil society, and the political arena, one central focus of the program within whose framework the Jerusalem workshop was undertaken was, first, the reexamination of these concepts—especially, but not only, as they apply to non-Western societies; second, the ways in which the contestations about power and its legitimation have crystallized in different civilizations and shaped their dynamics; and third, a possible reassessment of the dynamics of Western societies themselves.

*** III

Such a critical appraisal of the concepts of public sphere and civil society as they developed in contemporary scholarship is closely related to the "Orientalist" debate—that is, criticism of the analysis, in Western and Western-inspired scholarship, of non-Western, especially Asian, societies.

Critics of so-called Orientalism, from Edward Said on, have shown that many of the analyses of "Oriental" (above all Asian) societies undertaken by Western and Western-inspired scholarship have imposed concepts and categories rooted in the cultural program of modernity that developed in the West.[466] In particular, the conceptions of world history implicit in such scholarship have viewed the modern nation state as the epitome of progress.

On the analytical level, this approach often entailed, as Talal Asad has shown, the transposition of certain concepts—for instance, “religion”—that were rooted in Western thought and in the distinct Western historical experience, to the analysis of non-Western societies, often giving rise to the misinterpretation of many crucial aspects of the latter.[467]

On the conceptual level, the imposition of these concepts on the analysis of “Oriental” societies was often connected with a view that depicted Asian societies as being a mixture of stagnation and Oriental despotism. Truly enough, this view of Asian societies was not the only one prevalent in modern European historiographical discourse. Indeed, a strong current in this discourse as it developed in the Enlightenment promulgated a very positive view of some of these societies (e.g., the Chinese) as exhibiting civilizing features not to be found in the West. Yet the negative “Orientalist” view of these societies has become predominant in large parts of Western, especially European, scholarship and in public discourse.[468] Many studies have been guided by the implicit— and often also explicit—assumption to be found already in Marx’s discussion on the “Asian mode of production.”[469] The assumption was that these civilizations, even when initially dynamic, became static, stagnant—one major manifestation of such stagnation being that “modernity,” whether in the economic or in the political sphere, and rationality did not develop in them. In the case of Muslim societies, such decline was seen to have set in already early in the thirteenth century, with the victory of orthodoxy over the more open trends oriented to “Western” Greek philosophy.[470]

Concomitantly, many such societies—including most of the Muslim societies, especially Middle Eastern ones, as well as China—were often portrayed as epitomizing Oriental despotism; all power was seen as concentrated in the hands of the rulers, with the various sectors of society granted no autonomy beyond purely local affairs and even these affairs often tightly regulated by the great despots.[471]

*** IV

The critique of Orientalism gave rise, as is well known, to intensive discussion and controversy—with highly ideological overtones. It became closely connected with the many criticisms of the models—predominant in the social sciences of the 1950s and early 1960s—of the structural-framework approach, in particular studies of modernization.[472] One of the major foci of these criticisms was that no institutional or organizational setting was taken as "given," nor was the extent to which different parts or components thereof contributed to its continuity considered. Instead, the very construction of any such setting was seen as problematic—and as always taking place through continual power contestations and negotiations among the different actors, through which, to follow Gramsci's terminology, hegemonies were established.[473] These intensive discussions and controversies opened up the problem of the relations between agency and social structure and between social structure and culture.[474]

The criticism of Orientalism was indeed closely interrelated with general developments in the social sciences and humanities. Such criticism has shown that much of the research that was guided by "Orientalist" conceptions neglected many aspects of non-Western societies—especially those related to power contestations and the relations between power and culture, which are crucial for understanding their contours and dynamics. At the same time the researches that burgeoned in conjunction with these broad controversies highlighted the extent to which the crystallization of different hegemonies has influenced many aspects of social life, among them constructs of sexuality and gender, conceptions of the human body, or the shaping of collective memory and rituals of commemoration.[475]

Within the broad spectrum of such studies, two major lines of research developed that directly challenged what they perceived as the "Orientalist" assumption. One was the so-called subaltern studies,[476] developed first in India, which emphasized above all the continual development of different forms of opposition, or more accurately resistance, to the Western political and also intellectual hegemony, especially on different local levels. The other, more recent line of research, rooted far more than the subaltern studies in Western "postmodern" scholarship, criticized the emphasis on the modern nation-state as defined in Western terms as the model and the major unit of analysis, with the concomitant neglect of regional, occupational, gender, and other social sectors and networks.[477]

But interestingly enough, the critics of “Orientalist” scholarship did not take up the most important and potentially most constructive challenge opened up by the “Orientalist” debate—namely, how to account for the internal dynamics of these non-European modern civilizations in their own terms, possibly also putting them in a comparative framework that would not bestow a privileged position on the Western experience.

It is paradoxical that many of the studies of Asian societies criticizing the Orientalist approach in many ways accepted the assumption that in most of these societies, in some crucial period of their development, a process of stagnation had set in; that the impact of colonialization and imperialism had, at least partially, stifled their transformation into modern capitalist societies. One fascinating illustration of such an approach is the debate on the potentialities for capitalist development in seventeenth- to early nineteenth-century India, presumably stifled by British colonialism.[478]

Marshall Hodgson’s ideas, as expressed in his Venture of Islam and some of his very incisive articles, many published posthumously, could have served as a starting point for going in such directions beyond the “Orientalist” debate had they been more fully developed by Hodgson himself before his untimely death. He had as yet taken only the very first steps in analyzing the Muslim societies, and their encounter with modernity, which of course later became the point of departure for much of “Orientalist” critique and scholarship.[479] Moreover, Hodgson was not followed, at least until quite recently, in the mainstream studies of Islamic societies, even if references to him abounded.

*** V

The failure of these studies to analyze the internal dynamics of Asian societies was possibly rooted in a certain analytical blindness or blockage connected with the general ideological ambience of the intellectual and academic discourse of the 1970s. The central analytical point of much of such discourse— possibly the point most emphasized in the Orientalist

debate and certainly one that was greatly influenced by Foucault[480] and to a smaller extent by Gramsci[481]—was the close relation between power and culture; indeed, Foucault saw an almost complete identity between the two. Most of the criticism focused on the ways in which the cultural program of modernity was imposed on these societies through the exercise of power—especially colonial or imperial power. Yet, until recently, most of these studies did not address the problem of the extent to which the relation between power and culture developed in the dynamics of these civilizations prior to the impact of the West. They did not take up the problem of how relations between culture and power— and the challenges to the hegemonic relations and discourses that developed in these societies—differed from or were comparable to Western ones, much less how these relations and challenges differed among various non-Western societies.

With the interesting exception of some studies of early Mesoamerican societies,[482] an important outcome of this analytical blindness was the fact that these studies, with their strong emphasis either on subaltern resistance or on the autonomy of various social sectors (regional, professional, economic, gender), barely touch on a problem central to Weber's analysis. That problem relates to the various broad symbolic and institutional frameworks of these civilizations—whether of the Brahminic or Sanskritist or Confucian cosmopolis, or of the Islamic umma—and its dynamics. It is Sheldon Pollock's singular merit to be probably the first among the critics of Orientalism to raise this problem. In his central statement as well as his later work on the vernacular millennium, he pointed out the importance of the relations among the carriers of these broad frameworks and the various groups—especially various local political elites and groups—and the specific dynamics generated by these relations.[483] Further research would indicate how such dynamics—which included both resistance and a quest for autonomy, but also potential challenges to the legitimation of such hegemonies and patterns of power—crystallized in different societies.

It is interesting that most of these studies did not refer to Weber; and insofar as they did, they adopted that interpretation of Weber that tended to see him as a Eurocentric preoccupied with analyzing the origin of modern capitalism and demonstrating the superiority of the West.[484] They neglected the other side, or other reading, of his work—namely, the reading

of the Gesammelte Aufsatze zur Soziologie und Sozialpolitik as studies of the internal dynamics of the various great civilizations in their own terms, with a special emphasis on the role of heterodoxies and sectarian movements in these dynamics.[485]

The comparison between Weber and Foucault is indeed of great interest from the point of view of our analysis. As is well known, Foucault and his followers focused on the ways in which the concrete institutional patterns, patterns of life, and basic conceptions of order have been shaped by the interweaving of culture in the exercise of power. The relation between power and knowledge is also a central focus of Weber's analysis in the Gesammelte Aufsatze—probably best illustrated in his analysis of the place of the Confucian literati in the construction of the Chinese imperial order. Needless to say, Foucault's own work—as well as the many more contemporary historical, sociological, and anthropological studies influenced in one way or another by Foucault—provides far more detail than can be found in Weber's analysis, even if many details of Foucault, especially his analysis, have recently been subjected to far-reaching criticism.[486]

This can perhaps be best seen in Foucault's reluctance to face two broad problems. There is the problem of agency and its place in the constitution of different social and political orders, different orders of power and culture. And there is the closely related problem of the historical roots of different orders, and of continuities or discontinuities between historical periods and the concomitant difficulty in explaining the possible place of resistance in the generation of processes of social change.

As T. B. Hansen has indicated, the term parrhesia is used by Foucault for the courageous act of disrupting dominant discourses, thereby opening a new space for another truth to emerge—not a discursive truth but rather a "truth of the self," an authentication of the courageous speaker in this "eruptive truth-speaking."[487] But while this term goes beyond the simple emphasis on resistance as simply due to the inconvenience of being confined within the coercive frameworks of an order, it does not systematically analyze the nature of the agency through which such other truth may emerge,[488] or how the emergence of such "truth of the self" may become interwoven with processes of social change and transformation.

In contrast to Foucault, Weber's analysis focused on the way in which institutional patterns are constructed by human agency as well as on the problems of continuity and discontinuity between different historical periods. [489] Weber did not conflate power and culture; he attempted to specify the distinct aspects or dimensions of culture. For instance, he tried to clarify how the basic ontological premises, conceptions of salvation, and the like prevalent in a society influence specific institutional patterns—such as the structure of rulership or configurations of strata—as well as the mechanism through which such influence is exerted. Second, he emphasized that the contours of such patterns constitute a continual focus of contention among various groups among which of special importance are the various heterodoxies that potentially develop and continually challenge the existing hegemonies. The strong emphasis on the importance of heterodoxies in crystallizing such challenges indicates that such challenges are influenced not only by pure "power" contestation but also by the basic premises of the different religions or systems of belief and knowledge that become hegemonic in their respective societies, and that such premises, especially when institutionalized, contain within them seeds of potential challenge—and transformation.[490]

*** VI

It is indeed with respect to analyzing the relation between culture and power that the analysis of public spheres is of central importance. Public spheres—and of course social movements, especially heterodoxies, sectarianisms, and collective identities (for example, those that crystallized in the vernacular age)—constituted the most important institutional arena in all these societies, for it was in this arena that the rulers, different elites, and various social groups in the centers and peripheries continually negotiated with, contested, and confronted one another about the definition of the common good, as well as about the legitimation and accountability of authorities and the concomitant possible challenges to the existing hegemonies..

But the concrete ways in which such negotiations or contestations develop differ greatly among different civilizations—attesting to the different ways in

which power and culture are interwoven—and shape their distinct dynamics. Analyzing the dynamics of different societies may help in facing the challenge of how on the one hand to recognize the dynamics specific to particular civilizations, and on the other to confront the problem of the fruitfulness— and limits—of applying concepts developed in the Western social science discourse to the analysis of non-Western societies.

*** VII

The essays presented in this volume will hopefully help to resolve some of these problems and take up some of these challenges. To no small degree the chapters build on some of Hodgson’s powerful insights and clearly indicate the inadequacy of the approaches that have promulgated the view of Muslim societies as stagnant and of their political regimes as epitomizing Oriental despotism. They clearly demonstrate, as Hoexter, Levtzion, and Eickelman succinctly indicate in their introduction and foreword, that there crystallized in Muslim society a very vibrant and autonomous public sphere that was of crucial importance in shaping the dynamics of Muslim societies.

This public sphere crystallized out of the interaction of the ‘ulama’ (the interpreters of the religious sacred law), the shari’a (the religious law), various sectors of the broader community, and the rulers. The basic framework within which such interaction took place was that of the shari’a, which was the main overall framework of Islamic societies, the regulator of the moral and religious vision, the cohesive and boundary-setting force of Muslim communities.

In the words of Hoexter and Levtzion in their introduction:

<quote>

Umma and shari’a are central conceptions running through the discussion in virtually all the chapters included in the present volume. The umma—the community of believers—was

accorded central importance in Islamic political thought. Not only were the protection and furthering of its interests the central concern of the ruler, the individual Muslim and the ‘ulama’; the umma’s consensus (ijma’) on the legitimacy of the ruler as well as on details concerning the development of social and cultural norms was considered infallible. The community of believers was thus placed as the most significant group in the public sphere, and above the ruler. (see Miriam Hoexter).

The shari’a—the sacred law, or the rules and regulations governing the lives of Muslims, derived in principal from the Qur’an and hadith—was developed by fuqaha’ (jurists) and was basically an autonomous legal system, independent from the ruler’s influence. Above and beyond a legal system, the shari’a embodied the values and norms of the social order proper to the community of believers and became its principal cultural symbol. The sacred nature of the shari’a is deeply entrenched in the public sentiment of Muslim societies. The sanction of the sacred law has contributed to the formation of a Muslim public opinion and endowed institutions and social groupings based on the shari’a—such as the qadi, the mufti, the schools of law (madhabib)— with a high degree of autonomy vis-d-vis the ruler. It has also accorded moral authority to the ‘ulama’—the shari’a specialists—who have asserted the position as authorized interpreters of the shari’a law and custodians of the moral values underlying the ideals of social order of the umma.

</quote>

Among the many organizations that developed in Muslim societies, it was mainly in the schools of law, the waqf, and the different Sufi orders that reconstitution of the public sphere continually took place. As the essays presented here indicate, the relative importance and scope of these institutions did change in different historical settings and periods; but some combination of them seems to have existed in all cases. Many aspects of the institutional arenas constituting the public sphere varied in different societies and periods; though regulated by the ruler, they were yet autonomous and

could exert far-reaching influence on the ruler—an influence that went far beyond simple subservience to official rule or attempts to evade it.

*** VIII

The overall pattern of the public sphere (or spheres) that developed in Muslim societies, the mode of interaction between the ‘ulama’, the different sectors of society, and the rulers, was rooted in the basic premises and conceptions of Islam. The specific constellations, the concrete institutional arenas thereof, on the other hand, were shaped by the historical experience of the various Islamic societies.

Most important among the factors bearing on the construction of public spheres in Islam was the ideal of the umma—the community of all believers— as the major arena for the implementation of the moral and transcendental vision of Islam; the strong universalistic component in the definition of this Islamic community; and the closely connected emphasis on the principled political equality of all believers.

This pristine vision of the umma, probably implicit only in the very formative period of Islam, entailed a complete fusion of political and religious collectivities, the complete convergence or conflation of the sociopolitical and religious communities.[491] Indeed, the very conceptual distinction between these two dimensions, rooted as it is in the Western historical experience, is probably not entirely applicable to the concept of the umma.

In the implementation of these basic premises of Islamic vision, Islamic societies evinced, as Maxime Rodinson has put it,[492] the characteristics of a “totalitarian movement,” as if it were a political party strongly oriented to the reconstruction of the world and very militant in this pursuit—albeit needless to say without having all the modern technological and administrative means of totalitarianism. Such implementation, however, was to be realized not in the establishment of one continual political regime but through the shari’a, the law, which from early on in Islamic

history became the main framework of the overall moral and transcendental visions of Islam and the regulator of the modes of its implementation. It was only in the early phase of Islamic conquest and then in some of the “renovated” regimes to be discussed later that these “totalitarian”-like tendencies became predominant.

The emphasis on the construction of a political-religious collectivity was connected in Islam with the development of a principled ideological negation of any primordial element or component within this sacred political-religious identity. Indeed, of all the Axial Age civilizations in general, and the monotheistic ones in particular, Islam was, on the ideological level, the most extreme in its denial of the legitimacy of such primordial dimensions in the structure of the Islamic community—although de facto of course the story was often markedly different, as Bernard Lewis has shown.[493] In this it stood in opposition to Judaism, with which it shared such characteristics as an emphasis on the direct, unmediated access of all members of the community to the sacred. It differed, however, from Judaism in its basic conception of the relations between man and God, in the strong emphasis—as the name Islam connotes—on the total submission to God and in the lack of any possible contractual or covenantal relationship between God and the community of believers.[494]

Two primordial aspects have very forcefully persisted in very central areas of Islam: first, the strong emphasis, in the initial historical phase of Islam, then to a large extent in Shi’i Islam, and in its Moroccan version, on descent from the Prophet as a source of legitimation of rulers; second, the emphasis on Arabic as the sacred language of Islam, of the Qur’an, of prayer, and also to a large degree of the legal exegesis. This was in contrast to Judaism, where the Bible was read in Greek in Alexandria (and in English in many synagogues in the United States); and to Christianity, where the liturgy was naturally read in Greek (or other languages) in the East, and later on in Europe after the Reformation not only in Latin but in the various vernacular languages. But beyond these two primordial elements or emphases, there developed in Islam no sanctification of any “ethnic” primordial-communal elements or symbols, and it was the universalistic ideology of the umma that became predominant.

Yet from the very beginning of Islam’s history strong tensions developed between these particularistic primordial Arab components, which were natural, as it were, to the initial carriers of the Islamic vision, and the universalistic orientation—tensions that became more important with the continual conquest and incorporation of new territorial entities and ethnic groups.[495] The final crystallization of this universalistic ideology took place with the so-called ‘Abbasid revolution.

Paradoxically, also in this period—indeed, in close relation to the institutionalization of this universalistic vision—there developed, especially within Sunni Islam, a de facto separation between the religious community and the rulers. This separation was partially legitimized by the religious leadership, and was continually reinforced, above all by the ongoing military and missionary expansion of Islam—an expansion far beyond the ability of any single regime to sustain. This separation between the religious and political elites involved, as M. Sharon has shown,[496] a shift in the legitimation of rulers in Sunni Islam (with the partial exception of some rulers such as for instance the Moroccan sultans) from direct descent from the Prophet to the consensus of the community and the rulers’ ability to maintain their power.[497] Ultimately, any persons or groups able to seize power were accepted and post facto legitimated through the influence of the khalifa.

In the different Muslim regimes that developed under the combined impact of the continual expansion of Islam and the Mongol invasion, a separation took place between the khalifa and the actual ruler, the sultan, heralding de facto separation between the rulers and the religious establishment (‘ulama’). The khalifa often became de facto powerless yet continued to serve as an ideal figure—the presumed embodiment of the pristine Islamic vision of the umma, and the major source of legitimation of the sultan—even if de facto he and the ‘ulama’ legitimized any person or group that seized power. Such separation between the khalifa and the sultan was closely connected with the crystallization (in close relation to the mode of expansion of Islam, especially of Sunni Islam) of a unique type of ruling group—namely, the military-religious rulers, who emerged from tribal and sectarian elements. It also produced the system of military slavery, which created special channels of mobility—such as the

gulam system in general and the Mamluk and Ottoman devsirme in particular-through which the ruling groups could be recruited from alien elements.[498]

But even when some imperial components developed, as was the case in Iran, which became a stronghold of Shi’i Islam and in which relatively continual strong patrimonial regimes developed, a complete fusion between the political ruler and the religious elites and establishment did not ensue.[499]

*** IX

This separation between khalifa and sultan was most prevalent in the mainstream of Islamic (Sunni) religious thought and tended to legitimize any ruler who ensured the existence of the Muslim community and the upholding of the shari’a. At the same time this mode legitimated-indeed, assumed-the possible coercive nature of such rulers and their distance from the pristine Muslim ideal regarding the moral order of the community. While rulers, even oppressive ones, were legitimized in the seemingly minimalistic tone necessary for the maintenance of public order and of the community, they were not seen as the promulgators, guardians, or regulators of the basic norms of the Islamic community. But whatever the extent of the acceptance of their legitimation, it usually entailed the rulers’ duty to uphold the social order and to implement shari’a justice-and hence also the possibility of close scrutiny of their behavior by the ‘ulama’even if such scrutiny did not usually have clear institutional effects. It was indeed the ‘ulama’, however weak their organization, who were the guardians of the pristine Islamic vision, upholders of the normative dimensions of the umma, and keepers and interpreters of the shari’a.

It was the central place of the ‘ulama’—their relatively high symbolic standing despite small organizational autonomy-that distinguishes the Muslim regimes from other traditional patrimonial regimes in South or Southeast Asia or the early Near East. Truly enough, this highly autonomous religious elite did not develop into a broad, independent, and cohesive

ecclesiastic organization, and the religious groups and functionaries were not organized as a distinct, separate entity; nor did they constitute a tightly organized body— except, and even then only partially, in the Ottoman Empire,[500] where large sectors of the ‘ulama’ were organized by the state or in different modes in Shi’i Islam.[501] Yet the ‘ulama’ were largely autonomous in that they were constituted according to distinctive—even if highly informal—criteria of recruitment and were, at least in principle, independent of the rulers.

It was these religious leaders, the ‘ulama’even the relatively controlled ‘ulama’ of the Ottoman Empire, as Haim Gerber shows, who were the custodians of the law, of shari’a, and through it of the boundaries of the Islamic community, and hence performed important juridical functions. It was the ‘ulama’ who created major networks that brought together, under one religious—and often also social-civilizational—umbrella, varied ethnic and geopolitical groups, tribes, settled peasants, and urban groups, creating mutual impingement and interaction among them that otherwise would probably not have developed. And it was the ‘ulama’, acting through different, often transstate, networks, who were the crucial element forming the distinctive characteristics of public spheres in Islamic societies. As M. Hodgson has indicated, and as is fully illustrated in the chapters in this volume, it was the ‘ulama’ who, through their activities in schools of law, the waqfs, and the Sufi orders constituted the public spheres in Islamic societies and provided arenas of life not entirely controlled by the rulers. These public spheres were arenas in which different sectors of the society could voice their demands in the name of the basic premises of Islamic vision. Indeed, the dynamics of these public spheres cannot be understood without taking into account the crucial importance in them of the place of the community, rooted also in the basic premise of Islam, that of the equality of all believers and of their access to the sacred—conceptions that have necessarily given members of the community a right to participate, if not in the political arena, certainly in the communal and religious ones, in the promulgation and voicing of norms of public order.

*** X

The continual interaction between the ‘ulama’, the rulers, and the different sectors of the community, then, were crucial to the constitution of an autonomous public sphere in Islamic societies. To quote Hoexter and Levtzion’s introduction once more:

<quote>

The picture that emerges from the contributions to this volume is that of a vibrant public sphere, accommodating a large variety of autonomous groups and characterized by its relatively stable but very dynamic nature. The community of believers was the center of gravity around which activity in the public sphere revolved. Its participation in the formation of the public sphere was a matter of course; its well-being, customs, and consensus were both the motives and the main justifications for the introduction of changes in social and religious practices, in the law and policies governing the public sphere. The independence of the shari’a and the distribution of duties toward the community between the ruler and the ‘ulama’, established very early in Islamic history, were crucial factors in securing the autonomy of the public sphere and putting limits on the absolute power of the ruler.

</quote>

The relative strength of these actors varied of course, as the essays in this volume attest, in different periods and in different Muslim societies; and these differences greatly influenced the specific contours of the major institutions of the public sphere.

In some cases, as Said Arjomand has shown in his analysis of the emergence of the academics in medieval Islamic societies, they could indeed be greatly dependent on the ruler; he could exercise strong control—based on patronage—over the appointment of personnel to the institutions and hence limit their independence.[502] But in all cases the rulers retained the basic parameters of public spheres as constituted in Islamic societies. In cases where the rulers were weak, as for instance in Malaka, as Robert Heffner has shown, strong merchant groups could become not only autonomous in their own milieu but also major players in the political arena vis-0-vis the ruler.[503]

*** XI

The autonomy of the ‘ulama’, the hegemony of the shari’a, and the continuous yet variable vitality of the public spheres in Muslim society do not however imply direct autonomous access to the domain of rulership. Notwithstanding what might have been deduced from some of the more recent discussions about civil society and democracy, these factors did not result in the decision-making process of rulers, as they did in European parliaments and corporate urban institutions. Needless to say, some—often very strong—attempts to exert such influence did develop in many Muslim societies. But in concrete matters, especially foreign or military policy, as well as in such internal affairs as taxation and the keeping of public order and supervision of their own officials, the rulers were quite independent from the various actors in the public sphere.

It was this rather limited access of the major actors in the public sphere to concrete policy making that gave rise to the wrong perception of the rulers of Muslim societies as Oriental despots. This image is wrong because in fact the scope of the decision making of these rulers was relatively limited. Even if the rulers could behave in despotic ways in their relations to the officials most close to them, in internal affairs beyond taxation and the keeping of public order, they were limited, and not only because of the limits of technology. Their power was also limited because, unlike the European experience, rulership (“politics”) in these above all Sunni Islamic societies did not constitute— contrary to the pristine image of the Muslim ruler as the embodiment of a transcendental vision of Islam—a central ideological component in the upholding of the moral order, even if pragmatically it constituted a necessary condition for the implementation of shari’a. Paradoxically enough, the fact that political problems constituted a central focus of Muslim theology was to no small extent rooted in this disjunction between the ideal of the Islamic ruler as the upholder of the pristine transcendental vision of Islam and the reality of his rulership. Moreover, the “political” weakness of many of the major organizations in the public sphere, as Said Arjomand has shown, is to be attributed not to the despotic tendencies of the ruler but to the absence of legal concepts and of corporations.[504]

Thus, in Muslim, especially Sunni, societies a very interesting decoupling developed between the makeup of the public sphere and access to the decision making of the rulers. This decoupling was manifest in the combination, on the one hand, of granting to large sectors of the society, to the major actors in the public sphere, rather limited autonomous access to concrete policy making; on the other hand the upholding of the moral order of the community was vested in the ‘ulama’ and in the members of the community, with the rulers playing a secondary role.

This decoupling of a vibrant public sphere, autonomous from the political arena—or to be more precise from the realm of rulership, which differed greatly from its counterparts in Europe, especially Western and Central Europe—constituted one of the distinctive characteristics of Muslim civilization. It was distinctive, too, from the relations between the public sphere and the political rulership arena that developed in other non-Muslim Asian civilizations. It differed from India, where the political order did not constitute a major arena for the implementation of the predominant transcendental and moral vision; where sovereignty was highly fragmented; and where rulership was to a large extent embedded in the very flexible caste order,[505] giving rise to a vibrant public sphere with relatively strong access to the rulers. And it differed from China, where the political order in fact constituted the major arena for the implementation of the transcendental vision and where it was the rulers who, together with the Confucian literati, constituted the custodian of this order, leaving very limited scope for an autonomous public sphere.[506]

*** XII

From the point of view of the contemporary discourse on civil society, constitutionalism, and democracy, this specific combination of a vibrant public sphere with highly limited access of the major actors to the rulers’ decision making gave rise in Muslim societies to a very paradoxical situation with respect to the impact of these main actors on changes in the political arena. The most important fact here—one that seemingly strengthened the view of these regimes as despotic—is that despite the potential autonomous

standing of members of the ‘ulama’, fully institutionalized effective checks on the decision making of the rulers did not develop in these societies, and there was no machinery other than rebellion through which to enforce any far-reaching “radical” political demands.

And yet in contrast to other patrimonial regimes, the potential not just for rebellion but also for principled revolt and possible regime changes was endemic in Muslim societies. True, as Bernard Lewis has shown,[507] a concept of revolution never developed within Islam. But at the same time, as Ernest Gellner indicated in his interpretation of Ibn Khaldun’s work,[508] a less direct yet very forceful pattern of indirect ruler accountability and the possibility of regime changes did arise. This pattern was closely connected with a second type of ruler legitimation and accountability in Muslim societies—that embodied in the ruler being seen as the upholder of the pristine, transcendental Islamic vision.

Yet the possibility of implementing that pristine vision of Islam, of achieving that ideal fusion between the political and the religious community, of constructing the umma, was actually given up relatively early on in the formation and expansion of Islam. Indeed, the fact that political issues constituted a central focus of Muslim theology was to no small extent rooted in this disjunction between the ideal of the Islamic ruler as the upholder of the pristine transcendental vision of Islam and the reality of rulership in Islamic religion.[509] Yet although never fully attained, it was continually promulgated, as Aziz al-Azmeh has shown, with very strong utopian orientation, by various scholars and religious leaders, in the later periods.[510] Given the ongoing perception of the age of the Prophet as an ideal, even utopian model, the idea of restoration constituted a perennial component of Islamic civilization, promoted above all by some of the extreme reformist movements. Muhammad’s community in Medina became —in the apt phrase of Henry Munson Jr., the Islamic “primordial utopia.”[511] Many of the later rulers (the ‘Abbasids, Fatimids, and others) came to power on the crest of religious movements that upheld this ideal and legitimized themselves in just such religiouspolitical terms.

*** XIII

The impact of this enduring utopian vision of the original Islamic era, of the fact that this ideal was neither ever fully implemented nor ever fully given up, became evident in some specific characteristics of the political dynamism of Islamic regimes and of Islamic sects—or rather movements with sectarian tendencies. One has of course to be very careful in using the term sect—with its Jewish and especially Christian roots—with respect to Islam, or even with respect to Hinduism. Other than the fundamental break between the Shi'is and the Sunnis, the distinctive characteristic of Christian sectarianism—the tendency to schism—has barely been applicable to Islam. But sectarian-like tendencies have existed in the recurring social movements in Muslim societies; and one of their distinctive characteristics has been the importance of their political dimensions, frequently oriented toward the restoration of that pristine vision of Islam, which has never been given up. Such renovative orientations were embodied in the different versions of the tradition of reform— the Mujaddid tradition. [512]

These radical reform movements could be focused on the person of a mahdi and/or be promulgated by a Sufi order or in a tribal group such as the Wahhabis, or in a school of law. As Emanuel Sivan has pointed out:

<quote>

Islamic Sunni radicalism was born out of the anti-accommodative attitude towards political power which had always existed within this tradition as a vigilante-type, legitimate, albeit secondary strand. Its most consistent and powerful paragon over the last seven centuries was the neo-Hanbalite school of Islamic law. When modern Sunni radicals looked in the 1920s and 1960s for a tradition to build upon, they turned quite naturally, like their predecessors in the late eighteenth century (the founders of Saudi Arabia), to neo-Hanbalism.[513]

</quote>

Such restorative protofundamentalist tendencies were often connected with strong utopian eschatological orientations. In the words of Aziz al-Azmeh:

<quote>

The Medinan Caliphate can thus be regarded, with Laroui, as a utopia. What Laroui omits is an important complement without which consideration of this matter would remain incomplete: this is eschatology. Unlike activist, fundamentalist utopia, this finalist state of felicity and rectitude associated with the future reigns of the Mahdi (the Messiah) and of ‘Isa b. Maryam (Jesus Christ) is not the result of voluntaristic action! Like the Medinan regime and the prophetic example, it is a miraculous irruption by divine command onto the fact of history, although it will be announced for the believers by many cosmic and other signs. Not only is the End a recovery of the Muslim prophetic experience, it is also the recovery of the primordial Adamic order, of the line of Abel, of every divine mission like those of Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus and Muhammad, who incorporates, transcends and consummates them all in the most definitive form of primeval religiosity, Islam. The End, like the beginning and like the periodic irruptions of prophecy, is really against nature; it is the calque of the beginning so often repeated in history, and is the ultimate primitivism.[514]

</quote>

Political and/or renovative orientations could be oriented toward active participation in the political center, or its destruction or transformation, or toward a conscious withdrawal from it. But even such withdrawal, which developed in both Shi’ism and Sufism, often harbored tendencies to pristine renovation, leading potentially to political action.

*** XIV

The fullest development of the political potential of such renovative tendencies took place in Islamic societies where such tendencies became connected with the resurgence of tribal revival against “corrupt” or weak regimes, rooted in the mode of Islamic expansion. Here the political impact of such movements became connected with processes attendant on the

expansion of Islam and especially with the continuous impingement on the core Islamic polities of relatively newly converted tribal elements who presented themselves as the carriers of the original ideal Islamic vision and of the pristine Islamic polity. Many tribes (e.g., some of the Mongols), after being converted to Islam, transformed their own “typical” tribal structures to accord with Islamic religious-political visions and presented themselves as the symbol of pristine Islam, with strong renovative tendencies oriented to the restoration of pristine Islam.[515]

This tendency became closely related to the famous cycle depicted by Ibn Khaldun—namely, the cycle of tribal conquest, based on tribal solidarity and religious devotion, giving rise to the conquest of cities and settlement in them, followed by the degeneration of the ruling (often the former tribal) elite and then by its subsequent regeneration out of new tribal elements from the vast—old or new—tribal reservoirs. Ibn Khaldun emphasized above all the possibility of such renovation from within the original, especially Arab, tribal reservoir, and not from reservoirs acquired as it were through the expansion of Islam. Moreover, he focused more on the dilution of internal tribal cohesion as an important factor in the decline of Muslim dynasties and paid less attention to the “dogmatic” dimensions of Islam. But the overall strength of Ibn Khaldun’s approach is that it provides an important analytical tool for understanding the dynamics of Islamic societies beyond the geographical scope of his own vision. Such new “converts”—along with the seemingly dormant tribes of the Arabian peninsula, of which the Wahhabis constituted probably the latest and most forceful illustration—became a central dynamic political force in Islamic civilization.

By virtue of the combination of this expansion with such sectarian, renovative orientations, Islam was probably the only Axial civilization within which sectarian-like movements—together with tribal leadership and groups—often led not only to the overthrow or downfall of existing regimes but also to the establishment of new political regimes oriented, at least initially, to the implementation of the original pristine, primordial Islamic utopia.

*** XV

It was indeed the Wahhabis who constituted, as John Voll has indicated, the last—and very forceful—case of a “traditional” Islamic, renovative protofundamentalist movement:

The vision of creating a society in which the Qur’an is implemented means that Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s mission would inevitably entail political consequences. It was the local rulers who forced him to leave the town where he began teaching, and it was another local ruler, Ibn Sa’ud, who provided necessary support. The political system created by the Wahhabis did not place the inspirational teacher in a position of political rule. Instead, the Wahhabi state was based on the close cooperation of a learned ruler (shaykh) and an able commander (emir). The combination reflected a long-standing perception of the proper relations between the institutions of the scholars and those of the commanders. Such a system of institutionalization reflected a reduced emphasis on charismatic leadership among Sunni fundamentalists and was also an important aspect of the great Sunni sultanates of the medieval era.

“Wahhabism” is thus a term used today for the type of reformism elucidated in ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s opposition to popular religious superstitions and innovations, his insistence on informed independent judgment rather than the rote reliance on medieval authorities, and his call for the Islamization of society and the creation of a political order that would give appropriate recognition to Islam. Wahhabism represents an important type of fundamentalism, one that continues to operate within the modern world but was not initiated as a result of conflict with the modernized West. The Wahhabis succeeded in establishing a state that, while imperfect, has nonetheless been recognized by many in the Islamic world as consonant with the fundamentalist vision to create an Islamic society. It is the most enduring experiment within the broader mission, and as such it has provided a standard against which other movements and states could be measured. [516]

In such “renovative” regimes a concept of rulership, and of its legitimation, was promulgated that presented the ruler as the upholder of the pristine, transcendental vision. Such regimes constituted probably the most widespread illustration of at least a partial transformation of the “usual”

conception of rulership in Sunni Islam. Such transformation could be found also in cases where the rulers, the sultans, were also recognized as being khalifas—or at least as having many of the attributes of khalifas—by virtue of some charismatic qualities of baraka (blessing) attached to them. This was the case among the Moroccan rulers. For instance, the Moroccan sultans Sidi Muhammed and Mowlay Suleyman based their claim to represent the pristine vision largely on baraka, derived from the fact that they could claim to be descendants of the Prophet—to be challenged by diferent sectors of the ‘ulama’ and various popular sectarian-like movements.[517] Such rulers could be recognized—in John Waterbury’s felicitous characterization—as “Commanders of the Faithful” by wide-ranging groups over whom they would not impose their sultanic rulership.[518]

The most extreme case of such transformation of the usual Sunni conception of rulership was to befound within Shi’i Islam, where a strong potential for the implementation of such visions by the ruler continually existed, even if in a subterranean fashion, in the image of the hidden imam. When combined with messianic or eschatological orientations it came to embody, in the mahdis, messianic-like renovators who appeared in Muslim societies—first in Sunni then in Shi’i ones—throughout history. Their transformed conception of rulership and of its legitimation was connected with a public sphere that differed greatly from the one analyzed above. With the possible exception of the mahdi regimes, the ‘ulama’ continued to constitute a very important element in those waqf institutions that were fully developed, although the Sufi orders were suppressed by the “puritan” renovative regimes. In the latter regimes, the public sphere was much less autonomous, and the ruler constituted the major—possibly the dominant—actor in the public sphere, at least in the regulation of the moral consensus of the community.

*** XVI

Insofar as such movements did not create, in the Ibn-Kahldunian mode, new regimes, the impact of such movements on Muslim societies indeed continually constituted their organizational foci. Such construction of autonomous public spheres gave rise to some of the distinct patterns of

pluralism characteristic of these societies. This pluralism was characterized by very strongly patrimonial features—such as the existence of segregated—regional, ethnic, and religious—sectors perhaps best illustrated by the Ottoman millet. It also resulted in a relative blurring as between the center and the periphery, as well as the prevalence—especially in these sectors—of multiple patterns of legitimation. But in contrast to more classical patrimonial regimes that developed in such non-Axial civilizations as those of Mesoameria, the ancient Near East, and (Hinduized) South Asia, the Muslim patrimonial regimes were in constant tension with the more sectarian "totalistic" tendencies and they could be undermined by the more extreme proto-fundamentalists, who could attempt, as was the case with the Wahhabis, to establish new "pristine" regimes.

*** XVII

It is only natural that these tensions and confrontations between pluralistic and totalistic tendencies became intensified in Muslim societies with the establishment within them of regimes rooted in the ideological premises of modernity, with their strong emphasis on relatively homogeneous territorial states. The rise of modern nation states, with their claim to homogeneity, has greatly undermined the autonomy of the public sphere—with the state attempting to appropriate, control, and even monopolize it. Although, as Dale Eickleman has shown,[519] a vibrant public sphere did develop in these regimes—and its very development attests to a growing democratization—this trend did not necessarily broaden the scope of autonomous political participation and of pluralism. These problems became even more acute with the rise of contemporary fundamentalist movements, which often combined the control mechanisms of the modern states with strong Jacobin tendencies, legitimized in terms of an essentialist tradition.

Contemporary Muslim societies can be seen as moving between two poles: attempts to establish territorial states with some elements of pluralism that build on their earlier historical experience; and strong antipluralistic tendencies in the form of either extreme secular oppressive—often military—regimes or extreme Jacobin fundamentalist ones. But these problems are beyond the scope of this volume.

*** XVIII

The above analysis of the characteristics and dynamics of public spheres in Islamic societies illustrates how one might account for the internal dynamics of these non-European modern civilizations at least to some extent in their own terms; how one might analyze the ways in which power and culture are interwoven in different societies and shape also the distinct dynamics of these societies; how to put them in a comparative framework that does not bestow a privileged position on the Western experience.[520]

Additionally, the analysis of public spheres in Islam provides some clues as to the applicability of Western social scientific concepts to non-Western societies. We cannot avoid Western concepts, but we can make them more flexible, so to speak, through differentiation and contextualization. The use of such concepts as public sphere, civil society, and collective identity is helpful as long as we do not assume that the way in which these components were put together in Europe constitutes an evaluative yardstick for other modernizing societies. These components can develop in many different ways, depending, among other factors, on the major symbols available, especially the relative importance of their religious, ideological, primordial, and historical aspects; the conception of the political order and its relation to other societal orders; the conception of political authority and its accountability; the conception of the subject; and the modes of center-periphery relations.

We need to avoid the pitfalls of both Western- and Eastern-centeredness. Such a fallacious position can be found, for instance, in the Nihonjinron literature, with its claims about the incomparable uniqueness of Japan. We cannot identify uniqueness without making some comparisons. The attitude of “inverted Orientalism,” sometimes to be found among the more critical Western and Japanese scholars, developed in reaction to the Nihonjinron literature and led to a denial of the validity of certain Japanese categories of thought as applied to the analysis of Japanese historical and contemporary experience. Such an approach turns out to be rather paradoxical, as it goes

against the exploration of those categories emphasized by the critics of the “Orientalist” approach.

The existence of debates on these issues attests to the intricacies of comparative research. The root of the problems lies not only in the fact that, at least until recently, most of the scholars who addressed these issues came from the West, but also in that this type of research has developed almost entirely— Ibn Khaldun notwithstanding—as part of the Western modern discourse. The adoption of various critical stances toward the earlier “Orientalist” literature— in the West, in India, in Japan, and elsewhere—has remained part of this discourse. The continuous reconstruction of this discourse by intellectuals in non-Western countries has greatly transformed it, but for the most part these interventions have not gone beyond the confines of this discourse.

[460] Eisenstadt and Schluchter 1998; this is partly based on a research proposal by S. N. Eisenstadt, W. Schluchter, and B. Wittrock, entitled “Collective Identity, Public Sphere, and Political Order: Cultural Foundations and the Formation of Contemporary Societies.”

[461] Habermas 1989.

[462] Cohen 1999; Galston 1999; Mardsen 1999; Barber 1999.

[463] Hirschman 1982; 1970.

[464] Eisenstadt 1987; 2000.

[465] As quoted in Hirschman 1982, 63; see also Eisenstadt and Schluchter 1998, 10–12.

[466] Said 1978; Hussain, Olson, and Qureshi 1984, esp. the chapter by Turner; Breckenridge and Van der Veer 1993; Dirks 1995.

[467] Asad 1993.

[468] Stauth 1993.

[469] See Vidal-Naquet 1996, esp. chapter 11, 267–76 and chapter 12, 277–318.

[470] Grunebaum 1976; Grunebaum and Hartner 1960.

[471] Springborg 1987.

[472] Eisenstadt 1973; 1995 chapter 11, 280–305; Vidal-Naquet 1996; Dirks, Eley, and Ortner 1996.

[473] Gramsci 1991.

[474] Eisenstadt 1995.

[475] Gorski 1993.

[476] Guha and Spivak 1988.

[477] Duara 1988.

[478] Chandra 1968; Matsui 1968; Morris 1968.

[479] Hodgson 1974; 1993.

[480] Foucault 1973; 1988; 1975; 1965.

[481] Gramsci 1991.

[482] Pollock 1993; Brown 1991; Tedlock 1992.

[483] Pollock 1998a; 1998b.

[484] Stauth 1993.

[485] Eisenstadt 2000; Schluchter 1989, esp. part II, 83–279.

[486] O’Neill 1986; Van Krieken 1990.

[487] Hansen 1999, 243 (note 3 to chapter 2).

[488] It is only in his reportages of the Iranian revolution that Foucault went beyond these limitations; but in these reportages he did not take up the analytical challenge of reconciling such different portrayals.

[489] Weber 1924; 1968; 1951; 1958; 1952.

[490] Eisenstadt 1995, chapter 12, 306–27.

[491] Cook 1983; Hodgson 1974; Turner 1974; Lapidus 1988; 1982; Shahid 1970; Schluchter 1987; Pipes 1981; Crone 1980.

[492] Rodinson 1971.

[493] Lewis 1973; al-Azmeh 1997, esp. part II, chapters 6–8.

[494] Eisenstadt 1992a.

[495] Lapidus 1975; 1996.

[496] Sharon 1983.

[497] Gibb 1968; Lapidus 1988; 1996; Pipes 1981; Crone 1980.

[498] Ayalon 1951; 1996.

[499] Arjomand 1999; 1988a; 1984; 1988b.

[500] Gibb 1968; Inalcik 1973.

[501] Arjomand 1988a.

[502] Arjomand 1988a; 1999.

[503] Heffner 1998.

[504] Arjomand 1999.

[505] Goodwin Raheja 1988; Rudolph and Rudolph 1987; Wink 1994.

[506] Balazs 1964; Chang 1955; Van der Sprenkel 1958; Wakeman 1998; Woodside 1998; Eisenstadt 1992b.

[507] Lewis 1973.

[508] Ibn Khaldun (d. 808/1406) 1958; Gellner 1981

[509] al-Azmeh 1997; Rosenthal 1958; Rosenthal 1968.

[510] al-Azmeh 1997; 1993.

[511] Munson 1988.

[512] Landau-Tasseron 1989; Lazarus-Yafeh 1986; Levtzion 1986; Levtzion and Voll 1987; Levtzion and Weigert 1995; Voll 1991.

[513] Sivan 1995, 16.

[514] al-Azmeh 1993, 98

[515] Lewis 1973, chapter 18, 253–66; Gellner 1981; Ibn Khaldun 1958.

[516] Voll 1991, 351.

[517] Munson 1988.

[518] Waterbury 1970.

[519] Eickelman and Piscatori 1996; Eickelman 1993; Eickelman and Anderson 1999.

[520] This follows Eisenstadt and Schluchter 1998.

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** Index

<biblio>

Abu Hanifa. See Hanafi

‘ada. See custom

ahl al-hadith, muhaddithun (traditionists, advocating exclusive authority of hadith), 3, 17–29, 34, 37, 40, 41

ahl al-ra’y (rationalists, advocating the right of jurists to reason for themselves), 26, 40, 41

‘alim. See ‘ulama’

‘amal (judicial practice), 86, 91

‘amma. See commoners

ashab al-ra’y. See ahl al-ra’y

Ash’ari, 34, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 48nn. 45,

46; 50, 51, 62n. 42

ashraf (sing. sharif) (descendants of the

Prophet), 12, 35, 128, 149, 157

awqaf. See waqf

baraka (divine blessing, grace), 45, 55,

107n. 87, 110, 111, 113, 116, 157 See also Sufi

bid’a (pl. bida’) (unwarranted innovation), 39, 49, 50, 51, 59, 60, 63n. 84

bid’a hasana (welcome, good innovation), 50

caliph. See khalifa

commoners (‘amma), 13, 23, 49–63. See also community of believers

community of believers (umma)

active in public sphere, 12, 13, 15, 49–50, 59–66, 71, 73, 74–75, 79, 81n. 23, 126, 127, 129, 134, 151, 152

autonomous groups within (see ashraf; groups of origin; guilds; madhhab; neighborhoods; Sufi)

discourse with ruling authorities (see rulers)

place in doctrine, 10, 66, 120--2, 123–25, 144, 147, 148–49, 154

role in shaping religious practices, 6, 13, 49--0, 55, 60

See also commoners; ‘ulama’; waqf
cult of saints, 55, 60, 87, 96–97, 106n.

74, 107n. 87, 110, 116

custom (‘ada, ta’amul, ta’aruf, ‘urf), 5, 13, 73, 80, 86–99, 94–97, 125–27 See also qadi

dar ‘adl (tribal arbitrator incorporated in the shari’a court and treated by the qadi as a shar’i notary — ‘adl — of the court), 90, 93, 94, 96, 106nn. 76, 81, 82; 107n. 91

dhikr (Sufi litany), 55, 113–14, 117, 129

endowments. See waqf

faqih. See fuqaha’

fatwa (legal opinion), 14, 32, 33, 43, 49, 50, 52, 53, 74, 91, 92, 126. See also mufti

fiqh (the science of the shari’a), 26, 85, 121, 147

fuqaha’ (sing. faqih) (scholars of fiqh), 10, 43, 53, 85, 86, 91–92, 109, 120. See also ‘ulama’

groups of origin, 12, 128–29

guilds, 5, 12, 69–70, 71, 80, 81n. 18,

128–29

hadith (tradition deriving from the

Prophet), 10, 15, 21, 22, 25, 26, 36, 41, 43, 50, 54, 56, 55, 66, 54–55, 120 Hanafi, Abu Hanifa, 7, 12, 14, 26, 25n.

36, 32, 37, 38, 35, 41, 47n. 27, 50,

54, 55, 62n. 42, 63n. 82, 85, 50, 52, 131, 136n. 31 See also madhhab Hanbali, Ibn Hanbal, 4, 11, 14, 22–24,

26, 28n. 4, 32, 34, 37, 38, 35, 40, 41,

42, 43, 44, 47n. 27, 51, 53, 54, 55, 58–55, 105, 155. See also madhhab

Ibn Hanbal. See Hanbali

ijma’ (consensus of community or

‘ulama’), 10, 13, 120, 147

ijtihad (exercise of independent reason

ing), 5, 50

‘ilm (religious knowledge), 31, 40 ‘ilm al-rijal (branch of knowledge concerning information about hadith transmitters), 21–22, 25–28, 25n.

25. See also ‘ulama’

imam (leader of public prayer), 35, 38,

45, 51, 55, 58, 55

kalam (theology), 15, 22–24, 28n. 5, 41 khalifa (caliph), 66–68, 114, 150, 157.

See also rulers

khanqah (pl. khawaniq) (Sufi lodge), 3,

31, 54, 56, 55, 62n. 45, 111, 116 khatib (preacher of Friday sermon), 35,

37, 53, 54, 58, 55

madhhab (pl. madhahib) (school of law), 31, 33, 54, 88, 128, 125, 151, 155

affiliation and membership, 37–38, 35, 44

and madaris, 38, 35–40, 43

arena of public sphere, 3, 11, 37–41,

43–45, 147

as solidarity group, 4, 11–12, 38, 35, 40–41, 44, 46-47n. 23, 58–55, 105
autonomy in public sphere, 10, 14, 44, 58–55, 147

internal conflicts, 4, 41–44

rulers' intervention in conflicts, 14, 41–42, 43

rulers' intervention in debates among madhahib, 14, 42, 43

social functions, 11, 38–39, 41, 47–488. 37, 58–55

See also: Hanafi; Hanbali; Maliki;

Shafi’i; ‘ulama’

madrasa (pl. madaris) (college of religious sciences), 4, 31–32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 41, 44, 45n. 6, 47n. 34, 54, 59, 74, 75, 76, 122, 128, 131, 137n. 46 autonomy of ‘ulama’ heads of madaris, 11, 33–34

role in public sphere, 3, 43

See also ‘ilm; madhhab

mahdi (a divinely guided ruler who would restore Islam to its original perfection), 14, 68, 137n. 33, 155, 158 majlis al-‘ilm (assembly of learning), 54, 59

Maliki, 32, 37, 47n. 27, 86, 90, 91, 95, 97, 105n. 56, 136n. 31. See also madhhab mazalim (rulers’ court of justice dealing in particular with petitions concerning abuse of power by officials), 34, 70. See also Ottoman law

mihna (inquisition), 3, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17–29, 28n. 4, 41, 136n. 25

mudarris (pl. mudarrisun) (teacher at a madrasa), 33–34, 37

mufti (jurisconsult who issues fatwas), 10, 11, 14, 32, 36, 41, 50, 52, 53, 59, 72, 74, 84, 85, 86, 92, 125, 126, 136-37n. 31, 147. See also fatwa; ‘ulama’

muhaddithun. See ahl al-hadith muhtasib (supervisor of moral behaviour, particularly market inspector), 35, 49, 54, 61n. 22, 70, 78, 93

mutakallimun (scholastic theologians), 3, 17–29. See also kalam

mutawalli, nazir (waqf administrator), 34, 35, 54

Mu’tazili, 15, 23, 24, 28n. 8, 25n. 20, 37, 40

nazir. See mutawalli neighborhoods, 12, 38, 58, 77, 80, 128–25

Orientalism, 141444 145, 159–66

Oriental and Ottoman despotism, 7, 15, 78–79, 119, 142, 147

stagnation of Oriental societies, 142, 14344

Ottoman law, 68–75, 80

general characteristics, 68–69

procedure, 71

qanun and shari’a, 13, 72

rise of shari’a, 13, 72

role of sultan, 69, 70

tribunals, 70–71, 81n. 22 (see also mazalim)

See also guilds; qadi; shari’a

patronage, 3, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 54, 57, 59, 62n. 40, 111, 113, 129, 152

public opinion, 10, 11, 13, 17, 21, 27, 126, 130, 147

public sphere

general:

and civil society, 9, 65, 83, 139–41

and the new cultural history, 65, 119

and official sphere, 9, 140, 141

and private sphere, 9, 140, 141

and relations between power and culture, 144–44

applicability of Western models to other civilizations, 9, 142, 143, 146, 159–66

definition, 9, 17, 119, 140, 141

development of theory of, 13, 139–41

in Muslim societies, 1–2, 4, 9–15, 50, 65–66, 70, 120, 121, 122, 124, 147

and civil society, 65–66, 72, 74, 76–77, 77–80, 83–84, 119

and official sphere, 35–36 (see also ‘ulama’)

and policy-making decisions, 15255, 154

and private sphere, 7, 9, 12, 121–22 and religion, 1–8, 49–63, 148
applicability of Western models to,

17, 83–84, 142, 146, 147, 159–60 arenas of public sphere, 37–41,

68–75, 75–77, 79–80, 84–107, 128–29, 134, 148, 151 (see also guilds; madhhab; madrasa; neighborhoods; qadi; Sufi)

autonomy of, 7--, 15, 70, 77, 147, 148, 151, 152, 153

discourse in, 3, 6–7, 15 (see also waqf)

dynamics of, 7–8, 15, 27, 151

impact of modern territorial states, 157–58

impact of renovative movements, 154–5 (see also mahdi)

informality of, 3, 4, 15, 134 in other civilizations, 139, 140, 141, 142, 144–45, 153, 159–66

qadi (judge), 19, 22, 26, 41, 52, 53, 54,

59, 74, 79, 136–77. 31

autonomy of, 5, 10, 11, 34, 70–71, 84–86, 94.97, 109, 147

bridging shari’a and social reality, 5,

11, 90–93, 94–97

general duties, 32, 3433, 70–72, 84,

93, 133

his court as an arena of public sphere, 5, 11, 35, 84–107

See also custom; Ottoman law; ‘ulama’; waqf

ribat (pl. rubut) (Sufi lodge), 31, 45, 48n. 51, 111

rulers

and norms governing the public sphere, 13, 123–24, 130

and religious sphere, 14, 49–63

and shari’a, 5, 10, 11, 13, 49–50, 5255, 60nn. 3, 7; 62n. 42, 69, 78, 79, 86, 123–25, 131, 150

decrees relating to the shari’a, 14, 126 discourse with ‘ulama’ and commu nity, 73–74, 125--7, 129–34, 137n. 33, 147

division of responsibilities with ‘ulama’, 19–20, 27, 66–67, 123–25 rulers (continued)

involvement in doctrinal discussion,

4, 13–14, 17–20, 43, 50, 126–27

involvement in resolving conflicts in the public sphere, 4, 14, 41–42, 43, 51, 80, 152

legitimation of, 7, 13, 14, 32, 35, 43, 67–68, 78–79, 84, 123, 124, 130, 150, 154, 157, 158

responsibilities towards the community, 123, 124, 125, 131,150, 152

See also khalifa; madhhab; mihna;

Ottoman law; Sufi; ‘ulama’; waqf

Shafi’i, 12, 14, 32, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41,

42, 43, 47n. 27, 51, 54, 59, 62n. 42, 63n. 82, 92. See also madhhab

shari’a, (the sacred law of Islam) (adjective: shar’i), 66, 72, 83, 122, 131, 132

an autonomous civic force, 5, 9, 10,

69, 86, 109, 120, 147, 152

and custom (see custom)

and moral, cultural, and social norms,

10, 13, 37, 121, 127, 147, 148

and social order, 10, 109, 124, 147

and Sufism, 5, 109–10, 111, 114, 116

shar’i concepts, views, 85–86, 93, 123, 124

shar’i courts, 34, 125 (see also qadi)

shar’i regulations, rules:

dynamics of change, 4–5, 73, 125–27, 137n. 41

local variations, 5, 13, 69, 73–74, 127

social forces involved in change, 74–75.126–27

violation of, 51, 124, 133–34

symbol of cultural identity, 10, 13, 147

tribal notrary incorporated in the

shar’i court (see dar ‘adl)

See also fuqaha’; mufti; Ottoman law;

qadi; rulers; ‘ulama’; waqf

sharif. See ashraf

Shi’i, Shi’ism, 21, 25, 26, 35, 41, 50, 51, 52, 112, 149, 150, 151, 155, 157, 158

Sufi, Sufi brotherboods (tariqa, pl. turuq), 5, 10, 13, 31, 44–4, 51, 52, 54, 57, 59, 73, 87, 107n. 87, 120, 122, 126, 128, 151, 155, 158 affiliation, 4, 45, 113, 114, 117 alliance with other social groupings, 110, 117

and expansion of Islam, 111, 112, 116

and jihad movements, 112, 115–16

and the public sphere, 3, 6, 12, 109–10, 116–17, 147

and radicalization of Islam, 115, 117

and ‘ulama’, 110, 111, 116

and use of vernacular languages, 6, 12, 115–116, 117

economic and political power, 112–13, 116

historical development and structure, 6, 11, 12, 109–18

relations with the ruling authorities, 12, 111–12, 116, 117

social functions, 4, 6, 45, 110, 113, 116, 117

See also baraka; dhikr; khanqah; ribat; shari’a; tekke; zawiya

sunna (the Prophet’s sayings and doings established as legally binding precedents, in addition to the Qur’an), 13, 21, 22, 24, 60, 60n. 2, 63n. 84, 88, 91, 120

revival of (ihya’ al-sunna), 14, 31, 40, 48n. 46, 50, 58, 59

Sunni, 24, 25, 28, 28n. 5, 32, 37, 41, 42, 43, 51, 59, 149, 150, 153, 155, 157, 158

ta’amul. See custom

ta’aruf. See custom

tariqa, (pl. turuq). See Sufi

tekke (Sufi lodge), 111, 112

‘ulama’ (sing. ‘alim) (scholars of religious sciences)

articulation of religious dogma, 3, 10, 17–29

‘ulama’ (continued)

association with rulers, 36, 39, 40, 42, 45–446. 7, 57, 67, 74, 84

autonomy, independece from ruling authorities, 5, 10, 11, 18–20, 36, 73–74, 79–80, 85, 124, 151

conflict with ruling authorities, 3,

17–29, 66–67, 74, 123, 157

cooperation with ruling authorities,

14, 27, 43, 49–50, 51–52, 57–58,

59, 131, 132

custodians of social norms, 10, 59,

123, 125, 147, 150

discourse with ruling authorities, 125–27, 131

functions, 11, 32–33, 35, 55, 84, 123,

124, 132, 151

informal representatives of the community of believers, 11, 32, 76, 84, 93, 123, 124

in official positions, 11, 32, 33–37, 52, 54, 59, 72, 83–84

internal discourse among, 18–29, 125--7

interpreters, transmitters of shari’a, 37, 59, 85, 109, 120, 123, 124, 130–31, 147, 150, 158

leaders of autonomous organizations.

(see madhhab; Sufi)

moral authority, 7–8, 10, 32, 84, 85,

109, 123, 147, 153

part of the official sphere? 32–37, 74–75, 83–84

social status and organization, 20–21, 44, 45n. 3, 72, 84, 123, 136n. 29, 150, 151

spiritual status, 19–20

strife among. (see madhhab, mihna)

See also fuqaha’; ‘ilm; ‘ilm al-rijal; mad-

hhab; madrasa; mufti; qadi; rulers;

shari’a; Sufi; waqf

umma. See community of believers

‘urf. See custom

Wahhabi, 155, 156–57, 158

waqf (pl. awqaf) (Islamic endowment), 4, 10

administration of large public endowments, 7, 15, 35, 76, 129, 131–33

and groups in the community, 12, 77, 128–29, 135

and urban public space, 12, 128 autonomy of, 5, 6, 77, 80, 129, 130, 131

cash endowments, 13, 73, 126–27

endowments by rulers and retinue, 7, 14, 32, 34, 53, 54, 55, 58, 75–77, 121, 130, 131, 132, 135

focus of discourse or tacit bargaining in public sphere, 6–7, 12, 15, 125–27, 129–34, 135,147

ideology, 7, 12, 121–22, 124, 130, 134–35

involvement of community, 7, 76, 77, 131–32, 133–34, 135

involvement of qadis, 7, 15, 76, 77, 132, 133

involvement of ruling authorities, 7, 45n. 6, 77, 124, 129–34, 135

involvement of ‘ulama’, 7, 76, 77, 123, 124, 129–34, 135, 151, 158

See also mutawalli; shari’a; ‘ulama’ wa’z, wa’iz (pl. wu’az) (deliverer of wa’z, admonition or sermon), 34, 54, 57, 59, 63n. 67, 68

zawiya (Sufi lodge), 87, 111, 128, 129

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** [Front Matter]

*** [Synopsis]

Nationalism is one of the major social and political sources of modern times, and a subject of intense intellectual debate. The most important and influential theory of nationalism is that of Ernest Gellner (1925–1995). This volume assesses every aspect of that theory, bringing together an exceptional set of scholars to explain, criticise and move beyond Gellner’s work. In doing so the book establishes the state-of-play within the theory of nationalism, and complements Gellner’s account by bringing political

variables into consideration. The book is unique in offering sustained attention to a single powerful theory, and will be of wide interest to students and scholars of political and social theory, history, sociology and anthropology.

John A. Hall is Professor of Sociology at McGill University, and has also taught at Southampton and Harvard Universities and the London School of Economics. His recent books include Coercion and Consent (1994), International Orders (1996), Is America Breaking Apart? (with Charles Lindholm, 1998) and The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner (co-edited with I C. Jarvie, 1996).

*** [Title Page]

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*** Contents

List of contributors

Introduction

JOHN A. HALL

Part I The making of the theory

1 Thoughts about change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism 23

ROMAN SZPORLUK

2 Ernest Gellner’s diagnoses of nationalism: a critical overview, or, what is living and what is dead in Ernest Gellner’s philosophy of nationalism? 40

BRENDAN O’LEARY

Part II The classical criticisms

3 Real and constructed: the nature of the nation 91

MIROSLAV HROCH

4 The curse of rurality: limits of modernisation theory 107

TOM NAIRN

5 Nationalism and language: a post-Soviet perspective 135

DAVID LAITIN

6 Ernest Gellner’s theory of nationalism: some definitional and methodological issues 158

NICOS MOUZELIS

vi Contents

Part III Bringing politics back in

7 Nationalisms that bark and nationalisms that bite: Ernest Gellner and the substantiation of nations

MARK BEISSINGER

8 Nationalism and modernity CHARLES TAYLOR

9 Modern multinational democracies: transcending a Gellnerian oxymoron ALFRED STEPAN

Part IV Wider implications

10 Nationalism and civil society in central Europe: from Ruritania to the Carpathian Euroregion CHRIS HANN

11 From here to modernity: Ernest Gellner on nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism

DALE F. EICKELMAN

12 Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism ROGERS BRUBAKER

Bibliography of Ernest Gellner’s writings on nationalism Index

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** Introduction

John A. Hall

The most striking way in which Ernest Gellner stood apart from the rest of his generation of postwar social scientists was in his concentration on nationalism. The neglect of nationalism within the academy after 1945 is easily explained: as is often the case, geopolitical events set the intellectual agenda. Nationalism was blamed for the onset of war in 1939; as statesmen paid no attention to national self-determination when dividing Germany and Korea, so scholars in their turn ignored nationalism. If there was some interest, not least in the case of Gellner himself, in decolonisation and in nation-building in the new states that resulted, it remains the case that generalised intellectual attention turned to nationalism only in the 1980s — interestingly and puzzlingly slightly before the break-up of the last Eurasian empire made nationalism a central topic of public concern. In these circumstances, Gellner's theory of nationalism, first adumbrated two decades earlier, suddenly received enormous attention, with Nations and Nationalism becoming an influential, much translated bestseller.

The circumstances of Gellner's life which made it utterly impossible for him ever to have neglected nationalism are well worth bearing in mind as background to the studies assembled in here. Both his parents were lower middle class Bohemians of Jewish background who changed their allegiance, from the German to the Czech community, to accommodate themselves to the way in which sheer demographic weight created a new form of society in Prague at the end of the nineteenth century.[1] Gellner himself grew up in a bilingual household within a genuinely multinational city. He was necessarily aware not just of Zionism, Marxism and nationalism but also of different communities, often in violent conflict with each other. After his class had sung together in his Czech primary school, for example, he volunteered to sing the same song with different words — German words, to the shocked silence of his classmates. This was the sort of event that let would-be insiders know that they would never really be accepted, especially if they came from a Jewish background. Loyalty to Masaryk's republic kept the family in Prague very late, so that Gellner witnessed the start of the German occupation which was to lead to the death of some of his relations. But the escape of his immediate family allowed attendance at St Albans County

School for Boys and a year at Balliol College before active service at the end of the war as a member of the Czech Brigade. Gellner marched in the victory parade in Prague in 1945, but was unable to re-settle in the city he so loved. For one thing, he was appalled at the manner of the expulsion of the Sudeten Germans at this time, even though he found it entirely comprehensible. For another, he could see — or so he claimed in later years — that Czechoslovakia was in for a very bad time: there was limited active opposition to communism because the Czechs had no doubt that Germany would revive and no trust that the West would protect them should that revival react to the political and ethnic cleansing in which they were then engaged.

Thinking through these experiences necessitated theorising nationalism. Most obviously, the marvellous extended parable of ‘Megalomania’ and ‘Ruritania’ that stands at the heart of Nations and Nationalism demonstrates identities to be constructed and chosen, thereby making his central claim that it is nationalism that explains the nation — and not, as is so often believed, the nation which accounts for nationalism. [2] But it is a less obvious element of Gellner’s background that makes his theory permanently thought-provoking. Gellner’s thought contained powerful tensions. The firm stress on the need for protection given by the political roof of nationalism goes hand-in-hand with a no-holds-barred defence of universal rationality against every form of relativism; equally, the insistence that national homogeneity enables political and economic development did not rule out deep loathing for nationalist politics and ideology.

These tensions came out especially clearly after he returned to Prague in 1991 to open a Centre for the Study of Nationalism for the newly founded Central European University. At a local level, Gellner disliked the claustrophilia of Vaclav Klaus’s Czech Republic despite the fact that it was producing, as his theory had predicted, something of an economic miracle. More generally, he was deeply worried by the speed and totality of the Soviet collapse, fearing that ethnic cleansings might lead to dreadful political instability throughout the region. [3] This was something of a change of heart: he had returned from initial close contacts with Soviet ethnographers delighted that his concern with ethnic stratification seemed to cast so much light on problems sure to plague the Soviet Union. With characteristically witty self-deprecation, he made the best and most cutting joke against

himself — that he had become a Russian imperialist. [4] He became equally enthusiastic about the virtues of Austro-Hungary, not least when assessing the contribution of Malinowski — and particularly so when setting him against the narrow communalism he found in Wittgenstein. [5] At the end of his life there was accordingly considerable tension between the formal descriptive theory of Nations and Nationalism which predicts the demise of entities such as Austro-Hungary and the Soviet Union and his prescriptive hopes for some way in which cultural pluralism could be achieved within a larger political unit.

The purpose of this volume is to analyse Gellner's theory of nationalism as a whole. In order to do this properly, the book is structured around four key themes. It is vital, to begin with, to fully comprehend the making of the theory, not least since emphases within it — for example, the late emergence of a prescriptive tone — changed over the three decades over which it was articulated. Secondly, considerable attention is given to the classical criticisms brought against the theory. At a substantive level, Gellner's theory was accused of being too modernist and too optimistic; at a more formal philosophical level, it was attacked again and again for having too instrumental a view of human motivation and for relying excessively on functionalist argumentation. These charges are discussed at length here, giving one justification for the title — that is, providing the most up to date state-of-play of discussions of Gellner's theory of nationalism. But the title is designed to suggest a second meaning. Gellner's theory explains nationalism by means of socio-economic categories. The principal positive claim of the third section of this volume is that nationalism cannot be understood without systematically bringing politics back in; differently put, this section is representative of modern studies of nationalism in seeking to challenge Gellner's account by stressing the impact of the actions of states. The fourth thematic section considers some implications of Gellner's theory: if two essays — one on civil society, the other on Islam — follow Gellner's own agenda, the final essay by Rogers Brubaker presents nothing less than an overview of the future of nationalist studies in general.

These themes can best be brought out by devoting the rest of this introduction to discussion of the individual chapters — albeit this process necessarily cannot take the place of the rich detail in which the reader will soon be immersed. But before turning to this task, two general points

deserve emphasis. First, it is curiously rare in social science to subject any theory to sustained analysis, let alone to definitive refutation. Intellectual interest seems driven by fashion, with one view being replaced by another because it lends excitement rather than truth. This is dreadful, not least since it means that untested theories come back again and again. The studies assembled here aim at better cognitive practice, not least since Gellner's theory needs attention on the grounds of complexity as well as merit. Secondly, it should be emphasised that all Gellner's work to do with nationalism, listed in the bibliography at the end of this volume, is considered here. This means that attention is given to his initial statement in the mid-1960s and to the complete account of Nations and Nationalism, to later historically-sensitive amendments and to the prescriptive writings already mentioned, to his important 1996 'Reply to Critics' and to Nationalism, his last book on the subject published posthumously in 1997. One benefit of considering the full panoply of Gellner's work on nationalism is that it is possible to draw attention to replies that Gellner developed to standard criticisms of his position.

The charm of Roman Szporluk's account of the way in which Thought and Change suggested an intellectual agenda should not distract from the novelty of its analytical contribution. Szporluk shares with Gellner an East Central European background, and this makes him especially sensitive to the way in which Gellner's assessment of nationalism was merely a part of a larger attempt to take stock of the ideological options provided by the modern world, and in particular of Marxism and liberalism. The most important claim of Szporluk's own important Communism and Nationalism — that is, its interpretation of Marxism as a nationalist strategy of late development — is clearly inspired by Gellner's view of Marxism as a protestant ethic of the twentieth century.[6] Still, there remains a difference between the two accounts. Gellner's review essay of Szporluk's book took issue with the praise given to List's view that nations are eternal: this ontology was rejected on the grounds that nations are created, with nationalism itself being seen as the result of ethnic conflict — for all that the 'nation', once formed, then often eagerly embraces developmentalist strategies.[7] This is not a matter on which Gellner changed his mind, noting in a very late statement (in a passage quoted at length below) that 'nationalism is not to be explained by the use it has in legitimising modernisation — a view with which I am quite mistakenly credited.[8] Despite the power of Gellner's reply, Szporluk is surely right to

insist that Gellner showed too little interest in ‘old-state’ nationalism. This is an extremely important point. Gellner defined nationalism in terms of the ‘awakened’ seeking their own state. But large and established states, not least Revolutionary France and Wilhelmine and Nazi Germany, can and have embraced nationalism in ways that have vitally affected the historical record. Szporluk further notes, perhaps as the result of a background whose contours are powerfully evoked by Chris Hann in his contribution to this volume, that peoples are fought for by different states. This leads him to hint at another definitional point of which we will hear more: states are not always quite so unitary and homogeneous as Gellner imagined. Szporluk certainly makes much of this point in his most recent work on the Ukraine, and this in turn derives in part from stressing the way in which differential outcomes may come about as the result of nationalist ideas — which Gellner famously scorned.[9]

Gellner responded generously and warmly to an earlier version of Brendan O’Leary’s essay, not surprisingly since it was then the most complete critical account of his work on nationalism. This version of O’Leary’s essay is very much expanded, and takes into account all of Gellner’s late writings on nationalism; O’Leary now goes beyond his discussion of Thought and Change and Nations and Nationalism to critical assessment of the historical stages of nationalism proposed as well as to analysis of Gellner’s late prescriptive argument. The essay now stands as the most accurate analytic reconstruction of Gellner’s theory. O’Leary adds to this a defence of many of the theory’s key points, most notably its modernist emphasis and its claim that nationalism would lose its virulence once the transition to modernity had been achieved. He is particularly interesting on the typology of nationalism, noting both that it is not as inclusive as Gellner had imagined and that it does not structure his later historically sensitive amendments. O’Leary is of course not without critical points of his own to make. Those concerning the philosophy of social science and politics concern us below, for they are at the heart of later essays; but one point should be mentioned here. O’Leary insists that nationalism has a perfectly coherent ideology, based on the principle of self-determination, and that it is inherently modern and progressive — a view that means a great deal to O’Leary, one suspects, given that his works suggest adherence to a particular and highly liberal version of Irish nationalism. Gellner’s response at this point was blunt: ‘We should not make nationalists a present of their ontology. It is not universally applicable, and to accept a principle which

implies the contrary, means that we start from false premises.[10] One should not miss O’Leary’s footnotes for his reply to Gellner at this point. And his essay anyway deserves the closest reading: it is packed with innovative views, not least in its appreciation of the role of geopolitical conjunctures in the history of nationalism.

The second section of the book turns to detailed consideration of the classical accusations levelled at Gellner’s theory. The first substantive issue to be considered is the charge that nations are far older than Gellner’s modernist account allowed. A thesis of primordialism was suggested by John Armstrong in his Nations before Nationalism, but Gellner gave sustained attention to two different authors, Anthony Smith and Miroslav Hroch, who offered more subtle accounts seeking some mix of modernism and primordialism. He did so, it should be noted, because he was genuinely troubled by the issue, noting uneasily that Shakespeare’s plays are full of nationalist rhetoric. Still, he sought to maintain his modernist view, albeit he took care to open the matter to empirical debate. Thus Nationalism doubts Anthony Smith’s view that successful nation-states must have an ethnic core at their heart, but suggests empirical research to establish how many states have historic ‘navels’ and how many invent them — as well as to consider those which seem to manage without them altogether.[11] He gave still more attention to the work of Miroslav Hroch, often joking that the publication of his Social preconditions of national revival in Europe made it difficult for him to open his mouth for fear of making some mistake. He most certainly took very seriously Hroch’s insistence that Balkan nationalism did not fit his scheme since it had nothing to do with industrialism: he varied his reply to this point, becoming most consistent, in the eyes of both O’Leary and Mouzelis, when arguing that industrialism cast a long shadow to which peripheral elites reacted. Still, he eventually devoted a critical essay of great power to Hroch’s work, accusing him of reifying both class and nation.[12] It is to that essay that Hroch replies here.

Hroch carefully and interestingly describes the process of his intellectual formation so as to evade certain of Gellner’s objections. He insists that his use of the nationalist term ‘revival’ did not entail acceptance of any ontological view of the permanence of nations. Equally, he explains that the class terms in which his argument had been expressed did not indicate

allegiance to the materialist conception of history: if pure economic classes mattered on occasion, so too did all sorts of social groups whose existence is best understood in Weberian terms. It is good to have these matters cleared up, and there is justice in Hroch's claim that this increases the conceptual overlap between their two accounts — both of which, after all, draw on socio-economic rather than political categories for the explanations they offer. Still, two sets of differences remain. First, there is disagreement as to the material on which nationalist processes work. Hroch stands closer to Anthony Smith in insisting that nationalism would be ineffective were its appeal not directed at a pre-existent community; this contrasts with Gellner's more constructivist position. Secondly, Hroch's celebrated phase model makes an important distinction between national identity and nationalism, and he insists that some movements sought to affirm their identity without seeking their own state. This again puts Gellner's definition of nationalism under scrutiny.

A second substantive charge often made is that Gellner was too optimistic in imagining that nationalism would lose its bite once modernisation had been completed. This claim is of course extremely important to his general position, for it allows him to restore a measure of universalism by arguing that the excesses of nationalism will be temporary. One occasion on which he devoted his full attention to the impact of nationalism within the industrial era was when reviewing Tom Nairn's The Break-Up of Britain.[13] He did not find himself especially troubled by the arguments of that book, not surprisingly given that it made extensive use of his own categories. Nor did he find movements of rich regions seeking some autonomy from the fiscal extractions of central states — for that is how he and Nairn then saw the matter — especially troubling for his general position.[14] But Nairn here makes a rather different case — one moreover which does go absolutely to the heart of Gellner's thought. When Gellner sought to explain the viciousness to which nationalism can be prone, he tended to make much of John Plamenatz's contention that nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe was bound to be nasty, given the absence of a high culture and the presence of complex ethnic intermingling — a corollary of Gellner's view here being that the undoubted horror associated with German nationalism was seen as essentially contingent.[15] Nairn's interpretation is very different. Modernisation is brutal, as Gellner knew, but it need not be passive: rather, traumatic experiences which take away the promise of affluence lead those placed in pain to codify anti-modern memories. According to this view of interrupted modernisation, ethnic nationalism is the

result of a peasantry managing to write its way into history. If this has happened in Central and Eastern Europe, most notably in contemporary Serbia, Nairn insists that it can happen anywhere: he has in mind here not just the Khmer Rouge with whom he begins but quite as much the cases of France and Germany — which is, of course, to agree with Szporluk that the form of nationalism within ‘core’ countries matters a very great deal. In making this argument, Nairn interestingly distinguishes between chauvinism and nationalism. The words themselves do not matter, but the reality does. For all that nationalism can be reactionary and vicious, it can equally be progressive; this was the case with Gellner’s Czechs seeking to escape the constraints of Vienna and the Baltic peoples seeking to leave a moribund Soviet Union — and, Nairn insists, of the Scots wanting autonomy from an overcentralised and decrepit imperial state.[16]

These two substantive criticisms effectively concern the beginning and end points of the record of nationalism with which Gellner was concerned. But most attention by his critics has always been given to the area in between, namely to the putative link between industrialism and nationalism. It should be said immediately that rather different issues are here deeply, even licentiously entangled. An immediate problem is that of functionalist logic, that is, of whether the needs of industrial society cause nationalism. Should the answer to that question prove to be negative, the claim that national homogeneity enables, that is, is functional for, economic (and political) development may still convince — which is to stress that multinational arrangements are rare and difficult. But a further distinction needs to be drawn here, between societies that have built their nations before industrialisation and those that face modernisation after nation-building has begun. It may be the case that the advantages given by the relative social homogeneity of the former should not convert to policy prescriptions for the latter designed to extirpate all pluralism. Asymmetry in development — ethnic and linguistic homogeneity achieved over time in the one case, nationbuilding through a recognition of cultural diversity in the latter — may have much to recommend it.

The chapters by Laitin and Mouzelis form something of a pair, arriving at similar conclusions even though one is a negative and the other a positive critique. David Laitin is one of the most distinguished practitioners of rational choice theory, an approach he clearly finds attractive on account of its

rigour. This makes Laitin's charge against Gellner — that he attempts to be too rigorous — all the more striking. In fact two elements are involved here. First, Laitin accuses him — as have many others, notably Charles Taylor and Brendan O'Leary in this volume, as well as Michael Mann and Perry Anderson on previous occasions [17] — of adopting a functionalist logic of explanation. It is not at all hard to see what is meant here. Gellner constantly marshalled the categories of his general philosophy of history when discussing nationalism, and it very often seemed as if he did mean to say that industrial society's need for social and linguistic homogeneity was the cause of nationalism. But Laitin moves beyond this to say that Gellner relies heavily on the most instrumental view of human motivation imaginable. [18] Laitin believes that one can do much better by drawing in other variables, in this case adding to material self-interest the extent to which one's own group forces nationalist activity upon one through varied social pressures and the extent to which the larger society might be prepared to welcome moves to accommodation. The second part of his chapter makes marvellous use of these variables, themselves identified through the construction of ingenious measures, to identify patterns of behaviour in Estonia, Latvia, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine which would not be revealed by Gellner's approach.[19] In all this, it should be firmly noted, Laitin clearly envisages a range of relations wider than Gellner's stark choice between nationalist secession or assimilation — a viewpoint for which he argued extensively in an earlier pathbreaking book on language repertoires and state construction.[20]

Nicos Mouzelis has become particularly well known in recent years for a series of books dealing with the logic of social theory, and he here applies his skills to a defence of Gellner's position against the first of Laitin's charges. [21] There is indeed no doubt that it makes no sense to take consequences as causes — that is, in this case, to take the need of a social formation as the cause of its very creation. One way out of this dilemma is suggested by O'Leary. He notes that some nationalist leaders in effect agree with Gellner's view of the needs of a new form of society, and therefore actively try to create it. If this brings agency back into the historical record, equally important is the fact that the seeming necessity of the equation between social homogeneity and the modern world is subtly undermined. Differently put, that equation is an ideology, and an ideology which may not be completely true: for all that modern social organisation may be easier given social similarity, policies to engineer social homogenisation forcibly may, as noted, have grave disadvantages. That is the point at the heart of Laitin's

interest in the extent to which a larger society will welcome those who seek to enter its bounds, the particular point being that Estonians can create loyalty and diminish dissent if they welcome Russians who learn Estonian. Alfred Stepan also reflects on this case, underscoring the potential in the situation by saying that the Russian population can be politically integrated rather easily even though it will retain a measure of cultural distinctiveness.

Mouzelis accepts O'Leary's criticism, but then uses these words of Gellner to mount a defence of a particular type of functionalism:

Functionalism is a term people sometimes apply to their own position and it is not clear why it should be a badge of shame. What I think the critics mean is that [my] theory is teleological, that it explains a phenomenon in terms of the needs it satisfied, and this is not acceptable in good social science: a need may be demonstrated but it does not bring forth its own satisfaction ...

I accept entirely this repudiation of teleological explanation: I have many needs which, whatever their urgency or intensity, nature has not deemed fit to satisfy. Bitter experience, quite apart from the canons of scientific propriety, has taught me this unpalatable truth. Needs engender no realities. But my theory does not sin against this. It is straightforwardly causal. Political and economic forces, the aspirations of governments for greater power and of individuals for greater wealth, have in certain circumstances produced a world in which the division of labour is very advanced, the occupational structure highly unstable, and most work is semantic and communicative rather than physical. This situation in turn leads to the adoption of a standard and codified, literacy-linked ('High') idiom, requires business of all kinds to be conducted in its terms, and reduces persons who are not masters of that idiom (or not acceptable to its practitioners) to the status of humiliated second-class members, a condition from which one plausible and much-frequented escape route led through nationalist politics. [22]

This is an important passage, making it crystal clear that Gellner's principal thesis is that nationalism results from the actions of a social group placed at

a disadvantage by newly unified cultural space — the causal origins of which lie with varied and unspecified ‘political and economic forces’. Mouzelis follows Michael Mann in arguing that the new social context was initially as much the result of military as of economic factors. [23] Gellner came to accept this, admitting that a ‘state committed by its very manner of operation to cultural Gleichschaltung is not merely an effect of a new socio-economic system, but also an important independent cause’. [24] Mouzelis then defends functionalism shorn of teleology as a useful general orienting approach to social life. But it is noticeable that this attempt to save Gellner in fact ends up largely agreeing with Gellner’s critics. Both Laitin and Mouzelis insist that Gellner’s very abstract general model needs to be filled up with historical detail. Mouzelis seems to think that in general we are bound to have abstract theories which can then suggest detailed historical accounts, with Gellner certainly believing this to be true for nationalism. In contrast, Laitin is in the company of a group of contemporary scholars who feel that historical details are not just one damn thing after another: as we shall see, this school rather seeks to theorise politics as a comprehensible middle ground standing between abstract generality and random particularity.

The possibility of political explanation is also raised by Laitin’s second charge, namely that Gellner’s theory suffers from an excessively instrumental view of human nature. Gellner firmly rejected this charge:

I am deeply sensitive to the spell of nationalism. I can play about thirty Bohemian folk songs (or songs presented as such in my youth) on my mouth organ. My oldest friend, whom I have known since the age of three or four and who is Czech and a patriot, cannot bear to hear me play them because he says I do it in such a schmaltzy way, ‘crying into the mouth organ’. I do not think I could have written the book on nationalism which I did write, were I not capable of crying, with the help of a little alcohol, over folksongs, which happen to be my favourite form of music. I attend folklore performances from choice, but go to Covent Garden or the Narodni Divadlo from social obligation or snobbery. [25]

More than the merely personal is involved here. Gellner emphasised — in a passage replying to Perry Anderson, who had made Laitin’s point with great

force[26] — that humiliation rather than material self-interest provides the heart of his theory:

Modern life is contact with bureaucrats: shop assistants, railway clerks, etc., etc.

It is this which pushes people into nationalism, into the need for the congruence between their own ‘culture’ (the idiom in which they can express themselves and understand others) and that of the extensive and interconnected bureaucracies which constitute their social environment. Noncongruence is not merely an inconvenience or a disadvantage: it means perpetual humiliation. Only if such a congruence does obtain, can one feel ‘at ease in one’s skin’. Only then is one’s personal style of being accepted and endorsed by the environment, only then is one allowed to ‘be oneself’, without impediment. Nationalism is not explained by the use it has in legitimising modernisation — a view with which I am quite mistakenly credited — but by the fact that individuals find themselves in very stressful situations, unless the nationalist requirement of congruence between a man’s culture and that of his environment is satisfied. Hence that deep passion which, according to Perry Anderson, is absent both from my theory and my bosom. As it happens, it is very much present in both of them. The passion is not a means to some end, it is a reaction to an intolerable situation, to a constant jarring in the activity which is by far the most important thing in life — contact and communication with fellow human beings.[27]

This shows again that the core of his theory lies in a group seeking the security of its own political roof. O’Leary accepts this formulation as an improvement on Gellner’s earlier statements. Though this may be so, it is still noticeable that humiliation is seen socio-economically, that is, as the result of ethnic and/or linguistic difference. But nationalism can arise without linguistic or ethnic difference, whilst relative peace can sometimes be observed where cultural and linguistic diversity is allowed within a single state. This brings us to the third part of the book.

One of Gellner’s most brilliant points was that nationalism was at once inevitable and relatively weak, that is, that only a very few calls by nationalists for their own states have been successful.[28] This is akin to the point made against — but not by — Durkheim, namely that not all divorced Protestant males who are unemployed commit suicide.[29] If one set of factors does not explain all variance, it may make sense to bring in further variables. O’Leary suggests in this spirit that the size of a ‘nation’ might help us predict the chances for success of a nationalist claim. He also argues that political oppression might go a long way to explaining the incidence of nationalism — that is, differently put, that a sense of humiliation might result from acts of political arbitrariness. Gellner would have none of this:

<quote>

Oppression is not some kind of independent and additional factor: cultural differentiation, inoffensive under the old intimate social order, is automatically experienced as oppression in the age of anonymity, mobility, and pervasive bureaucratisation with a standardised idiom. [30]

</quote>

There is some truth here, just as there is to an alternative defence he sometimes offered — namely, that authoritarianism is almost a constant, and so no explanation of nationalism. But oppression can not be dismissed so easily. For one thing, there is a marked difference between old regimes which do not much interfere with their societies, and modern ones which do so with real bite.[31] For another thing, his insistence that ‘repression itself is a corollary of a nationalism-engendering situation’ does not carry conviction: a whole host of ideological and institutional factors stand behind the actions of the modern state.[32]

The three chapters that follow offer a state-centric challenge to Gellner’s theory of nationalism. Mark Beissinger begins his chapter with an analysis of the remarkable way in which Gellner’s theory stresses both necessity and contingency, and thereafter seeks middle ground through theorising politics. Beissinger notes that nationalists are very much more concerned with state power than economic opportunity, and he in effect suggests that we take them at their word. He argues that completely repressive states can bring

nationalist agitation to a halt, whilst liberal regimes stressing compromise and accommodation may create a soft nationalism concerned to have national identity within established borders. But his central point is reminiscent of Tocqueville: nationalism is likely to be strongest when political openness is followed by a sudden re-imposition of arbitary rule. Support for independence in Georgia blossomed literally over night after the Soviet attempt at repression — with this, together with a similar intervention in the Baltics, having powerful demonstration effects elsewhere. The analytic point is best expressed in terms of the categories made famous by Hirschman: exit is attractive when voice is denied, with some measure of loyalty being possible as the result of political inclusion. [33] Differently put, nationalism is a dialectical affair, with movements amongst Ruritanians very often resulting from the actions of those in the Megalomanian metropolis. One prime example of the independence of oppression as a explanatory factor can be found in Scotland: nearly two decades of rule by a party not supported locally, and one determined to destroy local government, stand behind the current resurgence of Scottish nationalism. A second example may well yet be provided by Belarus: nationalism is there becoming political and liberal, the opponent of Stalinist legacies — with the language itself something that nationalist leaders will force themselves to learn later, should their struggle prove to be successful.[34] All this is reminiscent of Austro-Hungary: the Dual Monarchy might have survived if a more liberal option had been taken by the regime, with the failure to do so leading political sub-units to become homogeneous linguistic and ‘ethnic’ blocs.

Charles Taylor is one of a very small handful of modern thinkers possessed of something like Gellner’s extraordinary intellectual range. Both shared a background in Oxford philosophy, and both consider the relations of epistemology to politics. It is perhaps this that leads to a certain similarity of argumentative style. Taylor broadly accepts Gellner’s functionalist argument about industrialisation, seeking to complement it with an appreciation of the functional requirements of democracy. Further, Taylor accepts that nationalism is pre-eminently modern. Although he has interesting points to make about the very varied nature of mass support for nationalism, the core of his case then privileges the reactive responses on the part of peripheral elites. It is at this point that Taylor subtly parts company with Gellner: nationalism is occasioned by discrimination on the part of the powerful. One example of this is the Quebecois nationalism with which he has always lived, seen here as the result of the relative instransigence of ‘the rest of Canada’.

But this is part of a much more general demand for dignity, one manifestation of which is that of Islamic fundamentalism. This very different philosophy of history leads to Taylor's now famous call for a 'politics of recognition', the purpose of which is to soften various ethnic and cultural demands by means of political inclusion. [35]

Alfred Stepan begins his discussion of multinational arrangements by placing Gellner within the history of liberalism more generally. A fundamental drift within liberalism asserts that it is necessary to solve the national question before liberal rule can be possible. Stepan is far too good an historical sociologist to disagree with this, as the recent book he has co-authored with Juan Linz makes exceedingly clear.[36] All the same, he wishes to consider the alternative possibility — that liberal arrangements may sufficiently soften demands for cultural diversity that they do not lead to full-scale secession. Such arrangements are especially vital, in his view, because most secessions create new problems of minorities — not least because the late twentieth century lends minorities staying power, as the result of diasporas sending money home and of external interest fanned by the international media. There is absolutely no doubt in Stepan's mind that human beings are capable of holding multiple identities, and that doing so encourages rather than undermines the consolidation of democracies. In this matter, he draws on striking evidence from Spain and the Baltics. But his tone is still cautious. A very great deal will depend upon the details of design.[37] If federalism leads to regional overrepresentation, it can lead to stalemate and blackmail. And if institutions matter, so too does our political theory. Stepan here follows Taylor and Kymlicka in arguing that greater attention be given by liberalism to communal rather than individual rights — an area in which there is sure to be intense debate in coming years. Behind these pleas, it is easy to see the nature of Stepan's fundamental hope. He certainly favours a measure of homogeneity, for he is well aware that loyalty is necessary for democracy: but that sharing can be at, so to speak, a high level, thereby allowing for greater cultural diversity within it. The civic nationalism of France and the United States had the capacity to be highly exacting, being as wedded to the nation-state as a moral project as has been ethnic nationalism. [38] Stepan is best seen as arguing for more civil arrangements, for a less romanticised, more domesticated view of the state as a home for nations.

It may be useful to assess this state-centred position so as then to compare it with Gellner's general viewpoint. Nobody doubts that uniformity makes the operation of a modern industrial and democratic society much easier. It is a fact, albeit a sad one, that the developmental tasks of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland are much eased thanks to the ethnic cleansings of Hitler and Stalin. None the less, the incidence of nationalism — the move from national identity to demands for secession, or, in a different formulation, the ability of some national markers to eventually create states — is definitely influenced by state activity. A corollary of this descriptive point is prescriptive practice, namely, a politics of recognising difference. We have some reason to believe that such politics can work. Had postcommunist Ukraine forcibly sought to build a unitary and homogenised nation-state it would surely have faced debilitating secessionist challenge: its more civil route makes it possible for us to at least hope that it will continue to survive. Equally, multilingual India seems to work, probably thanks to a three plus or minus one language regime — that is, one needs Hindi and English and a provincial language, with the minus applying to Hindi provinces and the plus to minorities within provinces. More generally, it should firmly be noted that the attempt to build unitary, homogenised nation-states in Africa has been a disaster — less a help to economic development than the principal ideological element explaining a period of catastrophe. [39]

Gellner's own late prescriptive arguments are rather different. His hope that different cultures could be allowed to flourish did not diminish his insistence that power remain politically centralised. As the provision of opera houses rather than the acceptance of political autonomy, of folk-dancing rather than of democracy, failed in both Austro-Hungary and the Soviet Union it is worth speculating as to why Gellner would not go any further. Gellner was a remorseless critic of the replacement of analysis by hope, and there remains enough to be said for his pessimism to make the state-centred view a challenge rather than a complete alternative. His general view that nationalism may lose its bite after the transition to modernity after all gains support from the discovery that accommodation by means of federal and consociational deals depends upon certain background conditions, lending it better chances in Holland than in South Africa.[40] Linguistic difference does raise difficulty: Quebec may yet secede from a relatively liberal regime, whilst the continued unity of India is not guaranteed. His refusal to endorse any view that placed too much hope on the best being realised can be seen

in those final words of Nationalism on the principle of selfdetermination:

<quote>

Various procedures involved in applying [the idea of self-determination] cut across each other: is it demography, history, or geography which is to prevail? The application of the demographic principle (let the majority of the population be heard and be decisive) depends on how the electoral units are drawn, and this demarcation can easily be manipulated to render diverse answers. There is the not insignificant consideration of safety and security: our nation has been attacked before and probably will be attacked again, so can we tolerate a boundary which enables the enemy to cut the country in half with ease, or to shell the capital with small guns? There is the piquant principle invoked in Kosovo — can a nation be expected to separate itself from a piece of land which witnessed its greatest national disaster, even if that land is now largely inhabited by aliens? ... There is also the principle that even a cultural/national group which is not a majority anywhere, may nevertheless, or all the more, require to have a safe haven, shelter, base, somewhere ... In brief, the various criteria are almost always in conflict.[41]

</quote>

This stands as a prescient warning to philosophers now — of course, quite properly — seeking to establish principles of legitimacy for secession.[42] Bluntly, power and principle do not always coincide, and a large part of the task of social science needs to be limited to that of explaining the very difficult matter of how the world actually works.

Gellner’s mind seemed to be furnished with a set of cards, surprising use of which could be made when addressing particular issues. The last section of this book begins with two chapters addressing occasions when the playing of these cards was linked to his interpretation of nationalism. Gellner’s 1995 Conditions of Liberty is the text principally involved in both cases.

Gellner argued that the collapse of socialism involved the loss of a moral universe, and his analyses of postcommunist politics were thereafter concerned with what would come to fill the vacuum. He viewed this general situation with a great deal of apprehension, noting that civil society forces were slow to organise — in contrast to ethnic nationalist sentiment which seemed to him all-too-readily mobilisable. With the benefit of even a few years of hindsight, and in particular of a series of elections lost by nationalist demagogues, we can see that Gellner may have been wrong at this point. Nationalism has not swept over most of the former socialist bloc, perhaps in part because the absence of civil society made it rather hard to organise nationalist protest efficiently. [43] Part of the explanations for this statement has already been given, particularly by Mark Beissinger: nationalist protest derived far less from cultural bases than from political units with which a central state interacted.

Chris Hann disputed Gellner’s view of the nature of civil society on a previous occasion.[44] A background to his argument on this occasion is a precise anthropological account of the fate of east Galicia, and in particular of Premsyl. Hann notes the contrast already drawn, between the descriptive theory of Nations and Nationalism and the late admiration for Austro-Hungary, and insists that the former makes most sense of this area before 1918 given that state policies were neither passive nor liberal.[45] A still more fundamental contrast with Gellner’s general world view concerns the socialist period. Hann insists that a good deal of progressive social change took place in this period, moving society from rural hierarchy towards something like equality and inclusion. This stands behind his scepticism as to the benefits of the introduction of civil society: in so far as this means the arrival of capitalist market relations, Hann insists that it has merely diminished life chances and recreated hierarchies. What is especially noticeable for Hann is that western monies to support civil society groupings have been used to underwrite Polish right-wing nationalist groups opposed to the rights of Ukrainians. In a sense, Gellner knew all about this: a merit of his discussion of civil society is that it explicitly points out that mere societal self-organisation is no guarantee of civility. But it certainly was Gellner’s hope that the strengthening of society in eastern Europe would prevent the sudden emergence of the politics of rage.

Conditions of Liberty necessitates consideration of Islam since it argues forcefully that this religion may take the place of nationalism in large parts of the modern world. Gellner's thesis at this point was straightforward. Islam has within it a high tradition, stressing literacy and puritanism, that can be and is used by those wishing to modernise their societies. This means that Islamic societies can evade, as Taylor also notes, the awful choice between populism and westernisation: remaining true to their better selves allows them to enter the modern world. It is this that lends Islam, in Gellner's view, its secularisation-resistant quality, making it a major force to be reckoned with in the modern world.

This very striking view is open to the very basic rejoinder that Islamic societies in fact have a poor record of economic, social and political modernisation. But what matters here are the two rather different considerations raised by Brendan O'Leary. First, it may well not be the case that Islamic societies are resistant to pressures that derive from nationalism. O'Leary notes that Pakistan and Afghanistan remain subject to ethnic conflicts, and suggests that Islam may be tied with nationalism in South Asia rather than serving as an alternative to it. One might add to his analysis at this point a further objection: attempts to develop identities larger than the national — whether pan-Arab, Muslim or Shi'ite — have uniformly failed. Secondly, O'Leary wonders whether Islam is as secularisation resistant as Gellner imagined. Were it to be so, there would be a remarkable and uncomfortable contrast with the way in which Gellner hopes that achieved modernity will diminish the fervour of nationalism.

Dale Eickelman's account of Muslim politics takes direct issue with Gellner at this point. Gellner's view of lslamic civilisation was formed in the mid-l 960s, Eickelman correctly notes, and so is slightly insensitive to key changes that have taken place since then. Mass higher education has led to a plethora of societal organisations, many of which wish to reimagine Islam in very different forms. Eickelman insists that Islam is no longer unitary, going so far as to say that its varied characters result in largest part from the national contexts within which it interacts. By and large, Eickelman presents an optimistic view, noting that many Islamic movements favour democracy, for all that some wish to undermine it. History has not yet sat in judgement on this matter, and Gellner's pessimism may yet come to haunt us.

Nothing could be more Gellnerian in spirit, Rogers Brubaker correctly notes, than removal of intellectual detritus. His essay decisively refutes, through factual consideration and analytical clarification, six misconceptions about nationalism, so as to offer a comprehensive account of where nationalist studies are now going. Analysis of the first pair of misconceptions — that careful architecture can solve nationalism as against the view that it is endemic and dangerous — takes Brubaker close to Gellner's viewpoint. The second pair of misconceptions — the idea that nationalism is a 'return of the repressed' as against the view that it results from elite manipulation — is the result of debates in the most recent literature. None the less, Brubaker should be seen as arguing against Gellner's position. Broadly speaking, Brubaker belongs to the state-centred school of thought identified above — his particular contribution being to stress that nationalism in the former Soviet Union crystallised around the administrative units of that modern regime. But it is the fifth myth, that of groupism, that leads Brubaker to his largest and most original disagreement with Gellner. Brubaker believes that the high point of homogeneity for the nation-state may now be over: the end of conscription warfare and transnational migration may lead to multicultural societies that allow cultural difference within liberal limits. This leads to the final myth, much spread in fact by his own earlier work, according to which a useful binary contrast should be drawn between civic as against ethnic nationalism. [46] Brubaker seeks to replace this with the highly suggestive notions of state-framed and counter-state nationalisms.

[1] G. Cohen, The Politics of Ethnic Survival, Princeton, 1981.

[2] E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, pp. 58–62.

[3] E. Gellner, 'The Rest ofHistory', Prospect, May 1996, pp. 34–8.

[4] E. Gellner, ‘Nationalism in Eastern Europe’, New Left Review, no. 189, 1991.

[5] His growing interest in Malinowski can be seen easily by looking through the bibliography at the end of this volume. His most important arguments are contained in Language and Solitude: Wittgenstein, Malinowski and the Hapsburg Dilemma, Cambridge, 1998; but attention should also be given to ‘Two Escapes from History, or the Hapsburg Impact on British Thought’, in A. Bohnen and A. Musgrave, eds., Wege der Vernunft, Festschrift zum siebzigsten Geburtstag van Hans Albert, Tubingen, 1991.

[6] R. Szporluk, Communism and Nationalism, Oxford, 1988. Gellner’s Weberian view ofMarxism is in Thought and Change, London, 1965, pp. 136–9.

[7] E. Gellner, ‘The Dramatis Personae of History’, East European Politics and Society, vol. 4, 1990, reprinted as ‘Nationalism and Marxism’, in Encounters with Nationalism, Oxford, 1994.

[8] E. Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner, Amsterdam, 1996, p. 626.

[9] A foretaste of Szporluk’s forthcoming magnum opus on Ukrainian history is ‘After Empire: What?’, Daedalus, vol. 123, 1994.

[10] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, p. 638.

[11] Smith’s claims were made in The Ethnic Origins of Nations, Oxford, 1986. A direct debate between Smith and Gellner on this point can now be found in Nations and Nationalism, vol. 2, 1996. But see too, Nationalism, London, 1997, pp. 90–101.

[12] E. Gellner, ‘An Alternative Vision’, in Encounters with Nationalism. The reader should note that this essay is taken from a larger piece, published later as ‘The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation: The Myth of Nation and Class’, in G. Balakrishnan, ed., Mapping the Nation, London, 1996.

[13] T. Nairn, The Break-Up of Britain, London, 1977.

[14] E. Gellner, ‘Nationalism, or the New Confessions of a Justified Edinburgh Sinner’, Political Quarterly, vol. 49, 1978.

[15] J. Plamenatz, ‘Two Types of Nationalism’, in E. Kamenka, ed., Nationalism: The Nature and Evolution of an Idea, London, 1973, discussed in E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, pp. 99–100. See Gellner’s Nationalism, pp. 59–62 for some further, slightly ad hoc comments about nationalist violence.

[16] A brilliant account and comparison of the reactionary and progressive nationalisms of the Basques and the Catalans is now available in J. D. Medrano, Divided Nations: Class, Politics, and Nationalism in the Basque Country and Catalonia, Ithaca, 1995.

[17] P. Anderson, ‘Science, Politics, Enchantment’ and M. Mann, ‘The Emergence of Modern European Nationalism’, first published in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., Transition to Modernity, Cambridge, 1992, and reprinted in Hall and Jarvie, The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner.

[18] A part of Gellner’s rejection of this claim is noted below, but see too ‘Reply to Critics’, pp. 623–39.

[19] D. Laitin, Identity in Formation: The Russian Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad, Ithaca, 1998.

[20] D. Laitin, Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa, Cambridge, 1992.

[21] The books in question are Post-Marxist Alternatives (London, 1990), Back to Sociological Theory (London, 1990), and Sociological Theory: What Went Wrong? (London, 1995).

[22] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, pp. 629–30.

[23] Mann, ‘The Emergence ofModern European Nationalism’.

[24] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, p. 636.

[25] Ibid., pp. 626–7.

[26] Anderson, ‘Science, Politics, Enchantment’.

[27] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, pp. 627–8.

[28] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 43–50.

[29] R. Aron, Introduction to the Philosophy of History, London, 1961, p. 202.

[30] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, p. 637.

[31] M. Mann, Sources of Social Power. Volume Two: The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760–1914, Cambridge, 1993.

[32] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, p. 637.

[33] A. O. Hirschman, Exit, Voice and Loyalty, Cambridge, MA, 1978.

[34] R. Szporluk, ‘Nationalism after Communism: Reflections on Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Poland’, Nations and Natioralism, vol. IV, 1998.

[35] C. Taylor, ‘The Politics of Recognition’, in A. Gutmann, ed., Multiculturalism, Princeton, 1994.

[36] J. Linz and A. Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, Baltimore, 1996, especially ch. 2.

[37] This is a fertile area for research and theory, not least on the vexed question as to whether the provision of local institutions contains or serves as a launching pad for nationalism. A great deal seems to depend upon political style — that is, whether local institutions are the result of pressure rather than of generosity on the part of an intelligent state.

[38] For an analysis of the state as a moral project, see the excellent discussion in V. Perez-Diaz, The Return of Civil Society, Cambridge, MA, 1990.

[39] I draw on Laitin, Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa for these points about India and Africa.

[40] J. McGarry and B. O’Leary, ‘Introduction: The Macro-political Regulation of Ethnic Conflict’, in J. McGarry and B. O’Leary, eds., The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation, London, 1993, pp. 36–7.

[41] Gellner, Nationalism, pp. 104–6.

[42] For examples, see A. Buchanan, Secession, Boulder, 1992 and M. Moore, ed., Self-Determination and Secession, Oxford, 1997.

[43] See Jack Snyder’s forthcoming monograph on nationalism and democracy for a fully developed working out of this argument.

[44] C. Hann, ‘Gellner on Malinowski: Words and Things in Central Europe’, in Hall and Jarvie, The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner, pp. 45–64. For Gellner’s response see ‘Reply to Critics’, pp. 675–8.

[45] It may be worth noting in passing that one of Gellner’s favourite novels, Joseph Roth’s superb The Radetzky March, is partly set in East Galicia. The novel by and large takes the same view as Nations and Nationalism — that the break-up of the empire was inevitable.

[46] R. Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Cambridge, MA, 1992.

* Part I: The mating of the theory

** 1. Thoughts about change: Ernest Gellner and the history of nationalism

Roman Szporluk

... two of the great myths of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, namely Marxism and nationalism. [47]

Today, a third of a century since its publication in 1964, Thought and Change can be seen as Ernest Gellner's magnum opus, a work that contained the nucleus of not only Nations and Nationalism but also of an even later Plough, Sword and Book. [48] Its initial reception, however, appears to have been lukewarm: Brendan O'Leary says that Gellner's theory of nationalism presented there 'went largely unnoticed' among political scientists, philosophers and sociologists.[49] Something similar probably may be said also about its reception among historians. This chapter, however, is not even a beginning of an investigation of that question. Instead, this is a personal account, written twenty-eight years after the story began, of how one historian's encounter with Thought and Change, first read by him in 1968,[50] had put him on a 'train of thought' in the course of which he formed, for himself, a view of the history of nationalism and Marxism, which he then presented in his teaching and writing.

It is common for one book to become the stimulus for another writer to write another book in roughly the same area and on the same (or a related) topic. But in this case something different happened. Here a philosophical and sociological argument by a theorist inspired a historian to design a concrete historical investigation that was not even aimed at 'testing' the theorist's thesis, let alone at formulating another general proposition. Instead, Gellner's understanding of what nationalism is in general, led a historian to look at historical evidence in a way that enabled him (or so he thought), in accordance with criteria implicit in Gellner's argument, to identify a certain individual as a significant nationalist thinker. That 'discovery' in

turn inspired a new reading of the life and ideas of another figure, representing another Weltanschauung, whose standing as a major thinker, unlike that of the former, had never been in question.

Paradoxically, this occurred under the inspiration of a scholar who insisted that nationalist thinkers ‘did not really make much difference’:

If one of them had fallen, others would have stepped into his place ... No one was indispensable. The quality of nationalist thought would hardly have been affected much by such substitutions. Their precise doctrines are hardly worth analyzing.[51]

The story does not end here, however. For that very scholar then wrote an essay in which he examined, seriously and sympathetically, the said nationalist thinker’s ideas.[52] But let us begin at the beginning.

*** Reading Gellner

For me, Thought and Change was not an easy ‘read’ and I absorbed, and reacted to, some parts of it more actively than others. But as I worked my way through his argument, I realised that Gellner treated nationalism in a way I had not seen anywhere else — and that he was most strikingly original in establishing ‘genetic’ (not his adjective) connections between nationalism and Marxism that had remained hidden or obscure to other writers.

**** Philosophy

Gellner’s aphoristic style — sentences that effortlessly turned themselves into memorable ‘quotations’ — helped an outsider to come to grips with the philosopher’s fundamental thesis. ‘Philosophy’, Gellner said, ‘is about industrialisation’. He then clarified his meaning in a footnote: ‘Or, if you like: philosophy is about the failure of 1789.’ To help those distressed or confused

by the seeming paradox, Gellner was willing to reformulate his thought: he described philosophy as ‘an attempt to understand the nature, emergence, alternatives and implications of the kind of knowledge on which our society is based, and of that society itself’.[53] Elsewhere, he described philosophy as ‘general thought about man, society, and their place in the world, and thought of the kind which takes least for granted’.[54]

Gellner said that philosophy is about change, and the essence of change is industrialisation — the transition from agrarian to industrial world. According to him, that change was transforming the nature of the relationship between man and the surrounding world:

the features which differentiate the world of pre-industrial men from those of developed countries are far deeper than mere wealth alone, or the presence of steel mills, electricity, and so forth. What is at issue is something far bigger: a wholly new balance between being and knowing.[55]

Even while elsewhere in the book he said that ‘philosophy is about industrialisation’, Gellner made it clear that in his view it is not industry but science that defines the new age. Moreover, science is not a new religion replacing the old: ‘it was a mistake of the Enlightenment, and its nineteenth-century revolutionary successors, to suppose that science was rather like a religious synthesis — only truer and free of invocation of the extra-mundane.[56]

There was a fundamental difference between the philosophy of the modern age and the religion of the old:

In fact, science is radically and qualitatively different. Its manifest and regrettable characteristics ... include not only the now well-advertised essential incompleteness ... but also a kind of amorality, one might even say a moral dullness. It does not reveal a nature that rewards virtue and punishes vice, and in whose terms virtue and vice can be defined (in brief, a kind of decapitated version of the old Deity). There is no such lady. It reveals

a world that supplies no morals, which at best indicates possibilities and excludes some others. No closed, meaningful, reliable cosmos emerges.[57]

Thus, if ‘science’ did not offer any guidance as to how the individual ora group should behave, and thus was not assuming the role of religion in old society, what authority did modern men and women have to rely on once they had lost religion as their guide? Was ‘philosophy’ a substitute, as a ‘practical’ or ‘applied’ science? Nor was it clear whether Gellner allowed that there might exist more than one kind of ‘philosophy’ whose business was ‘industrialisation’. He called liberalism and socialism the ‘two great currents of social thought brought into being by the earlier stages of the great transition’[58] but was ‘social thought’ as understood in this case another name for philosophy?

Questions of this kind did not bother me at the time when I was working my way through Thought and Change. I was not interested in the relationship between philosophy and science as he defined them and I paid little attention to his critique of liberalism, to which he gave considerable attention in his book. What mattered was his treatment of Marxism.[59]

**** Marxism

As was to be expected, Gellner acknowledged that Marxism was concerned with those matters which he assigned to the domain of philosophy. It was understandable, therefore, that he turned to Marxism after an explication of his own position.

He recognised that Marxism was concerned with change, and was thus on the right track in identifying what was important, indeed crucial, about the modern period. ‘Marxism is still probably the best starting point for the understanding of the modern world. Not because its doctrines are true ... but because, on the whole, the questions it poses are the correct ones.’ He spoke with respect about Marx’s sociology — but he separated it from his ‘preposterous eschatology’.[60]

Gellner also acknowledged the special political status of Marxism as the legitimating ideology of a number of states: the ‘one official belief ... that comes some way towards incorporating the transition into the official Founding and Justifying Myth of these societies’.[61]

But being official did not make Marxism right. I was especially struck by Gellner’s remark on what he called the ‘two famous mistakes of Marxism’ and what, he said, they really were about:

two famous mistakes of Marxism — the expectation of continuing or even increasing misery of the proletariat, and the underestimation of nationalism — are really one mistake: if the proletariat in regions where the big wave has already passed remained near the starvation line ... then indeed it might feel solidarity with the new recruits to industrial misery.[62]

To appreciate the explosive content of this message, one needs to place it next to what Gellner had to say about nationalism and industrialisation or ‘change’: ‘Essentially, nationalism is a phenomenon connected not so much with industrialisation or modernisation as such, but with its uneven diffusion.’[63]

Let us follow Gellner’s thought — philosophy is about industrialisation, nationalism is about its uneven diffusion — to where it leads. A moment’s reflection makes one realise that since no other kind of diffusion is possible — diffusion must take place in time — Gellner is really saying: ‘Nationalism is about industrialisation.’ (I am sure it did not occur to me then to ask whether this meant that ‘philosophy equals nationalism’.)

It would be interesting to see if post-publication reviews and other critical commentaries on Thought and Change noted the anti-Marxist thrust of that work. For me, because of my prior exposure to MarxismLeninism, that was one of its most impressive elements. Gellner was challenging Marxism on its territory: the idea of uneven development had

been a fixture in the repertory of Marxism-Leninism; every student of communism knew that Trotsky had argued, by invoking uneven development, for the communist revolution in what came to be called Third World countries. As late as the 1930s, Trotsky famously insisted that workers in Calcutta had much more in common with those of Manchester, and vice versa, than either did with their respective nation's 'bourgeoisie'. And here Professor Gellner came along to stand the famous Trotsky argument on its head! The solidarity of workers of advanced and underdeveloped countries was a myth, he said, and he implied further that for developing lands nationalism was the answer. It was good for them to be independent: 'if a politically united world were passing through the second, global, phase of industrialisation, this united world might well come to resemble the present condition of South Africa' .[64]

Modern industry was a child of science, Gellner was saying, but nationalism, not Marxism, was better suited to deal with the social and political aspects and consequences of industrialisation.

**** Nationalism

It was obvious from the preceding that change and nationalism went hand-in-hand. Nationalism was a subversive, revolutionary force: as the wave of industrialisation and modernisation moves outward, it disrupts the previous political units. These are generally either small and intimate (village, tribe, feudal unit), or large but loose and ill-centralised (traditional empires, which of course contain the small intimate groupings as parts). [65]

In a footnote (some of his most revealing points were in the footnotes) Gellner introduced the concept of modernisation and explained how industrialisation was related to it:

The two are to be distinguished only as the narrower and wider aspects of the same phenomenon. Industrialisation proper may be preceded — in certain odd cases followed — by the trappings, terminology, expectations,

slogans of industrial society. A complex of such anticipatory borrowings may have almost as much impact on a society as the thing itself. [66]

Later, the idea of ‘anticipatory borrowings’ would reappear when he recognised that some nations were ‘engendered by recent industrialism’, while others were engendered by ‘the shadow cast by its coming’.[67] Modernisation was obviously a broader concept than industrialisation.

It was in the realm of culture, including education, that ‘anticipatory borrowings’ took place and where industrialism’s coming cast its ‘shadow’. However, for Gellner culture is the foundation of industrial society, not only something very important in an industrialising one. Modernity calls for an educated person, education is attained in school, schools use different languages:

The importance of the ‘national’ differentiation, of what are in effect cultural definitions of group membership, hinges on the fact that development requires, above all, education, that it is in effect education which confers real citizenship, and that education must be in some medium, some culture, some ‘language’. [68]

In school one learned to work and one also learned to be a citizen:

the modern phenomenon — citizenship through education, group differentiae in terms of the language of instruction, and unmediated membership of mass co-cultural societies ... [69]

Thus, to Gellner, the language was more than a medium in which scientific-industrial knowledge was communicated. The medium was the message: ‘Language is, as Vico saw, more than a tool of culture, it is culture.’[70]

Nationalism recognised the crucial importance of education in the making of the modern person — i.e. an individual skilled to function in industrial society. While in agrarian society one learned the necessary skills while working in agriculture, in industrial society one learned not by working in a factory but by studying in school before going to work. And school, said Gellner, had to be national.

Gellner's approach helped one to see why education was the central battleground in nationality struggles in countries like the Habsburg monarchy. The struggle for language of instruction in school was not a diversion from the real issues such as suffrage or wages or land reform (which was what democrats, liberals and socialists were saying) but a fundamental struggle about the kind of persons that were being made — and thus about the limits of political units.

What Gellner had to say about 'anticipatory borrowings' and nations engendered by the 'shadow' of industry amounted to recognising that even while 'philosophy', that is, sociology and economics, was more important than history, something was still left for the historian to do. 'Anticipatory borrowings' meant ideas. A study of those ideas had a future, after all ...

*** Studying history

There were personal or autobiographical circumstances which led me to find Gellner's position on nationalism so persuasive and so appealing. I had studied the intellectual evolution of Tomas G. Masaryk (1850–1937) and Gellner suddenly illuminated for me the larger stage on which my subject's life had taken its course.

At first, Masaryk proclaimed the necessity of a 'New Christianity'. (He read Saint-Simon and Comte during his youth, in the late 1860s. One of his teachers in Brno was a follower of Saint-Simon.) Then he gave up that new universal religion and proposed that science should become a new, needless to say, universal, religion. Finally, by the 1890s, without giving up his fundamental religious and philosophical ideas, Masaryk decided to present

them in a package he called the Czech national philosophy. Only with that last move, only by going national, did Masaryk acquire a potential constituency and at least a prospect of political influence. He could preach his vision of what it meant to be human only by telling certain people that he was teaching them what it meant to be Czech. [71]

If Masaryk had provided me with what was one case of an originally religious figure's seemingly inevitable march to nationalism, Russia/ USSR supplied the story of a Marxist historian, M. N. Pokrovsky (1868–1932), who attempted 'rescuing history from the nation', [72] and from 1917 until his death enjoyed the status, with Lenin's approval, of the leader of new Soviet historical science. But then, in 1934, he was condemned by the new Stalinist orthodoxy that put Marxism-Leninism in the service of new Russian-cum-Soviet imperial patriotism. [73]

Gellner seemed to be telling me that there was some regularity (Gesetzmassigkeit or zakonomernost) in what happened in the cases I studied: the futility, or so it looked, of two very different attempts to ignore or to overcome nationalism, the impossibility of transcending the nation in modern thought and politics.

**** Teaching

It was obvious I had to share my discovery of Gellner with my students. Back in school, at the University of Michigan, I organised an undergraduate colloquium, under the title 'Theories of Nationalism', in which Thought and Change was the principal text; and in conjunction with its themes other readings were selected. (Topics of several of the weekly sessions were presented via quotations from the book. Thus, one week's theme was 'Philosophy is about industrialisation.' The next was: 'Or, ifyou like: philosophy is about the failure of 1789.')

That colloquium underwent revisions over several years and then was succeeded by 'Socialism and Nationalism', a lecture course with, I thought, a

broader appeal. The main idea, however, remained the same. Students were told that socialism and nationalism operated in a world being transformed by industry, and both were equally ‘responses’ to it and attempts to explain the failure of ‘1789’; these two world-views differed, however, in that one spoke for the underdog and the other for the outsider. (I would hasten to add that later in the term we would deal with situations in which outsiders and underdogs were, or thought themselves to be, the same.)

This was a course in which nationalism and Marxism were given equal standing. Nationalism or the national question was not treated as a problem (that is, a distraction from serious matters) for the Marxists to ‘solve’ — which was how college courses on Marxism dealt with nationalism. [74] Here, nationalism was recognised as a view and a movement which had in common with Marxism a concern with the modern world: industrialisation/modernisation and its consequences. Nationalism was another — alternative — interpretation of the world and a rival programme for its transformation.

**** Learning

It was one thing to make assumptions and issue declarations, and another to furnish individuals and ideas capable of doing for nationalism what Marx, Engels and their followers (whose names my students had at least heard) did for socialism. Preparation for it took some time and effort.

When I walked into the forest of nationalism I did so with at least some idea on how to recognise those trees that I needed to find. From Gellner I had received a standard for comparing and ‘grading’ nationalist thinkers of the nineteenth century. Which ones had understood — or, anticipated? — what Gellner was teaching us now? Which one/s knew what nationalism was all about, without having read Gellner?

If nationalism was what Gellner said it was — and the relevant citations above had made me a convert to his interpretation — I reasoned that there

should have been at least some nationalists who had at least intuitively been on the right track before Gellner. There must have been some, that is, who had grasped the connection between the condition of their nation, the nationalist's proper main concern, on the one hand, and the uneven diffusion of industrialisation, a universal process, on the other. In short: my task was to find a Gellner before Gellner.

Just as before Marx and scientific socialism there had been various 'Utopian' currents, in my study (and then presentation) of nationalism I found 'Utopian' nationalist thinkers and currents. Just as Utopian socialists idealised the past social order and the village commune where it still survived, so, I argued, did Utopian nationalists do the same about the distant national past and the village culture of their time, and they rejected industrialisation and change. 'Scientific nationalism', by contrast, built its programme on the acceptance of the inevitability and desirability of industrialisation. While it was evident that in actual historical cases the distinction between the two kinds of nationalism was not always sharp, for some 'Utopians' had intuitively arrived at important and correct insights (Herder was an obvious example), I needed someone who clearly understood that 'philosophy is about industrialisation'. After reading in secondary literature and after going to original writings of major figures themselves, I decided I could close my search. It was Friedrich List. [75]

More than any nationalist thinker I had encountered, I concluded, List deserved the rank of leading theorist, perhaps founder, of 'scientific nationalism'. At times I called his system generic nationalism for it could be adopted by any nation facing an industrialising world. This generic nationalism, or the 'algebra of nationalism', which List invented, could be learned and applied by any nationalist currents and movements for they in relation to it represented just so many different 'arithmetics'.[76] I suspect this mathematical analogy made little if any sense, but it helped me to clarify my argument about an underlying commonality in all 'scientific' nationalisms. For the same purpose, I drew on List's own life and career as an illustration of universal applicability of his system: List had begun (and ended) his public life as a German nationalist but also found time to be a theorist and practitioner of American nationalism as well, and even managed to offer to the French some free advice on how they could make France stronger. To make the symmetry between the two

Weltanschauungen perfect, I needed a nationalist figure to ‘compare and contrast’ with Marx. If List had not existed it would have been necessary to invent him. ‘The Marx of nationalism’, I could tell my students, ‘was Friedrich List’.

The ‘discovery’ of List called for a fresh look at, perhaps a reexamination of, Marx’s biography. If List was what he appeared to have been, one reasoned, Marx ought to have known, and have said something about, him. It was reasonable to suspect that the young Marx should have not only had some opinions on German nationalism of his time but he should have been especially interested in List because of List’s view of industrialisation in the setting of a world market. But, as I was soon to learn, standard works on Marx were not interested in the question of young Marx and German nationalism, and had nothing or almost nothing to say about Marx’s knowledge of or opinions on Friedrich List (only Harold Laski seemed to have noticed a polemic with List in The Communist Manifesto).[77] Undeterred, and seeing myself similar to the astronomer who senses that there must be an unaccounted-for celestial body somewhere in the space because the movements of known planets cannot be explained otherwise, I felt an important piece — German nationalism before 1848, and specifically Marx’s relation to List — was missing in the accounts of Marx and Marxism. I went to work and found that Marx had known List — and, much better than I had imagined; Marx had even read List’s critique of Adam Smith before reading Adam Smith himself. (Even their careers intersected at one point: Marx took a job that List had been offered first, but declined.) I had a subtitle for my book: Karl Marx versus Friedrich List.

*** History of nationalism ... and Marxism?

In an essay titled ‘An Alternative Vision’, first published in 1992, Gellner reaffirmed the original message of Thought and Change. ‘History is neither the conflict of classes nor of nations.’[78] The development of nations and the change in class relations do not take place in two distinct and independent realms: ‘in reality, both are aspects of one single transition’. [79] Thought and Change carried the same message already in the 1960s. If one took seriously Ernest Gellner’s thought about change, I concluded, this was how

one should teach — and write — the intellectual history of the nineteenth century. It was therefore under his inspiration, or what I took it to be, that I decided to treat communism and nationalism together, as entities enjoying equal status and, more importantly, as dealing with the same subject.

This being evident to Gellner (and his readers) did not mean it was evident to nationalists or Marxists of the past. Their philosophical and ideological principles and assumptions presumably were impediments to their seeing the full picture and meaning of the process, even if they also stimulated them to see correctly, realistically, one or the other aspect of the single process: these nationalists and Marxists may have resembled those men in a famous tale who, with their eyes tied, were asked to touch and then to describe an elephant. (Perhaps Gellner would have corrected this analogy to say that nationalism and Marxism see the world with one eye, right or left, open: consequently, nationalism sees one side of the picture, and Marxism the other.)

For obvious reasons (one of them clarity), the ideas of one key fgure, Marx, had to be presented in one part of the book, and those of List in another. But as my story moved on from List and Marx to their successors and followers, it was becoming harder, sometimes impossible, to isolate in separate chapters socialist figures and their ideas from their nationalist rivals. Some ‘nationalists’ spoke and acted like (sometimes even as) Marxists, while in other cases ‘Marxists’ could be equally legitimately labelled as nationalists. This was the case in nineteenth and early twentieth-century Europe, for example in Bulgaria and in Italy, and even more so in Russia. But the original boundaries between Marxism and nationalism became quite blurred in the post-1945 colonial and postcolonial world, where some of the central ideas of List came to be attributed to Marx under the label of ‘dependency theory’. After this and other similar revelations, I was prepared to believe Dieter Senghaas that List had been ‘an early Maoist’.[80]

But as I learned while writing my book and then continuing to read on these topics thereafter, one did not need to go to Mao or to dependency theory in Latin America to see cases of a convergence between nationalism and

Marxism or between any of these two and social science. In Europe two relevant examples are provided by Max Weber and Antonio Gramsci.

Weber's Olympian stature as a scholar may have been one of the reasons why nationalism in his thought was overlooked. A number of publications have corrected this view and I feel safer now than I did when in response to Benedict Anderson's remark that 'nationalism did not produce its grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes or Webers', I wrote: 'The Weber of nationalism was Weber.'[81]

In his recent book on Russian politics, Jeremy Lester analyses Gramsci's argument 'that social classes which exist at the economic level are not necessarily duplicated at the political level' and that 'the process of articulating a collective will able to effect a political hegemony in society' requires first 'the ability to create "inter-class" political subjects'. Gramsci further argued, Lester continues, that 'victory in a hegemonic struggle' will be achieved when 'a collective will' becomes a 'popular religion': by this Gramsci means, according to Lester, that this will happen when a collective will 'becomes imbued in the national consciousness of a given society'.[82] Lester and other scholars provide support for the argument that Gramsci's Marxist ideas can be 'converted' or 'translated' to communicate something important in the language of nationalism. (In that language, societies with the 'interclass' political subjects postulated by Gramsci are called nations.) It seems legitimate to see in the grandfather of Eurocommunism also a theorist of nation-building and also a figure in the Risorgimento tradition.[83]

Such trans-ideological convertibility was exactly what should have been taking place if the world was as Gellner described and interpreted it. Since Marxism and nationalism were concerned with 'aspects of one single transition', the more original, the more open-minded thinkers of one school should have been driven by the logic of their pursuit to set aside ideological blinkers imposed on them by their respective outlook and to enter the others' territory. Ideas of those who did so especially successfully, one might further reason, would not only be 'translatable' or 'convertible' into the language of the other current but would enter a common knowledge about history, society and politics. Step by step, the

walls separating what Gellner called ‘political myth’ (see the epigraph to this paper) from what he termed ‘a social current’ and that from ‘philosophy’ would be dismantled.

*** Epilogue

Indeed, as I see it today, Gellner had anticipated something of this kind himself. At a time when the USSR appeared to the world as a Marxist success story, he speculated that ‘though there may be little to suggest that the Soviet state will wither away, there may be some hope that Marxism itself will do so’. It would end up, he thought, occupying ‘the kind of modest place in Russian national pride, patriotism and disbelief, as do traditional faiths in the life of other nations’.[84] In other words, Marxism would become an item in the repertoire of Russian nationalism. But then in Gellner’s view Marxism in Russia had performed the function of nationalism from the beginning: ‘It is nationalists above all who flirt with Marxism’;[85] ‘Marxism is not intended for the overcoming of the ills of industrialism: its role is to bring them about. Marxist revolutions precede, and do not follow, industrial development.[86] Russia’s Marxist revolution had been engendered by the diffusion of industrialisation and once in power it carried industrialisation out to a successful completion: this accomplishment proved it was nationalist! QED.

But, it is also evident to me — now, decades following the publication of his opus, during which major works on nationalism by other scholars have also appeared — that Gellner overlooked some other important things. First, perhaps forgivably at the time, he ignored the non-Russian nationalities in the USSR and their national ideas and ideals. Secondly, he did not consider the possibility that the Russians themselves might have other ideas, besides the official one, about their national identity. Even less did he allow the more general proposition, namely that in nationalist intellectual debates important issues were considered and then resolved as some visions of the nation established themselves as dominant. He thus refused to concede what Gramsci had acknowledged after traversing a very different intellectual journey: national identity is a subject of intranational contestation and the ideological sphere is a battlefield in the struggle for hegemony within the nation.

To admit this required recognising that nationalist ideas and nationalist thinkers did matter. Such an admission would have been perfectly compatible with Gellner's acceptance of nationalism's correct appreciation of what industrialisation was doing to society. Why not allow that nationalism attracted minds at least as bright as those drawn to Marxism? But while bright minds tend to disagree even when they share some basic views, their disagreements are not always a waste of time. To the best of my knowledge Gellner never said that Marxist ideas did not matter, that the controversies between Bernstein and Luxemburg, between Lenin and Plekhanov or Martov, and so forth, did not contribute to the eventual determination of what Marxism became when in power. Why did he not concede the same importance to nationalist debates and struggles for the definition of national identities and national policies? (But then this may be wrong: when he spoke about Marx's 'preposterous eschatology', which for real believers makes Marx, Marx, he showed that his failure to do justice to nationalism was matched by the same in regard to Marxism.)

To understand Gellner's lack of attention to conflict and cooperation within the particular ethnic group in the process of its formation as a modern nation one needs to bear in mind the larger framework in which he viewed the nation-making process. According to Ronald Findlay, 'in common with much of nineteenth-century evolutionary type of thinking', Gellner treated states and nations as 'the collective units ... lined up on parallel tracks with the trains leaving at successive dates'. This explains why 'any interaction between the units in either conflict or cooperation' is missing in Gellner's account.[87]

There is merit in Findlay's point. It is, as the Russians say, no accident that one of Gellner's last books, Plough, Sword and Book, was subtitled The Structure of Human History. What excited him was Change, the global transition from Agraria to Industria. In this regard Gellner's real precursor or Doppelganger was neither List nor Marx but the man who inspired them both. Henri de Saint-Simon was a great interpreter and the prophet of industrial civilisation. (I have often wondered why that name is missing from all the books of Gellner's I have seen.) But what Saint-Simon had seen as a future Gellner knew as a recent past and the

present, and thus, unlike the former, he had to explore the connection between industry and nationalism and Marxism.

In other words, Gellner had to deal with a history that was not reducible to sociology. As a historical phenomenon in Central and Eastern Europe, the transition from Agraria to Industria took place as transition from the ancient empire of ‘Megalomania’ to new nationstates, such as ‘Ruritania’ and its siblings. (‘Megalomania’, of course, was the Habsburg monarchy, and Gellner’s own Czechoslovakia was one of the ‘Ruritanias’.) But he paid little attention to intranational and international relations, including situations, common in East Europe, when one and the same ethnic group was an object of rival nationbuilding efforts at the same time — invoking different ethnic, historic and political arguments for its cause and proposing different national responses to modernity. [88] Perhaps because it fitted so ill under any broader type, Poland is also conspicuously absent on his map of nationalism: the Poles had their own elite even when they were under foreign rule, their nationalism had by far anteceded industrialisation, and at no time could they be called an ‘awakening nation’. (Their condition could rather be diagnosed as national insomnia.) Gellner touched upon the condition of Poland indirectly, in an essay on the Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski, who spent his youth under Austrian rule. (He seems to have written more on him than on all the other Poles combined. Did he detect some similarities between the Pole’s and his own life path?)[89] His view of the monarchy, even though it had been destined, in his scheme, to be replaced by new nations, was not all negative: the empire of the Habsburgs was a ‘kindergarten of nations’.[90]

This was brilliant. But the empire was also something else. It contained also nations or parts of nations which on Gellner’s timetable (not to mention their conduct) were long past kindergarten. But he was less ready to recognise that modernisation profoundly affected also the so-called ‘old continuous nations’ — that they too were undergoing a crisis during the transition to modernity, as they faced the task of creating their nation-states on the ruins of their respective imperial ‘Megalomanias’.

As Findlay points out, in Gellner’s view ‘there could be no such a thing as “old industrial country” nationalism’. For Gellner, nationalism was ‘exclusively an

“ideology of delayed industrialisation” ... associated with a movement against an alien ruling elite’.[91] But Francis Joseph I, the monarch under whose ‘auspices’ (sub auspiciis imperatoris) the young Malinowski received his degree at the University of Cracow, and whose many titles included that of Grand Duke of Cracow, had among his subjects also Adolf Hitler, and was also titled Duke of Auschwitz. When it came to actual life experience, nobody needed to tell Ernest Gellner that ‘modernity’ had had another side and had been the source of problems other than discontents arising from industrialisation. He recognised, as we saw, ‘not only the now well-advertised essential incompleteness ... but also a kind of amorality, one might even say a moral dullness’ of science. ‘It reveals a world that supplies no morals, which at best indicates possibilities and excludes some others. No closed, meaningful, reliable cosmos emerges.’[92] But when he commented on this aspect of the world — which I think he did rarely in print — he did so in a different genre from the academic. Without claiming to know sufficiently well his published works, it appears to me that his essay on Hannah Arendt, ‘From Konigsberg to Manhattan (or Hannah, Rahel, Martin and Elfriede, or, Thy Neighbour’s Gemeinschaft)’, presents most completely Gellner’s view of that other side of history from the age of the Enlightenment to Hitler.[93] But his own system, his grand vision of global scientific and industrial transformation, did not allow for the possibility ofAuschwitz, or the Gulag, and did not claim to have an ex-post explanation of their occurrence.

*** Notes

I would like to thank Anatoly Khazanov and John A. Hall for their encouragement and suggestions; also Patrice M. Dabrowski and Benjamin R. Frommer.

[47] E. Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, Oxford, 1994, p. 199.

[48] According to John A. Hall, when commenting on an earlier draft of this paper, Legitimation of Belief and The Psychoanalytic Movement and ‘maybe others’ are ‘contained therein quite as much’.

[49] B. O’Leary, ‘Ernest Gellner’s Diagnoses of Nationalism: A Critical Overview’, or, ‘What is Living and What is Dead in Ernest Gellner’s Philosophy of Nationalism’, this volume, p. 46.

[50] I ordered a copy of Thought and Change from Blackwell whilst in Vienna, after finding an intriguing reference to it in some weekly. (I had first heard of Ernest Gellner in 1959, when I was a newly arrived student in England, but I did not read his Words and Things then and did not much follow the polemic it generated.) In Vienna, I was studying the life and thought of Masaryk (see note 25 below), and had planned to spend a major part of my research leave in Prague; 21 August 1968 made it Vienna only.

[51] E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, p. 124. B. O’Leary, ‘On the Nature of Nationalism: An Appraisal of Ernest Gellner’s Writings on Nationalism’, in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner, Amsterdam, 1996, p. 103, speaks of ‘Gellner’s contempt for nationalist doctrine’.

[52] E. Gellner, ‘Nationalism and Marxism’, in Encounters with Nationalism. This review article of R. Szporluk, Communism and Nationalism: Karl Marx versus Friedrich List, Oxford and New York, 1988 was originally published in East European Politics and Societies, vol. 4, 1990.

[53] E. Gellner, Thought and Change, London, 1965, p. 72.

[54] Ibid., p. 74.

[55] Ibid., p. 72. Further clarification and elaboration of his meaning was given on p. 74, and in a footnote to that page.

[56] Ibid., pp. 122–3.

[57] Ibid., p. 123.

[58] Ibid., p. 117.

[59] Ibid., p. 126.

[60] Ibid., p. 126.

[61] Ibid., p. 126. Italics in the original.

[62] Ibid., p. 172. Italics in the original.

[63] Ibid., p. 166.

[64] Ibid., p. 178.

[65] lbid.,p. 171.

[66] Ibid., p. 17 ln.

[67] Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, p. 11. My emphasis.

[68] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 172.

[69] Ibid., p. 173.

[70] Ibid., p. 195.

[71] R. Szporluk, ‘Masaryk in Search of Authority’, Canadian Slavonic Papers, vol. 7, 1965. I developed this interpretation more fully in The Political Thought of Thomas G. Masaryk, Boulder, 1981, especially in ch. 4, ‘Religion as Nationalism’.

[72] This is borrowed from P. Duara, Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China, Chicago and London, 1995.

[73] R. Szporluk, ‘Pokrovsky’s View of the Russian Revolution’, Slavic Review, vol. 26, 1967 and M. N. Pokrovskii, Russia in World History: Selected Essays, ed. with an introduction by R. Szporluk, trans. R. Szporluk and M. A. Szporluk, Ann Arbor, 1970.

[74] To my knowledge, the many books with Marxism (or socialism) and nationalism in the title are without exception about what Marxists have had to say about nationalism. R. Munck’s The Difficult Dialogue: Marxism and Nationalism, London, 1986 is a monologue.

[75] I had heard of List before reading Gellner, of course, and the history of nationalism was not a tabula rasa for me when, with Gellner’s guidebook in hand, I started my journey of discovery. But Gellner supplied the instrument that permitted me to locate List as the central figure in the nationalist constellation. I do not know of works in which comparisons are drawn between any aspects of Gellner’s and List’s thought — with the exception of Ugo Pagano, who argues (‘Can Economists Explain Nationalism?’, in A. Breton, G. Galeotti, P. Salmon and R. Wintrobe, eds., Nationalism and Rationality, Cambridge, 1995, p. 175n) that List had ‘anticipated some considerations on the role of the nation in the organisation of the division of labour that have been later independently developed by Gellner’.

[76] My search for a ‘generic’ nationalism had obviously been stimulated by Anthony Smith’s argument on nationalism’s ‘core doctrine’. On this, see A. D. Smith, Theories of Nationalism, New York, 1973, pp. 20–4 and Szporluk, Communism and Nationalism, pp. 93–4.

[77] H. J. Laski, ‘Introduction’, to K. Marx and F. Engels, The Communist Manifesto, New York, 1982, pp. 50–1.

[78] Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, p. 199. Italics in the original.

[79] Ibid., p. 195. Italics in the original.

[80] D. Senghaas, ‘Friedrich List und die neue internationale okonomische Ordnung’, Leviathan, vol. 3, 197 5, p. 297, quoted in Szporluk, Communism and Nationalism, p. 274n. Senghaas may be going a bit too far but there is a trace of Gellner here: List and Mao alike were concerned with late modernisers/industrialisers. Wasn’t List’s idea of ‘the world city’ (his characterisation of England) that was exploiting a ‘global village’ Maoist? (Or should we call Mao a late Listian?).

[81] ‘Preface’ to Communism and Nationalism, (1991, pbk.) p. vi. O’Leary, ‘Ernest Gellner’s Diagnoses of Nationalism’, p. 87, thinks it ‘strange’ that Anderson ‘fails to classify Weber as a nationalist grand thinker, stranger still that Rousseau, Burke, J. S. Mill and Friedrich List are not seen as nationalist grand thinkers ... ‘ In a recent article on Marx, List and Smith (‘The World of Nations: Some Economic Implications of Nationalism’, Critical Review, vol. 9, 1995) Liah Greenfeld adds more names. While Greenfeld restates the interpretation of Marx given in her Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity (Cambridge, MA, 1992), see pp. 577–9 and 581–2 of the new article for her view of nationalism in Adam Smith.

[82] J. Lester, Modern Tsars and Princes: The Struggle for Hegemony in Russia, London, 1995, pp. 7–8.

[83] Gramsci's well-known and often-cited 'Marxist' analyses of the October 1917 revolution in Russia and its aftermath show that the Bolshevik seizure of power took place in a country in which nation-building had not yet taken place. See Lester, Modern Tsars and Princes, pp. 19–21 and Walter Adamson, Hegemony and Revolution: A Study of Antonio Gramsci's Political and Cultural Theory, Berkeley, 1980, p. 221, whom Lester cites. R. Bellamy, Modern Italian Social Theory: Ideology and Politics from Pareto to the Present, Oxford, 1987 writes on Gramsci's place in the history of Italian nation-formation.

[84] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 125.

[85] Ibid., p. 135.

[86] Ibid., p. 137.

[87] R. Findlay, 'Notes on the Political Economy of Nationalism', in Breton, Galeotti, Salmon and Wintrobe, Nationalism and Rationality, p. 149.

[88] To take an extreme example: the 'Ruthenes' of Hungary before 1918 were being told at various times that, on the basis of certain 'objective' criteria, they were Hungarian, or Ukrainian, or Russian, or Ruthene or Austrian. (Because a supra-ethnic, 'imperial-Austrian' national identity was not created, or did not survive for long, we should not forget that there were times when serious attempts were being made to promote such a national identity. On this matter, see W. Leitsch, 'East Europeans Studying History in Vienna (1855–1918)', in D. Deletant and H. Hanak, eds., Historians as Nation-Builders: Central and South-East Europe, London, 1988.) In such situations, choosing one nationality against others implied making

choices in politics, in attitudes towards ‘industrialisation’, and so forth, because some nationalisms were more ‘scientific’ and others more ‘Utopian’.

[89] [Editorial Note: Roman Szporluk’s guess can now be answered positively: see E. Gellner, Language and Solitude: Wittgenstein, Malinowski, and the Hapsburg Dilemma, Cambridge, 1998.)

[90] Gellner, ‘A Non-nationalist Pole’, Encounters with Nationalism, p. 78.

[91] Findlay, ‘Notes on the Political Economy ofNationalism’, p. 148.

[92] Gellner, Thought and Change, pp. 122–3.

[93] E. Gellner, Culture, Identity and Politics, Cambridge, 1987.

** 2 Ernest Gellner’s diagnoses of nationalism: a critical overview, or, what is living and what is dead in Ernest Gellner’s philosophy of nationalism?

Brendan O ‘Leary

The theoretical problem is to separate the quite spurious ‘national’ and ‘natural’ justifications and explanations of nationalism, from the genuine, time- and context-bound roots of it. (Ernest Gellner, Thought and Change)[94]

Nationalism, so far the most potent principle of political legitimacy in the modern world, holds that the nation should be collectively and freely institutionally expressed, and ruled by its conationals. In numerous essays and four books, Ernest Gellner, an exceptionally brilliant, fluent, prolific and witty philosopher, anthropologist, sociologist and multilingual polymath

provided lucid and persuasive accounts of why nationalism is a necessary component of modernity, and why it is its typical and major principle of political legitimacy.[95] This chapter seeks to provide a preliminary posthumous analysis of Gellner’s legacy. It needs little justification since all worthwhile subsequent writing and research on nationalism will benefit from Gellner’s work, whether they build on his presumptions or dissent from them.

Gellner’s arguments about nationalism disturbed both conservatives and secular rationalists. The reasons are not hard to find. Nationalism relegates religion to a secondary, and even inessential, principle of a stable and legitimate political order and thus challenges traditionalist conservatism. Nationalism also suggests that law, reason, utility, material prosperity and social justice are secondary principles in establishing a stable and legitimate political order, and has therefore provoked persistent condemnation from rationalist liberals and socialists for some two hundred years.[96] Gellner’s writings on nationalism were a sustained criticism of one very pious Oakeshottian conservative, the late Elie Kedourie; but they were also intended to reassure rationalist liberals (including social democrats). One question is whether he provided the right reassurances.

This chapter scrutinises the core arguments of Gellner’s Thought and Change, Nations and Nationalism and Nationalism. His other writings on the subject are treated in parentheses. This textual focus is not difficult to justify. Nations and Nationalism was Gellner’s most elaborate statement on the subject; and was largely a rich expansion of the themes first sketched in Thought and Change. His last work, Nationalism, completed but not published in the summer before his death, does not repudiate the key propositions advanced in Nations and Nationalism. However, it does contain some tacit and important qualifications, as well as elaborations, of his views — as did his Encounters with Nationalism, a late collection of essays and reviews, and as did his ‘Reply to Critics’, who included this author, in The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner, edited by J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie. Benefiting from these late writings this chapter will close by answering the question in the subtitle above.

*** Thought and Change

Gellner’s first extensive statement on nationalism asserted that both liberalism and Marxism got it wrong.[97] Most liberals assumed nationalism was a doomed legacy of outmoded irrationalism, superstition and savagery; most Marxists thought it was a necessary but temporary stage in the path to global socialism. They were both a touch previous in their assumptions. Indeed, while Marxism, as an organised ideocracy, is now fast heading towards its grave and political liberalism is wracked with self-doubt, nationalism seems in vigorous and rude health.

Marxism and liberalism were not wrong, however, because two other popular theories are right, namely ‘Dark Gods theory’ and ‘naturality theory’. Dark Gods theory has it that nationalism is the inevitable expression of the atavistic, irrationalist passions that motivate human beings — an original sin.[98] Gellner rejected this idea as ‘utter nonsense’, even when it included sensible premises like the importance of belonging, identification and exclusion in human behaviour.[99] That human beings have always been organised in groups with loyalty-instilling capacities must be distinguished from their more recent and historically novel propensity to identify with the modern anonymous nation. Naturality theory has it that people have nationalities in the way that they have eyebrows and blood groups; that it is natural that those who share a nationality should wish to share the same political unit; and this is a good thing. Gellner, by contrast, insisted on the contingency of nationalism. It is, however, underpinned by social foundations: ‘there are undoubtedly overwhelmingly powerful factors in the contemporary and recent social conditions which do make these [nationalist] suppositions ... natural and probably irresistible’.[100]

Gellner rejected naturality theory and Kedourie’s idealist argument that nationalism is the result of a world-historical intellectual error: an accidental and bad set of ideas, loosely derived from Kant, and disseminated by philosophical incompetents with disastrous consequences. [101] Contrary to the assumption of the naturality of nationalism, the typical political units for most of history were not animated by nationalist principles — which did not feature in small tribal or village units, city states, feudal entities, dynastic empires or in the loose moral empires of a shared religion. Premodern political units rarely, and only accidentally, coincided with those of ‘nations’,

‘i.e. linguistic and cultural boundaries’.[102] Within them the nationality of the governors was not a fundamental issue of legitimacy; the governed simply asked of their rulers whether they were ‘less corrupt and grasping, or more just and merciful’ than their predecessors.[103] Now, to use the nouns of social anthropologists, the relationships between ‘structure’ and ‘culture’ are utterly changed. Nationalism is a principle of political legitimacy for us precisely because culture has become so important that it ‘does not so much underline structure: rather, it replaces it’.[104]

Once social ‘structure’, i.e., social roles, were tightly circumscribed, nested and ascriptive, and for this reason shared linguistic and cultural communication was not essential to the preservation of social order and effective interaction; but now social roles are open and changeable, and ‘those who communicate must speak the same language, in some sense or other’, and the classification of people by ‘culture’ is classification by ‘nationality’.[105] The negative social foundations of nationalism are thus explained by the erosion of rigid social structures. A shared culture has become much more important in creating and sustaining social cohesion than it was. The positive social foundations are explained by economies of scale in the production of literate citizens by state-sponsored educational systems. The minimal political unit, formerly circumscribed by defence or economic requirements, ‘is now determined by the preconditions of education’, [106] which means it must be larger than the family, village and city-state. Moreover, the relevant educational system must operate ‘in some medium, some language (both in the literal and the extended sense)’ .[107] Literacy, an essential aspect of a normally socialised modern human being, is generated by state-sponsored educational systems, which are multiply facilitated if the idioms of the home and the school are the same. In turn, modern educational systems explain the cultural identifications that move so many human beings. These identifications are, however, historically recent and novel, and are not (authentically?) nostalgic: modern people ‘do not in general become nationalists from sentiment or sentimentality, atavistic or not, well-based or myth-founded: they become nationalists through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognised’. [108]

Thought and Change provided a schematic account of why modern loyalty-invoking units are not very small and local, like tribal, feudal or classical units: functioning educational systems have to operate on a

broader scale; and of why they are cultural units: a shared culture is an indispensable feature of a modern social system. Gellner went one stage further and asked why these cultural units tend to be smaller than those of agrarian religious civilisations (e.g., Christendom or Islam), even though these wider civilisations could have furnished a shared language or culture. In other words, he sought to explain the divisiveness of nationalism — why it fractures wider political entities, such as the empires of the ancien regime. His answer was that ‘nationalism is a phenomenon connected not so much with industrialisation or modernisation as such, but with its uneven diffusion’. [109]

The uneven impact of successive waves of industrialisation and modernisation generate sharp stratifications between peoples that are not hallowed by custom, that are not easily politically regulated, but that are remediable through ‘national’ secession. Intelligentsias that experience blocked social mobility, and who share cultural traits with proletarians experiencing multiple humiliations in urban environments, and discrimination in labour markets, provide the personnel for nationalist movements. They seek to establish their own nation-states if they presently have no feasible prospect of being fairly treated or assimilated — which Gellner seemed to treat as the same thing. These new nationstates will be modern, or at least they will be structured as such, even if in ideological self-deception the intelligentsia romantically believe themselves to be restoring their old nation. They will talk like narodniks but act as westernisers. [110] Contrary to the wisdom of historiographers, poets and philologists: ‘Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to selfconsciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist — but it does need some pre-existing differentiating marks to work on, even if ... these are purely negative.’[111]

These are the core propositions of Thought and Change. Gellner anticipated criticisms by clarifying and qualifying his theses in three ways.

First, he recognised that ‘some pre-modern loyalty-evoking political units’, notably the strong dynastic states of the Atlantic seaboard of Europe, embraced populations and territories ‘similar to those which one would expect to be produced by modern nationalism’, and posed the question ‘do

these rather different phenomena, so close to “nationalism”, contradict the theory?’ [112] In a dense and slightly confusing passage, he suggested three possible theory-saving options:

(i) he could accept that the modernising forces generating nationalism have been operating in Europe at least since the Reformation, or

(ii) he could refuse to classify these phenomena with modern nationalism (which left open the possibility of a non-modern nationalism?), or

(iii) he could accept that a pre-modern shared culture, including membership of a dynastic state whose boundaries roughly overlapped with a language, might be a factor, amongst others, in inclining people in the direction of particular bedfellows for the construction of a modern nation.

Gellner wanted to protect his theory from the charge that it is tautological and/or unfalsifiable, and to separate the modern phenomena of nationalism — ‘citizenship through education, group differentiae in terms of the language of instruction, and unmediated membership of mass co-cultural societies’ — from other superficially related premodern phenomena, ‘even if a few of those others also make a banner of language-and-culture’.[113] The latter are the religious and linguistic imperialisms of some ethnically based pre-modern dynasties.

Secondly, Gellner insisted that ‘it is impossible to predict with confidence, prior to the crystallisation of this or that nationalism, just which “nations” will emerge’.[114] Cultural differences are widespread and real, and injustices, exploitation, humiliation are equally so, but it isn’t easy to tell just which identifications and oppositions will emerge to produce specific nationalisms. This predictive weakness may make his theory look suspiciously untestable, but he left the impression that it can be tested in other ways, and that it has the merit of rejecting two alternative theses:

(i) that all pre-modern cultures will inevitably generate nations, and (ii) that some pre-modern cultures are far more likely than others to

form the raw materials of modern nations.[115]

Thirdly, he recognised that nationalism is not an all-powerful or all-pervasive political force. There are exceptional zones that have resisted the norm of ‘one culture, one polity’: Switzerland, Belgium and Canada. The last two cases did not concern him because the weaknesses of Belgian and Canadian nationalism confirm the assumption that bilingual or multilingual states will be less nationally stable than those that are monolingual. Switzerland is more embarrassing: Gellner described it as ‘a traditional society which has weathered modernisation’ so it can tolerate linguistic pluralism. Also, there ‘is a sense in which various kinds of Swiss “speak the same language” even if they do not do so in a literal sense’;[116] a curious argument. Gellner additionally recognised that just as nationalisms can be obstructed or modified ‘by special circumstances’, so they can also be facilitated by power politics which may manipulate nationalist ideas, or by the dissemination of political norms which are infused with nationalist assumptions. He mentions what for him was a homely example, the formation of the Czech national state which resulted from a coalition between Czech intellectuals and western foreign policy.

He closed his first discussion of nationalism by briefly evaluating it. He wasted no time condemning nationalist chauvinism in the standard manner of liberal cosmopolitans. Instead he considered that the ‘main boon which nationalism has conferred on mankind … may well be political’. The benefits are not merely psychological though these are important — the dignity and self-respect arising from the elimination of ‘second- or nth class citizenship’ and the joys liberated peoples enjoy from not being ‘bossed and knocked about by others with whom they cannot or are not allowed to identify’, and being bossed and knocked about by ‘their own’ people instead. [117]

The major political benefit that nationalism has given to humanity is that it has preserved pluralism in the world, and thereby preserved political liberalism. This conclusion was reached by considering the most feasible

counterfactual alternatives to a world of nation-states: a world government or a world in which the major empires of the late nineteenth century had been preserved. In both these situations, Gellner reasoned that liberalism would have been obliterated. A world government passing through the second, global phase of industrialisation would have resembled South Africa under apartheid, a coercively organised hierarchy of races and ethnic communities; while a world of industrialising empires would have been wracked by ferocious battles over citizenship fought between the metropolitan cores and the more numerous and poorer peoples of the territories they had conquered. The ironic message was that nationalism, unintentionally, preserved the miracle of western liberalism because it inhibited global despotism and helped destroy the world of the European empires. For this reason, if no others, Gellner thought that liberals should take comfort from the benign repercussions of nationalism.

*** Nations and nationalism

The theory articulated in Thought and Change went largely unnoticed in the writings of political scientists, political sociologists and political philosophers — perhaps because it was buried within a wider discussion of philosophy and social change, and perhaps because it was patronisingly classed as a provincial ‘English’ variation on the themes of the modernisation school ascendant in American social science. [118] Thought and Change was known, if at all, for sharply stating the conventional wisdom of the emergent affluent society of the late 1950s and the early 1960s: a modern state has one major principle of political legitimacy, the GNP must increase. The other major principle, that the state must be a nation-state, was less remarked upon.

In complete contrast, Gellner’s book-length statement, wittily expounded nearly two decades later in Nations and Nationalism, was very well received amongst political scientists and political sociologists who study nationalism, and those who do not, and rightly so.[119] Nations and Nationalism was at once more sociologically ambitious than Thought and Change, bearing the imprint of Gellner’s dialogues with Durkheim and Marx; more conceptually novel, displaying the value-added of his theory of industrial society; and more empirically promising, as

it set out a typology of nationalism-inducing and nationalism-thwarting situations.

There are, however, fundamental continuities between Thought and Change and Nations and Nationalism. First, Gellner continued to reject four erroneous theories of nationalism:

(i) the nationalist theory that it is natural, self-evident and self-generating;

(ii) Kedourie's theory that it is a contingent consequence of 'ideas which did not need ever to be formulated, and appeared by a regrettable accident', and is inessential to the life of industrial societies;[120]

(iii) Marxism's 'Wrong Address Theory': the liberationist message intended for classes was 'by some terrible postal error' delivered instead to nations; and

(iv) 'Dark Gods Theory'.[121]

The thesis is restated that nationalism is an essential component of modernisation, of the transition from agrarian to industrial society — the latter requiring a state that can produce and be maintained by one common, literate and accessible culture. The vocabulary in which this idea is expressed has, however, become part of a wider philosophy of history. Nationalism is now defined as:

the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority, and in some cases the totality, of the population. It means the general diffusion of a school-mediated, academy-supervised idiom, codifed for the requirements of a reasonably precise bureaucratic and technological communication. It is the establishment of an anonymous impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomised individuals, held together above all by

a shared culture of this kind, in place of the previous complex structure of local groups, sustained by folk cultures reproduced locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves. [122]

The preconditions (and maintenance) of nationalism include widespread or universal literacy, and a society committed to economic growth through its formal commitment to social mobility — both horizontal and vertical. Industrial society requires effective and widespread context-free communication through a common medium, a ‘high culture’. Communicative media are placed centre-stage in generating and maintaining nationalism, but the argument stresses the functionality of a shared culture for the effective operation of modern work organisations and bureaucracies. [123]

In Nations and Nationalism nationalism is still seen as distinctive to modernity, but it is now part of a philosophy of history that distinguishes three phases in human progress, the pre-agrarian, the agrarian, and the industrial. In a reworked and non-teleological form of historical materialism, Gellner maintained that each of the three key phases is associated with characteristic modes of production, coercion, culture and cognition. [124] Nationalism is distinctive to industrial society, and intimately connected to its mode of production. It would have made no sense in tribal societies because such societies were and are stateless, and the ambition to unify the national culture and the state would therefore have been incoherent. In the ‘agro-literate’ polity or the agrarian empire, nationalism also would have made no sense, because such empires did not need their elites and peasant masses to share a common culture. In the industrial society, by contrast, nationalism is an essential part of the cultural atmosphere — its ‘exo-socialisation’, i.e., educating persons in a culture that mostly frees them from familial and corporate ties, is a sine qua non of social cohesion. To these suppositions Gellner added a modified Durkheimian account of normative orientations through the ages. Whereas tribal societies worship themselves indirectly (as spirits), agrarian societies worship their rulers directly or indirectly (in monotheistic religions), while in industrial societies the participants directly worship themselves (nationalism). Nationalism is the functional equivalent for industrial societies of the world religions of agro-literate polities, and of the animistic cults of pre-agrarian bands, nomads and tribes.

Table 2.1 Gellner’s typology of the inducing and thwarting of nationalism

Type	P	-P
	-E	-E
1	A	B	typical prenationalist situation
2	A	A	untypical prenationalist situation
	E	-E
3	A	A	early industrialism without ethnic catalyst
4	A	B	ethnic nationalism
	E	E
5	A	A	mature homogeneous industrialism (established nationalism)
6	A	B	classical liberal western nationalism
	-E	E
7	A	B	diaspora or ‘middle-man’ nationalism
8	A	A	Decembrist revolutionary, but not nationalist, situation

Source: adapted from Nations and Nationalism, p. 94. (Nationalism-generating situations in italics)

Gellner also provided a typology of ‘nationalism-inducing and nationalism-thwarting situations’ which considerably amplified the crude ‘model’ sketched in Thought and Change. [125] There are three dimensions to the typology. Gellner differentiated

(i) power-holders from the rest: P and -P;

(ii) those who have had access to a modern education or a viable modern high culture from those who have not: E and -E; and

(iii) a polity in which the power-holders and the rest, and the educated or uneducated, share a homogeneous culture (A and A), from one in which they do not (A and B).

These three dimensions generate the eight possibilities in Table 2.1: a line containing A and A represents a culturally homogeneous territory, whereas a line containing A and B represents a bicultural territory.

The typology suggests four situations in which nationalism will be engendered, and four in which it will be absent or thwarted. Consider the latter. In types 1 and 2, where no one, power-holder or non-powerholder, has access to modern education, nationalism cannot exist, ex hypothesi. The typical agro-literate polity, type 1, is not culturally homogeneous, although a few such specimens might exist, type 2. [126] In the third scenario, type 8, the old ruling class of the agro-literate polity retains power, and is challenged by a politically weak, but educationally and economically privileged intelligentsia — a ‘Decembrist’ revolutionary situation, type 8. No nationalist problems and conflicts arise here, said Gellner. [127] In the last case, type 3, early industrialism within a culturally homogeneous society, the power-holders are differentiated from the non-power-holders by the former’s monopoly of modern high culture. This situation gives rise to class conflict, which may be moderately ferocious, but without the catalyst of ethnic differentiation is unlikely to be especially politically destabilising — contrary to the assumptions of classical Marxism.

The typology implies, by contrast, four nationalism-engendering situations:

(i) satisfied nationalism, type 5, characteristic of mature homogeneous industrialism in which the power-holders and non-power-holders share access to the same style of modern education, and are co-cultural conationals — in which case we can expect no [internal] nationalist conflicts and problems;[128]

(ii) classical liberal nationalism, type 6, characteristic of territories in which some have power and others do not, and this difference correlates with cultural differences, even though the relevant persons are both educationally equipped for modern society — a situation, Gellner suggested, which historically corresponds to the ‘unification nationalisms’ of nineteenth-century Italy and Germany;[129]

(iii) ethnic nationalism, type 4, characteristic of territories in which power-holders have privileged access to the central high culture, which is their own, while the powerless are also the educationally deprived, sunk in low cultures. The small intelligentsias of the powerless spearhead efforts to make their low culture into a high culture — a situation, Gellner suggested, which historically corresponds to the nationalisms of Eastern, Slavic and Balkan Europe;[130] and

(iv) Diaspora nationalism, type 7, better described as ‘middle-man’ nationalism, arises in societies in transit from Agraria to Industria, and is characteristic of groups that historically had access to commercial and educational high culture, often through their caste-roles as pariah ‘middle-men’ in the agrarian economy. These groups are economically better equipped for modernisation than those who historically lacked access to a high culture. They are also ethnically distinctive, but lack political and military power — and so are likely candidates for genocidal assaults or mass expulsions as economic competition grows within a modernising and nationalising polity; and in consequence, are likely to generate ‘diaspora nationalisms’. Gellner had in mind the Jews, Greeks, Armenians, overseas Indians in Africa, overseas Chinese in south-east Asia and the Ibos ofNigeria.[131]

This typology rested on a theory of social conflict, explicitly directed against Marxist propositions. Conflict is predicted to occur ‘where “ethnic” (cultural or other diacritical marks) are visible and accentuate the differences in educational access and power’, and above all, when they inhibit the ‘free flow of personnel across the loose lines of social stratification’.[132] In short: blockages in social mobility, when tied to ethnic or other diacritical markers, are at the heart of nationalist conflicts. Exclusionary control of cultural capital, or usurpationary attempts to capture it, rather than exclusionary control of propertied capital or usurpationary attempts to expropriate it, give rise to vigorous social wars, and nationalist conflicts.

This theory of conflict is tied, in deliberately provocative language, to a discussion of ‘social entropy’ and equality in industrial society. [133] An ideal-typical industrial society should have a systematic randomness, and thus be ‘entropic’: social origins should not matter in determining placement in the occupational and prestige hierarchies, and in this sense industrial society should be egalitarian. ‘Entropy-resistant traits’ constitute a very serious problem. They ‘have a marked tendency not to become, even with the passage of time ... evenly dispersed throughout the entire society’.[134] Such traits can be invented, Gellner suggests, to apply to a particular class of persons, but: ‘the entropy-resistance of a concept, in this sense, will normally be of interest only if it is a reasonably natural notion, one already in use in the society in question, rather than artificially invented for the present purpose’.[135]

He then discussed a range of entropy-resistant traits, physical or genetically transmitted, and religious-cultural habits which are often just as resistant to the industrial ‘melting pot’.

This illuminating discussion sits uneasily with the arguments in Thought and Change which had suggested the almost plasticine materials with which modern nation-builders could ‘invent’ their nations and nation-states. Nevertheless Gellner restated his conviction that we cannot predict which cultures will be blessed with success in their efforts to become nationalist cultures with political roofs.[136] He went further, and suggested that the ‘weakness of nationalism’ is much greater than it might appear at first glance. [137] The number of languages in the world may be

some 8,000, and the number of other cultural or historical materials which might be used to mark potential national cultures is even higher. Yet there are at present about 200 states in existence — many of which are postage-stamp states that cannot be counted as aspirant nation-states. The potential number of nation-states may be higher given the existence of numerous unsatisfied nationalisms which may succeed, one day. Yet the ratio of effective to potential nationalisms is a small one — much less than nationalists might imagine. The implication is that a blind, unpredictable and evolutionary process selects which nationalisms shall succeed, and which shall not. There is an apparent paradox here. Nationalism is a very strong force in the modern world; in most cases it prevails, and it does set the standard for what constitutes a modern state. However, very few potential nations are strong enough to make it to modernity and statehood.

*** Reviewing and reformulating the theory in Thought and Change and Nations and Nationalism

Gellner’s theory has been subject to diffuse criticisms, which I have grouped into five principal categories. The next section addresses how robust the theory remains in the light of these criticisms, and how it might be reformulated.

**** The philosophical functionalism of the argument

Both in Thought and Change and Nations and Nationalism, Gellner’s argument seems to be explicitly, brazenly and unashamedly, functionalist. Functionalism is characteristic of historical materialism, [138] and forgivable in a social anthropologist, but less easily accepted by social scientists committed to causal explanations or methodological individualism. It is ironic that it is Perry Anderson, grandfather of the Marxist New Left, who complains that the ‘most arresting feature of [Gellner’s] theory of nationalism is its single-minded economic functionalism’.[139] He cites in support a passage from the conclusion to Nations and Nationalism:

So the economy needs both the new type of central culture and the central state; the culture needs the state; and the state probably needs the homogeneous cultural branding of its flock ... In brief, the mutual relationship of a modern culture and state is something quite new, and springs, inevitably, from the requirements of a modern economy.[140]

There is no denying the functionalist cast of these arguments. If one is sceptical about functionalist arguments in the social sciences the important question is whether Gellner's case can be reconstructed in a nonfunctionalist manner. It is clear that for him nationalism is explained by its beneficial consequences (functionality) for modern society.[141] A strongly functionalist version of his argument would go as follows:[142]

(i) Nationalism is an effect of modernisation.

(ii) Nationalism is beneficial for modernising states — because a highly specialised division of labour requires a unified high culture, which is underpinned by a highly developed and specialised educational system.

(iii) Nationalism (in Gellner's sense) is unintended by the actors producing modernisation.

(iv) The causal relationship between nationalism and modernisation is not recognised by the agents operating in modernising societies.

(v) Nationalism functionally maintains modernisation by a feedback loop operating through the actions of modernising states.

Formulated in this way Gellner's argument would display the vices of functionalist reasoning — in which events and processes occur wholly, or largely, beyond the understanding of human agents, in which consequences precede causes, and in which suspicions arise that supraindividual and holistic entities are tacitly invoked to do explanatory work.

One obvious way to reconstruct Gellner’s argument is to deny (iv), and replace a functionalist with a ‘filter explanation’.[143] It would take the following form: modernising elites believe that nationalism is essential for modernisation, precisely because it breaks down barriers to modernising success. Nation-building nationalists recognise the beneficial consequences of nationalism, and this fact helps explains its political diffusion. Nationalists believe that nation-building will break down traditionalist or religious inhibitions on economic growth, and political blockages — such as imperialist domination or caste-like barriers that prevent the liberation of productive economic, political and cultural energies.[144] It is not at all difficult to find wide-ranging support for this filter explanation. Prospective nation-builders, like Paidraig Pearse and Jawaharlal Nehru, embraced nationalism because they believed it would liberate the Irish and Indian nations, and free them to develop their educational, economic and political systems, and the Japanese reformers of the Meiji restoration deliberately imitated features of German and French nation-building in their efforts to build a modern Japan. The idea that nationalism could lead to a renewal — or revival — of social energies was implicit in the advice rendered by Rousseau in The Government of Poland, which commended a citizen’s army and a comprehensive state-controlled education system. [145]

Although this ‘filter explanation’ would avoid strong functionalism, it remains vulnerable on two grounds. First, the ‘real’ filter in explaining the actions of the first nation-builders and nationalists may have been the perception that nationalism was essential for military success or geopolitical security, rather than economic success. Therefore the historical relationship between nationalism, modernisation and industrialisation may have been more indirect and unintended than Gellnerian theory suggests[146] — and it may be that Gellner’s theory accounts better for the maintenance of nationalism than it does for its origins.

Secondly, the universal truth of the ‘filter explanation’ may be doubted, that is nationalism may not be essential for modernisation. Communist regimes in the USSR, China and North Korea did not primarily rely — although one might argue that they did rely tacitly (remember Stalin’s ‘socialism in one country’)

— on nationalism for ‘first-stage industrialisation’, although one might argue, correctly, that none of them are exemplars of modernising success. There have been some highly successful industrial city-states, for example Hong Kong, which have not required nationalism to travel to their version of modernity. And, a point to which I shall return, Gellner himself appeared to suggest that Islam, unlike the other world religions, might be capable of performing modernisation’s necessary support functions — thereby making nationalism inessential for the breakthrough to modernisation. [147]

These qualifications, do not, however, imperil the general thesis that nationalism is beneficial, and even possibly optimal, for modernisation, providing we accept the qualification that this relationship is widely recognised by nationalists themselves. It is also tempting to draw a distinction between explaining the genesis of nationalism and explaining its diffusion. The genesis of nationalism may have been at least partially autonomous of modernisation and industrialisation, and its functionally beneficially consequences may only have been partially related to modern economic development. The diffusion of nationalism, its attractiveness to those who followed the first modern nations, may be more centrally linked to their belief in a Gellnerian-style filter explanation. Rather than being foolish victims of the contagious bad ideas, as Kedourie implied, nationalists believed that nationalism would assist modernisation in the way that it had the British, the Americans, the French and the Germans. [148] In short, it is possible to argue for the core Gellnerian thesis that there is a functional relationship between nationalism and modernity, but it does not have to be expressed in a strongly functionalist form.

**** The place of nationalism in a philosophy of history

Delineating stages in history is partly a matter of taste. Some completely reject the idea of a philosophy of history; those who do not may dislike three-stage tales of human progress; and some prefer explicitly evolutionary to non-teleological and episodic conceptions of the transitions between stages in human history. My position, in this chapter, is that of a critical supporter of Gellner’s philosophy of history. But within that philosophy there are three potentially embarrassing questions about nations and nationalism:

(i) could there have been nations before nationalism, and, if so, can Gellner’s theory cope with such anomalies?

(ii) could there have been nations and nationalism before industrialism, and if so, can Gellner’s theory be reformulated to cope with this difficulty?

(iii) can there be post-industrial national conflicts, and if so, how do they fit in with Gellner’s general theory?

**** Nations before nationalism, and nationalism before industrialism?

Gellner’s is a strongly ‘modernist’ theory. He informed his readers that nationalism only became an historical possibility from approximately the eighteenth century — indeed he cast the philosophers of the Enlightenment in the role of the first alienated intelligentsia, ‘the westernisers of the west’. Nationalism invents nations, rather than the other way around.

Yet a considerable number of specialists on nationalism, implicitly or explicitly, reject the stark modernism of Gellner. Thus historians write of the ‘old continuous European nations’, and compare them with the ‘new nations’ of eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world. [149] Historical sociologists write in a similar vein: John Armstrong’s Nations before Nationalism and Anthony Smith’s The Ethnic Origins of Nations are sustained criticisms of the (strong) modernist interpretation of nations and nationalism. [150] Smith, for example, argues that ethnic culture and social organisation were persistent, intensive, widespread and salient in much of Euro-Asian antiquity and the medieval era. Moreover, particular kingdoms were often based on ethnic communities: for Smith, nationalism represents ‘the transformation and universalisation of a preexisting political and social norm’.[151] Similarly, Liah Greenfeld’s Nationalism treats sixteenth-century England as the first nation and the site of the first nationalism, and her researches on England, France,

Russia, Germany and America extend back to the Renaissance. [152]

Can one defend Gellner’s theory against these arguments? He anticipated one possible line of defence in Thought and Change, the forces of modernisation have been at work since the Reformation, or before. This reply is not, however, convincing; it seems to operate against the placement of nationalism within Gellner’s triadic stages of history, and to suggest that Protestantism and vernacular print languages were more important than industrialism in spawning nationalism. Yet it seems empirically sensible to concede that ‘national consciousness’ developed in some territories before full-scale industrialisation: consider just the colonies of Latin America, North America and Ireland. [153] Moreover, it seems sensible to concede that protonationalist ideas existed, at least in embryonic forms, in commercial societies like early modern England and Holland.[154] This leaves Gellner with his other, and theoretically more consistent, line of defence — to refuse to classify the phenomena of pre-eighteenth-century ethnic or national consciousness with modern nationalism or nationalism proper. There are good grounds for doing so.

Many of the authors who survey the rise of ‘nations’ before nationalism are conceptually confused;[155] and, secondly, many of them concede that nationalism ‘both as an ideology and movement, is a wholly modern phenomenon’.[156] Gellner’s theory can not be embarrassed by the existence of the word nation in pre-eighteenth-century England, or indeed by the presence of national consciousness, especially of a religiously mediated kind. It would be embarrassed by explicitly nationalist doctrines of legitimacy, nationalist programmes and nationalist movements flourishing in the time of Henry VII. Most of those who discuss ‘nations’ before ‘nationalism’ are in fact establishing the existence of cultural precedents, and ethnic and other materials subsequently shaped and re-shaped by nation-builders. But it is a conceptual confusion, or so at least a Gellnerian must insist, to assimilate the materials upon which nationalists will draw, to nationalism itself. Consciousness of a shared cultural, religious or territorial identity is not of the essence of nationalism. Its essence is a theory of political legitimacy: the governed must be conational with and representative of the governed. That said, the work of Armstrong, Smith and Greenfeld may be used to qualify Gellner’s work in one respect: they furnish evidence that

the first nations were innovations rather than inventions, and that predicting or ‘retrodicting’ which nations would emerge in the age of nationalism may be less difficult than Gellner declared.

Most of those who have written of nations before the age of nationalism, whether they be historians like Hugh Seton-Watson, or historical sociologists, like Armstrong, Greenfeld and Smith, concede the modernity of nationalist doctrine and political programmes. They recognise that the writers of the Enlightenment and their romantic critics, and the phenomena of the American and French revolutions, produced an explicitly novel set of doctrines, nationalism proper. Gellnerian theory can thus, in principle, be saved: there may have been talk about nations, and indeed national consciousness, before nationalism, but, so to speak, there was no nationalist talk of nations and national consciousness before nationalism. That said, Gellner was left the problem that the historical evidence does not suggest a neat causal or functional relationship between industrialisation and the onset of nationalism, and I will consider later how he sought to manage this little ‘local difficulty’ in his last writings.

**** Nationalism after industrialisation?

Another possible embarrassment for Gellner’s philosophy of history would be evidence of revived or new nationalist secessionist movements emerging within a fully industrialised environment, after the ‘great transformation’ from Agraria to Industria has been completed. Do the phenomena of ‘ethnic revivalism’, ‘ethnonationalism’, ‘mininationalism’ or ‘neonationalism’ as they have been variously and sometimes misleadingly labelled, both in advanced OECD countries and among and within the post-Soviet successor states, constitute a problem for Gellner’s theory?

It is not transparent how exactly such evidence would refute the theory. The evidence would be consistent with some of the propositions in Nations and Nationalism, where Gellner differentiated between early nationalism and late nationalism — which occur respectively in the conditions of early and mature industrialisation.[157] In early industrialism

there is ‘a terrible difference’ between the life-chances of the well-off and the starving poor, whereas in late industrialism there is not such acute objective social discontent — and, in consequence, although a late nationalism may be motivated by blocked social mobility and inequality, it will, on materialist assumptions, presumably, be less virulent. In short, on these premises, Gellner’s theory would be most embarrassed by violently virulent nationalist secessionisms within advanced ‘Industrias’, not by the existence of such movements themselves, which, after all, might be occasioned by ‘counter-entropic’ traits.

Gellner is presumed by many to have argued that the world is drifting towards advanced industrialised homogeneous nation-states in which secessionisms are less likely — and that is one possible reading of his obiter dicta on the ‘future of nationalism’.[158] A moment’s reflection, however, should make clear that an industrialised world characterised by divergent demographic growth rates across culturally differentiated communities, displaying counter-entropic traits of whatever kind, and large-scale migratory movements, in which migrants can retain their original high culture (if they have one), is not going to be free either of nationalist secessionist possibilities, or of ‘integral nationalisms’. Consequently, even if Gellner can be convicted of the view that nationalist secessionist movements are less likely after industrialisation — a view for which I think there is no explicit textual warrant — his theory itself is not deductively linked to such a view.

Another line of defence would be that the scale of virulent nationalist secessionism, or nationalist irredentism, at least within the OECD, has not been very substantial. There are no significant secessionist or irredentist movements in Austria, Australia, Denmark, Iceland, Luxembourg, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland or the USA. There are significant Revolutionist’ movements in Wales within the United Kingdom, in Catalonia in Spain, in Brittany and Corsica in France, and amongst both linguistic communities in Belgium. There are also significant, but peaceful secessionist movements in Canada, amongst the Quebecois, and in Great Britain amongst the Scots — who seek independence ‘within’ the NAFTA and the EU respectively. There has also been a recent effervescence of what may become full-fledged secessionist sentiment in Italy, notably in ‘Lombardy’ or ‘Padania’ — though it seems likely to remain a form of regional resentment;

and similar traits can be found in Belgium. Germany has been unified, but it has officially abandoned its other possible irredentist ambitions. Within ‘western Europe’ only Greece, the Republic of Ireland, and possibly Finland retain, in principle, ambitions to complete their nations, and in each case (apart, possibly, from Greece), the support for ‘reunification’ with the relevant conationals situated across recognised sovereign boundaries is generally peaceful, sentimental and inactive — which is not to say that it is finished. [159] Significant cases of protracted violent secessionism or unificationism in Europe have existed in the Basque country and Northern Ireland, but even here the relevant movements have smaller support-bases than their peaceful and regionally inclined conational competitors. The two Cypriot communities are, however, undoubtedly capable of further war.

Yet all in all there is not a great deal in the European Union, or the OECD, to embarrass Gellner’s theory. [160] Extensive armed violence and insurrection by aggrieved nationalist groups within the OECD is rare. Basque separatists in Spain; Irish republicans and loyalist paramilitaries in Northern Ireland; Israelis and Palestinians in and outside of Israel/ Palestine are responsible for the lion’s share. Sporadic activities by Corsicans, Tyrolese German-speakers and Bretons are small beer by comparison. In most regions of OECD states the aggrieved ethnic communities would appear to be capable of being satisfied by public policy changes and/or constitutional changes which recognise their national cultural claims. This may be so of the Quebecois in Canada, the Scots and Welsh in the UK, the Walloons in Belgium and the Catalans in Spain. A similar argument may be advanced for the bulk of Basques and Irish nationalists in Northern Ireland: Basques may be satisfied with extensive autonomy, northern Irish nationalists by the functional equivalent of shared sovereignty. [161] Indeed many of the actual or potential national and ethnic conflicts in advanced industrial countries may be remediable by accommodative political institutions, such as consociations, federalisms and condominiums, a point on which Gellner is weak, and to which I shall return.

If the scale of nationalist secessionism within advanced democratic capitalist societies seems exaggerated, the success of nationalist secessionism within the industrialised states of what were the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia is a fact. And there are further secessionist movements within the debris of these former communist systems: in Nagorno-Karabakh, Chechen-Ingushetia,

Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Dniester, Gagauzia, Kaliningrad, Crimea, Krajina, Kosovo and the Vojvodina. These phenomena are, however, not an overt embarrassment for Gellner's theory — unlike some other theories.[162] The respective communist systems failed to invent durable Soviet and Yugoslav nationalisms or 'high cultures', but they did industrialise through adapting — and in some cases creating — national cultures, and, incidentally, national political units, which then, in most cases, became the bases of secessionist movements when the communists lost their grip on power — which in turn was connected to their failures in managing industrial performance. This said, not all of the conflicts which generated secession from these communist polities are fully explicable within Gellnerian theory, which, as presently formulated, cannot treat sensitively the importance of the state-system and political regime types in explaining what encourages or thwarts nationalist secessionisms.

A superfluous defence of the Gellnerian theory is also available: most other social and political theories are left in a much worse state by evidence of secessionism in industrialised societies. Marxists, who thought future statelessness was also to be nationlessness, when we were all expected to be class-less and culture-less (or perhaps monocultured in a multicultured way), have an embarrassing affinity with liberal functionalists, who anticipated that the outcome of modernisation would be an instrumental and cosmopolitan world-federal order rather than a world of nation-states, who thought that ideocracy would vanish beneath the benefits of affluence, and that the fate of the nation-state was to be undermined from above, by international organisations, and from below, by political decentralisation. [163]

**** How predictionless or retrodictionless is the theory?

Gellner explicitly denied that one can predict which nations will acquire political roofs, and, by implication, just which phenotypically or culturally counter-entropic traits, or other materials, will provide the markers for the nations built by nationalists. There are at least two difficulties here. First, the selection process that determines which of the thousands of potential nations eventually become member states of the United Nations may not be as blind, or as unpredictable, as Gellner suggested. Secondly, if 'invented' or

‘designed’ nations are less stable than the ‘old’ or ‘continuous’ nations such evidence would suggest that ‘real’ ethnic or other foundations are more vital to the success of nation-building than Gellner suggested. I shall only elaborate the first point since the second point has been well made by Anthony Smith.

Historical evidence does suggest that while many may be called to be nations only a few are chosen — who now remembers the Burgundians? However, Gellner’s own theory, in principle, has greater retrodictive potential than he implies. His suppositions point towards a key selection mechanism: ceteris paribus, those possessed of a high culture, or on the verge of possessing one on the eve of modernisation, should be better endowed with nation-building potential than other potential nations. Those who have no ‘high culture’, or potential ‘high culture’, presumably are bereft of an intelligentsia, and lack the requisite quota of poets, balladeers, bibliophiles, engineers and officers for successful nationbuilding. For this reason Gellner’s casual citation of the nationalist potential implicit in the existence of 8,000 languages should not be accepted at face value. How many of these languages have the capacity for rapid transformation into a high culture, that is, one with an extensive vocabulary, a formal grammar, an alphabet, a literary tradition, a capacity for context-free communication, etc.? This question is open to empirical resolution but the number of feasible potential nations on the eve of modernity must have been less than a fundamentalist Gellnerian would imagine. A Gellnerian should also assume that viable candidates for nationhood must have a threshold population of around 250,000 (the population of Iceland which has successfully produced a national high culture) on the grounds, suggested in Thought and Change, that economies of scale are required to sustain a ‘non-parasitic’ and modern, education system. If so, then the numbers of potential nationalist ‘peoples’ on the eve of modernity was probably much less than 8,000. This question is capable of resolution through appropriate investigation of demographic and anthropological data.

Empirical appraisal of the selection mechanism implicit in Gellner’s theory need not, of course, be confined to the linguistic and demographic properties of potential nations. In Nations and Nationalism Gellner recognised that those communities which are tightly integrated into a literate world religion are more likely to be candidates for successful nation-

building or secessionist movements than those which are not. On Gellner's own logic, one should therefore predict greater nation-building capacity in some premodern cultures than others, and expect the number of feasible nations on the eve of modernity to be less numerous and more predictable than he implies. This argument is one way of reconciling Gellner's general theory with the arguments advanced by the 'nations before nationalism' school. Moreover, nothing in this argument commits one to an objectivist definition of the nation in which one trait, say race, is given pre-eminence.

If one were to extract from the mechanism of possession of a proto-high culture possible retrodictions or predictions about which cultures are most likely to generate modern nations, and test them against the historical evidence, one would, however, run into the issue of rival 'selection mechanisms'. The most obvious alternative selection mechanism affecting which cultures become nations, or at least realised nation-states, is exogenous rather than endogenous. Power politics may best explain which states have the borders that they do, and therefore which nations get to win their own nation-states or stakes in a multinational state. Since the onset of modernity — whenever that was — the state-system and the great powers have been decisive arbiters of the prospects of nations' achieving statehood or autonomy. The four great waves of modern state-creation have accompanied the collapse or weakening of empires: the formation of the states of Latin America in the 1820s and after, the new European states recognised at Versailles, the new Asian, African, Caribbean and Pacific states established after 1945; and the new successor states established on the ruins of the former tsarist and Soviet empires after 1989.

Most politically realised nations owe their existence, or at least their territorial shape, to the calculations, decisions and indecisions of the extant great powers which watched another great power collapsing or caused it to collapse. Even if the Gellnerian ingredients of blocked social mobility and strong diacritical markers are present to fertilise nationalism a potentially secessionist nationalism may be prevented from being successful by its exogenous environment: the Irish, the Poles and the Eritreans, to name but a few, took a long time to win their freedom. 'Nation-state' formation frequently takes place, as it were, by permission, rather than as a by-product of the strength of indigenous mobilisation for nationhood. Thus the French

helped the birth of the American nation; the British empire hastened the collapse of the Spanish empire; the victorious Allies decided the fate and shape of ‘nations’ at Versailles and presided over the redistribution of the debris of the Habsburg and Ottoman empires; and the departing colonial powers shaped the frontiers of the so-called new ‘nations’ (mostly multiethnic and multinational states) which they left behind. The best-known illustration of the salience of great states in determining the fate of nations is the fact that the principle of self-determination was widely ignored by the great powers after World War I, because they wanted to create economically and strategically (rather than nationally) viable states as checks and balances on Germany and the Soviet Union.[164] So the boundaries of Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia in the interwar years were established with scant respect for ethnic boundaries. Plebiscites were used to establish local preferences in some frontier zones, but not in geopolitically significant territories like the Sudetenland or the South Tyrol. Subsequently, from 1948 until 1989, the superpower system preserved borders which make no sense on any reasonable construal of national ‘self-determination’.

Sadly, it also seems reasonable to suggest that within collapsing empires the proto-nations that enjoy strategic positions or resources — be they demographic, military or economic — are likely to do better than more marginal communities, which may face the threat of genocide, mass-population transfers or coercive assimilation. Better, in short, to be Tartarstan than Chechnya, or Croatia rather than Bosnia. There is no need to elaborate further: power politics, and power resources, provide an alternative (or at least a supplementary and overdetermining) selection mechanism to that implicit in Gellner’s theory. [165]

The typology andforms of nationalism

Gellner’s typology was an admirable effort at theoretical parsimony. Three dimensions are used to generate four types of nationalism (outside of or against satisfied nation-states): western liberal nationalism, ethnic nationalism, diaspora nationalism and mature homogeneous nationalism.

There are, however, problems with the typology, even if we leave aside the simplicity of the dimensions. First, its explanatory capacities are implicitly limited to nationalist conflicts within states; it has little to say about nationalist conflicts between states. Secondly, it is not clear that classical liberal western nationalism emerged from the conjunction of a clash between educated power-holders from one high culture facing educated non-power-holders from another high culture, whereas ethnic nationalism emerges from a clash between educated power-holders from one high culture facing uneducated non-power-holders from a low culture. Gellner cited as the classic exemplars of classical liberal western nationalism the ‘unification nationalisms’ of Italy and Germany, and suggested that ‘a few battles’ and ‘some diplomacy’ were all that were required to sort out the right political roofs for the previously subordinated high cultures. By contrast, in eastern Europe and the Balkans matters were much messier, because nationalism was mobilised behind ‘a high culture as yet not properly crystallised’ which made matters a great deal more ferociously ‘ethnic’ — population expulsions, liquidations, coercive assimilation and other horrors occurred. Gellner euphemistically recognises the ‘markedly un-benign’[166] forms German and Italian nationalisms took in the twentieth century but does so in a parenthesis that almost suggests that it is a problem for John Plamenatz, who developed one form of the contrast between western and eastern nationalisms, rather than for him! Yet, German and Italian nationalisms were markedly ‘un-benign’ in frontier zones. Indeed the German variety notoriously excelled Balkan nationalism in its bloodthirstiness.

This difficulty suggests that the important difference between ethnic (or what Gellner calls Habsburg) nationalism and classical liberal (or western) nationalism is not the availability of a high culture functional for modernity in the latter case but not in the former, but rather, amongst other things, the fact that in the Habsburg-type of nationalism there are multiple and roughly equal but intermixed and counter-entropic cultures (i.e., Bl, B2 ... Bn), whereas in the classical liberal case the B group can feasibly homogenise — or at least courteously control — all the possible other Bs in its nation-building ambitions. Alternatively, some nationalists can afford to be liberal — and choose to be so, while others fear that they cannot afford to be liberal — and choose to act accordingly.

The key complaint I am making here is that the typology was used by Gellner to classify actual historical ‘types’ which do not follow logically from it. The typology is only useful for considering ‘homogeneous’ and ‘bicultural’ situations; and it cannot, by definition, be used to explain ‘multicultural’ situations.[167] The typology is also a typology of cultural nationalisms, rather than one of political nationalisms, which have been far more common in the literature on the subject. [168] And precisely because the typology is bereft of political content — other than a very crude distinction between power-holders and non-power-holders — it is difficult to assent to Gellner’s illustrations of his ‘types’. For example, exclusionary and integral nationalisms (which normally have a strong ethnic content — although frequently denied in, e.g., the French case) have developed amongst peoples possessed of a high culture in combat with those who also have a high culture; while inclusive and civic assimilationist nationalisms have developed amongst peoples who have not historically had a crystallised high culture but have been engaged in combat with those who have had a high culture (e.g., the contemporary Eritreans).

The apolitical character of Gellner’s theory

Gellner’s theory of nationalism rests on cultural and materialist premises. What it appears to lack is a sustained and developed sense of the political — with the notable exception of Gellner’s perception of the precariousness of western liberal pluralism, and his preparedness to give retrospective thanks to nationalism for preserving it. The apolitical charge can be substantiated in several ways:

(i) his typology is geared towards explaining the development or thwarting of nationalist secessionism, but does not provide a politically sensitive account of what may dampen nationalist secessionism;

(ii) the theory appears to rely on culturally or materially reductionist accounts of political motivation;

(iii) as we have already claimed Gellner neglects the role of powerpolitics in explaining which cultures become nations, and the possibility that nation-builders explicitly see the functional relationship between nationalism and modernity which he posits;

(iv) although Gellner sees the connections between nationalism and egalitarianism in modern societies, he does not, strangely enough, see the mutually reinforcing relationships between nationalism, egalitarianism and democratisation;

(v) and lastly, but relatedly, he displays contempt for nationalist doctrines.

These points are elaborated below.

(i) Gellner did not provide a politically sensitive account of what may dampen nationalist secessionism. He appeared to assume that the range of possibilities in modern times is bifurcated: there is a simple choice between nationalist homogenisation through assimilation, and nationalist secessionism which produces another nationalist homogenisation: ‘Nowadays people can live only in units defined by a shared culture, and internally mobile and fluid. Genuine cultural pluralism ceases to be viable under current conditions.[169]

This argument is not empirically tenable, unless it is rephrased as an equilibrium theory, which asserts that homogeneous nationalism is the most stable outcome in modern times. In modern times states have frequently adopted what John McGarry and I call strategies for eliminating national and ethnic differences, through four principal devices: genocide, mass-population transfers, territorial restructuring through partitions/secessions, and cultural engineering through integration or assimilation.[170] Their widespread usage confirms the intuitive sense in Gellner’s idea of a nationalist homogenising tendency. Yet one initial qualification must be made: political integration of diverse peoples often occurs without full-scale cultural assimilation, which suggests that Gellner too easily assumed that a political nationalism must be a (high) cultural nationalism.

More importantly here, modern political entities have also developed strategies for managing national and ethnic differences that, prima facie, counteract the potency of nationalist homogenisation. There are four major ‘macro-methods’ through which genuine cultural pluralism (if not democracy) may operate: systems of control; arbitration; federation/ autonomy; and consociation. The last three of these are compatible with liberal and egalitarian pluralist principles. [171] Throughout modernity these methods have existed at various times, and in many parts of the world, and new versions of them are continually springing into being. Thus Belgium has recently federalised, South Africa is (or was?) temporarily consociationalised, and the European Union is increasingly embattled because of the ambitions offederalists.

All four of these systems of cultural pluralism, viz. control, arbitration, federation and consociation, may, as Gellner’s theory suggests, be less stable than homogeneous nation-states. Systems of control, like empires, communist dictatorships and majoritarian or ‘ethnic democracies’, as some prefer to call systems dominated by a Staatsvolk, have shattered in many places. An orthodox Gellnerian might, reasonably, classify some of these cases as imperial ‘hang-overs’ from ‘Agraria’, succumbing to modernising pressures — the break-up of Ethiopia might be an exemplary illustration. External and internal arbitrations of ethnic conflicts are also infrequently successful.[172] Democratic biethnic or multiethnic federations are few and in regular crises. Czechoslovakia broke up very quickly after democratisation. Consociations frequently break down, and when they are successful they can lead to integration, as some believe has occurred through ‘depillarisation’ in the Netherlands, or they can be transit mechanisms to record a shift in ethnic power, as may be happening before our eyes in South Africa.

Yet the persistence of such strategies, and regimes based upon them, are empirical embarrassments for Gellner’s theory. The equilibrium condition of one nation, one state, seems to be continually elusive. Switzerland is a real anomaly for Gellner’s theory. Multiethnic and multinational states in which there is a common sense of political (not cultural) nationhood exist. Some would even argue that Gellner

lived in one — though as an Irishman I cannot be expected to be as generous as others might be on that point.[173] The key issue is that Gellner's theory too readily assumes that the general case, that the political nation and the cultural nation must be one, is the universal and, in the long run, the irresistible tendency. While Gellner admits that nationalism is 'occasionally defeated by some other force or interest, or by inertia', [174] he leaves little for the creative possibilities of political design and architecture. Constitutional and political engineers do not figure in this sociologically reductionist conception of modernity, in which all nationalisms must (eventually) be cultural nationalisms.

(ii) Although he denied it, Gellner appeared to rely on culturally or materially reductionist accounts of nationalists' political motivations. He defended himself against the thesis that he was economically reductionist, suggesting that it is a parody to claim that the nationalist footsoldier fights for his tobacco shop pension. Nevertheless the impression is conveyed in his writings that job-hunting and job-deprived intelligentsias and proletarians provide the nationalist personnel. Gellner recognised that a range of cultural humiliations and repressions may provoke nationalist protests and insurrections, but once experience of repression, as opposed to blocked social mobility, explains the propensity to engage in nationalist movements then we appear to have moved some distance from industrial society theory. A flexible and non-repressive regime, that has authentically egalitarian and pluralist characteristics, may be able to thwart secessionist pressures precisely because it gives the culturally and educationally differentiated a share in political institutions. In short, the political regime within which national minorities operate, rather than their material or cultural grievances, may best explain their predispositions to be secessionists, federalists or consociationalists, and that is not obvious in the texts Thought and Change or Nations and Nationalism.

(iii) We have seen that Gellner underplayed the role of power-politics in explaining which cultures become nations, and the possibility that nation-builders explicitly see the functional relationship between nationalism and modernity. In this respect he appears as a strict historical materialist: nationalist politics is the superstructural by-product of cultural fissures that are in turn shaped by the uneven diffusion of industrialism. Yet numerous scholars suggest that the genesis of nationalism, and its maintenance, owed

much to the functional relationship between nationalism and military success rather than economic performance.

The education and cultural standardisation of troops in the European ancien regime preceded that of the general citizenry, and there is more than humour in the thesis that a language differs from a dialect in that the former has an army and a navy. The state bureaucracies of the old European regimes were mechanisms for the genesis of ‘official nationalism’, partly through the Gellnerian mechanisms of the development of literacy, the decay of sacred religious languages and their replacement with vernacular high cultures produced by a new clerisy, the meritocratic bourgeoisie. These elites, however, deliberately used protonationalism for military purposes that operated autonomously from the logic of industrial society.

(iv) The connections between nationalism and egalitarianism in modern societies were persuasively observed by Gellner, but he did not spell out the mutually reinforcing relationships between nationalism, egalitarianism and democratisation. The first political nationalisms in the USA and France were explicitly democratic in character,[175] and there are social structural arguments, congenial to Gellner’s philosophy of history, which explain why the wider distribution of power-resources in modernity has made democratic outcomes more likely than in agrarian societies.[176] Preoccupied with the miracle of western liberalism, and the virtues of its civil society, Gellner appeared to assume that democratisation has been a lucky accident in some industrialised societies, rather than a systemic trait. Yet it is odd to take the view that nationalism is no accidental by-product of modernisation, indeed to claim that it is intrinsic to its more egalitarian conditions, but not to notice that exactly the same arguments can be made about democratisation. Moreover, the relationships, politically and culturally, between nationalism and democratisation, at least at the doctrinal level are very clear, or, at least, so one can maintain.

(v) It was central to Gellner’s definition of nationalism that the doctrine holds that nations should be ruled by conationals. It is central to liberal nationalism that that should be the case with the express consent of the conationals. Nationalism, with qualifications, is therefore a defensible doctrine for modern liberals, and so there is no necessary reason why someone convinced of the

explanatory merits of Gellner's account of the roots of nationalism must share his contempt for nationalist political doctrine. Consistent nationalists hold that all nations should be free, free to express themselves, culturally and politically, and, that this freedom is constrained by other nations' rights to the same cultural and political freedom. Nationalism can be a liberal political doctrine, one which emphasises freedom, with at least the following corollaries:

(i) that all people are or should be members of nations;

(ii) that membership of a nation is a beneficial good;

(iii) that nations are the most important cultural and political collectivities;

(iv) that all nations have the right to determine their form of selfgovernment and, relatedly, that all nations have the right to selfdetermination; and lastly

(v) that the activities of states should, in general, be subordinated to nationalist principles.

Gellner, like most postwar academic commentators on nationalism, refused to treat nationalism seriously as a political doctrine because he shared, understandably, the anti-nationalist animus of the European intelligentsia who matured during or after the Nazi holocaust (although he did so with greater intellectual detachment and hard-headedness). He happily conceded to cosmopolitan critics of nationalism that nationalist authors are either self-evidently vacuous or incoherent. His theory of nationalism is consequently vulnerable to the charge that it ignores the autonomous significance of political doctrine in shaping social life — which is not, be it noted, an argument that rescues Kedourie's approach to nationalism by the back door.

The claim can be made, but not fully defended here, that nationalist political doctrine is not merely not vacuous, but that all self-professedly modern

political doctrines, liberal, socialist or conservative are parasitic upon nationalist assumptions; and that the political success of these doctrines in argument and political struggle rests on these assumptions. Gellner suggested that nationalism has received little attention from political philosophers because ‘there was not enough in the way of good doctrines and texts, which is the kind of material they used to like, for them to get their teeth into’. Even if they had, he maintained, nationalist thinkers could not really have made much difference: ‘If one of them had fallen, others would have stepped into their place.’ In any case ‘their precise doctrines are hardly worth analysing’ since nationalist ideology ‘suffers from a pervasive false consciousness ... we shall not learn too much about nationalism from the study of its own prophets’.[177]

This style of argument was characteristically provocative. [178] Gellner told his readers that nationalist thought is not worth examining in much the same manner that the philosophes and Marxists held that religious doctrine was not worth examining, because it represented an inchoate mixture of myth, superstition, error and false consciousness. Indeed Gellner’s criticism of Kedourie was just like Marx’s criticism of the philosophes: do not waste one’s breath examining the bad ideas, instead seek to explain their material roots. Gellner presumed not just that nationalist ideas are bad, or low-brow, as Kedourie complained, but that they are epiphenomenal. The message was that he had no wish to disturb the bad press which nationalists’ writings have received. This bad press holds nationalism responsible for many disasters and catastrophes, wars, forced mass-population transfers, imperialisms, fascisms and genocides. Depending on the particular intellectual’s account of the source of all evil, nationalism is held to be an expression of patriarchy, capitalism or socialism: feminists interpret nationalism as a by-product of patriarchal thought, penile aggression and other features of male malevolence; Marxists hold capitalism culpable for nationalism; while economic liberals generally see it as a species of collectivism because nationalists demand public regulation of capital and labour markets and are critical of the Ricardian theory of free trade.

One reason Gellner did not take nationalist doctrines seriously is that there have been few universalist theorists of nationalism, and those that have existed, like Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, have usually been read, criticised and admired for their nonnationalist writings. Moreover, universalist themes

in nationalist authors, like Burke, Herder, Fichte and List, have generally been seen as motivated by the particularist concerns of their national cause. [179] The naturally parochial audience to whom exponents of nationalism have addressed themselves has meant that their writings and arguments are not treated with respect by cosmopolitan intellectuals addressing other cosmopolitan intellectuals. This cosmopolitan bias in the reading of nationalist writing is something one should never forget. However, rather than discuss Rousseau's Social Contract and Government of Poland, Burke's views of political obligation, Herder's theory of language or Fichte's Addresses to the Gennan Nation I shall simply note here that liberal nationalist doctrine may be no less coherent than liberalism, conservatism or socialism, [180] and that although nationalism often comes packaged with fairy-tales its myths are no less plausible than the myths of social contracts, of class struggles, of wars between the sexes, of immemorial traditions, of intimations or of natural harmony of interests.

Lest we forget the enemies of nationalism and national self-determination have been, and are, imperialists, cosmopolitans and the godly. And their professed fears about the exclusivism of some nationalisms, historically understandable, can be nicely answered: 'Particularistic nationalism bears the same relation to universal nationalism as selfishness does to individualism, selfishness being the pursuit of one's own interests without regard to the interests of others, and individualism being the doctrine that it is legitimate to pursue one's own interests on the same terms on which theirs are free to pursue others.'[181]

Nationalism is most famously associated with the doctrine of national self-determination, which it is fashionable to scorn as incoherent and destructively chaotic in its repercussions.[182] Yet the idea is simple enough: a nation must be free to establish its preferred form of government, whether that be as a constituent component of a multinational state or federation or as an independent state. (Gellner mistakenly implies that only separatist or irredentist nationalisms are properly nationalist.) The idea of national self-determination is attacked as dangerous because it spells chaos to the world's map-makers, threatens the permanent instability of frontiers,[183] and fails to specify who constitutes the 'self' with the right to self-determination, and how that self might be realised. Properly understood,

however, national self-determination is a recursive principle of democratic consent: every nation should have the right to seek self-determination, including the right to secede to create its own state, providing the members of the nation consent to such self-determination, and providing they grant the same right to those who do not regard themselves as part of the nation concerned.[184] Imperialists, cosmopolitans and the godly riposte with searching questions: ‘who are the people?’, ‘what if there is more than one nation in a given region?’, and ‘how does one ensure that each nation is granted self-determination in territories where nations are intermingled?’ These are important questions, but they do not demonstrate the incoherence of national self-determination. All that they prove in the first place is that implementing the idea of self-determination may not be easy. Liberals, socialists, conservatives and feminists have difficulties with working out the implementation of their core ideas, so nationalists are not alone in their problems with their doctrines. Note, secondly, that there are ways in which multiple nations may grant one another free and equal self-determination — through consociational or federal arrangements, or even through genuinely agreed partitions and negotiated exchanges of populations. Indeed the liberal nationalist must agree with John Stuart Mill that there are cases where nationalities are so intermingled that the nations concerned must make a virtue of necessity by developing appropriately complex forms of political accommodation and respect, such as democratic condominia. [185]

Nationalism implies that loyalty to the nation should be the first virtue of a citizen. This idea has internal and external implications. It suggests that loyalty to the national community should transcend loyalty to more particular identifications, personal, cultural, economic, or political, and that members of one’s nation have higher moral claims than members of other nations. Whatever may be said of the merits of such thinking, and note carefully that I am not endorsing it without qualification, it is scarcely fair to say that it is incoherent. Nationalist moral doctrine is at odds with cosmopolitanism — the doctrine that one owes equal duties to all members of the human species — and with personalism — the doctrine that you owe first moral obligations to your personal friends;[186] and it is at odds with statism — that your first loyalty is to the state (except when one’s nation is a nation-state). Cosmopolitanism, personalism, statism and nationalism have all attracted rational arguments and exponents — and it is not credible to insist that nationalism is alone in its weaknesses. Nationalist thinking is not incompatible with the belief that nations may be duty-bound towards other

nations; indeed it is internationalism proper to observe (genuine) international law and to provide charitable assistance to other nations. In brief, liberal nationalism does not deserve the contempt with which Gellner wishes to be associated.

Nationalism also has prescriptive public policy content, independently of particular political ideologies. Most obviously, nationalism suggests a doctrine of citizenship. Who should and who should not automatically be entitled to membership of the nation? Nationalists vary in their answer to the question, depending on the stress they give to ethnic or civic conceptions of the nation, but at least they provide an answer. Liberals, socialists and conservatives in practice accept the nationalist answer or debate its frontiers. The nationalist theory of citizenship is in turn closely bound to the development of the modern welfare state, in which, in principle, conationals are treated as members of a collectivity engaged in mutual insurance and assurance. Nationalism also has prescriptive implications for education — educating potential citizens in a national culture, in respect for nationally endorsed institutions, in prescribing the moral universe of rights and obligations, in preserving and developing distinctive cultural idiosyncrasies, and in freeing the educated from the prejudices, be they patriarchal or otherwise, of the home or the sect. Nationalism additionally limits the operation of free markets: nationalists rarely believe in the unrestrained movement of labour, though they may embrace the free movement of capital. [187] Nationalists are anti-Smithians — Adam not Anthony — who seek to inhibit particular consequences of homogenising capitalism, or for that matter of homogenising cosmopolitan socialism. They have, in the current parlance, some minimal communitarian values. These are core elements of coherent political reasoning endorsed tacitly by millions of people on this planet. They may, of course, be mistaken, but they are not obviously mistaken.

Nationalism should not be equated with fascism or racism, as Gellner recognised, although it may become infected by the latter notions. Nationalism, as a doctrine, from Herder onwards recognised the equality of nations. In both its romantic and instrumental-developmental versions it celebrates the diversity of national differences, and, therefore, in principle, is not genocidal or racist. Racism and religious creeds have arguably been more responsible for genocides than nationalism. Racism, by contrast with

nationalism, ranks races in an evolutionary and moral hierarchy, and is therefore dispositionally genocidal; while religious believers, dogmatically convinced of their possession of the truth, may well be disposed to engage in mass killings of nonbelievers. The fusion of racism and religious chauvinism with illiberal nationalism is a dangerous and potentially murderous phenomenon but to suggest that the rise of nationalism is responsible for genocides in the modern world is contestable. The argument may seem plausible when nationalism is defined as the ethnocentric glorification of the in-group, as the religious deification of the nation, or in Conor Cruise O'Brien's characteristically inflammatory words as 'the most effective engine for the mobilisation of hatred and destruction that the world has ever known'.[188] The 'argument' is that from the ideal of the nation-state it is but a short step to putting people into cattle trucks to exterminate them. The implication is that nationalism cannot tolerate ethnic, racial or religious differences but must eliminate them. Such arguments are refuted, at least to my mind, by the existence of multiethnic, multiracial and multireligious nations, and by the fact of peaceful international relations between liberal democratic nations. Yet because Gellner treated nationalism as the doctrine of 'one culture, one state' he leaves it open to the charge that its central doctrine spells a simple choice between assimilation on the one hand, and genocide and forced expulsion or emigration on the other hand. But even vigorously nationalising nation-states have a range of intermediate strategies: their choices are not confined to either compulsory assimilation or genocide.

*** Nationalism: Gellner's elaborations, responses to his critics and his last words

In the last two decades of his life Gellner re-engaged with his eastern European roots and with Marxist-Leninist scholarship in the Soviet Union, experiences that culminated in the establishment of a Centre for the Study of Nationalism at the Central European University. These activities helped generate a range of essays and books, in which Gellner elaborated his theory, modified it in places, and replied to his critics.

The most important is the posthumous book, Nationalism, which integrates material contained in essay form in Encounters with

Nationalism and in other occasional contributions. The most important of the essays is his ‘Reply to my Critics’ — in which he responded directly to the arguments made above, as well as to those made by other critics.

**** Nationalism

Nationalism is a typically fluent and witty Gellnerian long essay, or minibook. It maintains the key arguments of Nations and Nationalism, especially its philosophy of history and its industrial society theory; defends the theory against real and alleged misinterpretations; recognises, honestly, some of its real difficulties; and lastly, adds some novel perspectives.

Elaborations, qualifications and defence mechanisms

Three key elaborations and qualifications are made in defence of the theory against unnamed critics. First, Gellner denies that his theory is reductive in the sense that it neglects the psychological authenticity and depth of the emotional power of nationalism. Not so, he replies. The merit of his theory is that it seeks to explain why these emotions exist, why they are invested in nations and their fates, and why they feel (and are) authentic and powerful in the breasts of nationals.[189] Secondly, while insisting that he is a pure and proper paid-up modernist, Gellner recognises in multiple passages that some premodern cultures were better equipped than others to become modern national cultures. As he put it, intellectual modernists are anti-creationists on the schooling of children in biology, but they are the creationists in this debate, whereas their opponents are the Darwinians, emphasising slow evolutionary change with occasionally important discontinuities in the nature of ethnic communities. Gellner finally accepted that some nations have genuine and authentic navels, meaning that they have ancient roots (as Anthony Smith maintains); others have had navels invented for them (in Gellner’s view, the majority); whereas still others are ‘navel-less’. It is, however, an empirical question, to be resolved by research, which of the three types of nation is most common. This is a fair and reasonable concession on Gellner’s part, but he did not address whether

states built on authentic ancient national pasts are more stable and durable than those that have had their national pasts invented — or which simply lack any past, authentic or invented.[190] Lastly, and importantly, Gellner partially downplayed the primacy of industrialisation in the aetiology of nationalism: bureaucratic centralisation (and its standardising implications), and ‘Protestant-type’ religions (with their egalitarian and high-culture diffusing properties) are granted their due as semi-independent agents in the generation of nationalism. Nevertheless, the functional link between industrialisation and nationalism is maintained, and its ‘last instance’ role in Gellner’s theory is apparent.

There is one important recognition of difficulty: Gellner recognises that Greek nationalism in the 1820s preceded industrialisation — ‘the Morea did not look like the Lancashire dales’[191] — a matter of no small import as he also believed that the first nationalist rising was that of the Greeks. Leave to one side whether the originality of the Greeks in this case is suspect: the United Irishmen of the 1790s, the North American revolutionaries of the 1770s, and Bolivar’s South American revolutionaries, arguably have prior claims.[192] Instead, let us focus on how Gellner seeks to finesse the difficulty. In an explicitly ad hoc argument he claimed that despite their peripheral agrarian location the ‘Balkan bandits’, i.e., the Greeks, were very susceptible to the diffusion of Enlightenment and Romantic ideas. Though no Balkan specialist, I suspect the argument is correct, but the trouble is that it does not solve Gellner’s problem. He has invoked the autonomous role of doctrine and ideas and their cultural resonance, rather than industrialisation, to account for the nationalists in the first nationalist uprising. Elsewhere he made a better response to Ken Minogue: industrialisation casts a long shadow over preindustrial peoples, enabling certain communities to anticipate its consequences and reorder their identities and actions accordingly. [193] That response is consistent with the filter explanation I discussed above.

Novelties

There are three novelties in Nationalism compared with Nations and Nationalism — though the first two were foreshadowed in essays published between 1984 and 1994. The first novelty

is Gellner’s new preference for a more explicitly historical conception of the stages of nationalism, and the ‘time-zones’ of nationalism within Europe — and his apparent loss of interest in his own typology of nationalism-inducing situations. The five stages are the time of the Congress of Vienna, the age of Irredentism, the age of (Woodrow) Wilsonism, the era of ethnic cleansing and the age of attenuated and satisfied nationalism. I shall not quibble here with the historical details in this delineation of stages — though I could. What should be apparent to the reader is the absence of a neat link — or attempts to forge links — to either industrialisation or uneven economic development, in accounting for the transitfons between the stages. With the exception of the era of attenuated nationalism the sequence of stages seems to operate according to the rhythms and ruptures of the politics of the great powers rather than the functional logic of industrialism and the stresses of uneven development. By contrast, the great merit of the typology in Nations and Nationalism was that it attempted to link nationalist types to the variables emphasised in industrial society theory.

What of Gellner’s three (or is it four?) time-zones of nationalism in Europe? In the first zone, the Atlantic seaboard, nation and state cohabited in premodernity before the era of modern nationalism. From the cohabitation came Portugal, Spain, France and England. In the second zone, the nation existed but was stateless, and had to be forged though war and diplomacy. The bride was ready, but a groom had to be found: so shot-gun marriages occurred between Germany and Prussia, and between Italy and Piedmont. In the third zone, neither the nation nor the state existed, and ethnic cleansing was necessary to generate the nation-state form. Now we are in the lands of the Habsburg, Ottoman and Romanov empires. The fourth time-zone, was the area captured by the USSR (and Yugoslavia). The question there is: in which of the five stages and which of the three time-zones will the successor entities find themselves?[194] And so on. This tale and its question are not without interest, though the tale does read suspiciously like the potted story of nationalism of Hans Kohn, Alfred Cobban and others — in which nationalism, such a good thing in the west, becomes an increasingly venomous and murderous creature as it travels east. Gellner’s defence would be that he is seeking to explain the truth in that tale — why the sociology of central and eastern Europe meant that the repercussions of nationalism would be very different there to what happened around the Atlantic seaboard. Nevertheless his is a great-power centred account. In which time-zones or stages do we fit Ireland, the Low Countries or the Scandinavians?

[195] But at least the time-zones, unlike the stages, do have the merit of being linked to his wider theory: the equilibrium condition of modern politics and culture is the nation-state; its formation in particular locations will be a function of the preceding national, political, agrarian and industrial materials.

The second novelty in Nationalism is Gellner’s explicit consideration of the relationship between Islam and nationalism. This question married two fields in which he distinguished himself as an original scholar. The combination, however, seems unhappy. Some of the very traits that Gellner had sketched to argue that Islam is functional for modernisation[196] are the same as the cluster he associates with nationalism — egalitarianism, diffusion of a high culture, non-magicality, and unmediated relations between the individual and community. The traits which allegedly make Islam secularisation-resistant are then invoked to claim that Islam can, and may well trump nationalism as a legitimation formula, in a way that Christianity can no longer do in the west. Indeed, Gellner claims that fundamentalism is presently victorious over nationalism — though he did not make this a prediction for the future.[197] Though no Arabist or Islamicist I have great scepticism about the merits of these arguments — perhaps because I want to believe that Islam will not be secularisation-resistant, in the long run, and certainly because I do not want to accept that contemporary Algeria has this message for the Islamic world: de tefabula narratur.

Gellner applies his arguments almost wholly to Arabic lands — though he has interesting remarks to make about Kemalist Turkey and Khomenei’s Iran. But one does not need to be an Islamic specialist to see the difficulties with his case. Kemalist and post-Kemalist Turkey show that Islam can compete with nationalism, whether or not it controls the state, but Gellner himself noted the vitality of Kemalism as an institutionalised ‘Decembrism’ that controls Turkish Islam, and a more corrupt version of Decembrism still persists in Algeria. Elsewhere it is not evident that fundamentalist Islam has trumped nationalism in South-East Asia, South Asia, or indeed the Middle East. Has Islam triumphed over nationalism in Malaysia and Indonesia, or is it in alliance with it? The break-up of Pakistan in 1971 suggests that a polyethnic or multinational state in which Islam is the sole unifying cultural bond rests on brittle foundations. There have been wars between Islamic states with different dominant ethnonational groups, e.g. the Iran-Iraq war. The

ethnonational instability of present-day Pakistan, Afghanistan, or of the successor states in former Soviet Central Asia, is a commonplace. The treatment of Muslim Kurds by Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria points, if anything, to the primacy of ethnonational conflict over pan-Islamic integration. Gellner, in my judgement, too readily concedes Islamist anomalies for his general theory of nationalism — anomalies that he would, I suspect, have sought to explain away if they had been presented by other area specialists or other comparative sociologists of religion.

The last novelty of Nationalism is that Gellner felt prompted into politics proper, into making political prescriptions, or drawing practical implications.[198] He describes these prescriptions as ‘banal’, perhaps because he may have been conscious of how far they support the conventional wisdom of Euro-liberals. He rejected the doctrine of national self-determination as ‘rubbish’, and maintained that there can be no just solutions to national conflicts[199] — though two pages later this had become an argument that there can be no solutions to national conflicts based on justice alone.[200] He expressed a preference for stability, i.e. the avoidance of the break-up of existing states without an orderly passage to successor regimes. He also hoped that the (shared?) affluence of industrial society would attenuate most conflicts, and that the ‘de-fetishisation’ of territory as a means to wealth would simultaneously entrench stability and economic growth. More significantly, he hoped that major order-maintenance functions could become supranational, while social functions could become cantonised, so that cultural pluralism could co-exist with the benefits of modernity.

**** @@@‘Reply to My Critics’

In his lengthy, generous and funny ‘Reply to my Critics’[201] Gellner made two important replies to objections to his theory of nationalism. The first, already discussed above, was to reject the claim that his theory is ‘reductionist’, that it ignores the power of nationalist identity, for individuals and communities. This he argued, is unfair, though he conceded that this misinterpretation is widespread. Nationalism is explained as important both for people’s interests and their identities — which are, of course, partially interdependent. His final restatement of his position was

unambiguous. Personally I find it convincing, and Table 2.2 is intended to provide a simple expression of Gellner’s views on this issue compared to what I take to be the position of some other theorists. Nevertheless, in Thought and Change and Nations and Nationalism, the stress is on the instrumentality of nations and nationalism rather than upon their expressive identifications — so, for me at any rate, late Gellner corrects early Gellner, or at least brings into sharper relief what young Gellner believed.

Secondly, Gellner responded to the charge of functionalism. He denied that his theory is teleological; avoided deciding whether it should be classified as a (non-teleological) functionalist argument; but instead insisted that it is causal. Industrial society, its diffusion, its discontents and its uneven impact upon existing ethnic and cultural terrains cause nationalism. His reply means that my labours above were not in vain. A filter explanation — e.g. nationalists realise that nationalism is beneficial for modernisation — can account for the self-conscious nation-builders, whose existence no one doubts. It can also account for the diffusion of nationalism — and indeed for the anomalies occasioned by Greek nationalism before Greece or its hinterland had experienced industrialisation. However, the much stronger functionalist claim, that nationalism is functionally explained (without intentionality) by its beneficial consequences for industrial society, or the straightforward causal claim that industrial society causes nationalism, are now brought into sharp relief as strong hypotheses open for empirical testing or modification. To treat the causal claim properly serious empirical research must establish the operational meaning of industrial society (or a range of its possible meanings) and its (alleged) most important nationalism-engendering traits, and proceed to test their interrelationships.[202]

Table 2.2 *Gellner compared with other theorists of nationalism*

| Nations are | primarily tools of manipulative elites or ideological masks for interests | primarily expressions of authentically felt identities | both tools of elites and authentic expressions of identities |

| perennial and permanent features of humankind | Pierre van den Berghe | Johann Gottfried Herder (& most nationalists) | Johan Gottlieb Fichte |

| (often) continuous with premodern ethnies |

| John Armstrong John Hutchinson Anthony Smith |

| (mostly) modern | Paul Brass
Eric Hobsbawm | | Ernest Gellner
Benedict Anderson
Walker Connor |

*** Conclusion

**** What is living in Gellner’s philosophy of nationalism?

With qualifications, Ernest Gellner’s arguments about the elective affinity between nationalism and modernity are plausible. His criticisms of naturality, wrong address, dark gods, and accidental-but-bad-ideas theories of the genesis and diffusion of nationalism are short, sharp and persuasive. Nationalism or nations have not been permanent features of human history — or so the evidence suggests. Nationalism has both expressive and instrumental dimensions that appear to be linked to modernisation, and its imperatives. Nationalism may be used to legitimate elites and counter-elites, it may be an ideology of mobilisation especially favoured by the disaffected intelligentsia — though that does not mean that it is specially embraced by ‘the lesser-examination passing classes’ in Hobsbawm’s inaccurate phrase. [203] Nationalist arguments may, of course, be manipulated for illiberal purposes: whether articulated by anti-colonial movements, or by established political elites, they may be used to obtain and exploit territorial, administrative and economic monopolies. Yet like Gellner we must accept that unless nationalist doctrine made some rough sense of the modern world, unless that world continually stimulated such identity formations, then it could not be tapped by manipulative elites: why else is nationalist manipulation so often more successful than many other kinds? Lastly, on his own logic his theory has greater retrodictive or predictive power than he initially thought, and it need not deny that successful nation-building may depend much more on successful innovation than on fabricationist invention.

**** What is dead (or at least doubtful) in Gellnefs philosophy of nationalism?

The criticisms sketched here are not fatal to Gellner's theory; they are merely necessary qualifications or reformulations. What is dead (or at least doubtful) is his explicitly functionalist argumentation. What is also doubtful is the primacy he gives to industrialisation in explaining the genesis and maintenance of nationalism, unless industrialisation means something broadly synonymous with modernisation, commercialisation and democratisation. Other mechanisms have been conducive to the genesis and maintenance of nationalism — including explicitly political mechanisms, and it is hard to see how the primacy of one or another mechanism might be proven. Gellner's typology of nationalisms is deficient in its range, and defectively elaborated; while his later historical stages, and time-zones, are specifically European, problematic and disconnected from the central premises of his own theory.

Many of the dead or doubtful aspects of Gellner's philosophy of nationalism, in my view, stemmed from Gellner's almost Olympian apoliticism. His last words on the subject, his last political prescriptions, express anxieties about nationalism's destabilising properties, whilst his hopes were expressed, it seems to me, independently of his theoretical convictions. His theory holds that the nation-state is the equilibrium condition of modernity, so he had no good reason for his hopes of a different world-order in which power would be transferred both to supranational and sub-state levels. If however, the nation-state is just one political form amongst many capable of managing or eliminating ethnonational conflict, and if the nation-state can be structured in culturally pluralist ways (consociational, federal or through other modes of co-sovereignty), then the world may not be governed by the logic of the strong version of Gellner's theory.

In my judgement Gellner missed the interdependencies between nationalism and democratisation, and failed to treat nationalism as a political doctrine that, when suitably furbished, is consistent with most of the liberal values Gellner held dear. Almost intellectually uninterested in ethics, perhaps because he didn't believe in their power, he was tempted to assume that just resolutions of ethnonational conflicts are impossible. That remains to be proven. National self-determination is not a doctrine which inexorably points towards madness and murder; and I am not alone in thinking that, suitably

dressed, it might offer some prospect of structuring our world with both authority and justice, but then I believe that nationalism is the major form in which democratic consciousness expresses itself in the modern world. It will be to Ernest Gellner's eternal credit that his wonderfully wide-ranging, clear and often hilarious thought helps us all understand why that is so, and why it must be so.

*** Notes

The subtitle of this chapter is stolen from Benedetto Croce's W'hiat is Living and What is Dead in Hegel's Philosophy?, but whereas Croce's relationship with Hegel was purely intellectual, my relationship with Gellner was personal. He was the external examiner of my Ph.D., and a reliable and generous referee in my academic career. For critical comments I am grateful to Brian Barry, Alan Beattie, James Kellas, James Mayall, David Miller, Karin von Hippel, George Schopflin, Albert Weale, and to my students at LSE. I am especially grateful to John A. Hall for his guidance and patience. I am also grateful but sad to have received, posthumously, Ernest Gellner's warm-spirited response to a previous version of this chapter.

The first draft of this chapter was presented to the Seminar on International Political Economy held at LSE in December 1993, a second to the Political Economy Seminar at the University of Western Ontario in March 1994. Three variations on this second draft resulted in publications: 'On the Nature of Nationalism: An Appraisal of Ernest Gellner's Writings on Nationalism', Papers in Political Economy, University of Western Ontario, vol. 47, 1994; 'On the Nature of Nationalism: A Critical Appraisal of Ernest Gellner's Writings on Nationalism', British Journal of Political Science, vol. 27, 1997; and 'On the Nature of Nationalism: A Critical Appraisal of Ernest Gellner's Writings on Nationalism', in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner, Amsterdam, 1996. This essay supersedes the preceding, not least because it alone considers all of Gellner's writings on nationalism, including those written after my first essay.

[94] E. Gellner, Thought and Change, London, 1965, p. 151.

[95] See especially ibid. Gellner, ‘Scale and Nation’, Philosophy of the Social Sciences, vol. 3, 1973; ‘Nationalism, or the New Confessions of a Justified Edinburgh Sinner’, Political Quarterly, vol. 49, 1978; Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983; ‘Nationalism and the Two Forms of Cohesion in Complex Societies’, in his Culture, Identity and Politics, Cambridge, 1987; ‘Nationalism and Politics in Eastern Europe’, New Left Review, no. 189, 1991; ‘The Coming of Nationalism and its Interpretation: The Myths of Nation and Class’, in G. Balakrishnan, ed., Mapping the Nation, London, 1996; Encounters with Nationalism, Oxford, 1994; ‘Reply to Critics’, in Hall and Jarvie, The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner; and Nationalism, London, 1997.

[96] A famous nineteenth-century illustration of a liberal criticism of nationalism is Lord Acton’s 1862 essay on ‘Nationality’ (reprinted in J. R. Fears, ed., Essays in the History of Liberty: Selected Writings of Lord Acton, Indianapolis, 1985). A recent illustration of socialist criticism is E. Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1780, Cambridge, 1990.

[97] A later essay, presented in the Soviet Union, discussed further why both Marxism and liberalism have been wrong about nationalism, viz., ‘From Kinship to Ethnicity’, in Encounters with Nationalism.

[98] The contemporary version of ‘Dark Gods’ theory is socio-biological, see, e.g. P. van den Berghes, The Ethnic Phenomenon, New York, 1981.

[99] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 149 and Nations and Nationalism, p. 130.

[100] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 151.

[101] E. Kedourie, Nationalism, 4th edn, London, 1985. Kedourie mocked the quest for a general theory of nationalism as ‘the sociological temptation’, identified Gellner’s theory as ‘a species of economism’ and maintained that it did not ‘fit the chronology either of nationalism or of industrialisation’ (pp. 145, 147–8). The vicissitudes and political contradictions of Kedourie’s own position on nationalism went unremarked by Gellner: Kedourie, a religiously orthodox Iraqi-born Jew, and a victim of ethnic cleansing from Baghdad, was a tacit critic of Zionism in 1960, but at the end of his life was a supporter of the state oflsrael.

[102] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 152.

[103] Ibid., p. 153. Gellner was citing the famous conclusion to Kedourie’s Nationalism. Kedourie thought that his question was the only criterion of legitimacy capable of universal defence. Gellner replied in Nations and Nationalism (pp. 127–8) that:

The question which Professor Kedourie asks with such eloquence is indeed one which a typical burgher in an agrarian society would ask himself, if one morning he just heard that the local Pasha had been overthrown and replaced by an altogether new one. If, at that point, his wife dared ask of the burgher what language the new Pasha spoke in the intimacy of his home life — was it Arabic, Turkish, Persian, French or English? — the hapless burgher would give her a sharp look, and wonder how he would cope with all the new difficulties when, at the same time, his wife had gone quite mad.

The sensible implication is that Kedourie’s question is no longer coherent in a world in which accountable, participatory and representative government is possible, and in which a modern economy requires a national system of communication.

[104] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 155.

[105] Ibid., pp. 155, 157.

[106] Ibid., p. 159. Gellner added (p. 159, n. 1) that ‘It is of course possible for nominally independent political units to exist in a kind of educationally parasitic way. But the present argument is not really undermined by the existence of Monaco or Andorra.’

[107] Ibid., p. 160.

[108] Ibid., p. 160.

[109] Ibid., p. 166.

[110] Ibid., p. 171.

[111] Ibid., p. 168.

[112] Ibid., p. 173.

[113] Ibid., p. 173.

[114] Ibid.,p. 174.

[115] Gellner could not consistently claim to reject this thesis and accept, as he appeared to do above (see p. 143), that some pre-modern cultures were a factor in making up the materials of modern nations.

[116] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 174. Highly educated French, Swiss-Deutsch and Italian-speakers frequently speak to each other in English as a neutral second language.

[117] Ibid., p. 177.

[118] Perhaps that explains why when Gellner re-expressed the argument in Nations and Nationalism nearly two decades later there were complaints that he had ignored the writings of North American scholars — see, e.g., B. Shafer's 'Review of Ernest Gellner's Nations and Nationalism, Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism, vol. 11, 1984. Many surveyors of writings on nationalism, and many students, appear to see little difference between Gellner's arguments and those of Karl Deutsch's Nationalism and Social Communications, Cambridge, MA, 1966. Yet there is this major difference: whereas Deutsch conveyed the notion that the idea of nationalism is transmitted by newspapers, books and radio (and now television) to previously non-nationalist peoples, Gellner insisted that it is the media, 'the pervasiveness and importance of abstract, centralised, standardised, one to many communication, which automatically engenders the core idea of nationalism, quite irrespective of what ... is being put into the specific messages transmitted ... That core message is that the style and language of the transmissions is important, that only he who can understand them, or can acquire such comprehension, is included in a moral and political community, and that he who does not and cannot, is excluded' (Nations and Nationalism, p. 127). In addition, unlike Deutsch's, Gellner's theory of nationalism does not suffer from facile optimism about the ease with which peoples can be assimilated into 'nation-building' projects — for decisive criticism of Deutsch at this point, see W. Connor, 'Nation-building or Nation-destroying?', World Politics, vol. 24, 1972.

[119] See for example, B. Barry, 'Review of Ernest Gellner's Nations and Nationalism', Ethics, vol. 95, 1984; J. Kellas, 'Review of Nations and Nationalism, InternationalAffairs, vol. 60, 1984; A. D. Smith, 'Book Review: Ernest Gellner, Nations andNationalism', Millennium, vol. 13, 1983; B. Crick, 'The Gad-fly and the Eagle', New Statesman, 16 September 1983; and J. Dunn, 'For the

Good of the Country’, Times Higher Educational Supplement, 21 October 1983.

[120] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p. 129. One of Kedourie’s arguments was that nationalism could be cleansed from the planet by the education students used to undergo when they took his courses on the History of Political Thought (Pierre Trudeau, one of Kedourie’s students, acted on Kedourie’s premises, refusing to make significant concessions to Quebec nationalism, and thereby helped destabilise the Canadian federation).

Another implication was that Kant was the source of all evil. Gellner contested both Kedourie’s history of ideas as well as his idealist insistence on the power of (bad) ideas. He defended Kant in Nations and Nationalism (p. 133), maintaining that there is no relationship, other than a verbal one, between individual ‘self-determination’ and ‘national self-determination’: Kant was ‘a very model for that allegedly bloodless, cosmopolitan, emaciated ethic of the Enlightenment’ which romantic nationalists detested. All that nationalists and Kant have in common is that neither are, in Kedourie’s sense, respecters of tradition.

[121] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 129–30.

[122] Ibid., p. 57. The italics are mine.

[123] Unlike Benedict Anderson who insists on the pivotal importance of ‘print capitalism’ (Imagined Communities, London, 1983), Gellner stressed the importance of print per se. Given that the large-scale production of bibles, so important in the development of European vernacular languages at the expense of Latin, was a state (or state-church) sponsored project, why should we regard capitalism, rather than the mass production of texts, as the salient cause in the origins and spread of languages?

Gellner shared Anderson’s emphasis on the impersonal nature of the nation, but unlike Anderson had no time for the metaphoric pun involved in describing nations as ‘imagined communities’: a pun that plays on (and confuses) the difference between the non-real and the not-immediately visual. Gellner’s emphasis on the anonymous, impersonal and unmediated nature of nations captures what is best in Anderson’s notion of ‘imagined’ community.

[124] This philosophy was later stated at length in his Plough, Sword and Book (London, 1988), published coterminously with the end of Gellner’s long engagement with Soviet Marxist scholarship — State and Society in Soviet Thought, Oxford, 1988.

[125] Ibid., pp. 164–71.

[126] Pre-modern examples might include Iceland, Korea, Thailand and Japan.

[127] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p. 95. This argument is odd. It excludes a widespread form of nationalism, a reforming nationalism ‘from above’ — imposed by a Jacobin intelligentsia on a less than modern peasantry.

[128] The square brackets are mine. Gellner strangely treats this case (ibid., p. 97) as a ‘nonnationalist one’ though it is plainly what historians would call a ‘satisfied nationalism’. This suggests that his typology was directed towards explaining nationalist conflicts rather than forms of nationalism.

[129] Ibid., p. 98.

[130] The contrast between ethnic nationalism and western liberal nationalism is Gellner’s reworking of John Plamenatz’s contrast between eastern and western (European) nationalisms — itself not dissimilar to Hans Kohn’s contrast between civic and ethnic nationalisms: see J. Plamenatz, ‘Two Types of Nationalism’, in E. Kamenka, ed., Nationalism (London, 1973) and H. Kohn, Nationalism (Princeton, 1955). Gellner argued (Nations and Nationalism, p. 101) that the key advantage of his approach is that the contrast between ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ nationalism emerged logically from the three dimensions of his typology.

[131] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 101–9.

[132] Ibid., p. 96.

[133] Ibid., pp. 63–87.

[134] Ibid., p. 64.

[135] Ibid., p. 65. The emphasis is mine.

[136] Ibid., p. 47.

[137] Ibid., pp. 43–50.

[138] See inter alia: G. A. Cohen, Karl Marx’s Theory of History, Oxford, 1978, pp. 249–96; J. Bister, Making Sense of Marx, Cambridge, 1985, pp. 27–37; and B. O’Leary, The Asiatic Mode of Production: Oriental Despotism, Historical Materialism and Indian History, Oxford, 1989, chs. 4–5.

[139] P. Anderson, ‘Science, Politics, Enchantment’, in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., Transition to Modernity: Essays on Power, Wealth and Belief, Cambridge, 1992, p. 207.

[140] Ibid., p. 140.

[141] I use the expressions ‘modern society’ and ‘modernisation’ throughout, in anticipation of the difficulties attached to Gellner’s arguments about the relationships between nationalism and industrialisation.

[142] See Jon Elster’s formalisation of functionalist argumentation, Ulysses and the Sirens, Cambridge, 1979, pp. 28–35 and Explaining Technical Change, Cambridge, 1983.

[143] Bister, Ulysses and the Sirens, p. 30.

[144] The same logic explains why nationalists were often liberal feminists, promoting the education of boys and girls, and men and women, outside the home in national educational systems.

[145] J. J. Rousseau, The Government of Poland, trans. W. Kendall, Indianapolis, 1985, ch. 12 and ch. 4.

[146] This is the principal burden of M. Mann, ‘The Emergence of Modern European Nationalism’, in Hall and Jarvie, eds., Power, Wealth and Belief.

[147] There are multiple suggestive — and ambiguous — passages in his writings on this theme. Compare two paragraphs (from his Muslim Society, Cambridge, 1981) separated by a few pages:

The elective affinity of scripturalist rigorism or fundamentalism with the social and political needs of the period of industrialisation or ‘development’ is fairly clear ... it may well be that, for the viability of a religion, its specific doctrines on faith and morals matter far less than their spirit. Whether that spirit can also remain compatible with an economically developed society, as opposed to a developing one, remains to be seen.(p. 61)

The two processes, ‘purification’ or radicalisation of religion, and nationalism, are often intimately intertwined, to a degree that it is hard to say which one is ‘merely’ the external form of the other.(p. 59)

[148] In responding to Gellner, Kedourie advanced the remarkable view (Nationalism, p. 148), which does not survive any historical scrutiny, that ‘the areas ... where industrialism first appeared and made the greatest progress, i.e., Great Britain and the United States of America, are precisely those areas where nationalism is unknown’. Only a truly deferential child of the British empire could hold such a pious view.

[149] See inter alia H. Seton-Watson, Nations and States: An Inquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism, London, 1977, pp. 15–88, which treats the British, French, Irish, Iberian, Dutch, Scandinavian, Swiss and Russian nations as ‘old and continuous’.

[150] J. Armstrong, Nations before Nationalism, Chapel Hill, 1982 and A. D. Smith, The Ethnic Origins of Nations, Oxford, 1986. Smith, however, happily concedes the discontinuity between modern nationalism and pre-modern ‘ethnicism’ — his criticism of Gellner is that this discontinuity builds on historical continuity, i.e. a modern nation is most successfully constructed when it builds on an actual ethnic communal base.

[151] Smith, ‘Book Review’, pp. 280–2.

[152] L. Greenfeld, Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, Cambridge, MA, 1992. Greenfeld’s position on the

relationship between nationalism and modernity is more extremist, and more indefensible, than Gellner’s. For her, ‘modernity is defined by nationalism’, and she wants to reverse the normal order of causality — maintaining both that nationalism precedes and causes modernity and that it is constitutive of it (pp. 18, 21).

[153] The same point is made forcefully by his chief protagonist, Kedourie: ‘Nationalist ideology spread in areas like Greece, the Balkans and other parts of the Ottoman Empire when they were innocent of industrialisation’ (Nationalism, p. 148).

[154] The ‘vast disagreement among eminent authorities’ on the modernity of nationalism ‘has been made possible by the near absence of conclusive evidence. The fact that members of the ruling elite or intelligentsia manifest national sentiment is not sufficient to establish that national consciousness has permeated the value system of the masses. And the masses, until recent times totally or semi-illiterate, furnished few hints concerning their view of group-self’ — W. Connor, ‘When Is a Nation?’, in his Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding, Princeton, 1994, p. 214.

[155] The conceptual confusions are illustrated by Greenfeld’s opening gambit: The word ‘nationalism’ is used here as an umbrella term under which are subsumed the related phenomena of national identity (or nationality) and consciousness, and collectivities based on them — nations; occasionally, it is employed to refer to the articulate ideology on which national identity and consciousness rest, though not — unless specified — to the politically activist, xenophobic variety of national patriotism, which it frequently designates. (Greenfeld, Nationalism, p. 1)

This strategy elides the admittedly much-tangled concept ofnation, national identity, national consciousness, patriotism, nationality and nationalism. No wonder that ‘nationalism’ can be found in the 1500s if the term has such empirical range — though lay usage admittedly accepts this approach.

Connor has been a stern critic of ‘terminological chaos’ in this field: see ‘A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a … ‘, in his Ethnonationalism.

[156] Smith, The Ethnic Origins of Nations, p. 18. Smith recognises that nationalism has the etymological range which Greenfeld suggests, but narrows his definition — in his National Identity, London, 1991, pp. 72ff. — to ‘an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential “nation” ‘.

[157] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 74–5.

[158] Ibid., pp. 110–22.

[159] The most feasible form in which widespread secessionism will occur across Europe will be in departures from the European Union if it becomes a federation — with the late entrants with glorious imperial pasts as the most likely anti-federalists, viz., the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark and Austria. Given that the European Union has been deprived of its recent geopolitical rationale, and has to rely largely upon materialist incentives for cooperation, it may become subject to the predictable strains that nationalism brings to federal systems.

[160] A proper answer to the question ‘has there been a nationalist revival in the liberal advanced industrialised OECD?’ would require hard data on (a) support for nationalist movements and parties; (b) the formation and impact of new nationalist parties, and nationalist grievances; (c) evidence of relearning of old languages and cultural traditions; (d) opinion poll data on nationalist secessionist of (re-)unification sentiment; and (e) irridentist/ jingoistic political rhetoric amongst politicians, intelligentsias and mass media.

[161] See B. O’Leary and J. McGarry, The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland, London, 1993, ch. 8; B. O’Leary, T. Lyne, J. Marshall and B. Rowthorn, Northern Ireland: Sharing Authority, London, 1993; and J. McGarry and B. O’Leary, Explaining Northern Ireland: Broken Images, Oxford, 1995, especially ch. 9.

[162] For example, James Mayall’s otherwise excellent Nationalism and International Society, Cambridge, 1990 (especially p. 64) suggested that legal and political opinion within the state-system, and the geopolitical interests of the two superpowers, had placed an effective moratorium on the prospects of further secessions. Perhaps Mayall’s mistake was to suggest that ‘there are no more empires to collapse’.

[163] We were all expected to become monocultured, though our monoculture would be the rationalisation of all cultures. In efficient states we would eat Italian food, listen to Mozart on Sony Walkmans, distribute welfare like the Swedes and make love like the French; in inefficient states we would eat American food, listen to Swedish pop music on Korean tape recorders, distribute welfare like the Italians and make love like the English.

[164] A. Cobban, The Nation State and National Self-Determination, Glasgow, 1969, pp. 83–4 notes that ‘The more we study the Peace Conference, the less it seems to have been under the control of the principle of selfdetermination.’

[165] Gellner recognised that the major difference between Edward Carr and himself was that the latter was interested in the impact of nationalism on the state-system, whereas he was interested in the societal transformation (from ‘Agraria’ to ‘Industria’) which generates nationalism. See Gellner’s ‘Nationalism and the International Order’, in his Encounters with Nationalism.

[166] Ibid., p. 100.

[167] In any case there are difficulties with the alleged ‘western liberal nationalisms’. These are supposed to have been the civil-territorial forms, by contrast with the ethnic-communitarian types of the Hapsburg lands. Britain, France and the USA are meant to be the exemplars of western liberal nationalism. Yet the Catholics of the British Isles, the provincials and Jews of France, and the Red Indians and black slaves of the USA do not have histories which resonate with this ‘type’. It seems best to say that civic nationalism is the name often given to the nationalism of a people who already have a state or territorial unit of government; whereas ethnic nationalism is the name often given to a people who do not have such an identity. This problem is not, however, Gellner’s alone: it starts with the first academic treatments of nationalism, in the writings of Hans Kohn and Carlton Hayes.

[168] Peter Alter usefolly distinguishes ‘risorgimento nationalism’, ‘reform nationalism’ and ‘integral nationalism’ (Nationalism, London, 1985); Wolfgang Mommsen differentiates liberal, imperialist, fascist and contemporary nationalisms (‘The Varieties of the Nation-state in Modern History: Liberal, Imperialist, Fascist and Contemporary Notions of Nation and Nationality’, in M. Mann, ed., The Rise and Decline of the Nation-State, Oxford, 1990); whilst John A. Hall distinguishes nationalisms ‘from above’, nationalisms based on ‘desire and fear blessed by opportunity’ (Latin America), risorgimento nationalism, integral nationalism, decolonising nationalism and nationalism by trade (Coercion and Consent, Oxford, 1994).

[169] Ibid., p. 55. This statement sits oddly with a later (p. 138) disclaimer: ‘It is not claimed that, even in the modern world, nationalism is the only force operating, or an irresistible one.’

[170] J. McGarry and B. O’Leary, ‘Introduction: The Macro-Political Regulation of Ethnic Conflict’, in J. McGarry and B. O’Leary, eds., The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation: Case Studies of Protracted Ethnic Conflicts, London, 1993.

[171] Ibid. Federation includes all types of genuine territorial autonomy. Mixed types are also possible: e.g. a democratic condominium in a bicultural region could combine principles of arbitration, federation and consociation.

[172] See the sober case studies in W. J. Durch, ed., The Evolution of UN Peacekeeping: Case Studies and Comparative Analysis, New York, 1993.

[173] Social democratic and more conservative appraisals of the United Kingdom as a multinational state can be found respectively in R. Parry, ‘State and Nation in the United Kingdom’, in M. Messner, K. Armes and K. Martin, eds., State and Nation in Multiethnic Societies, Manchester, 1991 and R. Rose, Understanding the United Kingdom: The Territorial Dimension in Government, Harlow, 1982.

[174] Gellner, Nations andNationalism, p. 138.

[175] The ‘people’ of course were narrowly defined to exclude women and slaves in the American case, and women in the French example.

[176] See, for example, T. Vanhanen, The Process of Democratisation: A Comparative Study of 147 States, New York, 1990. Gellner would have rejected the socio-biological foundations of Vanhanen’s arguments — which, in my judgement, are inessential to Vanhanen’s case — but he would have shared Vanhanen’s view of the inescapability ofhierarchy in agro-literate polities.

[177] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 124–5. Compare the verdict reached by Benedict Anderson (Imagined Communities, pp. 14–15): ‘unlike other isms, nationalism has never produced its own grand thinkers: no Hobbeses, Tocquevilles, Marxes or Webers’. Therefore, he reasons, nationalism should not be compared with political doctrines, but rather with kinship and religion.

It is strange not to classify Weber as a nationalist grand thinker, stranger still that Rousseau, Burke, John Stuart Mill and Friedrich List are not seen as nationalist grand thinkers, and exceedingly odd, and I say this as an atheist, to imply that religion has never produced its grand thinkers.

[178] Gellner's contempt is more provocative than the inaccurate and cliche-ridden view that nationalism is the 'starkest political shame of the twentieth century, the deepest, most intractable, and yet most unanticipated blot on the political history of the world since the year 1900' (J. Dunn, Western Political Theory in the Face of the Future, Cambridge, 1979, p. 55). The starkest political shames of the twentieth century were the genocidal regimes of Nazi Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union, both formally transnational in nature. The most unanticipated blot on our history in this century was also provided by these regimes. Nationalism by contrast helped to destroy both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, and to bring down the other European empires.

[179] Burke can be read, like Rousseau, as an exponent of the thesis that nations have the right to resist rulers who do not meet the obligations expected of them by organically developed nations, and List consistently advocated a system of national economy for the USA and France as well as his native Germany — on which see R. Szporluk, Communism and Nationalism: Karl Marx versus Friedrich List, New York, 1991, pp. 96–114.

[180] See inter alia D. Miller, On Nationality, Oxford, 1995, Y. Tamir, Liberal Nationalism, Princeton, 1993 and M. Lind, 'In Defence of Liberal Nationalism', Foreign Affairs, vol. 73, 1994. These authors are not, of course, identical, nor am I saying that I entirely agree with any one of them.

[181] B. Barry, 'Nationalism', in D. Miller, J. Coleman, W. Connolly and A. Ryan, eds., The Basil Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, Oxford, 1987, pp. 352–4.

[182] For a conservative’s perplexed glance at national self-determination, see Kedourie’s Nationalism, pp. 62–91.

[183] D. P. Moynihan calls his recent diatribe against self-determination Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics, Oxford, 1993, while A. Etzioni lists ‘The Evils of Self-Determination’, Foreign Policy, vol. 89, 1992.

[184] See H. Beran’s ‘A Liberal Theory of Secession’, Political Studies, vol. 32, 1984 for a provisional attempt to grapple with these issues. Neither Buzan nor his critics think his article is the final word on the subject.

[185] O’Leary and McGarry, The Politics of Antagonism, ch. 8; O’Leary, Lyne, Marshall and Rowthorn, Northern Ireland; and McGarry and O’Leary, Explaining Northern Ireland, ch. 9.

[186] Barry, ‘Nationalism’.

[187] Brian Barry provides an astringent review of the arguments of cosmopolitan liberals who believe in the unrestrained movement of people and money in ‘The Quest for Consistency: a Sceptical View’, in B. Barry and R. Goodin, eds., Free Movement: Ethical Issues in the Transnational Migration of People and ofMoney, University Park Pennsylvania, 1992.

[188] C. C. O’Brien, ‘A Lost Chance to Save the Jews’, New York Review of Books, vol. 30, 1989. Gellner wrote an incisive criticism of O’Brien’s views on nationalism, which is now in Encounters with Nationalism.

[189] Gellner, Nationalism, pp. 11–13.

[190] Ibid., pp. 90–101.

[191] Ibid., p. 41.

[192] Nationalism is not definitive on this issue. Perhaps Gellner simply meant that the Greeks were the first Europeans to rise in nationalist form against the settlement of the Congress of Vienna, but since he appears to claim that the Congress of Vienna is stage 1 in demarcating the history of nationalism in Europe he is vulnerable to my charge of simple error about the timing and location of the first nationalist risings.

[193] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, p. 7.

[194] In an exemplary illustration of the merits of comparison, Rogers Brubaker has made a strong case for arguing that for many entities the post-Soviet period is rather like the post-Versailles era (Nationalism Reframed, Cambridge, 1996, especially chs. 2 and 5).

[195] Gellner recognised (in Encounters with Nationalism, p. 29), the Republic of Ireland as the sole case leading to major frontier adjustment in time-zone 1, but states that it is ‘not clear’ whether the separation of Belgium from Holland or Norway from Sweden should count as ‘specimens of modern nationalism’. The latter anomalies are interesting: if the secessions of Belgium and Norway were not specimens of modern nationalism then what type of nationalism were they — proto-modern?

[196] Gellner, Muslim Society.

[197] Gellner, Nationalism, p. 85.

[198] Gellner, Nationalism Observed, pp. 102–8.

[199] Ibid., p. 104.

[200] Ibid., p. 106.

[201] Anyone who wants to read a delightfol assault on Oakeshottian political philosophy should read Gellner’s response (pp. 8–13) to Ken Minogue.

[202] Gellner also replied to people like the present author who embrace some liberal nationalist ideas. He argued that we should not make nationalists a present of their ontology, e.g. by endorsing the notion that nations should be free. However, a tu quoque is in order here. As Gellner acknowledged, I, like him, regard nations as a largely modern phenomenon; moreover, just as he claimed he did, I acknowledge that nations are authentically felt expressions of collective identity. So apparently the only real difference between us is this. He did want to devalue the authenticity of present national identifications by explaining their origins — refusing nationalists their ontology. But this is precisely what he accused me of being wrong to do with his arguments when I charged them with reductionism, i.e. I was accused of assuming that his explanation of nationalism somehow denied the authenticity of nationalist sentiment. It is a shame that we could not have had this debate, preferably with wine and food.

[203] Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1780, p. 118.

* Part II: The classical criticisms

** 3. Real and constructed: the nature of the nation

Miroslav Hroch

When, thirty years ago, I began to write my book about the social composition of the leaders of national movements, it was not my intention to present a ‘theory’ of the origins of nations. [204] My aim was far more modest: to determine just which social circumstances were favourable for the successful spread of national consciousness among the broad mass of the population — in other words the conditions for the success of those activities which I grouped together under the term ‘national agitation’. At the same time I hoped to clarify the place of the Czech ‘national revival’ in the European context. If I had any ambitions beyond the realm of empirical research, these lay in the field of methods rather than theory: I tried to demonstrate the utility of comparative methods at a time when their use was not yet a commonplace in European (and even less in Czech) historiography. I also aimed to investigate the possibilities of quantification as a modified form of ‘Namierism’.

In order to apply comparative methods, it was first necessary to select an approach which would exclude voluntarism and above all avoid the error of attempting to compare things that are not comparable. Therefore it was necessary to define the subject of comparison (the ‘nation’ or ‘nationality’) and to choose a set of processes involved in the formation of nations that have enough features in common so as to be brought together under a single type. My definition of the ‘nation’ at that time was thus a wholly provisional one intended to promote a better understanding of the issues. Behind all this of course stood a certain theoretical conception: the view that the great social group known as the ‘nation’ was formed in historical time, that it really exists in the present and may thus serve as an object of empirical research far more conveniently than the irrational and foggy notion of ‘nationalism’.

As the objects to be compared I chose only those which belonged to one of two basic types of processes of national formation, the one which I called the ‘formation of smaller nations’ — in traditional terminology a ‘national revival’. Here the adjective ‘smaller’ had a qualitative rather than

quantitative connotation. This consisted in the fact that, at the beginning of its development towards a modern national state, the ‘smaller nation’ lacked its own ruling classes, while its language had been significantly weakened, so that it possessed only an enfeebled or interrupted literary tradition. Its leaders were just launching their efforts to gain the sympathy of the people for their idea of the nation and to win recognition from the ruling state-nation. I called this twin effort a ‘national movement’.

In order to compare national movements it was necessary to establish a periodisation which would not only permit a synchronic comparison but also one according to analogous situations. Of the three phases of the national movement I chose the second, ‘Phase B’, that of national agitation, in which the decision was taken to proceed to a mass-based national movement. The criterion of comparison, then, was the social and territorial composition or origin of the national leaders, the ‘pioneers’ of the agitation in Phase B of the national movement. This composition was not limited to a consideration of professional grouping but also included the wider context of property, relation to the state, position in the distribution of goods, and varying life-styles — in short membership of classes (landlords, yeomen, urban middle class) and social groups (various categories of officials, professionals, craftsmen, students, clergy).

The English translation of the book was prepared at the end of the 1970s, at a time when publication in western Europe, even of an old manuscript, carried the risk of repression at home. For a number of reasons publication was delayed, so that the book appeared only after the new and significant theoretical works by Anthony Smith, Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner, but too soon for me to be able even to refer to them in the preface or notes. [205] It therefore appeared in the context of those studies which attempted a comprehensive theory, and so it was judged in a context which its author had not anticipated when it was written twenty years earlier.[206] This explains, among other things, why the book devotes scant attention to analysis of the relationship between the ‘revival’ of the nation and the social transformations during the transition to modern society, even though the author, inspired by historical materialism, considered this relationship to be of decisive importance and practically self-evident. [207]

At the time the book was written, the problems of the formation of nations were considered to be outdated, and ‘nationalism’ itself was studied as an antiquated deviation, a historical error. [208] This represented an advantage for scholarly analysis: it was possible to work free of ideological constraint, independently, especially when the chief object of analysis was quantification of social and geographical structures. Practically no models existed, and thus it was not difficult to choose pathbreaking procedures and to open new horizons.

Since the 1960s, of course, conditions have changed: new researchers appeared on the scene, and the informational base expanded. The need to explain and clarify the process of the formation of modern nations took on the aspect of a currently relevant task for the social sciences, and the study of ‘nationalism’ was raised to a political and ethical duty. In these circumstances it was necessary to reckon with a scholarly boom in the field and with the advisability of presenting as quickly as possible the most original and effective results. The social sciences saw an overproduction of new theories; on the other hand, historians recognised that they could not limit themselves to mere empiricism. They were also obliged to take into account the findings of the social sciences, at least at the level of middle-range theories. [209]

With the growing number of studies, a certain terminological poverty became increasingly widespread — especially the monotonous and unreflected repetition of the term ‘nationalism’ in the most varied contexts and applied to the most varied phenomena. Sometimes an individual state of mind is meant, sometimes that of a certain group or even of an entire society. Sometimes the term is applied to the activities of individuals, sometimes to that of groups.[210] The result is frequent misunderstanding and an inability to provide explanation. If we regard ‘nationalism’ as the prime mover, then we merely shift the explanation from the level of empirically grasped social activity to that of a ‘state of mind’, which is not susceptible to historical investigation. This is perhaps the reason why contemporary historical research on ‘nationalism’ has yielded so few relevant (i.e. generalising) results. I do not presume to pass judgement on the results of research in the social sciences.

As long as the historian has not given up on perceiving development in causal contexts, then the notion that the nation is a mere myth or construct will be of little help, as will the authoritative a priori thesis that the conflict of nations is unrepresented in history. [211] Even if national identity is not the sole determinant of an individual's place in society, one cannot ignore the fact that from a certain point in the history of modern Europe there have existed large groupings of people who are integrated by a combination of several kinds of relationships (economic, historical, political, religious, linguistic, cultural, geographical, etc.), and by their subjective perception of a collective consciousness of belonging together. Many of these ties could be mutually substitutable, but among them, three stand out as irreplaceable: a memory of a common past, treated as a destiny of the group; a density of linguistic or religious ties enabling a higher degree of social communication within the group than beyond it; and a conception of the equality of all members of the group organised as a civil society. The fact that members of these groups term themselves as a 'nation' — a term whose equivalents in different languages have varying connotations — is no reason to doubt the existence of such groups. These, or similar groups, would still exist if they were assigned another verbal designation or some sort of code.

This does not mean that nations should be regarded as eternal categories. In this connection it is necessary to note that I have used the term 'revival' in a metaphorical sense, though it is a term which comes from a vocabulary characteristic of the primordialist vision of the nation and was a typical commonplace for the national movements of the nineteenth century. But if we wish to analyse the processes of national formation, we must take into account the fact that objective relationships and ties, which were characteristic of the coherence of a large group (the nation), took centuries to be formed. [212] The process whereby nations were built was not preordained or irreversible. It went through two distinct stages, of unequal length and intensity. The first stage had an extensive character and began during the Middle Ages. The second, which was intensive and decisive, took place during the nineteenth century and was a part of that basic social transformation referred to above.

The relation between the formation of nations and this transformation occupies a key place in our discussion. Some authors, such as Hans Kohn and his followers, limit this relation to the diffusion of the ideas of the French

Revolution. Sometimes greater emphasis is placed on other intellectual currents, such as the influence of Herder or of German Romanticism. But the origin of nations cannot be satisfactorily explained without reference to the changes in the spheres of society, politics and economics. The fact that the rise of modern capitalist society comes in the same period as the rise of nations is not merely a chronological coincidence. At the same time I think it is unimportant whether we call the great social transformation a transition from feudAl-absolutist society to capitalism, a process of modernisation, or (in Gellner's usage) a process of industrialisation. [213]

Two basic types of nation-forming may be distinguished, according to the starting-point of the second, decisive stage. The first was that in the early modern state-nation, as in France, the Netherlands or Sweden. The second type, which I first called the 'smaller nation', began under conditions of a non-dominant ethnic group, i.e. a group which formed an ethnic community and whose members possessed a greater or lesser degree of ethnic identity. [214] The non-dominant ethnic group was distinguished from the state-nation by three deficiencies: it lacked 'its own' nobility or ruling classes, statehood and continuous literary tradition in its own language.

Sooner or later a group of educated members of these ethnic communities reached the conclusion that their group also belonged to the category of the 'nation', but that it was still an 'unconscious' nation which needed to be awakened, revived and made aware, but also required recognition from the other, already established nations. In time there began a purposeful activity aimed at achieving all the attributes of a fully formed nation: they started a 'national movement'. The success of this movement was by no means preordained. My research was focused on this second type of nation-forming process, the national movement. Therefore the central role was occupied neither by the ideas of the French Revolution, nor by the theories of Tocqueville nor by the politics of Bismarck.

In a historical explanation, the term 'national movement' has a significant advantage over 'nationalism' in that it refers to empirically observable activity by concrete individuals. We can analyse their goals and demands, their forms of organisation, their numbers and their social composition. At the beginning of the national movements there was activity which was above

all devoted to scholarly inquiry into and propagation of an awareness of the linguistic, cultural, social, economic and historical attributes of the non-dominant ethnic group (Phase A). In the ensuing period, Phase B, a new range of activists emerged, who now sought to win over as many of their ethnic group as possible to the project of creating a modern nation, by patriotic agitation. Once the major part of the population came to set special store by their national identity, a mass movement emerged — Phase C.

This periodisation, originally worked out in order to compare analogous stages of various national movements, has met with the approval of many researchers. It gradually became clear that its usefulness extended beyond its original role as a purely working approach; it can be used for the measurement of national territory, for codification of language and for determining the basic components of national identity. The attitude of the patriots, their relation to the state and to power — and also the response they elicited from within their ethnic group — varied according to which phase the national movement had attained. The same holds true for the national programme.

The essence of national agitation, which arose with Phase B, was the effort to spread the idea of national identity in an environment which until that time recognised several distinct identities. As has been mentioned, ethnic identity was stronger wherever it was supported by institutions — ecclesiastical organisations, parliaments, armies and so forth — in which a ‘memory’ of political or cultural uniqueness survived. However, national identity cannot be reduced to a mere transformation of ethnic identity. With varying strength and social results, other identities were represented in the territory of the non-dominant ethnic groups: those defined by the state or dynasty, in a multiethnic monarchy focused upon the ruler; by the land or country, sometimes in the form of ‘land patriotism’; by the region, in the sense of enlightened patriotism; and finally by social group or religion.

In what ways did national identity differ from these older identities? In contrast with ethnic identity, national identity expressed a relationship to a large social group which (1) possessed, or should possess, a fully formed social composition, including an educated elite and an entrepreneurial class; (2) was at the same time a community of citizens enjoying equal rights; (3)

acknowledged a body of ‘higher culture’ in the national language; (4) combined an awareness of a common origin with an awareness of a common destiny, to create a historical ‘personalised’ collectivity.

The relationship between national and state identity depended to a decisive degree on the level of modernisation attained during Phase B of the national movement. Wherever the idea of the state was still formed by the dynastic identity of the absolutist monarchy, the efforts towards a new, national identity could focus on a combination of the civic principle and cultural uniqueness. Wherever a constitutional system and civic society had appeared before the inauguration of Phase B, it became far more difficult to make national identity independent of state identity, as for example in Catalonia, Scotland or Slovakia.

In contrast to the premodern state identity, regional identity was compatible with national identity and in certain situations could act as a preparation for it. The difference lay in the fact that enlightened regional patriotism was based chiefly on the idea of the responsibility of the educated elite for the life of the people of the given region and on the moral obligation to be useful for these people. Its goal, then, was not the mobilisation of the mass of the people. What is now regarded as regionalism already posits the existence of a mass regional identity and depends upon it. This identity is of course based on vaguely defined borders, it usually lacks a firm awareness of ethnic community and a personalised conception of a common past.

The national movement did not operate in a social and political vacuum. Members of non-dominant ethnic groups lived in multiethnic states which had their ruling elites, administrations, and their fully developed social composition. The leaders of the national movements therefore had to adopt an attitude towards the internal conditions of the given state and participate in its internal conflicts. The basic problem was the process of social transformation and modernisation mentioned earlier. Wherever the national movement began under conditions of late absolutism, it was obliged to take up a stance towards that system, and its social and cultural demands, whatever the intentions of the movement’s leaders, were inevitably aimed against the old regime, even when their goal was only modernisation through reforms. [215]

The structure of the demands of national movements corresponded roughly to those missing elements which excluded them from the ranks of the fully-fledged nations. We may divide these demands into three groups:

(i) Cultural and linguistic demands: the development of a national culture based on the local language and its normal use in literature, education, administration and political life.

(ii) Political demands: the achievement of civil rights and political selfadministration and participation; later also autonomy and independence.

(iii) Social demands: here the specific demands varied according to the prevailing social and economic situation — emancipation of the peasantry, better conditions for the crafts, access to education, and so forth. However, all national movements endeavoured to attain a complete social structure within the ethnic group, including an educated elite, an entrepreneurial and sometimes a landowning class.

The combination of groups of demands varied, as did their timing, but it was not random, and certainly it cannot be inferred from the arbitrary decisions of the ‘nationalists’. On the contrary, we can observe a remarkable correlation between the character of the demands and the social structure. Most of the national movements pursued cultural, linguistic and social goals during Phase B, while political demands were formulated only at the beginning or during the course of Phase C. However, some national movements already formulated political demands during Phase B, sometimes demanding complete independence (the Greeks, Norwegians, Serbs, Poles), at others only aiming for autonomy (the Irish, Hungarians). If we ask what these national movements had in common, the answer is clear: they were movements of ethnic groups which possessed ‘their own’ elites including ‘their own’ nobility or bourgeoisie. A second common feature is that these ethnic groups could point to the sometime existence of ‘their own’ state and demand its renewal.[216]

As mentioned earlier, the process of nation-forming acquired an irreversible character only once the national movement had won mass support, thereby reaching Phase C. This is a fact which has escaped most contemporary theoreticians of ‘nationalism’. We know of a number of cases in which the national movement remained in Phase B for a long time, sometimes down to the present: here we may point to Wales, Brittany, Belarus or the eastern Ukraine. How can these differences be explained? Certainly not by reference to ‘nationalism’: for if we wish, we can find it everywhere.

The question of the ‘success’ of the national movement cannot be posed in the abstract, but concretely within the individual phases of the national movement. Three analytical levels need to be distinguished:

(i) Why did some of the patriots from Phase A decide to begin national agitation? In other words, why did Phase B begin?

(ii) Why did their national agitation win a mass response, and why was the national movement able to proceed to Phase C?

(iii) Why and in what circumstances did the national movement achieve its cultural, social and political goals?

The first level of the problem has so far been accorded scant attention in empirical research?[217] But we may infer the basic connections by evaluating the conditions in which the decision in favour of a new national identity was taken. This always occurred during a crisis of the old regime (whether we choose to emphasise its absolutist or its feudal character) at a time when the old relations and ties were disrupted and opened to doubt, and when the old religious legitimacy was challenged. The ruling elites — or more specifically some of their members — reacted to this crisis of the old regime with efforts at reform from above, at a systematic modernisation by decree. The immediate outcome of these reforms was of course a further disruption of the existing relations and certainties, and hence also of identity.

We may recall for example, that Phase B of the national movements in the Hapsburg monarchy began with reaction to the Josephine Reforms and to the shocks of the Napoleonic wars, which also certainly resulted in the turn towards the official Austrian state identity. The national movement in tsarist Russia reacted to the crisis of the monarchy in the 1850s and the ensuing reforms of Alexander II. The beginning of the Serbian and Greek struggles for independence followed immediately upon the political tremors within the Ottoman empire, which were preceded by Selim III's efforts to reform the backward system and which continued during the Napoleonic period.

Of course it must be admitted that in the beginning the weakening of old certainties and the old system of values was only perceived by those who possessed a certain breadth of outlook and education; they concluded that it was necessary to search for new certainties and to create a new system of values which would correspond to the modern age. For some of them the solution was to look for new certainties in a new type of identity: by identifying with a group of equal citizens bound together by a common culture, destiny, social position, language and so forth.

For this new type of group solidarity the term 'nation' offered itself, and in many cases it echoed an analogous historical community to which it was possible to subscribe. Thus the term 'nation' was able to take on a new connotation, sometimes (though not always) under the influence of the French Revolution, which imparted to it the attributes of a political programme. The comparative study of the different connotations which the term 'nation' had at the beginning of Phase B (or also during Phase A) in the varying linguistic contexts of the European national movements would be an attractive theme for future scholars.[218]

The success of national agitation during Phase B, as has been mentioned, was a basic factor in the successful outcome of the nationforming process within the non-dominant ethnic group. If national agitation is evaluated in this way, then the question arises of whether the modern nation cannot be regarded as the result of a wilful decision on the part of the 'nationalists'. Is it not possible to agree with Gellner's view that a 'rival conclusion' may be

drawn from my analysis — that it was ‘nationalism’ that created nations? [219]

If this were the case, we would have to explain why it occurred to nobody at the beginning of the nineteenth century to launch a campaign to persuade, for example, the Irish that they were in fact Germans, or to win over the Hungarians to the notion that they were actually Chinese. What explains the failure to create a Slavic nation, as the Pan-Slavists attempted, or an Illyrian nation? Why did the idea of a united Czechoslovak nation fail among the Slovaks, even though in the interwar period the Czechoslovak Republic possessed all the necessary means of effective agitation to put across this view of state and national identity?

The answer is simple. The basic condition for the success of any agitation (not only national agitation) is that its argument at least roughly corresponds to reality as perceived by those to whom it is directed. National agitation therefore had to (and normally did) begin with the fact that, quite independently of the will of the ‘patriots’, certain relations and ties had developed over the centuries which united those people towards whom the agitation was directed. They formed a community united by inward ties, and they were at least vaguely aware of this. There was of course a further psychological condition that was not entirely evident: this was the ability of the targets of national agitation to conceive of the existence of ‘their’ group outside the framework of their everyday experience. [220] This conception in turn depended on the degree of education and the personal experiences of individuals. These were not circumstances which the agitators could themselves create or influence; they were results of the process of modernisation.

Along with these elementary and general conditions for successful agitation, four further factors must be mentioned, for taken together they were of decisive importance. The first was the successful course of Phase A: successful in so far as it clearly distinguished the nation-to-be from its neighbours, codified the language, provided basic information about the ‘national’ past, and so forth. The second was a basic level of vertical social mobility: some educated people must come from the nondominant ethnic group without being assimilated. The third necessary condition was an

increasing level of social communication, including literacy, schooling and market relations.

While these three conditions are more or less generally accepted as necessary to the nation-forming process, the fourth factor in national integration was more controversial. I have termed this factor a ‘nationally relevant conflict of interests’, i.e. a social or professional tension or collision that could be mapped onto linguistic divisions. Although I emphasised that these nationally relevant conflicts of interests ‘definitely cannot be reduced to fundamental antagonisms’ such as those between tenants and landlords, Gellner based his criticism of my book on the assertion that I had reduced history to the history of class conflicts and had explained the formation of nations as a result of such conflicts.[221] In any case, among the examples of nationally relevant conflicts of interests I pointed chiefly to conflicts which cannot be classified in the repertory of class conflict.[222]

Especially it was the conflict between new university graduates coming from a non-dominant ethnic group and a closed elite from the ruling nation keeping a hereditary grip on leading positions in the state. Further, I pointed to the tension between craftsmen belonging to the non-dominant group and the large traders and manufacturers belonging to the dominant nation.[223] To these instances may be added the tension between the towns and the countryside, between the centre and the provinces, and so forth. [224] Ultimately the struggle for positions of power may also be considered an interesting conflict.

In any case, I always used the phrase ‘classes and groups’ (i.e. social groups) in order to distance myself from a simplistic class ‘reductionism’. On the other hand, I have searched the text in vain for the term ‘class struggle’ ascribed to me by Gellner.[225] Nor did I ever assert that the origin of the nation depended exclusively on the existence of nationally relevant conflicts of interests (they were only one of four factors), and in this connection I certainly never emphasised the class interest. Twenty-five years ago I considered ‘the most outstanding and obvious result’ of my empirical analysis to have been that ‘no class or social group had a stable place in the structure of the patriotic communities’.[226]

In interpreting the response to national agitation, I do not consider it to be of fundamental importance whether we refer to artisans or officials as ‘classes’ or ‘social groups’. What is important is to demonstrate that national agitation was more effective wherever the conflict of interests could be articulated in national terms. And conversely, wherever the issues were only those of language and culture, or where conflicts of interests were articulated not in national, but in political terms, national agitation encountered marked difficulties, and Phase B lasted much longer, as in the case of the Flemings or Welsh.

I fully agree with Gellner’s view that history ‘is rich in countless kinds of conflict’, and that it cannot be reduced to class conflicts.[227] But unlike him I believe that conflicts between classes (that is, those social groups which are distinguished by the nature of the ownership of productive forces) also have their place among these ‘countless’ conflicts. This difference of opinion is only a nuance in the interpretation of nationforming and without any fundamental importance. What is important, however, is that nationally relevant conflicts of interests can only be applied as a factor in nation-forming in the case of national movements, and not in the type of nation-forming which began in the context of the nation-state. Here — in France, England, Sweden and so forth — conflicts of interests did not acquire a national relevance: they were firmly confined to the social sphere and were sometimes articulated in the political sphere. Since Gellner failed to take account of my typological distinction between two basic processes of nation-forming, it is perhaps possible to accept his criticism of the relation between class and nation in conditions of ‘industrialism’ as far as the first ‘French’ type of nationforming is concerned, but not for the type which was the object of my analysis and which I designated as ‘national movements’.[228]

While Phase B of the national movement was chiefly a struggle for the very existence of the nation, Phase C decided the form that the emerging nation would take. This form was not defined merely by the political programme worked out by this or that national movement, which in Phase B inclined towards linguistic and cultural aims. For it was only in Phase C that most of the national communities achieved a fully formed social structure. National elites appeared: industrialists, financiers, large traders, high officials,

scholars. Meanwhile, at least a part of the peasantry or yeomanry had been won over for the national community, and there were efforts to integrate the national working class. Phase C, then, was marked by three significant novelties: first, a political programme was formulated, in which nationalism (in the proper sense of the word) was established; secondly, the nation acquired a fully-formed social composition; and third, the working class — or more precisely, an organised socialist movement — appeared on the scene.

In my view, the rise of a working-class movement was not significant, as Gellner supposes, because it signalled the end of capitalism and the rise of socialism,[229] but rather because the socialists offered the only relevant alternative to a national identity and nationalism, namely, a class identity and internationalism. For the study of the factors which influenced the process of nation-forming — and especially for the study of the spread of a national identity among the popular masses — the fact that this alternative did not ultimately win out is completely irrelevant.

If class identity did not in most cases replace national identity, this has its reasons which are susceptible to analysis, though this theme exceeds the scope of the present chapter. Apart from this, the rise of the socialist workers' movement is also of significance for the study of the nationforming process itself. The Austro-Marxists (above all Otto Bauer) were the first to criticise the myth of the eternal nation, and the Marxist discussion concerning the relation between the working class and the national movements set the agenda for the ensuing discussion of the phenomenon of 'nationalism'.[230]

That which we characterise as the political programme of the national movement contained several elements which emerged gradually and in connection with broad political changes within the given multiethnic state. The demand for local self-administration emerged quite early: the struggle for influence in 'City Hall' provided the first political school for most of the national movements. Another level of political demands was participation, which of course was only practicable within a constitutional regime. The demand for participation was followed by that for autonomy, that is, the possibility to take decisions within territory which the leaders of the national movement considered 'their own'.

If we accept Balibar's view that 'the bourgeoisie was always the state bourgeoisie',[231] it is logical that the demand for automony or statehood could appear in the programme of the national movement only after the social composition of the emerging nation had been completed, i.e. that it also included the bourgeoisie (or some parts of nobility as its substitute — as in the case of Hungary). Also connected with the completion of the social composition was the internal differentiation of political programmes, which found its institutional expression in the appearance of political parties. It is symptomatic, and part of the nature of national movements, that all the political parties emphasised general national interests along with their particular party demands.

When can we consider the national movement to have been finished? On the plane of theory, the usual answer is: after it has achieved all attributes of a fully-fledged nation. But on the concrete plane, the question remains of what we consider to be the fulfilment of the individual elements of the national programme. This is especially important for the political programme. While full linguistic equality and cultural emancipation can be achieved in conditions of political autonomy, it remains debatable whether we can consider autonomy to be the 'fulfilment' of the political demands. Surely much depends on the degree of autonomy. With Dualism, Hungary practically became a national state, so that here we may speak of a completion of the national movement. On the other hand, Finnish or Galician autonomy was far from being able to create the conditions for a full national selfadministration.

Full independence in the form of a nation-state, then, was part of the political programme of only some of the European national movements (Norwegian, Polish, Irish), while in most cases the right of self-determination was limited to autonomy. If in spite of this most of the national movements in fact ended with the formation of a nation-state, this was not the fruit of a deliberate and long-term effort on the part of the national leaders; rather it was a consequence of external events. The disintegration of three multiethnic empires at the end of World War I (together with the policies of the Allied powers) opened the way to national independence. Therefore it is a mistake to project the outcome back into the past and assign credit for eventual state independence to all political programmes of the nineteenth century. [232]

In conclusion, I do not believe that my explanation of nation-forming was merely an unintended ‘alternative vision’ to Gellner’s theory. On the contrary, it seems to me that our approaches to the basic question are concurrent: our shared view is that nation-forming must be explained and understood in the context of the great social and cultural transformation that ushered in the modern age. As a historian I cannot conceive of this transformation in the abstract but rather as a shift in relations among real, actually existing people, who had their specific interests and concrete social background, while their social and economic interests cannot be trivialised as a fiction or ‘stereotype’. I also agree with Gellner that it would be a mistake to reduce the social and cultural situation to relations between the classes. However, such a reduction cannot be ascribed to me. The basic difference of opinion lies elsewhere: I cannot accept the view that nations are a mere ‘myth’, nor do I accept Gellner’s global understanding of nationalism as an allpurpose explanation including categories of which the nation is a mere derivative. [233] The relation between the nation and national consciousness (or national identity, or ‘nationalism’) is not one of unilateral derivation but one of mutual and complementary correlation, and the discussion about which of them is ‘primary’ can, at least for the present, be left to the philosophers and ideologues.

*** Notes

John A. Hall encouraged me to contribute to this collection an explanation of my conception of nation-forming, in part as an answer to Gellner’s recent critique of my work. I complied only after hesitation, and I regret that my reply appears after the death of this outstanding scholar.

[204] The book appeared in German in Prague in 1968: Die Vorkiimpfer der nationalen Bewegung bei den kleinen Volkern Europas. Eine vergleichende Analyse zur gesellschaftlichen Schichtung der patriotischen Gruppen, Acta Universtatis Carolinae Philosophica et Historica, Monographia XXIV.

[205] Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations, Cambridge, 1985.

[206] Thus it is flattering but chronologically inaccurate for Gellner to see — as he does in Encounters with Nationalism, Oxford, 1994, ch. 14 — my book of 1968 as ‘an alternative vision’ to his own 1983 monograph.

[207] Whether we apply to this process of transformation the term ‘transition from traditional to modern society’ or ‘transition from agrarian to industrial society’ is not, I think, of any great importance.

[208] Typical in this respect is E. Kedourie, Nationalism, London, 1960.

[209] The most noteworthy result of this trend in recent years was the interdisciplinary conference held in Santiago de Compostela in 1993, the papers of which appeared in two volumes as J. G. Beramendi, R. Maiz and S. M. Nunez, eds., Nationalism in Europe: Past and Present, Santiago de Compostela, 1994.

[210] Gellner’s characterisation of my book as a study of nationalism suggests a serious misunderstanding. I never used the word ‘nationalism’ because I do not consider it an appropriate tool for scholarly analysis. Nor does the content of my book deal with an attitude that I would characterise as ‘nationalist’.

[211] Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, p. 199.

[212] Ibid., pp. 185–6. Gellner’s presupposition that I do not recognise the ‘earlier roots’ (i.e. the pre-modern stage) of national development is again the result of misunderstanding. In a book about the social composition of nineteenthcentury patriots, which did not aim at developing a general

theory, there was no reason to discuss earlier developments, except for occasional remarks at the beginning of particular case studies — on which, see Social Preconditions of National Revival, pp. 33, 44, 86, 98, etc.

[213] Gellner’s understanding of the terms ‘industrialisation’ and ‘industrial’ differs from that of most historians. In his text they do not refer to the age in which machine production was introduced in the factories but to the appearance of new forms of enterprise, social mobility and shifts in ownership patterns — in other words, roughly the sense of the category ‘transition to capitalist society’. This is also the source of his mistaken impression that I did not place the process of nation-forming in the context of this great transformation. This context was for me self-evident: the difficulty lies only in the fact that Gellner’s term ‘industrialisation’ was not applied to the transformation. In fact, one result of my analysis was that industrialisation (in the sense of the introduction of machine production, the rise of a modern proletariat, etc.), as far as it coincided with Phase B of the national movement, had no demonstrable influence on a positive response from the masses to national agitation. On this see Social Preconditions of National Revival, pp. l 69ff.

[214] I originally used the term ‘smaller nations’ for this type of development but now prefer the more precise ‘non-dominant ethnic group’, the term popularised and in a way codified by the European Science Foundation’s ‘Comparative Studies on Governments and Non-Dominant Ethnic Groups in Europe, 1850–1950’, whose results were published in a six volume series under the same title by New York University Press, Dartmouth, 1990.

[215] To Gellner’s remark that I have assigned feudalism and absolutism to one period (Encounters with Nationalism, p. 183), I can only note here that I analysed the relations between the two in a book co-authored with J. Petran, Das 17. Jahrhundert — Krise der Feudalgesellschaft, Hamburg, 1981. Decisive for my not very different approach towards the problem of the formation of nations as part of the rise of modern society was that the absolutist system had more features in common with classical feudalism than with civic society.

[216] I have analysed these and other elements of national demands in my latest study V narodnim zajmu. Pozadavky a cile evropskych narodnich hnuti v komparativniperspkktive, Prague, 1996.

[217] This is a serious weakness of my work of 1968 — which, however, Gellner overlooks. But even from this model we cannot explain why some individuals decided in favour of the new identity and embarked on national agitation.

[218] On this subject there is a suggestive book by the Finnish historian A. Kemilainen, Nationalism: Problems Concerning the Word, the Concept and Classification, Helsinki, 1964, which of course limits itself to the ‘major’ languages.

[219] In this modification I locate the rational nucleus of Gellner’s suggestion (Encounters with Nationalism, pp. l 95ff.) that ‘rival conclusions’ may be drawn from the empirical data that I collected.

[220] Benedict Anderson’s metaphor of ‘imagined community’ must also be interpreted in this sense. In accord with this is the concept of operationalisation formulated earlier by Gail Stokes in ‘Cognition and the Function of Nationalism’, Journal of Interdisciplinary History, vol. 4, 1976, pp. 530ff.

[221] Social Preconditions of National Revival, p. 188; Encounters with Nationalism, pp. 196ff.

[222] In any case, Gellner’s critique contains no concrete examples of the class conflicts that he has in mind when labelling their role as a ‘myth’.

[223] Social Preconditions of National Revival, pp. 188ff.

[224] M. Hechter, Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536–1966, London, 1975.

[225] I never wrote the sentence ‘Class struggle on its own led to no revolution ... was similarly ineffective’ which Gellner cites (Encounters with Nationalism, p. 197). The quotation from my book (p. 185) actually begins ‘Conflicts of interest ...’ Nor can the sentence ‘It is the presence ...’ (cited by Gellner on the same page) be found in my book.

[226] Social Preconditions of National Revival, p. 129.

[227] Encounters with Nationalism, p. 199.

[228] Ibid., pp. 198ff. In this connection should be considered Gellner’s claim that I ‘map’ class and cultural differences as if they were ‘really independent’. I am not sure what the term ‘independent’ signifies in anthropology, but from a historical perspective the two phenomena cannot be regarded as ‘independent’, since in that case we would be unable to explain the dynamic of their change. On the contrary, the concept of ‘nationally relevant conflicts of interests’ is based on their functional interdependence — or, in Gellner’s phrase, on the assumption that ‘class and cultural differences overlap’.

[229] If, as Gellner correctly asserts (Encounters with Nationalism, pp. 194ff.), I never mentioned the ‘victory of socialism’ or a ‘socialist nation’ (though both phrases would have been welcomed by the regime at the time), this surely had its reasons.

[230] O. Bauer, Nationalitiitenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie, Vienna, 1907; E. Nimni, Marxism and Nationalism: Theoretical Origins of a Political Crisis, London, 1991, pp. 50ff.

[231] E. Balibar and I. Wallerstein, Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities, London, 1991, p. 91.

[232] The opinion that Gellner attributes to me (that national movements had to ‘create their high culture before they could even strive for a state ... ‘) seems somewhat teleological. In any case, I mentioned several examples of national movements beginning to strive for a state prior to their formation of a high culture (Norwegians, Greeks, etc.).

[233] I believe that this brief contribution convincingly shows that Gellner’s critical objections to my book are based partly on misunderstanding and partly on an inadequate interpretation of my terms and concepts. I consider some of them as a demonstration of his efforts to distance his explanation from Marxism, to which in his historical materialism he was methodologically (though not politically) closer than most of the authors who have dealt with the problem of ‘nationalism’. In any case, on the level of methods and working procedures, the distinctions between Marxism, ‘semi-Marxism’ and historical materialism are matters more of definition than principle.

** 4. The curse of rurality: limits of modernisation theory

Tom Nairn

Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, Corsica, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ngorno-Karabakh: this list of familiar trouble spots is neither complete nor extended beyond Europe, in which case it would be at least eight times longer. Originally coined for Ireland, ‘troubles’ in this sense have multiplied and become global, notably since 1989. No serious newspaper and few bulletins are without their quota of violent trouble items, which often enough make up most of the news.

Under such a barrage it is easy to feel ‘trouble’ as a climate of the age, and link it to one indiscriminate ‘-ism’ or another. Yet even from the restricted sample quoted something else may spring to the eye, not so easily

classified. Most such ethnonationalist conflicts seem to go on recurring in predominantly rural situations. Nor are these ‘rural’ merely in the sense of being agricultural or non-urban — like East Anglia, say, or the Beauce plain in central France. No, they are areas where ‘rural’ tends to mean ‘peasant’ — that is, where an historical pattern of small landholding prevails, or has until recently prevailed, marked by intense heritable rights, rigid morality or faith, customary exclusivity and an accompanying small-town or village culture.

It is certainly also true that the troubles are not literally confined to the countryside. Thus, Sarajevo was a key site for a good deal of what was none the less more accurately described as the Bosnian ‘village war’. ETA is notoriously active and supported in the industrial suburbs of Bilbao and San Sebastian, as well as in the Basque mountain heartland. Belfast has undeniably been the focus of much of the Ulster conflict, and witnessed the forced segregation of the contending communities among different streets or quarters, as well as into separate farm towns or hamlets.

However, in none of these examples did the conflict itself originate in the cities. In Ireland, for instance, it notoriously derives on both sides from a centuries-old struggle over land rights — as Colm Toibin wrote in his thoughtful travel book about the Northern Ireland frontier, Walking along the Border, it came out of the ‘good and bad blood’ generated by violent expropriation, and involved both literal and land hunger.[234] Whatever else it may have become, today’s Sinn Fein is also the inheritor of Republicanism’s old social ideal: the rural and pious peasant family utopia which inspired the Irish constitution, and regulated most of its strategic development from 1922 until Ireland’s entry to the European Community in 1975. The resultant generational warfare may penetrate or even take over cities, the urban sites to which extended families of land-dwellers have moved or (sometimes) been expelled. But the violent side of the conflicts appears invariably to have its origin in the peasant or small town world they have left behind.

Also, such violence may for a time — maybe quite a long time — be aggravated by the transition itself. ‘Urbanisation’ is the smoothsounding, impersonal term for what was often an agonising process: the fearful

undertow of modernity. During it rural emigrants look backward as much as forward, and pass from the remembrance to the often elaborate reinvention of the worlds they have lost. They are helped to do so by other strata without direct connection to the land. Some urban classes have a parallel if different motivation — above all, the intellectuals. They are seeking to ‘mobilise’ lost-world psychology in order to build a new world, that of the modern nation-state. Eventually this may owe very little to the old rural existence and its folk memories; yet while the original nation-building alliance holds good the debt feels important, and will go on finding expression in myths of rootedness. Hence many traits of the abandoned world may continue to ‘haunt’ an existence in other ways apparently broken in to city existence and civic conditions.

It seems to me there is another term for such haunting: ethnic nationalism. Ethnic nationalism is in essence a peasantry transmuted (at least in ideal terms) into a nation. It is the breath and reverberation of modernity’s undertow, the deepest voice of ‘transition’. Granted, the formation of modern national identities has notoriously involved a multiplicity of other factors, all attended to by different brands of social scientist: states, frontiers, literacy, industrialisation, school systems, symbols and complex cultural artefacts. But it can be read along this other axis too. Underneath all the accumulating paraphernalia of the modern lies a prolonged and massive social Calvary out of peasant subsistence and towards eventual urban interdependence. On that level of the Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft journey terrible accidents have been common. Peasantries may be ‘re-imagined’ essentially as a form of leverage, a way of helping to erect the modern nation, and in the end such imagining of communities may turn into Green Politics and ecology. However, it is not impossible for the instrumental lever to assume a life of its own and (at least for a time) to take over and dominate the processes by which nations are built.

The late Edward Thompson liked to insist that the working class was present at its own birth: the new workers were not only modelled by impersonal forces, he explained in The Making of the English Working Class,[235] but helped to make even their early history. But most ‘workers’ originated as ex-peasants. In many parts of the world they for long tried to combine aspects of both fates, and still do so today — most strikingly in the East Asian societies representing the latest round of

industrial development. Nor, when it came to ‘making’, have they operated exclusively in the social, forward and outward-looking spirit most approved of by our century’s socialists. Escape or flight backwards or sideways have also figured prominently — movement away from the rules of a ‘progress’ whose burdens or sacrifices came to seem (or were made to seem) insupportable. Occasionally such flights have taken the form of short-cuts to Utopia, a magically foreshortened ‘end of history’.

One of the most revealing took place in Cambodia, between 1975 and 1979. There, a significant and concentrated historical attempt was made literally to reverse the entire process — to abort urbanisation altogether and forcibly reconstitute peasant society into a different sort of nation. In his important new study Ben Kiernan calls it ‘the indentured agrarian state’.[236] Everyone has heard of the horrors accompanying this attempt. And yet the episode itself remains ill understood. In its own day the Cambodian revolution was interpreted by the outside world primarily in terms of Cold War dogmatics, as an aberration of communism or Marxist ideology. But in the longer retrospect now so thoroughly divulged, one can see the inadequacy of that prism. Other coordinates were much more important. The Cambodian Hell was more truly an aberration of nationalist development than of socialism. Hence from the vantage point of the late 1990s it appears quite differently: as an extraordinary precursor of today’s ocean of ‘troubles’. Twenty years before such crises became common with the collapse of communist state power, it demonstrated fully how devastating the exercise of that power could be upon an explicitly ethnic or racial nationalist template.

‘In this book I shall show ... that Khmer Rouge conceptions of race overshadowed those of class’, Kiernan states firmly in his introduction.[237] ‘In terms of population as well as of territory, history was to be undone’, through absolute central control devoted, with ever-increasing fervour and ruthlessness, to what was then not yet known as ‘ethnic cleansing’.[238] The aim of Pol Pot’s revolution was a pure-blood and almost entirely rural, self-sufficient Khmer nation-state. The shadow cast across history by the retreating peasantry is, I would contend, generally much longer and deeper than most analyses have acknowledged. And, in Cambodia, certain exceptional circumstances let it attain for four years to an unexampled and murderous darkness. The political instruments of ‘revolutionary’ modernity were consecrated to the reconstruction of a nativist countryside — the

rooted, Edenic community that had supposedly existed before the time of cities, social classes and individual guilt or shame.[239]

*** A dark monkey from the mountains

His real name was Saloth Sar. ‘Pol Pot’ — an emblematic title in the tradition of twentieth-century communist rebaptism — was not disclosed to the world until 14 April 1976, when he became prime minister of the new revolutionary government in Phnom Penh. The Saloth family were peasants all right (12 hectares, 6 buffalo) but with a difference. They had royal connections. His cousin was a palace dancer and ‘favourite wife’ to a king. An elder brother found employment as a lackey, and the future dictator joined him there at the age of six. As Kiernan points out, ‘he never worked a rice field or knew much of village life ... few Cambodian childhoods were so removed from their vernacular culture’.[240]

He went on to a royal monastery and a Catholic school for the privileged. It is still astonishing to recall just how privileged: with a population of about 7 million and after nearly a century of French colonial occupation, there was very little secondary education in Cambodia and no higher education at all. When independence was granted in 1953 only 144 Cambodians had the baccalaureat. While in France Saloth Sar met the woman who became his wife in 1956, Khieu Ponnary: she was the first Khmer woman to graduate from high school. So it is not surprising that even elite Khmers felt like country bumpkins in the wider world. When he first reached Saigon in 1948, on his way to Paris, Saloth and the other twenty-year-old with him felt themselves to be like ‘two dark monkeys from the mountains’.

His scholarship was meant to turn him into a radio electrician, but it failed. He joined the French Communist Party (Cambodian Section) instead, and took part in the exiled independence movement. To avoid persecution the emigre cadres habitually used noms de plume like ‘Khmer Worker’, but Saloth Sar’s was unusual: ‘khmaer da’em’ or ‘original Cambodian’, an anticipation of that fidelity to native essence which, twenty years later, would turn Phnom Penh inside out and build the skull mountains at Tuol Sleng extermination centre.

Not that much of this showed on the surface, either in Paris or later. A consensual social view of Saloth emerges from the many careful references in Kiernan’s book: only with some difficulty would butter have melted in his mouth. In public he always displayed the palace fa<;ade — personally ‘charming, self-effacing’, cultivated, ‘genteel’ and quite humorous, and rarely showing anger in public. There is one account of Pol Pot breaking someone’s leg in a vicious punishment session: his own deputy prime minister, Vorn Vet. [241] But otherwise no record suggests burning eyes, Mussolinian blustering sessions or heimatisch warblings like the lyrics of Radovan Karadzic. In general, the outstanding serialkiller of the age shrouded his resentment so well that few could have known what it portended.

*** Living for death

In a three-hour speech delivered on 27 September 1977 Pol Pot included a few words in honour of the national anthem of Democratic Kampuchea:

<quote>

Our national anthem clearly shows the essence of our people’s struggle. As you know, our national anthem was not composed by a poet. Its essence is the blood of our entire people ... This blood call has been incorporated into the national anthem ... [242]

</quote>

A colossal amount of actual blood was wasted by the Khmer Rouge regime. Kiernan estimates it as about 20 per cent of the previous population, or ‘... at least 1.5 million’. Twenty years before Rwanda, ‘the DK regime was on a genocidal track. There is no reason to believe the killing would have slowed, had it not been stopped by the Vietnamese army.’[243]

However, the anthem (which did in fact mention blood in almost every line) was not exalting mere haemoglobin. ‘Blood’ in this essentialist sense is the

precious, inherited gist of an ‘entire people’, the secret of a nation passed on in trust from one generation to the next. But ‘entire people’ should not be read literally either: the meaning was not everybody who lived in pre-1975 Cambodia, and not even everyone ‘of Khmer descent’ in a certifiable or physical sense. Phnom Penh and the ancien regime had been full of traitors and vendus, as well as foreigners. These false Khmers had to be got rid of, which could be done only with the assistance of a ‘true Khmer’ stereotype. Although the Marxist ideology deployed by Pol Pot prescribed ‘workers and peasants’ for the slot, in practice Cambodia had only peasants. Not just any peasants, however: the well-off ones were no good, since privilege might have aligned them with the enemy. It had to be the poor — or, in terms of ancient piety, the simple - peasants who bore the blood-burden of the national soul. This is why they figured so prominently in the hectorings of Khmer Rouge ideologist Khieu Samphan:

<quote>

Did university graduates know anything about the true natural sciences? No ... everything was done according to foreign books and foreign standards. Therefore it was useless. By contrast our children in the rural areas have always had very usefol knowledge. They can tell you which cow is tame and which is skittish. They can mount a buffalo from both sides ... They are practically masters of nature [and] only this should be called natural science because it is closely connected with the reality of the nation, with the ideas of nationalism, production, national construction and national defense ... [244]

</quote>

Such true Khmers had to re-educate their fallen cousins in the meaning of ‘national’. That was best accomplished on the spot, close to the soil. Instead of taking peasant brigades to the cities, therefore, the cities were emptied out into the fields. Foreign obsessions and selfish individualism would be beaten out of them there, by a regime of productive if arduous labour which would also raise food production and make Cambodia self-sufficient, or ‘truly independent’. This would swiftly bring about a new society, sound, clean, free of corruption, hooliganism, graft, embezzlement, gambling, prostitution, alcoholism or any kind of hazardous games. [245]

All those who could not or would not be cleaned up, died. Betrayal of the slightest unclean impulse meant extinction.[246] Pol Pot and Khieu Samphan were of course influenced by the Chinese Cultural Revolution. That is, they thought the Red Guards had chickened out. After beating up a few ancien re&me egg-heads they stopped short of serious measures like vacating Peking and abolishing money. Now it was up to Cambodia. The flames of peasant nationalism had been fanned by Mao's Great Leap Forward. But the same fire was far more intense among the Khmers, a small and historically vulnerable people equipped with a relegation complex and an indurate hatred for its neighbours. By harnessing and directing that, the Cambodian Party thought it had the possibility of really forging an exemplary rural-socialist state. For the first time in modern history, 'autarchy' or total self-sufficiency might be realisable.[247]

As we saw earlier, Kiernan believes ethnic purity was one key theme in the resultant Cambodian frenzy. The other was what he calls 'the struggle for central control', or 'the Khmer Rouge Center's unceasing ... struggle for top-down domination' .[248] However, the one really implied the other. Stereotypically simple peasants could not themselves plan or organise their new hegemony, or decide who were the incompatible elements and what to do with them. That was the task of the party. It spoke 'in the name of' the soil cultivators, of course, as orthodox communists did for the working class. But knowledge of tame and skittish cows did not take it far, and neither did a traditional rankling sense of 'us and them'. Most of the message had therefore to be made up by the revolutionaries as they went along. General Marxist apologetics was too forward-looking to contribute much: however deluded in detail, it was at least devoted to an imminent industrialised future, and to out-producing capitalism in its own unclean terms. The ethnonationalist stereotype, by contrast, offered significant advantages as an instrument of control and coercion.

Ethnic boundaries are for the most part both murky and alterable. They compose a sign-system which lays claim to natural and selfevident status — something like the obvious contrast between (say) a Rwandan Hutu and a Chinaman. But in reality comparatively few signs carry such blatant meaning, and for these the sub-ethnic category of 'race' tends to be

employed. Most ethnic markers rely on language (learnable), customs (adoptable or forgettable), faith (acquirable), or still more imprecise configurations like ‘national character’, common history or memory. One implication is that it often is quite difficult to contradict a verdict about just who is a what. When authority decides the matter, in effect it decrees: so-and-so either was or was not a ‘Khmer’ or (more to the point after 1975) a ‘true Khmer’, genetically patented to sustain the revolution of authentic Khmerism rather than to betray it. Mercifully, people do not carry around DNA birth charts or gene tattoos to refute such decisions. In practice contesting them involves something like an argumentative legal battle, with the production and weighing of evidence before a qualified and preferably impartial tribunal. But few are ever really in a position to undertake such procedures — and in the fury of revolutionary warfare, none at all were. Hence the decree was normally immediate, and final. In Democratic Kampuchea the Centre (Angkar, ‘the organisation’) tailored Khmerness to fit the rules of its rural national Utopia; but as time passed that meant simply to suit itself, or the day’s message from the leader. Central control gains its own momentum, in other words, and (as in postYugoslav Serbia) may then turn nationalism into the most malleable instrument of absolutism. This is why (as Kiernan underlines in his all-too-brief Conclusion to this book): ‘Despite its underdeveloped economy, the regime probably exerted more power over its citizens than any state in world history.’ [249]

A further advantage of nationalism for autocrats lies in its fictive kinship. The idealised nation is perceived as a vastly extended family. This is supposed to bestow a general sense of psychic belonging and community (or, in the Cambodian case, of rural-commune solidarity).

In many cases what it most observably does is to legitimate the actual extended-family behaviour of a leadership clique. As in Syria and Iraq, Cambodian central power gravitated quite naturally into the hands of family relations: the ‘people one can trust’ from a particular kin network or village area. Nationalism sanctifies nepotism; but also, nepotism can be in a sense exalted by a genetically oriented or ethnic nationalism. As Karl D. Jackson wrote some years ago:

<quote>

In essence the concept of collective leadership was infused into the tradition of Khmer family power ... Rivals within the Communist movement were tortured and executed in large numbers along with their spouses, indicating the degree to which the Khmer leadership perceived power as flowing along family lines; to destroy an important political opponent it was necessary to root out the entire family. [250]

</quote>

The ‘rooting out’ procedure can never be completed. Behind it lies a violent struggle for ‘top-down domination’ requiring a constant flow of new evidence of the enemy or anti-nation. Since it serves directly to justify power, such evidence must be made visible and catalogued for future time: proof of true descent, as it were, the birth certificate of Utopia. Tuol Sleng’s function was to provide this. The agony of its victims was secondary, and their possible repentance unimportant: only seven survived (accidentally) of the over 14,000 sent there. The aim was proud commemoration. Their piteous confessions and photographs were filed for the gaze of Pol Pot and his lineage, and much of the archive has survived. In 1996 a BBC television programme, ‘The Works’, followed the activity of two American photographers in Phnom Penh, Chris Riley and Doug Niven. Twenty years later they are still labouring to complete the record of depravity, unearthing dusty negatives and yellowing log-books, and interviewing ex-prison guards.

Hell-holes are as distinctive as the revolutions they serve. Although Hitler and Stalin dealt in much larger numbers than Pol Pot, the latter greatly excelled them in puritanic zeal and ethnic thoroughness. ‘Smashing’ was the favourite Khmer Rouge term, and in fact simple rustic methods — boot, knife, water immersion, a blow to the head to save bullets — realised their purpose better than the high technology of Auschwitz and Sobibor.

*** Apocalypse then

In Peasants, his classical introduction to peasant anthropology, Eric Wolf observes how rural history has been punctuated by extraordinarily cruel uprisings: jacqueries (a fourteenth-century term) where

‘the peasant band sweeps across the countryside like an avalanche’ and tries literally to drown its oppressors in blood. This ‘seems in curious contradiction to the everyday life of the peasant, which … appears to be spent in such docile drudgery upon the land’, and was often associated with millenialist visions of an imminent new order. Inevitably, such convulsions generated an even more violent reaction, like that called for in Martin Luther’s infamous pamphlet of May 1525 — Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants. The cure was to be cruder than the ailment: ‘Therefore let everyone who can, smite, slay and stab, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more poisonous, hurtful, or Devilish than a rebel.’

In more modern circumstances (Wolf goes on) peasant-based movements occur most readily ‘in countries so devastated by war that they experience a breakdown of traditional leadership and social order’?[251] This is the equivalent of the Black Death which preceded the great English Peasant Revolt of 1381. It creates a sense of total, oneiric alteration in which, since the time-honoured no longer functions, almost anything can be attempted. The world can be turned upside down. For Cambodians apocalypse came out of the air, in the shape of the prolonged American bombardment of their country during the last years of the Vietnamese War. ‘The most important single factor in Pol Pot’s rise’, writes Kiernan, ‘was the 1969–73 carpet-bombing of Cambodia’s countryside by American B-52s.’[252] As the Vietnamese army made increasing use of a supposedly neutral Cambodia, it was pursued and harassed there by the US Air Force. Naturally, most of the resultant carnage was Cambodian.

The beginning of Roland Jaffe’s film Killing Fields tried to evoke something of the climate fostered by the attacks. One saw New York Times correspondent Sidney Schanberg visiting a border town ‘accidentally’ flattened by the bombers, and over its ruins the Khmer Rouge rebels advance to the capture of Phnom Penh. The Nixon-Kissinger government had not even the excuse of ignorance. One of the most telling of the declassified CIA documents quoted by Kiernan was already outlining the consequences in 1973:

<quote>

The Khmer Rouge are using the damage caused by B-52 strikes as the main theme of their propaganda. The cadres tell the people that the Lon Nol government has requested the airstrikes and is responsible for the ‘suffering of innocent villagers’ ... [hence] the only way to stop ‘the massive destruction of the country’ is to defeat Lon Nol and stop the bombing. This approach has resulted in the successful recruitment of a number of young men [and] been effective with refugees and in areas subject to B-52 strikes ... [253]

</quote>

which by that time meant most populated parts of Cambodia. However, this was only the wooden tongue of a disregarded espionage service. Kiernan quotes more tellingly from the eye-wimesses. Near Angkor Wat (the emblem of Cambodia’s once glorious nationhood) for example:

<quote>

The ordinary people sometimes literally shat in their pants when the big bombs and shells came ... Their minds just froze up and they would wander round mute for three or four days. Terrified and half-crazy, the people were ready to believe what they were told, that was what made it so easy for the Khmer Rouge to win people over.[254]

</quote>

Killing Fields continues with the sufferings of the Phnom Penh press corps and the evacuation of the American and French embassies. It would have been more costly to recreate on film what was happening in the background: the blowing-up of the Cambodian Central Bank (after which millions of bank notes were allowed to flutter through the capital’s deserted streets) and the stone-by-stone disassembly of the Roman Catholic cathedral. Thus economics as we know it was ended, and no trace of western religion remained. Mter apocalypse, the ground plan of millennium was being laid down: no mere simple-soul vision, but an organised framework to fill the void, egalitarian kibbutzim of peasantwarriors where Adam would delve and Eve spin once more, free for good of cash, gentlemen and (above all) of foreigners.

*** Peasant chauvinism

Much of Kiernan’s study is devoted to the downfall of the Khmer Rouge state. [255] Fortunately, the infernal machine of party-guided ethnicity had an internal contradiction built into it. Pol Pot bit off more than he could chew, and (even before the Viemamese chased him back into the jungle) had begun to choke to death. The maintenance of mass chauvinist tension inside the country demanded a parallel mobilisation against foreign foes, and particularly against the old national enemy, Vietnam. But the logic of this was suicidal. In late February of 1978 Hanoi secretly decided that the Pol Pot regime had to go, and one year later it had accomplished the task.

Ben Kiernan appears less secure when it comes to overall diagnosis of the Cambodian storm. This is of course what counts most in any Gellnerian perspective. Was it a peasant revolution? Or was it foisted upon the country by a specially evil combination of intelligentsia and hoodlums? The first view has become particularly associated with Michael Vickery, author of Cambodia 1975–1982, who perceives the 1975 takeover as ‘a complete peasant revolution, with the victorious revolutionaries doing what peasant rebels have always wanted to do to their urban enemies’?[256] This was the source of the extraordinary violence. Pol Pot’s Centre was an elite of deracinated intellectuals like himself, driven partly by anti-colonial Marxism but (more significantly) by ‘peasantist romanticism’. Peasantism was their equivalent of western ‘workerism’, a creed obliging them to obey what they interpreted as the impulses of the masses.

The opposite standpoint is presented in Kate Frieson’s ‘The Impact of Revolution on Cambodian Peasants, 1970–1975’.[257] There the rural masses of Cambodia are depicted as essentially innocent: ‘unwitting participants’ in a movement directed from outside their ken, by idea-led cadres seizing the unique chance provided by the chaos following the bombardments and the fall of Prince Sihanouk’s old regime. By and large mass motivation remained traditional, she argues, if not timeless: the cultivating class kept its head down and did as commanded — ‘digging in, bending low, and cursing inwardly’. [258] In time they even put up with the

Khmer Rouge’s ‘high-level cooperatives’ where communal eating was enforced and the family was phased out. Private land, the family and religious belief — the staples of peasant existence — disappeared, as they found themselves turned into unpaid indentured labourers.

Drawing on a much wider range of interviews and documents than previous scholars, what Kiernan comes up with is an uneasy compromise between these two interpretations. ‘In my view, ideological as well as economic issues were at stake’: that is, the peasants at first actively supported the Khmer Rouge takeover and then grew disillusioned, above all when they realised that family life itself was under threat. [259] Pol Pot’s rural Utopia really aimed at ending rural life as they had known it. Individual land ownership and Buddhist faith were in the end less important to them than ‘the devastating blows administered by the ending of home meals and the enforced separation of children from parents’. As for the violence and death, Kiernan judges the peasantry to be guilty but with (increasingly) extenuating circumstances: initially they must have had it in for city folk, particularly educated ones, but were later forced to repent. His final conclusion adds little to this save a last-minute emphasis upon the significance of racism. [260]

*** The brood of Nicolas Chauvin

But what is really emphasised by this final flourish is the oddity of the preceding judgement. The Pol Pot Regime is a wonderful if dismaying portrait of ethnic nationalism unleashed. Ernest Gellner explained definitively why nationalism as such is not a malignancy. However (like its Nazi predecessor) the Cambodian version was manifestly a pathological diversion from the mainstream pattern he so often described. Although on the small scale of its nation, the Khmer head-count was proportionately the most savage example of genetic pandemonium in history — at least until the Rwandan massacre of 1994, which matched Pol Pot’s in numbers but was to outdo even it in intensity. Yet when trying to account for the whole event Kiernan ultimately falls back primarily on social factors. ‘Social’, that is, in the conventional sense which seeks for explanation in terms of class or individual interests: the peasants, the middle class, intellectuals and so on. A second explanatory motif is provided by a political

category like ‘central control’ and then a more subordinate one by external affairs — the effects of French colonialism and American, Chinese or Vietnamese interference.

In reality, if ‘racism’ was so vital to the story — as the author asserts from beginning to end — then surely a frankly nationalist explanation-grid is more relevant. What bound the revolutionary intelligentsia and the peasant majority together was the historical formation (or malformation) of the Khmer national identity. A combination of marked retardation and uniquely maleficent external blows produced an equally (and fatally) singular reaction. In relation to its size Cambodia probably had the least developed urban middle class and intelligentsia in the world. Yet this had to be the country which was, in one of the century’s grimmest phrases, ‘bombed back into the Stone Age’. Twentieth-century history exhibits plenty of atrocities; does it show any more extreme example of identity assault and battery? Many forms of nationalism have operated in terms of threats of extinction, often exaggerated or imaginary, and preached a life-or-death struggle ‘before it is too late’. But in Phnom Penh in 1975 there was nothing at all exaggerated about fear of extinction, and almost everyone must have thought, or half-thought, that it might already be too late. The French had incorporated the Khmers into ‘Indochina’, their South-East Asian empire; now, the new convulsions of the postcolonial war had swamped them in another way and put a decimated and almost helpless land at the mercy of the Vietnamese.[261]

By the testimony so massively marshalled in Kiernan’s book Khmer nationalism was a powerful yet very maimed and lop-sided sentiment. It was capable of uniting the peasantry with the country’s tiny, nascent radical elite — but only through the bias of an exaggerated ‘peasantism’, as discerned in Vickery’s analysis. The feeble native kingdom in whose ruins Pol Pot was raised had disappeared. There was no industry, and the cities were inhabited to a remarkable extent by foreign traders or middlemen. Father Frarn;ois Ponchaud, author of Cambodia: Year Zero and one of the last to quit Phnom Penh in the great exodus, wrote later: ‘It is little wonder that Cambodian peasants perceived the centres of wealth and power as being dominated disproportionately by foreigners against whom they already held longstanding feelings of racial animosity.’[262] What gave the sense of ‘zero’ or void was the absence of the articulation nationalist ideas normally

undergo amid differing upper- and middle-class strata. In this void it was possible for a jacquerie to become the state. By exchanging Marxism for the vilest and most wilful form of chauvinism, that state was then able to remain in power for years though (fortunately) only by the violent erosion of its own foundations. Even so, it took outside intervention to kill it.

These were ideal conditions both for abrupt radical ascendancy and for what is more accurately called ‘chauvinism’ rather than nationalism. Few terms have been more abused in recent debate. It has become vague enough in denotation to be almost appropriated by gender politics, as a shorthand for ‘male chauvinism’. French in origin (like most modern political vocabulary) the idea of ‘chauvinism’ arose in Paris during the post-Napoleonic era, and was linked to the popular wartime hero-figure of Nicolas Chauvin: le soldat-laboureur or ploughman-soldier. What the dictionaries of every modern tongue define as ‘extreme or vulgar nationalism’, ‘foreigner-hating xenophobia’, etc., had its source therefore in a particular person — or at any rate, in the supposed antics of that individual, as depicted on the vaudeville stage from the 1820s to mid-century. [263] But what matters here is that the Gallic original is essentially and incontestably a peasant. He always retires to his smallholding (usually with a wooden leg), where musket and bemedalled uniform are kept ready for action, and the village boys are regaled with lurid tales of the emperor, Bedouin-bashing and laying the foreigners’ women. Blood and soil are evoked in crassly direct fashion: while ploughing, he is forever turning up the ancestral bones of those who died for la patrie in times past.

We know from Gerard de Puymege’s superb study of early chauvinism that he never actually existed: ‘Chauvin’ was pure but very significant myth. [264] With roots in antiquity, what it represented was the profound reverberation of the rural world among those who had (just) left it behind — the newly urbanised masses painfully adapting themselves to modern conditions, individual opportunity, shops and factories, literacy and the nuclear family. In its infancy, chauvinism was one aspect of how peasants were ‘made into Frenchmen’. And what de Puymege reminds us of is that the very same process conserved Frenchmen as, so to speak, ideological peasants. That is, it reconfigured them as the subjects of a national myth-

system incorporating and forever reproducing the primary ingredients of rurality, blood and soil.

This myth-system also instilled elements deriving from the revolutionary state-formation of 1789 and later — Frenchmen as citizens, embodiments (like Americans) of the Rights of Man and of a selfconsciously liberal and supra-ethnic Enlightenment. There was of course always a clash between these components of Frenchness. It has led to the profound internal warfare of all modern French Republics, and to what Raymond Aron and others have diagnosed as the weakness of political and ideological liberalism in France. One of its most striking later episodes (to mention a single important example) was the Dreyfus Affair in the 1890s — a drama which was to define for us the true twentieth-century meaning of the term ‘intellectual’, and illustrate its determining link to the thematic of nationalism.[265]

However, such a national idea-system can perfectly well go on supporting ‘contradictions’ in a practical sense. All it means is that French men and women have had to learn to move between different personae in different situations, and also to try and compose links between these. If the clash is allowed to become too overt (as at the moment of the Dreyfus trials) then something like civil war threatens. But much effort is normally put into preventing that happening, notably vis-a-vis foreigners. Political and cultural weapons are customarily deployed to maintain in operation an identity structure which, if laid out as doctrine, would be absurd.[266] However, identities are devices for living, not for composing Doctorates. Irresolvable contradictions within them must either be concealed, neutralised by some kind of balancing mechanism or — in crises where the devices fail — fought out through open civil war. For the French, this war threatened again at the time of the Popular Front, was precipitated by the 1940 defeat and the formation of Petain’s (literally) ‘chauvinist’ republic at Vichy, then prosecuted through the Resistance and its immediate postwar aftermath.

*** The spell of ruraUty

What the true story of ‘chauvinism’ suggests is that modernisation involves passage through something like a colossal mill-race, in which a multigenerational struggle between the (rural) past and the (urban-industrial) future is fought out. Sometimes images of ‘uneven development’ depict this as a relatively tidy process, where developmental poles or centres impact upon tradition like stones cast into the pool of the past, with outward-spreading ripples of reaction and emulation. [267] But in reality many stones were cast together, or at least fairly close together, the pond where they fell was fairly small (the world), and the resultant back-and counter-flows convulsed the entire body of the carrying stream. ‘Uneven and combined’ registers something of the complexity of this, but not its sheer chaos and pandemonium.

The mill-race of ‘Progress’ occasionally produces struggles to the

literal death, in particular circumstances. But in any case it is (in an appropriately epochal sense) always a life and death contest, where one global mode of existence perishes to make way for a successor. Nationalism is no side-effect of this battle, but its essence: it seems to me that was Ernest Gellner’s fundamental intuition of the matter. However, his approach also placed disproportionate emphasis upon the future-oriented factors in the process. He thought modern philosophy was really about industrialisation — the disruptive impact of the future, as it were. ‘Modernisation theory’ in his original formulation could not help overstressing the elements of literal modernity themselves — machine industry, the transformation of vernaculars into literacy, the inventive ‘rediscovery’ of the countryside by the new ‘clerks’ of national movements and so on. Greater attention is invariably given to these motives and instruments of change than to the ‘raw material’ itself — that is, the peasant masses who underwent the change and (like ‘Nicolas Chauvin’) got themselves not only made over into Frenchmen and Czechs but idealised into the very source of nationhood.

In reality, I suspect that the ‘raw material’ has played a far larger part in the overall genesis of nationalism than Gellnerian theory allows for. Czech nationalism was ‘made in Prague’, undoubtedly; but its ethnic characteristics came out of Bohemia, Moravia and the Sudetenland, and

were not themselves ‘made’ in the familiar sense of invented, or converted into ideology. Whatever happens to them in the urban vaudeville (or the soap opera) ‘traditions’ are also a real matrix borne forward from past time by individuals and families. The kind of remaking which features in modern nationalism is not creation ex nihilo, but a reformulation constrained by determinate parameters of that past. And the past which has mainly counted here — and gives its ‘bite’ and sentimental incontrovertibility to all ethnonationalist belief-structure — is that of peasant existence.

The most telling critique of Gellner has been that focusing upon his cheerful over-rationalism. In an essay contrasting Weber and Gellner, Perry Anderson accuses the latter of ‘skirting the really spectacular manifestations of 20th century nationalism — not the independence of Czechoslovakia or Morocco, but World War and Nazism’?[268] There is a bias towards economic functionalism in his theory which ends by making nationalism into too much of ‘a wholesomely constructive and forward-looking principle’ — a series of adjustments demanded by entry into the era of modernity, as it were, rather than a life or death trauma. Marxist ‘historical materialism’ used to be denounced for this style of economism, with its propensity to infer everything from alterations in the mode of production. ‘Ironically’ (Anderson continues):

<quote>

there is a sense in which Gellner’s theory might be described as immoderately materialist. For what it plainly neglects is the overpowering dimension of collective meaning that modern nationalism has always involved: that is, not its functionality for industry, but its fulfilment of identity ... In his tour of reenchantments, Gellner has paradoxically missed far the most important of all in the twentieth century. [269]

</quote>

Hence he ‘theorised nationalism without detecting the spell’, in the sense of its binding or passionate attraction, and its capacity to inspire the phenomena of self-sacrifice and genocide.

But where is the ‘spell’ located? Anderson notes its psychological and emotive nature, but suggests no originating source. I believe that by far the most plausible origin lies in the link between most forms of ethnic nationalism and ‘rural’ existence as defined earlier. Those ‘reenchantments’ Gellner faltered over — above all German Aryanism and the Jewish genocide — were examples of unhinged ethnicity which retained a palpable or single-generation connection to peasant existence. The ‘fantasies’ of Hitler and Himmler envisaged forming another, earlier version of Kiernan’s ‘indentured agrarian state’ — that is, a master race of reconstituted Germanic peasant-farmers extending across central and eastern Europe, with unfree Slav labourers doing the hard work on their farms. The anti-modern virulence of this vision derived partly from the very closeness of the traditions thus reinvented and turned into philosophy. German industrialisation had been abrupt and traumatic, and it had indeed given rise to nationalism according to the broad prescriptions of modernisation theory. However, the countershock against this rise, from the ‘raw material’ of a society still mainly rural and ethnically homogeneous, proved even more powerful than the originating shock itself. After the experience of national defeat in 1914–18, it was strong enough to overwhelm and carry modernised German society along a different and regressive trajectory: ethnic chauvinism transmuted into a global mission. [270]

One can put what is really the same point in another way. There is a familiar litany of rather abstract terms employed in both the rhetoric of and speculation on nationalism, like ‘inheritance’, ‘community’, ‘descent’ or ‘blood’, ‘common experience’ and ‘purity’ or its many opposites (‘pollution’, ‘the alien’ and so on). But since most nations conform rather feebly to these categories in any sociological sense, it is often quite hard to discern just where their emotive authority comes from. A clue may be provided by historical situations where this was relatively easy: that is, situations where peasant rurality has been close, recent, still accessible to the people undergoing ‘nationalisation’, and (therefore) still capable of infusing violent personal or familial emotions into its language and rhetoric. The resultant mixture is highly infectious: newly eloquent romantic intellectualism combined with the half-healed wounds of actual or recently transmitted recollection — from a rural life in which ‘inheritance’, ‘community’, ‘roots’ and the other standard nostrums all had a perfectly concrete meaning. The

colourful mixture is also tailor-made for the burgeoning media of early literacy and urbanisation — like the Paris vaudeville, the London nineteenth-century musichall (where ‘jingoism’ was forged) and the yellow or tabloid press. Gellner’s ironic rationality tended always to see traditions being falsified into ‘traditions’. But in certain important cases, ‘traditions’ could actually be infused with the blood — not always figurative — of (real) traditions. A reborn Germany or Cambodia found themselves engorged by the flailing life of a peasant social order which, although ‘dying out’ in the epochal sense, was still alive enough for a serious effort to ‘undo history’ (as Kiernan puts it). Ideologies of anti-modernism — from Nietszche to ‘Unabomber’ Ted Kaszinski, via Martin Heidegger — have occasionally been able to pierce into a vein of ‘authentic’ rural despair and resentment, and assist the mobilisation of its violence. Not by chance was ‘authentic’ Heidegger’s favourite word. [271]

Both the intense emotionality and the violence of ethnic nationalism acquire much more meaning when traced to this specific root. The sole alternative would seem to be a frankly psychological one: a story of ‘human nature’, in fact, where feelings of ‘belonging’ or extended kinship are read as the essential realities offended by the circumstances of modernity. One difficulty with Karl Popper’s early rendition of the theme in The Open Society and Its Enemies is of course its sheer familiarity: it is the tale recounted for the last two centuries by the intellectual protagonists of just what we are discussing here — ethnic nationalism. And the theoretical issue which Gellner’s modernisation thesis addressed arose only because that explained nothing. Nationalism is only a question because nationality politics and national identities are not all ‘ethnic’ in the imagined-kinship, fakelore, immemorialist sense. From Hans Kohn’s time onwards one of its key dilemmas has always been making sense of these vital differences: whether as ‘western’ versus ‘eastern’, ‘liberal’ versus ‘closed’, or (more recently) ‘civic’ versus ‘ethnic’ nationalism. [272]

*** Beyond the mill-race

How long did this crucial and fertile chaos of waters endure? Unfortunately, the past tense remains inappropriate. The curse endures to this day. It still exists, notably, within the French state which gave birth to ‘Nicolas Chauvin’;

that is, in the society also considered by many theorists as archetypally modern, the very hearth of Enlightenment and egalite or even (since the 1980s) the crucial site of postmodernity. Not necessarily under his own name, ‘Nicolas Chauvin’ figures none the less in every Front National speech and pamphlet today. This is not to prophesy his return to earth via a second Perain.[273] However, one might be a little more sanguine on this count, were not the wider European scene so ambiguous. Its institutional modernity remains deeply weighed down by the ball and chain of the Common Agricultural Policy. Though designed to lever the countries of the European Union out of Chauvin’s world for good, by a ‘phasing out’ of peasant cultivation, it has unfortunately been bent by political pressure into an instrument for at least partially preserving it everywhere from Greece to Ireland. Hence the European Union, the principal white hope for ‘civic nationalism’, remains deeply compromised by the very ruralist inheritance which has in the past so often nourished ethnic nationalism.[274]

In a penetrating discussion of violence in nationalist movements, David Laitin has recently underlined this same dimension. ‘Why are some nationalist movements peaceful in strategy and outcome while others create carnage?’ is his leading question, and he searches for an answer less among ‘the great forces of history’ than in ‘micro foundations based upon social organisation in rural and small town life’, plus contributions from ‘fortuitous events’ (like assassinations or acts of state terrorism) and what he calls the ‘tipping phenomena’ of political recruitment (attainment of ‘thresholds’ beyond which violent tactics seem to be paying off) .[275] Thus, the salience of terrorism in the Basque national movement can be contrasted with its remarkably low profile in Catalonia. In the former we find a ‘dense rural social structure’ where considerations of honour are prominent; the Catalans, however, are more organised into economic-based groups and political parties operating at the national and all-Spanish levels (both city-centred). ETA’s long dominance therefore depended upon its links to a specifically rural (or recently rural) society in which ‘nationalist leaders could recruit in small villages and towns in which there are many social groups whose members are bound by codes of honour’. But such honourable bonding derives, surely, from a nexus of peasant custom and heritable tradition — that very ‘raw material’ referred to previously, and infused fairly directly into the idealised nationhood of Euzkadi.

The point is reinforced by the second comparative example Laitin goes on to provide: developments in post-Soviet Georgia and Ukraine. While in Georgia there have been a series of insurgencies and wars, Ukrainian reconstruction remains remarkably free from armed conflict. In general terms it is certainly not obvious why the contrast should be so great. The Ukraine has a host of important minority problems and, in the Crimea, the site of a major three-way conflict among Russians, Tatars and Ukrainians which has constantly threatened escalation into warfare. Yet the new Ukrainian regime has largely avoided violence, whereas 'Georgia's rural social structure appears to have maintained the basis for terrorist organisation.' Nearly 70 per cent of Ukrainians will be living in large urban environments by the year 2000, and one result is that 'the populism that was the hallmark of Ukrainian ideologies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has faded. One can even argue that today the concept of the narod — in the traditional sense of the poor, oppressed peasant masses — no longer occupies a central place in the political thinking ofUkrainians.'[276]

Post-1989 conditions in many parts of Eastern Europe have made them even more the victim of the inheritance which is fading away in Ukraine. In a recent study of the underlying causes of the Bosnian war, Sabrina Ramet points out that whereas Titoist Yugoslavia had attempted (however unsuccessfully) to 'impose the values of the city' on south Slav culture, MiloseviC's 1987 coup 'represented among other things the triumph of the countryside over the city in Serbia (and hence) the rising tide of Serbian nationalism, closely associated with rural perceptions and rural values, albeit often as synthesised and reflected by urban literary elites.'[277] She outlines the primarily rural character of the new Serb national movement and the extremes it attained in Bosnia, where a campaign for 'traditional values' (meaning in the first place a full-scale assault on any claims by women to equal treatment) — 'represents in the clearest possible way a cultural encroachment of the countryside on the city'. Linking this to the perspective of modernisation theory, she concludes that:

<quote>

There is a world of difference between a national movement founded on urban mobilisation (even if it manipulates the symbols and mythologies of

the countryside, in its own distorted mirror) and a national movement based, to a great extent, on rural mobilisation ...[278]

</quote>

Outside Europe a similar general pattern is identifiable. Laitin distinguishes his analysis from what he feels to be the abstractness of ‘the great forces of history’; but the analysis itself conducts the reader back to one of these forces, the latent power of a mobilised peasantry and its counter-attack upon the spreading tide of ‘modernisation’, the market economy and the norms of urban liberalism. Although Ben Kiernan’s study does not deal with this, we know that the Khmer Rouge by no means lay down and died after the Vietnamese invasion. Presumably because it still enjoys some real support, it is notoriously still around, and a political as well as a military player. Living partly off the timber and drug business in Cambodia’s western forests, its guerrilla remnant has survived the Vietnamese occupation and successor regimes. On the day I finished reading Kiernan’s book the London Independent ran a main news item titled ‘Pol Pot’s Top Man Quits Khmer Rouge’ (13 August 1996) — quits, alas, not to spend more time with his family but to run for office in Phnom Penh. Sentenced to death years ago for his part in the atrocities, Ieng Sary is planning a new party to contest the next elections. He was a member of the founding Paris elite, and one of Pol Pot’s closest buddies.

Nor is this the sole great rebuke to Gellnerian optimism produced by the 1990s. One paragraph in Kiernan’s book gave me an almost physical shock the first time I read it. It is in his ‘Introduction’, and it is intended as no more than a simple outline of the Cambodian scene for the uninitiated:

<quote>

At first glance, Cambodia seems a society resistant to transformation. It was geographically compact, demographically dispersed, linguistically unified, ethnically homogeneous, socially undifferentiated, culturally uniform, administratively unitary, politically undeveloped, economically undiversified, and educationally deprived. Cambodia was more isolated and landlocked than any other Southeast Asian country except Laos ... [and] mummified by ninety years of a colonial protectorate which preserved, even enhanced the

traditional monarchy and social structure ... [and] 80 per cent peasant.[279]

</quote>

I have added the emphasis. What provokes the shock is the fact that, place-names aside, only one further change (‘ethnically homogeneous’) is needed to make this a perfect description of another country altogether, located in another continent: Rwanda.[280]

*** A counter-example

Earlier, I mentioned the continuing conflict in Ireland as one of the pointers towards the general significance of rurality for nationalism. But this indicator makes its point still more forcefully when set in a slightly wider context. For Irish nationalism is also the exception within the larger archipelago to which it belongs. In Hans Kohn’s old contrast of western (liberal) versus eastern (ethnic-authoritarian) nationalisms, Ireland was sometimes grouped with the latter: a violent ethnoreligious movement perplexingly located on the farthest geographic fringe of the European west. Physically contiguous and historically intertwined with England — the founding specimen of Kohn’s liberal-institutional, state-formed identity — it none the less seemed much closer in both spirit and methods to the characteristic nineteenth-century formations of central and eastern Europe. The paradox has been heightened by the remarkable post-independence relationship between old monarchy and new republic. Two generations after secession citizens of the latter are still formally treated (and for the most part, informally regarded) as quasisubjects of the former when ‘on British soil’. Yet simultaneously the IRA’s campaign of irredentist violence has led to over 3,000 deaths over a period of almost 30 years, and in the 1990s produced episodes of citycentre devastation upon the same soil.

The enigma is intensified again by broad comparison to the fates of other United Kingdom nationalities. Both Wales and Scotland have generated twentieth-century national movements aiming at secession on Irish republican lines, and since the 1950s these have developed significantly over

a generation of general British and imperial decline. Such movements have been frustrated by British counter-tactics (notably around the 1979 devolution referenda) and are now also dogged by a more distinct stirring of English resentment focused upon ‘preserving the Union’ (above all against European influence or encroachment). Yet they have also been almost wholly free from violence. The absence of terrorist ‘persuasion’ is particularly significant among the Scots. As well as representing about 10 per cent of the UK population (easily the largest archipelago minority) their institutions carry forward the traditions of a statehood alive until the eighteenth century, and largely built up in hostility to England. In 1745–6 a Highland-based army made the last attempt to overthrow the post-1688 British state, and the long subsequent experience of empire has generated strong popular traditions of militarism among both Highland and Lowland peoples. However, the fact is that these traditions have (so far at least) had only a marginal effect upon a national movement conducted exclusively in political terms — political, and indeed quite self-consciously civic and pacific terms.

But perhaps this puzzling difference between the two main parts of the ‘British Isles’ yields to analysis along the lines sketched out above.[281] The most striking underlying contrast is the one found between their respective agrarian histories. In England and Lowland Scotland, an early ‘agrarian revolution’ virtually destroyed peasant society, permanently replacing it with a landscape of large estate farms, ‘county towns’ and servant villages. In Ireland it did not. On the contrary, to some extent nineteenth-century land reform reconstructed small-scale agriculture after earlier disaster and depredations, thus laying the foundation for De Valera’s rural Catholic state and — ultimately — for the prosecution of Sinn Fein’s irredentist campaigns at the end of the twentieth century. It was from such radically divergent social trajectories that equally diverse nationality movements arose: a Hibernian one liberating itself only with great difficulty from ‘blood and soil’, and British ones mainly configured within the category of an earlier ‘civic nationalism’, and by the absence (save in romantic fancy) of those elements most propitious for ‘chauvinist’ or blood-and-soil mobilisation. There is even a partial exception which can serve as confirmation: Wales. In that country, both ethnolinguistic motifs and violence have been somewhat more pronounced in the nationalist movements of the twentieth century; and they are rooted in areas where (in spite of early political and legal incorporation by the Tudor dynasty) the subsequent capitalist transformation of the countryside was much less dramatic.

English national identity itself, the original template of modernisation delineated in Liah Greenfeld's Nationalism, finds itself in perhaps the strangest dilemma of any contemporary nationalism.[282] National movements usually arise from what she calls status ressentiment, articulated through a deployment of inherited differentiae — the 'peculiarities' of people and nation. For the English, however, for over two centuries the most important peculiarity has undoubtedly been 'Britain' — the grander personae of multinational state and empire, worn long enough to feel almost like the 'nature' evoked by nationalists. Redefinition upon much narrower ground needs alternative motifs: the rediscovery of another nature, as it were, whose mobilisation could restore the national fortune. But apart from the despairing one of 'race' (used by all current formations of the extreme Right in England) it has become difficult to see what such motifs could be. What appeared to Hans Kohn as an early and exemplary state-led liberalism now appears in a truer light: a thoroughly archaic version of civic nationalism, 1688s crude, early-modern apparatus of absolute parliamentary sovereignty. Hence the first principles of effective national identity — the 'way we do things', etc. — have themselves become major obstacles to the reform of that identity. But this is an historical context in which ethnos can offer no way out or forward. Everywhere in the archipelago it looks as if modern civis is the sole solution; but is that attainable only upon the broader terrain of Europe?[283]

*** Conclusion: the fertile womb

By way of over-general conclusion, therefore: the modernisation theory stemming from Gellner's great chapter on 'Nationalism' in Thought and Change and more fully elaborated in Nations and Nationalism had the effect of foreshortening the future; yet part of its great vigour and explanatory power arose from this very effect — from the way it foreclosed so abruptly on the past. Placing too great an emphasis upon all the cultural factors attendant upon industrialisation, it made theorists too confident that modernity had all but prevailed. In spite of his ironic scepticism and his attraction to social conservatism, Gellner was essentially an Enlightenment optimist. And the obverse of such confidence

was a tendency to relegate or discount the enduring pressures of rurality itself — the formative weight of that preceding peasant world which, once the constraints of the Cold War were loosened, has shown itself very rapidly to be anything but mere ‘raw material’. Fifteen years ago Arno J. Mayer concluded his masterly synthesis The Persistence of the Old Regime with these words:

<quote>

The old regime ... was too vast, resilient, and resistant a target to be felled by a few terrorist bullets in Sarajevo. It would take the two World Wars and the Holocaust, or the Thirty Years War of the twentieth century, to finally dislodge and exorcise the feudal and aristocratic presumption from Europe’s civil and political societies. [284]

</quote>

And even then (we should now add) the social inheritance that underlay such presumption was not really dislodged. It is, alas, still undergoing exorcism to this day, in Western as well as Eastern Europe, and in many other areas of the world. Two generations before 1914 modernisers like Marx and Mill had treated the demise of the old regime as practically a foregone conclusion. Their heir, Ernest Gellner, gave a picture of the modernisation process far deeper and wider than they could. Yet his picture remained in certain respects configured by the inheritance he shared with them — that is, by certain limitations of the original Enlightenment as well as by its intellectual and moral grandeur. Approaching the year 2000, and trying to peer beyond these frontiers, perhaps it should be conceded that we still do so from among the ruins of that ancient rural world which he understood, and yet also underestimated.

The thunder of its long collapse is still by far the loudest sound in all our ears. From McLuhan to Baudrillard theorists have sought to discern electronic postmodernity through the clouds of dust. But may not such efforts be only the latest style of rationalist foregone conclusion? Many intellectuals want to go on believing it is much later than most people and politicians think, and in spite of his sceptical, disbelieving temperament Gellner too could not help inclining in that direction. Without collapsing in the contrary direction, it may

be time to reasonably doubt it. No apologia of atavism is required in order to doubt whether we are quite as modern as some people think. The point is a more cautious one: an alternative reading with puts nationalism nearer the centre of the theory-world will suggest contrary evidence, and make theorists look much more closely (and in a sense, respectfully) at the partly hidden mechanisms of transition from ‘traditional’ into contemporary society. [285] Yes, that womb is fertile still, in Brecht’s famous phrase in Arturo Ui, but not necessarily or only with other versions of fascism or totalitarianism.

The departure of a great mind like Gellner ought therefore to be an occasion for reappraising not just ‘modernisation’, but also our own collective and intellectual location within its process. Neither ‘tradition’ (rurality) nor the vehicles and reformers of tradition (‘intellectuals’) are sufficiently understood, and advance in these areas is what the deepening study of nationalism demands. Gellner’s was essentially an epochal theory. And in that epochal sense, the new fin de siecle may be a lot sooner than most politicians and social theorists want to believe.

[234] C. T6ibin, Walking along the Border, London, 1987.

[235] E. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class, London, 1963.

[236] B. Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power and Genocide under the Khmer Rouge, 1975–79, New Haven, 1996, chs. 5 and 6.

[237] Ibid., p. 26.

[238] Ibid., p. 27.

[239] One of the most celebrated of post-1945 denunciations of Marxism, Karl Popper’s The Open Society and Its Enemies, London, 1945, analysed its general appeal as based upon a nostalgia of this kind: longing for a ‘closed society’ unperturbed by the individualism, alienation and choice of modern times. But this analysis remained couched in general and psychological terms: it did not inquire what the effective models of closure were for most populations caught up in the modernisation process.

[240] Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, p. 10.

[241] Ibid., p. 437.

[242] As quoted in K. D. Jackson, ‘The Ideology of Total Revolution’, in his Cambodia 1975–1978: Rendezvous with Death, Princeton, 1989, p. 73.

[243] Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, p. 460.

[244] Jackson, Cambodia 1975–1978, pp. 74–5.

[245] For details, see Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, ch. 2.

[246] In one of the most fascinating accounts of postwar intellectual life in France, Memoires: le voleur dans la maison vide, Paris, 1997, Jean-Fran;ois Revel has described a meeting with the distinguished academic, Maurice Mouillaud, a subtle and imaginative mind who in the 1950s had embraced the most abject Stalinism. Mouillaud could account for his lapse only by:

a sort of enchantment, comparable to that affecting members of a religious sect. He had the feeling of having been invaded, taken over by another personality having no relationship either to his previous self or his

furure self ... [however] ... it must be kept in mind that thoroughgoing communism meant the pursuit of total ‘purification’ and the formation of a ‘new man’ in the canonical sense, and this appeared to legitimate physical or lateral liquidation of the ‘old man’. In this sense the most logical of communists had been Pol Pot rather than Stalin or Mao. ‘At least he was willing to kill everyone.’ (pp. 35–7)

Khmer Rouge ideology derived partly from the experience of postwar French communism, a source not unimportant both for its logical nature and its ideas of rural rootedness — on which see further remarks later in the argument.

[247] Autarchy (or ‘autarky’) was the doctrine of absolute economic self-reliance, prominent between the world wars in both fascist states and the USSR. ‘In the 1930s the drive to self-sufficiency or autarky was founded on the desire to achieve ... power to control one’s own destiny, generally by states which were despotic in their internal politics, and felt victimised internationally’ (R. Skidelsky, The World After Communism, London, 1995, pp. 62–3). It represented only an ideal-type extrapolated from Friedrich List’s theory of economic nationalism or protectionism: there are no examples of effectively autarkic states in modern times — with the dubious and transient exception of Pol Pot’s Cambodia.

[248] Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, p. 26.

[249] Ibid., p. 464.

[250] Jackson, Cambodia 1975–1978, p. 242.

[251] E. Wolf, Peasants, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1966, pp. 106–9.

[252] Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, p. 16.

[253] Ibid., pp. 22–3.

[254] Ibid., p. 23.

[255] Ibid., part III.

[256] M. Vickery, Cambodia, 1975–1982, Boston, 1984.

[257] K. Frieson, ‘The Impact of Revolution on Cambodian Peasants, 1970–1975’, Ph.D. Thesis, Monash University, Australia, 1991.

[258] Frieson, ‘The Impact of Revolution’, pp. iii, ii.

[259] Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, p. 213.

[260] Ibid., pp. 463–5.

[261] By far the most persuasive analysis of this dimension is that given by Anthony Barnett in ‘Cambodia Will Never Disappear’, New Left Review, no. 180, 1990. He argues that what Pol Pot and the leadership clique absorbed from France was its chauvinism, as well as its variant of Stalinism. Prince Sihanouk ‘was and remains the incarnation of the French myth of Cambodia’, while the radical nationalism of his Khmer Rouge opponents was also ‘expressed within the parameters of the French ideal’. The cult of Angkor Wat and the delusions about the ancient Khmer hydraulic system also find their place in Barnett’s brilliant profile of Cambodian nationalism.

[262] F. Ponchaud, Cambodia: Year Zero, London, 1978.

[263] British television viewers with recollections of the 1960s and 1970s would recognise him instantly as something like ‘Alf Garnett’: comic, tear-jerking, randy, foreigner-despising, royalty-loving and irreversibly Tory. However, Garnett was a Chaplinesque and urban figure of fun, a pre-war Londoner risen (or half-risen) above proletarian origins.

[264] G. de Puymege, Chauvin, le soldat-labourer: contribution a l’erude des nationalismes, Paris, 1993.

[265] On the theme of the relationship between nationalism and the intellectuals, see for the French case C. Charle, Naissance des ‘intellectuels’, Paris, 1990. The same author has more recently carried his analysis on to a much wider canvas with Les intellectuels en Europe au XIXe siecle: essai d’histoire comparee, Paris, 1996. On the specific history of France, Tony Judt’s Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 1944–56, Berkeley, 1992 gives a vigorous polemical account of what the author sees as the failure of political liberalism in France. A more recent overview is provided by Jeremy Jennings in ‘Of Treason, Blindness and Silence: Dilemmas of the Intellectual in Modern France’, in J. Jennings and A. Kemp-Welch, eds., Intellectuals in Politics: From the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie (London, 1977). By far the most concrete view ‘from inside’ is that given by Revel, Memoires.

[266] One striking example of this is the nexus of myths and observances attached to French cuisine and gastronomy. This represents an ‘earthy’ (peasant) tradition which is now perfectly urbanised and strongly identified — indeed overidentified — with national distinctiveness. The peculiar salience of la bouffe in contemporary France may arise partly from its function as an uncontroversial cementing factor between two nations of the mind: the land of Chauvin (Perain, Le Pen, etc.) on one hand and that of the neo-Jacobins and Radicals (Zola, Mendes-France, 1968, etc.) on the other.

[267] I stand penitent in the front row of the accused here, having tried to expound a tidily quasi-Marxist theory in ‘Modern Janus’, an unpublished text of 1976, part of which appeared as the chapter ‘Modern Janus’ in my The Break-up of Britain, London, 1977.

[268] P. Anderson, ‘Science, Politics, Enchantment’, inJ. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., Transition to Modernity: Essays on Power, Wealth and Belief, Cambridge, 1992, p. 207. It is not irrelevant to the point to recall that, for all his irony about ethnic passion and misrepresentation, Gellner (who was an adept with the mouth-organ) loved playing Czech folk-tunes and would sometimes burst into tears after doing so. In a postcard to me he once wrote: ‘I was brought up among Ruritanians and Megalomanians and to this day can remember and play many folk-ditties (both real and invented) on the mouthorgan. For some reason which escapes me, these seem never to give pleasure to the listeners.’

[269] Anderson, ‘Science, Politics, Enchantment’, p. 208.

[270] A further analysis of the causes of Nazism’s rise was attempted by the anthropologist Emmanuel Todd in his Le Pou et le proletaire, Paris, 1979, where inherited family structure is added to the list of accusation — a theme subsequently elaborated by the author into a general explanation of modern societal variation in L’invention de l’Europe, Paris, 1989. But in the present context that argument may perhaps be left in parentheses: the familial patterns depicted were undoubtedly rural, whether or not they have been transmitted forward in the way Todd suggests.

[271] In a 1934 speech to unemployed workers, Heidegger suggested that this was what urbanisation had brought them. The solution was a return ‘to soil and land’ which could renew German community. In a radio address of the same period, he even compared philosophical reflection to peasant labour: ‘This philosophical work ... belongs right here in the midst of the peasants’ work ... My work is intimately rooted in and related to the life of the peasants [and] comes from a centuries long and irreplaceable rootedness in Alemannian-Swabic soil.’ On these matters, see M. E. Zimmerman, Heideggers Confrontation with Modernity,

Bloomington, IN, 1990, pp. 69–70. Another important discussion of the issue is R. Minder, ‘Martin Heidegger et le conservatisme agraire’, Alemagnes d’Aujourd’hui, no. 6, 1967. P. Bourdieu, L’Ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger, Paris, 1988 gives the complete lowdown on his ‘louche’ philosophical rendition of folkish nationalism.

[272] See, inter alia: H. Kohn, The Idea of Nationalism, New York, 1944; J. Plamenatz, ‘Two Types of Nationalism’, in E. Kamenka, ed., Nationalism, the Nature and Evolution of an Idea, London, 1973; R. Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Cambridge, MA, 1992; L. Greenfeld, Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, Cambridge, MA, 1992.

[273] Eugen Weber tries to estimate the limits of right-wing nationalism in contemporary France in ‘Nationalism and the Politics of Resentment’, American Scholar, vol. 63, 1994. But perhaps the most significant limit lies in the postwar transformation described in Henri Mendras, La fin du paysan: suivi d’une reflexion sur la fin du paysan vingt ans apres, Le Paradou, Actes Sud, 1984.

[274] Goran Therborn shows — in European Modernity and Beyond, New York, 1992 — that on the eve of World War II Europe was ‘still a predominantly agrarian society’, and that only in the 1950s to 1970s was ‘the compressed end of immemorial agrarian society’ witnessed — one generation ago, in fact (pp. 65–73). Except in the British Isles and one ‘corridor from Switzerland to Sweden’, industrialisation was rapid, one-way — and remarkably short lived. By the 1980s, de-industrialisation was already under way. In this context of ultra rapid transitions, perhaps what Therborn calls in his general conclusion ‘the cunning survival capacity of historical traditions’ (p. 359) deserves greater emphasis than it has usually received.

[275] D. Laitin, ‘National Revivals and Violence’, European Journal of Sociology, vol. 36, 1995.

[276] Laitin, ‘National Revivals and Violence’, p. 35, where the author is quoting from O. Subtelny’s Ukraine., a History, Toronto, 1988. Roman Szporluk has fortified the same line of argument more recently in ‘Nationalism after Communism: Reflections on Russia, the Ukraine, Belarus and Poland,’ Nations and Nationalism, vol. 4, 1998.

[277] S. Ramet, ‘Nationalism and the “Idiocy” of the Countryside: The Case of Serbia’, Ethnic and Racial Studies, vol. 19, 1996, pp. 70–1. See also her Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to Ethnic War, Boulder, 1995.

[278] Ramet, ‘Nationalism and the “Idiocy” of the Countryside’, p. 85.

[279] Kiernan, The Pol Pot Regime, pp. 4–5.

[280] On this topic the reader must turn first of all to Gerard Prunier’s brilliant and corrosive study The Rwandan Crisis 1959–1994: History of a Genocide, London, 1995. The parallels to be drawn with Barnett’s profile of Cambodian nationalism in ‘Cambodia Will Never Die’ are especially striking as regards both the ideological origins of the conflicts, and the potentially lethal authority of one-party rule within peasant societies.

[281] It failed to yield much before this author’s earlier effort, The Break-up of Britain, London, 1977, which entirely failed to register the socio-historical dimension emphasised here. Gellner wrote a typically amusing and acerbic notice of this work, ‘Nationalism, or the New Confessions of a Justified Edinburgh Sinner’, in The Political Quarterly, vol. 49, 1978 (reprinted in his Spectacles and Predicaments, Cambridge, 1979).

[282] Greenfeld, ‘God’s First-born: England’, in her Nationalism, ch. 1.

[283] Gellner was an enthusiastic pro-European, but always had difficulty fitting the British Isles into his grand schema of modernisation through nationalism. It seems to me that his most acute critique of his adopted nation’s culture is contained in an early and famously abrasive study of its indwelling philosophical mystique, ‘British Empiricism’, Words and Things, London, 1959. Only an outsider could have dealt such a memorable blow to the native identity. On the other hand, he did become more of an insider, and later always gave the impression that there was much — indeed more and more — to be said in defence of God’s first-born. It was as if a part of the Hapsburg mantle (which he was also quite fond of praising) had fallen upon Windsordom. It may also be worth observing here that the first-born is not really unique. Actually his second- and third-born are in similar sorts of trouble today, as the United States and France also labour towards long-overdue reform of their own almost equivalently gerontocratic versions of ‘the western model’. It looks as if the general fate of revolutionary models is to become out-dated, and then discover what an impossible nuisance is further political revolution.

[284] A. J. Mayer, The Persistence of the Old Regime, London, 1981, p. 329.

[285] One interesting new attempt at analysing social transmission mechanisms in their own right is provided by Regis Debray’s new study, Transmettre, Paris, 1997. Connoisseurs of transmission effects may also observe an odd echoeffect between the lines here. In the 1960s, Perry Anderson and I evolved a theory of Britishness which proclaimed that everything in the United Kingdom was, in effect, far sooner than most opinion then wanted to believe. First published in the New Left Review, the so-called ‘Nairn-Anderson theses’ asserted, not without passion, that the great vanguardstate of European modernity was in truth a pitiable and quasi-feudal reliquary fit only for history’s museum, or perhaps just its dustbin. There too it was asserted that history was more enmeshed in and compromised by the past than liberals and socialists thought. In retrospect, even this denunciation seems inadequate. It did not occur to either of us that the old bone cage would rattle on into the third millennium, or that forty years later a new Labour government might be in power,

devoted to pathologically cautious re-arrangement of the relics — for example, phasing out the hereditary principle in the House of Lords while conserving lordship and monarchy themselves.

** 5. Nationalism and language: a post-Soviet perspective

David D. Laitin

The collapse of the Soviet Union meant for millions liberation from a regime that created the Gulag archipelago, in which their relatives, their friends and untold numbers whom they never met were incarcerated and/ or murdered; for millions more it meant the possibility to associate and interact freely with people throughout the globe; for still millions more it meant a catastrophic disruption of working life, of social security and of status in a new society they could hardly understand; for millions again it meant a feeling of hope, of security, of future possibility, as a member of a ‘nation’ that would now have its own state. Hardly to be compared with these earth-shattering effects, it is none the less noteworthy that the Soviet collapse has drawn scores of social scientists back to the seminal work of Ernest Gellner, who gave us a framework for analysing how nationalism arises, when it is powerful and when it is weak.

The most important contribution of Gellner’s work on nationalism has been its unrelenting insistence that the existence of a ‘nation’ is not a sufficient condition for the emergence of nationalism; rather nationalism is the result of the uneven diffusion of industrialisation. The theory is evocatively explicated in Gellner’s ‘just-so’ story, related in Thought and Change, which has a robust plot. In it, there are two territories, A and B, which are parts of an overarching empire. Modernisation hits the world ‘in a devastating but untidy flood’, coming first through A, and only later to B. This means that as A finally ploughs through the misery and dislocation of early modernisation, B will still be mired in it. Impoverished and hopeless youth in B will consequently seek to better their lives by migrating to A. From this situation, different sorts of nationalism will arise. If Bs can blend into A without being noticed, and B’s intellectuals get elite positions in A, then there will emerge a wider A-&-B society, on the road to becoming a nation.

Nationalism will be the doctrine of the A-&-B elites seeking to naturalise state power inside the boundaries of A-&-B, through the standardisation of a national culture. However, if Bs cannot blend in — that is, when Bs are radically differentiated from As by race, skin colour, or religion, what Gellner later calls ‘entropy-resistant’ classifications[286] — the discontent from Bs unable to achieve social mobility in A will express itself in a form of separatist nationalism, of an A vs. B type. In both the A-&-B and A vs. B cases, nationalism was impelled not by culture, but rather by the uneven development of modernisation. [287]

As for language, a cultural feature that is not entropy-resistant, Gellner’s story has clear implications. Clerks are the drones of modern society; full citizenship in such a society therefore requires literacy; and practical necessity demands that all clerk/citizens can communicate efficiently with each other in a single language. Small communities with their own language cannot produce the range of specialists needed to run a modern society; therefore the nation-state is the minimal territorial unit in the modern world. And the nation-state will impose a standard dialect or language within its boundaries, more associated with scholastic high culture than the folk cultures of the peasants — demonstrating that the claim by nationalists that they represent the ‘folk’ is a sham — and this new standard language will become the distinguishing mark of the nation. This theory, however, does not predict a universal industrial culture, or a universal language of industrial society, mainly because uneven development will assure break-away nationalisms (from those places where assimilation is blocked by a jealous working class focusing on cultural difference in order to discriminate against migrants) whose leaders will consecrate some dialect or a language that differentiates it from its neighbour.[288]

The motivating factor in this model is the opportunity for bureaucratic and other literacy-demanding jobs that impels rural folk to learn the elite language of the cities to which they had migrated. If mobility prospects are blocked, these migrants will sense higher expected economic returns for having their own nation-state, where the elite dialect of their language would become the basis for white-collar jobs, and these frustrated job-seekers would then become recruits for a nationalist movement. To be sure, Gellner shied away from this bald economism, and claimed that his theory had been ‘travestied’ by others who held that nationalism was based upon

calculations. ‘This formulation’, he protests, ‘is a misrepresentation.[289] He points to the real experience of rural migrants into a city ruled by bureaucrats who speak a language absolutely foreign to them. ‘This very concrete experience’, Gellner imagines, helps them learn ‘the difference between dealing with a conational, one understanding and sympathising with their culture, and someone hostile to it’. From this experience, a sort of ‘love’ can emerge for their culture, ‘without any conscious calculation of advantages and prospects of social mobility’. None the less, Gellner admits, ‘had there been such calculation (which there was not) it would, in quite a number of cases ... have been a very sound one [to become nationalists]’.[290] And so, even though his peasant-migrants never calculated, they more-or-less acted as if they had!

It is an intellectual treat to read Gellner’s clear, acerbic and powerful prose, whether battling Kedourie, one-upping Hroch, or elaborating his alternative vision. Yet, Gellner’s work, especially apparent today when modernisation theory has faced generations of critics, is deeply flawed. Its functionalism runs mad. Its reifications deny human agency. And when the theory does include agents, these agents are portrayed in caricature.[291]

In functionalist logic, the identification of a ‘need’ is used to explain an outcome, ignoring the historical reality that many needs go unfulfilled, to the detriment of organisations and individuals. The need itself, it should be apparent, can hardly explain its fulfilment, though Gellner often writes that it can. In Nations and Nationalism, for example, Gellner summarises his explanation of why centralised states monopolise culture within their boundaries. This kind of state, he tells us:

<quote>

must be so. Its economy depends on mobility and communication between individuals, at a level which can only be achieved if those individuals have been socialised into a high culture, and indeed into the same high culture ... Also, the economic tasks set these individuals do not allow them to be both soldiers and citizens of local petty communities ... So the economy needs both the new type of central culture and the central state; the culture needs the state; and the state probably needs the homogeneous cultural branding

of its flock ... So the culture needs to be sustained as a culture, and not as the carrier or scarcely noticed accompaniment of a faith. [292]

</quote>

The needs of high cultures, he earlier asserts, explain the modern reality of nation-states. ‘In the industrial world high cultures prevail, but they need a state not a church, and they need a state each’, we are told. ‘That is one way of summing up the emergence of the nationalist age.’[293]

In his subtle and clever posthumous Nationalism, Gellner softens his functionalist view of social causation. ‘In the second zone’, Gellner writes with his focus on Germany and Italy, ‘nationalism could be benign and liberal; it had no inherent need to go nasty (even if in the end it did).’[294] Here ‘needs’ could not explain fascism. But for Gellner, that is an anomaly. Usually, needs create fulfilling outcomes.

As in many functionalist accounts, Gellner relies on a technique of reification, giving human attributes to unspecified globs of humanity or territory. ‘Mankind is irreversibly committed to industrial society’, Gellner preaches. [295] How precisely one can feel, or see, or measure this commitment, or find precisely where it resides, is left to the readers’ imaginations. ‘Cultural minorities’, we are told, ‘refrain from developing an effective nationalism because they have no hope of success ... ‘[296] How do groups of people, most of whom don’t know each other, we can ask, ‘refrain’ from doing anything? Elsewhere: ‘advanced lands do not have any interest in sharing their prosperity with the ill-trained latest arrivals’. [297] How can we attribute ‘interests’ to lands?

Reifications come from all corners of his work. In his chapter on ‘What is a Nation?’ in Nations and Nationalism, he affirms that ‘Polities then will to extend their boundaries to the limits of their cultures ...’; that ‘[N]ationalism uses the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures ... and most often transforms them radically’; that ‘The cultures [nationalism] claims to defend and revive are often its own inventions’; that ‘[S]ocieties

worship themselves brazenly and openly ... in a nationalist age’; that ‘[Nationalism has its own amnesias ... which ... can be profoundly distorting’; and that ‘Modern ... society ... believes itself to be perpetuating ... a folk culture.’[298] And in Nationalism, he writes that in his second zone, that of Prussia and Italy, ‘A nation wanted its own state in addition to its own main poet ... ‘[299] In these snippets, polities, nationalism, and societies are humanised, and are given intentions and goals. His argument with Hroch is revealing. In it, Gellner points out that Hroch ‘faces one of the most persistent and deep issues in this field: is it nations, or is it classes, which are the real and principal actors in history?’ [300] Gellner never even suggests that it may be ‘people’.

To be sure, actors are not entirely absent from Gellner’s writings. In Nationalism, Gellner introduces more fully the goals and aspirations of the ‘nationalist’, thereby overcoming some of his functionalism and reification. But his view of nationalists is quite caricatured. Nationalists are in fact aware, ‘with great bitterness’ that their nations did not always exist.[301] Perhaps, though, some were aware with a sense of irony, or maybe were not aware due to self-imposed amnesia, that their nation did not always exist.[302] And immediately following, Gellner writes, ‘The nationalist squares the assumption of the universality of nationalism with its widespread absence ... by claiming that it was there ... but ... asleep.’[303] ‘Reawakening’ is indeed a common trope by nationalists; but the presentation of this line of nationalist thought hardly captures the complex set of reasons that motivates real nationalists. Caricatured visions of actors are an insufficiently powerful substitute for a functionalist logic without any actors at all.

Gellner’s use of functionalism, reification and caricature, in my judgement, were for him a shorthand, to elide the issue of mechanisms, in order to get at the basic structure of nationalism. In that regard — where nationalism is firmly placed into a social calculus — I am thoroughly in debt to Gellner’s work. What I propose to do is to purge Gellner’s theory of its excessive functionalism and reification in order to specify more precisely the mechanisms he chooses to ignore. Thus I want to construct a more plausible micro component as a complement to Gellner’s macro theory.

One way to do this, as I have already suggested, is to assume that people are oftentimes the principal actors in history. Don’t misunderstand; I’m not a radical methodological individualist. By no means am I opposed to macro-theorising, in analysing the structural effects of industrialisation, of state construction, and of interstate conflicts of interest. Rather, I believe that our macro stories must be made consistent with parallel stories told on a micro level. That is to say, the predictions of the macro and micro stories need to be calibrated. It may be the case, for example, from a macro perspective, that cultural minorities ‘refrain’ from nationalism due to low probability of success. None the less, a convincing theory would need to show that for all (or most) members of that set, there would be no individual interest in developing a nationalist programme, and insufficient resources to ‘sell’ it to the putative members of that nation. To be sure, Gellner often reconciles the micro and macro stories, especially when writing about the role of the intelligentsia in the forging of nationalism. [304] But the typical story line has macro-historical forces (industrialisation and modernisation) impelling unspecified actors (minorities, states, lands, classes) — explained by the needs of those conglomerates — into nationalist movements. This requires revision.

What I am proposing is that we discharge some of the weight carried by the functionalist logic in Gellner’s formulation; and replace it with a model that takes individual incentives more strongly into account. In light of this goal, I shall begin by summarising a micro-based story of national revival I have elaborated elsewhere;[305] relying on this model, and data I collected in four of the post-Soviet Union Republics (Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan), I then seek to account for nationalist sentiments and actions by the Russians now living in diaspora. The data, once examined on a micro level, allow me to complement Gellner’s theory with a non-functionalist micro-calculus, a calculus that does not require a pure job-mobility motivation that Gellner knew to be inadequate.

*** National revivals and the tipping game

Under a variety of conditions — a rationalising state seeking to fashion a common standardised nation within the boundaries of rule; a rebellious region within a state seeking economic, political and cultural autonomy; a

wave of migrants moving from one cultural/linguistic zone to another — there will be pressures on people to alter their (or their children's) language repertoires. These pressures often (as with immigrants in the United States to English) seem inexorable; in other cases (for example, the Poles in Russia) they meet with strong resistance; and in still other cases the tides change (as in Catalonia, to Spanish and back to Catalan). As I have already suggested, Gellner has addressed the dynamics of language shift under these precise conditions, but he all too often explained individual shifts based on macro-sociological needs. The theory was at its weakest in translating macro forces into individual actions. Thomas Schelling, in his 'tipping game' models, has made great headway in addressing problems of this sort; in this section I shall put my 'language' version of Schelling's tipping game in a nutshell.[306] Here the focus will be on the pressures faced by the Russian diaspora in the nationalising states of the former Soviet Union.

Consider Figure 5.1. The x axis represents the percentage of Russians who speak the titular language.[307] (Alternatively, and as a much better indicator of assimilation, it could represent the percentage of Russian-speakers who send their children to titular medium of instruction schools). The numbers of Russian parents who have done so is so low as of this writing, that the model does not have much interest. Readers might assume that at a certain point along the x axis — say at around 50 per cent of Russians who speak the titular language — a second tipping game — that involving sending your children to a titular medium of instruction school — is triggered. Meanwhile, the y axis portrays the average pay-off (less learning costs) for a Russian-speaker in the population who acquires facility in the titular language (or who sends her child to a titular medium of instruction school). The utility function represents the pay-off for maintaining a monolingual Russian repertoire; and ITT represents the pay-off for developing a Russian/titular bilingual repertoire (with the medium of instruction tipping game, would represent Russian-language dominance and ITT would represent titularlanguage dominance).

The structure of this game makes for a powerful story about language shift. For one, there are only two stable equilibria, at 0 per cent speaking the titular language or 100 per cent. Anywhere to the left of 'k', the tipping point, the average pay-off for learning the titular language is less than maintaining

monolingualism in Russian. Those who speak the titular language will have little incentive to maintain facility in it, or to pass it on to their children. The long-term consequence of this situation is for the society to return to a 0 per cent equilibrium. Anywhere to the right of ‘k’, however, the incentives are reversed. And any Russian speaker who is monolingual will see that her likely pay-off will be higher if she acquires facility in the titular language. If all remaining Russian monolinguals make the same calculation (which would be rational for all those facing more-or-less average costs of learning and pay-offs for success), the trend would be towards 100 per cent facility in the titular language, the second stable equilibrium.

[[j-a-john-a-hall-the-state-of-the-nation-2.jpg][Figure 5.1 Tipping game: Russians into titular society]]

A second crucial element of the tipping game plot is that the difference between the average pay-off for R at 0 per cent and the average pay-off for T at 100 per cent plays almost no role in individual choice. Suppose the average individual pay-offs for Russian-speakers at 100 per cent along the x axis were much higher than the average individual pay-offs for Russian-speakers at 0 per cent along the x axis. Here, we might say that there were strong macro (economic, political or social) incentives for assimilation. But if the status quo were at 0 per cent, there would be no incentive for a particular individual to shift her language repertoire. In this case, the ‘needs’ of the society would not be met by the actions of its members. This portrays graphically the flaw in Gellner’s functionalist formulations.

Each of the utility functions has an unusual shape, and this merits some comment about two assumptions hidden in those curves. My first assumption is that at 0 per cent along the x axis, there will be extremely high rewards for a few Russian-speaking individuals to serve as what Abram de Swaan calls ‘monopoly mediators’ between the elites of the nationalising state and the cultural minority. [308] These mediators serve as translators of the laws and regulations of the polity to their community; and serve also as interlocutors to the state apparatus on behalf of members of their community who need special services from the state. If there are virtually no bilinguals, and if bilingual titulars abjure playing such a role (or are not trusted by the minority community) the returns on learning the titular language (for some Russians)

would be great, raising the average pay-off, making it come close to the pay-off for at 0 per cent on the x axis. This is why TT drops at first before rising as more and more Russian-speakers become fluent in the titular language.

My second assumption is that as the society moves towards 100 per cent of Russian-speakers (and their children) who are fluent in the titular language, many people in that community will feel a sense of wistfulness that their culture is disappearing as a viable aspect of the society/polity in which they live. (This is especially the case amid the second game, in which the choice is whether to send your child to a Russian or titular medium of instruction school.) While people will yearn for the days of yore, when the culture of the immigrant community was intact, only a few individuals will have an incentive to maintain monolingualism in Russian. Those who do (when most other members of the Russian-speaking community have become either bilinguals or monolinguals in the titular language) will become cultural heroes. Elsewhere I have called them the 'lonely philologists and half-forgotten poets' who pine for the day when interests change, and the pay-offs favouring a Russian language revival increase.[309] These philologists would become the vanguard of the revival. But with no revival in sight, they will get honour and respect from members of the assimilated community who remember their roots, and perhaps receive professorships in Russian culture in the national university, and their pay-offs at will begin to rise as the society moves towards the right-hand equilibrium.

Economists (and Gellner, in some of his formulations) would have little trouble in calculating the pay-off functions R. and "TT. They would be the expected economic returns for each language repertoire depending on how many other people of the Russian-speaking community had the same repertoire or a different one. If, for example, Russian-speakers project that as the society moves towards its tipping point, it would be impossible to get a job as a sales clerk, as a customs official, as a production manager, or as a teacher, unless one spoke the titular language, they would set their expected economic returns for speaking the titular language as significantly higher than if they maintained their monolingual repertoire.

Utility functions, at least when it comes to language issues, are not nearly so simple. People will be reluctant to reposition (or better, represent)

themselves culturally — say by assimilating — if they know people who share their background will taunt or ostracise them or their children. They will be equally reluctant if they know that assimilation is like being an Alice on the Queen’s chessboard. The closer they get, the more the fashion leaders of the high culture change their styles in order to create a moving target. Gellner hinted at these factors, but never specified them in his Just-So stories.

In light of these considerations, and relying on Petersen, who addressed issues of assimilation in the realm of volunteering for military service, I postulate two other variables that help constitute the language utility function, both having more to do with status than income.[310] First, there is the value of in-group status. Suppose Russian-speakers who attempt to learn the titular language (through seeking social relations, or even relations of affection) suffer ridicule, ostracism or even bodily harm from members of their own community. To the extent that vigilantes within the migrant society can impose costs on potential assimilators into the titular culture, the pay-off for TT will be reduced. Secondly, there is the value of out-group acceptance. Suppose Russian-speakers who learn the titular language are easily identified by titulars, and are barred from enjoying the fruits of assimilation. Titular clubs, social groups and spouses remain off-territory for assimilators, or nouveaux-titulars. Under such conditions (even if they could get decent employment that requires knowing the titular language), the returns for TT, compared with RR, will be lowered.

A number of important questions relating to this model and its predictions in regard to assimilation versus a separating nationalism will remain unanswered. First is the question as to how the three elements of the language utility function get combined, and with what weighting. Secondly, there is the question of how to build into the model the opportunities and constraints set by the policies of the nationalising state. It makes a big difference if the state subsidises language instruction for its minorities, or whether the governments refuse even to sponsor the publication of textbooks oriented to teaching the outside group how to speak the national language. There may be precious little ‘choice’ involved if there are no opportunities to learn it. Thirdly, there are a range of other realms in which assimilation can take place — in dress, in surnames, in diet. The relationship of language assimilation to these other forms, and how they play into one another, awaits specification. Despite these theoretical lacunae, the data

analyzed below demonstrate that expected economic returns cannot tell the whole story of assimilation, at least at the early stages of language rationalisation in the newly nationalising states of the former Soviet Union. And furthermore, I shall demonstrate that concerns of in-group and out-group status can be made part of a rational calculus in questions of assimilation and nationalism.

*** Russians in the post-Soviet diaspora

The 25 million Russians living in the now-independent states that were formerly Union Republics of the Soviet Union find themselves somewhat like ‘Bs’ in Gellner’s just-so story of nationalism. In the course of Russian and then Soviet modernisation, Russians moved, or were forced to move, where there was land or jobs. Similarly, non-Russians moved in large numbers into Russia and into areas ‘foreign’ to them. In a variety of ways, often quite distinct from the standard stories of state-building, the leaders of Russia and the Soviet Union sought to create a wider national identity that would incorporate all Bs (Tatars, Georgians, Estonians, Ukrainians, etc.) into an A-&-B nation-state. With the collapse of the Union in 1991, however, the As have become Bs: Russians are the migrants living in ‘nationalising states who seek social mobility within those states’, but are also subject to discrimination there and are therefore potential recruits for a counternationalism as ‘Russians’, whether through secession, regional autonomy movements, or out-migration. [311] The question of the fate of these 25 million Russians, a sort of ‘beached diaspora’, remains unanswered.

An economistic interpretation would have us look at the relative modernisation of the nationalising state and Russia. To the extent that the former is ahead of Russia (e.g. Estonia and Latvia), the diaspora would remain in the titular republic; to the extent that it is behind (e.g. in Kazakhstan), the diaspora would migrate back to Russia in search of the better things in life associated with advanced modernisation. In the former case, where the Russians remain, the theory would then demand that we look to social mobility prospects within the nationalising state for Russians. If they are more-or-less equal to that of the titulars (and this would happen where the working class could not easily distinguish titulars from Russians, for example in Ukraine), the theory would predict assimilation by Russian-

speakers into the standard language of the titular republic. If the Russians face discrimination through easy detection (for example in Estonia or Latvia), the theory would predict a counter-nationalism, led by the Russian-speaking disaffected intelligentsia living in the titular republic.

To put these predictions to the test, but with more of a focus on individual incentives than Gellner's formulations would have demanded, I collected data on the adaptations of Russians to their diasporic condition in four former Union Republics — Estonia, Latvia, eastern Ukraine and northern Kazakhstan. In this chapter, I will report on only two elements in this organic chain of data. The first is a high-n random survey, comparably administered in each of these republics, where we asked titulars and Russians about their knowledge of languages, their use of the titular and Russian language in a variety of domains, their social and demographic situation, and their attitudes and expectations about assimilation, out-migration, and mobilisation for nationalist goals.

The second research technique used in the project and to be reported on here is called the 'matched-guise' test, first administered in Montreal by Lambert, and revised by Woolard in her research in Catalonia. [312] My research team and I administered the test based on Woolard's standards in the four republics in which we had our high-n survey. The goal of this test is to ascertain the degree of status people receive for speaking a particular language, independent of knowledge about the speaker's economic achievements or failures. I used these data to get 'scores' for the in-group and out-group status variables that partly constitute the utility functions in the tipping game.

To administer the matched-guise test, you need to recruit two bilinguals (in Russian and the titular language). We chose one bilingual whose first language was Russian; and another whose first language was the titular language. We then translated a neutral passage (about a mathematical concept) into Russian and the titular language. Each bilingual read the passage into a tape recorder twice, once in each language. We alternated the four 'voices' on the tape so that the same person did not speak consecutively, and we played the tape in front of audiences of secondary school students. Never in our administration of the tests (nor in Lambert's or

Woolard's) did any student pollute the research by noticing aloud that a single person was speaking in two different guises. Mter the test, students were generally surprised and delighted to hear about the 'trick'.

Students were asked to 'judge' each voice on a scale of 1 to 6, telling us what sort of person they imagined, just by hearing the voice. The students were given a variety of criteria in which to judge the voices, such as pleasant, attractive, spiritual, witty, cultured, open, magnanimous, intellectual, educated, self-confident, proud, having leadership qualities, diligent. Through confirmatory factor analysis, we differentiated the rankings into two primary factors, that of respect and friendship. Students were also asked to speculate about what sort of job they thought the speaker held, and these were coded by levels of status. From the answers to our questions, we were able to rank the degree of friendship and respect accorded to a single person, whether she was speaking in the titular language or Russian.

Relevant data from the surveys, from the matched-guise tests, and from a few other sources of published data, are presented in Table 5.1. The dependent variable that is of consequence for a test of Gellner's theory is the reaction of the diasporic population to the nationalising projects of their new states in which they are now citizens/subjects. Consequently, I shall focus here upon the openness of Russian-speakers to assimilation into titular society. As Table 5.1 shows, five survey questions (rows 2–7) tapped different levels of openness in the four republics.

On the dependent variable, openness to assimilation, Latvia's Russians are by far the most open. Nearly half of the Russian respondents answered that assimilation represents the best future for Russians in their republic, more than twice as many as Russian nationals in Ukraine (row 2). The figures for Estonia and Kazakhstan are considerably lower. Similarly, on the question of whether all Russians in the titular republic should be fluent in the titular language, over 70 per cent of Latvia's Russians in our survey agreed. Here Estonia's Russians were in second place, followed by Ukraine and then Kazakhstan. On the question of whether Russians in the republic should abjure claims to territorial autonomy (row 5), over 70 per cent of Latvia's Russians agreed. Here Ukraine was second, Kazakhstan (surprisingly, given the reported sentiments in the Russian press of Russians in the north of the

republic) third, and Estonia fourth, as Russians in the north-east of the country showed a strong desire for autonomy. On the question of whether the titular language should be a required subject in all schools in the republic (row 4), there was widespread agreement among Russian respondents in all four republics, with those in Latvia coming in a close second to the Russians in Estonia; those in Kazakhstan were most reluctant to be required to study Kazakh. Finally, there was a question of how the respondent would react if a state official addressed an inquiry to him or her in the titular language. In which language, we asked, would you respond? For respondents who speak the titular language with great difficulty (row 6), those in Latvia were most likely to respond in the titular language, accommodating to the state language. The answers get more interesting when we look at that sub-set of respondents who claim to speak the titular language well (row 7). Among Latvia's Russians, most would respond in the language of the questioner, and in the language they know well. But in the other three republics, there is strong resistance to this accommodation norm. Note well that 36 per cent of Ukrainian Russians who speak Ukrainian freely would none the less respond in Russian. The figures for Estonian and Kazakh Russians show similar resistance. Overall, on a single dimension of openness to assimilation, it appears that Latvia's Russians are most open, that Estonian and Ukrainian Russians are a far second, and Kazakh's Russians are least open to assimilation in Kazakh culture.

Table 5.1 Explaining openness to assimilation: Russians in Four Republics

| Estonia | Latvia | Kazakhstan | Ukraine |

| Variable |

| 1. Tipping Axis (% of Russians who speak titular language (1989 Census; those who think it it or speak it freely, from survey) | 13.8; | 21; | 0.86; | 33.3; |

| | 6.4 | 20. l | 3.5 | 26.4 |

| Dependent variable: Openness to assimilation |

| 2. Best future for Russians in this Republic | 7.9 | 48.4 | 7.7 | 23.l |

| is to assimilate (survey, only Russian respondents) |

| 3. All permanent residents should be | 58.2 | 70.6 | 23.0 | 36.9 |

| fluent in the titular language, % of Russian respondents who agree (survey) |

| 4. Titular language should be a required | 95.8 | 95.2 | 64.4 | 84.7 |

| subject in school, % of Russian respondents who agree (survey) |

| 5. Russians in this republic have no right | 24.2 | 71.5 | 46 | 49 |

| to territorial autonomy, % of Russian respondents who agree (survey) |

| 6. Of all Russian respondents in survey | 45.3; | 48; | 16.5; | 20.6; |

| who speak titular language with difficulty; | 5.3 | 14.9 | 3.6 | 8.0 |

| and with great difficulty, % who will answer the question of a government official in the titular language |

| 7. Of all Russian respondents in survey | 25; | 16.7; | 50; | 16.7; |

| who ‘think in’ the titular language; speak | 11.8 | 0 | 33.3 | 36 |

| it freely, % who will answer the question of a government official, asked in the titular language, in Russian. |

| Independent variable: expected economic returns |

| 8. Regression analysis: job status explained based on knowing titular language (B; SE B), from survey | 0.4313; | -0.237; | -0.0043; | 0.3456; |

| | 0.0826 | 0.0998 | 0.0588 | 0.0539 |

| 9. Matched-guise: mean quality of job — for Russian in Russian guise less quality of job for Russian in titular guise (positive number means higher prestige for Russian speaker, speaking Russian) | 0.349 | 0.268 | 0.225 | 0.949 |

| 10. Economically useful to learn titular language (from survey) | 72.2 | 49.5 | 51.6 | 59.2 |

| 11. % of Russians in unskilled labour; ratio of % of Russians in unskilled labour to % ofall respondents in survey | 26.0; | 10.1; | 9.4; | 5.2; |

| | 1.42 | 1.07 | 1.54 | 1.08 |

Table 5.1 (contd)

| Estonia | Latvia | Kazakhstan | Ukraine |

| Independent variable: status returns |

| 12. Loss of in-group status in friendship for speaking titular language (matched guise) | 0.52 | 0.43 | 0.37 | 0.25 |

| 13. Loss ofin-group status in respect for speaking titular language (matched guise) | 0.41 | 0.34 | 0.49 | 0.35 |

| 14. Gain in out-group status in friendship — for speaking titular language (matched guise) | 0.28 — | 0.26 — | 0.21 | -0.33 |

| 15. Gain in out-group status in respect — for speaking titular language (matched guise) | 0.34 — | 0.29 — | 0.45 | -0.49 |

| Independent variable: titular accommodation |

| 16. % of titular respondents in survey who fully accept internationality marriage of son; of daughter | 14.5; | 24.7 | 14.3; | 52.8; |

| | 13.9 | 23.0 | 12.4 | 50.8 |

| 17. Citizen/job rights for Russian monolinguals (judgment of research team) | low/ | pending/ | high/ | high/ |

| restricted | restricted | few | high |

| 18. % of titular respondents in survey who | 65.2; | 88.4; | limitations |

| 39.1; | 32; |

| agree strongly; agree, that titular language | 21 | 6.7 | 21 | 10.7 |

| should be the sole state language of the Republic |

| Intervening sociological variables |

| 19. Linguistic difference of titular language from Russian | high | medium | high | low |

| 20. Religious distance of titulars from orthodoxy | medium | medium | high | low |

| 21. % of Russians in capital city (1897; | 16; 35; | 16; 43; | 58; 70; | 54; 23; |

| 1970; 1989) | 42 | 47 | 59 | 21 |

| 22. % of Russians in republic (1989 Soviet census) | 30.3 | 34.0 | 37.8 | 22.1 |

| Intervening variable: options for exit |

| 23. % of Russians who migrated 1991–93, | 8.26 | 5.95 | 5.80 | 3.14 |

| based on 1991 population |

| 24. Cost of out-migration: % who want to migrate less per cent that thinks it very likely they will migrate (from a 1990 survey) | 23–12=1l | 16–3=13 | 20–2=18 | 26–16=10 |

Notes: Precise questions in the Survey, and all data from it, are available at the Data Archive at the IPSR, University of Michigan. The surveys were conducted from 1993–95. Except for Ukraine (where the survey was conducted only in Kiev and Donets), random samples were interviewed from all regions of the country. Details on the matched-guise data will be published in a related article. It should be noted here, however, that the 'Russian' speaker in Kazakhstan was in actuality a Russified Kazakh who spoke fluent Russian and rudimentary Kazakh. The research team that made judgements for rows 17, 19, and 20 include the author (Estonia), Dominique Arel (Ukraine), Bhavna Dave (Kazakhstan) and Vello Pettai (Estonia and Latvia). Source for row 21: Chauncy D. Harris (1993) 'The New Russian Minorities: A Statistical Overview', Post-Soviet Geography 34:1, pp. 18–19. Source for row 23: Federal Migration Service numbers compiled from RFE/ RL Research Institute. Slavic, Baltic, and Eurasian Archive. Russia and CIS Today: Media News and Feature Digest, 30 July, 1994, no. 518: pp. 39–40. Press Survey: Integratsiya Respublik SNG: Protsess poshel, 'Pereseleniye Narodov Prodolzhaetsya vse dorogi vedut v Rossiyu (po dannym FMS RF)'. Vek No. 28: 29/07-04/08/94, c.7), kindly compiled for me by Lee Schwartz, of the US Department of State, Office of the Geographer and Global Issues. Source for row 24: Survey performed by Moscow News, only of Rusians, compiled by RFE/RL, 15 November 1991. Census data are from the 1989 Soviet census.

The tipping model, if presented as a monotonic process in which positive attitudes towards assimilation increase to the extent that other members of your group have already assimilated, would require some revision in light of these data. If the point on the x axis of the tipping model is coded based on the percentage of Russians who speak the titular language (row 1), one would expect Ukrainian Russians to be most open to assimilation, with Latvians in second, Estonians in third and Kazakhs in fourth place.

What then explains the point on the x axis for each republic at the time of the survey, shortly after the Soviet collapse? From the data on Table 5.1, the answer seems clear: social distance. The proximity of religious doctrine (row 20) and language group (row 19) accounts for Ukraine's Russians (with a Slavic language and Orthodox religion) who are on the point furthest towards assimilation, followed by Latvia (an Indo-European language and Christian in religion), then by Estonia (a non Indo-European language but Christian) and finally Kazakhstan (a non Indo-European language and Islamic). Furthermore, consider the 1989 figures for percentage of Russians in the capital city (row 21) and in the entire Republican population (row 22). The lower the number, a demographic perspective would assume, the higher probability of language assimilation, as the probability of interacting with a non-Russian would be higher. Again, these data are nearly consistent with each republic's point on the x axis (with Estonia and Latvia reversed).

Does this mean that a choice model is not useful for studying assimilation? If cultural distance and demographics can explain placement on the x axis, where do calculations about economic returns and social status come into play? The answer is that under Soviet rule, the pay-offs in status and economic returns for speaking the titular language for Russians hovered around zero; those who learned it did so passively, and the closer you are to native speakers (in terms of cultural or geographic distance), the more likely you will pick up the language at virtually no cost.

In the post-Soviet period, due to the language policies of the nationalising states, where the expected returns for speaking the titular language are much higher, Russian-speakers need to calculate more consciously the potential pay-offs for learning the titular language. Therefore, while a choice model would have had very little value-added in an explanation for bilingual

repertoires among Russians living in titular republics during the Soviet era (but much value-added as an explanation for titulars learning Russian!), such a model has greater importance in the present era. In fact, the ordering of the four republics in terms of where they stand on the x axis and where they stand regarding openness to assimilation in the survey suggest that the incentives to learn the titular language have changed in the post-Soviet era. For Russians in the Soviet successor states, as demonstrated by the different rankings on the x axis and on the openness to assimilation variable, there is a new prospective market in language learning; that is to say, it is now a long term humancapital investment worthy of consideration. Let us now examine the utility functions of Russians in their new states (based on survey data) to tease out criteria of their early decisions.

If the tipping model relied solely on expected economic returns and probabilities for occupational mobility, these data present an insurmountable challenge. The data show that the economic returns for speaking the titular language are highest in Estonia, second highest in Ukraine, neutral in Kazakhstan and negative in Latvia. Job prospects and occupational mobility cannot therefore be the principal motor for assimilation. In the four surveys, I regressed job status ofrespondent on his/her knowing of the titular language (row 8). In Estonia, for each level of increase in knowledge of Estonian, Russian respondents' job status category went up nearly a half; in Ukraine, it went up by about a third; in Kazakhstan it was neutral; but in Latvia, it went down by nearly a quarter level! This is reflected in respondent attitudes (row 10), as over 70 per cent of Russians in Estonia agreed that it was economically useful to learn Estonian; 59 per cent of Ukrainian Russians similarly agreed; and again Latvian Russians, of the four republics, agreed in lowest numbers.

The same results are partially confirmed in the matched-guise test (row 9). To be sure, only in Estonia was the job attributed to the Russian-speaker in her titular guise higher in status than in her Russian guise. In the other three republics, the job status of the Russian-speaker in her titular guise was lower than in her Russian guise. But the relative standing is what is of interest. Here respondents in Ukraine had the highest bias in favour of the Russian in her Russian guise. Students in Ukraine envisioned the Russian voice speaking the titular language as having a far worse job than that same person speaking Russian. Latvia and Kazakhstan stand in the middle, where the

Russian-speaker in her Russian guise is clearly seen to have a better job, but not overwhelmingly so. Finally, an examination of respondents' actual jobs (row 11) — with the notion that a high percentage in unskilled labour would give the greatest incentive to assimilate, as clerk jobs are the next step up for the children of unskilled labour — suggests that opportunities for social mobility through learning the titular language should be highest in Estonia, which comes in a far third in openness to assimilation. Openness to assimilation, pace the predictions of a pure job-mobility theory, cannot be explained by jobs associated with speaking the titular language and the opportunities in the titular republics for occupational mobility.

The status variables, however, can help account for variations in openness to assimilation that are missed by models that rely primarily on expected economic returns. To be sure, Gellner's writings do not ignore status. In his Encounters with Nationalism, he writes:

<quote>

Modern man enjoys, or suffers from, no ... rigid and reinforced ascribed status. He makes his own position, not by a single contract, but by a vast multiplicity of minor contracts with his fellows. In order to negotiate and articulate these contracts, he must speak in the same idiom as his numerous partners. A large, anonymous and mobile mass of individuals, negotiating countless contracts with each other, is obliged to share a culture. They must learn to follow the same rules in articulating their terms. Cultural nuance no longer symbolises status, for the status is no longer given: but a shared, standardised culture indicates the eligibility and ability of participants to take part in this open market of negotiable, specific statuses, to be effective members of the same collectivity. [313]

</quote>

But for Gellner, in modern society there is no value in sharing, for its own sake, outside of the requirements of the macro-economy, a set of customs or a language. In contrast to this view, the status variables that I elucidated in the discussion of the tipping game, which are captured by the matched-guise test, stand independently from economic rewards or occupational standing.

And they play some role in individual decisions about whether assimilation is desirable.

In-group status — the degree to which respondents of the minority group accept as friends those conationals who are seeking to assimilate — is measured here by the relative scores on friendship and respect measures given to the Russian-speaker in her Russian and her titular guises. The higher the former score in relationship to the latter, the lower is the value of in-group respect for potential assimilators. In all four republics, the mean score (for both Russian and titular respondents) for the Russian-speaker in her Russian guise was more positive (on both friendship and respect dimensions) than for the Russian-speaker in her titular guise. None of the speakers gained points for speaking the titular language for the Russian students making their evaluations. Yet the relative status loss was different in each republic. As Table 5.1 shows (row 12), the Russian-speaker in Ukraine lost least on the friendship dimension in her Ukrainian guise; the Russian-speaker in Estonia lost most. On the respect dimension (row 13), the Russian-speaker in Latvia lost least in her titular guise while again, the Russian-speaker in Kazakhstan lost most. The Russian-speaker in Ukraine had the lowest cumulative loss, followed by the Russian-speaker in Latvia. The Russian speaker in Kazakhstan had the third lowest cumulative loss, and in Estonia the fourth.

As for out-group status — measured here by the degree to which respondents in the titular group accept in friendship and respect members of the Russian-speaking community who seek to assimilate -1 have measured that based on the differential score for titular respondents between the Russian-speaker in her Russian guise and in her titular guise. It is curious — but this point will need to be developed elsewhere — that in all four republics, Russian-speakers suffered a status loss among titulars for speaking in their titular guise! The question here, as with ingroup status, is that of relative losses between republics. On the friendship dimension (row 14), the Russian-speaker in Kazakhstan lost least in her titular guise; the Russian-speaker in Ukraine lost most. On the respect dimension (row 15), the Russian-speaker in Latvia lost least and the Russian-speaker in Ukraine lost most. On the cumulative score, the Russian-speaker in Latvia lost least, the one in Estonia second least, the one in Kazakhstan third least and the one in Ukraine lost most.

Two other measures of out-group acceptance add to the data from the matched-guise test. From material in the survey, but also in actual political life, I sought data on whether Russians were accepted as potentially equal to titulars in the social and political domains. The more accepted, the higher the ‘out-group status’ score, and the greater the likelihood of assimilation. First, in the survey, we asked respondents what they thought of a marriage of their son (and then their daughter) to a person of another nationality. Of the titular group who responded to this question (row 16), Ukrainian respondents were most willing to accept non-Ukrainians as members of their family, while Kazakh

respondents were least willing to do so, with the Estonian respondents quite close to the Kazakhs. Secondly, in an examination of citizenship and language laws (row 1 7), I sought to rank the four republics based on the degree to which Russians were accepted immediately and without question as citizens, and eligible for sensitive government jobs (these jobs I consider measures of status, and not so much for expected income). These would be tests of the degree to which there were restrictions put upon Russian-speaking permanent residents of the republics in the immediate post-Soviet period. The greater the restrictions, the lower the out-group status. As Table 5.1 indicates, Ukraine was the most accommodating of the four republics; Latvia second (it is far in front of Kazakhstan on the first and weakly behind in the second), Kazakhstan third and Estonia fourth. In an average of the four indicators of out-group acceptance, Ukrainians are most accommodating, Latvians a close second, Kazakhs third and Estonians last.

How best to understand the lay-out of the dependent variable, openness to assimilation? The high assimilationist attitudes of Russians in Latvia (despite low economic returns) and the low assimilationist attitudes of Russians in Estonia (despite high economic returns) are worthy of special comment. Russians in Latvia, based on calculations of economic returns for learning Latvian, should all remain monolingual and have little interest in assimilating. Yet in our survey they show a greater willingness than respondents in the other four republics to do so. An examination of status returns — that Russians in Latvia do not abandon fellow Russians who are seen to be speaking Latvian as much as Russians in two of the other republics; and that

Latvians do not scorn assimilationist efforts by Russian-speakers as much as the titulars in all three other republics, coming quite close to Ukraine's score — may well be part of the answer. Concern for friendship and respect of one's own in-group, and a sense of acceptance ofassimilationist moves by members of the out-group, irrespective of occupational returns, play an important role in calculations about assimilation. Similarly, Estonia's high score for economic returns for assimilating is counteracted by the low (in-group and out-group) status scores received by Russians who speak Estonian. [314] This helps explain the relatively low scores in Estonia on the dependent variable. Further research, applying the model to cases that were not used to fine tune the theory, is obviously necessary to work out the precise weighing of the components of the tipping model. But it should be clear already that status concerns, by both in-group and out-group, motivate orientations to assimilate or to sustain cultural difference. And while a simple occupational mobility calculus is clearly inadequate, a theory of nationalism based on calculations of economic and status concerns does not do injustice to social reality. In fact, in ethnographic fieldwork that complemented the data collection for this project, my colleagues and I found it quite normal for Russian-speakers in these republics to calculate the expected value oflinguistic assimilation.[315]

Consistent with the tipping model, but ignored in my earlier formulations of actor utility functions, are calculations concerning the possibility of return to one's homeland through emigration. Here the data help make sense of why Ukrainian Russians are far less open to assimilation than the position on the x axis would have predicted.[316] It also helps make sense of why Estonian Russians, who are closer to Kazakhstan's Russians on the x axis, and rebuffed strongly by Estonian policies, are as open to assimilation as are Ukrainians. As can be seen in rows 23 and 24 in Table 5.1, in the 1991–3 period, a lower percentage of Russians from Ukraine migrated to Russia than any of the other three republics included in this study. Yet of the four republics, more Russians in Ukraine claim they want to migrate, and more claim they think it likely they will migrate. What this suggests is that Russians in Ukraine in the Soviet period were passively picking up Ukrainian, without giving it much political or economic significance. Once Ukraine became independent, they feared that assimilation would be at the expense of their Russianness, and developed anti-assimilationist attitudes. Few have left because there has been little pressure on them to Ukrainise; but they know it will be easy (compared with other republics) to do so if necessary.

The high expectation along with the low realisation of migration suggests a community that will resist assimilation, if forced upon them, through out-migration.

Estonia, on the other hand, has had relatively the highest out-migration of Russian-speakers, along with the second highest score for Russians wanting to out-migrate. This suggests that the Russians who remained were those most accepting of Estonian society. Even though in the 1989 census less than a quarter as many Russians in Estonia than Russians in Ukraine claimed to speak the titular language — in the survey the figure was less than half as many, suggesting that most of those who left were those who knew no Estonian — Russian respondents in Estonia on the dependent variable of this study were about equal to those in Ukraine. Not only did the economic returns help explain the closing of the incentive gap, but the possibilities and actualities of exit also played an important role.

More work needs to be done in conceptualising the role of exit for assimilation. On the one hand, high levels of exit might lower incentives for assimilation. Because foreign residents can say that if things get tough, they can always leave, the possibility of exit should lower the incentive to assimilate. On the other hand, high levels of exit might indicate that the anti-titulars are all leaving, with only those willing to assimilate remaining. With a lower percentage of Russians in the republic, due to high exit, it might also make the chances for a binational republic (the Belgian model) seem more remote, thus adding incentives to assimilate. This is why I have not yet included out-migration figures, or the cost of out-migration, into the tipping calculus at this time. But the three variables — economic returns, in-group status and out-group acceptance — have given us an excellent first cut into the issue of the possibilities for A-&-B national states in the liberated Union Republics of the former Soviet Union.

The true test of the tipping model, at least in its former Soviet republics domain, will not be available for many years. The model predicts that in cases where the expected returns for assimilation begin to appear positive for a few social or demographic groups of Russians in the post-Soviet republics, this will alter the pay-offs for closely related social or demographic groups. There should then be a slow but steady growth of potential

assimilators. But at some point in this process, there should be a rapid acceleration, as all Russians come to believe that assimilation is inevitable. As we near the tipping point, the incentives for Russian political entrepreneurs, whose status is based on representing the Russian-speaking population as Russians, would be strong to coercively induce fellow Russians to resist assimilation, and to return to ‘their’ culture. In republics where growth is slow, with few Russians having positive expected returns for assimilation, the model predicts stagnation or negative growth intergenerationally in assimilators. In this case, Russian political entrepreneurs will maintain their representative monopolies to speak for the Russian-speaking population, and they will likely bargain for regional autonomy, as have the Flemish population in Belgium. Obviously, the data in the early moments of nationality politics in the Soviet successor states, which produce only a snapshot, cannot pick up these trends. But future research can and should. Ernest Gellner’s work opened the gates to the study of social and economic sources of nationalism and assimilation; the possibility for long-term comparative study to refine Gellner’s models — thanks to the Soviet collapse — is too inviting to disregard.

*** Notes

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[286] E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, ch. 6.

[287] Gellner, Thought and Change, London, 1965, pp. 166–8.

[288] Ibid., pp. 158–63. In Nations and Nationalism, Gellner writes about ‘assimilation’ without providing a formal definition. Because many citizens throughout the globe are fully incorporated into political life without having assimilated, it seems unduly provocative, as Alfred Stepan pointed out at the Prague presentation of this paper, to hold this to be the criterion of ultimate loyalty of a nation-state. None the less any theory of the nation needs to have a criterion of culture shift in line with a national standard, for which the term assimilation is perfectly appropriate. In ‘Marginality: A Microperspective’, Rationality and Society, vol. 7, 1995, I defined assimilation as ‘the process of adoption of the ever changing cultural practices of dominant society with the goal of crossing a fluid cultural boundary separating marginal groups from dominant society’. I believe this definition to be consistent with Gellner’s use of the term.

[289] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p. 61.

[290] Ibid., p. 61.

[291] Gellner’s core argument, in what he refers to as the LSE debate on nationalism (Encounters with Nationalism, Oxford, 1994, p. 61), is that the motivating factor in inducing nationalism is industrial society. In my judgement, especially when he considers sub-Saharan Africa, he uses fancy footwork to ignore disconfirming evidence. African nationalism clearly was not motivated by industrialisation. So Gellner substitutes (Nations and Nationalism, p. 82) the dubious fact that nationalism developed in Africa because Europeans were intent on setting up an ‘eventually industrial type of society’. Intentions (such as they were) to set up an industrial society are quite a different matter from industrialisation itself. This chapter is not concerned with the causes of nationalism, and it will not enter the LSE debate. Rather, this chapter is concerned mainly with the elaboration of the mechanisms which translate the macro forces (whether

they are from industrialisation, modernity or ideas) into micro incentives for people to assimilate into a cosmopolitan culture or to seek fulfilment as a member of a separate nation, built on cultural materials recognisable from their rural roots.

[292] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 140–2.

[293] Ibid., pp. 72–3.

[294] E. Gellner, Nationalism, London, 1997, p. 54.

[295] Gellner, Nations andNationalism, p. 39.

[296] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 174.

[297] Ibid., p. 167.

[298] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 55, 56, 58.

[299] Gellner, Nationalism, p. 53.

[300] Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, p. 194.

[301] Gellner, Nationalism, p. 8.

[302] See, for example, J. Diez-Medrano’s discussion of Sabino de Arana in Divided Nations: Class, Politics and Nationalism in the Basque Country and Catalonia, Ithaca, 1995.

[303] Gellner, Nationalism, p. 8.

[304] Gellner, Thought and Change, pp. 169–70.

[305] D. Laitin, Language Repertoires and State Construction in Africa, Cambridge, 1992.

[306] T. Schelling, Micromotives andMacrobehaviour, New York, 1978, ch. 7.

[307] Because the now-independent former Union Republics each had a major language group after which it was named, they are commonly referred to as ‘titular’ nationalities, who are now, as leaders of nationalising states, promoting the titular language of their republic.

[308] A. de Swaan, In Care of the State, Oxford, 1988, ch. 3.

[309] D. Laitin, ‘Language Games’, Comparative Politics, vol. 20, 1988.

[310] R. Petersen, ‘Rationality, Ethnicity, and Military Enlistment’, Social Science Information, vol. 28, 1989.

[311] R. Brubaker, ‘National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands’, Daedalus, vol. 124, 1995.

[312] W. Lambert, Language, Psychology and Culture, Stanford, 1972; K. Woolard, Double Talk, Stanford, 1989.

[313] Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, pp. vii-viii.

[314] As suggested to me by Terry Martin, the long periods of cooperation between Russians and Latvians, for example in their mutual participation in the prerevolutionary Social Democratic Movement, may help explain the feelings of mutual respect shown in the matched guise. Russians and Estonians have not had similar types of mutual cooperation. Furthermore, the greater neighbourhood mixing of Russians in Riga, as compared to Russians in Tallinn, due mostly to relative size of groups, may also play a role. Whatever the deep causes of difference, this chapter is emphasising the mechanisms — having to do with status concerns that show up differently in the two Baltic Republics — that drive everyday behaviour.

[315] This theme is elaborated in my Identity in Formation: The Russian Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad, Ithaca, 1998.

[316] Perhaps it is not the perceived ease of exit, but rather the quasi-utopian belief by Russians in Ukraine that one day there will be an Anschluss, that weakens incentives for them to learn Ukrainian. This possibility was drawn to my attention by Valeri Khmelko, whose data show the strength of desire for re-Union with Russia among Russians in eastern Ukraine.

** 6. Ernest Gellner’s theory of nationalism: some definitional and methodological issues

Nicos Mouzelis

*** Nationalism and industrialisation

A standard criticism of Gellner’s theory of nationalism is that he tries to establish too contiguous a link between industrialisation and nationalism,

whereas in fact the two phenomena are not always very closely linked. It is quite possible to have industrialisation without nationalism (for example, the proto-industrialisation of several regions in western Europe), or nationalism without industrialisation (as in the nationalist movements of the Balkans and Latin America in the nineteenth century).

Gellner has replied to this criticism in two ways. First, he has stressed that he uses the term industrialisation in a broad sense:

<quote>

which includes the earlier commercialisation of society, which only becomes ‘industrial’ in a narrower sense (power machinery, large scale production) later, thereby however allowing the social changes already initiated by commercialisation to be preserved, extended, and to become entrenched. [317]

</quote>

Secondly, he has pointed out that his theory focuses on the emergence rather than the subsequent diffusion of nationalism. Once nationalism is seen as rooted in the industrialised west, its adoption in several nonindustrial parts of the globe does not create any special problems for his theory.[318]

Both these points of defence present certain difficulties. The problem with the first is that the motor force that brought about a special type of social structure which, according to Gellner, ‘requires’ a nationalist ideology might have to do less with industry or the market than with the development of the state. As Michael Mann, Anthony Giddens and others have pointed out, it was geopolitical competition between European states that — via the development of military technology, the building up of national armies eventually based on conscription, the spectacular increase of taxes through the centralisation and rationalisation of tax-gathering techniques, and so on — finally destroyed political, economic and cultural localism. [319] This break-up generated unprecedented processes of social mobilisation, in the course of which a large number of people, whose lives had previously been embedded within the rigid structures of traditional local communities, were

brought into the politico-administrative centre. This in turn resulted in a marked shift in orientations and loyalties from the local periphery to the ‘imagined community’ of the nation-state.

One might well say that this politico-military ‘bringing in’ was greatly facilitated by market developments. But even if this is conceded, as well as the close and dialectical relation between state and market developments, it is still perfectly plausible to argue that, in the eighteenth century, it is military rather than economic technologies that primarily explain the spectacular development of state bureaucracies and their unprecedented penetration of the societal periphery. This ‘infrastructural’ development of the state, to use Mann’s terminology, [320] eventually led to the transformation of absolutist states into nation-states, and of ‘subjects’ into ‘citizens’. In other words, the vast evolution of state infrastructures cannot be viewed as a merely ancillary, derivative process; it was at the very centre of the development that brought about the type of transformation of orientation and identity that is at the centre of Gellner’s work.

Gellner’s defensive argument about the diffusion of nationalism to non-industrialised parts of the world also faces serious difficulties. It is easy to explain why nineteenth-century Greek merchants became nationalists:

<quote>

Greek navigators and traders on, say, the island of Hydra, when they supported and financed the Greek nationalist revolution, must have been fully aware that traders in, say, Marseilles, were safer, freer and richer than they, and the idea that they would share these advantages in a Greek, non-Ottoman state, if they succeeded in creating it, could hardly have been long in coming.[321]

</quote>

All this is perfectly true. However, it is rather less easy to explain without reference to internal social structures how these nationalist sentiments spread to the lower echelons of the social pyramid, at a time when both commercial and industrial capitalism was very weak. [322] In other words, if

the processes of diffusion and imitation explain quite well the development of elite nationalism, it does not help to explain the shift from elite to mass nationalism in the nineteenth-century Balkans. For this shift to become understandable requires taking into account the partial destruction of localism in these societies by the enormous development of state bureaucracies and national armies.[323] In the Balkans, therefore, more dramatically than in western Europe, the ‘bringing-in’ process was primarily initiated and sustained by a politico-military rather than economic-industrial logic and dynamic.

Although all cases of nation-building involve the destruction of localism, the shift of orientations from the periphery to the centre and the creation of broader ‘national’ arenas, the major force bringing about this huge and unprecedented change was not always or predominantly industry- or market-related. This becomes still more obvious if we consider nation-building in post-1945 African societies. In these cases, the creation of national armies, public bureaucracies and wide mass media networks had more to do with nation-building and national ideologies than with the development of industrial or commercial capitalism.

These criticisms do not, of course, invalidate Gellner’s theory: they simply suggest that it should be modified in specific ways. Once one accepts, as I do, an elective affinity between nationalist ideology and the type of centralised non-segmental broad arenas brought about by interrelated state and market expansion, then Gellner’s thesis is still relevant if the term ‘industrialisation’ is replaced by the more inclusive ‘modernisation’. If modernity is taken to mean the kind of social arrangements that were institutionalised after the English industrial and French political revolutions, that is, if the term describes the destruction of localism and the creation via unprecedented social mobilisation, of broad social areas in the social, political, economic and cultural spheres, then we can argue that the elective affinity that Gellner tries to establish is not between nationalism and industrialisation, but between nationalism and modernity. In some cases modernity came about via predominantly market means, in others via predominantly politico-military means.

If this is accepted, then Gellner’s tripartite neo-episodic typology of history (that is, his division between pre-agrarian, agrarian and industrial eras)[324] is less usefol for understanding the emergence and development of nationalism than a political coercion based typology of say, stateless societies, societies with traditional state structures, and societies with highly ‘penetrative’ and ‘infrastructurally’ effective strong states.

*** Gellner’s functionalism

A second, and by now standard, critique of Gellner’s theory of nationalism focuses on the functionalist character of his basic idea that a certain type of society (marked by social mobility, fluid relative egalitarianism, anonymity, semantic/communicative rather than physical work, and so on) requires a context-free medium of communication — i.e., a nationalist ideology based on mass literacy/education. This immediately conveys the impression that the needs of ‘Industria’ are illegitimately transformed into causes which more or less automatically create nationalism.

Gellner has defended his position by arguing, as have Merton and others, [325] that functionalist analysis is not necessarily teleological. He posits that one can avoid the illegitimate transformation of needs into causes by spelling out the mechanisms that link Industria’s functional requirements with the emergence and consolidation of a literacy-linked, context-free nationalist idiom. These mechanisms are related to the fact that people who fail or refuse to acquire such a nationalist idiom feel frustrated, disadvantaged, second-class citizens. More precisely:

<quote>

Political and economic forces, the aspiration of governments for greater power and of individuals for greater wealth, have in certain circumstances produced a world in which the division of labour is very advanced, the occupational structure highly unstable, and most work is semantic and communicative rather than physical. This situation in turn leads to the adoption of a standard and codified, literacy-linked (‘High’) idiom, requires business of all kinds to be conducted in its terms, and reduces persons who

are not masters of that idiom (or not acceptable to its practitioners) to the status of humiliated, second-class members.[326]

</quote>

All of this can be usefully be represented schematically:

(A) the advanced division of labour, unstable occupational structure, and so on;

is linked to

(B) adoption of a literacy-linked idiom:

is linked to

(C) the refusal to accept or adopt the idiom being so ‘dysfunctional’ for the individual that attempts at resistance are peripheralised or peter out.

I find the linkages between (A), (B) and (C) convincing if they are conceptualised not causally, but in terms of compatibility and noncompatibility — that is, in terms of elective affinity. Any move from elective affinity to causality proper — or, to use Sahlins and Service’s terminology,[327] any move from general to ‘specific evolutionary’ analysis — requires much greater context specificity in respect to history and agency, and particularly to questions of collective agency.

So in order to establish linkages between (A), (B) and (C) in one or several countries or cases, it is necessary to bring into the analysis not only vague ‘meanings’ but real actors, playing specific games. For instance, what kind of groups or individuals created the literacy-linked idiom, and were there struggles for the construction of competing idioms? Which groups or categories of actors were against all literacy-linked idioms, and which were in favour of a nationalist solution? To what degree was the idiom that prevailed consciously constructed, and to what degree was it an unintended consequence of different struggles or games? Which groups or categories of people were unwilling/willing to learn the nationalist idiom, and what form did their peripheralisation take?

Brendan O’Leary makes a point similar to mine when he argues that a way out of Gellner’s difficulties is to replace a functionalist explanation by what Elster calls a ‘filter’ explanation.[328] This is an explanation that shows how the intentions of actors operate as filters linking favourable conditions with the construction of nationalism:

<quote>

Modernising elites believe that nationalism is essential for modernisation, precisely because it breaks down barriers to modernising success. Nationalbuilding nationalists recognise the beneficial consequences of nationalism, and this fact helps explain its political diffusion.[329]

</quote>

O’Leary is only partly right here. There is no doubt that ‘recognition’ and/or the adoption of conscious strategies is an important mechanism linking functional requirements — or, to use a more fashionable terminology, favourable conditions of existence — with nationalism. But the importance of this mechanism varies from one case to another. Sometimes recognition and conscious strategies do play a central role, at other times they are less prominent. In the latter case, unintended consequences such as those Gellner mentions (for example, the petering out of anti-idiom reactions due to their greater dysfunctionality) are much more crucial.

This leads us to the conclusion that the passage from elective affinity to causality proper requires contextual specification via the more serious introduction of actors as not only products but also producers of their social world. This is to say that the shift from functional to causal analysis requires both O'Leary's 'recognition/conscious strategy' and Gellner's 'peripheralisation/petering-out' mechanism. The latter is more closely linked to the notion of unintended consequences, in the sense that it considers the emergence of nationalism in effect with reference to the method of elimination: it explains why alternative solutions to the adoption of a nationalist idiom failed. [330] Needless to say, it is an empirical question whether the former or the latter mechanism is the more important, given that their respective weight varies from one case to the next. For instance, for obvious reasons conscious strategies of nation-building are more prominent in late modernisers, such as the Greek traders mentioned by Gellner himself.

*** Is a general theory of nationalism possible?

The discussion about the linkages between functional and causal explanations brings me to my third and final point. This is that Gellner's theory is less a substantive theory (Generalities III in Althusserian terminology) than a very useful conceptual framework (Generalities II in the same framework), with the help of which one can raise interesting questions and investigate in more historically and culturally specific ways and in a more finite, context-bound but still comparative manner, nationalist developments in various parts of the globe.[331]

Another way of saying this is to argue that, despite what Gellner himself says, his industrialisation/nationalism thesis is less of a theory than an ideal type suggesting an elective affinity between industrialism (or, better, modernity) and the literacy-linked idiom we call nationalist or nationalist ideology. From this point of view, the methodological similarity with Weber's Protestant ethic thesis is quite striking. In the same way that Weber's famous thesis establishes an elective affinity between Protestantism and 'bourgeois rational capitalism in the West', so Gellner,

following the same procedure, establishes compatibilities between Industria and nationalism. In neither case has adequate causality been achieved, though this is claimed by the authors. It was not achieved for the very simple reason that one cannot provide adequate causal linkages by the sweeping, ‘armchair’ manner in which both these theorists attempted to establish this connection. The only difference between them in this context is that Weber was more cautious, or more aware of the ideal-typical nature of his theory, than was Gellner. The latter has great faith in the ability of the social sciences to produce very general, substantive theories (Generalities III, in Althusserian terminology) about such global phenomena as nationalism, industrialism and revolution.

As for myself, I am more in accord with Weber than with Gellner in this regard. I do not think that a theory of nationalism both general (that is, applying to all types of nationalism) and substantive (that is, telling us non-trivial things) is possible. Or, to put it more cautiously, I believe that a general as well as substantive theory about the linkages between industrialisation and nationalism is bound to be either true but trivial, or wrong — in the sense that its statements will apply in only certain conditions which, given the theory’s generality, will have to remain unspecified. This point of view does not necessarily imply that generalisations are impossible in the social sciences. It rather leads to the idea, which is quite explicit in Weber’s methodology, that interesting generalisations in the social sciences take one of two forms:

(i) that of a finite, context-sensitive substantive generalisation based on a historically and culturally sensitive comparative methodology (generalisations such as are found, for instance, in the works of Barrington Moore and Michael Mann);

(ii) that of ideal types constituting conceptual tools useful for investigating interesting problems, and for preparing the ground for the construction of more substantive, that is, more context-sensitive, theories.

In other words, I accept Ken Minogue’s objection that Gellner’s theory cannot greatly help to explain the specific course taken by the linkage between

industrialism and nationalism in France, Germany or India.[332] But if we consider, as I do, his theory to be a conceptual framework, an ideal-type, then I think it is a highly useful instrument for raising interesting questions and producing a myriad of suggestive points that a more historically-oriented sociologist can take up to construct more substantive, context-bound theories of nationalism.

*** Conclusion

In contrast to Gellner, I see his theory of nationalism not as a substantive theory but as an ideal-type — an ideal type which, in its conceptual ingenuity and heuristic utility, compares quite favourably with Weber's equally ideal typical theory about the connection between Protestantism and capitalism. I also think that, contrary to the standard claim of his critics, Gellner's functionalist reasoning, being non-teleological, is perfectly legitimate and highly useful. One simply has to be aware that it establishes linkages between Industria and nationalism on the level of elective affinity, rather than on the level of historical causality; to move from the former to the latter requires a greater recognition of collective actors and their games than is present in Gellner's work — and indeed in functionalism more generally.

[317] E. Gellner, 'Reply to Critics', in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner, Amsterdam, 1996, p. 638.

[318] Ibid., pp. 632ff.

[319] M. Mann, Sources of Social Power. Volume One: A History of Power from the Beginning to 1760 AD, Cambridge, 1986 and 'The Emergence of Modern European Nationalism', in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., Power, Wealth and Belief, Cambridge, 1991; A. Giddens, The Nation-State and Violence, Oxford, 1985.

[320] M. Mann, ‘The Autonomous Power of the State: its Origins, Mechanisms and Results’, European Journal of Sociology, vol. 25, 1984.

[321] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, p. 632.

[322] N. Mouzelis, Modern Greece, London, 1978 and Post-Marxist Alternatives, London, 1990, pp. 103–10.

[323] For the marked discrepancy between the politico-military growth of bureaucracies and the persistent backwardness of Balkan economies in the nineteenth century, see L. S. Stavrianos, The Balkans since 1453, New York, 1968.

[324] E. Gellner, Plough, Sword and Book, London, 1988.

[325] R. K. Merton, Social Theory andSocial Structure, Glencoe, IL, 1963, ch. 1.

[326] Gellner, ‘Reply to Critics’, pp. 629–30.

[327] M. D. Sahlins and E. R. Service, eds., Evolution and Culture, Ann Arbor, 1960.

[328] J. Elster, Ulysses and the Sirens, Cambridge, 1979, p. 30.

[329] B. O’Leary, ‘Ernest Gellner’s Diagnoses of Nationalism: A Critical Overview, or, \What is Living and What is Dead in Ernest Gellner’s Philosophy of Nationalism?’, this volume, p. 52.

[330] For an early discussion of these mechanisms as the only legitimate means to move from functional to causal analysis, see R. Dore, ‘Function and Cause’, American Sociological Review, vol. 26, 1961.

[331] On levels of theory, see N. Mouzelis, Sociological Theory:: “What Went Wrong?, London, 1995.

[332] K. Minogue, ‘Ernest Gellner and the Dangers of Theorising Nationalism’, in Hall and Jarvie, The Social Philosophy of Ernest Gellner.

* Part III: Bringing politics back in

** 7. Nationalisms that bark and nationalisms that bite: Ernest Gellner and the substantiation of nations

Mark Beissinger

Anyone familiar with Ernest Gellner’s work cannot help but be struck by the tension that runs throughout it over the inevitability and the contingency of nationalism. On the one hand, Gellner identified the rise of nationalism with the global, secular transition from Agraria to Industria. Challenging liberal and Marxist claims that nationalism was in fundamental conflict with the requirements of modern society, Gellner maintained that nationalism rather was rooted in industrialism — and specifically, its generalisation of a ‘high culture’ as a means for effecting a complex and constantly shifting division of labour. As Gellner wrote, ‘Although those who participate in it generally, indeed almost without exception, fail to understand what it is that they do,

the movement is none the less the external manifestation of a deep adjustment in the relationship between polity and culture which is quite unavoidable.’[333]

At the same time, Gellner consistently maintained that nationalism in its specific manifestations was ‘a contingency, not a universal necessity’. For Gellner, it was the dog that failed to bark that provided the vital clue to understanding nationalism and, specifically, the arbitrariness of its particular incarnation, in sharp contrast to the primordial and inevitabilist claims of nationalists themselves; as he argued, ‘most potential nationalisms must either fail, or, more commonly, will refrain from even trying to find political expression.[334] ‘Nationalism as such is fated to prevail’, he wrote, ‘but not any one particular nationalism.[335] While nationalism may be inevitable, the concrete materialisation of nationalism — the outcomes of its struggles and the forms it assumes — are a matter of circumstance.

The argument is at once brilliant and problematic. Nationalism no longer belonged to the history of ideas, nor could it be represented as a mere reawakening of suppressed identities. In the modern world we are fated to invent a universe of contending nationalisms, and if one nationalism were to disappear, another, Gellner tells us, would quickly fill the void. In a world of the universalisation of high culture the nonnational escapes the imaginable, as nations become the vessels within which the modern state and economy must operate. ‘[Nationalism’, Gellner wrote, ‘is like gravity, an important and pervasive force, but not, at most times, strong enough to be violently disruptive.’[336]

But Gellner’s argument takes nationalism out of the realm of the accidental only to deposit it there once again. How is it possible that the processes that produce the phenomenon in general have nothing to do with the processes that produce the phenomenon in its specifics? If most nationalisms are fated to fail, why do any succeed? Is a theory of nationalism which is utterly indifferent to explaining the great variety of forms which nationalism has assumed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries — from genocide to the multicultural state — an adequate accounting of the phenomenon? Are all of these divergent acts in the name of the nation caused by the same

civilisational shift from Agraria to Industria and its accompanying adjustment between polity and culture, and, if so, in what sense?

Like a Marxism without a theory of revolution, Gellner's theory provides no coherent vision of how nationalism works its way into the realm of substantive human action. Certainly, Gellner identified the agents of this nationalist world of our making: the modern state and the nationalist movement. But he stopped short of placing these agents in motion or connecting their acts with the larger social forces which he argued were central to their emergence. At most he pointed to stages through which nationalism naturally developed or 'time zones' in which particular types of nationalist struggles predominated. As he noted on the eve of his death, his theory largely sought to explain 'why nationalism, relatively inconspicuous in the past, is so very salient in our age'. But it 'does not explain why, for instance, German nationalism should have become quite so virulent during the Nazi period. Or again, it fails to explain the firm commitment of anglophone Canadians to the existing Canadian political unit, notwithstanding the fact that anglophone Canadians at any rate have not the slightest difficulty operating within the polity of the USA.'[337] Without a mechanism tying broad social forces to concrete human action, Gellner's ideas can never really be subjected to a rigorous empirical test. 'It may seem convenient for a theory that it should lack specific consequences in a certain area which could help to test its truth', Gellner wrote in Thought and Change. 'Still, the arbitrariness of nationalism was not invented in order to make the theory harder to refute ... '[338]

It is not difficult to deduce that by arbitrariness and contingency what Gellner really had in mind was politics — a subject which, as John Breuilly reminds us,[339] is central to nationalism, and one which is naturally full of arbitrariness and contingency. By directing our attention to the contingent character of nationalisms, Gellner was actually pointing us towards thinking about nationalism and its manifestations as the outcomes of political processes. Gellner provided us with a clear answer (albeit a debatable one) to the question of why the human agents of these processes should care about (and indeed, are often obsessed with) national outcomes: in a civilisational context in which culture matters, the rationalisation of language and education, the determination of the limits of state membership, and the definition of the physical boundaries of the state are central not only to a

state’s ability to foster societal wealth on its territory and to state capacity and legitimation, but also affect tremendously the life chances of individuals (or at least are expected to affect them). But Gellner failed to provide us with a coherent answer to the questions of how populations come to care about these things and why actors who care about these things should behave so differently from one another. By relegating the politics of nationalism to the residual category of ‘arbitrary’, Gellner left us without a theory of what might be called the substantiation of nations — i.e. the process by which categories of nationhood take on meaning for large numbers of people and become potent frames for political action. The blackboxing of nationalist politics was hardly unique to Gellner; it is rather typical of genetic and developmental approaches to the subject. [340] But as much as we are interested in knowing why we are national, we are naturally even more interested in knowing why we are national in the ways that we are.

These two questions are hardly separable, for obviously there can be no nationalism without assertions of nationhood, without categories of nationhood becoming a basis for political action. Nationalism achieves political potency only in the form of collective discourse, mass mobilisation or state practice, although it manifests itself in other areas of social behaviour as well. In this sense, a nation must be understood as both a claim and a condition. It is a claim that is inherently ambiguous and contestable, as well as a condition of the generalisation of such claims, their spread beyond a narrow circle of claimants and their translation into human action. As Seton-Watson observed, ‘a nation exists when a significant number of people in a community consider themselves to form a nation, or behave as if they formed one’.[341] But it is not because people ‘think the nation’[342] that we believe that nations exist, but rather because people ‘behave the nation’. They engage in collective behaviours and actions which signal to us that the nation is a category of substance. In spite of the tendency of much scholarship on nationalism to focus on the role of leaderships and ideas in this process, the substantiation of nations is ultimately a mass behavioural phenomenon, not merely an elite or attitudinal affair.

The spread of nationalist behaviours may take place gradually over a protracted period of time (as was true, for instance, in the crystallisation of Russian national identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) or be concentrated in a few defining historical moments (as among Eastern

Ukrainians in the fall of 1990 and early 1991). It may be a state-led process (as was true for the French in the late nineteenth century) or a process accomplished by activists and intellectuals (as was true of the French in the late eighteenth century). It may manifest itself in acts of extreme loyalty to the state (as in Japan in the first half of the twentieth century) or in open revolt against the state (as among Tamils in Sri Lanka in the late twentieth century). But if we take politics as the central aspect of the substantiation of nations, then we must reject the notion that the forms assumed by each nationalism are embedded somehow in its cultural code, predetermining its character for all time. The contingency towards which Gellner pointed us means that nationalisms take shape out of interactive processes, not out of essences.

Taking contingency seriously also means introducing path dependency into our understanding of nationalism. Indeed, the variety of behavioural paths which nationalisms may follow is quite substantial. Nationalisms may, in Gellner's phrase, bark or fail to bark. And even when they do bark, it is far from certain that they will bite. It is also hardly apparent whether, where, and how their bites will find their intended target. States may attempt to shape the identities of their populations, normalise boundaries, and alter patterns of language use. But recent history is littered with failures as well as successes, including cases in which apparent success subsequently developed into spectacular failure (witness Gellner's Czechoslovakia). Likewise, intellectuals who propagate nationalist ideas may indeed be in place; they may even attempt to mobilise populations in pursuit of nationalist aims. But whether their messages resonate within populations is very much a matter of context. Nationalists may be forced, for example, to bark behind fences — to operate under severe political constraints which render it impossible for their messages to find resonance in mass behaviour. According to Uzbek nationalists, for example, in spite of a strong sense of Uzbek identity vis-a-vis Russian domination, the high degree of repression carried out against nationalists in 1989 by local authorities and the successful attempts by the state to divide the nationalist movement undermined the efforts of nationalists to mobilise the Uzbek population against Soviet rule.[343] It is natural for us to read history backwards and to project an aura of inevitability, in Candide-like fashion, around those nationalisms which succeed and those which fail. Gellner warned precisely against this tendency. But it is ultimately human agency which shapes how

nationalism manifests itself in politics, so that a theory of nationalism without a theory of agency presents serious problems.

Here, we also face the abiding problem of how we know whether categories of nationhood have obtained substance. Anyone can declare a nation into existence. Contrary to Renan, nations are not daily plebiscites; rather, they are punctuated and irregular plebiscites whose timing is largely determined by the rhythms of political authority. The nation may be the largest community to which we pay allegiance when the chips are down. However, in politics the chips are usually not on the table, and it is only in uncommon circumstances that the choice between competing allegiances must be made. Certainly, the resonance of nationalist claims and identities within populations varies considerably over time and is always subject to evolution and change. But in most contexts it is rare when a plebiscite is actually conducted — when categories of nationhood are actually put to the test. The nation usually exists as a form of state or elite discourse, while nationalist frames gain resonance within larger segments of the population only at critical junctures in time. As Merab Kostava, the Georgian nationalist leader, told hundreds of thousands of Georgians massed outside of the House of Government in Tbilisi in April 1989, ‘Every nation has several moments which may be called great.[344]

A nation whose tangibility is never affirmed through its behaviours — through unimpeded and inclusive public discourse, voluntary support for state action, or autonomous mass mobilisation — can hardly be said to exist other than in name only. Elites may believe such a nation exists, and may even act in its name. But unless the nation extends into the beliefs and behaviours of society, such a farce runs a great risk of eventually being punctured. For states and elites to sit on top of society and declare that they represent the nation is without doubt a powerful influence on social behaviour, but it does not in itself make a nation. The barking of nationalism is only one dimension (and perhaps not the most critical dimension) of the substantiation of nations. More important to those of us who actually encounter this animal is whether it bites: whether the noise that we hear is merely a cowardly deception by a weak and harmless creature, the greeting of a loyal friend, or the signal for an impending and savage leap for the jugular.

This chapter takes Gellner’s insight about the contingency of nationalism seriously in order to probe the substantiation of nations as political process. My intention is neither to take contingency out of nationalism nor to turn nations into accidents (both of which, Gellner rightly tells us, are impossible in any case). Rather, the goal here is to place the contingencies of nationalism into a larger understanding of the politics involved in the substantiation of nations in order to help us focus more clearly on what needs to be explained and how we might go about explaining it. I see this as a pre-condition for any empirically based attempt to connect nationalism to the broader social forces of which Gellner wrote, for we cannot answer why we are fated to be national without also answering why we are national in the ways that we are.

*** Nationalist contention and the state

I begin by reframing nationalism as a contentious politics in which states vie with societal actors or with other states for control over a certain set of political objects: over the crystallisation of the state’s physical, human or cultural boundaries. As a form of contentious politics, nationalism is a politics of normalisation and contestation, not a teleology of time zones and stages. The outcomes of this interactive process — the resonance or lack of resonance of nationalist frames, the forms of nationalist action which these frames evince and the consequences that these actions leave on the ground — are, as Gellner asserted, unpredictable a priori. The politics of the substantiation of nations always involves significant indetermination, precisely because it involves human agency. But like any path-dependent process, it is neither so opaque nor so erratic as to lack structure altogether. The factors which give shape to outcomes are connected in part with how actors provoke, weather and use to advantage the larger social transformations that have brought nationalism into being. But these connections must be demonstrated rather than assumed. At the same time, outcomes are also influenced by how actors are affected by and utilise to their own advantage the behaviours of others. For nationalism in its concrete manifestations is not an isolated contingent event, but rather a chain of connected contingent events which assume a larger pattern and meaning, especially to those who effect them. In this regard, even a series of

connected contingencies that produce an outcome contains a certain structure and regularity which, when subjected to systematic analysis, tell us much about why the beast behaves as it does.

Unlike Gellner, I do not view nationalism merely as a principle or claim, nor do I view it as necessarily an industrial phenomenon per se. It is rather a set of political behaviours oriented towards certain objects in politics: the enclosure of the polity — the drawing of its physical, human and cultural boundaries.[345] These objects are intrinsic qualities of the modern state, and elements which distinguish it from earlier forms of political organisation, such as empires, city-states and kingships. Few premodern polities contained what we would call today a mass membership, elevated mass culture to a central aspect of rule or recognised fixed boundaries (as opposed to frontiers) to their authority. Nationalism emerged concomitantly with the rise of the modern state and the notions of popular sovereignty that materialized in opposition to the modern state's growing appetite and ambitions. These were arguably part of the civilisational transformation which Gellner lumped under the rubric of 'industrialism', and which others have described as 'modernity'. I focus specifically on the modern state rather than industrialism, for it acts as both the central object and subject of nationalist politics and as the principal provocateur of the contingencies of which Gellner wrote. War, repression, mass revolt and popular resistance obviously predate the rise of nationalism. But the nature of these activities was irrevocably transformed by the rise of the modern state and the emergence of mass politics.

The enclosure of the modern state is part of its mode of legitimation and operation. But the physical, human and cultural boundaries of the state are also objects that are inherently ambiguous and controversial. Interests are closely bound up with any given crystallisation of state boundaries, and there is no objective answer to the question of what the proper bounds of the state should be. As Gellner recognised, nationalism attempts to convert the intrinsically ambiguous and controversial into the conventional and seemingly natural.[346] In this sense, nationalism is not simply about imagined communities; it is much more fundamentally a struggle for control over defining communities — and particularly a struggle for control over the imagination about community. In an age of mass politics, when states claim to represent rather than rule over populations, state institutions seek to

promote a hardening of boundaries within popular consciousness and among potential challengers by establishing a frame of discourse aimed at moulding attitudes to the ‘reality’ which these institutions project, turning boundaries, in Ian Lustick’s words, into ‘unquestioned features of … public life’ and ‘part of the natural order of things for the overwhelming majority of the population’.[347] Nationalist movements, by contrast, seek to undermine such claims; as Elie Kedourie declared, they ‘make use of the past in order to subvert the present’.[348]

The boundedness of a particular state may be challenged both from above (through war, diplomacy and irredentist activity) or from below (through mobilisation and resistance). As a Janus-faced institution, the state confronts challenges to its boundedness both domestically and internationally. In an age of mass politics all interstate wars are nationalist wars, conducted in the name of nations and purportedly in their interests. As states have increasingly turned to international norms as a way of shoring up boundaries, inter-state war has become an exceptional outcome in the politics of nationalism. Nationalism has become a contest fought primarily within rather than between states, although the battlefields on which these intrastate contests are fought are global and transnational as well. Within this world of bounded but inter-related polities that claim to represent the interests of their memberships, the struggle for control over imaginations defines the possibilities for contestation; as Murray Edelman has put it, ‘government affects behaviour chiefly by shaping the cognitions of large numbers of people in ambiguous situations’.[349]

Necessarily looming large in this struggle for control over imaginations is what Gellner called the ‘cultural equipment’ of the state: its coercive, material and normative power. To paraphrase Gellner, states normalise and contest boundaries through the gun, the dollar and the book. In wielding their coercive power, states not only shape their boundaries and memberships and enforce their rules of cultural interaction. They also attempt to make challenge impossible through the normalising influence of the seemingly immutable reality which state institutions project. There is a strong tendency for individuals to adjust their beliefs to the limits of the possible, accepting a given institutional arrangement as unalterable, natural and even necessary precisely because it cannot be changed. Over time under such conditions, dissonant collective memories are disrupted,

undermined and at times supplanted. Gellner, of course, placed great emphasis on the role of states in advancing cultural homogeneity in their efforts to promote wealth. Economic interaction also exercises a powerful normalising effect on the modern state. Within a functioning capitalist (and less so, socialist) context there are powerful material incentives for individuals (even members of ethnic or racial underclasses) to accept dominant conceptions of nationhood and to work within the given parameters of the state. Upward mobility and maintenance of livelihood usually require, at a minimum, acquiescence to boundary rules and tend to promote identification with and internalisation of such rules?[350] Moreover, the linkage of national economies into a global economy further constrains boundary change, since transnational economic actors function through the receptacle of the state and have always demonstrated a penchant for the stability of state units. As Gellner asserted, 'The interdependence of society's diverse parts seems to make it susceptible to conformity.'[351] States also shape imaginations about boundaries directly through their ability to inculcate ideas and shape expectations. Here, it is not only the roles played by education and the universalisation of high culture in the consolidation of conceptions of nationhood that is important. States also naturalise their preferred conceptions of nationhood through their ability to dominate public discourse. They establish and enforce international norms (such as the norm of state sovereignty) that are intended to shape expectations and fend off challenges to boundary regimes. And they establish and manipulate symbols in an attempt to generate identification with them.

But nationalism would not be the troublesome force that it is, nor would states have to wield this equipment, were it not for the fact that the efforts of states to define their physical, human and cultural boundedness engender controversy and evoke opposition. As a political activity nationalism always involves two types of interacting participants — those who defend a given order, and those who challenge it or are viewed as challenging it. Indeed, contestation was embedded in the state's rationale for inventing national communities in the first place. Historically, nationalism emerged concomitantly with the appearance of both the national state and the nationalist movement, the latter pitting challengers 'against the people who run national states'.[352] Like the modern state, the social movement also is a product of modern civilisation. The notions of boundedness and the revolutions in technology, economy and communications which gave rise to the national state also gave rise to the national movement as a vehicle for

opposing the claims of the state. States sought to pre-empt these oppositions through the creation of national communities, but also evoked these oppositions through the cultural interests embedded in them.

Nationalist movements contest prevailing conceptualisations of the physical, human and cultural boundedness of states through various forms of disruption, resistance and mobilisation. The aim of such contestation is to seize control of the state in order to remake its boundaries and rules or to cause sufficient disturbance so that those who control the state accede to such claims. Those who challenge a given crystallisation of state boundedness must convince populations that such shifts are not only desirable, but also possible. The role of hegemony and compliance in the constitution of belief is precisely why opportunities are critical in the politics of identity. By attempting to disrupt the boundaries of the permissible and the possible, nationalist movements not only seek to convince target populations and opposing forces of the correctness and desirability of change. They also seek to embolden people to express ideas which activists believe lie repressed beneath the surface of outward behaviour. In Soviet Latvia on the eve of perestroika, for instance, most Latvians ‘appeared to take Soviet institutions for granted’ and viewed Soviet control as ‘a permanent state of affairs’, even though there was an implicit awareness among a large number of Latvians that they lived in an occupied country. But in the summer and fall of 1988, as nationalist movements ‘tested the limits of the permissible’, public opinion shifted towards support for Latvian independence. Even so, as one astute observer notes, ‘not all were prepared to say that their lot would be improved by totally separating from the larger system’.[353] Public opinion surveys conducted in June 1989 revealed that only 55 per cent of Latvians favoured independence for Latvia. One year later the proportion of Latvians that supported independence had risen to 85 per cent.[354] Only over a two-year period of protracted challenge and mobilisation and after nationalists had gained control over segments of the state did a generalised desire for independence crystallise among Latvians.

In linking the politics of the possible and the thinkable, the contingencies of which Gellner wrote begin to loom in front of us more sharply. Nationalism is not a constant, but a variable over time. Nationalist politics is punctuated by broader cycles of contention — parabolas of mobilisation and disruption which rise and fall largely as the possibilities for challenge shift. These

opportunities are primarily shaped by what takes place within and to state institutions.[355] Splits within ruling coalitions, an opening or liberalisation of the parameters of permissible discourse, severe stresses on the capabilities of states caused by war or other external factors, fundamental realignments of forces within a ruling coalition, and the example of analogous challenges elsewhere to the state — all these are widely known to evoke nationalist eruptions. The crises of the state and its institutional order provide the circumstances for the conduct of plebiscites of nationhood. Opportunities do not in themselves create challenge. Rather, they transform the ways in which challenges manifest themselves in politics, and they become occasions by which the hitherto inconceivable, impossible and ambiguous can come to be viewed by large numbers of people as thinkable, necessary and transparent. In this regard, cycles of nationalist contention are central to the process of identity-change, for they provide the context in which a massive reimagining of the nation becomes possible. For groups challenging the state, these ‘moments of madness’, when the social world turns upside-down and that which was formerly anathema comes to be embraced as convention, are critical elements in the substantiation of nations and the rise and institutionalisation of identities. [356]

For most individuals the nation as behavioural form exists as a mere moment in time, receding in the aftermath of the consolidation of state authority to the back corridors of consciousness and relinquishing its place to more mundane and everyday concerns. In the aftermath of mobilisation the nation may become institutionalised as a ubiquitous and implicit assumption of social life, or it may remain the object of continued contention by states and nationalist movements in anticipation of another plebiscite looming on the horizon. It may be an object of guilt rather than glorification for acts committed in the emotional fever of contention, or an artificial and senseless category embraced at a peculiar political juncture in response to problems which no longer exist. No matter which of these outcomes emerges, nationalism needs to be understood as a protracted, iterative and connected series of efforts to contest and normalise the boundedness of states, albeit a process which clusters in time and across space.

*** Contingency and the substantiation of nations

Of course, not all acts of nationalist contention build into cycles; some are cut short through repression or cooptation, while in other cases the frames put forward by nationalist movements fail to resonate significantly within populations. A significant amount of nationalist contention occurs outside of mobilisational cycles, both in the actions taken by states to eliminate potential sources of contention and by challengers who refuse to accept state authority and behave dissonantly. A great deal of focus in the study of nationalism has been on this ‘quiet’ politics of nationalism outside of mobilisational cycles — and in particular, on the cultural equipment wielded by the state and the challenges posed by nationalist intellectuals.[357] In phases of quiescence states attempt to institutionalise behaviours and identities to prevent challenges to official conceptions of nationhood, while nationalist challengers seek to counter these efforts through disruption and to prepare populations for moments when direct contestation becomes possible. This they do by strengthening and implanting supportive attitudes and behaviours that can act as resources when opportunities for challenge materialise. The persistence of nationalist beliefs and practices under conditions of severe state repression (and even their transmission intergenerationally) is accomplished by embedding them in diffuse social networks that are relatively less susceptible to state influence.[358] Social psychologists have noted the persuasive influence that can at times be exerted by disruptive minorities — in particular from consistent disruptive behaviour over time that indicates conviction and commitment — especially among those who are minimally committed to a pre-existing position. Persistent conflict ‘transforms the worth of the substance of what the minority asserts’ and exercises an independent influence over the beliefs of majorities.[359]

The myriad nationalisms which Gellner calculated never emerged are largely a function of this ‘quiet’ politics of nationalism and the failure of some categories of cultural difference to produce a web of activists (a failure to bark). Gellner saw the paradox of nationalisms which failed to develop as the key to the arbitrary (i.e. political) character of nationalism’s specific manifestations. But he did not adequately represent the politics that informs this outcome. For one thing, state practices and the meanings which they have for individuals establish the basis for constituting otherness within populations, causing some divisions rather than others to take on meaning in social life. Those who contest the enclosure of states may, for instance, emphasise commonalities with those with whom they are similar

linguistically in common opposition against particular centres of power, while a short time later, when sharing the same political space, they enter into competition with one another, emphasising the differences among them — as occurred among the South Slavs in the first half of the twentieth century. The drawing of administrative boundaries (as in the colonial partitions of Africa, South Asia and Latin America) reinforces or undermines already existing cultural identities simply by constituting centres of authority around which identities coalesce and oppositions crystallise. The failure of some nationalisms to materialise (in the example given by Gellner, why a Scottish nationalism should emerge but not a Highland nationalism) has in part to do with ways in which state authority inspired and consolidated oppositions to itself — at times in spite of cultural markers that could have constituted a basis for difference among those challenging the state.

The politics of the possible also exercises an independent effect on whether nationalisms bark — particularly with regard to group size and geographic dispersal. The reservation of the right to self-determination in the form of independent statehood in international norms to groups with large populations and the difficulties involved in attempting to mobilise small or dispersed populations have in some cases prevented nationalisms from ever emerging, although the rise of global communications networks has helped to overcome these obstacles to some extent.

Gellner focused in particular on the ‘cultural equipment’ of the state in the consolidation of nations and the assimilation of groups. To be sure, the state remains the most powerful force shaping conceptions of nationhood. Its very existence and the aura of authority that surrounds its actions exercise a pervasive normalising effect over its conceptions of boundedness. Indeed, in the wake of the collapse of state authority (as, for instance, occurred after World War I and with the disintegration of the USSR in 1991) numerous nation-building projects emerge with almost limitless imagination[360] demonstrating that the institutional constraints imposed by the functioning state confine the ways in which we think about nationhood. There are other goals and trade-offs in how states wield their cultural equipment, and the capacity of states to wield it has differed dramatically from one case to another. The ability of the French state to marginalise nationalist challenges so that they rarely exceed the bounds of quiescence contrasts markedly with the incapacity of the Ethiopian state, in spite of heavy coercion, to penetrate

its society and to exercise effectual control over its territories. In cases of permanent state breakdown (as in quasi-states) a ‘quiet’ politics of nationalism may never materialise, with nationalist contestation marked by perennial mobilisation punctuated by phases of exhaustion.

There is a sense today that it is much more difficult for states to wield their cultural equipment than in the past. While it still may be widely practised, the forceful resolution of nation-building is no longer an acceptable solution from the point of view of international norms — an advantage which the English and the French enjoyed over the Kazakhs and the Ukrainians. International norms of human rights and selfdetermination constrain state actions and provide resources to challenging groups, while integration into the global economy renders states all the more vulnerable to disruption and external influence for violation of these norms. The global communications revolution also creates opportunities and resources for those who would contest states by easing barriers to the creation and functioning of networks and movements. Of course, these very same factors — international norms, the global economy and the communications revolution — also constitute powerful tools in the hands of states for nationalising their societies, suppressing minorities, and defining boundaries. Thus, both states and those who challenge states have greater resources available to them today to contest nationalist issues than was the case a century ago. Today, more nationalisms that challenge states from within may bark than in the past. They may even attempt to bite more frequently, making nationalism a more prevalent disruptive force than previously (although not necessarily a more intense disruption). But in general it is more difficult today to break-up a state than it was a century ago. In spite of the disruptive effects of nationalism globally, the outcomes of nationalist struggles are still considerably weighted in favour of states.

In periods of quiescence, state ideologies and institutional practices carve out differential spaces by which groups can engage in quiet challenges to dominant conceptions of nationhood. Indigenous peoples in the United States have contested their sovereignty over natural resources through the legal system of the American state and by appealing to the federal government for intervention vis-a-vis local government. Indigenous peoples in Siberia, by contrast, have sought instead to obtain a foothold within the ethnofederal system of Russia, which they seek to use to

consolidate their control over the extraction of wealth from their territories. Ethnofederalism is a good example of an institutional practice established by states in order to co-opt challenging groups, usually as a last resort against widespread claims to secession, but a practice which, contrary to the intentions of its creators, tends to consolidate cultural groups and to provide them with an institutional base for conducting a ‘quiet’ politics of nationalism. But in essence challengers seek to use whatever institutional forms with which they are presented to achieve these same ends. In periods of quiescence challengers attempt to ‘metamorphise the dominant order’, to make it ‘function in another register,[361] either by assimilating it or undermining its integrity. Different institutional configurations present different opportunities for challenging the state, so that state ideologies and organising principles play a large role in shaping the ways in which nationalism takes form.

The ambiguity of goals among challengers — to reform or subvert a given order — ensures that the boundary between within-system and extra-system politics remains fuzzy and imparts a degree of uncertainty and anticipation into the interactions between states and nationalist oppositions. Can states trust nationalist oppositions to act ‘responsibly’ within the confines of a given system of authority? Or are the espoused aims of these movements merely Trojan horses for a more radical agenda? Can nationalist oppositions trust the openings which states provide to them to pursue their goals within the framework of the system? And how should they frame their demands and tactics so as to achieve their longer-range goals?

The transformation of the ‘quiet’ politics of nationalism into a ‘noisy’ politics of nationalism is replete with uncertainties such as these. In the former Soviet Union in the early glasnost period, for instance, nationalist challenges could have been shut down through repressive means, and indeed most nationalist activists expected that this would occur. But Gorbachev viewed these challenges as part of his larger efforts to reform the state, believed that they could be contained, and even encouraged them to some extent. Systems of compliance create their own expectations within populations, and understandings embedded in periods of quiet struggle define how challengers frame opportunities and openings. [362] ‘Our cadres consider non-coercive methods a sign of weakness’, Gorbachev once observed.[363] Given embedded expectations such as these, it is hardly surprising that the

switch from coercion to consensusbuilding that glasnost initiated gave rise to an explosion of nationalist challenges.

The ‘quiet’ politics of nationalism shapes many of the resources that challengers and states can deploy and the expectations that they bring with them in periods of ‘noisy’ contention. Still, the ‘noisy’ politics of nationalism, occurring as it does in a transitional context, contains a great deal of indeterminacy. Nationalist violence, for instance, grows in part out of embedded mistrust produced from prior contestation. But a relatively small number of conflict situations actually produce violence, and an even smaller number result in prolonged violent conflict. The strategic interaction between state and society is key in determining whether mistrust builds into violence or takes other forms. Waves of nationalist violence almost always emerge in the wake of significant nonviolent contestation, and chains of precipitating events usually escalate gradually into violence, with small acts of contention creating reactions that move towards a larger violent outcome. The roles played by state institutions in providing channels for non-violent resolution of conflict and in signalling acquiescence and even support for violent actions are critical to the emergence and sustainment of nationalist violence. In many cases state institutions themselves initiate violence directly as a way of consolidating authority against nationalist challengers. The forms assumed by nationalism are shaped in the context of interaction, as embedded assumptions about contenders interact with the constraints and opportunities afforded by political authority.

Within the context of a mobilisational cycle, specific state actions can crystallise opinion around new cultural norms, altering fundamentally the landscape of politics and identities. These significant events exercise a ‘transformative power that goes beyond such obvious political effects as redistribution of power or reshaping of political strategies’. They change ‘the cultural meanings or significations [of] political and social categories’ and ‘fundamentally shap[ing] people’s collective loyalties and actions’.[364] The backlash effects of repression, the outrage that erupts from intergroup violence, the anger that materialises out of specific governmental decisions — all these transform the opinion climate of politics, affecting the prisms through which individuals relate to authority and understand their identities.[365] These actions do not take place in a cultural vacuum; basic categories of conflict are well established by prior contestation. But the manifest

assertion of the implicit and the rejection of the overt are themselves bold acts that transform consciousness. Such situations are often characterised by those who live through them as an ‘awakening’, ‘rebirth’ or ‘spiritual revolution’. Gellner was correct to reject the ‘sleeping beauty’ images implied by such discourse. Nevertheless, transformative events often bear a cathartic and even euphoric character — as Anatol Lieven put it, ‘the songs, the tears, the sense of relief as people were able to say in public things which for fifty years they had been scared even to whisper in private’.[366] In this sense, nationalist behaviour must be seen as both a dependent and an independent variable. ‘On the one hand, the social construction of meaning precedes collective action and determines its direction; on the other, collective action in its turn determines the process of meaning construction.’[367]

Understanding the power of the significant event to undermine authority and to transform opinion, nationalist movements consciously attempt to precipitate such events so as to bring about a discursive shift within target populations. In Soviet Georgia in late 1988 and early 1989, for instance, the population’s commitment to independence remained equivocal, to the chagrin of radical nationalists. As one reliable source notes, ‘the majority of people were still not prepared to give them [the nationalists] their active support ... The nation still slept, and it was necessary to awaken it.’[368] In early April 1989 nationalist movements utilised public outrage over Abkhaz demands to separate from Georgia as a lever for shifting the frame of public discourse towards support for Georgian independence. But after the Georgian government took steps to defuse the Abkhaz challenge, Georgian demonstrators ‘had begun to grow tired. It was decided to continue for a couple of days, and then to disperse, in order to gather strength for the next attack, since now ... the sharpness of the issue with which everything had begun had fallen.’[369] Instead, the violent dispersal of a crowd encamped outside the House of Government by Soviet army troops in the early hours of 9 April forever altered the nature of Georgian politics. If, on the eve of the Tbilisi crackdown, the degree of support for independence was confined to a sizeable minority, after the Tbilisi massacres public opinion polls showed that 89 per cent of Georgians believed that Georgia should be an independent country.[370]

As a politics of the possible, cycles of nationalist contention contain many of the characteristics of ‘tipping’ games, in which expectations of success or failure have great influence over whether nationalisms resonate within populations. In Estonia ‘for the majority independence seemed either a pipe dream in 1987, or something one could think about only after meaningful autonomy was attained’.[371] But from June through September 1988 an extraordinary wave of mobilisation in response to openings afforded by glasnost brought about a remarkable transformation in national consciousness. Still, by April 1989 public opinion polls showed that only 56 per cent of Estonians supported complete independence, while another 39 per cent preferred a confederal arrangement within the USSR.[372] By September 1989, as revolt spread to the Transcaucasus, Ukraine and Moldova, the proportion of Estonians favouring independence had climbed to 64 per cent. The East European revolutions of autumn 1989 and the republican elections of January 1990 transformed a large block of Estonian opinion, so that by January 1990 81 per cent of Estonians favoured independence, while only 15 per cent preferred a confederal arrangement within the USSR. By March 1990, when Lithuania declared independence from the USSR, the proportion of Estonians favouring independence had risen to 94 per cent.[373] Nothing breeds identity so strongly as the prospect of success.

But as the above example also illustrates, nationalism takes place within a transnational context in which the behaviours of other populations strongly influence the ways in which a given population thinks and acts. Analogy and example are critical elements in the spread of nationalism, and nationalisms need to be understood as transnational and inter-related phenomena, not merely a collection of individual and isolated national stories. The transnational context of nationalisms overflows the boundaries of any given state, in part because of the ways by which states reinforce their existence through the example of like units.[374] States share common personas — an interconnectedness produced by common institutional characteristics, ideologies or modes of domination which are mutually reinforcing. It is precisely this interconnectedness which becomes a powerful force for spreading nationalism across state boundaries. Families of states sharing similar state personas (and often connected through alliance) are the most directly affected by transnational tides of nationalist contention. Successful nationalist contestation in one state through its example weakens the political order in others and raises expectations among challengers that the

boundaries of the state can be contested. Political opportunities are linked transnationally through the linkages of polities themselves. Moreover, those who challenge authority frequently attempt to spread their challenge so as to afford it legitimacy, much like states seek safety through their own reproduction. By demonstrating their power through numbers, both movements and states seek to generate bandwagoning processes, lowering the social esteem of those who fail to identify with them. For precisely these reasons, nationalist challenges tend to strike multiple states simultaneously, encompassing particular regions of the world or families of polities.[375] The barking of one nationalism attracts and incites noise from other animals, and when nationalisms do attack, they tend to do so not as strays, but in packs.

*** Reflections on contingency, conformity, and social change

Gellner was quite right in focusing our attention on the arbitrariness and contingencies involved in the manifestation of individual nationalisms. As is evident from the above discussion, there are numerous turning points that any potential nationalism must traverse before it can bark or bite, and whether, where, and how these bites find their targets are also highly conditional. But if the limits of the possible, the interactions between state and society, the role of analogy and transnational influence, bandwagoning processes and transformative events play such conspicuous roles in the substantiation of nations, what then is left of the larger social forces which Gellner identified as the determining factors in the emergence of nations? Does not the politics that Gellner recognised as lying at the centre of nationalism undermine the necessity which his theory prescribed?

Perhaps. Unlike the deterministic relationship between modernity and nationalism advanced by Karl Deutsch or the randomness and accidental character of nationalism posited by Elie Kedourie, Gellner occupied a middle ground between necessity and contingency in the manifestation of nationalism. He confined the influence of both by assuming a world in which human action was profoundly conditioned by larger social forces, but not necessarily determined by them. As he wrote in Thought and Change:

<quote>

The human situation is most conspicuously unlike that of the condemned man. Characteristically, the condemned man is in a situation of most unusual clarity ... and some physical comfort. He knows exactly what his end will be, and when it will come ... Human life is totally unlike this. The end may be certain, but not its date or manner. In the meantime, there is constant opportunity, indeed necessity, for seeking postponement of the verdict and for improving one's condition. [376]

</quote>

Gellner's theory of nationalism attempts to explain the ends for which nationalist politics strives, not the means, manner or context in which that politics must play itself out. But if we are to accept Gellner's explanation as to why the end is ultimately inescapable, the factors which cause it to be inevitable should be leaving their traces on the human actions which effect that outcome. For Gellner's theory to prove true, the contingencies which give shape to specific nationalist outcomes must be connected to the ways in which actors utilise and survive the larger civilisational transformation that, he argues, produces its inexorable result.

To the degree that these contingencies represent autonomous and insular social processes isolated from the broad social transformations that Gellner describes, they present serious problems for the theory. Some of the evidence presented above supports at least the notion of the limited autonomy of these processes, although the boundaries of this autonomy were not interrogated. If nationalist behaviour is determined in large part by the limits of the possible, indeterminant interaction, the example of like behaviour by others, bandwagoning and the influence of singular events irrespective of how the large-scale social forces portrayed by Gellner have played themselves out, the theory at a minimum requires qualification, and possibly revision or rejection. If conformity is responsible for the national behaviour of most individuals, what role then does the transition to industrialism play in making nationalism inevitable and universal?

Gellner of course focused on nationalism in general, not nationalism in its specificity. He eschewed the kind of empirical research that would be

necessary to demonstrate the linkages between his theory and substantive nationalist behaviour. As he argued, those who make history may not be cognisant of their connection to any larger force or rationale, but their actions may nevertheless be conditioned by these forces. But Gellner did not prove this to be so. A robust theory of nationalism must provide a connection between what Charles Tilly has called the ‘two rhythms’ of history — the larger social forces that condition social action, and the specific contexts in which social action occurs.[377] One can attempt this either by starting from a theory of social change and exploring how the broad social forces that appear to evoke nationalism into being in the first place come to take form as concrete nationalist action; or one can start from the empirical study of nationalist action, searching for the larger social forces which seem to inform it. Gellner chose the first of these approaches, although he never succeeded in linking his theory of social change with a coherent theory of agency. His blackboxing of nationalist politics was an astute recognition of the ways in which interactive behaviour informs the emergence of specific nationalisms, but is troublesome for the larger theory of social change. In this chapter I have approached the subject from its opposite end — as a theory of agency — without elaborating an adequate theory of social change.

It may be, as Gellner’s theory would seem to assume, that specific aspects of the transition to industrial society condition acts of enclosure by states and the emergence of notions of nationhood, that the punctuated plebiscites that characterise the substantiation of nations are really part of larger crises of transition to industrialism, and that repertoires of nationalist behaviour and the processes that influence the outcomes of nationalist struggles are connected with the transition to industrialism in subtle ways. Alternatively, industrialism per se may have little to do with these phenomena, whose roots rather inhere in the institutions of the modern state itself, as this chapter has conjectured. As appealing as a theory that cannot be proved or disproved undoubtedly is, Gellner’s theory, with its bracketing of the politics of nationalism, cannot be accepted on the basis of faith in the power of industrialism as a force of social change alone. Until we explore systematically and empirically concrete nationalist behaviour and the traces left on it by larger social forces, our explanations for why we are fated to be national and why we are national in the ways that we are will likely remain detached.

[333] E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, p. 35.

[334] Ibid., pp. 43, 47.

[335] Ibid., pp. 6, 47.

[336] E. Gellner, Encounters with Nationalism, Oxford, 1994, p. xi.

[337] Ibid., pp. 44–5.

[338] E. Gellner, Thought and Change, London, 1965, p. 174.

[339] J. Breuilly, Nationalism and the State, Chicago, 1982.

[340] Liah Greenfeld, for instance, in her recent study of nationalism, argues that the effects of nationalism in the political realm can be attributed to the original definition of nationalism by nationalist intellectuals: ‘Its effects, in the political, social, and cultural constitution of the respective nations, as well as their historical record, are attributable to this original definition which set the goals for mobilisation, not to the nationalisation of the masses.’ (L. Greenfeld, Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, Cambridge, MA, 1992, pp. 22–3).

[341] H. Seton-Watson, Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origns of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism, Boulder, 1977, p. 5.

[342] B. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, rev. edn, London, Verso, 1991.

[343] Urnid/Hope, vol. 1, 1992, p. 39.

[344] Ekspress khronika, no. 15, 10 April 1 990.

[345] On nationalism as the enclosure of polities, see R. Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Cambridge, MA, 1992, pp. 21–34.

[346] As Gellner pointed out (Thought and Change, pp. 150–1), ‘The central mistake committed both by the friends and the enemies of nationalism is the supposition that it is somehow natural ... These assumptions are so much part of the air we breathe that they are generally taken for granted quite uncritically ... The theoretical problem is to separate the quite spurious “national” and “natural” justifications and explanations of nationalism, from the genuine, time- and context-bound roots of it.’

[347] I. S. Lustick, Unsettled States, Disputed Lands: Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank-Gaza, Ithaca, 1993, pp. 41 and 44.

[348] E. Kedourie, Nationalism, 4th edn, London, 1985, p. 70.

[349] M. Edelman, Politics as Symbolic Action: Mass Arousal and Quiescence, Chicago, 1971, p. 7.

[350] A. L. Epstein, for instance, distinguished, in his Ethos and Identity: Three Studies in Ethnicity (London, 1978, pp. 102–3), between what he called positive identities, resting on ‘self-esteem, a sense of the worthiness of one’s own group’s ways and values’, and negative

identities, based on ‘the internalized evaluations of others’, with ‘much of one’s behaviour ... prompted by the desire to avoid their anticipated slights or censure’. As Epstein argued, ‘elements of negative identity are nearly always present where ethnic groups occupy a position of inferiority or marginality within a dominance hierarchy’. Rejection of a subordinate identity and the adoption of an identity associated with dominance is a widespread social strategy connected with attempts to achieve upward social mobility.

[351] E. Gellner, Plough, Sword and Book: The Structure of Human History, Chicago, 1988, p. 234.

[352] C. Tilly, ‘Social Movements and National Politics’, in C. Bright and S. Harding, eds., Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory, Ann Arbor, 1984, p. 304.

[353] A. Plakans, The Latvians: A Short History, Stanford, 1995, pp. 162, 172.

[354] R. Karklins, Ethnopolitics and Transition to Democracy: The Collapse of the USSR and Latvia, Washington, 1994, p. 50.

[355] S. Tarrow, Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics, Cambridge, 1994.

[356] For an elaboration, see M. R. Beissinger, ‘How Nationalisms Spread: Eastern Europe Adrift the Tides and Cycles of Nationalist Contention’, Social Research, vol. 20, 1996, pp. 97–146.

[357] M. Hroch, for instance, focuses his attention on what he terms Phase B in the development of nationalism (the period of patriotic agitation), which he calls ‘the most important phase’, largely ignoring how and why the emergence of nationalist counter-elites leads to the rise of mass national

movements (Phase C), although he notes that ‘Phase B was not necessarily destined to pass over into Phase C.’ On this, see M. Hroch, Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe, Cambridge, 1985, pp. 22–4.

[358] See H. Johnston, ‘Religion and Nationalist Subcultures in the Baltics’, Journal of Baltic Studies, vol. 23, 1992, pp. 133–48.

[359] S. Moscovici, ‘Innovation and Minority Influence’, in S. Moscovici, G. Mugny and E. Van Avermaet, eds., Perspectives on Minority Influence, Cambridge, 1985, p. 30.

[360] See, for instance, M. R. Beissinger, ‘Demise of an Empire-State: Identity, Legitimacy, and the Deconstruction of Soviet Politics’, in C. Young, ed., The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism: The Nation-State at Bay?, Madison, 1993, pp. 109–10.

[361] M. de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life, Berkeley, 1984, p. 32.

[362] W. A. Gamson and D. S. Meyer, ‘Framing Political Opportunity’, in D. McAdam, J. D. McCarthy and M. N. Zald, eds., Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilising Structures, and Cultural Framings, Cambridge, 1996, pp. 275–90.

[363] M. Gorbachev, Zhizn’ i reformy, vol. II, Moscow, 1995, p. 515.

[364] W. H. Sewell, Jr, ‘Collective Violence and Collective Loyalties in France: Why the French Revolution Made a Difference’, Politics and Society, vol. 18, 1990, p. 548.

[365] S. Tarrow, ‘Contentious Event Analysis: Event-fol History, Event Histories, and Events-in-History’, paper presented at the Workshop on Collective Action Research, Wissenschaftzentrum-Berlin, June 1995.

[366] A. Lieven, The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence, New Haven, 1993, p. 219.

[367] B. Klandermans, ‘The Social Construction of Protest and Multiorganisational Fields’, in A. D. Morris and C. Mueller, eds., Frontiers in Social Movement Theory, New Haven, 1992, p. 82.

[368] A. Sobchak, Tbilisskii izlom, iii Krovavoe voskresen’e 1989 goda, Moscow, 1993, p. 49. Sobchak studied these events in detail as head of the USSR Supreme Soviet commission investigating the April 1989 Tbilisi massacres.

[369] Sobchak, Tbilisskii izlom, p. 106.

[370] Vesti iz SSSR, vols. 19/20-2, 1989, p. 7.

[371] R. Taagepera, Estonia: Return to Independence, Boulder, 1993, p. 127.

[372] Vesti iz SSSR, vols. 7/8-4, 1989, p. 10.

[373] J. F. Hough, ‘Editor’s Introduction’, Journal of Soviet Nationalities, vol. 1, 1990, p. 7.

[374] H. Spruyt, The Sovereign State and its Competitors, Princeton, 1994, pp. 167–71.

[375] See Beissinger, ‘How Nationalisms Spread’, pp. 129–36.

[376] Gellner, Thought and Change, p. 145.

[377] C. Tilly, Popular Contention in Great Britain, 1758–1834, Cambridge, MA, 1995.

** 8 Nationalism and modernity

Charles Taylor

*** I

Nationalism is much talked about these days. I suppose it’s obvious why. The postcommunist massacres in the ex-Soviet Union and ex-Yugoslavia are reason enough. And suddenly this kind of frightening outburst seems in danger of becoming more the rule than the exception. For some people all this is the more shocking in that it seems like a throwback. We thought we had got past this. The Bosnian savagery comes across to these people as an atavistic return, as though primeval identities, and ageless mutual hatreds were being resurrected at the end of the twentieth century. But this can’t be quite the right take on things, because so much in nationalism is quintessentially modern. The Serb-Croat wars disconcert us because they mix an unquestionably modern discourse — self-determination, rule by the people, etc. — with other elements which seem to us alien to (what we understand as) modernity.

Can we hope to understand this? Is there even a ‘this’ to understand here? I mean: is there a single phenomenon? Maybe we’re making things even harder for ourselves by assuming that there is something called ‘nationalism’ which is the same wherever people make demands in the name of ethnic/cultural self-determination, so that Bosnian Serbs and Quebecois are put in the same category.[378] The differences are explained by the first being more ‘extreme’ than the second; rather on the analogy of: neat whisky knocks you out, but taken diluted makes you mellow.

I want to argue that there are big differences here, but also some links. Sorting this out will require thinking in more than one register. One-line theories of nationalism are as bad as such theories invariably are in social science. I am going to try to explore the ways in which various nationalisms are linked to modernity, both to central features of its political culture, and to the stresses and malaises to which it gives rise.

There are explanations which take it up from this latter perspective. Nationalism is an outbreak of emotion which is understandable when people are under strain, because of, say, a disorienting social and economic transition, especially if this is accompanied by hard times. So we understand why lots of Russians voted for Zhirinovsky, even though we deplore it; just as we understand why Algerians voted for the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) in their last election. Now if things had been going better, if people had felt more secure, or if there hadn’t been so much unemployment and hardship, these extreme and dangerous parties would not have made the headway they did.

There is very often a lot of truth in this last counterfactual proposition. But it does not tell us what is really interesting to know: why nationalism, or Islamic ‘fundamentalism’ are the candidates which are waiting to take up the angry, disoriented protest vote. And this has a lot to do with the progress of what I am calling ‘modernity’, even, perhaps especially, where it seems to take ‘anti-modern’ forms.

*** II

So I want first to trace the ways in which nationalism arises out of modern society and the modern state form. Gellner's interesting theory is of just this kind.[379] His is in a sense a functional account. It concentrates on modern societies as economies which by their very nature need to be serviced and (to some degree) managed by the state.

A modern economy is by definition one undergoing growth and change. As such it requires a mobile population, both occupationally and geographically. People no longer will necessarily stay in the same metier throughout their whole careers; and certainly there cannot be the hereditary handing down of metier from parent to child which characterised many premodern societies. This flexibility can be attained only by a high level of general education, literacy and numeracy, one unmatched by any previous society in history. The modern division of labour is multiform but shallow. That is, it is taken for granted that people can be retrained, or at least that their children can. Vocations are no longer linked with the standing status divisions which marked many earlier societies, of which the extreme case is the traditional Indian caste system.

Moreover, this generalised and high level of culture has to be homogeneous. We need people who can communicate with each other, and generally understand each other without having to rely heavily on familiarity with particular contexts of family, clan, locality, provenance, etc. To 'do business' with each other, operate a system of courts, run a bureaucratic state apparatus and the like, we need millions who can communicate without difficulty in a context-free fashion. There has to be a standard language, replacing all the local and class dialects which abounded earlier.

Society needs in a sense a homogeneous culture, in which people have to be inducted to be able to do business with each other across all the particularities of context and background. But how can they be inducted into this culture? Here is where the modern state takes on a specially important role.

In earlier ‘agro-literate’ societies, the high culture was confined to a class, literati and perhaps other top strata. The job of handing on this culture could be assumed by families in some cases, or by special institutions which might take some distance from the state (e.g. the church in premodern Europe). But in the modern context, the task of educating everybody up to scratch is too imposing and too vital to be left to the private sector. Both the scale of the educative enterprise and its essential uniformity dictate that it be assumed by the state. Modern societies/economies are all serviced, inescapably, by a state system of education.

A homogeneous language and culture is fostered and diffused, and hence also to some degree defined by the state. Modern societies necessarily have official languages, almost official cultures. This is a functional imperative. Gellner takes issue with Kedourie: it is not so much that nationalism as a sentiment, as a political aspiration, has imposed homogeneity. Rather homogeneity is a requirement of the modern state, and it is this ‘inescapable imperative [which] eventually appears on the surface in the form of nationalism’.[380]

Now up to this last quote, I think Gellner is basically right. There can be differences in the detailed account, but it seems to me an undeniable feature of modern market, growth-oriented, industrial economies, embedded as they are in bureaucratic polities, that they force a kind of homogeneity of language and culture, both designedly, as through the education system, and by the very way they operate, as through their media. And it seems that this could not very well be otherwise. The demands of this kind of society in trained personnel, above all in retrainable personnel, capable of taking on ever new technologies and operating by ever new methods, the needs for intercommunication across vaster and vaster networks, pushes inevitably to the diffusion of standardised, context-free languages, embedding within themselves a multiplicity of expert ‘language games’. [381] As a consequence of this, earlier ‘network’ identities, linked to family, clan, locality, provenance, tend to decline, and new ‘categorical’ identities, which link us to a multitude of others nationally or even globally — on the basis of confession, profession, citizenship — take on more and more importance.[382]

Compared to earlier societies, which tended to be divided between a ‘high’ culture, the apanage of a restricted class, and a set of partly overlapping ‘folk’ cultures, this modern form tends to universalise a species of ‘high’ (literate) culture, putting a larger and larger proportion of its population through tertiary education, inculcating into many of them a ‘canon’, as ‘high’ cultures have always tended to do to their initiates. As Gellner puts it, ‘a high culture pervades the whole of society, defines it, and needs to be sustained by that polity. That is the secret of nationalism.[383]

All this seems true, but how does it account for nationalism? This seems evident enough to Gellner. If a modern society has an ‘official’ language, in the fullest sense of the term, that is, a state-sponsored, state-inculcated, and state-defined language and culture, in which both economy and state function, then it is obviously an immense advantage to anyone if this language and culture is theirs. Speakers of other languages are at a distinct disadvantage. They either must go on functioning in what to them is a second language, or they get on an equal footing with speakers of the official language by assimilating. Or else, faced with this second distasteful prospect, they demand to redraw the boundaries of the state, and set up shop in a new polity/economy where their own language will become official. The nationalist imperative is born.

People have raised objections to Gellner’s theory on a number of grounds, most notably that it seems to have trouble explaining the rise of nationalism in preindustrial contexts, such as nineteenth-century eastern Europe, and twentieth-century Africa. But I don’t want to dwell on these difficulties, for which there are probably answers anyway. What concerns me is the incompleteness of the explanation.

Some peoples assimilate; they go without much protest into the mixmaster of school and army, and lose their regional dialects. They enter as peasants, and emerge as Frenchmen.[384] Why do some put up a fight and create nationalist movements, while others do not? Or again, if there are two languages widely spoken in a given state, why is it so difficult to come to some arrangement around a form of bilingualism. This does happen, of course, but alas, much more rarely than it should; and it is often fraught with strife and difficulty even where it has been adopted. Why should this be so?

Some people might think that the problematicity of bilingualism needed no explanation. It is so much easier to operate in a single language. The answer is: easier than what? If everyone were willing to agree happily to operate in a single language, we'd be crazy to insist on two. But if the alternative is strife, resentment, separatist movements, perhaps even the dissolution of the state, well, bilingualism isn't really that complicated. In my (admittedly jaundiced) experience of living in a bilingual state, pleas about the trouble and expense of bilingualism are generally technological pretexts for a chauvinism which dare not declare itself openly.

But if that is so, then the crucial explanatory bit is missing from Gellner's account. The reason why some minorities assimilate and others fight back has to be referred to the nationalism of these latter. The reason bilingual solutions are hard is not because they are so complicated and expensive, but because they are resisted (i.e. under the bad faith pretext that they are complicated and expensive) on fundamentally nationalist grounds. That is, nationalism is still figuring in the account as an explanans, not as a successfully accounted for explanandum.

What Gellner has done, which is very valuable, is define some of the very important stakes of nationalist struggle. Just because the modern state does sustain an official language/culture, it becomes of ultimate significance to those with a strong national identity to get some kind of control of a state. The state focus of so much modern national sentiment and national identity, which Gellner makes a matter of definition, is thereby partly explained, and this is no small matter. But the original energy fuelling these struggles remains to be understood. Unless one takes the cynical view (espoused, for instance, by Pierre Trudeau in relation to Quebec independentism) that the whole thing is powered by the ambition of social elites to establish a monopoly of prestigious and remunerative jobs. The refusal of bilingualism is then easily explained: under this regime, our gang get 50 per cent of the jobs, under unilingualism, we get 100 per cent.

Once again, this certainly explains something, but far from everything. It can not explain, for instance, why non-elites are so easily recruited into the

nationalist enterprise. Nor does it explain the solidarity of the elites themselves. If you are one of those holding down a top job within the 50 per cent allocated to your language group, why should you upset everything so that some as yet unfavoured compatriots can take over the other 50 per cent? Why side with compatriots against fellow top-job-holders? Of course, not everybody does, but it is one of the remarkable things about the moral pressures of nationalism that many feel they should, and lots do. Where does nationalism get its moral thrust? Totally cynical explanations are powerless to illuminate this.

Lastly, I wonder if we should make the state focus definitional for modern nationalism as Gellner does. Granted, it overwhelmingly takes this form, but not invariably. Thus French-Canadian nationalism, from the nineteenth into the twentieth century, had two forms, of which the dominant one was turned away from the state, and promoted non-state institutions, especially the church. The more familiar, state-centred mode was also there, at least since the rebellion of 1837, but it remained the less powerful strand; that is, until the turn-over of 1960, after which it has taken over the whole field, with the resultant rise of independentism, and the identity switch from ‘Canadien-frarn;ais’ to ‘Quebecois’. Nevertheless, during those many decades before 1960, there were people whom everybody, including themselves, referred to as nationalistes who lacked the state focus. The emotional and moral sources on which they drew were different, but not totally distinct from Quebec nationalists today. We gain nothing by excluding this phenomenon from our purview by definitional fiat.

So the ultimate sources of modern nationalism still escape us. (Perhaps they always will.) But at least we understand better some of the things at stake in modern nationalist struggles, and hence their focus, thanks to Gellner’s account. Before I try my hand at defining the sources, I would like to supplement Gellner’s picture of what is at stake, by bringing to the fore other functional requirements of the modern state.

*** III

Modern nation-states are ‘imagined communities’ in Benedict Anderson’s celebrated phrase.[385] We might say that they have a particular kind of social imaginary, that is, socially shared ways in which social spaces are imagined. There are two important features of the modern imaginary, which I can best bring out by contrasting them in each case with what went before in European history.

First, there is the shift from hierarchical, mediated-access societies to horizontal, direct-access societies. In the earlier form, hierarchy and what I am calling mediacy of access went together. A society of ranks — ‘society of orders’, to use Tocqueville’s phrase — like seventeenthcentury France, for instance, was hierarchical in an obvious sense. But this also meant that one belonged to this society via belonging to some component of it. As a peasant one was linked to a lord who in turn held from the king. One was a member of a municipal corporation which had a standing in the kingdom, or exercised some function in a Parlement with its recognised status, and so on. By contrast, the modern notion of citizenship is direct. In whatever many ways I am related to the rest of society through intermediary organisations, I think of my citizenship as separate from all these. My fundamental way of belonging to the state is not dependent on, or mediated by any of these other belongings. I stand, alongside all my fellow citizens, in direct relationship to the state which is the object of our common allegiance.

Of course, this does not necessarily change the way things get done. I know someone whose brother-in-law is a judge, or an MP, and so I phone her up when I am in a jam. We might say that what has changed is the normative picture. But underlying this, without which the new norm could not exist for us, is a change in the way people imagine belonging. There were certainly people in seventeenth-century France, and before, for whom the very idea of direct access would have been foreign, impossible to clearly grasp. The educated had the model of the ancient republic. But for many others, the only way they could understand belonging to a larger whole, like a kingdom, or a universal church, was through the imbrication of more immediate, understandable units of belonging (parish, lord) into the greater entity. Modernity has involved, among other things, a revolution in our social imaginary, the relegation of these forms of mediacy to the margins, and the diffusions of images of direct access.

This has come about in a number of forms: the rise of a public sphere, in which people conceive of themselves as participating directly in a nation-wide (sometimes even international) discussion; the development of market economies, in which all economic agents are seen as entering into contractual relations with others on an equal footing; and, of course, the rise of the modern citizenship state. But we can think of other ways as well in which immediacy of access takes hold of our imaginations. We see ourselves as in spaces of fashion, for instance, taking up and handing on styles. We see ourselves as part of the worldwide audience of media stars. And while these spaces are in their own sense hierarchical — they centre on quasi-legendary figures — they offer all participants an access unmediated by any of their other allegiances or belongings. Something of the same kind, along with a more substantial mode of participation, is available in the various movements, social, political, religious, which are a crucial feature of modern life, and which link people translocally and internationally into a single collective agency.

These modes of imagined direct access are linked to, indeed are just different facets of, modern equality and individualism. Directness of access abolishes the heterogeneity of hierarchical belonging. It makes us uniform, and that is one way of becoming equal. (Whether it is the only way is the fateful issue at stake in many of today's struggles over multiculturalism.) At the same time, the relegation of various mediations reduces their importance in our lives; the individual stands more and more free of them, and hence has a growing self-consciousness as an individual. Modern individualism, as a moral idea, does not mean ceasing to belong at all — that is the individualism of anomie and breakdown — but imagining oneself as belonging to ever wider and more impersonal entities: the state, the movement, the community of humankind. This is the same change — seen from another angle — that I described above in terms borrowed from Craig Calhoun: the shift from 'network' or 'relational' identities to 'categorical' ones.

The second important feature of the modern social imaginary is that it no longer sees the greater trans-local entities as grounded in something other, something higher, than common action in secular time. This was not true of

the premodern state. The hierarchical order of the kingdom was seen as based in the Great Chain of Being. The tribal unit was seen as constituted as such by its law, which went back ‘since time out of mind’, or perhaps to some founding moment which had the status of a ‘time of origins’ in Mircea Eliade’s sense. The importance in premodern revolutions, up to and including the English civil war, of the backward look, of establishing an original law, comes from this sense that the political entity is in this sense action-transcendent. It cannot simply create itself by its own action. On the contrary, it can act as an entity because it is already constituted as such; and that is why such legitimacy attaches to returning to the original constitution.

Seventeenth-century social contract theory, which sees a people as coming together out of a state of nature, obviously belongs to another order of thought. But it was not until the late eighteenth century that this new way of conceiving things entered the social imaginary. The American Revolution is in a sense the watershed. It was undertaken in a backward-looking spirit, in the sense that the colonists were fighting for their established rights as Englishmen. Moreover they were fighting under their established colonial legislatures, associated in a Congress. But out of the whole process emerges the crucial fiction of ‘we, the people’, into whose mouth the declaration of the new constitution is placed.

Here the idea is invoked that a people, or as it was also called at the time, a ‘nation’, can exist prior to and independently of its political constitution. So that this people can give itself its own constitution by its own free action in secular time. Of course the epoch-making action comes rapidly to be invested with images drawn from older notions of higher time. The ‘Novo Ordo saeclorum’, just like the new French revolutionary calendar, draws heavily on Judaeo-Christian apocalyptic. The constitution-founding comes to be invested with something of the force of a ‘time of origins’, a higher time, filled with agents of a superior kind, which we should ceaselessly try to reapproach. But, nevertheless, a new way of conceiving of things is abroad. Nations, people, can have a personality, can act together outside of any prior political ordering. One of the key premises of modern nationalism is in place, because without this the demand for self-determination of nations would make no sense. This just is the right for peoples to make their own constitution, unfettered by their historical political organisation.

What is immensely suggestive about Anderson's account is that it links these two features. It shows how the rise of direct-access societies was linked to changing understandings of time, and consequently of the possible ways of imaging social wholes. Anderson stresses how the new sense of belonging to a nation was prepared by a new way of grasping society under the category of simultaneity: society as the whole consisting of the simultaneous happening of all the myriad events which mark the lives of its members at that moment.[386] These events are the fillers of this segment of a kind of homogeneous time. This very clear, unambiguous concept of simultaneity belongs to an understanding of time as exclusively secular. As long as secular time is interwoven with various kinds of higher time, there is no guarantee that all events can be placed in unambiguous relations of simultaneity and succession. The high feast is in one way contemporaneous with my life and that of my fellow pilgrims, but in another way it is close to eternity, or the time of origins, or the events it prefigures.

A purely secular time-understanding allows us to imagine society 'horizontally', unrelated to any 'high points', where the ordinary sequence of events touches higher time, and therefore without recognising any privileged persons or agencies — such as kings or priests — who stand and mediate at such alleged points. This radical horizontality is precisely what is implied in the direct access society, where each member is 'immediate to the whole'. Anderson is undoubtedly right to argue that this new understanding could not have arisen without social developments, like that of print capitalism, but he does not want to imply by this that the transformations of the social imaginary are sufficiently explained by these developments. Modern society also required transformations in the way we figure ourselves as societies. Crucial among these has been this ability to grasp society from a decentred view which is no-one's. That is, the search for a truer and more authoritative perspective than my own does not lead me to centre society on a king or sacred assembly, or whatever, but allows for this lateral, horizontal view, which an unsituated observer might have — society as it might be laid out in a tableau without privileged nodal points. There is a close inner link between modern direct-access societies, their self-understandings, their refraction in categorical identities, and modern synoptic modes of representation in 'the Age of the World Picture':[387] society as simultaneous happenings, social

interchange as impersonal ‘system’, the social terrain as what is mapped, historical culture as what shows up in museums, etc. [388]

*** IV

What light can these considerations about the social imaginary throw on modern nationalism? It can help illuminate what is at stake in nationalist struggles, just as Gellner’s account did, an account which these considerations in a sense complement. Gellner showed the phenomenon of a state-fostered official language as a functional requirement of a modern state and economy. And in an analogous way there are functional requirements which attend the modern social imaginary.

The horizontal, direct-access society, given political form by an act of the people — this forms the background to the contemporary source of legitimate government in the will of the people. This principle is getting harder and harder to gainsay in the modern world. It comes close to being the only acceptable basis for any regime which does not declare itself as merely temporary or transitional, with the partial exception of so-called ‘Islamic’ regimes — although this does not prevent it from being used to justify the most terrible tyrannies. Communist regimes were also supposedly based on popular sovereignty, and fascism was supposed to emanate from the united will of a conquering people.

Now this has certain functional requirements. Let us first of all take the case where the attempt is made to live out the principle of popular sovereignty through a representative democracy. Now the nature of this kind of society, as with any other free society, is that it requires a certain degree of commitment on the part of its citizens. Traditional despotisms could ask of people only that they remain passive and obey the laws. A democracy, ancient or modern, has to ask more. It requires that its members be motivated to make the necessary contributions: of treasure (in taxes), sometimes blood (in war) and always of some degree of participation in the process of governance. A free society has to substitute for despotic enforcement with a certain degree of self-enforcement. Where this fails, the system is in danger. For instance, democratic societies where the level of

participation falls below a certain threshold cease to be legitimate in the eyes of their members. A government elected in a turn-out of 20 per cent can not claim to have the mandate of the people. It can only claim to have got there by the rules, which is much weaker defence if ever it affronts a crisis.

So democracies require a relatively strong commitment on the part of their citizens. In terms of identity, being citizens has to rate as an important component of who they are. I am speaking in general, of course; in any society, there will a wide gamut of cases, stretching from the most gung-ho and motivated to the most turned-off internal exiles. But the median point of this gamut has to fall closer to the upper than the lower limit. This membership has got to be one that matters. In particular, it has to matter more than the things that can divide the citizens.

In other words, the modern democratic state needs a healthy degree of what used to be called patriotism, a strong sense of identification with the polity, and a willingness to give of oneself for its sake. That is why these states try to inculcate patriotism, and to create a strong sense of common identity even where it did not previously exist. And that is why one thrust of modern democracy has been to try to shift the balance within the identity of the modern citizen, so that being a citizen will take precedence over a host of other poles of identity, such as family, class, gender and even (perhaps especially) religion. This may be promoted in a deliberate way, on the basis of an express ideology, as in the case of French Republicanism. Or it may be fostered in more indirect ways, as a consequence of the injunction to render other modes of description — gender, race, religion, etc. — irrelevant in the operation of public life.[389]

But the effect is the same, and we can see that it complements the factors Gellner highlights. Parallel to the homogeneity of language and culture that the modern state-economy can not help fostering, is this homogenisation of identity and allegiance that it must nourish for its survival. In both cases, the features which divide us, which distinguish us into sub-groups and partial publics, fade, either altogether, or at least in their importance and relevance.

How does this connect with nationalism? Well, one obvious link is that nationalism can provide the fuel for patriotism. So much so that we can have trouble distinguishing them. But it is important to keep them distinct, if we want to understand our history. If we think of patriotism as a strong citizen identification, then nationalism is one basis for patriotism, but not the only one. We can speak of nationalism when the ground of the common political allegiance is some ethnic, linguistic, cultural or religious identity which exists independently of the polity. If I am a nationalist, I owe allegiance to this state because it is the state of the Xs, where X is my national identity, one I bear whether or not we are lucky enough or strong enough or virtuous enough to have a state. The whole nationalist idea supposes this pre-political identity, as I said above.

But patriotism can also have the meaning it had for the ancients. I love my fatherland, and what makes it essentially mine is its laws. Outside of these, it is denatured, and no longer really mine. There is no reference to a pre-political identity here; on the contrary, the patria is politically defined. Now this is important, because this was the form that patriotism took initially, in the two great inaugural revolutions of the liberal age, the American and the French. Neither was initially nationalist. In both cases, the nation was taken as given out of previous history (or constructed, in the American case, out of an alliance based on an obvious commonalty of historical predicament), and the patriot was one who sought its freedom. It was later, when (the elites of) other peoples began to feel that they could not attain real freedom by simply revolutionising the existing (often imperial) political structures, or find their place within a liberal empire (ofNapoleon), that nationalism raises its head.

But subsequently, so much does nationalism become the rule, as a basis for patriotism, that the original prenationalist societies themselves begin to understand their own patriotism in something like nationalist terms. Instead of seeing liberal institutions as uncomplicatedly universal, the prevalence of nationalism accredits the idea that in each society they must be tailored to the particular genius of the people. But then even in their original countries of origin where they were at first understood universalistically, they now come to be seen as coloured by particular circumstances and history.

Be that as it may, nationalism has become the most readily available motor of patriotism. So that when leaders want to unite a country, and lift people out of their warring partial allegiances, they appeal to a broader national identity, telling a story which makes this central to the history of their society, rather than the partial identities they are trying to supersede. Thus Nehru in his Discovery of India tells a narrative of Indian identity, the basis of a pan-Indian secular nationalism which would take precedence over the potentially warring communal allegiances, Hindu and Muslim.[390]

There is thus a sort of dialectic of state and nation. It is not just that nations strive to become states; it is also that modern states in order to survive strive to create national allegiances to their own measure. This is a point parallel to Gellner's correction of Kedourie above. Nationalism is not only the motor behind the homogenisation of modern societies; it can also sometimes be the upshot. In order to see this, we have to keep in mind the functional requirement of patriotism.

But this still does not 'explain' modern nationalism because (a) lots of nationalisms arise outside of this state-building process,[391] and (b) we still have to explain why some state-sponsored enterprises of patriotism succeed, and others founder on unconquerable existent identities. (Is the Nehruvian secular Indian nationalism among the casualties?) The ultimate insight still eludes us.

It does however further define the form of the struggles that nationalism gives rise to, clarifies what is at stake in them, in a way parallel and complementary to Gellner's account. This showed how the modern economy and bureaucratic state push towards a state-fostered common language and culture, and thus showed that if a given minority group did not want to assimilate, and ifthe majority was unwilling to give them a place through some regime of bilingualism, then they face the unenviable lot of being forever disadvantaged, and feeling the assimilative pressure on their members inseparable from this lot, and hence ultimately risking the feared outcome of assimilation. So that trouble and strife is built into such a situation.

Analogously here, we see that the modern state must push for a strong common identity. And thus, if a group feels that this identity does not reflect it, and if the majority will not accommodate by modifying the definition of common identity to include this group, then its members feel like second-class citizens, and consequently experience an assimilative pressure. Trouble of some sort must follow.

What this does not tell us is what makes these ‘if’ clauses true when they are. What it does help us to see is that once they are true, then the distressing scenarios of nationalist struggles: separatist movements, assimilation policies, tense compromises, and the like, are not just the result of gratuitous bloody-mindedness, even less of some regression to premodern tribal identities, but are very much the product of a situation of rivalry which is quintessentially modern in its structure and stakes.

A further word here might be helpful about how this latter kind of struggle plays itself out, based on further reflections on the functional requirements of democratic rule. The model of democratic legitimacy requires that the laws we live under in some sense result from our collective decisions. The people for these purposes is thought to form a collective unit of decision. But we do more than decide on issues which are already clear-cut. If that were the case, the best way to do things would be to put everything to a referendum. We also have to deliberate, clarify things and make up our minds. So that the people also has to be conceived of as a collective unit of deliberation.

Now in the meaning of the act, the people is also seen as made up of equal and autonomous members. Because to the extent that this is not the case, and that some are dependent on others, the decision would be held to emanate from the influential part, and not from the whole people.

If we put these two together, we have the idea of a process of deliberation and decision in which everybody can be heard. Of course, if we were very exigent, this would always turn out to be utopian. In fact, democratic societies are usually satisfied with some approximation in principle to this

norm. But if it appears that in some systematic way, there are obstacles to certain sections of the population being heard, then the legitimacy of democratic rule in that society is under challenge.

Now there are a number of ways a case can be made out that a certain segment of the population is being systematically unheard. A case of this kind was made on behalf of the working class in earlier times, could be made today with great plausibility on behalf of the non-working, marginalised poor and is often vigorously made on behalf of women. What concerns me here is the way that a case of this kind can be made in relation to an ethnic or linguistic group.

A minority group can come to feel that (a) their way of seeing things is different from the majority and (b) that this is generally not understood or recognised by the majority, that consequently (c) the majority is not willing to alter the terms of the debate to accommodate this difference, and therefore that the minority is being systematically unheard. Their voice cannot really penetrate the public debate. They are not really part of the deliberative unit.

How this feeling could arise must emerge from our ever-deferred search for the sources of nationalism. But we can see from here how destabilising this type of challenge is in a modern democratic society; and that is because it strikes at the very basis of legitimacy in this kind of society. Part of understanding modern nationalism is seeing how vulnerable our societies are to it.

*** V

That being said, can we now come to the sources of nationalism? If I could listen to the voice of prudence, I would now plead lack of space, and leave this to some other occasion. But I am going to ignore the trembling of angels, and rush in anyway. Nationalism, I have wanted to say, can not be understood as an atavistic reaction. It is a quintessentially modern phenomenon. It might be thought that the above discussion clears the way

for a picture of it as both. What is modern would be the context of nationalist struggles, the stakes and predispositions to struggle, given national sentiment, as these have been outlined by Gellner, supplemented by my remarks (in turn, inspired by Anderson). What is primeval would be the sentiment itself; and so the two can be neatly combined.

But I think that even the sentiment is one which could only arise in modernity, and that is what I now want to explain. Why does nationalism arise? Why could not the Germans just be happy to be part of Napoleon's liberalising empire, as Hegel would have liked? Why did not the Algerians demand the full French citizenship to which they would have been entitled according to the logic of TAlgerie, c'est la France', instead of going for independence? And so on, through an immense range of similar questions.

First, it is important to see that in very many situations, the initial refusal is that of certain elites, generally the ones who are most acquainted with the culture of the metropolis they are refusing. Later, in a successful nationalist movement, the mass of the people is somehow induced to come on board. This indicates that an account of the sources of such a movement ought to distinguish two stages.

So let me try to tackle the first phase: why do the elites refuse metropolitan incorporation, even, perhaps especially when they have accepted many of the values of the metropolis? Here we have to look at another facet of the unfolding process of modernity.

From one point of view, modernity is like a wave, flowing over and engulfing one traditional culture after another. If we understand by modernity, inter alia, the developments discussed above: the emergence of a market-industrial economy, of a bureaucratically organised state, of modes of popular rule, then its progress is, indeed, wave-like. The first two changes, if not the third, are in a sense irresistible. Whoever fails to take them on, or some good functional equivalent, will fall so far behind in the power stakes as to be taken over, and forced to undergo these changes anyway. There are good reasons in the relations of force for the onward march of modernity so defined.

But modernity as lived from the inside, as it were, is something different. The institutional changes just described always shake up and alter traditional culture. They did this in the original development in the west, and they have done this elsewhere. But outside of those cases where the original culture is quite destroyed, and the people either die or are forcibly assimilated — and European colonialism has a number of such cases to its discredit — a successful transition involves a people finding resources in their traditional culture to take on the new practices. In this sense, modernity is not a single wave. It would be better to speak of alternative modernities, as the cultures which emerge in the world to carry the institutional changes turn out to differ in important ways from each other. Thus a Japanese modernity, an Indian modernity and various modulations of Islamic modernity will probably enter alongside the gamut ofwestern societies, which are also far from being totally uniform.

Seen in this perspective, we can see that modernity — the wave — can be felt as a threat to a traditional culture. It will remain an external threat to those deeply committed against change. But there is another reaction, among those who want to take on some version of the institutional changes. Unlike the conservatives, they do not want to refuse the changes. They want of course to avoid the fate of those aboriginal people who have just been engulfed and made over by the changes. What they are looking for is a creative adaptation, drawing on the cultural resources of their tradition which would enable them to take on the new practices successfully. In short they want to do what has already been done in the west. But they see, or sense, that that cannot consist in just copying the west’s adaptations. The creative adaptation using traditional resources has by definition to be different from culture to culture. Just taking over western modernity could not be the answer. Or otherwise put, this answer comes too close to engulfment. They have to invent their own.

There is thus a ‘call to difference’ felt by ‘modernising’ elites which corresponds to something objective in their situation. This is part of the background to nationalism. But there is more. The call to difference could be felt by anyone concerned for the well-being of the people concerned. But the

challenge is lived by the elites concerned overwhelmingly in a certain register, that of dignity.

Western modernity has been a conquering culture, because the changes described above confer tremendous power on the societies adopting them. In the relation of conquest, there grow presumptions of superiority and inferiority which the conqueror blithely accepts, and the conquered resist. This is the challenge to dignity. To the extent that traditional elites can remain insulated from the relationship, they feel the challenge less. But those involved in modernisation, whether it be in a colony, or a country overshadowed and threatened, have before them constantly what they also see as a state of backwardness which they are concerned to make up. The issue is whether they can.

Thus the urge on the part of elites to find their own path is more than a matter of concern for their compatriots. It is also a matter of their own dignity. Until they can find their own creative adaptation, and take on the institutional changes while remaining themselves, the imputation of inferiority against the culture they identify with remains unrefuted. And of course, the imputation is liberally made by members of the dominant societies. Their word tends (irrationally but understandably) to have weight, just because of their success and power. They become in a sense important interlocutors, whose recognition would count for a lot if they gave it. In the face of non-recognition, this importance will frequently be denied, but sometimes with a vehemence which makes it suspect.

I am trying to identify the source of the modern nationalist turn, the refusal — at first among elites — of incorporation by the metropolitan culture, as a recognition of the need for difference, but felt existentially as a challenge not just as a matter of valuable common good to be created, but also viscerally as a matter of dignity, in which one’s selfworth is engaged. This is what gives nationalism its emotive power. This is what places it so frequently in the register of pride and humiliation. So nationalism can be said to be modern, because it is a response to a modern predicament. But the link is also more intimate. I said above that nationalism usually arises among ‘modernising’ elites. The link can be understood as more than accidental. One facet of

nationalism, I have been arguing, is a response to a threat to dignity. But modernity has also transformed the conditions of dignity.

These in effect could not but change in the move from hierarchical, ‘mediated’ societies to ‘horizontal’, direct-access ones. The concept of honour, which was in place in the earlier forms, was intrinsically hierarchical. It supposed ‘preferences’, in Montesquieu’s terms.[392] For me to have honour, I had to have a status that not everyone shares, as is still the case with an ‘honours list’ of awards today. Equal direct-access societies have developed the modern notion of ‘dignity’. This is based on the opposite supposition, that all humans enjoy this equally. For instance, the term as used by Kant designates what is supposed to be the apanage of all rational agents.[393] Philosophically, we may want to attribute this status to all; but politically, the sense of equal dignity is really shared by people who belong to a functioning direct-access society together.[394] In this typically modern predicament, their dignity passes through their common categorical identity. My sense of my own worth can no longer be based mainly on my lineage, my clan. A goodly part of it will usually be invested in some other categorical identity.

But categorical identities can also be threatened, even humiliated. The more we are inducted into modern society, the more this is the form in which the question of dignity will pose itself for us. Nationalism is modern, because it is a typically modern way of responding to the threat represented by the advancing wave of modernisation. Elites have always been able to experience a dramatic loss of dignity in the face of conquering power. One way of responding is to fight back or come to terms with the conquerors out of the same traditional identity and sense of honour. Another is to force a new categorical identity to be the bearer of the sought-for dignity. It is (a sub-species of) this second reaction that we call nationalist; but it is essentially modern. The 1857 Mutiny in India was in part an attempt to expunge this perennially available loss of dignity in a premodern context. In this sense, it was not a nationalist movement, as Congress later was.

The modern context of nationalism is also what turns its search for dignity outward. No human identity is purely inwardly formed. The other always plays some role. But it can be just as a foil, a contrast, a way of defining what

we were not, for better or for worse. So the aboriginals of the newly ‘discovered’ world figured for post-Colombian Europeans. The ‘savage’, the other of civilisation, was a way Europeans defined themselves, both favourably (applying ‘civilised’ to themselves in selfcongratulation), and sometimes unfavourably (Europeans as corrupted in contrast to the ‘noble savage’). This kind of other reference requires no interaction. Indeed, the less interaction the better, else the stereotype may be unable to resist.

But the other can also play a role directly, where I need his/her recognition to be confident of my identity. This has been standard for our relation to our intimates, but it was not that important in relation to outsiders in the premodern period. Identities were defined by reference to the other, but not out of the other’s reactions. Where this latter becomes so, of course, the way we interact is crucial — or perhaps we should say: the way the interaction is seen by the parties, because of the big part played by illusion here. But the crucial point is that the interaction is understood to be crucial by the identity-bearers themselves.

I would like to argue that identities in the modern world are more and more formed in this direct relation to others, in a space of recognition. I can not argue the general case here,[395] but I hope that this is evident for modern nationalism. Modern nationalist politics is a species of identity politics. Indeed, the original species: national struggles are the site from which the model comes to be applied to feminism, to the struggles of cultural minorities, to the gay movement, etc. The work of someone like Frantz Fanon, written in the context of the anti-colonial struggle, but whose themes have been re-played in other contexts, illustrates the connections.[396] Strong national sentiment among elites usually arises in the first phase because an identity is threatened in its worth.

This identity is vulnerable to non-recognition, at first on the part of the members of the dominant societies; but later, there has developed a world public scene, on which peoples see themselves as standing, on which they see themselves as rated, which rating matters to them. This world scene is dominated by a vocabulary of relative advance, even to the point of having to discover periodic neologisms in order to euphemise the distinctions. Hence what used to be called the ‘backward’ societies began to be called

‘underdeveloped’ after the war; and then even this came to be seen as indelicate, and so we have the present partition: developed/developing. The backdrop of modern nationalism, that there is something to be caught up with, each society in its own way, is inscribed in this common language, which in turn animates the world public sphere.

Modern nationalism thus taps into something perennial. Conquest, or the threat of conquest, has never been good for one’s sense of worth. But the whole context in which this nationalism arises, that of successive waves of (institutional) modernisation, and the resultant challenge to difference, that of the growth of categorical identities, as well as the creation of a world public sphere as a space of recognition, this is quintessentially modern. We are very far from atavistic reactions and primal identities.

*** VI

Hence the first phase of modern nationalism, the refusal of incorporation, arises from the felt need for difference in the context of modernisation, but lived in the register of dignity, of an identity potentially threatened in its worth, and in a growing space of recognition.

Let us suppose this is all true (a proposition with a very low antecedent probability); it still only accounts for the first phase. How does nationalism become generalised, galvanise whole populations? How does it break beyond the elites?

The answer to this question will be even more unsatisfactory than that to the previous one. There does not seem to be a single mechanism. Sometimes, a charismatic leadership, with great imaginative power, linking the national aspiration to a host of existing complaints, can make nationalism a mass movement. This is the case of Gandhi and the Salt March, for instance. Often, the movement spreads slowly down, from the original elites, to those who strive to emulate them, accede to them, take them as their model. And when we take account of the fact that modernity itself, as we saw above, tends to generalise a transformation of the original high culture, we can understand

how more and more strata of the population may come to experience their situation in the terms originally espoused by elites.

These are ways in which the mass of the people can come to share in the original nationalist aspiration, and sense of vulnerable identity. But there are other ways in which nationalism can become a mass movement, where ordinary people are recruited into it without necessarily sharing the original outlook. Sometimes active minorities, themselves actuated by nationalist fears and aspirations, can contrive to sow discord, distrust and hatred between populations which hitherto had lived in some amity side by side. Terrorist killings can accomplish this, or atrocities committed by armed gangs, identified as from one group, against the members of the other community. Then uninvolved people can begin to mistrust their neighbours, even though these may be uninvolved as well. Each community draws together among their own members, in fear and for protection. But the result is that they begin to condone, or at least not protest at the actions of their self-appointed ‘self-defence’ squads, as these perhaps begin to clear out the now untrustworthy neighbours. The scenario is all too depressingly familiar from recent developments in Croatia and Bosnia.

At the end of the day, each community is ranged against the other, perhaps even geographically separated into ‘ethnically cleansed’ pockets, full of a hatred and fear fed on atrocity stories, and often feeling betrayed and bewildered. Each community is now in the grip of a powerful nationalism, hell-bent on their own form of ethnically pure ‘self-determination’, but for the masses the motivation may have little to do with a call to difference, and a sense of threatened identity. It is a nationalism born of a sense of physical threat, of the fear of displacement, even extermination, by a hostile other. Each community has the sense that the other united first against its unsuspecting members, and that its own mobilisation is secondary and defensive in nature. The tragedy is that often neither is right; the split was in a sense engineered by determined and violent minorities, playing a game of provocation and counter-provocation, objectively allied in gradually unravelling ties of conviviality, even intermarriage, which may be of centuries’ standing. [397]

Many of today's mass nationalisms are ofthis secondary and defensive variety, a response to the perceived threat of expulsion or genocide. The infernal circle of killings between Armenians and Azeris, between Georgians and Abkhazi, and so on, are of this kind. But this is not to say that such nationalisms are of an entirely different kind. Because somewhere in the causal story is usually the action of minority elites, who were actuated by the classic motivation to difference that I described above. What does distinguish them, however, is that the diffusion of the nationalist movement does not come through more and more strata coming to share the original aspiration, through a conversion to the nationalist vision, as with Gandhi and the Salt March, but rather through the (often manipulated) politics of division and mutual threat. Not an identity threat in this case, but a physical threat, of exile or annihilation. I want to call this kind of mass nationalism defensive; but we have to remember that usually at its origin is a minority nationalism of aspiration. And of course, it may also happen that over time, in a third phase, a mass nationalism of defence can be gradually won over to some version of the original aspiration.

The rise of communal 'nationalisms' in India illustrates these mechanisms. Before the mass agitations of the twentieth century, Hindus and Muslims often enjoyed a degree of conviviality difficult to imagine today. Both communities participated in a form of syncretism. In certain parts of the sub-continent,[398] Hindus would attend the celebration of Moharram, and Muslims would attend Dussehra feasts. Protests, around the turn of the century, begin to come from elites in both communities, who were concerned to create and propagate a purer, more consistent version of their respective religious identities.

The motivations for religious reform and purification are, of course, always plural and complex. But I would maintain that part of the motivation is the one I described above. Hindu reform, for instance, from Rammohan Roy on, was partly stimulated by the fact of domination, by admiration for the powers of discipline and organisation of the dominators, and by the desire to find Hindu sources for an identity which could sustain the same reformed practices. It was an unavoidable by-product of this that popular syncretism, along with many other practices of popular Hinduism, was judged unacceptable. In Arya Samaj terms, it was 'idolatry'.

A similar reproach, couched in the same terms, comes from the side of Muslim reform. These reform movements, turning to a purer, often more Sharia-oriented Islam, and condemning various popular practices, sometimes including various aspects of Sufism, have been a feature of the last century or so. Indeed, they begin somewhat earlier, if we include the Wahhabi. Again, it would be wildly over-simple to explain them entirely as the response to a ‘call to difference’. But the need to respond to a conquering west, and the wounds to Islam’s self-esteem as itself an erstwhile conquering civilisation, have almost certainly given a stimulus to these movements.

The move to sever syncretic conviviality, then, comes from elites concerned, at least in some important part, with the call to difference and the threat to identity. And indeed, the Arya Samaj did so call for Hindus to cease participating in Moharram;[399] and to complete the connection, members of the Arya Samaj formed part of the nucleus out of which emerged the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and later the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), standard bearers of contemporary Hindu communalism.

But between pure-minded calls to renounce syncretism and the present communal violence and mistrust lies the second phase. My argument is that, unlike the pan-Indian nationalism of Gandhi, followed by Nehru, which was popularised by diffusion of the aspiration concerned, communalism made inroads into syncretic conviviality mainly through clashes and conflicts which raised ever stronger reactions of defence. For Jinnah and those around him, the impulse to Pakistan had a lot to do with the preservation of a modernised (and in Jinnah’s case, rather secularised) Muslim identity against the danger of being overwhelmed in a Hindu state. Their own ‘call to difference’ risked being drowned out, they feared, in India’s answer to her call. But when the Muslim League swept the Muslim areas of India in the elections of 1941, the popular slogan was ‘Islam in danger!’ What was being conjured up here was a threat of a more direct and aggressive kind. The ideology ofPakistan propagated itself as a defensive nationalism.

Of course, since then, in a third phase, the original positive aspiration may have propagated itself downward in Pakistani society. How much, it is not

easy to judge, because defensiveness and threat still seem an important mainstay of Pakistani unity.

*** VII

I have been trying to fill in the explanatory hole that I saw in Gellner's account, and my Anderson-inspired complement to it. These told us something about the context of modern nationalist struggles, even about what can make them virtually inevitable. But the sources of nationalist aspirations escaped us. They offered us Hamlet without the Prince. I have tried to explain the missing bit by invoking the context of expanding modernity, and the call to difference which it raises in peoples in the path of that expansion. This call, lived by elites in the register of dignity, can become the basis of a mass movement in a number of ways, including some rather sinister and destructive ones which have little to do with the call itself.

What does this tell us about the kinds of nationalism? Can we think of it as something homogeneous? Here there are lots of difficulties, and I can see my theory already in danger of unravelling. Because it is plain that my account places phenomena like the various modes of Islamic 'fundamentalism' in the third world (Iran, Algeria) in the same category as nationalism. Indeed, in so far as I am trying to account for nationalism as a call to difference in face of the wave of 'modernisation', lived in the register of threatened dignity, and constructing a new, categorical identity as the bearer of that dignity, I could also be talking of the rise of Marxist parties in certain Third World contexts.

This does not by itself worry me. As Liah Greenfeld argues (and I feel my account has a lot in common with hers),[400] this may even be a plus for the account. We should not make a fetish of our preliminary vocabulary of distinctions. So what if the categories which emerge from the explanation include more than what we antecedently called 'nationalism'? If some common element is really illuminated, then we have gained.

Now with the very important reservation that I do not want to reduce Islamic integrism to a single mode of explanation and that we are dealing with a

complex, many-sided, over-determined, reality, I nevertheless would like to argue that its various manifestations have some features of the profile I have just outlined. The sense of operating on a world scene, in the register of threatened dignity, is very much present; as is the over-vehement rejection of the west (or its quintessence, America, the ‘great Satan’), and the tremendous sensitivity to criticism from this quarter, for all the protestations of hostility and indifference. Islamic societies are perhaps if anything more vulnerable to a threat to their self-esteem from the impact of superior power, in that Islam’s selfimage, as indicated above, was of the definitive revelation, destined to spread outward without check. The Islamic sense of Providence, if I may use this Christian expression, can cope with the status of conquerors, but tends to be bewildered by the experience of powerlessness and conquest.

Again, for all their protestations of faithfulness to the origins, this integrism is in some respects very modern. It mobilises people in a modern fashion, in horizontal, direct-access movements; it thus has no problem using the ‘modern’ institutional apparatus of elected legislatures, bureaucratic states and armies. While it would reject the doctrine of popular sovereignty in favour of a species of theocracy, it has also delegitimated all the traditional ruling strata. The Iranian revolution was carried out against the Shah. Those enjoying special authority are exclusively those who ‘rationally’ merit this, granted the nature and goals of the state, viz., the experts in God’s law; not to speak of the Ayatollah Khomeini’s media-oriented abuse of the Islamic judicial forms in issuing his fatwa against Salman Rushdie.

Indeed, this seems true of all fundamentalisms, that they paradoxically are most modern where they think they are most faithful to tradition. Starting with the original home of the term, in the Protestant sectarian doctrines of Biblical inerrancy; this is in fact a doctrine only defended in recent centuries. But more important, one can doubt that the issue would even have been clearly understood by Christians in earlier centuries. It supposes a modern conception of the literal truth in secular time, one which owes something to our social imaginary and our science. Earlier Christian centuries lived in a world in which secular time was interwoven with various orders of higher time, various dimensions of eternity. From within this time sense, it may be hard to explain just what is at stake in the issue of whether ‘day’ in Genesis

means ‘literally’ the twenty-four hours between sunset and sunset, let alone get the people to see why they should be concerned about it.

Moreover, seeing nationalism, proletarian internationalism and religious fundamentalisms in the same register may help us to understand their interaction, that they are so often, in fact, fighting for the same space. Arab nationalism gives way to Islamic integrism,[401] just as the demise of Soviet Marxism opens the way for virulent nationalisms. The search for a categorical identity, to answer the call to difference, and be the bearer of the sought-for dignity, can take many forms. It is understandable that the discrediting of some must strengthen the appeal of others.

Moreover, this kind of diversity and rivalry shades into that between different definitions of nationalism. In many countries, less and more inclusive national identities have vied for people’s allegiance: Quebecois and Canadian, Slovak and Czechoslovak, Scots and British. Indeed, one could class the struggle between Nehruvian and ‘Hindutva’ nationalism in India as another such rivalry, rather than as a struggle between a national and a religious identity. In all the struggles invoked in this and the preceding paragraph, it is as though there were a space waiting to be filled. I am not unduly worried that my account may lead us to bring things together that we now class under different headings. Understanding nationalism in terms of a ‘call to difference’ allows for a great variety of different responses. The aspiration to take on certain forms of modernity, but on the basis of one’s own cultural resources, can obviously be played out in many different ways, depending on what you want to take over, and what the cultural resources are you hope to sustain it with. The considerations Gellner adduces, as well as others, certainly explain why one thing that people will generally want to take over is state power; hence the near universal validity of his definition of nationalism. But we can also see why in special circumstances, a phenomenon like pre-1960 Quebec ‘nationalism’ can arise.

But there is one difference which is worth commenting on here, that between liberal nationalism, like, for example, contemporary Quebec ‘independentism’, on one hand, and what we now see raging in Bosnia on the other. There are some common roots, as captured in my scheme, but there are also clear qualitative differences. The idea that these are both

manifestations of the same force, but just differing in virulence, is a serious mistake. It is not just that the second phase in Bosnia was a purely ‘defensive’ one, in my sense. More fundamentally, nationalisms differ, as I have just said, in regard to what they want to take over.

Now there are some nationalisms where part of what is defined as the desirable modernity is the liberal regime of rights and equal citizenship, attributed to all members of the political unit, regardless of differences, even of ethnicity. These nationalisms have taken over, one might better say have never lost, the aspirations to patriotism of the founding revolutions anterior to nationalism. The original ‘nations’ which these revolutions sought to liberate were held to consist of all free men living in the historically defined societies. The fact that ‘free men’ excluded, in one way women, and in another, more grievous way, Afro-American slaves, did not totally blunt the force of this principle. On the contrary, this force was part of the complex of factors which eventually led to the lifting of these exclusions.

The first wave of nationalisms in Europe, those which grew up in opposition to the Holy Alliance, were of this liberal sort. They retained the original Verfassungspatriotismus of the Revolutions; their sense of nation incorporated the constitutional principles of liberalism. Contemporary Quebec nationalism is of this kind.

Of course, liberal nationalism suffers strains. All are citizens without distinction, and yet the state has its raison d’etre in a cultural nation to which not all citizens belong. There are tensions here to be managed.[402] But there is no question of sacrificing universality on the altar of the nation. For this would be a betrayal of identity.

Quite different are the modes of nationalism where what is to be taken over does not include this liberal patriotism; even in some cases, as in proto-Nazi German movements, where this patriotism is rejected as an alien element, a bit of Civilisation which is contrary to the Kultur of the nation. Or where liberal politics has never had a toe-hold, as in the Balkans. There one can have forms where the aspiration includes state power, economic development, even something like an abolition of

traditional hierarchies in the name of popular sovereignty. But nothing stands in the way of defining the nation purely ethnically, even racially. Where this is so, the elements of modern politics which are taken up are no help. Rather, they aggravate things. At least traditional societies recognised some moral limits, however frequently transgressed, in the treatment of outsiders. But in the face of the sovereign national will, source of all right, nothing else can stand.

Premodern societies often incorporated different groups in a sort of hierarchy of complementarity, where each one had its niche — as Greeks, for instance, were frequently merchants in the Ottoman empire. This was a far cry from equal rights, but it did confer a semi-secure status. But the outsider has no place in a regime of popular sovereignty, where the people is ethnically defined. Moreover, under the rules of selfdetermination, outsiders in sufficiently large numbers can contest one's right to the territory. Add to this the sense of threat in defensive nationalism, and the scene is set for ethnic cleansing.

It is clear that this type of nationalism, while having partly similar roots to the liberal one, and like this growing and operating within the context of modernity, is nevertheless a wholly different animal, obeying a different dynamic. The account I am offering should lead us not only to see other phenomena (e.g. some 'fundamentalisms') as very similar to nationalism, it should also help us to distinguish rather different modes within the category.

There are all sorts of further objections which I have not begun to meet. But enough is enough. I have tried to present an account of nationalism on two levels, as it were: one a description of the social and state context in which national struggles are played out, and by which the stakes of these struggles are defined; and a second level, which it was more foolhardy to venture on, where I have tried to say what gives rise to nationalist aspirations and national movements. Whatever the inaccuracy of my remarks on this second level (or indeed, on the first), I am convinced that nationalism needs to be tackled in this two-pronged way, and I hope to have helped clarify some of the thorny issues which impede our vision of this absorbing, and disturbing, but seemingly inescapable feature of our modern world.

*** Notes

An earlier version of this chapter appeared in R. McKim and J. McMahon, eds., The Morality of Nationalism, New York, 1997.

[378] We might follow Gellner (Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, p. 1) in defining nationalism as the ‘political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent’. The basic idea is that a people defined antecedently by unity of culture, or language or religion, should be allowed to give itself its own political forms. This certainly picks out a class of movements, sentiments, political ideas — forces in the contemporary world, viz., those related to that principle. The question I am raising is whether they all have the same causes and are moved by the same dynamic.

[379] Ibid.

[380] Ibid., p. 39.

[381] There is an interesting discussion of modern languages as context-free in something like this sense in A. Macintyre, IWhose Justice? Which Rationality?, Notre Dame, 1988.

[382] I am borrowing this term from Craig Calhoun. See for instance his ‘Nationalism and Ethnicity’, American Review of Sociology, no. 19, 1993, p. 230. I draw heavily on Calhoun’s work later in my characterisation of ‘directaccess’ societies.

[383] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p. 18. I have dealt at length here on only one facet of Gellner’s theory, that which stresses the homogenisation which is functionally necessary to a modern economy. But

the move to a modern, homogenised society was driven by other forces besides. The modern European bureaucratic state has been growing for a number of centuries, increasing its outreach, invading the lives of its citizens and administering its territories, far and near, by uniform principles. Not all this was powered by economic motives (though much undoubtedly was). But the upshot proves essentially the basis from which Gellner's account takes off: this historical development has landed us with the homogeneous state with its uniform language and cultures, indispensable as well to our kind of economy as to our type of polity and our administrative procedures. And it is this which accounts for nationalism.

[384] E. Weber, Peasants into Frenchmen, London, 1979.

[385] B. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, 2nd edn, London, 1991.

[386] Ibid., p. 37.

[387] M. Heidegger, 'Die Zeit des Weltbildes', in his Holzwege, Frankfurt, 1977.

[388] Calhoun, 'Nationalism and Ethnicity', pp. 234–5. I want to reiterate how much the discussion in this section owes to Calhoun's recent work.

[389] I have not discussed the case of non-democratic regimes based on popular will, but these plainly push in the same direction, indeed, even farther and faster. Just because emanating from the common will is essential to their legitimacy, they cannot leave their citizens alone in a condition of obedient passivity, as earlier despotic regimes were content to do. They must always mobilise them into repeated expressions of unshakeable, unanimous will: phoney elections, demonstrations, May Day parades and the

like. This is the essence of modern ‘totalitarianism’ in its distinction from earlier despotism.

Calhoun stresses, however, how easily the search for national identity, even in democratic contexts, leads to an attempt to induce people to suppress their other (gender, religious, minority-cultural) identities in favour of a ‘national’ one. The modern quest for patriotism is full of dangers.

[390] Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India, Delhi, 1989.

[391] Although many are ‘produced’ at an earlier phase where a movement begins to unite disparate populations under the same banner, in the name of a supposed common history. Thus a great many official languages today result from the imposition of one dialect as the ‘true’ language on a whole people who earlier spoke a scatter of similar dialects. National vernaculars have almost always had to be ‘invented’ in this sense.

Too much has perhaps been made of this point in a spirit of debunking nationalist claims. A lot of nationalist history hovers between myth and lies. But as Calhoun cogently argues, this does not by itself invalidate the claims that contemporaries may make in terms of their shared sense of national identity. ‘Ethnicity or cultural traditions are bases for nationalism when they effectively constitute historical memory, when they inculcate it as habitus ... not when (or because) the historical origins of the claims are accurate (‘Nationalism and Ethnicity’, p. 222).

[392] C. L. Montesquieu, The Spirit of the Laws, Cambridge, 1989, book 3, chapter 7.

[393] I. Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals, New York, 1964.

[394] This does not have to be a political society. It can be a dispersed common agency, like a religious confession of an ethnic group.

[395] But see my ‘The Politics of Recognition’, in A. Gutman, ed., Multiculturalism and ‘the Politics of Recognition’, Princeton, 1992.

[396] F. Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, New York, 1966.

[397] Fortunately, this tactic does not always succeed. There are signs that ties between Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab were in many cases strong enough to withstand the atrocities perpetrated by the murderous bands of Khalistan supporters, though a self-feeding process of distrust and division was clearly the aim of those terrible acts. Again, after the massacres of Partition in 1947, the communities in India seemed to draw back from the brink. Secularism was for a while strengthened. It took some time for the forces of Hindu chauvinism to make the progress which they have recently registered.

[398] My source here is a paper by John Roosa, ‘Composite Culture and Communalism’, presented at the conference on Culture, Community and Nation, Hyderabad, India, December 1993.

[399] Roosa, ‘Composite Culture and Communalism’.

[400] L. Greenfeld, ‘Transcending the Nation’s Worth’, Daedalus, vol. 122, 1993 and Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, Cambridge, MA, 1992.

[401] M. Kramer, ‘Arab Nationalism: Mistaken Identity’, Daedalus, vol. 122, 1993.

[402] I have discussed this theme at greater length in ‘Les sources de l’identite moderne’, in G. Laforest, ed., Lesfrontieres de l’identite, Quebec, 1996.

** 9 Modern multinational democracies: transcending a Gellnerian oxymoron

Alfred Stepan

By 1986, three years before the walls came down, two new important bodies of literature were in place that should have helped us to think carefully about the difficult relationship between democratisation and nationalism. Ernest Gellner published his magisterial Nations and Nationalism in 1983, the same year that saw the publication of another modern classic on nationalism, Benedict Anderson’s Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.[403] In 1986 the four-volume work edited by Guillermo O’Donnell, Phillipe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, Transitions From Authoritarian Rule was released and immediately created the field of ‘transitology’. [404]

What now strikes me as amazing is that these two bodies of literature, which in retrospect should have learned so much from each other, were virtually separate and non-communicating discourses. In the four volumes on democratic transitions, nationalism is never thematised as a major issue, or even given one separate chapter. Indeed, the word ‘nationalism’ only appears in the index of one of the four volumes, that on southern Europe, and the reader is only referred to one page on Spain, one page on Portugal and two pages on Greece. The name of Ernest Gellner does not appear in the index of any of the four volumes, nor does the name of Benedict Anderson. As the author of one of the comparative papers in this series, I of course must share responsibility for the oversight.

For their part, on the other hand, neither Gellner in Nations and Nationalism, nor Anderson in Imagined Communities, in any way thematises democracy, and indeed the word does not enter into the index of either book. [405]

In my judgement, two of the most urgent problems facing modern democratic theorists and practitioners are how to reconcile nationalism and democracy, especially in multiethnic settings, and how to improve the quality of consolidated democracies. This chapter is devoted to the first question but it has implications for the second. Obviously, if we are to make advances concerning the first question, then the two previously non-communicating discourses must come into constant dialogue with one another.

As an analyst of democratisation, and as the first rector of the Central European University, I mentioned this problem of our non-communicating discourses, and the opportunity to contribute to overcoming it, to Ernest Gellner, the founder of CEU's Centre for the Study of Nationalism. With his characteristic collegial generosity and energy he immediately accepted the challenge to bring the discourses together. He attended a series of four lectures I gave in CEU Prague on the relationship of democratisation to nationalism, and personally typed eight pages of suggestions in 1994 on an early draft of what is now a book Juan Linz and I have co-authored on the problems of democratisation.[406] Obviously, my attempt to relate democratisation to Gellner's thoughts on nationalism is only a shadow of what it could have been had Gellner lived to flail me. But let me now turn explicitly to what Gellner says, and does not say, about the relationship of nationalism and democracy in his last great book, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals.

*** Gellner's bounded world of nation-states

Ernest Gellner stated his functionalist argument for 'one nation one state' especially forcefully in Conditions of Liberty:

[T]he new imperative of cultural homogeneity ... is the very essence of nationalism ... [F]or the first time in world history a High Culture ... becomes the pervasive and operational culture of an entire society ... The state has not merely the monopoly of legitimate violence, but also of the accreditation of educational qualification. So the marriage of state and culture takes place, and we find ourselves in the Age of Nationalism ... For the average person, the limits of his culture are ... the limits of his employability, social acceptability, dignity, effective participation and citizenship. [407]

But what happens if there are one or more conscious nations in the territory, nations which do not partake of this state-culture congruence? Gellner, as always, was direct: ‘Under the new social regime, this[condition] becomes increasingly uncomfortable. Men then had two options, if they were to diminish such discomfort: they could change their own culture, or they could change the nature of the political unit.’[408]

Gellner did not really develop the full implications of the above assertions, but for the sake of even more brutal clarity I shall call the major cultural change option assimilation, and the major political change option boundary change. In this chapter I will explore what implications Gellner’s argument properly has, and does not properly have, for the crafting ofmultinational democracies.

Later in the book, Gellner, in his brilliant and sweeping way, used the metaphor of marriage to discuss the four time-zones, as he conceived them, of Europe. For Gellner, in ‘time-zone’ I, encompassing roughly the Atlantic coast of Europe (Ireland and parts of northern Spain being the major exceptions), historically strong dynastic states correlated with high cultural areas. According to him, ‘If nationalism requires the marriage of state and culture, then in this zone the couple had been cohabiting long before their union was acclaimed by nationalist Manifest Destiny ... History had made a present to nationalism ... ‘[409]

‘Time-zone’ II, to the east, was different. It was an area of ‘quite exceptional political fragmentation’, but ‘was exceedingly well-equipped with pre-existing, codified, normative High Cultures’.[410] Thus for Gellner, in what is

now Germany and Italy, there was some — but not great — need for state-building, because, ‘An existing High Culture had to be endowed with a political roof worthy of it and capable of giving it shelter. It took a certain amount of military and diplomatic activity, but not much else.’[411]

In time-zone III, most of which is now central and eastern Europe, no dominant states existed. This time-zone ‘presented the greatest problems from the viewpoint of the implementation of the nationalist principal of one culture, one state’.[412] For Gellner, ‘If the eventual units were to be compact and reasonably homogeneous, more had to be done: many, many people had to be either assimilated, or expelled or killed.’ [413]

In Gellner’s view, the path in the czarist empire, which concerns his time-zone IV, was roughly similar to that in time-zone III until what he calls the ‘Leninist Umma’ emerged. Then, ‘The new ideocracy and the institutions it spawned controlled the entire territory with ease, and obliged its inhabitants to proclaim that their nationalist aspirations were satisfied. This fiction was maintained well into the 1980s ...’[414]

Gellner argued that the postcommunist situation in most of the former Soviet Union was even more complicated than in time-zone III because not only was it an area ‘[w]here neither the political bridegroom nor the cultural bride was available for the required marriage of nation state and national culture, but where the search for them was delayed by seventy or forty years of Bolshevik ideocracy ... [415] It is this special context, according to Gellner, that explains why the economic and political aspects of civil society in postcommunist Europe are difficult to bring into being, while ‘ethnically based and defined associations appear to be capable of almost immediate formation and firm as well as rapid crystallisation’. [416]

Where does Conditions ofLiberty leave democratisation crafters and/or theorists interested in the prospects of democratisation outside of territories that are actually a part of, or analogous to, time-zones I and II? The central implication of Conditions of Liberty is that if a single high culture, and a state broadly supportive of that culture, do not coexist in one territory, the crafting of a democracy will be substantially more difficult

than if they do. Unfortunately for those like myself who personally value the quality of life in a culturally diverse society, the existing empirical evidence would seem to indicate that Gellner's argument is justified.

We should also note for the record that some of the world's most influential liberal and democratic theorists can be seen to be in fundamental agreement with Gellner. For John Stuart Mill, for instance, it was almost axiomatic that, 'free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow-feelings, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion necessary to the working of representative institutions cannot exist ... '[417] In our own time, Dankwart Rustow, the seminal founder of the dynamic-conflict approach to modern democratisation theory, argues that his model of democratisation 'starts with a single background condition — national unity ... National unity ... must precede all the other phases of democratisation.'[418] The leading American theorist of pluralism and democracy, Robert A. Dahl, does not argue that multinational democracies are impossible, but he does suggest that if there is no clarity about which groups or individuals are members of a political community 'we cannot solve the problems of the scope and domain of democratic units from within democratic theory. Like the majority principle, the democratic process presupposes a unit.'[419] The contemporary Oxford political philosopher, David Miller, argues on grounds of quasi-Humeian moral sentiments that 'democratic states that have successfully pursued policies aiming at social justice have a unifying identity'. Miller goes on to suggest that a high degree of trust and solidarity are necessary for democratic redistributive policies, and 'for that reason socialists should be more strongly committed than classical liberals to the nation-state as an institution ...' For Miller the positive consequences of solidarity and cultural homogeneity are such that 'political authorities are likely to function most effectively when they embrace just a single national community'.[420]

What can democratic theorists and practitioners learn from Gellner and where, why and how must we attempt to go beyond him?

In my judgement, the legitimate insight that Gellner makes, and that in different ways is implicit in the work of Mill, Rustow and Dahl, is that if there

is only one homogeneous high culture in the territory, and the vast majority of long-term residents identify with that culture, and that culture has a supportive state, many of the problems that will nonnally appear in the effort to democratise a multinational community are simply not on the agenda in such ‘one nation one state’ polities. On balance, David Miller’s book is probably also right that national homogeneity may make certain state-wide policies concerning social justice more politically feasible than in a multinational, multicultural polity. But let us return to Gellner’s time-zones. How far will they take us, even metaphorically? First, we must recognise the well-documented fact that there are very few states in the entire world that are relatively homogeneous nation-states and approximate Gellner’s time-zone I.[421] But the evidence from those that did begin their democratic process in timezone I supports Gellner’s thesis.

For those territories that are analogous to Gellner’s time-zone I, whatever other problems they had or have, they did not have to manage the culture-state incongruence problem. Japan is the clearest example. Long before any western polity, Japan had culture-state congruence. Portugal, as western Europe’s longest standing dictatorship, faced many problems when it began its democratisation process in 197 4. However, because it was one of the world’s oldest and most homogeneous nationstates, culture-state incongruence was not an issue, notwithstanding the return of an overseas population proportionately five times greater than that which France had to absorb after Algeria.

Democratisation in Greece and South Korea was somewhat more analogous to time-zone II than to time-zone III because these countries had relatively homogeneous high cultures. Of course, at various times in their history they had some time-zone III qualities because their high common culture lacked a political roof due to the existence of foreign rule or occupation. However, when Greece and South Korea began their democratisation processes in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively, they conformed to what Gellner would label time-zone II. Though the diaspora in Greece, and the geopolitics of ‘two Koreas’, presented some congruence problems, these problems complicated, but ultimately did not prevent, democratisation.

Some parts of the world's map are of course more culturally homogeneous in the 1980s than they were in the 1930s, but in Poland and in Czechoslovakia this was 'helped' first by Nazi genocide of Jewish and Gypsy minorities and later by the Soviet-backed expulsion of the Germans, an expulsion which the Allies accepted. As the millennium turns, Croatia is now nearly homogeneous, but at the cost of ethnic cleansing and the creation of an ethnocracy. These are not useable templates for the practice and theory of democracy.

The hard reality is that, in the vast majority of the world's countries that are not now democratic, homogeneous high cultures do not coexist within one state. Thus, if we want to avoid ethnic cleansing, if time-zone I territories cover little of the planet, and if much of the world is in timezones III or IV, what is left in the Gellnerian world to produce culturestate congruence in a democratic way? According to Gellner, there are only two options: changing the political boundaries democratically, or voluntary and democratic cultural assimilation. Unfortunately, probably neither route can expand democratic boundaries in the world very much. Why?

In principle there is no democratic reason to oppose the democratic division of one state into two or more states. However, a democratic division is facilitated greatly if the groups to be divided live in relatively clearly demarcated cultural zones. The Czech and Slovak parts of Czechoslovakia satisfied this criterion. But, in many countries, redrawing of the boundaries to produce culture-state congruence is simply not an available democratic option. For example, in Latvia, Russian is the dominant language in the seven largest cities; in India, the 115 million Muslims are found in numerous parts of the federation; in the Ukraine and Estonia, though major concentrations of Russian-speakers are indeed clustered on the borders with Russia, the inescapable reality is also that the capitals of Ukraine (Kiev) and Estonia (Tallinn) are located in the centres of the countries and are culturally and linguistically defacto multinational.

Gellner's second option involves consensual change in cultures so as to produce a culture-state congruence. This is of course conceivable for many individuals, and if voluntarily done, does not involve a violation of individual rights. However, for entire cultural communities, such as Muslims in

Orthodox Christian or Hindu cultures, or working-class Russophones in linguistically distant cultures such as Estonia, cultural assimilation may not be desired, or even if desired, may be extremely difficult to achieve in less than two or three generations.

The historical question of assimilation in some time-zone I or timezone II states probably needs to be re-examined with greater care. In some countries with a high codified culture (such as France, Germany and Italy) Gellner certainly understates the state-craft and power involved when, in a casual aside, he writes that congruence only entailed ‘a certain amount of military and diplomatic activity, but not much else’.[422] Near cultural homogenisation in France was in fact, as Eugene Weber has so meticulously documented, the result of the assiduous combination of state sanctions and inducements concerning language, dress, education and military service.[423]

Could such state sanctions be democratically and effectively used in many time-zone III or IV areas to produce congruence via voluntary cultural assimilation? Given the significant technological changes that have occurred since the late nineteenth-century state-induced homogenisation processes so well described by Eugen Weber, and the analytically distinct but related emergence of what Charles Taylor calls the ‘politics of recognition’, there are grounds for thinking such processes are now less available.[424] Most of the world’s minorities can keep in cultural contact with their home cultures via radio, cassettes and cheap air travel to a vastly greater extent than was possible a hundred years ago. Also, due to advances in literacy and communications, more minority communities have semi-professional ‘cultural carriers’, in the Weberian sense of Trager, than a hundred years ago. Normative changes in the form of increased desire for cultural autonomy in some minority (especially Muslim) communities — contested by rising anti-foreign sentiment in the majority cultures that reduces the integrating capacity that in theory the majority culture would like — probably have contributed to greater cultural will, and greater cultural capacity, for minorities to resist cultural assimilation.

Furthermore, the original territorial source of immigration (e.g. Sudan or Guatemala) and the location of emigration (e.g. to

England or to the United States) are becoming ‘deterritorialised’. For reasons of sociology, politics and even census-recording, new identities (given or adopted) and new communities (e.g. ‘Muslims’ in England, ‘Latinos’ in the United States) are emerging with at least some of the affective power previously associated only with nationalism. [425]

My point is that voluntary cultural assimilation into the dominant host culture is in many parts of the world now more complex and problematic than it was in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. If I am right in these reflections, cultural congruence via minority community choice and/or via state inducements is, not surprisingly, a waning, rather than a growing, force in our globalising societies.

*** Living democratically outside of nation-states

An urgent question for democratic theorists and practitioners concerns whether there is anything that can be done to improve the chances of successfol democratic consolidation in polities that are actually multinational. This is a huge and complicated question, but in order to focus the debate on the possibility of multinational democracies, I will make two sets of simplifying assumptions to start our analysis.

The first is that we are talking about a polis that does not now have culture-state congruence (i.e. there are at least two self-conscious cultures or nationalities in the territory), and for which voluntary and effective minority cultural assimilation to the dominant culture in the middle range, say twenty-five years, seems extremely unlikely, and where peaceful democratic secession is virtually impossible. This is where our reflections about Gellner’s argument, and our assessment of contemporary polities, leave us in many countries in the world.

The second set of assumptions is that, for whatever reasons (their current democratic values, their desire to join a prestigious international organisation that only admits democracies, or simply out of fear of dangerous ethnic or cultural conflict if a democratic future can not be crafted), at least some

important policy-making leaders from the dominant culture or nation, and of the non-dominant cultures or nations, want the polis to become a consolidated democracy or to remain a consolidated democracy. [426]

For those interested in polities which meet the above assumptions, three connected but analytically distinct clusters of practices and concepts should be on the political and/or research agenda. First, we must analyse how the policies of nation-state building, and the policies of democracy building, are in such a polity conflicting logics. Secondly, we should explore how to contribute to the construction of complementary identities. Thirdly, we have to search for political formulas that do what many liberal democratic theorists argue is dangerous, or even impossible, that is create policies that reconcile group rights and individual rights.

*** Crafting integration and difference into democratic institutions

For Rogers Brubaker, leaders who pursue nation-state policies assume that the state is of and for the dominant cultural nation.[427] If there is only one culturally conscious demos in the polity, nation-state building and democracy building are, as David Miller would argue, mutually reinforcing political logics. But, if there are two or more culturally conscious demoi in the polity, nation-building policies of and for the dominant nation would imply restricted citizenship, or at least unequal citizenship, for many of the long-standing minority residents in the state. Formally, and prudentially therefore, in multinational or multicultural polities, nation-state building policies and democracy-building policies are conflicting political logics. Would-be democracy crafters in such a polity have to recognise this political reality and search for an alternative set of policies to that of a ‘nation-state’.

If the goal is to further advance towards democratic consolidation in a multinational polity, leaders of political and civil society will have to explore a range of state and governmental institutions that encourage political integration and loyalty towards the democratic regime, while simultaneously guaranteeing the right of minorities to organise and express cultural and national differences.

In cultural areas like schools, access to radio or the media, some politically crafted power sharing institutional formats and practices that Arend Lijphart calls ‘consociational’ are almost certainly called for in multiethnic democracies.[428] Non-territorial forms of representation need to be explored much more carefully.[429]

If the choice is between parliamentary versus presidential systems, the ‘non-winner take all’ aspects of parliamentarism, and parliamentarism’s greater ‘coalition requiring’ and ‘coalition sustaining’ properties, are worth serious consideration. [430] Electoral systems should also be studied thoughtfully for their impact on minority representation; in general, we can say that proportional representation systems are better at representing minorities than are strong majoritarian formulas such as ‘first past the post’ in large single-member districts.

Among the forms of territorial representation that are particularly important to consider if groups are spatially concentrated in a multinational polity is federalism. Unfortunately, there is virtually no modern high-quality comparative research on the relationship between democracy and federalism so we must have a brief excursus on this topic.

*** Excursus on federalism and institutional choice in multinational polities

Postcommunist Europe points out the need to be careful about federalism. If one excludes the case of ‘one nation in two states’ in Germany, then we can say that there were eight European states with communist political systems. Five of these were unitary states (Hungary, Poland, Romania, Albania and Bulgaria). Three were federal states (USSR, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia). Seven years after the ‘annus miraculous’ of 1989, the five unitary states remain five unitary states. But, the three federal states have fragmented into twenty-two states.

Clearly, federal systems must be crafted carefully, or instead of attenuating the problems of multinationality, they can aggravate them. For the cases of the three European communist federal ruptures, one of the major causes was that none of these federal systems was designed to operate in a context where competitive democratic elections were decisive. They only worked as long as the centralised party-state played the major coordinating role.

In the standard literature on federal systems, often no distinction is made between democratic and non-democratic federal systems.[431] For modern democratic theorists this makes such literature of limited value. If federalism is to be a useful concept to employ in the comparative analysis of democratisation, we will have to re-state what should be the minimal requirements of democratic federalism. Democratic political systems probably should not be called federal systems unless they meet two criteria. First, within the state there must exist some territorial political sub-units whose electorate is exclusively drawn from citizens of the sub-unit and which have areas of legal and policy-making autonomy and sovereignty that is constitutionally guaranteed.[432]" Secondly, there must be a state-wide political unit, which contains at least one chamber elected by the state-wide population, and which has some law and policy-making areas that are constitutionally guaranteed to fall within the sovereignty of this state-wide body.

Two conclusions immediately flow from these criteria. If the sub-units do not in theory and practice have at least one significant policy-making area where they are relatively autonomous vis-a-vis the centre, then the political system is defacto centralised. But, if the centre does not have a policy-making area or areas where it is relatively autonomous to make policy, the political system is not a federal system but a confederation or even only an alliance.

If one accepts these arguments it also follows that in a robust democratic federal political system, the more the citizens feel a sense of separate allegiance to two democratically legitimated sovereignties, each with its constitutionally guaranteed scope of action, the more democratically secure the federation. Ideally, therefore, citizens within a democratic federation should have dual but complementary political

identities. This is so because, as citizens of a territorial sub-unit, if they and their elected leaders of the sub-unit do not feel that the centre provides some goods, security or identities that they consider valuable, and which are not available from the sub-unit alone, then their loyalty to the centre will be weak. Potentially they will provide a constituency for the politics of secession. In the very least, they might provide a constituency for a politics of alienation, or a sense of exploitation, neither of which will help democratic consolidation. Likewise, if many citizens of the federal state and leaders of the centre feel that the federal system entails few benefits, but imposes many political and economic costs, and that the costs of intervention (or encouraged exit) are relatively low, the democratic federation will be endangered.

Federalism is an attractive formula for some types of multinational polities, but the politics of building and maintaining dual and complementary identities needs more thought and research.

The most widely known example, and emulated model, of democratic federalism is that crafted in 1787 in Philadelphia. But the American model has two major characteristics that are not essential to democratic federalism and should be open to debate, negotiation and challenge. Both characteristics concern the second chamber. All modern democratic federations have second chambers. The rationale of such second chambers is that they pay particular attention to issues of special relevance to the sub-units of the federation. Not as a point of principle, but rather, as a part of the historical ‘grand compromise’ between the big and small states, the representatives of the big states in 1787 made two major concessions which violated formal democratic equality. First, they gave the small states equal representation, or more accurately, massive over-representation. Secondly, with less awareness of the implications, they made the policy scope of both houses basically the same. These two decisions that I will call ‘disproportionate representation’ but ‘symmetrical scope’ are a fundamental part of the US formula. But should they necessarily be a part of modern democratic federalism?

How disproportionate is the US Senate? When Robert Dahl did the calculation for the United States in the 1950s, he came to the conclusion that ‘an average vote cast in Nevada has eighty-five times as much weight as an average vote cast in New York, other things being equal’.[433]

In 1988, after twenty-one years of direct military rule a Brazilian constituent assembly, following almost two years of intense debate and discussion, created what was thought to be a very democratic constitution. However, almost no discussion was devoted to the senate. [434] Following Dahl’s logic of presentation and the data provided by Mainwaring, I have to assert that ‘an average vote cast in Roraima has 276 times as much weight as a vote cast in Sao Paulo, other things being equal’.[435]

Such massive over-representation is not a necessary feature of democratic federalism. If an ethnic or cultural minority in a federation was over-represented by such a drastic number in the upper chamber, and if the chamber had a scope equal to that of the more democratically elected house, this would almost certainly create problems of allegiance to the federation by some leaders at the centre. There can be, and there is, a great degree of variation in the representation formulas in the second chamber of democratic federal systems. The democratic federal system with the least over-representation is Austria with a Gini Index of Inequality co-efficient of representation of only .05.[436] Germany is .36 and Canada is . 31. But, the US has a Gini co-efficient of representation in the second chamber of .50, and Brazil is close to .60.[437]

To compound the democratic inequalities introduced by the US model, we have only to look at the policy scope of the second chamber. The US model, as I have mentioned, gives the second chamber symmetrical scope with the first chamber. The first chamber in the US follows a principle of reapportionment every ten years in order to approach perfect equality of representation. The reapportionment is based on a census taken at the end of each decade. What is important theoretically and politically, especially given our concern with multinational federations, is that the second chamber has a special role to play in all areas of fundamental importance to the federation. In a multinational federation, issues of special interest to the minority cultures and nations such as language, religion,

education and citizenship should fall within the areas where they can vote and indeed exercise possibly an absolute, but normally a relative, over-ridable veto requiring a special majority of the lower house. However, it is important to insist that neither democratic theory nor modern democratic practice requires that a chamber with massive disproportionality be given symmetry of scope with the near-perfectly proportional chamber. For example, I have not seen a serious charge that the second chamber in Germany, the Bundesrat, is treated unfairly or undemocratically because of its delimited scope. The more proportional first chamber, the Bundestag, which represents all the voters in the states of Germany, has the exclusive power to elect and dismiss the chancellor. Germany's famous 'constructive vote of no confidence' is only voted in the lower chamber. Likewise, the second chamber only has special veto powers in areas concerning half of the bills, and all of those which are of special interest to the Lander.

This difference in scope between the US model and what eventually became the German federal model was absolutely understood — and resisted — by the American Occupation authorities during the drafting of the Bonn constitution. According to the eminent scholar of political institutions, Herman Finer, the Americans had been strongly 'convinced of the desirability of a weak federal authority. They were persuaded by the kind of arguments for federalism and the separation of powers needed in the nascent USA in 1787, namely, to keep government weak for the sake of a durable and democratic (that is, atomised) system. This caused the SPD [The German Social Democratic Party] to go into opposition.' Eventually the SPD prevailed over American objections and 'secured that, broadly speaking, the second chamber should not be of the dominant state-powerful type over the lower chamber'. [438]

So German federalism is less disproportionate than US federalism, and less symmetrical in scope than US federalism. On both dimensions, therefore, German federalism is more formally (and I believe substantively) democratic. [439]

Does the fact that US federalism entails both of these democratic shortcomings make any difference? For the most widely cited author on modern federalism, William Riker, it does not matter very much because 'If

we understand ... that states are agents of the society in just the same way as any government, the worst one could expect of them is minor perversities, no matter how pronounced the federalism.[440] Indeed, elsewhere Riker even asserts that ‘federalism makes no particular difference to public policy’.[441] These assertions simply do not hold up to close scrutiny.

The potential for blockage of the majority by a very small minority, about something that has nothing to do with a federal policy issue per se, is actually immense. Robert Dahl captures this succinctly:

<quote>

The eight largest states with 54 per cent of the voters have the same number of votes in the Senate as the eight smallest with less than 3 per cent of the voters. A majority of votes in the Senate can be cast by Senators representing less than 15 per cent of the voters. Thus a policy preferred by the representatives of 85 per cent of the voters could be vetoed by the representatives of 15 per cent of the voters.[442]

</quote>

In newly democratising Brazil, the actual figures are even worse. Moreover, the relatively oligarchic small states in the north are often in a blocking position on federation-wide issues concerning, for example, higher standards of treatment towards indigenous peoples, or higher standards vis-a-vis the environment. In Brazil under the reform president, Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1994-present), the difficulty of implementing a policy agenda is substantially, but by no means exclusively, due to the narrow voter base and wide policy scope of the Senate, a Senate which has exercised its blocking powers in such a way as to hinder efforts to enforce the efficacy and legitimacy of Brazil’s new democracy.

In a multinational democracy the strains on efficacy and legitimacy, for reasons that we have already mentioned, are likely to be particularly high. Federalism, especially if the policy scope of the upper house is wide enough to have a major say on issues of particular importance to regional minorities,

can help engender identification with the centre. Likewise, if the cost of federalism, in terms of disproportional weight on policy areas of legitimate interest to all members of the federation, is reduced by narrowing the policy scope of the second chamber, the potential for disaffection of the centre will be diminished, and centre leaders are more likely to accept the necessary costs of the federal democratic bargain. If approached in this way, a balanced democratic federalism in a multinational polity can help integrate citizens into the political regime while constitutionally privileging a degree of sub-unit autonomy and difference.

*** Multiple and complementary identities in a multinational democracy

So far I have argued that democratic federalism entails two constitutionally guaranteed areas of relative policy-making autonomy, and that the legitimacy of such systems is enhanced to the degree to which citizens in the federation have a fairly high degree of multiple and complementary identities. This argument calls for explicit discussion of the phrase ‘political identities’. Linz and I have discussed how many writings on nationalism focus on ‘primordial’ identities and the need for people to choose between mutually exclusive identities. However, our research into political identities has shown two things. First, political identities are not fixed or primordial in the Oxford English Dictionary sense of ‘pertaining to, or existing at (or from) the very beginning; first in time, earliest, original, primitive, primeval’. Rather, they are highly changeable and socially constructed. Secondly, if nationalist politicians, by the atmosphere they create (or social scientists and census-takers with their crude dichotomous categories) do not force polarisation, many people may prefer to claim multiple and complementary identities. In fact, along with a common political ‘roof’ of state-protected rights for inclusive and equal citizenship, the human capacity for multiple and complementary identities is precisely one of the key factors that makes democracy in multinational states possible. Because political identities are not fixed and permanent, the quality of democratic leadership is particularly important. Multiple and complementary political identities can be nurtured by political leadership. So can polar and conflictual political identities. Before the conscious use of ethnic cleansing as a strategy to construct nation-states in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sarajevo was a multinational urban area, whose citizens had multiple identities and one of the highest rates of interfaith marriages of any city in the world. Sadly, we

know how such multiple and complementary identities can be eroded. Yet, building on my joint work with Juan Linz, let me show how multiple and complementary identities can be socially constructed in a nurturing and highly interactive way.

In the first four years after the death of Franco, sentiments in favour of independence virtually doubled in the Basque Country, and tripled in Catalonia. However, after a sequence of state-wide elections for a constituent assembly, consensual crafting of a constitution, a referendum on the constitution, negotiations between elected officials from the centre and the regions concerning devolution of power to the regions, a referendum in Catalonia and the Basque Country to approve the parameters of such devolution, and the subsequent implementation of Spain's new federal system of 'autonomias', sentiment in favour of independence declined sharply. Indeed, three years after the consensual creation of Spain's new federal system, of five possible identities that respondents in a 1982 survey could choose from ('Catalan', 'More Catalan than Spanish', 'Equally Catalan and Spanish', 'More Spanish than Catalan', and 'Spanish'), the modal self-identification chosen was 'Equally Catalan and Spanish'. Even when one breaks down the survey respondents to 'both parents born in Catalonia', or 'neither parent born in Catalonia', the modal category among both groups of respondents was 'Equally Catalan and Spanish'. In another survey among Catalans, 82 per cent were 'Proud to be Catalan', 73 per cent were 'Proud to be Spanish', and 83 per cent were also in favour of 'Unification of Europe via the European Community'.[443]

The best proof is an existence proof. Clearly the data from Spain and Catalonia prove three things:

(i) political identities are not permanent but can be highly changeable and socially constructed;

(ii) human beings are capable of multiple and complementary identities;

(iii) people can simultaneously identify with, and give loyalty to, different types of complementary political sovereignties. In Catalonia, the evidence indicates that citizens were strongly and positively identified with a national sub-unit of a federation (Catalonia), the state of the multinational federation (Spain), and a potential suprastate confederation (the European Union).

Let us go to a more difficult case of multiple and complementary identities — that of Russophones in Estonia. Many ethnic Estonian political leaders would like Estonia to be a nation-state — to be, to use Rogers Brubaker's phrase, of and for ethnic Estonians. However, at independence less than 65 per cent of the long-term residents of Estonia were 'ethnic Estonians'. Indeed, about 35 per cent were Russophones. Less than 5 per cent of the Russophones had any plans to leave Estonia voluntarily. One should also note that there was great linguistic distance between Estonian and Russian, and that many of the Russophones were adults in industrial or manual labour jobs. Thus, on linguistic grounds alone, I would argue that the Russophone population in Estonia was absolutely culturally unassimilable into a democratic nation-state for one or two generations. However, I would also argue, on the basis of numerous different indicators, that the Russophone population in Estonia could be almost immediately politically integratable as loyal citizens within a democratic state if a 'roof of rights' were to be extended over their heads. Why?[444]

While it is true that the vast majority of Russophone adults who were born in Estonia never learned Estonian, the political context after independence changed drastically. Since over 90 per cent of the Russo-phones are making no plans to leave Estonia, their children's life chances will be significantly improved if they learn Estonian in school (and presumably learn Russian at least in their homes). The critical piece of evidence that supports the thesis that Russophones want to broaden the cultural and employment portfolio of their children is the following evidence from a work in progress by David Laitin. In answer to a question as to whether the best future for Russians in Estonia was to assimilate, only 7.9 per cent of the Russophones said 'yes'. Attitudes like this of course would be pointed out as evidence by some nationalist ethnic Estonian politicians as supporting their argument that such Russophones should not be citizens. However, 58 per cent of the Russian respondents agreed with the statement that all permanent residents should be fluent in Estonian. Given the difficulty for a Russophone adult to learn

Estonian, this strikes me as high, but no doubt would still be unacceptably low for an Estonian nation-state advocate. But for me, the key Russophone response was in answer to the question of whether Estonian should be a compulsory subject in schools; 95.8 per cent of the Russophones agreed. [445]

Crafting democracy is probably more about attitudes towards the future than behaviour in the past. The Russophones' answer to the question concerning the status of the Estonian language in schools indicates that they accept the authority of the Estonian state to demand that their children learn Estonian. This means that within two generations, if the Estonian state provides adequate language facilities, the overwhelming majority of Russophones under 40 will also be Estonian-speakers. They will have the ability, and probably the propensity, to have dual and complementary political identities. They will probably still not be 'ethnic Estonian', but they well might be loyal citizens of Estonia and identify with the 'state-nation' of Estonia.

*** Conclusion: transcending the individual rights versus group rights tension

An assumption of many thinkers in the liberal tradition is that all rights are individual and universal. This assumption should properly be seen as a normative preference. Advocates of such a liberal approach are prone to look on any deviation from individualism and universalism with suspicion. [446]

Thinkers associated with the liberal tradition of rights are particularly skeptical of group rights, and thus at least implicitly, of many of the 'consociational practices' that I and thinkers such as Arend Lijphart believe could be used to craft democracy in a multinational polity.

As a student of the historical development of democracies, and as an empirical democratic theorist, let me conclude this chapter with four observations about what I think could be, and at times actually have been, democratic 'group specific rights', to use Will Kymlicka's phrase.

First, individuals are indeed the primary bearers of rights and no group right should violate individual rights in a democratic polity. In our example of a democratic multinational federal state, this means that something like a bill of individual rights should be a property of the federal centre and that any laws and social policies that violate this statewide bill of individual rights must fall outside the constitutionally guaranteed policy scope of sub-units.

Secondly, while individual rights are universal, it is simply bad history to argue that in actual democracies all rights have been universal. Frequently, the struggle to reconcile the imperatives of political integration and to recognise the legitimate imperatives of cultural difference has meant according group specific rights such as those given to the Maori in New Zealand, to Spanish-speakers in Puerto Rico, to religious and language culture councils in Belgium and to Muslim family courts in India.[447] The key point is that it is the obligation of the democratic state to ensure that no group specific right violates universal individual rights. As long as this political condition obtains, there is no contradiction between individual rights and group specific rights.

Thirdly, while individuals are the bearers of rights there may well be concrete moments in the crafting of a democracy where individuals cannot develop and exercise their full rights until they are active members of a group that struggles for some collective goods common to most members of the group.[448] Some of the cases I have discussed in this chapter illustrate this point. If Catalans (who under Franco were not allowed to organise Catalan organisations or to have Catalan language radio and television programmes) had not been given some group specific rights, it is not clear that they could have developed as individual democratic activists. It was partially the group rights won by Catalans that contributed to them having the power to argue, vote and negotiate for a form of devolution and power sharing in the newly constructed Spanish federation. Many of the individuals' multiple and complementary political identities I have discussed emerged after some collective goods had been won by Catalan groups.

In Estonia, after an initial period when some ethnic nationalists tried to freeze Russophones out of politics and to argue against their right to organise and have Russian television channels, the recognised group right of Russophones to organise was crucial in helping some Russophones to participate as individuals (and as members of groups) in Estonian political life. As I have already suggested, effective individual rights for Russians may well only be won initially in a context of groups. Indeed, if compulsory language education in Estonian goes forward with the active assent of the organised Russian community, and if more extensive rights of national citizenship are won (partly due to the Russophone group struggles), then one could expect more extensive individual rights for more long-term residents. Such a process could also contribute to deepening the loyalty of Russophones to the state that gave them a roof of rights over their heads. If all this occurs, the incidence of multiple and complementary identities among what is now the Russophone community will grow.

Fourthly, the types of group specific rights I have discussed in the three points above may not be consistent with some nineteenth-century tenets of Anglo-Saxon liberal democracy, or the French idea of citizenship in a nation-state, but they are consistent with a polity in which group rights do not violate individual rights and where effective democratic citizenship and loyalty is broadened. They are in fact some of the few ways to craft democracy in the more difficult and more populous world than those found in Gellner’s time-zones I and II.

[403] E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983; B. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, London, 1983.

[404] G. O’Donnell, P. C. Schmitter and L. Whitehead, eds., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy, Baltimore, 1986. This comprised four paperback volumes devoted respectively to theory, southern Europe, Latin America and comparison.

[405] Gellner’s central preoccupation in Nations and Nationalism is with the relationship of the emergence of nationalism to the advent of industrialisation. In private correspondence, he said that he viewed democratisation as a complicated offshoot of industrialisation. Obviously, in the overall corpus of his work, especially in one of his last books, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals, London, 1994, he is concerned with democratic practices. Conditions of Liberty will be the main focus of my comments in this chapter.

[406] J. J. Linz and A. Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America andPost-Communist Europe, Baltimore, 1996, especially chs. 2, 6, 19 and 20 which relate to some of the themes of this chapter. See also our joint article ‘Political Identities and Electoral Sequences: Spain, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia’, Daedalus, vol. 121, 1992 and Linz’s ‘De la crisis de un Estado unitario al Estado de las autonomias’, in F. F. Rodriguez, ed., La Espana de las autonomias, Madrid, 1985, and ‘State Building and Nation Building’, European Review, vol. 1, 1993 and my ‘When Democracy and the Nation-State are Competing Logics: Reflections on Estonia’, European Journal of Sociology, vol. 35, 1994.

[407] Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, pp. 105–8.

[408] Ibid., p. 108.

[409] Ibid., p. 113.

[410] Ibid., p. 114.

[411] Ibid., p. 115.

[412] Ibid., p. 115.

[413] Ibid., p. 116.

[414] Ibid., p. 117.

[415] Ibid., p. 123.

[416] Ibid., p. 126.

[417] J. S. Mill, Considerations on Representative Government, first published London, 1861, now in J. S. Mill, Utilitarianism, On Liberty, Considerations on Representative Government, London, 1993, p. 396.

[418] D. Rustow, ‘Transitions to Democracy: Towards a Dynamic Model’, Comparative Politics, vol. 2, 1970, pp. 350–1.

[419] R. A. Dahl, Democracy and its Critics, New Haven, 1989, p. 207.

[420] D. Miller, On Nationality, Oxford, 1995, pp. 90–3.

[421] In the early 1970s, Walker Connor calculated — in ‘Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?’, World Politics, vol. 24, 1972, p. 322 — that only 12 of the world’s 132 existing states were ‘essentially homogeneous from an ethnic viewpoint’. For later discussions using somewhat different criteria that also arrived at very low estimates of the number of true nation-states in the world, see H. Wiberg, ‘Self-determination as an International Issue’, in I. M. Lewis, ed., Nationalism and Self-determination in the Horn of Africa, London, 1983; G. T. Kurien, The New Book of World Ranking, New York, 1 991; and the various articles brought

together in W. Connor, Ethnonationalism: The Questfor Understanding, Princeton, 1994.

[422] Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, p. 115.

[423] E. Weber, Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernisation of Rural France, 1870–1914, Stanford, 1976.

[424] For the argument that the recognition of difference is a growing claim in the contemporary theory and practice of democracy, see C. Taylor, ‘The Politics of Recognition’, in A. Gutmann, ed., Multiculturalism and the ‘Politics of Recognition’, Princeton, 1992.

[425] See, for example, the interesting discussion of the ‘deterritorialisation’ of ethnicity in D. F. Eickelman and J. Piscatori, Muslim Politics, Princeton, 1996, especially chs. 5 and 6. See also R. G. Rumbaut, ‘The Americans: Latin American and Caribbean Peoples in the United States’, in A. Stepan, ed., Americas: New Interpretative Essays, Oxford, 1992.

[426] In some polities of course there is not a significant set of such leaders and, until something happens to change that democracy is not on the agenda.

[427] R. Brubaker, Nationalism Refamed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe, Cambridge, 1996.

[428] See various works by Arend Lijphart: ‘Consociational Democracy’, World Politics, vol. 21, 1969; Democracies: Majoritarian and Consensus Patterns of Government in Twenty-One Countries, New Haven, 1984; and ‘The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation’, American Political Science Review, vol. 90, 1996.

[429] Alternative solutions to territorial autonomy as a means of cultural resolution are beginning to receive scholarly attention, but they remain undertheorised. One usefol work is J. Coakley, ‘Approaches to the Resolution of Ethnic Conflict: The Strategy of Non-territorial Autonomy’, International Political Science Review, vol. 15, 1994.

[430] One of the earliest theoretical works on this question is J. J. Linz’s, ‘Excursus on Presidential and Parliamentary Democracy’, in J. J. Linz and A. Stepan, eds., Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Crisis, Breakdown, Re-equilibration, Baltimore, 1978. This ignited subsequent debate and quests for data to substantiate the claims made regarding parliamentarism’s properties. See in particular the two-volume work J. J. Linz and A. Valenzuela, eds., The Failure of Presidential Democracy, Baltimore, 1994 and A. Stepan and C. Skach, ‘Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarism versus Presidentialism’, World Politics, vol. 46, 1993.

[431] See the classic studies by W. H. Riker, Federalism: Origins, Operation, Significance, Boston, 1964 and ‘Federalism’ in F. I Greenstein and N. W. Polsby, eds., Handbook of Political Science. Volume Five: Governmental Institutions and Processes, Reading, 1975. For Riker, the United States, Canada, Yugoslavia and the USSR all fit the criteria of federal systems. Indeed, according to Riker (‘Federalism’, p. 101), the United States and Yugoslavia fit the same sub-type of ‘centralised federalism’.

[432] R. A. Dahl, in a short but classic discussion of federal systems in a democracy, uses the phase ‘constitutionally guaranteed’ in his Democracy, Liberty and Equality, Oslo, 1986, especially pp. 114–26.

[433] R. A. Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory., Chicago, 1956, p. 116.

[434] S. Mainwaring, The Party System and Democratisation in Brazil, Stanford, 1998, especially ch. 9.

[435] Ibid., p. 134.

[436] The Gini Index of Inequality simply measures the degree of inequality among variables, where an index of zero denotes complete equality and an index value approaching the theoretical maximum of 1.0 denotes complete inequality (which would mean here that one state has all the representatives). On this see Lijphart, Democracies, pp. 173–5.

[437] Ibid., p. 174. The Gini co-efficient for Brazil is estimated on the basis of data in Mainwaring, The Party System and Democratisation in Brazil, Table 5.3.

[438] H. Finer, Governments of Greater European Powers: A Comparative Study of the Governments and Political Culture of Great Britain, France, Germany and the Soviet Union, London, 1956, p. 690.

[439] On German federalism, and more specifically on the German constitutional concept of Bundestreue (often translated as ‘federal trust’ or ‘comity’), see B. de Villiers, ‘Bundestreue, The Soul of an Intergovernmental Partnership: Comparative Analysis of the Principle underlying Bundestreue in the Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland and Belgium’, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Occasional Papers, Johannesburg, 1995.

[440] Riker, ‘Federalism’, p. 147.

[441] Ibid., p. 143.

[442] Dahl, A Preface to Democratic Theory, p. 116.

[443] For these surveys, see Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, pp. 98–107.

[444] See ibid., chs. 2 and 20 for a much more extensive argument concerning Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

[445] The details of these surveys are taken from D. Laitin, ‘Nationalism and Language: a Post-Soviet Perspective’, this volume, p. 148. Full details of this research are now available in his Identity in Formation: The Russian Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad, Ithaca, 1998.

[446] For an excellent discussion of this tradition and its discomfort with ‘group rights’, see W. Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights, Oxford, 1994, especially ch. 4.

[447] Ibid.; Lijphart, Democracies and ‘The Puzzle oflndian Democracy’.

[448] An elegant development of this argument is found in J. Raz, The Morality of Freedom, Oxford, 1986, especially chs. 8 and 10. See too Raz’s Ethics in the Public Domain: Essays in the Morality of Law and Politics, Oxford, 1994, especially the preface and chs. 1, 6 and 8.

* Part IV: Wider implications

** 10 Nationalism and civil society in central Europe: from Ruritania to the Carpathian Euroregion

Chris Hann

Ernest Gellner’s interests embraced the whole of human history. He cooperated with archaeologists such as Paul Mellars in investigating the origins of human society; supported the work of hunter-gatherer specialists like James Woodburn, his colleague for many years at the London School of Economics; and he himself carried out extended fieldwork among tribesmen in Morocco. But I suspect that he is probably best known for his work on the transition to industrial society, and in particular, for his analysis of the links between industrialisation and nationalism. In this chapter I shall consider this powerful general theory of modernity in the context of an area that had preeminent significance in his life, if not always in his scholarly output. He spent his formative years in Czechoslovakia, in many ways the most remarkable of the ‘successor states’ to emerge after World War I. It enjoyed a real measure of democracy, and the Bohemian region had already taken significant steps towards a modern industrial society. Despite the name, it was also a country of rather more than two ethnic components: in addition to Czechs and Slovaks, there were large numbers of Ruthenians, Hungarians, Germans, Jews and Gypsies, to name only the most numerous.

The Prague where Gellner had a base in the last years of his life was the capital of a very different country. The Jews mostly vanished during World War II, as did the Gypsies. The Germans and Ruthenians were mostly excluded when new frontiers were determined in its aftermath. Slovaks remained, together with their large Hungarian minority, throughout the period of socialist federalism. But following the ‘velvet divorce’, the Czechs have come close to achieving the ideal of a nationstate, in which the political and the national unit are fully congruent. [449] Of course, perfection is hard to attain. Many awkward questions still surround the claims of Sudeten Germans, and many Czechs are still gravely irritated by pockets of Gypsies in their society as Michael Stewart has recently shown in a striking film. [450] Even so, this part of Central Europe has clearly undergone a rather drastic transformation in the course of one man’s lifetime.

But Gellner did not just live through these transformations; he also did much more than most to help us to understand them and to theorise them. I shall focus on his ideas concerning industrialism, nationalism and civil society, a fundamental triad in the oeuvre. [451] I shall be critical, since I do not think Gellner ever liked hagiography. Also in line with his own preferences, I shall be concrete. I find his ideal-types ‘good to think with’, but very wide of the mark in the specific contexts of my own recent fieldwork. In this way I hope to provoke some reassessment of contemporary history in Central Europe and to stimulate debate on issues of vital importance to this region.

*** Ruritanian ideal: east Galician reality

Gellner’s depiction of ‘Ruritania’ is a marvellous, colourful caricature of how nationalism is created in agrarian societies that have no history of nationhood:

The Ruritanians were a peasant population speaking a group of related and more or less mutually intelligible dialects, and inhabiting a series of discontinuous but not very much separated pockets within the lands of the Empire of Megalomania. The Ruritanian language, or rather the dialects which could be held to compose it, was not really spoken by anyone other than these peasants. The aristocracy and officialdom spoke the language of the Megalomanian court, which happened to belong to a language group different from the one of which the Ruritanian dialects were an offshoot.

Most, but not all, Ruritanian peasants belonged to a church whose liturgy was taken from another linguistic group again .... The petty traders of the small towns serving the Ruritanian countryside were drawn from a different ethnic group and religion still, and one heartily detested by the Ruritanian peasantry.[452]

The reader is later given to understand that this model of nationalism was prevalent in eastern districts of Habsburg Europe, but no more precise

location is offered. It surely falls within the third of his ‘time zones’.[453] Perhaps Gellner had the Slovaks in mind, or perhaps even his former Ruthenian compatriots. [454] He hints that he first encountered this kind of cultural nationalism as a member of a Prague youth movement, perhaps taking trips to the remote eastern provinces in an age when the peasants were not yet collectivised and the Carpathian foothills not yet tamed by tractors and modern means of communication. [455]

I am grateful to Gellner for allowing his readers to keep their options open. For me, Ruritania lies neither in Czechoslovakia nor in the Balkans: it is code for the Austrian regions of eastern Galicia. Never one of the empire’s wealthier possessions, this was none the less in the later Hapsburg period a province of considerable political and strategic importance because of the threat from tsarist Russia. This external power also played a significant role in the debates about national identity that were beginning in eastern Galicia at exactly this time. Many inhabitants looked to Moscow for their political salvation. The Austrians exacted a heavy price for this Panslavism during World War I, when Karl Polanyi, Ludwig Wittgenstein and many other late Habsburg intellectuals served their emperor on this Eastern Front. In eastern Galicia, even before this war, both Panslavism and an autonomous ‘Ruthenian’ orientation had been largely superseded by a new movement among eastern Slavs, that of Ukrainian nationalism. It is difficult to explain this movement in terms of the direct impact of industrialisation, since there was so little industry here at this time. However, a broader interpretation of Gellner’s theories, one which emphasises uneven development rather than industrialisation per se, and which recognises that positions in rapidly expanding secular bureaucracies may have the same sociological consequences as industrial jobs, nevertheless shed some light on the Ukrainian case. At any rate, the Austrians did little to stifle this new nationalism, since it promised both a buffer against Russia and a counterweight to the increased assertiveness of the Poles. The latter were dominant in western Galicia, where they generally formed the most numerous group in both towns and villages. They had turned Cracow into the cultural capital of a Polish nation which as yet lacked political frontiers. But in eastern Galicia the Poles were heavily outnumbered by eastern Slavs in most rural areas, while in the towns and cities Poles and Ukrainians had to jostle for position alongside large Jewish populations, and also smaller communities such as Armenians.

All these people had their own languages, their own churches, their own educational systems. They co-existed over centuries in a framework that exemplifies what Gellner termed ‘the Agrarian Age’, in which cultural diversity is compatible with political unity. Also in line with Gellner’s model, this society had rather little social mobility: people were born into particular communities, and they acquired the characteristics and skills (such as they were) of their forebears. In eastern Galicia Roman Catholic Poles generally had the upper hand, as landowning aristocrats and as cultured townspeople, while the mass of the peasantry spoke dialects of what gradually came to be known as Ukrainian. Those east Slavs who did become wealthy were likely to become ‘Polonised’, often altering their names as well as their language. Sometimes they also altered their religion, a process known as ‘latinization’. At lower levels there were also many cases of Roman Catholic peasants and Poles of the impoverished gentry class becoming, ‘Ruthenised’, i.e. adapting the language and religion of the dominant rural population. Although the division between western and eastern Slavs generally corresponded quite closely to that between the western (Latin) and eastern (Byzantine) traditions of Christianity, the fit was by no means perfect on either side.

This was an extremely poor agrarian society, and this poverty probably got worse in the closing decades ofimperial rule. Vienna invested in railways and in fortifications, but there was little in the way of public or private industrial accumulation. The expanding rural population had little alternative to overseas emigration. Huge numbers crossed the Atlantic, where the new communities they formed contributed to the formation of new identities both in America and in the ‘homelands’.

So, with a high degree of cultural diversity and inequality, we can say that eastern Galicia down to the demise of Franz Josef meets the main criteria of Gellner’s model of agrarian society. Poles, Ukrainians and Ruthenians were all busy in this period, promoting their collective causes in the Ruritanian manner. Poles had better resources to work with in some ‘objective’ historical sense, given the long history of Polish statehood. However, this was by no means self-evident on the ground where ‘Polish’ villagers were seldom any more conscious of their national identity than were their East Slav

neighbours. They were not even called Poles, a name that frequently was applied only to wealthy landowners, i.e. to the Pan.

Before poking fun at these embryonic nationalists and taking ‘Megalomania’ to be an unambiguously negative evaluation of the House of Habsburg, we should also note a virtue of this political formation. As Gellner himself liked to point out, so long as that empire lasted you could travel from eastern Galicia to the shores of the Adriatic without a passport.[456] He saw the Hapsburgs as permitting the development of benign forms of cultural nationalism within the framework of an increasingly federal polity — still in essence the solution which commends itself to many intellectuals who debate the demise of nation-states and a ‘Europe without frontiers’ at the close of our century. I shall return to this theme below.

*** Three transformations: plus fa change

Where Gellner’s theoretical model offers essentially one transformation from the agrarian age to the industrial era, eastern Galicia has in the course of this century experienced at least three major political convulsions. The extent to which the region can be called industrialised is still rather debatable, even at the end of the century. The collapse of Ruritania (in Anthony Hope’s sense rather than in that of Gellner) was best symbolised by that day in 1915 when the tsar arrived in Przemysl to inspect his conquering army. Przemysl was the Austrian military stronghold in eastern Galicia and one of the jewels in the Hapsburg crown. But the tsar himself was soon swept aside, and the Austro-Hungarian empire disintegrated in 1918. With almost everything up for grabs, the future of eastern Galicia was decided less by diplomacy in Paris than by direct action on the ground. The peacemakers reinvented the state of Poland, but spontaneous risings of eastern Slavs succeeded temporarily in creating an independent Ukraine. This initiative was soon squashed. The military strength of the new Poland proved stronger than that of Bolshevik Russia. Eastern Galicia, with all its cultural diversity, was forcibly incorporated into the new Poland.

This drastic political change was not accompanied by accelerated industrial development. In the fields of education and administration the Poles

preserved a good deal of the Austrian legacy. Promises to create a Ukrainian university were broken, and large numbers of Polish colonists were given help to settle in the region, while Ukrainians were disqualified from purchasing land that they badly needed. Although the rhetoric of ‘poor Galicia’ became less fashionable, emigration opportunities were now severely restricted. Overall, the interwar decades were characterised by intense depression and poverty. This period was marked by an intensification of ethnonational conflicts. The Poles could find solace for their economic problems in the glorious re-emergence of their state and their new military strength. Ukrainians resorted to ‘terrorist’ organisations to pursue their cause, since the prospects for achieving any form of autonomy by constitutional means seemed gloomier than they had been under the Austrians. In multiethnic cities like Przemysl and, increasingly, in the countryside as well, the accommodations of the past were now more difficult to sustain. These tensions were most evident in religion: there was pressure on all Poles to conform to the Latin variant of Catholicism, while the Greek Catholic church became even more firmly identified with the cause of Ukrainian nationalism and experienced political repression from Warsaw as a result. Both western and eastern Catholics participated in anti-Jewish activities.

These tensions led to tragedy on a massive scale in the 1940s. Przemysl became a divided city when Poland was partitioned by Germany and the USSR in 1939. Many Ukrainians, victims of Polish oppression in preceding decades, were persuaded by Nazi assurances that cooperation with the occupying power would lead in time to full Ukrainian independence. After 1941, when the Nazis attacked the USSR, the levels of violence in eastern Galicia escalated still further. The Jewish population was exterminated. As German and Soviet armies moved back and forth across this region, other groups, both Polish and Ukrainian, perpetrated their own horrors, often against their close neighbours. This mutual ‘ethnic cleansing’ was in effect formally ratified at the end of the war when the new border was set by the so-called ‘Curzon Line’, just a few miles east of Przemysl. Further agreements led to the ‘voluntary repatriation’ of millions of Poles from the eastern districts, many of them to be resettled in the far west of the country, in lands ‘regained’ from Germany, while large numbers of east Slavs were transported from Poland to various points of the Ukraine. The Greek Catholic Church was suppressed, following the Soviet precedent. The cleansing policy culminated in 1947 when the Polish authorities, embarrassed by the

continued campaign of the ‘terrorist organisation UPA’ in the Carpathian mountains, took decisive action by deporting the entire remaining east Slav civilian population and scattering it across areas in the far north and west of the country previously inhabited by Germans.

In the space of a few years the ethnic map of eastern Galicia and all adjacent regions had altered dramatically. Socialist Poland, unlike its predecessor, could claim to be almost where the Czechs are today, one of the most ethnically homogeneous states in Europe. It had, of course, given up most of the old east Galician lands to the Ukraine. Ukraine itself was rather less homogeneous because of the large Russian presence in the east; but in the Galician districts, even in cities such as L’viv, formerly largely Polish, Ukrainians became virtually as dominant on their side of Curzon’s Line as the Poles became in cities such as Przemysl and their hinterlands.

The socialist period that was inaugurated with such bloodshed was later marked by many other changes in Poland. Economic progress was significant. Even if the south-east received relatively little investment, the large plants established in locations such as Silesia and Nowa Huta ensured that once again opportunities for emigration were opened up. At the same time educational opportunities made it possible for large numbers of peasant children to aspire to white-collar work. Consequently, the early decades of socialist rule showed high rates of intergenerational social mobility. It is true that later these rates began to decline and that the prestige of some of the traditional professions remained as high as ever, whatever socialists might attempt in terms of levelling salaries and tinkering with university entrance systems. The picture is a complex one, and it is perhaps still too early to draw up a final balance sheet. But, though the socialists soon produced their own distinctive forms of stratification, I suggest that in this period Poland

began to approximate to Gellner’s ideal type of a modern industrial society. Socialist Poland achieved a high degree of meritocratic mobility, thanks to an effective national education system that used a single standardised national language and fostered a basic sense of equality among all citizens of the state, the great majority of whom felt themselves to be members of one Polish nation.

This relative success in accomplishing a modern industrial society was flawed in a number of ways. One of the most significant was the political failure to proceed with the collectivisation of agriculture after the disturbances of 1956. This failure had especially dire consequences in the Galician districts, given the extreme sub-division of farms here that dated back to Austrian times. These villagers still tended to have more than twice as many children as town dwellers. Some of these children took their chance in Silesia, some became commuters to their local market town, but even these would often return to settle in the village because of the urban housing shortages. The rural sector was characterised by an almost complete absence of investment in production and the persistence of an irrational structure of land ownership and use. Yet faute de mieux a very large proportion of the population still carried out most of its consumption here.

The more serious flaw in the Polish People’s Republic’s claim to modernity was that it was advanced in the name of socialism. The sad consequence of this fact is that much of the real progress that was made down to 1989 has been undone since then, in the chaos unleashed by ‘shock therapy’. It is generally agreed that Poland has experienced one of the more extreme ‘transitions’ to market economy. It is less frequently noted in the west that this was not a path chosen by Polish voters; on the contrary, they voted at the first opportunity for a ‘reform socialist’ style of government. In effect it has been the west, in collaboration with various elites, most of them concentrated in the capital, that has dictated the course of Poland’s third great period of convulsion this century. It is obviously premature to assess the final outcomes, but visiting the country recently I found it hard to agree with those economists and politicians who assert that ‘shock therapy has worked’. Certainly the economy now appears to be growing rapidly, after several years of catastrophic decline. But how do we assess the social costs? A society that had banished the threat of unemployment must now recognise this as part of its everyday reality. Another part of this reality is having to step over the beggars on every railway station and every urban underpass.Yet there is no doubt that consumers who remember the shortages of past decades are grateful for the market conditions that prevail today, however bitterly they may complain about the prices.

It seems to me that the chief price being paid in Poland’s present transition relates to those elusive ideals of meritocracy and equality. Already weakening in the later socialist decades, they have crumbled dramatically since 1989. The village children of the south-east, whose parents at least had the opportunities to move elsewhere in the country and some chance of joining the bureaucracy, are in some ways back to where their grandparents or greatgrandparents were, with few opportunities for mobility of any kind. In Przemysl county today more than half of the population lives in villages. The voivode (prefect), himself born into a peasant family and a beneficiary of socialist policies, is brutally frank about the prospects of young people today. He was recently quoted as saying:

In the past villagers had alternatives. They could go off to other regions of the country, to Silesia, to large cities and industrial agglomerations. At the same time Przemysl itself offered relatively cheap flats in the cooperative system and — albeit for lousy wages — jobs. In the new conditions there are no such alternatives. It is therefore necessary to create conditions for young people to build their future where they are born, in the countryside. This is where they ought to find jobs, build their accommodation, organise their lives, not necessarily in agriculture ... it is therefore necessary to restructure the countryside. [457]

Lest this be dismissed as locally specific, and therefore irrelevant, by those who believe in the redemptive powers of market capitalism in this region, let me quote also the careful assessment of some Warsaw sociologists whose research has focused upon the impact of recent political and economic changes on the occupational structure. They have concluded that:

although we have been able to trace some positive developments undoubtedly modernising Polish occupational and sectoral structures, these developments were outweighed by tendencies leading in the opposite direction ... Job moves from the state sector to the private did not produce any upgrading effect on either sectoral or occupational structure ... Downward mobility was on the rise, and women seemed to lose more mobility chances than men did. [458]

None of this augurs well for Poland, whose imperfect approximation to Gellner's ideal-type of modernity looks like becoming more imperfect still in the new capitalist conditions.

*** Civil society and Euroregions

I wish now to return to the themes of ethnicity and nationalism in the context of some very recent events in the city of Przemysl.[459] I used to visit this city regularly between 1979 and 1981, when I was doing fieldwork in a village some 60 miles away across the mountains, Przemysl was the diocesan centre for both the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic churches and I found archival materials related to my village stored by the state in an ecclesiastical building confiscated after the Greek Catholics were suppressed in 1946. The building had retained all its essential features externally, and even internally it was most unlike any other archive or library I have known. This was my introduction to the city's complicated history. Later I heard more about past conflicts surrounding more famous churches in the city centre. In 1982, when 'martial law' was still in force, the highest representatives of the Greek Catholic church in the city, surviving in semi-clandestine form under the 'protection' of the Roman Catholics, told me of the antagonism they continued to experience not so much from the socialist coteries as from the highest levels of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.

Some of this history of antagonism became evident for all the world to see after the collapse of socialist government in Poland. In 1991 the Pope asked the Roman Catholics to return the cathedral church of the Carmelites to the Greek Catholics, to whom it had belonged before 1946. However, as an inscription at the entrance to the church today informs visitors, 'a part of the local society' declined to accept this message from the head of the universal Catholic church. The building was the focus of a campaign by Polish nationalists which eventually forced the Pope to back down. The Greek Catholics have had to make do with another building, with which they have no historic ties, while the Carmelite church is now adorned with every kind of nationalist sloganising, with a huge map engraved onto an interior wall showing Poland with its pre-1939 frontiers. This is part of what the reassertion of 'civil society' has meant in Przemysl. The slogan of civil society has been generally used by western commentators and a few local

intellectuals in the same unambiguously positive sense as ‘market economy’. The general argument is that free, mediating institutions between persons and families on the one hand, and the state on the other, were ruthlessly suppressed under communism. The reassertion of this civil society is held to be a key part of the reconstruction of democracy and an effective ‘public sphere’, at local as well as national levels. However, the realities on the ground have often been very different.

It is worth recalling that, following protracted ‘round table’ negotiations, Poland elected a non-communist government several months before the more dramatic, revolutionary upheavals elsewhere in eastern Europe at the end of 1989. It was only after the impact of these external developments that the political atmosphere in Przemysl was transformed. Where free association had previously been discouraged or prohibited, under new legislation you needed to muster just fifteen members to register your voluntary association. Many such groupings emerged on the nationalist right, mostly with overlapping if not identical memberships. In fact a single individual was the driving force behind most of this activity. He was said to be an ex-communist, indeed, a former KGB agent, who had been born and raised in those former eastern lands that Poland had lost to the Ukraine. Most of his new organisations were more or less overtly anti-Ukrainian. They included groupings to commemorate those who had fought against Ukrainians in the city in 1918–19, and those murdered by Ukrainian terrorists during and after World War II. These national activists were the prime organisers of the opposition to the Pope’s wish to restore property to the Greek Catholics. They have made astute use of the local press: the text of their ‘letters to the editor’ is sometimes shorter than the list of signatures, each followed by the full formal title of the organisation and the individual’s status within it. (One of the established small businesses to do well out of the new civil society has been the manufacturer of ink stamps: the taste for these trappings of organisational power provides a strand of continuity not only with socialist bureaucracy, but also with the age of Musil and Kafka.) The nationalists have been able to put pressure on the city council e.g. to object to the Ministry of Culture’s plans to organise a festival for Poland’s Ukrainian minority in Przemysl in 1995 (in the end the festival went ahead, but in an atmosphere poisoned by — among other atrocities — an arson attack on the local Ukrainian club). They have also lobbied effectively at national level, e.g. in securing the removal of a county conservation officer who was allegedly spending too much of his budget on the preservation of

Ukrainian cultural monuments in the region. Employees of the city council have been forced out of their jobs simply for being suspected of having Ukrainian blood in their families. At one stage the leader of the rightist groupings had himself appointed deputy voivode of the county. That did not last very long, and he has never held any significant elective office. Nevertheless he is in many ways the most powerful man in the city, whose views must be taken constantly into consideration by elected counsellors, newspaper editors, the voivode, the police chiefs etc. There is no countervailing power of any sort at the other end of the political spectrum, while the country's major centre-liberal party, the Union of Freedom, which has done much to promote cultural tolerance at the national level, performs very badly in Przemysl. These are not the conditions of liberty, and I think it is because he saw these problems very clearly that Gellner recognised the continuing need for strong central authorities to restrain ethnic extremists in postsocialist conditions.[460]

A fine illustration of the workings of the new local political culture is provided by events surrounding the inception of a 'Carpathian Euroregion'. This idea was taken up in the early 1990s by a voivode of whom the local nationalists disapproved because of his alleged Ukrainian descent. This idea caught on in several neighbouring countries, particularly when a number of western organisations took interest and offered funding. The ostensible motives were straightforward: to simplify and encourage cross-border contacts in this crossroads of Europe, in both cultural and economic spheres. It is possible that, to some, the Euroregion had some vague Habsburgian appeal. From the point of view of western sponsors, notably the Institute for EastWest Studies with its headquarters in New York, the object was simultaneously to promote a strong civil society and to further the goals of the privatisation campaigns by enabling the new entrepreneurs to launch cross-border initiatives and avoid the red tape associated with the socialist planned economy. The western sponsors added the standard rhetoric about support for the 'nonprofit sector' .[461] Liberal enthusiasts of civil society, such as Adam Michnik in Warsaw, wrote messages of support for this initiative: it was self-evidently a good thing for people to forge closer ties with their close neighbours and become less dependent on the overcentralised Polish state and its remote capital.

Unfortunately no one reckoned with the nationalist reaction in Przemysl. Having emerged victorious from their tussle with the Pope over ecclesiastical property, the right-wingers were determined to obstruct what they saw as a potentially dangerous external intervention. They had no wish to weaken borders or to promote respect for neighbouring cultures. They argued that any relaxation of frontier controls would only lead to an uncontrollable influx of cheap labour from the east, accentuating the city's rising unemployment problem. Taking full advantage of legislative provisions designed to enhance local democracy, in summer 1993 they mounted a campaign for signatures to call for a referendum to prevent the elected councillors from taking Przemysl into the Euroregion. This signature campaign was aggressive (people were accosted on the streets) and soon met the target required to force a referendum. Following complex legal manoeuvring by the authorities, this was not held. The county did join the Euroregion, and although the city councillors eventually resolved in 1995 to withdraw from it, this is not considered to have any legal force. The county remains a full member, along with the neighbouring county of Krosno, and other counties in eastern Slovakia, north-eastern Hungary and western Ukraine. (Romanians have also participated, but only as 'observers'.) There is a secretariat that was based for a time in Poland, but has since transferred to Hungary. Foreign ministers have signed agreements, and lots of newsletters have been produced in Atlanta, Georgia, by the Institute for EastWest Studies. This Institute regards the creation of this Euroregion as a success story, a positive example of the measures that can be taken to promote private enterprise and break down the power of centralised states over their subjects. It claims that non-governmental organisations have been the driving force in this campaign, and that the Euroregion has been 'run entirely by the representatives of local communities' .[462]

Local people in Przemysl are agreed in rejecting this interpretation. [463] One of my friends there describes the Euroregion as simply 'fiction': no cultural or economic contacts have been promoted that would not have developed in any case. The most important form of cross-border contact remains the bazaar sector, the myriad forms of petty trading to which not even the nationalists object, recognising how vital they are to postsocialist survival strategies in the city, even though the mess and disorder of these market contacts inevitably fuel stereotypes of the typical Ukrainian as a 'dirty trader'. [464] All the Euroregion has really done is supply a further opportunity for the nationalists to whip up antiUkrainian sentiment, and to

combine this with the ever-present powerful resentment felt towards superfluous bureaucracy. The Euroregion may have created a few more jobs for officials and inspired liberals to much wishful thinking, but surely some better use could have been found for the western resources it has absorbed. [465]

*** Conclusion

This chapter has ranged over roughly a century of central European history, but it is obvious that my principal concern is with understanding the impact of the region's most recent transition. I find it difficult to be optimistic about the present state of the Polish 'nation-state', and my main conclusions can be summarised as follows.

First, in terms of the general structure of society it is clear that the shift from Agraria was slow in getting started in eastern Galicia. The most significant progress was made in the socialist period, when for the first time all members of a relatively homogeneous integrated national society could participate on the basis of a high degree of equality in a labour market that offered significant opportunities for social as well as geographical mobility. But much of that progress is now being undone and recent research suggests that the ideals of social mobility and meritocracy are now being further undermined. It is true that in industrial societies, relative rates of social mobility have shown remarkable continuity over time, despite the increase in absolute mobility rates. [466] However, it is this increase in absolute rates, brought about through the progressive modernisation of labour markets, which has had the more significant material impact on populations as a whole. But in contemporary Poland, primarily because of its antiquated agrarian structure, the absolute indicators would seem to be adverse. One would not expect Gellner to pay much attention to the relativist arguments, but the present shift towards intensified absolute inequality is in sharp contradiction with his ideal-type of modern industrial society.

Secondly, these depressing socio-economic trends seem to be associated with an upsurge in more virulent styles of nationalism. In this chapter I have

charted the emergence of ethnically more homogenous states in this region, the most decisive events being those of the 1940s. The tensions of recent years in Przemysl suggest that the ‘time-zone’ distinctions made by Gellner, whatever their validity in the past, have now collapsed. The propagation of a certain version of ‘civil society’ has in practice enabled a small minority of Polish nationalists to dictate the policies of the city and county, and to have a pervasive poisoning impact on Polish-Ukrainian relations. The creation of a Carpathian Euroregion, with overseas funding linked in part to the privatisation campaigns, presented these groups with an excellent opportunity to assert their nationalist values.

I conclude by suggesting that Gellner’s apparent nostalgic sympathy for the Franz Josef prototype of Euroregion is misplaced. This was never anything like a federation of culturally diverse but equal nations. Ruritanians under Hungarian rule, including those inherited by Czechoslovakia, were subject to ruthless Magyarisation. Galician Ruritania was initially predicated on Austrian domination, but the ground that the Austrians later conceded to Poles was not ground the latter were ever willing to concede to the Ukrainians, or the Ukrainians to Ruthenians or regional groups such as the Lemkos. It was all thoroughly unstable. Only socialism brought any kind of stability and egalitarianism to this region, though at a terrible price. Socialism did not last long enough for the memories of ethnic hatreds to die away. In a climate of great political and economic instability, elite policies designed to promote local democracy and western interventions to strengthen ‘civil society’ in this region are helping to fan the flames of these past hatreds.

*** Notes

This chapter was drafted in September 1995 following a number of brief visits to the city of Przemsyl in south-east Poland. These visits were linked to an ESRC research project, ‘The Politics of Religious Identity: the Greek Catholics of Central Europe’ (reference number R00023071).

[449] Cf. E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983, p. 1.

[450] Stewart’s ‘What Magdalena Said’ was shown on BBC I ‘Everyman’ programme in January 1994. Cf. A. Tucker, ‘The New Jews’, Telos, vols. 98–9, 1993–4.

[451] See, in particular, Gellner, Nations andNationalism and Conditions of Liberty, London, 1994.

[452] Gellner, Nations andNationalism, p. 58.

[453] Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, pp. 113–18.

[454] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p. 59. Miroslav Hroch has informed me that the locations were almost certainly Slovak. According to Hroch, Gellner never forgot the Slovak folk songs that he heard on these trips.

[455] See P. R. Magocsi, ‘Made or Re-made in America: Nationality and Identity Formations among Carpatho-Rusyn Immigrants and Their Descendants’, in P. R. Magocsi, ed., The Persistance of Regional Cultures, New York, 1993.

[456] Personal communication at a seminar in Cracow in May 1994.

[457] S. Bajda, Zycie Prsemskie, 3 May 1995.

[458] B. W. Mach and K. M. Slomczynski, ‘Occupational Structure and Mobility in the Transition from Communism to Post-Communist Capitalism’, in E. Wnuk-Lipinski, ed., After Communism: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Radical Social Change, Warsaw, 1995, pp. 135–51.

[459] For further information, see C. Hann, ‘Ethnic Cleansing: Poles and Ukrainians Beside the Curzon Line’, Nations and Nationalism, vol. 2, 1996.

[460] Thus Gellner often disagreed with those other analysts who wished to see the fastest possible dismantling of the centralist socialist state. For example, he did not think that postsocialist Russia should acquiesce in the secession of relatively homogenous peoples like the Chechens (personal communication). Cf. E. Gellner, ‘The Rest of History’, Prospect, May 1996.

[461] According to the most recent report I have seen (K. J. Ners and I. T. Buxell’s Assistance to Transition Survey, Warsaw, 1995, p. 78), ‘in 1994 the Michiganbased Charles Steward Mott Foundation provided the IEWS (Institute for EastWest Studies) with a grant of $3.9 million to establish a Fund for the Development of the Carpathian Euroregion (FDCE), which will focus particularly on cross-border interactions. The Fund’s initial mission will be to strengthen the capacity of non-profit organisations and local governments to address community problems and needs and is a step closer to the development of a civil society in the countries of the region.’

[462] Ibid., p. 78.

[463] For an extremely mild version of the common criticisms (because written by a public official), see D. Iwaneczko, ‘Euroregion karpacki jako przyklad wspolpracy transgranicznej’ (The Carpathian Euroregion as an example of cross-border cooperation), Fraza, vol. 4, 1995.

[464] See J. Jestal, ‘Stereotyp Ukramca w swiadornosci mlodziezy Polski poludniowo-wschadniej (The Stereotype of the Ukrainian in the Consciousness of Young People in South-East Poland), Fraza, vol. 4, 1995.

[465] For example, resources might be deployed to counter Przemysl’s nationalists with a campaign to promote awareness of the city’s multicultural traditions.

The Ukrainian population today is tiny, and yet in the absence of any countervailing education or information it is generating the same ‘phantom limb’ effect often noted in connection with the country’s Jews — on which see R. Wisse, ‘Poland’s Jewish Ghosts’, Commentary, vol. 83, 1987.

[466] R. Erikson and J. Goldthorpe, The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies, Oxford, 1992. I am grateful to Rosemary Crompton for advice on the formulation of this point.

** 11 From here to modernity: Ernest Gellner on nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism

Dale F. Eickelman

Islam is one of the basic ‘bricks’ in Ernest Gellner’s political thought, along with segmentation, psychoanalysis, nationalism, Marxism and the transition to the Enlightenment.[467] The Islamic ‘brick’, like the others, emerges as a ‘neat, crisp model’. In Gellner’s words: ‘Any structure, any theory will do — not because it’s true but because it makes you notice that evidence goes against it or for it.’[468] Islam held a particular fascination for Gellner. He regarded ‘Muslim society’ as the exception to the pervasive trend towards a shared culture of nationalism, with its ensuing fruit of modernity — commonly educated, mutually substitutable, atomised individuals with the potential for participating in a Civil Society — Gellner’s capitals — which, among other features, precludes an ‘ideological monopoly’.[469] This chapter argues that Gellner’s Islamic brick made readers notice evidence which went for and against it more than it described historical or

contemporary developments and that Muslim politics and society, far from being an exception to worldwide trends, exemplify them.

*** The Islamic ‘brick’

Gellner’s depiction of Islam in Conditions of Liberty, the last book published during his lifetime, reiterates his long-standing convictions about ‘Muslim society’. He preferred the single, society, to the plural, societies, in writing about Islam because he regarded Islam as a faith as imposing ‘essential’ constraints on the conduct and thought of those committed to it. [470] For Gellner, Islam was a ‘closed system’ of thought for which he had a ‘horrified fascination’.[471] With the collapse of Marxist regimes, only Islam, he argued, continued to resist the universal trend towards secularisation and nationalism. In the West, ‘the essence of nationalism ... is that a ‘high — literacy-linked — culture becomes the pervasive, membership-defining culture of the total society’. In Islam, in contrast, fundamentalism becomes the essence of total society, so that regimes are judged by ‘the religious norms of sacred law, rather than the secular principles of a Civil Society’. For Gellner, the collective Islamic self-representation provides a new and powerful self-image for ‘an anonymous mobile mass society produced by modern conditions’, one no longer able to identify with smaller, primordial entities. On its downside, this vision of Islam ‘exemplifies a social order which seems to lack much capacity to provide political countervailing institutions or associations’ and ‘operates effectively without intellectual pluralism’.[472]

Gellner’s argument resonates strongly with certain Western assumptions that the Muslim world offers an ‘exception’ to the emergence of both nationalist movements and civil society elsewhere. As a means to provoke argument and capture the reader’s imagination, it ranks alongside Samuel Huntington’s ‘West versus Rest’ claim of a coming crisis pitting the ‘West’ against ‘Confucian’ and ‘Muslim’ civilisations.[473] Paradoxically, Huntington refuted the basic tenets of his ‘cultural’ argument prior to the publication of his 1993 Foreign Affairs article: ‘Confucian democracy may be a contradiction in terms, but democracy in a Confucian society need not be’, and the dynamism inherent in any cultural tradition can radically transform it, even in remarkably short time spans. Thus Huntington argues that

‘Spanish culture’ was described as ‘traditional, authoritarian, hierarchical, deeply religious, and oriented towards honour and status’ in the 1950s, but by the 1970s, ‘these words had virtually no place in a description of Spanish attitudes and values’.[474] Gellner made no major revision to his views on Islam.

Indeed, there is a remarkable consistency between Gellner’s first presentation of his argument on Islam in the 1960s and his final ones. He believed, along with Daniel Lerner, that the Muslim world faces a stark choice: ‘Mecca or mechanisation’. [475] ‘Islam’ for Gellner constituted the ‘one very real, dramatic and conspicuous exception’ to the overall post-Enlightenment trend to the decline of religious faith and observance, leading to few celebrated forms of community ‘other than possibly the national state’. [476] Gellner writes: ‘To say that secularization prevails in Islam is not contentious. It is simply false. Islam is as strong now as it was a century ago. In some ways, it is probably much stronger.’ [477]

Gellner’s argument is nothing if not bold. Although his basic image of Islam is a Morocco-inspired contrast between walled towns as islands of a literate urban elite surrounded by a vast sea of tribes people, well over half the world’s billion Muslims, from the southern Philippines to North Africa, live in areas where the contrast between a ‘High Islamic’ town and a ‘Low Islamic’ tribal hinterland, questionable even for ‘premodern’ Morocco, is even less applicable. [478] Two centuries after the advent of Islam in 622 CE, Arab Muslims were outnumbered by the Muslim populations of South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia and Africa, to whose ranks are now added the growing Muslim populations of Europe and North America. All these groups contribute to the diversity of Muslim expression and practice.

Gellner eventually conceded that he overstated the contrast between a Protestant-like scriptural puritanism and a more particularistic rural/ tribal Islam tied to saint worship and that the two ‘patterns’ of religious comportment largely co-existed. [479] Yet what Gellner acknowledges in passing in relation to the modern era for Muslim societies — multiple interpretations of religious tradition and experience — applies equally to the long, unspecified years of premodernity, as is also the case for Christianity. One need only think ofPeter Brown’s discussion of the cult of saints in early

Latin Christianity or Ernst Troeltsch's characterisation of the Christian tradition as one of shifts at various levels and times between compromise and non-compromise with the social world. [480]

The premodern Muslim tradition shows similar creative tension, involving scripture and practice, tradition and interpretation, that cannot readily be reduced to monochromatic contrasts between rural and urban, high and low. Saints also exist in towns; renowned scholars often resided in the Moroccan countryside (and one person's saint was often another's religious scholar); and the zar cults in the Sudan or visits to shrines in Turkey suggest ways in which both women and men, now and in the past, conceive of alternate social realities and collaborate in religious practices.[481] Similarly, notwithstanding the pious fiction of some Muslim jurists that there can be no change in the divinely revealed law (shari'a), emendations and additions have occurred throughout Islamic history, and at an increased pace since the mid nineteenth century. The supposedly complete divine law has also been circumscribed by the growth of parallel legal traditions, as in the case of Ottoman reforms from 1839 through 1876.[482]

Just as Pope Pius X in 1907 declared modernism (which for him encompassed a heresy, including democracy, religious tolerance, science and 'rationalism'[483]) conservatives in the Muslim world have reacted vigorously to the accelerated pace of innovation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Even if a significant degree of political activity in the Muslim world is legitimised in religious terms, however, this does not mean that the political activity of Muslim activists is a throwback to a premodern era. As James Piscatori has argued, the premodern era in the Muslim world has been characterised by a defacto secularisation, just as contemporary states, even while claiming adherence to Islamic principles, conduct their business and secular affairs in a manner indistinguishable from, and as diverse as, their non-Islamic counterparts.[484]

With the exception of Turkey, secularisation in most of the Muslim world has been, as Sadik al-Azm points out in luxuriant Geertz-like prose, 'slow, informal, hesitant, adaptive, absorbent, pragmatic, gradualistic, full of halfway houses, partial compromises, transient marriages of convenience, and plenty of temporary retreats and unending evasions, but no striking

moment of high drama’. [485] This de facto secularisation is no less real for its lack of drama. Expert opinion similarly predicted that an ‘unchanging bedrock of Islamic identity’ would emerge with the collapse of Communist regimes in Central Asia — such identity has emerged as merely one possibility among many.[486]

*** Muslim politics today

There is a sense in which ‘Muslim politics’ can be used legitimately without recourse to the kiln of bricks from which Gellner extracted his Islamic one and without having to assert that Muslims are more driven by dogma and belief than adherents of other world religious traditions. Politics are ‘Muslim’ when they relate to a widely shared, although not doctrinally defined, tradition of ideas and practice. The awareness of participating in a world-wide religious movement empowers Muslims in France, Egypt and elsewhere, encouraging them to call for social and political reforms. The November 1979 attack on the Great Mosque in Mecca and the 1981 assassination of Egypt’s President Sadat show how some Islamic groups use violence to confront political authority, but the 1989 head-scarf controversy in Creil, France, temporarily resolved by the state remanding the issue to local authorities rather than provoke a major political crisis, is also an example of Muslim politics.

Gilles Kepel has suggested that the 1989 head-scarf dispute in Creil was a ‘Copernican revolution’, signalling a shift among French Muslims from regarding France as a land of work opportunities (terre de contrat) in which they temporarily reside to regarding it as a land of mission (terre de mission) in which they are permanently settled.[487] Muslim groups calling for democratisation in such countries as Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco indicate how Muslims as self-conscious religious actors use the instruments of existing political systems to magnify their political voice and intensify pressure for reform. State authorities inevitably see both forms of assertiveness as challenging official ideologies and control over policy. Even when asserting universality, however, Muslim politics assume distinctly national and local forms, and their political claims reflect considerable internal debate. The statements of the leaders of the Algerian Front Islamique du Salut (FIS), like those of political movements

elsewhere, range from moderation to radical populism, but this divergence is not unique to Islamic movements.[488] Before FIS was outlawed in March 1992, this internal debate was publicly sustained within and without the movement, although FIS equated its political voice with Islam and legitimacy (‘another form of democracy’) and opposition to western-dominated ‘democrats’.[489] Muslim politics, like all politics, operates in distinct national spheres.

A useful way of looking at politics, including Muslim politics, is to conceive of it as the setting of boundaries between decision-making units in society and the enforceable rules for resolving jurisdictional disputes among them. Even when self-consciously Muslim groups accept the existing political hierarchy, they do not necessarily acquiesce to existing boundaries. For instance, the religious authorities (‘ulama) in Egypt vigorously protested President Sadat’s 1979 effort to liberalise family law — specifically, women’s rights in marriage. They saw Sadat’s efforts as an intrusion on their authority. Muslim politics, like politics elsewhere, involves a contest over the extent of state control — locating the boundaries oflegitimate state and non-state activity.

The notion of politics as centred on power relations and ‘interests’ does not take account of relations among individuals in a society or between societies that are based on what they think is right, just or religiously ordained.[490] The idea of politics as ‘a struggle about people’s imaginations’ is a corrective to some conventional thinking. [491] More broadly, politics can be conceived of as cooperation in and contest over symbolic production and control of the institutions — formal and informal — which serve as the symbolic arbiters of society. [492] Politics as Leviathan is thus decisively abandoned in favour of politics as symbol maker. Of course, this perspective involves understanding culture as contested, temporal and emergent. Even Gellner, a firm believer in ‘culture-transcending truth’, acknowledges that in most circumstances ‘preaching across cultural boundaries’ is ‘a fairly pointless exercise’.[493]

Gellner’s claim that ‘fundamentalism’ is the essence of a monolithic Muslim society runs counter to the highly diverse political and religious currents which suffuse Muslim societies and Muslim-majority polities. The fascination of Western commentators with ‘fundamentalist’ Muslim discourse has meant

that there has been less attention paid to the rising tide of Muslim moderates responding to what they see as the bankruptcy of traditionalist religious discourse. These significant other voices, like the fundamentalists, are distinctively modern, in that they break with earlier forms of conventional religious authority. A case in point is Muhammad Shahrur’s 800-page al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an (The Book and the Qur’an), which booksellers in Kuwait and Morocco claim is ‘worse than Rushdie’ because the author, a Muslim civil engineer with wide-ranging intellectual interests, attacks the ‘classical’ religious authorities of whom they approve. Banned in Saudi Arabia and initially in Egypt, but with at least 10,000 clandestine photocopies in each of these countries and on the open market in Egypt since late 1993 and personally approved for circulation by Sultan Qaboos of Oman, Shahrur’s book and others like it can be seen as experiments in capturing a new readership and in defining Islam as involving dialogue and interpretation in opposition to populist street slogans asserting the ‘true’ meaning of Islam. [494] Paradoxically, the element of mass education, which Gellner sees as an essential component of Western nationalism and modernity, equally pervades the Muslim world, where it is profoundly altering how people conceive of religion and politics.

*** Mass higher education and the political imagination in the Muslim world

Religious fundamentalism, the claims of its adherents notwithstanding, is a distinctively modern phenomenon. [495] Its supporters are the beneficiaries of mass higher education, and it is not the sole or principal product of the massification of education and communications. Mass education, important in itself, also suggests basic transformations in ideas of what people accept as legitimate political authority. An exclusive focus on fundamentalism deflects attention from the more profound changes taking place throughout Morocco, Egypt, Jordan and other places in the Arab world which are correlated with mass higher education and mass communication, factors which have begun to profoundly affect how people think about authority and responsibility in the domains of religion and politics.

Throughout the Muslim majority states, mass higher education has expanded significantly since the 1960s, reshaping conceptions of self, religion, nation and politics. It is as significant as the introduction of printed books in

sixteenth-century rural France. Ironically, however, we know more about literacy in medieval and premodern Europe than in the contemporary Muslim and Arab worlds. Many scholars have noted linkages between advanced education and religious activism, but the focus on extremism deflects attention from basic conceptual innovations and emerging networks for communication and action.

For the most part, mass higher education is a recent phenomenon throughout the Muslim world. It began in earnest only in the 1950s, with Egypt's commitment to universal schooling following the 1952 revolution. By the 1970s, large numbers of students had begun to complete the advanced educational cycles. The timing of educational expansion varies for other countries and regions. For example, major educational expansion in Morocco began after independence in 1956, accelerated in the 1960s, and today almost matches the rate of population growth.

A complementary measure of change is the circulation of books and the proliferation of magazines. The Moroccan writer Mohammed Bennis recalls his student days in Fes in the 1970s, when the first 'little' intellectual journals began to flourish in Arabic, rather than French, which had been the dominant language of the educated elite. In lectures and public meetings, students began to insist that teachers and their classmates express themselves in Arabic and that they not use French words when Arabic words and phrases were available.[496]" The shift from French to Arabic, important in the massification of education in France's former North African colonies, and the growing enrolments in higher education significantly increased participation in debates about politics, culture and society. The intellectual effervescence of the 1970s which Bennis describes saw the emergence of the first cohort of Moroccans to acquire their pervasive 'habits of thought' in Arabic, the country's national language. As elsewhere, pressure from this cohort created a demand for 're-imagining' Islam and politics and produced a significant readership for 'quality' books in Arabic. In spite of the rising rate of unemployment among university graduates, reading has for them become a means of 'appropriating, organising, and making objective ideas of society, politics, and self'. [497]

As a result, new books and new markets for them have developed, which suggests a sea change in images and vocabulary and affecting the prospects for political thinking. Egypt provides an excellent case study of the changing market for books and magazines. Although studies of readership in Egypt, as elsewhere in the Arab world, are weak, the few that are available suggest that only 1 to 2 per cent of the population read books regularly. But discussions about books — through word of mouth, the broadcast media or newspapers and magazines — reach much larger segments of the population. Even censors draw attention to books by banning them or attempting to restrict their circulation. [498] The most rapid growth is occurring in publications with religious content: the growth of secular mass education has increased attachment to Islamic culture. During the Nasser era in Egypt (1952–70), religious books were of marginal importance, at least in terms of official production figures. [499] With the opening of the book market in the 1970s, the relaxation of censorship controls, and subsidies from the oil-rich states, religious books became much more common. In recent years, books have became a part of mass culture in Egypt, and ‘products’ intended for the consumption of a literary elite have become an endangered species.

Such mass culture ‘Islamic books’ are growing rapidly in popularity. These are inexpensive, attractively printed texts, accessible to a readership that lacks the literary skills of the educated cadres of an earlier era. The style is often a breezy mix of oral style and colloquial diction. The covers take advantage of modern printing technologies and are designed to be both readily accessible and eye-catching, with titles such as Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hamid Kishk’s Ayyuha l-Muslimun, Ufiqu (O Muslims, Awake!), the cover of which shows a bearded Muslim (bright blue), seated at a table in front of a red-covered Qur’an, covering his eyes in order to sleep. An orange and blue serpent hovers above him, poised to strike. [500]

Other covers are reminiscent of pamphlets distributed by the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Layla Mabruk’s Rihla ila ‘alam al-khulud: ‘adalatyawm al-qiyama (A Trip to Eternity: Justice on Judgment Day) shows a weakened hand sticking out of a bright red pool, while above the title at the right and encircled by a green garland, two Muslims, oblivious to the scene below, pray. [501] A Saudi pamphlet with a curious cover showing a bright red ball plunging into a well in an otherwise parched desert, explains that

democracy, which is ‘creeping’ (tatasa-rrub) into the Muslim world, is incompatible with Islam because Islam offers governance by the Creator (al-khaliq) as understood by a properly instructed religious elite, whereas democracy, a non-Arabic term, necessarily implies rule by the created (al-makhluqin), in which unbelievers and the ignorant have an equal say in governance and usurp God’s rule. [502] In many parts of the Muslim world, including North Africa, this style of argument — in some respects a mirror image of Samuel Huntington’s ‘West versus Rest’ — is regarded with amusement by many, but it also offers a style of argument more accessible than that sustained by Muslim moderates who argue for political pluralism in the mainstream Arab print media. [503]

‘Islamic’ books seek to capture the religious — and with increasing explicitness the political — imagination of a new generation. In them, readers find echoes of what they already know and have their questions about religion and conduct answered. Conventional intellectuals may accord no legitimacy to the commercial entrepreneurs who benefit from a market which allows Shaykh Sha’rawi to sell 250,000 copies of a book when the sale of I 0,000 books is regarded as a success and 50,000 as a best-seller. However, few can fail to recognise the significance of an emerging and distinctive ‘popular culture’ in which the ‘Islamic’ book has become a massified commodity.[504]

In retrospect, the 1952 Egyptian revolution appears less a break with the past than an intensification of the prior monarchical vision of directing change from above, a notion visualised by King Farouk’s personal bookplate, which shows a printing press directly under his name, a crown in the upper left and a city and minarets in the background.[505] A learned man in front of the press passes a book to a peasant kneeling next to his plough and oxen. This self-image of the distribution of knowledge was not significantly challenged in the years of the military junta and Nasser’s presidency, and it was largely compatible with the versions of modernisation theory then prevailing. The real revolution in ideas of authority came later, as mass education created a new public for the printed word. In retrospect, the economic reforms set in motion in the 1970s unintentionally created the space for a cultural and intellectual reorientation through ‘market forces’ which favoured ‘Islamisation from below’ — uncontrolled and uncontrollable by state forces.

In a general sense, the implications of mass higher education and mass communication include a changed sense of authoritative discourse, the emergence of a sense of religion and politics as system and object, and altered conceptions of language and community. First, mass education fosters a sharp break with earlier traditions of authority, with direct — albeit selective — access to the printed word. Belief and practice are now expressed publicly without reference to the authority of traditionally educated religious elites and are more directly related to political action than was the case earlier. The rise of this new dominant discourse affects both the expressive forms of the state and its religious and secular opposition.

Secondly, mass education and mass communication encourage the conception of religion and politics as self-contained systems which can incorporate features from other systems. Mass education encourages this by treating Islam as one subject among many, even as students are told that ‘Islam is one’ and all-encompassing. Changes in the successive editions of Sayyid Qutb’s Social Justice in Islam (first edition 1949; seventh edition 1974) show how he refined his view of Islam as ‘an inwardly consistent and harmonious “system” ... making it possible for it to be at once flexible, comprehensive, and distinctive’.[506] Even radical Islam ‘accepts much that is borrowed from the West’, although such borrowings are often denied or unrecognised.[507] ‘Moderates’, as opposed to radicals, are more likely to acknowledge such borrowings, arguing that while Islamic principles are eternal, the way they are implemented can be adjusted to historical context.

This point was brought home by a religious activist in the Arab Gulf. In 1978 he explained that al-dimuqratiyya [democracy] would never take hold in the Muslim world because it was a concept alien to shura, which was Qur’anic and Islamic. In 1990 he asserted that Al-dimuqratiyia was compatible with Islam. When reminded of what he had said a decade earlier, he replied: ‘Now we know better. Shura is not a major concept in the Qur’an, and its few usages there are ambiguous. Democracy can be adapted to Islamic ideals.’ Likewise, when Islamic activists in Morocco declare that they are engaged in the ‘Islamisation’ of their society, they make explicit their sense of one

system of ideas and practices — theirs — acting against the system of beliefs and practices held by other members of society. Among the Ibadiyya of Algeria and Oman, modern education and intensified contact with other Muslims have encouraged such phenomena as catechisms, videos and pamphlets to help Ibadi students explain their doctrines to Muslims liable to misunderstand them.[508]

Finally, the standardised language of mass higher education encourages new senses of community and affinity. In India, the templemosque dispute at Ayodhya in December 1992 went from a local matter to a national crisis in Hindu-Muslim relations because of ‘a massive expansion in the availability of television and the ending of the Indian government’s carefully managed news monopoly’. The BBC World Television reporting of the incident, widely followed by English-speakers in India, was a model of balance, but the pictures acted ‘as recruiting banners for the militants on both sides’.[509] The video clips fed to Oman television by an American network at the time of the massacres in the Sabra/Shatila refugee camps in Beirut in 1982 had a similar effect, as did footage of the Hebron/al-Khalil killings and their aftermath in February 1994. Benedict Anderson argues that the rise of written vernacular languages in Europe and the spread of print technology have created language communities wider than those of face-to-face interactions yet narrower than the communities created by shared sacred languages.[510] With modifications, this premise can be transposed to the Arab world, in which there has been intensified access to the printed word and, in terms of the spoken word, to a more standardised Arabic. In Arab countries where languages such as Berber or Kurdish are spoken, there is increased use of Arabic as the principal language of education and formal communication.

*** Conclusion

This shift in the religious and political imagination of a younger, educated generation in many parts of the Muslim world constitutes a fundamental break with prior structures of religious and political authority. Mass education empowers citizens to talk back to state and religious authorities, fragmenting religious and political authority by making the state one actor among many and eroding the authority of traditional religious scholars. Although the scale

and intensity of this fragmentation of authority is unique to the last decades of the twentieth century, it is an ongoing element of the political life of Muslims. As a system of belief, Islam may be no more secularisable than Roman Catholicism or Christian fundamentalism, but Muslims, and Muslim societies, are secularisable, and the process is well advanced. Civil society may be fragile or in short supply in much of the Middle East and elsewhere in the Muslim world, but the causes of this are not inherent to Islam. Religion and state (din wa-dawla), far from being indissoluble in the Muslim world, became separable not long after the death of the Prophet Muhammad and the establishment of dynastic rule,[511] and nationalism is alive and well throughout the Muslim world. In a word, Gellner's Islamic 'brick' is friable — a brittle abstraction which fits awkwardly with known history and historical context. In thinking about Islam, however, Gellner's bold design has made us notice the evidence which goes 'against it or for it'. The prospects for 'Civil Society' may be uncertain, but a lasting element of Gellner's legacy is a standard of civility in thinking about religion, society and politics which is often hard to match.

*** Notes

The author wishes to thank Deborah Hodges for comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

[467] John Davis, 'An Interview with Ernest Gellner', Current Anthropology, vol. 12, 1991,p. 71.

[468] Ibid., p. 70.

[469] E. Gellner, Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and its Rivals, London, 1994, p. 211.

[470] Davis, 'Interview with Ernest Gellner', p. 7 0 captures the tenacity with which Gellner held to his core convictions concerning the Islamic brick. Referring to his research among the Ihansalen in Morocco's High Atlas in the

1950s he remarked: ‘When I read ethnographies of other parts of the Muslim world I have the feeling that I am utterly familiar with this pack of cards. It happens to be shuffled a bit differently, but I know the cards.’

[471] Ibid., p. 69.

[472] Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, especially pp. 22, 29. In contrast A. R. Norton argues vigorously (‘Introduction’, in his Civil Society in the Middle East, Leiden, 1994, p. 25) that civil society is ‘theoretically, conceptually, normatively, and ontologically’ part of political discourse in the Middle East.

[473] S. P. Huntington, ‘The Clash of Civilisations?’, Foreign Affairs, vol. 72, 1993.

[474] S. P. Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century, Norman, 1991, pp. 310–11.

[475] The alliterative quotation is from D. Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernising the Middle East, New York, 1964, p. 405, although the notion is fully consonant with Gellner’s conception of progression from agrarian to industrial society.

[476] E. Gellner, Postmodernism, Reason and Religion, London, 1992, pp. 4–5.

[477] Ibid., p. 5.

[478] For a review of Gellner’s model of religious development as it applies specifically to Morocco, see D. F. Eickelman, ‘New Directions in Interpreting North African Society’, in H. Barakat, ed., Contemporary North Africa: Issues of Development and Integration, London, 1985, with additional

references. Discussions concerning the applicability of Gellner’s version of segmentation theory were most intense in the 1970s and early 1980s. Also see, however, H. Munson, ‘Rethinking Gellner’s Segmentary Analysis of Morocco’s Ait ‘Atta’, Man, vol. 28, 1993, which argues that Gellner’s depiction of the Ait ‘Atta is ‘fundamentally flawed’. Gellner’s reply in ‘Segmentation: Reality or Myth?’, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. 1, 1995 (which also includes Munson’s reply) stresses that segmentation is an ‘absolutely indispensable’ tool for understanding ‘agrarian’ societies, another important ‘brick’ in his conceptual apparatus. For fuller discussion of the difficulties in assuming a ‘great divide’ between tradition and modernity in Muslim societies, see D. F. Eickelman and J. Piscatori, Muslim Politics, Princeton, 1996, pp. 22–37; for Hinduism, see P. van der Veer, Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India, Berkeley, 1994, pp. 12–18.

[479] E. Gellner, Muslim Society, Cambridge, 1981, pp. 214–20; see also his Conditions of Liberty, pp. 16–20.

[480] P. Brown, The Cult of Saints in Early Latin Christianity, Chicago, 1981; E. Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, New York, 1960.

[481] See, for example, J. Boddy, Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men, and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan, Madison, 1989 and N. Tapper and R. Tapper, ‘The Birth of the Prophet: Ritual and Gender in Turkish Islam’, Man, vol. 22, 1987.

[482] Eickelman and Piscatori, Muslim Politics, p. 26.

[483] Cited in Sadik J. al-Azm, ‘Islamic Fundamentalism Reconsidered: A Critical Outline of Problems, Ideas, and Approaches’, South Asia Bulletin, vol. 13, 1993, p. 102.

[484] J. Piscatori, Islam in a World of Nation-States, Cambridge, 1986. See also S. Zubaida, ‘Is There a Muslim Society? Ernest Gellner’s Sociology of Islam’, Economy and Society, vol. 24, 1995 and Sadik J. al-Azm, ‘Is Islam Secularizable?’, Jahrbuch fur Philosophie des Forschungsinstituts fur Philosophie Hannover, vol. 7, 1996.

[485] al-Azm, ‘Is Islam Secularizable?’, p. 22.

[486] Ibid., p. 23.

[487] Cited in H. Tineo, ‘L’Islam de France se radicalise’, Le Monde, 12 August 1994, pp. 1, 3.

[488] For a selection ofFIS writings, see M. al-Ahnaf, B. Botiveau and F. Fregosi, L ‘Algerie par ses islamistes, Paris, 1991.

[489] Abdelasiem el-Difraoui, ‘La critique du systeme democratique par le Front Islamique du Salut’, in G. Kepel, ed., Exils et royaumes: les appartenances au monde arabo-musulman aujourd’hui, Paris, 1994, pp. 123–4.

[490] P. G. Cerny, The Changing Architecture of Politics: Structure, Agency and the Future of the State, London, 1990, pp. 17–18.

[491] K. Pekonen, ‘Symbols and Politics as Culture in the Modern Situation: The Problem and Prospects of the “New”’, in J. R. Gibbins, ed., Contemporary Political Culture: Politics in a Postmodern World, London, 1989, p. 132.

[492] See, for example, C. Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, New York, 1973, pp. 193–233.

[493] Gellner, Conditions of Liberty, p. 214.

[494] See D. F. Eickelman, ‘Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back’, Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, vol. 27, 1993.

[495] An earlier version of the argument concerning mass education appeared in D. F. Eickelman, ‘Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies’, American Ethnologist, vol. 19, 1992.

[496] Interview with Mohammed Bennis, Mohammediya, Morocco, 16 July 1992.

[497] R. Chartier, The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France, Princeton, 1987, pp. 6–11.

[498] Y. Gonzalez-Quijano, ‘Les gens du livre. Champ intellectuel et edition dans l’Egypte republicaine (1952–1993)’, Institut d’Etudes Politiques de Paris, Ph.D. Thesis, 1994, pp. 398–408.

[499] Ibid., pp. 159–60.

[500] ‘Abd al-Hamid Kishk, Ayyuha l-Muslimun, Ufiqu [O Muslims, Awake!], Cairo, 1989.

[501] L. Mabruk, Rihla ila ‘alam al-khulud: ‘adalat yawm al-qiyama [A Trip to Eternity: Justice on Judgement Day], Cairo, 1989.

[502] Muhammad Shakir al-Sharif, Haqiqat al-Dimuqratiya [The Truth about Democracy], Riyadh, 1992, pp. 16–18.

[503] Note, however, that Islamic activists and fundamentalists come from all social classes and educational levels, with the ‘mix’ across national and class lines varying state by state. See M. Tessler and J. Jesse, ‘Gender and Support for Islamist Movements: Evidence from Egypt, Kuwait, and Palestine’, Muslim World, vol. 86, 1996, pp. 214–15. For an example of ‘liberal’ writing on Islam, see Sa’id Binsa’id, ‘al-hiwar wa-1-fahm la al-qat’iyya wa-1-jahl’ [Dialogue and Understanding, Not Alienation and Ignorance], Al-Sharq Al-Awsat [The Middle East], London, 7 July 1993, p. 10. This generally liberal, Saudi-financed newspaper is one of the most widely circulated newspapers of the Arab world.

[504] Gonzalez-Quijano, ‘Les gens du livre’, pp. 270, 412.

[505] Reproduced in ibid., p. 96b.

[506] W. Shepard, ‘The Development of the Thought of Sayyid Qutb as Reflected in Earlier and Later Editions of Social Justice in Islam’, Die Welt des Islam, vol. 32, 1992, pp. 200, 211.

[507] W. Shepard, ‘Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology’, International Journal ofMiddle East Studies, vol. 19, 1987, p. 315 and ‘Islam as a “System” in the Later Writings of Sayyid Qutb’, Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 25, 1989, pp. 31–50.

[508] Ahmad bin Hamad al-Khalili, W’hio Are the Ibadhis?, Zanzibar, 1988.

[509] ‘Feeding Fundamentalism’, The Economist, 21 August 1993, p. 36.

[510] B. Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, London, 1991.

[511] Eickelman and Piscatori, Muslim Politics, pp. 46–57.

** 12 Myths and misconceptions in the study of nationalism

Rogers Brubaker

The resurgence of nationalism in eastern Europe and elsewhere in the last decade has sparked — with only the shortest of lags — an even stronger resurgence in the study of nationalism. As a certifiably ‘hot topic’, nationalism has moved rapidly from the front pages to the journal pages, from the periphery — often the distant periphery — to the centre of numerous scholarly fields and subfields. [512] This new centrality is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, the robust demand for knowledge about — and ‘fixes’ for — nationalism brings new opportunities, resources and attention to the field. On the other hand, the rapid expansion of the field has strengthened analytically primitive currents in the study of nationalism, [513] threatening to erode (or simply — given the volume of the new literature — to overwhelm) the analytical gains previously made in sophisticated works by Benedict Anderson, John Armstrong, John Breuilly, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Smith and a number of other scholars.[514]

Borrowing Charles Tilly’s phrase, this chapter addresses six ‘pernicious postulates’, six myths and misconceptions that, newly strengthened by the dizzying expansion in the literature and quasi-literature on the subject, inform, and misinform, the study of ethnicity and nationalism.[515] Although I draw illustrative empirical material mainly from postcommunist east central

Europe and the former Soviet Union, the theoretical debates I engage are central to the study of nationalism generally. [516]

Nobody took greater pleasure, or displayed greater vigour, in demolishing myths than Ernest Gellner; and the trenchancy with which he punctured nationalists' own myths — as well as other myths about nationalism — was exemplary. I would like to think, therefore, that the present chapter is Gellnerian in spirit. The chapter is not, however, about Gellner's theory of nationalism; it engages his theory only incidentally. Gellner approached the study of nationalism from Olympian distance, situating the emergence and vicissitudes of nationalism in world-historical perspective. My concerns in this chapter are rather less global and do not, for the most part, directly engage Gellner's arguments.

I begin by addressing two opposed appraisals of the gravity and 'resolvability' of national conflicts. The first is the 'architectonic illusion' — the belief that the right 'grand architecture', the right territorial and institutional framework, can satisfy nationalist demands, quench nationalist passions and thereby resolve national conflicts. Most conceptions of grand architecture have involved the reorganisation of political space along national lines, based on an alleged right of national self-determination or on the related 'principle of nationality'. Against this, I want to argue that nationalist conflicts are in principle, by their very nature, irresolvable, and that the search for an overall 'architectural' resolution of national conflicts is misguided.

Sharply opposed to the meliorist optimism of this first view is the dire pessimism of the second. This is the 'seething cauldron' view of ethnic and national conflicts. This gloom-and-doom perspective sees all of eastern Europe — and many other world regions — as a seething cauldron of ethnic and national conflict, on the verge of boiling over into violence. More generally, it sees nationalism as the central problem in these regions, and sees national identities as strong and salient. Against this, I want to assert that ethnonational violence is neither as prevalent, nor as likely to occur, as is often assumed; and that national feeling is less strong, national identity less salient and nationalist politics less central than is often assumed.

Next, I will address two opposed views of the sources and dynamics of resurgent nationalism. The first is the ‘return of the repressed’ perspective. In its specifically eastern European form, this view sees national identities and national conflicts as deeply rooted in the precommunist history of eastern Europe, and as subsequently frozen or repressed by ruthlessly anti-national communist regimes. With the collapse of communism, these pre-communist national identities and nationalist conflicts have returned with redoubled force. Against this, I will stress the pervasive shaping and structuring of national identities and nationalist conflicts by communist regimes.

Categorically rejecting the primordialist understanding of nationhood that often accompanies the ‘return of the repressed’ view, and refusing to see national identity and nationalist conflicts as deeply encoded historically, is the ‘elite manipulation’ view. This perspective sees nationalism as the product of unscrupulous and manipulative elites, who are seen as cynically stirring up nationalist passions at will. While conceding, of course, that unscrupulous elites often do seek to stir up nationalist passions, I want to argue against this view that it is not always so easy for elites to stir up nationalist passions; and that it is mistaken to see nationalism in purely instrumental terms, to focus solely on the calculating stances of self-interested elites.

The fifth perspective I call that of ‘the realism of the group’. Based on a ‘groupist’ social ontology, this view sees nations and ethnic groups as real entities, as substantial, enduring, sharply bounded collectivities. It sees the social world, like a Modigliani painting (to borrow Gellner’s image), as composed of externally bounded, internally homogeneous cultural blocs. Against this, I will argue that the ‘Modiglianesque’ vision of the social world is deeply problematic, that ethnic and national groups are not well conceived as externally sharply bounded, internally culturally homogeneous blocs.

Finally, I address the ‘Manichean’ view that there are, at bottom, only two kinds of nationalism, a good, civic kind and a bad, ethnic kind; and two corresponding understandings of nationhood, the good, civic conception, in

which nationhood is seen as based on common citizenship, and the bad, ethnic conception, in which nationhood is seen as based on common ethnicity. Against this, I will argue that the distinction between civic and ethnic nationhood and nationalism is both normatively and analytically problematic.

*** I

I begin with the ‘architectonic illusion’. This is the belief that if one gets the ‘grand architecture’ right — if one discovers and establishes the proper territorial and institutional framework — then one can conclusively satisfy legitimate nationalist demands and thereby resolve national conflicts. There have been many different conceptions of just what the proper grand architecture should look like. But most of these have appealed in one way or another to the idea of national self-determination or to the so-called principle of nationality.

The principle of national self-determination assigns moral agency and political authority to nations; it holds that nations are entitled to govern their own affairs and, in particular, to form their own states. The principle of nationality asserts that state and nation should be congruent; it thereby provides a powerful lever for evaluating, and redrawing, state boundaries, for legitimating, or delegitimating political frontiers according to a kind of ‘correspondence theory’ of justice.

These principles underlay, albeit imperfectly, the post-World War I territorial settlement in central and eastern Europe; the mid-twentiethcentury wave of decolonisation in Asia and Africa; and the recent reorganisation of political space in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In each of these cases, the period preceding the reorganisation of political space along national lines was one of intensifying nationalist movements. In each case, the demands of these nationalist movements were viewed with sympathy by much of world public opinion. In each case, it was widely believed that a new ‘grand architecture’, involving the reorganisation of political space along national lines, would satisfy the demands of these national movements and contribute to regional peace and stability by resolving national tensions.

[517] Yet, in each case, this expectation was disappointed. Political reconfiguration did not resolve national tensions but only reframed them, recast them in new (and in some cases more virulent) form.

I am not arguing that the reconfiguration of political space along ostensibly national lines in these cases was necessarily a bad thing (though I think in some cases — such as the former Yugoslavia — it was unfortunate). I am arguing, instead, against the idea that nationalism is a problem that can somehow be solved by ‘correct’ territorial and institutional arrangements; and, more specifically, against the idea that nationalist demands can be satisfied and national conflicts resolved by applying the principle of national self-determination or redrawing political boundaries according to the principle of nationality.

Today, of course, this argument is less likely to be advanced than it was a few years earlier. Several years after the last major reorganisation of political space along national lines, it is all too evident that national conflicts have not been resolved, and that the most virulent conflicts have occurred after rather than before the reorganisation of political space. But it is worth remembering that only a few years ago, a great deal of hope was invested in national self-determination. The prospect of the break-up of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia was welcomed as a story of national liberation; the prevailing narrative was one of national imprisonment and liberation. The rising curve of enthusiasm for national self-determination, as communist regimes began to crumble, did not, to be sure, reach the apogee of seventy-five years earlier, when the first wholesale reorganisation of previously multinational political space along national lines was undertaken. Yet the fin-de-siecle re-enchantment with national self-determination was substantial enough, incautious enough, and — in view of the disastrous sequel to the early twentiethcentury experiment in national self-determination[518] — puzzling enough to give us pause.[519] Moreover, even if the re-enchantment has since yielded to a new disenchantment, even if yesterday’s narrative of national imprisonment and liberation today seems one-sided, mischievous or even downright pernicious, still the underlying way of thinking about nationalism that has historically accompanied appeals to the principle of national self-determination remains robustly entrenched.

The principle of national self-determination and the related principle of nationality are of course normative, not analytical principles; and I do not want to make here an argument in normative political theory. [520] But for a century and a half, the appeal to the principle of nationality or to an alleged right of national self-determination has been closely related to a particular — and I believe mistaken — account of the sources and dynamics ofnationalism. And it is this account that I would like to dwell on for a moment.

This account is fundamentally a nation-centred understanding of nationalism. It is grounded, as Gellner observed,[521] in a ‘social ontology’ that posits the existence of nations as real entities whose tendency or telos - at least under modern social and political conditions — is to seek independent statehood. Nationalism, on this view, is thus nation-based, state-seeking activity.

If this understanding of nationalism were correct, then one might indeed expect the reorganisation of political space along national lines to resolve national conflicts by fulfilling nationalist demands. The imagery here is that nationalism has a self-limiting political career. Fundamentally oriented towards independence, national movements in a sense transcend themselves, and wither away in the very course of realising their aims. When nationalist demands for statehood are fulfilled, the nationalist programme is satisfied; it exhausts itself in the attainment of its ends.

However, I do not think nationalism can be well understood as nation-based, state-seeking activity. In the first place, nationalism is not always, or essentially, state-seeking. To focus narrowly on state-seeking nationalist movements is to ignore the infinitely protean nature of nationalist politics; it is to ignore the manner in which the interests of a putative ‘nation’ can be seen as requiring many kinds of actions other than, or in addition to, formal independence; it is to be unprepared for the kinds of nationalist politics that can flourish after the reorganisation of political space along national lines, after the break-up of multinational states into would-be nation-states. It is to be unprepared for the fact that nationalism was not only a cause but also a consequence of the break-up of old empires and the creation of new nation-states.

In the new or newly enlarged nation-states of interwar central and eastern Europe, and in the new nation-states of postcommunist eastern Europe today, several kinds of nationalism have flourished as a result of the reorganisation of political space along ostensibly national lines. Here I would like to briefly characterise four such forms of non-state-seeking nationalism.

The first is what I call the ‘nationalising’ nationalism of newly independent (or newly reconfigured) states. Nationalising nationalisms involve claims made in the name of a ‘core nation’ or nationality, defined in ethnocultural terms, and sharply distinguished from the citizenry as a whole. The core nation is understood as the legitimate ‘owner’ of the state, which is conceived as the state of and for the core nation. Despite having ‘its own’ state, however, the core nation is conceived as being in a weak cultural, economic or demographic position within the state. This weak position is seen as a legacy of discrimination against the nation before it attained independence. And it is held to justify the ‘remedial’ or ‘compensatory’ project of using state power to promote the specific (and previously inadequately served) interests of the core nation. Examples of such nationalising nationalisms abound in interwar Europe and the postcommunist present. [522]

Directly challenging these ‘nationalising’ nationalisms are the transborder nationalisms of what I call ‘external national homelands’. Homeland nationalisms are oriented to ethnonational kin who are residents and citizens of other states. Transborder homeland nationalism asserts a state’s right — indeed its obligation — to monitor the condition, promote the welfare, support the activities and institutions, and protect the interests of ‘its’ ethnonational kin in other states. Such claims are typically made, and typically have greatest force and resonance, when the ethnonational kin in question are seen as threatened by the nationalising policies and practices of the state in which they live. Homeland nationalisms thus arise in direct opposition to and in dynamic interaction with nationalising nationalisms. Prominent instances of homeland nationalism are furnished by Weimar (and in a very different mode) Nazi Germany, and by Russia today. [523]

The third characteristic form ofnationalism found in the aftermath of the reorganisation of political space along national lines is the nationalism of national minorities. Minority nationalist stances characteristically involve a self-understanding in specifically ‘national’ rather than merely ‘ethnic’ terms, a demand for state recognition of their distinct ethnocultural nationality, and the assertion of certain collective, nationality-based cultural or political rights. Salient examples include Germans in many eastern European countries in the interwar period and Hungarian and Russian minorities today.

The fourth form is a defensive, protective, national-populist nationalism that seeks to protect the national economy, language, mores or cultural patrimony against alleged threats from outside. The bearers of such putative threats are diverse but can include foreign capital, transnational organisations, notably the IMF, immigrants, powerful foreign cultural influences and so on. This kind of nationalism often claims to seek a ‘third way’ between capitalism and socialism, is often receptive to anti-Semitism, brands its political opponents as antinational, ‘un-Romanian’, ‘un-Russian’, etc., is critical of the various ills of ‘the west’ and of ‘modernity’, and tends to idealise an agrarian past. The social and economic dislocations accompanying market-oriented reforms — unemployment, inflation, tighter workplace discipline, etc. — create fertile soil for the use of such national populist idioms as a legitimation strategy by governments or as a mobilisation strategy by oppositions.

Nationalism, then, should not be conceived as essentially or even as primarily state-seeking. Nor, as Gellner emphasised, should it be understood as nation-based, that is as arising from the demands of nations, understood as real, substantial, bounded social entities. Nationhood is not an unambiguous social fact; it is a contestable — and often contested — political claim. Consequently, neither the principle of national selfdetermination nor the principle of nationality can provide an unambiguous guide to the reorganisation of political space.

Claims to nationhood are often disputed — think, for example, historically, about the Macedonians, or about the dispute concerning whether interwar Czechoslovakia was one nation or two. Or, more recently, think of the Kurds, the Palestinians, the Quebecois, and of a host of west European

ethnoregional movements. And even when the status of nationhood itself is not disputed, the territorial or cultural boundaries of the putative nation are often contested, as is the manner in which nationhood ought to be construed for purposes of implementing the right of self-determination or of redrawing frontiers along national lines.

Given the very large number of more or less serious (and often conflicting) claims to nationhood, how are we to identify the national selves who are to enjoy the right or privilege of self-determination? And once we have identified these favoured national selves, how are we to determine their bounds and contours? This is not a theoretical quibble, but a question of the utmost practical import.

Take for example the case of Yugoslavia. Even if one could have agreed that the national selves who were to enjoy self-determination were the officially recognised constituent nations of Yugoslavia (but why not the Albanians? Why not the Hungarians in Voivodina?), one still could not have avoided the question of how those national selves were to be construed. To put the question in its simplest form, supposing we agreed that self-determination was to be exercised by Serbs, Croats and Muslims. How, then, were these self-determining units to be construed? Was the right of self-determination to be exercised by Serbia or by Serbs? By Croatia or by Croats? By Bosnia-Hercegovina or by Yugoslav Muslims? By territorial entities, that is, or by boundary-transcending ethnocultural nations? Were all the inhabitants of the Croatian republic to enjoy a single right of self-determination? And similarly for all the inhabitants of the Serb republic, and of Bosnia-Hercegovina, by majority vote? Or rather, was self-determination to be exercised by the Croatian, Serb and Muslim ethnonations, whose populations spilled over republican borders? In practice, the international community opted for the former — but perhaps without realising the tremendous difference between the two modes of construing self-determination for the same national units. [524] And the consequences were catastrophic.

There are of course many other examples of conflicting claims about how national selves should be construed. The negotiations concerning the post-World War I settlement furnished a whole catalogue of such conflicting claims, many involving a clash between historic-territorial and ethnocultural

versions of nationhood, with parties typically opportunistically advancing whichever claim would benefit them.

On a more philosophical level, we arrive here at the inescapable antinomies of national self-determination. Self-determination presupposes the prior determination of the unit — the national self — that is to enjoy the right of self-determination. But the identification and boundaries of this self cannot themselves be self-determined: they must be determined by others. Just as the boundaries of the demos that is presupposed by democratic institutions cannot themselves be democratically determined, [525] so too the boundaries of the national self that is presupposed by national self-determination cannot themselves be selfdetermined. Only in practice, the problem with national selfdetermination is more serious than with democracy. For in the routine functioning of democracy, the bounds of the demos are simply taken as given and unproblematic. But since national self-determination is precisely about setting the initial boundaries of the demos, there is no analogue in the sphere of self-determination to the routine functioning of democracy within the frame of a taken-for-granted demos. Since the whole point of invoking national self-determination is to change unit boundaries, such boundaries cannot be taken for granted — especially given the pervasively contested, conflicting and overlapping nature of claims to nationhood.

Against the architectonic illusion, then, against the illusion that nationalist conflicts are susceptible of fundamental resolution through national self-determination, I am asserting a kind of ‘impossibility theorem’ — that national conflicts are in principle irresolvable; that ‘nation’ belongs to the class of ‘essentially contested’ concepts; that chronic contestedness is therefore intrinsic to nationalist politics, part of the very nature of nationalist politics; and that the search for an overall ‘architectural’ resolution of national conflicts is misguided in principle, and often disastrous in practice.

In criticising this naively optimistic view I should emphasise that I do not want to adopt a gloom-and-doom perspective. In fact the next myth I want to criticise is precisely the gloom-and-doom view of the region. My point is not to substitute a pessimistic for an optimistic reading, but rather to suggest that the search for solutions and resolutions of national conflicts — especially

grand, ‘architectonic’, isomorphic, ‘one-size-fits-all’ solutions and resolutions — is misguided. To assert the irresolvability of national conflicts is not to assert anything about their salience, intensity or centrality. Indeed I believe, as I am about to argue, that their salience, intensity and centrality are generally overstated. The search for some fundamental architectural resolution of national conflicts, then, is not only philosophically problematic and practically misguided; it is often, also, simply unnecessary.

To criticise the search for solutions and resolutions of national conflicts is not to suggest that institutional design does not matter. On the contrary, it matters a great deal.[526] Clearly, institutional design can either exacerbate or ameliorate ethnic and national conflicts. But it cannot solve such conflicts. Rather, good institutional design can give political actors incentives to work around ethnic and national conflicts, to disregard them for certain purposes, to frame political rhetoric and political claims in non-ethnic or trans-ethnic terms. Moreover, institutional design is unlikely to have even these limited (but very important) effects if carried out in a grand, architectonic, one-size-fits-all mode. Good institutional design is more likely to be subverted than informed by grand architectural principles like the principle of national self-determination or the principle of nationality. Good institutional design has to be contextsensitive in a strong sense, that is, sensitive not only to the gross features of differing contexts but to finer details as well; it presupposes relatively ‘thick’ understandings of the local contexts in which it is to apply.[527]

In my view, national conflicts are seldom ‘solved’ or ‘resolved’. Somewhat like conflicts between conflicting paradigms in a Kuhnian history of science, they are more likely to fade away, to lose their centrality and salience as ordinary people — and political entrepreneurs — turn to other concerns, or as a new generation grows up to whom old quarrels seem largely irrelevant. We need to devote more attention to studying how and why this happens — not only how and why politics can be pervasively, and relatively suddenly, ‘nationalised’, but also how and why it can be pervasively, and sometimes equally suddenly, ‘denationalised’.

II

The second misconception that I want to discuss is in some ways the opposite of the first. If the architectonic illusion is characterised by the naively optimistic view that national conflicts are capable of a final resolution, the second misconception is characterised by a bleakly pessimistic appraisal of east European nationalism. I will call this the ‘seething cauldron’ view, since it sees the entire region as a seething cauldron of ethnic conflict, on the verge of boiling over into ethnic and nationalist violence, or, in another metaphorical idiom, as a tinderbox that a single careless spark could ignite into a catastrophic ethnonational inferno. [528]

This might also be called the ‘orientalist’ view of east European nationalism, since it often involves, at least implicitly, an overdrawn, if not downright caricatural, contrast between western and eastern Europe, built on a series of oppositions such as that between reason and passion, universalism and particularism, transnational integration and nationalist disintegration, civility and violence, modern tolerance and ancient hatreds, civic nationhood and ethnic nationalism.

Indisputably, there are important differences, conditioned by historical traditions and present economic, cultural, political and ethnodemographic realities, between prevailing forms of nationhood and nationalism in western Europe and eastern Europe. Yet one must reject the complacent and self-congratulatory account of western Europe that is implicit or explicit in this orientalist, ‘seething cauldron’ view of eastern European nationalism. After all, the ‘Europhoria’ that surrounded discussions of European integration a few years ago was dissipated by the unforeseen (and partly nationalist) resistance to the Maastricht treaty; and nationalist and xenophobic parties have established a secure place in the political landscape of almost all western European countries.

One must also reject the ‘seething cauldron’ account of eastern Europe. It is this gloom-and-doom view of the east, rather than the paired complacent view of the west, that I address here. I focus on two problematic aspects of

this account. The first concerns violence, the second the strength and salience of nationalism and national identities.

The violence in the region — in the former Yugoslavia, in Transcaucasia and the North Caucasus, in parts of Soviet Central Asia — has indeed been appalling. But the undifferentiated image of the region as a hotbed of ubiquitous, explosive, violent or at least potentially violent ethnic and national conflict is quite misleading. Violence is neither as prevalent, nor as likely to occur in the region, as is generally believed.

Journalists and scholars have focused on spectacular but atypical cases of violence (the former Yugoslavia) rather than on unspectacular but more typical cases of ‘routine’ ethnic and nationalist tensions, and they have tended to generalise from the atypical cases to the region as a whole. This case selection bias is one reason for the overemphasis on violence. [529]

Not only the actual incidence of violence, but also the danger of future violence is overestimated. Violence is often presented as an omnipresent possibility. ‘If it happened in Yugoslavia’ — so goes the argument — ‘it could happen anywhere.’ I think this is mistaken. I have done some work, for example, on Hungarian minorities in neighbouring states, especially Romania and Slovakia. In this setting, several forms of nationalism are intertwined. The most important are the autonomyseeking nationalism of the Hungarian minorities; the ‘nation-building’ or ‘nationalising’ nationalisms of Slovakia and Romania; and the ‘homeland’ nationalism of Hungary, oriented to protecting the rights and interests of its co-ethnics in neighbouring states. Yet I think the danger of large-scale ethnic violence or nationalist war is minimal in this case. This is not because these national tensions can somehow be ‘resolved’. I do not think they can be. These interlocking, mutually antagonistic nationalisms of national minority, nationalising state and external national homeland are intractable and are likely to persist as chronic tensions and conflicts. But their intractability should not be conflated with explosiveness or with a potential to engender large-scale violence.

If I am right about this, it raises the analytical question of what prevents these chronic, intractable, interlocking nationalist conflicts from escalating

into violent confrontation. This neglected question of how to explain the absence or containment of violence, as political scientists James Fearon and David Laitin have recently argued, [530] is as important as the much more studied question of how to explain the occurrence of violence. In the case of Hungary and its neighbours, I would propose three reasons for the absence of violence. [531] The first is that Hungarians in the neighbouring states have enjoyed an accessible and relatively attractive ‘exit’ option — the possibility of emigrating to or working in Hungary. This has functioned as a ‘safety valve’ and has worked against the radicalisation of ethnonational conflict, especially in Romania. Secondly, the embeddedness of national conflicts in regional processes of European integration has ‘disciplined’ central political elites, especially in the foreign policy domain. This has induced Hungary to limit its support for transborder co-ethnics to support for Hungarian culture and to scrupulously avoid inciting destabilising political activity on the part of its co-ethnics. This is true even of the national-populist Antall government of the early 1990s, despite its strong rhetorical commitment to transborder co-ethnics. Third, the absence of credible narratives linking past ethnonational violence to present threat makes it difficult for radical, violence-oriented ethnopolitical entrepreneurs, whose stock in trade is fear, to succeed. By contrast, such narratives of danger and threat, linked to past violence, were strikingly evident in the former Yugoslavia before war broke out.[532]

Nor is this an isolated case. Estonia, for example, has been in the news a lot in recent years in connection with its bitterly contested citizenship laws and, more generally, in connection with the status of its large Russian minority. Rhetoric has been heated, indeed overheated: Russians (more frequently Russians in Russia than local Russians) have accused Estonia of apartheid and ethnic cleansing; Estonian nationalists have spoken of the Russian minority as colonists or illegal immigrants. Yet despite this overheated rhetoric, there is little fear of violence on the ground.[533]

It is not only violence that is overemphasised by the seething cauldron view. More generally, the strength, salience and centrality of national feeling, national identity and nationalist politics also tend to be overestimated. Consider for example nationalist mobilisation. There have, of course, been dramatic, even spectacular, moments of high nationalist mobilisation. One thinks, for example, of the ‘human chain’ across the Baltics in August 1989,

or of the great crowds that filled the main squares of Yerevan, Tbilisi, Berlin, Prague and other cities in 1988–90. These searing moments, transmitted worldwide by television, are etched forever in our memories. But they have been the exception, not the rule. Moments of high mobilisation — where they did occur — proved ephemeral; ‘nation’ was revealed to be a galvanising category at one moment, but not at the next. On the whole, people have remained in their homes, not taken to the streets. In conspicuous contrast to interwar east central Europe, demobilisation and political passivity, rather than fevered mobilisation, have characterised the political landscape. Much has been written on the strength of nationalist movements in the former Soviet Union; not enough has been written on their comparative weakness. And while the weakness of nationalism in certain regions (especially exSoviet Central Asia) has indeed been noted, too much attention has been given to variation across space in the intensity of nationalist mobilisation, too little attention to variation over time. Declining curves of mobilisation have been particularly neglected, although they are as common, as deserving of explanation, and as theoretically challenging as the more sexy ascending curves.

Even where national conflicts and national identity remain salient in the political sphere, they are not necessarily salient in everyday life. Nationalism may occur in the legislatures, in the press, in some branches of the state administration without occurring in the streets, or in the homes. [534] There is a loose coupling, or lack of congruence, between nationalist politics — which seems to run in a sphere of its own, unmoored from its putative constituencies — and everyday life. People do not necessarily respond particularly energetically or warmly to the nationalist utterances of politicians who claim to speak in their name. This general lukewarm responsiveness or even non-responsiveness to nationalist appeals of politicians is a legacy of a more general cynicism towards and distrust of politics and politicians. An ‘us’ versus ‘them’ distinction was indeed central to the way people understood politics under communism, and one might think this would be easily transposed into an exclusionary nationalism. Under certain circumstances, it may indeed be so transposed. In general, however, the ‘us’ — ‘them’ distinction divided not one ethnic or national group from another, but ‘the people’ from ‘the regime’. ‘They’ — representatives of the regime — were assuredly not ‘us’, even when they claimed to speak in our name (as they always did, of course, under communism). Nor did this change with the collapse of communism: deploying the idiom of ethnonationalism

(rather than that of class solidarity or socialist internationalism) is no guarantee that ‘they’ will be able to persuade ‘us’ that ‘we’ belong together, separated not by position in the mode of domination but by ethnic nationality from an external ‘them’.

Nor are national identities in the region as strong as is often assumed. I return to this theme below; suffice it to observe here that, given the overwhelming evidence of contextual and situational shifts in self- and other-identification, one should be skeptical of the oft-repeated emphasis on the deep historical encoding of national identities in the region, and alert to the danger of over-historicisation. [535]

Incipient but not insignificant cosmopolitan tendencies in the region, finally, have been obscured by the orientalist opposition between western supranationalism and eastern nationalism. Consider again Hungarians in Romania. It is no doubt true that, since the fall of Ceau§escu, the Hungarian national element in their self-understanding has become more pronounced. The linguistic, cultural, religious, historical and economic ties that link them to Hungary as anyaorszag or ‘mother country’ have become more palpable, more ‘real’. But there is not necessarily an inverse relationship between national and cosmopolitan self-understandings. At the same time that they have become more aware of and concerned with their trans-state Hungarian nationality, they have also become more aware of and concerned with the wider European world.

Television has played an interestingly ambivalent role here. The establishment, relatively lavish financing, and diffusion from Hungary of Duna TV, a channel intended chiefly for Hungarians in the neighbouring states, has reinforced the Hungarian national self-understanding of Transylvanian Hungarians. At the same time, however, the high prestige of French, German and English-language channels (Eurosport, BBC, etc) — widely available in Transylvania through cable and satellite systems — has probably had a certain (though admittedly hard to measure) denationalising or transnationalising effect. [536] An anecdote reveals the national ambivalence of television. Romanian authorities were distressed when they learned that a particular cable package was to include MTV To them, this meant Magyar TV, i.e. the state television from Hungary. In fact, of course, it

was the American music video channel that was at issue. And to the Transylvanian Hungarians, the American MTV was no doubt far more interesting than the Hungarian.

In sum, ethnic and nationalist conflict has been both less violent, and less salient, than many commentators have suggested; and where such conflict has occurred, it has often been chronic and low-level, a kind of ‘background noise’ occurring far from the focus of everyday life, rather than acute and explosive.

*** III

So far I have considered two overall appraisals of nationalist conflicts in the region, an optimistic view that sees them as resolvable through reorganising political space along national lines, and a pessimistic view that sees them as deeply entrenched, pervasive, destabilising, and on the verge of violent explosion.

I would now like to turn to two opposed accounts of the sources and dynamics of nationalist resurgence. The first of these is the ‘return of the repressed’ view. The gist of this account is that national identities and national conflicts were deeply rooted in the precommunist history of eastern Europe, but then frozen or repressed by ruthlessly anti-national communist regimes. With the collapse of communism, on this account, these precommunist national identities and nationalist conflicts have returned with redoubled force.

This view can be expressed in (and often seems to draw at least implicitly on) a quasi-Freudian idiom. Lacking the rationally regulative ego of self-regulating civil society, the communist regimes repressed the primordial national id through a harshly punitive communist superego.

With the collapse of the communist superego, the repressed ethnonational id returns in full force, wreaking vengeance, uncontrolled by the regulative ego.

(The quasi-Freudian idiom makes clear the orientalist inflection of this view, and its close relation to the myth of the seething cauldron.)

Obviously, communist regimes of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union did repress nationalism. But the ‘return of the repressed’ view mistakes the manner in which they did so. It suggests that these regimes repressed not only nationalism, but nationhood; that they were not only anti-nationalist but anti-national. It suggest further that a robust, primordial sense of nationhood survived in this period in spite of strenuous regime efforts to root it out in favour of internationalist and class loyalties and solidarities.

This view is fundamentally mistaken. Let me suggest why with a few words about the Soviet case. [537] To see late- and post-Soviet national struggles as the struggles of nations, of real, solidary groups who somehow survived despite Soviet attempts to crush them — to suggest that nations and nationalism flourish today despite the Soviet regime’s ruthlessly anti-national policies — is to get things nearly backwards. To put the point somewhat too sharply: nationhood and nationalism flourish today largely because of the regime’s policies. Although antinationalist, those policies were anything but anti-national. Far from ruthlessly suppressing nationhood, the Soviet regime pervasively institutionalised it. The regime repressed nationalism, of course; but at the same time, it went further than any other state before or since in institutionalising territorial nationhood and ethnic nationality as fundamental social categories. In doing so it inadvertently created a political field supremely conducive to nationalism.

The regime did this in two ways. On the one hand, it carved up the Soviet state into more than fifty national territories, each expressly defined as the homeland of and for a particular ethnonational group. The top-level national territories — those that are today the independent successor states — were defined as quasi-nation states, complete with their own territories, names, constitutions, legislatures, administrative staffs, cultural and scientific institutions, and so on.

On the other hand, the regime divided the citizenry into a set of exhaustive and mutually exclusive ethnic nationalities, over a hundred in all. Through this state classification system, ethnic nationality served not only as a statistical category, a fundamental unit of social accounting, but also, and more distinctively, as an obligatory ascribed status. It was assigned by the state at birth on the basis of descent. It was registered in personal identity documents. It was recorded in almost all bureaucratic encounters and official transactions. And it was used to control access to higher education and to certain desirable jobs, restricting the opportunities of some nationalities, especially Jews, and promoting others through preferential treatment policies for so-called ‘titular’ nationalities in ‘their own’ republics.

Long before Gorbachov, then, territorial nationhood and ethnic nationality were pervasively institutionalised social and cultural forms. These forms were by no means empty. They were scorned by Sovietologists — no doubt because the regime consistently and effectively repressed all signs of overt political nationalism, and sometimes even cultural nationalism. Yet the repression of nationalism went hand-inhand with the establishment and consolidation of nationhood and nationality as fundamental cognitive and social forms.

Nationhood and nationality as institutionalised forms comprised a pervasive system of social classification, an organising ‘principle of vision and division’ of the social world, to use Bourdieu’s phrase. They comprised a standardised scheme of social accounting, an interpretive frame for public discussion, a dense organisational grid, a set of boundary-markers, a legitimate form for public and private identities. And when political space expanded under Gorbachev, these already pervasively institutionalised forms were readily politicised. They constituted elementary forms of political understanding, political rhetoric, political interest and political identity. In the terms of Max Weber’s ‘switchman’ metaphor, they determined the tracks, the cognitive frame, along which action was pushed by the dynamic of material and ideal interests. In so doing, they transformed the collapse of a regime into the disintegration of a state. And they continue to shape political understanding and political action in the successor states.

Similar points could be made about Yugoslavia. [538] In other states of east central Europe, to be sure, the case is somewhat different; and there was not the same degree of public support for and pervasive institutionalisation of national identities. However, even in these cases, communist regimes made various, albeit limited, accommodations to the sense of nationhood; and the repression of nationhood, especially in the postStalinist era, was not so consistent as is widely assumed.

In emphasising the codification and pervasive institutionalisation of nationhood and nationality by the Soviet and Yugoslav regimes, I am not making a claim about the strength or depth of the ethnonational identities thus institutionalised. It is important to distinguish between the degree of institutionalisation of ethnic and national categories and the psychological depth, substantiality and practical potency of such categorical identities. The former was unprecedentedly great in the Soviet Union, but the latter were highly variable, and in some cases minimal. At the limit — widely instantiated among some of the smaller officially recognised nationalities within the Russian Federation — strongly institutionalised categorical identities masked the near-complete absence of distinct cultural identities or distinct ethnonational habitus. In this limiting case, members of different ‘groups’ differed only in the official categorical ethnonational markers they bore; these categorical markers did not represent cultural or ethnic differences, but replaced them. [539] I do not mean to imply that this limiting case was the general one in the former Soviet Union. But the general point remains. A strongly institutionalised system of official ethnonational identities makes certain categories available for the public representation of social reality, the framing of political claims, and the organisation of political action. This in itself is a fact of great significance. But it does not assure that these categories will have a significant, pervasively structuring role in framing perception or orienting action in everyday life. Institutionalised categorical group denominations can not be taken as unproblematic indicators of ‘real groups’ or of strong ‘identities’.

There is a version of the ‘return of the repressed’ argument to which I am more sympathetic. This is relevant especially in Yugoslavia, but also in parts of the former Soviet Union. The argument is that the tabuisation of certain

themes — in Yugoslavia the taboo preventing discussion of the fratricidal violence of World War II — prevented any kind of Vergangenheitsbewaltigung (mastery of the past) of the sort that occurred in Germany. There was simply no way to publicly work through arguments about the massive wartime atrocities. This does not imply that discussing these openly would have resolved them: of course this would not have happened. Discussion would have engendered bitter conflicts. But still, the public discussion of these might have deprived them of some of their potency forty years later when they were resurrected in public in a situation of pervasive uncertainty and insecurity without any previous attempt to master the past discursively.

In any event, what ‘returns’ in the postcommunist present is not something from the precommunist past; it is something constituted in important ways by the communist past. In the Soviet case, many national identities were first invented, imagined, and institutionalised under communism. But even elsewhere in eastern Europe, where this was not true, the national phenomenon was constituted in part — if only negatively — by communism, by the suppression of civil society, by the suppression of a public sphere where past atrocities could have been, in part, discursively mastered.

*** IV

‘The return of repressed’ view often sees what returns as somehow primordial, or at least deeply rooted in the pre-communist history of the region. Hence the frequent reference to ‘ancient hatreds’. Those who focus on unscrupulous and manipulative elites take the opposite view. Far from seeing nationalism as deeply rooted in primordial identities or ancient conflicts, they see it as stirred up in opportunistic and cynical fashion by unprincipled political elites. There is obviously much truth in this view. It is scarcely controversial to point out the opportunism and cynicism of political elites, or to underscore the crucial role of elites, whether cynical or sincere, in articulating national grievances and mobilising people for nationalist conflict. And there are certain textbook-clear examples of cynically manipulative elites stirring up nationalist tensions and passions: perhaps Slobodan Milosevic is the paradigmatic case — a pure example of a nationalist of convenience, rather than conviction. The elitist, instrumentalist

focus of this view is also correct in its rejection of the view that contemporary nationalist politics is driven by deeply rooted national identities and ancient conflicts.

As a general account of the sources and dynamics of nationalism in the region, however, the elite manipulation view has at least three problematic implications. The first is that nationalism pays off as a political strategy; that it is therefore a rational strategy for opportunistic elites to adopt; and that it is relatively easy for manipulative elites to stir up nationalist passions in a politically profitable manner. The second is that if elite-instigated ethnonational mobilisation could engender ethnonational war and mass violence in Yugoslavia, the same thing could happen elsewhere (in the strong version: anywhere). The third is that this elite-driven nationalism is essentially a politics of interest, and that it therefore must be explained in instrumental terms.

I think all three implications — or clusters of implications — are mistaken. To begin with, nationalism is not always a subjectively rational or objectively ‘successful’ political strategy. It is not always possible, let alone easy, to ‘stir up nationalist passions’. [540] It is not always possible, let alone easy, to evoke the anxieties, the fears, the resentments, the perceptions and misperceptions, the self- and other-identifications, in short, the dispositions, the cast of mind against the background of which conspicuous and calculated nationalist stance-taking by elites can ‘pay off’ politically. Nor is it always possible, or easy, to sustain such a nationally ‘primed’ frame of mind, such propitiously ‘nationalised’ dispositions, once they have been successfully evoked.

The loosely related political stances or strategies we call ‘nationalist’ afford no generalised guarantee of political success, no generalised advantage over other political stances or strategies.[541] Investing in nationalism, in general, is no wiser than investing in any other political idiom or stance. At certain moments, to be sure, nationalist stances may yield higher returns. But it is hard to identify the boundaries of such moments ex ante. And once it is clear that such a moment has arrived, both politicians and analysts are likely to err by conceiving it in overgeneralized terms. The collapse of communist regimes — a fortiori those

that ruled multi- or binational states — was such a moment. But how do we define this moment and its boundaries? I would argue that political entrepreneurs, closely monitoring other political entrepreneurs within bounded fields of comparison, and seeking a share of the windfall profits won by early investors in late-communist (or early postcommunist) nationalism, have tended to overinvest in this (momentarily) successful strategy, just as analysts, monitoring other analysts (as well as politicians), and seeking a share of the windfall profits won by early analysts of late-communist (or early postcommunist) nationalism, have similarly tended to overinvest in the study of nationalism in general, and in the study of elite manipulation in particular. [542]

The history of postcommunism is short; but it is long enough to make it clear that nationalism is not always a winning strategy, even in the specifically postcommunist setting. The record of electoral failure by nationalists — beginning with Lithuania in 1992 and including Hungary (1994), Ukraine (1994), Belarus (1994), Romania (1996) and others — is by now quite substantial. [543] The failure of one particular kind of nationalist appeal — the appeal to the need to protect transborder coethnics who are citizens and residents of other states — has been particularly striking. It is a source of chronic frustration to the Hungarian political elite, for example, how little the average Hungarian knows, or cares, about transborder Hungarians (in Romania, Slovakia, rump Yugoslavia and Ukraine). What the average Hungarian ‘knows’ about them, he or she doesn’t like: the ‘fact’ that the Hungarian government should be spending ‘our’ money on ‘them’, and the ‘fact’ that ‘they’ come to Hungary to take ‘our’ jobs. ‘They’ are certainly not recognised as ‘us’; the most eloquent testimony to this is that Hungarians from Transylvania who come to work in Hungary are routinely called ‘Romanians’. [544] Similarly, Russian politicians’ attempts to mobilise on the issue of Russians stranded in the ‘near abroad’ have been conspicuously unsuccessful. The one organisation specifically devoted to this theme — the Congress of Russian Communities (KOR) — failed even to clear the 5 per cent threshold in the December 1995 parliamentary elections. [545]

The second problematic implication is that if elite manipulation drove the former Yugoslavia into ethnonational barbarism, the same could happen elsewhere. I have already criticised the conclusion to this syllogism, arguing that large-scale violence between Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania

is unlikely despite intractable national tensions. Here I would like to challenge the premise.

Elite manipulation was of course an important element in the unfolding Yugoslav catastrophe. But the elite manipulation thesis fails to specify the particular conditions that made key segments of the Yugoslav population especially responsive to elite manipulation as the state began to disintegrate; more generally, failing to account for the differential success of the mobilising efforts and activities of elites, it overpredicts the severity and violence of ethnic conflict. In the Yugoslav case, a whole series of distinctive factors — the massive intercommunal violence during World War 11; the narratives of that violence that, deprived of a public hearing, circulated in familial settings, especially in certain key regions such as the Serb-inhabited areas of Croatian Krajina; the fear of the recurrence of that violence under conditions of rapid change in control over the means of state violence, especially when control over the means of state violence in Croatia was passing into the hands of a regime that incautiously (at best) employed certain symbols associated in the minds of Serbs with the murderous wartime Ustasha regime — help explain why people were responsive to the cynical manipulations originating in Belgrade.[546] Of course politicians distorted the past. But these distortions could be perceived as resonant and relevant in certain regions of Yugoslavia in a way that has no close parallel elsewhere, except perhaps in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Such variation in conditions of responsiveness to inflammatory elite appeals remains untheorised by the elite manipulation approach.

The third problematic implication of the elite manipulation thesis is that nationalism is essentially a politics of interest, not a politics of identity, and that it therefore must be explained in instrumental terms, by focusing on the calculations of cynical, self-interested elites, not in primordial identitarian terms. We should not in fact have to choose between an instrumentalist and an identitarian approach to the study of nationalism. That this is a false opposition becomes clear when we think about the cognitive dimension of nationalism. Considered from a cognitive point of view, nationalism is a way of seeing the world, a way of identifying interests, or more precisely, a way of specifying interestbearing units, of identifying the relevant units in terms of which interests are conceived. It furnishes a

mode of vision and division of the world, to use Pierre Bourdieu’s phrase, a mode of social counting and accounting.

Thus it inherently links identity and interest — by identifying how we are to calculate our interests.

Of course ‘interests’ are central to nationalist politics, as to all politics, indeed to social life generally. The elite manipulation view errs not in focusing on interests, but in doing so too narrowly, focusing on the calculating pursuit of interests taken as unproblematically ‘given’ (above all politicians’ interest in attaining or maintaining power), and ignoring broader questions about the constitution of interests, questions concerning the manner in which interests — and, more fundamentally, units construed as capable of having interests, such as ‘nations’, ‘ethnic groups’ and ‘classes’ — are identified and thereby constituted. Elite discourse often plays an important role in the constitution of interests, but again this is not something political or cultural elites can do at will by deploying a few manipulative tricks. The identification and constitution of interests — in national or other terms — is a complex process that cannot be reduced to elite manipulation.

*** V

The fifth idea I want to address is the ‘groupism’ that still prevails in the study of ethnicity and nationalism. By groupism — or what I will also call the ‘realism of the group’ — I mean the social ontology that leads us to talk and write about ethnic groups and nations as real entities, as communities, as substantial, enduring, internally homogeneous and externally bounded collectivities.

A similar realism of the group long prevailed in many areas of sociology and kindred disciplines.[547] Yet in the last decade or so, at least four developments in social theory have combined to undermine the treatment of groups as real, substantial entities. The first is the growing interest in network forms, the flourishing of network theory, and the increasing use of

network as an overall orienting image or metaphor in social theory. Secondly, there is the challenge posed by theories of rational action, with their relentless methodological individualism, to realist understandings of groupness. The third development is a shift from broadly structuralist to a variety of more ‘constructivist’ theoretical stances; while the former envisioned groups as enduring components of social structure, the latter see groupness as constructed, contingent and fluctuating. Finally, an emergent postmodernist theoretical sensibility emphasises the fragmentary, the ephemeral and the erosion of fixed forms and clear boundaries. These developments are disparate, even contradictory. But they have converged in problematising groupness, and in undermining axioms of stable group being.

Yet this movement away from the realism of the group in the social sciences has been uneven. It has been striking — to take just one example — in the study of class, especially in the study of the working class — a term that is hard to use today without quotation marks or some other distancing device. Indeed the working class — understood as a real entity or substantial community — has largely dissolved as an object of analysis. It has been challenged both by theoretical statements and by detailed empirical research in social history, labour history and the history of popular discourse and mobilisation. The study of class as a cultural and political idiom, as a mode of conflict, and as an underlying abstract dimension of economic structure remains vital; but it is no longer encumbered by an understanding of classes as real, enduring entities.

At the same time, an understanding of ethnic groups and nations as real entities continues to inform the study of ethnicity, nationhood and nationalism. In our everyday talk and writing, we casually reify ethnic and national groups, speaking of ‘the Serbs’, ‘the Croats’, ‘the Estonians’, ‘the Russians’, ‘the Hungarians’, ‘the Romanians’ as if they were internally homogeneous, externally bounded groups, even unitary collective actors with common purposes. We represent the social and cultural world in terms reminiscent of a Modigliani painting as a multichrome mosaic of monochrome ethnic or cultural blocs.

I want to say a bit more about this Modiglianesque image of the social world. The metaphor I borrow from Gellner. Towards the end of Nations and

Nationalism, Gellner invoked the contrasting painterly styles of Kokoschka and Modigliani — shreds and patches of colour and light in the former case, solid, sharply outlined blocs of colour in the latter — to characterise the passage from the cultural landscape of prenational agrarian society to that of nationally and culturally homogenised industrial society. [548]

This is a striking image, but I think it is misleading. There are in fact two versions of the Modiglianisation argument. The first — and this is Gellner's own argument — is the 'classical', nation-statist version. This is the argument that culture and polity gradually converge. Gellner was a master of compressed characterisations of vast, world-historical social transformations; and no doubt in very broad historical perspective one can speak of a substantial cultural homogenisation of polities, and of a consequent convergence of cultural and political boundaries. There are, however, two problems with Gellner's account.

First, Gellner's stress on the homogenisation functionally required by industrial society seems to me to be trebly misplaced: in overemphasising the degree of cultural homogeneity 'required' by industrial society; in sidestepping the problem, endemic in functionalist accounts, of explanation (to note that something may be 'required' or 'useful' for something else is not to explain its occurrence; no mechanism guarantees that what is 'required' will in fact be produced); and in neglecting the homogenising pressures arising from interstate competition, mass military conscription and mass nationalist public education in the classical age of the mass citizen army — pressures more powerful, in my view, than those arising from industrialism as such. [549]

Secondly, Gellner did not specify whether the homogenising forces of industrial society are still at work, or whether late industrial society is no longer culturally homogenising. A differentiated answer is required to this question. In certain respects — for example in the global diffusion of what is in many respects a single global material culture and dispositions associated with it — powerfully homogenising forces are still at work. In other respects, however, this is not the case. Thus, for example, the very logic of advanced capitalist/late industrialist/postindustrial society generates pressures for

massive imports of immigrant labour, which tends to recreate a more Kokoschka-like cultural pattern.

It seems indisputable, however, that the homogenising forces arising from militarised interstate competition in the classical age of the mass citizen army — at least in the advanced industrial world — peaked in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was the maximally ‘Modiglianesque’ moment, I would argue: it was the ‘high noon’ of the citizen army, of the ‘nation in arms’, of the highly assimilationist, homogenising school systems that were linked in style and ideology to citizen armies, and of nation-states’ claims to absolute internal sovereignty, claims that legitimated their attempts to ‘nationalise’ their own territories at will, even ruthlessly. With the passing of this maximally ‘Modiglianesque’ moment, there has been a certain relaxation in the homogenising claims, aspirations and practices of the state, at least in regions of the world (most strikingly in western Europe) where states are no longer locked in fierce geopolitical and potentially military competition with one another.

But the classical, nation-statist version of the Modigliani-map argument is not the most current one. It is universally acknowledged today that culture and polity do not converge, that nearly all existing polities are in some sense ‘multicultural’. Yet the multicultural landscapes of late modernity are themselves usually represented in Modiglianesque terms, in terms, that is, of juxtaposed, well-defined, monochrome blocs. I want to argue that this newer, ‘postnational’ (or, more precisely, postnation-state) version of the Modigliani map is as problematic as the older, classically ‘nation-statist’ version.

One might have thought that the mixed settlement patterns characteristic of most contemporary ‘multicultural’ polities would resist Modiglianesque representation. On this way of thinking, immigration-engendered ethnic heterogeneity, such as that of the United States, would be particularly refractory to representation in such terms; but so too would the intricately intermixed ethnodemographic landscape of Eastern Europe, and of East Central Europe in particular — a locus classicus of ethnically and nationally mixed settlement.

But this mistakes the nature — and the rhetorical power — of the Modigliani map. The spatial aspect of the representation — the image of continuous and homogeneous blocs situated next to, rather than interspersed with, one another — should not be interpreted too literally; it does not necessarily imply corresponding spatial characteristics of what is represented. The Modiglianesque representation of heterogeneity as the juxtaposition of homogeneous blocs does not presuppose that the blocs be territorially concentrated. The constituent blocs may be intermixed in space, for their 'blocness' — their boundedness and internal homogeneity — is conceptually located not in physical but in social and cultural space. [550] But the conceptual map is still groupist; it still sees the population as composed of definable, bounded, internally homogeneous blocs (for example, African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans, and Euro-Americans, in the 'pentagonal' multiculturalist account of America). [551] The implicit if not explicit imagery is that of internally homogeneous, externally sharply bounded, though not necessary territorially concentrated, ethnocultural blocs.

The fact of pervasive territorial intermixing, then, is not itself incompatible with the Modiglianesque representation of ethnocultural heterogeneity. To challenge the Modigliani map, one must directly challenge the underlying groupist social ontology that informs most discussions of multiculturalism in North America (and indeed most discussions of ethnicity and nationalism throughout the world). There is by now an ample and sophisticated literature supporting such a challenge. As I noted above, moreover, a series of fundamental developments in social theory in recent decades have converged in problematising assumptions of stable and bounded 'groupness'. Yet these considerable theoretical and empirical resources have scarcely made a dent in the groupism that continues to prevail — that has indeed recently been strengthened — in theoretical and practical discussions of ethnicity and nationalism, sustained by the combined force of casually groupist ordinary language, parochial scholarly tradition (especially in ethnic and racial studies and area studies, but now also in the rapidly expanding sphere of nationalism studies), the institutionalisation and codification of groups and group 'identities' in public policy, and the group-making, group-strengthening endeavours of ethnopolitical entrepreneurs.

The forces supporting — and strengthening — groupist social ontology and groupist social analysis are even stronger in Eastern Europe than in North America. The institutionalisation and codification of ethnic and national groups, as noted above, went much further in multinational communist states than in North America. In Eastern Europe, moreover, the scholarly traditions associated with challenges to groupness — rational choice theory, network analysis, constructivism generally, and postmodernist emphases on the transient and fragmentary — have been much weaker than in North America. More fundamentally, Eastern Europe lacks the individualist traditions ofNorth America, above all the fundamentally voluntarist conception of groupness originating in sectarian Protestantism but ramifying throughout social and political life, especially in the United States.

One might argue, moreover, that the prevailingly strongly groupist language of social analysis in Eastern Europe describes the ethnonational landscape of the region rather well. After all, this region has seen an enduring and conspicuous discrepancy between national boundaries — strongly maintained within and against states — and state boundaries. It has been the locus classicus of deeply sedimented, resilient and relatively stable ethnonational boundaries following, in much of the region, linguistic rather than political frontiers. The very forces that conspicuously hindered the Gellnerian convergence of culture and polity in the region, enabling ethnonational ‘groups’ to sustain boundaries that cut across political divisions, would seem to warrant a Modiglianesque representation.

There have indeed been impressive instances of sustained ‘groupness’ in the region — in particular, of the maintenance of group boundaries and strengthening of group identities against the homogenising, assimilationist pressures and practices of nationalising states. One notable instance is that of Poles in Eastern Prussia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. One cannot generalise, however, from this case to the region as a whole — or even to other settings involving Poles and Germans. In other nearby settings, the boundaries between Poles and Germans proved quite weak and unstable, and a great deal of assimilation occurred in both directions. The maintenance and strengthening of national boundaries in this instance must be seen as reflecting particular circumstantial forces and factors, not as somehow emanating from some properties putatively intrinsic to ‘Poles’ as

such. Groupness was strengthened in dynamic, interactive, organised response (involving a highly developed agricultural cooperative movement, credit associations, land purchase organisations, school strikes and strong support from the Catholic church) to the harshly assimilative practices of the Prussian/German state. It was sustained by a strong basis in the Catholic church (and by religiously as well as ethnolinguistically sustained endogamy) in a region where linguistic and religious cleavages coincided (in regions where Catholic Germans encountered Poles, national boundaries were much weaker). Groupness in this case was thus a product of politics and collective action, not a stable underlying basis for these.[552]

In other cases boundaries are much weaker. Consider for example late- and post-Soviet Ukraine. As we have noted above, the Soviet regime pervasively institutionalised nationhood and nationality as fundamental social categories. A key expression (and instrument) of that institutionalised scheme was the census, which recorded the self-identified ethnocultural nationality (natsional'nost} of every person. At the time of the 1989 census, some 11.4 million residents of Ukraine identified their nationality as Russian. But the precision suggested by this census data, even when rounded to the nearest 100,000, is entirely spurious. The very categories 'Russian' and 'Ukrainian', as designators of putatively distinct ethnocultural nationalities, are deeply problematic in the Ukrainian context, where rates of intermarriage have been extremely high, and where nearly 2 million of those designating their ethnic nationality as Ukrainian in the 1989 census admitted to not speaking Ukrainian as their native language or as a second language they could 'freely command' — a figure many consider to be greatly underestimated. One should therefore be skeptical of the illusion of bounded groupness created by the census, with its exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories. One can imagine circumstances in which a selfconscious ethnically Russian minority might emerge in Ukraine, but such a 'group' cannot be taken as given or deduced from the census.[553]

The boundary between Hungarians and Romanians in Transylvania is certainly sharper than that between Russians and Ukrainians in Ukraine. Even in Transylvania, however, group boundaries are considerably more porous and ambiguous than is widely assumed. The language of everyday life, to be sure, is rigorously categorical, dividing the population into mutually exclusive ethnonational categories, and making no allowance for mixed or

ambiguous forms. But this categorical code, important though it is as a constituent element of social relations, should not be taken for a faithful description of them. Reinforced by ethnopolitical entrepreneurs on both sides, the categorical code obscures as much as it reveals about ethnonational identifications, masking the fluidity and ambiguity that arise from mixed marriages, from bilingualism, from migration, from Hungarian children attending Romanian-language schools, from intergenerational assimilation (in both directions) and from sheer indifference to the claims of ethnocultural nationality.

‘Groupness’ and ‘boundedness’ must thus be taken as variable, as emergent properties of particular structural or conjunctural settings; they cannot properly be taken as given or axiomatic. Comparative studies of ethnicity and nationalism provide abundant support for this point, but it remains inadequately appreciated outside this specialised research tradition. The point needs to be emphasised today more than ever, for the unreflectively groupist language that prevails in everyday life, journalism, politics, and much social research as well — the habit of speaking without qualification of ‘Hungarians’ and ‘Romanians’, for example, as if they were sharply bounded, internally homogeneous ‘groups’ — not only weakens social analysis but undermines the possibilities for liberal politics in the region.

*** VI

The final idea I want to discuss is the Manichean view that there are two kinds of nationalism, a good, civic kind and a bad, ethnic kind; and two corresponding understandings of nationhood, the good, civic conception, in which nationhood is seen as based on common citizenship, and the bad, ethnic conception, in which nationhood is seen as based on common ethnicity. This is often connected to an Orientalist conception of east European nationalism, for in general civic nationalism is seen as characteristic of western Europe, ethnic nationalism as characteristic of eastern Europe. But the civic-ethnic distinction is also used within regions, sometimes in an ideological mode, to distinguish one’s own good, legitimate civic nationalism from the illegitimate ethnic nationalism of one’s neighbours, and sometimes in a scholarly or quasi-scholarly mode, to

characterise and classify different forms of nationalism and modes of national self-understanding. Today the distinction is often used to frame discussions of the new states of eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and to ‘keep score’ on contemporary processes of nation- and state-building in the region; it provides a handy — all-too-handy, in my view — tool for classifying incipient processes of state- and nation-building as civic or ethnic.

By labelling this a Manichean view, I caricature it, of course, but not too violently. In its more nuanced forms, the distinction certainly has some analytical and normative merit. I myself have used a related (though not identical) distinction between state-centred and ethnocultural understandings of nationhood in my own previous work. [554] Still, I think the distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism, especially in the rather simplistic form in which it is usually applied, is both analytically and normatively problematic. [555]

One way of highlighting the analytical weakness of the Manichean view is by noting its uncertainty over how to conceptualise the cultural dimension of nationhood and nationalism. Roughly speaking, there are two very different ways of mapping culture onto the civic-ethnic distinction.

(i) On the one hand, ethnic nationalism may be interpreted narrowly, as involving an emphasis on descent, and, ultimately, on race, on biology. In this case, there is very little ethnic nationalism around, for on this view an emphasis on common culture, without any marked emphasis on common descent, has to be coded as a species of civic nationalism. But the category of civic nationalism then becomes too heterogeneous to be useful, while that of ethnic nationalism is underpopulated.

(ii) On the other hand, ethnic nationalism may be interpreted broadly, as ethnocultural, while civic nationalism may be interpreted narrowly, as involving an acultural conception of citizenship, a sharp separation of citizenship from cultural as well as ethnic nationality. But in this case, the problem is just the opposite: civic nationalism gets defined out of existence, and virtually all nationalisms would be coded as ethnic or cultural. Even the paradigmatic cases of civic nationalism — France and America — cease to

count as civic nationalism, since they have a crucial cultural component. (Interestingly, two recent books argue for the existence of an American cultural nationality: American nationhood, they argue, is not purely political, founded on an idea; it is cultural; America is a nationstate founded on a common, and distinctive, American culture).[556]

The normative weakness of the distinction similarly pivots on the ambiguous place of culture:

(a) If ethnic is interpreted broadly as ethnocultural, then the blanket normative condemnation of ethnic nationalism is problematic, for in certain circumstances it is easy to have normative sympathy for the defensive power of ethnocultural nationalism (e.g. for that of Poland during the time of partition, for that of the Baltic nations under Soviet rule, indeed for minority cultures everywhere, whose nationalism cannot assume a civic form, though it need not, of course, be ‘ethnic’ in the narrow, biologically based sense).

(b) If culture, however, is classified with civic nationhood and nationalism, then many nationalising ‘civic’ nationalisms, more or less suffused with cultural chauvinism, and seeking to reduce or (at the limit) eradicate cultural heterogeneity within a state, although indifferent to ethnicity in the sense of descent as such, are normatively ambiguous at best.

From a normative point of view, the joining of state power to nationalist or nationalising practices should always be cause for concern. A skeptical stance towards statist nationalising nationalisms (not to be equated with a blanket condemnation of them) is more adequate, and more supple, than the conceptually muddled blanket embrace of civic (and condemnation of ethnic) nationalism. The policies and practices of nationalising states may be assimilationist, in a variety of modalities ranging from benign — or not so benign — neglect of ethnic or cultural differences to harsh or even coercive attempts to eradicate such differences. On the other hand, nationalising policies and practices may be dissimilationist — premised on, even constitutive of, fundamental differences between groups. The assimilationist stances are not necessarily ‘civic’ in any normatively robust sense, while the dissimilationist stances are not necessarily ‘ethnic’ in the narrow sense (not

necessarily premised on descent-based group difference). Both assimilationist and dissimilationist nationalising nationalisms warrant normative skepticism, though our normative evaluation of them will depend heavily on rich contextual knowledge — knowledge that cannot adequately be captured, even in simplified form, by an impoverished and ambiguous coding of them as ‘civic’ or ‘ethnic’.

From an analytical point of view, a more useful (though of course closely related) distinction can be drawn between state-framed and counter-state understandings of nationhood and forms of nationalism. In the former, ‘nation’ is conceived as congruent with the state, as institutionally and territorially ‘framed’ by the state; in the latter, it is conceived in opposition to the territorial and institutional frame of some existing state or states. This distinction can do the analytical work that is expected of the civic-ethnic distinction without the attendant confusions.

Clearly, there is not necessarily anything ‘civic’ — in the normatively robust sense of that term — about state-framed nationhood or nationalism. It is the state — not citizenship — that is the cardinal point of reference; and the state that frames the nation need not be democratic, let alone robustly so. Moreover, the notion of state-framed nationhood or nationalism can accommodate linguistic, cultural and even ethnic aspects of nationhood and nationalism in so far as these are (as they often are in fact) framed, mediated and shaped by the state.[557] Escaping the constricting definitional antithesis between civic and ethnic or ethnocultural nationalism, we can see that state-framed nationalisms are often imbued with a strong cultural content and may be (though need not be) ethnicised is well.[558]

Counter-state nationalisms, on the other hand, need not be specifically ethnic; nationhood conceived in opposition to an existing state need not be conceived in ethnic terms, or even, more loosely, in ethnocultural terms. Quite apart from the difference, mentioned above, between narrowly ethnic and broadly ethnocultural understandings of nationhood, counter-state definitions of nation may be based on territory, on historic provincial privileges, on distinct political histories prior to incorporation into a larger state and so on. These are all cases of counter-state but non-ethnic definitions of nationhood — of nation defined in opposition to the institutional

and territorial framework of an existing state or states but without reference to a distinct ethnic or ethnocultural collectivity. Moreover, whether the counter-state nation in question is defined in ethnic or ethnocultural terms or in some other fashion, counter-state nationalisms may partake of ‘civic’ qualities; indeed demandingly participatory counter-state nationalist movements may provide a particularly rich setting for the cultivation, display and exercise of participatory and thereby in some sense ‘civic’ virtue — which the conventional civic-ethnic antithesis definitionally, but misleadingly, associates with ‘civic’ and denies to ‘ethnic’ nations and nationalisms.

*** Conclusion

The ‘pernicious postulates’ I have discussed — some directly opposed to others — do not add up to a single theory of nationalism. Nor have I sought to construct such a theory in my critique of these postulates. The search for ‘a’ or ‘the’ theory of nationalism — like the search for ‘a’ or ‘the’ solution to nationalist conflicts — is in my view misguided: for the theoretical problems associated with nationhood and nationalism, like the practical political problems, are multiform and varied, and not susceptible of resolution through a single theoretical (or practical) approach. What I have sought to provide, then, is not a comprehensive theory of nationalism, but a series of pointers away from a set of analytical cliches, theoretical dead ends and misguided practical stances towards more promising ways of thinking about, writing about and coping practically with nationalism and national conflicts.

*** Notes

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[512] A partial listing of these would include international relations and security studies (as the end of the Cold War has fostered new understandings of ‘security’ and ‘insecurity’); political science (as the study of nationalism

has spread from its traditional home in comparative politics into more theretically ambitious, self-consciously ‘scientific’ areas of political science); rational choice theory (in sociology as well as in political science); anthropology (as it has increasing taken complex, ‘modern’ societies as its object); sociology (especially with the ‘cultural turn’ in comparative, historical and political sociology); ethnic studies (with a partial convergence between the literatures on ethnicity and on nationalism); cultural studies; comparative literature; art history; women’s studies; musicology; and a variety of areastudies fields including, in a spectacular instance of scholarly perestroika, post-Soviet and east European studies.

[513] In the post-Soviet field, this has happened as academic entrepreneurs, in search of windfall profits, have entered the field, unburdened by any but the most minimal acquaintance with the comparative and theoretical literature of the field, to say nothing of the wider theoretical and empirical literature of the social sciences, and hastily converted their intellectual capital from forms suddenly devalued by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet regime into newly revalued forms, for example, in the sub-field of ‘security studies’, from a weapons-oriented understanding of security and insecurity to one centred on ethnic and national conflict. In other fields, far removed from the traditional disciplinary loci for the study of nationalism (cultural studies, musicology, comparative literature, etc.), the historical and social scientific literature on nationalism has been appropriated in a highly selective way.

[514] For a sampling of that literature, see B. Anderson, Imagined Communities, London, 1991; J. Armstrong, Nations before Nationalism, Chapel Hill, 1982; J. Breuilly, Nationalism and the State, Manchester, 1982; E. Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, Oxford, 1983; and A. D. Smith, The Ethnic Origins of Nations, Oxford, 1986.

[515] C. Tilly, Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons, New York, 1984.

[516] Apart from the fact that my own recent work has concerned nationalism in this region, there are good analytical reasons for focusing on this region. Nowhere — for reasons suggested in note 2 — is the theoretical primitivism in the study of nationalism more striking than in the literature (and quasiliterature) on this region. Nowhere, moreover, do the myths and misconceptions I address have more superficial plausibility than in this region.

[517] It is an uncomfortable truth that, around the time of the 1938 Munich agreement, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia through the separation of the Sudeten German lands from the rest of the country was presented and justified in Britain — and not only in Germany — in the name of national selfdetermination. See A. J. P. Taylor, The Origins of the Second World War, London, 1961 and M. Kofacs, ‘A nemzeti onredelkezes csapdaja’ [The trap of self-determination], Nepszabadsag, 12 August 1995.

[518] For a classic, albeit highly compressed, statement of the sequel, see the epilogue to A. J. P. Taylor, The Habsburg Monarchy, Chicago, 1976. For a more extended statement, though still splendidly concise, see J. Rothschild, East Central Europe between the Two World Wars, Seattle, 1974, especially ch. 1. It is problematic, to be sure, to assign responsibility for the disastrous developments in Central Europe in the two decades following World War I to the principle of self-determination, not least because the principle was applied so selectively in the postwar settlement. One could argue that it was the failure to apply the principle more consistently — for example, by allowing the peaceful accession of rump Austria to Germany — rather than the application of the principle, that proved disastrous.

[519] Kovacs, ‘A nemzeti onredelkezes csapdaja’.

[520] For sophisticated recent discussions from the perspective of normative political theory, see Y. Tamir, Liberal Nationalism, Princeton, 1993; W. Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship, Oxford, 1995; and D. Miller, On Nationality, Oxford, 1995.

[521] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, p. 48.

[522] For an analysis of interwar Poland as a nationalising state, with some concluding reflections on nationalising states today, see R. Brubaker, Nationalism Refamed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe, Cambridge, 1996, ch. 4.

[523] For a comparison ofWeimar Germany and contemporary Russian homeland nationalism, see Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, ch. 5.

[524] See inter alia S. Woodward, Balkan Tragedy, Washington, 1995, pp. 209ff and Kovacs, ‘A nemzeti onredelkezes csapdaja’.

[525] As Robert Dahl puts it, We cannot solve the problem of the proper scope and domain of democratic units from within democratic theory. Like the majority principle, the democratic principle presupposes a proper unit. The criteria of the democratic process presuppose the rightfulness of the unit itself.’ See for a thorough exploration of this point Dahl’s Democracy and its Critics, New Haven, 1989, pp. 147–8, 193–209, with quotation coming from p. 209.

[526] For penetrating analysis ofinstitutional design, see D. Horowitz, Ethnic Groups in Conflict, Berkeley, 1985 and A Democratic South Africa?, Berkeley, 1991.

[527] For an eloquent contextualist plea for ‘the adjustment of claims to circumstances’, see M. Walzer, ‘The New Tribalism’, Dissent, Spring, 1992. To argue that good institutional design must be context-sensitive in a strong sense does not mean that generalising analysis of the workings of different types of institutions — say, for example, different types of electoral systems — is inappropriate. Horowitz undertakes such

generalising analysis, but it is a generalising analysis of the very different effects that ‘the same’ electoral system can have in differing contexts. And Horowitz’s most sustained discussion of institutional design — in A Democratic South Africa? — is densely contextual in my sense, blending relatively ‘thick’ description of a particular context with generalising arguments about the effects of particular institutions in a variety of settings.

[528] Although I limit my remarks to eastern Europe here, the gloom-and-doom view of putatively explosive ethnic nationalism has considerably wider currency. It is even used in the United States, for example, to link multiculturalism to ‘Balkanisation’ and attendant bloodshed. Critical though I am of many multiculturalist pieties (see, for example, pp. 292–98), I find the argument of a ‘slippery slope’ leading from the follies of multiculturalism a l’americaine to ethnic warfare just plain silly.

[529] J. D. Fearon and D. D. Laitin, ‘Explaining Interethnic Cooperation’, American Political Science Review, vol. 90, 1996.

[530] Ibid.

[531] I should emphasise that this is a relative, not an absolute, absence of nationalist violence. There was one serious incident of violent clashes between Hungarians and Romanians in Tirgu Mires in the spring of 1990, but this did not trigger further violence. Other forms of violence — notably violent attacks on Gypsies in Romania and other east European countries — have been quite serious; my attention here is limited to relations between Hungary and the majority nationalities in states neighbouring Hungary.

[532] Fearon and Laitin, ‘Explaining Interethnic Cooperation’, correctly caution against explaining ethnic violence by appealing to narratives of ‘loss, blame, and threat’, arguing that such narratives characterise non-violent forms of ethnic conflict as well. But not all such narratives are equal, or equally likely to be connected to violence. There is an important difference, in particular, between memories and threats of death and physical violence on the one hand and narratives of loss, blame and threat in general on the

other. Credible narratives of loss, blame and threat are ubiquitous; credible narratives linking memeories of past mass violence to threats of future mass violence are not. What was distinctive about the Yugoslav situation — and in my view centrally connected with the violence there — was the availability of plausible, and for some key actors, compelling narratives linking the occurrence of large-scale violence, in particular, mass killings, in the past to the threatened recurrence of such violence in the present.

[533] David Laitin, personal communication.

[534] In Estonia and Latvia, for example, the clash between the claims of the newly independent nationalising states and those of their Russian and Russophone minorities, strongly amplified from the outside by the homeland nationalist claims of Russia to ‘protect’ Baltic Russians, has remained intense and intractable at the level of high politics. But there has been little popular nationalist mobilisation in the last few years on the part of majority nationalities or on the part of the Russian and Russian-speaking minorities (on the relative political passivity of Russians, see N. Melvin, Russians beyond Russia, London, 1995).

[535] There is, of course, a parallel danger of under-historicisation. I address this below in my discussion of the failure of ‘elite manipulation’ accounts to explain or systematically address the historically conditioned differential resonance of appeals made by manipulative or opportunistic nationalist politicians. (To the extent that historically conditioned differences in responsiveness to inflammatory nationalist rhetoric are addressed at all in the ‘elitist’ literature, they are addressed in an ad hoc fashion, relegated to the category of ‘other factors’ or to an undertheorised residual ‘context’.)

[536] Both the Hungarian Duna-TV and the various western European channels have high prestige among Transylvanian Hungarians. Romanian state television, by contrast, has low prestige although a new private Romanian channel, self-consciously Western in style, is widely watched. Its effect is mainly in contributing to the alienation of Transylvanian Hungarians from the regime, and, perhaps, from the state itself.

[537] For a fuller version of this argument, see Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, ch. 2.

[538] V. Vujacic and V. Zaslavsky, ‘The Causes ofDisintegration in the USSR and Yugoslavia’, Telos, vol. 88, 1991.

[539] In Bourdieuian terms, two sets of persons might share exactly the same habitus (or, more sociologically, the same distribution of habitus); they might look at the world in the same way, speak the same language, dress in the same manner, consume the same goods, etc.: yet they might still exist as two ‘groups’ because of public categorical recognition.

[540] The expression itself is problematic: presuming that nationalist passions are already there to be ‘stirred up’, it glosses over the difficulties involved in what might be called the ‘work of nationalisation’.

[541] For a sophisticated argument to the contrary, see J. Rothschild, Ethnopolitics, New York, 1981, pp. 41–66, especially pp. 64–5.

[542] In another sense, to be sure, analysts have underinvested in the study of nationalism; or, their investments have been short-term rather than longterm. In search of a quick pay-off, they have underinvested in the long-term study of nationalism, but over-invested in quick discussions and in ‘pidding up’ the significance of the phenomenon of nationalism.

[543] One should not replace a global overestimation of the power of nationalist political appeals with a global underestimation. The ‘return of the left’ does not mean that nationalism is no longer a viable political option in the region. The ‘return of the left’ — especially, of a ‘left’ whose economic policies have been (in some instances) far more monetarist, far more acceptable to the IMF, than anything the preceding ‘right’ government undertook — may well be followed by the ‘return of the return of

the right’. Moreover, the ‘left’ — think of the communists in Russia — is quite as capable of nationalism as the ‘right’, if these labels mean anything at all, which is doubtful. Nationalism had no fixed location on the political spectrum back when it made sense to speak of a political ‘spectrum’; still less does it have any such fixed location today.

[544] This is not, of course, peculiar to Hungary: ‘Germans’ from Kazakhstan who resettle in Germany are called ‘Russians’, as are Jews from Russia (or elsewhere in the former Soviet Union) who resettle in Israel.

[545] The lack of electoral success of appeals to the protection of Russians outside Russia does not mean that this theme will disappear from Russian political discourse. Even if such appeals are unprofitable in the arena of domestic political competition, they may be useful in international contexts. This argument is developed in Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, ch. 5.

[546] For a more detailed statement of this argument, see Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, pp. 72ff.

[547] The argument of this and the next paragraph is drawn from, and developed more fully in, Brubaker, Nationalism Reframed, ch 1, especially pp. 13ff.

[548] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, pp. 139–40.

[549] Gellner of course did devote considerable attention to education, notably in Nations and Nationalism, ch. 3. But he saw mass ‘exo-education’ as arising from the logic of industrial society, not from the logic of interstate competition in the age of mass warfare.

[550] Even mixed settlement patterns, though, are often imagined in mosaic-like terms as composites of bounded and homogenous units. ‘Heterogeneity’,

in this mode of imagining it, is a distribution of homogenous units. Heterogeneity is still conceptualised in groupist terms. Sometimes this finds literal representation in maps — as, for example, when maps of ethnic ‘diversity’ or ‘mixing’ are represented as juxtaposed solid colour patches. How to represent ethnic heterogeneity on a two-dimensional map is a difficult — and philosophically interesting — question. Certainly, though, the simple juxtaposition of solid colour fields is quite often misleading, suggesting a much greater degree of local homogeneity than in fact exists, and relegating heterogeneity to a higher-level unit. That is, such maps imply that provinces (for example) are heterogeneous, but smaller regions and villages are not; and this implication is often mistaken.

[551] For critical discussions of conceptions of this multicultural pentagon, see D. Hollinger, Post-Ethnic America, New York, 1995 and M. Lind, The Next American Nation, New York, 1995.

[552] For a general statement of this point, see C. Calhoun, ‘The Problem of Identity in Collective Action’, in J. Huber, ed., Macro-Micro Linkages in Sociology, Newbury Park, 1991, p. 59.

[553] The data on nationality and language are taken from Gosudarstvennyi Komitetet po Statistike, Natsional’nyi Sostav Naseleniia SSSR, Moscow, 1991, pp. 78–9.

[554] R. Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany, Cambridge, MA, 1992.

[555] For a critique of the civic-ethnic dichotomy from the point of view of political theory, see B. Yack, ‘The Myth of the Civic Nation’, Critical Review, vol. 10, 1996.

[556] See Hollinger, Post-Ethnic America and Lind, The Next American Nation.

[557] France may again be cited as a paradigmatic instance of state-framed nationhood. Culture is indeed constitutive (not — as I argued in Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany — simply expressive) of French nationhood; but this is pervasively state-framed culture, not culture conceived as prior to and independent of the territorial and institutional frame of the state.

[558] Again, in this case, we would be talking about a statist ethnicisation of nationhood, not some kind of pre-state or extra-state ethnicity. ‘Ethnicity’ and ‘culture’ thus may be found in state-framed nationalism, but only in so far as they themselves are state-framed or state-‘caged’ (to use Michael Mann’s term, drawn from his The Sources of Social Power, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1986 and 1993). There is no opposition between the statist component — which refers to the framing — and ethnicity or culture.

* Bibliography of Ernest Gellner’s writings on nationalism

Comments about nationalism occur throughout Gellner’s writings, not least when discussing particular national identities, Islam, the options of modern European thought, and the sociology of development: this is scarcely surprising given that the interpretation of nationalism is part of a larger social philosophy. The following list concentrates on the theory of nationalism, and so omits most occasional references and much of the more general social philosophy. As the list that follows is extensive, key texts have been marked with asterisks. It follows Ian Jarvie’s ‘Bibliography of Ernest Gellner’ in J. A. Hall and I. C. Jarvie, eds., The Social Philosophy of Ernest Geitner, Amsterdam, 1996. Please note that the pieces collected in Encounters with Nationalism are not listed here by date of original publication; equally, translations and reprintings are not cited.

| 1963 | ‘Going into Europe’, Encounter, vol. 20, pp. 54–5. |

| ★1965 | Thought and Change, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson; Chicago: University of Chicago Press (with the imprint 1964).
‘The Day the Pendulum Stood Still’ (review of Sylvia G. Haim, ed., Arab Nationalism), New Society, vol. 5, pp. 30–1. |

| 1967 ‘Democracy and Industrialisation’, European Journal of Sociology, vol. 8, pp. 47–70. |

| 1971 ‘Our Current Sense of History’, European Journal of Sociology, vol. 12, pp. 159–79.
‘Going into Europe — Again?’, Encounter, vol. 37, pp. 232–4. |

| 1972 Review ofElie Kedourie, Nationalism in Asia and Afica, British Journal of Sociology, vol. 23, pp. 120–3. |

| ★1973 ‘Scale and Nation’, Philosophy of the Social Sciences, vol. 3, pp. 1–17. |

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* Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version]

<biblio>

‘Abd al-Hamid Kishk, Shaykh 265 access, direct 196–7, 199–200, 207 Afghanistan 75

Africa 160 agency 9, 161–2, 170, 173, 174, 186 agriculture 249

Alexander II 98

Algeria 192, 261–2

Anderson, B. 33, 92, 196, 199, 204, 212, 219, 267, 272

Anderson, P. 8, 10, 11, 51, 121–2 anti-Jewish activities 223, 247–8 anticipatory borrowings 27–8 arbitration 64 architectonic illusion 273, 274–80 Arendt, H. 36 Armenia 210

Armstrong, J. 5, 54, 55, 272

Aron, R. 120

Arya Samaj 211 assimilation 220 democratic cultural 224–5 elites’ refusal 205–9 matched-guise test 145–6, 150–2 pressure 203 reasons for 153 role of exit 12, 154–5 of Russians 146–8, 233–4 survey 144–5 versus nationalism 143 see also language

Austria 229, 244–6 authoritarianism 12

Balibar, E. 102

Basque country 57–8, 124, 232–3

Baudrillard, J. 129

Bauer, O. 102

Beirut 267

Beissinger, M. R. 169–90, 12, 16

Belarus 290

Belgium 44–5, 57, 58, 64

Bennis, M. 264

Bernstein, E. 34

bilingualism 45, 194–5

Bismarck, O. E. L. von 95

books 263–5

Bosnia 125, 191, 210, 214, 232

boundaries

administrative 180

changes 220

ethnic 113

physical, human and cultural 174–9

political 224

Bourdieu, P. 287

bourgeoisie l 02

Brazil 229, 231

Brecht, B. 130

Breuilly, J. 171, 272

British empire 61

Brittany 57

Brown, P. 260

Brubaker, R. 3, 17, 226, 272–306

bureaucracy 11, 66, 136

Burke, E. 68

Calhoun, C. 198

call to difference 206, 211–12, 214

Cambodia 109–14, 115–18, 125–6

Canada 44–5, 57, 58, 170, 195–6, 229, 278

Cardoso, F. H. 231

caricature 138

Carpathian Euroregion 253–4, 255

Catalonia 57, 58, 124, 232–3, 235–6

causality 162, 163–4

Ceausescu, N. 284

change 24, 26–7, 32, 220

Chauvin, N. 119, 124

chauvinism 7, 119

China 53

choice model 149–50

Christianity 260

citizenship 70, 196–7

civil society 15–16, 250–4, 255, 258–9, 268

class

conflicts 100–1

identity 102

peasant 107–8, 114–17

working 102, 109, 293

Cobban, A. 74

communications 47, 100, 160, 181, 225,

263–7

communitarian values 70

Comte, A. 28

conflict

class 100–1

ethnic 247–8, 252–4, 255

ofinterests 100–1

irresolvable 279–80

persistent 179–80

resolution 183

within ethnic groups 35 see also violence

consociation 64

constructivist theory 292, 296

contingency versus necessity 169–90

control 64

Corsica 57

Croatia 210, 223

cultural equipment 176, 180–1

culture 27, 299–300

conquering 206

diverse 64, 245–6

high 7, 47, 59, 62, 137, 169–70, 192–4,

220–2

homogeneous 176, 192–4, 220, 293–4

peasant 107–8

state influence 183–4

and structure 42–3

traditional 194, 205–6

Cyprus 57

Czech national philosophy 28

Czech nationalism 45, 91, 121

Czechoslovakia 35, 64, 223–4, 243, 278

Dahl, R. A. 222, 229

Dark Gods theory 41, 46

De Valera, E. 127

deliberation and decision 203–4

democracy 13

and homogeneity 222–4

improvement of 219

legitimate 203–4

multinational 225–7

and nationalism 219

representative 200–1

transitions 219

unequal 229–31

Deutsch, K. 186

devolution 57

dignity 206–9, 212, 214

Dreyfus Affair 120

Durkheim, E. 46, 11

economic functionalism 121

economic growth 47, 76, 245

economic returns 142, 150, 153

Edelman, M. 176

education

and culture 27–8, 42–3, 47, 70

economies of scale 59

mass 160–1, 263–8

modernisation, need for 27–8, 192

national system 249

state 193

egalitarianism 66

Egypt 261, 262, 263, 264–6

Eickelman, D. F. 258–71, 17

electoral systems 227

Eliade, M. 198

elite manipulation 273–4, 289–92

elites 205–9, 212

see also intelligentsia

Elster, J. 162

Engels, F. 30

England 74, 128

English Peasant Revolt (1381) 115

entropy-resistant classifications 136

equality 197

individual 94, 249

labour market 254

of nations 71

Estonia 144–55, 184–5, 224, 283

Russians in 233–4, 236

ethnic boundaries 113

ethnic cleansing 248

ethnic conflict 35, 247–8, 252–4, 255

ethnic identity 94–6

ethnic nationalism 108, 117, 122–3,

286–7

ethnicity 250–4

ethnofederalism 182

European Union 64, 124

exit and voice 12, 154–5

Fanon, F. 208

Farouk, King 266

fascism 137

Fearon, J. 282

federalism 64, 227–32, 235–6

communist ruptures 227 democratic inequalities 229–31 ethno-federalism 182

Fichte, J. G. 68

filter explanation 52–3, 76, 162

Findlay, R. 35–6

Finer, H. 230

Finland 57

France 57, 60, 66, 74, 119–20, 123–4, 197, 202

Muslims 261, 263

Franz Josef (Francis Joseph) I 36, 246

free markets 70

Frieson, K. 117

functionalism 8, 192

and causality 163–4

criticised 51–3, 78, 160–2

defended 10, 137–9

economic 121

liberal 58

and teleology 9,76

Galicia, eastern 244–50, 254

Gandhi, M. 209, 210, 211

Gellner, E.

‘An Alternative Vision’ 32

Conditions ofLiberty 15, 16, 258, 220–2

Encounters with Nationalism 72, 151 life 1–3

Nationalism 6, 15, 71–6, 138

Nationalism Observed 41, 137

Nations and Nationalism 23, 128, 293, 219, 137, 138, 1–6, 16, 41, 46–51, 51–76

Plough, Sword and Book 23, 35

‘Reply toMy Critics’ 9–10, 11–12, 41, 72, 76–7, 158, 161

Thought and Change 4–5, 23–4, 26, 29, 32, 40, 41–5, 50, 51–76, 128, 135, 170, 186

geographical dispersion 180

Georgia 124–5, 173, 184, 210

Germany 61, 62, 74, 122, 170, 221, 229–30, 277

Giddens, A. 158

global economy 176, 181

Gorbachev, M. 182–3, 287

Gramsci, A. 33, 34

Great Chain of Being 198

Greece 73, 76,98, 223

Greek Catholic Church 247–8, 251

Greenfeld, L. 54, 55, 128, 212

Hall, J. A. 1–18, 41

Hann, C. 16,243–57,4

Hapsburgempire 61, 74, 98, 244–6, 247

Hegel, G. W. F. 205

Heidegger, M. 123

Herder, J. G. von 68, 71

hierarchy 196, 198, 207

Himmler, H. 122

Hindus 211

Hirschman, A. O. 12

historical materialism 65

Hitler, A. 36, 114, 122

Hobsbawm, E. 77

homogeneity 8–9, 193, 201, 293–4

culture 220

and democracy 222–4

and nationalism 63–4, 202

Hong Kong 53

honour 207

Hope, A. 246

Hroch, M. 6, 91–106, 137, 138

human action 9, 161–2, 170, 174, 186

human rights see rights

Hungary 61, 103, 282–3, 290

Huntington, S. 259

ideal type 163, 164

identity

categorical 198, 199, 207, 214

class 102

ethnic 94–6

from relationship with others 208

modern citizen 201

multiple 13, 228, 232–4

national 6, 34, 96, 284

political 232

regional 96

threatened 211

ideology 9, 34, 67–8

Ieng Sary 126

imagined communities 196

incentives 139, 144

India 202, 207, 211, 224, 267

individualism 197–8

Indonesia 75

industrialisation 6, 72–3, 188

and change 24, 26

diffusion 135–6

and modernisation 94, 121

and nationalism 8,26, 36, 47, 135–6, 158–60, 163

and philosophy 24

uneven 245

inequality 245–6

innovation or invention 78

institutionalisation

degree of 287–8

of groups 296

institutions 13, 280

intelligentsia 43, 59, 172, 179

see also elites

interests, politics of 291–2

international context 181, 185–6

international relations 35, 118

Ireland 57–8, 60, 107–8, 126–7

Islam 211–13

‘brick’ 258–61, 268

fundamentalism 214, 262

and nationalisation 16–17, 53, 74–5

see also Muslim society

Israel 57

Italy 57, 62, 74, 221

Jackson, K. D. 114

Jaffe, R. 115

Japan 52, 223

Jarvie, I. C. 41

Jinnah 212

job mobility 150–1

see also social mobility

Jordan 261, 263

Kant, I. 42, 207

Kaszinski, T. 123

Kazakhstan 144–55

Kedourie, E. 40, 42, 46, 67–8, 137, 175,

186, 193,202

Kepel, G. 261

Khieu Ponnary 110

Khieu Samphan 112

Khomeini, Ayatollah 213

Kiernan, B. 109–13, 115–18, 122, 125, 126

Killing Fields 115–16

Klaus, V. 2

Kohn, H. 74, 94, 123, 126, 128

Kokoschka, O. 293–4

Kostava, M. 173

Kurds 75

Kuwait 262

Kymlicka, W. 235, 14

labour, division of 161, 169

Laitin, D. D. 8–10, 124, 125, 135–57, 234, 282

Lambert, W. 145

language 15, 100, 222

as culture 28

economic returns 142, 150, 153

multilingualism 45, 194–5

official 193, 194

shift 140–3

standardised 171, 192, 267

total number of 50, 59

utility function 141–3

see also assimilation

Laski, H. 31

Latvia 144–55, 178, 224

leadership 96–7, 209

see also elites; intelligentsia

Lenin, V. I. 29, 35

Lerner, D. 259

Lester, J. 33

liberalism 4, 13, 14, 41, 45, 58, 61–3,

66

Lieven, A. 184

Lijphart, A. 227, 235

Linz, J. 13, 220, 232

List, F. 30–1, 32, 4, 35, 68

literacy 42, 47, 160–1, 192, 225

Lithuania 185, 290

loyalty 69–70

Lustick, I. 175

Luther, M. 115

Luxemburg, R. 34

Mabruk, L. 265

McGarry, J. 64

McLuhan, M. 129

Malaysia 75

Malinowski, B. 3, 36

Manichian view 274, 298–301

Mann, M. 8, 10, 158, 159, 164

Mao Tse Dong 112

market economies 197

Martov 35

Marx, K. 30–1, 32, 35, 46, 67, 129

Marxism 4, 41, 58

and nationalism 24, 29–30

philosophy 25–7

political status of 26

Masaryk, T. G. 1, 28

Mayer, A. J. 129

Mellars, P. 243

Merton, R. K. 161

methodology

comparative 91

macro/micro level consistency 139

Michnik, A. 253

migrants 108, 136

military 10, 53, 65–6, 159

Mill, J. S. 68, 69, 222, 129

Miller, D. 222–3, 226

Milosevic, S. 125, 289

Minogue, K. 73, 164

minorities 204, 227, 277

modern economy 192

modern state 170, 175

need for homogeneity 193

requirements 196–204

modernisation

and industrialisation 27, 94, 121

interrupted 7

and nationalisation 46, 53

nature ofprocess 120, 129

uneven development 135–6

modernist theory 54–5

modernity 40, 77 wave-like 205–6

Modigliani, A. 293–5 monopolymediators 141 Montesquieu, C. de S. 207

Moore, B. 164

Morocco 259, 261, 262, 263–4

Mouzelis, N. 6, 9, 158–65, 8, 10

Muhammad, Prophet 268 multicultural politics 294–5 multilingualism 45, 194–5

Muslim politics 261–3

Muslim society

diversity 260

secular 260–1 see also Islam

Nairn, T. 7, 107–34

Namierism 91

Nasser, President 264, 266 national consciousness 55, 91 national identity 6,34, 96, 284 national revival 91–2 nationalisation

and modernism 46, 53

and peasant rurality 122–3 nationalism

after industrialisation 56–7

behavioural spread l 72

benefits of 45

and change 27 civic-ethnic division 298–301 classical liberal 49

as contentious politics 174–9

cycles of 178

defensive 210, 277–8

defined 4–5, 6, 46–7

and democracy 78, 219

diaspora 49, 61

diffusion 43, 53,76

divisive 43

early andlate 56

east/west contrasts 281

erroneous theories 17–18, 46, 273, 281–5

ethnic 49, 61, 62, 108, 117, 122–3, 286–7

and everyday life 284

external national homelands 277

failed 180

goals and aspirations 138

history of 32–3

and homogeneity 202

and industrialisation 8, 26, 36, 47, 135–6, 158–60, 163

liberal 214–15 a losing strategy 289–90 and Marxism 24, 29–30 mature homogenous 61 meanings of 93–4 modern phenomenon 204 nation-based 276 nationalising 277 patriotism 201–2 pre-industrial 54–6, 194 satisfied 49 scientific 30–1 sources of 53, 204–5, 285–92 stages (time zones) 73–4, 170, 221, 223, 244, 245

state focus 195, 300–1

typology 61–3

Utopian 30

weak and strong 11, 50–1 western liberal 61, 62, 63 nationalist movements 91–2, 136, 184, 283 contest of current concepts 177–8 demands of97 leadership 96–7 mass support for 95, 98, 159, 209–12 and the modern state 170 successful 99–101 violence in 124–6

nationality principle 274–80 nations

categories of 173

as claim and condition 1 71

claims disputed 278–9 created or evolved 72 definitions 91, 99, 215–16 as extended family 113–14 form of 101–2 homogenisation 63–4 as innovation or invention 55 size 11, 59, 91–2, 94, 180 stages of development 94 substantiation of 171–4 typology 48–50, 74, 78

naturality theory 41–2

Nazis 223, 247 need 137, 161–2 Nehru, J. 52, 202, 211 Netherlands 64 network theory 292, 296 Nietszche, F. W. 123 Niven, D. 114

North Korea 53

O’Brien, C. C. 71

O’Donnell, G. 219

O’Leary, B. 5,6, 8,9, 11, 17, 23, 40–88, 162

Ottoman empire 61, 74, 98

Pakistan 75

Palestine 57, 278

path dependency l 72, l 74

patriotism 201–2

Pearse, P. 52

peasant culture 107–8

peasant uprisings 114–15, 116–17

Petain, H. P. O. 120, 124

Petersen, R. 143

philosophy 33

ofhistory 53–4

and industrialization 24

Marxism 25–7

Piedmont 74

Piscatori, J. 260

Pius X, Pope 260

Plamenatz, J. 7, 62

Plekhanov, G. V. 35

Pokrovsky, M. N. 29

Pol Pot (Saloth Sar) 109–12, 114–18, 126

Poland 35–6, 60, 61, 223, 245, 254

agriculture 249

partitioned 247

Przemysl 247–8, 250–4, 255

transition 249–50

Polanyi, K. 245

Poles 296–7

political legitimacy 40, 42, 55

political myth 33

political oppression 11–12

political programme 102–3

political systems 227

political theory 13–14

politics 3, l 0, 171

contentious l 74–9

and everyday life 284

interest 291–2

multicultural 294–5

Muslim 261–3

nature of 262

ofthe possible 180, 184, 186–7

ofrecognition 13, 225

and substantiation of nations l 72–4

Ponchaud, Father F. 118

Popper, K. 123

Portugal 74, 223

postmodern theory 292, 296

pre-modern units 42–4

primordialism 5–6

Protestantism 163, 213, 296

Prussia 74

Puymege, G. de 119

Qaboos, Sultan 263

racism 71, 118

Ramet, S. 125

Rammohan Roy 211

rational action theory 292, 296

rational choice theory 8

realism of the group 17–18, 274, 292–8

reductionism

cultural and material 65

theory 72, 76

reification 137–9

religions 40, 47, 60, 211

chauvinism 71

fundamentalism 214, 262–3

see also Christianity; Islam; Protestantism

Renan, J. E. 173

return of the repressed 17–18, 273, 285–8

reunification 57

rights 181

individual and group 14, 234–6

minority 227

Riker, W. 231

Riley, C. 114

Roman Catholic Church 251

Romania 61, 282, 290

Hungarians in 284–5

Romanov empire 74

Rousseau, J. J. 52, 68

rurality, curse of 107–30

Ruritania 244, 246

Rushdie, S. 263

Russia 192, 289

tsarist 98, 221, 245

Russian diaspora 140–55

Rustow, D. 222

Rwanda 126

Sadat, A. el-, President ofEgypt 261, 262

Sadik al-Azm 261

Saint-Somon, Henri de 35, 28

Saudi Arabia 263

Sayyid Qutb 266

Schanberg, S. 115

Schelling, T. 140

Schmitter, P. C. 219

science 25

Scotland 127

secession 13, 58, 63–4

seething cauldron 17–18, 273, 281–5

selection mechanisms 60–1

self-determination 66, 199

antimonies of279

doctrine of69, 75, 79

international norms 181

local 102–3

principle of 5–6, 27 4–80

Selim III 98

Senghaas, D. 32

Serbs 98, 125

Seton-Watson, H. 55, 171

Shahrur, M. 262–3

Shakespeare, W. 6

Sha’rawi, Shaykh 265

Siberia 182

Sihanouk, Prince 117

simultaneity 199

Smith, Adam 31

Smith, Anthony 54, 55, 59, 72, 92, 272

social conflict theory 50

social contract theory 198

social current 33

social entropy 50, 136

social mobility 47, 100, 245, 248–9, 254–5 see also job mobility

socialism 102, 248–9

South Africa 64

South Korea 223

South Tyrol 61

sovereignty 200

Soviet Union 53, 61, 74

diaspora 140–55

glasnost 182–3

Marxist success 34

nationhood encouraged 286–7

post communist 58, 185, 221, 275, 283

Spain 57, 58, 232–3, 235–6

see also Basque country; Catalonia

Spanish empire 61

stability 76

Stalin, J. 53, 114

state

challenged 175–6

cultural equipment 176, 180–1

democratic division 224

development of 158–9

domination of public discourse 1 77

influence on cultural norms 183–4

mistrust of 182–3, 186

modern 170, 175, 193, 196–204

permanent breakdown 181

power 12

quiescent phases 179–86

wealth creation role 176

state-nation 94

status

in-group 143, 151–2

out-group 143, 152–3

Stepan, A. 9, 13–14, 219–39

Stewart, M. 243

Sudetenland 61

Swaan, A.de 141

Switzerland 44–5, 65

Szporluk, R. 4–5, 7, 23–39

tabuisation 288

Taylor, C. 8, 13, 14, 16, 191–218, 225 theory, predictive power 44, 50, 59–61, 78

Thompson, E. P. 109

Tilly, C. 187, 272

time zones 73–4, 170, 221, 223, 244, 245

tipping games model 140–3, 149–50,

154–5, 184

Tocqueville, A. de 12, 95, 196

T6ibin, C. 107

Transylvania 291, 297–8

Troeltsch, E. 260

Trotsky, L. 26

Trudeau, P. 195

Tunisia 261

Tuol Sleng 114

Turkey 75

Ukraine 124–5, 144–55, 224, 245, 247–8, 252, 290, 297

uncertainty 182

United States 66, 182, 202, 296

American Revolution 198

federal system 229–30

universalist theories 68

urbanisation 108, 136

Uzbekistan 172

Vickery, M. 116, 118

Vico, G. B. 28

Viemamese War 115–16

violence 124–6, 183, 209–10

absence of282-3

Eastern Europe 281–2

vision and division principle 287

Wales 57, 58, 127

wealth creation 176

Weber, E. 224–5

Weber, M. 287, 33, 121, 163

Whitehead, L. 219

Wittgenstein, L. 245, 3

Wolf, E. 114–15

Woodburn, J. 243

Woolard, K. 145

working-class

movement 102

origin of 109

studies 293

Wrong Address theory 46

Yugoslavia 58, 61, 74, 125, 275, 278–9, 287–8, 291

Zhirinovsky 192

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IDENTITY CONFLICTS

Can Violence be Regulated

J. Craig Jenkins Esther E. Gottlieb editors

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*** [Dedication]

To the Memory of Ruth C. Jenkins 8/31/1917-10/15/2006 and Bluma (Fuhrer) Gottlieb 11/2/1917-12/4/2006

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“Deprivation, Violence, and Identities” was a truly international interdisciplinary effort, embracing not only many world areas and academic disciplines, as reflected in the authors’ and discussants’ research, but also in the staging of an original play, Photographs from S-21, by Catherine Filloux (published by Playscripts, 2003). A finalist for the 1999 Heideman Award at the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Filloux’s play is based on documentary evidence of the detainment, torture, and execution of Cambodians in a secret prison called S-21 under the Khmer Rouge regime. The production of the play at OSU Theater Department, directed by Professor Lesley Ferris, was followed by a panel discussion with John B. Quigley, Presidents’ Club Professor of Law, Moritz College of Law, author of The Genocide Convention: An International Law Analysis, Ara Wilson, author of The Intimate Economies of Bangkok, and Alan Woods, director of the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute.

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J. Craig Jenkins and Esther E. Gottlieb

Columbus, Ohio,

December 2006

*** Preface

This volume examines the origins and regulation of violent conflicts. Our focus is on the regulation of conflict, by which we mean the constraining, directing, and repression of violence through institutional rules and understandings. We use "regulation" as the organizing theme of this volume because it captures the idea that conflict is ubiquitous but can be managed by rules, symbols and common understandings. Others have used terms such as "resolving," "modulating," "moderating," "containing," "de-fusing," and "mediating," but they are less satisfying. We assume that social conflicts are ubiquitous and inherent in organized social life. Conflict, therefore, cannot be eliminated and simply replaced by strictly cooperative behavior. A more realistic perspective is that though conflicts are rarely and perhaps never "resolved," they can be regulated. The root of the word "regulation" is the application of rules, which is narrower than the way we are going to use this term here and certainly narrower than the repertoire of strategies used to deal with or mediate identity conflicts. By regulation, we include common understandings, symbols and shared meanings that, in conjunction with rules, serve to reduce the intensity and violence of conflict. This may also include force or the potential for force, such as positioning peacekeepers and the like. Regulation does not necessarily mean the end of violence but, for durable violence reduction, violence regulation does have to occur. The core

question of this volume is how violence is regulated and the social and political consequences of such regulation.

The chapters collected in this volume provide a multidisciplinary multiregional analysis of identity conflicts and their regulation. Our chapters draw on two general approaches for analyzing identity conflicts. Some follow a political-economy approach that places primary emphasis on resources, organization, and interests. In this view, violent conflict is seen as a product of underlying antagonisms combined with the availability of resources, organization, and political opportunities. Violence occurs because subordinated groups develop new resources, organization, and experience new opportunities and threats, or, alternatively, dominant groups see the need to enforce their claims through violence, using repression that may meet resistance. The limitation of the political-economy approach is that it neglects the understandings, sentiments, identities and values of the actors. It also treats institutional rules as the result of underlying power processes. For this reason, other chapters in this volume develop a cultural approach that focuses on the meanings of actors, tracing how identities are socially constructed, grievances defined, blame attributed, and programs for the redress of grievances articulated. This includes discussions of “unthinkable” conflict, multiple or “two-faced” identities, and the use of cultural symbols to signal opposition as well as reconciliation and conflict transformation. This captures the intentions and meanings of actors, which are stripped away by a political-economy treatment.

These are complementary approaches. Understanding identity conflicts and their regulation requires capturing both the resources and the interests of contending parties as well as their codes of honor, symbolism, and collective identities. Our volume is multidisciplinary in bringing together these different approaches in a sustained dialogue. Moreover, its perspective is global, drawing on the experiences of all the major world regions.

Chapter 1 of our volume provides a framework for examining the connections between identity, conflict, and violence. We begin our introductory chapter on the regulation of conflict, asking what processes contribute to the regulation of violence. In chapter 2, Neil Smelser examines the debates surrounding the idea that globalization is behind contemporary

identity conflicts. Advancing a qualified and balanced assessment of the concept, he argues that contemporary ethnic conflicts are due only in part to globalization. The chief factors are the ethnic suppression that followed post-colonial independence and the new ethnic competition set off by the collapse of the Soviet Union. Globalization did, however, create limits on repressive closed states, encouraging ethnic minority movements and putting pressure on states to recognize human rights. Smelser points out a useful distinction between the economic, cultural, and political aspects of globalization. Transnational human rights advocacy, cooperative security arrangements that require protection for minority rights, and international norms that encourage human rights have created new opportunities for ethnic mobilization. Where states have had the capacity to implement conflict settlements and engage in effective reconstruction, globalization has discouraged violence and promoted positive conflict transformation. Globalization has both contributed to conflict and, at the same time, contributed to its regulation.

The remainder of the volume is divided into six parts, which address strategies or processes that contribute to the regulation of identity conflicts. Part I involves the forging of new identities, especially the processes that provide alternating support for conflicting identities. The chapters in this section highlight diverse responses to identity crisis. In some colonial settings, the oppressed respond with “false consciousness” by enthusiastically adopting the colonized identity offered them. Leo Ching shows that discrepant views were “unthinkable” or at least not openly expressed in a way that got into historical records. Similarly to the cases of recruitment of Gurkhas from Nepal to serve in the British imperial army or the Navaho “code talker” American Indians during World War II, the indigenous Taiwanese in Ching’s case study identified totally with their colonizers. Others challenged the colonizer identity but, due to lack of resources, leadership, and opportunities, failed to articulate an alternative identity. In chapter 4, Diane Nelson shows how many Mayans in post-conflict Guatemala have forged new ethnic identities which incorporate a more fluid “two-faced” element that depends on the audience and the immediate setting. This reflects the complexity of human identities in fluid changing societies, where identities are multiple and unfixed. It also reflects the reality of post-conflict societies in which conflicting social expectations are common. Chapter 5 focuses on the development of public discourse in Muslim-majority countries. Some contend that there is an unbridgeable cultural gulf between

Islam and Western culture and that the norms of public discourse and political tolerance that prevail in Western democracies do not exist in non-democratic Muslim societies. Dale Eickelman and Armando Salvatore argue, contrary to these positions, that semiformal and informal articulations of Muslim identities in Muslim majority countries are currently creating such a public discourse and therefore publicly accountable forms of Islam. If we think of what they call “public Islam” as a new identity shaped by new practices, new forms of publication and communication, and new ways of thinking about religious and political authority, we must remember that there is no singular public Islam. Rather there are a multiplicity of overlapping forms of practice and discourse that represent the varied historical and political trajectories of Muslim communities and their links and influences with societies elsewhere.

Part II details the suppression of identities and thereby conflicts. In chapter 6, Dru Gladney examines Muslim identity in China, showing that some Muslims have become fully assimilated while others maintain a distinctive identity and way of life. Aside from a few protests, there has been little independent expression of ethnic identity. The Chinese government has used public works and state-controlled minority bodies to regulate and suppress conflict. However, exiled Muslims abroad have used the Internet and political opportunities in their diaspora communities to organize and promote a new “cyber-separatism.” While this campaign has gained little visible support inside China, it illustrates the possibilities for transnational organizing and has spurred the Chinese government to redouble its efforts to regulate expressions of Muslim identity. Chapter 7 turns to the world’s largest stateless nationality—the Kurds—whose identity has been suppressed until recently. Michael Gunter traces this suppression from the post-colonial solution imposed by the British in the 1920s to the present. While contemporary U.S. military protection for Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq and civil relaxations in Turkey have created new opportunities for an autonomous identity, Kurdish nationalism remains largely suppressed in Iran and Syria. Recent developments in Iraq suggest one possibility, regional autonomy inside a federal state. However, should Iraq fail as a coherent state, it would seem likely that a new autonomous Kurdish state will emerge, posing new challenges for regional stability in the Middle East. In chapter 8, Pori Park examines the conflict over married vs. celibate Buddhist monks in post-colonial South Korea. Identified with the Japanese colonial regime, the celibate monks were able to purge the married monks, consolidating their

control over Buddhist institutions. This shows how seemingly innocuous distinctions can be made into symbols of identity. Ironically, the celibate monks became closely identified with the repressive military governments, which eventually undermined their legitimacy and public support.

Part III focuses on problematic identities in which identity conflict is only partially regulated and could explode. In his analysis of ethnic hatred in Macedonia in chapter 9, Robert Hislope shows that rural ethnic Albanians are attitudinally capable of considerable ethnic violence but, at least to date, have not acted on their hatreds. He provides a comprehensive overview of theories of ethnic mobilization and violence, highlighting how these inform the Macedonian case. What translates ethnic hatred into action? This points to the importance of political entrepreneurs and opportunities created by outside powerbrokers. Comparing Hislope's evidence to Georgi Derluguian's analysis of ethnic politics in Abkhazia, in chapter 10, underscores the importance of regional powerbrokers. In the case of Abkhazia, a strong cultural identity was maintained within Georgia throughout the Soviet period. In part, this was because the region served as a vacation spot for Soviet officials as well as because it served Russian interests. In the post-Soviet era, regional rivalries between Russia and Georgia have created alternating rounds of ethnic purges and violence. The Russians have supported an autonomous Abkhazia as part of their grand strategy to weaken Georgia. So long as this balance of regional power between Russia and Georgia persists, Abkhazia will retain an odd type of de facto sovereignty.

Chapter II by Aseel Sawalha addresses the problem of urban reconstruction given the large displaced population uprooted by Lebanon's civil war. In view of the recent 2006 war in Lebanon, there are thousands of newly displaced southern Lebanese, who will now again lack permanent housing, a "problem" that is related to the debates about heritage and the identity of the city of Beirut. The newly uprooted from their homes, now as in 1991, have to adapt themselves to other spaces in the city, homes abandoned by the more affluent Lebanese who were able to flee to safer regions. Sawalha shows that the displaced are viewed as lacking urban culture and, worse, of disturbing the social order of the urban by making it grubby, dirty, and backward. The goal of finally placing the displaced has implications related to the city's aesthetics and the goal of modernizing, both of which are inevitably bound up with the theme of social and economic power. Responses to the large-

scale social problem involve issues of geographic region as well as time: All the proposed solutions for solving the problem of displacement imply the return of the rural population to their prewar villages. Even those who criticize how the government treats the displaced agree that they should be removed from the Beirut area. Defining Lebanon's popular heritage and preserving its traditions by the urban elite were part of the country's search for its postwar identity. On the surface, this process might be read to suggest that the actors involved are trying to depart from the Western modernities, but in fact their strategies are a way of creating an "alternative modernity" in an attempt to be part of the global world.

Part IV turns to processes of reconstructing identities through peace-building measures, such as military reintegration, the creation of new collective memories, and building new political institutions. After war settlements, a key problem is how to reintegrate former troops. Frequently middle-aged and lacking alternative job skills, many former soldiers turn to predatory behavior, becoming criminal enforcers, mercenaries or other violence specialists. In chapter 13, Antoinette Errante examines post-conflict educational policies in Mozambique, in the wake of a peace settlement often celebrated as one of the more successful. Mozambican authorities have suppressed any public discussion of the conflict, assuming that the best approach is acting as if the civil war never occurred. Errante argues, however, that this has prevented youth from coming to terms with the conflict and recognizing the guilt that many parties incurred for atrocities committed during the war. As with the case of the South African Truth Commissions (discussed in chapter 1), conflict transformation requires an open dialogue before atonement can occur. Errante's chapter documents how wartime cultures and identities affect post-conflict violence regulation. Political and economic decision making regarding the socialization of war-affected youth has been shown to compromise prospects for long-term peace and security. Post-conflict policies that require reconciling parties to acknowledge their part in wartime atrocities against women and children trouble both the triumphalist wartime histories that reconciling parties-cum-policymakers are reluctant to surrender and any new identity narratives of political legitimacy that might help them do so. Similar to Sawalha's claim about reconstructing Beirut, Errante also argues that it is not enough for post-civil war political recontruction programs to wish to return societies to prewar conditions because for most countries this means a state dominated

by high levels of structural inequality that will ultimately breed violence and rage all over again.

In Chapter 13, Norma Kriger also discusses the war-affected generation and the attempts to reintegrate Zimbawbwean guerrillas into postwar civil society building. Kriger shows how guerrillas were redefined as legitimate soldiers, giving them pension rights and privileged access to bureaucratic posts. This did not, however, eliminate violence, for many of these former guerillas later became the “enforcers” who carried out political purges, land seizures, and massacres on behalf of the Mugabe government and themselves. Redeploying the guerrillas as the regime’s “brown shirts” undermined state-building and any chance of positive conflict transformation. Kriger demonstrates that all the laws affecting guerrillas shared an understanding of justice that entailed material recognition for their war sacrifices. The laws also shared common characteristics: they created retroactive rights, were political (in the sense of arbitrarily including some and excluding others), and depended on the invention of legal fictions. Studies of transitional justice consider only justice for the victims and perpetrators of human rights atrocities. Laws that seek to provide justice for guerrillas by recognizing their heroic war sacrifices and forging new identities for the ex-fighters are outside the purview of transitional justice studies. The laws dealing with guerrillas carry the hallmarks of transitional justice measures insofar as they are retroactive, political, selective, and create legal fictions.

Part V of the book focuses on political democracy and problems of state-building. As the United States is painfully learning in Iraq, political reconstruction requires creating coherent and effective police, courts, a legal profession, educational institutions, and urban services, such as water and electricity, that are reliably and impartially delivered. This is not simply a question of dollars but one of organization, professional training, impartiality, and effectiveness. In the absence of a coherent state, the new benefits promised by political settlements cannot be delivered. Encouraged by perceived slights, ethnic polarization and retributive violence will likely persist. Put another way, a coherent institutionalized state has to be constructed before democratization and other conflict regulation devices can be effectively put into place. In his discussion of ethnic and religious conflict in Nigeria in chapter 15, M. Sani Umar shows

that the key political problem in Nigeria is not lack of democracy (which is still a significant problem) but the lack of a coherent state. Corruption, nepotism, ethnic favoritism and the like undermine coherent rule. In this context, attempts to resolve ethnic conflict through elections are counterproductive, inflaming ethnic passions and frustrating those who seek a more effective state. Similarly, Kidane Mengisteab, in chapter 14, shows that state-building is the key crisis confronting sub-Saharan Africa, a region ripe with ethnic conflict as well as weak and repressive governments. Mengisteab argues that it is timely that African countries set political conditionalities for membership in regional integration schemes as well as in the African Union. African countries should also encourage bottom-up integration by allowing freer across border trade. The global factors are more difficult to address since they are not within the control of African countries. However, reconstitution of the African state, developing regional integration, and strengthening the African Union would go a long way in regulating violence and reducing conflicts as well as raising Africa's bargaining power within the global arena.

A more optimistic picture comes from Donna Lee Van Cott in chapter 16 as she analyzes the intercultural communication in the Andean region of Latin America. The Amerindian movements have pressed for controversial gains in terms of local courts and other separate institutions and forced the removal of elected governments, but have also responded to elections by forging cross-ethnic alliances focused on broader issues, such as corruption and urban services. Despite large-scale demonstrations and governmental instability in Bolivia, the overall process has been relatively peaceful, creating a deepening of democracy based on an intercultural dialogue that incorporates previously excluded groups and their shared interests with the broader population.

This volume offers new ideas about the regulation of identity conflicts. Identity conflicts stem from processes that operate on multiple social scales. At the global level, modernization has created new ethnic competition but also encourages conflict regulation processes that promote conflict transformation. Intercultural dialogue, democratization, and legal protections for human rights are actively promoted by international norms, agreements, and international organizations. At the same time, identity conflicts are also local. Political entrepreneurs and violence specialists are critical to mobilizing

ethnic violence. They construct ethnic images and stereotypes as tools to legitimize their rule. Identity conflicts can also be regulated, suppressed by coercion or through identification with the oppressor, as well as channeled into more positive outcomes. Reconstructing collective memories, building coherent state institutions, and political democratization can work as strategies to positively transform conflict. The choices are there for the taking.

** 1. Identity Conflicts and Their Regulation: An Introduction

J. Craig Jenkins and Esther E. Gottlieb

<quote>

<right>

…every decrease in power is an open invitation to violence--if only because those who hold power and feel it slipping from their hands, be they the government or be they the governed, have always found it difficult to resist the temptation to substitute violence for it.—Hannah Arendt

</right>

<right>

(1969: 87)

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</quote>

Every day the news is filled with reports of suicide bombings, ethnic cleansing, collective rapes, calls for ethnic reconciliation and atonement, and violent power struggles. The location changes but the basic story does not. Ethnic and religious groups use violence to intimidate and destroy other groups, seeking control over resources, a sense of security, and to restore lost honor. What drives these conflicts and can they be regulated? Most identity conflicts occur within a single state, but reflecting the globalization

of the economy and increasing international migration and interdependence these conflicts increasingly operate across international borders. Is globalization contributing to this growing pandemonium?

This volume focuses on two questions. First, what are the sources of identity conflicts? By identity conflict, we mean any rivalry between two or more groups that define themselves in mutually exclusive terms that use a collective “we/they” definition. This leads us to address theories of ethnic identity and mobilization asking when and why these groups resort to violence. Are these conflicts due to ancient hatreds, the opportunistic actions of political entrepreneurs, ideologies that justify dehumanization of the other, or situations that facilitate ethnic mobilization? Below, we will argue for a synthesis of the last three explanations along with the idea that identity conflicts tend to be zero-sum, creating greater intensity and likelihood of violence, and the idea of violence cycles, that is, that violence creates strong identities that lead to retributive violence.

Second, we address the regulation of identity conflicts. By regulation, we mean the constraining, directing, and channeling of conflict through institutional rules, cultural understandings and collective definitions. Regulation is often treated as simply a question of rules, such as new constitutions or rule-enforcing institutions, such as courts and police. While rules and enforcement institutions are critical, it is also important to include the ideational side of conflict regulation. Collective symbols, integrative humanizing ideologies, and diffuse social networks may also regulate conflict by creating alternative sources of integration and overarching common belief. In the following chapters, we show that post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building require new collective symbols as well as new constitutions and governance institutions.

At the outset, we should state our argument that identity conflict is not inevitably negative. Identity conflict can be a source of positive social and political innovation. Promoting a broader inclusive definition of citizenship, minority rights advocates and democracy reformers can create pressures for social reform to create a more just and equitable society. Resulting conflicts can pave the way for a more open, inclusive society. But identity conflicts can also be destructive, destroying the bases of social trust that help

promote markets and economic transactions and provide a sense of security. A striking example comes from the research on civil wars, which have been found to reduce economic wealth in countries by a quarter or more of the prewar standard, undermine social trust, and impose major social costs on the population in terms of higher mortality, widespread psychological trauma, and greater exposure to disease (Collier et al. 2003: 11–32). None of the groups, victors or losers, is exempted from war loss. More limited identity violence, such as suicide bombings and assassinations, likewise stoke ethnic hatreds, provoke retaliatory attacks, and create security fears that undermine the normal working of society.

The chapters in this book illustrate many such situations in which two or more groups perceive themselves as having incompatible objectives that involve questions of honor, cultural integrity, territorial control and/or core values. Sometimes called “cultural clashes” or “identity wars,” these conflicts typically center on the recognition and cultural integrity of ethnic groups. In this introduction, we provide a framework for understanding the origins of identity conflicts and their possible regulation. In addressing the first, we argue that a theory of identity conflict needs to integrate insights from multiple academic disciplines, work at different levels of analysis, and address the complex processes that contribute to identity conflict. With regard to conflict regulation, we draw heavily on discussions of post-conflict reconstruction and conflict transformation, especially the literature on political reconstruction and peace-building (Barton 1990; Galtung, Jacobsen and Brand-Jacobson 2002; Galtung 2004). We underscore the social and cultural side of these processes, arguing that, in addition to institution-building and the creation of rules to adjudicate between conflicting identities, such peace-building efforts need to create a sustained social dialogue that creates new collective symbols, ideologies, and interpersonal social networks. Democratization, targeted nationality policies, and self-governance schemes that protect ethnic minorities also need to be complemented by new collective symbols, inclusive humanizing ideologies, and inter-group trust. Durable political reconstruction and peace-building require social and cultural reconstruction. We begin first with the nature of identity conflict and its origins.

*** Identity Conflict and Polarization

Social conflict can be both socially beneficial and harmful. Lewis Coser (1956) argued that conflict can be a source of social and political innovation, giving individuals and groups an opportunity to articulate new ideas, experiment with new practices, and challenge prevailing social myths and institutions. This is most evident in social movements that attempt to open up opportunities for disadvantaged groups by overturning discriminatory laws and practices and, in the process, make society more flexible and adaptive. Drawing on Georg Simmel's (1955) ideas about conflict, Coser (1956) had in mind moderate reform movements in modern diversified societies in which contests over identity could be channeled into "realistic conflicts" over divisible material benefits, such as better streets and minority access to jobs. Such "realistic conflicts" mean that contenders are more likely to find compromises and positive-sum or "win-win" solutions. Coser (1956) contrasted these to "non-realistic conflicts" in which the key contention was over indivisible symbolic goods, such as social honor, territorial control, and sacred values. Such zero-sum identity conflicts are more intense and likely to create violence. Only one country can claim territorial control over Jerusalem's Temple Mount. Coser traced such identity conflicts to traditional societies with a more simple division of labor, reliance on retributive justice, and fewer cross-group social ties.

This structural explanation of identity conflict needs to be supplemented by a discussion of conflict process. Identity conflict is not simply a product of social structure but also of conflict dynamics. A fundamental rule of social interaction is reciprocity, that is, that one should respond with similar or like action. Peaceful and positive actions should be reciprocated with similar actions. Likewise, threats and violence should receive a similar negative response. Violence also creates in-group solidarity as people come to see group identity as more central and group survival at risk. This is especially the case where claims to legitimize violence rely on dehumanizing definitions. Victims are defined a subhuman, as animals or vermin that deserve their fate. Such violence deserves retaliation, which of course sets off further retaliation, creating a cycle of violence that is broken only when one party is no longer capable of resistance. Conflict leads to identity polarization, that is, the reduction of social interactions and group identities so that eventually there are only two groups both of which are characterized by strong positive in-group interaction but negative

between-group interaction. Violence means that everyone has to pick sides, supporting one or the other party. So the question becomes: What can be done to prevent or regulate violence cycles and identity polarization?

One answer is provided by the conflict resolution movement (Kriesberg 1997, 1998; Galtung, Jacobsen and Brand-Jacobsen 2002; Galtung 2004; Rothman 1997; Ross and Rothman 2000). The basic “conflict resolution” idea is that broad participatory negotiations and third-party mediation can mutually educate contenders, make them aware of the interests and identity claims of opponents, create a better understanding of the benefits of future positive interactions with opponents, and generate a greater willingness to redefine identities so that the situation becomes a positive sum or “win-win” one. According to this approach, the basic tactics of mediation and negotiation are applicable to individual, group, societal and international conflicts and, with skillful third-party mediation and the creation of a sustained dialogue, identity conflicts, can be transformed, that is, redefined in positive “win-win” terms. Conflict transformation means that all parties come to recognize the limits of their claims and the benefits they receive from maintaining positive relations with other contenders, and to realize the merits of new social practices that protect the basic needs of all parties (Barton 1990; Kriesberg, Northrup and Thorson 1989; Rupesinghe 1995; Lederach 1995). To use Coser’s (1956) language, a conflict can be transformed from a “non-realistic” into a positive-sum “realistic” conflict. A core feature of such conflict transformation is redefining social identities so that identities are no longer seen in mutually exclusive terms but as inclusionary. “They” in effect become part and parcel of the “we.” This, of course, requires identity change and the creation or at least partially overlap with new integrative symbols and understandings that sustain these new identities.

This conflict transformation idea requires going beyond the standard rule-based formulas for conflict regulation. Over the past few decades, a standard package of post-conflict reconstruction or “conflict resolution” methods have been developed that focus on creating new rules for regulating inter-group relations (Gurr 1993, 2000; Lederach 1995; Collier et al. 2003). A key is democratization with new constitutions and law enforcement institutions that provide legal and institutional protections for minority and other group civil liberties and political rights. To accommodate ethnic diversity, peace-builders

often recommend the creation of self-governance institutions, such as specialized regional or group-based courts to deal with family law and separate educational institutions to protect cultural heritages (Horowitz 1991; Van Cott, chap. 16 below). Compulsory multilingualism in the courts, legislatures, and schools also contributes to protecting diverse cultural heritages. If there are a small number of large ethnic groups, it may be preferable to use proportional representation to insure that all groups have access to centers of power. In contrast, where there are a large number of small groups, majoritarian “winner-take-all” elections may work better by forcing groups to band together to form broad coalitional majorities. Where there is a history of ethnic exclusion and persecution, peace-builders frequently recommend protective quotas to insure that disadvantaged groups are included. These need not protect numerical minorities. In Malaysia, for example, quotas are used to protect the majority Malay population, which historically was excluded from higher education and government positions. In India, quotas are used to protect minority listed castes, insuring them positions in higher education and government posts.

The idea of conflict transformation also highlights the importance of intergroup trust. Studies of civil war settlements show that the primary obstacle to peace is the lack of trust between contenders (Walter 1997, 2002). Unless there is a neutral third party or other enforcement mechanism that can insure that the terms of the peace settlement are honored, why should rebels or governments lay down their arms? Further, the greater the number of claimants and the closer the military balance of power between the major contenders, the less likely a peace settlement (Zartman 1995). The most favorable setting is a civil war in which territorial control is not at issue and either the government or the rebels has a clear military advantage. A third-party intermediary, such as the Catholic Church or a foreign government that is certain to remain engaged, can provide guarantees for a durable settlement.

Conflict transformation also entails creating new symbols so as to re-fashion self and social identities to bring contenders together (Gottlieb 2001). This can be seen from failures to transform conflict in Lebanon. Sawalha shows in her chapter below that a major barrier to a durable peace is the lack of new cultural models for national identity. Despite formal democratization and many of the above-mentioned peace procedures, the government planners

who oversee the urban reconstruction of post-civil war Beirut define the urban slums inhabited by thousands of Shiite refugees as lacking in “civilized qualities.” Their solution was to remove the settlers, attempting to recreate a pre-war Beirut. Would the recent 2006 war with Israel be followed by a more inclusionary social/national Lebanese identity that includes all the major groups? Democratization and minority guarantees can help by facilitating sustained dialogue. But often there is no guarantee that this dialogue will go beyond elites, to fashion new self and social/national identities. In the Oslo accord negotiations between Israel and the PLO during the early 1990s, the dialogue remained limited to a small number of elites who did little to engage the broader population in an on-going discussion about what would be needed to create a lasting settlement and social/national embracement of peace. On both sides, unrealistic perceptions about exclusionary demands persisted. Hamas and other Palestinian factions continued to claim that their primary objective is to abolish Israel and recreate a unified Palestine. Israeli groups continued to talk about the need for more security settlements, creating a “greater” Israel. So long as such exclusionary identities persist, there is little likelihood of a durable solution. Had there been a broader participatory dialogue that engaged the majority of the population, the odds are greater that the major contenders would have redefined their identities in inclusionary terms (Galtung et al. 2002). Similarly, the Dayton accords over the breakup of Yugoslavia failed to include the broader population, leaving elites able to re-ignite the war when it became advantageous. So long as the dialogue remained limited to elites, elites could go back on their promises and restart the war, hoping to gain new territories and “cleanse” those from undesirable groups.

Various measures of reconciliation and atonement have been tried in post-conflict settings. Which is better, court-like legal proceedings that bring war criminals to justice or open-ended “truth forums” where victims can articulate their grievances and guilty parties acknowledge their guilt without threats of punishment? James Gibson’s (2004) work on the Truth Commission in South Africa suggests that open-ended forums are far more effective, promoting broader public education and identity exchange, breaking down stereotypes and making clear that all parties were victims. The problem with legal tribunals and similar justice efforts is that they are primarily concerned with retribution and hence tend to reinforce polarized identities. While the circumstances that surround the Truth Commission in South Africa are unique and highly unlikely to be replicated (all groups shared a strong commitment

to the rule of law; all groups shared some guilt in terms of human right abuses; Bishop Tutu enjoyed considerable legitimacy as a neutral party), this experience suggests the merits of an open-ended “truth forum.”

In discussing conflict transformation, it is important to distinguish between positive and negative conflict regulation. The former entails positive changes in mutual awareness and identities such as those discussed above. Groups change their identities so that mutual sustained interaction is possible. Negative regulation, by contrast, means that interests are suppressed, typically by the stronger party using superior force and manipulating the situation to suppress, intimidate, and reeducate the opposition. Both methods may resolve conflict in the sense that violence declines. But negative conflict regulation suppresses conflict, which is likely to reemerge later in a more explosive form. This may not, then, prove to be a durable solution. Suppression may also mean that disadvantaged groups come to identify with their oppressors. In his discussion of “third dimensional” power, Steven Lukes (2005) argues that the most stable authority is legitimized power, that is, where subordinates cannot articulate their own distinctive interests and identity, coming to accept the commands of the powerful as legitimate even when they contradict their own interests. In these circumstances, subordinates may resort to passive resistance by footdragging and cultural displays like jokes and songs that invert the social hierarchy (Scott 1985). Some subordinates may also overconform, attempting to curry favor with superiors by internalizing the culture and claims of their superiors. An extreme example is Bruno Bettelheim’s (1992) analysis of how some victims of the Nazi Holocaust prison camps came to identify with their oppressors. In his discussion of Taiwanese colonial identity in this volume, Leo Ching argues that many of the indigenous Taiwanese overconformed with the colonial Japanese, adopting an “imperial identity” and making support for the Musha rebellion “unthinkable.” The durability of this solution to identity conflict depends on whether dominant groups are able to sustain the legitimacy of their control.

*** The Origins of Identity Conflicts

What creates polarized identity conflict? A classic answer is Georg Simmel's (1955) modernization thesis. Analyzing the changes in social structure in nineteenth-century Western Europe, Simmel argued that the shift from a traditional to a modern division of labor creates a broad change from segmentary to highly differentiated social relations. In traditional societies, a simple division of labor means that groups are relatively autonomous (i.e., separate segments) and interact with only a limited set of other similar groups. This creates strong investments in particularistic identities and a strong likelihood that conflicts will be overlapping, concurrent, and persistent across time (also called "interlocked conflicts"). Such interlocked conflicts create identity polarization. Modern differentiated societies, in contrast, tend to have dispersed, non-concurrent, and fluid social relationships. Actors have multiple identities and are less vested in particular social relations. There are also cross-cutting cleavages, meaning that groups that are disadvantaged in one social domain are likely to find themselves advantaged in some other domain. Conflicts therefore tend to cross-cut one another or balance out with compensating gains and losses. Investment in particular identities is limited. This type of society encourages more moderate, "realistic," and nonviolent conflicts.

Does this mean that traditional segmentary societies are racked by violence? To the contrary, power in such societies is generally highly concentrated, meaning that subordinate groups have little opportunity to even think of opposing the existing order, much less the resources and collective identity needed to organize concerted opposition. So there is significant suppressed conflict in traditional societies. But when conflict does occur, the polarized identities at play often lead to violence. Violent conflict is more likely to emerge in social settings where social segmentation has begun to break down and elite controls are weakened, whether this is due to modernization, war, migration, economic crises or natural disasters. For Simmel, the most vulnerable societies are transitional societies that are moving from a traditional to a modern division of labor. Interlocked conflict and polarization still exists but, due to some modernization, subordinate groups have the opportunity and resources to act. In the long-run, socioeconomic and political modernization transform the nature of conflict, initially creating a greater likelihood of violence and polarization but then, at more advantaged stages, the likelihood of polarization and violence decline. This argument holds a net of other factors that contribute to identity polarization, such as the balance

of power between rival ethnic groups, the degree of inequality among these groups, and a history of conquest and colonization.

This volume updates and significantly revises Simmel's classic argument. First we examine the impact of globalization. The globalization thesis argues that economic, political, technological and cultural exchange and interdependence are transforming the world, creating new identity conflicts and the likelihood of violence (Held 2005). Some advance a global domination thesis, arguing that economic hegemony by the "core" world powers reduces the economic and political security of the global "periphery" (Wallerstein 2000; Galtung 2004). Others extend Simmel, arguing that globalization is fueling transitional modernization and creating new cultural contacts, thereby stirring new discontents and violence. One variant is Huntington's (1996) "clash of civilizations" thesis that contends that, in the post-Cold War world, civilizational divisions between large religious blocs are supplanting the traditional capitalist-communist division. Identity conflicts are centered in countries along the buffer zone between these large religious blocs, such as Christianity and Islam. Another view is that economic globalization is creating new cultural contacts, information exchange, and cross-border social transactions that generate new conflicts and identities. International pressures on previously exclusionary states to recognize human rights and protect minorities create new opportunities for minority groups to mobilize (Held 2005).

In the following chapter, Neil Smelser critically assesses these arguments, arguing that, in addition to the transitional strains of modernization, political globalization is creating a world in which the norms of citizenship and human rights are becoming more widely accepted. With the growth of transnational advocacy organizations and international governmental organizations promoting these rights, exclusionary states are under pressure to recognize ethnic heterogeneity. Previously suppressed groups are able to mobilize and press their claims for recognition, autonomy and even independent statehood. At the same time, cross-border ties, such as financial linkages between diaspora communities, facilitate mobilization. While these movements might not resort initially to violence, authoritarian rulers typically resist demands for change, confronting reformers with "no way out" (Goodwin 2001) and the option of either a continued ineffectual voice, acceptance, flight abroad or violent rebellion. Some are almost certain to

choose rebellion, which explains that strong association often noted between authoritarian regimes and violent rebellion (Timberlake and Williams 1984; Mueller 1985; Jenkins and Schock 1992; Rasler 1996; Hasef 2004).

Identity conflict may also stem from cultural globalization, which often boils down to “Americanization.” As U.S. and Western transnational corporations, media companies and communications anchored in the United States and Western Europe spread throughout the globe, previously isolated groups are exposed to Western (or “American”) standards of conduct and consumer standards, creating cultural clashes and a strong sense of relative deprivation. Combined with its status as the sole global superpower and the widespread perception abroad that the United States follows a “go-it-alone” diplomatic stance, anti-American attitudes have spread throughout the developing world (Kohut and Stokes 2006), making the United States a target for political attacks.

Yet the globalization explanation alone is too simple. In his discussion, Smelser points out that local oppression is also a key factor behind most identity conflicts. Post-colonial states in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia have attempted to impose a false national unity, ignoring internal cultural differences and repressing groups that refuse to assimilate. The Kurds in Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey have in different degrees mounted political rebellion against states that refuse to accommodate their cultural difference. In other cases, this quest for imposed unity has led to a type of internal colonialism that has produced ethnic polarization and violent conflict (Gurr 1993; Gurr et al. 2001).

A second factor is the breakup of the Soviet Union, which created over a dozen new multi-ethnic states, several with a long history of ethnic exclusion and repression. Lacking an alternative political formula, Serbian leaders in former Yugoslavia turned to ethnic hate, using criminals, irregular troops and corrupt police to organize violence against Croats, Muslims, and other groups (Mueller 2004). In his chapter here, Georgi Derluguian traces the complex history of Abkhazia, showing how the breakup of the Soviet Union and the rivalries between the Russians and the Georgians led to rounds of ethnic plundering and the eventual emergence of Abkhazia as a de facto state. The breakup of the Soviet Union also meant that many

former Soviet client states throughout the developing world (e.g., Zaire, Ethiopia) were militarily weakened and vulnerable to challenge. Some turned to ethnic hate, launching purges and repressing opponents to consolidate their rule. The end of the Cold War also meant that the major world powers had less of a direct stake in maintaining the existing order, which indirectly encouraged groups to mobilize resistance (Rasmussen 1997).

A third factor is international migration and the creation of global diasporas that are mobilized to fund insurgency. Migrants typically carry their identity and grievances with them to their new homeland. Often, they are the most ardent supporters of ethnic liberation and their new homeland (typically Western Europe, Canada, and the United States) provides greater opportunities and resources for organizing. Diasporas provide an ideal organizing ground for transnational ethnic liberation movements, allowing them to work from abroad outside the immediate conflict zone to stoke ethnic resentments and fund efforts to create a liberated homeland (Basch, Schiller, and Blanc 1994: 27). In the diaspora, extreme attitudes are untempered by realities in the homeland where interdependence and immediate needs create more moderate attitudes. Palestinian refugees who fled to Lebanon and Syria are typically more radical than Palestinians in Gaza or the West Bank, providing funds for suicide bombers and violent attacks on Israel and Palestinian moderates (Bloom 2005). In the 1990s, Tamils living in Western Europe, Canada, and the United States donated over $450,000 per year to buy arms and munitions that were used to equip the Tamil Tiger bombings and military attacks in Sri Lanka. During the same period, the Kurdish Worker Party managed to control wholesale trade among Kurdish retailers scattered throughout Western Europe, imposing a “tax” that was used to finance the Kurdish insurgency in Turkey (Collier et al. 2003: 146).

In his discussion of Islamic mobilization in China in this volume, Dru Gladney finds little evidence of support for Muslim ethnoseparatism among the 18 million plus Muslim minorities who reside within China. While there have been some civil rights protests, these have been moderate in their goals and methods. But Internet technology and the freedom and sources of émigrés who are operating from new temporary homelands abroad have created a new type of “cyber-separatism,” which is viewed as a serious threat by the Chinese government. He also points out that, while there is no evidence of affiliations between these groups and other Islamist radicals in Asia and the

Middle East, the Chinese government has exploited the global “war on terror” as an opportunity to suppress politically active Muslims both inside China and abroad. While it seems highly unlikely that a separatist movement will develop inside China, an ethnic rights movement is developing in the regional diasporas to demand protection for Muslim minority rights.

Some idea of the global potential for ethnic conflict is given by the recognition that worldwide there are over 2,000 ethnicities with potential claims to sacred space and memories of sacred times housed within a little over 200 internationally recognized sovereign states, only twenty of which are genuine nation-states (i.e., states with only a single ethnicity). In the abstract, this suggests that there is a world potential for some 1,980 independence wars. Of course, few of these ethnicities will develop an organized claim for national identity, much less an organized claim for independent statehood, but the point is clear. There is considerable structural potential for ethnic conflict. Almost two-thirds of the internal armed conflicts between 1990 and 2003 centered on ethnic claims for territorial autonomy or independent statehood (Project Ploughshares 2003; Eck, Sollenberg and Wallensteen 2005; Gurr, Marshall and Khosla 2000). These ethnic wars tend to be protracted and highly lethal, reflecting the zero-sum nature of the issues under contention (Licklider 1993). While the number of such conflicts appears to have peaked in the mid-1990s and since declined (Eck, Sollenberg and Wallensteen 2005), the structural potential remains considerable.

Why do some ethnicities mobilize while others do not? Here discussions of globalization need to be supplemented by discussions of group and country-specific processes. Analysts of ethnic conflict have advanced four major explanations: primordialism, constructivism, ethnic competition, and social network ideas.

Primordialists point to the existence of strong identities in violent attacks, arguing that early childhood socialization creates strong loyalties and beliefs that later give rise to ethnocentric attitudes. The problem, however, is the translation of ethnocentric beliefs into violence. Ethnocentric beliefs are probably near universal and most bigots never

engage in ethnic attacks, much less violence. Others engage in ethnic attacks for purely opportunistic reasons.

Constructivists provide a different focus, pointing to the interests of elites who gain by scapegoating minorities or “the other” as a device to legitimize their rule. By blaming others for problems, they divert attention from their own shortcomings and present themselves as loyal protectors of group heritage. By propagating ethnic ideologies that dehumanize or devalue other groups, these ethnic entrepreneurs incite hatred and mobilize attacks. The major limitation is that ethnic constructions require an available audience that can be readily persuaded to engage in ethnic violence. While ethnocentric attitudes and hatred are probably widespread, there are normally strong inhibitions on violence against anonymous others that have to be overcome. Nor do all situations favor the efforts of ethnic entrepreneurs.

Ethnic competition theory provides a third explanation. It argues that breakdowns in long-standing ethnic segmentation that bring previously separated groups into contact and social changes that increase the opportunities and resources of ethnic minorities are critical. Urbanization and immigration bring ethnic groups in contact, vying for the same jobs. A young generation of more educated minorities is able to compete for the same positions, threatening the dominant workers. Democratization creates new opportunities for suppressed minorities to organize and press their rights. Ethnic competition then spills over into ethnic violence (Blalock 1967; Olzak 1992). Competition is also a product of population ratios with the most volatile situation being a small number of large groups of roughly comparable size and resources that have a realistic claim to power (Jenkins and Kposowa 1990; Reynal-Querol 2002; Collier and Hoeffler 2004). The limitation of competition theory is that it does not capture the latent ethnocentrism built into socialization and fails to address the efforts of ethnic entrepreneurs.

Network theorists add the idea that cross-cutting social ties create social trust and reduce the likelihood of cross-group violence (Varshney 2002). Taking a page from Simmel’s classic cross-cutting cleavages idea, strong professional societies, unions, and other civic

associations that span ethnic communities may serve to blunt ethnic hostilities. Varshney (2002) makes a plausible case that cross-ethnic ties between Hindus and Moslems in India traditionally regulated ethnic tensions but, with the decline of cross-group civic organizations, a new cauldron of polarization has developed.

None of these explanations is alone sufficient. Primordialism cannot account for the highly variable content of ethnic identity. There may be an innate human tendency towards ethnocentrism but this does not necessarily lead to ethnic hate. Bigots often fail to act on their hatred. Constructivism is relevant here by providing a situational account of the mobilization of ethnic hatred and action. The actual agents in ethnic violence are typically only a small portion of the population, either leaders with a stake in legitimizing their rule or social predators who can profit psychologically and materially from ethnic attacks. For entrepreneurial efforts to work, however, there must be a receptive context of widespread ethnic stereotypes and negative beliefs. Primordialism may help explain that. Competition and network theories both refine Simmel's ideas about identity conflict, arguing that transitional modernization creates greater likelihood of violence and that cross-cutting ties, which are likely anchored in modern social structures and associations, limit ethnic polarization. Competition and network theories typically take identities as given and focus on how initial contacts lead to competition or how the lack of cross-cutting group networks make for a polarized setting. Ultimately these theories need to be combined to provide a satisfactory explanation of ethnic conflict.

Robert Hislope's analysis of ethnic hatred and the lack of ethnic violence in Macedonia illustrates these points. Hislope documents a strong pattern of ethnic hatred and polarization between ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, especially among young rural Albanian men. However, this polarization has not led to violence. On primordial grounds, there is an ethnic "powder keg" that has yet to explode. The constructivists correctly point to ethnic entrepreneurs. Until a concerted "hate" campaign emerges along with dehumanizing ideologies that justify violence, this hatred is unlikely to lead to large-scale violence. At the same time, there are few cross-ethnic civic ties, which makes this a ripe context for ethnic strife. A key question is the level of ethnic competition. So long as these two groups remain largely segregated into different villages and regions, ethnic

competition is limited. A critical “spark” will be increased competition between Macedonians and Albanians for the same jobs, territory, political power and social recognition. All four elements are needed to explain the lack of ethnic violence.

Social movement theory provides additional insights. Drawing on resource mobilization and political process ideas (Tilly 1978; Jenkins 1983; McCarthy and Zald 1987; Tarrow 1998), it argues that indigenous leadership, group cohesion, and opportunities for mobilization contribute to the likelihood of ethnic mobilization. For already mobilized groups, political threats create perceived security risks, thereby strengthening group loyalties and motivating collective action against antagonists. Ethnic entrepreneurs may forge an ideology of ethnic hatred by framing grievances in terms of the actions of ethnic rivals and constructing new symbols of collective identity (Snow and Benford 1992; Snow 2000; Melucci 1989, 1996; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Drawing on existing cultural commitments and identities, movement leaders define new justice norms, redefine stigmatized traits in positive terms, assert the justice of an alternative order, and redefine dominant groups as culpable and subject to change.

Research suggests that all of these factors are relevant to ethnic violence. In his comparative research, Gurr (1993) and collaborators (2001) found that ethnic discrimination combined with cultural cohesion and group organization are critical to the mobilization of minority groups. The form of that mobilization, however, depends on political opportunities and threats. Democratization encourages ethnic reform movements while repressive exclusionary policies typically provoke violent insurgencies that seek to overthrow or dismember the state. Ethnic violence is a product of minority group cohesion and grievances interacting with political opportunities and threats. At the group level, ethnic political entrepreneurs develop new collective identities and frame issues so that potential supporters mobilize behind the campaign.

In sum, globalization provides a useful complement to modernization, standard theories of ethnic conflict and social movement theory. Increased international trade, migration, communications and global support for human rights have increased ethnic competition and created new resources and

opportunities for mobilization. At the same time, attention needs to be paid to local grievances, the efforts of ethnic entrepreneurs, and cross-ethnic social ties. A comprehensive explanation of identity conflict needs to integrate insights from a variety of different perspectives, work at multiple levels of analysis, and address the multiple processes that contribute to ethnic mobilization and conflict.

*** Regulating Identity Conflict

What are the most effective measures for regulating identity conflict? Students of international conflict regulation make an important distinction between conflict management, i.e. the elimination of violence and the means of violence, and conflict transformation, that is, replacing polarization with positive relations. Constructing a durable peace means transforming conflict so that rival ideologies and beliefs are eliminated. Conflict management may be a useful measure in preparing the way for conflict transformation but needs to be kept distinct. Transformation does not necessarily mean that all conflict is eliminated but rather that identities and relations are changed so that they are surrounded by and embedded in a broader set of positive-sum social relations.

This discussion further distinguishes between peace-making, that is, diplomatic efforts to handle conflict (such as under the auspices of the UN Charter VI), and peace-keeping, i.e. the use of military force to monitor and maintain existing peace agreements. The favored conflict regulation measure is to forge peace agreements that bring previously warring sides together into some type of general peace agreement. Typically, this will not occur until all sides come to see perpetuating the conflict as more costly than accepting an agreement. As Zartman (1989) argues, conflicts have to become “mutually hurting” before contenders are likely to accept an agreement. Peace-keeping typically includes peace-enforcement, that is, the use of military force to bring conflicting parties under control, and peace-building, that is, the introduction of structural reforms and institutional changes to prevent a relapse into conflict. The key peace-building measure is the depolarization of identities and social relations by creating mutual understanding and positive social ties. Each of these international measures has a parallel in

domestic conflict regulation where warring groups come to accept the existence and legitimacy of the police and institutional reforms that regulate relations between rival groups (Rothman 1997; Ross and Rothman 2000).

A major critique of standard conflict regulation is that it fails to address peace-building, leaving intact the “root cause” conditions that generated conflict in the first place as well as any deep-seated hostilities created by the violence. Moving beyond the traditional “top-down” approach of elite bargaining and traditional diplomacy, some argue for the use of social mediation processes that include grassroots peace and human rights movements, the use of reconciliation measures, and broader participation in peace-building (Kriesberg 1998; Galtung et al. 2002; Galtung 2004). Johan Galtung (2002) refers to these broader holistic peace-building processes as: Conscientization, Organization, Mobilization and Empowerment (COME). Rothman (1997) argues for the use of community boards, popular surveys, open hearings on grievances, and other devices to generate public participation and engagement in community dispute regulation. For durable peace-building to occur, broader participation in these conflict transformation processes is necessary.

What are the primary methods of post-conflict regulation? Laue (1991) argues that successful conflict settlements rest on five principles. First, a joint agreement must be worked out that addresses the basic needs and interests of all parties and that does not sacrifice the key values of any party. Second, the agreement must contain stipulations and measures that prevent any backsliding or repudiation of the agreement. This may entail agreed-upon sanctions, third-party guarantees or other measures to prevent backsliding. The certainty that such sanctions will be applied is important to the willingness to enter into the agreement much less its durability. Third, agreements work best that are self-implemented and self-monitored. While third parties may play a positive role in monitoring and implementing agreements, it is important that the major interested parties are directly involved in these processes. Peace-building, in this sense, often requires the empowerment of previously disorganized and stigmatized groups. Providing social recognition and a positive identity is a critical part of the peace-building process. Fourth, such agreements are more durable if they are based on universal norms of fairness and justice, not on simple compromises. Groups that suspend conflict due to compromise alone are

often willing to regroup and refight the war again. Fifth, durable agreements must be advantageous to all parties, otherwise adherence will be problematic and groups will consider exiting the agreement or exploiting it to their advantage. “Advantage” here may mean simply exit from a “mutually hurting” conflict that has brought each side to the bargaining table or it may entail the creation of new advantages. Students of community dispute regulation often point to the need to maintain a “single text” process that brings together the various objectives, concerns, and restraints of all the parties into a single integrated process (Rothman 1997). This is obviously more complex the larger the number of actors, but by providing multiple public forums for dialogue and negotiation, peace-building processes can alter the broader context and create the conditions for a durable peace.

The question then is converting a settlement into a durable peace. A favored tactic in international peace-building is democratization, especially holding fair and free elections immediately following peace agreements. Since 1990, the UN and other international monitors have been involved in staging dozens of post-conflict elections throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America, billing these as peace-building measures. Many of these have, however, reverted to violence. Merely holding elections guarantees little about whether the peace will hold, much less whether elected governments will rule democratically, reconcile diverse and often antagonistic claims, or transform conflicts.

One question involves the rules of political representation and how these relate to ethnic composition. If there is a small number of large groups, majoritarian or “winner-take-all” rule is likely to polarize conflict. Proportional representation guarantees all groups at least some representation and typically forces groups to forge coalitions after the election, which may foster extreme views. Majoritarian rules are probably the best method for regulating post-conflict settings with large numbers of small groups, forcing them to form coalitions prior to elections.

A second question is state-building. Stable democratization often requires building new legal and enforcement institutions, such as effective police and courts (Linz and Stepan 1996; Sorensen 1998). Another factor is the capacity to deliver social services, such as education and health care that counter a

sense of isolation and reduce longstanding inequalities (Grindle 1996). Studies of post-conflict societies find that increased social spending fosters peace while military spending encourages a reversion to war (Collier and Hoffert 2002a). In their chapters, Kidane Mengisteab and Sani Umar argue that basic state-building must occur prior to elections if elections are to contribute to conflict transformation. In the absence of a coherent institutionalized state, governments lack the ability to implement effective policies. In the context of ineffective government, elections will only exacerbate ethnic rivalries and violence. New democracies are most vulnerable to renewed warfare during the first four or five years (Gates, Hegre, Jones and Strand 2003).

A third feature is an intercultural dialogue, which fosters mutual understandings and possible coalitions among former conflict groups. In her analysis of ethnic conflict and democratization in the Andean region of Latin America, Donna Lee Van Cott shows that decentralized government, the creation of special courts for particular regions, and strong protections for civil liberties, and political rights have fostered an intercultural dialogue in which Amerindians have come to recognize shared interests with lower class mestizos. Reflecting this dialogue, the Amerindians have turned to broader issues, like corruption and urban services, and forged electoral coalitions that cut across previous group boundaries. This has allowed broad political and social reforms with minimal violence. Strong regional norms against violence and international pressure from multilateral development agencies have also helped regulate these conflicts.

A fourth measure is the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (sometimes called “DDR”) of former soldiers, both those in the official military and in the guerrilla units. If there is to be a durable peace, soldiers need to be reintegrated by finding alternative employment or else they are likely to resort to crime or war-making. In her analysis of post-civil war Zimbawbwe, Norma Kriger shows that the absence of strong legal norms and impartial measures in allocating soldiers pensions and access to jobs undermined reintegration. Ad hoc norms, irregular procedures, and falsified service records were widely used to consolidate an alliance between the ZANLA guerrillas and Robert Mugabe’s ruling political party. Guerrillas claimed military service during the liberation struggle to legitimize war pensions and guaranteed access to positions in the army, police and civil

bureaucracy. This corrupt partnership created a paramilitary force within the state that later turned to violent land invasions, political purges, and massive repression against the political opposition that eventually undermined the original settlement. This shows that effective reintegration depends on a coherent administratively rationalized state.

As pointed out earlier, discussions of conflict regulation typically focus on these rule-based measures, neglecting cultural and ideological regulation. Several of our chapters demonstrate the importance of cultural regulation, especially the development of new cultural symbols and unifying identities. One aim is the creation of new collective memories that redefine the past in ways that strengthen new identities. In her discussion of the flawed urban redevelopment of post-civil war Beirut, Lebanon, Aseel Sawalha shows how urban planners failed to take into account the new identities that would be needed to reconcile the rivalries and hatreds stemming from a twenty-year civil war. In place of traditional symbols, new integrative symbols need to be developed that provide a basis for new identities and unifying symbols. In her study of post-colonial South Korea, Pori Park shows that highly charged symbolic fights over the celibate vs. married status of Buddhist monks were critical to removing the vestiges of Japanese colonial rule. Although the celibate monks were later compromised by their association with military rule, initially their claims to purity and anti-Japanese sentiments helped construct a new national identity. In a post-conflict setting, new collective memories of the “imagined community” (Anderson 1990) need to be constructed along with institutional reconstruction.

Another setting for the construction of new identities is reconciliation efforts. Did the reconciliation efforts in post-conflict Rwanda, Cambodia, and South Africa create new identities and symbols? As discussed earlier, the evidence suggests that court-like justice forums designed to identify and punish guilty parties reinforce the conflict. Because their goal is retribution, these tribunals tend to reinforce existing hostilities. In contrast, Bishop Desmond Tutu’s Truth Commission in South Africa seems to have generated some reconciliation and encouraged new inclusive identities. Gibson (2004) finds that an open-ended “fact-finding” process with amnesty guarantees creates opportunities for parties to come forward and acknowledge guilt for atrocities. Those who refuse to participate can be tried in traditional courts. It also helps to have widespread support for rational-legal norms, a limited number of victims, and

sufficient atrocities on all sides of the conflict. Effective reconciliation is unlikely where there is a large number of victims (e.g., Israel/Palestine, former Yugoslavia) or where the victims are largely on one side (e.g., Rwanda). International legal proceedings, such as those against Slobodan Milosevic in the Hague, or the genocide trial of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, or the trial in Cambodia against Pol Pot and his allies seem to have perpetuated the conflict.

The idea behind reconciliation is to transform conflict by reversing the dynamics that led to conflict escalation. In place of group polarization, groups are supposed to come to perceive mutual benefit from future interaction. In some measure, increased interaction in mutually complementary activities, such as market exchange and humanitarian assistance, can go a long way towards redefining the "Other." A second element is dealing with negative projections and attributions. Just as conflict escalates out of distorted perceptions and attributions (Jervis 1976; Janis 1982), so regulation requires building more realistic perceptions and attributions. For conflicts to be transformed, these processes need to work across multiple levels, affecting individuals, inter-group interaction, as well as the basic needs of entire populations.

Some argue that we are moving towards a "post-state world" in that traditional state sovereignty is increasingly constrained by transnational norms and institutions. Rosenau (1990) coined the term "sovereignty-free world" to capture the normative idea that state sovereignty is not an absolute but conditional on the recognition and practice of certain basic human rights. This means that states should share the international stage with other "sovereignty-free" actors, such as international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs). These "sovereignty-free" organizations have greater resources and legitimacy and are able to work at multiple levels to constrain and regulate various actors. Making use of "track two" diplomacy, such bodies attempt to create a forum for parties to explore and recognize the flaws and errors in their fears and the illegitimacy of their grievances and demands in a nonbinding environment. While guaranteeing little in terms of specific outcomes, such institutions have become fixtures in the international arena and capable of performing positive conflict regulation tasks.

The idea of a “post-state world” is, of course, central to the globalization thesis. It is important to keep in mind that globalization does not actually mean suspending state sovereignty but rather imposing a “tax” or a limitation on it. States are less and less able to control international events that directly affect their populations, and their borders are becoming increasingly permeable. Transnational organizations are increasingly important, not because they have direct coercive power (i.e., sovereignty), but because they influence state behavior through normative regulation and persuasion. These processes are working on both the regional and the global level. Further, the influence of global processes is highly variable and depends on the maturity and strength of the state itself. Many of the IGOs and INGOs are instruments of the major power states and have their greatest impact on the weaker states of the world which feel compelled to demonstrate their modernity by complying with international norms. This often creates a glaring gap between promise and performance but also has some benefits in terms of identifying new norms that regulate conflict.

*** Conclusions

In line with these arguments, it appears that both institutional rules and shared understandings are important to regulating identity conflict. The transformation of conflict requires both the creation of new institutions and rules to regulate relations, and new understandings and integrative symbols that regulate inter-group relations. Political reconstruction needs to be complemented by cultural reconstruction. There is no guarantee that such regulation will create a durable peace, or that the various parties will perceive that their interests are best advanced by nonviolence. Our basic assumption is that identity conflicts can be regulated only where all parties recognize long-term advantages in a new arrangement. Peace-making must focus on the real conflicts of interests that divide parties as well as the perceptions, including distorted perceptions and attributions, that sustain hostilities.

Ultimately, for a durable peace to hold, all parties must perceive greater gains from conflict regulation than violence. This may include changing the

salience of various interests, altering identities, and reframing these identities in new terms. It may also entail mutual recognition of the interests and identities of others, including measures to symbolize that recognition in collective terms.

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** 2. Uncertain Connections: Globalization, Localization, Identities, and Violence

Neil J. Smelser

Given the conceptual and geographical breadth of the chapters in this volume, any attempt to provide an integrative statement to introduce this volume is a formidable challenge. In the end I chose a strategy that is congenial for me but runs the risk of self-embarrassment. My strategy is to struggle with the issue of breadth by taking an even broader view. That is to say, I believe I can serve best by taking a critical look at the main conceptual frameworks that organize the various chapters. Among the frameworks are identities of dispossession, the state, the growing porousness of international borders, transnationalism (including globalization), and the regulation of violence. Each of these frameworks is itself complex, and the relations among the phenomena identified are even more so. In my remarks I hope to contribute to the theoretical clarification of the frameworks, to raise some skeptical observations about some dominant presuppositions relating them to one another, and to point toward more adequate formulations and explanations. My mission is therefore both ambitious and modest—ambitious in that I intend to venture into very uncertain seas as though I have confidence that they may be made more certain, and modest in that I hope to provide a conceptual apparatus that will not challenge but will rather tease out some of the general implications of the many case studies that constitute the real content of this volume. For documentation I have relied on a general search of the literature on the relevant topics, but also I have exploited the recently accumulated treasure of synthesized knowledge available in the International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences in which I had a major editorial role.

*** A Loose Model Linking Globalization, Localization, Identity, and Violence

To facilitate my tasks, I begin by creating what some might regard as a straw person—a kind of explanatory model (perspective or sketch might be a better term) that ties together many of the ingredients listed above. This model is based on widely but not universally shared assumptions (that is why it is straw). Nevertheless, it represents a more or less coherent set of connections and serves as a foil for the more complex and contextualized discussion I wish to introduce.

The model begins with the world-phenomenon of globalization, which might be defined at the most general level as “the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of transcontinental flows and patterns of social interaction” (Held and McGrew 2002: 1). To some commentators the process has the form of an “irresistible lava flow” (Langhorne 2001: 1) that is transforming the world. There are disagreements about the essence of the process, but the following dimensions are the most commonly stressed:

- technological, which have “given human beings the ability to conduct their affairs across the world without reference to nationality, governmental authority, time of day or physical environment” (Langhorne 2001: 2). Among these the information and communication revolutions are paramount.

- economic, including the explosion in international trade, internationalization of production, and the galloping internationalization of capital and financial institutions.

- political, involving the rise of new but incomplete and inadequate forms of global governance—including international non governmental organizations—which is “an array of formal legal arrangements, informal codes of conduct, and habitual practices based on shared expectations about legitimate action” (Benedict 2001:6233).

- migration, the movement of increasing numbers of peoples across national lines.

- cultural, or the spread and homogenization of a global culture, dominated by American and/or Western content and accomplished through the mass media.

An evidently complex process, globalization nevertheless is an admittedly diffuse independent variable that produces two clear consequences. The first has to do with the declining sovereignty of the traditional nation-state occasioned by re-locating of decisive events and constellations of decision making beyond the realm of state control (Held 1996). Although this thesis is disputed by “antiglobalists” (Held and McGrew 2002), it has had a certain staying power. The forces undermining the nation-state include “multinational companies, common markets, satellite communications and global environmental concerns, none of which have much respect for traditional political boundaries and the integrity of the sovereign state” (Samarasinghe 1990:1).

The second consequence of globalization is thought to excite various local, often but not always sub-national tendencies, represented as antagonistic to global tendencies which intrude in various ways—economic, political, cultural—on the autonomy and integrity of the local. In fact “most of the debates about globalization, whether scholarly or popular, have centered around the relation and even polarity between the global and the local” (Beyer 2001: 6287). On the cultural side, the tension is between homogenization of an international culture on the one hand and the reassertion of social and cultural diversity on the other (Beyer 2001: 6287). These tendencies have been represented, albeit very simplistically, as opposites (Robertson 2001: 6255). The “local” is not only regional as the term literally implies, but it subsumes groups that are ethnic, racial, indigenous, ethnonationalistic, religious, linguistic, cultural or simply a style of life—and often some mix of these. These are the foci of resistance to globalizing tendencies and the reassertion of local autonomy. In the extreme, this takes the form of “globaphobia,” or resistance to globalizing economic trends such as free trade and competition as alien and “threatening the integrity of primordiality of a particular collectivity” (Robertson 2001: 6256; see also Burtless, Lawrence, Litan and Shapiro 1998).

This antagonism affects the traditional nation-state as well, as these local assertions come to constitute claims against sovereignty as well: “the nation-state is being challenged by a new wave of ethnic nationalism that has manifested itself across the globe” (Samarasinghe 1990:1). At an earlier time I myself voiced these relations as follows: “nationally based systems of political-legal and territorial integration are being increasingly besieged by

economic and political developments mainly ‘from above’ and by cultural developments mainly ‘from below’ the nation-state level” (Smelser 1997: 70). As my subsequent remarks will demonstrate, I am now in a position of wishing to recant partially on that formulation, because of its unacceptable simplicity. In all events, the drift of the reasoning I have summarized is to posit a set of zero-sum relations between globalization, national sovereignty, and localist tendencies—that is, the more you have of the one, the more you are subtracting from the others. Below, I am going to recant on that assumption and offer a more complex alternative.

The next ingredient in the complex is group identity. The various “local” bases noted in fact constitute the major bases of identity and identity politics with which nation-states have to contend. As the local is made more salient by contemporary global developments, so are identities associated with localism. Those now writing on identity focus mainly on (and often quietly laud) the identities of ethnic minorities, which involve claims for political rights or redress of past and present wrongs (Hardin 2001:7169). Identity movements defend the interests and promote the rights of these groups. There is also frequently “the search for symbolic recognition by a significant other” (Langlois 2001: 7166), typically the state and the dominant ethnicities.

The final and least certain connection is between identity and violence. The working assumption is that groups based on the particularistic identities may be particularly prone to violence. The bases for this assumption are two. First, even though identity groups certainly often behave like interest groups, the ideological bases of their claims are typically primordial and absolute. The further assumption is that these characteristics provide a ready legitimization for violence, containing as they do such a powerful distinction of a righteous “we” versus an evil “they.” The second basis is more political in nature. Because of the ideological commitments of identity groups, they are—or at least present a posture that they are—unfriendly to compromise in a give-and take in democratic polities, which find their existence in fashioning compromises among competing conflict groups. Democratic regimes, in their turn, are taxed by identity groups for the very same reason, and are likely to give them short treatment because they insist on playing on the edges of the political rules of the game. The net result is to rule out many options for the accommodation of identity groups, and thereby to

increase their alienation and their willingness to turn toward more desperate measures, especially violence.

The reader will have little trouble in discerning that I am dissatisfied with the oversimplified connections I have just described. However simplified, they do inform much of the existing literature. By and large, the rendition I have given takes whole complexes of variables and treats them as undifferentiated causes. As such, the connections come up short with respect to specific mechanisms involved and, consequently, explanatory power. My aim in the remainder of these remarks will be to visit each one of the supposed connections and specify the contingent variables that should be included to make our understanding of the connections more realistic and accurate.

*** Transition #1: The Subglobal Effects of Globalization

Under this heading I will discuss, first, the issue of the impact of globalization on the system of nation-states—briefly, because this is somewhat peripheral to the discussion in the volume—and, second, the impact of globalization on what I referred to above as “locality.”

**** The Nation-State

A certain case can be made for the argument that states are weakened by the global economic system. With respect to the familiar kinds of economic penetrations—arising from the economic impact of decisions made by powerful nations, world inflation, shocks such as the OPEC price crisis of 1973, and fluctuations in international currency rates—it is true that these are “external” to states and that state governments are often unable to prevent or control them. At the same time it must be remembered that the responsibility for dealing with these penetrations remains with nation-states. That is to say, national governments are the agencies that have to cope with the consequences (for their domestic populations) of the vicissitudes of the world economy. The correct diagnosis is that sovereignty of nation-states is increasingly taxed or limited in the context of

globalization. However, states still retain their sovereign power. The change is that states are less and less able to control events affecting their populations. There has been, however, very little by way of a formal handing over or transfer of sovereignty to transnational or supranational groups and agencies.

Similarly, the decisions made by transnational or supranational agencies continue, by and large, to be filtered through the apparatus of the nation-state. The extent to which such international agencies have spread is remarkable. Working from figures presented in the 1998–99 Yearbook of International Organizations, Haas (2001) counted some 6,000 international organizations at the end of the twentieth century. Of these, some 264 (170 in 1962) were organizations whose members were states (international governmental organizations, or IGOs), such as the United Nations and the Caribbean Community, another 5,766 (1,542 in 1962) were private associations with international objectives (NGOs), such as Doctors without Borders and the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions. Some 72 percent of these organizations represented a regional rather than a universal constituency.

What are the normative relations of these organizations to the nation-state? As for the NGOs, they are by and large cooperative associations, many of which do not make collective decisions, and, when they do, these decisions are not even binding on their own members, much less anyone else. IGOs, however, vary along a dimension, which Haas describes as extending from “organizations” to “institutions.” Organizations are interest-based collectivities without power; institutions assume a certain level of autonomy and an ability to bind their members by majority vote. The most remarkable transition from organization to institution is the European Union, but that is almost the only example. A few others, such as the International Monetary Fund, rely on strictures, which, if not adhered to, result in very adverse economic and political consequences; for this reason, these can be regarded as semi-coercive in character. Most other international governmental organizations are voluntary and rely on their members’ willingness to conform. The UN agencies, for example, are completely dependent on the voluntary cooperation of member states to provide revenues for operations and military support for various peace-keeping activities. NATO has recently experimented with integrated command structures within its military

operations in Afghanistan but here, too, traditional sovereignty remains intact. A true world government would clearly be a fully developed institution, with a capacity to exercise binding power over its member units, but the world, as yet, has produced nothing remotely close to that.

Even when cooperation at the national level is obtained, different states adapt the policies to their own economic circumstances, cultures, and political systems and evolve their own “policy styles”(see Jänick and Weidner 1997; Richardson 1982). In all cases, however, the state mediates in a de facto way—that is, as the effective agency of normative control —between the supranational agencies and the people and groups who are affected by the influence locally, even though the origin of the normative influence originates externally to the state.

In all events, the impact of economic and political trends and events is highly variable according to the maturity and strength of the nation-state itself. To remind ourselves of the obvious, strong and mature modernized states surely have more control over the effects of global phenomena—indeed, they are the more active agents in engineering these phenomena—than the large number of post-colonial, weak, partially developed states, mainly in Africa and Asia. In a word, the impact of globalization is selective, both according to type of international penetration involved and according to the capacity of the “receiving” state.

**** “Local” Impacts

The last third of the twentieth century has witnessed a dramatic increase in the development of quasi-religious, sub-nationalist, local movements based on a mix of ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural identities (Gurr 2000). Examples are the “nationalistic” movements in Wales and Scotland, the Basque phenomenon, the resurfacing of fissiparous ethnic tendencies in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and similar phenomena in other areas of the world. We have also witnessed a growth of solidary groupings based on social movements pressing for recognition, status and rights, or advocating a cause such as women’s rights, peace, or antagonism to nuclear power. In exploring the determinants of these developments, I hope to throw

light on the first orienting question for the volume—why are there so many identity conflicts in the world today?

This explosion in local political contentiousness is a remarkable turn of historical events, in part because it was unanticipated by (and an embarrassment for) most of the social-science paradigms that reigned at mid-century. Modernization theory (particularly of the “convergence” variety) anticipated a global trend towards social and cultural homogenization. Marxian theory had always downplayed particularistic loyalties in favor of the dynamics of class. Secularization theory in the sociology of religion posited a long-term decline in religious forces. Mainstream liberal political theory tended to treat particularistic ethnic loyalties as subject to processes of assimilation.

Since this explosion has coincided with the very rapid pace of world globalizing tendencies, it seems reasonable to regard the localist impulse as a counteractive response to them. What might be the mechanisms of such a response? Nearly a quarter of a century ago, Rokkan and Urwin suggested such a mechanism. Referring to Western Europe, they pointed first to “globalizing” tendencies associated with the common market and the corresponding “erosion of inter-state boundaries.” These in turn constituted demands on the resources and manpower and have increased the need to expand welfare and education services. This relative “weakening” of the state led to “the multiplication of efforts to mobilize peripheries, regions and even localities against the national centres, and an assertion (or reassertion) of minority claims for cultural autonomy and for separate decision-making” (1982: 3). To generalize this formulation, global tendencies and events subtract from the ability of states to meet demands from local and particularistic constituencies, and this neglect heightens the political activity of these constituencies.

To focus on the powers of the state in relation to sub-state particularistic groups seems like a good lead but the link to “globalization” seems problematic. It seems more profitable to look at the fate of the state as it has been conditioned by specific international processes, all of which can be subsumed under “globalization” only by a very unhelpful stretching of the connotations of that term. The “international processes” I have in mind are

long-term historical trends that have heightened the disjunction between the nation-state (and nationalism) and ethnic particularism throughout the world. The following trends are the major ones:

- The colonial heritage, in which the world's major colonial powers divided up the colonized world into colonial territories that took little or no account of the tribal, religious, and other characteristics of those territories, except sometimes to exploit them for political purposes. As a result, they generated political units that were constituted by a multiplicity of particularistic groups, many of which have reemerged with full force in the post-colonial world.

- The post-colonial heritage, in which most of the colonies adopted the formal model of the nation-state—the mode of political organization represented by their former colonizers and the political mode preferred by the diplomatic communities and the United Nations for membership in the world system. In most cases this adaptation perpetuated the internal ethnic diversity and merely papered over it or perhaps exacerbated it by pretending that it did not exist (Gurr and Harff 1994).

- The formal adoption of the traditional characteristics of nation-states by the new states (claims to self-sufficiency, insistence on a monopoly of violence, the focus on a single national identity) but their actual ineffectiveness in developing the nation-state form, which had, in fact, been realized in the West only after a long and irregular historical process that required many centuries and was, in some respects, incomplete. In some cases the result was "failed states," and, in other cases, "the insistence on the right to conduct internal affairs without outside interference gave unscrupulous dictators like Macias and Amin freedom to commit atrocities against their subjects in the name of 'nation-building'" (Gurr and Harff 1994:12).

- The dramatic "third (and fourth) wave" of democratization (Huntington 1991), which beginning in 1974, affected dozens of states throughout the world. The general shift was toward the dismantling of authoritarian regimes and the development of democratic institutions, but the results of this movement have been mixed in terms of the actual institutionalization of

stable democracies. There have been many instances of democratic breakdown. More important, the quality of democracy often remains sharply limited. Minorities often lack effective protections and voice and severe restrictions remain on freedom of speech and organization. The transition to democracy implies a formal commitment to deal with contending opposition voices (including ethnic groups), thus giving them, legitimately, more political salience, but many of the democratization did not guarantee effectiveness in dealing with conflicts among such groups or between them and the state.

- The even more dramatic dismantling of the communist and socialist countries in 1989–90, which not only permitted the emergence of multiple ethnic, religious, and local forces held under by repression for decades, but also resulted in the formation of a significant number of new states. Almost all these states, moreover, did not really solve underlying issues of internal diversity, because in almost all cases residual minorities remained (e.g., the Russians in Latvia).

- An accelerating process of international migration, which is the factor most closely associated with the concept of globalization. While international migrants make up only 2 percent of the world's population, their absolute numbers have accelerated from approximately 75 million in 1965 to perhaps 140 million at the end of the 1990s (Castles 2001: 9826). The occasions for migration have been both economic and political, and the process inevitably results in some kind of multiculturalism both for the receiving country and for the migrant populations who are caught in the struggle between inherited particularistic loyalties and the "pressures of the varied ideologies of cultural and legal inclusion which characterize their new homes" (Appadurai 2001: 6269). This creates diaspora communities which are often freer to act than minorities in their homelands and thus likely to create greater conflict.

- The final factor is a kind of internal political dynamic. Countries in North America and Western Europe have gradually evolved from political aspirations for the individual assimilation of minorities (an evolution dictated mainly because those aspirations were not realized), to policies of recognition of cultural difference through policies of pluralism and multiculturalism (Castles 2001: 9827). Once the political system has made a

commitment to recognize and respond to the demands of particularistic groups, this creates a kind of informal “invitation” or “hope” that politics based on claims of particularistic groups have a degree of political legitimacy.

This extended catalogue of mainly political developments provides much of the answer to the question of why there are so many more identity conflicts in the world. The answer is that all the preconditions for generating them have been moving in the same direction. The world has seen the immense growth in numbers of nation-states (185 in the United Nations in 2000). Almost all are multi-ethnic (or multi-particularistic) and many are multi-homeland (Said and Simmons 1976; Connor 2002). The number of multiple-oriented “border” populations at nations’ edges has increased correspondingly (Donnan and Wilson 1999). Most of the nations have not been able to create political machinery for contending with identity conflict, and in those that have, the machinery is fragile.

While these general conditions together have produced the worldwide growth in identity conflicts, the combination of these conditions varies in specific cases. To explain multiculturalist politics in the United States, for example, one would look at the heritage of repressing indigenous peoples, slavery, and unprecedented waves of migration; the failure of class-based organizations (particularly labor unions) to subordinate ethnic to class loyalties; the recent weakening of the major political parties as conduits for channeling ethnic groups and the increased salience of the social movement as a mode of organizing political expression; and the legitimization of ethnic groups by the governmental response to racial disturbances of the 1960s in racial/political terms (including affirmative action), and the subsequent adoption of collectivist/solidarity rhetoric by other such groups. The multiculturalism of Western Europe is a combination of the incomplete absorption of new immigrant groups and the excitation of long-standing regional loyalties. In the new nations the glaring contradictions between the nation-state structure and sub-national groups and the relative weakness of the state would be the beginning point for analysis. In all these cases “globalization” may have something to do with the changing conditions, but

in and of itself it cannot be profitably regarded as a generalized, undifferentiated explanation.

*** Transition #2: From Localism to Identity

To speak of the relationship between any given racial, ethnic, religious, regional or other particularistic group and that group's identity as a "transition" in a causal sense is somewhat meaningless, because the one virtually implies the other. Such a group would not be a group if it were not, already by definition set off by boundaries that are imposed on it both by others and by members of the group itself (Scherrer 2002: 7). One inevitable ingredient of group identity is that it contains a usually dichotomous reference to "we" and "they," though the "theys" may be multiple according to how different they are from the "we," how friendly or how inimical they are, the degree to which they may be trusted, and so on.

One initial conceptual clarification: under the influence of scholars preoccupied with group oppression (including some postmodernist scholars), the contemporary literature tends to treat "identity" and "identity movements" in moralistic terms, that is, focusing on the dispossessed, downtrodden, third world populations, minorities and subaltern peoples of the world—in short, victimized groups. Their identities tend to be taken for granted, and are thought to be a positive asset for mobilizing such groups (Hardin 2001: 7168). As Hardin notes, "actual supporters of group identity in many contexts would blanch at the thought of support for, say, Caucasian-American, Anglo-Saxon, or German identity, although each of these historically has been asserted against immigrant groups and, in the U.S., former slaves" (Hardin 2001: 7168). My own view, consistent with Hardin's expression, is that the question of identity is not a property of any one class of groups, but is a generic category applicable to all. Ethnic identity plays a significant role in regimes that perpetrate ethnic cleansings and genocides as well as in the identities of their victims and potential victims. Hence discussions of identity conflict require an analysis of all types of identity, both dominant (or victimizing) and subordinant (or victimized) groups.

The key question about identity, then, is not whether it is a characteristic of groups, but how salient it is for different kinds of groups, how this salience is likely to change over time, and under what conditions it is activated as a basis for a group's behavior. Gurr has provided a helpful list of factors affecting the salience of identity, which I present in schematic and somewhat modified form:

- how much of people's lives are wrapped up in their "home" group

- whether invoking their identity is thought to contribute to its advantage or disadvantage

- open conflict with states or other ethnic groups, especially recent violent conflict

- "group capacity" including territorial concentration and coalitions among diverse segments and contending leaders

- "opportunity factors," such as the political instability associated with the breakup of old states and establishment of new ones, transitions from one type of regime to another

- international factors, especially transnational networks and foreign interventions (Gurr 2000: 67–70).

Gurr lists these as "objective" factors, but analysis of the activation of identity calls for reference to two more dynamic and interactive elements.

The first issue has to do with fact that group identity often involves some kind of ideology, the elements of which include references to the glory and dignity of the group itself, threats to it, including its past and present mistreatment or victimization, grievances, and a vision of a better world.

These ingredients provide the standards by which the group's sense of relative deprivation is represented. Inevitably there are differences between group members, who go about their day-by-day business, and leaders who designate themselves and are sometimes designated by others as spokespeople or prolocutors for the group in the political arena. Tilly (2002) argues that such differences are omnipresent. Furthermore, it is typical that leaders tend to "push" identity issues more than followers, both because their leadership depends on "representing" the group, and they are in competition with one another as expressers of the group's identity and interests. The salience of group identity, then, is a function of two sets of negotiations—those between leaders and group members on the one hand, and those between leaders and the outside publics to whom they represent their group interests.

To frame the issue in this way shows the intellectual fruitlessness of the polemic opposition among scholars who define ethnic and related groups in "primordial" terms versus those who define them in "instrumental" terms, that is, as groups seeking their own interest in the political and economic arenas (Gurr and Harff 1994: 78–79). As Robert Hislope's discussion in chapter 9 of ethnic identity in Macedonia shows, ethnic identity is neither primordial nor purely instrumental. It is influenced by both the real economic and political situation and by ideology and collective memory of recent and past events.

Second, in connection with "opportunity factors," I would extend the list of factors that augment group identity to the active intervention of authorities, especially the state. I give one example dealing with the indigenous population of the United States. The fact that the American government drew up treaties with this indigenous population encouraged a certain solidification of their identity as "tribes," and this went counter to other strong tendencies to erase these distinctive identities—tendencies to decimate the tribes themselves through violence, famine, and disease, and tendencies for the dominant population to homogenize them into a population of "Indians" or "Native Americans." More recently, the U.S. government has held out positive economic incentives to tribes in the form of extending rights to organize gambling enterprises and other businesses. This has proven to be an "invitation to identity," in effect, asking tribes—some of which have long been dispersed—to declare their identity in hopes

of economic gain (Wilkins and Vine 1999; Wilkins 2002). Several of the chapters in this volume show that state action is critical to all of the factors that Gurr identifies as sources of ethnic identity.

*** Transition #3: From Identity to Identity Movement and Identity Politics

Earlier I observed that the existence of any kind of particularistic group more or less entails some notion of boundaries between that group and others and at least a minimum level of identity, self-imposed or imposed from outside (typically both). No such entailment is involved in the relationship between particularistic group identity and mobilization into some kind of movement. In fact, it may be more realistic to assume the opposite: that the identities remain latent and mobilizable but are not often mobilized. Olzak speaks of "the seemingly natural resistance of individuals to sustain collective action" (2001: 4796). Moreover, there are good theoretical reasons for supposing that individuals will not be motivated to participate in social movements, including identity movements (Olson 1965; Oberschall 1973). Williams reminds us that the vast majority of ethnic groups in the world do not engage in collective violence or civil war. "Of some 1600 major cultural groupings, less than 300 have been recently mobilized in politicized protest or rebellion and only some 30–50 wars are ongoing in a particular year" (2001: 4809).

Despite this observation, collective mobilization remains a sufficiently frequent phenomenon that a serious attempt to specify the major factors that influence its appearance and vicissitudes is invaluable. As a general rule, an intensification of the conditions augmenting the identity of a group will also serve as conditions increasing the probability of mobilization into some kind of collective action. To make this observation more specific, I would mention three sets of variables that come to mind as especially salient in this transition:

1. The occurrence of a visible historical event that (a) augments the perceived adversity or threat under which the group sees itself as living, such as an intensification of discrimination or major victimization in terms of violence; (b) contrariwise, increases the hope of the group to improve its

situation, such as major concessions by a ruling government, a law that remedies longstanding grievances, or a promise of help to a group from friendly outside forces. Such events raise the consciousness of identity groups and provide the occasion for them to reassess and perhaps act on their political situation. In an earlier characterization of these kinds of events I used the term “precipitating factor” (Smelser 1962).

1. The capacity of leaders to symbolically integrate such events into a call for collective mobilization and action. This involves their ability to interpret convincingly the event or situation at hand in terms as “evidence” that threatens and/or encourages the identity of the group, articulating this “evidence” with the existing worldview, and convincing the group that collective action rather than some other form of response is needed and the most effective response.

1. The behavior of authorities in relation to group demands, which may be considered as part of the opportunity structure for potentially mobilizing groups (Tarrow 1994). At the one extreme, violent repression of a group by an effective state diminishes its power to mobilize, and tends to force it into a latent state or drive it underground. At the other extreme, the collapse of a state authority—not infrequent in weak, new states, and strikingly evident in the communist and socialist world in 1989–90 frees up the political situation, permits long-passive groups to become activated, and excites competitive political striving among them, including escalating mobilization and the creation of self-reinforcing violence (Gurr 2000: 70). Between these two extremes, there is also a notable sequence of vacillating behavior on the part of regimes that appears to be strong invitation to political mobilization—a period of accommodation or reform (raising expectations of the group), followed by a reversal of these policies accompanied by a repressive posture (dashing those expectations), followed by evidence of weakness, ineffectiveness, or vacillation on the part of authorities (Smelser 1962). All three state responses may help trigger ethnic mobilization by driving identities underground, creating unregulated competition, and creating opportunities that are frustrated.

*** Transition #4: From Identity Movement to Violence

As indicated, the perpetration of social violence by collective movements is not well understood, and, correspondingly, my reflections on this will have to be the most tentative of all. In their introduction and coda, Craig Jenkins and Esther Gottlieb provide a more comprehensive assessment than I can provide here. My aim here is simply to provide an assessment of the conditions under which already mobilized movements resort to violence.

In his review of social violence, Tilly identifies three main, competing views:

- “propensity-driven behavior [which locates] its causes within the actor, calling attention to genetic, motional, or cognitive peculiarities”

- “instrumental interaction [which] characterize [violence] as means to power, wealth, prestige, or other ends”

- “a cultural form—as in the claim that because of the frontier, slavery, or capitalist competition the USA has an exceptionally violent culture—argues that the ready availability of certain ideas, practices, models, and beliefs itself promotes violent action.” (Tilly 2001:16207)

All three views share a common frailty, namely that they are formulated as constants that predispose individuals and groups to violence, but they are not framed in a way that would account for systematic variation in its occurrence. As a rule, it is analytically unsatisfactory to try to explain variations by reference to constants. In my own estimation, it is more fruitful to turn research in the direction of seeking variables that combine to produce empirically identifiable episodes of violence. Since different types of violence (e.g., criminal, interstate) may have different causes, my effort here is limited to explaining ethnic violence. In particular I would suggest that

research look for the confluence of the four following sets of variables to increase our precision in explaining the occurrence of violence:

1. A facilitating ideology, many instances of which are found in the worldview of identity groups. Ingredients of such an ideology are a profound sense on the part of a “we” group of a “they” that are responsible for the threat, accompanied by a righteous rage and perhaps a glorification of the we-group’s culture and history. The reason why such an ideology is facilitative of violence is that it legitimates extreme violence against a perceived evil in the name of high moral purpose, which serves to blunt what otherwise might be inhibitions to destructive behavior.

1. The actual or perceived (and usually some mix) unavailability of alternative political means to achieve one’s ends. The capacity to work through political parties or potentially effective social movements should tame groups and draw them into the political process, giving them a stake in the system. I would not push this insight so far as some, who suggest that “the more democratic the political environment, the more likely ethnopolitical groups will be to voice opposition nonviolently” (Gurr and Harff 1994: 85), because democratic political systems have historically experienced a great deal of political violence (Rapoport and Weinberg 2001), but, in specific historical situations, the availability of non-violent institutional options is an important consideration. Critical is a rationalized justice system in which all parties can see some likelihood of being treated fairly in the long-run. This is part of the point made below by M. Sani Umar that an effective state is often more important in regulating ethnic violence than the form of government.

1. Opportunities for the use of violence. Under effective totalitarian regimes, the state itself is able to repress not only violence but also political protest in general. Less repressive and regulatory regimes are relatively more open to group violence, but the operative presump-tion—just enunciated—is that they provide more alternatives to it. The collapse of political regimes also means a failure in their ability to stem violence and therefore a greater opportunity for groups to rely on it. Finally, one of the observations made is that some of the characteristics of globalization—open borders and points of entry, increased migration and geographical mobility—

also constitute a greater opportunity for violence, in that the ease of movement also increases difficulty of detection and prevention.

1. Access to the means of violence. This might be regarded as a sub-type of “opportunity,” but it deserves special mention. One of the characteristics of the episodes of genocide and ethnic cleansing in the past century is a regime that trumpets an ideology that is both nationalistic and ethnically or religiously specific, identifies “others” as inferior or treacherous (Naimark 2001: 4801). As a state regime, the ruling group typically enjoys an effective monopoly on legitimate violence, as well as control of army and police forces. Minorities that are typically victims of genocide or “ethnic cleansing” are typically weaker in their capacity for violence, and, when they do possess access to the means of violence, the result is more likely to be a civil war than an “ethnic cleansing.”

As with other formulations contained in these remarks, I regard the several points made not so much as established social-science principles but rather as the most likely leads into systematic historical and comparative research.

*** A Concluding Note

My strategy has been this. For all the complex packaging of our concerns—globalization, localization, dispossession, identities and identity politics, and violence—I have engaged in an unpacking operation. Many dozens of explanatory variables have been assembled in the literature in the effort to establish connections among these ingredients. I have taken a critical attitude toward the adequacy of many of these explanations—concentrating especially on their vagueness and diffuseness—but above all I have attempted to pinpoint the precise locations in these connections where these various explanations assume their greatest explanatory power. I have carried out this strategy in the context of an article of faith: that to disaggregate large classes of variables and to specify their respective roles is the most fruitful way in which to

generate a better understanding of the major cultural and social forces that generate violence and allow it to be regulated. To obtain better purchase on the sources of violence and our ability to reduce its harmful effects by social and political regulation requires this type of disaggregation as a critical first step.

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* Part I: Forging New Identities

** 3. The Musha Rebellion as Unthinkable: Coloniality, Aboriginality, and the Epistemology of Colonial Difference

Leo T.S. Ching

<quote>

From all aspects, their brutality was truly detestable.... But I personally felt, somehow with virtuous persuasion and proper guidance, I would want to have them on the front line as part of the military under our command for future emergency. I remember this kind of idea came naturally to me.

<right>

---Hattori Heijirô, 1931 (Hayashi 2000:41)

</right>

</quote>

Hattori was the staff officer to the subjugation army convened by the colonial administration following the 1930 Musha Rebellion. Nearly half of the population of the six aboriginal groups (1,373 at the time) where three hundred or so men participated in the uprising were either killed by the punitive force or committed suicide themselves. The remaining population was further depleted when the colonial administration conspired and launched an assault on the defenseless internment camp with the pro-Japanese aboriginal groups the following April, widely known as the second Musha Incident. Overall, only 298 survived the attack with 153 men (few above the age of fifteen) and 145 women. The six groups were reduced to one with two-thirds of their population annihilated. Hattori's observation proved prophetic eleven years later when fifty young men from the Musha reservation "volunteered" for the Imperial army and were sent off to the Philippines along with five hundred other "volunteers." The "detestable brutality" of the aborigines, through "virtuous persuasion and proper guidance," was transformed into civilized bravery under the command and demand of late-colonial exigency.

In retrospect, Hattori's "natural" idea seems to have sutured two contradictory events, the Musha Rebellion and wartime "voluntarism," into a dominant colonial narrative of converting the brutal "savage" to brave "volunteer" through ideological colonial-state apparatus, that is, the policies of assimilation and imperialization. The "voluntarism" exhibited by the aborigines can be then understood in terms of either the affect of colonial psychology or the instrumentality of post-Musha colonial policy. On the one hand, it is to interpret the aborigine identification as the manifestation of the latent "inferiority complex" and "dependency complex" of the colonized propagated by thinkers such as Octave Mannoni (1990).[1] The aborigine's "desire" to become "Japanese," to fight for the emperor and the Japanese nation is described as the innate "dependency complex" of the natives and

then ascribed to their alleged unconscious “desire” to be colonized. The remarkable identification with the colonizer could be attributed to the “simplistic” if not the “retarded” psychic make-up of the aborigines given their undermost positionality in the overall colonial hierarchy.[2] On the other hand, one can attribute the subjective constitution of aborigine colonial identity to the objective and generalized (mis)representation of Japanese colonial ideology and the policies of assimilation and imperialization. The dramatic transformation from a “rebellious savage” to a “Japanese soldier” is scripted and effected by the success of the colonial regime of power through the institutionalization of education, administration, and welfare programs. That is, the unruly savages have been successfully “modernized” through colonial tutelage.

Needless to say, this linear and evolutionary account of the aborigine’s coming-into-being is embedded in and generated by what Anibal Quijano (2000) calls the “coloniality of power.” One constitution of the coloniality of power is the classification and reclassification of the planet population wherein the concept of “culture” becomes crucial in delineating and discriminating peoples in their relative positionalities to the omnipresent and omnipotent “West” through the dichotomous schemata of underdevelopment/development, premodern/modern, incivility/civility, etc. Furthermore, what is crucial for the exercise of the coloniality of power is the institutional structure that functions to articulate and manage such classification and reclassification: the colonial administration and, in the case of aborigines, the anthropological apparatus that ensures knowledge production serves the colonial will to dominate, exploit, and in the worst scenario, annihilate. The coloniality of power thus embodies an epistemological perspective from which to articulate the meaning and profile of the matrix of power and from which the production of knowledge could be channeled. This epistemological perspective takes the form of a universalist and hegemonic imposition where the colonizer is always prescribed with the production of knowledge, of the “known,” and the colonized is relegated to the recipient of that knowledge, of the “unknown.” The linear and evolutionary narrative of the aborigine subject presupposes the monotopic hermeneutics of the all-knowing colonial apparatus that elides and conceals the irreducible contradiction of the colonial condition.

This chapter is an attempt to disrupt and displace the all-knowing coloniality of power regarding the Musha Rebellion and the subsequent voluntarism by introducing the notion of what Michel-Rolph Trouillot calls “unthinkability” regarding historical events (Trouillot 1995). I want to suggest that the 1930 Musha Rebellion constituted a similar unthinkability within Japanese colonial epistemology. The Rebellion was unthinkable in two temporalities: the event itself and the subsequent “volunteerism.” The event itself was beyond the comprehensibility of Japanese colonial knowledge because it was instigated by a relatively “enlightened” and “assimilated” aboriginal group. The event was unthinkable because it was incommensurable with the discourse of colonial benevolence. A decade later, despite the near elimination of its entire population, some descendants of the aborigines “volunteered” for the Japanese war effort. This volunteerism constituted a second unthinkability from the perspective of postcoloniality where postwar Japanese intellectuals could not fathom the motivation of the aborigines. Volunteerism was unthinkable because it was incomprehensible in light of colonial violence. The unthinkability of colonial benevolence and violence, despite their apparent difference in relation to Japanese colonial rule, converges in the epistemology of colonial difference. Colonial difference refers to the radical incommensurability between the colonizers and the colonized, not as essentialized categories, but as a structural cleavage and irreconcilable condition of being within the colonial system. The unthinkablility points to a Japan-centrism that is unable to think beyond the limit of its own colonial design, that its mode of knowing is always already delimited by colonial difference despite the desire for reconciliation and rehabilitation. Colonial difference embodies the general contradiction of Japanese colonial discourse as it vacillates between the politics of difference and the politics of identity. The unthinkability is therefore symptomatic of the failures of colonial and postcolonial attempts to regulate violence.

The 1930 Musha Rebellion, or what came to be known as the Musha Incident (musha jiken) in the official discourse, was an organized attack on the Japanese led by three hundred Taiyal aborigines that left one hundred and thirty four Japanese dead, including many women and children. It marked one of the largest and bloodiest uprisings against the Japanese in Taiwan’s colonial history. The rebellion was devastating not only to the colonial authority, but also to the Japanese colonial projects and their relationships to the aborigines in general. This “immense scandal” (daifushôji) and “surprise of all surprises” (igaichû no

igaiji) shocked imperialist Japan for several reasons. First of all, the perpetrators were from what the colonial officials have praised as the most “enlightened and compliant” of all aboriginal territories with relatively higher living and education standards. Secondly, two of the distinguished aborigine police Dakkis-nobin and Dakkis-naui (Japanese names Hanaoka Ichirô, Hanaoka Jirô respectively) who were groomed and lauded as symbols of Japanese colonial benevolence and tutelage, committed suicide instead of forewarning the authority or persuading the rebels to surrender. Thirdly, the killing appears to have been premeditated and methodical from the strategized pre-attacks on the police stations peripheral to Musha and the indiscriminate slaying of Japanese regardless of age and gender. Finally, the rebellion occurred in the midst of a global economic crisis that further strained the viability of Japanese capitalism and its overseas colonial enterprise. Many metropolitan and colonial officials feared that the Musha Incident would spark nationalist movements and stimulate class antagonisms not only in colonial Taiwan but also colonial Korea, and perhaps, in Japan itself (Tai 1981). The incredulity and agitation caused by the insurgence consumed the colonial authority to the extent that the subsequent subjugation campaign mobilized approximately 3,000 military and police forces (against 300 rebels) and deployed internationally banned poisonous gas with the clear aim to decimate the rebelling population.[3]

The massive and relentless murders of not only the rebels but also their entire tribal population only serve to underscore the shock and “unthinkability” of the rebellion in the minds of the colonial administration. In his general argument that silences are constitutive to historical narrative, Michel-Rolph Trouillot points to the Haiti Revolution as unthinkable in Western colonial epistemology: “The events that shook up Saint-Dominguez from 1791 to 1804 constituted a sequence for which not even the extreme political left in France or in England had a conceptual frame of reference. They were ‘unthinkable’ facts in the framework of Western thought” (Trouillot 1995: 82). Trouillot’s argument is not that eighteenth-century men and women should have thought about the fundamental equality of humankind, thus the possibility of violent revolt against the colonial regime, but that they could not have done so in the very historical limit of their epistemology. This structure of limitation is grounded in the knowledge of the ontological nature of conquered people, which, in turn, constructs a certain ideal of “man.” In coloniality, non-European groups are forced to enter into various philosophical, ideological, and practical schemes

that recognized degrees of humanity. Colonialism provided the most potent impetus for the transformation of European ethnocentrism into scientific racism. The practice of slavery in the Americas secured the blacks' position at the bottom of the human world. The ontological principles behind the colonialist enterprise, namely that the differences between forms of humanity were not only of degree but of kind, not historical but primordial. The silencing of the Haitian revolution is therefore a general silencing of slavery, colonialism, and violence in historiography (Trouillot 1995: 82).

The notion of unthinkability as a structure of limitation of thought is useful in drawing the compatibility between Western and Japanese colonial discourse. The Western conviction that slaves could not envision freedom, let alone formulate strategies for gaining and securing such freedom, was based not so much on empirical evidences as on ontology, an implicit organization and classification of the world and its inhabitants. The subhuman designation of the Taiwanese aborigines was clearly spoken by the fourth Governor General Kodama Gentarô in his policy of "savage management" after the military suppression of Han-Taiwanese guerrillas in the "plains." Kodama had initially envisioned a total "extinction" of the aborigines. For Kodama, the natives are "stubbornly stupid" and are equivalent to "wild beasts" therefore difficult to properly "rein in." Although they might "evolve" in time, it is best in the interest of the colonial administration to dispose of them entirely (Kondo 1992: 36). Given the impossibility of eliminating the entire aborigine population and the practical needs to exploit the rich resources of the aboriginal territories, subsequent colonial policies have followed a more moderate "intimidate first, cultivate later" dictum of gradual assimilation. The tropes that placed aborigines in various degrees and categories of savagery to civility, however, remained consistent in Japanese colonial discourse.

It is this contradiction between savagery and civility within colonial discourse that confers the paradoxical nature of its unthinkability. On the one hand, the aborigines are "stubbornly stupid" subhuman forms incapable of rational thoughts, not to mention formulating and organizing military operations. On the other hand, the policy of gradual assimilation has brought the brethren ever closer to civility where their transgression is also inconceivable. The Musha Rebellion was unthinkable because Musha had "progressed" to semi-civility through colonial development. In 1930, Musha was considered by the

colonial administration as the symbol of colonial benevolence and as the model of “savage management.” The writer Sato Haruo succinctly captured the semi-civility of Musha and the improbability of savagery in his visit to the island colony in 1920. Upon hearing a minor aboriginal disturbance mistakenly attributed to the Musha aborigines, Sato writes:

<quote>

There is suspicion about this rumor [that all the Japanese in Musha were killed in an aborigine uprising]. Musha is probably the premier city in the savage territory. There are more than a hundred Japanese residing there. As a result, the aborigines there shouldn’t be that barbarous. It is unthinkable that over a hundred Japanese could have been murdered.

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(Uno 1981: 84)

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The disturbance that Sato referred to did not occur at Musha, but at Saramao where seven Japanese were killed. It was Musha’s relative proximity to civility, its designation as the “premier city in the savage territory,” that a mass revolt against the Japanese was unthinkable. The unthinkable therefore operates as a phenomenological barrier that occludes the contradiction between “city” and “savage territory,” between “civility” and “savagery.” As we shall see in a moment, it is a return to the discourse of savagery and bestiality, of the incapability to civility that colonial discourse tried to cope with the unthinkable that ten years later became a reality.

The initial unthinkability of the aboriginal uprising demanded a secondary rationalization that formed a system of knowledge capable of making sense of the event’s cause and effect on the one hand, and the diffusion and repression of the event itself on the other. Put differently, the trauma of the unthinkable must be displaced through a rational regime of colonial administrative power: historiography, investigations, reports, and

management recommendations. Japanese colonial authority conducted a number of investigations and commissioned a number of reports on the Musha rebellion and its aftermath.[4] Compared to earlier official accounts of the uprising, An Account of the Musha Incident is by far the most complete and meticulous, and which includes much new evidence not found in other such reports. From the beginning of Japanese colonial policy toward the aborigine to the Musha Incident, from the subsequent subjugation mission to the final internment of the surviving aborigines, the report charts in detail the development and demise of the rebellion. For the context of our discussion, I want to call attention to what the report claims as the underlying motives for the aboriginal revolt. I will summarize them as follows:

1. The inherent characteristics of the savages. Despite the tireless effort of the colonial authority to civilize the savages, their natural propensity for violence, especially the practice of headhunting and their lack of guilt-consciousness (zaiakukan wo yûsezu) toward such practice, cannot be eradicated in a short period of time. Their innate infantilism, stupidity and stubbornness (ganmei korô) have foolishly led to the belief that they can recuperate bygone glory by killing a few Japanese.

1. The rebellious spirit of Mona-rudao, the chief of the Maebo tribe. Mona-rudao, the likely leader of the revolt, has harbored subversive plans (fuon keikaku) against the colonial authority stemming from the failed marriage between his sister Tewas-rudao and the Japanese police officer, Kondo Gisaburô.

1. The discontent of Bassao-Mona with his family. Bassao-mona, the second son of Mona-rudao who led the massacre was known to be involved in a marital dispute and carried out this headhunting ritual to demonstrate his bravery to another woman.

1. The beating of police officer Yoshimura. Twenty days prior to the incident, on October 7 at approximately 10:15 a.m., officer Yoshimura was beaten by an intoxicated Dadao-mona, the eldest son of Mona-rudao, for

refusing a drink to celebrate the wedding of an aborigine couple. Fear of reprisal could have precipitated his determination to rebel.

1. The laxness of police discipline. A certain number of police officers have abused their authority by taking advantage of aboriginal labor and women and this has brought discontent to the natives.

1. The problems of marriage between police officers and savage women. As a measure of aboriginal rule, colonial authority has instituted a practice of marrying Japanese police officers and daughters of influential aboriginal men. Many failed matrimonies have incurred antipathy towards the authority.

1. The great number of construction works prior to the incident. The tremendous amount of labor power required for the nine or so construction works has brought a number of complaints by the savages.

1. The construction at the Musha elementary school. The construction required the transporting of timber through perilous terrains and thick forests. And the savages were ordered to carry the timber on their shoulders instead of dragging it on the ground as they are accustomed to do. Compounded by low wages and delays in payments, many savages have secretly harbored hatred for Japanese officers.

1. The scheme of the delinquent savages. Piho-sappo of the Hôgô tribe and his cousin Piho-waris, both inherently violent and with loose morals incited fellow savages’ disapproval of the elementary school construction.

1. The plotting by the Taiwanese. Although this is uncertain, there is suspicion that some Taiwanese living in Musha were involved in plotting the killing.

1. Flaws in administrative personnel. A few overly repressive police officers, the scarcity of long-term personnel in suspicious tribes, and lack of communication between police officers and savages have contributed to the strained relationship. The dwindling number of police officers can be attributed to the general reduction in colonial expenditures.[5]

The report concludes this segment of its investigation by linking the aboriginal discontent directly to the construction problems with the Musha elementary school lodgings and the agitation of a few “rebellious savages.” Without qualified and understanding police officers, the report laments, “For those who do not know ways to redress through letters and petitions (tôsho tangan) as would civilized beings (bunmeijin), it was inevitable that they would resort to such measure” (Tai 1981: 369–382).Not surprisingly, the report incriminates the rebels for their “primitivity,” their propensity for violence and their “stupidity and stubbornness” that led to the inevitable bloodshed despite the efforts in colonial assimilation. I have listed the official report on the causes at great length not so much to reiterate the expected rhetoric of colonial authority, but to point to the tactic of diffusion that the report employs. An Account of the Musha Incident lists eleven items as the possible causes to emphasize the overdetermined nature of the incident. The varying and multiple considerations given to the incident reflect not so much the complexity inherent to the uprising as the lack of preparation of the colonial authority in the midst of the largest extermination in the supposedly most “developed” aboriginal settlement. The historical contradiction between primitive bestiality and colonial civility could only be temporarily contained through evoking and stressing the utterly contingent and personal motivations behind the uprising. The construction surrounding Musha elementary school and the required timber transport are thus held up as the pivotal source of aboriginal discontent; the individuated defiance of a few aboriginal men and the misconduct of some Japanese police officials are cast as the sole instigators to the incident. The tactic of diffusion displaces the trauma of the unthinkable into individuated contingencies and the rebellion is devoid of its political content. By diffusing the incident into a

circumstantial and personal effort, the colonial officials aimed to deflect any interrogation and criticism of colonial authority itself.

From the perspective of the metropolitan left, the Musha uprising was equally unthinkable. It was not that they were not critical of Japanese colonialism, indeed they were. Rather, they were similarly incapable of transcending the epistemological limit to colonial difference. Kôno Mitsu and Kawakami Jôtarô, associates of the Japan People's Party (minshûtô), published two reports based on their brief January 1931 visit to Musha directly refuting the colonial government's findings.[6] In contrast to colonial administration's tendency to locate the cause of the incident in the particular customs and inherent psychology of the savages, Kôno and Kawakami (1931) argued that one must probe into the "economic meaning" and attend to the "suggestive meanings given by the ethnic background" in locating the truth surrounding the Musha incident. They write:

<quote>

In short, to explain "the Musha incident" from simply the perspective of the savages' disposition or particular psychology is completely off the mark. "The Musha incident" is definitely not a question of "anthropology." To regard this as a general maltreatment of the savages through "coerced labor and non-payment" is to know only one aspect but not the others. "The Musha incident" is definitely not a simple "question of humanism." Furthermore, it is insufficient to understand it as police oppression based on police autocracy and impropriety. "The Musha incident" is not a question of political responsibility solely in terms of a "disciplinary problem." Kôno and Kawakami

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(1931: 124)

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For Kôno and Kawakami, the Musha incident was not an aberration but embodied "the question of people's liberation, labor, and problems relating

to the entirety of colonial rule.” The Musha incident thus reflected the age of imperialism--the discontent and resistance to colonialism’s exploitation and racial discrimination. Only by considering these fundamental factors of colonial rule, they argue, can the “truth” regarding the uprising be known.

Contrary to the colonial authority’s emphasis on the transient and contingent nature of the incident, Kôno and Kawakami insist on the systemic and structural failure of colonial rule itself by pointing out two separate, but interrelated areas of concern: the so-called “savage problem” and the errors of Japanese colonial policy. First of all, they seek to expose the problems of aboriginal rule through the various “transformations” of aboriginal lives affected by colonial policy. The forced shift of the basic aboriginal lifestyle from hunting and gathering to farming and grazing, the change from a primitive economy to the regulations of a capitalist economy, and the conversion from “independently employed subject” to wage laborer, they argue, exasperated the livelihoods of the aborigines. As far as the Musha incident is concerned, the forced labor imposed for the purpose of timber transport and the delay in wage payments, they argue, must be considered as a threat to their lifestyle. Furthermore, the spread of education and knowledge, what the colonial government lauded as the “civilizing policy” (kyôka seisaku), inevitably instilled within the aborigine intellectuals their “ethnic self-awareness” (minzokuteki jikaku) and the consciousness of colonial inequality. Secondly, they point to the Musha incident as an exposure to the two basic flaws in Japanese imperialism: autocracy and the lack of accountability. Citing the various aboriginal upheavals prior to the Musha incident, Kôno and Kawakami conclude that rather than due to a few licentious police officers and a few scandalous Japanese-aboriginal relations, unlawfulness and misconduct were construed as the “overall tendency of the colonial government” (sôtôseiji no zenteki keikô).

Kôno and Kawakami’s intervention is both insightful and damaging to the official response to the Musha uprising considering the brevity of their stay and the intensity of colonial censorship. They saw the Musha incident as a manifestation of deep-rooted and extensive colonial mismanagement rather than an abrupt and contingent event. Nonetheless, their analysis is marred by the kind of totalizing generalization and patronizing attitude that are symptomatic of metropolitan leftist discourse. Although understandably

sympathetic to the plight of the aborigines, they never confront or come to terms with, the wretched of the earth themselves. This is evident in the longer and more detailed report penned by Kôno (1931) alone in “Exposing the Truth of the Musha Incident.” Ironically, the report also exposes the inherent flaw of anti-colonial leftist discourse, that the objective political resistance is incompatible with the subjective “primitivity” of the aborigines themselves. The report appears to be operating on two different registers: one that of an “objective” investigator, and the other of a “subjective” voyeur. Much akin to that of travelers to an exotic locale, Kôno describes his state-of-mind upon entering Musha as filled with various emotions: “impatience,” “anxiety,” “restlessness,” “anticipation” and “apprehension.” Protected by the colonial police, his party traced the sites and remains of the uprising, witnessing the markings of a beheaded aboriginal woman, the blood stain on the sword that decapitated the provincial governor, the cave that was a hideout for the rebel leader Mona-rudao. While wondering whether these vestiges of violence could serve as the “key to the truth,” they toured a settlement of a pro-Japanese aborigine camp, facing the natives for the first time. Amidst the hustle and bustle of aborigines conducting daily activities and chores relating to the subjugation effort, Kôno wonders:

<quote>

Raising the flags with a blue cross (the blue cross flag indicates pro-Japanese savages), the savages are running about in large numbers. We were told they are ordered to collect weapons. There is an inexplicable appeal to those who strut by carrying the aboriginal swords. The pitifulness of those who greet us with “konnichiwa, konnichiwa” as they come and go. After all, we only saw them as lovable and couldn’t find them detestable at all. Where is the brutality supposedly concealed in them? Who is responsible for the incident?

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(Kôno 1931:345, italics mine)

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Confronted by the unexpected docility and gentility of the natives, Kôno is left to ponder how the same domesticated aborigines are capable of instigating one of the bloodiest attacks on the Japanese. After spending an entire day at Musha, Kôno laments that they still couldn't come close to the "truth" of the incident. The rest of "Exposing" echoes "Speaking" in establishing the "labor problem" and the "ethnic problem" inherent in Japanese colonialism overall as the cause of the aboriginal revolt.

What is important here is the paradoxical disjuncture between "seeing" and "believing," between "appearance" and "truth" that undergirds metropolitan leftist discourse. Kôno and Kawakami's interrogation of the Musha incident is premised on their "total disbelief" of what the colonial authority has offered as the true causes of the rebellion. Their sense of mission is motivated by the uncovering and solving of this "mystery" behind official rhetoric and explanations. What this radical political gesture conceals, however, is that its operative strategy is incumbent upon their "believing" in what they "see" in the "appearance" of the natives who are "pitiful," "lovable," and "alluring." Put differently, whereas the colonial problematic is understood in its full complexity that requires multiple efforts of analysis and scrutiny, the "savages" simply exist in their simplicity and depthlessness, rendering themselves clearly to the perusing eyes of the metropolitan radicals. To this extent, Kôno and Kawakami reproduce the other side of the same coin of colonial denigration of which they accused the colonial authority: the romanticization of the natives. My intention here, pace Trioullot, is not to suggest that Kôno and Kawakami should have been mindful of their idealization of the natives, but rather that they couldn't have. Once the aboriginal resistance is characterized and categorized into the familiar metropolitan radical discourse of "labor problem" and "national liberation problem," it was not difficult for Kôno and colleagues to conclude that the Musha incident was a direct result of "autocracy," of "corrupted politics," of "bourgeois politics," and to hope that the investigation would become a "large bomb" to be used against imperialism, militarism, and autocracy. Between colonial denigration and leftist appropriation, between colonial oppression and leftist emancipation, are there any alternatives for the aborigines?

The official report on the Musha incident and Kôno and Kawakami's anti-official discourse, despite their opposing political persuasions, are equally motivated by their dualistic differentiation between "self" and "other, " "colonizer" and "colonized," "Japanese" and "savages." Whereas the ontological status of the first term is taken for granted, the second term of the binary can only exist either in its primitive bestiality or primeval beauty, as heinous perpetrators or helpless victims. We should of course not be surprised by the complicity between the official and oppositional discourses on the Musha incident given the political context in which these reports were circulated.[7] As long as the Musha incident is interpreted and debated within the arena of colonial administration and policymaking, any attempt at interrogating the fundamental contradiction between the colonizer and the colonized, the Japanese and the aborigines, is necessarily disavowed and foreclosed.

The postwar reconsideration of the Musha incident, with a handful of exceptions, did not resume until the late 1960s.[8] The belatedness in which a colonial event reappears in academic and public discourse could be attributed to the general process of Japan's decolonization on the one hand, and the specific marginalization of "Taiwan" in the consciousness of Japanese intellectuals on the other. Reflecting on the status of Taiwan studies in Japan, the Japan resident historian Tai Kuo-hui writes:

<quote>

At the time, it was in a rather strange atmosphere that China Studies in Japan made "One China" their keynote. And most of the people who sang the tune only paid lip service to it. Let us disregard the conservatives who maintained from the outset [the position of] "One China, One Taiwan." The "One China" people presupposed that "Taiwan is part of China." They regarded Taiwan as both an object of study and a place to visit as taboo, and filled their "heads" with the most barren apolitical formula and theory disguised as politics. This ungainliness has gone beyond "weirdness," and is truly pitiful.

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(Tai 1981: 2)

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Tai’s criticism against the indifference and hypocrisy of Taiwanese studies in Japan must be contextualized within the geopolitics of the Cold War era. What is important here, however, is that Tai and his colleagues have chosen the Musha uprising as the panacea for the marginalization of Taiwanese studies in Japan. Tai cites two reasons for selecting the Musha incident as the first theme for their collaborative work: the highly politicized atmosphere of the time (the Vietnam war, the Cultural Revolution, and worldwide student protests) and the necessity for a topic that required a multidisciplinary approach and a solid ground for research. Most crucially, Tai and his colleagues intended “to clarify the tragic event of those most oppressed and marginalized, and to present their actual conditions to the world” (Tai 1981: 3). It is perhaps too easy in today’s academic climate, despite Tai’s own qualifications, to criticize him for not only conflating “academic” politics (the marginalization of Taiwanese studies in Japan) with “real” politics (the rebellion of the most deprived) but also appropriating the latter as a means to remedy the former.[9] It seems to me that what is important here is that in a historical moment when “the subaltern cannot speak,” due to either the lack of access or total annihilation, intellectual work that situates itself as a “relay” for the vision of the future is perhaps the only possible means of political and ethical responsibility. Silence is another form of complicity. One of Tai’s insights on scholarship surrounding the Musha incident is that the Japanese anthropologists and folk studies, which were the pioneers and handmaidens of colonial rule, and compiling and composing compendium of writings on aboriginal customs, languages, and socioeconomic conditions, are completely mum on the Musha uprising. Tai’s intention was to provide some voice to the general silencing of the Musha uprising in postcolonial Japan.

It is rather ironic that it is the “informal” ethnography--that of travel writing and interview rather than institutional anthropology--that constitutes the most interesting and mediating writing on the Musha incident in the postwar era.[10] The literary critic Ozaki Hotsuki writes optimistically of this postcolonial generation: “The scar of colonialism can perhaps be overcome by the generation that can view the former colony objectively as a foreign

country. However, in order to do so, the autonomous recognition of experience (and its theorization) is perhaps necessary" (Ozaki 1971: 237). It is not clear to me how an "objective" relationship to an ex-colony constitutes a better approach to the legacy of imperialism, or that it is even possible to posit such a relationship in the first place, and just how experience can be understood independently from the objective condition of its possibility. While it is difficult to imagine how the "scar of colonialism" can ever be healed by generational change, Ozaki does succinctly profile the outlook of postcolonial writings on the Musha incident: whereas earlier writings on the incident had been mostly by those who had directly or indirectly experienced colonialism, the postwar writings are by those who have no immediate colonial experience. Despite, or rather in spite of their colonial non-affiliation, most of these writers are sympathetic to the plights of the aborigines and as a whole see the Musha incident as resistance against Japanese colonial rule. However, rather than interpreting the postwar writings in terms of generational change, I would like to argue that the "desire" for writing on Musha be understood as enabled by the historical experience of the aborigines as "volunteers" to the Japanese military in the post-Musha era. It is indeed this contradiction between opposition and collaboration, between mutinous savages and Japanese soldiers that concerns the postwar literature on Musha. It is this seemingly inexplicable and unthinkable shift from the "savage" anti-colonial resistance and imperial "civil" servitude that has preoccupied most of the postcolonial writings on the Musha incident.

In a valiant effort to reveal the Japanese colonial hypocrisy of "universal brotherhood," Katô Kunihiko spends a chapter in his book on the plight of the aboriginal "volunteers" (Katô 1979). Katô's documentation of "the unexpected legacy of imperialism" invariably conjoins the "aboriginal volunteers" and the Musha rebels, pondering the tremendous historical irony. [11] Katô is especially intrigued by his encounter with Aui, who despite having lost his father at the hands of the Japanese police during the uprising, enlisted for the Sixth Takasago Volunteer Army. It is not only that Aui's father, who apparently did not participate in the uprising, was killed, but he was also tortured and put to death as the Japanese colonial force sought revenge in the wake of the Musha incident. Thirteen years later, Aui became a "volunteer" for the imperial military. The central question concerning Katô is obviously: "how can we account for the divergence in those ten or so years?" According to the interview, Aui began attending the four-year public school

curriculum the year following the Musha uprising. And it is in the school, Aui says, where he was taught the “Japanese spirit” (nihon seishin):

<quote>

Japanese education is all about the “Yamato damashi.” How can I put it? A kind of spirit.... We all imbibed the Japanese spirit: for the final victory and for the last five minutes. We also memorized songs. A man is to crown his life for the nation. To crown one’s life is to drop bombs in the South, isn’t it? And then, one’s body is to be scattered like a flower.... It means to die for the country. It is to follow orders regardless of being beaten or killed. This is all Japanese spirit. We all took in the Japanese spirit. This is because Japan ruled us for fifty years.

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(Katô 1979: 132–133)

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Somehow, Katô finds this rather straightforward and instrumental answer insufficient as an explanation for Aui’s volunteerism. Without mentioning the death of Aui’s father, Katô invites Aui to speak about his willingness to enlist:

<quote>

We went on our own because we all learned the Japanese spirit. We all applied at the police substation. However, as I recall, there was also an order (to enlist): an order from the prefectural governor to the police to enlist a number of men. The police officer would then seek out a number of qualified men from the tribe. “ Will you go?” “Oh sure.” Everyone responded the same way. As long as we’re ordered to go, we will. This is the Japanese spirit. Can’t say no. On the surface it is voluntary, but it is the same as an order.

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(Katô 1979: 133–134)

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Despite Aui’s claim that in the colonial context, the distinction between “voluntarism” and “order” are often indistinguishable, Katô is nonetheless still troubled by the apparent contradiction. Unable to suppress his impatience, Katô queries Aui directly about his enlisting in relation to the death of his father: “Mr. Aui, but you did know that your father was killed by the Japanese during the Musha incident, and you still went to war for Japan?” Aui’s response is surprisingly brief and mundane: “it is because we were taught the Japanese spirit.” Aui repeats the phrase “Japanese spirit” several times and emphasizes the role education played in instilling such an ideology. As others begin to join in the conversation, Katô decides to ask the final question: “Well, it might be awkward for me as a Japanese to pose such a question, but please tell me what exactly is the Japanese spirit?” To Katô’s supposedly penetrating inquiry, the former aboriginal soldiers collectively respond matter-of-factly: “The Total Mobilization of National Spirit” (kokuminseishin sôdôin), “Dogged Perseverance” (kennin jikyû), “To Die for the Nation” (kuni no tameni inochi wo suterukoto), and “To Die for the Emperor” (tennoheika no tame ni shinukoto) (Katô 1979: 134–135). With a deep sense of resignation Katô writes:

<quote>

At this point, I could not but make this strange consent. That is the only thing the ruling Japanese has taught them: nothing more nothing less. To those who are positioned in the lowest level of the colonial hierarchy, it is enough to just teach those

ideas, to inculcate in these innocent children violent values and to beat into them the values of the imperial nation. With excruciating thought, I brought the interview to an end.

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(Katô 1979:135)

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Hayashi Eidai expresses similar incredulity at the contradictory positionality of the aborigines in an extremely valuable contemporary photo documentation of Japanese rule in Taiwan (Hayashi 2000). After a brief discussion of the Musha uprising and the cruel subjugation by the colonial government, Hayashi rightly points to “imperialization through education” (kôkoku shinminka kyôiku) as the primary assimilation policy that the colonizer attempted in “altering the aborigine’s traditional world view, eradicating their ethnic spirit and introducing new ideas based on the imperial family and the Japanese nation.” Despite foregrounding the total mobilization of the ideological state apparatus, Hayashi, like Katô, is much concerned with the “about face” of the volunteers from Musha:

They were elementary school children during the Musha Incident. Twelve years later, why did they compose letters in blood and volunteer for the Takasago Volunteer Army? With their fathers and brothers massacred, Japanese should certainly be their enemy. This cannot be explained as solely the outcome of imperial education by the police.

Despite his interviewees’ chorus of “to become a Japanese soldier is the highest honor and to die for the emperor and the nation is the ultimate Japanese spirit,” Hayashi still finds himself puzzled by their seeming ideological responses. These “conversations” between anti-colonialists from the former colonizing nation and the nationalist aborigines from the ex-colony seems less of a “dialogue” than an “inquisition,” not entirely different from the high times of colonialism. This is because, to put it crudely, despite decolonization, the fundamental power relationship between the aborigines and the Japanese has remained the same. For the postwar Japanese sympathetic to the plights of the aborigines, the unusually “common” responses—statements that have been utterly refuted, if not repressed, in Japan since 1945—emerge as an aporia, an incomprehensibility, an

anachronicity that reproduce the ghostly images of the Japanese themselves: a mimetic other that is “not quite, yet alike.”

Katô and Hayashi’s incredulity and frustration can perhaps be interpreted as working within the “regime of nationality.” For them, the identity of the aborigines, hence its difference is incommensurable with loyalty to the emperor and the Japanese nation especially in the aftermath of the Musha uprising. On the one hand, there is a metropolitan desire to seek “resistance” within the oppressed in an ahistorical and essentialized manner. The oppressed, because of their ontological and existential relationality to the oppressor, is by definition recalcitrant and potentially subversive. On the other hand, loyalty and submission is perceived within a one-to-one relationship between the “nation” and its “people.” Whereas it is completely “natural” for the Japanese to fall prey to the nationalist and imperialist ideology—”to die for the emperor and the Japanese nation”—it is considered an aberration, if not an outright abomination for the colonized aborigines to do so. What is being played out here is none other than a politics of identity where the aborigines are consumed and presumed in their “difference,” and that difference alone, to the Japanese, despite the fact that they “were” Japanese and imperial subjects during the colonial period. I am not suggesting that we should take the aborigines’ responses “literally” for they are surely mediated by the politics of postcolonialism and a renewed internal colonization. It is noteworthy that in a number of postwar Japanese reports on the aborigines, as in Katô’s case, the Japanese interlocutors are initially mistaken for government officials whom the aborigines think to have come to the remote mountainous regions from Japan to hear their redress. Since the defeat of Japan and the subsequent decolonization meant that those aboriginal “volunteers” were no longer “Japanese,” but were now “Chinese/Taiwanese” under the new regime, they have not only lost their owed back wages but also any compensation from the Japanese government. As most of these aborigines today live in dire poverty, the claim of patriotism and loyalty to the Japanese nation is a present day strategy of protesting against the “betrayal” of the former colonizer and an effort to maintain an economic possibility of reparation.

Economic imperatives aside, should we be surprised at the devotion the aborigines have displayed toward the Japanese colonizers in the wake of colonial re-articulation and reinforcement after the Musha incident?

Positioned in the abyss of the colonial hierarchy and deprived of any political and economic possibilities, to become a “Japanese soldier” was perhaps the only avenue to a perceived equality and agency for most of these “volunteers.” This is a historical condition not particular to the Taiwanese aborigines, but a general category of colonized existence vividly depicted by Albert Memmi:

<quote>

The first attempt of the colonized is to change his condition by changing his skin. There is a tempting model very close at hand--the colonizer. The latter suffers from none of his deficiencies, has all rights, enjoys every possession and benefits from every prestige. He is, moreover, the other part of the comparison, the one that crushes the colonized and keeps him in servitude. The first ambition of the colonized is to become equal to that splendid model and to resemble him to the point of disappearing in him.

<right>

(Memmi 1965: 120, italics mine)

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</quote>

The advocacy and insistence of “sameness” perhaps strikes a dissonant chord in today’s overemphasized call for “difference” of cultural politics. But for the dispossessed, the contradiction between “savagery” and “civility,” the “colonized” and the “colonizer,” “natives” and “Japanese” can only be overcome through a strategic construction of “sameness” and “equality.” Not as an end in itself, but a temporary transcendence from the alienated and battered existence inflicted by colonialism. This process of interpellation, or what has come to be known as “imperialization” (kôminka), obviously points to the tenacity of Japanese colonial rule as much as to the desire of the aborigines to insert themselves as active agents in the making of history. It is in this self-affirmation that we might view the desire of “becoming Japanese” not simply as the substantiation of “false consciousness” but rather as the coming to terms with the trauma and the tragedy of the Musha incident. As Waris-piho, one of the few surviving

aborigine soldier with his given Japanese name “Yonekawa” tattooed onto his right wrist, defends his decision to volunteer for the war: “By becoming a Japanese soldier, I thought to remove the disgrace that has been attached to the Musha incident. By enlisting, I would achieve the same honor as the Japanese. I have never feared death” (Hayashi 1996).

The unthinkability of the Musha uprising and subsequent voluntarism points to the epistemological and historical limit of Japanese colonialism in the construction and articulation of colonial difference. This does not mean however, that the colonized occupies a privileged position capable of overcoming or transcending that limitation. It is not my intention to resuscitate a positivity that constructs a totalizing and monolithic colonial formation that leaves no room for negotiation or resistance. Nor do I want to overlook the hesitation and irresolution in the construction of a colonial subject and the possibilities of recalcitrance implicit within that construction. I do want however, to argue that the condition of coloniality is best construed and apprehended not as “ambivalence” or “hybridity” but as “contradiction.” And that colonial policies and texts are ideology and practices that deny, conceal, and otherwise distort that very contradiction.[12] It is important to underscore here that differences alone do not necessarily produce contradiction; only when apparently different elements are grasped in their constitutive relationship, can certain of their features be abstracted as contradiction. This “incompatible development” within a “dependent” relationship in the colonial system is well-recognized by Fanon:

<quote>

The settler and the native are old acquaintances. In fact, the settler is right when he speaks of knowing “them” well. For it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence. The settler owes the fact of his very existence, that is to say, his property, to the colonial system.

<right>

(Fanon 1963: 36)

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</quote>

The interrelationship between the colonizer and the colonized is neither mutual nor equal, but rather it represents a perpetuation as required by the workings and structuring of colonialism. Ironically, it is precisely from this internal dynamics of the colonial system that contradiction becomes visible and the condition for change becomes possible. Fanon continues:

<quote>

The settler-native relationship is a mass relationship. The settler pits brute force against the weight of numbers. He is an exhibitionist. His preoccupation with security makes him remind the native out loud that there he alone is master. The settler keeps alive in the native an anger which he deprives of outlet; the native is trapped in the tight links of the chains of colonialism.

<right>

(1963: 54, italics mine)

</right>

</quote>

In other words, the colonial world of prohibitions and barriers, of confinements and barbed-wire entanglements, also assists in strengthening the inhibited aggressiveness and instilling the suppressed anger within the colonized. As the immanent contradiction unfolds into a “decisive struggle between the two protagonists,” there arises a possibility where the “whole social structure [can be] changed from the bottom up” (Fanon 1963: 35).

There are several advantages, I believe, in grasping colonialism and its discourse in terms of contradiction rather than ambivalence. First of all, contradiction retains the inevitable internal conflict of colonialism and its discourse as suggested by ambivalence, yet by virtue of its insistence on analyzing colonial economy in terms of structure, system, and agency, it avoids seeing the colonizer and the colonized as simply shifting positions in

an indeterminate process of circulation that eventually renders the relation of power equivocal. Secondly, whereas ambivalence suggests the inner dissension within a colonial discourse through the conflicting economy of the psyche, thus risking an unproblematic articulation of the transcendental categories of psychoanalysis, contradiction traces the necessary internal movements and developments of colonialism as a historically contingent process that constitutes a qualitative difference from an earlier period. In other words, contradiction enables us to grasp changes in colonial attitude not through some external causes (transcendental or metaphysical) but through the inner workings and dynamics of the colonial apparatus itself.

Lastly, the subject constructed within the complex articulation of colonial ambivalence, in its refusal to determinacy or fixity, in the final analysis, offers little or no threat at all to the strategic operation of colonial discourse. Put differently, what ambivalence suggests then, is that since the enunciation of colonial discourse is already inevitably split, and invariably in constant slippage, the “resistance” of the colonized, by virtue of its constituting relationship to the dominant, is always present and effected. What this theoretical argument ultimately refuses then, is to come to terms with the colonized, with his or her struggles, since the colonized has always spoken within the ambivalence of colonial discourse without either the intention or the desire of the colonial subject. The deconstruction of colonial discourse does not mean the destruction of colonial economy. Contradiction, on the other hand, as a continuous process of internal relations simultaneously supporting and undermining one another in an uneasy equilibrium, intensifies as colonialism exerts more pressure and furthers its exploitation. As the contradiction within the colonial system becomes bigger, sharper, and more explosive, both the supporting and undermining movements become more intense, though not necessarily to the same degree. And it is within this intensified unfolding of contradiction that the hitherto suppressed antagonism between the colonizer and the colonized becomes a reality where the colonized “becomes unhinged, reorganizes itself, and in blood and tears gives birth to very real and immediate action” (Fanon 1963: 56). This is, however, not to subscribe to a teleological movement within contradiction and to prescribe a final resolution to the colonial question--although that is the utopic strategy to which anti-colonialist struggles must envision--but as a possibility that requires constant revision in relation to the changing predicament of its subaltern positions, not a predetermined site waiting for the final unfolding of History. In this

formulation, contradiction therefore, must ultimately be viewed as an analytical category of colonialism, not a guarantor for total emancipation. It is indispensable to the interpreting and mapping of the partial resolution and the constant negotiation of colonialism and its discourse. As preexisting equilibrium breaks down, new ones are being constructed--as witnessed by neocolonialism replacing colonialism after decolonization, and today in the guise of transnational capitalism. In other words, unlike the notion of ambivalence that risks the danger of ignoring the inner workings of colonial discourse that permits gaps and slippage to be occupied by anti-colonialist resistance in the interest of maintaining its own equilibrium, contradiction is able to trace the readjustments, the partial concessions of the continuing colonial practices.

Notes

[1] For a critique of Mannoni's work, see Fanon (1967), chapter 4, "The So-Called Dependency Complex of Colonized Peoples."

[2] What makes these otherwise tenuous propositions even partially conceivable is the generally positive assessment by the surviving aborigine "volunteers" regarding their own experiences under Japanese colonial rule. Many of them sang praise for the way the Japanese military treated them "fairly" despite the fact they were deployed not as soldiers but as war workers (gunzoku) doing menial and perilous chores. Many listed the partings with their Japanese "compatriots" after the war as the most emotional event in their war experience. Many more reminisced fondly about their interactions with the Japanese during the colonial period. For examples, see interviews recorded by Suzuki Akira in Suzuki (1976).

[3] The following account and discussion of the Musha Rebellion and postcolonial interpretation of voluntarism are based on chapter 4 ("From Mutineers to Volunteers: The Musha Uprising and Aboriginal Representations of Savagery and Civility") of Ching (2001).

[4] Some examples of the official documents are: Mushaban sôjô jiken chôsa fukumeisho (The Commissioned Investigating Report on the Musha Savage Riot) in November 1930 (Ikoma 1930), Musha jiken no tenmatsu (An Account of the Musha Incident) (Taiwan Sôtôfu 1931), Musha shûgeki jiken gaiyô (An Outline of the Musha Assault) (Taiwan Sôtôfu 1932) in the following year, and Musha jikenshi (An Account of the Musha Incident) (Taiwan Sôtôfu 1934). I have relied on the more comprehensive and detailed Musha jikenshi published by the Police Bureau of the Taiwan Colonial Government for my subsequent discussion of the official discourse.

[5] Musha jikenshi, appended in (Tai 1981: 369–382).

[6] “Mushajiken no shinsô wo kataru” (Speaking the Truth on the Musha Incident) was written by both Kawakami and Kôno (1931) in the March issue of Kaizô. “Musha jiken no shinsô wo abaku” (Exposing the Truth of the Musha Incident) was authored by Kôno (1931) in Chuô Kôron’s March issue. They are hereafter referred to as “Speaking” and “Exposing,” respectively. The two reports are very similar to “Exposing,” providing more detailed point-by-point refutation of the official investigation.

[7] The Musha incident was hotly debated in the fifty-ninth parliamentary meeting.

[8] Nishikawa Mitsuru’s “Banka” (The Aboriginal Songs) was published in 1951. Sakaguchi Reiko published a number of short stories on the aborigines: “Bikki no hanashi” (The Tales of Bikki) (1953); “Banchi” (The Aboriginal Territory) (1953); “Musha” (1954); “Banchi no onna” (The Aboriginal Women) (1956).

[9] “Regardless of nationalities, we take the position that the current members cannot, and should not, write the history of these Taiwanese minorities on their behalf. In the near future and from within the aboriginal society, there certainly will be movements of identity search relating to the establishment of historical subject and the restoration of minority rights. We

are foreseeing this development and looking forward to its realization.... Our collaboration is intended as a “relay” until the aboriginal writers begin their work.” (Tai 1981:4).

[10] Both imaginative and historical texts are continuously being produced since the late 1960s. Some include recollections by those who were directly involved in the incident: Egawa Hirotôri’s Musha no chizakura (The Bloody Blossoms of Musha) (1970) and Morita Shûnsuke’s Taiwan no mushajiken: shinsô to haikei (The Musha Incident of Taiwan: Its Facts and Background) (1976). Egawa served as the section chief of the Nôkô County Police Department and Morita was the section chief of Aboriginal Rule. Another text that treads the official line on Musha is Miyamura Keny’a’s Maebo nisshi (The Maebo Diary) (1965). For accounts of other publications on the Musha Incident in the postwar era, see Nakagawa Koichi, Umezawa Fumiko, Wakamori Tamio, and Nakamura Reiko, Musha jiken--Taiwan takasagozoku no hôki (The Musha Incident: The Uprising of Taiwan’s Takasago Tribe) (Tokyo: Sanseidô, 1980: 263–271).

[11] Naoki Sakai defines “the unexpected legacy of imperialism” as follows: “what is pointed to by the mass of displaced or oppressed people, including those refugees in diaspora, whose existence one would not be able to comprehend but for the imperialist maneuvers that destroyed their previous habitats.” See Sakai 1997: 19.

[12] Contradiction here is to be understood in its Marxist formulation in material dialectics as “the incompatible development of different elements within the same relation...between elements that are also dependent on one another.” See Ollman 1993: 15.

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** 4. Dispossession and Possession: The Maya, Identi/ties, and “Post” War Guatemala

Diane M. Nelson1

A drum is playing and the thin reedy song of the oboe-like chirimia in the Guatemalan highland town of Joyabaj. Dancers dressed in heavy costumes and thick wooden masks trace the back and forth steps of the Baile de la Culebra (Dance of the Snake) in which the snakes are real and poisonous. Dancers repeat the yearly rituals of being contracted to work on the sugarcane plantations on the steamy Pacific coast by an indigenous man dressed as a Spaniard in blonde wooden curls. He bends one over to use his back as a table to mark down men’s names and how much they owe for the drink he just bought them—an act I’ve seen repeated out of costume, that is, in “real” life. Meanwhile the contratista’s (contractor) two companions, his “wife” ([cross]dressed in the huipil[13] of the department capital—not a local woman) and his “shaman” or Maxe, in the traditional dress of nearby Chichicastenango, seem to be dallying behind his back. In the slow rhythms of the dance the workers plan a revolt against the labor contractor. Plans are made and rituals performed, including handling the snakes, which are placed under the master’s clothes while he is sleeping. After much struggle he dies

and the workers rejoice. But their joy is short-lived as the Maxe or shaman performs spells that bring him back to life. Things seem to go back to the way they were.

When I had seen it (August 2000 and 2002) the audience yelled out “Maxe necio!” (naughty Maxe, a nickname for people from Chichicastenango—where everyone is reputed to be a shaman, isomorphing geographical with supernatural identities. People in Joyabaj call themselves Xoye. Both speak the K’iche’ language.) Like the Dance of the Conquest, which recapitulates a Spanish dance commemorating the expulsion of the Moors in 1492, in the Baile de la Culebra the people united are defeated. They enact many of the tensions around remembering and amnesia addressed in this book. These are dances about dispossession.

In February 1999, three years after a peace treaty was signed in Guatemala’s thirty-six-year civil war, the United Nations Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) declared that under international law the state’s counterinsurgency campaign of the early 1980s (comprising 93 percent of all violence they investigated) constituted genocide against the Mayan people (the majority in Guatemala). They based this claim on four case studies, including Joyabaj’s neighbor, Zacualpa. Much of the violence in Zacualpa was carried out by “civil patrollers” from Joyabaj. While those giving the orders were mostly non-indigenous (ladino), both victims and perpetrators many of whom in turn feel transformed into victims by this experience were indigenous. This chapter cannot fully account for their becoming collaborators in genocide or having to live without clear-cut divisions between victimizer and those who suffer (Nelson, in press). More humbly, I attempt to give the reader a sense of some complexities of identification in a place where the war, overwhelming and horrifying as it was, was also a continuation of everyday life, and the “post” war is less a clear-cut period than an unstable process.

Possession has been called “9/10s of the law” and has, since the 1600s in the global north, been the sign of full humanity, the seat of rights. In the postcolony, those who once were their own king, now dispossessed by the armies (of soldiers, merchants, priests, and other camp followers) mobilized under this banner, struggle to possess something:land, control

of their own labor, community bonds. These struggles increasingly focus on possession of culture, or identity, authenticity, “Mayan-ness.”

Indigenous people (and the anthropologists who study them) are involved in complex articulations of what possessing identity means and what role it might play in struggles over re-possession: of land and labor, tradition and modernity, a sense of moral worth, and the complex emotions surrounding collaboration in violence. In Guatemala, these struggles are waged in the context of 500 years of colonization and thirty-five years of civil war, which brought geno-and ethnocide, syncretism, ladinization, exclusion, and a myriad of divide and conquer counterinsurgency strategies. While indigenous people are the majority in Guatemala they are divided among twenty-some ethno-linguistic groups with extremely strong community identifications (like Maxe and Xoye), further fractioning this non-homogeneous category. The civil war has been characterized as a racist war, pitting non-indigenous (ladino) elites vs. the Maya. While indigenous people suffered by far the largest casualties (on both sides), possession of such a clear-cut explanatory framework is far from secure.

This chapter explores these struggles, but also pivots through an other meaning of possession the kind in The Exorcist, the more magical sense that one has been taken over, acted on by an outside force, bent to act to another, alien will. In the masquerade dancers have two faces. The dancing, often for 15 + hours a day for days on end, is very taxing, but dancers report feeling the power of those they represent helping them bear the physical and psychic challenge. Power is represented in the form of the labor contractor. In the dance, he is played by an indigenous man wearing a white mask. In the “real world,” the role was formerly held exclusively by ladinos but has been monopolized by indigenous men for at least a generation. Power is revivified through the Maxe, indigenous magic practiced by an aj q’ij or sacerdote Maya (priest), clearly identified as indigenous, but not local, and NOT a “good person” or gente decente, an important category of belonging in Mayan communities (Gonzalez 2002; McAllister 2002).[14] A magical possession is enacted through a neighbor who is indigenous but also Other. Another ghostly possession is pointed to by the indigenous men who will go down to the Coast to cut cane and pick coffee, but will barely pay back their debts after months of hard labor. Who acts and who is acted on when a nation’s

spectral ties to transnational finance capital are incarnated in the laboring (and dancing) bodies of indigenous men; when the mass murder of war is carried out by local people dragooned into “Civil” Patrols; when hated oppressors seem to come back from the dead; and “Mayan” identity, once feared lost, is “revitalized”? With identity so dynamic, with the difficulties in mapping the fine line between heinous perpetrator and hapless victim, how is one to live the “identities of dispossession”?

*** Global Dispossession

Perhaps this chapter, as part of the book’s project to “map contemporary world conflicts,” should have started with my own attempts to be a good person in a context of collaboration and duplicity. Perhaps I should have started with a joke that is popular in Guatemala: “Why are there no coups d’etat in the U.S.? Because there is no U.S. Embassy there.” Jenkins and Gottlieb encourage us to address the end of the Cold War, but as a U.S. citizen I am constantly drawn back to its beginning for Latin America: Guatemala, 1954, with the overthrow of the elected Arbenz government. I am drawn back every time I go to Guatemala and am identified (by Guatemalans of every station) as a “gringa,” a two-faced entity, simultaneously concerned scholar and representative of a great, rich, ambivalent power. I am reminded over and over again by the Xoye in Joyabaj that I possess that great modern value of U.S. citizenship:an identity that means I won’t die trying to illegally cross the border into Guatemala in order to make my living.

David Harvey, pondering the “new imperialism” (2003), connects it to the dual character of capital accumulation. One aspect consists of the factory, the mine, the agricultural estate where an economic process is transacted between capitalist and laborer. The other aspect concerns relations between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production mediated via colonial policy, the international loan system, and war (137). He disputes the term “primitive accumulation” because it suggests that rapaciousness and brutality are a stage, an earlier moment, that is overcome and morphs into “normal” accumulation. Instead he proffers “accumulation by dispossession” to name the continuous role of predation, force, and debt peonage in the contemporary world. Echoing Arrighi and Silver (1999) and Amin (1997), he

characterizes the current moment as chaotic, in a serious crisis, and global structures as contingent, only partially effective at “protect[ing] the main centres of capital accumulation against devaluation...[via the] Wall Street-Treasury-IMF complex” (185).

Harvey (2003), the geographer, says that the post-1970 turn to neoliberal adjustments and privatization sought a “spatio-temporal fix” for surplus capital that included intensifying financialization. But this created deindustrialization, rapid inflation followed by credit crunches, and chronic structural unemployment in the United States as well as the global south. I am a gringa, thereby part of these transnational flows. In this chapter, I am working to map Joyabaj and Guatemala into global geographies of deprivation and violence. Following Leo Ching (chapter 3 in this volume), to do so entails paying attention to the un/thinkable and to epistemologies of “post-” colonial difference. I will try to think the possession of indigenous and Mayan identities, not only through war but also through these regimes of accumulation by dispossession. They inhabit contiguous terrains.

*** Local Dispossession

**** Land and Labor

Joyabaj has been a finca de mozos (worker farm) for close to 100 years (CEH 1999; Oglesby 2002; Remijnse 2003). Similar to how different areas were given over to export monocrop cultivation fincas de café,banano, azucar, algodón(coffee, bananas, sugar, cotton plantations), Joyabaj produced mozos: field hands for seasonal work on Guatemala’s South Coast plantations. The same non-indigenous (ladino) family, the Herreras, who acquired vast tracts of land in the hot coastal lowlands also acquired land around Joyabaj. As the land was communally held, that is, had no “owner” in the Liberal sense of the late nineteenth century “reform” movements, the Herreras didn’t buy it. They simply paid for a survey, some bribes, and took possession of the land and its people. In Joyabaj, in return for farming what had been their communally held land, individuals and families had to migrate to cut cane during the harvest season. The state regulated these transactions through landholding,

labor, vagrancy, and other laws and their violent enforcement. In the twenty-first century, people are still tightly bound to the plantations but more through the sinuous ties of debt relations, while the fincas face increasing competition from immigration to the United States.

**** Tradition and Modernity

The dance of the snakes is over-determined, with many possible interpretations, but I want to pull on the threads that help us think about identities of dispossession. Like any postcolonial project, the baile is deeply hybrid: it incorporates ancient fertility rites, honors the town's Catholic patron saint La Virgen de Transito (Virgin of the Assumption), and contains such "modern" actants as labor contractors. To outsiders—tourists, anthropologists, revitalized Catholics, Protestants, non-indigenous/ladinos, Mayan activists—the baile is an expression of authentic indigenous culture. For this, it is both celebrated and reviled.

"Authentic" culture is contested terrain—for example, not all "Indians" identify as Maya (people active in the cultural rights movement). In 1999, when I asked the indigenous mayor (Alcalde Indígena[15]) of Joyabaj if there were "Maya" in the area he looked puzzled, then asked if I were looking for a museum. In our discussion about identity he complained about ladinos in the area who called him an "indio" (a racist term). He said, "I am not one of those because they were people who lived here a long time ago...naked, without schooling. Now there are schools in all the hamlets. There are only naturales here." And Maya? "Like in a museum?" he asked. Then, "Here there aren't any of those, like from before. But there is an organization in Guatemala City. People who have their degrees.... But you know, there is a Grupo Maya here.... They talk about how we can all be united, how to come together.... When I leave here [retire from being mayor] I'm going to become a Maya."

Struggles to possess some means of subsistence, or perhaps a little more than that, are linked in contradictory ways with (self) possession and identity —they have several faces. For some indigenous people it means to look and

sound less “indio” and more ladino—being educated, speaking Spanish, getting a white-collar job rather than the manual labor associated with indigeneity, or wearing “Western” clothing. Ladino is a term mainly used in Guatemala and southern Mexico to mean mestizo, non-indigenous, but also not white. It is only partially a “racial” term as it is marked by class, culture, clothes, and so forth. As a Guatemalan joke puts it: “What is a ladino? An Indian with money.”

Possessing education is somewhat ambivalent for the Alcalde Indígena (who by his very position seems to represent “authentic” Joyabaj). Schooling differentiates the hamlets from “primitive indios” but he also feels he still has much to learn.

Alfonso García is a local Mayan activist struggling to hold on to the language and “culture.” He says he is often asked by his more assimilated cousins, “Why would you want to talk that way? To be that way? It’s so backwards!’” Many of the organized Mayas point to the continuing tradition of the bailes/dances and cofradias/saint societies with pride. But they also criticize the more traditional people (costumbristas) for refusing to send their children to school, thus denying them any chance for economic advancement. The “real” indigenous are seen as consigning their kids to a life of non-subsistence farming and the horrible migration to the coast. Possessing culture is linked to dispossession of one’s labor and of the means to obtain a more comfortable, modern life.

This sort of possession—of material comforts, or “development”—was the goal of movements for radical political change. In Joyabaj, many of those who now identify publicly as Maya were involved in the mass movements of the l970s that culminated in the strong revolutionary challenge to the Guatemalan state. While at the national level many Mayan cultural rights activists disavow their relation to the guerrillas, in Joyabaj the most well-known Mayas are candidates on the URNG (former rebel) political ticket. While they maintain relations with the cofradias that organize the “traditional” dances, these Maya are not members nor are they invited to perform. Instead they sponsor the convite, a masked dance associated in other towns with ladinos.

One of the people in the Joyabaj Grupo Maya mentioned by the Alcalde Indígena is Natalia Godoy. Several people described her as the founder of the group and as a Mayan priestess. She became a Maya in Costa Rica where she had worked with a group of Guatemalans in the Maya League, studying esoteric literature, music, and social change, and had ties to the URNG. During that time she began to suffer several of the illnesses that presage a calling to become a diviner or curer (Tedlock 1992). Mejia says that an internationalist from a development agency paid for her to travel to Guatemala to apprentice herself to a daykeeper. She was initiated and in the late 1990s returned to Joyabaj. She and her young husband lived with her parents until they could get their feet on the ground.

She seems well respected and is involved in a number of projects to support Mayan cultural survival. However, she is chafing at the gender attitudes of indigenous leaders, including the Alcalde Indígena. She is also frustrated with her parents who want her to concentrate on having more children and who constantly rib her husband about who “wears the pants” in their relationship. She has worked with the Rigoberta Menchú Foundation and was involved with the formation of COPMAGUA in l996, the organization charged with implementing the indigenous rights accord of the peace treaty (although she complains about the way the men involved treated the women). Now she helps support her family with a shoe store and works on a variety of local issues. She said, “The Maya Committee, we are facing a lot of obstacles. In a lot of ways I think it’s because I’m a woman. I wonder why there are so many problems. They say I’m a bruja [a witch], that I’m not from here, that I’m a manipulador and just want to make money. I don’t want anything to do with that—how could they think that?”

Alfonso is also a Maya (meaning he is involved in the organization). Describing the teasing he takes from his cousins about repossessing his identity, he says, “Now I don’t like to be with them. I’m learning more about the conquest, what happened to us, how we are losing our values. It’s important to try to bring them back, to recuperate our morals. I am studying a lot, it’s good.” At other times, however, he says he doesn’t really believe in the Mayan stuff. “We have lost all that, what people are doing and saying,

it’s lost, it’s not true, they don’t really feel those things in their hearts.” When we talk about identity issues, his pronouns float around—sometimes the indigenous are “us” and sometimes “them.” While he farms a little land, he has worked as a health promoter much of his life. He is a catechist in the Catholic Church, where he strongly resisted attempts to introduce hybrid Mayan practices into the mass. “They have their place,” he said, “but not in the church!” His children are mostly trained as elementary school teachers. One day we walked past a man and his young children hoeing their cornfield and Alfonso said, “They are traditionalists, and I really feel sorry for them, how hard they have to work. It hurts me to see it.”

Marcelo Guttiérez is Xoye and a labor contractor. He has done this work for many years and functions as an intermediary between the workers and the finca overseers on the South Coast. He insists that he is constantly agitating for better treatment, fairer wages, and an end to discrimination against indigenous workers. He is also the local representative of CONIC, the National Indigenous and Campesino Committee, with ties to earlier revolutionary peasant organizations. In the past ten years, CONIC has been on the front lines in organizing for land reform, collective bargaining, implementation of the peace treaty (all struggles for possession), and against capitalist globalization. A number of CONIC activists have received death threats and several have been killed.

In preparation for a large CONIC meeting in Joyabaj, Marcelo went to a diviner to choose the most auspicious day for the event and hired a local aj q’ij or Mayan priest to perform a ceremony to open it. It seems that working with the aj q’ij is somewhat new for him, as he, like many people in CONIC, increasingly identifies as Maya. The possession of cultural rights is taking a more central place in their struggles for equity. Thinking of the baile, I don’t know if the men he contracts want to kill him, with or without snake venom. It’s a blurry line here between victim and perpetrator.

**** Moral Worth and Collaboration

In Joyabaj, those who perform the bailes and older rituals, or who have been initiated as aj q’ij or in other sacred roles, are known as traditionalists or

costumbristas. The majority speak little Spanish and show no interest in being interviewed by an anthropologist. Many of them sided with the army against the popular movement, which in the highlands was strongly influenced by Catholic liberation theology. This means they are implicated in the murder and displacement of many of the indigenous people engaged in (or suspected of engagement with) the popular struggle for the possession of land and labor rights. In some cases, the very conservatism that retains “authentic” culture also supported their collaboration with genocide. Simone Remijnse, a Dutch anthropologist who spent several years in Joyabaj researching counterinsurgency, said, “The military did so well here! They knew so much about the local culture and the conflicts, because the local military commissioners were from here and told them all about people’s fears, their organization. They went around telling the costumbristas [traditionalists] that the Catholic Action people had first tried to take away their religion and then they were going to try to take away their land. And it worked. Some of the strongest Civil Patrols were in the towns where the costumbre was strongest.”

Initiated by anti-Communist priests brought in after the 1954 coup, Catholic Action was a church revitalization movement to purge “pagan” elements from the church (thus Alfonso’s discomfort with re/introducing “Mayan” elements). It became a powerful local tool to challenge the gerontocracya way to represent and live the huge changes in production, and the increasing power of (trans)national over local organization (Warren 1989; Brintnall 1979). By exorcising such powers from this important institution, Catholic Action seemed to offer the possession of more progressive possibilities and slowly became linked to Liberation Theology and the popular, then revolutionary movement. Service as a catechist was a frequent path to wider ranging power networks, and many prominent indigenous people, at the local, national, and international levels took it (including Nobel Laureate Rigoberta Menchú Tum). An activist now repents of his Catholic Action work. “I went with my father to help stamp out the other practices. I knew both sides the traditional and the Catholic, so I was very good at finding the traces of idolatry. Now that I see the importance of our culture I am so sorry for what I did. We were the worst destroyers of our own culture.” He is now dedicated to salvaging, repossessing, what he once worked so hard to root out.

In 1993, a woman whose family is very involved with Catholic Action introduced me to her two children, Maria, a toddler, and her infant daughter, Ixmucane (the name of a Mayan deity). She told me that her very Catholic mother is furious that she gave her newborn a pagan name. “This is my Quincentennial child,” she said. The hemisphere-wide organizing to repudiate the “official story” of the Columbus legacy was an extraordinary inspiration for the fledgling pan-Maya movement in Guatemala. The movement to revitalize and repossess Mayan identity grew out of the ashes of scorched earth counterinsurgency. It wove together those seeking ways to organize without being killed (for whom “cultural rights” agitation seemed safer than more revolutionary claims) and those angry at the racism and discrimination they felt in the popular and armed movements. It also articulates the claims of an emerging critical mass of young indigenous people with education and skills but not necessarily radical projects. The so-called Mayan movement is complex, encompassing city-based NGOs, government ministers, indigenous language radio stations, university student organizations, weaving cooperatives, the Grupo Maya in Joyabaj, and maybe the Alcalde Indígena, if he can find the time (Bastos and Camus 2003). Possessing this identity may be somewhat “interesting” in that it can also mean a job with an NGO, in a bilingual school, or even a government ministry. But I also see it as closely linked to the hopes and dreams of the costumbristas, the catechists, and the revolutionaries who are all struggling to be gente decente or good people in a world of dispossession.

*** War and Dis/Re-Possession

A catechist in a hamlet of Joyabaj is in his second hour of speaking in Maya-K’iche’ about martyrs. He links the martyrdom of the biblical Israelis with Jesus Christ, then with the l980 assassination of the local priest, and finally with the recent state-sponsored genocide of the “Mayan people.” He is a corn farmer who also migrates to pick coffee and, unlike most men his age, wears traje (traditional clothing). This is the first day in a week of mission work connected to the Vatican’s Jubilee Year (July 2000). While the project seems connected to taking possession of history, genocide is not part of the standardized lesson-plan.

I am sitting on a dirt floor covered with pine needles in a schoolroom in this outlying hamlet and feeling a bit surprised when he uses the term Maya. It turns out the Guatemalan Mayan Language Academy (ALMG), an indigenous-run autonomous state agency, is providing the village with culturally sensitive curricular materials in both Spanish and Maya-K'iche'. All three of the official teachers in this public school are local K'iche' speakers, some have been involved in Mayan revitalization efforts for many years, and several are studying "intercultural education" through a National University extension program taught by Mayan activists from Guatemala City. The program is partly sponsored by USAID (United States Agency for International Development).

Domingo González, president of the hamlet's Improvement Committee, had just returned from a seminar on Mayan rights with the ALMG in Guatemala City, which was also partly funded by the Guatemalan government and USAID. The Mayan Language Academy (ALMG) was created by indigenous intellectuals in the early l980s who struggled for a decade to gain legal recognition. In 1990, it became an autonomous state agency. At the seminar on Mayan educational rights, Mr. González heard one of the founders of the ALMG speak, Dr. Demetrio Cojti Cuxil, who received a doctorate in Belgium in the late 1970s and is now vice minister of education. As Mr. González described it, "there were people from all over the country, the 23 languages all had representatives. Those Kaqchiqueles, from Chimaltenango, they are really adelantado (advanced), there was the Viceministro who gave a talk. His name is Cojtí. He's a doctor! We don't have any doctors, lawyers, engineers here. We need to work more on education so our children can learn and come back, like they do there. Cojtí started his speech speaking perfect Kaqchiquel; it was very smooth. Then he went right into Spanish he has accomplished so much, but he hasn't lost his language! You'd never know he's a doctor! He was very humble."

Mr. González tells me that the catechist who spoke of martyrdom was the driving force behind getting a road built to the hamlet, organizing state funding and community labor crews. The catechist also organized the community-controlled bilingual school and served several terms as a minor elected official in the town of Joyabaj. This hamlet is known throughout the municipality for its self-possession, its unity and progressive attitudes. Several days later I learn from the catechist that he was the civil patrol

leader in the hamlet, the army-run militias responsible for atrocities during the war. “I have two faces,” he said. “One I show to the army, the other I show to my people.”

Survivors of the civil war frequently use this term of self-dispossession (Gonzalez 2002; Green 1999; McAllister 2002; Zur 1998). The state that carried out this genocide also has two faces, the paler, well-fed one that shows up in the newspaper accounts of government doings and the indigenous one that actually carried out the massacres, often through the “Civil” Patrol (PAC). Instituted in 1981, the PAC was quite diabolical, inducing community members to surveil, incriminate, and punish each other. This allowed the military state some distance from these crimes, which in turn warped and undermined community solidarity. Throughout much of the country, but especially in indigenous communities, every single man from age fourteen to sixty or even older was incorporated into the patrols. In some cases, leaders were former soldiers or military commissioners whose faces already pointed towards the state (although sometimes these same people used their military experiences to train local youth for the guerrilla). In many cases, however, the army laid this onerous task on respected local leaders, often catechists, cooperative members, or schoolteachers. Compared to other dirty wars in Latin America Guatemala was exceptional for its almost total incorporation of civilians into the counterinsurgency war.

For example, in 1982 the army called together all the men of Joyabaj and various outlying hamlets and made them walk through the night to the hamlet of Xeabaj. There they were forced to kill the residents with their machetes. “Awful things happened there,” said Alfonso, who thanked God he had been out of town that day. “My brother had to go. There were bodies, blood, the whole square was full. He couldn’t stand it. He went and hid in the woods for a long time.” Doña Miguela, an older K’iche’ woman from the town of Joyabaj said, “Ay dios! Ay dios! It was so horrible! So horrible! They killed babies (and she acted it out in her kitchen, as if she were lifting up an infant and smashing its head), children, women, old people. My husband had to go. Everyone had to go. We had to cook but when they came back they couldn’t eat. Their mouths were so bitter with all they had seen. All they had done. Terrible! Terrible! Ay dios!” Remijnse says there is still no accurate accounting: estimates of those murdered range from fifty to 200. “A river of blood ran down the mountain,” a witness told her (2001: 463).[16] The years

1981 and 1982 saw a wave of army-ordered patrol massacres in the Joyabaj/Zacualpa region, which then gave way to more “privatized” violence, “used more and more by individual patrol commanders for their own purposes—to improve their own economic position in the village by confiscating land and cattle from disappeared or fleeing neighbors. ‘That way lots of land changed owners. They saw that there was a good piece of land...and they took it,’” a Xoye told Remijnse (2001: 458).

The government’s counterinsurgency war was a horrific dispossession. The loss of life was massive. While clandestine cemeteries in the region are being exhumed and some people gave testimony to the truth commission, fear is still rampant. Rape was widespread. Tools, food stores, domestic animals, homes, clothing were all stolen or destroyed, access to land for farming and for ritual at sacred places was cut off, sometimes for years (González 2002; Wilson 1995). Many people fled to live in other towns, to disappear into the burgeoning shantytowns in Guatemala City, or to Costa Rica, Mexico, and the United States. The excess of violence, the genocidal killing “down to the last seed” (Falla 1984), the systematic murder of children and babies, as Doñ a Miguela so kinaesthetically recalls, is exceptional, to be sure. But it is also somehow the rule, a more recent and extreme expression of long histories of dispossession. These are old struggles over land and labor, tradition and modernity, moral worth and collaboration.

There is the moment in the Baile de la Culebra when the contratista bends over the indigenous worker to use his back as a table to note down debt, time owed, the muscle and creative powers to be extracted on the plantations possessed by the ladino Herrerra family. It is a masked simulation of the self-same movement that takes place daily around harvest season in the town square, and of other movements repeated time and again, of being bent down, acted on by a will coming from outside oneself.

What are the identities of such dispossession? “Indigenousness-ness,” much less Mayan-ness, has never been a unified category. Even the much-vaunted (in anthropology circles at least) indigenous community has always been riven by age and gender difference, possession of ties to outside power sources (like the army or church), or incipient class formation. The tense intra-indigenous relations in the Baile de la Culebra suggest some of the

many complications of identification among Xoye (from Joyabaj the decent people), the naughty and duplicitous Maxe (Chichicastenango), and the Quiché (the department capital, represented by the contratista's wife). Then there are the divisions among Xoye, between the contratista, perpetrator of these violent everyday acts of dispossession and the victims, the resentful rebellious dispossessed. In turn, the ties to ladino Guatemalans and the supra-Guatemalan economic relations that undergird the dancing, the possession and the dispossession, remain spectral even as they weigh heavily.

For the Alcalde Indígena possessing education changes one from an indio to a natural and maybe to a Maya (if you can find the time), but for Alfonso's cousins it promises escape from indigeneity itself identified with backwardness and dispossession. This is a sense Alfonso himself sometimes shares. Domingo Gonzalez, on returning from the Mayan Language Academy conference, sees hope for being both a doctor and a Maya, for possessing education and a different lifeway, without being dispossessed of one's identity. Alfonso is sorry for traditionalists (who possess culture but are possessed by their old ways), but unsure about the Maya, who seem to have two faces their outward identity does not match their "hearts."

Anastasia also seems caught between two identities, a position that leads some to call her a manipuladora, duplicitous. One identity is her own true self as opposed to the gender stereotype those around her are trying to impose. Another is her role as a Mayan activist and her expression of that not through "traditional" dances, but through the convite (more a class performance than an "ethnic" one). Finally, there is her conviction that possessing government power through the URNG political party expresses her indigenous identity, while other Xoye saw and see the revolution as a threat to that very identity.

In the eyes of some traditionalists, during the guerrilla war their neighbors seemed possessed by Marxism, or by Liberation Theology and its purity movements. These seemed to threaten their traditions, the local organization and power hierarchies that in turn maintain the dances, understandings of time, illness, healing, and the vital connection to the past through which they

possess themselves. Some reacted to this threat by siding wholeheartedly with the army. Others, like the two-faced patrol leader and Doña Miguela's husband, felt they had no choice but to obey, to be possessed by counterinsurgency, made to act against their will in murdering their neighbors.

The term identity comes from the Latin root of essence, akin to the Sanskrit for sameness. But five hundred years after the invasion, fifty years after the Cold War bombarded Guatemala with the Arbenz coup, and forty years after the start of civil war, the sense of self-possession we associate with the word identity seems contingent on the tenuous ties among shifting sites of power and struggle, identi/ties.

*** Identit/ties

An identity of dispossession can mean the CONIC activist who deploys the aj q'ij as an instrument for alienating the labor of his neighbors, even as he struggles for their rights. It can also encompass the former patrol leader, the forcibly recruited soldier returning to his village, the Maya-K'iche' Catholic Action catechist and her "Quincentennial baby," and the increasing numbers of young men and now women going to the United States. I have tried to describe the double fascination and terror embedded in these narratives about dispossession and possession. They are articulations (both speaking of and tying together) of the struggle to control land, labor, culture and identity, and not be controlled, not be bent over to someone else's will. These are attempts to hold on to to possess values, morals, the past, in order to build a different kind of future. Conducting fieldwork after 1996, in postwar Guatemala, I keep encountering stories of two-faces, uncanny doubles, and duplicity. I think these are effects of the blurring of differences between victim and perpetrator, possessed and possessor in a moment when the "Post" War is surrounded by "scare quotes" and dispossession occurs at least as much through the invisible yet tightening "ties" of neoliberal globalization as through the visitations of military violence.

Indigenous people in Guatemala struggle to maintain two faces, to preserve some autonomy against the state even as they are the state's

agent in their hamlets. They seek to hold on to the fruits of their labor even as they enact dispossession for the invisible hand of the global market. Perhaps this is why there are proliferating anxieties about possession in the magico-religious sense of being acted on. Diana Fuss suggests this “magic” may bathe every process of self-making. Identity is “profoundly unstable and perpetually open to radical change...[because] identification is, from the beginning, a question of relation, of self to other, subject to object, inside to outside” (1995: 2–3). People in Joyabaj talk about double identities, two faces, feeling things in their heads but not in their hearts perhaps as a symptom of identification as possession and dispossession, as a “detour through the other that defines the self” (Fuss 1995: 3).

The dispossession of the war took away life, family members, homes, and children. Already divided communities now harbor the blood memories of violent acts carried out against each other. Often both sides felt justified in their acts of violence, like “good people” because they understood they were struggling against dispossession. In trying to survive the postwar both sides struggle with the contradictions between their sense of moral worth and their collaboration in war. Perhaps this is why actors on both sides speak both about acting for something they believe in and acting against their own will, having two faces.

After 1984 the scorched earth counterinsurgency gave way to more selective violence and after 1996 the war gave way to less overtly violent forms of dispossession. The century-old migration to the coast has been revivified but it is now complemented by the more dangerous (but more lucrative if successful) migration to the United States. In return many families are losing their long-fought-for possession of land, used collateral for “coyote” fees for the trip North.

While possessing land, being fixed in a place is a central concern of the struggles I have been describing; mobility, rather than stasis or essence is central to the identities of dispossession that I am exploring here. I have told stories about indigenous people detouring through the education system, the Civil Patrol, and the state-supported ALMG; people also detour through NGOs supported by other states (a USAID-sponsored conference on Mayan identity). A woman becomes a Maya while detouring through Costa Rica;

mozos become central to the state’s (and globe’s) political economy by detouring through the plantation system; and gringo anthropologists detour through Guatemala interviewing and writing about indigenous people to bring you, my detouring reader, this story. In all this traversing, where exactly is the identity of dispossession? How are we to “map” the contemporary world of deprivation and violence? Is identity actually this “two-faced Indian?” In turn, is one of those faces “real” and the other a sham? Or is the effect of self-possession precisely in the awful, struggling, continuing movement between them, in identi/ties?

Harvey argues that global capital has a dual character and that struggles over its effects are thereby two-faced. One he calls “expanded reproduction,” the emphasis of the “traditional left.” Then there is “accumulation by dispossession” that he sees as confronted by the social movements coalescing within the anti- and alternative globalization movements (2003: 176–177). While in Guatemala these struggles have often been expressed as either/or either Catholic Action or costumbre, either ladino (meaning educated, developed) or indigenous (meaning backward).Harvey argues for analyzing them dialectically. Perhaps this is what is emerging in postwar Guatemala, as the labor contractor and CONIC activist contracts an aj q’ij, as the Maya from Costa Rica sponsors traditional dances and throws herself behind the political party of the URNG.

Human identity may not be essential or inherent, but formed through movement, action. In this way it may be similar to the value of money, which is not internal to it but materialized in our effective social activity. “Cut off from all relation to circulation [money] would not be money, but merely a simple natural object” (Marx in Spivak 1988: 163). To understand the identi/ties of dispossession means acknowledging that their effectivity comes from their mobili/ties. They are materialized through ties or binding, when positions are momentarily clarified as in the moment of a coup, a massacre, the inscription of debt, the statement “I am a Maya. “ But they are simultaneously real-ized through the circulations of land, labor, bodies, ideas. This mobility is ambi (double)-valent (value or capacity). It is not just a one-way activity of the state on Joyabaj; of international debt relations incarnated through a man bending down to be used as a table; of education acting on traditionalists; of

Catholic Action acting on benighted Indians; or the “modern” Maya acting on costumbristas. It is a complex interaction that dispossesses us of clear-cut stories of actor/acted on or victim/perpetrator.

How do we think the “unthinkable:” how people recover from genocide and how they endure ongoing dispossession? How do we “map contemporary world conflicts?” Like many of the authors gathered here I have described the tenuousness and context-specificity of apparently essential identifications. The modern history of Guatemala and dispossession is one of struggle. Masked dancers enact rituals of rebellion against labor contractors, a catechist struggles to remember martyrdom and to build a road to get agricultural surpluses to market, parents struggle for their children to possess an education so they can “get ahead,” men and women struggle to grasp hold of the fleeting sense of authentic Mayanness through study or through feeling it in their hearts. The struggle is to act, and not only be acted on, to possess and not only to be possessed by an Other. I am suggesting in this chapter that a map may be too static for thinking in regard to the dancing, mobile identi/ties that people detour through in postwar Guatemala. This does not mean there isn’t ground to stand on. But they and we need to be quick on our feet and able to “tie” strong knots.

[13] I have worked in Guatemala since 1985, with over six years total time there. Quotes are from interviews with Mayan organizers, Guatemalan state officials, development workers, and popular organization activists. All quotes are from author interviews and all translations are mine. I am indebted to everyone in Joyabaj who shared their time with me. It would not have been possible without Natalia Godoy, Liz Oglesby, and Simone Remijnse. Thanks also to AVANCSO, Maury Hutchinson and Lewis and Clark College, Duke University, and the Mellon Title VI grant. I am extremely grateful to J. Craig Jenkins and Esther Gottlieb for their work to bring this conference and volume together, and to all the participants.

[14] A traditional, usually handmade shirt that is distinctive for every highland town.

[15] Derluguian powerfully evoked a similar identification category for Abkhazia youth torn between the Q’uran and drug dealing.

[16] Joyabaj has a dual civil government system with a mayor elected through a nationally supervised process, and an Alcalde Indígena selected less formally, primarily by indigenous people.

[17] Remijnse says that some ladinos accepted the military, due to a sense that “only communists and naturals” were killed (as an older ladina told her), that their way of life was threatened, or “fear of an Indian majority literally pouring down from the mountains, demanding their rights and intent on killing every ladino in sight” (2002: 162). However, many ladinos who had resisted the army by refusing to patrol or in other ways, experienced the Xeabaj massacre as a turning point, “opening their eyes to what the military were capable of doing” (2002: 154).

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** 5. Public Islam as an Antidote to Violence?{1}

Dale F. Eickelman and Armando Salvatore

*** Terrorism and Public Debate

Now more than ever, secular and religious Muslims have to confront issues of identity and violence in open and public debate. Until the Iraqi death tolls began to rise after the 2003 preemptive war against Iraq, Colombia was still leading the world in the number of deaths directly attributable to terrorism,

with Sri Lanka not far behind. Public perceptions, however, placed the Muslim-majority Middle East at the foreground of terrorism. The events of September 11, 2001, the October 2002 bombings in Bali, the May 2003 “kamikaze” attacks in Saudi Arabia and Morocco, the March 11, 2004 bombings in Madrid, the July 8, 2005 bombings in downtown London, the July 11, 2005, attacks in Bombay, and the staccato repetition of bombings and violence elsewhere, including Jerusalem, Baghdad, Gaza, and Ayodhya, test the limits of civility and trust and inscribed the possibility of “Islamic” terrorism on the global imagination. Ironically, “kamikaze” has become one of the first Japanese words to enter educated Arabic usage. It is the word of choice in Moroccan newspapers and transnational Arabic-language newspapers such as al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), offering an alternative to calling the perpetrators of such attacks either “martyrs” or “suicide bombers,” word choices with starkly different connotations in the political struggle over people’s imaginations (Pekonen 1989: 132).

The perpetrators of terrorist acts intend to block reasoned debate over appropriate responses, and often their small numbers succeed beyond all expectations. Yet it is necessary for scholars and observers to look beyond immediate—and often disturbing—events and to discern the long-term trends and developments likely to shape world politics for years to come. Only a tiny minority of Muslims use or condone terrorism in the name of religion, although many see it as a weapon of the weak. Apologists find a ready stock of counterpart examples among Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and followers of other religions. The actions of these few, however, have captured the imagination of a global political community and altered the sense of political threat. In this context, it is unsurprising that political trends in the Muslim majority world are often violent and contradictory, but this is mainly due to the authoritarian regimes of many states. “Public Islam”—a concept intimately related to the new media and to contemporary senses of belonging—is not itself immune from such contradictions, but for the most part it works against violence.

*** Contemporary Public Islam

Prevailing theories of modernity and modernization in the mid-twentieth century assumed that religious movements, identities, and practice had

become increasingly marginal, and that only those religious intellectuals and leaders who attached themselves to the nation-state would continue to play a significant role in public life. These assertions concerning the eclipse of religion in the public life of North America and Europe have been exaggerated. José Casanova (1994) was one of the first to note that by the late 1970s this prevalent view was challenged by the impact of several parallel developments: the Iranian revolution, the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, the role of liberation theology in political movements throughout Latin America, and the return of Protestant fundamentalism as a force in American politics. In recent decades Muslims in Europe have increasingly asserted distinct identities. The rise of Islam in Europe over the past three decades is not just due to numbers but also to a consciousness of what it means to be Muslim in Europe. Gilles Kepel was one of the first to point this out in his carefully chosen subtitle to Les banlieues de l'Islam: Naissance d'un religion en France (The Suburbs of Islam: Birth of a religion in France) (1987). For some Europeans, who assumed that religion had receded as an element of their own public identity, this rise of Muslim consciousness was seen as a threat.

In the Muslim majority world, however, the role of religion in social and community life never receded. This does not mean that it did not change and develop in ways often underemphasized by Western observers and by Muslims themselves (Zaman 2002). Only in the last decade has the idea of an "Islamic public sphere"—Islamische Öffentlichkeit in German—come to the fore in contexts that Reinhard Schulze (2000 [1994]), responding to the work of Jürgen Habermas, discerned as forming the infrastructure of communication and discourse of a new intellectual class, from the classic era of Islamic reform in the late nineteenth century through the structural transformations of the 1960s and 1970s, and the present.

Advancing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media throughout the Muslim-majority world contribute to the emergence of a public sphere in which large numbers of people, and not only an educated, political, and economic elite, want a say in political and religious issues. The result has been challenges to authoritarianism, the fragmentation of religious and political authority, and increasingly open discussions of issues related to the "common good" (al-maslaha al-'amma or simply maslaha), a key concept within

Islamic juridical traditions. At the same time, this trend has been uneven and often contradictory (see Masud 2005).

“Public Islam” refers to the highly diverse invocations of Islam as ideas and practices that religious scholars, self-ascribed religious authorities, secular intellectuals, Sufi orders, mothers, students, workers, engineers, and many others make to civic debate and public life. In this public capacity, Islam makes a difference in configuring the politics and social life of large parts of the globe, and not just for self-ascribed religious authorities. It makes this difference not only as a template for ideas and practices but also as a way of envisioning alternative political realities and, increasingly, in acting on both global and local stages, thus reconfiguring established boundaries of civil and social life.

Not all these trends are unique to the modern world. One can read Michael Cook’s (2000) captivating account of “commanding right and forbidding wrong” in Islamic thought, a study that flows from the early Islamic centuries to the present, as an account of an engagement including both Muslim jurists and a wider Muslim public with issues of community concern and conduct. Such concerns have been profoundly shaped by the course of history and the idea of the past in the Muslim majority world.

Many of the emerging new voices and the leaders of movements within the proliferating public space of the contemporary Muslim world—a space which is simultaneously physical and communicative—claim to interpret or be inspired by basic religious texts and ideas, and work in local or transnational contexts. These new interpreters of how religion shapes, or should shape, societies and politics, like their counterparts in Poland’s Solidarity movement and the liberation theology movements in Latin America in the 1980s, often lack the theological and philosophical sophistication of the religious scholars of earlier eras who led such discussions. Such new leaders and spokespersons have nonetheless succeeded in capturing the imagination of large numbers of people. These trends often intensify the ties that bind Muslim communities in the Muslim-majority world with Muslims in Europe, North America, and elsewhere.

*** Public Islam in Practice

The issues and themes in Muslim politics increasingly transcend the specifics of region or place. Thus the contemporary “publicization” of Islam is often more commonly rooted in practice than in formal ideology (Adelkhah 2002). It has often created new social spaces, a trend significantly accelerated since the mid-twentieth century, and it has facilitated modern and distinctively open senses of political and religious identity.

Such practices and the resulting social spaces involve both emotional and intellectual engagement among participants in overlapping circles of communication, solidarity, and the building of bonds of identity and trust. Some of these practices are based on local communities. Others are geographically widespread and targeted to receptive audiences. One example is the use of e-mail among the Indonesian university students who coordinated the nationwide campus protests that contributed to the downfall of President Suharto as early as in 1998. These modern practices and new communication technologies create new, effective, and geographically more dispersed bases for effective mobilization—but they can also threaten tolerance and civil society by facilitating publicity and calls to action by extremist groups (Hefner 2003).

Social practices that are based on ideas of the common good and that contribute to shaping public Islam also embrace collective rituals including the pilgrimage to Mecca, popular festivals, and religious and secular commemorations. They also encompass disciplining and performative practices as diverse as Sufi rituals, regional pilgrimages, the informal economy, the routines of modern schooling, and the use of the press and modern communications technologies. The lively and quadrilingual website of Nadia Yassine (www.nadiayassine.net) and the mostly Arabic one of her father, Abdesslam Yassine (www.yassine.net), in Morocco dramatically illustrate how supposedly “traditional” religious orders can rapidly transform themselves into movements that foreground in the minds of a wide public the issue of the proper role for religion to play in society. The movement of Fethullah Gülen, based in Turkey but increasingly becoming transnational, is another indicator of this important trend. Gülen’s

movement carefully steers clear of challenges to laicism, one of the founding principals of the Turkish state (Turam 2006).

Ideas of the common good are not an immutable heritage of religious or normative traditions, even if some Muslim spokespersons claim otherwise. They are defined by ethical notions and social values contested and redefined through interaction, practice, and transmission over generations. Sectarianism in Christian Europe provided the habitus and the congregational form for developing such ideas and practices, and it is possible to see in the Sufi tradition and other Muslim religious practices a similar contribution to a participative habitus, but also the authoritarian limits, inherent in the master-disciple relationship, of such participation and to the idea of the public sphere itself (Pinto 2004). Like the Christian sects, the more orthodox forms of Sufism and other styles of public piety have also contributed to shape reasoning selves and to reconfigure the relationship between legitimate authority and the independent pursuit of truth. Immanuel Kant was not born in Iraq; public reasoning has, however, a long tradition in Islamic jurisprudence, both Sunni and Shi’a, that flourished in Iraq and inspired modern Islamic reform.

Various sectarian movements in Europe played a major role in developing the idea of the modular self, a self empowered with a moral conscience that could confront the authority both of established religion and the state. In this European trajectory, only when the freedom of individual conscience is recognized and tolerated can a public sphere develop. It is, nonetheless, a more general argument that religious ideas and practice can foster the emergence of the public sphere, and this has taken place in the Muslim-majority world.

Ideas of the public are historically embedded and have strong links with culturally shared senses of self and community. They are situated at the strategic intersection between practice and discourse. Public Islam is a concept by which we encompass non-elite practices and interactions and their pre-modern antecedents. Its development includes challenging over the authority to interpret sacred texts and changing how issues are framed. The shared sense of public built into these social interactions varies considerably

from place to place and time to time, as issues of individual responsibility, welfare, justice, and piety are contested and in flux.

*** The Limits of Secular Spaces

How do these developments match views of the public sphere premised on the existence of a religiously neutral, indeed “secular” threshold of access to public debate? Some ideas of “secular” divest participants in public exchanges of their religious and cultural identities, or at least marginalize these identities. But the creation of a public culture promoting exchange and discussion can also involve deliberation over issues of common interest through the invocation of traditions of religious, moral, and legal discourses. It can also encourage the gradual emergence of ever more abstract patterns of membership and citizenship that rest on obligations and rights which increasingly fit a legal vocabulary and a contractual view of society.

In spite of the growing recognition that religion has an important role to play in public life and can contribute to the common good, it remains necessary to challenge the common assumption that secularism and secularly oriented practical rationality is the exclusive normative base for “modern” public life (Eickelman 2000; Salvatore 1997, 2001; Salvatore and LeVine 2005). Religious thought and practice in the Muslim world can be shown to inspire rational-practical orientations as much as do secular approaches to social action. Some practices, including Sufi (mystical) disciplines, interact and sometimes clash with different forms of secularism as incorporated in the ideologies and practices of most states within Muslim-majority societies or where Muslim minorities live.

For both the nineteenth century and the contemporary era, it is possible to identify the norms of exchange and discourse that are the product of these interactions and clashes, and also the creation of a variety of explicit and implicit Muslim forms of civility and publicness. This in turn requires an effort to discern the social history, or genealogy, of the emergence of a sense and structure of public communication and participation in societies shaped by Muslim cultural, religious, and political traditions.

The present period differs from earlier ones in the speed, intensity, and large numbers of people involved in pushing the contours of tradition, but the publics of an earlier era were equally engaged in doing so. The reshaping of religious identity and forms of communication and publicness in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire is especially important in this respect. Consider, for example, Istanbul, a city inhabited by a religiously, ethnically, and linguistically diverse population in which Muslims were outnumbered for a good part of the Ottoman era. The most commonly held assumption is that the confessional communities of the empire lived separately, with minimal reciprocal interaction, and developed social bonds and allegiances exclusively within their own communities. This assumption diverts an appreciation of the mobile and relational aspect of community relations in Ottoman Istanbul, and it says little about the people's sense of identity and of collective allegiance. Understanding the ongoing transformations of the Ottoman Empire from the nineteenth century to the present can facilitate a better grasp of the possibilities for change in the contemporary Muslim majority world (see, for example, Meeker 2002; Kirli 2004; Çinar 2005). Learning to think and act civilly in public is a prolonged, historically specific process, and Turkey offers a good example of the delicate combination of internal processes and opportunities combined with "external" ones. If formal negotiations and incentives for Turkey's entry into the European Union offer a high-level framework, the give-and-take of Turks in Europe who return frequently to their homeland and keep in touch through the new media (Yavuz 2003: 180–184) offers a ground-level impetus to blur supposed distinctions between "East" and "West."

The collective historical experience of coexistence among Muslims and non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire can be analyzed on the basis of their common interests as members of a vibrant society. In India, the relation between Hindus and Muslims is crucial to the development of ideas of secularism and religiosity in relation to the public sphere. In such an historical and interreligious perspective, the forms of public Islam in the twentieth century appear as contingent crystallizations of much more complex historical processes. For example, imperial encounters have been of great importance to the historical development of public debate in the metropole as well as the colony—a circumstance that the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003 brought once again to light even though most policymakers

concerned with Iraq acknowledge difficulty in understanding the distinction between Sunni and Shi’a (Stein 2006), let alone other historical background that most educated Middle Easterners take for granted.

Notwithstanding this diversity of experience, most Muslims share inherited conceptions of ideas of the common good. These shared ideas of the past shape contemporary understandings of publicness in Muslim societies (see Eickelman and Salvatore 2002). For example, although Islamic religious scholars, the ‘ulama, claim that God reveals the ideas of the common good to humankind, they also regard these ideas as discernable primarily by themselves—men with expertise in the science of scriptural hermeneutics. These religious scholars debate vigorously among themselves about what the common good entails. Yet they are never the only participants in this debate. Their authority remains strong in the modern world, but is increasingly challenged by alternative religious—and political—authorities that often lack formal training in the traditional religious sciences.

The increasing accessibility of the new media, including satellite television, the Internet, and new uses of older media such as video- and audio-cassettes and CDs and DVDs, contributes to fragmentation of the traditional structures of religious authority. It also facilitates innovative ideas of religious authority and of representing Islam in public in unexpected ways (Gonzalez-Quijano 2003; Hefner 2003). There are numerous combinations of fragmented and sustained old and new forms of religious authority and influence in the public sphere, making debates about what constitutes “good” or authentic Islam much more competitive than has been the case in the past.

One of the paradoxes of modern Muslim publics is that despite this discursive expansion in many Muslim-majority states and communities, the public good is increasingly defined within the parameters of Islam. Some states, such as republican Turkey, vigorously sought to domesticate and neutralize Islamic institutions and ideas, yet current Turkish politics are defined by a mutual accommodation and tacit bargaining, as the guardians of secularism and those who participate in Turkey’s public sphere and civic life learn to accommodate one another through public debate and practice (White 2002).

As Adelkhah (2004) suggests for Iran, the most powerful part of the women's movement is not formal and recognized organizations, all monitored and repressed by the state, but women's activities in the informal economy and in shaping religious practices. As in the French revolution, Adelkhah argues that such "informal" activities can be at least as powerful a vehicle for changing gender roles and ideas of Islam as explicit ideological statements and formal organizations. In all cases, Islamic ideas of the common good shift in content and elaboration over time and, despite explicit denials, may often converge with Western understandings of such major issues as democracy and tolerance for religious diversity (Hefner 2000). Sadek Sulaiman (1998), an activist in Arabian Peninsula Islamic circles and a former journalist, has gone so far as to say that democracy is an integral element of Islamic revelation and that the United States, who took over two centuries to grant the right to vote to all its citizens, is the best example of how the implementation of democracy requires time and shared historical experience. The role of Islam in shaping understandings of the common good is unlikely to recede in importance in the years to come, and Sulaiman's argument reminds us that Islamic thought is far from hermetically sealed from non-Islamic historical and political experience.

Muslims participate in crafting the idea of the common good in a variety of ways, and they also contribute to shaping the definitions of wider and more inclusive public goods in societies where Muslims are not a majority, as in Europe (Khosrokhavar 1997; Kepel 1997 [1994]); or, as in Syria and Turkey, they are confronted with a profoundly secular elite; or, as in Iran, with an increasingly unpopular, although powerful, clerical elite (Adelkhah 2004). In India, Muslims live in a secular state strongly buffeted by religious extremism (van der Veer 1994).

*** The "West" Versus the "Rest" Laid to Rest

At the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, various policy ideas gained currency posited on the notion that "Islam"—or what some people presume to be Islam—determines the identity and conduct of Muslims in a way that other world religions do not.

Paul Johnson (1991), for example, argued that “European civilization” was facing its “third major invasion” from the forces of Islam that he saw as concentrated in a 4,000-mile belt of tension running from North Africa to China. This invasion by demographic growth and labor migration is said to equal the threat posed by the expansion of Islam into Europe in the eighth century and the rise of the Ottoman Empire in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Like Samuel Huntington (1993a: 34), who wrote of the “bloody borders” of the crescent-shaped Islamic bloc, which extends from the bulge of Africa to central Asia, Johnson inexplicably excluded Southeast Asia, where half the world’s Muslims live and where no such equivalent “threat” is apparent.

Johnson wrote that in this vast arc, “Western style concepts” such as “democracy, personal freedoms, and the rule of law... are denied”—his use of the passive voice disguises who does the denying. Amos Perlmutter (1992) argued that “Islam, fundamentalist or otherwise,” is incompatible with “liberal, human rights-oriented, Western-style, representative democracy,” so that Islamic religious movements “should be stifled at birth.” Those unsympathetic to Islam and Muslims are not the only ones to excoriate Islam. Muslim leaders and intellectuals, such as Tunisia’s exiled Rasheed Ghannouchi (1992), also did so. In an essay entitled “Islam and Freedom can be Friends,” he invoked such concepts as the role of “government in Islam,” as if “Islam” prescribed a clear and timeless point of view.

Samuel Huntington (1993b: 24–25), for his part argued that “non-Western civilizations” have increasingly become political actors. Updating Arnold Toynbee’s (1947) notion of civilizational traditions, Huntington saw “Islam” and “Confucianism” as antithetical to the West and suggested that the West develop strategies to pit one against the other. Toynbee, upon whom Huntington relied, identified twenty-one distinct civilizations, of which six supposedly survive today. A closer look at Toynbee might have cautioned Huntington against invoking the moralizing and stereotyped historicism of an earlier generation. Thus, Toynbee wrote that the Ottomans (Osmanlis) failed as a civilization because “they achieved their astonishing triumphs by… assuming an animal nature [and] limiting their minds to the ‘single-track’ action of instinct.” Consequently Toynbee relegated them to the category of “arrested” civilizations, which also included Polynesians, Eskimos, Nomads [sic], and Spartans (Toynbee 1947: 566–567).

The apparent simplicity of formulations such as Toynbee's and Huntington's encourages representations of "other" religions and civilizations as timeless essences, much like the Orientalism of an earlier generation. In this respect, Huntington's crisp "West versus rest" formula is as deceptive in its Manichean simplicity as Daniel Lerner's "Mecca or mechanization" (1964: 405), deflecting attention from the internal and historical variations between what are perceived as civilizations and from the vigorous internal debate "within" them.

Nonetheless, a positive consequence of Huntington's formulation was to reintroduce the concept of culture—albeit a dated and deeply flawed one—to the study of foreign policy and international relations and to underscore that nation-states are no longer the sole pole of identity in politics. Civilizations, however, do not act on the human stage. The actors are the carriers of civilizational traditions, and among them, even in societies labeled as "traditional"—or alternatively as populist—there is diversity, contest, and continuing internal debate over identifying key values, who is "authorized" to articulate them, and how they are implemented.

*** The Contest for "True" Islam in the Public Sphere

Historically known and contemporary debates and practices among Muslims argue against efforts to find a single, overarching idea of the common good shared by all Muslim societies, even if some ideologues—both those claiming to represent Islam and those attacking it—make such essentializing claims (Eickelman and Piscatori 2004: 46–79). It is often the case that such debates or conflicts about what "good" or "true" Islam entails disrupt implicit or even camouflaged conceptions of the public sphere, as in many communities throughout the Muslim world. The analyses of these debates and the contexts in which they occur throw into relief competing claims to speak in public, revealing threads of consensus and points of divergence or rupture.

The participation of religious authorities in public religious debate cannot be understood without an analysis of the audiences to which their discourses

are directed and the elements that connect the followers of religious leaders to their persona. The new media, including sermons on tape, popular journals, and local radio broadcasts, may combine with more conventional media (including gossip or published fatwas, or religious interpretations) to widen spheres of participation and make them more complex. The degree to which the participation or influence of these new audiences alters conceptions and implementation of the common good, however, is a question that must always be asked rather than assumed (Eickelman and Salvatore 2002:105–110). New authorities or speakers emerge in the space between the state and more traditional religious authorities, and thus come to represent alternative points of power.

Religious authority can be an essential part of the construction of public religious discourse in many different ways. For example, the participation of Sufis in public religious debate combines modern forms of conceptualizing and presenting religious arguments with membership in a hierarchical and intensely personalized religious framework.

The relationship between religious authority—whether claimed by traditional religious scholars or by “new” religious intellectuals (Roy 1994 [1992]) and their political counterparts—and the public sphere is therefore profoundly ambiguous and much more complex than conventional Habermasian theories, in spite of their theoretical sophistication, would make us believe. Even in places where there is a state-sponsored Islamic ideology, as in Pakistan and Iran, individuals, groups, and communities often appropriate this ideology to reinforce their position in public religious debate by claiming Islamic credentials for defining the common good, or furthering particular interests in the guise of shared ones—a device common to public spheres everywhere (Masud 2005).

Well before September 2001, the growing number of Muslims in Europe and North America began to address questions about national identity, citizenship and multiple loyalties, as in France and Germany. Events since then have further foregrounded the vulnerability of Muslims living in the diaspora. At times this has led to efforts to organize for more effective participation in the political life of the societies in question, and at times has created waves of self-estrangement, exposing the fragility of multicultural

discourse. Even in such a predicament, however, a positive outcome of double estrangement with the home and the receiving societies is to encourage engagement with transnational Muslim causes, especially where Muslims are the victims of human rights abuses. Therefore, the fragilities of the diasporic predicament, exacerbated since the events of September 2001 might in the long run reinforce participation in transnational Muslim publics.

In short, there is no singular public Islam, but rather a multiplicity of overlapping forms of practice and discourse that represent the varied historical and political trajectories of Muslim communities and their links and influences with societies elsewhere. The debates in the public sphere about the common good encompass both words and actions. They are also profoundly shaped by new practices, new forms of publication and communication, and new ways of thinking about religious and political authority.

{1} This chapter is a revised and updated version of Dale F. Eickelman and Armando Salvatore, “Public Islam,” in Public Islam and the Common Good, edited by Armando Salvatore and Dale F. Eickelman (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2004), 3–27.

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* Part II: Suppressed Identities/Conflicts

** 6. Cyber-Separatism, Islam, and the State in China

Dru C. Gladney

China’s Muslims are now facing their second millennium under Chinese rule. Many of the challenges they confront remain the same as they have for the last 1400 years of interaction with Chinese society, but many others are new as a result of China’s transformed and increasingly globalized society, and especially the watershed events of the September 11 terrorist attacks with the subsequent “war on terrorism.” Muslims in China live as minority communities amid a sea of people who, in their view, are largely pork-eating, polytheist, secularist, and “heathen” (kafir). Nevertheless, many of their small and isolated communities have survived in rather inhospitable circumstances for over a millennium. In response to the theme of this book, this chapter explores the integration and non-integration of Muslim groups and their identity conflicts in China today, charting the background of recent expressions of violence among some Muslim groups.

Though small in population percentage (about 2 percent in China, 1 percent in Japan, and less than 1 percent in Korea), the Muslim populations of East Asia are nevertheless large in comparison with those of other Muslim states. In fact, there are more Muslims living in China today than there are in

Malaysia, and more than in every Middle Eastern Muslim nation except Iran, Turkey, and Egypt. East Asia is also increasingly depending on immigrants from Muslim-majority nations for energy and cheap labor, thus raising the importance of its Muslim diasporic communities for international and domestic relations. Japan has a rather small resident Muslim community, estimated to be less than 10,000. However, recent waves of Middle Eastern and South Asian migrant laborers to Japan's large industrial cities suggest that the total Muslim population could be nearing the 1 million mark. Though these communities are temporary in terms of residency, they have as strong an impact on Japan's rather insular society as the Turkish and Kurdish populations in the Scandinavian heartlands (which now have surpassed 10 percent). As Lipman (1997:2) insightfully noted, these long-term Muslim communities have often been the "familiar strangers" found in small enclaves throughout Asia. And if Kosovo and Bosnia are to serve as lessons, failure to accommodate Muslim minorities can lead to national dismemberment and international intervention. Indeed, China's primary objection to NATO involvement in Kosovo centered on its fear that this might encourage the aiding and abetting of separatists, a potential problem in light of the fact that independence groups in Xinjiang, Tibet, and even Taiwan, remain a major Chinese concern.

This chapter examines Muslim minority identity in Asia with specific reference to Muslim, in China and how they manage to regulate violence. With the largest Muslim minority in East Asia, China's Muslims are clearly the most threatened in terms of self-preservation and Islamic identity. At the same time, some of the lessons from the Chinese case might be useful for other Muslim communities in East Asia, and perhaps elsewhere in the world. Most relevant is the thesis that successful Muslim accommodation to minority status in Asia can be seen to be a measure of the extent to which Muslim groups allow the dictates of Islam to adapt to the contexts of their host cultures, which in turn helps regulate violence. This goes against the opposite view that Islam is almost unavoidably rebellious and that Muslims as minorities are inherently problematic to a non-Muslim state (Israeli 1978; Dillon 1997).

*** Islam in China

According to the reasonably accurate 2000 national census of China, the total Muslim population is 20.3 million, including: Hui (9,816,805); Uyghur (8,399,393); Kazakh (1,250,458); Dongxiang (513,805); Kyrgyz (160,823); Salar (104,503); Tajik (41,028); Uzbek (14,502); Bonan (16,505); Tatar (4,890).[17] The Hui speak mainly Sino-Tibetan languages; Turkic-language speakers include the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Salar, and Tatar; combined Turkic-Mongolian speakers include the Dongxiang and Bonan, concentrated in Gansu's mountainous Hexi corridor; and the Tajik speak a variety of Indo-Persian dialects. It is important to note, however, that the Chinese census registered people by nationality, not religious affiliation, so the actual number of Muslims is still unknown, and all population figures are clearly influenced by politics in their use and interpretation. Nevertheless, there are few Han converts to Islam, and perhaps even fewer members of the ten nationalities listed above who would dare to say they are not Muslim, at least in front of their parents. As I have argued elsewhere (Gladney 1996: 112–114), Muslim identity in China can best be described as ethnoreligious in that history, ethnicity, and state nationality policy has left an indelible mark on contemporary Muslim identity and it is almost impossible to discuss Islam without reference to ethnic and national identity.

Archaeological discoveries of large collections of Islamic artifacts and epigraphy on the southeast coast suggest that the earliest Muslim communities in China were descended from Arab, Persian, Central Asian, and Mongolian Muslim merchants, militia, and officials who settled first along China's southeast coast from the seventh through the tenth centuries. Later, larger migrations to the North from Central Asia under the Mongol-Yuan dynasty in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries added to these Muslim populations by gradually intermarrying with the local Chinese populations, and raising their children as Muslims. Practicing Sunni, Hanafi Islam, and residing in independent small communities clustered around a central mosque, these communities were characterized by relatively isolated, independent Islamic villages and urban enclaves, who related with each other via trading networks. However these scattered Islamic settlements shared a recognition of belonging to the wider Islamic community (umma), that was connected by traveling Muslim teachers known locally as Ahung.

*** Hui Muslims and Islamic Accommodation to Chinese Society

Islam in China has primarily been propagated over the last 1300 years among the people now known as Hui, but many of the issues confronting them are relevant to the Turkic and Indo-European Muslims on China’s Inner Asian frontier. Though Hui speak a number of non-Chinese languages, most Hui are closer to Han Chinese than other Muslim nationalities in terms of demographic proximity and cultural accommodation. The attempt to adapt many of their Muslim practices to the Han way of life has led to criticisms among some Muslim reformers. In the wake of modern Islamic reform movements that have swept across China, a wide spectrum of Islamic belief and practice can now be found among those Muslims in China referred to as the Hui.

The Hui have been labeled the “Chinese-speaking Muslims,” “Chinese Muslims,’ and most recently, as “Sino-Muslims.”[18] However this terminology is misleading since by law all Muslims living in China are “Chinese” by citizenship, and there are large Hui communities who speak primarily the non-Chinese languages dominant in the areas where they live. This is the case, for example, with the Tibetan, Mongolian, Thai, and Hainan Muslims of China, who are also classified by the state as Hui. These “Hui” Muslims speak Tibetan, Mongolian, and Thai as their first-languages, with Han Chinese the national language that they learn in school, along with the Arabic and Persian that some of them also learn at the mosque. Interestingly, since Tajik is not an official language in China, the Tajiks’ children of Xinjiangan go to school in either Turkic Uyghur or Han Chinese.

*** Hui Islamic Orders and Chinese Culture

Sufism began to make a substantial impact in China proper in the late seventeenth century, arriving mainly along the Central Asian trade routes with saintly shaykhs, both Chinese and foreign, who brought new teachings from the pilgrimage cities. These charismatic teachers and tradesmen established widespread networks and brotherhood associations, including most prominently the Naqshbandiyya, Qadariyya, and Kubrawiyya. Unlike Middle Eastern or Central Asian Sufi orders, where one might belong to two or even three brotherhoods at once, the Hui belong to only one. Among the

Hui, one is generally born into one’s Islamic order (menhuan), or converts dramatically to another. In fact, this is the only instance of conversion I encountered during my sojourn among the Hui. I never met a Han who had converted to Islam in China without having been married to a Hui or adopted into a Hui family, though I heard of a few isolated instances. Fletcher records the conversion to Islam of twenty-eight Tibetan tribes as well as their “Living Buddha” by Ma Laichi in Xunhua, Qinghai in the mid-eighteenth century (Trippner 1961: 154–155). After the 1784 Ma Mingxin uprising, the Qing government forbade non-Muslims from converting to Islam, which may have had some influence. This goes against the common assumption that Islam in China was spread through proselytization and conversion.

The tensions and conflicts that led to the rise and divisions between various Islamic orders menhuan in China, and subsequent non-Sufi reforms, are impossible to enumerate in their complexity. An overview of major developments can, however, give evidence of the ongoing struggles that continue to make Islam meaningful to Hui Muslims. These tensions between Islamic ideals and social realities are often left unresolved. Their very dynamism derives from the questions they raise and the doubts they engender among people struggling with traditional meanings in the midst of changing social contexts. Questions of purity and legitimacy become paramount when the Hui are faced with radical internal socioeconomic and political change, and exposed to different interpretations of Islam from the outside Muslim world. These conflicts and reforms reflect an ongoing debate in China over Islamic orthodoxy, revealing an important disjunction between “scripturalist” or “mystical” interpretations.

In a similar fashion, the study of Southeast Asian Islam has often centered on the contradiction and compromise between the native culture of the indigenous Muslims and the shari’a of orthodox Islam, the mystical and scriptural, the real and the ideal.[19] The supposed accommodation of orthodox Islamic tenets to local cultural practices has led scholars to dismiss or explain such compromise as syncretism, assimilation, and “sinification,” as has been described among the Hui. An alternative approach, and one perhaps more in tune with the interests of Hui themselves, sees this incongruence as the basis for ongoing dialectical

tensions that have often led to reform movements and conflicts within Muslim communities (Eickelman 1976: 10–13).

In the competition for scarce resources, these conflicts are also prompted by and expressed in economic concerns. For example, Fletcher (1996) notes that one of the criticisms of the Khufiyya order in China was that their recitation of an Islamic religious text, entitled the Ming Sha Le, took less time than the normal Quranic suras as read by non-Sufi clergy, and therefore their Imams were cheaper to hire at ritual ceremonies. Fletcher (1996:,21) suggests that this assisted their rise in popularity and contributed to the criticism they received from traditional religious leaders.

*** Tendencies toward Acculturation and Purification

The tensions arising from the conflict of Chinese cultural practices and Islamic ideals have led to the rise and powerful appeal of Islamic movements among Hui Muslims. At one extreme, there are those who reject any integration of Islam with Chinese culture, advocating instead a return to an Arabicized “pure” Islam. Conversely, at the other extreme, there are those traditionalist Chinese Muslim leaders who accepted greater degrees of integration with traditional Chinese society. Likewise, Ma Qixi’s Xi Dao Tang stressed the complete compatibility of Chinese and Islamic culture, the importance of Chinese Islamic Confucian texts, the harmony of the two systems, and the reading of the Quran in Chinese.

In between, one finds various attempts at changing Chinese society to “fit” a Muslim world, through transformationist or militant Islam, as illustrated by the largely Naqshbandiyya-led nineteenth-century Hui uprisings. The Jahriyya order sought to implement an alternative vision of the world in their society, and this posed a threat to the Qing as well as to other Hui Muslims, earning them the label of “heterodox” (xie jiao) and persecution by the Chinese state. By contrast, other Hui reformers have attempted to make Islam “fit” Chinese society, such as Liu Zhi’s monumental effort to demonstrate the Confucian morality of Islam. The alternative advocated by

the Qadiriyya order in China represents resolution of this tension through ascetic withdrawal from the world.

The hierarchical organization of these Sufi networks helped in the mobilization of large numbers of Hui during economic and political crises of the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, assisting widespread Muslim-led rebellions and resistance movements against late Ming and Qing imperial rule in Yunnan, Shaanxi, Gansu, and Xinjiang. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Wahhabi-inspired reform movements, known as the Yihewani, rose to popularity under Nationalist and warlord sponsorship, and were noted for their critical stance toward traditionalist Islam, which they viewed as being overly acculturated to non-Muslim Chinese practices, and to forms of popular Sufism such as saint and tomb veneration.

Beyond such internal Muslim critiques, the Chinese state has also launched its own criticisms of certain Islamic orders among the Hui. The stakes in such debates were often economic, as well as ideological. For example, during the Land Reform campaigns of the 1950s, the state appropriated mosque and waqf (Islamic endowment) holdings from traditional Muslim religious institutions. These met with great resistance from the Sufi menhuan that had accumulated a great deal due to their hierarchical centralized leadership.

*** Islam and Chinese Nationalism

In the twentieth century, many Muslims supported the earliest communist call for economic equality, autonomy, freedom of religion, and recognized nationality status, and were active in the early establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). However, many of them later became disenchanted by growing critiques of religious practice during several periods in the PRC beginning in 1957. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), Muslims became the focus for both anti-religious and anti-ethnic nationalist critiques, leading to widespread persecutions, mosque closings, and at least one large massacre of 1,000 Hui following a 1975 uprising in Yunnan province. Since Deng Xiaoping’s post-1978 reforms, Muslims have sought to take advantage

of liberalized economic and religious policies, while keeping a watchful eye on the ever-swinging pendulum of Chinese radical politics. There are now more mosques open in China than there were prior to 1949, and Muslims travel freely on the hajj to Mecca, as well as engaging in cross-border trade with co-religionists in Central Asia, the Middle East, and increasingly, Southeast Asia.

With the dramatic increase in the number of Muslims traveling back and forth to the Middle East came new waves of Islamic reformist thought, including criticism of local Muslim practices in China. Through similar channels, other Chinese Muslims have also been exposed to various types of new, often politically radical, Islamic ideologies. These developments have fueled Islamic factional struggles that have continued to further China's Muslims internal divisions. For example, in February 1994, four Naqshbandi Sufi leaders were sentenced to long-term imprisonment for their support of internal factional disputes in the southern Ningxia Region that had led to at least sixty deaths on both sides and People's Liberation Army intervention. Throughout the summer and fall of 1993 bombs exploded in several towns in Xinjiang, indicating the growing demands of organizations pressing for an "independent Turkestan." In February 1997, a major uprising in Ili led to the deaths of at least thirteen Uyghur Muslims and the arrests of hundreds. It is clear that Hui and Kazakh Muslims are critical of these separatist actions among the Uyghur, but it is not yet clear how much support even among the Uyghur there is for the violent acts, especially one recent attempt to assassinate a "collaborating" Imam in Kashghar. Beijing has responded with increased military presence in the region, particularly in Kashghar and Urumqi, as well as diplomatic efforts in the Central Asian states and Turkey to discourage foreign support for separatist movements.

Increasing Muslim political activism on a national scale and rapid state responses to such developments indicate the growing importance Beijing attaches to Muslim-related issues. Muslims throughout China protested the publication of a Chinese book Sexual Customs in May 1989, and a children's book in October 1993 that portrayed Muslims, particularly their restriction against pork, in a derogatory fashion. In each case, the government responded quickly, meeting most of the Muslims' demands, condemning the publications and arresting the authors, and closing down the printing houses.

These developments have influenced all Muslim nationalities in China today. However, they have found their most overtly political expressions among those Hui who are faced most directly with the task of accommodating new Islamic movements within Chinese culture. By comparison, among the Uyghur a more recent integration into Chinese society as a result of Mongolian and Manchu expansion into Central Asian has forced them to reach different degrees of social and political accommodations that have challenged their identity. In terms of integration, the Uyghur as a people are perhaps the least integrated into Chinese society, while the Hui are at the other end of the spectrum.

Increased Muslim activism in China might be thought of as “nationalistic,” but it is also a nationalism that may often transcend the boundaries of the contemporary nation-state, via mass communications, increased travel, and the internet. Encouraged by the Chinese state, relations between Muslims in China and their co-religionists in the Middle East are becoming stronger and more frequent. This appears to be motivated partly out of a desire to establish trading partners for arms, commodities, and currency exchanges, and partly by China’s traditional view of itself as a leader of the Third World. Delegations of foreign Muslims regularly travel to prominent Islamic sites in China, in a kind of state-sponsored religious tourism, and donations are encouraged. While the state hopes that private Islamic investment will assist economic development, the vast majority of grants by visiting foreign Muslims have been donated to the rebuilding of Islamic mosques, schools, and hospitals. As Hui in China are further exposed to Islamic internationalism, and they return from pilgrimages and periods of study abroad, traditional Hui identities are once again being reshaped and called into question, giving rise to new manifestations of Islam in China. Global Islam is thus localized into Hui Islam, finding its expression as a range of accommodations between Chinese-ness and Muslim-ness as defined in each local community.

*** Uyghurs, Muslims, and Chinese

In 1997, bombs exploded in a city park in Beijing on May 13 (killing one) and on two buses on March 7 (killing two), as well as on February 25 in the northwestern border city of Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (killing nine). In recent years there have been over thirty other bombings, six of them in Tibet alone. Most of these are thought to have been related to demands by Muslim and Tibetan separatists. Eight members of the Uyghur Muslim minority were executed on May 29, 1997 for alleged bombings in northwest China, with hundreds arrested on suspicion of taking part in ethnic riots and engaging in separatist activities. Though sporadically reported since the early 1980s, such incidents have been increasingly common since 1997 and are documented in a recent scathing report on Chinese government policy in the region by Amnesty International (1999). A report in the Wall Street Journal of August 11, 1999 (Johnson 1999) on the arrest of a well-known Uyghur business woman named Rebiya Kadir during a visit by the United States Congressional Research Service delegation to the region, indicates that China's random arrests have not diminished since the report, and that China remains relatively unconcerned with Western criticism of such measures. As a result of considerable international pressure, Ms. Kadir was released to the United States in May 2005 and is now the elected leader of the Uyghur American Association, based in Washington, DC.

As we consider the interaction of Uyghur Muslims with Chinese society, we must examine the interrelated aspects of regional history, economy, and politics. First, Chinese histories notwithstanding, most Uyghur firmly believe that their ancestors were the indigenous people of the Tarim basin, which did not become known in Chinese as Xinjiang (new dominion) until the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the indigeneity of the present people classified as Uyghur by the Chinese state is a recent ethnogenesis created by Great Game rivalries, Sino-Soviet geopolitical maneuverings, and Chinese nation-building (Gladney 1990: 3).

The end of the Qing dynasty in 1912 and the rise of Great Game rivalries between China, Russia, and Britain saw the region torn by competing loyalties and marked by two short-lived and drastically different attempts at independence: the short-lived proclamations of an "East Turkestan Republic" in Kashgar in 1933, and another in Yining in 1944 (Benson 1990). These rebellions and attempts at self-rule did little to bridge competing political,

religious, and regional differences among the Turkic people who became known as the Uyghur (Forbes 1986: 29). Furthermore Rudelson’s (1997) research suggests there remains persistent regional diversity along three, and perhaps four macro-regions of Uyghuristan: the northwestern Zungaria plateau, the southern Tarim basin, the southwest Pamir region, and the eastern Kumul-Turpan-Hami corridor.

*** Uyghur Indigeneity and the Challenge to Chinese Sovereignty

The minzu policy under the Chinese Nationalists identified five peoples of China, with the Han in the majority. The recognition of the Uyghur as an official Chinese nationality (minzu) under a Soviet-influenced policy of nationality recognition contributed to a widespread acceptance today of the idea of a continuity with the ancient Uyghur kingdom and the eventual ethnogenesis of the Uyghur as a bona fide nationality. This policy was continued under the Communists, who eventually recognized fifty-six nationalities, with the Han occupying a 91 percent majority in 1990. The “peaceful liberation” of Xinjiang by the Chinese Communists in 1949, and the subsequent establishment of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region on October 1, 1955, perpetuated the Nationalist policy of recognizing the Uyghur as a minority nationality under Chinese rule (Shahidi 1984). However, the designation of the Uyghur as a nationality masks tremendous regional and linguistic diversity. It also includes the Loplyk and Dolans, who have little in common with the oasis-based Uyghur. Contemporary Uyghur separatists look back to the brief periods of independent self-rule under Yakub Beg and the Eastern Turkestan Republics, in addition to the earlier Uyghur kingdoms as evidence of their rightful claims to the region.

Within the region, Uyghurs continue to be divided from within by religious conflicts between Sufi and non-Sufi factions, territorial loyalties, language, commoner-elite alienation, and competing political loyalties. These divided loyalties were behind the May 1996 attack on the Imam of the Idgah Mosque in Kashgar by other Uyghurs, as well as the assassination of at least six Uyghur officials in September 2001. It is also important to note that Islam is only one of several unifying markers for Uyghur identity, depending on those with whom they are cooperating at the time. To the Hui Muslim Chinese, the

Uyghur distinguish themselves as the legitimate autochthonous minority, since both share a belief in Sunni Islam. In contrast to the nomadic Muslim peoples (Kazakh or Kyrgyz), Uyghur might stress their attachment to the land and oases of origin.

Alleged incursions of Taliban fighters through the Wakhan corridor into China where Xinjiang shares a narrow border with Afghanistan have led to the area being swamped with Chinese security forces and large military exercises, beginning at least one month prior to the 9/11 attacks. These military exercises suggested growing government concern about these border areas much earlier than 9/11/2001. Under U.S. and Chinese pressure, Pakistan returned one Uyghur activist to China out of hundreds of Taliban detainees, following a pattern of repatriating suspected Uyghur separatists in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. Amnesty International claims that Chinese government round-ups of “terrorists” and “separatists” has led to hurried public trials and immediate, summary executions of possibly thousands of locals. One Amnesty International estimate suggested that in a country known for its frequent executions, Xinjiang had the highest number, averaging 1.8 per week, most of them Uyghur (1999: 24). Troop movements to the area, related to the nationwide campaign against crime known as “Strike Hard” launched in 1998 have reportedly been the largest since the suppression of the large Akto insurrection in April 1990.[20]

*** Ethnic Muslim Nationalism in an Age of Globalization

International campaigns for Uyghur rights and possible independence have become increasingly vocal and well organized, especially on the Internet. Repeated public appeals have been made to Abdulahat Abdurixit, the Uyghur People’s Government Chairman of Xinjiang in Urumqi. Notably, the elected chair of the Unrepresented Nations and People’s Organization (UNPO) based in the Hague is a Uyghur, Erkin Alptekin, son of the separatist leader, Isa Yusuf Alptekin, who is buried in Istanbul where there is a park dedicated to his memory. Supporting primarily an audience of approximately one million expatriate Uyghurs (yet few Uyghurs in Central Asia and China have access to these Internet sites), there are at least twenty-five international organizations and web sites working for the independence of “Eastern Turkestan.” Since 9/11, each of these organizations has disclaimed any

support for violence or terrorism, pressing for a peaceful resolution of ongoing conflicts in the region. The growing influence of cyber-separatism and international popularization of the Uyghur cause concerns Chinese authorities, who hope to convince the world that the Uyghurs do pose a real domestic and international terrorist threat.

At the same time, the Chinese state has become more keenly aware of the importance that foreign Muslim governments place on China's treatment of its Muslim minorities as a factor in China's lucrative trade and military agreements. The establishment of full diplomatic ties with Saudi Arabia in 1991 and increasing military and technical trade with Middle Eastern Muslim states enhances the economic and political salience of China's treatment of its internal Muslim minority population. The official protocols signed with China's Central Asian border nations, beginning in 1996 with the group known as the "Shanghai 5" (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikstan) and expanded in 2001 to include Uzbekistan, underlines China's growing role in the region and concerns over transnational trade and security. The increased transnationalism of China's Muslims will be an important factor in their ethnic expression as well as practiced accommodation to Chinese culture and state authority.

Beyond these political pressures, Uyghur relations with the Chinese state also involve significant economic issues. Since 1991, China has been a net oil importer; it also has twenty million Muslims. Mishandling of its Muslim populations runs the risk of alienating Middle Eastern trading partners, who are primarily Muslims. After an ethnic riot on February 5, 1997, in the northwestern Xinjiang city of Yining, that left at least nine Uyghur Muslims dead and several hundreds arrested, the Saudi Arabian official newspaper warned China about the "suffering of [its] Muslims whose human rights are violated." Turkey's Defense Minister officially condemned China's handling of the issue, and China responded by telling Turkey not to interfere in China's internal affairs. Muslim nations on China's borders, though officially unsupportive of Uyghur separatists, may be increasingly critical of harsh treatment extended to fellow Turkic and/or Muslim co-religionists in China.

Unrest in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region may thus lead to a decline in outside oil investment and revenues, which are already operating at a loss.

In 2003, Exxon reported that its two wells came up dry in China's supposedly oil-rich Tarim basin of southern Xinjiang, with the entire region yielding only 3.15 million metric tons of crude oil, much less than China's overall output of 156 million tons. The World Bank loans over $3 billion a year to China, investing over $780.5 million in fifteen projects in the Xinjiang Region alone, with some of that money allegedly going to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) that human rights activist Harry Wu has claimed employs prison labor. International companies and organizations may not wish to subject their employees and investors to social and political upheavals. As a result of these criticisms, many World Bank and Asian Development Bank projects have been curtailed in recent years. Yet China's trade with Central Asia is expanding rapidly with the opening of direct rail, air, and six overland links. Xinjiang's top trading partners are Kazakhstan and Hong Kong, with China-Kazakhstan trade alone totaling more than Turkey's trade with all of Central Asia (Dorian, Wigdortz, Gladney 1997).

Additionally, China is hoping to increase revenues from tourism to the region, marketing it as an important link on the ancient Silk Road. It has been a tremendous draw to foreign Muslim tourists, as well as Japanese, Taiwanese, Southeast Asian, and domestic tourists. This rise in tourism has led to five-star hotels throughout the region and dramatic changes, such as the building of eighty new skyscrapers in Urumqi over the last decade. Uyghur separatism and Muslim complaints regarding Chinese policy will have important consequences for China's economic development of the region.

China's handling of ethnic and integrationist issues in Xinjiang and Hong Kong will have a direct bearing on its possible reunification with Taiwan. Beyond the official minorities, China possesses tremendous ethnic, linguistic, and regional diversity. Intolerance toward difference in Xinjiang might be extended to limiting cultural pluralism in Guangdong, where at least fifteen dialects of Cantonese are spoken and folk religious practices remain strong. Memories of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), when all forms of diversity, political or cultural, were severely curtailed, are still very much alive. If rising Chinese nationalism entails reducing ethnic and cultural difference, then anyone who is regarded as "other" in China will suffer, not only the Uyghurs.

*** Cyber-Separatism: Virtual Voices in the Uyghur Opposition

Though silenced within China, Uyghur voices can still be heard virtually on the Internet. Perhaps due to Chinese restrictions on public protest and a state-controlled media or the deleterious effect of a war on domestic terrorism, very few Uyghur voices critical of the Chinese can be heard publicly today in the region. Supporting primarily an audience of over 500,000 expatriate Uyghurs, there are at least twenty-five international organizations and web sites working for the independence of “Eastern Turkestan,” and based in Amsterdam, Munich, Istanbul, Melbourne, Washington, DC, and New York. Estimates differ widely on the number of Uyghurs living in the diaspora. Uyghurs in Central Asia are not always well represented in the state censuses, particularly since 1991. Shichor (2002) estimates approximately 500,000 living abroad, about 5–6 percent of the total world Uyghur population. Uyghur web sites differ dramatically on the official Uyghur population, from up to 25 million Uyghur inside Xinjiang, to up to 10 million in the diaspora.[21]

Both the UN and the U.S. government have agreed with China that at least one international organization, ETIM (East Turkestan Islamic Movement), is a Uyghur-sponsored terrorist organization, while the vast majority of the Eastern Turkestan independence and information organizations disclaim violence. Supported largely by Uyghur émigrés who left China prior to the Communist takeover in 1949, these organizations maintain web sites and activities that take a primarily negative view of Chinese policies in the region. Although not all advocate independence, the vast majority press for radical change in the region, reporting human rights violations, environmental degradation, economic imbalances and alternative histories of the region. In general, these web sites can be divided into information and political advocacy sites, nearly all of which are critical of Chinese policies in Xinjiang.

There are also a growing number of Central Asia-based sites that contain information and discussion of events in Xinjiang. While most do not take positions on the Uyghur independence issues related to Xinjiang, most report more favorably on Uyghur claims against the Chinese State. GeoNative’s informational site maintained by the Basque activist Luistxo Fernandez claims to report objectively on minority peoples less represented in the world

press. More advocacy-driven is the Uyghur service of Radio Free Asia, which as part of its regular broadcast to Xinjiang and surrounding regions, is reportedly beamed from transmitters in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (www. rfa.org/service/index.html?service=uyg). According to their site, Radio Free Asia (RFA) broadcasts news and information to Asian listeners who lack regular access to “full and balanced reporting” in their domestic media. In its broadcasts and call-in programs, RFA aims to fill a “critical gap” in the news reporting for people in certain regions of Asia. Created by the U.S. Congress in 1994, RFA currently broadcasts in Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, the Wu dialect, Vietnamese, Tibetan (Uke, Amdo, and Kham), and Uyghur. Although it claims to adhere to the highest standards of journalism, local governments have often complained of bias in favor of groups critical to the regimes in power. The Uyghur service has been regularly blocked and criticized by the Chinese government, and has been cited in the past for carrying stories supportive of “separatists.” Despite increased Sino-U.S. cooperation on terrorism and the labeling of ETIM as an international Uyghur terrorist group, there seem to have been no changes in funding levels or content. Frequent Uyghur listeners, however, have complained that the site no longer criticizes China as strongly or frequently for its treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

Funding for the informational sites are generally traceable to academic organizations, advertising, and subscription. It is much harder to establish funding sources for the advocacy sites. While most sites are supported by subscribers, advertising, and small donations from Uyghurs and other Muslims outside of China sympathetic to the Uyghur cause, there is no evidence that the organizations and the sites they sponsor have ever received official government sponsorship. Other than the Radio Free Asia Uyghur service, which is supported by the U.S. government, there is no other government that officially supports dissemination of information related to Uyghur human rights issues.

An interesting U.S.-based site includes the Citizens Against Communist Chinese Propaganda (with one page entitled “Free East Turkistan!”), which bills itself as a counter-propaganda site based in Florida and led by Jack Churchward who started the organization, Free Eastern Turkestan, that originally made a name for itself through a series of protests against a Chinese-owned and operated theme park, “Splendid

China," located in Kissimmee, Florida that they found denigrating to Uyghurs and Tibetans. The Uyghur Human Rights Coalition is a web site reporting human rights abuses of Uyghurs in China and contains links to articles and other sites (www.uyghurs.org/). KIVILCIM is an East Turkistan Information Website advocating independence, in Uyghur language (www.doguturkistan.net/). Other advocacy groups include the East Turkestan Information Center www.uygur.org/ and the Eastern Turkestan National Freedom Center (www.uygur.org). The Uyghur Human Rights Coalition publishes personal testimonies of human rights abuses. As most sites are cross-linked, they repeat and pass along information contained on other sites.

There were over twenty Uyghur advocacy organizations in the late 1990s but these seem to have declined in membership and activities since 9/11. The most strident advocacy site in 2003 was the "Islamic Party of Turkistan," which was entirely in Uyghur (in the Arabicized script used in China, not the Cyrillic that is still used in the Central Asian Republics). The site advocated overthrow of the Chinese government by any means, including the use of violence, and chronicles atrocities committed against the Uyghur in Xinjiang and Central Asia with detailed reports on incidents in the region often drawn from BBC and Al-Jazeerah.

It is difficult to assess who the audience is for these web sites and organizations, as they are all blocked in China, and mostly inaccessible in Central Asia due to either inadequate Internet access or high costs. Many Uyghurs in China and Central Asia have never heard of these sites and government officials in Xinjiang also claim they do not have access. I was quite surprised, therefore, when on March 26, 2003, while in Kashgar, I went to the "Fatima Wangba" Internet café, across the street from the Seman Hotel, and was able to access the discussion list, Uighur-L, run by the site www.taklamakan.org/uighur-l. At that URL, I was able to read a history of the Uyghur in Xinjiang that was quite contrary to the officially approved Chinese government position. Nevertheless, this site is probably rarely accessed by local Uyghur and may no longer be available (Harwit 2003). During a September 2003 visit to Urumqi, it was no longer accessible, but I was able to connect to several pro-Tibetan sites. It is clear, however, that Uyghurs in the Western diaspora, particularly in Europe, Turkey, the

United States, Canada, and Australia are frequent readers and contributors to these sites. In addition, events in the region since 9/11 have led an increasing number of journalists and observers to visit these sites more regularly. It is also interesting that little on these sites can be associated with militant or radical Islam, and there are almost no calls for an Islamic “Jihad” against the Chinese state. Most involve documenting the plight and history of the Uyghurs under Chinese rule in Xinjiang. Few Chinese inside or outside of China have visited these sites and are quite unaware of these alternative histories. Although there are several sites available in Turkish and Uyghur, there are none in Chinese. As such, it is a self-selected audience and rarely reaches beyond those who already support and are interested in the agenda supported by the site.

Financial support for these organizations and web sites come mostly from private individuals, foundations, and rare subscriptions. In an interview, Anwar Yusuf, president of the Washington, DC-based Eastern Turkestan National Freedom Center, claimed that he had received substantial support from patrons in Saudi Arabia, but by the late 1990s funding had begun to dry up due to too many organizations and waning interest in the Uyghur cause (Yusuf 1999).

Although most of these websites have limited funding and circulation, they should not be dismissed as forming only a “virtual” community without any substantial impact on events within Xinjiang. They serve as an important source of information unavailable in the official Chinese media and there is evidence that Internet sites influence public opinion because of their widespread availability and alternative reporting (Baber 2002). While there is debate about how much effect, it is clear that the Internet has altered the way information is circulated and opinions are formed. More important, these “virtual communities” have led to interactions and coalitions that have influenced political and socioeconomic events. Social movements in East Timor, Aceh, Chechnya, and Bosnia have used Internet communities for mobilizing, influencing opinion as well as creating large financial transfers (Foster 1997; Jordan 1999; Rushkoff 1994; Smith and Kollock 1999). While cyber-separatism would never be able on its own to unseat a local government, it does link like-minded individuals and raise consciousness about issues that were often inaccessible to the general public. For an isolated region such as Xinjiang, and the widely dispersed Uyghur diaspora,

the Internet has dramatically altered the way the world sees the region and the Chinese state must respond to issues within it.

There are more than just Internet organizations involved in separatist activities in and around Xinjiang. As noted above, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) was recognized by the UN in October 2002 as an international terrorist organization responsible for domestic and international terrorist acts, which China claimed included a bombing of the Chinese consulate in Istanbul, assassinations of Chinese officials in Bishkek, and Uighur officials in Kashgar thought to collaborate with Chinese officialdom (Hutzler 2001). This designation, however, created a controversy in that China and the United States presented little public evidence to positively link the ETIM organization with the specific incidents described.[22] In 2001, the U.S. State Department released a report that documented several separatist and terrorist groups operating inside the region and abroad promoting an independent Xinjiang (McNeal 2001).[23] This included “The United Revolutionary Front of Eastern Turkestan” whose leader Yusupbek Mukhlisi claims to have thirty armed units with “20 million” Uyghurs primed for an uprising; the “Home of East Turkestan Youth,” said to be linked to Hamas with a reported 2000 members; the “Free Turkestan Movement” whose leader Abdul Kasim is said to have led the 1990 Baren uprising; the “Organization for the Liberation of Uighuristan” whose leader Ashir Vakhidi is said to be committed to the fighting Chinese “occupation” of the “Uighur homeland;” and the so-called “Wolves of Lop Nor” who have claimed responsibility for various bombings and uprisings. The State Department claims that all have tenuous links with al Qaeda, Taliban, the Hizb-ut-Tahrir (“Islamic Revival”), and the Tableeghi Jamaat. It came as some surprise, then, when at the conclusion of his August 2001 visit to Beijing, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage identified ETIM as the leading Uyghur group to be targeted as an international terrorist group. At the time, few, including activists working for an independent East Turkistan, had ever heard of the ETIM group. Even the U.S. military did not seem to be aware of the group, as the September 28, 2001 “Special Report: Uighur Muslim Separatists” issued by the Virtual Information Center in Honolulu, which is funded by USCINCPAC (the Pacific Asia Command), not only did not mention ETIM, but concluded regarding separatist violence in Xinjiang that there is “no single identifiable group but there is violent opposition coordinated and possibly conducted by exiled groups and organizations within Xinjiang” (Virtual Information Center 2001).

The main criticism raised by those critical of this designation is that, with so many identified groups, it has not been made clear why ETIM was singled out. Interestingly, Mukhlisi's United Revolutionary Front was not included with ETIM, despite its frequent claims of responsibility for violent acts in Xinjiang, such as the 1997 train derailment and police station bombings.[24]

When I met with Yusupbek Mukhlisi in Almaty on two occasions in August 2003, he continued to advocate violence in the overthrow of the Chinese state in East Turkistan. He stated: "The Chinese government will never peacefully withdraw from the occupied territory of East Turkistan. We have no choice but to use violence." At the same time, many Uyghur have complained to me that, although there have been many reported terrorist bombings in Tibet and frequent organized protests against Chinese rule that have led to violence outside of Tibet, given the sympathy shown to Tibetans in the West, they do not see the United States ever siding with China in condemning a Tibetan independence organization as terrorist.

Following Armitage's announcement and the State Department's report, the Chinese State Council issued its own report charging that from 1990 to 2001 various Uyghur separatist groups "were responsible for over 200 terrorist incidents in Xinjiang" that resulted in the deaths of 162 people and injuries to 440 others. The report, titled "East Turkestan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity," also dismissed allegations that Beijing had used the U.S.-led war on terror as a pretext to crack down on Uyghurs. The report condemned numerous Uyghur groups including Hazret's ETLO (East Turkestan Liberation Organization); the ETIM; the Islamic Reformist Party "Shock Brigade"; the East Turkestan Islamic Party; the East Turkestan Opposition Party; the East Turkestan Islamic Party of Allah; the Uyghur Liberation Organization; the Islamic Holy Warriors; and the East Turkestan International Committee.

An Internet search of these organizations reveals little information if any. These organizations and the Internet news and information organizations discussed above have rarely if ever claimed responsibility for any specific

action, though many are sympathetic to isolated incidents regarded as challenging Chinese rule in the region. Interestingly, there seems to be very little support for radical Islam and a search for the term “jihad” among the various web sites and news postings related to these groups turns up almost no use of the term or call for a religious war against the Chinese, except for the Islamic Party of Turkistan as noted above (see www.turkistan-islam.com). As Rudelson (1997) has noted, many of the Uyghur nationalists are quite secular in their orientation, and overthrow of Chinese rule is related to issues of sovereignty and human rights, rather than religion. By contrast, Uyghur expatriots in the United States, Canada, Turkey, and Europe tend to be quite religious, yet rarely call for a holy war against the Chinese. Their concerns are more related to historic claims upon ancestral lands, Chinese mistreatment, and a desire to return home to a “free East Turkestan.” A Uyghur family with whom I spent the Ramadan feast in Toronto in 2000 maintained a deeply religious life in Canada that they claimed was not possible in China. Although disavowing violence, their daily prayer was for a free “Uyghuristan” where their relatives could be free to practice religion. In Istanbul, the Uyghur community is quite active in the mosques in Zeytinburnu and Tuzla, and strongly advocates a “liberated East Turkestan,” but on several visits to these communities since 1993 I have never once heard them call for a jihad against the Chinese government.

Since 9/11, very few groups have publicly advocated terror against the Chinese state, and most have denied any involvement in terrorist activities, though they may express sympathy for such activities. A case in point is the East Turkestan Liberation Organization (ETLO), led by the secretive Mehmet Emin Hazret. In a January 24, 2003 telephone interview with the Uyghur service of Radio Free Asia, Hazret admitted that there may be a need to establish a military wing of his organization that would target Chinese interests but he denied any prior terrorist activity or association with the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM). “We have not been and will not be involved in any kind of terrorist action inside or outside China. We have been trying to solve the East Turkestan problem through peaceful means. But the Chinese government’s brutality in East Turkestan may have forced some individuals to resort to violence.”[25]

Hazret, a former screenwriter from Xinjiang, who migrated to Turkey in his forties, denied any connection between his organization and al-Qaeda or

Osama bin Laden. Nevertheless, he did see the increasing need for a military action against Chinese rule in the region: “Our principal goal is to achieve independence for East Turkestan by peaceful means. But to show our enemies and friends our determination on the East Turkestan issue, we view a military wing as inevitable….The Chinese people are not our enemy. Our problem is with the Chinese government, which violates the human rights of the Uyghur people.” Once again, a common pattern to his response regarding Chinese rule in the region was not to stress Islamic jihad or religious nationalism, but to emphasize human rights violations and Uyghur claims on Eastern Turkestan.

China’s Uyghur separatists are small in number, poorly equipped, loosely linked, and vastly out-gunned by the People’s Liberation Army and People’s Police. Although sometimes disgruntled about other rights’ and mistreatment issues, China’s nine other official Muslim minorities do not in general support Uyghur separatism. There is continued enmity between Uyghur and Hui (Tungan) in the region. Few Hui support an independent Xinjiang, and one million Kazakh in Xinjiang would have very little say in an independent Uyghuristan. Local support for separatist activities, particularly in Xinjiang and other border regions, is ambivalent at best, given the economic disparity between these regions and their foreign neighbors, including Tadjikistan, Kygyzstan, Pakistan, and especially Afghanistan. Strong memories persist of mass starvation and widespread destruction during the Sino-Japanese and civil war in the first half of this century, including intra-Muslim and Muslim-Chinese bloody conflicts, as well as the chaotic horrors of the Cultural Revolution. Many local activists are raising specific issues, such as environmental degradation, anti-nuclear testing, religious freedom, over-taxation, and limits on childbearing. Many ethnic leaders are simply calling for “real” autonomy according to Chinese law for the five Autonomous Regions that are each led by First Party Secretaries who are all Han Chinese controlled by Beijing.

The history of Chinese-Muslim relations in Xinjiang has been one of relative peace and quiet, broken by enormous social and political disruptions, fostered by both internal and external crises. The problems of the region have not been resolved or opposition dissolved. The opposition is similar to the Basque separatists of the ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna [Basquefor “Basque Homeland and Freedom”]) in Spain or former IRA (Irish Republican

Army) in Ireland and England. It may erupt in limited, violent moments of terror and resistance. And just as these oppositional movements have not been resolved in Europe, the Uyghur problem in Xinjiang does not appear to be one that will readily go away. The admitted problem of Uyghur terrorism and dissent, even in the diaspora, is thus problematic for a government that wants to encourage integration and development in a region where the majority population is not only ethnically different, but also devoutly Muslim. How does a government integrate a strongly religious minority (be it Muslim, Tibetan, Christian, or Buddhist) into a Marxist-Capitalist system? China's policy of intolerance toward dissent and economic stimulus has not seemed to resolve this issue.

*** Conclusion: Contesting Otherness

Hui, Uyghur, and other minority groups in China are fully aware of the use the Chinese state is making of their identities in both international relations and the construction of national identity, which allows for the justification of internal control over not only individual sexuality, but cultural and political difference as well. Through several protests—I witnessed a Uyghur march against a Han exhibition of "minority art" at the Overseas Hotel in Urumqi in fall 1987 that the Uyghur found to be denigrating and degrading—Uyghurs have often objected to their National Geographic-like portrayals as "happy, sensual natives." But in China there is more to it than the National Geographic romanticization of the primitive. I would argue that it is because the construction of Han identity is so tenuous, so questionable, and the position of Han superiority is so insecure, that the portrayal of the Other as sensual, immoral, and even barbarous becomes so important. This is also why the erotic portrayal of minorities is still permitted in a society that strictly controls any other even slightly pornographic material, not only that of the Han, but also including foreign publications and video media. While every society tends to allow the exoticization and eroticization of the other and the stranger, in China it is an active project of the state itself. It is the internal "Other" that is appropriated for nation-building and reinforcing the prurient moral code of the totalitarian state. By allowing the continued portrayal of the minorities in state-sponsored media, at the very same time that it restricts such portrayals of Han and foreigners, the state reinforces its hegemonic control over its peoples as well as promoting its notion of civilization and moral authority. For domestic

consumption, minorities—Muslims included—are portrayed as exotic and erotic, but for international purposes, the nationalities—Muslims especially—are represented as traditional and content.

At the same time, Uyghur and other minorities are taking advantage of their official minority status and objectified identities, ill-fitting or not, to promote their own religious, political, and personal interests. Opportunities to study and travel abroad are hard to come by, even for Han, and the Uyghur are eager to take advantage of every little crack in the Chinese system. When the state allows those cracks to appear, albeit for very specific foreign policy and economic goals, they may not be able to anticipate the many unintended results—results, which might include a strengthened transnational Uyghur identity, both Turkish and Muslim.

China is not immune from the new tide of ethnic nationalism and “primordial politics” sweeping Europe, Africa, and Asia in the post-Cold War period. Much of it is clearly due to a response to globalization in terms of localization: increasing nationalism arising from the organization of the world into nation-states. No longer content to sit on the sidelines, the nations within these states are playing a greater role in the public sphere, which Jürgen Habermas (1989) suggests is the defining characteristic of civil society in the modern nation-state. In most of these nationalist movements, religion, culture, and racialization play a privileged role in defining the boundaries of the nation. In China, as elsewhere, Islam will continue to play an important role in defining the nation, especially in countries where nationality is defined by a mix of religion and ethnicity.

[18] For an analysis of the 2000 population statistics, see Yang and Hong (2002).

[19] For the debate over the definition of Hui and reference to them as “Sino-Muslims,” see Lipman (1997: xxiv).

[20] This distinction was most fully articulated by Roff (1985: 8–10).

[21] This was the first major uprising in Xinjiang that took place in the Southern Tarim region near Baren Township, which initiated a series of sporadic protests in the Southern Tarim region.

[22] See, for example, www.Uyghur.org, the site supported by Anwar Yusuf, president of the Eastern Turkestan National Freedom Center in Washington, DC, who has suggested there are up to 25 million Uyghurs worldwide. Shichor (2002) based on information from Enver Can in Munich, estimates there are about 500 Uyghurs in Germany (mostly in Munich), 500 in Belgium (mostly from Central Asia), 200 in Sweden (mostly from Kazakhstan), 40 in England, 35 in Switzerland, 30 in Holland, and 10 in Norway. In addition, there are an estimated 10,000 Uyghurs in Turkey, 1,000 in the United States, 500 in Canada, and 200 in Australia (mostly in Melbourne).

[23] “China also Harmed by Separatist-Minded Eastern Turkestan Terrorists,” People’s Daily, October 10, 2001; Erik Eckholm, “U.S. Labeling of Group in China as Terrorist is Criticized,” New York Times, September 13, 2002; Charles Hutzler, “U.S. Gesture to China Raises Crackdown Fears,” Wall Street Journal, September 13, 2002.

[24] See also Scott Fogden’s excellent thesis (Fogden 2002).

[25] “Exile Group Claims Bomb Blast in Xinjiang,” AFP (Hong Kong), March 1, 1997, FBIS, FTS19970513001183.

[26] Radio Free Asia, Uyghur service, “Separatist leader vows to target Chinese government (RFA),” January 24, 2003. http://www.rfa.org/service/index. html?service=uyg.

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** 7. Re-Evaluating the Kurdish Question{2}

Michael M. Gunter

*** Introduction

Straddling the borders where Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria converge in the Middle East, the Kurds constitute the largest nation in the world without its own independent state.[26] Long a suppressed minority, the wars against Saddam Hussein in 1991 and 2003 resulted in the creation of a virtually independent Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in a federal Iraq. This KRG has inspired the Kurds elsewhere to seek cultural, social, and even political autonomy, if not independence. Furthermore, Turkey’s application for admission into the European Union (EU) also has brought the Kurdish issue to the attention of Europe. On the other hand, the states in which the Kurds live greatly fear Kurdish autonomy as a threat to their territorial integrity. The purpose of this chapter is to re-evaluate the resulting Kurdish problem in light of these developments.

*** Population

The Kurds are a largely Sunni Muslim, Indo-European people. Thus, they are quite distinct ethnically from the Turks and Arabs, but related to the Iranians

with whom they share the Newroz (new year) holiday at the beginning of spring. No precise figures for the Kurdish population exist because most Kurds tend to exaggerate their numbers, while the states in which they live undercount them for political reasons.[27] In addition, a significant number of Kurds have partially or fully assimilated into the larger Arab, Turkish, or Iranian populations surrounding them. Furthermore, debate continues whether such groups as the Lurs, Bakhtiyaris, and others are Kurds or not. Thus, there is not even complete agreement on who is a Kurd.

Nevertheless, a reasonable estimate is that there may be as many as 12 to 15 million Kurds in Turkey (18 to 23 percent of the population), 6.5 million in Iran (11 percent), 4 to 4.5 million in Iraq (17 to 20 percent), and 1 million in Syria (9 percent). At least 200,000 Kurds also live in parts of the former Soviet Union (some claim as many as 1 million largely assimilated Kurds live there) and recently a Kurdish diaspora of more than 1 million has risen in western Europe. More than half of this diaspora is concentrated in Germany. Some 25,000 Kurds live in the United States. (Again, it must be noted, however, that these figures are simply estimates given the lack of accurate demographic statistics.) Finally, it should be noted that numerous minorities also live in Kurdistan. These minorities include Christian groups such as the Armenians and Assyrians, Turkomans and Turks, Arabs, and Iranians, among others.

The Kurds themselves are notoriously divided geographically, politically, linguistically, tribally, and ideologically. Their mountains and valleys divide the Kurds as much as they ethnically stamp them. Whatever their exact origin, it is clear that racially the Kurds today constitute a mixture of various groupings, the result of earlier invasions and migrations.

The Kurdish language, too (which is related to Iranian), has two main variants, Kurmanji (or Bahdinani) spoken mainly in the northwest of Kurdistan (Turkey and the Bahdinan or Barzani area of northwest Iraqi Kurdistan) and Sorani spoken mainly in the southeast of Kurdistan. In addition, Dimili (Zaza) is also spoken in parts of Turkish Kurdistan, while Gurani is spoken in sections of Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan. Finally, there are numerous subdialects of each one of these four main dialects. These Kurdish language variants are limited

as to their degree of mutual intelligibility, a situation that adds to the many divisions in Kurdish society.[28]

Tribalism, too, has prevented Kurdish unity. Indeed, until recently the tribe has received more loyalty than any sense of Kurdish nationalism. In all of the Kurdish revolts of the twentieth century, for example, significant numbers of Kurds have supported the government because of their tribal antipathies for those rebelling. In Iraq, these pro-government Kurds have been derisively referred to as josh (little donkeys), while in recent years the Turkish government created a pro-government militia of Kurds called village guards. Similarly, the aghas (feudal landlords or tribal chieftains) and sheikhs (religious leaders) continue to command allegiances inconsistent with the full development of a modern sense of nationalism.

*** Historical Background

The origin of the Kurds is uncertain, although some scholars believe them to be the descendants of various Indo-European tribes, which settled in the area as many as 4,000 years ago. The Kurds themselves claim to be the descendants of the Medes who helped overthrow the Assyrian Empire in 612 BCE, and also recite interesting myths about their origins involving King Solomon, jinn, and other magical agents. Many believe that the Kardouchoi, mentioned in his Anabasis by Xenophon, who gave his 10,000 such a mauling as they retreated from Persia in 401 BCE, were the ancestors of the Kurds. In the seventh century CE, the conquering Arabs applied the name “Kurds” to the mountainous people they Islamicized in the region, and history also records that the famous Saladin (Salah al-Din), who fought so chivalrously and successfully against the Christian Crusaders and Richard the Lionheart, was a Kurd.

Early in the sixteenth century, most of the Kurds fell loosely under Ottoman Turkish rule, while the remainder was placed under the Persians. In 1597, Sharaf Khan Bitlisi completed the Sharafnama, a highly erudite history of the ruling families of the Kurdish emirates. During the following century, Ahmad-i Khani wrote Mem u Zin, the Kurdish national epic and was seen by some as an early advocate of Kurdish nationalism.

Badr Khan Beg, the ruler of the last semi-independent Kurdish emirate of Botan, surrendered to the Ottomans in 1847. Some scholars argue that Sheikh Ubeydullah’s unsuccessful revolt in 1880 represented the first indication of modern Kurdish nationalism, while others consider it little more than a tribal-religious disturbance.

*** Turkey

**** Background

In 1891, Ottoman sultan Abdul Hamid II created the Hamidiye, a modern pro-government Kurdish cavalry that proved to be an important stage in the emergence of modern Kurdish nationalism. Nevertheless, the Kurds supported the Ottomans in World War I and Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) during the Turkish War of Independence following that conflict.

During World War I, one of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points (Number 12) declared that the non-Turkish minorities of the Ottoman Empire should be granted the right of “autonomous development.” The stillborn Treaty of Sèvres signed in August 1920 provided for “local autonomy for the predominantly Kurdish area” (Article 62) and in Article 64 even looked forward to the possibility that “the Kurdish peoples” might be granted “independence from Turkey.” Turkey’s quick revival under Ataturk—ironically enough with considerable Kurdish help as the Turks played well on the theme of Islamic unity—altered the entire situation. The subsequent and definitive Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923 recognized the modern Republic of Turkey without any special provisions for the Turkish Kurds.

Ataturk’s creation of a secular and purely Turkish state led to the first of three great Kurdish revolts, the rising in 1925 of Sheikh Said, the hereditary chief of the powerful Naqshbandi sufi Islamic order. Sheikh Said’s rebellion was both nationalistic and religious as it also favored the reinstatement of the Caliphate. After some initial successes, Sheikh Said was crushed and hanged.[29] In 1927, Khoyboun (Independence), a transnational Kurdish party that had been founded that year in Lebanon,

helped to launch another major uprising under General Ihsan Nuri Pasha in the Ararat area that also was completely crushed, this time with Iranian cooperation. Finally, the Dersim (now called Tunceli) rebellion from 1936 to the end of 1938, and led by Sheikh Sayyid Riza until his death in 1937, also ended in a total Kurdish defeat.

Although many Kurdish tribes either supported the Turkish government or were at least neutral in these rebellions, the Turkish authorities decided to eliminate anything that might suggest a separate Kurdish nation. A broad battery of social and constitutional devices was employed to achieve this goal. In some cases what can only be termed pseudo-theoretical justifications were offered to defend what was being done. Thus, the so-called Sun Theory taught that all languages derived from one original primeval Turkic language in central Asia. Isolated in the mountain fastnesses of eastern Anatolia, the Kurds had simply forgotten their mother tongue. The much-abused and criticized appellation “Mountain Turks” when referring to the Turkish Kurds served as a code term for these actions. Everything that recalled a separate Kurdish identity was to be abolished: language, clothing, names, and so forth.[30]

The present (1982) constitution contained a number of specific provisions that sought to limit even speaking or writing in Kurdish. Its preamble, for example, declared: “The determination that no protection shall be afforded to thoughts or opinions contrary to Turkish national interests, the principle of the existence of Turkey as an indivisible entity.” Two articles banned the spoken and written usage of the Kurdish language without specifically naming it.

Although restrictions on the usage of the Kurdish language were eased following the Gulf War in 1991, Article 8 of the Anti-Terrorism Law that entered into force in April 1991, made it possible to consider academics, intellectuals, and journalists speaking up peacefully for Kurdish rights to be engaging in terrorist acts. Similarly, under Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code, mere verbal or written support for Kurdish rights could lead one to be charged with “provoking hatred or animosity between groups of different race, religion, region, or social class.” Yasar Kemal, one of Turkey’s most famous novelists and an ethnic Kurd, was indicted in 1995 for violating these

provisions of what some have termed “thought crime.” These problems have continued into the twenty-first century.

**** PKK

Beginning in the 1970s, an increasingly significant portion of Turkey’s population of ethnic Kurds has actively demanded cultural, linguistic, and political rights as Kurds. Until recently, however, the government ruthlessly suppressed these demands for fear they would lead to the breakup of the state itself. This official refusal to brook any moderate Kurdish opposition helped encourage extremism and the creation of the Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan (PKK) or Kurdistan Workers Party, headed by Abdullah (Apo) Ocalan on November 27, 1978. In August 1984, the PKK officially launched its insurgency that by the beginning of 2000 had resulted in more than 37,000 deaths, as many as 3,000 villages partially or completely destroyed, and some 3 million people internally displaced.

For a short period in the early 1990s, Ocalan actually seemed close to achieving a certain degree of military success. In the end, however, he overextended himself, while the Turkish military spared no excesses in containing him. Slowly but steadily, the Turks marginalized the PKK’s military threat. Ocalan’s ill-advised decision in August 1995 to also attack Massoud Barzani’s Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in northern Iraq because of its support for Turkey further sapped his strength. The final blow came when Turkey threatened to go to war against Syria in October 1998 unless Damascus expelled Ocalan from his longtime sanctuary in that country.

Ocalan fled to Italy where U.S. pressure on behalf of its NATO ally Turkey pressured Italy and others to reject Ocalan as a terrorist undeserving of political asylum or negotiation. Indeed, for years the United States had given Turkey intelligence training and weapons to battle against what it saw as the “bad” Kurds of Turkey, while ironically supporting the “good” Kurds of Iraq against Saddam Hussein. With U.S. and possibly Israeli aid, Ocalan was finally captured in Kenya on February 16, 1999, flown back to Turkey for a sensational trial, and sentenced to death for treason.

**** Recent Events

Instead of making a hard-line appeal for renewed struggle during his trial, however, Ocalan issued a remarkable statement that called for the implementation of true democracy to solve the Kurdish problem within the existing borders of a unitary Turkey. He also ordered his guerrillas to evacuate Turkey to demonstrate his sincerity. Thus, far from ending Turkey's Kurdish problem, Ocalan's capture began a process of implicit bargaining between the state and many of its citizens of Kurdish ethnic heritage as represented by the PKK and the Peoples Democracy Party (HADEP). HADEP had been founded in 1994 as a legal Kurdish party and had elected numerous mayors in the Kurdish areas during the local elections held shortly after Ocalan's capture.

At this point, Turkey's potential candidacy for membership in the European Union entered the picture. If implemented, EU membership would fulfill Ataturk's ultimate hope for a strong, united, and democratic Turkey joined to the West. Until Turkey successfully implemented the so-called Copenhagen Criteria of minority rights for its Kurdish ethnic population and suspended Ocalan's death sentence to conform with EU standards which banned capital punishment, however, it was clear that Turkey's long-treasured candidacy would be only a pipe dream. As some have noted, Turkey's road to the EU lies through Diyarbakir (the unofficial capital of Turkish Kurdistan).

There are unfortunately still powerful forces in Turkey that do not want further democratization because they fear it would threaten their privileged positions as well as Turkey's territorial integrity. The military's privileged position in Turkey has been a prime example of this continuing situation. Thus, Turkey's passage of reform legislation beginning in August 2002 to harmonize its laws with EU norms and allow significant Kurdish cultural rights in theory as well as the commutation of Ocalan's death sentence to life imprisonment in October 2002, did not solve the continuing Kurdish problem in practice. The tremendous electoral victory of the moderate Islamist AK Party (AKP) on November 3, 2002, however, brought an even stronger Turkish determination to implement the necessary reforms for the EU,

resulting in Turkey finally being given October 3, 2005 as a specific date for its candidacy talks with the EU to begin.

Although HADEP was finally closed down in 2003, its place was taken first by the Democratic Peoples Party (DEHAP) and since November 2005, the Democratic Society Party (DTP). Leyla Zana—a Kurdish leader elected to the Turkish parliament in 1991 but imprisoned in 1994 for her nonviolent support of the Kurdish cause—was finally released in 2004 after her case had become a cause célèbre for Kurdish human rights. In August 2005, Prime Minster Re-cep Tayyip Erdogan became the first Turkish leader to admit that Turkey had a “Kurdish problem.” In a dramatic speech in Diyarbakir, he added that Turkey had made “grave mistakes” in the past and called for more democracy to solve the problem (“The Sun Also Rises in the Southeast” 2005: 1–2). Violent riots throughout many parts of Turkey in March 2006, however, have dampened further movement on the Kurdish issue as of this writing in August 2006. Much work still has to be done both on the part of Turkey and the EU if Turkey is ever going to enter the European Union and in so doing help solve the Kurdish problem in Turkey.[31]

Arguing that Turkey has not implemented the necessary reforms, for example, the PKK ended the cease-fire it implemented after Ocalan’s capture and renewed low-level fighting in June 2004. In addition, opposition to Turkish membership in the EU seems to be growing in such EU members as France, Germany, and Austria, among others. New EU members must be approved unanimously, so any one member of the EU could veto Turkey’s membership, which many now see as not possible until sometime in the distant future.

**** U.S. Alliance

Turkey’s opposition to the Kurdish identity and Turkey’s strong strategic alliance with the United States since the days of the Truman Doctrine, first promulgated in 1947, have arguably been two of the main reasons for the inability of the Kurds to create any type of an independent state in the modern Middle East, which began to develop after World War I. Although the United States paid lip service to the idea of Kurdish rights, when the chips

were down, again and again the United States backed its strategic NATO ally Turkey when it came to the Kurdish issue.

Only when the United States perceived the Iraqi Kurds to be a useful foil against Saddam Hussein did the United States begin to take a partially pro-Kurdish position, at least towards the Iraqi Kurds. Although this U.S. support for the Iraqi Kurds did not prohibit Turkey from unilaterally intervening into northern Iraq in pursuit of the PKK during the 1990s, U.S. support for the de facto state of Kurdistan in northern Iraq, and disagreements over sanctions against Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the future of Iraq itself began to fray the longstanding U.S.-Turkish alliance.

The U.S. war to remove Saddam Hussein from power in 2003 furthered this process and even partially reversed alliance partners. For the first time since the creation of Iraq, the Iraqi Kurds now—at least for the present—have a powerful ally in the United States. This ironic situation was brought about by Turkey refusing to allow the United States to use its territory as a base for a northern front to attack Saddam Hussein's Iraq in March 2003. Courtesy of Turkey, the Iraqi Kurds suddenly were thrust into the role of U.S. ally, a novel position they eagerly and successfully assumed. Quickly, the Iraqi Kurds occupied the oil-rich Kirkuk and Mosul areas which would have been unthinkable encroachments upon Turkish "red lines" had Turkey anchored the northern front. What is more, Turkey had no choice but to acquiesce in the Iraqi Kurdish moves.

The new situation was further illustrated in July 2003 when the United States apprehended eleven Turkish commandos in the Iraqi Kurdish city of Sulaymaniya who were apparently seeking to carry out acts intended to destabilize the Kurdish government and de facto state in northern Iraq. Previously, as the strategic ally of the United States, Turkey had carte blanche to do practically anything it wanted to in northern Iraq. No longer is this true. The "Sulaymaniya incident" caused what one high-ranking Turkish general called the "worst crisis of confidence" ("Ozkok: Biggest Crisis of Trust with U.S." 2003; Kralev 2003) in U.S.-Turkish relations since the creation of the NATO alliance. It also illustrated how the United States was willing to protect the Iraqi Kurds from unwanted Turkish interference. What is more, the same U.S. principle of non-interference now began to apply to

Turkish proposals that either the United States eliminate the PKK guerrillas holed up in northern Iraq or permit the Turkish army to do so. Previously, the Turkish army had entered northern Iraq any time it desired in pursuit of the PKK.

*** Iraq

**** Background

The Kurds in Iraq have been in an almost constant state of revolt since Great Britain artificially created Ira—in accordance with the Sykes-Picot Agreement of World War I—out of the former Ottoman vilayets (provinces) of Mosul, Baghdad, and Basra. There are three major reasons for this rebellious situation.[32]

First, the Kurds in Iraq long constituted a greater proportion of the population than they did in any other state they inhabited. Consequently, despite their smaller absolute numbers, they represented a larger critical mass in Iraq than elsewhere, a situation that enabled them to play a more important role there than they did in Turkey and Iran. Second, as an artificial, new state, Iraq had less legitimacy as a political entity than Turkey and Iran, two states that had existed in one form or another for many centuries despite their large Kurdish minorities. Thus, discontent and rebellion came easier for the Iraqi Kurds. Third, Iraq was further divided by a Sunni-Shiite Muslim division not present in Turkey or Iran. This predicament further called into question Iraq’s future.

For its part, the Iraqi government has always feared the possibility of Kurdish separatism. Kurdish secession would not only deplete the Iraqi population; it would also set a precedent that the Shiites, some 60 percent of the population, might follow and thus threaten the very future of the Iraqi state. In addition, since for many years approximately two-thirds of the oil production and reserves as well as much of the fertile land were located in the Kurdish area, the government felt that Kurdish secession would strike at

the economic heart of the state. Thus were sown the seeds of a seemingly irreconcilable struggle between Iraq and its Kurdish minority.

To further their goals, the British, who held Iraq as a mandate from the League of Nations, invited a local Kurdish leader, Sheikh Mahmud Barzinji of Sulaymaniya, to act as their governor in the Kurdish vilayet (province) of Mosul. Despite his inability to overcome the division among the Kurds, Sheikh Mahmud almost immediately proclaimed himself “King of Kurdistan,” revolted against British rule, and began secret dealings with the Turks. In a precursor to subsequent defeats at the hands of the Iraqi government in Baghdad, the British Royal Air Force (RAF) successfully bombed the sheikh’s forces, putting down several of his uprisings during the 1920s.

Although the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) held out the possibility of Kurdish independence, as mentioned above, the definitive Treaty of Lausanne (1923) made no mention of the Kurds. What is more, the British already had decided to attach the largely Kurdish vilayet of Mosul to Iraq because of its vast oil resources. The British felt that this was the only way Iraq could be made viable.

With the final defeat of Sheikh Mahmud in 1931, Mulla Mustafa Barzani began to emerge as the leader almost synonymous with the Kurdish movement in Iraq. Although the Barzanis’ power was originally founded on their religious authority as Naqshbandi sheikhs, they also became noted for their fighting abilities and still wear a distinctive turban with red stripes. For more than half a century, Barzani fought the Iraqi government in one way or another. Despite his inherent conservatism and tribal mentality, he was the guiding spirit of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) founded on 16 August 1946; spent a decade of exile in the Soviet Union (1947–58); and at the height of his power in the early 1970s negotiated the March Manifesto of 1970 which theoretically provided for Kurdish autonomy under his rule. Kurdish infighting against such other leaders as Ibrahim Ahmad and his son-in-law Jalal Talabany and continuing government opposition, however, finally helped lead to Barzani’s ultimate defeat in 1975. Barzani’s defeat also occurred because the United States and Iran withdrew their support in return for Iraqi concessions, an action U.S. National Security Advisor Henry

Kissinger cynically explained as necessary covert action not to be confused with missionary work.[33]

Following Barzani's collapse in March 1975, his son Massoud Barzani eventually emerged as the new leader of the KDP, while Talabany established his Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on June 1, 1975. Divided by philosophy, geography, dialect, and ambition, Barzani's KDP and Talabany's PUK have alternated between cooperation and bloody conflict ever since. They also have suffered grievously from such horrific repression as Saddam Hussein's genocidal Anfal campaigns of 1987–88, and the chemical attack against the city of Halabja on March 16, 1988.

After the Gulf War and failure of the ensuing Kurdish uprising in March 1991, the mass flight of Kurdish refugees to the mountains reluctantly forced the United States to create a safe haven and no-fly zone in which a de facto Kurdish state began to develop in northern Iraq. In addition, the unprecedented United Nations Security Council Resolution 688 of April 5, 1991 condemned "the repression of the Iraqi civilian population…in Kurdish populated areas" and demanded "that Iraq…immediately end this repression." As symbolic as it may have been, never before had the Kurds received such official international mention and protection.

Despite the de facto Kurdish state that emerged in northern Iraq following Saddam Hussein's defeat in the Gulf War, the KDP and PUK actually fought a civil war against each other from 1994 to 1998. As a result of this internal Kurdish fighting, there were two separate rump governments in Iraqi Kurdistan after 1994: the KDP's in Irbil and the PUK's in Sulaymaniya. Inevitably, the resulting instability and power vacuum drew in neighboring Turkey and Iran, among others such as the United States, Syria, and, of course, Iraq, since for reasons of state none of the powers wanted to see a Kurdish state established in northern Iraq.

The United States finally brokered a cease-fire by bringing Barzani and Talabany together in Washington in September 1998. The Kurds also began to receive 13 percent of the receipts from the oil Iraq was allowed to sell after 1995. Peace, relative prosperity, and democracy began to grow in the

de facto state of Kurdistan in northern Iraq. In October 2002, the reunified parliament of the de facto Kurdish state met for the first time since 1994 and declared that Iraqi Kurdistan would be a federal state in a post-Sad-dam-Hussein Iraq.

**** The 2003 War

On March 19, 2003, the United States finally launched a war against Iraq that quickly overthrew Saddam Hussein's regime. Establishing a stable new government has proven much more difficult. As Peter W. Galbraith recently explained: "The fundamental problem of Iraq is an absence of Iraqis" (Galbraith 2005: 242).[34] The interim constitution—known as the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL)[35]—promulgated on 8 March 2004 for a democratic federal Iraq proved only a temporary compromise given the majority Shiites' insistence on what they saw as their right to unfettered majority rule. Thus, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546 of 8 June 2004, which authorized Iraq's new interim government, failed even to mention the TAL and federalism as a solution for the Kurdish problem in Iraq. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the de facto Shiite leader and spokesman, in general felt that the TAL should not tie the hands of the Iraqi parliament elected on January 30, 2005 and specifically objected to Article 61(c) in the TAL which gave the Kurds an effective veto[36] over the final constitution which nevertheless provided for meaningful federalism and was adopted on October 15, 2005.

Many Arabs consider the Kurds traitors for having supported the United States in the 2003 War. On the other hand, many Kurds see the Arabs as chauvinistic nationalists who oppose Kurdish rights because they would end up detaching territory from the Arab world. The future of Iraq, of course, has become even more uncertain given the virulent insurgency against the interim Iraqi government and its U.S. ally.

Moreover, Turkey fears the demonstration effect on its own restless Kurds of any Kurdish entity on the Turkish border. Indeed, General Ilker Basbug, Turkey's deputy chief of staff, declared that "if there is a federal structure in Iraq on an ethnic basis, the future will be very difficult and bloody" (Williams

2004). Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan accused the Iraqi Kurds of “playing with fire” (“Turkey’s Growing Uneasiness over Kurds’ Federalist Asprirations” 2004) by trying to annex the oil-rich Kirkuk area to their prospective federal state. Turkish opposition to ethnic or multinational federalism in Iraq reflects its long-standing security fears that any decentralization there—especially in favor of the Kurds—will inevitably encourage the Kurds in Turkey to seek autonomy and eventually separation. Given the adoption of the Iraqi constitution in October 2005 and its institutionalization of federalism, however, Turkey has begrudgingly come to accept the existence of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

**** Will Federalism Work?

Iraq lacks a democratic tradition. For one to develop requires the existence of an implicit consensus on the legitimacy of the underlying order and trust on the part of the minority that the majority will not abuse its power. These, however, are the very ingredients that have “mostly been in pitifully short supply” in modern Iraq (Anderson and Stansfield 2004: 10). Moreover, federalism is a sophisticated division and sharing of powers between a central government and its constituent parts that would probably demand, as a prerequisite for its successful implementation, a democratic ethos. Trying to establish federalism in Iraq before that state is able to imbue a democratic tradition may be placing the cart before the horse.

**** Elections

A number of other problems face a prospective Kurdish federal state. Unofficial referenda held in February 2004 and again in January 2005 called almost unanimously for independence despite the opposition of the KDP and PUK leaders who argued that independence would not be practical.[37] In maintaining this position, Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabany ran the risk of losing control of the Kurdish “street” and thus their long-term grip on power. For the present, however, the two leaders seem secure in their positions.

In the immediate aftermath of the national elections held on January 30, 2005 for an interim parliament that then chose a new interim government and began to write a new permanent constitution for Iraq, the Kurds held the balance of power. To form the necessary two-thirds majority coalition government, the majority Shiite coalition had to accept the Kurdish demands for strong Kurdish rights in a democratic federal Iraq. These demands included one of the two main Kurdish leaders, Jalal Talabany, as the interim president of Iraq, while the Shiites gained the leading office of prime minister. Other Kurdish demands included the so-called Kurdish veto over approving or amending any future Iraqi constitution, the limited role of Islam, the rights of women, no Arab troops in Kurdistan, and Kirkuk, among others. The Kurds also decided that the other Kurdish leader, Massoud Barzani, would become president of the unified Kurdistan Regional Government. If these demands would not be met, the Kurds could simply wait until they were while maintaining their de facto independence. On paper, it seemed a win/win situation.

After a great deal of debate and against strong Sunni Arab opposition, the permanent constitution finally was concluded at the end of August 2005 and then approved by nearly 79 percent of those who voted in a referendum held on October 15, 2005. Sunni Arab opposition almost derailed the document, however, as the Sunnis achieved a two-thirds negative vote against the constitution in two governorates and fell just short of doing so in a third (Boudreaux 2005). As noted above, a two-thirds negative vote in any three governorates would have scuttled the constitution.

On December 15, 2005, elections were held to choose the first permanent post-Saddam-Hussein parliament and government. After a great deal of haggling, a Shiite Arab, Nouri al-Malki, finally emerged in May 2006 as the new prime minister, while Jalal Talabany was chosen as the largely ceremonial permanent president. Several other prominent Kurds also joined the new Iraqi government. Among others, Barham Salih was tabbed as one of the two deputy prime ministers and Hoshyar Zebari remained the foreign minister. The Kurdish role in Baghdad was a hedge against renewed Arab chauvinism.

On May 7, 2006, a supposedly unified Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) was chosen headed by Nechirvan Idris Barzani, the nephew of Massoud Barzani. It consisted of thirteen ministries headed by the KDP and fourteen by the PUK. Islamists held three ministries, while Turkmans and Assyrians were granted one each. The main problem with the new unified KRG was that four of its major ministries remained divided between the PUK and the KDP: Interior, Finance, Justice, and Peshmerga (Defense). Each portfolio had two ministers, one from the PUK and the other from the KDP. It remained to be seen how successful this mechanism would prove. Even more problematic would be the interrelationship between the KRG and the national government in Baghdad.

**** Kirkuk

Kirkuk is on the cusp where most of Iraq's Arab, Kurdish, and Turkmans ethnic factions and Sunni, Shiite, and Christian sectarian divisions meet. It also possesses incredibly large oil reserves. Thus, the Iraqi government and the Kurds have never been able to agree on whether Kirkuk should be included in a Kurdish autonomous region. The uncompromising position Barzani and Talabany seem to be taking on Kirkuk being part of Kurdistan is probably, at least in part, a result of their fear of losing control of the Kurdish "street," which considers Kirkuk to be the Kurdish "Jerusalem."

Kirkuk voted against Faisal becoming king of Iraq during the referendum of 1921. Turkey also claimed it until the League of Nations finally handed it over to Iraq as part of the former Ottoman vilayet of Mosul in 1926. Indeed, the 1957 census indicated that Kirkuk city (as distinguished from Kirkuk province or governorate) had a slightly larger Turkmans (39.8 percent) than Kurdish (35.1 percent) population. The Arabs (23.8 percent) constituted only the third largest group. The 1957 census, however, also showed that Kirkuk province had a Kurdish majority of 55 percent, while the Arabs numbered only 30.8 percent and the Turkmans 14.2 percent (Directorate of Population 1957).

During the 1960s and 1970s, Kirkuk was perhaps the most important point of disagreement between Mulla Mustafa Barzani (Massoud Barzani's legendary father who died in 1979) and the Iraqi government. Illustrating how strongly

he felt about the issue, the elder Barzani reputedly declared that even if a census showed that the Kurds were only a minority in Kirkuk, he would still claim it. Showing his ultimately poor judgment on the matter, Barzani also stated that he would allow the United States to exploit its rich oil fields if the United States would support him (Gunter 1992: 17, 28). Thus, the Iraqi government had reason to believe that—given the Kurdish links to the United States, Israel, and then pro-Western Iran—handing Kirkuk to the Kurds, in effect, would be giving it and its rich oil reserves back to the West.

Given its oil and geostrategic location, Kirkuk's Kurdish majority was diluted over the decades by Saddam Hussein's Arabization policies so that when Saddam Hussein fell from power in 2003, the city had roughly equal populations of Kurds, Arabs, and Turkmans, as well as a considerable number of Christians. Indeed, the census that had been taken in 1977 even showed that Kirkuk province had an Arab plurality of 44.41 percent, while the Kurds numbered 37.53 percent and the Turkmans 16.31 percent (Talabany 1999: 81). Saddam Hussein accomplished this demographic legerdemain by expelling and killing many Kurds, replacing them with Arab settlers, and gerrymandering the province's boundaries. The Iraqi government even officially renamed Kirkuk as Tamim (Nationalization), supposedly in honor of the nationalization of the oil fields in 1972.

In a theoretical victory for the Kurdish position, Article 58 of the TAL declared that "the Iraqi Transitional Government…shall act expeditiously to take measures to remedy the injustice caused by the previous regime's practices in altering the demographic character of certain regions, including Kirkuk, by deporting and expelling individuals from their places of residence, forcing migration in and out of the region, settling individuals alien to the region, depriving the inhabitants of work, and correcting nationality." Although tens of thousands of Kurds have returned to Kirkuk and filed claims for homes and property lost when they were expelled, as of August 2006, few claims have been settled. Indeed, in 2005, Jalal Talabany, then the interim president of Iraq, complained formally to Ibrahim Al-Jafari, the (Shiite) interim prime minister of Iraq, about the situation ("Talabany Accuses Al-Ja'fari of Assaulting the Kurds' Right" 2005). As for taking a census, the Kurds, of course, argued that one should only be taken after all the expelled Kurds have been allowed to return to Kirkuk and the Arab newcomers returned to their original homes. To summarily oust the new Arab population after it has

lived in Kirkuk for some 30 years, however, would simply create new injustices. In addition, what would it say about the future of Iraqi unity if most Iraqi Arabs were not allowed even to live in Kirkuk? Furthermore, the Turkish military has suggested that it would take it only 18 hours to reach Kirkuk if the Kurds insisted on tampering with the city's population to their own benefit and to the detriment of the Turkmans ("Military Issues Dire Warning on Iraq" 2004: 11).

In a partial victory for the Kurds, the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq authorized some 100,000 Kurds to return to Kirkuk and vote in the elections held on January 30, 2005. The result was a resounding Kurdish electoral victory in the Kirkuk municipal elections. Article 140 of the permanent constitution adopted on October 15, 2005 provided that a referendum to determine the final status of Kirkuk would be held by the end of 2007. Clearly, Kirkuk constitutes one of the main stumbling blocks in the effort to create a successful post-Saddam-Hussein Iraq, especially given the lack of any group manifesting a willingness to compromise on their maximal demands.

**** Independence?

Based on the above analysis, it would be very difficult for the Kurds to obtain the type of ethnic federalism that would satisfy their demands. Moreover, Iraq's lack of a democratic culture would make actual federalism very difficult to implement.

Therefore, if a federal Iraq proves impossible to construct, why not an independent Iraqi Kurdish state? What would be so sacred about the territorial integrity of a failed state like Iraq that was becoming increasingly unstable?[38] Indeed, within the past fifteen years, both the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia broke up into numerous new states. Earlier, Singapore split off from Malaysia, Bangladesh from Pakistan, and, more recently, Eritrea broke away from Ethiopia and East Timor from Indonesia. The United Nations also has in the past officially approved self-determination for the Palestinians[39] and black South African majority.[40]

Why do the Arabs so rightfully demand a state for the Palestinians, but so hypocritically deny one for the Iraqi Kurds? Why do the Turks demand self-determination for the Turkish Cypriots, but deny the same for the Iraqi Kurds? For the Kurds and their supporters, the current situation is neither fair nor logical. Indeed, a strong case can be made that the injustice done to the Kurds contributes to the instability in the Middle East.

The Iraqi Kurds, however, would be well advised to proceed with the consent of the United States, Turkey, and the other involved regional neighbors because without their consent an independent Iraqi Kurdistan would prove impossible to sustain for obvious geopolitical reasons. The first step to achieve this seemingly impossible task is for the Iraqi Kurds to be seen giving their all in trying to make a democratic federal Iraq work. If such an Iraq proves impossible to achieve, the Iraqi Kurds then would be seen as having the right, in the name of stability that also would benefit the United States, Turkey, and other neighboring states, to move towards independence.

At that point, the Iraqi Kurds must convince these states that in return for their support for Iraqi Kurdish independence, an independent Iraqi Kurdistan would not foment rebellion among the Kurds in neighboring states either directly or indirectly. These states' guarantee of an independent Iraqi Kurdish state would be a powerful incentive for the Iraqi Kurds to satisfy them on this point. Furthermore, the Iraqi Kurds must proceed in a manner that their neighbors including the Iraqi Arabs would perceive to be fair to them. This will probably mean compromise on the Kurdish demands for complete control of oil-rich Kirkuk.

In addition, the Iraqi Kurds should encourage Turkey's begrudging democratic reforms that will help lead to eventual Turkish membership in the EU and thus help solve the Kurdish problem in Turkey without secession, as discussed above. If Turkey joins the EU, its fears about an independent Iraqi Kurdish state gradually would most likely abate since EU membership would guarantee Turkish territorial integrity. Furthermore, once Turkey joins the EU, the influence of the Turkish military on political decisions regarding such issues as the Iraqi Kurds would diminish, a work already in progress as

Turkey’s candidacy proceeds. A more civilian-directed Turkish government within the EU would be less likely to fear an independent Iraqi Kurdish state. The late Turkish president Turgut Ozal’s imaginative initiatives towards the Kurds during the early 1990s illustrate that these arguments concerning Turkish-Kurdish cooperation are not divorced from reality.[41]

On the other hand, if Turkey were kept out of the EU, Turkey would be more likely to continue to view the Kurdish issue through traditional national security issues hostile to an independent Iraqi Kurdish state. Cast adrift from both the European Union and the United States, Turkey would be more likely to seek succor from Syria and Iran, both of which remain very hostile to any concept of an independent Iraqi Kurdish state. On July 19, 2005, for example, Turkish officials suggested at a meeting of the foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran, and Syria that the three states join forces to help eliminate the PKK forces sheltering on the Iraqi Kurdish-Iranian border given the U.S. and Iraqi Kurdish hesitancy to do so (Ridolfo 2005). The United States responded that such operations could have “unintended consequences” and denied that it had issued orders to capture PKK leaders sheltering in northern Iraq (Landler 2005).

*** Conclusion

Despite the seemingly endless conflicts of the past century, most Kurds in Turkey would probably still be satisfied with meaningful cultural rights and real democracy. In Iran and Syria—which space did not permit covering in this chapte—the lesser-developed Kurdish movements would also be more than pleased with such a result. In Iraq, on the other hand—due to the incredible incompetence of Saddam Hussein in calling forth the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2003 upon himself and thus the resulting institution of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in northern Ira—the Iraqi Kurds will probably be satisfied with nothing less than a federal solution in any post-Saddam-Hussein Iraq. If Iraq breaks up, Iraqi Kurdish independence may even result.

At the present time, however, Iraqi Kurdish independence and even more pan-Kurdish unity remain unlikely because all the neighboring states bitterly

oppose it as a threat to their own territorial integrity. The United States, although protecting the KRG with a no-fly zone until Saddam Hussein's removal from power in 2003, opposed independence for the Iraqi Kurds because of Turkey's attitude and the U.S. fear that Kurdish independence would destabilize the geostrategically important Middle East. Officially, both the United States and the Iraqi Kurds have accepted that the Kurds will remain as part of a post-Saddam-Hussein, democratic, and federal Iraq which will allow the Kurds to exercise a great deal of self-government. Given the current uncertain situation regarding the future of a post-Saddam-Hussein Iraq, however, the Kurdish situation there remains uncertain. What is certain, however, is the increasing importance of the Kurds for the future of regional Middle East and international politics.

{2} Portions of this chapter originally appeared in other articles I have published including "The Kurdish Question in Perspective," World Affairs 166 (Spring 2004): 197–205; and (with M. Hakan Yavuz) "The Continuing Crisis in Iraqi Kurdistan," Middle East Policy 12 (Spring 2005): 22–33.

[27] Possibly the two best studies of the Kurds in English remain van Bruinessen (1992) and McDowall (1996). More recently, see Romano (2006) and Natali (2005).

[28] For further discussions of the size of the Kurdish population, see McDowall (1996: 3–5); van Bruinessen (1992: 14–15); Izady (1992: 111–120). For a detailed analysis that lists considerably smaller figures for Turkey, see Mutlu (1996).

[29] On the Kurdish language, see Hassanpour (1992); Kreyenbroek (1992: 68–83).

[30] For a solid study of the Sheikh Said revolt, see Olson (1989).

[31] For a recent detailed analysis of the Kurdish problem in Turkey, see Ozcan (2006).

[32] For a meticulous analysis of the many problems involved, see Yildiz (2005) as well as the chapter in this collection by Nathalie Tocci.

[33] For recent detailed analysis of the Kurdish problem in Iraq, see Stansfield (2003).

[34] For Henry Kissinger's exact words, see "The CIA Report the President Doesn't Want You to Read" (1976: 70–92). This article contains the U.S. Congress House of Representatives Pike Committee Report, which investigated the CIA in the mid-1970s. The part dealing with the Kurds is entitled "Case 2: Arms Support," and appears on pp. 85 and 87–88. Many years later, Kissinger explained his position more thoroughly in Kissinger (1999: 576–596).

[35] In other words, given that Iraq has proven to be a failed state, its inhabitants simply reject further identification with it, identifying instead with their ethnic and/or sectarian groups. In addition to the series of articles in the O'Leary collection cited here, see Ahmed and Gunter (2005) for background analysis of the results of the 2003 War in Kurdistan in Iraq.

[36] For a copy of the TAL, see http://www.cpa-iraq.org/government/TAL.html.

[37] Article 61 (c) of the TAL—the so-called "Kurdish veto"—declared that "the general referendum will be successful and the draft constitution ratified if a majority of the voters in Iraq approve and if two-thirds of the voters in three or more governorates do not reject it." Since Iraqi Kurdistan consists of three governorates, this provision gave the Kurds an effective veto over the final constitution. Iraq's Sunni Arabs also came close to using it successfully to block approval of the permanent constitution in the referendum held on October 15, 2005.

[38] What Barzani and Talabany probably really meant was that to declare independence now would be premature.

[39] See, for example, Galbraith (2006) and Cockburn (2006).

[40] See, for example, U.N. General Assembly Resolutions 2672 C (XXV), in UN Chronicle, 1971, no. 1, 46; 3236 (XXIX), in UN Chronicle, 1974, no. 11, 36–74; and 33/23, in UN Chronicle, 1978, no. 11, 80.

[41] See, for example, U.N. General Assembly Resolutions 2396 (XXIII), in UN Chronicle, 1969, no. 1, 94; and 31/61, in UN Chronicle, 1976, no. 1, 79.

[42] For an analysis of Ozal’s initiatives, see Gunter (1997: 61–79).

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** 8. The Buddhist Purification Movement in Postcolonial South Korea: Restoring Clerical Celibacy and State Intervention

Pori Park

Korea was colonized by Japan from 1910 to 1945, during which Korean Buddhism was severely Japanized. As a result, Korean monasteries were reorganized according to the Japanese main monastery system, by which Buddhist clerics were bureaucratized and competed for the limited abbot positions. Most of them adopted the practices of Japanese Buddhism, wearing Western-style clothes, taking wives, eating meat, and drinking wine. Korean monks regarded cleric marriage, their having fewer regulations, and living in cities as a more convenient way for them to relate to and assist lay people, as compared to living in monasteries as celibate monks. Cleric marriages already had become prevalent when they were officially approved by the government in 1926.

However, after liberation, during the process of overcoming the long years of colonization, cleric marriage began to appear as an apparent product of Japanized Buddhism, and married clerics were thus deemed collaborators of the Japanese rule. The purging of married clerics from the Buddhist order instigated the most vicious and prolonged fights among South Korean Buddhists in their modern history. As a result of this conflict, present-day South Korean Buddhism is represented by the most influential and celibate Chogye (Jogye) order, the largest Buddhist denomination in numbers of clerics and the possession of traditional monasteries.

This targeting of married clerics, during the so-called “Purification Movement” (Ch nghwa undong), became the focal issue of de-colonization only after 1954, about ten years after liberation. Immediately following liberation, Korean Buddhists had to purge themselves of the remnants of colonialism, which included identifying and punishing the so-called traitors and eliminating the Japanese product of the “temple ordinance.” The ideological confrontation and political chaos immediately following liberation frustrated the initial effort of de-colonization of the Buddhist order. Korea was divided into two by the “liberating” forces of the Soviet Union and the United States, and the nation was soon engulfed in a civil war, lasting from 1950 to 1953.

The Purification Movement was thus the second attempt to purge the order. This time, however, the focus was confined to the issue of who was considered a cleric, and cleric marriage was regarded as a grave infringement of the irrevocable criteria for Buddhist clerics. Observing celibacy was thus regarded as the first and fundamental rule for being Buddhist clerics. Instigated by the first president, Yi Sŭngman (Syngman Rhee, president from 1948 to 1960), who abruptly ordered the married clerics’ resignation by labeling them “Japanized clerics,” the celibate clerics embarked on a campaign to get rid of married clerics. In declaring the holy “Dharma War,” they sought to restore the celibate tradition of the Sangha (monastic community), with the Vinaya rules re-instituted. In tandem, the celibate faction made wholesale accusations of married clerics being the very product of colonized Buddhism. I argue that this accusation skewed the entire issue of de-colonization and that the celibates used this rhetoric of de-colonization for their own cause, namely, the hegemonic assumption of the Sangha.

In the Purification Movement, one of a number of problems was the stark contrast in numbers between the celibate and the married monks. Married clerics were power holders of the Korean Sangha and numbered 7,000, while the celibate numbered only 600. This large difference in power and numbers had to be resolved by the celibates to attain the final victory. It would thus be easy to conjecture that the fight could not be imaginable without the external backup of the tate. Further, the forceful nature of the assault on the

married faction, provoked by the state, may well have heralded a long road of violent confrontations.

The celibates resorted to the government, and the government, in turn, sided with them in eliminating the powerful and resourceful married faction. In this chapter, I examine the process of the Purification Movement, in which the minority faction claimed the final victory, and analyze the state intervention as a major contributing element to the victory. I then discuss the ramifications of this dependence on the state and on violence, namely the Sangha's falling victim to the vicissitudes of politics and the continuation of the internal strife of the Sangha even up to the present day.

*** Initial Efforts toward De-Colonization

Soon after liberation, on August 19, 1945, the Korean Sangha began to cleanse the country of the effect of colonized practices. The Buddhist community voluntarily participated in the nationwide movement of de-colonization and rebuilding the nation through the rectifying of the colonial past. The central administration of the Sangha, headed by Yi Chong'uk, voluntarily resigned.[42] The interim administration, the Committee for the Preparation of Korean Buddhist Renovation (Chŏson Pulgyo hyŏksin chunbi wiwŏnhoe), was soon established by Kim Pŏmlin, Ch'oe Pŏmsul, and Hŏ Yŏp, who belonged to the right wing Youth Party for Korean Independence (Kŏnguk Ch'ŏngnyŏn-tang). This Committee held a nationwide conference of Buddhist clerics (Chŏn'guk sungryŏ taehoe) in September 1945. They decided to abolish the colonial products of the "temple ordinance" and its detailed regulations, as well as the main branch monastery system. Kim Pŏmlin was elected as the chair of the central office and Pak Hanyong, a renowned Dharma teacher, as Supreme Patriarch (Kyŏjŏng). The new administration passed the constitution of Korean Buddhism in March 1946 and changed the sectarian name to Chosŏn Pulgyo (Korean Buddhism) from Chogye-chong (Chogye Sect).

Despite these changes, however, the central administration was criticized for its lukewarm reform effort, particularly when dealing with the alleged pro-

Japanese traitors. The administration put deemed collaborators, such as Yi Chong’uk, on probation, yet most of the collaborators of the Japanese colonial government were covertly brought back into important positions of the order. Moreover, the abbots of the thirty main monasteries, who were active during the colonial rule, were not subject to investigation (Kang 2000: 85).

As a reaction to those actions, outside the administration, voluntary reform groups began to appear to address the situation differently. Buddhist clerics and lay people formed such organizations as the Korean Buddhist Youth League (Chosŏn Pulgyo Ch’ŏngnyŏn-tang), Alliance of Revolutionary Buddhists (Hyŏngmyŏng Pulgyodo Tongmaeng), Korean Buddhist Reform Association (Chosŏn Pulgyo Hyŏksinhoe), and Buddhist Women’s League (Pulgyo Yŏsŏng Tongmaeng). These groups insisted on a thorough purging of colonial Buddhism and, by extension, social reforms.

The tension between the administration and the reform groups grew into conflict. In December 1946, the reform organizations consolidated into the General League of Buddhist Reforms (Pulgyo hŏksin ch’ongyŏnmaeng). The League held a nationwide conference of Buddhists in May 1947 and established its own administration headquarters, Ch’ongbonwŏn, in repudiation of the central administration. This division of the Sangha lasted until early 1948.

The right-left polarization of the society, a consequence of the international Cold War ideology, also became a crucial element in the conflict of Korean Buddhists. The central administration accused the reform groups of being Socialist. The General League members supported land reforms, which would take land from the people without compensation and redistribute the land free of charge, as advocated by the left, while the central administration backed the notion of redistribution with compensation. Moreover, the League espoused the unification of the nation. When Kim Ku and Kim Kyusik, nationalist leaders of the South, went to P’yŏngyang in North Korea for the unification conference in April 1948, ten of the General League members accompanied them and remained in North Korea. A total of fifty-six of the

Buddhist leaders went north, which shows the seriousness of the ideological division of the Sangha (Kang 2000: 96).

As the United States military government (which governed from 1945 to 1948) increasingly favored the right wing and oppressed the left, the General League became obsolete, as did de-colonization issues. The military government did not abolish the temple ordinance, despite the demands of Korean Buddhists. To control the Japanese temples left in Korea, the military made use of the “temple ordinance,” instead of revoking it (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 171). As such, not much came of the cleansing of colonized Buddhism. Those who collaborated with the colonial government survived, and even the colonial temple ordinance remained intact, partly because of the ideological and political dissension of Korea.

The Korean peninsula was divided into North and South Koreas when the South Korean government was established in 1948 and the North Korean regime followed suit. While North Korea became a Communist nation, the issue of decolonization in South Korea had to wait until the second round of mobilization of Buddhists. This second time, however, was mobilized by a politician, not from within the Buddhist themselves, as had occurred before.

*** The “Purification Movement” and Political Intervention

As discussed above, the initial efforts of redressing colonized Buddhism were frustrated by the internal conflict among the conservative and progressive parties and international politics. After the Korean War, Buddhists in South Korea staged the Purification Movement to redo the early attempts of the decolonization of Korean Buddhism; and the minor faction of celibate clerics declared war against the majority, married faction, encouraged by the issuance of the presidential order.

President Yi Sŭngman, who served from 1948 to 1960, issued the first order on May 20, 1954, commanding that married clerics leave the Buddhist order. This had a great impact on both the married and celibate clerics, given the almost absolute power of the president in the fledgling democracy of Korea.

Yi not only ignited the fight, but also became the main force, throughout his presidency, behind the prolonged battle between these factions by repeatedly emitting presidential orders. Yi wanted to use the rhetoric of de-colonization to boost his weak political foundation and regarded the purging of the married monks as a way of pursing the colonial past. He also diverted people's attention from the unlawful revision of the constitution of the nation, in November 1954, to this unusual battle among monks, by igniting and fostering the fight. At the same time, he got rid of his political opponents, among which were some leaders of married monks (Kang 2000: 104–105).

With the political maneuvers, the married clerics became the main target of de-colonization, and the internal conflict was narrowed down to fights between the two factions. President Yi stated that his nation, which was in the process of restoring the freedom and independence of Korean people at the price of life, would not tolerate those who were pro-Japanese (the married clerics) and who did not care about the crisis of national sovereignty. He further insisted that everyone should cherish patriotism by abandoning Japanese customs and habits. He stated that those who were Buddhist clerics in a Japanese fashion should gradually return to lay life and help restore the sacred celibate tradition.[43]

All the married clerics were thus regarded as Japanese collaborators. The celibates literally incorporated this severe reductionism into their war against the violators of Buddhist precepts. The celibate clerics, who were mostly Sŏn meditation monks as opposed to doctrinal clerics, emerged as the leading group in this "purification" march. Being alienated by the powerful householders (married clerics) and losing retreat places for Sŏn practices, they had accumulated grievances against the power holders.

Taking advantage of the favorable social and political currents, the celibate clerics focused on religious justification for the restoration of celibacy of the Sangha. They accused the married clerics of neglecting their public duties for the Sangha, such as educating disciples and protecting the Sangha properties, due to their family responsibilities. The celibates regarded themselves as the legitimate heirs of the Buddha and thus argued that the places of the hosts (celibate clerics) and those of the guests (married ones)

were reversed. Yi Ch’ŏngdam (1902–1971), the de facto leader of the purification movement, saw the movement as a “dharma war”(pŏpchŏn) between right and evil. He saw the restoration of celibacy as equivalent to returning to the truth. He thus gave absolute value to this dharma war by saying that the truth was beyond the boundaries of time and space and not made by consensus among people (Pulgyo 1994). The observance of celibacy was thus a preparatory and mandatory step to being a Buddhist cleric.

In a defensive position, the married clerics argued that they practiced taejung Pulgyo (Buddhism for the general public) and modern Buddhism, while adapting to the conditions of the time. In fact, up until the eruption of the married/celibate conflict, the practice of taejung Pulgyo had topped the priority list of the Sangha. In other words, cleric marriage was a way to respond to the urgencies of the time, to facilitate interactions between the laity and the populace.

To comply with the imminent president’s order, the married faction convened a general meeting in June 1954, allotting fifty monasteries to the celibates and designating the Three Jewel Monasteries, the largest monasteries, for the celibates. The celibate leaders also convened in Seoul in August 1954 and held a conference of the celibates on September 27, 1954, during which they passed their version of the constitution of the Chogye Order. This constitution stated that married clerics should be removed from the cleric registry and instead be known as Dharma Protectors (hobŏpjung), who would only take care of the official duties of the order for the public. The celibates also decided that they would assume the power of the administration and that the married clerics would leave the monasteries within a span of ten years.[44] The married faction denounced those celibates’ decisions, stating that they could not be just Dharma Protectors and decided to establish a separate sect. Tension grew between the two and there were no compromises made by either side.

President Yi then issued a second order on November 4, 1954, and affirmed his position favoring the celibates. Encouraged by this second order, the celibates made a forceful entry into and occupied the headquarters temple T’aego-sa on November 5, 1954, and then hung out their own signboard of

Chogye-sa. On November 11, a bloody confrontation erupted as the married faction tried to retake the temple. The married did not concede to this coercive action without putting up a fight.

While this violent conflict had become deadlocked, the president issued a third order on November 19, 1954, and made it firm that the Japanized married monks should yield and resign gradually and that the Buddhists had to end the fight among themselves. If Buddhists did not concede, he threatened that the government would intervene and punish them, according to law.

Being obliged to this third order, the married faction convened at T'aego-sa, November 20–23, 1954, and decided that they would resign from central administration positions and abbot posts. The married faction then appointed the celibate monks, who belonged to their own camp, to major positions. Filling such positions with their own celibate monks was the strategy of the married faction to maintain their power, while fulfilling the presidential order and the demands of the opposite camp. The married clerics elected Im Sŏkjin, Chŏng Pongmo, Pak Pon'gong, Kim Sangho, and Kuk Mukt'aek. These celibate clerics were scholar monks, as opposed to Sŏn meditation monks in the other faction. From here, we can see another set of conflicts—meditation clerics versus doctrinal clerics.

These emergency measures, however, did not satisfy the celibate leadership. When the married faction handed over the official duties to the elected members on November 3, 1954, the celibate faction intervened in the process and demanded that the transition procedure should be open to the public. Physical fights among those involved followed the confrontation. Facing the tenacious resistance of the married camp, the celibates actively solicited government support. They held a conference on December 11–13, 1954, marched to Kyŏngmudae, the presidential residence, and protested the government's active involvement. On January 16, 1955, they again occupied T'aego-sa and retreated from there on January 21 due to police intervention.

With this impasse, the government directly intervened by mediating between the two factions. On February 4, 1955, the Minister of Education arranged a meeting among the ten delegates from both camps. As a result of this meeting, they agreed on the eight conditions of Buddhist clerics, such as shaving one’s hair, wearing monk robes, maintaining a single life, abstaining from meat and liquor, living in the monastic community, and being older than twenty-five years of age.[45] On May 18, 1955, in the room of the Minster of Education, delegates from both camps formed the Special Committee for Purification of Buddhism and decided to hold a nationwide abbot election. They would then report the election results to the Ministers of Education and the Interior by the end of June 1955.

This agreement, however, never materialized because of the resistance of the married clerics, who thought that these measures threatened their survival in the order. No further discussion took place, and the married faction still dominated the order. To protest the administrative delay of the government, 200 celibate clerics, representing Sŏn Hagwŏn in Seoul, a center temple for celibates, fasted for seven days (June 9–15, 1955). During this event, about 360 married clerics attacked the fasting celibates and injured about thirty of them (Han’guk 2002: 81).

At the beginning of the conflict, the celibates earned not only the support of the government, but also that of the general public because of their seemingly moral cause of liquidating the product of the colonial past, the married clerics. As the chaotic confrontation persisted, however, the general public became increasingly upset by the violent exchanges between the two factions and rebuked this battle as a fight over Buddhist property, which included 800 jŏngbo (approximately 1,960 acres) of forest, 700 jŏngbo (approximately 1,715 acres) of land, 900 temples, nine colleges, fifteen middle and high schools, and small and medium enterprises. The total annual income of the enterprises of the Buddhist order reached several million hwan (Korea’s currency introduced in 1953 at 1/60 U.S. dollar).[46] Choson Ilbo (Choson Daily) ridiculed the celibates for their heavy dependence on presidential orders and criticized the bloody fighting.[47]

As the violence continued, the National Assemly took matters into its own hands and interrogated the Ministers of Education and the Interior for their handing of the conflict. The Assembly raised the issue of the intervention of the government in Buddhist affairs as an infringement of freedom of religion. It also criticized the biased and illegal handling of the government ministers for following the presidential order mechanically, without thinking about the consequences. The Assembly members also asked about the counter plans of the government after driving the married monks out into the street. Apparently, the Assembly was more sympathetic to the married monks, who produced their own members in the Assembly, including Ch'oe Kaphwan and Kim Pŏmlin. Kim Tuhwan, a member of the Assembly, complained that he seemed to be the only one who supported the celibates. The Assembly finally recommended that the government not intervene in religious affairs and that, from then on, the Assembly would no longer discuss the matter.[48]

The day after the Assembly decisions, June 16, 1955, President Yi again issued a fourth order, commanding the married monks to surrender. In this action, one can see the conflict of interest between the administration and the Assembly. On July 5, 1955, the married faction acceded to forming the Special Committee. This committee met four times and then the talks broke off.

On August 2–3, 1955, the celibates convened without government permission. They passed a revised constitution and elected the Supreme Patriarch (Chongjŏng) and central posts. The next day, August 4, President Yi held a news briefing with reporters and again made his points clear that those clerics who were collaborators of the Japanese government should leave the order. He added that the married clerics were the ones who had attempted to become good citizens of the Japanese regime. Yi regarded cleric marriage as a way to please the colonial rulers. On August 5, the day following the news conference, Yi summoned the ministers and told them to resign their positions if they could not promptly resolve the Buddhist conflict.[49]

Encouraged by Yi's support and, this time, with the approval of the government, the celibates gathered at Chogye-sa on August 12 and passed the constitution of the Sangha. They elected fifty-six Sangha assembly

members and filled the administrative positions. The celibate faction filled all the ecclesiastical positions. Now, with the Conference of Buddhist Clerics and the passing of the constitution, the resignation of the married clerics could no longer be avoided. The celibates finally began to take over major monasteries. This process of seizing monasteries was difficult due to the resistance of those who operated them. With the help of police, the celibates forced the married clerics out. Those clerics and their families who were kicked out went to the street and became a social problem, not just a symbol of Buddhist strife.

By October 1955, the celibates had taken over from the married faction about 450 monasteries out of 1,000. For the remaining ones, they gave only the right of operation to those married clerics who agreed with the purification movement. In reality, however, these monasteries remained under the ownership of the married clerics, as the minority celibates simply did not have sufficient manpower to take over so many monasteries (Minjok Pulgyo Yŏon'guso 1986: 59). The celibates employed thugs and street boys for their fights and later transformed them into clerics, without much discretion or training. Despite all these inventions, they still could not operate many of these monasteries by themselves.

Under these circumstances, the married clerics resorted to the judicial system and began lawsuits. Additionally, they did not give up the operation of enterprises, schools, companies, or Buddhist foundations. The Sangha was engulfed in a succession of legal battles with the married faction. In June 1956, the married clerics won a victory in district court. The court announced that the constitution proclaimed by the celibates was not effective. In July 1956, the married also won their lawsuit against T'aego-sa. These judgments made the married clerics reassume the Sangha as well as the bloody battle. [50]

The celibate faction immediately appealed to a high court of justice and won their lawsuit on September 17, 1957. In addition, the district court had recalled its decision on the ownership of T'aego-sa in August 1956. Thus, the situation again was favorable for the celibates. The government's support of the celibates was the major force for this judicial victory. In the end, both the government and the judicial system protected the celibates.

With this litigation, both parties consumed the wealth and resources of the Sangha, but there were still more than seventy lawsuits in process over the ownership of temples. Many married clerics got divorced as a group in order to acquire single status and thus preserve their rights over their monasteries. [51] All in all, President Yi's repeated orders and determination for the causes of the celibates made possible the impossible battle against the powerful married faction. This reliance on the political power, in turn, led the Sangha to fall helplessly into the hands of politicians and the judicial systems.

*** Political Turmoil and Monastic Strife

The Korean Sangha further stumbled into the vicissitudes of politics. Yi Sŭngman's dictatorship was overthrown by student and popular protest in April 1960. With this popular upsurge and the loss of their major supporter, Yi Sŭngman, the situation changed for the worse for the celibates, and the Buddhist order again went through great upheaval. Now their fate was at the mercy of politics.

The cornered married faction took full advantage of the situation and began to reoccupy monasteries, while accusing the celibates of being both adherents of bureaucratic Buddhism (kwanje Pulgyo) and parasites of the corrupt regime (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 1996: 208). On April 27, 1960, married clerics attempted to retake Chogye-sa, and a bloody fight ensued. In May 1960, the married reassumed control of major monasteries, such as Haein-sa, Hwaŏm-sa, Sŏnam-sa, and T'ongdo-sa, as well as ten other monasteries (Minjok Pulgyo Yŏ'guso 1986: 60).

With the change in government, the judicial system also became unfavorable to the celibates. The Supreme Court sent the case back to the higher court, in which the married faction went against the efficacy of the decision of the Conference of Buddhist Clerics held in August 1955. This ruling frustrated the celibates, and seven celibate monks went to the Supreme Court and protested the decision by attempting to cut their abdomens with a knife.

Upon hearing about this incident, several hundred celibate clerics broke into the court, and 133 of them were arrested for illegal entry.

The case returned to the higher court and was still pending when the May 16, 1961 coup took place. Legal and physical fights over the ownership of temples erupted everywhere, and Buddhists were involved in seventy-five lawsuits during this period. Both factions further consumed temple property in litigation. Under these chaotic circumstances, some monks hid temple property for personal use and sold it before returning to lay life. Despite these events, the celibates were still in charge of the Sangha (Minjok Pulgyo Yŏn'guso 1986: 61).

The unstable second republic lasted only briefly, being toppled by a coup d'état staged by a faction of the military elite on May 16, 1961. After one year of tasting democracy, the Korean people again lost their political freedom, this time by military guns. The Buddhists' fate was again up in the air. A young general, Pak Chŏnghui (Park Chung Hee, who served as president from 1961 to 1979), rose in power and began to implement sweeping social reforms to make up for the lack of legitimacy of the coup. Under the exigent situation, not much freedom was left, even for the Buddhists, but it worked in favor of the celibates in the end. The Chogye order of the celibate faction decided to aid the military coup and end the purging of the Sangha. It handed a petition to the interim government, which asked for its assistance in completing the taking over of the order (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 217).

General Pak issued an order twice, urging Buddhists to reach a prompt agreement to end the social disturbance. Following the request of the military government, the Supreme Court ordered all seventy-five Buddhist lawsuits pending in court to stop. This command turned out to be in favor of the celibates because the court appeal had been the major means of winning lawsuits for the married faction.[52]

With the suggestion of the Department of Education, both parties formed the Committee of Rebuilding Buddhism in January 1962 (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 219–222). The Committee held four meetings

and prepared the foundation for a unified Sangha. It elected members and developed operational rules of the Emergency Sangha Assembly of Rebuilding (Chaegŏn pisang chonghoe). The Assembly members consisted of fifteen clerics from each faction, for a total of thirty. They confronted each other, however, on the issue of qualifications of clerics. The celibates insisted that Buddhist clerics had to be single, and the married faction emphasized that the married clerics also needed to be recognized as legitimate members of the Sangha.

Pushed by the government's request to end the conflict, both members had to abandon their disagreement and agree to adopt the constitution, leaving revision of the phrases of the constitution and the cleric qualification issues to the government. In response, the Department of Education announced that the married clerics would keep their vested rights and be treated as clerics only when they acted as clerics, meaning maintaining a single life. The married faction protested this interpretation, but the constitution was passed without the presence of the married ones.

Upon this action, the married faction rejected the efficacy of the passed constitution. To mediate the situation, the government again intervened. The Department of Education disbanded the Emergency Assembly and started a new Assembly with fifteen people, drawing five clerics each from both factions and five social leaders from outside the Sangha. The latter five members were all hand picked by the government and were sympathetic to the celibates, as was the government (Han'guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaes Yŏn'guhoe 2001: 327).

In this setting, the constitution was revised such that those who stayed alone without family at a temple were regarded as clerics. The previous constitution defined clerics as single people who stay at a temple (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 222–223). Due to government pressure, the married faction agreed to accept the revised constitution, although they still did not like it. On March 25, 1962, the Sangha finally passed the revised constitution. On April 11, 1962, the unified Sangha officially began. Both factions filled the administration. For example, the Supreme Patriarch was Hyobong sunim, ˇ from the celibate

camp, and the chair of the administration was Im Sokjin, ˘ from the married faction.

Immediately after the formation of the unified administration, in May 1962, the government announced the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property (Pulgyo chaesan kwalli pŏb). This provided the government with a means to supervise the operation of the Sangha in the appointment of abbots and the management of Buddhist property. The law functioned exactly like the temple ordinance of the Japanese regime. The celibates actively sought the government's supervision to protect their property from being lost by individual clerics and to acquire the government's sanction for their order (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 226).

The unified Sangha, however, soon faced another conflict regarding the ratio of the two factions among the numbers of the Assembly. The celibate faction outnumbered the married faction 32 to 18. The married faction wanted to be represented equally, yet its opinion was ignored. Further, the government backed the celibates in leading the Sangha (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 225).

The dejected married faction declared its separation and established its own administrative headquarters. Within less than a year after the unified Sangha started, Korean Buddhism again experienced dissension. The government and the general public did not support the separation. The married faction thus again turned to the judicial system. The Seoul district court announced victory for the married faction on October 4, 1962. The celibate administration made an immediate appeal to the higher court, and so the court battle resumed. By this time, approximately 90 percent of the Korean monasteries belonged to the celibate Chogye order. The court battles spread to local monasteries, fighting over the abbotship. In September 1965, the celibate order won the case at the higher court and was legally legitimized. Nevertheless, the local legal battles continued long after this victory (Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn 2001: 226).

Beginning in March 1965, the celibate order tried to win some married clerics over with such conditions as dropping the court appeals and following the

Sangha’s constitution and rules. With this conciliatory attitude, the Chogye order took more monasteries, which belonged to the married clerics, and let those ones known as hwadongpa take charge of some main and branch monasteries. In October 1969, the Supreme Court dropped the appeal of the married faction regarding the legitimacy of the celibate order. This final court decision facilitated further submission of the married clerics to the Sangha.

Those married clerics who rejected the compromise with the celibate order criticized those hwadongp’a clerics and declared their official separation from the celibates. Yet, they could not secure legitimate status due to the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property. This law allowed only one Sangha, that is, the celibate order as registered by Chogye order. To protect the few monasteries that belonged to them, the married faction decided to create a new denomination and registered as T’aego order in May 1970. The two administrations thus went their separate ways, and the long fierce battle officially ended after more than two decades. Nevertheless, the disputes over local monasteries continued long after this separation.

*** Conclusion

The celibates became the final victors in the battle over the hegemony of the Korean Sangha. From this strife, the Chogye order emerged as a celibate order. The determining force behind the triumph of the minor faction was the support of the government. The Purification Movement began with Yi Sŭngman’s issuance of an order against the married clerics. Throughout Yi’s rule, he showed consistent support to the celibates and offered legitimacy to them by identifying the married as “Japanized clerics.” His administration provided moral support and the police force in taking over the monasteries of the married.

Other major political aid came from Pak Chŏnghŭi, who rendered the final victory for the celibates, with the enactment of the Law for the Control of Buddhist Property. These two presidents, known as autocrats, favored the minor faction, possibly for political reasons. Yi ruled the nation for thirteen years and Pak for eighteen years. Yi provoked the fights against the married

clerics for political reasons, rather than for innocent religious ones, namely to restore the “purity” of the Sangha. He himself was a devout Christian and might well have wanted to distract people from politics to ensure his longevity as president. Similarly, Pak needed the people’s support for his military takeover. He regarded the purging of Buddhism as means for the betterment of society. Additionally, as a result of his active intervention, he took firm control of the Sangha.

Being disadvantaged by political force, the married clerics, in contrast, resorted to court decisions. Neither faction could reach a middle ground that could satisfy all. Because of this failure to reach internal consensus to end the conflict, the factions invited further political intervention. The political dependence, in turn, made the Buddhist situation vulnerable to political power. When the regime changed, the Buddhist fate was totally dependent on the action of the new political power. The battle lasted for over two decades and small disputes continued even longer. The fate of both factions depended on court decisions, which were influenced by political power. During the short-lived second republic, the defeated married faction had a chance to reclaim its ownership of temples. The emergence of the military regime, however, aggravated the political situation, but worked in favor of the celibates.

The celibates took advantage of the government’s political support and actively sought the necessary backup of the government. They risked their lives by forming a “martyr band” for the ultimate “cleansing” of the evil married clerics. By making cleric marriage the focal issue of de-colonization, they managed efficiently to galvanize their members for the cause. With this concentration of the restoration of monastic rules, however, they overlooked investigating the broader issues of de-colonization, such as probing the religion’s independence from political intervention, reassessing Buddhists’ relationships with the colonial regime, and reinventing ways to restore the sense of community after enduring the common plights of colonialism. Instead, Buddhist clerics planted a seed of distrust and confusion by distorting the real issues of de-colonization and handed down the legacy of violence and unreasonableness. Further, under the name of restoration of the Sangha’s original purity, the celibates denied their own past, that is, all the accomplishments of the Sangha during the colonial era, including the human resource.

Moreover, the celibate faction only focused on the goal of re-instituting celibacy, neglecting the means for attaining it. After the Purification Movement, the Sangha was crowded with unqualified clerics, who were hastily made into clerics by the celibate faction, and divorced clerics, who still hid their wives and children outside temples. The forceful and arbitrary nature of overturning the membership led to the potential conflicts that had heretofore exploded. The Sangha came to consist of the original celibate leaders, conciliatory clerics from the married faction, divorced ones, and those who were added without adequate procedures. All of them were soon consolidated into their own dharma families. After the Purification Movement, the Sangha had been plagued with hegemonic strife among the different dharma families. They repeated the same strategies of their forefathers, who fought for the celibacy, namely, the use of violence through resorting to collective power and the dependence on the political and judicial system, rather than resolving the conflict among themselves.

Overall, the Purification Movement resulted in victory for the celibates. In the beginning, the battle was an impossible task for the minority celibates. Their commitment and dedication to the cause was admirable, and they were applauded for creating the space and environment that were conducive to the Buddhist disciplines for generations to come. They had to pay a price, however, for their close relationship with the government. The Chogye order was under heavy political control and was not able to independently operate the Sangha. In addition, the Sangha earned the name of Bureaucratic Buddhism (kwanje Pulgyo) and was scorned by the public. The government mobilized the Buddhists for the election of presidents and Assembly members. The order also was accused of providing political funds for the leading political party (Kang 2000: 107). All those political engagements have been recently criticized by younger generations of Korean Buddhists, who have earned the name of minjung Pulgyo (Buddhism for the masses). This is an area for future investigation.

[43] For Korean Buddhism from 1945 to 1950, see the following articles: Kang and Pak (2000: 82–99); Kim (2001: 76–83); and Taehan Pulgyo Chogyejong Kyoyukwŏn (ed.) (2001: 157–174).

[44] Choson Daily, November 6, 1954; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 187).

[45] Choson Daily, November 28, 1954; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 190).

[46] Tonga Daily, February 6, 1955; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 204).

[47] Tonga Daily, January 18, 1955; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 199).

[48] Choson Daily, November 22, 1954, November 28, 1954; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 188, 190).

[49] Choson Daily, June 16, 1955; Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 221).

[50] Tonga Daily, August 13, 1955; Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 245).

[51] Tonga Daily, July 30, 1956; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 257).

[52] Kyonghyang Daily, July 28, 1955; cited in Han’guk Pukgyo Kunhyŏndaesa Yŏn’guhoe (ed.) (1995: 236–237). ˘

[53] Tonga Daily, October 22, 1961, cited in Kim (2000: 409).

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* Part III: Problematic-National Identities

** 9. From Expressive to Actionable Hatred: Ethnic Divisions and Riots in Macedonia{3}

Robert Hislope

<quote>

In other places, there is no gap between real prejudice and the readiness to act on that prejudice. Here the gap is very big, and in this gap is where politics is found.

<right>

—Ljubomir Frckovski (2000)

</right>

</quote>

This chapter focuses on the role of ethnic animosities in generating conflict. I argue that interethnic antipathies are real, critical factors that often accurately characterize multi-ethnic societies. Thus, I take issue with the trendy “con-structivist” and “instrumentalist” positions adopted by many scholars today, which not only denies a causal role for emotional factors like hatred, but also brings a hermeneutics of suspicion to the concept of ethnicity itself. To many constructivists/instrumentalists, ethnicity is an epiphenomenon having no basis in reality. In the case under investigation in this study--the Republic of Macedonia--this position is without empirical

support. The opposite error is advanced by the doctrine of primordialism, which frames ethnic animosities as ancient in origin and incapable of being extinguished once ignited. Constructivist and instrumentalist thinkers have offered sharp and convincing criticisms of the “ancient animosities thesis,” but this does not mean they have offered a compelling alternative.

In contrast to the extremes of primordialism and constructivism/instrumentalism, I offer an argument that contains two parts: (1) in some societies, ethnic hatreds are quite palpable and do shape the pattern of political dynamics; but (2) such hatreds are insufficient to spark violence. Ljubomir Frckovski, former Macedonian interior minister, foreign minister, and joint author of the 1991 Macedonian Constitution, notes that it is one thing to express hatred or resentment, and quite another to act on this disposition.[53] Therefore, a major component of this chapter is to specify exactly what types of factors bridge “the gap” between expressive hatred and actionable hatred, and what types of factors and conditions make that gap wider.

Macedonia is the test case for these propositions. After achieving independence in 1991, post-communist Macedonian and Albanian elites never had to convince their respective communities to dislike each other, because interethnic animosity is part of the social fabric. This point will be elaborated upon below. The intriguing story, however, behind the evidence of widespread interethnic antipathies, is the fact that Macedonia remained relatively peaceful for the first decade of its independence, which suggests that primordial-like societies (hard ethnic boundaries, interethnic animosities, ethnic distance) are not inherently prone to implosion.

War did eventually come to Macedonia in 2001 in the form of an external, spillover effect from the fighting in Kosovo and southern Serbia (Hislope 2003; Vankovska 2003; Liotta and Jebb 2004). But this was certainly a low-scale conflict with a small death toll (Balalovska, Silj, and Zucconi 2002; Rusi 2001)[54] and was successfully mitigated within six months by international diplomatic intervention. The interesting element about the conflict—for the purposes of this discussion—is that it spawned two episodes of ethnic rioting in the southern town of Bitola. In section three of this chapter, I analyze the riots in Bitola, and contrast them with the relatively peaceful conditions in

the northern Macedonian town of Kumanovo. The major difference between the two cases is this: in Bitola, the anger and grievances of the Macedonian community spilled over into direct action as it was in a state of mourning over the death of several young, local soldiers who were killed by Albanian guerrillas on the war front. Interethnic animosities are a crucial element in the riots, for without the community-level anger and grief it is difficult to imagine how the riots could have been triggered. But by the same token, it took the encouragement of local elites and institutions to transpose expressive hatred into actionable hatred. In contrast, local Macedonian and Albanian elites in Kumanovo successfully worked over time to ensure that latent animosities would remain just that, latent.

Thus, the important findings of this study are: (1) contra the constructivists and instrumentalists, there indeed are ethnically divided societies that harbor ample reserves of hatred for the ethnic “other”; but (2) contra the primordialists, the translation of emotion into action requires facilitating factors. Hate alone—as well as the mere existence of ethnic differences—is not enough. Following Donald Horowitz’s work, The Deadly Ethnic Riot (2001), I argue that actionable hatred requires a precipitating event that represents a perceived injury and injustice to a community. Traumatizing events galvanize a community’s consciousness and serve to rationalize mob retaliation. In the wake of a precipitating event, preexisting animosities work to inform and inflame the moral outrage a community experiences, and they function to pre-select the target of violence. This is not to say that institutions (such as the media and the police) and nationalist elites have no role to play in the causal equation. On the contrary, they are often indispensable in the facilitation of riots. However, as Horowitz notes, “organization cannot lead where sentiment will not go” (Horowitz 2001: 230). In this way, interethnic hostilities are causally prior and empirically distinct from organizational vehicles and elite interests. The bulk of the chapter is dedicated to demonstrating these propositions.

*** Theoretical Polemics and Propositions

Primordialism, instrumentalism, and constructivism offer distinct conceptualizations of politically organized ethnicity. Primordialists argue that ethnicity is a basic form of human identity that creates a natural fault line for

politicization. Ethnicity is deeper and more totalizing than other types of identities, such as class, they argue. Whereas class barriers can be breached, ethnic identity is “inherited and inescapable.”[55] The intense emotional pull of ethnic attachments encourages in-group amity and out-group enmity. Instrumentalism and constructivism, in contrast, frame ethnic identities as fluid, contingent, and malleable. For instrumentalists, a rational actor assumption replaces the irrational affect of primordialism. From this vantage point, one pathway to conflict is an elite-centered model of calculating nationalists who convince their co-ethnics to engage in collective action (Snyder 2000; Oberschall 2000). Another is the micro-level rationality of individuals who find their self-interests served in nationalist causes (Hechter 1995; Bates 1974). Either way, instrumentalism treats ethnicity as simply one of many social vehicles by which self-interested humans pursue power, wealth, and prestige. Constructivists, for their part, place a special emphasis on the manufacturing of ethnicity. They are reluctant to assign an ontological status to ethnicity because they argue that ethnic identities are constructed rather than a natural feature of the human condition. In other words, the master key to unlock ethnicity is not found in group characteristics or culture or shared historical experiences, but rather in the deconstruction of an ethnic-engendering discourse (Brubaker and Laitin 1998; Fearon and Laitin 2000). In this way (and to paraphrase Simone De Beauvoir), ethnic groups are not born, but made.

The popularity of these theories changed over time. When the ethnic wars began to unfold in the early 1990s, many Western journalists and politicians spoke of the resurgence of “ancient animosities.” The removal of the communist apparatus of repression allowed the resurfacing of historically forged, irreconcilable antipathies, so it was reasoned. Many scholars complained that primordialism worked against third-party efforts to resolve ethnic problems (Gagnon 2004; Kumar 1997). Why spend resources to make peace when ethnic communities are implacably committed to war? In reaction, instrumentalist and constructivist explanations were articulated that centered on a variety of social forces, such as elite manipulation, economic hardship, state weakness, gangsterism, the rational opportunism of local actors, and the policy debacles of the international community (to name just a few) (Mueller 2000; Woodward 1995; Beissinger 1998). In the marketplace of ideas, primordialism was reduced to a reactionary, simplistic dogma of ancient hatreds and, thereby, “came upon bad times” (Motyl 1999: 83).

However, constructivists and instrumentalists often produce conclusions just as absurd as the straw man constructed from primordialism. In fact, I argue that the major error of the moment is found not in primordialism, but in the opposite direction, as too many scholars, in the attempt to avoid essentialist fallacies, downplay the role of history and culture in the post-communist ethnic wars.[56] For example, in a recent work on Serbia and Croatia, V. P. Gagnon argues that the Yugoslav wars of succession were misidentified as a case of “ethnic war”; hence, the title of his book, The Myth of Ethnic War (Gagnon 2004, my emphasis). In his preface, Gagnon states, “my work seeks to problematize not just the primordial or essentialist views of the Yugoslav conflict…[but to question] the essentialized understanding of ‘ethnic groups’ as political actors.” Apparently, the category of ethnic groups is so suspicious (and politically incorrect?)[57] that Gagnon is compelled to enclose the concept within quotation marks! This does a great disservice to the facts of the case.

For if we consider the politically significant[58] parties of Croatia, Serbia, and Bosnia in the 1990s, we will find not a single “civic” oriented party that won national elections and was able to form a government. Instead, each republic produced and voted for ethnic parties whose membership was overwhelmingly ethnically homogeneous and whose rhetoric extolled the interests of the ethnic group in question. Furthermore, each ethnic party staked out a policy platform that one would predict given the size of its community-as-constituency and political status. Hence, Milosevic’s Socialist Party of Serbia advocated a recentralization of Yugoslavia which, based on an ethnic calculus, makes perfect sense given the scattered nature of Serb communities throughout Yugoslavia. For similar reasons, Alija Izetbegovic of the Party of Democratic Action in Bosnia advocated a unitary-majoritarian approach,[59] which would directly benefit Muslims as the largest single group in Bosnia, while Radovan Karadzic of the Serbian Democratic Party of Bosnia and the various leaders of the Croatian Democratic Community in Bosnia argued for cantonization and later secession and incorporation into Serbia and Croatia, respectively. If there is no such thing as an ethnic group, and therefore no explanatory utility for the construct ethnic politics, as Gagnon and others suggest, then how come it is rare to find parties representing majority ethnic groups to demand consensus or consocia-tional-based institutions and rules, and equally rare to find parties representing

minority ethnic groups to press for a centralized state and majoritarian rules of decision making?

The central mistake that constructivists and instrumentalists make when rejecting a sui generis role for ethnic politics is to treat any deviation from totalizing ethnic identities and loyalties as proof that ethnicity is an empty concept.[60] But this is demanding too much, as well as bearing a close resemblance to the fallacy of the false dilemma. If such all-or-nothing standards were imposed on other constructs in the social sciences, then it is questionable whether a single usable concept would be left. For example, should we enclose the construct of class conflict within quotation marks simply because it is rare to find historical cases of the proletarian class unanimously and uniformly mobilizing to fight capital? Similarly, should the concept of gender politics be jettisoned because many men are feminists, and many women are not?

Constructivists muddy the waters in another way, and that is by failing to make clear whether their deconstructions render ethnicity epistemologically problematic or ontologically false (Hacking 1999: 6, 24–31).[61] If the concept of ethnicity involves epistemological difficulties, then it is hardly different than any other concept (such as elite, power, class, or culture) in the social sciences. But if ethnicity is actually an ontological phantom, then constructivists find themselves making an implicit and inadvertent elitist claim that the ethnic identifiers they study have false consciousness.

The question now becomes relevant as to how one identifies a case that may be properly labeled as ethnically divided. In political terms, ethnic divisions are largely inconsequential if there are no political parties to organize and express ethnic interests. And one can distinguish an ethnic party, following Kanchan Chandra, as encapsulating the dimensions of ascription, exclusion, and centrality: “The categories that such a party mobilizes are defined according to ascriptive characteristics; the mobilization of the ‘insider’ ethnic categories is always accompanied by the exclusion of ethnic ‘outsiders’; and, while the party may also highlight other issues, the championing of the cause of an ethnic category or categories is central to its mobilizing efforts” (Chandra 2004: 3). In other words, we know an ethnic party when we see one if the party’s social base is overwhelmingly based on a single ethnic

group and if its policy platform champions that ethnic group's interest. Ethnically divided societies, therefore, are determined by the fact that all (or most all) politically significant parties are ethnic based.

None of these characteristics of ethnic parties or ethnically divided societies precludes intra-ethnic party competition (Hislope 1996; Rabushka and Shepsle 1972), intra-ethnic violence, interethnic trade and commerce (whether legal or illegal) (Hislope 2002; Andreas 2004), oscillations of ethnic salience in a polity, or the commingling of non-ethnic causes and forces (like economics, elites, electoral rules, institutions, etc.) with ethnic factors in the production of social and political outcomes. When instrumentalist thinkers argue that ethnic conflict is a "myth" because in most cases ethnically organized actors pursue goods like land, resources, and power (as opposed to pure cultural goals) (Bowen 1996), one must ask what it is about land, resources, and power that negates the category of ethnicity. What better way is there for a politically organized ethnic group to gain both affective self-satisfaction and instrumental gain over its adversarial "other" than for it to accumulate land, resources, and power?

Fortunately, many scholars have moved beyond the theoretical straightjackets imposed by primordialism, instrumentalism, and constructivism. Donald Horowitz, for example, is often categorized as a primordialist, but his scholarship actually borrows and combines elements from several theoretical perspectives. In his classic work, Ethnic Groups in Conflict (1985), he argues that the motor forces of ethnopolitics in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean are located in unranked political systems where ethnic status is insecure and groups compete for recognition. At the same time, a good deal of his study is focused on regional economic position, electoral and institutional incentives, and the "utility of ethnic affiliations" (Horowitz 1985: 74–83, 233–262). Eller and Coughlan correctly point out that "Horowitz comes down somewhere in between, suggesting that there is a continuum in the ways in which people organize and categorize themselves, such that the affective and the instrumental would be viewed as poles rather than opposites" (Eller and Coughlan 1993).

Horowitz's most recent work, The Deadly Ethnic Riot, is a comprehensive anatomy of the forms and patterns of ethnic riots in the

developing world. He finds that extant hostilities are indispensable factors in the generation of the ethnic riot. To be sure, traditional antipathy is not a “guarantee” that two groups will fight each other (2001: 160), as other factors need to be present for the transposition from attitude to behavior. Those conditions include, among other things, widespread popular support for the violence, a sympathetic or passive police force, the role of rumor, and the causal power of a precipitating event. Precipitating events are comparable to what game theorists call the tipping point (Laitin 1995; Kuran 1991), as they bridge the gap between expressive and actionable hatred. Rumors of an ethnically motivated murder or rape are sufficient to spark a visceral reaction in a community, and serve to both indict the community to which the perpetrators belong and to validate traditional prejudices, fears, resentments, and antagonisms. In this way, knowledge of antipathies leads to knowledge of targets (Horowitz 2001:198).

Let us now consider the structure of ethnic cleavages and perceptions in Macedonia.

*** Portrait of an Ethnically Divided Society

Macedonia is the very exemplar of an ethnically divided society. The two principal ethnic groups, ethnic Macedonians (64.18 percent, or 1,297,981) and ethnic Albanians (25.17 percent, or 509, 083) fracture on just about every key trait of group identity: culture, language, religion, and family structure. Apart from this central bipolar division, Macedonia contains a potpourri of ethnic groups from the region, including Turks (77,959; 3.85 percent), Roma (53,879; 2.66 percent) Serbs (35, 939; 1.78 percent), Vlachs (9,695; 0.48 percent), Bosniaks (17,108; 0.84 percent), and “others” (20, 993; 1.04 percent) (State Statistical Office 2003).

On top of Macedonia’s ethnic diversity and cultural distance is a whole layer of mutual frustrations and antipathies. Ten years of post-communist politics witnessed considerable tension over cultural issues like flags, language, and education. A casual racism permeates Macedonian society. On the Macedonian side, racism shows up in the endlessly cruel jokes about Shiptari (derogatory term for Albanians), in the traditional

media associations of Albanians with criminals and terrorists, and in contempt for Albanian cultural traditions. Essentially, Macedonians express a cultural hierarchy in which they are portrayed as “advanced” and Albanians as “backwards” (Horowitz 1985: 166–171). Albanians who are more modernized and open to friendship with Macedonians are typically referred to as Albanci. In this case, the term Shiptari is reserved for imagined migrants from Kosovo, villagers, and criminals. Albanians draw similar distinctions. Macedonians who are accepted by Albanians are said to be “like an Albanian.” This delineates decent Macedonians from those who are nationalistic and chauvinistic (Naegele 2001a).

Polling data confirm Macedonia’s deep divisions.[62] One of the most graphic manifestations of this is what I term the “see-saw” character of public opinion. If Albanians see black, Macedonians surely see white. This can be seen across many different issue dimensions. Table 9.1 expresses this phenomenon well.

Table 9.1 Rights for Ethnic Albanians in Macedonia.

| “Recently, various politicians have suggested amending the constitution of Macedonia, mostly to make political structures more representative of Macedonia’s various ethnic groups. For each of these following amendments, please tell me whether you would support or oppose.” |

| | | **Macedonians** | **Albanians** |

| Creating a vice-presidency, which would be held by an ethnic Albanian | support | 5 | 93% |

| oppose | 93 | 3 |

| Legalizing universities which teach using minority languages | support | 2 | 82 |

| oppose | 96 | 14 |

| Giving the Albanian language legal status equal to that of the Macedonian language for official contracts and business, such as in courts and in the parliament | | | |

| support | — | 93 |

| oppose | 98 | 4 |

| | | | |

| Giving greater authority to municipal governments | support | 24 | 91 |

| oppose | 74 | 3 |

Macedonian and Albanian views on minority rights are diametrically opposed. The Macedonian community was overwhelmingly against granting the kinds of rights Albanians were nearly uniformly demanding. This same pattern of positions on ethnic rights was replicated in surveys conducted by the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) in June and October of 2000. When the focus shifts from internal Macedonian politics to security issues in the Balkan region, the ethnic divide is preserved. Thus, Macedonians cited Kosovo (81.6 percent) and Albania (45.4 percent) as the two most serious regional threats to the state of Macedonia. Albanians, in contrast, chose Serbia (75.5 percent) and Montenegro (33.6 percent) as the principal destabilizing forces in the region.

Both groups traditionally have a low opinion of the other. For example, in a 1998 U.S. State Department survey, 77 percent of the Macedonian respondents held an unfavorable view of Albanians. Among Albanians, 43 percent indicated an unfavorable view of Macedonians. Interestingly, negative views of the other do not preclude market transactions. Survey data as well as personal testimony suggest that private business contacts between the two communities are largely unhindered by ethnic prejudice. [63]

Making money is one thing, making love is quite another. Albanians and Macedonians are psychologically unprepared to accept intermarriage between their two communities. Seventy-six percent of those polled by the UNDP in 2001 agreed with the statement “most citizens of Macedonia are not ready to marry outside their ethnic group.” In sum, there is very little evidence of affective and dense social networks between Albanians and Macedonians. In fact, both before and after the 2001 conflict a trend towards the ethnicization of public space was evident in both Skopje and Tetovo (the

center of Albanian political life) (Petruseva 2001a; Borden 2001; Pritchard 2001; Icevska 2001). As the journalist Kim Mehmeti bemoaned in 1992, “we have lived together for more than four decades, but only side by side, without feeling any need to know each other better and to become closer to each other.…It would have been sufficient if each Albanian in Macedonia had just two or three Macedonian friends, or if two or three Macedonians had one common Albanian friend. This might have maintained some degree of normal communication between those who happened to share the same place and the same fate” (Mehmeti 1992: 12).

In the next section, two ethnically divided cities in Macedonia are compared, one which experienced ethnic rioting during the course of the 2001 conflict, and one which did not. The objective of this section is to determine how expressive antipathies became actionable.

*** A Tale of Two Cities: Kumanovo and Bitola

The region of Kumanovo, northeast of Skopje, was an important recruiting center for the Albanian insurrectionary group the National Liberation Army (NLA) in the 2001 conflict, and was the site of a second front that opened in early May of that year. Despite its proximity to the theater of war, the inhabitants of Kumanovo avoided a direct confrontation. On the opposite, southern, side of the country is the town of Bitola. Two episodes of ethnic rioting occurred there, one in late April/early May, and the other in early June. These two contrasting cases offer important insights into the nature of the relationship between ethnic animosities and violence.

**** Kumanovo

Constituting the second largest urban enclave in Macedonia (behind Skopje), Kumanovo lies twenty miles northeast of the capital. Situated in Skopje’s Black Mountain (Skopska Crna Gora) range, Kumanovo sits on a traditional crossroad that links Skopje, Nis (Serbia), and Sofia. It is also the beginning of an arc of Albanian-populated areas that, moving westward and then southward, ring Macedonia’s borders with southern Serbia, Kosovo, and

Albania. The city of Kumanovo is multi-ethnic, with sizable communities of Serbs (9,035; 8.75 percent) and Roma (4,256; 4.12 percent) adding to the Macedonian-Albanian mosaic. The town itself has over 100,000 inhabitants. Albanians comprise 26 percent of that number. However, if we consider the surrounding villages and countryside dwellings, of which many are nearly 100 percent Albanian, the Albanian population reaches 37 percent of the total (State Statistical Office 2003; UNDP, Territorial Division).

The Albanians of the Kumanovo district have several grievances, which made them a fertile recruitment base for the NLA. Most notably, inhabitants of the border villages with southern Serbia were never issued citizenship documents. During Yugoslavia's existence, the border zones between republics, particularly in these mountainous terrains, were never defined or carefully monitored. Albanians could thus reasonably wonder, that with the fracturing of Yugoslavia along republican lines, to which future state they belonged. The Macedonian state, permanently paranoid about the illegal (i.e., unwanted) influx of Albanians from Kosovo, demanded from these villagers documentation of their residence in Macedonia during the communist period, documents which the villagers, due to their remote location and the institutional ineffectiveness of the Macedonian bureaucracy, never received. In this way, ten years of "democracy" passed in Macedonia with scores and scores of border Albanians disenfranchised (Naegele 2001e; Balalovska 2002: 26).

It was among such disaffected people that the NLA found a ready-base for mobilization. The rural areas in the district, such as Lipkovo, were believed to be locations for NLA military training and exercises. NLA fighters even declared "liberated zones" in the Lipkovo area in May. Much of these rural areas lie adjacent to the Presevo Valley, where Albanian guerrillas of southern Serbia conducted an unsuccessful bid for secession from Serbia in 2000. Moreover, many Kumanovo Albanians eagerly joined the Kosovo Liberation Army in 1999 and gained valuable combat experience (Naegele 2001f; Ordanoski 2001; Latifi 2001a). This whole cross-border region, therefore, is a stronghold of pan-Albanian nationalism and paramilitary networks.

The town of Kumanovo, too, has long been a delicate interethnic mixture. The Second World War opened in Macedonia in Kumanovo, and relations among the various communities were stained by that experience. Ethnic rivalry has often spilled into nationalist quarrels and fights. According to the analyst Nexhat Aqifi, “inter-ethnic relations have long been Kumanovo’s biggest challenge. The town has always been tense, with Serbs and ethnic Macedonians often in conflict with Albanians” (Aqifi 2001). When fighting came to this area in early May, many feared the city would become a “second Vukovar.” Indeed, one could say that deteriorating conditions in the countryside made the outbreak of violence in the city a safe bet. The most intense fighting of the war occurred in the Kumanovo countryside. Many villages were heavily shelled, and there are widespread, credible reports of Albanian villagers being severely abused by the police (Steele 2001). Furthermore, the NLA cut off the water supply to the city between June 6 and June 14, and Albanian villagers flocked to Kumanovo in search of refuge once the shelling began (Petruseva 2001b). All of this caused obvious hardship and tensions.

Nonetheless, the city did not implode. Credit is due to the town’s mayor, Slobodan Kovacevski, and Albanian local leaders, all of whom worked tirelessly to ensure confidence and to maintain open, honest communication channels. Kovacevski regularly contacted all the local mayors in the district and urged them to calm the population and promote peaceful relations. He asked local party leaders to refrain from protest rallies, he convinced the police to stop wearing facial masks during patrols, and he ensured that NGO relief convoys could reach besieged villages. Feriz Dervishi, the Albanian chair of Kumanovo’s interethnic commission, sums up the contribution of the mayor in the following way: “Thanks to the actions since 15 March of Mayor Slobodan Kovacevski, we have succeeded in ensuring that interethnic relations in Kumanovo have not been damaged, even though the situation has escalated in the Lipkovo villages. Kumanovo has remained relatively calm and interethnic relations have not been violated” (Naegele 2001d; Latifi 2001; Ford 2001). In this respect, therefore, one can conclude that the concerted efforts of capable elites were sufficient to dampen otherwise high-conflict conditions for violence.

**** Bitola

The city of Bitola, which lies in the southwestern part of the country, is about 105 miles from Skopje. Macedonian citizens perpetrated two rounds of anti-Albanian rioting in 2001. The first episode began the evening of April 30 and continued until the evening of May 1. The second riot occurred on June 6 and lasted for four hours. In the first event, a few hundred rioters burned and looted fifty-nine shops and businesses and ten kiosks. In the second, at least 1,000 Macedonians (some estimates reach 3,000) gathered to destroy fifty Albanian and Turkish (or, more generally, Muslim) shops, twenty homes, and one mosque. Some Muslims were beaten. Anti-Albanian graffiti was spray-painted on building after building, most of it calling for “Death to the Shiptars,” “Pure Bitola,” and “Get Out Albanians.”[64] Speaking in the aftermath of the May disturbance, the Albanian leader Arben Xhaferi decried it as the equivalent of “Kristallnacht” (Human Rights Watch 2001; Naegele 2001b, f).

There are five separate threads that weave together the rioting of May and June: (1) the source of Macedonian outrage, (2) the role played by relatives of the deceased, (3) the irresponsibility of the media and the use of rumor, (4) the passivity of the police, and (5) the encouragement of elites. The precipitating events for both riots occurred not in Bitola, but in the Sar mountain range above Tetovo, 170 kilometers from the city. Each time, angry Macedonians assembled because the NLA ambushed and killed soldiers who came from the Bitola area. In May, NLA forces gunned down four Bitola policemen on active duty in the army; in June, NLA units killed three Bitola natives.

When Macedonians reacted to these triggering events, they unleashed a furious revenge not only on local Albanians, but Turks as well. The transferal of retribution from Albanians to Turks may lead one to question the nexus between precipitants and targets, but there is a logic to this displacement. According to the 2002 census, Albanians in the district number only 2,522 (2.92 percent) of the population, which makes them the third largest ethnicity, behind Macedonians (77,470; 90 percent) and Roma (2,594; 3 percent). Turks are the fourth largest ethnic group in Bitola, numbering 1,580 (1.83 percent) (State Statistical Office). By selecting Turks as a substitute target for Albanians, Macedonians were acting out not only traditional

antipathies that stretch back to Ottoman rule, but broadening the boundaries of the immediate adversary to the more encompassing category of “Muslim.” Consequently, there occurred what Horowitz labels a “cumulation” effect, or the “conjunction of direct and displaced aggression” (Horowitz 2001: 137–138).

A second common element of the riots is that they occurred in the aftermath of funeral ceremonies, when relatives of the deceased organized friends and neighbors to join in demonstrations. The siblings and friends of those murdered were at the forefront of the May rioting, according to local eyewitnesses. In the June rampage, a brother of one of the victims organized a protest among taxi drivers, which quickly snowballed into mob action (Naegele 2001b, c).

A third thread that facilitated the rioting was the activity of the media. When the Macedonian soldiers were killed on April 28, a privately owned local television station, Tera TV, reported that the Albanians of Bitola were celebrating their deaths by discharging guns in the air. When individual rioters were later questioned, they cited the television report as one of the reasons for their behavior. Also revealed on television was the state coroner’s report, which documented in detail how the soldiers’ bodies were disfigured. Reportedly, NLA guerrillas mutilated the fingers, eyes, and scalps of the victims (Naegele 2001c; Taylor 2001). The editor of Fakti (Albanian newspaper), Lirim Dulovi, holds such media reports directly responsible for the subsequent carnage. He described the media’s role as follows:

<quote>

The Macedonian language media were put in position to create hatred, I underline this-- hatred, and to urge violence against the non-Macedonian population.... I shall remind you that what happened in Bitola was inspired by the murder of eight soldiers near Vejce ..... After the funeral ceremony of the soldiers, the article developed by Mende Mladenovski and presented at Tera TV included details that could be qualified as urging racial hatred. In the article, [Tito] Petkovski [nationalist Macedonian politician] said that while the soldiers were buried, the Albanians from the city were celebrating their

death. After this article, the city was set on fire and ethnic cleansing of the non-Macedonian population begun…. So, this was simply manipulating with the public. — Dulovi 2001)

</quote>

A fourth thread concerns the reluctance of the police to intervene. Human Rights Watch, which published a study on the riots, concluded that local policemen not only passively stood by, but also in some cases, actively participated in the mayhem. In June, the police did not even attempt to enforce their own declared curfew of 10:00 p.m., and instead waited until 1:00 a.m. to clamp down on the vandals. Albanian eyewitnesses, including those whose shops were destroyed, claim to have seen a few policemen either directly participating or preventing Albanians from attempting to put out fires. In May, the only significant action of the police over two nights was to protect the home of an Albanian deputy health minister, Muarem Nexhipi. In June, not even his home was spared. According to a local Albanian television reporter, the minister's home was burned "in the presence of Macedonian police who were just spectators" (Human Rights Watch 2001; Naegele 2001b, c).

The fifth thread centers on the role of elites. Vladimir Milchin, director of the Open Society Institute branch in Skopje, is a major proponent of this thesis. In an article published in Utrinski vesnik on May 3, Milcin raised the specter that dark forces were at work in Bitola: "There is something smelly in this dim story, something that stinks much more than the burnt shops in the bazaar in Bitola. Power and money are the agents of movement of this 'death game'. Someone is encouraging enmity to incite voluntary or violent ethnic cleansing" (Milchin 2001). Milchin observes that hardline interior minister, Ljube Boskovski, was in Bitola on the day of the funeral and stayed until the next day.[65] This rather suspicious appearance coincided too neatly with the subsequent passivity of the police, who even disobeyed the mayor's demand to impose order. The June event also involved a prominent personality who, by virtue of his position, provided holy cover for sinister deeds. At the funeral service, Orthodox Bishop Petar presented an incendiary speech, in which Albanian political party leaders were accused of being collaborators with those who murdered the young men (ICG 2001).

Police collusion, likely at Boskovski's request but impossible to confirm, undoubtedly made possible the extent of destruction. More questionable, however, are the various conspiracy theories that have swirled around the Bitola events. For example, some commentators have attempted to assign complete responsibility to hooligans bused in from Skopje (ICG 2001; Alusevski 2001). However, such reports contradict the claims of residents who insist that locals alone perpetrated the violence.[66] Much is also made about the fact that wealthy Albanian homes were targeted, which presumably indicates the planned nature of the riots. Perhaps a better explanation is that local Macedonians had no trouble identifying the property of prominent Albanians simply because in small, parochial settings, people grow up knowing "who's who." The looting of homes, therefore, represented a criminal opportunity as well as a way to punish Albanians for the misdeeds of the NLA.

*** Conclusion

The events in Bitola confirm Horowitz's analysis of the anatomy of the ethnic riot. Traditional antipathies become salient when a community experiences a traumatic, precipitating event, and such antipathies predetermine the targets for retribution. Moreover, triggering events such as ethnically motivated crimes reciprocally confirm and validate long-standing prejudices and suspicions. But other factors need to be present to facilitate the transposition of hatred from attitude to behavior. The Bitola riots were sustained by the local power structure, but not jumpstarted by them. For that, we have to look to the close relatives and friends of the victims. Macedonian politicians could not have successfully mobilized riots in the absence of the macabre slayings of Macedonian soldiers. The killings were a triggering event that prompted a visceral reaction in the Macedonian community. As Vladimir Milchin acknowledges, conditions in Bitola make it "a town which is easily pushed into being involved in events like a pogrom" (Naegele 2001c).

Kumanovo is also a town widely recognized to contain fragile interethnic relations. I argued above that diligent elites in that town worked overtime to prevent any type of conflagration as the war commenced in the surrounding countryside. But this brief comparison demonstrates another crucial

difference between Bitola and Kumanovo, namely, the presence of a precipitating event in the former and its absence in the latter. Traumatizing events, such as interethnic rapes, murders, and mutilations, trigger powerful emotions in a community, and represent a fundamental factor that tips the balance from expressive to actionable hatred.

Office of Research, Department of State (May 9, 2000), p. 4. Poll was conducted March 19–20, 2000.

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[54] Personal interview with Ljubomir Frckovski (November 21, 2000), Skopje, Macedonia.

[55] The Macedonian government has yet to release an official figure of the casualties. Early estimates were 200+, but it is likely higher. Eighty thousand Albanian refugees sought temporary shelter in Kosovo.

[56] The phrase is from Ralf Dahrendorf, which Horowitz applies to ethnic affiliations (Horowitz 1985: 90). Connor (1984) and Huntington (1996) are representative of the primordialist tradition.

[57] For instance, Fearon and Laitin (2000: 850) remarkably assert that earlier Yugoslav struggles with national identity (the nineteenth century, the Titoist period) have no bearing on the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s! Mary Kaldor (2001), too, fails to see any connection between previous ethnic wars

in the Balkans and what she calls the “new wars.” For a critique of Kaldor, see Hislope (2004).

[58] The philosopher Ian Hacking (1999) argues that behind social constructivism is a political agenda. By exposing the human hand behind the supposed naturalness of a social category or social relations, constructivists hope to pave the way for social change.

[59] I define “politically significant” as parties and actors who are capable of affecting national outcomes substantially and regularly. Croatia, Bosnia, and Serbia in the 1990s produced many civic parties, but none were politically significant. To be sure, Serbia produced several significant multi-party coalitions (e.g., DEPOS, Zajedno, etc.) against Milosevic, but these were combinations of many small civic and nationalist parties. The definition of politically significant comes from Burton, Gunther, and Higley, (1992: 8).

[60] While Izetbegovic’s party did officially call for a “civic republic” (civilna gradjanska drzava) to replace the communist constitution, the political implications of this model were not lost on Bosnian Serb leaders, who realized that civic republics based on majoritarian rules have a built-in bias against minorities (Hislope 1995).

[61] John Mueller in his study of criminal thugs in the Balkan wars makes the same mistake, according to Anna Simons. She writes: “It seems that for Mueller…so long as ‘the vast majority’ do not take up arms, the conflict cannot be considered ethnically motivated…” (Mueller 2000; Simons 2001).

[62] Gagnon (2004: 197), for example, takes other constructivists to task for, among other things, assuming “the existence of ethnic groups.”

[63] The surveys examined in this essay are all from U.S. State Department commissioned-studies from 1998 to January 2001, and United Nations Development Program “early warning reports” from October 2000 to March

2001. I thank Anna Sweeny, Janice Bell, and Dina Smeltz at the U.S. State Department, and Albana Gjuzi at UNDP, for providing copies of the surveys. Nationally representative samples of 1,000 plus adults aged 18 and over were drawn by both organizations.

[64] UNDP (2000: 15), Office of Research, Department of State (June 4, 2001), p.3; personal interview with former economics minister, Jane Miljovski (Skopje, November 21, 2000). This point was also made by several small-scale entrepreneurs who were ethnic Macedonians.

[65] I visited Bitola and Prilep (also the scene of a riot) in November 2002, and saw many burned out businesses, shops, and a demolished mosque (in Prilep). In Prilep, I interviewed a local Turk, whose shop was destroyed. At an adjacent building, the words “UCK” [NLA] were spray-painted on the window. The author thanks Zoran Ilievski and family for the tour of Bitola, and Dane Taleski for leading the investigation in Prilep.

[66] Personal interview with Vladmir Milchin (June 21, 2002), Skopje.

[67] Personal interview with Zoran Ilievski and Ljubcho Ilievski, Bitola residents (November 22, 2002).

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** 10. Abkhazia: A Summary of Ethnic Conflict

Georgi M. Derluguian

The conventional explanations of the Abkhazian independence war against the Republic of Georgia dwell on the combination of local ancient hatreds and Moscow’s secret meddling. This explanation is both incorrect and politically harmful. After all, what can be done if the hatreds are so ancient, and Russia, as any state faced with similar problems, might be surely predicted to stay “meddling” in its Caucasus underbelly? To reframe these inherently pessimistic assumptions, let us revisit the typical arguments or “facts” one hears from the participants in the Abkhazia conflict. It is by no means a pedantic exercise. Abkhazia’s troubles are structurally similar to other smoldering separatist conflicts all over the Caucasus and the Balkans. By getting the record straight with Abkhazia, we may gain an analytical summary of Karabagh, Chechnya, or Kosovo as well.

The social processes and historical structures commonly understood as background to conflict, as I shall seek to demonstrate, are not at all “background” factors. Rather they form the historically complex trajectory that at certain points could ignite—and also defuse—conflicts which then become expressed in ethnic terms, as presumably confrontations between the Georgian majority, Abkhaz minority, and the intervening Russia. The usual “ancient hatreds” or path-dependent explanation is about as correct as blaming the contemporary violence in Northern Ireland on the long-standing theological dispute between the two branches of Western Christianity.

Let me throw in some hard “facts”: the Georgians are Orthodox Christian and so are, of course, the Russians—at least, most of them believe so on the basis of their getting to the church for baptisms, weddings, funerals, and occasionally on Easter, which totals on average two and a half times a year (Furman 1999). The religious practices and beliefs of the Abkhazes should be described as agnostic-syncretist while (to put it more bluntly) basically pagan (Abdushelishvili et al. 1994). I shall soon explain how come. The politicized sector among the Chechens, that for a brief period in the early 1990s (though not earlier and no longer today), passionately considered themselves brethren to the Abkhaz people, by all accounts are more serious

Sunni Muslims than the happily syncretist Abkhaz. This is mostly because the Chechens over the last two centuries have regularly engaged in confrontations with the Russian imperial machinery which has been brutally reminding them of a separate identity (Zelkina 2000). In the Caucasus wars of the nineteenth century the Georgians (or rather the Georgian elites) usually sided with Russia not simply because they were Christians but because their Orthodox Christian background had culturally facilitated their access to Russian imperial careers. Curiously, the three men that in 1944 ordered and oversaw the deportation of the entire Chechen nation were the ethnic Georgians highly positioned in Moscow: the NKVD Col. Gvishiani, the chief of Soviet secret police Lavrenti Beria, and Joseph Stalin (Lieven 1998).

In order to stay on track in this political maze, let us follow the wisdom of the great historian Fernand Braudel (1986) and begin with the fundamental structures, literally with the fabulous soil and climate of Abkhazia.

*** Geography

Abkhazia consists of about 250 km of gorgeous winding beaches and densely green valleys climbing to the snowy peaks of the Caucasus that tower in the background. In the twentieth century, Abkhazia was transformed into one of best vacation spots on earth (Ascherson 1995). The relic pine forests and the lush sub-tropical vegetation of the coastal strip reminds one of northern California, only the beaches of Abkhazia are washed by the balmy, moderately salty, and tideless Black Sea. After Stalin and Khrushchev chose to have their summer dachas here, some of the highest status Soviet-era entities such as the Ministry of Defense, the Pravda newspaper, and the Union of Writers built imposing vacation retreats for their personnel on Abkhazia’s coast. Furthermore, Abkhazia’s sub-tropical climate endows it with outstanding condition for cash-crop plantations that can produce everything from tea and tangerines to walnuts and, most recently, kiwis. The seaside real estate and the agricultural hinterland of Abkhazia in relative value was even more precious than California--within the immense confines of the USSR, after all, there were very few moderately humid sub-tropical locales.

Just as in California or Florida, the prized landscape is actually man-made and very recent. Earlier in history Abkhazia, like much of the Caucasus, consisted of roadless mountain slopes covered with impenetrable thorny forests and unhealthy swamps in the lowlands (Khodarkovsky 2002; Kurtynova-Derluguian 1995). In the 1900s, Russian colonial botanists planted exotic palm trees and citrus orchards, and the coast was at last freed from endemic malaria only in the 1930s-1950s, thanks to extensive public works and the spread of eucalyptuses. The created real estate value of Abkhazia brought the blessing of exceptional wealth during the 1950s-1980s, in the times of late Soviet prosperity. But quarrels over the possession of this man-made paradise also caused the curse of seemingly perpetual devastation after the collapse of the Soviet order after 1989.

*** Linguistics, Archaeology, Ethno-Genetics

Linguistically and anthropologically, the native Abkhazes belong to the North Caucasian group of peoples that also comprise the Adyghs (Adygeis, Circassians, Kabardins) and, more distantly, the Vainakhs (Chechens and Ingushes) and most Daghestanis (Abdushelishvili et al. 1994). To the considerable pride of its native speakers, the Abkhaz language is featured in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world’s hardest tongue. Indeed it boasts sixty or so consonants to just four vowels or even one (depending on the dialect). The verdict of patriotic Georgian scholars renders Abkhaz merely patois, a backward dialect of the Georgian language. Today, however, the comparative linguists consider it proven that the languages of the North Caucasian group are entirely unrelated to any other language family in this part of the world, be it Indo-European, Afrasian (Semitic), Turkic, or Kartvelian (a small endemic family that consist of Georgian proper and the Svan, Mingrelian, and Laz languages).

An extravagant but apparently solid recent hypothesis claims to have discovered the traces of very distant (meta-family level) linguistic relation between the North Caucasian, Sino-Tibetan (Chinese et al.) and the Na-Dene languages once spoken by California’s natives (Diakonoff 1999). But so far this newest scientific discovery has not been appropriated by the patriotic Abkhaz minds always looking out to claim additional allies in their struggles

against Georgia. This could be just a matter of time considering that Abkhazia's founding president Dr. Vladislav Ardzinba is himself a professional historical linguist who had once authored a respectable exploration of Hittite mythology.

The distant ancestors of North Caucasian peoples have inhabited the valleys of North Caucasus apparently since the late Stone Age. The nationalists, of course, would take (or fiercely contest) this scholarly theory as political argument directly related to presumed historical rights (De Waal 2003). Yet all it really says is that the mountain environment was so inaccessible and resource-poor that historical migrations and conquests bypassed the Caucasus ridge. This nature-made sanctuary durably preserved different isolated languages and genetic pools.

Isolation apparently explains also the famous longevity of native Abkhazes, many of whom stay alive and healthy past the age of one hundred years. In the 1970s-1980s, the multidisciplinary inquiry of Soviet and Western scholars into the Abkhaz gerontological phenomenon pursued the factors as diverse as the yogurt-based diet, climate, the natural background radiation, or the special respect and social roles accorded by the Abkhaz culture to male and female elders (Hewitt 1979). The most robust hypothesis suggests simply an advantageous genetic mutation that became sustained in a relatively small and durably contained population. (By curious coincidence, the other similar pool of highlander longevity gene is found in Karabagh.)

*** History

Another manifestation of durable isolation is the easy-going religious syncretism of Abkhazes. For centuries, first the Byzantine and then the Ottoman empires claimed to dominate the Caucasus Black Sea coast and thus to spread their respective religions. The imperial claims, however, were mostly nominal. The empires and the native Abkhaz princes possessed neither the coercive resources nor sufficient reasons to struggle for establishing credible authority over the self-governing highlander communities scattered over this poor and inaccessible periphery of the larger Mediterranean (Ascherson 1995; King 2004). In Abkhazia as elsewhere

in the Caucasus, the traditional social organization rested on self-sufficient village communities interwoven in the extensive kinship networks. The convoluted feudal politics of princely families, that is, the very staple of historical monographs, for centuries remained quite superfluous to the autonomous village kind of social organization. By default, the majority of Abkhazes remained oblivious to their distant imperial rulers, and essentially were traditional pagan believers under a thin veneer of mixed up Christianity and Islam.

As recently as in 2004, I could observe that sacred groves are still frequented for the annual sacrificial feasts, and the dead are buried in the backyard after long periods of funerary rites rather than in the cemeteries (find a wonderfully literary description in Iskander 1983). On many occasions I heard the common Abkhazes ridiculing the Muslim zeal displayed by the volunteers from Chechnya and the Middle East, who, in 1992, rushed to defend Abkhazia's independence against the Christian Georgians. After the quiet departure of foreign volunteers, the mosques they had begun to build remain abandoned. Except for a few Russians priests and the Russian Orthodox churches, there is little Christian presence either.

According to textbooks, Abkhazia became part of the Russian empire in 1810 when a particular branch of Abkhaz princely lineage, called the Chachbas in the Abkhaz language or the Shervashidzes in Georgian, swore vassalage to the Tsar. Prince Sefer-bei Chachba/Shervashidze shed the Islam of previous pro-Ottoman orientation, his scions re-invented their Orthodox Christian identity and soon they adopted the culture of the much larger Georgian nobility at Russia's imperial service (Suny 1994). The upper-class shifts of vassal allegiance and corresponding cultural conversions had a long tradition in this corner of the world. Modern Georgian nationalists seeking to prove their claims to Abkhazia on medieval precedents, in reality generalize the eleventh-thirteenth-centuries experience when the feudal kingdom of Georgia was strong enough to pull the Abkhaz princes into its political and cultural orbit. We have no historical evidence to judge whether the medieval cultural bonds penetrated beyond the thin Abkhaz feudal elite. But the nineteenth-century situation is sufficiently documented to make it clear that the Russian and, by proxy, the Georgian presence in Abkhazia was a squarely diplomatic fiction until the final military defeat of independent highlander communities of the Caucasus in 1864.

*** Demography and Empire

Until the last quarter of the nineteenth century the population of Abkhazia (probably around 100,000 people—the actual size is very hard to estimate due to complete lack of any state authority and thus censuses prior to the 1890s) consisted solely of ethnic native Abkhazes and a few other closely related peoples (such as the Ubykhs), who no longer exist. In 1864, the sweeping push of Russian armies towards the Black Sea provoked among the highlanders an apocalyptic panic that led to mass exodus across the sea into the Ottoman lands: present-day Turkey, Syria, Jordan, and even Kosovo (Ascherson 1995; Lieven 1998). The panic swept the entire expanse from Daghestan and Chechnya in the east Caucasus to the Circassian lands and Abkhazia in the western parts. Since Abkhazia was situated directly on the Black Sea coast, the emigration there was particularly massive. At least one half or perhaps as much as three-quarters of the Abkhazes abandoned their native land in successive waves following the series of crushed rebellions between 1864 and 1878. Their neighbors to the north, the Ubykhs and Abadzekhs, left entirely. Most of them would assimilate in the Middle East, remembering only that their ancestors came from the Caucasus. The majority of emigrés lost their languages given the natural assimilation and the activist nationalist policies of the Turkish Republic. The last speaker of the Ubykh language, a linguistic relative of the Abkhaz, died in Turkey in 1974. In a bittersweet accident, the famous folklorist Georges Dumezile himself had recorded the Ubykh language before it disappeared for good (King 2004).

The anguish of exile instilled among the North Caucasian muhajeers (Muslim refugees fleeing from the threatening infidels) a pro-Turkish, militantly Islamic identity directed against the Russian conquerors. The recent ethnic wars in Abkhazia, Chechnya, and in the former Yugoslavia forcefully revived these feelings. Today almost 3 million people in Turkey claim to be descendants of the Abkhazes, Circassians, and Chechens. In the meantime, the Abkhazes who remained in their homeland grew very pro-Russian, a fact that has more than bemused the diaspora volunteers as they rushed in 1992 to recover the land of their ancestors. Invariably, the diaspora nationalisms tend to presume their ethnic cradles to be a repository

of untainted national culture. But in the last century Abkhazia underwent profound changes that made the Abkhazes an ethnic minority of 17 percent whose special status in the face of the Georgian majority of around 45 percent could be secured only by the counterbalancing factor of Russian state interests (Beissinger 2002).

The Abkhaz popular memory downplays the effects of Russian conquest and overlooks the relationship between the arrival of Georgian, Armenian, Greek, even the several hundred Estonian settlers and the policies of colonial development (Shnirelman 2001). Before 1917, the Russian administration had two objectives in Abkhazia—to create a revenue base by encouraging the introduction of cash-crop plantations (citrines, tobacco, tea) and, in a related effort, to placate the restless peasantry of western Georgia with land grants in depopulated Abkhazia.

The contemporary demographic explosion in the Georgian countryside was due to the spread of the substantially more productive American corn (which replaced the traditional millet) sometime in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which was followed by the imposition of Russian rule in the early nineteenth century that curbed the depredations of feudal warfare and slave trade. But the Russian rule in Georgia critically depended on the loyalty of Georgian nobility (which at the time included the Abkhaz princes) whose numbers were multiplying even faster than the numbers of their serf peasants. At the abolition of Georgian serfdom in the late 1860s, the Russian administration yielded to the native noblemen and gave the freed peasants even punier land plots than in central Russia (Suny 1994). Despite the land reclamation and resettlement into the frontier territories such as Abkhazia, the rapid development of monetized economy, cash-crop plantations, and the accelerating population growth by the beginning of the twentieth century significantly worsened the plight of peasantry throughout the Caucasus.

When, in 1905 and again in 1917, the Russian state experienced revolutionary breakdowns, the social pressures erupted all over in the form of rural revolts, land seizures, and banditry (for a classic statement of causality flowing from demographic pressure to revolutions, see Goldstone 1991; specifically for the Russian Empire, see Suny 1994; Martin 2001). In a multi-ethnic environment the agrarian unrest evolved into numerous ethnic

confrontations involving various sub-groups of Georgians, the Azeris, Armenians, Ossets, and Abkhazes.

The complexities of demography, land tenure, and revolutionary politics of the time became totally incomprehensible to the Caucasian men and women who grew up in the radically different atmosphere of Soviet times. The historical memory of Caucasian peoples, imperfectly preserved in family lore and eventually shaped by modern national intellectuals, could say about the dreadful events of 1905 and 1917–1921 only that “they were killing us,” but, of course, this crude simplification was repeated with enormously emotional belief. When the Soviet state began breaking down in the late 1980s, the traumatic memories became actualized and consciously reenacted in the new and quite different historical circumstances.

It is utterly wrong to follow the local nationalists and their followers, however numerous and vociferous they might be, in claiming that the recent conflicts were just the reemergence of age-old hatreds. (See the important document written in the early 1920s but first published only decades later, Lisitsian 1992; also De Waal 2003.) Interethnic relations are a gross generalization that in actuality consist of myriad daily-life interactions ranging from personal-level cooperation (friendships, intermarriages, corruption if one wishes) to occasional conflicts (careerist competition or drunken brawls) that nonetheless under normal circumstances find daily-life resolution even if, in particularly dire instances, they may involve the police (Mars and Altman 1983; Ledeneva 1998). The impression of history repeating itself is produced by two factors: the culturally driven rationalization of all kinds of conflict along the lines of traumatic historical memory and the path-dependent institutionalization of ethnicity by modern national states. The Soviet Union and socialist Yugoslavia offered poignant examples of originally quite successful institutionalization of troublesome ethnicities in the framework of federal republics that became unmanageable and destructive when the socialist states attempted limited liberalization and market reforms in response to their declining legitimation and the looming bankruptcy of previous industrialization efforts (Bunce 1998).

*** Politics

In 1918, as Russia was descending into the hell of civil war, Georgia became an independent state and hurried to impose its own administration over the ethnically problematic outliers including Abkhazia (Suny 1994). The presumably irrational ethnic violence of those times is commonly blamed on the imperfections in character, class structures, and institutions of East Europeans. We overlook the centrality of the League of Nations with its perfectly liberal and legalistic discourse in sponsoring the nationalist warfare on the ruins of Hapsburg, Ottoman, and Russian empires. In 1919, the Great Powers gathered in Versailles and set the newly independent Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia three standard conditions to be met within one year in preparation to receiving full recognition as nation-states. The three conditions were: (a) historical rights, (b) cultural belonging of the populations, if necessary, decided in plebiscites, and (c) effective occupation (Kazem-zadeh 1951). The first clause prompted the new regimes to create the committees of national historians and anthropologists whose patriotic findings to this day are supplying ammunition to the nationalist propaganda. The second and especially the third condition, the demand of effective occupation, which was directly adopted from the 1885 Berlin conference on the colonial partition of Africa, sent the aspiring national states scrambling to hoist their flags and install garrisons in as many contested areas as possible before the deadline and the looming plebiscites. To compensate for the severe shortage of regular troops, local militias and irregulars of all sorts were recruited and armed in the process. The results were predictably bloody (Mann 2005).

Everywhere, in Karabagh, Adjaria, Southern Ossetia, or in Abkhazia, the arrival of nationalist armed forces exacerbated the local ethnically colored agrarian conflicts and led to outright massacres. The Abkhaz village militias (called Kiaraz) sought an alternative source of weapons from the Russian Bolsheviks, who in their turn counted on transforming the disparate rural resistances into the communist organized rebellions against the nationalist regimes (Tsutsiev 1998). After finally taking Georgia in 1921, the Bolsheviks united it with Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Abkhazia into the short-lived Transcaucasian Federation (Suny 1994). This historical precedent, rooted in the constitutional experimentation of the early Soviet era, in the late 1980s would be stressed by Abkhaz leaders to claim that they were all along equal to Georgia in status, that is, a union republic enjoying the

constitutional right to secession and international recognition no less than (admittedly as recently made) Moldova or Tadjikistan.

It is an understatement to say that the convoluted Soviet system of national federalism could function only due to the central institution of Communist party supported by secret police (Martin 2001). The Soviet federal system functioned largely on the common understandings and through the personal networks running through the party apparat. In 1921–1936, the special advantageous status of Abkhazia hinged on the personality of its hugely popular leader Nestor Lakoba, the semi-educated former honorable bandit of the 1905 generation, who, by 1917, had spent years in the underground or in tsarist prisons and became a Bolshevik convert with strong personal ties to Stalin (for a fictionalized account based on local folklore, see Iskander 1983). For this reason or more likely because Abkhazia was generally considered too backward and peripheral, Lakoba was able to postpone the collectivization of Abkhaz peasantry until his sudden death in 1936. (Lakoba died several days after he had feasted with Lavrenti Beria, then the communist boss of Georgia.)

With Lakoba eliminated and posthumously declared enemy of the people, Beria launched the Georgianization of Abkhazia with his trademark organizing vigor and ruthlessness. The 1936 Constitution made Abkhazia an autonomous republic of the Georgian SSR. Large numbers of Georgian collective farmers and specialists were transferred to Abkhazia as part of a campaign against backwardness (Viola 1996). Meanwhile, the Abkhaz language, that only a decade earlier acquired its own alphabet, was replaced with the Georgian language in official usage and the nascent Abkhaz intelligentsia was decimated in purges. The attempted forced Georgianization of Abkhazia (and the parallel campaign in Southern Ossetia) falls into the late 1930s Stalinist trend to reduce the roster of national autonomies to a more manageable number and eliminate along the way the virtual fiefdoms like the one carved up by Lakoba in Abkhazia. But the fact that both Stalin and Beria were ethnic Georgians was missed in neither Abkhazia nor in Georgia (Grant 1995).

After 1953, the surviving Abkhaz intelligentsia (a few writers, historians, and educators produced mostly in the earlier Soviet era) and the Abkhaz party

cadres exploited the death of Stalin and the execution of Beria to reverse the tide. The ethnic demographic was changed irreversibly—without the Georgian and, to a lesser degree, the Armenian, and the Russian labor force the modern agriculture and the newly prominent resort sector of Abkhazia would have collapsed. But the Abkhaz leaders successfully urged Khrushchev to revert to the “truly Leninist nationality policies,” namely the state sponsorship of Abkhaz culture and the affirmative action in university admissions and administrative promotions favoring the titular nationality. Unsurprisingly enough, this provoked apprehension and resentment among the Georgians who occupied various positions in Abkhazia ranging from government minister down to university instructors, collective farm managers, and the police.

Normally, such tensions would be contained by the bureaucratic procedures and the constraints imposed by official Soviet discourse on nationalities (Martin 2001). In fact, after 1954, the bureaucratic containment of nationalist disruptions would become the norm for years to come, forcing the Georgian majority to adapt and learn how to live with it. But Georgia was one of the least compliant and quiescent Soviet republics in every respect (Beissinger 2002). Georgia’s history and agrarian social structures resembled Poland. Both countries boasted vibrant civil societies centered on highly regarded artistic and professorial intelligentsia whose lineages reached back to the inordinately large and ambitious petty nobility of pre-socialist times (Bunce 1998; King 2001).

During the 1956–1989 period, unruly Georgia was no less Moscow’s headache than Poland. The post-Stalinist regime felt perennially apprehensive in the face of periodical outbursts of intelligentsia-led protests. Moscow responded typically with a mixture of coopting and repressive measures against the nationalist intelligentsia, which, inadvertently, created an expanding opportunity structure for further protest mobilizations (Suny 1994). Moscow offered generous aid to the Georgian economy and cultural institutions (that never had it better than under Brezhnev) while keeping it the target of every blame. The Abkhaz population benefited even more given that in this period its numbers stabilized at under 100,000, which was around 17 percent of Abkhazia’s total population of under half-a-million. Ethnic Russians, Armenians, and Greeks each had a share comparable to Abkhaz (12–17 percent), while the ethnic Georgians (mostly speakers of the

Mengrelian “dialect,” which differs from literary Georgian roughly as Spanish does from French) maintained a plurality of 40–46 percent (Suny 1994; Grant 1995). Each cycle of protest left in its wake newly actualized practices, ever-wider networks, and conciliatory political arrangements that ensured the recurrence of further protests. Both Georgian and Abkhaz protestors maneuvered to select the issues and rhetoric that would resonate with national feelings yet would avoid directly assaulting the core of Communist ideology and leave Moscow no alternative but to respond harshly (Nodia 2002).

As long as the Soviet state remained functioning in its post-1956 low-repression mode, the cycle of protest could offer a valuable bargaining opportunity for Georgian and Abkhaz officials. They were conniving almost openly with the dissidents and the crowds. The escalating cycles of protest regarding Abkhazia’s status took place every decade: in the late 1950s, the late 1960s, in 1978–79, in December 1988, spring and summer 1989. Each campaign served to embolden the protestors and wrangle substantial benefits intended to pacify the mass passions. Ironically, it was at the pinnacle of Gorbachev’s democratization that Moscow finally resolved to use coercion instead of the usual gratuitous pacification of Georgian-Abkhaz ritualized clashes. (For the general theory of democratization as cause of ethnic violence, see Mann 2005). In April 1989, Soviet paratroopers were sent to disperse the protesting crowds permanently occupying Tbilisi’s central square (Beissinger 2002). The paratroopers had to be armed with entrenching shovels for the shortage of batons and apparently received no instruction in combating angry civilians. Nineteen protestors died in the result, most of them women. Tbilisi’s “shovel massacre” initiated the first anti-communist revolution of 1989. Over a single tragic night, the legitimacy of Georgia’s Communist party was destroyed and the mercurial nationalist dissident Zviad Gamsakhurdia suddenly became the likeliest contender for state power.

*** Revolution and War

Two typical stories from Abkhazia illustrate the turmoil unleashed by the events of 1989 (personal field notes, recorded in 2000). An Abkhaz farmer meets his old Georgian friend for a drink, but instead of the usual

conversation about soccer and planning on selling profitably the tangerine crops, the Georgian begins passionately asserting that Georgia is the most civilized ancient nation in a Caucasus long suffering from the Russian domination. When the Abkhaz fails to match the emotions of his friend, the latter grimly proposes a toast to the death of all Abkhazes. In another instance, the graciously charismatic Djaba Ioseliani, whose picturesque life record included a long prison term for bank robberies, a subsequent doctorate in art history, and several well-crafted novels, comes to recruit Abkhazia's Georgians into his nationalist para-military organization, the National Rescue Squad (Mkhedrioni). Ioseliani had the biggest success in the cluster of ethnic Georgian villages near the prized resort town of Gagra. These villages emerged during Beria's resettlement campaign in the late 1930s, and this memory continued to cause uneasiness locally. Ioseliani forcefully insisted that Gagra was no less a Georgian land than any other, calling Abkhazes a backward subset of Georgians whose provincial ego was deliberately boosted by Moscow's attempt to dominate Georgia. He furthermore announced the pending privatization of land and the resorts of Abkhazia under the post-socialist reforms of the independent Georgian state and hinted that membership in his para-military movement would count a lot in the privatization of Soviet-era assets. The emboldened villagers joined en masse receiving the Mkhedrioni badges, pre-authorized titles to property, and a few guns. Two years later these villages would be burnt to the ground by the joint Abkhaz and Chechen forces led by then little-known Shamil Basayev (in 1995–2004, the mastermind of hostage takings in the town hospital of Budennovsk, a Moscow theater, and a school in Beslan).

The Abkhaz population of less than 100,000 felt beleaguered at the prospect of Georgian independence. Their experience of living in the state based on local patronage (which we usually call corruption) quite rightly suggested the conclusions that competitive elections would only serve the interests of the ethnic majority (Holmes 1993; Urban 1989; Vaksberg 1991; Volkov 2002). Furthermore, the senior Abkhaz Communist leaders became irrelevant when Gorbachev's acts removed from power in Moscow the top nomenklatura patrons of Abkhaz elite (Zaslavsky 1993). In the disarray, the organizing of Abkhaz countermobilization passed to the younger and less-inhibited generation of national nomenklatura. They pursued two goals: to preserve the Soviet-era ethnic quota system, which prevented the local Georgians from scoring automatic majority in the Abkhaz parliamentary elections, and to recruit external allies, Russian, Chechen, Armenian, or Middle Eastern, in

order to counterbalance the overwhelming odds enjoyed by the Georgian majority.

The compactness of the Abkhaz population made its political mobilization relatively easy (see the impressive event-analysis database compiled by Beissinger 2002). By contrast, the emerging political scene of Georgia was plagued by an extreme fragmentation reminiscent of feudal patrimonial feuds (excellent analyses of familial politics include Humpherey 1991; Solnick 1998; Hislope 2002; Fisun 2002; Ganev 2006). During the Soviet times, when the Communist party offered the common unifying target, the inherited culture of Georgian petty nobility, embedded in the high status networks of intelligentsia and professionals, helped to maintain a colorful and vibrant civil society. But once the Soviet rule had collapsed, the “good families” of Georgia quarreled shamefully over status and the spoils of empire. Besides, their social skills and habits, cultivated in the intellectual salons and at the famous Georgian banquets, proved quite inadequate to the tasks of state-building and war-making. The first post-communist president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, whose rise to power was largely due to the pedigree credential of being son of a famous national writer, within a year was overthrown by his erstwhile allies (Suny 1994). Eduard Shevardnadze, the senior Soviet-era statesman of legendary cunning, was then called to sort out the runaway mess. Shevardnadze eventually achieved a degree of pacification. But this could happen not before Djaba Ioseliani and Tengiz Kitovani, the two warlords who brought him to power, disgraced themselves through the military defeat in Abkhazia.

The origins and the course of the 1992–93 war are shrouded in dirty mysteries. The Abkhaz leadership in 1991 managed to make a power-sharing deal with Gamsakhurdia who probably sought to avoid wars on too many fronts. The Abkhaz ethnic minority managed to preserve its vastly disproportionate share in the provincial parliament and state administration. But after toppling the first Georgian president, Kitovani and Ioseliani apparently wanted to score another military success, or, perhaps, they needed to occupy and reward their troops by plundering the richest part of Georgian territory. Using the numerous and admittedly irresponsible proclamations of Abkhazia’s parliament as pretext, the Georgian warlords launched their blitzkrieg in August 1992. Their campaign almost immediately got bogged down either due to the threat of Russian troops still stationed in

Abkhazia or, as many witnesses suggest, because the Georgian invaders began looting. Likely it was a combination of both constraints. The Abkhaz side acquired a breathing space to organize their defenses.

There can be no doubt that the Abkhazes were aided by the Russian military. Despite the romantic stories of Chechen and Kabardin volunteers valiantly crossing the mountains on foot to help their Abkhaz brethren, the majority of North Caucasus and Cossack volunteers were openly recruited on Russian territory, transported to the Abkhaz border by bus, trained and armed by Russian officers. The Chechen detachment of Shamil Basayev received its training on the former dacha of Khrushchev in Pitsunda, which still belongs to the Russian presidential administration. The motives and the institutional movers of Russian covert aid are less clear. Journalists suggested reasons ranging from sophisticated geostrategic calculations to the purported revenge against She-vardnadze, whom the Russian generals accused of selling East Germany to the NATO (De Waal 2003).

As with all conspiracy theories, the major point of doubt is the assumption of a unified agency capable of long-term calculations under the conditions of radical uncertainty and the seamless execution of plans (for an elaboration of this critique, see Derluguian 2001). The war in Abkhazia coincided with President Yeltsin's war on his parliament, where, incidentally, the Abkhaz leaders had many friends among the anti-Yeltsin nationalists. Furthermore, it is usually neglected that in the summer of 1992 Kabardino-Balkaria experienced a near successful nationalist revolution modeled on the earlier Chechen example, North Ossetia was on the brink of war with Ingushetia, the Adygeis on the Black Sea coast rallied for the restoration of their national enclave abolished in the mid-1950s, and the project of the pan-Caucasian Mountain Republic did not seem too hot-headed. Against this backdrop we must either presume that the acts of Moscow were guided by a secret genius enforcing a devilishly complicated plan, or a more parsimonious hypothesis would be that the events followed a chaotic trajectory consisting of myriad contradictory acts and motivations that in the end benefited Moscow as still the most powerful player on the field.

The Abkhaz independence war of 1992–93 consisted of sporadic inconclusive battles, protracted periods of stalemate, and peace agreements broken

every time one or the other side (or even an individual commander) saw a chance to score victory. It was accompanied by looting and atrocities against civilians by all combatants. In the rear of both armies, Georgian or Abkhaz civilians committed the paranoid acts of house burning and executions by lynching mobs directed against suspected spies, traitors, or simply for the sake of symbolic revenge (Bourdieu 1973) every time a dead fighter was brought home for the funeral. It must be acknowledged that after several generations of living side by side the Abkhazes and the Georgians shared a common culture, common territory, common networks created through marriage and working together. It was normal to speak at least two, usually three languages (Abkhaz, Georgian, and Russian). Therefore the war-induced separation was atrociously traumatic and produced the socio-psychological effects familiar from the anthropological literature on ritual impurity and witch-hunts. From the political science perspective, Stathis Kalyvas (2006) compellingly argues that the apparent insanity in fact follows the logic of control in contested areas during civil wars.

The random atrocities became a central part of organized warfare towards the end of war, in September-October 1993, when the joint Abkhaz and external volunteer forces tricked the Georgian defenses and rapidly captured the capital of Suhum (pronounced Suhumi in Georgian) and the rest of Abkhazia. Before the war only 7 percent of Suhum's population was ethnic Abkhaz, while the richest agricultural district of Gali in southern Abkhazia was entirely Georgian (Nodia 2002). Evidently, the Abkhaz war leaders calculated that given their limited manpower it would be impossible to control the areas of predominantly Georgian population, hence there better be no population at all. Ethnic cleansing has its own perverse logic (Mann 2005; Kalyvas 2006). The atrocities must be despicable to produce the wave of panic driving large populations to flee before a small band of fighters who would not otherwise be able to prevent resistance in their rear. A simple maximization of return on effort, which results in another banality of evil (Arendt 1964).

*** Future Possibilities

Stating his vision of what social science must achieve, Arthur Stinchcombe (1997) writes that the key lies in the ability to trace the social mechanisms

and the resulting roads by which societies come from past into future. Where, given the preceding analysis, might we locate structural configurations that can embed the future of Abkhazia? My main contention is that the conflict in Abkhazia is akin to revolutions and civil wars. The conflict was “frozen” by the military ability of Abkhaz forces and their Russian backers to defeat the Georgian forces, and by the diplomatic ability of Georgia, an internationally recognized sovereign state with a secure seat in the United Nations, to brand the Abkhaz rebellion as separatist and illegitimate. The juxtaposition of military power and diplomatic norms produced one of the “frozen” conflicts that abounded in the former Soviet Caucasus. Since 1993, Abkhazia has existed as a de facto state (under Russian unacknowledged protectorate) while being subjected to the international economic and political blockade because of the Georgian adamant refusal to recognize the secession.

Elsewhere Stinchcombe (1999) suggested that revolutions come to an end when the degree of political uncertainty is reduced by building enough bargains into a structure of power that can sustain such bargains. It seems then that Abkhazia, like many similarly rebellious provinces in the former USSR (and in Yugoslavia), has not reached the end. In other words, frozen conflict is civil war without conclusion. Stinchcombe summarizes the structures ending revolutions and civil wars as analytical continuum from conservative authoritarianism (“Thermidor”), totalitarianism, caudillismo, occupation government, to democracy, and national independence. Let us consider the likelihood of these options in turn.

Totalitarianism is not an option for two major reasons. International norms, which today are strongly antithetical to totalitarian dictatorships, seem to be of secondary importance. After all, there still exists North Korea and there would have existed a coercively unified Iraq if international norms were not manipulated by the American government. The main reason why totalitarianism is not a realistic option is because it takes a functioning state to sustain such a regime. This is obviously not the case in Abkhazia or Georgia.

Ironically, democracy is not a realistic option for largely the same reason—this kind of regime also takes a good amount of state capacity to be

sustained. In the absence of strong state structures (Fisun 2002; Ganev 2005), the prevalent if not the sole form of government in the region is what Stinchcombe called caudillismo: personalistic rule through the networks of loyalties glued by venality, mutual complicity, nepotism—and ethnicity in its most localized “tribal” and regionalist forms. But in the example of Abkhazia, caudillismo by itself would not solve the conflict.

We are left with national independence and its obverse, foreign occupation. In another typical irony, what one side of the conflict would consider national independence another would view as foreign occupation. Since the 2003 “Rose Revolution” in Georgia, the new energetic president Mikheil Saakashvili has been betting on American aid and political patronage. Indeed, today Georgian troops wear American uniforms, they serve alongside their American comrades in Iraq, and, in a display of humor, the Pentagon entrusted training Georgian military forces to the National Guard of the American State of Georgia. Expectedly, Abkhazia and Russia view this build up with suspicion that leads to another round of war preparations. The conflict was un-frozen and by the end of 2006 reached the point beyond which open warfare appeared very likely.

Besides the personal ambition of Georgia’s young new president who promised to his domestic constituency a speedy re-unification of Georgian territory, the looming recognition of Kosovo’s independence was the major factor in un-freezing the Abkhazia conflict. In this context, three outcomes can be envisioned. Abkhazia would be conquered by the newly rebuilt Georgian army and integrated into Georgia. But Georgian forces would have to confront the Abkhaz, perhaps this time overtly aided by the Russians. Moscow under President Putin has been increasingly nationalist and assertive internationally. The windfall of foreign earnings from Russian energy exports is not the cause; rather it has been a resource in the policies of Putin. The main reason is that Russian elites no longer buy into the vision of global integration. Instead, they feel cynical regarding international norms, which they now consider merely a front for American imperial ambitions. In the minds of the Russian political elite, the American-led “humanitarian interventions” in Kosovo and the invasion of Iraq proved that the world scene is shaped by the calculus of power and that Moscow cannot expect a kind invitation to join the club of America’s favored allies. All this makes more likely Russia’s annexation of Abkhazia (as well as Southern Ossetia) in one

form or another. Between the prospect of Georgia’s re-conquest of Abkhazia and the Russian annexation of Abkhazia, the historical middle ground appears to be the same familiar situation of neither war, nor peace: a frozen ethnic conflict.

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** 11. Reconstructing Heritage and Tradition in Postwar Beirut

Aseel Sawalha

<quote>

Each people supposes their newly inflated heritage concerns to be unique, reflecting some trait of character circumstance, some spirit of veneration or revenge that is peculiarly their own. Some impute these concerns to patriotic ardor, some to nostalgic fantasy, others to specific needs for mourning or celebrating.—

<right>

(Lowenthal 1998: 4)

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*** Historical Background

A devastating sixteen-year civil war (1975–1991) destroyed much of the physical landscape of Lebanon and shaped the identity and history of its people. The capital, Beirut, became the site for the fiercest battles, which resulted in the destruction of infrastructures, displacement of many people, and loss of lives. For example, in Beirut alone, one-quarter of all residential units were damaged or demolished; half of the population was temporarily or permanently displaced from their homes (Charif 1994; Faour 1991; Trendle 1991); and the lively downtown area was deserted, with most of its commercial buildings destroyed by bombing or fire.

At the end of the civil war in 1991, officials launched a major reconstruction project to rebuild the war-torn city. The project, which focused mainly on the rebuilding of the physical space in Beirut’s downtown central district, aimed at restoring the Beirut of its glorious past, while making it a center of contemporary modernity, that is, integrating Beirut into global capitalism and international tourism. The postwar reconstruction project was encharged to a private real estate company named Solidere, with other international

and regional developers, the Lebanese elite, and urban planners and architects. The prime minister at the time, Rafiq Hariri,[67] was not only supportive of, but personally involved in the privatizing plan. The developers are not restoring the downtown district to its cherished old ways, however, but rather selecting details these authorities value and integrating them into their vision, which is shaped largely by the concerns of global capitalism. While replacing old cafés with Starbucks and Hard Rock Café, the project revived the flattering nicknames for Beirut that were common during that glorious period before the war, such as “Paris of the Middle East,” “Switzerland of the Arab world,” and the “East’s window onto the West,” as part of the promotion of its plans. This massive development scheme, deaf to local residents’ concerns, destroyed the buildings in the downtown area that had survived the war-–this time not by the war’s rockets and bombs, but by the authorized bulldozers.

In response to this top-down development, many individuals and groups were drawn into discussions, forming a diverse conversation from many levels of society: international to local, state, elite, intellectual, and ordinary residents. These debates revolved around a main tension: as the city preserves its past, whose past counts? Which group’s experiences comprise the city’s official heritage? These debates, in turn, raised debates over the definitions of core concepts, heritage, authenticity, which are closely linked to the city’s ambitions of modernity.[68] Beirutis found that these diverse groups do not agree on what the city’s past is. In reconstruction, they faced the continual question: whose past counts? This chapter examines the politics of heritage specifically as it was debated between two different groups: one, a local museum organized by one regular citizen; the second, a conference among Lebanese intellectuals to address the question of the country’s heritage. The conference leads to a seemingly separate, but closely related issue of what should be done about the large population of people displaced by the civil war, in effect Lebanon’s internal refugees or homeless, whose fates are entwined with the visions of the modern future of the nation and its capital city.

At the close of the war, groups that had been battling against one another suddenly found themselves searching for a shared heritage, a common ground that would facilitate the reconciliation process. This raised questions about what Lebanon’s past was, or whose stories qualified as its history.

Thus, collective memories became crucial weapons in the struggle over which elements of the past would become part of the official history, which would determine whether buildings or ports or cafés were preserved, or whose interests mattered more in a historic neighborhood. These struggles challenge the very definition of heritage, history, past, memory, and other charged terms. All the keywords debated in Beirut are complex, not only in the daily life of Beirutis, but for scholars researching the relationship of living people to their cultural histories.

As psychologists and social theorists argue, memory is selective, as people edit/sift their own experiences as well as other accounts to highlight specific details, exclude others, and reinterpret earlier narratives to fit into a particular agenda, which is related more to the present and future than to the real past. Often such reinterpretations pit specific groups against the official reconstruction project, as when developers saw the last surviving fishing port as an opportunity for luxury condominiums, but the fishermen stressed the role of their port as part of the city's history. Sometimes, though, collective narratives get shaped by tacit agreement in order to preserve peace among them. In establishing a collective memory and preserving harmony among rival communities, these groups (consciously and unconsciously) collectively silence particular episodes of the past in what can be named "collective amnesia."

Examining collective memory (or amnesia) involves the obvious question, which aspects of the past are remembered? The choice of parts of the past involves not only selecting certain places, but certain times: the Lebanese debate which moments are worth remembering, as well as which places should be preserved. Some Lebanese argued that the best route to reconciliation is to obliterate all reminders of the sixteen-year war era. For them, the prewar period was the part of the past worth selecting, and it was remembered with what we understand as nostalgia, a time of peace, prosperity, and harmony, nearly without flaw.

But this strategy of deliberately forgetting the war while recalling prewar times is not shared by all Lebanese. After the war, a large number of cultural productions (writing, films, visual art, and museums) addressed and even glorified the experiences of the civil war. According to the authors creating

these kinds of works, the goal of healing the wounds of the recent war, and preventing future civil war, was to be accomplished only by confronting that past, especially the ugly brutality of the war. These Lebanese remembered and documented prewar and wartime periods through various media: making art, including theater plays, visual work, and film; publishing memoirs, historical accounts, and coffee-table books of photographs (there were several of buildings, doorways, and other prewar architecture);[69] founding museums, both on official and nonofficial levels; and launching Internet web sites where individuals posted their memories, old photos, or notices seeking lost friends and family members. An architect-critic wrote, “Hardly a month passes without seeing a book of beautiful photographs about ‘Beirut as it was,’ reading an article reviving the memories of the good old days (ayam zaman), or noticing an art exhibition showing the magic and beauty of old Lebanese buildings and traditional rural and urban homes” (Thabet 1999: 1).

In the postwar period, there were signs of an analogous concern to remember, and to promote a certain aspect of the city’s past, across other sections of society. One important strategy in relation to the past was smaller groups organizing for preservation according to their respective alliances, religion and ethnicity among them, but there were also trade and neighborhood interests that worked in similar ways. In the period between 1991 and 1997, more than 100 such groups were registered at the Ministry of Interior for licenses, stating missions that ranged from preserving architectural sites, collecting traditional songs and folktales, to building specialized museums (Misk 1997).[70] My first case below is one such humble organization. At the same time, ordinary people took an interest in archaeological artifacts, objects that were visible at professional archaeology digs around the city, or displayed in informal exhibits. Elites and intellectuals, meanwhile, participated in conferences and lectures focused on heritage or Beirut’s identity; one of these conferences forms the other focal point for this chapter.

In these discussions about Beirut’s future, its identity and its past, one heard frequent vocal and widespread criticism of the reconstruction company Solidere. These voices were also diverse, from a range including social scientists, dissenting architects (marginal to or excluded from the reconstruction process), heritage groups, and many intellectuals. In different ways, they accused the private international reconstruction company,

Solidere, of designing a business-oriented city at the expense of both the city's heritage and its contemporary residential life.

Solidere responded to these criticisms by hiring a committee comprised of architects, archaeologists and urban planners (the majority of whom had criticized the first plans), whose task was to recommend a list of historically valuable buildings in the downtown area. The committee designated 265 buildings and monuments as "historically valuable" (Beirut in Motion 1996: 48). Solidere then modified its plans and treated these buildings as symbols of Beirut's architectural heritage in order, in the words of Lebanon's director general of antiquities, "to imbue the new city center with symbolic and aesthetic references to the past" (quoted in Percy 1995). Since the majority of these buildings are concentrated in only two main areas, Solidere decided to renovate these two respective neighborhoods—Al-Saifi, located east of the city center, and Wadi Abu Jmil to the west. These renovated sections were intended to serve as displays, almost like a living museum, of the old Beiruti neighborhoods. Other neighborhoods have been largely demolished and remodeled, with the exception of an old building left standing here or there.

These discourses about authenticity and reviving the "popular heritage" that influenced the preservation parts of the overall development design are fundamental to how the Lebanese construct the nation's postwar self-image. The revival and the preservation efforts have two dimensions, which it helps to distinguish: first, protecting what is regarded local and authentic; and second, rejecting the sweeping influences from the outside—in this case the outside means rapid Westernization and the influx of hybrid ideas, lifestyles, and architectural forms. Ironically, the body responsible for implementing this large-scale downtown preservation according to ideals of authenticity was the same company that installed Western multinational hotels and restaurants nearby.

The politics of rebuilding the war-torn country brought to the surface new conflicts over concepts of the modern, the heritage, and the authentic, which are entwined in this process. This can be seen in the ways individuals and groups define and narrate the country's pasts, histories, and identities. Beirutis, then, are working along different channels that sometimes intersect and merge (and sometimes collide) in response to these questions about the

city’s disputed past and future. Each group or project defines heritage according to its own interest. For example, the fishermen stress the vital role of the port, while intellectual women voice nostalgia for their affordable, French-style cafés, where they could socialize with ease; though both have lost their havens to the same force, development, the Beirut they remember and advocate rebuilding is not the same.

The increasing interest in preserving the heritage among Beirut’s various groups and individuals did not create a unified heritage for the city and the country. On the contrary, it exacerbated divisions among the people, with each group struggling to broadcast its own story, to prove that its past should be valued and its own meaning of heritage was the right one. David Lowenthal, in The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History (1998) explains: “Each people supposes their newly inflated heritage concerns to be unique, reflecting some trait of character circumstance, some spirit of veneration or revenge that is peculiarly their own. Some impute these concerns to patriotic ardor, some to nostalgic fantasy, others to specific needs for mourning or celebrating” (Lowenthal 1998: 4).

Why did heritage and tradition become matters of concern at this historical juncture in the Lebanese situation? What characterizes this historical juncture, in the postwar era after a long civil war, is not so much that the crisis is over, but rather that there is a continuation of emergency; although the war has ended, peace is not yet fully restored. One cause of this instability was the fact that in the late 1990s, the state had still not resumed its full responsibilities, or separated clearly from the militia leadership of the war years, when the city was sliced into hostile turfs and virtually ruled by unofficial factions. After the war, policies were in flux, and rumors became the principle source of information about resources. The state and its institutions failed to provide many of the expected services: there was a very high percentage of unemployment, the war-displaced left homeless and still struggled and negotiated to secure reliable living space. As I explain in another section, people across the economic spectrum yearned for a place to drink coffee and socialize as they once did.

Ordinary people (not those in positions of power) therefore enjoyed no certainty about the condition of their lives six months or a year ahead, and

this uncertain relationship to the future shaped their relationship to the past. They expressed the fear that they were excluded from participating in their own future, the rebuilding of the city. They questioned the promises of the political leaders and blamed them for granting the private sector the upper hand in determining the agenda of reconstruction. They complained that the old downtown market has been usurped by international investors, such as American fast-food chains, and aimed at tourists, not residents. Beirutis, who longed for the end of the emergencies associated with the war, continued to live in a state of emergency in the postwar era. Yet they had lost the social, economic, and political networks that helped them during the war, and were yet unable to establish alternative ones for the times of peace. I would argue that in response to the instabilities of the present, regular people idealized the past (both prewar and wartime) and used it as a figurative refuge from the unpleasant reality of the present.

*** The Meaning of Heritage

Etymologically, in Arabic, the word turath (heritage) is derived from the verb waratha, which means the legal transfer of ownership of material and/or abstract objects from one's ancestors. Heritage, turath, means the collective ownership of traditions, beliefs, and ways of life, which were passed on from earlier generations. In Beirut, the word heritage is used in daily life to mean the local traditions that were practiced by previous generations, such as the traditional group dance dabka, or material objects, such as brass pots that were used by Lebanese people in the past. The word turath is often coupled with the word asala (authenticity), which also means the traditions of the past that are pure and original. In the postwar period, Lebanese intellectuals, elite as well as ordinary people, all agree that heritage is essential in the making of the Lebanese identity in the process of recovery from the war and its violence, but these same actors do not agree on which elements form the Lebanese heritage that should be conserved. On a scholarly level, Tahan (1993) defined Al-Turath (the heritage) as "what was produced in the past and some how continued to exist among us in the present. It is our cultural memory that we keep either consciously or mythically as Arabs, Muslims and human beings" (Tahan 1993: 129). Tahan then blurs the clarity of his definition by describing the unsettled state of these concepts: "It is important to admit that the Arab thought is going through a crisis in dealing

with heritage.[71] [Because] heritage is not the problem of the past, but rather it is the problem of the present" (Tahan 1993: 129).

Underlying these divergent debates about the meaning of heritage, and the value of particular components of heritage, is a similar desire to preserve some elements of the past. The rest of this chapter examines two cases of preserving Lebanese heritage, each of which illustrates the effort to preserve particular kinds of heritage, though in different ways. The first case is one of the organizations formed in the postwar era, the Association for the Revival of the Heritage of Ayn al-Mreisi neighborhood, whose members gathered specific aspects of the neighborhood's past to be collected and preserved in a local museum. The second case, also a response to postwar reconstruction, is not a group, but a single conference, organized by and for the country's intellectuals in order to define heritage.

*** The Association for the Revival of the Heritage of Ayn al-Mreisi

The Association for the Revival of the Heritage of Ayn al-Mreisi is an example of marginalized locals organizing themselves to preserve the heritage of their neighborhood and record their memories in a local museum. Members of this association come primarily from three ethno-religious groups, Druze, Sunni and Christian Lebanese, whose residence in the neighborhood of Ayn al-Mreisi can be traced to before the war. Ayn al-Mreisi abuts the downtown area on the waterfront, next to Wadi Abu-Jmil, one of the two neighborhoods selected for Solidere's living-museum style preservation project. The aim of this association is to protect the neighborhood's threatened heritage, as they see it, and to preserve the memories of its original residents.

The association's understanding of the concept of "heritage" is a flexible one Najem, a middle-aged man, is the self-appointed and community-recognized authority on the neighborhood's heritage. A retired fireman who also worked as a diver before he lost both his legs in an explosion, he has transformed the second floor of his own house into what he calls the "Museum of Ayn al-Mreisi." Residents of the neighborhood acknowledge the leadership of Najem, referring to him as "the one who can tell the history of the neighborhood," and they donate items they no longer use but judge as

valuable to his collection. Najem describes the association's objective as "the preservation of anything old, authentic and used by the people of Ayn al-Mreisi." This flexible definition of heritage, and his neighbors' cooperation, is manifest in the jammed, three-room museum that holds, among other things, forty albums of old photographs; a collection of old radio sets, telephones, and phonographs; Beiruti clothes considered traditional; coins from different parts of the world; paintings and postcards of old Beirut; and hundreds of sea shells collected from shores surrounding Beirut.

Najem emphasizes the importance of his museum as a way to preserve Beirut's threatened heritage and guarantee the continued existence of the area. Najem is convinced that his museum is vital not only for protecting the past of Ayn al-Mreisi neighborhood, but also for the whole city. He fortifies this by stating, "Ayn al-Mreisi is what is left of old Beirut, which is also on its way to disappearing. If you come back to this area in 10 years, I am sure that you won't find any of us here, and you won't recognize the area. I am trying to protect the past of the area and the memory of its residents. I believe that our heritage is our history." Najem sees himself as a guardian of the neighborhood's threatened past and the memories of its residents. He finds himself where he has to interpret and negotiate with his neighbors and supporters the meaning of heritage.

Although Najem does not have a systematic method for organizing the museum material, he does have elaborate knowledge of his collection, such as the names of the items, the names of owners and donors, the approximate year they were purchased, the prices the original owners paid for selected items, and most interestingly, an anecdote about it. For example, Najem enthusiastically recounts the story of an old radio set: "This radio was the first radio set in Ayn al-Mreisi. The owner, who was a friend of my father, sold his carpentry equipment to pay for the radio in the 1930s. The neighbors [male] used to go to the carpenter's shop to listen to the radio." Najem tells similar stories about other items of his collection. Each of these items is connected to a story that embeds it in the neighborhood or the social network of its residents. This knowledge is not written anywhere, but reproduced orally; it is perpetuated in the collective memories and the shared knowledge of Najem and his friends, and mainly in the stories they tell about the museum's collection.

As the inventory of phonographs and telephones suggests, Najem's collection is not limited to items manufactured or made in the neighborhood. The museum includes anything adopted or owned by the residents of the neighborhood over time, regardless of the item's origin. In fact, many of the items in the collection like the telephones represented moments of modernity, and not authenticity, at the time when they were first used by the neighborhood's inhabitants. Najem's story of the carpenter's radio is an example of this irony. According to Najem, if an item was used by the inhabitants of Ayn al-Mreisi in the past it becomes part of the neighborhood's heritage and deserves preserving, whether it be an appliance, coins, clothing, or fishing equipment.

One of the complex examples of objects in Najem's museum coming from "outside" the neighborhood is the collection of photographs. The collection includes photographs of international celebrities, such as Hollywood actors and actresses, the Shah of Iran and late King Hussein of Jordan, the American boxer Mohammed Ali, and employees of different embassies whom Najem knew by name—portraits taken when the person was visiting the neighborhood as a tourist. For Najem and his constituency, these photos illustrate a crucial aspect of Ayn al-Mreisi's heritage—namely that the neighborhood beaches, nightclubs, and hotels attracted many foreign visitors, some of whom formed temporary friendships with local residents. Najem and his friends express pride in the neighborhood's past when it was a site of attraction for outsiders and tourists, but, at the same time, they complain about the current version of tourism, a commodification of features of the neighborhood's natural environment and what they describe as "the invasion of the neighborhood by strangers who do not belong to the area." Abu Adnan, a member of the Association for the Revival of the Heritage of Ayn al-Mreisi, indicts these strangers: "With their money, they buy apartments with beautiful views of the sea, but they do not know their actual meaning. They only watch the sea through the glass of their air-conditioned balconies." Other members of the association criticize the new residents for not appreciating the unique character of the neighborhood and its "authentic" past and for not interacting with the original residents. Through the museum's displays, Najem and members of his association hope to document and preserve certain moments of the past as a way of providing the area with roots in the present.

In addition to housing the items that are believed to represent Ayn al-Mreisi's past, the museum functions as a site of remembrance for the neighborhood's residents. Sitting in a big armchair under a vine tree on his old house's balcony, overlooking an alleyway and accompanied with other cofounders, his aging mother and two sisters, Najem narrates what could be called the "biographies" of his collection. During these narrations, his friends and family members complement his story by injecting more details, making comments or prompting Najem to show his guests an item he had just acquired. It is apparent that Najem's friends have heard the same stories before, but they continue to seem interested in hearing them repeated. The family and members of his association become active participants in telling the story of their neighborhood's past through talking about the museum's collection. They seem to perceive the biographies of the museum collection as an extension of their own lives.

The museum/home exudes the quality of a social center, where familiar friends banter, and strangers (like I was) are welcomed as audience to the organization's importance. One of Najem's colleagues is Abu Adnan, a cheerful, talkative 80-year-old Bieruti fisherman, who spends most of his time sitting with Najem on his balcony watching the passersby. Abu Adnan gave Najem an assortment of intimate and personal items that became part of the museum's collection: photographs, an old butcher scale and meat hooks that he used in his shop, his father's traditional Beiruti dress, and his traditional wooden sandals. He also contributed personal stories associated with each item. One afternoon, Abu Adnan asked Najem to show me his father's traditional Beiruti dress, and when Najem obliged, Abu Adnan recounted a story from his boyhood, about a day he followed his father in the old alleys of Beirut and got lost. A third member of the association teased Abu Adnan by saying that he had given the items to the museum because his wife wanted them out. Abu Adnan laughingly replied that he had given them to the museum so he can keep telling stories about his own life. While Abu Adnan was talking about his memories with his father, a younger regular at the museum and a neighborhood painter, Kareem, jumped into the conversation to tell us about his grandfather, who used to wear the traditional Beiruti dress as well. Three of Kareem's original paintings depicting twilight in the neighborhood's fishing port are hanging on a main wall in the museum.

Like Abu Adnan’s donations, the rest of the museum’s collection consists of familiar but no-longer-used items. The items became symbols in the interrelated processes of collective remembering and the preservation of the neighborhood’s past. Ayn al-Mreisi museum serves multiple purposes: it is a kind of archive, site of memory for the residents of the neighborhood who are keen on preserving their memories and storing them, with the possibility of teaching others (like me) about those memories; and it is a place for socializing, where members of the community discuss their concerns, their political positions on important issues related to their lives, dialogue that reinforces their affiliations.

In addition to operating the neighborhood’s museum, The Association for the Revival of the Heritage of Ayn al-Mreisi supported the fishermen of Ayn al-Mreisi in their struggle against investors and developers, who had managed to displace the fishermen and take over the neighborhood’s fishing port. The organization’s interest in reinforcing the fishermen’s cause was crystallized when members of the association, along with members of the Mosque’s Committee (another neighborhood group), collaborated to coordinate their votes in the parliament elections to support candidates who promised to defend the fishermen. As explained by members of the association, the support of the fishermen was seen as one way of protecting an important aspect of the neighborhood’s threatened heritage. Although the neighborhood museum is run by Najem, the efforts and the passion of his neighbors are what make the museum a site of collective memory. In discussing feminism and cultural memory, Hirsch and Smith defined cultural memory as the product of fragmentary personal and collective experiences that are transmitted through memory. The authors view acts of memory as forms of performance, representation, and interpretation (Hirsch and Smith 2002: 5). Similarly, Andreas Huyssen explains the political reasons that make communities preserve their collective memories creating public spheres of real memory that will counter the politics of forgetting imposed by ruling regimes either through reconciliation or through repressive silencing, “in sum, memory has become a cultural obsession on monumental proportions across the globe” (Huyssen 2000: 26).

*** The First Convention of the Lebanese Popular Culture

Whatever its importance for local symbolism or anthropological research, though, the efforts of the heritage museum organization remained marginal to the efforts of defining and preserving the Lebanese heritage. What did those in power, meanwhile, think of the city's cherished past? As said above, one heard among the intellectuals in Lebanon an ongoing debate over the meanings of al-turath (heritage), al-asala (authenticity) and al-hadatha (modernity). At the level of policymaking, the debate involved several powerful parties: concerned intellectuals, state institutions, and non-governmental organizations. Unlike the local residents of Ayn al-Mrieisi, who collected material objects in the museum and recounted individual memories, the intellectuals and policymakers issued various calls for reviving the "heritage" and maintaining the "authentic" at a larger level, in order to unite a strong nation that would be capable of maintaining a peaceful existence internally among its different groups. Heritage, in this vision, will unite the divergent ethno-religious groups (who had fought each other for nearly two decades) within a collective national frame. Although there was a general consensus on the importance of preserving "The Heritage," there was no consensus on what the word means or on whose heritage should be collected and preserved. This lack of agreement sparked ongoing debate, which played out in live conversation, print, and formal gatherings such as conferences.

The "First Convention of the Lebanese Popular Culture" was held in Beirut in December 1993. On the agenda of its meetings, the terms heritage and authenticity were given a prominent place. As a sign of how urgent and critical this issue was, those invited were all figures of power: ministers from an assortment of departments—including media, internal affairs, tourism, culture and higher education; two Parliament members; the director of the Hariri Foundation; professors at local universities; and finally independent researchers and writers. At this gathering, the participants discussed in formal dialogue what constituted the nation's heritage. In the end, they failed to reach an agreement. Nonetheless, in his report of the convention, the Lebanese journalist and writer Joseph Basil (1994) wrote that underneath their variety, these intellectuals did share the definition of Lebanon's popular heritage as "the accumulation of the experiences of ordinary people, experiences that stretch over thousands of years through the many successive governments and armies." In order to include all strata of the

Lebanese society within this vision, the participants in the convention agreed that the Lebanese heritage should be seen as having four characteristics: collective, unique, divergent, and multifold. Participants in the conference acknowledged that the Lebanese heritage is multilayered. They recommended that the state, with cultural and academic institutions, play a key role in collecting and preserving not only the country's heritage, but also its popular culture. In this move, heritage was conflated with yet another complex category: popular culture.

The conference reporter, Basil, acknowledged the variations in the components of heritage among distinct Lebanese groups. Moreover, he attributed these differences to geographic region, rather than to sectarian or religious affiliation, that is, to rural (agrarian and generally more poor) or urban (cosmopolitan, modern) differences. This is a notable assertion, given that it comes after a long civil war based, largely, on sectarian divisions—not on regional differences. According to this vision, heritage transcends sectarian affiliations but not social classes. By obscuring the still volatile tensions between different religious identities, the conference participants, analogous to the museum organizers and other Beirut residents, configured "heritage" in a way that would help the process of recovering from war.

Participants in the debate over defining the postwar Lebanese heritage selected specific aspects of the country's contested past, and presented them as "the" Lebanese Heritage. While in a positive light, such selecting of elements is an attempt to create a collective past that could unite the once fighting factions, on the negative side, highlighting the elements that ostensibly unite people induces a collective amnesia, in which the various sectarian "traditions" and "heritage" (which had been centrally important during the war) were now silenced.

Which practices were remembered, which (deliberately) forgotten? The components of heritage highlighted by more powerful voices were mostly rural practices. These parts of the culture were shared by all religious and sectarian groups living in the same geographical region, which included Christians, Druze, and Muslims. Basil went on to support his geographic, non-sectarian scheme by stating that the Christians share the same popular heritage as the Druze, because both groups live in the Shouf Mountains,

while the “tribal mentality” of the Shiites in the Hermil region is shared by the Maronite Christians in the Bshiri area. Why at this specific moment did regional heritage become more important than the ethno-religious affiliation?

These official voices expressed a growing concern for promoting a national collective heritage that could be shared by the divergent eighteen ethno-religious groups that constitute Lebanese society. But how does their vision of the past incorporate these ethnic and religions differences? Examining the proceedings of the Convention of the Lebanese Popular Culture, it is evident that, despite what Basil reported, the participants in fact reached no consensus on the definitions of these central terms, not “culture” (thaqafa), “popular culture” (thaqafa shabeya), “tradition”(taqlaid), “heritage” (turath) or “elite culture” (thaqafat al-anukhba). At the conference, the phrase elite culture is used to refer to the urban elite, the opposite of the rural lower classes, a distinction that raises contradictions, as I will explain below. Ironically, while the convention’s participants couldn’t agree on what heritage is, they all agreed that, whatever it is, it must be preserved. More emphatically, collecting the heritage, traditions and memories of the Lebanese people should be a national priority.

In the presentations at the convention, speakers (who were mostly city dwellers) invoked a shared past, and that past belonged to rural traditions. The rural people who were believed to practice these traditions were themselves absent from the convention. Officials and intellectuals called for collecting, preserving, restoring, and replicating proverbs, songs, fables, marriage traditions, and, interestingly, religious rituals. Heritage remains the concern of the state and the elite of the country, who want to safeguard selective aspects of the lifestyles of the ordinary people, more specifically the rural population. To preserve these cultural forms, these elites frame them as the public property of the nation and as an essential part of its unified past.

The desire to preserve Lebanon’s past is not—at the levels of government or business sectors— longing to return to the past (as it may be for some residents). Rather the past and the rural are valued as ingredients with which to shape the future Lebanon, and that future must be modern—that is, integrated into global systems. In tune with the neoliberal economic policies

of Western nations, the route to “modernity” is seen as granting more power to the private sector, as evidenced in the Hard Rock Café and the international investment that controls the reconstruction of Beirut, as mentioned previously. In this scheme, the route to modernity also requires cleaning dirt, organizing disordered spaces, and getting rid of urban illegalities.

The issue that looms over all these strategies is the problem of the displaced population—those who were dislocated during and because of the civil war, who still lack permanent housing—a “problem” that is related to the debates about heritage and the city’s identity. Uprooted from their homes, these people adapted themselves to other spaces in the city, often homes abandoned by the more affluent Lebanese who were able to flee to safer regions. Similar to the debates over heritage and authenticity, the discourse surrounding the evacuation of the displaced is also widespread and controversial. The displaced are viewed as lacking urban culture and, worse, of disturbing the social order of the urban by making it grubby, dirty, and backward. The goal of finally placing the displaced has implications related to the city’s aesthetics and the goal of modernizing, both of which are inevitably bound with the theme of social and economic power, as it is the elite who will largely determine the fate of the displaced. They also shape the discourses through which the displaced, who are mainly of rural origin, are framed, which positions the internal refugees as the wrong opposing term in a set of binary oppositions. The displaced represent dirt, illegality, and poverty—the stark opposite to the modernity the development project aims for.

The responses to the large-scale social problem involve issues of geographic region as well as time: All the proposed solutions for solving the problem of displacement imply the return of the rural population to their prewar villages. Even those who criticize how the government treats the displaced agree that they should be removed from the Beirut area. There are no calls, for example, to incorporate the displaced into the new plans of the downtown area and into the urban fabric of Beirut. The displaced are accused of endangering the city by ruralizing it, especially because they lack the “culture of the city.” For example, in The Suspended City, Wadah Shararah, a Lebanese sociologist, describes the displaced population in Beirut as the “temporary residents” of the city who impose their

“authentic rural culture” on the urban environment without integrating into the city’s “rational and social life.” He continues to accuse the rural displaced of hindering Beirut’s urban heritage by “ruralizing” it, and even violating it through the use of violence (Shararah 1985: 13–15).

Others criticized the state’s policy of giving the displaced cash compensations in order for them to evacuate the urban spaces they illegally occupied during the war. While agreeing that the displaced should leave these spaces, these critics believe the displaced should not be awarded cash compensations because they were not using them to build new homes in their villages of origin, but instead spending the compensation money in the city. Others accused the displaced of not caring about the country or its national economy.

*** Conclusions

The displaced, and the discourses they engender as a social problem, highlight the contradictions of the national project of recovery. On the one hand, this rural population (in this context the displaced), is seen as an obstacle in healing the nation’s wounds; their presence in Beirut hinders its future modernity. On the other hand, official discourse sees the rural heritage as rooted in the countryside, the very place these displaced come from; and in order to accomplish modernity the rural heritage should be preserved, studied, and collected. So while the people who originally came from the country are dirty and incongruent, the rural, as the source of tradition, is seen as the pure, original and authentic strain of national culture. While the displaced must be removed, or erased, the regional culture that produced them must be protected and replicated, in order for Lebanon to move toward its goal to be, in the words of the reconstruction project motto, “An Ancient City for the Future.”

Defining Lebanon’s popular heritage and preserving its traditions by the urban elite is part of the country’s search for its postwar identity. On the surface, this process might be read to suggest that the actors involved are trying to depart from Western modernities, but in fact their strategies are a way of creating “alternative modernity” in an attempt to be part of the global

world. Defining heritage and rewriting the past is always politically charged. Of the possible places, things, and moments in national history, which pieces of the past get preserved and counted as part of the heritage, and which ones are marginalized or erased, depends on who has the power to define heritage, the authentic, and national ambitions, in this case, modernity as embodied in global capitalism.

[68] Lebanon’s Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri was assassinated on February 14, 2004. His death resulted in a UN resolution that forced Syria to withdraw its forces from Lebanon.

[69] Terms such as heritage, authenticity, and modernity bear layers of meanings. In this chapter I will use such terms as they are used in the literature cited both here and by my interviewees, without elaborating the different meanings of each term.

[70] The following are examples of nostalgic publications that include memoirs with titles such as: Beirut in the Heart (Jarkas 1996), Oh for those Old Days Beirut (Rubayz 1986), Beirut Fragments (Makdisi 1990), Memory for Forgetfulness (Darwish 1995), Nadia, Captive of Hope: Memoir of an Arab Woman (Kabafani 1998), Our Beirut (Mukhtar Itani 1996), Beirut the Heritage (Al-Khatib 1993), and Beirut: Morning Beauty (Machnouk 1994). All these writings record the authors’ experiences about the past and thoughts on the heritage of Beirut. Novels include: Beirut Blues (Shaykh 1995), Beirut Nightmares (Samman 1997) Leaving Beirut: Women and the Wars Within (Ghoussoub 1998), City Gates (Khuri 1990), and The Stone of Laughter (Barakat 1995), and films such as West Beirut: Coming of Age in a Time of War, Between Us Two Beirut and The Civilized. In these, the authors shed light on social and political aspects of the war, which many condemned, criticizing those involved in it.

[71] As some examples: The Association for Memory and Development-AMED, which aims at preserving the built and natural heritage; The

Association for the Safeguard of the Sites and Old Residences (APSAD), which seeks to raise awareness about environmental problems and to encourage the safeguard of the cultural and natural heritage of the country. After the war, APSAD added a new dimension to its mission, which is to safeguard old constructions. It promoted the annual Daraj el Fann exhibition in Gemayze, and produced postcards depicting Beirut's old houses. The Audi Foundation aims at rediscovering the heritage of the city, revalorizing tourism, organizing artistic and cultural activities (exhibitions, conferences, seminars, concerts) and the revival of traditional professions. The Cultural Dialogue Circle, works for the promotion of heritage and popular education. There was also the National Foundation for Heritage and the Beirut Heritage Association.

[72] Issues of heritage and authenticity and modernity have been debated among Arab scholars. For further information, see George Trabishi and Aziz Al-Azmeh.

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* Part IV: Reconstructing Identities/Peace-Building

** 12. Regulating Peace or Institutionalizing Rage? The Identity Conundrums of Postwar Educational Policymaking in Mozambique

Antoinette Errante

<quote>

All politics is identity politics. Political activity is... animated by efforts to define and defend who I am, or we are, or you are, or hope to be, or hope to be seen to be. By extension, it is motivated by our imagination of what is or ought to be mine or ours or yours. It is not only about self-government. What

structures it, often beneath the surface, is the unfinished enterprise of self-construction and self-presentation.

<right>

—(Parker 2005: 53)

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It is why politicians like to be photographed kissing babies and reading books to schoolchildren: child protection and formal schooling have become values so intrinsically linked with modern states, we can hardly think of the world community recognizing a state or the legitimacy of ruling elites that did not enthusiastically embrace them. This link between child protection and state legitimacy is precisely why modern warfare has made innocent civilians and social institutions the casualties of choice (Machel 1996). There is no better way to challenge a state's legitimacy than to render visible the vulnerability of its civilian population and destroy those institutions associated with societal well-being.

Among the many challenges faced by reconciling societies, therefore, are the identity conundrums that wartime leadership identities place on peacetime ones (Lyons 2004; Manning 2004; "Remaking Guebuza" 2006). In many recent world conflicts, a good combatant must be ruthless enough to maim, brutalize, rape women and children, and burn down schools and hospitals (Machel 1996). As enemies become democrats in post-conflict societies, this wartime identity no longer serves them. The very same leaders who a short while ago expressed their power by killing babies must now legitimize their power by kissing and educating them. This "identity repositioning" (Liu and Hilton 2005) tends to inspire a case of selective amnesia: former enemies tend to forget and erase from social representations their own past atrocities while vividly remembering and documenting the past atrocities of their former enemies.

In the rest of this chapter, I will explore how the identity repositioning of reconciling ruling elites leads to decision-making behaviors that can jeopardize the long-term prospects for peace. Specifically, I will examine how this identity conundrum has compromised the post-conflict educational policy context in the case of Mozambique, with devastating consequences for addressing the needs of those most likely to lapse a country into violence (political, criminal, and/or interpersonal): war-affected youth and child combatants (Ember and Ember 1994; Everatt and Jennings 1993; Everatt 1995; Gilligan 2001). Mozambique is an interesting case because it is considered a success story in the international literature (Manning 2004; McMullin 2004; Pitcher 2004). The country has not lapsed back into war and many lessons learned from other failed peace processes (Angola, in particular) informed demobilization efforts in Mozambique. These efforts focused peace processes almost exclusively on the regulation of violence (prevent a return to war by focusing on a postwar agenda that enables a selective group of Mozambican leaders to blot out wartime identities) rather than the positive regulation of peace (encourage and facilitate the transformation of violence-adaptive identities into peace-adaptive ones throughout society through broad-based socio-political transformation).

By not explicitly attending to the identity work of average Mozambicans, the postwar policy context did not address the dynamics of protracted conflict mostly likely to institutionalize rage. War and political violence are some of the many forms of violence that actually threaten the long-term consolidation of peace; other types of violence come in the form of structural violence, interpersonal violence, crime, substance and domestic abuse and internalized violence. Unfortunately, since conventional wisdom defines a country “postwar” five years after the cessation of political violence, the connections between these lingering violences and the war are often rendered invisible, as are the ways in which the rage over unresolved war traumas and structural inequalities begets other forms of violence (Gilligan 1991; Errante 1999; 2003).

Mozambique’s experience illustrates that finding a solution to the postwar policy context’s penchant for breeding this long-term rage is complicated because it is a byproduct of a fundamental challenge faced by reconciling societies: the identity work required to regulate violence leads to decision-making behaviors among ruling elites that can compromise the identity work

required to foster decision-making behaviors that would make the positive regulation of peace a priority.

*** All Politics is Identity Politics: The Dilemmas of Power, Identity, History, and Policy in War-to-Peace Transitions

Identity is a construct that expresses as well as gives expression to our sense of power, power being the sense of personal and collective intactness that we experience when we have “access to and control over valued symbolic and material goods” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). Whether we are conscious of it or not, our sense of accomplishment in giving expression to valued identities such “parent,” “leader,” “healer,” “man,” “woman,” “patriot,” “warrior,” or “statesman” is contingent upon our ability to access the symbolic and material resources that confer status and legitimacy to those roles. Our identities can be multiple, nested, and in flux because our sense of access to and control over the symbolic and material goods valued within any given context can vary across time and space (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Stein 1987).

Since these valued symbolic and material goods are context-specific, their meaning to the individuals and groups that value them does not always seem “rational” to outside observers.[72] It has led to a realization that theories and processes of negotiation and conflict resolution that are based upon “rational actors” are problematic because human actors, though reasoning creatures, are not necessarily “rational” (a term that is also increasingly understood as a Western cultural construct). There has been a subsequent call for a canon of negotiation and conflict resolution that takes culture, power, and identity into account (Avruch 2006; Honeyman and Schneider 2004; Hughes 2004).

The reason to take non-rational, non-linear dimensions of human decision-making into account when trying to understand negotiation and the positive regulation of peace is because we already know how culture, identity, and power affect conflict escalation and the positive regulation of violence (Honeyman and Schneider 2004). Our sense of what constitutes a conflict or an attack derives from situations where access to the symbolic and material

resources we believe we should have control over is threatened; when we say we—as individuals or groups—feel threatened, what we are actually experiencing are threats to the intactness of our individual and collective identities (Avruch 2006; Mahjoub et al. 1989; Wolfe and Yang 1996).[73] In moments of insecurity, particularly when these are protracted, we tend to protect ourselves from the threat of annihilation by denying this threat—and we do this by re-making our identities with narratives that re-inscribe "us" with an idealized sense of purpose and thus power, and defining, diminishing, and de-humanizing "them"—those that we perceive are attempting to instill insecurity (Volkan 1985, 1988). We thus repair the physical and symbolic boundaries of self and community that have been penetrated or threatened with penetration by constructing high and impermeable walls between "us," our friends and allies, and "them," our enemies, and their friends and their allies. Groups adopt new or re-fashion old ideologies—political, ethnic, religious, racial, gendered—that sustain these new "stories of us" (for examples, see Errante 2003; Peteet 1994).

In this way "realistic group conflicts (at the functional level) survive through social representations that provide a symbolic resource for national identities" (Liu and Hilton 2005: 543). It is no wonder, therefore, that Liu and Hilton (2005) found in a cross-national analysis of historical representations that military events constituted the majority of defining moments in national histories: wars and conflicts are precisely when we tend to become preoccupied with defining the boundaries of identity and giving them heightened importance. Historical representations can thus be understood as a group narrative to respond to new challenges (Liu and Hilton 2005). This is not a question of history being subjective; even facts that may be indisputable may be given different meanings by different groups at different times depending upon the utility of those facts for positioning collective identities in the present (Ebenshade 1995; Evans 2003; Teski and Climo 1995).

In this sense, all policymaking involves implicit and/or explicit historical representations. Policies address problems and issues by defining the present and future in relation to the past; to the extent they align the past with a particularly desired present and future, they are implicitly histories of the regimes and biographies of the policymakers that shaped them (Teski and Climo 1995). Therefore, policy discourse, formation, and implementation

are as much “identity narratives” as histories themselves (Hunt and Benford 1994; Gobodo-Madzikizela 1995). It is why, in the end, “all politics are identity politics,” whether they support policies that justify the need to continue fighting or policies that justify the consolidation of peace.

And this is precisely the rub of identity politics in transitions from protracted conflict to peace. Identity politics steer the collective course: in times of protracted conflict, policies implicitly and explicitly reproduce social representations (some imagined “us” versus some imagined “them”) that inscribe the situation of violence with power thereby making it recursive. Elites and communities attempting to reconcile will only relinquish violence with power if they can be assured access to and control over the identity resources (symbolic and material goods) they feel will allow them to claim peace with power (Ross 2000). Long-term reconciliation and the positive regulation of peace after protracted violence is thus akin to changing the course of an ocean current; at no time is this process of identity repositioning more polemical and contested than during regime change (Evans 2003).

Yet the existing literature and conventional wisdom on war-to-peace transitions have addressed this dilemma in a very limited way, focusing almost exclusively on the “reintegration” of former adult military combatants, since the research shows that non-demobilized forces, especially mid-level officers are more likely to turn to organized criminal activities if they are not offered the symbolic and material resources with which to craft high status peacetime identities (Addison 2003; McMullin 2004).

Although the demobilization of adult troops is an important component of postwar identity repositioning, this focus by the donor community has obscured as much as it has illuminated the importance of identity work in war-to-peace transitions. First, reintegration implies that some members left a society that remained intact during wartime and now need to be brought back into the fold; this overlooks the degree to which protracted violence insinuates itself—and becomes normalized—throughout societies in conflict (Addison 2004; Errante 1999). In reality, a demobilization-centered model of peace consolidation is simply transferring combatants from one organization where violence is normalized (the military) to another (society at-large). It

facilitates “making old soldiers fade away” in that success becomes defined as the “absence of visible differences between demobilised and non-demobilised” (Dolan and Schafer 1997 in Alden 2002: 342) and that it does tend to avoid a return to war (McMullin 2004). However, such a model does not attend to the broader dimensions of war-to-peace identity work which has to do with assisting all members of reconciling societies to integrate/interact in fundamentally different ways than they did in wartime and even before the war, so that these patterns of social relations are not reproduced and do not threaten peaceful resolution of differences in the future.

Despite the growing recognition that political violence begets other forms of violence (Gilligan 2001), and the increasing calls over the last decade for “broad-based recovery” from conflict (Addison 2003), this approach continues to be the ideal rather than the reality (Barakat et al. 2005; McMullin 2004; Tobach 2004). There are many dynamics of the long-term positive regulation of peace that are obscured by the donor community’s focus on the demobilization of adult troops, but I will focus on two interrelated aspects.

First, the donor community’s emphasis on the demobilization of adult troops means that reconciling ruling elites can reposition their identities and establish their credibility as “reconciling” leaders as long as they attend to former adult combatants in some way. It holds reconciling accountable only for the regulation of violence (not returning to war) rather than the positive regulation of peace (broad-based societal recovery). This means that reconciling groups can gain international recognition without ever attending to the broader needs of their war-affected populations and they do so essentially with the blessing of the international community.

The Mozambican case suggests that ruling elites prefer this limited mandate because it facilitates their own postwar identity repositioning, by allowing them to move forward while forgetting their roles in creating war-affected populations in the first place. It tends to result in another glaring omission in postwar recovery plans: the needs of child combatants and other war-affected youth.

*** Child Soldiers? What Child Soldiers? No Child Soldiers Here...

The situation and policy implications of children born and reared in violent societies are especially critical to understand if we are to encourage peace for the long haul (Errante 1999; Errante and Efraime 2006). These so-called “lost generations” are not actually “lost.” Instead, war-affected youth that do not succeed in forming social and economic networks in peacetime to substitute for their wartime networks are those most likely to “disturb the peace” (Gilligan 1996; Everatt and Jennings 1993). Protracted conflicts “school” children and youth in violence and its proliferation while compromising their access to formal education. Their transition to peace is often marked by high levels of illiteracy and conflict-based behaviors, skills, and identities that do not easily translate into valued (and employable) peacetime ones. When peacetime offers them no other means of survival, war-affected youth are also likely to turn to the sex or drug industry (McKay and Mazurana 2004; USIP 2001). This exposure along with their vulnerability as refugees, combatants, and victims of sexual violence makes war-affected children and youth particularly susceptible to HIV infection (USIP 2001). To the degree that education constitutes a symbolic and material resource through which wartime values and identities can be transformed into high-status peacetime ones, the responsiveness of the post-conflict educational policy context to the needs of war-affected youth is a critical aspect of sustainable peace and security (Errante 1999).

Unfortunately, it is an aspect of long-term peace consolidation that is often overlooked and this is precisely what occurred in Mozambique. Mozambique’s marginalization of war-affected youth in its post-conflict educational strategic plan was a stunning reversal because Mozambique became an international model of interministerial efforts to address the needs of war-affected children during the FRELIMO-RENAMO conflict (Errante 1999). But these programs were not carried through in peacetime. Of all the educational programs proposed in the government’s 1998 National Education Program, only two were cut from its final 2000–2005 Strategic Plan for the Education Sector. The two programs that were cut were those assisting war-affected teachers and children, and out-of-school youth, such as former child soldiers, the children with limited access to schooling during

the fourteen-year conflict, and those who were largely no longer of school age (Errante 1999; Errante and Efraime 2006). Such programs, considered a priority in earlier drafts of the reform, were relegated to civil society in the final version of the plan.

Mozambican civil society has been recognized as effectively mobilizing itself for peace and reconciliation in the immediate post-conflict period. By 2000, however, the community leaders at the forefront of such efforts (e.g., traditional healers, religious leaders, elders, especially women) were themselves economically and emotionally strained (Errante 1999). Conventional wisdom, however, continued to be that the ever-resilient African family and community could continue to sustain and support its youth.

Those sectors of Mozambican civil society that pressed on working with war-affected communities also found their efforts increasingly stymied. Since most donors classify a country “postwar” after five years of peace, by 2000 most Mozambican NGOs did not qualify for much international assistance. None of the existing aid in any case would have reached most child soldiers because funds set aside by agencies such as USAID for child combatants are only extended to youth up to the age of eighteen. Many of Mozambique’s child combatants reached the age of eighteen within a few years of accords being signed. Child combatants under the age of sixteen were regarded by the United Nations as unassembled troops and thus were not eligible for the demobilization benefits that their adult counterparts received. Women and girls, who had provided service in the various armies as combatants and concubines were not demobilized at all (McKay and Mazurana 2004).

The bureaucratic challenges in the post-conflict policy context seemed to be the result rather than the cause of much more fundamental issues related to identity politics. In my own fieldwork on post-conflict educational policies carried out between 1996 and 2001, I found a “silent impasse” (Scheff 1994) in regard to the issue of war-affected children in general and child soldiers in particular. For diplomats, officers of international donor agencies, and education ministry officials with whom I spoke, the issue was so contentious and sensitive that most would only speak off the record. Policy development and implementation were paralyzed in some instances because pro-RENAMO

or pro-FRELIMO foreign governments insisted that agencies working with war-affected children work only with and acknowledge that one side of the previous conflict—FRELIMO or RENAMO, respectively—actually used child soldiers. The FRELIMO-led government insisted that its troops had not used child combatants and that only RENAMO had engaged in such behavior. Officers of international organizations that I knew had been heavily involved in wartime efforts to secure the well-being of children denied that their agencies had been involved or denied that they had ever produced final reports of written documents of such efforts. Those extensive interministerial education proposals developed during the conflict—and which I had followed from 1989 to 1993—seemed to simply vanish in peacetime.

It seemed that neither FRELIMO nor RENAMO wanted to take responsibility for the fact that best estimates to date suggest 27 percent of the total number of soldiers used by RENAMO, FRELIMO, and local militias were under-age conscripts (around 25,498). Of these 16,553 had served under FRELIMO and 8,945 (about 40 percent) under RENAMO (ONUMOZ 1994). Though both RENAMO and FRELIMO were ultimately forced to acknowledge the existence of child soldiers (though their numbers continue to be disputed), “child soldiers have been, and continue to be used as political currency” (Interact Report 2004: 5).

Interact’s 2004 report on “Children in Armed Conflict” demonstrates some of the difficulties of trying to understand the experiences of youth combatants and their war-affected peers. The report indicates that in interviews, “former child soldiers did not appear to differentiate between their own situations and those of their families and communities. They share, with the rest of young Mozambican populations, serious concerns about education, employment and governance” (p. 5). Given that 80 percent of the schools were destroyed during the conflict and as many as 20 percent of the school-age population was estimated to have been severely traumatized, defining the success of “integration” based upon the fact that youth combatants are no different from their peers is extremely misleading because, as the report suggests, the impact of war and poverty is so generalized. It points to the difficulties in the ways in which “success” in reintegration programs is measured (Barakat et al. 2005). Moreover, the cultural and political context of combatant’s responses must be understood. Though there are regional variations and traditions, generally speaking, the traditional Mozambican

approaches to healing that proved so powerful in addressing the psycho-social trauma of war in the years immediately following the peace accord (Efraime and Errante 2002; Honwana 1997) are based upon the notion that once someone undergoes rituals of reintegration and is accepted back into the community, it becomes taboo to discuss the war; this is a culturally sanctioned form of identity repositioning. It is not surprising, therefore, that former combatants would not link their present situation to their past. It is also not surprising, given the high value placed upon strong communal bonds, that these combatants would not differentiate themselves from their communities. Finally, in my own fieldwork with Mozambican psychologists who worked with child combatants (Boia Efraime and his colleagues at the NGO Rebuilding Hope, for instance), we noted that fear and distrust of the government was prevalent. These youthful combatants feel they have been betrayed many times over by the current political elites (Efraime and Errante 2002). They still remember when the president of Mozambique was either the chief of the army whom they served—only to be betrayed by him and dis-acknowledged at demobilization—or the chief of the army that looked at them through the barrel of a gun. They have no great incentive to speak critically about those in power.

This is particularly so given that the international community seems to remain silent on the issue of war-affected populations. The Interact Report (2004) highlights that international donors and humanitarian organizations are caught between a rock and a hard place because their work depends on good relations with ruling elites; this was also the reason that my informants in the international community would only speak off the record of their experiences with the government regarding policies designed to address the needs of war-affected populations (Errante 1999). But others with whom I spoke took a more calculated approach. One international consultant who had worked on the Education Sector Strategic Plan responded to my queries regarding why war-affected youth had been eliminated from the plan by observing that countries simply had to absorb a “lost generation” and that anyway most of these child combatants would probably be dead of AIDS before they could become a nuisance to society. Some, sadly, would and will succumb to AIDs and other diseases related to poverty and poor nutrition; however, such cost-benefit analyses neglected to figure into the equation that many of these young people—like child soldiers and war-affected youth in other post-conflict societies—would leave behind a whole new generation of AIDS orphans.

So why this baffling lack of attention to war-affected communities by reconciling ruling elites? And why does the international donor community seem complicit in this? I propose that this posture is largely the result of the identity repositioning work of reconciling elites during regime changes, in particular the legitimizing function of education and child protection, and the transnational pressure for postwar nations to assume a national persona that is “post-postwar.”

*** Regime Change and the Legitimizing Function of Education and Child Welfare in Mozambique

As an “identity resource,” the provision of education and the protection of children is deeply embedded in legitimizing the state and its political elites (Ramirez and Boli 1987). This legitimacy is an important form of socio-political capital for new regimes generally and for post-conflict regimes in particular; it facilitates economic development, international prestige, and the good graces of a variety of domestic as well as transnational forces (Arnove 1995; Marshall 1985; Fägerlind and Saha 1989). It is no wonder that the postwar Mozambican government was eager to put its “stamp” on a new strategic plan for the education sector. As a policy document, the Education Sector Strategic Plan is very much an identity narrative, and in this regard the initiatives included as well as excluded are important to consider.

The general exclusion of war-affected children is part of the amnesia that postwar ruling elites develop around issues that suggest they might have at any point contributed to child maltreatment, since the point of education policies in new regimes is to legitimate the regime (Fägerlind and Saha 1989). In order to formulate policies regarding war-affected youth, reconciling elites must first be willing to acknowledge their existence and, with their former enemies-cum-political opposition, reach some agreement about (a) what happened, (b) to whom, (c) by whom, and (d) what is the preferable solution. All of this requires a use of the past that does not suit the social representations that reconciling elites wish to create in the present. That representation is one of a government that works positively to support educational opportunities and child welfare.

To understand how this has worked in Mozambique, we need only take a journey through Mozambique's iconography of education because it provides an interesting window on the country's political evolution. In the fall of 1964, as the reality of the anti-colonial insurrections in Angola and Mozambique began to sink in among Portugal's ruling elite, pictures spoke the thousand words that the Estado Novo's strict censorship would not allow to be spoken. For the first time, the journal of Portugal's Education Directorate, Escola Portuguesa (1934–1974), began to depict not only African children on its cover, but African school children looking up to Mozambique's governor-general, Manuel Maria Rodrigues-Sarmento, dressed in full military regalia. But the 1960s, being a time of "polemical representations" (Moscovici 1988) in the Portuguese "overseas provinces" (aka "colonies"), gave rise to counter-iconographies challenging Portuguese state legitimacy. Mozambique's anti-colonial forces, FRELIMO (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), legitimized its armed struggle against the Portuguese state on the grounds that the movement would educate while liberating (Errante 1994, 1995). Escola Portuguesa (1934–1974) became a symbol every bit as important as the gun and both of FRELIMO's earliest leaders—Eduardo Mondlane and Samora Machel—appear in countless photos dressed in military garb and embracing schoolchildren. FRELIMO's journals, Mozambique Revolution (1963–1975) and Voz da revolução (1965–1988), hardly had a cover that did not feature children, soldiers, or both learning to read. After Mozambique's independence in 1975, President Samora Machel continued to appear with schoolchildren, rallying the country to "study and think of knowledge as an instrument of the people's liberation" (1977) because "education was everyone's job" (1978).

Eighteen years and a bloody civil war later, RENAMO (Resistência Nacional de Moçambique), FRELIMO's nemesis-cum-opposition party in a multiparty democracy, would feature on the cover of its journal, Moçambique: Novos Tempos (March 1993), its president Afonso Dhlakama, in military garb and surrounded by schoolchildren. The pose is almost identical to many of those of Samora Machel taken nearly thirty years earlier. Now that peace accords had been signed and RENAMO had made the transition to opposition party, it was anxious, as RENAMO Secretary Vincent Ululu exclaimed, to show that "we [RENAMO] are not beasts with horns and a tail" (personal interview 2001). FRELIMO leaders, meanwhile—still the majority

party in the new democratic legislature—did all they could to undermine RENAMO's attempts at this identity—repositioning, insisting upon referring to RENAMO leaders and government representatives as "armed bandits."

To understand this war of images is to understand the last thirty years or so of Mozambique's history—the role of education in that history—and why this history remains such contested terrain. Under Portuguese colonial rule, educational opportunities for blacks remained limited throughout the colonial period (Errante 1995). As a result, only 2 percent of Mozambique's population was literate at the time of independence in 1975 (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983). FRELIMO consolidated its legitimacy as the agent of armed struggle against colonial rule by constructing a large portion of its identity on its educational agenda. Education's prominence continued throughout FRELIMO's post-independence socialist development agenda. National reconstruction efforts, including literacy campaigns and the expansion of schooling, as well as the euphoria to sustain them were soon disrupted by political instability, economic turmoil, and natural disasters. Mozambique's socialist sympathies made it vulnerable to Cold War politics. It was also surrounded by the white minority governments of Rhodesia and South Africa that retaliated for their fear of Mozambique's black socialist leadership by engaging in campaigns of state-sponsored terrorism. In its zeal to create a socialist national persona, FRELIMO also marginalized (sometimes through force) all cultural and political remnants of traditional African society, which it considered "obscurantist." By the early 1980s, when Rhodesia, and then South Africa launched and supported an insurgency force, RENAMO, its leadership as well as rank and file included many disgruntled former FRELIMO supporters.

RENAMO's initial purpose was to destabilize the Mozambican state (Isaacman 1987; Vines 1991), and it did so through a cult of violence and extreme brutality directed at civilian populations and state institutions such as schools and hospitals (Wilson 1992). This brutalized representation inspired fear in civilian militia and FRELIMO troops, and the destruction of schools and hospitals was a direct challenge to state authority. FRELIMO defended its identity as the party that had brought education to Mozambique by organizing—with the assistance of international donors—a broad interministerial effort to develop educational assistance to students and teachers that would take into account the traumatic and violent reality in

which many of them were living. Mozambique's efforts were exemplary in a country where conflict killed 1.5 million people, including 600,000 children, displaced 5 million people, and decimated the country's infrastructure (Msabaha 1995).

The postwar education policy sector has thus been especially contested terrain because of its historic symbolic significance to the wartime representations of both parties. It becomes impossible for the parties to discuss education sector issues such as the construction of schools without FRELIMO recriminations and RENAMO counter-recriminations. FRELIMO reminds RENAMO that new schools would not be necessary had RENAMO not destroyed them; RENAMO counters that in any case FRELIMO only built schools in regions that paid ideological patronage to FRELIMO's socialist agenda. Discussions to support culturally responsive curriculum are an invitation for RENAMO to remind FRELIMO that it was they that had defended African traditions against FRELIMO's attempt to wipe them out. RENAMO wants to claim the education sector and child protection as "its" platform as a way of undoing its wartime brutalizing identities. FRELIMO leaders have resisted all RENAMO's efforts; education is too closely tied to FRELIMO's identity for them to share it or surrender it to RENAMO. And this is one area where the personal truly is political. FRELIMO's ruling elites have been with the party since the liberation movement; the historical representation of FRELIMO is deeply enmeshed with the meaning of their own biographies. The same can be said of RENAMO's leadership.

And so, the parties alternate between periods of silent impasses and shouting matches in an interminable quarrel. Unresolved anger and shame have paralyzed national conversations regarding postwar healing and reconstruction in general and the needs of child soldiers and war-affected children in particular.

Because the donor community has focused on discouraging a return to war, it has not taken into consideration that these silent impasses not only temporarily stymie policy formulation, but they also encourage the institutionalization of a festering rage among ruling elites that is as potentially explosive as that which is festering among marginalized Mozambicans throughout the country because of the postwar reconstruction

policies (and lack thereof). This rage manifests itself in FRELIMO “old guard” leadership refusing to step aside or mentor up-and-coming young leaders within the party who might be more willing to work with their RENAMO counterparts on policies that were mutually agreeable; in the refusal of presidential winners (to date members of FRELIMO) to appoint RENAMO members to cabinet positions; and in the lack of bipartisan efforts, with RENAMO largely confining its position as opposition party to voting down any policy put forward by FRELIMO (Manning 2003).

*** Amnesia and the Need to Be Post-Postwar: The Role of Globalization

The disincentive for the postwar ruling elites to remember war-affected populations is also influenced by the incentives fueling their perceptions of the type of postwar social representations that are most desirable. The Education Sector Strategic Plan is replete with language concerning “capacity-building,” economic growth, educational excellence, and the preparation of a capable workforce. This is language that directly relates to Mozambique’s desire to cultivate its reputation as a success story as a modern African state. In other words, the best postwar state is one that is post-postwar.

Postwar countries need to reconstruct their infrastructures and their economic base for the purpose of economic development and poverty reduction, both of which are considered critical to the consolidation of peace. But how does a postwar government such as Mozambique’s convince both foreign and national investors that the political and economic climate is stable enough to invest? Postwar governments are under economic and political pressures to construct a future-oriented national image in which war is a thing of the past. This also tends to suppress policy discussions and priorities that address the needs of war-affected populations.

Thus, the identity conundrum: the general postwar policy climate creates a tension between attending to the social and human dimensions of prolonged conflict in the postwar context and attending to national reconstruction. These tensions have to do with the transitional state of postwar societies and how to best manage this transition: to what degree do post-conflict societies

“look back” at the context of war and to what degree do they assume a future orientation in which the consolidation of peace is already assumed? International and national postwar policy contexts tend to foster a bias for the latter; that is, a need and desire for postwar governments to act as if they were already “post-postwar.” This policy bias creates a tension between poverty reduction priorities (including educational and vocational programs) aimed at the psychosocial reintegration of war-affected populations and poverty reduction strategies aimed at long-term national reconstruction.

*** Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the ways in which and the degrees to which wartime cultures and identities affect post-conflict political and economic decision making in regard to the socialization of war-affected youth that, in turn, have been shown to compromise prospects for long-term peace and security. Policies regarding the rearing and well-being of war-affected children can become especially contested terrain. In terms of postwar identity politics, the worldwide institutionalization of Western schooling since the nineteenth century, and its attendant ideology of state responsibility for the well-being of children and youth have served as potent legitimizing forces of national polities (Ramirez and Boli 1987); and post-conflict policies that require reconciling parties to acknowledge their part in wartime atrocities against women and children trouble both the triumphalist wartime histories that reconciling parties-cum-policymakers are reluctant to surrender (where only the enemy engaged in such practices) and any new identity narratives of political legitimacy that might help them to do so.

Wartime identities are based upon the need to be right because that righteousness is the only thing that makes insecurity, death, and martyrdom bearable. The consolidation of peace requires reconciling elites to surrender the need to be right; in the case of FRELIMO’s and RENAMO’s senior leadership, this has turned out to be a difficult capitulation. It is too painful, too personal, and each remains unforgiven in the eyes of the other. Neither FRELIMO nor RENAMO seem especially interested in returning to the bush because the donor community’s focus on regulating violence has provided sufficient incentives for them not to do so. Like all reconciling elites, FRELIMO and RENAMO want “peace with power;” they only surrendered their wartime

identities once they perceived themselves to have access to and control over symbolic and material resources that they associate with postwar high-status identities. These resources were, in turn, linked to the political economy of postwar reconstruction, which tends to have transnational dimensions, and to be deeply enmeshed with global capitalism. The long-term benefits to reconciling elites for their entry into global capitalism remains to be seen. [74] In the short term, overt violence has ceased, but without the cessation of underlying hostilities; the search for military solutions has ceased, but parties have not been motivated to engage in a long-term political solution to broad-based societal recovery. Instead, the political economy of postwar reconstruction has fostered a desire to formulate political, social, and economic policies that act as if countries were “post-postwar.”

The post-conflict situation of many war-affected youth is thus a kind of socially sanctioned violence, and in order to understand the nature of these privileged forms of violence, we need to stop focusing on the transmission of violence, and rather attempt to understand who controls its production. For this reason it is critical to understand postwar national and transnational policy contexts.

Societies pay a huge price for hoping war-affected generations will simply “get lost.” It is not enough for postwar recovery programs to return societies to prewar conditions because for most countries this means a state dominated by high levels of structural inequality that will ultimately breed violence and rage all over again. Postwar recovery initiatives must aim higher and strive to ensure that reconciling societies become better than their former selves.

[73] A concrete example of this would be the symbolic meaning of marital infidelity in our perceptions of a political leader’s legitimacy and power. In the United States, there is a tendency to perceive marital infidelity (as occurred in the final years of the Clinton administration) as a sign of moral weakness and therefore tends to weaken public perceptions of a leader’s power, which is itself deeply embedded in American understanding of moral rectitude. The link between marital infidelity and political power is understood quite differently in Mozambique. Mozambicans believed Americans were not being at all rational in their “obsession” with President

Clinton’s sex life. Instead, such sexual liaisons were interpreted as signs of Clinton’s virility and general state of health and therefore positively associated with his capacity as a leader.

[74] Eastern and Western perspectives on power and identity differ radically; while in the West, we argue over which symbolic and material resources are attached to our sense of power, Eastern traditions—understanding that material and symbolic goods can come to have “power over” us—prefer to argue that the road to power lies where individuals and societies transcend their attachment to symbols altogether.

[75] There is some anecdotal evidence that business opportunities and partnerships with foreign multinationals were attractive incentives to ruling elites early in the peace process but that in the last few years, many of these elites have lost their controlling interests as firms have expanded. The result is that many ruling elites have remained or are returning to political life because it is the only way to make money. This would also explain the reluctance of the “old guard” to relinquish to newer forces within FRELIMO and RENAMO.

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** 13. Reconstituting Guerrillas as Veterans in Postwar Zimbabwe

Norma Kriger

Former guerrillas who fought in Zimbabwe’s liberation war have played a prominent role in postwar politics since independence in 1980. In 1997, veterans engaged in high-profile, and often violent, street protests. With the tacit support of their colleagues who commanded the police and the army, ex-guerrillas threatened to remove President Mugabe unless he met their demands for state recognition of their liberation war services. President Mugabe conceded a gratuity of Z$50,000 (the ex-guerrillas had demanded ten times more) and a monthly pension of Z$2,000 for each of an estimated total of 50,000 ex-combatants, free education and health services for ex-combatants and their dependents, funds for business projects, funeral expenses, and 20 percent of future land resettlement plots. By local

standards, the monetary payments were generous—70 percent of the urban population at the time earned less than Z$2,000 per month, and some skilled workers earned Z$50,000 in a year (Kriger 2005: 261–262). The gratuities cost more than twice total government funding on land reform, a major government policy objective, since 1980 (Selby 2006: 246, 255).

Analysts often view the large unbudgeted government payments to veterans as an economic turning point from which the economy did not recover. Observers also point to the 1997 pay-off as a political turning point, with the start of a close alliance between veterans and the ruling party against urban workers who increasingly drew white business support. From 2000, in the context of parliamentary and then presidential elections, veterans were in the forefront of state-sponsored land invasions of primarily white-owned farms and state-orchestrated violence against all known and suspected supporters of the opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Over the past six years, the economy has contracted by an estimated 40 percent. The inner circle of ZANU PF, among which ex-guerrillas grew increasingly well represented, continues to reap material benefits from corrupt deals and patronage politics while the vast majority live in growing economic misery and often fear. At least 4 million Zimbabweans—arguably 25 percent of the total population—have fled to live in neighboring countries, the United Kingdom, or elsewhere.

There is a strong link between the postwar power of guerrillas in Zimbabwe and guerrilla integration strategies. In Guerrilla Veterans in Post-War Zimbabwe: Symbolic and Violent Politics, 1980–1987 (Kriger 2003), I argued that the British-mediated peace settlement that formally ended the liberation war left the newly elected ruling party with the task of acquiring control of state institutions. Not yet disarmed and demobilized, the guerrillas were both an asset and a threat to the ruling party in 1980. Elements in Mugabe’s ZANLA forces had their own aspirations to rule as did ZIPRA guerrillas affiliated to the chief opposition party, ZAPU. To build power and legitimacy, Mugabe’s party turned to the guerrillas. In its demobilization and military integration programs, the ruling party gave the guerrillas preferential access to state employment, and further privilege by treating them as the equals of the relatively well-paid Rhodesian soldiers. These privileges the party justified by celebrating the guerrillas’ contributions to independence. The initial even-handed treatment of guerrillas belonging to the two mutually

antagonistic liberation armies was short-lived. ZANU PF used its ZANLA forces in a violent take-over of the new army and police and in the mass atrocities against ZAPU supporters. ZANLA guerrillas manipulated the ruling party's legitimating rhetoric of recognition for war contributions and used violence to extract further state resources. The relationship between ZANLA guerrillas and the ruling party came to be characterized by a political dynamic of conflict, accommodation, and further conflict. With the absorption of the devastated ZAPU by ZANU PF in 1987, the guerrillas —now including ex-ZIPRA too—and the party continued to have a similar relationship. The book's appendix draws parallels between the guerrilla-party relationship from 1980 to 1987 and after 2000.

For societies that must confront the challenges of guerrilla integration, the Zimbabwe experience offers at least two cautionary lessons. First, to evaluate successful guerrilla integration, one must ask the questions of "success for whom?" and "success by whose criteria?" Studies of guerrilla integration rarely do this, instead the prescribe stability and democracy as desirable goals that would make everybody better off. The quest for power, material gain, and status by groups and regimes are viewed as obstacles to stability and democracy whereas they may well be the raison d'etre of regime and groups. Second, it is important to understand guerrilla integration in the broader context of other groups' integration in the state, the ruling party, and the wider society. The tragedy of Zimbabwe stems from the mutual dependence that the guerrillas (ZANLA before 1987, ZIPRA and ZANLA after 1987) and the party had on each other for legitimacy, power and its concomitant privileges, and from which neither could move away. The guerrillas and the ruling party mirrored each other in the difficulty or low interest each had in mobilizing mass-based support without relying on violence or repression and pay-offs.

This chapter examines legislative programs for ex-guerrillas rather than administrative programs, which the demobilization and integration programs were. While one can demonstrate similar dynamics across these administrative and legal programs even as the political and economic contexts shifted, my goal is limited to demonstrating that the major laws affecting guerrilla integration embraced the same political ideas and values as the administrative programs. The guerrillas were to be treated as the equals of regular soldiers, and hence enjoy privileged rights to state

resources when compared with civilians who did not join the guerrilla forces. The official recognition of ex-guerrillas' war contributions as superior to the strictly political contributions of ex-political prisoners and detainees, underscored the hierarchical political ideas of the ruling elite and reinforced a higher value for armed struggle over exclusively political roles. These were not only the views of the lawmakers but clearly tapped into widely held guerrilla ideas and expectations. The laws also made clear that unswerving party loyalty was a requirement to enjoy state benefits. The political construction of guerrillas into veterans, as articulated in legislation, provides insight into an exclusive, hierarchical, and intolerant nationalism, packaged by its architects as "revolutionary nationalism."

The chapter has two parts: the first part examines the political construction of guerrillas as war veterans through law, and the second part focuses on how guerrillas resisted challenges in the legislative arena from former political detainees to share in the status and benefits of being war veterans.

*** The Political Construction of Guerrillas as Veterans

In Zimbabwe, there have been three major legislative instruments directed toward the former guerrillas of the liberation war: the War Victims Compensation Act, 1980; the incorporation of guerrilla war service years for the purpose of calculating retirement pensions in 1989–90; and the War Veterans Act, 1992. There has been almost no scholarly work on these laws despite their prominence and that of the ex-guerrillas in postwar politics.[75] I focus on the political construction of guerrillas as veterans in these laws. In particular, I highlight how guerrillas were given privileged access to state resources over civilians, including those who had participated actively in the liberation struggle, the justification being their superior war contributions. Besides the hierarchy among liberation participants, I also draw attention to the importance of guerrilla loyalty to the liberation movement and to the party-state after the war as a prerequisite for receiving state largesse.

**** War Victims Compensation Act, 1980

The War Victims Compensation Act of 1980 provided pensions and rehabilitation for the war disabled, widow's pensions, and dependents' allowances in much the same way as the Victims of Terrorism (Compensation) Act of 1973, which it repealed. The new legislation incorporated war-disabled guerrillas and the widows and dependents of guerrillas who had died as a result of the war, redefined "acts of terrorism" to legitimate the guerrilla war, and removed provision for compensation for war-related property losses and damages.

The War Victims Compensation Act was introduced to provide compensation for war-disabled guerrillas (Motion–Presidential Speech 1980: 846). Introducing the Bill to the House on September 30, 1980, Minister Kangai remarked that catering for ex-guerrillas had motivated the drafting of the Bill, even though it covered war-disabled civilians too. "In late April this year, Cabinet noted that no compensation was payable in respect of war-disabled guerrillas. In terms of the existing compensation legislation, it was subsequently resolved to rectify this anomaly, and the result is before the House today in the form of the War Victims Compensation Bill. The Bill is designed to bring together into one consistent and universally applicable framework, compensation for all war-disabled persons and persons killed during the war, regardless of their race, background or affiliation. While former members of the Rhodesian security forces and some civilians have been catered for in terms of existing legislation, the same cannot be said of those former members of the liberation forces or their civilian supporters who have been disabled or killed" (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1087).

Given that the size of disability and death pensions depended not only on the degree of disablement but also on earnings at the time of death or injury, how would this apply to former guerrillas who were not earning a wage at the time of injury or death? For the purposes of assessing their earnings, the guerrillas would be treated as if they had been Rhodesian soldiers. The Act stipulates: "In assessing...the earnings of a person who at the time of his death or injury was performing unpaid combatant duties [my italics], the Commissioner [of War Victims Compensation] shall, for the purpose of calculating that person's potential earnings, have regard to the level of seniority [years of service] and rank of that person in his military or guerrilla service at the time of his death or injury" (War Victims Compensation Act

1980: section 27 [76]). After consulting with the relevant military authority to establish the guerrilla's rank and seniority within his particular force, the Commissioner would relate it to the national army rank pay scales (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980:1091). In the minister's words: "The basic assessed income of the lowest ranking guerrilla will, therefore, equate to the basic pay of a regular private soldier, and the disability pension assessed accordingly" (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1091). It remained ambiguous whether the guerrillas would be treated like African or European soldiers (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1096–1097).

Assessing the earnings of the unpaid guerrillas as if they had been Rhodesian soldiers privileged the ex-guerrillas over unemployed African civilians whose earnings were assessed at minimum wage, which was significantly lower. The legislation did not indicate whether the guerrillas' collaborators—the young boys and girls who worked with the guerrillas—should be treated as guerrillas or civilians. In practice, though, the guerrillas' collaborators were treated as if they had been the lowest ranking guerrillas, underscoring an official hierarchy of sacrifices.

The War Victims Compensation Act, unlike the Victims of Terrorism Act, did not provide for compensation for property that was lost or damaged as a result of the war. Whites argued that the retroactive elimination of property compensation violated the constitution's protection of property rights, and gave this as the reason for rejecting the Bill. Minister Kangai focused his remarks on the consequences for the African population of the government not paying compensation for war-related property losses. The reasons for eliminating property compensation, Minister Kangai said, were that so many people had suffered for Zimbabwe's independence—at least 75 percent of the population—and the government could not afford to compensate them (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1092, 1104). He noted, too, the problems of verifying who had lost property as a result of the war (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1092).[77] Many Africans had suffered property losses or damages as punishment for supporting the guerrillas, as participants in the parliamentary debate on the proposed Bill acknowledged. Especially African rural civilians had sustained significant property losses—money, cattle, chicken, goats, and other food supplies—which they were obliged to give for the guerrillas' upkeep and

which were not mentioned in the debate. The elimination of property compensation underscores the extent to which the ruling party privileged the generally property-less guerrillas over African civilians who had suffered war-related property losses.

The concerns of two black parliamentarians, men who had stayed in the country during the war, highlight how official efforts to recognize war sacrifices raised tough distributive issues even among those who had supported the guerrilla war. MP Mr. Kona was especially concerned about the adverse psychological impact of the government's exclusion of compensation on the many blacks who lost property as a result of the war, and in particular those who lost property for helping the freedom-fighters and who therefore could not get compensation under the previous regime (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1101–1103). MP Mr. Moyo (ZAPU, Matabeleland North) asked if the minister was aware that some of the properties that had been lost had been bought on credit, which had to be repaid. Those who had been dependent on cattle that were destroyed in the war would not be able to repay their debts unless the government assisted them (War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1099–1100). To these parliamentarians, Minister Kangai said:

<quote>

surely there were a number of business people in the rural areas and there were a number of people who owned, say, farms, who were driven away from the farms who lost property; people whose cattle were driven away...that is indeed the price we had to pay for the independence of Zimbabwe.

If we are going to line up everybody and say: "Look, you are going to get a share of the independence of Zimbabwe," I am sure our Treasury will be bankrupt in no time.... The Government appreciates the role which all our people played in the liberation struggle and that at the moment they have been impoverished by the war. They need to be assisted and assistance is going on.... Therefore, I do not think there is any question that our people would think we have forgotten about their contribution.... We are fully conscious of the losses which people have incurred but the question right

now is the reconstruction of our country: that is the important issue before us.”

<right>

(War Victims Compensation Bill, Second Reading 1980: 1107–1108)

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The War Victims Compensation Act termed the armed conflict a war rather than “acts of terrorism,” as in its predecessor, the Victim of Terrorism (Compensation) Act. In the Act, “the war” “means the armed conflict which occurred in Zimbabwe and in neighbouring countries between the 23rd December, 1972, and the 29th February, 1980, in connexion with the bringing about of, or resistance to, political and social change in Zimbabwe.” The neighboring countries referred to Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Botswana, and Angola—countries that had hosted the liberation forces and refugees and had borne the brunt of Rhodesian attacks. Terming the conflict a war about social and political change recognized its legitimacy and removed the stigma of it being branded “acts of terrorism,” but the war dates were legal fictions, as guerrilla wars typically have ambiguous starting and ending dates.

**** Recognizing Liberation War Service: 1989–1990

The government came under pressure from ex-guerrillas in the uniformed services to recognize their war services in the same way as the state had done for the Rhodesians in the uniformed services. How could the government count towards years of pensionable service the war duty of those who ostensibly had lost the war and who had opposed independence while not providing at least the same benefit to those who had won independence for their war services? Ex-guerrillas in the public services were soon to argue for and win recognition for their war service years in the calculation of their pensionable years on the basis of equality with ex-

guerrillas in the uniformed services and their non-guerrilla colleagues in the public sector.

Gazetted on March 17, 1989, an amendment to the pensions regulations for the uniformed services—the police, army, air force, and prison service—incorporated ex-guerrillas' years of war service in the definition of pensionable service (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989). Also included in the definition of pensionable service for ex-guerrillas was the period after April 18, 1980, the date of independence, in which ex-guerrillas had been stationed in assembly places awaiting appointment to a uniformed force or had been attending a course of training under the auspices of the government before their appointment to the uniformed forces (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989).

Given the absence of guerrilla records, age was used as a proxy for ex-combatants' period of active participation in the liberation struggle. The regulations provided for five years of war service for those less than thirty-one years old in March 1989, six years for those thirty-one years or more but less than thirty-two years old, seven years for those thirty-two to thirty-three years old, eight years for those thirty-three to thirty-four years old, and so on, until the forty-year-olds and over who were granted fifteen years of war service (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989). This assumes that all guerrillas joined the liberation armies when they were fifteen years old, which was obviously not true. Moreover, most guerrillas joined the war effort in the latter part of the war (Cilliers 1984: 28, 43, 87, 239). The age profile of guerrillas based on a sample in assembly points in early 1980 shows that thirty-five percent of the guerrillas were twenty-five years or older, and were granted ten years' service, thus assuming that they joined the forces in 1970. Fifty percent of the guerrillas were between nineteen and twenty-four years of age, and were assumed to have been in the liberation forces for four to nine years, or to have joined between 1971 and 1976 (Motion—Presidential Speech 1980: 846). It is clear that the government wanted to calculate the guerrillas' years of service generously so as to mute any potential contention and to recognize guerrillas' war contributions.

The meaning of "ex-combatant" in the statutory instrument, which applied only to those who had been in the guerrilla forces, implied that April 18,

1980, was the end of the war. An “ex-combatant” was defined to mean “a member who participated actively in the liberation struggle as a combatant before the 18th April, 1980, otherwise than as a member of a uniformed force of the then Government of Rhodesia, but does not include a member who joins a uniformed force after the fixed date [the commencement date of the amendment]...” (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989). This implied end-of-war date is at odds with the explicit terminal point of the war—February 29, 1980—in the War Victims Compensation Act and underscores the fiction of imposing an end of war date on a guerrilla war. The divergence in the dates for the end of the war also highlights how ad hoc the fictions are, often driven by the contingencies of the particular law.

The exclusion of certain categories of ex-combatants from the right to count their war years towards pensionable service underscored the value the new government attached to loyalty to the liberation movement during the war and to the ruling party after the war. Those who deserted and those who were demobilized from the uniformed services were explicitly excluded (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989). Deserters would have included mostly ZIPRA ex-combatants, who, in the 1980s, were often victims of human rights violations or whose command authority was ignored for political reasons. Also, perhaps a disproportionate number of ZIPRA ex-combatants demobilized because of these unfavorable conditions in the army. Ex-combatants who served in the struggle but who joined a uniformed force of the government before Independence Day were also excluded (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989). This provision was intended to exclude liberation war guerrillas who had taken advantage of the former regime’s amnesties in 1978 and 1979. Ex-combatants who retired or resigned before age fifty without appropriate consent—from the president in the case of an officer, and from the commanding officer in the case of any member other than an officer—were denied the benefit (Statutory Instrument 53A 1989).

Another excluded category were the ex-guerrillas who were not in the uniformed services. Later, in 1989, the government introduced a statutory instrument to provide the identical right to count war service towards pensionable years for ex-guerrillas in the public service and then in 1990 extended the same right to ex-guerrillas who were officers in Parliament (Officers of Parliament [Pensions] Amendment Rules 1990). However, reflecting Rhodesian law, those in the uniformed services could retire at fifty

without formal permission whereas those in the public service and in Parliament had to work until they were fifty-five years old. The incorporation of ex-guerrillas into state contributory retirement pension schemes created a new inequity between state-employed ex-guerrillas and their counterparts who were employed in the private sector, self-employed, or unemployed. The inequity was never eliminated. Instead, ex-guerrillas exerted enormous pressures on the ruling party and in August 1997 President Mugabe agreed to pay all ex-combatants a monthly life pension of Z$2,000 and a gratuity of Z$50,000. The scheme was legalized through the introduction of a statutory instrument in terms of the War Veterans Act, and included other benefits for war veterans and their dependents (Statutory Instrument 281 1997).

**** War Veterans Act, 1992

The War Veterans Act was the product of intense pressure on the ruling party from the War Veterans Association.[78] The War Veterans Act was an enabling law that provided for the creation of government schemes to assist war veterans. The Minister of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare (or any other minister to whom the president assigned the administration of the Act) “may, by statutory instrument, establish one or more schemes for the provision of benefits or assistance to or in respect of any war veterans and their dependants or any classes of war veterans and their dependants, and may in like manner amend or abolish any such scheme” (War Veterans Act 1992: section 7 [79]).

The War Veterans Act interpreted “war veteran” to mean “any person who underwent military training and participated, consistently and persistently, in the liberation struggle which occurred in Zimbabwe and in neighbouring countries between the 1st January, 1962, and the 29th February, 1980, in connection with the bringing about of Zimbabwe’s independence on the 18th April, 1980” (War Veterans Act 1992: section 2). These liberation struggle dates were consistent with the dates of the armed conflict in the amended War Victims Compensation Act.[80] The definition of “war veterans” excluded deserters and those who were captured by the Rhodesians and then fought for them, emphasizing the importance of unswerving loyalty to the liberation movements.

Negotiations between senior ruling party members and the War Veterans Association leaders over a draft bill and the parliamentary debate on the bill itself exposed their radically different perspectives on the party's record of recognizing veterans' sacrifices. Introducing the Bill, the deputy minister rejected the media's depiction of government's attitude to ex-combatants as "ungrateful, uncaring and insensitive" and outlined the preferential measures government had taken "to alleviate the situation of ex-combatants and to integrate them into the society at large" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, March 31, 1992: 4995). During the debate, war veterans—who constituted about one-third of the 150 members of parliament, of whom only three did not belong to ZANU PF (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, March 31, 1992: 5163)—and their supporters spoke of veterans having been victimized and discriminated against, not only by their former enemies but also within ZANU PF and the wider society.[81] These different perceptions about official recognition for veterans' sacrifices in the past shaped the conflicting views of the ruling party leaders as opposed to veterans and their supporters in parliament.

Despite their different viewpoints on how to recognize veterans, the ruling elite and veterans and their supporters shared a strong sentiment that the state had a special obligation to war veterans because of their sacrifices for liberation. In a memo to the Cabinet Committee, Minister John Nkomo portrayed the proposed Bill as having "generous and preferential provisions" for war veterans (War Veterans Administration Bill, Memorandum). Government favored welfare type schemes. The government's priority was the estimated 15,000 unemployed ex-combatants (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, March 31, 1992: 5000). The Bill provided for the introduction of welfare assistance for such veterans and their families. In his memo to the Cabinet Committee, Minister Nkomo said of the level of public welfare for which they were eligible: "It is contended that the level of such assistance is not always adequate and falls far below the poverty datum line. In view of the heroic participation of war veterans in the war of liberation it is contended that the level of welfare assistance granted to them, should be higher than that given in all other cases. For this reason welfare assistance to war veterans should come from separate fund [sic] which will adhere to the principle of preferential treatment of war veterans" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Memorandum). The government also

seemed to favor the payment of pensions for unemployed war veterans when they reached the retirement age of fifty-five years (War Veterans Administration Bill, Memorandum; War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 7, 1992: 5222).

Veterans and their supporters wanted the legislation to provide them with concrete rights to recognize their war contributions rather than have their rights be dependent on the minister's discretion to introduce statutory instruments.[82] Veterans wanted access to the wealth of the country, and especially land.[83] Hence they had called their draft Bill the War Veterans Investment and Administration Bill 1992 and wanted their schemes to be under the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, rather than the welfare ministry (War Veterans Investment and Administration Bill 1992). Their draft Bill's goal was "to transform liberation war veterans into active participants in the struggle for economic independence and development in practical and purposeful recognition of the frontline role and sacrifice they paid for the liberation of Zimbabwe" (War Veterans Investment and Administration Bill 1992). Veterans and their supporters in parliament persisted with these ideas during the debate on the War Veterans Administration Bill. Mr. Simon Moyo said: "We can no longer allow war veterans to continue for a day longer as hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land they liberated. War veterans must not be treated as objects of pity for they were our own political liberation peddlers yesterday, they should indeed be our own economic liberation peddlers today.... They need economic power...to deliver the country from... poverty..." (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5156). Supporting the allegedly belated Bill, Mr. Kudzedzereka said: "I know that people who joined the struggle did not do so to be rewarded. But would you be happy that some people who have not been in the struggle are enjoying the fruits of the country, because they have got money to buy a farm, money to buy a store or whatever they can choose yet there were people who did everything, those who have given us the freedom we have today are not enjoying that? They have got a right, it is not a reward, but it is a right we have got to give to our freedom fighters, the people who were in the bush to liberate this country" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5202). Mr. Nzarayebani, himself an ex-fighter, said: "It was unfortunate for us that when our gallant fighters came home from the war in 1980 we did very little, except demobilising them from the army...these fighters are not asking for alms.... What the fighters want is to be part and parcel of the economic

development of the land and they want the necessary resources to develop themselves and to become part and parcel of the economic welfare of the country. They do not want to be marginalised. They also want to own the basic means of production and the best means of production is the land" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5134). As he and many others asserted, had it not been for the fighters, they would not be enjoying the political and economic fruits of independence.[84]

Many parliamentarians objected to the narrow definition of war veterans that excluded those who had contributed to the war other than through undergoing military training. Some parliamentarians favored subsequent legislation for non-fighters who had contributed to the struggle. Mr. Moyo indicated that it was his "sincere hope that the Bill to cater for political detainees and political prisoners will be brought to this House in the near future" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5155–5156). Mr. Munyoro said that "the mothers and fathers who helped, sheltered and gave food to the war veterans must be recognised and be thanked for the work they did. I want to say, I hope the Ministry as it has said will look again and expand the net of recognition of helping the people who did something for the survival of this country" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5175–5176). Mr. Sibanda lamented that the Bill had "forgotten about the refugees. Most of the refugees left this country because they wanted to join the war but some of them did not succeed to be taken. But when they came back they found all their homes destroyed.... So I thought perhaps they were going to [be] covered by this Bill. But nevertheless, I am looking forward that the next Bill must also cover the refugees..." (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5181). Mr. Shambambeva-Nyandoro emphasized that people fought in different ways, but felt the fighters should get priority government attention, as in the Bill, and that subsequent legislation could incorporate other groups. "If we want to do justice, we should look closely and think about the mujibas and those who were in detention who have not been compensated. If we observe closely, those who were at the front with guns should also be put at the front... this is the truth. These people are different. The mujiba is also different because he was practically in the war, but if we want to do justice we should not put them on par.... Many different people fought in the war, even those who were cooking for the ex-fighters, but we should see that they are included. This Bill cannot start by considering everyone" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5209–5210).

Other members of parliament wanted immediate equal treatment for all who had sacrificed for the war. Chief Mangwende opposed the Bill's selective focus on the fighters: "As far as I am concerned, I am not looking at each and every individual who went to fight the war, because the war does not start with the gun only. It starts with planning to fight the war. In this fighting, there are some who are supposed to be carrying supplies and some who are supposed to do medical duties. All these people are part and parcel of the war, even though there are some who did not carry guns. Whatever they were doing was equivalent to carrying a gun. When you are looking at the people who were holding the guns only, what about those who were planning the war before the guns were there? Do you not see that those people are as good as those who were holding guns?... So how are you going to incorporate these people? Are they not the same as the people who were holding the guns?... When I look closely and see that we have selected people who were holding guns, I see that this is improper." He went on to ask whether the Bill would only look at ex-fighters who were still alive and not recognize those who had died or disappeared (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5203–5204). Mr. Masiane had problems with the limited definition of war veterans too. "I would like the Bill to include those people whose parents assisted in the struggle, either in cooking for the war veterans or by doing anything else. In the event of doing that, they met death through the enemy. They were shot or killed while helping out ex-combatants. I would like to see their families get help because they fought in a war and to me they are veterans. When a man fights, we do not only consider the man holding the gun, but we also consider even the man who uses a stick. If he kills the enemy that is a war veteran.... I also wish this Bill to included [sic] those who were either imprisoned or hanged when they were prosecuting the struggle. I believe they are also veterans.... This Bill should cover all" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5207–5208).

Deputy Minister of Labour, Manpower Planning and Social Welfare, Mrs. Florence Chitauro, was impatient with the parliamentary discussions about who was a veteran because the ruling party's caucus had previously accepted the Bill's definition. "Members have surfaced again the issue of who is a war veteran. I think all those who attended Caucus here, that issue of who is a war veterans came up there. The definition was given. Members

were not satisfied and we took that issue back to the Politburo and back to the Central Committee.... There are only three members who are opposition members and they could not attend the Caucus. So I can forgive them. The definition of a war veteran is, as stated in this Bill and that is what is agreed at the Central Committee and it was also agreed that the issue of the detainees, and issue of any other group will be dealt with at a later stage. So we are now focusing on the war veterans as stated in this Bill and at the moment, it is unnegotiable…" (War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992: 5220).

*** The Political Construction of Veterans as Guerrillas

The exclusion of political detainees and political prisoners, themselves then well represented in parliament, led them to engage in a protracted struggle for their inclusion in the definition of "war veterans." Guerrillas resisted the incorporation of former political detainees in the definition of war veterans. Each group justified its claims on the grounds of its superior contributions to the struggle. After a fourteen-year legislative struggle, former political prisoners were accorded state recognition and benefits in 2004, but they were denied the status of war veterans and their benefits were substantially lower than those won by guerrillas in 1997. The guerrillas remained top dogs for their role in the "people's war." This section follows the legislative efforts to settle the status of former political detainees.

**** Political Detainees Bill, 1996

Angry with the ruling party's inaction, MP Aeneas Chigwedere, a ruling party backbencher who had spent the war years as a civil servant in the Rhodesian Department of Education, notified the House on February 15, 1996, of his intention to obtain permission to introduce an amendment to the War Veterans Act to incorporate political detainees as war veterans. He subsequently withdrew the amendment bill because "it sadly came to my attention that some war veterans did not want to be bracketed together with the political detainees" (Political Detainees Bill, Motion, July 24, 1996: 362).

Chigwedere then sought to win rights for political detainees in a separate law. On July 24 1996 he introduced a parliamentary motion “that leave be granted to introduce a Bill to accord legal status and recognition to political detainees of various categories that were detained, restricted, or imprisoned for political activism in Zimbabwe between 1959 and 1980” (Political Detainees Bill, Motion, July 24, 1996: 360). For Chigwedere, 1959 was a critically important date. It was the year the first mass political party, the ANC, was banned and the Preventive Detention Act was passed to arrest and detain political activists. Without the politicians, he said, there would have been no war. Political detainees, he claimed, “were the political tutors of the African masses; they recruited the youths and organised them to go for military training; they made the decision to fight and negotiated with countries like Ghana, Egypt, Algeria, and China for the training of our liberation cadres. In short, the war veterans were the instruments of the political machinery and never vice versa…. Admittedly, without the fighting cadres, we would not have won the war…. Accordingly, it can not be just and fair to honour the war veterans without honouring the political detainee” (Political Detainees Bill, Motion, July 24, 1996: 365–366) and vice versa. Hence the need to extend legal recognition to political detainees, as had been done for war veterans. Seconding Chigwedere’s motion, MP Mr. Norman Zikhali, an ex-detainee, referred to political detainees as fighters. “All we are asking for is that this category of ex-fighters who are generally known as ex-detainees be also catered for by the State” (Political Detainees Bill, Motion, July 24, 1996: 368). Ruling party and government leaders made public promises to amend the War Veterans act to include ex-political detainees but took no legislative initiative (Political Detainees Bill, Motion, July 24, 1996: 381).[85]

On February 18, 1997, Mr. Chigwedere presented the Political Detainees Bill to parliament. It sought to make state assistance for political detainees and their dependents a legal right, subject to various conditions. In contrast, the War Veterans Act was merely enabling legislation, dependent on a minister introducing a statutory instrument for a particular type of scheme. The Bill defined “political detainee” to mean “any person detained, restricted or imprisoned in Zimbabwe for more than one year, for political activity in connection with the bringing about of political and social change in Zimbabwe between the 1st January, 1959 and 30th April, 1980 and is registered with the Board in terms of

this Act” (Political Detainees Bill, section 2, 1996). Without support from senior ruling party members, this Bill was destined to die.

**** War Veterans Amendment Bill, 1997

Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare Mrs. Florence Chitauro finally introduced the War Veterans Amendment Bill in 1997 when the war veterans had already won pensions and other state benefits. The Bill brought political detainees into the definition of war veteran. A “political detainee” was “any person who, before the 18th April 1980—(i) was served with an order for his detention or restriction in terms of any enactment then in force; or (ii) was convicted of an offence under any law then in force; as a result of his political activity in connection with the bringing about of Zimbabwe’s independence on the 18th April 1980, and who was detained, restricted or imprisoned in consequence of such order or conviction for a period of more than two years or for periods which, in the aggregate, amounted to more than two years” (War Veterans Amendment Bill 1997: section 2 [b]). Political detainees might begin to benefit from some of the schemes for ex-combatants, especially access to free health care, but not from pensions and gratuities (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997: 2536, 2564). Members of parliament objected to the lack of equity between ex-combatants who already had pensions and gratuities and detainees who would not enjoy such benefits. Also, perhaps because the Minister had referred to ex-combatants having at least six months’ military training (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997: 2536) many parliamentarians wanted the cut-off date for ex-detainees to be dropped from two years to at least six months. Chigwedere objected that “there is no intention of doing justice to the ex-prisoners, detainees and restrictees. In other words, the idea that they are a second class to the war veterans still persists in the mind of the Minister and possibly the others behind her” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997: 2540). According to him, even 3 months in detention entailed more suffering than six months’ military training: “the first 90 days were, to say the least, excruciating, devastating—many perished. Those who went to Mozambique, Botswana and Zambia, for as long as they were in camps, and most of them were in the camps, they were safe for the first six months if not for the whole year until they were sent out or bombed over there. They were safer than

the detainees, restrictees who were here” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997: 2540–2541). The parliamentarians were also offended that the ruling party had ignored their prior rejection of a two-year cut-off in the party’s parliamentary caucus (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997: 2542).[86] Most unusually, Parliament rejected the Bill (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 27, 1997: 2623). Perhaps rejection of the Bill had as much to do with a groundswell of resentment among backbenchers in the ruling party as how their leaders had disregarded caucus agreements.[87]

**** War Veterans Amendment Bill, 1999

A War Veterans Amendment Bill introduced in 1999 offered a more generous definition of “political detainees” to be included as war veterans; it included those who spent more than one year in detention, restriction, or imprisonment in pre-independence Zimbabwe for political reasons, but still denied them the gratuities and benefits that other “war veterans” received (War Veterans Amendment Bill 1998, sections 2&3). Some again objected to the Bill’s unequal treatment of political detainees and those who received military training (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4049, 4053–4054). Aeneas Chigwedere welcomed the relaxed definition of eligible detainees but objected:

<quote>

still I want to know the rationale behind this discrimination between the war veterans on one side and the political detainees on the other.

I happen to know that among the war veterans are large numbers of people who did not even receive training and the Mujibhas who were recruited in to the assembly points in 1980 at the time of cease fire. They are given all the benefits of the war veterans. Some of them have never been out of this country, never across the boarder [sic], they are recognised toay as war veterans.

<right>

(War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4043–4044)

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</quote>

MP Njekesa made the case for paying the ex-detainees and treating them identically to the war veterans. He urged the government to find the money “because it will be unfair [otherwise]. I do not see the reason why they should not be made to enjoy the fruits of their suffering. We have people who have served 2/3/4 years in prison as much as we have ex-combatants who stayed in Mozambique for 1/2 years and they were paid” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4053–4054).

Some, like ex-combatant Mr. Nzarabeyani, felt the government should provide money for the detainees, even if it could not afford to pay them as much as the ex-guerrillas had received (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, 18 February 1999: 4051). MP Hokoyo argued the government should provide the detainees with land “because this is what they fought for” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4062). She emphasized that ex-political detainees needed to be compensated by the state “because they did not get the opportunity to support their families. So they should support them now” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4062). MP Mudenda rejected the definition of political detainee as eliminating some who suffered the most but supported granting legal recognition without material benefits: “let the nation be warned that... anybody who participated one way or the other in the liberation struggle... did not do so because they were expecting some reward. They did so because people believed in their inalienable right to create freedom for Zimbabwe, to bring about the independence of Zimbabwe.... The danger that has befallen the nation now is that there has been too much concentration on reward, and as a result, some people have joined the band wagon for better or worse to demand compensation which was not the primary and fundamental issue in our liberation struggle” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4055–4056). Mr. Mujuru, ZANLA’s military leader at the end of the war and then head of

the new army, dismissed the material claims of political detainees by belittling their contribution. “People suffered during the liberation struggle in the bush with the rains and the heat, but these ones want to be paid for what? They were guarded and they where [sic] protected…. We saw people suffering in the protected villages and some of them even died but those who were in detention were even protected” (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4059–4060).[88] Beyond contestation over whether the detainees deserved material compensation, there were also some pleas for incorporating new categories, such as those who had been recruited to join the ex-guerrillas but did not actually cross the border because the war ended (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4035, 4038), or deceased ex-detainees, their children, wives and widows (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, February 18, 1999: 4041).

**** Ex-Political Prisoners, Detainees, and Restrictees Act, No. 20 of 2004

In October 2004, the government finally passed a separate law to provide immediate benefits to the now elderly group of political veterans who had spent at least six months in prison, detention or restriction between January 1, 1959 and April 18, 1980. President Mugabe made the law operational just before the Senate election in November 2005. These benefits were substantially less than what the war veterans had received, reflecting the privileged position of war veterans vis-à-vis other liberation movement activists. In the context of hyperinflation, ex-detainees’ monetary payments were worth still less and likely to further exacerbate the economic decline (Kriger 2006: 1160–1161).

*** Conclusions

The laws affecting guerrillas—war disability pensions, counting war service years towards years of pensionable service for ex-guerrillas in the army and later the rest of the public sector, and the War Veterans Act—consistently privileged guerrillas over other liberation war participants because their sacrifices for independence were considered to have been greater than others. Treating soldiers as war heroes and giving them preferential

treatment is hardly new. What makes the Zimbabwe case interesting is the way in which the law was used to reconstitute guerrillas as veterans. Also, the essence of a guerrilla war is that the guerrillas are like fish that must swim in the sea; they must depend on the people, making civilian participation at least as important as guerrilla action. Though the government of Zimbabwe often used the rhetoric of the sacrifices made by all the people in the war, in law and in practice it elevated the guerrillas' status and preferential rights to state resources. The special treatment afforded guerrillas fuelled their sense of superiority over civilians and their belief in their entitlement to state resources. They focused on advancing their own self-interest through engagement with the ruling party and seldom sought to represent any broader social interests. The ruling party's continued dependence on the guerrillas long after the liberation war reflected its own failure to develop or retain other constituencies. Among the weaknesses of guerrilla integration studies is their disdain for power politics as detrimental to the goals of democratization and political stability. The case of Zimbabwe is less an illustration of the failure of guerrilla integration than of the logic of power-building that worked for a minority but brought ruin for the majority. Democracy and political stability were always less important or entirely irrelevant to those who sought to build and consolidate political power.

[76] In contrast, there have been quite a few studies of the more conventional demobilization and military integration programs.

[77] See also Minister Kangai, Committee Stage. War Victims Compensation Bill, October2, 1980, col.1194.

[78] War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992, Mrs. Dongo, col.5168; Mr. Marwodzi, col.5144; Miss S. Mugabe, col.5157.

[79] The commencement date of the war had been brought forward from 1972 to 1965 in the War Marriages Validation Act of 1984 and then to 1962 in the General Laws Amendment Act, 1994. No.20, Section 17.

[80] For example, War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992, Governor of Midlands, col.5174; Governor for Mashonaland Central, col.5177; Mr. Mhorombe, cols.5179–5180; Mr. Mudariki, cols. 5185–5186; Miss Sabina Mugabe, cols.5157–8; Mr. Chivende, cols.5188–9; Mrs. Dongo, col.5164.

[81] War Veterans Administration Bill, Committee Stage, April 8, 1992, Mr. Duri, cols.5367–68, 5370–72; Mr. Vuma, col.5372; Mrs. Dongo, cols.5376–77; Mr. Nza-rayebani, 5377–78; Mr. M. Chinamasa, 5378–79.

[82] War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992, Mr. Nzarayebani, col.5134; Mr. Duri, col.5138; Mr.Gara, col.5142; Mrs. Dongo, col.5167. See also Deputy Minister Mrs. Chitauro on the main thrust of the war veterans' request being land acquisition; see War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 7, 1992, col.5218; Mrs. Dongo, War Veterans Administration Bill, Committee Stage, April 8, 1992, col.5377.

[83] War Veterans Administration Bill, Second Reading, April 2, 1992, Mr. Nzarayebani, col.5132–5133; see also Mr. Chafesuka, col.51337–51378; Mr. Marwodzi, col. 5144; Mr. Mudariki, col.5185.

[84] During the debate, Minister without Portfolio Joseph Msika informed the house that the ruling party had instructed the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare to amend the War Veterans Act to include ex-political detainees. In July 1996, then Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare Mrs. Florence Chitauro said no new Act would be introduced for political detainees but they would be incorporated in the War Veterans Act. ["War Veterans' Act to cater for ex-detainees," The Herald, July 31, 1996.] The following month on Heroes' Day, President Mugabe promised that the War Veterans Act would be amended so political detainees could benefit from its provisions. He said that they had not only played a vital role in laying the foundation of the struggle but had also participated in it. ["Veterans Act to be amended," The Herald, August 12, 1996.]

[85] See also the minister’s response to members of parliament’s questions where she wonders whether they are objecting to the Bill because they are concerned about the detainees’ welfare or are trying to assert their authority vis-à-vis the party leadership (War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997: 2562).

[86] War Veterans Amendment Bill, Second Reading, November 25, 1997. Mr. Mavhaire said: “Not a single provincial chairman could say that we agreed on two years” (2542); Mr. Mvenge said: “We do not accept that just because somebody is a Minister whatever they say must go as in a family where the father detects [sic] to his children. I think they [sic] should be some democracy but if the leaders are patronising this will not be acceptable. They must give ample evidence that a Parliament is not a mere rubber stamp” (2549).

[87] Mr. Mujuru sometimes equated detainees’ and protected villagers’ sufferings and sometimes claimed the latter suffered more.

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* Part V: Building Collective Identities: State/Democratic Rebuilding

** 14. Africa’s Crisis of State-Building

Kidane Mengisteab

*** Introduction: Manifestations of the Crisis of State-Building

As Adebayo Adedeji (1999) notes, Africa continues to be devoured by various types of conflicts. The continent now accounts for more war-related deaths than the rest of the world combined (Human Security Report 2005). In at least one African country, the conflicts have led to genocide. In others they have led to state collapse, gross human rights violations, including gruesome mutilations of large numbers of people. They have also produced millions of refugees and unknown numbers of internally displaced people. Moreover, the conflicts have caused severe economic dislocation and disruption in the provision of public services, contributing to economic crisis and grinding poverty in many countries. A typical civil war that lasts seven years is estimated to lead to a 15 percent decline in income and approximately 30 percent rise in the incidence of absolute poverty (Collier et al. 2003). The losses in human capital due to the direct and indirect effects of the conflicts are difficult to estimate but they are certain to be high. There are also growing indications that the conflicts are contributing to the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in various ways.

With few exceptions, Africa’s armed conflicts are civil wars and, while the specific factors causing them vary from case to case, they are essentially reflections of a crisis in state-building. The primary goal of this chapter is to examine the most important factors contributing to the crisis of state-building in sub-Saharan Africa with emphasis on the Horn of Africa. The

chapter is organized into three parts. The first part provides a working definition of state-building and briefly identifies the most important manifestations of the crisis of state-building prevalent in Africa. The second part explores the domestic, regional, and global factors that undermine the process of state-building in the continent. The last part draws concluding remarks and suggests some measures that may contribute to changing the conditions that impede state-building.

*** Conceptualizing State-Building

For purposes of this chapter, the phrase state-building is used in lieu of nation-building in order to avoid confusion with the development of sub-state nationalism. State-building has two interrelated components. One component refers to building and strengthening the institutions of the state, including the leadership and the administrative infrastructure, to enhance their effectiveness in advancing the well-being of citizens and in managing society in line with the authority mandated by the community of citizens. Changes in the capabilities of the state can be measured by examining changes in security conditions, application of the rule of law, respect for human rights, and economic development, including access to health and educational services to the population.

The second component of state-building refers to the complex process of integrating different ethno-linguistic, religious, and sociocultural identities within the population of a country to form a political community of citizens living under shared socioeconomic systems and institutions. Given the African condition of fragmented economies, linking the different economic sectors and segments of society to form an interdependent and complementary economic system is an integral part of establishing a political community. Such internal economic integration entails transforming the large subsistence sector into an exchange economy and thereby integrating the dual economic systems that characterize the continent.

Both components of state-building are underdeveloped in Africa. The African state’s limitations in providing its citizens with the services commonly expected of the state are rather conspicuous. Its general failure to create

suitable conditions for economic development and to raise the standard of living of its citizens is one manifestation. The state's inability to provide adequate basic public services, such as education and health care to all citizens, and to provide security by curtailing and resolving conflicts and respecting human rights are other manifestations.

The state in many African countries has also been unsuccessful in forging a political community of citizens out of its culturally diverse populations. Many countries have faced chronic rebellions by ethnic, regional, or religious entities and other social groups, who do not perceive that the political system and terms of their incorporation into the state accommodate their interests and aspirations. Such rebellions have often escalated to civil wars. Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Congo, Chad, Angola, and the Central African Republic are among the African countries that have encountered violent conflicts, while many other countries face moderate to low-intensity unrest that has the potential to escalate into civil wars.

African economies also remain fragmented with weak linkages between the modern and traditional sectors. As a result, the modern sector lacks a significant domestic market to rely on and depends excessively on the international market for its dynamics. However, failing to be competitive in the global market of manufactured products, it remains largely relegated to the export of primary commodities. The large traditional economic sector, on the other hand, is largely bypassed by the modern sector and the state and marginalized from the global market. This sector lacks a source of dynamism to pull it out of its near stagnant condition. Such fragmentation has contributed to the poor performance of African economies, which, in turn, exacerbates the civil conflicts as various ethno-linguistic and religious groups engage in vicious struggles over dwindling public resources.

The fragmentation between the modern and traditional sectors is not limited to the economic sphere. These sectors are also fragmented in terms of the institutions of governance they espouse. Large segments of the rural inhabitants, the overwhelming majority of the population in most African countries, continue to adhere principally to traditional institutions of

governance. The postcolonial state, along with the urban areas, on the other hand, essentially emulates Western institutions of governance, which are often at odds with traditional African cultural values and the region's contemporary socioeconomic realities. In any case, the fragmentation of the institutions of governance is also another manifestation of the lack of progress in creating a political community governed by a coherent system of institutions. We now examine the most important factors that impede state-building in Africa.

*** Factors Contributing to State-Building Crisis

There are a number of intertwined domestic, regional, and global factors that have contributed to undermining the process of state-building in Africa. The proto-colonial nature of the postcolonial African state is one of the key factors. As Lewis Namier (in Schwarz 1995) notes, historically, incorporation of different ethnic and religious entities into the state was mostly attained through coercive measures. Economic integration and democratization have, however, contributed to consolidating the process of state-building. In the African case, the colonial state created African states by forcibly merging disparate ethnic and cultural groups under the new colonial entities. But it provided little of the economic and political mechanisms that facilitate consolidation of state-building. Instead, it established socioeconomic systems that kept the subjects in the newly forged colonies internally fragmented along ethnic, religious, and regional lines. With the exception of the settler economies, the economies of the colonies, which largely produced commodities for the markets of the colonial powers, were tied to the economies of the mother countries in a feudal manner with little internal interdependence.

The populations of the colonies were further fragmented through various mechanisms. Often they were classified hierarchically causing ethnic-based animosities. The Belgian colonial state, for instance, identified the Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi and the Bangala in the Congo as "superior" to the ethnic groups around them. Even when overt hierarchical classification was not evident, uneven access to opportunities was rather common. The Kikuyu in Kenya and the Buganda in Uganda, for example, enjoyed greater access to public services, such as education, compared to their compatriots (Rothchild

1968; Kasfir 1976). In some other cases the colonial state accentuated interethnic divisions by isolating certain ethnic groups ostensibly for purposes of preserving native culture. In the case of the Sudan, for example, the British prevented cultural integration of the south and Nuba with the dominant culture in the northern part of the country (Salih 1990).

The postcolonial state has made limited progress in replacing the colonial structures that obstruct state-building. One of the most conspicuous characteristics of the African political landscape is that the state has not been brought under the control of its citizenry. Given the legacies of the colonial state, the post-independence African state was, at the time of decolonization, expected by its constituency to be an agent for reclaiming the collective dignity of its citizens and to fundamentally change the fragmenting socioeconomic structures it inherited in order to facilitate state-building and development. Contrary to popular expectations, the state has remained imposed upon the population, in a manner similar to that of the colonial state. Instead of reconstituting the state, the political elite of the postcolonial state largely inherited the structures of the highly predatory colonial state with its extractive institutions and repressive security apparatus. The elite essentially placed itself in control of the extractive institutions and used them to advance its own interests, essentially reducing the state to a semi-private apparatus that advances the interests of those who control it.

This independence from the citizenry allowed many African leaders to behave as if they own the state and to use it as they wish in a self-serving manner. Mobutu of Zaire, Idi Amin of Uganda, Bokassa of the Central African Republic, Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Mengistu of Ethiopia, Abacha of Nigeria, and Taylor of Liberia are the most notorious examples. These dictators saw themselves as the state and used the state coffers as their private bank accounts and the security forces as their private armies (The Economist, May 11, 2000). Perhaps, as a result of the colonial oppression and the similar experience under such dictators, the African population makes little distinction between the state and the individuals who hold power. Those who support the leaders also consider that their allegiance is owed to the person in power rather than to the state (The Economist, May 11, 2000). Segments of the counter elite (elite not in power), on the other hand, see the state as a prize to be won in

order to control the privileges of power. Rebellions, such as those led by Jonas Savimbi in Angola and Foday Sankoh in Sierra Leone, were clearly led by blatant drive to capture state power for self-serving purposes. Many of the military coups that took place between the late 1960s and early 1980s were also motivated by similar ambitions. Similar motives guide opposition parties in many African countries.

Even the leaders who were not widely viewed to be self-serving, such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Keneth Kaunda of Zambia, Sekou Toure of Guinea, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Houphouet Boigny of the Ivory Coast, did not bring the state under the control of the citizens. The manner in which they governed was largely an expression of their own vision and benevolence rather than the expressed wishes of their populations. The unpopularity of Ujaama in Tanzania or many of Nkrumah's policies in Ghana are obvious examples. The situation has changed little with most of the current leaders in the continent, including the so-called "new breed," except perhaps with Mbeki of South Africa. Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, Isaias Afeworki of Eritrea, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and Paul Kagame of Rwanda have not brought the state under the control of the citizenry any more than the dictators preceding them. Isaias Afeworki's banning of the private press and failure to implement the country's ratified constitution, is a clear indication. Rigging of elections and harassment of opposition parties by the others are other manifestations. The post-2005 election violence and the imprisoning of leaders of opposition parties in Ethiopia have, for example, shattered all democratic pretenses of Meles Zenawi's regime.

The differences between the self-serving dictators and the benevolent nationalist leaders not withstanding, both groups of leaders have undermined state-building in the continent. The latter group's failure to bring about economic development and democratic governance did not allow advancement of state-building. The former hindered state-building through various mechanisms, including appropriation of the state as a private club, gross human rights violations, and through the economic disasters it brought about. Moreover, many of the self-serving dictators have manipulated ethnic affiliation in manners similar to those of the colonial state in order to preserve their oppressive rule. Pressed by the advancing troops of the Eritrean People's Liberation front and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia, for example, resorted to unmasked appeals

for ethnic-based support in its final days. It attempted to incite public anger against what it called the “Tigray-Tigrignie” (Tigrigna-speaking ethnic group) threat to Ethiopian unity (Abay 1998).

Another aspect of the failure of the African state is related to its inability to project itself as a neutral arbitrator of the competing interests of the various ethno-linguistic entities within its constituency. Whether the state is a neutral arbitrator of various conflicting interests, as the liberal conception of the state suggests, or it is an instrument of domination, as the Marxist view asserts, remains a contentious issue. Perhaps, as Rueschemeyer and Evans (1985) suggest, the state plays these different roles at different times depending on the balance of power among social classes. In any case, the state is a major dispenser of various resources and privileges. As such, fairness in this role is a crucial element in the process of state-building. There is also an important difference between class and ethnic and religious differences in that the latter two are more rigidly exclusive than class differences that allow some social mobility. As a result, it is likely that ethno-linguistic and religious differences require more firm neutrality of the state than do class differences.

Views that ethnic and religious differences are primordial which would disappear with development have also proved to be unsustainable, as many developed countries have continued to face this intractable problem (Connor 1994). Neutrality of the state through carefully designed forms of representation and decentralized and democratic governance is, thus, an essential mechanism for managing problems related to ethnic and religious differences (de Varness 1999). Such measures help to safeguard both individual and group rights.

In multi-ethnic countries, especially where civil society is not well developed, it is perhaps not possible to create a completely neutral state. It is, for example, hardly feasible to use all the languages in the country as official languages or as mediums of instruction in schools. It is, however, essential that the state does not advance the interests of some ethnic groups at the expense of others and that it creates an inclusive polity instead of preserving ethnic hierarchy.

Expectations of fairness and neutrality are perhaps greater on the African state than on most other states due to the scarcity of resources and the underdevelopment of the private sector. However, Mauritius and, to a lesser extent, Botswana are among the few African states that have registered remarkable progress in mitigating ethnic-based conflicts by reducing the uneven distribution of power, resources, and opportunities among ethnic entities and by respecting the basic rights of all groups of citizens (Carroll and Carroll 1997). Once depicted as a society profoundly divided between ethnically based antagonistic group interests, Mauritius has distinguished itself as a success story in mitigating ethnic antagonisms (Eriksen 1994). In Mauritius's case extensive interaction between state officials and ethnic leaders is viewed as an important mechanism that has helped convince members of ethnic communities that the state is responsive to their needs and concerns (Carroll and Carroll 1997). Botswana's leadership, which undertakes frequent consultations with the Kgotla, a traditional gathering of all adult males, has also attained notable progress in reducing ethnic conflicts (Carroll and Carroll 1997).

Despite the small size of the sample, the experiences of the two relatively successful countries suggest the existence of a strong relationship between democratic governance and state neutrality. Fairness and impartiality are hardly compatible with dictatorial rule, especially since dictatorial regimes often use ethnicity as a tool to extend their tenure in power.

Another factor in the failure of the African state relates to its inability to develop appropriate vision and strategy for state-building. Following decolonization, state-building in Africa was widely perceived as forging a nation-state with a single cultural identity. Nations and ethnic groups were expected to give up their cultural identity and to assimilate into a common national culture, which essentially meant the culture of the dominant nation (or ethnic group). In the process, less dominant groups were expected to transfer their political and cultural loyalty from the nation to that of the state. With few exceptions, such as Nigeria, African leaders of the era of decolonization viewed federalism and other forms of decentralization, which give cultural autonomy as well as the right to self-governance to ethno-linguistic groups, as divisive arrangements that would reinforce ethno-

nationalism and lead to secessions. As a result, a centralized unitary strategy of state-building was widely adopted.

Ethiopia and Sudan are two good examples of countries that insisted on a centralized unitary state structure. Like many others, these two countries pursued a strategy of assimilation and are facing serious and chronic state-building crises. During Ethiopia's last two regimes, different national entities, especially the ethnic groups in the southern parts of the country, which were incorporated by conquest during the last decade of the nineteenth century, were allowed little space for autonomous cultural development, much less for self-rule. They were instead expected to assimilate into the culture of the dominant nation, the Amhara. Despite creating a parliament to disguise the nature of his rule, the last monarch, Emperor Haile Selassie, remained absolute with little regard for cultural diversity and the rights of nations to some form of self-governance. When faced with ethnic-based rebellions, the concern of the monarchy was primarily how to suppress them rather than how to address the legitimate concerns of the rebelling entities. Ethiopia's successive governments have failed to fundamentally alter the policy in favor of greater decentralization. The military government of Mengistu HaileMariam (1974–91) remained as centralized as the monarchy preceding it. The post-1991 government, which is led by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), instituted a largely ethnic-based federal arrangement, which on paper appears to provide extensive decentralization. In reality, the regime maintains rigid centralization through the control of the ethnic-based satellite parties it created throughout the country (Mengisteab 2002).

Sudan is another country which, in an attempt to reverse the colonial policy of isolating the south from the north, adopted a policy of centralization and assimilation of the south to the dominant culture of the north. Despite resistance by the south, which culminated in a civil war, successive regimes in the Sudan essentially maintained a policy of centralization, although the country was able to stop the civil war for a decade (1972–83) by granting limited self-rule to the south.

Under conditions of competent leadership that safeguards the rights of all concerned and is perceived to be fair to all entities, a centralized system has

some advantages. It is possible, for instance, that centralization allows faster implementation of policies and thereby expedite development. Since such leadership has rarely emerged in Africa, however, decentralization becomes a viable mechanism for reducing risks of state partiality. It also allows different groups to engage in self-governance, which may mitigate the adverse impacts of repressive regimes. In any case, centralized political systems along with repressive dictatorial rule and absence of neutrality of the state have undermined state-building and encouraged centrifugal tendencies in many African countries.

Given its undemocratic nature, the African state continues to rely on the coercive approach to state-building. When faced with challenges by sub-state actors, it usually resorts to suppressing the challenges by means of force. Coercive measures, however, rarely advance state building, even if they succeed in suppressing revolts. As Okafor notes, coercive approaches to state building fail because in “contemporary view of human rights, violent coercive unification and repressive homogenization are morally and socially bankrupt” (2000:525). Far from leading to long-term peace and stability, military victory often leads to a temporary lull in violent conflicts accompanied by intense resentment and resistance, which are likely to be followed by a new cycle of hostilities.

Several African civil wars were concluded after they ran their course with a military victory of one party or another. The Nigerian civil war (1967–70); the Angolan civil war, which ended in 2002 with the death of UNITA’s leader, Savimbi; the Ethiopian conflicts between the Mengistu regime and rebel groups, including the Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and the Oromo Liberation Front (OLF), which ended in 1991, are some examples. The Rwandan civil war, which ended with the victory of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1994, and the conflict in the Republic of the Congo, which ended in 1999, are other examples. In some cases, the wars came to an end with external intervention. The conflicts in Chad (1979–94), Sierra Leone (1991–2002), Liberia (1989–96) and the Katanga (1960–63) and the Shaba (1977–78) wars in the former Zaire are such examples. However, the military settlements of these civil wars have hardly translated to success in state-building as many of these countries remain embroiled in new conflicts or face growing ethnic and civil strife. Coercive measures simply do not integrate fragmented economies or create a cohesive political

community. State-building in Africa, thus, has to take place within a democratic context. Unfortunately, the nature of the postcolonial African state has not allowed the democratic approach to state-building to materialize.

*** Global Factors

Global factors in general and the manner in which Africa is incorporated into the global system in particular also play a major role in undermining the continent's state-building process. A brief review of the history of Africa's incorporation into the global economic system helps in explaining the impact of the global system. At least three different phases of Africa's incorporation into the global capitalist system can be identified.

The first phase took place prior to the era of decolonization, roughly between the middle of the fifteenth century and the middle of the twentieth century. This phase itself had at least three stages, including the early commercial incorporation, the plunder of Africa during the era of the slave trade, and the period of direct colonial domination. The pillage that took place during the era of the slave trade (ca. 1450–1870) and the naked exploitation during colonialism (1884–1960) were, however, the most important stages that shaped Africa's place in the global division of labor. Needless to say, the slave raids of the era of slave trade and the colonial policies of uneven development and practices of divide and rule left lingering effects in interethnic relations in many parts of the continent making it difficult to bond them together to form a political community.

The second phase of Africa's incorporation took place during the three decades between the beginning of its decolonization in the early 1960s and the end of the Cold War in 1991. Decolonization did not give African countries the power to determine their own terms of integration with the global system due to many factors. Nevertheless, decolonization meant a marked loosening of the monopolistic grip of African economies by European colonial powers, resulting in some diversification of the trading partners of African countries. The Cold War rivalry between the super powers and the welfare state ideology of compromise between social classes that prevailed

during the Cold War era also allowed African states to expand public services, such as education and health care, to their populations and to initiate some level of industrialization behind protectionist policies. Despite these benefits, the Cold War context of decolonization impeded African countries from developing their own development strategies. Moreover, the Cold War environment subjected African countries to frequent external intervention from both the ideological camps and to engagement in various conflicts as proxies. Civil wars in the now Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique, Angola, and Ethiopia are the most obvious examples.

The third phase of Africa's incorporation corresponds with the advent of globalization and represents new terms of integration of African economies into the global economy in the post-Cold War era. With globalization, economic liberalization has become a condition for integration into the global economy for African economies, as well as for those of other developing countries. Policies of liberalization, including retrenchment of state involvement in economic activity, including its public expenditures, institutional changes that foster openness of the economy and wide ranging deregulations, and expenditure switching policies designed to promote exports, have been imposed through a package of reforms known as structural adjustment programs. Crippled by the debt crisis and current account deficits, which were caused by a variety of factors, including the oil crisis of the 1970s and falling prices of primary commodities, African countries reluctantly succumbed to adopting liberalization policies dictated by the vision of globalization.

The liberalization mechanisms intended to integrate African economies with the global economy have, however, led to several problems, including loss of sovereignty of the African state in policymaking, worsening of social inequalities, and de-industrialization of the continent. All these outcomes have, in turn, exacerbated the crisis of state-building.

As noted, one aspect of the package of reforms that are used as a mechanism of integrating African economies into the global economy is that of institutional reforms, which include reduction of trade protectionism, deregulation of interest rates and financial flows, and privatization of financial institutions. According to proponents, reducing protectionism allows

local opportunity costs of resources to be reflected more accurately. Decontrolling interest rates is also expected to raise rates and thereby to encourage savings and the adoption of appropriate technology by discouraging capital-intensive technology. Financial deregulation and privatization of banks are also expected to allow banks to allocate funds to finance private investments in industry. These policies, however, can also produce adverse results. Lifting protectionism can, for example, lead to loss of revenue and the destruction of potentially competitive local infant industry by cheap imports. Higher interest rates and tight credit may also hurt industry which tends to have higher working capital needs while privatization of banks may discourage investments in industry which tend to have longer duration and higher risks.

A number of African countries have already suffered significant losses due to cheap imports. In Nigeria, for example, the number of textile factories has fallen to forty, a quarter of the number seen in the mid-1980s. Nigeria has reacted by banning imports of all printed fabrics in order to protect its own ailing industry (BBC, October 3, 2002). Mozambique's largest textile factory, Textafrica, which once employed 3,300 workers, also closed in 2002 due to premature and indiscriminate free trade. In the previous year, a number of textile factories shut down in Mozambique leading to the loss of about 9,500 jobs (BBC, May 7, 2002). Malawi's decision to shut down the country's largest textile factory putting more than 2000 people out of work was also largely caused by cheap imports, including second-hand clothing from the Far East (BBC, September 6, 2002). Processing cashew nuts, which used to be Mozambique's main industry, was also closed following the World Bank imposed ending of state tariffs, which had allowed local processors to buy home-grown nuts cheaper. Over 40,000 jobs were lost as a result of this closure.

Beyond the identified examples of de-industrialization, the overall picture of Africa's industry since the implementation of the globalization mechanisms in the beginning of the middle of the 1980s is rather grim. In 1994, the World Bank, in its Adjustment in Africa Report, projected a rosy picture for the adjusting African countries, despite the skepticism of many observers. The evidence now reveals that Africa's industry has stagnated with the implementation of the liberalization mechanisms (World Bank 2002). A comparison of manufacturing value added (as percentage of GDP) for the

years 1990 and 1999 shows a decline in twenty-three of thirty countries, while there was no change in four countries (World Bank 2001). A comparison of value added as percentage of GDP for overall industry for 1990 and 1999 also shows a decline in seventeen of thirty-one countries. A comparison of average annual growth rates of output in industry and in the manufacturing sector for the periods of 1980–90 and 1990–2000 also reveal a similar trend. In the manufacturing sector growth rates declined in twelve of twenty-three countries while growth rates in industry declined or remained unchanged in fifteen of twenty-nine countries (UNCTAD 2002). For sub-Saharan Africa as a whole annual growth rates of value added in industry have declined from 2.2 percent for the 1975–84 period to 1.7 percent for the 1985–89 period, and to 1.3 percent for the 1990–2000 period (World Bank 2001). Liberalization of its markets without reciprocity by the advanced countries in their marketing of agricultural products has relegated Africa to the export of primary commodities, which is unlikely to lead to a higher standard of living.

Another globalizing mechanism promoted through the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) is retrenchment of public expenditures to reduce budget deficits of governments. This policy is intended to restrain the growth of the money supply and thereby lead to stable prices and a climate conducive for investment. Obviously unrestricted budgetary deficits are unsustainable as they are likely to lead to economic instability undermining the development process. However, in the African case, where the level of human development and development of infrastructure is extremely low, retrenchment of public expenditures is likely to limit investments on human development and development of infrastructure, curtailing the long-term prospects for overall development of African countries. Many sub-Saharan African countries have retrenched their expenditures on public services since adopting adjustment mechanisms. Public expenditure on education, for example, has declined steeply in many countries although modest increases are reported in others. For sub-Saharan Africa, in general, public expenditures on education as a ratio of GDP declined from 4.5 percent in 1992 to 3.3 percent in 1999 (World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization 2004). At a time when malaria and the HIV/AIDS epidemic are eroding the economic and social fabric of many African societies, total health expenditures as percentage of GDP show little effort by African governments to deal with the continent’s growing health crisis. Per capita health

expenditures in 2001, for example, declined in twenty-three of thirty-nine countries (World Health Organization 2003).

Retrenchment of public expenditures and state involvement in the economy are also likely to exacerbate the already high poverty rates and social inequalities. Adjusted poverty rates in Sab-Saharan Africa have increased from 48 percent in 1970 to 60 percent in 1995 (Artadi and Sala-i-Martin 2003). According to the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization (2004), the total number of the destitute increased from 241 million in 1990 to 323 million in 2000.

It is also unlikely that transformation of the subsistence sector and internal integration of the economy will take place under state disengagement. Inequalities in access to public services among regional and ethnic entities are also likely to linger without active state engagement. State-building in the continent is, thus, likely to be undermined when the role of the state, as a promoter of social justice, is curtailed. As noted, not many African states are champions of social justice. However, the liberal doctrine that guides the global system also provides ideological justification for denying social justice, exacerbating the problems of state-building and poor state-society relations.

Political liberalization has accompanied economic liberalization in much of Africa, partly due to donor conditionalities. Most African countries have since the early 1990s carried out multiparty elections, despite various electoral irregularities. In many cases, however, the elections hardly represent an advancement of genuine democratization. As post-election conflicts in countries, such as the Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Togo, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, reveal, elections without the establishment of political arrangements that accommodate the interests and perspectives of the various cultural entities, and without transformation and integration of the peasantry, are unlikely to advance genuine democratization or state-building.

Not unlike the era of the Cold War, the war on terrorism has also drawn many African countries as proxies. The countries in the Horn of Africa, for instance, find themselves on the verge of a potentially disastrous war, as the United

States and Ethiopia are currently inching closer to military intervention in Somalia against the Union of Islamic Courts, which they accuse of having links to terrorism. In addition to derailing state formation in Somalia, this war, if it takes place, has the potential to destabilize the whole region and fuel religious cleavage within the individual countries.

*** Regional Factors

Regional factors have also contributed to the state-building crisis, albeit to a lesser degree than the internal and global factors. African countries have not fought many wars against each other, despite the large number of border disputes that characterize the continent. Many African countries have, however, engaged in proxy wars that destabilize their neighbors. Many countries have actively supported rebel groups fighting against the governments of their neighbors or at least allowed them to operate from bases in their territories. Ethiopia and Somalia have supported each other's rebels. Ethiopia and Sudan have done the same. Ethiopia and Eritrea and Eritrea and the Sudan have also engaged in efforts to destabilize each other. Other African states that have attempted to destabilize each other include: the Sudan and Uganda; the Sudan and Chad; the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda; Liberia and Sierra Leone; and Liberia and Guinea.

The reasons for such interventions vary from case to case. In some cases, irridentism is the main factor, as between Ethiopia and Somalia. In other cases, affiliation of ethnic or religious entities with the rebelling groups plays a role. Inability of governments to control their borders and to deny rebels from neighboring countries the use of their territories as bases of operation also plays a role. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan are good examples. In some cases, economic benefits have motivated interventions. Liberia's support of Sierra Leone's rebels was a case in point. Intervention in the civil war of the Democratic Republic of the Congo also revealed such motives. The absence of strong regional economic interdependence among African countries, despite the proliferation of regional economic integration schemes, has also made interventions less costly. In any case, regional factors have played a notable role in Africa's crisis of state building.

*** Conclusion

The foregoing analysis suggests that overcoming Africa's crisis of state-building requires fundamental changes in the nature of the African state. It also requires major changes in Africa's global and regional relations. African civil wars have made it clear that state-building cannot be consolidated without democratizing the state. Democratization, in turn, requires reconstitution of the state not only to bring it under the control of society but also to integrate it with society's institutions and cultural values. Choices of development strategies and decisions on the role of the state in promoting social justice also need to be made in a democratic manner. Reducing democratization to merely conducting elections to recycle the elite in power, as is presently happening in much of Africa, hardly represents democracy and is unlikely to have significant impact on the continent's crisis of state-building. Botswana and Mauritius have made progress in democratization. These two countries have also made notable progress in state-building and development. Ghana and South Africa have also made progress in the areas of democratization, development, and state-building. These cases suggest that democratization, state-building, and development have become intertwined and require an integrated approach to advance.

Our analysis suggests that African countries also need to address the regional factors that undermine their state-building efforts by developing their regional integration schemes and the African Union. In August 2003, at Maputo, the members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) entered a pact for a strong regional action to end civil wars. Under the pact, the members pledged that a conflict in a SADC country would automatically invite diplomatic, political or military response from all members. Putting in practice such intervention would not only curtail negative intervention by neighbors but it may also help in mitigating internal conflicts or, at least resolve them more quickly. It is timely that African countries set political conditionalities for membership in regional integration schemes as well as in the African Union. African countries should also perhaps encourage bottom-up integration by allowing freer cross-border trade.

The global factors are more difficult to address since they are not within the control of African countries. However, reconstitution of the African state, developing regional integration, and strengthening the African Union would go a long way in reducing Africa’s external dependency and vulnerability and in raising its bargaining power within the global arena.

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** 15. Weak States and Democratization: Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Nigeria

Muhammad Sani Umar

During the 1990s, the “third wave of democratization” swept across West Africa, with each of the countries in the region taking various steps toward democratization: ending the tenures of presidents-for-life, introducing multiparty elections, and making successful handovers from one administration to another via democratic elections. However, the 1990s also witnessed numerous violent political conflicts: ethnic and religious riots, bloody military coups, political assassinations, civil wars and anarchy in collapsed states. In this chapter, I address the question: Does democratic transition help to resolve or aggravate violent political conflicts in general, and ethnic and religious conflicts in particular?

To answer this question, the chapter begins with a brief regional overview of political developments in West Africa during the 1990s, with particular focus on the relationships between democratic transitions and violent conflicts that have ethnic and religious dimension, as well as the rise of Islamist movements in the West African region and their impact on conflict, democratization, and political stability. Next, the chapter focuses on Nigeria for a case-study of the complexities of these issues. From its national (Nigeria) and regional (West Africa) perspectives, this chapter contributes to the larger debates on democratization in the era of globalization.

The central argument of the chapter is that in the short term (within a single generation), democracy does not resolve preexisting violent political conflicts, particularly those with religious and ethic dimensions. In fact, democracy could aggravate such conflicts by transforming them into contests that are characteristic of democracy: contests of elections, ideas, policies, privileges, and positions of power. The centrality of these contests in a democracy carries the potential to intensify preexisting political conflicts, particularly in divided societies with weak states that are not capable of asserting state autonomy from sectional influences of ethnic and religious groups. The confluence of democratic contestation, divided society, and weak state helps to explain why democratic transition is followed by the explosion of ethnic and religious violent conflicts in Nigeria, and political instability in most of the West African countries, including civil war in Côte d’Ivoire and state collapse in Liberia and Sierra Leone. In the long term

(within at least two generations or more), democracy may in fact offer better potential than alternative political systems for solving the problem of violent political conflicts through various models of democratic power sharing and popular participation.[89] But even in the long term, democracy alone will not solve all the underlying social, economic, cultural, and political conditions that in the first place gave birth to violent political conflicts. The fallacy of all-good-things-go-together that informed the initial optimism about what "transition to democracy" heralded has since given way to sober realization of the limits of what democratization could accomplish not only in West Africa, but in other regions as well.[90]

In a very good review of the huge literature on transition to democracy in Africa, Clark Gibson points to an emerging consensus among political scientists that the political changes of the 1990s that swept away authoritarian regimes in Africa have not yet "consolidated" into "deep democracies." The first multiparty elections may very well have been "free and fair," terminated the tenure of presidents-for-life, and introduced laudable political reforms. Still, the political realities in African countries a decade after the first multiparty elections point to the staying power of the old political order, entrenched in the neo-patrimonialism that was partly responsible for the pervasive corruption and inefficiency that on the first instant provided one of the strong reasons for political reform. Gibson also calls attention to another emerging consensus among political scientists that rather than "transition to democracy" or "democratization," "political change" is a more accurate description, which also avoids the pro-democracy normative bias that prevented accurate understanding of significant political developments taking place in Africa over the last two decades (Gibson 2002). One cannot, however, deny that the general thrust of those developments has been (imperfectly no doubt) towards democracy, no matter what definition of democracy one adopts.

For example, the Annual Freedom in the World Country Scores 1972–73 to 2001–2002 compiled by the Freedom House (see Table 15.1) shows that of the twenty-one countries in the West African region, only three (Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and The Gambia) did not register any gain in political freedom during the period under review, while Côte d'Ivoire is the only country to remain unchanged. The survey also shows that the gains registered varied significantly from the countries that gained two percentage

points or less (Chad, Guinea, Liberia, and Mauritania) to those that gained more than two percentage points (Benin, Burkino Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo).[91] Thus, despite significant variations, the general direction of political changes in the region is toward more political freedoms that are characteristic of “deep democracy.” It is also important to note that Benin, Ghana, Senegal, and Mali have each experienced hand-over of power from one party to another through democratic elections—another important marker of democratic consolidation.

Following are some clarifying remarks: The characters representing scores for each year are, from left to right, political rights, civil liberties, and freedom status. Each of the first two is measured on a one-to-seven scale, with one representing the highest degree of freedom and seven the lowest. “F,” “PF,” and “NF,” respectively, stand for “free,” “partly free,” and “not free.” Countries whose combined averages for political rights and for civil liberties fall between 1.0 and 2.5 are designated “free”; between 3.0 and 5.5 “partly free”; and between 5.5 and 7.0 “not free.”

Yet even as West African countries move toward more substantive democracy beyond mere multiparty elections, the region did not avoid political violence, thereby highlighting the fact that democracy is not an instant panacea for all political problems. A study on conflict around the world concludes, “conflict has declined in eastern and central Africa in the last several years but may be intensifying once again in West Africa” (Marshall and Gurr 2003: 2). The phenomenon of political violence following in the immediate aftermath of transition to democracy is not unique to the West African region, for the same study of global conflict also concludes: “Democratic governance does not guarantee full respect for civil and political rights nor does it necessarily prevent regimes from using coercion against restive citizens or to ‘influence’ the electoral process. The third wave of democratization has been accompanied by an increase in the number of democratic regimes with mixed human rights record” (Marshall and Gurr 2003: 2).[92] Increasingly, the realization is spreading even in pro-democracy circles that democratization does not solve all the problems confronting different societies around the globe. In order to understand how the initial optimism heralding glad tidings in the wake of transition to democracy has so far failed to materialize fully, this chapter argues that

African countries in general cannot become free and prosperous to the same level of the democratic countries of Western Europe and North America within a single generation. That desirable state of political bliss can only come about through the synergy of the modern state, capitalism, and liberalism functioning together with democracy in the longue durée. Let me now elaborate this argument with particular reference to Nigeria.

Table 15.1 Selected Years (1975–2000) of Freedom Scores for West African Countries

| S/1 | Country | 1975/76 | 1980/81 | 1985/86 | 1990/91 | 1995/96 | 2000/01 | Observation |

| 1 | Benin | 7,7,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,7,NF | 6,4,PF | 2,2,F | 2,2J | Gain |

| 2 | BurkinoFaso | 6,4,PF | 6,5,PF | 7,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 5,4 JPF | 4,4,PF | Gain |

| 3 | Cameroon | 6,4,PF | 6,6,NF | 6,7,NF | 6,6,NF | 7,5,NF | 7,6,NF | Decline |

| 4 | Cape Verde | 5,5,PF | 6,6,NF | 6,7,NF | 5,5 ,PF | UJ | W | Gain |

| 5 | Central African Republic | 7,7,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 3,4,PF | 3,4,PF | Gain |

| 6 | Chad | 7,6,NF | 6,6,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 6,5,NF | Gain |

| 7 | Cote d’Ivoire | 6,5,NF | 6,5,PF | 6,5 JF | 6,4,PF | 6,5,NF | 6,5 JPF | Same |

| 8 | Equatorial Guinea | 6,7,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF | Decline |

| 9 | Gambia (The) | 2AF | 2,2,F | 3,4,PF | 2,2,F | 7,6,NF | 7,5 ,NF | Decline |

| 10 | Ghana | 7,5,NF | 2,3J | 7,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 4,4,PF | 2,3,F | Gain |

| 11 | Guinea | 7,7,NF | 7,7,NF | 7,5,NF | 6,5,NF | 6,5,N 1 | 6,5,NF | Gain |

| 12 | Guinea Bissau | 6,6,NF | 6,6,NF | 6,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 3,4,PF | 4,5,PF | Gain |

| 13 | Liberia | 6,4,PF | 6,6,NF | 5,5,PF | 7,7,NF | 7,6,NF | 5,6,PF | Gain |

| 14 | Mali | 7,7,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 2,3,F | 2,3,F | Gain |

| 15 | Mauritania | 6,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 6,6,NF | 6,5,NF | Gain |

| 16 | Niger | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 3,5,PF | 4,4,PF | Gain |

| 17 | Nigeria | 6,5,PF | 2,3,F | 7,5,NF | 5,5 ,PF | 7,7,NF | 4,4,PF | Gain |

| IS | Sao Tome and Prinicipe | 5,5,PF | 6,6,NF | 7,7,NF | 5,5,PF | 1,2,F | IAF | Gain |

| 19 | Senegal | 6,4,PF | 4,4,PF | 3,4,PF | 4,3,PF | 4,5,PF | 3,4,PF | Gain |

| 20 | Sierra Leone | 6,5,PF | 5,5JF | 5,5,PF | 6,5,PF | 7,6,NF | 4,5 ,PF | Gain |

| 21 | Togo | 7,6,NF | 7,6,NF | 6,6,NF | 6,6,NF | 6,5,NF | 5,5,PF | Gain |

Source: Freedom House, Annual Freedom in the World Country Scores 1972–73 to 2001–2002.

Following are some clarifying remarks: The characters representing scores for each year are. from left to right, political rights, civil liberties, and freedom status. Each of the first two is measured on a one-to-seven scale, with one representing the highest degree of freedom and seven the lowest. “F.” “PF.” and “NF.” respectively, stand for “free.” “partly free.” and “not free.” Countries whose combined averages for political rights and for civil liberties fall between 1.0 and 2.5 arc designated “free”: between 3.0 and 5.5 “partly free”: and between 5.5 and 7.0 “not free.”

*** The Nigerian Case

Although Nigeria’s transition from military regime to elected civilian administration should be seen as part of the wave of political changes that swept away authoritarian regimes across the West African region during the last two decades, the differences among the countries of the region are obvious and important. In particular, Nigeria stands out on a number of important aspects, most notably its sheer size and ethnic heterogeneity. For example, Nigeria’s population estimated at 126.91 million is more than the total populations of half the countries in the region that have more than 5 million people: Burkino Faso (11.27), Cameroon (15.09), Côte d’Ivoire (15.95), Ghana (19.20), Mali (10.84), Niger (10.85), Senegal (9.53), Guinea (7.42), Benin (6.28), Togo (5.28), and Sierra Leone (5.03). None of these

countries have more than ten different ethnic groups, whereas Nigeria has more than 250 different ethnic groups. Similarly, while only Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire have gross domestic products of $10.04 and $11.89 million, respectively, Nigeria's gross domestic product stands at $32.184 millions (World Bank 2002: 5–15). Clearly, these differences between Nigeria and other West African countries must be considered in any comparative analysis —a point discernible in the different roles of Islam during the political transitions.

In May 1999, Nigeria returned to civilian rule after successfully holding elections that ended fifteen years of devastating military (mis)rule that nearly caused the disintegration of the country. For most Nigerians, as well as scholars of Nigerian politics and international observers, the expectations were very high. General Olusegun Obasanjo, the former military head of state who voluntarily handed power to civilians in 1979, was elected largely because he was believed to possess the moral and political integrity to begin the difficult task of reforming Nigeria's moribund political, social, and economic conditions. In his victory speech, General Obasanjo sounded messianic when he proclaimed the "rebirth of our nation" and characterized his election "as a mandate from the people of Nigeria and a command from God Almighty that I should spare no effort in rebuilding this nation" (Obasanjo 1999). The optimism of the international community was expressed by Michael Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, in a speech he gave in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, shortly after General Obasanjo's electoral victory was announced. Camdessus declared: "Nigeria has created a new opportunity for economic progress, national harmony, and democracy. Around the world, hopes are high that Nigeria will recover the momentum of development and assume once again its leadership in Africa and among developing countries worldwide" (Camdessus 1999). These optimistic expectations have been cruelly dashed by the horrendous political developments since Nigeria's return to democracy, particularly the escalation of political violence during the last general elections in March-April 2003 (Human Rights Watch 2003). Regrettably, more lives and properties have been lost in repeated incidents of ethnic, religious and political violence since the return of democratic rule in 1999 than at anytime since the end of Nigeria's civil war in 1970.

A careful analysis of these negative political developments will show three sets of distinct but interrelated problems. First, there are problems resulting from weakness of state capacity as evidenced in poor management of the rising tide of ethnic, religious, and political violence as well as an increase in organized violent crimes. Second, there are problems of ethnic chauvinism, religious intolerance and the imperative of peaceful coexistence, and citizenship rights. And third, there are problems of crippling poverty and the widening gap between the rich and poor that have been aggravated by the serious failures of economic policies, including the structural adjustment programs imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Democracy can help to solve these problems in the long run, but in the short run each set of problems calls for a different solution.

More than any other problem, the recurrent waves of ethnic, religious, and political violence seem to have worsened since Nigeria's return to democracy. Although no exact figures are readily available, conservative estimates put the number of people killed at more than ten thousand, and those injured at more than double that number. Additionally, no one knows the exact number of other victims who have been traumatized through loss of family members, neighbors, friends, business associates, and colleagues. [93] Needless to say, no one thought that a return to democracy would produce such a terrible outcome. As Nigerians struggle to understand the seemingly endless and senseless violence, they are increasingly beginning to realize that not all of the political developments that came in the wake of return to democratic civilian rule are wholesome.

**** Building Civil Society and Ethnic Identities

In particular, the political radicalization of ethnic identities under the guise of "civil society" and "pro-democracy activism" is beginning to receive critical scrutiny in light of its unhealthy relation to the ethnic militias and vigilante groups that have actively perpetrated some of the most heinous violence. Augustine Ikelegbe observes that consistent with the continental trend in Africa during the 1990s, civil society associations were in the forefront of the struggle for democracy in Nigeria, and were particularly courageous in their opposition to the military regime of General Sani Abach. However, Ikelegbe notes, "Recent events are pointing to the negative roles played by some civil

groups in the construction of platforms for ethnic militancy and violent confrontation with other groups and the state." From his case-study of three ethnic associations that have become very active since Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1999, Ikelegbe demonstrates that their "goals, methods, strategies and tendencies indicate intense primordialism, militancy, and violence." Ikelegbe finds that ethnic associations are becoming perverse by promoting anti-democratic agendas, including ethnic parochial interests and preference for political violence as the strategy for achieving legitimate and not-so-legitimate goals. Observing that ethnic militias are terrorizing innocent citizens to "the applause of their ethnic kinsmen and the horror of Nigerians," Ikelegbe cautions against the danger of ethnic militias: "in plural societies, civil society may become so parochial, divisive, divergent, and disarticulative that it actually undermines democracy" (Ikelegbe 2001: 1–24).

In contrast, R. T. Akinyele contends that ethnic militias, including the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), the Yoruba ethnic militia that had been using violence allegedly in order to protect "the interests of the Yoruba ethnic group," do not undermine the national stability of Nigeria, even though he concedes that "at times, certain ethnic groups have threatened to secede from the federation in order to draw attention to their claim of a right to a greater share of national cake" (Akinyele 2001: 625). Emphasizing the credentials of ethnic militias as civil associations by calling attention to professionals (physicians, lawyers, journalists, academics, and the like) in the ranks of their memberships, and their declared goal to "protect the identities and interests of the groups they represent within the federation (of Nigeria)," Akinyele contends, "the existence of ethnic congresses is compatible with a democratic system because democracy promotes the ideal of self-determination which they preach, and they also act to keep the exploiters in check." Akinyele urges that ethnic militias should be encouraged to form an umbrella organization under which they could articulate their demands. But rather than focusing on the individual rights of citizens, Akinyele neglects to note that the exclusionary demands of ethnic militias are undemocratic, and as Ikelegbe noted correctly, the demands of ethnic militias have been so divisive, often leading to unnecessary mayhem.

Yet despite his enthusiasm for ethnic militias, Akinyele could not overlook the political problems resulting from their use of violence when he concludes that "although…the degree of threat ethnic militias pose to the nation has

been exaggerated, the danger becomes great when combined with the agitation for resource control, and adoption of “political sharia,” and inability of the police to guarantee the safety of people’s lives and property” (Akinyele 2001: 640). Akinyele’s conclusion is quite insightful because political violence is deeply connected with the three political problems (political sharia, resources control, and police inability to enforce law and order) that are the most crucial issues to surface in connection with ethnic and religious violence since Nigeria’s return to democracy.

Of course, democracy did not cause each of these three problems, but democracy is unlikely to solve them in the short term either. For example, police inability to protect life and property not only from the politically motivated violence by ethnic militias, but also from the steady rise of violent organized crime points clearly to weak state capacity. Armed robbery has been a major problem during the military regimes, but it has become more violent, more frequent, more brutal, and more daring. According to police statistics on crimes committed between August 2000 and June 2001, “84 policemen were killed nationwide, 273 civilians were killed, 133 policemen were injured, 718 robbers died and, 2,080 robbers were arrested, 729 weapons recovered and police lost 95 weapons” (Olukoya2003). Daily Nigerian newspapers carry screaming headlines on rising waves of violent crimes: “Robbers raid bank, kill two cops” (This Days News 2002), “Robbers injure policeman, snatch 4 cars” (This Days News 2002), “Armed robbers kill 3 policemen at M[uratal] M[ohammed] Airport”(Daily Trust 2002), “Eight feared dead as robbers raid commercial bank” (Vanguard Newspaper 2002), “Bandits kill 3 mobile policemen” (Daily Trust 2003). The criminals committing these outrages in broad daylight usually come in gangs of ten to fifty men dangerously armed with more fire power than the police; hence they easily kill innocent citizens and police officers with impunity. These well-organized criminal gangs are so powerful that they are not afraid to raid official residences of state governors, court premises, and commercial banks. But nothing dramatizes the impotence of Nigeria’s law enforcement agencies like the brazen assassination of Bola Ige, the erstwhile minister of justice and attorney general of Nigeria. Not surprisingly, supporters of ethnic militias and vigilante groups claim that their groups are necessary to give them security for life and property that the Nigerian police have become unable to provide. No one could plausibly claim that democracy caused the rise of organized violent crime. Although democracy may in the long run

solve the social and political problems that contribute to the problem of violent crime, the most obvious solution that recommends itself in the short run is strengthening the institutional capacity of the law enforcement agencies of the Nigerian State. In order words, problems arising from weakness of the state call for strengthening the state, a project that is not easily accomplished by democratization.

**** The Constitutional Debate

In the same vein, proponents of what has become known as political sharia make the same argument that the stern punishments for crime in Islamic law are the necessary deterrent needed to stem the rising tide of violent organized crime. The complexities of the politics of applying Islamic law in contemporary Nigeria are too many to analyze here; only some of the salient issues can be briefly discussed. First, it is important to realize that Islamic law has been operational among Muslims for centuries before British-imposed colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. It is equally important to realize that British colonial authorities suspended only aspects of Islamic criminal law (mainly penal sections of amputation and execution by stoning) that the British found repugnant to their sense of justice. Apart from these changes, the British incorporated Islamic law as one of the three integral parts of Nigeria's legal system—the other two parts were British Common Law and Native Law and Custom of non-Muslim communities. The legal order that the British bequeathed to Nigeria remained substantially unchanged since Nigeria's independence in 1960.[94] Although Muslims have acquiesced in the colonial compromise that omitted the penal aspects of Islamic law, they have occasionally wanted to enhance the status of Islamic law within the Nigerian legal system.

In 1976, the military regime of Generals Murtala Mohammed/Olusegun Obasanjo appointed a committee to draft a new constitution for Nigeria in preparation for returning the country to a democratically elected civilian administration in 1979. In the course of the constitutional debate, Muslims wanted to create constitutional provision for a court structure for Islamic law similar to the structure for Common Law. Such a structure would make it possible for cases involving Islamic law to be tried in sharia courts from local area courts through upper courts with appellate jurisdiction not only in the

individual states that operate Islamic courts, but also at the Federal Court of Appeal. Although no Federal Sharia Courts of Appeal were provided for in the Nigerian Constitution of 1979, the compromise reached allowed for cases involving Islamic law to be tried before Judges of the Federal Court of Appeal and Justices of the Supreme Court of Nigeria who have competence in Islamic law.[95] This compromise remained in effect until the 1979 Constitution came up for review under the military regime of General Sani Abacha, ca. 1993–1998. Given the numerous political problems that developed during the 1980s and 1990s, most notably the tension between Muslims and Christians that erupted in a number of violent clashes,[96] the constitutional provisions relative to Islamic law became the subject of acrimonious debates. Christians sought to remove any reference to Islamic law in the Nigerian Constitution, and Muslims wanted to strengthen those provisions and extend the jurisdiction of Islamic law beyond the confine of civil and marital affairs.

The polarized positions were not resolved through a compromise similar to the one reached earlier in 1979; instead, the military regime imposed a lid on the constitutional debate on the issue, thereby keeping the 1979 compromise effectively unchanged. However, because the political atmosphere that made the 1979 compromise feasible has since been replaced by more bitterly polarized politics of violent clashes between Muslims and Christians and also between different ethnic groups, it was clear that the military fiat of terminating the debate on the status of Islamic law in the Nigerian constitution would not be the end of the matter. Therefore, it should not be surprising that when democratically elected civilians took over power from the military regime in May 1999, the hitherto suspended debates about Islamic law resumed in full force albeit in a different political arena.

After assuming office in 1999, the democratically elected Governor Ahmed Sani of Zamfara State announced his decision to expand the scope of Islamic law in order to allow Zamfara State to implement “the full sharia” (Doki 1999: 1–3), including the criminal and penal provisions of Islamic law that were suspended by the British colonial authorities during the colonial era from 1903 to 1960. Thus began the protracted political controversies and violent clashes regarding what has since come to be called “political sharia.” Following Governor Ahmed Sani’s decision in Zamfara, it became virtually impossible for all the democratically elected governors of states with

substantial Muslim populations in northern Nigeria to resist tremendous popular demand for the implementation of full sharia. To date, twelve of the nineteen states of northern Nigeria have officially adopted similar but no identical policies of expanding the jurisdiction of Islamic law. One sentence of amputation for theft was carried out in 2000 in Zamfara, and two sentences for death by stoning for adultery were overruled on appeal to Sharia Courts of Appeal, while two other cases are still in process. Reactions to these developments have ranged widely from local activists to global organizations and even heads of governments, and from praise to outrage.[97]

Some of the issues raised in these reactions are particularly relevant here. First, violent clashes between Muslims and Christians have resulted on several occasions when proponents and opponents of implementing full sharia took to street demonstrations to make their case. In particular, the breakdown of law and order in Kaduna in 2000 and Jos in 2001 resulted in the horrific deaths of thousands and destruction of property worth millions. In addition, thousands have been forced to relocate to other states, losing their businesses, homes, friends and families. As already noted in Akinyele's article, non-Muslim Nigerians regard the overwhelming support of Muslims for implementing the full sharia as a politically calculated move by the Hausa/Fulani ethnic group (majority of which are Muslims) to compensate for their loss of power at the federal level since Nigeria's return to democratically elected civilian government, headed by President Obasanjo, who is a Christian, Yoruba, and from southern Nigeria. Seen by other Nigerian ethnic groups as political radicalization of Hausa/Fulani ethnic/religious identity, the violent conflicts over the full sharia become more difficult since they now relate to communal identity on which compromise is not as easy as in conflicts over other issues. Robin Williams, Jr. observes: "Both interethnic and ethnic-state conflicts tend to be severe, protracted, and intractable. At the extremes, the stakes are total: survival versus genocide" (Williams 1994: 49).[98] But the more relevant point to my main argument is that the increasing violence is severely overtaxing the already weakened ability of the law-enforcement agencies to maintain basic security of life and property; on several occasions, soldiers had to intervene because of police inability to restore law and order. Clearly, the popularity of "application of full sharia" is only one of the emerging responses to the weakening capacity of the Nigerian state that has been going on for at least the last two decades, a development that should be seen in the context of worldwide transformation of the state system in this era of globalization. Significant dimensions of the

global transformation of the state system include: (1) contraction of state capacity through incremental decay resulting from patrimonialism, particularly in African and Arab countries; (2) deregulation and privatization of state economic enterprises through structural adjustment programs; and (3) emergence of new international norms rejecting state sovereignty and reason of state. Some of the vehement opposition to application of Islamic law in Nigeria has come from domestic and international organizations operating within these new international norms, including human rights advocacy and women empowerment groups (Human Rights Watch 2004).

The enormous popular political pressure that compelled many reluctant governors of states with Muslim majorities to adopt the full sharia raises the question of whether Islam is compatible with democracy or not. The contentious debate on this question has not yet come to terms with the paradox of democratic elections producing unintended consequences that could be anti-democratic. This paradox is unavoidable if democracy is understood to entail no more than change of government through periodic free and fair elections open equally to all eligible citizens. Nowadays, democracy is understood to include more substantive criteria such as protection of minorities, gender equality, respect of human rights, liberal attitudes toward cultural difference, secularization or at least tolerance for religious pluralism, equitable distribution of resources, and open market capitalism, and so on. These attributes that characterized the affluent democracies in Western Europe and North America are the outcomes of a well-articulated system comprising different elements: the organizational and technical capabilities of modern states, liberalism, efficient open-market economy (capitalism), and democracy. While different models of democratic rule (such as consociation and proportional representation) can effectively solve the political problems of divided societies, no model of democratic rule is particularly capable of solving the problems of weak states because state-building requires concentration of power but democracy dictates the need for power sharing. The disarticulation between the two conflicting imperatives of strengthening state and consolidating democracy helps to explain why Nigeria’s problems, including escalating organized crime, ethnic, religious and political violence, have persisted and in some cases worsened after the country’s return to democracy. Historically, states have only strengthened their capacities through war-making (Finer 1975: 84–163),[99] the quintessential act of violence.

The adoption of full sharia since Nigeria's return to democracy has generated a more favorable attitude toward democracy among Muslims in Nigeria. To explain this development, Michael Bratton speculates, "Because Muslims constitute almost half of the Nigerian population, they calculate that majority rule will not always work to their disadvantage. Or perhaps the introduction of sharia in northern states in the aftermath of democratic transition has favorably flavored their views." Using a public opinion survey conducted by the Afrobarometer between mid-1999 and mid-2001 in Mali, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda, Bratton also demonstrates that "although adherents of Islam in Africa occasionally display distinctive political attitudes, they do not differ much from non-Muslims on the subject of democracy and their differences with others do not always run in an anti-democratic direction. Moreover, any hesitancy about supporting democracy among the African Muslims we interviewed is more due to deficits of formal education and other attributes of modernization than to the influence of religious attachments" (Bratton 2003: 494). This conclusion is consistent with the findings of more and more scholars who challenge the claim that Islam is incompatible with democracy with data from public opinion surveys (Rose 2002; Stephan and Robertson 2003: 30–44; Price 2002: 213–225).[100] Since Muslims constitute at least 15 percent and as much as 90 percent of the populations of West African countries, the interesting question arises: Does the situation in Nigeria predict the future roles of Muslim electorates in West Africa as democracy consolidates in the region?

*** Muslim Electorate in West Africa

"Not necessarily" is the simple answer to this question; but a more complex answer will have to take account of the subterranean changes taking place within all the Muslim communities of West Africa. At the moment, none of the West African countries, including those with Muslim majorities, have any active Islamic political project similar to the application of Islamic law in Nigeria. In Senegal there are signs of increasing Islamic political activism. But the long standing modus operandi between the maraboutic families and their mass followers in the Sufi orders on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the Senegalese politicians and ruling elite is so deeply entrenched that the new Muslim political activists have not yet changed the status quo (Beck

2001: 601–622; Villalon 1995; Piga 2002: 43–68). Similarly, Muslim political activists in Mali were visible and loud during the April 2002 general elections. A coalition of Muslim associations campaigned in mosques and on the radio for their favorite presidential candidate, former Prime Minister Ibrahim Boubacar Keita; however, he did not win the election, thus indicating the limited electoral influence of Islamic political activists (Baxter 2002). The visibility of Islamic political activism is even more limited in the rest of West African countries, including countries with clear Muslim majorities, namely: Guinea, Gambia, and Niger. Therefore, one can safely conclude that there are currently no cases in the entire West African region that are comparable to the active role of Islam in Nigerian politics.

Yet the important changes that made Islam politically prominent in Nigeria are, to varying degrees, observable in virtually all the Muslim communities in West Africa. First and foremost are the educational changes shaping the emergence of a new Muslim elite across the region, a development that is also observable in the rest of the Muslim world. The advent of modern/Western education in West Africa came largely through Christian missionaries, who used their schools for effective proselytization. Throughout the colonial period, Muslims avoided sending their children to Christian missionary schools out of the justified fear that the children would be converted to Christianity. Even when public schools were established after independence, Muslims remained suspicious of modern/Western education because Muslims still regarded Western education (even when separated from Christian missions) as a corrupting cultural influence. Consequently, Muslims are politically marginalized because they do not have enough people with the requisite western educational qualifications to actively participate in public affairs, particularly in countries where Muslims are a minority (Benin, Togo, Liberia, Ghana) or simple majority (Burkino Faso, Sierra Leone, and Côte d’Ivoire). In fact, even in countries with clear/substantial Muslim majorities (Senegal, Mali, Guinea, and Niger Republic), the prevailing political order inherited from colonialism does not admit religious players into the system, and may in fact be openly hostile to Islamic political activists. However, three related developments in the last three decades suggest that significant changes in the political profiles of Muslim communities in West African states are on the horizon.

First, Muslims across the region are bridging the educational gap that has been excluding them from active participation in public affairs not only by the increasing acceptance of modern Western education offered in the public schools of their respective countries, but also by modernizing Islamic traditions of learning. The development of the madrasa, the Islamic school modeled on the institutional format of the public schools, has increasingly added modern secular subjects, including French/English, alongside Islamic religious education. Thousands of madrasa graduates have completed their university education, many of them in Arab countries. In Nigeria, the madrasa graduates constitute a new Muslim elite that is in the forefront of Islamic political activism, including the demand for application of Islamic law (Umar 2001:127–150; Barkindo 1993: 91–105; Reichmuth 1993: 179–197). In the rest of West Africa, madrasa graduates are also becoming new Muslim religious elite, agitating for Islamic reforms within their respective Muslim communities. This development has significant political implications not only in terms of leadership of local Muslim communities, but also in terms of the relationships between those communities and the governments of their respective countries, and the international Islamic networks as well.[101]

The second development is the proliferation of Muslim associations of the new nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) kind, whose links to the international networks of Islamic organizations provide them with significant resources and inspirations for political activism. These Muslim NGOs are veritable instruments for political mobilization, and they are poised to contest the political monopoly of the older leadership of Muslim communities. In Nigeria, sectarian divisions among Muslim organizations limited their potential influence in the electoral process. Still, Muslim organizations did provide powerful platforms from which the new Muslim elite could bargain with other political actors within the political order (Umar 2001: 130–138; Kane 2003: 149–177, 207–226; Loimeier 1997: 207–324). As the new Muslim elite become more and more organized, they will most likely chart a different political course in their interface with the governments of their countries, an outcome that is all the more likely in democratic system (Kaba 2000: 89–208; Piga 2002: 43–68).[102]

The third development is transition to democracy, which has been ongoing in the region for the second decade now. As democracy consolidates in various

West African countries, the new Muslim elite, along with its civic associations, is likely to become more politically active; it also seems likely that the new elite will seek to mobilize the Muslim electorate. As already noted, the return of democratic politics in Nigeria since 1999 made possible the application of Islamic law in the expanded version that the elected governor of Zamfara state pioneered, and which, subsequently, became impossible for other elected governors of Muslim majority states to resist due to tremendous popular support for applying the full sharia. In free and fair electoral systems, even a small minority can produce significant political impact by casting the winning votes. Therefore, one should expect that as West African democracies consolidate, even the minorities of Muslims comprising 15–20 percent of the national populations of Benin, Ghana, Liberia, and Togo would play more critical political roles. In the countries with larger percentages of Muslims, political participation of the new Muslim elite can be expected to produce changes, even if not necessarily along the lines of the political prominence of Islam in Nigerian politics.

Whereas “no” is the simple answer to the question of whether pattern of Islam and politics in Nigeria predicts a likely trend in the West African region, the more complex answer must be “yes, even if somewhat differently.” The political and social forces that facilitated the increased prominence of Islam in Nigerian politics are three related developments: (1) modernization and expansion of Islamic education and Muslims’ increasing acceptance of modern education; (2) emergence of new Muslim elite and their challenge to traditional leadership of the Muslim community that used to mediate the interface between Muslims and their governments; and (3) Muslim civic associations capable of politically mobilizing Muslim masses. The interactions of these related developments in the Nigerian context play a very crucial role in saturating the public sphere with active Islamic political consciousness that provided the political constituency for popular demands to apply Islamic law after return to democracy. To the extent that similar developments are also observable in all the Muslim communities of West Africa, then the increased visibility of Muslim political activism cannot be entirely ruled out in the region. Of course, the local conditions in the different countries will certainly shape the trajectories and outcomes of Islam and politics in each country. Still, the local, national, and regional specificities of Islam and politics in West Africa in the era of global democratization can be compared meaningfully to similar developments in the other regions of the world as well.

*** Conclusion

Does democratic transition help to resolve or aggravate violent political conflicts in general, and ethnic and religious conflicts in particular? Proponents of the “democratic peace” theories respond to this question in the affirmative. Although initially the democratic peace was thought to be observable only in the international relations among democracies, it has now been extended to support the contention that democracies are also more peacefully internally (Hegre et al. 2001: 33–48; MacMillan 2003: 233–243; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999: 791–807).[103] Proponents of democratic peace locate the obvious anomaly of political violence in newly established democracies in the relative weakness of the democratic institutions that serve as the causal mechanism that theoretically accounts for the observed phenomenon of democratic peace. For example, Hegre and his collaborators observe that whereas authoritarian states and established democracies experience fewer civil wars, intermediate regimes including semi-democracies, are more prone to political violence because “semi-democracies are partly open yet somewhat repressive, a combination that invites protest, rebellion, and other forms of civil disobedience. Repression leads to grievances that induce groups to take action, and openness allows for them to organize and engage in activities against the regime. Such institutional contradictions imply a level of political incoherence, which is linked to civil conflict” (Hegre et al. 2001: 33). Furthermore, Hegre and his collaborators contend: “in short run, a democratizing country will have to live through unsettling period of change. But if we focus on countries that are at least halfway toward complete democracy, the prospects for domestic peace are promising. There is a democratic civil peace, and it may be achieved in the short run in some countries” (Hegre et al. 2001: 44). The central weakness of this argument is the failure to isolate democracy as the cause for peace in the established democracies of Western Europe and North America since those countries are also characterized by strong states, prosperous economies and political liberalism—each of these three can equally plausibly explain the so-called democratic peace. The argument also neglects to note that it took centuries for these established democracies to evolve the synergy among their strong states, political liberalism, open market economies and democracy in a systemic way that has minimized political violence in the last fifty years or so.

Alternative explanation to the democratic peace emphasizes strong states as the most critical players in maintaining peace and security. For example, John Mueller has demonstrated that even a small cadre of disciplined and well-trained police force can easily contain internal political violence (Mueller 2003: 507–518); and that the external violence of war among states has become obsolete among strong states and “remnants of war” are observable only among weak states (Mueller 2000: 52–70). This line of argument has gained more credence through an empirical study of the causal relationship between political violence and democratization in African countries during the 1990s. In his insightful study, Zeric K. Smith draws a distinction between political liberalization, which entails “relaxation of political control on the part of authoritarian rules,” and democratization, which means “open contestation over the right to win control of the government, and this in turn requires free, competitive elections, the results of which determine who governs” (Smith 2000: 24–25). The critical difference is that political liberalization means respect for human rights and basic civil liberties such as freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention, freedom of press, speech, association, etc, but on the other hand democracy relates more directly to political rights to seek and hold power through free and fair elections open to all eligible citizens. Smith finds that political liberalization does not lead to an increase in ethnic conflict, and that “even after a two-year and a three-year lag, democratized political institutions seem to have no statistically demonstrable influence in lowering (or raising) ethnic conflict” (Smith 2000: 34). Thus, consistent with my main argument, the so-called “democratic peace” is not simply the direct outcome of democracy. Whereas John Mueller calls attention to the centrality of strong state in maintaining peace, Smith’s findings show that liberalization “has a significant and robust negative influence on ethnic conflict scores,” but democratization shows no impact on ethnic conflict.

Equally important in Smith’s findings is that more than either liberalization or democratization, economic conditions as measured in low rates of gross national product (GNP) and infant mortality rate (IMR) are more reliable predictors of ethnic conflict, because “rising levels of economic and social well-being are systematically related to lower levels of ethnic conflict” (Smith 2000: 35). Therefore, one can plausibly argue that extreme poverty and a widening gap between the rich and the poor are the root causes of the

problems of political violence, and that democratic peace in the democracies of Western Europe and North America is due to their higher levels of economic prosperity than to their democratic system of government. In its simplest form, this point derives from the long-standing theories of deprivation. No matter how one disagrees with the classical formulations of deprivation, one must concede the strong relevance of economic realities in explaining social and political affairs, particularly the problem of political violence. As in the case with the problems of state capacity, the logic of economic development is not necessarily the same as the logic of democracy, as evidenced in the emergence of Southeast Asian new economies, which began to democratize only after their economies had become prosperous. It is also important to note that the Southeast Asian rapid economic development came not through unregulated market economy of the type that World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programs imposed on African countries, but through the well-coordinated policies of the "developmental state" (Leftwich 1996). While properly functioning market economy may in the long run be more prosperous than other systems, it is not capable of eradicating all economic problems, most notably the widening gap between rich and poor. Market economies work best in strong states that are capable of effectively regulating the market and pursuing healthy economic policies including reduction of poverty by increasing the income of the poor. But democracy by itself is not necessary for the proper functioning of market economy, and its coincidence in Western Europe is just that: a coincidence. The prosperous economies of Southeast Asia are the clearest proof, for even Japan's de facto one-party state is not nearly as democratic as it should or could be.

When capable state, political liberalization, effective market economy, and democracy are combined together in a functioning system, the system produces the wholesome effects that characterize the affluent societies of Western Europe and North America. Mere application of one component of the system will not do the magic. In fact, even if all the components of the system are in place, the European experience shows that it took a couple of centuries for the system to produce its present level of desired outcome. But the Southeast Asian example has also demonstrated that tremendous accomplishments can be attained within a single generation. The lesson for Africa is to take each component in due course, and with moderate expectations.

[88] For example, see Barnes (2001: 86–101).

[89] Examples include Ottaway (1999; 2003), Mengisteab and Daddieh (1999), and Joseph (1999). Also see the essays under “Debating the Transition Paradigm,” Journal of Democracy 13, 3 (July 2002): 5–38; and Smith (2003: 357–362).

[90] See Table 15.1.

[91] For more discussion of the relevant literature on this point, see the concluding section of this essay.

[92] For example, see the reflections of British Broadcasting Company correspondent in Nigeria, Bernaby Phillips, at end of his tour of duty in the country, “Farewell to Nigeria,” BBC News Online, World: From Our Own Correspondent, Sunday, 8 July, 2001, 17:58 GMT 18:58 UK. See also Usman (2003).

[93] For different perspectives on these developments, see Umar (2006:157–208); Osteien (1999). See also Anderson (1954: 171–224).

[94] For example, see Ofonagoro (1978); Abdullahi (1980: 37–42); Sulaiman (1981: 39–62); Laitin (1982: 411–30).

[95] For example, see Falola (1998).

[96] For example, see Kalu (2003: 389–408); Ukiwo (2003: 115–38); Center for Religious Freedom (2003); Yadudu (2002); Aliyu (2002: 31–44); Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy (2004:1–3); Naniya (2002: 14–31); Nmehielle (2004: 730–759); Ostien (2000: 1–35).

[97] See also Sanders (2002: 327–57).

[98] See also Young (1994: 77–140)

[99] See also the essays under “What is Liberal Islam?” Journal of Democracy 14, 2 (April 2003): 19–49.

[100] The most systematic study of the educational changes and their political and social implications is Brenner (2001). Also see Abdolaye (2002: 129–46); Holtedahl and Djingui (1997: 254–85). For the connections between Islam in West Africa and the international Islamic networks, see Hunwick (1998: 28–54).

[101] See also Launay (1992).

[102] See also Jungblut and Stoll (2002: 527–546).

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** 16. The Intercultural Construction of Public Authority in Latin America[104]

Donna Lee Van Cott

In the 1990s, most Latin American states experienced steep declines in public support. These were attributable to severe crises of legitimacy and authority for democratic institutions, politicians, and the state that are rooted in long-standing practices of economic exploitation and political exclusion. Although democratic regimes were able to endure, they were unable to establish legitimacy. Increasing economic inequality and the concentration of economic and political power contradicted the value of equality on which democracy rests. Moreover, many sectors of society were unable to exercise in practice the political rights enshrined in existing constitutions or to receive protection from formal legal institutions.

After a long struggle to reestablish and stabilize elected civilian rule in the 1980s, in the 1990s social movements and civil society organizations pressed for improvements in the quality of democracy. They demanded that

the state recognize a broad set of internationally recognized human rights and strengthen judicial systems to make them more accessible and accountable to disadvantaged groups. They demanded that political parties be more responsive to voters and that alternative routes to representation be created to circumvent parties' monopoly on formal representation. They demanded mechanisms to facilitate the direct participation of individuals and social groups in public policy decision making (Assies et al. 2002: 13). In addition, in response to the homogenizing effects of globalization, many individuals and social movements promoted the adoption of policies recognizing the region's ethnic diversity.

In response to these multiple crises and the demands of civil society, in the 1990s most states undertook radical constitutional reforms. Throughout the region indigenous peoples' organizations took advantage of these constitutional conjunctures, of their own increasing political strength and public support, and of the weakness of traditional political and social actors, to demand and secure collective constitutional rights that carved out a space of politico-territorial autonomy, while easing access for this once-excluded group to the formal political system. As a result, the region's new constitutions eschew universalist, individualist conceptions of citizenship in favor of recognizing the existence of multiple cultural identities, a limited number of collective rights, and spheres of autonomy for indigenous peoples and, in Colombia and Ecuador, communities of African descent that retain a distinct cultural heritage (Van Cott 2000).

Focusing mainly on the Andean region, this chapter examines how indigenous peoples' movements are using new constitutional rights to propose alternatives to the prevailing economic and political models and to construct intercultural forms of public authority intended to fill the vacuum created by the failure of the state and politicians to respond to pressing societal needs. This shift from "legal-rational" (state) and "charismatic" (populist politicians) to "traditional" (indigenous cultures) forms of public authority recalls Weber's famous articulation of three ideal types of authority and how shifts occur among them (Weber 1946: 78–79). Weber predicted that when one type of authority loses public support, people will search for leadership authority generated by one of the other two sources. In light of the failure of the state and populist politicians to fulfill societal needs, Andean communities have sought refuge in forms of authority derived from

indigenous cultures, which are believed to have the sanctity of generations of past practice, but which are mixed with widely accepted, modern democratic practices, such as popular election and transparent policymaking. Following Weber's cyclical model, we may expect that once the new intercultural practices become institutionalized the rational-legal-bureaucratic source of their authority will increase and the cycle will continue.

I concentrate on three spheres of activity: (1) the construction of pluralistic legal systems that recognize indigenous customary law as public and binding, while connecting it to the larger national legal system; (2) the formation of political parties that, although based on indigenous social movement organizations, incorporate non-indigenous individuals and groups in a multiethnic coalition guided by traditional indigenous values; and (3) the efforts of indigenous-dominated local governments to create alternative models of participatory, inter-cultural democracy based on traditional indigenous forms of self-government. I argue that these activities are improving the quality of democracy in the Andes by promoting peaceful intercultural negotiation and infusing Western institutions with the values and authority of indigenous cultural institutions, which have grown in prestige and legitimacy in recent years.

I focus on the Andean region because it is the most ethnically diverse in Latin America (see Table 16.1). A deep divide separates the subordinate darker-skinned population of Amerindian and African descent from the ruling white-mestizo (mixed race) population. As a result, the Andes are home to many of Latin America's most militant and influential indigenous peoples' movements. These movements emerged at the local and regional levels in the 1960s and 1970s and expanded into consolidated regional and national-level social movement organizations in the 1980s and 1990s (Albó 1991; Stavenhagen 1992; Yashar 2005). The Andes are also home to large populations of African descent. Movements emphasizing black ethnic rights and identity emerged in Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, often mimicking the discourse and strategies of indigenous movements, but they have been far less successful in attracting support from among the populations they claim to represent and in gaining concessions from the state. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the political activities of indigenous peoples.

Table 16.1 Indigenous and Afro-Latin American Populations in the Andes

| | BOLIVIA | COLOMBIA | ECUADOR | PERU | VENEZUELA |

| % indigenous | 6105% | 2.7% | 24.9% | 38.4% | 1.5% |

| % of African | .04% | 26.0% | 10.0% | 5.0% | 10.0% |

| descent |

Sources: 2001 Bolivian census. 1993 Colombian indigenous census. Dcruyttcrc (1997: I); Inter-American Dialogue (2003: 1). The last two sources are likely to undercount ethnic minorities.

*** Legal Pluralism and the Intercultural Construction of Legal Authority[105]

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the peoples indigenous to the Americas had their own legal institutions. The imposition of colonial rule destroyed some of these. Elsewhere they were adapted to the new situation of ethnic domination and to facilitate interactions between colonial and indigenous authorities. Colonial administrators tolerated the self-regulating activities of indigenous authorities with respect to minor, internal matters provided that they did not impinge on “divine and human law” (Yrigoyen 2000: 206). Some indigenous legal systems originated in the colonial period, often imposed by colonial authorities. Over time, Indians appropriated these systems and made them their own. After independence, indigenous legal systems were banned in most areas as part of Latin American states’ efforts to forcibly assimilate the indigenous. Nevertheless, indigenous legal systems persisted, particularly in more remote locations. Closer to state power structures, indigenous communities incorporated more aspects of Western law and

culture and were more likely to coordinate their justice systems with those of the state, particularly in cases involving outsiders or serious offenses.

In the last decade, as indigenous movements gained political power and indigenous identity began to confer greater prestige and rights, many indigenous authority systems have been revived (Yrigoyen 2000: 204). These revived systems often undergo significant transformations and some indigenous communities actually have created new justice institutions. For example, García discovered a Quichua community in Ecuador in which community authorities, together with representatives from the Catholic, evangelical and Mormon churches, had established an Autonomous Social Justice Commission, which was not a part of traditional Quichua culture (García 2000: 15). Thus, while observers often receive an essentialized version of indigenous culture and legal systems that is static and purported to protect centuries-old traditions, contemporary indigenous legal systems are flexible and dynamic and many practices and norms are of recent vintage. Their "authenticity" is derived more from the autonomy with which their chosen authorities devise and develop them, than with their historical continuity.

These legal systems have survived because they help to maintain indigenous communities as culturally distinct collectivities, and because they are more efficient, accessible, and culturally appropriate than state systems. Whereas the state's business is done in Spanish in distant urban centers, indigenous legal authorities speak indigenous languages and are located within the community, where cases are handled more quickly and require no lawyers or court costs (Yrigoyen 1999: 44–45). Equally important, the values and goals of indigenous justice reflect those of indigenous cultures, rather than the foreign values of the Western system. For example, while the state emphasizes the goal of punishment, indigenous authorities prioritize the resolution of conflict between the transgressor and the community and the restoration of community harmony.

In the 1990s, recognition of indigenous customary law was incorporated into many Latin American constitutions (see Table 16.2). This recognition resulted from three main sources of pressure on states. First, highly mobilized indigenous organizations for more than a decade had been pressuring the

state to recognize their collective rights as peoples (Assies, Van der Haar, and Hoekema 2001; Brysk 2000; Stavenhagen 1992). Second, state justice systems suffered from severe failures of accessibility, efficiency, honesty, and legitimacy. Recognizing indigenous justice systems enabled Andean states to extend the presence of public law throughout their territories, particularly in rural communities (Murga Armas 1999: 330; Van Cott 2000). Third, international norms on human rights had a profound influence in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s as the region recovered from decades of military rule. All five Andean countries ratified International Labour Organization Convention 169 (1989) on the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, which requires states to allow indigenous communities to conserve their legal customs and institutions, provided that they do not violate fundamental rights as defined by national or international law.

Table 16.2 State Recognition of Indigenous Customary Law in the Andes

| **Country** | | **Recognition of Indigenous Laws**{4} |

| Bolivia | *1967* | *Constitution, reformed 1995, Article 171*. The natural authorities of the indigenous and campesino communities may exercise functions of administration and application of their own norms as an alternative solution in conflicts, in conformity with their customs and procedures, always providing that they are not contrary to the Constitution and the laws. The law will establish the coordination of this special jurisdiction with the judicial power. |

| Columbia | *1991* | *Constitution, Article 246*. The authorities among the native peoples may exercise judicial functions within their territorial areas in accordance with their own rules and procedures, which must not be contrary to the Constitution and laws of the Republic. The law shall establish the forms of coordination of this special jurisdiction with the national judicial system. |

| Ecuador | *1998* | *Constitution, Article 191*. The authorities of the indigenous peoples may exercise functions of justice, applying their own norms and procedures for the solution of internal conflicts in conformity with their customs or customary law, provided that they are not contrary to the Constitution and the laws. The law shall make those functions compatible with the national judicial system. |

| Peru | *1993* | *Constitution, Article 149*. The authorities of the Campesino and Native Communities, with the support of the Rondas Campesinas, may exercise jurisdictional functions within their territorial ambit in conformity with the customary law, always that they do not violate the fundamental rights of the person. The law shall establish the forms of coordination between this special jurisdiction and the Justices of the Peace, and other instances of Judicial Power. Codigo Procesal Penal, art. 552. The oldest judge shall preside over the tribunal and will resolve [cases] in accordance with the usos y costumbres, equity, and the general principles of the Law whenever possible. |

| Venezuela | *1999* | *Constitution, Article 260*. The legitimate authorities of the indigenous peoples may apply in their habitat instances of justice based in their ancestral traditions, and that only affect their own members, according to their own norms and procedures, provided that they are not contrary to the Constitution, to the law and to public order. The law shall determine the form of coordination between this special jurisdiction and the national system of justice. |

{4} Constitutional and legislative language is my translation from the original Spanish.

The new regimes of legal pluralism require that some mechanism be created to coordinate them with state law and to mediate conflicts of jurisdiction or norms. In fact, things are not so simple. In recent years, as the state and Western society have encroached more upon indigenous spheres of autonomy, state law has had a profound influence on indigenous law. Exposure to state norms often prompts changes in how community justice is administered, particularly if authorities are not sure how to proceed, their own law is incomplete or unclear, or if they are worried about the penalties for breaking state law (Orellana 1998: 233). New forms of customary law—such as the crime-fighting rondas campesinas developed by indigenous peasants in northern Peru in the 1980s—often mimic what rural peasants consider to be the best practices of state law and police procedure (Starn 1999). In addition, the proximity of the state affects how indigenous authorities practice their judicial duties. The threat of referring a matter to the state if community members refuse to obey the rulings of community authorities is an important component of the sanctioning authority of

indigenous customary law, while the possibility of state intervention induces indigenous authorities to exercise their powers with caution. Indigenous authorities may consider cases involving serious infractions but then decide to refer them to the state system, particularly when they result from conflicts that the community has been unable to reconcile internally, where the transgressor is a repeat offender, or where the case involves non-Indians (Assies 2003; García 2000: 17; Gómez 2000: 13).

Indigenous justice systems increasingly are available to non-Indians, and may even be preferred when state police and courts prove inaccessible or ineffective. In a study of Ecuadorian Quichua communities in the late 1990s, lawyers and judges in cities near indigenous communities that had recently strengthened their legal systems reported a “total absence of claims on the part of the indigenous in legal offices and courts in recent years” (my translation; García 2000: 15). Moreover, mestizos and Indians from communities lacking their own justice authorities were taking their problems to Quichua tribunals, particularly those disputes that the state could or would not resolve (García 2000: 20). Thus, in some areas indigenous justice systems are making public legal authority more available, more effective, and more legitimate for all citizens.

Constitutional language recognizing indigenous law was left deliberately vague and the details were left to ordinary legislation, which was supposed to “compatibilize” or “coordinate” state and indigenous jurisdictions to avoid normative and procedural conflicts. In practice, three issues have been difficult to resolve: (1) should parties to the dispute be allowed to choose between indigenous and state courts, or is one or the other venue mandatory? (2) should indigenous legal authorities adjudicate disputes involving non-Indians or Indians from other cultures and communities? and (3) should indigenous jurisdiction be defined geographically? In practice, such issues have generally been negotiated on a case-by-case basis (see, e.g., García 2000: 21). At the bottom of these disputes are concerns that indigenous law may violate liberal-Western standards of human rights, particularly with respect to the equality of women. In the absence of this legislation states have developed other means of implementing legal pluralism through the courts and through the construction of institutional mediators between the state and indigenous justice systems.

This brief sketch of legal pluralism in the Andes conveys a rosy view of how indigenous justice systems are carving a space for themselves within and articulating themselves to state systems. In some areas, relations between state and indigenous authorities are conflictual and even violent. In others, some community members, particularly women, who are underrepresented as indigenous authorities, are underserved or even exploited by indigenous systems. However, given the abysmal quality and coverage of justice in the Andes, recognition of indigenous legal authority constitutes a vital part of the effort to extend public legal authority throughout fragmented Andean territories.

*** Indigenous Political Parties and the Intercultural Construction of Representational Authority

In the 1990s, Andean political party systems were altered radically. Once-dominant parties and party systems crumbled as voters rejected traditional politicians unable or unwilling to combat rampant corruption, to ease the pain of economic adjustment, or to protect citizens from spiraling violent crime. Public opinion polls registered dramatic drops in public support for political parties (Alcántara and Freidenberg 2001: Cuadro IV). Within this context, indigenous peoples formed political parties in all five Andean countries. With the exception of Bolivia, they did so for the first time, encouraged by the success of the indigenous mobilizations of the 1980s and early 1990s, as well as the political opening created by the collapse of party systems in Peru and Venezuela and institutional reforms that made electoral contests more accessible and winnable in Bolivia, Colombia, and Ecuador. They gained immediate success in municipal contests in all five countries, and even in national contests in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela (Van Cott 2005).

What is particularly noteworthy about the new indigenous-movement-cum-parties is that, although they promote a clear discourse of demanding rights for indigenous peoples, they have attracted considerable support from non-indigenous voters seeking an alternative to the corrupt, unresponsive political elite. The most successful indigenous parties are those that

incorporate non-indigenous intellectuals, political operatives, and social movement activists. These usually are orphaned cadres of an electoral left that saw its vote share decline throughout the region as a result of the worldwide decline of socialism in the late 1980s and the ravages of structural adjustment on union and peasant organizations, the left's traditional base (Roberts 1998, 2002; Tanaka 1998; Burgess and Levitsky 2001). The tendency to court non-indigenous allies and sympathizers is seen both in Colombia, where the minuscule indigenous population needs non-indigenous votes in national elections and in subnational regions where it is a numerical minority, and in Bolivia and Ecuador, where the indigenous population is numerically significant enough to support at least one indigenous-only party.

Ecuador's Movement of Plurinational Unity Pachakutik-New Country (Pachakutik) exemplifies this intercultural strategy. It was formed in 1995 by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE) immediately following a successful CONAIE-led mobilization to defeat President Sixto Durán Ballén's neoliberal reform proposal, as well as institutional changes that made electoral participation more accessible for indigenous movements. The experience of working with other popular organizations during the 1995 anti-referendum campaign convinced CONAIE leaders to change their strategy, to broaden the movement's programmatic agenda, and to work on issues of concern to the poor majority and the economically precarious middle class—anti-neoliberalism, privatization and corruption—on which CONAIE could build solidarity with other popular movements (Collins 2001: 14). With few other viable electoral options, much of the left joined the Pachakutik alliance (Sánchez López and Freidenberg 1998: 71).

In 1996, Pachakutik won eight seats in the eighty-two-seat National Congress, which made it the fourth largest bloc, as well as six municipal mayors. It achieved similar results in the 1997 National Constituent Assembly and the 1998 national elections. In 2000, Pachakutik made significant gains in regional elections, winning five of 22 prefectures, twenty-five of 215 mayors, and 60 percent of seats on parish advisory councils. In 2002, Pachakutik formed an electoral coalition with Patriotic Society (PSP), a party led by retired Colonel Lucio Gutiérrez, who had joined CONAIE-president Antonio Vargas in a brief coup attempt in January 2000. The PSP-Pachakutik coalition won the presidential elections, and Pachakutik won five

congressional seats on its own, six with the PSP, and three more in alliance with other parties. The alliance lasted less than a year, however; Gutiérrez expelled Pachakutik from the government in August 2003, after its congressional delegation refused to support the president's civil service law. Since that time, Pachakutik has encountered electoral setbacks owing to its association with the discredited Gutiérrez government.

In Bolivia, small groups of indigenous intellectuals and activists formed political parties in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but these never gained more than a seat or two in congress, and most had disappeared by the early 1990s. The militant coca growers' movement, based in Cochabamba, made a second, more successful attempt to launch an indigenous party in 1995, after a new municipal decentralization law provided for direct elections to more than 300 municipal governments. After a promising showing in the 1995 municipal elections, the Assembly of the Sovereignty of the People (ASP) expanded to the national level, winning four seats in the Chamber of Deputies, including one for coca growers' leader Evo Morales. A personal rivalry split the party in 1998. The rump ASP participated in the 1999 elections, but did not run on its own thereafter. The splinter party, Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples (IPSP), led by Morales, made significant gains for indigenous peasants in the 1999 municipal elections. Technical difficulties with its registration required it to borrow the registration of the small leftist party Movement Toward Socialism (MAS). As persistent demonstrations against the government's coca eradication policy made Morales a national symbol of rejection of the economic and political status quo, the party's stature rose. In 2002, IPSP/MAS finished second in the presidential contest, less than two percentage points behind the winner. After dominating the 2004 municipal elections, the MAS won the 2005 presidential election with the most decisive victory in twenty years of elections: 54 percent of the vote. The victory also netted the party the largest delegation in the legislature and the leadership of numerous important committees. The MAS is poised to have a major impact on the design of democratic institutions: it dominated the 2006 National Constituent Assembly election, winning 54 percent of seats (www.cne.org.bo, accessed September 23, 2006).

Morales' main rival is Aymara radical Felipe Quispe, who heads the national peasant confederation and who ran for president in 2002 and 2005 with the

Indigenous Pachakutik Movement (MIP). After winning a surprising 6.09 percent of the vote in the 2002 presidential election, Quispe's popularity dropped dramatically in 2004 as Morales effectively positioned himself as the most viable candidate of the center-left anti-neoliberal opposition. The party fared poorly in both the 2004 and 2005 contests. The personalist nature of the leadership of both Bolivian indigenous parties is unusual for the new wave of indigenous parties, most of which endeavor to build support for the party as an authentic representative of indigenous peoples, rather than for individual leaders.

Like Pachakutik, IPSP/MAS tried to represent the aggregated demands of the country's neglected and economically suffering poor, in the absence of other coherent, strong, labor or popular movements or leftist parties. Both parties also attracted votes from the middle class and even elites frustrated with the corruption and incompetence of the traditional political class. Party leaders played on growing anti-U.S. nationalism generated by the imposition of harsh structural adjustment policies and, in Bolivia, the forcible eradication of coca leaf.

Although there are some stridently ethno-national indigenous parties in the Andes—the Pachakutik Indigenous Movement of Aymara radical Felipe Quispe is a good example—most recognize that their electoral viability depends on their ability to attract support from non-indigenous voters. In addition, their experience as social movement activists has taught indigenous politicians that separatist appeals tend to backfire and lead to increased repression and the public's rejection of their more moderate rights claims. During the 1980s and 1990s, the discourse of most indigenous peoples' organizations was one of inclusion and equitable participation in the larger state and society, while protecting a zone of autonomy for the development of indigenous culture.

The new ethnic parties have had a number of positive effects on democratic institutions. One of the greatest problems of contemporary Latin American parties is their distance from social groups and lack of responsiveness to voters (Roberts 2002: 21). The new ethnic parties offer a healthy model of party-voter linkage because they are more effectively connected to civil society through organic ties to social movements and the associative

networks in which they operate, and because they offer a coherent ideology and programmatic goals. Second, indigenous parties have put themes on the agenda that had not previously found a place in mainstream political discourse: the value of recognizing and respecting cultural diversity; the problem of racial discrimination and oppression; and the need of civil society groups for autonomy from political parties and the state. The popularity of these new themes has forced traditional parties to include them in their own agendas. Indigenous parties provide a national platform to challenge the political status quo and the ideologies, symbols, and values on which it is based (Herzog 1987: 326). They serve as voices for all of the disenfranchised and disaffected, offering a critique of the state and regime that otherwise might not be represented in national politics. Third, indigenous parties have introduced more transparent and democratic modes of doing politics. Several ethnic parties have been crusaders against corruption and patronage-based politics. In the Ecuadorian congress, although some indigenous legislators have been caught in the web of corruption and clientelism that pervades Ecuadorian politics, others have been among the most important crusaders against corruption, and have denounced and expelled party members linked to it. In Bolivia, following the 2002 elections, both indigenous party leaders refused to participate in the post-electoral pact-making on which Bolivian governments have been erected since 1982. Morales' party IPSP/MAS has distinguished itself by its ethical behavior. In August 2002, it championed a failed proposal to lower congressional salaries.

Finally, the new indigenous parties are more likely to be internally democratic, in contrast with many traditional Latin American parties, because they often incorporate indigenous cultural norms of consensus-building and participatory decision making. Although there are cases of a single figure dominating an indigenous party—such as Evo Morales or Felipe Quispe—there are more cases where leadership and candidate renewal is the norm. Participatory norms extend to public policymaking and parties' platforms are typically discussed in multiple, lengthy assemblies. After Pachakutik began a practice of discussing proposed laws with the people affected, some legislators from other parties began to incorporate more popular participation in the design of laws. From the beginning, Pachakutik promised not simply to gain power, but to transform politics, to make it more participatory, ethical, and moral. Luis Macas notes, "What we have achieved, then, is perhaps the participation of the people in the legislative process, the

practice of social sectors mobilizing themselves when a law affecting them is discussed" (interview, Luis Macas, July 28, 1999).

*** Alternative Models of Participatory, Intercultural Local Governance

Indigenous parties that have gained control of municipal governments have instituted a variety of institutional innovations to promote intercultural negotiation and consensus-building, while fostering a greater level of participation of common citizens in policy-making and development planning. The most dramatic changes have occurred in Ecuador, where capturing local government in order to install more culturally sensitive, equitable, and participatory governing processes has been a main goal of the indigenous movement since the early 1990s.

In Ecuador, experiments in intercultural government began after 1992, when indigenous movement leaders gained local office running with a variety of political parties. It followed a decade of decentralization efforts that resulted in the creation of new municipalities (Torres 1999: 15). Throughout Latin America, decentralization drives in the 1980s and 1990s opened space for experiments in participatory, more transparent, local democracy, which social movements increasingly demanded (Assies, Calderón and Salman 2002: 14). In Ecuador, these experiments intensified and attracted the support of international donors after 1996, when the new indigenous-movement-based party Pachakutik elected six mayors who promised to install a more participatory, ethnically inclusive model of government. International donors like the World Bank, who had been promoting municipal decentralization, participatory development, and ethnodevelopment, began to provide financial resources for development projects in indigenous-run municipalities (Radcliffe 2001: 2–4). Indigenous mayors' preferential access to international resources has been crucial in securing support from non-indigenous elites, who realize that they could not obtain such support on their own (Larrea and Larrea 1999: 149). Thus, in Ecuador, a variety of forces generated the new intercultural alternative municipal governments: the elite-driven policy of municipal and state reform; economic incentives and urging from international donors; links to a transnational discourse on decentralization, participatory democracy, and ethnodevelopment; demands of a variety of popular organizations, particularly indigenous organizations,

for greater participation in local government; the conscious decision of the indigenous political party Pachakutik to offer a new type of local government; and the courage and determination of several indigenous mayors in fulfilling this promise (Ortiz Crespo 1999: 66; Radcliffe 2001: 7; Torres 1999: 21).

In Ecuador, although the state provided a legal framework for municipal decentralization, indigenous mayors and organizations worked with a variety of nongovernmental organizations to design new institutions. These new participatory institutions combined local indigenous cultural practices and values—such as a tradition of collective work, frequent public assemblies, and consensus-building—with participatory methodologies that NGOs developed or adapted from experiences elsewhere. Several have invoked the ancient Quichua governance motto: “don’t lie, don’t steal, don’t be lazy,” which indigenous delegates to the 1998 constituent assembly inserted in the Ecuadorian constitution (Flor 2001: 9). The mayors themselves have been the most important protagonists. They must confront the opposition of mestizo elites, who impugn their competence, as well as demands from indigenous organizations for their complete attention after years of neglect from municipal governments catering only to urban, mestizo constituents. The most successful mayors have made a concerted effort to reach out to urban, mestizo groups; they understand that without non-indigenous citizens on board, little can be accomplished (MUPP 1999).

By 1999, at least thirty (of 218) Ecuadorian municipalities were using some type of participatory planning methodology (Ortiz Crespo 1999: 70) and twenty were engaged in “participatory, sustainable long-term development programs” (Radcliffe 2001: 5). In indigenous-run municipalities, municipal spending is more transparent and clientelism has been reduced (Larrea and Larrea 1999: 137). Similar practices are underway in majority-indigenous Guatemala, which has the largest number of municipalities governed by indigenous officials (León 2002: 26). In April 1996, Guatemalan indigenous authorities formed the Guatemalan Association of Indigenous Mayors and Authorities in order to “defend, exercise and develop true municipal autonomy, in fraternity with the different municipalities, applying Mayan values of political participation” (Ruiz Hernández and Burguete Cal y Mayor 2001: 40).

Numerous obstacles exist to the construction of these promising local government alternatives in Ecuador and elsewhere in the Andes. Chief among them are the resistance of the politicians they displace, the lack of public management training and experience among indigenous politicians, the lack of resources and clear guidelines from weak national governments, a weak economic base for economic development initiatives, which are considered to be the backbone of local participatory democracy (Torres 1999: 32), and the persistence of racism and authoritarianism. In addition, gender discrimination pervades indigenous and mestizo-led governments alike. In majority-indigenous Bolivia, intercultural innovations in local democracy are inhibited by the rigidity of state-imposed municipal procedures and structures and the lack of a legal framework for the creation of “indigenous municipalities,” which would give indigenous-majority municipalities the right to incorporate indigenous cultural traditions into municipal government.

*** Conclusion

I have argued that indigenous social movements have improved the quality of democracy in Latin America. As they launch serious challenges to the concentration of power in the hands of light-skinned elites and to their exclusionary models of governance they propose alternative models that are more participatory and tolerant of diversity. However, I do not mean to give the impression that these movements do not generate conflict and instability. On the contrary, indigenous movements in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru have contributed to the ouster of elected presidents and have led or participated in mass protests that severely disrupted the economy and generated moderate amounts of violence. Severe internal divisions—over strategy, access to leadership and resources, and ideology—impair the indigenous movements’ capacity to act as a coherent, unified voice for the indigenous population or the wider, disaffected public. Thus, even as indigenous movements improve the quality of democratic representation and participation, increase the availability of responsive justice mechanisms, and raise important issues that other civil society groups have been unable to put on the national agenda, they present significant challenges to Latin American states. These suffer from endemic weaknesses similar to but not as severe as those that Mengisteab and Umar identify in sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, Latin American legislatures and executives have difficulty making and executing decisions, judicial systems frequently violate or fail to protect

the rights of poor and marginalized groups, public services are poor or nonexistent, and police are unable to stop rising crime rates. Although, ideally, state-building should precede the challenging tasks of democratization and interethnic accommodation, in Latin America all three processes are occurring simultaneously, with uneven and often-contradictory effects.

Indigenous mobilizations have fostered rather than weakened democracy because they have occurred in a context of profound and widespread public dissatisfaction with the prevailing economic and political models and of the weakness of the left and other popular movements in most Latin American countries. Thus, in some cases, only the indigenous movement is able to articulate a coherent alternative. Successful indigenous movements have made a conscious decision to seek non-indigenous allies and to work within existing political institutions in order to reshape them from inside. They seek not to monopolize access to national power but, rather, to appropriate an equitable share for all excluded groups. Although indigenous radicals promote a discourse of separatism and the construction of utopian, indigenous-only institutions, more numerous, moderate, Western-educated indigenous leaders are willing to negotiate for local indigenous autonomy in primarily indigenous zones, alongside more intercultural institutions at levels where indigenous peoples must coexist with others.

Second, indigenous peoples have a unique place as an ethnic group in Latin American society. National myths of nation-formation recognize the historical roots of the nation in pre-Colombian indigenous civilizations and enable all citizens in Andean countries to claim indigenous culture as part of their own history. This intellectual link to a shared pre-Colombian past lays the basis for claims of authority based in indigenous traditional cultures to resonate widely. The cases presented are especially instructive because they deal with indigenous peoples' rights, which present a particularly difficult challenge to liberal-Democratic institutions (Kymlicka 1995; Tully 1995; Young 1990), and because the states and economies involved are among the most troubled in the Western Hemisphere. If even modest achievements can be secured in these "most-difficult cases," perhaps they can offer useful lessons for intractable interethnic conflicts elsewhere, where the mobilization of ethnic identities within and across borders has resulted only in violence and the destruction of democratic institutions.

[103] The author wishes to thank Abril Trigo and the editors of this volume for helpful comments on a previous draft.

[104] This section is based on Van Cott (2006).

[105] For more information on and analysis of indigenous political parties in all five Andean countries, see Van Cott (2005).

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* Part VI: Coda

** 17. Can Violence Be Regulated?

Esther E. Gottlieb and J. Craig Jenkins

<quote>

The problems of violence still remain very obscure.

<right>

--George Sorel ([1906] 1914: 59)

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George Sorel’s remark over a hundred years ago is still true today. The chapters in this volume illustrate how durable identity conflicts are and that they are ultimately never “resolved.” Conflicts can instead be regulated, meaning that they can be moderated, channeled, and controlled so that they appear in more or less nonviolent forms. Our key focus has been identifying ways in which rules, institutionalized practices, unifying symbols, and inclusive identities can regulate conflict, converting zero-sum interactions into positive-sum relations.

Past work on identity conflicts has largely focused on the practical question of conflict management. While these issues are important, our goal has been to develop a general framework for understanding the origins of identity conflicts and the possibilities of regulating them. Our primary concern has been showing how cultural and institutional regulation can work and fail. No single theory of identity conflict underlies the chapters in this volume. Rather our authors pose a series of questions about the nature of identity conflict, its causes, and various methods of regulating it. Some teach by negative example, highlighting failures of conflict regulation, while others offer positive instruction. The chapters differ widely in their empirical application. In addition to covering all world regions, some chapters work at the micro level by addressing face-to-face interaction. Others address meaning, examining discourse, performance, and collective symbols. Still others focus on groups and institutions, tracing how these interact in the making or the regulation of identity conflict. Several chapters examine whole countries, regions, and global processes. One rule that emerges is that the linkages among various cultural and social systems are loose and should not be considered as a single integrated system of beliefs, values, and behavior (Clifford 1988). Instead, there are contradictions and inconsistencies that routinely operate through these various sociocultural and political processes.

*** Methods of Conflict Regulation

This volume identifies four methods for regulating identity conflict. First and foremost are formal rules, which can set limits on behavior, create a sense of fair treatment and recognition, and thereby moderate conflict. Discussions of post-conflict reconstruction typically focus on new rules of political representation, methods for insuring minority representation, formulas for making decisions, and the creation of rule-making and rule-enforcing institutions, such as legislatures, courts, police, and militaries. The basic objective is to create an equitable set of rules and procedures that protect all parties and create a rough balance between “giving” and “getting,” thereby creating a social contract between the various parties. Without a framework of rules, some parties will think that they are being punished or treated unfairly. Several chapters illustrate how such rule-based regulation works and how it may go astray. Norma Kriger’s study of the demobilization of guerrilla troops in Zimbabwe shows how ad hoc rule-making and political manipulation can corrupt a demobilization process, creating a violent repressive force that is as dangerous as the previous “war” situation. Such rules also require effective agencies for enforcement. In looking at ethnic conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, Kidane Mengisteab and M. Sani Umar make the central point that democratization without building effective governmental institutions will only exacerbate conflict. The state cannot implement effective policies, however well designed, meaning that democratization merely creates opportunities for greater ethnic mobilization.

Secondly, conflict regulation needs to go beyond rules by building social networks and trust. Without a sense of trust and positive social ties, contenders are unlikely to put aside their differences and focus on the positive gains that could come from further interaction. Rules can engender trust but these must be built from dialogue. In her discussion of intercultural communication, Donna Lee Van Cott shows how Amerindian leaders have devised new political strategies that foster inter-group networks and coalitions. Democratization and various protections for ethnic autonomy and self-governance are of course an important framework, but the dialogue itself and the positive networks and trust that it engenders are central to peace-building processes.

A third element is new policies. In their analysis of post-conflict societies, Collier et al. (2003) show that the most favorable policies are social investments in education and health. These create a sense of membership in the broader society on the part of previously excluded groups as well as address long-standing social problems. Military spending and arms buildups have the opposite effect, heightening tensions and re-igniting conflict. Economic growth and policies that foster growth are also important. It is always easier to allocate resources when there are more resources to go around. Growth, however, is an elusive goal when there are strong conflicts over the definition of the nation or the formulas for rule. Strong identity conflict creates a “catch 22” situation in which little can be done to stimulate the economy but the resources to regulate conflict are unavailable. Aseel Sawalha shows how urban development policy in post-conflict Lebanon has failed to break the impasse between the various contenders, threatening a possible restart of the civil war.

Fourth is the forging of new inclusive identities that foster social tolerance and diversity instead of narrow exclusionary identities that fail to integrate. In his discussion of the colonial mentality, Leo Ching shows how negative identity regulation works, creating over-conformity to imperial definitions. While resistance might seem an option to the outside observer, colonial subjects not only accept the definitions but also over-identify with their masters. A more fluid situation makes it possible for new and more complex identities to emerge. Diane Nelson shows that the more open political situation in Guatemala has facilitated the development of more fluid and complex identities. Actors can now present both a Mayan and an assimilated self while displaying distance from both.

*** Processes of Identity Conflict

Our chapters capture five fundamental processes of identity conflict. First is the forging of identities, whether by negative or positive regulation. Addressing negative regulation, Leo Ching examines the case of colonial Taiwan, arguing that colonial authority was able to make resistance “unthinkable” for at least a significant segment of the aboriginal population. This identification was not, however, a simple linear process but was based on a complex dialectic. Colonial definitions simultaneously strengthened the

inhibited aggression and suppressed anger of the colonized aboriginals while creating an internalization in which the colonized over-identified with their oppressors, becoming loyal defenders of the colonial system. In the first step of this process, the logical possibility emerges that the “whole social structure [can be] changed from the bottom up.” Second is suppression of this counter-identification, which leads to the third step—over-identification with the colonial power. The result, Ching argues, is that the colonized become the defenders of their own oppression, willingly sacrificing their lives to defend the system that oppresses them.

How do people recover from genocide and forge new identities? What types of identities do they forge? Diane Nelson addresses identity displays among Mayans in post-genocide Guatemala. In her field research, she found herself repeatedly faced with the question of the authenticity of Mayan identity. In view of the government’s past attempt to eradicate all traces of the Mayan race, do public displays of Mayan identity indicate an ethnic revitalization? Her analysis suggests that identity is dynamic and contradictory, pointing simultaneously in multiple directions. The younger multi-lingual Mayans project multiple selves, both a Mayan and an assimilated or conformist self. In their rituals, celebrations, and dances, they project both their dispossession and their new autonomous powers.

A third setting where new identities are being forged is Muslim-majority countries. Traditionally dominated by secular authoritarian governments that negatively regulated religious expression, these countries, Eickelman and Salvatore argue, are developing a new type of positive regulation, which they dub “Public Islam.” In contrast to the anti-modern conformist picture provided in much Western discussion of contemporary Islam, they find a growing plurality of voices and positions with a new dialogue over the nature of social justice, right and wrong, and ways of organizing public authority. A diverse set of religious scholars, self-described religious authorities, secular intellectuals, Sufi orders, mothers, students, workers, engineers, and many others advance multiple positions. As Susan Buck-Morss (2003) argues, acknowledging that Islamism enables political discourses that are modern in their own terms does not entail defending all Islamist movements or positions. This new Islamic dialogue has created challenges to authoritarian rule, a more fragmented religious and political authority, and increasingly open discussions of the “common good” (al-maslaha al-’amma

or simply maslaha). As Eickelman and Salvatore show, ideas of the common good are not a simple heritage of specific religious or normative traditions but rather a set of ethical concepts and social norms that are contested and redefined through interaction, practice, and transmission over generations.

Part II of our volume addresses the suppression of identities. Much like the negative regulation of identity discussed above, this section discusses how identities are suppressed and the impact of such processes. Dru Gladney's chapter traces the diverse adaptations of Muslim minorities in China, showing that some have become fully assimilated to the dominant Han culture while others have supported various autonomy movements. While constituting less than 2 percent of the total Chinese population, the two largest groups--the Hui and the Uyghurs—have preserved their cultural distinctiveness and recently supported various autonomy movements. The Chinese government has oscillated between minority protection, recognizing ten distinct Muslim nationalities and regulating anti-minority attacks, and pressing for linguistic and religious assimilation, especially during periods of internal political purges such as the Cultural Revolution and the recent "war on terror." Meanwhile, Chinese Muslims have continued to travel abroad freely for pilgrimage and study, bringing them into contact with Islamic internationalism and other reform movements in the Middle East and Central Asia. There has also been a significant growth of "cyber-separatism," primarily in the Uyghur diaspora, which numbers over 500,000 and provides a ready audience for human rights advocacy and monitoring projects, supporting Neil Smelser's comments about the impact of globalization on local ethnic mobilization.

The net result is complex and does not fit either a simple suppression or a resistance model. On the one hand, many Chinese Muslims are unsympathetic and uninvolved in any autonomy activity whatsoever. On the other hand, a small but growing minority of Chinese Muslims is active in supporting human rights advocacy and other cultural autonomy efforts with a handful possibly involved in separatist activity. In a way that parallels Eickelman and Salvatore's analysis (chapter 5), this has created greater pluralism within Islam and contributed to a broader public debate about the meaning of Islam and its implications for public life.

In his chapter on the Kurdish question, Michael Gunter argues that geopolitics is the primary factor suppressing Kurdish identity. All the major regional powers have joined forces with the United States and Western Europe to oppose the idea of an independent Kurdish state. In its place, the Kurds are offered regional autonomy (Iraq), democratic citizenship within a more or less pluralistic nation (Turkey), or special protected religious status (Iran and Syria). In Turkey, the Turkish Kurds seem to be moving away from a violent insurgency towards accepting citizenship in a multi-ethnic Turkish state. In Iraq, the favored solution seems to be regional autonomy within a federal state while Iran and Syria, with smaller Kurdish populations, are providing greater religious autonomy.

What are the mechanisms by which identity is suppressed? In her analysis of the symbolic struggle over married vs. celibate Buddhist priests in South Korea, Pori Park shows that the critical mechanism was the symbolic association of the married priests with the previous Japanese colonial power. Proponents of celibacy were a small minority but, because of their symbolic association with tradition and national identity, they were able to claim religious purity and launch a successful purge of the priesthood, driving out all the married monks. Later, however, they found themselves undercut because of their collaboration with an increasingly unpopular military regime. This experience parallels the ongoing involvement of Buddhist monks in a purification movement in Sri Lanka. Like the South Korean celibate monks, the Buddhist purification movement has allied itself with the Sinhalese-dominated government, effectively suppressing Tamil and other minority identities. Seneviratne (1999) argues that this has blocked the development of a more inclusive Buddhist modernism that could pave the way for a more pluralistic civil society. As Park concludes, this has undermined the promise of this post-colonial purification movement and a more inclusive national identity.

Part III of this book addresses problematic identities where conflicts could suddenly erupt or remain quiescent. Robert Hislope examines the tense relations between Serbs and Albanians in Macedonia, using community-level comparisons to show that, as long as there is a gap between expressive and actionable hatred, violence can be regulated. The key seems to be a durable

multi-ethnic coalition government. Despite widespread and intense hatred between the two groups and the presence of multiple triggering incidents in the form of violent attacks, local elites in some communities have used their cross-ethnic ties to prevent these from setting off a violence cycle while, in other communities, local elites have tolerated growing violence, eventually leading to widespread rioting. In addition to illustrating the idea of inter-group civic networks, Hislope shows that elites can play a central role in regulating conflict despite the presence of widespread and intense ethnic hatreds. Ethnic violence is not simply a question of primordial sentiments or expressive hatred, but must be mobilized. Elites play a critical role in determining when and how it is mobilized.

Georgi Derluguian provides a more negative assessment of the conflict potential in Abkhazia, a mini-republic that is trying to break away from Georgia. He shows that the origins of this conflict lie in the history of Soviet and even pre-Soviet rule when Russian officials and wealthy tourists used Abkhazia as a resort, giving it a special autonomy, affluence, and ethnic mix. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, Abkhazian nationalists made a bid for full independence, precipitating a civil war in which thousands of Abkhazian and Georgian ethnics were forced from the region. With Russian sponsorship and the opportunities created by a weak Georgian state, the Abkhazian rebels have been able to sustain their autonomy bid, but the future is highly problematic. Since Derluguian wrote this chapter, the Georgians have launched military offensives to recapture the region and Abkhazian nationalists have destroyed the major bridges and railway links giving access to the region. This chapter shows that the actual history of ethnonationalist struggle is often more contingent and chaotic than suggested by subsequent histories and that it is important to understand the structural origins of identity conflicts as well as their short-term dynamics.

The 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah war in Lebanon highlights the relevance of Aseel Sawalha’s analysis of the politics of ethnic heritage in post-conflict Lebanon. A twenty-year civil war left behind thousands of displaced Shiite refugees, many of whom settled in the suburbs surrounding Beirut. With the arrival of an uneasy peace in the late 1990s, politicians and urban planners launched efforts to reconstruct the city, appealing symbolically to the need to create “An Ancient City for the Future.” Public art and museums became important sites symbolizing this new identity but, given the assumptions of elites, were

designed in ways that excluded the Shiite refugees. This is evident in the way the refugees and their heritage were symbolized. On the one hand, this largely rural population was seen as an obstacle to constructing a new modern and prosperous Beirut. Urban planners proposed razing their slums and resettling the population. On the other hand, this rural heritage was seen as authentic and something that should be preserved, studied, collected in the museums and commemorated in public art. This created a contradictory collective memory in that Shitte refugees are in practice presented as “dirty” and “undesirable,” while at the same time their ruralness is presented as an honorable source of tradition that is “pure, original and authentic.” These contradictions point to an underlying tension over Lebanese national identity, which so far has failed to incorporate the diverse groups in a way that will sustain the peace.

Part IV of the volume addresses problems in the reconstruction of identities in post-conflict societies. One of the major challenges facing post-conflict societies is how to educate its youth about the conflict and the processes that created it. How are the various contenders to be presented and characterized? Are they heroes or villains? In her chapter on educational policies in postwar Mozambique, Antoinette Errante finds that these policies have largely failed to create a realistic understanding of the conflict or a set of new identities and norms that will preserve the peace. Instead, educators and the government have assumed that the best approach is to ignore the issue, blotting the civil war from collective memory. This, however, is a mistake, for it allows the conflict to go on outside the classroom unaddressed and unreconstructed. Conflict transformation means that identities must be restructured and take on a more inclusive role that recognizes the legitimacy of the interests of others. It also means that the actual political economy is reconstructed so as to provide access to all. Wartime identities are based upon the need to be “right” because that righteousness is the only thing that makes insecurity, death, and martyrdom bearable. The consolidation of peace requires reconciling elites who surrender this need to be “right.” The youth Errante interviewed are not interested in returning to the bush because the donor community has provided sufficient financial incentives to avoid this. Like all reconciling elites, the ex-guerrillas want “peace with power.” They want to surrender their wartime identities only once they have secured control over new symbolic and material resources. The educational system has, however, failed to create a mutual awareness of the conflict or a set of identities that will prevent conflict from reemerging. Nor has the

distribution of resources changed significantly. Instead, elites act as if the situation was a type of “post-postwar” condition, leaving the framework for renewed violence.

A second problem is the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (sometimes called “DDR”) of former soldiers, both those in the official military and in guerrilla units. Reconstruction requires finding new employment and status for former soldiers whose only job skill is using violence and intimidation. Unintegrated, they will likely revert to criminal or other violence. Norma Kriger examines the flawed reintegration of guerrilla soldiers in post-conflict Zimbabwe, showing that the use of ad hoc rules, political manipulations, and ineffective career alternatives has created a more volatile and dangerous situation. The government has reconstituted the former guerrillas as military veterans with pension rights and privileged access to civil service jobs. While this may have temporarily removed these former guerrillas from the battlefield, it has created an aggressive new paramilitary force, which the Mugabe government has then used to suppress dissent and democratic political competition. The problem does not lie in the concept of reintegration but rather in the way in which reintegration was organized and conducted, failing to transform these former fighters into civilian activities.

Part V addresses the construction of new identities in the context of state-building and democratization. Many have promoted the idea that democracy is the best way of transforming identity conflicts, instituting new rules to guarantee political representation and protect minority rights. Our final three chapters support this basic idea but propose important qualifications on this argument. Kidane Mengisteab argues that the problems confronting states in sub-Saharan Africa are far more complex, stemming from economic dependency, economic and institutional fragmentation, as well as the flawed development strategies of African states. Despite various attempts at regional integration, the average African country still trades primarily with its ex-colonial power and is heavily dependent on exporting primary products. This creates persisting poverty and anemic economic growth. On average, per capita income is lower in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa today than it was at independence in the 1960s and early 1970s. A second factor is the ethnic heterogeneity of the “new states,” which typically underwent attempts to impose ethnic unity by force with military coups, ethnic wars and

geno/politicides. This has undermined economic growth and created arbitrary autocratic rule. Third has been the institutional weakness of African states, few of which have strong civil service traditions, independent courts, or effective police and law enforcement systems. Routine dispute resolution is better handled through traditional forums than the formal state. Sub-Saharan Africa is repeatedly rated as having the largest concentration of corrupt governments in the world (Transparency International, 2006). Over the past decade, the World Bank and other international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) have promoted political democratization as a way of opening up societies, encouraging market reforms, and creating political accountability. While there are some successes (e.g., South Africa, Tanzania), failures are more numerous. Corruption pervades most of these new democracies and undermines market reforms. Without internal capital and diversification, market reforms will accomplish little and may be detrimental by cutting off needed investments in human capital and public health. Another proposed reform has been regional economic pacts to promote trade and collective security. Mengisteab finds that few of these efforts have been effective, despite their significant potential.

In his chapter M. Sani Umar questions the effectiveness of democratization when basic problems of state-building remain unresolved. Although political democracy may create a more favorable context for conflict transformation, the key problem is the inability to deliver fundamental public services. Independent courts, non-corrupt police and militaries, and effective schools and public health systems need to be constructed before democratization. Introducing democratic government in the context of a weak and ineffective state and widespread poverty is more likely to intensify ethnic hatred and conflict by creating opportunities for mobilization alongside the frustrations stemming from ineffective government. In this context, democracy alone is no panacea but rather must be preceded by state-building and economic development.

A more favorable reading of democratization is provided by Donna Lee Van Cott, who examines the indigenous movements in the Andean region of South America. Over the past two decades, this region has witnessed significant democratization and the mobilization of Amerindian movements. The longstanding victims of colonial conquest and the mestizo elites that took over in the post-colonial period, these indigenous populations

have remained relegated to the margins of these societies. By challenging exclusionary governments throughout the Andes, these movements have promoted and built upon alternative democratic models. There is significant instability associated with these protests. Amerindian movements in Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru have helped to oust elected presidents and have mounted protests that disrupted the economy and created violence. On the whole, however, these movements have developed new ways of negotiating peacefully with state authorities and traditional political actors with the help of domestic and transnational NGOs, foreign governments, and multilateral organizations. Media reports have overemphasized the violence and anti-democratic behavior in some settings while missing the positive developments. By building on widespread popular dissatisfaction with the traditional left and right, these movements have forged inter-ethnic coalitions with lower class mestizo groups that have an interest in opposing corruption and poor governmental services. By securing local indigenous autonomy in primarily indigenous zones, alongside promoting more intercultural institutions at levels where indigenous peoples must coexist with others, these coalitions have promoted a more inclusive definition of citizenship and national identity.

In contrast to some of the other cases presented in this volume, national myths of nation-formation in the Andean region recognize the historical roots of the nation in pre-Colombian indigenous civilizations. Although indigenous cultures are usually recognized as relics of a glorious Incan past, and numerous prejudices persist concerning such cultures, national myths of mestizaje (racial mixing) enable all citizens in Andean countries to claim indigenous culture as part of their own history. This intellectual link to a shared pre-Colombian past lays the basis for claims of new identities based in indigenous traditional cultures to resonate widely.

*** Can Identity Conflict Be Regulated?

Pointing out the how violence can be reduced and conflict regulated is an even more demanding exercise. There are no uniform, straightforward answers to the question of how violence can be regulated. As the chapters in this book have demonstrated, each conflict is different in time, space, parties involved, intensity, issues, the types of violence, and the ways in which they

are manifested. It is likely that different conflicts will require different approaches to understanding the violence and to mapping out ways to regulate it. The multiple dimensions of conflict that are well documented in the chapters of this book recommend multiple strategies.

We have organized our discussion to address five processes ranging from the formation of identity, the suppression of identities, the mobilization of groups, attempts to create new identities, and changes in basic rules and symbols of national unity. This discussion suggests that identity conflict can be regulated by creating more open and effective political systems and inclusive identities, and by countering exclusionary ideologies. Creating a sustained dialogue is central to the process. Where dialogue is blocked by poverty, ethnic hatred, corrupt institutions or negative beliefs, conflict transformation is unlikely. Ethnic violence is predicated on the idea that the other is subhuman. If this belief can be systematically countered, this constitutes a first step towards regulating violence.

It is important to have a context-specific understanding of identity conflict; nevertheless, there are some general rules that emerge from our discussion. Conflict regulation works on multiple levels, both through the introduction of rules and the creation of integrated symbols and new identities. At the same time, we need to be aware that identity conflict is never “resolved” in the sense of completely eliminated. In fact, conflict can be functional in the sense that it serves as a source of innovation and increased flexibility. The aim of conflict regulation is placing boundaries on identity conflict so that it operates with a minimum of violence. The multiple dimensions of identity conflict have shown that violence does not cease when violent actions stop. Violence, like domination, according to Simmel (1955: 151), “is not so much the exploitation of the other as the mere consciousness of the possibility.”

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** [Back Matter]

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*** Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version.]

<biblio>

Abacha, Sani, 246, 267

Abay, Amel Seged, 247

Abdul Hamid II, 115

Abdurixit, Abdulahat, 101

Abdushelishvili, M.G., 168, 169

Abkhazia, xvi, 9,167–81, 304

Aborigine, 43–45, 47, 48, 50, 51, 52 53, 54, 56, 57, 58

Acculturation, 97

Addison, T., 206, 207

Adedeji, Adebayo, 243

Adelkhah, Fariba, 81, 85–86

Adnan, Abu, 192, 193

Afeworki, Isaias, 247

Afghanistan, 27, 101, 109

Africa, 173, 247; sub-Saharan xviii, 243, 253, 293, 300, 306

African Union, xviii, 255–256

Ahmad, Ibrahim, 121

Akinyele, R.T., 265, 268

Albania, xvi, 12, 150, 154–61, 303

Albó, Xavier, 283

Alcántara, Sáez, 287

Alden, C., 207

Ali, Mohammed, 192

Al-jazeerah, 105

Alptekin, Erkin, 101

Alptekin, Isa Jusuf, 101

Al-Qaeda, 109

Al-Sistani, Ali, 122

Altman, Yochanan, 173

Alusevski, Sime, 161

Americanization, 8

Amerindians, 16, 300, 305

Amin, Ida, 246; Samir, 66

Amnesia: collective, 187, 195; selective, 204, 211, 214

Amnesty International, 100, 101

Anderson, Liam, 123

Andes, 16, 17, 282, 283, 285, 287, 289, 292, 307

Andreas, Peter, 153

Angola, 204, 212, 226, 244, 246, 251

Animosities: ancient, 149, 151, 172; interethnic, 150; latent, 150

Appadurai, A., 30

Arendt, Hannah, 1, 179

Armenia, 114, 172, 173, 174, 175, 177

Armitage, Richard, 107

Arnove, R., 211

Arrighi, Giovanni, 66

Ascherson, Neal, 170

Asian Development Bank, 103

Assembly of the Sovereignty of the People (ASP), 288, 289

Assies, Willem, 281, 284, 286, 291

Assimilation, 28, 30, 44, 47, 49, 56, 96, 171, 249, 302

Authoritarianism, 8–9, 81, 180, 292

Authority: public, 282, 302; religious, 85, 88, 120

Autonomy, 282, 286, 289; ethnic, 300; Kurdish, xv, 113, 121; state, 260

Avruch, K., 205

Azerbaijan, 173, 174, 309

Baber, Zaheer, 106

Baile de la Culebra, 63–65, 67, 69, 73

Balalovska, Krisitna, 150, 157

Ballén, Sixto Durán, 288

Bangala, 246

Bangladesh, 126

Barakat, Hoda, 198

Barakat, S., 207, 210

Barkindo, Bawuro, 271

Barzani, area, 114

Barzani, Massoud 117, 121, 123

Barzani, Mulla Mustafa, 120–121, 124

Barzani, Nechirvan Idris, 124

Basbug, General Ilker, 122

Basil, Joseph, 195, 196

Basque, 28

Bassao-Mona, 48

Bastos, Santiago, 70

Bates, Robert, 151

Baxter, Joan, 270

BBC, 105, 252

Beauvoir, Simone de, 151

Beck, Linda J., 270

Beg, Badr Khan, 115

Beijing, 98, 99,107,108,109

Beissinger, Mark R., 152, 171, 175–77

Belgium, 71, 245

Benedict, K., 24

Benford, R.D., 206

Benin, 261, 263, 271, 272

Beria, Lavrenti, 168, 174, 176

Bettelheim, Bruno, 7

Beyer, P., 25

Bin Laden, Osama, 109

Bishop Tutu, 6

Bissau, 261

Black Sea, 168, 170, 171, 178

Boigny, Houphouet, 247

Bokassa, 246

Boli, J., 211, 215

Bolivia, xviii, 287, 288,289, 292, 293, 307

Bolsheviks, 174

Bombay, India, 79

Borden, Anthony, 156

Boskovski, Ljube, 160–161

Bosnia, 94,106,152, 154

Botan, 115

Botswana, 226, 234, 248, 255

Bourdieu, Pierre, 178

Bowen, John R., 153

Bratton, Michael, 269–270

Brezhnev, Leonid, 175

Brintnall, Douglas, 70

British Royal Air Force (RAF), 120

Brubaker, Rogers, 151

Brysk, Alison, 284

Buck-Morss, Susan, 302

Buddhism: Japanese, 131; Korean, 131, 133, 134, 141

Bueno de Mesquita, 273

Buganda, 246

Bunce, Valerie, 173, 175

Bureaucracy: 16, 157, 282; Buddhist, 139, 143

Burgess, Katrina, 287

Burguete Cal y Mayor, Aracely, 292

Burkino Faso, 261, 263, 271

Burtless, G., 25

Burundi, 244, 246, 254

Calderón, Marco Antonio, 291

Cambodia, xi, 17

Camdessus, Michael, 263

Cameroon, 260, 263

Camus, Manuela, 70

Canada, 9, 10, 105, 108

Cape Verde, 261

Capitalism: 46, 60, 261, 269; global, 185–186, 189

Carroll, Barbara Wake, 248

Carroll, Terrance, 248

Casanova, José, 80

Castles, S., 30

Catholic Action, 70, 74, 76

Celibacy, 132, 135, 143

Central African Republic, 244, 246, 261

Central Asia, 86, 95, 96, 98, 99, 101–05, 302

Chachba, Prince Sefer-bei, 170

Chad, 244, 250, 254, 260

Chandra, Kanchan, 153

Charif, Hassan, 185

Chauvinism: Arab, 124; ethnic, 264

Chechnya, 167, 170, 171

Chief Mangwende, 231

Chigwedere, MP Aeneus, 234–35

Child soldiers, 208–211, 214

China, xv, 10, 53, 86, 93, 111, 233, 302

Chinese State Council, 107

Ching, Leo, xiv, 7, 66, 301

Chitauro, Florence, 232, 234

Ch ngh i, Pak, 142

Chong’uk, Yi, 133

Churchward, Jack, 105

Cinar, Alev, 84

Citizens Against Chinese Communism, 105

Civil, associations, 265, 272

Civil Patrol (PAC), 72, 75

Civilization: arrested, 86–87; culture and, 87, 110; clash of, 8, 86–7

Climo, J.J., 206

Collier, Paul, 243, 300

Colonel Lucia Gutiérrez, 288

Colonialism: 9, 29, 59, 143, 251, 301; Japanese, 6, 16, 50, 52, 303

Coloniality of power, 44–45, 46, 49–50

Columbia, 285

Comaroff: Jean, 205; John L., 205

Committee of Rebuilding Buddhism, 140

Communism: 30, 100; post-, 173, 175, 176, 177, 179, 180

Community: imagined, 17, 18; Quichua, 284, 286, 291

Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), 288

Conference of Buddhist Clerics, 138 139

Conflict: cycles of, 2–3; FRELIMO-RENAMO, 208–209, 212–14; frozen, 179–80; functions of, 3, 308; interlocked, 7; management, 13, 299; and media, 159; post-, 305; realistic vs. non-realistic, 3; regulation, cultural, 16; regulation, defined, xiii, 2, 299, 303, 304, 307–308; regulation positive and negative, xiv, 6, 13–15, 16–18, 301; resolution, 3, 13–14; suppressed, 6–7; theories of ethnic, 10–12, 16–18; transformation, 3–5, 13, 14, 299, 300–01, 305, 308; violent and non-violent xiii, 7,9, 32, 137, 244, 250, 259, 268

Confucianism, 86, 97

Congo, 244, 246

Connor, Walker, 31, 248

Cook, Michael, 81

Cooperation, Turkish-Kurdish, 127

COPMAGUA, 68

Coser, Lewis, 3–4

Côte d’Ivoire, 244, 247, 254, 260, 263, 271

Coughlan, Reed M., 154

Croatia, 9, 152

Croatian Democratic Community, 152

Cross-cutting: cleavages 7, 11, 12, 154; ties, 12

Culture: conflict of, 2, 8; material, 67; reconstruction of, 18, 213

Cultural Revolution, 53, 98, 103, 109, 302

Cuxil, Demetrio Cojti, 71

Cyber-separatism, 10, 302

Dadao-mona, 48

Daily Trust, 266

Dakkis-navi, 46

Dakkis-nobin, 46

Dance of the snake, see Baile de la Culebra

De Varness, Fernand, 248

De Waal, Thomas, 173, 178, 169

Decentralization, 122, 249, 288–289, 291

Decolonialization, 131, 143;

Democracy: democratic transition, 7, 259; democratization, xviii, 4, 11, 13, 15, 18, 30,117, 176, 237, 245, 259, 272–73, 290, 293, 300, 306–07; and Islam, 85

Democratic People’s Party (DEHAP), 118

Democratic Republic of the Congo, 244, 251, 254, 255

Democratic Society Party (DTP), 118

Dependency, economic, 256, 306

Deprivation, relative, 9, 32

Derluguian, Georgi, 9, 168, 178, 304

Dervishi, Feriz, 158

Development: and reconstruction, 214; economic, 263, 273; human, 255; topdown, 186, 188

Dhlakama, Afonso, 2 12

Diakonoff, Igor M., 169

Diaspora: xv, 8–10, 30, 88, 171; Kurdish, 114; Uyghur, 103, 105, 106, 109, 302; Muslim, 93–94

Dillon, Michael, 94

Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR), 16, 305

Doki, Abdullahi, 267

Dorian, James, 103

Dulovi, Lirim, 160

Dumezile, Georges, 171

East Asian Muslims, 93

East Germany, 178

East Timor, 126

East Turkestan Islamic Movement, 103–104, 106, 107

East Turkestan Liberation Organization, 108

East Turkestan Republic, 100–101

Eastern Turkestan National Freedom Center, 106

Ebenshade, R.S., 206

Economist, The, 246

Ecuador, 282–88, 291, 293, 306

Education, xvii, 4–6,15, 29, 44, 51, 70, 73, 155, 195, 211, 212–13, 300

Efraime Junior, B., 208, 210

Egypt, 93, 233

Eickelman, Dale F., 83, 84, 87, 96, 302–03

Eidai, Hayashi, 56

Eller, Jack David, 154

Ember, M., 204

Emergency Sangha Assembly of Rebuilding, 140

Emperor Haile Selassie, 249

Empire: Byzantine, 170; Ottoman, 170

Epistemology, 46, 52, 56

Equatorial Guinea, 246, 260

Erdogan, Recep Tayyip, 118

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland, 248

Eritrea, 126, 247

Eritrean People’s Liberation Front, 247

Errante, Antoinette, xv, xvii, 204, 206, 207, 208, 210, 305

Estado, Novo, 212

Ethiopia, 9, 126, 244, 246, 247, 249, 251, 254, 255

Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), 249

Ethnic: cleansing, 36, 134, 180,199; entrepreneurs, 11–12; hate, xvi, 2, 9, 12, 149, 304, 306, 308; identity, xv, 1, 12, 32–33, 151; inter-ethnic coalitions, 282, 303, 307; nationalism, 25,110; rivalry, 158; violence, xix, 11–13, 35–36, 173, 176; war, 152. See also genocide

Ethnocentrism, 11, 46

Ethnolinguistic entities, 244, 245, 247–48

Ethno-religious identity, 94

European Union: 27, 84, 113, 117, 118, 127; Copenhagen Criteria, 117

Evans, Peter, 247

Evans, R.J., 206

Everatt, D., 204, 208

Ex-Political Prisoners, Detainees, and Restrictees Act, 236

Exxon, 102

Fägerlind, I., 211

Fanon, Frantz, 58–59

Faour, Ali, 185

Fearon, James D., 151

Federalism: 122–123, 174, 249; ethnic, 126

Fernandez, Luistxo, 104

Finer, Samuel E., 269

Fisun, Oleksandr, 177, 180

Fletcher, Joseph, 96, 97

Flor, R. Eulalia, 292

Ford, Peter, 158

Foster, Derek, 106

France, 87

Frckovski, Ljubomir, 149

Free East Turkestan, 105

Free Turkestan Movement, 107–108

Freedom House, 260

Freidenberg, Flavia, 287

Furman, Dmitry,167

Fuss, Diana, 75

Gagnon, V.P., 151

Galbraith, Peter, 122

Galtung, Johann, 14

Gambia, 260, 270

Ganev, Venelin, 177, 180

Garcia, Alfonso, 67–70, 73

García, Serrano, 284, 286

Gasakhurdia, Zviad, 177

Gaza, 9

General League of Buddhist Reforms, 133–134

Genocide: 17, 32, 36, 43, 63, 203 301; Mayan, 64, 71, 72, 73. See also ethnic cleansing, ethnic war, conflict, violence

Gentaro, Governor General Kodama, 47

Germany, 87, 114

Ghana, 233, 247, 255, 261, 263, 271, 272

Ghannouchi, Rasheed, 86

Gibson, Clark, 260

Gilligan, J., 204, 207, 208

Gladney, Dru, xv, 9, 94, 100, 103, 302

Globalization: xiv, 1, 8–9, 13, 18, 24, 28, 29, 75, 214–15, 250–54, 268–69, 281, 302; cultural, 8, 24–25

Gobodo-Madzikizela, P., 206

Godoy, Natalia, 68

Goldstone, Jack, 172

Gómez, Magdalena, 286

Gonzalez, Domingo, 71, 73

Gonzalez, Matilde, 72

Gonzolaz-Quijano, 84

Gorbachev, Mikhail, 176, 177

Gottlieb, Esther, 5, 35, 65

Grant, Bruce, 175

Great Britain, 100, 119

Greece, 172

Green, Linda, 72

Guatemala, xv, 301

Guatemalan Mayan Language Academy (ALMG), 71, 75

Guinea, 247, 254, 260, 261, 263, 270, 271

Gulen, Fethullah, 82

Gunter, Michael, xv, 125, 303

Gurr, Ted Robert, 4, 9, 10, 13, 28, 29–30, 32, 33, 34, 36, 261

Guttiérez, Marcelo, 69

Habermas, Jurgen, 80, 88, 111

Hacking, Ian, 153

Hamas, 5, 107

Han, 110, 302

Han’guk, 137

Hany ng, Pak, 133

Hardin, Russel, 25, 32

Harff, Barbara, 29–30, 33, 36

Hariri, Rafiq, 186

Haruo, Sato, 47

Harvey, David, 65–66, 76

Harwit, Eric, 05

Hass, Ernst, 27

Hatred, actionable, 150

Hattori, Heijirô, 43, 44

Hayaski, Eidai, 56–57, 58

Hazret, Mehmet Emin, 108–109

Hechter, Michael, 151

Hee, Park Chung, 140

Hefner, Robert W., 85

Hegre, Havard, 273

Held, Donald, 24

Heritage: authentic, 192; national collective, 194, 196; and popular culture, 195, 196; popular, 188–189, 190; understanding of, 191

Herzog, Hanna, 290

Hewitt, B.G., 169

Hilton, D.J., 204, 206

Hirsch, Marianne, 194

Hislope, Robert, 11, 33, 153, 177, 303–04

HIV/AIDS, 211, 243, 253

Hizb-ut-Tahrr, 107

Hoekema, André, 284

Hogo tribe, 49

Holmes,Leslie, 177

Home of East Turkestan Youth, 107

Honeyman, C., 205

Honwana, A.M., 210

Horowitz, Donald, 4, 150–151, 154, 155, 159, 161

Hokoyo, MP, 235

Hughes, S., 205

Hui, 94, 110, 302

Human capital, 243, 251, 306

Human rights, xiv, 8, 13, 14, 17, 86, 88, 102, 104–05,109, 118, 228, 243–44, 247, 250, 261, 274, 281, 284, 291–92, 302–03

Human Rights Watch, 159, 160, 263, 269

Human Security Report, 243

Humphrey, Caroline, 177

Hunt, S.A., 206

Huntingon, Samuel P., 8, 30, 86–7

Hussein, Saddam, 17, 113, 117, 119, 121, 122, 123, 125, 126,127, 128, 194

Huyssen, Andreas, 194

Icevska, Gordana, 156

Identities of dispossession, 65

Identity: 17, 301, 303–305; building, 71–72, 301; conflicts, xiii, xix, 1, 3, 10, 14, 18, 301–303; group 3, 25, 31–3, 154; groups, 26, 34–5, 64; Mayan 65, 70, 75, 292, 301; movements 25, 28, 32–6; over identification, 301; peace adaptive, 204; polarization, 3–4, 7–8, 9, 133; post-war, 198; politics, 26, 203,

205–06, 209, 212–13, 215; reconstruction 205, 305–306; religious, 81, 84, 268; suppression of, 302–03; violence adaptive, 204

Ige, Bola, 266

Ikelegbe, Augustine, 264–265

Imperial Army, 43

Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, 125

India, 11, 84

Indigenous Pachekutik Movement (MIP), 289

Indonesia, 82, 126; Bali, 79

Institutionalization, 173

Institutions: building. 27, 311; democratic, 289, 290, 293–294, institutionalization, 173; political, 293; traditional, 244–245. See also democracy, state-building

Insurrection, Akto, 101

Integration strategies, guerilla, 222–223

Integration, regional, 254

Intercultural dialogue, xix, 15–16, 56, 193, 300, 307

Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs), 17, 18, 27,

International Labor Organization Convention, 284

International Monetary Fund, 27, 263, 264, 273

International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), 17, 18, 306

International, assistance, 209; trade, 103

Ioseliani, Djaba, 176, 177

Iran, xv, 9, 85, 86, 88, 93, 113, 114, 115, 120, 121, 125, 127, 192, 303; women’s movement, 80

Iranian Revolution, 80

Iraq, xv, 9, 17, 79, 82, 84, 113, 114, 117, 119–27, 303; US occupation of, 84, 119

Isaacman, A., 213

Iskander, Fazil, 170, 174

Islam: global, 99; Islamic internationalism, 99, 302; Islamic jurisprudence, 82; Islamic movements, 82, 86, 97, 99, 259; Naqshabandi Sufi, 115; Islamic orders, 96; public, 80, 81, 82, 302; Sufi 87, 94–6, 98, 270, 302

Islamic Party of Turkestan, 105

Islamist, 10, 124, 259, 302

Islamist AK Party, 118

Israel, 5, 17

Israeli, Raphael, 94

Istanbul, Turkey, 84

Italy, 117

Jamaat, Tableeghi, 107

Jänick, M., 28

Japan: 93; Japanese spirit, 55

Japan Peoples Party, 50

Jenkins, J. Craig, 8, 11, 12, 35, 65

Jennings, R., 204, 208

Johnson, Paul, 86, 100

Jordan, 171, 192

Jordan, Tim, 106

Joyabaj, 63–64

Kaba, Lansine, 272

Kadir, Rebiya, 100

Kalyvas, Stathis, 179

Kane, Ousmane, 272

Kang, Inch, 133, 134, 144

Kangai, Minister Kubirai, 223, 225, 226

Kant, Immanuel, 82

Kaphwan, Ch’oe, 137

Karabagh, 167, 169, 173

Karadzic, Radovan, 152

Kasfir, Nelson, 246

Kasim, Abdul, 107

Katô, Kunihiko, 54–57

Kaunda, Keneth, 247

Kawakami, Jôtarô, 50–52

Kazakhstan, 101, 103

Kazem-Zadeh, 173

Keita, Ibrahim Boubacar, 270

Kemal, Mustafa, 115, 117

Kenya, 117, 246

Kepel, Gilles, 80, 85

Kgotla, 248

Khodarkovsky, Michael, 168

Khosrokhavar, Farhad, 85

Khoyboun (Independence Party), 115

Khrushchev, Nikita, 168, 175

Kiavaz, 173–174

Kikuyo, 246

King Hussein of Jordan, 192

King Solomon, 114

King, Charles, 170, 175

Kirkuk, 124–125

Kirli, Cengiz, 84

Kissinger, Henry, 121

Kitovani, Tengiz, 177

Kollock, Peter, 106

Kona, MP, 225

Kondo, Masami, 47

Kondo-Gisaburo, 48

Kôno, Mitsu, 50, 52

Kosovo, 94, 150,155, 156, 157, 167, 171, 180, 181

Kovacevski, Slobodan, 158

Kriger, Norma, xvii, 6, 221, 300, 305

Ku, Kim, 134

Kumanova, Macedonia, 150, 156–58, 161

Kumar, Radha, 151

Kuran, Timur, 154

Kurdish tribalism, 114

Kurdish Worker’s Party (PKK), 9, 116–17, 118, 119, 127

Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), 117, 120, 123

Kurdistan Regional Government, 113, 122, 123, 124

Kurds: 9, 94, 303; Iraqi, 119, 126, 128; Turkish, 115–16, 303

Kurtynova-Derluguian, Liubov, 168

Kyrgyzstan, 101

Kyusik, Kim, 133

Laicism, 82. See also secularism

Laitin, David D., 151, 154

Lakoba, Nestor, 174

Land rights, 225–226, 230

Langhorne, Richard, 24

Larrea, Ana María, 291, 292

Larrea, Fernando, 291, 292

Latifi, Veton, 157, 158

Latin America: xviii, 15, 16, 65, 72, 80, 81, 281, 293; Movements, 283

Latvia, 30

Laue, Robert, 14

Law: common, 267; Buddhist property, 141–42; customary, 284, 286; Islamic, 265–269, 272; native, 267

Lawrence, R., 25

League of Nations, 173

Lebanon: 5, 16, 115, 185, 187, 196, 301, 304–05; Beirut: 5, 185, 188, 197, 304

Ledeneva, Alena, 173

Leftwich, Adrian, 273

Lerner, Daniel, 87

Levine, Armando, 83

Levitsky, Steven, 287

Liberalism: 261; and liberalization: economic, 251–253, 269; political, 254, 269, 273

Liberation War Services, 226–228

Liberia, 244, 246, 250, 254, 260, 261, 271, 272

Lisitsian, Stepan, 173

Litan, R., 25

Liu, J.H., 204, 206

Localization, 99

Loimeier, Roman, 272

London, England, 79

Loplyk, 101

Lowenthal, David, 185, 189

Lukes, Steven, 6

Lyons, T., 203

Macas, Luis, 290

Macedonia, 12, 303; Bitola, 150, 158, 161; ethnicity, 154, 159

Machel, G.M., 203

Machel, Samora, 212

MacMillan, John, 273

Madrasa, 271

Madrid, Spain, 79

Mahjoub, A., 205

Majoritarian rule, 15, 152

Malaysia, 5, 126

Mali, 261, 263, 269, 271

Mann, Michael, 173, 179

Manning, C., 203, 204, 214

Mannoni, Octave, 44

Marginalization of children, 208

Marriage: cleric, 131, 134–36; inter-, 156

Mars, Gerald, 173

Marshall, J., 211

Marshall, Monty, 261

Martin, Terry, 172, 174, 175

Marx, Karl, 76

Marxism, 28, 247

Masud, Khalid, 80, 87

Mauritania, 261

Mauritius, 248

Mayan movement, 71, 301

Mazurana, D., 208, 209

Mbeki, 247

McAllister, Carlota, 72

McGrew, Anthony, 24

McKay, S., 208, 209

McMullin, J., 204, 206, 207

McNeal, Dewardic, 107

Mecca, 82, 87, 98

Medes, 114

Media: and public Islam, 85; censorship, 104

Meeker, Michael E., 84

Mehmeti, Kim, 156

Memmi, Albert, 57

Memory: collective, 33, 187, 193–94, 304–05; cultural, 190, 194

Menchú Tum, Rigoberta, 68, 70

Mengisteab, Kidane, xviii, 15, 293, 300, 306

Mengistu, 246, 247, 249

Mestizo, xv, 307

Middle East, xv, 312

Migration, 30, 66, 68, 75

Migration, international, 9, 93

Milchin, Vladimir, 160, 161

Military: demobilization of, 179, 204, 207, 209, 210, 222, 300; regime, 259, 263–64, 267, 284; training of, 212, 231, 233; volunteerism in, 44–45

Milosevic, Slobodan, 17

Milosevic’s Socialist Party, 152

Misk, Zeina, 188

Mobilization: 288, 294; internet, 10

Mobutu, 246

Modernity: xvii, 18, 64, 73, 80, 185–186, 192, 196–197, 311; and modernization, xix, 7, 8, 12, 13, 28, 80, 270, 272

Modular self, 82–83

Mohammed, General Murtala, 267

Moldova, 174

Mona-rudao, 48, 51

Mondlane, Eduardo, 212

Monks, Buddhist, 16, 303

Monks, Sŏn, 135, 136

Morales, Evo, 288, 290

Mormons, 284

Morocco, 79, 82

Moscovici, S., 212

Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), 221

Movement Towards Socialism (MAS), 289–90

Movements: social, 3, 28, 31, 34, 36, 76, 106, 281–83, 287, 290–92

Moyo, MP, 225, 231

Mozambique, 203, 16, 251, 252

Mudenda, MP 236

Mueller, John, 151, 273

Mugabe, Robert, 16, 221, 222, 227–28, 236, 305

Muhajeers, 171

Mujuru, Mr., 236

Mukhlisi, Yusupbek, 107

Mukt’aek, Kuk, 136

Multiculturalism, 30–31

Munyoro, MP, 231

Murga Armas, Jorge, 284

Museveni, Yoweri, 247

Muslim consciousness, 80

Muslim transnationalism, 102

Muslims: 9, 10, 11, 302; Chinese, xv, 302, 303; Shiite, 5, 304

Naegele, Jolyon, 155, 158, 158, 159, 160

Naimark, N. M., 36

Namier, Lewis, 245

National Assembly, 137–138

National Indigenous and Campesino Committee (CONIC), 69, 74

Nationalism: 25, 29, 56, 99, 114, 171, 244, 249, 289; Chinese, 98, 103; Kurdish, xv; Muslim, 99, 101–03, 125; revolutionary, 223

Nation-state: 10, 29, 31, 34, 75, 173, 248; sovereignty of, 24–25, 27; modern, 28, 111; post-, 17, 18

NATO, 27, 94, 117, 118, 119, 178

Nelson, Diane M., xv, 64, 301

Networks, social, 2, 3, 156, 190, 192, 300, 304

Nextie, Muarem, 160

Nguema, Macias, 246

Niger, 261, 263, 270, 271

Nigeria, 244, 246, 249, 252, 261, 269

Njekesa, MP, 235

Nkomo, Minister John, 228

Nkrumah, Kwame, 247

NKVD Colonel Gvishiani, 168

Nodia, Ghia, 175, 179

Northern Ireland, 167

Nuba, 246

Nyerere, Julius, 247

Nzarabeyani, Mr., 235

Obasanjo, General Olusegun, 263, 267, 268

Oberschall, Anthony, 34, 151

Ocalan, Abdullah, 116–117

Oglesby, Liz, 66

Okafor, Obiora, 250

Olson, Mancur, 34

Olukoya, Sam, 266

Olzak, S., 34

Oodua People’s Congress (OPC), 265

Open Society Institute, 160

Ordanoski, Saso, 157

Order, Chogye, 131, 135, 140, 141–42, 143

Ordinance, temple, 132, 133, 134, 141

Orellana, Halkyer, 286

Organization for the Liberation of Ui-ghurstan, 107

Organizations, Islamic, 271

Orientalism, 87

Oromo Liberation Front, 250

Ortiz Crespo, Santiago, 291, 292

Ottoman Empire, 84, 86, 115, 170

Overconformity, 6–7

Ozaki, Hotsuki, 54

Pachakutik, 288–91

Pakistan, 88, 101, 109, 126

Palestine: 5, 17, 126; Palestinians, 9, 10

Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), 5

Park, Pori, xv, 16, 303

Participation, political, 83, 227, 260, 271–72, 281

Party of Democratic Action, 152

Pashu, General Insan Nuri, 115

Patriotic Society (PSP), 288

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), 121, 123

Peace accords: Dayton, 16; Oslo, 5

Peace: durable, 5, 13, 15, 16, 18; building, xvii, 2, 4, 14, 300; enforcement of, 14; keeping, 13, 14, 27; making, 13, 18

Pensions, war, xvii, 16, 221, 227, 305

People’s Democratic Party (HADEP), 117, 118

People’s Liberation Army, 98, 108

People’s Police, 108

Peoples: displaced, 197–198; indigenous, 31, 64, 67, 281, 282, 283,285, 287, 289, 291, 293, 307; indigenous Abkhazes, 169; indigenous Taiwanese, 7

Percy, Charles, 188

Perlmutter, Amos, 86

Peru, 293, 307

Petar, Orthodox Bishop, 160

Peteet, J., 206

Petruseva, Ana, 156, 158

Phillipines, 43

Piga, Adriana, 270, 272

Pino-sappo, 49

Pino-waris, 49

Pinto,Paulo G., 82

Piscatori, James, 87

Pitcher, A., 204

Pluralism: 30, 103, 265, 269, 282, 303;legal, 283–287

Pol Pot, 17

Poland, 80, 81, 175

Political Detainee Bill, 233–234

Political: economy, 172, 177, 179; parties, 281, 282, 287–91; representation 300

Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the People (IPSP), 289–90

Pŏmlin, Kim, 133, 137

Pŏmsul, Ch’oe, 133

Pongmo, Chŏng, 136

Pongong, Pak, 136

Portugal, 212

Post-colonialism, 9, 29, 57,131, 271

Primordialism, 11, 12, 25, 26, 33, 46, 110, 149–52,154, 248, 264, 304

Pritchard, Ellie, 156

Privatization, 176, 177, 186

Protectors, dharma, 136

Protestant fundamentalism, 80

Public Islam, xv, 80–1, 83, 302

Purification, 97

Putin, Vladimir, 180

Qing government, 96, 97

Quijano, Anibal, 44

Quispe, Felipe, 289, 290

Rabushka, Alvin, 153

Racism, 155, 292

Radcliffe, Sarah, 291

Radio Free Asia, 104

Rage, 204, 214, 216

Ramirez, F.O., 211, 215

Rapoport, David C., 36

Rationalization, 173, 282

Rebellion: Musha, 7, 43–60; Tunceli, 116

Reconciliation, 6, 14, 17, 206, 208

Reconstruction: African 243, 259; political, 2–3, 18, 305; measures of, 4, 6

Reichmuth, Steohan, 271

Reintegration, xvii, 16, 206, 207, 210, 215, 305–06

Relations, Hindu-Muslim, 11, 84; Taiwan-Chinese, 53

Remaking Guebuza, 203

Reminjse, Simone, 66, 69–70, 72–73

Republic of Georgia, 9, 167, 170, 172–81, 304

Revolution: French, 85; Haitian, 46; Mozambique, 212; Rose, 180

Rhodesia, 213

Richard the Lionhearted, 115

Ridolfo, Kathleen, 127

Riza, Sheikh Sayyid, 116

Roberts, Kenneth M., 287, 290

Robertson, Graeme, 270

Robertson, R., 25

Rodrigues-Sarmento, Manuel Maria, 212

Rokkan, Stein, 29

Rose, Richard, 270

Rosenau, James N., 17

Ross, M.H., 206

Rothchild, Donald, 246

Rothman, David, 14

Roy, Olivier, 87

Rudelson, Justin Jon, 100, 108

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, 247

Ruiz Hernández, Margarito, 292

Rushkoff, Douglas, 106

Rusi, Iso, 150

Russia, 9, 30, 167, 170–73, 175–81, 304

Rwanda, 17, 244, 246, 254

Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), 250

Saakashvili, Mikheil, 180

Saha, L., 211

Said, Abdul A., 31

Saladin, 115

Salih, Kamal Osman, 246

Salman, Ton, 291

Salvatore, Armando, xv, 83, 84, 87, 302–03

Samarasigne, S. W. R. de A., 25

Sangha, Korea, 132

Sangho, Kim, 136

Sani, General Ahmed, 267–268

Sankoh, Fodog, 246

Sao Tome, 261

Saramao, 47

Saudi Arabia, 79, 102, 106

Sauimbi, Jonas, 246

Sawalha, Aseel, xvi, 16, 301, 304

Scheff, T., 209

Scherrer, Christian, 31

Schneider, A.K., 205

Schulze, Reinhard, 80

Schwarz, Benjamin, 245

Scotland, 28

Sectarianism, 82, 195

Secularism, 83–5. See also laicism

Selby, Angus, 221

Senegal, 261, 263, 270, 271

Separatism, Kurdish, 116, 120

Separatists, 94, 98, 101

Serbia, 9, 150, 152, 157, 303

Serbian Democratic Party, 152

Settlements, war, 5, 15

Shambambeva-Nyandoro, Mr., 231

Shame, 214

Shapiro, R., 25

Sharaf Khan Billisi, 115

Sharia, see law, Islamic

Sharrarah, Waddah, 197

Sheikh Mahmud Barzinji, 120

Sheikh Said, 115

Shepsle, Kenneth A., 153

Shevardnadze, Eduard, 177

Shovel massacre, 176

Sibanda MP, 231

Sierra Leone, 244, 246, 250, 254, 255, 259, 260, 261, 263, 271

Silj, Alessandro, 150

Silver, Beverly J., 66

Simmel, Georg, 7, 11–12, 308

Simmons, Luiz R., 31

Singapore, 126

Sinhalese, 303

Sino-Muslims, 94

Smelser, Neil J., xiv, 8, 25, 34, 302

Smith, Mark A., 106

Smith, Valerie, 194

Smith, Zeric K., 273

Snyder, Jack, 151

Socialization, xvii, 11, 215

Society, segmentary, 7

S kjin, Im, 136, 141

Solidarity, 80, 81

Solidere, 185, 188, 191

Solnick, Steven, 177

Somalia, 244, 254, 255

Sorel, Georges, 299

South Africa, Republic of, 6, 17, 126, 213, 247, 255, 306

South America, 307

South Korea, xv, 16, 46, 131–32; US Military Government, 134

Southeast Asia, 273

Southern African Development Community (SADC), 255

Soviet Union, 9, 28, 113–14, 126, 132, 173, 304

Spivak, Gayatari, 76

Sri Lanka, 9–10, 79, 303

Stalin, Joseph, 168, 174

Stansfield, Gareth, 123

Starn, Orin, 286

State: building, xvii, 15–16, 177, 243, 244–50, 252, 254, 255, 269, 293, 300, 306–07; capacity, 180, 264, 265, 269, 274; failed, 29, 126; intervention, 132, 286; state-society relations, 246; unitary structure, 249; modern, 203, 261, 269; Zamfara 267–268, 272

Stavenhagen, Rodolfo, 283, 284

Stein, H.F., 205

Stein, Jeff, 84

Stephan, Alfred, 270

Stinchcombe, Arthur, 179, 180

Strike Hard, 101

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP), 253, 287

Sudan, 244, 246, 249, 254, 255

Suharto, President, 82

Sulaiman, Sadek, 85

Sulaymaniya incident, 119

Sŭngman, Yi, 132, 134–36, 138–39, 142

Sŭnim, Hyobong, 141

Sunni Muslim, 113

Suny, Ronald, 170, 172, 174, 175, 177

Sykes-Picot Agreement, 119

Syria, xv, 9, 113, 117, 171, 303

Tabad, Jad, 187

Tadjikistan, 174

Tahan, 190

Tai, Kuo-hui, 46, 49, 53

Taiwan, 94, 103, 301

Takasago Volunteer Army, 54, 56

Talabany, Jalal, 120–121, 123

Taliban, 107

Tamils, 9–10, 303

Tanaka, Martin, 287

Tanzania, 247, 269, 306

Tarim Basin, 100

Tarrow, Sydney, 12, 34

Taylor, Scott, 160

Teski, M.C., 206

Tewao-rudao, 48

Theories of mobilization, 34

Theory: constructivism, 11, 12, 149–51, 152, 153, 154; democratic peace, 273; ethnic competition, 11–12; instrumentalism, 149–151,152, 154; liberal political, 28; secularization, 28; social movement, 12; sun, 116

This Days News, 266

Three Jewels Monestary, 135

Tibet, 94, 99, 107

Tigray People’s Liberation Front, 247

Tilly, Charles, 33, 35

Tobach, E., 207

Togo, 254, 261, 263, 271

Torres, Víctor Hugo, 291, 292

Totalitarianism, 180

Toure, Sekou, 247

Tourism, 99,103, 185, 192, 195

Toynbee, Arnold, 86

Transcaucasian Federation, 174

Transitional Administrative Law, 122

Transnational Muslim politics, 87

Transnational organizations, 17, 18, 27–28

Treaty of Lausanne, 115, 120

Treaty of Sèvres, 115, 120

Trendle, Giles, 185

Trippner, 96

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph, 45–46, 52

Truman Doctrine, 118

Tsutsiev, 174

Tuhwan, Kim, 137

Turkestan, 98, 102. See also East Turkestan Republic

Turkey, 9, 82, 85, 93, 102, 108, 112, 171, 303

Tutsi, 245

Ubeydullah, Sheikh, 115

Uganda, 244, 246, 254, 270

Ujaama, 247

Ulama, 84–85

Ululu, Vincent, 212

Umar, M. Sani xvii, 15, 36, 293, 300

Umar, Muhammad, 271, 272

Union of Islamic Courts, 254

Union of Writers, 168

United Nations, 15, 27,121, 126, 156, 179, 209

United Revolution Front of Eastern Turkestan, 107

United State Institute of Peace, 208

United States, 8, 9, 32, 85, 114, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 254, 303

Uno, Toshiharu, 47

Unthinkability, 45–46, 47, 58, 76

Urban, Michael, 177

URNG, 68, 74

Urumqi, 99, 101, 103, 105, 110

Urwin, Derrick, W., 29

US Congressional Research Service, 100

USSR, 168

Uyghur: 101, 102, 302; American Association, 100; Human Rights Coalition, 105; Muslims, 98, 99

Uzbekistan, 101, 102

Vakhidi, Ashir, 107

Vaksberg, Arkady, 177

Van Cott, Donna Lee, xvii, 16, 282, 284, 287, 300, 307

van der Haar, Gemma, 284

van der Veer, Peter, 86

Vanguard newspaper, 266

Varshney, Astok, 11

Veterans, guerilla, 237

Villalon, Leonardo, 270

Vine, Deloria, 33

Vines, A., 213

Violence: xvi, 1, 3, 7, 11, 45, 51, 64, 75, 93, 107, 149, 206, 216, 269, 305; cycles of, xiii, 204; and identity, 3, 26, 204; political, 261, 264, 274; regulation, xiii, xvii, 24, 45, 94, 204, 215, 307–308; social, 35–36; structural, 204; war, 190. See also ethnic cleansing, ethnic violence, genocide, war

Virtual Information Center, 107

Volkan, V.D., 205

Wales, 28

War Veterans Act, 223, 228–32

War Veterans Amendment Bill, 235

War Veterans Association, 228

War Victims Compensation Act, 223–26

War: Angolan civil, 250; Caucasus, 168; civil, 243, 244, 250; Cold, 9, 53, 251, 254; dharma, 132; Gulf, 121; identity, 2; Israeli-Hezbollah, 304; Kurdish civil, 121; Lebanese civil, 185, 186, 196; proxy, 254; World II, 158; Yugoslav, 152. See also Violance

Waris-pino, 58

Warren, Kay, 70

Weber, Max, 282

Website funding, 106

Weidner, H., 28

Weinberg, Leonard, 36

West Africa, 259–260

Western Europe, 8–9

White, Jenny B., 85

Wigdortz, B. H., 103

Wilkins, David E., 33

Williams Jr., Robin, 268

Williams, R. M., 34, 122

Wilson, K.B., 213

Wilson’s Fourteen Points, 115

Wolfe, A., 205

Woodward, Susan L., 151

World Bank, 102,103, 252, 253, 264, 273, 274, 291, 306

Wu, Harry, 102

Xeabaj, 72

Xhaferi, Arben, 159

Xiaoping, Peng, 98

Xinjiang, 94, 100

Xinjiang Producation and Construction Corps, 102

Yang, H., 205

Yashar, Deborah, 283

Yassine, Abdesslam, 82

Yassine, Nadia, 82

Yavuz, Hakan, 84

Yinewai, 97

Yŏp, Hŏ, 133

Yoshimura, 48

Youth Party for Korean Independence, 132

Yrigoyen, Raquel, 283, 284

Yugoslavia, 6, 9, 17, 126, 157, 171, 173, 180

Yusuf, Anwar, 106

Zacuapa, 64

Zaire, 9, 246, 250, 251

Zaman, Muhhammad Qasim, 80

Zambia, 247

ZANLA, 16, 222, 236

ZANU PF, 222, 228

ZAPU, 222

Zartman, William, 13

Zaslavsky, Victor, 177

Zenawi, Meles, 247

Zimbabwe, 16, 300, 305

ZIPRA, 222

Zucconi, Mario, 150

Zur, Judith, 72

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Shattering the Myth

ISLAM

BEYOND VIOLENCE

Bruce B. Lawrence

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*** [Dedication]

TO MIRIAM

COMPANION, CATALYST, CRITIC, AND,

ABOVE ALL, FRIEND

*** [Epigraph]

<quote>
Islam’s middle position can be recognized by the fact that Islam has always been attacked from two opposite directions: from the side of religion that it is too natural, actual, and tuned to the world; and from the side of science that it contains religious and mystical elements. There is only one Islam, but like man, it has both soul and body … For the future and man’s practical activity, Islam means the call to create a man harmonious in his soul and body, and [the call to create] a society whose laws and socio-political institutions will maintain—and not violate—this harmony.

</quote>

<quote>

—’Alija ‘ Ali Izetbegovic, Islam between East and West

</quote>

<quote>

Jihad means ‘‘to insure that the real-world struggles of Muslims for social justice and peace may bear fruit. The ultimate goal of every Muslim is Islam, the state of peace, of submission in the certainty and power of Allah.’’

</quote>

<quote>

—Digital Jihad, an entry for the Activist Resource Center of the Dunya and Cyber Muslim Information host line of the World Wide Web, 26 February 1996

</quote>

*** Contents

List of Illustrations xi

Foreword

Acknowledgments

INTRODUCTION

Islam across Time and Cultures

PART ONE:

european colonialism and its sequels 31

CHAPTER 1

The Three Phases of Modern-Day Islam

CHAPTER 2

Islamic Revivalism: Anti-Colonial Revolt

CHAPTER 3

Islamic Reform: Secular Nationalism

CHAPTER 4

Islamic Fundamentalism: Religious Nationalism

PART TWO:

muslim women and islamic fundamentalism 107

CHAPTER 5

The Double Bind Revisited

CHAPTER 6

The Shah Bano Case

CONCLUSION

Convergent Signposts: Jihad and Corporate Culture

Notes

Bibliography

Index

*** Illustrations

Figure 1. The Muslim world (Africa and Asia) 34

Figure 2. Two veiled women by the sea wall in Tunis.

Photo: Trish O’Rielly, 1985 82

Figure 3. A swimsuit ad with veiled passerby in Tunis.

Photo: Trish O’Rielly, 1985 82

Figure 4. A light moment between the award-winning director Moufida Tlafli and Amel ben Aba, feminist, teacher, and advocate of women’s rights. Photo: Amel ben Aba, 1997 83

Figure 5. The feminist perception of the new family code in Tunisia. Photo: Amel ben Aba, 1997 83

Figure 6. ‘Ali, the major figure in Shi<i veneration. Photo: Iranian Airport Authority, 1996 102

Figure 7. Hussein, ‘Ali’s son and the major martyr of Shi<i veneration. Photo: Iranian Airport Authority, 1996 102

Figure 8. Khomeini’s official portrait. Photo: Iranian

Airport Authority, 1996 103

Figure 9. Khomeini’s tomb mosque. Photo: Iranian Ministry of Culture and Islamic guidance, 1996 103

** Foreword

VIOLENCE is never far from popular assumptions of Muslim politics. Islamists, or Muslim “fundamentalists,” are thought to be single-mindedly pitted against the secular state; suicide bombings and hostage-taking are viewed as a critical, if not the decisive, component of the modern Muslim-Western encounter; and the subordination of women in Muslim societies has acquired the normative status of a cliche. As with all received understandings, there are elements of truth in these formulations, but adequate analysis requires a fuller exploration of the contexts in which Muslim societies have evolved and of the ways they interact with larger economic and political orders. Bruce Lawrence has provided just such an informed interpretation of the contemporary Muslim experience.

For Muslim societies from the eighteenth century onward, as for countless other peoples, the defining event has been the imperialist intrusion of the West and the advent of colonial dependency. The consequences have been manifold: the distortion of economic development and subordination to “global”—that is, Western— trade, investment, and production requirements; the emergence of local bureaucratic elites that, in the name of independence, replicate the nationalist ideological superstructure of the colonizers; the reaction of counterelites that seek to affirm their own claims to power and legitimacy by contesting the bases of political and cultural

“authenticity.” This course of history is scarcely unique to Muslims, and to the extent that they, like others, are buffeted by larger currents, explanations for Muslim political conduct based on such categorizations as “Muslim rage” seem not only reductionist, but also parochial.

If Muslims have been subjected to structural violence like others, the common victims of economic and political hegemonies, they have not, however, lost control over their destinies. Indeed, to grant that they possess agency, the means to respond to the challenges and dilemmas of modern life, is to recognize the analytical and policy significance of what is evocatively called the “Islamic difference.” Although ideologically determined explanations may well end in unhelpful caricatures, Muslim symbols and values have a place in our examination of Muslim politics for they often shape discourse and influence conduct. Muslims do more than simply react; motivated by their own norms and ideas, they routinely reshape their world—and Islam—even as they reshape through interaction the worlds of the postcolonial or, generally, non-Muslim “Others.”

This process, described in the pages to follow, is complex. On the one hand, although the term “Muslim politics” may at first glance appear to suggest uniformity of intent or practice, it is grounded in the assumption of variability and change. Circumstances affect the contours of that politics, and Lawrence’s explanations for the particular states of affairs in Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, and Malaysia, among other cases, are compelling. Yet, on the other hand, there are broadly shared characteristics, notably the manipulation of symbolic resources and the permeability, even volatility, of boundaries. Women, to a large extent, have emerged at the core of politics in Muslim societies because they have been invested, or have invested themselves, with the representation of “Islam.” They become the bearers of cultural orthodoxy, the very symbol of the faith and purity of the community. However, the production and maintenance of this symbol, like others, is an intensely political act that speaks directly to—at times sustaining but often subverting—established hierarchies and approved codes of social conduct. Thus, contention over the status, legal and otherwise, of women in Muslim societies both delineates and challenges the boundaries of public morality.

Negotiations are a constant feature of the Muslim landscape, but a more visible aspect is protest, whether it be against colonial or neocolonial power, the dominant local state apparatus, the religious establishment, or the prevailing economic system. In a sense, this focus on negotiation almost naturally flows from the fragmentation of authority that marks Muslim societies today. Political and religious bureaucracies, officially sanctioned ‘ulama or religious authorities, Islamist movements, urban intellectuals, Sufi orders—all present in Lawrence’s study—represent the range of competitors for the mantle of defender of the faith. Their very competition spurs a sense of discontent with the status quo and the search for alternative futures. But Professor Lawrence refines our understanding of the dynamics of protest by noting the importance of timing and sequence, placing protest into a historical framework that distinguishes among revivalist, reformist, and fundamentalist phases.

Revivalists were preindustrial and overwhelmingly Sunni, responding to a potent combination of direct European intervention, disruptions to traditional trade, demographic shifts, and agricultural decline and finding a cushion of sorts in the reaffirmation of Islamic identity and values. Reformers, who formed an intellectual elite and were the product of the colonial presence, adapted to the nationalist and ideological legacies of the West and saw them as compatible with Islam. Whether they acknowledged it or not, they found in these Western ideas a rival standard to that of the divine text. It is thus no surprise that, from the 1970s, fundamentalists have sought to right the imbalance and to wrest power, and therefore the control of authenticity, away from the “modernists.” Structural realignments of global economic, political, and military power provide the context in which these protest movements hope to overcome the interconnected senses of vulnerability and cultural outrage and to achieve empowerment.

We come full circle, then, to the specter and reality of violence. Although not all fundamentalists have the same goals and adopt the same strategies, it is obvious that many deploy directly confrontational means in their assault on the mighty state or what they regard as the neoimperialist West. But, as Lawrence acutely observes, other voices, whether from Bosnia or from Malaysia, are beginning to be heard as well, and basic concepts are being redefined in the direction of pluralism. The current debate over whether Islam is compatible with democracy turns in large part on whether Islamic

values and symbols are seen as evolving and flexible or as definitive and unyielding. Lawrence’s argument in this regard is subtle and penetrating. Muslims, particularly Muslim women of course, face economic underdevelopment within their own societies and marginalization in the high-technology global economy; even the oil-rich Gulf states are disadvantaged in their reliance on Western technology and science. However, just as economic and political need provided the engine for change in the past, so too now the concept of jihad, long reviled in the West as a sign of Muslim aggressiveness, has emerged in some quarters as an internal challenge to Muslim societies. Despite what fundamentalists may say, the real struggle of the modern world is against economic dependence, and rather than seeing neocapitalist corporate culture as a sterile conformity with, or capitulation to, the global hegemon, some recognize that striving toward that culture— jihad—is consistent with evolving Islamic norms of economic responsibility and social justice. As Muslims accept that accommodationism of this kind is both necessary and desirable, space may well be created for tolerance between Muslims and others—but, perhaps more importantly, among Muslims themselves—and the cause of pluralism advanced.

The challenge in evaluating the manifold dimensions of contemporary Islam is to accord analytical respect to the evolving normative code while avoiding the overdeterminism sometimes implicit in notions of religious politics. Muslims, we often forget, do not always act as Muslims or as members of a religious community; rather, they respond to economic, social, and political needs that may direct conduct more than ideological signposts do. Yet, at the same time, the “world view” or imagination of Muslims remains a renewing source of guidance in a world undergoing bewildering transformations. Bruce Lawrence’s distinguished contribution is to demonstrate a balance of perspectives that is instructive, and to alert us to the salutary effects that an Islamic difference can make.

<right>

James Piscatori

</right>

<right>

Dale F. Eickelman

</right>

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Yet neither Miriam nor anyone else is responsible for the use to which I have put their generous gifts of time and thought. For over twenty years I have continued to reflect on the complexity of contemporary Muslim life. I remain perplexed at its diverse norms, but I also remain in awe of its persistent values. This book mirrors my ongoing engagement with Islam and with Muslims. Its errors, like its judgments, remain mine; both are but the latest way station in a lifelong journey.

** Introduction: Islam Across Time and Cultures

MY MAIN argument is simple, yet it is at odds with most popular and academic understandings of Islam. I argue that Islam cannot be understood except as a major and complex religious system, shaped as much by its own

metaphysical postulates and ethical demands as by the circumstances of Muslim polities in the modern world. The last two hundred years have witnessed challenge upon challenge, from colonial subjugation to sporadic revivalism to elitist reform movements to, most recently, pervasive struggles with fundamentalism or Islamism. During each phase, Muslims have had to address internal tensions as well as external threats. The success of anticolonial struggles was followed by the disappointment of indigenous neocolonialisms. More recently, postcolonial Muslims—some Arab, most non-Arab—have been playing ever greater roles in economic changes, both regional and global. As the impact of these changes has become evident on societies everywhere, they have propelled new actors into public view. The most remarkable new presence is that of Muslim women.

In what follows I argue that the experience of Muslim women, above all, calls for a more nuanced approach to Islam and global change. It is time to counter negative stereotypes about Muslim women with knowledge about their newly constituted roles.

Yet few books attempt to synthesize data from regionally separate and geographically discrete countries with a majority Muslim population. Where such an effort has been made, it is usually through multiauthored or edited volumes that belie the very coherence suggested by their titles. While I do offer an in-depth study of one pivotal judicial saga, from India, I have otherwise drawn together data provided by others in order to demonstrate (a) that Islam is not inherently violent and (b) that the longer view of Muslim societies offers hope, rather than despair, about the role of Islam in the next century.

This book offers three convergent foci: the crystallization of Islamic sociopolitical movements, women as the key index of Muslim identity, and finally the staging of new global economic developments that bode an unexpected Muslim difference in world affairs.

The Muslim difference will remain hidden, its force unacknowledged, unless the dominant stereotype is exposed: Islam is not violence, nor are Muslims intrinsically prone to violence. The stereotype amounts to a slur, and it must

be addressed at the outset if the emerging profile of postcolonial Muslims is to be understood.

*** Islam Beyond Violence

Islam is ... Islam is ... Islam is ... Islam is many things. Just as there is no single America or Europe or the West, a seamless caption etching diverse groups and persons with the same values and meanings, so there is no single place or uniform culture called Islam. There is no monolithic Islam. There is a Muslim world spanning Africa and Asia. It is as pluralistic as the West, outstripping both Europe and America in the numerous regions, races, languages, and cultures that it encompasses. The Afro-Asian Muslim world is also internally pluralistic, containing multiple groups who might be said to represent Islamic norms in each Muslim country. And Muslims themselves are aware of how necessary, and how difficult, it is to specify differing notions of Islam. An Indonesian friend of mine once quipped: “There are three Islams: the popular Islam which anthropologists are fond of studying, mostly as curious spectators; the public Islam with which political scientists, journalists, and policy makers identify, mostly as adversaries; and the academic Islam in which Orientalists delight, whether as art historians, linguists, or religion scholars, each studying artifacts esteemed by their guild. In Indonesia we try to provide our visitors with all three.”[1]

If Islam is so diverse and Muslims so accommodating, then why has Islam so often been viewed by non-Muslims as alien at best and violent at worst? I suggest that the principal reason for the negative view of Islam is the predominance in popular thinking of the second view: public Islam. In that view, Islam emanates from a hostile, “Arab” Middle East. Most journalists, and many policy makers, continue to discount any but Arab Islam, or what is conjured up as Arab Islam in projecting the orthodox face of puritanism and militancy. In the 1990s most Euro-American journalists continue to echo the sentiments that drove European kings and their subjects to launch their crusades almost a millennium ago, crusades whose enemy was Arab Muslims. In the aftermath of the Cold War the enemy, once again, has become the one Islam, the militant, unyielding, violent face of “Arab” Islam. Whether one picks up a popular book claiming to represent “Western cultures and values” under attack from Islam,[2] or lead articles of The

New York Times, such as the recent “Seeing Green: The Red Menace Is Gone. But Here’s Islam,”[3] the message is the same: Islam is one, and Islam is dangerous.

The Muslim enemy is invariably male, whether a foreign warrior conjured from the past or a potential terrorist stalking modern America. The fierce Kurdish anti-Crusader Salah ad-din Ayyubi, known popularly as Saladin, seems to have multiple contemporary look-alikes. Whether it is Ayatollah Khomeini denouncing the United States as the Great Satan or the Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman plotting to bomb the World Trade Center and other New York public buildings, Muslim leaders continue to be newsworthy principally for their adversarial words and deeds.

Behind the hostile Muslim men, Americans imagine the faces of Muslim women, homebound creatures marked alike by seclusion from the outside world and apparent oppression by their tyrannical husbands. The reality of Muslim women’s active participation in their societies is glossed, covered, as it were, by a veil that projects the violence of male “Arab” Muslims everywhere. They hate the West and abuse their women.

Both images depend on singularizing Islam and then describing it as both different and violent. That stereotype remains remote from Islam as lived experience. Popular Islam is more than just the remote village or exotic domain of anthropologists. It is also the shared notion of a world view and a pattern of living that characterizes most Muslims in Asia and Africa. It provides enormous challenges and hopes and satisfactions for Muslim women and for Muslim men. Islam offers all Muslims no fewer possibilities than every major religious tradition offers the women and the men who identify with it.

Because gender imbalance pervades both popular understanding and Muslim historiography, I will call attention to the places where women have been excluded. I will also draw out the implications of their exclusion. How best to weave the multiple levels of women’s history and their interests into a narrative that also takes account of macropolitical changes has not been an easy task. I have decided to do a separate section on women’s history for

three countries—Iran, Pakistan, and Egypt—in order to show how different that history looks from the “standard” history I provide in the earlier analyses of these same countries. While the preponderance of dates given in country chapters highlights male actors, it is the significant dates for women that highlight chapter 5, where I explore the double bind of Muslim women in the current period of Islamic fundamentalism. In chapter 6 I limit analysis to one nonMuslim country and one famous court case, that of Shah Bano in India. The Shah Bano case is important for India but also for its Muslim majoritarian neighbors, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Since these three polities govern the largest number of Muslims in the world, I have tried to demonstrate how the Shah Bano case discloses the juridical structures that define, and also restrict, the public opportunities for Muslim women throughout the Asian subcontinent.

To some, the arrangement of chapters might seem to perpetuate the perverse axiom “equal but separate” as applied to women in general and Muslim women in particular. My intent has been the opposite: to argue for the inclusion of a perspective on Muslim women that complicates the standard interpretation of Muslim norms and values, at the same time that it does not obscure the prevalence of violence as a condition that affects both Muslim men and Muslim women, in much of Asia and Africa but also in Europe and America.

Why do I begin with violence? Because violence is where most non-Muslims begin to think about Islam, especially if they live in a society where Muslim citizens are either silent or absent. In some cases, Muslims are too few to be properly viewed as multiple rather than singular in their outlook. Such is the case with America in the mid-1990s, where popular attention focuses on Louis Farrakhan and his message of hatred as if that messenger speaks for most Muslims as well as many African American males.[4]

Though there are episodes in which Muslims, like members of any contemporary religious community, do commit violence, and though there are other Farrakhans in the world outside the United States, violence remains an aberration rather than the norm. Violence is no more intrinsic to Islam than to Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, or Sikhism. The distorted link of Islam to violence has to be brought into the full light of critical enquiry.

It is to restore balance to the popular Euro-American understanding of Islam and Muslims that I begin my foray into recent Muslim history by focusing on violence. Violence fully exposed can illumine how Islamic rhetoric and symbol function for Muslim leaders and institutions. If violence pervades Muslim public life throughout this century, it is because violence pervades the world order, old and new. It affects all Muslims indirectly, but it has a direct and immediate impact on those who are marked as Muslim political figures.

Take, for example, ‘Alija Izetbegovic. The president of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Izetbegovic provides the first epigraph for this book. “Islam,” in his view, “means the call to create a person harmonious in body and soul, and [the call to create] a society whose laws and socio-political institutions will maintain—and not violate— that harmony.” Why Izetbegovic? Because he has lived during a period of unprecedented turmoil for himself and for his countrymen. The Cold War ended abruptly in 1989, yet the promised new world order did not emerge, at least not in Bosnia. Izetbegovic, however, continues to struggle as an East European Muslim who refuses to parochialize Islam or to advocate a defensive Islam against an offensive West. Izetbegovic exemplifies the crucial, transregional scope of impulses to locate Islam within rather than against global processes.

Who is Izetbegovic? Except for his dour countenance flashed from time to time on CNN, he remains little known to most Americans or Europeans. Yet he is an intellectual turned activist. Neither Arab nor Asian nor African, he is fully European. His being European calls into question the standard set of equivalents attached to religious affiliations that tend to frame Islam as Afro-Asian, Christianity as Euro-American. A lawyer and a philosopher, Izetbegovic is conversant with the major intellectual and social challenges of this century that originate from the so-called West, that is, the nation-states of Europe (and America) located to the west of Bosnia.[5]

To some Izetbegovic might well be dubbed a “violent” Muslim, since violence forms part of his world view and he does not flinch from its consideration in his writings. But he views physical violence, including military confrontation, as a last resort only, a counterforce to others’ violence. What he advocates is

a defensive, not an offensive, resort to violence: violence to achieve a more harmonious political-social order. In Bosnia, and elsewhere, Izetbegovic seeks a pluralist polity where Islam becomes not the preemptive religion but the pragmatic middle way, a modus vivendi between remnants of the formerly Communist East and the emerging European Union, with its global allies.

Yet violence of another kind does loom large, casting its dark shadow over Izetbegovic's Bosnian homeland, as it does over the destiny of most Muslims in most parts of the globe at the end of the twentieth century. It is a structural violence that reduces the range of choice for European, as for African and Asian, Muslims. It is a structural violence that restricts the options for Muslim nationstates in a post-Cold War world, but it also does something far more subtle and consequential: it victimizes Muslim intellectuals by imposing limits on discourse about Islam at the end of this century. It talks about some other, in this case Muslim others, but never talks from a perspective that is self-critical about location (Euro-American) and time (end of a century).

But which century is ending? It seems obvious, almost banal, to state "the twentieth century" because we take it for granted as our century. We presume the Christian century as a universal time gradient, though there is also a new Muslim century (the fifteenth) that is only in its second decade. Most persons calculate "real" time only by the Christian calendar, and that is fitting since the century that is coming to an end in the year 2000/2001 is a supremely Christian century. The common calendar reflects the axis of global power: the twentieth century belongs to Christian nations or to "secular" nations with a residual Christian ethos or a majority of Christian citizens. Muslim players have been few and peripheral. This century, more than any that preceded it, will be remembered and portrayed as the Euro-American century. And it is against that backdrop of taken-for-granted hegemony, a kind of blind structural violence writ large, that the relationship of Islam to violence needs to be reconsidered.

Izetbegovic, alert to French science, British history, and Russian literature, able to cite Freud, Marx, Engels, and Buber with equal ease, should be in the so-called Western camp: both by training and by disposition he is a Muslim modernist. The first of two epigraphs for this book was taken from his major

theoretical writing published in 1984, long before the debacle of 1991 in ex-Yugoslavia. Yet already Izetbegovic felt himself beset by enemies. Despite being an eclectic pluralist broadly engaged in the scholarly tradition of modern Europe, he asserts (a) that Islam is under attack and (b) that Islam under attack is always split into two Islams, one etherialized as religion, the other demonized as politics.

Izetbegovic rejects the dichotomization, which amounts to the demonizations, of Islam. He acknowledges the link between Islamic rhetoric and some acts of political violence, but he stops short of making Islam either the primary cause or the principal motivation for violence. Instead he tries to project and preserve the Islamic middle ground or middle way. He also tries to restore Muslim intellectuals to a role of mediation in charting the future for Muslim polities and the Muslim world as a whole.

In what follows I will try to chart my own middle way, steering between the twin minefields of apologetics and polemics. While no one can deny that some Muslims perpetrate acts of violence, I will attempt to show how the variability of Islam permits not one but several Muslim responses to violence: loyalty to Islam may be invoked as easily to avert cyclical violence (as in the case of Izetbegovic) as to pursue violent confrontation in the name of Allah. Nor is such variability unique to Islam; it is shared by other religious traditions—Hindu, Buddhist, or Sikh—that also share with Islam the experience of being shaped by a Christian century, one stamped by “the West” in its colonial and now postcolonial configurations of public space and institutions.

To disconnect the equation of Islam with violence, I will employ a double stratagem. The first stratagem will be definitional: I will explore how Islam is more than what is commonly presupposed as religion. In the deepest sense, Islam remains a religion, since those who profess belief in Allah and in Muhammad as His final prophet are marked with a distinctive set of rituals and laws. Yet Islam is also a modern ideology subordinated to the dominant ideology of this century, nationalism, and it is the relationship of Islam to nationalism that is at once pivotal and understudied.

It is fashionable in some circles to debunk nationalism, and to project either the “end of history”—in Francis Fukuyama’s misguided slogan—or a “coming clash of civilizations”—in Samuel Huntington’s vaporous restaging of postnational, global conflict.[6] A close look at day-to-day affairs, however, suggests both that nationalism is alive in the mid-1990s and that the nation-state is far from obsolete as an instrument of power. As one shrewd observer has lamented, the nation-state remains “the politics of the first person plural.” It coalesces ideological forces precisely because “the sense of being ‘we’ ... is the necessary foundation for any durable political system” and “only the nation-state possesses this necessary sense of identity.” “The nation-state will last longer than most people had thought.”[7] And because most Muslims exist within postcolonial Muslim nation-states, the ubiquitous character of nationalism has to be acknowledged in any discussion of contemporary Islam. At the same time, one must be alert to recall, as Bruce Kapferer has reminded us, that nationalism itself is far from a unitary movement; it reflects much more than European norms, First World values, or elitist experiences.[8]

If my first stratagem is to revisit and redefine basic categories, my second stratagem will be discursive: I will focus on how European colonial powers have used religion in the service of ideology to divide and control major segments of the world, from West Africa to Southeast Asia. The record does not permit blanket condemnation of all legacies from the colonial period, for the modern sector of Muslim societies has produced creative advocates and notable benefits. Yet fifty years after the founding of the United Nations and the near elimination of European control over much of Asia and Africa, one must remain wary of how postcolonial independence has been shaped by the immediate past. The British may have gone home, and the French mission to civilize (la mission civilisatrice) declared a failure, but British and French, as also Dutch and Russian, legacies persist in the Muslim world. Part 2 will explore the durable influence of postcolonialism in specific Muslim nation-states.

I approach this task conscious that I am limited as well as enabled by who I am. I am male. I am Anglo. I am upper middle class. European in ancestry, I was born in America. Raised non-Muslim, I remain non-Muslim. Yet after

studying both the Arabic language and Middle Eastern history from an early age, I remain deeply attracted to Islam as a life force: it animates many Muslims with whom I have lived and worked and whom I count among my closest friends.

While these are ascriptive limits shaping my viewpoint, I am further limited by what I embrace: I choose to be both an intellectual and an unabashed humanist. Despite the many assaults on the humanities from within and beyond the academy, I remain not only a humanist but a late modern humanist.

I am not a postmodernist humanist, however. I continue to scan metanarratives in the pursuit of local histories. I seek patterns that interconnect numerous Muslim histories, whether local, national, or regional, and also link them collectively to global forces. At the same time, I reject the judgment that none but the persons invoked can talk about themselves. In that case, only the words of informants count, and they must be cited as the trump authority, or if one does not cite their exact words, goes the argument, then at the least one must use terms that these same informants would be comfortable having others use.[9]

The Syrian philosopher Sadik al-Azm has exposed the foolhardiness of embracing rank nominalism as a benchmark of scholarship. Rhetorically, he asks: “Were I to take seriously the subjectivist advice of those who ask us never to ‘apply words to describe people that they would not accept and apply to themselves,’ would I ever be able to say that such and such a Middle Eastern ruler is ‘a brutal military dictator,’ considering that he never applies such words and descriptions either to himself or to his regime?”[10]

The evident answer is “NO!” But too often it is a muted or defensive “No!” It needs to be announced again and again as a “NO!” “NO” to relativism, “NO” to delusionary escapism from the interlocking character of late capitalist culture and social movements that relate to it even when they claim to be independent of its influence.

At the same time, I do not advocate the total neglect of other people's self-presentation. It does matter what people say about themselves, the categories they use, the arguments they construct, or the goals they advocate. It does matter what people say, yet as the American religious critic Robert Segal deftly put it, "there is a difference between starting with the actor's point of view and ending with it.... The actor may be right, but the assumption that the actor automatically is right is dogmatic."[11]

Beyond trying to make comparisons through explicit and interdisciplinary categories, I espouse cross-cultural enquiry as a genuine form of academic labor. It is not reducible to the new Orientalism that the feminist critic Gayatri Spivak claims it to be. In Spivak's view, cross-culturalism serves only to perpetuate banality in a postcolonial world,[12] but it can do more: it can also become a pathway to exploratory dialogue that is both interdisciplinary and international.

But cross-culturalism, if it is to generate useful dialogue, must first accept "open appraisal, the typical plausibility tests, the bargaining adjustments regnant in an open pluralist market of ideas." The criteria are set forth by the sociologist Jose Casanova.[13] I advocate the same criteria, and I advocate them as a humanist who is at the same time a perspectivist. In an open pluralist market of ideas, I set out self-consciously what beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions inform my approach to the social reality of the Muslim world.[14] And it is from the perspective of the humanities that I challenge both humanists and social scientists to rethink how their own prior convictions—religious, political, and social—have shaped their approach to contemporary Islam. What units of analysis are suitable to assessing Muslim thought and Muslim societies? What presumptions do some of the taken-for-granted categories carry? How do we account for the difference that they convey from a context that is predominantly Christian and secular to one that is Muslim and often nonsecular?

I begin with the category religion.

*** Islam as Religion and Also Not Religion

<quote>

The history of the twentieth century has confirmed something well known to all the historians of the past, something our ideologies have stubbornly ignored: the strongest, fiercest, most enduring political passions are nationalism and religion.

</quote>

<quote>

—Octavio Paz, One Earth, Four or Five Worlds

</quote>

To unhinge the reflexive stereotyping that plagues too much scholarship on modern-day Muslims, I begin at a point of reference outside the Muslim world but within the so-called Third World. I take as my starting point Octavio Paz, the Mexican Nobel Laureate in Literature. Like many contemporary Euro-American intellectuals, Paz implies not only that religion and nationalism are equivalent passions but also that religion, like nationalism, is an undifferentiated whole that evokes deep-seated political passions. He concurs with the cultural historian Daniel Pick that nationalism is a form of mimetic religion, “involving a kind of faith, indeed something of the aura of ‘religion’ which it arguably both displaces and substitutes.”[15] In that sense, religion can be both opposed to nationalism and allied with it. Yet religion is more than political and it is other than passion; it also entails language, values, and institutions. One cannot begin to compare religion and nationalism without recognizing at the outset that they are very different categories of individual expression and collective experience. While they have been engaged, each with the other, since at least the sixteenth century, Paz argues that it is in the present century that their interrelationship has become most explicit and most dangerous. Why? Because only in the twentieth century did historians for the first time recognize nationalism as evoking a passion equivalent to religion; only then did both become enduring passions—not just enduring, but “the strongest, fiercest, most enduring.”

While religion can be and should be conjoined with nationalism, there remains a deeper, crucial question: Is religion privileged or diluted by being paired with nationalism? The question cannot be avoided, and Paz does give an implicit answer: in the twentieth century religion has been superseded by nationalism. Its influence, defensive and residual, becomes felt to the extent that its advocates can couple their goals with nationalist aspirations, their structures with the administrative, political, and commercial apparatus of the state. In short, for Paz religion can succeed, but it can succeed only when it becomes part of the nationalist agenda.

Yet Paz's notion of religion, never stated, seems restricted to Christianity and at the same time divested of the early modern history of Christian missions. He ignores the role and influence of "colonialism" as the vanguard and often the partner of Christian missions.[16] His notion of religion needs to be expanded beyond its most immediate referent group, Euro-American Christian elites living in the postcolonial era. Few Muslim intellectuals, still facing the legacy of colonialism, juxtapose religion to nationalism as equivalent categories, for Islam still retains a symbolic force independent of nationalism, just as it projects a pragmatic function that can, and often does, challenge nationalist ideologies.

Consider the Muslim intellectual with whom we began this book: Izetbegovic. Religion as a category remains problematic for Izetbegovic precisely because it projects belief as Christian belief unaffected by the historical process that led to European control over much of Asia and Africa. Yet Christian missions and missionaries were married to the colonial project in much of Asia and Africa, even when, as in the case of India, British officials attempted to limit missionary activity in order to curtail civil unrest. Religion can never be neutral when it is controlling or linked to structures that control.

At the same time, religion should have, and does have, political valence apart from the state. The Islamic "difference," in Izetbegovic's view, is to project a holistic world view that invokes religious norms as a corrective to political practices. Religion becomes a vehicle for the redress of public life, not its betrayal, since Islam advocates control—of mind, of body, of space—as an explicit dimension of religion.

Whereas Paz links religion with nationalism, Izetbegovic contrasts religion with worldly gain. Islam, in Izetbegovic's view, escapes the too Christian/European dialectic of religion and nationalism because pure Islam, ideal Islam, is not mere religion: it applies alike to the inner and outer life; it couples belief with action in a single, equal accent. The most palpable site of belief enacted is the mosque. It functions as a place of worship and education. "That is why schools in the Islamic world cannot be classified according to the European criterion: secular-spiritual."[17] They are both spiritual and secular, even as Islam is both other-worldly and this-worldly. The stress is double rather than staged; to believe in the next world is to be engaged in this world.

Yet engagement with this life entails more than educational pursuits; it also requires attention to the pivotal role of politics. Ideal politics are channeled to a higher vision than narrow self-interest. Islam, according to Izetbegovic, should be invoked not for expedient political ends but rather for justice: How then does one serve justice?

<quote>

In principle, force has nothing to do with morality. But in real life, there is no justice without force. Justice is the unity of the idea of equity and power ... the impotence of religion[18] to carry out in practice even a part of the great ideals it preaches, compromises its demands before the humble and the repressed. Violence and politics, on the contrary, have been justified to a certain extent, for they created the means needed for realizing the great ideas which religion had discovered or inspired but could not manage to translate into reality.[19]

</quote>

Though Izetbegovic's view is that of an idealist, his views very closely match those of the Cyber Muslim host line citation that appears, along with his, at the outset of this book: the goal of lived Islam is "to insure that the real-world struggles of Muslims for social justice and peace may bear fruit." In pursuit of his ideals, Izetbegovic went to jail under Tito. Later he was

maligned by both Serbs and Croats for his commitment to a pluralist polity in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He remains a committed exponent of Muslim universalism, seeing Muslims as one group among many, not Islam as a socioreligious orientation superseding others in the civil domain.

Yet, in trying to make Islam more than an exclusionary religion, Izetbegovic overlooks the challenge that nationalism has posed to the autonomy of religious language, religious values, and, above all, religious institutions. Especially in this century nationalism has become a quasi-religion, displacing prior religions. There are several instrumental reasons, such as the emergence of print-capitalism,[20] that help to explain the success of nationalism. But still more important has been the ability of nationalism to provide an alternative vocabulary to religion. Nationalists preempted the public authority of religious leaders and institutions. Beyond the instrumental force of language, one must also calculate the values of nationalist leaders. These values, as I have argued elsewhere,[21] often clashed with those of religious leaders, at the same time that nationalists either undercut or co-opted the resources of religious institutions for their own ends.[22]

Islam—no less than Christianity or Judaism, Hinduism or Buddhism—is shaped by its world historical context, in which nationalism occupies center stage. However much religious symbols may be invoked or religious leaders coopted, or religious buildings sprinkled on the landscape, nationalist fervor remains at heart a rival to the universalist claim of religious fervor. In the twentieth century nationalism and ethnic/regional markings have superseded religion as the hallmark of collective identity. Nationalism does for the modern era what religion did, or tried to do, in the premodern era: to direct the hopes of the majority toward its norms while also engaging their energies in its public life.

The displacement of religion by nationalism on these grounds needs to be closely examined if we are to understand the shifting valence of Islam in the high-tech era. Can religion become an adjunct of the state and still function as religion, or does co-optive nationalism amount to little more than a thinly disguised variant of the secularization hypothesis?

These questions are crucial to any reconsideration of postcolonial Muslim hopes, for behind all the arguments about Islam and politics remains the twinfold assumption that (a) Christianity defines “true” religion, and Islam as religion must, or should, resemble Christian models, and (b) all religion is premodern and antirational while the state is both modern and rational. Assumptions die hard, and the most closely held resist even sympathetic exposure. Underlying the critique of religion in general and Christianity in particular is an evolutionary bias. Religion, whether Christianity or Islam, could not stand the light of scientific truth. When the modern era fully dawned, the superstitious and backward nature of antecedent myths (scriptural dicta, creedal formulae, local magic) became evident, their hold on believers gradually eroded or disappeared. And in those instances where religion did not vanish, it was at least revalued and consigned to its proper domain, which is to say, private spaces of individual choice, far from the public realm of scientific progress and rational pursuits. To the extent that civil society was independent of political society and the state, it provided a haven for belief in, and pursuit of, prescientific myths.[23]

Such is the assumption of evolutionary “believers.” Seldom exposed, their convictions permeate much so-called neutral or objective scholarship on religion. A corollary of evolutionism is also claimed with equal conviction, namely, that societies where religion lingers as something other than a gnostic symbiosis between self and other[24] remain suspect. In the new order heralded by all modernists (and not just liberals), public loyalty to religious precepts connotes what Laroui once called historical retardation. That is to say, religion comes to symbolize a willful resistance to the tidal wave of change that must move the premodern (religion) off center stage in order to propel the modern (nationalism) onto it.[25]

By this approach, there can be good and bad nationalisms but no religious nationalisms since the very phrase “religious nationalism” embodies a logical impossibility, an illusion, an oxymoron.

Major First World nationalisms, according to one widely cited sociological study, can be deduced from the review of five nationstates, all of which have

forged more or less adequate roads to modernity. All are roads to the modern, which is to say, industrial, high-tech era. The dominant trope, the goal to which these and other nationalist polities aspires, is liberal democracy; no other candidate of social organization can be admitted. Religious structures, like religious actors, are omitted, or else defeated, in the great venture of nation-building.[26]

Just as nationalism is deemed to be the exclusive carrier of secular modernity, so is it further presumed that the reason only some countries succeeded in the high-tech era is that only some were able to modernize. Nationalism becomes but one more way of differentiating the modern West from all its precursors, which in the post-Cold War era have also now become its dreaded nemeses. Nationalism cannot be ascribed to any premodern point in the preindustrial past.[27] With nationalism, as with industrialism, all those groups who have not already succeeded can succeed only by mimesis. Nationalism occurred in one place, among those groups prefiguring the high-tech era. They clustered as the nations of Western Europe and North America. All other nations came later. They were compelled by events beyond their control to imitate antecedent Euro-American models. In Richard Falk's haunting phrase, all the non-West was transformed into state-nations hoping to become nation-states,[28] yet destined to flounder and fail.[29] Economic inequality led to despair and often violence, causing the have-nots to drift still farther to the margins of global exchange.

There have been some who question this view of nationalism, but they choose to make their's a rearguard protest. They resist from the margins, as those who acknowledge their powerlessness even while voicing their opposition to the dominant view. The 1980s witnessed the emergence within critical theory of a new generation of Asian and African intellectuals. They challenged extant paradigms of nationalism. In particular, they "opposed much of the prevailing academic practice in historiography and the social sciences because it failed to acknowledge the subaltern (i.e., the indigenous non-elite) as the maker of his [or her] own destiny."[30] Despite excesses and shortcomings, a group of scholars linked to the Asian subcontinent, known as the Subaltern School, has made evident the problem of social scientific assertions about what nationalism means and how it can best be studied. To the centrist, top-down gaze of Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, subaltern scholars counterpose views from the margins or from

the bottom up. To complicate a public-sector, masculine view that excludes women actors or voices, they highlight a private domain where women, along with elders and minors, contribute to postcolonial developments.[31]

Yet even those who oppose a hegemonic, Eurocentric view of nationalism have not thought to restore religion to a place of distinction compatible with other ideological options. The ideal nationalism remains one that enshrines Profit, Progress, and Peace. (The other P's—Poverty, Population, Pollution, and Proliferation—are usually ignored, or else treated as problems that will be solved along the way.[32]) Where is religion in this forward gaze? Religion might relate to Peace: insofar as it either protects or threatens peace, it can be included in the nationalist project, but it is deemed out of bounds on the major subjects of Profit and Progress. Mark Juergensmeyer,[33] for instance, not only has given new life to the term "religious nationalism," he has also argued that religious sensibilities should be conjoined to the nationalist project, where they would serve as a valuable counterweight or deterrent to violent outcomes.

Religion in the national interest? That suggests a return to theocracy, and a nationalist theocracy would attempt to transform history, not merely recuperate and validate a golden past. As Juergensmeyer himself notes about the Iranian revolution, "it was not simply a revival of an earlier form of Muslim rule, but a new form of Islamic politics. In a curious way, it was the shah's vision of an Iranian nationalism come true."[34]

Despite the clarity of Juergensmeyer's thesis, late twentieth-century theocracy frightens most analysts of religion and nationalism. It conjures up particular fear when applied to the case of Islam because ideal Islam, like the premodern Catholic Church, functions as the comprehensive defining code for public as well as private pursuit. While every religion, from a modernist viewpoint, is "bad," to be minimized or better excluded, there remain degrees of exclusion. Islam remains the worst religion, the spoiler for a nationalist utopia. It remains the worst because many scholars argue that no Muslim nation-state, including Turkey and Tunisia, has ever experienced social modernity. Social modernity is linked to the formation of an urban middle class. Turkey since the 1920s may have come close to generating an indigenous secular bourgeoisie, but even Turkey is said to have failed, just as

Tunisia appears to have been stymied by an overgrown urban bureaucracy. Other newer Muslim nations, like Malaysia and Indonesia, are excluded because the general public and even many academics deem them too remote from the Middle East heartland to be considered “real” Muslims.[35]

Yet the historical “failure” of Turkey and Tunisia is minor compared to the ongoing “threat” of Iran. For among all those premodern nations that cling to Islam as arbiter of public norms, Iran stands out as the most glaring culprit. While official Turkey in the 1920s distanced itself from Islamic symbols in trying to emulate European/secular norms, the Iranian revolution of the 1970s threatened to bring Islam from offstage to center stage in the realm of global politics. It posed a twin threat, making Islam central and the West villain. It was against this twin threat of the Iranian revolution—its perceived impossibility, its geopolitical unacceptability—that the dread of Islam’s antiquarian status as antimodern was rekindled. In its most distinctive religious guise, Islamic “fundamentalism” was seen to be inseparable from the undiluted opposition of Muslims to Christian or pluralist influence. In vain could an Izetbegovic try to demonstrate that Islam is already modern, and that a middle class is not the analytical key to its character, for from Iran came a flood of literature suggesting the opposite: Islam can never become modern, not because Muslim countries lack a bourgeoisie, but because Muslims—in this case, Iranian Muslims—themselves invoke religion to perpetuate the continuing, unremitting primitiveness of Islam. The renowned Iranian essayist Jalal Al-i Ahmad speaks for numerous others when he lauds an “Islamic totality”:

<quote>

India reminds one of Africa as a linguistic Tower of Babel and agglomeration of races and religions. Think of South America becoming Christianized with one sweep of the Spanish sword or of Oceania, a collection of islands and thus ideal for stirring up dissensions. Thus only we in our Islamic totality, formal and real, obstructed the spread (through colonialism, effectively equivalent to Christianity) of European civilization, that is, the opening of new markets to the West’s industries. The halt of Ottoman artillery before the gates of Vienna

</quote>

<quote>

concluded a process that began in 732 C.E. in Andalusia. How are we to regard these twelve centuries of struggle of East against West if not as the struggle of Islam against Christianity? ... In the present age, I, as an Asian, as a remnant of that Islamic totality, represent just what that African or that Australian represented as a remnant of primitiveness and savagery I, as an Asian or an African, am supposed to

</quote>

<quote>

preserve my manners, culture, music, religion and so forth untouched, like an unearthed relic, so that the gentlemen can find and excavate them, so they can display them in a museum and say, “Yes, another example of primitive life.”[36]

</quote>

Al-i Ahmad cannot escape the contradiction embedded in his eloquent lament. Though he decries the reification of a Muslim mindset as unchanging, at once anti-Christian, anti-Western, and now antimodern, he, unlike Izetbegovic, perpetuates the mindset that he opposes. He offers no alternative to what he opposes and, by invoking an Islamic totality, confirms the stereotype of European observers, and now their American successors. Al-i Ahmad demonstrates that Islamic obscurantism is not solely the whimsical distortion of colonial administrators and political commentators; it also becomes the project of certain Muslim advocates insofar as they repeat, without modifying, the profile of a primitive and unchanging, a defiant and challenging Islam.

To offset the dialectic of self-other, progressive-primitive that pervades Muslim and anti-Muslim rhetoric alike, we must reveal its tenuous, recent origins; we must not only cite the alternative, modern view of Izetbegovic, which announces a dialectic of accommodation, we must also examine the many faces of Islam that, though less evident, are as real as its one face, the

face of bloclike antagonism, whether to Christians, to the Christian West, or to the post-Christian modern world.

*** The Many Faces of Islam

Though Izetbegovic is right about the ambivalent status of Islam in the late twentieth century—it is too often seen as either sociopolitical or religious but seldom both—his argument still needs to be extended. While Islam is not “mere” religion, it is also more than “mere” religious politics. Islam can be as well a kind of symbolic resource or world view that invites accommodation to other world views, not confrontation with them. Islam as religion, Islam as politics, Islam as world view—all three, and not merely the first two, need to be explored.

Such categorization emerges out of critical reflections on the role of imagination in defining and projecting identity. Imagination is both collective and individual. Collectively imagination is nourished by the institutions of a society; individually it is shaped and reshaped by members of that society. In religious discourse, it is imagination—the ability to play with the material world and its limits, including the too evident limits of love and death—that sustains the conscious advocacy of a range of beliefs and practices deemed to be inseparable from the “real” force of life. Names abound for the Object/Subject of imagination: Yahweh, God, Allah, Other. Let us call it Other. Other is always a transtemporal force; exceeding time, it also exceeds all other human limits. Yet Other also must always be mediated in human discourse and through social institutions. In its most intellectual form it becomes theology, in its most pervasive expression popular religion, and in still another form ideology.[37]

Numerous Muslim apologists who assert that Islam is, above all, religion mean that Islam as religion concerns itself with the practice of imagining the Other, also known as divine revelation. Whether systematic or pragmatic, theological, popular, or ideological, Islam, in their view, is always religion. Even when it assumes a political dimension, Islam expresses a religious impulse. It is the impulse to align the human imagination with the divine imagination, so that social norms and individual conduct are always directed

toward a path already specified. While obstacles on the path may vary, the contours of the path, as also the requirements it imposes on those who would tread it, have not changed. This is the message, for instance, of Muhammad Qutb in his diatribe, Islam: The Misunderstood Religion (1977). Examining all the facets of modern science and European civilization, he summarizes them as embodiments of an age-old pattern of slavery. Islam rejects slavery, slavery of men and women, slavery of whole nations and classes. Since both capitalism and communism, the two ideologies of the modern West, continue age-old patterns of slavery, they must be opposed in the name of Islam. It is only Islam as the “third” way that can provide guidance on the path that will help humankind “get out of the darkness it has long since been plunged in.”[38]

While Muhammad Qutb’s writings do have a political message, the message is implicit rather than explicit: he does not advocate a specific political system nor a set of political reforms. Others do. More than a few modern-day Muslim writers see Islam as preeminently an ideology, that is, “an organized and polarized formulation” of a system that must be equally secular and sacred, encompassing the instrumentalities of politics as well as the pieties of mosque, court, and home. Among those who argue for political Islam is Muhammad Qutb’s older brother, Sayyid Qutb. He is the oft-cited ideologue of Islamic extremism or fundamentalism. A founding figure of the Muslim Brethren in prerevolutionary Egypt, he opposed Nasser when the latter came to power. His opposition led to jail and eventually to the gallows: he was hanged, along with two other Brethren leaders, in August 1966.

But it was not just Nasser whom Sayyid Qutb opposed. Sayyid Qutb opposed Nasser as the advocate and embodiment of Arab nationalism. The true evil was nationalism—whether Arab, Iranian, Turkish, or Pakistani—nationalism as an ideology rivaling Islam. Qutb’s numerous writings gradually came to stress a Manichaean divide: on one side was justice, rule according to the precepts of the Qur’an and Islam, that was the sign of hakimiyya, or divine lordship. On the other side was jahiliyya or opposition to hakimiyya, the willful persistence in ignorance, perversity, and error. It consisted of glorifying any -ism, whether communism or capitalism, scientism or humanism, instead of God. Nationalism became one more Godlessism. Loyalty to it, like loyalty to any other -ism, was false. It was a sign of jahiliyya. The

difference between hakimiyya and jahiliyya was epitomized by Sayyid Qutb in a famous set of slogans that subverts the nationalist agenda. In true Islam, when hakimiyya prevails, according to Qutb, “nationalism will be recognized as belief, homeland as Dar al-Islam, the ruler as God, and the constitution as the Qur’an.”[39]

Yet those who advocate Islam either as an oppositional religion (Muhmmad Qutb) or as religious politics (Sayyid Qutb) reduce Islam to a single platform of protest against the dominant forces of the modern world system. Despite the urgent, impassioned, and often impatient tone of their writings, they do not advance arguments that integrate Islam either with its own past history or with the issues that commonly confront humankind. They too easily elide human imagination with the divine imagination read as divine will. As one shrewd observer of Islamic movements wrote, their advocates make political philosophy shoulder the role of metaphysics: “God’s relevance can only be seen in a political context.”[40]

“Divine” politics is a meaningless concept unless related to history. Raimundo Panikkar, a seasoned cultural critic, was only halfright when he declared that in the modern period “religion without politics becomes uninteresting, just as politics without religion turns irrelevant.”[41] The crucial factor remains historical location, and for contemporary Muslims the most significant dimension of their history is marked by European colonial expansion and consequent anticolonial nationalist movements. One cannot talk about modern Islam without paying attention to the world-transforming activity of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. It was only in the colonial period that nationalist movements involving Muslims first emerged, and the subsequent history of Islam is inseparable from nationalisms both European and indigenous. There are specific turning points in this history that merit recapitulation, if we are to understand why Islam is more often the victim than the agent of violence.

1. Colonial rule gave birth to national movements organized in secular terms with mythical appeals, structural features, and institutional mechanisms that reflected, even when they did not imitate or replicate, the same instruments characteristic of the colonizers’ country of origin. Ethnic nationalism became the primary organizing principle or

symbolic engine to liberation from overseas rule. This was so even when religious symbols were invoked, or religious movements, such as Pan-Islamism, drew sizable numbers of followers. It is crucial not to accept at face value the assertions of Muslim revivalist leaders. For instance, one scholar, after charting the Pan-Islam movement in massive detail from primary sources, concluded that in the 1990s “Pan-Islamists (along with other consociational groups) may well turn a 120-years’ old dream from what seemed a utopia into a political reality.”[42] Yet another scholar, taking a functional view of this same movement, chose to look not at what Pan-Islamists say, but rather at the impact their movement had on subsequent nationalist endeavors. In so doing, he reached a conclusion opposite to the first scholar: not only is there no future to Pan-Islamism, but “the rise of Pan-Islamic sentiments helped to establish the credentials of particularized nationalisms.”[43] Why? Because Pan-Islamic ideologues posed, albeit indirectly, the question of permeable boundaries and drew attention to both ethnic nationalism (qawmiyya) and region-specific nationalism (wataniyya) as alternative polities—alternative not only to European rule but also, more importantly, to the universal Muslim community (umma). Pan-Islamism may conjure the “fear of Islam” yet it itself proved to be a restricted, short-lived movement. The antidote to fear is to look beyond slogans and examine the historical development of a protest movement. Pan-Islamism relies more on ideological accents than on pragmatic strategies. Throughout the twentieth century links among Muslims of different races, regions, and languages remain more rhetorical than pragmatic, signaling a loose affinity of faith, not an actual alliance of forces, whether military or political or both.

2. Islam as a pragmatic referent in organizing social or economic life was denied autonomy under colonial rule, even when certain farsighted elites attempted to forge a link between Muslim and national identity, as did Muhammad Abduh, for instance, in British Egypt. “What had begun as an attempt to protect Islam by reinterpreting it tended to end as a discussion of the possibility of creating a secular society with nationalism as its animating principle, and with Islam as its inherited culture rather than a guide to social action.”[44] The subordination of Islamic ideals and values to political pragmatism continued in postcolonial polities. As a result, Islam remained a reservoir of symbolic dissent, often couched in violent terms, available to marginalized, aggrieved groups.

During the postcolonial period, as political independence was achieved by more and more newly formed Muslim polities, appeals to Islam were slow to garner attention. Whether hidden from European eyes or ignored by indigenous elites, it was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that Islamic rhetoric and Islamic loyalty were brought to the forefront of domestic, regional, and international issues. Nationalism did not provide the panacea for a host of ills and inequities, and Muslim spokespersons began to contend not only with external non-Muslims but also, just as often, with internal, "impure" Muslim others.

Again, there is no uniform view of the "Islamic difference." Even within the ranks of social science, the lack of consensus is evident. Two social scientists concerned with Egypt disagree on how Egyptian elites viewed the ideal postcolonial polity. One German-based political theorist argues that nationalism, like modernization, rules out religion. He cites as proof of this maxim the stance of the nineteenth-century Egyptian Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, for whom "the social was more important than the religious." Al-Tahtawi's neologism hubb al-watan, "love of country," was thoroughly secular, since it conveyed the sense of wataniyya, the Arab(ic) equivalent of patriotism, a concept divorced from religion.[45] But in the view of an American political scientist, it is not al-Tahtawi but another twentieth-century Egyptian theorist, Tariq al-Bishri, who augurs the future stance for his country: neither a secularist nor a fundamentalist but a liberal (of sorts), al-Bishri argues that Arab nationalism cannot omit Islam, while at the same time admitting that Islam cannot be made the sole basis for Arab/Egyptian nationalism. What should be the modus operandi then for Muslims and the state? Islam, according to al-Bishri, should play an instrumental role in fostering what are the primary goals, namely, "independence, cultural authenticity, and political integration."[46] While al-Bishri does not offer his own prescription for an ideal Muslim state, his engagement with Islam is a far cry from al-Tahtawi's vision of a secular state.

3. It is the presence of colonialism that linked all Muslim collectivities, throughout the Afro-Eurasian oikumene, especially in that heavily populated cosmopolitan area south and east of the Mediterranean. There has been an attempt from time to time to isolate Saudi Arabia, as

though what happened on the peninsula was immune from events around it. But it was not, for as Marilyn Waldman has pointed out: “though not all Muslim territories were colonized, nearly all experienced some kind of dependency, be it psychological, political, technological, cultural, or economic

Even in Saudi Arabia oil exploration, begun in the 1930s, brought European (and then American) interference.”[47]

If the colonial experience has a crucial mediating role in the development of the present-day Muslim world, it is a role that commands attention in order to avoid a double myopia. One is the myopia of indigeous elites who claim to be exponents of “true” Islam. To the extent that they ignore the colonial period, except as a reminder of the “defeated” enemy, such elites tend to project their own polities as homogeneous associations, at once natural and voluntary. The other myopia is that of dissidents who claim, on behalf of Pan-Islamic ideology, that there has always been a borderless Muslim nation, that all nation-states are fictive, postcolonial inventions, their leaders impeding the reemergence of the pristine Muslim collectivity, the umma.

The misfortune of recent scholarship is to perpetuate, rather than correct, these reinforcing myopic readings of the Muslim past. There are two dominant social scientific approaches to Islam and nationalism. One offers a straightforward narration of Muslim polities, linking them to each other and not to neighboring or similar non-Muslim polities, as if the mere label “Islam” were sufficient to merit their clustering as a discrete group separate from all other groups.[48] The other approach traces how Muslim polities took on relevance only with reference to an invasive colonial administration, whether Dutch or Russian, French or British. This blindness is much more serious than the first, because it erases the Islamic “difference” and freezes all Muslims into the role of defensive opponents of an emergent global order. Its proponents claim that Muslim elites, in competing with one another under the same non-Muslim aegis, became redefined: they came to differ as much from their precolonial Muslim ancestors as they did from their contemporary non-Muslim compatriots. The cultural marking of Islam, if not irrelevant, was at best residual, while the temporal marking of modernity became all-important. From the premise that the European/Christian West as

colonial overlord provided the crucial dimension is drawn the conclusion that only attention to the colonizing process will generate analytical insights into the relationship of Muslim polities to nationalism.[49]

While the first approach oversimplifies the emergence of Muslim polities from a common colonial past, the second overloads the significance of the colonial experience. Its advocates deny the agency of their Muslim subjects, dismissing urban intellectuals, in particular, as little more than hapless purveyors of an ossified or retarded civilizational legacy.

The truth is more complex. If Europe transformed the Muslim world, it did not itself remain immune from change. The direction of influence between Europe and the Muslim world was never unilinear; it was always interactive. Those European colonial powers that extended their influence, whether by direct or by indirect rule,[50] were themselves reshaped by the experience of their colonial subjects. But they seldom acknowledged their own reshaping as a direct experience of the other. Instead, colonial history, when not luxuriating in the romance and mystique of the Orient, masked its own change as economic gain, commercial profit, overseas investment, or civilizational uplift. Implicit in the exercise of massive military and political power was the denial of agency anywhere in Africa or Asia, including countries with major Muslim populations.

Yet not all Europeans acted with the same motivation or the same set of interests: in the early phase of British colonial rule in India, for instance, not only administrators but also often linguists identified with their subjects, as Richard Fox has shown in his critique of the Orientalism thesis.[51] And when the imperialists did succeed the colonialists, as happened in most cases after the 1870s, there was a heightened degree of intra-European rivalry—from French-British in the Sudan to British-Dutch in the Asian archipelago—that shaped the regional outcome of colonial projects.[52]

Often wrapped into social scientific analysis of Islam is a variant of the economic determinist argument: capitalist forces are placed in the foreground and credited with changing the colonial and postcolonial Muslim world. Particular emphasis is placed on the dismemberment of the central

premodern Muslim polity, the Ottoman Empire.[53] Modern-day Turkey becomes the chief negative case representing all Muslim polities stumbling into the twentieth century: its leaders could neither reverse outdated modes of production nor generate a viable middle class.[54] Absent in the Turkish case as elsewhere, we are told, were mechanisms of exchange. Without either accountability or obligation, how could one produce either a viable democracy or a modified authoritarianism? One could not, according to these theorists, and so most African/ Asian polities were doomed to be undemocratic; oil merely worsened their economic malaise in the late twentieth century.[55]

Perhaps the most negative assessment of oil production/export and its impact on Arab/Muslim state formation has been set forth by the Lebanese political commentator Georges Corm. Corm offers an intensely detailed, closely argued variation of Delacroix's thesis about the evils of a distributive economy and rentier state. Corm is especially bitter about the petromania unleashed since the early 1970s. "In the deserts of the Arabian Peninsula, ... the oilexporting countries of the Gulf barely had sufficient manpower, managerial staff, technicians, employees and teachers to meet the needs and projects this new oil wealth gave rise to. Other Arab countries (and also Pakistan and Bangladesh) were suddenly drained of the most dynamic among their active populations, which further undermined their already eroding social structures."[56] In the case of Pahlavi Iran, petromania did not cause an influx of Muslim outsiders, but it did create a too rapid immigration of rural Iranians to Tehran, leading to structural asymmetries that have persisted in post-Pahlavi Iran.[57]

To place the colonial period and the determinist interpretations of Islam in a broader perspective, one must move beyond both politics and religion to the contingencies of history. The best place to begin is with the boldly revisionist thesis of the world historian and American Islamicist Marshall Hodgson. As Hodgson explained, Islamic loyalties relate above all to a larger, complex process that he labels the Great Western Transmutation. The Great Western Transmutation was "great" because it was global: European norms of political rule and social and economic exchange were introduced throughout Asia and Africa. It remained "Western" not only because it was European in origin but also because it reflected changes going on in the New World, especially North America. But finally it remained a transmutation

because it depended on a variety of factors rather than a single, predictable response to European events and actors; it was not inevitable to one region or one culture or one time; it was not even a transformation but rather, following biological models, a transmutation.

The Great Western Transmutation was local as well as global, since the process it spurred was framed within indigenous contexts and limited by indigenous responses, in our case Muslim responses to European norms. To the extent that we can depict a composite Muslim profile, it emerged only after World War I and did not achieve widespread prominence till after World War II.[58] What it revealed was a world turned inside out.[59] Neither Muslim collectivities nor individual Afro-Asian Muslims could any longer operate from a position of parity in the world-system.[60] All Muslim elites—whether by choice or compulsion, whether explicitly adjusting or implicitly demurring—were reshaped by European norms and expectations.[61] Precisely because their lives were under constant stress, their identities remained in flux, and Islam became a symbolic resource both shared and debated. Colonial and postcolonial reverberations were most evident in urban metropolitan centers, yet their impact also extended to rural or peripheral groups, even when these groups seem not to be affected or represented by the momentous events occurring at the center.[62]

To understand the difficulty of this circumstance, but also to locate the kernel of hope within it, one must revisit the colonial period and attempt to analyze its internal shifts, or successive phases, reflecting the views of Muslim "others" as well as European overlords. One must recognize that not all colonizers had the same agenda nor did all periods yield the same record of brutal conquest and systematic negation of Africans and Asians who happened to be Muslim. Instead, one must look at three major periods that overlap but still need to be distinguished each from the other: revivalist, reformist, and fundamentalist.[63]

* Part One: European Colonialism and Its Sequels

** Chapter 1. The Three Phases of Modern-Day Islam

EACH BROAD-SCALE Islamic movement—revivalism, reform, and fundamentalism— belongs to a pattern of interaction between Europe and the Muslim world. The latest chapter of that interaction begins with European colonial expansion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The initial response was revivalism. When revivalism failed to achieve long-term results, it was replaced by efforts at Islamic reform that worked in tandem with nationalist movements. It was only with the failure of the latter that Islamic fundamentalism emerged.

As a preamble to considering each of these movements one must note, and then repeat, and repeat again, that the Muslim world is at once very large and very diverse. The more than 800 million believers in Allah and His prophet Muhammad are as diverse as any comparable community would be. They exhibit marks of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, and while no single graph can encompass the range of this diversity, it is hoped that figure 1 will suggest at least the broad contours of what coheres as the Muslim world.

Muslims total between one-quarter and one-third of the world’s population. More Muslims are Asian than African, more African than Arab. The numbers are startling: perhaps 200 million Middle Easterners are Muslim, but that is only if you include Turkey’s 50 million plus Iran’s 55 million. In other words, less than 90 million Middle Eastern Muslims are Arabs. About the same number are Turks if you add to Turkey’s 50 million plus the 30 million Muslims of Turkish descent who live in the Commonwealth of Independent States, formerly known as Soviet Central Asia. There are more Arabs living in the two North African countries, Morocco and Algeria, than in the whole of the Middle East outside of Egypt. In sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria alone has more Muslims than any Arab country: its closest rival would be Egypt, with 40 million Muslims, yet it is hardly a close rivalry since Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, has a population approaching 110 million, of whom about 60 million are Muslim.

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-1.jpg][Figure 1. The Muslim world (Africa and Asia)]]

However, it is South and Southeast Asia that outstrip all other claimants to majoritarian representation in the Muslim world. Until 1947 South Asia, which includes Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh as its principal polities, formed a single administrative unit under British rule. Today they are home to at least 300 million Muslim inhabitants. Farther east, Indonesia, with more than 13,000 islands and a population exceeding 170 million, can boast that it is, and will remain for some time to come, the largest Muslim country in the world: 150 million Indonesians profess faith in Allah and His prophet Muhammad.

In the face of such numbers it is nonsensical to speak of Muslims and Middle Eastern Arabs as if the two were interchangeable. A recent book outlining major Western misconceptions of Islam listed as number one the notion that “Muslims are mainly Arabs, and Islam is the exclusive religion of the ‘Middle East.’ ”[64] Even more shortsighted is attention to the Arab-Israeli struggle as the epitome of Muslim global concerns.

What matters most for Muslims lies beyond Palestine. It is an economic rather than a territorial nightmare. It relates to the present uneven distribution of global resources; above all, to the grinding calculus that not only sorts out the world into haves and have-nots but makes the division between the advanced industrialized bloc and all others wider and wider, year after year. Although economic constraints are not the only way to understand Islam and the Muslim world,[65] it would be foolhardy to speak of cultural norms and societal options without taking into account economic indices. Where then can one find a neutral benchmark to address economic disparities? The best seems to be the OECD, an acronym for the transnational Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In 1979 the OECD published its decadal report, Facing the Future. Its authors concluded that the Third World is “defined in relation to the developed countries more than in relation to itself; it comprises all the human societies which could not or did not want to adapt to the shock imparted by Georgian England and which, as a result, now display common characteristics both as to their present reality and (future) dynamics.” In other words, countries of the Third World, including all majority Islamic nations, are willy-nilly out of step with their First World contemporaries.

There are exceptions, such as Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, and Malaysia, yet most lack deep-rooted democratic traditions even more than did Second World or Communist countries before 1989. Enjoying neither economic nor social parity with Euro-America, they have been branded inferior in every other category.

The recent ascendancy of the Pacific Rim countries has only served to give the Islamic difference a stronger negative accent. Over a decade ago Eric Hoffer, author of The True Believer, declared: “No Islamic country has mastered industrial production or achieved anything remotely comparable to what was accomplished in Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and (also) India.”[66] Hoffer’s characterization must now be modified because of dramatic strides taken by Malaysia and Indonesia in the past decade. Both are Muslim countries, if not Islamic states, and both have recently generated high-tech, rapid-growth economies that compete on a global scale. Is it pure accident that both are also part of the Pacific Rim prosperity zone?

As bright as the future looks for both Malaysia and Indonesia, their exceptionalism brings up a further dilemma of perception for the U.S. public. Ever since the gasoline shortages of 1973, most Americans have tended to scapegoat the Muslim as Saudi Arabian, accepting the frequent cartoons that depict a wealthy Muslim sheik depriving cowed motorists at the gasoline pumps. The blanket ascription of wealth is as much in need of correction as the monochrome Islamic identity. The oil-rich Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia, Libya, the Gulf states, and also Iraq, are the least populous, and also the least professionally inclined. The resource-poor Arab states, particularly Egypt and Sudan, are overpopulated, though with an excess of trained but underemployed professionals in every branch of the modern sector, from medicine to engineering to business.

So great are the disparities within the Arab world that the gift of black gold, as oil is often called, has not been an unmixed blessing. Counterintuitive though it may seem, the tyranny of oil burdened the rich as well as the poor Middle Eastern countries between 1945 and 1973. For the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as for many of its oil-rich Arab neighbors, an avalanche of petro-dollars produced neither an immediate release from poverty nor the

emergence of a kind of modern-day version of capitalist utopia in desert sands. Rather, it created a panic of spending. In Georges Corm's view:

<quote>

Not since the fall of the Abbasid empire (in the 13th century) has the Arab world seen population movements on such a scale. Like Libya, the oil-exporting countries of the Gulf barely have sufficient manpower, managerial staff, technicians, employees and teachers to meet the needs and projects this new oil wealth has spurred. Other Arab countries have been suddenly drained of the most dynamic among their active populations, which has further undermined their already eroding social structures. Expatriates earning high salaries have remitted savings to their home countries, increasing not only the flow of capital but also the craving for consumption and subsequent inflationary pressures.[67]

</quote>

Nor has religion been exempt from this same gold rush mentality. For it was due to the sudden flush of extraordinary wealth, produced by the quadrupling of oil prices in 1973, that Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Muslim nations were able to sponsor the unprecedented World of Islam Festival. Convened in London in 1976, it was the most lavish display of Muslim art and architecture, replete with replications of Bedouin life and extraordinary coffee table picture books, that the non-Muslim world had ever seen. It marked not the end but the beginning of Saudi, Libyan, and Gulf funding for a variety of Islam-related activities. Might not Islamic fundamentalism turn out to be nothing more than "an enormous malaise brought on by poorly assimilated and badly shared-out oil wealth clogging up the scrawny frames of these societies, still historically deprived of real industrialization"?[68]

Corm's rhetorical question begs for qualification. It denies Muslims agency for their own future. It smacks of economic determinism ratcheted to the highest level. Yet Corm's cynicism serves as a healthy antidote to the flood tide of journalism and scholarship that parrots Muslim assertions about Islamic revolution as if such revolution were at once self-evident and inevitable.

No real revolution has succeeded, either in Iran or elsewhere in the Muslim world. The real litmus test for success remains the global socioeconomic order. No revolution can be deemed successful unless it challenges, and attempts to level, socioeconomic disparities. One need not be a Marxist or a capitalist to apply the standard of distributive justice, nor does one have to accept the judgment of modernization theorists, that Muslims must accommodate to the values as well as the structures of modernity, and to the extent that they do, they will inevitably abandon Islam.[69] Muslims can be modern and democratic as well as loyal to the tenets of Islam, but their options for self-expression are nonetheless limited by the current criteria of economic privilege. One cannot ignore what is happening throughout the so-called Third World, at every level among all groups, advantaged and disadvantaged. Those who have been excluded from the front rank of technicalizing societies suffer stark structural inequities. The list of handicaps is grim: political limitations, reflected by the prevalence of military dictatorships or clan rulership permitting only restricted popular participation; economic disparities, situating a few landed or mercantile rich above masses of urban and rural poor, precluding the emergence of a middle class; educational restrictions, especially at the top, where overcrowding in too few universities and the absence of high-tech institutions force elites to send their children abroad while others are denied training in essential skills; and, of course, gender asymmetry, characterized by the invocation of tradition as the reason for excluding women from the public sphere, which conceals the real issue: job scarcity for unemployed or underemployed men.

Faced with these structural constraints, Muslim nation-states are as stymied by the presence of oil revenue as they were deprived by its absence. Islamic societies cannot escape the hierarchical gradient that privileges the advanced nations of Western Europe, North America, and the Pacific Rim while precluding others from competition except in subordinate relations of implicit or outright dependency.

This observation is directed to external criteria and to the global economy. Within the so-called advanced technicalistic nations there exist major groups who also suffer from their positioning at the lower end of the spectrum of educational access and economic privilege, whether they be the urban poor

of London and Manchester or Los Angeles and Detroit. Yet the presence of marginalized others in the West merely tempers, it does not refute, our basic contention, namely, that Asian-African Muslims experience wholesale marginality not because Islam is at base defective but because they are located within imposed, and still contested, nation-state borders. Due to the arbitrary construction of these borders, tribal rather than constitutional processes prevail, and authoritarianism is the norm, even when socioeconomic success at some level can be claimed.[70] One need not be surprised that many members of ex-colonial states have come forward to challenge the process by which they were constituted as “self-evident” states. Saddam Hussein became merely the latest, and most extreme, of those who hoped to remake their national boundaries. We must revisit the process itself if we are to understand why Muslim groups have been at such a disadvantage in making their newly formed, postindependence governments work. It is this large-scale process that demands more attention than the specific form by which some groups were placed within a certain state and others displaced from that state or denied their own identity altogether.

** Chapter 2. Islamic Revivalism: Anti-Colonial Revolt

IT IS within such a global frame of reference that the story of Islamic revivalism needs to be retold. All blanket words such as revivalism, reformism, or fundamentalism are arbitrary invocations of the English language; they do not, and cannot, describe the varying degrees of Islamic loyalty and protest.

Why, then, do I continue to use these terms? Three guidelines inform my choice of nomenclature.[71] One comes from a comment made by Ihab Hassan in another context. Trying to justify the far-flung use of the term “postmodernism,” he noted that “There is a will to power in nomenclature, as well as in people or texts. A new term opens for its proponents a space in language.”[72] Because fundamentalism has assumed a new connotation since 1979, when for the first time it was consistently applied to evidence

outside Protestant American Christianity, it has in effect become a new term, global fundamentalism, with the potential to “open for its proponents [who are its academic analysts] a space in language.” Second, as Norma Salem observed in her perceptive essay on Islamic fundamentalism in Tunisia, if one surrenders to local, in-group usage and relies on indigenous terms to the exclusion of all others, the resulting “cultural relativism leads to a dead end ... since it cannot distinguish between ‘etic’ categories, referring to the perception of the informant, and ‘emic’ categories, referring to epistemological concepts developed beyond the limits of the culture involved.” In her view, which is also mine, “we cannot avoid using cross-cultural concepts in order to forge links between the informant and the observer.”[73] Third, clustering the concepts revivalism, reformism, and fundamentalism together helps us to understand the limits of each in the contemporary Muslim world. But first they must be situated historically within a frame of reference that takes account of how all three have been shaped as defensive reactions to European colonial expansion. The novelty here is to suggest that these three terms, taken together, provide a unique function, helping us to understand why we have reached the point when fundamentalism, and not revivalism or reformism, looms large on the political horizon of Muslim nations.

There is no generic category of religious protest that applies to the past three centuries of Islamic history. Instead, there are three distinct phases of protest. In each phase certain Muslim groups revolted against the ascendant world order. Linked to Western Europe, the ascendant world order in time became the dominant order, but not without resistance, protest, and rebellion. Not all protestors were Muslim, nor did all Muslims protest, but the nature of the religiously valorized Muslim protest merits careful consideration. Only the first phase is properly speaking revivalist. It is succeeded by a second that should be termed reformist, and it is only after the revivalist and reformist phases, and in large part due to their failures, that there emerged recently what can be termed Islamic fundamentalism.

All three—revivalism, reformism, and fundamentalism—are historically specific socioreligious movements propelling a few male leaders into public view as they attempt to reclaim the space that was challenged and reduced, then impoverished and redefined, by European expansion (first through sea power, but later through land power supported by naval control of sea trade).

From the eighteenth century to the present, all the major Muslim polities experienced financial crises, demographic disruption, and agricultural stagnation. Some of their malaise resulted from indigenous challenges. Provincial Arabs chafed under Ottoman Turkish rule, Afghans protested when Qajar control in Iran was extended to them, Marattas rebelled against Mughal hegemony in South Asia. In each instance, however, the situation of ruling elites was complicated and worsened by (1) the external diversion of commodity trade from the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean routes to the Atlantic Ocean following discovery and exploitation of the New World; and (2) the internal infiltration of European trade through a nexus of foreign merchants and local middlemen or compradores cooperating to establish new products, new markets, new communication networks, and new sources of profit and reinvestment. To speak of Islamic revivalism is to recognize the ideological reaction of particular Muslim interest groups to the losses that they experienced. Islam became an emblem of protest against the gradual contraction of internal and external trade, brought about by the mercantile activities of European maritime nations, specifically, the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Dutch, the British, and the French. What was contested in the name of Islam by Islamic revivalists was control over vital commodities—textiles, slaves, coffee, tea, spices—gold—all trafficked along the major trade routes from the Atlantic coast of West Africa to the Indonesian archipelago.

The major Muslim revivalist movements were without exception preindustrial. Their leaders mobilized followers in response to the European redirection of global trade, even when they did not acknowledge the extent to which European advances were reshaping their lives. Not all the revivalists directly confronted Europeans; some challenged weakened local elites seen as mediators between Europeans and indigenous groups.

One of the earliest instances of European influence concerns the rebellious Wahhabis. In western Arabia the Wahhabis aligned with a Najdi chief named Ibn Sa‘ud. That combination in time produced what is now regarded as a legitimate government, though it remains the only Muslim polity named after a tribal group: the present-day Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Both Ibn Sa‘ud and his appointed ideologue, Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, benefited from the loss of revenues suffered by their chief rival, the Sharif of Mecca, who in the eighteenth century reigned as the legitimate ruler of the Hijaz. Dependent as he was on the lucrative Indian trade, primarily in textiles, indigo, and spices,

the Sharif could not sustain its diversion away from the Arabian peninsula by the British. Weakened economically, he also became militarily vulnerable. His Najdi rivals rallied to their side other groups who had been deprived by the British ascendancy in trade, and toward the end of the eighteenth century they were able to dislodge and replace the Sharif of Mecca. Although the Wahhabis had other battles to wage, with the Turks and with Muslim loyalists from rival tribes who did not accept their leadership, their initial success was a byproduct of incipient European colonialism.

The pattern evident in Arabia had numerous analogues elsewhere on the seams of commercial activity that came increasingly under the flag of the Union Jack. In Northwest India, the Barelvis, sometimes confused with the Wahhabis because of their intensely Islamic profile, tried to wage war against indigenous groups, Sikhs and Hindus, but the latter were better positioned than the Barelvis vis-a-vis British commercial interests. The Barelvis were strategically isolated before being defeated on the battlefield by Sikhs. Elsewhere, in Northeast India, the Faraidis also resorted to Islamic symbols and tried to mobilize fellow Muslims when they perceived the shift to a moneyed, international economy as advantageous to Hindu landlords while impoverishing Muslim peasant laborers. The Faraidis, under Hajji Shari‘atallah, did attract widespread support, at first in local protests and later in regionwide acts of defiance; yet neither succeeded in reversing the tide of change.[74]

It was the same story, with different actors but a similar outcome, in Africa. The best documented of the revivalist movements, the Fulani-Qadiris in Nigeria, pitted Muslim herdsmen and traders against British markets and middlemen, the middlemen often being recruited from rival Muslim tribes. Though the revivalists enjoyed superb Islamic credentials, they were eventually defeated on the battlefield. There were temporary successes: the Sanusis prevailed in the Cyrenaica region near the Ottoman province of Libya, strengthening Islamic identity for over fifty years till the Italian invasion of 1911. A Somali chieftain, too, was able to mobilize interior tribes against British, Italian, and French forces in the coastal areas near Mogadishu. He won several battles and continued to rule for over twenty years, only to have the British bomb and machine-gun their way to victory in 1920. Finally, on the other side of the Muslim world, in Southeast Asia, there emerged a puritanical movement, also linked to the Wahhabis and known as

the Padris.[75] The Padris galvanized Sumatran Muslims dispossessed by the shift from gold and pepper trade to a new cash crop, coffee. During the course of the nineteenth century the Padris, after causing much initial concern among local elites and their foreign allies, were harassed and coerced by better organized opponents. They endured defeat after defeat in bloody encounters before finally succumbing to the Dutch authorities.

All these revivalist movements occurred at crucial seams in the expanding imperium of maritime Europe. All were Sunni Muslim movements. The single parallel within Shi‘i Islam were the Bahais, a group still despised by Twelver Shi‘i clergy. The vilification masks a deeper fear: the first Bahais embodied and then projected the latent messianic impulse of Twelver Shi‘ism. They were Shi‘i revivalists. Yet Bahaism would have been crushed and ignored, as have been many other protest movements, had its adherents not benefited from the communication networks attendant on the economic penetration of European capitalism into both Iran and Turkey. The newly emergent world order provided havens of refuge for those Bahais who survived persecution in their native Iran. They shifted first to nearby Turkey and then, by the third generation, to the New World. Today they proselytize not for Shi‘i Islam but for a doctrine of world peace and universal prophethood, and they proselytize from Wilmette, Illinois, at the same time as they continue to protest the treatment of their coreligionists who remain in Iran. The history of the Bahais is therefore doubly instructive: they offer an early success story of global capitalism, and they also attest to the power of Islamic revivalism as a form of symbolic capital beyond the Afro-Asian Muslim world.

** Chapter 3. Islamic Reform: Secular Nationalism

THOSE ISLAMIC revivalist groups who, unlike the Bahais, remained in their country of origin were succeeded by Islamic reformers. Islamic reformers were closely linked to nationalist movements, and indeed in retrospect it can be seen that despite their universalist rhetoric, almost all the Islamic reformers were shaped by the influences of the colonial period. Especially keen is the emphasis on science and technology in education, on

constitutional structures and parliamentary democracy in politics, and on the revised role of women in social life. If Muslim nationalism became mimetic, it should be no surprise that movements that claimed a loyalty to Islam were also mimetic, picking up elements from Europe that they hoped could be transformed into an Islamic system. There is no spontaneous Islamic movement after the colonial period; all are reacting to some force, or series of forces, that emanates from the Western world, which is to say, first from Northern Europe and then from the United States. Even within Northern Europe, however, the cast of characters is limited: with the exception of the Italians in Libya and the Horn of Africa, the major players in the Islamic world till World War II were Britain, France, and Holland.

It is important to note both the size and the outlook of the reformers. They were very few in number, and their elite character has often been overlooked by outside scholars who feel kinship for the reformers as Muslim thinkers not unlike themselves in outlook and ambition. Despite their small numbers or perhaps because of them, the reformers recognized the power of the institutions that were propelling certain European nations to a unique position of global prestige. The reformers came from those countries whose Muslim elites were most engaged by the specter of European commercial and military penetration—Egypt and India, Iran and Turkey before World War I, but then following the war, also Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The North African reformers coalesced into a movement known as Salafiya, or Islamic advocacy. In their own terms, they saw the generation of the Prophet Muhammad as a group to be commended for its energy, vision, and dedication, but also as a model to be re-created in the modern era. Their opponents turned their zeal against them, criticizing the Salafiya for their unwitting promotion of historical retardation. Since the Salafiya seemed to hark back to a golden age that never existed, or at least could never be reconstructed, their passionate pleas were seen to be draining energies away from the crucial task at hand: to accommodate to the new reality of a European world order.[76]

Yet most of the reformers did act in good faith, as committed Muslims conflicted by the gap between Europe’s pragmatic success and what seemed to be its spiritual vapidity. It was as though they were witnesses to a novel and “unholy” revelation. As the European presence shifted from trade to government to social services to ideology, its challenge moved to the

deepest register of self-reflection; it became religious. For Muslim reformers, “the arbiter of truth and knowledge suddenly ceased to be enclosed in the revealed word of God. Another text, with no specific author or format, had made a permanent intrusion. It was the West with its political systems, military presence and economic domination which now appeared in the background as an authoritative code of practice.”[77]

But the authoritative code was not uniform. As they intervened, the European powers quarreled with one another. Some Muslim polities, such as the Sharifian Kingdom of Morocco, benefited from these quarrels, able to resist direct rule because no Mediterranean power wanted its rivals to control the prize of the Arab/Muslim West. But all polities were affected by the two world wars, sometimes known as the Christian wars, of the twentieth century. It was due to the enormous expenditures and consequent destruction of these wars, and also the personal participation of colonized Muslims in these same wars, that Islamic protest movements were able to cohere and emerge into national liberation movements. Gradually, as the smoke cleared from the second of these horrific Christian wars, most Muslim ruling elites succeeded in grasping the laurel of independence.

Even so, not all were marked by the same opportunities or the same political order. A glaring anachronism was the persistence of monarchs, dynastic rulers who compel allegiance to themselves, their values, and, above all, their interests. Almost one-fifth of all Arab Muslims still owe allegiance to a total of three kings (Hassan II of Morocco, Hussein of Jordan, and Fahd of Saudi Arabia), one sultan (Qabus of Oman), and nine emirs (all from the Persian Gulf, including the Emir of Kuwait).

In those nations where monarchs have not survived, they have often been replaced by quasi-monarchs embracing a top-down, closed system of governance, enabled by mukhabarat or citizen surveillance that often produces a national security state.[78] As long as colonial patterns persist, democracy will remain a challenge. Even countries that were not colonized directly, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, did not escape the effects of European economic penetration into the eastern Mediterranean and Indian Ocean, and the structures that arose after independence reflect this

influence, above all in the sphere of bureaucracy, centrist politics, and commercial law.

It was because the nature of self-rule was shaped more by European than by indigenous models that one must speak of “mimetic nationalism.” Though nationalism was embraced by Arab, as by non-Arab, Muslim leaders to chart the path to independence, the models of governance were derived from the departing colonials. Whether one looks to constitutional charters or to the adoption of separate executive and legislative bodies, the impress of European precedents is evident. At the same time the boundaries of new nations reflected a patchwork of compromise implementing the wishes of European powers rather than the preferences of their Muslim subjects. Saddam Hussein’s attempt to readjust Iraq’s borders with Kuwait in fall 1990 was at once justified and spurious: justified because the borders of all African and Asian countries were set in the colonial period or its immediate aftermath; spurious because many countries benefited as well as lost from such manipulation. Without the addition of parts of Kurdistan, especially the oil-rich region around Mosul, Iraq, for instance, would not have had the geopolitical resources that make it potentially the economic giant among all Arab states.

The truth about the process by which postcolonial borders were decided may be simpler, though no prettier, than conspiracy theories allow: disparate communities of Asia and Africa had been welded together as parts of the British or French or Dutch empires. They could not be dissolved and reconstituted in their precolonial form with independence. Often the very conditions of self-rule had to be set by colonial authorities and imperial administration because consent could not have been secured on any other basis. Yet the end result was to make the entire process of Arab/Muslim nationalism seem imitative. It appealed only to a limited stratum of elites. Military control had been a wing of colonial administration—not just a wing but the foundation. With independence, mechanisms to curb military intervention and to spur the emergence of a civil society were never set in place.

It is important to note how most theorists of nationalism stress a few distinct traits as crucial for the coherence of a national ethos and the moblization of

a nationalist movement. Religion is not among them. Homogeneity, literacy, and professionalism are the crucial traits, according to Ernest Gellner, the late British sociologist.[79] Each nationalist movement finally seeks to create a world in its own image, a world of theoretically independent and equal nation-states. Hence, in Gellner's view, twentieth-century European nationalism "is revealed as an optimistic, secular and practical ideology." Even when it incorporates elements from prenationalist religious cultures, nationalism transforms them to its own ends. Religion is usually suppressed or collapsed into a personal sphere, defined by its exclusion from the state-dominated public sphere into which it continually threatens to erupt.

What Gellner does not discuss but what becomes evident from his trait analysis is the deep fear that most European nationalists had of theocracy. Not only did they want to prevent religious institutions and leaders from reclaiming a public space they had once dominated, but they also hoped to provide the social cohesion that would make the state an effective instrument of power against both internal and external challenges to its authority. It has been the retention of political power, not the assertion of religious truth, that has loomed as the ultimate goal of European nationalists.

While most Europeans and Americans have lived within "secure" national borders for several generations and see themselves as beneficiaries of the tradition of nation-state loyalty, many Third World citizens, and Afro-Asian Muslims in particular, do not share either their experience or their trust. For most Muslims, it is hard to applaud the arbitrary, top-down process, imposed from outside, by which almost all Afro-Asian polities came to assume their present form.

And not only the external boundaries of territory but also the internal boundaries of identity are open to challenge and reformulation. In thinking about Islamic protest, it is especially important to note how the clash at the core of all other clashes between nationalists and fundamentalists is the totalizing impulse guiding each. As Kenneth Cragg once noted, in the Muslim world the state functions as an obedience context.[80] The majority of Muslim states are praetorian or, in Richard Bulliet's apt phrase, neo-Mamluk dictatorships: the form of military bureaucracy on which they depend imitates the Mamluks, though in fact it derives from the legacy of colonial

rule.[81] Each demands total compliance with a vision of state control in which Islam is projected as a legitimating factor, even though no open debate about what constitutes “true” Islam is tolerated. Tacitly it recognizes that the norms it imposes are not universally shared by all Muslims, yet publicly it arrogates to itself and to its custodians the right to decide which elements of Islamic belief and practice are to be supported. The memory of other Islams is too strong, however, to be erased. In each instance Muslims have to decide how to preserve their symbolic identity within a public order that is antireligious at worst, as in the former Soviet Union, China, Indonesia, and Turkey, or pseudoreligious at best, as in most Arab states, Iran, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

The greatest failure of mimetic nationalism is that it left each of the colonized countries, many of them in Africa and Asia, many of them majoritarian Muslim, with the illusion that they could reclaim both identity and purity as nation-states. The nationalist leaders of Muslim states played to these hopes. Having ended foreign domination, they could claim to have banished the hated foreigner. Yet the foreigner did not go away. Frantz Fanon made prophetic warnings about the danger of independence, namely, that colonial values might persist even after the colonizers had left.[82] As a result, twentieth-century nationalism produced for the entire Muslim world a cleavage of enormous magnitude. The most evident cleavage was between Muslims and the dominant culture of Western Europe. But an equally great cleavage was among Muslim reformers, between those who were attracted to European achievements, seeking to appropriate their benefits but packaged in an indigenous idiom, and those others who sought to oppose them, arguing that no accommodation was possible without loss of authenticity. The danger for reformers was their apparent affinity with that which they admired but did not embrace. Even when colonialism finally yielded to independence movements, they as well as nationalist leaders were seen to be tainted by neocolonialism, representing, as Fanon put it, black/brown skins wearing white masks.

If the final legacy of colonialism was to reshape the Muslim world into truncated territories and contested borders, capitalism left it with economies that could only function on the margins. Capitalism benefited its captains, the major powers of the high-tech era. These powers are the technologically advanced, professionally differentiated, and economically privileged societies

of Western Europe, North America, and now East Asia. Even before the rubric of First, Second, and Third Worlds was invented in the 1950s,[83] there existed a proto-Third World. It embraced all Muslim societies, even those that were to benefit from the petro-dollar infusion begun in the 1950s and 1960s but then accelerated through the 1970s and 1980s before flattening out in the 1990s. It is this economic gradient that undergirds, or should undergird, all attempts to explain Islamic fundamentalism.

** Chapter 4. Islamic Fundamentalism: Religious Nationalism

THE SUDDEN dramatic increase of oil revenues in the 1970s did not produce, but it did catalyze, the eruption of an uncoordinated set of protests against Muslim rulers who seemed to accept the dominant and un-Islamic global order. That chain reaction has been dubbed Islamic radicalism, Islamic fundamentalism, or just plain Islamism. Even as Islamic revivalism cannot be separated from the introduction of European commerce in the early modern period at a certain moment in time, so Islamism or Islamic fundamentalism cannot be divorced from the structural realignment of global power— economic and social as well as political and military— that preceded the rise of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). There might have been Islamic fundamentalism without OPEC, and economic factors alone do not explain its myriad expressions, yet the global context is crucial to understanding how Islamic fundamentalism has appeared and reappeared during the last quarter of this century.

While petromania was contagious in the 1970s, the tyranny of oil, in Georges Corm’s apt phrase, had begun much earlier. It culminated in the 1970s due to the coincidence of political frustration after the bitter Arab-Israeli War of October 1973 with the overdue readjustment of oil prices leveraged through the newly founded union of oil-producing states named OPEC. OPEC was a union rather than a cartel, as is often supposed. By any standard of proportionality, its members were more than justified in seeking a fairer share of profits for their extraction of a nonrenewable resource.

But proportionality, and with it higher profits for OPEC members, did not pave the way to higher status in the international community, nor did it ensure independence from the skills and ambitions of others. The new wealth was monetary. It had to be invested or distributed in a way that would allow these preindustrial societies to enter the postindustrial or high-tech era. The way was never found, in part because financial resources could not be transformed into social restructuring without reliance on the technoindustrial complexes of Europe and America that pioneered modernization even while projecting an “alien” civilization. Genuine independence proved impossible, and in its stead emerged a selfdestructive frenzy. Drawn into an economic order where they remain marginal, the principal members of OPEC can only function with the assistance of other, more advanced and more powerful countries. They require foreign assistance in everything from agricultural goods to military weapons to construction projects to transport vehicles. They employ an enormous number of expatriate workers to help them try to keep up with the modern world. Some do recognize the irony of sudden riches. As a Saudi official once lamented, “We Saudis are rich while you Americans are wealthy. I’d rather be wealthy.” By this he meant that the true criterion of national prosperity is not export-import surpluses or per capita income but rather the potential to construct and maintain an economic infrastructure that is globally competitive without foreign assistance. By that criterion, Saudi Arabia, like every OPEC country, including Iran, remains underdeveloped and therefore dependent on others for what it needs to exist and to compete as a modern nation.

As long as the greatest field of play in the high-tech era remains science—scientific discovery, technological adaptation, commercial deployment—Muslim countries will remain disadvantaged, and Islamic fundamentalism will function as a spoiler. Its ideological appeal is strengthened by the failure—the inevitable failure—of other ideologies, namely, nationalism, socialism, pan-Arabism, or even pan-Islamism. Yet the state against which the fundamentalists rail is a durative institution. Not only have governments proven their ability to survive insurgency, with the solitary exception of Iran, but the state, in the words of a Lebanese observer, “has become the strongest dominant shadow over the lives of the individual and society.”[84] From control of the army and secret police to ownership of major industries to recruitment in administrative bureaucracies, the new postcolonial state

exercises centripetal pressures unimaginable in the pre-World War II era. Fundamentalists can challenge the state. They can even kill the pharaoh, as some Egyptians did when they assassinated Sadat in 1981, but there will be other pharaohs and other centrist deployments of power.

There is more, much more, to Islamic fundamentalism than can be gleaned from the “great man” approach to history, an approach that in this case would conjure a list of fundamentalist heroes, from the Pakistani Mawdudi to the Egyptian Qutb to the Tunisian Ghannouchi, and then show how they have influenced the way alienated Muslims come to express their grievance with global patterns of economic and cultural exchange. Instead of offering biographical snapshots of fundamentalist heroes, I will look at the socioeconomic as well as the cultural profiles of particular countries that have experienced a series of postcolonial crises. I begin with Pakistan and Egypt in order to gauge the extent of fundamentalist protest in former British colonies. I then turn to Tunisia and Syria to illustrate parallel protests in the ex-French colonial sphere. I conclude by focusing on Saudi Arabia and Iran because their intrinsic rivalry is even more important than their evident and explicit policy differences. Each polity claims Islamic credentials and yet each has responded to the threat of exogenous control in opposite ways, the Saudis by allying with Western capitalism while suppressing the fundamentalists in their midst, the Iranians by pursuing a form of theocratic capitalism that permits limited but real internal dissent.

*** Antinationalist Discourse

If one can locate a substantive kernel of Islamic fundamentalist thinking, it comes from the subtle religious response to the limits of secular-style Arab nationalism. It is well illustrated in two statements by Jordanian Islamic spokesmen. They reflect the antinationalist mood of Sunni Arab Islamists or fundamentalists, as experienced in Jordan but also in many countries caught between the ascendant West and their own memory of a glorious Muslim past. A leading jurist who has authored over forty books, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Khayyat once summed up the five divinely mandated preservations that were at the heart of Muslim law (shari’A). They are:

<quote>

Self-preservation, enjoining what is proper to eat and drink, while prohibiting indulgence in prolonged fasting

</quote>

<quote>

Preservation of the mind, or mental health, encouraging literacy and education while prohibiting alcohol, hashish, or drugs

</quote>

<quote>

Preserving the species, requiring marriage while also limiting the number of wives to four, and making even that option remote by mandating conjugal parity

</quote>

<quote>

Preserving wealth and property, by honoring labor and investment of money while also prohibiting unfair interest or usury or excessive accumulation of wealth

</quote>

<quote>

Preserving belief since belief in God as One, in Muhammad as His final prophet, and in the Qur’an as His perfect revelation are enjoined on Muslims, while superstition and idolatry in all forms, including the elevation of country above God (nationalism), are prohibited[85]

</quote>

Note the order in which these preservations are cited. The two most specific preservations, concerning food and marriage, are first and third. Both are traditional. Both are modern. The first inveighs against Sufi brotherhoods that deem fasting to be a meritorious way of encouraging dependence on God alone (tawakkul). The third acknowledges the option of four wives but also, following the Qur'an, makes clear that each wife must be treated equally. Since most modern-day nations support monogamy, this implicit compromise is an effective way of being both modern and Muslim.

What is most curious, however, is the reiteration of the most basic creed of Islam as the fifth preservation. At first this seems to be out of proportion to its operative importance, but in fact its intent is not merely to reinforce monotheism but to suggest that true compliance with Oneness may supersede other loyalties. Many Jordanians, especially those of Palestinian origin, would read this as a rationale for demurral from honoring King Hussein too highly, but at the same time it could be seen as a not-so-veiled message to the Palestinians that they should honor their own commitment to a Palestinian homeland less intently than their devotion to God!

The very fact that this ethical digest could allow for alternative readings illustrates its appropriateness as a list of fundamentals. They are all terms which most observant Muslims would generally accept. They do not incite violence or even active resistance to political authorities, yet they project as a seamless program norms on which there is not a consensus, leaving open how various Muslims would apply them as directives to their own lives.

Equally adept at couching emotive language in abstractly displaced referents is Dr. Mohamed Sakr, an economics professor at the University of Amman and a member of the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brothers. In a magazine interview Dr. Sakr, who earned a Ph.D. degree in economics from Harvard University, blasts the West. Without once mentioning a specific Western country as the culprit or villain, he is adamant that "the West is against us." Having lived in the United States, he claims to know it as "a civilization stricken by forces from within." The alternative to the West, he suggests, is a united Muslim world, one that would allow countries to share their resources in a complementary fashion. "Some countries like Saudi Arabia and Qatar have money, and others like Jordan and Egypt have the labor force. Unity

would bring greater benefits for all." Unity would allow benefits of oil extraction to be shared because "today the wealth of the region is in the hands of a few sheiks, and the majority of the people are poor." In the end, the masses will take decisions into their own hands, he warns. What, then, should the West do? Two things: first, it should take note that "we have millions of people who have U.S. educations and who are not slaves of the West"; and second, Euro-American firms should stop squeezing profits out of the region, instead allowing its citizens to govern themselves "without dictation from Washington, Paris or Bonn."[86]

Though admittedly fragmentary because it was gleaned from an interview, the above captures the tone of the discourse common to Islamic fundamentalists. The finger of accusation points with equal pique to enemies at home and abroad. Those who are the real Muslim culprits are "the few sheikhs" who take money from the West for oil. Yet, in the same breath, these Sheikhs are asked to join an Islamic unity movement that would provide their countries labor from Jordan and Egypt in return for "fair" wages. It is a plea for distributive justice likely to fall on deaf ears in Riyadh and Kuwait City.

Should one then ignore the appeal of this argument? No, for despite its seeming incoherence, it exactly mirrors the dilemma of Islamic fundamentalists in the 1990s: to have the best of the West—its education, its technology, and its dollars—and yet to evolve into a separate, Islamically renewed, world order. In the words of Roy Mottahedeh, "Islamic government is for many Muslims what the old but recently revived phrase 'civil society' is for many liberals: a repository of collective hope and an aspiration that the fundamentally good values at the roots of their traditions can be recovered and strengthened." That is the goal but, as Mottahedeh goes on to note, "the actual agreed-upon content of Islamic government remains very limited and, more often than not, severely disputed."[87]

*** Examples of Islamic Fundamentalism

No appeal works unless it matches the mood and the options for change in particular countries. The sameness and the difference of Islamist movements

can best be grasped by looking at specific Muslim nation-states. The following six cases are selective, but they are not random. While they show the limits of fundamentalist movements, they also represent different aspects of the colonial experience. Two—Pakistan and Egypt—suffered British rule. Two others—Syria and Tunisia—became victims of la mission civilisatrice or French rule, while the final two—Saudi Arabia and Iran — operated only within spheres of influence, escaping direct rule from a European capital. Each of these six countries signals changes within its own sociopolitical sphere at the same time that it portends trends of broad significance for postcolonial Islamic identity. Though I draw attention to the arch rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, I also highlight Iran as the most significant symbolic site for understanding, and misunderstanding, contemporary Islam. Without the Islamic Republic of Iran, there would be no Islamic fundamentalism, nor would the “menace of Islam” ever have become a siren call for both Euro-American policy makers and the public at large. It is because of its singular importance that I conclude the country-by-country analysis with Iran.

**** Pakistan

Principal key dates,[88] including major leaders since independence:

| 1858 | Beginning of direct British rule of India |

| 1906 | Founding of the Muslim League separate from the Indian National Congress |

| 1941 | Founding of Jama’At-i Islami in East Punjab |

| 1947 | Formation of East and West Pakistan, independent of both Britain and the Republic of India |

| 1947–50 | Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah |

| 1956 | Pakistan proclaimed an Islamic republic |

| 1958–69 | Ayub Khan |

| 1969–71 | Yahya Khan |

| 1971 | Revolt of East Pakistan, formation of Bangladesh |

| 1971–77 | Zulfikar ‘Ali Bhutto |

| 1973 | Promulgation of constitution officially declaring Pakistan to be an Islamic republic |

| 1978–88 | Zia al-Haq |

| 1988–90 | Benazir Bhutto |

| 1990–93 | Nawaz Sharif |

| 1993–96 | Benazir Bhutto |

| 1997- | Nawaz Sharif |

After an experiment with parliamentary democracy, Ayub Khan, a general, assumed direct rule through a coup in 1958. Field Marshal Yahya Khan and General Zia al-Haq also invoked martial law, with the Bhuttos (father and daughter) and Nawaz Sharif being the only duly elected, nonmilitary leaders of Pakistan during the past three decades.

Pakistani Islamic fundamentalism cannot be understood apart from Pakistani history, which is also a function of geography. A part of the Asian subcontinent, Pakistan is linked by historical development to India, by faith orientation to Central and West Asia (i.e., the Middle East). Its hundred-million-plus inhabitants are predominantly Muslim. Three hundred years of Mughal rule provided Muslim elites in North India with a sense of their continuity to Central Asian forebears. Yet it was British colonialism that shaped the profile of present-day Pakistan: Lord Mountbatten presided over the partition of a vast region along communal lines, religiously defined. His goal was to ensure maximum political influence and future economic opportunity in England’s “crown jewel,” even after independence was granted. His was a fatal error, resulting in the death of millions but also destroying the dreams of other millions.

Some of those dreams were Muslim dreams of a united postcolonial Indian state. I can remember discussing Partition with a distinguished Indian Muslim scholar from Delhi in the mid-1980s. I asked him which side he chose at the end of British rule. “Both,” he answered calmly, and then, his voice cracking, he explained. “Both. I wanted to be both Indian

and Muslim. I still want to be both Indian and Muslim. There was no destiny to create this division of brothers. An Islamic state? It was a human error, not the divine will. An Islamic state is where Muslims live together in peace with their neighbors. Bharat [the Sanskrit name for the subcontinent] is an Islamic state, not this bid’A [innovation] called Pakistan. What an error! What a havoc!”[89]

Though many Indian Muslims did favor a separate Muslim polity, not all wanted to be joined together in the same Islamic state. The subsequent rift between East and West Pakistan resulted in the formation of Bangladesh in 1971, again with much bloodshed. Two incompatible parts came unbound from the mold into which they had been cast in 1947. The result was three separate nationstates that held in common only a constitution as their norm of governance, but even the constitutions differed in what they specified as the basis for the state: one, dominated by Hindus, was constitutionally secular (India); another, with a Muslim plurality, had an avowedly Islamic constitution (Pakistan); while the third (Bangladesh), though dominated by Muslims, remained constitutionally secular till 1987.

The great dilemma for Pakistan was how to be an Islamic state while also accommodating diverse ethnic/linguistic groups within its Western and Eastern wings. No figure from East Pakistan ever attained consensus support from West Pakistan as a national leader. All the political, juridical, economic, and social structures of the new state were shaped in West Pakistan. The national language also was Urdu, not Bengali, and all those Bengali leaders who had to fly to Islamabad for parliamentary meetings had to speak Urdu once they boarded the Pakistani International Airlines plane in Dhaka.

Among those who stood forth as religious nationalists from West Pakistan was Mawlana Abu>l-’Ala Mawdudi. Every history of Islam in Pakistan cites his name prominently, and it is with reference to him that the tale of Islamic fundamentalism is told, the claim of its prestige in the subcontinent advanced.

A trained journalist rather than a religious professional or <alim, Mawdudi experienced a powerful second conversion to

Islam in his twenties and thereafter became a prolific pamphleteer, spokesman, and activist on behalf of Islamic causes. Especially because he was a skilled wordsmith, it is important to distinguish what he said from what he did: he was able to articulate ideals that in practice neither he nor others could uphold.

In 1941 Mawdudi founded the Jama'At-i Islami, an organization dedicated to promoting Islamic norms within India. He was opposed to the Pakistan movement and to the Muslim League, arguing that the Muslims of India were effectively irreligious and that the creation of a separate state would not help them any more than it had helped the irreligious Muslims of Iran and Turkey (even though neither Iran nor Turkey had been founded as self-consciously Islamic states). Yet when Pakistan came into being in 1947, Mawdudi ignored his disagreement with Muhammad Ali Jinnah and, despite the secular tone of the Muslim League, migrated to Lahore. Through the Jama'At-i Islami he played the role of religious gadfly, repeatedly challenging the government's claims to be Islamic, risking imprisonment and even the death penalty (in 1953). After being freed from prison, he came to terms with the military regime of Ayub Khan, and from 1962 till his death in 1979, with few interruptions, he continued his work on behalf of the Jama'At-i Islami.

Mawdudi confronted the traditional religious professionals, the <ulama, as well as the successive governments of Pakistan. His was an inclusive, consistent critique of human failure to come to terms with the radical message of true, which is to say originary, Islam. He so simplified that message that it seemed to be accessible to all. From his initial publication of a book on jihad through his subsequent essays on virtually every domain of contemporary Muslim life, Mawdudi applied twin hermeneutical principles, both related to the Qur'an: (1) God's word provides the supreme yardstick for human conduct; and (2) it is possible to derive a single, correct interpretation of its meaning for the present age. It is as if he took upon himself the enormous task of "proving Islam's ability to supersede modern secular ideologies."[90]

Mawdudi did live under very secular governments, none more so than the martial rule of Ayub Khan. In 1970, after Ayub had resigned, Mawdudi lamented that "it was the leftists who had really controlled his government.

All religious elements were crushed and the administration went into the hands of the leftists. Press, news agencies, radio and television—in fact all the organs of the mass media—were used by leftist forces [while] Jama'At-i Islami had very little opportunity to work."[91]

Despite the passion of Mawdudi's protest, his posture was compromised on two fronts, or at least so his opponents have argued. One weakness in his lament derives from the nature of the state he was attacking; the other, from his own engagement with representatives of that state. It is important to understand both positions to see how precarious, and fragile, is the future of Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan. Mawdudi waged a kind of internal jihad against the Pakistani government: though its leaders claimed to be "good" Muslims, Mawdudi criticized their policies as un-Islamic. Most heads of state were military rulers with little engagement in religious subjects, but when they claimed to act on behalf of some ideal higher than self-interest, that ideal was invariably Islam. Even a nonmilitary ruler, such as the socialist Zulfikar 'Ali Bhutto, attempted to legitimize his tenuous authority with reference to Islam. What other ideology could compete with Islam? Could socialism or capitalism or democracy? No. Islam was the cement holding together the diverse elements within Pakistani society, and every leader wrapped himself (or herself) in the mantle of Islamic legitimacy. There was the liberal-modernist Islam of the early parliamentary phase. Ayub sponsored a developmentalist Islam; his successor Yahya Khan, a nationalist Islam; and the secular Zulfikar 'Ali Bhutto, a socialist-populist Islam. The successor to Bhutto, who also proved to be his fatal nemesis, Zia al-Haq, claimed that his was a revivalist (though it was actually a fundamentalist) Islam. In the aftermath of his 1988 death, Bhutto's daughter Benazir perpetuated a socialist-populist Islam, while her successor, Nawaz Sharif, advocated a capitalist Islam that she did not entirely abandon after replacing him, and to which he reverted when becoming prime minister for the second time in 1997.[92]

And so Mawdudi had to compete with variant notions of Islamic identity within the government. At the same time, he had to placate other Islamic activists outside the government. One such was Dr. Israr Ahmad, a fellow member of the Jama'At-i Islami. According to Dr. Israr, as he likes to be known, Mawdudi changed after his release from prison in the 1950s. He retreated "from his fundamentalist position and instead

sought allegiance, first with the religious groups and then with avowedly secular political parties." Mawdudi, in other words, tacitly cooperated with the very government that he openly criticized; he only appeared to be remaking Pakistan in the image of true Islam. As a result of this shortfall between words and actions, Dr. Israr resigned from the Jama'At in 1957. Later, in 1974, he formed his own organization, Tanzim-i Islam. His project in many ways resembles Mawdudi's, as Vali Nasr has pointed out.[93] Yet there are two major differences. First, Dr. Israr adamantly excluded women from the public work force, stressing the need to "honor" them for their unique domestic roles. (Mawdudi had also advocated the seclusion of women, until the 1964 elections, when he did an about-face and supported, albeit half-heartedly, the candidacy of a woman who was running for president against Ayub Khan!) Second, Dr. Israr understood that a religious movement, to succeed in the late twentieth century, required modern media. Skillfully he used both television and overseas travel to project the image of a worldwide organization: reaching beyond Pakistan, he reinforced his local, regional, and national standing as the bellwether of Islamic ideals. He often seemed to use media professionals, whether journalists, radio commentators, or television program planners, to his own ends. Once, during a 1982 visit to Pakistan, I picked up the English evening newspaper, The Leader, only to find the headline: PAKISTAN ON THE VERGE OF ISRARIZATION. The lead article went on to highlight how the growing influence of Tanzim-i Islam was feared in many quarters, not least among professional women.

The worse did not come to pass, however, because the Zia al-Haq regime realized that its own fundamentalist image was not served by this headstrong Punjabi activist. Since the Pakistani media is government controlled, Dr. Israr could be, and was, denied access to the airwaves and also to the headlines. His star faded, as the nation-state in Pakistan made clear that it was the decisive forum for shaping acceptable Islamic ideology. When Benazir Bhutto came to power in the fall of 1988, Dr. Israr suffered a further setback: female domesticity could no longer be flaunted as the sole appropriate model of Islamic womanhood.

Other expressions of fundamentalism have also been undercut by the lack of popular support for either the Jama'At-i Islami or its competitors, many of which are advocates of local ethnic nationalisms. Muhajirs are the Urdu-speaking refugees from India who settled in the Sind region of Pakistan,

especially in the large cities of Karachi and Hyderabad. They have become Sindhis by default: though at first some were drawn to the Jama'At-i Islami, they now embrace a variant of Sindhi nationalism and advocate refugees' rights, rather than religious norms, through secular political parties.

During the 1990s Islamic fundamentalism, though partially eclipsed in Pakistan, has not died out. It simmers because the social, ethnic, and economic unrest that continues to paralyze much of Pakistani public life cannot be easily or quickly ended. As crises recur, one may expect the clarion cry for a "simple" solution, one rooted in the Qur'an and in age-old precepts. Yet its appeal will be not to the masses but mainly to members of the bloated government bureaucracy. It will also have little appeal to urban, underemployed young professionals who want to distance themselves from both religious and ethnic politics. Most of its supporters will be men, though they will claim the support of women, even as they argue that their mission is to defend the honor of their own female family members.

The long-range message from Pakistan is cautionary: while no one would be foolish enough to say that religious activism or a variant of fundamentalism will not influence Pakistan's future, the lessons of the past fifty years suggest that fundamentalist ideology will continue to elicit a limited response, its declamatory excesses more evident than its programmatic achievements.

**** Egypt

Principal dates and rulers in the modern era:

| 1882 | 'Urabi Revolt and British Occupation |

| 1936 | Limited independence from England

| 1936–52 | King Faruq |

| 1952 | Free Officers' Revolution |

| 1954–70 | Gamal 'Abd al-Nasser |

| 1956 | Suez Crisis |

| 1967 | June War with Israel |

| 1970–81 | Anwar Sadat |

| 1973 | October War with Israel |

| 1979 | Camp David Accords with Israel |

| 1981 | Sadat’s assassination by Islamic fundamentalists |

| 1981- | Hosni Mubarak |

| 1992 | Assassination of journalist Farag Foda by Islamic fundamentalists |

Many observers think of Egypt as the heartland of the Arab and the African worlds. Located at a strategic juncture between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, in the heart of the Middle East, Egypt has spearheaded both the expansion of European commercialism and indigenous reaction to external manipulation. The anger of its intellectuals against the British occupiers was first heard in the nineteenth century and echoed in the newly founded presses of Cairo and Alexandria, which reached far beyond their borders.[94] Calling for the expulsion of foreigners, Egyptians hoped to challenge European world hegemony by counterposing to it a modernized civilization at once Arab and Islamic, with Egypt in the vanguard. Not all Egyptians were so utopian, however. Not all espoused Pan-Arabism or “greater” Egypt. Other elites, both political and commercial, accommodated to the shift in commercial and strategic options offered by the British presence. At the same time, the large majority of Egyptians experienced the colonial and postcolonial era only in an indirect sense: they remained peasants (fellahin), often in debt to absentee landlords, and for them survival was—and is—the overriding concern.

Two parallel but divergent groups protested against British influence in Egypt. During the early years of the twentieth century, the nationalist movement coalesced around the figure of Sa<d Zaghlul. He himself had been inspired by the leading light of Islamic reformism, Muhammad ‘Abduh, and founded the opposition Wafd party on principles that reflected an elision of political independence with religious dedication to Islam. Formal independence was granted in 1922, yet British control of defense and foreign

affairs persisted. Zaghlul died in 1927, still protesting. Others continued to protest till the Wafdist and the British finally signed a treaty in 1936. Yet extremists demanded total British withdrawal, a withdrawal that did not seem possible as long as King Faruq, who had succeeded to the throne in 1936, ruled.

Challenging not only the British and his royal lackey but also the Egyptian nationalists was a group called the Muslim Brothers. Formally established in 1929 under the leadership of Hasan al-Banna, they advocated nothing less than the restoration of Islamic identity to all levels of Egyptian society, but particularly the government. They were less confident than either the reformers or early nationalists that independence from foreign rule would bring a renewed dedication to Islamic norms.

Their fears proved correct when an army coup brought the Free Officers to power in 1952, with Gamal ‘Abd al-Nasir (Nasser) assuming full control in 1954.[95] Nasser claimed to free Egypt from British tutelage, and the Suez Crisis of 1956, as well as later flirtations with the Soviet Union, seemed to confirm his nonaligned status. Yet Nasser also governed through a centralizing bureaucratic state that changed the rhetoric but little of the substance of the monarchist era. Despite the high-sounding claims made by and about Nasser, Egypt did not experience either a social or an economic revolution under his rule.

Nor did it experience a religious revolution. Nasser was not antipathetic to Islam: like other officers who cooperated in the coup of 1952, his first views had been shaped by a madrasa education. Yet religion for Nasser played essentially an instrumental role, to strengthen the bonds between Egypt and other Muslim nations, but above all to draw attention to Egypt as the hub of the Muslim world. He stopped far short of acclaiming Egypt an Islamic state. To Nasser, as to Ayub Khan in Pakistan, the shari’A or Islamic law should not be used as a technical term signaling public commitment to Islamic ideals. The shari’A portended a retreat from, not an advance into, the modern world. Yet for many observant Muslims, the honor of Islam was intertwined with the observance of the shari’A; relaxing or denying its influence was tantamount to defaming Islam. While Nasser never officially denied the shari’A, he held it at arm’s

length from his own ideological repertoire. In Nasser’s Egypt the shari’A remained, but it became an option that was voluntary rather than mandatory, its compliance private rather than public. In 1952 Nasser abolished the Mixed courts, in which British judges applied British law in Egypt, a detested legacy of colonial rule, yet two years later he launched a single state secular system that, in effect, superseded the shari’A courts as well as the minority religious courts (established for Christians and Jews).

It is hardly surprising that in the same year, 1954, Nasser became the target of an assassination attempt by a member of the Muslim Brothers. Though the attempt failed, it highlighted what was already apparent to many: Nasser’s socialist ideology was on a collision course with nascent Islamic fundamentalism. Fundamentalists could not gain the center of power, but they could challenge all those who used power in ways that they construed to be against the highest ideals of Islam.

Far from rejecting Islam, Nasser did not hesitate to co-opt state-appointed religious functionaries in order to issue decrees approving what he did, while at the same time denouncing the “terrorist” activities of the Muslim Brothers. As was the case in Pakistan, it was not a war between Islam and non-Islam, but between competing versions of Islam.

To his opponents, however, Nasser was merely projecting a Muslim veneer on a secular and foreign reality: he was dressing up European ideas and Western myths in Arab clothes. While Nasser may have been indulging in a game of political charades, he was also appealing to a major, crucial constituency: the Arab middle classes, who wanted to maintain the status quo of a progressive bureaucratic state. It may have been impossible for Nasser to advocate both Arab socialism, which supported class interests through government control, and economic justice for the masses. Through Nasserism, an ideology of Arab unity projected far beyond the borders of Egypt, he invoked distributive justice while pursing the interests of those who remained directly dependent on him.[96]

The year 1967 proved to be the year of destiny for Nasser. As the symbol of Arab leadership, he brought Egypt and its Arab neighbors into open confrontation with Israel. The result was a rapid and catastrophic defeat for Egypt that only confirmed in the eyes of his critics what they had said all along about Nasser: his temporizing policies could not withstand the test of time.[97]

Nasser threatened to resign, but by popular demand he remained in power. His stature was such that for a time he seemed to experience a psychological recuperation transcending his military debacle. Yet he died in 1970. The pharaonic tradition of statesmanship did not die with him. Nasser had inherited it from King Faruq, and Anwar Sadat, succeeding Nasser, adapted the same authoritarian structure of the Egyptian state to his own ends. Like Nasser, he failed to deal with the massive, underlying social inequities perpetuated by what one writer has called the “hydropolitics of the Nile.”[98] Though Sadat did achieve a pyrrhic victory over Israel in the 1973 war, the gap between the ideals of an Islamic state and the reality of a secular, pragmatic government became even more apparent in the 1970s, especially after the Camp David accords of 1978.

In October 1981 Sadat arrived at his moment of destiny. Was it inevitable that he would be killed by representatives of those who opposed him? Was it inevitable that his killers would be a clandestine unit of fundamentalists who had infiltrated the Egyptian army? The answer, as analysis after analysis makes clearer and clearer, is no. Khalid Islambouli and his accomplices were fixated on Sadat the image rather than Sadat the man. They blamed all the shortcomings of present-day Egypt on Sadat’s refusal to enshrine the shari’A as the law of the land. Instead of an Islamic state, he had tried to jumpstart the stagnant Egyptian economy through an opening (infitah) to the West. Instead of a reforged Arab alliance against Israel, he had made peace with Israel at Camp David. And so Islambouli and his accomplices attacked Sadat as a secular despot ignoring the ideals of both Islam and Arab unity. They wanted to kill the pharaoh. Sadat the symbol embodied the pharaonic despot whom fundamentalists, along with others, had come to revile. They killed the symbol but scarcely affected the system.

The turbulence of Egyptian politics should not obscure the issue that matters most about fundamentalism and fundamentalists: winning the battle for Islamic legitimacy. Yet fundamentalists have no monopoly on either religious rhetoric or religious praxis. Throughout the postcolonial era of Egyptian history, “Islam [has] remained the widest and most effective basis for consensus despite all efforts to promote nationalism, patriotism, secularism, and socialism.”[99] But consensus for whom? Islam has come to mean divergent values and conflicting norms for different Egyptians. All attempts at constitutional legitimation in Egypt have reflected pervasive loyalty to Islam. In 1964 under Nasser and again in 1971 under Sadat, Islam was designated as the state religion of Egypt. The people’s council (majlis ash-sha<b), appointed by the government, has continued to receive proposals for heightening the state’s public commitment to Islamic norms. Opposition political parties vie with one another as well as with the government in claiming the mantle of Islamic legitimacy.

In such an atmosphere, suffused, as it is, with the symbols and sanctity of Islam, it is imperative to identify who the fundamentalists are. It is not enough to analyze their ideological claims or to chart their public attacks. One must also see what classes of Egyptian society they represent. Those who have been identified as fundamentalist invariably come from upwardly mobile middle-class backgrounds: they are not the poor, downtrodden, and dispossessed, but rather those who have had sufficient education to perceive another reality than the one they daily confront. They are underemployed doctors or engineers, or journeymen technicians with no stable career path. They may also be marginalized merchants or disgruntled army personnel. They have enough education to frame their protest in either-or ideological categories, categories that admit of black and white but not gray Mawdudi was a harbinger of all Islamic fundamentalists: seeing whatever was not Islam as shirk or unbelief, he could attack a pervasive enemy, without ever once suggesting how that enemy was to be transformed into an observant cobeliever.

The postcolonial experiences of Egypt and Pakistan provide a benchmark for some of the enduring arguments about political Islam. Separation of religion from politics became a trip wire, a shibboleth for all that was wrong with colonialism and its legacy, and all that was right about Islamic norms. Fundamentalists refuse to acknowledge the separation of church and state,

waging an internal jihad against all who pretend to clarify and enforce such a separation. Islam, in their view, is both church and state. The Arabic words din (religion) and dawla (state) are conjoined with the meaning of Islam. In the words of an early member of the Muslim Brothers, “politics is part of religion. Caesar and what belongs to Caesar is for God Almighty alone Islam commanded a unity of life. To impose upon Islam the Christian separation of loyalties [into church and state] is to deny it its essential meaning and very existence.”[100]

Islam then becomes a giant anomaly. On the one hand, it is more than a religion. It encompasses both the spiritual and the political, the private and the public domains. Attention to one sphere presumes engagement in the other. To do less is to trivialize and confound Islam. To talk about a mosque-state division in Islam is to talk about dividing Islam.

Yet at the same time, religious specialists are not in charge of making Islam into an overarching, socioeconomic, religiopolitical reality. For the Muslim Brothers and their various subgroups in Egypt, as for the Islamic Society in Pakistan, emphasis on the unity of Islam does not imply the creation of a theocracy. Sunni Muslims attach minimal importance to a class of religious specialists; the <ulama are ordinary Muslims who happen to be religious functionaries. They are not endowed with the high rank or social prestige of Shi<ite clerics. Islamic fundamentalism represents the radicalizing synthesis of Muslim laymen, not clergy.

In the postcolonial era, the nation-state is the inescapable context for all public life, and the Egyptian fundamentalists who challenged the political leadership in Cairo did so by claiming that they, not the army officers turned politicians, were the true claimants to the seventh-century Medinan state inaugurated by the Prophet Muhammad. Nationalism, in their view, resurrected the kind of tribalism or jahiliyya that Muhammad opposed and that early Muslims temporarily overcame. In its stead, there should be a transnational patriotism that seeks the benefit of all Muslims everywhere. Sayyid Qutb, the Muslim Brother who opposed Nasser and was executed on charges of sedition in 1966, used a string of homologies to stress how Islam, if correctly defined, offered a nationalism worthy of

Muslims. In true Islam, wrote Qutb, “nationalism is belief, homeland is Dar al-Islam, the ruler is God, and the constitution is the Qur’an.”[101]

As secular nationalism falters in the Muslim world, one might expect religious fundamentalism, also known as Islamism, to surge forward. That would be a facile, and possibly inaccurate, expectation. Though the effective appeal of nationalism is to a limited, sophisticated urban elite, the power of the modern state allows these same elites to exercise coercive authority over a much wider segment of the population. At the same time, fundamentalists, despite the religious idiom of their discourses, are handicapped by the counterappeal of other religious authorities, and the lack of concrete goals in their stated programs. Their greatest appeal is to urban discontents with at least high-school-level education. Seldom do they appeal to the greater number of their semiliterate or uneducated countrymen. And, as in Pakistan, their rhetorical power exceeds their pragmatic accomplishments even when they provide, as some have, social, medical, and educational services that surpass those of the often corrupt, ever inefficient state bureaucracy.

If the pattern of protest that marks Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan and Egypt is in part the legacy of British colonial rule and in part the response to regional tensions and national dilemmas arising from the post-World War II era, can the same be said for Muslim majority countries that had been under French colonial rule? To explore that question I will focus on two Arab/ Muslim countries that experienced French colonial rule: Syria and Tunisia.

**** Syria

Principal dates and rulers:

| 1914–17 | Ottoman conscription of Syrians during World War I led to widespread famine; Armenian massacres |

| 1920–46 | French mandate |

| 1946 | Independence

| 1958–63 | Egyptian-Syrian alliance (United Arab Republic)

| 1963 | Baath party comes to power

| 1964 | First Hama riots against Baath secularism

| 1967 | June war with Israel

| 1967–70 | Hafiz al-Asad consolidates power in Correctionist Movement and becomes president |

| 1973 | New “secular” constitution; October war with Israel |

| 1976 | Deployment of troops to Lebanon

| 1982 | Israeli invasion of Lebanon and subsequent de facto division of Lebanon into Syrian and Israeli spheres of influence
Muslim Brothers’ uprising in Hama crushed |

| 1994 | Death of Basil Asad, oldest son and likely successor to Hafiz al-Asad |

Syria, like Egypt, remained within the Ottoman sphere of influence for nearly four centuries, from the early sixteenth to the early twentieth century. It was not till the defeat of the Turks at the end of World War I that the French established a mandate over the region. Its unpopularity led to an early uprising (1925–27), a treaty with France before World War II and finally full independence in 1946.

Independence did not bring stability, however: Syrians were merely left with a geographical entity, that piece of territory from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates that the French had ruled, together with Lebanon, since 1920. The struggle to take control of postcolonial Syria was waged along several regional, sectarian, class, and ideological lines. Over time it became a battle between a landowning, urban, mercantile elite and a rising group of rural army officers who favored modernization within a praetorian state.

It was under the banner of the Baath party that the latter group won, and since 1963 they have ruled in Syria. The current president, Hafiz al-Asad, was a rural army officer turned Baathist. He became the undisputed ruler of Syria after deposing a party rival in 1970. To maintain his power base in

Damascus, he had to outwit even his own brother, the ambitious Rifaat al-Asad, whom he sent into exile in 1984.[102]

Within the context of regional politics, many observers have criticized Asad for the severity with which he has punished dissenters from his autocratic rule. The showcase for Asad's alleged brutality is his handling of the Hama rebellion in 1982. What begs for amplification, however, is the historical background to the Hama rebellion. It requires attention both to the social formation of the fundamentalist protestors who spearheaded that rebellion and to the search for religious legitimation on the part of a precarious, minoritarian regime.

The Muslim Brothers have existed in Syria almost as long as in Egypt. Appearing in the mid-1930s, they opposed the French mandate and resented the benefits it conferred on the modernizing sector of the Syrian economy. Those who supported the Brothers clustered in the region around Hama, an ancient trading center some 150 miles north of Damascus. Merchants and landlords, they numbered about one-sixth of Syria's population. In the 1960s, the Brothers sparked two organized protests against the Baathist regime. The first took the form of a series of merchant strikes in 1964 that openly challenged Baath policies as un-Islamic, secular, and therefore unacceptable. The first Hama riot forced the new government to intervene and even to shell a mosque. It was followed by another strike the next year. Once again, the government had to intervene, and once again it broke the strike with force.

When Hafiz al-Asad took control of the Baath party in 1970, the Brothers were initially silent, but by 1973 they had come to view him as an Alawite secularist. After all, Asad, like Nasser, his erstwhile hero, had sponsored a new constitution, and like Nasser's, his new constitution did not enshrine Islam as the state religion. Merchant strikes and violence spread to Hama. Asad put down the protest but at the same time declared that only a Muslim could serve as Syria's president. Yet he remained an Alawite, and many still regarded Alawites as heretics. To put to rest qualms about the Islamic status of Alawites, Asad set about projecting an Islamic image for himself and his family. He launched two architectural projects in his native village of Qardaha, situated in the heart of the Alawite mountains. For his deceased

mother he built a lavish mosque, and for his oldest son Basil, who was tipped to be his successor but died in 1994, a vast funerary complex. Reminiscent of a Muslim saint's shrine, it features Qur'anic recitation and projects Basil as, above all, an observant Muslim.

From Damascus Asad increased the salaries of religious functionaries throughout Syria. Nor did he stint in his patronage of religious sites, either building new monuments or restoring historic landmarks. His pride may also be remembered as his folly: the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus now memorializes Asad through his signature on the band of one of its newly rebuilt minarets.

Throughout the 1970s the face of Syria was transformed both politically and economically. In 1973 Syria, along with Egypt, was drawn into still another war with Israel. Despite initial victories, which included the Syrian recapture of Qunaitra, both Egypt and Syria were finally defeated. Yet over twenty years later the Baathist regime continues to celebrate what is lauded on state-run television every October as "the victory of Qunaitra." Political obfuscation can succeed only because economic progress during the same period has been real, at least for some Syrians. While the highest levels of Baath leadership have remained exclusively male, some women have emerged as public figures: both the minister of education and the minister of culture are women, the latter having held her post for almost two decades. Women have also been encouraged to work, and to work at higher paying, salaried jobs where they were often trained in skills denied to previous generations of women. The Women's Union, a government-sponsored group, advocates causes such as greater female employment opportunities and increased literacy for women of all classes. The literacy rate of Syrian women and their prominence in education have become touted achievements of Baathist rule during the past three decades.

Both women and men gained from the increase of petrodollar profits in the Gulf after 1973, since some of those profits were channeled to Syria through labor and services. This meant that goods and services improved but prices also escalated. The newly rich and the newly empowered benefited at the same time that traditional mercantile classes felt slighted or even betrayed. Their frustration took on an added religious coloration when Syria intervened

on behalf of the Maronite Christians and against the Palestinians, both Muslim and Christian, in the early stages of the Lebanese civil war (1976). The legacy of that intervention lingers among Muslim activists. Initially it spurred Sunni Syrians who opposed Asad to identify him as a secularist and to challenge the non-Sunni, specifically Alawi, tone of his leadership.

During this same period the Brothers expanded their influence and trained cadres in urban warfare. Mosque study circles on weekends became a recruitment nexus for their cells. When a noted Hama cleric was imprisoned and died, they also used his funeral as a rallying point for mobilizing new recruits. By 1976 they had embarked on an assassination campaign against key state officials. When Asad's brother Rifaat was attacked in February 1978, many began to suspect that there was sympathy for the Brothers even within the officer corps.

The struggle escalated in June 1979: a terrorist unit of the Brothers attacked an artillery school, killing sixty cadets and wounding many others. Asad's response was the stick and the carrot. The stick fell on the Brothers: three hundred of them were imprisoned. The carrot was extended to other members of the Sunni community, as more and more Sunnis were awarded government posts.

The Brothers continued to agitate, and a crackdown in 1980 was directed at the city of Aleppo, in the far north on the same trade route with Hama. Five thousand people were arrested, hundreds killed. In a single helicopter attack on a Brothers' outpost, two hundred of their number were killed. The local merchants of Aleppo attempted a strike, parallel to the one previously declared in Hama, but it fizzled and failed.

By spring 1980 the Baathists had introduced a special law that made membership in the Muslim Brothers an offense punishable by death. Though public membership disappeared overnight, the Brothers, operating clandestinely, tried to assassinate Asad in June 1980. They failed, but his security forces killed over five hundred Brethren who were serving time in prison.

The Brothers now became part of a united Islamic Front that opposed Asad as an unbeliever, not only because of his draconian measures against them but because of the secular constitution he introduced in 1973 at the same time that he required the president of Syria to be a Muslim. It is impossible to calculate how broad was the social basis for the Islamic Front. It seems more coherent than its counterpart in Egypt, yet it also seems more vulnerable to isolation and defeat, for behind the rhetoric of opposition to the Baathist regime there emerged a low-key success story: the constitution, combined with Syria's modernizing prosperity, allayed the fears and raised the hopes of many groups in urban areas. It also appealed to rural peasants and, of course, to loyalist elements of the army.

But the Brothers were able to strike. A bomb attack in late 1981 killed five hundred people in central Damascus. It was followed by a military plot to overthrow Asad in January 1982; over four hundred members of the army were purged.

It was against this backdrop that the rebellion in Hama occurred in February 1982. From Asad's view, it was hardly an isolated incident, but rather the latest and most portentous in a series of threatening actions by his declared enemies. His response was swift and brutal. Between ten thousand and twenty-five thousand people were killed. As whole districts were razed, many families were allegedly taken from their homes and shot en masse.

The campaign worked. Hama halted the Islamic challenge to Asad's rule. It epitomized not a religious struggle but a struggle for power in which religion was used by both sides as a mask for deeper grievances and more palpable stakes. The merchants and landlords who were the backbone of support for the Brothers and the Islamic Front numbered about one-sixth of the Syrian population. The Baath party relied on workers, peasants, minorities, and army personnel. Its constituency accounted for about one-fourth of the Syrian population. The chief issue did not concern Islam but modernization. It was not an up or down decision on Islamic statehood, but rather a process involving countless daily decisions on how the country modernizes, who benefits, and who is in charge. It was also in part regional. The merchants,

landlords, and religious classes from the North resented the influence of other groups. They could appeal to some disaffected student cadres and military units but not to broader constituencies. Even though upper-middle-class professionals denounced the government as authoritarian, they were unenthusiastic about an Islamic state. Teachers and professors might sympathize with the Brothers, yet they remained in the employ of the state. Little support came from working classes or peasants. Indeed, these groups, which represented the majority of Syrians, had benefited from Baathist social policy and were also often controlled via trade unions or the Peasant Union, both of which were allied to the Baath party.[103]

If one charts political conflict on socioeconomic lines, it is possible to say of modern-day Syria that the Baath party represents a secular state with rural constituents opposing an urban mercantile class professing Sunni orthodoxy. Framed in this perspective, Islamic fundamentalism stands out in Syria for what it is everywhere: an ideology of protest that represents the interests of specific socioeconomic groups yet claims to project all of Islam under the banner of those interests. It is not often that the conflict reaches the battle proportions that it did in Hama in 1982, but when it does, the outcome is clear: the Syrian state, with its powerful economic and technological base, its professional army and security forces, can suppress any rebellion. The rebellion is labeled sedition, the rebels traitors. The state wins militarily but it also wins psychologically, for many afterward are led to applaud the rational nature of the state's response to terrorism. "The state is said to be (by its custodians, by its many, many spokesmen) the only dike against great upheaval and disorder."[104] Was it possible that many Syrians in the aftermath of Hama thought to themselves: "Better one month of Hama than fourteen years of Lebanon"?[105] If so, the chief legacy of French colonial rule in the Levant would seem to be a predisposition to accept the worst excesses of authoritarian government rather than to opt for change. Was French colonial rule therefore more destructive of indigenous resilience than its British counterpart? Not perceptibly, for comparison of Syria with its Arab neighbors does not reveal a qualitative difference. Authoritarianism and popular complicity or cooptation seem to be the rule.

Even were Hafiz al-Asad to be replaced as leader of Syria by the end of the current century, the new ruler would be, at best, an "enlightened" despot, one who invokes Islam but, like Asad, stops far short of implementing an

Islamic state. After all, that state would have to straddle Shi<i and Sunni sensibilities, since the Alawites are much closer to Iranian than Saudi notions of Islamic observance. What modern Syrian history seems to favor is the continuation of a secularist polity that genuflects toward Qom as much as Mecca, favoring Shi<i piety around its own monument to martyrdom at Sidi Zaynab, outside Damascus, as well as commercial and political ties with Tehran.

**** Tunisia

Principal dates and rulers:

| 1881 | French Protectorate |

| 1956 | Independence |

| 1956–87 | Habib Bourguiba |

| 1987- | Zayn al-'Abidin Ben 'Ali |

| 1990 | An-Nahda party, also known as Le Mouvement de tendace islamique, outlawed, and its leader, Rachid al-Ghannouchi, sent into exile |

Tunisia, at first glance, may seem like an unlikely candidate to include in a survey of the engagement with Muslim protest movements known as Islamic fundamentalism. It is a small North African country of seven million people, wedged between two magnets of revolutionary fervor, Algeria and Libya. If one wanted to chart the aftermath of French colonial rule and the agency of indigenous Muslim activists, one might expect to profit more from a study of Islamic fundamentalism in Algeria or even distant Morocco than Tunisia.

Tunisia, however, offers some unique characteristics that highlight the nature of Islamic fundamentalism in general. Like Syria, it was shaped by French colonial policy, above all in the educational sphere and in the development of the army. Like Syria, too, it has prospered not so much through its natural resources, which are meager, as through its ability to integrate into the commercial patterns of the larger Mediterranean world. The first of the North

African French colonies to obtain independence (in 1956), it has been dominated for the past forty years by one party, the Destourian Socialist party, and shaped by one man, Habib Bourguiba, leader of the independence movement and president-for-life. At least Bourguiba was supposed to be president-for-life, but in 1987, though still alive, he was declared unfit to rule. Through a bloodless military coup he was deposed and replaced by the current president, a former securities force chief, Zayn al-‘Abidin Ben ‘Ali.

The major reason for studying Tunisia goes beyond its French connection and authoritarian politics. It has to do with the expressiveness of its ideologues: along with the fundamentalist movements in Pakistan and Egypt, the Tunisian opposition ranks as among the most articulate in the entire Muslim world.[106] It has played only a marginal role in the history of modern Tunisia, yet it has eloquently voiced both its laments and its hopes. Faced with intractable opposition, and against impossible odds, Tunisian fundamentalists throw into bold relief the dilemma of other postcolonial Muslim societies: the struggle to forge a new identity against forces identified with the colonial period and yet the desire to recuperate agency as Muslims allied with economic as well as political progress.

Tunisia resembles Syria in more than its Francophone legacy. Politically it too has the power of the central government vested in one city, the capital city. From Tunis and through Tunis all the mechanisms of the modern nation-state are channeled. Bourguiba, like Asad, defined the state in his image, though Bourguiba even more than Asad might be portrayed as a rank secularist. Bourguiba was a product of the bilingual education system that the French had introduced in order to bridge the modern and traditional cultures of Tunisia. After completing his education in France, he became a lawyer active in the nationalist movement. Immediately after World War II, he was challenged by an Islamic rival, Salah Ben Youssef. Ben Youssef based himself at the most prominent mosque, the Zaytuna, in Tunis and drew support for his cause from other Muslim countries. While Bourguiba stressed themes of progress and development, building indigenous power through trade unions and maintaining external leverage through ties with the French, Ben Youssef appealed to traditional merchant and landowner interests, accenting Arab-Islamic solidarity rather than Tunisian national identity.

Ben Youssef’s challenge faded because nationalism, not Pan-Islamism, was on the ascendant in the late 1950s and 1960s. Bourguiba became president and almost immediately sponsored a Code of Personal Conduct. It was made the law of the land in August 1956. It outflanked while also delegitimating Muslim law (the shari’A). Most important were its provisions in the realm of family law. Polygamy was abolished, judicial divorce granted to women, a minimum age fixed for marriage, and mutual consent of both bride and bridegroom required. Women also were given the right to vote and to hold political office. Education was made free for both men and women, at the same time that women were to be given equal pay for equal work, as well as an equal chance to be hired.[107]

The challenge of the Code of Personal Status was followed by the abolition of the shari’A courts. At the same time, charitable endowments (the habus) were incorporated within the state bureaucracy. The Islamic educational system also became redefined as an extension of the Tunis government. Religion followed suit, as the state gave Zaytuna mosque in Tunis, together with all other mosques, maintenance allowances, at the same time that it directly subsidized preachers’ salaries.

Whatever hope religious leaders may have had for intellectual or institutional independence from the Bourguiba regime was removed by still another provision: all those who sought government employment were required to be bilingual. “As a consequence of these reforms, that fraction of the political elite whose symbolic capital was based on knowledge of Arabic and Islam and on the control of Islamic institutions was dispossessed of political power and social mobility.”[108]

To complete his credentials as a thoroughgoing secularist, Bourguiba proposed an unprecedented change in February 1960: he attempted to eliminate one of the defining pillars of Islamic ritual observance, the Ramadan fast. Anyone who has traveled in the Muslim world or lived in a Muslim country must be sensitive to the tenacity of the Ramadan fast. It requires all observant Muslims who have reached young adulthood to abstain from food, drink, and sexual liaison during the period from dawn to dusk for twenty-eight days.

How, then, could Bourguiba expect his fellow Tunisians to welcome his proposal to end the Ramadan fast? Because, he argued, such fasting impeded national development, and what was needed in Tunisia was to break the back of underdevelopment. Nothing less than a holy war or jihad against underdevelopment was required if Tunisia expected to enter the competitive ranks of its industrialized Mediterranean neighbors. It was not merely to get ahead but to survive that Tunisians needed to increase their productivity. And so, in the name of a higher principle, the survival of an Islamic society, Bourguiba called for the renunciation of a lower principle, the prolonged fasting of Ramadan.[109]

However flawed the logic of his appeal, Bourguiba's declaration was consistent with a pattern of ambiguity that beguiled his enemies, even as it strengthened his own support. Bourguiba never renounced Islam; he merely claimed that his own interpretation of its tenets superseded that of the traditional classes. He even sought and obtained the approval of religious functionaries for his 1956 Code of Personal Conduct. No urban revolts or assassination attempts followed its implementation. And in the 1959 constitution Bourguiba did what Asad later did: he proclaimed Islam to be the state religion and required that the president of the republic be a Muslim. At no time during his more than thirty-year rule did Bourguiba, his ministers, or his party reject the Islamic focus of Tunisian identity. They never became explicit secularists in the tradition of Kemal Mustafa Ataturk, the founder and icon of modern-day Turkey.

Even when he hit a trip wire, Bourguiba knew how to keep his balance. Unlike the Code of Personal Conduct, the banning of the Ramadan fast did not win the approval of most <ulama. To be sure, some modernist Sheikhs did support Bourguiba, declaring, "As long as one conserves one's faith, religion can adapt."[110] Yet most religious leaders rebelled. Defying Bourguiba, they continued to urge the Ramadan fast, and in one instance, in the city of Kairouan, a mob of students attacked the governor's house. Eight deaths resulted. Other public reactions were sporadic and less violent. Even when some civil students and university students did eat in public to show their support of Bourguiba, they were ignored rather than attacked. Most Tunisians quietly persisted in keeping the fast of Ramadan, and Bourguiba

turned his attention to other reforms: he restricted religious education to one hour per week in primary school, and he banned the wearing of the veil in any staterun system of education. Even without the effective ban of the Ramadan fast, he hoped that the effects of secular education would eventually produce the secular lifestyle and competitive national economy that he sought for Tunisia in the late twentieth century.

In the face of such a populist autocrat, a determined modernizer with widespread appeal, how could fundamentalists hope to effect any change? They did not pick the option of armed revolt, as in Syria, or assassination of public officials, as in Egypt and Syria. Nor did they attempt to foment large-scale civil unrest, as in Iran. The cyclical pattern of economic life in Tunisia did cause several explosive incidents in the late 1970s and early 1980s—the Black Thursday riots in Tunis in January 1978, the Gafsah revolt of January 1980, and the bread riots of January 1984—but none of these was either initiated or supported by fundamentalist groups. Unlike the Syrian case, where the socioeconomic basis for fundamentalist anger, dissent, and open revolt was evident, the leading religious activists of Tunis attempted to influence the populace at large through literary and cultural media. Several journals served to promulgate the views of an Islamic opposition to Bourguiba and his party. But the government seldom closed them down or arrested their editors. Instead, the Tunis bureaucrats selectively removed the most flagrant abuses to which the Islamists drew attention, while also stressing their own Islamic convictions and behavior. Only in December 1979 was a fundamentalist journal, Al-Ma<rifa, the official publication of the Mouvement de tendace islamique (MTI), banned, and then on the flimsiest of pretexts: because it dared to criticize the Saudi regime for its handling of an attack on the Meccan Grand Mosque (discussed below).

In the late 1980s, however, after the removal of Bourguiba from office, the Tunisian authorities became less tolerant of cultural protest. Bourguiba’s successor, Ben ‘Ali, supported a law disallowing any political group specifically affiliated with any race, creed, or religion (as had Syria and Egypt). Because the leading fundamentalist group, the MTI, headed by Rachid al-Ghannouchi, is called Le Mouvement de tendance islamique, it is now banned as a political party in Tunisia’s avowedly pluralist system, and al-Ghannouchi himself has been sent into exile.

Both the ban and the exile have outraged some of the marginalized intellectual and social groups in Tunis. It may yet undermine the current regime, especially if economic conditions become more desperate once Tunisia's long-protected agricultural and textile export markets are opened, as they will be in 2007, according to a free-trade agreement signed with the European Union in 1995.

Yet the social sources for fundamentalist appeal in Tunisia are as limited as they were in Syria. The major bases for recruitment are the universities. Tunisia's population is continuing to grow at a rapid rate (2.1 percent annually), with over two-thirds of its nine million citizens under twenty-five years of age. Many of those who attend university come from salaried middle classes. Not only the parents but increasingly their children are coming to face what one observer has described as "a blocked future and downward mobility,"[111] even though female literacy and life expectancy continue to soar.[112] It is fundamentalists who benefit when despair over a secular future runs high among urban professionals. Not surprisingly, over 80 percent of the membership of MTI comes from this group, as do 75 percent of its leaders. The remaining 25 percent come from white-collar and blue-collar workers, either unemployed or underemployed.

The similarity of their profile to the Islamists studied in Egypt are striking. In both instances the majority of the members are under thirty. In geographical origins both are urban or of recent rural origin. A minor difference concerns parentage: while in Egypt two-thirds of the fathers were middle-level government employees, in Tunisia almost half of the fathers were urban or rural workers. The major difference seems to reflect the social fallout from the 1956 Code of Personal Conduct: while in Egypt none of the fundamentalists came from families that had been scarred by divorce or separation, in Tunisia almost a third did come from families that had been so scarred.

Despite the adverse economic circumstances that Tunisia has faced in the 1990s, with upwardly mobile young professionals being caught in a downward cycle of frustration, it is hard to foresee how fundamentalism can

enjoy more than a short-term appeal. First, there is the organizational problem: not all the fundamentalist groups coalesce under one umbrella. Their world views differ, their objectives conflict, their membership compete, each with the other. One group tries to combine socialism with Islamic radicalism: labeling its major journal 15/21, it hopes to elide the fifteenth Islamic century with the imminent twenty-first century of Christian, now Western preference.

More significant is the cultural antipathy of the MTI leadership to all things European. Rachid al-Ghannouchi feels himself alienated from the nationalist movement, his rights deprived since independence: he, and many of his followers, were "educated as Muslims and Arabs, while we could see the country totally molded in the French cultural identity."[113] Like the Syrian Muslim Brethren in Hama, the MTI leadership have been set adrift by the modernizing forces of their new nation-state, but unlike them, MTI has not opted for violent confrontation.

Rachid al-Ghannouchi had but slight ties to groups of the urban poor and the regionally marginalized, even before his exile to London in the early 1990s. Predictions of the late 1980s that Tunisia was on the brink of disaster, and that the government's failure to recognize MTI as a political party would bring about an alliance between Islamic and secular forces, forging links between private citizens and the military that would eventually topple the Ben 'Ali government—such predictions now seem at best premature, at worst hopelessly naive.[114]

There are at least two further reasons why Tunisia seems more stable now than it did a decade ago. One, the option of military intervention, has not been seriously broached in modern Tunisian history. Civilian political institutions are stronger in Tunis than in any neighboring North African or Middle Eastern polity, even though security forces pose an omnipresent, stifling control on social mobility and political experimentation. Another is the anomaly of women's role in Tunisian fundamentalist protests. To the surprise of some, women have actively participated in MTI. Why would young, mostly educated Tunisian women support a group that advocates an Islamic state? The women themselves seem to feel that Islamist organizations "provide well-known male acquaintances and also, by their professed code, guarantee

physical respect."[115] However, a fuller explanation seems to lie in the distance between the goals of Bourguiba's secular utopia and the reality of present-day Tunis. Women have been encouraged to succeed outside traditional, domestic roles. They have tried to emulate the independent-minded women of Europe, and some, such as the teacher/activist and film maker shown in figure 4, have succeeded.

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-3.png][Figure 2. (right) Two veiled women by the sea wall in Tunis.]]

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-2.jpg][Figure 3. (below) A swimsuit ad with veiled passer by in Tunis]]

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-4.jpg][Figure 4. A light moment between the award-winning director Moufida Tlafli (right) and Amel ben Aba, feminist, teacher, and advocate of women's rights (left).]]

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-5.jpg][Figure 5. A feminist perception of the new family code in Tunisia.]]

Yet, even after obtaining a university education, others have been denied the achievements they were taught to expect. Job discrimination and gender segregation persist, despite the longstanding Personal Status Code. Unable to work outside the home and urged by male contemporaries to remain in the home, many Tunisian women have retreated, reclaiming traditional roles while also participating in the Islamist movement.

But women's roles, like Tunisian society in general, are clearly in transition. It is important to stress that the experiment begun by Bourguiba is still young, and that it is still in limbo. Bourguiba himself gave the fundamentalists their best opening when he tried to have nine MTI members retried and hung for a crime of which they had been previously acquitted. The sympathy generated for the MTI from groups that usually did not support them alarmed other members of his party, and it was at this crucial moment, in 1987, that Ben

Ali intervened to depose Bourguiba. Though Ben ‘Ali’s own policies have, in turn, been criticized, it is too early to say that he will not succeed in the art of ambiguity and compromise. It is, after all, a form of art that Tunisians have come to expect of their political leadership.

Above all, it is important to note that Tunisia remains “the only Arab country which has been governed by a mass-supported party, rather than by military dynastic rule, or by a group of notable families.”[116] Its Personal Status Code has also been in effect for thirty-five years; by prohibiting polygamy and attempting to make men and women equal in matters of divorce and inheritance, the Tunisian code exceeds even the secular legislation of Turkey. Indeed, “the code stands out as one of the most progressive pieces of legislation ever promulgated in any Islamic country.”[117] Further modified in 1993, it now provides still more explicit legal guarantees for women, especially in alimony and divorce.

The range of opportunities for Tunisian women is also reflected in their contrasting images, from traditional to modern dress: neither beach ads nor feminist cartoons are precluded from the cosmopolitan public space of modern Tunis. (See figs. 4 and 5.)

By such accomplishments, Tunisians have shown themselves to be both nimble and adaptable. Their stake in the twenty-first century, as the journal 15/21 suggests, may yet depend on adapting Islam to new global challenges, while at the same time maintaining their competitive edge in an increasingly technological and regionally unionized global economy. Civil society has continued to function even in the shell of a praetorian state, suggesting that the French colonial legacy in Tunisia may yet prove to be more positive than it has been in either Algeria or Syria.

**** Saudi Arabia

Principal dates and rulers:

| 1902–32 | ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn Sa’ud contests other Arab chiefs for control of the Arabian peninsula |

| 1927 | Treaty of Jidda, by which the British recognize ‘Abd al-‘Aziz as King of Hijaz and Najd |

| 1932 | Kingdom of Saudi Arabia consolidated |

| 1933 | First oil concession to Aramco |

| 1953 | Death of King ‘Abd al-’Aziz |

| 1953–64 | King Sa’ud |

| 1964 | King Sa’ud deposed, goes into exile, replaced by King Faisal |

| 1975 | King Faisal assassinated |

| 1979 | Mecca mosque rebellion |

| 1975–82 | King Khalid |

| 1982- | King Fahd |

It is a frequent if simplistic argument that Saudi Arabia is the oldest fundamentalist state in the Muslim world. “Having established a state,” argues one writer, “the House of Saud has used Islam to legitimize its dynastic rule. Saudi Arabia is unique. It was created out of a series of Islamic campaigns in modern times, and its character as a fundamentalist polity has remained unchanged since its inception in 1932. It is thus the oldest politically independent Islamic fundamentalist state in the world.”[118]

Or is it? The argument for Saudi-style fundamentalism accords Islamic legitimacy to Saudi Arabia, even while ignoring evidence that the opposite conclusion is equally valid: Saudi Arabia has become a viable nation-state not by implementing Muslim norms but by using religion as a mask. In the name of Islam, the state introduces changes that would otherwise be unacceptable to a population little prepared and even less inclined to engage the modern world.

Saudi Arabia is neither old nor unique. It is a tribal theocracy of very recent origin. There was no unified political entity called Saudi Arabia until the

major provinces of the Arabian peninsula had been conquered by a skilled Hijazi chieftain. That chieftain, the later King ‘Abd al-’Aziz, believed in the puritanical Wahhabi creed. Wahhabi was a name given to the small group that ‘Abd al-’Aziz legitimated by his bold military and diplomatic actions in the 1920s and 1930s. At first he employed religious zealots, the Ikhwan or Brothers (not to confused with the Muslim Brothers of Egypt and Syria), but by 1929 ‘Abd al-’Aziz had outgrown his need for, and his toleration of, his erstwhile Ikhwan supporters. Aided by British weaponry, he attacked and defeated them at Sabila and later that year killed several of their leaders who, after being captured by the British, were dutifully returned to him.

Even before he entered into the treaty with Aramco in 1932, the nimble ‘Abd al-< Aziz was using European assistance to help him dominate and outstrip his rivals on the peninsula. By the Treaty of Jiddah in 1927 he had recognized treaty borders of the sort laid down by the Great Powers after World War I. Though he claimed legitimacy for his kingdom by declaring the Qur’an as state constitution, few among the Qur’an’s lofty verses refer to political structures. Kingship is neither affirmed nor denied in the Qur’an, and so the only basis on which ‘Abd al-’Aziz and his successors can claim Qur’anic legitimacy is by alleging that the king is equal to all other believers. It is to maintain that scriptural facade, and also to perpetuate tribal custom, that ‘Abd al-’Aziz and his successors have held open consultations where subjects can approach and ask them about any matter of public concern. That practice, however, hardly fulfills the Qur’anic mandate (3:158) that the ruler, following the example of the Prophet Muhammad, should consult with those ruled about all matters of governance. There has never been a consultative assembly in Saudi Arabia, nor has any publicly elected body enjoyed the influence that the National Assembly did in neighboring Kuwait during the 1980s.

Saudi history pivots around two facts: (1) the holiest shrines of Islam exist in the western province of the Hijaz, and (2) one-quarter of all proven oil reserves exist underneath the sands of the eastern provinces. Every other significant dimension of Saudi life relates to one of those two “gifts.” Take them away, as if by a magical, whimsical sleight of hand, and Saudi Arabia would be as important in contemporary affairs as the hapless African nation of Chad.

The king of Saudi Arabia is a twentieth-century monarch. He continues a dynasty less than sixty years old. His religious title is “Protector of the Two Holy Places.” The two holy places he is committed to protect are transnational centers of Islamic ritual loyalty: the birthplace of the prophet Muhammad and his first home, Mecca; and the city where he established his first armed polity, Medina. King Fahd protects them, but not as a spiritual leader, for he can make no pronouncement that other Muslims accept as authoritative. Rather, he protects them as the head of a modern-day nation-state. His task is at once simple and impossible: to ensure the hegemony of one tribe, the al-Sa’ud, over an area larger than the United States east of the Mississippi River. Not all Saudis are either Sunnis or Wahhabis; a disaffected Shi<i populace inhabits the strategically significant eastern province of the kingdom. It is demography and economics that make King Fahd’s task manageable: a minute population enjoys stupendous wealth. The total population of native Saudis is less than five million, despite published statistics to the contrary, while the vast income generated by petroleum production and export continues to provide, even with the reduced power of OPEC since the mid-1980s, the basis for large-scale modernizing strategies.

While it is easy to say that “in Saudi Arabia the <ulama enjoy more power and prestige than in any other Sunni state” and even to claim that “they are the key element in bestowing legitimacy on the Saudi regime,”[119] their actual role is, in fact, ceremonial. No group of religious functionaries determines the dominant tone of the state, nor do they set its planning agenda. There are numerous other bureaucrats, many of them members of the royal family, most of them educated abroad, who advise the monarch on such matters.

The usefulness of the <ulama is chiefly exemplified by the one event that will live as the true expression of Saudi Arabian fundamentalism in the twentieth century. It was not initiated by the state but against it. Its leaders did not come from the House of al-Sa’ud or from then King Khalid’s theological advisers but from those who had lost hope in the religious credibility of both the king and his advisers. It is known as the Mecca Mosque incident, and it inspired tremors from Wall Street to Riyadh. It is noteworthy

as a showcase demonstrating how tenuous can be any nation-state’s attempt to co-opt Islamic symbols and discourse.

The Muslim lunar calendar does not coincide with the common era solar calendar. The beginning of the fifteenth-century hijri occurred in November 1979, nearly ten months after the return of Khomeini in triumph from Paris to Tehran. The new century was inaugurated by a revolt against the Saudi monarchy that took place in the heartland of Arabia in the precinct of its holiest mosque. The leader of the movement was a disaffected National Guardsman who had become a theological autodidact. In the province adjacent to the Hijaz, Juhayman ibn Sayf al-<Utayba preached against the corruption of the Saudi state. He had been inspired by one of the king’s theological advisers, Shaikh ‘Abd al-’Aziz ibn Baz, and when Juhayman had first provoked the Saudi authorities in 1978 he had been arrested along with nearly one hundred of his followers. But Shaikh ibn Baz had intervened, procuring his release. Security police monitored his actions thereafter, but not with great efficiency. For Juhayman managed to evade detection as he returned to his anti-Saudi declamations. Now he not only advocated but he also planned for the overthrow of the monarchy. And he found followers. Young theological students, disillusioned and disoriented by the rapid change that took place in the kingdom during the late 1970s, joined Juhayman’s movement.

Juhayman’s message was simple, but his motivation was complex. He believed that King ‘Abd al-’Aziz Ibn Sa’ud had gone astray from the shari’A in the 1920s: disavowing the Ikhwan, the king had become corrupted by collusion with Western forces. But Juhayman’s zeal had a personal as well as a theological motivation, since his grandfather had been among the Ikhwan killed by Ibn Sa’ud, with British assistance, in 1929. Preaching that the expected mahdi, a messianic figure for both Sunni and Shi<i Muslims, would usher in the new century, Juhayman proclaimed his own brother-in-law as the mahdi. The band of modern-day Ikhwan marched on the Great Mosque at Mecca and easily gained control of its sacred precinct. Juhayman then began to preach his message of messianic imminence to the surprised congregants, fully expecting that Allah would intervene and assist his small band to overcome the expected counterattack from unbelievers, that is, from troops loyal to the Saudi regime.

Juhayman's was a bold if suicidal move. His makeshift militia, which may have numbered several hundred, overwhelmed the thin Saudi security forces. Not only did they capture the ritual center of the Islamic world, but they effectively controlled it for exactly two weeks. The authorities, embarrassed, did not try to dislodge them immediately. Instead, they first obtained a fatwa, or legal decree, from the <ulama. Wards of the state, the <ulama readily complied, providing written religious sanction to crush the revolt. The false mahdi and numerous others were killed in the ensuing engagement, but Juhayman was captured alive. He, along with sixty-two others deemed to be the ringleaders, were quickly tried and publicly hanged. The Saudi authorities blamed the whole incident on outside interference. International oil companies, after briefly suffering heart arrest, calmed down by the early 1980s. They were assured by their Saudi counterparts that such an eruption would never, never occur again. The Mecca incident remained just that— an untidy domestic episode. Once the main rebels had been subdued, tried, and executed, no one within Saudi Arabia attempted to address the challenge that Juhayman had briefly raised: had the House of Sa'ud gone too far in its implicit accommodation to secular values?

Yet an astute observer of Saudi national life has raised just this question, though in slightly different language: "Precisely because the Sauds claim to be so Islamic," writes James Piscatori, "the decisive field of action may yet be that of ideology—not in the sense of whether Islam is compatible with the modern age, but in the sense of whether the Sauds are seen to be faithful to it."[120]

The greatest irony of the Saudi experiment in Islamic statecraft may be that the regime, from 'Abd al-'Aziz to Fahd, played the fundamentalist game without being fundamentalists. "How long can a society succeed when its professed symbols war with its realities?" That is a question that as yet no one is willing to answer, nor do the Saudis themselves want it to be asked, yet it may contain the distinctive, if unintended, Saudi contribution to the history of Islamic fundamentalism and its manifest contradictions.[121]

Nowhere are these contradictions more evident than in the way that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia projects its image abroad: (1) through foreign policy initatives that have fear, mixed with hatred, of Iran at their core, and (2) through international groups that claim true Islam to be Wahhabi puritanism, with every rival version of Islamic belief and practice outlawed as heretical, Western-inspired, and blasphemous. Whether due to systemic weakness or creative marginality, Saudi efforts to influence others can produce confusing signals, as they did recently in Afghanistan. When the Taliban were resisting the government in Kabul before seizing power, as they did in mid-1996, they were described in some media reports as “Wahhabis,” and yet a journal supported by Saudi sympathizers criticized this very label as itself evidence of a plot by “the Western press, Radio Kabul, Sufi Marabouts, the Voice of America and Radio Free Iran”![122]

What needs to be constantly born in mind is that the Saudi-Iranian rivalry is seldom raised to the explicit level, either in policy or in journalistic circles. It has been kept discreetly parked to one side of media attention because of United States foreign policy. Since 1979 American officialdom, with few exceptions, has remained fixated with the superseding danger of Iran to all American interests in the Gulf region. It is for that reason that a closer reading and more nuanced understanding of Iran occupies the next chapter of this book.

**** Iran

Major events and rulers since the outbreak of World War II:

| 1941–46 | Iran occupied by Allied forces |

| 1941–79 | Muhammad Reza reigns as shah |

| Mar. 1951 | Iranian oil nationalized; Musaddiq named prime minister |

| Aug. 1953 | Musaddiq overthrown by CIA plot |

| Jan. 1963 | The shah inaugurates the White revolution |

| June 1963 | Khomeini’s arrest sparks antigovernment demonstrations |

| Nov. 1964 | Khomeini exiled, first to Turkey, then to Iraq, and finally (1978) to Paris |

| Jan.-Feb. 1979 | The shah departs Iran; Khomeini returns |

| Dec. 1979 | The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran is ratified by popular referendum |

| 1980–88 | The Iran-Iraq war |

| Feb. 1989 | The Salman Rushdie affair erupts when Khomeini issues a fatwa against the author of The Satanic Verses |

| June 1989 | Khomeini dies; Khamenei is elected his successor, with Rafsanjani becoming president of the Islamic Republic of Iran |

| May 1997 | Mohammed Khatami, a moderate cleric, is elected to succeed Rafsanjani as president |

While the above list may seem quite detailed, at least compared to the brief sidebar calendars provided for other Muslim polities, it is not. It represents what is commonly known about the Islamic Republic of Iran because Iran since Khomeini has engendered more fear, and more misunderstanding, than any modern-day Muslim government. For the same reason Iran merits closer scrutiny than any of the Arab or Asian Muslim nation-states: it is said to be the sole test case of a successful fundamentalist revolution. “Islam in Power: The Case of Iran” is how one writer depicted the last twelve years of Iranian history. Another, still more effusive, summarized the period as “Iran: Revolutionary Fundamentalism in Power.”[123]

Despite such pronouncements, a longer view of the Iranian experiment is required. Not only does the Islamic Republic of Iran remain a young political experiment, but it also has not established a collective profile that takes into account all the evidence of its most recent history. There are at least two distinct approaches to understanding Iran as an Islamic fundamentalist polity. They compete with each other. They do not offer a single, coherent view of recent Iranian history.

One proposes that Iran must be evaluated as the final outcome of several experiments in Islamic radicalism/fundamentalism that have marked the

postcolonial era. According to this approach, radicalism/fundamentalism is “a purely modern, or contemporary, reaction to the emergence of revolutionary nationalism and secular norms of government.”[124] As the latest endeavor to rescue the political fortunes of Islam, it first rose in countries that attempted to implement a secular nationalist tradition but did not engage all sectors of their diverse societies. These would be Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. The North African countries of Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya were also radicalized in the 1960s and 1970s, but with less social disruption than Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, in part because their governments did not attempt radical agricultural reform. Still another group, consisting of Asian Muslim countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, attempted to initiate policies of industrialization and modernization through existing patronage systems, with mixed results. In a fourth set of countries the ruling family remained as the primary nexus of the patronage network, thus precluding any wide-scale socioeconomic transformation. Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, Brunei, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain all fall into this category. Yet a fifth category ranks as the most un-Islamic group of all, since here Islam becomes “almost submerged in the interstices of national, sectarian, ethnic or religious differences within one single state.”[125] This patchwork amalgam of political-social authority applies to Malaysia, Afghanistan, occupied Palestine, Lebanon, the Sudan, and Nigeria.

While the above schematization of Muslim nation-states is rife with generalities that admit of too many exceptions, it does allow its author to suggest that prerevolutionary Iran combined elements of all five. Under the shah land reform had been applied but failed: ownership patterns changed little, while agricultural production stagnated. By attempting to industrialize wholesale in the White Revolution (launched in 1963), the shah alienated bazaari merchants and artisan guilds. He also did not produce a fully modern infrastructure, except perhaps in the two extensions of the state that mattered most to him: the armed forces and security services, both of which were organized, equipped, and maintained at a high level and at great cost.

Hence by the time Khomeini raised a challenge to the shah, much of the population had become disenchanted and alienated, poised for fundamental change.

In other words, in searching for an explanation of the Iranian revolution, one must look almost entirely to internal, socioeconomic factors. But the opposite approach is also possible: to locate the revolution's source above all with reference to external factors. While conceding that rapid economic growth was disruptive and that the self-interest of traditional social groups, especially the ulama and the bazaaris, was threatened, some scholars have seen the precipitating cause for the shah's fall and Khomeini's success in one major external development: the human rights policy of the Carter administration during 1977. It was Carter's accent on human rights as a major cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy, goes the argument, that produced two unexpected developments in Iran. First, the shah opted to curb his repressive tactics, at least temporarily. The outburst of criticism against him was thunderous. Critics, hearing other critics for the first time, were empowered to articulate their own grievances. Second, Khomeini was able to galvanize criticism of the shah into support for his own rule. Khomeini's insistence on drastic change was strident and uncompromising. It also was better articulated once he moved to Paris in winter 1978, for from Paris he had ease of access to Iran, especially through smuggled cassette tapes, that was denied him in both Iraq and Turkey, where he had previously resided in exile. Once the shah cracked down again on protestors, as he did in the winter and spring of 1978, it was too late: the sources opposing him, even though they did not know about his cancer, sensed his vulnerability, and in the figure of Khomeini as a charismatic debunker of the shah and the West, they had a symbol around whom to rally, a hope to propel them beyond the horror and bloodshed of mid-1978.[126]

The problem with both the internal and external explanations of revolutionary Iran is that neither addresses the Iranian context except in parochial terms. The first adds up all the problems that could be perceived in modern Muslim nation-states and then, having located them in Iran, concludes that Iran was ripe for revolution. The second lists all the possible approaches to explaining the revolution and then determines that one or two were precipitating, even though many others may have been contributory. What neither does is to approach head-on the problem of turning data into evidence. To determine which data can be used as evidence, one must construct an analytical framework that permits comparative, cross-cultural assessments. In the case of the Islamic Republic of Iran, no such assessment is possible unless one first devises a strategy that matches the rhetoric of

Islamic Revolution with the reality of building an Islamic nation-state in the late twentieth century.

The very first step, therefore, must be to examine major categories rather than to accept them as self-evident, at once timeless in origin and univocal in meaning. All human language is derived, all is socially conditioned. To understand aggregate terms like Islam or revolution, one must specify in what ways and by what criteria they are to be invoked. Islam has already been shown to be as much a pliable symbol as a fixed system; Arab and Asian Muslim rulers use it at the same time that all contestants for power challenge their use of it. The situation is no different in Iran. What is different in Iran is the constant invocation of the term “revolution,” as though this is the revolution, that it is also, because its supporters say it is, an Islamic revolution. Both claims need to be examined more carefully.

Did 1978–79 produce an Islamic revolution? No and yes. No, because it was more than Islamic in its genesis, it was also a Third World revolution. Yes, because Islam became the label by which it was broadcast as a legitimate transfer of power, replacing a Shi<i-Iranian monarchy with an Iranian-Shi<i theocracy.

Both the no and the yes require explanation.

The events of 1978–79 may be termed a Third World revolution because they exhibit several of the features characteristic of the accelerated technological era after World War I. It was a local happening, yet it was precipitated by transregional factors, not the least being Iran’s economic marginalization in the 1940s and 1950s. Only oil production and its strategic location gave Iran some political leverage at the outset of the Cold War. In the 1960s and 1970s that situation changed. Increased oil prices opened up major opportunities, but mismanagement, greed, and paranoia prevented those opportunities from being realized. The White Revolution, launched in 1963 to make Iran rapidly modern and military powerful, failed. It created a crisis affecting numerous groups, not only the clerical elite. Dissatisfaction came to focus on

the autocratic leader, but also on the external, colonizing forces linked to him.

A land of poets also intensifies the power of slogans: one Persian word has come to symbolize extreme dependency on foreign income, foreign military aid, foreign political adventurism, and foreign lifestyles. That word is gharbzadegi, “excess of the West,” or, as some would have it, “Westoxification.” Gharbzadegi was pinned on the shah as transmitter and perpetuator of the colonial past, which Iranians of nearly all classes so deeply resented. Though Iran was never directly colonized, Prime Minister Mossadegh was overthrown by CIA collusion in the early 1950s and then replaced by the shah, leaving the impression that Iran was not in control of its own destiny. And the wealth that came with oil production was suspect, benefiting only a small minority of Westernized, affluent Iranians. The dispossessed resented their lowly status, even when they had neither the means nor the hope of successful revolt.

Religion provided the vehicle of Third World protest in Iran. The years 1978–79 witnessed not only a Third World but also a religiously inspired revolt. A Shi<i Iranian monarchy became an Iranian-Shi<i theocracy. Most observers neglect to note how inextricable are the two, how thin the line between Shi<i Iranian and Iranian-Shi<i. There is no neat division of religion from national, or national from religious, in the consciousness of most Iranians. To oppose the enemy within there had to be a moral, specifically Shi<i criterion against which the enemy could be measured and found wanting. The shah was vilified not because the majority of Iranians were Shi<i rather than Sunni Muslims, nor because as Shi<i Muslims they had a deep distrust of, or outright aversion to, political power, especially when exercised by an absolute monarch. History disproves that essentialist reflex. The accommodation between shahs and their Iranian Shi<i subjects goes back to the early sixteenth century and the founding of the Safavi Empire, a vast, successful, bureaucratic, military patronage state. The crisscrossing of religious-political authority and the constant need of even the most powerful monarchs to claim religious legitimacy ensure that the shah could, and did, project himself as “God’s Shadow on Earth.” From the Safavi period, Iranian rulers had arrogated to themselves the multivalent title “God’s Shadow on Earth.” Even though some have remarked that “Mohammed Reza Shah

seems to have given little more than ritually dutiful attention to this aspect of his role,”[127] he never disavowed it.

Yet, in the minds of his Iranian subjects, there lingered an implicit, unescapable question: is it possible for din and dunya (the demands of religion and the lures of worldliness) to be reconciled? How does the ruler resist the latter while promoting the former? Do the Shi<i clergy, as the repositories of Islamic teaching but even more as the custodians of hope for all Iranians, deem him to be sultan’Adil or sultan jabir—a just ruler or a despot? Until 1979 there was no Shi<i consensus either that monarchy was patently un-Islamic or that a cleric should rule in place of the shah. Rather, the hope for clergy and laity alike was that the shah—if not this shah, then another shah, whether from this dynasty or a successor dynasty—could be made accountable to the standards of justice, which also meant at least the appearance of rejecting, rather than promoting, colonial—which is to say, European or American— influence in Iran.

The events of 1978–79 therefore did produce a dramatic shift in the world view of Iranians. As such, they could be said to have augured a revolution, whether Third World or Iranian-Shi<i or both. Yet to Iranians, this revolution was not their first revolution. That distinction belongs to the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1911, and in many ways that earlier revolution prefigured the events of 1978–79. It, too, was a revolution against the shah, though he was then a Qajar rather than a Pahlavi shah. It, too, was sparked by a protest against foreign (then British, now American) influence, involving tobacco rather than oil. It also had the support of a few influential Iranian clergy. However, the principal agenda for that revolution was strikingly different: its advocates insisted above all on the implementation of a uniquely Western democratic instrument, namely, a constitution. Hence it has been named the “Constitutional Revolution.”

As firm as is collective memory of the Constitutional Revolution, dim and dreaded is the memory of another Iranian revolution, the failed “White” Revolution heralded by the late shah in January 1963. As its name suggests, it was intended to be a revolution without violence, one that would modernize Iran’s economy (especially the agricultural sector) and also

upgrade its military profile during the remainder of the twentieth century. The White Revolution failed, yet its deeper aspiration, to modernize Iran and make it a country benefiting from the global economic system, is one that drives the planning of many pragmatists in the current Islamic Republic of Iran.

Against this background, we must revisit the events of 1978–79. If we suppose that the ascent of Khomeini did augur an Islamic Revolution, to what extent was it more than a mere circulation of ruling elites under opposite ideological banners? Since most observers agree that both the Constitutional and the White Revolutions have failed, in what sense can one claim that the current, Islamic Revolution has succeeded?

It can only be said to have succeeded as a durable revolution if it embodies economic as well as political change; in other words, if it succeeds in doing what neither the Constitutional nor the White Revolution could do. It is an awesome challenge because, as indicated above, this revolution was not only Islamic but Third World, its power deriving from the marginalized disempowerment of those who protested the structures of late twentieth-century Iranian society. How could its leaders both transform their own society and alter the role of that society in the larger world community?

For many observers, it is more than an awesome challenge, it is an impossible goal. Class analysts especially are skeptical of Iranian claims. The sociologist Bryan Turner, looking at the critical transformations that have characterized Western societies, notes that in each case the presence of an autonomous, commercial middle class was required to make the transition from feudal/religious to industrial/secular culture. That class has been lacking in Middle Eastern societies, including Iran; its absence has produced the “No Revolutions” thesis that dominates much writing on the premodern and modern Middle East. Though it is an Orientalist argument, it has its Marxist counterpart, namely, that these societies, precisely because they have not undergone genuine “social” revolutions, have experienced mere political coup d’etats and palace revolutions. Ernest Gellner advances a similar claim in arguing that outside Western Europe and North America no other societies could forge liberal democratic states driven by capitalist, scientifically oriented economies. Islamic Iran becomes the crucial test case proving the

incompatibility of Islam and modernity, at least insofar as modernity can be defined as coeval openness to pluralist structures and technological advance.[128]

Yet the clerics who came to power in Tehran in 1978–79 are not so easily pigeonholed. Their ideology includes a platform for totally restructuring the economic, judiciary, and administrative instruments as well as the symbolic profile and political leadership of Iran. Have they succeeded? In any such evaluation two indices would seem to be crucial: the mode of political representation and the sources of income. At a formal level, neither has changed significantly since the Pahlavi period. The state has been called an Islamic Republic, yet it does not function as a democracy. There is a single party majlis (parliament), with courts, mosques, schools, and land law functioning under a hierarchically monitored state ideology as rigid as that which prevailed prior to 1978. The income that allows the new government to function domestically and to prosecute its foreign policy continues to derive from the export-oriented segment of the economy. Since the fall of the shah, oil revenues as a percentage of total foreign exchange revenues have actually increased; they now constitute 80 percent of Iran’s export earnings, while non-oil-related exports have continued to decline.[129]

New revolutionary institutions have been established, yet many of them shadow institutions remaining from the ancient regime, with only the personnel circulating. Particularly at the provincial level, where there is great disparity between the less and more developed provinces, almost the same procedures are followed today as were in place twelve years ago. The court system has not been reorganized. In the absence of an Islamic Retribution Bill (ratified in 1981 but not yet enacted), individual revolutionary courts and firing squads acting as neighborhood committees continue to operate. On the crucial issue of land reform, little has been done since the time of the shah.

Land reform is indeed the most evident single issue for gauging how difficult it is to implement a genuine social revolution in Iran. The 270-person majlis (an elected body) and the 12-member Council of Guardians (first appointed by Khomeini and now by Khamanei) have been in

sharp disagreement with one another on just this point. The former has loudly advocated rapid socialization of the entire economy, including land. Social justice is its shibboleth. The latter has quietly held out for individual rights, retention of private property (with scriptural support from the Qur’an), and free trade (not restricting it to the Muslim bloc as the majlis has advocated). In effect, there is a continuing ideological contest between the majlis and the Council of Guardians. While he was alive, only the undisputed authority of the Imam (as Khomeini was affectionately and fearfully known) held together the Iranian government on these issues. But even some of his efforts at mediation failed: the 13-member council for determining the interests of the Islamic order, a body consisting of 6 members from the Council of Guardians, six from the majlis, and his own personal representative, which he first appointed in February 1988, still wavered on the implementation of land reform.[130]

Since Khomeini’s demise, a viable policy on social change remains paralyzed by the same forces that were at work during his lifetime. Rather than focusing on ideological claims that continue to stress how the Islamic Republic is an agent for social justice acting on behalf of the dispossessed, one must look closely at the class distinctions that stymie the Islamic Revolution and its present leadership. The first, crucial point to note is the absence of the cross-class conflict contributing to the formation of a fundamentalist opposition elsewhere, especially in Syria and Egypt. Though their ideology is cross-class—indeed, universalist—in scope, the members of the ruling elite in the Islamic Republic are predominantly middle class. Nor should one think of the ideological contests within the middle class as interclass political conflicts or rivalries. It is not different classes, but different factions within the middle class, that subscribe to different types of economic policy and development strategy. And they debate as members of the same social class, arguing, in effect, about how their class relates to those beneath them, that is, the vast majority of Iranians.

There are three middle-class groups that vie with one another for the mantle of leadership in post-Khomeini revolutionary Iran. There is a conservative faction. Supported by wealthy merchants, landlords, and some high-ranking ayatollahs, they reflect the dominant merchant-clergy alliance that is often credited with having authored the events of 1978–79. They oppose planning, state ownership, and public management of the economy. They advocate

free enterprise and decentralization. They oppose both the land reform bill and any increase of direct taxes. They favor free trade with Western Europe and Japan as well as with Islamic countries. They prefer agricultural exports over oil exports.

Opposed to them is a radical faction. They consist of lower- to middle-ranking clergy, many religious intelligentsia, and most revolutionary organizations. Traditional middle and lower classes in the urban centers and rural areas also support this faction. They advocate public ownership and management of large enterprises. Supporters of agriculture, they want food products consumed at home but not exported. They are against both free trade and openness to international economic forces. They stress self-reliance and confrontation with the Great Powers. They deride the conservatives as proponents of “American Islam” because the latter allow for engagement with the Great Satan. They claim that their own is “the Islam of the Prophet Muhammad” or “the Islam of the Oppressed.”

Bridging the two groups is the centrist-pragmatist faction. While they are supported by the religious intelligentsia, the new middle class, and the technocrats, they also enjoy the confidence of most classes throughout Iran. They are classic fence-straddlers. They favor a market economy, but with controls. They uphold the need for socioeconomic and even further political reforms, but they equivocate on their implementation. They advocate free trade, but only within limits: they do not want Iran to be exposed to the risks of an open economy. They advocate peaceful coexistence with other Islamic nations and want to build an exemplary society rather than to export the Islamic Revolution, as the radicals propose. In 1989 they advocated a change in the constitution and succeeded in eliminating the premiership, transferring the functions of this office to a more powerful presidency.

Since the end of the Iran-Iraq War and even more since Khomeini’s death, this centrist-pragmatist group has determined the future course of events in Iran. They have not yet succeeded in transforming factionalism into full-scale participatory democracy. That remains a distant goal in the Islamic Republic of Iran, but even short of that ideal, if the three factions could succeed in cooperating to the extent that they ensure enough political stability and social security to cause a sustained upturn in the economy, they may

institutionalize the Islamic Revolution. However, it will be a revolution with a small r, rather than a capital R, one that allows Iran to survive as a modern-day theocracy with a mixed socioeconomic policy. The problems of ethnic and religious minorities will persist, and while Muslim Kurds and Armenian Christians may fare moderately well, Muslim Afghans and Bahai sectarians will find a cool reception even were pragmatism to reign long after Rafsanjani's departure from the presidency. [131]

What challenges and preoccupies all branches of current Iranian political culture is an ideological high-wire act: how to take account of the modern world while not disallowing or reducing the Islamic difference. On this point, the adaptability and tenacity of Islamic thinkers in Iran can be traced from the modernist Shari'Ati[132] to the fundamentalist Motahhari to the pragmatist Rafsanjani. They stretch Islamic thought and its technical categories to include a range of data that is clearly engaged by the modern world, saturated even with philosophical or scientific reference, yet never loses its spiritual rootedness. While one could focus on Shari'Ati or Motahhari, Rafsanjani invites closer attention, if only because one seldom finds a politician with the multifaceted intellect that Rafsanjani clearly possesses. His homiletic style is revealed in Friday sermons as well as in political stump speeches. In one such sermon, he deftly defends the Islamic legal code while also implying that it can and should be adapted to changing times:

<quote>

The important point here is that the Islam which developed 1,400 years ago on the Arabian peninsula—in a settlement where the people were fundamentally nomads—was a legal code specific to that society. And even that code was promulgated slowly over a period of seven or eight years. Now the legal code, which was executed in those days for that particular nation, aspires to become the code for a world in which humanity has plunged the depths of the earth and mined resources thousands of meters below its surface, has competed in space to conquer Mars, has built formidable weapons of defense and offense from particles of atoms, and has conquered the sky, the earth and the mountains At this very moment millions of people are engaged in legal

</quote>

<quote>

research to better human society. The Islam which was revealed some 1,400 years ago for the limited society of that time, now desires to become the fulcrum of [modern] social administration and [our] nation wants to use this fulcrum [as a weapon] to wage war on the entire imperialist world, testing its mettle by those means. Unique circumstances have arisen during the course of time. How can Islam [without adaptation] cover all these contingencies? [133]

</quote>

Despite the final appeal to “wage war on the entire imperialist world,” the tone of this speech is an impassioned plea for Islamic flexibility in the face of the scientific and technological advances that have shaped the modern world. It is hardly a radical or fundamentalist view of Islam, and the fact that it is made by the de facto ruler of the Islamic Republic of Iran suggests how far the first success of Islamic fundamentalism has come from the millenarian aspirations of its founding figure. If Khomeini had to swallow poison in order to accept a cease-fire with his nemesis, Saddam Hussein, he must have been jolted from his eternal sleep by the tone and the message of Rafsanjani’s speech.

What the message illustrates is the extent to which the continued memory of Khomeini, which extends to the construction of a marvelous tomb complex honoring him near the Graveyard of Martyrs on the outskirts of Tehran, may cloak other realities. If one were to observe the posters that continue to lionize Khomeini, or if one were to compare popular photos, such as those linking him iconically as well as thematically to both ‘Ali and Hussein, the exemplars of Shi’i Islam, it would be easy to assume that the Islamic Revolution persists, its ideals intact, since Khomeini’s demise in 1989.

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-6.jpg][Figure 6. ‘Ali, the major figure in Shi<i veneration.]]

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-7.jpg][Figure 7. Hussein, ‘Ali’s son and the major martyr of Shi<i veneration.]]

Yet the changes signaled in Rafsanjani’s speech are not limited to him. They are mirrored in numerous other currents of thought in post-1989 Iran. During the past eight years, there have mushroomed within cosmopolitan circles heated debates about the future course of Iranian society. For a time the press in Iran, unlike its Arab neighbors, became so free that “newspapers, magazines, scholarly journals and books provided a forum for the dissemination of ideas that only a few years ago would have been considered dissident thinking.” Intellectual populists, such as Hosain Azimi and Abdul Karim Sorush, until recently have been allowed to voice their views openly, even when they called for a reassessment of the role of religion in the Islamic Republic of Iran.[134]

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-8.jpg][Figure 8. Khomeini’s official portrait.

[[b-b-bruce-b-lawrence-shattering-the-myth-islam-bey-9.jpg][Figure 9. Khomeini’s tomb mosque.]]

The makers of revolutions and the builders of revolutionary nation-states may walk in the same shoes, but they do not always march to the same cadence. What was true for the Soviet Union from Lenin to Gorbachev is also now becoming true in the Islamic Republic of Iran, but within a much shorter time span. There is evidence of a broadly based rethinking of the goals of an Islamic society, one so pervasive that it has been labeled andisheh-ye digar, alternative thinking, which is to say, opposition to current policies framed by respected figures who accept the premise of a Shi<i state but not its current format. If a Second Republic is emerging within the chrysalis of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it will be more tolerant, of both internal dissent and external difference, than its predecessor. It will be neither an outlaw state nor a hostile civilization. Instead, it will project a development that students of late capitalism should welcome: while the world system may not be one, its parts do interconnect, and cultural distinctiveness can be maintained only if each nation-state fosters exchange

with other nationstates who do not share or who may in part oppose one's own motto of authenticity. Fundamentalists, whether in Iran or in Egypt or any Muslim nation-state, will always hold out hope for a radically new world order, but in the meantime they must, and they will, live within the present order.

It is necessary, however, to look at the Iranian experiment with religious nationalism at a more profound level than has been the case up till now in most public policy and journalistic quarters, especially in the United States. The great difficulty, as indicated in the previous chapter, is the overwhelming support within the American political establishment for privileging Saudi interests. That translates into permitting Saudis greater access to American institutions and also into aiding pro-Saudi Muslim groups, such as the Islamic Students of North America (ISNA) and the World Muslim Council, the group that in spring 1997 protested the statue of Muhammad in the U.S. Supreme Court building. Many of these groups have no explicit Saudi connection yet are either funded by Saudis or remain sympathetic to them; the Iranians have no counterpart to these groups and operate mostly through cultural venues that tend to differ among themselves as to what is the most appropriate stance toward religiopolitical identity generally and the regime in Tehran in particular.[135]

The global political outlook for Iran may depend on a new generation of American pragmatists assessing what the long-term loss will be for U.S. interests if implacable, uncompromising hostility by Iran to the United States is matched by equally implacable, uncompromising demonization of Iran from the U.S. Department of State. Iran, far from being an immediate threat, poses the best venue for access to inner Asia through the Caspian Basin, itself "the most promising source of new energy in the 21st century."[136]

But the greatest resource of Iran may be its mobile, entrepreneurial people, many of whom are keenly aware of advantages in the global market. Urban Iranians speak better English, and also have more acquaintance with philosophical and technical issues of the high-tech era, than do their counterparts in other Middle Eastern countries, with the partial exception of Turkey and Egypt.

Yet few observers would doubt that the major hurdle to Iranian acceptance into a larger international commity may have less to do with Washington-London-Paris-Bonn policy makers than with internal disputes about culture. The present rulers of the Islamic Republic of Iran have maintained a definite stance on women's dress codes and also women's participation in the public sphere. The accent on women remains central to a Muslim difference in projecting global norms and values.

If the difference is persistent, it is also subtle. Not only Iranian Islamists but their counterparts in other Muslim countries are slow in coming to terms with gender differences that escape the too neat binary categorization common to dogmatic pronouncements. Women—their role, their status, their future—provide a key to understanding the social dilemmas of Islamism. They also permit one to see differences internal to Muslim countries. To the extent that some Muslim men not only control women but also direct the perceptions that others have of them, the production of the Woman Question must be addressed. In part 2 I shall try to clarify what has been the impact of male ideologues, and the patriarchal order that they proclaim, on their female coreligionists. At the same time, I will attempt to chart future options that empower Muslim women in what one observer has called, referring to late-twentieth-century Iran, a "post-Islamist society."[137]

* Part Two: Muslim Women and Islamic Fundamentalism

** Chapter 5. The Double Bind Revisited

A RECENT study of the multiple writings of Frantz Fanon made clear the importance of gender for Fanon's critique of both colonial and postcolonial Afro-Asian societies. It was Fanon's goal, never fully realized, that a new social order—at once more generous and more equal toward all its citizens—should emerge in the aftermath of colonial rule. Though far from consistent, Fanon seemed to grope toward a criterion for authentic humanism that would "take the condition of woman as a mark of the degree to which human beings in a determinate place and time have truly come into their own."[138]

By Fanon’s criterion, both fundamentalists and the praetorian, neocolonialist state have failed. Both conspire to keep Muslim women in a condition of marginality. Like other Asian and African women, most Muslim women still enjoy neither the educational nor professional opportunities available to their fathers and brothers, husbands and sons. And while much more information now exists about the variety of circumstances that characterize the lives of Muslim women, the information widens rather than reduces the sense of oppression they face. Some thought that the state would in time reduce the hold of religious tradition falsely arrayed against female Muslims, but in fact, as Hisham Sharabi has shown, the modern state has itself fallen sway to neopatriarchal norms.[139] Even when literacy is dramatically improved, as in the case of Iraq, the public role of women does not change significantly.

The largest single factor handicapping women in the Muslim world is the same that inhibits men: the underdevelopment of economic opportunities for their respective nations within the current “new world order.” It is not the sole factor, nor has its impact gone unchallenged, yet to begin to understand the range of options available to Muslim women, one must recognize what is not available to them: the bourgeois lifestyle that presupposes a public sphere of opportunity for both men and women with market access to resources for education and employment, communication and consumption. Such resources are not available to most Afro-Asian Muslims, either men or women, and while the frank acknowledgment of their absence may lead some to an economic determinist reading of the Muslim world, it may, and should, lead others to frame a realistic assessment of local options and future possibilities.

Since there is a limited middle class in most Muslim countries, economic inequalities still situate a few landed or mercantile rich above masses of urban and rural poor. The army remains one of the principal avenues to social and economic advancement, provided one also has the right tribal or sectarian markings to evoke trust from the ruling elite of one’s country. Educational restrictions are severe. Not only are there too few universities and too many applicants, but there is also the absence of high tech institutions of quality, with the result that the few who are rich (the 8 out of 100 who can qualify for credit cards) send their children abroad.

Alternatively, foreign nationals from abroad are hired to perform the functions that indigenous professionals do not know because they cannot learn them locally.

Gender asymmetry becomes reinforced by such structural limitations. While tradition may be invoked to deny women entrance into the public job market, it is in fact the prevalence of unemployed or underemployed men vying with one another for scarce jobs that ensures the continued exclusion or curtailment of Muslim women from employment in the industrial or modern sector of their respective countries.

The double bind becomes triple: being Muslim, being female, being economically marginal, would seem to exclude all but the most desparate options. Yet women's voices do register in protest against the present system. Literate women protest in writing; their illiterate sisters are spoken for by others. These are the voices to which we should be listening. Many tell a story of violence on several levels. Cognitive violence is to ignore, social violence is to reduce, the marginalized or feared group; these same women suffer a physical violence the pain of which cannot be glossed as "mere" cultural difference. Where there is resistance, challenge, and change, it needs to be highlighted, but first it must be located.

An example from Egypt illustrates the dimensions of the dilemma facing responsible scholarship on Muslim women. Few monographs have explored the ambiguous stance of veiled working women as well as Arlene MacLeod's, Accomodating Protest: Working Women, the New Veiling, and Change in Cairo.[140] MacLeod's Foucauldian study of middle-class women in Cairo reveals that the muhaggabat, or veiled women, resist through accommodation as well as protest. They do so by exhibiting that contradictory consciousness to which Gramsci drew attention: working in low-level government positions, they are responding to economic pressures that necessitate as many incomes as possible, at the same time that they are able to express Islamic loyalty through dress code. They do give religious meaning to the veil that they adopt, argues McLeod, but to the degree that their veiling remains instrumental—providing, as it does, the pretext for their being allowed by conservative relatives and friends to work—they will be

alert to ways that they may oppose, rather than merely being preempted by, the increasingly Islamist tone of modern-day Cairo.

Unlike MacLeod’s nuanced analysis, the public story of Muslim female fundamentalism is most often told by charting the women’s groups that appear alongside men’s. The very telling of the story presumes (a) that female fundamentalists share the same social and political agenda of their male counterparts and (b) that women participate in defining the public agenda for protest. Neither presumption is correct. Female fundamentalists are, by definition, concerned with private rather than public issues: the home and not the headlines motivate them. For that very reason we will rarely see the diary of a female Muslim fundamentalist; whatever she thinks and feels and hopes for is best voiced by male fundamentalists.[141] Even when women do join in public gatherings, whether to sport rifles or to shout slogans, their presence, and one imagines also their performance, is choreographed by men. The myth of the independent, voluntary female fundamentalist has no factual basis. Men create a space for representative women, and these women are representative precisely because men select and direct them to the purposes that they, the men, favor. Fundamentalists insist that women by nature are weaker than men, mentally as well as physically, and yet since women are also possessed of the ability to distract men, the Islamist mandate is to create and maintain separate public spheres. As the French political theorist Olivier Roy has observed, the true taboo for fundamentalists is coeducation (ikhtilat): women’s track for learning must remain separate from men’s.[142]

In what follows I will try to soften the male fixation that characterizes most studies of Islamic fundamentalism. I will look not at the manipulated women counterparts to male fundamentalists, but at the role or roles that women seek in Muslim nation-states. I will also try to assess how those roles have changed in three representative Muslim nation-states: Iran, Egypt, and Pakistan.

The choice of these three as “representative” Muslim states reflects their frequent citation in all studies that claim to grapple with Islamic values. They also touch disparate geographic regions of the vast Muslim world. Iran is both Middle Eastern and Asian, Egypt is both Middle Eastern and African,

while Pakistan is South Asian, reflecting the nexus between Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. More important, all three have had to come to terms with the commercial expansion of Western Europe and the United States, and to a considerable extent they share structural features that handicap them vis-a-vis the existing transnational order shaped by global capitalism.

In pursuing the changing circumstance of Muslim women, one could pick other countries than Iran, Egypt, and Pakistan, yet the combined geographic diversity and socioeconomic commonality they represent will at least suggest insight into patterns that may apply elsewhere in that vast domain of Asia and Africa known as the Muslim world.

Why begin with Iran? Because it is in Iran that Islamic fundamentalism began. Iran determines the standard, which is to say the male-specific, depiction of Islamic fundamentalism. It also sets the standard for women. Not only did Iran signal the return of Islamic values as a dominant element of national identity in many Muslim societies, but the women of Iran, in particular, had a history of participation in that society prior to 1979 that was so extensive, and so well documented, that examining it allows us to understand the force—some would say the fury—of Islamic fundamentalism.

The Pahlavi regime had a specific policy toward women. Embracing Euro-American norms, it tried to impose them on twentieth-century Iranian women. Its major moments include:

1935–36 Women compelled not to wear the veil in public places

7 Jan. 1937 Marked as women’s day by Reza Shah

1938 First women admitted to Tehran University

1958 High Council of Women organized; later (1966) replaced by Women’s Organization of Iran (WOI), with branches in all major cities

Jan. 1963 Among the six points marking the reforms known as the White Revolution, one promises women’s suffrage

1967 Women accepted into the judiciary and also drafted into the police and army

1967 Family Protection Law passed, modified in 1975 to provide for mutual consent in divorce

Spanning the forty-four year period from 1935, when the veil was banned, till 1979, when the Islamic Republic of Iran came to power, these government-initiated changes produced results. Among them were the following:

<quote>

Women’s Organization of Iran expanded to a network of 400 branches and 118 centers, with 51 affiliated organizations. The centers provided vocational training, literacy classes, childcare, legal and professional counseling, as well as family planning.

</quote>

<quote>

The number of girls attending elementary and vocational training schools rose dramatically, increasing more than tenfold in the decade of the 1970s alone. By 1978, 33 percent of all university students were women, and many had begun to choose fields other than those marked as traditionally female occupations. For example, the number of women candidates for medical school in 1978 was higher than the number of men.

</quote>

<quote>

By 1979, 2 million Iranian women (out of a total female population of 20 million) had entered the labor force. Almost 200,000 were enrolled in academic and specialized fields; another 150,000 worked as civil servants, with over 1,500 serving as managers or directors. There were over 1,800 women university professors, and women worked in the army, in the police force, as judges, pilots, engineers—in every field except religious activities. Schools of theology were the only academic institutions closed to women.

</quote>

<quote>

Political space was also opened to Iranian women. Women were encouraged to run for public office. In 1978, of 1,660 candidates elected to local council, 33 were women. Twenty-two of the 270 member majlis were women. There was a woman cabinet member, ambassador, and governor. There were five women mayors.[143]

</quote>

As heady as were these achievements for Iranian women, they depended for their continuation on government support. There were no private-sector initiatives, nor did the private sector begin to acquire an institutional autonomy that allowed it to complement or compete with government initiatives. Consequently, when government support was withdrawn with the return of Khomeini and the coming to power of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the above markings of women's public prominence were erased. They were quickly replaced by rules favoring women's absence from, or invisibility within, the public sphere:

Feb. 1979 Family Protection Law suspended

March 1979 Women no longer appointed judges or allowed to hold decision-making posts; public veiling required; childcare centers closed; women barred from competing in internation sports

May 1979 Coeducation banned, with women also segregated in cafeterias and on buses

Dec. 1979 The first woman to have served as a cabinet minister under the shah (a medical doctor and teacher who had been education minister from 1968 to 1975) is brought to trial, condemned for spreading corruption on earth, and sentenced to die before a firing squad

March 1980 The First Islamic majlis is elected; there are 2 women among its 270 representatives

April 1980 Universities closed indefinitely

May-July Further steps are taken to implement compulsory

1981 veiling, e.g., unveiled women fired from

government jobs

July 1981 The majlis ratified Bill of Retribution, especially harsh on women offenders

Yet a skeletal reiteration of legislative or juridical measures taken against women's participation in the public sphere does not tell the full story. The Shi<i clergy who dominate the Islamic Republic of Iran also extol those women who conform to their understanding of women's ideal roles in an ideal Islamic nation-state. Their viewpoint deserves scrutiny in its own terms, even when it rubs up against the dominant notion of who women are and what their public role ought to be.

A crucial issue is representation: representation within the clerical leadership and representation within the female population of Iran. Who speaks authoritatively for the norms established by the Islamic Republic? And to which women do those norms apply? Do they apply equally to urban and rural women, to elites and nonelites, to wealthy and poor? Such questions about female representation complicate the issue of women and fundamentalism, yet by specifying subgroups within a population too easily glossed and generalized under a single image, they allow us to nuance the future of women in an Islamic nation-state.

The authoritative spokesperson setting forth the fundamentalist view of women might be either Khomeini or Motahhari. Khomeini is the better-known figure, but Motahhari is the more consistent thinker. Khomeini's position is complicated by the seeming contradiction between some of his pronouncements, which seemed to hold out hope for women's public participation in the Islamic Republic, and his writings, which, along with the provisions of the 1979 Constitution, extolled women solely as childrearers and educators, i.e., as the denizens of domestic space.[144] Motahhari, on the other hand, has systematically delved into the question of women and women's social roles. He is no less controlling than Khomeini, but he is better grounded in his mode of argumentation. It is from his writings that we gain a unique perspective on the Iranian clerical view of women.[145]

It is a view defined by two considerations: (1) the requirements of marriage and (2) the challenge of the modern West and its social norms. So major is the West and its symbolic challenge that traditional marriage must be retained, at all costs. Motahhari is not content merely to restate what Islam does, nor how Muslims ought to behave. Instead, he frames his own views as counterarguments to the arguments of his opponents, those who advocate the heralded notions of freedom and equality. Both notions are boldly attacked in two sets of lectures, one addressing "The Rights of Women in Islam," the other, "Sexual Ethics in Islam and in the Western World." Though the second is much briefer than the first, it contains in summary form the central postulate of Motahhari's approach: women are primarily defined as sexual beings, for it is their sexuality that provides the criteria for their broader function as members of society. While disclaiming any essentialist notion of female sexuality, he dwells on what he terms "the basic need for humane conditioning of natural instincts and desires."[146] This conditioning

applies both to men and to women, and yet it is women who bear the burden of responsibility for allaying male concerns. The male-privileging moves that punctuate “Sexual Ethics” become starkly evident when Motahhari lists the most frequent charges that he feels permissive Westerners raise (without justification, of course) against proponents of traditional mores. They are:

<quote>

male sense of possession of his female

</quote>

<quote>

male jealousy

</quote>

<quote>

male concern for establishing his paternity of a child

</quote>

<quote>

asceticism and monasticism based on the assumed sinfulness and wickedness of human sexual relations

</quote>

<quote>

female sense of impurity arising from her menstruating nature

</quote>

<quote>

male abstinence from sexual relations with a menstruating female

</quote>

<quote>

severe punishment at the hands of men undergone by women throughout recorded history

</quote>

<quote>

causing women to remain economically dependent on men[147]

</quote>

Apart from (4), which applies to both men and women, and (5), which is a female reflex, all the other charges concern male malevolence. It is men who marginalize and subordinate women, whether due to insecurity or to a drive to power. Motahhari never refutes these charges; he seems to presume that he has removed their stigma by itemizing them serially without comment.

Despite the ad hominem form of his reasoning, Motahhari's argument does exhibit a form of logic. The logic he pursues is the logic of internal falsification, refuting the West through the West. He adduces case after case of how traditional morality works and modern laissez-faire ethics fails. Ironically, Motahhari summons as witnesses on behalf of his position prominent Western thinkers like Bertrand Russell, Will Durant, and even William James.

The major weakness of Motahhari's position lies not so much in the form of his argument as in its unspoken, and therefore unexamined, premises. He views woman first of all as a sexual being, and so defines her from the outset within a world view that excludes the social roles that many modern women have come to take for granted: freedom of mobility, equality before the law, the right to higher education (whether in university or in technical schools),

and opportunities for employment in business, medicine, law, or government, with the expectation of advancement in each up to the highest level or office. Motahhari never cites these options, nor does he acknowledge them as women's rights, for none of them pertains to the foundational notion of a woman's identity, her identity as sexual being.

Motahhari's views are not his alone. They are shared by other clerical members of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by other Iranian men and women, and by non-Iranian Muslims, even by some deemed to be "progressive." One such "progressive" Muslim, a modern-day Tunisian scholar, declared that "male supremacy is fundamental in Islam."[148] If he is right, then the only true Islamic society would have to be patriarchal. But is he right? Could it be that male supremacy is not fundamental to Islam? Might it not be rather due to the construction of Islam that has developed since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, a construction that is at variance not only with the Qur'an but also with the exemplar conduct of the Prophet's own life? As early as the 1920s, a Lebanese woman activist, Nazira Zayn al-Din, made just this assertion, arguing that it was religious scholars who had occluded the gender-inclusive message of the Qur'an and relegated women to a position inferior to men.[149] And as Barbara Stowasser, in a trenchant textual analysis of women and early Islam, writes: "The fault for unjust laws and practices such as women's inequality lies not with God's revelation but with the 'ulama's interpretation of it ... as well as with contrived or unauthentic variations of Prophetic Hadith."[150]

It is important to recognize that there is a contest about what constitutes true Islam, and that testimony from Qur'anic evidence often conflicts with later juridical decrees. It is equally important to note that women have been defined not only textually but also socially. Whether they are urban or rural matters as much as their class markings. Rural women are rarely reported, much less featured, in journalistic accounts of Muslim women. Rural women are also uneducated, often illiterate. Yet they represent the largest number of women in Iran, as also in Egypt and Pakistan.[151] Neither veiling nor polygamy characterizes their lives, and so the driving issues of both fundamentalist and feminist ideologues have little appeal since neither religious conformity nor social liberation is related to the day-to-day reality of life for these women. Arguments about women's rights vs. women's duties remain just that, arguments. They are arguments that presuppose a space

for reflection denied to rural women whose social and economic value is measured by increments of survival.

Women of Deh Koh is a brilliant anthropological study of one group of rural Iranian women, a study undertaken since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It provides several anecdotes that demonstrate how women cope. Especially gruesome is the story of a village woman's rape. This story demonstrates just how limited are a woman's options. Not only was the rapist not executed, it was the woman who was burdened by his crime; since she was no longer a virgin, her "best" hope was to have the rapist marry her. She resisted that conclusion, but fellow women villagers, in talking among themselves and with her, left no doubt that her only other option (and one that many women are driven to choose), was suicide.[152]

If women are everywhere vulnerable to men, in the countryside of Iran they are less prone to seek or support options for change than elsewhere. They live as economic dependents of their male relatives, but they also form emotional attachments to other women that preclude criticism. One of the most scathing indictments of the Islamic Republic's policy toward women also criticizes Iranian women for condoning their own lot. "The women themselves are to blame for ... women are not conscious of their rights and either try to justify the existing laws, or raise cries for our rights without any valid backing."[153] Yet this is an urban lament, since rural women must continue to think in terms of one right: survival.

Since 1979 women, along with men, have begun to move out of the villages in greater numbers. Many recent migrants to Tehran, whose population in 1997 has swollen to 13 million, have become part of a lumpenproletariat, or lower-middle-class urban population. Changing locale has also entailed a change in the visible expressions of Islamic loyalty. In crowded, often inadequate housing, women have embraced the austere black veil or chador and maghnae (a head, shoulder, and bodice covering that leaves the face and hands free) as a passport to public space. Since all urban women must wear this uniform, they become equally conformist in the public domain but also equally free of patriarchal control restricting them to the private domain, that is, their households.

Common dress code then allows to surface the true problem of women: their place in the workforce. On this question there has been, and will continue to be, debate at all levels of Iranian society. Until Khomeini's demise, most governmental positions, except teaching and women's health, had been closed to women professionals, but for the past six years "women have been able to study whatever they want and enter all jobs." One might scoff at such a statement except that it comes from the editor of Zanan (Women), a bimonthly magazine focusing on women's issues that began publication in 1991 and has not shied away from such controversial topics as divorce practices, the condition of women prisoners, stereotypes of women in textbooks, the image of women in Iranian cinema, and particularly alternative readings of Qur'anic passages concerning the status of women.[154]

Zanan is a publication by and for urban women—those who have had the benefit of education, employment, and access to public space. It is they who have protested against the Islamic Republic of Iran. They have written passionately and argued effectively against patriarchal norms. Many have also projected their views through publications that have appeared in English while they were exiled to England or North America.[155]

The comparative freedom that Iranian women enjoy reflects the resilience and determination of those who have lived through both the early years of the revolution and the eight-year-long war with Iraq. It also reflects the political courage of Rafsanjani, who in a characteristic interview noted the accomplishments as well as the limits of women in the public sphere:

<quote>

After the revolution, we invited people to encourage their daughters to play a more active role in society. And we encourage them very much to send their children to higher institutes of learning and research centers. Now, about 35% of our university students are women. And about 40% of school teachers are women. We do not have many women at the level of high management, but their number is increasing in the parliament and top

management. We think that the status of women has been enhanced and that their future is even better in this 19

</quote>

<quote>

country.[156]

</quote>

While not all clerics or parliamentarians share Rafsanjani’s “liberal” view of women’s role in society, there is little doubt that the situation of Iranian women is improving, partly as a result of their own efforts, but partly also with some help from engaged and supportive leaders. Iranian women are far from passive creatures confined to home and unable to participate in the public sphere; EuroAmerican media stereotypes die hard, but die they must if the reality of Iran is to be recognized.

*** Egypt

What is true for women in Iran is also true in Egypt during the past quarter century: Islamic fundamentalism has played an increasing role in their lives.

There are at least three profiles that need to be considered. The first, and narrowest, profile focuses only on those female cadres allied with male fundamentalists. These are lower-middle- to middle-class women, often of rural background. There are few of them, and they do not speak for themselves because their self-described role does not permit their voices to be heard as individual testimonies. The second profile centers on those women who are negatively affected by fundamentalist-inspired laws, which reduce or exclude them from public space that during a prior period had seemed open to them. Also few in number, they are almost entirely second- or third-generation urban dwellers. By birth, education, and travel they have an awareness of the status of women in Europe and America, even when they criticize the excesses of “Western” feminists. The third profile is the one

least often considered in discussion of fundamentalism: it is the great mass of rural women for whom the issues of fundamentalism and feminism alike are moot. As we saw in the Iranian case, it is foolish to speak of Muslim women as a single group since the social, economic, and educational profile of rural women brackets them from their urban sisters.

If we begin with urban women, it is because only in cities, and with the transformations that occur to women in Muslim cities, can the saga of Islamic fundamentalism be charted.

In the Egyptian case, as in the Iranian case, we begin with a provisional list of public events, but even as we do, we must recognize that the events of progress that they signal affect but a small number of Egyptian women, nearly all of them urban dwellers.

Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU) is founded; its journal, L’Egyptienne, is published in French. Its upper-class constituents, headed by Huda Shaarawi, advocate social reform.

First women admitted to Fuad I, later Cairo University Minimum marriage age for women raised to sixteen; marriage laws reformed; higher health standards advocated for rural women

Protective legislation passed for working-class women

Muslim Ladies’ Association (MLA) formed as an alternative to, but not a competitor with, EFU

EFU shifts its journal from French to Arabic language (becoming al-Misriya), but still denies even middleclass women educated abroad admission to its ranks

National Feminine Party (NFP) founded, limited to Cairo

League of University and Institutes' Young Women (LUIYW) founded. Its leader, Inji Aflatun, writes two major books: 80 Million Women with Us and We Egyptian Women, arguing that women's liberation is compatible with Islam

Daughters of the Nile Union (DNU) also founded in Cairo, but with branches throughout Egypt. DNU, along with NFP and LUIYW, advocates political rights, literacy, and hygiene for poor women

First family planning programs inaugurated

Article 40 guarantees citizens equality before the law, with "no discrimination made on the basis of race, sex, language, ideology, or belief."

By law women are guaranteed thirty seats in Parliament Personal Status Law passed. Canceled in early 1985;

most of its central provisions reinstated in a new law that went into effect in July 1985

Arab Women's Solidarity Association founded by Nawal el-Saadawi. At first denied permission to register by the government, it was finally allowed to register in 1985 but then was dissolved in 1990 along with its journal, Nun.

What the above list of dates and events omits is the level of interaction between fundamentalists and feminists that moved from initial cooperation to outright hostility. MLA was founded by Zaynab al-Ghazali, the leading female Islamist, as an alternative to EFU, but with the goal of furthering options for Egyptian women. However, in 1952, when Nasser and his fellow

officers came to power, fundamentalists split from feminists and disavowed the latter's goal of harnessing all women to the development goals of the state. Nasser reacted by choking off fundamentalist women. He treated them less harshly than he did their male counterparts: though imprisoning Zaynab al-Ghazali in 1965, he executed her male role model, Sayyid Qutb, the following year. Sadat may be seen to have had a similarly punitive stance toward female fundamentalists: after Zaynab al-Ghazzali's release, another female Islamist, Safinaz Kazim, was incarcerated on three separate occasions —in 1973, 1975, and 1981.

Yet attention to the names and fates of a few fundamentalist women ignores an underlying class disjuncture. Both Zaynab al-Ghazali and Safinaz Kazim were upper-middle-class Cairene women of education and privilege; while distanced from the upper-class women of the EFU, in class background they very much resembled members of the MLA or the DNU. By contrast, fundamentalist women who joined Islamic alternative groups in the 1970s and 1980s tended to be middle- or even lower-middle class.[157] This cross-class mobilization of female Islamists invites attention. It matches the growing economic disjunctures of urban Egypt during the past two decades. Women as well as men have been confronted with mammoth shortfalls between their educational horizons and their occupational opportunities: each year 375,000 new people enter a workforce that already is swollen with 40 percent unemployment,[158] and so the new class lines tend to be drawn between those who are employed with any semblance of "honorable" subsistence and those who are not. Fundamentalism appeals to educated, underemployed women, as it does to their male counterparts.

Faced with such a massive, intractable economic crisis, Sadat and then Mubarak followed the policy of Nasser in manipulating both women's issues and fundamentalists toward their own Pharaonic objectives: to maintain the state as a refuge against chaos at all costs. The Constitution of 1971 is a showcase of juridical ambiguity, as Margot Badran has demonstrated in her path-breaking article on women and modern Egypt. While guaranteeing women equality before the law, it also declared: "The state guarantees a balance and accord between a woman's duties towards her family on the one hand and towards her work in society and her equality with man in the political, social and cultural spheres on the other without violating the law of the Islamic Shari'Ah."[159]

In effect, the fundamentalist viewpoint that women are to be maintained in the domestic sphere and excluded from the public sphere was supported by the tone, as well as by the last clause, of the declaration above. In other ways, too, Sadat undermined women in the workforce. His famous Open Door (infitah) policy, inaugurated in 1974, embraced foreign investment and encouraged the private sector, but it also rescinded the state's guarantee to employ all university graduates who could not otherwise find jobs. Since women had to compete with men for the few private-sector jobs available, the Open Door became a closed door for female university graduates. With every other Egyptian facing unemployment by the mid-1980s, the state positioned itself as the constrainer of woman's public roles, the advocate of her retreat into the home.

What Sadat took away through economic policies he seemed to restore by legislative decree. Through a double move in 1979 he opened up Parliament to greater female representation and also passed the most hotly contested legislation of his entire rule, the Personal Status Laws. The Personal Status Laws gave women the right to initiate divorce, protected them in divorce actions, and also placed controls on polygyny. All this in the same year that witnessed the ratification of the Camp David Accords with Israel and the ascent to power of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran!

Despite the uproar that greeted the Personal Status Laws, they did not change the subsurface reality of Egyptian social culture. In the early 1980s a flood of editions of popular religious tracts appeared from Egyptian publishing houses, at the same that the charismatic preacher Muhammad Mitwalli al-Sha<rawi rose to public prominence. Their message was the same: the happy woman is the woman in the home, an Egyptian woman who is at once obedient wife and nurturing mother. While the radical female fundamentalists like al-Ghazali and Kazim were kept at bay, the moderate fundamentalists were allowed to operate at will. They were even supported by the state under Mubarak. In 1988 Shaarawi, whose television popularity exceeds that of America's televangelists and who, unlike them, was granted free air time by the state, received a national decoration. In the same year a similar decoration was bestowed on a university professor of peasant origins,

Bint al-Shati, whose prolific writings were chiefly marked by their unflagging exaltation of women's domestic roles.[160]

There was a still deeper subsurface reality of Egyptian economic life that had not changed. While statistics are notoriously inaccurate, it is still likely that the majority of Egyptian women continue to be rural rather than urban, and among rural female workers, more than two-thirds are engaged in some kind of economic productivity outside the house, whether plowing in Lower Egypt or milking cows and tending to chickens in Upper Egypt. Such women are concerned with subsistence, with managing minimal resources. Illiterate themselves, to the extent that they think of educational opportunities for their children they "harbor a suspicion that an education which at the end of university [no longer even] guarantees a poorly paying job in the government bureaucracy may not always be worth the effort."[161]

And what does occupy them beyond subsistence is family relations and, above all, marriage. When one reads accounts of the lives of such women, it is neither the platitudes of fundamentalism nor the promises of feminism but the strategies for coping with arduous circumstances and limited options that loom large. These women are far from being passive or unresourceful. Though they and their families are visited by numerous and unending afflictions, they are never left without some appropriate action to take. They are "actively and energetically involved in manipulating their and others' lives, in responding to difficulties effectively, and in discovering solutions to problems that are realistic given the limits of what is available."[162] And yet when all the opportunities for change have been mapped out, neither a religious validation of hearth and home nor a shift to education and public employment is among them. It is only a tiny fraction of urban-dwelling Egyptian women who are affected by either the fundamentalist or the feminist option— or by a newly emergent trend toward "Islamic feminism."

*** Pakistan

One reaches the same conclusions about Pakistan that one does about Egypt, though by a different historical route. The tabulation of public events prior to 1947 is difficult because it must take into account the multiple

groups participating in colonial India, conjoining future Pakistanis with Muslims and Hindus who were as opposed to Partition as they were to British occupation. Indian Muslim women, for instance, were visible in the ranks of those supporting a Pan-Islamic coalition (the Khilafat movement) in 1917. They also helped to found the Muslim League, which was the prime advocacy group of an independent South Asian Muslim nation. Soon after Partition in August 1947, Muslim women became visible as Pakistani citizens. They began to organize at the national level. Among their achievements were the following:

1949 All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) formed by the wife of Pakistan's first prime minister, Begum Liaqat Ali Khan

1956 APWA publishes a report recommending restrictions on talaq divorce and polygyny

1961 Moslem Family Laws Ordinance passed, raising the legal age for marriage from fourteen to sixteen for women, and eighteen to twenty-one for men

1973 New constitution promulgated, one of its provisions claiming to guarantee women's equality

1974 Married Women's Property Act and Dowry Prohibition Act passed

1979 Women's Division created at the federal level

1979 Hudood Ordinance passed, creating a special threat to lower-class women

1981 Women's Action Forum (WAF) formed, stressing feminist issues and attracting housewives, students, lawyers, and professional women

1982 A lay preacher, Dr. Israr Ahmad, calls for the complete seculsion of women as well as total enforcement of the veil, and a Federal Council appointed by General Zia al-Haq limits women’s participation in spectator sports

1983 Law of Evidence passed, limiting women’s testimony in court and also compensation due from murder of a relative

All these dates suggest again a tug-of-war between feminists and fundamentalists, with the fundamentalists in Pakistan enjoying explicit government support, at least until General Zia’s death in 1988. After its founding in 1981, the Women’s Action Forum (WAF) spread to all major urban centers of Pakistan, and with support of the older APWA, focused on advocating women’s rights, including education, marriage choice, family planning, even abortion. WAF members were loyal citizens of the state and also devout followers of Islam, inasmuch as their members participated regularly in Qur’an classes. These feminists, like their counterparts from Egypt, Iran, and elsewhere, were seeking to find scriptural justification for Islamic norms other than those sanctioned by a neopatriarchal religious class.

The WAF strategy did appeal to some moderate Muslim males, but it did not not succeed in convincing other conservative Muslims, both male and female. The state, which was tainted by its illegal usurpation of power, nonetheless countered the WAF challenge through its own backers, female as well as male Islamists. “The women’s wings of the fundamentalist Jamaat-e Islami and its student appendage, the Jamiat-e Tulaba, banded together with the newly formed Majlis-e Khawatin Pakistan to stymie WAF’s campaign against Zia’s Islamization policies.”[163] At the height of this ideological battle, in 1984, the founder of the APWA, Begum Lia-qat Ali Khan, challenged General Zia to a showdown. She was the leader of Pakistani women while he was the head of state. He was the instrument of religious fundamentalists, she the advocate of democratic processes and women’s rights.

The drama evident in this theater of confrontation masks a deep and disturbing reality. Pakistan is less able to nurture, to educate, and to employ its women citizens than either Egypt or Iran. Pakistan is predominantly agrarian, over 75 percent of its ninety-five million population living in forty-five thousand villages in four provinces. Most women live in such abject poverty that a report by the government-sponsored Commission on the Status of Women could report that “the average rural woman of Pakistan is born in near slavery, leads a life of drudgery and dies invariably in oblivion.”[164] Girls’ education is even scarcer than running water or electricity. While most boys go to elementary school, some to high school, and a few even to college, most females “typically have been trapped into a traditional treadmill as maintainers of simple one- or two-room dwellings, tenders of animals, and auxiliary farm workers.”[165] And, of course, they get married and produce children, an average of seven surviving children per family since only a small percentage of fertile couples practice family planning.

Yet even in the most desperate village, women continue to function, as they do in the most upper-class circles of Karachi social life, as vessels of honor. “For whatever her station in life, the Pakistani woman derives identity in the family circle as mother, wife, daughter, and sister. The stability and sanctity of family life, kinship ties and loyalties, the fabric of religious observance and custom—all these are maintained largely through women who are looked upon as preservers and upholders of social virtues.”[166]

In relation to the total population of Pakistan, both feminists and fundamentalists seemed to share certain benefits. They were far more privileged than the poorer, which are also the more populous, segments of Pakistani society. In Egypt, the feminist and the fundamentalist movements also drew support from urban women of privilege: regardless of class differentiation among upper, middle, and lower classes, they all benefited from their placement in the upper third of the Cairene social scale. For Pakistani women also, markers of class location are crucial. They mirror a pattern of social hierarchy that has been historically constructed and remains deeply embedded as the “obvious” norm of social exchange, above all in urban settings. Feminism, despite its rhetorical clamor, remains socially conservative, so socially conservative that the politican historian Ayesha Jalal

depicts its functional stance as “the convenience of subservience.” She explains:

<quote>

In Pakistan, as in other parts of the world, the class origins of those who have formed the vanguard of the “feminist” movement have been the decisive factor in the articulation of women’s issues at the level of the state. Educated, urban, middle and upper class in the main, these women have toyed with notions of emancipation but carefully resisted challenging their prescribed roles in society. Such deference is merely the outward expression of a deeper and largely subjective consideration: the stability of the family unit and by implication of the social order itself. As beneficiaries of social accommodations worked out over long periods of history, middle and upper class women everywhere have a stake in preserving the existing structures of authority, and with them the convenience of a subservience that denies them equality in the public realm but also affords privileges not available to women lower down the rungs of the social hierarchy.[167]

</quote>

In the context of Pakistan, such conservatism, expressed as subservience to existing structures, means that the mere election of a woman to the highest political office does not assure that the fundamentalist cause has been stalled, the feminist advanced:

<quote>

On the face of it the election of Benazir Bhutto as prime minister ... might well suggest that the march of history has dramatically changed course. Yet even the most visible symbol of a woman successful in the public domain has been compelled to win social approbation with measured nods to the orthodox and fundamentalist galleries. [Hence Benazir Bhutto during her time in office did not repeal either the hated Hudood Ordinance or its sequel, the Law of Evidence.][168]

</quote>

While Pakistan provides a test case of how gender advocacy and class consciousness do not mesh, leaving poor urban and destitute rural women equally disempowered, the circumstances of women in Egypt and Iran are better only by degrees. The strategy for feminists has been to advocate advancement for their country, along with the improvement of opportunities for women. Hence Azar Tabari has declared that “any struggle must also fight against the overall political Islamic system that deprives women and men of the most elementary rights of choice and any kind of self-determination,”[169] while Nawal El-Saadawi has gone even further, asserting that “the complete and real liberation of women, whether in the Arab countries or the West or the Far East, can only become a fact when humanity does away with class society and exploitation for all time In other words, women can only become truly liberated under a socialist system where classes have been abolished.”[170] Hers is an appealing utopian vision: it evokes a global community at once transgendered and classless. Yet it must be tempered on three counts: (1) It conceals the class-embeddedness of the speaker, a medical doctor whose writings and travel place her among the most privileged of Egypt’s tiny urban elite. (2) It provides no middle ground for advocacy within the current global economic order, where classless society is not only a lofty ideal but also an unattainable option. Reallocating wealth is no easier for women than for men: how many advocates of a truly classless society would be prepared to endure the grinding poverty of El-Saadawi’s rural Egyptian sisters, or their counterparts in Iran and Pakistan? (3) It downplays the historical formation of contemporary Arab/Muslim society, which has been very uneven, leaving most societies with impoverished masses (Egypt and Algeria) or expatriate workers who amount to indentured servants (Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States). Not only capitalism but industrialization and corporatization have reinforced divisions among humankind within as well as between different societies. Socialism in the mid-1990s represents a spent force.

Pakistani women are, and will continue to be, deprived of the opportunity to work. Their irreversible deprivation underscores the global, international specter that daunts feminists and fundamentalists alike: “In the final analysis, the integration of women in the wage-labor force hangs on a solution to the Arab [read: Egyptian, Iranian, Pakistani] economic crisis. This in turn depends on the political will to achieve real national independence and regional self-reliance. If the past is anything to go by, little will be achieved in the foreseeable future.”[171]

Because feminists have neither the internal mechanisms nor the external supports to further their agenda, it will remain possible for others, especially fundamentalist others, female as well as male, to propound their solution to the no-win economic dilemma. As new generations crowd out the old, more and more young people will continue to migrate to cities. They will seek education and employment, only to meet with dissatisfaction and poverty. The most visible group to blame will be “the modernizers,” those who seem to have succeeded by defending the current order. A major group standing against the modernizers will be the Islamists or fundamentalists, those who articulate an indigenous set of codes, grounded in one reading of the Islamic past. The fundamentalists will claim to provide a safety-net against the disruptions and disappointments of emerging economic order. Since no such safety-net exists, the fraud of fundamentalism will become evident, at least to some. Yet the fundamentalist protest will persist. Even when its proponents do not succeed in gaining direct political power, they will have succeeded to the extent that they have made conformity to religious norms the litmus test of cultural authenticity. Even though a theocratic experiment is unlikely for either Egypt or Pakistan, elites in both countries will experience the impulse, from the government as well as from the opposition, to seek an Islamic solution to nagging problems. Women will be drawn into the fray from both sides, and their voices will merit close attention, etching sharply the contradictions that face Muslim society as a whole.

** Chapter 6. The Shah Bano Case

NOWHERE have the contradictions posed by an Islamist solution become more evident than in the case of a South Asian Muslim divorcee who sought support from her husband through the court system. To examine the case of Shah Bano is to call attention to the pivotal yet problematic role of one mode of governance, the judiciary, as it functions in the three major Muslim states of South Asia: India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. I will argue two points that emerge when one looks at women as an independent category and the judiciary as a crucial dimension of governance. The first is that women are

made to represent the cultural norms shared by men and women alike throughout Muslim South Asia. The second is that court cases involving women's legal rights not only reflect boundary markings between Muslim and other communities, they also heighten tensions about their maintenance, even as they complicate notions of what it is to be both Asian and Muslim in the late twentieth century of the common era.

Shah Bano was the daughter of a police constable.[172] At an early age she had been married to her first cousin, Muhammad Ahmad Khan. During more than forty years of marriage she had borne him five children. Then one day in 1975, according to her account, he evicted her from their home. At first he paid her a maintenance sum, as was required by Islamic law, but he ceased payment after some two and a half years. When she applied to the district court for redress, he divorced her. Uttering the formula disapproved by the Prophet but authorized by the Hanafi school of law, he declared: "I divorce you, I divorce you, I divorce you."[173]

At that point they were fully divorced, but, complying with a further provision of Islamic law, Muhammad Ahmad Khan repaid Shah Bano the dower of about three hundred dollars that he had set aside at the time of their marriage. Legally he had fulfilled all his responsibilities to her.

Shah Bano, however, was left impoverished. She had no means to support herself, having worked only as a housewife for over forty years in the domicile from which she was now debarred. She sued her former husband by going to the magistrate of a provincial court. The magistrate ruled that Muhammad Ahmad Khan, having violated the intent of Muslim Personal Law, was obliged to continue paying Shah Bano her maintenance. The court awarded her the sum of roughly two dollars a month. She appealed the amount of that award, and two years later, in 1980, the High Court of her state (Madhya Pradesh) awarded Shah Bano approximately twenty-three dollars a month.

It was at that point that Muhammad Ahmad Khan appealed the High Court's decision. A lawyer himself, he took the case to the Indian Supreme Court,

arguing that he had fulfilled all the provisions of Muslim Personal Law and hence had no more financial obligations toward his former spouse.

The Shah Bano case dragged on for another five years. Without the financial support of “fairly well-off male family members (in this case, Shah Bano’s sons),”[174] she could not have pursued her appeal. Finally, in 1985, seven years after she had begun litigation in the lower courts, Shah Bano was vindicated: the Indian Supreme Court upheld the Madhya Pradesh High Court judgment, and her former husband had to comply with its verdict. The Supreme Court justices, in dismissing Muhammad Ahmad Khan’s appeal, cited the Criminal Procedure Code of 1973, one section of which referred to “the maintenance of wives, children and parents.”[175]

None of the above narrative makes Shah Bano exceptional. Neither her plight nor the length of her legal battles lacks precedents. Numerous are the studies of South Asian women that underscore the discrimination they continue to experience even after the attention drawn to Third World women during the International Women’s Decade (1975–1985).[176] It is no small irony that Shah Bano’s legal vindication came just as the International Women’s Decade was ending, but the favorable outcome of her case had more to do with a legislative act than with public advocacy of women’s rights: it was a change in the Code of Criminal Procedure (often abbreviated Cr.P.C.) enacted in 1973 that made possible the reconsideration of provisions for divorced Muslim women. Under this code, two Muslim women had been awarded maintenance—in 1979 and again in 1980—and it was their cases, though reviewed and modified in the Shah Bano judgment, that provided the precedent with reference to which the Supreme Court opted to rule in favor of Shah Bano.

The legal drama, and its political consequence, are dense. Often the case seems to remain only a watershed for identity politics in the continuing struggle for inclusive norms within postcolonial India. What needs to be stressed alternatively is the nature of the legal system that made all three cases possible. All three women resided neither in Bangladesh nor in Pakistan, the two majoritarian Muslim nations of the subcontinent, but in the Republic of India. As Indian citizens, they lived under an ad hoc system evolved since British colonial rule. It was a system that tended to separate

criminal law from Muslim personal law. Throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries there was no uniform manner of applying Muslim family law within the lower courts. On the one hand, the number of rules applied to questions of marriage and inheritance were restricted, while on the other hand, they were enforced through a strict hierarchical structure where appeals moved haltingly from a subordinate district judge to a state high court to the London Privy Council, replaced after 1947 by the Indian Supreme Court.[177]

Due to the omissions and excesses of this system, it is not surprising that customary law, unfavorable to women, was often applied instead of the more favorable terms of Islamic law. Muslim women in the western and northern regions of India were especially vulnerable to facing the denial of property inheritance and dowry settlements, both provided to them under the shari’A or Islamic law. Finally, in 1937, under pressure from Muslim elites, the Shariat Law was passed. It required all Indian Muslims to be governed solely by Islamic juridical norms in family matters, namely, in marriage, divorce, maintenance, adoption, succession, and inheritance. But at independence ten years later, Parliament passed an All India Criminal Procedure Code that applied, as its title suggests, to all Indian citizens, whatever their religious affiliations; one of its provisions stipulated “the maintenance of wife, children and parents.” It was that provision which the Supreme Court justices cited in the 1979 and 1980 cases and again in 1985 when they ruled in favor of Shah Bano and against Muhammad Ahmad Khan.[178]

Personal law, in effect, acquired a double tracking, one pertaining to the Muslim community, the other to common Indian citizenship. While that double tracking created tension between secular and religious authorities after Independence, such tension was nonetheless successfully negotiated prior to 1985. Were the issue itself a sufficient provocation, then both the 1979 and the 1980 cases should have set off a nationwide row. In fact, they did not.

The case of Shah Bano became decisive for one reason: its timing. It did not occur in the mid-1970s, when Mrs. Gandhi’s declaration of a state of emergency had muzzled the court system, nor will it occur again in the mid-

1990s, for reasons that will be made clear below. It was the changed climate of religious identity in the mid-1980s that set the stage for the Shah Bano debacle. There were several necessary conditions, but the one sufficient condition was timing: it was in the mid-1980s, and only in the mid-1980s, that there surfaced an issue that signaled how permeable and volatile were the boundaries of Muslim identity. That issue was Muslim Personal Law, that is, law that applied to the personal status of each Muslim within the family domain. Personal law became the litmus test of Indian Muslim collective identity, its fragility underscored by the creation in 1972 of an All India Muslim Personal Law Board to maintain and defend its application.[179]

Even so, personal law by itself would not have created the Shah Bano debacle. The case came to public attention in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's assassination at the hands of Sikh extremists. Riots in Delhi and elsewhere had shredded the myth of communal harmony in the Republic of India. Everyone had become more aware and more worried about his or her markings as a Hindu or a Muslim or a Sikh or a tribal. While Sikhs, not Muslims, had been the primary targets of the Delhi riots, Muslims still felt vulnerable.

It was in this charged atmosphere that demagogues sought pretexts to "prove" that the ruling party was but a front for furthering Hindu hegemony, at the expense of all minorities but especially the largest, which was the Muslim, minority. The Shah Bano case provided Muslim ideologues, supported and abetted by the All India Muslim Personal Law Board, with "clear" evidence that there was a juridical slide toward uniform civil codes, codes that would enforce majoritarian Hindu values on all Indians. Rajiv Gandhi's Congress-I was then the ruling party. When Congress-I supported the Supreme Court decision, an incensed Muslim politician ran against the Congress-I candidate (who also happened to be a Muslim). The demagogue won, lambasting the anti-Muslim impact of the Shah Bano judgment. How could Muslims preserve their separate identity, he argued, if even their personal laws were subject to arbitration in the higher, "secular" courts of India? The Muslim Personal Law Board, having won a victory at the regional level, ratcheted its claims to the next level. Its members pressed on the national front, appealing to legislators, ministers, and, of course, journalists. They were abetted by Muhammad Ahmad Khan, a barrister arguing his own case! Together the aggrieved former spouse and representatives of the

Muslim Personal Law Board carried the banner of Muslim juridical autonomy to several members of Parliament, their every move broadcast by the press.

The role of the press in dramatizing the Shah Bano case has been considerable. In volume of print and decibels of emotion it exceeds all other tragedy-laced spectacles, even the storming of the Sikh golden temple in Amritsar, even the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi and later her son, Rajiv. It exceeds even the Rushdie affair, with which it has sometimes been linked, notably by Gayatri Spivak.[180] The Shah Bano case exceeds all these because it concerns a process that has tapped into communal fears, and drawn out appeals to communal loyalty, not witnessed since independence. Its only competitor for sustained media attention is the Ayodhya mandir/ Babri masjid dispute. That dispute erupted in 1986 as a politically motivated effort to reclaim all of India as “Hindu” by pinpointing, with scant historical evidence,[181] one pilgrimage site as the birthplace of the god Ram and then alleging that sixteenth-century Mughal invaders built a mosque on this same site in order to affirm their superiority over Hinduism.

Important though the Ayodhya dispute is, in a real sense it occupies adjacent space on the same spectrum of communally marked confrontation as Shah Bano. Ayodhya becomes the sequel to Shah Bano since it was the latter that pushed Muslim-Hindu antagonism to new levels. Unlike the local protagonists of previous communal riots, the India-wide Hindu protagonists of Ayodhya’s sacral purity used the media to stage a grievance identical to that of the Shah Bano case, namely, that Muslim and Hindu world views were finally incommensurate and that the Republic of India could not grant both equal representation.

In such a charged atmosphere the value of religious identity is heightened, and appeals to creedal shibboleths abound. The ideological weapon wielded on both sides quickly became identified as fundamentalism. It was fundamentalism Indian-style, but it was still the bugbear of fundamentalism. The challenge was thrown down by the demagogue who used Shah Bano as the rallying cry for his own election to Parliament in 1985. Syed Shahabuddin decried the Supreme Court decision as “clear” evidence of Hindu contempt for Muslim law. He opposed it not only for himself and for his Muslim constituents but also for all believing Muslims who, like himself, were

fundamentalists. Fundamentalists? Yes, fundamentalists, because to be a true Muslim, in his view, was to bind oneself to the literal revelation of the Qur'an. "Historically," declared Syed Shahabaddin, "the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet 1400 years ago but it is the final message of God to mankind. Not one syllable is subject to change It is in this sense that the Muslim is by definition a fundamentalist."[182]

There are, of course, enormous contradictions in this assertion, since the Qur'an itself is subject to variant interpretations within the believing community of Muslims. Despite the consensus shared by all Muslims that the Qur'an is the final message of God's final messenger, its rare legal passages engender multiple interpretations, arising as they do in a myriad of human circumstances. When Syed Shahabuddin and his followers appeal to Qur'anic finality, they are really staking out a claim for themselves as the sole valid interpreters of what they take to be the simple, singular meaning mandated by Qur'anic verses. Yet other, equally devout Muslims can challenge those claims and offer in their stead equally valid alternative readings of both the Holy Qur'an and Islamic history.

In a time of crisis, to those who perceive themselves at risk, a dispassionate view of the Qur'an may be less plausible than the unequivocal reading claimed by Syed Shahabuddin and other "fundamentalists." The mid-1980s were such a time of crisis for many Indians. India's Muslim "fundamentalists" challenged the Shah Bano ruling at a moment when the center seemed to be unraveling. Their appeal to Parliament to reverse the Shah Bano decree seemed implausible, and the uproar about Shah Bano would have quickly subsided had their appeal failed. But for a variety of political considerations both the Congress-I and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi perceived themselves as vulnerable to "the Muslim vote." Out of expediency the Indian Parliament in 1986 passed a bill often referred to as the Muslim Women's Bill.[183] That bill withdrew the right of Muslim women to appeal for maintenance under the Criminal Procedure Code. In other words, after 1986 Shah Bano could have no successors, for the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill, in fact, discriminated against Muslim women: it removed the right of any Muslim woman to juridical appeal for redress of the award made to her under Muslim Personal Law.

Damaging though that outcome may be to the invisible seam of multiculturalism without which Indian democracy cannot function, its most dire consequences may yet be muted by the logic of its initial success. Rather than closing debate on the Shah Bano case, the legislative reversal of the Supreme Court ruling raised new questions about who has the right to speak on behalf of the Muslim community. The Supreme Court judge who read the majority decision made his own claim to best understand Muslim interests when in concluding his argument for the court's ruling he justified it as "more in keeping with the Quran than the traditional interpretation by Muslims of the Shariat."[184] His move to separate the purity of Qur'anic principles from the obfuscation of Muslim jurists was followed by others, including a score of journalists. In an exchange that enlivened the Illustrated Weekly of India during early March 1986, a Hindu journalist, Arun Shouri, argued that "while there was much oppression of women under Islamic law, the Quran, rightly interpreted, would make possible the removal of the injustices they suffered." But, according to his respondent, the Islamic scholar Rafiq Zakaria, Shouri only seemed to be concerned about true Islam; his stated concern actually masked a contempt for Muslims and a not so subtle attempt to undermine Muslim religious identity. Nor did the debate disappear once the Muslim Women Bill became law: women's groups opposed the government's stand in favor of the bill, with the result that leading Muslims spoke out on both sides of the issue.[185] Seldom before had religious identity and gender parity been so publicly framed in antithetical, competing terms. No wonder that Shah Bano subsequently rejected the court verdict in her favor and occasioned still another round of debate about the meaning of her subjectivity as a Muslim woman.[186]

What is too easily ignored in the heat of the debate is the further limiting effect it has on the claims of Islamic fundamentalists. Islamic fundamentalism spurs competitors, also religious ideologues, also "fundamentalists."[187] The Islamist move is countered by the effort of Sikh and Hindu others to mark their community boundaries with shibboleths. Each shibboleth is said to echo an element of scriptural, linguistic, or ethnic purity. Collectively such shibboleths are upheld as fundamental dicta, that all insiders must defend, but which outsiders also must respect.

While the outcome of ideological warfare, with its frequent eruption into physical violence, is not clear, one thing has now become clear. Though seldom stressed, the status of women in fundamentalist discourse is crucial. Laws governing women have provided the touchstone for Islamist identity in the maelstrom of Indian politics. While much more could be said about how several groups have manipulated the Shah Bano case to their own perceived advantage,[188] that narrative obscures rather than illumines the significance of Shah Bano's gender. It is only when Shah Bano has been highlighted as a Muslim woman litigant in modern-day India that one can begin to assess how other Muslim women fare in the judicial systems of Bangladesh and Pakistan.

*** Female Litigants in Pakistan and Bangladesh

There are no Shah Banos in the Pakistan of the 1950s and 1960s, nor in the Pakistan and Bangladesh of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Despite the attention directed to the implications of the Shah Bano case within India, no one has yet examined its implication for India's Muslim neighbors.[189] To ask why Shah Bano is a distinctly Indian test case is to make a comparative move across territorial borders by presuming that Islam as a variable can be tested in each postcolonial state. It is also a move that reveals the major divergences between the advocacy groups claiming allegiance to Islamic fundamentals as they strive to dominate the social and political life of the subcontinent in the 1990s.

One would like to believe, for instance, that there are no test cases of female appellants in Pakistani or Bangladeshi courts because as majoritarian Muslim nations, Pakistan and Bangladesh treat their women citizens fairly, providing them with the entitlements specified in the Qur'an and in Muslim law. Such is not the case. If one could measure, one would probably find as many infractions of Muslim fundamentals in the cases of divorcees or widows in Pakistan and Bangladesh as in India, and one would also probably find most of these infractions committed by devout Muslims who ignore the "clear" reading of the Qur'an, not so much because it is expedient to do so but because they feel themselves to be legally "protected" from its application to them. They are "protected" because Muslim law is continually being reinterpreted and adjudicated, making it impossible to chart a single, direct

line of interpretation from seventh-century scripture to twentieth-century juridical norms. There is no “clear” reading of the Qur’an as law, just as there is not of the Bible or the Torah, or the Adi Granth or the Vedas. Scriptures are themselves symbol systems that allow for multiple, often conflicting, extrapolations of their legal mandates.

Yet there is more than juridical ambiguity that accounts for the absence of publicized cases involving women and personal law in both Pakistan and Bangladesh. One must also look to structural features that have determined, and so delimited, each country’s mode of governance. One must confront, in particular, the colonial legacy of Pakistan and Bangladesh. At the most general level their colonial legacy is the same as that of India. It can be traced to the calculated imposition of British administrative norms. The new norms were designed to meet the needs of competing interest groups, but they also impelled these same groups to continue to compete with one another. The final demarcations of territory in 1947 further ensured that groups defined and controlled as rivals would find no intrinsic basis for national cohesion after Independence.[190] Even if one demurs from the wag who quipped that “British rule in India began on 14 August 1947,”[191] one must acknowledge that the structures defining governance in Pakistan and India after 1947 diverged more and more from one another. Both nations, and later Bangladesh, had inherited the threefold division of governance into executive, legislative, and judicial branches. But the three branches did not function with equal authority in each polity. It is in examining differences between them that one can begin to understand the ideology of control that has been obsessed with women’s status since the mid-1980s, that is, since the advent of competing religious fundamentalisms.

The space created for Shah Bano to protest came out of the mixed legal system inherited from the Raj. On paper Bangladesh and Pakistan have a judicial system similar to India’s, one where criminal law parallels but also diverges from Muslim Personal Law. Yet only in India does one find an independent judiciary functioning as a third branch of government, at once separate from and unbridled by its legislative and executive branches. The Indian court system, despite many challenges, has maintained its autonomous role since 1947. It continues to be

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a single, integrated, hierarchical system, consisting of the Supreme Court of India at the top, high courts in the states, and lower courts in the district and local areas. The idea of the independence of the judiciary, introduced by the British, has struck deep roots in India. The Constitution guarantees security of tenure for judges ... and outlines an exhaustive procedure for dismissal on charges of incompetence or misconduct Given India’s diverse and contentious social groups,

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the judiciary overall has played an indispensable role in mediating social conflict. Not only the educated elites concentrated in the cities but also the poorer rural and urban sectors of the population have made frequent use of the courts, and Indians in general have gained the reputation of being a highly litigious people.[192]

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While opponents of the Shah Bano case have contested the Supreme Court’s ruling, they have had to go to great lengths to mitigate its effect. Despite the political debacle produced by the subsequent Muslim Women Bill, the very process that produced the Shah Bano case demands attention if we are to understand why no Shah Banos have litigated their grievances in either Pakistan or Bangladesh.

It is executive supremacy, rather than judicial autonomy, that characterizes the postindependence polities of Pakistan and, since 1971, Pakistan and Bangladesh. From its inception in 1947 Pakistan functioned as a Punjabi-based militocracy, where the influence of British-trained senior army officers determined the political culture of first Karachi and then Islamabad. Although Bengalis resisted West Pakistani disdain for their culture and waged a successful war of independence, with Indian assistance and at great cost, the asymmetry of governance that prevailed in Islamabad was transferred to bhaka. During the past two decades the military has dominated all levels of governance in Bangladesh. Sheikh Mujib, through the Awami party, guided

his countrymen to independence and was twice elected to office with massive pluralities. Yet, because of his close ties with India, he lost the confidence of the army, for despite the fact that India had assisted Bangladesh to gain independence, the officer corps had inherited from their Pakistani counterparts a deep anti-Indian bias. In 1975 a group of young army officers invaded Mujib's Dhaka residence and another residence where some of his family lived, assassinating Mujib and nine of his closest relatives. They justified their mass murder in part because of Mujib's alleged subservience to India.[193] In 1981 Mujib's successor, Zia ar-Rahman, who had tried to form his own political party and to bring new groups into Dhakan public life, was also assassinated by the army. Zia's successor was an army general, Husain Ershad, who imposed martial law on Bangladesh and suppressed all rival political parties. When at last Ershad was forced to hold elections in 1988, the entire opposition boycotted the polls, producing a voter turnout of less than 3 percent! In such circumstances it was nonsensical to talk of a democratic polity: Bangladesh, even more than Pakistan, functioned as a one-party militocracy till the early 1990s. Though the Constitution of 1972, later modified in 1977 and 1988, provided for independent legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, the legislature consisted of Ershad appointees, as did the court system at all levels, even after Begum Khaleda Zia, the widow of the general assassinated in 1981, became prime minister of Bangladesh in 1990.

While Begum Khaleda Zia is seen as an ineffective executive, her successor, Hasina Wazed, is not. Elected prime minister in June 1996, Hasina Wazed is one of the two surviving members of Sheikh Mujib's family. She promises to usher Bangladesh into a new era of internal justice and external respect. Yet the path beyond military domination remains perilous; it has been difficult even for Hasina Wazed to bring the still living murderers of her own family to trial. In late April 1997 she did succeed in beginning a process of litigation that, when it culminates in 1998, will perhaps demonstrate that at last, more than twenty-five years after its separation from Pakistan, Bangladesh is "finally becoming a nation under law."[194]

Despite the repressive, single-party regime that prevailed in Bangladesh till recently, women still enjoy some benefits. There is a tradition going back to Zia ar-Rahman of Bengali participation in the cause of Women in Development (WID). This program channels international aid to women's

cooperatives in the poor rural areas that constitute most of Bangladesh. Since both Zia and Ershad found it expedient to mobilize at least some women into government-sponsored activities, it is not surprising that two women, though rivals of each other, have made it to the highest executive office, with first Begum Khaleda Zia and now Hasina Wazed serving as prime minister of their nation.

Personal law, however, has fared less well. Not till 1985 were family courts even set up. Though they were said to have been given “exclusive jurisdiction to deal with cases relating to parental and conjugal rights, thereby expediting their resolution,”[195] one may wonder how efficient these courts were. Changes at the executive level may accelerate the snail pace of litigation and appeal, but the legacy of martial law lingers, and as recently as 1987 “there were 29 Supreme Court judges dealing with 21,600 cases.”[196]

Throughout the 1980s the cases selected as well as the decisions rendered by the Bangladeshi judiciary were also subject to review by the executive. Since Ershad attempted to make Islam the defining badge of national identity, he did not tolerate a case that questioned personal law, even if the litigant based her plea on Qur’anic precedent. Women, most of them rural, poor, and illiterate, remain subordinate to norms that are un-Islamic because the state-sponsored version of Islam reflects surface expediency rather than scriptural zeal. What few rights Bangladeshi women have gained come from left-wing parties or grass-roots organizations; the anaemic judiciary has left them no other avenue of redress.

The legal situation of women in Pakistan reflects a postcolonial asymmetry that more nearly mirrors the condition of Bangladesh than India. Pakistan, like Bangladesh, is plagued by a history of military interventionism. What seems on paper to be a tripartite government of executive, legislative, and judiciary powers turns out to be a long executive arm enveloping and so curtailing both the legislature and the courts. The high profile of Pakistan in international politics has deflected attention from its structural deficiencies. Unlike Delhi, Islamabad did not develop a legislature that could be regularly elected from different regions and so represent plural constituencies at the center, nor did it sponsor a judiciary that could be freed of political pressure

from the head of state. Again, the role of the army provides the principal narrative tracing political power in Pakistan's fifty year history. The first ten years of a lackluster experiment with parliamentary democracy ended in 1958 when a military coup by General Mohammad Ayub Khan took control of Islamabad. Ten years later Ayub Khan was, in turn, removed from power on charges of corruption and inefficiency, to be replaced by General Mohammad Yahya Khan. Yahya suffered both a military defeat by India and the territorial loss of East Pakistan in 1971. He was replaced by a popularly elected prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whose brand of Islamic socialism produced a 1973 Constitution for Pakistan. His insecurities, however, led him to rig elections in 1977, or at least that was the claim made by his adversaries. The uproar that followed the "disclosure" of rigging provided the cover for an ambitious general to invoke martial law and eventually declare himself president of Pakistan. Zia al-Haqq not only replaced Bhutto, he engineered the latter's execution through a mock trial on trumped up charges. The Lahore High Court as well as the Supreme Court were divided in their decisions to support the government's case against Bhutto, but in the end they both capitulated, and Bhutto was hanged in 1979. Zia proceeded to rule through a small junta consisting of senior generals close to him. His disdain for other branches of government was made evident by his cynical manipulation of elections to the National Assembly but even more by his assault on the courts.

Zia's opposition to the judiciary took two parallel and complementary forms. One was to subordinate the judiciary to the chief executive. This he did through the Provisional Constitutional Order of 1981. When the chief justice and four other justices of the Supreme Court, along with several high court judges, refused to accept this 1981 Order, Zia fired them and replaced them with his own appointees.[197] Still more subversive of judicial independence was Zia's move to impose military courts and Shari'At courts on the traditional court system. The former was to provide security, the latter to introduce Islamic orthodoxy into the fabric of Pakistani society. Both turned out to be extensions of Zia's power-sated personality, and the status of women, in particular, was problematized by the agency of the Shari'At courts.

The benchmark of Pakistan's effort to provide legal rights for all its citizens was the Family Law Ordinance of 1961. Introduced by Ayub Khan when he

was attempting to extend the bases for his own limited claim to legitimacy, its provisions were hardly radical, yet they did curtail polygyny and also enhanced women's rights in the event of divorce. The bill also raised the legal age of marriage for both females (from fourteen to sixteen) and males (from eighteen to twenty-one).

For religious zealots and political conservatives, the Family Law Ordinance was wrong because it interfered in the private domain, which only Muslim law courts could regulate. Bureaucratic and ideological impediments limited enforcement of the ordinance, and it has functioned more as a symbolic point of attack by fundamentalists than as an instrument of large-scale social change. Its bearing on women's status since 1979 has been almost entirely overshadowed by the moves that Zia made to define criminal justice for women. Three ordinances shaped the tone of Zia's allegedly Islamic reforms: the Hudood Ordinance, the Qisas and Diyat Ordinance, and the proposed Law of Evidence. Each downgraded women to a juridical value roughly equivalent to half the value accorded men. It also exalted patriarchal norms to such a definitional cloud zone that adultery and rape became indistinguishable. [198] Not only were there no Shah Banos in Zia's Pakistani courts, but the equivalent case of a woman whose litigation drew nationwide attention was the victim of a double rape who was herself convicted of adultery and punished for her "crime." Under Zia's Hudood ordinance there was both zina (adultery) and zina bil-jabr (adultery by force, i.e., rape). But the latter crime had to be established by the same procedure as the former, that is, it required the testimony of four pious adult male witnesses. In the case of adultery, such testimony is hard to come by, but in the case of rape, it boggles the mind to think of four pious Muslim males witnessing the act without intervening on behalf of the intended victim!

These obvious contradictions in the Hudood ordinance did not concern the single-minded Zia, and their crowning mockery became evident in the Safia Bibi case. Safia, the daughter of a poor peasant, had been employed in the local landlord's house as a domestic servant. Virtually blind, she could only do minimal chores. She was eighteen years old. According to the statement she made to the police, she was raped first by the landlord's son and then by the landlord himself. As a result she became pregnant and gave birth to an illegitimate child who later died. It was after the death of the child that her

father registered a case of rape. The sessions judge in a lower provincial court acquitted both the son and the father of the crime, claiming insufficient evidence to prove rape under the Hudood Ordinance. Had he stopped his judgment here, the case would scarcely have merited mention in the press, but he then went on to note that Safia Bibi's self-confessed pregnancy was evidence supporting a charge of adultery against her. Having ruled that she did in fact commit adultery, he then gave her what he later claimed to be a light sentence: on account of her young age and near blindness, he sentenced her only to public lashing (fifteen lashes), three years imprisonment, and a fine of Rs. 1,000. When his ruling became public in July 1983, there was an outburst of indignation from several quarters. Especially effective was the advocacy of Safia Bibi's case by the Women's Action Forum, calling attention to the illogic of a judge sentencing a rape victim for adultery on the basis of her own testimony![199]

So embarrassing was the Safia Bibi case to Zia's credibility that the Federal Shari'At Court intervened the following month (August 1983) and requested that the case be transferred to it for review.[200] Chief Justice Aftab Hussein overruled the session judge and, clearly distinguishing between rape and adultery, dismissed the case of Safia Bibi. He also added a note of sympathy for the victim.

The Safia Bibi case underscores what is evident about justice in Pakistan during the past two and a half decades. It depends on the shaky autonomy of an appointed court, the Federal Shari'At Court, to overrule misguided convictions in the lower courts, at the same time that other instruments of Pakistan's militocracy, notably the Islamic Ideology Council and the Qazi Courts, are indifferent to changes in women's status. Their indifference mirrors the indifference of most Pakistani women to their judicial status. There is renewed hope for some women litigants in the reemergence of the Supreme Court in Pakistan as a vigorous, independent voice during the late 1990s. Yet the litigations that take place continue to have a distinct class coloration. The majority of feminists argue within the urban, upper-middle-class professional ranks of the Punjab and Sind. They do not represent women from other provinces, nor do they represent the vast numbers of rural, illiterate women who account for the majority of Pakistan's female population.[201]

It is dangerous to make too much of the class bias in the feminist movement: [202] most sociopolitical protest movements in the Islamic world are limited to urban settings and to the multiple groups that are at once spawned and alienated by urban conditions. Yet its limited class basis should not obscure the fact that Pakistan, in Nikki Keddie's view, "has the most effective and militant women's movement of any Muslim country."[203] During the 1980s urban groups of professional women, joined by sympathetic male counterparts, did succeed in protesting against a system that masks authoritarian control through the creation of feeble alternatives to executive power.

The excesses of Zia thrived in the cracks: he attempted to reduce or to manipulate the other two branches of government, exploiting their intrinsic weakness to his own ends. Instead of vesting an independent judiciary with the right to pursue guidelines for Islamic justice, Zia sidestepped the existing courts. He supplanted them with courts that reflected his own one-person interpretation of what constituted Islamic orthodoxy. Ironically, the Federal Shari'At Court that was designed to project and enact Zia's views became independent of him in certain instances,[204] at the same time that the Supreme Court of Pakistan appealed to the constitution as the basis for its own noninterference in the process of Islamization, leaving that task to the executive branch.[205]

The shallowness of Zia's moves are further demonstrated by the inability of Islamic groups to win votes in nationwide elections: the people who do care about Islam are not convinced that state-sponsored fundamentalism represents the true intent of Islamic communitarian norms. Not only feminists and moderate professionals but also respected lawyers and judges are intent to remove the judicial process from the arbitrary dictates of a nonjurist ruler, whether Zia or one of his successors.

One must ask the tough structural question: can Pakistan (or Bangladesh) forge a representative, effective polity when one of its three branches of governance functions undaunted, and unchallenged, by the existence of the other two? Not likely. Yet Zia's legacy continues ten years after his death. It

continues because a militocracy does not quickly or easily reform itself. Moreover, his successors have been handicapped. The first premiership of Benazir Bhutto was so marred by programmatic contradictions and political opposition that her mere survival became more important than any moves to establish a fairer, more durable polity. Her successor Nawaz Sharif concerned himself with pleasing conservative supporters and military interest groups; he never ventured to intervene in the judicial process. While the Shari'Ah Ordinance of 1988 was never enacted,[206] the Federal Shari'At Court introduced by Zia continues to function under his successors, including Benazir Bhutto, during her second term in office as prime minister, and now Nawaz Sharif in his second term. One must note the evident good will of some of justices sitting in the Federal Shari'At Court, but the court as a whole still stops short of functioning as an independent judiciary. In its present form it makes democracy in Pakistan a distant rather than an imminent prospect.

The focus on women's status through the Shah Bano case goes to the heart of many issues raised in the age of Islamic fundamentalism. It is often said—and with considerable truth—that the early Islamic movement effected a revolution in the status of Arab women.[207] Muslim norms provided new rights for women, within limits. The Qur'an makes explicit that male and female believers alike inherit Paradise. In all matters of faith women are, as Stowasser aptly notes, "the spiritual and sexual equals of men."[208] Stipulations concerning divorce and inheritance law also mark an advance over prior practices, and even the oft-cited permission for Muslim men to take up to four wives is hedged with restrictions (Q.4:3: "If you fear that you will not do justice, then marry only one."). Throughout most periods of history Muslim wives have been accorded provisions of justice, even while dependent on their husbands to interpret of what is meant by justice. For Islam, like all premodern societies, remained patriarchal in its norms and values. The Qur'an, like the Torah, the Bible, and the Vedas, mirrors those patriarchal standards. Men count twice as much as women in giving legal testimony, and it is incumbent on men to maintain women, with proportionately greater responsibilities in public matters (Q.4:34).

Reading the Qur'an in tandem with early Islamic history remains, for Muslims, both an act of piety and an interpretive challenge. How does one respond in successive eras to divine revelation? Is submission to the will of God best accomplished by conforming to the patterns of earlier epochs? Or

does one have to search anew for the spirit of God’s directive and Muhammad’s example and try to apply their guidance to today’s challenges? In South Asia, as elsewhere, such questions have been raised with insistent urgency in the modern period. Nineteenth- and early- twentieth-century reformers like Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Amir Ali argued that the spirit of Qur’an and hadith alike required the Muslim community to participate in an ongoing effort to improve the social status of women. Contemporary Muslim writers, such as the late Fazlur Rahman, have followed in the same tradition.[209] Despite the controversy of such efforts, no one can escape the question posed by the foremost twentieth-century intellectual from Muslim South Asia. For the poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal that question was: can Islamic law, including its provisions for women, develop and change or not? His own answer was an unflinching “Yes.” “I have no doubt,” he wrote in his most famous theological essay, “that a deeper study of the enormous legal literature of Islam is sure to rid the modern critic of the superficial opinion that the Law of Islam is stationary and incapable of development.”[210] And the principle of development rested, above all, on the practice of ijtihad as a vehicle for returning to authoritative sources and reexamining them in the light of present-day conditions. Iqbal’s was an unabashed reformist voice.

Yet those who oppose Iqbal and all other reformist voices argue that there is no going back, except by way of emulating, without change, the example of earlier generations. For such Muslims, adherence to Islamic tradition, understood as a network of practices ordained by prior custom, becomes the benchmark of Islamic identity, over and against the military, economic, and intellectual power of non-Muslim communities. In South Asia, as elsewhere, Muslims who perceive themselves above all to be engaged in intercommunal struggles dismiss the reformist argument as an alien import: reflecting Western influence, it dilutes true Islam and debilitates its present profile. They consider loyalty to the Muslim community as primary, its core defined, above all, by willingness to subject one’s personal and family life—fully and without question—to traditional legal norms. The advocacy of such norms in a charged public forum for explicit group interests is not, however, part of Islamic tradition, and so the nontraditional advocacy of traditional norms is most often called fundamentalism or, less accurately, “neo-traditionalism.”

At present, the reformist voices have become muted, or attenuated, in public debates where Islam is invoked. It is the neotraditionalist or fundamentalist approach to Islam that dominates the intercommunal disputes of South Asia. Politicians understand the negative as well as positive force of a fundamentalist agenda and so often become its most ardent supporters. As long as reformist voices are denied equal access to both media and policy forums, they will have difficulty reshaping institutions that apply to the range of Muslim social life, including those affecting the status of women.

As a consequence, there are no Shah Banos in Pakistan. There have been none in Bangladesh. A cross-national comparison of South Asia's major states confers on the Republic of India a pivotal distinctiveness: despite its struggles with an independent judiciary, India has maintained a claim to impartial review that extends to female as well as male litigants. In Pakistan women continue to suffer from an ad hoc judicial review system that affects too few rural women, at the same time that it is subject to manipulation, rather than consultation, from the center. In Bangladesh one is confronted not only with the neglect of women's rights but also with the absence of all but a few women from any public scrutiny. In part the anonymity of Bangladeshi women is a legacy of that country's belated and brutal entry into the comity of nations, yet postcolonial independence, first from England, then from Pakistan, has not allowed an independent judiciary to emerge in Dhaka. Justice through litigation has become the expectation for a mere handful of Bangladeshis, while the continuing co-optation of the federal courts by the executive branch signals just how difficult it has become, and will remain, for Bangladeshi women to counter fundamentalist or other state-directed ideologies.

*** The Future of Islamic Fundamentalism

In recent decades the emphasis of scholars, journalists, and policy makers alike has been almost exclusively on Islamic fundamentalism. The result has been a deficit in understanding the actual nature of Muslim social and cultural values in the modern period. For there is no concerted, uniform movement called Islamic fundamentalism. It varies due to many factors, and after situating it within a broader historical context, we must still examine specific local contexts. The beginning of each of its several manifestations

must be ratcheted to specific regions, its ideologues traced to specific countries and then sorted out into specific classes, and specific groups of men and women. At the same time, one must examine the limits of fundamentalism, to gauge why its appeal is not greater and for what reasons the largest number of pious, observant Muslims remain nonfundamentalist in their outlook as also in their behavior.

It is too easy to follow the opposite course. One can read numerous statements from leading Muslim thinkers and from EuroAmerican analysts attesting both to the unity of the Islamic world and to its exceptionalism. All Muslims think alike, we are told, and no one else thinks as they do. While Muslims, from the time of the Prophet Muhammad, have been enjoined to function as one community, the foundational ideal has not become a sustainable reality: Muslims have failed to cohere as a single, cohesive group, either politically or ideologically. Their failure is no worse than that of Jews, divided into three major and other minor sects for more than a hundred years, and Christians, likewise divided and subdivided into numerous competing sects since the Reformation. Why, then, should we be surprised that Muslims have failed to obtain either a structural coherence or a creedal/ritual/juridical uniformity? In premodern times there were already Muslim sects, not merely the familiar Sunni-Shi<i faultline but myriad internal divisions within both Sunni and Shi<i communities. More importantly, in modern times sectarian divisions have been surpassed by national ideologies of Islamic identity. Some have tried to suggest that since World War II the major difference is between Islamic states and Muslim states, the latter resting on demographic indices, the former on dedication to a uniform religious culture. But this distinction is moot, for it belies an underlying common function of both Islamic and Muslim states: both states define Islam for their citizens rather than acknowledging an independent or polyphonous source of religious authority. The major characteristic of all modern-day Muslim societies is the centralized authority exercised by the state on behalf of whichever form of Islam best suits its rulers. As one scholar has noted about the profile of statist Islam:

<quote>

This rise of “officialized,” government-supported forms of Islam and Islamic ideologies is ... one of the most important developments of Islam in Muslim

countries since the mid-century. The government itself benefits from this “officialized” version of Islam because it gives a religious legitimation to the state and its politics, however hard they may be on the population. But this “officialized” Islam inevitably evokes responses among the population, including political and religious opponents of the established regime, and these will also be expressed in terms of Islam. As soon as the centralization of state power leads to particular state supported definitions of Islam, its opponents will develop alternative definitions such as one finds in Islamist circles all over the present-day Muslim world.[211]

</quote>

This point can be expanded. Not only does the state define Islam, but its definition competes with the definition of other Muslim nation-states. Hence the irony that all Muslims, while clinging to ideals of collective solidarity, live within Muslim nation-states that compete with one another. Most were created since World War II, often by colonial administration and imperial diplomacy. As independent nation-states they must compete with one another, for, though free from direct foreign rule, they remain separated from the political and social loyalties that characterize their Muslim neighbors. No new state has disappeared (despite the further partition of Pakistan in 1971 with the creation of Bangladesh, and despite the 1990 Iraqi invasion that placed Kuwait’s future at risk). Nor have any two states combined, though several attempts were made both by Nasser of Egypt and later by Qaddafi of Libya. Why, we might ask, should Muslim nation-states combine? Could anyone imagine Canada, the United States, and Mexico becoming federated as the Union of American States? As preposterous as that scheme sounds, even more preposterous would be the suggestion that such a federation is mandated on religious grounds, since the majority population of all three is Christian! Yet a parallel suggestion is regularly put forth by those who look at the Muslim world. “Aha!” they exclaim: “The hold of their religion on them is stronger than ours on us. They can unite against us, and we must fear their collective hostility.”

This fear would be dismissable if made only by Serbian nationalists trying to cow their Muslim neighbors, as it was in the early 1990s, or by Jewish settlers seeking to curtail a Palestinian presence in West Bank and Gaza. But it is also made by many respectable American academic and foreign policy pundits. It

is given credibility because some Muslim leaders, such as Muammar Qaddafi and Saddam Hussein, deliberately play on such fears. Yet the discerning observer must remember time and again to separate the rhetoric from the reality, the ideals proclaiming unity from the institutions, especially the nation-state, mandating competition. Islam is no different from Judaism or Christianity. Living in a world of compromise, it cannot meet either the goals of founding figures or the ideals of present-day spokesmen.

A related and equally important rule of thumb is to ask: Whose Islam? Whose Islamic revivalism? Or whose Islamic fundamentalism? Is it Arabs or Persians, Africans or Asians who are drawing attention to Islam? Is it those in power or those seeking power? Is it men or women or teenagers? The greatest problem for the best informed non-Muslims, even when they are sincere and well-intentioned, is the absence of acquaintance with real-life Muslims. The only Muslims who are known to most Europeans are Muslims from abroad living either as expatriates or as temporary laborers in their midst. Such Muslims are refugees from the economic, and often also the political, climate in their country of origin. Though concerned about their distant coreligionists, these refugees do not inevitably mirror the outlook or aspirations of those back home. By contrast, in the United States there exist both emigre and indigenous, or African American, Muslims. Despite their small numbers (less than two million[212]), they are no less heterogeneous than Protestant or Catholic or Jewish Americans. They consist of immigrants from Middle Eastern, African, and Asian Muslim nations as well as indigenous converts.

Neither Americans nor Europeans have cause to fear the growth of self-confident Muslim communities in their midst. The great difficulty is to separate the Muslims represented—and too often misrepresented—in the media from the Muslims resident next door. To acknowledge diversity is the first step toward placing Islamic fundamentalism in its proper perspective, and replacing a negative image of Islam with a proper vision of its norms and values. Europeans, like Americans, should learn more about real-life Muslims. Few of them resemble the feared Muslim fanatic or his gun-toting accomplices or his veiled female companions.[213] And indeed, one sees in the voices of Muslim modernists the continuity of an Islamic alternative to both fundamentalism and praetorian neocolonialism.

I have explored above the answers of a Muhammad Iqbal and also an ‘Ali Shari’Ati. But how does one frame their contribution, along with that of Izetbegovic and other Muslim modernists? To do so with any hope of interpretive, cross-cultural affirmation, one must introduce a category that does not limit God to the mosque, the school, the court, or the seat of government. One must find a new word that demotes religion and politics alike from their current prestige ranking. In English the most suitable word might be “mentality” or “world view.” It eschews a kind of linguistic reductionism by admitting the role of imagination and historical change. It also collates the givenness of key ideas and values with the equally important property of adopting “models of behavior inherited from different traditions.”[214]

Muslim thinkers in the context of the late twentieth century who have exhibited the ability to be both traditional and modern can and do embrace elements from the Islamic past while also espousing “models of behavior” from other sources. They are not less Muslim for being adaptive. They exposit a world view or mentality that may over time generate powerful changes, even though they are largely ignored in the current debate. Among their number, in addition to Izetbegovic, Shariati, and Iqbal, one needs to add the names of Egyptian jurist ‘Ali ‘Abd ar-Raziq, Algerian semiotician Mohammed Arkoun,[215] and Sudanese exegete Mahmoud Taha.[216]

Though ‘Ali ‘Abd ar-Raziq achieved fame—or rather, notoriety—in the early part of the century, the issues he raised continue to inform alternate views of Islam that inform internal debates about the profile of a distinctive Muslim world view, at least in Sunni Muslim circles. For the furor that surrounded ‘Ali ‘Abd ar-Raziq concerned the debate about the Caliphate. The Caliphate stood at the apogee of Sunni Muslim symbolic structures, just as the Imamate occupied that rung for Shi<i Muslims. And it was at the height of Ataturk’s challenge to the Caliphate that many Muslims in adjacent countriues, including India, rallied to the support of the Caliphate.[217] At the height of this debate over the Caliphate, ‘Ali ‘Abd ar-Raziq, himself a Shaykh at al-Azhar, posed to other Egyptian scholars a challenge to the very notion of political-religious symbiosis as crucial to Islamic life. His book, al-Islam wa usul al-hukm (Islam and the bases of governance), caused an uproar that led eventually to his trial and also his dismissal from the post he held at al-Azhar. As Leonard Binder has deftly shown in his extended analysis

of ‘Ali ‘Abd ar-Raziq’s trial,[218] it was not easy for him to maintain his initial position, and he may have been browbeaten into reversing himself, but the notoriety of his case suggests that he went to the heart of a major issue and provided an alternative that could not be dismissed out of hand, namely, that there is a religious core to Islamic identity that may take multiple political forms, and by the same token, that there is no single political structure announced by the Prophet, perpetuated by the first three Caliphs, or sanctioned by practice in subsequent Muslim dynasties. It is the opposite of current thinking in Islamic fundamentalist circles but also in much of popular perception about the Muslim difference in religio-political norms.

Arkoun is alive and well because he forged his boldly revisionist view of Islam from Paris, not from Algiers. His is a powerful appeal to the transformative power of the Qur’an and its applicability to a range of modern issues, including equality for women and human rights for religious as well as ethnic minorities. He also privileges myth over history, suggesting that there is a narrative kernel in the Qur’an that supersedes all other markers of its revelatory impulse. The task of scholars and activists alike, in Arkoun’s view, is to separate mythic from both mythological and ideological invocations of the Qur’anic fact.[219]

One of the ironies of Arkoun’s approach is its relocation in English via translations, or references to his works in English-language theoretical works such as Binder’s Islamic Liberalism. It is ironic because Arkoun’s methodology presupposes an acquaintance with, and acceptance of, French discursive subtleties that often elude or just plain annoy English readers and Anglo-American scholars. Binder, who devotes a long section to Arkoun in his own assessment of Islamic liberalism, still has to take him to task for not accepting “either the historicity or the validity of what happened in Iran.”[220] Yet Binder misses, or chooses to avoid, the linchpin of Arkoun’s argument: that the Qur’anic myth can never be fully or adequately reappropriated at any moment in history. Every reading is also a misreading. Every truth is also a lie, and so on. Arkoun does privilege post-Enlightenment, poststructuralist methods in his assessment of the Islamic world view, but his approach merits sustained attention, despite its obtuseness for American pragmatists or their British counterparts.

Taha, on the other hand, wrote in Arabic but, like Arkoun, has achieved notoriety in his land of origin as well as in some American academic circles. A Sufi exemplar with distinctive exegetical perspectives, he evolved a way of reading the Qur'an that directly assaulted the traditional approach of most Sunni Muslim scholars. His provocation was more virulent than Arkoun's and more lethal than 'Ali 'Abd ar-Raziq's because he remained in his native Sudan. Tolerated for a time, he was subjected to a mock trial, conviction, and execution, all engineered by the then ruler of Sudan, General Numeiri, in the late 1980s. Numeiri has ceased to rule Sudan, but Taha's radical view of the Qur'an still inspires debate. Like both 'Ali 'Abd ar-Raziq and Mohammed Arkoun, he would be deemed heretical by many Muslims, and yet his legacy is to provoke a continuing debate about what comprises an authentic Muslim world view and attendant practice of Muslim norms.

By examining these and other Muslim provocateurs, one begins to see how Islam as world view does more than locate Islam beyond the ideological fray of religion and politics. It also posits Islam as a symbolic resource that has not been exhausted by its relation to Europe and to the triple process of colonialism, postcolonialism, and neocolonialism. But it also requires seeing Islam as less than a sufficient explanation for the ills or the hopes of all Muslims. Islam is but one of several variables determining the social fabric of Muslim communities in Asia, Africa, and America. It does not itself determine the dominant culture, nor does it provide the sole, or even the most adequate, ideology for protesting the disruptive qualities of the high-tech era. In such circumstances Muslims may protest with violence, but they protest as aggrieved parties on the margins of a world system that they did not create and cannot control but in which they participate and refuse not to be counted.

One would like to linger on the hope embedded in the work and vision of Izetbegovic and company. However, they represent but one stratum of modern-day Islam, and their Muslim opponents are numerous. There are also non-Muslims who continue to fear what some Muslims proclaim as the cornerstone of faith, namely, jihad. Is not jihad holy war, and is it not always to be waged against the infidel? These are frequent questions, and they need to be addressed, all the more so because new ideological challenges face the increasingly visible Muslim community of Southeast Asia. Unlike their West Asian coreligionists, Southeast Asian

Muslims see their battle as economic. Recently that battle has been captioned as “Islam and Corporate Culture.” And so at the end of a book exploring Islamic diversity and underscoring the potential for accommodation in the Muslim world, it is salutary to explore both jihad and corporate culture. Jihad and corporate culture exist together in the minds of many Malay Muslims, but till now they have not been highlighted in an overview of sociocultural tensions and opportunities that face contemporary Muslims, Malay and nonMalay. The time has come to make that step.

** Conclusion: Convergent Signposts: Jihad and Corporate Culture

TWO TECHNICAL terms that circulate in the contemporary Muslim world are “jihad” and “corporate culture.” One is Arabic and has a long, contested history, mostly applied to the older Muslim regions of Africa and Asia. The other is English and has a lifetime of perhaps a decade, mostly in Southeast Asia, above all in Malaysia. It would seem incongruous to compare the two terms except that together they address the central question of this book: how do Muslim countries in the postcolonial—and now post-Cold War— era move from confrontation to accommodation?

The very word jihad connotes violence. It is most often translated into English as “holy war,” war waged against non-Muslims, a kind of Crusade in reverse. Jihad could be, and was, invoked in Muslim protests against European colonial rule, for it embodies ideology; it translates thought into action; it mobilizes the committed for a cause perceived as both just and necessary. But jihad also has a history in Islamic religion prior to the anticolonial and then nationalist movements. All proponents of jihad, whether intellectuals or politicians, are ideologues, but more importantly they are religious ideologues. For Muslims, as for others, religion and ideology merge, and during the modern or high-tech era, their merger is crucial for understanding the ambiguities of violence in an Islamic context.[221]

The same prologue informs the brief history of corporate culture as a Muslim idiom. It has no Arabic equivalent. It arises as a technical term describing the framework for competitive business in the high-tech era. The countries most renowned for their attention to corporate culture are non-Muslim industrial powers: Japan and the United States.

Yet Muslim proponents of corporate culture are now in evidence, nowhere more so than in 1990s' Malaysia. And, like proponents of jihad, they are motivated by both religion and ideology since they are intent on applying religious guidelines to the special conditions of late capitalist society in Southeast Asia.

If post-Cold War events have offered any single lesson, it is that historical antecedents do not determine the present or dictate the future: neither Muslim nation-states nor urban sectors of wageearning Muslims are bound by the premodern legacy or symbolic capital of centrist Islam. There are discrete local and global factors informing Malay expansion into what the sociologist Clive Kessler has called cultural modernity. One is corporate culture, portending the accommodation of Islamic norms and values in the once alien terrain of late capitalist economics. The other is Chinese pluralism, the networking of a specifically Chinese world view under the rubric of Confucianism, Taoism, and/or Buddhism. Like corporate culture, Chinese pluralism too has been a domain where Islam until recently has been either a minor player or a reluctant outsider.

The challenge of Chinese pluralism needs to be assessed, but only after corporate culture. For, despite its recent origins and geographic restriction, corporate culture has as much right to be considered in a Muslim context as does jihad. Muslims, like Christians and Jews, like Hindus and Buddhists and Sikhs, must be modern to survive. They are inescapably moderns because they live at a point in time best labeled the high-tech era. They experience modernity even when they do not fully embrace modernism. And one of the most radical consequences of modernity is to transform every theology or philosophy into a species of ideology that matches the requirements of the present age.

The transformation of jihad into a modern ideology has been uneven. Its accommodation to practical exigencies, while seldom admitted among Sunni theorists, is showcased among their Shi<i counterparts. Wherever one looks, whether to a “secular” Iranian ideologue such as ‘Ali Shari’Ati or a clerical theoretician such as Ayatollah Motahhari,[222] one finds Iranian Shi<is consciously reflecting on the needs of the present age, and the shifts that it requires.

Equally important, however, is the reduced attention to jihad in some quarters. While jihad may retain its rhetorical appeal in a North African, Middle Eastern, or even South Asian context, for Southeast Asians, and especially for Malay Muslims, jihad (understood as an appeal to armed struggle) has already been bypassed by the need to situate Islam in the context of international economics.[223] As the second epigraph for this volume suggests, jihad has come to mean the advocacy of social justice in a widening circle that also includes economic participation and prosperity for Muslims.

The dominant Malay accent on corporate culture seeks to locate an Islamic dimension parallel to the commercial culture of the most economically advanced countries while not reflexively imitative of them. It seeks to operate not against the G-7, the core group of high-tech, industrialized countries, but within that alternative group of nation-states clustered as the G-15, that is, South-to-South countries that have experienced rapid growth in recent years and are now pledged to support one another in trade, commerce, and industry, even while recognizing their individual and common subordination to the G-7.[224]

The example of Malaysia helps to highlight a pattern of change that may begin to appear in other Muslim nation-states in the next phase of the post-Cold War era. While some may continue to link national interests to narrowly ethnic goals (Malays against Chinese), many others are attempting to move beyond ethno-nationalism to higher collective opportunities (Malaysians among regional economic powers).

The constant theme of Malaysian public life is mobilization in economic terms for the future. While it can be directed abroad, as it is in the G-15 meetings, it may also motivate a domestic audience, specifically Malays, who have yet to attain economic prominence equivalent to their Chinese countrymen and women. The prime minister is a weathervane of new dispositions. Mahathir could not be a successful Malay politician unless he advocated a set of policies that would advance his own basic constituency within UNMO, the political party that brought him to power and remains his primary base of support. Does Mahathir always live up to his professed goals? Of course not; neither does any public figure. The larger question is whether he can maneuver the G-15 or any South-to-South alternative group to avert the Greater China identity that many see as the future for the entire region.

The question seems to have already been answered by a new and aggressive breed of image purveyors. Among their venues is the Asian Marketing column regularly featured in The Asian Wall Street Journal. For marketing people, ever alert to the power of advertising slogans, there is but one caption that fits the entire Asia-Pacific region: “Greater China.” All the region consists of growth triangles knit together under the umbrella of Greater China. Marketers take account of variant cultural traditions, such as the “globalization of the world through multinational brands, music, film, and television,” but they always defer to Greater China as the telos for the region as a whole.[225]

Malaysia, like most of Southeast Asia, lives in the shadow of Greater China. Mahathir has charted the kind of values needed if Malaysia is to achieve regional recognition. It was in his 1991 address labeled “Vision 2020” that Mahathir first launched his program for making Malaysia a fully developed country, able to strut with those countries already regarded as “developed.” Mahathir acknowledges that Malaysia has not yet reached the next level of economic recognition. The liminal status of his country partially explains why membership in the G-15 is so important to him: paralleling the G-7, it reminds those other top-rank countries that the second-rank countries cannot be ignored. It also reminds the Muslim world that no Muslim country has made it to the top: only Malaysia, along with Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Senegal, and Nigeria—who happen also to be members of the G-15—are possible contenders. And for there to be an Islamic difference in the Greater

China Co-Prosperity Sphere, one must forge a broad-scale economic strategy that takes account of cultural difference while accenting Islamic norms.

In other words, it is the symbolism as much as the reality of Malaysia's economic achievements that are framed in Vision 2020. One much respected Malaysian academic told me: "It does not matter where Malaysia is in actual economic standings; it does matter how it projects its economic weight in geopolitical terms. A major economic heavyweight like Japan often appears to be either quiescent or subservient on global matters, while another economic giant, South Korea, has scarcely any independent foreign policy."[226]

No wonder, then, that there are few places in Malaysia today where Vision 2020 is not discussed, and when discussed, it is invariably in terms of the relatedness of values, that is, Islamic values, to economic growth. The lexical linchpin behind this bid to become globally competitive is corporate culture.

To the extent that every vision needs an ideological engine, the engine in Malaysia is IKIM, a think tank established at government initiative to project Islamic values. It is IKIM that engages Corporate Culture as both Islamic and Malay. IKIM is the acronym for the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia: it parallels but turns to practical ends the work of another recently founded institution, the International Islamic University, or IIU. In trying to promote Islamic understanding, IKIM publishes a wide variety of books on specialized topics. One major new IKIM publication consists of an edited volume titled Quality and Productivity: Creating a Difference in Modern Industry and Corporations. Though the initial essays stress Islamic precedents for corporate culture, gleaned from the Qur'an, the life of the Prophet, and early Muslim history, it is a thin Islamic veneer, since no contributor claims that corporate culture emanates from either Islamic scripture or the Muslim past. Instead, the sole cross-cultural essay stands back from Malay self-absorption and lays out two variant models for economic growth. One, deriving from the United States and favoring productivity over quality, prevailed through World War II. The second, linked to Japan and opting for quality, has achieved spectacular results from the early 1950s to the present.[227]

While the narrative about corporate culture is honed to contemporary history and global economics, the narrative about jihad is the opposite. Its symbolic force is evoked from the past, especially the colonial past, with the implication that Muslims should not change in their implacable posture of enmity to the West—creedal and ideological, at the least, and, if need be, political and military as well. Economics seems to be absent, unimportant for jihad advocates.

Yet jihad does entail change. It is not the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. And it is not the same for all Muslims. Those who contest its applicability have equal claim to being devout Muslims, whether Sunni or Shi<i, legist or Sufi in their affiliations, and they do take stock of economic as well as historical markers.

Complicating the use of jihad is the series of historical asymmetries it infers between Muslim and Christian mentalities. Concealed within these asymmetries is a series of power relations. They obscure understanding and falsify judgment unless they are brought into the open. Before leaping to the analysis of a freighted term such as jihad, we must first take account of these asymmetries and their impact on cross-cultural judgments.

One asymmetry looms over all others and has to be placed in the foreground. It is a material difference that has become the hallmark of arrogance vs. weakness. Most beneficiaries of the technical age are also citizens of the G-7. Whether European or American, we speak from a moment in world history during which Christian, or at least residually Christian, polities dominate the discourse about global hegemony. From a Muslim perspective, American and European world views are naturally, necessarily conjoined, since neither the United States nor its European allies project an agenda that depends upon, or considers, Muslim interests.

Two international crises underscore the subordination of Muslim interests and sensibilities to a homogeneous globalism. First was the publication and then

hyped-up promotion of Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses in the late 1980s. It was not an equal contest between competing world views. Rather, it confirmed what has been evident since World War II: Muslim sensibilities seldom register, except negatively, among Euro-American opinion setters. As one wag put it, we love to hate the Ayatollah and all his fanatic followers.

The recent Balkan conflict provided further confirmation that if Muslims count, it is only in a negative sense. In late 1995 the United States government joined NATO forces trying to broker a peace in the former Yugoslavia. Yet it was global politics, not consideration for Bosnian Muslims, that prompted the change in U.S. foreign policy, just as it is the potential for a “Muslim backlash,” not the concern for Muslim sensibilities, that prompts U.S. interest in most African or Asian countries with large Muslim populations.

Yet there will never be a “Muslim backlash,” for there is no concerted strategy among any two Muslim polities. Muslim polities are not now, nor have they ever been, a political bloc. Lame and ludicrous is the effort of polemicists like Frances Fukuyama and Samuel Huntington to portray Muslim governments as both unified and adamant in opposing the West and “Western interests.” The historian Roy Mottahedeh rightly observed that “the actual agreed-upon content of Islamic government remains very limited and, more often than not, severely disputed.”[228]

Unfortunately, advocates of Western exceptionalism outnumber historians of transnational cultural movements. West-is-Best advocates proliferate; they are not limited to politicians and policy mavens. Even American observers who seem to be culturally sensitive hit a tripwire when it comes to Islam, revealing how very “present-minded”[229] most Americans are prone to be.

In the case of Malaysia an egregious offender is James Fallows, Washington editor for The Atlantic Monthly and frequent commentator on National Public Radio. In a recent book, Fallows describes the new East Asian ascendancy in economics and increasingly in politics. He devotes a major section to Malaysia. He praises Malay commercial adventurism, yet he also contrasts Malaysia with Thailand, accenting the cultural deficit that Malaysia

brings to global harmony. “Thailand is libertine,” he observes, but “most of Malaysia’s population is Muslim.”[230] In other words, libertine is the opposite of Muslim, and everything about Islam inhibits or limits. It especially limits Western influence, since “in its political tone Malaysian life has become more and more aggressively anti-Western ... in part ... due to the worldwide rise of fundamentalist Islam.”[231]

These words would be less jarring had Fallows never visited Malaysia, but in fact he spent two years in Kuala Lumpur during the 1980s. He saw what he expected to see, filtering all his impressions of Malaysia through an international media fixation with Islamic fundamentalism. So narrow is this fixation that it made all representations of Islamic loyalty seem like but another turn away from the West and toward religiously inspired acrimony or worse.

Reference to fundamentalism allows Fallows to keep Malay cultural pride at bay: as Muslims, Malays remain not only foreign but other.

Nor is Fallows’ implicit judgment his alone. It is shared by numerous highbrow global commentators. Despite other differences, the elites of Euro-America are presumed to have a common destiny: it is we who share—and also preserve—the legacy of globally diffuse, multinational capitalism. No longer Russians but Afro-Asian Muslims, elites and nonelites alike, become the other to us; they are also the lesser, because now the weaker, other.

A second asymmetry underscores, and enhances, the first asymmetry between “Christian” Euro-America and “Muslim” Afro-Asia. It is too often ignored because it addresses power as constructive rather than destructive. It interprets power as part of the potential good rather than the necessary evil that marks human existence. It is a major Muslim-Christian difference, since power, far from being alien to the first Muslims, was integral to their selfidentity. From the outset, the Prophet Muhammad and his companions had to confront power—political and military, economic and social, cultural and religious. The Qur’an, as the foundational text inscribing Muslim self-identity, projected the benefits as well as the limits of power. Qur’anic

revelations addressed circumstances of social transformation, portending a better life in this world as well as the next. Both the order and content of the Qur'an became fixed as a single, unchanging scripture almost at once, even before the earliest period of Muslim expansionism. Yet Christians deferred entering the brutish world of politics, and Christian rulers only harnessed scriptural authority to the exigencies of political life after Christianity itself became a state religion. The time lag between Jesus's death and Christian rule was nearly three hundred years, with the result that ethical norms construed by the first, urban Christians did not engage Roman institutions of statecraft and warfare except oppositionally. While the Emperor Constantine did augur the constructive use of power by Christians, the interlude between Jesus's death and his conversion produced other influences—gnostic and stoic, Greek and Roman—that implicitly shaped Christian efforts to appropriate power. These same influences also complicated the subsequent strategy of Christian rulers and theorists in justifying war. Even today, in a post-Christian world tone-deaf to the ultimacy of religious values, Christian wariness of power continues to infuse public discourse in Europe and in America. It makes still more difficult a clear perception of the Muslim difference that often places jihad in the foreground.

Western Christian versus Asian Muslim—each label suggests uneasy accommodations to perceptual differences as well as historical asymmetries. What is true for jihad is also true for corporate culture. If Christians are ill at ease with power, Muslims recoil at profit. It is Europeans and, by extension, Americans who have the chief claim on developing capitalism as a world-encompassing mercantile and commercial world view. The Japanese have adopted, and now exceeded, Euro-American models of capitalist productivity and profit. Yet the word "profit" retains a negative connotation in Islamic parlance, at least to the extent that it connotes "excessive, personal gain." When corporate culture is discussed by Muslim members of the Pacific prosperity club, such as Malaysia and Indonesia, the term "profit" is frequently downplayed or else paired with "social responsibility."[232]

How, then, can one bridge the historical distance from developing to developed world? The G-15 can work for Malaysia only if it connects Malaysian interests to those of other economic powerhouses in Asia, like Indonesia and India.[233] So far the recognition by political leaders, business leaders, and trendsetting opinion makers that Malaysia belongs to the front

tier and not the back tier or middle tier of nations has been slow to emerge, despite the hype in some quarters.[234]

At the same time, the risk of going too far forward too fast stalks all Malay modernizers. Profitability without social responsibility might lead Malays in Malaysia by the year 2020, if not sooner, to be crazed with material concerns and become neglectful of their rich Islamic heritage. To avert that possibility, Mahathir has seemed to pick an untainted successor, an embodiment of cultural purity and religious high-mindedness. At least many observers feel that it was for this reason that he selected, then groomed, Anwar Ibrahim, the former leader of the Islamic Students' movement, to be his deputy prime minister.[235]

But the larger lesson of the Malaysian dalliance with corporate culture may be to reinforce the autonomy of religion on the spiritual plane: religion as religion can converge with neither economics nor culture. Ideology often obscures the automony of religion since a parochial cultural view can project itself as a universal ethical norm. The stress on individual human rights within the United Nations, for instance, is not universally applied since economic rights, often translated as basic survival rights, have often been denied to marginalized countries. Consider the examples of post-1991 Iraq and Burma/Myanmar.

The opposite danger also looms large: a universal view may become projected into a parochial one, especially when the high-tech era encourages a selective reading of premodern history. Here the major victim is Islamic civilization itself. Luxuriant in the premodern period, it is now in danger of being squandered by too many nation-state orthodoxies, competing with each other, and often canceling each other out, all in the name of Allah's will and for the common good of the Muslim community.

Finally, there is the danger of appropriating a single global economic pattern or a particular political order as if it were a universal good, as if it had been sacralized by God and hence was incumbent on all believers to uphold and pursue. With reference to Islam, as to other universal religions, it needs to be said again and again: neither Islam nor Buddhism nor Christianity is a

culture; the major social function of each is to criticize, and so to purify, cultures that already exist.[236]

Because religion cannot be fully harnessed to any social or economic system, believers are often faced with a painful, if inchoate, dilemma: they can talk about the existing order only in its own terms, not in a specifically religious idiom. In the case of Islam and corporate culture in Malaysia, that means abandoning the usual effort to relate a new approach to Qur'anic antecedents when the objective is not advocacy of Islamic economics but Muslim participation in global economics. Othman Alhabshi, the deputy director general of IKIM, faced just this dilemma when he wanted to address all Malaysians, and not just Malay Muslims, in his essay "Corporate Ethics in the Management of Organisations." He omitted the words Muslim and Islam and any reference to Qur'an, hadith, or shari'A, yet at the crucial point in his argument, after noting how corporations today differ from their predecessors (they are fewer in number, more transnational, at once more efficient and more aggressive, but also less accountable), he tried to define corporate ethics vs. corporate culture:

<quote>

Corporate culture is the way the corporation conducts itself. It encompasses the mission, objectives, strategies, plans, values and beliefs of a corporation. What determines corporate culture is really the mission and the set of values and beliefs that the corporation is committed to. The mission can be quite independently decided, but the objectives, strategies and plans will have to be influenced both by the mission and the values. In this fashion, one can say that corporate culture is the corporation's special way of conducting itself, whilst corporate ethics is the very thing that determines the formulation of mission, objectives, strategies, plans, programmes, etc. which is actually the corporate culture. It is in this sense that corporate ethics forms the basis for corporate culture or the principal determinant of corporate culture.[237]

</quote>

So which is it—mission subsumed under culture, or culture, meaning values and ethics, determining mission? Alhabshi, though he never cites market

forces or the global economy, seems to say that value-driven perspectives can shape corporate culture no matter what the mission. Such abstract, often convoluted reasoning would be unnecessary if Alhabshi were addressing a Muslim audience, but he is trying to appeal to non-Muslims as well as to Muslims. A year earlier in the same journal he had pronounced that Islam is the way, the only way, to achieve Vision 2020.[238] He is closer to realeconomik when he detheologizes his ethical message, since the overall pattern of change in East Asia and globally suggests that the dynamics of corporate culture will continue to restrict the counterforce of value-directed ethics, however plausibly framed, however earnestly advocated.

Still another limitation emerges from Malay-Chinese relations. It is the second of two simultaneous fronts for the expansion of Islamic norms in East Asia, as Malay and Chinese come to symbolize Islam and East Asia in the near-term future. The challenge involves more than sorting out Malaysia's multiracial society on quota lines, a practice that began with the preindependence accords of 1957. Political dominance was decreed to Malays, with safeguards for Chinese, Indians, and others. But since Malays were underrepresented in professions and business, the federal constitution stipulated that they receive preferential treatment in the award of both university scholarships and business contracts.

Political maturity has been deferred in Malaysia because Malays continue to be represented in just one political party, UNMO, with PAS as the Islamic spoiler, and Chinese and Indians each having separate political parties but little effective power. For instance, in 1991 the Chinese political party, known as the Malaysian Chinese Association, proposed spending M$5 million on a Chinese cultural center. But UNMO objected to this public testimony to Chinese culture within Malaysia, and MCA had to withdraw its proposal.[239]

Mahathir has survived as prime minister of Malaysia for over fifteen years in part because he continues to recognize the potential political damage of having competing ethnic consitutencies, each ratcheting up the claims of its group against other Malays perceived as both other and rival. In mid-1995 he made still another plea for "Bangsa Malaysia," namely, for people to "identify themselves with the country, speak Bahasa Malaysia, and accept the

Constitution” and ultimately remove the special bumiputra privileges that apply mainly to Muslim Malays. [240]

Yet, however Mahathir engineers the move to genuine Malay-ness, executive decisions alone will not resolve the crucial dilemma for Malay identity. Pluralism has to be grounded in civil society, as it functions parallel to, but not always in tandem with, the state and political society. Crucial questions remain: how can Chinese and Malay actually integrate? Beyond the orbit of Kuala Lumpur politics, how do other Malaysians approach the vast chasm between two world views and their civilizational antecedents? And what is to be the role of Malay women?

The tentative answer appears in two conferences with identical titles, but different subtitles, that were convened in Malaysia in 1995. Most of the papers wallowed in vague generalities, offering ad hominem testimonials on behalf of Islamic universalism without exploring how that universalism accommodates the equally persistent universalism of Chinese, most of whom are not now and never will be Muslim. With the exception of one paper (discussed below) that talked about pre-Muslim cultural values and the need for Muslims to affirm them, the presenters, all of them Muslim, relied on ex cathedra pronouncements about history or doctrine and broke no new ground. Moreover, the shift in format from the first to the second conference suggested an increasing intellectual isolationism on the part of most Muslim participants. The general tenor of the first conference, despite the sterility of most of the papers, was to promote a civilizational dialogue, but by the convening of the second conference, a bare six months later, the recurrent accent had shifted to the universality of Islam. It was as if to underscore the universality of Islam that nearly all the papers highlighted a Chinese Muslim diaspora from the People’s Republic of China to several parts of Asia. Ignored in the rush to combine Muslim and Chinese everywhere was the content of what might constitute a common Chinese-Muslim world view and set of practices. Grand appeals to the function of a Confucian rhetoric in Muslim guise, or an Islamic interpretation of the Analects of Confucius, only reinforced an incipient inclusivism.

If the above conferences do move beyond form to substance, and if the first rather than the second portends future developments, a long-term

reflowering of Malayness as a composite pluralist culture is possible, and not only corporate culture but also transnational tolerance may be the outcome.

The role of women, however, is less clear. While Sisters in Islam has been functioning for over a decade from Kuala Lumpur and includes some pioneering women intellectuals in its ranks, their primary impact has come through the monograph on Qur'anic interpretation authored by an African American scholar teaching in Malaysia. Amina Wadud-Muhsin's Qur'an and Woman gives generous and deserved credit to the Malay activist Dr. Chandra Muzaffar at the same time that it provides fresh insight into the Islamic/Qur'anic view of women's roles.[241] Within Malaysia itself, however, the impact of the book seems negligible, and when a government-sponsored think tank like IKIM does write about religion as a social force, it is without women participants; rather, it is male authors who discuss not only politics, law, and economics, but also education and the family.[242]

Despite the underutilization of women in charting Vision 2020, it does not follow that the dominant future for Malays, as for other Muslims, will be to pursue the urge to cultural isolationism, confrontation, and war, as has been argued by theorists like Huntington and Fukuyama and journalists like Fallows and the anonymous contributors to The Economist.

Attention to the very construct jihad shows how subtle, yet determinative, can be the Muslim difference from Southeast Asia. It reflects an intra-Muslim struggle as much as a Muslim struggle with non-Muslim others. Consider Mahathir's reflection on the dilemma of his country vis-a-vis the Gulf War and the Balkan conflict. In both cases, Malaysia was forced to comply with the actions of the dominant Western powers. In a unipolar world, "might alone makes right," as Shaykh Fadlallah noted in his theorizations on jihad (discussed below). But Mahathir also had to voice his frustration after Iraq's defeat. On the one hand, he denounced Iraq for its greed, but on the other, he denounced "those who hold back the Muslim people and nations by drawing their attention to the next world to the neglect of duties and potentials in this world." He was, in effect, reprimanding his own constituents, Malays who remained backward not only compared with the industrial world but also with their Chinese copatriots. To them, his message was progress not procrastination. "The truth is that if Muslims cannot go

after progress in this world and succeed like the non-Muslims, then there is the likelihood that they will become frustrated and eventually lose their faith in Islam. Poverty and weakness will lead to apostasy, so there shall be no hereafter for them."

Vision 2020 becomes more than a vague slogan; it holds out the sole alternative to a backward, weak Malaysia, lumped together with a backward, weak Muslim world.

Is Mahathir's vision so different from traditional jihad? His plea is for an all-out effort not with weapons and war but with brains and technology. Malaysia in 2020 should be nothing less than "an advanced nation capable of self-upliftment through the mastery of knowledge and skills," and at the same time a nation "professing high moral values and able to complete with other advanced nations in all fields."[243]

While the day for parity on a global scale has not yet arrived for Malaysia, it is possible to see how a Muslim perspective revalues both the Gulf War and the Balkan conflict. Yet it is difficult to hear either Mahathir's dissent from the Western public policy view of justice or his concomitant appeal for a Muslim perspective on global events. At the close of the twentieth century, it is the Fukuyamas and Huntingtons, together with the Fallowses and yellow press internationalists, who continue to dominate most media representation of issues that shape Islam and Muslims.

While Muslims themselves must bear some responsibility for being an absent or negative voice in the major geopolitical issues of the day, it is still necessary to note that they are victimized, along with most of the South, by the structure of international news. Not only English-language media but English-language media reflecting specifically North European-North American viewpoints dominates: 90 percent of international news comes from the standard wire-services of Europe and America. Even the Saudi purchase of United Press International will not change the nature of news, especially since the Saudis themselves are masters at the double standard of professing one set of ideals and pursuing with blinkers another, opposite value standard.[244]

More importantly, the level of debate about international issues is already remote from, and may even be seen to cover up, groundlevel realities. Few newspapers or periodicals, and no news programs on televison or radio, attend to structural disparities between the G-7 countries and the rest of the world. Instead, the Fukuyama/Huntington thesis,[245] as Chandra Muzaffar pointedly observed, has sparked a pseudo-debate. It serves as a smokescreen camouflaging the real post-1989 global crisis: the monopoly of resources, and so policy options for change, by the major advanced industrial nations, the G-7.[246]

In other words, a Muslim world power, despite the hype that such a power is to be feared by the West, is remote if not impossible, and instead countries like Malaysia must aim for limited economic progress while also holding out for “profitability with social responsibility.”[247] The twin challenge facing Malaysia and the Muslim world, in Mahathir’s words, is twofold: “to re-create a living civilization of Islam that was once dynamic and thriving, and to make a positive contribution to the predicament facing mankind.”[248] Not more Muslims but better Muslims, not a regression to fundamentalism “which tends to be preoccupied with forms and symbols, rituals and practices,”[249] but a progress to corporate culture both within and beyond the umma.

The obstacles, of course, are evident. Two loom largest: (1) Malaysia itself is politically unified but not culturally uniform. The values espoused by upwardly mobile middle-class Malays may not be shared by their coreligionists who are not urban or their countrymen who are not Muslims, namely, the significant Chinese minority and the prominent, if less numerous, Indian minority. One writer has even gone so far as to suggest that the ethic Mahathir labels as “Islamic,” implying its resonance with the universal norms of Islam, is in fact class-based, driven by Mahathir’s own authoritarian, petit bourgeois upbringing that stressed values which sound strangely Confucian or Calvinist rather than intrinsically Islamic: “diligence, thrift, striving, perseverance, self-improvement, self-reliance, and attainment.”[250] (2) The move to inscribe corporate culture as an Islamic ethos for the New Malay may be conflictual. It may represent not a step forward for Islam but a regression from Muslim norms of family loyalty and

social responsibility. After all, the cornerstone of corporate culture is greed, not need. Can even skilled politicians like Mahathir or his likely successor, Anwar Ibrahim, engineer a social revolution in Malay economic thinking while also putting “fear of God” into those who engage in bribery or corruption? Bribery persists, as does corruption, though their scale and significance remain open to debate.[251]

The other side of Mahathir’s and Malaysia’s struggle to find an Islamic ethic that works in a pluralist, modernizing society is the rearguard engagement with jihad. Jihad has not disappeared, either from the historical memory or from the symbolic repertoire of Muslim societies. How can one keep in check the tendency to see the Islamic engagement with jihad as either (a) a systemic flaw of Islam as a universal religion or (b) a uniform characteristic of all Muslims in all circumstances? The only safety valve is constant vigilance, looking at Islamic norms as specific cultural constructs and the modern world as a further set of sociocultural constructs.

To the extent that jihad and corporate culture can be summarized as competing Muslim world views, they go beyond the contrasting visions of late-twentieth-century Islamic leaders, such as Ayatollah Khomeini and Mohammed Mahathir, and one needs to reevaluate jihad before claiming that it is the enemy of all progress, either in economics or in civil society.

Jihad is best approached as a multivalent category of reference within the Islamic symbol system. It is not limited to “holy war,” nor is it decisive to the Qur’an if one considers all the themes and counterthemes of that book of revelation on its own terms. It is especially important to see how jihad has itself been subject to change, from the earliest period of Muslim history to the Sunni-Shi<i appropriation of religious authority to modern-day revisionist packagings of Muslim norms and values.

It is necessary to begin with the Qur’an. A crucial principle, internal to the Qur’an, is that of abrogation (naskh). The Qur’an provides the basis for its own continuously revised interpretation (2:106, 13:37, 16:101, 22:52). God’s transcendence above human knowing, His sovereignty beyond human attempts to appropriate, and so limit, His power extends even to His

final selfdisclosure in prophecy, the Qur’an. The Qur’an ended prophecy but not divine intervention in human affairs. While Muhammad lived, the book remained open; it could always be updated. With his death (in 632 C.E.), the question of leadership for his community also raised the related question: what would be the nature, and the limits, of ongoing divine intervention? Sunnis and Shi<is have responded to these twin problems in opposite ways. The Sunnis have closed the book, applying its ‘clear’ directives to juridical legislation. They have also closed ranks around a discrete set of leaders who defend the book and the will of the majority. They are caliphs, their shibboleth is order, their fear is sedition/discord/disbelief.[252] Shi<is accepted the book but often located decisive meanings within the ambiguous or allegorical verses (3:7), at the same time that they posited a continuing source of oral revelation in a set of leaders who are related to the Prophet Muhammad both by kinship and by piety. They are imams, their shibboleth is justice, their fear is tyranny/oppression/disbelief.

While belief in the Qur’an and rejection of disbelief are traits common to both Sunni and Shi<i Muslims, that commonality does not allow the construction of a theory of either just war or revolution that would lump them together under one umbrella rubric labeled “The Muslim View of Jihad.” Rather, acknowledging difference as basic to any sociology of Islam, we must pursue an alternate strategy. We must nuance discussion of jihad, first by recognizing it as a leitmotif of Islamic ideology, and second by exploring its variant expressions among Sunni and Shi<i theorists as well as Sunni and Shi<i activists.

Especially marked is the Shi’ite difference. For Imami or 12er Shi’is, who comprise the majority of the Shi’ite community, jihad is not indefinitely deferred, nor is it held in abeyance till the return of the hidden Imam. Jihad is constantly extolled. And it can be waged not only by the hidden Imam but by one who has been chosen by the Imam, an individual whose scholarship and piety ensures that he has been commissioned by the Imam, that is, a Shi’i cleric. And also, the enemy against whom jihad must be waged is not merely the outsider “infidel” or non-Muslim. It is also those Muslims who have not accepted true Islam. Since true Islam can only be Imami Shi’i Islam, there are many enemies who are other “Muslims.” As one student of the classical Imami juridical sources has noted, the classification of enemy encompasses “the entire hateful Sunni world, a world held responsible for all the

harassment and persecution to which the Shi’is were subjected throughout the ages.”[253]

While the legal position of Imami jurists has seldom translated into day-to-day action, it is foolhardy, as well as wrong, to deny that there is a Shi<i difference on the issue of “holy war” in Islam. The Shi‘i difference is not only real, it is also pervasive. To highlight that difference and bring it into discussion at the level that it merits, we will explore the best known, and least understood, Sunni and Shi‘i cases.

The textbook Sunni case for jihad comes from the dissident group in Egypt (also named al-Jihad), which not only plotted against the pharaoh but killed him. President Sadat fell to assassin bullets in October 1981. Those who killed him invoked jihad as their cause; an ideologue who supported the same cause wrote a short tract titled al-Farida al-Gha’iba (The missing precept), which pointedly referred to jihad. Both the group and its ideology have been the subject of intensive scrutiny from many quarters. They have also spawned look-alike groups in other dissident circles of the current skewed political system called the Middle East.[254] Yet none of the vast, and still growing, literature about them challenges the above conclusions: Jihad does not succeed in mobilizing an ideology that could replace the modern nation-state with an alternate polity. Those who advocate jihad have been reduced to the role of terrorists even when, as in the case of the Palestinian Jihad group and also Hamas, they are counterrevolutionaries struggling to reclaim a national homeland.

The anachronism of jihad-type groups may be seen from the fate of those who have attempted to fulfill the vision inspiring Sadat’s assassins. Those who invoke jihad have neither mass support nor the military firepower to challenge the omnipresent, and nearly omnipotent, Egyptian security forces. And why does jihad no longer generate popular appeal nor pose a threat to nation-state polities in the Sunni Muslim world? Fouad Ajami, himself a scholar turned news analyst, has provided an answer at once simple and grim. Jihad advocates function as terrorists, with all the hope and fear that the enterprise of terrorism evokes. Yet “when terrorism becomes commonplace ... it can be accepted. What begins as a challenge to the state ends up confirming its rationality.... The state is said to be (by its custodians,

by its many, many spokespersons) the only dike against great upheaval and disorder [read: fitna]. This is a game that all states play; this also happens to be a game at which the Egyptian state is particularly skilled."[255] And it is a game that they continue to play relentlessly in the mid-1990s. When Egyptian terrorists, stifled at home, bombed the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad, the bodies of "martyrs" were brought home to a state-sponsored funeral that featured loud outcries against the tyranny of terrorists. In other words, the state continues to make clear to doubtful outsiders, and also protesting insiders, that "it is the only dike against fitna."

While further eruptions of jihad-coded violence will take place in the Sunni Muslim world, they will be minor irritations rather than large-scale threats to the authoritarian regimes who continue to control all the instruments of state power, not only military and political, not only social and economic, but also religious and ideological. "There is substantial evidence," notes the historian Emmanuel Sivan, "of a long-standing and conscious effort on the part of territorial states to create a network of symbol-laden, stylized and repetitive social activities to define a meaningful focus of group loyalty, i.e., the national entity." As a result, Sunni fundamentalists "seem quite pessimistic as to their own chances. Most of their work takes place in the private sphere (e.g., in mosques that are privately-owned and not state-controlled, or in voluntary and welfare associations). They see the public sphere dominated by the state and its 'secular religion.' "[256]

At the same time, there has been an attempt at broad-scale revisionism on the meaning of jihad among the proponents of a modern Sunni world view. Chief among them is Muhammad Shahrur, a Syrian engineer turned Qur'anic exegete. In his most recent book of essays, Dirasat Islamiyat Mu'Asirat (fi dawlah wal-mujtama<) (Contemporary Islamic studies of the state and society), Shahrur argues that the first meaning of jihad is to defend freedom of belief and to oppose compulsion in religion. It then becomes extended to include protection of a community by those who uphold freedom of belief, along with other rights, and it is always directed against tyranny (<unf). While Shahrur's views are not shared by all Syrian scholars, especially those who view with contempt any nonspecialist advocating a new approach to Qur'anic interpretation, his is a weather vane

of critical inquiry, and it opens up possibilities worthy of future exploration. [257]

Among Shi<i Muslims, however, there has already emerged a different canon for measuring state power and also for projecting the ideological role of jihad. The Shi<i difference might be summarized with reference to a major contemporary Iranian theorist on jihad, coupled with a unique ethnographic account of jihad from a regional, rural Iranian perspective. Both help to inform not only the Shi<i-Sunni distinction on “holy war” but also the new invocation of jihad as struggle by Mahathir in Southeast Asia.

The theoretician whose writings seem most apt is Ayatollah Mortaza Motahhari, discussed in an earlier chapter for his approach to the roles of Muslim women. Motahhari was among the foremost Iranian clerics, a man whom Khomeini once described as “the fruit of my life” and “a part of my flesh.” Although he was killed in 1979 at the outset of the Iranian Revolution, his numerous speeches, articles, and pamphlets are still widely quoted, and several, including a small pamphlet titled Jihad: The Holy War of Islam and Its Legitimacy in the Quran, have been translated into English. The pamphlet itself sorts out into a series of four lectures, all of which were delivered in the early 1960s, long before the Iranian Revolution and probably as part of a monthly debating colloquium (guftar-i mah), attended by secularists as well as clerics. We are less concerned to look at the Qur’anic justifications for jihad that Motahhari adduces than to delineate what stands out as an approach at once distinctively Shi<ite in method and characteristically modern in tone. Distinctively Shi<ite is the subtlety of exegetical techniques, so subtle that an entire lecture (#4) is dedicated to the question of abrogated verses. In Motahhari’s view, abrogation requires always interpreting the unconditional as the conditional, so that a general injunction about jihad (e.g., 9:73 “O Prophet! Fight the kuffar [disbelievers] and hypocrites and be stern against them) must be qualified by the following, more complete aya (2:190): “And fight in the path of God with those who are fighting with you and do not transgress, God loves not those who transgress.” While Sunni fuqaha or jurists use a variety of hadiths or Prophetic traditions to justify what would be called jus in bello, Motahhari is able to set forth specific guidelines solely with reference to an inferential reading of Surah 2:190. In his view, the only enemy to be opposed are soldiers on the

battlefield, and even then only after they have been declared transgressors.[258]

Jihad, for Motahhari, is always defensive. Aggression is an absolute, unmitigated evil. He excoriates aggression yet quickly adds “all war, on all sides, is not always aggression. War can be aggression but it can also be a reply to aggression, for sometimes the reply to aggression must be given by force.”[259] Since only defensive war is justified, one is obliged to delineate what it is that must be defended. On this point, again using the exegetical principle of interpreting the unconditional through the conditional, Motahhari reasons that all oppressed Muslims can be defended, including and especially the Palestinians. “We may be in a situation,” he suggests,

<quote>

whereby a party has not transgressed against us but has committed some type of injustice against a group from another people, who may be Muslims, or who may be non-Muslims. If they are Muslims—like today’s plight of the Palestinians who have been exiled from their homes, whose wealth has been seized, who have been subjected to all kinds of transgression—while, for the moment, the transgressor has no intentions against us, is it permissible for us in such circumstances to hurry to the help of those oppressed Muslims and deliver them or is this not permissible? Certainly [it is].”[260]

</quote>

If defensive war can be justified on behalf of the Palestinians, it can also be cast in a still larger frame of reference. It is one thing to fight against transgression that afflicts one’s rights as an individual or a tribe or a nation. While such assertion of self-defense is justified, there is a still higher form of defense. According to Motahhari,

<quote>

There exists something superior to the rights of the individual or nation. Something more holy, more sacred, the defense of which in accordance to the human conscience is higher than the defense of individual rights. And

that something is the rights of humanity. [He goes on to detail what is meant by such rights, and then concludes]. I do not think that anyone has any doubts that the holiest form of jihad and the holiest form of war is that which is fought in defense of humanity and of humanity’s rights.

</quote>

Such a paean to idealism demands a practical illustration of its feasibility, and Motahhari goes on to provide it:

<quote>

During the period in which the Algerians were at war with the French colonialists, a group of Europeans helped them in their war and the jihad of such people was holier than the jihad of the Algerians, because the Algerians were defending the cause of their own rights, while the cause of the others was more ethical and more sacred than that of the Algerians.[261]

</quote>

In short, any group of people who are fighting for freedom of belief or freedom of thought deserves support from outsiders, and those who offer such support, even if they be non-Muslims supporting other non-Muslims, are waging the greatest jihad, a jihad on behalf of the universal rights of humanity.

Few contemporary Muslim ideologues rival Motahhari in expanding and redefining jihad. Within a Shi<i frame of reference, one might be the renowned spokesperson for the Shi<i community of southern Lebanon, Shaykh Muhammad Husain Fadlallah. Shaykh Fadlallah underscores the feasibility of jihad as a kind of da<wa. Unlike classical jurists, he argues that da<wa or calling the world to Islam cannot be implemented apart from jihad. For Shaykh Fadlallah, jihad is always dynamic, always interactive; it is not, in the absence of the Hidden Imam, restricted to reactive or defensive strategies. In Foucauldian terms, Shaykh Fadlallah asserts that power (quwwa) is the generic, foundational quality of human life. The major question becomes how to relate the universal urge

to secure power in a distinctly Islamic framework. His response is to affirm jihad as a subcategory of quwwa that is also inseparable from da<wa. Jihad is both required and legalized by the Islamic need for power.[262] Unlike Motahhari, however, Shaykh Fadlallah does not project the scope of jihad beyond the boundaries of the Muslim community (Dar al-Islam), nor does he suggest that non-Muslims can wage jihad, including the best of all jihads, which is the jihad waged on behalf of humankind.

If Motahhari remains the foremost Shi<i theorist on jihad, the imaginative thrust of his rhetoric has thus far not translated into ground-level tactical successes for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Instead, there has emerged a practical reexamination of jihad precisely because of its widespread invocation to justify not just waging the war against Iraq but using very young, untrained combatants to face a professional army furnished with modern weapons, both legal and illegal. Iranian reactions to the jihad against Iraq provide us with a unique case instance about Muslim resort to “holy war.” The official justification for conducting a war that in the end claimed more than a million lives, most of them Iranian youth, was the necessary struggle between Islam and blasphemy. Ayatollah Khomeini was masterful in shaping the discourse of debate in terms of category differences that seemed airtight and inflexible. In speech after speech throughout the 1980s, he forced his internal adversaries to oppose not only the war but also God, Islam, and the Prophet Muhammad as well as the glorious revolution and its fruit, the Islamic Republic of Iran. “The war between Iran and the Iraqi Baathis,” he onced declared, “ is the war between Islam and infidelity, between the Qur’an and atheism.”[263]

If opposition to the Iran-Iraq War was deemed both blasphemous and traitorous, it nonetheless managed to surface. It surfaced especially in families whose children became martyrs to God’s cause. Some of these voices of dissent have been narrated by an Austrian anthropologist, Reinhold Loeffler. In an extraordinary book, Islam in Practice: Religious Beliefs in a Persian Village, Loeffler provides numerous interviews he conducted in a village of southern Iran. There he distilled poignant voices of outrage against the dominant ideology of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Some of his informants criticized the regime largely in secular terms, such as the following:

<quote>

Now, young men with no proper training go to the front and are senselessly killed. I don’t believe they are martyrs going to paradise. Who knows how many young men have been killed. If there had been a strong army, as there was under the Shah, this would not have happened. Also, when this reverend sir came to power, he immediately started to attack the whole world, made everybody his enemy. He should first have set the affairs of the country right, and then, like the Prophet, worked to gradually establish Islam and to create an example of true Islamic life. Then the world would have said, “Look, how truly human that society is,” and come toward Islam all by itself.[264]

</quote>

But others faulted Khomeini for identifying too closely with the Last Imam:

<quote>

He also claims to be the representative of the Last Imam, that is, that he came to prepare the way for the coming of the Last Imam. I know this cannot be true because the Last Imam himself does not know when God will order him to come. [The speaker goes on to enumerate what he perceives to be Khomeini’s principal shortcomings, e.g., his flamboyance, haughtiness and vengefulness. But what most distances Khomeini from “the great ones,” in his view, is lack of compassion.] Finally, the prophets and Imams were kind and compassionate. Before his final battle the Imam Husayn exempted his followers from the obligation of jihad so that they might save their lives. Khomeini, however, pitilessly incites people to go to their deaths. All these things showed and show that his claims are unjustified. He is not what he pretends to be.[265]

</quote>

Hardest for many Iranians were those moments when family members quarreled among themselves about whether or not the Iran-Iraq War was a holy war. A father-son dispute went like this:

<quote>

My son now is telling me about the true Islam; they have to fight a holy war (he says) and of necessity get killed. I tell him there is no holy war in the absence of the Last Imam. He shouts at me saying I do not understand a thing. These young ones are like unfledged birds. When they try to fly, they fall from the tree and a cat eats them. They cannot discern the right road. I tell him to stay out of everything, to mind his own business, and do his studies; it’s not the right time. But he won’t listen. He will get hurt.[266]

</quote>

The bitterest lament of all conjoins despair about the war dead with betrayal of the deepest ideals of Shi<ism, to strive for justice, which is to say, freedom and humanity:

<quote>

Some of the clergy wore their garb to gather people around themselves and make them devoted to themselves. But they did not pursue the essence of religion, that is, freedom and humanity. The Imam Husayn whom they are flaunting so much now—again only outwardly, not in truth—fought for that freedom and humanity and in this struggle sacrificed himself and his family. The Muharram celebration should be a remembrance of this and a reminder for us to follow his order to do the same, that is, not to submit to oppression but to fight it. But the mullahs never taught us that They were right when they called for a revolution against the Shah because he was an oppressor. But I don’t think that this was a real revolution. The clergy do not allow it that those basic principles, freedom and humanity, become established. In the past it was repression by the Shah, now it is repression by the clergy.

</quote>

<quote>

They refuse to stop this war in which our young men are being killed for no reason. They simply tell them that if they get killed, they will go to paradise.

This is a very cheap thing to say. Is there a proof of it? Of course we believe in the after-world. But in a matter of such gravity, when thousands and thousands of young men are sent to their deaths in this belief, one should have especially strong evidence. We are seeing what is going on and we know they are telling lies, but we cannot say it. If we open up our mouths, they shut them by force. Like our former landlords, they have gathered a bunch of illiterate youngsters around themselves by giving them much more money than they could otherwise earn and telling them to suppress us.[267]

</quote>

These are admittedly random voices, taken from but one village by a single anthropologist. They do not include women’s voices, nor do they record the same voice over a span of years, except in rare instances. Yet the sample is reflective of a range of popular sentiments about the Islamic Republic of Iran and its rulers. It demonstrates that despite an elaborate mobilization campaign by the government, as well as efforts both material and symbolic either to accommodate bereaved families or to force compliance with the war effort, many Iranians doubted the “divine-demonic” nature of the Iran-Iraq War; they resisted its classification as a “holy war.”

Perhaps even more significant for the future of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the way in which the very concept of jihad has been expanded to include a social, and also an economic, rather than a purely military or political dimension. While complaints are rife about how badly some members of the clerical leadership have handled their political responsibilities since 1979, one also reads about the extensive efforts to bring social justice to Iranian villages. Jihad Sazendegi was created in 1979 as a grass-roots movement to bring rural Iran into the modern age. Despite the promise of the White Revolution under the shah, rural Iran remained a symbol of bureaucratic incompetence, compounded by royal neglect. The task of Jihad Sazendegi was to construct rural roads, electric lines, portable water systems, sewerage systems, schools, mosques, and health clinics. The pace of improvements was slowed down by the eight year Iran-Iraq War, but by 1990, according to official sources, 50,000 kilometers of rural roads had been built, more than 10,000 villages provided clean water, and almost 5,000 new village schools built.[268] One could quickly add that the urban poor, the so-called mostazafin, did not fare as well

under the Islamic Republic of Iran, yet the government has tried to cope with the worst urban areas, at the same time that it has maintained its level of rural development. In both urban and rural arenas the notion of jihad is central to mobilizing public interest, and grassroots involvement. Economic jihad, admittedly less glamorous and less dangerous than military jihad, remains a high priority for post-1989 Iran.

* * * * *

From the above examples of jihad “holy war,” it becomes clear that the rhetoric of “holy war” changes its relevance in the actual circumstances of Muslim polities past and present. Above all, one cannot trace just war theory in an Islamic context without first delineating differences between Sunni and Shi<i norms. For Sunni Muslims, the invocation of jihad is framed by the hegemonic strictures of the modern nation-state. No rival group within the boundaries of a majoritarian Muslim country has the power to wage war on a transregional, much less international, scale. Jihad has become little more than a pejorative codeword for random protest against excesses committed by the regime in power.

For Shi<i Muslims, the situation seems to be more favorable, at least initially. One nation-state has adopted an explicit religious ideology and under the guise of jihad has waged war over a protracted period of time, with great cost of life and pain to the families of both martyrs and survivors. That nation, of course, is the Islamic Republic of Iran. The war it waged for eight years was against the avowedly secular, Ba’Athist regime of Iraq. Yet the jihad invoked in the name of Islam by Ayatollah Khomeini failed to attain its goals. The atheist opponent was not defeated, nor was the hated enemy deposed. Even had Iranian forces been militarily successful, there would have been many devout Shi<is who would have continued to question the appropriateness of such a war: can there be any invocation of jihad in the absence of the Hidden Imam? Can anyone, even a learned, pious cleric, convince others that he has been designated as the Hidden Imam’s vicar? For many, especially illiterate or semiliterate Iranian peasants, the answer to that question was and remains “No”!

While jihad retains its symbolic valence as more than a battle cry for both Sunni and Shi<i Muslims, the major mobilizing cry for Shi<is remains the call to justice, symbolized by the injustice perpetrated against Husayn on the plain of Karbala, Iraq, in the late seventh century. One may reasonably doubt that the pragmatic limits to political/military jihad will curtail or deplete the spiritual elan that motivates those for whom history has still to disclose the will of a just God.[269]

If there is to be a sequel to jingoistic jihad, it may well be the alternative force of corporate culture. In the case of Malaysia, corporate culture proposes to forsake military zeal for another, more difficult battle: parity on the playing fields of free-market capitalism. In casting Mahathir as a negative voice for the future of cooperative internationalism, Fallows emphasizes two themes, both of which he ascribes unflinchingly to Mahathir: anti-Westernism and opposition to individual rights.[270] In fact, the outlook of Mahathir is more complex. It is not to reject democracy or individual rights but rather to accent the impossibility of any shift in Malaysia's status unless and until the country as a whole attains economic prowess at the global level. Whatever his shortcomings, he has tried to lead through his own example, warding off the inevitable suspicion that he would be prone to the kind of nepotism widely recognized as inextricable with Suharto and his key cohorts in neighboring Indonesia. Personal integrity, sacrifice, hard work— all are part of the image that Mahathir nurtures and projects. But he is well aware that Malays will be leery of his intentions to the extent that they have progressed less than the Chinese during the accelerated economic growth of the early 1990s. Relative to their own past Malays have already made substantial gains. Many of the younger professional class may dare to hope that under a slogan of "corporate culture with Islamic values," they will be carried to a new level of prosperity unknown to Malays of the past.

Perhaps urban Malays, who are fond of talking about Malaysia as a model for other Muslim countries, can in this one area at least devise a product worth exporting: economic jihad, the advocacy of a modern Islamic profile that combines commerce with compassion. The alternatives are grim: either a failed experiment in modernization in one of the Asian Muslim countries best poised to succeed in the Pacific century, or else an economic success story that has a Muslim patina but no Islamic core, one scarred by personal greed

and self-interest rather than ennobled by a collective will committed to decency and decorum at home, justice and persistence abroad.

What seems to be more important in terms of Malaysia and Southeast Asian Islam generally is to see the multivalence of jihad as a concept that can apply to the East as well as to the West. The overwhelming rhetoric remains Islam vs. the West. But what is equally necessary is a jihad in the East, one that asserts the Islamic dimension to East Asian prosperity, not by showing how Islam is almost the same as Confucianism but rather how an Islamic difference can provide pluralism with a moral edge that includes the welfare of all and not merely the advocacy of Muslim superiority. That task has barely begun, but it is most evident in the report of a Singaporan Muslim on the cultural benefits of non-Muslims in the Greater China sphere.

Unlike others, who talk only in vague generalities about what it means to be Muslim and Malay, Riduan Wu Chia Chung Ibn Abdullah argues that the cultural values, the family structure, and the lifestyles, including dress and eating habits, of Chinese Malaysians are not inferior to those of their Muslim Malay neighbors and political rulers. He even goes so far as to list what are acceptable Muslim approaches to Chinese ritual celebrations: Chinese New Year—yes; Qing Ming (visitation of ancestral graves)—qualified yes (don't worship them); Festival of the Hungry Ghosts—no (implies a consumer society in Hell, which is outside the bounds of acceptable Muslim belief); Funeral rites—yes; Tea Ceremony— yes. In short, he advocates an elastic practice of Islam, especially by Chinese converts to Islam, and encourages "Muslims (whether Chinese or otherwise) to attend traditional ceremonies as a mark of respect for the living and the dead while also avoiding participation in the rituals of ancestor worship that compromise Allah's Unity and Uniqueness."[271]

Even if one does not accept all the directives of Riduan Wu Chia, he has identified in graphic terms the ways that Muslim and nonMuslim values can elide in South-east Asia.

What has not yet been done is to probe the notion of jihad to the East in terms that anticipate the future of Islam as a global community embedded in

an Asian as well as a non-Asian context. Jihad to the East needs to be embraced as a project where Southeast Asian Muslims can and should play a distinctive role in the future, even before 2020.

And it will have its most pivotal expression not in Malay or Chinese but in English. Why? Because whatever the outcome of Vision 2020, it is, like many dreams in Malaysia, couched in English. Mahathir was criticized in early 1994 for announcing that in university-level curricula scientific and technical subjects could be taught in English. English is a residue of the colonial experience, but it is also Malaysia's bridge to the competitive world of free-market capitalism where its leaders have pledged to make every effort to succeed. Those who protested the move to make English a science language felt that Malay would be threatened, but Prabhasa Malay has now taken deep roots in both the Chinese and Malay communities. Mahathir's was a shrewd move to keep Malaysia's cherished educational system competitive with its regional, and also global, rivals.

Mahathir also garners additional attention because of his own proclivity to speak in English. It is sometimes joked about Mahathir that he knows, and uses, English better than he does Prabhasa Malay. Throughout Southeast Asia those from countries where British colonial rule prevailed have tended to make sure that English became the language of international preference, at least for ruling elites. Their preference has prevailed during the postcolonial period. Yet, of the three ASEAN leaders who speak English—Mahathir in Malaysia, Lee in Singapore, and Ramos in the Philippines—Mahathir is the only one who is a Muslim, a Muslim representing a secular state in which Islam is the official religion.

Not only for Malays but also for other Muslims, the future may yet belong to those who learn to wage economic jihad in English. There will still be competition and confrontation; some things do not change. Yet the terms of engagement will have shifted: accommodation more than violence will be the preferred outcome for Muslims as for non-Muslims.

[1] A paraphrase from Dr. Tawfik Abdullah, dinner conversation in Jakarta, Indonesia, 12 May 1983.

[2] I am alluding to a 1990s version of the scare book genre. It comes from “an internationally recognized scholar in the field of comparative religions, the cults and the occult.” Robert Morey has written more than twenty popular books. His favorite targets begin with M: Mormons, Masons, and now Muslims. In The Islamic Invasion: Confronting the World’s Fastest Growing Religion (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House, 1992), Morey ridicules both Islam and Muslims. His chief premise is at once simplistic and antagonistic: Islam is but “a form of cultural imperialism in which the religion and culture of seventh-century Arabia have been raised to the status of divine law” (19). Distortions, half-truths, and innuendos abound, yet the book continues to be adopted as a required text in some college-level religion courses.

[3] Elaine Sciolino, “Seeing Green etc.” The New York Times Week in Review, 21 January 1996. The bait-and-switch tone of this essay only reinforces the popular fixation on “political Islam” as the major issue, displacing concerns with other dimensions of Islamic culture and contemporary history.

[4] Again the book by Morey is representative of a spate of books that reduce Islam in America to “the Black Muslim Movement,” and the history of that movement since 1975, when Elijah Muhammad died, to the provocations of Louis Farrakhan (172–173). No mention is made of Elijah Muhammad’s son and principal successor, Warith D. Muhammad, who happens to be both a “moderate” Muslim and a Republican!

[5] For the larger picture of Bosnia, we now at last have a competent, nonpartisan history that calls into question most journalistic assessments and foreign policy initiatives. See Noel Malcolm, Bosnia: A Short History (New York: New York University Press, 1994), esp. 218–22 on Alija Izetbgovic. The best journalistic account remains Roy Gutmann, Witness to Genocide (New York: Macmillan, 1993), while a masterful documentary overview, calling into sharp question the Balkan peace process, has been provided by Rabia Ali and Lawrence Lifschultz. Why Bosnia? Writings on the Balkan War (Stoney Creek: The Pamphleteer's Press, 1993).

[6] Frances Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man (New York: Free Press, 1992), and Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs 72.3 (Summer 1993): 22–49. Both authors presume that the Cold War ended a major phase in modern history, and both also project Euro-American triumphalism as the logical outcome of post-1989 global capitalism. Huntington's essay, in particular, has drawn a lot of criticism, and among the most trenchant is Roy P. Mottahedeh, "The Clash of Civilizations: an Islamicist's Critique," Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review 2.2 (1996): 1–26. Mottahedeh, rather than simply deriding his Harvard colleague for rampant essentialism and pseudoargumentation, calls attention to the need for broader discussion of what shapes, and also limits, "large transnational cultural entities"(24).

[7] Anonymous, "The Shape of the World: The Nation-State is Dead, Long Live the Nation-State," The Economist 23 (Dec. 95–5 Jan. 96): 17–18.

[8] See Bruce Kapferer, "Nationalist Ideology and a Comparative Anthropology," Ethnos 54. 3–4 (1991): 161–99.

[9] I have exposed the limits to this kind of thinking elsewhere, in Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 91–95.

[10] Sadik al-Azm, “Islamic Fundamentalism Reconsidered,” South Asia Bulletin 13.1 & 2 (1993): 95.

[11] Robert Segal, “Joachim Wach and the History of Religions,” Religious Studies Review 20.3 (July 1994): 200.

[12] Gayatri Spivak, “Postcoloniality and Its Implications for Cultural Studies,” plenary speech delivered at the 1988 convention of the Modern Language Association in San Francisco.

[13] Jose Casanova. Public Religions in the Modern World (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994): 166.

[14] I take the term “perspectivist” from Steven Lukes, “Relativism in its Place,” in Martin Hollis and Steven Lukes, eds., Rationality and Relativism (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), 298–305, though I disagree with Lukes that perspectivism can have only a weak form (deferring to actors’ perspectives) or a strong form (acknowledging the interpreter’s perspective). Lukes follows too closely Said’s dictum, quoted at the end of his essay: “the student must feel he or she is answerable to and in uncoercive contact with the culture or people being studied” (305). This is a false criterion of authentic scholarship, since students will always decide what represents the culture being studied (elite or popular, textual or nontextual sources) and also which people (certainly not all the people) studied they will hold themselves accountable to. My perspectivism announces that freedom and tolerance, understood as cultural pluralism and religious multicreedalism, are decisive. One may say either that they finally do matter (weak form) or that they, and they alone, count as universal desiderata (strong form).

[15] Daniel Pick, War Machine: The Rationalisation of Slaughter in the Modern Age (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 158.

[16] On the overlapping relationship of missions and missionaries with the larger colonial project of reorienting colonized subjects, see especially the evocative case study by Johannes Fabian, Language and Colonial Power: The Appropriation of Swahili in the Former Belgian Congo 1880–1938 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[17] Izetbegovic, Islam between East and West (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1984), 175.

[18] Izetbegovic here identifies religion with “weak religion,” or purely spiritual religion as identified by some Western, specifically Christian, authors. His project is to retain the applicability of the ideal while modifying the practice of Islam as a religion of harmony or balance between the spiritual and secular domains.

[19] Ibid., 180–81.

[20] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1983), 116–40.

[21] Lawrence, Defenders of God, 83–87.

[22] It is on this point that both Benedict Anderson and Mark Juergensmeyer need to be corrected. The former speaks only about religion as a weakened social variable, a once dominant purveyor of values now in decline at the moment that nationalism enters its most virulent phase, i.e., late nineteenth century Western Europe (Anderson, Imagined Communities, 12f). Anderson never considers religion as a social force that did not weaken for all citizens of the major European nations (and the United States), nor does he recognize religion as a residual symbol world still important to so-called secular elites. Juergensmeyer, on the other hand, is overly concerned to see how religious actors and secular nationalist leaders can merge their common concerns in a future step-down from Armageddon. His is a prescriptive rather than descriptive task. The continuing incommensurability

of religion and nationalism is for him an obstacle to be overcome rather than a scenario to be monitored, yet his work has the singular value of charting the numerous instances of that oxymoronic phenomenon called religious nationalism, pleading against current evidence for its peaceful advance into the next century; see Mark Juergensmeyer, The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), esp. 193–202.

[23] It is a mark of how thoroughly secular the debate about civil society has become that religion enters not as an independent variable but rather as a substratum of trust, justice, benevolence. From Kant to Strauss to Habermas, one can trace the effort to invoke a transcendent morality without positing the need for a Transcendent Being, and the chief debate becomes why nationalism produced one kind of civil society in Western Europe and a very different kind in Eastern Europe. While there is much of value to pursuing this debate in its own terms, it ignores the larger shift from metaphysical to instrumental notions of truth; see Adam B. Seligman, The Idea of a Civil Society (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), esp. 156–66.

[24] Harold Bloom, The American Religion: The Emergence of a PostChristian Nation (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 16–17.

[25] Abdallah Laroui, The Crisis of the Arab Intellectual: Traditionalism or Historicism? (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 174.

[26] Liah Greenfeld, Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[27] Among several exponents of this view, three stand out: Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983) and Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals (New York: Allen Lane/The Penguin Press, 1994); Eric Hobsbawm, Nations and Nationalism since 1870 (London: Canto Press, 1991); and Frances

Fukuyama, The End of History and the Last Man (New York: Free Press, 1992).

[28] Richard Falk, The Endangered Planet (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1971), 227.

[29] See, e.g., Basil Davidson, The Black Man’s Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State (New York: Times Books/Random House, 1992), for a particularly strong critique of the postcolonial legacy in subSaharan Africa.

[30] Ranajit Guha, Subaltern Studies (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), 4:vii.

[31] All the volumes of Subaltern Studies articulate this viewpoint, as do Gayatri Spivak, In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics (New York: Methuen, 1987), and Robert Young, White Mythologies: Writing History and the West (London and New York: Routledge, 1990).

[32] The political theorist Kenneth Waltz, for instance, treats the four P’s as but four flashpoints in an argument for the danger posed by interdependence in a convergent world system; see Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 139.

[33] See Juergensmeyer, The New Cold War? 193–202.

[34] Ibid., 50.

[35] For the clearest exposition of this theory, see Bryan Turner, Marx and the End of Orientalism (London: George Allen Unwin, 1983), 67f. But equally damning of the absence of social change among Muslim nation-

states, using the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a yardstick, or rather a bully club, is Martin Kramer, “Islam versus Democracy,” Commentary 95.1 (Jan. 1993): 35–42. Overlooking the differentiation within and between Muslim societies is not only short-sighted, it also reinforces the cultural stereotypes invoked by such glibly ahistorical commentators as Fukuyama and Huntington in order to stoke the prospect of a “New Cold War.”

[36] Jalal Al-i Ahmad, Occidentosis: A Plague from the West (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1984), 33–34.

[37] With these few words I am sidestepping moves to privilege insider above outsider use of referents to the transcendent. One such move is to isolate God as the real object of reflection for prophets, saints, and lesser believers, while marking God as merely the theoretical object of consideration for theologians and other academics. A parallel move, common even before Max Weber but dominant in much academic writing about religion since his time, is to separate interpretation from explanation, claiming for one discipline (the history of religions) the sole ability to explain religious phenomena while allowing the social sciences the related but less exalted task of interpreting these same phenomena. Robert Segal has exposed how this move has played out in the dominant branch of history of religion; especially in Religious Studies Review 20.3 (July 1994): 197–201. Another move, which has gained prominence among neo-Tillichians in mainline Protestant circles, is to distinguish between first-order and second-order discourse, as does George Lindbeck, The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984).

The problem with all these moves, whether polemical or apologetic or both, is their implicit ranking of those who engage in God-talk while ignoring the major issue: is there or is there not a nonmaterial force influencing, perhaps even directing, human activity? The realm of the imagination has not hesitated to say YES, and even though the voices do not accord the Other the same name, it is necessary to accent the common ground that they occupy vis-a-vis rank materialists, closet atheists, or scientizing

triumphalists, all of whom deny the very existence of the Other, except, of course, as “a figment of the imagination.”

[38] Muhammad Qutb, Islam: The Misunderstood Religion (Damascus: The Holy Koran Publishing House, 1977), 52.

[39] Sayyid Qutb, Ma’Alim fi’t-Tariq (Milestones on the Path) (Cairo: Dar ash-Shuruq, 1964), 146. One of Sayyid Qutb’s most popular tracts, it has often been translated into English, and the above quotation can be found also in Sayyid Qutb, Milestones (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Unity Publishing, n.d.), 126. On the rhetoric of hakimiyya, there now exists the unprecedented and invaluable two-part study of Islamic fundamentalism in a comparative context by Sadik al-Azm; see “Islamic Fundamentalism Reconsidered.”

[40] Ahmad Moussalli, Radical Islamic Fundamentalism: The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992), 241.

[41] Raimundo Panikkar, “Religion or Politics: The Western Dilemma” in Ninian Smart and Peter Merkl, eds., Religion and Politics in the Modern World (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 46.

[42] Jacob Landau, The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 311.

[43] James Piscatori, Islam in a World of Nation-States (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 77. Not only on this point but in his general approach, Piscatori highlights the need for constant vigilance in separating rhetoric from outcome, polemics from pragmatic action. His book confirms a hopeful, long-range view of Muslim polities that is at variance with most media assessments even as it is consonant with the arguments here advanced. For a useful update of his approach, see the

analysis forged with Dale Eickelman in Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[44] Albert Hourani, Islam in European Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 73.

[45] Bassam Tibi, Arab Nationalism: A Critical Enquiry (New York: St. Martin’s Press, [1981] 1990), 87.

[46] Leonard Binder, Islamic Liberalism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 280.

[47] Marilyn Waldman, “The Islamic World,” Encyclopaedia Britannica Macropaedia (Chicago: Britannica Publishing, 1987), 130.

[48] The most egregrious examples of this approach are James Bill and Carl Leiden, Politics in the Middle East (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), and Edward Mortimer, Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam (New York: Random House, 1982). More nuanced, balancing Islam as world view with attention to numerous, often competing Muslim ideologies, especially in the introduction and conclusion, is James Piscatori, ed. Islam in the Political Process (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

[49] The most subtle example of this approach is Clifford Geertz, Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), though one must quickly add in defense of Geertz’s approach that he tries to retrieve a cultural boundedness for all social existence that earlier analysts of Muslim history largely ignored. Other scholars, less sensitive than Geertz to the colonial optic, include Christopher Harrison, France and Islam in West Africa, 18601960 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), and Ian Talbot, The Punjab and the Raj, 1849–1947 (Riverdale: Riverdale Company, 1988).

[50] David Laitin, Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 164–69, has detailed the similarities and differences in a West African context.

[51] Richard Fox, “East of Said,” in Richard Fox, ed. Nationalist Ideologies and the Production of National Cultures (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1990).

[52] For a broad global view of this protracted rivalry, see Geoffrey Barraclough, ed., The Times Atlas of World History (Maplewood, N.J.: Hammond, 1982), 207–95. For a region-specific view that takes account of all of Asia, see Rhoads Murphey, A History of Asia (New York: HarperCollins, 1992).

[53] Huri Islamoglu-Inan, ed., The Ottoman Empire and the WorldEconomy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and Resat Kasaba, The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

[54] Turner, Marx and the End of Orientalism, highlights this argument, especially in chaper 4.

[55] Delacroix’s thesis is restated in Lisa Anderson, “Obligation and Accountability: Islamic Politics in North Africa,” Daedalus 120.3 (1991): 93–121.

[56] Georges Corm, Fragmentation of the Middle East: The Last Thirty Years (London: Hutchinson, 1988), 137.

[57] For a thorough, often critical review of these trends, one can do no better than Hooshang Amirahmadi, Revolution and Economic Transition: The Iranian Experience (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

[58] Marshall Hodgson, The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 3:176–222.

[59] Michael Gilsenan, Recognizing Islam: Religion and Society in the Modern Arab World (New York: Pantheon, 1982), 215.

[60] Charles Barone, Marxist Thought on Imperialism: Survey and Critique (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1985), 115f, provides a keen exposition and broad-scale critique of Marxist theory on this point.

[61] The degree of influence can be overstated, however, as is the case with the unidirectional and triumphalist thesis of Theodore Van Laue in The World Revolution of Westernization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[62] For the Iranian case, there is much evidence of global patterns impinging on local contexts, often with unanticipated consequences. See especially Paul Vieille and Farhad Khosrokhavar, Le Discours populaire de la revolution iranienne, 2 vols. (Paris: Contemporaneite, 1990), and also Erika Friedl, Women of Deh Koh: Women’s Lives in an Iranian Village (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian, 1989), the companion study to Reinhold Loeffler, Islam and Practice: Religious Lives in a Persian Village (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

[63] I agree with James Piscatori that we cannot absolutize successive stages of Muslim protest, implying that the rhythm of history explains all social change and potential development; see his critique of Hamid Enayat in Islam in a World of Nation-States, (1986) 36.

Yet it still seems valuable to differentiate the sequence of public responses to British, French, and Dutch colonial empires. The unexpected has happened and will continue to happen, but sketching patterns of possibility can help understand a long-term process, even when the next turn in the road remains invisible, and the road itself very bumpy.

[64] Osman Bakar, “Towards a Positive World-view of Islam,” in Abdul Monir Yaacob and Ahmad Faiz Abdul Rahman, Towards a Positive Islamic World-View: Malaysian and American Perspectives (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Islamic Understanding 1994), 38.

[65] See, e.g., Immanuel Wallerstein, The Capitalist World-System (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), though the best summary of his work and its impact remains Charles Ragin and Daniel Chirot, “The World System of Immanuel Wallerstein: Sociology and Politics as History,” in Theda Skocpol, ed., Vision and Method in Historical Sociology (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 276–312.

[66] Eric Hoffer, “Islam and Modernization,” The Spectator (Spring 1980): 1.

[67] Corm, Fragmentation of the Middle East, 133. I am indebted to Corm’s insightful book for many of the revisionist, often radical interpretations of Middle Eastern society reflected in these pages.

[68] Ibid., 90.

[69] The boldest articulation of the either-or thesis concerning Islam and modernization comes from the political scientist Bassam Tibi, The Crisis of Modern Islam: A Preindustrial Culture in the Scientific-Technological

Age (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1989), and Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990).

[70] For a broad delineation of the postcolonial dilemmas faced by many Middle Eastern and North African societies, see Philip S. Khoury and Joseph Kostiner, eds. Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). The most persuasive review of democracy as an element of Muslim political discourse, despite occasional lapses into economic determinist arguments, is provided in Ghassan Salame, ed., Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994).

[71] On the specific problems of nomenclature for Islamic fundamentalism, see my chapter “Muslim Fundamentalist Movements: Reflections toward a New Approach,” in Barbara F. Stowasser, ed., The Islamic Impulse (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 15–36; and also chapter 4 in Defenders of God. Similar points have been made by Sadik al-Azm in his two-part essay noted above.

[72] Ihab Hassan, “The Culture of Postmodernism,” in Monique Chefdor et al., Modernism: Challenges and Perspectives (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 307.

[73] Norma Salem, “Tunisia,” in Shireen T. Hunter, ed., The Politics of Islamic Revivalism (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1988), 167, n. 7. Elsewhere I deal with a similar set of issues about terminology, arguing that to choose and defend specific cross-cultural constructs is the only way that comparative studies can finally produce some explanatory yield (see Defenders of God, 90–96). Sadik al-Azm is even more emphatic about the need for cross-cultural categories when he declares: “I

would like to argue broadly for the epistemological legitimacy, scientific integrity and critical applicability of such supposedly modern Western and Christian-derived concepts as ‘Fundamentalism’ and ‘Revivalism’ in the study of the contemporary Islamist phenomenon.” “Islamic Fundamentalism Reconsidered,” 95.

[74] A recapitulation of both the Arabian Wahhabis and the Indian revivalists sometimes confused with them, the Barelwis and Faraidis, is set forth in Ira M. Lapidus, A History of Islamic Societies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 673–75, 720–22.

[75] Much scholarship still routinely considers the Padris, like the Barelwis, Faraidis, and, of course, Wahhabis, as prototypical fundamentalists. The Padris were said to represent “the intensification of Islamic fundamentalism evident elsewhere in the [Southeast Asian] region” during the early nineteenth century. See A. C. Milner, “Islam and the Muslim State” in M. B. Hooker, ed., Islam in South-east Asia (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1983), 47. It is just such an uncritical reading of all Islamically motivated protest as fundamentalist that mandates a reconsideration of recent Muslim history.

[76] This level of critique against reformers has been especially associated with the leading advocate of cultural or Althusserian Marxism in Morocco, Abdallah Laroui, whose views are etched in The Crisis of the Arab Intellectual, esp. 153–77.

[77] Youssef M. Choueiri, Islamic Fundamentalism (Boston: Twayne, 1990), 35. I am indebted to Choueiri for his clear exposition of Islamic fundamentalism, demarcating it from both revivalism and reformism in a diachronic sequence that mirrors my own approach. I do, however, disagree with Choueiri on the label denoting the last phase. He prefers “radicalism,” glossing the term fundamentalism as applicable to all three phases of recent Islamic protest. The term “radical,” unlike revivalism and reformism, has no positive referent. It presupposes

some other norm. That norm, in an Islamic context, is a strict religious code or sense of inalterable, all-encompassing fundamentals; hence I use “fundamentalism” in preference to “radicalism” to denote the last and most significant phase of Islamic protest in recent history.

[78] Jean Leca, “Democratization in the Arab World,” in Salame, ed. Democracy without Democrats?, 61. I use the phrase in a more general sense than does Leca, who confines it to the nonmonarchical states of the Arab world, even though the practice of citizen surveillance among the monarchies differs little from that of their “republican” counterparts.

[79] Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 138. Put even more starkly in subsequent essays is Gellner’s view that what characterizes the modern Middle East and, by extension, the whole Muslim world is “a kind of tribalism in a new milieu and idiom ... strong religion, strong state, weak civil society, and the fragile ideological power (’asabiyya) of quasi-kin, quasi-territorial patronage—that seems to be the heritage (of Islam in the modern world).” Ernest Gellner, “Tribalism and State in the Middle East” in Khoury/Kostiner, Tribes and State Formation, 125–26. The problem with this view is its parochialism: it prejudges the future of all Muslims by one, limited reading of the Islamic past. There are other options possible, if the current economic order does not inscribe the same or greater inequities on Africa and South/Southeast Asia as it has in the immediate past.

[80] Kenneth Cragg, The House of Islam (Belmont, Calif.: Dickenson, 1982), 96.

[81] Richard W. Bulliet, Islam: The View from the Edge (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 205, though Bulliet is principally concerned with the coercive redirection of education and curbing of the power base of the ulama, intentionally or unintentionally, through “Europeanization.”

[82] Even when allowance is made for Fanon’s emotive appeal to undifferentiated masses, whom he lauded as the sole harbingers of cultural authenticity, it is his posthumous classic, Les Damnes de la terre, translated as The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove, 1961/1963), that augured the grim irony of postcolonial dependence more clearly than any other writing of the nationalist resistance period, just as his Sociologie d’une revolution translated as A Dying Colonialism (New York: Grove, 1964/1965), highlighted the crucial role of gender analysis and the new woman in forging an autonomous space of freedom in postcolonial Muslim societies. See also Ato Sekyi-Otu, Fanon’s Dialectic of Experience (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 211–35.

[83] See Carl E. Pletsch, “The Three Worlds, or the Division of Social Scientific Labor, circa 1950–1975,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 23 (October 1981): 565–90, for the best explanation of how these terms, rather than some alternative rubrics, came to define the socioeconomic gradient dividing the modern capitalist world system.

[84] Fouad Ajami, “In the Pharaoh’s Shadow: Religion and Authority in Egypt,” in Piscatori, ed., Islam in the Political Process, 1983.

[85] Abd al-Aziz Khayyat, Minister of Religious Endowments, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, lecture delivered at Duke University on 8 October 1982.

[86] World Link 3 (Spring 1991): 12–13. I am indebted to Dr. Paul Hoff for this reference, and for his reflections on how Islam is perceived by nonspecialists in today’s world.

[87] Roy Mottahedeh, “The Islamic Movement: The Case for Democratic Inclusion,” Contention 4.3 (Spring 1995): 111.

[88] For Pakistan, as for every other country considered, there are numerous dates that could be selected for mention. I provide only those that are registered most often and reverberate most widely when the subject of discussion is changes in the public sphere during the transition from anticolonial protest to postcolonial hopes merging into new points of resistance. There are many other dates to consider for the analysis of noncentrist issues crucial to civil society; some of these dates are set forth in chapter 5 for the purpose of addressing the current and future status of women in three majoritarian Muslim states—Iran, Egypt, and Pakistan.

[89] My friend has asked to remain anonymous, but his sentiments are echoed by numerous Indian Muslims to the present day, as one recent account makes clear; see Rafiq Zakaria, The Struggle within Islam (London: Penguin, 1989), 1. Though I do not agree with the overly determined bifurcation of fundamentalism and secularism in Zakaria's sweeping account, the book does have the singular merit of presenting in lucid English both a learned Indian Muslim's view of Islamic history and a skillful weaving together of indigenous with Euro-American scholarship on that same history.

[90] Hamid Enayat, Modern Islamic Political Thought (London: Macmillan, 1982), 102.

[91] S. Barakat Ahmad, "Maududian Concept of Islamic State," Islam and the Modern Age 14 (November 1983): 10.

[92] Mumtaz Ahmad, "Islamic Revival in Pakistan," in J. W. Bjorkman, ed., Fundamentalism, Revivalists and Violence in South Asia (Riverdale, Md.: The Riverdale Company, 1988), 93. Ahmad makes the analytic error of conflating the essentially nonpolitical Tablighi Jama'At with the very political Jama'At-i Islami. He also calls both groups grass-roots revivalist movements, when, in fact, neither was grass-roots or revivalist. Their appeal was urban and often elitist; their program was fidelity to

scriptural norms within the modern nation-state. Despite its analytic shortfall, Ahmad’s essay contains many valuable source citations.

[93] Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama’At-i Islami of Pakistan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 59. “The Jama’At’s rivals, from ulama parties to Israr Ahmad’s Tanzim-i Islami and Tahiru’l-Qadri’s Minhaju’l-Qur’an, with some changes in titles and functions, have reproduced it [the Jama’At’s organizational model] in their own organizations.” Nasr’s study provides the best single overview in English of both the aims and limits of Mawdudi’s organizational legacy.

[94] Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 338, 393. Hourani, the premier Arab historian of the late twentieth century, documents this point, as so many others, with crystal clarity.

[95] Adducing the significance of Nasser and his successors, Sadat and Mubarak, is a delicate task that has occupied many political scientists. For the latest effort suggesting that their achievements were more monumental than the forces constraining them, see Raymond W. Baker, Sadat and After: Struggles for Egypt’s Political Soul (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990). My approach emphasizes recurrent features of political culture rather than the psychology or mystique of particular Egyptian leaders. A boldly comprehensive study that takes account of class and economic variables in assessing the major Muslim politics of West Asia and North Africa, including Egypt, is Alan Richards and John Waterbury, A Political Economy of the Middle East: State, Class and Economic Development (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990). Especially valuable is the authors’ effort to show how the internal differentiation of the middle class complicates any roseate picture of development in the Arab Muslim world, as also in its Iranian and Turkish neighbors.

[96] According to Joel Migdal, Nasser’s was essentially a top-down strategy of survival. Through nationalization of key industries, he precluded the development of centrifugal economic groups and structures that were necessary for the long-range viability of the Egyptian economy. The virtue of

Migdal’s broadly comparative study is to illustrate that the dilemma of Nasserist overcentralization was neither his nor the Middle East’s alone; see Joel S. Migdal, Strong Societies and Weak States: StateSociety Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), esp. 229–32.

[97] See Hourani, Islam in European Thought, 401–15, for an adroit analysis of the 1967 war as the nearly inevitable outcome of a perilous experiment with Arab socialism cast in the mold of Nasser’s Egypt.

[98] John Waterbury, Hydropolitics of the Nile Valley (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1979).

[99] Morroe Berger, Islam in Egypt; Social and Political Aspects of Popular Religion (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 47, quoted by Daniel Crecelius in D. E. Smith, ed., Religion and Political Modernization (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 90.

[100] Quoted in Richard P. Mitchell, The Society of Muslim Brothers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 244.

[101] Sayyid Qutb, Ma’Alim fi’t-Tariq, 26.

[102] This detail, along with countless others, is provided in the thoroughly sympathetic biography of Asad by Patrick Seale (see 437). Titled Asad: The Struggle for the Middle East (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), it is accurately called by the author himself a “chronicle.” It is a chronicle that he concludes by asking Asad how he wants it to conclude. Unsurpisingly, Asad quips: “Say simply that the struggle continues” (495).

[103] The best presentation of the socioeconomic issues and class struggle evident in Hama is offered by Fred Lawson, “Social Bases for the Hamah

Revolt," Middle East Reports in Progress (MERIP) 12.9 (Nov.-Dec. 1982): 24–28. The alternative explanation of modern Syrian history as a clash of competing religious ideologies has been set forth in Umar F. Abd-Allah, The Islamic Struggle in Syria (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1983).

[104] Fouad Ajami, "In the Pharaoh's Shadow," in J. Piscatori, ed., Islam in the Political Process, 34.

[105] Thomas L. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1989), 101. While this quote from Friedman is valuable, his analysis of Hama is seriously flawed by overschematization and psychological projection. Is Asad a schizophrenic three-faced Jekyll-and-Hyde, unable or unwilling to declare himself as (1) tribal leader, (2) brutal autocrat, or (3) modernizing president? Such is Friedman's cynical surmise, yet equally plausible is the opposite surmise, namely, that Asad is a wily pragmatist ruling Syria in almost the only way that one could rule a postcolonial artifice, with almost no historical tradition as a nation-state, threatened by fissiparous forces within and beyond its borders. Friedman eschews comparative analysis in order to tell a good story, but it is not the whole story, and it may cloak the long-range historical lessons emerging out of modern-day Ba'Athist Syria.

[106] Norma Salem, "Tunisia," in Hunter, ed., The Politics of Islamic Revivalism, 158. Not only for this insight but for an imaginative theoretical overview of Islamism, applying Bourdieu's categories with analytic adroitness, I am indebted to Norma Salem's chapter.

[107] Norma Salem, Habib Bourguiba, Islam and the Creation of Tunisia (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 38.

[108] Salem, "Tunisia," 154.

[109] Ibid., 155, summarizing a spate of publicity and criticism that went well beyond Tunisia during the early 1960s.

[110] Clement H. Moore, Tunisia since Independence: The Dynamics of a One-Party System (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 52n.

[111] Salem, “Tunisia,” 155.

[112] The Economist (13 Jan. 1996) provides the details of a rising tide of hope for Tunisian women: “A girl born today stands a 95% chance of learning to read, and is likely to live to 71—13 years longer than one born ten years ago”(41).

[113] Salem, “Tunisia,” 165.

[114] See North Africa News 2/1 (Jan.-Feb. 1991): 6. While this periodical is published by North African Students for Freedom and might be expected to tilt toward extreme conclusions, in fact this is one of the rare instances where its editorials verge on the alarmist rather than the pragmatic side of predicting the unpredictable, namely, the future of Maghribi politics.

[115] Susan Waltz, “Islamist Appeal in Tunisia,” Middle East Journal 40 (Autumn 1986): 669.

[116] Choueiri, Islamic Fundamentalism, 75.

[117] Ibid., 75.

[118] Dilip Hiro, Holy Wars: The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism (New York: Routledge, 1989), 116.

[119] Ibid., 119.

[120] James P. Piscatori, “Ideological Politics in Saudi Arabia,” in Piscatori, ed., Islam in the Political Process, 71. On Saudi foreign policy, see Cary Fraser, “In Defense of Allah’s Realm: Religion and Statecraft in Saudi Foreign Policy,” in a book co-edited by Piscatori and Susan H. Rudolph, Transnational Religion & Fading States (Boulder: Westview, 1996), 212–40. Fraser acknowledges indebtedness to Piscatori both for reviewing the above essay and for an earlier article, “Islamic Values and National Interest: The Foreign Policy of Saudi Arabia,” in Adeed Dawish, ed. Islam in Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 33–53. Piscatori further explores the limits of Saudi ability to out-maneuver religious opponents of the state in Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); espec. 157–59.]

[121] Fouad Ajami, “In the Pharaoh’s Shadow,” in Piscatori, ed., Islam in the Political Process, 32, asks this question about Egypt; it applies with equal force to Saudi Arabia.

[122] This ludicrous but apt anecdote comes from Olivier Roy, The Failure of Political Islam, trans. Carol Volk (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), 116. In general, Roy highlights the distinctions within the Islamist movements and articulates the consequences of what he terms “a new world-space,” one so permeated with commercial and communicative links to the global market that “triumphant neofundamentalism will be incapable of ensuring the insularity of Islamic societies” (202). As such, his thesis has many similarities to the principal argument of this book about diversity and accommodation, though Roy’s accent is concerned mainly with political currents.

[123] The first chapter title is from Shireen Hunter, The Politics of Islamic Revivalism; the other, from Dilip Hiro, Holy Wars.

[124] Choueiri, Islamic Fundamentalism., 70.

[125] Ibid., 77.

[126] The stress on Carter’s human rights policy is best set forth by Henry Munson, Jr., in Islam and Revolution in the Middle East (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 126–28. The use of cassettes was reported widely in the news media at the time, though it escaped mention in many later commentaries on the Islamic revolution.

[127] Ruth Ann Willner, The Spellbinders (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 82.

[128] Turner, Marx and the End of Orientalism, 67, and Gellner, Conditions of Liberty. See also this volume’s introduction, note 35.

[129] The best overview of the manifold economic problems facing the Islamic Republic of Iran is set forth by Hooshang Amirahmadi in Revolution and Economic Transition, 70–82. Amirahmadi provides a rare and valuable class analysis of the debate on development planning, discussed more fully below.

[130] For the best assessment of this volatile issue, see Shaul Bakhash, The Reign of the Ayatollahs: Iran and the Islamic Revolution (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 195–216. For a case study of the controversial land cultivation bill, see his “Land, Law and Social Justice in Iran,” The Middle East Journal 43.2 (Spring 1989): 186–201.

[131] For a full review of the status of minorities during the most recent phase of the Islamic Republic of Iran, see John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, Islam and Democracy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 69–74.

[132] For more on Shari’Ati, see particularly Hamid Dabashi, Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 102–46.

[133] Amirahmadi, Revolution and Economic Transition, 121. All the qualified brackets come from the author, except the last, which are mine.

[134] Eric Hooglund, “The Pulse of Iran Today,” Middle East Insight 11.5(July-Aug. 1995): 40–47. The quotation is adapted from p. 41, but the entire article expounds on the role of free speech and open debate in 1990s’ Iran. On the special importance of Abdul Karim Sorush, see Yann Richard, “Clercs et intellectuels de la Republique islamique d’Iran,” in Gilles Kepel and Yann Richard, eds., Intellectuels et militants de l’islam contemporain (Paris: Le Seuil, 1990), 29–70. Alas, the window of freedom has not remained untainted, or wide open: Sorush was forced to cease teaching at Tehran Unveristy after a radical theocratic faction, Ansar-i Hizbullah, staged political confrontations against him in the mid-1990s. However, he continues to argue publicly with leading officials of the Iranian government; in most other West Asian Muslim countries, with the exception of Turkey, such open debate about the nature and role of Islam would be unthinkable.

[135] The immensity of the Iranian diaspora since 1978 and the significant presence of Iranians in the United States are nowhere more evident than in Los Angeles. For a marvelous pictorial overview of the many strands of the Iranian exile community in southern California, see Ron Kelley, Jonathan Friedlander, and Anita Colby, eds., Irangeles: Iranians in Los Angeles (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

[136] The quotation comes from Paul B. Henze and S. Enders Wimbush, “A New Policy for a New Middle East,” Wall Street Journal, 31 Jan. 1997, with a sequel by Robert D. Kaplan, “Why the U.S. and Iran Will Be Friends Again,” Wall Street Journal, 10 Feb. 1997. Despite the hopeful tone of both articles, most policy pronouncements still tend to echo the dismal logic, and bleak pessimism, of Samuel P. Huntington, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). As I argue below, Chandra Muzaffar, a Malay intellectual, has pinpointed the solipsistic futility of Huntington’s thesis with a deftness that has escaped most Washington globe watchers: they remain mired in Cold War nostalgia even while talking of a post-Cold War future.

[137] Asef Bayat, “The Coming of a Post-Islamist Society,” Critique 9 (Fall 1996): 43–52.

[138] Sekyi-Otu, Fanon’s Dialectic of Experience, 214.

[139] Hisham Sharabi, Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[140] New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, esp. 142–63.

[141] The one, oft noted “exception” is the Egyptian founder of the Society of Muslim Women, Zaynab al-Ghazali. Her prison memoirs have been reprinted and reprinted, yet her life as an activist abounds in contradictions, not the least of which is her self-defined independence from her husband. See Valerie J. Hoffman, “An Islamic Activist: Zaynab al-Ghazali,” in Elizabeth W. Fernea, ed. Women and the Family in the Middle East: New Voices of Change (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), and Miriam Cooke, “Prisons: Women Write about Islam,” Religion and Literature 20.1 (Spring 1988).

[142] Roy, The Failure of Political Islam, 59.

[143] Most of these figures are taken from the superb summary provided by Mahnaz Afkhami in “Iran: A Future in the Past—The Prerevolutionary Women’s Movement,” in Robin Morgan, ed., Sisterhood is Global (New York: Anchor-Doubleday, 1984), 335. No woman who writes about Iran writes in a vacuum. Afkhami has her own personal history of involvement in the events she describes: she served as secretary-general to the Women’s Organization of Iran under Muhammad Reza Shah, and for some that involvement leads to accusations of class-blindness and overreliance on state-sponsored or top-down feminism (Haideh Moghissi, review of Mahnaz Afkhami and Erika Friedl, eds., In the Eye of the Storm: Women in Post Revolutionary Iran [Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994], in International Journal of Middle East Studies 28.2 [May 1996]: 293–95). But insofar as there exists a viable umbrella movement known as global feminism, Afkhami remains one of its most articulate Iranian advocates.

[144] These seeming contradictions are outlined by Freda Hussain and Kamelia Radwan in “The Islamic Revolution and Women: Quest for the Quranic Model,” in Freda Hussain, ed., Muslim Women (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1984), 48–51.

[145] Motahhari, like every other figure in the inner circle of Iranian Islamic ideologues, has a contested history. Abrahamian, in particular, is dismissive of Motahhari as a thinker, labeling his critique of Marxism and his class analysis as “half-baked and third-hand conservative arguments designed to preserve the socioeconomic status quo while implicitly questioning the political power structure” (review of Dabashi, in International Journal of Middle East Studies 28.2 [May 1996]: 300). Yet Motahhari’s range of reinterpretation is impressive, and his views on women more compelling than his digest of Marxist ideology.

[146] Motahhari, Sexual Ethics in Islam (Muslim Student Association— Persian Speaking Group, n.d.), 33–45.

[147] Ibid., 20–21.

[148] Abdelwahab Bouhdiba, Sexuality in Islam (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 19.

[149] For a biography of Nazira Zayn al-Din and brief excerpts from two of her writings, see Margot Badran and Miriam Cooke, eds., Opening the Gates: A Century of Arab Feminist Writings (London and Bloomington: Virago and Indiana University Press, 1990), 270–78.

[150] Barbara F. Stowasser, “The Status of Women in Early Islam,” in Hussain, ed., Muslim Women 37. The concluding section of Stowasser’s chapter highlights Nazira Zayn al-Din’s writings and their significance for reevaluating women’s status in Islam.

[151] For actual statistics on marriage and literacy, see the entry “Iran” in Morgan, ed., Sisterhood Is Global, 326. Yet these statistics, especially on literacy, are subject to challenge, and in need of upward revision. Valentine Mogadham, “Women, Work and Ideology in Post-Revolutionary Iran,” Michigan State University Working Paper #170 (May 1988), 24, n. 15, cites the literacy rate of urban women as 55 percent now, which means that the figure for rural women at best hovers around 25 percent.

[152] See Friedl, Women of Deh Koh, 110–19. In the introduction Friedl notes: “The ultimate motivation for the many suicide attempts of women in Deh Koh is quoted as a wish ‘to be at rest, quiet, out of it forever.’ ”

[153] Hussein/Radwan, “The Islamic Revolution and Women,” 65.

[154] Eric Hooglund, “Islamic Feminism,” in Middle East Insight 11.5: 70–71, quotes extensively from his interview with Shala Sherkat, the editor of Zanan, who claims it is “the first Islamic feminist magazine in Iran.” Even allowing for a self-serving dose of hyperbole, one has to underscore the significance of a widely read literary forum directed at urban professional women in 1990s’ Iran. Nor is its influence limited to Iran: a recent issue of Critique: Journal for Critical Studies of the Middle East featured an article by the Egyptian sociologist, Asef Bayat, in which she argued that Iran may well witness the first post-Islamist society. Her evidence derives from the popularity of a new brand of Islamic modernism emerging under a self-consciously Islamic state, namely, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and among the harbingers of this change Bayat cites women advocates writing in major journals such as Zanan. See Asef Bayat, “The Coming of a Post-Islamist Society,” Critique 9 (Fall 1996): 43–52.

One example supporting Bayat’s optimism is the prominence recently accorded a Qum-based cleric, Mohsen Sa’idzadeh, who directly challenges the premise of Mutahhari’s approach to exegesis. Instead of assuming the complementarity of rights for men and women as the axial outlook of the Qur’an, “Sa>idzadeh contends that Islam grants women the same rights as men in all matters, including the right to become leaders, both religious and political, and to serve as judges.” See Ziba Mir-Hosseini, “Stretching the Limits: A Feminist Reading of the Shari’A in Post-Khomeini Iran,” in Mai Yamani, ed. Feminism & Islam: Legal and Literary Perspectives (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 305. Mir-Hosseini’s entire essay, drawing on articles from Zanan, reflects some of the latest and most engaging scholarly efforts to reclaim Shi<i Islam for a new generation of Iranian women.

[155] Of the many, sources that could be cited, see especially Azar Tabari and Nahid Yeganeh, eds., In the Shadow of Islam. The Woman’s Movement in Iran (London: Zed Press, 1982); Guity Nashat, Women and Revolution in Iran (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983); Farah Azari, ed. Women of Iran: The Conflict with Fundamentalist

Islam (Ithaca: Ithaca Press, 1983); and Afkhami and Friedl, eds., In the Eye of the Storm.

[156] George A. Nader, “Interview with President Ali Akbar Rafsanjani,” Middle East Insight 11.5:14. The opposite interpretation, of course, has been offered by some Iranian women in exile; see, e.g., Haideh Moghissi, IJMES 28/2 [May 1996]: 293: “the clerics have tried to co-opt and silence women through various means, including a retreat from their initial exclusionary educational and employment policies and the reintroduction of pre-revolutionary Family Law under an Islamic rubric.” By this reading, there are no sources of power possible for women in a patriarchal society, and so “it can hardly be said [as Erika Friedl among others has tried to say] that in the Islamic Republic of Iran, women exert much power” (295).

[157] See Nemat Guenena, “The Jihad: An Islamic Alternative in Egypt,” Cairo Papers in Social Science 8.2 (Summer 1986): 81–87.

[158] Nadia Hijab, Womanpower: The Arab Debate on Women at Work (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 81.

[159] See Margot Badran, “Competing Agenda: Feminists, Islam and the State in Nineteenth-and Twentieth-Century Egypt,” in Deniz Kan-diyoti, ed., Women, Islam & the State (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 222–23. Badran’s article provides a rare and comprehensive overview of Egyptian women’s movements under the shadow of the colonial, then postcolonial, state. Also see her recent history of Muslim women and feminism in Egypt, which goes beyond any comparable study of women in a majoritarian Muslim country and sets a high standard for all future analysis of Muslim women and the state: Margot Badran, Feminists, Islam, and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[160] Badran, “Competing Agenda,” 219.

[161] Nayra Atiya, Khul-Khaal: Five Egyptian Women Tell Their Story (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press, 1982), viii. The statement has been modified to reflect the reality that even government employment is no longer guaranteed since 1974.

[162] Ibid., xv-xvi.

[163] Ayesha Jalal, “The Convenience of Subservience: Women and the State of Pakistan,” in Kandiyoti, Women, Islam, & the State, 105.

[164] Quoted in ibid., 77.

[165] Miriam Habib, “Pakistani Women: A Fractured Profile,” in Morgan, ed., Sisterhood Is Global, 531.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Jalal, “The Convenience of Subservience,” 79.

[168] Ibid., 108.

[169] Tabari and Yaganeh, In the Shadow of Islam, 24.

[170] Nawal el-Saadawi, The Hidden Face of Eve (Boston: Beacon, 1982), 180.

[171] Hijab, Womanpower, 93.

[172] The details of the court case concerning Shah Bano are summarized, or paraphrased, from the version of the judgment that appears in Asghar Ali Engineer, ed., The Shah Bano Controversy (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1987), 23–34. I also benefited from a close reading of my earlier essay on Shah Bano by Lucy Carroll Stout, herself an expert and prolific author on Muslim Personal Law in South Asia.

[173] Danial Latifi, who appeared before the Supreme Court on behalf of Shah Bano, notes that of the three forms of divorce possible under Islamic law, this is the most reprehensible, even though it is still technically “allowed by the present interpretation of the Hanafi school of law,” which is the school that applies for most Muslims throughout the subcontinent. See Danial Latifi, “The Muslim Women Bill,” reprinted in ibid., 104–105.

[174] Madhu Kishwar, “Pro-Women or Anti-Muslim? The Furore over Muslim Personal Law,” Manushi 32 (1986): 8.

[175] Cited in Engineer, ed., The Shah Bano Controversy, 24.

[176] For an India-specific review of how much remains to be done, merely to describe the circumstances of all women, but especially the agrarian poor, without even considering how to redress these same seemingly intractable circumstances, see Niroj Sinha, ed., Women and Violence (New Delhi: Vikas, 1989). Though many of these essays suffer from both lack of editing and strident advocacy, they do contain numerous insights into the actual circumstances of Muslim as well as Hindu women. For instance, Shahnaz Bano, “Violence on Women in Muslim Society: The Case of Divorced Women” (148–54), evokes the horror and desperation that a Muslim divorcee feels, not only due to rejection by her former husband, but also from the lack of sympathy or support within her agnatic family.

[177] I am indebted to the excellent analysis of Muslim Personal Law that was provided by Gregory C. Koslowski in “Muslim Personal Law and Political Identity in Independent India,” a paper given at the University of Iowa conference on Religion and Law in South Asia, fall 1991.

[178] The relevant passage is set forth in Engineer, 24.

[179] Amrita Chhachhi, “Forced Identities: The State, Communalism, Fundamentalism and Women in India,” in Kandiyoti, ed., Women, Islam and the State, 153.

[180] See Afsaneh Najmabadi, “Interview with Gayatri Spivak,” Social Text 28. 9/3 (1991): esp. 132–34.

[181] For the ideological efforts either to deny history or to retell it from a “Hindu” viewpoint, see the comprehensive study by Peter van der Veer, Gods on Earth: The Management of Religious Experience and Identity in a North Indian Pilgrimage Centre (London: Athlone Press, 1988). “Ayodhya’s rise as a supra-regional place of pilgrimage is relatively recent. Only during the eighteenth century did Ramanandi sadhus start to build their institutions there, while many of the buildings we see today were built in the second half of the nineteenth or the first part of the twentieth century” (36). In other words, the cult of Rama at Ayodhya is more a countermemory of Hindu revivalism than a historical reflection of ancient Indian practice.

[182] Quoted from Zakia Pathak and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, “ ‘Shah-bano,’ ” in Micheline Malson et al., eds., Feminist Theory in Practice and Process (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 252–53. Pathak and Rajan provide a clear articulation of the several paradoxes in press coverage and subsequent ideological invocation of Shah Bano, even though they stress one aspect of Shahbano, namely, her subjectivity, to the exclusion of other, equally salient aspects.

[183] The full text of this extraordinary bill is set forth in Engineer, ed., The Shah Bano Controversy, 85–88.

[184] For this quotation, a paraphrase of Chief Justice Chandrachud's opinion, and also for many insights into the juridical and political maneuvering that surrounded the Shah Bano case, see Ainslie T. Embree, Utopias in Conflict: Religion and Nationalism in Modern India (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), esp. 96–101. The significance of Chief Justice Chandrachud's intervention has also been discussed at length in Erin E. O'Donnell, "Muslims in Modern India and Political Identity: The Shah Bano Case (1985) and the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act (1986) and the Elite Use of Symbols," Annals of the Southeast Conference Association for Asian Studies 13 (17–19 Jan. 1991): 89–102.

[185] The controversy is reviewed and analyzed in Embree, Utopias in Conflict, 107–11.

[186] For the full text of Shah Bano's demurral, see Engineer, ed., The Shah Bano Controversy, 211.

[187] For this observation I am indebted to Professor Morris H. Abrams of Cornell University. In one of several gatherings of the Fundamentalism Project, sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, he asked: "To what extent may one fundamentalist movement be generated to oppose an inimical fundamentalism?" (Fundamentalisms Compared, Spring Conference 1991, summary notes, 12). What follows here is an attempt to respond to the pertinent question he raised, and to trace that response in the specific context of 1980s' India.

[188] A full expose of these later developments is tracked from a feminist perspective in the above cited article by Amrita Chhachhi.

[189] For instance, in Engineer, ed., The Shah Bano Controversy, one finds numerous essays of value as well as the text

of the original judgment (23–34), but no essay sets forth the Pakistani point of view. Only a brief piece critical of the Indian ulema is included in Janak Raj Rai, ed., Shah Bano (New Delhi: Rajiv Publications, 1986); see Rafiullah Shahab, “A Pak View of Muslim Law,” 121–24.

[190] It is from this South Asian perspective that Benedict Anderson’s much touted thesis about nationalism as an imaginary construct, inducing cohesion where none was intrinsically available, is in need of correction: the colonial manipulation of difference persists beyond independence and often precludes the possibility of cohesion on some superseding criterion even after independence has been achieved.

[191] See Gregory Koslowski, “Shah Bano’s Case and Indian Politics,” in Malik and Vajpeyi, eds., Law, Politics and Society in India, 106.

[192] Richard F. Nyrop, ed., India: A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area Studies, 1985), 394–95.

[193] Naila Kabeer, “The Quest for National Identity: Women, Islam and the State in Bangladesh,” in Kandiyoti, ed., Women, Islam & Society, 123. One of the few studies of Bangladesh to appear in collective volumes on Islam, Kabeer’s is the sole attempt to give voice to the condition of Bangladeshi women under the repressive Ershad regime.

[194] John Burns, “Bangladesh Hopes Trial Shows a Nation of Laws,” New York Times, 4 May 1997: 14.

[195] Kabeer, “The Quest for National Identity,” 128.

[196] James Heitzman and Robert L. Worden, eds., Bangladesh: A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: Area Handbooks, 1989), 158.

[197] Richard F. Nyrop, Pakistan: A Country Study (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area Studies, 1984), 303. For the contention that Zia was trying to unify the laws of Pakistan, fusing Muslim law with general law, see David Pearl, A Textbook on Muslim Personal Law, 2d ed. (London: Croom Helm, 1987), 40, 238–45.

[198] The degradation of women was also linked to the denigration of minorities, as is outlined in Esposito and Voll, Islam and Democracy, 112–14.

[199] The Safia Bibi case, and other cases involving women tried under the Hudood Ordinance, are reviewed in Khawar Mumtaz and Farida Shaheed, eds., Women of Pakistan: Two Steps Forward, One Step Back? (London: Zed Press, 1987), 103–105.

[200] The irony of this move has been lost on some legal scholars. David Pearl provides a detailed and seemingly comprehensive treatment of the subject, especially with reference to Pakistan and especially with reference to the post-1979 decrees of Zia. Yet nowhere does he mention the Safia Bibi case, and, in discussing another case, he observes that Aftab Hussain, then chief justice of the Federal Shari’At Court, refused to review a case because it concerned Muslim personal law, which was “excluded from examination by the court as a result of Article 203(b) of the (Pakistani) Constitution” (Muslim Personal Law, and p. 114, n. 23, 244). Why the same restriction did not apply to the Safia Bibi case remains a puzzle that admits only of political expediency as its explanation.

[201] While Pakistani feminism does not enjoy rural support, neither does its ideological enemy, Islamic fundamentalism. On the alienation of Pakistani villagers, male and female, from the mechanisms of Islamization, as also the scriptural claims of its urban agents, see the insightful essay by Richard Kurin, “Islamization: A View from the Countryside,” in Anita Weiss, ed., Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan: The Application of Islamic Laws in a Modern State (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 115–28.

[202] See, for instance, Ayesha Jalal, “The Convenience of Subservience: Women and the State of Pakistan,” in Kandiyoti, ed., Woman, Islam & Society, esp. 103–109, and also Mumtaz and Shaheed, eds. Women of Pakistan, 150–60.

[203] Nikki R. Keddie, “Ideology, Society and the State in Post-Colonial Muslim Societies,” in Fred Halliday and Hamza Alavi, eds., State and Ideology in the Middle East and Pakistan (London: Macmillan, 1988), 26.

[204] Aftab Hussain, chief justice of the Federal Shari’At Court during the early 1980s, is often viewed as a supporter of women’s rights because of his opinion on Safia Bibi and other personal law matters. See Mumtaz and Shaheed, eds., Women of Pakistan, 112, n. 25 and 155.

[205] The failure of Islamists to have the offensive article (203B) of the constitution deleted has been documented in Charles H. Kennedy, “Islamization and Legal Reform in Pakistan, 1979–1989,” Pacific Affairs 63.1 (Spring 1990): 66–67. Kennedy provides a close reading of all the legal maneuvers attendant on Islamization but is content to argue a single point, to wit, that Zia’s policies did not significantly alter the institutional mechanisms of statecraft in Islamabad. The inadequacy of other branches of government to provide a counterbalance to the executive is not considered, and hence the issues of concern to marginal groups, such as professional women and rural dwellers, are either downplayed or ignored.

[206] See ibid., 67 for a full expose of all the parliamentary procedures that resulted in its not so quiet demise.

[207] Despite its sometimes polemical tone, Fatima Mernissi, Le harem politique, 1987; trans. as The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women’s Rights in Islam (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1991), makes a compelling case for the novelty of Qur’anic dicta about women. Less passionate in tone but fuller in its range of references to both Qur’anic passages and early Islamic traditions (hadith) about

women is Barbara Stowasser, “The Status of Women in Early Islam,” in Hussain, ed. Muslim Women, 11–43.

[208] Stowasser, “The Status of Women,” 30.

[209] See especially his Islam (2d ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), chap. 14, and also his Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982).

[210] Muhammad Iqbal, The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam (London, 1934; reprinted Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1982), 164.

[211] Jacques Waardenberg, “Muslim States, Islamic Norms and Secular Realities,” ms., ca. June 1990. Waardenberg goes on to distinguish between two kinds of Islamists, the more reflective being “fundamentalists”; the more political, “activists.” However, in what follows it is apparent that one of the defining characteristics of fundamentalists is their insistence on implementing religious ideals in the political sphere; fundamentalists are invariably political rather than reflective. It is on this crucial point, as also on the essentialist tone of his arguments about the concept of Islam, that I differ from another of Waardenberg’s wide-ranging essays: “Islam as a Vehicle of Protest,” in Ernest Gellner, ed., Islamic Dilemma: Reformers, Nationalists and Industrialization. The Southern Shore of the Mediterranean (The Hague: Mouton, 1985), 22–48.

[212] On the question of counting Muslims in America, there has been more heat than light generated, especially by the telejournalist Andy Rooney. Claiming that all Islam is inherently violent, Rooney has alleged that Muslims are the fastest growing religious community in America, already surpassing Episcopalians and closing in on Methodists. Such hyperbole stokes people’s fears. It needs to be deflated, as Jonathan D. Sarna has tried to do in a recent article, “The Rise of Islam in America,” Moment (June 1991): 34–55, where he quotes the 1990 survey by Barry A. Kosmin and Jeffrey

Scheckner, “Estimating the Muslim Population of the United States in 1990,” City University of New York (April 1991). Its authors, after extensive research and tabulation, deduce that in 1990 the total Muslim population in America numbered 800,000 immigrants, 400,000 indigenous Muslims, and less than 100,000 students. “Certainly,” they conclude, “it cannot exceed 1.5. million.”

The myth of demography once exploded does not lessen the need for dealing with Muslims in a religiously plural society; it simply makes the basis for such an undertaking more realistic and, one hopes, more fruitful.

[213] One of the favorite images of headline chasers combines the two groups, representing modern-day Muslim warriors as black-garbed women in chadors sporting guns, often in combat pose. While that makes for an electric image, it is far from the ground-level truth: Muslim military planners are less ready to admit women warriors as regular combatants than are their counterparts in the Pentagon, that bastion of patriarchal leadership for the United States armed services which, even after the superb performance of women in Operation Desert Storm in spring 1991, would not allow female officers to fly combat missions or to serve as unit commanders in the marine corps.

[214] Michel Vovelle, Ideologies and Mentalities (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 11.

[215] See several works but most recently Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers (Boulder: Westview, 1994).

[216] The Second Message of Islam (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987).

[217] See particularly the detailed and valuable study of Gail Minault, The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

[218] Binder, Islamic Liberalism, 131–46. The criticism of Hourani that begins Binder’s analysis (129–30) is disingenuous, as is the omission of Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age from the bibliography, since Hourani opened the larger discussion of Islamic liberalism to which Binder’s own book is a sequel contribution, but otherwise Binder lays out the major issues in luxuriant detail; see also Eickelman and James Piscatori, Muslim Politics, 52–53, for a summary of ‘Ali ‘Abd ar-Raziq’s provocation.

[219] See Rethinking Islam, ca. 75.

[220] Binder, Islamic Liberalism, 169.

[221] I am using these terms in the sense that they are introduced and refined by Marshall Hodgson, following Karl Jaspers. See The Venture of Islam, 1: 50–52.

[222] On Motahhari’s contribution to the Shi’ite reformulation of ideology, see Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age, 2d ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 221–24.

[223] The practical face of corporate culture is not the same as the large-scale, conceptually moribund industries focusing on the Islamization of Knowledge, including the Islamization of Economics. While one may find some Malay proponents of this approach, it remains a minor voice in Malay intellectual circles.

[224] There is no space to explore the complications inherent in the formation and strategy-planning of the G-15, but suffice it to say that as of the fall 1995 meeting in Buenos Aires, Mahathir had clearly projected

Malaysian participation in this body as equivalent to, or exceeding, Malaysian participation in the biennial meeting of Commonwealth heads of government.

[225] The Asian Wall Street Journal, 10–12 November 1995: 7.

[226] Chandra Muzaffar in private conversation in Penang, Malaysia, on 6 November 1995.

[227] Mukhtar Abdullah, “Historical Developments of Quality and Productivity Movements: Japan vs. The West,” in Alhabshi and Nik Hassen, eds., Quality and Productivity, 61–77.

[228] Mottahedeh,“The Islamic Movement,” 111. Alas, Mottahedeh’s voice is scarcely heard beyond Harvard Yard, while Huntington, though also at Harvard, is trying to become the benchmark for all international policy planning. He is often invoked, without even being cited, as in The Economist, where an article on Russia and China suddenly veers toward the Muslim world, noting that “in 20 or 30 years’ time, a Muslim power could arise to join the ranks of world powers. There would then be half a dozen of them, including America and Europe, possibly Japan, probably Russia. Of this number, China might well reckon that the Islamic power would be the one most likely to help it counterbalance what it will see as its chief rivals, America and Europe” (The Economist, 26 April 1997:20). Such sabre rattling and Islam bashing is exactly what Huntington’s so-called thesis promotes, but its factual basis in the lived experience of most Muslim polities, including those of Southeast Asia, is thin and vacuous.

[229] R. L. Schuyler’s phrase as developed by J. H. Hexter in “The Historian and His Day,” Reappraisals in History (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 1–13. I am indebted to Douglas Streusand for this reference and also for elaborating its significance in Islamic historiography.

[230] James Fallows, Looking at the Sun: The Rise of the New East Asian Economic and Political System (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 299.

[231] Ibid., 308.

[232] See Mahathir's statement on 45–46, paraphrased, in Quality and Productivity. The technical conversation has shifted from the evils of riba, or usury, to the benefits of zakat, or almsgiving, as in Nik Mustapha Nik Hassan, "Economic Significance of Zakat," in Hamiza Ibrahim and Hasnan Hakim, eds., Quest for Excellence (Kuala Lumpur: IKIM, 1994), 115–20. Still others, like M. Umer Chapra, try to chart a path for Islamic economic theory that goes beyond any single measure. Too often the high-level theorists substitute platitudinous generalities for specific guidelines, ignoring the very real gap between Islamic economic theory and the actual practice of Muslim banking. See, e.g., Chapra's critique of the pragmatic approach by Timur Kuran in Islam and the Economic Challenge (Herndon, Va.: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1995), 225–27.

[233] M. S. Dobbs-Higginson, a former chief executive officer of Merrill Lynch Asia, is unequivocal about the role of India. "The real need for Mahathir, and ASEAN, is to review the question of India's and Australasia's participation in this vision [of regional economic growth]. Pursuing it without them will, I suspect, prove unfruitful in the long run." Asia Pacific: Its Role in the New World Disorder (London: Mandarin, 1994), 322.

[234] One of the most unabashed Malaysia boosters is John Naisbitt, who used his fellowship at the Institute for International and Strategic Studies in Kuala Lumpur to write his recent futurist book: Megatrends Asia (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), in which he features Malaysia as trendsetter for an Asian economic boom. Like too many forecasters, his crystal ball reflects more Pollyanna than critical thinking.

[235] Zam (Zainuddin Maidin), The Other Side of Mahathir (English trans. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications & Distributors, 1994), 242–43.

[236] While the basic book on this theme in a Christian context remains H. Richard Niebuhr, Christ and Culture (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), several authors have noted the tension between religion and culture in Muslim history, including Izetbegovic in his classic work, Islam between East and West; Vincent J. Cornell, “Towards a Cooperation among People of Different World Religions,” in Yaacob and Abdul Rahman, eds. Towards a Positive Islamic World-View, 90–98; and, with reference to juridical norms for women, Amina Wadud-Muhsin, Qur’an and Woman (Selangoor: Faja Bakti Sdn. Bhd., 1992), and her excellent contribution to Norani Othman and Cecilia Ng Choon Sim, eds., Gender, Culture and Religion (Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia, 1995). Titled “Gender, Culture and Religion: an Islamic Perspective,” it makes clear in brief strokes how “the cultural inflections of the Islamic teachings” are not the same as first principles (30–38).

[237] Syed Othman Alhabshi, Jurnal IKIM/IKIM Journal 2.2 (1994): 8.

[238] Syed Othman Alhabshi, “Mental Change to Cope 2020” Jurnal IKIM/IKIM Journal 1.1 (1993), which reads more like a pep talk for Mahathir’s 2020 speech than a systematic analysis.

[239] See the brief reference to this incident in the often helpful, always majesterial overview of Malaysian life provided by M. S. Dobbs-Higginson, Asia Pacific, 317.

[240] Other non-Muslim, non-Malay groups had already been alert to the danger posed by increasing resort to religious rhetoric as the instrument of political jockeying in Malaysia. See Far Eastern Economic Review, 22 January 1987: 25. “Non-Muslims and the more secular-minded Muslims fear that Pas and Unmo, by trying to outdo each other on

the Islamic chessboard ... may have introduced or tried to introduce Islamic reforms much too fast for the party leaders themselves to cope with in terms of fulfillment of promises—and for society to absorb. Heightened expectations and unrealistic demands by radical youths are potentially fertile soil for religious tensions, especially given the moral righteousness of religious aspirations." Despite its journalese, this summary statement better catches the generational problem in Malaysia than the full-length article by Shamsul A.B., "Religion and Ethnic Politics in Malaysia: The Significance of the Islamic Resurgence Phenomenon," in Keyes, Asian Visions of Authority, 99–116; the latter, perhaps due to the author's involvement in one branch of Islamic resurgence in Malaysia, Pusat Islam, reads too much like a bulletin board monitoring religious traffic on the peninsula. Though it cites a volume highlighting the bases for interreligious tensions in Malaysia, it undervalues the limits of Islam as a politically dominant religion, as do the coauthors of that volume, especially in their consideration of state policies toward Chinese religious practices. See Susan Ackerman and Raymond Lee, Heaven in Transition: NonMuslim Religious Innovation and Ethnic Identity in Malaysia (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press 1988), 51, 120–53.

[241] Wadud-Muhsin, Qur'an and Woman. While it is debatable that her approach is as new as she claims, her double effort to read the Qur'an directly from a woman's viewpoint, sidestepping all medieval exegesis (largely by men), and also to "demonstrate the relevance of the Qur'an to the concerns of the modern woman" (95), has produced a book with wide-ranging application to the issue of Muslim norms.

[242] A 1993 Malay-German conference, featuring a speech by Mahathir, addressed a wide range of social dimensions and uses of religion, yet it lacked a single woman contributor. See Syed Othman Alhabshi and Syed Omar Syed Agil, eds. The Role and Influence of Religion in Society (Kuala Lumpur: IKIM, 1994).

[243] All three citations from Mahathir's speeches are indebted to Maidin, The Other Side of Mahathir, 138–40.

[244] Jan Goodwin, Price of Honour (London: Warner, 1994), 205.

[245] Of all the critiques of Huntington's banal, simplistic, and ahistorical thesis, the one that applies especially to Southeast Asia comes from the Islamicist Frederick Denny. Quoting from Huntington's original 1993 Foreign Affairs article (the 1996 book of the same title had not yet appeared), Denny notes that "Huntington speaks only of 'the crescentshaped Islamic bloc of nations from the bulge of Africa to central Asia' (32). What about Southeast Asia, where about a fifth of the world's Muslims live? Surely the author knows about Indonesia and Malaysia. Don't they count or do they simply provide an inconvenient set of conditions contrary to his argument about the clash of civilizations?" See Frederick Denny, "American Perceptions of Islam and Muslims," in Yaacob and Abdul Rahman, eds., Towards a Positive Islamic World-View, 71–72.

[246] Chandra Muzaffar, Just Viewpoints (Penang: Just World Trust, 1994), 17. There is, of course, a danger in this argument, as also in much of Muzaffar's writing, that it/he becomes susceptible to a variant of the conspiracy theory: they are all out to get us, we must resist, only resistance works, even if it brings, a la Fanon, death. Yet Muzaffar does fluctuate between an outright condemnation of others' bad faith and the advocacy of new strategies for a just use of resources on the part of dominating actors (G-7 but also Scandinavian countries). See especially his Human Rights and the New World Order: (Penang: Just World Trust, 144–76.

[247] Alhabshi and Nik Hassan eds., Quality and Productivity, 45.

[248] Teik, Hoo Boo, Paradoxes of Mahathirism, 166.

[249] Muzaffar, Just Viewpoints, 13.

[250] Teik, Hoo Boo, Paradoxes of Mahathirism (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1995), 186.

[251] See K. George, “Malaysia’s Economic Progress: The Other Side of the Coin,” Aliran Monthly (1995): 10–17.

[252] For the range of homologies that apply to Arabic fitna, usually rendered into English as “sedition” or “disorder,” see the lexical display mounted by E. W. Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon (reprinted Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1974), 2:2335–36.

[253] Etan Kohlberg, “The Development of the Imami Shi’i Doctrine of Jihad,” Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morganlandischen Gesellschaft 126 (1976), 1:68. Peters (Jihad in Mediwal and Modern Islam [Leioten: E. J. Brill 1977]) cites Kohlberg’s article in his bibliography but seems to have ignored its content otherwise.

[254] The 17 November 1995 issue of the weekly political journal Al-Hawadith, for instance, discusses at length the Palestinian Jihad group from the West Bank. Fathi Shaqaqi, their leader in exile in Syria, was assassinated while in Malta, presumably by Israeli agents, in late October 1995, and his successor, Ramadan ‘Abdallah Shalah, has vowed revenge (intiqam), declaring that “our jihad is not only military but also religious, for our project is the establishment of Islam.” At the same time, he, a Sunni Muslim, acknowledges that he could not hope to carry on the struggle without the assistance of others, especially the Iranian-backed Hizbollah in southern Lebanon, who “provide humanitarian aid, especially for the families of martyrs” (citations from 26 November issue of Al-Hayat, a Saudi daily published from London, then syndicated elsewhere).

Even as the cycle of violence never stops in the Middle East, but merely spins into newer episodes of riposte or retaliation, so it is necessary to recognize its cultural limits. Details on the latest invocation of jihad are less important than the index of symbolic capital it provides to the continuous

engagement with military-political jihad in West Asia, an engagement not found in Southeast Asia.

[255] Fouad Ajami, “In the Pharaoh’s Shadow: Religion and Authority in Egypt,” in Piscatori, ed., Islam in the Political Process, 34.

[256] See Emmanuel Sivan, “The Arab Nation-State: In Search of a Usable Past,” Middle East Review 19.3 (Spring 1987): 29. Sivan develops his views on jihad in a subsequent article, confirming my view that the dominant force in Muslim politics has been what he calls “adamant nation-state egotism,” but unlike me, he surmises that a turn to Islamic radicalism (the term he prefers over “fundamentalism”) has become pronounced and irreversible. He even predicts that “the anti-apostate (murtadd) Jihad is bound to be the norm towards the end of this century.” But with what result, and also with what alternatives from polities put on the defensive? These are questions that beg to be answered, yet are omitted from an otherwise deft essay. See “Jihad: Text, Myth, Historical Realities,” in Evelyne Patlagean and Alain Le Boulluec, eds. Les Retours aux ecritures: Fondamentalismes presents et passes (Peeters: Louvain-Paris, 1994), 83–99.

[257] Muhammad Shahrur, Dirasat Islamiyat Mu’asirat (fi’d-dawla wal-mujtama’) (Al-Ahali: Damascus, 1994), 341–69.

[258] Morteza Motahhari, Jihad: The Holy War of Islam and Its Legitimacy in the Quran, trans, Mohammad S. Tawheedi (Albany, Ca.: Moslem Student Association [Persian Speaking Group], n.d.), 35.

[259] Ibid., 32.

[260] Ibid., 36–37.

[261] Ibid., 52–53.

[262] Jihad, for Shaykh Fadlallah, is directly linked to da’wa, and the crucial discussion of jihad in his book takes place in the subchapter titled “The Instrumentality of jihad in Da’wa.” Since jihad, like da’wa, is linked to the requirements of actualizing power, its invocation becomes justified, or legalized, by the quest for power. Hence Shaykh Fadlallah declares that “the legalization of jihad emanates from the need of Islam for power” (wa-hiya inna tashri’A ’l-jihad intalaqa min hajati ’l-Islam ila quwwat). Yet the actual steps by which this gambit is deployed are not spelled out. See Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, Al-Islam wa-mantiq al-quwwat (Beirut: Dar al-Islamiya, 1981), 204.

[263] Quoted from Sahifah-i Nur: Majmu’ah-i Rahnimud’ha-yi Imam Khomeini (Tehran: Vizarat-i Irshad-i Islami, 1362/1983), v. 13:92–93, as cited in Heidar Ghajar Azodanloo, “Discourses of Mobilization in PostRevolutionary Iran,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1992), 42. As a counterpoint to the narratives from Reinhold Loeffler cited in what follows, one should consult all of Azodanloo’s study, but especially chapters 4 and 5 dealing with discourses of martyrdom on the battlefront, followed by strategies for consoling, as well as maintaining the loyalty, of veterans’ families.

I am indebted to Professor Bruce Lincoln for providing me with a copy of Azodanloo’s dissertation, completed under his supervision while he was still at the University of Minnesota.

[264] Loeffler. Islam in Practice, 229.

[265] Ibid., 235.

[266] Ibid., 237.

[267] Ibid., 240.

[268] Eric Hoogland, “The Pulse of Iran Today,” 45–46.

[269] One could elaborate on the theme of striving for justice as a modern ideological appeal, exceeding its traditional formulations while still connoting jihad, to the Imami Shi<is of Iran. For instance, the influential anti-Pahlavi pamphleteer ‘Ali Shari’Ati formulated an “order of unity” (nezam-i tawhid) that harked back to the martyrdom of Imam Hussein. Hussein’s sacred sacrifice became, in Shari’Ati’s view, not only the historical model for continuous opposition to persistent evils, but also the existential catalyst for “striving toward justice, equity, human brotherhood, public ownership of wealth, and, most important of all, a classless society” (Ervand Abrahamian, Iran between Two Revolutions [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982]: 466).

[270] Fallows, Looking at the Sun, 309–14.

[271] Riduan Wu Chia Chung Ibn Abdallah, “The Chinese Muslims of Singapore: Their Positions and Contributions,” paper delivered at a Seminar on Islam and Confucianism: Universality of Islam in Kuching, Sarawak (Malaysia), 17–18 Nov. 1995: 6–8.

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** Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version.]

<biblio>

‘Abd al-’Aziz, 86

‘Abd ar-Raziq, ‘Ali, 153–55

‘Abduh, Muhammad, 24, 63

abrogation, 172

Accommodating Protest (MacLeod), 111

adultery, 144

Afghanistan, 90, 92

Aflatun, Inji, 121

Africa, 43

aggression, 176

Ahmad Khan, Muhammad, 131–32, 135

Ahmad Khan, Sayyid, 147–48

Ahmad, Dr. Israr, 60–61, 125

Ajami, Fouad, 174

al-Asad, Basil, 71

al-Asad, Hafiz, 70–71

al-Asad, Rifaat, 70, 72

Alawi, 72

Alawites, 71, 75

al-Azm, Sadik, 11

Aleppo, 72

Algeria, 33, 45–46, 91–92, 129, 160

Alhabshi, Othman, 166, 167

Ali, Amir, 147–48

Al-i Ahmad, Jalal, 19–20

Ali Khan, Begum Liaqat, 125, 126

All India Criminal Procedure Code, 133

All India Muslim Personal Law Board, 134, 135

All Pakistan Women’s Association

(APWA), 125, 126

Anderson, Benedict, 18

Arab-Israeli War, 51

Arab Women’s Solidarity Association, 121

Arkoun, Mohammed, 153, 154–55

Asian Wall Street Journal, 159

authoritarianism, 39, 74–75

Ayodhya mandir/Babri masjid dispute, 135

Ayub Khan, General Mohammad, 143, 59

Azimi, Hosain, 102

Baath party, 70–74

Badran, Margot, 123

Bahais, 43–44

Bahrain, 92

Balkan conflict, 162, 170

Bangladesh, 6, 28, 35, 58, 92, 138–42, 149

Banna, Hasan al-, 63–64

Bano, Shah, 6, 131–38, 140

Barelvis, 42–43

Ben Ali, Zayn al-Abidin, 76, 84

Ben Youssef, Salah, 76–77

Bhutto, Benazir, 60, 61, 128, 146–47

Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali, 60, 143

Bibi, Safia, 144–45

Bill of Retribution, 114

Binder, Leonard, 154

al-Bishri, Tariq, 25

Bosnia, 7–8, 162

Bourguiba, Habib, 76–79, 84

bread riots, 79

Bulliet, Richard W., 49

Burma, 165

Cairo, 111

calendar, 8, 88

Caliphate, 153–54

Camp David accords, 66

capitalism, 21, 27, 44, 50, 129, 164–65

Carter, Jimmy, 93

Casanova, Jose, 12

China, 167–68

Christianity, 13, 16, 161–65

class, 127–28, 145–46, 171. See also middle class

clerics, 94, 97–98, 173

Code of Personal Conduct, 77, 78, 80, 84

coeducation, 111, 114

colonialism, 10, 13, 41–44; French, 74, 75; and Islamic reformers, 45–50; legacies of, 47–50; and Muslim history, 23–25; and national boundaries, 47–48; and nationalism, 26–29

communism, 21

Congress-I, 134–37

Constitution of 1971 (Egypt), 123

Constitution of 1972 (Pakistan), 141

Constitution of 1979 (Iran), 115

Constitutional Revolution (1905–1911), 96

Corm, Georges, 27, 37

corporate culture, 156; vs. corporate ethics, 166–67; defined, 157; in Malaysia, 15965, 171; as sequel to jihad, 182–84

“Corporate Ethics in the Management of

Organisations” (Alhabshi), 166 corporatization, 129

Council of Guardians, 98

Cragg, Kenneth, 49

Criminal Procedure Code of 1973, 132, 137 cross-cultural assessments, 11–12, 93 cultural modernity, 158

Cyrenaica region, 43

da<wa (calling the world to Islam), 178

Daughters of the Nile Union (DNU), 121 democracy, 17, 45, 47

Destourian Socialist party, 76

Dirasat Islamiyat Mu’Asirat (Shahrur), 175 dissent, 179

diversity, 151–53, 162, 168

divine revelation, 21

divorce, 77, 84, 125, 131, 132–33, 144, 147

Dowry Prohibition Act, 125 dress code, 105, 118–19

economic determinism, 27

economic development, 35–38, 109–10, 159

education, 38, 45, 77, 110, 111, 113, 114; religious, 78–79; of women, 121, 124, 127, 129. See also coeducation

Egypt, 24, 36, 91, 160, 174; and colonialism, 45; and postcolonial period, 25; Muslim population of, 33; women in, 120–24

Egyptian Feminist Union (EFU), 121

L’Egyptienne, 121 elites, 25–26, 28, 68, 94

Emir of Kuwait, 47

endowments, charitable, 77

English language, 184–85

Ershad, Husain, 141–42 ethics, corporate, 166–67 Europe, 25–29, 81. See also colonialism; postcolonialism

Facing the Future (OECD), 35

Fadlallah, Shaykh Muhammad Husain, 169, 178

Fahd, King, 47, 87

Fallows, James, 162, 170, 182

Family Law Ordinance of 1961, 143–44 family law, 77 family planning, 121, 127

Family Protection Law, 113, 114

Fanon, Frantz, 49–50, 109

Faraidis, 43

al-Farida al-Gha’iba, 174

Farrakhan, Louis, 6

Faruq, King, 63 fasting, 53, 54, 77–79 Federal Shari’At Court, 145, 146^7 feminism, 126–30, 145–46 15/21, 80, 84 food, 53–54

Fox, Richard, 27

France, 45, 69, 74, 75, 85

Fukuyama, Frances, 9, 162, 170, 171

Fulani-Qadiris, 43 fundamentalism, changing connotation of, 40; contradictions of, 89–90; difficulties faced by, 80–81; in Egypt, 62–68; future of, 149–56; identification of, 66–67; impact of oil on, 51–52; in India, 136–38; in Iran, 90–105; and media, 163; and nationalism, 49, 53–56; in Pakistan, 56–62; and protest, 74; recruitment for, 80; rise of, 33; in Saudi Arabia, 85–90; in South Asia, 148–49; in Syria, 59–75; in Tunisia, 75–85

G-15, 159, 160, 165

G-7, 159, 160, 162, 171

Gafsah revolt, 79

Gandhi, Indira, 134

Gandhi, Rajiv, 134, 136

Gellner, Ernest, 18, 48, 97

gender differences, 5–6, 38, 84, 105, 110

al-Ghannouchi, Rachid, 79, 81 gharbzadegi (excess of the West), 94 al-Ghazali, Zaynab, 122

governance, Islamic, 55–56; models of, 47

Grand Mosque (Mecca), 79

Great Britain, 42, 45, 63–64

Great Western Transmutation, 28

Gulf States, 36, 129

Gulf War, 170

hakimiyya (divine lordship), 22

Hama rebellion, 70–74

Hamas, 174

Hanafi school of law, 131

Hasan, Ihab, 40

Hassan II, King, 46–47

High Council of Women, 113

Hindus, 42–43, 134, 138

Hodgson, Marshall, 28

Hoffer, Eric, 36

Holland, 45

holy war. See jihad

Hudood Ordinance, 125, 128, 144–45 human rights, 93, 165, 182

Huntington, Samuel P., 9, 162, 170, 171

Hussain, Aftab, 145

Hussein, King, 47

Hussein, Saddam, 39, 47, 151

Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, 42

Ibn Abdullah, Riduan Wu Chia Chung, 183

Ibn Baz, Shaikh ‘Abd al-’AziZ, 88

Ibn Sa’ud, King ‘Abd al-’Aziz, 42, 88

Ibrahim, Anwar, 165, 171 identity, 21 ideology, 9, 10; and religion, 157, 165

IKIM, 161, 169

imagination, 21

Imami Shi<is, 173

India, 35; and colonialism, 42–43, 45; and Partition, 57–58; Supreme Court, 13237, 140; women in, 131–38, 140, 149.

See also Bano, Shah

Indonesia, 19, 35, 36, 92, 160, 183 industrialization, 92, 129 inheritance, 84, 133, 147

International Islamic University, 161

International Women’s Decade, 132

Iqbal, Muhammad, 148, 153

Iran, 36, 90–105; and colonialism, 44;

European influence on, 47; and fundamentalism, 91–92; Islamic Republic of, 81, 99–105, 114, 117, 178–82;

and oil, 28; popular sentiment on, 17981; revolution, 19; and Saudi Arabia, 53, 89–90, 104; and United States, 104;

viewed as threat, 19; women in, 105, 112–20

Iraq, 36, 91, 165, 169, 182

Islam in Practice (Loeffler), 179

Islam: as ideology, 9, 22; and nationalism, 9–10; pluralism of, 9, 20–29; political, 22–26, 67–68; as religion, 9, 12–21; as symbolic force, 13; and trade, 41–42; and violence, 4–7

Islam: The Misunderstood Religion (Qutb), 21

al-Islam wa usul al-hukm (‘Abd ar-Raziq), 154

Islambouli, Khalid, 66

Islamic Front, 73

Islamic identity, 60

Islamic Ideology Council, 145

Islamic Liberalism (Binder), 154

Islamic Retribution Bill, 98

Islamic revolution, 37–38, 94, 96–98, 100

Islamic Society (Pakistan), 68

Islamic Students of North America (ISNA), 104

Israel, 65, 66, 71

Izetbegovic, ‘Alija, 7–9, 14–15

jahiliyya (ignorance, perversity), 22

Jalal, Ayesha, 127

Jamaat-e Islami, 59–62, 126

Jamiat-e Tulaba, 126

Japan, 157, 161

jihad, changing relevance of, 181–85; and colonialism, 161; and corporate culture, 156, 172, 182–84; defined, 157; economic, 181; and Iran, 178–81; as modern ideology, 158; Motahhari on, 175–78;

jihad (cont.)

among Shi<i Muslims, 175–78, 182;

among Sunni Muslims, 174–75, 181–82

Jihad (Motahhari), 176

Jihad Sazendegi, 181

Jinnah, Muhammad ‘Ali, 59

Jordan, 47, 53–55, 92

judicial review, 149

judiciary in Bangladesh, 138–42, 149; in

India, 131–38, 149; in Pakistan, 138–49

Juergensmeyer, Mark, 18

Juhayman ibn Sayf al-<Utayba, 88–89 justice, 14–15, 22. See also social justice

Kairouan, 78

Kapferer, Bruce, 10

Kazim, Safinaz, 122

Keddie, Nikki, 146

Kessler, Clive, 158

Khayyat, ‘Abd al-’Aziz, 53–54

Khilafat movement, 125

Khomeini, Ayatollah, 92–93, 96–98, 101

3, 115, 176, 178, 182

Kuwait, 47, 92

land reform, 98

Last Imam, 179–80

Law of Evidence, 126, 128, 144

League of University and Institutes’ Young

Women (LUIYW), 121

Lebanon, 72, 92, 178

Libya, 36, 43, 91–92

literacy, 72, 80, 109

Loeffler, Reinhold, 179

loyalty, 24–25

MacLeod, Arlene, 111

Mahathir, 159–60, 165, 167–71, 182, 184

mahdi (messianic figure), 88

majlis, 98, 114

Majlis-e Khawatin, 126

Malaysia, 19, 36, 92, 157–61, 163–72, 182–84

Malaysian Chinese Association, 167–68

male supremacy, 117

marginality, 38–39

Al-Ma<rifa, 79

marriage, 54, 115, 121, 124, 125, 133, 144, 147

Married Women’s Property Act, 125

Mawdudi, Mawlana Abu’l-’Ala, 58–61, 67

Mecca, 87–89

Mecca Mosque incident, 87–89

media, 61, 79, 102, 135, 137, 159–60, 163, 170–71

middle class, 19, 38, 65, 67, 80, 97, 99–100

Middle East, 4–5, 28, 33

military, 49, 110, 142

Mixed courts, 64

mobilization, 159–60

modernization, 17, 73–74, 92

Mogadishu, 43

monarchies, 46–47

monotheism, 54

Morocco, 33, 45–46, 92

Moslem Family Laws Ordinance, 125

Mossadegh (Prime Minister), 94

Motahhari, Ayatollah Mortaza, 100, 11517, 158, 175–78

Mottahedeh, Roy P., 55–56, 162

Mountbatten, Lord, 57

Mouvement de tendace islamique (MTI), 79, 80–81, 84

Mubarak, Hosni, 122, 124

Muhajirs, 61–62

Mujib, Sheikh, 140–41

Muslim Brethren, 22

Muslim Brothers, 55, 63–65, 67–68, 70–74

Muslim Ladies’ Association (MLA), 121, 122

Muslim law. See shari’A

Muslim League, 59, 125

Muslim Personal Law, 132, 133–35, 137

Muslim Women’s Bill, 136–37, 140

Muzaffar, Chandra, 169, 171

Myanmar, 165

Najdis, 42

Nasr, Seyyed Vali Reza, 61

Nasser, Gamal ‘Abd al-, 22, 64–66

National Feminine Party (NFP), 121 national liberation movments, 46–47 nationalism, Arab, 22, 25; ethnic, 23–24, 61–62, 159; and fundamentalism, 49, 53–56; and Islam, 9–10, 68; mimetic, 47, 49; and Muslim history, 23–25; regional, 24, 25; and religion, 13–18, 25, 51–52;

secular, 33, 45–50; traits of, 48

New York Times, 4

Nigeria, 33, 35, 43, 92, 160

No Revolutions thesis, 97

nomenclature, 40–41

Numeiri, General, 155

Nun, 121

oikumene (Afro-Eur-Asian), 25

oil: impact of, 51–52; and Iran, 94, 95,

98; and Muslim state formation, 27

28; and Saudi Arabia, 36–37, 86; and Syria, 72

Oman, 47, 92

Open Door (infitah) policy, 123

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 35

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), 51, 87

Ottoman Empire, 27, 69

Padris, 43

Pakistan, 35, 36, 56–62, 92; and oil, 28; and Shah Bano case, 6; Supreme Court, 142, 143, 145, 146; women in, 125–30, 138–49

Palestinians, 92, 176–77

pan-Arabism, 52, 63

Pan-Islamism, 23–24, 26, 52

Panikkar, Raimundo, 23

Partition (of India and Pakistan), 57–58

PAS, 167

patriotism, 25

patronage, 92

Paz, Octavio, 12–13

Peasant Union, 74

Personal Status Law, 121, 123

Pick, Daniel, 13

Piscatori, James, 89

pluralism, 4, 8, 33, 150; Chinese, 158, 168.

See also diversity

political participation, 38, 105

politics, 14–15; divine, 22–26

polygyny, 54, 77, 84, 117, 125, 144 postcolonialism, 10, 24–25, 68 power, 163–64

Prabhasa Malay, 184

preservations, divinely mandated, 53–54 profit, 164–65, 171

protest, 41, 49, 74, 81, 84, 110

Provisional Constitutional Order of 1981, 143

Qabus of Oman, 47

Qaddafi, Muammar, 151

Qardaha, 71

Qazi Courts, 145

Qisas and Diyat Ordinance, 144

Qunaitra, 71

Qur’an and Woman (Wadud-Muhsin), 169

Qur’an, 22, 59; and corporate culture, 161; and fundamentalism, 136; as law, 139; and myth, 154; and power, 164; and principle of abrogation, 172–73; as state constitution, 86; and women, 117, 126, 147–48, 169

Qutb, Muhammad, 21–22

Qutb, Sayyid, 22, 68, 122

radicalism. See fundamentalism

Rafsanjani, 100–101, 119

Rahman, Fazlur, 148

Ramadan, 77–79

rape, 144

reform and reformers, 33, 45–50, 148–49 religion, 12–20, 78; and ideology, 157, 165;

Islam as, 66; as a mask, 85 revivalism, 33, 40–44, 152 Reza Shah, Mohammed, 95

Rights of Women in Islam, The (Motahhari), 115

Rushdie, Salman, 162

el-Saadawi, Nawal, 121, 128–29

Sadat, Anwar, 65–66, 122, 123, 174

Sakr, Dr. Mohamed, 54–55

Salafiya (Islamic advocacy), 45–46

Salem, Norma, 40

Sanusis, 43

Satanic Verses, The (Rushdie), 162 al-Sa’ud, 87

Saudi Arabia, 25, 92, 129; dependence on others, 52; European influence on, 47; founding of, 42; and Iran, 53; and media, 170; and oil, 36–37; stereotypes of, 36

science, 52

Segal, Robert, 11

self-presenta tion, 11

Senegal, 160

Sexual Ethics in Islam and in the Western

World (Motahhari), 115–17

sexuality, 115–16

Sha<rawi, Huda, 121

Shah of Iran, 92–93, 95–96

Shahabuddin, Syed, 136

Shahrur, Muhammad, 175

Sharabi, Hisham, 109

al-Sha<rawi, Muhammad Mitwalli, 123

24

shari’A (Muslim law), 53–54, 64, 77, 88, 133

Shari’Ah Ordinance of 1988, 147

Shari’Atallah, Hajji, 43

Shari’At Law, 133

Shari’Ati, ‘Ali, 100, 153, 158

Sharif of Mecca, 42

Sharif, Nawaz, 57, 60, 146–47

Sharifian Kingdom, 46

al-Shati, Bint, 124

Shi<i Muslims, 43, 87, 95–96,114–17, 158, 172–73, 175–78, 182

Shouri, Arun, 137

Sidi Zaynab, 75

Sikhs, 42–43, 138

Sisters in Islam, 169

Sivan, Emmanuel, 175

slavery, 21–22

social justice, 98–99, 159, 181, 182

social modernity, 18–19

social responsibility, 165, 171

socialism, 52, 65, 128, 129

Somalia, 43

Sorush, Abdul Karim, 102

South Asia, 35, 43

Southeast Asia, 156

Spivak, Gayatri, 12, 135

state, centralized authority of, 150–51 stereotypes, 4–5, 36, 120

Stowasser, Barbara, 117, 147

Subaltern School, 17–18

Sudan, 36, 92, 155

Suez Crisis, 64

Sufi brotherhoods, 54

Suharto, 183

Sumatra, 43

Sunni Muslims, 72, 153, 172–74, 182; antinationalism of, 53; and colonialism, 43;

and <ulama, 68

surveillance (mukhabarat), 47

Syria, 69–75, 91

Tabari, Azar, 128–29

Taha, Mahmoud, 153, 155

Tahtawi, Rifa’A al-, 25

Taliban, 90

Tanzim-i Islam, 61

Tehran University, 112

Thailand, 162

theocracy, 18, 48, 68, 86, 95

Third World, 35–36, 38, 48, 50, 94–97

trade, 41–42, 80

Treaty of Jiddah, 86

tribalism (jahiliyya), 68, 86

Tunis, 76, 79

Tunisia, 19, 45–46, 75–85, 91–92

Turkey, 19, 27, 33, 36, 44, 45

Turner, Bryan, 97

Twelver Shi<i, 43, 173

<ulama, 68, 78, 87, 89

Umayyad Mosque, 71

umma (Muslim community), 24, 26

unemployment, 110, 122

United Arab Emirates, 92

United Press International, 170

United States, 157, 161

unity, Arab, 65

UNMO, 159, 167

veiling, 79, 111, 112, 114, 117, 118

violence; as aberration, 6–7; Izetbegovic’s views on, 7–8, 14–15; and political figures, 7–9; as stereotype, 4–5; structural, 8; against women, 110

Vision 2020, 160, 167, 169–70, 184

Wadud-Muhsin, Amina, 169

Wafd party, 63

Wahhabis, 42–43, 86, 90

Waldman, Marilyn, 25

Wazed, Hasina, 141, 142 wealth, 51–52, 54, 87, 95 Westernization, 115

White Revolution, 94, 96, 113

Women’s Action Forum (WAF), 125, 126, 145

Women’s Organization of Iran, 113 Women’s Union, 71–72

Women in Development (WID), 141 Women of Deh Koh (Friedl), 118 women (Muslim); American perceptions of, 5; clerical views on, 114–17; dress code of, 118–19; and economic underdevelopment, 109–10; and education, 110, 111, 113, 124, 127; in Egypt, 120–24; exclusion of, 5–6; as feminists, 126–30; as fundamentalists, 111, 122, 126–30; in India, 131–38, 140, 149; in Iran, 105, 112–20; and judicial system, 131–49; in labor force, 113, 118, 122, 123, 128; in Malaysia, 168, 169; marginality of, 109; in Pakistan, 61, 125–30; and Personal Status

Laws, 123; and the Qur’an, 147–48, 169; rights of, 116–17; roles of, 45, 112; rural, 117–18, 120, 124; seclusion of, 61; in Syria, 71–72; in Tunisia, 81, 94; scholarship on, 110–11; urban, 119, 120, 12728; and veiling, 79, 111, 112, 114, 117, 118; as vessels of honor, 127; and voting rights, 77

work force, 113, 122, 123, 129

World Muslim Council, 104

World of Islam Festival, 37

world view, 162; Chinese, 158, 168; Muslim, 153–56

world wars, 46

Yahya Khan, General Mohammad, 57, 60

Zaghlul, Sa<d, 63

Zakaria, Rafiq, 137

Zanan, 119

Zayn al-Din, Nazira, 117

Zaytuna mosque, 76, 77

Zia, Begum Khaleda, 141, 142

Zia al-Haq, General, 57, 60, 61, 125, 126, 143

Zia ar-Rahman, 141

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** [Front Matter]

*** [Synopsis]

As violence escalates in the Middle East, a peace agreement between Israel and Palestine seems more elusive than ever. Yet one thing remains clear: without constructive dialogue such an agreement cannot occur. This timely volume presents just such a dialogue. It brings together opinions, perspectives, and research focused on one of the region’s most complex and volatile problems: the Palestinian refugee situation.

Based on a 1999 conference at the University of Oklahoma International Program Center, The Palestinian Refugees combines contributions from Israelis, Palestinians, Jordanians, Egyptians, Americans, and Europeans. In addition to focusing on the Palestinian refugees, the essays present various proposals for solving the Palestinian problem.

Organized in two parts, the volume presents both scholarly essays and position papers. The scholarly essays place current issues in historical context and explore the Palestinian belief in the “right of return” and questions of appropriate compensation. The position papers focus on policy

and offer a variety of perspectives. Concluding the volume is a special essay on public polls that gauge how Palestinians and Israelis view the circumstances of Palestinian refugees and what they feel about possible solutions. Also featured in this book are a foreword by His Royal Highness Prince Hassan of Jordan, a preface by former U.S. Senator David L. Boren, and an introduction by volume editors Joseph Ginat and Edward Perkins.

*** [Title Page]

THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

OLD PROBLEMS — NEW SOLUTIONS

Edited by

JOSEPH GINAT AND EDWARD J. PERKINS

Foreword by

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan

Preface by

David L. Boren, President of the University of Oklahoma

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*** Contents

Foreword

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal ofJordan

Preface

David L. Boren, President of the University of Oklahoma

Acknowledgments

Introduction: Traditional Positions and New Solutions

Joseph Ginat and Edward J. Perkins

PART I

The Historical Background and the “Right of Return ”

2

The Historical Background

Yoav Gelber

3 Between the Right of Return and Attempts of Resettlement 34
Mohamed Hawary

4 From a Doctrine-Oriented to a Solution-Oriented Policy: The PLO’s “Right of Return,” 1964–2000 46

Menachem Klein

5

The Political Refugee Problem in the Light of the Peace Process

Manuel Hassassian

6 Early US Policy toward Palestinian Refugees: The Syria Option 77
Joshua Landis

Comprehensive Solutions

7 Refugee Compensation: Responsibility, Recipients, and Forms and Sources 88

Don Peretz

8 Refugee Compensation: Why the Parties Have Been Unable to Agree and Why it is Important to Compensate Refugees

for Losses 102

Emanuel Marx

9

Traditional Positions and New Solutions

Moshe Ma’oz

10

Actual Repatriation: A Minimal Israeli Gesture

Donna E. Arzt

Regional Context Perspectives

11

From Refugees to Citizens: A Regional Proposal

Joseph Ginat and Dale F. Eickelman

12

Palestinian Refugees in Jordan and National Identity,

Mohanna Haddad

13

Final Status Negotiations and Regional Cooperation

Taisir Amre

14 Refugee Resettlement in the Gaza Strip: Israeli Policy Revisited 179
Norma Masrieh-Hazboun

15

Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon since

Kais M. Firro

16

The Future of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

Laura Drake

PART II

Policy Positions and Solutions

17

Solving the Refugee Problem — An Israeli Point of View

Shlomo Gazit

18

A Predicament in Search of an Innovative Solution

Munther S. Dajani

<right>

19

The Historical Development of the Refugee Camps in Jordan

</right>

Hussein Ramzoun

20

The Role of UNRWA: Refugee Statistics and UN Resolutions

Abraham Badran

21

A Jordanian Perspective

Rateb Amro

22

The Refugee Question and Human Rights

Bahieldin Elibrachy

23

Obstacles and Opportunities: The Ideological Dimensions

Tahseen Basheer

24 The Economic Capacity of the Palestinian State to Absorb the Refugees: The Employment Perspective 282

Onn Winckler

Public Opinion Polling

25 How the Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish Publics Perceive

the Issues 303

Ephraim Yuchtman- Yaar and Tamar Hermann

Concluding Remarks

Joseph Ginat and Edward J. Perkins

The Contributors

Index

** Foreword

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal of Jordan

This book on the Palestinian refugee problem is timely: it draws attention to the need to examine “Traditional Positions,” and to make suggestions for “New Solutions.” In recent attempts by the Palestinian National Authority and the Israeli Government to reach a settlement of their outstanding differences, the problem of the Palestinian refugees was marginalized: in exchange for a territorial arrangement which it was hoped would satifsy the Palestinian claim to a viable state, they were asked to give up the refugees’ “right of return.”

Foreseeably this was something which no Palestinian, whether in “authority” or in opposition, could accept. Without any accompanying proposals to address their problems, the refugees were being told that they had to give up the only thing they feel they still have: the right to return, however theoretical, remains a dream which if shattered removes their last and only hope.

There has never been a more urgent need for “new solutions” than now. With time the refugee problem will not fade away or die: without positive and realistic proposals which are compatible with international and moral law, and political, economic and social realities, it will only become more difficult to resolve, and more potentially explosive.

With the likely prospect of a vast increase in population inside Israel and its neighboring countries in the next fifty years, it is clear that sovereignty, statehood, and security are concepts that will have to be redefined. Existing frontiers no longer take into account demography, land or water resources, any more than they will be able to provide security against the development of weaponry technology. In this context the problem of refugees, of displaced persons, and of population movements voluntary or involuntary, will have to be addressed with new ideas and new proposals.

To be valid and viable these new ideas and proposals must embody a basic human and humanitarian set of principles: the right of all individuals to have access to natural resources and to knowledge: to community and conviviality: to liberty of thought, conscience and speech, and the practice of belief.

** Preface: David L. Boren, President of the University of Oklahoma

Welcome to this informative and, we hope, useful book. Palestinian Refugees: Old Problems — New Solutions brings together the history and the creative thinking of the world’s foremost scholars on what has been one of the two most intractable issues in Middle East peace negotiations: solutions for the Palestinian refugees and the status of Jerusalem. This book provides information that would be useful both in reaching a solution on refugees and in the implementation of any settlement upon which there is agreement. The book is the product of a conference sponsored by the Center for Peace Studies of the International Programs Center of the University of Oklahoma (OU).

The Center for Peace Studies focuses upon urgent issues of international relationships by drawing on analytic tools from the social sciences, humanities, sciences and technology, and business administration. It fosters a multidisciplinary discussion of contemporary conflicts among societies, cultures, and political entities. Studies and conferences sponsored by the Center have initially concentrated on the pressing issues of the Arab-Israeli peace process but will subsequently address other conflicts around the globe. The Center is creating an international community of scholars and advisors. Symposia held under the leadership of the Center attempt to identify solutions to the critical disputes that stand in the way of a lasting peace in the Middle East and elsewhere throughout the world. As governments around the world struggle to find the bases for building peace, their citizens must develop mechanisms that support those efforts. The Center serves this process by contributing to and influencing new policies as they are conceived and implemented.

An example of the potential impact of this approach can be seen in a series of conferences funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. In January 1999, Ambassador Edward J. Perkins, former United States Permanent Representative at the United Nations and now Executive Director of the

International Programs Center at OU, and Professor Joseph Ginat, OU visiting professor from the University of Haifa, participated in a conference on “The Status of Jerusalem,” held in Amman, Jordan. This meeting was a follow-on to an earlier session held in the summer of 1998 in Bellagio, Italy. The initial conference included Jordanian, Palestinian, Saudi Arabian, Egyptian, Moroccan, and Israeli scholars representing various disciplines. These scholars discussed a range of historical and contemporary questions concerning the status of Jerusalem, a critical topic for the Middle East peace process. Participants in the Bellagio workshop agreed the dialogue should be continued in Jordan in early 1999 and scholars from the United States of America should also be included.

These scholars met again in January 2000 in Amman, Jordan and Jerusalem for a third and final conference. This conference was again funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, but organized by the University of Oklahoma. The conferees recommended a set of principles governing the future status of Jerusalem and these principles were delivered to governments involved in the peace process.

The University of Oklahoma’s involvement in these conferences provided the vision for the establishment of the Center for Peace Studies. The Center currently consists of a quadrilateral consortium among the University of Oklahoma in the United States, the University of Haifa in Israel, Palestinian Bethlehem University and Horizon Center for Studies & Research in Jordan. The Horizon Center provides linkage to Jordanian universities and scholars, and has excellent relations throughout the Arab world. The University of Haifa, with a 20 percent Arab student population, has the highest ratio of Arab students and the largest Arab faculty among Israeli universities. The current Academic President at Haifa. Professor Gad Gilbar, is a specialist in Middle Eastern economies and is well respected in the Middle East. Bethlehem University, under the Palestinian Authority, serves as the Palestinian partner for this initiative. Professor Manuel Hassassian, the

Executive Vice President of Bethlehem University, is a noted authority on Middle East social and political structure. Joseph Ginat, a well-known Israeli scholar, is uniquely qualified to direct the Center for Peace Studies and he works under the guidance of Dr. Perkins, a distinguished diplomat and experienced academician, at the University of Oklahoma. The Center is already taking steps to include universities from other Middle East countries, and will add universities from other regions as the geographic scope of its work expands. The Center also has a Board of Directors with representation from each participating institution, as well as other distinguished scholars and practitioners. His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan honors the Center by serving as Chairman of the Board of Advisors.

It is appropriate that The Center for Peace Studies began at the University of Oklahoma for several reasons. The University is located in the middle of the United States and provides a much-needed voice from this region in international education and policy matters. Internationally marketed agricultural products, manufactured goods, and oil and gas resources originate in the American heartland, as do internationally significant research and development. Since conflicts in one troubled area of the world affect others worldwide, helping form the path to peace in the Middle East will also have a positive and significant impact on Oklahoma.

Regional conflicts around the world concern the global community. Academic study and research on these matters, which culminate in identified applied solutions, are the aim of the Center. In addition to the conferences with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Center hosted two additional conferences on issues crucial to a lasting peace in the Middle East. The first conference addressed the Palestinian refugee diaspora and proposed solutions. It was held on November 30-December 2, 1999 on the campus of the University of Oklahoma. The solution to the problems of the Palestinian refugees is critical for the continuation of the entire peace process and for building the basis for a lasting peace in the region. The gathering of some 30 academics and intellectuals primarily from the Middle East on the University’s campus was significant. First, it permitted the participants to experience a university and its environment in the middle of the United States. Secondly, it gave the University and its community an opportunity to be involved in an element of the Middle East peace process. Moreover, it was an occasion to air the

practical issues which must be addressed in making operational a future settlement amongst Israelis, the Palestinians, and Israel’s neighbors in the Middle East.

The International Programs Center, in cooperation with The University of Haifa, sponsored a second conference on “The Peace Process in the Middle East,” in Haifa, Israel on March 13–15, 2000. Over 30 academics and practitioners exchanged views on the peace process and relations between Israel Palestinian Authority; Syria-Israel; Jordan-Israel; and Israel-Iraq, Iran, and Persian Gulf and Mediterranean countries. Attention was also given to Israeli Arabs. Future conferences planned for the Center include such topics as nationality, ethnicity and minorities in the Middle East, and water resources and their effects on the peace process and the future development of the region.

Governments have expressed keen interest in the findings and conclusions of this unique group of academics and informally the group is in touch with those respective governments. The participants unanimously agreed that no formal links to their respective governments, including the U.S., should be established. By so doing, the group maintains credibility as an independent body of experts, unencumbered in its analysis of the issues. Participants are well placed to engage the broader academic communities and to shape public opinion and public policy.

To complement the conferences discussed above, the Center will sponsor seminars, visiting scholars, and scholarly publications that analyze contemporary conflicts and assess possible solutions in the Middle East as well as elsewhere around the world. Recent events in European and Asian countries indicate the importance of developing a program that could influence the resolution of other conflicts affecting the global community.

The Center for Peace Studies offers to the international community the fruits of scholarly research and discussion on contemporary world conflicts combined with guidance for achieving lasting solutions. Awareness of the past will help direct future generations in achieving a peaceful, prosperous future. It is in this spirit that The University of Oklahoma is proud to share

with you this volume, Palestinian Refugees: Old Problems — New Solutions.

** Acknowledgments

The editors would like to express their gratitude to the following individuals, without whom publication of this book would not have been possible.

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Lastly, the editors would like to thank the contributors for their scholarship in addressing the Palestinian refugee problem. The contributors have suggested sound measures to help the parties to the conflict resolve the refugee issue, which is vital to reaching a comprehensive Middle East peace agreement.

** 1. Introduction: Traditional Positions and New Solutions

[[Joseph Ginat and Edward]] J. Perkins

The Palestinian refugee problem started as a result of the war in 1948 over the creation of the State of Israel. Resolution of the Palestinian refugee issue is one of the three crucial elements — the others being the status of Jerusalem and the division of territory — needed to reach a comprehensive peace agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis. Other elements have to be agreed upon by both parties such as the settlements in the West Bank and water. But Jerusalem, division of land and the issue of refugees remain the biggest obstacles to peace in the Middle East. Each is made more difficult because of its emotional dimension. Even though the Oslo agreement of 1993 between the Palestinians and Israelis was an important breakthrough in the peace process, little tangible progress has been made on the Palestinian refugee issue. Progress on this matter is critical if Middle East peace is to be more than an illusion.

Scholars and institutes have conducted studies on Palestinian refugees for many years. Many of these studies were politically oriented or biased; others were quality fieldwork studies conducted within the refugee camps. Very few studies have put forward suggestions for permanent solutions. The

Palestinian Refugees: Old Problems New Solutions includes applied studies that contain a variety of insightful solutions.[1]

This Introduction addresses the Palestinian refugee problem and solutions, reviews past and current non-governmental efforts to grapple with the refugee issue challenge, briefly describes the enormity of the problem and the plight of the refugees, and provides a brief synopsis of the chapters of this book, which are contributed by recognized experts and scholars on the subject and region. However, before outlining the purposes and content of the book, it is important to review some of the recent good work that is being conducted outside of governmental channels to promote and reach a solution to the refugee problem.

Many institutes, groups, and individual scholars are concerned with the Palestinian refugee issue. Some deal with Palestinian refugees as part of the larger Palestinian question. Others deal with them under the headline of refugees only. A dialogue of Palestinians and Israelis at Harvard’s Weatherhead Center for International Affairs resulted in a 1998 jointly-written paper, The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right oj Return. The paper explores the divergent points of view and narratives of both sides and proposes four possible solutions to the problem. Two of these take the traditional approach, while the other are compromise solutions proposed by each side.[2]

The Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford University in conjunction with Oxford University Press issued a special edition of the Journal of Refugee Studies in 1997 on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.[3] The Norwegian Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science has done extensive research and data collection on the Palestinian refugees.[4]

Canada is a leading country in providing infrastructure and institutional support to address the refugee issue. McGill University is part of the InterUniversity Consortium for Arab Studies (Montreal) and maintains the Palestinian Refugee ResearchNet (PRRN), a worldwide web site devoted to the Palestinian refugee issue.[5] Many of the institutes listed there have produced academic articles, position papers, press releases, or other

relevant publications for study and research of the topic.[6] “Shaml,” the Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Centre in Ramallah, is but one example of a Palestinian institute that addresses the political issues and human needs of the Palestinian refugees.

The Institute for Global Conflict and Cooperation dedicated a special portion of its 1994 conference in Vouliagmeni, Greece, to the Palestinian refugee issue. In 1999, in Ottawa, the Palestine Refugee ResearchNet and the International Development Research Centre hosted the Workshop on Compensation as Part of a Comprehensive Solution to the Palestinian Refugee Problem.

A conference at UNESCO headquarters in Paris in 2000 was organized by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People in cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States. During the same year, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars sponsored a symposium in which the sessions were off the record in order to create a more frank discussion of the various refugee issues. For further information on the topic, several of the better known books of the many that have been published are listed in the notes.[7]

The Center for Peace Studies, which produced the material for this book, has an inter-academic structure that currently includes the University of Oklahoma in the United States, Bethlehem University in the Palestinian Authority, the University of Haifa in Israel, and the Horizon Institute for Study and Research in Amman, Jordan. The aim of the Center is to integrate an applied dimension to its member institutions’ traditional academic research. Many studies present important theories; many conferences deal with theoretical issues. The idea of the Center is to combine theory with reality — for academics to do scholarly work, be realistic, and to produce practical, applicable work. Scholars from the four corners of the Center, joined by others, approach a specific subject, attempt to stay close to the real issues involved and to suggest, if not one solution, several possible solutions to a particular problem from which policy-makers and negotiators can consider and choose.

The research, the studies, and the outcome of the Center's conferences have been and will be presented to the governments and political leaders involved in the conflict being examined, and even to the public. It is hoped that all parties to the conflict might be open to conference results and conclusions, and benefit from new ideas that they can introduce at the negotiation table.

In deciding to address the topic of Palestinian refugees, the Center chose one of the most difficult issues on the road to peace. There has been little progress on this subject because of official Palestinian public positions and other Arab countries' approach to the "right of return" of all Palestinian refugees, and the contrasting Israeli public policy of not allowing any refugees to come back to live in Israel. Such polar-opposite approaches can never reach an agreement. By working collectively, conference participants from Arab countries, the Palestinian Authority, Israel, Europe, and the United States attempted to reach realistic proposals for solving the Palestinian refugee problem.

The participants at this conference developed a chessboard of proposed solutions, as is evident in the different individual essays presented in this book. Although some essays reflect the polarization that exists on the issue, others move away from the political slogans of both sides. One contributor proposes that Israel should adopt the "right of return" in principle, but, in reality, accept only a symbolic number of refugees. Another conference participant suggests that Israel should accept "the right of return," but that the return should be to the future Palestinian state, not to Israel. Some of the scholars' essays focus on an Israeli gesture to accept tens of thousands of refugees without referring to "the right of return." Others deal with reparations and the rehabilitation of the refugees in the countries where they reside. In some essays there are proposals for a regional solution in which the refugees would be settled in different countries, not only in countries where they now reside.

The conference took place on the first and second of December 1999. The participants at the conference were mostly from the four member institutions of the Center, but experts in the subject from other Middle Eastern, American

and European universities participated. The small, selected audience included guests who deal with the refugee problem for the governments of the region. Perhaps it is no mere coincidence that Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel in his meeting with President William Clinton in the White House on April 11, 2000 told him that the Canadian government had expressed interest in leading an international effort by absorbing 15,000 Palestinian refugees in Canada.

More importantly, for the first time since the Oslo agreement, an Israeli prime minister declared that Israel would accept refugees for humanitarian concern and for uniting families.[8] This declaration is a breakthrough that reflects the proposed solutions of the Center for Peace Studies conference. If implemented, it will allow tens of thousands of refugees, if they desire, to reunite with their families in Israel. Barak's move from Israel's previous polarizing position improves the chance for successful negotiations on the Palestinian refugee issue.

The Palestinians are fully aware that there are limitations on the number of persons that can be brought to Israel and to the Palestinian Authority. According to recent statistics of the Palestinian Authority's Central Bureau of Statistics headed by Ghasan Abu-Libdeh, by mid-2000 the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will reach 3.2 million. The population growth rate in 1999 was 4.18 percent and was predicted at 4.27 percent for 2000. It is estimated that thereafter there will be a decline in the increase.[9] Fifty-three percent of the total population is less than 18 years of age. Twenty-four percent of the children are living in poverty. In the Gaza Strip 37.2 percent are in poverty versus 16.1 percent in the West Bank. These statistics reveal that there is much to do in developing the economy and improving living conditions for the populations that exist in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It is urgent to find an economic solution and employment opportunities for Palestinians. This reality must be the basis for the discussions and proposals for a permanent solution to the refugee problem.[10]

A study carried out by the Norwegian institute Fafo among the 300,000 Palestinian refugees in 12 refugee camps in Lebanon pointed out that the Lebanese government does not provide services to the camps. In addition,

whereas the Lebanese exercise tight military control around the camps, inside the camps the Palestinian militias are in control. The study found that 20 percent of the adult male population are illiterate and that 40 percent of the students drop out of school by age 11. The sanitation situation is very poor, and there is a high incidence of disease and malnutrition.[11]

It is imperative to address more effectively the tragic situation of the refugees living in poverty. There is no justification for delaying the solution to the plight of these poor people who have suffered for so many years. His Royal Highness Prince Faisal, brother of King Abdallah, and the head of the Jordanian General Intelligence Department, emphasized in a meeting in April 2000 in Amman that solving the problem of the

Palestinian refugees was vital. As part of their discussion at the meeting, the participants suggested that while a large majority of Palestinian refugees are ready to forgo actually returning, they are not willing to give up their right to do so.[12]

This book is organized into two parts, each of which is further subdivided. Part I contains three sections — The Historical Background and the “Right of Return,” Comprehensive Solutions, and Regional Context Perspectives. Scholars put forth two general approaches for comprehensive solutions that include proposals for compensation. One avenue is to focus on specific countries; the second avenue encompasses proposals on a regional basis. Part II contains two sections — Policy Positions and Solutions and Public Opinion Polling. The essays present different perspectives and a variety of solutions. The public opinion polling essay (chapter 25) shows how the Palestinians and Israelis view the circumstances of the Palestinian refugees and their feelings toward a solution.

Part I, The Historical Background and the “Right of Return” comprises chapters 2–6.

Yoav Gelber, in “The Historical Background,” presents the Palestinian refugee issue in the context of the history of the Arab-Israel conflict, and focuses on

the 1948 war that gave rise to the problem. Gelber argues against revisionist historians who adopt or justify the traditional Arab point of view. He says that, historically, like other societies east of Egypt and west of Iran, the Palestinians had no historical experience with national war or an understanding of its essence. Their social structure tumbled, he says, because of economic hardship and administrative disorganization. Gelber concludes that the Israeli effort to solve the problem of refugees through resettlement is geo-culturally out of context. He closes by contrasting the Israeli idea of accommodation with the Palestinian idea of justice.

Mohamed Hawary, in “Between the Right of Return and Attempts of Resettlement,” explores the background of the Palestinian refugee problem, covering population statistics and United Nations resolutions. After providing a list of certain inalienable rights for the Palestinian refugees, and discussing the “right of return” and resettlement, Hawary outlines the conditions of Palestinian refugees living in the host Arab states. He concludes by stating that any final solution must contain the principle of choice for the refugees between repatriation and rehabilitation while considering Israel’s requirements for security.

Menachem Klein, in “From a Doctrine-Oriented to a Solution-Oriented Policy: The PLO’s ‘Right of Return,’ 1964–2000.” researches the history and evolution of the PLO’s “right of return” policy. He analyzes the meaning of this phrase within the framework of a settlement. The Palestinian Liberation Organization’s position had been based on the belief that the “right of return” equalled liberation. Later, the relevance of the the “right of return” came into doubt among the PLO ranks. Klein brings forward four attitudes toward the relevance of the “right of return” in the context of a political settlement with Israel: disregard, word-for-word acceptance of UN Resolution 194, full rights within pre-1967 borders, and a “differential realization” separating the realities of the 1967 border versus 1948 borders. As a solution he presents five guiding principles of an Israeli-Palestinian agreement concerning the refugees.

Manuel Hassassian, in “The Political Refugee Problem in the Light of the Peace Process,” looks directly at problems and solutions. He starts by identifying the hurdles that derive from the enormous variegated

socioeconomic conditions under which Palestinians live in their respective host countries. He points out the deep-seated emotions which continue to overshadow the effort to rectify the basic economic, social, and political situations of the refugees. He lists logistical problems that must be dealt with, such as issues relating to the transfer of jurisdiction from the United Nations Works and Relief Agencey (UNWRA) to the Palestinian National Authority and the naturalization of Palestinians in their current country of asylum. Hassassian endorses specific recommendations for resolving the claims of the refugees, including that the “right of return” cannot be literally exercised inside 1948 Israel and will have to be exercised in the State of Palestine.

Joshua Landis, in “Early US Policy toward Palestinian Refugees: The Syria Option,” documents the attempt by the United States to resettle Palestinian refugees in Syria after the 1948 war. He researches this little- known aspect of the history of the Middle East conflict and US foreign policy. Landis tells the complete story and discovers that US policy was motivated by a variety of factors. Syria’s refusal to accept the American proposal led to the decision of the US government to throw its support behind the Israeli policy on the Palestinian refugee issue.

Part I, Comprehensive Solutions comprises chapters 7–10.

Don Peretz, in “Refugee Compensation: Responsibility. Recipients, and Forms and Sources,” provides an in-depth study of the problems of refugee compensation. Using historical statistics from a variety of sources, he reviews land and property holdings and points out the difficulties in applying those statistics today for levels of compensation. The most authoritative source in Israel for statistics would be the Israel Custodian of Absentee Property. He suggests several alternative scenarios for compensation. In all cases, Israel would assist financially, but funding for compensation would have to come from outside to afford the substantial amounts involved by all estimates.

Emanuel Marx, in “Refugee Compensation: Why the Parties have been Unable to Agree and Why it is Important to Compensate Refugees for Losses,” asks two questions. The first is why the parties have so far been unable to formulate polices on refugee compensation. The second is why it is so important to compensate individual refugees for losses sustained half a century ago. He explains that set attitudes are not likely to change, because they have never been thoroughly examined by either of the parties or discussed by both parties. For Marx, compensation will provide a basis on which Israeli-Palestinian relations will grow and thrive. To keep that relationship strong, however, he recommends that the Palestinian state throw up high tariff walls in order to protect itself against the inroads of the Israeli economy.

Moshe Ma’oz, in “Traditional Positions and New Solutions,” looks at the two compromise solutions resulting from the Harvard’s Weatherford Center for International Affairs meeting of Palestinian and Israeli scholars. Using the four principles stated in the joint concept papers, he outlines the advantages and disadvantages for both Israelis and Palestinians. He looks at the differing historical narratives and uses them as bases to judge how various solutions will fare with the different groups. Ma’oz discusses the problems and possible benefits of linkages in negotiations for both sides. He is of the opinion that the refugee issue is probably less difficult than other permanent settlement issues. Finally he discusses the components of a solution.

Donna E. Arzt, in “Actual Repatriation: A Minimal Israeli Gesture,” proposes the establishment of an exact number of refugees (75,000) to return to Israel and how this can logically proceed as a compromise for all concerned. She suggests that a symbolic gesture of repatriation is the lynchpin of the refugee issue. She states categorically that both sides will have to accept the fact that the Israelis will never accept a peace that implies the return of all the refugees and that the Palestinians will never accept a peace without return of some refugees. Arzt explains how not to get bogged down in semantic distinctions. She also recommends enlisting outside help in implementation, including the UN High Commission for Refugees and the Refugee Project of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, which has issued a set of ten General Principles Relating to the Promotion of Refugee Repatriation.

Part I, Regional Context Perspectives comprises chapters II 16.

Joseph Ginat and Dale F. Eickelman, in “From Refugees to Citizens: A Regional Proposal,” stress the importance of involving the Palestinian refugees in the implementation of decisions that affect their status. They believe this reality supersedes any public policy slogan toward an actual solution. Ginat interviewed three generations of refugees as to how they see the future for themselves. The refugees’ directly and indirectly expressed preferences regarding housing and residence patterns in refugee camps that suggest issues requiring resolution as part of the peace process. The authors propose that existing refugee camps be turned into permanent towns or annexed to local municipalities. They outline a plan for resident involvement in collective decision making for housing construction based on economy of scale.

Mohanna Haddad, in “Palestinian Refugees in Jordan and National Identity, 1948–1999,” gives a detailed overview of Palestinians in Jordan. He uses historical demography to show changes in the Jordanian population. Haddad separates the “Palestinian identity” into four phases during the twentieth century. He says that after 1974, Jordan served as an umbrella covering the Palestinians, including their presence at the Madrid conference. He feels that since the majority of Palestinian refugees are integrated into Jordanian society, they do not manifest much difference with that society at large. He questions whether they could be included into Jordan in non-refugee terms versus the situation of those who are still living as refugees in the camps.

Taisir Amre, in “Final Status Negotiations and Regional Cooperation,” presents ideas about the Palestinian refugee problem for the final status negotiations. He states that there is a consensus that the problem of Palestinian refugees is of a distinct political nature. He says that United Nations Resolution 194 will not be implemented without a political solution to the Palestinian national cause. As a starting point, he wants Israelis to refrain from ignoring the Palestinians’ plight and legitimate rights. At the same time, he recognizes that Palestinians must be open to the idea that it is not possible politically or practically to repatriate all their refugees. He proposes

instead that the Palestinian state take on the responsibility of the displaced persons of 1967.

Norma Masrieh-Hazboun, in “Refugee Resettlement in the Gaza Strip: Israeli Policy Revisited,” deals with the Israeli policy of resettlement versus the Palestinian idea of “right of return.” She explains that resettlement is a policy of liquidation while return means resolution. She rejects the Israeli-Western approach of an economic solution because it neglects the political aspects of the problem. She also sees attempts at resettlement of Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip as consolidating the collective identity among them and promoting their adherence to their “right of return.”

Kais M. Firro, in “Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon since 1982,” looks at the situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. He shows that the marginalization of refugees in Lebanon began in 1948. At one time, between 1969 and 1982, the PLO was empowered to administer the camps. However, the PLO office was closed in 1982, and the “War of the Camps” between 1985 and 1987 further undermined the PLO. By 1996, unemployment among Palestinians reached 50 to 65 percent. Kais Firro gives examples showing the difficulties the refugees have faced recently and how the Lebanese rejectionist position is unlikely to change.

Laura Drake, in “The Future of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon,” presents the issue from a Lebanese perspective as well as from those in the camps in Lebanon. She reviews and proposes alternative solutions for the refugees. These solutions include a proposed survey ofcamp residents to find out what they desire. Suggested solutions range from recognition and reconciliation of all properties within Israel to a resettlement option in Iraq. She states that the Lebanese do not want the refugees to stay in Lebanon, and that the Israeli-Palestinian talks create the fear of permanent settlement there. She predicted correctly that the announcement of a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon would cause strong negative reaction among the Arabs.

Part II, Policy Positions and Solutions comprises chapters 17–24.

Shlomo Gazit, in ‘Solving the Refugee Problem — An Israeli Point of View,” sees the issue as a tragedy in which both sides are right. His stated priorities are the continued existence of a Jewish state, the security of Israel, and the beginning of a comprehensive settlement. He believes Israel should not have to admit responsibility for the refugee problem, yet it should compensate the refugees for the properties they have left behind. His recommended solution is that the law of return apply only to the Palestinian state, that refugees have the right to citizenship of their host countries, and that Israel and the international community help in compensating, resettling, and rehabilitating the refugees.

Munther S. Dajani, in “A Predicament in Search of an Innovative Solution,” attempts to coerce a solution from the Israelis and the Palestinians. He clearly recognizes the reality that the most complex issue is how to create trust and confidence between the two parties. He pulls no punches when he says that all parties must concede on what they thought was non-negotiable at one time or another. He suggests that the Palestinian issue is seen within Israel as an exclusive Israeli concern, which leaves the Palestinians out of the dialogue. He uses his family’s own personal history as an analogy to the entire history of the conflict.

Hussein Ramzoun, in “The Historical Development of the Refugee Camps in Jordan,” reports on the development of the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan. He shows the active role of the Jordanian government in the care of refugees while UNRWA offers just basic services. He says that such care constitutes 22 percent of the Jordanian budget. He also includes tables showing the distribution of the population of refugee camps in Jordan, contrasting the original capacity with the present number of residents.

Abraham Badran, in “The Role of UNRWA: Refugee Statistics and UN Resolutions,” reviews the refugee problem and the United Nations resolutions. He uses tabular material to contrast reports of refugee number estimates. He recommends various principles for a proposed solution, including the observation that people become tolerant of others once they themselves are recognized and their rights are acknowledged. He sees

Israel’s granting of rights to the Palestinians as a major step toward a permanent peace. Along the same lines, he proposes that 30 percent of current Middle Eastern military budget be used to pay for implementing peace issues instead of war preparations.

Rateb Amro, in “A Jordanian Perspective,” contrasts recent promising Jordanian-Israeli relations with the thorny issue of the Palestinian refugees of 1948 and 1967. He explores the legal issues before addressing the Jordanian angle on the refugee issue. He states that the Palestinian community in Jordan has the dual role of being typically Jordanian while, nevertheless, remaining typically Palestinian. He says that Jordanians believe that the stabilility of each country in the region is an integral component for peace. If nearly half the population of Jordan — the Palestinians — remain restless because of expectations for a solution of their final identity and status, then real economic, social, and political stability in Jordan will be forever compromised.

Bahieldin Elibrachy, in “The Refugee Question and Human Rights,” looks back and then forward to the policy of refugee compensation. He believes that the solution needs to be a regional one. He proposes as an alternative solution that certain countries in the area could integrate refugees into the hosting countries. Egypt’s plan to expand from 4 percent to 25 percent the amount of culturable land creates an enormous opportunity. Other countries such as Sudan and Iraq have the same opportunities even though they are not yet politically ready.

Tahseen Basheer, in “Obstacles and Opportunities: The Ideological Dimensions,” argues optimistically that a negotiated agreement is possible but that ideological differences create a clouded negotiating atmosphere and psychological roadblocks. Each side has recast history to explain and justify its goals and this has led to irreconcilable claims. The Palestinian dimension is the cornerstone of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis and between Israelis and Arabs. The refugee problem centers on the people-to-people level. Seminars and simulations cannot replace governmental negotiations. A sustainable peace will be achieved only if the people accept a successfully negotiated complex package of compromise solutions that respond to human needs and create a structure in which there is neither

victor nor vanquished. There must be a win-win arrangement that can grow in symmetry and synergy. An international fund established before an accord is possible could help remove some road blocks and promote cooperation that could facilitate successful negotiations.

Onn Winckler, in “The Economic Capacity of the Palestinian State to Absorb the Refugees: The Employment Perspective,” addresses the socioeconomic factors that will affect the possibility of absorption of Palestinian refugees into the future Palestinian state. The subject of employment receives a historical and demographic overview. He traces the peaks and valleys of employment opportunities for Palestinians and looks to the future with the enormous number of young people coming into the workforce in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Looking at the current lack of employment growth in these areas, he discusses the problems and strategies for the return of refugees as additional members of the workforce.

Part II, Public Opinion Polling comprises chapter 25.

Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar and Tamar Hermann, in “How the Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish Publics Perceive the Issues,’’ present a picture of public opinion about the issues concerning Palestinian refugees. This is an important contribution, as it demonstrates the application of scholarship to reality. The authors present polling data showing that both the Israeli and Palestinian publics tend to view the problem of Palestinian refugees from their own national narrative and national interests. However, they also show that a sizable percentage of both Israelis and Palestinians do not accept their own national narrative, specifically about the historical circumstances behind the refugee problem. They found that 31 percent of Israeli respondents accept the view that the Palestinian refugees were forced to leave by the Israeli army, while nearly 30 percent of the Palestinians see encouragement by Arab leaders or voluntary departure as at least a contributing factor to the refugee problem.

This volume and its distinguished contributors offer firm ground upon which to conduct timely and rational discourse that can lead to a negotiated

settlement on refugees, but only if those involved in the dispute have the will to truly compromise for the sake of a peaceful, prosperous Middle East with soverign Israeli and Palestinian states.

[1] The Center for Peace Studies conducted three conferences in the academic year 1999 2000. One was on the refugee issue, one was on the status of Jerusalem, and the third was dedicated to the peace process. This volume is based on the November 30-December 2, 1999 conference at the University of Oklahoma on the refugee problem. The editors are preparing a second volume to be published that will include papers from the conferences on the peace process and the status of Jerusalem. As to the conference on the status of Jerusalem, it was a unique kind of conference where a document of eleven points was produced and accepted by all participants except one. The document, as a guideline for negotiation, was presented to the Israeli government, the Palestinian Authority, King Abdullah of Jordan and President Mubarak of Egypt. The document was released at a press conference one hour after delivering it to the governments on January 23, 2000.

[2] The working group at Harvard University has been discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict for several years. The group comprises five Palestinian and six Israeli scholars. It is headed by Dr. Herbert C. Kelman of Harvard University. Group members have written many papers as part of a Working Papers series. The paper referred to here, The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return, was edited by Joseph Alpher and Khalil Shikaki, May 1998. See also Moshe Ma’oz’s paper in this book and footnote 6 for the names of the participants in the Harvard group.

[3] Journal of Refugee Studies 11 (25).

[4] Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science is an institute for commissioned research. In 1999, it did an additional survey of camps and “gatherings” of Palestinian refugees.

[5] Lists of projects, papers and organizations involved in researching questions on Palestinian refugees can be found at:

[[http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/prfront.html][http://www.arts.mcgill.ca/MEPP/PRRN/prfront.html]].

[6] The following is a more extensive list of other institutions dealing with Palestinian refugees:

BADIL — Alternative Information Centre (Bethlehem)

CEDEJ (Cairo)

Center for Palestine Research and Studies (Nablus)

Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine (Washington, D.C.)

Council on Foreign Relations (New York)

Human Rights Watch/Middle East (New York)

Institute for Global Conflict and Cooperation (University of California — San Diego)

Institute for Jerusalem Studies (Jerusalem)

Institute for Social and Economic Policy in the Middle East (Harvard University)

Israel/Palestine Centre for Research and Information (Jerusalem)

Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies (Tel Aviv University)

Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (Beirut)

<br’al-Najah University (Nablus)

Near and Middle East Information Project (Berlin)

Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (Jerusalem)

Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Centre/“Shaml” (Ramallah) RAND (US) Royal Institute of International Affairs (London)

Washington Institute for Near East Policy (Washington, D.C.)

Source: Palestinian Refugee Research.Net

[7] Donna Arzt, Refugees Into Citizens: Palestinians and the End of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1996); Shmay Cahana, Differing and Converging Views on solving the Palestinian Refugees' Problems (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Davis Institute for International Relations, 1997); Shlomo Gazit, The Palestinian Refugee Problem, Final Status Issues: Israelis-Palestinians, Study No. 2 (Tel Aviv: Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1995); Sami Hadawi, Palestinian Rights and Losses in 1V48: A Comprehensive Study (London: Saqi Books, 1998); Ruth Lapidoth, The Right of Return in International Law (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies [in Hebrew]); Benny Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Don Peretz, Palestinians, Refugees and the Middle East (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute for Peace, 1993); Ramzi Rabah. Palestinian Refugees, Displaced, and the Final Status Negotiations (Beirut: Arab Progress House, 1996); Danny Rubinstein, The People of Nowhere: The Palestinian Vision of Home (New York: Times Books/Random House); Salim Tamari, "Adaptation" in the West Bank and Gaza. Prepared for RWG intersessional. April, 1996; Elia Zureik, Palestinian Refugees and the Peace Process (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996); UNRWA, Annual Reports of the Commissioner Generals and other publications.

[8] Aluf Ben, Ha'aretz, April 13, 2000.

[9] Personal communication from Dr. Manuel Hassassian, see also Amira Hass, Haaretz, 12 April, 2000.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science, unpublished study

[12] Personal communication from Rateb Amro. See also Ha’aretz, April 10, 2000.

* Part I: The Historical Background and the “Right of Return”: Comprehensive Solutions Regional Context Perspectives

** 2. The Historical Background

[[Yoav Gelber]]

The Israeli-Arab war of 1948 has been thoroughly researched. However, lasting interest in this encounter has not emanated from its significance to military history. Scholarly curiosity derives mainly from its wider historical repercussions that have changed the face of the Middle East. Among the war’s outcomes were the emergence and shaping of Israel; its persistent existence as a spearhead of western civilization in the region; the protracted Arab-Israeli conflict and the unsolved Palestinian problem. Other processes have significant links to this war as well. These include the vanishing of the ancient Jewish communities in Muslim countries through emigration to Israel and elsewhere; political and social upheavals in the Arab states and frequent changes of their global orientations. All have stemmed from the strategy and the outcome of the 1948 war.

The end to the fighting in 1949 through the armistice agreements did not resolve the causes of the war. For a long time, the threat of a “second round” hung over the Middle East. Incessant skirmishing along Israel’s borders, and continuing political and economic warfare, naturally influenced the war’s historiography. Writings reflected the contenders’ deep conviction of their own righteousness and hatred of their antagonists for the evils their adversary inflicted upon them.

Propaganda, memoirs, journalistic writing, and early historiography have enveloped the war in a thick cloak of stereotypes, myths, polemics and apologies. Younger generations — Jews and Arabs alike — have grown up under their shadow forming their respective images of each other in accordance with these conceptions.

The opening of official archives in the late 1970s has changed the scene. Yet, archival material at the disposal of scholars has been Israeli, British, and American. No Arab parallel documentation has been made accessible to date. Studying the Arab perspective of the war is still confined mainly to British and American diplomats’ reports from Arab capitals, British and Israeli intelligence material (reflecting also — although indirectly — important Arab documentation), and Arab apologetics and denunciations. Several Israeli scholars have studied the Arab side of the war. No parallel interest in the Jewish perspective has developed among their Arab colleagues.[13]

A significant new feature in scholarly works on the war written in the late 1980s was the emergence of a school of inquiry by scholars who diverted the focus of attention from Israel’s accomplishments to the Palestinians’ grim fate. These studies portrayed the Palestinians as the hapless objects of violence and oppression (Israeli), collusion (Israeli-Transjordanian), and a treacherous diplomacy (British and Arab).[14]

This was not a mere coincidence. The new trend paralleled a widespread reversal of attitudes in the western world toward Israel. From May 1948 until the mid-1970s, Israel’s encounters with the Arab states stood at the crux of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israeli historiography, emphasizing the triumph over the Arab armies, was compatible with conventional views of the conflict.

Stabilization of Israel's relations with the Arab states after the 1973 Yom Kippur war shifted attention to the Palestinian problem.

The self-proclaimed title "new historians" that these scholars have adopted — implying possession of objectivity and open-mindedness that was not the province of "old" historians, alleged to harbour a partisanship and involvement — has been particularly irritating.[15] This school's emergence has not brought about a scholarly breakthrough, neither in revealing new horizons nor in methodological originality. It has, however, generated a questionable revision of accepted standards of presentation, based on incomplete use of the newly accessible source material that has been open to professional criticism no less than its predecessors.[16]

Awarding the revisionist historians' standing as impartial and free from ideological bias is equally unwarranted. Some of them adopt the Arab standpoint after 1948, while others justify the Arabs' denial of the 1947 Partition Resolution and identify themselves with the Palestinian basic argument against Zionism — its being a colonialist movement accompanying the occupation of the Middle East by the imperialist powers. Although the fashionable tendency to exhibit Israel as "conceived in sin" had not necessarily been the motivation fueling all revisionist scholars, they have rendered this charge a valuable service by sketching the Palestinians as innocent victims of others' conspiracies and atrocities. In their works, the Israelis emerge as having no other worry in the most difficult time in their history than cynically plotting their enemies' expulsion from their own homeland. This double simplicity appears unconvincing to anyone familiar with the sources, who has studied that period — unless the reader is utterly prejudiced.

Since, in the eyes of revisionist historians, the primordial sin was Jewish statehood — seemingly at the Palestinians' expense — they treat the previous chapters of Zionist-Arab relations superficially, almost ignoring Palestinians' violent opposition to the Zionist enterprise prior to 1948. Apparently, they consider this irrelevant, or perhaps even avoid it because a proper examination might contradict their theories.

In their handling of the 1948 war, the revisionists have bypassed elementary facts in order to underscore the particular issue of the Palestinians' ordeal. A simple and yet undisputed fact of common knowledge is that the Palestinians and the Arab League — not the Yishuv - promptly rejected the UN resolution on partition following the vote in the General Assembly on November 29, 1947. Immediately and intentionally, they embarked on frustrating implementation of partition by violence. At first, they instigated disturbances and gradually escalated them to a full- scale war. The Arab League backed the Palestinians' campaign from the beginning and the Arab states joined in the fighting upon termination of the mandate, invading the newly established Jewish state. The Arabs stubbornly repudiated any compromise that provided for a Jewish state, no matter what its borders were. Only in the wake of their military defeat did the Arabs make UN resolutions a cornerstone of their case and demand their strict fulfillment.

Any study describing solely Palestinian suffering is one-sided and incomplete without properly weighing this plain truth: As victims of war, the Palestinians' own conduct gives adequate cause to deny them the adjective "innocent. " Truly, they have paid a heavy price in this war — and ever since. They have been victims — but to a large extent they are the victims of their own follies and pugnacity, as well as the incompetence of their Arab allies.

The following modest contribution to the historical debate of this war is a continuation of several previous works that I have published in Hebrew. These studies have treated the creation of the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) and accompanying military and political domestic controversies in Israel; the earlier development of the Arab-Jewish conflict, and the Jews' relations with Transjordan. Other forthcoming books examine the development of the Israeli intelligence services during the war and the emergence of the refugee problem.[17]

Israel's War of Independence — the equivalent to the Palestinians' Al-Naqaba (Arabic for "Holocaust") — consisted of two distinct, consecutive, but separate campaigns fought by different enemies, under dissimilar circumstances, each phase under different rules. The first encounter commenced early in December 1947 and lasted until the British mandate in Palestine expired. It was a civil war between Jews and

Palestinians that took place under British sovereignty and in the presence of British troops. The second contest began with the invasion of Palestine by the regular Arab armies on May 15. 1948 and continued intermittently until the conclusion of armistice agreements during the first half of 1949. This was a war between Israel and a coalition of Arab states, fought by armies using methods of regular warfare.

Throughout the civil war, the characteristic tactics were urban guerrilla, raids, or shooting attacks on isolated rural settlements and ambushes on the opponent’s transportation lines. No territory could be gained — even temporarily, and decisive determination of an outcome of hostilities was impossible. Lacking proper military objectives, the antagonists carried out their attacks on non-combatant targets, subjecting civilians to deprivation, intimidation, and harassment. Consequently, the weaker, less cohesive and backward Palestinian society collapsed under a not-overly-heavy strain. An increasing flow of refugees to the heart of Arab-populated areas and into adjacent countries underscored the defeat.

During this period, the principal Jewish paramilitary organization — the Haganah — was reshaped as a regular fighting force, based on conscription. A territorial militia of armed settlers backed the emerging army. Simultaneously, the network of autonomous Jewish national institutions that had been established by the Yishuv during the mandatory era were transformed into a system of independent and sovereign government that controlled and directed the Yishuv s war effort.

The patriarchal Palestinian society lagged behind. Spontaneously, “national committees” emerged in the principal towns to deal with essential preparations for war on the local level. Yet, the Palestinians failed to establish central political, financial, administrative, and military facilities. This failure resulted in a rapid deterioration of local institutions and eventually led to complete anarchy. The Arab League contributed to the chaos by being able neither to determine Arab Palestine’s political future nor to let the Palestinians shape their own destiny.

On the eve of the war, the Arab Higher Committee (AHC) and its associates in neighboring countries — the committees for defending Filastin — recruited hundreds of volunteers: exiled Palestinians, Syrians, Iraqis, and fascist Bosnians. In December 1947, they infiltrated Palestine and formed the nucleus of Jihad al-Mukadas (“Holy Fighters”). Several thousand indigenous youngsters joined their ranks. After the invasion, the regular armies employed these volunteers, augmented by other native recruits, as auxiliaries and garrisons in non-essential front sectors.

Following the outbreak of hostilities, the Palestinians improvised local militias for defending their towns and villages. Members of the prewar paramilitary organizations Najada and Futuwa, ex-soldiers of the British army, former policemen and defectors from the Transjordan Frontier Force — all joined these “national guards,” but their role remained limited and passive.

From the outset, the Palestinian combatants had a secondary role in the framework of the Arab war effort. In December 1947, the League undertook to raise the Arab Liberation Army (ALA) that should have carried the main burden of the Palestine campaign. This force hastily assembled and drilled in Syria, and during January-March 1948 moved into the country. Originally, the mission of the ALA should have been defending Arab areas until the end of the mandate, meanwhile avoiding incidents with the British and major clashes with the Jews. Yet, rapid escalation of the civil war dragged the foreigners into an untimely involvement in combat. Several abortive attacks on Jewish settlements exposed the ALA’s incompetence and revealed numerous tactical and organizational deficiencies.

The evacuation’s progression and the British army’s preoccupation with safeguarding its lines of withdrawal enabled the adversaries to change their tactics. Early in April, the Haganah took the initiative and during the next six weeks launched several large-scale operations across the country. By contrast, the Arab forces remained dispersed and disarrayed, clinging to their traditional patterns of warfare and organization that were anachronistic under prevailing circumstances. The Haganah soon pushed the Arab forces onto the defensive. Between early April and

mid-May 1948 the nascent Jewish army crushed the Palestinian irregulars and the League’s expedition, although at the price of heavy losses.

Culminating in the last days of the mandate, this civil war between rival ethnic communities set a precedent. Hitherto, the civilized world had known very few such examples. The American civil war was too remote, while the Russian and Spanish civil wars were fought by armies using methods and means of regular warfare. All three armed conflicts were fought between members of the same nation and society. The war of 1948 was the first modern civil war fought between competing ethnic communities. It was also the first national contest in the post-Ottoman Middle East. In the 1970s and 1980s, the civil war in Lebanon might have given some perspective and a better insight into the brutal nature of this kind of feud. Recent feuds in the Balkans or in the former Soviet Empire have further revealed the cruel essence of inter-communal flare-ups and their immense impact on civilian populations.

Encounters between akin societies such as Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians; Armenians and Azeris; or Georgians and Ossetians are often indecisive. The rapid and decisive tipping of the scales in favor of one side in the civil war in 1948 — once the British left the rivals to themselves, rather than a protracted stalemate — was exceptional. The Palestinians’ swift downfall surprised all concerned: Arabs, British, and Jews.

In six weeks of fierce fighting, the Haganah occupied most of the area that the UN partition plan allotted to the Jewish state. In some regions, the Jews extended their control even beyond this line. They took over five Arab or mixed towns and 200 villages; between 250,000 to 300,000 Palestinians escaped (so far they were not driven out) to Palestine’s Arab sectors and to neighboring countries. The Palestinian irregulars and the League s army disintegrated, becoming militarily immaterial.

The Palestinians’ rapid and almost total collapse astonished their Jewish opponents. It was unbelievable that plain defeatism lacking any ulterior motives had provoked their mass flight. The Yishuv suspected the flight was nothing but a conspiracy concocted by the AHC to embroil the

Arab states in the war. Later, this hypothesis would become the official line of Israeli diplomacy and propaganda. Originally, the allegations emanated from popular hearsay claiming that the Mufti's followers encouraged running away by promising the escapees a quick return in the footsteps of the triumphant Arab armies. Often, fugitives from the fighting invented and disseminated these stories to exonerate their defection.

However, all the documentary evidence clearly shows that the AHC (though not local leaders in certain places), the ALA, and the Arab League did not countenance flight. On the contrary, they tried in vain to stop it.

Like other societies in the area east of Egypt and west of Iran, the Palestinians had no historical experience with national war or an understanding of its essence. For centuries, wars in this region had been fought either between foreign empires and rulers or between local lords competing for power. Napoleon and Muhammad Ali's wars against the Supreme Porte, or Britain's campaign against Turkey in the First World War, were irrelevant to a populace that did not associate itself with either of the antagonists. Throughout the ages, the people of this region developed their own avenues of survival in others' wars. They were accustomed to evading the fighting by finding temporary havens nearby until the tempest had passed and they could safely return to their homes.

Many thousands of Palestinian fallahin (villagers) fled to Hauran (in today's Syria) during the First World War to evade conscription and forced labor or to escape drought and famine in Palestine. They mostly returned after the British army occupied the country. During the rebellion of 1936/9, approximately 25,000 Palestinians moved to adjacent countries because they were hard pressed either by the British or by the rebel gangs. Most fugitives and exiles returned openly or clandestinely during and after the Second World War.

Unaware of the different historical circumstances, at the beginning of the civil war in 1948 the Palestinians reacted similarly. Their fragile social structure tumbled because of economic hardships and administrative disorganization. From the outset of fighting, those who could afford to had

sent their families to neighboring countries and joined them later, when the situation deteriorated. Others moved from the vicinity of the front lines to less exposed areas of the Arab sector, particularly if they had relatives there to receive them. Thousands of foreign Arab immigrants and temporary residents — Egyptians, Lebanese and Syrians — returned to their home countries to avoid the hardships of war. First-generation emigrants from rural hamlets to urban centers — mostly day laborers who were the first to lose their jobs because of the economic chaos — returned to their villages.

They all set a model and created an atmosphere of desertion that soon embraced wider circles. Between half to two-thirds of the Arab inhabitants in cities such as Haifa or Jaffa had abandoned their homes before the Jews discharged the final blow and occupied the towns.

Dependence on towns that had fallen to the Jews, the impossibility of maintaining the agricultural routine, and rumors of atrocities exacerbated mass flight to the countryside. Many hamlets that the Haganah stormed in April-May 1948 were empty. Under the pressure of the fighting, their tenants had gradually left during the campaign’s earlier stages.

At this point in time, running away was, for the most part, voluntary. So far, the Haganah’s use of intimidation and other methods of psychological warfare was sporadic. Quantitatively, most of the Palestinian refugees fled under these circumstances of an inter-communal civil war. The Arab armies’ invasion on May 15, 1948 terminated this phase of the flight. In certain places, escapees who had not gone far returned to their deserted homes in the wake of the invading troops.

During the civil war, the Palestinians’ behavior stood in sharp contrast to the Yishuv’s performance. Not a single Jewish settlement was deserted before the invasion. Only a dozen kibbutzim in the Galilee and in Gush Etzion near Jerusalem sent mothers and children to safer places in the interior. In all other instances, the central leadership took measures to reinforce vulnerable posts and secure their capacity to survive. Unlike the Palestinians, the Yishuv’s main centers displayed a proven solidarity with its periphery.

The next waves of Palestinian escapees and deportees were the result of the Israeli Defense Force’s (IDF) counter-offensives against the invading Arab armies. By July 1948, the Israelis’ previous restraints about crossing the UN partition line disappeared. They also considered expulsion of the Palestinians who had summoned the invaders morally legitimate. These later refugees were sometimes literally deported across the lines. In certain cases, IDF units terrorized them to hasten their escape and a few isolated massacres expedited their flight.

When they ran away, the refugees were confident of their eventual repatriation at the end of hostilities. This term could mean a cease-fire, a truce, an armistice, or a peace agreement. The return of escapees had been customary in the Middle East’s wars throughout the ages. When the first truce began in June 1948, many tried to resettle in their hamlets or at least to gather the crops. However, they were fated for a surprise.

Their Jewish adversaries belonged to an alien European civilization whose historical experience and concepts of warfare were different. Three years after the end of the Second World War, it was inconceivable that Sudeten, Pomeranian, or Silesian Germans who had been expelled by the Czechs, Poles, and Russians would ever return to their former dwelling places. People still remembered the war between Turkey and Greece in the early 1920s that had ended with an exchange of populations between these two countries. Europe was full of White Russians who had left their homeland after the revolution and the subsequent civil war. The vast majority of the Yishuv did not think that the Palestinians should fare better.

In Europe, war refugees seldom returned to their former places of residence if the victorious enemy had occupied their homes. Usually, they resettled and began life anew elsewhere. This was particularly true after the Second World War. Hailing mostly from Europe, the Israelis applied this principle to the Middle East. They forcibly blocked the returning infiltrators during the truces and after the war. Concurrently, they seized their lands and their dwellings were used to accommodate evacuees from Jewish settlements that had been occupied by the invading Arab armies, such as Gush El

Hon and the Jewish quarter of Jerusalem’s Old City. Later, they settled new immigrants and demobilized soldiers in deserted Arab towns and on lands formerly cultivated by Arab villagers. Thus, the presumably temporary flight turned into a permanent, almost eternal, problem of refugees.

Israel deemed the Arab League responsible for the refugees’ fate and expected the Arab governments to resettle them in their countries as Germany had absorbed Volksdeutsche after the Second World War. Surrounding Arab culture — the refugees, the non-refugee Palestinians, and the Arab states and people — refused to accept this alien code and have insisted on the refugees’ “right of return” as a precondition for any reconciliation with Israel.

Late in April 1948, it seemed that without outside intervention to stop the Haganah’s offensive, the Jews might take over the entire country. This implied the imminent demise of Arab Palestine and more escapees pouring into the adjacent states. The British evaded the Arab League’s demands to rescue the Palestinians. They refused to prolong the mandate temporarily — pending finding a solution, or imposing a cease-fire. Last-minute efforts by the UN mission, foreign consuls, and the International Red Cross to stop the fighting, at least in Jerusalem, failed. Thus, the Palestinians’ debacle in the civil war activated the regular armies’ invasion and the Arab-Israeli war.

The Palestinians’ collapse occurred when the British were still masters of Palestine. Britain had sufficient air and land forces in the country to stop the Haganah had the British authorities wanted to employ them. Determined to complete their withdrawal according to schedule, the British were reluctant to intervene. They also rejected Abdullah’s plea to deploy the Arab Legion in Palestinian Arab hamlets and cautioned neighboring states against any thoughts of premature invasion to hold back the Jewish offensive.

In April-May 1948, the British looked on while the Haganah crushed the Palestinians and the ALA. They passively witnessed the storming of Tiberias, Haifa and Safed, as well as many Arab villages. All the British did

in the face of the Palestinians' mass flight was occasionally provide escapees with transport and escort them to the closest place of asylum. The only exception was Jaffa where the British intervened with vigor to stop the /ZL (Jrgun Zvai Leumi [National Military Organization]) assault. Contrary to the other three towns, Jaffa was within the boundaries of the partition plan's Arab state.

Britain's disposition did not stem from any particular sympathy with the Jewish cause. Its main objective was preparing the ground for Abdullah's seizure of the country's Arab areas after termination of the mandate. Already in February 1948, the British had reached the conclusion that annexing Arab Palestine to Transjordan was the only way to fill the vacuum and avoid chaos in the region at the end of the mandate. They decided to endorse the king's ambition although it violated the UN resolution to establish a Palestinian state. Yet, Abdullah's aspirations were unpopular among the Palestinians and other Arab states; all the League's members except Iraq were likely to oppose their implementation. The Palestinians' defeat should have made them, and the Arab states as well, more amenable to annexation — in the absence of any practical alternative.

This was the only plot against the Palestinians if there was any at all. It was British, and not Israeli-Transjordanian. Between February and August 1948 the Jews and Abdullah had no political contacts except Golda Meyerson's (later, Meir) futile interview with the king in Amman on the eve of the invasion. Although the Arab Legion did not invade the territory of the Jewish state as the partition plan delineated it, the battles in Latrun and around Jerusalem were far from being faked or simulated. In Israeli eyes, the Legion was the principal enemy until July 1948.

Military intervention in Palestine had been a feasible contingency since the Arab League's conference at Bludan in June 1946. Nonetheless, the Arab governments had hesitated for a long time before deciding to employ their armies for that purpose. The Arab armies were young, untrained, inexperienced and poorly equipped with pre- or early Second World War types of armaments. A singular exception was the small Arab Legion that was commanded, modeled, and trained by British officers. None of these armies took any significant part in the Second World War. Their principal task

was defending their respective regimes against domestic subversion. Dispatching them to Palestine was likely to expose the rulers to internal dangers. The expeditions' possible failure might have triggered further risk when embittered troops would return from the battlefields and possibly endanger political stability — precisely what happened after the war. In four years, all Arab regimes that had gone to war in 1948 collapsed, and their leaders were either murdered or exiled. Only in Iraq, the Regent and Nuri Sa'id managed to survive longer — until the revolution of 1958.

Despite the Arab League's resolutions at Bludan, the member states had done nothing to prepare for a military intervention in Palestine until late in September 1947. When Britain announced its determination to withdraw from Palestine, the League's conference at Alia in Lebanon nominated a "technical" committee to examine the military implications of the new situation. Its chairman, the Iraqi retired General Isma'il Safwat, estimated the balance of power between the Palestinians and the Jews, and rightly concluded that the former had no chance. Urging the quick mobilization of volunteers, arms and money to help the Palestinians, Safwat stressed that this aid would only enable the Palestinians to endure. Frustrating Jewish statehood was feasible solely through the participation of regular armies, and then only after making essential preparations.

Competition and animosity within the Arab League made creation of a military coalition a difficult task. Aware of their domestic necessities and military defects, the Arab premiers discarded Safwat's advice. As a substitute, they embarked on the hasty formation of the ALA as a common enterprise of the League as a whole.

In April 1948, the ALA's setbacks and the Palestinians' defeat thrust the issue again into the Arab leaders' laps. Under pressure of public opinion aroused by news from Palestine and incited by wild rumors spread by Palestinian refugees, they reluctantly decided to invade the country. Yet, their hesitation persisted. Egypt delayed its decision to join the invading coalition until 12 May, three days before the mandate expired. Abdullah restricted his role to occupying the Arab areas in Judea and Samaria; he also contemplated the rescue of the holy places in Jerusalem, although his British advisors tried to dissuade him from undertaking such a mission. Lebanon was active in

forming the political coalition, but ultimately abstained from military participation, presumably owing to the still influential Christians' opposition, encouraged by Jewish bribes.

Miracles rarely, if ever, occur in wars. The stronger belligerent wins and the Israeli War of Independence was no exception. A detailed examination of the balance of power reveals that throughout most of the 1948 war, the Jews were superior in personnel, equipment, and organization. The sole exception to this rule was the transition period between the two stages of the war — from the outset of the invasion up until the first truce in June 1948, the Arab armies enjoyed a considerable superiority over the IDF in the air, in artillery, and light armor. Moreover, Jewish troops were exhausted after six months of combat and had already sustained heavy losses. By contrast, the invading formations were all fresh and complete. Nonetheless, even at this stage, the expeditionary forces and their local auxiliaries were quantitatively inferior to the scope of the Yishuv's mobilized personnel.

Throughout the rest of the war, the Haganah and the IDF were stronger in magnitude of military personnel although neither they nor their enemies fully realized this fact. At the beginning of hostilities, the Palestinians had nothing that might resemble the Haganah, with all its shortcomings, or compete with it. The Palestinian's mobilized power never exceeded a few thousand, while during December 1947 alone the Yishuv enrolled 10,000 full-time recruits. The Haganah absorbed them and embarked on their training and organization in new and larger formations. Conscription according to age and marital status increased the number to 35,000 by midMay 1948. Although the ALA and other foreigners simultaneously enhanced Arab power by a few more thousand fighters, the disparity grew in favor of the Jews.

Continuing enlistment of additional age groups, volunteers from abroad and new immigrants, brought the IDF peak for the duration of the war to 117,500 recruits. Owing to casualties and early discharges, however, there were never more than 90,000 on active duty at any one time. The Arab expeditionary forces at their utmost height did not reach half that number. To this number one should add a few thousand Palestinian auxiliaries. This statistic, however, is somewhat misleading, and the disparity was not as big

as it appears. The Israeli figures included the IDF’s entire logistic infrastructure that lacked a parallel among the invaders whose supply depots remained at home. Nonetheless, there was still a considerable difference in the IDF’s favor.

Jewish material superiority was also significant, though never admitted. Only one of the Haganah’s experts on Arab affairs (“Arabists”) claimed as early as January 1, 1948: “Our appreciation of the Arab armed forces is highly pretentious. They don’t have as many weapons as we think.” This correct statement held in question a deep-seated belief that was as old as the British reign in Palestine. A prevalent myth assumed that the Arabs enjoyed a considerable superiority of armaments over the Haganah.

During the civil war, the Palestinians’ performance and the information on available arms in various places did not support the orthodox evaluation of the arsenal at their disposal. The shortage of arms and munitions was their principal source of anxiety, fuelled both by scarcity inside the country and difficulties of obtaining weapons abroad. The ALA brought a certain number of support arms and a few artillery pieces and armored vehicles. Although the gap narrowed, the picture did not materially change, and the Haganah continued to maintain its relative edge.

Most Arab armies depended on Britain for supply of arms, munitions, spare parts, and other war materiel. Hence, they suffered heavily from the embargo that the UN Security Council imposed in May 1948. Only toward the end of the war did Arab governments find alternative sources of supply on the free European arms market and means of shipping purchased armaments to Arab ports. By contrast, the Israelis — endowed with long-time experience in clandestine purchase of weapons — efficiently circumvented the embargo. By July, the IDF had balanced the initial superiority of the

Arab armies in heavy equipment, later regaining the lead in several types of weaponry.[18]

Yet, military superiority was insufficient to explain the final outcomes of the war. The quantitative advantages in personnel and equipment, as well as the qualitative gaps in training, organization, technical skills, battle experience, unity of purpose, and unified command were not sufficient on their own to cause the Arabs' — and particularly the Palestinians' — unprecedented rout. On a man-to-man basis, the Palestinian urban garrison, the raiders in the countryside, and the fighters in ambush along the roads were not significantly inferior qualitatively to their Jewish opponents. Ultimately, the enormous Jewish advantage lay in the social, cultural, moral, organizational, and technical infrastructure behind the warriors, and successful transformation and application of these factors in the military sphere. The disparity between a modern but still not pampered society and a traditional-patriarchal community was a principal factor in deciding the outcome of the war.

The military triumph notwithstanding, the war of 1948 was the most costly that Israel has ever fought. Lack of preparedness, dilettantism, and mistaken conceptions — not Arab might — were the main reasons for the high death toll. Until the war, the Yishuv's political and military leadership believed that the Great Powers would safeguard implementation of the partition solution adopted by the General Assembly against any outside onslaught. Ben-Gurion was the only exception to this view. His colleagues, however, did not share Ben-Gurion's vision of the approaching war and consistently objected to his demands to prepare the Yishuv for a total war and modify or transform the Haganah accordingly. Before the outbreak of hostilities, this organization conceived its responsibility only in terms of overcoming the likelihood of local Palestinian opposition. It prepared for an enhanced repetition of the Palestinian revolt of 1936/9, ignoring potential dangers from across the border. Various setbacks that the Haganah sustained in the course of the early phase of the civil war demonstrated that it had not been properly prepared even for that contingency. Response and reorganization in the midst of battle took time, and a high proportion of casualties paid the price for this lack of preparedness. Several myths surrounding the war have masked guilt-feelings about this lack of preparedness and were circulated to vindicate the leadership for any responsibility in the enormous number of casualties.

All these reservations notwithstanding, the 1948 war was Israel's most prominent campaign against the Arabs. It was the only war in which Israel succeeded in translating a military victory into a political settlement. Despite all the difficulties, this settlement survived eighteen crucial years during which the State of Israel consolidated its position through the admission of millions of immigrants and development of the infrastructure necessary to absorb and integrate them into a cohesive and vibrant society.

The armistice agreements of 1949 ended the fighting, but neither addressed the causes of the war nor solved its consequences. At first, Israel regarded these accords as an interim phase leading to talks about a permanent settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the signing of peace treaties. These hopes were not consummated. The armistice regime persisted until the Six Day War in 1967, and the permanent settlement still seems to be far from near at hand even at the time of writing this essay, in the closing days of the twentieth century.

Transforming the armistice into peace was the task of the Palestine Conciliation Commission. Late in April 1949, the PCC convened the parties at a conference in Lausanne (Switzerland) that ended inconclusively in August of the same year. The PCC failed to bridge the enormous gaps between the adversaries and could not even bring them together. Subsequently, it embarked on reviewing the conditions of the Palestinian refugees and devising solutions for their temporary rehabilitation. Two more rounds of talks — at the beginning of 1950 and in the fall of 1951 — ended in failure and the PCC disappeared into oblivion. Attempts at mediation and direct talks between Israel on the one hand, and Jordan, Egypt and Syria (separately) on the other, also proved futile.

During this period — from 1949 to 1967 — the Palestinians receded from the political scene. Those who remained in Israel, as well as those who returned legally or illegally in the first year after the war, became Israeli citizens. The indigenous Palestinians on the West Bank and the refugees on both banks were incorporated into Jordan, which granted them full citizenship. There were also "Egyptian" Palestinians in the Gaza Strip as well as "Syrian" and "Lebanese" Palestinians in refugee camps in Syria and Lebanon — all without

recognized citizenship. The concept “Palestinian” as such vanished, unless it was linked to the word “refugee.”

Only in the wake of the Six Day War did the Palestinians return to the political arena under their own banner. Since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip but did not annex them, the inhabitants of these areas ceased to be “Jordanian” and “Egyptian” but did not become “Israeli.” They reappeared as simply “Palestinians” — a term that had been forgotten for 18 years. After relations between Israel and the Arab states stabilized in the wake of the Yom Kippur war in 1973, the Palestinian question returned to the center of the Israeli-Arab conflict.

Four issues have curtailed all ventures to reconcile the Arab states and the Palestinians with Israel after the war of 1948. These four issues still constitute an insurmountable hindrance to any permanent settlement.

The first issue has been territorial. Israel inherited Mandatory Palestine’s international borders with the adjacent Arab states. The Arab armies violated these lines by their invasion of Palestine in May 1948 and — except the Arab Legion — violated the borders of the Jewish state according to the UN resolution of November 29, 1947. Nevertheless, Israel accepted the international borders and in 1949 withdrew its forces from Egyptian and Lebanese territories in preparation for or in the wake of the armistice negotiations. Until 1967, Egypt demanded a corridor through the Negev that separated it from the rest of the Arab world as a precondition for any settlement with Israel. As part of the Camp David peace treaty with Egypt, Israel again evacuated all Egyptian territories that had been occupied in 1967. In return, Egypt recognized the legitimacy of its international border with Israel, but not Israel’s other borders.

Israel’s border with Syria has posed a different problem. Unlike the other Arab states, Syria has never recognized its international border with Palestine whose demarcation had been determined by an Anglo-French pact in December 1920 and modified later — in 1923, during the process of setting up border markers in the field. In 1949, Syria refused to withdraw its army behind this line. The compromise that the UN mediator devised —

defining the controversial area between the former Syrian lines on Jordan River's western bank and the international border as a "demilitarised zone," was open to contradictory interpretations by the adversaries. For all intents and purposes, partitioned in practice by Syria and Israel in 1951–3, this "demilitarized" area remained a constant source of friction until the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights in 1967.

The most crucial territorial problem, however, has been the border between Israelis and Palestinians. The armistice lines of 1949 separated between Israel on the one hand, and Egypt and Jordan on the other. From a Palestinian standpoint, the armistice lines (in popular parlance the "Green Line," as designated on maps) have been meaningless and noncommitting. Continuous infiltration into Israel manifested this attitude. The only internationally recognized line separating Israelis from Palestinians has been the 1947 partition borders. At the PCC talks in Lausanne, the Arab states insisted that this line be a starting point for discussion of the territorial issue. Under heavy American pressure and fears that Israel would not be admitted as a member to the UN, the Israeli delegation succumbed to this demand (presented by the PCC as its own). After Ben-Gurion ignored their request for instructions, the delegates signed the document known as "The Lausanne Protocol," which accepted the principle of the 1947 lines as the basis for territorial discussions, although it allowed the parties to suggest modifications. Subsequently, the PCC dismissed the scheme of border amendments submitted by Israel as going far beyond what the commissioners had meant by the term "modifications." The PCC even refused to hand the Israeli proposals over to the Arab delegations. Thus, the territorial discussion reached a stalemate at the very beginning of the conference and has remained such ever since.

The Arabs also linked the claim for Israel's withdrawal to the partition lines with the refugee issue. In Lausanne and elsewhere, Arab delegates maintained that the more territory Israel would cede, the less would be the scope of the remaining refugee problem after the return of some to the vacated area.

Apparently, the second issue, which has been posed by the Palestinian refugees, is the most crucial. Several other major refugee problems have

emerged in the world during the twentieth century — in Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Balkans, India and Pakistan, Vietnam, and various countries in Africa. Most have found their solution long ago. Only the eternal Palestinian refugee problem has endured, affecting all parties concerned. More than any other single factor of the Israeli-Arab conflict, the Palestinian refugee problem manifests its unique features as a confrontation between opposing civilizations, extending beyond the ordinary national or religious level of other historical encounters.

Israel's efforts to convince the Palestinians, the Arab states, and the entire world that this problem should be solved by resettlement have been sincere, but geo-culturally out of context. The Israeli approach derived from the European experience, particularly after the Second World War. The mass repatriation of millions after the war concerned only the Allies' nationals. Refugees or deportees of the defeated belligerents resettled to begin life anew elsewhere. Germany absorbed millions of deportees from the Sudeten in Czechoslovakia and from Silesia. Poles, whom the Russians had driven out of Galicia, resettled in Silesia. Chetnik and Ustacha refugees did not go back to Yugoslavia. Israel wanted to apply this principle to the Middle East — to a large extent oblivious of the deep-seated difference in historical experience.

In the fifty years that have transpired since the 1948 war, the Arab world has not absorbed the refugees, although various states — especially in the Arab Peninsula — exploited their skills. A partial exception was Transjordan. While individual refugees settled to begin life anew in and outside the region, the majority barely mixed with their hosts neither in the W'est Bank and Gaza Strip nor in the Arab countries. They have remained aloof from the indigenous population — socially and geographically — living in their separate camps and expecting their return.

The Arab world the refugees themselves, other Palestinians, and the Arab states — rejected forthwith the Israeli approach to the problem and Israel's proposals to resolve the problem. The implied message has been unequivocal: (I) the Palestinian refugees are Israel's creation and responsibility, and it should not expect the Arab world to help solving the problem or share the responsibility for their ultimate fate. (2) the Arabs have not been able to crush Jewish statehood, but Israel should not expect them

to comply with its alien code of behavior. Unlike Europe, the pattern in the Middle East has been that war refugees return to their homes when hostilities end, and do not resettle elsewhere. Israel has to reckon with this twofold message. Yet, unless the Jewish state is ready to commit national suicide with a demographic Damoclean sword — allowing the abolition of Israel's Jewish character and its hegemony as a social and political entity — it is difficult to foresee how the problem can be solved

A third focal issue has been Jerusalem. In Arab eyes, Jerusalem embodies the whole conflict because apart from its religious and historical significance, the fate of the holy city also concerns the territorial and refugee issues. Although Jerusalem has had a Jewish majority since the middle of the nineteenth century, the town was also the seat of the Arab elite in Palestine and the traditional center of Arab political life.

In Jewish eyes, Jerusalem is primarily the historical capital of the Jewish people, the holy city, for generations the focal point for historical yearnings (i.e., "Next Year in Jerusalem") for a return to Zion. The town's fate in 1948 symbolized the UN's failure to implement the partition plan. Israel therefore preferred sharing the city with Jordan rather than internationalization as the least of all evils, and both states cooperated in frustrating UN attempts to revive internationalization. With Jordan's disappearance from the West Bank in 1967, Israel annexed Jerusalem. Ever since it has tried hard to deny the Palestinians any political foothold in the town, claiming that they have neither historical nor political status in Jerusalem. Once more, this seems to be an unbridgeable gap.

The fourth issue concerns Arab reconciliation with Israel. After their defeat in 1948, the Arab states adopted a series of UN resolutions — to which they had vehemently objected prior to their military debacle — as the cornerstone of their political case against Israel. These resolutions concerned the aforementioned issues of the partition and borders, the refugees, and Jerusalem. While insisting on their strict fulfillment, the Arab states refused to commit themselves to recognition of, and peaceful and friendly relations with, their new neighbor. Political and economic relations with Israel, they asserted, were their own business and should not be linked to implementing UN resolutions, which should be an international commitment.

This attitude persisted until Anuar Sadat’s peace initiative in 1977 and has considerably transformed in recent years across most of the Arab world, although genuine acceptance of the “legitimacy” of a non-Muslim entity such as the State of Israel in their midst remains fundamentally unresolved. The basic issues concerning Israeli-Palestinian relations have not been tackled yet and continue to cast a shadow on Israel’s relations with the Arab states as well.

The Israeli-Palestinian dialogue since the Oslo pact has been conducted on two different levels which, unfortunately, do not seem to be converging: Ultimately, the vast majority of Israelis seeks coexistence with the Arabs and understands that such coexistence requires compromise and concessions on Israel’s part. Apart from marginal groups on both extremes, domestic controversies among Israelis do not concern the principle of compromise and concession, but its implementation: How far to compromise and what should be the limit of accommodation. The Palestinians strive for neither coexistence nor compromise but for justice’. The final and permanent settlement with Israel should remedy the wrongs that have allegedly been done to them, at least since the UN partition plan if not since the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Justice as framed by the Palestinians is an absolute: pure — recognizing no compromises, exclusive — with no apparent leeway for reciprocity in the pursuit of “righting historical wrongs.” As long as Israeli concessions meet the Palestinians’ conceptions of justice — the dialogue persists. When Israel stops conceding and insists on any of its positions calling for compromise — the Palestinian struggle for what they perceive as their “just rights” is likely to erupt again.

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** 3. Between the Right of Return and Attempts of Resettlement

Mohamed Hawary

Aside from the land problem, the issue of the refugees is the cornerstone of the Palestinian national question at the present time. For the Palestinian refugee problem lies at the heart of the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian—Israeli conflict.

Estimates vary of the number of Palestinian refugees displaced from within what became the borders of Israel in 1948. In 1949, the United Nations Conciliation Commission put the number at 726,000; the newly- established United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) subsequently put the number at 960,021 in June 1950.[19] The Israeli government has, in the past, suggested numbers as low as 520,000, while Palestinian researchers have suggested up to 850,000. It was estimated that, before the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli war on May 15, 1948, the number of Palestinian refugees had reached about 300.000.[20] This figure rose. In October 1948 it was 472,000; in November, 600,000; in March ,700,000; in April, 900,000; in June, 1,000,000; in June, 1958, the number had reached 1.053,628, and 1,344.576 in May, 1967. By the late 1960s, it was estimated that the number of Palestinian refugees had grown to 2 million.[21] The early figures were probably exaggerated and certainly dropped back when fighting stopped. [22]

It was estimated that over 410,000 Palestinians were displaced in 1967, some of them for the second time.[23] According to the Report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA submitted to the Twenty-second Session of the UN General Assembly, 234,000 Arabs were refugees from Jordan, Syria, and the Sinai Peninsula following the crisis of June 5, 1967. This is in addition to the 100,000 “old” refugees who lied their refugee camps (where they were registered with UNRWA) when these were overrun by the Israeli army. The refugee population continued to grow, and these numbers increased day by day.[24]

Estimates put the Palestinian population at approximately 6.6 million in 1995. In 1995, UNRWA data indicated some 3,172,641 registered refugees in

its “area of operation” (West Bank, Gaza, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon), plus an estimated 335,000 non-registered “displaced persons.”[25]

The political weight and dimension of the Palestine refugee problem is underlined by the fact that Palestinians in exile make up 58 percent of the total Palestinian population (over six million) and that they also make up 56 percent of the population inside the Occupied Territories. There are three million Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA: 37.8% live in the West Bank and Gaza, 39.7% in Jordan, 11.2% in Lebanon, 10.9% in Syria.

*** UN Resolutions

The “right UN Resolutions of return” was endorsed and ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1948. It reads as follows:

<quote>

The right of the Arab refugees to return to their homes in Jewish controlled territory at earliest possible date should be affirmed by the UN, and their repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation, and payment of adequate compensation for property of those choosing not to return, should be supervised and assisted by the UN Conciliation Commission.[26]

</quote>

On May 14, 1948, Count Folke Bernadotte was appointed Mediator pursuant to a resolution of the General Assembly. In his report to the Third Session of the General Assembly, he stated:

<quote>

No settlement can be just and complete if recognition is not accorded to the right of the Arab refugee to return to the home from which he has been dislodged by the hazards and strategy of the armed conflict between Arabs

and Jews in Palestine. The majority of these refugees have come from territory which, under the Assembly resolution of 29 November, was to be included in the Jewish state.... It would be an offence against the principles of elemental justice if these innocent victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine, and, indeed, at least offer the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.[27]

</quote>

The UN established the “right of return” of Palestinians in Resolution 194(111) on December 11, 1948, which has become the foundation of all subsequent United Nations’ pronouncements on the question of the Palestinian Refugees. Paragraph 11 of this resolution reads:

<quote>

Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.[28]

</quote>

Resolution 194 upheld the right of the refugees to repatriation to Palestine. It also upheld the right of every Palestinian who may not opt to return to full compensation.[29]

Resolution 194 instructed the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine “to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees ... ”[30] Israel refused to implement the General Assembly resolution.[31] In its Third Progress Report, the Conciliation Commission stated that it had not succeeded in achieving the acceptance by Israel of the principle of the repatriation of the Palestine

refugees. This resolution has been reiterated every year since, and the UN is legally and morally bound to carry it out.

Following the 1967 war, several UN resolutions called for the return of the Palestinian refugees. On June 14, 1967, Resolution 237 was endorsed by the General Assembly, which declared:

<quote>

that essential and inalienable human rights should be respected even during the vicissitudes of war.

calls upon the government of Israel to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities.[32]

</quote>

However, Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, called “for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem.” So far, the UN has not been successful in securing Israel’s acknowledgment of the right of return for the Palestinians. The Assembly explicitly called upon Israel to “take effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who had fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities.”

Israel has persistently refused to implement the two resolutions and has adopted further illegitimate measures against the civilian population left in the occupied territories.[33]

Israel was required to cooperate in the return of the second wave of Palestinian refugees to their homes. The combined efforts of the International Red Cross, UNRWA, and the Great Powers succeeded in securing the repatriation of only 14,000 of the Palestinian refugees displaced in June 1967. However, at the same time as this token repatriation. Israel forced 17.000 Palestinians to leave the occupied territories and to seek refuge on the East Bank of the Jordan River.[34]

It is clear that the Palestinian refugees have certain inalienable rights:

- The “right to return” to their homes and lands in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related Geneva Conventions. This includes refugees who were uprooted from Palestine in 1948 and those who were displaced in the wake of the 1967 Israeli invasion of the West Bank and Gaza.

- The right to be compensated for individual property, as well as property arbitrarily expropriated or taken by force. Proper compensation should be paid to all refugees who choose to return, and to those who choose to be naturalized in the host countries.

- The provision of humanitarian assistance and basic services without prejudice to the right of return.

- The right to self-determination without external interference.

- The right to national independence and sovereignty.

- The right to nationality — the Palestinian nationality.

- Civil and religious rights.

- The right of visitation to holy places.[35]

*** Human Rights and the Right of Return

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has a right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. [36]

On May 7, 1968, the International Conference on Human Rights “affirmed the inalienable rights of all inhabitants who have left their homes as a result of the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East to return home, resume their normal life, recover their property and homes, and rejoin their families according to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”[37]

It is evident that many universally recognized human rights are directly applicable to refugees. These include the right to life, protection from torture and ill-treatment, the right to a nationality, the right to freedom of movement, the right to leave any country, including one’s own, and to return to one’s country, and the right not to be forcibly returned.

**** The right of return

Between 1949 and 1967, Israel consistently argued that the return of the refugees would undermine its national security and dilute the Jewish character of the state.[38] To complete the uprooting of the Palestinians and to make difficult a reversal of the situation, Israel not only refused their repatriation, but it took two other measures:

- In 1950 Israel enacted the Law of Return, which granted to every Jew in the world potential citizenship and enabled any Jew who desired it to immigrate to Israel and settle there. Millions of Jews have immigrated to Israel and have been given the lands and the homes of the Palestinian refugees.[39]

- The Israeli Government destroyed a great number of Arab villages to prevent their inhabitants, who had fled or had been forced to evacuate, from returning to their homes.[40]

In July 1949, a conference representing refugees in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Syria adopted the following resolution “The Arabs of Palestine insist upon the return of the refugees to their homes in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly, including the provisions thereof for compensation and guarantees of property, rights, and personal security. They reject any scheme or plan calling for their resettlement in the Arab countries.[41] In 1965, the Commissioner-General of UNRWA pointed out that the refugees “use every opportunity to stress the intensity of their aspirations and hopes to return to their former homelands.”[42]

The right of an individual to return to his home in his native country is an integral part of an individual’s fundamental rights. In cases where people have been forced to leave their country because of war and hostilities, the right of return is unquestionable. In 1971, twelve million refugees left Bangladesh. However when the India Pakistan war came to an end, they all returned to their homes.[43] In Palestine itself, 40,000 Arabs fled during the Arab rebellion of 1936–9. But they came back when peace was restored.[44] The same has happened in all other wars: When the war comes to an end, the refugees return to their homes. But not so in the case of the Palestinians, who were displaced to make room for Jewish immigrants. They were expelled from their country to seek refuge in adjacent Arab lands and were denied the right of return on political and legal grounds.

For almost two decades, from 1953 to 1973, the Palestinian question was essentially treated as a “refugee problem.” This problem didn’t remain a purely economic or social issue, but became a political one as well. And, in 1974, the UN General Assembly acknowledged the Palestinians’ right to self-determination, and reaffirmed their inalienable right of return.

The attitude of the refugees has been clear since 1948. They are unwilling to accept anything short of a free choice to return to their homes and resume possession of their own property. This expression of desire has not altered

during the years and has been conveyed annually to the General Assembly by the director of the agency responsible for the relief of the refugees (UNRWA).[45]

The right of return is expressed in terms of both the moral claims of refugees to return to homes from which they have been displaced, and by reference to a number of UN resolutions. It is important to distinguish

between the “right of return” as a principle, and the exercising of that right by literally returning to Palestine as a national homeland (and to that same home or piece of land which a Palestinian owned before 1948),[46]

In any negotiated settlement it must be accepted that all Palestinian refugees and their descendants have a right to return to their homes in principle. Return to Palestinian National Authority areas is not a substitute for the “right of return” of the refugees of 1948.[47] At the very least, Israel should take into its territory several tens of thousands of refugees, particularly those who have family members living inside Israel.[48]

**** Resettlement

From 1948 to the early 1990s Israel has attempted to ignore the existence of the Palestine problem. Israel’s official attitude since 1948 has been that there is no Palestine problem, only a refugee problem, which should be resolved by resettlement of the Palestinians outside their own country. Israel offered to assist in the resettlement of the refugees elsewhere, and offered to compensate for their property destroyed or requisitioned during the war.[49] Having succeeded in displacing and dispersing the Palestinians in various parts of the Middle East, the Israelis thought they had put an end to the Palestinian entity and had thereby, solved the Palestine problem.[50]

In 1961, at the request of the Conciliation Commission, Dr. Joseph E. Johnson, President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, made a new study of the refugee problem. He proposed that “refugee heads of families,

insulated by the United Nations from pressure from any source, should be allowed to choose voluntarily between a return to Palestine and compensation."[51]

Johnson's proposals were rejected by the Israeli government in January 1962, with a reiteration of a Knesset resolution of November 1961, which asserted that Arab refugees could not return to Israel and that the only solution to the problem was Palestinian settlement in the Arab states.[52]

Well-meaning people who suggest that the Palestinians should have a homeland either in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip or elsewhere outside their own homeland are the victims of Israeli-Zionist propaganda. This view points to the vastness of the Arab world and suggests that the Palestinians should not begrudge the Israelis for taking the small land of Palestine when the Palestinians can live in some other corner of the Arab world. But the vast expanses of the Arab world — mostly arid desert — are not their homeland, and the Palestinians have neither the right nor the intention to live in any country other than their own, whether it be Transjordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, or elsewhere.[53]

Many solutions to the Palestinian refugee issue have been proffered, but all invariably ignore the United Nations resolutions and the Palestine

Arabs' legitimate right to return to their country. Perhaps the most persistent proposed solution is that the refugees should be resettled in Arab countries. The answer to this suggestion may be found in the Secretary- General's report for 1959. He warned: "No reintegration would be satisfactory, or even possible, were it to be brought about by forcing people into their new positions against their will. It must be freely accepted, if it is to yield lasting results in the form of economic and political stability."[54]

It is difficult to see how those states which support Israel's right to exist can honestly deny to the Palestinians their own natural right to exist and to live in peace and freedom in their own homeland.[55]

*** Palestinian Refugees in the Host Arab States

Some scholars and politicians, especially in Israel, have maintained that the Palestinian refugee issue would gradually be eliminated by utilizing the Arab host countries. The last five decades have proven this view wrong. In fact, the conditions of Palestinian refugees in the host Arab countries, especially those who live in camps, are very miserable.

The dispersal of the Palestinians in 1948 deprived them of the basic right to citizenship. Arab states do not grant foreigners full residency status, which includes either naturalization or permission to remain indefinitely.

Marriage to a female citizen of a country does not constitute grounds for naturalization or special residency rights either for the husband who is not a national or the resulting children. Very few Palestinians in Syria and

Egypt managed to obtain citizenship; and those who did were mainly from families who had settled there before 1948. Although Palestinians in Syria receive equal treatment to Syrians, they do not have citizenship rights. In Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States, a few families were granted nationality as acknowledgment of their long and special service to these countries. In Lebanon, about fifty thousand Palestinians, mainly Christians or those having family connections, acquired Lebanese nationality in the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, the majority of Palestinians scattered in various Arab countries, except for those in Jordan, have refugee documents (RDs). But RDs in most Arab states do not confer secure residency status.

In Lebanon, not long after the expulsion of the PLO in 1982, the Lebanese authorities embarked on a policy to reduce the number of Palestinian refugees. Thousands of refugees were forced to leave. A diplomatic row broke out between Lebanon and Jordan in the early 1990s when Lebanon began to expel Palestinians to Jordan. In Kuwait, few Palestinians were granted Kuwaiti citizenship. After the PLO failed to condemn Saddam Hussein

for his invasion of Kuwait in August 1991, the Kuwaiti-Palestinian relationship collapsed. After the eviction of the Iraqi army, Palestinians were expelled, arrested, and, on occasion, killed. Despite this, some were allowed to stay in Kuwait. However, they no longer have a public or political profile in the country.

Some Palestinians who fled from Kuwait went into exile in Yemen in 1991. Many of them continue to live in Iraq, suffering and living in miserable conditions. Like most Iraqis, they were middle class and are now sliding down on the economic ladder as sanctions diminish the economic value of their education.

At the time of the Gulf War most of the roughly thirty thousand stranded in Kuwait were originally from Gaza; there were also some Egyptian RDs. Similarly, many of the five thousand Palestinian workers expelled from Libya in August 1995, who became stranded at the Salloum camp on the Egyptian-Libyan border, were Egyptian RD holders but were denied entry into Egypt.

Palestinian refugees considered Libya as one of the most liberal Arab states as far as allowing entry and work. Many Palestinians found refuge in Libya after losing their right of residency in Palestine, due to the Israeli occupation, or in other Arab host countries, because of political or administrative reasons. Recently, residency in Libya is not as secure as many Palestinians had hoped. In 1995, the Libyan government expelled hundreds of Palestinians as a means of demonstrating its political control.[56] The Libyan government expressed its intention to reduce the number of foreign workers in the country and since 1995 has deported many thousands. However, unlike other foreign laborers, who can return to their countries, the Palestinians often have no country to which they can go.[57] For example, the Lebanese government announced they would not allow any ships carrying Palestinians expelled from Libya entry to Lebanese ports, and they were closing the shipping routes between the two countries. These are tragic circumstances for the individual refugee concerned. This attitude toward Palestinian refugees could occur on an even greater scale, for some Arab host governments have attempted to reduce the number of Palestinians by changing the requirements for the right of residency and by putting limits on the validity of their current documents.

The 30,000 Palestinians who were stranded in Kuwait during the Gulf War, and the majority of those in Libya, are part of the quarter million Palestinians in this world who have no country in which to seek refuge.

Since 1948, Palestinians have probably been in the majority in Jordan. In the camps, they suffer from miserable living conditions.[58] The refugees have lived in these camps since the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. Almost all Palestinians in Jordan have been granted citizenship and have full rights. Though given citizenship by the Jordanian government, most of them have been categorically opposed to resettlement in any of the Arab countries.[59] Their representation in the Jordanian parliament is, however, limited. Their role and identification as Palestinians has sometimes been a source of tension. In 1970, a leftist Palestinian party proclaimed the desire to depose the king and set up a republic; an ugly civil war ensued. A few months after these events, Yasser Arafat said: “What took place in Black September was not simply an attack by the Jordanian military regime against the revolution but an attempt of genocide against the Palestinian population as a whole.”[60]

The Palestinians of Lebanon have been, in many ways, both the most successful and the most discriminated against. When compared with other Palestinians living in Arab host countries, such as Jordan and Syria, Palestinians in Lebanon are the most marginalized and least assimilated into Lebanese society. Recently some 30,000 Palestinians, Christians, and Muslims were granted citizenship. The issue in Lebanon is the fate of the 352,700, most of whom are banned from almost any kind of work and are restricted in movement, enjoying almost no rights whatsoever. This group lives in refugee camps.

Although Palestinians have been in Lebanon for nearly 50 years, and despite the fact that two or three generations have been born in Lebanon, Palestinians are still treated as foreigners and have been denied basic human rights. Successive Lebanese governments have denied the Palestinians civil, social, and economic rights since the Palestinians took refuge in Lebanon in 1948. Palestinians are not allowed to work in the public sector or in

governmental institutions; neither are they allowed to engage in many professions. They are also required to obtain an official permit to work in the private sector. Obtaining work permits is very difficult, almost impossible. [61] Palestinians in Lebanon are banned from seeking education in Lebanese public schools. The Lebanese argue that this group, which is almost exclusively Sunni Muslim and poor, would completely destroy Lebanon’s sectarian balance.

*** Conclusion

The existence of more than five million Palestinian refugees, many of them still living in camps in the Palestinian territory, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, fifty years after the events of 1947–8 is a constant and very human reminder that the issue remains unresolved to this day, despite the passage of so many resolutions by the UNGA and by the Security Council. Indeed, it is one of these resolutions, 242, which affirms, amongst other things, the necessity of a just solution to the refugee issue — which was the basis for the Madrid Conference in 1991.

Any final solution to the problem must pay more than lip service to the principle of choice for the refugees — choice between repatriation and rehabilitation. Of course, Israel’s requirements for security would have to be met, but Israel has to date never accepted that the refugees have the right of choice.[62]

The only legal and valid framework for a just and legitimate settlement is General Assembly Resolution 181, on the establishment of a Palestinian state and of an Israeli state within secure, defined, and recognized boundaries; Resolution 194, on the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland and live in peace with their neighbors; and Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which are general formulations, complementary to the other valid resolutions.[63]

With regard to the Palestine Question, the only way to restore right and justice in Palestine is for the UN, with the assistance of the International

Court of Justice, if necessary, to reappraise the situation and, regardless of conditions created by force, to lay down a new formula for peace. Such a peace formula should restore peace and bring about “justice.” “Justice” requires the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homes, and the restoration of the human rights and fundamental freedoms.[64]

This problem — which in essence is the Middle East problem — will not go away without a fair and just solution to the refugee problem. The alternative is continuing economic and political instability.

Finally, let us imagine that only 5 percent of the Palestinian refugees who live in exile reject the suggested solution of resettlement; this means that more than 250.000 Palestinians will fight to restore their rights by force, generation after generation.

It is important to understand that “compensation” does not mean that this compensation should be paid to “all refugees” as a price for their forgotten homeland. A “homeland” is not for sale. Palestinians of this generation have no right to sell their homeland. They are not the only owners; it is not just a piece of land in a field, or a tree in a garden. It is a great value which they have inherited from their ancestors, and should be bequeathed to their descendants.

[19] See: Louise W. Holborn, “The Palestine Arab Refugee Problem,” in The Arab-Israeli Conflict, ed. John Norton Moore. Vol. I: Readings (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 670; George J. Tomeh, “Legal Status of Arab Refugees,” in The Arab Israeli Conflict, ed. John Norton Moore, Vol. I: Readings (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 679; Hadawi, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 19.

[20] Henry Cattan, Palestine and International Law, The Legal Aspects of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (London: Longman, 2nd edn.,

1976), p. 138; Charles Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel (London: The Bodley Head Ltd, 1970), p. 38: Hadawi, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 19; Holborn, “The Palestine Arab Refugee Problem,” p. 670; Tomeh, “Legal Status of Arab Refugees,” p. 679.

[21] Ritchie Ovendale, The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Wars (London: Longman, 2nd edn., 1992), p. 138.

[22] Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 38.

[23] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 139.

[24] Tomeh, “Legal Status of Arab Refugees” p. 680.

[25] Displaced Persons are those individuals and their families and descendants who left their homes in the West Bank and Gaza, or were unable to return to their homes, as a consequence of the 1967 war.

[26] Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine Submitted to the Secretary-General for Transmission to the Members of the United Nations, UN GAOR, Supp. 11, at 17–19, UN Doc. A/648 (1948). See John Norton Moore, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, Vol. Ill: Documents (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 371.

[27] Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine, 3 UN GAOR, Supp. 11, at 14, UN Doc. A/648 (1948) See Tomeh, “Legal Status of Arab Refugees,” p. 685.

[28] General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) Concerning the Progress Report of the United Nations mediator, December 11, 1948. 3 UN GAOR, Resolutions, at 21–25, UN Doc. A/810; See Moore, Vol. Ill: Documents, p. 376; Sami Hadawi, Palestine in the United Nations (New York:

The Arab Information Center, 1964), p. 47; Holborn, “The Palestine Arab Refugee Problem,” pp.668–9.

[29] Hazem Zaki Nuseibeh, Palestine and the United Nations (London: Quartet Books, 1982), p. 52.

[30] UN Document AI927, June 21, 1949. See Cattan, pp. 136, 231; Nuseibeh, Palestine and the United Nations, p. 52; Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 41; Hadawi, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 23–4.

[31] Moore, Vol. Ill: Documents, p. 1035.

[32] General Assembly Resolution 2452 A (XXIII) of December 19, 1968. See Moore, Vol. Ill: Documents, p. 836.

[33] Tomeh, “Legal Status of Arab Refugees,” pp. 680–1.

[34] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 139.

[35] Tomeh, “Legal Status of Arab Refugees,” p. 681.

[36] See: Moore, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, Vol. Ill: Documents, pp. 833–4.

[37] Ibid., p. 834.

[38] Karen A. Feste, Plan for Peace, Negotiation and the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1991), p. 68.

[39] In 1946 the number of Jews in Palestine amounted to 608,000. See: Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 137; Nuseibeh, Palestine and the United Nations, p. 58; Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 40.

[40] See: Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 137; Nuseibeh, Palestine and the United Nations, p. 32.

[41] Naseer H. Aruri, Jordan: A Study in Political Development (1921–1965) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), pp. 45–6.

[42] Report of the Commissioner-General of UN R WA for Palestine. Refugees in the Near East, July 1,1965. See: Aruri, Jordan, p. 46.

[43] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 139; see: Hadawi, The Arab-Israeli Conflict, p. 22.

[44] Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 38.

[45] Hadawi, Palestine in the United Nations, p. 20.

[46] Ziad Abu Zayyad, “The Palestinian Right of Return: A Realistic Approach,” Palestine-Israel Journal! (Spring 1994): 77.

[47] See: “CommentaryA in Shaml Newsletter No. 3, June 1996, p. 4.

[48] Cf. Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 48.

[49] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 238; Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 40.

[50] Dr. Johnson served as Special Representative of the Commission from August 1961 to January 1963.

[51] Holborn, “The Palestine Arab Refugee Problem,” p. 675.

[52] Ibid., p. 675.

[53] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 217.

[54] Hadawi, Palestine in the United Nations, p. 20 (UN Document A/4121).

[55] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 217.

[56] Abbas Shiblak, “A Time of Hardship and Agony: The Case of Palestinian Refugees in Libya,” article in Shand Newsletter No. I (December 1995).

[57] Ibid.

[58] Aruri, Jordan, pp. 27, 45; Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 44.

[59] Aruri, Jordan, p. 45; Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 44.

[60] Fatah’s view was presented through an interview with Yasser Arafat published in its official English language organ, Fateh, on March 23, 1971. See: Russell Stetler (ed.), Palestine The Arab-Israeli Conflict (San Francisco: Ramparts Press, 1972), p. 261.

[61] “A Policy of Marginalization and Covert Deportation Facing Palestinian in Lebanon,” article in Shand Newsletter No. 6 (February 1997).

[62] Douglas-Home, The Arabs and Israel, p. 48.

[63] Nuseibeh, Palestine and the United Nations, pp. 55–6.

[64] Cattan, Palestine and International Law, p. 241.

** 4. From a Doctrine-Oriented to a Solution-Oriented Policy: The PLO’s Right of Return, 1964–2000

Menachem Klein

In its early years (1964–8) the PLO did not separate the idea of the return of the refugees from the notion of “liberation.” In the first version of the

Palestinian National Charter (1964) the issue of return was only mentioned implicitly as a self-explanatory outcome of liberating Palestine. In this context, “liberation” was identified with Palestinian identity and return.[65] While the term “return” appeared in the first Palestinian National Council (PNC) decisions in 1964, the PLO used it in a narrow sense. As part of a program of reorientation directed from above, the PLO ordered that the term “returnees” replace that of “refugees” in its publications.[66] Because in its

early stages the PLO had a single-issue orientation and ideology, the idea of liberating Palestine was a central one; all other goals were seen as its mere outcomes. The hope for return did not disappear; rather it was as great as the dream of liberating Palestine entirely.[67]

*** The Fundamental Meaning of “Return”

The 1967 war forced the PLO to grapple with UN Security Council Resolution 242, which stressed the need for a just solution of the Palestinian refugee problem but without seeing it as a question of national self- determination as the PLO claimed. In response to this resolution, in 1968 the Palestinian Charter was amended to refer for the first time to the issue of return. The Palestinian National Charter set forth a series of absolute goals. The 1968 version of the charter described the Palestinian people and land as two organic entities that must be reunited. Article 9 of the Charter emphasized that the armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine ... The Palestinian Arab people assert their absolute determination and firm resolution to continue their armed struggle and to work for an armed popular revolution for the liberation of their country and their return to it.[68]

In the formative years that followed, the PLO was occupied in rebuilding national institutions and ideology, and return was defined as a national collective task. The PLO sought, then, to realize the return after liberating Palestine either by regular Arab armies, as the PLO hoped between 1964 and 1968, or by its own armed struggle as a vanguard of the Arab armies as it advocated after 1968. In the case of the PLO, the ideology during the formative period was clearly fundamental and reflected a concrete vision of total liberation. Such pressures as the civil war in Jordan in 1970 (“Black September”), Jordan’s federation program comprising of East and West Bank (1972), the 1973 war, and the political process which followed, all wrought changes on the operative level during the first half of the 1970s. Consequently, after 1974 the PLO also developed an operative ideology that served to justify a policy that was implemented. This policy’s political effect contradicted the overall vision and the means of its fulfillment as delineated

by the fundamental ideology, in addition to developing a middle ground between the fundamental and operative ideology.[69]

The first significant change in the PLO s doctrine of liberation occurred in 1974 when the 12th PNC adopted a political program implying that the liberation of Palestine would be divided into two consecutive phases. In establishing the base for an operative ideology, the PLO's first aim was to build "the people's national, independent and fighting authority on every part of Palestinian land to be liberated,"[70] and, thereafter, to complete its mission of liberation. In addition to legitimizing the use of political means, the program used the idiom the "right of return" (Haq al-'Awda) and put it at the forefront of the Palestinian rights. In the first paragraph of its platform, the PLO declared its rejection of UN Resolution 242, because "it obliterates the patriotic (wataniyah) and national (qawmiyah) rights of our people and deals with our people's cause as a refugee problem." In the third paragraph the PLO obligated itself to struggle against any plan for the establishment of a Palestinian entity the price of which is recognition, conciliation, secure borders, renunciation of the national right and our people's deprivation of their right to return and their right to determine their fate on their national soil.[71]

With these words the PLO changed the ideological status of the right of return from an undefined outcome of complete liberation to a necessary means which would assure the liberation. Yet the PLO's 1974 program was aimed implicitly at Israel's destruction, although later it became the first step in making peace with it. While Resolution 194 conditioned return with living at peace under Israeli sovereignty, the PLO used it as a means of fighting. By demanding to fulfill the right of return the PLO reaffirmed its commitment to the total liberation of Palestine.[72] Since then the right of return has been the first component in PLO s political-ideological "trinity" of "rational rights" or "inalienable rights": the right of return, the right of self-determination, and the right of establishing an independent state.[73]

The right of return, then, became an important factor in PLO's call for recognition that the Palestinians are a nation to which an injustice has been done. According to this formula any rejection of the right of return was tantamount to a denial of Palestinian collective identity, and constituted

another form of deportation and expulsion. Contrary to Resolution 194 which advocates the return of individual refugees who wished “to live in peace with their neighbors,” the PLO stood for a national-collective return. Moreover, by declaring that national rights may not be forfeited, the PLO stood against the option that Resolution 194 gives to 1948 Palestinian refugees to choose between return or compensation.[74]

*** The Right of Return as a Political Tool

Between 1985 and 1993, which is to say, from the Amman Agreement for joint political action between Jordan and the PLO to the Declaration of Principles (DoP) with Israel, doubt among PLO ranks arose regarding the relevance of the right of return. This paralleled the mainstream PLO’s reconciliation with Israel and the distinguishing between Palestinian self-determination and Israel’s right to exist. In the PLO’s 1986 document titled “Proposals for a Legal Formula to Convene the International Conference for Peace in the Middle East,” the right of return was not mentioned explicitly.[75] Therefore, the right of return in its 1974 meaning became a testing point in the eyes of PLO’s “hawks,” and they demanded its frequent mention in PLO’s official documents. The political statement of the 19th PNC (1988) pointed to the right of return five times, but only once in the context of living in peace with Israel.

The middle ground developed by the PLO since the mid-1980s holds both the older and the newer meanings of the right of return. For despite the way of new understanding of the right of return that the Amman Agreement reflects, the PLO also continued to give expression to the 1974 program. The most remarkable use of the conservative formula by the PLO is seen in the documents issued at the 19th PNC in 1988. The Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine stressed that the UN’s Charter and resolutions recognized

the Palestinian Arab people’s national rights including the right of return, the right to independence, the right to sovereignty over territory and homeland.[76]

During that period, the PLO leaders displayed four attitudes toward the relevance of the right of return in the context of a political settlement with Israel: utter disregard of the concept, acceptance of Resolution 194 word tor word, calling for full realization of the right of return in a Palestinian state whose borders correspond to those before 1967, and a differential realization aiming to implement a collective return with the foundation of the Palestinian state over 1967 territories. In the last case the individual return to 1948 borders remained either unfulfilled or as a right to be exercised voluntarily. Each of these options had limits and costs vis-a-vis the tension between the classic formula of the right of return and maximizing any chance to achieve acceptance for Palestinians to implement this right. Often PLO leaders expressed more than one of those four attitudes as well as declaring their commitment to the old 1974 conservative formulation, thereby attempting to establish and maintain a purposely ambiguous stance typical of a middle-ground position. Unlike my previous detailed and theoretical analyses of these attitudes,[77] the theoretical discussion below will be shorter. Based on these attitudes, however, I will suggest a reasonable solution that fits current interests and policies of both Israel and the PLO.

*** The PLO’s Disregard of the “Right of Return”

The right of return is absent from some of the most important statements made by senior PLO officials. It does not appear in Basam Abu-Sharif’s June 1988 article about the prospects of a Palestinian-Israeli settlement.[78] Nor did Arafat mention it in his speech to the UN General Assembly in December 1988. Contrary to the documents from the 18th PNC calling for the right of return, of which Arafat would inform the UN General Assembly, here Arafat spoke only of “the implementation of the Palestinian-Arab people’s right to self-determination political independence and sovereignty on their soil.” Arafat’s emphasis on the rights of self-determination and sovereignty as the foundations of the Declaration of Independence ignored the third wing of the 1974 formula that the Declaration was based upon.[79]

By choosing the option to disregard the right of return, the PLO leadership tried to avoid confronting a sensitive problem which threatened to halt its coalition-building; namely, the contradiction between its ideological imperative of return and actual policy. However, the practical utility of this policy, i.e., disregarding the right, was limited. The serious gap between the classical meaning of the right of return and the PLO s politics since 1988 still needed to be bridged.

*** Acceptance of Resolution 194

Since its inception the PLO had rejected UN Resolution 194 which proclaimed the right of each individual Palestinian refugee to choose between return or compensation. The organization claimed the Palestinian problem to be a national one, and, therefore, a collective return should be realized. Even when the PLO moved forward on its political track, it did not accept Resolution 194 expressly. The political statement of the 18th PNC invoked the right of return four times in its conservative sense. It only then hinted at Resolution 194 by calling for “the question of the Palestinian refugees [to be settled] in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions.”[80] In his speech to the UN General Assembly in December 1988, Arafat repeated this formula as well as ignoring the right of return.[81]

Clear acceptance of Resolution 194 was declared by the 20th PNC in September 1991, the session in which the PNC confirmed Palestinian participation in the Madrid Peace Conference. The weak position of the PLO in the international arena, stemming from Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait during the Gulf War, forced it to accept the invitation to participate in the Madrid Conference although the framework of the conference sharply limited the organization’s position. Thereafter, in its efforts to regain international recognition and legitimization, the PLO leadership accepted Resolution 194.

At the 20th PNC it was declared that one of the aims of the Madrid conference should be to solve

the problem of Palestinian refugees driven out of their homeland by force and against their will ... in accordance with UN resolutions, especially Resolution 194 issued by the UN General Assembly.[82]

It should be noted that by allowing the refugees to choose between return and compensation, the PLO situated itself as a mediator but not as the patron of the way the problem should be solved. Moreover, in choosing to actualize this option, the PLO sees itself responsible for bringing Israel to accept Resolution 194, which it had totally rejected since 1948.

*** Full Realization but only in 1967 Territories

This policy has two meanings. The first is that the achievement of national independence in the pre-1967 territories by a fully sovereign Palestinian state may be considered a realization of the right of return. Furthermore, the Palestinians may establish this small entity as the state of all the Palestinians wherever they may be, granting them the automatic right to return. As Faisal al-Husaini, one of the PLO political leaders in the occupied territories, formulated:

the right to return to the Palestinian state is not negotiable. It’s a natural right tor every Palestinian to return to the Palestinian state because the very idea behind creating the state is the establishment of a homeland where the Palestinian people can feel secure, where they can fulfill their goals, hopes, and national aspirations. Any Palestinian who lives in exile who wants to come to the Palestinian state, where he can raise children in an Arab Palestinian atmosphere, must be able to do so.[83]

In other words, the complete collective return demanded by the PLO in its formative period is no longer a matter of the whole of Palestine but of total independence.

*** Differential Realization

Contrary to the preceding option, in this method of interpreting the right of return, PLO spokesmen distinguish between the collective fulfillment of the right of return and the individual one. The collective realization lies in the establishment of the Palestinian state in 1967 borders, while the right to return to 1948 territories remains variously as an unfulfilled right or as a right to be exercised individually by each Palestinian refugee who chooses to do so. This approach was used by Arafat in his February 1990 letter to the International Conference of World Jewish Leaders. Arafat expropriated from each Palestinian refugee the option of negotiating over the implementation of Resolution 194 as well as the power to choose between return or compensation. Furthermore, Arafat linked the right of return to Palestinian self-determination in a way which understands Palestinian self-determination as the essence of this people's return. Resolution 194, relating to territories beyond the Palestinian state's borders, is open to further negotiation, but Arafat did not clarify exactly what the framework of such negotiations would really be.[84] According to Dr. Elias Sanbar, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the multilateral workshop on the refugee problem at the Madrid Peace Conference, Resolution 194 does not offer the Palestinian refugees compensation in exchange for the right of return but rather the choice between two ways of implementing the right of return.[85] Similarly, Faisal al-Husseini, a member of the PLO's Executive Committee, and Radwan Abu-A'yyash, head of the Palestinian Broadcasting Authority and himself a 1948 refugee, described the options given in Resolution 194 as two poles between which everything is open to negotiation. In other words, the acceptance of Resolution 194 is not a package deal but rather could be implemented differentially.[86]

Of the four approaches to the right of return, it should be noted that disregard and literal acceptance of Resolution 194 — primarily the latter — became the official attitudes expressed by the PLO in its formal documents. The other two options, full realization of the right of return within a 1967 border Palestinian state and differential realization, are still informal attitudes expressed privately by senior PLO officials. By emphasizing Resolution 194, the PLO leaders can stress their commitment to international legitimacy, the common ground on which they strive to operate politically.

*** Solution-Oriented Policy

Until the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles (DoP) was signed in September 1993, the PLO related to the right of return as a principle, rather than being a policy or a program. As Rashid Khalidi has noted, “there is no authoritative Palestinian definition of what constitutes the right of return.”[87] The PLO has never turned its attention to describing in detail how this right is to be realized. This is despite the fact that its leaders moved from seeing the conflict with Israel as an existential zero-sum game to a conflict over borders and equality of rights. Ironically, this lack, together with the PLO’s 1974 policy of linking the right of return to the right of self-determination and with the PLO’s demand for official recognition as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, helped the organization to maneuver and reach an interim agreement with Israel.

In absence of any concrete program for realizing the right of return, the

PLO and Israel agreed in the DoP to divide the issue into two parts. The problem of 1948 refugees is to be discussed later among issues relating to the permanent solution. As for the people displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, Israel agreed in principle to let them return. According to the DoP, a standing committee of the Palestinian Authority, Israel. Egypt, and Jordan will be formed in order to decide “on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder.”[88]

For the first time in its history, the PLO was forced by its agreement with Israel to begin dealing with one dimension of the refugee problem — those displaced in 1967. First and foremost, in absence of a reliable database, the PLO is conscious of the need to define who and how many such refugees there are. Several spokesmen mentioned the figure of 800,000,[89] but the heads of the PLO concur that this is an estimate that still needs to be proven. The PLO and governments of Egypt and Jordan have agreed to conduct a registration of the 1967 displaced inhabitants in the area. Such a population census has not been carried out, but at least the bilateral Jordanian-Palestinian committee agreed to define as displaced anyone who on June 4,

1967 was officially registered as resident in the West Bank or anyone who descended from such an individual. Both sides also agreed upon the formulation of the questions in this population census.[90]

Furthermore, Palestinian leaders expressed their awareness of the need to coordinate between the return of the 1967 displaced persons and the building of infrastructure within areas administrated by the Palestinian Authority, lest systems and public services such as education, health, and housing collapse. “The only consideration that may suspend this return is the problem of capacity,” declared Abu-Mazin, while Dr. Elias Sanbar suggested that the quota of return and its rate will be determined by the quadrilateral committee (the PA, Israel, Egypt, and Jordan) agreed upon in the DoP.[91] Elowever, other than acknowledging their awareness of the current limited abilities of the Palestinian Authority, PLO leaders have taken no further step, nor have they suggested any policy of absorption.

Nothing tangible has ever resulted from the quadrilateral committee.[92] The first meeting of the four-sided committee was not until March 1995, fully 30 months after signing the DoP. Beside the real needs to improve social and economic conditions surrounding the Palestinian Authority and its infrastructure, there are three reasons why the actions taken by the PA to further the return of 1967 displaced were so unimpressive since the signing of the DoP in September 1993. First, while transferring the PLO infrastructure and personnel from abroad to Gaza, the PA leaders concentrated on building their new political institutions and personal power bases. They aimed to balance the power of Israel and Jordan — the PLO counterparts to negotiate over the refugees and displaced problems — rather than operate the new institutions effectively in order to improve the quality of life of the local population. Secondly, the various opposition groups failed to politically mobilize the dissatisfied refugees as a pressure group toward the PA leadership. Thus, the PA leaders were free to decide their own agenda. The opposition’s inability to gather support among the refugees is connected to the third factor, which is the growing fragmentation among the refugees. In addition to former geographical and economic divisions between different refugee communities, the DoP created new subdivisions: 1948 refugees whose status will be discussed only later, and 1967 displaced persons whom Israel would allow to return; those in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who hope to enjoy the investments promised by several foreign countries and

international organizations, and those outside who must continue relying on the limited support of UNRWA. Finally, among the refugees staying outside, the older generation will find great difficulties in immigrating “inside” due to deprivation in terms of education, occupation, economic class and social status, in contrast to the younger generation which is more capable of adjusting itself to new environments and careers.

*** Towards a Solution: Guiding Principles of Israeli-Palestinian Agreement

Although the PLO leadership has not yet developed any detailed program for realizing the right of return, it has the political means to negotiate over the issue and reach a compromise. In addition to its official policy of calling upon Israel to realize every word of Resolution 194, the PLO also developed informal attitudes regarding the right of return of which the differential approach is the most promising. Accordingly, hereafter are five principles suggested as a framework of a declaration on principles between Israel and the PLO on the refugee issues:

1. Israel has to acknowledge its part in creating the 1948 refugee problem as shown in academic historical research. It should be noted that by acknowledging its partial responsibility in creating the refugee problem, Israel can easily tackle the Arab argument that its very existence is illegitimate and based on a sin. An Israeli-Palestinian peace accord in itself will recognize the legitimacy of both parties.

1. Israel is to be committed to help reaching a solution based on what I call, following Rashid Khalidi,[93] realistic justice. Realistic justice means that in accordance with its obligation from 1948–9 to absorb 75,000 refugees, Israel will agree to let certain number of 1948 refugees return to Israel within the framework of family reunification on individual humanitarian basis, and only for those whose home villages still exist, have family living there, and are willing to become citizens of the State of Israel with all that citizenship entails. Realistic justice also means that Israel will join an international effort aimed to mobilize the needed financial resources necessary to compensate

the refugees collectively and individually, and help the poor Arab host states to absorb refugees. In addition, the Israeli effort will include a symbolic compensation achieved with the resettlement of Palestinian refugees in evacuated settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Finally, in exchange for Israeli settlements in the West Bank that will be annexed to Israel, the Palestinians shall receive areas adjacent to the Gaza Strip now under Israeli sovereignty in order to resettle there returnees and refugees.

1. With the creation of a Palestinian state and the realization of the collective return, refugees already living on its soil, as well as those who might return to it, will be rehabilitated. Refugee camps in the State of

Palestine shall be reconstructed and the new Palestinian country’s absorptive capacity developed.

A comprehensive solution to the problem calls upon the involvement of other partners, in particular Arab host countries. The host Arab

countries will contribute to the solution refugees preferring to reside in their sovereign territory.

In cases where Palestinians prefer to maintain their right of return, or as a result of Israel’s refusal to allow them to do so, or of the dis

appearance of their homes and villages in Israel, their right will remain unrealized. The final status agreement, however, shall put an end to any claims pertaining to realizing this aspect of the conflict in the future.

[65] Menachem Klein, “Between Right and Realization: The PLO Dialectics of ‘The right of Return,’” Journal of Refugee Studies 11 (1) (1998): 1–19.

[66] Y. Harkabi, ed., The Arabs and Israel (Tel Aviv: Am-Oved, 1975), pp. 23–45; R. Khalidi, “Observations on the Right of Return,” Journal of Palestine Studies 21 (1992): 29–40.

[67] Klein, ‘‘Between Right and Realization/’

[68] H. Cobban, The PLO, People, Power and Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), appendix 2; Harkabi, The Arabs and Israel, p. 94.

[69] M. Seliger, Ideology and Politics (London: Allen and Unwin, 1976), pp. 176–265: M. Seliger, “Fundamental and Operative Ideology: The Two Principal Dimensions of Political Argumentation,” Policy Science, vol. 1 (1970), pp. 325 38; Menachem Klein, “The PLO as a Methodological Problem for Israeli Researchers 1985 1993,” The British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies 20 (YEAR): 164–73; Klein, “Between Right and Realization.”

[70] Y. Lukacs, ed., Documents on the Israeli Palestinian Conflict 1967–1983 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 157; H. Cobban, “The PLO, People, Power and Politics,” p. 62, prefers to translate the term sulta as “sovereignty.”

[71] Lukacs, Documents, pp. 156–7.

[72] Klein, “Between Right and Realization.”

[73] M. Steinberg, “The PLO’s Solution: The Meaning of a Triangular Formula,” in Is There a Solution to the Palestinian Problem? Israeli Positions, ed. Alouph Hareven (Jerusalem: Van Leer Insitute, 1982) pp. 151–71 (in Hebrew).

[74] Klein, “Between Right and Realization.”

[75] Sh un Filastiniyya, pp. 108–9; 1986: 82–6; Klein, “Between Right and Realization.”

[76] Journal of Palestine Studies 18 (1989): 214; al-Dustur, November 16, 1988.

[77] Klein, “Between Right and Realization.”

[78] B. Abu-Sharif, “Prospects of a Palestinian Israeli Settlement,” Journal of Palestine Studies 18 (1988): 272–5; The Middle East Mirror, June 2, 1988; Haaretz, July 8, 1988.

[79] Journal of Palestine Studies 18 (1989): 167; Ha’aretz, December 14, 1988; George P. Shultz, Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary oj State (New York: Scribner’s, 1993), pp. 1041–2.

[80] Journal of Palestine Studies 18 (1989): 220; Ha’aretz, November 16, 1988.

[81] Journal of Palestine Studies 18 (1989): 161–71; Ha’aretz, December 14, 1988.

[82] Journal oj Palestine Studies 21 (1992): 152; al-Quds, September 29, 1991.

[83] Faisal al-Husaini, Journal of Palestine Studies 18: 7 13, 1989: 11; see also N. Sh’ath, “Challenges of 1992 — The Palestinian Situation,” Middle East Policy I (1992): 41.

[84] Journal of Palestine Studies 19 (1990): 160; Filastin al-Thaura. March 11, 1990.

[85] Filastin al-Thaura, May 1, 1994.

[86] Ha’aretz, July 25, 1994, August 5, 1992.

[87] Khalidi, “Observations on the Right of Return,” p. 29.

[88] Israel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs: 1993. “Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangement.”

[89] al-Dustur, January 27, 1994; Abu-Mazin in al-Quds, July 1, 1994; Filastin al- Thawra, February 13, 1994; Dr. Elias Sanbar in Filastin al-Thawra, May 1, 1994.

[90] Saut al-Sha’ab, January 27, 1994.

[91] Abu-Mazin in al-Quds, January 7, 1994; The political report presented by Abu- Mazin to the 21th PNC, Gaza, April 1996, in al-Quds April 24, 1996; Elias Sanbar in Filastin al-Thawra, May 1, 1994; al-Sharq al-Awsat. February 8, 1994; al-Dustur, January 27, 1994; Saut al-Sha’ab, January 27, 1994.

[92] al-Quds. January 1, 1997; Ha’aretz, March 5, 1995; March 8, 1995; Davar. March 10, 1995.

[93] Khalidi, “The Palestinian Refugee Problem,” pp. 72–5.

** 5. The Political Refugee Problem in the Light of the Peace Process

[[Manuel Hassassian]]

Resolving the Palestinian refugee problem is of the utmost importance to an enduring and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The issue is one of significant complexity involving multiple variables on multiple levels, and high emotional volatility. For over forty-five years the question of the refugees was overshadowed by the Arab-Israeli wars over territorial and political disputes. Yet with the advent of the peace process, the refugee question emerged as an integral part of the multilateral talks. It was evident from the start, however, that many hurdles lay in the path of a just and satisfactory solution, primarily arising from the breadth of the parties involved and the enormous variegated socioeconomic conditions under which Palestinians live in their respective host countries. The deep-seated emotions of historical injustice also continue to overshadow the effort to rectify the basic economic, social, and political lives of the refugees. To add to this, the lack of consensus on how to analyze the costs, benefits, and ramifications to all parties involved continues to plague the effort to arrive at a solution. This essay provides a basic history of the Palestinian refugees and international efforts to secure them justice, and then analyzes the effects within the context of the current peace process.

*** The Refugee Condition

Any attempt to arrive at a solution to the refugee problem must first seek to understand the complexity of the situation itself. This is by no means a simple task. The following will convey the dizzying nature of the surfeit of variables involved.

Two-thirds of the entire Palestinian population were made refugees after the war of 1948. Almost 40 percent of Palestinian refugees (an estimated 1.05 million) live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, either inside or outside refugee camps. About another 40 percent reside in Jordan as citizens (Jordan being the only country that had a policy of openly awarding citizenship to the refugees). The remaining 20 percent are roughly divided equally between Syria and Lebanon; in both these countries they are denied access to opportunities of employment and ownership of land. About 38 percent of Palestinians registered as refugees still live in refugee camps receiving charitable aid and funds from the United Nations Refugee and Works Administration (UNWRA). They number approximately 2.250,000. About one million refugees have no form of identification outside of their UNWRA identification card, meaning they are not legally the responsibility of, nor under the protection of, any individual state. It is such precariousness of existence that has all too often elicited the egregious behavior Palestinian refugees have become renowned for.

Aside from these demographic realities, it is also important to understand the extent to which Palestinian refugees lost their properties, belongings, and livelihoods as a consequence of the various wars and subsequent expulsion. UN commissions have roughly estimated the value of property lost by the refugees. The agricultural example (table 5.1) adequately demonstrates the extent to which Palestinian refugees lost financial assets as a consequence of their diaspora. Considering that more than 80 percent of the Palestinian economy revolved around agriculture, the figures in table 5.1 paint a bleak picture concerning the utter debasing effect the diaspora had. Stripped of livelihood, camp life hardly offered a solution to the basic problems that now plagued the Palestinians. From this nest, the “right of return” of the refugees to their lands and homes was born, as viable and sustainable alternatives could hardly be seen in camp life.

Table 5.1 Palestine agricultural assets lost through refugeesim

| Type of Land (in dunams) | Amount of land (in US$ millions) | Value in 1993 |

| Irrigated | 1.48 | 1330 |

| Fallow | 3 | 900

| Citrus | 260,000 | 780 |

| Olive | 78,000 | 265 |

| Vineyards | 53,000 | 53 |

| Unexploited | 700,000 | 105 |

More thorough accounts of the travails of refugees can be found in various books and journals. I do not wish to attempt to match their scholarship here, but only use them to further the point that the refugee problem is steeped in a morass of fundamental problems as a consequence of their displacement. On top of these are a series of problems that have arisen as a consequence of the political situation between Arabs and Jews, and between the Palestinians and their Arab host countries. Likewise, I do not wish to add to the sizable scholarship that has been applied in this field. Rather, my aim is to portray these problems within the context of a possible solution.

There are, however, problems that must be foreseen as particular impediments to a solution outside of the basic problems previously outlined. Such basic impediments further complicate the issues but also reveal the latent complexity brought about by the fundamental problems. Future solutions must attempt to grasp them or risk creating more problems than solutions. These problems are:

- The question of the absorptive capacity of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and its effects upon the socioeconomic structure if a mass return of refugees were permitted.

- The question of the transfer of UNRWA functions to Palestinian National Authority jurisdiction.

- Consideration of questions regarding naturalization, integration, resettlement, and long-term residency of Palestinians in their current countries of asylum.

- Assessments of the relative costs of various options for resolving the refugee problem, including consideration of the compensation issue and a formula for the burden sharing.

- The question of family reunification.

- The question of Jerusalem and the refugee question.

Such issues and others are likely to raise ultimate questions over not just the resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem, but also the issue of justice itself, as a construct of human moral conscience, and the role it will play, if at all, in the chasms between ideology, reality, and pragmatism.

*** The Historic Evolution of the Palestinian Refugee Problem

Having briefly outlined the root problems plaguing the refugee question, it is now necessary to outline the international communities' attempts at a solution. A historical perspective will provide a framework within which attempted solutions in the current peace process can be contextualized.

**** The principle of "Right of Return"

From the very inception of the refugee problem, Palestinians based their case on what became known as the “right of return.” The right of an individual to return to his home in his native land is an integral part of an individual’s fundamental rights, and is guaranteed by a slew of international conventions (see below). In cases where people had been forced to leave their country due to war and hostilities, the “right of return” is an unquestionable and sacrosanct principle that all people of the world must strive to protect. Palestinians are a notable exception, in that the majority of the nation was expelled from its land to seek refuge in adjacent Arab lands. But unlike other war situations, Palestinians were denied the “right of return” in full contempt of political and legal protocols. As such, the “right of return” became organically intertwined with an emergent sense of identity and to the national right of self-determination.

While Israel contrived to declare its independence on May 15, 1948, based on a UN partition resolution, war and politics prevented the Palestinians from forming their independent state as envisaged in the partition plan. Instead, a mass exodus of Palestinians took place in 1948, followed by another wave in 1967. Consequently, the majority of the Palestinian people have been in exile, unable to exercise their “right of return” despite its endorsement by the UN General Assembly since 1948.

The ensuing two decades saw the Palestinian question essentially treated as a “refugee problem.” By categorizing it as such, there was a denial of the Palestinians as a people with a history and a heritage. After 1967, the Palestinian revolution brought a considerable amount of recognition to the Palestinian problems. Consequently by 1974, the UN General Assembly unequivocally acknowledged the Palestinians’ right to self- determination in compliance with the UN Charter, reaffirming their inalienable “right of return.” These basic human rights remain at the core of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and indeed play a major role in it. Without a fair and equitable solution, the Middle East will no doubt continue to suffer from future instability and bloodshed.

**** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The context of the “right of return” is explicitly spelled out in article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reads:

- Everyone has a right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

- Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

- All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.[94]

As the Palestinians clearly do not enjoy or exercise these rights, a universal and humanitarian dimension is added to their cause.

**** The Human Commission on Human Rights

The right of return to one’s own country has been reiterated in the draft principles by the UN Economic and Social Council in 1973. In addition, the Council mandated the Commission on Human Rights to keep it on its agenda. The draft principles read as follows:

- Everyone is entitled, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, creed, national or social origin, property, birth, marriage or other status, to return to his country.

- No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country.

- No one shall be denied the right to return to his own country on the grounds that he has no passport or other travel document.[95]

It is clear that juridical opinions assert that the inherent “right of return” is an acknowledged norm of international law, recognized by civilized nation-states.

**** The Partition Resolution and subsequent UN Resolutions

The Partition Resolution. Resolution 181 (II) of November 29, 1947, called for the establishment of a Jewish and an Arab state in Palestine. After the war of 1948 and the subsequent creation of a massive refugee problem, the partition resolution became a moot agreement. The war had geographically and demographically altered the make up of Palestine to such a degree that reversal to Partition Plan lines was virtually impossible. This was further reinforced by the new Israeli state’s intransigence and hyper concern over the issue of its security. The refugees were perceived by Israel as a threat to security rather than victims of the war which had largely excluded their participation. Even though Israel was unwilling to acknowledge the refugees’ “right of return,” the UN General Assembly endorsed and ratified this right soon after the battlefield dust had cleared in November 1948. It read (and continues to read) as follows:

The right of the Arab refugees to return to their homes in Jewish controlled territory at earliest possible date should be affirmed by the UN. and their repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation, and payment of adequate compensation for property of those choosing not to return, should be supervised and assisted by the UN Conciliation Commission ...[96]

The UN established the “right of return” of Palestinians in Resolution 194 (III), based on a draft resolution presented by Great Britain to the

General Assembly on December 11, 1948 [Resolution 194 (III)], which categorically in paragraph eleven declared:

that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good.[97]

Furthermore, this resolution established the Conciliation Commission for Palestine, instructing it “to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation.”[98] It is important to note here how the element of compensation exists at the heart of the “right of return,” which was interpreted in the provision of paragraph II of Resolution 194 (III), by the Conciliation Commission for Palestine.[99] This resolution, which was drafted five decades ago, has been reiterated by the General Assembly in every session since then, with a “note of deep regret that repatriation or compensation of the refugees as provided for in paragraph II of General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) has not been effected.”[100]

That the resolution of the refugee problem fell on deaf ears in Israel is no surprise. To add to its complexity was the historical instability of the region that brought about the 1967 war. This war itself created a whole new set of displaced persons of its own, and altered the geo-political make-up of the region even more. Now Israel occupied land from three different countries and more than doubled its total land area. The UN continued its tradition in the form of several UN resolutions calling for the return of the Palestinian refugees, both old and new. Israel was required to undertake obligations to cooperate in the return of the second wave of displaced Palestinians to their homes.[101]

On June 14, 1967, Resolution 237 was endorsed by the General Assembly declaring:

<quote>

that essential and inalienable human rights should be respected even during the vicissitudes of war

and

Calls upon the government of Israel ... to facilitate the return of those in habitants who have tied the areas since the outbreak of hostilities ...[102]

</quote>

The UN also passed the infamous Resolution 242 of November 11, 1967, which was supposed to act as a land for peace deal between Arabs and Jews. Resolution 242's treatment of the refugees called "for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem."[103] The Assembly explicitly called upon Israel to "take effective and immediate steps for the return without delay of those inhabitants who had fled the areas since the outbreak of hostilities."[104] Yet in tact, Resolution 242 only dealt with the Palestinians as a question of refugees, and not as a people with a legitimate national cause. For that reason the PLO rejected 242 and it called on Israel's acknowledgment of the "right of return" for the Palestinians.

There are other moments when the international community has come forward to endorse the Palestinian refugees' "right of return." In 1970, the Assembly recognized: "that respect for the rights of the Palestinians is an indispensable element in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East ... "[105] Also in 1973, the UN General Assembly endorsed the "right of return" of the Palestinian people, tracing it directly to Resolution 194 (III).[106]

**** The Committee on Palestinian Rights

In 1975, the General Assembly established the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.[107] The Committee submitted its report in May 1976, which stated the following:

to implement the “right of return.” a two-phase program is proposed. In the first phase, the Palestinians displaced in 1967 should be allowed to return to the territories which have been under Israeli military occupation since 1967. [108]

These preparations involved the following elements:

- Designation or creation of a competent agency to be entrusted with the organizational and logistical aspects of the mass return of displaced Palestinians;

- Creation and financing of a fund for that purpose;

- Registration of displaced Palestinians other than those already registered with UNRWA.[109]

The Committee’s report was endorsed by the General Assembly in November 1976, and in December 1977. The Assembly on both occasions re-endorsed the “right of return” of the Palestinian people.

It is fairly evident from the above that time and again the international community has collectively ratified the unquestionable right of the refugees to return. But UN resolutions, however comprehensive, are not binding unless UN members themselves actively seek their implementation. As of yet, no countries have risen to the challenge of trying to implement that which was endorsed by the world community. The impotence of international laws and structures in creating any effective practical change for Palestinian refugees resulted in a Palestinian consciousness which deemed them as being outside the laws of the international community. By this I mean if international law and protocol are to exist and be observed, they must in some way be implemented or else they cease to have any purpose outside of their limited cause. If international law therefore is not abided with respect to the Palestinians, why then should Palestinians follow, respect, or even be held accountable by such laws. Such sentiments linger in the hearts and

minds of Palestinians creating an environment where anything was seen as feasible with respect to the liberation of Palestine and the “right of return” of the refugees.

*** The Refugee Question and the Peace Process

The Oslo Accords, signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in September 1993 marginalized the position of Palestinians living in diaspora. The Declaration of Principles (DoP) did not include specific provisions for the future of displaced Palestinians. In fact, reference to the question of refugees was limited to two references. Article V of the DoP states that negotiations on the remaining issues including refugees, settlements, Jerusalem, security arrangements, and so on will start as soon as possible, but no later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period. It is later mentioned in Article XII, which provides for the establishment of a continuing committee with Jordan and Egypt to agree on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967.

There are three items of particular note that may not be so evident from the somewhat vague and logistical language of the DoP. First, the PLO and Israel were only able to come to terms by agreeing not to agree for now at least, but hopefully later on at some unspecified time period.

Second, the DoP is only brave enough to refer to refugees in contrast to those that date back to 1967. There is no specific mention of refugees created as a result of the 1948 war, even though they exist as the heart and core of the refugee problem.

Third, the DoP also fails to mention the fundamental principle of the “right of return” as specified in UN resolutions for the previous 45 years. Israel had adamantly refused to acknowledge the Palestinians’ right to return, thus never accepting the authority of the UN General Assembly Resolution 194 of December 1948. These three issues need to be kept in mind at all times

when considering judgment on the Oslo peace Accords and their ability to provide a sustainable and productive peace between both interlocutors.

The Madrid Peace Conference made Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 the basic framework for negotiations. A decision was made early on to include the refugee question, as well as other issues of regional scope to be dealt with by the peace talks within a multilateral context. A working group on refugees was founded as one of the five multilateral groups dealing with various issues relating to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Other issues included water, the environment, security, and economic cooperation and development. The refugee group became known as the Refugee Working Group (RWG) and held its opening meeting in Moscow. This working group is gaveled by Canada with the United States, the European Union, and Japan acting as co-organizers. The Palestinian delegation had insisted on putting the refugee question on the agendas of both bilateral and multilateral tracks. It seems this was done to highlight the essence of the refugee question and its solution within the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, given the political nature and context of this problem, the refugee question ultimately can only be resolved on a bilateral level, as both parties seem intransigent on having any attempted solution imposed by a foreign party.

The agenda of the RWG revolves around several items that have formed the basis as well as the frame of reference of the various intercession activities. These issues consist of:

The gathering of information on refugees.

The question of family reunification.

Issues related to improving the basic quality of living and welfare of the refugees. This consists of human resource development, vocational training and job creation, public health, child welfare, and the development of the socioeconomic infrastructure of both camps and areas where refugees may have attempted to resettle.

**** The Israeli position

In all fairness, it is worth articulating the Israeli position. Regardless of the propriety of the Israeli claims, any attempted discussion of the refugee question would be incomplete without some form of their account. Without it, an incomplete picture will be painted of an already obscure and complicated topic.

Israel’s basic contentions have been systematic and coherent for the fifty years of its existence. Its arguments are based upon the following:

- The Arabs alone caused the problem of the refugees, and the responsibility for resolving it rests with them alone.

- Instead of helping the refugees, the Arab governments deliberately used the refugees as a political pawn to gain political ends. They pressured them into opposing resettlement, thereby keeping the refugee issue alive to employ it as a weapon against Israel.

- The Arab world was and remains sufficiently large and wealthy enough to sustain the absorption of all refugees.

- The refugees would be happier if they resettled in Arab countries where they would be with their own people.

- Israel was unable to accept repatriation because of the lack of space, continued existence of a state of war with the Arabs, and the serious social, political, and security consequences that would arise if repatriation were implemented.

As previously mentioned, such arguments remain at the heart of the Israeli position, and have been consistently reiterated (very similar to the way Arab demands have been reiterated) ever since the creation of the problem. Such inertia and deadlock have aided in giving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict the aura of a morass of utter futility. Therefore, when we return to the issue of the peace process, we notice the similar (intransigent) position of the Israeli negotiators. Israel continues to restate that the negotiations of the RWG should focus on rendering assistance to Palestinian refugees with the view of resettling them wherever they may be at present. In brief, Israel continued to refuse to admit culpability or responsibility in the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem, or even for its resolution — and definitely not on the basis of any existing UN resolutions.

It is not surprising that Israel's tough stand against the returning of the refugees is rationalized along the lines of security as well as the undermining of the Jewish character of the state, even when it entails the return of refugees controlled by the Palestinian National Authority. Paradoxically, the "right of return" of the Jews is enshrined in the Israeli Law of Return. Withholding this right from Palestinians, while at the same time permitting such a right to Jews, is tantamount to an act of racism, especially when many Palestinians can trace their lineage in Palestine for centuries. Although implementation of the "right of return" to Israel within its borders is unlikely, it is politically feasible that over an extended period a substantial number of refugees could return to the territories under Palestinian control. This form of return could facilitate the process of repatriation and resettlement in a broad sense; however, it will only be implemented by monetary compensation. Of course, a major difficulty confronting the Palestinians would be the creation of an economically viable entity that could absorb the influx of Palestinian returnees.

**** The Palestinian position

The Palestinian position has been consistent all along with its reference to UN resolutions in regard to the question of refugees. It has reiterated time and time again Israel's refusal to accept any responsibility for the creation of the refugees, even though there is ample convincing evidence (by both Palestinian, international, and even Israeli scholars) that this is the case.

Benny Morris, Ilian Pappe and other so called “new historians” shattered the myths of independence which Israeli relied upon and had based (and continues to base) much of the credibility of their founding father’s actions. In many senses, Morris and others were not really saying anything that Arab and international historians had not been saying for years: that the mass wave of refugees was not a result of orders from Arab leaders, but was rather the direct consequence of expulsion combined with fear tactics of the Haganah and other Jewish militias. Yet the scholarship achieved a degree of higher credibility (sometimes questionably so) after Israeli historians changed their ideas on accountability with the help of declassified Israeli documents from the war period. Refugee scholarship is by no means a field where all participants agree. Yet there is at least the sense that most serious scholars accept variations on the overriding idea that Israel was largely responsible for the creation of the refugee problem. Perhaps more important is the fact that Palestinians were not allowed to return, which, more than anything else, implicates Israel for the birth and maturation of the refugee problem.

Yet the Palestinians have always understood the inherent difficulties in implementing any agreed-upon solution. Both time and current reality have made it clear that compromises will have to be made. But what motivates the Palestinian position is not the unilateral fulfillment and implementation of UN principles, but rather the acknowledgment of the principles that they embody. These include the Palestinians’ right to return to their homes and lands, that Israel was largely responsible for their displacement (whether through force, or through other means), and that the “right of return” is a sacred principle that Palestinians hold dearly which embodies the justice of their cause. For this reason, the “right of return” can never be compromised. It is a basic Palestinian national principle upon which much of Palestinian identity is based. The Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority cannot succumb to Israeli and American pressure to yield on this principle because the “right of return” is simply at the core of preserving the Palestinian national identity. It may be true indeed that any solution would require drastic conceptual and expectational changes, which must be followed up with attitudes and policy changes made by the policy-makers. Furthermore, these difficult changes will also have to include rehabiliatory considerations (such as the construction of new houses, job training, and the

creation of employment opportunities) that will ameliorate the basic daily travails that refugees suffer. Other Arab host countries likewise need to be involved in the political agreement due to the magnanimous presence of the Palestinian refugees in those respective countries. Only with enormous financial resources that will cover the costs of repatriation, resettlement, and rehabilitation can a solution be reached. Before this is possible, however, there needs to be a desire of all partners involved a scenario that as of yet remains to be seen. So far, the position of both partners to the conflict revolve around a zero-sum conflict which might make it necessary for third-party intervention to break the impasse and narrow the gulf between the two extreme positions. It is fair to infer that second-track diplomacy could effectively address the nuances and could bridge and narrow the bellicose posturing of both sides, by creating the ambiance as well as the conducive conditions to get the issue of the refugees back on track. Above and beyond, bold leadership on both sides is required to shoulder the responsibility as well as withstand the barrage of criticism from both constituencies in implementing the DoP and the permanent status issues.

*** The Future of Palestinian Refugees in the Peace Negotiations

The Oslo peace process ran into an impasse largely due to Israeli intransigence as a consequence of a Likud elected government. As a result, final status issues were delayed; and above all, the RWG stopped meeting as gatherings quickly turned into fruitless endeavors. It is, however, worthwhile to shed light on the basic issues in the RWG, as they are indicative of the breadth of problems involved with negotiation and the possible procedure in the process of reaching plausible solutions to the refugee question.[110]

Of the six issues that the RWG saw as relevant, only one (the question of family reunification) dealt with the concrete political dimension of the refugee problem. All others addressed issues of community development and refugee living conditions, with major European countries and the United States shepherding each. The question of family reunification will be used here as an exemplary of the problems that faced negotiators. Keep in mind how this, if any of the six topics, was the most uncomplicated due to the fact

that it dealt with practical, limited cases where families sought to exercise their right to reunite with their families.

The Oslo Accords set a quota of permitting 2,000 annual cases of family reunification, although Palestinians had higher expectations raised by the May 4, 1994 Cairo agreements. Unfortunately these hopes were quickly dashed by the attitudes of the Israeli negotiators. Many Israelis perceived the permission of families to reunite as the “right of return” through the back door. The Israeli government and its mouthpiece press encouraged and alluded to this fallacy several times in the hope of mobilizing support for “foot dragging” at the negotiation table, and backtracking on previously signed agreements.

With respect to the RWG, the third round of negotiations saw the breakdown of talks where interlocutors were unable to agree on basic principles or frameworks for discussion. Such a problem proved to be a trend that Palestinian and Israeli negotiators faced, especially after the change in the Israeli government. Several unresolved issues of family reunification continue to complicate the momentum of the process:

- Criteria: clear guidelines as to who is entitled to apply

- Transparency: guidelines on transparency have been ignored by the Israelis.

- Quotas: The declared annual goal of 2,000 families per year has been complicated by the Israeli Civil Administration not announcing the number of acceptances or rejections on a periodic basis. As such, it is very difficult to see whether the quotas have been met.

- Time limitation: Applicants complain of not receiving responses within the previously agreed-upon time span of three months. This leaves families in an agonizing situation of uncertainty, with their lives directly subject to the whims of Israeli negotiator transience.

- Appeals: Lack of accountability on behalf of a rejected application, no way to appeal a rejected application, and lack of transparency concerning the appeals process itself means that families engage in a virtual gamble as to whether they are able to enjoy their right to be with their families.

As a result of these and other such stymies, nothing fruitful emerged from the RWG talks regarding the issue of family reunification. Dispersed family members continued to suffer as visitor permits were denied and extension prohibited. Israeli unfaithfulness to its agreement with respect to Oslo became an expected charade, with refugees' lives continuing to sustain the consequence. It has reached a point where Palestinian expatriates that return to their homes have fewer rights than the non-Jewish expatriates that come from eastern Europe in search of work. For this, the Israeli advocate Eliahu Abram writes:

While the Palestinian residents of the occupied territories have not acquired independent citizenship, neither are they alien residents with the option to return to a previous homeland or domicile in order to be reunited there with dependent parents or relatives. The anomalous position of Palestinians under prolonged occupation, disrupting at times the natural development of the family, should not be ignored. Their right to be unified with family members should approximate state practices with respect to citizenship.[111]

Other aspects of the refugee question were taken up by the RWG that witnessed similar difficulties in procedure. In line with the Oslo Accords, Palestinians pushed for resolution of the issue of 1967 displaced persons (the term commonly referred to 1967 refugees to distinguish them from the refugees of 1948.) A quadripartite committee representing Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and the Palestinians was established to work toward that end. Article XII of the Oslo Accords stipulated that this committee will decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of displaced persons from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, together with preventative measures against disorder and disruption. The frame of reference of this committee is the DoP Article XII, the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Agreement and the Clauses of the 1979 Camp David Accords that dealt with displaced persons.

Similar to the question of family reunification, basic vocabulary and definitions have also become a problem. The committee met several times in 1995 and managed to adopt an agenda revolving around three major issues:

1. The definition of displaced persons.

1. The number of displaced persons.

1. The possible modalities of repatriation.

But even this proved to be too difficult. The Jordanian-Palestinian delegation defined displaced persons as “those individuals and their families and descendants who left their homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip or were unable to return to their homes as a consequence of the 1967 war.” Such a straightforward definition was rejected by the Israelis, as the negotiators tried to undermine the process by a shift in the terms of the debate. The Israeli press backed up their negotiators’ positioning by engendering an unnecessary fear that the acceptance of any decision on the 1967 refugees signaled the prelude for the return of the 1948 refugees.

These examples demonstrate the uphill struggle of negotiators in arriving at a decision on the variegated issues of refugees. Fifty years have transpired without a resolution, while the daily lives of refugees deteriorate and their fate becomes more and more the consequence of power politics, historic intransigence, and reneged agreements.

*** Plausible Options in Negotiations Over Refugees

I am neither the first nor the last Palestinian to propose a solution for the Palestinian refugee problem. In fact, I do not even wish to propose one here, out of fear that I would not do the subject justice considering all its

complexities. I do, however, wish to endorse Rashid Khalidi's recommendations for resolving the claims of the refugees.[112] He comprehensively outlines a pragmatic solution, yet one that does not turn its eye from the claims of justice that Palestinians have so long decried. These claims are:

- That Israel acknowledges its moral accountability for the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem, including the means of socializing this recognition to the younger generation of Israelis.

- That Israel accepts, in principle, the right of Palestinians and their descendants to return to their homes. The Palestinians in return will recognize that the right cannot be literally exercised inside 1948 Israel, and will have to exercise it in the State of Palestine. Israel should take into its domain several tens of thousands of refugees, particularly those that have family members living inside of Israel.

- A distinction should be made between reparations (for those who will not be allowed to return) and compensation (for those who lost property in 1948). Khalidi suggests a figure of $92-$ 147 billion for property loss, and $40 billion in reparations, all based on an estimate of $20,000 per person for 2 million people.

- Palestinian exiles should have the right to return to the future Palestinian state, or implicitly to the areas under control of the PNA. Palestinians who choose to remain in Jordan should be offered the choice of having full citizenship rights, or limited rights as citiens of the Palestinian component of the Jordanian Palestinian Confederation.

- Palestinians in Lebanon would be offered a choice: repatriation to the Palestinian state, return to the Galilee and acquisition of Palestinian citizenship, or the granting of permanent residency in Lebanon.

Tamari, on the other hand, has suggested that two separate forms of reparations be made:

- The first would be collective compensation, to be negotiated by the Palestinian refugees in general, the result of which will be used to rebuild the infrastructure of the Palestinian state which will be, in part, the state of the returnees.

- The second would be based on individuals' claims which would be negotiated between the State of Israel and representatives of the refugees. Since many of these refugees are not the subjects of the Palestinian state, the PNA would not be a first party to this second set of negotiations.[113]

Both Tamari and Khalidi provide us with some experienced basic thoughts in the area of compensation. There are, however, many other attempts by scholars, both Arab and Israeli, who attempt a resolution of questions of compensation. Among such scholars of note are Shlomo Gazit and Don Peretz.

This essay does not attempt to suggest formulae for compensation. One must give up the idea that there is a magic pill that, when taken, will resolve all the complexities and intricacies of this problem. Rather, scholars, policy-makers, and most importantly refugees must acquaint themselves with the idea that if there is to be a solution, it is not likely to solve every problem, or perhaps even most of the problems. Additionally, it is likely to take a great deal of time, effort and patience, especially considering that the results are likely to be far less exciting than the vibrant cause. In such a scenario, it is up to those involved to ask themselves whether it is better to continue negotiating with a ruthlessly stubborn opponent, or attempt to put an end to a tragedy whose inconclusive history has for so long caused unmeasurable amounts of human suffering.

The question of Palestinian refugees seemingly took a backseat position to more attainable ends in the interim agreement period. Several things caused this. The election of Benjamin Netanyahu placed a particular damper on the

refugee question not to mention the peace process as a whole. Moving at an almost unbearably slow pace, Palestinian negotiators had a difficult time gaining any concession from the man who has spoken, written, and acted out his dislike of the Oslo Accords. As such it was a safe bet that the Israeli position of negotiation would revolve around the all too predictable Likud pole of intransigence. As the status quo remains to Israel's benefit and as the disproportion of power between the Palestinians and Israelis remains drastically tipped in Israel's favor, Netanyahu was unwilling to give any green lights to his negotiators to make concessions on topics such as the refugee question. In fact, attempts to marginalize the issue were more in order from the Israeli president, as hyper-concentration on issues of Israeli security and the need to stop terrorism served as justifications for all Likud policies: from settlement building, to closure, and, of course, the refugees' "right of return."

Secondly, the signing of the Oslo Acords and the convening of the Quadripartite Commission on Displaced Persons shifted the debate such that the multilateral committee on refugees became marginalized. As such, the RWG has not met since 1995. Furthermore, the American and Canadian parties who had both respectively sponsored and gaveled the talks, replaced the heads of their delegations with less important and influential civil servants. This demonstrated that even the supporters of the talks had lost confidence in the ability of RWG meetings to bear any fruit.

Thirdly, the 1994 Jordan-Israel peace treaty signaled an era of normalization in which collective Arab pressure on Israel on the issue of refugees was released. Normalized relations between Israel and Jordan effectively meant that the Palestinians could not rely upon Jordanian pressure to necessarily pull for their cause. This becomes a serious problem when one considers that the majority of Palestinian refugees outside of the Occupied Territories reside in Jordan. Also, since the Quadripartite Committee has by definition excluded all free-floating potential pressuring entities upon Israel (most especially Europe, which has historically shown existent, albeit limited political pressure), the Palestinian negotiating position finds itself with Egypt as its only ally — a country that has signed its own peace treaty with Israel and with very few Palestinian refugees residing there. This is, of course, it negotiations on the question of refugees ever have the opportunity to be restarted.

Given all this, it remains to be asked whether the Refugee Working Groups, actually accomplished anything on an issue reflective of the essential problems intrinsic to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. On a political level, there are some basic things that still block progress. The question, for instance, of defining the scope of the refugee problem was given to the Norwegians, which have so far come up with some useful surveys and studies that are sure to be beneficial if negotiators can actually get to that point. Still, these studies fail to address critical issues such as the category of the refugees as well as their personal sentiments regarding future options. It is such critical issues that remain at the heart of the issue, and therefore remain so sensitive that even independent researchers refrain from getting their hands dirty.

Furthermore, concrete issues such as the question of family reunification have failed to meet expectations, even though this, if any issue, was seen as potentially most fruitful. Permitting 2,000, as opposed to 1,000 cases, still fell far below Palestinian demands and expectations. Even when Israel has permitted cases, the procedural headaches, lengthy time period, uncertain criteria, and acres of red tape make this issue such a harrowing debacle that has only added to refugee frustration and suffering.

Several other problems need to be addressed by the RWG. Mobilizing adequate resources, both in the field of monetary flexibility of projects and political willpower to implement these schemes, is a serious issue that needs consideration. There is a need for concrete proposals to be drawn up, organized, and implemented. This is a marked shift away from the broad and general rhetoric of both sides. The absence of clear mechanisms to implement ideas continues to plague the process and has done so from the very start. Furthermore, the whole process needs to be divested of the lofty language and entrenched dogma that all too often results in deadlock and stagnation. There is a need to break down taboos between both policymakers and their constituencies that would allow pragmatic solutions to permeate all sides. Furthermore, there is a need to differentiate between objective and subjective assessments of intentions and preferences in order that the question of refugees can be effectively addressed in the final status phase. So far negotiations in the interim phase have had a difficult enough

time surviving, and therefore we must not have any unnecessary illusions about the capacity or productivity of Final status talks if or when policy makers can even get to that stage.

Further general problems were latent throughout the framework of the negotiations. The RWG required the consent of all parties involved in the multilaterals before any solutions could be implemented. This is comfortably democratic, and may well be the essence of negotiations; however, it fails to bring about anything productive when the participants themselves seem to rely on power politics rather than on questions of justice. The Palestinian negotiating position is so utterly weak that it seems incapable of squeezing any leverage from an Israeli entourage which is quite happy to continue its policies (toward refugee rights among other issues) relatively unimpeded. In this, negotiations on refugee rights appear to be comfortable lip service to the peace process, but are hardly taken seriously when it comes to getting anything accomplished. Furthermore, Israeli political discourse has imbued amongst its constituency (and even outside its constituency) that concessions on the refugee issue are tantamount to threatening the future security of the Jewish state and the Jewish people. As Tamari acutely points out, Israeli collective fears of the refugee question have been used by the Israeli negotiating team to preempt rational discussion of this matter.[114] Without the employment of reason, the hope for progress on this front is all but dissolved into subjective gerrymandering and intentional foot-dragging.

One further issue that also remains to be discussed is the refugee problem’s relation to the question of Jerusalem. Jerusalem became inadvertently linked to the issue of refugees after Israel’s policy on the city worked to preempt final status talks and change the demographic reality of the city. Jerusalem itself remains a divided city, and the international community continues to consider East Jerusalem occupied. Yet, focusing upon the 1967 lines and the refugees that this war created overlooks the fact that a considerable amount of refugees came from Jerusalem back in 1948. Furthermore 70 percent of (presently Jewish) West Jerusalem property belonged to Palestinians from Talbieh, Lifta, Katamon, Baqa’a and other suburbs.[115]

Israel s most recent onslaught upon the city has been its encirclement with a ring of settlements in an attempt to preserve Jewish majority to the city and

divide it from the rest of the West Bank. Israel has also tried to restrict residency conditions of Jerusalem's Palestinians by taking away social services such as health care and national insurance. Building restrictions and identity confiscation add to a lengthy list of human rights abuses that are deliberate premeditated attempts by the Israeli government to make the issue of Jerusalem a non-negotiable issue as far as Palestinian statehood is considered and most especially with regard to the question of the "right of return" for Jerusalem refugees.

*** Concluding Remarks

In terms of strategic vision toward the future, the refugee question exists in relative abeyance proportionate to the enormous gravity of its weight in propitiating the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Its sensitivity and intractability tests the limits of not just the current peace process, but also the question of the efficacy of formalized negotiations as a tactic for resolving disputes. If left unresolved, the inherent latent problems are guaranteed to surface in the continued tradition of cyclical hatred, poverty, and injustice.

It is important to note that the refugee problem is composed of demographic, political, and psychological dimensions. This essay has largely focused upon the former two and ignored the latter. However, it would be foolish to continue to do so, especially with respect to negotiations. One day, policy-makers will have to sit down and decide on the fate of 2.5 million people, many of whom see little reason to sacrifice the justice of their cause for a pragmatic solution wrought from power politics, poor negotiation position, and exhaustion from the conflict. So far, no one has found a way to solve the problems, let alone communicate them to the refugees themselves. For this reason, it is almost possible to say that nobody wants to solve the problem, because of its potential ramifications on the stability of the region.

Ignoring the problem, however, is not a way of solving it. There is a need to re-energize participants and breathe life into the talks. This could possibly be done with the impetus of a third party. However, any new talks are not likely to have a positive effect unless participants stop bargaining from positions of strength or weakness, but rather commit themselves to bargaining on

achieving what limited forms of justice can be obtained. If this were a perfect world, politics would view the world through the enlightened moral lens of justice (however unattainable such a concept is). Unfortunately, the Palestinian refugees know only too well that words like justice and rights were made for political abuse and rarely if ever are used toward the achievement of such soundbite-friendly rhetoric. In such a world, power translated through violence (whether actual or structural) becomes the language of communication. The inevitable results are the scars of our violent history, which if remain unsolved, are doomed to be repeated.

[94] “The Right of Return of the Palestinian People,” United Nations Publication, ST/SG/SER. F/2, New York, 1979, p. 4.

[95] Economic and Social Council Resolution — UN 1988, (LIV) of May 18, 1973.

[96] Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session. Supplement No. I 1, Document A/648. Progress Report of the UN Mediator in Palestine, pp. 17–18.

[97] The text of Resolution 198(111) at Annex IL

[98] “The Right of Return,” ST/SG/SER.

[99] Official Records of the UN General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Document A/AC. 25/W.81/Rev 2. (Historical survey of the Efforts of the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine to Secure the Implementation of Paragraph 11 of G.A Resolution 194 (III) para. 38.

[100] Ibid.

[101] “The Right of Return,” SR/SG/SER. F/2, p. 16.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

[104] General Assembly Resolution 2452 A (XIII) of December 19, 1968. Votes: 100 in favor, I against, 6 abstentions.

[105] General Assembly Resolution 2628 (XXV) of November 4, 1970. Votes: 57 in favor, 16 against, 30 abstentions.

[106] General Assembly Resolution 3089 D (XVIII) of December 7, 1973. Votes: 87 in favor, 6 against, 33 abstentions.

[107] General Assembly Resolution 3376 (XXX) of November 10, 1975. Votes: in favor 93, 18 against, 27 abstentions.

[108] Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty First Session, Supplement no #35. Document A/31/35. Para, 18–24.

[109] General Assembly Resolution 31/20 of November 24, 1976. Votes: 90 in favor, 16 against, 30 abstentions. Also General Assembly resolution 32/40 of December 15, 1977. Votes: part A: 100 in favor, I against, 29 abstentions. Part B: 95 in favor, 20 against, 26 abstentions.

[110] Much of the following data comes from Salim Tamari. “Palestinian Refugee Negotiations: From Madrid to Oslo II, A Final Status Issues Paper” (Institute for Palestine Studies, Washington, D.C., 1996).

[111] Eliahu Abram, “Problems of Definition of the Palestinian Family and its Implications for Family Reunification Schemes?” An unpublished report submitted to the Group on Family Reunification and Residency Rights, Jerusalem, February, 1994, p. 6.

[112] Rashid Khalidi, “The Palestinian Refugee Problem: A Possible Solution,” Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture 3 (4) (Autumn 1995): 72–8.

[113] Tamari, “Palestinian Refugee Negotiations,” p. 19.

[114] Ibid., p. 26.

[115] Faisal Husseini, al-Quds, May 25, 1995.

** 6. Early US Policy toward Palestinian Refugees: The Syria Option

[[Joshua Landis]]

During the first four years following the 1948 Palestine war, the United States attempted to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict by settling Palestinian Refugees in Syria. At the height of US-Syrian negotiations during the summer of 1952, the US contemplated paying the Syrian government $400,000,000 dollars in exchange for settling up to 500,000 Palestinians in the fertile plains of the Jazira that lie between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

This chapter of US foreign policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict has been almost entirely ignored.[116] Despite the failure of US attempts to settle the majority of Palestinian refugees in Syria, it is an important episode in US foreign policy. It was the first concerted effort by the West to settle the Palestine issue after the 1948 war. It helped define US attitudes toward the Arab Israeli conflict. As the Truman administration abandoned efforts to induce Israel to compromise with the Arabs either by returning land to the Palestinians or by allowing for the return of refugees, the State Department asked the Arab countries to resettle the refugees. In doing so. the US accepted the notion that the solution to the Palestinian problem was to assimilate the refugees into the neighboring Arab countries. This meant denying the force of Palestinian nationalism and embracing the notion that economic assistance and development could solve the political problems of the region.

US policy toward the Palestine Question following the 1948 war was guided by two main concerns: domestic concerns, in particular. President Truman's inability or unwillingness to push the Israelis to allow the return of Palestinian refugees; and foreign concerns, in particular, the emerging Cold War and the policy of containment. The United States might have ignored the refugee issue altogether had it not been committed to helping Great Britain organize some framework for defending the Middle East against the influence of communism and possible attack by the Soviet Union. The successful organization of such a defense organization required a resolution to the Arab -Israeli conflict that was souring relations between the western powers and the Arab states.

At the Lausanne Conference, which ran from April to September of 1949, the US and UK attempted to solve the Arab Israeli conflict. It is there that President Truman made his last attempt to pressure Israel to accept the return of Palestinian refugees. US State Department officials were largely hostile to Israel. Like Mark Ethridge, the US member of the Palestine Conciliation Commission, they insisted to Ben-Gurion that "the refugees were the main concern for Arab states," and reported to President Truman that "the Arabs have made what the Commission considers very great concessions; the Jews have made none so far."[117]

Under pressure from the State Department, President Truman decided to get tough with Israel. In April, he wrote to Ethridge the following, “Dear Mark ... I am rather disgusted with the manner in which the Jews are approaching the refugee problem. I told the President of Israel in the presence of his Ambassador just exactly what I thought about it. It may have some effect, I hope so.”[118] Later Truman cabled the Israeli government, insisting that if they were not more forthcoming on the refugee issue “the US Govt, will regretfully be forced to the conclusion that a revision of its attitude toward Israel has become unavoidable.”[119] Emboldened by these Presidential declarations George McGhee, the US coordinator on Palestine Refugee Matters, threatened the Israeli ambassador to the US that if Israel did not accept 200,000 refugees, the US would withhold S49 million worth of Export/Import Bank loans to Israel. The Israeli Ambassador was unimpressed with McGhee’s threat and responded that McGhee “wouldn’t get by with this move.” The Israeli Ambassador boasted that “he would stop it ...”[120]

True to his word, the Ambassador was able to nip McGhee’s threat in the bud. That same afternoon, the White house phoned McGhee to say that the President would have nothing to do with withholding loans to Israel. Never again would a State Department official under President Truman attempt to intimidate Israel on the issue of refugees.

US policy toward the refugees took a dramatic turn during the summer of 1949 away from Israel and toward Syria. Rather than withhold money from Israel, a policy for which President Truman did not have the stomach, the US began to develop a plan to pay money to Syria in order to take in refugees and turn them into Syrians.

The notion of Syria’s taking in a large number of Palestinians first came up under Husni Za’im. On March 30, 1949, the Syrian army led by Husni Za’im, the Chief of Staff, overthrew President Shukri al-Quwwatli and the

republican government in Syria. US policy toward Syria’s new military ruler was influenced from the start by concern for settling the refugee problem.

Only days after the coup, US officials on the Palestine Conciliation Commission began to argue for the recognition of the Za'im regime because without diplomatic recognition no progress on refugee maters "could be adequately undertaken."[121] Furthermore, the US State Department and the British Foreign Office were unanimous in recognizing that without some resolution of the refugee problem and the Palestine Question, no progress could be made on the question of organizing Middle East defense. As the Policy Planning Staff in Washington concluded in June 1949:

All of the countries of the Middle East area ... have indicated at one time or another a desire to enter into a military alliance or other military arrangements with the US or with the US and UK ... Moreover, with the exception of Saudi Arabia, none of the Arab governments could enter into an alliance with the US at this time due to the deterioration of relations relating to the Palestine Question.[122]

Settling refugees was important to the Western Powers because of their interest in organizing Middle East Defense and fighting the Cold War. It was during these years from 1949 through 1956 that Great Britain sought to form what it called the Middle East Command, then MEDO or Middle East Defense Organization — following the plan of NATO and SEATO, and finally, the Baghdad Pact.

From the moment the West recognized Za'im's government, Britain's Prime Minister Ernest Bevin began to "put pressure on Syria for the settlement of between 200,000 and 300,000 in northern Syria."[123] Za'im, who was from a Aleppine Kurdish family, did not have strong Arab nationalist feelings and was willing to conclude a deal with the Israelis. He had fought under Ottoman, French, and Syrian command and had led the Syrian army during its disastrous Palestine campaign of 1948. His experience had taught him the value of possessing a strong army, which he wanted for Syria above all else. In the hope of winning Western military support in July, Za'im offered "to settle about 300,000 refugees in the Jazirah area" on condition that Israel accept "large-scale international financial aid to Syria and the repatriation of most of the refugees and resettlement of the rest in Syria.[124] Israel was not interested in such a deal. It had already determined that Washington would not pressure it to accept refugees. Syria presented little military threat

to Tel Aviv either. During the 1948 war in Palestine, Syria stationed only 3,000 Syrian soldiers out of a total military strength of 10,000 at the border with Israel.[125] Za'im had no bargaining power in his negotiations with Israel. Ben-Gurion understood this full well and refused to meet Za'im. He was not about to accept 200,000 additional Arabs in Israel. Ben-Gurion's policy of delay paid off in August 1949. Husni Za'im was overthrown by Colonel Sami al-Hinnawi, who was in turn overthrown by Colonel 'Adib al-Shishakli in December 1949 four months later.

'Adib Shishakli was a more able leader than Za'im. He tried to work through Syria's parliament, known for its emulous factionalism, rather than run roughshod over it. A Sunni Arab from Hama who had ably led a division of volunteer troops in Palestine during the 1948 war, Shishakli was keenly aware of the growing Arab nationalist sentiment among Syrians that Za'im ignored and often belittled. He made every effort not to get too far ahead of public opinion or to resort to dictatorial and extra-legal measures. Despite their many differences in temperament, origin, and style, Shishakli and Za'im pursued similar strategies. Shishakli wanted money to develop Syria's economy. He pushed forward on projects to improve agriculture, irrigation, and transportation. Most of all though, he wanted to strengthen Syria's military; in particular, he wanted jet fighters.

During the first years of Shishakli's rule, the US and UK came to believe that Shishakli could deliver on the refugee issue if he were offered enough money and arms. He was a strong leader, they determined, who could cajole the Syrian parliament and people into accepting a deal to settle large numbers of Palestinians in Syria without being overthrown as Za'im had been. They realized that the issue was a sensitive one because leftist politicians and public opinion equated any such deal with capitulation to western imperialism and acq uiescence to Israel. Syria's minister of national economy, Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi, explained that the "Syrian Government would find it difficult to cooperate with the US, especially in realizing any projects envisaging refugee resettlement instead of repatriation"; though he hoped that if both countries understood "the difficulties each faces in present circumstances," the influence of the Palestine situation could be "minimized to permit economic collaboration."[126]

In an attempt to diffuse the dangers such a deal presented to Shishakli and the Syrian government, US and British officials tried to convert what was a political problem into a technical and economic one. As the British representative to UNWRA explained, the trick was to treat the Arab refugee problem “as a non-political one” even though, in his view, it was “fundamentally a political problem.”[127] Western governments encouraged UNWRA, the International Bank, the Export/Import Bank, and other development agencies to take the lead in offering Syria aid and in pushing for refugee settlement. They reiterated in their meetings with the Syrians that assistance from UNWRA for the settlement of Palestinian refugees “would be regarded as being of a strictly provisional nature.” UNWRA “did not concern itself with the permanent settlement of the dispute with Israel.” they insisted, and any attempt to “improve” the living conditions of the refugees would not prejudice their right to return.[128]

The State Department and Foreign office were most optimistic about closing a deal with Syria on the refugee issue during 1951 and 1952. A number of factors contributed to this positive assessment. President Truman displayed a renewed interest in the Middle East and placed “particular emphasis on the problem of the Arab refugees” and on helping the British to establish a regional defense organization to contain the Soviet Union, problems which were understood to be linked. He demonstrated this by allocating substantial sums of money for economic and military aid to the region.[129]

As for the Syrians, Colonel Shishakli had begun his second year in power and had every reason to believe that he had Syrian politics well in hand. Opposition to his rule was negligible. He had successfully pitted the two major conservative parties in parliament against each other. The left, including the Ba’th Party and Akram Hawrani’s Arab Socialist Party, continued to support him. It was not until December 1951 that these two parties merged in order to overthrow Shishakli. The coup attempt was broken up even before it started because Shishakli moved quickly and decisively to suppress it and because few senior military officials were willing to join the conspiracy.

Within the larger arena of Middle East politics, Shishakli also faced few important challenges in 1951 and 1952. The Arab League seemed amenable

to revising its resolutions on refugee settlement in order to pave the way for large-scale settlement in Syria. The Egyptian monarchy faced serious internal disturbances in 1951 and was unable to stand in the way of an independent Syria policy toward the West. Gamal Abdul Nasser did not take power in Egypt until the summer of 1952 and it was some time before he had consolidated his power in Egypt. Once Nasser began to champion Arab nationalism and to throw his full support behind the Syrian left in opposing any possible rapprochement between Syria and the West, the chances for a Syrian deal on the refugees diminished considerably.

In 1951, however, UK and particularly US officials believed the likelihood of settling refugees in Syria was good. President Truman pushed for increased aid of various types to the Middle East. Point Four money, which was earmarked for technical assistance, was continued. The Foreign Aid Bill of 1951 authorized $160,000,000 for economic assistance to the Middle East with increased levels for Syria. In recognition of the particular needs of refugees, Congress allocated $50,000,000 for Arab refugees, the same amount allocated to Israel for settling Jewish immigrants. This was a considerable increase from the allocation in 1950 of $27,000,000 and from 1949’s allocation of $16,000,000. As the British recognized, these increases in refugee aid indicated “the United States had played its part well in dealing with the problem.” The fact that congress specifically designated half the money for the resettlement of the refugees and expressed its willingness to “increase appropriations for a second and third year” of a three-year program, also cheered officials in the field.[130]

Just as important, Truman successfully shepherded the Mutual Security Program through congress. This assistance was specifically designated lor arms and defense spending in the region. This permitted the US to provide Arab countries with large-scale military assistance for the first time. The 1952 allocation for the Middle East was $196,000,000, a considerable sum. President Truman’s speech to congress in May 1951 urging the passage of

Program was summarized as follows:

No part of the world is more directly exposed to Soviet pressure than the countries of the Middle East. He stated further that the incessant pressure on the Middle East could be overcome only by a continual build-up of armed defenses and the fostering of economic development ... This would permit the United States for the first time to assist those countries directly in building up their defensive capabilities.[131]

The willingness of the US and UK to supply substantial quantities of

arms and military aid was key to any success with settling the refugees. As the Chief of the British Legation in Damascus explained in March 1951, “If we are to influence Syria to come out in favor of the Western powers we must show that we are prepared to help her build up her defences. This we can best do by supplying arms and equipment to the Syrian Army.”[132]

Early US attempts to interest Shishakli in small amounts of Point Four

money and economic aid for refugee resettlement as “confidence building” programs failed miserably. The Syrian government rejected one offer of $150,000 in seed money for a project in 1951 out of hand. “Syria expected something far more generous,” the British Chief of Legation explained.[133] US and British officials groused that the Syrians did not understand the realities of congress, government funding, and project development; nevertheless, the Western powers did revise their approach to winning Syrian confidence. By the beginning of 1952, it was agreed that “an alternative” policy to “reinforce resettlement” would have to be made. “Such a generous offer of economic aid to Syria” must be made that it would “enable the Syrian government to over-ride the political objections to resettlement. But such an offer would have to be on an impressive scale, for the reason that in general political considerations weigh far more strongly with the Syria people than do economic ones.”[134]

Military aid also had to be increased. As the British Legation Chief observed, “trying to conduct diplomacy in Syria without military goods was akin to producing bricks without straw.”[135] He described his meetings with

Shishakli and General Silo, the nominal leader of Syria in 1951, to be centered around discussions of arms and jet aircraft, in particular.

These talks are never exactly easy going. Silo keeps in the middle of his desk a large and shiny model of a jet lighter, which he strokes from time to time while eyeing me in a rather meaningful way.[136]

Renewed efforts by the West in 1951 to settle refugees in Syria were matched by positive indications about the possibility of a deal on the part of the Syrians. Syrian government officials asked for aid with increasing persistence throughout 1951. Shishakli deliberately held out the possibility of resettlement as an inducement for Western aid. Early in 1951, the Syrian ambassador to Britain told the Parliamentary Under-Secretary that the Americans could win resettlement for a substantial sum of money and quantity of arms. As the Under-Secretary reported:

He said that none of the Arab States could begin to cooperate freely with Israel until the question of the Arab refugees had been settled ... The Arab countries would be only too pleased to absorb them but it was not sufficient simply to set them down on the land and tell them to start life again as peasants. Many of them were artisans, merchants and members of the professional classes and in order to reestablish them a good deal of capital would be required ... The Ambassador suggested that America might provide the money ... then said that Syria was in urgent need of arms for self-defence.[137]

The Syrians continued to tantalize western officials with possibility of large-scale resettlement if only the West would talk real money and weapons. Negotiations proceeded throughout 1951 and the early part of 1952 with ever larger numbers being put forward by both sides. General Robertson of the British army reported in 1951 that the Americans were considering large-scale military support for Syria for purely political reasons. He wrote:

Mr. McGhee is impressed with the importance of giving arms to the Syrians. In the case of Syria we are asked to give the arms first, and we are told that

the political position will depend upon an adequate supply of arms being received. This may be quite a logical attitude from the Syrian point of view, but it means that we are being asked to buy Syria's friendship with arms. This may be a proper thing to do.[138]

General Robertson was quite explicit that he believed the Syrian army to be rotten and incapable of providing much help to the West in halting a Soviet invasion through Turkey. So long as everyone was clear that military assistance to Syria would be undertaken for political and not military reasons, he would not oppose it. A Foreign Office official explained Britain's position on aid to Syria as follows: "We are only considering supplying military and economic aid to Syria insofar as this will bring her to our way of thinking and persuade her to carry out such projects as may assist in the major problem of the resettlement of refugees."[139]

Shishakli inquired about Western aid with increasing persistence throughout the first half of 1952. Sir William Horace Montagu-Pollock. kcmg, Chief of Legation in Syria, reported that Shishakli "professed to be wholeheartedly in favor of a practical scheme for the resettlement of the refugees," and that he had commented that "all aid from the West would be welcome, provided the West was prepared to support Syrian independence."[140] Following the failed anti-Shishakli coup of December 1951, Iraq increased its support for Syria dissidents and renewed its call tor a united Fertile Crescent, which was to begin with Syrian unification with Iraq. In order to counter Iraqi ambitions in Syria, Shishakli sought to curry favor with the Western powers that had influence over Iraq and could restrain Hashemite unification schemes.

During the early months of 1952, Shishakli called a number of meetings with the Director of UNRWA, Mr. Blanford, and was able to convince him that "the Syrian Government meant business in its approaches to foreign authorities for funds."[141] In April 1952, Blanford announced that there had been a breakthrough. UNRWA had reached an agreement with Shishakli. The plan was to resettle 500,000 refugees in Syria at the cost of $200,000,000. Shishakli demanded a further $200,000,000 in order to improve the Syrian standard of living, or as he phrased it, "parallel development." Shishakli argued that it would cause problems in Syria if only the Palestinians were to receive assistance. He insisted that Syrians receive an equal amount. "The

new programme," the British Legation reported, "was to help the refugees to obtain adequate housing and employment. They would be transferred from camps and temporary shelter to suburban housing projects and rural villages ... The cost of such a programme ... would be about $220 m. over three years." The British report concluded that, "Negotiations for the implementation for the three year plan are now proceeding between UNWRA and the Arab Governments ... The prospects of a solution of the problem are now less discouraging than at any time since the Palestine war resulted in the exodus of the refugees."[142] In 1952, Congress approved a much-augmented package for the Mutual Security Program, which in conjunction with other aid programs and World Bank funds came close to meeting the Syrian request for parallel development and resettlement costs.

Further momentum to the resettlement plan was provided by the Arab League, which moved to include Syria among the places mentioned in the League's resolution where it approved of the resettlement of the refugees. As the Foreign Office reported, "The other Arab Governments have been discreetly informed of the Syrian negotiations and have reacted quite favorably. Leading officials of the Arab League have also given it informal support."[143]

Shortly after the Egyptian revolution of July 1952 Shishakli shelved his agreement with UNWRA and the Western powers. The British legation cabled the Foreign Office in September that "we have heard no further mention of this programme from the Syrian side and. as you know. Colonel Shishakli recently asked that the plan for re-settling refugees from outside Syria should be postponed indefinitely."[144] Shishakli returned to complaining about the pressures put upon him by public opinion and his political opponents. British representatives in Damascus explained that Shishakli had been "at pains to exculpate himself in public and private statements. You will remember that Hourani accused him of suppressing freedom, of shackling Syria to the imperialist organizers of Western Pacts and to the oil companies, and also of selling the refugees."[145] By the end of 1953, Shishakli's opponents had grown in number and courage. Iraq called for Shishakli's removal and supported his right wing opponents while Egypt supported his left-wing opponents and fanned the Hames of Arab nationalism and anti-imperialist and Zionist sentiment in Syria. In such an environment, Shishakli found it impossible to accept Western aid or to resettle Palestinian refugees.

In February 1954, Shishakli was driven from the country by a military insurrection. Neither western countries nor Syria raised the issue of the resettlement of refugees again.

In reviewing early Western efforts to solve the Palestine question by resettling refugees in Syria, several conclusions can be drawn. Although modern scholarship ignores resettlement negotiations, they were a foreign policy priority for the US and Great Britain during the early 1950s. In particular, the Truman administration was much more active in trying to find a solution to the Palestinian problem than previously acknowledged, for it was ready to bankroll the lion's share of $400,000,000 resettlement project. The US was unwilling to pressure Israel on the subject of returning refugees. Instead, it believed that the Palestinians could be Syrianized, underestimating the importance of nationalism in the region and overestimating the extent to which local problems could be solved by money and offers of economic development. The primary motive of the Western powers in finding a solution to the Palestinian problem was their interest in organizing a Middle East defense plan to fight to Cold War and to contain the Soviet Union.

Syria sought to use the refugee issue for its own interests. Overlooking the welfare of the refugees, Syria tried to use them to squeeze money and weapons out of the West. Instability in Syria ultimately undermined efforts at negotiating an improvement in the living conditions and economic prospects of the Palestinian refugees. The unwillingness and inability of the Arab states to cut a deal on refugee resettlement led the West to turn further toward Israel rather than to pressure Israel to make concessions.

*** Notes

I would like to thank my student, Russ Allen, for his help in researching this article and in sharpening its arguments.

[116] Moshe Ma’oz is the first academic to mention this episode in US policy in his line work, Syria and Israel: From IVar to Peacemaking (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1995). Major texts on US policy in the region and toward Palestinians ignore it. These include important works such as: Michael E. Jansen. The United States and the Palestinian People (Beirut: Institute tor Palestine Studies, 1970); Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars: US Policy toward Palestine and Israel since 1945 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1995); George Lenczowski. American Presidents and the Middle East (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990); Seth P. Tillman. The United States in the Middle East, Interests and Obstacles (Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 1982); Dan Tschirgi. The Politics of Indecision: Origins and Implications of American Involvement with the Palestine (New York: Praeger, 1983); and Dan Tschirgi. The American Search for Mideast Peace (New York: Praeger, 1989).

[117] FRUS 1949, “Mr. Mark F. Ethridge to the President” (Jerusalem), April 11, 1949, pp. 905–6, as quoted in Neff. Fallen Pillars, p. 75.

[118] Ibid., p. 76.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ilan Pappe. The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947–1951 (London: I.B. Tauris, 1992), p. 218.

[122] FRUS 1949, Gordon Merriam (Washington), “Memorandum to the Policy Planning Staff,” June 13, 1949, p. 33.

[123] FRUS 1949, “Talks at Washington between the US and the UK,” April 4, 1949, p. 51.

[124] Pappe, The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, pp. 226. 234.

[125] Joshua Landis, “Syria and the Palestine War: Fighting King Abdullah’s Greater Syria Plan.” in Eugene Rogan and Avi Shlaim. eds. Rewriting the Palestine War: 1948 and the History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 35.

[126] FRUS 1950 (Damascus). Keeley to Secretary of State. February 24. 1950. p. 1206.

[127] PRO. “Minutes of a meeting held at the Foreign Office.” November 30. 1951. FO 371/91218.

[128] PRO (Damascus), Mann to Morgan, June 29, 1950, FO 371 Z82785 EY1015/21.

[129] PRO (Washington), “Transcript of Acheson’s Summary of Truman’s Message to Congress,” May 21, 1951, FO 371 /91195.

[130] PRO, “Minutes of a Meeting Held at the Foreign Office.” November 30. 1951. FO 371/91218.

[131] PRO. “Transcript of Acheson’s Summary ofTruman’s Message to Congress.” May 21, 1951, FO 371/91195.

[132] PRO (Damascus), Montagu-Pollock, “Internal Situation in Syria, “ October, 1951, FO 371/91842/EY 1015/10/G.

[133] PRO (Damascus) Montagu-Pollock to Geoffrey Furlonge, November 12, 1951, FO 371/91840/ EY 1016/24.

[134] PRO (Damascus), British Legation to Eden, December 10, 1951, FO 371/91852 EY 1051/16.

[135] PRO (Damascus) Montagu-Pollock to Rapp, May 22, 1951, FO 371/91865/ EY 1192/12.

[136] PRO (Damascus), Montagu-Pollock to Geoffrey Furlonge, July 2, 1951. FO 371/91867/EY 1195/15.

[137] PRO (London), Davies, “Conversation between the Syrian Ambassador and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary,” February 2, 1951, FO 371/91848/ EY 1025/2.

[138] PRO (Damascus), General Brian Robertson, GHQ Middle East Land Forces to Under Secretary of State, War Office, April 19, 1951, FO 371/91867/ EY 1195/15.

[139] PRO (Damascus), P. A. Rhodes, “Arms Aid to Syria,” March 5, 1952, FO 371/98921/ EY 1102/7.

[140] PRO (Damascus), Montagu-Pollock to R. J. Bowker, January 7, 1952, FO 371/98925/ EY I 102/1/E.

[141] PRO (Damascus), Minutesofa Meetingin Foreign Office,” June 27, 1952, FO 371/918520/ EE 18126/10.

[142] PRO (Damascus), Evans and Wright, “Paper for the Heads of Missions to the Middle East,” June 6, 1952, FO 371/98254/ El056/41.

[143] PRO, “Minutes of a Meeting in Foreign Office,” June 27, 1952, FO 371/98520/EE 18126/10.

[144] PRO (Damascus), Chancery to Secretariat, British Legation, September 11, 1952, FO 371/98925/ EY1102/22.

[145] PRO (Damascus), Samuel to Ross, January 30, 1953, FO 371/104967/ EY 1015/5.

** 7. Refugee Compensation: Responsibility, Recipients, and Forms and Sources

[[Don Peretz]]

The issue of compensation is one of the most critical but difficult aspects of the refugee problem to be negotiated in the final status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Differences between the parties are indeed wide on nearly all aspects, including responsibility for payment, identification of property and non-material items to be covered, the value of material and non-material items, who is to be compensated, the form and source of payments, and counterclaims for compensation that Israel is likely to present.

*** Responsibility for Compensation

On one hand, the Palestinians and the Arab states maintain that Israel is responsible for payment of compensation to the refugees who left Israel during the 1948 war regardless of the reasons for their departure. To support their claim they cite precedents established through international law and United Nations resolutions, in particular paragraph 11 of Resolution 194 (III) passed by the UN General Assembly in December 1948, resolving “that compensation should be paid for the property of those [refugees] choosing not to return and for the loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible.” Although the resolution does not specifically designate Israel as responsible, the Arab states, and indeed many nations not party to the conflict, have assumed that the resolution infers that Israel is accountable for abandoned refugee property, even if not for the cause of the refugee Hight.

On the other hand, Israeli governments since 1948 have disclaimed responsibility tor the refugee departure, placing the blame on the Arab states and Arab leaders. They have asserted that the refugee flight was the result of instigation by Arab leaders in a war of aggression against Israel; therefore ultimate responsibility for any claims must be borne by the aggressor states. However, Israel has stated that it is willing to discuss the issue in the context of a peace settlement and to consider some form of payment as a humanitarian gesture, not as an obligation by the State of Israel.[146] Ze’ev Schiff underscores this perspective in a recent monograph, Israeli Preconditions for Palestinian Statehood. He asserts that:

Israel should participate in a humanitarian effort to rehabilitate the refugees, recognizing that it bears no responsibility to compensate these refugees for damages suffered during a war initiated by others during which Israelis themselves suffered greatly. Additionally, Israel should reject claims for compensation of Palestinian refugees, perhaps by presenting in return Israel’s own claims to regain Jewish property in Arab countries.[147]

Recently, however, there have been nuances of change in Israeli public opinion. In a Knesset speech. Prime Minister Ehud Barak expressed regret for Palestinian suffering caused by the 1948 war, but emphasized that his regret was “not, under any circumstances, based on a feeling of guilt or responsibility for the emergence of the conflict and its results.[148] Several “new historians” using official archives have refuted assertions that Israel was blameless in the matter of refugee flight, documenting that a large percentage of Palestinians were forced from their homes to become refugees either within Israel or beyond its borders. Even the Ministry of Education recently initiated a project to revise school textbooks to give a more balanced and equitable picture of Israel’s early years.

General (Ret.) Shlomo Gazit, former head of Israeli military intelligence, reflects changing perspectives in a monograph titled, “The Palestinian Refugee Problem.” He observes that: “One must question the current Israeli policy of refusing to recognize any Israeli responsibility to compensate the refugees. Whoever seeks a full solution to the Arab-Israel and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts, cannot ignore the significant psychological contribution to a changed Arab-Palestinian attitude toward Israel that would derive from an Israeli decision to pay compensation.”[149]

Gazit asserts that there is no possible comparison between the situation of the Palestinians in 1948 and Jewish suffering resulting from the Holocaust since the former resulted “from war their own leadership initiated.” However, he asserts, Israel should calculate compensation and payments to be made to the refugees, a process that “could be of great psychological importance, facilitate normalization, and open a new era of positive bilateral relations between the peoples.” If Israel were to insist, “as in the German case, that Palestinians be obligated to use the Israeli payments to import Israeli products,” Palestinian and Arab markets would be opened for Israel.[150]

Gazit’s proposal is indicative of an influential view in Israel that corresponds with the international consensus concerning Israel’s, at least partial, responsibility for payment of compensation to the 1948 refugees.

*** Identification and Evaluation of Property and Non-material Items

A major task facing those dealing with the compensation issue is identification of items for which to be compensated. The two main categories are movable and immovable property. The latter includes primarily land and building structures; the former, industrial equipment, commercial stocks, motor vehicles, agricultural equipment and livestock, household effects, and blocked bank accounts.[151] In addition, Palestinian and other Arab specialists have demanded compensation for loss of “human capital,” psychological suffering, and the Palestinian Arab share in the value of public material assets during the mandatory period; such as railroads, airports, ports, water resources, and other such public assets.[152]

Rural and urban lands constitute the principal capital owned by the Arab community in 1948. Land categories of diverse values include urban property, various qualities of cultivable land, forests, uncultivable grazing lands, and wastelands.

Table 7.1 Arab-owned land in Israel following the 1949 armistice agreements

| | Area (in acres) | Percentage |

| Arab individually owned | 1,870,492 | 36.64 |

| Jewish owned | 368,941 | 7.23 |

| Other than A or J | 26,308 | 0.52 |

| State domain | 2,838,765 | 55.61 |

| Total | 5,104,506 | 100.00 |

Sources for identification of former Palestinian Arab assets are diverse, including Arab specialists such as Sami Hadawi, Yusuf Sayegh, and Atif Kubursi; the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property; and the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (CCP). Hadawi, former Chief of the Land Taxation

Section of the Palestine Government’s Department of Land Settlement and editor of the authoritative Village Statistics that classified land categories and ownership during the mandate, provided data on Arab owned land in Israel following the 1949 armistice agreements (table 7.1).[153]

The CCP’s Refugee Office established a Committee of Experts on

Compensation in 1950 to undertake the task of identifying and evaluating Arab property, focusing on land. Its principal source of data was based on land holdings and values registered in the Government of Palestine’s Land Ottice in 1937, 1942, and 1947. The CCP’s global estimate was based on the territorial situation defined in the 1949 armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.[154]

After completing a global estimate of Arab property, the CCP sought to identify hundreds of thousands of individual land parcels based on mandate records giving each location, area and description, owners’ names and respective shares, and other data such as mortgages affecting the parcel.

A major problem was that records of land holdings were dispersed among several authorities. At the end of the mandate, British officials turned over to Israel only those records within the jurisdiction of the Jewish state where land was predominantly Jewish owned. Other records were received by Jordan, Syria, and Egypt. Many microfilmed documents had been sent to England, where they were made available to the CCP.[155]

The CCP expected to base its estimates on records sent to England and from government tax records held by Israel. Although the CCP claimed that Israel, Syria, Egypt and Jordan cooperated in its work, it was discovered that many original land registration records were destroyed in the 1948 war or otherwise missing. Some of the microfilmed material sent to

England was later found to be illegible, and many documents had basic omissions.

The CCP Refugee Office estimated that more than 80 percent of Israel's total area of 20,850 square kilometers represented land abandoned by the Arab refugees, although only a little more than a quarter of it was considered cultivable.[156] Three-quarters of this land was sub-marginal or semi-desert, mostly occupied by nomad tribes whose ownership, although not clearly defined, was unchallenged during the mandate. Actual title to this land was "presumed" to be state domain and thus was considered government land by Israel. Given the ambiguity of title to such lands, they are likely to be the object of controversy in compensation negotiations. According to the CCP, abandoned Arab cultivable land was nearly two- and-a-half times the total area of Jewish-owned land at the end of the mandate.

Specific identification of land ownership and evaluation of many large abandoned tracts was impossible because of the land system prevailing at the end of the mandate. Most land in the CCP's global estimate of 16,324,000 dunams (one-quarter acre), including the 4,574,000 considered cultivable, had not been registered under the Land Settlement Act that identified ownership by cadastral survey. Much of this property was registered under the old Ottoman system that usually identified land parcels or buildings undefined by a survey. Entries in the Register of Deeds could rarely be identified with the parcel of land to which they purported to refer. In effect, land registration was personal rather than territorial.[157]

Although land registration under Ottoman law was compulsory, it was frequently not enforced. Consequently, much land was held by private contracts drawn up according to local custom outside the official Land Registry Office. There was no record of successions that often divided and subdivided ownership. The Register of Deeds, especially in rural areas, often did not show true ownership of land and the tangle of titles was a complex labyrinth leading to frequent disputes over encroachments and boundaries.

The British mandatory authorities initially adopted Ottoman legislation pertaining to immovable property that conformed to Shari'a Islamic religious law modified by tradition. Although the mandate authorities did little to modify Ottoman land legislation, they permitted the civil courts to apply

principles of English common law and doctrines of equity in force in the United Kingdom, subject to Ottoman law.

In 1928, the British introduced a new system, the Land Settlement Ordinance, basing registration on survey maps accurately defining each parcel of land. However, by the end of the mandate, only 5,200,000 dunams had been reclassified or settled under this system, including most Jewish-owned land. Large areas that became absentee property, particularly in western Galilee, the Jerusalem Corridor, and areas surrounding Safad, Acre and the Little Triangle, were never reclassified. In these areas ownership and payment of compensation on an individual basis would generate complicated legal and technical difficulties.

A major objective of the 1928 Land Registration Ordinance was to limit land holdings in undivided or collective ownership (mush’a) and to end fragmentation of holdings by preventing registration of tiny plots into valueless fractions. Owners of such fragments were required to combine their shares with neighboring owners.

Jointly owned village land (mush’a) holdings varied from village to village throughout Palestine, but precise information on its distribution and pattern was never collected. The most common type was joint ownership of village land and distribution of shares for each family. Over time, numerous partitions among the heirs and the sale of land to others reduced the shares to infinitesimal denominations — ten-thousandths, hundredthousandths, and even millionth shares. Many areas were in total dispute with as many as thirty claims to a single small parcel of land. Often claimants had no documentation to support their claims with only oral evidence as the basis for decisions.

Although there was no extensive documentation on the total amount of mush’a land in Palestine, it was known that mush’a was the most common ownership throughout the nineteenth century. However, the amount greatly decreased under the mandate. Mandatory surveys indicated that the decline in mush’a holdings during the 1920s and 1930s resulted from

voluntary partitions carried out by the fellahin themselves. On the basis of the mandatory surveys, it would seem that between 40 and 50 percent of village lands were commonly owned. Attempts to determine individual compensation payments for commonly owned village lands would raise a host of difficulties.

Since a large part of immovable urban and village property consisted of building structures that were destroyed in war or demolished in urban reconstruction, identification of such items would depend on tax records or such documents that former owners might possess.

The most authoritative Israeli source for identification and evaluation of abandoned refugee property is the Israel Custodian of Absentee Property, a division of the Ministry of Finance. However, much information concerning the use, amounts, distribution and value of abandoned property, and the government's policy concerning it, has been secret. Often sessions of the Knesset Finance Committee discussing the work of the Custodian were closed. Even the CCP was unable to acquire information from the Custodian concerning its activities.

According to early press releases, unclassified reports to the Knesset, and Israeli press accounts, the property acquired by the Custodian made a major contribution to the country's early economic development. The extent of this property and the fact that much of Israel's border region consisted of absentee property made it strategically significant. Of the 370 new Jewish settlements established between 1948 and 1953, 350 were on absentee property. By 1954, more than a third of the 250,000 new immigrants settled in abandoned Arab urban areas. Arabs left whole cities including Jaffa, Acre, Lydda, Ramleh, Bissan, Majdal; 388 towns and villages and large parts of 94 other cities and towns containing nearly a quarter of all buildings then in Israel. Ten thousand shops, businesses and stores were left in Jewish hands. Nearly half the country's citrus holdings, then a major source of foreign currency, were formerly Arab. In 1949, olive produce from Arab groves was Israel's third largest export after citrus and diamonds.[158]

Since the 1950s nearly all this property has been dispersed to Jewish owners through the Jewish National Fund, Jewish Agency, and Israeli land and housing authorities. Much of the rural land was turned over to agricultural settlements; urban property (land and remaining buildings) was acquired by individuals or housing firms on long-term leases. To identify immovable property abandoned by the Arab refugees, the archives of the Custodian would have to become available.

At this point, fifty years after the refugee flight, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to identify movable property. According to the finance minister in 1951, much absentee property was illegally seized during the early 1950s by squatters, veterans, and institutions settling new immigrants.[159]

Until now the Israeli government has not made publie any estimate of the overall value of abandoned property. Consequently there are no precise figures available, but only estimates of former Arab property values. These estimates range from about two billion to well over two hundred billion current US dollars. Two principal sources of estimates are the CCP and Palestinian economists and land specialists mentioned above.[160]

The CCP maintained that valuation of movable property was all but impossible. There was no way of knowing what the refugees took with them and w hat they left. The CCP Refugee Office received no answer from Israel concerning the nature and extent of movables appropriated by its authorities, although the Custodian of Absentee Property estimated the value of movables in its warehouses during 1951 at LP (Palestine Pounds) 4 million. Despite these difficulties, the CCP offered a rough calculation of the value of movable property based on the national income of Palestinians in 1945 and the aggregate value of various items in 1945 such as farm equipment, livestock, and household effects: a figure of LP 20 million. Comparisons were made between the relative value of movable to immovable property in the case of Turks leaving Greece and Greeks leaving Turkey after the First World War since the social structure of these two communities resembled that of the Palestinians. Based on this comparison, the value of Arab movable property would have been LP 21.570.000. Thus the total value of Arab movable and immovable property in 1948–50 according to the CCP was LP 121.570.000. the equivalent of about SI.85 billion 1990 US dollars.[161]

The CCP estimated that the total value of abandoned Arab land in 1950 was about LP 100 million and of movable Arab property in the neighborhood of LP 20 million. Because of the complexity of the problem resulting from missing records and technical complications, these were acknowledged to be very approximate estimates. Furthermore, immovable property evaluation was overshadowed by. on one hand, many changes in land and building values brought about by improvements after the Arab flight. On the other hand, tens of thousands of buildings and hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural land deteriorated during the 1948 war and Arab flight.

CCP estimates were based on the tax records of the Palestine Government. Agricultural land values were based on estimated productivity used for tax purposes. Agricultural productivity was determined by the Rural Property Ordinance which set a tax per dunam according to the estimated soil productivity; the Ordinance applied to all rural lands except those in the Negev. Urban and town property values were based on assessed rental value.

The value of land was greatly increased by the Land Transfer Regulations of 1940 (derived from the 1939 White Paper) which greatly restricted areas in which Jews could acquire land, thus driving the price

upwards. An additional factor was the Arab nationalist campaign against sales to Jews, a fact that made land sales to Jews by Arabs dangerous.

Uncultivable land and buildings in rural areas were not evaluated by the

CCP. I he total value of abandoned immovable property estimated by the CCP based on this method was (in Palestine Pounds):[162]

Rural land Urban lands Jerusalem lands

Total

Neither the Arab states nor the Palestinian community accepted the UN estimates, belies ing that they were far too low. The Arab League appointed its own committee of experts to evaluate the loss of Arab property in Palestine. Arab delegates at the CCP s 1951 Paris conference presented a figure nearly twenty times the estimate of the CCP experts, the equivalent of over 35 billion US dollars. They demanded that refugees who did not return to Israel should be compensated for their share in public property, including roads, railways, ports, airfields, and other such facilities, in addition to compensation for individual property.[163] Palestinian economist Dr. Y usif Sayegh estimated the value of abandoned Arab property at 756.7 million 1948 pounds sterling (land and houses £644.2 million, movable property £12.5 million). He added lost income possibilities, the cost of separating the West Bank and Gaza from the Palestinian economy, and the burden imposed on the neighboring Arab states by absorbing large numbers of the refugees.[164]

Sami I ladawi added to the bill for land, houses, and movables the costs of human capital losses including loss of life, careers, suffering, etc. His estimate of property losses in 1948 prices was LP 743 million; in addition, 430.2 million in human capital losses totaling LP 1,182 billion or $239 billion in 1990 US dollars.[165]

(Canadian economics professor Dr. Atif K ubursi maintains that the estimates presented above were inaccurate, those of the CCP far too low, and those of the various Arab experts, although more realistic than the UN estimates, not inclusive enough. His estimate of material losses is identical to Hadawi s, i.e., LP 743 million in 1948 prices, the equivalent of $132 billion in 1994. Inclusion of human capital losses raises total compensation claims to $209 billion. If compensation for psychological damage and pain, similar to payments made to Jews by West Germany is added, the total reaches $253 billion. K ubursi and other Arab economists maintain that the ((p greatly undervalued refugee assets, neglecting important data such as sales records of land in Palestine when the mandate ended and the diversity and fluctuations in land evaluation.[166]

*** Compensation Recipients and Forms of Payment

A principal difference between the parties in the dispute over compensation is whether payments should be global or individual; and. it global, should payment be made directly or to an agency representing refugee interests in the form of large-scale development projects intended to rehabilitate and absorb them.

Although Israel has offered individual payments for expropriated land to its internal Palestinian refugees (those who fled or were driven from one part of Israel to another during 1948) it has insisted that only global payment be offered in the case of refugees who left the country, and only within the context of a general peace agreement. In 1949, the Israel Government stated that it would consider payment into a UN fund for integration of the refugees within the neighboring countries with the understanding that Israel was not responsible for the refugee flight. Final agreement on compensation would have to put an end to the whole refugee problem. Individual claims by former Arab owners would have to be addressed to a UN body charged with settling the compensation issue, not to Israel. This offer would not be viewed as an obligation, but as a humanitarian contribution dependent on loans to Israel.[167]

Gazit has proposed that Israel should determine compensation “at a fixed and modest rate, making no attempt to calculate the amount due to every refugee family according to the value of its property in 1948.” He proposes a rate of approximately $10,000 per family to be applied toward rehabilitation “within a collective framework.” Such family grants, he acknowledges, “would account for a relatively small part of the original assets left behind in 1948.”[168]

In early negotiations on the refugee issue, the CCP considered that Israel should pay compensation to individual owners based on CCP evaluations of abandoned property. Considering Israel’s stringent economic conditions in the early 1950s, the CCP recommended establishment of a UN trustee

through whom individual payments would be made and who would be assisted by a group of economic and financial experts charged with developing a compensation program. However, when it became evident that the compensation issue would be indefinitely deferred, emphasis changed from direct individual payments to some form of global financing of refugee resettlement and rehabilitation.

Neither the US nor the UN has taken an official position on the question of global versus individual payment. UN Resolution 194 (III), while calling for compensation, was ambiguous about the form of payments, and whether or not they should be individual or global. However, early attempts to resolve the refugee issue placed great emphasis on resettlement and rehabilitation through projects such as those proposed by the Clapp Mission (UN Economic Survey Mission) and Eric Johnston's schemes for regional economic development. These proposals implied global compensation in the form of contributions through the UN for projects that would absorb the refugees in the countries surrounding Israel. Neither the Clapp nor Johnston proposals were implemented because of the belief by most Arab authorities that they were intended to dispose of the refugee problem through resettlement, thus relieving Israel of any obligation for repatriation or compensation.[169]

Arab delegations to the 1951 Paris conference insisted on individual

compensation payment; if Israel was incapable of assuming the burden, then the UN should assume responsibility. Attempts to establish a relationship between payment and Israel's ability to pay was seen as pure and simple confiscation of Arab refugee property. To restrict the right of the refugees to compensation would be to make Israel a present of the refugees' property, the Arab representative insisted.[170]

Kubursi underscores the Palestinian emphasis on the right to individual compensation in his study, Palestinian Losses in 1948: The Quest for Precision-. "Individual rights are at the heart of the compensation issue," he states. "The largest losses are incurred by individuals or families. The collective will, as expressed by the Palestinian leadership, can only theoretically forfeit collective rights. It is up to individuals to pursue their

rights regardless of the agreements the current Palestinian leadership may reach with the Israelis at this time, presumably on their behalf.”[171]

A workshop on refugee compensation sponsored in July 1999 by the Palestinian Refugee Research Net and the Canadian International Development Research Center outlined the strengths and weaknesses of various forms of compensation and types of claimants. These included claims by individual 1948 property owners and their heirs, by extended families and/or villages, by the refugee community as a whole regardless of property ownership, by the Palestinian slate on behalf of the refugees, by host governments for the costs of hosting the refugees.[172]

The workshop also surveyed the strengths and weaknesses of payment mechanisms. They included cash payments to individuals, payment in service vouchers for individuals and/or families, investment in community development, refugee ownership of investments in development corporations, a lump sum payment to a Palestinian state, payment through a binational (Palestine, Israel) agency, trilateral (Palestine, Israel, other), or multilateral international commission, and payment through a UN organization such as UNRWA or its successor.

In summary, considerations in payment of both global and individual or family compensation include:

- Should payments be in equal amounts regardless of whether recipients were property owners or not?

- Should they be determined by amounts and type of property lost?

- Should payments be specifically designated for refugee rehabilitation or should recipients be free to use payments as they wish?

- Should payment be direct to refugees or through an intermediary agency such as an Israeli or Palestinian authority or through an international agency, UN or other?

*** Counter Claims

When the issue of compensation was initially raised, Israel responded with counterclaims for Jewish-owned property in areas of Palestine held by Jordan, war-damage claims, and claims for property of Jews leaving Iraq in the early 1950s.[173] War damage claims included the costs to Israel of the economic blockade imposed by the Arab states and Jewish property in the Jordanian-held Old City of Jerusalem, the Rutenberg electric plant at Naharayim. several Jewish settlements in the West Bank, the Dead Sea potash works, and Jewish-owned property in Hebron.

After Iraq froze Jewish property and turned it over to a Custodian of Jewish Property in 1951, Foreign Minister Sharett emphasized that Israel would have to take into account the value of Jewish-owned property frozen in Iraq “with regard to compensation we have undertaken to pay the Arabs.”[174]

Similar moves by Syria in 1953 and Egypt in 1956 to freeze Jewish property or to place it under control of a custodian increased the number of counterclaims by Israel. They were reinforced by the powerful lobby of Jews from Arab countries, who, in 1975, established the World

Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC), which received quasi-official status from the Israel Government.[175]

WOJAC demanded that Jewish property in Arab countries and the costs to Israel of absorbing Jewish immigrants from the Arab world be presented as counterclaims to the compensation demanded for Arab property seized in Israel. The demands were again r

Congress and organizations of Sephardi Jews who intensified their campaign against payment to the Palestinians, charging that the value of their property was larger than that of the Palestinians. Some presented what they maintained was a conservative estimate of $100 billion.

Until now there has been no accurate accounting of Jewish property in Arab countries. However, Sephardi organizations recently distributed 75,000 questionnaires to Jews from Arab countries now living in Israel, the US, and in other countries to obtain data on property left by the Jewish emigrants.

Although a strong case may be made by Palestinian negotiators that Arabs who left property in Israel are in no way responsible for the fate of Jews who left Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Yemen, Morocco, Libya and

Algeria, the Sephardi lobby in Israel will continue to exert strong pressures on the government to take into account their counterclaims.

*** Sources of Compensation Payments

All estimates of compensation due the Palestinian refugees are substantial. The largest amounts are greater than the annual national income of most Middle East nations (the current annual budget of the Israel Government is around $50 billion). It is therefore obvious that, if compensation is to be paid, the source will have to come from or be supplemented from outside the region.

A survey, “Financing Palestinian Refugee Compensation,” by Rex Brynen of McGill University postulates a variety of sources including Israel, the Arab states, the UN and third party international assistance, principally Western nations.[176]

Although counterclaims for reparations and internal political opposition are pressures militating against any substantial Israeli contributions to

compensation funding, there are several possible sources worthy of consideration. They include some property restitution, payments from rental funds collected by the Custodian of Absentee Property and the Israel Land Authority, payment-in-kind for Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories turned over to the Palestine Authority, and assistance to the Palestinians of the type Israel extends in its aid programs to developing countries. Even if all these sources are available (which is not likely), they would total only a few hundred million dollars a year constituting but a small fraction of the value of absentee property.

Contributions from Arab states are unlikely because they hold Israel liable for creating the problem. Furthermore, only Arab states with large petroleum revenues would be able to participate in any compensation scheme. However, Arab participation might be elicited by contributions to projects for refugee rehabilitation and/or resettlement, either in the projected Palestine state or in the neighboring countries.

Some economists have anticipated the devolution of UNRWA functions to host countries (Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine) and the gradual transfer of UNRWA funds (now over $300 million per year) to projects for refugee rehabilitation. Compensation in whole or in part might take the form of global payments to finance these projects.

A major source might be Western contributions to projects in the Palestine state which would absorb substantial numbers of refugees. Although the US has been a principal contributor to Middle East development schemes, the current political climate in America is not conducive to large-scale foreign aid. Theoretically, as US economic assistance to Israel decreases, funding for development projects in the Palestine state might increase.

International contribution to any compensation scheme is unlikely to be based on payment to individual property owners. If international assistance is forthcoming, it would be for projects in refugee rehabilitation and economic development of the Palestine state — in essence, a form of global compensation.

The political climate in Israel and the outlook for international assistance indicates that there is little likelihood of any substantial funding for individual compensation. To the extent that funding may become available, it will probably be for global compensation in the form of contributions to rehabilitate and resettle the refugees. If individual claims are to be considered, they will probably have to be dealt with through a bilateral (Palestine/Israel) claims commission where former refugee owners would be represented by the Palestine state. Such a commission will probably be established as one of the bodies set up in a peace treaty to deal with unresolved issues in the final status negotiations.

[146] Divrei ha-Kneset (Israel Knesset proceedings), vol. 8, pp. 358–9.

[147] Washington Institute for Near East Policy f WINEP), May, 1999, p. 38.

[148] Haaretz, October 12, 1999.

[149] Shlomo Gazit, The Palestinian Refugee Problem, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies (Tel Aviv University, 1995), p. 30.

[150] Ibid.

[151] UN GAOR (United Nations General Assembly Official Records) (6th Session) Supp. no. 18, Annex A.

[152] Atif Kubursi, Palestinian Losses in 1948: The Quest for Precision, Information Paper No. 6. The Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine (CPAP), Washington, D.C., August 1996.

[153] Sami Hadawi. Palestine is Our Heritage, private research paper. No date.

[154] UN GAOR (6th Session).

[155] UN GAOR (7th Session) Annexes, Vol. 2, Item 67 (doc. A/2216-Add 1); UN PR (Provisional Records) (8th Session) (doc. A/2629) CCP 13th Progress Report.

[156] UN GAOR (6th Session).

[157] See F. M. Goadby and M. J. Doukan, The Land Law of Palestine (Tel Aviv, 1935); A. Granott, The Land System in Palestine (London, 1952); A Survey of Palestine 1945–46, vol. 1.

[158] Israel Government, Custodian of Absentee Property, press release, 1/16/53; Israel Government Yearbook (English edition). 5713 (1952); 5712 (1951/52); Ha’aretz, April 17, 1956; Jerusalem.

[159] Divrei ha-Knesset, 1951, passim; Ha’aretz, passim 1951.

[160] Peretz, Palestine Refugee Compensation, Information Paper No. 3, CPAP, May, 1995, pp.13–14; Kubursi, Palestinian Losses.

[161] D. Peretz, Israel and the Palestine Arabs (Washington, D.C.: The Middle East Institute, 1958), pp. 144—7.

[162] UN GAOR (6th Session).

[163] UN GAOR (7th Session).

[164] Sami Hadawi, Palestinian Rights and Losses in 1948: A Comprehensive_Study (London: Saqi Books, 1988).

[165] Ibid.

[166] Kubursi, Palestinian Losses.

[167] Divrei ha-Knesset, vol. 1, p. 721.

[168] Shlomo Gazit, The Palestinian Refugee Problem, Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies (Tel Aviv University, 1995), p. 30.

[169] Peretz, Israel and the Palestine Arabs, ch. 4, “The Shift to an Economic Solution.”

[170] UN GAOR (6th Session).

[171] Kubursi, Palestinian Losses.

[172] Report on the Workshop on Compensation as Part of a Comprehensive Solution to the Palestinian Refugee Problem: July 14–15, 1999, Palestinian Refugee Research Net, Ottawa, Canada, September 1999.

[173] Peretz, Israel and the Palestine Arabs, pp. 199–201.

[174] Peretz, CPAP, pp. 10–11.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Report on the Workshop, Ottawa, Canada, September 1999.

** 8. Refugee Compensation: Why the Parties have been Unable to Agree and Why it is Important to Compensate Refugees for Losses

[[Emanuel Marx]]

The opinions of both Palestinian and Israeli statesmen regarding Palestine Refugee Compensation have been set out in Don Peretz's groundbreaking survey in 1995.[177] Rex Brynen[178] and Shamay Cahana[179] brought the discussion forward until 1997. One point emerges clearly from these studies: that both parties have skirted the issue of why and how to compensate the refugees, and left it to the final status negotiations. So far Palestinian spokesmen have put all the emphasis on the "return" (cnida). the reinstatement of all the refugees to their former homes and properties. Therefore, they have never explored alternative or additional options, such as granting the refugees living in camps ownership titles to their homes, paying the refugees and their descendants compensation for loss of property and missed life chances, resettling refugees in Palestine and. of course, negotiating an agreement on the return of a specified number of refugees to Israel. As to the Israeli authorities, for almost fifty years they have stuck to the notion that over the years, and especially from 1948 onward, a de

facto population transfer has taken place, in which both Palestinians and Jews from Arab countries were dislodged from their land and property. While frequently arguing that the material losses on both sides were equal and should be set against each other, Israeli leaders never formulated a comprehensive policy regarding the treatment of Palestinian refugees.

This leaves us with two perplexing questions:

1. Why have the parties so far been unable to formulate policies regarding the compensation for refugees?

1. Why is it so important to compensate individual refugees for losses sustained half a century ago?

Concerning the first question I argue that the State of Israel's continuing efforts to achieve a monopoly on land have so far blocked any thoughts of handing over land to Palestinians, and that the Palestinian Authority's insistence on "return" as the only acceptable solution to the refugee problem is an inevitable reaction to this position. As to the second question. I believe that people memorize material losses as perpetual debts. Debts that are not redeemed remain open sores. Therefore it is incumbent on states which intend to make a lasting peace to compensate the individuals who suffered and sustained losses in the course of acts of war. If these persons are no longer alive, their rights do not lapse but pass on to their descendants.

The State of Israel's resistance to both the return of Palestinian refugees and the payment of compensation is longstanding, as documented by Shenhav. [180] It is based on the argument that the 1948 war created refugees among both the Palestinians and the Jews in the Middle East. In 1982, the then Minister Mordechai Ben-Porath, himselfa Jew of Iraqi origin, chaired a ministerial committee on a solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. In his foreword to the committee's report Ben-Porath restates this argument. His narrative begins in 1948, when "590,000 Arabs left for the Arab countries and were there put into refugee camps. At the same time 600,000 Jews from Arab countries arrived in Israel." He ends with the, to him, obvious

conclusion that “the solution to the problem of the Middle East refugees is by resettlement.”[181] The thinking behind this story is that the events following the establishment of Israel turned both Jews from the Arab countries and Palestinians into refugees. They left behind property, most of which was then taken over by the states concerned. Thus two linked accounts were created: the number of refugees on both sides was almost equal, and the property left behind was presumably of equal value, and. anyway, it would be difficult to recover. The State of Israel absorbed the Jewish refugees and thus compensated them for their losses. If the Palestinian refugees, too, were resettled in their present locations, there would no longer be a need to compensate them. The Palestinian refugee camps would be dismantled and there would no longer be a refugee problem. In line with this feat of wishful thinking, the ministerial committee concluded that the refugee issue should be discussed within the framework of peace agreements between Israel and the Arab countries. (We must remember that the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 created a political climate that could disregard the fact that a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel had already been concluded in 1977.) At that time “Israel will demand that the Arab countries absorb the refugees living in their territories, as against [Israel’s] absorption of the Jewish refugees from

Arab countries.”[182] The committee thus adopted Israel’s traditional position, but also introduced a new idea, namely that on humanitarian grounds Israel should resettle the inhabitants of refugee camps in the Occupied Territories.

The argument was not motivated by a concern for the Jewish immigrants from Arab countries, for the State of Israel never demanded compensation for their losses. They were always considered immigrants who chose to come to Israel; and only in this special context did they become “refugees.” Needless to say, these Jewish immigrants had not appointed the state as their attorney. The state’s real concern was, and still is, to remain in possession of the land and property that the Palestinians left behind. It has. by various means, whether legal sequestration, administrative decree, or by the forcible removal of the original owners, established ownership over 93 percent of all the land in the country. This trend has not abated; the state still seeks to increase its land holdings.[183] Its agent, the Israel Lands Authority, does not usually sell land. Instead, it gives Jewish users 49-year leases to

parcels of land; its regulations do not permit the leasing of land to Arab citizens. The State of Israel is incapable of giving up land. Its leaders and politicians cannot conceive the possibility of restoring large areas of land to the original Palestinian owners. Perhaps this explains the seeming paradox that, in the absence of specific policies regarding the Palestinian refugees, Israel's reactions to the demands made from time to time to reinstate Palestinian refugees to their lands have for 50 years remained so consistent and unchanged.

To Israel's flat refusal to receive or compensate the refugees, the Palestinian representatives could only react in one way: to demand the complete reinstatement of all Palestinian refugees to their former homes and properties. They still feel that Israel's proposals are unjust; if they were implemented, only the Arab states and the Israeli state would benefit, whereas neither the Palestinian state nor the individual Palestinians who sustained the losses would receive any compensation. It would also introduce numerous states, each with its own agenda, into negotiations concerning solely the Palestinians and the Israelis. The Arab countries would, for instance, argue that the Jews left of their own free will, that many Jews sold their property before emigration, and that, therefore, the Arab countries were not obliged to discuss the issue of compensation.

The history of the idea of the "return" parallels that of the Israeli refusal to deal with the refugee issue. It is enshrined in UN Resolution 194 (III) of 1948, paragraph, of which "resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes ... should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return.[184] It reappears in paragraph 9 of the Palestinian Compact of 1968 as "the liberation of the motherland and return to it."[185] but without the option of compensation. Various studies of refugees testify to the paramount importance attached to the "right of return."[186] A 1968 study of Jalazon camp found that the idea of the "return" was not only accepted unanimously by persons meeting in public, but was also found to underlie much of the camp's social organization. For instance, the neighborhoods were initially based on village origin and people from the same village still tend to intermarry.[187] A recent study of the attitudes of Palestinian refugees by a research team made up of Palestinians and Israelis still finds that "Return" is

probably the one magic word that can fulfill the Palestinians' longing for the original homes and lands that they have never really forgotten."[188]

These set attitudes are not likely to change, precisely because they have never been thoroughly examined by either of the parties or discussed by both parties. The Multilateral Working Group on Refugees set up at the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991 was convened six times in five years. At all these meetings the Palestinian delegation regularly raised the issue of the return, while the Israeli delegation as regularly refused to discuss it.[189] A recent meeting of Israeli and Palestinian academics and former politicians, arranged by Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, attempted to seek a compromise between the positions. The Israeli representatives were adamant: "Israel would pay collective compensation" to the Palestinian state, paralleled by Arab state compensation for Jewish refugees from 1948.[190] And the men who formulated this declaration were academics, not politicians! The Palestinian participants were more flexible: they insisted that Israel recognize, in principle, the "right of return," but agreed to restrict the number of returnees. They did, however, demand that "Israel would pay both individual and collective compensation" to Palestinians.[191] It should be clear by now that the twin issues of the return of Palestinian refugees to Israel and to Palestine and the payment of compensation to those preferring not to return must be discussed and some solution agreed upon before the parties can implement peace.

Why is individual compensation of Palestinian refugees so critical? And why is it more important for the establishment of peace in the Middle East than either the return of the refugees or payment of collective compensation? Because states only conclude peace treaties, while peace is made between peoples.

A lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis must be based on a dense network of links between the two peoples. The peace treaties between the states will regulate the borders and provide security measures, establish controls on the movement of people and goods, and set up fiscal obstructions to free trade. Such regulations would be implemented by a growing bureaucratic staff, which would make every effort to entrench itself

and to set up elaborate control mechanisms. Peace must then be fostered by the people of Palestine and the people of Israel, against very heavy odds.

But before such relationships can be established, the people on both sides must be reconciled and become more tolerant of each other. The hatred and resentment accumulated over generations must be overcome, and wounds must be healed. That there is such a problem comes out clearly in informal intercourse with Palestinian refugees. The memories of a lost home, of land and property left behind and the social upheaval that accompanied their flight, are indelibly etched in their minds.[192] Each household keeps legal documents, such as tax receipts and land registration documents, which have become reminders of a happier past. People may turn a simple artifact, such as a house-key, into a symbol that elicits detailed itemized accounts of the property to which it gave access. It may arouse memories of the abrupt loss of property and life changes. It may also remind people of the injustice perpetrated on them, and cause them to realize that the world has forgotten them and that no one has compensated them for their losses. Such profound reactions can be observed, not only where people witnessed the past, but also by members of a second and third generation. These sentiments are never far from the surface. In meetings with refugees, the issue of their lost property crops up regularly. No sooner is the theme broached than their anger flares up and they hold their interlocutor, especially if he is as an Israeli, partly responsible for their plight. This issue must be attended to. Only when the refugees are compensated for these losses, will they be able to turn a new page, though without ever forgetting that they are refugees. [193]

Refugees who are not compensated for their losses may pass their resentment on to descending generations. The best illustration are the refugees created by the 1922 war between Greece and Turkey, which ended with the signing of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923. The two governments consented to a population transfer, as a result of which over a million persons became “Greeks” and 350,000 people became “Turks” who lost their homes and property. Hirschon’s study of a settlement of Asia Minor refugees in Pireus found the “Greek” refugees, fifty years after their arrival in Greece, still to be refugees. They still considered themselves to be people from Asia Minor and had little respect for the local Greeks.[194] Many of them still spoke Turkish among themselves.[195] While the Greek state had housed

them in state-owned makeshift accommodation, it had never compensated them for their losses. The refugees resented both the Greek and the Turkish authorities for having left them in the lurch. This resentment is spread throughout the refugee populations in both countries. It has poisoned the relations between the countries and has fed into their sporadic disputes. It flares up at the slightest pretext. Thus the disagreements between Muslim and Christian Cypriots repeatedly brought the two countries to the brink of war.

Compensation provides a substratum on which economic and other relationships may grow and thrive. If the Palestinians and Israelis could establish dense networks of economic relations, these would reinforce peaceful relations. But the chances for developing such ties are quite slim. For in thirty years of Israeli rule, the Palestinian economy has been eroded. Not only were local trade, industry,and agriculture supplanted by Israeli imports, but the Occupied Territories were also left without a labor force: the Israeli labor market offered higher wages for unlimited numbers of Palestinian workers. In order to collaborate with the Israeli economy, the Palestinians must first develop an independent and competitive economy. Their natural outlets are, of course, the neighboring Arab countries. But at the moment the level of trade between the Arab countries stands at about 7 to 8 percent (Feiler and Yisraeli put the figure at under 7 percent),[196] largely because of the divide between the rich oil-exporting countries and the poor labor-exporting ones. The rich states import goods from all over the world, and seek to control the import of labor from their poorer Arab neighbors, relatives who might eventually claim the rights and benefits of citizenship. Therefore, they maintain strict border controls and restrict the import of goods from the poor countries.

Relations between Palestine and Israel are likely to fall into a familiar pattern: The poorer state will export labor to the rich one, while the wealthy one will swamp the market with its products. The Palestinian state will need to throw up high tariff walls in order to protect itself against the inroads of the Israeli economy. The import restrictions are likely to remain in force for as long as the Palestinian economy is insecure. The Palestinian state is likely to discourage labor migration to Israel, because this would withdraw the most skilled and entrepreneurial segment of its manpower. It seems that neither

now nor in the foreseeable future will the Palestinian authorities be interested in the movement of Palestinians to Israel.

It appears that Palestinian economic interests are totally opposed to the movement of Palestinians to Israel, either as migrant workers or as settlers, as distinct from the ideological demand for a return. If Israel were to adopt a more flexible position toward the return of Palestinian refugees and agreed to compensate them for losses, the Palestinians would probably respond positively and the seeming contradiction could be reconciled.

[177] Don Peretz, Palestinian Refugee Compensation (Washington, D.C.: Center tor Policy Analysis on Palestine, 1995).

[178] Rex Brynen, “The Funding of Palestinian Refugee Compensation,” Fofognet Digest, March 1996.

[179] Shamay Cahana, Differing and Converging Views on Solving the Palestinian Refugees’ Problems (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, Davis Institute for International Relations, 1997).

[180] Yehouda Shenhav, “The Jews of Iraq, Zionist Ideology, and the Property of the Palestinian Refugees of 1948: an Anomaly of National Accounting,” International Journal of Middle East Studies 31 (1999): 605–30.

[181] Aner Avner, 1984, Ha-omnampelitim la-netzach? (in Hebrew: Will they forever remain Refugees?). (Jerusalem: Information Center, with Minister M. Ben- Porath’s Office).

[182] Ibid.

[183] Emanuel Marx,“Palestinian Refugee Camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,[11] Middle Eastern Studies 28 (2) (1992): 281–94.

[184] Paldstinensische Fluchtlinge undder Friedensprozess: Paldstinenser ini Libanon, ed. Ronald Ofteringer (Berlin: Das arabische Buch).

[185] Yehoshafat Harkavi and Mati Steinberg, Haamana ha-falastinit (in Hebrew: The Palestinian Compact) (Jerusalem: Information Center, 1988).

[186] Rashid Khalidi,“The Way Forward: a Palestinian Perspective,” Journal of Refugee Studies 2 (1) (1989): 191–9; Randa Farah,“Crossing Boundaries: Reconstruction of Palestinian Identities in al-Baq*a Refugee Camp” (Jordan, 1997); Palestine, Palestiniens: Territoire national, espaces communautaires, eds. R. Bocco, B. Destremau and J. Hanoyer (Beirut: CERMOC [Les Cahiers du CERMOC, No. 17]), pp. 259–98.

[187] Yoram Ben-Porath and Emanuel Marx, Some Sociological and Economic Aspects of Refugee Camps on the West Bank (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1971).

[188] Adel Yahya, Palestinian Refugees Remembered (Jerusalem: IPCRI, 1998).

[189] Cahana, Differing.

[190] Joseph Alpher and Khalil Shikaki, The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), Weatherhead Center for International Affairs.

[191] Ibid.

[192] Shimon Shamir,“West Bank Refugees — Between Camp and Society, [1]* in J. Migdal, Palestinian Society and Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 147–65; Farah, “Crossing Boundaries.”

[193] Emanuel Marx, “Land and Work: Negev Bedouin Struggle with Israeli Bureaucracies,” Nomadic Peoples (NS) 3, no. 2 (2000).

[194] Renee Hirschon, Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[195] Ibid.

[196] Gil Feiler and Yaacov Yisraeli, Business Laws and Economic Prospects in the Middle East and North Africa (Tel Aviv: Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce, 1996).

** 9. Traditional Positions and New Solutions

[[Moshe Ma’oz]]

The traditional positions of the Palestinians and Israelis regarding the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem and its desired solution are highly contradictory. According to the Palestinian narrative, Israel forcibly expelled many Palestinian Arabs from their homes in 1948, making them refugees. Therefore, these refugees and their descendants have the right to return to their previous homes in Israel or accept compensation for it; Israel should

acknowledge its moral responsibility for the injustice created to these refugees.

Israel, by contrast, has rejected any responsibility for the Palestinian refugee problem and has denied their “right of return.” It has continued to put the blame on the Arabs — including the Palestinians — who had repudiated the creation of Israel and declared war upon it in 1948. This war created the Palestinian refugee problem, alongside a Jewish refugee problem in certain Arab countries. Israel has absorbed the Jewish refugees and expects the Arab states to deal with the Palestinian refugees. Their return to Israel would undermine the viability of Israel as a Jewish state.

To be sure, the official positions of Israel and the Palestinians — represented by the PLO have not essentially changed, even following the Oslo Accords (signed by these parties in September 1993) which inter alia depicted the Palestinian refugee problem as one of final status issues to be discussed in a later stage. The PLO still insists on “Right of Return” (Haqq al-Awda) for the Palestinian refugees to their homes in Israel and on the implementation by Israel of UN Resolution 194 III (paragraph. 11) of December 11, 1948, namely :

the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date, and that

compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property ... [197]

Israel, by contrast, still rejects both the Palestinian refugees’ “right of return” and UN Resolution 194. Nevertheless, for the first time, an Israeli prime minister, Ehud Barak, adopted a somewhat more flexible attitude toward the Palestinian refugee problem: In the opening of the Knesset winter session on October 4, 1999, Barak stated:

We regret the heavy suffering that the conflict caused not only us. but all of the Arab nations that fought against us, including the Palestinian people ... In the time of peace Israel will be ready to take part in the efforts to heal the wounds of the war out of goodwill, friendship and good neighborliness, and under no circumstances out of feelings of guilt or responsibility for causing the conflict and its results.[198]

Unlike Barak, or previous Israeli prime ministers, several Israeli scholars and politicians have indeed pointed to the responsibility of Israel, at least partially, regarding the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem.[199] Significantly, in a new study published by the Israel Defense Ministry’s publication house, Professor Yoav Gelber, an Israeli nationalist, writes inter alia:

The waves of the [Palestinian] flight after the invasion of the Arab states stemmed from the IDF counter-attacks against the Arab invaders ... It now became legitimate to expel those [Palestinians] who invited the Arab invaders. Occasionally, refugees were expelled beyond the borders. In certain cases, IDF units frightened Arab inhabitants in order to enhance their flight; and there were also a few massacres [of Palestinians].[200]

Among Palestinian scholars, too, Professor Rashid Khalidi presented in 1992 a more pragmatic view than the official Palestinian line regarding the implementation of the refugees’ “right of return.”[201]

Remarkably, however, for the first time a joint working group of Palestinian and Israeli scholars and intellectuals recently developed new approaches to the refugee issue and to its acceptable solution. Established by Professor Herbert Kelman of Harvard University, it published a joint concept paper[202] which largely lays out two compromise solutions to the Palestinian refugee problem from a Palestinian and an Israeli point of view, respectively. Each represents a serious attempt to address the concerns and needs of the other side and to narrow the gap in the traditional positions of both parties. Yet the paper does not represent a consensus solution that could be endorsed by all members of the working group, Palestinians and Israelis alike. The main points of this essay are as follows.

*** Principles

It goes without saying that any solution to the refugee problem must be perceived as reasonably just and fair by both sides. Each side must see it as addressing its needs, rights, and concerns. The solution should transcend the balance of military power and accommodate the other side's sense of justice and fairness. Neither side should see the outcome as giving an unfair or unwarranted advantage to the other.

While there can be no genuine "finality" to a solution on the personal level for refugees who have suffered for 50 years, the solution should, nevertheless, strive to "close the file" on the issue of refugees. It must therefore and not only in the

West Bank and Gaza. It should attempt to resolve all aspects of the problem. Both sides must agree not to make any further claims in the future. Arrangements and institutions associated with the refugee problem — such as refugee camps, refugees' legal-political status, refugee ID cards, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) — must cease to exist as part of the implementation of the agreement.

The agreement should be conducive to the stability of the Palestinian- Israeli and Arab-Israeli settlement. It should therefore be based on trust, equality, and reciprocity and should promote better relations. For example, it must not lead to the forced de-Palestinization of refugees in host countries. Nor should it impose a heavy burden on those countries: In particular, the agreement should make clear that the refugee solution would not be at Jordan's expense.

The solution should be consistent with international law and relevant

UN resolutions.

*** A Palestinian Compromise Solution

This compromise seeks to provide an acceptable, honorable though not necessarily just — resolution of the refugee issue while accommodating the realities on the ground and Israeli security concerns. No return en masse of the Palestinian refugees is envisaged, but the individual moral right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and property in Palestine is fully acknowledged by Israel. In this sense, Israel accepts the responsibility for creating the refugee problem. The actual exercise of the "right of return," however, is a different matter. Here a return of only a limited number is seen as feasible. This reflects the changed situation of individual refugees and of the property that they had to abandon a half century ago, when the problem of the refugees was created. Many individual refugees — having in fact resettled and made their homes elsewhere — will opt for compensation. Further, Israel will want to have a say as to the number of refugees allowed to return.

Those not returning to Israel proper would be allowed to return to the Palestinian state if they so wished. The absorptive capacity of the Palestinian state, not Israel's position, would determine the number of those returning to the state. In this final settlement, the Palestinians make a strategic trade-off. They demand a return to the 1967 border in order to absorb the largest possible number of refugees, in return for foregoing the full exercise of the "right of return." Refugees who may wish to remain in host countries may be resettled there if the host countries agree.

Those not exercising the "right of return" would receive individual compensation. Collective compensation would be paid to the Palestinian state and used for rehabilitation and absorption projects. Israel would carry the sole responsibility for finding and providing the two types of compensation, possibly under an international umbrella. The resettlement in host countries would probably require separate negotiations with them as well as the participation of international donors. Finally, to ensure the

permanent nature of this agreement, refugee camps would be dismantled and UNRWA dissolved.

**** Advantages

This solution appears to give Israel what it wants most. It diminishes existential threats and demographic problems by removing the most threatening element in the Palestinian negotiating position. In return, the Palestinians get what they want most from Israel. The final settlement provides the Palestinians with the largest territorial assets for resettlement and strengthens the Palestinian demand for the 1967 borders, or equivalent trade-offs. In the absence of absolute justice, this solution provides realistic and reasonable justice by granting a moral-political right while acknowledging realities on the ground. It also provides a sense of finality at the psychological level, and makes it politically feasible that it will receive widespread Palestinian and possibly Israeli support.

**** Disadvantages

From an Israeli perspective, this solution has several disadvantages. The attribution of moral responsibility to the Arabs, rather than to itself, is central to the Israeli narrative. Hence this solution, which requires that Israel acknowledge actual guilt and moral responsibility on its own part, would be seen by it as a potential political threat and dangerous precedent. The determination that a limited number of refugees return to Israel proper might also be seen as a violation of Israel’s sovereign control over its borders and population, hence a precedent. In other words, Israelis might fear that this solution merely opens the file on the Palestinian refugee issue rather than closing it.

Moreover, Israel may see a demographic problem in the return of a large number of refugees to mandated Palestine even if the return is confined only to the State of Palestine. And Israel will not wish to pay both individual and collective compensation, particularly insofar as the issue is not linked to compensation for Jewish refugees from Arab countries.

Israel may also be reluctant to accept the return of a large number of refugees to the Palestinian state as that might bring about political instability there. Indeed, the economic and social burden on the Palestinian state might be very heavy due to its limited absorptive capacity and fragile economy. Therefore, fears of social and political disorder cannot be entirely discounted.

The solution requires cooperation of host countries, particularly Jordan, Lebanon and Syria, who may be asked to absorb a large number of refugees. While Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel and has granted citizenship to its Palestinian refugees, and, therefore, may show willingness to cooperate, Lebanon and Syria, on the other hand, may choose not to do so. Moreover, those refugees who stay in some host countries may face the threat of de-Palestinization.

Finally, Palestinians might be concerned that the return of a “limited” number of refugees to Israel proper would not be sufficient from the standpoint of Palestinians’ psychological and/or material needs, and hence would lack justice and finality.

*** An Israeli Compromise Solution

In this compromise, Israel acknowledges that, at least to some extent, it shares practical (but not moral) responsibility, together with the other parties in the process that culminated in the 1948 war, for the plight and suffering of the refugees, and that rectification of that plight by all parties is the central goal of the Arab Israeli peace process. Israel also accepts the “right of return” to the Palestinian state, but not to Israel proper. Israel also may accept repatriation of tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees as part of its family reunification program.

Israel compensates refugees for lost property on a collective basis. The relevant Arab countries create a similar mechanism for Arab collective compensation of Jewish refugees (based on Arab states’ acknowledgment of

their obligations in this regard). Both programs fall within the framework of the Multilateral Working Group on refugees, but they are not linked operationally.

Israel and the Palestinians reach an understanding intended to harmonize the inflow of refugees with Palestinian absorptive capabilities.

Israel drops its demand for direct physical control over the inflow of refugees to the Palestinian state in view of enforcement difficulties. The Palestinian state commits itself to limit the flow in consideration of its assessment of its absorptive capabilities. This gives Israel a mechanism for reciprocity. If the pledge is blatantly violated, Israel can curtail some obligation of its own, such as financial compensation. On the other hand, Israel will encourage the expansion of Palestinian absorptive capabilities.

A key component of this proposal is the Israeli “statement of acknowledgment.” While this is recognized to be of great psychological-historical importance to Palestinians, it is also so to Israelis, whose historical narrative holds that the Arabs bear culpability and responsibility. The following is a possible formulation:

- Israel recognizes that the historical process culminating in the 1948 war generated a refugee problem that caused great suffering to the Palestinian people. As Israel, the Arab countries, and the Palestinians all participated in this historical process, all parties share, at least to some extent, the responsibility for the injustices of the past and for the plight of the Palestinians. Rectification of that plight by all parties is a central goal of the Arab-Israel peace process.

- The Palestinians, having received financial compensation within the context of a settlement of Israeli and Palestinian refugee claims, consider that this satisfies their grievance and renounce any claim to exercise the “right of return” to the State of Israel.

- Israel will continue its unilateral program of family reunification of Palestinians.

- The Palestinian state undertakes, with Arab and international aid, the rehabilitation of the 1948 refugees with the aim of resolving the refugee problem on Arab territory as a condition for a stable Israeli-Palestinian peace.

- The Arab host countries where Palestinian refugees reside recognize the right of those refugees to remain in the country without forfeiting Palestinian citizenship.

- This series of acts and understandings on the part of Israel and Palestine are part and parcel of the overall Arab-Israeli peace process.

**** Advantages

This solution, too, enjoys the advantage of closing the file on the entire refugee question, including the ending of refugee status, dissolution of refugee camps, dissolution of UNRWA, etc. It poses no existential or demographic threat to Israel, from whose perspective the settlement is both final and consistent with its self-image.

From the Israeli perspective, compensation funds will be paid out collectively only, and Jewish refugees from Arab countries will be compensated.

From the Palestinian standpoint, the inflow of refugees to the new state is a function solely of local considerations. This solution also operationally delinks the Palestinian and Jewish refugee issues, thereby denying the Arab states leverage on the Palestinian issue.

**** Disadvantages

The key disadvantage of this solution for the Palestinians is that it still denies the moral “right of return.” Many Palestinians would not consider Israeli recognition that “the historical process culminating in the 1948 war ... caused great suffering” to be an achievement that justifies concessions. Hence, correspondingly, acknowledging that suffering might not be worth the risk for an Israeli leader. This solution could also, at one and the same time, put pressure on the absorptive capacity of the Palestinian state, and de-Palestinize those refugees who choose or are constrained to remain in other Arab states.

Additional disadvantages from the Palestinian standpoint include the unacceptability of the Israeli program of unilateral family reunification as the sole means of “return” to Israel proper and the linkage, however generalized, between Arab compensation to Jewish refugees and Israeli compensation to Palestinian refugees. Palestinians would also see a disadvantage from the moral standpoint in the definition of Israeli compensation as collective rather than personal.

From the Israeli standpoint, one disadvantage lies in the removal of the operational linkage with Arab state compensation to Jews, and controls over the inflow of refugees, although, given the difficulties of enforcement, this appears to be a calculated risk that Israel must take. At the same time, from the Palestinian standpoint, the residual Israeli sanctions on refugee repatriation to Palestine constitute an undesirable political constraint upon Palestinian sovereignty. The statement of acknowledgment might also be problematic in the eyes of some sectors of the Israeli public. And acceptance of an international role in determining the scope of compensation might invite intolerable pressures on Israel’s financial capabilities.

*** Linkages and Interlocks

We may distinguish at the outset between third-party linkages and issuearea linkages. The former appear to have a disruptive potential from the Palestinian standpoint but to be at least occasionally useful for Israel,

whereas the latter bear the positive capacity to generate flexibility for both parties in finding solutions.

Concerning third-party linkages, in the course of this inquiry, we have repeatedly encountered the possibility of involvement by actors other than Israelis and Palestinians. This is an inevitable corollary of any attempt to solve an issue as complex as that of the Palestinian refugees. This is particularly so when the solution falls within the overall context of the Israeli-Arab peace process, wherein an entire multilateral working group is devoted to refugee issues.

While both Israel and the PLO agree than any solution should be based first and foremost on an Israeli-Palestinian negotiating framework, Israel tends to look positively upon the prospect of tripartite agreements, e.g., with Lebanon regarding the disposition of its refugees, while the PLO would prefer itself to represent the interests of all Palestinians, wherever they are. Similarly, Israel has already made provision for Jordanian involvement in refugee discussions within the framework of the Israeli- Jordanian peace treaty, and, in the case of Lebanon and Syria, would presumably wish to see refugee agreements linked to peace treaties with these countries. The PLO, on the other hand, would seek to be the sole negotiator with these Arab countries on refugee issues, to the exclusion of Israel. In either case, it is generally understood that all relevant agreements with Arab third parties must be compatible with Israeli-PLO agreements on the refugee issue.

This suggests that the most obvious and necessary area of inter-Arab

linkage is the Arab role in the rehabilitation of refugees who do not return to Palestine. Another area of possible inter-Arab linkage is the juxtaposition of Arab state compensation to Jews who fled Arab countries with Israeli compensation to Palestinian refugees, a demand voiced by many Israelis and rejected by the Palestinians as counterproductive. As we have noted, both of these spheres offer possibilities for Arab actors to exercise some sort of veto power over the pace and nature of a settlement.

We have already mentioned a demand voiced by Jordanian spokespersons that Jordan represent its resident Palestinians' claims for compensation for property abandoned in Israel. Jordan also expects compensation for having hosted Palestinian refugees since 1948. This, coupled with the Hashemite aspiration that a refugee solution ease Jordan's demographic-political problems, suggests the potential for considerable friction between Jordan and the PLO over refugee issues. Thus Jordan might confront refugees remaining there with the threat of forced repatriation, or '"political return," by forcing them to choose between cancellation of their Jordanian citizenship thus constraining their rights within Jordan and implicitly holding out a threat to force their emigration — and the acceptance of Jordanization. The frequently discussed possibility of the establishment of some sort of Jordanian Palestinian confederation might alternatively complicate or ease disposition of the refugee issue.

Two additional third-party linkages apply mainly to Israel. Even assuming that a refugee agreement is clearly defined so as to apply only to Palestinians outside of Israel, resolution of the refugee issue, like other aspects of a Palestinian settlement, will undoubtedly impact upon Israel's own Palestinian Arab population. Specifically, any move by Israel to compensate Palestinian refugees for properties left behind in 1948 might generate parallel demands by Israeli Arabs who also abandoned lands or were removed from them, even though they remained in Israel. This could have far-reaching implications for Jewish-Arab relations within Israel. Hence the Israeli-Palestinian agreement on refugees must, from the Israeli standpoint, clearly define the PLO role as representing only Palestinians outside of Israel, while the government of Israel is responsible for all Israeli citizens, including Arabs.

Secondly, if Israel agrees to offer compensation, and particularly if that compensation is not directly linked to payment by Arab countries to Jewish refugees, it will require large sums of money. At least some of this is likely to be borrowed on the international market and/or raised from the world Jewish community, thereby affecting Israel's economy and international relations. All of these options imply the possibility that the extent of compensation might be determined at least in part by a third party.

Totally different categories of linkages are those between the refugees' "right of return" issue on the one hand, and all the other aspects of an Israeli-Palestinian final settlement on the other. After all, final status negotiations will involve a broad range of interlocking issues; in addition to refugees, the Oslo Declaration of Principles mentions Jerusalem, borders, Israeli settlements, security arrangements, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest. Once final status negotiations are enjoined, the possibilities for linkage among these and additional issues are endless. We have already seen how the Ben- Gurion government in 1949 viewed the refugee issue within the context of a comprehensive settlement.

These linkages can work to the benefit of the overall negotiations. For example, Israel might make concessions on refugee issues in return for Palestinian concessions on settlement issues. Conversely, Palestinian willingness to show flexibility in the implementation of the right of return might be made contingent on Israel's flexibility on territorial issues. Or the abandonment of certain Israeli settlements might be linked to the "return" and rehabilitation within those settlements' infrastructure of Palestinian refugees. Or the scope of Palestinian family reunification could be linked to the number of Israeli settlers who remain in the Palestinian state. Certainly it seems doubtful that a solution to the refugee issue will be concluded on a "stand alone" basis. It is very likely that one or both parties will see fit to introduce into the refugee negotiations extraneous issues that do not touch directly on the refugees' plight or status. Indeed, it is virtually certain that a comprehensive final settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will comprise an agreed-upon timetable for the phased execution of agreed-upon solutions to a number of issues, not the least of these borders, Jerusalem, and of course refugees.

*** Conclusion

While major differences in Palestinian-Israeli positions regarding the refugee issue do exist, and while the legacy of human suffering can never fully be dispelled through political decisions, this issue is nevertheless probably less difficult than other permanent settlement issues. Therefore, an attempt to bridge the gap between the two positions is not a futile exercise. For

example, there is acknowledgment among some Palestinians that the exercise of the right of return by all refugees to homes they were forced to abandon in 1948 is unrealizable. Similarly, there is a recognition on the part of some Israelis that Israel s historical role in the events that created the refugee problem is undeniable: They are willing to acknowledge the refugees' suffering along with partial responsibility for the injustice of the past. Moreover, there is agreement that collective material compensation for refugees is an essential and vital component of the solution.

Additionally, the two solutions (the Israeli and the Palestinian) concur that, at the practical level, the core of the solution involves four components: first, a "return," however defined, of a limited number of refugees to Israel proper; second, return of a larger number to the Palestinian state; third, permanent absorption in host countries (notably Jordan); and fourth, compensation. Both sides agree that a successfully negotiated solution should close the file on the refugee issue. At the practical level, this means dismantling the refugee camps and integrating their residents into the communities in which they have lived; ending the political-legal status of the refugees both inside the Palestinian state and in host countries; ending all claims and rights to future claims; and dissolving UNRWA and other international bodies created to deal with the Palestinian refugee problem.

Needless to say, closing the file implies the resolution of other Palestinian-Israeli permanent status issues and making progress toward a more comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement. By the same token, no comprehensive settlement can be called final unless it also solves the refugee question. In this sense, all the issues are linked. Certainly the dismantling of refugee camps in Arab countries and the resettlement of those wishing to remain in those countries can only occur within a comprehensive settlement.

Despite these points of agreement, no solution acceptable to the two sides has been found. In order for a compromise approach to bridge the two proposed solutions, it must still resolve four clusters of issues, detailed below.

**** The nature of Israeli acknowledgment of s u fferi ng/res ponsi bi l ity

In their solution, the Palestinians, in accordance with their narrative, demand that Israel accept the responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem, and that the collective moral right of return to Palestine be fully acknowledged by Israel, but without demanding the actual return of all refugees to their homes. In its solution, Israel acknowledges a portion of the responsibility for the injustices of the past and the plight of the refugees. At the same time, it insists that the Arab states and the Palestinians themselves also bear responsibility. This is in accord with the Israeli narrative, which holds that the Arab parties started the war of 1948, and hence bear the primary responsibility for its consequences.

The Palestinians find this version of “shared” responsibility intolerable, insofar as it implies that they were at least in part responsible for their plight, thereby contradicting their own narrative. They continue to insist that Israel acknowledge “moral” responsibility, particularly by acknowledging their “moral right of return.” This implies Israeli guilt, however, which in turn, compromises the Israeli narrative in a way that is intolerable for Israelis. It also, in Israeli eyes, compromises finality: Once moral responsibility and guilt are acknowledged, what historical or ethical argument could stop the Palestinians from demanding — at the present stage or a later one — massive return to Israel proper, thereby negating the Jewish-Zionist nature of the Israeli state? The Palestinians argue that in the absence of Israel’s acceptance of UN Resolution 194 it must accept moral and legal responsibility, and thus provide a basis for the Palestinian demand for compensation.

**** The nature and number of “returnees” and family reunification to Israel proper

This issue is directly linked to the previous one, which is acknowledgment of responsibility. Once the Palestinians have achieved a satisfactory Israeli acknowledgment of responsibility, they are prepared to forego massive return to Israel itself. They will accept the return of a limited number of refugees. But they reject the concept of “family reunification” and the use of

the term “symbolic return” by Israel. They seek a genuine, albeit limited, return of the 1948 refugees to Israel (along with unfettered access to the Palestinian state by the large mass of remaining 1948 refugees; see below). Only by acknowledging the validity of “right of return,” they argue, will Israelis give genuine expression to their acknowledgment of moral responsibility.

It is precisely for this reason, Israelis argue, that to accept any sort of a return is to give the Palestinians a moral “foot in the door” that undermines the Israeli narrative. Family reunification is a tried-and-true formula; and the difference between “several tens of thousands” and a “limited number” of refugees returning over a period of years may be significant.

**** The nature and size of compensation, and linkage to Jewish refugees

We have noted that there are two basic forms of compensation: collective and individual. There are also two different populations demanding or requiring compensation: Palestinian refugees from 1948, and Jews who fled Arab lands in the aftermath of the creation of the State of Israel. Israel agrees to offer compensation to Palestinian refugees from 1948, but insists that it be collective and not individual. This, in the Israeli view, avoids a prolonged, backward-looking, and inevitably frustrating attempt to put a price on every asset abandoned by Palestinians, in favor of a forwardlooking approach of compensating the PLO or the Palestinian state with funds that can be dispersed at its own discretion, whether to individuals or for state-building enterprises. Israel is prepared for this approach to be applied by the Arab states to the issue of compensation for Jews who fled Arab lands, but it insists that this parallel effort indeed be made by the Arab states.

The Palestinians insist that compensation be both collective and individual, arguing that this corresponds with historical justice, based on the Palestinian narrative of both extreme individual and national deprivation. And while the Palestinians do not object in principle to the notion of Arab compensation for Jewish refugees, they do reject any kind of linkage or parallelism with their own demand for compensation. Here too, to do otherwise would be to compromise the Palestinian narrative of Israeli moral responsibility in favor of

the Israeli narrative of a shared Israeli, Palestinian, and Arab state responsibility. It would also give Israel and the Arab states a form of veto power over progress in compensating Palestinian refugees.

Our discussion has not entered into another potential area of controversy regarding compensation. Regardless of whether this compensation is collective, individual or both, will it be on the basis of property left behind, the suffering of the past 50 years, the costs of relocation, or some other set of criteria?

The issues of refugee compensation extend far beyond the borders of Israel/Palestine and involve Arab host countries as well as, almost certainly, the international community. In any negotiations, the PLO will seek to be recognized as the sole negotiator for Palestinian refugees, wherever these refugees are. It will then undertake to turn over collective and/or individual compensation in bilateral talks with other Arab states, beginning with Jordan. But the latter, for one, has already made clear its desire to negotiate directly with Israel. Israel may be able to exercise some discretion of its own in deciding this issue and similar ones. In any event, precisely because of the potential for multilaterality, the formulae for bridging the gaps we have outlined are likely to be particularly difficult to achieve.

**** The size of return to the Palestinian state

Here, the gap between the two options reflects Israel’s practical concerns. First of all, it regards these possible ecological and political effects of an unmonitored or unrestricted massive influx of refugees into the Palestinian state, and secondly, it concerns the Palestinians’ demand to fulfill a national obligation and to exercise the same sovereign independence in regulating the influx of new residents that Israel maintains. Yet, both sides, along with Jordan, recognize the essential size and resource limitations and ecological fragility of the landmass between the desert and the sea, and the need to monitor population movements with an eye to avoiding irreversible damage. Hence, this appears to be partially an issue of trust as well as one of clashing narratives.

These, then, are the principal gaps that remain to be bridged if an agreed solution is to be found to the refugee “right of return” issue. The formula for bridging the gaps between the two solutions lies, we believe, in two realms. The first is the building of trust and confidence derived from a sincere and prolonged effort at seriously negotiating the issues at hand. This is where narratives can be modified and adjusted to accommodate the other side. The second is the more pragmatic, indeed political, realm of the inevitable trade-offs among different, yet interrelated aspects of the overall Israeli-Palestinian conflict-resolution effort.

[197] Text in DennisC. Howley, The United Nations and the Palestinians (New York: Exposition Press, 1975), p. 86.

[198] Jerusalem Post, October 29, 1999, p. B2.

[199] For example, Benny Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem 1947–1949 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[200] Cf. Ze’ev Schiff, “A new approach to the Palestinian problem,” Ha’aretz, November 5, 1999, p. IB.

[201] Rashid Khalidi, “Observations on the Right of Return,” Journal of Palestine Studies 2] (2) (1992): 29–40.

[202] The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return, Harvard University, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, May 1998, by Joseph Alpher and Khalil Shikaki, with the participation of Gabriel Ben Dor, Ibrahim Dakkak, MK Yossi Katz, Ghassan Khatib, Moshe Ma’oz, Yezid Sayigh,

Ze’ev Schiff, Shimon Shamir, with an Introduction by Herbert C. Kelman and Nadim N. Rouhana.

** 10. Actual Repatriation: A Minimal Israeli Cesture

[[Donna E. Arzt]]

The refugee issue has long been the “last taboo” of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Even though it was named in 1991 as one of the six multilateral committee topics under the Madrid Framework,[203] until recently the refugee issue was considered so volatile that it was usually not even mentioned alongside that other ostensibly intractable subject, Jerusalem. Most Israelis (as well as many American and Canadian Jews) either vehemently vowed that not a single Palestinian would ever return across the Green Line or adamantly refused to talk about it; while Palestinians, no matter what their residential status, almost uniformly denied that they would accept anything less than complete and total return of all Palestinian refugees to their original homes within the 1949 Armistice line.[204]

For over fifty years, Palestinians and Israelis have fought rhetorical as well as military wars over the highly charged phrase, “the right of return,” though, in fact, that precise locution does not appear in any treaty on refugees, nor in any of the relevant General Assembly or Security Council Resolutions — not 194, 242 nor 338. (Even where it appears in paraphrased form in general human rights documents, it is most probably not applicable to the collective circumstances of the Palestinians.)[205] Moreover, the rhetorical debate occurred almost completely in a vacuum: Palestinians and Israelis rarely if ever talked to each other about anything, let alone about the topic of refugees.

But public posturing when only one audience is listening is one thing; serious peace negotiations across a table is another. At least on the Palestinian side, a number of moderate voices have begun to suggest that compromises will be necessary and possible in pursuit of a permanent peace accord. For instance, Ziad Abu Zayyad has recognized that Palestinian “return” can, in fact, mean:

the acquisition of national independence and dignity, and not necessarily as a literal return. In other words, Palestinians continue to believe that they are entitled to their claim to the Right of Return, but they are prepared to bring it to the negotiating table. This claim can be satisfied either through the actual return of a mutually acceptable number of refugees, or a symbolic number of them... ,[206]

Similarly, Walid Salem has recently concurred that the “right of return” to Israel proper would be limited to a symbolic number of refugees, so long as the vast majority could “return” to the to-be-established Palestinian state and all refugees would receive compensation; while in a recent interview, Salim Tamari referred to “a symbolic return to 1948 territories, but a substantial number to the 1967 territories,” i.e. the West Bank and Gaza.[207]

Are Israelis equally prepared to bring the issue of “return,” of a symbolic number, at least, to the negotiating table? In order to achieve a negotiated peace with the most important characteristic, finality,[208] Israelis have no choice but to entertain the issue of “return.” For if the refugee issue is the lynchpin of peace, then a symbolic gesture of repatriation is the lynchpin for solving the refugee issue.

This essay explores this idea within the current negotiating climate, examines why such a symbolic gesture is necessary (including why it is merely a gesture and not a risk), and discusses who might be among those repatriated and how they might be assisted in returning. The essay concludes with the question of “Then, What?” In other words, how will these new Palestinian immigrants to Israel be integrated into Israeli society?

*** The Current Negotiating Climate

Besides being one of the multilateral topics, refugees are one of the eleven agenda items scheduled to be discussed within the bilateral Israeli-Palestinian Framework Agreement.[209] The very existence of this agenda implicitly reflects concurrence on two essential elements: One, that Palestinian statehood is inevitable and imperative, and, two, that the refugee issue is integral to any permanent peace settlement. True, each side has its own “nationalist red lines.” in the words of Shibley Telhami:

No Israeli government can accept the massive return of Palestinians into Israel in a way that threatens the Jewish majority, and no Palestinian leader can sign an agreement that does not grant a future Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza the right to accept as citizens any willing Palestinian refugees.[210]

Nevertheless, these are not so much red lines as the front lines of negotiation.

Officially, as of this writing in 2001, Israel is still denying the right of any refugee to return. In late November 1999, Prime Minister Barak declared that Israel would not accept a single Palestinian refugee within the Green Line.[211] Chief Israeli negotiator Oded Eran had said earlier that same month that the solution to the refugee problem ‘‘cannot be found within the borders of Israel,” and that the refugees should be settled in their current places of residence, albeit with massive economic aid. (He did not use the word “compensation.” per se.)[212] At about the same time, retired Israeli General Shlomo Gazit opined that a final status agreement would have to include a public announcement by Yasser Arafat that “refugees would not be returning to Israel proper.”[213]

Yet, concomitantly, unofficial trial balloons about limited return were being released for Israeli public consumption. On 21 November, during a visit to Shuafat refugee camp, Labor MK Yossi Katz (the Labor Party’s official liaison with the Palestinians) told reporters that “the State of Israel must return

Palestinians [to places] within the Green Line as part of the state's recognition and shared responsibility — together with the Arab states — for the refugee problem."[214] Previously, Katz had called for the return of 100,000 refugees within the 1948 borders as part of a "framework of family reunification."[215] While, officially, Katz may be sanctioned by his party for saying this, the timing, location, and affiliation of this announcement cannot be pure coincidence.

Clearly, the words "right" and "return" are as highly charged as ever. But, at least, a much-needed dialogue on Palestinian refugees is beginning among the Israeli public. The Katz trial balloon should be read together with the publication of the new Israel Defense Ministry book acknowledging, for the first time in official circles, that the Israeli army prompted much of the flight of the Palestinians in 1948 and created the refugee problem by taking an active role in frightening them enough so that they would flee.[216] Moreover, at least one recent public opinion poll indicates that as many as 46.8 percent of Israeli Jews place some degree of responsibility on Israel for creating the refugee problem originally.[217] These sources are more demonstrative of a shift in Israeli thinking (both governmental and popular) than any new academic text by Benny Morris or any of the other "new historians."

When Ehud Barak and Yasser Arafat finally sit down together to negotiate the refugee issue. Bill Clinton or whatever third party is hosting their discussions should leave them with these blunt words of advice: Get Real.[218] Israelis will never accept a peace that includes return of all the refugees; and, likewise, Palestinians will never accept a peace without return of some refugees. In order to achieve a mutually acceptable and durable peace, both sides will have to relinquish their absolutist aspirations and negotiate a comprehensive compromise solution to the refugee issue.

That solution will undoubtedly contain certain key features. For instance, it will be regional in scope, because, at least for the foreseeable future, a Palestinian state will not have the economic stability to absorb six, or even three to four, million refugees, and because all states in the region share at least some responsibility for perpetuating the Arab-Israeli conflict, if not, in

fact for causing the refugee crisis. As a member of the region, it will be necessary for Israel to make a minimal gesture of repatriation as part of the overall regional package. Moreover, the solution must offer:

- voluntary and realistic options for individual Palestinian families, including the option to remain where they are, with compensation packages that can assist them to rehabilitate themselves; or

- the option to move to the Palestinian state in the West Bank or Gaza, again with compensation which should also include communal reparations so that Palestinian communities can be reconstituted; and in all cases,

- Palestinian passports and full citizenship in whatever country they reside (or even dual citizenship in Palestine and, for instance, Jordan, Syria, Israel or, say, Canada).[219]

In the context of such an overall settlement, Israel should agree to accept the repatriation of 50,000 to 100,000 Palestinians. (For the sake of concision, this figure will hereafter be described as 75,000. But both the range and the middle number are offered here only as “ballpark figures,” an approximation of the general amount to be targeted, not as precise numbers of persons).[220] Both sides should avoid further rhetorical battles over semantic distinctions concerning how this part of the package is described. While Palestinians will wish that these 75,000 be identified as refugees who are exercising their right to return, Israel may prefer a designation such as “reunited families” or “reabsorbed refugees” or even “absorbed migrants.” Palestinians will try to insist that the agreement be accompanied by an apology for having caused the refugees to flee in 1948, while Israel will want to avoid employing any language that connotes blame.

Repatriation need not, in fact, be an acknowledgement of blame: According to the international law doctrine of “objective responsibility,” a breach of international law from which arises a right to compensation to remedy the breach — occurs through the result alone, provided that agency and causal connection or “attribution” can be established.[221] The “blame game” over

who caused the refugees to flee in 1948 is probably unwinable, even in the face of newly revealed documents from historical archives. Nevertheless, Israelis cannot deny that they have been living as “custodians” for “absentee” landowners since 1948; indeed, the Israeli government office charged with administering former Palestinian property is called the Custodian of Absentee Property.[222] When the office was created in 1950 it had to be anticipated that eventually at least some of the absentees would come home.

*** Why the Gesture is Necessary

From the Palestinian perspective, an Israeli gesture of limited repatriation is necessary because as part of the final peace agreement, Palestinians will be asked to make a trade-off of absolute return for limited statehood. That is, Palestinians will be receiving an independent state in less than the full amount of land they consider to be Palestine — and perhaps also a state whose sovereignty is restricted in one or more respects, such as in its degree of militarization. The trade-off will be scrutinized especially carefully by the millions of “diaspora Palestinians” — those living outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who, since the Oslo Accords in 1993, have suspiciously felt that Yasser Arafat and the PLO have been neglecting their needs and interests for the sake of de facto statehood.

Although Israel holds most of the cards when it comes to negotiating the final peace agreement, it does not necessarily hold them with regard to the refugee issue. According to Palestinian academic Salim Tamari:

Israel will not be in a position to demand that the Arab states “regularize” the status of refugees in their own countries and make them citizens if it refuses to do so itself... The more Israel is amenable to a certain degree of absorbing Palestinian refugees within Israeli territory, the more likely that the Arab countries will join in a framework of resettlement of refugees in their own countries.[223]

From the Israeli perspective, such a gesture is necessary to show good will to its neighbors and to encourage other states in the region to agree to absorb at least as many Palestinians as well. Israeli agreement to this rather small and symbolic target of 75,000 persons is essential to facilitate the final peace agreement, because, only when the Arab states see that Israel is at least partially recognizing Palestinian claims for return (regardless of the terminology employed), will they themselves be willing to grant citizenship to and permanently absorb the refugees they will themselves have to absorb. It will also facilitate mutual acceptance of peace if Israel accepts full Palestinian self-determination. In other words, Israel should make a pragmatic decision to exchange partial, symbolic return of Palestinians and the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza for the Palestinian and Arab state acceptance of less than full Palestinian return and less than the complete territory they originally sought.

Although there is currently much popular opposition in Israel to the idea that even a single Palestinian refugee would return to live within the Green

Line, this sentiment can be overcome when it is presented as part of a reciprocal and regional framework for resolving the Palestinian refugee question and obtaining a full-scale peace. Israel’s decision to accept Palestinian refugees could be described, instead, as the same process of “absorption” that the Arab states would concomitantly be undertaking, rather than as the oft-feared acknowledgment of a Palestinian “right” to “return.” Israelis would do well to recognize their own advantage in such a compromise resolution and to express their commitment to truly being part of a regional absorption plan that will lead to greater regional stability.

*** Why it is Merely a Gesture

True, 75,000 is not a very substantial figure. It constitutes barely 2.14 percent of the current number of registered Palestinian refugees, approximately 3.5 million, and only 1.21 percent of Israel’s current total population of 6.2 million, of which one million are Arab citizens of the state. [224] (Adding 75,000 to one million would only raise the Arab percentage of

the total Israeli population from 16.13 percent to 17.34 percent, though over time that proportion would rise, as the birthrate among Israeli Muslims is higher than among Israeli Jews.)[225] Perhaps most tellingly, the figure has been criticized vehemently by both Israelis and Palestinians alike as, respectively, either 75,000 too high or almost 3.5 million too low.[226] But it is a figure that is “sellable” to Israelis, not due only to the negligible demographic impact, but also on historical grounds.

The United Nations Conciliation Commission, which was created by the UN General Assembly in December 1948 to try to end the Arab-Israeli war and resolve its conflicts, came closest — if only fleetingly — to reaching a settlement on the refugee question during its conference in Lausanne in 1949. The United States delegation strongly urged Israel to agree to repatriate from 200,000 to 300,000 Palestinian refugees, who, at that time, were estimated to number between 500,000 and 900,000.[227] After a series of Commission negotiation efforts, in August of that year, Israel reluctantly agreed to accept no more than 100,000 family reunification cases, screened to keep out security risks. Israel also insisted that the refugees return not to their original homes but to locations determined by Israel, where they would “not come into contact” with possible enemies of the Jewish state.

The “100,000 proposal” was in fact fiercely opposed within Israeli political and popular circles, elicited a lukewarm international reception, and was denounced by Arab delegations as a “less than a token ... propaganda scheme.”[228] Within official Israeli circles, the offer was heavily criticized, reflecting, in the opinion of one observer:

- “security fears of the reintroduction of a ‘fifth column’;

- fears that Israel would be forced beyond the 100,000 to allow the return of larger numbers;

- distaste for the apparent surrender to US pressure; and,

- a popular backlash against the return of any of the refugees."[229]

The "100.000 proposal" — which was really for admission of no more than 75,000 additional people, because at least 25,000 had already returned on their own by that time[230] — became snagged amid counterproposals concerning territorial compromises and frozen bank accounts, as well as growing Commission impatience with the parties' implacable negotiating styles. Soon thereafter, Israel withdrew its reluctant offer.

Given the small number of Jews living in Israel in 1949 (under 700,000), the return of 100,000 would have constituted a much greater relative percentage then than 75,000 would be to Israel's current Jewish population of 5.2 million.[231] Similarly, 100,000 was a greater percentage of the total Palestinian population of 1949 than 75,000 is of even the most liberal estimates of the current combined West Bank and Gaza populations of 3 million. Moreover, at least 75,000 Jewish settlers will most likely return from the West Bank to Israel proper when a final peace agreement is signed.[232] Therefore, an additional 75,000 Palestinian citizens will not unduly endanger Israel's demographic stability and, moreover, is less than the Israeli government conceded to, if only momentarily, at Lausanne.

*** Who Might be Repatriated

Israel will naturally — and rightfully — require that each Palestinian who seeks to return to (or "be absorbed by") Israel satisfy certain conditions which are related to its legitimate security needs. Criteria to be agreed upon in the final peace treaty might include the following:

- The returnees must be able to prove original residence before 1948.

- They must have close family members (a term which would have to be defined) who have been citizens of Israel since 1948.

- They must agree, by written contract, to comply with the condition in General Assembly Resolution 194 to “live at peace with their (Israeli) neighbors.”

A population subgroup very likely to seek return, and which would be most likely to satisfy this third criterion, is the oldest living generation of Palestinians, the ones with personal memories of life before 1948. However, members of this subgroup are unlikely to be able to return on their own. without being accompanied by some younger relatives who can care for them. Palestinians may also object that, because this generation does not have long to live, that agreeing to their return is too easy a condition for Israel to satisfy.

Related questions to be resolved include: who should make the decisions on who shall return (a commission composed of Israelis alone? one of Palestinians alone? A joint commission?); where they should be able to live within Israel (in their original homes, if they still exist, regardless of whether Jewish Israelis or even Palestinian Israelis currently live there?); and whether they should be entitled to compensation for being displaced from their homes for over 50 years, even if they are among the few who will finally return.[233]

*** How the Returnees Might be Assisted

Regardless of the actual number who return and who they will, in fact, be, the returnees cannot simply be deposited in front of their former homes and be expected to start new lives. They will need both individual and collective assistance from the Israeli government, from the Palestinian community (especially if they are to be eligible for Palestinian citizenship, in addition to Israeli citizenship), and from those states and institutions in the Arab world and international community who support the Middle East peace process.

Aside from the paying of compensation, how will the refugees be assisted in their transition to new homes and new legal and social statuses?[234] While Palestinians will look to UNRWA, Israelis distrust it due to a perception of its political bias. (Indeed, Shlomo Gazit has called for “an unequivocal announcement on the cessation of UNRWA’s activities” as part of a final status agreement.)[235]

Regardless of whether the UN Relief and Works Administration was originally intended to do more than simply provide just that, relief and works, UNRWA may not be the ideal agency to help Palestinian refugees with repatriation and making the transition to statehood.[236] Instead, Palestinians and Israelis might look for assistance to the widely experienced and respected United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which, in the last decade, has directly overseen and often administered refugee repatriation movements in over twenty countries,[237] as well as regional resettlement and reconstruction efforts in various parts of Africa.[238] UNHCR has also assisted in the global resettlement of refugees in Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Scandinavia, Switzerland, and the United States.[239] These efforts have involved more than just migration assistance: along with other UN agencies such as UNDP and peace-keeping forces, and myriad non-governmental organizations, UNHCR has been engaged in actual nation building, laying the foundations for new infrastructures of democracy.

The UNHCR’s statutory mandate is to provide “international protection” to refugees and to seek “permanent solutions” to their problems, including facilitating their repatriation or their assimilation within new national communities. Its work is humanitarian and social and, more to the point, “of an entirely non-political character.”[240] Its efforts to administer solutions to refugee crises have generated a series of guidelines to ensure the voluntary, orderly, and humanitarian character of the absorption programs. For instance, the Executive Committee of UNHCR has, among other requirements for repatriation, reaffirmed that: the repatriation of refugees should take place only at their freely expressed wish; the voluntary and individual character of repatriation of refugees and the need for it to be carried out under conditions of absolute safety, preferably to the place of residence of the refugee in his country of origin, should always be respected.[241]

The agency has, whenever possible, sought the adoption of written guarantees of non-recrimination against returnees. For instance, UNHCR's Executive Committee has recognized the importance of refugees being provided with the necessary information regarding conditions in their country of origin in order to facilitate their decision to repatriate; and recognized further that visits by individual refugees or refugee representatives to their country of origin to inform themselves of the situation there

without such visits automatically involving loss of refugee status — could also be of assistance in this regard. The Executive Committee has also called upon governments of countries of origin to provide formal guarantees for the safety of returning refugees and stressed the importance of such guarantees being fully respected. Even if it is not politically feasible for UNHCR to completely replace UNRWA in the role of administering services to Palestinian refugees during the post-agreement transition process, it would be useful if key, experienced UNHCR personnel could be available on loan or as consultants.

Other international organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental. might also be enlisted in the transition process. For instance, the Refugee Project of the New York-based NGO Lawyers Committee for Human Rights has issued a set of ten General Principles Relating to the Promotion of Refugee Repatriation, along with useful commentaries on implementation of the principles. Some of the most relevant include:

- Repatriation should not be promoted unless all countries involved in the repatriation can ensure the protection of and respect for the fundamental human rights of the refugees.

- Repatriation should be promoted only if it can be accomplished in a manner that ensures safety and dignity upon return.

- The UNHCR should be involved in a meaningful way from the inception of the repatriation plan to its conclusion.

- Non-governmental organizations, in addition to the UNHCR, should have independent access to the refugees, both before and after their return.

- Any repatriation plan should establish that the conflict has abated and its attendant risks eliminated before promoting return. And

- Particular emphasis must be placed on the unique protection needs of returning women and children, who are a high-risk group within an already vulnerable population.[242]

In sum, there is clearly a surplus of available wisdom and experience (if not financial support) to assist the repatriating Palestinians and their Israeli neighbors in making the transition.

*** Then, What?

What comes after minimal repatriation? Ideally, maximum reconciliation. While “reconciliation” (or more precisely, “Truth and Reconciliation”) has become the watchword of the transition to democracy in many formerly conflict-ridden countries — most notably in El Salvador and South Africa it has rarely been successful in the context of bi-national peace settlements.[243] Moreover, as has been demonstrated elsewhere, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been, in part, a conflict over mutually inconsistent historiographies.[244] For half a century the parties have been unable to agree on what caused the 1948 refugee flow; why should reconciliation of this issue be any easier to achieve in the future?

Nevertheless, it might be possible for Palestinians and Israelis to begin to focus on their common interests and histories, in order to lay the groundwork for their joint future as economic if not political partners in two respective states. One such commonality is the experience of having been refugees. The creation of a joint Israeli Palestinian Truth and Reconciliation Commission

to air, record, and exchange testimony on the pain and repercussions of each people's own refugee experience — might be a pipe-dream worth undertaking.

At a minimum, newly repatriated Palestinians must be offered Israeli citizenship so that they can become a part of the larger Palestinian- Israeli community, which currently constitutes almost 20 percent of the overall Israeli population. They will continue to be a national minority (as will, presumably, a certain portion of Israeli settlers who choose to remain within the territory of the future State of Palestine) and will be entitled to the protection that international law accords national minorities. This should not be considered a major burden on Israel's part. The 1948

Declaration of Israel's Independence already provides for protection of minorities. It calls on "the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the state on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation ... "[245]

More detailed guidelines on post-repatriation minority rights can be derived from international precedents such as the 1950 New Delhi Accord between India and Pakistan,[246] which regulated the migration of Hindus and Muslims between the two newly independent, partitioned states. Significantly, these events took place at virtually the identical time, and under similar circumstances — the withdrawal of Britain — as the plan for the partition of Palestine into two states. Although implementation of the Accord was troubled by disorder and violence, Article A is worth quoting almost in full:

The Governments of India and Pakistan solemnly agree that each shall ensure to the Minorities throughout its territory complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honor, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation, speech and worship, subject to law and morality. Members of the minorities shall have equal opportunity with members of the majority community to participate in the public life of the country, to hold political or other office and to serve in their country's civil

and armed forces. Both Governments declare these rights to be fundamental and undertake to enforce them effectively. It is the policy of both Governments that the enjoyment of these democratic rights shall be ensured to all their nationals without distinction.[247]

Among contemporary precedents on this issue, foremost are the achievements of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which, both during and after the Cold War, forged a common bond of humanitarian principles among the disparate political and economic systems of Eastern and Western Europe (plus Canada and the US and, after the dissolution of the USSR, the Central Asian states). Though not legally binding, the OSCE's various agreements, which were reached by the rule of consensus, have realized better than any formal set of treaties the establishment of "standards for the behavior of governments, creation of a diplomatic process and encouragement of social movements that continue to this day."[248]

For instance, in the area of national minority rights — probably the most contentious issue, outside of security, to engage the East-West divide — the member states of the OSCE were able to agree on a series of general principles, including:

- Persons belonging to national minorities have the right to exercise fully and effectively their human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law ... with the other citizens.

- The participating states will respect the right of persons belonging to national minorities to effective participation in public affairs, including participation in the affairs relating to the protection and promotion of the identity of such minorities.[249]

- (National minorities have the right) to establish and maintain their own educational, cultural and religious institutions, organizations or associations, which can seek voluntary financial and other contributions as well as public assistance, in conformity with national legislation; and

- to establish and maintain unimpeded contacts among themselves within their country as well as contacts across frontiers with citizens of other states with whom they share a common ethic or national origin, cultural heritage, or religious beliefs.[250]

This last right will be especially important for repatriated Palestinians, who will wish to visit with family members residing in the West Bank, Jordan, and other Arab countries. With regard to freedom of movement, the OSCE participating states have affirmed that “freer movement and contacts among their citizens are important in the context of the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms.”[251] Included among their specific commitments in this regard are the good faith and expeditious processing of visa applications and customs controls; the reduction of visa application fees; and the simplification of administrative procedures. They also have paid deliberate attention to the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers.[252] In all OSCE documents on “the human dimension,” the problem of family reunification is given special emphasis. Each of these standards is equally important to Palestinians, many of whose families have been and may still remain split and scattered across many borders. Palestinians who repatriate to Israel should be allowed to visit and work in the State of Palestine and other Arab states, while those who remain outside of Israel should, similarly, be permitted to visit and even work inside.

*** Conclusion

Reconciliation is not just a process of facing each other: it is about facing one’s own self-image, one’s own reality. Both Palestinians and Israelis need to “get real” and recognize that they can only find peace through compromise. While compromise over the return of refugees may be one of the most painful for Israelis to make, this essay has demonstrated that it can be done and that it must be done.

*** Notes

Portions of this essay are adapted from the author’s book, Refugees Imo Citizens: Palestinians and the End of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1997).

[203] The other multilateral topics are water, the environment, arms control, and economic development. See Donna E. Arzt, “Negotiating the Last Taboo: Palestinian Refugees,” The Jordan Times, July 12, 1995.

[204] The most recent opinion polls are, in fact, somewhat more optimistic than this anecdotal assessment indicates. While 42.7 percent of Israeli Jews reject the right of even one single Palestinian refugee to return, 20.8 percent support the return of a limited number of refugees (and suitable compensation to those who do not return) as the most feasible solution. “Limited number” was defined as “a few thousand” or fewer, however, Poll conducted by Ephraim Yaar and Tamar Herman of Tel Aviv University during the last week in October 1999, as reported in Amira Hass, “Counting Palestinians is a Matter of Perspective,” Ha’aretz, January 4, 2000. A coordinated survey among West Bank and Gaza residents found 81.1 percent believing that the solution to the refugee issue requires the right of return of all the refugees and compensation to those who do not return. Ibid.

[205] See Arzt, Refugees Into Citizens, pp. 64–7.

[206] Zayyad continues: .“or through compensation, or even through the implementation of any other option agreed upon through the negotiations on a comprehensive settlement to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.” Ziad Abu Zayyad. “The Palestinian Right of Return: A Realistic Approach,” Palestine- Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture 2 (Spring 1994): 74, 77.

[207] See Shlomo Gazit. “Refugee Solution,” The Jerusalem Post, November 9, 1999, p. 8; “Palestinian Refugees and the Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations: An Interview with Salim Tamari,”

Journal of Palestine Studies 29 (1) (Autumn 1999): 81, 86. Note that the subject of refugee compensation is not within the scope of this essay. See the author's recent comments in Donna E. Arzt, "The Right of Compensation: Basic Principles Under International Law," background paper prepared for the IDRC Workshop on Compensation for Palestinian Refugees (Ottawa, July 14–15, 1999).

[208] Shlomo Gazit and other Israeli commentators have stated that only a permanent peace in which Palestinians relinquish future demands for land or other concessions can be acceptable. See Gazit, "Refugee Solution."

[209] The ten others are borders, Jerusalem, settlements, security arrangements, military sites, Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza, foreign relations of the Palestinians, archaeological finds, water rights, and ownership of water and sewer networks. See Americans for Peace Now, Middle East Peace Report, Issue 19(November 15, 1999), citing Ha'aretz and Associated Press. November 15, 1999.

[210] Shibley Telhami, "Real Issue, Israeli, Palestinian Nationalism," Los Angeles Times, October 25, 1999.

[211] Gideon Alon. "Barak to MKs: No Return of Refugees within Green Line," Ha'aretz, November 30. 1999. The same day, some Palestinian activists stated that refugees are not interested in a Palestinian state, if its price would be surrender of the right to return to their original homes. "No Final Status Agreement with Israel Without Implementation of the Refugees[1] Right of Return," BADIL Resource Center, FOFOGN ET Digest. November 28 to November 29, 1999 (e-mail listserve).

[212] Quoted by Ben Lynlield, "Final Status Talks Open Without Signs of Flexibility," The Jerusalem Post. November 9, 1999.

[213] Gazit, "Refugee Solution."

[214] Quoted by Ben Lynfield and David Zev Harris, “MK Katz: Israel Partially Responsible for Palestinian Refugee Problem,” The Jerusalem Post. November 22, 1999.

[215] Ibid.

[216] See Ze’ev Schiff, “The IDF’s New Take on the Refugee Problem,” Ha’aretz, November 5, 1999.

[217] See “Counting Palestinians is a Matter of Perspective,” Haaretz, January 4, 2000.

[218] If King Hussein of Jordan were still alive, he might word the message more eloquently. As he told the Palestinians and the Israelis in October 1991, at the start of the Madrid Process, they each needed “the courage to face reality ... to bury senseless illusions.” See Laura Zittrain Eisenberg and Neil Caplan, Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: Patterns, Problems, Possibilities (Indiana University Press, 1998), pp. 78–9.

[219] See Refugees into Citizens, pp. 83–100, for more details on the author’s proposed solution. Admittedly, Arab states are not currently in the practice of recognizing dual citizenship with other Arab states.

[220] This figure is similar to the number of Palestinians that Lebanon should be expected to absorb, within the context of a regional peace; it is also similar to the number of Jewish settlers who might, for ideological reasons, seek to remain in the West Bank after it becomes part of the Palestinian state. Ibid, pp. 89, 98–9.

[221] See Arzt, “Compensation for Palestinian Refugees,” p. 7, n. 12, citing Ian Brownlie, Principles of Public International Law

(2nd edn., 1973), pp. 423–8. See Donna E. Arzt and Karen Zughaib, “Return to the Negotiated Lands: The Likelihood and Legality of a Population Transfer between Israel and a Future Palestinian State,” New York University Journal of International Law and Politics 24 (1992): 1399, 1423–5; Eyal Benvenisti and Eyal Zamir, “Private Claims to Property Rights in the Future Israeli- Palestinian Settlement,” American Journal of International Law 89 (April 1995): 295, 323–4; and Don Peretz, “Early State Policy Toward the Arab Population, 1948–1955,” in Laurence J. Silberstein (ed.), New Perspectives on Israeli History: The Early Years of the State (New York University Press, 1991), pp. 82, 95.

[222] “An Interview with Salim Tamari,” p. 89.

[223] The most recent demographic data for both the Jewish and Palestinian populations of Israel are discussed in Peter Hirschberg, “Population Overload, “ The Jerusalem Report. January 3, 2000, p. 16. See also Isabel Kershner, “People Power,” The Jerusalem Report. January 3, 2000, p. 22. For the current number of registered Palestinian refugees, see UNRWA General Information Sheet (January, 2000). (I have rounded off UNRWA’s numbers,

[224] as UNRWA itself admits that they are mere estimates. The total number of Palestinians, as opposed to those registered as refugees with UNRWA, may be as much as double, or 7 million.) See also “Counting Palestinians is a Matter of Perspective,” Haaretz, January 4, 2000.

[225] The average Muslim woman in Israel currently has 4.8 children compared to the average Jewish woman’s 2.7. Kershner, “People Power.” The cited data did not report figures for average Christian women, but the majority of Arab Israelis are Muslim, not Christian.

[226] After my 1997 book. Refugees into Citizens, first proposed the “target figure” of 75,000 refugees to return to Israel — as part of a regional balance which would, by the year 2005, include doubling the

Palestinian population in the West Bank and requiring Lebanon, for instance, to grant full citizenship rights to a comparable 75,000 Palestinians, I was often labeled a “terrorist” by Jews, including members of my own synagogue, and, I’ve been informed, had my photo mounted on dart boards in Palestinian refugee camps (or worse).

Even in scholarly settings, commentators conveniently ignored the carefully worded caveats in my book to the effect that my “target numbers, timetables, priority rankings, and other suggested guidelines” were not a formal blueprint, but were intended only to “help spark the refugee discussions in the final status talks,” so that “participants in the negotiations can borrow some parts, reject other parts, improve on those for which future fact-finding may shed more light, and be prompted to generate other possible solutions.” See Refugees into Citizens, pp. 7, 64–67, 83, 87–90. Instead, even the academics acted as if I had demanded outright quotas (and, as quotas go, one side’s ceiling is another side’s floor).

[227] See Refugees into Citizens, pp. 13–14, on the “magic number” debate over how many Palestinians actually fled.

[228] See David P. Forsythe, United Nations Peacemaking: The Conciliation Commission for Palestine (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), pp. 48–63; Mark Tessier, A History of the Israel-Palestinian Conflict (Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 313–14; and Neil Caplan, The Lausanne Conference 1949: A Case Study in Middle East Peacemaking (Tel Aviv University, 1993), pp. 92–5.

[229] Caplan, The Lausanne Conference, p. 93.

[230] Benny Morris cites then-Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett as explaining that the offer would really only amount to 65,000, as approximately 35,000 of the 1948 refugees had already found their way back over the border. Benny Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 280–3; Benny Morris, 1948

and After: Israel and the Palestinians (Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 26–7. See also Caplan, The Lausannne Conference, p. 93.

[231] In January 1949, Israel's total Jewish population was estimated at 650,000. Martin Gilbert, Atlas of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 46.

[232] Of the approximately 175,000 Jewish settlers living in the West Bank and Gaza, only about 20 to 25 percent are considered "ideologically motivated" by the concept of a Greater Israel and therefore unlikely to willingly depart. That still leaves over 100,000 who can be persuaded to return to Israel, with the right mix of economic incentives. That would provide a number which is more than adequate, from the perspective of those who may need this kind of persuasion, to "offset" the addition of 75,000 Palestinians (although Jewish settlers are already included in the current population figures cited above). Israel will probably want to encourage the returning settlers to move to the Galilee, where the Arab population currently outnumbers Jews.

[233] Questions concerning compensation of the refugees are beyond the scope of this essay. See Terry Rempel, "The Ottawa Process: Workshop on Compensation and Palestinian Refugees, " Journal of Palestine Studies 29 (1) (Autumn 1999): 36.

[234] See Elia Zureik, "The Trek Back Home: Palestinians Returning Home and their Problems of Absorption/' in Are Hovdenak, Jon Pedersen, Dag Tuastad and Elia Zureik (eds.), Constructing Order: Palestinian Adaptations to Refugee Life^WQ, 1997).

[235] Gazit, "Refugee Solution."

[236] I am not advocating the abrupt shutdown of UNRWA, just the slow phaseout in which more and more of the long-term work of administering

services is transferred to the Palestinian Authority, while the temporary job of helping with repatriation and resettlement is handled by UNHCR specialists.

[237] Including Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Burundi, Croatia, Cambodia, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Guatemala, Laos, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Western Sahara, Zaire, Zimbabwe and elsewhere. See “Going Home,” Refugees, No. 88 (January, 1992), pp. 6–11; Jean-Victor Nkolo, “Journey’s End,” Refugees, No. 94 (December, 1993), pp. 34–5; “The Preferred Solution,” Refugees, No. 96 (II — 1994), p. 24; John Battersby, “UN, Mozambique, Begin Massive Repatriation,” Christian Science Monitor (August 11, 1993), p. 3; John Battersby, “Going Home in Southern Africa,” Christian Science Monitor (March 11, 1994), p. 6; Sylvie Girard, “Afghanistan: The Will But Not the Means,” Refugees, 90 (July 1992): 20–3.

[238] See T. F. Betts, “Evolution and Promotion of the Integrated Rural Development Approach to Refugee Policy in Africa,” Africa Today 31 (1984): 7–24; Art Hansen, “Managing Refugees: Zambia’s Response to Angolan Refugees, 1966–1977,” Disasters III (1979): 375–80. “As a general rule, the more racial, linguistic, religious or cultural characteristics incoming refugees have in common with the native population, the easier integration will be ... The generally celebrated receptivity of African countries to refugees from neighboring countries has been commonly credited to hospitality within related groups of people who straddle borders.” Gil Loescher, Beyond Charity: International Cooperation and the Global Refugee Crisis (Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 25. Examples of successful integration include Afghans in Pakistan and Iran, Bulgarian Turks in Turkey, Burmese Muslims in Bangladesh, Ethiopians in the Sudan, Ogadeni Ethiopians in Somalia, Southern Sudanese in Uganda, and Mozambicans in Malawi. Ibid.

[239] Rupert Colville, “Resettlement: Still Vital After All These Years,” Refugees 94 (December, 1993): 4–8; “Resettlement Criteria in a Changing World,” Refugees, 94 (December, 1993): 18–21; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, The State of the

World’s Refugees, 1993: The Challenge of Protection (United Nations, 1993), pp. 172–5.

[240] Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, para. I and 2, Annex to General Assembly Resolution 428(V) of December 14. 1950.

[241] UNHCR Executive Committee, “Voluntary Repatriation,” No. 40 (XXXVI) — 1985, para. b.

[242] Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Refugee Project. ‘ General Principles Relating to the Promotion of Refugee Repatriation” (New York, May 1992). The guidelines, with commentary, also appear in Arthur C. Helton. “Repatriation or Refoulement.” Refugees 90 (September 1992): 38–40.

[243] See Donna E. Arzt. “Bridge Over Troubled Water: Law and the Emergence of New Democracies,” Syracuse Journal of International Law and Commerce 22 (Spring 1996): 81; Neil J. Kritz (ed.), Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, 3 vols. (United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995).

[244] See Refugees into Citizens, pp. 13–29.

[245] State of Israel, Declaration of Independence, May 14, 1948.

[246] Agreement Between Pakistan and India, April 8, 1950, 131 UNTS 3. See Wayne A. Wilcox, Pakistan: The Consolidation of a Nation (Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 54; Mohammad Waseem, Politics and the State in Pakistan (Progressive Publishers, 1989), pp. 111–16.

[247] 131 UNTS at 4. Reprinted in Patrick Thornberry, International Law and the Rights of Minorities (Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 403. See also article 7 of the State Treaty of May 15, 1955 for the Re-establishment of an Independent and Democratic Austria, reprinted in ibid., p. 404.

[248] Dennis DeConcini and Steny Hoyer, Letter of Transmittal (February 24, 1992), in The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: An Overview of the CSCE Process, Recent Meetings and Institutional Development (Washington, Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe. February 1992), p. iii. See also the symposium issue on national minorities in the CSCE, International Journal on Group Rights 2(1) (1994). A newer European agreement on national minorities, which may eventually prove as influential as that of the CSCE, is the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, adopted at Strasbourg, November 8, 1994, reprinted, along with an explanatory report and commentary, in International Human Rights Reports 2(1) (January 1995): 217–40.

[249] Document of the Copenhagen Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the CSCE (June 29, 1990), 29 International Legal Materials 1305 (1990), Principles 31, 32 and 35.

[250] Ibid., Principles 32.2 and 32.4.

[251] Copenhagan Document, Principle 19.

[252] Ibid., Principles 19.1 to 19.3 and 22 to 22.4.

** 11. From Refugees to Citizens: A Regional Proposal

[[Joseph Ginat and Dale F. Eickelman]]

Words have the power to destroy or heal. When words are both true and kind, they can change the world. — Buddhist proverb

The Palestinian refugee problem is a major issue in the Palestinian public consciousness, but only a marginal issue for the Israeli Jewish public as it comes to terms with final status negotiations.[253] Likewise, a recent "guide" to final status negotiations acknowledges that the fate of Palestinian refugees remains a major problem, but devotes a mere two pages to a substantive discussion of the issue.[254] Although the refugee problem is now over half a century old, only in the last five years have various multilateral working groups that include Israeli and Palestinian participants begun to explore pragmatic approaches to addressing the Palestinian refugee issue.[255] In contrast, over 60 recent proposals address the status of Jerusalem.[256]

The proposal outlined in this essay begins from "below," stressing the importance of involving refugees themselves or their representatives in the implementation of decisions affecting their status. It builds on the available evidence, however imperfect, concerning how Palestinian refugees themselves, especially those living in UNRWA-administered camps, have made pragmatic choices and actions concerning residence, housing, and employment. This proposal focuses on the form an expanded participation might take in the continuing conditions of a weak economy and authoritarian rule.[257] Our principal discussion concerns how such "material" interests as adequate housing, residential planning, and livelihood are inextricably linked to issues of identity, community, and nation. We also argue for a regional approach to resolving the issue of Palestinian refugees that includes the granting of citizenship or dual nationality in the country of residence.[258]

*** The View From the Refugee Camps

As is well known, the refugee camps have become increasingly crowded with the passage of time. Gaza, for example, holds the world record in birth rates with an average of 9.8 births per woman.[259] Houses in camps have gradually expanded, leaving passageways barely wide enough to permit the passage of a single person. In the grim humor of the refugee camps, people sometimes say, “Even a coffin can’t get through here. If you die in your own home, it’s hard to get you to the cemetery.”[260] The complex and narrow streets also offer, however, protection from outsiders so that it is difficult for police unfamiliar with the camp or other outsiders to navigate. In some cases one has to walk sideways to negotiate narrow spots.

In the 1960s and 1970s, outsiders asked camp inhabitants why they remained in the camps, even when permanent settlements in nearby towns or lodging closer to their places of employment was available. The answer was that those who remained in the camps were more likely to benefit from an eventual settlement, or, in some cases, they expressed the hope that Israel would be obliged to surrender some of its territory.[261]

Some Israelis, in contrast, compare the Arab experience from 1948 to 1967 with the relatively rapid settlement and absorption of Jewish refugees into Israel beginning in 1948. Israel’s internal resources were initially meager, but the combination of external resources, including reparation payments, contributions by Jewish communities elsewhere, and massive international financial support, enabled Israel to absorb immigrants from the Middle East and Europe. The policies and politics of these Israeli patterns of absorption changed over the last half-century, but in the early stages the patterns partially resembled the situation of Arab refugees. Immigrants were first placed in camps, usually made up of tents. These tents were later replaced by corrugated metal shacks, and subsequently wooden ones. The Jewish camps were subsequently dismantled in a coordinated national effort, with the refugees resettled in newly-planned “development” towns as well as in other available housing, including Arab homes “abandoned” due to the 1948 war or from which the Arab inhabitants were evicted. With the exception of those in Jordan, the economic and juridical status of most Palestinian refugees remained precarious.[262]

The majority of Palestinian refugees from the 1948–9 war became stateless. Zureik explains:

<quote>

In order to highlight the plight of the refugees and to put pressure on Israel to admit responsibility for them. Arab countries (except Jordan) have denied citizenship rights to the Palestinians in their midst; in so doing, they claimed they were serving the interests of the Palestinians and supporting their right of return.[263]

</quote>

For the Palestinian leadership and for many other Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, the centrality of the refugee issue has shifted significantly over time. Until 1967, the refugees were the main issue in the Israeli-Arab conflict, but later the creation of a Palestinian state took precedence.[264] Within the Lebanese refugee camps, Rosemary Sayigh noted a similar shift, but for different reasons: “A strongly defined Palestinian identity did not emerge until 1968, two decades after expulsion ... Palestinians challenged their designation insisting that they were not ’refugees,’ but ’freedom fighters.’”[265] The issue of the refugees is re-emerging as a principal component of a permanent peace settlement.

The record for the Palestinian leadership’s consultation with the refugees themselves remains uneven, when the issue concerns the internal governance of the camps, as documented by Bucaille for Gaza,[266] or for the multilateral discussion of refugee issues in the discussions leading to Oslo. Some observers, including Shlomo Gazit, argued that representatives from the camps in Lebanon. Syria, and Jordan should also have been included in discussions concerning the status of refugees. Gazit also was the first to argue that any resolution of the refugee issue would oblige Israel to participate in direct talks with the Palestine Liberation Organization, which Israel did not yet recognize.[267]

Gazit also recognized the significance of obtaining popular Israeli and Palestinian support for high-level initiatives. After the Oslo agreement in

1993, many residents of the Lebanese refugee camps switched their allegiance from the PLO to a rival Palestinian organization opposing the peace-talks.[268] With rising levels of education and expectations, decisionmaking about refugees from this point onward, no matter how difficult, should engage representatives from the camps themselves.

*** “Refugees” Defined

The issue of who is a Palestinian refugee is highly contested, for the language used directly raises questions of responsibility, obligation, entitlement, and numbers.[269] Estimates of the numbers of refugees created in 1948–9 vary considerably, as do estimates of the aggregate contemporary Palestinian refugee and non-refugee population. Alpher and Shikaki note that “Palestinians cite the UNRWA figure of 3,469,109 refugees (January 1998) as the minimum number, including 1,308,438 in the territories (548,874 in the West Bank and 759,564 in Gaza); some Palestinian sources argue that the total figure is as high as 4,900,000.”[270] They distinguish between the Palestinian refugee population, “persons who were displaced from their homes in Palestine in 1948 and subsequently registered as refugees with UNRWA, and their descendants,” a figure larger than those of camp residents.[271] Gazit suggests that the “practical refugee population”

(as of 1992) was 1.9 million, “or a little more than one-third of the total Palestinian population.”[272]

*** The Social Organization of Camp Life

Palestinian refugees living in UNRWA camps have been afforded few opportunities to express views on their status. At a literal “on the ground’ level, however, their directly and indirectly expressed preferences regarding housing and residence patterns suggest issues that must be taken into consideration in any settlement that will sustain widespread acquiescence or even support.

Both Israeli and Palestinian anthropologists and other scholars offer insight on the evolution of urban patterns in the camps over the past half century.[273] Even when some camp residents had the opportunity to move out, and non-residents moved into the camps, most refugees within the camps chose to settle in close proximity to people from their hometowns and villages. Marriage and residence patterns both indicate sustained efforts to preserve ties with kinspeople and neighbors sharing common places of origin.[274] The “imagined communities” of villages that have in many cases disappeared half a century ago remain pervasive and enduring anchors in contemporary social life.[275]

The camps have become permanent residences for the refugees living in them. They have been home to the refugees for nearly half a century. The ties of kin, community, and livelihood formed over this time would be difficult to replace were the communities broken up and their residents dispersed. Some of the families in the camps are third-generation offspring of the original 1948 refugees. The camps, whether in Gaza, the West Bank, or Lebanon, are the only home known to many of the descendants of the original refugees.

Private construction by refugees in the camps offers some guidance on preferred residential choices. In the Jenin and other refugee camps, some residents bought housing units from neighbors who had left the camp. Some purchasers expanded their own units by adding an extension to their existing home; others tore down their original house and built a larger one. When asked why they did not move to the city of Jenin or to one of the larger villages in the area, the refugees said that their social and economic relationships were all with people in the camp or nearby villages. Their choice of permanent residence was therefore near the refugee camp.

Ginat asked a refugee from the Qalandiyya camp (north of Jerusalem), and another from ‘Arub (north of Hebron) why they did not take their families with them to live nearer their places of work in the West Bank. Their answers were almost identical: the cost of living is less in the camps and their family ties are in the vicinity. Among other factors, married daughters in Palestinian

society remain in close contact with their families of origin, who retain major responsibility for them.[276]

Such attitudes are not, however, set in stone. In field research conducted in the 1970s and 1980s, Ginat noted that some of the older camp inhabitants, mostly first-generation refugees, opposed any changes to camp lite. They refused to build outside the camp. They claimed that they would return to their villages in present-day Israel. The same answer was given in all the camps, but applies only to an older cohort. In some camps, Ginat asked older refugees whether they would be willing to return to the area merely near their original village, since the original villages have become Jewish. They answered unequivocally that they would return only to their original houses in Masamiyya, Qastina, or Mijdal (now Ashkelon). Their sons, grandchildren, and many of their own generation who have become refugees like them say that this nostalgic aspiration is no longer practicable. A 1995 poll conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, for example, found that the youngest cohort (aged 15 to 18) was more opposed than older residents to any agreement that relinquished claims to lands held in 1948.[277] On the basis of this poll and others, Zureik states that Ginat's conclusion — younger refugees are more amenable than older ones to relinquishing claims to lands held in 1948 — is incorrect.[278] Part of the difference between Ginat's findings and those of the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center may be due to the gap of a decade or more between the two inquiries.

*** Refugee Resettlement in Gaza Under Israeli Rule

Israel attempted several resettlements of refugees in Gaza from the 1970s until its 1994 withdrawal. Although inspired in part by security considerations, these efforts point to approaches for future planners to consider. One attempt to resettle refugees was carried out in the Rafah camp. Each family that agreed to resettle received a 200 square meter plot of land, on which was built a house unit of specified measurement and Israeli design. The cost of these houses, however, was high. When refugees were allowed to participate in the construction of the houses themselves, they rapidly deviated from Israeli intentions and made more intensive use of the allotted plots. Israeli building permits allowed use of 60 percent of the plot;

the refugees, however, used more than 80 percent of the allotted space for construction.

At the beginning of the 1980s, multistoried apartment buildings were introduced, a change dictated by dwindling land resources. Local contractors — not necessarily refugees — received a plot of land on the condition that they erect upon it a four-storied building comprising eight apartments.

In order to receive the keys to the new apartment, the refugee household had first to give up its existing house in the camp, which was then torn down. The intention was to use the land thus cleared for the construction of additional new housing units, but was also related to Israeli security concerns during the Intifada.

The principal innovation of the 1990s structures was that the contractor built only the frame of the building, including all the outer walls and finish windows, doors, electrical sockets, and plumbing. The inner space of the apartments was left undivided, so that each family could adapt the interior to its preferences.

Many camp inhabitants are skilled construction workers — including carpenters, masons, and plumbers. The ability to apply their crafts to their own housing when they were prevented from working outside of Gaza became an irresistible incentive. In the years of the Intifada, the camps were often placed under closure, barring inhabitants from wage labor in Israel. The do-it-yourself approach in the early 1990s brought a 50 percent reduction in the price of apartments, in comparison to those built entirely by contractors. Moreover, much of the infrastructure was constructed and funded by the Israeli authorities.

The hesitant starts of these various housing schemes were in part due to political vicissitudes as well as resistance to the top-down planning by Israeli authorities. Throughout the world, from public housing in St. Louis, Chicago, to the suburbs of Paris, and to the 1960s “new” towns on Morocco’s western plains, top-down housing schemes built without significant input from

residents has encountered obstruction and resistance. Habitat for Humanity, among other ongoing concerns, demonstrates the value of “sweat equity” in implementing housing schemes. The same can be said for allowing at least some residential choice in design.

*** An Approach to Resettlement

The existing camps should be turned into permanent towns, as they have, in any case, been incrementally urbanized over the past few decades and function as towns.[279] Camps adjacent or close to towns should be annexed to the local municipalities. The camps located away from towns should be turned into permanent settlements and given an independent municipal status. Thus, the Dheisha camp would be incorporated into the Bethlehem municipality, while Jalazon, on the outskirts of Ramallah, should be annexed to it. The al-Shatti camp, likewise, should be assimilated into the town of Gaza. Camps such as Qalandiya, ‘Arub or Fuwar (south of Hebron) should be given the status of independent municipalities. This model should also be applied in neighboring states with refugee settlements.

This approach, as sociologist Ishaq Qutb concurs, takes into account the de facto evolution of the camps into municipalities or parts of them:

Relative autonomy should be given to the camp cities, which would allow the formation of a power structure, a local representative leadership and a system for the wider participation of the citizenry ... long-range urban development as well as short-term planning should be geared toward the comprehensive development and change in both the physical and cultural environments.[280]

Resettlement also necessarily involves relocation for some Palestinian refugees. The experience of refugees has varied significantly among the countries in which they have settled, with Lebanon most resistant to their assimilation and Jordan the most accommodating.[281] Israel has remained the most intransigent, although a trickle of refugees has been allowed to

return to Israel under a family reunification program and the open borders with Jordan have generated a perceptible amount of clandestine labor immigration. The return of at least some Palestinian refugees from Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan to the West Bank and Gaza is also likely. As one Palestinian intellectual has commented, once the Palestinians have a state, it is reasonable to reinterpret the “right of return” to signify a return to Palestine.[282] Widespread public acceptance, or at least acquiescence, of such a major ideological shift is not unthinkable, any more than the transition of the PLO leadership over the past decade to close daily economic and security cooperation with Israeli authorities on a range of issues difficult to conceive a decade earlier.[283] Such a shift in interpretation of the right of return should also be accompanied by Israel’s acceptance of at least a token number of former Arab residents. As Arzt argues, the refugee problem necessitates a regional agreement that should also allow refugees to remain in their current countries of residence with rights of citizenship or of dual citizenship.[284] Likewise, some Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza might be dismantled or made available to Palestinian refugees.

Some aspects of the Israeli experience in Gaza arc useful for envisioning the process of turning the camps into de facto as well as de jure permanent residences. First, residents themselves should be involved in the decisionmaking process. Space constraints, however, require a high degree of collective decision-making, necessitating multi-storied apartment buildings as a likely form of residence. However, as prior experience in Gaza indicates, such an approach can allow considerable latitude in design within the space allocated to each family or family group.

Construction work should start at the camp periphery and work inwards, so that the inhabitants of the next area designed for development would be the first to inhabit the new apartments. Such housing need not always involve related families in this respect there may be changing attitudes toward residence patterns, at least among some refugees. Although refugees often prefer to settle near households related by village or origin or kinship ties, other settlement patterns may also be possible. Recent experience in construction in Tirah, an Arab rural settlement in Israel’s Central Triangle region, shows the success of housing estates comprising three- to four-storied apartment buildings in which many residents are not related to each other.

For economy of scale, construction should include a well-prepared infrastructure sewers, potable water, access roads, electricity, and telephones. Each neighborhood should be built around a nucleus consisting of public institutions such as schools, medical clinics, and social clubs. Employment opportunities should also be pre-planned, in order to anchor residents in their locality.

In any discussion of a post-settlement Middle East, the economic development of the former refugee camps should be given precedence in any regional development plans. In referring to Israeli involvement in the resettlement of Palestinian refugees, Gazit notes the Israeli experience in absorbing new' immigrants of various educational and income levels.[285] One might also consider the negative aspects to Israeli resettlement and "absorption" of Jews of Middle Eastern origin, especially those from North Africa and Yemen, in the 1950s and 1960s. Direct Israeli involvement in resettlement schemes may appear unrealistic in present circumstances, but such involvement could have the benefit of confidence building on both sides.

Arzt, Alpher and Skikaki, and others stress that any permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees also involves granting them citizenship in the countries where they are settled.[286] As Arzt points out, the granting of citizenship, including dual citizenship, is a major challenge because it implies relinquishing the "right of return" and poses other challenges for host countries. This concern is particularly acute in Lebanon. As Salem indicates, any naturalization of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon will affect its delicate sectarian balance, a concern not alien to Israeli sensibilities.[287] A change in Lebanese attitudes toward granting citizenship to Palestinian refugees is unlikely; the eighteen members of the Council on Christian- Muslim Dialogue are unanimous in their rejection of this possibility.[288] As Heller and Nusseibah stated nearly a decade ago, some Palestinian intellectuals at the time accepted the idea of refugees receiving citizenship in their host countries.[289] The process is most advanced in Jordan, which accorded full citizenship to many refugees in spite of its limited resources and the fact that Palestinians of refugee origin constitute over half the population.

A regional agreement to settle Palestinian refugees would involve Israel's offering "some sort of moral compensation"[290] for giving up the "right of return." Gazit, for one, suggests ways in which such a statement might be formulated without suggesting "Israeli responsibility for the Palestinian predicament." The Weatherhead Center report also reiterates the suggestion that both sides acknowledge that Israel had a "historic role" in creating the refugee problem, and also that the massive exercise of the right of return is unrealizable.[291]

Such language has already been incorporated into formal documents. For example. Article 8 of the Israeli-Jordanian peace agreement signed on October 26, 1994 acknowledges "the massive human problems caused to both parties by the conflict in the Middle East, as well as the contribution made by them toward the alleviation of human suffering," and commits both parties to "alleviate those problems arising on a bilateral level."[292] The wording of the agreement suggests a way in which the strongly conflicting Israeli and Palestinian-Arab national "narratives"[293] about the 1948 war can be overcome in order to generate new ideas for resolving the status of the Palestinian refugees.

In addition. Israel, most likely with international support, would pay some form of compensation to the refugees. The states of the region, again with external support, would also undertake a major program of economic development. The UNRWA administrative apparatus would be abolished and the administration of the refugee camps and separate entities would also come to an end.

To implement such a solution, a regional fund should be established under international auspices, and the absorbing countries should be allotted resources through a regional bank, an idea supported by the United States. The first stage would be planning, followed by investment in infrastructure, and finally the actual resettlement of refugees, including in some cases their relocation. Only at this third and final stage would individuals receive compensation, probably around $10,000–520,000 per household, as suggested by various informal working groups.

A “new” Middle East with a durable Israeli-Arab peace would create many new opportunities for employment and development. The process would no doubt involve major economic and social readjustment, but the overall effect would be a significant advance over the increasingly untenable status quo of the last fifty years.

[253] See the results of public opinion polls reported by Yuchtman-Ya’ar and Tamai- Hermann (chapter 25, this volume), and Khalil Shikaki, “Palestinian Public- Opinion about the Peace Process, 1993–1999.” Information BRIEF Number II. October 26, 1999, Washington, D.C.: Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine (available at [[http://www.palestinecenter.org] [www.palestinecenter.org]]).

[254] Aharon Kleiman, Compromising Palestine: A Guide to Final Status Negotiations (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), esp. pp. 129–30.

[255] Donna E. Arzt, Refugees into Citizens: Palestinians and the End of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (New York: Council on Foreign Relations. 1997), pp. 182–99, for a concise bibliographic essay on the Palestinian refugee question. See also Elia Zureik, Palestinian Refugees and the Peace Process (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1996), pp. 75–84, available at: [[http://www.ipsjps.org/html/zureik.htm][http://www.ipsjps.org/html/zureik.htm]]. Key recent discussions include Joseph Alpher and Khalil Shikaki, The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return, Working Paper Series, 98 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, May 1998); Shlomo Gazit, The Problem of the Palestinian Refugees (Tel Aviv: Jaffe Center for Strategic Research, Tel Aviv University, 1994); General Principles for the Final Israeli-Palestinian Agreement, Working Group on International Conflict Analysis and Resolution, PICAR Working Paper (Cambridge, MA: Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, September 1998); and Shibley Telhami, “Lines Already Drawn in the Mideast Sand,” Los Angeles Times, October 27, 1999.

[256] Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, p. 5.

[257] See Laetitia Bucaille, Gaza: La violence de la paix [Gaza: The Violence of Peace] (Paris: Presses de Sciences, 1998). This study remains the only full- length political ethnography of political and economic life in post-autonomy Gaza.

[258] See Arzt, Refugees into Citizens', Telhami, "Lines Already Drawn"; and Zureik, Palestinian Refugees, pp. 72–3.

[259] See Bucaille, Gaza, p. 99.

[260] Ibid., p. 98.

[261] Joseph Ginat. A Permanent Settlement Plan for the Palestinian Refugees (Haifa: University of Haifa, 1994). Also available at: [[gopher://gopher-igcc.ucsd.edu][gopher://gopher-igcc.ucsd.edu]] 9

[262] Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, pp. 34–5; and Laurie Brand, Palestinians in the Arab World (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 7.

[263] Zureik, Palestinian Refugees, p. 18.

[264] Emanuel Marx, "Changes in Arab Refugee Camps," Jerusalem Quarterly 8 (Summer 1978): 141–52.

[265] Rosemary Sayigh, “Palestinian Identity Among Camp Residents,” Journal of Palestine Studies 6 (3): 3–22.

[266] Bucaille, Gaza, pp. 53–93.

[267] Gazit, a former chief of intelligence for the Israeli Defense Forces, advocated this approach in a speech to the National Council for Peace and Security, an association of army reserve officers, on April 12, 1994.

[268] Ginat, Permanent Settlement Plan, intimates that the PLO leadership was opposed to including Palestinians in Lebanese camps to their delegation. Zureik, Palestinian Refugees, p. 52, rejects this inference, claiming that objections to including them came from “Israel and the refugees themselves.” For a journalist’s account of how news of the Oslo Accords was received in Lebanese refugee camps, see Peter Waldman, “Forgotten Families,” Wall Street Journal, January 17, 1994.

[269] See Alpher and Shikaki, Palestinian Refugee Problem, pp. 3 4; Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, pp. 69–71; Gazit, Problem of the Palestinian Refugees, pp. 2–3; and Zureik, Palestinian Refugees, pp. 6–8.

[270] Alpher and Shikaki, Palestinian Refugee Problem, pp. 3–4.

[271] Ibid., p. 3. Some 80 percent of persons who were “displaced” from the West Bank and Gaza as a result of the 1967 war already had refugee status as a result of the 1948–9 war. Israelis, but not Palestinians, distinguish sharply between the 1948 refugees and persons “displaced” by the 1967 war.

[272] Gazit, Problem of the Palestinian Refugees, p. 3.

[273] See, for example, Yoram Ben-Porath, Emanuel Marx, and Shimon Shamir, A Refugee Camp on the Mountain Ridge (Tel Aviv: The Shiloah Center, 1974) (in Hebrew); and Yoram Ben-Porath and Emanuel Marx, Some Sociological and Economical Aspects of Refugee Camps on the West Bank (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1971). For a post-intifada view, see Bucaille, Gaza.

[274] Ben-Porath and Marx, Sociological and Economical Aspects, pp. 48–9.

[275] Susan Slyomovics, The Object of Memory: Arab and Jew Narrate the Palestinian Village (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

[276] Joseph Ginat, Women in Muslim Rural Society: Status and Role in Family and Community (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books. 1982), pp. 100–14, 126–32.

[277] Zureik, Palestinian Refugees, p. 30.

[278] Ibid., p. 52.

[279] Emanuel Marx, “Palestinian Refugee Camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,” Middle Eastern Studies 28 (2) (April, 1992): 281.

[280] Ishaq Y. al-Qutb, “Refugee Camp Cities in the Middle East: A Challenge for Urban Development Policies,” International Sociology 4 (1) (1989): 91–108.

[281] Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, pp. 30–62.

[282] Manuel Hassassian, comment at the conference on “The Palestinian Refugees,” University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, November 30, 1999. Also see Rashid I. Khalidi and Itamar Rabinowich, The Palestinian Right of Return: Two G’t’ir.y (Cambridge, MA: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1990).

[283] See Bucaille, Gaza, pp. 126-A3.

[284] Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, pp. 87–91.

[285] Gazit, Problem of the Palestinain Refugees, p. 26.

[286] Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, pp. 83 100; Alpher and Shikaki, Palestinian Refugee Problem.

[287] Nawaf A. Salem, “Between Repatriation and Resettlement: Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon,” Journal of Palestine Studies 24 (1) (Autumn 1994): 18–27.

[288] Interview, Muhammad Sammak, London, November 25, 1999.

[289] Mark A. Heller and Sari Nusseibah, No Trumpets, No Drums: A Two-Hyphen State Settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (New York: Hill and Wang, 1991).

[290] Gazit, Problem of the Palestinain Refugees, pp. 20–1.

[291] Alpher and Shikaki, Palestinian Refugee Problem.

[292] Cited in Arzt, Refugees into Citizens, p. 216.

[293] Alpher and Shikaki, Palestinian Refugee Problem, p. I.

** 12. Palestinian Refugees in Jordan and National Identity, 1948–1999]]

[[Mohanna Haddad]]

At the termination of the British Mandate in Palestine, the legal status of the political organization functioning there also came to an end. The Jewish organizations appear to have been more aware of the situation than were the Palestinian Arabs, and proclaimed the State of Israel, taking the place of the terminated state authority. By refusing the partition plan, the Palestinian side lost something essential in the process: the creation of the legitimate and legal, nationally recognized corps d’etat that granted citizenship to the Palestinian Arabs. Under the umbrella of the Arab League, the member-states carried out the responsibility of defending Palestine. Their endeavor led to their defeat in 1948 and to the division of Palestine into three parts, one of which (the West Bank) came under the protection of the Jordanian Monarchy, which, in 1950, became part and parcel of the Jordanian Kingdom. The Jordanian Constitution of 1952 included it as part of the Kingdom of Jordan and still includes it despite the Fak al-Irtibat (Detachment) of 1988.

As a result of the war of 1948, some 94,000 refugees fled to the East Bank of the Jordanian Kingdom.[294] This brings us to the core of the problem of the demography of the Palestinian refugees in Jordan.

*** Demography

To reach approximately correct estimates of the number of Palestinian refugees in Jordan, it is necessary to consider the demographic development of Jordan since 1921, the year of the inception of the state as an emirate. Despite the estimation given by the British officers operating in the east of Jordan at that time, it seems that the most correct and, to some extent reliable estimate, is the census of the tribes in 1922, which found that Jordan had a total count of 225,380.[295] Athamna,[296] who presents the various estimates for the period of the emirate through 1946, points correctly to the defects of the estimates in that period. Mahafza,[297] quoting A. Konikoff and H. Horani,[298] gives the figure of 300,214 in 1938. Musa Samha[299] gives the figure of 400,000 for 1947.

The year 1947 forms the onset of the direct military clashes between the Palestinian Arabs and Jews in an attempt to replace the mandatory power. Noteworthy is the fact that the rate of population increases in the region had been 0.8 percent annually for reasons of ignorance, bad health, and economic conditions.[300] It was only after 1960 that living conditions underwent considerable progress, and the rate of population increase went up to 1.2 percent. The high rate of population increase between 1948 and 1973 was due to two factors: the expulsion of the Palestinian Arabs from Palestine as a result of the 1948 war between the newly emerging Jewish state and the Arab states. Jordan (the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) and the region that it was assigned to keep (the West Bank) got the lion’s share of the Palestinian refugees. UNRWA estimated the number at 506,200 for the year 1952. forming 55.4 percent of all the Palestinian refugees in the Arab states.[301]

The Jordanian-Palestinian Committee for the Study of the Living Conditions of the Refugees in the West Bank[302] stated the number of refugees at 94.000 for the East Bank and 357,200 for the West Bank, making a total of 451,200 PRs (Palestinian Refugees) in 1948–9.[303]

An abstract of the population from the annual statistical reports for the East Bank (1952, 1961, 1979, and 1994) refers to the total number of Jordan’s population in 1952 as 586,880, including the refugees. Based on estimates of the rate of population increase during this period, Jordan must have harbored 424,005 East Jordanians and 98,516 refugees. The remaining increment of

the population was caused by internal migration from the West Bank to the East Bank in addition to migration from other Arab countries. Only this only can explain the high rate of population increase in the country.

Eor 1961 the total population of Jordan was 1,760,279, of whom 809,304 were in the West Bank and 950,975 were in the East Bank, including 61,972 living abroad and 55,525 Bedouin. The net total of the Jordanian population, according to the census, is 1,698,207. A simple mathematical calculation reveals that, counting on the basis of 1.2 percent as the rate of population increase in that period, the West Bank must have harbored 430.936 refugees and 378,936 inhabitants in the three districts of Nablus, Jerusalem, and al-Khalil (Hebron). The East Bank must have had 474,890 East Bankers and 108,677 refugees. The remaining part of the Jordanian population, 305,536 people, must have come into Jordan from the West Bank and other countries such as Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq during one decade. Even following Samha's reasoning[304] (Samha 1987: 187), which states that in 1952 the number of refugees in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is estimated at 464,670 (369,689 refugees in the West Bank and 100.981 in the East Bank), the figures do not match those of the Jordanian Palestinian Committee. The difference is 13,200 refugees. According to Samha, the number of refugees in Jordan increased to 631,000 in 1961; whereas this number, according to the figures given above, was 539,613 — a difference of some 92.387 persons. Still unknown is the formula on the basis of which he calculated his estimate.

What makes these differences less ambiguous are the UNRWA statistics for 1971 and 1983 as presented by Samha,[305] showing the number of refugees in Jordan for 1971 as 551.612, forming 36.3 percent of the total Palestinian refugees. This is to say that the number of refugees in Jordan fell to less than it had been in 1951, being 506,200.[306] According to the same source, the number of Palestinian refugees in 1960 was 613,743. According to the DPA, the number of Palestinian refugees in 1980 was 716.372; whereas UNRWA cites their number in 1983 to be 759,160. The estimate for 1983 on the basis of the former figure and a 3.5 percent increase rate gives the figure of 791,594. Again, the difference is rather extensive and there is no agreement on the issue. Even the Jordanian figures do not match reality, for their estimates are based on a 2.5 percent annual increase rate; whereas elsewhere the rate of increase is considered to be at least 3.09 percent for

1990.[307] However, UNRWA recognizes only ten refugee camps in Jordan, when in fact there are thirteen. The total number of Palestinian refugees in Jordan amounts to some 1.5 million. Zureik maintains that of an estimated 2,328,308 Palestinians in Jordan, the refugees total 1,741,796 individuals. [308]

The formal Palestinian reading is that the Palestinian refugees problem was created in a number of waves, as follows:

**** The first wave

Approximately 30,000 Palestinians were forced to leave the country during the period from January 1947 to March 1948.

**** The second wave

Over 300.000 Palestinians left West Jerusalem, Tiberias, Haifa, Jaffa, and Beishan as well as those who survived the Deir Yasin massacre. These huge numbers were forced to leave during the period from March 1948 to May 1948. They were terrified by the horrible massacre committed by Haganah and Stern forces against innocent civilians in the village of Deir Yasin, where the death toll reached 250 persons including women, children, and the elderly.

**** The third wave

The Israeli armed forces deported approximately 100,000 Palestinians from the cities of Lod and Ramleh to Jordan during the period from May 1948 to December 1948.

**** The fourth wave

In view of the Israeli hostilities which continued even after the 1948 war, over 200,000 Palestinians were forced to move to the Gaza Strip.[309]

*** Palestinian Refugees: An Identity

The history of Palestinian identity passed through four phases in the twentieth century. Until 1918, Palestine had been part of the Ottoman Empire for four centuries, and the people in Palestine were considered Ottoman subjects. The term “citizen” is rather difficult to apply to the Ottoman period, for the state identity did not match with the regional identity of the subject. Yet Palestine was one of the Arab-speaking dominions of the empire and the people were represented in the various Arab movements organizing for the Arabs’ liberation from the Ottoman yoke. Palestine then formed a part of the Fertile Crescent or Greater Syria; those who took part in the Young Arab movement were obsessed by the one idea of Arabism against Ottoman nationalism. The same was true for Syrians, Iraqis, and Lebanese.

The Palestinian Arab identity crystallized more after the Balfour Declaration, which promised the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The Sherif of Mecca and the leader of the Great Arab Revolution at that time, Hussain Ben Ali, included Palestine in his map of the future Arab state. All the Palestinian uprisings against Jewish immigration and the British Mandate in Palestine had taken place under the motto of “Palestine, an Arab Land,” to be understood as “an Arab, Muslim, and Palestinian land.” During the twenty-eight years of the Mandate, no real attempt was made to form a united Palestinian front, and a struggle remained between the two prominent leading families in Palestine — the Nashashibi in Nablus and the Husseini in Jerusalem. A reconsideration of the literature concerning the Palestine issue between 1920 and 1947 does not show an overall representative organization for the Palestinians in terms of a well-defined national movement and the consciousness of establishing such an organization had to wait until the emergence of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964.

Some scholars referred to the identity of Palestinians in that period as “segmented”: tribal, territorial, and religious. Territorially, the allegiance was either to the village, city, or simple district.[310] In fact, the pan-Arab idea had dominated and still dominates Arab societies. The regimes of the country states in the Arab lands institutionalized themselves through three approaches: the adoption of Arab nationalism, force and military oppression, and the expansion of the state bureaucratic apparatus. The Jordanian Hashemite monarchy did the same, yet with a more humanitarian flavor, not only in this period among the east Jordanians, but also in the following phase among the Palestinian segment of the society.

The third phase was that between 1948 and 1964/1967. I call this period the “phase of awakening.” the term coined by G. Antonius.[311] It is in this period that the Jordanian monarchy came to play a major role in the development of the Palestinian identity, whether positively or negatively. The first step was the participation of the Arab Legion (the Jordanian army) in the 1948 war. The defeat of the joint Arab armies led to an armistice between Israel and Jordan, whose troops remained in control of what came later on to be called the West Bank. Both the banks received 451.000 refugees fleeing from the territories in which the State of Israel w as established. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) expelled the majority of the Palestinian refugees, and a considerable number fled out of fear for various reasons summarized by Amirah Habibi.[312] She mentions, among others, family considerations (fear for the lives of their relatives, family honor, being with the family), fear of the war. social behavior, and expulsion by force. In 1950. the two banks were unified (whether for better or worse) and constituted the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Yet. had UNRWA not been established, the economic situation of Jordan at that time did not permit Jordan to give assistance to such a huge number of refugees in addition to a similar number of West Bank Palestinians. The population of the Jordanian society tripled within two years.

The question of Palestinian identity among the refugees in Jordan did not escape the attention of Israeli scholars.[313] Their views vary significantly, albeit representing the Israeli side. The formal Zionist view, before as well as after the establishment of the state, maintains that King Abdullah always looked toward expanding his state to Palestine in order to establish the Arab state that his father as leader of the Arab Revolution of 1916 advocated. Various readings present Prince Abdullah in negotiations to form a state

where both Arabs and Jew’s could live in peace, aiming thereby at creating the State of Israel. This attempt, according to the Israeli view, aimed at Jordanizing the whole area of Palestine. After 1950 Jordan (according to Israeli and Palestinian understanding) annexed and (according to the Jordanian view) united the two banks of the River Jordan on grounds inherent in the Hashemite political mind based on the idea of Arab nationalism. The Jordanian citizenship granted to the Palestinians (refugees and non-refugees in the West and the East Bank) implied, for better or worse, for many, an attempt at a virtual liquidation of the

Palestinian identity, to be replaced by the Jordanian identity. Ilan Pappe writes:

From the very beginning of the Annexation, the Hashemite court worked relentlessly to Jordanize the West Bankers and the Palestinian Refugees. Abdallah tried at first to placate the Palestinians by liberalizing his autocratic rule and allowing a modicum of democratization into the new political system. This move, however, produced exactly the opposite effect, as it revealed the amount of opposition to Abdallah’s rule in the West Bank and ultimately led the King to dissolve the Palestinian dominated Parliament he had helped to establish.[314]

That the Palestinians were unwilling to accept Jordanian identity as the national one is a logical truth since they were (and are) a people with a case to defend. The problem, I suggest, is deeper than that. Now in the fourth generation, if asked where one is from, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin would answer, “From Palestine.” The Palestinians were stateless until the

Jordanian monarchy granted them citizenship. Accepting it meant in no way that they had detached themselves from their natural allegiance to the land where they were born and grew up, nor that they were willing to be referred to by any other name than “Palestinian.” Citizenship and national identity are different things that may be interrelated and interdependent in various cases; but in the case of Palestinians, they are not. Without resorting to apologetic discourse, the Jordanian version simply leans upon ideological grounds inherent in the “mind of the great Arab revolution” as a fundamental

motive for that political behavior, regardless of any other consideration. It was only thereafter that the idea of pan-Arab nationalism got its gestalt.

The truth is that the Palestinians came to be subject to two forces: UNRWA and the Jordanian authorities. The former's task was to provide help to the Palestinians, but by doing so they helped them keep their national identity. What is lacking in Pappe's argument is that the Jordanian monarchy at that time stuck with the issue of self-institutionalization among a newly-added part of the population who came to form the majority of Jordanian society. The Palestinians came to live in the urban centers and formed the middle class of Jordanian society, and indeed they still form the majority of that class, including the academic and professional elements.[315] The issue is that the same situation had existed already in 1970 when the sad September events led to complete segregation of Jordanian society into East and Palestinian Jordanians. In fact, the collective consciousness of national identity will continue even if a final solution is provided. The PLO and the recognition it achieved in both the Arab and the international arenas moved the Palestinians to actively manifest their Palestinian national identity. Despite the fact that the Hashemite monarchy had been in need of the Palestinian people to consolidate its existence as a state, the burden of the Palestinians on the monarchy was heavier than the state was able to bear.

The fourth phase (the phase of revolutionary formation) came after 1964 and lasted until 1970 when the PLO realized that it was able to gain support for its activities in Jordan. This ambition and the facilities they received from the state led to an extraordinary position. Jordanian citizens, not only of Palestinian origin but also East Jordanians, were encouraged to join the organization. The refugees in Jordan became a recruiting field, and the Palestinian national revival became an obsession. Since at that time the Palestinians formed the majority of the population, especially after the 1967 war, they felt that the state should transfer the responsibility of defense of the country and war against Israel to those who were more concerned with the issues — namely the PLO. The Palestinian national identity rose to its climax among Palestinians and also among many of East Jordanians so that it looked as if it were representing Jordanian nationality. The majority of the Palestinian refugees at that time no longer lived in the refugee camps. This integration posed a danger if the Palestinians were to turn their backs on the

citizenship Jordan granted them. Such a possibility inflamed the army. The term “Jordanian” at that time appeared as if it had become a curse and an insult. In fact, had Jordan not taken part in the war of 1967, a clash between the Palestinian organizations and the Jordanian army would have been inevitable. The organization had already affected the West Bank to the point that the institutional resistance against the Jordanian monarchy was alarming. The loss of the West Bank simply postponed the confrontation until some years later. From a pan-Arab nationalist point of view, the rise of the PLO had been divisive to the Arab front. It was also a result of the Palestinian consciousness of the fallacy of the traditional pan-Arab ideology that was adopted by the country state (al-Dawla al-Qutriya) and the incapability of the country states to weigh against the Israeli military power. [316]

The events of September 1970 ended the presence and activities of the Palestinian military organization, but the consciousness of the Palestinian identification had already reached its peak. The question of Jordanian citizenship became (at least for a good many of the Palestinian refugees) more a temporary means for movement and claiming public rights. “Not to lose the hen that lays the golden egg, at least for the time being,” became the slogan. Events on the Arab political level led to the recognition of the PLO to be the sole representative of the Palestinian question in the international arena. This gave the Palestinians in Jordan a push in the direction of consolidating their national identity, a fact that manifested itself in the solidarity they showed with the Palestinian struggle, first in Lebanon, and then in the Intifada in the West Bank. A similar reaction, though in a different context, was clear among the Palestinians in Israel.

After 1974, Jordan functioned as an umbrella for the participation of

Palestinians in the international arena and continued to do so (at the Madrid Conference, for example). However, The Palestinian national identity, as understood by the Palestinian Authority at present, seems to be debated on various levels. There is a lack of consensus on whether the Palestinians in the diaspora will lend an ear to the call of the new state-information. A logical consequence of the life in exile is that many of Palestinians have

established themselves and acquired rights, properties, and even influential positions that they will not give up easily.

*** The Refugees' Living Conditions

Jordan has thirteen refugee camps, ten of which are under the supervision of UNRWA, which assists the inhabitants in education, health, occupational training, and financial assistance to those they consider hardship cases. UNRWA would never have been able to perform its tasks if the Jordanian government was not willing to take charge of more fundamental and costly services such as infrastructure (electricity, telephone, running water and sewage, roads and communication), education for the last three years of high school, university education, security and sanitation, and especially, jobs in the public sector. Even so, UNRWA assists only the refugees in the camps, who form some 20 percent of the total refugees, whereas 80 percent of the refugees do not live in camps and enjoy their life as citizens in the country. Despite the fact that all Palestinian refugees are eligible and can profit from the services of UNRWA, the majority do not, and all costs for the services presented to them are from the account of the state.

The last Fafo Report[317] on living conditions in Jordan, including the refugees, does not show much difference in the standard of living, compared with the Jordanian population. The lower class of Jordanian society perceives the services presented to the Palestinian refugees as privileges. Yet most indices found by researchers put the conditions of the refugees in-between the urban and the rural standard of living in the country. Considering the fact that the majority of urban Jordanians are of Palestinian origin, the conclusion is self-evident. For example, the population dependency ratio for refugees is .83, whereas it is .80 for the urban and .92 for rural populations.[318] The total fertility in 1995 for refugees is less than that of non-refugees (4.34 and 4.40 respectively) whereas it is 4.83 for rural areas.[319] The Infant Mortality Index for refugees is far lower than for non-refugees (23.9 to 31.2), while it is 24.3 for rural areas, 43.3 for the southern Governorates, and 34.8 for the Balqa and Madaba.[320] Enrollment of the refugees' children at the secondary (high school) educational level is 78 percent, and in vocational training it is 22 percent, which is far above the rural areas where these figures are 70 percent and 30 percent respectively. These percentages lor all

students are 80 percent and 20 percent.[321] Health insurance coverage and medication for refugees are completely free compared to the rest of the population, regardless of origin.[322] The distance to the medical centers for refugees is far shorter than it is for non-refugees, not to mention the refugees in camps, where the distance is negligible.[323] Participation in the labor force among camp refugees is about the same among non-refugees and other refugees not in camps.[324] Female participation in the labor force in Jordan is the highest for non-Jordanians, and is the same for both in all other categories with some very slight differences. Employment in the Arab world cannot be measured according to usual standards, and perhaps the only standard is Wastah (mediation). The refugees' representation in the professional and managerial sectors is 5 percent less than that of non-refugees, and they are over-represented in clerical work and two other sectors.[325] Even participation in elections does not show much difference (55 percent for refugees and 67 percent for non-refugees),[326] the motivation of participation being bound to the tribal character of the elections in the country.

To speak of the living conditions of the refugees in Jordan in general terms seems to me unjustifiable, since the majority of the Palestinian refugees in Jordan are integrated into society at large. In fact, the term "non-refugee" need not necessarily refer to non-Paiestinian of origin. Living conditions in the country vary per governorate, and there are Governorates where only very few Jordanians of Palestinian origin live, such as al-Karak, Ma'an, Tafilah, and al-Shawbak. In East Jordan, the whole northern Badia is void of Palestinians, and the villages of'Ajlun and Irbid host only individual Palestinians. Except for the chain Amman- Rusaifa and Zarka the whole area east of Amman is lacking Palestinians, and the Valley rift from Ajlun to al-Salt is lacking nearly any Palestinian presence.

The not-in-camp refugees do not manifest much difference from nonPalestinian citizens; and in many respects they are better off. The problem remains with the refugees in camps, where unemployment is estimated at 22 percent for 1997.[327] It was estimated at 28 percent for 1995 by the Fafo researchers.[328]

The refugee camps form a diminishing factor for the population. The numbers of the people in the camps are decreasing due to many factors, among which are housing, sanitation, social factors, economic and perhaps policy factors. This decrease is clearer when measured against the natural increase rate of the population. In al-Baq’a, for example, refugees bought land outside the camp-built houses and expanded. Though the new area does not belong to the camp, it became part and parcel of it, carrying the same name. Similar trends have taken place in other camps as well. Most of the houses around the camp in Irbid are owned by the refugees; and the majority left the camp and lived there, while in many instances they

maintained their cottages in the camp or left persons behind to occupy them. Al-Sukhna, an unrecognized camp near al-Zarqa, is no longer a camp; it is rather one part of three agglomerations of the town (a part is for settled nomads; the other for Chechens). The al-Zarqa camp is becoming part of the city itself, sharing the same municipality and municipal services. Many of the camp refugees have left the camp and are scattered throughout the town. Specifically, refugees populate the ward called al-Ghuwayriyya, its neighboring wards, and the western wards of the city. The refugees of the Schneller Camp spread east and north, and in various cases they laid hands on miri (state land), and built their houses. The government pardoned them and registered the land in their names. In Al-Husn, the refugees spread south and north, confiscating the land and building houses under the observing eyes of the landowners and the state. The description often given of the camps is specific as to the spot of the camp, which the state rented for them from the owners.

Table 12.1 Palestinian refugee population by camp, in selected years

Camp name	Initial population	1985	1992	1998
Al-Jabal	8,000	33,321	32,245	28,000
Al-Baq’a	26,000		63,413	84,737
Al-Wihdat	5,000	43,911	42,000	53,300
Al-Zarka	8,000	16,042	15,481	16,494
Souf	8,000	13,203	13,666	17,100

| Talbieh | 5,000 | | 2,612 | 8,043 |

| Irbid | 4,000 | 20,060 | 18,536 | 22,076 |

| Marka (Hittin) | 15,000 | 30,663 | 30,865 | 65,000 |

| Al-Husn | 12,500 | 13,066 | 13,180 | 25,356 |

| Jarash | 11,500 | | 11,750 | 25,980 |

*** The State and the Refugees

The camps, then, continue neither in their size nor in their characteristics. The various comparisons between living conditions of the refugees in Jordan and elsewhere refer to Jordan as the better situation. UNRWA could never have been able to sustain the refugees in Jordan had the state itself not invested so much to make life for the refugees bearable and, to some extent, comfortable.

In addition to the ten camps mentioned earlier, Jordan has other camps, which the state sustains completely: Al-Sukhnah near Zarqa, Hnaikin and al-Nazif in Amman, and Madaba. UNRWA does not render them any service whatsoever. Since expansion of the house units in the camps has always been forbidden, in addition to the fact that the space assigned for the house units is very limited, the natural increment was obliged to leave the camps and form new squatters' plots around the cities, but without being recognized by UNRWA. The government provides for all the basic services and infrastructures (roads, water, electricity, schools, health centers, sanitation, etc). Especially after 1967, the government provided the land to build five new camps. Those who were in need from the new generation to have their own home could apply to the state to grant them a piece of land to build a house. By 1985, some 294 applications were approved, whereas 1,353 were under study and 298 were refused."[329]

Government expenditures on the refugees for 1985 were as follows:

- Costs of education (basic, preparatory, secondary, university and scholarships in addition to educational supervision: 23,195,000 JD (Jordanian dinnar).

- Costs of refugees' displaced rations, aid to their children, costs of land, rent for the camps, water, training sewing centers, and administrative staff: 7,225,000 JD.

- Costs of health services, medication in clinics and hospitals, X-rays and blood banks in addition to psychiatric and obstetric consultation: 7,117,000 JD.

- Costs of social aid, cash contributions, institutional services, and contributions of charity institutions: 1,120,000 JD.

- Costs of police security service (police centers), social defense, and other administrative services inside and outside the camps: 1,650,000 JD.

- Contribution to UNRWA to enable it to perform its tasks: 1.025.000 JD.

- Other services to various governmental institutions: 40,307000 JD. Total 81,639.000 JD or $244,917,000 US.

For the year 1998, these costs reached some $350 million US.

*** Identity, Citizenship and Attitudes

The literature on national identity has made it clear that national identity is part of man's existence and a major motive for allegiance and loyalty.[330] The history of the Palestinians in the State of Israel demonstrates clearly the allegiance of this group of Israeli citizens to their national identity. Likewise,

the history of the Palestinians in Jordan shows similar characteristics. Citizenship does not seem to compensate for national identity in normal situations, as is the case with ethnic groups in Europe and the New World, least of all let it be compensating in cases where national groups live in a crisis situation as the Palestinians do. Palestinian identity has survived all the oppression it underwent, whether or not the Palestinians remained stateless or acquired citizenship — as in Israel and Jordan. In several cases citizenship appears to work toward hardening loyalty to nationhood, as such groups consider citizenship a means of reducing the intensity of their cause. Jordan has suffered a lot from this phenomenon.

The dispersion crisis witnessed by the Palestinians has created in them an attitude toward the world outside: they see it as hostile, unjust, and oppressive. Even among colleagues and companions, skepticism and continuous dissatisfaction form the dominating features of their presence. This situation is over-dominant in the Palestinian groups in the societies hosting them. Talks with colleagues, university students, professors, lawyers, physicians, and clerks emphasize such a view; the feeling of being discriminated against is overwhelming. The Palestinian Authority does not escape such skepticism. My Palestinian colleagues condemned the Sharm El-Shaikh Agreement as much as they did the Wye River and Oslo Accords, and. before those, the Madrid Conference. The Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement was refused categorically and the various civil societies in Jordan (where Jordanians of Palestinian origin form the majority) not only oppose the agreement, but take action against any of their members who try to normalize relations with the Israelis. It is no longer a secret that the syndicates, professional unions, and labor unions condemn any of their members if he or she comes in contact with Israelis or goes to the State of Israel. In some cases, members have been dismissed from membership. It is clearly beneficial that political decision-making concerning foreign policy and national security issues in Jordan is separate from public opinion — which is different from the case in Israel.[331] It eases the government’s movement toward peace making so that finally there may be peace with the State of Israel. But these problems outlined above make the issue of a solution of the refugee question complicated and difficult.

*** Refugees in Jordan and the final solution

Except for the refugees from the Gaza Strip and some others, the Palestinian refugees in Jordan, whether in or outside camps, enjoy full Jordanian citizenship. The idea that UNRWA alone only has helped maintain their status as refugees is true only to a limited extent. Their national. Palestinian, identity has been with them all these years; and it will, perhaps, continue to be with those who refuse to leave Jordan. The probable 1.4 million refugees living in Jordanian society cannot be classified under one denominator as refugees. As part of Jordanian society, they are integrated into the socio-structural framework of the population in all its dimensions — commercial, occupational, industrial, intellectual, social, and cultural. They form a hard core in class, political, and tribal structures. The refugees in the refugee camps have so far constructed a new sub-culture in Jordanian society: I call it "the refugee or camp culture."[332] This segment of the refugees cannot be classified as one, for even in the camps, people can be classified differently — ethnically, territorially, or socioeconomically.

Any proposal for a final solution to the Palestinian refugee problem has in the end to cope with variable attitudes these refugees have toward their definition of the homeland, the State of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the Kingdom of Jordan.

What do the Palestinians mean by returning home? Is it their houses and agricultural land? If so, this means that they will return to neither Palestine which they know, nor to their Arab environment of which

they have been dreaming since the al-Nakba (catastrophe). Even when they can have the choice to go back to Israel, will they be willing to give up their Arab-Jordanian citizenship for an Israeli one? What choice do they have? If Palestinian identity gives them the choice to

change only from a national political identity to a cultural one without the possibility of gaining back their land and properties, they would ask what benefit their return has.

The State of Israel (i.e., the Israeli society) has the image not only of the occupier but also of the expropriator and the expelling force. The question is whether the State of Israel, even if it allows Palestinians to return, can compensate their losses both materially and psychologically. What will it mean for the Palestinians to return to the State of Israel? The other question is whether the fast-rooted image in the mind of these people is amenable for change, especially since their culture and socialization process is based fundamentally on the conviction (religious as well as cultural) that Israel and the Jews are not to be trusted. What guarantees, they will ask, will Israel be able to present that they will not be expelled again, particularly since they cannot lean upon any power to protect them in time of need.

Attitudes toward the Palestinian Authority are exempt neither from skepticism nor of criticism. The first reaction of some Palestinian refugees in al-Husn (Martyr ‘Azmi al-Mufti Refugee Camp) to my question asking whether they would heed the call of the Palestinian state to go and live there was (after a very sarcastic laugh): What would they do in the desert of Beit Lehm (Judea) or in the Gaza Strip? Why leave one camp to go to another camp? Why go to a state that has not enough land and a shortage of water to drink?

*** The State of Jordan

The attitude of the refugees toward Jordan in a political sense has never been investigated. The only indication we have is to be found in the Fafo report of the living conditions in Jordan (1998). That report measured the extent of satisfaction the people have with their houses, infrastructure, living standard, medical care, education, etc. The general result of the research indicated a given satisfaction among the refugees, particularly among those outside the camps. That is to say, after fifty years of their presence in Jordan and despite the turmoil of the years 1967–70, the refugees in Jordan lead a normal life as citizens. Jordan for them is the land where they live and share in its flora and fauna, security and freedom. It is the country where no one can oblige them to leave if they choose to stay. The law guarantees that, and Jordan is a country of law and order despite various inconveniences that may occur from time to time. Supposing that the parties (Israelis and Palestinians) concerned do not reach an acceptable solution, the Hashemite Kingdom has never been and will never be the country to harm its citizens so profoundly.

Yet Jordan cannot stand watching while other states or a “state-in-formation” is benefiting from suitable conditions to acquire rights and wealth, while Jordan pays the toll.

*** Some Contributions to a Solution

On the basis of the foregoing it is necessary to note that one solution for the Palestinian refugees’ problem in terms of either/or will not be possible, since the fundamental, traditional demand is neither possible nor credible. The solution, I think, should be made in terms of “and/and/and,” i.e., the individual’s (household head) choice. Palestinian demands are now formulated clearly to have their own state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It is also becoming evident that those who will agree to go (or not go back) to the Palestinian state in-formation will vary according to the situation and the opportunities that will be made available. Such a solution should include three lines:

1. Return.

1. Compensation for land, property, and suffering.

1. Settling the refugees.

Israel is not the only party to compensate for the historical mistakes. Israel is but one part of the conflict. Those states who adopted the fulfilling of Zionist prophecy and used whatever means available to help establish and maintain the Jewish state should also bear responsibility, i.e., England, France, Germany, the USA, Canada, and Australia, in addition, the international Jewish organizations, the Christian churches that propagated the return of the Jews to the Promised Land and facilitated the establishment of the Jewish state as represented in the Protestant, Confessional, Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Baptist, and other Christian denominations, must also take moral and financial responsibility.

**** Return

With regard to returning to Israel (Israeli Palestine), it is doubtful that many will agree to go back to the Palestine which is now Israel and choose to acquire Israeli citizenship. Yet those who accept and choose to return to Palestine have that right, as well as the right to compensation for their lost property. The latter can be priced through negotiations between the parties concerned. Seen against the background of the conflict and the disciplinarian process that has been and is still going in the Arab cultural and educational programs, it is expected that no more than 10 to 13 percent of the refugees in Jordan will show interest in returning to Palestine. The justification of this estimate is to be found, in addition to the background process mentioned above, in the fact that the majority of these refugees have established themselves in the country. Most of them own their own houses, businesses, offices, jobs, and other basic necessities that bind them fast to the country.

Return to the Palestinian state, especially for those who left the West Bank in 1967 for the second time, will find more acceptance among the refugees in Jordan, especially those in the camps. Among those refugees from the Gaza Strip, the wish to return will be greater; and Jordan will no doubt find it suitable to see them return so as to put an end to the refugee camps. Additionally, these refugees form a burden on the Jordanian economy. As for the other category of refugees in camps, the majority come from parts of Palestine other than the West Bank and Gaza. It is difficult to find any motivation for these people to go to the newly established Palestinian Authority territory, and it is doubtful whether these people have any interest in, or loyalty to, Palestinian leaders or even to the state to be proclaimed in the future. What forms their attitudes toward the regime in the Palestinian territories is the information they get from the residents of the territories about the harsh treatment they experience from the Palestinian Authorities. Such information revives memories of the past history of the Arab regimes.

As for the remaining part of the Palestinian refugees, some 30 percent belong to the lower-income classes in Jordan. They seek better living conditions than they have in Jordan. These people have their rights on

compensation, but they may neither wish to stay in Jordan or go back to Israel (Palestine), or go to the Palestinian state. In this case, it seems reasonable to propose that they be given the choice to emigrate. The USA,

Canada, and Australia can absorb these refugees as new immigrants and end their status as refugees. The compensation they would receive can be very good capital to start a new life. The Protestant churches can, and have the responsibility to, assist in this process materially and morally.

**** Compensation tor land, property and suffering

Courageous voices in Israel have already admitted the historical mistakes and even crimes against the Palestinians in the wars of 1948 and after. This admission was manifest in the changes made to the texts of schoolbooks in a consciousness-raising effort to recognize that the Palestinians had been dismissed by force from their villages and land. In a recent article by Ilan Pape (received from the fofgnet, September 19, 1999), he agrees with Abu Sitta’s statement with regard to the numbers and total amount of area confiscated by the Israelis in the years from 1948 onwards. For only 1948–9, he mentions some three million dunams of land in addition to the houses and the villages the Israelis abolished in a process of terminating any Palestinian trace in the territory of the new Israeli state.

Despite the fact that the Palestinian demand is both the “right of return” and compensation at the same time, which, from both rational and emotional points of view are justified, justification alone cannot make things possible. Compensation is not only compensation to individuals; compensation comprises more than individual losses of both the material and the psychological; it also includes compensation to the hosting states. The Jordanian population has suffered from the Palestine Question and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as much as the Israelis and the Palestinians.

This is perhaps what the Jordanian government referred to as vital interests in the negotiations of the refugees’ problems as expressed by the Director of the Department of the Palestinian Affairs, Mr. ‘Abdel-Karim Abul Haija in Al-

Ra’i. The reporter asked that if we spoke of a million and a half refugees in Jordan carrying the Jordanian nationality, what interests did Jordan speak about? He answered:

<quote>

It is not interests. What we say is that we will defend the vital interests of Jordan, and, therefore, we should have an active role in one way or another in the search for a solution and in putting the suitable mechanisms to solve the problems of the Palestinian refugees whom we granted the Jordanian nationality. Though they are registered as refugees, their Jordanian citizenship does not contradict in any way their legal rights. We are for the legal rights of the refugees in return within the framework of the UN Resolution 194 and the other international agreements to begin with the Jordanian-Israeli peace accord.[333]

</quote>

The answer of this statesman as a director in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not designate anything specific. It may be diplomatic, but it is surely not clear. What he clearly said is that his department or the Jordanian Government has documents of the possessions of the Palestinian refugees whether these are lands, houses, stores or other items.

Jordan, surely, deserves compensation not only in terms of cost-bearing services to refugees in the camps, but also for all services which it presented to the Palestinians during the last fifty years in the East Bank, in addition to all the money it has paid out for the 18 years of control on the West Bank.

**** Settling the refugees

Settling the refugees in Jordan does not present a problem, since they are settled except for the 230.000 in the refugee camps, most of whom are Jordanian citizens. The state cannot oblige them to leave Jordan. The question of the wish of a given refugee to leave Jordan is a personal matter of the refugees everyone has the right to stay or go. Settling or not settling

may apply for other Arab states where the refugees remained stateless, but surely Jordan cannot be either for the permanent settling of refugees anywhere, nor for bringing in more Palestinian refugees to settle in the country. The demographic situation in Jordan does not permit people to settle in the country.

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** 13. Final Status Negotiations and Regional Cooperation

[[Taisir Amre]]

It is widely acknowledged that the Palestinian cause is the crux of the Middle East problem. There is also a consensus that solving the refugee issue with due care and vigilance is the major ingredient of any solution to the Palestinian cause, which will in turn, lead to peace in the Middle East. This suggests that without solving the refugee problem in an acceptable and reasonable way, doubt will increasingly be cast upon the possibility of achieving a sustainable final solution to the Palestinian cause, and thus to the Middle East conflict. Unless the issue of the Palestinian refugees is dealt with effectively, there can be no real peace, a peace which would be an indispensable beginning to a promising future which would unfold

tremendous opportunities for regional cooperation. Hence, resolving the refugee issue is a precondition for a stable peace, not just a benefit that would follow.[334]

The purpose of this essay is to explore the issue of the Palestinian refugees as one of the final negotiation issues in the Palestinian track of the Middle East peace process with the aim of determining a working draft of a policy memorandum to strike a just, acceptable, and working balance between the non-alienable, absolute rights of the Palestinian refugees in the light of five decades of checkered developments which have culminated in the current peace process. The current negotiations offer a unique and historic opportunity to usher in a new era of peace and prosperity in our region. However, it is important to emphasize that this aim should not be taken for granted. It requires hard work by both Palestinians and Israelis, and the ball is in the Israeli court.

*** A Historical Perspective of Palestinian Refugees

The estimated population of the Palestinian people in the year 1948 was 2,115,000, of which two-thirds were Muslims and Christians (i.e., 1,415,000). The remaining 700,000 were Jews.[335] The total area of Palestine was 26,320,000 dunams. Until 1948, ninety-two percent of the land was owned by Palestinian Arabs, and the remaining 8 percent by Jews.[336] To view this situation from a different angle, it is worthwhile to note that Palestine bore the brunt of many world events, from the assassination of Alexander II in the year 1881 and the massacres that followed, to the Balfour Declaration, which considered the Arab majority as “a non-Jewish 9 community,” to the Second World War, with its revealed and unrevealed secrets. All in all, the events paved the way for intensive Jewish immigration to Palestine.

The Jewish population in Palestine in 1882 was 24,000. That population had grown to 52,000 in 1918 and to 700,000 by 1948.[337] The year 1948 also witnessed the outflow of as many as 940,000 Palestinian refugees according

to the report of the Secretary General of the United Nations to the Fourth Session of the General Assembly held in June 1949, although the number of refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA) in 1950 numbered 960,000.[338]

*** Interpretations and Approaches

It is difficult to determine any cause for the huge influx of Palestinian refugees in 1948 other than attributing it to the excesses and atrocities of the fledgling Israeli state. Academic honesty makes it obligatory to state the Israeli point of view in an attempt to juxtapose it with other contesting ones in order to establish a foundation for the just solution both parties crave. This endeavor becomes very important because Israeli and Palestinian views with regard to refugees diverge on everything from the original number of Palestinian refugees created in 1948 to the means of resolving the impasse.[339] To date, the Israeli government, as well as a significant body of academics in Israel, have subscribed to the notion that the

Palestinian exodus in 1948 was either voluntary or largely instigated by the leaders of neighboring Arab countries,[340] or it was at most the by-product of a war imposed on Israel by the Arabs who tried to prevent by force the implementation of United Nations Resolution 181 dated November 29, 1947. Fortunately, some Israeli researchers, and even some of its leaders, have uncovered a substantial body of information that largely affirms the refugees' own versions of their involuntary exodus. For example, the exPrime Minister of Israel, Menahem Begin, in his book The Revolution, disclosed the role the massacre at Deir Yasin played in horrifying the humble civilian Palestinians and led to their mass exodus.[341] The Israeli author Simha Flaban pointed out in his book The Birth of Israel the fact that Palestinian departure from Palestine in 1948 was due to an Israeli political and military plan that resulted in driving out 84 percent of the Palestinian population. Mr. Flaban also revealed that 55 percent of those who fled did so as a result of Jewish assaults on Palestinian cities and villages, 15 percent left their homeland under pressure of terrorist attacks from Argon, 2 percent left due to propaganda and psychological warfare, an additional 2 percent due to direct military orders, and a remaining 10 percent out of a general feeling of fear and helplessness.[342] Two-thirds of these refugees

did not even live in lands stipulated in United Nations Resolution 181; they came from areas subsequently conquered by Israel. This fact sheds further light on the extent of the atrocities committed by the Israelis against innocent Palestinians to create a de facto demographic situation on a “clean land” in keeping with the assumed logical consistency between practices and thoughts enshrined in the Zionist ideology regarding the establishment of a pure Jewish state.[343] This same rationale has been adopted and advocated by subsequent Israeli governments toward Palestinian Arabs in varied proportions in the territories occupied since 1967, and must be exposed as a blatant attempt to ensure the “purity” of the Jewish state. Unfortunately, “old habits die hard.” Terrorist tactics continued to be employed against Palestinians in the occupied territories through such acts as dynamiting homes, issuing one-way exit permits, judaizing Jerusalem, confiscating land on which to build Jewish settlements, imposing a large number of heavy taxes, and instigating harsh economic measures to create decisively high unemployment rates among Palestinian Arabs, which also had the effect of forcing them out of their homeland. These actions graphically depict an anti-Palestinian policy that set a precedent for current policy.

Is there now anything that can lead us to believe that the Israeli government is concerned with accepting responsibility for creating the problem with Palestinian refugees? No. Instead, they attempt to cast blame on the Arab side for creating the refugee situation. In November 1992 it initially appeared as if the Israeli government was beginning to accept responsibility for their actions when Shlomo Ben-Ami, the head of the Israeli delegation to the second Refugee Working Group (RWG) meeting in Ottawa, said that the proposition that the “Palestinian refugees” problem was the result of mass expulsion” was a travesty. However, he went on to state “that the Palestinian refugee problem was born as the land was bisected by the Sword, not by design, Jewish and Arab. It was largely the inevitable by-product of Arab and Jewish fears, and the protracted bitter fighting.”[344] This language, echoing Israeli historian Benny Morris’s well-known statement that the refugee problem was “born of war, not of design,” represents an important departure in Israeli official thinking. Even though it is laced with an element of Jewish culpability, it is unlikely to impress those who have languished for generations in camps, whether a result of expulsion from their homeland by design or fear of life. Still the statement does acknowledge some Israeli responsibility for what the head of the Israeli delegation to the RWG called “the inherent immorality of war.”[345]

*** The Political Nature vis-a-vis the Wrong Path

It is an established fact to which there is a consensus that the problem of the Palestinian refugees is of a distinct political nature. That is why the emphasis for Palestinian refugees differs from that of other refugees in the aftermath of the Second World War. The thrust of the latter has been not so much on repatriation as on (a) providing a new place of residence for the refugees, and (b) recognizing the needs to protect such individuals from persecution, either in their adopted country or in their country of origin, should they be forced to return to it. In contrast, the emphasis with Palestinian refugees has been substantially different. Palestinian refugees are not seeking a place of residence other than their country of origin. That is why United Nations Resolution 194 is so very important. It deals specifically with Palestinian refugees; it affirms their right of return and compensation particularly for those not wishing to return. That is why Palestinian refugees have been excluded from protection under the umbrella of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other international bodies. UNRWA’s creation is just an extension of Resolution 194. It is not a substitute for it.[346] There is no doubt that Resolution 194 was not, is not, and will not be implemented without arriving at a political solution to the Palestinian national cause. Israel knows this fact more than any other concerned party. This development should not be viewed lightly because the Palestinians as a whole, wherever they have lived, have been recognized as a people who have a place at the negotiating table. The issue has been one not simply of inhabitants of a specific territory, but of a people who are scattered as refugees.[347] Everyone is aware that the multilateral track is meant to assist, supplement, and reinforce the bilateral track and vice versa, so one can safely state that the Declaration of Principles (DoP) Agreement between Israel and the PLO have had a direct, strong effect on the multilateral groups, particularly with working group on refugees. On one hand, it dealt with the displacement issue in stating that refugees would have the right of return to their homes and homeland. On the other hand, it stated that the issue of the refugees of 1948 would be discussed at the latest by the beginning of the third year of the interim period. Unfortunately, none of these important issues has ever been resolved, despite the fact that we are currently in the seventh year of the interim period.

Nevertheless, what is important is that this agreement could not have been achieved had the many bilateral Palestinian-Israeli meetings not occurred since the Madrid peace conference in 1991. These series of meetings have gradually been melting the ice surrounding the negotiations. In addition they have played, and will continue to play, an important role in changing the Israeli attitude about refugees from a dogmatic to a more positive one. It has also played a similar role in adjusting the perhaps-rigid attitude of the Palestinian refugees in dealing with new realities. Professor Howard Adelman has nicely explained this dual shift in his analogy between the Freudian basic structure of the personality and the working group on refugees, which reflects on how the refugee situation has been dealt with during the past five decades. Professor Adelman divided the development of the multilateral talks on refugees into three phases: (1) the id phase, (2) the super ego phase, and (3) the ego phase.[348] Though I agree in general with Professor Adelman's classifications, it is not my intention to discuss these phases at this juncture. Rather, I want to stress the fact that the Palestinian refugees are witnessing with passion and hope the resurrection of their homeland and political identity, and are out of the disorganized id and parentalist super ego phases and well into the ego phase which is organized and capable of making its people competent enough to determine their own destiny and assume responsibility for the destiny of self. In other words, it allows them to respond and adjust to the realities of the external world, which, if I may add, is a precondition for a historic compromise. If the other parties meet them halfway and discard the wrong path in dealing with the roots of their cause, it will expediate the process of both bilateral and multilateral tracks away from the rigid terms of reference in the current peace process outlined in the disorganized and lopsided id phase.

*** The Wrong Path

Admittedly, the international community has failed miserably in offering the Palestinian refugees any honorable solution which would address their political needs since it has confined itself to the services of UNRWA which can at most cure, not solve, the problem. On the other hand, most, if not all, regional parties have played unholy games with the pains and sufferings of the refugees. In Jordan the refugees are legally considered citizens equal to nationals, though this status is not necessarily identical to that of nationals. Nevertheless, the refugees have viewed that as an attempt to dissolve their

attachment to the long-awaited political identity. In Lebanon they have, unfortunately, been subjected to unspeakable discrimination embodied until now in legal and administrative laws and decrees, which require that they work only in a variety of blue-collared jobs. This situation has aggravated their agony and made them feel anachronistic drubbings of the supposedly democratic and open society in multiple ways.

*** The Current Peace Process

One can safely state that the multilaterals, and particularly the working group of refugees, began in an almost total vacuum as far as terms of reference are concerned. That is why nothing tangible has yet been achieved and why progress is virtually frozen. On the other hand, the controversial United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 constitutes the basis for the peace process in its entirety but confines itself, as far as the refugee problem is concerned, to demanding a just solution.[349] However, it is inevitable to assess things on the basis of their ultimate outcome, which should be comprehensive and have a lasting peace. In this course we cannot but find ourselves face to face with the concept of absolute and relative rights.

*** Absolute and Relative Rights

There is considerable evidence affirming Israel’s responsibility and guilt in creating the problem concerning the Palestinian refugees, and there is an endless number of indisputable legal instruments and international resolutions supporting the Palestinian refugees’ right of return. We also have Israel’s statement of May 11, 1949, the date on which it was admitted to the United Nations, in which Israel pledged to respect the principles of the charter of the United Nations and to implement its resolutions, as well as the preamble to Resolution 273 (111) of May 11, 1949 which stated specifically that Israel pledges to implement Resolution 181 and 194. These pledges were a major reason why Israel was granted admission to the United Nations and remain indispensable to the final settlement of the Palestinian question.[350] But, despite their usefulness as a reminder of Israel’s responsibility to act in good faith according to the principles set forth by the United Nations, they have limited practical use. Events have been occurring successively

over the past five decades in a manner that naturally affects the course of action and the final end result. Just like the other dimensions of the Palestinian question, the right of return overlaps many other objective factors. For this reason, many see the necessity to discuss the right of return simultaneously in light of recent developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict and from a legal angle. More than twenty-five years ago an English researcher said that what we need for the refugees was an acceptable solution, not a just one. Justice, in real terms, cannot be achieved for the Palestinian refugees as nothing can compensate them for

their agony and distress throughout the years they have spent in exile, even if this resolution is fully implemented. He rightfully added that there is no possibility of solving the issue on any basis other than the one this resolution furnishes, but at the time of implementation many difficulties and developments should be taken into consideration. Justice is a remote goal. “Justice can never be absolute,’’ as was stated by Ben-Ami in his presentation to the second session of the RWG in Ottawa in November 1992. We must remember that Israel views Resolution 194 as an instrument to engulf the Arabs in an manner bound to upset its demographic balance which would also pose a grave security situation, threatening its justification for existence. The aforesaid contradictory argument makes it necessary to launch a historic compromise.

*** The Way Out

Approaching a thorny issue like that of the Palestinian refugees is indistinguishable from the complex Palestinian national problem; it requires an open mind, courage, credibility, and commitment to establishing a just and comprehensive peace. We, the Arabs, have a phrase, sadikoka man sadakaka la man sadakak, which means “your friend indeed is the one who is sincere to you when you seek his opinion and not the one who believes you, irrespective of the rightness or wrongness of your attitude.” Therefore, our attempt to find a way out of this dilemma should stress that the Israelis cannot turn a blind eye to the agony and legitimate rights of the Palestinian refugees, nor can Palestinians expect to repatriate approximately four million refugees for both political and practical reasons.

It is quite clear that the Palestinian refugees, and the Palestinian people as a whole, are well armed with a variety of legitimate rights that they are not willing to give up just because the other party shuns them. By the same token, the Palestinians are ready to negotiate a dignified settlement in which they will entertain legitimate Israeli concerns in exchange for realizing their relative legitimate rights. One can't help asking the concerned parties to be pragmatic and just, because, if we can start from these twin principles, we can reach our supposedly common goals: coexistence, peace, cooperation and prosperity. I believe that the cohesive nature of the content of the solution should be in no way overlooked. We must not subscribe to a sugarcoated, piecemeal strategy in an attempt to achieve these goals.

It has been rightly stated on several occasions that regional cooperation involving Israel as one of the parlies to such cooperation will be a "peace dividend." So peace is the sine qua non that must be achieved first, but such peace within the region as a whole is inconceivable without a final political settlement having been achieved between Israel and the Palestinian people.[351] This is probably a truism not needing much analysis or proof. The Palestinian refugee problem is organically linked with the political settlement of the Palestinian national cause as a whole, which could be settled through the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state which would shoulder the responsibility of more than 1.1 million refugees currently living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, in addition to the thousands of other refugees who fled those areas in 1967 and became displaced persons. They, too, are supposed to be able to return according to the Declaration of Principles accord. Such a sovereign state would replace the coercive ties and relations with Israel, and perhaps those with other regional parties, by establishing good neighbor relations and paving the way for a healthy and positive role for the Palestinian people in the new regional order. This would in turn eliminate in large part the despair of the remaining Palestinian refugees, as they would perceive such a state as their political ka'aba, and it would satisfy their yearning for political identity. This strategic breakthrough would need to be coupled with the United States taking an active role in leading the international community to convince Israel to accept the return of a negotiated number of refugees while initiating a simultaneous compensation process particularly for those who do not wish or are unable to return. In fact, nothing is new in this scenario as far as Israel

is concerned. Following the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948, Israel offered to take back 100,000 Palestinian refugees which was only a small fraction of the more than 960,000 refugees at that time. Dr. Nabeel Sha’ath of the PLO and PNA stated to the English daily newspaper The Independent that Israel had to accept back 100,000 Palestinians of the Galilee. Though the size of the negotiated number should naturally be left to the negotiating parties, I feel that an acceptable number would be approximately 20 percent of the total current number, a figure which is not far from the percentage offered by Israel in 1949. Moreover, the increased absorption capacity of the Israeli state and infrastructure should logically serve as a factor deciding the number of return refugees. On the other hand, the second move should aim at convincing host countries, particularly Lebanon, to grant full civil and political rights to the Palestinian refugees who may not wish or be able to return.

At the same time, a well-defined committee with a clear mandate, clear term of reference, and a clear operational mechanism should be set up to work out a program for compensation to the non-returning refugees as well as to returning refugees for the damages they had suffered during their diaspora. This program could be similar to the “Widergutmachung” program, which means in English “to make something good again,” as the Jews themselves asked for and accepted while settling their claims from Germany in the aftermath of World War II.[352] In addition the work on these pivots — return of a negotiated number of refugees and a compensation program should be synchronized by a geared-up and proper Palestinian internal strategy whereby the refugees should be deeply involved. A plebiscite may be held to determine how many refugees would actually want to exercise their right of return. The pivots and this work are interconnected and are bound to soothe mutterings of the refugee communlity and thus reinforce the positive course of the whole issue. This multifaceted but simple, coherent solution will not only establish peace but also cement its foundation, consolidate its structure, and raise a historical edifice that eclipses the hatred of yesterday.

The major twin moves — the return of refugees and compensation and the establishment of a Palestinian sovereign state — are quite feasible. The first implies the return of a negotiated number of refugees which will not upset the demographic balance of Israel as well as compensation, which is

incomparable with the huge amount of resources which will drift away to such expenses as armaments if peace eludes us.

While the second is enjoying the merit of objectivity, the Palestinian refugees — if the sequence of solution is maintained — will work on the following two lince. First, they will plunge into action to build their state directly and indirectly, i.e., their political “Ka’aba” and economy. Particularly several hundred thousand of them are classified as semi-skilled and skilled labor, technicians, professionals, industrialists, merchants, contractors and so on. They operate as individuals or through companies and professional associations. They are most eager to make a substantial contribution to their national economy as soon as the opportunity arises. Secondly, they will get themselves integrated into a rising crescendo of regional economic cooperation, which by nature gradually lessens the importance of geographic and national boundries. This could successfully imitate the European experience in the aftermath of World War 11, thus ushering new horizons of cooperation. This could transform the Middle East tremendously and render it a real paradise on Earth.

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[337] Ibid.

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[339] Elia Zureik, “Palestinian Refugees and Peace,” Journal of Palestine Studies 24 (1) (Autumn 1994): 10.

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[341] Mohammed Khalid Ai Aza’ar, “The Palestinian Right of Return. Between the International Resolutions and the Actual Restrictions.” Cairo: Al Falloja Center for Studies and Publications (June 1992), p. 13.

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[346] Taisir Amre, “The File of the Palestinian Refugees,” unpublished work, Department of Economic Affairs and Planning of PLO, Tunis (April 1992).

[347] Zureik, “Palestinian Refugees and Peace,” p. 8.

[348] Adelman, “Overview of the Refugee Problem, The Working Group on Refugees,” a paper presented at Vouliagmeni IGCC Conference, November 4–8, 1994, p. 3.

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[351] Yusif A. Sayigh, “Development Strategies for the Palestinian Development Program,” Department of Economic Affairs and Planning (Tunis, 1993).

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** 14. Refugee Resettlement in the Gaza Strip: Israeli Policy Revisited

[[Norma Masrieh-Hazboun]]

Discussion of the resettlement of the Palestinian refugees coincides with what is currently happening in Lebanon, where the issue of the Palestinian presence has been reopened after a period of more than ten years. This topic is especially pertinent at this time in light of attempts to isolate the problem of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and other host countries from the political changes currently taking place in the region. There is also an attempt to make this problem a local, internal issue instead of recognizing it as part of the overall problem in the Middle East — the dimensions of which have grown exponentially throughout the Palestinian people’s struggle toward a just and comprehensive settlement. Unfortunately, the majority of explicit and implicit international and Israeli positions disregard the international legitimacy of the Palestinian claims, as well as the human aspects and historical injustice done to an entire population. Today, Lebanon, for example, is concerned about the resettlement of the Palestinian refugees on its land. Instead of working to solve the problem, Lebanon is fearful of

repercussions on internal equilibrium, that is, on the political, social, economic, and humanitarian impact the refugees make on the country.

The question of the Palestinian refugees revolves around the interconnected cause of a people, land, and homeland. This is what gives the Palestinian refugees a unique posture differing from that of other refugee experiences in four vital respects:

1. They differ in the nature of their uprootedness. The majority of the Palestinians became refugees in what Weinstock described as “a deviant pattern of colonization.”[353]

1. They differ in that the Palestinian refugees insist on return, and this insistence gives them a unique posture. As such, they see themselves not as refugees, but as very temporary absentees, whose situation can only be rectified through restitution and not resettlement.

1. They differ in their unique collectivity, which the refugees have managed to maintain, that revolves around the Palestinian idea, both culturally and politically.

1. They differ in that the struggle and persistence of the Palestinian refugees has fueled Palestinian nationalism. As such, the Palestinian refugees have been asserting the broad collective will of an entire people for self-determination and independence.[354]

The doves in the Israeli Labor Party are competing with the hawks in rejecting the “right of return” for the Palestinian refugees. Both call for resettlement, rehabilitation, and integration into the Arab host countries — a solution that is unacceptable to the refugees themselves who view the distinction between return and resettlement as that between resolution and liquidation.

The topic of the return of the 1948 refugees has become taboo in Israel.

We do not sense any serious differences among the Israelis with regard to this issue. The Israelis seem to feel that the “right of return” applies exclusively to them.[355] They feel that the indigenous population of Palestine has no right even to consider their “right of return.” The Israelis seem to be in complete consensus, so much so that this issue does not appear in Barak’s four “No’s,” pronounced as a precondition for commencing the final status negotiations:

1. No for the division of Jerusalem;

1. No for Israeli withdrawal to pre June 1967 borders;

1. No for the existence of any foreign army on the banks of the River Jordan; and

1. No for the dismantling of the settlements.

This rejectionist policy has been followed for the last fifty years: It has left questions, rather than convincing answers. The question of how to resolve the problem of the Palestinian refugees has remained unresolved due to the steadfast positions taken by the two parties struggling over the issue. As a result, this problem is considered to be the longest-standing one in modern history, not withstanding other unresolved refugee situations throughout the world; many have argued that the Palestinian refugee problem crisis is unresolvable.

There is a total agreement between Palestinians and Arab governments on the final status issues; namely, Jerusalem, restitution, borders, and water. Palestinians and the Arab governments have underscored the “right of

return” of the refugees and reject all attempts to resettle the refugees in Arab countries, or resolutions that call for either rehabilitation or reparations.

With the commencement of the final status negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis, the refugee question emerges as a point of agreement among the Arabs.[356] Resettlement is rejected as an alternative to the return of the refugees to their homeland, Palestine. United Nations Resolutions 194 and 237 represent international legitimacy for the “right of return” of the Palestinian refugees, viewed as a Palestinian solution that embodies the justness of any international resolution.[357]

There is a huge gap between the Palestinian and Israeli positions in the multilateral negotiations regarding the question of the refugees. During the negotiations, the Israeli delegation reiterated that the refugee question poses a threat to the security and existence of Israel. Not only do the Israelis want to prevent the Palestinians from returning to their lands and properties in Israel proper, but they also deny the “right of return” to a future Palestinian state. They claim that this would create pressures on the Palestinian economy and on the regional environmental equilibrium, which could in turn threaten the peace agreement between the two parties. Their approach to return would be limited to a “reunion of Palestinian families.”

Resettlement of the Palestinian refugees is a controversial issue. There are diverse points of view, many position papers, and a wealth of written material. Rather than reiterate the arguments I have chosen to discuss one specific issue: the resettlement of Gazan refugees.

Most studies on the Palestinian refugees examine the creation of the refugee situation. However, few, if any, have looked into the resolution of this problem. Too many of the proposed solutions, policies, and measures undertaken to eradicate the Palestine refugee question do not effectively deal with the political and legal rights of the refugees. This issue is an old-new paradigm. An economic approach to the solution of the refugee question was first proposed in the 1950s and a similar approach is being advocated today in the current peace negotiations.[358] This approach smacks of Israeli- Western collusion.

Robert McGhee, an advisor on refugee problems in the US State Department, suggested a “Marshall Plan” for the Middle East; the resettlement of Palestinian refugees in the Arab states was an integral part of this plan. He suggested that “Trans-Jordan, Syria, and Iraq, in that order, offer the best opportunities for refugee resettlement, and the best approach for Arab governments would be to stress the development aspect for their benefit and not to stress the refugee aspect.”[359] Such proposals have been acceptable to the Israeli leadership as a means of ending the refugee question, despite the warning in 1959 made by Dag Hammarskjold when he addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations. He stated that the “integration of refugees in the host countries would not be possible, if it was brought about by forcing people into new positions against their will.”[360]

Between the years of 1949 and 1959, attempts by UNRWA to reintegrate Palestinian refugees did not succeed because more serious obstacles were encountered than had been anticipated. The General- Commissioner admitted that “UNRWA should not again attempt works projects designed to settle the refugees. From this experience, one should not conclude that economic development is not wanted by the people of the region; on the contrary, it is wanted and at an accelerated rate... and it should proceed independently of UNRWA, but not in the form of refugee resettlement.”[361]

In all negotiations and proposals regarding refugee resettlement, this strategy has failed for two reasons:

1. All resettlement proposals for Palestinian refugees identify the question as economic, requiring economic solutions; the political aspects of the question have been neglected. The refugees have been perceived, not as a “liability, but an asset for the future,” a reservoir of manpower, which, when combined with the economic potentialities of the area, could contribute to raising the standards of living in the whole region.[362] However, on a political level, they have been perceived as a threat to the stability and peace in the area that could be exploited by Communism and other radical movements.[363]

1. The Palestinian refugees have rejected any sort of permanent settlement outside Palestine. Their adherence to the “right of return” to their homes and properties has been expressed at two levels: (a) holding protest conferences and issuing communiques condemning the proposals and criticizing their initiators;[364] and (b) consolidating the collective identity of the Palestinian refugees as a survival strategy against all the political and socioeconomic restrictions imposed upon them.

In all the proposals for resettling refugees prior to the 1967 war, self-determination of the Palestine refugees and non-refugees was overlooked. For the West, the refugee question was not a priority on their agenda.

As a result of the failure of the resettlement strategy, UNRWA,[365] as the tool of the UN, “ceased to be prominent in the capitals of the affluent West. It was even raised in the US congress that UNRWA’s relief was helping to subsidize Palestinian commando groups ... but the main politics of the refugee situation were well beyond UNRWA’s purview or control.”[366]

The lesson that Israel and its Western partners must learn from the failure of the resettlement strategy before and after 1967 should come from their experience in resettling Gaza Strip refugees during the 1970s. This experience has challenged the Israeli authority’s belief that through relocation, “urbanization,” or “de-peasantization” the refugee numbers, and thus their resistance, would decline. More importantly, the Israeli authorities ignored the fact that “improving housing” has never been an alternative to a political solution nor a means to thwarting resistance. As the historical experience of Palestinian refugees has shown, repression escalates resistance, regardless of residential location. This theory has been affirmed by the relocated refugees in the Sheikh Radwan Resettlement Scheme in Gaza, one of the nine Israeli-sponsored resettlement schemes on the Gaza Strip: 95.6 percent of these refugees believe their conception of, and contribution to, the national struggle is as strong as it was prior to relocation, as was shown in the author’s previous research.[367]

The Gaza Strip has always been a priority whenever the issue of refugee resettlement has been raised, due to the socioeconomic problems there.

[368] These problems include the large concentration of refugees in a limited geographical area. The area comprises a mere 363 square kilometers and has a population density of 920 persons per square kilometer in 1952 which rose to 1850 persons per square kilometer in 1996. The refugees on the Gaza Strip are also highly militant, a trait which they developed under the Egyptian Administration and during the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip in the mid-1950s.[369]

While the improvement of the physical living conditions in the camps was always a thorny issue for the first generation, refugees from the second generation perceive the provision of basic services in the camps from a different perspective. Their perception is based on full awareness of their entitlement to adequate housing as recognized in a number of international human rights laws and their universal instruments. For example, Article 11.1 of the international Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, proclaims that “everyone [has a right] to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.”[370]

In the case of the Palestinian refugees, enjoyment of these rights can be carried out without in any way affecting the permanent solution to the refugee question, which must be a political one. This begs the question of whether the Israeli authority’s aims in resettling the refugees in the Gaza Strip were humanitarian, or whether they connoted a link to the longstanding strategy of dispersion and control in the Zionist-Israeli ideology and practice. This question will be examined in some detail later.

The Palestinian refugees fall into the category of majority-identified refugees who are firm in their conviction that their opposition to the events is shared by the majority of their compatriots, rather than that of events- alienated refugees and exiles or self-alienated persons. Moreover, their attitudes toward displacement place them in reactive-fate groups, rather than purpose groups.[371]

The Palestinians who were exiled in 1948 were a highly family-oriented society that gave precedence to informal and personal ties. The Palestinian

family is an influential unit, considered the dominant group structure, and is viewed as a critical part of the informal politics in the Middle East.[372]

The Palestinian family, as part of the Middle East culture, has proven “impossible to rupture or break.” This “invisible skeleton” has been the means and the motivator by which the Palestinians have been able to respond to the conditions of their exile and crisis, and to maximize their chances for survival.[373] Through such a society that is bound together, Palestinians, as Sa’id observed, have been able to “survive the ravages of our history, its tragic mistakes and misfortunes, and the destructive course of Israeli policies.”[374]

As survivors, it is not only the social dimension which stateless Palestinian families have managed to bridge through the creation of new social networks, it has also been the means by which Palestinian nationalism and identity are protected and preserved; it has served as a form of social psychology. Franz Fanon observed that the oppressed “develop in themselves a sense of conscious self-determination that is based on the discovery of their social needs.”[375] The strength of social ties among refugees is one factor, among others, which has created a new Palestinianism that has identified with Palestine and developed a growing Palestinian consciousness. This has been a cyclical reaction to the post-1948 era, of which the Intifada became a symbol, led mainly by the young leadership and children from the refugee camps.

Let us now consider a telling statement made by then Defense Minister Moshe Dayan in June 1973. “As long as the refugees remain in their camps ... their children will say they come from Jaffa or Haifa; if they move out of the camps, the hope is they will feel an attachment to their new land.”[376] The plan to eliminate the camps, and consequently the Palestinian refugee status, has been interpreted as having a dual political purpose, but the Palestinian resettlement has been delayed simply because of Israel’s preoccupation with security and its own guilt. Thus, the Zionist ideology of dispossession, continuing dispersion and transfer of Palestinian refugees and non-refugees, both pre-1948 and post-1967, provides a better understanding of the Israeli resettlement policy.[377] The Israeli authorities hoped that by doing away with the camps, they would remove the ugly evidence which

exposes as a lie the Zionist slogan that Palestine is “a land without a people, for a people without a land.”

Moreover, Israeli measures to resettle Gazan Strip refugees do not conform to their humanitarian claims. Instead, these measures can be interpreted as an integral part of modern counter-insurgency doctrines promoted by security considerations in response to revolutionary guerrilla warfare or insurgency. It becomes clear that the conflicting statements given by the Israeli authorities regarding the resettlement schemes in the Gaza Strip[378] reflect political, rather than humanitarian, policies toward dispersion and control.[379] Responses from refugees in the camps to the resettlement schemes in a sample survey reflect a full awareness of the political motives and dimensions of these schemes (72.5 percent at the Shati’ camp, and 74.4 percent in the Sheikh Radwan Resettlement Scheme).[380]

In the context of a counter-insurgency strategy, resettlement is perceived as part of a “civic action” to counter-organize the population after the destruction of a guerrilla organization. It is a policy that follows the French concept that emphasizes “destruction must be followed by construction.”[381]

the real motives behind the Israeli resettlement schemes in the Gaza Strip. These schemes were set up after the crackdown on the Fedayeen (Freedom fighters) in 1971, through the then head of the Southern Command in the Gaza Strip, Ariel Sharon’s, roadwidening operations in the large camps in the Strip.[382] The long-term objectives of these operations were to liquidate the refugee camps and the refugees as a category and thus eliminate the core of the Palestinian question and, in the long run, to attempt to promote the Israeli resettlement schemes and enhance the military authority’s control over the camps. This combination of security and resettlement strategy was confirmed in the Ministry of Defense report on the occupied territories, which stated: “the slackening of terrorist activities in 1971 made possible the implementation of Israel’s rehabilitation programme.”[383]

The contradictory statements of the Israeli authorities nevertheless provide ample evidence of ulterior motives toward the policy to impose control over the refugee community and quell their resistance to occupation. The major concern of the Israeli authorities has been to retain the Strip, but with a minimum of number of refugees. This policy makes provision for refugee families to relocate to homes outside the camps; however, before a family is allowed to do so, several conditions must be met. (1) the family must have a down-payment toward purchasing a home outside the camp, (2) they must currently reside in a refugee camp, and (3) the camp shelter must be demolished. This Israeli resettlement policy has two implications. First, it leaves the refugees only a limited opportunity to re-accommodate themselves, and secondly, it promotes the purchasing of houses or plots of land in the resettlement projects, thus projecting a coercive aspect onto the resettlement projects.

An example of the considerable coercion used in achieving relocation is cited in the General-Commissioner’s Report of 1987. In the Jabalia and Rafah camps, bulldozing activities left shelters isolated and completely surrounded by mounds of sand higher than the shelters themselves, thus making it extremely difficult for the families to remain and live normal lives.[384] This left as their only option to purchase home plots, which the authorities could allocate to them.

The UNRWA and UN positions toward refugee resettlement in the Gaza Strip has been to deny “the fact that people are being forced to move from the camps,” as stated by Ronald Davidson, former deputy director of UNRWA in an interview with a New York Times correspondent.[385]

One of the main criticisms made by UNRWA regarding the Israeli resettlement scheme was that demolition of the family’s camp shelter was a precondition for obtaining a new home. In the annual reports of the General-Commissioner, emphasis is placed on this issue more than on the difficulties the refugees face due to relocation. UNRWA’s protest was voiced by Davidson who stated that camp shelters are UN property needed for the growing refugee population, and their demolition would further increase the housing shortage in the camps.[386]

The Israeli official response to this complaint from the Defense Ministry was “of course, we demolish them. The whole point of the project is to get rid of the refugee camps.”[387] In addition, the Israeli Government position has been that materials from demolished shelters should be used by refugees in new construction outside the camps, thus relieving congestion in the camps.[388]

Fragmentation of extended families through relocation, brought about by the initial dispersal strategy, raised concern of family reunification among the Sheikh Radwan refugees who seek to live with others from the same village or town in order to form new patterns of concentration. The initial dispersion strategy was conducted by Israeli authorities for a variety of political and logistical reasons, and the break-up of extended families was justified on such grounds. Even so, the refugees remained within the larger Palestinian family which retained cultural compatibility and accelerated the integration process, in marked contrast to resettlement processes experienced, for example, by Lithuanian and Vietnamese refugees in the USA.[389]

The resettlement schemes were set up with counter-insurgency strategies in mind. For example, the roads were made wide enough for use by military forces, and narrow alleyways avoided. Even so, the Israeli authorities aimed to minimize the refugees’ longings for return and pacify their resistance to occupation by providing improved housing conditions.

Nevertheless, the refugee’s role in the Palestinian national struggle, and their adherence to their “right of return” (83.3 percent in Sheikh Radwan Scheme and 90.7 percent in the Shati camp) have not been diminished by having been provided better housing conditions. On the contrary, Palestinian political mobilization has been sustained, and the Israeli counter-insurgency strategy proved counter-productive, particularly during the Intifada.

The greatest negative impact of the Israeli resettlement scheme is that it has created a feeling of alienation among relocated refugees, particularly among

first-generation refugees (28.9%). This can be attributed to two fatal factors; the first is in not allowing the same mixture of refugees as in the camp, the second is in breaking up extended family groups that had formerly lived in the same village or town.

The Israeli resettlement policies in the Gaza Strip, designed to foster population dispersal, have created antagonism among the refugees who desire population concentration for personal reasons. This points up the contradictions that have developed between the principles established in the resettlement policies and the realities of the resettlement processes.[390]

The circumstances of the Israeli resettlement process have created a situation for the Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip that differ radically from those of other resettlement experiences in countries such as Algeria and Malaya.[391]

One shortcoming of the Israeli resettlement scheme is that “improving housing conditions” has never been an alternative to a political solution, nor a means of thwarting resistance. Historical experiences with the Palestinian refugees demonstrate that repression escalates resistance, regardless of residential location. Emanuel Marx has even argued that the Israeli-sponsored resettlement schemes in the Gaza Strip have increased the value of being a refugee there. Palestinian leaders in the Gaza strip were interviewed, and in these interviews they emphasized the fact that improved living conditions in the Gaza Strip did not affect the Palestinian national struggle. As one interviewee explained, “living in a tent, or under inhuman conditions, or a palace does not enhance or lessen national struggle and political consciousness; political consciousness has components other than type of housing.”[392]

Consequently, refugee resettlement in the Gaza Strip may require the use of a new set of conceptual lenses to understand some of the specific circumstances of resettlement that differ from similar experiences in other parts of the world. One unique characteristic of refugees in the Gaza Strip is that they feel the burden of occupation more than any other area in the occupied territories. Another is that direct Israeli control has helped in

sharpening and consolidating the collective Palestinian cultural and political identity, enabling the refugees there to hold ground in the face of Israeli attacks during the Intifada.

Resettlement in other countries has been accomplished by isolating the settlement schemes from the locals through defensible borders. Yet, the scarcity of land in the Gaza Strip has not permitted resettling refugees in separate, distinct areas. Instead, the resettlements were constructed adjacent to the camps, which have maintained, to a high degree, the links between camps and the resettlements.

The Zionist movement tended to negate the history of the land (Palestine), except for the Jewish existence in it, and this is what has distinguished Zionism from other national movements, states Amon-Raz Karkoteskin, a Professor of Jewish history at Beer Sheva University. In this regard, the theological dimension connects directly with the political activity and the historical conception of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This consciousness provided an excuse for the expulsion of the Palestinians in 1948, the adoption of a denial stance, and for the concealment of expulsion in the Zionist legendary consciousness. The term “salvation from exile” for the Jews has been transformed into the source of legitimization of suppression and the continuation of the policy of land confiscation and setting-up of settlements, [393] and even the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.[394]

Though there are some major differences between the situations in Kosovo and Palestine, basic similarities exist between the two. Both crises resulted from political decisions, whose architects found it easy to use uprooting techniques to expel a people from their original homeland for the purpose of achieving short-term and short-sighted political gains.

There is a question to be raised here. If the United States led NATO in a long war to force Slobodan Molosevic to accept the return of nearly one million Albanian refugees to their homes in Kosovo, why is the world’s sole superpower not doing the same to assist more than four million Palestinian refugees dispersed worldwide to return to their homeland? This again raises

the question of a “double standard” — a factor that should be considered by the international community in dealing with conflicts worldwide.

Palestinian historian Mohammad Darwazeh eloquently declared: “We Palestinians were not defeated in 1948. When we deny the outcome of an event... When we attempt to change it... When we cling on to our rights, history, memories and identity ... we are not defeated. Defeat comes from the inside, and when we are defeated from the inside, we are truly defeated. Do we consider the legions of Palestinian martyrs and heroes defeated?”[395]

I would like to expand on Darwazeh’s impassioned cry. Do we consider the rejection of resettlement by refugees, inside Palestine and in the Diaspora, defeat? The unshakable belief in our rights, which is the backbone of Palestinian refugees and non-refugees alike, does not nullify the possibility of bringing about a historical reconciliation that has international legitimacy. The plight of the Palestinian refugees, created by the Jews, who themselves rejected “exile,” is based on the Jews’ views of historical right and principles. Both principles were interconnected with theology, later transformed into political policy with the advent of political Zionism. Karkoteskin observes that, “The reality of alienation and exile consciousness are the lot of the Palestinians today.”[396]

When Ahmad Zweil, the Egyptian-born recipient of the Nobel Prize for Chemistry for 1999, was asked about his acceptance of a prize from The Wolf Foundation, one of the scientific centers in Israel, he stated that he believed in the universality of science, and its resistance to narrow concepts.[397] Let us, too, call upon universality; universality in the concept of salvation. The refuge we all seek is protection from forces that wrench us away from security and comfort, physical and mental, which give dignity and meaning to human existence.[398]

We are so in need of a brighter world, one offering adequate refuge to all its inhabitants, and one that eradicates the roots of injustice inflicted on the Palestinian refugees. True justice for the Palestinians and Israelis means living in security — the fundamental social contract any government makes

with its people. However, with the ending of the Cold War, the treatment of the refugees will be the litmus test of any new economic order, since no amount of material goods or technological know-how can compensate for human irresponsibility and injustice.

The dream of a society ruled by reason, security, and justice is a dream as old as civilized man. It does not have to be an impossible dream.

[353] Nathan Weinstock, “The Impact of Zionist Colonization on Palestinian Arab Society Before 1948,” Journal of Palestine Studies (Winter 1973): 51.

[354] Norma Masriyyeh Hazboun, The Resettlement of the Palestinian Refugees of the Gaza Strip. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis (Leeds: The University of Leeds, Department of Politics, 1994), pp.7–8.

[355] A Russian Jew, for example, who has no link with Palestine, immigrates to Israel, receiving full support, starting with reception at the airport and provision of accommodation and a job that suits his/her qualifications.

[356] The Arab support for the refugees question, their ‘Tight of return” and rejection of resettlement, in line with international legitimacy, was manifested at the meeting of The Council of Arab Foreign Ministers, held in Cairo on September 12, 1999.

[357] The UN General Assembly Resolution 194 of December 11, 1948. Article 11 reads: “Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.

[358] Henry Cattan, Palestine and the Arabs and Israel (London: Longman, Green and Co., 1969), pp. 142–3.

[359] Foreign Relations of the United States (1949), p. 908. Many resettlement proposals were passed at this early period (1949–59); for example: “The Blandford Scheme of 1950,” adopted by UNRWA; “Dulles Proposal of 1955”; “Eisenhower Proposal” of 1957; and “Hammarskjold’s Plan” of 1959.

[360] Fayez Sayigh, Mashrou Hamarshold Wa Qadiyat al-Laji’in (The Refugee Question and Hammarskjold’s Project). (Beirut: Dar al — Fajr al-Jadid, 1959), pp. 36–7.

[361] United Nations, Annual Report of the Commissioner — General of the UNRWA, July 1, 1961 — June 30, 1962 (GA, Official Records: 17th Session, Supplement No. 14 [A/52/14], New York, 1962), p. 2.

[362] Sayigh, The Refugee Question and Hammarskjold’s Project, p. 36.

[363] S. G. Thicknesse, Arab Refugees: A Survey of Resettlement Possibilities (London and New York: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1949), p. 8.

[364] Conferences were held by the Executive Committees of the Refugees in Gaza (March 24, 1952); in Syria (March 26, I952); in Bethlehem and Hebron Districts Camps (February 8, 1952); in Jerusalem (July 20, 1955); in Beirut (June 26, 1959 and July 12, 1959).

[365] The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) was established according to General Assembly

Resolution 302 of December 8, 1949 (Article 22). It began its operations on I May, 1950. Its mandate includes the care of refugees — inside and outside the camps with relief services, shelter, social assistance, health and education care. These services apply to the five field offices where UNRWA operates — Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip; they are known as the host countries (UN, 1986), p. 25.

[366] David Forsythe, “The Palestine Question: Dealing with a Long-Term Refugee Situation,” ANNALS (May 1983), p. 97.

[367] Norma Masriyyeh Hazboun, “Refugee Resettlement: The Gaza Strip Experience, “ Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture (Autumn 1995): 63–4.

[368] In 1997, for example, the estimated incidence of poverty in Gaza Strip was 51 percent in the south of the Gaza Strip, compared to 31 percent in the north and the city of Gaza. More than 38 percent of Gaza Strip households live below the poverty line.

[369] The Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip began on October 30, 1956 and lasted until March 12, 1957. For more details see : E. L.M. Burns, Between Arab and Israeli (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1969), pp. 136–49.

[370] The United Nations, The Human Rights to adequate Housing (New York: UN, 1994), p. 5.

[371] Egon Kunz, “Exile and Resettlement: Refugee Theory,” International Migration Review (Spring-Summer, 1981): 43M.

[372] James Bill and C. Leiden, Politics in the Middle East, 2nd edn. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), p. 77.

[373] Ibid.

[374] Edward Said, “Palestine, Then and Now: An Exile’s Journey Through Israel and the Occupied Territories,” Harper’s Magazine (December 1992), p. 54.

[375] Honi Bhabha, “Review of Franz Fanon and the Psychology of Oppression,” Race and Class (Winter 1987): 84.

[376] The Jerusalem Post, June 13, 1973.

[377] A case in point is the Israeli measures in occupied East Jerusalem, involving withdrawal of identity documents (IDs) of Palestinian families; these withdrawals escalated alarmingly year after year — 1,300 families in Jerusalem losing their IDs every year.

[378] Conflicting statements by Israeli officers indicate the hidden agenda behind setting up the resettlement schemes in Gaza Strip; for example: Major Amir Cheshin told a New York Times correspondent “that the idea behind the schemes is less security and more humanitarian” (The New York Times, November 24, 1976); Whereas Moshe Dayan stated that the result of the resettlement policy is to make Gaza Strip refugees in name only (The New York Times, April 2, 1974).

[379] Emanuel Marx, ‘‘Palestinian Refugee Camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip,” Middle Eastern Studies (April 1992): 292.

[380] Hazboun, “Refugee Resettlement/’ p. 139.

[381] John McCuen, The Art of Counter — Revolutionary War, the Strategy of Counte-Insurgency (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), pp. 128, 152–66.

[382] According to UNRWA statistics, 10,794 rooms were demolished (affecting 3,941 families 24,067 persons), in the three large camps — Jabalia, al-Shati', and Rafah (UNRWA, 1991).

[383] Ministry of Defense, Judea-Samaria and the Gaza District: A Sixteen-Year Survey (1967–1983) (November, 1983), p. 56.

[384] United Nations, Annual Report of the Commissioner — General of the UNRWA, July 1, 1985-June 30, 1986 (GA, Official Records: 41st Session, Supplement No. 13 [A/41/13], New York, 1987), p. 17.

[385] The New York Times, November 24, 1976.

[386] United Nations 1987, p. 17, see note 33; and United Nations, Annual Report of the Commissioner General of the UNRWA, July 1, 1976-June 30, 1977 (GA, Official Records: 32nd Session, Supplement No. 13 [A/32/13], New York, 1978), p. 23. Up to June 1989, 7,764 rooms were demolished as a precondition for relocation to the resettlement schemes.

[387] The Jerusalem Post, October 19, 1988.

[388] United Nations 1987, p. 17.

[389] L. Baskauskas, "The Lithuanian Refugee Experience," International Migration Review (Summer 1981): 282–3; and David Haines, "Family and Community Among Vietnamese Refugee," International Migration Review (Summer 1981): 310–13.

[390] Hazboun, “Refugee Resettlement,” p. 234.

[391] The objectives of the resettlement experiences in these two countries was to separate the civilian population from the insurgents. To ensure such separation, two methods have become customary since 1945: “either by erecting a physical barrier against guerrilla infiltration in the manner of the French “Morice Line” in Algeria ... or by resettlement of the civilian population, e.g. Malaya (1948 1960), the Boers in South Africa (1900 1902). (For more details see: Ian Beckett and John Pimlott (eds.), Armed Forces and Modern Counter-Insurgency (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985), pp. 11, 59.

[392] At the end of 1997, Israel’s Interior Ministry released the figures of settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (including East Jerusalem), which amounted to 321,000 settlers in 144 settlements. Sham Newsletter, February 1998.

[393] Interview, July 7, 1991.

[394] Amnon-Raz Karkoteskin, “as-sahyuniyyah, ‘ath-thiyolojiyyah, wa z-sdiwaji- hhat al-qawmiyyh: mutadiyyinum wa Timaniyyn fi israil,” al-Karmel (Spring 1997): 204–8.

[395] al-Ayyam, September 17, 1999.

[396] Karkoteskin, al-Karmel (Spring 1997): 213.

[397] al-Ayyam, October 30, 1999.

[398] Aung San Suukyi, Towards a True Refugee (Oxford: The Refugee Studies Programme, 1993), p. 11.The majority of explicit and implicit international and Israeli positions disregard international legitimacy, human aspects, and historical injustice done to an entire population. The distinction between “return” and “resettlement” is that between resolution and liquidation.

** 15. Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon since 1982

Kais M. Firro

This chapter investigates the social, economic, and legal situation of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon since 1982. Three topics will be discussed: the impact on the refugees of the departure of the PLO from Lebanon; the relations between the Lebanese and the Palestinian refugees after 1982, and finally, the connection between the experience from the past and the current peace process. Combining these three topics, this chapter argues that the Palestinians were pushed into a state of marginalization even more severe than that they had experienced in the period 1948–69.

In 1995, Rosemary Sayigh wrote that the marginalization of the refugee issue in Lebanon was a result of the Madrid conference of 1991 and the Oslo agreement of 1993:

Palestinians in Lebanon form a special case of the marginalization of the refugee issue began in Madrid and given the ... (PLO) stamp of approval at Oslo ... [The Palestinians] in Lebanon suffer from uncertainty about the future to a degree unparalleled elsewhere.[399]

Sayigh saw Madrid as the first step on the road to marginalizing the refugee issue, when James Baker’s “two-track” formula sidetracked it to a multilateral committee, thus weakening the historic legacy of the UN resolutions on refugees. According to her, “it was from this time that UNRWA and PLO aid to refugees in Lebanon began to decline.”[400] It is true that the Madrid

conference can be seen as a turning point in the international treatment of the refugees' problem, but marginalization of the refugees in Lebanon had begun much earlier, in 1948–9 as a result of their dispossession and the way by which the international community treated them following the war of 1948 in Palestine. The fact that the UN failed to enforce the implementation of the Resolution 194 (III) of December 11, 1948 meant that the refugees were forced to remain in exile in a state of marginalization. However, when we compare the case of the refugees in Lebanon with that of refugees in other Arab countries, we realize that the Palestinians in Lebanon were deprived of many legal rights which prevented them integrating into the political and economic life of the country. The best way to understand the state of marginalization of the Palestinians is to contrast it to the UN treatment of refugee problems in other parts of the world. As we know, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) was established by Resolution 212 (III), November 19, 1948, and 302 (IV), December 8, 1949, of the UN General Assembly "to plan and implement a relief programme and to seek the aid of UN Specialized Agencies and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)."[401] UNRWA was to provide "temporary" assistance to prevent conditions of famine and distress. In this sense, UNRWA's mandate was to help the refugees until a peace agreement had been reached. The "temporary" mandate of UNRWA resulted in the exclusion of the Palestinian refugees from the implementation of the famous Convention of 1951. This Convention offers refugees significant economic and social rights protecting refugees against discrimination in employment, labor legislation, and social security. Palestinian refugees are excluded by Paragraph D of the Convention's first article which states that its provisions

shall not apply to persons who are at present receiving from organs or agencies of United Nations other than the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees protection or assistance.[402]

The 1951 Convention provides protection and security to refugees in the host country before their repatriation. It is this exclusion from the 1951 convention, combined with their legal status in Lebanon, that has marginalized the Palestinians in Lebanon.

From 1968 the relationship between the Palestinians and Lebanon began to change as the PLO began to establish bases in south Labanon and refugee camps from which guerrilla units attacked Israeli targets. As result of these attacks, the Israeli army shelled Lebanese villages. Attacks and counter attacks escalated further in December when Palestinians hijacked an Israeli plane in Athens, leading Israeli commandos to land at Beirut airport and destroy thirteen aircrafts of the Lebanese airline. In spring 1969, the Lebanese army tried to stop the PLO's military activities so as not to give Israel cause for further attacks on Lebanese territory. In October the Lebanese army launched an operation against the PLO to restore "Lebanese sovereignity." But because of pressures from the Lebanese leftist parties and from almost all the Arab states, the commander of the Lebanese army met with Yasir Arafat in Cairo to negotiate an agreement regulating the relations between the two sides. From I to3 November 1969, Arafat and the commander of the Lebanese army negotiated an agreement which enabled the PLO to legitimize its presence in Lebanon and documented the rights of Palestinian refugees in the country.

Thus the period from 1969 to 1982 was exceptional, in that the Cairo agreement redefined the general basis of the regulations of the Palestinian presence in Lebanon, granting them the right to employment and residency according to UN and Arab League decisions, to which Lebanon had agreed. Although the agreement on November 3, 1969 focused on keeping in check Palestinian weapons, and placing limits on the areas in which armed forces could operate, it empowered the PLO to administer the camps. Subsequently, the PLO could address the civil, social, and economic requirements of the refugees. Meanwhile the agreement stipulated that the Palestinians had the right to work, reside, and circulate freely in Lebanon. The PLO was enabled to impose this redefinition on Lebanon as an outcome of a shift in the internal balance of forces.

When the internal balance of forces had shifted again in 1982, the Palestinians faced a new balance of power in which their general base collapsed and in 1989 the Agreement of 1969 was abrogated. The legal status of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon was then reverted back to what it had been between 1948 and 1969.

It is worth noting here that from 1983 to 1987, the PLO made substantial efforts to stay in touch with the refugees in Lebanon, possibly with two objectives in mind. First, to ensure an independent role of the PLO as the sole representative of all Palestinians, including all refugees in Lebanon. Second, to protect the safety and security of the Palestinians in Lebanon and alleviate their economic hardship. It was the “war of the camps” between Arafat’s followers and the Shi’ite militia of Amal in 1985–7 which undermined this PLO strategy. The remaining offices of PLO in Beirut were shut down and the flow of military and economic assistance to the Palestinians in Lebanon became more difficult. At a fringe meeting of the Arab Ministers’ Council in Cairo in May 1991, the PLO and the Lebanese government reached an understanding by which the former recognized the extension of Lebanese authority over the camps while Lebanon promised to facilitate the flow of humanitarian aid to the refugees. A tripartite ministerial committee was established to investigate the situation in the camps. However, the Oslo Declaration of Principles (DoP) led Lebanon in 1992 to withdraw from any further contact with Arafat. The DoP was seen by Syria and Lebanon as a violation of the principles of a united Arab stance, as expressed at the Madrid Conference. [403]

One result of the DoP was that the tripartite ministerial committee was scuttled and Lebanese officials ceased to respond to even some of the most basic humanitarian needs in the camps, notably rehousing for the displaced refugees. Restoring the legal status of the years 1948–69, the Lebanese government insisted on re-establishing full control over the refugees. The two governments of Lebanon since 1992 conducted approximately the same policies toward refugee problem, which enjoyed a broad consensus among the main Lebanese political forces.

In addition to official policies, the refugees face cuts in UNRWA’s services. While international donors increased their financing of projects in the West Bank and Gaza, they provided less aid for UNRWA, which resulted in a cumulative deficit of approximately 50 million dollars in 1996.[404] In 1993 UNRWA warned the international community not to forget the refugees, because otherwise they would turn away from peace. UNRWA’s financial difficulties could not meet the needs of the camps, where by now most public services had ceased to exist and housing conditions no longer fulfilled the most basic requirement of providing shelter. Shortages of water and

electricity, open sewage, and unpaved flooded roads are only part of the heavy burden placed on UNRAW's agencies. Lebanese restrictions on employment of Palestinians — exacerbated by the fact that refugees had lost their posts in the PLO's medical and economic institutions, which had collapsed — meant that unemployment rose from 35 percent in 1992 to more than 40 percent in 1995.[405] According to other sources, unemployment in 1996 was 50–65 percent.[406] Palestinian education in Lebanon almost entirely collapsed. Only 41 elementary and 35 preparatory schools of UNRWA remained. Even UNRWA had lost 11 of its schools in Lebanon during the years of the upheaval.[407] Since 1982, medical services have sharply declined. The Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS) and URWA both offered medical services to Palestinians. Because of the decline in PRCS' services, UNRWA was unable to meet the health requirements, though its health budget increased by 7.5 percent from 1993 to 1995.[408]

The Lebanese government finds itself confronted with these miserable conditions of the refugees while it attempts to rebuild its own economy. More importantly, providing assistance to the refugees, when final status negotiations are being deliberated, would be interpreted in and outside Lebanon as creating conditions for permanent resettlement (Tawtiri) of the approximtely 400,000 Sunni Palestinians there. Thus, it would be seen as pre-empting the future negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority on the refugees question and undermining the refugees' "right of return," and thereby further destabilizing the "demographic balance." which is vital for the survival of the country's political system. Thus Lebanese governments since 1992 have approached the Palestinians with a policy of maintaining the status quo, which means rejection of any assistance which would lead to al-Tawtin and rejection of a resumption of any Palestinian military activities in Lebanon.

The Lebanese campaign of November 1999 against the attempt of Palestinian organizations to resume military training in the camps reflects the characteristics of the relationship of the Palestinians with Lebanon. Perhaps the PLO or other Palestinian organizations in Lebanon are attempting to impose new game rules in Lebanon in order to influence the ongoing negotiations between Israel and the PA on the "final status," per chance to improve the highly inadequate conditions of the camps within Lebanon.[409]

In my view, Palestinians in Lebanon today cannot reverse their current marginalization to a situation similar to that of the 1970s. During the 1970s, the success of Palestinians in securing control over the camps and enhancing economic processes was linked directly to the weakness of the Lebanese polity to deal with Palestinian issues. Today, with Syrian backing and the political atmosphere created by the departure of the PLO in 1982, the agreement of Ta'if in 1989, the Madrid conference in 1991 and the Oslo process since 1993 put the Palestinians and Lebanese in a zerosum game, as Weighill puts it:

Interaction between political representatives of refugees and the government [of Lebanon] ... develops into a zero-sum situation in which any prerogative or control secured by the refugees is interpreted as an encroachment on the power of the government.[410]

As a result of the departure of the PLO from Lebanon in 1982, Palestinian decision-making was shifted to Tunisia and other places outside Lebanon. Meanwhile, changes in the internal situation in Lebanon had put the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon in a state of passive accommodation, letting outside factors decide their future. The peace process has further marginalized the Palestinians in Lebanon. The absence of Lebanon from multilateral committees has also added confusion among the refugees of Lebanon. Since 1994, anti-Palestinian rhetoric, which had previously been less prominent, began to be accepted in the political discourse in Lebanon even amongst the Sunnis and Druzes, the traditional supporters of the "Palestinian cause." In a meeting with the Palestinian delegation in early 1994, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri acknowledged the existence of an official plan to reduce the number of Palestinians in Lebanon. In the summer of 1995, the authorities issued new regulations requiring Palestinians to obtain re-entry visas before traveling, while those who were already outside the country were not allowed to return without a re-entry visa from a Lebanese embassy. In most cases this was not granted.[411] Faris Buwayz, the ex-foreign minister, suggested in 1996 to distribute the refugees between the territories of the Palestinian Authority and those Arab countries where they had families and relatives. Meanwhile, it would not be a bad idea to facilitate ongoing emigration to Canada, Australia, and the US.[412]

Two examples will serve to illustrate the situation that the refugees have been facing since 1994. The one is related to the building of new housing for displaced Palestinians in the Lebanese village of Quraya in August 1994. The project led to a debate among Lebanese leaders about al-Tawtin (the resettlement) of the Palestinians in Lebanon, which by now had covered hundreds of pages in the Lebanese press. The debate on al-Tawtin came into the spotlight after Barak's promise to withdraw Israeli troops from the security zone in South Lebanon and to re-start Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on "the permanent status." In a speech on Lebanese Independence Day, November 22, 1999, President Emile Lahud stressed the urgent demand of Lebanon to solve the problem of the refugees in Lebanon but rejected any compromise that would lead to al-Tawtin.

The second example concerns the issue of Abu al-'Aynayin, a Fatah leader in Lebanon who was given the death sentence in September 1999 by a Lebanese court. As a result, in early November 1999 Fatah began military training of its members in the Ayen al-Helua camp, fearing that the Lebanese authorities would "attack the camp with the pretext to capture Abu al-'Aynayin." The renewal of the military presence within the refugee camps immediately raised the whole issue of the Palestinian-Lebanese relations and their historical experiences since the 1960s. Both the Quray'a and Abu al-'Aynayin episodes have put the Ta'if agreement of 1989 to the test, with respect to the whole question of the presence of the Palestinians in Lebanon and their future.

There are at least about 370,000 UNRWA registered Palestinians living in Lebanon. About half of them live in camps (twelve in total; five in South Lebanon, one in Beirut, three in Mt. Lebanon, two in North Lebanon, and one in Beqa'a). It is important to recall that during the civil war three camps were completely destroyed. Even those camps that remained have been partly destroyed by Israeli invasions and bombardments and by the "war of the camps" between Amal's militia and Palestinians in 1985–7. Another 17 informal, small camps contain about 40,000 Palestinians. Those who live outside the camps, including those with UNRWA registration, number between 200,000 to 250,000.[413] Reconstructing the destroyed camps or rehousing displaced Palestinians are both rejected as solutions by the Lebanese authorities.

In summary, one can assert that Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are caught between, on the one hand, Lebanon’s rejectionist position toward them, and, on the other, the pessimistic outlook on the current Israeli- Palestinian negotiations due to Barak’s four “No’s.” As such, the refugee problem in Lebanon has become a time bomb which can only be defused through a concerted international effort. In other words, there is little hope for comprehensive peace as long as Lebanon and Syria are not part of the peace negotiations.

[399] Rosemary Sayigh, “Palestinians in Lebanon, Harsh Present, Uncertain Future,” Journal of Palestine Studies 25 (1) (Autumn 1995): 37.

[400] Ibid., p. 38.

[401] Yves Besson, “URWA and its Role in Lebanon.” Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 335; Anthony Parsons, “The United Nations and the Palestine Refugees.” Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 232–3.

[402] Marie-Louise Weighill, “Palestinians in Lebanon: The Politics of Assistance,” Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 305; see also I. C. Jackson, “The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees,[11] International Journal of Refugees Law 3 (3) (1991): 408.

[403] See Abbas Shilbak, “Palestinians in Lebanon and the PLO,[11] Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 270–1.

[404] Ibid., p. 272.

[405] Hussein Shaaban, “Unemployment and its Impact on Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon,” Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 385.

[406] See Michael C. Hudson, “Palestinians and Lebanon: The Common Story, [11] ibid., p. 258.

[407] On education problems see Bassem Sirhan, “Education and Palestinians in Lebanon,[11] ibid., pp. 388–92.

[408] On health situation see Ali Hassan, “Health Amongst the Palestinians in Lebanon,[11] ibid., pp. 392–6.

[409] On “dialogue,” at the end of 1999, between the main forces on the Palestinian side and the Lebanese State, see Jaber Suleiman “The Current Political, Organizational, and Security Situation in the Palestinian Refugee Camps of Lebanon,” Journal of Palestine Studies 29 (1) (Autumn 1999): 77–9.

[410] Weighill, “Palestinians in Lebanon,[11] p. 304.

[411] Shilbak, “Palestinians in Lebanon and the PLO,[11] p. 271.

[412] Farid El-Khazen, “Permenent Settlment of Palestinians in Lebanon,[11] Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 282.

[413] See Mahmoud Abbas, Hussein Shaaban, Bassem Sirhan and Ali Hassan, “The Socio-Economic Conditions of Palestinians in Lebanon,” Journal of Refugees Studies 3 (1997): 379–82.

** 16. The Future of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

[[Laura Drake]]

After the long deferrals of Oslo and the interim period, the seminal issues of the Middle East peace process are finally being discussed. The final status of the Palestinian refugees of 1948, the same issue which constituted the initial condition of the Arab-Israeli conflict, may now define either the closure of this conflict or its indefinite continuation.

The Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, most of whom hail from the Galilee, will prove to be the essential crux of the issue, since Israel's preferred solution, resettlement in the host countries, does not work in Lebanon. Indeed, Palestinian Authority (PA) President Yasser Arafat has drawn attention to the fact that the refugees are not only in Lebanon.[414] It is in Lebanon, however, where the issue is most urgent.

Were it not for Lebanon, Israel may have been able to indefinitely defer the entire refugee issue, or simply refuse to discuss it. However, the tie-in of the ultimate Palestinian issue — the refugees — with the Syria- Israel-Lebanon track, makes immediate discussion imperative even for Israel. In fact, the success of the Lebanese track of the peace process will ultimately hinge on the fate of these 350,000 refugees.[415] According to Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, "We cannot accept a settlement without a pull-out from Lebanon and Syria, and without the sacred right of the Palestinians to return home, and this is a final decision."[416]

If the intertwining of the tracks around the refugee issue makes its solution urgent from an Israeli perspective, then the scenarios emanating from the Israeli sense of urgency make the situation that much more urgent from the

perspective of the Palestinian refugees themselves. Of course, there is little discussion about what they think, their fears, their hopes, but only their disposition. What the refugees in Lebanon fear most is the concept of third-country resettlement — that they will be subjected to a forced transfer even further away from the borders of their home country to faraway destinations as Iraq, or that they will be dispersed throughout the Arab world, much as the PLO forces were dispersed after the Israeli invasion in 1982. Likewise, they fear that their people as individuals, not as a population, will be subjected to a combined process of being “pushed” out of Lebanon and “pulled” — redirected by way of coordinated economic pressure and enticement — into an assorted variety of Western countries. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine’s (PFLP) Abu Ali Mustafa objected to such schemes in the following manner: “They must not just say search for another country for them. It is as though an exodus requires another exodus when in fact an exodus requires the right of return.”[417]

These transfer scenarios — to use the Israeli lexicon — are now considered to be immediate threats, or worst-case scenarios by the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Brigadier General Sultan Abu Aynain, refugee leader and Fatah commander in Lebanon, responded, “We are not herds of cattle, nor is Palestine a livestock trading firm.”[418] The fear that one of these scenarios will come about bears down on the Palestinian refugees in the Lebanon camps night and day, as something analogous to the possibility of an imminent apocalyptic event.

Not far behind the fear and uncertainty that resides within these dispersion scenarios are the fears that the United States and Israel will somehow convince Lebanon to nationalize the refugees within that country, thus putting a final end to their possibility of returning home.

From the Lebanese perspective, this urgency stems from the fear that the Palestinian-Israeli final status talks will contain a solution for the Palestinian refugee situation that goes against their national interests, and that is adopted without their participation or involvement. That is, the fear that the Palestinian leadership might be forced by virtue of US pressure to agree to the permanent settlement of the refugees where they are — namely, in Lebanon. Some parties, notably the Jordanians, appear to believe that this

solution will indeed be forced upon Lebanon.[419] This would then be presented to the government of Lebanon as a fait accompli, and followed up by US pressure on Lebanon to grant Lebanese citizenship to the refugees. Despite the fact that the prohibition on granting citizenship to “non-Lebanese” has now been enacted into Article 43 of the Lebanese naturalization law,[420] in addition to being a component of the post-Taif Lebanese constitution,[421] such pressure could be very difficult to resist, since everything will have already been decided. That is why Lebanon wants to be involved as early as possible in the discussions surrounding this issue. As Lebanese Prime Minister Salim al-Hoss has stated:

We are sometimes told that the refugee issue is one of the subjects to be discussed on the Palestinian track, and that it is one of the issues to be debated in the multilateral negotiations. Our answer is no. This issue concerns Lebanon directly.[422]

But alas, the refugee issue is being discussed not trilaterally in an Israeli-Palestinian-Lebanese format, but as a component of the Palestinian- Israeli track of the peace process.

On top of these urgencies, as if it were not enough, is a new one: the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon came in tandem with the return ofChairman Arafat’s Fatah forces to the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp near Saida in southern Lebanon. This camp is so important that it has been called the “capital of the Palestinian diaspora.”[423] Hence, it is imperative for Fatah to be in control there if it is to credibly represent the Palestinian refugees in the final status talks. This turn of events so magnified Lebanon’s security concerns in the event of a unilateral Israeli withdrawal to the point where the Lebanese, in a joint statement with the French, said that the unilateral withdrawal would constitute an irresponsible act on the part of Israel.[424] Perhaps they feared they would not be able to control the Palestinians in the south in the event of the Israeli departure; for them it brought up shades of the earlier civil war in Lebanon, in which the PLO took over the south and established the zone of PLO control near the Israeli border that Israel used to call “Fatahland.” The desire to move the Palestinians out of Lebanon by a combination of local pressure and

international diplomacy became doubly urgent for Lebanon; indeed, Lebanon’s international diplomacy on this subject reached a fever pitch.

It was in this context that the death sentence Lebanon recently passed against the aforementioned Sultan Abu al-Aynain, the Fatah commander in Rashidiyah camp in the far south, should be understood — as a move concurrent with the return of the Fatah militia, in some force, to Ein al-Hilweh.[425]

The military forces of Fatah are presently being enhanced through the institution of new military training courses for new and old recruits in Ein al-Hilweh — a development that has heightened Lebanon’s fears. However, according to the PLO, it is being done for the Palestinian refugees’ protection and security, in particular, vis-a-vis Israel and its hired agents lurking in and around the camps. These activities become necessary, according to the PLO, in the wake of the recent series of assassinations and assassination attempts against Fatah commanders in the Saida area, and the generally deteriorating security conditions in the Ein al-Hilweh camp. Furthermore, the Palestinians are responsible for the security inside their camps by virtue of an old agreement between the PLO and Lebanon. However, the Lebanese fear the ramifications of the Israeli-Palestinian Authority security cooperation in the form of the PA “self-rule authority” potentially being transferred into their country during time of war with Israel.[426]

The Palestinians are feeling the pressure. They have tried to reassure the Lebanese that they have no designs whatsoever on re-establishing themselves in Lebanon, and that they only want to return home.[427] According to Col. Munir al-Maqdah, the PLO-Fatah Commander in Lebanon prior to Oslo, speaking about the situation in Ein al-Hilweh, “As far as individual weapons are concerned, they exist and nobody denies that. However those weapons will never be used against the Lebanese army or authority and they will never be used to sabotage the situation in Lebanon either.”[428] However, relations between the PA and Lebanon remain hostage to the ghosts of wars past; thus the mechanisms necessary to resolve bilateral problems, and the problems facing the refugees themselves, do not exist.[429]

The truth is that neither the civilian refugees nor the military leaders feel anything similar to the power they exerted in the 1970s. What they do feel is economically poor, politically abandoned, and militarily vulnerable. In fact, they feel that the walls of the 1990s are closing in around the remnant of what they have been able to preserve since the 1970s, which is very little. Every refugee in Lebanon has the same sense of total powerlessness.

*** Scenarios

Israel says that “the refugee issue could be both the most difficult and the easiest to solve of all the issues in the final status agreement.”[430] If Israel could simply defer the refugee issue and leave the refugees in place as a fait accompli, it would be its easiest issue. The Palestinian side has been facing some pressure to do just that, to defer this issue to some final status date and deal today with the subject of the Palestinian state. There are several strategies that Israel may be thinking about employing to accomplish this.

**** Negotiation scenarios

Separation of the refugee issue from other issues. Israel might try to simply deal with the territorial issues first (borders, Jerusalem, and settlements), deferring the refugee issue indefinitely. Israel in fact has already begun to use this approach, demanding the deferral of both refugees and Jerusalem,[431] drawing rejection from the head of the PLO final status negotiating team, who hold that “the issues cannot be separated.”[432]

It is extremely unlikely that the PLO leadership which, according to the PLO Refugee Department Affairs head As’ad Abdel Rahman, sees the refugee subject as “the basic issue in the policy of the PLO and the PA … the central cause,”[433] will sign an agreement ending the conflict under these terms. What the PLO wants to discuss is not refugee rights, which are already universally affirmed, but rather, the “practical mechanisms to implement

Resolution 194."[434] There have been worries among the refugees that they will be traded away for statehood.[435] However, the PLO would not be able to do this even it wanted to (and it does not), and at the same time simultaneously retain its national credibility. Furthermore, statehood in some form is already accepted as inevitable by Israel; all that remains to be discussed is in what form it will ultimately be expressed. Finally, according to President Arafat himself, even "talking about settlement" of refugees is a crime.[436]

Regrouping of issue clusters geographically. Failing that, Israel might try to avoid the subject of the refugees by breaking the final status issues up into two separate geographical clusters: for arrangements inside Palestine and arrangements outside it. Such a potential strategy is already foreshadowed in an important article by one of Israel's most prominent intelligence commentators, Shlomo Gazit.[437] Again, the main agreement would focus on the Palestinian territorial arrangements, which will take care of borders. Jerusalem, and settlements. The refugee issue may then be discussed first as it pertains to the refugees currently under PA jurisdiction, i.e., those currently resident in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, under the justification of practicality, since President Arafat does not have territorial jurisdiction of Palestinians outside. Those 1948 Palestine refugees currently living inside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be expected to stay there. They would be offered compensation from an international fund over which Israel would have an influential decision-making capacity. Their refugee status would be eliminated and UNRWA would be disbanded in areas under PA jurisdiction; or at the very least, their activities would no longer include the refugees living in those areas. Israel might then continue negotiating the situation of the refugees in exile bilaterally with the PLO/PA; or if those talks fail, it might try to transfer the disposition of the refugees in Arab countries to the domain of Israel-Arab state negotiations, which would be dealt with either bilaterally or multilaterally — in the latter case, with PLO/PA participation.

Even if Israel were able to pressure the PLO to sign an agreement without the refugees in exile, which seems impossible in any case, both of these Israeli "options" break down with regard to the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon and Syria, because their situation is tied to the peace process with regard to these two countries, particularly Lebanon. Syria, additionally, is standing

behind the Lebanese position on this issue.[438] The Israelis might have therefore tried to do the aforementioned with all the other refugees, including the refugees in Jordan; but they would, however, still need to find a solution as to the final disposition of the Palestinians in Lebanon in particular if they wish to have a peace agreement with that country. Because of Jordan’s political sensitivities, Amman is not willing to stand alone on this issue for fear of being held responsible for the results. Thus, the strategy breaks down on all three counts. Jordan cannot negotiate anything relating to the permanent settlement of the refugees in existing countries without Lebanese and Syrian support, which it is unlikely to receive.

**** Transfer scenarios

As tor the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, there are only two possibilities: They can either leave Lebanon or they can remain there. For them, there are no other options. They can either 1’ight or negotiate their way home; and barring this, they must stay in Lebanon until it becomes possible to go home. To Israel, it means two entirely different things: Either Israel can find a new home for these refugees or convince Lebanon to allow them to stay there. The Israelis, sometimes with the help of the Americans, have been pursuing both of these options behind closed doors, examining options and sending up trial balloons with various third parties. It must be restated for the record that these proposals do not originate with the Canadian government, nor are they being conceived within the Refugee Working Group, neither of which are implicated in any way. Rather, these are unauthorized government-to-government contacts, at times with the help of intermediaries, that have been undertaken by an interested party outside the formally agreed-upon method for negotiation of the refugee issue. Were these contacts to become successful, the formal refugee negotiations would become merely ceremonial, since all the outlines would have been completed in advance. This is nothing new in the history of negotiations.

The reason this has been done in secret is because the first option, which is finding a new home for the Lebanon refugees in one or more third countries, is unacceptable to both the refugees themselves and to the Palestinian leadership. The second option, that of naturalizing the refugees permanently

in Lebanon, is not only unacceptable to the aforementioned Palestinian parties, but also to the government and people of Lebanon.

Not everything that is secret is a conspiracy. Keeping any type of hostile effort a secret — and this is a hostile effort because it goes against the express wishes of the populations concerned — prevents the targets of that effort from benefitting from the early-warning asset, thus posing it as an institutionalized fait accompli with the organized support of powerful states on which the affected parties depend. It prevents them from employing diplomatic, political, or military countermeasures for disruption purposes in advance of the event, simply because the lack of information has deprived them of the time they require to organize a resistance effort in advance. As Lebanon's Faris Bouez noted, "We need to take precautionary moves."[439] The Palestinian refugees feel exactly the same way.

The Iraq scenario. The most prominent of the third-party resettlement efforts by Israel has been the so-called Iraq option. This option is one of which I have a first-hand knowledge — something I have been following directly with Middle East parties since late 1993. The basis of the proposal is that Iraq re-settle the Lebanon refugees, and possibly some of the others, in either the western desert of Iraq, in the Anbar region near the Jordanian border,[440] or perhaps closer in. In a different variation, the Iraqis would be resettled in the southern part of Iraq near the Saudi border. In exchange, Iraq would receive Israeli help in convincing the United States to release the country from the global trading embargo to which it has been subjected since Iraq entered Kuwait in August 1990. In another variation, they would be promised a lifting of the embargo by the United States directly, though they would still be required to adhere to and implement all of the UN Security Council resolutions (presumably including those pertaining to their internal situation).

There have been some media reports of late attributing the origin of this proposal to the Iraqi leadership.[441] These stand in contradiction to my own first-hand information on the subject. Early on, in 1993, before the idea of resettling the Lebanon refugees in Iraq became the common knowledge it is now, the existence of this proposal was offered to me by an Arab official in the Middle East, with the understanding that the Iraqis did not wish it to

come to pass. I was told that the Iraqis saw it as inimical to both their historic alliance with the PLO and the Palestinian people, as well as destructive to their own national interests. These same affirmations were echoed by Azzam al-Ahmad, the Palestinian Ambassador to Baghdad, in November 1999, following his own discussion with Iraqi officials.[442]

There have also been scattered allegations of Palestinian leadership complicity in certain of these underground consultations,[443] accusations which are totally and completely unfounded. This would be seen as a complete betrayal by Palestinians everywhere, and there is no way the PLO leadership would or could ever be a part of such a thing. The fact that the official Palestinian media has been not only willing but enthusiastic about publicizing and exposing the so-called “Iraq option” for what it is should put to rest any such accusations.

I am also aware of certain consultations that occurred between Palestinian and Iraqi officials attempting to uncover the origin of the proposal, and to see if the other side was in any way participating in it. It turned out that neither side was the origin, and that neither side was complicit in its conception. In 1997, PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat publicly rejected the concept.[444]

It is most probable that the proposal is of Israeli origin, as it has received only intermittent and inconsistent US backing. There was a time, roughly during the period of 1995–7, when Washington opposed the concept as standing in contradiction to its all-important Gulf policy, even though it would clearly have been in Israel’s interests. The Israelis have been interested in such resettlement schemes for many years — the idea being to “move the Palestinians away from the regions that border Palestine as a prelude to merging them into remote societies.”[445] During this time, however, the Americans warned Israel in the person of US ambassador Martin Indyk to stop pursuing this or any other option that involved Israeli overtures

to Iraq, for fear of injuring ongoing American efforts to perpetuate Iraq’s isolation internationally. The isolation of Iraq, from the American perspective,

was then seen as a higher priority than the resettlement of Palestine refugees in Iraq (perhaps because the final status had not yet started).

But today, Fouzi El-Asmar reports correctly that at the present time, US administration officials are in fact insisting that Iraq both take these refugees and enter the Middle East peace process as a necessary but not sufficient condition for the lifting of sanctions,[446] which is identical to their original line back in 1993–4. Although supportive of it once again, the Americans are clearly trying to shift the responsibility for the original suggestion onto the Iraqi leadership. By doing this, they can pursue the option without looking like they need something from Iraq — having it appear that Iraq is asking for something from them. For the Iraqis, however, any notion that the idea belonged to them would cause immeasurable and permanent injury to their reputation among their Arab supporters regionwide.

Aside from the above, there are essentially two reasons, I believe, that this proposal is seen as contrary to Iraq's own national interests. First, not only would Baghdad have to resettle the refugees; it would also have to sign a peace agreement with Israel and align itself unconditionally with US regional security policies in both the Gulf and the Mashreq.

Second, there is no guarantee that the sanctions would actually be lifted.[447] Iraq would simply receive "help" in getting them lifted, or alternatively, "steps leading to lifting the blockade."[448] This sounds like a very long process, perhaps akin to the Oslo process. Normalization first, followed by a prolonged lifting of sanctions that could be done in tiny steps, issues taken apart and carved up into fragments and fractions and stages and phases as the issues in the Palestinian Israeli track of the peace process have been — as the West Bank and Gaza Strip territory have been with no real finality, into infinity, dragged out forever. With these tactics, every promise of the tiniest increment of forward movement on lifting sanctions would be met with a demand to Iraq for yet another concession, with no real end in sight.

Once inside such a process, it is nearly impossible to get out of it. We all know that these kinds of concessions are a slippery slope, especially when one needs something from the receiving country. During the indefinite

interim, Iraq would become a hostage to both US and Israeli policy, not only in regional affairs but also inside Iraq itself. Iraq would be made complicit in all kinds of activities during this period, with nothing left to lose by staying in. together with the eventual hope of getting rid of the sanctions. The sanctions could be dragged out for a very long time as a perpetual pressure lever under such circumstance perhaps longer than they would have been otherwise; and why not? This is not even to mention the weapons inspectors, hostile foreign entities, and perhaps even opposition figures moving everywhere throughout their country with impunity.

Of course we need not mention the potential labor benefits to Iraq resulting from an influx of Palestinians. Nor need we mention the confessional downside (or upside, depending on how one wants to look at it) of the importation into Iraq of large numbers of Sunni Muslims. Iraq is not Lebanon: Iraq has ten times Lebanon’s population, and hence a totally different sense of proportion. While the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon constitute 10 percent of the country’s population; in Iraq, with its population of more than 22 million, the addition of several hundred thousand or even one or two million Sunni Muslims would be virtually imperceptible. I

**** The Dispersion scenarios

When the Iraqi option fell into disrepute for a period in the mid-1990s, a new one appeared on the horizon from Congressman Benjamin Gilman of New York, one of Israel’s strongest supporters in the US Congress. I first heard of this proposal from a Western press correspondent during a visit to Iran in 1997, then checked it out for myself. The subject was proposed to the six states of the Gulf Co-operation Council via a staff delegation of the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, which Gilman chairs. The delegation was led by one of Gilman’s chief assistants, Ms. Deborah Bohdlander, an individual with serious links to Israel. The other participants were Mr. Walker Roberts, another member of Gilman’s committee staff, as well as Mr. Christopher Kojm, from Congressman Lee Hamilton’s staff (though Mr. Hamilton has no known involvement, he is a ranking member of the committee and this was supposedly a committee operation). These individuals were sent to the Gulf countries to discuss two issues: Gulf security and the peace process. Included in the peace process

discussion was Gilman’s proposal: That each of the six GCC states resettle 30,000 refugees from Lebanon in their respective countries, for a total of 180,000 refugees. They respectfully declined.[449] During travel to Yemen and Sudan, I was told by relevant individuals in each of those countries that they had also received unofficial requests from American quarters to receive approximately equivalent numbers of Palestinian refugees from Lebanon. These countries have also declined.

Other dispersion scenarios include the various Arab states together with Western countries such as Canada, France, the United States, and even countries as far away as Australia.[450] Canada does not appear to be interested in participating, whereas France, in particular, may be willing because it would help Lebanon.[451] Perhaps the most well-known and far-flung of the mass dispersion schemes is the one suggested by Donna Arzt, which comes complete with the numbers of refugees to be resettled in each country as new citizens (not permanent residents) of those countries.[452] Almost every conceivable country is included as a potential refugee receptacle (which is how she seems to conceive it), including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the North African countries, and the Western countries, in addition to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, and finally, Israel, which is asked to take back a token number of refugee elders (75,000) — all of which brings back the image of Sultan Abu al-Aynain’s “herds of cattle.” Obviously, refugee preferences and opinions did not figure into her analysis. This scheme was received unfavorably throughout the region, not least in the refugee communities in Lebanon.

The Jordan Scenario. In the summer of 1999 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip there was something known as the “Jordan option” floating all around the Palestinian Authority. Apparently, someone in Israel had thought of the idea of bringing Palestinian refugees from Lebanon into Jordan[453] to reside in a large refugee camp complex in the south of the country called Al-Azraq. Some personnel reported having actually seen the complex. It is said to be in two parts: the eastern camp near the Iraqi border, which currently houses Iraqi refugees, and the southern camp near the Saudi border, which is currently empty. These camps were supposedly built long ago as a contingency measure in case Israel ever decided to suddenly expel large numbers of Palestinians from the West Bank across the river into Jordan, during a time of future war or upheaval. In time of peace, however, someone

apparently came up with the idea of sending the refugees from Lebanon to these camps. Jordan has since then publicly denied any intention to resettle Palestinian refugees from Lebanon on its territory.

The Jordanians are inclined to continue to house any refugees they currently host who do not wish to exercise their right of return, namely those with Jordanian nationality. But they are not prepared to take any more. In the words of King Abdallah II, “Everyone wants to solve their problem. But not at the expense of Jordan. The last thing we want is refugees from Syria and Lebanon to come to Jordan.”[454] To Jordan’s way of thinking, Jordan has already borne more than its share of the refugee burden. This also explains why the Jordanians have been shying away from any premature moves toward confederation with the Palestinian territories, since that could lead to the Hooding of the Kingdom with Palestinian refugees.[455]

Naturalization scenarios: The Lebanon Syria Jordan scenario. If the third-party resettlement efforts all end in failure, then Israel will feel compelled to return to the default option, which is leaving the refugees where they are, meaning in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan (with scattered numbers elsewhere), and demanding they be given citizenship or permanent residence in those countries. Jordan would not object to this, provided that the other two countries also agree, and provided that they are financially compensated for it. However, it wants assurances from other

Arab states, like Syria and Lebanon, that all involved countries would do this simultaneously.[456] This has the political effect of collusion: an effort that would degrade the right of the refugees in all three countries to return. Syria has already indicated that it will not offer citizenship to the refugees in its country, thereby preserving the right to return. Financial resettlement assistance to Jordan means both lifting Amman’s $7 billion debt burden and setting aside some of the refugee compensation funds for the Jordanian government.[457] The PLO is opposed to this, holding that no one must compete with the Palestinian refugee families who have the right to the full benefit of individual compensation.[458] Lebanon, for one, has already said it will not accept, much less demand, financial assistance to resettle the refugees in Lebanon.[459]

In any case, even if the Arab states were to try to compete for such funds, their efforts could easily be nullified by Israeli claims against fellow Arab states as to compensation for the property and assets left behind in the Jewish immigrations to Israel back in the 1950s. Not surprisingly, as the final status of the refugees approaches, the Israelis have already begun researching possible claims in this direction.[460] The credibility of this equivalence, strangely enough, still persists, despite the fact that “the Arab Jews left their countries to occupy the homes of expelled Palestinians. Had the latter not been expelled, the former would not have been able to occupy their homes. They are thus beneficiaries rather than victims.”[461]

If the claims of the two groups are found by the current Israeli research to be equal or even close, Israel will then dispense with the issue by proposing that Israel compensate its own nationals, leaving the Arab states to compensate the Palestinians.[462] Thus, the appropriate counter-tactic would be for the Arab League to pass a binding resolution immediately as a preventive measure — one that would prevent any Arab state from ever having to face this inverted “compensation” proposal.

On the second front, the Israelis have been setting forth conditions for Palestinian refugee compensation that no Palestinian leader could possibly sign (such as the summary dissolution of both the refugee status category and UNRWA), and which additionally attempt to shift the burden of payment to the international community.[463] American officials have already reacted to the latter, stating:

If anyone is thinking about an agreement with Syria and Lebanon or a final-status settlement with the Palestinians in terms of tens of billions of dollars, including compensation for the refugees — he can just forget about it. The United States is not a cash machine.[464]

In any case, the Lebanese will not go along with this. They have said both repeatedly and forcefully that nationalizing the Palestinians in Lebanon is totally unacceptable to them because it would upset the balance of their

country. Palestinian leaders in Lebanon are also opposed for reasons concerning the right of return, and have drafted a common memorandum to this effect with Lebanese counterparts.[465]

There is also the unspoken Lebanese historical rationale, which concerns the almost absolute empowerment of the PLO as a military and political force in certain areas of Lebanon during that country's civil war. An unfortunate aspect of Lebanon's internal reconciliation has been the scapegoating of the Palestinian organization, and by extension the Palestinian people in Lebanon, and attributing to them a somewhat exaggerated level of complicity in that war.

The Palestinians are also blamed for the repeated Israeli incursions into Lebanon, peaking with the 1982 Israeli invasion and leaving them with an Israeli occupation force in the south of their country, on the logic that these things would not have happened had the Palestinians not been there. Obviously, this is reversed logic. It has been said that "the Palestinians did not choose to be in Lebanon,"[466] but popular logic often contains a cruel aspect — that the Palestinians are somehow responsible for Israeli attacks on Lebanon simply because they were trying to return to their country from the territory in which they happened to find themselves. Nevertheless, what all this adds up to is that the Palestinians have no future in a Lebanon that obviously does not want them, which refuses to have them, and which obviously bears no responsibility, as Israel does, for creating their plight.

There have even been efforts at third-party mediation, in an attempt to convince Lebanon to reconsider. France was one such third party which attempted to do just that.[467] Lebanon not only rejected it, but objected to it. The French then denied that they had ever even suggested it; and now they are standing solidly behind — and reinforcing — the Lebanese position.[468] Lebanon continues to maintain that there will be no peace agreement with Israel without a solution to the Palestinian refugee situation outside of Lebanon. According to the Lebanese prime minister, the issues of Palestinian refugees and Lebanon's water resource are not up for negotiation: He states, "Lebanon has nothing to concede on these two issues."[469] The latest variation is a new proposal that Lebanon has received, namely, to allow Palestinian passports for the refugees there, while according them special

travel status in European and other Western countries.[470] This idea is presumably offered with the real intention of encouraging the refugees' semi-permanent emigration from Lebanon. The PLO has vehemently denied even considering such proposals.[471]

In addition, the Syrian side has injected into the conversation the point that it will not agree to a comprehensive peace solution that contains the provision of Syrian citizenship for Palestinian refugees currently resident in Syria.[472] This intervention probably came about in response to proposals such as those forwarded by Donna Arzt and others calling for dual nationality for Palestinian refugees in exile as a cover for naturalizing them inside the countries currently hosting them,[473] an idea that Jordan has likewise already rejected.[474] Apparently, Syria is trying to defuse this "solution" before it gets off the ground, though it is difficult to see how Damascus could enforce a condition that lies outside Syria's bilateral track with Israel. Syria continues to insist that the Palestinian refugees in Syria have the right to return to their country. Although Syria has given them almost all the rights and benefits accorded to Syrian citizens, and given that Syria would have nothing to lose by offering citizenship to the Palestinians, we must conclude that the Syrians are refusing such suggestions on the grounds that they would pre-empt and thereby deflate the right of the refugees to return.

The difference between the Syrian and Lebanese refusals is, of course, that Syria is not insisting that the Palestinians physically depart Syria as a condition for a peace agreement with Israel; to the contrary, the personal situations of the Palestinian refugees are secure there. However, the Syrians are not willing to take on any additional refugees originating in third countries like Lebanon, for much the same reasons as the Iraqis. They have nothing to gain by doing so, and quite a bit to lose — though not as much as Iraq. In the case of Syria, the losses would all be expressed in the interArab level of Middle East politics, specifically in terms of Syria's credibility as a nationalist state with regional leadership aspirations and protective of its national responsibilities.

*** Realism and Lack of Realism on the Right of Return

In order to preserve the element of realism, it is necessary to briefly outline the practicalities and impracticalities as they pertain to the PLO position.

**** Signing away the right of return

PLO Chairman Y asser Arafat cannot sign away the right of return and then claim to represent the refugees, especially those in exile outside the Palestinian Authority area. Those refugees taken together constitute two-thirds of the Palestinian people. Therefore he would be signing away his claim to national leadership of the Palestinian people, and this he will not do. As PLO veteran Shafiq El-Hout recently noted:

“I do know that were Arafat or any other Palestinian leader to renounce officially the right of return he would be signing his own death warrant. For Palestinians, this would be the ultimate act of treason.” Furthermore, the PLO’s own position on this matter is solid. Daoud Barakat, PLO Deputy Head of Refugee Affairs, has made a critical historical interpretation, namely, that “UN Resolution 194 is an integral part of UN Resolution 242. ”[475]

He adds:

In regards to the refugee issue, we will state clearly that there will be no peace agreement between the PLO and Israel, unless an agreement for a just solution of the refugee question is achieved. The term “just solution” will be defined as the Israeli acceptance of the Palestinian refugees’ right of return as outlined in LIN Resolution 194. Once agreement is achieved on the principles, the Palestinian delegation will be ready to discuss modalities regarding implementation.[476]

No other party could or would step forward to represent the refugees outside the PLO framework; to do so would be to deprive the refugees of their Palestinian national dimension. No other party except the PLO can credibly represent Palestinian national aspirations as a whole. At the present time,

none of them has the numbers or the national following to pose a credible alternative to PLO representation.

**** Signing away the right to implement the “right of return”

Arafat cannot sign away the right to implement the right of return and still tell his people he believes in the right of return, because to do so is tantamount to permanently signing away his possibility of implementing a right. This would be seen as a contradiction and a deception. If someone has an acknowledged right to do something, logically he has the right to then proceed to do it, or at least to keep it open as a future option. To Palestinians, the right of return is seen as an inalienable right, one that is also recognized by the community of nations, as affirmed by UN resolutions. Inalienable rights cannot be signed away; only the intention to exercise those rights at a particular point in time.

**** Sovereignty

As a practical matter, the Palestinian Authority may be interested in bringing some of the 1948 refugees into the West Bank and helping them continue to fight for their right of return to their nearby home towns. However, Israel may presently be interested in limiting the number of refugees the future Palestinian state will be allowed to admit to the territory it will control. Yet if the Palestinian state is to have sovereign control over its external borders. West Bank Jordan and Rafah Egypt, together with entry and exit to the airport and to the seaport in Gaza, then realistically, Israel would not be able to regulate the entry of refugees. If it is not real independence — a real state — that is being negotiated, if Israel is to control Palestine’s gateways to the world, then it is a different story because it means that what has been termed “remote control occupation” will be continued by Israel indefinitely under the banner of a false statehood. This subject falls under the heading of what is called the “integration of the Palestinian refugee issue into the right to self-determination.”[477] As Arafat said. “When the Palestinian state is established, it will have the right to receive its citizens.”[478] Statehood and independence, especially with regard to admitting and expelling people, and control of borders, are synonymous. Israel might attempt to write limitations

to entry into a final status agreement, but it seems unlikely that it could enforce them in practice[479] if the Palestinians do indeed achieve sovereign control over their borders with Jordan and Egypt. Alternatively, Israel may not really need those limitations.[480] It may therefore use them as a "concession" or card to be traded away for something of a much higher value.

**** The relationship to the settlements

Palestinian researcher Salman Abu-Sitteh has turned the Israeli "empty land"[481] argument on its head, noting the large concentrations of Israeli population in small territorial areas,[482] the same way the Israelis talk about population concentrations among the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza as a justification for settlements. Israel can do that because it thinks it has a right to settle in the West Bank and Gaza, regardless of the effect on the future of Palestinian existence as an independent nation-state. The Palestinians can do it because they believe in their right to return, regardless of the effect on future Israeli existence as a Jewish entity; hence the mirror image of the refugees and the settlers, just as it was with the original settlers in the 1948 areas who displaced the population and turned them into refugees.

Israel may believe that the settlement of Jews anywhere within the borders of mandatory Palestine is an inalienable right in the same way the Palestinians believe the return of their exiles to any place within the borders of mandatory Palestine is an inalienable right. Stephen Cohen of the Center for Middle East Peace, for instance, stated: "You have two groups of people in this negotiation who are totally indigestible by the other side — the settlers and the refugees."[483] Along these same lines, the Israeli Peace Now movement has compared Israel's restraint in not settling more Jews in certain places in the West Bank (e.g., in the middle of Hebron), to a signing away of the will not to exercise a right in the name of practicality; thus the Israelis might therefore demand that Arafat do this with regard to the right of return. The Palestinian refugees who want to return are like the Jews who want to settle in Hebron according to Peace Now: "They have the right of return. But they don't have the right to realize that right."[484]

However, there are several important differences that negate the concept of an equivalence.

First, the settlers already have a country in which they can live — pre- 1967 Israel. This situation, which was created at a very high cost — the dispossession of the 1948 Palestinian population and the creation of the original refugee problem — came about precisely so that these Jews would not have to live elsewhere.

Secondly, the Palestinian refugees do not have their own country in which to live, precisely because most of that country was lost to the original settlers of 1948. The Palestinian state they may gain in the final status might not be large or fertile enough, or may not possess enough real independence to be able to absorb all of the refugees. This is because the post-1967 settlers and the Israeli state apparatus, in combination, have taken over much of the land. There is also the factor of the Israeli closure, instituted in 1993 to prevent the normal movement of Palestinian citizens within the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a situation that may or may not persist into the final status. If it does, the Palestinian economy will remain in a virtual shutdown mode as it is now. It will continue to be unable to provide normal lives even for the Palestinians native to those areas into the indefinite future, much less to provide them to returning refugee communities.

Thirdly, those Jews who moved from Israel proper into the West Bank to settle there were not displaced by anyone from anywhere, certainly not in Israel. To the contrary, they chose to relocate by themselves for both ideological and economic reasons.

Fourthly, the perceived right of the settlers, unlike the right of the Palestinian refugees, not only lacks the backing of UN resolutions; but rather, it has the condemnation of the very same UN resolutions. These days, UN resolutions have been accorded a kind of absolute status everywhere in the world, especially in the Middle East. This can be seen in the way such resolutions

have been used to establish a controlling influence on world relations with Iraq.

The Palestinian refugees do have the internationally sanctioned right to live anywhere in what they understand to be their own country, just as the settlers are able to do now. So even by the Israeli logic which essentially says, “We would allow all the refugees to ‘return’ to the Palestinian state if only there were more space.” If the settlers and the Israeli military are planning to take parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip for themselves, then the Palestinian refugees, to the degree that the remaining parcels of the West Bank cannot absorb them, should as a practical measure be able to return to their original locations in the Galilee and elsewhere.

It must now be fully understood that the real Israeli argument is not about “space” or an economic “inability to absorb,” which is a problem which would not discriminate between different types of people. Israel is ready to absorb” as many Jewish immigrants as it can — in fact it is trying with all its might to obtain more. So we know there would be neither a problem of space nor economic absorption capacity if a certain percentage of Palestinian refugees from 1948 were to express a desire to rebuild their

hometowns in Israel proper. So let us dispense with these arguments once and for all. The real Israeli objection is about politics and demography — it concerns the ethnic makeup of the State of Israel.

If we were to apply the same argument to the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the only practical arenas for a Palestinian state, then it would make sense that the Palestinians should have the same ability to shape their political demography, which means that the entire area should be made available for them to exercise their independent statehood. Presently (1999), Israel’s Ehud Barak seems reconciled to allowing Palestinian refugees to return to areas under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority. However, Salim Tamari, a Palestinian member of the Refugee Working Group, has expressed concern that the West Bank and Gaza Strip territory may not be conceived by Israel to be synonymous with the territory available for the return of Palestinian refugees.[485] It must also be noted that the 1967 “displaced” may receive first priority because Israel has already agreed to their return in the Oslo

agreement, and all that remains now is to delineate the “modalities” for that return.[486] This means that any 1948 refugees who could be taken in would be brought in on top of the potentially large numbers of the 1967 “displaced,” who would come first; thus, the number of 1948 refugees whom it would be possible to bring inside would be diminished by precisely the number of 1967 “displaced” who chose to return.

If we are going to apply Israel’s ethnic argument only to Israel but not to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, then in the name of equality of the two peoples, we must dispose of the ethnic argument altogether. In other words, if Israel is going to retain Jewish populations and military outposts in any part of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, making those areas unavailable for a Palestinian state, it makes even more sense to consider the possibility of a refugee return to areas in Israel proper. What is not practical, or ethical, is to eliminate both of these options. To do so would be to eliminate the possibility of Palestinian existence in any part of Palestine for the vast majority of the Palestinian population. This takes us back to the most important right of all for the Palestinians, as Edward Said has commented, which is “the right of Palestinians to coexist on an equal footing with Israeli Jews.”[487]

Let us clarify: the remaining argument, the Israeli concept of exchanging numbers of refugees for numbers of settlers as described by Salim Tamari[488] and reported in the Jerusalem Post.[489] must now be dispensed with once and for all. First, as has been explained, there is no logical, ethical, or temporal equivalence between the two groups of people — the 1967 occupiers on the one hand and those Palestinians displaced from the original occupation on the other. Secondly, the problem in Palestine is not about people; it is about land, and not merely the West Bank and Gaza Strip land. For the 1948 refugees, it is about Galilee land and coastal land. The West Bank and Gaza

Strip were never meant to hold the refugees from 1948, nor is it capable of holding them all. The shortage of land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is not only about the settlements of 1967; it is exactly about the land that Israel appropriated from the original refugees in 1947 and 1948.

*** Recommendations to the Interested Parties

(1) Stop the schemes, and get constructive! The most important suggestion I can make is to emphasize that these deceptive subterranean schemes should be put to an end.

(2) Involve the local camp leaders in any discussions relevant to their fate. The people concerned, the refugees themselves, through their local leaders inside the camps, should not only be consulted but actually involved in the discussions regarding their fate. This is much more valuable and eminently more practical than conducting “opinion polls” asking ordinary people what they think about various aspects of complex negotiations. Presently the discussions are taking place without any direct input from those most concerned. These leaders are struggling day and night simply to acquire real-time information about what is being discussed in secret regarding their fate. This is both unethical and politically unwise. These leaders should be involved and informed at every stage, in every detail, and in real time not after the matters in question have already been decided and have become crystallized in the minds of other participants. The fact that some of them are not allowed by host countries to travel outside or to formally join the talks is not an excuse: they can be included by way of continuous contact by telephone, fax, and other benefits of modern technology.

Certainly these leaders would have the right, which they may take upon themselves, to scuttle anything that was done to their people without their consent. Rather than the powers that be trying to exclude them from discussion with the objective of presenting them with a fait accompli, it is far better to involve them directly and obtain their input and consent to those matters that will decide their future. That is what Palestinian self- determination is all about — the right of the Palestinian people everywhere, not only those inside, to collectively determine their future. Even Israel (and the US) acknowledge that the Palestinians have a right to “participate” in determining their future, but these principles are not being applied in practice. The refugees in exile are being accorded neither of these rights; and now that the refugee issue is at the top of the Middle East peace agenda, it is high time these rights were given.

(3) Layering and prioritizing the return. In dealing with the refugee situation realistically, it may be necessary to determine priorities for a return program in phases. A future Palestinian state will need to set priorities, but here we provide the original example. These phases and their organization will, by the definition of sovereignty, fall entirely within the Palestinian sovereign domain, assuming the achievement of sovereign Palestinian authority over their external borders with Egypt and Jordan. The return should be in phases, and according to PLO/PA established priorities, since it will not be practically feasible to return all the refugees at once. Some of them will have to wait for a specified length of time; some must return immediately. It is up to the Palestinian leadership to determine these priorities based on objective criteria as to whose situation is most urgent, then to go to the other refugee communities and reach an understanding with them so that they will agree to wait as a nationalistic duty, and not feel that they have been left out in the cold.

In terms of the overall exile population, we are talking about perhaps four million people. Probably one million of these are safe and sound in the Western diaspora and would be happy with the right of return, even if they would not exercise it except for intermittent visits. Being in no immediate danger, they stand at the very bottom of the priority list. Practically speaking, many of them will not want to leave their luxurious standards to take up residence in refugee camps or makeshift towns, even in a Palestinian state.

The two million Palestinians in Jordan, in their relatively stable situation, would have the next lowest priority. Not all of them will want to return. Some will want to stay; and King Abdallah has indicated that anyone who wants to stay will be allowed to.

That leaves us with about one million people in camps or in insecure situations. Breaking this down, we have next on the priority scale those 350,000 or so Palestinians in camps in Syria, who live in a secure situation but some of whom might want to resettle closer to home.

Next, there are another 100,000 or so Palestinian refugees in countries as Libya and Egypt where their existence is either insecure and unviable politically (Libya and Egypt) or is economically desperate as in Iraq. In all of these cases, these countries are far away; and because of that situation, these Palestinians should be allowed to leave.

**** Emergency preparations to save the Lebanon refugees from third-country transfer as the most immediate priority

At the very top of the priority list, then, are the 350,000 or so Palestinians in Lebanon, whose situation is both politically and financially desperate, and whose immediate future is additionally in danger. Their situation must be treated with the utmost urgency, because they are, unlike the other refugees, facing the possibility of a sudden fait accompli. If time runs out and they are suddenly sent away from Lebanon and scattered among a multitude of faraway locations, no force in the world will be able to save them from a permanent and desolate exile. In fact, even if they are exiled to a different nearby area or permanently resettled in Lebanon itself, their problem will be declared solved, and their existence as they know it will be over. However, if they are embraced by the Palestinian state and an internal contingency plan is developed to bring them inside it not as a “return” but as a step toward the return — they will have a fighting chance.

It should be mentioned that the threat of transferring the Lebanese refugees to Iraq or to any other third country by force is not only antithetical to international law; it would constitute a forced mass deportation, categorized by international law as a war crime. In the wake of the notorious forced marches that took place during the Second World War, the 1949 Geneva Convention in Article 49 prohibits “individual or mass forcible transfers ... regardless of their motive.” This may not even be enough to stop it, although there are indications that a more deceptive or subtle means might be used: that of opening the doors of immigration to Western countries such as Australia, Canada and the US, to which the refugees may be drawn by economic desperation resulting from Lebanon’s prohibition on Palestinians there to earn a living. Of course, such a mass scattering, by appealing to people’s concerns for their immediate families, would destroy these people’s

existence as Palestinians forever, and it must be opposed. Collectively, the people must be kept safe from such a dispersal, whatever it takes.

It is perfectly realistic from an objective standpoint that the refugees in the camps, especially in Lebanon, be given physical nationality rights in a sovereign Palestinian state similar to any 1948 refugee currently residing in the West Bank or Gaza Strip camps, without prejudicing their personal or political rights in the original return. However, this should be a fallback position, that is, ready to implement immediately on an emergency basis should a transfer threat from Lebanon to distant countries (or resettlement in Lebanon itself) suddenly manifest itself. This fallback position should be ready and waiting to be offered as a counter-measure should the danger of transfer or re-resettlement in Lebanon become imminent.

Of course, the best scenario of all would be for the Lebanon refugees to have top priority for a return to the 1948 areas, should this become possible in the negotiated forum. This would leave additional room in the West Bank areas for the 1967 “displaced” who are actually from there, to return there. But it should be understood in either case that the situation of the Lebanon refugees is many times more urgent than that of the 1967 “displaced,” and it should therefore be afforded the higher priority. At the very least, the 1967 “displaced” are living as Palestinians, with Palestinians, and in Palestinian communities close to Palestine, and are not facing the imminent danger of “mass transfer” or dispersion to faraway locales.

*** Refugee Referendum

The task itself belongs to the Palestine Liberation Organization as the sole legitimate representative of the people in question. Therefore, it should be the organization’s primary responsibility to conceive it and then carry it out. It would be hoped that the PLO. in executing this immense but important task, would have the assistance and cooperation of the international community. The most important form of assistance outside parties could provide would be to convince reluctant parties to allow the process to proceed in their countries. Other than this, the PLO would need logistical help

in obtaining the data to locate and then centralize the Palestinian residents in each of the individual countries into this process.

The purpose of this exercise is not to determine how many Palestinians possess the right of return — since all of them do — but on how many refugees actually would return today, and to where, if the possibility were offered to them. This referendum should be given to every Palestinian, including small children, to be completed by their parents — whose current primary residence (to distinguish students and workers abroad only temporarily) is anywhere but his or her original home town in Palestine. I realize that a variety of suggestions — the census, the opinion poll, and so forth — have already been made. However, this one differs from the others in that it is a numbers game; its aim is to imbue the return with a sharp practical attribute. If it is done, it will remove a certain vagueness from the Palestinian negotiating position on the return, strengthening it by virtue of granting it the practical dimension. This way, since rights would not be under negotiation — rights that simply exist — PLO negotiators would have the potential to refocus the discussion on the return from an argument about rights to an argument about practicalities.

For our purposes, the term “Palestinian” includes everyone with at least one Palestinian parent (mother or father, so as not to discriminate by gender, in conjunction with the original PLO National Charter of 1964). The objective here is not to practicalize the return or create false hopes, but to help the PLO/PA and other interested parties gain information on how many people we are really dealing with, how many people wish to exercise that right today or tomorrow as opposed to how many people theoretically have that right but would probably not exercise it anytime in the foreseeable future. The practicalities of any type of return cannot be gauged, nor can priorities for a staggered return be discerned or negotiated, unless we know how many people we are actually talking about.

The term “refugee” is to be understood here not in its legalistic sense, i.e., whether or not the person is registered with UNRWA — which is more a measure of poverty than anything else — but in its political sense, since we are dealing with a political question. The term “refugee” should be understood here as synonymous with the terms “involuntarily exiled from his

or her hometown” and “descendant of an individual involuntary exiled from his or her home town.” This will obviously include a number of 1948 Palestine refugees currently living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as those abroad.

The questions in this referendum would be as follows:

1. Did your family leave Palestine voluntarily as a permanent emigre, or were you forced out? (This question is not about morality or the ethics of responsibility for the refugee issue; rather it is designed to separate refugees from emigres. Those Palestinians who voluntarily undertook what they considered to be a permanent emigration still have a right to return, as everyone in the world possesses the right to return to their country, but they are not likely to want to exercise it. It is likely that many of these permanent emigrants, and particularly their children and grandchildren born overseas, would not (do not) even go back for short visits on a regular basis, much less likely they would want to return wholesale.)

1. In which country or territory are you currently living, and how long have you been living there? In which other countries have you previously lived, if any, and how long did you live in each one?

1. Are you from the West Bank or Gaza Strip, or from the part of Palestine that became the State of Israel in 1948? (This is to separate those whose original hometowns lie within the areas that could become part of a future independent Palestinian state from those whose hometowns have become part of Israel).

(a) If you are from the 1948 areas, if you were given the opportunity to return unconditionally and live permanently and exclusively in your hometown in Palestine, with a Palestinian passport, would you do it? (The term “permanently and exclusively” is to separate real returnees from elite international individuals who would actually spend most of their time living outside while retaining technical residence in Palestine for political reasons.)

(b) If you are from the 1948 areas, if you were given the opportunity to return unconditionally and live permanently and exclusively in your hometown in Palestine, with an Israeli passport, would you do it?

(c) If you are from the 1948 areas, if you were given the opportunity to live permanently and exclusively in an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with a Palestinian passport, would you do it?

(d) If you are from the 1948 areas, do you possess an Arab or foreign passport or are you technically stateless? (These questions are not to negate any of these people's right to return, but to determine, again, the likelihood that a given individual would want to return.)

- If you possess an Arab or foreign passport and were forced to choose between it and a Palestinian passport with residence in your hometown in Palestine, which would you choose?

- If you possess an Arab or foreign passport and were forced to choose between it and a Palestinian passport with residence in an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which would you choose?

- If you are stateless, are you currently seeking an Arab or foreign passport?

- If you are seeking an Arab or foreign passport, would you cancel your application in exchange for a Palestinian passport with residence in your hometown in Palestine?

- If you are seeking an Arab or foreign passport, would you cancel your application in exchange for a Palestinian passport with residence in a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip?

- If you are seeking an Arab or foreign passport and the answers to the two preceding questions were both “no,” are you currently a legal permanent resident of the country in question? (This is to discover the likelihood that the Arab or foreign passport seeker will actually obtain one, given that although they would rather live outside permanently, they might have nowhere else to go).

(e) If you are from the West Bank or Gaza Strip, if you were given the opportunity to return unconditionally and live permanently and exclusively in your hometown in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with a Palestinian passport, would you do it?

(f) If you are from the West Bank or Gaza Strip, if you were given the opportunity to return unconditionally and live permanently and exclusively in some other town in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with a Palestinian passport — assuming your home town is likely to be annexed by Israel — would you do it?

(g) If you are from the West Bank and Gaza Strip but living in exile, do you possess an Arab or foreign passport or are you technically stateless?

- If you possess an Arab or foreign passport and were forced to choose between it and a Palestinian passport with exclusive residence in your hometown in the West Bank or Gaza Strip, which would you choose? (This question again is not to diminish anyone’s right to return, but to get a sense of how likely they are to want to return.)

- If you possess an Arab or foreign passport and were forced to choose between it and a Palestinian passport with exclusive residence in some other town in the West Bank or Gaza Strip — assuming your hometown is likely to be annexed by Israel — which would you choose?

- It you are stateless, are you currently seeking or likely to receive an Arab state or foreign country passport with permanent residency rights in that country in the foreseeable future?

- It you are seeking an Arab or foreign passport, would you cancel your application in exchange for a Palestinian passport with exclusive residence in your hometown in the West Bank or Gaza Strip?

- It you are seeking an Arab or foreign passport, would you cancel your application in exchange for a Palestinian passport with exclusive residence in some other town in the West Bank or Gaza Strip, assuming your hometown is likely to be annexed by Israel?

- If you are seeking an Arab or foreign passport and the answers to the two preceding questions were both “no,” are you currently a legal permanent resident of the country in question? (Again, this is to discover the likelihood that the Arab or foreign passport seeker will actually obtain one, given that although they would rather live outside permanently, they might have nowhere else to go.)

*** Conclusion

These results should be statistically collated and cross-referenced. This procedure will generate categories of necessary and likely returnees as well as differing levels of urgency. The seven categories thus generated are here ranked in terms of the priority and sequence of a proposed staggered return process:

1. 1948 Palestine refugees currently stateless, living outside the boundaries of mandatory Palestine, and not seeking Arab or foreign passports. This will generate the bulk of the refugees in Lebanon and Syria, together with small numbers of others scattered in other Arab countries such as Egypt and Libya.

1. 1948 Palestine refugees with Arab passports living outside the borders of mandatory Palestine. This will generate the bulk of 1948 refugees with Jordanian passports living in Jordan, as well as small numbers of refugees who have been given citizenship in Lebanon, Syria, and other Arab countries. Much of this is due to marriage or religion. In instances of marriage to another Arab national, especially in the case of female refugees, some of these people might find that their husbands will want to stay abroad, and hence, they would not be included in the category of practical returnees.

1. West Bank and Gaza Strip refugees with Arab passports living outside the borders of mandatory Palestine. This will generate the bulk of the 1967 “displaced” with Jordanian passports living in Jordan.

1. 1948 Palestine refugees currently stateless living within the boundaries of mandatory Palestine. This will generate the bulk of the refugees in the Gaza Strip.

1. 1948 Palestine refugees with Arab passports living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This will generate the bulk of 1948 refugees with Jordanian passports living in the West Bank.

1. 1948 Palestine refugees with foreign passports or actively seeking them, living outside the boundaries of mandatory Palestine. This will generate the bulk of 1948 refugees and emigres living outside of the Arab world.

1. West Bank and Gaza Strip refugees with foreign passports or actively seeking them, living outside the borders of mandatory Palestine. This will generate the bulk of the 1967 “displaced” and emigres, living outside the Arab world.

Each category will generate two sets of numbers: the number of Palestinians who want to return, and those who do not wish to undertake their right to return at this time, but who will receive compensation. The numbers of those who want to return now, and to where, could then become the Palestinian

negotiating position on the practical aspects of the return. This could be offered together with an exact timetable of a staggered return for the groups in each of the above categories, ranked in order of urgency and priority, 1–7. Those in category #1 would be placed first on the timetable, comprising the initial wave of return, and so on.

In conclusion, the lending of a practical aspect to the return is imperative to the logical strength of the Palestinian negotiating position in the final status. I believe these ideas to be in line with the “voluntary repatriation” concept of Salim Tamari, and likewise, consistent with his strategic advice to focus on the “non-final terms and modalities of residency, return and compensation that will be acceptable to the Palestinians” because, as he says, “it does not mean that the Palestinians give up their historical rights to return to the country.”[490] These proposals will also help to protect the ethical and moral weight of the subject at the international level, since they would serve to transform the negotiation from the negotiation about rights that it is now, that it should never have been, into a negotiation about implementation — a negotiation about precise actions to be taken, in a specific sequence.

In short, what is outlined here is a proposal for the practical implementation of United Nations Resolution 194.

[414] Interview with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, al-Nahar (Beirut), September 10, 1999, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, September 13, 1999.

[415] Address by Lebanese Prime Minister Salim El-Hoss to the United Nations General Assembly, New York, September 23, 1999, via FB1S. Lebanon’s former prime minister, Omar Karaim, says there are only 250,000 Palestinian refugees currently in Lebanon, that the rest have “either returned to Palestine or been granted Lebanese citizenship,” as quoted in Deutsche Presse-Agentur, July 21, 1999. In fact, many more of this number have left Lebanon out of economic desperation to join relatives already resident in Scandinavia and other Western regions. Hezbollah’s

Fadlallah, similarly, cites Palestinian research sources in Lebanon as claiming the number of Palestinians in Lebanon has diminished to the 200,000–250,000 range, see the interview with Hezbollah spiritual leader Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah by Tawfiq Abu Bakr, al-Sharq al-Aw sat (London), December 2, 1998: 12, via FBIS.

[416] Agence France Presse, “Lebanese president warns unilateral Israeli pullout will not bring peace,” November 9, 1999.

[417] Interview with Abu Ali Mustafa, Assistant Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, by cd-Ayyam (Ramallah), September 27, 1999: 11, via FBIS.

[418] Interview with then Col. Sultan Abu al-Aynain by Ahmad Faqih, al-Diyar (Beirut), August 6, 1999: 6, via FBIS.

[419] Reported by al-Quds al-Arabi (London), in “Resettling the Palestinian refugees,” Mideast Mirror, November 10, 1999.

[420] As observed by Lebanese Interior Minister Michel Murr, quoted in Mounir B. Abboud. “Refugees await return to Palestine,” Saudi Gazette, September 16, 1999.

[421] Address by Lebanese Prime Minister Salim El-Hoss to the United Nations General Assembly. New York. September 23, 1999, via FBIS\ and “Losers, always,” The Economist, August 28, 1999.

[422] Radio Lebanon (Beirut), July 25, 1999, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, July 27, 1999: Hoss made similar remarks to Madeleine Albright during her visit to Lebanon, notably, “We cannot accept the saying that the matter will have to be relegated to final status talks. We think we should be a party to such talks,” in “‘Iraq option’ resurfaces as Albright,

Lebanese PM differ on refugees," Mideast Mirror, September 6, 1999.

[423] Graham Usher, "Arafat returns to Lebanon," al-Ahram Weekly no. 444, August 26-September I, 1999.

[424] Agence France Presse, "Lebanese president says any peace must be comprehensive," November 12, 1999; Deutsche Press Agentur, "Vedrine acknowledges Lebanon's fears on an Israeli unilateral withdrawal,' November 12, 1999.

[425] This position is echoed in the Beirut press, as reported in "Palestinian official to visit Lebanon, solving sentence dispute." Xinhua News Agency, November 4,1999.

[426] al-Watan al-Arahi (Paris), November 6, 1998: 18–20, via I BIS.

[427] Interview with then Col. Sultan Abu al-Aynain by Ahmad Faqih, al-Diyar (Beirut), August 6, 1999: 6, via FBIS.

[428] "Fatah militia leader denies Palestinian camps' involvement in illegal activities," al-Safir (Beirut), November 11, 1999, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, November 13, 1999.

[429] Intisar El-Wazir, Palestinian Authority Minister of Social Affairs to al-Ahram (Cairo), November 3, 1998: 8, via FBIS.

[430] Aluf Benn, quoting an Israeli official involved in the talks, in "Facing the refugee problem," Ha'aretz, October 12, 1999..

[431] Muhammad Baqir Sharri, “Al-Asad’s Syria and the National Authority: the motto ‘return of the refugees’ is stronger than the motto ‘rejection of their settlement, “ al-Diyar (Beirut), August 11, 1999: I, via FBIS.

[432] Palestinian Authority Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo, quoted in Middle East Newsline, September, 1999.

[433] As’ad Abdel Rahman, head of the PLO Refugee Affairs Department, to al-Sharqal-Awsat (London), November 18, 1998: 7, via FBIS.

[434] As’ad Abdel Rahman, director of the PLO Refugee Affairs Department, to al-Ayyam (Ramallah), March 1, 1999: 5, via FBIS.

[435] As reported in “Losers, always/’ The Economist. August 28, 1999.

[436] Interview with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, al-Nahar (Beirut), September 10, 1999, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts. September 13, 1999.

[437] Initial signs of a strategy of inside-outside geographical separation can be found by a close reading of Shlomo Gazit, “Refugee solution,” Jerusalem Post. November 9, 1999: 8.

[438] Ramzi Mansour, “PM sees no point in talks with Israel, spurns invitations to ’Partners in Peace,’” Daily Star (Beirut), September 23, 1999.

[439] Mounir B. Abboud, “Refugees await return to Palestine.” Saudi Gazette. September 16, 1999.

[440] Iranian former President Hashemi Rafsanjani’s version: Rafsanjani also claims to be in possession of documents to this effect, reported in “Israel accused of planning to transfer Palestinian refugees to Iraq,” Xinhua News Agency, January 15, 1999.

[441] Primarily Kuwaiti reports, e.g., Kuwait’s al-Watan. as reported in “Iraq to make deal with Israel.” Xinhua News Agency, August 10. 1994. See also speculation about the contents of an “Iraqi message” for the United States to be delivered via King Abdallah II of Jordan, “Jordan’s King Abdallah to deliver Saddam message to Clinton,” Mideast Mirror. October 7, 1999; and Bahrain’s al-Ayyam. “Saddam reportedly sends proposals to USA via Jordanian king,” October 18, 1999, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts. October 20, 1999. For the same accusation leveled in the context of the recent US congressional staff delegation to Iraq, see Said Al-Qaysi, “Two million Palestinians to save Saddam Hussein’s head,” al-Watan al-Arabi (London), September 24, 1999. King Abdallah later denied the very existence of the Iraqi message in an interview, Mideast Mirror. November 12, 1999.

[442] As reported by the Voice of Palestine (Ramallah), November 6, 1999, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts. November 8, 1999.

[443] Including early reports of Palestinian “go-betweens” to a willing Iraq, “Iraq’s Israeli option,” Mideast Mirror. June 21, 1994; also al-Watan (Kuwait), as reported in “PLO, Iraq, consider settling 800,000 Palestinians, Xinhua News Agency, August 28, 1994. For reports on PA complicity in the Gulf resettlement scheme, see the denial by PA Preventive Security — West Bank chief, Jibril Rajoub, quoted by the Xinhua News Agency, “Palestinian refugees have sacred right to return home — official,” November 10, 1999.

[444] “Iraqis and Palestinians won’t swap exiles,” Mideast Mirror. June 25. 1997.

[445] Relating to Israeli calls to resettle Palestinians in Iraq dating back to the 1950s, in /bid.

[446] Fouzi El-Asmar, “Right to repatriation,” al-Riyadh (Riyadh), September 30, 1999: 16, viaFB/S.

[447] Contrary to some media reports, e.g., “al-Hayat reports an informal offer to Iraq: take the Palestinians of Lebanon and escape the embargo.” Mideast Mirror. October 4, 1993.

[448] al-Bayan (Dubai), April 14, 1997, quoted in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts. April 16, 1997.

[449] My initial research into this matter (and the disclosures I received on the Iraqi matter) have since been cited and reaffirmed by Abdallah al-Nafisi, a member of the Kuwaiti parliament, as reported in al-Watan (Kuwait) and al-Khaleej (UAE), for a summary of these in English, see “US scheme to resettle Palestinian refugees in Iraq,” Mideast Mirror. October 13, 1999.

[450] Joseph Samaha in al-Hayat. reproduced as “Lebanon’s outcry against Palestinian resettlement,” in Mideast Mirror. September 3, 1999.

[451] The French offer is in “France offers to resettle Palestinians,’’ Middle East Newsline. September 22, 1999.

[452] Donna Arzt, Refugees into Citizens: Palestinians and the End of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1997).

[453] An earlier version of this proposal coincides with the timing of the original Iraq proposal, “al-Hayat reports an informal offer to Iraq: take the Palestinians of Lebanon and escape the embargo,” Mideast Mirror. October 4, 1993; for Jordan’s current concern regarding re-settling the Palestine refugees from Lebanon in Jordan, Zvi Bare!, “Lebanon has its own Palestinian problem,” Ha’aretz, Septembers, 1999.

[454] “Jordan’s King Abdallah to deliver Saddam message to Clinton,” Mideast Mirror, October 7, 1999.

[455] Interview with former Jordanian Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh in “Former Jordan PM warns against confederation,” Middle East Newsline. June 17, 1999; also remarks by the current prime minister Abdel Ra’uf Rawabidah, “Prime minister says no plans to settle Palestinian refugees in Jordan,” Jordan Times. August 10, 1999.

[456] “Resettling the Palestinian refugees,” Mideast Mirror. November 10, 1999.

[457] A new variation on the Gulf states scheme, as well as the Jordan Syria Lebanon scheme, are both recently reported by al-Quds al-Arahi (London) as being of US origin, in “Resettling the Palestinian refugees,” Mideast Mirror. November 10, 1999.

[458] “Jordan’s role in final status analyzed,” Jordan l imes. September 19, 1999, via EBIS; this line is also advocated in Mamduh Nawfal, “Baraq’s tactics should be encountered with a clear and constant negotiating strategy,” al-Ayyam (Ramallah), October 11, 1999: 18, via EBIS.

[459] “‘Iraq option’ resurfaces as Albright, Lebanese PM differ on refugees,” Mideast Mirror. September 6, 1999.

[460] Eli Wohlgelernter, “Campaign to identify Jewish property in Arab countries, Jerusalem Post. May 5, 1999, quotes David Bar-Ilan, director of policy planning under Netanyahu, as saying: “If claims to Arab property are raised, then obviously Israel will have to counter them with claims to property that are immeasurably greater.” Also see “Israel launches hunt lor lost Jewish property in Arab world,” Agence France Presse, January 16, 1999; “A scheme to settle 5 million Palestinian refugees in the region and the world,” al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), January 17, 1999; Itamar Levin, “WJC starts battle for compensation to Jews of Arab countries,” Globes, June 22, 1999.

[461] From Salman Abu-Sitteh, al-Hayat, reported in “Compensation for Palestinian refugees? forget it,” Mideast Mirror, August 26, 1999.

[462] Douglas Davis, “US plan seeks to re-settle Palestinian refugees,” Jerusalem Post, January 22, 1999, A13.

[463] The conditions were described by Salman Abu-Sitteh in Al-Hayat and reported in “Compensation for Palestinian refugees? forget it,” Mideast Mirror, August 26, 1999. These conditions are virtually identical to those later elaborated in Aluf Benn, reporting on Barak’s position, in “Facing the refugee problem,” Haaretz, October 12, 1999.

[464] Nitzan Horowitz and Aluf Benn, “US reluctance on aid casts shadow over talks,” Ha’aretz, October 20, 1999.

[465] “Lebanon wants Palestinians to retain refugee status,” Middle East Newsline, July 1, 1999.

[466] Interview with Hezbollah spiritual leader Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah by Tawfiq Abu Bakr, al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), December 2, 1998: 12, via FBIS.

[467] “France ‘urges Lebanon to resettle Palestinian refugees,’” Mideast Mirror, September 22, 1999; and “France reportedly proposes Lebanon settle Palestinians,” al-Sharq al-Awsat (London), September 22, 1999, in BBC Worldwide Monitoring, September 23, 1999.

[468] Jihad Khalil, “Vedrine denies Palestinian refugee plan,” United Press International, October 5, 1999; Agence France Presse, “Lebanese president says any peace must be comprehensive,” November 12, 1999; Radio France Internationale (Paris), November 13, 1999, in BBC Worldwide Monitoring, November 13, 1999.

[469] Quoted in Zvi Barel, “Lebanon has its own Palestinian problem,” Haaretz, September 8, 1999.

[470] al-Bay an (Dubai), September 9, 1999, via FBIS.

[471] Interview with Daoud Barakat, Deputy Head of the PLO Refugee Affairs Department, by BADIL Resource Center, September 21, 1999.

[472] “Syria does not want Palestinian refugees after deal with Israel,” al-Masa’iyah (Amman), August 3, 1999, in BBC Monitoring Middle East, August 4, 1999.

[473] Arzt, Refugees into Citizens.

[474] Barry Rubin, “Forced to choose,” Jerusalem Post, October 26, 1999, p. 9.

[475] Quoted in Graham Usher, “Arafat returns to Lebanon,” al-Ahram Weekly, no. 444, August 26-September 1, 1999.

[476] Interview with Daoud Barakat, Deputy Head of the PLO Refugee Affairs Department, by BADIL Resource Center, September 21, 1999.

[477] Fanny Germain, “The new diaspora system.” Palestine Report, January 29, 1999.

[478] Interview with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, al-Nahar (Beirut), September 10, 1999, in BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, September 13, 1999.

[479] This opinion is echoed in Barry Rubin, “Forced to choose,” Jerusalem Post, October 26, 1999, p. 9.

[480] This is the opinion expressed in the press release of the BADIL Resource Center, October 14, 1999.

[481] Benjamin Netanyahu, A Place Among the Nations: Israel and the World (New York: Bantam Books, 1993).

[482] Salman Abu-Sitteh’s argument is outlined in his “Palestinian refugees and the permanent status negotiations/’ Policy Brief no. 7, Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, November 16, 1999; and in a press release of the BADIL Resource Center entitled “The right of return of Palestinian refugees,” April 28, 1999.

[483] Quoted in Thomas L. Friedman (New York Times), “The crunch issue: the refugee-settler tradeoff is at root of any Mideast peace deal,” The Gazette (Montreal), November 11, 1999, p. B3.

[484] Mossy Raz, general secretary of Peace Now, to the Israeli Independent Media Review and Analysis, July 2, 1999.

[485] Interview with Salim Tamari by Tom Abowd, News from Within, July 27, 1999.

[486] Ibid.

[487] Edward Said, “By birth or choice?” al-Ahram Weekly, October 28- November 3, 1999.

[488] Interview with Salim Tamari by Tom Abowd, News from Within, July 27, 1999.

[489] Ben Lynfield, “A point of no return,” Jerusalem Post, October 29, 1999, p. 1B.

[490] Interview with Salim Tamari by Tom Abowd, News from Within, July 27, 1999.

* Part II: Policy Positions and Solutions

** 17. Solving the Refugee Problem — An Israeli Point of View

[[Shlomo Gazit]]

This chapter is not the Israeli position but just one individual Israeli's point of view. Furthermore, knowing Israeli public opinion, my proposal here belongs to the Israeli left wing; it is not the most extreme left position, but it is some distance from the mainstream positions. Another important point is that we did not come to negotiate here in Oklahoma, and this chapter is not intended to serve as my opening bargaining position. As far as I am concerned, if what I say here is not acceptable to the Palestinians, then there is no deal!

Listening to the Palestinian presentations together with the Israeli ones reminds me of an old Jewish story. A couple with many problems in their conjugal life went to their rabbi to present their differences.

First comes in the husband. The rabbi listens carefully to his claims and complaints, nods his head again and again and agrees, saying, "You are right, you are right!"

Next comes the woman's turn. Again, the rabbi listens patiently to all her grievances and nods his head, and says, "You are right, you are right!"

The rabbi's wife reproaches her husband saying "But this utterly impossible! How come you listen to the husband and tell him that he was right, and then you listen to the wife, and you tell that she was right?"

The rabbi sighs, and responds, "You know what? You are also right!"

Unfortunately, this story reflects the tragedy of the Palestinian refugee problem. For both sides there are legitimate views, and for both sides the past is not clear-cut. We need to look for solutions and not waste energy discussing the past. More than 50 years have passed since the war in 1948. The political solutions that might have worked had there been no war or even the solutions that were offered and discussed immediately after the war, are no longer viable. The reality (and the facts that go with that reality) is totally changed. For example, the various UN resolutions that were adopted 50 years ago were proposed and agreed in a very different situation from that which exists today.

Israel and the Palestinian Authority are now in the process of bilateral discussions. Both sides are making a serious attempt to reach a workable and lasting solution to the conflict. Neither side has any illusions that it will get one hundred percent of its claims and expectations. Palestinian independence and statehood, Jerusalem, borders, Israeli settlements, security, water and economic relations — all these issues have to be resolved. And of course, the Palestinian refugee problem has to be resolved. Were either party to enter these final status negotiations without flexibility, without willingness to listen to compromise solutions and with insistence on receiving all their demands, the result would be failure.

Addressing the refugee problem in a vacuum, without taking on board the other issues that are being addressed simultaneously, brings with it an additional problem. The end solution calls for clear and cruel priorities. Each party will have to decide which of the issues is more important? On which of the issues is Israel ready to go for a crisis and a breakdown of the talks? On the other hand, where can Israel show more flexibility, where can Israel be more forthcoming to the other side's demands?

With a gentle reminder that I am stating my personal position, let me begin by saying that I am a pessimist. I do not believe that the Middle East is ready for real and lasting peace in the foreseeable future. I am referring not only to the relations between Israel and its Arab neighbors. I believe that antagonisms among all neighboring countries will be characteristic of the Middle East, and that problems will flare up on the Iranian-Iraqi border, the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border, the Egyptian-Sudanese border, etc.

The media never ceases talking about “peace in the Middle East,” but it is pertinent to ask why Israel is trying to achieve a political agreement in an unstable area and world. My understanding of “real peace” is that the two parties do not threaten each other, and that they do not fear the possibility of a political change or of a revolution that may throw the parties once more into a violent conflict.

Recall that we saw no real peace in western Europe until the last 40–50 years. From a legal point of view there was “peace” in Europe before 1914, just as there was peace between 1919 and 1939. There was a French embassy in Berlin and a German embassy in Paris; there was commerce going in both directions; and tourists came and went. And yet — almost from one day to another — this “peace” collapsed.

My concept of “real peace” is the kind of relations we see today in western Europe, between France and Germany or between the United States and Canada.

I am a strong supporter of the political process. I very well understand why people prefer to call it the “peace process.” I very much hope that the parties will reach a political agreement; and this agreement — Inshalla - will launch a very long process of, on one hand, implementing the agreement and resolving the issues, and on the other hand, gradually dissolving the deep emotional feelings on both sides. Without these gradual changes and developments there is no chance to ultimately see real peace.

*** Israeli Priorities

Let me list Israel’s national priorities as I see them. My top priority is the continued existence of Israel as a Jewish state — a Jewish state and not an Israeli state. The possibility that Jews will become a minority in Israel is a nightmare for me. I do not want to live in such a state. I did not come to this part of the world in order to replace my being a minority in the US, in Europe, or elsewhere with my becoming a minority in a state where the majority will be Arab-Palestinian.

I am a Zionist that believes that the only solution for the Jewish people is the establishment of one single independent and sovereign state in which we Jews will be the majority. Any political agreement between Israel and the Palestinians that will endanger the Jewish character of my state is totally unacceptable to me.

This national priority has two immediate and practical implications. First, when discussing the future borders between Israel and Palestine, I will be very careful not to admit to any new and major Arab-Palestinian communities within Israel’s new borders. Secondly, I am categorically against the return of Palestinian refugees into Israel.

There is already a large slice of non-Jews within Israel, about 18 percent. Taking note of and into consideration the difference between existing Jewish and Arab demographic trends, this is already a problem. Thus my first priority is that any future political solution should guarantee the Jewish character of the state.

My second national priority deals with security. And this is the direct conclusion from my pessimistic forecast as for the chances of seeing real peace in the foreseeable future. Any future political agreement should include strong and reliable security guarantees. It should

serve a double purpose — on one hand, if something in the process does go wrong I would not like to face an existential threat to Israel; on the other hand, the very existence of these security guarantees may, hopefully, serve as a deterrent. The very knowledge that Israel cannot be taken by surprise may deter a possible Arab enemy from initiating such a military move. I am not unduly worried about a Palestinian capability to attempt an all out military offensive against Israel. But with respect to the security aspects of Israel's bilateral agreement with the Palestinians:

- I would like to have a clear Palestinian guarantee not to allow any outside Arab military forces to enter its territory;

- I insist on the continued presence of limited Israeli forces at strategic locations in the West Bank, serving both for early warning purposes as well as a tripwire and first military interception of any Arab force making an attempt to enter from the east;

- And last but not least, there has to be a clear and unequivocal Palestinian undertaking not to allow any terrorist operations from its territory against Israel.

Such security arrangements are an important element in our political agreement with Egypt. Israeli troops have withdrawn completely from the Sinai Peninsula. Nevertheless, because of the above arrangements, Israel does not consider its security along the Egyptian border to be affected. The security problems between Israel and Jordan do not have such a high priority in our agreement. At the same time, there are some important understandings in this agreement too. For example, Jordan has undertaken not to allow any foreign forces to enter its territory.

At some point in the future, Israel hopes to negotiate and to reach a political agreement with Damascus. I am sure that security will be one of the most important criteria in that agreement.

My third and final national priority is to see this agreement as the beginning of a lasting and comprehensive settlement of the conflict, a true conclusion of the Arab-Israeli conflict. I very much believe that both parties should remove, dismantle and diffuse every single “mine” — whether rhetoric or threat — in this huge minefield in which the people of the Middle East have been living for the last fifty years. Leaving unresolved problems would be like leaving live non-diffused mines; the end result would only be who and when one party would suffer and blame the other. Blaming the other party can no longer be the means of political discourse between nation states in the Middle East.

*** The Priorities in Resolving the Refugee Problem

The above three priorities lead me to my personal view and solution to the refugee problem.

The first priority is the need to have two entirely separate political entities. Two states with clearly defined borders to separate them. Separate borders do not necessarily mean closed borders, with fences and minefields.

I would like to see two countries that allow movement in both directions, but only through recognized crossing points. In this situation, there would be movement of goods and of people. I hope that we shall see the end to the present phenomena of some 40,000 vehicles that are stolen every year from Israeli private owners and smuggled into Palestinian territory.

To reiterate the argument presented above — there should be no return of Palestinian refugees into the present or future borders of Israel. The future borders between the two countries will be on the agenda of the bilateral negotiations and I assume that the agreed borders will not be the old Green Line. Within these future borders, there should be no return of refugees and no right of return.

The current balance between Jews and non-Jews in Israel is delicate. Growth of the Arab population in Israel may encourage Arab irredentist movements that will call for independence from and their separation from Israel. This is something Israel cannot afford, bearing in mind that the present size of Israel is approximately some 10,000 square miles.

There are some 3 to 3.5 million Palestinian refugees that claim the right of return. Had they returned in 1948, in accordance to the famous UN resolution 194. they could have returned to their original homes, property and villages. This is no longer possible. What people fail to understand is that were the Palestinian refugees to return to Israel today, nothing is available. There would be only two possibilities. One possibility would be to remove several million Israelis that have been living in Palestinian's former houses for the last 50 years. Many of these properties are now occupied by universities, hospitals and other major installations. The other possibility would expect Israel to absorb the returning Palestinian refugees somewhere in Israel, irrespective of their original homes and villages. The obvious question to be asked is, if we are not calling for the literal return to original homes and property, why not resettle the refugees in countries that have a similar religious and cultural background?

I assume that the present Israeli policy will continue and that we shall allow the entrance of individual Palestinians, on a humanitarian basis. This policy had been going on for the last 50 years, in small numbers, and I very much recommend that it continue. But it is an Israeli decision, and neither the Palestinians nor any outside power have the right to impose on Israel the number of refugees that will be allowed to enter, nor where and when they be allowed to enter. Thus, if a Palestinian Arab living in Nazareth or in Kafr Kassem has a close relative living in Lebanon, he will have the right to apply for family-reunion. It will be a humanitarian act on Israel's part to agree to reunite the family but such reunions should not be part of an annual quota.

With respect to the Palestinian demand and expectation that Israel should admit responsibility for the refugee problem, as well as for the 50 years of refugee suffering, it must be made clear that Israel refuses to accept any responsibility for the refugee problem. I oppose the idea of any Israeli admittance of guilt. The Jews in Palestine did not start the 1948 war. Israel

accepted the UN resolution 181 of November 29, 1947 when the Arab side rejected this UN resolution, and the Arabs and others started a violent war against the Jewish community. The Arabs were quite confident that they would win the war, that the Jews in Palestine would be exterminated, and that the Arabs would establish an independent Arab state in all Palestine.

There were also a small number of Jewish refugees during that war. All Jewish villages that were captured during the war by Arab forces were completely destroyed and all their Jewish population (including women and children) were killed or taken as prisoners of war.

In spite of the invasion of foreign Arab armies in support of the local Palestinians, the Arabs lost the war. They lost major parts of the land that had been allocated to them according to the UN partition plan. Furthermore, some 650,000 Palestinians lost their homes and became refugees.

In the years that followed there was consistent Arab refusal to recognize Israel, to negotiate with Israel, or to make peace with the Jewish State. The Palestinian side cannot now come to the table ignoring what took place in 1947 and 1948, ignoring their stubborn refusal to resettle the refugees, and now say to Israeli Jews: “We have lost the war, but now, 52 years later, do allow us to go back to our homes!” The clock cannot be turned back. It is totally wrong to ignore what happened in this part of the world during those 50 years.

The Palestinians demand an Israeli public declaration in which Israel would acknowledge responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem. But there was a war and there was suffering on both sides. Israel lost one percent of its male population. I personally lost many of my closest friends in the 1948 war. Indeed, both my brother and myself were wounded.

I do not even want to think what would have been the consequences for the Israelis had we lost the war. We know, of course, that Palestinians did suffer and that they are still suffering. And the majority of Israelis are sorry that the refugee problem has not yet been resolved. It is a painful humanitarian

problem that should be dealt with as soon as possible. But we Israelis are not the responsible party, nor are we prepared to share responsibility.

We are facing nowadays “new historians” that try to tell us that there was no possibility that Israel could have lost the war. I know what were my feelings and those of my friends during those long months of incessant fighting. We never thought that our victory was guaranteed. The only question that we asked again and again was which of our friends will be buried next.

I know very well that the Palestinians have suffered for the last 50 years

and are still suffering today. I gladly recognize openly their suffering. But it is neither our doing nor our responsibility.

If the Palestinians greatly desire an Israeli declaration, even if it isn’t true, why should we not please them? Why should we not make that gesture in order to please them’? Why should we not give them the satisfaction that may perhaps allow a solution to the problem?

My answer is very simple: Were Israel to admit responsibility for the refugee problem, we would automatically also be responsible for the 1948 war. We would automatically be responsible for the “rejection” of UN Resolution 181 of November 29, 1947, as well as for many other ‘crimes’ against Palestinians for which Israelis are erroneously blamed for having “committed.”

*** The Compensation Issue

I realize that I represent a rather small Israeli minority in terms of the need to compensate the refugees for the properties they left behind — properties we now hold and occupy in Israel. There are many estimates as to the value of these properties. Even according to the most modest evaluations, Israel is incapable of carrying this burden by itself. It will have to be an international

project, with Israel raising its limited share. But I simply cannot see how we Israelis have the right not to offer the Palestinians compensation. This is not a political issue, it is a humanitarian problem (as well as a justice problem), and we should treat it as such. The compensation issue has to be part of a package that solves the refugee problem; it has to be within the context of an Israeli-Palestinian peace treaty and political settlement. But it has to be done.

For the sake of fairness I want to also mention the Israeli arguments against these compensation:

First comes the claim, of course, that all these lost properties were the result of a war initiated by the Palestinians and by their Arab neighboring countries, a war they lost. The Palestinians have no right to come today and to say — “Well, we want to forget all the history and circumstances. We want to be compensated for our losses.”

Next comes the claim that the very same war that created the Palestinian refugee problem also created a Jewish refugee problem. Most of the Jewish communities in the Arab world were forced to flee and to find shelter in Israel. None of these Jewish refugees were compensated for their properties, while Israel fully absorbed and integrated them. The Jewish refugees were resettled, in many cases, in vacated former Palestinian villages and neighborhoods.

The third Israeli argument refers to the size of the problem. Israel simply does not have the financial resources to fully compensate the refugees.

Beside the obvious urgent need to solve the compensation problem, I am a strong supporter of the need to solve the refugee issue as a political problem. I strongly believe that the refugee problem will play a key role in the overall complex arrangements leading to a comprehensive resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israelis are repeatedly concerned with a very intriguing question, that is: Are the Palestinians sincere in their promises to see the future political agreement as the conclusion of all their claims? On almost every of the standing issues, Israel will be expected to “give” something to the Palestinians, while the Palestinian party’s real intentions will not be put to test. Resolving the refugee issue will bring the Palestinians over to the “giving” side.

I assume that once we reach an agreement, the Palestinian leadership will have to address its Palestinian constituency with a very clear message, perhaps along these lines:

“My fellow Palestinians, I am happy to tell you today that our conflict with Israel has come to an end. After so many years of struggle, we have won the war! We are going to have our independent and sovereign Palestinian State. At long last, we shall have our independence, we shall develop our country and we shall show the Jews and the Israelis, as well as the rest of the world, what a beautiful country it is going to be!”

But to this statement, it will be necessary to add:

“This is the good news. The bad news is that our refugee brothers, those that have been living and suffering in the camps for more than 50 years, will not return to their homes in Israel. This is part of the agreement that we have negotiated and signed today. The refugee problem will be resolved in three ways:

First, the Palestinian State will have a Palestinian ‘Law of Return’. Every refugee, wherever he or she may live today, will have the right of choice to return to his own independent Palestinian State, and the Palestinian State will attempt to assist returnees to live in the Palestinian environment and to share the challenge of developing our own land.

Second, we have reached an agreement with our Arab brothers in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. All refugees presently living in those countries will have the right of residence there. They will have a choice between the citizenship of their host countries, Palestinian citizenship, or dual citizenship;

And last, but not least, both Israel and the international community, will help us in financially compensating, resettling and rehabilitating the refugees."

The above should not be just a declaration. It has to become a commitment of the Palestinian State, other Arab States, Israel, and the international community. In due course there should be no more refugees or refugee camps.

Next, I would expect the Palestinian leadership to undertake another difficult task. That of approaching the Secretary General of the UN and to ask him to dissolve UNRWA. The host countries should assume all of its services. The administration and the personnel should remain in place but as part of the local national administrations. And of course, there would no longer be any Palestinian carrying the formal status of "refugee."

And lastly, the real and most important test would be the implementation of this agreement — the process of resettlement and rehabilitation of the refugees. Do not expect miracles. Nothing will happen from one day to another — it will take years, and most probably, decades. But through this process Israel would be able to see the Palestinian "give" as well as a mutual process of confidence building measures.

The Palestinian refugee problem is considered to be one of the most difficult problems on the mutual Palestinian-Israeli agenda. Once the parties understand the need and are each ready to slaughter a 'sacred cow', the solution will be quite simple. Palestinians have to understand that there will be no return to their original homes inside Israel; Israel will have to undertake to compensate the refugees. Once the parties accept these terms, the resolution of the problem will not only be relatively simple but this

process will play an extremely important role in the overall solution of the complex Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

** 18. A Predicament in Search of an Innovative Solution

[[Munther S. Dajani]]

Before tackling the problem of the Palestinian refugees. I would like to begin by establishing our hopes and aspirations as we stand poised on the eve of the final status negotiations. I would like to speak at first in general terms, then focus on the refugee problem.

*** The General Atmosphere on the Eve of the Final Status Negotiations

One of the most complex issues in reaching a final settlement in the Arab-Israeli conflict concerns building trust and confidence between two peoples who have lived in armed conflict for nearly a century. Throughout this struggle we've learned a valuable lesson: Although it may be important to sign treaties or agreements between governments, the people's acceptance to these agreements and how they are actually implemented are even more important.

In order to sustain the peace promised in the treaties and make it a warm peace, treaties must be accepted, not only by the leadership, but also by the people whose lives are daily affected by such agreements. All parties to the agreement must develop a win-win mentality. To achieve these goals, we must first acknowledge the adversarial relations which exist between the occupiers and the occupied, then attempt to transform this relationship to that of a partnership. We can also start by learning from each other. While it may never be possible for either party to love, or even like, the other, we must begin by developing business partnerships that would mutually benefit both sides.

Both sides must change their basic attitudes toward each other and begin thinking of the other side as a partner in peace rather than as an adversary.

The Israelis, who have always had the upper hand in the negotiations, must start this process by ceasing and desisting in their condescension toward the Palestinians and by putting an end to the hegemony that has resulted in an occupier-occupied/master-slave mentality which continues to jeopardize the entire peace process. Palestinians observe this paradigm even when Israelis negotiate among themselves, then attempt to impose their own consensus on the Palestinians, in an assumption that that which is in the best interests of Israel must be accepted by the Palestinians. This logic constitutes an unacceptable basis on which to build a sustainable and lasting peace.

The Israelis continue to confiscate Palestinian land, to expand their settlements, and detain prisoners. Whether in the name of Israeli security, or for religious or historical reasons, such actions will always remain obstacles toward building a meaningful peace. The Palestinian people need to feel that there can be a significant change from conflict to harmony, from war and agony to peace and happiness, from bombs and destruction to building and reconstruction, from economic strangulation to economic prosperity.

While it is true that the Palestinians are currently in a weak bargaining position, the Israeli leadership must be magnanimous and visionary enough to base present policy on long-term goals that will serve the longterm interests of both parties. Lessons from history continue to remind us that the

balance of power changes, alliances shift, and above all nothing is permanent in a modern world full of surprises. Some day the shoe may be on the other foot. As a partner in the peace process, the Israelis should reassess and re-evaluate their long-term policies toward their next door neighbors, especially the Palestinians. It is not feasible, nor sensible, to create a cold peace with those who live next door, let alone those sitting on one's lap. The Israelis must not continue to take unfair advantage of their current strength to undermine the position and credibility of their partners in the peace process who have staked everything on its success. A continuation of current policy will eventually lead to a treaty that, as time passes, will cause bitterness and shame and become a common nightmare; the old treaty, namely the "Versailles" Oslo Treaty of 1999, will become a source of public shame and humiliation which must be corrected or it will lead to a crisis caused by loss of face.

In the 1930s, bad agreements resulted in an unstable political environment which in turn resulted in the creation of the motto "Let's Go to War." This motto became a popular means of ridding the shame brought on by the old treaties instigated by an ancien regime. Bad agreements, resulting in situations similar to the current Palestinian refugee camps, became fertile grounds for planting the seeds of hatred and revenge.

At some point the Israelis must face the truth and begin the reconciliation process by accepting responsibility for injustices inflicted on the

Palestinians in general, and the refugees in particular. This will open the way to usher in the Palestinians as equal partners. While it is true that it has taken the Palestinians a long fifty years to finally accept the Israelis, it is my sincere hope that it will not take the Israelis another fifty years to accept the Palestinians. Unfortunately, it appears to be taking the Israelis much longer than expected to accept the Palestinians as partners in the peace process. Perhaps this process can begin by accepting the fact that both peoples must share the land they live on, the water they drink, the air they breathe, the natural resources of the country, and the environment around them. Both must accept that each must have his fair share, but only his fair share.

As the Palestinians have recognized the State of Israel, so must Israel reciprocate by recognizing the State of Palestine as an independent sovereign state. The current logic that seems to state “what is mine is mine, and what is yours must be negotiated” is not, and will never be, acceptable. History has demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt, that over the long run, the best and longest-lasting treaties, are the win-win treaties, not the zero-sum treaties.

Israelis must view Palestinians not as terrorists and laborers, but as equals and partners. Palestinians are proud to number among its people highly specialized doctors, pharmacists, dentists, lawyers, engineers, scientists, entrepreneurs and businessmen who can make a difference, if given the opportunity to cooperate on important viable projects. We live in a highly dynamic world, a world village, being made increasingly smaller every day by a technological and communications revolution. In the final analysis, considering the progress made over the past five decades, including the fact that many individuals have survived wars in which neither party has successfully been able to rid itself of the other, we had better accept the fact that peace can only result in a catholic marriage.

*** The Refugees’ Problem

I would like to begin by defining the term refugee in order to establish a common ground upon which we can discuss first, generalities, then the specifics, of the case of the Palestinian refugees. The term refugee, as defined by a number of international jurists and political scientists, is a person who, “owing to oppression, occupation or foreign domination or even events disturbing public order, in either part or whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of national habitat in order to seek refuge in any place outside his country of origin or nationality.” The Organization of American States has defined refugees as “people who are unwilling to return to their countries of origins.” Thus the main problem of refugees has evolved around two notions:

1. Providing a new place of settlement for those who seem to be unable to return in the short term. (Resettlement)

1. Protecting such individuals from persecution or bodily harm in their country of origin once they return to it.

The Palestinian refugee situation is a little more complicated than this. Due to oppression, occupation, and foreign domination of their country of origin, Palestine, they have been compelled to leave their place of national habitat in order to seek refuge in a number of places outside their country of origin. They are a people who are willing to return to their country of origin, but who still cannot do so for a variety of political reasons. The Palestinians did not displace a people, but were themselves displaced by a people.

The Palestinian refugees, among whom my parents and family numbered, left their homes in Palestine in 1948; they left the food cooking on their stoves and their personal belongings intact in their homes, hoping to return in a few hours, or at most, in a few days. Sadly for them, they were replaced by waves of Jewish immigrants who simply settled into the homes of those they displaced. Therefore, the Palestinian refugees have been unable to return to their homes due to the simple fact that their homes are no longer available for them to return to. This difficulty became further compounded after the Israeli Knesset passed the law of 1961, which prevented the Palestinians from exercising their “right of return.”

In an attempt to deal with reality, the Palestinians have chosen to accept

UN Resolution 194. The Palestinian leadership has looked for a way out by modifying their demand for “right of return” from the right of return to the original homes of individual families, to the right of return to the Palestinian homeland. The implication of this change in policy is to restrict boundaries of the future State of Palestine to those established in 1967.

Also implied is a choice to return and compensation for loss of land and property for those who choose not to return. Implementation through the final status negotiations would require evacuation of all Jewish settlements in

the Occupied Territories of 1967, followed by a subsequent return of the Palestinian people to these areas. It is unacceptable to speak of peace, or an Israeli right of return, while millions of Palestinians still populate refugee camps in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt.

To circumvent the refugee problem in Oslo, the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships stipulated in the Declaration of Principles (DoP) of 1993 the creation of an Israeli-Palestinian committee, which also included representatives from Egypt and Jordan, charged with the responsibility of discussing the displaced of 1967, while leaving the fate of the refugees of 1948 to the decisions of the final status negotiations. The Palestinian leadership is extremely committed to solving the refugee problem through their return or by any other acceptable solution. They, as well as many

Arab leaders, are convinced that there can be no sustainable peace without a final resolution to the refugee problem. Why? Why not simply maintain the status quo? After all, the refugee question is simply a bureaucratic problem or merely a statistical problem on paper.

*** The Palestinian Refugees’ General Conditions

Of the close to six million estimated Palestinians worldwide, more than two-thirds are designated as refugees and displaced persons, many of whom reside in refugee camps. The first group of refugees were those displaced in 1948, the second group was displaced in 1967, the third following the civil war in Lebanon and the fourth following the second Gulf Wan

The Palestinian camps have many common characteristics, whether located in neighboring Arab countries, on Palestinian soil in the West Bank, or in the Gaza Strip. They are generally located on small areas of uncultivated land, or in some cases on abandoned military campsites. At first, all were very primitive in nature with no infrastructure; they often had open sewage systems, not enough running water, and naked earth or sand which became disastrous in winter. Later some areas were covered with cement or asphalt.

In many areas, tents gradually gave way to shacks which were in turn replaced privately by the refugees themselves with brick and mortar family dwellings with private or shared toilets. Even so, the open, above-ground sewage system still exist in most of the refugee camps, regardless of host country or area, and serves as a breeding ground for huge numbers of mosquitoes, bacteria, and bad smells. Needless to say. winter flooding poses major health and environmental problems. The population of the camps doubled in the first twenty-five years and tripled in the next twenty- five years, especially as the infant mortality rate improved. This in turn resulted in another problem, severe overcrowding. According to the latest international population statistics, Gaza is considered to have one of the highest population densities in the world. The physical conditions are tangible and quantifiable; however, the social and psychological trauma these people have suffered in the last fifty years, as well as the political oppression they have suffered at the hands of the host governments, has been tremendous. For all parties involved, there are no easy solutions, merely bitter pills to swallow. All involved must be ready to make serious concessions on all fronts.

*** A Futuristic, Practical Approach

Before attempting to solve the problem, we must look creatively at how it can be approached following two basic assumptions:

1 An independent Palestinian state must be created on the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967.

2 All parties must negotiate in good faith and with flexibility to concede issues they have considered at some point as non-negotiable or unacceptable in order to solve the refugee problem.

Once an independent Palestinian state is created from the occupied territories of the J une 1967 war. there can be no problem with displaced

persons returning to their homes within the newly recreated Palestine. Once this is accomplished, dealing with the really tough nut, the problem of those displaced in 1948, becomes much more manageable.

I would like to propose that a study be sponsored by an international agency such as the United Nations, to determine how many of the Palestinian refugees of 1948 would actually like to return to the newly recreated Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, how many would like to remain in the host country, and how many would like to emigrate from the host country and where they would like to immigrate to. Based on this information, teams could be formed to implement the findings. Returning residents and subsequent repatriation, and compensation to those who choose not to return, should occur simultaneously. Israel has already asserted at the International Forum of the United Nations that it is willing to allow 100,000 150,000 refugees to return to their homeland of 1948. Reaffirming this already stated intent would pave the way for the Palestinian leadership to demand that settlements in former Palestinian areas be evacuated. Repatriation of such a number of Palestinian refugees should not cause undue hardship for the Israeli government, which has already absorbed at least one million (some estimates give 1.2–1.4 million) Russians.

The aforementioned study would be utilized in screening those Palestinians who declare their desire to return, and in selecting those who will actually be allowed to return. Repatriating these refugees should encourage the Arab countries to extend their hospitality to the remainder, since this step would be an indicator of both parties' desire for a sustainable peace. This would ease the fear of the Arab regimes, especially the Syrians and Lebanese, about future political problems or military incursions by one group or another. It will also assure the neighboring Arab governments of the seriousness of Israel's commitment toward the peace process, and their good will toward the Palestinian refugees in creating and sustaining a lasting peace. It would be considered a major step toward building trust and confidence, yet no one has yet taken that first bold step in implementing this agreement. In the last year alone (1999), Israel has imported 400,000 workers from eastern European countries such as Romania; why can't they also accept the 100,000 Palestinian refugees they have already agreed to allow? Such acts merely increase the tension already existing between the two parties in the negotiations.

The Arab-Israeli relations have long been characterized by mutual fear, hatred and distrust. It is increasingly important that all parties concerned concede some important issues in order to decrease the animosity over fundamental differences of the main issues. All parties must stop blaming each other for the misfortunes of the other and start looking for a common ground upon which to build the future of the next millennium once peace prevails. If we don’t, what will happen in the future as ever more sophisticated weapons of destruction become even more accessible and available on the open market?

The refugee situation must be rectified by compensation, repatriation or resettlement, either in host countries or in the evacuated Israeli settlements on the West Bank or the Gaza Strip. It is naive to ignore the refugee problem and pretend it does not exist. A non-resolution of this problem will sustain a very precarious state of tension and a semi-unofficial state of war that could easily last several more generations. For Israel, resolution of this problem is a bitter pill which must be swallowed. Admitting 200,000–250,000 Palestinians might pose a psychological problem, but not an impossible or unacceptable one. Compensation can be placed in the hands of an international voluntary group, and many of the Palestinians can be relocated to their own independent Palestinian state, thus strengthening and preserving the Jewishness of the present Israeli state. Plans for economic development and prosperity for all are already being implemented.

In conclusion, we must look for ways to sustain the peace process and to continue investing in new projects being built daily. After all, we, the peoples of the region, clearly understand what is desirable, what is probable and what is acceptable to all involved.

** 19. The Historical Development of the Refugee Camps in Jordan

[[Hussein Ramzoun]]

Several social scientists have considered the twentieth century as the century of human rights. During this period such classical concepts as slavery, feudalism, and capital punishment have vanished, while democracy and the rights of women and children have come to be recognized by members of the United Nations. Unfortunately, the twentieth century has also witnessed a sad increase of forced refugees throughout the world due to war and civil riots. The Middle East, in particular, has witnessed several waves of forced migration as well as voluntary migration due to a lack of stability in the region.

The Middle East is strategically located where a number of regional and international trade routes meet, and it is here that three major world religions have arisen and co-exist in an uneasy peace. It is this unrest that has led to the present problem regarding the Palestinian refugees.

Following the establishment of the Jewish state on the site of the former Palestine in 1948, more than 800,000 Palestinians were forced to leave their homeland and resettle in surrounding Arab states, particularly in Jordan. Approximately 41 percent of these refugees migrated to major cities in Jordan. This was followed by another wave of Palestinian refugees after the 1967 war, when an additional 385,277 refugees migrated to Jordan.

This essay aims to trace the historical development of the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan by focusing on the following issues:

1. The reasons why the refugees chose to immigrate to Jordan;

1. The spatial distribution of the refugee camps and the population structure; and

1. The design and structure of the camps.

I use a variety of sources and would like to recognize Hussein Ismail's research in his 1989 Ph.D. dissertation at Michigan State University, "The Socio-Economic Experiences of Families of Migrant Workers in Jordan."

*** Why the Refugees Chose to Immigrate to Jordan

Before the colonial period, the eastern Mediterranean area — the modern countries of Syria, Jordan, Palestine, and Lebanon — was considered one nation, called Greater Syria, or Shaam. Even at the time of the Ottoman Empire, the Turks divided the area into administrative districts from east to west connecting Hebron, Nablus, and Tobass in Palestine with Kerak, Salt, and Irbid in Jordan. Such administrative connections encouraged trade between Palestine and Jordan, as well as an exchange of peoples and cultures, which resulted in the development of strong relations between the Jordanian and the Palestinian peoples.

When the Jewish militant groups began to attack the Palestinian villages and towns, and when the Israeli army started to occupy parts of Palestine, Palestinian families escaped killing by fleeing to Jordan, a country with which they had long been familiar and had long ago established friendship ties. This is the real reason why, as Mousa Samha wrote in 1995, such a large percentage of Palestinian refugees have lived in Jordan since their first exodus in 1948 and the second in 1967. Jordan and the West Bank, what was left of Palestine after the Jewish state was established in 1948, became united as one state called the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This unity was welcomed by both peoples; the people of Jordan shared with their Palestinian brothers food, land, and a large number of other things. Today, Jordan lies in

an area between 29.5 and 32.5 degrees north latitude that is blessed with a moderate climate and encompasses a total area of 88,950 square kilometers.

Before 1948, the total population of Jordan totaled about 400,000 people, and the limited food and water resources were scarcely enough for that number. Only about 1.1 percent of the country receives an annual rainfall between 500 and 600 millimeters, enough to support a large concentration of people; 91.4 percent of the country receives less than 200 millimeters of annual rainfall. Most importantly, 92.2 percent of the rainfall evaporates, leaving only 7.8 percent of ail rainfall to replenish underground water sources. These limited resources have become stretched further in the past fifty years following the influx of refugees from Palestine, and of course their subsequent natural population growth. According to the Refugee and Displaced Persons Report, by 1997 the total population of Jordan numbered more than three and a half million. Today, Jordan hosts approximately 1.2 million Palestinian refugees, of whom

<br’approximately 240,000 still live in camps, the remainder of whom live in major towns and cities.

The Jordanian government plays an active role in caring for the refugees in conjunction with UNRWA, offering basic services such as education in nutrition and literacy, immunization, and childcare services. The Jordanian government covers the shortages in other services, especially for those living outside of the camps. Such support costs the Jordanian government approximately $300 million per year, i.e., 22 percent of the total Jordanian budget. The Jordanian government also provides Palestinian refugees with Jordanian citizenship and passports. This entitles the refugees to live and work in Jordan, own land, vote in elections and even leave the country for work in other Arab oil countries, Europe and the United States. Jordan is the only Arab state in the region that offers such a service that has enabled thousands of Palestinians to migrate and seek residence in Canada, Europe, and the United States. Now only about 20 percent of all Palestinian refugees in Jordan live in refugee camps. The skilled and educated Palestinian refugees have been able to obtain employment and thus live outside of the refugee camps, leaving only the poor and uneducated in the camps.

*** Spatial Distribution/Population of Refugee Camps

Table 19.1 depicts the distribution of the Palestinian refugees in the camps in Jordan.

Table 19.1 Distribution of the Palestinian refugees in the camps in Jordan

| Name of Original Present Number | Refugee Camps Capacity of Refugees |

| 1948 | 1 Al-Hussein, Amman | 8,000 | 27,301 |

| | 2 Wehdat, Amman | 6,000 | 36,474 |

| | 3 Zarqa, Zarqa | 8,000 | 14,143 |

| | 4 Irbid | 4,000 | 17,444 |

| 1968 | 1 Baqa’a | 26,000 | 63,276 |

| | 2 Jarash | 11,500 | 16,176 |

| | 3 Souf | 8,000 | 9,943 |

| | 4 Housoun | 12,500 | 16,083 |

| | 5 Markah | 15,000 | 30,677 |

| | 6 Talbieh | 6,000 | 6,860 |

| Totals: | 10 Camps | 103,000 | 237,477 |

Statistics used for Palestinian migration after the 1948 war from the administrative districts established during the Ottoman period are:

| 1 Palestinians in the North: | 10% to Syria
12% to Lebanon
2% to Iraq |

| 2 Palestinians in the South: | 32% to Gaza |

| 3 Palestinians in the East and central parts: | 44% to Jordan |

After the unification of the East and West Banks, the 1948 Palestinian refugees became free to live wherever they wished. Many of those who had previously moved to Syria and Lebanon decided that Jordan was a better place to live and moved there to join their relatives. Therefore, according to Mousa Samha (1994), about 55.4 percent of the Palestinian refugees subsequently moved to Jordan. Most moved to the capital city of Amman or to the two major cities in the north, Irbid and Zarqa. Thus the 1948 refugees came to be concentrated primarily in these three major cities in camps which are now located at the hearts of those cities.

After the 1967 war, most of the Palestinian refugees, approximately 175,000 of them, left the West Bank to live in Jordan; and as before, they migrated to the same three major cities. The Jordanian government decided that such settlement would pose political threats due to crowded conditions and therefore built new refugee camps in mountainous areas outside the major crowded cities. The Department of Palestinian Affairs' Atlas of Palestinian Refugee Camps in Jordan (1999) shows that the total number of Palestinian refugees in Jordan jumped from 341,767 in 1948 to more than 500.000 in 1967. This meant that the demographic structure of Jordan began to change dramatically due to such a large influx of refugees.

*** Camp Design and Structure

Upon their arrival in Jordan, the Palestinian refugees depended on donations and assistance from the Jordanian government, from local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and from other Arab states. At first, the refugees were confident that they would be able to return to their homes in the near future. But after several years had passed without their being able to do so, they gave up hope for return. At this point the United Nations established the UNRWA in order to take care of the needs of the refugees in terms of food, housing, education and health care, in cooperation with the host governments.

In Jordan, the refugee camps were built on lands owned by the government or rented from the private sector for a period of 99 years. The camps established in 1948 were located near the major cities or near main highways to provide for easy transportation of goods and services to and from the camps, as well as easy ingress and egress into and out of the camps. The camps built in 1967, on the other hand, were built in rural areas far from the major cities.

At first, the camps were built of tents organized in lines approximately one hundred meters long, with a main road cutting the camps into two sections. Later on, the tents were replaced by buildings constructed of sheet metal, and later by cement block and wood structures. Each original unit had one bedroom, a kitchen, and a fence around the unit to provide privacy. At first, each unit was one storey high, though now they are allowed to be two or three storeys high. Water used to be carried from public outlets, of which there were approximately five per camp. Approximately ten public restrooms were also provided for each camp. Now each home has running water and a restroom, though a sewage system was not available until recently when a modern sewage system was installed. Electricity was not available at first, except at neighboring villages or complexes. Now it is available for every unit.

Each camp was provided with a health clinic, a center for food distribution, schools, and a police station. Such basic services were provided by UNRWA and the Jordanian government. For example, security, laws and courts, roads, and other official and legislative services were provided by the Jordanian government; while health care, education and similar services were provided by UNRWA.

All refugees w’ere free to come and go to and from the camps at any time. There were also free to live outside the camps, to open businesses, or to work for the government. Thus skilled workers and educated persons never lived in the camps or left as soon as they were able to secure employment. These individuals were able to rent houses in the major cities and enjoy normal lives. This fact has caused many Palestinian refugees to seek education as a means of escape from the farming profession. And this explains the high ratio of educated persons among the refugees.

Due to the limited number of schools in the refugee camps, the schools have been forced to run two shifts, one in the mornings and one in the afternoons six days per week, in order to provide the education necessary for the ever increasing number of students. Many of the schools have been rented and many classes have more than sixty students in them. Following secondary education, there is one college of educational science and a vocational training center in Amman.

*** In Conclusion

Jordan became the largest host of the Palestinian refugees. More than ten camps now exist in Jordan. Such camps have continuously been improved due to the joint efforts of the Jordanian government and the UNRWA, which have both expended great effort and resources to achieve this goal. Some of the camps are no longer refugee camps in terms of the original meaning; they function more as independent villages. Yet this should not divert us from the fact that there is a human dimension attached to the lives of the refugees. Their lives have come under threat of danger, they have experienced a sense of isolation, a loss of freedom and basic rights, and have suffered a sense of humiliation at this loss as well as for the way they have been forced to live as refugees all these many years. And though conditions in the camps have greatly improved over the years, the fact exists that those who live there remain refugees.

** 20. The Role of UNRWA: Refugee Statistics and UN Resolutions

[[Abraham Badran]]

In the briefest historical detail, the demographic structure of Palestine has changed dramatically since 1900. The Jewish immigration began to escalate, especially during the British Mandate of Palestine from 1917 to 1948. As a result of the military conflicts which took place before and in the aftermath of the fall of Palestine and the creation of Israel, approximately one million Palestinians were forced to leave their homes, property and country, and seek refuge elsewhere.

Most of these refugees were small landowners, traders, farm workers, and laborers. The bulk arrived in neighboring Arab countries, mainly Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt; thousands were dispersed all over the world. However, a good portion of the refugees took refuge in that part of Palestine which Israel could not seize, i.e., the West Bank and Gaza strip.

Upon Israel’s refusal to implement 1948 UN Resolution 194 Item II, which called for the return of the refugees and compensation for those who could not return, the prospects for a quick settlement to the refugee problem soon diminished, and the plight of the refugees grew worse.

In its Resolution 302, of December 8, 1949, the UN General Assembly established the United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). The Agency assumed its duties on the first of May 1950. When UNRWA commenced its duties, there were 910,000 registered Palestinian refugees. By 1998, that number had grown to 3.5 million registered refugees through both natural population growth, and as a result of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip in 1967.

To facilitate its operations, UNRWA defined a Palestinian refugee as:

A person whose normal residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years before the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, and who, having lost both home and livelihood as a result of the conflict, has taken refuge in one of UNRWA’s five fields of operation.

In the five areas of refuge (the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon) camps were erected hastily. Every one of the refugees — particularly women, children, and the elderly — has had to suffer all the difficulties, pains, and deprivations that are associated with expulsion from one’s home and country, from 1948 to the present time. Gradually, some refugees began to leave the camps and start new lives. By 1998, more than one million refugees were still living in 62 official camps.

*** Palestinian Refugee Statistics

According to UNWRA’s records, the total number of those who registered as refugees was less than the number of refugees who were effectively expelled from Palestine. This record does not include well-off refugees not in need of relief services when UNRWA began its operation, those not considered as “needy people,” Palestinians who were not residing in Palestine prior to the 1948 war, nor refugees who took refuge outside of UNWRA’s five fields of operations.

Table 20.1 demonstrates the differences between UNRWA statistics for registered Palestine refugees and other independent estimates that attempt to reach the actual figures of all refugees. UNRWA uses a figure of 3.5 million, while Palestinian and Israeli researchers assign a figure of 5 million as an average. Table 20.1 gives different estimates of refugees by Palestinian and Israeli sources.

*** Present State of the Refugees

Palestinians who left Palestine in 1948 have remained in that condition since. The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967 created additional

refugees. Politically, the refugee issue is one of the five main issues of the final status talks between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. Socio-historically, no similar cases were actually solved by simple naive replacement of homelands. Learning from the Israelis, if not through their national feelings, the refugees find themselves more qualified than that of the Jews for a “right of return,” comparing their 50-year-old claim to the 3,000-year-old claim of their counterparts. Hence, it is only right to state that the refugees in the host countries and elsewhere are adamant concerning their right to go back to their homes and receive compensation for the damages, injuries, and pains they suffered, and are still suffering.

On the humanitarian level, the matter is alarming. It is regrettable that after 50 years of commendable efforts by the Palestinians, host countries, donor countries and UNRWA, the living conditions of the refugees, and

particularly those in the camps, have not radically improved. Furthermore, disruptions caused by wars, as well as restrictions imposed by Israel in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, have added to the refugees’ difficulties, frustrated their efforts to improve their own conditions, and hampered UNWRA’s efforts over the years.

The principal activity of UNRWA is the provision of primary education, health, relief, and social services to eligible refugees. The $801 a year per capita that UNRWA spends falls very short of the actual needs of the individual refugees. Approximately one-third of the registered refugees live in the 62 camps which are partially served by UNRWA and host countries, at different levels of service. The camps are no longer made up of tents and makeshift huts; but, perhaps with the exception of the Lebanon camps, they resemble very impoverished suburbs of towns and villages in the host country.

From 66 to 80 percent of the refugees live outside the camps in the towns and villages in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, the West Bank, and Gaza. Despite the huge amount of work that is still badly needed to make the camps more inhabitable, donor countries reduced their donations drastically after the Oslo Agreement in 1994. UNRWA’s 1997 budget was the lowest in per capita terms since 1991; while in the same period, the refugee population grew by 3.6 percent. Its report of July 1996-June 1997 states that there has been a

drop of 29 percent in the average expenditure per refugee in the last four years from $100.40 in 1992 to $78.20 in 1996.

Table 20.1 Estimates of numbers of refugees (in thousands)

| Host country | (1) UNRWA | (2) Salmon Abu Sitta | (3) Donna E. Arzt| (4) Ha’aretz |

| Jordan | 1,463 | 1,742 | 1,832 | 2000 |

| Syria | 366 | 445 | 352 | 303 |

| Lebanon | 365 | 408 | 373 | 480 |

| Gaza | 773 | 766 | 880 | 700 |

| West Bank | 555 | 852 | 1,200 | 1,116 |

| Other Arab Countries | — | 393 | 542 | 388 |

| Total | 3,522 | 4,606 | 5,179 | 4,987 |

1. UNRWA Registration Statistical Bulletin for the Second Quarter, 1998-. Amman, July 1998.

1. Salman Abu Sitta. Palestine 1948:50 years after a l-Na kba (a map and tables).

1. Donna E. Arzt. Refugees Into Citizens: Palestinians and the End of the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1997).

1. Ha’aretz, July 21, 1995.

*** UN Resolutions and Refugees

The UN has provided the appropriate legal framework to solve the problem of the 1948 Palestine refugees and the 1967 displaced persons. Two fundamental resolutions are considered to be key to a just solution. The first was adopted by the General Assembly in 1948 (Resolution 194 of December 1948), and has been repeated annually until the present day. It:

resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property, which under principles of international law or in equity should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible.

Secondly, Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 call for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza and the immediate return of the displaced persons who were forced to leave their homes. The numerous resolutions issued by different UN organs and their specialized agencies dealing with the Palestinian issue and the situation in the Middle East can be grouped into five main categories:

- Arab-Israeli conflict

- Refugees and the “right of return”

- The inalienable rights of the Palestinian people

- Violation of human rights

- Peace in the Middle East

In the first category, it is worth noting the recommendation on the “Partition Plan of Palestine” (General Assembly Resolution 237 of May 11, 1949), the establishment of UNRWA (General Assembly Resolution 302 of December 8, 1949), and the granting of “observer status” to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) (General Assembly Resolution 3237 of November 22, 1974).

UN resolutions which were issued following the Partition Plan in 1947 until the late 1960s focused on the individual and human rights of Palestinian refugees. Only superficial attention was paid in those resolutions to the refugees as a “people.” In 1969, the General Assembly acknowledged the Palestinians as a people having rights under the United Nations Charter. The first preambular paragraph of General Assembly Resolution 2535 B of December 10, 1969 recognizes:

that the problem of the Palestine Arab refugees has arisen from a denial of their inalienable rights under the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

General Assembly Resolution 3236 of November 22, 1974 represented “another milestone toward the recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People in Palestine,” including:

- the right to self-determination

- the right of national independence and sovereignty

- the right to return to their homes

- the right to regain their rights by all means

*** Refugees and Human Rights

It is obvious that the Palestinian refugees have been wronged since 1948, when they left their homes and properties to save their lives and those of their children, or because they were expelled by force. Moreover, even after the UN Assembly adopted its Resolution 194 of 1948, the refugees were neither allowed to return to their homes nor were they were compensated for the losses of their homes, properties, businesses, lost relatives, or injuries and sufferings. This is diametrically opposed to human rights' principles as stipulated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and other relevant conventions and treaties.

Articles 15, 16, 17, 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 of that Declaration refer to rights to protect one's family, the right to own property, the right to participate in government and in free elections, the right to an adequate standard of living for health and well being, the right to education, the right to participate in the cultural life of the community, the right to social order assuring human rights, and the responsibility to community essential to free and full development of the individual respectively.

Every item of human rights is grossly violated in the case of the Palestinian refugees. This violation not only applies to past or present generations, but also to subsequent generations — to women and children of the refugees' community.

Shimon Peres describes Israel as " a nation of refugees," stating, "We (the Jews) carry in our collective memory the history of being twice deported from our country, from our ancestor land." Here Peres refers to historical incidents that took place 3,000 years ago. What about the incident of the Palestinian refugees that took place 50 years ago?

The Commission on Human Rights of the United Nations issued many resolutions reaffirming the rights of the Palestinian people (the refugees being the major part) to their unalienable rights. It referred inter alia to the principles of international law; the charter of the UN; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the

International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights; the Vienna Declaration; programs of action adopted by the World Conference on Human

Rights in June 1993; Security Council resolutions; General Assembly Resolutions; etc.

*** The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Through 50 years of a state of war, it became clear to everyone that this complicated problem cannot be solved by force, but only through peaceful means and direct negotiations. Any peace settlement has to be based on international law and UN resolutions, and has to take into consideration;

- The right of the Palestinians to self-determination

- Solution of the refugee problem

- The recognition of the rights of every nation in the area to live in peace with normal relations between neighboring countries

It is quite evident to Israel, the Palestinians, and the international community that the passage of time is not the solution. On the contrary, the past 50 years of Arab-Israeli conflict have shown that the refugees are now more aware of their misery, more aware of their rights, and more ready for realistic solutions.

Although the humanitarian side is of major significance, the political dimension is of the same importance when the stability of the Middle East is taken into consideration. Shimon Peres, the Israeli leader who is a great believer in peace, says in his book, The New Middle East: “ We must find an acceptable solution that is acceptable both to Arabs and Israelis

alike. The solution must be fair in order to bring justice for the two parties." Peres continues:

It is quite difficult to separate the misery of the Palestinian refugees from their demands to apply the right of return. For the first generation of the refugees we find that the refugee experience and the culture that develops in parallel with it works as a foundation of the awareness of the "refugee." For him, he is being negated by the "other," denied the place of birth, has lost his homeland, his home, his land and properties, the familiar sceneries from childhood, and the graves of fathers and beloved persons. Despite all this, the refugee hopes to return to his home.

The second and the third generations inherited this experience, which is charged with great emotional power and increases in intensity and strength in the midst of devastating poverty and miserable, insulting conditions in the refugee camps.

*** The Solution

Is there a possible solution to the refugee problem? And is a possible solution practical and realistic? The answer is yes. There must be a solution, and the passage of time makes it more and more reachable.

The signs of possible compromise are getting stronger. The different partners in the conflict are ready to come nearer to a mid-way solution, but any solution should be based on internationally accepted and recognized principles. Two wrongs do not make a right. The persecution of Jews by the Nazis and others in Europe does not justify the persecution of Palestinians by the Jews. The absorption of Jewish immigrants to Israel does not justify the expulsion of Palestinian refugees from their homes. The rights of the individual to his properties, means of living and homeland cannot be nullified by a change of the sovereign state. Any innocent person is entitled to compensation for the loss of property and for the injury or pain suffered.

International law and principles of human rights should always be observed. UN resolutions represent the commitment of the international community to this effect.

Financial and human investment in peace is far less than the corresponding investment in a non-peace or conflict process. Political solutions imposed by force cannot bring peace, stability, and prosperity if they cannot respond to the indigenous rights of the society. People become more tolerant if they are recognized and their rights acknowledged. Justice, equality, UN resolutions and international law, rather than the decisions and attitudes of politicians, extremists or dogmatists, should be the basis for practical problem solving.

Human rights are the very personal rights for every human being as an individual. Whatever “good” is done for “others” does not close the file of an episode of violated rights. All theories, philosophies, ideologies, doctrines and practices based on religious or racial supremacy or divine- rights-against-others are no longer accepted. They never help in regional stability or co-existence between nations.

The United Nations and the international community, in addition to the peace advocates regionally and internationally, have, during the past fifty years, paved the way for a practical solution to the Palestinian refugee issue, perhaps along the following framework.

In 1971, Golda Meir, the Prime Minister of Israel, said, “There are no Palestinians.” In 1998, Ehud Barak, the leader of the same party as Golda Meir, accepted the idea of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

**** Chapter (1): Recognition of the rights

A declaration of principles for the solution of the refugee problem can be signed by the core parties to the effect that they accept UN Resolution 194, and the refugees have the right to return or the right to compensation. The return and compensation would be regulated along a practical span of time

that extends for several years. Those of the refugees who would like to stay where they are in the host countries will be welcomed to do so and receive their compensation.

**** Chapter (2): Funding of the rights

An International Conference on Palestinian refugees funding can be held with the purpose of:

- creating a Palestinian Refugee Compensation Fund

- creating a technical body to develop and manage the compensation process

- qualifying refugees and host countries to compensation according to evidence

The money for such compensation funds is not beyond the means of the major leading countries of the world. On the contrary, such countries will pay less than what they are paying now to support the military power of the parties.

The total military expenditure of Israel and the surrounding Arab countries from 1970 to 1990 exceeded $180 billion, or an average of $9 billion a year. The international community through bilateral or multilateral arrangements contributed at least 30 percent of that spending (i.e., $3 billion per year). US official military aid to Israel has been $1.8 billion per year since the Camp David Agreement in 1979.

**** Chapter (3): Development

The final settlement would require substantial investment in socioeconomic development. Such investment can be directed toward job creation, education, health services, infrastructure etc. This can be implemented through:

- Middle East development agencies

- regional projects

- research institutions

- manpower development centers

The funds for such activities can be easily allocated if only 30 percent of military expenditures are diverted from military to civil projects. Such funds would be directed to help the integration and resettlement of the refugees in the places where they choose to settle.

The scope of development is unlimited, yet the following fields are cardinal to any substantial development, stability, and final solution of the refugee problem:

- roads, railways and other transportation and communication systems

- science and technology, especially in water, environment, arid areas, etc.

- tourism

- petrochemical and minerals industries

The solution may look very theoretical and need years and years to implement. Yet we have to remember that the conflict has been ongoing for the last 100 years, and the refugees have been suffering for the last 50 years. During this century of conflict, hundreds of thousands were killed or injured, hundreds of billions of dollars in equipment were used, hundreds of billions of dollars of opportunities were lost, and decades of lack of development were experienced.

*** Stability of the Middle East

It has to be reemphasized that the refugee question is one of the major five categories of stability in the Middle East. But it is the most critical and vital one of all. Without settling this issue, which cannot be suppressed either by force or by neglect, the Middle East will continue to remain unstable. The Arab-Israeli conflict is complex. It has historical, cultural, national, geographic, demographic, humanitarian, legal, regional, and political elements. This explains why the entire Middle East is affected by the Palestinian question, and why the refugee issue is the most critical.

Comprehensive peace between Israel and Arab countries based on the Madrid Principles, UN resolutions, international law, human rights, and international community support would help bring coexistence and cooperation to all the countries concerned.

** 21. A Jordanian Perspective

[[Rateb Amro]]

On October 12, 1991, just before the convening of the Madrid Conference, in an address to the nation, His Majesty the late King Hussein declared:

Peace demands no less courage than war. It is the courage to meet the adversary, his attitudes and arguments, the courage to face hardships, the courage to bury senseless illusions, the courage to surmount impeding obstacles, the courage to engage in a dialogue to tear down the walls of fear and suspicion. It is the courage to face reality.

The treaty of peace between Jordan and Israel has produced more than thirty protocols and agreements by July 1999. It is, therefore, reasonable to ask: “Are we on the threshold of a new era?” From a purely bilateral angle, Jordanian-Israeli prospects are bright and promising. But the reality of the present becomes less bright and more complex on the thorny issue of the Palestinian refugees of 1948 and 1967.

The Palestinian community in Jordan was granted Jordanian citizenship in the early 1950s. Nevertheless, the Palestinian community was given, and is still given, the right to restore Palestinian citizenship whenever new reality is created within the implementation of peace agreements between host countries and Israel. I shall limit my remarks to one host country, which is my country: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

*** Palestinians in Jordan

The Palestinian community in Jordan, approximately less than half the population of the country, is a typically Jordanian community. Nevertheless, at the same time, it is typically Palestinian. The aspiration toward a Palestinian home on the soil of Palestine remains paramount. The dream of return is an everyday dream. Notwithstanding these feelings and aspirations, the Palestinian community does not manifest any feelings against being Jordanian.

To make an analogy, I would think of the Jewish community of New York or California, who are composed of US citizens. The Jewish community, however, in the US or any other country, can always choose to live in Israel and enjoy their Israeli citizenship in application of the Israeli Law of Return of 1950.

This option has proved to be mostly theoretical, especially for the Jewish community oi the US, whose “return” to Israel is almost non-existent. The spiritual and emotional value of belonging to a home is, nonetheless, great and cherished by both Israeli and US citizens as well as by the Palestinian community in Jordan.

The Baqa’a camp, one of the largest Palestinian refugee camps and one of thirteen similar camps in Jordan, is home to Palestinians who fled their homes in the West Bank after the 1967 war. Many of the camps residents are originally refugees from 1948. During His Majesty King Abdulah’s visit to the Baqa’a camp, he said:

The problem of refugees was shared by every Jordanian. The 1988 decision to sever administrative and legal ties with the West Bank did not mean a severance of links within the one Jordanian people, nor did that decision mean that Jordan would give up its support for the prime Arab cause that is Palestine.

*** Legal Status

“There are no Palestinians” — so said Golda Meir, as quoted in The Sunday Times on June 15, 1969.

As a result of the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, almost 1.5 million Palestinians became refugees. Today there are an estimated 5 million Palestinians in the world, half of whom hold refugee status.

According to the UN definition, a Palestine refugee is “A person whose residence was Palestine for a minimum of two years immediately preceding the outbreak of the conflict in 1948, and who, as a result of this conflict, has lost both his home and means of livelihood. “ The conscious and deliberate policy of “emptying” the land is now well documented. Israeli politicians and decision-makers have admitted to their plans to drive the Palestinians into an exodus from a time as early as the 1930s.

Israel’s first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, stated this Zionist plan as a fact when he wrote, according to Israeli publications of that time, “we must expel the Arabs and take their places ... ”

The right of the Palestinian refugees to return has been continuously reaffirmed since 1949 by the United Nations and by international law.

The Arab population of Palestine in 1948 was 1,400,000. When the Israeli state was established on 77 percent of mandated Palestine in 1948, 770,000 Palestinians became displaced. Only 120,000 Arab Palestinians remained in Israel.

On June 14, 1967, less than a week after the end of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 237, which called on Israel to facilitate the return of over 300,000 inhabitants who had fled since the outbreak of hostilities. Israel has still not complied. Only 25,000 were allowed to return.

It is evident that the international political consensus, as emphasized in United Nations resolutions, gives the Palestinians the right to return to their homes, but more than 90 percent of Palestinian Arabs have never been allowed to return.

Israel’s Law of Return (1950, 1954, 1970) states: “Every Jew has the right to immigrate to the country ...” It says nothing of non-Jews. Palestinian Arabs, as far as Israeli citizenship and return laws are concerned, don’t exist.

*** Palestinian Refugees and the Peace Treaty

War always brings in its wake a harsh reality. The Palestinian refugees in Jordan are still there and a solution is not apparent. The peace treaty between Jordan and Israel has two important references to the refugee question. One is in the preamble; the other is Article 8 of the agreement.

The preamble in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, October 26, 1994, states:

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and the Government of the State of Israel:

Bearing in mind the Washington Declaration signed by them on 25th July 1994, and which they are both committed to honor.

Aiming at the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolution 242 and 338 in all their aspects. Paragraph 2 (b) of 242 affirms the necessity “For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem.” Article 8

Refugees and Displaced Persons

Recognising the massive human problems caused to both Parties by the conflict in the Middle East as well as the contribution made by them towards the alleviation of human suffering, the Parties will seek to further alleviate those problems arising on a bilateral level.

Recognising that the above human problems caused by the conflict in the Middle East cannot be fully resolved on the bilateral level, the

Parties will seek to resolve them in appropriate forums, in accordance with international law, including the following:

(a) In the case of displaced persons, in a quadripartite committee together with Egypt and the Palestinians,

(b) In the case of Refugees,

(1) In the framework of the Multilateral Working Group on Refugees; (ii) In negotiations, in a framework to be agreed, bilateral or otherwise, in conjunction with and at the same time as the permanent status negotiations pertaining to the territories referred to in Article 3 of this Treaty,

(c) Through the implementation of agreed United Nations programs and other agreed international economic programs concerning refugees and displaced persons, including assistance to their settlement.

Also, article 12 of the Oslo DoP defines one dimension of the regional aspects of the question. It reads:

Article 12 of the Declaration of Principles (DoP), September 13, 1993. The two parties will invite the Government of Jordan and Egypt to participate in establishing further liaison and co-operation arrangements between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian representatives, on one hand, and the Governments of Jordan and Egypt, on the other hand, to promote co-operation between them. These arrangements will include the constitution of a Continuing Committee that will decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder. Other matters of common concern will be dealt with by the Committee.

Over and above these contractual texts, there is the Gaza-Jericho first agreement, the Paris Agreement, Taba, Cairo and the three memoranda of understanding: Hebron, Wye River I, and Wye River II (Sharm el-Sheikh Agreement) between the Palestinian Authority and Israel. There is also the international forum of the multilateral peace talks especially at the Refugee Working Group (RWG).

If the word and spirit of these texts are honored, and if a reasonable amount of good will and sincere intentions are exercised, the parties who are aware of the need for co-existence of Jews and Arabs can iron out creative ways and means of solving the problem in compliance with international law and universal humanitarian practices. But if the spirit behind the words is ignored by the parties, then little room will be left for creative thinking that would lead to a practical solution of the problem of Palestinian refugees in general and the Palestinian community in Jordan in particular.

In talking about the spirit behind words and creative thinking that is really needed in such a complex situation, it is pertinent to refer to Mr. Shimon Peres book The New Middle East. Although his book should be read as an indivisible text, this notable paragraph is especially important.

It is hard to separate the miserable plight of the Palestinian refugees, the experience of being a refugee and the culture that grew up around it served as a basis for the consciousness of exile from the land of their birth — the loss of the country, house, lands, landscapes familiar from childhood, and family graves — alongside the hope of returning to their homes. The second and third generations have inherited this experience, a powerful emotive load that grows ever stronger amid crushing poverty and degrading conditions in the refugee camps. The claim to the right of return has to be seen against this complex historical background. However, it is a maximal claim; if accepted, it would wipe out the national character of the State of Israel, making the Jewish majority into a minority. Consequently, there is no chance it will be accepted, either now or in the future. No Israeli government would agree to the strategy that entailed the destruction of our national entity. In fact, the problem of the Palestinian refugees is not the only case in

history where a maximal demand ruined the chances of settlement. Instead of this dead-end approach, I suggest that we look for a mutual optimum divided into stages: the negotiation stage, the transitional stage, and the permanent settlement stage.

I concur with Mr. Peres that we must look for a mutual optimum. A maximal position is not possible; it is not practical. But what is a mutual optimum?

*** Proposed Solutions

Another dimension of special value in handling the question of the Palestinian community in Jordan is that of security. We in Jordan believe that the stability of each country in the region, particularly that of Israel and its bordering countries, is an integral component of the peace we hope to achieve, a peace that is conducive to normal and warm relations. The Palestinian refugee community in Jordan has maintained its integrity and dignity due to special management of the first Palestinian exodus to Jordan by the late King Abdullah I. His management became subject to worldwide appreciation. This humane and practical management, which included the granting of full citizenship rights, enhanced rather than weakened the Palestinian aspiration for return.

It is my strong belief that when almost half the population of Jordan is restless because of expectations of a solution for their final identity and status, real stability in Jordan — socially, economically, and politically — will always be compromised. These people are entitled to choose for good the identity and citizenship they would like to maintain and through hard work from all the parties, to do that within the context of a phased and final settlement. They should be able to choose to reside either in Jordan; in the Palestinian entity (hopefully, a future state) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; or, whenever possible and mutually agreed, in their original homes.

I would venture, on a purely personal basis, not representing any Jordanian government position, to put forward some hopefully creative views for future deliberations on the issue of Palestinian refugees in Jordan:

(a) The 1967 Displaced Persons:

1. Some will be allowed to return to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

2. Some will opt and be allowed to stay in Jordan.

Some will choose other alternatives like acquiring host country citizenship or residing in a third country.

If Jordanian-Palestinian mutual approval is achieved, some displaced persons may be allowed to keep their Jordanian citizenship status and continue to reside in Jordan. Others may choose to return to the West Bank and Gaza Strip as Palestinian citizens. A third category may choose not to return but to continue to reside in Jordan as Palestinians. The fourth category may choose to keep Jordanian citizenship but to reside in the West Bank or Gaza Strip.

(b) The 1948 Refugees:

The previous four options applicable to the 1967 displaced persons may apply to the 1948 refugees who resided in the West Bank and Gaza until 1967 and then moved to Jordan.

The 1948 refugees, with the mutual agreement of Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, may fall within the above categories too, but may also (a) become Israeli citizens and reside in Israel or (b) become Israeli citizens and reside in the West Bank, Gaza or any of the neighbouring countries.

Palestinian refugees who lost land, property and home and have acceptable proof may be compensated if the land and property cannot be recovered because of the status quo.

Negotiations on the status of 1948 refugees will start only upon mutual consent of Israel and the Palestinian Authority which, so far, has not happened.

In anticipation of various possible solutions, the management of the complex aspects of this issue will require the establishment of a data bank. Again Mr. Shimon Peres touched very skillfully on this vital organizational step in his book.

Forty-six years have passed since the onset of the Palestinian refugee

problem, while the United Nations institutions continue to issue new

refugee documents to the grandchildren of the 1948 refugees. This is part of the problematic and strange reality of the Middle East. Babies are born as refugees; but even so, there are no accurate numbers for the refugee population or data on distribution by place of residence.

*** Resettlement is a Non-Option

After 52 years it should be clear to both the Israelis and the international community that absorption of the Palestinians outside Palestine, in particular those who are registered refugees, is a non-option. Just as the Israelis see themselves as separate unique people who can only live in Israel, the Palestinians see themselves as distinct people whose identity is so inherently connected to Palestine that it is the only place they are willing to settle permanently.

Since the State of Israel is capable of absorbing or at least making serious attempts at absorbing hundreds of thousands of Jewish immigrants from all

over the world, it must repatriate all those original Arab inhabitants whom it dispossessed. As UN General Assembly resolution No. 394 (V) of December 14, 1950 urged, Israel should repatriate, socially and economically rehabilitate, and pay compensation to the Palestinian refugees.

[[Chapter 22]]

** 22. The Refugee Question and Human Rights

[[Bahieldin Elibrachy]]

The refugee problem is an intrinsic component of the complex Palestinian problem, which can be solved as a package deal including simultaneous compromises and gains for each side. However, in trying to conceive solutions to the refugee problem, we extract it from its context. And in doing so, we overlook the necessary interactions that shall go into the formulation of the compromise final solution.

The refugee problem focuses the moral obligation of Israel. The Jews called for their right to seek a homeland that would preserve their culture and provide them with independence. It is, therefore, self-defeating for the morality of their cause to deny the same for the Palestinians. It is not possible to leave people in destitution and to deny them their right to preserve their culture, their right for political association. This is a basic human rights issue that implies a moral obligation as well as perpetuating grave political risks and instability.

*** Aspects of the Palestinian Problem

To address the Palestinian refugee problem it is necessary to address two distinct issues. The first is the relocation of the refugees. The second is paying proper and adequate compensation.

The refugees who have been dislocated from Palestine/Israel need to become integrated into a political system with which they choose to associate. This problem does not apply to Palestinians who opted for citizenship of another country, with the exception of Jordan. By opting for the citizenship of another country, the former Palestinians has already voluntarily associated with a political community of his choice, and therefore surrendered claim for reintegration into a Palestinian community.

The moral grounds of such restrictions could be challenged on the basis that the voluntary association with another political community was made when an alternative Palestinian association was not available. It would be, therefore, a reflection of a practical necessity more than a willful abandonment of the Palestinian identity. This argument is both logically sound as well as politically powerful. It is politically powerful in view of the fact that many of the leaders of the Palestinians have disproportionately made the choice of electing alternative citizenship.

Nevertheless, this distinction seems fair in view of the fact that it would not be practically possible to relocate the entire Palestinian people to Israel and Palestine. It is, therefore, a practical necessity to selectively narrow down the scope of the problem by decreasing the number of eligible refugees allowed the “right of return.” It is appropriate to confine the right of return to those Palestinians who have never elected an alternative citizenship.

The confinement of the refugee problem to Palestinians without a current alternative citizenship should not apply, however, to those Palestinians who have acquired Jordanian nationality. This is because Jordan included Palestine as part of its nation. Therefore, acquiring the Jordanian citizenship does not imply voluntarily abandoning one’s Palestinian heritage.

I do not believe it helpful to draw distinctions between refugees on the basis of the years they have been refugees, because this is an historical coincidence of uncertain significance in defining the problem. Additionally, I do not believe it is helpful to draw distinctions based on whether a refugee willfully left or was forced to leave. This is because the distinction is probably illusory. Mass dispersion cannot and should not be deemed voluntary — I have assumed that it is always involuntary. Furthermore, voluntary immigration does not deny the immigrant the right to return if he or she has not acquired an alternative nationality.

All refugees should be provided with adequate compensation. Compensation should include the price of relocation, and should be paid to the hosting countries, whether the host country is the new Palestinian entity and/or any other country that offers to host significant groups of Palestinians, provided that Palestinian refugees agree to relocate to that country. The relocation compensation should cover the costs that the host country shall incur in providing the necessary public services to the refugees.

The other distinct aspect of the compensation issue is proper and adequate compensation to the refugees for their land and property from which they have been dispossessed. Egypt has been a good example in providing compensation for the Jewish property that was confiscated after the Jews' departure in the fifties and sixties. Priority was given to reinstating the property to such Jews. If the reinstatement was not possible due to the fact that the property rested with good-faith third party ownership, then compensation was granted. The compensation was calculated on the basis of the value of the property at the time compensation was allowed and not at the historical value of the property at the time of sequestration.

*** Responsibility for Payment of the Compensation

Liability for compensation payment to the refugees falls squarely on Israel. Neighboring countries have a political interest in finding a solution, but not the moral responsibility to provide it. Temporary hosting of the refugees by countries such as Syria and Lebanon should not imply any responsibility by these countries to provide for a permanent solution.

Furthermore, although Palestinian refugees should not be obliged to accept an alternative to the “right of return,” it is legitimate that they voluntarily accept alternative citizenship. While alternative citizenship could possibly be provided to a certain segment of the refugees by the West, it seems to me that the broader segment of the population would only be attracted by neighboring countries that share a common culture with them.

Those Palestinians who do not accept alternative citizenship should be allowed the right of return to both Israel and Palestine. The allocation of Palestinians to either of the two countries should be mutually agreed upon.

In my opinion, it is a fundamental human rights requirement that Israel provide all dispossessed Palestinian refugees with proper compensation for their sequestered properties. In addition, Israel has to incur all costs related to the infrastructure requirements for creating hosting communities for the refugees.

*** Alternative Solutions

As an alternative but not as an obligatory alternative, certain countries in the area could be host to certain refugees. For such countries to be attracted to provide such support, Israel could subsidize the infrastructural cost to create such communities. It should also make a technical and know-how contribution to help such communities be productive. Such communities would include a mix of the population of the host country in order to promote integration of the refugee community into that country. The communities should not be located on the borders of the hosting country in order to avoid any possibility of a future call for secession.

Several countries could perform this function. Egypt has a plan to expand from 4 percent to 25 percent of its land. This creates a vast opportunity to integrate refugees, provided that the huge costs related to the creation of such new communities be borne by the responsible party — Israel — in

conjunction with substantial Western, and especially US, assistance. Other countries in the region could perform this function, such as Iraq and Sudan, even if this choice is not currently available for political reasons.

The host country would be obliged to confer — within an agreed upon time limit — citizenship onto the refugee members of the new communities. As an additional incentive for refugees, Israel should allow the refugees and their children the right to visit Israel and their families. Such a human rights gesture would increase the chance for positive and real regional integration. The right to visit could be limited to 90 days per year.

** 23. Obstacles and Opportunities: The Ideological Dimensions

[[Tahseen Basheer]]

The last twenty years have offered both the Arabs and Israelis some profound breakthroughs in their mutual search for achieving a real and lasting peace. From this vantage point — and irrespective of all outstanding problems — I can see the inevitability of a long-term resolution of the key factors of the conflict. I can also see the transformation of the relationship between Israelis and Arabs to new levels of mutual advantage within a framework of stable peace.

To achieve these goals we have to recognize the challenges facing both sides:

- How to develop a relationship based on mutual recognition and respect;

- How to structure that relationship in political, economic, and cultural forms that allow integration and cooperation, and;

- How to maintain their cultural uniqueness in a relationship of cooperation and collaboration.

Finally, it is not “whether” but “when” challenges are faced that a synergistic relationship between Arabs and Israelis can emerge. A realistic awareness of the key features of the conflict and the full realization of the changes required to achieve a continuous process of reconciliation must be pursued with vision, ability, and continuity.

In these remarks, I am concentrating on viewing the relevant features of the conflict through the prism of ideology. The crucial issues that constitute the agenda for the final status negotiation will produce and crystallize many competing and conflicting alternatives. The fault line between the two parties is not limited to any specific technical issue. It takes place within an atmosphere clouded with ideological impediments and psychological roadblocks. The need to understand the challenge of the existing ideological kaleidoscope calls for an examination of the long-term evolution and historical change that both parties to the conflict must undergo. The resulting changes in perception and outlook will color the political stage and move the parties to behave in ways different from preconceived stereotypes and inherited political dogmas.

Awareness and revisiting of the ideological positions, and assessment of their impact, is a key factor in conditioning the parties to be more open to exploring the act of building structures of positive processes that can help them plan positive and mutually acceptable outcomes.

The refugee problem revolves around the people-to-people level, and as such, it evokes serious ideological concerns. The ideological dimensions, difficult as they are, cannot be ignored. They do not by themselves offer a master key to tackle the difficult disagreements; but without addressing them in a creative manner, the search for peace will be inflexible.

Ideological breakthroughs will open the door for a more sustainable solution, both on a people-to-people level as well as on the level of the respective political authorities. The clearing of the ideological jungle will facilitate the discovery of new ways to promote peace.

*** Some Salient Features of the Conflict

The aim here is not to wallow in a replay of accumulated arguments; however, there must be an awareness of the aspects of the conflict in order to outline the key features that need to be addressed.

**** The evolution of a dynamic ideology of conflict

The Arab-Israeli conflict has taken many shapes and assumed various dimensions as it has developed in complexity and pervasiveness. What started as a conflict over the land of Palestine has developed into an intractable and protracted clash spreading from the domestic stage of Palestine to the regional stage of the Middle East, transforming its focus to Arab versus Israeli dimensions. During the Cold War it became an international conflict.

As an intractable conflict, it has defied easy resolution. Historical dimensions of the conflict led to its becoming long and continuous. In its forms, the positions of the conflicting parties grew to be diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive.

**** Irreconcilable claims

The modern history of both the Palestinians and the Jews emerged in different historical, political, and psychological landscapes. Both were seeking a stable haven to achieve a renaissance of their own cultures and political fulfillment of their contemporary national goals.

The Jews who immigrated to Palestine believed that their territorial claims had greater moral validity and political effectiveness than the claims and rights of the indigenous inhabitants, i.e. the Palestinians who were seeking independence and self-determination.

Early Zionists did not concern themselves with the Arabs of Palestine. Instead they concentrated their efforts on addressing the problem of the Jews, which prevented them from addressing the issue of Jewish-Arab relations in a more coherent way. They emphasized the potential for Arab-Jewish cooperation in Palestine and minimized the degree to which the Arab population was fearful of a growing Jewish presence. Mark Tessier, in his A History of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, states that the reluctance to acknowledge and address Arab issues also reflected a desire to rebut the criticisms of European opponents of Zionism, some of whom charged that Jewish-Arab coexistence in Palestine was impossible.

Perhaps more significant is the fact that most Jewish leaders saw the problems of the Arabs as transient, and accordingly regarded them to be of secondary importance. Some moralists, as Ahad Ha’am, warned of a confrontation with the Arabs, and urged action to avoid such an outcome. Alas, the mainstream Zionist leadership continued to claim that Jews and Palestinian Arabs could live side by side, and that the Arabs could benefit from the Zionist enterprise. Even some Arab moderates advocated binationalism with parity, meaning that Jewish immigration should continue.

The dominant movement of Zionism never bothered to ascertain how Palestinian Arabs felt about their claims as such. The conflict escalated by acts not only of omission, but also of indifference and disregard. The Arabs

were not consulted; no one sought their approval for the Zionist project of the Jewish state.

The manner in which the conflict evolved resulted in its transformation from a relatively limited political dispute into an intractable conflict with many layers and multiple dimensions. It became an umbrella conflict, which covered numbers of distinct and interconnected disputes relating to the issues of conflict, yet possessing distinct and separate features.

The two peoples and the two claims tragically encountered each other in a zero-sum approach escalating to a level of uncontrolled tragedy. This element of tragedy is a factor that cannot be ignored or dismissed. Like all tragedies it calls for understanding and at least a serious effort at expiation in symbolic and concrete action.

**** The recasting of history

The narrative each side employs in explaining, justifying, and advocating its position has become itself a victim of the conflict. The respective narratives escalated into negative tones. The views of each reflected vindictiveness. This hostile posturing led each side to discount the rights and aspirations of the other. The rhetoric involved tended to blur their visions through language that reduced complex human interaction to a simple dichotomy between friend and foe.

The reinvention of the respective histories created a climate of either/or attitudes that diminished possible accommodation. It locked them in a “no exit” situation, with only two choices available to them: either continuing down the road of unrelenting conflict or accommodating each other’s clams and vital concerns by reaching a historical compromise that closes the chapter of being either victor or vanquished, and turns the page to a more harmonious relationship.

*** Relevant Features of Reconciliation

**** Levels of negotiation

Negotiations are conducted on two levels:

- Government-to-government (or authority)

- People-to-people

Governments can reach agreements on cease-fire or partial settlement, or conclude a peace agreement, without necessarily achieving an ideological reconciliation. Many states exist with other states in a precarious mutual animosity, or in a cold peace — in an atmosphere of ideological competition and adverse positions.

Peace between governments is necessary but not sufficient. A sustainable peace can be achieved only through relations between people.

The Palestinian-Israeli issue revolves around finding a lasting accommodation between the two peoples on the same geographical land. The refugees constitute the living incarnation of the conflict. Along with issues of territory and political self-determination, this group of people is the key to a resolution of the conflict. They are the factor underlining the nitty- gritty of the conflict, i.e. the real aspirations of the people.

**** The three constituencies of peace

Any sustainable peace process has to address three interacting constituencies: domestic, regional, and international. Any successful peace process calls for the orchestration of the factors that impact on these three constituencies.

The peace process may not always move in a positive direction. Roadblocks will, at times, emerge as part of the dynamic force of change. The aim will always be the achievement of more progress to forgo stoppage and reverses.

**** The tests of successful resolution of the conflict

The resolution of any conflict occurs when the parties freely agree to a solution that has the following characteristics:

- By joint agreement, the solution satisfies the needs and interests of the involved parties and attenuates the causes underlying the conflict.

- The parties will not wish to repudiate the solution, even if they are in position to do so later.

- The solution meets, in an overall sense, the standards of justice and fairness.

- The solution is sufficiently advantageous to all the parties so that it becomes self-supporting and self-enforcing.

**** The importance of the Palestine track

The Palestinian dimension is the cornerstone of the conflict. It remains today the basic litmus test to the veracity of peace not only for the Palestinians and Israelis, but equally in the overall relations between all the Arabs and Israel. For if the Palestinians reach a stable and fair accommodation with Israel, then the historical core of the conflict will be essentially settled.

**** The core scenarios of reconciliation

Sustainable peace will be achieved not by resolving all outstanding conflicts between the parties but by adopting policies acceptable to both sides while moving toward closer symmetry. This sustainable element is not always steady or stable; it goes through ups and downs and many detours. The outcome is the test of whether it reaches a sense of synergy or not. Then peace will become steadier as the permanent feature of this relationship. The movement toward peace will transform many negative stereotypes and reshape past views and insecurities of both sides. The aim is not to achieve a zero-sum position but instead a position of mutual benefit both for the present and future.

Seminars and simulations are not substitutes for real negotiations. Complex negotiation is the key factor necessary to reach a package of concrete agreements. Only the parties in negotiations can achieve an acceptable package.

The ideological interpretation of the relevant Resolutions 194, 242, etc. has to be tackled in practical approach. The literal school failed over the last 50 years to achieve a practical result. Forcing the either/or approach will continue to impede progress. But even if different points of view or interpretation of the often cited resolutions cannot be entirely reconciled, the legal frame of reference should be kept. The process of negotiation bridges a spectrum of diametrically-opposed positions. But for this very reason, it can create mutual grounds for agreement.

The refugee problem cannot be handled without looking at the issues of territoriality and cannot ignore the need to tackle the issues of the “right of return” in harmony with the issues of “the law of return.”

Even in the best case scenario there will be elements on both sides of the conflict that will refuse on particulars of the agreement. But if the mainstream of both sides reach an agreement then a new mutual understanding may come to dominate their conflictual relationship.

Experience in the Middle East and elsewhere has shown that ideology cannot be discounted by rhetoric. It is better to try to avoid rhetoric by reaching concrete mutual agreements, in furtherance of mutually acceptable relationship and discourse.

*** In Conclusion

All efforts to study the different aspects of Palestinian-Israeli dimension should be viewed as serious endeavors to analyze and shed more light on the issues involved. These efforts should not be seen as negotiations. Whether they are conducted on the second track or third track, they at best represent pre-negotiation posturing.

Successful negotiation has as its target the formation of a “package” that the parties freely accept. This package outlines the trade-offs that are mutually acceptable. Only in negotiation can the parties reach the forms and contents of the agreed-upon package. This package has to achieve acceptance of the domestic constituents, the regional constituents, and the international constituents.

In the realm of ideology all pre-negotiation statements are positions provided to improve the bargaining power of each side. Ideology might not be amenable to direct reconciliation, so in theory these issues might be irreconcilable. But when it comes to the level of concrete application of suggested solutions and trade-offs, practical alternatives might emerge and gain acceptance even though each side will continue to invoke the legal frame of references that it believes supports their position.

The ideological dimension is not a crude debate between the “right of return” and the “law of return,” or between the literalist’s legal approach and the pragmatic outlook. For whatever common grounds might emerge, ideology will receive total support of the domestic constituency. Some individual refugees will stick to their legal rights despite any possible agreements reached between the Palestine Authority and Israel. But solutions that respond positively to human needs and demands can produce arrangements

that meet the demands of individual refugees as well as the demands of the Palestine Authority and Israel.

Finally, and without indulging in negotiation, I venture to say that developing a fund with sufficient capital to deal with compensation to pay for some of the projects needed for refugee restitution could offer an objective alleviation of some of the deadlocks. This fund could start now without having to be preceded by common agreements on the conflictual claims. It would highlight a serious intention to tackle the problems in hand, and it would tend to underline that a solution will be reached in peace and cooperation. Past Jewish and Israeli experiences in raising funds to alleviate the pain of the Holocaust could be used for the raising of the funds needed now. This could be a positive step in turning the conflict into cooperation, and might usher in a period of synergy through Arab and Israeli cooperation.

** 24 The Economic Capacity of the Palestinian State to Absorb the Refugees: The Employment Perspective

Onn Winckler

On the eve of the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) between the PLO and Israel in September 1993 (known as the “Oslo Accords”), the Palestinian economy was in its worst state since the Israeli occupation in the June 1967 war. The economy suffered from high unemployment rates and a declining standard of living, resulting from the Intifada, the 1990–1 Gulf crisis, and almost three decades of restrictive Israeli economic policy. It was a very small economy, with a high dependence on the Israeli economy in almost all aspects, thus making it vulnerable to any political and economic changes in the region.

While many studies have been conducted on the development of the Palestinian economy since the Oslo Accords, only a few have focused on the

employment aspect, particularly on the future employment options for the Palestinians in light of the current high unemployment and underemployment rates in the Palestinian territories. Moreover, since the population growth rate in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS) during the 1990s was one of the highest worldwide, even without a mass return of the refugees,[491] supplying sufficient work opportunities for the rapidly growing workforce remains one of the major socioeconomic challenges facing the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

This chapter will examine the following areas: the major demographic characteristics of the Palestinian population in the WBGS and their longterm implications for the size and composition of the workforce, particularly regarding the creation of the wide-based age pyramid; Palestinian employment trends following the Israeli occupation until the signing of the Oslo Accords; developments in the area of Palestinian employment in the post-Oslo period; and finally, future employment options tor the Palestinians in the neighboring labor markets of Jordan, the Arabian Gulf oil-exporting countries, and Israel.

*** Major Demographic Characteristics of the WBGS Palestinian Population

Prior to the examination of the employment situation in the WBGS, it is necessary first to examine the major demographic characteristics of the Palestinian population, since these constitute the most fundamental factors determining the composition of the workforce and its future direction. By 1949, and the end of the war, the total Palestinian population was estimated at 1.316 million, of whom 670,000 were in the West Bank (WB), including East Jerusalem, and 240,000 in the Gaza Strip (GS), representing 67 percent of the total Palestinian population in the Middle East at that time.[492]

As a result of the Israeli occupation of the WBGS during the June 1967 war, approximately 310.000 Palestinians from these areas took refuge in Jordan, 265,000 from the WB and 45,000 from the GS.[493] According to the Israeli census conducted in the WBGS in September 1967, the total population of

these areas amounted to 985,600 — 595,900 in the WB and 389,700 in the GS.[494] Janet Abu-Lughod claimed that between June 1967 and December 1968 some 250,000 WB residents and at least 75,000 GS residents were driven from their homes.[495] In the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, however, there was a large-scale emigration from the Palestinian territories, particularly from the WB, and according to the various estimates, 424,000 Palestinians emigrated from the WBGS during the period from the June 1967 war until 1982.[496]

According to the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS) figures, by the end of 1992 the de facto population of the WBGS totaled 1,768,300: 1,051,500 in the WB and 716,800 in the GS.[497] However, several alternative studies suggest that a downward bias in the ICBS figures regarding the WBGS population approximated 10 percent 15 percent.[498] In that case, the total Palestinian population in the WBGS, not including East Jerusalem, was roughly between 1.95–2.03 million. According to the population census conducted by the PNA in December 1997, the total Palestinian population in the WBGS numbered 2.602 million, with 1.600 million in the WB and 1.002 million in the GS.[499] This number does not include 210,209 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem.[500]

Thus, despite sustained emigration from the Palestinian territories, particularly from the WB, both prior to and following the Israeli occupation, which also continued during the 1970s and the 1980s, there was a considerable population growth in the WBGS. This rapid growth was an outcome of the high natural increase rates, increasing from 2.2 percent in the WB and 2.3 percent in the GS in 1968 to 3.4 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively, in 1995 (see table 24.1). Thus, during the 1990s, the natural increase rates in the WBGS were the highest in the Middle East region, after Saudi Arabia, and one of the highest worldwide.[501]

Table 24.1 Natural increase rates among the Palestinians in the WBGS, 1968–1995

| Year
Country | 1968 | 1980 | 1995 |

| | CBR | CDR | NI
(%) | TFR | | CBR | CDR | NI
(%) | TFR | | CBR | CDR | | NI
(%) | TFR |

| West Bank | 43.9 | 21.7 | 2.2 | 7.6 | | 42.1 | 10.4 | 3.2 | 7.0 | | 41.2 | 6.9 | 3.4 | 5.6 |

| Gaza Strip | 42.0 | 19.5 | 2.3 | 6.9 | | 47.6 | 10.1 | 3.8 | 7.3 | | 45.4 | 6.7 | 3.9 | 7.4 |

CBR = Crude birth rate per 1,000 people

CDR = Crude death rate per 1,000 people

NI = Natural increase (%)

TFR = Total fertility rate

Sources: PCBS, Health Statistics in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Current Status Report Series, No. 4 (mallah, July 1995); idem, The Demographic Survey in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Final Report (Ramallah, August 1997); ICBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1980–95, various issues, Jerusalem.

[[e-j-edward-j-perkins-and-joseph-ginat-the-palestin-1.jpg][**Figure 24.1** Natural increase rates among the Palestinians in the WBGS, 1968–1995]]

The major consequence of the prolonged high natural increase rates among the WBGS Palestinian population was the creation of a wide-based age pyramid. According to the 1997 census results, 57.6 percent of the WBGS Palestinian population were under the age of 20.[502] The meaning of this age pyramid composition is that more than half of the population are not included in the working age group, leading to low labor force participation rates. This has a profound influence on the per capita income through the ratio between dependants and breadwinners.

Table 24.2 Labor force and unemployment rates in the WBGs, 1968–1998

Year	Total Labor Force (in thousands) (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)
1968	{1}156	13.6
1973	198	1.0
1978	217	1.1
1982	230	1.3
1985	251	3.6
1988	{2}289	2.6
1990	308	3.7
1992	333	4.2
1993	339	6.7
1994	428	10.0
1995	443	18.3
1996	469	24.9
1997	558	19.3
1998	585	14.4

{1} 1968–86 — The labor force is for population aged 14 years and over.

{2} 1986 onward — The labor force is for population aged I 5 years and over.

Sources:

1968–92: ICBS, National Accounts of the Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Area, 1968–1993, Special Report No. 1012 (Jerusalem, 1996), p. 123, table 23.

1993–96: EIU, Country Profile, Israel, the Occupied Territories, 1999–2000, p. 78, reference table 2.

1997: PCBS, Population, Housing, and Establishment Census — 1997, Census Final Results — Summary (Ramallah, 30 November 1998), pp. 72–76, tables 15–17

1998: UNESCO, UNSCO Report on Economic and Social Conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Gaza, 30 April 1999), p. 18, table 9; PCBS, Labour Force Survey, Annual Report: 1998 (Ramallah, April 1999), p. 24.

[[e-j-edward-j-perkins-and-joseph-ginat-the-palestin-2.jpg][**Figure 24.2** Total and per capita GDP growth rates in the WBGS, 1994–1998 (in percentages)]]

The second consequence of the wide-based age pyramid is that for at least the coming three decades, rapid population growth will continue, even if the current high fertility rates substantially decrease, resulting from the declining crude death rates. Thus, while according to U.N. Economic Social Council for West Asia (ESCWA) projections the crude birth rate of the WBGS Palestinian population is expected to decline to 33.6 per 1,000 people on average during the period 2010–15 (from more than 40 per 1.000 in 1995), the crude death rate is also expected to decline to 3.5 per 1.000 people (from almost 7 per 1,000 in 1995), leaving the natural increase rate at a very high level of 3 percent annually.[503] Thus, despite fertility reduction, the number of jobs needed will continue to grow until the number of those entering the labor market, namely, those in the age group of 20–24, will be equal to those leaving the workforce at the age of 60–65.[504] According to the 1997 census results, the number of those in the age group of 0–4 was five times higher than those in the age group of 40–44.[505]

The 1997 census data indicates that the total Palestinian workforce amounted to 557,671 (501,146 males and 56,525 females), representing 21.4 percent of the total WBGS population, without the residents of East Jerusalem. One year later, in 1998, the working age group (15–64 years) in the WBGS was estimated at 1.1 million, and the labor force amounted to 585,000.[506] In comparison with a workforce of 156,000 in 1968, this represents a huge increase of 276 percent during a period of only one generation (see table 24.2), despite the large-scale emigration taking place since the Israeli occupation.

Moreover, women’s labor force participation rates have been steadily increasing during the past two decades in accordance with the improvement in their educational level. According to the 1998 Labour Force Survey, while the overall female labor force participation rate (age 15 and over) was 11.3 percent, this rate increased to 16.3 percent for women in the age group of 25–34.[507] Thus, the future demand for work opportunities is expected to grow even further, despite the expected fertility reduction, due both to increasing female labor force participation rates and the wide-based age pyramid. In addition, due to the sharp improvement in the education of the overall working-age group, the Palestinian authorities will soon have to deal not only with the problem of a shortage in work opportunities, but also with their diversification, due to an increasing demand for employment in skilled and professional occupations.

However, despite the rapid increase of the WBGS workforce, the labor force participation rate still remained low. In addition to the wide-based age pyramid and low rates of women labor force participation, the migration pattern of the Palestinians also contributed to the low rates of labor force participation insofar as the migrants were predominantly males.[508] However, as emigration slowed down in the early 1980s, and even more so following the establishment of the PNA, the labor force participation rates began to rise, as the sex and age composition of the WBGS population normalized.

*** Trends in Palestinian Employment in the Pre-Oslo Period

In general terms, since the Israeli occupation, the economic history of the WBGS can be divided into two major periods: the first period, lasting until the early 1980s, was characterized by rapid economic growth and a sharp rise in the standard of living; the second period, beginning at the end of the “oil decade” in 1982, was characterized mainly by economic stagnation and recession.

**** The First Period (1968–82): “The Bonanza Time”

With the end of the June 1967 war, two opposing approaches toward the nature of the economic relationship between Israel and the WBGS emerged. The first approach, initiated by Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan, advocated the free movement of both goods and labor between the two economies. The second approach, adopted by Minister of Finance Pinhas Sapir, rejected the free movement of Palestinian labor to Israel.[509] In the end, the integration approach prevailed and is still in force at the time of writing this essay (December 1999). However, as emphasized by Arie Arnon and associates, this integration “first was involuntary. Second, it was partial in two respects: a protectionist policy biased in favor of Israeli agricultural goods, and restrictions on entrepreneurship within the territories.”[510] On the other hand, the adoption of the “open bridges policy” enabled the Palestinians to continue to export their agricultural and industrial goods to Jordan and to other Arab countries.

In the early stage of the Israeli occupation, from 1968 until 1972, the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the WBGS increased rapidly, reaching an annual average growth rate of 15 percent in the WB and 11 percent in the GS.[511] This rapid economic growth was mainly due to the opening of the Israeli labor market to Palestinian workers. Consequently, the unemployment rate in the WBGS declined from almost 14 percent in 1968 to approximately I percent in the early 1970s (see table 24.3). However, it must be noted that from the beginning, almost all the Palestinians working in Israel were employed in unskilled jobs, mainly in construction, agriculture, and services.[512] This occupational pattern is still prevalent in the market today.

Throughout the 1970s, the Palestinian economy continued to enjoy rapid economic growth. In real terms, during the period of 1970–80, the GDP of the WB and GS increased by 160 percent and 73 percent, respectively. This rapid growth was the outcome of several factors, the most important being the sharp increase in the scale of remittances of the Palestinians working abroad, both in Israel and in the Gulf oilexporting countries. The number of the Palestinian workers in Israel increased from 53,800 in 1972 to 80,700 in 1982,[513] representing 35 percent of the WBGS total workforce (see table 24.2).

[[e-j-edward-j-perkins-and-joseph-ginat-the-palestin-3.jpg][Figure 24.3 Unemployment rates in the WBGS, 1968–1998 (in percentages)]]

During the period 1975–81, the net migration balance from the WB to both the Gulf countries and Jordan was estimated by the ICBS at 10,000 annually.[514] However, in contrast to the Palestinian workers in Israel, in the Gulf oil-exporting countries they were employed mainly in professional and managerial occupations. Overall, during the “oil decade” (1973–82), it was estimated that approximately 40,000 Palestinians from the WBGS were working in the Gulf oil-exporting countries. At the peak, in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the remittances of the Palestinians working in the Gulf oil-countries constituted approximately 10 percent of the WB’s total GNP.[515]

The sharp rise in the scale of remittances transferred by the Palestinian workers abroad not only led to a corresponding increase in the standard of living in the WBGS, but also to growth in activity in domestic construction, agriculture and, to a lesser extent, industry. The rapid increase in per capita income found expression in a substantial improvement in household conditions, with a many-fold rise in the possession of consumer durables and in water and electricity connections. This improvement, it should be noted, covered almost the entire WBGS population. However, the Palestinian economy continued to be based mainly on workers’ remittances and was not an outcome of internal development of the Palestinian economy, except in the agricultural sector. Thus, as Leila Farsakh noted rightly: “While the economic base of the WBGS gradually weakened, labor Bows to Israel

allowed for improvements in standards of living and income distribution in these areas.”[516]

**** The Second Period (1983–93): Economic stagnation and the Intifada

The rapid expansion of the Palestinian economy started to slow during the early 1980s, due mainly to two reasons. The first was the reduction in the number of Palestinian workers in the Arabian Gulf oil-exporting countries, resulting from the sharp drop in oil prices at the end of the “oil decade” in 1982, which led to a substantial decline in the financial allocations of the Gulf governments to socioeconomic development projects. In addition, from the early 1980s onward, a clear preference has been shown in the Gulf labor markets for workers from Southeast and Central Asian countries at the expense of Arab workers, including the Palestinians. This preference was the outcome of much lower wage demands among the Asian workers than among the Arabs, as well as the

tendency of the Asian workers, in contrast to the Arabs, to come alone to the Gulf without their family members.[517] Thus, the net migration balance from the WBGS decreased from 21,000 in 1981 to 11,000 in 1982 and only 3.700 in 1983,[518] leading to an obvious decline in workers’ remittances to the WBGS.

The second factor for the economic stagnation in the WBGS since the early 1980s was the parallel economic recession in Israel during that time, resulting from hyperinflation, which reached a peak of 445 percent in 1984.[519] The immediate outcome of these events was an increase in the unemployment rate in the WBGS from 1.3 percent in 1982 to 3.6 percent in 1985 (see table 24.3). Overall, during the five years prior to the outbreak of the Intifada, the average GNP growth rate in the WBGS was 3.2 percent, leading to stagnation in per capita terms.[520]

The onset of the Intifada caused further economic recession in the WBGS. Employment, trade, and industry activities were adversely affected by a combination of periodic closures, strikes, curfews, and shop closures. Since the outbreak of the Intifada, while the number of Palestinian workers in Israel continued to increase (except for 1991), the number of hours and days worked started to decline steadily. According to the various estimates, there was roughly a 20 percent decline in employment in terms of hours worked, for both the domestic and the Israeli markets.[521]

The expulsion of approximately 300,000 Palestinians from Kuwait in 1991, due to the support of Arafat for the Iraqi side during the 1990/91 Gulf crisis, caused a further decline in the Palestinian economy. This was a result of the considerable reduction in both workers' remittances and financial assistance to the Palestinians from the Gulf countries.[522] The return of many Palestinians from the Gulf to the WBGS led to a positive migration balance of 10,000 annually in 1990 and 1991, leading to a rapid population growth of 4.7 percent annually in the WB and 5.3 percent in the GS during those years.[523]

Thus, from early 1991, the dependence of the Palestinians on the Israeli labor market increased sharply. By the end of 1992, at the peak, 115,600 Palestinians were working in Israel,[524] and their income constituted more than 40 percent of the GDP of the WBGS. However, in mid-1993, as a result of the total closure of the WBGS in April 1993, unemployment rates reached approximately 25 percent in the WB and 40 percent in the GS. The closures eliminated free movement between the WB and the GS and severely diminished trade between Israel and the Palestinian territories. Moreover, the closures deprived the WBGS Palestinians of access to East Jerusalem — the major Palestinian trade area. In 1993, the World Bank estimated that every day of complete closure caused a loss of income of $1.1 million in labor earnings, in addition to a loss of almost $600,000 in exports lor the WB and a loss of $700,000 in labor earnings, as well as $250,000 in exports for the GS.[525] Thus, as reported by UNCTAD in mid-1993,

"unemployment and the need tor job-creation have become perhaps the most overriding challenges now facing the Palestinian economy."[526]

*** Trends in Palestinian Employment Following Oslo

The signing of the DoP in September 1993 led to high expectations for rapid growth in the Palestinian economy and for considerable improvement in the standard of living. The major economic priorities of the Palestinians following Oslo were: increasing employment opportunities in the WBGS; improving productive capacity, mainly in agriculture and industry, through large-scale investments of both foreign and domestic origin; enhancing private sector activities; improving social services, mainly in the areas of health care and education; and most importantly, decreasing economic dependence on Israel. According to the April 1994 Paris Economic Protocol. Israel and the Palestinians agreed to continue the free movement of labor and goods for an interim period of five years.

Unfortunately, despite the high expectations, the Palestinian economy deteriorated steadily in the five years following the signing of the Oslo Accords, and started to slightly recover only in the second half of 1998. According to IM F figures, the GDP of the WBGS declined during the years 1995–7 by an annual average of 2.7 percent in real terms, resulting in a cut of 25 percent in the per capita income for that period.[527] This deterioration was the outcome of the sharp decline in the number of Palestinians working in Israel and the disruption to trade between Israel and the WBGS. Such a state of affairs was caused by the frequent closures imposed by the IDF (the Israeli Defense Force) in response to the murderous attacks on Israeli citizens conducted by the Hamas and the Jihad Islami. In 1998, the World Bank estimated the damage of the closures on the WBGS to be $6—$10 million per day.[528] Overall, during the period of 1994 7, an average of less than 70,000 Palestinians were working in Israel, as compared with 116,000 in 1992.[529]

During the early 1990s, the Israeli economy experienced rapid growth as a result of the peace process, as well as massive immigration from the former Soviet Union. The rapid economic growth led to a parallel increase in the demand for workers, particularly in the construction sector. However, the unstable supply of Palestinian workers due to the frequent closures, led to a

massive import of workers from overseas, mainly from Southeast Asia and Central Europe. The number of overseas documented workers in Israel increased from less than 20,000 in 1993 to approximately 116,000 in mid-1997.[530] By late 1999, the total number of overseas workers in Israel was estimated by Kav LaOvech[531] at 185,000, with 85,000 documented and approximately 100,000 undocumented.[532]

This process naturally led to a sharp increase in the unemployment rates

in the WBGS. According to the December 1997 census data, the total number of unemployed in the WBGS was 107,735 (94,243 males and 13,492 females), representing an overall unemployment rate of 19.3 percent (15.5 percent in the WB and 27.5 percent in the GS), down from almost 25 percent in 1996 (see table 24.3). By 1998, an average of only 44,400 permit-holding WBGS workers were employed on a daily basis in Israel, in the Israeli settlements in the WBGS, and in the industrial zones. In addition, approximately 55,000 Palestinians were working in Israel unofficially. Although the 1998 figures are considerably lower than those from a decade earlier, they still represent an increase of 17 percent over the daily average of 38,000 documented workers in 1997. Overall, by 1998, nearly 22 percent of the WBGS workers were employed in Israel, as compared with approximately 17 percent in 1997, and only 8 percent in 1996.[533]

This means that, as the security situation has improved and the number of closures imposed by the IDF has substantially declined, the number of Palestinians working in Israel has once again increased, although it has not returned to the pre-Oslo level. Thus, in 1998, unemployment rates in the WBGS have remained high, amounting to 14.4 percent: 11.2 percent in the WB and 20.9 percent in the GS.[534] In 1998, GNP and GDP per capita in the WBGS were estimated at USS 1,750 and USS 1,450, respectively. In that year, the overall daily net wage was 57.7 NIS ($13.8),[535] with 50.0 NIS ($11.9) for those working in the WB, 40.0 NIS ($9.5) in the GS, and 100.0 NIS ($23.8) for those working in Israel and the Israeli settlements in the WBGS. Taking into consideration 23–24 monthly work days, the average monthly wage for a Palestinian worker in 1998 was 2,350 NIS ($560) for those working in Israel and the Israeli settlements, 1,175 NIS ($280) for those working in the WB, and 940 N1S ($224) for those working in the GS.[536] The real GDP growth rate in 1998 was 4.1 percent, and for the first time

since the beginning of the interim period in 1994 was sufficient to marginally raise the per capita GDP by 0.2 percent (see table 24.3).

Table 24.3 Major economic indicators of the Palestinian economy, 1994–1998

| Economic Indicator | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 |

| Real CDP growth (%) | 11.8 | -3.8 | -4.3 | 2.4 | 4.1 |

| Real CDP per capita growth (%) | 5.4 | -9.1 | -8.7 | -1.6 | 0.2 |

| Exports of goods and services ($US millions) | 366 | 550 | 582 | 632 | 693 |

| Imports of goods and services ($US millions) | 1,433 | 2,012 | 2,368 | 2,497 | 2,532 |

| Donor financing (US$ millions) | 665 | 795 | 735 | 716 | 549 |

| Donor financing (% of CDP) | 21 | 24 | 22 | 21 | 16 |

Source: IMF, West Bank and Gaza Strip: Economic Developments in the Five Years Since Oslo (Washington, D.C., 1999), p. 7, table 2.1.

[[e-j-edward-j-perkins-and-joseph-ginat-the-palestin-4.jpg][Figure 24.4 Palestinian labor force in the WBCS, 1968–1998]]

Thus, the recovery of the Palestinian economy in 1998–9 was due to an increase in Palestinian employment in Israel and not as a result of an increase in available work opportunities in the WBGS. The rapid fluctuation in the unemployment rates in the WBGS since the onset of the Intifada demonstrates, more than any other economic indicator, the extreme dependence of the Palestinian economy on Israel.

As the data indicates, the real GDP growth rate since 1993 was considerably higher than the real GNP growth rate. This was a result of the expansion in

the public sector under the administration of the PNA, which employed 89,319 persons in 1998, as compared with 40,000 in 1994, as well as the construction boom of 1994–5.[537] Overall, during the period of 1994—98, the real GDP growth rate in the WBGS was estimated at 2 percent annually on average, well below the population growth rate during the same years. As a result, the percentage of those living under and at the poverty line in the WBGS (defined as $650 annually income per capita) increased from 20 percent in 1995 to 40 percent in 1997.[538]

*** Options for Future Palestinian Employment outside the WBGS

Considering the current situation of the Palestinian economy, particularly the high unemployment rates in the GS, it seems that the creation of sufficient work opportunities for the currently unemployed, as well as the large number of newcomers to the workforce, amounting to more than 30,000 annually, is far beyond the current capacity of the Palestinian economy. Thus, in the short and the medium terms, it would appear that the solution for the absence of work opportunities in the WBGS lies outside the Palestinian territories.

**** Jordan

Following the October 1973 “oil boom” until the mid-1980s, Jordan enjoyed rapid economic growth which was accompanied by a very low unemployment rate, estimated at only 1.6 percent by 1976.[539] By 1987, the per capita GNP in Jordan was $1,560, as compared with only $370 in 1972.[540] This rapid economic expansion resulted mainly from extensive foreign grants, reaching a peak of $1.3 billion in 1980, and the large-scale remittances of the Jordanians working abroad, which amounted to $1.1 billion, on annual average, in the mid-1980s. By 1980, the number of Jordanian citizens working abroad was estimated by 305,000,[541] increasing to 328,000 in 1985.[542] Thus, during the first half of the 1980s, about 40 percent of the Jordanian indigenous workforce were working outside the Kingdom. At the same time, due to this massive labor emigration, Jordan was forced to become a labor-importing country. By 1985, the foreign workers in Jordan numbered 186,500.[543]

However, in the late 1980s the economic situation in Jordan started to deteriorate and the unemployment rate began to rise, amounting to 10 percent in 1989.[544] The economic recession in Jordan during the late 1980s was highly related to the drop in oil prices at that time. First, the economic recession in the Gulf led to a sharp decline in foreign grants to other Arab countries. By 1987, the Arab aid to Jordan fell to only $600 million,[545] less than half the amount received in the early 1980s. Second, the decline in oil prices caused a temporary reduction in the labor demands in the Gulf, narrowing the number of work opportunities for Jordanians and Palestinians in the Gulf from the mid-1980s onward.

The economic situation in Jordan further deteriorated following the support of Jordan for Iraq during the 1990/91 Gulf crisis, when Jordan was forced to absorb approximately 350,000 Jordanians and Palestinians returning from the Gulf countries, particularly from Kuwait.[546] Jordan, like the other major Middle Eastern labor-exporting countries, was not prepared to absorb hundreds of thousands of returnees in such a short period of time. Consequently, the unemployment rates in Jordan increased rapidly from early 1991 onward, amounting to 23 percent by October 1991, according to official figures, and as high as 35 percent according to unofficial estimates.[547] In addition, since Iraq was the largest importer of Jordanian goods and services, the damage of the international embargo imposed on Iraq cost Jordan $3 billion according to an official Jordanian estimate.[548]

Despite the high expectations for rapid growth of the Jordanian economy as a result of the peace agreement with Israel in October 1994, the economic situation in Jordan has improved only slightly during the past five years. In 1996 and 1997, the GDP growth rates in real terms were 0.8 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively, meaning a reduction in per capita terms.[549] According to preliminary data, during the first half of 1999 the GDP growth rate was only 1.3 percent in annual terms,[550] well below the population growth rate. By 1997, the per capita GDP in Jordan was $1,590,[551] similar to the level in the WBGS. In addition, due to the high natural increase rate, the Jordanian labor market is already receiving an average of 51,000 newcomers every year.

However, despite the high unemployment rates in Jordan during the 1990s, the number of foreign workers in the Kingdom continued to be very high, estimated in 1998 at 250,000–300,000,[552] not including approximately 120,000 Iraqis which were working in Jordan at that time.[553] These foreign workers are employed in the lowest occupational rungs of the Jordanian labor market. Thus, in light of such high unemployment rates and the easy availability of cheap foreign workers, even from a purely economic point of view, not to mention the political obstacles, it seems that the creation of a vast number of work opportunities for the Palestinians in Jordan is not a realistic solution, at least not in the foreseeable future.

*** The Gulf oil-exporting countries

As mentioned earlier, tens of thousands of Palestinians from the WBGS were working in the Gulf oil-exporting countries, particularly in Kuwait, until the 1990/91 Gulf crisis. Although the political relationship between the Palestinian leadership and the Gulf oil-exporting countries has improved during the past few years, the Gulf labor markets are no longer relevant for absorbing a large number of WBGS workers. This is mainly because the vast majority of the foreigners currently working in these countries are earning less than $500 monthly,[554] and are employed mainly in domestic services, agriculture, and other “blue-collar” positions in both the private and the public sectors. In addition, the traditional occupations of the Palestinians in Kuwait, mainly in teaching and governmental bureaucracy, are now occupied by Kuwaiti nationals, as the educational level of the Kuwaiti national workforce has sharply improved during the past two decades. Thus, achieving some relief from the employment pressures in the WBGS through temporary employment in the Gulf oilexporting countries, as in the 1970s and the first halt of the 1980s, is no longer a realistic option.

**** Israel

During the period 1997—9, as a result of the economic stagnation, unemployment rates among Israeli citizens sharply increased, amounting to more than 9 percent in late 1999. However, despite the high unemployment rate, there is still a considerable shortage of workers in the Israeli labor

market. While the number of unemployed in Israel in late 1999 was approximately 170,000, the number of foreign workers, including both Palestinians and overseas workers, was estimated at 285,000 or even higher, meaning a net shortage of more than 100,000 employees. The combination of high unemployment rates and large numbers of foreign workers is largely the result of the undesirability of many available positions in the Israeli labor market to Israeli citizens, mainly in construction, agriculture, and domestic services, either due to relatively low income or low occupational status.[555] Thus, it is likely that a large foreign workforce will continue to be needed in Israel, at least for the foreseeable future.

However, contrary to the current situation in the Israeli labor market, as well as the official and unofficial employment approaches, it seems that the better option for Israel would be to fill the unoccupied positions with Palestinians rather than with overseas workers, due to three main reasons:

1. The Palestinian workers are not living in Israel; they are coming in the morning and returning back to their homes in the WBGS in the evening. In contrast, the overseas workers are naturally living in Israel and thus need access to various public services — primarily health care, housing etc. Likewise, overseas workers are in many cases either coming to Israel with their family members or bringing them after a short period of time, therefore availing themselves of social and public services for their family members as well. Thus, by employing Palestinians rather than overseas workers, Israel can realize considerable savings in public expenditures.

1. While the incomes of the overseas workers are largely transferred to their home countries and thus do not contribute to increasing the demand for Israeli goods and services, a major part of the incomes of the Palestinian workers are spent on Israeli goods and services, either by acquiring them directly in Israel or by importing them into the WBGS.

1. While the salaries of the Palestinian workers in Israel are paid in NIS, the salaries of the overseas workers are paid in USS, thus increasing the balance of payments deficit. According to the estimate of the Bank of Israel, in 1998

the total remittances of the overseas workers in Israel (including undocumented workers) amounted to $1.42 billion.[556]

The major argument of those rejecting the preference of Palestinian workers at the expense of overseas workers is the lack of security involved in the employment of Palestinians and the unstable supply of workers in cases of security events and closures. However, the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with clear and secure monitored borders with Israel would provide a solution to this problem. Therefore, it seems that increasing the number of Palestinian workers in Israel at the expense of overseas workers is not only in the interests of the Palestinians, but in the interests of Israel as well, from both the economic and sociopolitical points of view.

*** Summary, Conclusions, and Outlook

The fluctuations in the Palestinian economy since the Israeli occupation until the present time have been, in most cases, an outcome of political and economic events occurring outside the Palestinian territories without any ability of the Palestinians themselves to influence these events or even to prepare for them. The major difference between the period of the pre-Oslo Accords and that following the Accords is that during the first period, particularly until the onset of the Intifada, the level of economic development in Israel was the major factor dictating the number of Palestinians working in Israel; during the second period, on the contrary, it was the political factor, particularly the security situation, that determined the scale of Palestinian employment in Israel.

However, large-scale Palestinian employment in Israel can be only a temporary solution. In the long run, the Palestinian economy must be able to create sufficient work opportunities for its current and future additional workforce. This, in turn, requires open borders and free access to other markets besides the Israeli one. It seems that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, with full autonomy to determine both monetary and fiscal policies, will boost Palestinian industry, which currently represents only a small fraction of the Palestinian GDP, Until today, the absorption of the WBGS within the Israeli tariff system has actually forced

the import of Israeli goods by the Palestinians. The abolishment of this obligatory system will provide an important lever for increasing Palestinian industrial activities, particularly in the fields of import-substituting products and highly labor-intensive industries (mainly in food and textiles), in which the Palestinians have a clear relative advantage due to a much cheaper workforce than in Israel. Another major lever for increasing

Palestinian industrial activities will be free access to foreign markets, mainly those of Jordan and the Gulf oil-exporting countries.

In addition to investments of the Palestinians themselves in the industrial sector, investments of Israelis and others from abroad also have the potential to increase Palestinian industrial activities. The 1999 IMF report on the Palestinian economy recommends that: “To combat unemployment, more private investment is essential, and serious efforts are required to create an environment conductive to private sector investment.”[557]

Since the establishment of the PNA, it has enjoyed substantial foreign aid. Over the five years following the September 1993 DoP, the PNA received $2.95 billion in assistance, outside of the aid from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The European Union is the largest donor at $2.91 billion.[558] In the future, a large segment of the foreign aid should be devoted to socioeconomic development in order to create as many work opportunities as possible.

However, the high natural increase rates in the WBGS have imposed a severe obstacle with regard to employment. Given current annually population growth of approximately 4 percent, economic growth rates need to rise above that level for a long period of time. Moreover, as a result of the wide-based age pyramid, the current number of 30,000 annual newcomers to the workforce is expected to grow in the coming years. During the period of 1994–8, while the WBGS workforce increased by 147,000, only 92,000 new work opportunities were created, both in the public and the private sectors, leading to an employment gap of 55,000.[559][560] Thus, in order to reduce the employment pressure in the future, as well as to increase the labor force participation rates, the Palestinian authorities should adopt a national family

planning policy, similar to that operating in Tunisia and Egypt, as soon as possible.

In conclusion, only by achieving stable and substantial economic growth in parallel to decreasing fertility rates and increasing labor force participation rates, particularly among women, will the future Palestinian state be able to enhance its validity as a sovereign and prosperous state. Moreover, consideration of the rate and shape of the absorption of the Palestinian refugees in the future Palestinian state must go beyond political calculations and take into account socioeconomic conditions, particularly employment possibilities.

*** Notes

The Hebrew version of this essay will be published in Hamizrah Hehadash [The Near East] journal.

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[495] Janet L. Abu-Lughod, ’“The Demographic Consequences of the Occupation,” in Naseer H. Aruri (ed.), Occupation: Israel Over Palestine (Belmont: Association of Arab-American University Graduates, 1989), p. 402.

[496] Gharaibeh. The Economies of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, p. 32.

[497] ICBS, Statistical Abstract of Israel — 1993, p. 758, table 27.1.

[498] See: The World Bank (WB), Developing the Occupied Territories: An Investment in Peace, Vol. 6 (Washington, D.C., 1993), p. 7.

[499] This number does not include the uncounted population according to postenumeration study.

[500] Palestinian National Authority, Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Population, Housing, and Establishment Census, 1997. Population Report, Palestinian Territory, First Part, Statistical Reports Series, 002 (Ramallah, May 1999), p. 46, table 1.

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[502] PCBS, Population, Housing, and Establishment Census, 1997, Statistical Reports Series, 002, p. 49, table 4.

[503] ESCWA (UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia), Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region, 19th Issue (New York, 1999), p. 50, table 1–5.

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[505] PCBS, Population, Housing, and Establishment Census 1997. Census Final Results Summary (Ramallah, November 30, 1998), p. 42, table 2.

[506] UNSCO (United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories), The Economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip: A Retrospective on the 1990s and Future Challenge (Gaza, January 1999), p. 3.

[507] PCBS, Labour Force Survey, Annual Report: 1998 (Ramallah, April 1999), p. 21.

[508] Radwan Shaban, “Palestinian Labour Mobility,” International Labour Review 134 (5–6) (1993): 660–3.

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Publishers, 1985), pp. 147–50 (in Hebrew); Moshe Dayan, The Story of my Life (Jerusalem and Tel Aviv: Eidanim Publishers in collaboration with Dvir Publishing House, 1976), pp. 502–5 (in Hebrew).

[510] Arie Arnon, Israel Luski, Avia Spivak, and Jimmy Weinblatt, The Palestinian Economy: Between Imposed Integration and Voluntary Separation (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997), p. 5.

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[513] New Israeli Shekels.

[514] Bank of Israel, Research Department. An Economic Analysis of the Palestinian Economy: The West Bank and Gaza, 1968–1991, by Arie Arnon and Daniel Gottlieb, Discussion Paper, No. 93.07 (Jerusalem, 1993), p. 44, appendix table

[515] On the demographic development of the Palestinians prior to the Intifida, see: Gad G. Gilbar, Population Dilemmas in the Middle East (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1997), ch. 1.

[516] WB, Developing the Occupied Territories, Vol. 1, p. 6; p. 140, table 6.

[517] Leila Farsakh, The Implementation of Labor-related Articles in the Protocol on Economic Relations between the Government of Israel and

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[518] Mostafa H. Nagi, “Migration of Asian Workers to the Arab Gulf: Policy Determinants and Consequences,” Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 9 (3) (Spring 1986): 19–34; Onn Winckler, “Gulf Monarchies as Rentier States: The Nationalization Policies of the Labor Force/’ in Joseph Kostiner (ed.). Middle Eastern Monarchies: The Challenge of Modernity (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), pp. 237–56.

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[520] Bank of Israel, Annual Report — 1999 (Jerusalem, March 2000), p. 363 (in Hebrew).

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[523] UNSCO, The Economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, p. 1.

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[526] WB, Developing the Occupied Territories, Vol. 2, p. 10.

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[530] Farsakh, p. 29.

[531] Yinon Cohen and Yitchak Haberfeld, “Israelian Labor Migration,” in Mohammad Shtayyeh (ed.), Labor Migration: Palestine, Jordan, Egypt and Israel (Jerusalem: Palestine Center for Regional Studies, 1998), p. 110.

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[533] Data provided by Ms. Hanna Zohar, the manager of Kav LaOved.

[534] UNSCO, ENSCO Report on Economic and Social Conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Gaza, April 30, 1999), p. 3.

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[536] By late 1999, 4.2 N1S was equal to one USS.

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[551] Jordan Times, November 18, 1999.

[552] Jordan Economic Monitor (August 1998), p. 4.

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[556] See, for example, Yedi’ot Aharonot (Tel Aviv), January 4, 2000 (in Hebrew).

[557] Bank of Israel, Annual Report — 7999, p. 57.

[558] IMF, West Bank and Gaza Strip: Economic Developments in the Five Years Since Oslo, p. 51.

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[560] IMF, West Bank and Gaza Strip: Economic Developments in the Five Years since Oslo, p. 47.

** 25. How the Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish Publics Perceive the Issues

Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar and Tamar Hermann

As a consequence of the 1948–9 Israeli-Arab war, some 750,000 Palestinians became homeless refugees, scattered in various countries, mostly in the Middle East. During the half century since then, their number has increased to about 3.5 million.[561] Some of these refugees, like those who sought refuge in Jordan, have been integrated, at least formally, in the hosting society. Others have looked for individual solutions through immigration to richer and more hospitable countries, largely in the West. However, most of the refugees and their descendants are still living in separate communities, or rather enclaves, within the confinement of “refugee camps,” typically under difficult economic, social, and political conditions.

Given these circumstances, there is little doubt that the problem of the Palestinian refugees will be one of the major issues on the agenda of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority toward the achievement of a lasting peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Evidently because of its importance and complexity, this problem was one of the few issues that the Declaration of Principles (DoP) in the Oslo Accords deferred to the final status negotiations between the two sides. Indeed it is not too hard to imagine that the Israelis and Palestinians will come to the negotiating table with opposing views on how to solve the problem of the refugees, particularly in light of their differing narratives about its origins. From the Palestinian perspective, all the refugees are entitled to return to their original homes and places of residence. This view is supported by the United Nations which, already in December 1948, decided that: “Refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date ... ”[562] From the Israeli viewpoint, this demand is not acceptable on at least two grounds: first, Israel maintains that the return of such a large number of Palestinians would virtually amount to its destruction as a Jewish state. Secondly, according to the Israeli narrative, the burden of responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem and its continuation over time lies mainly with the Palestinians themselves, and with the Arab world as a whole. This view stands in sharp contrast to the Palestinian narrative according to which the Israeli forces forcibly expelled most of the Palestinians from the towns and villages taken by Israel during the war of 1948, thus turning them into homeless refugees.[563]

It is reasonable to expect that the sentiments and attitudes of the Palestinian and Israeli-Jewish publics on the refugee issue are largely compatible with the views of their respective political leaderships. After all, in situations of protracted conflict, each nation tends to construct a collective memory in a way that supports its righteousness with regard to the origins of the conflict and its evolution over time. In other words, in such situations it is hard to find objectivity, even among professional historians, particularly when it comes to accounts about the role of “our” nation vis-a-vis the depiction of the other side. Accordingly, we anticipate that the large majority of the Palestinian public puts the entire blame of the refugee problem and the responsibility for its solution on Israel. In contrast, the Israeli public sees the problem as an inevitable consequence of the Arab policies since 1947 and, therefore, as an internal Palestinian- Arab responsibility.

Notwithstanding the assumption that the Israelis and Palestinian publics have adopted a unilateral approach to the refugee problem, it seems reasonable to expect some systematic differences between them with respect to the degree of uniformity and divergence in their attitudes. Specifically we suggest that the Palestinian views on the refugee problem are likely to be more uniform and slanted in comparison to the Israelis on the following grounds.

First, regardless of the question of responsibility for the problem, the fact remains that the Palestinian refugees were the ultimate losers and victims of the 1948 war. The suffering caused by their dislocation and its prolongation, coupled with the continuous economic and social progress made by the Israelis, the victors and beneficiaries of that war, makes it difficult for the Palestinians to view their predicament in a detached way. In other words, individuals and groups in agony cannot afford the luxury of empathizing with the other side, particularly when the latter is perceived as the perpetrator of their predicament.

Secondly, the Palestinians are still in the early stages of their struggle for national independence. History has taught us that under such circumstances, the desire to achieve the ultimate national goal supersedes all other considerations and discourages internal cleavages as well as tolerance for divergence and pluralism. In this respect, the Palestinian society of today is

reminiscent of the Israeli society in the years prior to the achievement of independence and even in later years, when the political culture under the hegemony of the labor movement showed little tolerance for nonconformity. Israeli society has come a long way since then, becoming politically more pluralistic and open to dissent, including the voice of those who challenge the Zionist principles on which Israel was established.

Taken together, these considerations have at least two potential implications: On the one hand, the Israeli and the Palestinian publics should be expected to have dissimilar, if not sharply contrasting, views about the causes of the Palestinian refugees problem and its solution. On the other hand, the views of the Israeli public on these issues are likely to be less uniform and less unidirectional in comparison with the attitudes of the Palestinian public. Aside from the theoretical interest in testing these hypotheses, it must be realized that the assessment of public opinion with regard the problem of the refugees, as well as the other controversial issues between the Israelis and the Palestinians, is also significant for practical reasons. In both societies public opinion plays an important role in policy-making in two complementary ways: First, it provides vital input to the process of negotiations between the two sides; second, it serves as the ultimate test of legitimacy for whatever peace accord they may reach.

*** Methodology

In order to examine the attitudes of the Israeli and Palestinian publics on the refugees' problem, we have used empirical data based on personal interviews with adult respondents (age 18 and above), who constitute representative samples of the Israeli and Palestinian populations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Israeli respondents (N — 1000) consisted of two groups: Jews (N = 500) and Arabs (N = 500). The Jewish respondents were contacted by means of telephone interviews while the Israeli Arabs and the Palestinians (N = 1200) were interviewed face to face. The surveys were held a few days apart, during the second half of October 1999. The questions were formulated jointly by Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar and Tamar Herman of the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University, Ghassan Hatib and Jamil Rabah of the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center, and by Elia Zureik of Queen's University, Canada. In this chapter our analysis

concentrates on the comparison between the attitudes of the Israeli Jews and the Palestinians. However, in the tables presenting the empirical findings, the responses of the Israeli Arabs are also included. The reader may notice from these tables that, with a few exceptions, the attitudes of the Israeli Arabs are very similar to those of the Palestinians.[564]

The questions discussed in this chapter pertain to four principal aspects of the refugee’s problem, as follows:

1. The relative importance of this problem vis-a-vis other issues pertaining to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1. Perceptions concerning responsibility for the creation of the problem.

1. Views on how the problem should and should be resolved.

1. Evaluations concerning the scale of the problem.

*** Empirical Findings

**** The importance of the refugee problem

Our first set of findings pertains to the importance of the refugee issue in the eyes of the Israelis and Palestinians in comparison with other outstanding issues discussed within the peace-negotiating framework. Respondents were presented with a list of six such issues and asked to indicate which they considered to be the most important, the second most important and third most important (table 25.1).

Table 25.1 reveals that the future status of Jerusalem is clearly the most important issue for Israelis and Palestinians alike. In fact, compared with all

the other issues, Jerusalem forms a league of its own, surpassing them by a wide margin. Thus, 48.4 percent of Israelis and 51.0 percent of Palestinians consider it to be the most important issue, whereas the highest percentages for other issues chosen as the most important are 13.8 and 15.8 percent among the Israelis and Palestinians, respectively. Another way to assess the importance of the six subjects is obtained by calculating an overall score for each of them, based on the weighted frequencies of the first, second, and third choices.[565] Accordingly, Jerusalem received scores of 64.0 among the Israeli and 67.2 among the Palestinians, whereas its nearest rivals obtained respective scores of 27.2 and 34.4.

Notwithstanding the binational consensus on the centrality of Jerusalem, table 25.1 also points to significant gaps between the Israeli and Palestinian respondents regarding the importance of some of the other issues. As can be seen, the largest gap pertains to the refugees' issue. Among the Palestinians it ranks third as a first priority, and second to Jerusalem in terms of overall scoring (34.4); whereas among the Israelis, its importance is ranked next to last as a first choice and the very last in terms of overall scoring (17.5).

Taken together, these results seem to be consistent with the assumption that the Israeli and Palestinian publics tend to follow the priorities allotted to the various issues by their national political authorities. Thus both the Israeli and Palestinian leaders never fail to emphasize that Jerusalem is a coveted city for their own nation and that no peace agreement can be achieved unless their (contrasting) demands with regard to the future political and religious status of Jerusalem are fully satisfied. However, while the Palestinian leadership has also repeatedly raised the issue of the Palestinian refugees, Israelis officials as well as the Israeli mass media have usually said little about it. These observations suggest that the importance of the refugee problem in the mind of the Israeli public may increase to the extent that it will become a salient subject in the peace negotiations between the two sides.

**** Who is responsible for the problem?

During the last decade there has been an ongoing debate among Israeli historians and sociologists as to the historical events that caused the refugee problem in the first place. According to the traditional Israeli version, the

Table 25.1 In your opinion, which of the following issues are the three most important for the two sides to find an agreeable solution to?

| The most important issue | Palestinians (%)
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews (%)
n = 500 |

| Palestinian state | 15.8 | 13.8 |

| Jerusalem | 51.0 | 48.4 |

| Borders | 4.8 | 12.1 |

| Refugees | 9.3 | 5.2 |

| Water | 5.5 | 6.4 |

| Jewish settlements | 10.4 | 4.6 |

| Other | — | 2.8 |

| No answer + don’t know | 3.2 | 6.6 |

| The three most important issues (weighted scores based on the frequencies of the 1st 2nd & 3rd choice) | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| Palestinian state | 27.3 | 27.2 |

| Jerusalem | 67.2 | 64.0 |

| Borders | 16.7 | 28.6 |

| Refugees | 34.4 | 17.5 |

| Water | 14.6 | 17.7 |

| Jewish settlements | 31.0 | 20.8 |

| Other | — | — |

| No answer + don’t know | 7.0 | 17.2 |

Palestinians who left Israel during the war of 1948 war did so voluntarily, either on their own initiative or under the influence of Arab leaders who encouraged them to leave. Those who support this version argue that at least in some places, notably Haifa, the local Arabs left their home despite attempts made the local Jewish leadership to convince them to stay. Thus by this account, many left their homes because of fears of reprisal by Israeli forces and general mistrust of the Jewish community, while others were led to believe that their departure was only temporary and they would be able to return home following the expected Arab victory. In contrast to this interpretation, some of Israel’s “new historians,” such as Benny Morris and Ilan Pappe,[566] have argued that a sizable number of Palestinians were forced to leave their homes in 1948 by Israeli troops, either because of security reasons or broader political considerations. To what extent have such criticisms of the Zionist narrative gone beyond the circle of intellectuals and affected the rank and file of the Israeli public? Some evidence about the answer to this question is given in the results presented in tables 25.2 and 25.3.

Turning first to the answers of the Palestinians respondents, it can be seen from table 25.2 that a large majority among them (59%) attributes the origins of the refugee problem to expulsion by Israeli forces. By contrast, only 4 percent believe that the refugees left of their own initiative and 6 percent believe that they were encouraged to leave their homes by Arab leaders. Of the remaining respondents, nearly 20 percent see the cause of the problem as a combined effect of expulsion, encouragement by Arab leaders (15.4%), or voluntary departure (3.3%). In other words, about 78 percent of the Palestinians blame Israel for the refugee problem, either exclusively or in combination with other factors. As for the Israeli respondents, table 25.2 indicates that their attitudes on this issue are considerably more evenly distributed. While 30 percent of this group believe that the refugees left of their own free will, an almost equal number of 31 percent accept the view that they were forced to leave by the Israeli army. Of the remaining respondents, about 17 percent blame the Arab leadership, while 23 percent could not identify the main cause for the creation of the problem.

Table 25.2 What caused the 1948 Palestinian refugee problem in the first instance?

	Palestinians n = 1200	Israeli Jews n = 500
Mainly, the refugees left voluntarily	4.0	29.9
Mainly, the refugees were told to leave by Arab leaders	5.9	17.3
Mainly, Jewish Forces expelled the refugees	59.0	31.0
Mainly, the refugees were told to leave by Arab leaders + Jewish forces expelled the refugees	15.4	2.6
Mainly, the refugees left voluntarily + Jewish forces expelled the refugees	3.3	2.5
Mainly, the refugees left voluntarily + Arab leaders	—	—
Others	5.8	4.7
No answer + don’t know	6.6	23.3

These results are highly consistent with our initial hypotheses regarding Israeli and Palestinian attitudes on the refugee issue. On the one hand, both sides tend to view this issue according to their own national perspective and place the blame on the other side. On the other hand, while the tendency of one-sidedness is highly pronounced among the Palestinians, the Israelis display a more even distribution of opinions, as nearly one-third of them depart from the conventional Israeli position and, in effect, accept the Palestinian view on this problem. The extent to which the attitudes of this group were influenced by the debate raised by the “new historians” is of course unknown. Nevertheless, it appears that their critical approach to the circumstances surrounding the origins of the refugees’ problem is shared by a significant number of Israelis. Also noteworthy to observe in this context is that nearly one-quarter of the Israeli respondents (23.3%) could not tell who was responsible for the problem.

We have used a somewhat different way to explore the views of the Israeli and the Palestinian interviewees on the question of responsibility for the refugees' problem on the basis of the following question: "There are different opinions as to who is responsible for the refugee problem in 1948, the Israelis or the Arabs?" The figures pertaining to the respondents' answers to this question are given in table 25.3.

Table 25.3 There are different opinions on the question who is responsible for the creation of the refugee problem in 1948, Israel or the Arabs. In your opinion, who is the responsible side?

| | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| Only Israel | 17.1 | 4.8 |

| Mostly Israel | 32.8 | 7.0 |

| Israel and the Arab side to the same extent | 42.6 | 35.0 |

| Mostly the Arab side | — | 22.2 |

| Only the Arab side | 3.7 | 21.1 |

| No answer + don't know | 3.8 | 9.9 |

As can be seen from table 25.3, each side clearly avoids accusing its own nation as culpable: Among the Palestinian respondents, only 3.7 percent place the entire blame on their other side, while the comparable figure for the Israelis is 4.8 percent. Nevertheless, relatively high proportions of Israeli (35%) and Palestinian (42.6%) respondents also avoid putting the entire blame on the other side, believing the Israeli and Arab sides to be equally responsible for the problem.[567] These findings suggest that sizable numbers of Israelis, as well as Palestinians, do not accept their own national narrative about the historical circumstances underlying the emergence of the refugee problem.

*** Solutions for the Problem

We have examined the attitudes toward various aspects of potential solutions to the refugee problem. The first aspect concerns the possibility of allowing the refugees to resettle in their original places of residence within Israel. Three approaches to this idea of solution were distinguished: (I) Implementation of the right of return for all refugees according to UN Resolution 194. (2) Allowing the return of a limited number of refugees, while compensating the others on the basis of a negotiated agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. (3) Giving Israel the right to decide who should be allowed to return and compensation to those who do not return. Respondents were asked to express their opinions about these possibilities in two ways: first, which they considered as the most just solution and, second, which one was perceived as the most feasible solution “under the present circumstances.” The results for the two questions are given in tables 25.4 and 25.5.

Table 25.4 Which of the following solutions to the refugee issue is most just in your opinion?

| | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| The solution should be based on 194 UN Resolution which calls for the right of return to all the Palestinian refugees and compensation to those who do not return. | 81.7 | 4.5 |

| The return of a limited number of Palestinian refugees to Israel and a suitable compensation for those who do not return, this should be decided by negotiations between Israel and Palestinians | 11.0 | 14.9 |

| Only those who are approved by Israel should be allowed to return and compensation for those who do not return | 2.9 | 56.8 |

| None of the above is just | — | 12.7 |

| Other answers | 0.3 | 6.2 |

| No answer + don’t know | 6.6 | 23.3 |

Looking first at the distribution of respondents' opinions regarding the three solutions as per the criterion of justice, it can be seen that they are very slanted in both groups and in the expected direction. The large majority of the Palestinians regard the right of return to all refugees as the most just solution, whereas among the Israelis a clear majority considers as most important just the return of only those refugees that will be approved by Israel. However it should be noted that the size of the majority that favors the Palestinian view among the Palestinian respondents (81.7%) is much larger than the size of the majority of Israelis (56.8%) who support the conventional Israeli view. At the same time, only an insignificant minority on each side accepts the idea of justice as expressed by the majority of the other side. In other words, the Israelis and the Palestinians are in almost total disagreement on the meaning of justice as regards the solution for the refugee's problem.

Is there a difference between considerations of justice and reality in regard to the solution of the refugees' problem? Comparing the findings of tables 25.4 and 25.5, it appears that some Israelis and Palestinians make a distinction between the ideational and practical levels. Thus, only 63.6 percent of the Palestinians believe that the solution involving the return of all the refugees is most feasible — a significant decrease in comparison to 81.7 percent who see it as the most just solution. Similarly, barely one-half of the Israeli respondents (50.8%) consider the solution based on Israel's exclusive right to approve who should return as most practical. However, the figures shown in table 25.5 also indicate that the two sides are quite far apart from each other even when taking into account the dimensions of feasibility.An issue intimately related to the debate over the principle of the right of return is the question of how many refugees should be allowed to return, if at all. The answers given to this question by the Israeli and Palestinian respondents in effect show very large discrepancies between the two groups, as can be seen from table 25.6.

Table 25.5 Under the present circumstances, which of the following solutions looks most feasible to you?

| | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| The solution should be based on 194 UN Resolution which calls for the right of return to all the Palestinian refugees and compensation to those who do not return. | 63.6 | 4.7 |

| The return of a limited number of Palestinian refugees to Israel and a suitable compensation for those who do not return, this should be decided by negotiations between Israel and Palestinians | 18.8 | 20.8 |

| Only those who are approved by Israel should be allowed to return and compensation for those who do not return | 6.4 | 50.8 |

| None of the above is possible | — | 10.6 |

| Other answers | 0.4 | 5.9 |

| No answer + don’t know | 10.8 | 7.2 |

An overwhelming majority of the Palestinians (79.6%) believe that any refugee wishing to return should be permitted to do so. Among the Israeli respondents only 11.5 percent agree to this right, while the rest hold the opinion that none should be allowed to return (42.7%) or that this opprtu-nity should be limited to a few hundred (21.9%) or a few thousand (10.7%) only. A complementary picture is obtained regarding the question of where the refugees should be permanently settled (see table 25.7). Whereas 53.8 percent of the Palestinians maintain that the right place for this purpose should be their original homes inside Israel, a similar percentage of Israelis (57.2%) hold the view that the refugees should be settled mainly in their present locations in Arab countries or in some other places. Interestingly, almost identical percentages of Israelis (32.3%) and Palestinians (29.7%) believe that the main permanent place of settlement should be inside the territory of the future Palestinian state.

The last aspect examined by us, related to the question of a solution, concerns the issue of compensation. While it is generally agreed, also in Israel, that any way of solving the refugees’ problem involves financial compensation, the question of who should carry this burden remains unanswered. We expected that, similar to the other aspects of solution, the Israeli and Palestinian views would differ greatly. However, granted that the issue of compensation involves practical considerations, in addition to its moral dimension, it seems reasonable to expect that responsibility for this

endeavor will be allocated among several sources by the Israeli and Palestinian respondents alike. The extent to which this proposition is empirically supported can be seen from the figures shown in table 25.8.

Table 25.6 What is the number of refugees who should be allowed to return?

| | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| None should be allowed to return | 1.3 | 42.7 |

| Few hundreds should be allowed to return | 3.1 | 21.9 |

| Few thousands should be alllowed to return | 10.8 | 10.7 |

| Anyone wishing to return should be allowed to return | 79.6 | 11.5 |

| No answer + don’t know | 5.2 | 13.1 |

The findings presented in table 25.8 indicate that the large majority of Palestinians hold the view that Israel should compensate the refugees. However, relatively few of them (21%) believe that Israel should do so exclusively. This percentage is just slightly higher than the percentage of Israelis who hold the same view (17%). In fact, the majority of Palestinians believe that responsibility for compensation should be shared between Israel and other sources, including international bodies, such as the United Nations, as well as Arab governments. The main difference between the Israeli and Palestinian respondents is that the former tend to exclude Israel from this obligation and to put the burden of compensation on international bodies, the United States, and Arab governments.

Table 25.7 Where should the Palestinian refugees be resettled permanently?

| | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| Mainly in their original homes inside Israel | 53.8 | 5.3 |

| Mainly in places inside the Palestinian State | 29.7 | 32.3 |

| Mainly in the Palestinian state and inside Israel | — | — |

| Mainly they should be resettled in their present locations in the Middle East or anywhere else | 7.3 | 57.2 |

| No answer + don’t know | 9.2 | 5.2 |

Table 25.8 Who should compensate the refugees?

| | Palestinians
n = 1200 | Israeli Jews
n = 500 |

| Noone | 1.8 | 17.0 |

| Israel | 21.0 | 18.3 |

| International bodies such as the UN | 13.9 | 41.3 |

| Arab governments | 5.5 | 29.9 |

| US | — | 11.4 |

| Israel + others | 47.4 | 10.3 |

| Israel and US | — | 2.9 |

| International bodies such as the UN + US | — | 5.6 |

| Arab governments + us | — | 3.9 |

| Other combinations | 6.5 | 8.2 |

| Any combination of the above (indicate which ones) | — | — |

| No answer + don’t know | 9.2 | 5.2 |

*** The Scale of the Problem

At the beginning of this chapter we observed that the numbers of the original and the current Palestinian refugees are still being debated, with the

estimates varying among Israeli, Palestinian, or UN sources. Given these differences, it seems relevant to find out to what extent the estimates of ordinary Israelis and Palestinians come close to the figures given by their own sources. This question may be relevant because, among other things, such estimates may affect the public attitudes on various aspects of a solution, such as place of resettlement and financial compensation. On the basis of our initial assumptions concerning the fundamental asymmetry between the Israelis and the Palestinians, we have hypothesized that the Israelis would be inclined to underestimate the actual number of refugees for at least two reasons. First, being less involved and concerned with the problem, they are probably less motivated to acquire knowledge of its scale. Moreover, as noted earlier, unlike its centrality in the daily life and public agenda of the Palestinians, little attention has been paid to the problem of the refugees in the Israeli society. Secondly, the Israeli public generally tends to mistrust the Arab sources under the belief that their figures concerning the number of refugees are exaggerated for political reasons.

Table 25.9 What do you think is the overall number of the Palestinian refugees today? (The term Palestinian refugees refer to those who left or were forced to leave their homes because of the 1948 war and their descendants).

| Up to one million | 11.1 |

| 1–2 million | 18.3 |

| 2–3 million | 18.0 |

| 3–4 million | 18.7 |

| 4 or more | 19.5 |

| No answer + don’t know | 14.4 |

Table 25.9 presents the figures provided by the respondents of both groups in response to the following question:

The two distributions of the estimated numbers of refugees generally confirm the hypothesis that the Israeli public tends to underestimate these numbers or to have no knowledge of them. Thus 31.7 percent of the Israeli respondents believe that there are less than one million refugees, while 37.3 percent have no idea of what is the right number. The comparable figures for the Palestinians are 11.1 percent and 14.4 percent. However, despite these differences, it is difficult to avoid the observation that a significant number among the Palestinians themselves tend to underestimate the current number of the refugees. Keeping in mind the figures of 3.5 million refugees, as given by the agencies of the United Nations, and of 4 to 5 million, according to various Palestinian estimates, the estimates given by the Palestinian respondents are somewhat perplexing. Nearly one-half of them (47.4%) believe that the number of refugees is less than 3 million, and about 30 percent think that this number is even less than 2 million. These results suggest that our initial hypothesis regarding the bias in the estimation of the number of the Palestinian refugees should be refined and elaborated. Specifically, it would be of both theoretical and practical interest to find out why the Palestinian public tends to underestimate the current number of Palestinian refugees.

*** Concluding Comments

The overall conclusion that can be drawn from the results that we have presented is that the perceptions of the Israelis and Palestinians with regard to the origins of the refugee problem and its modes of solution are generally in wide disagreement. We have also found that the distribution of the Israeli’s attitudes toward various aspects of the problem tend to be somewhat more varied and less slanted as compared with the attitudes of the Palestinians, consistently with our a priori considerations.

Nevertheless, from a practical viewpoint, the main lesson from these results is that both the Israeli and Palestinian publics tend to view this problem from the perspective of their own national narrative and in accordance with their own national interests. Consequently, assuming that the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships will make genuine efforts to reach an agreement on this issue in the framework of peace negotiations, and granted that such an agreement will be based on some forms of compromise, both sides will still

have the difficult task of convincing their own constituencies that the agreement is worthwhile and serves the interests of their nations. In order to achieve this purpose, the Israeli government should bring to the mind of its own public the plight of the refugees and the role that Israel has to fulfill in solving their problem. Similarly, the Palestinian authority should inform the Palestinian public about the Israeli needs, particularly with respect to its perspective on the risks involved in the implementation of the “right of return.”

[561] These figures are based on United Nations sources. Estimates by Arab sources are typically higher while those of Israeli sources tend to be lower.

[562] United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194 (III) of December ll, 1948.

[563] For a detailed account of the Israeli and Palestinian positions on the problem of the refugees and its solution, see: Alpher Joseph and Shikaki Khalil, 1998: The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return, Paper No. 98–7. Program on International Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University. For different individual perspectives on the refugee problem also see the special issue of the Palestinian-Israel Journal 11 (4) 1995.

[564] Dr. Zureik has written a report entitled “Public Opinion and Palestinian Refugees,” submitted to the International Development Program, December, 1999, in which he analyzes in detail the attitudes of the three groups.

[565] Respondents were asked to indicate which of the six issue is the most important, the second most important and the third.

[566] For a short but a representative “new “historian” perspective, see Ilan Pappe, “The New History and Sociology of Israel: A challenge to the Old Version,” Palestine-Israel Journal 11 (3) (1995): 70–6. For a critical view of the “new historians” school, see Ephraim Karsh, Fabricating New History (London: Frank Cass, 1997). Also see Benny Morris, The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949 (Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[567] Due to a technical error, the answering category of “mostly the Arab side” was omitted in the Palestinian survey. For this reason the absolute figures of the two surveys are not directly comparable. For example, respondents who might have preferred the omitted category turned as an alternative choice to the adjacent middle category of equal responsibility.

** Concluding Remarks

Joseph Ginat and Edward J. Perkins

This volume consists of a collection of papers dealing with the issue of the Palestinian refugees from diverse angles. Some of the authors proceed to suggest practical solutions. The papers and proposals are written by Palestinian. Jordanian, Egyptian, Israeli, and American scholars, several of who claim that without Israeli acquiescence to the right of return there is no solution to the conflict at large. Others claim that Israel has to acknowledge the right of return without necessarily implementing it. Some proposals indicate that Israel must acknowledge the right of return, and the actual return of refugees would be to the Palestinian State. Several advise that Israel absorb a symbolic number of several tens of thousands of the refugees. Still other proposals focus on a method to compensate the refugees for their losses.

A study based on empirical fieldwork asserts that already three generations have been born in the refugee camps. The marriage patterns of these people

show that some married spouses from refugees of different geographical areas. Others married spouses from the geographical area where they currently were living. Displacing them now would be the equivalent of uprooting them, and from a practical standpoint it would be an undesirable solution. The proposal suggests transforming the current refugee camps into modern towns, complete with infrastructure, various public buildings, and also industrial parks to provide them with work.

This book reflects a variety of proposals that must be brought to the governments in the region, especially to the Palestinian Authority and Israel, as well as to the countries who have hosted refugees since 1948. It must also be brought to the Secretary General of the UN, the European Union, and the United States Government. Any solution that will be agreed upon by the parties will also need the support of international financial resources.

The nature of our conference did not necessitate the arrival at one specific conclusion. Nevertheless it seems that this volume is a significant contribution not only to the academic community but can be a great help towards finding a solution to an enormous tragedy.

Usually books that are collections of papers are published several months or more after the conference. These concluding remarks are being written half a year after the beginning of the “Al-Aqsa Intifada,” or as the Palestinians call it. the “Second Intifada.” At the time of the conference, the participants did not foresee that the peace process would be put on hold by this Intifada, the consequences of which have been great tragedy. Neither did they expect that the Camp David Summit would end in uprising. We thought and emphasized that the two main stumbling blocks to be solved in the negotiations were and continue to be the status of Jerusalem and the Palestinian refugee issue. The breakdown of the talks proves not only were we right about the refugee issue, but also that this issue is even of more importance than the Jerusalem issue. According to US President Bill Clinton’s proposal, which was approved by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, Palestinian Chairman Yasser Arafat could receive sole sovereignty on the Temple Mount. When Yasser Arafat did not sign a peace treaty with Israel at Camp David, the Palestinian leader said that the proposal did not adequately deal with the refugee issue. Some Palestinian leaders said that had Yasser

Arafat signed the proposed agreement without Israel recognizing the right of return in some form, he would have certainly lost his political power if not more than that.

In an interview to Maariv Magazine on April 13, 2001, James Rubin, who was a US State Department Spokesman, said that at Camp David Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak offered the Palestinians a fair deal. “Barak did exactly what the world thought he had to do,” said Rubin. However it appears that Rubin does not understand Arafat’s reaction. “Arafat, as a reflection of Palestinian public opinion embodies exactly its inherent contradictions. On one side there is realism towards Israel. Israel is here and is not going anywhere, and there is a need to find an end to the conflict. On the other hand there is a big anger and frustration that feeds the continuation of the struggle against Israel. These two ‘Arafats,’ the two ideologies of Arafat, contradict one another. And in this stage the struggle overrides the realism.” However, Rubin and in fact the entire Western World are puzzled that Arafat could have refused such a generous offer.

During the course of the summit, it was perceived that the Palestinian leadership was not yet disposed to demonstrate flexibility during negotiations. We surmise that the leadership of the Arab World had not assured Arafat of its continued support were he to take a more flexible stance. In contrast, the positions presented by Israel at the Summit are said to have been well received and to have been accorded support by the US hosts. The perception of the Palestinians as inflexible and the Israelis as forthcoming during the negotiations became the consensus view of many in the Western World following the breakdown of the talks. The authors of this book think differently. We believe that neither Arafat nor any other Arab leader could sign any accord, even one giving them Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley, and the Temple Mount, if it still lacks agreement on the refugee issue.

It seems that the reason many people do not understand that Arafat’s refusal of the Clinton proposal is related to the marginalization of the Palestinian refugee issue. From 1948 until 1967 the refugee issue had been at the top of the agenda, with a unified Arab demand for the right to return. Following the 1967 War the Palestinian public focus has shifted towards demanding self-

determination. Moreover since the Oslo accords the emphasis has shifted almost entirely towards creating a Palestinian state.

On the other hand, the Palestinian refugees still living in scattered refugee camps cherish and preserve their Palestinian identity. When Ginat conducted his survey of the refugee camps in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, and Jordan he discovered how even those refugees of the second and third generation identified with their village of origin. The hosting countries tried also to keep the distinction between the refugees and the general population, albeit not very successfully. When there are intermarriages, it is difficult for the governments to prevent assimilation. The authors of this volume believe that in Israel as well as in the Western World politicians are unable to comprehend how the issue of the right of return has not disappeared or become replaced by the issue of self- determination.

In an interview to Ma’ariv on April 6, 2001, Ami Ayalon, the former head of the Israeli Security Services (Shin Bet) said, “The basic issue is the Palestinian Diaspora. I claim that this subject is exactly the gap between an ideological versus pragmatic approach. We [the Israelis] must accept that they [the Palestinians] will always have the desire to return to Jaffa, to Ramie, to Lod, the same as we always would like to go to Nablus (Shekhem), Hebron, and Jericho. Jews always dreamt about the return to Jerusalem, where the Palestinians will always dream to go back to Jaffa. We must distinguish how to live with their dream, but on the other hand to stay rooted in reality. We are not allowed to try and erase their dream, we have to study how to live with it.”

The question is that if Israelis find a way to live with this dream, will that be enough to achieve a peace agreement. In the array of opinions presented here we see very clearly that the Palestinians and Arabs distinguish between the demand of Israel to recognize the right of return and actual return to within the boundaries of Israel. While it appears that there is no flexibility in their demands for the right of return, compounding this has been a consensus in Israeli policy and public opinion throughout the process against accepting that demand. On the April 22, 2001, the Israeli Minister of Defense Benjamin Ben-Eliezer stated that he is willing to make many concessions, but is not willing to allow Palestinian sovereignty on the

Temple Mount or to recognize the Palestinian right of return. It should be indicated that Ben-Eliezer was a member of Ehud Barak's cabinet, where there was a different and even more conciliatory approach to the solution over the Temple Mount.

Over half a year has passed since the Intifada began. Unfortunately there seems little doubt that it will continue for more months, and there still looms the possibility of a costly escalation. Nevertheless, inevitably the Palestinians and Israelis will have to return to the negotiating table. We have to assume that when this day comes, the marathon approach utilized at Camp David will not be repeated. We anticipate that an incremental approach will take its place, and that such talks may well begin prior to a ceasefire, not withstanding the current official Israeli government position that talks cannot be held under fire. In reality there are talks, they are simply being defined as contacts designed at achieving a cease-fire.

The authors of this volume believe that the more dialogue, official or non-official negotiations, the sooner a cease-fire and ultimately a peace accord can be reached. When the sides reach the stage of official negotiations, the Palestinian refugee issue will be unavoidable. Neither Arafat nor any other Palestinian leader will be able or willing to avoid the issue of the Palestinian refugees. This volume has not come up with a single magical solution to the problem, yet as has been mentioned earlier, there are several serious proposals in this collection. To us, the authors of this book, it is clear that despite the difficulty for Israel, it is imperative to find a new formula designed to break the deadlock over the right of return. Many of us do not think that Israel must agree unconditionally to the Palestinian version dictating that Israel must recognize the right of return. Instead, there is a need for a creative formula that will include a constructive ambiguity allowing each of the sides to be satisfied by its own explanation. Perhaps this will include the proposal that Israel must absorb several tens of thousands of refugees.

Finally, the international community must begin organizing itself and prepare resources to facilitate the rehabilitation of the refugees. In any kind of

solution, it does not appear that most of the refugees will move to the Palestinian state, so the issue of reparations is extremely significant. Similarly the issue of citizenship or dual citizenship of the refugees has to be resolved. A combination of a formula that will extract the sides from the current catch-22 and a willingness to absorb a symbolic number of refugees could be the key for the solution not only of the Palestinian refugee issue specifically but the conflict as a whole.

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** Index

<biblio>

Abdallah II, King, I In, 209, 218, 265

Abdel Rahman, As’ad, 203

Abdullah Ibn Hussein, King of Jordan annexation of Arab Palestine, 25, 154, 155

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26

civil war (1947–8), 24

management of first Palestinian exodus, 268

Abram, Eliahu, 69, 76n

Abu Ah Mustafa, 201

Abu Aynain, 198, 201, 202, 209

Abu Mazin, 53

Abu Sitta, Salman, 165, 257

Abu Zayyad, Ziad, 122–3, 134n

Abu-A’yyash, Radwan, 51

Abu-Libdeh, Ghasan, 4

Abu-Lughod, Janet, 283

Abu-Sharif, Basam, 49

Abu-Sitteh, Salman, 214

Abul Haija, ‘Abdel-Karim, 165

Acre, 92, 93

Adelman, Howard, 173

Africa, refugee problems, 31

Ahad Ha’am, 277

al-Ahmad, Azzam, 206

‘Ajlun, 158

Alexander II, 170

Algeria, 187

Alpher, Joseph, 12/7, 141, 146

Amal militia, 195, 198

American civil war, 21

Amman Agreement (1985), 48

Amman Conference (1999), status of

Jerusalem, ix-x, I In

Amman-Rusaifa, 158

Amre, Taisir, 8, 169–78

Amro, Rateb, 10, 264–70

Antonius, G., 154

Arab Higher Committee (AHC), civil war

(1947–8), 20, 22

Arab League

annexation of Arab Palestine by Transjordan, 25

Arab property losses, 95

Arab- Israeli war (1948), 25, 26 civil war (1947–8), 20–1, 22, 150

Israeli counter compensation, 210 refugee settlement in Syria, 81, 84 rejection of UN Partition Resolution, 19 responsibility of defending Palestine, 150

Arab Legion, 24, 25, 29, 154

Arab Liberation Army (ALA)

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26, 27

civil war (1947–8), 20–1,22,24

Arab nationalism, 81, 85, 153, 155

Arab Peninsula states, 31

Arab Socialist Party, 81

Arab states

adoption of UN resolutions, 19, 32

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 19, 23, 25, 26

Israel’s responsibility for compensation, 88, 97, 99, 273

Jewish property in, 98

Jewish refugees, 98 9, 103–4, 109, 113, 115, 120,239

military expenditure, 262

reconciliation issues with Israel, 29 32, 278–80

refugee separation from indigenous population, 31

refugees, 40–2

refusals to recognize Israel, 32 resettlement of refugees, 55, I 18, 126,

209–12

right of return, 180–1

as source of compensation payments, 99

trade, 107

see also individual states

Arab-Israeli conflict

early US foreign policy, 77–8 ideological dimensions, 10, 275–81 salient features of, 276 8

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 5, 17–20, 23–4, 25–9

Arab armies invasion, 19, 23, 26, 29 armistice agreements (1949), 17, 29 revisionist historians, 18–19

Arab-Israeli wars, 57

Arafat, Yasser

Black September, 42

Camp David Summit, 318–19

Fatah forces in Ein al-Hilweh, 202

Iraq resettlement scenario, 206 location of refugees, 200

Palestinian diaspora suspicion of, 126 PLO in Lebanon, 194–5 refugees in Lebanon, 206 resettlement of refugees, 204 right of return, 49, 50, 51, 124, 212, 213, 214

support for Iraq during Gulf War, 290 territorial jurisdiction, 204 war of the camps, 195

archival material, 17

Argon, 171

Armenians, 21

armistice agreements (1949). 17, 29

Arnon. Arie, 288

Arzt, Donna E.

estimates of numbers of refugees, 257 Israeli gesture, 7, 122–38, 209
refugee citizenship, 145, 146, 211–12 resettlement of refugees, 208–9

‘Arub refugee camp, 142, 144

Ashkelon, 143

El-Asmar, Fouzi, 207

Athamna,‘Abdel-Basid, 151

Atlas of Palestinian Refugee Camps in

Jordan, 252

Australia, 129, 163, 164–5, 208, 219

Ayalon, Ami, 319

A yen al-Helua refugee camp, 198

Azeris, 21

Al-Azraq. 209

Badran, Abraham, 9–10, 255–63

Baghdad Pact, 79

Baker. James, 193

Balfour Declaration, 153, 170

Balkans, 21,31

Balqa. 157

Bangladesh, 38

Bank of Israel, 297

al-Baq’a refugee camp, 158, 159. 251, 265

Baqa’a, 74

Barak, Ehud

acceptance of Palestinian state. 261 Camp David Summit, 318

Canadian interest in absorbing refugees, 4

declaration on accepting refugees, 4 expressions of regret, 89, 110 family reunification, 4 four “No’s”, 180 right of return, 124, 216

South Lebanon security zone, 198

Barakat, Daoud, 212

Basheer, Tahseen, 10, 275–81

Ba’th Party, 81

Begin, Menahem, 170–1

Beishan, 152

Bellagio Conference (1998), x

Ben-Ami, Shlomo, 171, 175

Ben-Eliezer, Benjamin, 319–20

Ben-Gurion, David, 28, 30, 78, 79. 265

Ben-Porath, Mordechai, 103

Bernadotte, Folke, 35

Bethlehem University, x, 2

Bevin, Ernest, 79

The Birth of Israel (Flaban), 171

Bissan, 93

Black September, 42, 47, 155, 156

Blanford, Nicholas, 84

Bohdlander, Deborah, 208

borders, importance of in public opinion

polls, 307

Boren, David, ix-xii

Bosnians, 21

Bouez, Faris, 205

Britain

Arabs dependence on for arms, 27

defense organization for Middle East, 78, 79,81

land holdings records, 91

Lausanne Conference, 78

Mandate period, 92–3, 153, 255

Palestinian-Jewish civil war (1947–8), 19, 21,24–5

refugee settlement in Syria, 79, 80–5

Brynen, Rex, 99, 102

Bucaille, Laetitia, 141

building structures, as compensation issue, 90, 93

Buwayz, Faris, 197

Cahana, Shamay, 102

Cairo agreements (1994), 68, 267

Camp David peace treaty, 30, 70

Camp David Summit, 318–19

Canada

addressing of refugee issue, 2

interest in absorbing refugees, 4

and Israel, 163

refugee citizenship, 125

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 65. 72

refugees in Lebanon, 205

resettlement of refugees. 129, 164 -5,208, 219

Canadian International Development Research Center, 97

Center for Peace Studies, ix-xii, 2–3, I \ n

Central Bureau of Statistics, 4

Chetnik refugees, 31

Christian churches, 164, 165

civil rights, 37

see also human rights

civil war (1947–8), 19–23, 24–5

characteristic tactics of, 20

Palestinian flight, 21–3

Clapp Mission, 96–7

Clinton, Bill, 4, 318

Cohen, Stephen, 214

Cold War, 77, 79, 85

Commission on Human Rights, 61,259

Committee on the Exercise of the

Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian

People, 2, 63–4

Committee of Experts on Compensation, 90–1

communism, western fear of, 78 compensation, 6–7

Amre’s proposals, 176–7

Arab view of Israel as responsible for, 88, 97, 99, 273

for building structures, 90, 93

determined by third party, 117

as distinct from reparations, 71

as final status negotiation, 102

forms of payment, 97–8 identification of property and non-material items, 90–3

as inalienable right, 37

individual versus collective, 71,96–8, 100,

103, 105, 112, 113, 114–15, 118, 120

Israeli compromise solution, 113, 114–15,

118, 120

Israeli responses, 39, 89–90, 96, 102–7, 239–41

Jewish refugees, 98–9, 113, 115, 120, 210, 272–3

Jordan, 116. 166

Khalidi’s recommendations, 71

for land, 90–3

Palestinian compromise solution, 111 12, 118, 120

as part of resettlement solution, 147, 210 for property, 90–5

public opinion, 312–14

recipients, 96–8

refugees in Jordan, 165–6

regional solution, 272–3 responsibility for, 88–90, 273

sources of payments, 99–100, l l 7, 262

Tamari’s recommendations, 71

UN Conciliation Committee, 35, 62,

90–1,96

UN Resolution 194 (1948), 36, 50. 62, 88, 96, 109–10, 255, 258,262

valuation of property and non-material items, 94–5

Council on Christian-Muslim Dialogue, 146

Croats, 21

Custodian of Jewish Property, 98

Cyprus, 106

Czechoslovakia, 31

Dajani, Munther S., 9, 242–8

Darwazeh, Mohammad, 188

Davidson, Ronald, 186

al-Dawalibi, Ma’ruf, 80

Dayan, Moshe, 184, 287–8

Dead Sea potash works, 98

Declaration of Independence, 48–9

Declaration of Principles (1993), 48, 52 effect on multilateral groups, 172 reaction from Syria and Lebanon, 195 references to refugees, 64 refugee question, 64, 70, 245 refugees as final status negotiation, 245, 303

right of return, 64, 70, 172, 176

see also Oslo Accords (1993)

Deir Yasin massacre, 152, 170–1

Department of Palestinian Affairs (DPA), 152

development agencies, 80

Dheisha refugee camp, 144

DPA, 152

Drake, Laura, 9, 200–29

East Bank, refugee numbers, 151, 152 economic cooperation and development, multilateral working groups, 65

Economic Social Council for West Asia (ESCWA), 286

Egypt

Arab nationalism, 81, 85

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26

Camp David peace treaty, 30, 70 family planning policy, 298 freezing of Jewish property, 98 Jewish compensation, 272–3 land holdings records, 91

and Palestinian Jewish civil war, 19–26 quadrilateral standing committee, 52, 53, 64, 70, 72–3, 245

refugee citizenship, 29, 40

refugee settlement in Syria. 81, 85 refugees, 218, 223, 255 registration of 1967 refugees, 52–3 resettlement of refugees, 209, 273 4 security agreement with Israel, 236 territorial issues with Israel, 30

Eickelman, Dale F., 7–8, 139–49

Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp, 202, 203

El Salvador, 131

Elibrachy, Bahieldin, 10, 271 4

England, 163

environment, multilateral working groups,

65

Eran, Oded, 124

Ethridge, Mark, 78

Europe, war refugees, 23–4, 31, 172

European Union

aid to Palestinian Authority, 298

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 65

Export/Import Bank. 78, 80

Fadlallah, Hussein, 225/7

Fafo Institute for Applied Social Science. 2,

4. 12/7. 157, 158, 163

Faisal, Prince, 4–5

family planning policies, 298

family reunification, 54. 59, 145. 237

Barak’s declaration, 4

Israeli compromise solution, 113, 114.

115,120

OSCE documentation, 133

Oslo Accords (1993), 68

Palestinian compromise solution. 119

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 68–9,

73

Fanon, Franz, 184

Farsakh, Leila, 289

Fatah, 198,202

Fedayeen, 185

Feiler. Gil, 107

Fertile Crescent, 153

“Financing Palestinian Refugee

Compensation”, 99

Firro, Kais M„ 8, 193–9

Flaban, Simha, 171

France, 163,208,211

Futuwa, 20

Fuwar refugee camp, 144

Galicia, 31

Galilee

absentee property. 92

civil war (1947–8), 23

Gaza Strip

absorptive capacity of. 59

birthrate. 140. 284, 286

demography, 4, 282, 283–7, 290

employment trends, 287–93

international financing of projects, 195

Israeli resettlement policy, 8, 143–4, 179–92

Jewish settlements, 136-7/7, 145,214–17 labor force, 285, 286–7

movement of Palestinian citizens, 215

occupation by Israel, 29

opinion polls on right of return, 134/7

poverty, 4, 190/7

refugee separation from indigenous population, 31

refugees, 29, 35, 58, 141, 153, 204, 223–4. 255, 257

refugees displaced (1967), 52

right of return, 164

UN Resolutions, 258

unemployment rates, 285, 288, 290,

291–2

Gaza-Jericho first agreement. 267

Gazit. Shlomo. 9. 134/7, 233–41

cessation of UNRWA. 129

Israeli involvement in resettlement, 146

Israeli offer of moral compensation.

146–7

refugee camp representatives, 141

refugee compensation, 71, 89–90. 96.

239–41

refugee numbers, 141–2

regrouping of issue clusters geographi

cally, 204

right of return, 124, 235, 237

Gelber, Yoav, 5, 17–33, 110

Geneva Conventions. 37. 219

Georgians. 21

Germany

and Israel, 163

Jewish compensation, 176

refugee problems, 31

Volksdeutsche, 24

al-Ghuwayriyya, 159

Gilbar, Gad, x

Gilman, Benjamin. 208

Ginat. Joseph, ix-x. 1–13, 139–49, 317–20

Greater Syria, 153, 250

Greece, 106

Green Line. 30

Gulf Co-operation Council, 208

Gulf States

Palestinian workers, 289–90. 295–6

refugee citizenship. 40

Gush Etzion, 23. 24

Haaretz, 257

Habibi, Amirah, 154

Habitat for Humanity, 144

Hadawi, Sami, 90, 95

Haddad, Mohanna, 8, 150–68

Haganah

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26–7. 28. 67

civil war (1947–8), 20, 21, 23, 24, 152

Haifa, 23,25, 152, 308

Haifa, University of, x, xi. 2

Hamas, 291

Hamilton, Lee, 208

Hammarskjold, Dag, 181–2

Haqq al-A\\‘da see right of return

al-Hariri, Rafiq, 197

Harvard University, 2, 12//, 105

El Hassan bin Talal, viii, x

Hassassian, Manuel, x, 6, 57 76

Hatib, Ghassan, 305

Hauran, 22

Hawary, Mohamed. 5, 34 45

Hawrani, Akram, 81

Hebron, 98

Heller, Mark A., 146

Hermann, Tamar, I 1, 303–16

al-Hinnawi, Sami, 80

Hirschon, Renee. 106

AH is t o ry’ of Is ra el i Pci les I in i an Con fli c t

(Tessier), 277

Hittin refugee camp, 159

Hnaikin refugee camp, 159

Holocaust, 89

Holy Fighters see Jihad al-Mukadas

holy places, rights of visitation, 37

Horani, Hani, 151

Horizon C enter for Study and Research, x, 2–3

al-Hoss, Salim, 201,225/?

Hourani, Akram. 85

Housoun refugee camp. 251

El-Hout, Shafiq. 212–13

human rights

basic principles, viii. 249. 261

Commission on Human Rights. 61. 259

inalienable rights of refugees. 36–7. 48.

59–60, 67.213, 258–60, 271–4

International Covenant on Economic.

Social and Cultural Rights. 183. 259

PLO’s political-ideological trinity, 48

Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

37, 60, 259

see also compensation: right of return humanitarian assistance, right to, 37 al-Husaini, Faisal, 51

Al-Husn refugee camp. 159. 162. 251

Hussain Ben Ali, 153

Hussein bin Talal. King. 135/7. 264

Hussein. Saddam. 40. 50

Husseini family, 153 identity, sense of, 60. 153 7. 160 1. 184

ideological dimensions. 10.275 81

illiteracy, 4

IMF, 291.298

The Independent, 176

India

New Delhi Accord, 132

refugee problems, 31

Indyk, Martin, 206

Institute for Global Conflict and

Cooperation, 2

Inter-Uni versit} Consortium for Arab

Studies, 2

International Bank, 80

International Conference on Human Rights (1968), 37

International Conference of World Jewish

Leaders, 51

International Court of Justice. 43

International Covenant of Civil and

Political Rights, 259

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 183, 259

International Development Research

Centre. 2

International Monetary Fund (IMF). 291.

298

International Programs Center, xi

International Red Cross. 24. 36

Intifada. 156. 184. 186. 187. 290, 318. 320

Iraq

annexation of Arab Palestine by Transjordan, 25

Arabism, 153

domestic subversion, 25

freezing of Jewish property, 98 international embargo, 206. 295 Israeli compensation claims, 98 refugees, 41, 218 resettlement of refugees, 181, 200–1.

205–8.209.212,219,274

and Syria, 84. 85

Irbid, 158

Irbid refugee camp, 159.251

Irgtm Zvai Leumi (IZL), 25

Ismail, Hussein, 250

Israel

“100.000 proposal” (1949), 127–8, 176 absorption of Jewish refugees, 103–4.

109, 140, 239

admission to United Nations, 174 annexation of Jerusalem (1967), 32 Arab owned land, 90 3, 94–5, 104

Arab owned movable property, 93 4

Arab states refusal to recognise. 32

Arab Israeli war (1948), 5, 17–20. 23–4, 25–9

Arab Israeli wars. 57

Arabs regard as responsible for compensation, 88, 97, 99, 273

armistice agreements (1949), 29 attacks from PLO in Lebanon, 194 5 bilateral discussions with Palestinian

Authority, 234

Camp David peace treaty, 30, 70

Camp David Summit, 318 civil war (1947–8), 19–23, 24–5 compensation compromise solution. 113.

114–15. 118, 120

compensation counterclaims. 98–9. 113.

115. 120,210, 272–3

Israel (continued)

compensation issue, 39, 89–90, 96, 102–7, 239–41

conference document on status of

Jerusalem, 11/7

declaration of independence (1948), 17, 60, 150

definition of displaced persons, 70

destruction of Arab villages, 38

early US foreign policy, 77, 78, 85

estimates of numbers displaced, 34 family reunification, 4, 54, 68, 69, 73,

113, 114, 115, 120, 145,237

invasion of Lebanon, 103, 211

Jerusalem policy, 74

Jewish settlements, 93, 140, 214–17

as a Jewish state, 235

Khalidi’s recommendations, 71

land holdings records, 91

Law of Return, 38, 66, 265, 266

marginalization of refugee problem, viii, 72

military expenditure, 262

minorities protection, 131–2 naturalization scenario, 209–12

occupation of land after 1967 war, 62

occupation of West Bank and Gaza

Strip, 29

overseas workers, 291, 296–7

Palestinian Arab population, 117, 127, 131,237

Palestinian attitude to State of Israel. 162

Palestinian compromise solution, 111–13, 119

Palestinian workers, 107, 288, 289, 290, 291,292, 296–7

peace agreement with Jordan, 70, 72, 113, 116, 147, 264, 266–7

position on refugees, 65–6

principles of compromise and concession, 32–3

priorities, 235–6

public opinion on refugees, 11, 303–16

public opinion on right of return, 303–4, 317

quadrilateral standing committee, 52, 53, 64, 70, 72–3, 245

recognition of State of Palestine, 244, 261 reconciliation issues with Arab states, 29–32, 278–80

reconciliation with PLO, 48, 52, 141

refugee citizenship. 125, 131, 161

refugee compromise solution, 113–15, 119–21

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 66, 68–9, 74, 105 ”

refugees in Lebanon, 200, 201,205–9 refusal to accept responsibility for

refugees, 54, 66–7, 89, 103, 109, 119, 124,170–2, 237–9, 304, 307–8

regrouping of issue clusters geographi

cally, 204

repatriation of 1967 refugees, 36

resettlement as answer to refugee issue, 5,

31,39, 103–4, 205–9

resettlement in Iraq scenario, 205–8

resettlement policy in Gaza, 8, 143–4,

179–192

revisionist historians, 18–19

right of return, 3, 37–8, 61,64, 66, 102–4, 109, 110, 124, 180, 181,216, 245,317

right of return compromise solution, 113, 118,119–20

right of return symbolic gesture, 7, 119, 122–38, 209

security concerns, 61,66, 74, 235–6

separation of Jerusalem issue from other

issues, 203

separation of refugees issue from other

issues, 203–4

sharing of Jerusalem with Jordan (1948), 32

Sharm el-Sheikh Agreement, 267

sovereignty of the Palestinian Authority, 213–14

statement of acknowledgment, 114

territorial issues, 29–30

tripartite agreements, 116

trust and confidence building, 242–4

UN Resolution 181, 174, 238, 239

UN Resolution 194 (1948), 36, 64, 110,

119, 174, 175, 255

UN Resolution 237 (1967), 36, 62, 266

UN Resolution 242 (1967), 36, 62–3, 258

unemployment, 296

western reversal of attitudes, 18

withdrawal from Lebanon, 202

Za’im’s Syrian government proposals, 79 see also Arab-Israeli conflict;

Declaration of Principles (1993); Oslo

Accords (1993)

Israel Defense Ministry, 124

Israel Land Authority, 99, 104

Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS),

283, 289

Israeli Civil Administration, 69

Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property, 90, 93,94, 99, 125–6

Israeli Defense Force (IDF)

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 23, 26–8, 110,

154

border closures, 291

civil war (1947–8)

Israeli Preconditions for Palestinian

Statehood. 89

Israeli-Palestinian Framework Agreement, 123

IZL, 25

Jabal refugee camp, 159, 185

Jaffa, 23, 25, 93, 152

Jalazon refugee camp, 105, 144

Japan, Refugee Working Group (RWG), 65

Jarash refugee camp, 159, 251

Jazira, 77, 79

Jenin, 142

Jerusalem

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26

as crucial element in peace process, 1

Declaration of Principles (1993), 64 importance of in public opinion polls, 306–7

international conferences on status of, ix-x, 11 n

Israeli policy, 32, 74

Israeli strategy of separation from other issues, 203

Israeli war damage claims, 98

as major issue in Arab-Israeli reconciliation, 32

and the refugee question, 59, 74

Jerusalem corridor, 92

Jerusalem Media and Communication

Center, 143

Jerusalem Post, 216

Jewish Agency, 93

Jewish communities

Muslim countries, 17

Palestine, 170, 277

Jewish National Fund, 93

Jewish settlements, 128, 136—7/?, 145,

214–17

on absentee property, 93, 140

Declaration of Principles (1993), 64 importance of in public opinion polls, 307

Jihad al-Mukadas, 20

Jihad Island, 291

Johnson, Joseph E., 39

Johnston, Eric, 96–7

Jordan

Amman Agreement (1985), 48

Black September, 42, 47, 155, 156

compensation, 116, 166

definition of displaced persons, 70

demography, 150–3,250–1

development of Palestinian identity, 154

devolution of UNRWA functions, 99

diplomatic row with Lebanon, 40 economy, 294–5

federation program, 47

incorporation of West Bank, 29, 150, 250

Israeli compensation claims, 98

Khalidi’s recommendations, 71

land holdings records, 91

Madrid Peace Conference, 157

Palestinian compromise solution, 113

Palestinian workers, 294–5

peace agreement with Israel, 70, 72, 113, 116, 147, 264, 266–7

permanent settlement of refugees, 118, 166, 209–12

and the PLO, 116, 156

quadrilateral standing committee, 52, 53,

64, 70, 72–3, 245

refugee attitude towards, 163

refugee camps, 9,41, 141, 152, 157–60,

162, 249–54, 265

refugee citizenship, 29, 41, 58, 113, 125,

140, 146, 154–5, 161, 173, 251, 264, 272

refugees, 150–68, 204, 218, 223, 249–54,

255, 257, 264–70, 298-9/?, 303

refugees’ living conditions, 157–9 registration of 1967 refugees, 52–3
resettlement of refugees from Lebanon,

209

security agreement with Israel, 236

sharing of Jerusalem with Israel (1948), 32

tripartite agreements, 116

unemployment, 294, 295

wish to negotiate directly with Israel, 120–1

see also Transjordan

Jordanian Palestinian Committee for the

Study of the Living Conditions of the

Refugees in the West Bank, 151

Jordanian Palestinian confederation, 116

Journal of Refugee Studies, 2

Judea, 26

justice, 33, 43, 54, 59,75, 174–5 al-Karak, 158

Karami, Omar, 225/?

Karkoteskm, Amon-Raz, 187 8

Katamon, 74

Katz, Yossi, 124

Kav LaOved, 291

Kelman, Herbert C., 12/?, I 10

Khalidi, Rashid, 52, 54, 70 1, HO kibbutzim, civil war (1947 8), 23

Klein, Menachem, 5 6, 46 56

Knesset Finance Committee, 93

Kojm, Christopher, 208

Konikoff, A., 151

Kosovo, 188

Kubursi, Atif, 90, 95, 97

Kuwait

Palestinian workers, 290, 295 refugee citizenship, 40–1 resettlement of refugees, 209

Labor Force Survey 1998, 287 labor migration see migrant workers Lahoud, Emile, 198, 200 land, as compensation issue, 90–3 Land Office (Government of Palestine), 91 Land Settlement Act, 91,92

Land Transfer Regulations (1940), 94–5 Landis, Joshua, 6, 77–87

Lausanne Conference (1949), 29, 30, 78, 127

Lausanne Protocol, 30

Lausanne Treaty (1923), 106

Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 130–1

League of Arab States, 2

Lebanon

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26

Arabism, 153

civil war, 21

close of shipping routes from Libya, 41 Declaration of Principles (1993), 195 devolution of UNRWA functions, 99 diplomatic row with Jordan, 40 Israeli invasion of, 103, 211 Israeli withdrawal from, 202 Khalidi’s recommendations, 71 and Palestinian Authority, 202–3 Palestinian compromise solution, 113 Palestinian struggle, 156 permanent settlement of refugees, 179, 201,205,209–12,219

PLO control zone, 194–5, 202, 211

PLO departure from (1982), 197, 201 refugee camps, 4, 29,42, 141, 195–6, 198, 202–3, 257

refugee citizenship, 29, 40, 42, 146, 176 refugees, 2, 8–9, 35, 40, 42, 58, 145, 173–4, 179, 193–9, 200–29, 255, 257, 298-9/7

al-Tawtin, 196, 197–8

territorial issues with Israel, 30

tripartite agreements, 116

war of the camps, 195, 198

Libya

close of shipping routes to Lebanon, 41 refugees, 41, 218, 223

Lifta, 74

Lithuanian refugees, 186

Little Triangle, 92

Lod, 153

Lydda, 93

Ma’an, 158

Maariv, 318, 319

McGhee, George, 78, 83

McGhee, Robert, 181

McGill University, 2

Madaba, 157

Madaba refugee camp, 159

Madrid Peace Conference, 195, 197

Jordan,157

Palestinian Liberation Organization

(PLO), 50

refugees, 64–5, 122

refugees in Lebanon, 193

UN Resolution 242 (1967), 42, 64

Mahafza, ‘Ali, 151

Majdal, 93

Malaya, 187

Ma’oz, Moshe, 7, 109–21

al-Maqdah, Munir, 203

Marka refugee camp, 159, 251

Marx, Emanuel, 6–7, 102–8, 187

Masamiyya, 143

Masrieh-Hazboun, Norma, 8, 179–92

MEDO, 79

Meir, Golda (Meyerson), 25, 261, 265

Middle East Command, 79

Middle East Defense Organization

(MEDO), 79

migrant workers, 107, 133, 288, 289, 290,

291, 294–7

Mijdal, 143

minority populations, 131–3

Molosevic, Slobodan, 188

Montagu-Pollock, Sir William Horace

KCMG, 83–4

Morris, Benny, 67, 124, 171, 308

Mubarak, Hosni, 11/7

Muhammad Ali, 22

mush’a land holdings, 92–3

Mutual Security Program, 82, 84

Naharayim, 98

Najada, 20

Napoleon, 22

Nashashibi family, 153

Nasser, Gamal Abdul, 81

national independence, right to, 37, 48, 49,

180,259

nationality, right to, 37, 48

NATO, 79, 188

al-Nazif refugee camp, 159

Negev, 30, 94

Netanyahu, Benjamin, 72

Netherlands, 129

New Delhi Accord (1950), 132

The New Middle East (Peres), 260, 268,

269–70

New York Times, 186

New Zealand, 129

Nusseibah, Sari, 146

objective responsibility, 125

Oklahoma, University of, ix-xii, 2

Conference on Palestinian refugees (1999), xi, 11/7

Organization of American States, 244

Organization of the Islamic Conference, 2

Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 132–3

Oslo Accords (1993), 197

family reunification, 68

as important breakthrough in peace process, 1

Netanyahu’s dislike of, 72

reception in Lebanese refugee camps, 141

refugees, 64, 69–70, 109, 117, 303

refugees in Lebanon, 193

see also Declaration of Principles (1993)

Ossetians, 21

Ottoman Empire, 153, 250

Oxford University, 2

Oxford University Press, 2

Pakistan

New Delhi Accord (1950), 132

refugee problems, 31

Palestine, 170

British Mandate, 92–3, 153, 255

Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS), 196

Palestinian Authority

bilateral discussion with Israel, 234 conference document on status of

Jerusalem, 11/7

definition of displaced persons, 70 devolution of UNRWA functions, 59, 99
employment perspective, 282–302 foreign aid, 298

infrastructure needs, 53

institution building, 53

Khalidi’s recommendations, 71

and Lebanon,202–3 marginalization of refugee problem, viii opposition groups to leadership, 53 Palestinian identity, 157

Palestinian population growth. 4 quadrilateral standing committee, 52, 53, 64, 70, 72–3, 245

refugee attitude towards, 162

return of 1967 refugees, 53

right of return, 67, 103

Sharm el-Sheikh Agreement, 267 sovereignty, 213–14

Palestinian Compact (1968), 104

Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Centre, 2

Palestinian economy, 106–7

Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO)

Amman Agreement (1985), 48

control zone in Lebanon, 194–5, 202, 211

Declaration of Independence, 48–9 departure from Lebanon (1982), 197, 201 differential realization of right of return, 51–2, 54

disregard of the right of return, 49–50

doctrine of liberation, 46–8

emergence of, 153

Iraq resettlement scenario, 206

and Jordan, 116, 156

Madrid Peace Conference, 50

military activities from inside Lebanon, 194

naturalization scenarios, 210

observer status, 258

Palestinian diaspora suspicion of, 126

Palestinian national identity, 155

reconciliation with Israel, 48, 52, 141

refugees in Lebanon, 193, 194–5, 196–7,

206, 210, 211

registration of 1967 refugees, 52–3

regrouping of issue clusters geographi

cally, 204

right of return, 5–6, 46–56, 67, 109–10, 212–13,220

right of return as national-collective return, 48, 50, 51

right of return realization in pre-1967

territories, 50–1, 52

separation of refugee issue from other issues, 203

as sole representative of Palestinians, 116,

1 17, 120, 156, 220

support for Saddam Hussein, 40, 50

trinity of rights, 48

tripartite agreements, 116

UN Resolution 194 (1948), 48, 50, 51–2,

54, 109–10, 203

UN Resolution 242 (1967), 46, 47, 63

see also Declaration of Principles (1993);

Oslo Accords

Palestinian Losses in 1948: The Quest for

Precision, 97

Palestinian National Charter (1964), 46, 220

Palestinian National Charter (1968), 46–7

Palestinian National Council (PNC) (1st),

46

Palestinian National Council (PNC) (12th), 47

Palestinian National Council (PNC) (18th), 49, 50

Palestinian National Council (PNC) (19th),

48

Palestinian National Council (PNC) (20th), 50

“The Palestinian Refugee Problem” (Gazit), 89

The Palestinian Refugee Problem and the Right of Return, 2, 12/7

Palestinian Refugee Research Net (PPRN), 2, 97

Palestinian researchers, estimates of

numbers displaced, 34

Palestinian state

absorptive capacity, 112, 113–14, 125

economic factors, 10–11, 125, 177,

282–302

establishment of, 176, 177

importance of in public opinion polls, 307

Israeli recognition, 244, 261

right of return, 112, 113–14, 118, 121,

145, 164, 240, 247

as trade-off against absolute return, 112, 126

Palestinians

Arab owned land in Israel, 90

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 5, 17–20, 23–4, 25–9

awareness of limits on refugee numbers, 4

become Israeli citizens, 29

civil war (1947–8), 19–23, 24–5

desire for justice, 33, 43, 54, 174–5

emphasis on right of return, viii, 67, 102,

104–5, 122–3, 180, 182, 256, 303

family as an influential unit, 184

First World War, 22

illiteracy, 4

Israel’s responsibility for compensation, 88, 97, 99, 273

need for economic solution, 4

opposition to Zionism, 18, 19

population estimate, 35

population growth, 4

public opinion on refugees, 11, 303–16

rebellion (1936/9), 22, 38

recede from political scene, 29

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 68–9, 74, 105, 172–3

rejection of UN Partition Resolution, 19

revisionist historians, 18–19

territorial issues with Israel, 30

trust and confidence building, 242–4

Pappe, Ilian, 67, 155, 165, 308

Paris Agreement, 267

Paris Conference (1951), 97

Partition Resolution see United Nations Resolution 181

peace

concept of, 234–5

constituencies of, 278–9

Peace Now, 214

peace process

refugee question, 1, 57, 64–70, 122, 169, 175–6

see also Camp David peace treaty; Madrid Peace Conference; Oslo Accords (1993)

Peres, Shimon. 259, 260. 268, 269–70

Peretz, Don, 6, 71, 88–101, 102

Perkins, Edward J, ix-x, 1–13, 317–20

PNC see Palestinian National Council (PNC)

Point Four money, 81, 82

Poland, refugee problems, 31

Popular Front for the Liberation of

Palestine (PFLP), 201

PPRN see Palestinian Refugee Research Net(PPRN)

PRCS, 196

property, as compensation issue, 90 5

“Proposals for a Legal Formula to Convene the International Conference for Peace in the Middle East”, 48

Protestant churches, 164, 165

Qalandiyya refugee camp, 142, 144

Qastina, 143

Quray’a, 197–8

Qutb, Ishaq, 145

al-Quwwatli, Shukri, 78–9

Rabah, Jamil, 305

Rafah refugee camp, 143–4, 185

Ramleh, 93, 153

Ramzoun, Hussein, 9, 249–54 reconciliation, 29–32, 131–3, 278–80 refugee camps, 58, 140–1,256

conditions, 140, 246, 252–3, 257

dissolution of, 111, 112, 114, 118

in Gaza under Israeli rule, 143–4

Israeli plans to eliminate in Gaza, 184–6 in Jordan, 9,41, 141, 152, 157–60, 162, 249–54, 265

in Lebanon, 4, 29, 42, 141, 195–6, 198, 202–3, 257

reasons for remaining in, 140, 142–3

social organization, 142–3

status as permanent towns, 144–5

in Syria, 29, 141

refugee documents (RDs), 40

Refugee Project of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, 130–1

Refugee Studies Centre, 2

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 66, 72–4, 172–3, 174, 267

agenda of, 65

family reunification, 68–9, 73

refugees in Lebanon, 205

right of return, 105, 172

refugees

from European wars, 23–4, 31, 172

world-wide problems in twentieth century, 31

refugees, Jewish, 103–4, 109, 140, 239 compensation, 98–9, 113, 115, 120, 210, 272–3

refugees, Jordanian, due to Arab Israeli war (1967), 34

refugees, Palestinian

agricultural assets lost, 58

assistance to returnees, 129–31

attitude to Palestinian Authority, 162

attitude to State of Israel, 162

attitude to State of Jordan, 163

as crucial element in peace process, 1, 57, 64–70, 122, 169, 175–6

Declaration of Principles (1993), 64, 70, 245

definition of, 141–2, 244, 255, 265

due to Arab-Israeli war (1948), 1, 17, 34, 52, 54, 57, 60, 64, 88–9, 109, 113, 152, 170–2, 249, 255

due to Arab-Israeli war (1967), 34, 52–3, 62, 64, 249, 255, 283

early US policy, 6, 77–87

in Egypt, 218, 223, 255

estimates of numbers displaced, 34–5, 52, 57–8. 127, 141–2, 151–2, 249. 256, 257, 266, 298-9az, 303,314–15

as final status negotiation, 8, 109, 117, 139, 169–78,200–29, 245,303

full citizenship in Jordan, 29. 41. 58, 113, 125, 140, 146, 154–5, 161, 173,251, 264, 272

in Gaza Strip, 29, 35. 58, 141, 153, 204, 223–4. 255, 257

geographical distribution, 57–8

growing fragmentation among, 53

historic evolution of, 59–64

historical perspective, 170

ID cards, 111

identity history, 153–7, 160–1, 184

importance of in public opinion polls, 306–7

inalienable rights, 36 7, 48, 59 60, 67, 213,258–60, 271-4-

Israeli compromise solution, 113 15, 119–21

Israeli position, 65–6

Israeli refusal to accept responsibility for, 54, 66–7, 89, 103, 109, 119, 124, 170–2, 237–9, 304, 307–8

Israeli strategy of separation from other issues, 203–4

in Jordan, 8, 10, 35, 41–2, 58, 145, 150–68. 204. 218, 223, 249–54, 255, 257, 264–70, 298-9/?, 303

lack of citizenship rights, 29, 40, 140, 146

lack of forms of identification, 58

in Lebanon, 2, 8–9, 35, 40, 42, 58, 145, 173–4, 179, 193–9, 200–29, 255, 257, 298-9/7

legal-political status, 111, 118

living conditions in Jordan, 157–9

loss of properties, 58

Madrid Peace Conference, 64–5, 122

as major issue in Arab-Israeli reconciliation, 31–2, 34,278

marginalization of problem, viii, 72

Oslo Accords (1993), 64, 69–70, 109, 117, 303

Palestinian compromise solution, 111–13, 119–21

Palestinian narrative, 109

principles desirable in a solution, 111

public opinion, 11, 303–16

public opinion on responsibility for problem, 307–10

referendum of, 220–3

registration of 1967 refugees, 52–3

repatriation of those displaced in 1936–39

Arab rebellion, 38

repatriation of those displaced in 1967, 52–3, 62, 69–70,216

separation from indigenous population, 31

in Syria, 35, 58, 204, 209–12, 218, 223, 255, 257, 298-9/7

in West Bank, 29, 35, 58, 141, 204, 223^, 255, 257

see also compensation; refugee camps; resettlement; right of return

refugees, Sinai Peninsula, due to

Arab-Israeli war (1967), 34

refugees, Syrian

due to Arab-Israeli war (1967), 34

Register of Deeds, 91–2

rehabilitation projects, 96–7

religious rights, 37

reparations, 71

repatriation see right of return

resettlement, 39–40, 59, 96–7, 144–7

in Arab states, 55, 118, 126, 209–12

and Arafat, 204, 206

in Canada, 129, 164–5,208,219

Canadian interest in, 4

direct Israeli involvement, 146

in Egypt, 209, 273–4

in Gaza under Israeli rule, 8, 143–4,

179–92

in Iraq, 181, 200–1, 205–8, 209, 212, 219, 274

as Israeli solution, 5, 31, 39, 103–4, 205–9

in Jordan, 118, 166, 209–12

Palestinian compromise solution, I 12 permanent settlement as part of compromise solution, 118

refugees in Lebanon, 179, 200–1,205–12, 219

in Syria, 6, 77–87, 181,209–12

al-Tawtin, 196, 197–8

in Transjordan, 31, 181

in United States, 129, 164–5, 208, 219

revisionist historians, 5, 18–19

The Revolution, 170–1 right of return alternative options, 102 Amre’s proposals, 176–7 Arab states, 180–1

Arafat, 49, 50, 51, 124, 212, 213, 214

Declaration of Principles (1993), 64, 70, 172, 176

differential realization, 51–2, 54 full realization in pre-1967 territories, 50–1, 52

fundamental meaning of, 46–8

Gazit’s opposition to, 124, 235, 237 and human rights, 37–40 as inalienable right, 36–7, 48, 59–60, 67, 213,258–9

Israeli “100,000 proposal” (1949), 127–8, 176

Israeli attitude, 3, 37–8, 61, 64, 66, 102 4, 109, 110, 124, 180, 181,216, 245, 303–4, 317

Israeli compromise solution, 113, 118, 119–20

Khalidi’s recommendations, 71 national-collective versus individual, 48, 50, 51

numbers involved, 111–12, 119–20, 121, 125,127–8

Palestinian compromise solution. 111 12, 118, 119

Palestinian emphasis on, viii, 67, 102, 104–5, 122–3, 180, 182, 256,303

PLO disregard of, 49–50

PLO policy, 5–6, 46–56, 67, 109–10, 212–13,220

PNA asked to give up, viii as a political tool, 48–9 principle of, 59–61, 67 prioritizing of, 217–18, 223–4 public opinion, 134a?, 310–12 Refugee Working Group (RWG), 105, 172

refugees with alternative citizenship, 271–2

refugees in Jordan, 164–5

satisfaction of certain conditions, 128–9 symbolic Israeli gesture, 7, 119, 122–38, 209

to the Palestinian state, 112, 113–14, 118, 121, 145, 164, 240, 247

UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (CCP), 35, 36, 62, 127

UN ratification, 35–7, 38, 43, 51–2, 60, 61–3

UN Resolution 194(1948), 35–6, 43,48,

50, 51–2, 61–2, 63, 64, 104, 109–10, 128, 172, 181, 189m, 245, 255, 258, 262

UN Resolution 237 (1967), 36, 62, 181,

Roberts, Walker, 208

Robertson, General Brian, 83

Rockefeller Foundation, ix-x

Rubin, James, 318

Rural Property Ordinance, 94

Russian civil war, 21

Rutenberg electric plant, 98

RWG see Refugee Working Group (RWG)

Sadat, Anuar, 32

Safad, 92

Safed, 25

Safwat, Isma’il, 26

Said, Edward, 184, 216

Sa’id, Nuri, 25

Salem, Nawaf A., 146

Salem, Walid, 123

Salloum camp, 41

al-Salt, 158

Samaria, 26

Samha, Musa, 151, 152, 250, 252

Sanbar, Elias, 51, 53

Sapir, Pinhas, 288

Saudi Arabia, 79

population growth rate, 284

refugee citizenship, 40

resettlement of refugees, 209

Sayegh, Yusuf, 90, 95

Sayigh, Rosemary, 141, 193

Scandinavia, 129

Schiff, Ze’ev, 89

Schneller refugee camp, 159

SEATO, 79

security

Declaration of Principles (1993), 64

Israeli concerns, 61, 66, 74, 235–6

multilateral working groups, 65

need to redefine, viii

self-determination, right to, 37, 48, 49, 51,

60,180,259

Sephardi Jews, 98–9

Serbs, 21

Sha’ath, Nabeel, 176

Shaml, 2

Sharett, Moshe, 98

Shari’a Islamic religious law, 92

Sharm el-Sheikh Agreement, 267

Sharon, Ariel, 185

al-Shatti refugee camp, 144, 185, 186

al-Shawbak, 158

Sheikh Radwan Resettlement Scheme, 183,

185, 186

Shenhav, Yehouda, 103

Sherif of Mecca, 153

Shikaki, Khalil, 12/2, 141, 146 al-Shishakli, ‘Adib, 80, 81, 82, 83–5 Silesia, 31

Silo, General, 82

Sinai Peninsula, 34, 236

Souf refugee camp, 159, 251

South Africa, 131

sovereignty

need to redefine, viii

right to, 37, 49, 259

Soviet Union, 21, 78, 81, 85

Spanish civil war, 21

Stern forces, 152

Sudan, 208, 274

Sudeten, 31

Al-Sukhna refugee camp, 159

The Sunday Times. 265

Supreme Porte, 22

Switzerland, 129

Syria

Arabism, 153

Declaration of Principles (1993), 195

devolution of UNRWA functions, 99

freezing of Jewish property, 98

land holdings records, 91

military coups (1949), 78–80

Palestinian compromise solution, 113

refugee camps, 29, 141

refugee citizenship. 29. 40, 125

refugees, 35, 58, 204, 209–12, 218, 223, 255, 257, 298-9/?

resettlement of refugees, 6, 77–87, 181, 209–12

territorial issues with Israel, 30

tripartite agreements, 116

western plans to settle refugees, 6, 77, 78–9, 80–5

Taba Agreement, 267

Tafilah, 158

Ta’if agreement, 197, 198

Talbieh, 74

Talbieh refugee camp, 159, 251

Tamari, Salim, 71, 74, 123, 126, 216, 224

Telhami, Shibley, 123

territorial issues, as crucial element in peace

process, 1,29–30

Tessier, Mark, 277

Tiberias, 25, 152

Tirah, 146

Transjordan

annexation of Arab Palestine, 25

resettlement of refugees, 31, 181

see also Jordan

Truman, Harry S., 77, 78, 81, 82

Truth and Reconciliation, 131

Tunisia, family planning policy, 298

Turkey, 106

UN Economic Survey Mission, 96–7

UNCTAD, 290–1

UNDP, 129

UNESCO, 2

UNHCR, 129–30, 131, 172

United Nations

arms embargo (1948), 27

compensation payments, 35, 96–7 internationalization of Jerusalem (1948), 32

Israeli admission, 174

Jewish settlements, 215

Palestinian right to self-determination, 60, 259

resettlement of refugees, 186

right of return, 35–7, 38, 43, 51–2, 60, 7 7 7 7 7 7

61–3

as source of compensation payments, 99 United Nations Conciliation Commission

for Palestine (CCP), 29, 30

abandoned refugee property, 90–1, 93, 94, 95

compensation issue, 35, 62, 90–1, 96

numbers of refugees, 34

right of return, 35, 36, 62, 127

Syrian military regime, 79

United Nations Economic and Social

Council, 61

United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR), 129–30, 131, 172

United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), 53, 58, 173

devolution of functions, 59, 99

dissolution of as part of solution, 111,

112, 114, 118, 147, 204,210, 241 establishment of, 172, 190/?, 194, 252,

255, 258

Israeli distrust of, 129

numbers of Palestinian refugees, 257

numbers of refugees, 34, 35, 141, 151, 152, 170

refugee camps in Jordan, 157, 159–60, 161,253,254

refugee settlement in Syria, 80, 84

refugees in Lebanon, 193, 196 repatriation of 1967 refugees, 36 resettlement of refugees, 182, 186 right of return, 38

role of, 9–10, 155, 190/7, 255–63

United Nations Resolution 181,43, 60, 61, 171

Arab denial of, 18, 19, 170, 238

Israel, 174, 238,239

United Nations Resolution 194 (1948) compensation, 36, 50, 62, 88, 96, 109–10, 255, 258, 262

global versus individual compensation, 96

Israeli refusal to accept, 36, 64, 110, 119, 174, 175, 255

PLO response, 48, 50, 51–2, 54, 109–10, 203

right of return, 12, 35–6, 43, 48, 50, 51–2, 61–2, 63, 64, 104, 109–10, 128, 172, 181, 189/7, 245, 255, 258, 262

UN failure to enforce, 193

United Nations Resolution 212 (1948), 194

United Nations Resolution 237 (1967), 36, 62, 181,266

United Nations Resolution 242 (1967), 43, 174

Israel, 36, 62–3, 258

Madrid Peace Conference, 42, 64

PLO response, 46, 47, 63

United Nations Resolution 273 (1949), 174

United Nations Resolution 302 (1949), 194, 255, 258

United Nations Resolution 338 (1973), 43, 64, 258

United Nations Resolution 394 (1950), 270

United Nations Resolution 2535 (1969), 258

United Nations Resolution 3236 (1974), 259 United Nations Resolution 3237 (1974), 258 United States

active role requirement, 176

American civil war, 21

compensation payments, 96

defense organization for Middle East, 78, 79, 81

early policy toward refugees, 77–87

Iraq embargo, 206

Iraq resettlement scenario, 206–7

and Israel, 163, 262

Kosovo, 188

Lausanne Conference, 78, 127

Lithuanian/Vietnamese refugees, 186 refugee settlement in Syria, 6, 77, 78–9, 80–5

Refugee Working Group (RWG), 65, 72 refugees in Lebanon, 201,205, 206–7 regional bank proposal, 147 resettlement of refugees, 129, 164–5, 208, 219

as source of compensation payments, 99–100

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 37, 60, 259

UNRWA see United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

Ustacha refugees, 31

Vienna Declaration, 259

Vietnam, refugee problems, 31

Vietnamese refugees, 186

Village Statistics, 90

visitation to holy places, right to, 37

Volksdeutsche, 24 water resources

as crucial element in peace process, I importance of in public opinion polls, 307

multilateral working groups, 65

Weatherhead Center for International

Affairs, 2, 7, 105, 110–21, 147

Weighill, Marie-Louise, 197

Weinstock, Nathan, 179

West Bank

absorptive capacity of, 59

birth rate, 284, 286

as crucial element in peace process, 1

demography, 283–7

employment trends, 287–93

incorporation into Jordan, 29, 150, 250

international financing of projects, 195

Intifada, 156, 290

Israeli war damage claims, 98

Jewish settlements, 128, 136-7/7, 145,

214—17

labor force, 285, 286–7

movement of Palestinian citizens, 215

occupation by Israel, 29

opinion polls on right of return, 134/7

Palestinian population growth, 4

population growth rate, 282, 283–6, 290

poverty, 4

refugee numbers, 151, 152

refugee separation from indigenous population, 31

refugees, 29, 35, 58, 141, 204, 223–4, 255, 257

refugees displaced (1967), 52

right of return, 164

UN Resolutions, 258

unemployment rates, 285, 288, 290,

291–2

West Jerusalem, 152

Wider gut mac hung, 176

al-Wihdat refugee camp, 159, 251

Winckler, Onn, 10–11, 282–302

WOJAC, 98

The Wolf Foundation, 188

Woodrow Wilson International Center for

Scholars, 2

World Bank, 84, 290, 291

World Conference on Human Rights,

259–60

World Jewish Congress, 98

World Organization of Jews from Arab

Countries (WOJAC), 98

Yemen, 41, 208

Yish u v

Arab-Israeli war (1948), 26, ‘ll

civil war (1947–8), 20, 22, 23

safeguarding of partition solution, 28

Yisraeli, Yaacov, 107

Young Arab movement, 153

Yuchtman-Yaar, Ephraim, 11, 303–16

Yugoslavia, 31

Za’im, Husni, 78–80

Zarka, 158

Al-Zarqa refugee camp, 159, 251

Zionism, 277

Israeli resettlement policy, 183, 184

negation of history of the land, 187

Palestinian opposition, 18, 19

Zureik, Elia, 140, 143, 152, 305

Zweil, Ahmad, 188
</biblio>

** [Back Cover]

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*** Contents

Preface

1. Why Radical Muslims Aren’t Taking Over Governments

Emmanuel Sivan

2 Radical Islam in Egypt

A Comparison of Two Groups

David Zeidan

3 The Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups

Reuven Paz

4 Radical Islamist Movements in Turkey

Ely Karmon

5 Islamism and the State in North Africa

Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Meir Litvak

6 Hizballah

Between Armed Struggle and Domestic Politics

Eyal Zisser

7 Balancing State and Society

The Islamic Movement in Kuwait

Shafeeq N. Ghabra

8 The Rise of the Islamist Movement in Turkey

Nilufer Narli

9 Fethullah Gulen and His Liberal ‘Turkish Islam’ Movement

Bulent Aras and Omer Caha

10 Islam and Democracy

Ali R. Abootalebi

11 Mediating Middle East Conflicts: An Alternative Approach

George E. Irani

12 Liberal Islam: Prospects and Challenges

Charles Kurzman

13 Inside the Islamic Reformation

Dale F. Eickelman

14 Islamist Movements in the Middle East

A Survey and Balance Sheet

Barry Rubin

List of Contributors

Index

*** Preface

The politics of Islam has been one of the most controversial and tumultuous issues in the Middle East. Islamist movements have established regimes in Iran and Sudan, become the principal opposition groups in every other country of the region, and created revolutionary upheavals in Algeria and Egypt. Yet unable in most cases to gain power, these movements now face a serious debate over strategy and tactics that is likely to lead either to their relative decline or dramatic transformation.

This book looks at the Islamist movements seeking power today, analyzing both groups involved in armed struggle and those trying to gain power by operating within existing systems. At the heart of this situation stands a paradox: Islamist organizations cannot muster enough support or power to

gain power through revolutionary means, but are also blocked by governments from transforming their societies through elections or persuasion. Even Iran's Islamist government faces a divisive conflict over alternative visions, a mirror image of this very same debate.

Consequently, these movements face difficult choices. Certainly, they can continue failed strategies of violence or frustrated electoral efforts. Violence is always psychologically appealing to some activists and government repression may justify such a stance or even forbid any other option. Remaining an opposition party brings certain advantages ranging from power for its leaders to the freedom to maintain a network of institutions. In each case, the movement professes to transform the whole society while in practice creating a small model of that ideal goal.

An alternative, still in the process of full formulation, is a rethinking of Islamist politics to function as a pressure group to make their societies more Islamic, to reinforce the walls of semiseparate internal communities, and to reinterpret Islam in more liberal ways. This process could also require, however, a credible renunciation of any goal of fully transforming society.

To draw a rough parallel to European history, radical Islamism has been in a 'Communist party' phase, whether employing armed struggle or seeking power through elections and agitation. It could enter a 'Social Democratic' phase that could bring broader appeal, more effective lobbying for change, and perhaps eventual entrance into government. In Iran, the course proposed by President Muhammad Khatami and his supporters represents the same basic concept in reverse, paralleling recent debates in the Soviet Union and China. Rather than a 'totally Islamic' polity, the goal would be some form of Islamic-oriented society.

Again, though, it should be stressed that such a transition will not inevitably be accepted by the movements themselves, nor would it necessarily be acceptable to the incumbent rulers of these states. By examining the Islamist movements in opposition, the roots of their struggle, and their internal debates, this book tries to clarify how they approach these problems and

alternative options, as well as whether such different routes are within the realm of possibility or can succeed.

The emergence of a movement around Usama bin Ladin was not a result of the radical interpretation's success in winning over the masses; rather it was a desperate reaction to its failure. Having lost in every other way, bin Ladin and his followers tried to play the anti-American card, downgrading his opposition to the Arab regimes to the point where they might tolerate him and his movement as an asset or at least not as a threat. On September 11, 2001, though, they were too successful in attacking the United States. At first, this made them very popular in the Arab street and regimes rushed, each in its own way, to profit indirectly from the event. But America was too angry for Arab states or even Iran to risk its wrath by explicitly endorsing or protecting al- Qa'ida groups. Yet, as the debate continued, and whatever his own movement's fate, bin Ladin had struck a powerful doctrinal blow for a further radicalization of Islamist thought.

Bin Ladin's great innovation was to open up a new front against Americans and to give this strategy a justification. All the basic ideas he needed, however, had already been expressed by a range of radical Islamist thinkers, from the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb in the 1950s to Khomayni in the 1970s, and a score of Islamist thinkers thereafter. Killing Americans in east Africa (the 1998 attack on U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania), Yemen (the bombing of the USS Cole), and most spectacularly on America itself (September 11, 2001) was very popular in the Arab world.[1] Even those who claimed to mourn the victims cheered the gestures.

Bin Ladin had invented a new type of populist terrorism. Such activities brought Islamists not one inch closer to successfully making revolutions and seizing state power, but did make them feel and appear to be more powerful and successful. Most important of all, this type of action appealed to tens of thousands of Muslims who would never dream of becoming personally involved in violence.

The facts about Islamist politics have been clouded by Western ignorance and Islamist apologetics. It is necessary to apply the same kind of political

analysis here that is used to study political movements and ideologies in other parts of the world.

Islamism has clearly become a leading factor shaping the Middle East and the main source for revolutionary, terrorist, and reformist groups alike that challenge current policies and structures. Of central importance is the fact that Islamist interpretations of Islam's political philosophy vary widely from state to state and also among different groups. The fundamentalist readings of Islam are certainly innovative and often arguably heretical in light of traditional views and practices. Thus, in this book we use the word Islam to indicate the religion and its theological aspect, and Islamist to designate political movements and philosophies that provide specific interpretations of that religion.

Among the broader questions discussed in this book are:

- How interpretations of Islam lend themselves to radical and moderate movements.

- Why radical movements have not gained more support, in part because of their unusual and unfamiliar interpretations of Islam.

- How different movements have chosen their strategy and whether they have been able to alter it in the face of changing conditions.

- Prospects for radical or reformist movements seizing power and transforming their societies.

- Strategies of governments to co-opt or repress Islamist movements.

To discuss these and other issues, the book's chapters cover the countries where Islamist movements have been most important. The book begins with

case studies of revolutionary and reformist groups, followed by chapters discussing future alternatives for Islamist politics, presenting advocates and critics of a potential liberal, reformist, interest-group Islamism.

The failure of revolutionary Islamist movements to seize power is one of the most important factors in modern Middle East politics. The factors and reasons for this outcome are presented by Emmanuel Sivan. Following are four case studies of radical Islamist groups engaged in armed struggles. David Zeidan describes the doctrine, disputes, and failures of Egypt's militant Islamist organizations. A key point here is how their ideology broke with normative Islamic views. Among Palestinians, Islamist appeals have blended opposition to Israel with calls to transform society. Especially interesting is how Islamist movements have often been so appealing to those most exposed to Western thought and university training. Reuven Paz discusses the movement's origins and how it broke with the dominant nationalist movement.

In Turkey, Islamists who advocated armed struggle remained relatively marginal and dependent on Iranian sponsorship. This movement is analyzed by Ely Karmon.

Algeria and Lebanon are particularly interesting countries to examine, since they are arguably the two places where militant Islamist ideologies have won the highest proportional base of support. The Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria moved reluctantly from reformist to revolutionary tactics when the military regime there rejected its electoral victory in 1992. This situation, and its interesting contrasts to the evolution of Islamist movements in Morocco and Algeria, are described by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Meir Litvak.

In Lebanon, Islamism became very intermixed with ethnic-national conflicts. Thus, Hizballah was simultaneously involved in struggles to gain hegemony within the Shi'ite community, to take over Lebanon, and to lead a struggle against Israel. Following the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, Hizballah faced a difficult choice on what priority to put on these various functions. It had the opportunity to transform itself further into a political party seeking power within Lebanon, a challenge described by Eyal Zisser.

The book then presents two case studies of movements that have successfully established themselves in the context of electoral politics. In Kuwait, Islamist parties have become a regular part of the political scene, exercising influence on legislation and social life, as documented by Shafeeq N. Ghabra. Turkey is the only country where an Islamist party gained power as the result of electoral success, but the armed forces forced that government's resignation in 1997. This story is analyzed by Nilufer Narli. Turkey is also the home for one of the most coherent and advanced efforts to build a liberal, reformist Islamist philosophy, the movement of Fethullah Gulen, as described by Bulent Aras and Omer Caha.

Next, the book provides essays on three aspects of the potential development for a more liberal, reformist Islamism. Ali Abootalebi discusses the relationship between Islamist movements and democracy. George Irani suggests how traditional Islamic mediation techniques can be applied in politics. Charles Kurzman surveys the main developers and advocates of an alternative Islamist philosophy.

Finally, there are two concluding chapters that evaluate the state of Islamist movements. Dale Eickelman looks at the developmental changes that affect Islamic theory and practice, which may be underpinning a transition. Barry Rubin analyzes the status of Islamist politics across the Middle East, highlighting the paradox created in the failures of both revolutionary and reformist strategies. These factors will determine the direction of Islamist politics and, by extension, of the Middle East's future.

This book is a project of the Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA), which is part of the Global Research in International Affairs (GLORIA) Center of the Interdisciplinary Center. MERIA is a quarterly journal and monthly magazine on Middle East politics and research published and distributed through the Internet. Many of the chapters in this book originated as articles in MERIA Journal, and the authors were brought together through the project's activities. Additional books will be developed through MERIA in the future, bringing together the best scholarship from around the globe in the study of Middle East issues.

The article by Emmanuel Sivan is reprinted with the permission of the Middle East Quarterly. Thanks to Cameron Brown, Ozgul Erdemli, Elisheva Rosman-Stollman and Linda Sharaby for their help in preparing the manuscript.

[1] Cameron Brown, “The Shot Heard Round the World: The Middle East Reacts to September 11,” MERIA Journal, Vol. 5, No. 4 (December 2001), pp. 69—89, <[[http://meria.idc.ac.il][http://meria.idc.ac.il]]>; and Barry Rubin and Judy Colp Rubin, Anti-American Terror and the Middle East (NY: Oxford University Press, 2002).

** 1. Why Radical Muslims Aren’t Taking Over Governments

Emmanuel Sivan

Twenty-odd years after its rise to prominence, radical Islam (or Islamism) is at bay. Its mixed record includes survival in the teeth of state repression, some impact on political decision-making, and sociocultural hegemony, but a general failure in the attempt to take power. This predicament of radical movements holds true particularly in the Arab-speaking world, those ancient countries where Islam has been ensconced for nearly fourteen centuries. Why has radical Islam reached this impasse?

Radical Islam has made tremendous inroads into the hearts and minds of Arabic-speaking Muslims. In the sociocultural realm, militant Islamic discourse maintains a hegemony in the public debate among Arabs, replacing Pan-Arabism and Marxism. Islamism has a profound impact on gender roles, fertility, and consumption habits, as well as on the

marginalization of local Christians and the censorship of movies, plays, and books. Hyperrigorous religious practice has spread, leading to a growing social pressure toward conformity, the best example of which is the donning of the veil by women. Voluntary Islamic organizations proliferate; the popularity of Islamist media (notably audio- and videotapes) grows;[2] and religious activism resurges as the major avenue for venting both protest and the craving for change. The cultural success of radical Islam resides, above all, in the strength of voluntary Islamic associations.

Although the movement has always known a high turnover rate due to attrition or legal and administrative pressures, a large pool of new recruits, mostly young urban males in their teens, seems always to be available. As a result, the number of voluntary Islamic associations, far from declining, is on the rise; their activity, despite legal and bureaucratic harassment and some scandals (such as the bankruptcy of “Islamic” banks in Egypt), remains as strong as ever.

These associations remain the backbone of radical Islam. They carry out the work of da‘wa, spreading the word and establishing a countersociety to propagate the movement’s ideas, create support networks for members, and show that Islamic values can be fully implemented in the contemporary world. The continued vigor of the Islamic associations is a consequence, above all, of the budgetary woes of most Middle Eastern countries following the decline in oil prices after 1985, a decline that had implications not just for oil exporters but also for the poor countries, as Arab foreign aid dried up and employment for expatriate “guest workers” dwindled. For some states, these woes were further exacerbated by the demise of the Soviet Union and resultant loss of assured East European markets.

The revenue crisis helped the Islamists in two ways. First, regimes responded to this problem by breaking the unwritten covenant agreed upon with their subjects in the 1950s and 1960s, in which the subjects relinquished their claims to basic human and civil rights in return for the state’s undertaking to provide them with education and health care, employment, and subsidies for such necessities as staples, cooking gas, and transportation. The poorest and the young suffered these retrenchments the hardest.

The ‘retreating state’ of the 1990s thus created disgruntled citizens by the legion: university graduates no longer assured of a government job; workers barely able to eke out a living, let alone save for a dowry and establish a family; masses of recent rural migrants lacking such basics as shelter. All these groups provided a pool of possible recruits for Islamic associations.

Second, at a higher socioeconomic level, Islamic associations have sprung up among professionals (doctors, lawyers, journalists) whose growing wealth and sophistication enable them to act independently. They first try to shape decisionmaking within their respective professions, then reach out and take positions on public affairs in general. Islamism also has had political impact, though indirectly. It limits regimes’ room to maneuver; for example, any plan to slash subsidies must take into account the menace of Islamic-instigated mass demonstrations, for mass public demonstrations protesting austerity measures have often occurred.[3] Family-planning policies falter or advance in a haphazard manner due to the vituperations of Friday sermons in “free” (meaning nongovernmental) mosques. National security and regional power are often handicapped by the need to allocate resources to counterterrorism and the maintenance of public order. Da‘wa associations, always known for their idealism and probity, are now in demand more than ever.

The support networks thus created could serve as a base for an eventual rise to political power. But they have not. Only in Sudan did the radicals, in alliance with the army, manage to wrest power and hold it. Otherwise, radical Islamic movements in Arab countries have shown a persistent inability to become the major political player. In Algeria especially, a violent insurgency has led to many deaths but not to a takeover of the government, and the same holds to a lesser extent in Egypt and Tunisia. In Yemen and Jordan, they had a share in government as junior partners for brief periods, but exerted barely any influence on public policy. In all, the radicals have tried three avenues of approach to power— violence, da‘wa and parliament— with various degrees of failure.

Many radical movements have taken recourse to violence. Hoping to follow the Iranian, Sudanese, and Afghan examples, they have sought to seize

power from above and thus control the major instruments of ‘heretical modernity’ (meaning the state). But, after two decades of mostly failed efforts, fewer and fewer radicals believe they can take power by force. The main obstacle has proven to be the stiff and increasingly effective resistance of existing governments.

Counterterrorist operations have been devised with ingenuity and daring, relying on “sting” operations, intelligence, and changes in legislation (which permit preventive arrest, search without warrant, and transfer of suspects to the jurisdiction of military courts). Security services in many Middle East countries cooperate with their counterparts in other Muslim countries (including Turkey and Pakistan) as well as in the West. Several dictatorial regimes physically wiped out the movement: Hafiz al-Assad of Syria did so in the 1982 Hama massacre; Muammar Qadhafi of Libya did so everywhere except in Wadi al-Anjil; Saddam Hussein of Iraq liquidated cadres in 1980 and quelled the March 1991 revolt.

Authoritarian regimes rarely go to these extremes (with the exception of Algeria), but have shown themselves capable of defending their resource base: oil and gas (in the Persian Gulf, Libya, Algeria), the Suez Canal in Egypt, and even the vulnerable tourism industry in many countries. Nor do the regimes neglect the battle for hearts and minds. To deprive Islamist violence of its legitimacy, they use the resources of the Islamic establishment (notably its audiotaped spokesmen) as well as the entertainment industry (the Egyptian one has produced such successful movies as “The Terrorist” and “Terror and Meatballs,” as well as the television miniseries “Layla and the Dervishes.”)

The achievements of these counterterrorist efforts vary. In Tunisia, the iron-fisted President Zayn al-‘Abidin ‘Ali has managed to stem the tide of terrorism in just a few years following his takeover from Habib Bourghiba in November 1987. In the Algerian civil war, the scales have been tipped against an Islamic victory. Both the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) and the Islamic Salvation Group (GIA) have suffered heavy losses and are shunned by the bulk of the population. No more can their members believe that “power is within the range of our Kalashnikovs.” Protest, revenge, and extortion are the all-pervasive goals of the violence, which still goes on.

The Egyptian security services, in a sustained effort galvanized by the assassination attempt on Husni Mubarak in June 1995, have lowered the yearly level of violence to some 190 killed in 1996, compared to 1,100 in 1993, 700 in 1994, and 480 in 1995. While this deadly harvest is still greater than what Egypt experienced in the early years of the Mubarak presidency (30 killed per year), the improvement is evident. Further, the violence has been largely contained in Upper Egypt (particularly the Malawi region) far away from the loci of power and the large population centers.

Endemic violence, of the Shi'ite variety, can still be detected on a smaller scale in Bahrain, and on a sporadic scale in Morocco and Yemen. Perhaps as a result of the widespread antiterrorist activities, radical Islamic movements have experienced discord and disarray. It has reached the point that imprisoned leaders of the Jihad and Jama'at Islamiyya organizations in Egypt have called for an end to all acts of terror, despite the opposition of many leaders who are in hiding or abroad. A similar call was launched by most leaders of Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and its military arm, the AIS, only to be rejected out of hand by the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which continues to massacre women and children in the countryside south of Algiers.

Discord is not a novelty in the history of radical Islam, which has known various splits and internecine wars, but its extent today is greater than anything the radical Islamic movement has known over the last quarter century.

If violent 're-Islamization from above' is on the decline, how about 'reIslamization from below,' the long-term infiltration into society's every nook and cranny as a way to gain eventual political control? This is, on the face of it, the Muslim Brotherhood strategy in Egypt and elsewhere. They engage in grassroots vigilantism to ban alcohol, pornography, and television satellite dishes, and to impose Islamic law, dress codes, and stricter regulation of tourists.

In Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Kuwait, fundamentalists conduct court fights and press campaigns against “permissive” writers and artists. They mobilize popular protests against relations with Israel (a prominent topic in Jordan), launch strikes against the high cost of living (in Lebanon and Morocco), or demonstrate in favor of the constitution (in Bahrain).

Two key factors support this strategy. First, the Islamist message that the failure of the supposedly all-providing state is due to its moral dissoluteness and secularism is simple and effective, and it appeals to a deeply ingrained cultural tradition connecting private anxieties to public woes.

Second, the intricate yet elastic organizational structure of radical Islam is supple and decentralized, with a minimalistic hierarchy. This sort of ‘enclave’[4] (as anthropologists call it) ensures equality of status among members without hampering decision-making; it does so by promoting charismatic local figures. In this way, it hampers repression and endows the members with a sense of empowerment and group solidarity.

The radicals are resourceful in finding new locales in which to operate: Afghanistan served as a recruiting ground for militants to gain experience, contacts, and skills, then return to their home countries; Bosnia served this same function until the Dayton agreement of 1995. The North African movements, persecuted at home, transferred much of their activity (including propaganda, support networks for terrorism and even some terror operations) to migrant communities in Western Europe. Hamas expanded financing and support ventures in both Europe and North America. The Egyptian Jihad organization moved some of its operations to Ethiopia (where it tried to assassinate President Mubarak) and Pakistan (where it blew up the Egyptian embassy).

Militants living in Europe have achieved something else: improved coordination between the Islamist movements of various countries. Migrant workers recruited for the cause frequently shuttle across the Mediterranean along with family gifts, used cars, and electrical equipment. They carry propaganda material produced in the West, as well as funds. This supple

network fulfills radical Islam’s claim to be an international movement that encompasses the whole umma (population of Muslims).

Thus do religious luminaries from one country sometimes act as the higher legal and moral authority in another country: Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood lives in Qatar and serves as the supreme mufti for the Palestinian Hamas. Shaykh Ibn Qatada, a Palestinian-Jordanian living in London, is mufti for elements of the Algerian GIA. An Egyptian and former Afghan volunteer, Shaykh Abu Hamza, is one of the GIA’s chief propagandists abroad.

The cause of radical Islam is advanced when regimes, realizing that the old nationalist and statist ideologies have lost their appeal, try to steal some of the radicals’ thunder by relying on religious legitimacy. They infuse the school system with heavy doses of Islamic contents so that many children thus educated are later amenable to accepting the radicals’ worldview, transmitted in what is for them a familiar discourse. Because schooling is predicated upon learning by rote (talqin), the young are conditioned to accept a dogmatic message with no sense of critical inquiry, just the mindset in which radicalism thrives.

All this helps explain the sociocultural and organizational survival of radical Islam, which is in itself quite a feat, but why have these factors not brought about an increase in political power?

The Islamist movement aims to stop, before it is too late, the seemingly ineluctable and rapid slippage of the Middle East toward apostasy, modernity and secularism. By nature a long-term effort, this campaign can hardly enthuse a membership made up in their crushing majority of people aged fifteen to twenty-five. Underlying the Muslim Brotherhood’s message is that, thanks to the ongoing crisis of the state and their own resourcefulness, they ultimately will infiltrate the elites and create a popular base to exert pressure upon these secularized elites to change. At the end of the road, they would bring to power new Islamized elites (for example, judges who would interpret cases in the light of Islamic law, the Shari‘a).

Experience has shown, however, that powerful, countervailing cultural forces operate: the audiovisual media emit hedonistic messages, which undermine the notion “Islam is the solution.” The consumer culture’s attraction, the lure of “Made in USA” sneakers and movies, bewitches many amongst the shabab (youth) upon whom the elderly leaders had pinned their hopes. More dismaying yet are the local knockoffs, such as the North African hybrid of Arabic and rock music, dubbed Rai. Increasingly, Islamist voices can be heard asking, “Perhaps all we can wage is a rearguard battle. Isn’t it likely that our present achievements are doomed to death by attrition?”

The deadend of violence and da‘wa leads Islamists to often give higher consideration than before to the parliamentary option. The proponents of parliamentarism point to its many virtues. It permits them to introduce legal reforms, shapes policy-making, and allocates resources to causes close to the radicals’ hearts (notably, Islamic education).

Opponents of parliamentarism retort with several arguments. First, they are ideologically against it. For them, democracy is a value only for the despised “Westoxicated” elites. It cannot stop society’s decline into infidelity, let alone reverse the curve. As a system predicated on the sovereignty of man, it runs counter to Islam’s attachment to the sovereignty of God. It can be accepted at best as an instrument, and as that it dismally fails.

Second, in countries where “parties of a religious character” are illegal, such as Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt, the radicals are barred from running at all or are allowed to do so only under a subterfuge as independent candidates or in a joint list with another party. They are subject to constant harassment of da‘wa activities through control of voluntary associations, professional organizations, unofficial mosques, and preachers. Their activists do not enjoy freedom of expression and travel, may be subject to arbitrary search and detention, or may lose their government jobs.

In this respect, the distinction between Egypt and Jordan or between Tunisia and Morocco is simply one of degree. Many Islamists argue that Arab regimes offer, at best, a sort of democracia pactada of the type practiced in some Latin American countries during the transition period from military rule. These are democracies of what sociologists call ‘partial inclusion,’ built on shared rules of political competition including the right to vote and an electoral law designed to minimize the influence of extremist parties and favor more traditional-rural sectors (through a two-chamber system, for instance, as in Morocco and Jordan). These are top-down affairs whose creation presupposes the opposition’s willingness to content itself indefinitely with second-tier cabinet portfolios.

Some religious organizations would be included in the system, as is the Algerian Muslim Brotherhood, led by Shaykh Nahnah, who ran in the 1997 elections under the banner of the Social Movement for Peace. Others, such as the Algerian FIS, would not be permitted to run, though its members would one day perhaps be allowed to participate as individuals.

Third, skeptics note that no Arab opposition party has ever won power through the ballot; electoral returns are, in fact, tampered with almost everywhere. And, in the one instance in which a party came closest to winning power, the first round of the June 1991 elections in Algeria when FIS won a plurality, the results were annulled by the military.

Fourth, they say that Islamists have precious little to show for playing the parliamentary game and conclude that participation in government is an error. Their impact on legislation and policy is paltry. Sadat had promised enactment of taqnin al-Shari‘a (vetting existing laws for conformity with Islamic jurisprudence) but the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt never succeeded even in pushing it through parliamentary committees. In Jordan, the large faction of the Islamic Action Front (also known as the Muslim Brotherhood) could neither block the signing of the “sacrilegious” peace treaty with Israel nor development of close ties with the Jewish state. The same holds true of Jama’a Islamiya (Sunni) and the Hizballah (Shi’ite) deputies in Lebanon and their counterparts in Kuwait, Bahrain, and Morocco. In Yemen, the Tajammu al-Islah party is still smarting from the debacle of the May 1997 elections and its subsequent ousting from the government.

Moreover, when an Islamic party does cross the apparently critical threshold and join the government, it has to make do with minor ministries where its efforts are quite often hampered. As a result, the party in question is discredited with its own electorate either as a sellout or as ineffectual, and loses votes in the elections following its ousting from government; this happened in Jordan in 1993 and in Yemen in 1997. Further supporting the skeptical view, last but not least, is the Turkish case, where the radical Necmettin Erbakan was actually permitted to become prime minister but was stymied in every initiative he took and forced out of power within a year.

Parliamentary initiatives create much discord. Within Tunisia's Nahda movement, a minority led by founder Rashid al-Ghannushi (now in exile in Great Britain) demanded a change in the movement's platform and its embrace of democracy; rebuffed, he set up a rival organization, the Tunisian Islamic Front (FIT). Young Muslim Brotherhood activists in Egypt are endeavoring to establish a new party (named Wasat, the median way) that endorses the parliamentary option despite the opposition of the Muslim Brotherhood leadership. Shaykh 'Imad al-Faluji, a founder of the Palestinian Hamas, established the dissident Islamic Salvation Party that competed in the 1996 elections, and he then joined Arafat's administration.

Yet in countries where this very option has long been pursued, it is now a controversial issue. In Jordan the Muslim Brotherhood decided by a majority vote in the leadership, and under pressure from mid- and low-level militants, to boycott the November 1997 elections. The predicament for fundamentalist Islam is not solely of the regimes' making. Even those liberal circles in the Arab ruling elites favoring a transition to democracy must take into account the antidemocratic nature of radical Islam, which being the most important opposition force in society, might be the beneficiary of such a transition, leading to an Iranian- (or Sudanese-) style regime. This scenario, feared by the modern middle class, recalls the situation in Latin America in the 1980s, when Marxist-Leninist parties were the ones likely to benefit from the replacement of military rule by democracy. Whether to accept democracia pactada Arab-style is not only the major question exercising the radicals, but also a major concern for many in Arab ruling elites.

Some independent-minded thinkers within the radical orbit have recently set this predicament in relief. Perhaps Munir Shafiq, a Christian convert to Islam from northern Jordan living in Lebanon, has done so with the greatest insight. Long active in the Palestinian movement Fatah, Shafiq later abjured nationalism and Marxism, converted to Islam, and became a widely read radical Islamist thinker. If radical Islam wishes to allay the fears it generates and join the political process, he writes, it must undergo a transformation, not a face-lift. It must wholeheartedly and as a matter of principle accept pluralism and toleration (in the modern sense, first elaborated by Spinoza). In this he includes the notion of alternation of power as well as basic human and civil rights for people of all hues and convictions. Shafiq calls for a rigorously honest rethinking of ideology and practice; mere window dressing, like the recourse to apologetic arguments, will not do, he warns.

Arguments maintaining that Islam equals democracy in that it holds to the principle of shura (consultation to elect a caliph) do not suffice. For one thing, apologetics are historically inaccurate: The shura was rarely implemented even in the Golden Age, and even then it encompassed notables only. For another, verbal juggling of this sort would never convince hard-bitten rulers, their ever- suspicious security services, or the liberal middle class—not after the experiences of Iran, Sudan, and Afghanistan, not after the long drawn-out confrontation with the violent brand of Muslim radicalism.

What is required, say Shafiq and his followers, is a serious effort of ijtihad (legal reinterpretation) to infuse the shura notion with modern pluralistic values. Furthermore, such values should then be injected into radical Islam’s own internal mode of governance, which is at present autocratic, if not worse. It’s a tall order. Some rethinking along these lines has been sketched out, but more remains to be done, as Shafiq would be the first to acknowledge.[5]

Moreover, voices like Shafiq’s are, for the moment, solitary. Most radical groups who choose the parliamentary option are content to mouth the cliches about shura equaling democracy.[6] They dodge issues such as the

status of religious minorities or whether freedom of expression encompasses agnostics, atheists, or holders of iconoclastic (“heretical”) Muslim doctrines. They have come up with no constitutional-political guarantees to ensure alternation.

No wonder that all this is not enough to convince regimes or liberal public opinion, whose deep distrust of Islamists harks back to the days of Muslim Brotherhood violence in the 1950s. That Hasan al-Turabi, the most prolific writer on shura in the 1980s, has become a blood-stained leader of the present Sudanese regime certainly does not add to the credibility of the allegedly prodemocratic spokesmen in Islamist ranks.

When the exiled Tunisian leader Rashid al-Ghannushi announced a few years ago his conversion to democracy, then split the Nahda (Renaissance) movement he had founded over this issue, his past involvement in violence against the Neo-Destour Party was still a fresh memory. Doubts about his sincerity came not just from the autocratic Tunisian president and his henchmen but also from the Tunisian League of Human Rights, a bold opposition force. The Egyptian government denied a legal permit to the Wasat Party (the matter is still under appeal) and liberal opinion split over whether to believe the party’s declared commitment to democracy.

Poor as the Arabic-speaking radicals’ prospects for seizing power may be, it would be wrong to view them as doomed to political failure. Even in their present anti-democratic mindset, their top-down options may get a new lease on life due to changes in the economic and political environment. Power could yet be within their reach, through bullets or ballots, resulting from a military defeat, a succession crisis of the regime, or a drastic worsening of the economic situation.

[2] Emmanuel Sivan, “Eavesdropping on Radical Islam,” Middle East Quarterly, March 1995, pp. 13—24.

[3] In Algeria (1988); Egypt (1977, 1981, 1984, 1987); Jordan (1989, 1996); Kuwait (1989, 1990); Morocco (1984, 1988, 1996); South Yemen (1986, 1990); Sudan (1984, 1985, 1988).

[4] Emmanuel Sivan, “The Enclave Culture,” M. E. Marty and R. S. Appleby (eds.), Fundamentalism Comprehended (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 11–63.

[5] Munir Shafiq, Al-Nizam al-Duwali al-Jadid wa-Khiyar al-Muwajaha (Beirut: Dar al-Nashir, 1994); Munir Shafiq, Hawla Nazariyyat al-Taghyir (Beirut: Dar al-Nashir, 1995). See also, Majmu’at min al-‘Ulama’ [a pseudonym, possibly shaykhs Jamal Hammami and Jamil Salim], Al-Islam wal-Musharaka fil-Hukm (Nablus: n.p., 1996).

[6] Rashid Ghannushi, Al-Hurriyat al-‘Amma fil-Islam (Beirut: Markaz Dirasat al- Wihda al-‘Arabiya, 1993); ‘Ali Benhajj (Algerian), Risala ila Wazir al-Ittisal (n.p., 1995), pp. 53–58; Abu-l-Ala’ Madi (founder of the Egyptian al-Wasat party) interview, Al-Hayat Dec. 25, 1996; Mohammad al-‘Awwa (Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood), “Al-Ta‘addudiya min Manzur Islami,” Minbar al-Hiwar (Winter 1991), pp. 129.

** 2. Radical Islam in Egypt: A Comparison of Two Groups

David Zeidan

History reveals cyclical patterns of Islamic revival in times of crisis. Charismatic leaders arise attempting to renew the fervor and identity of Muslims, purify the faith from accretions and corrupt religious practices, and reinstate the pristine Islam of the Prophet Muhammad’s day. Leaders of revivals tend to appear either as renewers of the faith promised at the start

of each century (mujaddid), or as the deliverers sent by God in the end of times to establish the final kingdom of justice and peace (mahdi).[7]

In modern times, a new wave of revival was initiated by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the main grassroots movement that emerged in response to the modern crisis in the Arab world. At a time when Egypt faced the challenges of colonialism, economic and cultural dependence, rapid industrialization and urbanization, and a massive population explosion,[8] the Muslim Brotherhood called for a return to the original fundamentals of Islam as the basis of Muslim social and political renewal. Suppressed by Nasser in the mid-1950s—after Egypt's revolution evoked nationalism rather than Islam as Egypt's main identity marker— the Muslim Brotherhood reemerged during the Sadat era (1970—1981) as a movement committed to nonviolent participation in the political process.[9]

Radical Islamic societies (jama'at) sprang from the Muslim Brotherhood drawing on the thought of its main ideologue, Sayyid Qutb (1906—1966), who endorsed a violent takeover of power.[10] While he himself belonged to the mainline Brotherhood, Qutb's radical reinterpretation of several key Islamic concepts inspired some to split off from the Brotherhood and use his writings to legitimize violence against the regime. For example, he argued that the existing society and government were not Muslim but rather dominated by "pagan ignorance" (jahiliyya). The duty of righteous Muslims was to bring about God's sovereignty (hakimmiyya) over society, denounce the unbelief (takfir) of the current national leaders, and carry out a holy struggle (jihad) against them.[11]

Two of the radical groups that emerged in Egypt in the 1970s were the Society of Muslims (Takfir wal-Hijra) and the Society of Struggle (Jama'at al- Jihad). These two organizations espoused drastically different ideologies and strategies for gaining power. The Society of Muslims (al-Takfir) had a passive, separatist and messianic ideology, delaying active confrontation with the state to an indefinite point in the future when it could reach a certain degree of strength. In comparison, the Society of Struggle (al-Jihad) followed an activist, militant ideology

committed to immediate and violent action against the regime. This chapter compares these two Islamic groups and analyzes their differences in doctrine and strategy in the context of a broader examination of the history of militant Islamic groups in Egypt. The two societies furnish examples of basic types of radical Islamic movements. In addition, al-Jihad remains important in contemporary Egyptian politics and in that country’s internal struggle.

A number of factors led to the proliferation of radical groups during the 1970s in Egypt and across the Muslim world. These included, as had been true of the earlier Brotherhood, a response to the impact of modernity, Western encroachment, misrule by the national elite, and a whole series of massive economic and social dislocations. The result was a crisis of identity and a search for authenticity. Heavy-handed repression by military-backed regimes armed with their own powerful Arab nationalist ideologies left no avenues for protest except through the religious idiom.[12]

Equally, the oil boom enhanced the power of Islamic Saudi Arabia and channeled much financial aid to militant groups, encouraging their growth. The 1973 war against Israel and accompanying oil embargo against the West —which seemed to demonstrate Arab-Islamic power—as well as the 1979 Iranian revolution further fueled radical zeal.

Ironically, the state apparatus in Egypt also contributed to this trend. President Anwar Sadat encouraged the development of Islamist societies (jama’at Islamiyya) as a counterweight to the Nasserist-dominated professional associations and student unions. These societies extended their influence through a network of educational and social services at a time when government services had collapsed in the face of economic crisis and rapid increases in the number of students and the overall population. The Islamic societies, offering identity and community as well as social welfare, became a recruiting field for the revolutionary radicals. [13]

Another phenomenon that emerged during the 1970s was a dramatic rise in the number of independent private (ahli) mosques, not

controlled by the government, that provided a safe meeting point for militants and recruits.[14]

One of the new radical Islamic groups that appeared in the 1970s was generally called Takfir wal-Hijra (hereafter Takfir) by the media and government security agencies. Takfir is the legal ascription of unbelief (excommunication) to an individual or group, while hijra signifies Muhammad's original flight from Mecca to Medina, serving as the group's model for contemporary disentanglement from Egypt's corrupt society and regime.

Takfir was led by Shukri Mustafa, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood in Asyut, who was imprisoned in 1965 and joined the radical disciples of Qutb while in prison. Released in 1971, he soon started building up Takfir but, following the kidnapping and murder of an ex-government minister in 1978, Mustafa was arrested and executed by the authorities.

Mustafa was an autocratic leader who expected total obedience from his followers. His control was strengthened by the belief that he was the predicted savior (mahdi).[15] Given this prestige, he was able to run Takfir as a highly disciplined organization, divided into action cells, recruiting groups, and logistic units. Labeling contemporary society "infidel," Takfir aimed to set up an alternative community that would work, study, and pray together. There were gradations of membership: Full members devoted themselves totally to the community, leaving their jobs and families. Errant members were excommunicated and punished.[16]

The Jama'at al-Jihad (henceforth al-Jihad) was founded in 1979 by Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj, a former Muslim Brotherhood member who was disillusioned by its passivity.[17] To explain his views, Faraj wrote a short book titled "The Neglected Obligation" (al-farida al-gha'ibah). But al-Jihad did not restrict itself to theory alone. It quickly became involved in sectarian conflicts and disturbances in Upper Egypt and Cairo. In October 1981, the group assassinated Sadat at a military parade. Faced with an all-out campaign to

shut it down, al-Jihad supporters fought a three-day revolt in Asyut seeking to spark a revolution before being defeated.

In contrast to Takfir, al-Jihad was led not by one charismatic leader but by a collective leadership apparatus[18] in charge of overall strategy, and a ten-member consultation committee (majlis al-shura) headed by Shaykh Umar ‘Abd al-Rahman. Everyday operations were run by a three-department supervisory apparatus.[19] Members were organized in small semiautonomous groups and cells.[20] There were two distinct branches, one in Cairo and the other in Upper Egypt. The Cairo group was composed of five or six cells headed by emirs who met weekly to plan their strategy.[21]

In recruiting, both Takfir and al-Jihad relied heavily on kinship and friendship ties. Both attracted predominantly students from rural areas and lower and middle class backgrounds who had recently migrated to big cities and were alienated and disoriented in their new environment. Most members were well- educated, particularly in technology and the sciences.[22]

Takfir recruited mainly in Upper Egypt and was the only society to actively recruit women. Faraj recruited for al-Jihad in private mosques in poor neighborhoods where he delivered Friday sermons.[23] Al-Jihad succeeded in recruiting members from the presidential guard, civil bureaucracy, military intelligence, media, and academia.

Especially interesting are the differences between these two radical groups, which represent many streams of contemporary radical Islamic thought, as well as something of the traditional, still far more widely accepted Muslim theology and world view.

Both groups agreed that authentic Islam had existed only in the “Golden Age” of the Prophet’s original state in Medina and under the “rightly guided” first four caliphs (622–661). Muslims must rediscover their religion’s original principles, free them from innovations, and actively implement them in present society. This was in line with revivalist (salafi)[24] views, and contradicted the traditionalist view of Islam as the total of the

sacred source texts of Quran and the Prophet’s example and traditions (Sunna), plus all scholarly interpretation and consensus over the ages. It also differed from the reformist view in stressing active political, rather than mere educational, activity.

The ultimate goal for both groups was the establishment of a renewed universal Islamic nation (umma) under a true caliph,[25] fully implementing Islamic sacred law (Shari’a) as God’s ideal form of Islamic government.[26] Until the establishment of this Caliphate (khilafa), the Islamic societies would form the embryo and vanguard of the true Islamic nation in its struggle against internal and external enemies. The takeover of power in individual Muslim states would be a necessary first step.

Takfir’s ambitions did not extend to the Middle East or the Islamic world alone. It claimed that the Prophet’s mandate was to fight all people in the world until they all would convert, pray, and pay the Islamic charitable tax (zakat). The fact that this had never before been achieved did not change the fact that it was Islam’s true goal.

The group also emphasized the importance of a charismatic leader—its own —for Islam’s triumph. After establishing its rule over one state, Takfir would call on all humanity to join Islam and submit to its Shari’a. The Islamic state would become the third superpower and extend its dominion over the whole world.[27] The views of al-Jihad were roughly parallel, though the group placed less emphasis on a single leader. Nonetheless, it agreed that true Muslims must wage war against the infidel rulers of all states, including Muslim states.[28]

In contrast to traditional religious scholars, who proclaimed the necessity of submission to any ruler claiming to be a Muslim, they insisted that acceptance of a government is possible only when the Islamic legal system is fully implemented.[29] Implementation of Shari’a becomes the sole criterion of the legitimacy of regimes.[30]

Traditional scholars viewed the concept of the ‘age of ignorance’ or paganism (jahiliyya) as an historic condition in pre-Islamic Arabia. In contrast, for both groups, ‘ignorance’ is a present condition of a society which is not properly Islamic because it does not implement the full Shari’a and hence is rebelling against God’s sovereignty. All the regimes currently in power in Muslim countries are thus not acceptably Islamic and it is both right and necessary to rebel against them.[31]

On some points, Takfir and al-Jihad differed in a way that made clear why al-Jihad was the more successful organization. Takfir claimed that both the regime and all of society were pagan and that true Muslims must separate from them. Takfir included in this condemnation all four traditional schools of Islam (madhabs) and all traditional commentators. It labeled these schools “puppets” of rulers, who had monopolized Quranic interpretation to their own advantage. Takfir accused the founders of the four schools of having closed the door of creative interpretation (ijtihad) and set themselves up as idols (tawaghit), serving as mediators between God and believers. Takfir thus actually repudiated both fiqh and hadith, accepting only the Quran from traditional Islam.[32]

Al-Jihad, in contrast, selected certain commentators it favored, including the famous Hanbali medieval scholar, Ibn Taymiyya. His writings were interpreted as showing that societies are partly Muslim even when the rulers are all pagans who legislate according to their own whims.[33] Al-Jihad accepted the four traditional schools of Islam, much of scholarly consensus, and some later commentators. Consequently, it would be much easier for a Muslim to join al-Jihad or find some truth in its teachings.

While traditional scholars and the Muslim Brotherhood would not denounce a Muslim as an infidel—accepting his claim to be Muslim at face value and leaving the judgment of his intention to God—both radical groups were ready to denounce Muslims as infidels, which could imply a willingness to attack or kill them. Since Egypt’s failure to implement the Shari’a made it an infidel pagan state placed under excommunication (takfir), all true Muslims were duty-bound to wage holy struggle (jihad) against the regime, an idea alien to traditional Islam.

Both Takfir and al-Jihad also agreed that the prime emphasis should be put on a national revolution first. Only when the infidel regimes of Muslim countries were overthrown and replaced by true Islamic states could the Caliphate be restored, occupied Muslim territories liberated, and Shari’a rule established throughout the world.

But in determining the targets and enemies of its revolution, Takfir declared that not only the regime but the society itself was infidel and under excommunication. This entailed two strategic decisions that ensured that Takfir would remain more of a cult than a revolutionary organization. First, it meant a personal withdrawal from society, which required a choice few people would make and a burden beyond what its infrastructure could sustain. Second, it called for a delay in action, which indefinitely postponed active militancy.[34]

While rejecting the state, Takfir also provoked it. Denouncing all symbols of the regime’s legitimacy—the religious establishment, the army, and all government services—members ignored its laws, including conscription into the army and the legal or educational system. The group also forbade members from working as state employees, a real economic sacrifice given the Egyptian system.[35]

Traditional scholars view Muhammad’s migration (hijra) from Mecca to Medina as an historical event that has spiritual, but not programmatic, relevance for Muslims today. Takfir, however, interpreted hijra as meaning that all true Muslims in every generation must reenact and emulate Muhammad’s model of flight as a physical separation from infidel society. By departing to a safe place, they could establish a new society and prepare for the stage of return and victory. Total separation (mufassala kamila) is a must in the temporary stage of weakness, ending only when the alternative community becomes strong enough to challenge the regime.[36]

This plan was aborted, however, by Takfir itself. Its use of violence against “apostate” members brought police intervention, which in turn led to a confrontation that destroyed the organization. Given its program, Takfir posed no immediate danger to the government since in practice the strategy it pursued was one of passivity for an extended period.

In contrast, al-Jihad was a self-proclaimed revolutionary group employing armed struggle. Al-Jihad rejected Mustafa’s insistence on total separation from society, nor would it postpone jihad until the phase of strength was achieved. While Takfir wanted to boycott state institutions, al-Jihad worked to infiltrate the military, security services, and other government institutions so as to successfully wage immediate jihad.[37]

Al-Jihad was just as determined in rejecting the regime, but much more flexible in dealing with Egyptian society. Certainly, it declared armed jihad a fundamental requirement (a sixth pillar, in its own words) of Islam. Many traditional scholars, the group asserted, had suppressed this fact. Indeed, jihad against unbelievers—including “Muslims” who did not observe the religion’s requirements properly—must be the top priority of all true Muslims.[38]

The regime and its employees were infidels, al-Jihad claimed. As historical justification, it cited Ibn Taymiyya’s criticism of the Mongol rulers of his day, who mixed Shari’a with customary law. In contrast to Takfir, al-Jihad advocated immediate revolt as both legitimate and imperative.[39] Such a revolution would be able to seize power and establish an Islamic state.[40] In tactical terms, Faraj argued that the assassination of Egypt’s president (whom it called the “evil prince” and “the Pharaoh”) would be an effective first step.[41]

While Takfir rejected traditional mainstream Islam as it had been practiced and defined, al-Jihad claimed that its principles and goals were the proper embodiment of that faith. Faraj insisted that most historically respected scholars agreed with al-Jihad’s positions of waging jihad and establishing an Islamic state.[42] Like many historic European revolutionary groups (but unlike Marxist doctrine), al-Jihad viewed political assassination and violence

as acts that would mobilize the masses. A necessary assumption for this strategy to work was that people were already on al-Jihad's side and were just waiting to be shown the proper example and leadership. Indeed, this was al-Jihad's claim. Since God would grant success and the infidel regime's fall would miraculously cure all social ills, there was no need to prepare and establish one's strength beforehand.[43]

Yet such a strategy was not so easy to implement. For example, traditional Islamic doctrine was critical of killing fellow Muslims and, as noted above, viewed a government professing Islam as legitimate. Al-Jihad had to argue, using specific incidents and some commentators from Islamic history, that killing Muslims and overthrowing a Muslim-led government was the correct interpretation of Islam.[44]

While al-Jihad enthusiastically endorsed this position, its leaders knew that theirs was a distinctly minority view. Faraj criticized other groups, most importantly the Muslim Brotherhood, for their gradualist strategy and involvement in the political system. Such behavior, he insisted, only strengthened the regime. He also rejected widely accepted arguments that jihad should be postponed (as Takfir claimed) or that it required only defensive or nonviolent struggle (a widely held Muslim position).

In response, Faraj insisted they were all wrong and that active, immediate jihad would be the only strategy for achieving an Islamic state.[45] Al-Jihad immediately implemented its goals in the late 1970s by involvement in sectarian conflicts, riots, and acts of terrorism, culminating in the Sadat assassination.

Another characteristic of these two groups somewhat at odds with the traditionalist Muslim view was their strong antagonism to Christians and Jews, though even here Takfir and al-Jihad had contrasting views. Instead of seeing Jews and Christians as protected communities (dhimmis) and 'People of the Book,' the two groups viewed them as infidels both because they had deliberately rejected the truth and because of their connections to colonialism and Zionism.[46] They were

accused of serving as a ‘fifth column’ for external en- emies,[47] a Trojan Horse of the West within Muslim societies.[48]

Takfir stressed an international Jewish conspiracy and the need to fight it, while Zuhdi’s group in al-Jihad viewed Christians as the first enemy to confront and was heavily involved in anti-Coptic activities. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman issued a religious legal edict (fatwa) legitimizing the killing and robbing of Christians who were said to be anti-Muslim.

Both groups accepted the prevalent conspiracy theories that saw the Christian West, Jewish Zionism, and atheist Communism as planning to corrupt, divide, and destroy Islam. Rulers in Muslim states were puppets of these forces, leading their countries into dependence and secularization. This battle had started right at the inception of Islam, and the Jews and Christians of the seventh century were identical with the Jews and Christians of today.[49]

Takfir accused the Jews of seducing humanity to idol-worship and of spreading corruption and immorality all over the world, while al-Jihad accused Muslim rulers of obeying Jews and Christians and opening up Muslim countries to exploitation.[50]

Finally, both groups saw themselves as messianic (mahdist, in Islamic terminology). Takfir was radically mahdist, believing that the world was nearing its end and Mustafa, Takfir’s leader, was the Mahdi. Proof that the world was coming to an end was to be found in the prevalent state of disbelief, oppression, immorality, famine, wars, earthquakes, and typhoons.[51] Mustafa would be the caliph who would found a new Muslim community, conquer the world, and usher in God’s final reign on Earth.

Al-Jihad accepted the tradition of the Mahdi who will reveal himself at the end of time to establish justice in the whole world. However, in the meantime the West was in decline, and true Muslims had to actively engage in the struggle for the implementation of true Islam.[52] Lack of

messianic leadership was no excuse for postponing the struggle, and leadership should be given to the best Muslims in the community, presumably al-Jihad's leadership.

After its suppression by the government and the execution of its leader, Takfir seemed to disintegrate and its members joined other underground groups such as al-Jihad. However, there are persistent rumors that a nucleus remains active underground and that its ideas have affected many other radical groups.[53] Radical Islamic groups with the same name have surfaced in other Arab states, though it is not clear if they subscribe to the same ideology. For instance, in Algeria a group by the same name is reported to be actively linked to the GIA (Armed Islamic Group) and is blamed for urban terrorism and for some of the killings of civilians and attacks on the security forces. In Lebanon, on December 31, 1999, a group called takfir wal-Hijra ambushed a Lebanese army patrol near Assun, killing four soldiers. The army responded by launching a crackdown on militants in the hills around Tripoli, killing some 25 radicals.[54]

Al-Jihad, in contrast, survived repression. Despite the imprisonment and execution of al-Jihad's leaders following Sadat's assassination, offshoots managed to regroup, declaring jihad against Mubarak's regime. Al-Jihad has continued to be linked to terrorist incidents and outbreaks of communal violence ever since.[55] It seems to have a narrow base of support mainly in the urban centers of northern Egypt, and many of its leaders live in exile in Western countries. One wing seems to be loyal to 'Abbud al-Zammur, one of the original founders now imprisoned in Egypt. Another wing is called Vanguards of the Conquest or The New Jihad Group, and appears to be led by Afghan war veteran Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri.[56]

In July 1986, following riots started by mutinous Central Security Forces, 75 members of an offshoot were arrested.[57] In September 1989, members of Salvation from Hell, another offshoot, were sentenced for the attempted assassination of two ex-cabinet ministers and a journalist. Al-Jihad seemed to specialize in attacking high-level government officials and high-profile secularists; in 1990, five members of al-Jihad were arrested for the killing of the speaker of the National Assembly.[58]

In 1993, al-Jihad members attempted unsuccessfully to assassinate Interior Minister Hassan al-Alfi and Prime Minister ‘Atef Sidky. Al-Jihad maintains links with other international radical Islamic groups and figures such as Osama binLaden, the mastermind of the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania, and of the September 11 attacks in the United States.[59]

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman was exiled to the United States in 1985, where he was later implicated in the first bombing of New York’s World Trade Center, put on trial, and sentenced to imprisonment. He had kept his influence over al-Jihad as well as the other radical movement, al-Jama’at al-Islamiyya, operating both in Egypt and abroad.

In the 1980s members of both societies, like other radical groups in the Arab world, fought alongside the mujahidin in Afghanistan against the Soviets, gaining valuable experience in warfare and often specialist training from U.S. agents. After the Soviet withdrawal, many returned to their home countries, reinvigorating the violent struggle against the regimes in power.[60]

Studying these two groups reveals the impact of the new politicization of Islam in recent decades. Yet it should be clear that these groups’ theologies are no simple revivalist returns to sacred origins but reinterpretations of historically dominant views and sectarian-type modifications on the model of the early kharijis.[61] Even when they can claim historic precedents, such as Ibn Taymiyya, they use innovative approaches lying outside the framework of mainstream Islam.

Even though these groups have a large circle of sympathizers who agree with their goals and accept their methods, they remain a minority within Egypt. Examining their ideologies gives important clues as to why their support has remained limited.

First, as noted above, many of their views either revise or contradict traditionally accepted interpretations of Islam. Thus, joining or supporting the group requires a change in one’s original belief system.

Second, these groups are naive in their strategic conceptions. One could argue that, on a strategic level, both Takfir and al-Jihad were unconsciously pursuing a suicidal approach. Takfir’s isolation and al-Jihad’s launching of a revolution without preparation and wide support could only lead to defeat. Dependence on divine intervention is not a blueprint for success.

Third, many Egyptians will not accept their claim that a coup that establishes the Shari’a will miraculously solve all the country’s problems. The Iranian model shows that the capture of government does not automatically yield rapid progress or a just society. Even popular support can be difficult to maintain, while Islamist leaders may well disagree on goals, ideology, and methods. Their utopian presentation of the projected golden age of the reinstituted Caliphate fully implementing

Shari’a inevitably raises high expectations that can never be fulfilled. Should they take power, it would mean dealing with the frustrations of unfulfilled expectations by totalitarian means. As in most revolutions, large numbers of people would have to be sacrificed on the altar of ideology. And even then, the original ideology itself might have to be sacrificed to pragmatic considerations.

[7] Hrair R. Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution: Fundamentalism in the Arab World (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1985), pp. 9—12,19—20. See also John L. Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 117—118.

[8] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, pp. 3—7, 9—12.

[9] During the pre-revolution days, the Muslim Brotherhood had been equivocal on the issue of violence: while advocating participation in the parliamentary process, it had also founded a secret armed wing which was involved in some violent activities.

[10] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, pp. 912, 19—20.

[11] John L. Esposito, The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality? (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 133—135.

[12] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, pp. 8, 31. See also John O. Voll, “The Revivalist Heritage” in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad et al. (eds.), The Contemporary Islamic Revival: A Critical Survey and Bibliography (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), p. 23; Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, pp. 162—164.

[13] Esposito, The Islamic Threat, pp. 138—139.

[14] Hamid Ansari, “The Islamic Militants In Egyptian Politics,” IJMES, Vol. 16, No. 3, (1984), p. 129.

[15] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, p. 95. Mustafa’s title was “prince of the princes” (amir al-umara’), rather than the more common amir used by most leaders of Islamic societies.

[16] Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, pp. 136—137. See also Farzana Shaikh, (ed.), Islam & Islamic Groups: A Worldwide Reference Guide, (Harlow: Longman, 1992), p. 70.

[17] Nabeel Jabbour, The Rumbling Volcano, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1993), pp. 194–212.

[18] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, p. 97.

[19] Ibid., pp. 97–98. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman became spiritual guide for both al- Jihad and the other extremist groups known as “Islamic societies” (al-jama’at al-Islamiyya) well into the 1990s issuing the religious legal decisions (fatwas) needed to legitimate their various activities. He is now serving a prison term in the United States for his involvement in the First World Trade Center bombing in New York.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Gilles Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and the Pharaoh, (London: Al-Saqi Books, 1985), p. 206.

[22] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, pp. 95–96.

[23] Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, “Religion Or Opposition: Urban Protest Movements in Egypt,” IJMES, Vol. 16, (1984), pp. 549. See also Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt, p. 206.

[24] The Salafiyya movement was launched by Rashid Rida (1865—1935), disciple of the great Egyptian Muslim reformer Muhammad Abduh (1849—1905). Its goal was the revival of Islam not so much by harmonizing it with modern times as advocated by the reformers, but by a return to the pristine Islam of the pious forbears (salaf). Salafiyya was to some extent an amalgamation of reformist with fundamentalist Wahhabi trends.

[25] Ever since Ataturk dissolved the Ottoman Caliphate in 1924 in his drive for secularization, Islamists have viewed the revival of the Caliphate—the divinely appointed succession to the Prophet and the ideal form of state leadership—as essential to the revival and political resurgence of Islam.

[26] Ansari, “The Islamic Militants In Egyptian Politics,” pp 136. See also Walid Mahmoud Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt: Perceptions of International Relations, 1967–81, (London: Kegan Paul, 1994) p. 111; Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” in Johannes J. G. Jansen, The Neglected Duty: The Creed of Sadat’s Assassins and Islamic Resurgence in the Middle East, (New York: Macmillan, 1986), pp. 162–165.

[27] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, pp. 234–235.

[28] Ibid, p. 235.

[29] Ansari, “The Islamic Militants in Egyptian Politics,” pp. 136–137.

[30] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, pp. 258–259. See also Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” p. 166.

[31] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, p. 197.

[32] Ibid. See also Esposito (ed.), The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), Vol. 4, pp. 179–181.

[33] Ibid. See also Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” pp. 166–167,170,173–175.

[34] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, pp. 204–205.

[35] Jabbour, The Rumbling Volcano, p. 150. See also Kepel, Muslim Extremism In Egypt, p. 150; Abdelnasser, pp. 205–206.

[36] Jabbour, The Rumbling Volcano, pp 143–157. See also Kepel, Muslim Extremism In Egypt, pp. 95–96; Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, pp. 92–96, 101; Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” pp. 200–201.

[37] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, p. 111.

[38] Ansari, “The Islamic Militants In Egyptian Politics,” pp 137. See also Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, p. 101.

[39] Ansari, “The Islamic Militants in Egyptian Politics,” pp. 123–144. See also Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt, pp. 191–122; Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” pp. 170, 173–175.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Esposito, Islam: the Straight Path, pp. 134–135. See also Kepel, Muslim Extremism in Egypt, pp. 195; Ansari, “The Islamic Militants in Egyptian Politics,” pp. 136–7; Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, pp. 205–207.

[42] Johannes J. G. Jansen, “Tafsir, Ijma‘ and Modern Muslim Extremism,” ORIENT, Vol. 27, No. 4, (1986), p. 648. See also see Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” p. 172.

[43] Jansen, “Tafsir, Ijma‘ and Modern Muslim Extremism,” p. 648. See also Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” pp. 202—203.

[44] Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” pp. 207—208, 210—213.

[45] Ibid., pp. 186–189.

[46] Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, p. 171.

[47] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, pp. 242–243.

[48] Ibid, p. 239.

[49] Ibid, pp. 226, 240–241, 244, 254.

[50] Ibid, p. 226.

[51] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, p. 216. See also Derek Hopwood, Egypt: Politics and Society 1945–1990, (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991), p. 118.

[52] Abdelnasser, The Islamic Movement in Egypt, pp. 234–235. See also Faraj, “The Neglected Duty,” pp. 163–164.

[53] Dekmejian, Islam In Revolution, pp. 96–97.

[54] “Massacres in Algeria: A Domestic Tragedy and the Show-Off Positions,” ‘Ayn al-Yaqeen, Internet, <[[http://www.ain-al-yaqeen.com/issues/19980121/feat3en.htm][http://www.ain-al-yaqeen.com/issues/19980121/feat3en.htm]]>. “Syria Roots Out Militants,” 7 January 2000, Global Intelligence Update, Stratfor, Internet, <[[http://216.30.41.7/SERVICES/giu2000/01700.ASP][http://216.30.41.7/SERVICES/giu2000/01700.ASP]]>.

[55] Shaikh, p. 69.

[56] Terrorist Group Profiles, Dudley Knox Libraries, Naval Postgraduate School, published on the Internet: <[[http://web.nps.navy.mil/~library/tgp/jihad.htm][http://web.nps.navy.mil/~library/tgp/jihad.htm]]>.

[57] R. Springborg, Mubarak’s Egypt, (Boulder: Westview, 1989), pp. 217.

[58] Esposito, Islam: The Straight Path, pp. 134–135.

[59] Hopwood, Egypt: Politics and Society, p. 188.

[60] Adel Darwish, “On the Threshold of the 7th Millennium,” The Middle East, June 1999.

[61] The khariji movement was a legalistic puritan group that arose in the early years of Islam during the rule of Muhammad’s son-in-law ‘Ali (d.661) as fourth caliph. It was the first Muslim sect. The kharijis rejected all Muslims who did not accept their interpretation of Islam as infidels worthy of death. They developed an ideology of continuous jihad and rebelled against all rulers until finally suppressed after some 200 years of bloodshed. Remnants of the original khariji movement survive today in the ibadis of Oman and in the mzabis of Algeria.

** 3. The Development of Palestinian Islamic Groups

Reuven Paz

The story of how Palestinian Islamic groups evolved is one of the most interesting case studies in modern Islamist politics. By looking at the roots of these organizations and their recruitment techniques, one gets a far better appreciation of the nature, appeal, and strategy of these groups.

A key element in their development has been the struggle between Islamist and nationalist alternatives for the allegiance of individual Palestinians. Factionalism has also been an important dimension, given the multiplicity of groups deriving from the Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Jihad tendencies. Also interesting is the relationship between Islamist organizations and educational institutions, which have served as important centers for finding, socializing, and mobilizing supporters.

Until 1967, organized Islamic groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (henceforth called “the Territories”) were situated in socioreligious centers and mosques run by the Waqf establishment, as well as several charity funds in Jerusalem and the West Bank. These groups drew most of their support from middle class traders who were beginning to develop in urban areas of the West Bank.

In the Gaza Strip, the Muslim Brotherhood, active under the Egyptian civil regime despite Nasser’s hostility to the Brotherhood’s Egyptian branch, were influential in several mosques run by their supporters. In fact, until 1967, Islamic groups maintained a strong hold on the population of the Gaza Strip with almost exclusive control of all social organizations. The only Islamic group not affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood consisted of supporters of several shaykhs who had adopted a strict Salafi or Wahhabi line during their studies in Saudi Arabia. (Saudi Arabia supported the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood during the course of its rivalry with Nasser’s regime during the 1960s.)[62]

The Muslim Brotherhood was also dominant in the Jordanian-ruled West Bank. The Brotherhood controlled the Waqf establishment, operated legally, and even participated in the Jordanian government in the 1960s, though Jordanian security services did supervise the group tightly. The Jordanians restricted its movements, arrested its followers, and barred it from certain

actions.[63] The group’s only Islamic competitor was the Islamic Liberation Party (Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami), which was banned and persecuted by the government. Thus, the Brotherhood, which enjoyed some backing from the Saudi regime, was able to play an ‘open game’ by mildly criticizing the government on internal affairs.

Until 1967, the Muslim Brotherhood faced no real competition from secular nationalist groups in the Territories, such as the banned Jordanian Communist Party or the Syrian and Iraqi Ba’ath party. These groups attracted a very narrow stratum of intellectuals and university graduates. In Gaza, leftist organizations were often forced to collaborate with the Muslim Brotherhood as a result of joint imprisonment.

Israel’s entry into the Territories in 1967 brought considerable change in the nature of Islamic activities there. Islamic groups now enjoyed more freedom than in the past. This newfound freedom, coupled with changes that took place during the 1970s in the organizational pattern of Palestinian society in the Territories as a whole, were central factors in the Palestinian Islamic resurrection of the 1980s.

One of the central factors influencing Palestinians in the Territories since 1967 had been socioeconomic development, to which the Israelis were indifferent. The armed struggle waged by the Palestinian nationalist secular organizations from the onset of the occupation until the 1993—1994 period diverted Israeli attention from Palestinian social processes. By the 1980s, these processes had brought about several important results, including:

- A vast increase in the Palestinian population due to a high natural birthrate and immigration beginning in the late 1970s, as the number of Palestinians employed in the Persian Gulf sharply declined.[64]

- A major drop in the average age in the Territories.[65]

- A significant rise in the level of education and the number of educational institutes in the Territories concomitant with an awakening national awareness of the importance of education to political, economic, and social development.

- An increase in the standard of living among Palestinians, especially during the first half of the 1980s. The loss of income from Palestinian employment in Gulf countries was more than made up for by an increase in the number of laborers working in Israel and heavy funding since the late 1970s from Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) affiliates.[66]

- The (conscious or unconscious) adoption of Israeli behavior and ways of thinking, modernization, and the forming of a middle class influenced by Israel as well as communication with the rest of the Arab world.

The combination of these factors, together with an effort by the PLO and pro-Palestinian foreign organizations, gave rise to a Palestinian sociopolitical organizational foundation. Israel offered ‘covert help’ in the sense that it did not interfere so long as it did not perceive an immediate military threat. This new foundation shifted the political national organizational weight from municipalities, which could easily be controlled by the Israelis, to a wide variety of new and growing institutions in the early 1980s.

The West Bank, and later also the Gaza Strip, saw the emergence of research institutes, newspapers, information offices, workers unions, professionals unions, student committees, liberal organizations, youth movements, women’s organizations, social organizations, and charity funds—all somehow connected to PLO factions. Also notable is the fact that this sociopolitical base was centered in East Jerusalem, which was regaining its importance in relation to West Bank Arab municipalities.

One of the main factors enhancing the development of this national foundation was the growth of higher education institutions in the Territories at the end of the 1970s. These bodies soon became central to Palestinian political and social development in the Territories. They offered social

mobility to groups that previously did not have access to the higher education system. In the West Bank, for example, and even more so in Gaza's Islamic University, a large percentage of students came from refugee camps, small villages, and lower-income families.[67]

These colleges and universities not only enhanced Palestinian national political awareness but also introduced the PLO's structure to the Territories as a supraorganization comprised of several active groups such as ideological movements and even political parties.[68] Until this point, the PLO manifested itself only in the military-terrorist field and in the prisons where convicted terrorists were sent.

The political organization that developed across university campuses in the Territories and its social impact led to two processes that quickly influenced the entire population and its organizational structure. The first process was the almost total filling of the political void in the Territories. Gradually the entire younger generation—now the vast majority of the population—identified politically with either the PLO, an Islamic faction, the Communist Party, or Jordanian supporters. Even Israel, in the early 1980s, attempted (and failed) to start an organization of village associations that would lead a faction accepting the Israeli presence in the Territories.

The second process was the politicization of almost every aspect of Palestinian life. Relatively democratic election patterns and organizations were formed under Palestinian national political influence, perhaps also due to unconscious impression of Israeli democracy. Partylike structures developed in the Territories which allowed the PLO to exercise social, political, and economic control both from inside and from outside the Territories.

These processes—beginning in the early 1980s—were actually part of a larger transformation of Palestinian society toward creating a basis for a forthcoming state. The core of Palestinian nationalism was transferred inward, from the refugee camps in Lebanon to the Territories, and from external Arab patronage to direct struggle with Israel.

Along with these sociopolitical processes, another process was also taking place— an indigenous Islamic resurrection that aimed to mold the character of the Palestinian state-to-be, which could follow in an Islamic or national secular direction.

Because of the importance of universities in the Territories in shaping the ideologies of secular nationalist activists, Islamic factions decided to pour a heavy effort into their campus presence, especially since many students came from villages and refugee camps where Islam already had a relatively strong presence. It should be noted that for the Islamic groups, education, starting at a very young age, was a primary part of their sociopolitical activity.

The Muslim Brotherhood in particular focused on education. It had consistently abstained, from the beginning of the Israeli occupation until the Palestinian uprising—intifada—twenty years later, from any “armed struggle” against Israel, a main activity of all PLO-affiliated organizations. Just as the Muslim Brotherhood hoped to offer an alternative sociopolitical character to the future Palestinian state, it was also an alternative to violent protest until the uprising.

When, in the 1990s, the Palestinian national leadership chose to compromise with Israel and abandon terrorism, the Muslim Brotherhood remained an alternative and undertook terrorism in the guise of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. The twenty years preceding the forming of Hamas were for the Brotherhood a period of building and reinforcing its social foundation through its influence in the educational arena and in the almost total control it had obtained in the mosques.

For the Muslim Brotherhood, the development of sociopolitical organizations and their student activities gave the Islamic cause a significant push, which was crucial to the revolutionary faction of Islamic Jihad. The Islamic groups in the universities began forming as soon as the national secular groups did and an overt ideological rivalry soon developed.

While Islamic groups kept pace with their national secular counterparts in universities, they lagged behind in other fields. For example, no Islamic factions were formed in organizations such as workers unions, professionals unions, or economic and social societies. No bodies, such as unions or Islamic information centers, were created, apart from student bulletins and charity funds. Until 1988, several centers for the preservation of Islamic heritage were founded, but far fewer than similar centers founded by nationalist groups. For example, in January 1983, one such center was founded in Jerusalem by the Waqf administration, which mainly documented Arab and Turkish manuscripts. In 1986, a research center which doubled as an Islamic library from the estate of the al-Husayni family, was founded on behalf of the "Arab Child's House."[69] However, until the founding of Hamas at the beginning of the intifada, universities remained the main public arena where Islamic organizations concentrated their presence.

Several reasons explain why Islamic organizations failed to engage in a full range of sociopolitical activities, like their nationalist rivals. First, outside funding from the PLO, which was crucial to building up the nationalist base, did not reach Islamic groups. Similarly, these groups—which did not turn violent until late 1986—did not enjoy the large funds that supported terrorism or compensated the families of prisoners and dead activists.

Second, the Muslim Brotherhood senior leadership, which in the West Bank was relatively older than its nationalist equivalent, worked in the traditional ways of the 1950s and 1960s. To attain public influence, it invested in social communal activities, charity funds, and religious centers such as the Waqf and mosques. For some of them, activities such as charity, selling Islamic literature, preaching, and distributing cassettes were considered much more efficient than publishing newspapers and pamphlets or building a foundation of institutes taken from Western culture. The organized propaganda used by Hamas since its inception was engineered by younger activists who had learned from their nationalist colleagues in universities in the Territories or abroad.

Third, while the revolutionary faction of Islamic Jihad mimicked the activities of the Egyptian Islamic groups, where the student arena was also very central, other factions, especially the Salafi-based ones, were composed of people with little education who emphasized secret, armed activities and not building a large public base.

Fourth, the rivalry between Islamic groups and nationalist secular parties in colleges and universities very rarely reached the public sphere, and if so, it was almost exclusively in the Gaza Strip. Thus, there was no widespread competition for public support.

Fifth, the purpose of building an organizational infrastructure was to expand national awareness of the PLO as an exclusive Palestinian leadership ahead of future statehood. It was therefore built according to the accepted Arab national model. Islamic groups, on the other hand, envisioned the founding of an Islamic state at first narrowed to the entire land of Palestine and then enlarged to include the entire Islamic Arab world. Thus, their organizational emphasis was different.

Still, the Brotherhood’s limited focus is surprising given that the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood—which served as a model for branches in other countries—had developed front organizations until the early 1950s similar to those of secular groups. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf states had published Islamic newspapers and periodicals, as did other Islamic groups in Europe and the United States.

While secular groups established financial institutes and became heavily involved in professionals or workers unions, Islamic groups centered their activities in mosques which served as a communal factor no less than a religious one. Through the mosques, Islamic groups promoted awareness (wa’i), religious education, preaching and ideological, political, and social indoctrination, financial activity through charity funds, sports activities, and more.

After 1967, due to the relative freedom Israel granted them and constant connections with the Jordanian regime and its supporters, the national secular network did not pose a significant threat to the Islamic groups' stable position. In addition, the national base in the West Bank, where most of the population was rural and even traditional, did not have a political manifestation contradicting the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology. In the Gaza Strip, where the Muslim Brotherhood was always popular, secular nationalist groups developed slowly, and sped up only in the middle of the 1980s. In fact, in Gaza's Islamic Univer- sity—which became a leading political and social center—the Muslim Brotherhood had almost full control over the administration and the male and female student councils.

To a certain extent, however, the Muslim Brotherhood underestimated the institutional strength of the PLO factions. This was proven at the onset of the intifada, when the nationalist leadership in the Territories succeeded in controlling the population and the uprising's course, even before the outside directive from the PLO. More so, the uprising itself was a manifestation of the mood fostered mainly by the nationalist factions and using their foundation built in the 1980s.

Colleges and universities, however, were an exception. Hence, they were very important to the organizational growth of the Islamic Jihad factions, especially its revolutionary one, though the Muslim Brotherhood's groups conducted the main Islamic activity.

What is special about these groups' publications is that they were locally produced, not imported like most of the Islamic literature being circulated. The percentage of local articles—as opposed to photocopied ones published in Islamic bulletins abroad—rose greatly in the 1980s. Previously, very few thinkers originated from Palestinian Islamic groups and until the establishment of Hamas, the groups imported all of their ideals.

The Islamic groups were independently organized in every one of the higher-education institutes closed down after the uprising began. Once a year the groups convened a quasigeneral assembly of their representatives, usually during al-Israa' wal-Mi'raj events in Al-Aqsa mosque. The last assembly prior

to the uprising took place in April 1987[70] and dealt with current issues in the Islamic Arab world. The groups attacked Arab regimes—including that of the Palestin- ians—that supported a compromise with Israel. This hardline stance can perhaps be explained by the fact that the assembly took place at the same time as the

National Palestinian Council meeting in Algiers, which brought the beginning of a turn toward a political solution.

The Islamic groups' main activities were focused on events and ceremonies for Islamic holidays or ancient Islamic history. They also organized exhibits of Islamic books and fairs and circulated bulletins, books, and sundry Islamic publications, mainly published from 1982. This year marked a new stage in the organizational pattern of the Islamic groups in institutions of higher learning.

More than one factor influenced the change in Islamic groups' orientation, including Israel's invasion of Lebanon and Sadat's murder, as well as the trials of Egyptian Jihad organization members. It appears that the 'Lebanese effect' had to do not only with the Israeli control over southern Lebanon, but also with the infiltration of Iranian forces and the fallout from Iran's Islamic revolution that spurred the growth of the revolutionary faction of the Islamic Jihad.

The first publications in the spirit of the revolutionary Islamic Jihad, which probably posed a certain threat to the Muslim Brotherhood and also hastened its own publications, came from the Muslim Youth Association in Jerusalem. It was a series of three booklets which were once published under different names:[71] Al-Nur, Al-Nur Al-Rabbani, and Al-Nur Al-Ilahi.[72] The first was published in May—June 1982, before Israel's invasion of Lebanon, and its content reveals the influence of the Egyptian monthly Al-Mukhtar al-Islami of the radical Islamic groups in Egypt. The main issues featured in this publication and in subsequent ones were copied from the Egyptian publication and written by Dr. 'Iz al-Din Ibrahim, then one of the literary pseudonyms of Dr. Fathi al-Shqaqi, the founder of the revolutionary Islamic Jihad in Gaza.[73]

The first publications of the Muslim Brotherhood groups were a combination of photocopied material from abroad and handwritten articles and news items, mostly discussing the situation of Palestinian higher education. For example, a publication named Al-Risalah was published in November 1982 by the Hebron University student council, then led by the Muslim Brotherhood.[74] It featured an interview with a student named Muhammad Harb, an active communist who repented and became a supporter of the Islamic Group (another name for the Muslim Brotherhood).[75] The interview, propaganda against the communists, also accused nationalist groups of creating disturbances in the university aimed at causing the Israeli army to arrest Muslim students. This claim occasionally reappeared to justify why Islamic groups did not participate in demonstrations against the Israeli army, since these were viewed as provocations with no “pure” intent.

The publication also contained a list of student council activities during 1982 that indicates the Islamic groups’ mode of operation. Consider the following examples:

- Opening two mosques, one for male students and one for female students.

- Distributing free robes to needy female students.

- The sale of discounted books.

- Performing a ceremony for the birth (mawlid) of the Prophet. Among those registered as present were leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood such as Shaykh Ahmad Yassin from Gaza and Muhammad Fuad Abu Zaid from Qabatya/Jenin.

- A medical services card.

- Performing wide scale fundraising in ‘Palestine’ raising 15,000 dinars.

- The noting of historic dates such as the Balfour declaration and the partition decision.

- Holding a Hebrew learning course.

- Collecting 1,600 dinars to pay for fines given to imprisoned students.

- Blood donations for several residents.[76]

One of the main issues preoccupying Islamic students was ‘immoral behavior’ in colleges and universities. Many students attended daily meetings between Muslims and Christians, some of whom were more liberal regarding cross-gender relations. Some Christians also belonged to the Marxist organizations that advocated relative equality between the sexes. As a rule, the move from a strict, closed village society into an open one with daily cross-gender interactions led to behavior strongly condemned by the Islamic groups.

In an al-Muntalaq issue published in al-Najah University’s bulletin, the immoral behavior of the student council—“corruption and debauchery”—is cited as a direct reason for the founding of the Islamic group in 1987.[77]

One of the issues at the top of the Islamic groups’ agenda was friction with the administrations of other universities, especially the two considered more secular and nationalist—Bir Zeit University and al-Najah University in the West Bank. In both, there was a connection (and sometimes common interest) between the administration and nationalist student parties. Apart from disagreements on mundane issues such as tuition and dorms, the Islamic groups confronted the administration while attempting to conduct separate events, usually with Islamic content, that were usually points of

tension between the rival parties, interfered with studies, and led to conflicts that extended beyond university walls.

In both these institutions, and surely in Freres College (which became Bethlehem University), there was also Christian influence which added to the tension. In one al-Muntalaq issue, the university administration is called “the hostile crusade management.”[78] Reference to Christian students in the Islamic publications was rare.

The February 1984 al-Muntalaq bulletin surveyed the achievements of al- Najah University’s Islamic group six years after its establishment. It is interesting to see how the Islamic group’s followers classified the achievements in order of importance. The first was developing an Islamic personality and saving young men and women from moral and ideological deterioration; the second was building two separate mosques for men and women; the third was giving scholarships and loans to needy students; and the fourth was supplying Islamic books. Only in thirteenth place one can find activities which may be viewed as sociopolitical, copied from the nationalist groups and first introduced to the Territories by the Communist Party: one day of volunteer work in Gaza and two in the university itself.[79]

The volunteer framework was developed by leftist groups in the Territories as early as the second half of the 1970s and was adopted by Fatah supporters the following decade. It was turned into one of the main elements of the younger generation’s organization in all aspects of political and social life in the Territories in the framework of what was called “the youth committees for social work” (lijan al-shabibah lil-’amal al-ijtima’i), popularly known as “Shabibah.” Much of the volunteering consisted of charity work.

Volunteer days could be found only in the colleges and universities and were part of the Islamic groups’ influence there. The Islamic groups did not, however, form voluntary front organizations, as did the nationalist groups, with the exception of the Islamic group at Gaza’s Islamic University, which operated a voluntary labor committee. The dominant influence of the Muslim Brotherhood at Islamic University perhaps accounts for the rise of such a

committee there. Indeed, an Islamic workers union also formed at the university, which doubled as an organizational center for the Muslim Brotherhood.[80]

Islamic groups were also concerned with the recurrent closings of educational institutions by the Israelis, whether due to violent clashes among students or to clashes with the army and riots. The Islamic groups placed the utmost importance on maintaining regular studies in the Territories, as demonstrated by an Al-Muntalaq editorial from December 1984:

<quote>

Owing to the reopening of the university after a forced closure of four whole months, we cannot but congratulate the new and senior brothers and sisters We appeal to the senior students to be sensible and serve the public interest and abandon the activities that bring the university to give our enemies a golden opportunity We call upon our new brothers to see things clearly and understand that regular studies and the opening of the university are the peak of constructive positive activity, and this is what our people and nation want.[81]

</quote>

This position also demonstrated the Muslim Brotherhood’s passivity regarding resistance to the Israeli regime. Until the uprising, this policy advocated carrying on with life as usual in order to enable the movement to establish itself.

The Islamic University in Gaza was different from other institutions in that it was established initially as an Islamic institute, although it also offered secular studies. The centerpiece of the Muslim Brotherhood’s power, it became the largest university in the Territories and the one with the most political and social weight in the Gaza Strip.

The Muslim Brotherhood controlled the student council at the university and also became the most organized of the Islamic groups in the Territories. Several active committees were established in the 1980s, including a cultural and educational committee, an art committee, a volunteer work committee, a mosque committee, and a sports committee. These became the movement's main propaganda tools in the Gaza Strip. The group distributed publications such as al- Shihab (on behalf of the mosque committee) and al-Nidaa' (on behalf of the student council) and also irregular ideological publications such as "From The Young Generation's Desk" (Bi-aqlam al-Shabab).[82] In 1986 and 1987, the student council's Islamic preaching and guidance committee published a series headed Voice of Truth, Power and Freedom (Sawt al-Haqq Wal-Quwwah Wal- Hurriyyah), a well-known slogan of the Muslim Brotherhood's in Egypt.[83]

The student council's culture committee was prolific, publishing some material that was openly circulated under the name of the Muslim Brotherhood.[84] The student council publications in Gaza were also more ideologically consolidated than those in the West Bank. Al-Nidaa's bulletins included ideologically richer material from local writers, knowledgeable in the Muslim Brotherhood's philosophy. As a rule, their bulletin and other publications were similar to those of Islamic groups abroad.

It should be noted, however, that the Islamic group's publications in Nablus' al-Najah University were better funded than those in Islamic University, probably due to the indirect Jordanian funding of the Muslim Brotherhood in Nablus and Samarea. The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood was part of the Jordanian government even after 1967.

A prominent subject in all of the Islamic groups' publications was the rivalry with secular nationalist groups. In the West Bank, where the Muslim Brotherhood did not have as much control over popular centers as they did in parts of the Gaza Strip, the higher-education institutes became the main arena for competition between the two camps. The rivalry was most fierce in al-Najah University, which saw student clashes beyond the administration's

control from the beginning of the 1980s until it was closed during the intifada.

The Islamic groups circulated pamphlets[85] which, at their core, represented the cultural and social rivalry between the two sides—a rivalry most manifested at the universities. The West Bank institutions, which employed not only secular Arab instructors but also Americans and Europeans, became the center of secular revolution for many young people who came from villages and refugee camps. Since most members of the Islamic group came from similar homes and social status, they fought hard to preserve a traditional lifestyle in the face of Western influence in the universities.

The issue of Palestine was also a prominent point of contention. The Islamic groups were mostly concerned with Islam in the Palestinian arena, though there was some mention of the jihad in Afghanistan and the trials of Muslim groups in Egypt and Syria. Mainly, the groups in the Territories addressed the PLO's political line and accused Arab governments of neglecting the Palestinian cause. They concentrated on Palestinian political problems or local problems arising from the Islamic-secular rivalry.

The Palestine focus is to be expected given that Islamic Palestinian groups grew within a conflict that was nationalist in essence. Islamic supporters were well-integrated into general Palestinian society. What is interesting, though, is that the Islamic groups were controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood, which, at least in the West Bank, was part of the Jordanian movement. But the Muslim Brotherhood's transformation into a mainly Palestinian group that viewed the problems of the Arab Islamic world and of creating a large, new Arab state as secondary was a direct result of the activities of Islamic groups in colleges and universities. Students during the 1980s had grown up fighting the Israeli occupation. Indeed, resisting the Israelis became the center of Palestinian political work in the Territories, which led Islamic activists to address a question that became significant in Palestinian society: establishing the character and nature of the future independent state.

Higher-education institutions in the Territories became one of the centers of fighting the Israeli regime, and Islamic resistance was prominent. In violent riots initiated by leftist students at Bir Zeit in December 1986, Islamic group members played an active role for the first time. Both of the students killed in these clashes belonged to the Islamic group and were residents of the Gaza Strip.[86] Their residency is noteworthy because it represents an increase in the number of Gaza Strip residents who studied in West Bank institutions and their influence on the Islamic activity in this area. This increase accelerated the militancy of Islamic groups in the West Bank.

In summary, it appears that the flourishing of sociopolitical life in colleges and universities as central to the national Palestinian foundation in the Territories accelerated the organizational development of Islamic groups. The political implications of these changes were mainly felt during the intifada when the Muslim Brotherhood, in the form of the Gaza-born Hamas, openly opposed the Israeli regime.

At the same time, though, a new Islamic opponent surfaced—the Islamic Jihad—which was more threatening ideologically than organizationally. The Muslim Brotherhood had difficulty coping with Islamic Jihad's rise in popularity in 1986 and 1987 after it committed itself to violence against Israel, something the Muslim Brotherhood had consistently refrained from doing until that point.

The strengthening of the organizational infrastructure of Islamic groups in colleges and universities gave impetus to the growth of the revolutionary faction of Islamic Jihad in the Territories. In contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood's leadership, which consisted of older, religious establishment figures, Islamic Jihad's leadership came from students and academics who had spent time in Egyptian universities in the 1970s and absorbed the revolutionary militancy of groups there.

The elitist concept of a revolutionary group whose role was to lead the masses found an attentive audience among university activists. Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad was enthused by the success of Iran's Islamic revolution. From its mid-1982 founding at Islamic

University in Gaza, the group publicized its disagreement with the Muslim Brotherhood over Iran's revolution. Its first publication[87] contained the movement's main ideas: Khomeini's call to the Muslims of the world; an article about the Islamic revolution of the oppressed led by 'Iz al-Din al-Qassam; a call for permanent and organized dialogue among the Islamic groups; the battle against the tyranny of the Arab regimes based on the philosophy of Sayyid Qutb; and raising jihad to the top of the Islamic struggle's agenda.

Next, the group ran in the 1982 student council elections under the name "The Independent Islamists" (Al-Islamiyyun al-Mustaqillun). In 1984, the group attempted to form a faction called "The Islamic Student Movement" (Al-Harakah al-Islamiyyah al-Tulabiyyah) and published and distributed handwritten promotional material at the end of 1983 at the Islamic University. This flyer attacked the old Muslim Brotherhood's student council for kindling the fire of disagreement instead of striving to unite the Islamic groups. It cited the council's ban on the circulation of the new group's publications and compared the Muslim Brotherhood to a repressive government.[88]

It is interesting that Islamic Jihad's first flyer in the Territories was published not in Gaza but rather in al-Najah University in Nablus in May 1983.[89] The flyer severely attacked the university's secular student council for publishing a long declaration against the Islamic movement on different issues, including the support of the Islamic revolution in Iran. One of the subjects raised in the Islamic movement's counterflyer was the Arab secular nationalists' neglect of the Palestinian cause.

The year 1985 marked a new organizational feat for Islamic Jihad. It succeeded in forming as a proper party in several universities in the Territories under the name "The Islamic Group" (al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyyah)—a name borrowed from Egyptian student groups. This name, signaling Islamic violence, was used until the university was closed during the intifada. The group became the student faction of the Jihad movement.

Islamic Jihad differed from the Muslim Brotherhood and the nationalist groups on three basic points. The first was their support of the Iranian revolution. The second concerned the Palestine issue. Islamic Jihad favored military action against Israel, which served as a common denominator with the nationalist groups, especially Fatah. Inherent in its publications was harsh criticism of the Muslim Brotherhood's passive stance. The third difference concerned the unity of Islamic groups, not only in the Territories but throughout the Arab world. Islamic Jihad was influenced here by Shi'ite Iran, which wanted to end discord with Sunni Muslims and rebuild the Caliphate state. Anyone who disagreed with Islamic Jihad's strategy was declared an enemy. (In contrast, the Muslim Brotherhood emphasized Islamic pluralism.)

The revolutionary faction within Islamic Jihad was the only one to act as an official party at the Islamic University and in the universities in the West Bank. It refrained from using the name "Islamic Jihad" until June 1987, when it distributed a flyer bearing the name "Islamic Jihad Organization" at Islamic University. By October and November of 1987, it was the only name used and became the permanent name of the group led by Shaykh As'ad al-Tamimi during the intifada. The group affiliated with Fatah in the Gaza Strip began calling itself "The Islamic Jihad Squadrons" (Saraya al-Jihad al-Islami) and in the West Bank it added the words "Jerusalem/the temple" (Bait al-Maqdes).

The Islamic Jihad's bulletins were dull in comparison to those of the Islamic groups of the Muslim Brotherhood and contained few details regarding their groups' activities in different institutes, revealing Jihad's inferior position in the higher-education institutions in numbers, organization, and finances.

Until the outbreak of the intifada, the revolutionary Islamic Jihad group was successful only in Gaza, where it originated. In Islamic University's male and female student union elections in 1984 through 1986, it obtained six to seven percent of the male students' votes and a lower percentage among the female students. In the 1987 elections, held immediately after the outbreak of the uprising, it polled 15 percent of the votes. One may assume that this relatively high percentage is mainly due to the military actions of the other Jihad factions.

It seems that the main importance of the revolutionary faction in colleges and universities in the Territories lay more in its challenge to other Islamic groups than in any of its own achievements. It did supply the ideological basis that encouraged the forming of armed Islamic Jihad groups in 1986 and 1987, which implemented the revolutionary group's callings. The group also contributed to accelerating militant processes that developed among the young generation within the Muslim Brothers. Its activity and mode of organization were based on the student arena, most strongly at Islamic University.

*** Conclusion

The higher-education institutions in the Territories had a crucial effect on the development of most Islamic groups, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood and the revolutionary faction of the Islamic Jihad. It molded a new, young, and educated generation that filled important leadership positions in these groups. This generation, which grew up in the midst of the general Palestinian national struggle in the Territories, introduced Palestinian patriotism to the Islamic arena in lieu of the 'Islamic cosmopolitanism' that characterized the Muslim Brotherhood until the 1980s. It also emphasized the political and cultural struggle between Islamic groups and popular nationalist secular groups. Actually, until the December 1987 intifada, colleges and universities were the main arena for Palestinian-Israeli conflict, a prelude of what was to engulf the whole Palestinian community during the uprising. In time, the young veterans of the secularreligious conflict would form the indigenous leadership of the intifada against the Israelis.

This secular-religious conflict also had a cultural dimension. The universities and colleges in the Territories, especially those in the West Bank, accelerated the absorption of Western secular culture, particularly among the lower class, traditional folk who comprised the majority of the student population. Daily exposure to Israeli society also contributed a Western influence. Bir Zeit University and Bethlehem University became the centers of the cultural struggle, with a notable number of Christian professors, local and foreign, and even Israeli Arab citizens. Al-Najah University in Nablus, despite having a

Muslim character and very few Christian students and professors, developed a relatively strong Marxist element side by side with labor and professional unions.

Attempts were also made in the universities to create Palestinian cultural roots by exhibiting clothing, food, agricultural tools, and buildings from the pre-1948 era. Similar attempts at emphasizing the Canaanite heritage of the Palestinians, especially in Samarea, increased to a large extent immediately after the establishment of the Palestinian Authority in the 1990s. As in other Arab and Islamic countries (Egypt with its Pharaonic culture, Lebanon with the Phoenic, Turkey with the Pan-Turan, and Iran with its pre-Islamic Persian culture), these attempts led to religious tension and were sometimes seen as part of an anti-Islam campaign. In general, Palestinian culture in the Territories (and outside them after 1967) developed along secular lines, largely influenced by left-wing artists.

During the second half of the 1980s—right before the uprising—the Muslim Brotherhood was a strong rival of the secular nationalists among PLO supporters in the Territories. Its popularity was based partly on its passivity in the struggle against Israel. The tension between the Muslim Brotherhood and the secularists is well illustrated by the booklets circulated by both sides during the 1987 student council elections at Islamic University.

In the Muslim Brotherhoods' al-Haqiqah al-Gha'ibah (The Absent Truth),[90] the group quite apologetically presents its contribution to the Palestinian struggle since the 1930s through the participation of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhoods in the wars against Israel from 1948 until 1967. The booklet's main weak spot, exposed by the Muslim Brotherhood's opponents, was the fact that this contribution ceased in the same years in which "the Islamic holy places, foremost the al-Aqsa mosque, fell into the hands of the Jews." The movement could not claim any achievements for the liberation of Palestine between 1967 and 1987.

The combination of cultural and political battles was characteristic of the Palestinian students' activities in all the higher-education institutions from 1980 until the uprising. The uprising spread the battle to the entire

Palestinian population. The establishment of the Palestinian Authority worsened the internal conflict. The centricity of the higher-education institutes to the development of both the Islamic and nationalist groups strongly points out two issues related to Israel that until now have not been given proper attention.

Israel completely ignored the growth of Islamic sociocultural and nationalsecular foundations in these institutions, as they were not violent. In certain respects, Israel's behavior was a historical repetition of British behavior toward Jewish universities during the mandate period, chiefly Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the Technion in Haifa. But unlike the British, who were foreigners and did not consider themselves responsible for the future of the country, Israel is sure to be closely involved in the development of Palestinian society even after a permanent agreement is reached.

Israel's apathy regarding Palestinian social developments in the Territories contributed to its inability to read the 'Palestinian map' correctly. It misjudged the intensity of hatred toward the Israeli occupation, the causes of the national uprising headed by the lower classes in refugee camps, and the growth of Islamic groups and their deep hold on society. This hold was achieved mainly by community sociocultural-educational activity centered in higher-education institutions.

A second point concerning Israel is its conscious and unconscious influence on Palestinian society in the Territories. Palestinian colleges and universities and social foundations, both on the Islamic side and on the nationalist-secular side, continuously nurtured the study of Israeli society—an ability to read the 'Israeli map' and analyze the events in Israel. The large-scale employment of Palestinians in Israel, which grew in the 1980s, naturally contributed to this understanding, but it was also common among the lower classes both in the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank.

When members of these classes became a main force in Palestinian higher education in the Territories, they used their familiarity with Israeli society as a means of personal and national advancement. Palestinian colleges and

universities manifested the two most important elements of Israeli society: education as the key to personal and collective advancement, and democratic pluralism.

[62] Abu Amru, Ziad, Usul al-Harakat al-Siyasiyyah fi Quta Ghazah 1948–1967 (Acre: Dar Al-Aswar, 1987), pp. 70—74.

[63] Regarding the Muslim Brotherhood see, Amnon Cohen, Parties in the West Bank during the Jordanian Reign (Jerusalem: Magnes Publishers, The Hebrew University, 1980), pp. 128–193.

[64] Regarding the demographic developments in the Territories and in the entire Palestinian arena, see Gad Gilbar, Trends in the Palestinian Demographic Development, 1870— 1987 (Tel Aviv: Moshe Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University, No. 108, September 1989).

[65] The age group of 0—24 formed 69.5 percent of the population in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) and Gaza Strip in 1986. Of these, 60.5 percent were in the age group of 0—19. This is one of the world’s youngest populations, and this affected the development of political awareness. The age group of 20—34, the potential age of students in higher-education institutes in the Territories, then formed 21.5 percent, more than one fifth of the population.

According to a study made by the Higher Education Council in East Jerusalem, the number of those studying in higher-education institutes in the school year 1982—83 was 10,295, which formed 0.84 percent of the population in the Territories (including East Jerusalem). See Majlis al-Ta’lim al-’Aali, Hawl al-Ta’lim al-’Aali fi al-Dafah al-Gharbiyyah wa-Quta’ Ghazah (Arabic) (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 170.

[66] Naturally, there is no data, not even in general, regarding the extent of funding from the PLO to the Territories, although this funding was not kept secret by the organization. The best-known fund for helping the national foundation in the Territories was established during the convention of the Arab League at Baghdad in 1978. The funds were to come from all the Arab states. According to Arab publications, what happened was that in the 1980s only Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States participated in the funding. In the 1980s, the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee, which was to determine the distribution of the funds, operated on and off next to the Baghdad Fund. This committee's activity varied according to changes in Jordan's relations with the PLO. In July 1986 there was a long break in its activity after the expulsion of Khalil al-Wazir "Abu Jihad" from Jordan and the closing of most of the organization's offices in Aman. After that it seldom assembled, according to the state of the political relations between Jordan and the organization. For some details regarding the funding of the national institutes in the Territories see: Khalil Nakhleh, Mu'asasatuna al-Jamahiriyyah fi Filastin: Nahwa Tatwir Ijtima'i Hadif (Our Public Institutions in Palestine: Towards Comprehensive Social Development) (Geneva, January 1990. A PLO inner publication. Private copy with author). Dr. Nakhleh is a sociologist, an Arab Israeli citizen who left Israel in the 1970s and among other things was involved with the activities of Palestinian funds in Europe.

[67] Several studies regarding the social influence of the universities and the education of the Palestinian population in the Territories were published, some in the Territories themselves. See Samir N. 'Anabtawi, Palestinian Higher Education in the West Bank and Gaza: A Critical Assessment (New York: Keagan Paul International, 1987); Nabil A. Badran, "The means of survival: education and the Palestinian Community 1948—1967," Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Summer 1980), pp. 44—74; Gabi Baramki, "Aspects of Palestinian life under military occupation, with a special focus on education and development," British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 19 No. 2 (1992), pp. 125—132; Gabi Baramki, "Building Palestine Universities under occupation," Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 17, No. 1 (Autumn 1987), pp. 12—20; Munir Fasheh, "Education under occupation," in Nasser H. Aruri (ed.), Occupation: Israel over Palestine (Belmont: Arab American University Graduates (AAUG), 1989), pp. 511—535; Sarah Graham-Brown, "Impact on the social structure of Palestinian society," in Nasser H. Aruri (ed.), Occupation: Israel over Palestine

(Belmont: AAUG, 1989), pp. 230—256; Muhammad Hallaj, “Mission of Palestinian higher education,” in Emile A. Nakhleh (ed.), A Palestinian Agenda for the West Bank and Gaza (Washington: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), pp. 58—63; Khalil Mahshi, “The Palestinian uprising and education for the future,” Harvard Education Review, Vol. 59, No. 4 (1989), pp. 470^83; Muhsin D. Yusuf, “The potential impact of Palestinian education on a Palestinian state,” Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Summer 1979); Ahmad ‘Awad Munir, Al-Ta’lim al-’Aali fi al-Dafah al-Gharbiyyah wa-Quta’ Ghazah: Tatawwuruhu wa-Ususuhu (Nablus: Jami’at al-Najah al-Wataniya, Markaz al-Dirasat al-Rifiyyah, 1983). See also R. Shadid Muhammed, “The Muslim Brotherhood movement in the West Bank and Gaza,” Third World Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 2 (April 1988), pp. 658–682.

[68] For a good, concise view of the nationalist groups in the higher education institutes and their political division, see Emile Sahliyeh, In Search of Leadership: West Bank Politics since 1967 (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1988), pp. 115136.

[69] Hamuda Samih, “Marakiz al-Turath al-Islami fi Filastin” (The Centers for Islamic Heritage in Palestine), Al-Hilal Al-Dawli No. 15 (May 1–15 1988), p. 10.

[70] A flyer of the fourth student Islamic convention, Sha’ban 1407—April 1987.

[71] Changing the names of bulletins was a known method of circumventing the need to receive a permit from the Israeli military rule for publishing a newspaper. A onetime bulletin did not need a permit in the Territories nor in East Jerusalem under Israeli law. The method was to choose a word identifying the paper to the public, and add another word or words to every issue creating a different phrase, as if it were a one-time publication.

[72] Al-Nur al-Rabbani (The Celestial Light), one-time publication of the culture department of The Young Muslims Association in Jerusalem. Undated, 41 pages. According to its content, it was published during the first months of 1982. Al-Nur (The Light), one-time publication of the Young Muslims Association, July 26 1982, 77 pages. Al-Nur al-Ilahi (The Divine Light), one-time publication of the Young Muslims Association, October 19, 1983, 73 pages.

[73] This fact was related to the author from Dr. Fathi Shqaqi himself, during a discussion with him in February 1986 in the Gaza prison.

[74] Al-Risalah, one-time publication of the student council of Hebron University, undated. According to its content, it was published on November 1.

[75] Ibid., pp. 6–9.

[76] Ibid., pp. 34–37.

[77] Al-Muntalaq, the mosque committee of Al-Najah University’s bulletin, No. 8 (February 1984) pp. 16–17.

[78] Al-Muntalaq, No. 9 (April 1984), p. 49.

[79] Al-Muntalaq, No. 8, pp. 18–19.

[80] See, for example, the results of the union elections held on June 27, 1983, in which the Muslim Brotherhood won in all the faculties. Al-Nidaa’, a publication of the student council in the Gaza university, undated (according to its content, it was published in the summer of 1983), p. 22.

[81] Al-Muntalaq, No. 11 (December 1984), p. 3.

[82] At least four such undated publications were known to have been distributed by the culture committee in the student council. According to their content, they were published during the years 1983—1985. They included more ideological content than the group's bulletins and were probably meant to enhance the Islamic awareness.

[83] See, for example: Al-Haqiqah al-Gha'ibah (The Absent Truth), November 1987, 55 pages. This was the second booklet in the series.

[84] See, for example, the booklet titled "The Islamic Awakening and the Muslim Brotherhood," No. 1, a one-time cultural publication of the culture committee of the student council of the Islamic University in Gaza, undated.

[85] A flyer signed by the Islamic group in Al-Najah University in Nablus, September 11, 1987. It is noteworthy in that the tension at the Islamic University in Gaza in regard to the elections there continued in the first days after the outbreak of the Palestinian uprising. After the elections, Fatah supporters blamed the Islamic group for rigging the elections. See: Al-Fajr, December 7 and 9, 1987.

[86] "The Islamic group in Bir Zeit University Mourns its Dead," an undated flyer circulated in December 1986.

[87] Voice of The Oppressed (Sawt Al-Mustad'afin), a publication on the occasion of culture week at the Islamic University in Gaza, June 1986, 56 pages. The Koranic term Mustad'afin was occasionally used by the Muslim Brotherhood, but was much more widely used in the terminology of the Islamic revolution in Iran, almost synonymous with revolutionists.

[88] In July-August 1983, many members of the Islamic group that then called itself “The Islamic Forerunner” (Al-Tali’ah al-Islamiyyah), named after the bulletin they circulated by that name in the Territories, were arrested. The arrests were for distributing illegal and inciting material, and most were sentenced to short prison terms of up to one year. Among the imprisoned was their leader, Dr. Fathi Shqaqi. During their detention and trial several members of the group blamed the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic group in the University of Gaza for assisting the authorities in uncovering them. Their trial revealed that they were engaged then not in any violent activity against Israel, but only in subversive activities.

[89] “The War against Islam Continues,” a manifest of the Islamic student movement in al-Najah University, May 23, 1983.

[90] Al-Haqiqah al-Gha’ibah (Gaza, November 1987). This booklet was the second publication in a series named Sawt al-Haqq wal-Quwwah wal-Huriyyah (Voice of Truth, Power, and Freedom), a known slogan with the Muslim Brotherhood. It may very well be that the name of the booklet was chosen to deliberately resemble the name of the book by the engineer Muhamad ‘Abd al-Salam Faraj, the ideologist for the Egyptian Jihad group whose members murdered the late president Sadat: Al-Faridah al-Gha’ibah (The Neglected Obligation—in this case, Jihad).

** 4. Radical Islamist Movements in Turkey

Ely Karmon

It has been argued that the marginality of violent Islamist groups in Turkey, in contrast to the vigorous armed opposition in Egypt or Algeria, is due to the Turkish political system’s pluralism and the Islamist Welfare Party’s (RP) full integration into this system.[91] But the leaders and sponsors of these extremist organizations think that by using violence against the secular

symbols of the Turkish state, leading secular intellectuals and journalists, and representatives of “Imperialism and Zionism,” they will help install an Islamic state. The limited reaction by the authorities up to 1996 and the RP’s electoral victories seemed to provide reasons for this hope.

The military coup of 1980 was intended to end a long period of widespread terrorism and extremist violence throughout the country and also to hold back the threat of radical Islam embodied in the National Salvation Party led by Necmettin Erbakan.[92] But while the 1980—1983 military government did break up the extreme left and right, the Islamic movement survived and even grew in importance during the 1980s.[93]

In marked contrast to Turkey’s first two military coups, military authorities in the 1980s proclaimed the importance of religion in the nation’s political life[94] and forwarded a new ideological concept called “The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis,” which represented an attempt to integrate Islamists and nationalists.[95] The Islamist influence in the system was to contribute to Turkey’s territorial integrity and counter revolutionary sentiments, especially among the Kurdish youth. The Islamists offered an attractive alternative even for ex-communists after the collapse of communism in the Soviet bloc.[96]

On the foreign front, the Turkish-Islamic synthesis was supposed to help contain southward Soviet expansion and combat Iran’s radical Islam by constructing a coalition of U.S.-backed moderate Islamic states. Closer relations with Saudi Arabia were favored in order to gain big loans for the weak Turkish economy.[97] The geopolitical tumult of the early 1990s created a new international environment, which put Turkey in a key position, sometimes in direct competition with Iran for regional influence and economic assets.[98] Nevertheless, that strategy let the Islamic genie out of Ataturk’s bottle, as one researcher put it.[99]

Islamic subversive and terrorist activity in Turkey began in the 1960s. As early as 1967 and 1973, the leaders of Hizb al-Tahrir (Islamic Liberation Party) were imprisoned for attempting “to bring the Islamic State Constitution to Turkey.”[100] Islamic Jihad appeared as a real terrorist threat in the 1980s, after a series of assassinations of Jordanian, Saudi, and Iraqi

diplomats. In October 1991, Islamic Jihad took responsibility for killing an American sergeant and wounding an Egyptian diplomat to protest the Middle East peace conference in Madrid.[101] For many years it was assumed that this group was a Lebanese Shi’ite terrorist organization until it was discovered that a Turkish branch existed, engaging in assassinations of secular intellectuals.

As Anat Lapidot correctly notes, defining the Islamic movement is a complex task. Citing Sabri Sayari, she distinguishes between traditionalists and radicals, the latter a minority inspired by the Iranian revolution.[102] Ismet Imset points to the confusion about these different groups among the general public, researchers, and government officials in Turkey. A report by the Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT) and the Security General Directorate of the Police in October 1991 mentioned no fewer than ten Islamic organizations active in Turkey: the Turkish Islamic Liberation Army (IKO), the Turkish Islamic Liberation Front (TIK-C), Fighters of the Islamic Revolution (IDAM), the Turkish Islamic Liberation Union (TIKB), the World Shari’a Liberation Army (DSKO), the Universal Brotherhood Front-Shari’a Revenge Squad (EKC-SIM), the Islamic Liberation Party Front (IKP-C), Turkish Fighters of the Universal Islamic War of Liberation (EIK-TM), the Turkish Islamic Fighters Army (IMO), and the Turkish Shari’a Revenge Commandos (TSIK).[103]

This chapter uses the term Islamic movement to describe all currents in Turkish Islam, while Islamic Movement refers to one of the main radical groups.

Imset distinguishes between western and southeast Turkey. In the west, the Islamic Movement (Islami Hareket), also called “Islamic Resistance” (Islami Direnis), represents the ideological influence of the original (Iranian) Hizballah.[104] Both Movement and Resistance were only temporary code names, at least until 1990. In southeast Turkey, the movement spread first under the name of Hizballah, and was then referred to as the Hizbal-contra to address its anti-PKK activity. According to Imset, Hizballah and Islamic Movement are in fact one, representing an umbrella organization of

groups acting on behalf of what he calls “The International Islamic Movement.”[105]

At the end of the 1970s, under the influence of the coalition between leftwing organizations and Khomeini’s followers in Iran, an alliance of the left, especially Maoists, with radical Islamic elements was established in Turkey that attacked the nationalist right. The conflict peaked in February 1979 when a young Muslim leader was killed by nationalists (known as “Idealists”) in the yard of the Fatih mosque in Istanbul.

The Turkish Islamic Movement, like all other radical organizations, received a serious blow during the September 1980 military coup. But, as the regime encouraged the general Islamic trend as a solution to political polarization, and as both Marxists and nationalists lost their influence, Islamic activists were afforded ample space to strengthen their position. The “Hizballah Muslims” appeared for the first time publicly in 1984 and, like the original Hizballah, proclaimed support for the Iranian revolution and the defense not of nations or sects, but of “Allah’s way.”

According to Imset, Kalim Siddiqui, a Pakistani active at the Muslim Institute in London, had a key role in unifying Turkey’s radical Islamic Movement. Thus, the first Hizballahi appeared in Turkey as the “followers of Siddiki” (sic).[106] A pro-Hizballah magazine published in November 1987 “The guidelines of the Islamic Movement,” which included acceptance of the Islamic state as the center of religious belief, the leadership of Muslim scholars, the spread of the mentality of martyrdom and the leadership of the Islamic revolution (in Iran).[107]

A significant development occurred in the middle of the 1980s with the conversion of some members of the right-wing Nationalist Movement (MHP) to Islam. The death of one of their leaders in prison in 1984 and the tortures suffered by many others convinced a group of extreme nationalist activists “to turn to Allah” and condemn the “darkness of nationalism.”[108] These militants were already professionals in the field of terrorism and street fighting and represented significant operational support for the Islamic Movement.

In southeast Turkey, Islamic radicalism emerged in poor towns and villages with large Kurdish populations (Dyarbakir, Silvan, Cizre, Kiziltepe and others), especially among the young and unemployed. They followed the teachings of local Muslim scholars or shaykhs and often organized themselves around extremist Islamic publications such as Tevhid, Yeryuzu and Objektif. Their activity became more visible at the beginning of the 1990s, influenced more and more by Khomeini's teachings, and they were identified by the local public as Hizballah, although they considered themselves part of the Islamic Movement.

There are few sources on the Turkish Islamic organizations, although the groups' publications and manifestos are distributed quite freely even when they threaten future terrorist attacks. All the material is in Turkish and has neither been collected nor translated. The only other source consists of interviews given by anonymous leaders and activists to Turkish journalists.

In one such interview, published in February 1993, a militant declared, "We are fighters of the Islamic Liberation Movement, the sword against Satan, blasphemy, Zionism and Imperialism. We have begun taking action only recently in Turkey and our move is based on pain, suffering and patience. We do not pursue a tribal case; our objective is to establish a state for the Muslims." Asked whether he belonged to Hizballah, the militant replied that the press had given that name to the organization and that they would adopt it only when the movement was worthy of it. Meanwhile it had not reached "that level of perfection."[109]

In speaking about the special relationship of the Movement with Iran, the same militant seemed careful not to confirm "the lies of the Turkish state" about such links. Iran is seen as an example and a guide but the instructions are "from the Quran" and not from Iran, "the land of Dar al-Islam where blasphemy has been crushed." The Movement needs no instructions from any country because the Quran is the program and shows the strategies and the tactics to be adopted.[110]

It seems that the Sunni origin of the radical Turkish Islamic groups did not prevent their close cooperation with the Iranian Shi’ite regime. The material published so far in the Turkish sources does not permit an evaluation of the exact nature of these groups’ ideology: declarations such as those cited above are general and not binding. Yet, it is known that various Sunni extremist organizations have viewed the Iranian revolution and its leader Khomeini as a catalyst and a model for their own revolutionary endeavor. This is the case of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and its leader Fathi al-Shqaqi[111] or the Algerian Groupe Islamique Arme (GIA),[112] which also received direct Iranian logistic and financial support, leading the Algerian government to break diplomatic relations with Iran.

For its part, the Iranian regime, in spite of its increasing nationalism since its war with Iraq, has been keen to convince Sunni movements that it has continued to stick to Khomeini’s Islamic universalistic ideology. Ayatollah Ali Khamene’i, Iran’s spiritual leader, declared that his country wanted the unity of all Muslim brothers, Sunni and Shi’ite.[113]

A 1997 report prepared by the Turkish security authorities for the National Security Council (NSC) outlined the objectives of the radical religious movements and stressed that their strategy consists of three stages.[114] The first stage is the message (teblig), and calls for an effort by the radicals to persuade the people to adopt the Islamic religion, establish an Islamic state and administration, live in accordance with Islamic rules, and struggle to safeguard the Islamic way of life. The second stage is the community (cemaat) and calls for the restructuring of communities in accordance with the requirements of Islam. The third stage is the struggle (jihad) and calls for the armed struggle to safeguard the Islamic way of life.

Special mention should be made of a puzzling organization called “The Great Eastern Islamic Fighters Front” (IBDA-C), active since the middle of the 1970s but more extremist and aggressive since the beginning of the 1990s. Although it is an Islamic movement struggling for the constitution of an Islamic state, it uses leftist slogans in its publications and accepts ex-Marxists in its ranks. It is also extremely anti-Semitic and anti-Christian in its

propaganda and terrorist activity. It is interesting to note that IBDA-C's publications do not show any particular pro-Iranian tendency.

A chronological analysis of Islamic terrorist activity shows that 1990 was probably the starting point for the offensive against the Turkish secular establishment: a professor, journalist, political scientist, and writer were assassinated by Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Operation (or Action), the first time this name was used.[115] Muammar Aksoy, a liberal political scientist, was also killed in 1990, marking the first time the name Islamic Movement appeared.[116]

In 1991, Islamic radicals entered a period of reassessment that ended after the opening of the Madrid peace talks between Arab countries and Israel. In October, an American soldier was killed and an Egyptian diplomat was wounded by Islamic Jihad.[117] The following year represented the turning point in radical Islamic terrorist activity, as the targets of attacks included exiled Iranian opposition members as well as Jews and Israelis.[118]

But the terrorist threat attracted acute national attention when Ugur Mumcu, one of Turkey's top investigative reporters, was killed on January 24, 1993 by a car bomb similar to one used in the assassinations of an American computer specialist in October 1991 and an Israeli diplomat in March 1992. Both the Islamic Liberation Organization and IBDA-C took responsibility for the murder.[119]

Several days later an attempt was made on the life of a well-known Turkish businessman and community leader of Jewish origin, Jak Kamhi, by a group of four terrorists who used automatic weapons and even a rocket launcher. He escaped uninjured. The same month, the tortured body of exiled Iranian dissident Abbas Gholizadeh, a former officer and the Shah's bodyguard, kidnapped several weeks before, was discovered by the police.

This series of terrorist events provoked a sharp reaction among the Turkish public: huge street demonstrations in favor of the secular regime, a strong press campaign, and swift action by security authorities against the

perpetrators and their sponsors followed. For the first time, the Islamic Movement and Iran were directly implicated in acts of terror against the state. The arrests and interrogations of many Turkish members of these organizations unveiled the story behind the killings of Turkish secular intellectuals and anti-Khomeini Iranian exiles in the years 1990 to 1992.[120]

But the arrest and trial of dozens of Islamic terrorists did not dissuade more extremists from continuing to attack secular Turkish intellectuals. In July 1993, they set fire to a hotel hosting a cultural festival, killing thirty-seven people.[121]

The authorities' fight against the radicals continued in 1994, when 659 members of Hizballah were caught, some of them responsible for murders of exiled Iranian opposition activists. The same year, IBDA-C was responsible for ninety terrorist incidents, including five bombings in various cities.[122] A prominent cinema critic and writer, Onat Kutlar, was killed in December by a bomb attack carried out by IBDA-C aimed "at spoiling the colonialist Noel [Christmas] celebrations."[123]

One of the most controversial terrorist activities of Hizballah in southeast Turkey has been the liquidation of dozens of pro-PKK activists, journalists, intellectuals, and politicians beginning in the fall of 1991 and lasting through 1993. It has been widely assumed that this was the work of the splinter group "Hizbal-contra," because of the immunity it enjoyed from security authorities owing to its anti-PKK nature.[124]

It must be stressed that its members were mostly of Kurdish origin. The Hizballah regards the PKK as Islam's enemy and has accused it of "trying to create an atheist community, supporting the communist system, trying to divide the people through chauvinist activities and directing pressure on the Muslim people."[125] A Hizballah militant in the southeast described the goal of his organization as the establishment of an "Islamic Kurdish state in Turkey."[126]

In March 1993, the PKK signed a “cooperation protocol” with the Hizballah Kurdish Revolutionary Party aimed at ending the conflict and finding “methods for a joint struggle against the Turkish state.” The agreement was signed after Hizballah recognized that it was exploited by “the colonialists” and that the clashes in no way benefited the cause of Islam.[127]

A turning point in the Turkish authorities’ attitude toward the Islamic terrorist threat occurred in March 1996, with the arrest of one of the leaders of Islamic Action, Irfan Cagarici, and his confessions about the role his organization had played since the early 1990s in the assassinations of secular politicians and intellectuals, with the direct support and supervision of Iranian intelli- gence.[128] Relations between Turkey and Iran reached a new low as a result. But then, in June 1996, after 73 years of secular Kemalist regimes, the RP formed an Islamic government with Erbakan as prime minister.[129]

Turgut Ozal became in 1983 the first prime minister of a civilian government after the 1980 coup. His “Turkish-Islamist Synthesis,” a means of countering revolutionary sentiment, included a relaxation of Kemalist and secularist policies and a public embrace of Islam as an essential component of Turkish identity. During the long period of his rule as prime minister and then president of Turkey, Muslim associations, foundations, publications, and television and radio stations flourished. Islamists also built strongholds in the Ministry of Education.[130]

The important role played by Islamic radical publications in recruiting militants and designating targets cannot be underestimated. Two Istanbul-based publications, Akademi and Objektif, and the monthlies Yeryuzu and Tehvid have been accused of backing Hizballah.[131] IBDA-C sent death threats to the head of the Jewish community in Ankara before a bomb was placed in his car, and published a list of Jewish targets in the extreme religious periodical Akinci Yolu.[132] IBDA-C’s weekly, Taraf, took responsibility for the bomb attack on film critic Onat Kutlar in December 1994 and sent “a warning not to play with fire” to TV journalist Ali Kirca, whom it accused of being “anti-Islam.”[133]

In this atmosphere, pro-Islamic politicians received important appointments in the sensitive field of security, such as the Ministry of Interior. Under Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu, who served at the end of the 1980s, Turkey's security apparatus—especially the intelligence and personnel departments—was penetrated by pro-Islamic elements and, according to Ismet Imset, the ministry during this period was generally inclined toward "Saudi and even Iranian Islamism." Aksu was replaced at the end of 1991 and the police were purged of fundamentalist officers.[134] According to one source, 700 of the 1,600 key ministry executives, provincial governors, and other functionaries at the time were believed to be RP supporters. Yet, even in April 1994, Interior Ministry officials permitted the staging of unauthorized mass Islamist demonstrations in Ankara and Istanbul.[135] Ironically, these fundamentalist officers and functionaries were reassigned to posts in the southeast, where they supported or ignored the attacks of Hizballah against the PKK.

The RP leadership's attitude regarding violence and terror on the Islamic movement's radical fringes is at the least ambiguous, if not clearly supportive. Erbakan condemned the March 1993 assassination of the journalist Mumcu and declared it incompatible with the values of true Islam, but at the same time, important members of his party accused Israel of killing him.[136] In November 1993, Erbakan said at his party's parliamentary meeting that only "Islamic fraternity" could combat the PKK, but he did not mention the terrorism practiced by some Islamic groups.[137] Some researchers even considered Hizballah the RP's armed protector.[138]

Despite all the evidence, as late as the end of 1995, leading Islamic circles denied the existence of fundamentalist terrorist organizations. Deputy RP leader Abdullah Gul declared that no terror movement is compatible with Islam and that the accusation is "being circulated intentionally" in order to influence national elections. According to another leader, most of the crimes in Turkey blamed on the Islamic movement were in fact "international operations" and "plots of the West."[139]

Erbakan's real policy toward Islamic terrorist groups can be judged by the fact that he hosted, as prime minister, representatives of the Palestinian Hamas, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, and Algeria's FIS. Erbakan was not even

impressed by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak's protest against including the Muslim Brotherhood, sparking a diplomatic incident with Egypt. Over the years, Erbakan maintained a strange silence about the complicity of neighboring Muslim countries in anti-Turkish terrorism.[140]

Iran's support for and incitement of Islamic terrorism in Turkey in the early 1990s can be understood as part of its drive to export the Islamic revolution to a key Muslim country, a symbol of secularism and a strategic adversary. Tehran's aggressive policy was probably encouraged by Islam's growing influence in Turkish society. Iran especially encouraged Ozal's policy in the 1980s of embracing Islam and expanding Turkey's relations with its Muslim neighbors.[141]

Good relations did not, however, prevent deep Iranian involvement in Islamic terrorism inside Turkey's borders, which at times was proven in court or leaked by security authorities to the media. Iran was involved in the 1990 murder of three intellectuals, and the murders of Mumcu, an Iranian dissident, and a Jewish businessman, all in 1993. Turkish Islamic terrorists, who were recruited through numerous Iranian cultural centers in Turkey, received military training in Iran in "pursuit, counter-pursuit, weapons and bombs."[142]

As noted previously, an abrupt change occurred in the Turkish authorities' attitude after Mumcu's killing when rampant terrorism and growing international criticism of Iran prodded Ankara to finally acknowledge that the Turkish Hizballah existed.[143] For the first time, a Turkish minister declared that members of radical Islamic organizations trained in Iranian security installations, traveled with Iranian real and forged documents, and attacked Turkish citizens and Iranian opposition militants with Iranian-supplied arms.[144] Turkey's approach toward Iran, however, was very cautious.[145] The minister absolved the Iranian state of these actions, but concluded that "the perpetrators had connections in Iran."[146]

Iran's foreign minister issued a subtle denial excluding the possibility that any anti-Turkish activity conducted on Iran's territory could escape the state's control. While denying that Iran was behind anti-Turkey movements,

he accused Turkey of supporting terrorist groups opposed to the Tehran regime and suggested discussing any “mutual allegations” through a common security committee.[147]

Iran has never presented evidence of any Turkish sponsorship of terrorist organizations in Iran, though Turkey has sheltered more than a million Iranians, many of them political refugees from Khomeini’s regime. The main conflict in subsequent years surrounded not Iran’s support for Islamists but rather, its support of the PKK. Iran offered a safe haven to PKK fighters, who in 1994 intensified their terrorist campaign both inside and outside Turkey’s borders.[148]

Iranian support for radical Islamic terrorism in Turkey was likely dampened by the vigilant campaign waged by Turkey’s security forces against the Islamic groups and the consequent decline in their operations in 1994 and 1995. Radical Islamist organizations staged 86 acts of violence in 1995, compared with 464 attacks in 1994. Further, Ilim, one of Hizballah’s two splinter groups (the other was Menzil), ceased most of its armed activity and many Islamic Movement militants were arrested.[149]

Turkey’s fundamentalist Islamic movement has developed in a political and social environment very different from that of similar groups in other Middle Eastern countries. As Sami Zubaida notes, Turkey’s Islamist ideology is also nationalist and challenges Kemalism’s European leanings. At the same time, the Islamic movement’s leading political force—the RP and its various predecessors and successors—is fully integrated into the Turkish pluralist system, which may account for the marginality of the violent Islamic groups.[150]

The RP’s ambiguous and tortuous policy over the issue of Islamic terrorism in Turkey and Iranian involvement in it during the 1990—1996 period casts doubt about its genuine acceptance of Turkey’s democratic values and secular regime. What probably most influenced the RP’s moderate and cautious policies over the years has been the army’s staunch secular orientation and the country’s secular nationalist core. These factors also influenced the strategy of the more violent Islamic terrorist groups. They

never, for example, attacked military or security personnel, although many of their members were killed during the security forces' anti-terrorist campaigns. In contrast with Egypt or Algeria, the Turkish groups have also refrained from attacking top secular politicians, though some low-level Kurdish politicians have been targeted.[151] Moreover, Turkish Islamic groups have not attacked Western targets or acted abroad, like other Islamic groups or the PKK, though they have some infrastructure in Europe.[152]

Instead, the groups limited their operations to secular intellectuals and media professionals who were important in shaping public opinion against the Islamic movement. Indeed, until Mumcu's murder, operations against these targets did not seem to provoke a strong reaction against terrorist groups and their political mentors. Islamic groups attacked Jewish personalities, the Jewish community, and also Israeli diplomats, but in this they were not different from RP, which expressed anti-Semitic and anti-Israel views.[153] Indeed, because they shared a similar ideology, if not method, it can be hypothesized that RP leaders tried to cover up the radicals' violent practices.

The tolerance shown by some in the security establishment—especially those in the Ministry of Interior and the police who came to senior positions due to their Islamic views or connections—helped terrorist groups in their formative period. Top military leaders were clearly worried by this trend and it seems that an attempt by one police agency to spy on the National Security Council fostered its decision to bring down the Erbakan government.[154] The lack of any major act of Islamic terrorism during Erbakan's premiership and until the decision of the Constitutional Court to outlaw his party, raises some questions about the strategy of these groups and the real goals of their leaders and sponsors.

Turkey's growing military and strategic cooperation with Israel, which became public in 1996 and 1997, did not generate any particularly violent activity against the government or Israeli targets, despite the RP's clear opposition and Iran's anxiety. However, the Turkish military gave no respite to the new Islamic prime minister. On August 3, 1996, the Supreme Military Council (SMC) declared that "reactionism"—that is, Islamic fundamentalism—was becoming an important threat to Turkey.[155] This meeting could be

seen as the watershed leading to the Turkish army's decision to unequivocally end the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis era and eradicate both political and violent Islamist forces.

Following this first direct warning, President Suleyman Demirel sent several warning letters to the government, without result. And twice in early 1997, the NSC demanded that the government stop "illegal activities" and defend the secular regime.

The army's twenty urgent demands included "enforcement of neglected constitutional requirements on dress codes and on banning of Sufi brotherhoods; reversal of worrisome social and political trends, such as the growth of religious schools and infiltration of Islamists into the bureaucracy; special restrictions implicitly aimed at Refah, such as limits on cash transactions by Islamist groups and acceptance of party responsibility for the 'unconstitutional,' i.e., antisecular, behavior of its members; and careful monitoring of Iranian efforts to 'destabilize' Turkey."[156]

Erbakan avoided implementing the NSC's decisions and persisted in anticipating the possibility of "defense industrial cooperation" with Iran. After the February 1997 Jerusalem Day incident in Ankara's Sincan district, when inflammatory remarks by Iran's ambassador to Turkey and the city's RP mayor triggered a show of force by the Turkish military resulting in the ambassador's recall, Erbakan was finished. On June 18, 1997, under army pressure, Erbakan resigned; on January 16, 1998 the Constitutional Court outlawed the Refah Party and barred Erbakan from political activity for five years. The following month, a new party, the Virtue Party (FP), replaced the RP, gathering in its ranks some 130 parliamentarians from the old movement.

The Turkish army's views on the threat of Islamic extremism were unequivocal. Consider the following remarks given by the General Staff's chief of intelligence in June 1997:

<quote>

Following the transition to a multiparty system and as a result of concessions made to the detriment of Ataturkist principles and reforms, the reactionary sector stepped up its work to organize nationally under the umbrella of democracy... [resulting in a] situation [that] has turned individual fundamentalist activities into a mass movement [and] has created a climate that encourages and rewards those who raise a green banner instead of the sacred flag of the Turkish Republic.

</quote>

Even the appearance of separatist movements (that is, the Kurdish problem) was attributed to “the authority vacuum,” and to “[t]hose who do not wish to recognize the Turkish national identity and ... have undertaken activities behind the guise of the more international religious identity... as a first step toward their ultimate goal of destroying the unity and harmony of the Turkish Republic.”[157]

The speech detailed how, particularly since the Erbakan government, Islamic groups were able to build a huge political,[158] social,[159] economic,[160] and propaganda[161] infrastructure. It equated the threat from the “reactionary sector” with that of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in Turkey’s east and southeast, drew a link between the two anti-regime movements, and accused Iran of systematically providing every type of material and moral support to violent Turkish Islamic groups such as Hizballah, Selam, and the Islamic Movement.

In late July 1997, violence erupted in the first major Islamic demonstration since Erbakan’s forced resignation a month earlier. At least thirteen people were wounded and scores arrested in clashes in Ankara between police and thousands of Islamists protesting a government plan to severely curtail religious education in secondary schools.[162]

The impact of the secular military and civil establishment’s firm policy could be felt after the April 1999 parliamentary elections. The Virtue Party took only 15 percent of the vote, suffering a bitter defeat, although its candidates were re-elected as mayors of the country’s two largest cities, Istanbul and

Ankara. The real winners of these elections were Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit and his Democratic Left Party (DLP) and the Nationalist Action Party (MHP), which took about 18 percent of the vote, astonishing even its own leaders.[163] “Virtue’s decline will pull Turkey away from the appearance of a country where radical Islam is on the rise,” commented Ertugrul Ozkok, editor of the Hurriyet newspaper.[164] The Constitutional Court opened a closure case against the Virtue Party after the April 18, 1999 elections on charges that the party was carrying out antisecular activities and was the successor of the RP.[165]

It is difficult to draw an accurate picture of the terrorist activity of Islamist groups in Turkey since 1997. Most of the data published by the Turkish press relates to IBDA-C terrorism in big cities such as Istanbul and Ankara. Hizballah is active mainly in eastern and southeastern Anatolia and the national press rarely reports its attacks.[166] The group’s actions surface when members of Hizballah are detained in police operations and generally are not detailed. There is also a difference between the targets attacked by the two main organizations: while IBDA-C targeted secular journalists and intellectuals, symbolic sites of the secular regime, Christian (Greek) shrines, and even brothels, Hizballah focused on killing people in the southeastern provinces (including militants suspected of being informers), extorting money, and engaging in organizational activities in primary and high schools, universities, mosques, and shrines.[167]

After a lull in IBDA-C’s activity in 1997 and 1998, the organization staged a series of attacks beginning in October 1999 that could be regarded as a campaign to emphasize its renewed strength.[168] The most important and striking attack was the assassination on October 21, 1999 of Ahmet Taner Kislali, a former minister, academic, and respected newspaper columnist. Earlier, in June 1999, the General Directorate of Security affirmed that it had received a tip-off that IBDA-C was preparing to assassinate Premier Bulent Ecevit.[169]

One of the reasons for the autumn terrorist campaign could be the April 1999 trial of Salih Izzet Erdis (alias Salih Mirzabeyoglu), considered to be the leader of IBDA-C, and three of his deputies. During the trial, dozens of IBDA-C sympathizers protested violently in front of the court and more than thirty

were arrested. As a result, Turkish security authorities intensified their counterterrorist measures and arrested many active members of the organization, although they did not find the connection with Kislali's assassination. On November 15, 1999, twenty IBDA- C members were caught with weapons and bomb-making materials, planning to execute sensational acts of terrorism in Istanbul. Suspected targets included several well-known personalities such as Professor Yasar Nuri Ozturk, dean of the theology school at Istanbul University, and writer and columnist Fatih Altayli.[170] The group was also preparing to stage bomb attacks on November 6, to protest the anniversary of the founding of the Institution of Higher Education (YOK). Hasan Ozdemir, the director general of the Istanbul police, stressed that Erdis, IBDA-C's imprisoned leader, declared 1999 "The Year of Conquest."[171] According to Turkish officials, twenty separate operations were staged against IBDA-C in 1998 and 1999, netting 166 suspects and accounting for thirty-five acts of terror.

Security authorities have also waged a relentless campaign against the military and civil infrastructure of all the branches of Hizballah, considered to be the most powerful and dangerous of all the violent Islamist organizations. These extensive counterterrorist operations paralleled the well-publicized war against PKK guerrilla forces in southeastern Turkey and northern Iraq, but received no attention from the foreign media.

On April 22, 1998, Interior Minister Murat Basesgioglu announced the first wave of intensive operations against Hizballah, particularly in the eastern and southeastern Anatolian provinces. By the end of the month, 130 of the 1,000 wanted militants were captured in Diyarbakir alone. Dozens of other militants were arrested in May in Batman, Mersin, and Mus.

The second significant counterterrorist wave came in March 1999, when 400 Hizballah members were captured in the southeastern Diyarbakir, Mardin, and Batman provinces. Several dozen more Hizballah militants were captured that June.[172] Parallel to tracking IBDA-C terrorists in October and November 1999, operations against Hizballah continued with the arrests of nearly 100 militants in Diyarbakir, including a number of senior figures. In November, the government announced that Hizballah's infrastructure in eastern Turkey had been completely cracked.[173]

In January 1999, Kemal Donmez, chairman of the Struggle Against Terrorism Department, declared that a total of 3,793 people had been captured in ten years of operations against illegal fundamentalist organizations like Hizballah, IBDA-C, the Islamist Movement, and the Islamic Communities Union.[174] The arrest of many Hizballah militants helped solve 800 crimes, 400 of which were murders.

Despite the successes of the Turkish security forces, at least 20,000 supporters of violent Islamic groups strived to establish a “Kurdish-Islam” state in the southeastern Anatolian region. Operations in 1999 revealed that the organizational skills and overall strength of Hizballah were much greater than previously assumed.

In March 1999, allegations against Erbakan for the first time accused the former Islamist prime minister of being directly connected to terrorist organizations.

State Prosecutor Nuh Mete Yuksel accused Erbakan of participating in December 25, 1993 meetings in Tehran with the Greek 17 November organization, Fatah, the Lebanese Hizballah, the Japanese Red Army, the Abu-Nidal Group, Turkish Hizballah, and RP members under the chairmanship of Iran’s spiritual leader, Ali Khamene’i. The accusation was based on the testimony of Altan Karamanoglu, Turkey’s former ambassador to Baku. Participants in that meeting decided to establish a joint command, provisionally headquartered in Iran but slated to move to Turkey when a theocratic regime would be set up there.[175]

According to an indictment prepared by Yuksel, the RP’s former Deputy Chairman Ahmet Tekdal and former Deputies Sevki Yilmaz, Hasan Huseyin Ceylan, and Ibrahim Halil Celik face death sentences on charges that they tried to undermine the current constitutional state system and replace it with a state based on religious principles. The 75-page indictment states that the National View, the Islamists’ main ideological body, aimed to replace the current democratic system with an Islam-based one.[176]

The Virtue Party and the RP were also accused of having links to radical Islamic organizations abroad, such as the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) of Algeria and the Muslim Brotherhood of Syria. The indictment also charged the National View with having contacts with IBDA-C. Most importantly, representatives of the National View were reportedly connected to the PKK. The indictment accused Erbakan of promising to legitimize the “status of bandits” during his tenure as prime minister.

The same prosecutor launched a probe into remarks against secularism broadcast on a private television channel by the well-known and respected Islamic preacher Fethullah Gulen. Gulen had warned a group of his followers that, “If they come out early, the world will squash their heads. They would make Muslims once again relive incidents such as those that occurred in Algeria, Syria and Egypt.” In the recording, Gulen also underlined the importance of expanding his group within the civil and justice administrations. “In these entities will be our guarantee for the future,” he said. Prosecutors apparently believe that Gulen was warning his followers that if they rose up before they were fully prepared, they would face defeat. They therefore sought capital punishment for Gulen on suspicion of plotting religious unrest in Turkey.[177]

Finally, in July 1999, Uzbek dissidents convicted of playing a role in a February 1999 assassination attempt against Uzbek President Islam Karimov claimed that Erbakan had helped them financially.[178]

One of the possible consequences of the PKK’s decline as a fighting organization after the new peace strategy devised by its imprisoned leader Abdullah Ocalan could be a strengthening of radical Islamist groups, mainly Hizballah.

Relations between the PKK and some of the Islamic radical groups at the beginning of the 1990s were marked by ideological conflict and rivalry over the same Kurdish constituency in southeastern Turkey. At times this conflict permitted

Turkish authorities to use the more extremist elements of the Islamic Kurdish Hizballah in their fight against the nationalist PKK. In 1993, however, the two sides, acknowledging the danger of the internecine strife, agreed to a modus- vivendi and common struggle against the Kemalist regime. Since then, the PKK and most of the Islamist radicals have cooperated in the local operational arena.[179]

Hasan Yalcin, acting leader of the Labor Party, has claimed that a cooperation agreement, including the perpetrating of some attacks, was signed between the People's Liberation Army of Kurdistan, the PKK's military wing, and the fundamentalist Rahmet Group. He affirmed that a PKK-IBDA-C protocol about common terrorist training existed. Within this framework, the PKK trained some IBDA-C militants in Greece in acts of sabotage. According to Yalcin, the agreement between the PKK and Hizballah was also still in force.

According to the Istanbul Hurriyet, Hizballah has avoided armed clashes with the PKK since 1995 and rarely taken punitive measures against it because it considers PKK militants as a "ready military force." The Hizballah views PKK property as "free of charge," inheritable if Ocalan is executed and his organization dismembered.[180]

Emin Gurses of Sakarya University thinks that the PKK is in a process of disintegration and that the new threat will be Hizbul-PKK. Umit Ozdag of Gazi University believes that it will be very difficult for the PKK to survive without Ocalan's leadership, which was critical to raising money in Europe. Hizballah, according to Ozdag, is building up seriously, although it does not yet have the practical experience of the PKK.[181]

While Iran welcomed Erbakan's pro-Islamic policy, the warming in relations did not interfere with the overall strategy of furthering the Islamization of Turkey, as the 1997 Sincan incident revealed. In an interview with the Istanbul Turkiye, the Iranian ambassador said that at Sincan he spoke only about facts concerning Israel and that beyond that he did not even hint about Turkey: "I did not mention Hizballah or anything like that. I

simply produced historic examples to show that Israel is a fundamentalist state. I did not even mention Yasir Arafat." He added, candidly, that the year before he had presented a far tougher speech at Jerusalem Day, but then the press did not even devote a line to it. "Had the RP not been in government this year, the press would again not have mentioned it. It is inconceivable to use a neighboring country to get rid of the RP, and that without justification," complained the ambassador.[182]

The expanding military cooperation between Turkey and Israel, which Erbakan could not erase, caused great concern in Iranian governmental circles and was considered a new American-Zionist plot to isolate and encircle Iran.[183] Tehran considers its conflict with Turkey not merely as a strategic and political competition between two regional rivals, but mostly as an ideological battle between its radical Islamic worldview and Turkey's "adamant [will] to translate into practice the western concept of secularism."[184]

After the PKK's expulsion from Syria in October 1998 and Ocalan's February 1999 capture in Kenya, Iran was accused of actively supporting the Kurdish organization's attacks against Turkey. Turkish intelligence established that Osman Ocalan, Abdullah's brother, who aspired to be the new leader of the PKK, was under government protection in Iran and occasionally met Iranian officials for talks. It was reported that Iran was preparing Osman Ocalan and his men for bloody terrorist attacks against Turkey and providing them with logistic and technical aid in pursuit of the same anti-Turkey policy that Syria employed.[185]

According to the Turkish press, Tehran wanted to control not only the PKK but also Turkish Hizballah, which was organized in the same region. During his interrogation, PKK's leader Abdullah Ocalan admitted that Iran mediated between the PKK and Hizballah.[186]

In July 1999, Turkish authorities reported again that Abdulaziz Tunc, the first Hizballah 'confessor' and an assistant to its escaped leader, Huseyin Velioglu, affirmed that Iran was a supporter. Tunc and other Hizballah

members were trained in Iran in 1988 on how to use hand grenades, automatic weapons, and rockets.[187]

Also in July 1999, Tehran complained that Turkey had bombed an Iranian town at the mountainous junction of the Iranian, Iraqi, and Turkish borders—an area used by PKK guerrillas—killing five people and wounding ten. Iran retaliated by capturing two Turkish soldiers accused of straying into Iranian territory while pursuing the PKK; rather than return the soldiers immediately, Iran initially announced that they would be put on trial. These incidents fueled the tension between the two countries.[188]

The military incidents were accompanied by harsh criticism of the Iranian regime by Turkish prime minister Bulent Ecevit, who labeled student protests in Iran's cities a "natural" reaction against an "outdated regime of oppression." Ecevit also accused Iran of replacing Syria as the biggest base for PKK rebels.

The tension dissipated after the return of the two soldier-prisoners and a series of Turkish-Iranian security meetings focusing on Tehran's alleged growing support of anti-Turkish organizations. Korkmaz Haktanir, undersecretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, visited Iran on October 17 and 18 and asked Iranian leaders to act vigilantly against terrorists using their country for transit purposes. Positive security mechanisms between Turkey and Iran were also set up.[189]

The Turkish daily Milliyet analyzed Iran's policy in this context: "Democratic and modern Turkey that nonetheless respects and is committed to its religion constitutes a model for the Iranians, and the Tehran regime is uneasy about that." Tehran was also aware of its military weakness. Iran's frail economy and the most recent student protests had demonstrated that many dissatisfied people opposed the regime. Moreover, Iran was worried by the possible attitude of its important Azeri Turk minority. All these factors indicated that Iran was unlikely to risk a hot war with Turkey. But, the Turkish newspaper speculated that even after the end of the prisoners' crisis, Iran would not pursue friendship with Turkey so long as it did not have a

democratic and strong regime, and that the stormy relationship between the two countries would continue.[190]

The Iranian view, according to the Tehran daily Resalat, was not optimistic either. The Turkish bombing of Iranian territory “has put the Iranian nation in psychological conditions of war and rancor toward the government and the military ruling over Turkey.” The newspaper accused Ecevit of directing Turkish anger against Iran, because it regarded Islam in Turkey as an extension of Iran’s Islamism. Moreover, the Turkish military aggression against Iran had to be seen not only “in terms of that country’s national interests and objectives ... but also as the direct result of Turkey’s membership of NATO ... and its special ties with America and the Zionist regime.” It stressed the fact that the recent incidents coincided with President Demirel’s visit “to the occupied Palestine.” Turkey was presented therefore as a linking platform between military activity against Iran and “the centers controlling those activities in the West and the Zionist regime.” Thus, even if the crisis were to end, “enmity and hatred would still continue to remain in the minds of the Iranian nation.”[191]

According to Alan Makovsky, part of Turkey’s post-Gulf War self-confidence and activism is its new relationship with Israel. Turkey and Israel are both Western- oriented and pro-United States, and deeply concerned about terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. The only democracies in the Middle East, Turkey and Israel are also the two most economically dynamic and militarily powerful states in the region.[192] Therefore, it is quite natural for them to have finally announced in 1996 a strategic agreement including common military training, defense-industrial cooperation, collaboration in gathering intelligence on Syria, Iran, and Iraq, and free trade. Indeed, bilateral trade, virtually nonexistent in 1990 and roughly $450 million in 1998, was expected to reach more than $1 billion in 2000.[193]

Ironically, the relationship came to light during Erbakan’s premiership. Although the RP and Erbakan were staunch opponents of the Turkish-Israeli alliance, they were forced by the military “to swallow the frog” and accept it against their will. Erbakan’s signing of the agreement himself signaled to his followers, and opponents, the weakness of the Islamist movement and the limits of its political weight.

This event indicated the final step of the secular Turkish establishment, under the pressure of the unanimous military command, to resolutely leave behind the failed Turkish-Islamic Synthesis strategy, subdue the growing Islamist movement, and neutralize its political, social, and violent strongholds. The alliance also allowed for the military defeat of the PKK, seen more and more as an objective ally of the Islamists, by forcing Syria to expel its leader and other militants and stop any support for the Kurdish separatist movement.

On October 26, 1999, Cevik Bir, former deputy chief of the Turkish General Staff, remarked in an address at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy that “Turkey became a ‘front country’ in the region when new threats emerged after the Cold War ... The initiation of Turkish-Israeli relations should be seen in this light. Contrary to the beliefs of some, neither the United States nor any other third party initiated Turkish-Israeli cooperation or the 1996 military training and cooperation agreement. These were the initiatives of the Turkish leadership.”[194] General Bir affirmed that this military agreement paved the way for a resolution of the Autumn 1998 Turkish-Syrian crisis and, in his opinion, Syria’s more responsive attitude toward Turkey since then proves that the Turkish-Israeli agreement works.[195]

The Islamic fundamentalist movement in Turkey shares many common features with movements in many Muslim countries but it understands the dangers of a direct clash with the nationalist Kemalist ideology and a military sworn to defend it. The politicization of Islam by the new intellectual and economic elite and military—who believed they could transform it into a pillar of the regime— has been skillfully exploited by the Islamic movement in its bid to achieve power and install an Islamic regime.

This is also true regarding the more radical, violent Islamic offshoots. Their expansion and relative freedom of action was tolerated until they became a real threat to internal political stability. The RP’s parallel growth, its electoral success, and its leadership’s indulgence of the Islamists’ terror no doubt encouraged further violence.

It is noteworthy that following the RP's biggest electoral success in December 1995 and until the resignation of Erbakan's government in June 1997, Islamic groups perpetrated no serious terrorist acts, with the exception of low- level attacks by the IBDA-C, the most independent of the groups. Erbakan's policy of boosting relations with Iran and Libya possibly gave the radical groups the impression—or hope—that the RP government would indeed follow a more extremist Islamic policy.

Erbakan's resignation under army pressure, the succeeding government's steps to curtail the Islamic influence on the education system, the outlawing of the RP, and the recent move to ban its successor, the FP, have changed the rules of the game. The secular establishment, feeling the double pressure of the powerful military and of anxious Turkish civilians who favor the Kemalist ideology and regime, has definitely shown that the Turkish-Islamic Synthesis does not present a solution to Turkey's intricate problems.

Turkey has been able to resolutely challenge and foil growing domestic Islamic radicals due to a number of developments: its new self-confidence and strategic status that emerged as a result of the Gulf War; the fall of the Soviet empire; the liberation of the Turkic peoples of Central Asia; the weakening of Iran's regime; and the strategic agreement with Israel.

Until 1996, Iran paid a very low price for its support of Islamic terrorist activity in Turkey. The countries' bilateral relations were especially smooth during Erbakan's term of office. But Iran is entangled in internal strife between moderates, led by President Muhammad Khatami, and the old revolutionary strategy sustained by the spiritual leader, Khamene'i, whose supporters remain in key political and security posts.[196] The radicals seem to have the upper hand regarding relations with Turkey and have continued the strategy of subversion through the enfeebled PKK and the remnants of the violent Islamist movement.

According to Alan Makovsky, Turkey's relations with Iran are similar to its relations with Syria before Ocalan's expulsion. Turkey does not want a confrontation with Iran. "Given Turkey's more assertive regional policies of recent times, Ankara likely will continue to press Tehran—over time perhaps

with threats or even limited use of force—if the Iranians do not alter their behavior and rein in the PKK," according to Makovsky.[197] However, Turkey might not hesitate to threaten Iran if its national security interests are compromised. In 1998, for example, Turkey threatened to use force unless Syria dismantled PKK bases on its territory and expelled Ocalan. Syria bowed to Turkish pressure. Asked whether the row with Iran could reach the same intensity, president Suleyman Demirel said, "No, no, I don't think so; at least not for the time being."[198]

*** Radical Islamic Organizations in Turkey

<quote>

National Security Council (NSC) report on radical groupings

</quote>

In a twenty-page report on "reactionism" the NSC lists the radical Islamic groups as follows:

The organizations with religious motives: Hizbullah, IBDA-C [Islamic Great Eastern Raiders Front], Islami Hareket [Islamic Movement], and Vasat [al-Wasat].

The radical religious groups such as Yeryuzu, Tevhid, and Yildiz have their roots outside the country and gather around a bookshop, publication, or individual.

Indicating that the organizations with religious motives and the radical religious groups do not enjoy broad support, the report says these groups regard the Turkish Republic as the antithesis of Islam and consider it against their religious beliefs to form any legal organization sanctioned by the existing political system.

The radical religious groups in Turkey differ among themselves. These groups were further divided as being centered in Iran, Egypt, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan and in various countries simultaneously.

The report lists the prominent groups of the “reactionary” movement thus: Malatyalilar (or Safak), Hizbullahi Vahdet, Hizbullahi Davet, Yildiz, Vahdet, Tevhid (or Selam), Tefkir (or Cumasizlar), Akabe, Yeryuzu, Tevhid-i Cekirdek (or Kimliksizler), Yonelis (or Hak Soz), Ekin, Buruc (or Tohum), Mucadele, Fecr, Vehhabi, Ceysullah, Mazlum-Der.[199]

<quote>

Prime Minister’s Monitoring Council [PMMC] Report

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According to a report by the PMMC, there are in Turkey 4,500 “reactionary” foundations whose activities are inconsistent with the purpose declared at the time of their establishment. The report says that only 15 percent of these foundations are audited and that most of them are controlled by the Nurist (Divine Light) religious order. The other leading operators of foundations are the National Youth Foundation, the Nakshibendis, the Kadiris, and Hizballah. [200]

<quote>

The Istanbul Police Report on Illegal Organizations

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The Directorate of Police in Istanbul has drawn up a report on the activities of the radical and reactionary organizations in the city.

The report states that the radical right-wing and reactionary groups have thirteen organizations under different names in Istanbul. Hizballah and the IBDA- C (Great Eastern Islamic Fighters Front) are the leading groups among

the armed organizations. The report also says that the supporters of Hizballah operate as five different groups and notes that the Islamic Youth Organization organizes their unarmed popular activities.[201]

<quote>

Organizations and Areas of Activity

</quote>

IBDA-C: The organization is an extension of the THKP-C (Turkish People's Liberation Party Front) of the Islamic community. Its members work during the day and meet to carry out their activities at night. They return to their homes and families afterward. Consequently, officials find it difficult to control them. The organization does not seem to have any particular hierarchy. It is organized in Istanbul's Umraniye and Gaziosmanpasa districts and has nearly 300 militants and sympathizers. Its vakif (foundation) is the Islamic Studies and Arts Research Foundation (Islami Ilimler ve Sanatlar Arastirma Vakfi) in Sirinevler. Its founders are Yasar Sadoglu, Mehmet Salih Sadoglu, Sitki Dogan, Fikri Ozer, and Selma Sadoglu.

ICCB (Union of Islamic Associations and Societies): The organization is trying to get organized on the Western and Anatolian sides of the city. It uses one of its small mosques as a meeting center. It attracts new members with its propaganda activities run through publications and videotapes mailed from Germany. It has nearly sixty sympathizers in the city.

Ceysullah [God's Army]: The organization was established in 1987 by members of a group in the Umraniye and Uskudar Districts calling themselves Selefis. It has nearly 100 sympathizers. Some fifteen members of the group from various provinces, mainly Istanbul, Sakarya, and Izmir, have been sent to train at a camp in Pakistan. Its vakif is the Scientific Research Foundation (Ilim Arastirma Vakfi). Its founders are Ali Isik, Muharrem Iler, Sabri Salman, Mehmet Nur Gulluoglu, Mehmet Uyanikoglu, Mehmet Sukru Bakir.

Islamic Movement: The organization was established in Batman in 1986. High- ranking militants in the group agreed to arm their organization. Its militants were trained by the secret service in Iran, the SAVAMA. Significant blows were dealt to the organization in 1995 and 1996. Its members are trying to reorganize.

Hizbullah Tevhid Selam Gurubu [Unity and Salutation Group]: Some of the high- ranking members of the organization are from the former grassroots of left-wing factions. It has established close links with religious groups in Istanbul. Its members have rallied around the daily Selam, known for its articles from Iran. Its vakif is the Peace, Science and Service Foundation (Selam, Ilim ve Hizmet Vakfi) in Fatih. Its founders are A. Kemal Tuna, Mustafa Celik, Kenan Yabanigil, M. Burhan Genc, Isa Uzun, Ahmet Yurdakul, Suleyman Akboga, and M. Baki Seyda.

Hizballah Vasat [Moderate or Center] Group: The organization was established with the help of Sahabe, a periodical in Gaziantep. It later carried out activities in Pendik and Kaynarca and in Istanbul's Umraniye, Sultanbeyli, Bagcilar, and Gaziosmanpasa districts. Its members train at temporary camps in Kocaeli and Yalova. The organization has mosques in Kaynarca and Umraniye and a legal radio network known as Ozel (Special) FM. Its vakif is the Islamic Unification Foundation (Tevhid Vakfi) in Uskudar. Its founder is Mehmet Cakar.

Hizbullah Menzil (Course or House) Group: The organization is trying to legalize its activities. It is known to have nearly fifty militants and sympathizers. Its vakif is the Perseverance Social and Cultural Service Foundation (Sebat Sosyal ve Kulturel Hizmet Vakfi) in Fatih. Its founders are Mehmet Haydari, Ismail Oruc, and Mustafa Celik.

Hizbullah Vahdet (Unity) Group: The organization is trying to recruit new members through the Vahdet Foundation and its branches in Istanbul and the Abdulkadir Geylani Foundation in Diyarbakir. It has 150 members in Istanbul. Its vakif is the Invitation Educational, Cultural, and Fraternity Foundation (Davet Egitim, Kultur ve Kardeslik Vakfi) in Fatih. Its founders are Faris Karak, Ahmet varol, Adem Kiziltepe, Bulent Kaya, and Recep Celik.

Musluman Genclik (Yildiz) (Islamic Youth-Yildiz): The organization was created by a group headed by Tahir Gul at the Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul to struggle against the decision to ban students with head scarves from attending the university. Its vakif is the Human Education, Cultural and Solidarity Foundation (Insan Egitim, Kultur ve Yardimlasma Vakfi) in Fatih. Its founders are Husnu Turan, Yunus Torpil, Serif Enis, Cemal Tellioglu, and Kadir Tingiroglu.

Sirinevler Ulu Cami Egitim ve Hizmet Vakfi (Sirinevler Ulu Cami Education and Service Foundation) in Fatih. Its founders are Ibrahim Firat, Ozcan Kocaman, Binali Pala, Vehdettin Tasdemir, Mehmet Acikgoz, Idris Mutlu, and Elbeyli Celik. Its leader is Serif Eris.

Musluman Genclik (Maltyalilar) (Islamic Youth-Malatya): The organization was established by a group from eastern Turkey. Its high-ranking militants are from Malatya. It supports the Islamic Republic of Iran and has 100 supporters in Istanbul. Its vakif is the Islamic Thought and Solidarity Foundation [Islami Dusunce ve Dayanisma Vakfi]. Its founders are A. Riza Gokce, Taner Bayraktar, Abdurrahman Suayip, and Cetin Mitat.

Vahdet Egitim Yardimlasma Vakfi (Unity Education and Solidarity Foundation) in Ankara. Its founders are Recep Ozkan, Ahmet Altintepe, and Fatih Yildirim.

Asri Saadet (In the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad) Ilim, Hizmet ve Kultur Vakfi (Asri Saadet Service and Cultural Foundation) in Sultanciftligi. Its founder is Recep Aydin.

[91] See Sami Zubaida, “Turkish Islam and National Identity,” Middle East Report (April-June 1996), p. 11.

[92] See Ertugrul Kurkucu, “The Crisis of the Turkish State,” Middle East Report (April-June 1996), pp. 2–7.

[93] See Binnaz Toprak, “Religion as State Ideology in a Secular Setting: The Turk- ish-Islamic Synthesis” in Malcolm Wagstaff (ed.), Aspects of Religion in Secular Turkey, (Durham: University of Durham, Center for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Occasional Paper Series No. 40, 1990), p.10.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

[96] See Anat Lapidot, “Islamic Activism in Turkey since the 1980 Military Takeover” in Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 3, (1997), (special issue on “Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East” edited by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar), p. 64.

[97] Kurkucu, “The Crisis of the Turkish State,” p. 65.

[98] For an evaluation of Turkey’s strategic interests and policy in the region, see Kemal Kirisci’s article “Post Cold-War Turkish Security and the Middle East,” Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA) Journal, Vol. 1, No. 2, (June 1997).

[99] See Ben Lombard, “Turkey—Return of the Reluctant Generals?” Political Science Quarterly 112 (Summer 1997), <[[http://epn.org/psq/lombardi.html][http://epn.org/psq/lombardi.html]]>.

[100] Hizb al-Tahrir, founded in Jordan in 1953, is dedicated to the creation of a Khilafah (unified Islamic state) and is banned throughout the Middle East due to its attempts to foment Islamic revolution. It began activity in Turkey in

1962. See Cumhuriyet, October 30, 1991. In the 1980s this organization had only limited propaganda activity in Turkey.

[101] U.S. Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1991, p. 14.

[102] Lapidot, “Islamic Activism in Turkey,” p. 65.

[103] Cited by Cumhuriyet, October 30, 1991.

[104] Hezbollah is the spelling used by TDN and other Turkish sources.

[105] For this reason the names of the organizations mentioned in this article are those used by the various sources and do not always concord with the real group hiding behind the name.

[106] Kalim Siddiqui was the founder of the Muslim Parliament and the Muslim Institute in London, which have close links with Iran and many of the world’s violent Islamist groups. He died in 1996. See also The Antisemitism World Report, (London: Institute of Jewish Affairs, 1995), pp. 241—242.

[107] According to the Turkish journalist Tunkay Ozkan, the Islamic Movement was established in Batman in 1987 as one of the branches of the Islamic terror organization called Hizballahiler, active in the southeast, and moved its headquarters to Istanbul in 1990. See Cumhuriyet, June 23, 1993.

[108] It is interesting to note the similarity of this conversion to radical Islam as a consequence of harsh conditions in prison with the radicalization of Islamic militants in the prisons of Nasserist Egypt and Baathist Syria in the

middle 1960s. See Emmanuel Sivan, Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics (Tel-Aviv: Am Oved Publishers, 1986, in Hebrew), p. 37.

[109] See Cumhuriyet, February 16, 1993.

[110] Ibid.

[111] See Meir Hatina, “Iran and the Palestinian Islamic Movement,” Orient, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Marz 1997), pp. 108–110.

[112] See Gilles Millet, in Liberation, October 9, 1995, and James Philips, “The Rising Threat of Revolutionary Islam in Algeria,” Backgrounder—The Heritage Foundation, 9 (November 1995), p. 6.

[113] See Haggay Ram, “Exporting Iran’s Islamic Revolution: Steering a Path between Pan-Islam and Nationalism,” in Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 3 (1997), special issue on “Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East” edited by Bruce Maddy- Weitzman and Efraim Inbar, pp. 12–16.

[114] Milliyet, February 27, 1997.

[115] Professor Bahriye Ucok, writer Turan Dursan and journalist Cetin Emec (editor of the daily newspaper Hurriyet) were assassinated because they served “the idolatrous regime” and in order “to bring about the resurrection.” See Hurriyet, October 10, 1993, and Cumhuriyet, February 6 and June 23, 1993.

[116] See Imset, TDN, May 14, 1993.

[117] It is interesting to note that most of the anti-American and anti-Western terrorist activity during the Gulf War was perpetrated by the extreme left-wing Turkish organization Dev-Sol and not by Islamic groups, although they were also fiercely opposed to the allied intervention (with Turkish participation) in Iraq. See also U.S. Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1991, p. 14.

[118] A security officer at the Israeli embassy in Ankara was killed by a bomb in his car (March 7, 1992); grenades were thrown at the Neve Shalom synagogue in Istanbul (March 1, 1992); bombs were placed in the cars of two Iranian opposition militants (June 1992); the same month a member of the Iranian Mujahedin-e Halq was kidnapped and assassinated.

[119] See Anatolia Radio (in English), January 24, 1993.

[120] See for instance TDN, January 29, 1993, and reports of Ankara Turkiye Radyolari Network (FBIS-WEU-93-023 4.2.1993).

[121] On July 2, 1993, during the traditional Pir Sultan Abdal Culture festival in the southeast city of Sivan, fundamentalists set fire to the Madimak Hotel, where all the guests had been staying.

[122] TDN, January 19, 1995.

[123] See Inter Press Service, January 11, 1995.

[124] See Imset, TDN, February 8, 1993 and May 14, 1993 and Cumhuriyet, February 4, 1993.

[125] See Hurriyet, February 10, 1993.

[126] See Cumhuriyet, February 16, 1993.

[127] See TDN, March 12, 1993 and May 15, 1993.

[128] Irfan Cagarici, the arrested leader of Islamic Action, was also behind the attack on the Jewish businessman Jak Kamhi in January 1993. See Jane’s Intelligence Review, August 1996, p. 374.

[129] See Sabri Sayari, “Turkey’s Islamist Challenge,” Middle East Quarterly, September 1996, pp. 35—37. The RP obtained 21.3 percent of the vote and 158 seats out of the 550-member National Assembly and became the largest party in Parliament.

[130] See Zubaida, “Turkish Islam and National Identity,” pp. 11—12. See also Feroz Ahmad, The Making of Modern Turkey (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 219—222.

[131] TDN, February 26, 1993.

[132] The Project for the Study of Anti-Semitism, Anti-Semitism Worldwide: 1995/96 (Tel-Aviv University, 1996), p. 202.

[133] See Inter Press Service, January 11, 1995.

[134] Imset, TDN, May 14 and 16, 1993.

[135] See Zubaida, “Turkish Islam and National Identity,” p. 12.

[136] The vice-president of the RP declared on February 9, 1993 in the Turkish Parliament that a team of six Israeli Mossad agents assassinated Mumcu and that the West was interested in inciting public opinion to believe that Iran was responsible. This accusation was apparently based on a secret report of pro-Islamic elements in the police. See Middle East International, February 19, 1993.

[137] See Kanal 6 Television, November 24, 1993.

[138] See Nur Bilge Criss, “The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey,” Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Vol. 18, (1995), p. 21.

[139] The pro-Islamic daily Turkiye, December 3, 1995, published a series of such declarations, such as that of Muhsin Yazicioglu (leader of the Grand Unity Party-BBP) or that of Professor Mahir Kaynak, ex-intelligence officer.

[140] See Alan Makovsky, “Turkey: Erbakan at Six Months,” Policywatch, No. 230 (December 27, 1996), p. 3.

[141] This interesting analysis of Iran’s ‘three-phase’ relations with Turkey appeared in the Tehran Salam, December 19, 1996, on the occasion of Rafsanjani’s visit to Turkey.

[142] Cumhuriyet, June 23, 1993.

[143] See Imset, TDN, May 14, 1993.

[144] Cumhuriyet and other newspapers, February 5—6, 1993.

[145] Unfortunately, there is no room in this chapter for a detailed evaluation of the economic, strategic and political reasons behind the cautious approach of the various Turkish governments in their relations with Iran.

[146] See TDN, January 29, 1993.

[147] See Gungor Mengi’s column in reaction to Velayati’s interview on February 15, 1993 in Sabah, February 16, 1993.

[148] See U.S. Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1994, pp. 11—12, 25, and U.S. Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1995, pp. 12, 25. See also Criss, “The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey,” p. 31.

[149] See TDN, January 8, 1996.

[150] For a discussion of RP’s characteristics as an Islamic movement see Zubaida, “Turkish Islam and National Identity,” pp. 10—11, and Sayari, “Turkey’s Islamist Challenge,” p. 37.

[151] See Elie Podeh, “Egypt’s Struggle against the Militant Islamic Groups” in Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 3 (1997), special issue on “Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East,” edited by Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar, p. 48.

[152] IBDA-C’s monthly, Taraf, gives some addresses of its representatives in Europe. In Germany there are several extremist Islamic Turkish organizations. The most active is “The Islamic Communities Union” led by Cemalettin Kaplan. See “Islamischer Extremismus und seine Auswirkungen auf die Bundesrepublik Deutschland,” Bonn, Bundesamtfar Verfassungschutz (November 1994).

[153] According to Erbakan, Western “imperialist” institutions and “Zionist Wall Street bankers” seek mainly to exploit Turkey and the Islamic countries, and Washington is the tool of “Zionist forces.” RP’s politicians and daily newspapers have blamed the Jews, Zionism and Israel for every domestic and foreign problem of Turkey. See Sayari, “Turkey’s Islamist Challenge,” p. 41, and The Antisemitism World Report (1995), p. 228.

[154] See the interview with Admiral Guven Erkaya in Milliyet, August 14, 1997.

[155] For a full account of the events from the point of view of the military see the extraordinary interview with Admiral Guven Erkaya by Milliyet columnist Yavuz Donat, Milliyet, August 14, 1997.

[156] Cited from Alan Makovsky, Policywatch, No. 239, March 12, 1997, p. 1.

[157] Sabah, June 12, 1997. [FBIS-WEU-97-114]. The speech was cited fully by the newspaper.

[158] Political Islam has accumulated considerable power with its 2,500 associations, 500 foundations, more than 1,000 corporations, 1,200 student dormitories and more than 800 private schools and classrooms.

[159] It has been determined that there are 1,685,000 continuing students registered in Quranic courses and that their numbers double every five years. It is forecasted that this figure will rise to 7 million by 2005. According to a study based on 1995 figures, 492,809 students attend 561 imam-preacher lyceums in Turkey, and 53,553 students graduate from these schools each year. Meanwhile, the demand for imams is only 2,288 per year. The remaining 51,345 graduates are deliberately trained in schools of law and in the political sciences and in police academies. The purpose of that is

to build an Islamist state structure, within the context of political Islam, by occupying government positions over the short and medium terms.

[160] The donors of financial assistance to Islamist organizations include Islamist individuals whose shares of the national income are among the highest in the country. The status of these individuals, who are publicly known as the “100 political Islamist bosses,” is as follows: six are worth more than 100 trillion Turkish lira; five are worth between 20 and 50 trillion Turkish lira; fifteen are worth between 10 and 20 trillion Turkish lira; thirteen are worth between 1 and 10 trillion Turkish lira; the rest are worth less than 1 trillion Turkish lira.

[161] The propaganda activities are conducted through nineteen newspapers, 110 magazines, fifty-one radio stations, and twenty television stations.

[162] See James M. Dorsey, “Turkey’s Military Continues Crackdown on Islam in Public Life,” Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, October-November 1997, p. 36 <[[http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/1097/9710036.html] [http://www.washington-report.org/backissues/1097/9710036.html]]>.

[163] In the 1995 election it did not manage to pass the 10 percent threshold.

[164] See CNN, Ankara, April 19, 1999.

[165] For a detailed analysis of the political Islamist movement see Nilufer Narli, ‘The Rise of the Islamist Movement in Turkey,” MERIA Journal, Vol. 3, No. 3, (September 1999).

[166] By the end of 1996 the term Hizballah came to be used instead of the previous Hezbollah.

[167] See the statement of Cemil Serhadli, the governor of Diyarbakir, in Ankara Anatolia, October 20, 1999.

[168] October 7—A homemade bomb exploded a Greek lyceum in Istanbul; October 17—A bomb exploded in front of a bookstore in Istanbul selling the publications of the Religious Affairs Foundation; October 21—Ahmet Taner Kislali, a former minister, academic and newspaper columnist, was killed outside his home in Ankara by a homemade pipe bomb placed on top of his car; October 29—A time bomb exploded on the campus of the University of Marmara in the Goztepe district of Istanbul, causing minor damage; November 18—Unidentified assailants damaged pictures of Kemal Ataturk and planted a pipe bomb in the Istanbul headquarters of the Ataturk Association.

[169] See Ankara Anatolia, June 4, 1999.

[170] See Ankara Anatolia, November 15, 1999.

[171] See Ankara Anatolia, November 1, 1999.

[172] In June 1999, thirty militants, including four policemen, of the “Vasat Group” of Hizballah were captured in an operation carried out in Malatya; ten members of Hizballah were captured in the Batman province; eight militants of Hizballah were captured in Kovancilar county of eastern Elazig province.

[173] In Erzurum, a total of fourteen persons were detained on grounds that they aided the Menzil group. In operations conducted in Agri, the security forces caught twenty-eight Hizballah militants, including the five members of the “Province Council.” Security officials reported that the Hizballah members—who began organizing in the region in the early 1990s—from time to time also undertake activities in Turkey’s other provinces.

[174] See Ankara Anatolia, January 1, 1999.

[175] See Istanbul Hurriyet, March 16, 1999.

[176] See TDN, March 6, 1999.

[177] See TDN, June 21, 1999.

[178] See TDN, July 5, 1999.

[179] For a detailed analysis of PKK's strategy and Turkey's policy see this author's articles: Ely Karmon, "The Showdown Between the PKK and Turkey: Syria's Setback," November 20, 1998, <[[http://www.ict.org.il][http://www.ict.org.il]]> and "The Arrest of Abdullah Ocalan: The last stage in the Turkey-PKK showdown?" February 17, 1999, <[[http://www.ict.org.il/articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=72][http://www.ict.org.il/ articles/articledet.cfm?articleid=72]]>.

[180] See Hurriyet, March 5, 1999.

[181] See Zaman, June 5, 1999.

[182] See Turkiye, February 8, 1997. The relations between Turkey and Iran improved again after the mutual appointment of ambassadors in March 1998.

[183] See Tehran Times, January 13, 1998.

[184] Ibid.

[185] As of spring 1999, three Iranian officers were training some 200 PKK militants in a camp set up by the PKK in the Piransehir district in Iran. In another camp named Jerme, seventy PKK terrorists were being trained. It has been found out that Iran was planning to have all these militants infiltrate Turkey to stage terrorist attacks. It has also been ascertained that the districts of Maku and Dambak in Iran served as the PKK's military depots and that personnel and materiel were sent from there to the PKK groups active in Turkey. PKK leaders Osman Ocalan, Nizamettin Tas, and Mustafa Karasu were in Iran. See Hurriyet, May 17, 1999.

[186] See Hurriyet, May 29, 1999.

[187] See Milliyet, July 5, 1999.

[188] For a detailed analysis of these events, see Alan Makovsky, 'Turkish-Iranian Tension: a New Regional Flashpoint?" Policywatch, Number 404 (August 9, 1999).

[189] See Ankara Anatolia, October 27, 1999.

[190] See Milliyet, August 7, 1999.

[191] Tehran Resalat, July 20, 1999.

[192] See Alan Makovsky, "Israeli-Turkish Cooperation: Full Steam Ahead," Policywatch, Number 292 (January 6, 1998).

[193] Ibid.

[194] The French commentator Alain Gresh also asserts that “Contrary to what people think in the Arab world, in particular in Damascus, the impetus of the alliance does not come from Israel, but from the Turkish generals.” See Alain Gresh, “Grandes Manoeuvres Regionales Autour De L’alliance Israelo-Turque,” Le Monde Diplomatique, Decembre 1997.

[195] See General Cevik Bir, “Reflections on Turkish-Israeli Relations and Turkish Security,” Policywatch, Number 422 (November 5, 1999).

[196] The conflict between the two camps and strategies regarding the future foreign policy of Iran has found an echo even in Iranian academic circles, which are well aware of the discrepancy between the regime’s ideology and the constraints of international and internal realities. See, for instance, the publication of the revealing roundtable discussion between Dr. Ebrahim Mottaqi, assistant professor of political science at the University of Tehran, Dr. Dehshiri, member of the faculty of Allameh Tabataba’i University, and Dr. Javat Eta’at, the head of the Research Division of the Center of Islamic Revolution Documents, in Tehran Salam of August 11, 1997. It is interesting to note that in this professional, theoretical discussion on Iranian foreign policy, Turkey is one of the very few countries mentioned by name, and in this context Dr. Eta’at proposes a policy of confronting it and putting it in a reactive position by seeking a “reverse alliance” with one of its neighbors.

[197] See Makovsky, Policywatch, No. 404.

[198] See Tehran Times, July 27, 1999.

[199] See Istanbul Sabah, 26 June 1998.

[200] See Istanbul Hurriyet, 11 July 1998.

[201] See Istanbul Milliyet, 12 and 13 August 1998.

** 5. Islamism and the State in North Africa

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The confrontation in Algeria between the military regime and the Islamic opposition caused a near meltdown of the Algerian state during the last decade. Algeria was the metaphorical gharb (West), a place were “all terrors are pos- sible.”[202] Many pundits were quick to predict an Iranian-style outcome, with corresponding effects on Algeria’s neighbors. However, their rush to judgment betrayed a lack of understanding of both the Maghrib region and the highly varied realities within each Maghrib state. What is required is a proper understanding of the Islamic challenge in Algeria in relation to that which occurred in Morocco and Tunisia.

The ideological roots of modern-day Islamic fundamentalism are not solely recent: the ideas of the salafiyya current of Islamic reform and purification were present in preprotectorate Morocco among both the ‘ulama and various sultans,[203] and became widespread in the Maghrib in the era between the two world wars. One can argue that more than in the Mashriq (the Arab East), Islam was one of the core values for Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian nationalist movements that opposed European domination. In Algeria, the crystallization of a modern national identity between the two world wars was considerably shaped by the Islamic reformist movement led by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hamid Bin Badis. The

movement promoted both the purification of Islamic practices from “polytheism” (maraboutic practices) and creation of an educational network that would stress that Islam and the Arabic language, and not French culture, are at the core of modern Algerian identity.[204]

Similarly, Salafi activity in Morocco played an important role in shaping the nationalist movement, personified in the 1920s by ‘Allal al-Fasi, the religio- nationalist leader of the Istiqlal party.[205] Likewise in Tunisia, Islam “as a component of Tunisian identity and a legitimizing value ... suffused the first generation nationalist movement [in the decades prior to World War I] and ... persisted even into the age of Bourguibist secularism.”[206]

In contrast to the general Salafi current, political Islam in North Africa was not a ‘pan’ movement. Nor, again in contrast to the Mashriq, was pan-Arabism a competing ideology. Thus, the legitimacy of the state in North Africa has never been in doubt: “The state appears more as an appropriately adjusted transfer of technology than as an alien institution.”[207]

State power grew exponentially during the post-independence generation, intruding decisively into every sphere of society. However, in the words of the Tunisian scholar Abd al-Baki Hermassi, by the 1980s, policies once seen favorably as constituting the “etatization” of society increasingly began to look like the privatization of the state as small numbers of individuals accumulated great wealth from their privileged positions. This occurred at a time of austerity imposed by international financial institutions.[208] Also, the resources available for development were sharply cut by the post-oil boom economic contraction. The effect was felt across the Arab world among both petroleum-based economies, including Algeria, and “labor-exporters” such as Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia. What resulted was the obvious inability of Arab regimes, maghribi and mashriqi alike, to deliver the social, economic, political, and psychological goods to their expanding, increasingly youthful, urbanized, and literate populations. This failure caused a profound sense of crisis (azma) among wide sectors of their populations and endless debate among intellectuals over what should be done (spawning a cottage industry, “azmatology,” in the words of Muhammad Guessous, a Moroccan sociologist).[209]

The Maghrib’s proximity to Europe rendered its youthful population (two-thirds under 30 years of age) especially vulnerable to psychological dislocation, especially since North Africa had already been widely penetrated by the gharb (primarily France) during the prior 150 years. The proliferation of satellite dishes and powerful television transmitters brought images of Europe’s material glitter into people’s living rooms, raising expectations and prompting demands that had no chance of being fulfilled, thus opening the way to profound disillusionment. In Mernissi’s words, “[W]hat strikes me as a sociologist [when visiting a Muslim country] is the strong feeling of bitterness in the people—the intellectuals, the young, peasants. I see bitterness over blocked ambition, over frustrated desires for consumption—of clothes, commodities, and gadgets, but also of cultural products like books and quality films and performances which give meaning to life and reconcile the individual with his environment and his country..... In our country [Morocco] what is unbearable, especially when you listen to the young men and women of the poor class, is the awful waste of talent. ‘Ana daya‘’ (‘My life is a mess’) is a leitmotif that one hears constantly.”[210]

The crisis, which took root during the 1970s and gathered strength during the 1980s, spawned a new kind of dissent, articulated most forcefully by Islamist movements. They spoke not only on issues or strategies of development, but on matters concerned with justice and cultural identity. [211] Given the dual legacy of popular-maraboutic Islamic practice and the Maghrib’s penetration by the modern gharb, it is not surprising that Maghribi Salafists-fundamentalists often found themselves alienated from their own societies and thus sought guidance and inspiration from outside the Maghrib: e.g., the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood, Iran’s Islamic Revolution, and Sudan’s Hasan al-Turabi. This interaction marked a departure from premodern historical patterns.

*** Morocco

Despite the strongly similar development patterns of their Islamist movements, the specific sociopolitical and historical circumstances of the

three Maghrib states varied widely. This produced a disparate state-society/regime-opposition dynamic which, in each case, produced a very different political outcome. Consider Morocco: apart from Saudi Arabia, no other Arab regime has so thoroughly draped itself in Islam's mantle. King Hassan II, who reigned and ruled from 1961 until his death in July 1999, was constitutionally the amir al-mu'minin ("Commander of the Faithful") deputized by virtue of his descent from the Prophet Muhammad to lead the Moroccan Islamic umma in all matters, temporal and spiritual.[212] His own erudition in religious matters, displayed in dialogues with religious scholars on Moroccan television, reinforced this dual role. His son and heir, King Muhammad VI, has inherited this constitutionally grounded spiritual-temporal standing.

One can argue against the oft-made claim that the monarchy is the central religious institution of Moroccan life and that Hassan's longevity rested less on blind obedience and belief in his special sacredness (baraka) than on his astutely wielding the levers of power at his disposal, including repression.[213] As Hassan himself told his biographer, "One doesn't maintain order by wielding crois- sants."[214] At the same time, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Moroccan regime has been a relatively successful "modernizing monarchy" because it situated itself firmly within Moroccan political and sociocultural traditions. This enabled it to avoid some of the harsher social, political, and psychological dislocations of revolutionary Arab regimes and Pahlavi Iran.[215]

One of these traditions is the institution of the monarchy itself: the ruling Alawite dynasty is almost 350 years old. At the same time, as I. W. Zartman argues, the monarchy under Hassan has evolved through interaction with society.[216] Part of this involved Hassan's modification of religious traditions to reinforce his legitimacy.[217] More prosaic factors promoting relative political stability include a liberal economy and multiparty politics. Hassan described his political strategy as "homeopathic democracy," a process of controlled, well-managed change that maintains social peace while promoting economic development and the general welfare. His ultimate declared goal was a "bipolarized democracy," in which two parliamentary blocs would alternate in power, with the monarch serving as the ultimate arbiter and source of authority.

Hassan’s strategy slowly but successfully bore fruit. Efforts to entice the historical opposition parties into power-sharing following the 1993 parliamentary elections foundered on their unwillingness to serve alongside the all-powerful Interior Minister Driss Basri, as well as on their own internal divisions. Four years later, the pieces fell into place, following further constitutional reform. The November parliamentary elections produced a balance of forces in the Chamber of Deputies, with a slight advantage to the Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP). In early 1998, Hassan charged its leader, the historical opposition figure Abd al-Rahmane Youssoufi, with forming the long-sought-after alternance government. The new government, consisting of seven parties and six nonparty officials, including Basri, took office in March, amid great expectations for change.

Inevitably, the promise of reform did not immediately live up to its advanced billing. Modernizing administrative procedures and the judicial, commercial, and educational spheres took time, and the results, if at all meaningful, would not be quickly apparent.[218] Nonetheless, the atmosphere did improve, particularly in the area of human rights. It was perhaps fortuitous that just as the last vestiges of optimism for Youssoufi’s government were fading away in the summer of 1999, King Hassan died and was replaced by Muhammad. The new king surprised observers by moving quickly to put his own stamp on affairs of state, with a more open, populist style, further gestures in the human rights arena, and, most dramatically, the sacking of Interior Minister Basri. While continuing his father’s legacy, Muhammad gave unmistakable signs of desiring to accelerate the pace of change.

No less significant than the evolution of Moroccan political life has been the growth in recent years of authentic ‘civil society’ elements, notwithstanding considerable odds.[219] Labor unions have become increasingly combative; human rights groups have bucked considerable pressure to make their voices heard; women’s organizations gathered one million signatures in 1992—1993 on a petition to change the mudawanna, Morocco’s personal status law, which discriminates against women in many areas.[220] Of related interest has been a significant lowering of the population growth rate from 3 percent per annum in the early 1970s to under 2 percent in 1998, and a corresponding halving of the average family size.[221]

The downside of Hassan's controlled-change strategy was that his reliance on existing economic and political elites carried a danger of stagnation, a lack of attention to social and economic distress, and displeasure among the educated classes. The slow pace of change undoubtedly bred cynicism among the latter and did little to make the urban poor feel empowered. Hassan's International Monetary Fund-directed policies of structural readjustment, involving debt rescheduling, subsidy cuts, liberalizing capital movements, and initial privatizing of state firms, won considerable praise from the Paris Club governments and international and commercial lending agencies. The budget deficit, which in the early 1980s reached 12 percent of the gross domestic product, was cut to less than 2 percent in a decade, foreign investment rose fourfold between 1988 and 1992, and annual growth rates were impressive. King Muhammad remained committed to his father's economic reform package. So too was Prime Minister Youssoufi, who resisted pressures from within his own party and from coalition partners to significantly increase Morocco's already crushing debt burden (one- third of the GDP) in order to expand social services.

On the microeconomic level, however, the picture was far from rosy. Gaps between rich and poor, in a society where the average per capita income is just over $1,000, further widened; urban unemployment remained high (officially 16 percent, unofficially far higher), and two years of severe drought in 1992—1993, followed by the "drought of the century" in the winter of 1994—1995, exacerbated the plight of rural areas and reinforced longstanding trends toward migration to urban areas. Subsequent winters again demonstrated Morocco's overdependence on climatic vagaries: bountiful rains produced a record 11 percent growth rate in 1996; the failure of late winter rains in 1997 produced a negative growth rate for the year.

Like many Middle East governments, Hassan initially gave budding Islamist movements some freedom of action in order to balance opposition from the radical left. The assassination of USFP leader Omar Benjelloun in 1975 by radical Islamists, apparently with the connivance of the authorities, may have been the most extreme manifestation of regime-Islamist cooperation. [222] Thereafter, while permitting nonpolitical activities, Hassan adopted a strategy of manipulation and co-optation and severely restricted the ability

of Islamists to operate politically. It was only in the late 1990s, as part of the process of controlled political liberalization, that Hassan permitted, and indeed sought, Islamist activity within the formal political system. The regime's efforts to control Islamism were made easier by the fact that Moroccan Islamists are not homogeneous. One researcher counted no less than twenty-three politicized religious associations in the early 1980s. However, these are generally grouped into three trends. By summer 1996, three weekly newspapers representing the three main trends had a combined circulation of 40,000.[223]

One of these trends has been explicitly reformist but not overtly political, concentrating on matters of individual piety and righteousness, criticizing corruption, and affecting certain styles of traditional Islamic clothing, wedding celebrations, and rhetoric. As such, it has been the least restricted. The leading figure of this Sunni trend, before his death in the late 1980s, was an elderly mosque preacher in Tangier named Fqih al-Zamzami. Venerated by peddlers, laborers, and shopkeepers, cassettes of his sermons are sold in most cities. His three sons have tried to follow in his path. The Zamzami Sunni trend appears to have become intermingled with the Tabligh, an Islamic proselytizing movement originating in the Indian subcontinent.[224]

At the other extreme was a small group, al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya (Islamic Youth), drawn mostly from student and high school movements, which advocated the regime's violent overthrow. Its leader, 'Abd al-Karim al-Muti', is in exile somewhere in Europe. Some of the Shabiba, led by 'Abdallah Benkirane, broke with Muti' in 1981 and chose a nonconfrontational, reformist posture which accepted the inviolability of the monarchy and sought to work for the peaceful pursuit of an Islamic society. Benkirane operated under the banner of Harakat al- Islah wal-Tajdid (Movement for Reform and Renewal). By the 1990s, Benkirane was seeking to become overtly involved in the political process.[225] In 1996, his movement joined forces with another group, Rabitat al-Mustaqbal al-Islami (League of the Islamic Future), with the new group being called Harakat al-Tawhid wal- Islah (Movement for Unification and Reform). The regime's approach to Benkirane was twofold. On the one hand, it encouraged his group's activities, as a tamed, regime-legitimizing alternative to more radical groups. On the other, it was unwilling

to have an explicitly Islamic party running for public office. The solution was to incorporate Benkirane's movement into an existing, albeit moribund, party, the Mouvment Populaire Democratique et Constitutionnel (MPDC), headed by the venerable 'Abd al-Karim Khatib. The MPDC put up 140 candidates in the November 1997 parliamentary elections (out of a possible 325 seats). Nine won seats, four from Casablanca alone; a tenth seat was subsequently obtained (also from a Casablanca district) when the ostensible USFP winner resigned after discovering that his victory was fraudulent. In the spring of 1999, with his party now renamed the Party de la Justice et du Development (PJD), Benkirane himself was victorious in a special election to fill a vacant parliamentary seat from Sale. Rumors were widespread that he had been assisted by the authorities.[226] What was clear was that both the government and moderate Islamists had a common interest in having an Islamist voice participate in the public discourse.

The best-known Moroccan Islamist figure is 'Abd al-Salam Yasin, a former Education Ministry school inspector and Sufi-like figure who leads the banned al- 'Adl wal-Ihsan (Justice and Charity) movement. According to the leading analyst of Moroccan Islamism, Mohamed Tozy, the Justice and Charity movement would not exist if it weren't for Yasin, whose mystical and doctrinal authority is absolute.[227] Yasin's followers are more educated and more radical than Zamzami's. Yasin openly challenged Hassan's legitimacy—and that of any monarch in Islam—back in 1974. He later admitted to having prepared his burial shroud for the occasion.[228] Instead, King Hassan felt confident enough not to have him executed and thereafter merely kept him under various forms of detention, including a spell in a psychiatric hospital, for much of the time thereafter. During the Gulf War, 30,000 of Yasin's followers gathered under their own banner as part of a massive anti-war march, providing the only public indication of their strength. In December 1994, the government briefly eased Yasin's house arrest but swiftly reimposed it when Yasin declined to refrain from political sermons.

The authorities' effort to coax Yasin into working within the system indicates their recognition of the Islamists' potential strength and the need to defuse it by co-optation and dialogue, while not eschewing more traditional containment strategies. The Youssoufi government's tone regarding Yasin was more accommodating than its predecessor, with Human Rights Minister Mohammed Aujjar characterizing Yasin as a "grand 'alim and a

nationalist.”[229] Given the new king’s and Youssoufi government’s determination to ‘turn the page’ and work toward increased democratization and the rule of law, Yasin’s release was only a matter of time. The declaration by one Justice and Charity official that the movement had distanced itself from politics for good, and would instead concentrate on propagating Yasin’s nonviolent, purifying teachings[230] was probably an attempt to make it easier for the authorities to release Yasin. They eventually did so in May 2000, notwithstanding the stir he caused in the beginning of the year by dispatching a 19-page memorandum to King Muhammad asking him to return to the Moroccan people $40 allegedly stolen by Muhammad’s late father, King Hassan.

Although the main Islamist currents in Morocco were nonviolent, an incident in the summer of 1994 provided evidence that Morocco was not entirely immune to radical, violent Islamic currents of the kind manifesting themselves in Algeria and Egypt. On August 24, two Spanish tourists were shot to death in the lobby of a hotel in Marrakesh, the first, and so far only, violent attack against foreigners. The government immediately blamed Algerian intelligence services for supporting the perpetrators, precipitating renewed Algerian-Moroccan tensions and the closing of their border. Two weeks later, four alleged perpetrators were arrested. They turned out to be a group of young French-Moroccan and French-Algerian fundamentalists, possibly connected to the remnants of Muti‘’s al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya, who in the late 1980s organized themselves into a group to advance the cause of Islamic revolution. Their activities included receiving weapons training in Peshawar, Pakistan, near the Afghan frontier, smuggling weapons to Algerian Islamists via Morocco, and a number of robberies in France to support themselves and the cause.[231] Their alleged head, Tariq Fellah, a Moroccan, was arrested in Germany in December 1994 (another person, ‘Abd al- Ilah Ziyad, also a member of al-Shabiba, subsequently claimed he had organized the hotel attack during his trial in France). In January 1995, the group of four plus fourteen others were tried in Fez for the shooting plus other violent acts carried out during 1994. Three of the eighteen were sentenced to death (the sentences have not been carried out); the others to sentences ranging from six months to life imprisonment. Official Algerian involvement was never confirmed, and the affair pointed more to the common danger posed by Islamist radicals to both the Moroccan and Algerian regimes.

At the same time, the swift arrest and trial of the group confirmed anew that the Moroccan Islamists' ability to pose a serious challenge to the regime is extremely limited. Nonetheless, their activities, particularly on university campuses where Islamists control nearly all student unions and periodically clash violently with leftist groups, were publicly acknowledged by at least one government minister as constituting a worrisome development.[232] In November 1998, state security officers and campus guards attacked Islamist students at the Casablanca science college on the grounds of ensuring public order. Justice and Charity spokesman Fathallah Arslan declared that incorrect charges of Islamist student violence were part of an effort to frighten the public by falsely tarring Moroccan Islamists with the brush of Algerian Islamist violence. The roots of the latter, he declared, stemmed from the actions of the Algerian authorities.[233]

As Morocco entered the uncharted political and societal waters of the twenty-first century under the rule of a young new king, with the bounds of the permissible in political and social spheres being increasingly tested and contested, Islamist discourse and Islamist groups were clearly permanent features of the Moroccan landscape. In the summers of 1999 and 2000, Islamists demonstrated their mobilizing capacities by transforming public beaches into "camps" for religious, educational, cultural, and charitable activities.

Even more dramatic was a march in Casablanca in March 2001 of about 200,000 persons "in defense of the Moroccan family," protesting a government- sponsored plan to promote the integration of women into development schemes, including making far-reaching changes in the mudawanna, such as abolishing polygamy, equalizing the right of divorce and improving child custody rights for mothers, and raising the official minimum marriage age to eighteen. Islamist spokespersons, including Shaykh Yasin's daughter Nadia Yasin, took pains to clarify that the mudawanna was "not a sacred text" and that the humiliating situation of Moroccan women, including high rates of illiteracy, poverty, and prostitution, needed to be ameliorated. They framed their opposition to the plan in terms of protecting Moroccan society's "authentic identity" against the corrosive and odious anti-Islamic schemes of international organizations promoting Western-style globalization, imperialism and, for good measure, Zionism.[234]

The massive turnout for the march dwarfed that of a concurrent pro-plan demonstration in Rabat, and led the government to shelve the plan for the time being. Although Morocco's stability, controlled political evolution, and steadily increasing links with the global market seemed assured for the time being, the lines in Morocco's quickening "culture wars" seemed to be increasingly drawn.

*** Tunisia

Tunisia's Islamists have enjoyed a higher international profile than their Moroccan counterparts but suffer even greater repression. As in other cases in the Middle East, the Tunisian Islamists' protests can be seen partly as a response to socioeconomic dislocations stemming from the complex processes of modernization and development. Also contributing is Tunisia's clogged political system. However, the most important factor has been the 'psychosocial alienation' that has resulted from the predominant Western liberal model of modernity.[235]

This model has been the objective of President Habib Bourguiba since Algeria's independence in 1956.[236] Notwithstanding Bourguiba's efforts to legitimize his policies in Islamic modernist terms, his initiatives brought more secularization than in any other Arab country. An example is the Personal Status Code, which guarantees equality between men and women in matters of divorce and forbids polygamy. A second example is the relatively large number of women in managerial and executive positions. President Zayn 'Abidin Ben 'Ali, who assumed power in November 1987, softened some of Bourguiba's strident secularism and put more emphasis on Tunisia's Arab-Islamic heritage. The regime permitted Islamists to run in elections as independents in 1989. Officially, they captured about 14 percent of the vote and came close to winning a majority in several urban areas. Some have claimed that the real percentage attained by Islamist candidates was 30—32 percent.[237] The regime quickly took notice and cracked down harshly on Islamists, banning the newly formed Nahda (Renaissance) Party and taking advantage of violent acts by some Islamists to imprison thousands of

activists. Stern reprimands from international human rights organizations did not deter the regime.

For now, Ben ‘Ali rules Tunisia with a firm hand and, unlike in Morocco, guided political pluralism is only in its infancy: all but nineteen of the 163 seats in Tunisia’s parliament, elected in 1999, are held by the ruling Rassemblement Constitutionnel Democratique. This is an improvement from the early 1990s, when the parliament contained no opposition deputies, but marks no change since the 1994 elections. Economically, the Tunisians have followed a course similar to Morocco’s, instituting structural reforms and obtaining good results. Tunisia’s small population, reinforced by the lowest rate of population growth in the Arab world, its educated middle class, high rate of literacy, relatively high percentage of women in the work force, and European orientation make the state a less fertile ground for Islamists than other countries in the region. Nonetheless, the groundswell of support for Islamist movements during the 1970s and 1980s indicates that Tunisia is not immune from regionwide currents.

Like their counterparts elsewhere in North Africa and the Sunni world in general, Tunisia’s Islamists have been influenced by Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood and the teachings of Sayyid Qutb and Pakistan’s Mawlana Mawdudi.[238] Nonetheless, there was considerable talk during the 1980s within Islamist circles of developing a specifically “Tunisian Islam.”[239] Part of the rationale was the rejection of the predominant Islamist view that legitimacy is solely divine, in favor of the idea of popular will as the source of legitimacy.[240] The Islamic notion of shura (consultation), declared Rashid Ghannushi, the movement’s leading figure, legitimizes multiparty politics, alternation in power, and the protection of human rights.[241] In November 1995, Ghannushi and a group of non-Islamist exiled opposition members, including former Prime Minister Muhammad Mzali, published a joint communique appealing for democracy in Tunisia via the election of a parliament representing diverse views and political parties.[242] The problem, Ghannushi stressed, was the repressive Ben ‘Ali regime and most Arab governments, for that matter, which rejected all notions of civil society (al-mujtama‘ al-madani). Ghannushi’s avowed goal to promote a mod- ernist-Islamic synthesis in opposition to the Tunisian regime’s “superficial modernity” makes him one of the more interesting and original of contemporary Islamist thinkers.[243]

To be sure, his views are not entirely congruent with Western liberal values. As he said in one interview, state-building must begin with recognition of the umma's Arab and Islamic identity. Without first agreeing on this central pillar, the "cultural context" of state-society relations, there can be no stable, legitimate authority.[244] Once the identity question is resolved, he continued, democracy can be practiced. He did not address the place in society of those without an Arab- Islamic identity. Ghannushi, in exile in London, frequently speaks of the need to open a dialogue (hiwar) with the West, rejecting the "clash of civilizations" notion put forth by both Samuel Huntington and numerous Islamists. At the same time and in contrast to other Tunisian Islamists, his rhetoric has become increasingly radical in recent years.[245] His condemnations of the allegedly perfidious Western domination of the New World Order, praise for Sudan's regime as a state founded on Islamic concepts, and efforts to promote the cause of Algeria's FIS have weakened his credibility and appeal to Western governments. In a wide-ranging conversation with the New York Times, he repeatedly placed primary blame for excesses committed by Islamic regimes on Western "rejectionist attitudes" and justified the murder of Arab and Muslim intellectuals who had embraced secularism, referring to several as "the devil's advocate[s] ... Pharaoh's witches. The educated who put their brains and their talent in the service of an oppressive regime have made their own decisions. They must bear the responsibility for their choice."[246]

Ghannushi has also repeatedly emphasized that Western hostility to Islam is due to the activities of Zionism, which, in order to retain aid and support, is striving to convince the West that following the collapse of communism and the failure of Arab nationalism, Islam is the new evil force in the world.[247] Speaking in closed sessions at radical Islamic conferences, his rhetoric was even more fiery:

<quote>

"Zionism does not only target Arabs and Muslims. It targets goodness ...the entirety of values that have crystallized in humanity. Every evil in the world, the Zionists are behind it. This is no exaggeration. There are so many evils in the world, and behind which are the Children of Israel."[248]

</quote>

Speaking in May 1995 at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Ghannushi expressed the hope that the Algerian crisis would soon be resolved in the Islamists' favor. This would be followed by a "swift end" to the deadlock in Tunisia, "either as a result of an initiative by the regime itself, which we would prefer, or due to a massive popular pressure, which is more likely to happen. However, should Algeria continue to bleed slowly, the political situation in Tunisia will move in the same direction, but slowly too."[249] It seems that Ghannushi may have been overly optimistic. His continued denunciations of the Tunisian regime throughout the remainder of the decade seemed to have no effect. The government, Ben 'Ali claimed, had "taken the wind out of the fundamentalists' sails" through wide-ranging economic and social reforms and the country's tradition of toleration and moderation. Left unmentioned were the regime's effective modes of repression. The immediate future for the Islamists in Tunisia does not appear to be a promising one.

*** Algeria

As for Algeria, nowhere has the azma been more acutely felt. The socioeconomic dimension is obviously crucial in explaining Algeria's slide into chaos. A generation of misguided, mismanaged "state capitalist" policies, the worldwide slump in the hydrocarbon sector beginning in the mid-1980s, rampant corruption, rapid population growth, and high unemployment all fueled the breakdown of the ruling FLN (Front de Liberation Nationale) regime and the Islamists' rise. Taken alone, however, the socioeconomic explanation for the rise of Islamism in Algeria is insufficient. Cultural aspects must be addressed as well.

Islam has always constituted the central component of collective identity in Algeria, dating back to the pre-colonial period, when Algeria was not a unified political unit. Under French rule, Islam served as a major divide between the colonial government and its subjects. The latters' refusal to abandon Islamic personal status laws enabled the French to avoid awarding them the legal rights of French citizenship and served as a barrier to the

adoption of French culture. Furthermore, since Algeria was never fully Arabized, Islam unified Arabic- and Berber-speakers against the French, providing the religio-national content to the struggle for independence and serving as the kernel of Algerian nationalism.[250]

During the post-independence period, the ruling FLN elite sought to nationalize and manipulate Islam in the regime's service. Measures taken included the enactment of a personal status code in 1984 adhering closely to Islamic precepts, banning alcohol in some cities, making Friday the day of rest, promoting religious education in schools, and implementing an Arabization program in schools and public institutions. In order to advance Arabization, the regime imported schoolteachers from Egypt, many of them sympathizers of the Muslim Brotherhood, who used their position to disseminate Islamist ideology. At the same time, the FLN regime, under Houari Boummedienne and then Chedli Benjedid, sought to wed Islam to the governing socialist revolutionary ideology and block any independent Islamic political activity, whether urban-reformist or rural-popular. It is thus not surprising that Algeria has not produced Islamist theoreticians comparable to Khomeini, Turabi, or Ghannoushi.[251]

Notwithstanding the regime's efforts to monopolize and manipulate Islam, signs of an Islamic revival outside authorized state structures were widespread during the 1970s and 1980s. The Islamist movement developed along two parallel paths: a public one, of educational and social activities in order to disseminate the Islamic ideology and way of life; and a violent one, led by Mustafa Bouyali, an ex-FLN fighter in the war of independence who attempted to promote an armed insurrection in the countryside between 1984 and 1987. The regime responded by placing hundreds of activists in detention. Bouyali and most of his men were killed in 1987, but the survivors would play important roles in the fighting during the 1990s.[252]

The 1988 food riots and subsequent political liberalization initiated by Benjedid prompted the Islamist organizations to unite under the banner of the Front Islamique du Salut (Islamic Salvation Front), better known as FIS. Unlike previous groupings, the FIS, led by Dr. 'Abbasi Madani, sought to seize power through the electoral process. It demonstrated remarkable mobilizing capabilities, gaining major victories in the 1990 municipal elections and the

first round of the 1991 parliamentary elections. It owed its success to an effective use of its network of about 8,000 mosques throughout Algeria, an appropriating of the Islamic aspect of the FLN's governing vision,[253] and an explicit claim to be the new bearers of the FLN's torch and the authentic inheritor of its legacy. The FIS- FLN connection was further strengthened by the fact that Shaykh Madani, first among equals in the FIS leadership, was an early member of the FLN, and was even imprisoned for his activities for most of the 1954—1962 period. Also like the FLN, the FIS maintained a sort of collective leadership. But what was most important was that the FIS constituted a political body that gave primacy to political action over religious activities. The two more moderate, "gradualist" Islamist parties, Hamas, led by Mahfoud Nahnah, and al-Nahdah, headed by Shaykh 'Abdallah Djaballah, were completely overwhelmed by the FIS and won only minimal support in the 1990 and 1991 elections.[254]

Its two most prominent figures prior to their imprisonment in June 1991, Madani and 'Ali Belhadj, epitomize FIS's two faces. Madani, by almost forty years the older of the two holds a doctorate from the Institute of Education at the University of London. He has been unswerving in insisting on establishing an Islamic state governed by the Shari'a and on the need to reinstate allegedly Islamic norms, such as the separation of men and women in the workplace. Nonetheless, his tone prior to imprisonment was relatively benign and his commitment to political pluralism, while ultimately tactical, at least left room for a dialogue with other political forces in Algeria. He told an interviewer that pluralism was absolutely necessary for a just society, promising to make "Algeria a Hyde Park, not only for free expression but also for choice and behavior."[255]

While Madani was talking about Hyde Park, Belhadj, a young preacher based in a mosque in the overcrowded Bab al-Oued quarter of Algiers, was exerting a powerful appeal on the masses of deprived, frustrated youth. His militant message was unadorned: combat the "French" (meaning the secular forces in Algeria), transform Algeria into an Islamic state immediately, by elections, if possible, and by force if the authorities reject the peaceful transfer of power, and exact retribution on all those who have committed crimes against the people.[256]

Concurrently, the crystallization of the FIS out of a wide array of small groups, which coalesced following a cataclysmic political event, foreshadowed great diversity and lack of cohesion within the movement. In addition, the FIS leadership underestimated the army's refusal to relinquish its power as the real force in Algerian politics and its determination to fight for its privileges. Nevertheless, the Islamists were able to survive a brutal crackdown by the Algerian military authorities after January 1992 and to inflict heavy punishment of their own.

Apparently, they were able to attract activists from a variety of social backgrounds ranging from academics and ex-army officers to radical militants who had already served prison terms in the 1980s and the so-called "Afghans," Algerian veterans of the Afghanistan war against the Soviet-backed regime in Kabul. In particular, they attracted a continuous stream of desperate young men from the sprawling slums of Algeria's cities who had no hope of improving their dire economic conditions.[257]

The armed struggle against the regime has been waged by two loosely organized bodies. The larger was the l'Armee Islamique du Salut (AIS), known until May 1994 as the Mouvement Islamique Armee (MIA), which functioned as the FIS's armed wing. The other, smaller coalition of armed Islamist networks was the Group Islamique Armee (GIA).

The FIS strategy aimed at forcing the regime to accept an arrangement that would relegalize its activities and enable it to resume its bid for power through political means. For that purpose, it employed armed struggle as a means of leveraging the government and sought an alliance with non-Islamist opposition forces that would isolate the regime, expose it as illegitimate, and force it to compromise. These efforts bore fruit in the January 1995 "national contract" signed by representatives of eight opposition parties, meeting in Rome. The contract, whose main outlines were proposed by Madani and Belhadj, called for the "progressive return of civil peace," based on the relegalization of the FIS and freeing of jailed FIS activists in return for a gradual end to violence and its rejection as a means to attain power, negotiations for establishing a transitional government to prepare for multiparty elections, and the formation of an independent commission to investigate abuses of human rights.[258]

The regime, however, managed to split the Rome alliance by co-opting some its signatories and launched a series of constitutional measures during the 1995—1997 period designed to endow Algeria with political institutions that provided badly needed legitimacy while keeping real power in the army's hands. The semi-free presidential elections in November 1995, in which Gen. Liamine Zeroual won with a 61 percent majority, were followed by constitutional amendments approved in a referendum in November 1996 as well as by parliamentary and municipal elections on June 5 and October 23, 1997, respectively. Each time, the government party, the Rassemblement National Democratique (RND), secured a comfortable majority, often by rigging the electoral process.[259]

The FIS was forced into a reactive mode. Its organizational structures were almost paralyzed, having been outlawed by the army, while the physical separation between the detained leaders, Madani and Belhadj, the military commanders operating in the mountains, the shaykhs (political leaders in Algiers), whose operations were partially curtailed by the army, and the Executive Committee abroad, headed by Rabah Kabir, hampered its political activity.[260]

In the military sphere, the AIS attacked only army and other security forces units. It refrained from targeting the state's hydrocarbon facilities, possibly to demonstrate its national responsibility, thereby preserving a crucial source of revenues for the regime. Initially, FIS field commanders argued that the "best organization is no organization," but in view of the growing challenge by the GIA, the FIS National Shura (consultative) Council appointed Madani Merzaq, an Afghanistan veteran and former prayer leader, as the AIS "national emir" (commander) in March 1995. The appointment was not accepted easily, causing some defections among field commanders, but Merzaq was eventually able to consolidate his position as a major player in determining FIS's political line as well.[261]

The GIA, by contrast, adopted the purist approach, based on the teaching of Sayyid Qutb, which regards all of society as "apostate" unless it accepts the GIA's own strict interpretation of Islam, and consequently, rejected any

suggestion of dialogue with the regime. Moreover, the GIA did not fight only the army, but targeted all representatives of Western culture such as intellectuals, athletes, scientists, and musicians and particularly "immodestly" dressed or Western- educated women. It viewed all those serving or collaborating with the "apostate" regime, including those using government facilities such as schools and buses, as deserving of death. Consequently, the GIA was responsible for some of the more shocking acts of murder and terror during the civil war, including burning villagers alive, hacking people with saws and axes, disemboweling women, and setting off car bombs in crowded city streets. In addition, GIA units abducted and raped hundreds of young women under the guise of "temporary marriages" (zawaj mut'a). A Shi'ite custom abhorred by Sunni Islam, it was adopted by Algerian Islamists who had fought in Afghanistan. GIA terror and its impact on the country's social and cultural life prompted one foreign journalist to observe that the GIA's "war against intellectuals" had begun to resemble a "Khmer Rougestyle slaughter of the elite."[262]

The army, too, employed brutal methods, including arbitrary and secret detention, torture, area bombing of suspected Islamist strongholds, and extrajudicial executions. It also set up loyalist militias comprising up to about 200,000 fighters. Some of these militias showed the same degree of ferocity demonstrated by the GIA, while others used their weapons to settle old tribal or clan feuds over land and water rights, or for Mafia-like extortion practices.[263]

Unlike the FIS, the GIA maintained its decentralized structure, which also exposed it to greater infiltration by the regime's intelligence services and resulted in the killings of several of its leaders. Moreover, it was divided between units adhering to the Jaza'ira (Algerianists, those subscribing to a typical Algerian model of Islam) and Salafi trends of the Algerian Islamist movement, as well as by personal rivalries, which occasionally ended in fighting and the elimination of rivals. Two national GIA amirs, Jamal Zeituni and 'Antar Zoubri, were deposed in July and December 1996, respectively, with Zeituni killed by government forces shortly after his deposition. In addition, various units associated with the Jaza'ira trend seceded from the movement, some rejoining the AIS while others tried to establish a middle course.[264]

The initial rivalry between the FIS and GIA escalated into actual fighting. The FIS constantly condemned the massacres carried out by GIA units as contrary to Islam and tarnishing its image. It accused the army of turning a blind eye, or even of manipulating the GIA, in order to turn people away from Islam. The GIA, for its part, regarded as a form of paganism attempts by the FIS to reach political accommodation with the regime and its apparent acceptance of democracy.[265]

By late 1997 it became evident that the military had gained the upper hand strategically, even though the Islamists could continue fighting and at times inflict heavy casualties. The FIS realized its weakness in the military and political arenas. Even more so, it sensed that the GIA actions were turning the people against the Islamists as a whole. Consequently, AIS commander Merzaq, after holding secret talks with the military, accepted the army's conditions for renewing a dialogue and declared a unilateral truce starting on October 1, 1997. Several GIA units gradually joined the truce, while others kept fighting. Occasionally, the AIS cooperated with the army in fighting the latter.[266] Opponents of the truce, located mainly outside Algeria, set up the FIS Coordination Council as an organized opposition within the movement.[267]

The unilateral truce deprived the FIS of almost any leverage on the government. FIS spokesmen conceded that the resort to violence after the 1992 coup had "benefited only the government" and exacted a heavy price from their movement. The Islamist movement realized, they added, that it was "essential" to manage the political arena peacefully and have "recourse to compromise." They advocated, therefore, a "Chilean-style solution," whereby a general amnesty would be decreed, following which the army would return to its barracks, refrain from politics, and allow a genuine electoral contest to take place. While seeking to allay fears of its ideology among secularists, the FIS insisted that it advocated a "Muslim democracy," which would not be "imbued with Western values" but which would apply the principles "common to all democracies."

They acknowledged, however, that while many unjust oppressive measures against women should be removed, women could not be legally equal to men.[268]

The army’s tactical victory exacerbated factional infighting culminating in the forced resignation of President Zeroual on September 11, 1998. The new president, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Bouteflika, who served as foreign minister under Boumedienne, was elected on April 15, 1999 with the army’s backing and the withdrawal of the six opposition candidates.[269]

Although his authority was clearly subject to the army’s approval, Bouteflika launched a policy of national reconciliation. It culminated in a clemency law, approved by an overwhelming majority in a referendum on September 16, 1999. He ruled out, however, the relegalization of the FIS, even under a new name. Several hundred GIA fighters responded to the amnesty, which enabled them to lay down their arms peacefully. The FIS, which felt cheated by the regime’s continued refusal to relegalize it, could do little but threaten to withdraw from the truce, but it remained unclear how much credibility these threats had.[270]

By early 2001, the Algerian ruling elites were again secure in power, thanks to their ruthless determination to fight and to crucial mistakes by the Islamists. Despite internal divisions, the elites had remained largely unified in the struggle. The continuous flow of revenues from the hydrocarbon sector enabled the regime to sustain itself. Financial and political support by European countries, particularly France, and the United States proved important as well. Even more importantly, the atrocities committed by the GIA pushed important social sectors (e.g. workers, government employees, and peasants) to cooperate with the regime, however unpopular it was, because they feared the Islamists even more. Concurrently, the FIS failed to build a broad anti-government coalition, as Khomeini had done in the Iranian revolution, because its secular partners did not trust its declared adherence to political pluralism. GIA units, for their part, remained fragmented but were still able to carry out periodic attacks against government and civilian targets. However, these did not pose a strategic threat to the regime. While the regime has won the short-term military struggle, the Islamist alternative seems unlikely to vanish as long as the country’s economic crisis remains

unresolved and the political system unable to incorporate broad sectors of society.

The victory of the Algerian pouvoir over its Islamist challengers put to rest the notion of the inevitability of an Islamist triumph in North Africa. Even during the most difficult years of the Algerian civil war, however, it was clear that the diversity within the Maghrib, and the successful coping strategies of the Moroccan and Tunisian regimes toward their own Islamist movements, meant that Algeria's neighbors were far from being mere dominos waiting to fall into line behind a triumphant Algerian-driven Islamist order. Moreover, Algeria has always been sui generis in the Arab world. It had the least distinct historical identity in precolonial times of any of the Maghrib's geopolitical units. It experienced the most thorough colonization, the most brutal, violent independence struggle, the application of the Soviet/Eastern European model of development and political organization, and now, the most comprehensive collapse (Lebanon excepted). Other Arab regimes never imitated Algeria's model of development nor did Algeria ever really project power beyond its borders, apart from the vacuum in the western Sahara. Thus, if historical patterns are any guide, whatever the course of events in Algeria, its influence on its neighbors can be expected to be limited.

In any case, the real challenge facing Arab regimes in the Maghrib will continue to come from within, as they seek to reconcile their political cultures and domestic exigencies with the requirements of an increasingly globalized international system. The degree of mutual aid and succor among the Islamists (more of an Islamic "global village" than an "internationale"), [271] while not negligible, does not represent an irresistible force. As the experience of the Maghrib states during the last two decades shows, modern states, singly and in alliances, possess considerable capacities of their own.

[202] The gharb, writes Moroccan sociologist Fatima Mernissi, is "the place of darkness and the incomprehensible, always frightening. Gharb is the territory of the strange, the foreign … the place where the sun sets and where darkness awaits. It is in the West that the

night snaps up the sun and swallows it; then all terrors are possible. It is there that gharaba (strangeness) has taken up its abode.” As she also points out, in Arab-Islamic spatial terms, the land of the setting sun, the Far West, is al-maghrib al-aqsa, with not dissimilar connotations. Fatima Mernissi, Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1992) pp. 13—14.

[203] Mohamed El Mansour, “Salafis and Modernists in the Moroccan Nationalist Movement,” in John Ruedy (ed.), Islamism and Secularism in North Africa (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), pp. 61—62.

[204] Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 334—335.

[205] Ibid, pp. 38—91; Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, “The Salafiyya Movement in Morocco: the Religious Bases of the Moroccan Nationalist Movement,” in Albert Hourani (ed.), St. Antony’s Papers, Middle Eastern Affairs, No. 3. (London, 1963); Mansour, “Salafis and Modernists,” pp. 59—69.

[206] Michael Hudson, Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 379.

[207] Remy Leveau, “Reflections on the State in the Maghreb,” in George Joffe (ed.), North Africa: Nation, State and Region (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 247.

[208] Abdelbaki Hermassi, “State and Democratization in the Maghreb,” in Ellis Goldberg, Resat Kasalen, and Joel Migdal (eds.), Rules and Rights in the Middle East (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1993), pp. 106—107.

[209] Kevin Dwyer, Arab Voices (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 15; Ali El-Kenz, Algerian Reflections on Arab Crises (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991).

[210] Mernissi, Islam and Democracy, p. 56.

[211] Hermassi, “State and Democratization,” pp. 111—112.

[212] Remy Leveau points out the irony that the term amir al-mu’minin did not appear in the initial text of the 1962 constitution. Ironically, “it was the representatives of the [political] parties who reintroduced divine right among the instruments of power.” (“Islam et controle politique au Maroc,” cited in Francois Burgat and William Dowell, The Islamic Movement in North Africa (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), p. 167, n. 3.

[213] Henry Munson, Religion and Power in Morocco (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), makes a cogent argument to this effect, taking issue with Clifford Geertz’s classic Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

[214] Hassan II (Avec Eric Laurent), Hassan II: Le Memoire d’un Roi. Entretiens (Paris: Plons, 1993), p. 103.

[215] Along the lines laid down by John Entelis, Culture and Counterculture in Moroccan Politics (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989). The term “modernizing monarchy” is taken from Hudson’s Arab Politics (note 6) pp. 25—27, 165—229.

[216] I. William Zartman, “King Hassan’s New Morocco,” in I. W. Zartman (ed.), The Political Economy of Morocco (New York: Praeger, 1987), pp. 1—33.

[217] Elaine Combs-Schilling, Sacred Performances: Islam, Sexuality and Sacrifice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).

[218] Bruce Maddy-Weitzman, “Morocco,” in: B. Maddy-Weitzman (ed.), Middle East Contemporary Survey (MECS), Vol. XXII, 1998 (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), pp. 454–463.

[219] Azzedine Layachi, State, Society and Democracy in Morocco: The Limits of Associative Life (Washington: Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, 1998); B. Maddy- Weitzman, “God, King, Country and ... Civil Society? The Evolution of the Moroccan Polity in the 1990s,” paper delivered at the annual conference of the Middle East Studies Association, Chicago, December 1998.

[220] M. Al-Ahnaf, “Maroc. Le Code du statute personnel,” Monde Arab Maghreb- Machrek, No. 145 (July-September 1994), pp. 11–12.

[221] For an analysis of these trends, see B. Maddy-Weitzman, “Population Growth and Family Planning in Morocco,” Asian and African Studies, Vol. 26, No. 1 (March 1992), pp. 63–80.

[222] Interview with Mohamed Tozy, Jeune Afrique, February 9–15, 1999; Emad Eldin Shahin, Political Ascent: Contemporary Islamic Movements in North Africa (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), pp. 186–187.

[223] Mohammed Tozy, “Champ et contre champ politico-religieux au Maroc,” cited by Burgat and Dowell, The Islamic Movement in North Africa, p. 170; al-Majalla, June 23–29, 1996.

[224] Munson, Religion and Power in Morocco, pp. 153–158; Tozy interview in Jeune Afrique, February 9–15, 1999; Shahin, Political Ascent, pp. 179–181.

[225] Shahin, Political Ascent pp. 188–192; Shahin, “Under the Shadow of the Imam,” Middle East Insight, Vol.11, No. 2 (January-February 1995), pp. 42–43.

[226] Marco Hebdo Internatonal, May 7–13, 1999.

[227] Tozy interview in Jeune Afrique, February 9–15, 1999.

[228] Burgat and Dowell, The Islamic Movement in North Africa, pp. 166–167.

[229] Interview in the Casablanca daily al-Bayane, quoted by Marco Hebdo Internatonal, December 12—18, 1998.

[230] Al-Sharq al-Awsat, January 9, 1999.

[231] For the details of their activities, see Jeune Afrique, January 12—18, 1995.

[232] See the statement by Driss Khalil, the minister of higher education, that certain Moroccan universities were “confronting a wave of Islamic fundamentalism.” Agence France Press, April 24, 1995.

[233] Al-Quds al-‘Arabi, April 22, 1998 (WNC-Daily Report).

[234] Al-‘Alam (Rabat), 14 March 2000.

[235] Susan Waltz, “Islamist Appeal in Tunisia,” Middle East Journal, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Autumn 1986), pp. 651—670.

[236] Nikkie Keddie makes the important point that Bourguiba’s policies, e.g., the adoption of the Personal Status Code in 1956, were not simply blind imitations of Western policies (unlike those of Ataturk in Turkey), but contained features from the Shari‘a. Keddie, “The Islamist Movement in Tunisia,” The Maghreb Review, Vol. 11, No. 1 (1986), p. 26.

[237] Burgat and Dowell, The Islamic Movement in North Africa, p. 234.

[238] For the essence of their thinking and activities, see Yvonne Y. Haddad, “Sayyid Qutb: Ideologue of Islamic Revival,” and Charles J. Adams, “Mawdudi and the Islamic State,” in John L. Esposito (ed.), Voices of Resurgent Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 67—98, 99—133; and Emmanuel Sivan, Radical Islam (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), pp. 21–49.

[239] See statement by Ahmad Enneifer, one of the Tunisian “progressive Islamists” who separated from Ghannushi, in Burgat and Dowell, The Islamic Movement in North Africa, pp. 217–218.

[240] Norma Salem, “Tunisia,” in Shireen T. Hunter (ed.), The Politics of Islamic Revivalism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p. 164.

[241] Nicolas Beau, Rached Channouchi: “Penseur et Tribun,” interview, Le Cahiers De L’Orient, no. 27, (1992), pp. 45–52; The Observer, January 19, 1992, quoted in Emad Eldin Shahin, “Tunisia’s Renaissance Party,” Middle East Insight, Vol. 11, No. 2 (January- February 1995), p. 41.

[242] Marie Miran, “Tunisia,” in Bruce Maddy-Weitzman (ed.) MECS, Vol. XIX, 1995 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 630–631.

[243] For a detailed study of Ghannushi’s thinking on key issues, see Khaled Elgindy, “The Rhetoric of Rashid Ghannushi,” Arab Studies Journal, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 101–119.

[244] Al-Shira‘, October 24, 1994.

[245] Michael Collins Dunn, “The Al-Nahda Movement in Tunisia: From Renaissance to Revolution,” in Ruedy, (ed.), Islamism and Secularism in North Africa, pp. 149–165.

[246] New York Times, January 9, 1994.

[247] Al-Shira‘, October 24, 1994—MSANEWS, July 8, 1995; text of speech at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, London, May 9, 1995— MSANEWS, May 23, 1995.

[248] MSANEWS, May 23, 1995.

[249] Daniel Zisenwine, “Tunisia,” in Bruce Maddy-Weitzman (ed.), MECS, Vol. XXI, 1997 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1999), p. 701.

[250] John Entelis, Comparative Politics of North Africa (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1980), p. 105; Severine Labat, Les Islamistes Algeriens: entre les urnes et le maquis (Paris: Seul, 1995), pp. 23, 59—60; Mohammed Tozy, “Les tendances de l’islamisme en Algerie,” Confluences Mediterranee, No. 12 (Automne 1994), pp. 51—54.

[251] Boutheina Cheriet, “Islamism and Feminism: Algeria’s ‘Rites of Passage’ to Democracy,” in John P. Entelis and Phillip C. Naylor (eds.), State and Society in Algeria (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 171—215; Mohammed Tozy, “Islam and the State,” in I. William Zartman and William Mark Habeeb (eds.), Polity and Society in Contemporary North Africa (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 108—109, 199—200.

[252] Rabia Bekkar, “Taking Up Space in Tlemcen: The Islamist Opposition in Urban Algeria,” Middle East Report, Vol. 22, No. 6 (November/December 1992), pp. 11—15.

[253] Hugh Roberts, “A Trial of Strength: Algerian Islamism,” in James P. Piscatori (ed.), Islamic Fundamentalisms and the Gulf Crisis (Chicago: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1991), p. 144.

[254] Remy Leveau, Le sabre et le turban (Paris: Francois Burin, 1993), pp. 194—197; Hugh Roberts, “From Radical Mission to Equivocal Ambition: The Expansion and Manipulation of Algerian Islamism, 1979—1992,” in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (eds.), Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements (The Fundamentalism Project, Vol. 4), (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 428–489.

[255] Al-Watan, June 22—FBIS-NES, Daily Report (DR), June 27, 1990.

[256] Roberts argues forcefully that Madani’s and Belhadj’s voices complemented rather than contradicted each other. For the richest, and at times most provocative analysis of regime-Islamist dynamics in Algeria up until the 1992 military coup, see Roberts, “From Radical Mission to Equivocal Ambition,” pp. 428–489.

[257] Gideon Gera, “Algeria,” in B. Maddy-Weitzman (ed.), MECS, Vol. XVIII, 1994 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), p. 237; Meir Litvak, “Algeria,” in B. Maddy-Weitzman (ed.), MECS, Vol. XIX, 1995 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 225–226.

[258] Litvak, MECS, 1995, pp. 213–215.

[259] Ibid, pp. 216–217, 219–222; Litvak, “Algeria,” in MECS, Vol. XX, 1996 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), pp. 232–234; and “Algeria,” MECS, in B. Maddy-Weitzman (ed.), Vol. XXI, 1997 (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), pp. 266–269.

[260] Litvak, MECS, 1996, p. 238; and MECS, 1997, pp. 274–275.

[261] Litvak, MECS, 1995, p. 226; and MECS, 1997, pp. 273–274.

[262] The Independent, February 1, 1995; Litvak, MECS 1995, p. 223; Litvak, MECS 1997, pp. 279–280; al-Hayat, January 12, April 14; al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 6; al-Wasat, June 1, 1998.

[263] Mideast Mirror, March 6, 1998; al-Majalla, March 15–21, 1998.

[264] Litvak, MECS, 1996, pp. 237–238; Litvak, MECS, 1997, p. 283.

[265] Litvak, MECS, 1995, pp. 227–228; Litvak, MECS, 1996, pp. 236–237; al- Hayat, January 12, 1998.

[266] Litvak, MECS, 1997, pp. 273–274.

[267] Litvak, MECS, 1997, p. 275; al-Hayat, January 9; al-Wasat, May 11; Middle East International, June 19, 1998.

[268] Le Nouvel Observateur, January 15—21, 1998.

[269] Al-Watan, April 17, 1999 (WNC-DR).

[270] Mideast Mirror, June 8 and July 28, 1999, and January 7, 2000.

[271] We owe this distinction to Martin Kramer.

** 6. Hizballah: Between Armed Struggle and Domestic Politics

Eyal Zisser

On May 24, 2000, Israeli forces completed their withdrawal from south Lebanon, ending what Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak called Israel’s involvement in “the Lebanese tragedy.”[272] The military’s definition of this pullout as “an achievement and even an extraordinary success”[273] would be judged by whether the future brought peace along the border or a continued battle with Hizballah. In Lebanon, Hizballah activists led celebrations at what they considered a huge victory for the organization. After all, this struggle had been a major reason for the group’s establishment

in 1983 and one of the main factors making it a leading force within the Shi’ite community in Lebanon.

One cannot easily downplay this achievement by Hizballah, since throughout the 1990s it had remained almost the sole group in any Arab state committed to implementing an armed struggle against Israel. It would be argued that Hizballah achieved what no other Arab country or army had been able to do: oust Israel from Arab territory without the Arab side committing to any concession.[274]

As an Islamist movement seeking influence and power within Lebanon in order to transform Lebanese society, however, Hizballah found that its victory brought serious problems and posed serious decisions about its future. After all, it was the long, successful struggle against Israel that maintained the group, bolstered its standing within the Shi’ite community, and made it strong in Lebanon’s public opinion and political system. The same factor gave it foreign support, especially from Iran and Syria. After the Israeli withdrawal, the organization lost some of its luster in the face of day-to-day challenges from Lebanese life and the harsh choices of Lebanese domestic politics.

In its favor, Hizballah was deeply rooted in the Shi’ite and Lebanese experience and had been preparing for a decade to make this transition. It strengthened its political wing, information apparatus, and widespread system of educational, health and social services. Clearly, Hizballah will survive. The question is how its new status will affect its goals and tactics, the nature of its Islamist campaign to transform the country, and the internal affairs of Lebanon itself. One critical question is to what extent Hizballah will undergo a process of “normalization,” becoming more of a political party than an armed militia and a reformist rather than a revolutionary movement. If this happens, Hizballah would be cut down to its “natural size” as one more Shi’ite communal party and interest group, making deals with rivals in the Lebanese political mosaic, vying for prestige, power, and patronage.

The organization is quite aware of this danger and is trying to meet it. One potential solution would be to accept this framework and preserve a quiet

south Lebanon along the border with Israel. Another would be to renew its armed struggle, precisely to revive the past days of glory. In any event, what is clear is that an important and decisive chapter in the organization's history has ended; but its story is far from over.

Hizballah stormed onto the Lebanese scene in late 1983 with a series of attacks on Western and Israeli targets in the country that brought hundreds of casualties, leading the United States and France to end their involvement in Lebanon, and Israel to complete a quick withdrawal of its direct presence.[275] The military struggle against the West, and especially against Israel, has been since the early 1980s one of the organization's main activities. This was an expression of the influence of two major events in Middle East history that set the group on its path. One was Iran's Islamic revolution, a direct source of inspiration and role model for the organization. By the early 1980s Hizballah had already bound itself to Tehran and since then has received Iran's economic and political support. The second event was the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, which led the Shi'ite community onto the path of a violent struggle against the Israeli presence in south Lebanon. This struggle became an important focal point for the organization, one from which it drew legitimacy and support at home and abroad.

Despite all this, the organization's emergence came purely from the Lebanese context, as a result of domestic processes in Lebanon and within the Shi'ite community. The most prominent of these factors were: the Shi'ite community's increasing demographic weight in Lebanon's population (from 19 percent in 1950 to more than 40 percent at the end of the 1990s); increased migration of community members from rural regions in the Biqua'a and south to slums on the outskirts of cities; and, as a result, a stronger religious identification of

Shi'ites that turned Shi'ite clerics into the community's leaders, replacing the traditional leadership based on the notable Shi'ite families.[276]

These processes eventually turned the Shi'ite community from a weak, passive, and to some extent marginal community in the Lebanese arena into an active, powerful community struggling for a central role. This effort was

first led by Musa al-Sadr, a cleric born in Iran who arrived in Lebanon in 1959 and became the community's most prominent leader. In 1975, with the outbreak of civil war, al-Sadr founded the Amal movement as a military force to strengthen the community's bargaining power. In the wake of al-Sadr's disappearance during a visit to Libya in 1978, he was replaced as Amal leader by Nabih Barri, a lawyer by training and not a cleric.[277]

Even before his disappearance, there emerged those who opposed Musa al-Sadr, believing that the Shi'ites should adopt a more radical worldview. These people refused to accept Amal's moderate line, as inspired by Musa al-Sadr, to improve the Shi'ites' status based on accepting Lebanon's existing political system. With al-Sadr gone and in the shadow of Iran's Islamic revolution and Israel's invasion of Lebanon, these people established Hizballah, whose activities began in 1983.[278]

Hizballah's platform, published in February 1985, left no room for doubt regarding its long-term objectives. These focused on the establishment of an Islamic republic in Lebanon, based on the Iranian model, as a stage in establishing a united Islamic state all over the Islamic world. At the same time, there was an obvious attempt by the organization to don a cloak of pragmatism and moderation, mainly in the Lebanese domestic context.[279] This reflected its realization that it was operating within the limitations of Lebanese realities that made it difficult for Hizballah to implement its ideological concepts. Lebanese society is a mosaic of religious and ethnic communities, none of which has the ability to impose itself on its rivals. In addition, the Shi'ite community was an insignificant minority on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, outnumbered by a sometimes hostile Sunni majority. Finally, it seemed for a long time that it was Amal and not Hizballah that enjoyed support from the majority in the Shi'ite community.

Hizballah reached the pinnacle of its power within the Lebanese Shi'ite community in the late 1980s, when it gained both political and military control over most of West Beirut and large areas of south Lebanon. However, it was at this high point that Hizballah found itself faced with challenges threatening its continued activities and even its very existence. First and foremost among these problems was the Ta'if Agreement signed in October 1989, ending the Lebanese civil war—during which Hizballah had flourished—

and marking the start of a process of rehabilitating the state institutions and disarming most of the militias. Hizballah was also forced to give up weapons, although it was permitted to continue carrying arms in south Lebanon in the struggle against Israel. Moreover, the Ta'if Agreement laid the foundation for establishing a new Maronite- Sunni order in Lebanon, with Syrian backing and support, relegating the larger Shi'ite community to the sidelines. Another challenge facing the organization was the Middle East peace process that began in 1991 and threatened to bring an end to the organization's struggle against Israel, thus seriously weakening one of its sources of legitimacy and power.[280]

In the face of these realities, Hizballah reinvented itself as a pragmatic organization, ostensibly ready to abandon commitment to its ideological concepts or at least to postpone their implementation until far into the future. At first, the organization expressed opposition to the Ta'if Agreement and was apparently responsible for the assassination of Lebanon's President Rene Mu'awad, in November 1989, a way to prevent the agreement's implementation.[281] However, it quite quickly came to terms with the "Tai'f Republic" and began taking steps toward becoming integrated into the latter's institutions.

Hizballah participated in the 1992 parliamentary elections and its "Loyalty to the Resistance" slate won eight seats. It also participated in the parliamentary elections of 1996 and 2000, and in the 1998 municipal elections.[282] Throughout these years, Hizballah engaged in contacts designed to bring it into the government coalition. As the organization's Secretary General Na'im al-Qasim explained: "Our decision to participate in the parliamentary elections in 1992 meant that it was possible to participate in the government ... [d]epending only on what government it is to be, and so far as we are concerned it has nothing to do with any matter of principle."[283]

In all of this, it was possible to observe a clear process of Lebanonization that the organization had undergone, as part of which it had in fact accepted the existence of the Lebanese state and had begun to work toward integration into its institutions. Already in the organization's platform for the 1992 parliamentary elections, it stated that Hizballah would work toward

preserving “One Lebanon,” though adding that “preserving one Lebanon and its affiliation with its Muslim and Arab environment, makes it incumbent on all of us to adhere to the resistance to the Zionist occupation and the liberation of the occupied lands.”[284]

In April 1997, as part of its effort to establish dialogue and even cooperation with all parties and political forces active in Lebanon—including the Maronites—Hizballah’s Secretary-General Hasan Nasrallah declared that: “Hizballah is a movement whose members are Lebanese, its leadership is Lebanese, the decision is Lebanese and it is made by a Lebanese leadership. The movement is fighting on Lebanese soil for the cause of liberating Lebanese territory and for the honor and freedom of the Lebanese people and the nation in general Hizballah is an Islamic-Lebanese movement.”[285]

In addition to its moves in the political arena, the organization expanded its activity within the Shi’ite community. With Iran’s generous assistance, it established a network of educational and cultural institutions, and also health and social welfare services. The latter included an Islamic health authority that operated pharmacies, clinics and even hospitals where thousands of people were treated every day. The organization also established a construction company that not only built houses, mosques and schools, but also paved roads and even supplied water to Shi’ite villages. Particularly prominent in all of this was its contribution to the reconstruction of thousands of houses damaged in the battles with Israel in south Lebanon.[286] In addition, Hizballah maintained a Martyrs’ (shuhada) Fund, which provided assistance to thousands of families of dead, injured and imprisoned Shi’ites.[287] However, it should be borne in mind that as the rehabilitation of the state institutions in Lebanon progressed, they began pushing aside and limiting the organization’s activities, and it was forced to concentrate on matters of education, health, and social welfare.

Of course, all this provided the basis for transforming Hizballah from a radical militia movement to a social-political organization which had at first tried to present itself as an alternative to the Lebanese state but gradually came to terms with the state’s existence and slowly became part of the political order.

In view of the progress made in the Arab-Israeli peace process, particularly in the years 1992 to 1996, the organization’s leaders began hinting that they might be ready to accept an Israeli-Lebanese peace agreement and to end the armed struggle against Israel. Hizballah apparently wanted to adopt the approach of the Islamist organizations in Egypt and Jordan regarding the peace process. They had come to the realization that they were unable to prevent a peace agreement between Israel and the Arab regimes in their countries, but also hoped and believed they could prevent the normalization of relations between the Arab world and Israel.[288]

Nevertheless, the impasse in the peace process, especially on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks during the latter half of the 1990s, allowed the organization to refrain from reaching a decision on the question of its future character and path and to continue to enjoy the best of both worlds. On the one hand, it worked toward integration into the Lebanese political system, becoming a legitimate part of the Lebanese political mosaic. On the other hand, it carried on the struggle against Israel, thus preserving its image and standing as a radical armed movement. There can be no doubt that the organization increased its circle of supporters thanks to its political activities, as well as its social welfare activities. But this was insignificant compared to the prestige and support gained within the Shi’ite community and Lebanese public opinion, as well as from Syria and Iran, because of its armed struggle against Israel. This struggle differentiated it from its rivals in the Shi’ite or Lebanese arena, made it unique, and added to its renowned glory.

In view of all this, the organization’s determination to ensure Israel’s continued presence in south Lebanon as much as possible is understandable. Ostensibly, one might have expected Hizballah to encourage the voices that began to be heard in Israel beginning in the mid-1990s calling for Israeli’s unilateral withdrawal from south Lebanon. All it had to do was to hint that it was ready to end its armed struggle against Israel if this happened, thus pushing Israeli policy and public debate toward a quick withdrawal. However, exactly the opposite occurred. After all, Israel’s continued presence in south Lebanon allowed the organization to maintain a struggle against it that ensured the organization’s relative advantage over all other Lebanese forces, especially its Shi’ite rivals.

Thus the organization spoke in vague terms every time it was called upon the discuss the question of its future in the event that Israel unilaterally withdrew from south Lebanon. Although the organization's spokesmen repeatedly claimed that its activities were focused on driving Israel out of Lebanon, they also repeated their commitment to the liberation of all Palestine, thus implying the possibility of continued armed struggle against Israel even if the latter withdrew its forces to the international border with Lebanon.[289]

Thus Hizballah gained the image of defending the Shi'ites of south Lebanon.[290] In the weeks before and after the Israeli withdrawal, the organization became a symbol and object of admiration throughout the Arab and Muslim world. Even the Lebanese government, which had viewed the organization as an element undermining its sovereignty, recognized it as representing Lebanese patriotism and thus worthy of support. A clear expression of international recognition was the meeting between UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Hasan Nasrallah during the former's administration because of the central role the UN had played and would play in Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon.[291]

Thus, the withdrawal from south Lebanon allowed the organization to hold victory celebrations and take up the positions Israel had evacuated. Hizballah's activists became lords over the region, while the Lebanese government was wary of deploying its forces and enforcing its sovereignty there. The organization even began organizing visits of Lebanese as well as Arab tourists to areas in south Lebanon from which Israel had withdrawn, during which the big thrill for tourists was organized stone-throwing at the Fatma Gate toward Israeli soldiers across the border. Nevertheless, the organization was careful to preserve order and calm along the border, and even prevented acts of vengeance against South Lebanese Army (SLA) soldiers who surrendered to it. These soldiers were turned over to the Lebanese authorities for trial.[292]

However, this alleged victory over Israel may be revealed as a false one and may mark the beginning of Hizballah's decline in standing and prestige. After

all, having no battle with Israel may in the future cost the organization some of its dynamism, uniqueness, and foreign support. It was the struggle against Israel that had effectively prevented the organization from sinking into the Lebanese political quagmire and becoming just one of many political parties operating in Lebanon.

An example of the serious problem already facing Hizballah was provided several weeks after the withdrawal from south Lebanon by the death of two Hizballah fighters in the village of Markaba in south Lebanon during a battle against the rival group Amal for control over the area Israel had left. The leaders of both groups were quick to calm things down and to present the incident as a local affair. Yet such clashes could occur many times in the future, and the struggle for influence will remain intense.[293]

Amal is indeed emerging as a serious rival of Hizballah in the battle for control of the Shi'ite street. Amal has a certain advantage over Hizballah in that it is a more deeply entrenched organization headed by a pragmatic, moderate leadership. Amal's approach reflects recognition of the Lebanese reality, and its readiness to use that framework for promoting Shi'ite interests can make it a more effective lobbying group. Many Shi'ites do indeed prefer Amal and view Hizballah as too radical. Amal's largely secular leadership also appeals more to many individuals.

The power balance and Amal's advantages over Hizballah may be seen in the parliamentary elections of the 1990s, and in the 1998 municipal elections in which Amal's candidates gained control over many Shi'ite strongholds in south Lebanon and the Biqua'a. Among these were the city of Tyre, the largest Shi'ite concentration in the south, and Baalbek, the largest and most important town in the Lebanese Biqa'a. Until then both had been considered Hizballah strongholds.[294]

However, the struggle against Amal is only one of the series of challenges facing Hizballah. In July 1997, Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli, former Hizballah secretary-general who left the organization when he lost a bid to lead it, announced the founding of a new organization called the "Revolution of the Hungry." Tufayli had hoped through this movement to lead a campaign of

civil disobedience for the purpose of advancing the Shi’ite community, which he claimed had been neglected by the governing institutions as well as by the leaderships of both Amal and Hizballah.[295]

The new movement’s founding was a kind of coming full circle for Hizballah, and also for Amal. After all, both were founded as protest movements by sectors of the Shi’ite community dissatisfied with the high-handedness and ineffectiveness of the current leaders, viewing them as part of an indifferent establishment. Hizballah’s own creation expressed the criticisms of many Shi’ite clerics regarding Amal’s moderate position and readiness to integrate into the existing Lebanese order. In addition, the founding of Hizballah was also an expression of frustration by many in the Shi’ite community who had not gained influence or leadership in Amal institutions. Thus, Hizballah was not just a militant group but also a fascinating coalition of forces within the Shi’ite community working toward advancing their interests under the guise of a comprehensive effort to improve the status of the Shi’ite community.[296] Yet now Hizballah had also become institutionalized and the object of criticism by those who felt left out by its composition.

As Musa al-Sadr had done before him, Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, the spiritual leader of Hizballah, held these elements together, assisted by the antiIsrael struggle as a political and ideological glue.[297] However, it is clear that among these political and social forces that have joined together in Hizballah, there are fissures and differences of opinion on political and personal grounds which have long been pushed aside because of the priority granted to the struggle against Israel but in time might break out onto the surface.

One problem, which also affects Hizballah’s relationship to Iran, is Fadlallah’s pretensions to the role of Shi’ite’s supreme spiritual leader (Marj’a Taqlid), a position that became vacant with the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989. In this ambition, Fadlallah found himself in confrontation with Iran’s spiritual leader Ayatollah ‘Ali Khamene’i. Thus far, the organization has indeed avoided involvement in this confrontation but at the price of distancing itself somewhat from Fadlallah.[298] The question of religious leadership over the Shi’ites remains unresolved and could cast a threatening

shadow over Iranian-Hizballah relations and even over the organization's internal cohesion.

However, Hizballah's main problem is rooted, as with Amal, in the fact that the group has become a part of the Lebanese political establishment. This is illustrated by its willingness, even eagerness, to join the Lebanese government. It is therefore no wonder that now Hizballah is being accused of no longer reflecting the misery and distress of the Shi'ite community in Lebanon, a claim on which Tyfayli wants to build. There is no doubt that the emergence of Tyfayli caused Hizballah considerable embarrassment. Indications of the organization's difficulty in directly facing up to Tufayli can be seen in its readiness to support the Lebanese government's moves against Tufayli and his movement.

The Lebanese government issued a warrant for Tufayli's arrest and took steps to prevent his supporters' activities. However, this was not enough to prevent Tufayli from continuing his efforts, although he maintained a low profile and for a time even went underground.[299] Moreover, in July 2000 he appeared at the graveside of the late Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad in Qurdaha on the Syrian shore for a condolence call and prayers for the soul of the departed. This showed Tufayli's aspirations to continue an active role in the Lebanese scene but also, more important, the fact that he enjoys the support and backing of Syria, which apparently wishes to use him as a card against the Lebanese regime and Hizballah.[300]

Hizballah, of course, remains a well-established, deep-rooted organization with broad support from the Shi'ite community, not to mention backing from Syria and Iran. Yet if Hizballah provides neither its constituents the passion of anti-Israel struggle nor its patrons a useful card in regional conflicts, how might this base be eroded?

Israel's withdrawal brought to the fore other issues on the Lebanese agenda. For some, especially the hard-core Maronites, the new focus is on Syrian presence in Lebanon, and voices have already been heard calling for the departure of Syrian forces from Lebanon.[301]

Others, especially members of the Shi’ite community, have an entirely different agenda and set of priorities. They are well aware that the new Lebanese order arising from the Syrian-backed Ta’if Agreement has left Lebanon a country under a Maronite-Sunni hegemony. The balance of power between these two communities, which have ruled Lebanon together since the founding of that state in 1943, has become more equal. Nevertheless, the Shi’ite community, which is now the largest community in Lebanon, has remained discriminated against in everything that has to do with apportioning of financial and regime resources.

Therefore, it may be assumed that the Shi’ites will make their voices heard demanding a fair share of the Lebanese national pie. Experience teaches that these demands could develop, sooner or later, into a violent confrontation, especially since they represent not just hunger for political power and resources, but also real economic distress in the urban slums, Biaq’a and the south. It may be assumed that in such a situation in the future, Hizballah will play a substantial, albeit not exclusive, role in the Shi’ite community’s struggle. Yet with Syria opposing its ambitions, Iran reluctant to become too entangled in internal Lebanese politics, and other groups fighting Hizballah (instead of cheering it on against Israel), this would be a far more difficult period for the organization.

Of course, it cannot be assumed that the group’s struggle against Israel is over, especially since such a strategy has certain attractions. Yet if Hizballah were to be responsible for renewing a cross-border war with Israel (on behalf of the unpopular Palestinians) and for bringing Israeli attacks on the south (bringing new flights of refugees and a halt to or even reversal of reconstruction), an antiIsrael battle would be far less popular than it was in the past.

The death of Hafiz al-Assad undoubtedly upset the apple cart from Syria’s point of view. The Syrians had a clear interest in encouraging Hizballah to continue its struggle against Israel along the Israeli-Lebanese international border. After all, in Syria’s view, shedding Israeli blood in south Lebanon gave Syria the only powerful bargaining chip it had in pressuring Israel to accept

Damascus's conditions for an Israeli-Syrian peace agreement. Hafiz al-Assad had raised this kind of use of violence to gain his political objectives to a fine art. He did not eschew brinkmanship, being prepared to deal with possible escalation and flare-up.

With Assad's passing, though, and given his son and successor Bashar's clear interest in firmly establishing his status at home, Syria's interest or temptation in risking a border war that could escalate into a direct Syrian-Israel confrontation has diminished. Israeli spokesmen have on more than one occasion warned that any escalation along the border will force Israel to strike with unprecedented force again Syrian targets in Lebanon, with all that would entail.[302]

As for Iran, its distance from the Israeli-Arab arena of confrontation spurred it on to ignite fires there. After all, it was Iran's regime that reaped the fruits of Hizballah's achievements—which comprised the Islamic revolution's only foreign success—without paying any price at all for them. Thus, Iran has a basic interest in fanning the flames along the border, though this might be limited by that country's own internal struggle.

Nevertheless, the final decision was, and remains, in Hizballah's hands. The organization is aware of the great profits it could gain with the renewal of the struggle against Israel, but it also knows what harm might be done to its image and status inside Lebanon if its actions create a conflagration that could spread all over Lebanon. In such an event, it could lose a great deal of its legitimacy both inside Lebanon and in the international arena, as well as the support of the Shi'ite community, which might come to see it more as provocateur than as protector.

The organization has preferred to remain vague and to spread contradictory messages regarding its future path. For example, at funeral services for members of the organization killed in the clashes with Amal in Markaba in July 2000, Hizballah's Deputy Secretary General Na'im al-Qasim declared, "There are those who tell us how nice things are at present, is peace not sweet and is reaching an understanding with Israel not logical and desirable? On the other hand, there are those who now wish to turn into revolutionaries

although they were not like that in the past, and they ask why we are not shooting at Israeli soldiers standing opposite us ... We answer all of these people that we believe in Jihad and resistance and we will not deviate from this belief, but we will choose our own tactics and will not be dragged along by provocation. We conduct ourselves with wisdom, intelligence and Jihad, in a manner that incorporates all of this. Therefore we will not show our hand."[303] On another occasion, Na'im added: "This stage [in the struggle against Israel] has not finished, in view of the fact that the Palestinian [track of the peace negotiations] is in trouble, the Syrian track is stuck and the other elements of the Arab-Israeli conflict have also remained unchanged."[304]

The organization's Secretary-General Hasan Nasrallah explained in an interview that: "Hizballah is based on opposition to the Zionist project in our region. Hizballah adheres to this idea ... The expulsion of Israel from the region and the liberation of Palestine and Jerusalem form the Hizballah's principal belief, and as such they are more sacred than a set goal ... However, the question before us is our order of priorities in the next stage. There is no doubt that Hizballah enjoys a certain status in the Arab world. We want to preserve this and harness this status in favor of the awakening of the entire nation, to reinforce the condition of hostility towards our Israeli enemy to ensure that Israel was and has remained our enemy. Towards this end, we will invest efforts in formulating our opposition to normalization, and in order to perpetuate the isolation and siege of Israel, at the level of the people and after that at the cultural and economic level."[305]

However, the organization did take care to retain a pretext to continue its struggle against Israel, at the time and place it chooses. This pretext focuses on the claim that Israel's withdrawal is not complete, since it has retained some Lebanese territory. Reference is mainly to the Shab'a Farms, which Lebanon claims form part of its lands. Israel claims, however, and the UN agrees, that they are part of the Golan Heights, in other words part of Syria, and therefore Israel does not have to withdraw from them in the framework of UN Resolution 425. Hizballah can hardly count on Syria to agree that this land should be given to Lebanon.

The issue of the Lebanese prisoners, ‘Abd al-Karim ‘Ubayd and Mustafa Dirani, being held by Israel as leverage to obtain the release of a captured Israeli airman has remained an open issue for the organization. Moreover, Hizballah’s military wing continues to operate and is deployed like any army along the border with Israel. It has established observation points and armed patrols along the border.

A major regional crisis as a result of the collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations or the lack of any progress in the Syrian-Israeli track may encourage Iran and Syria, Hizballah’s main allies, to pressure it to resume military struggle against Israel. The organization may choose as an alternative option the resumption of terror activity against Israeli and Jewish targets outside Israel, or use Palestinians living in Lebanon. Indeed, according to Israeli intelligence sources, Hizballah has been training Palestinians, mainly members of the Islamic Jihad under Ramadan Shalah, for this purpose. Some of these individuals already took part in the beginning of 2000 in some Hizballah attacks against Israeli targets in south Lebanon.[306]

Indeed, on October 7, 2000, a few days after the eruption of the Palestinian intifada, Hizballah abducted three Israeli soldiers in the Shaba‘a Farms region. A few days later, Hasan Nasrallah announced that his men had kidnapped another Israeli senior reserve officer, promising to continue the struggle against Israel along the border.[307] In the months that followed, Hizballah continued its attacks in the Shaba‘a region. For some time, Israel refrained from any retaliation but, on the night of April 16, 2001, the Israeli air force attacked a Syrian radar position in Mt. Lebanon, signaling the beginning of a new policy in Lebanon. The attack was a response to an attack by Hizballah on an Israeli position in the Shaba‘a Farms three days earlier.[308] Although Hizballah continued its attack against Israeli targets in the Shaba‘a Farms, it was clear that the new Israeli policy increased Hizballah’s dilemma as to what should be its future course. The increasing criticism in Lebanon against the attacks on Israel, as endangering Lebanon’s political stability and economic growth, led to an apologetic response from Hizballah, for example, a declaration by Muhammad Ra‘d, Nasrallah’s deputy, in summer 2001, according to which the Hizballah would take into consideration the tourist season in Lebanon before making any military moves against Israel.[309]

Thus, while Israel had not been able to stop all attacks by its withdrawal, it had created a political situation that at least constrained Hizballah and forced it to confine most attacks to one small part of the border area.

To conclude, the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon should be considered a big achievement for Hizballah. At the same time this achievement presents the organization with a difficult dilemma: whether to end its military struggle against Israel and become an ordinary Lebanese political party or to continue the struggle against Israel with all its consequences. Within this choice is embedded an equally hard, though less obvious, problem, forcing Hizballah to transform itself from a revolutionary to a reformist group in trying to make Lebanon an Islamic state.

Choosing armed struggle abroad and revolution at home would isolate Hizballah and reduce its base of support. But selecting an end to foreign struggle and reformism at home takes away Hizballah's past political advantages and opens it to splits and complaints that it has failed or become an establishment group. Thus, the possible "normalization" of Hizballah may become Israel's revenge on the organization that first helped force it to remain on the south Lebanon battlefield and then helped force it to withdraw from that area.

[272] Ha'aretz, May 25, 2000.

[273] Ha'aretz, July 28, 2000.

[274] See Hizballah's Secretary-General Hasan Nasrallah's interview with al-Jazira TV, May 27, 2000; see also: <http://www.moqawama.org][http://www.moqawama.org]]> (Hizballah's official Web site).

[275] For historical background on the Hizballah see Eyal Zisser, “Hizballah in Leba- non—At the Crossroads,” in Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar (eds.), Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East (London: Frank Cass, 1997), pp. 90—110; Waddah Sharrara, Dawlat Hizballah, Lubnan Mujtama‘a Islamiyya (Hizballah’s State, Lebanon—an Islamic Society) (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-Nashr, 1996); Hala Jaber, Hezbollah, Born with a Vengeance (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Shimon Shapira, Hizbullah bein Iran ve Levanon (Hizbullah between Iran and Lebanon) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2000).

[276] For more see Foud Ajami, The Vanished Imam—Musa Sadr and the Shia of Lebanon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 16—23.

[277] Ibid., pp. 125–140; see also Richard Augustus Norton, Amal and the Shi‘a: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987).

[278] See Shapira, pp. 77—133.

[279] Hizballah, Nass al-Risala al-Maftuha alati Wajahatha Hizballah ila al-Mustad‘afin fi Lubnan (Hizballah’s Open Letter to the Oppressed in Lebanon) (Beirut: n.p., February 1985).

[280] Zisser, pp. 99—107; see also William Harris, Faces of Lebanon (Princeton: Markus Weiner Publishers, 1996), pp. 237—326.

[281] William B. Harris, “Lebanon,” in Ami Ayalon (ed.), MECS (Middle East Contemporary Survey), Vol. 13 (1989), (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991). p. 524.

[282] Harris, “Lebanon,” in Ami Ayalon (ed.), MECS, Vol. 16 (1992), pp. 598—608; see also Harris, MECS, Vol. 20 (1996), pp. 490—495, and Vol. 22 (1998), pp. 414—416; Nizar Hamzeh, “Lebanon’s Hizballah: From Islamic Revolution to Parliamentary Accommodation,” Third World Quarterly, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1993), pp. 321—337.

[283] Radio Nur, November 3, 1997.

[284] Radio Nur, August 5, 1992.

[285] See an interview with Hasan Nasrallah, al-Sharq al-Awsat, March 16, 1997; Da’irat al-‘Alaqat al-‘Amma wal-I‘lam fi Mu’assasat Jihad al-Bina’, Sit Sanawat min al- Jihad wal-Bina’ (Six years of Jihad and of Construction) (Beirut: n.p., 1994).

[286] Hala Jaber, Hezbollah, Born with a Vengeance, pp. 145—168; Shapira, pp. 140—149.

[287] See Eli Hurvitz, Ha-Dereg Ha-Tsva’i shel Ha-Hizballah, Diyukan Hevrati (The Military Wing of Hizballah: A Social Profile) (MA Thesis, Tel Aviv University, September 1998), pp. 134–171.

[288] See Shapira, pp. 205–213; Zisser, pp. 101–108; Richard Augustus Norton, “Walking Between Raindrops: Hizballah in Lebanon,” Mediterranean Politics, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1994), pp. 81–102; Al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya, Safahat ‘Izz, ‘Ard wa Tawthiq li‘Amaliyyat al-Muqawama al-Islamiyya Khilal ‘Amm 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997 (Pages of Glory, The Islamic Resistance Operations during the Years 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997) (Beirut: n.p., 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997).

[289] See Nasrallah’s interview with Der Spiegel, October 30, 1997; see also Mahmud Suwayd, al-Islam waFilastin, Hiwar Shamil ma‘a al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah (Islam and the

Question of Palestine, a Dialogue with Muhammad Husayn_Fadlallah) (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1998).

[290] See Ha’aretz, March 27, May 22 & 23, 2000.

[291] Reuters, June 22 & 23, 2000.

[292] See al-Nahar, July 20; Ha’aretz, July 28 & 30, 2000.

[293] R. Beirut, July 16 & 17, 2000.

[294] Harris, MECS, Vol. 22 (1998), pp. 415–416.

[295] Harris, MECS, Vol. 21 (1997), p. 411.

[296] See Waddah Sharrara, Dawlat Hizballah, Lubnan Mujtama‘a Islamiyya (Hizballah’s State, Lebanon—an Islamic Society) (Beirut: Dar al-Nahar li-Nashr, 1996); Hala Jaber, Hezbollah, Born with a Vengeance (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 774; Shapira, pp. 134–171.

[297] For more on Fadlallah see Martin Kramer, Fadlallah, haMatspen shel Hizballah (Fadlallah: The Compass of Hizbullah (The Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1998).

[298] See Shapira, pp. 192–199.

[299] Harris, MECS, Vol. 21 (1997), p. 411.

[300] Al-Nahar, July 20, 2000.

[301] See for example articles by al-Nahar’s editor, Ghassan Tuwayni, al-Nahar, June 5 & 8, July 10, 2000.

[302] See declarations by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Israel Defense Force Chief of Staff Sha’ul Mofaz, Ha’aretz, May 25, 2000.

[303] Radio Nur, July 23, 2000.

[304] Al-Mustaqbal, July 22, 2000.

[305] See interviews with Nasrallah, al-Jazira TV, May 27, 2000; al-Safir, June 25, 2000; see also al-Nahar, July 20, 2000.

[306] Ha’aretz, February 25, 2000; May 26, 2000.

[307] Ma‘ariv, October 10, 2000, November 19, 2000.

[308] Ha’aretz, April 17, 2001, al-Hayat, April 18, 2001.

[309] Al-Hayat, August 6, 2001.

** 7. Balancing State and Society: The Islamic Movement in Kuwait

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The events surrounding the 1990—1991 Iraqi attempt to destroy the state of Kuwait created a societal vacuum. Everything Kuwaitis had believed during the preceding decades regarding the positive nature of traditional Arab nationalism suffered a blow. This crisis in belief created the conditions for a further Westernization of Kuwaiti society.

Conservative Islamic forces that sought to politicize Islam and impose strict Islamic practices and behavior on society and state felt the need to counter these moral and behavioral changes, while also taking advantage of the resulting ideological vacuum. In order to accomplish this task these forces relied on the strength and zeal of their historical experience and, in particular, the credibility they had gained in confronting the Iraqi occupation. They also exploited the sense of alienation among some sectors of Kuwaiti society.

This study will analyze the conditions that led to the Islamic revival in Kuwait, as well as the forces and ideas behind it. It will attempt to explain how a welfare society such as Kuwait's, with a per capita income of $14,772, can support a strong Islamic movement.[310] Also discussed are the regional shifts and influences that can play a role in the rise and fall of national political and cultural currents. Shedding light on Islamic groups in Kuwait should further the understanding of the dynamics affecting Islamic movements in the Arab world as a whole.

Contrary to popular thought, societal groups in Kuwait do hold state power in check. Formal and informal groups based on different affiliations (class, urban/ rural, tribal, Islamic) bring to the government's attention their particular inter- ests.[311] Kuwait has more than 60 voluntary associations representing political trends, religious, civic, and professional groups. The state plays each of these groups off against the others, informally shifting its alliances.

As the owner of the means of production (oil) and the country's main employer (92 percent of the work force), the state provides the ruling Sabah family with the power to influence and sometimes control political events.[312] The state elite in Kuwait assigns a constant flow of values and rules to the different players in society, while permitting a relatively wide margin of freedom of expression to individuals and the press, which allows for serious debate on political issues. State policies and the authoritative distribution of values were responsible, during the 1970s and 1980s (outside the normal parliamentary institutions), for the Islamic forces' access to state resources, privileges, and rights.[313]

The Kuwaiti model of politics can be seen as an experiment in flexible pluralistic corporatism, where the state legitimizes certain groups at the expense of others.[314] The complicated interaction between the state's ruling family, formal groups, and society with all of its informal underpinning, is a dynamic mix of fluid corporatism and restricted pluralism.[315] This multiplicity of interests makes older, more authoritarian methods of control outmoded. Attempts to use authoritarianism in such an environment would only complicate the political process and engender ongoing crisis.

Throughout the Middle East, the Arab defeat in the June 1967 war opened the door for the dormant Islamic forces that Nasserism and Arab nationalism had shut out in the early 1950s.[316] As a result, when states faced internal opposition from pan-Arab nationalist and leftist opposition forces, some in power felt that they could depend on the newly aroused Islamic forces to counter them. The Lebanese civil war starting in 1975 and the role of both Palestinian and leftist Lebanese forces in it were quite alarming to the Kuwaiti government, because of relations between the Lebanese left and some Palestinian groups on the one hand and the Kuwaiti opposition on the other. The existence in Kuwait of a large Palestinian community added to this fear.

In response, the government dissolved Parliament in 1976 and reached out to those who were not critical of its decision. This marked the beginning of an informal, undocumented government alliance with the then-passive,

nonradical, and nonpolitical Islamic forces in Kuwait. The government rewarded the Islamic Social Reform Society (Al-Islah al-Ijtima‘i), which had not condemned the dissolution of Parliament, by appointing its chairman, Yusef al-Hajji, to the position of minister of awqaf (religious endowments).[317]

The success of Iran’s Islamic revolution also spawned waves of religious revival. While the Sunni Muslims of the Social Reform Society were deeply suspicious of Shi’ite Iran’s intentions, they nonetheless found the Iranian model to be proof of the adaptability of Islam to the modern era.[318] It inspired them to become more vocal and aggressive in their attempts to Islamicize society and gain a share of power. Their ability to infiltrate the government bureaucracy increased, and they strengthened old ties with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

As in most Middle Eastern countries, in Kuwait prior to the mid-1970s few women wore the Islamic hijab (which permits only the hands and face to show). Many people prayed, but the elderly were the most religious. Restrictions on the mixing of the sexes were not rigidly observed, and regulations inhibiting women’s participation in sports and many kinds of work were slowly loosening. In the 1970s, female students joined their male counterparts in classes at Kuwait University, opening the way for a coed university. Activities were jointly planned, regardless of sex.

In most Middle Eastern societies during the 1950s and 1960s, the majority of Muslims expressed their commitment to Islam through cultural and spiritual manifestations rather than in political forums. Belief in Islam underpinned the moral rectitude of the community, where followers were asked to remember God by doing good and caring for others.

After 1979 in Kuwait, Islamic forces seemed increasingly bold, as secular nationalist forces lost many of their traditional bases of power such as the teachers and students associations. In most nongovernmental organizations, every election after 1979 was characterized by an attempt on the part of Islamic forces to gain control.[319]

On the economic level, the movement was able to build a network in every mosque and neighborhood, and major institutions founded in the mid-1970s complemented their power. For instance, Bayt al-Tamwil (Finance House) became the second biggest bank in Kuwait. The movement built and solidified its base in the 1980s. Kuwaiti Islamists became key players in the financial support given to Islamic movements in Afghanistan, Egypt, Algeria, and Sudan.

Since 1980, Islamic forces have consisted of three main groups: the mainstream Muslim Brotherhood, whose base is in the Social Reform Society; the more marginal Ancestral (Salaf) Islamic group, which has its base in the Heritage group (al-Turath);[320] and the Cultural Social Society (Jam‘iyyat al-Thaqafah al-Ijtima‘iyah), which is under the influence of the forces inspired by the Iranian revolution and represents the interests of segments of the Shi’ite community (20 to 30 percent of the citizenry.)[321]

The strength of the Islamic movement, as expressed primarily in the Social Reform Society, was clearly demonstrated during the 1981 parliamentary elections, the first after the dissolution of Parliament in 1976.[322] In the elections, the secular pan-Arabist forces were defeated by the Islamists, who became the only organized political group in Parliament. Although a minority, they were influential, shrewdly focusing on strengthening their alliance with the state.[323]

The Kuwaiti government felt that co-opting the Islamic current in the bureaucracy would soften its appeal, while at the same time boosting government legitimacy. Such a boost was sorely needed following the second dissolution of Parliament in 1986, which prompted both secularist and Islamic forces to confront the government on a host of issues, most of them dealing with government accountability.

By 1981, Islamist influence had spread to the teachers association and from there to the Ministry of Education. This laid the groundwork for the

imposition of a more conservative school curriculum. Books in Arabic began citing parables from the Quran rather than from modern sources. The secular and ‘open’ poetry of the 1970s was increasingly replaced by that of a religious and conservative nature. First-grade Arabic primers were revised to include examples of children praying and eating, drinking, and thanking God for what they had. No examples were given of people working, producing, drawing, singing, dancing and so on.[324]

National day, on which boys and girls from all grades performed national songs and dances for parents, educators, officials and the media, was challenged on religious grounds. In 1986, it took a threat of resignation by the minister of education, Hassan al-Ibrahim, to prevent the cancellation of the government- approved ceremony. The celebration has since been abolished (though it was revived informally by teenagers after the Gulf War.) [325]

The Islamic movement’s influence during the 1980s was also felt in the Ministry of Information. Television programs became more conservative and censorship increased.[326] The ministry censored all kinds of books, including those critical of the Islamic current. Conversely, books and tapes with narrow interpretations of Islam flooded the market.

Islamic groups including the mainstream Muslim Brotherhood controlling the Social Reform Association, the minority Salafi organization, and Jam‘iyyat al-Thaqafah representing the Shi’ite community, have demonstrated exceptional organizational skills over the years. It seems natural that Islamic forces would target influential associational and professional groups and use them to further their cause. The amount of funding, equipment, and staffing available to the Islamic groups was much greater than what had previously been available to any political group in the Middle East.[327] These groups are responsible, by and large, for the introduction of more formal and organized politics in Kuwait and the region as a whole. The Islamic movement made the best use possible of the diffuse nature of informal groups based on such institutions as tribe and diwaniyya (traditional meeting place for men) in Kuwaiti society. As stated above, in the 1980s, the Islamic movement became the only organized mass-based political force in the country.

In addition to the state's leniency regarding interest groups furthering Islamic doctrines, cultural factors played an important role in the spread of the Islamists' doctrines. Mosques, organized prayer, and the various teachings of Islam helped make the population more accepting of narrowly-based political Islam. The overall conservative attitude of society toward women, dress codes, and religion exemplified the overlap between social conservatism and political Islam. By preaching the leading role of the elders over the young, of men over women, and the right of men to have more than one wife, the Islamic message attracted conservative and less-educated people, particularly among the Bedouin.

In the mid-1980s, the Islamic movement in Kuwait ceased to be an expression of disillusionment by the urban elite, and the marriage between Bedouin conservative values and the movement matured. Society's change from traditional to modern, and from rural (desert) to urban, isolated the Bedouin and made them more open to messages that would help them define the world, simplify its meaning, and find (sometimes superficial) solutions to its problems. The majority of the relatively deprived Bedouin tribes have moved from the sidelines to the forefront in demanding societal recognition and equality, the basis for which is found in Islam.[328] Several influential populist Islamists have risen from among their ranks. A similar trend of outspokenness can be seen in urban families of lesser influence seeking equal footing with the more cosmopolitan and traditionally powerful families.

This process of "desertization," as the Bahraini thinker Muhammad Ansari labels it, is among the most destructive processes in the Middle East.[329] It undermines modern life by bringing into urban society the ultraconservative values of the desert and mixing them with Islamist populism. The process destroys the hope of a nation-state whose urban centers can assimilate and acculturate newcomers. It puts the national civil framework at risk, and prevents it from maturing. Desertization of the city and the state entails populism and an increased urban-Bedouin divide. Religious fervor, in addition to creating a divisiveness based on values, also builds a sectarian (Shi'ite-Sunni or Bedouin-urban) division on the most limited and narrowly defined issues: prayer, time of prayer, style of dress, and so on.[330] Short of

authoritarian repression, in order to counter populism and Islamist radicalism the state has no choice but to undergo a process of democratization, societal neutrality, and egalitarianism. In the new milieu, repression will work only on a temporary basis.

In Kuwait, the attitudes of the Islamists toward modernity are of a dual nature. Somewhat ironically, the overwhelming majority of Islamists among Kuwait University students are in the colleges of science; their conservatism is somehow wedded to the fruits of modern technology. But just as the colleges of science provide a technical view, the social sciences provide a global view. The educational system at Kuwait University and in the rest of the country, as well as the region, has failed to provide a convincing set of ideas packaged in an indigenous social-science framework capable of assimilating students into more modern and forward-looking ways of thinking in both religion and secularism. The science and technical schools teach skills and techniques, not values or concepts for comprehending these changes.

The college of Shari’a at Kuwait University, like those in many other Arab universities, is a school of traditional religious indoctrination. This school also produces Islamist activists since most of the professors tend to be either fundamentalist or orthodox. Then comes the question of what type of employment will a “College of Shari’a” graduate get.

But in the world of Islam, flexibility is part of the process. In choosing between the doctrine and its historical application, practical considerations have always influenced its interpretation. This approach has developed a concept of allowing for a choice between the lesser of two evils, even if the decision taken would violate Islamic law. For instance, if forbidding alcohol would make more people consume it—profiting criminals—or encourage them to use drugs instead, such a law would be counterproductive.[331] This means that countries like the United Arab Emirates, Syria, or Egypt that allow the consumption of alcohol are not introducing an anti-Islamic practice. Interpretation can allow for much flexibility in Islam. However, this flexibility is not always observed. In the last two decades such flexibility has been lost to the conservative interpretation.

Further, the Islamic current carries with it a message of respect for the self and for Arab and Islamic history. It provides orientations for individuals, providing moral guidelines to the young in a society experiencing rapid change. However, the moment is also ripe for excess. Like any movement seeking power and influence and believing in the sole accuracy of its interpretations, it seeks full obedience by society to its version of truth.

Kuwait's relative wealth has had quite an impact on Islamic politics. Wealth by and large has defused the radical nature of the movement, and its moderating effect has helped Kuwait avoid the Algerian, Sudanese, and Egyptian experiences. In Kuwait, because of a combination of factors related to government policy on the one hand and relative wealth on the other, Islamists and liberals talk, debate, and vote against each other. But wealth also means that the Islamists have independent bases of power, which give them the ability to support other Islamists and also embark on larger social programs.

After its liberation in 1991, Kuwaiti society went through a searching selfevaluation. Many young Kuwaitis looked to the United States as a model for creating a new way of life. Their contact with the U.S. military, and its role in the liberation, had created among them a respect and fondness for Americans. Exiled Kuwaitis who had lived for almost a year in more open Western environments began to appreciate the need for change in their own society and values.

On the other hand, social conservatism also spread among equally large sectors. For example, Kuwaitis who had lived in Saudi Arabia during the invasion were impressed by the religiosity of the Saudis. Many religiously conservative Kuwaitis felt that the invasion and occupation were punishment from God for the Kuwaitis' lavish lifestyle. Only through Islam could the situation be rectified. During this period, Islamists needed to build on the confidence gained in confronting the Iraqi occupation and at the same time counter movements toward opening up society. The opportunity was at hand because the secular forces were weak and fragmented, and the government

was less capable of dealing with new societal demands. The government's own legitimacy was at stake.

Three Islamist political groups appeared in this period. The Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM) has its roots in the Muslim Brotherhood of Kuwait and in the Social Reform, an influential Islamic associational group that had been gaining strength since the 1970s. The Islamic Popular Alliance (IPA), better known as al-Salaf (Ancestral), has roots in the Society for the Rebirth of Islamic Tradition. This group, which has been attracting followers since the 1980s, is more literal than the Constitutional Movement in its interpretation of Islam. The Islamic National Alliance (INA) has roots in al-Jam'iyyah al- Thaqafiyyah, a group attractive to segments of Kuwait's Shi'ite population that was dissolved in 1989 after bombings in Saudi Arabia were linked to some of its members.

In addition, after Kuwait's liberation in 1991 a nongovernmental association was attempted by Islamists linked to the Social Reform Society in order to practice what can "direct the public to do good and refrain from evil," similar to what is done in Saudi Arabia. According to its general secretary, Fahid Abd al-Rahman al-Shwayyib, the group's goal was to enlist 1,000 men and establish a religious police with "a branch in every neighborhood to patrol and watch citizens, in order to spread the teachings of Islam."[332] The government responded by discrediting the practice, stating that "the police will not allow any group to harm any citizen or resident in Kuwait in any form, verbal or physical."[333]

Several incidents of violence involving radical Islamists took place in Kuwait City toward the end of 1991 and prior to the October 1992 elections. At the time, some extremists were caught holding large quantities of weapons and explosives. There were shooting incidents involving the Romanian circus, which was visiting Kuwait, due to the costumes worn by women performers, and explosions occurred in several video stores.[334] This wave of violence came to a halt as Parliament played its part in initiating appropriate legislation and state security sought weapons caches and made arrests.

In this context Abdallah al-Mutawa, director of the Social Reform Association, saw the need for an immediate application of Shari’a, including severing thieves’ hands, outlawing interest rates, segregating the sexes, and enforcing the dress code for women. Al-Mutawa also announced the need to change the wording of the Kuwaiti constitution from “The State’s religion is Islam, and the Islamic Shari’a is a source of legislation” to “Islamic Shari’a is the only and main source of legislation.”[335] Likewise, Shayikh Jasim Muhalhal al-Yasin, secretary of the Constitutional Movement, called for the application of the Shari’a immediately.[336]

Because the constitution, written in 1962, made Islam the state religion and Shari’a a source (though not the only one) of legislation, Kuwait did not ban awqaf (Islamic foundations), nor did it follow anti-Islamic policies, as did many socialist and revolutionary Middle Eastern states. It interpreted its rules on the basis of reason and necessity rather than on a particular interpretation of the Shari’a. The application of the Shari’a in a literal sense is, therefore, a controversial and oft-debated issue in Kuwait.

The Shari’a is applied in laws governing personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and waqf, but other laws strike a balance between the Shari’a and social and international practices. For example, alcohol is prohibited by law, but punishment is not administered according to the Shari’a. Those who trade in alcohol receive imprisonment, while a person consuming it in public can be fined and may at a maximum be imprisoned for a certain period. There is no punishment for consuming alcohol in the privacy of one’s own home in Kuwait.[337] Furthermore, the state tends to turn a blind eye on this matter.

It is precisely such flexibility in Kuwaiti laws that Islamists want to change. Islamic groups have increasingly distributed cassettes in commercial centers and in front of mosques that preach the need to practice the Shari’a, in particular its more conservative orthodox interpretation. Since 1991, most of the Islamists’ leading representatives have begun writing actively in the daily newspapers.

The emir of Kuwait, sensing the changing current, reacted immediately by establishing a higher consultative committee to work toward completing the enforcement of Islamic law. Established in December 1991, the committee was an attempt to institutionally co-opt the Islamists, many of whom were opposed to its formation. It had a long-term mandate but no enforcement capabilities; it has yet to issue a recommendation.

Despite the invigoration of the Islamist movement, relations between secular groups, intellectuals, and Islamists in Kuwait continued to be fairly positive. The main issue—the return to parliamentary life—dominated political discourse in the country throughout 1991 until the October elections in 1992. The Islamic groups continued, for political reasons, to be conciliatory toward non- Islamic groups.

The 1992 elections created a new atmosphere in Kuwait. The parliamentarians from Islamist groups believed that the vote could be interpreted as a mandate for the Islamicization of the country’s laws and regulations. This led the assembly during its first year to introduce an array of measures, which ultimately failed, that can be characterized as contradictory to anything expected from a democratic institution.

At the time, the Parliament consisted of the religious right, the center, and the traditional left. The fourteen or so members of the religious right led the hesitant center—consisting of another fourteen or more members, who feared losing their local and tribal constituency—on most religious and conservative issues. The secular-oriented liberal group of former Arab nationalists, the Democratic Forum (al-Manbar al-Dimuqrati), which was formed after liberation, and several other independent and liberal factions appeared fragmented.[338] Elected six years after the suspension of the previous Parliament—a period that included the Iraqi invasion—the members wasted a good deal of time on issues that should have been settled or dismissed quickly.

The suggestion by five Islamic parliamentarians to establish an “Authority to Direct the Public to Do Good and Refrain from Evil” is an example of the dominant trend.[339]

<quote>

The authority’s main role would be to fight foreign behavior that infringes on Kuwaiti traditions and contradicts Islam This is done by planning and supervising public behavior In order to achieve its goals, the authority will hear complaints from citizens regarding any phenomena contradicting public decency It will also open offices in every area and district It will call … Ministries such as Education and Information and Interior to inform them of non-Islamic behavior. The authority will study monthly reports that the Ministry of the Interior will commit itself to providing regarding cases of morality, regardless of whether it was transferred to court or was kept and pardoned … The authority will give lectures, distribute pamphlets, and print books.[340]

</quote>

Khalid al-‘Adwah, a leading Islamist in parliament, called for making “Kuwait the state of belief and Quran.”[341] Another leading Islamist from the Islamic Constitutional Movement said this was the only way to solve moral degeneration in Kuwait.[342] Another parliamentarian, Mufaraj Nahar al-Mutayri, explained that “police station files are full of moral crimes..... We are a country that went through a difficult crisis, and God put at our disposal all the countries of the world to defend us; our land has been liberated by those among us who contributed to the poor in the rest of the world.”[343]

By extrapolation, it is time to thank God—not politics or politicians or even the Western coalition—by practicing Islam and returning to its doctrines.[344] The nongovernmental associations controlled by the Islamists released a statement calling for the application of the authority project.[345]

The suggestion to establish an authority to publicly enforce Islamic law initiated a major and divisive debate. In general, the Islamist deputies’ assertions that government laws were non-Islamic—based, of course, on their narrow interpretation of Islam—led to the collapse of the alliance between the Islamists and liberals as opposition forces, an alliance forged

during the years after Parliament was banned in 1986. During this debate, in some cases the differences between the branches of the opposition were greater than the differences between the opposition as a whole and the government. In the end, the minority of secular and liberal deputies realized to what ends the Islamic groups would use the coalition.[346] Columnists in major newspapers blasted the proposed Authority and succeeded in defeating it.[347]

Another divisive issue that captured the country's attention for several months was the niqab. The issue started with a November 1991 incident in which the dean of the faculty of medicine at Kuwait University attempted to prohibit medical students in laboratories, for reasons of safety, from wearing the niqab, which covers the entire body, including the face and hands. This matter, involving four students, was given priority by the Islamists later elected to Parliament. Month after month this issue took the Assembly's time. Parliamentary committees, such as those on education and legislation, were consumed with following the matter up. The Islamist parliamentarians tried to issue legislation nullifying the dean's decision prohibiting the niqab; university professors protested parliament's interference. Jamal al-Kindari, secretary of the educational committee, advised the university "not to challenge the Parliament."[348]

Furthermore, Islamic parliamentarians initially approved the segregation by gender of the coeducational Kuwait University, whose president was a woman. In December 1994, a vote for segregation failed to garner a majority by one vote. The government had lobbied heavily against the measure, as had liberal deputies and Minister of Higher Education Ahmad al-Rube'i, creating something of an alliance between liberals and the government. This alliance once again prevailed in February 1995, when the Islamists failed to push through a vote of no confidence against al-Rube'i.

Also in 1994, 35 members of Parliament signed and delivered a petition to the emir regarding the Shari'a and the changing of the second article of the constitution to make Shari'a "the main source of legislation" (instead of a main source).[349] In fact, all elected members of Parliament signed the petition, with the exception of six liberals, who were

accused by Islamists of laxness in their faith. Despite this apparent support, such a measure would not pass easily, because it would require the agreement of two-thirds of Parliament (including the cabinet ministers) and the approval of the emir. Although the MPs signed the petition, no bill actually proposing the change was ever bought to the floor of Parliament.

However, the segregation law of Kuwait University did pass in 1996, and society, not only intellectuals, went through intense debates on the matter. Finally a compromise formula favorable to the Islamists was found that allowed Kuwait University to be coed for five years. The compromise also included noninterference in coed private schools. The passage of the law was a setback to liberal forces. Two days after the law was passed the university announced it could not apply the law for practical budgetary reasons, since Kuwait University had been coed for more than 20 years. However, five years have passed with the Islamic groups and representatives in Parliament continuously bringing up the issue making the work of the Minister of Education, Dr. Musaid Al-Haroun, quite difficult. Every year Parliament froze the university's budget and asked about steps towards segregation. The university segregated the cafeterias and some classes, hoping Parliament would forget the issue, but in the end, parliament had its way and the University had to segregate its classes in 2002.

Thus, some sectors of society considered certain activities to be heretical, while others viewed them as personal freedoms, and saw the Islamists' proposed laws as undemocratic and out of touch with the age. Journalists and opinion makers, and large elements of public opinion, attacked the suggested legislation, themselves putting pressure on parliamentarians to vote against these bills.

Thus while the Islamic movement won over many people, especially to greater religious observance, its more narrowly based interpretations of Islam— on issues of dress, modernity, East-West relations, personal freedom, and the need to control society and state behavior—alienated many who might have been sympathetic to a more moderate approach. Some saw the Islamists' claim that "Islam is the solution" for Kuwait today as a repeat of simplistic, ultimately unsuccessful, ideologies such as "Arab unity" or "the liberation of Palestine," heralded as the solution in earlier decades.

The Parliament elected in October 1996 was in some ways similar to the Parliament elected in 1992, though half the members were new. The main substantive difference was the presence of more members—21 percent—who tended toward cooperation with the government on at least some issues. But the hardcore support for the Islamic movement, including among some independents, continued to be high (14 percent). Now, however, more of them came from the Salaf movement and fewer from the Islamic Constitutional Movement. Other groups included eleven secular members critical of or opposed to the govern- ment[350] and four Shi'ite members who sometimes voted with the Islamists. Such a divided Parliament would have difficulty building consensus, yet the Islamists were able to get more than half the vote on any serious Islamic issue, such as gender segregation in Kuwait University or the application of the Shari'a.[351]

The new Parliament again sought the application of the Shari'a by suggesting a change in Article 2 of the constitution, though the opposition to this proposal rose from four members to nine.[352] Many others who voted for the suggestion did so out of concern for their image, knowing the emir would veto the legislation. A new issue was a parliamentary challenge to mixed-gender fashion shows, though the government paid little attention to the request. This added to the anger and mistrust between Islamic members of Parliament and the government.[353]

After the October 1996 election, the divisive atmosphere between liberals and Islamists increased, especially in the face of an Islamist-led campaign against several university professors and writers. For example, 'Alya Shu'ayb, a professor of philosophy at Kuwait University, was accused of spreading degenerate ideas when she stated in an interview with a Kuwaiti magazine that lesbianism was widespread at the university.[354] The reaction was intense, and the university rector had to form an investigating committee. The committee recommended expelling her from the university, but the university and the Ministry of Education did not act on the recommendation.

Likewise, Ahmad al-Baghdadi, the chairman of the political science department, and Sulaiman al-Badir, a former minister of education, were accused of insulting the Prophet Muhammad. Each had said in an interview with a Kuwaiti newspaper that in the early period of Islam the prophet "failed" in Mecca, which

forced his move to Medina.[355] The word "failed" became an issue; several Islamists took it to Parliament and called for punishment and resignation. Some threatened Baghdadi's life, and others sued him in civil court, while yet others wanted to dissolve his marriage (as happened in a similar case in Egypt) by declaring he was not a valid Muslim. As a result of a lawsuit brought by Islamists, al-Baghdadi was sentenced to one month in prison in October 1999. Conservative Islamists hailed the decision; liberals were disappointed. The emir pardoned Baghdadi from all charges after he had served half the sentence.

The writer Layla al-'Uthman became subject to a court order in January 1997 because of short stories she had written 10 years before describing love relationships. The stories had long been on bookshelves when they came to the attention of the Islamists. Four Islamists pursued the author in the courts. Again there was a flare-up in the press, as liberal writers accused the Islamists of an organized campaign against freedom of thought. The association of artists held meetings, while journalists and nongovernmental organizations in the Arab world criticized the charges. This case, like similar ones, was buried in the court system and no decision is anticipated.[356]

The cases of dispute between the government and Islamists continued. The government may have considered on more than one occasion dissolving Parliament and calling new elections. The final decision, however, was to hope that time and politics would defuse the situation. A major confrontation took place in March 1998 when the National Assembly scheduled a vote of no confidence after the minister of information, Shaykh Sa'ud Nasser al-Sabah, allowed more than 160 banned books in Kuwait's Arab book fair in November 1998. Islamist deputies cross-examined the minister for nearly seven hours in a session that drew more than 2,000 spectators. The crisis ended when the government resigned one day prior to the vote, scheduled for March 17. When the new government was formed, Shaykh Sa'ud was

appointed minister of oil. That ended the crisis but demonstrated how powerful Parliament and the Islamist bloc had become.

The Paladin Howitzer crisis was another dispute showing Parliament's renewed attention to accountability. Information reached Parliament that the Kuwaiti government had decided in May 1998 to purchase the U.S. Paladin artillery system but that the U.S. army was planning to purchase its successor, the Crusader. Press rumors of irregularities in the procurement process motivated members of Parliament to block the whole deal at the end of 1998. A confrontation took place with the Ministry of Defense and in March 1999 the government gave in, informing the National Assembly that it was freezing the procurement process.

While all these confrontations were taking place, the Islamists were also gaining strength by allying themselves with populace nationalist parliamentarians, a group led by the Assembly's speaker, Ahmad al-Sa'adoun. The skillful al- Sa'adoun used his oratorical abilities to build coalitions that led the 1985—1986 Parliament and the democratic movement in 1989. He was reelected speaker in the 1992 and 1996 Assemblies. The loose alliance between the Islamic opposition and populace nationalists continued from one session to another. Populace nationalists sometimes voted Islamist on conservative bills in order to gain Islamist support on other issues.

In certain ways, the lack of public political debate after 1986 contributed to the Islamic groups' growing strength and popularity. During the long period between parliamentary elections (1985–1992), people turned to rigid interpretations of Islam as a protection against change, modern life, social inequality, state differentiation between groups, etc. They sought Islam at a time of defeat, lack of democracy, and failure and hardship in their personal lives.

In each Islamic grouping, trends are being pulled by the past and pushed toward the future. Public debate and long-term experience with the democratic process can be expected to create conditions for a more reasoned, forward-looking view of Islam among the population. This process

can help in the transformation of Islam, allowing it to become more active, participatory, and modern. Yet such a process has no future if the limited press freedoms and nondemocratic institutions prevalent in the region do not change.

A small, moderate trend already exists in the Islamic movement. While it is a minority, it may, as a result of the losses of the Islamic mainstream, play a larger role at another stage. Khalid al-Madhkur, the chairman of the government-appointed committee to study the application of the Shari'a, is, for example, a leading scholar among those who have a moderate and practical understanding of Islam.

Former Member of Parliament (ICM) Dr. Isma'il al-Shatti, a former editor of al-Mujtama', the weekly magazine of the Muslim Brotherhood, and one of the most soft-spoken Islamic leaders, has called for a transition in stages toward the application of the Shari'a. He has criticized attempts to apply it in other countries as failures. Time is important, according to al-Shatti:

We did not solve the problem of the relation between Shari'a and music and theater, among other things. How can we create Islamic information? ... It is wrong to start the application of the Shari'a with al-hudud [restrictions]. The origin in people is honor and goodness, not delinquency ... We must first provide good, honest lives for people and then ask them about restrictions and applications of rules in other matters.

He goes on to note, "The Quran came in stages." To further make his point, al- Shatti cites the Sudanese experiment with the Shari'a as a failure. There, leaders started with the sword, cutting off the hands of those who stole, whipping those who committed adultery. They did not start with economic recovery or education and development.[357]

However, al-Shatti is indebted to the Islamic Constitutional Movement for his place in Parliament (1992—1996). The ideologues of the movement do not trust their politicians and constantly supervise their statements. It appears

that the ideological leaders are also those most exposed to public debate and politics and experienced in dealing with problems that will be affected more by rational thought and secular approaches. In the long run, this will also have an effect on Islamist groups, shaping them toward rational, modern and democratic Islamic thinking.

Public debate equally helps in bringing to light those Islamic ideas most susceptible to modernity and change. There is a whole range of modern interpretations of Islam being expressed in books and articles. These interpretations link democracy with Islam and consider women's and individual rights to be compatible with Islamic beliefs and practices. The writings of Muhammad Shahrur, Muhammad Arkun, Hussain Ahmad Amin, Nasr Abu Zayd and al-Sadiq al- Nayhum are already stirring intense debate. Shahrur's Al-Kitab wal Quran (the Book and the Quran) was at one time banned in Kuwait, but today it can be found in bookstores.[358]

The friction between government and Parliament—which was also partly a conflict between government and the Islamist movement—came to a turning point in April 1999. The crisis began when a new edition of the Quran published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs was found to contain mistakes. The Islamists wanted an investigation and wanted to question government officials. When the government was on the verge of resigning in May, the emir dissolved Parliament and the government called for early elections in accordance with the constitution.

Then almost immediately the emir, in a rare interference in the political process, announced his wish to see a governmental decree that would give women the right to vote and be elected to Parliament. This announcement fell like a bombshell, and all of society reacted. The liberals and many women supported it; radical nationalists were taken by surprise. Although they supported the concept, which appealed to their urban, upper class, and semiliberal taste, they did not want to set a precedent of laws being made by decree.

But the Sunni Islamists reacted very negatively. Al-Mutawa, director of the Social Reform Association, warned the government, criticized the emir, and

threatened to lead a demonstration at his palace. Preachers in at least 80 mosques also condemned the decree. The government responded by showing strength. It prevented the same 80 preachers from preaching on Friday, since preachers at Friday prayers must be licensed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The preachers demonstrated in protest.

The government, enforcing this law for the first time in years, announced that all Islamic money collection and associations must follow legal procedures, which include full accounting and reporting of income and expenditures. There was much speculation that unlicensed groups were misusing contributions, and that money may have been sent to illegal groups in Egypt and elsewhere. The Islamic associations had opened many chapters in Kuwaiti neighborhoods without permission, and the government now enforced registration requirements.

Even the National Union of Kuwaiti Students, dominated since 1977 by the Islamists, came under scrutiny. The government also said it was considering appointing its own boards to run cooperative supermarkets in Kuwaiti neighborhoods, since these cooperatives had become politicized and dominated by Islamists. Finally, the government hinted it would downgrade several official commissions run by Islamists, such as the “Committee for the Preparation for the Application of the Shari’a in Kuwait,” headed by a leading cleric.

These government actions made the Islamists reduce their protests of the decree. The government had won the first round over women’s rights, and the emir received widespread support from the population and the international community for his decision.

But the government carried the confrontation further, in an unusual show of zeal and decisiveness. While the election campaign was under way, the government established an interministerial committee chaired by the deputy prime minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah. This committee produced 60 decrees, all approved by the Cabinet, chaired by Crown Prince and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa‘ad al-Abdallah. The decrees included permission for foreign investments without a Kuwaiti guarantor;

non-Kuwaiti participation in the stock market, private universities to be opened in Kuwait, privatizing the statist economy; and a law on the Bidun (stateless residents) that will make many of them citizens and settle their status. This was a major reform program promising to liberalize Kuwait’s society and economy. While the decrees are considered effective laws, and took effect immediately, they had still to be either confirmed or vetoed by a parliamentary vote.

To a large extent, the election of July 3, 1999 became a referendum on the 60 decrees and, in essence, the country’s future direction. The elections produced a bloc of 20 out of 50 Parliament members who were liberal and independent. The Islamist delegation shrank from 14 to 10 seats, while Shi’ite and tribal representation grew slightly.

The new situation gave the liberals a chance to set the agenda for the new Parliament, as the Islamists had done in the 1992 and 1996 sessions. This liberal, independent group was not united on all issues. Among them was a group of radical independents who saw relations with the government through the prism of confrontation and parliamentary power. However, the fact that the new speaker of the Assembly, Jassem al-Khorafi, was an independent moderate, gave an advantage to the centrists in the group.

In general, the liberal independents sought compromises with the government in order to institute the reform program. A second bloc, in which radical representatives joined with hard-core Islamists, continued to focus on the illegality of legislation by government decree and the need to block it. The main issue centered on a constitutional phrase that said decrees in the absence of Parliament must deal with urgent issues. Islamists in Parliament argued that the women’s decree and most of the others were not urgent. These members of Parliament feared that the government might abuse its power in the future when Parliament is not in session. A number of members who belonged to neither bloc held the balance of power.

A good case study is the vote on the emiri decree enfranchising women. This decree became a law when it was instituted in May 1999. But it had also to be voted upon to make it permanent. The liberal bloc in support

of women’s rights had postponed the vote for fear that the Islamists and the radical independents would muster enough opposition to defeat it. The tactic of postponement was supported by the government, which had hoped to either schedule a vote when it felt it had a majority, or just keep delaying a vote until February 2000 when women would have registered to vote. But Parliament forced a vote, and the decree was rejected in November, 32 to 30, with two abstentions. The result was a clear setback to women’s suffrage. But the defeat was a triumph for parliamentary power, and set a precedent for the separation and limitations of executive and legislative authority. Ten or fifteen years ago, an emiri decree would have passed easily in Parliament. Today, every decree is scrutinized, and no law is law until voted upon and approved by Parliament. Parliamentarians are using all their powers without any hesitation.

Those who support women’s suffrage are drawing lessons from the setback. The issue of women’s suffrage has been raised by the emir and will not disappear: it will continue to be on the table during the months and years to come. The vote in Parliament expressed the ambivalence of Kuwaiti society: 32 to 30 reflects how evenly the country is divided. It is clear today that women’s activists ought to take the emiri decree as a starting point in order to open a wide debate and appeal to all forces, including conservative ones. The evolution of women’s role in society speaks for itself. Today 35 percent of the Kuwaiti work force is composed of women and 67 percent of Kuwait University students are female. Establishing an organization dedicated to women’s suffrage could be key to a process leading to women’s enfranchisement.

Conclusion:

The rise of the Islamists has been a reaction to both internal and global trends.[359] The overall environment and the global reality of more open thinking, market economies, and democratization will continue to generate tensions with the Islamist trend. While global trends and liberalization at home can undermine radical Islam, mainstream Islamist forces will survive these pressures as they use these powerful institutions to stay ahead of the current.

Therefore Kuwait’s journey into the global reality will not be an easy one. Kuwait could still fall hostage to a nonconclusive conflict with Islamists on every issue. Sometimes the conservatives will get their way; other times the liberals will get their way. The country could become more divided, with the government caught in the middle, one faction using the Islamists to further its agenda and another using the liberals. The history of the last decade testifies to how negative and frozen in time and space things can be.

But on the other hand, government resilience since the emiri decrees and the July 1999 election tells us that the country is experiencing pressures to reform in economics as well as politics and that Kuwait’s membership in the WTO, the challenges of the new millennium, and the need to depend on an enfranchised population are serious factors in the process. This does not mean that change will be linear. In fact, to hold the peace among Kuwait’s components, compromises must be made at every junction.

As the wind blows in the direction of reform, and as the world reacts in the wake of the radical Islamic terrorism that brought havoc to New York and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, the survival of the Islamic movement will be a function of its ability to adapt. Reform, social change, and government policy may succeed in helping to transform Islamist radicalism into Islamist reformism and interest group politics. The constant challenges to the movement, from society and state, and from intellectuals and the modern world, can in the long run weaken its appeal in favor of a more ‘compassionate’ Islamic interpretation of both personal and political behavior. But if differences are not mediated, if reforms are not addressed, and if the economy is mismanaged, the division and radicalization can increase. This era is therefore central in deciding on the future path of the country, its relation to “Islam” and the world.

[310] State of Kuwait, Ministry of Planning, Central Statistical Office, Statistical Review, Issue 17, 1994.

[311] See Jill Crystal, Kuwait: The Transformation of an Oil State (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), pp. 65–89.

[312] In 1998, out of a work force of 215,500 people, 202,500 worked in the government sector and 13,000 in the private sector. Statistical Review, 1999, 22nd edition.

[313] Khaldun al-Naqib, Al-Mujatama' wal Dawlah fi al-Khalij wal Jazirah al-'Arabiyya: Min Manzur Mukhtalif (State and Society in the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula: A Different Perspective) (Beirut: Center of Arab Unity Studies, 1989), p. 152.

[314] See Andrew Cox and Noel O'Sullivan (eds.), The Corporate State: Corporatism and the State Tradition in Western Europe (Hants, England: Edward Elgar Publishing, 1988).

[315] On these concepts, See Robert Bianchi, Interest Groups and Political Development in Turkey (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[316] Shafeeq Ghabra, "Voluntary Associations in Kuwait: Foundations of a New Society?" Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Spring, 1991), pp. 199—215.

[317] Ibid., p. 206.

[318] No author, Jam'iyyat al-Islah al-Ijtima'i: 25 'Aman Min al Ta'sis (The Social Reform Society: 25 Years Since Its Establishment) (Kuwait: The Social Reform Society, 1988), pp. 11–39.

[319] See Ghabra, "'Voluntary Associations in Kuwait" pp. 199–215.

[320] Ibid., pp. 206–211.

[321] See James Bill, "Resurgent Islam in the Persian Gulf," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Fall 1984), p. 120.

[322] Sawt al-Khalij, March 5, 1981, p. 12.

[323] See interview with Abdullah al-Mutawwa, chairman of the Social Reform Society and one of the founders of the Muslim Brotherhood in Kuwait, al-Mujtama' Weekly Magazine (Kuwait), December 15, 1981.

[324] Based on a review of the school curriculum and on several interviews with teachers and members of the Kuwait Ministry of Education, spring 1994.

[325] Discussion with Hasan al-Ibrahim, former Kuwaiti minister of education, spring 1994.

[326] Comparisons between television programs in the 1980s and today reveal many differences. Today, although such pressures remain, they can be challenged.

[327] On the previous dearth of organizational skills in Arab mass politics, see James Bill and Robert Springborg, Politics in the Middle East, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1990), p. 89.

[328] Shafeeq Ghabra, Al-Kuwayt: Dirasah fi Aliyyat al-Dawlah al-Qutriyyah wal Sultah wal Mujtama' (Kuwait: A Study of The

Dynamics of State, Authority, and Society) (Cairo: Dar Ibn Khaldun for Developmental Studies and Dar al-Amin lil-Nashr, 1995), pp. 5360.

[329] Muhammad Jabir al-Ansari, Takwin al-‘Arab al-Siyasi wa Maghzah al-Dawlah al-Qutriyya (Arab Political Formation and the Meaning of the State) (Beirut: Center of Arab Unity Studies, 1994).

[330] See al-Qabas, March 6, 1993, for the story of a Shi’ite child denied the right to pray in school.

[331] Muhammad Sa‘id al-‘Ishmawi, al-Islam al-Siyyasi (Political Islam), 3rd ed. (Cairo: Sina lil Nashr, 1992), p. 59.

[332] Al-Qabas, August 31, 1991.

[333] Ibid.

[334] Majalat al-Majalah (London), August 14, 1993.

[335] Al-Anba‘, December 21, 1991.

[336] Al-Mujtama‘, June 7, 1992.

[337] Najib al-Waqayyan, a lawyer, quoted in al-Anba‘, December 22, 1991.

[338] On the 1992 elections, see Shafeeq Ghabra, “Democratization in a Middle Eastern State: Kuwait, 1993,” Middle East Policy, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1994), pp. 102–119.

[339] Arab Times, October 27, 1993, p. 1.

[340] From the original draft of the proposed law as published in al-Anba‘, March 1, 1993.

[341] Al-Qabas, March 14, 1993.

[342] Al-Mujtama‘, March 23, 1993.

[343] Al-Siyasah, March 14, 1993.

[344] See the column of Abdul Rahman al-Najjar, al-Anba‘, March 12, 1993.

[345] Al-Watan, March 18, 1993.

[346] “Salah al-Hashim” (“The honeymoon is over”), al-Qabas, March 18, 1993.

[347] Al-Qabas, March 4, 1993; al-Tali‘ah, March 10, 1993; Sami Abud al Latif al- Nisif, al-Qabas, April 7, 1993, p. 11; Abdul Rahman al-Najar, al-Anba‘, March 12, 1993; al-Siyasah, March 20, 1993.

[348] Al-Watan, December 6, 1992, p. 1.

[349] Arab Times, August 31, 1993; “MPs Seek Constitutional Change to Islamic Law,” Arab Times, August 27, 1993, p. 1.

[350] (Surprises in the Elections ...), al-Qabas, October 8, 1996, p. 1.

[351] “The Islamists control half the seats in Parliament,” al-Watan al-‘Arabi (weekly), October l8, 1996, p. 18.

[352] “37 Udwan Yas’un Lil-taghyir al-Dusturi” (37 Members Seek Constitutional Change), al-Siyyasah, January 23, 1997, p. 5.

[353] Al-Qabas, December 25, 1996, p. 1; December 29, 1996, p. 7.

[354] Interview with Alya Shu’ayb in al-Hadath (monthly), November 1996, pp. 22–24.

[355] Interview with Ahmad Baghdadi, al-Shulah (student monthly), July 1996; interview with Sulaiman al-Badir, al-Anba‘ (daily), December 10, 1996.

[356] Al-Siyyasah, January 2, 1997, p. 1.

[357] Al-Anba‘, December 21, 1991.

[358] Muhammad Shahrur, Al-Kitab wal Quran (The Book and the Quran), 3rd ed. (Beirut: Sharikat al-Matbu‘at lil Tawzi‘ Wal Nashr, 1993).

[359] Shafeeq Ghabra, “Kuwait and the Dynamics of Socio-economic Change” Middle East Journal, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Summer, 1997), pp. 361–372.

** 8. The Rise of the Islamist Movement in Turkey

Nilufer Narli

Beginning in the 1950s and peaking in the 1980s, a number of developments greatly advanced Turkey’s modernization. These same events also transformed Turkish politics. The result was a confrontation between provincial/traditional and urban/modern cultures, new social classes, and the fragmentation of the conservative electorate from the 1970s onward.[360] This same situation provided the environment for the growth of Islamist parties in Turkey pilfering votes from their center-right competitors.[361]

Islamist political movements vary greatly among different states in their doctrines and strategies.[362] Turkey’s groups have their own distinctive history. In Turkey, the Islamist movement emerged soon after the founding of the secular republic in 1923.[363] It was led by tarikat (religious order) shaykhs and professional men of religion who lost their status and economic power when secular reforms abolished religious institutions.[364] Trying to stage revolts against the secular state in the 1920s and 1930s, the movement failed to gain wide support and was crushed by the authorities.[365] In general, though, Islamist groups stayed underground during the era of one-party rule between 1923 and 1946.

With the transition to a multiparty system in 1946, Islamist groups formed covert and overt alliances with the ruling center-right Democratic Party (1950 — 1960).[366] After the Democratic Party won the 1950 elections, it softened its secularist policies. With the provision of civil liberties in the 1961 constitution, Islamist groups began to operate legally, though their activities

were still technically banned.[367] Until Necmettin Erbakan established the National Order Party (NOP) in January 1970, Islamists had either formed conservative factions in a center-right party or had remained underground. With the NOP, however, for the first time Islamists had an autonomous party organization through which they could campaign for their agenda. Since the NOP's founding, the same Islamist party has endured, albeit under different names: NOP (1970—1971), National Salvation Party (NSP) (1972—1981), Welfare Party (1983—1998), and Virtue Party (1997–2001).

The NOP largely represented Anatolian cities controlled by religiously conservative Sunnis, and the small traders and artisans (esnaf) of the hinterland.[368] These groups had long waited to benefit from the state's modernization policies but had rarely done so, partly due to their own resistance to modernization in the name of religion and tradition. For example, girls were not often sent to school. In addition to the frustrated periphery, the NOP also represented religiously conservative people who were informal members of outlawed religious orders. These people formed silent, but powerful, pressure groups with a large network.

The NOP was shut down by the Constitutional Court on May 20, 1971— due to military pressure—on the grounds that it violated the principles of la- icism laid down in the constitution (the preamble and articles 2, 19, and 57) and in the Law of Political Parties (Law No. 648, articles 92, 93, and 94).[369] As a result, the National Salvation Party (NSP) was founded in October 1972 to succeed the NOP. With support from provincial merchants, the esnaf, and the covert network of two leading, informally organized religious groups, the Nakshibandis and Nurcus, the NSP achieved a surprising electoral success in the 1973 general elections, obtaining 11.8 percent of the total vote, mainly in central and eastern Anatolia.

After its solid showing in the 1973 general elections, the NSP became a coalition partner in successive governments. First, it formed a government with the staunchly secularist Republican People's Party (CHP) led by Bulent Ecevit. Soon after, it managed to place its members in the bureaucracy, particularly the ministries that it controlled. Moreover, it succeeded in passing a bill that made theological high schools (imam-hatip) equal to secondary schools and enabled these schools' often pro-Islamist

students to attend universities. A large number of girls also enrolled in these schools. Many graduates have gone on to political power as Islamists in the 1980s and 1990s (as in the case of the mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayip Erdogan) and have formed a powerful pressure group.

Ecevit's coalition government collapsed following Turkey's July 1974 military operation in Cyprus to protect the Turkish-Cypriot community. The NSP then became a coalition partner in a new "National Front" government on March 31, 1975, formed under the premiership of Suleyman Demirel's centerright Justice Party (JP). This coalition also included the ultranationalist National Action Party (NAP) led by Alpaslan Turkes.

In the June 1977 general elections, the NSP suffered a setback, winning only 8.6 percent of the vote, but was included in the second National Front government formed by Demirel after the elections. In July 1977 Demirel resigned, but he returned to power in August at the head of an almost identical coalition including the NSP, NAP, and JP. However, Demirel was forced to resign again following defections from the JP in December. Ecevit formed a coalition government in January 1978, promising to deal with the economic problems and political violence that were increasing as a result of conflict between left and right as well as between Sunnis and Alevis. But the JP's victory in the by-elections of October 1979 deprived Ecevit of his working majority, and he resigned. In November 1979, Demirel formed an all-JP minority government with the backing of the NAP and NSP. In short, the NSP had quickly grown to become a regular member of government coalitions.

In the late 1970s, successive governments failed to solve the country's serious economic and political problems as antagonism between the radical left and radical right escalated into violent clashes bordering on civil war. The armed forces, led by General Kenan Evren, seized power in a bloodless coup on September 12, 1980 and restructured the political system with a new military- drafted constitution in 1982. The leading parties, including the JP, NAP, and NSP, were banned from political activity.

On July 19, 1983 the Welfare Party (RP) was formed under the leadership of Ali Turkmen, in place of the banned Erbakan, replacing the NSP. Erbakan was

eventually reinstated into Turkish politics and became the Welfare Party's leader. In the first general elections entered under Erbakan's leadership, in November 1987, the RP received 7.2 percent of the total vote. In the 1989 local elections it polled 9.8 percent, showing signs of increased support in Istanbul and capturing municipalities in several districts. In the October 1991 general elections, the RP formed an electoral alliance with Turkes' ultra-nationalist party and together obtained 16.7 percent of the total vote. During this time the Islamist movement drew support from larger segments of the population, the majority of which had migrated from rural to urban centers.

One of the Islamist movement's important strategies was to develop an educated counter-elite as a base of support, especially by strengthening the Islamic stream in the educational system. During the post-1980 coup period, governments perceived Islamic education in the schools as a panacea against extremist ideologies.[370]

As Islamist supporters moved from provincial towns and villages to urban centers, they were more likely to gain access to formal education and opportunities for upward social mobility. Islamist groups responded to the needs and aspirations of the newly urban who might be university students, professionals, shopkeepers, merchants, or workers. The groups offered food to the needy, scholarships and hostels to university students, a network for young graduates looking for jobs, and credit to shopkeepers, industrialists, and merchants.[371] Selfhelp projects conducted by women were particularly important to this endeavor. Financial assistance came from a newly formed Islamist business elite.

In the late 1980s, a new urban middle class and business elite emerged whose members often came from provincial towns. Their parents were often selfemployed small traders and shopkeepers, merchants, and agrarian capitalists. Some of them came from state-employed families. Many provincial youths from this background moved to big cities where they had access to higher education. After graduation, many joined the urban middle class through employment in the modern economic sector, which expanded in the 1980s as a result of reforms that replaced the statist economic model with a liberal approach.

The liberal and export-oriented economic development model adopted by then Prime Minister Turgut Ozal gave birth to a new business elite, also with a provincial background. This new model provided opportunities not only for the established business elite, but also for the small and medium businessmen in Anatolian towns. Some of them have developed their businesses there. Others moved to Istanbul, seeking opportunities for expansion in this newly invigorated commercial center.

Having their origins in Anatolian towns, the new business elite desired to assert its provincial identity and preserve its values and traditions. Consequently, its members—dubbed “Anatolian Lions” (“Anadolu Aslanlari”)—differentiate themselves from the more urban, Westernized business elite represented by TUSIAD (The Turkish Businessmen’s and Industrialists’ Association, founded in 1971), whose members are the chief executives of Turkey’s 300 biggest corporations. In contrast, the Anatolian Lions follow the leadership of the pro-Islamist MUSIAD (the Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessmen) and now challenge the established business elite.

MUSIAD was founded on May 5, 1990 in Istanbul by a number of young pro-Islamic businessmen: Erol Yarar,[372] who was the president until May 1999, Ali Bayramolu, who replaced Yarar, Natik Akyol, and Abdurrahman Esmerer. The first letter of its acronym is commonly perceived as standing for Muslim rather than for mustakil (independent). The founders of MUSIAD aimed to create an “Islamic economic system” as an alternative to the existing “capitalist system” in Turkey.

This goal, though, remained only a slogan. The group’s membership reached 400 in 1991, 1,700 by 1993, and 3,000 in 1998.[373] In that year, its members’ companies’ annual revenue reached $2.79 billion. Members are active in most sectors of the economy, particularly in manufacturing, textiles, chemical and metallurgical products, automotive parts, building materials, iron and steel, and food products. There are also several powerful Islamist finance houses, some of which have been hit by the February 2001 economic crisis. In 1998 MUSIAD aimed to increase its membership to 5000

and the number of its branch offices from 28 to 40 by the year 2000.[374] However, this goal was not reached. In September 2001 its membership was 2300 and the number of branch offices was 27, showing an actual decrease in membership due to the anti-Islamist policies adopted after the February 28, 1997 National Security Council meeting.

The Islamist movement is an outlet to express political dissatisfaction with the existing order on the part of the geographical periphery and specific social groups with grievances or different interests. At least five types of relationships are represented here: center-periphery conflict,[375] class cleavages, regional cleavages, Islamist- secularist conflict, and sectarian antagonism (that is, Sunnis vs. Alevis).

The country’s central government and main institutions are led by military officers, senior bureaucrats, notables, and industrialists. Those living in, or belonging to groups based in peripheral areas have traditionally been distanced from power.

Thus, we see a progression in which specific socioeconomic and peripheral regional groups have backed a succession of parties in order to voice their grievances. During the 1950s, the Democratic Party, in opposing the centralist elite represented by the Republican People’s Party, represented the periphery, including peasants and the provincial bourgeoisie as well as Islamists and religiously conservative people dissatisfied with secular policies.

In the 1960s and 1970s, its successor, the Justice Party, was also sensitive to Islamic demands in the electorate, while representing newly emerged bourgeois elements—agrarian capitalists, big capital, the provincial bourgeoisie—as well as peasants and petty traders. Thus, it was different from the center-right political parties that represented big capital and the urban middle class in Western Europe.

While peasants and petty traders had voted for the Justice Party until the mid-1970s, by the 1973 general elections the Anatolian esnaf

and some segments of the religiously conservative provincial lower and middle classes switched to the National Salvation Party. Clashes between the left and right in the 1970s, however, became the central feature of political life in that era and led to military intervention in 1980. The Justice Party and other parties were outlawed.

In the post-coup period, the Motherland Party came forth to represent the center-right. Rather than representing only bourgeois classes, it had to represent a diversified electorate. It included a conservative faction representing the religiously conservative provincial bourgeoisie and new urban classes, and a liberal faction representing an urban managerial class expanding as a result of Ozal's liberal economic model. In this coalition, the Motherland Party represented Islamists and moderate ultranationalists on the one hand, and adherents of liberal democratic values on the other.

The Motherland Party was able to keep such an ideologically diversified constituency together until the late 1980s when the True Path party, which had a strong hold on some rural sectors, challenged its base. In addition, Motherland was subverted by the Islamist and ultranationalist parties. Consequently, the Motherland membership was fragmented. The culmination of this political change came in the 1999 election with a reduced Motherland and True Path vote, and enhanced support for the pro-Islamist Virtue Party, ultranationalist MHP (Nationalist Action Party), and a small but growing pro-Kurdish HADEP (People's

Democracy Party). Emerging victorious from the fragmented political scene was the Democratic Left Party (DSP), combining nationalist rhetoric with liberal democratic values.

The migration of many people to cities—in search of upward social mobil- ity—since the 1950s has often meant merely transforming rural poverty into urban poverty. In the cities, immigrants suffer from substandard housing conditions and a lack of infrastructure. They constitute a new periphery whose members are often economically disadvantaged, culturally disintegrated, and politically isolated. Their social rage has fostered extreme political tendencies since the beginning of the 1970s. In the 1970s the

revolutionary left articulated its political discontent and anti-regime sentiments. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Islamist movement took on this role.

Conflict caused by regional economic imbalances in the 1990s and the sectarian antagonism between the Sunnis and Alevis[376] have further complicated the political tension. Corruption allegations have aggravated social rage and mobilized people to turn to radical parties and groups challenging the system. The result has been political polarization and radicalization and a progressive decline in backing for the center-right and center-left parties since the late 1980s.[377]

The socioeconomic background, political aims, and interests of those supporting the Islamist movement are diverse.[378] Its supporters include the large university student population, especially upwardly mobile youths who must compete with the established urban middle and upper-middle classes; members of the unskilled young urban subproletariat, whose numbers have increased with migration and a higher level of unemployment;[379] and some of the state-employed petit bourgeoisie, proletarianized by falling real wages and high inflation, particularly since the early 1990s. In addition, there are bourgeoisie factions including some from the relatively privileged new middle and upper classes: rich merchants, businessmen, and industrialists of humble esnaf origins, as well as several rural agrarian capitalists.

In Anatolia, among the religiously conservative Sunni Turks who have perceived modernization as an attack on their family values and tradition, there are also sectors of ultranationalists who have embraced Islamist attitudes and a sizeable number of religiously conservative Sunni Kurds[380] who assume that an Islamic order could possibly bring solutions to the conflict in their region, which has cost more than 35,000 lives since the early 1980s.[381]

As a result of these different developments, which furnished a base for Islamist politics, the Welfare Party scored a success in the March 1994 local elections. The RP won 28 mayorships including six major metropolitan

centers, and leadership of 327 local governments. Nationwide, the RP received 19 percent of the vote. In the 1995 general elections, it obtained 21.4 percent.

The RP joined in July 1996 with Tansu Ciller's True Path Party to form a coalition government which lasted one year. Legislative disputes between the two partners were intensified by a crisis created by Welfare Party mayors and deputies, whose anti-secular rhetoric and activities agitated secular public opinion. Erbakan's relationship with Muammar Qadhafi also made some suggest the Turkish prime minister might owe ultimate allegiance to Libya's dictator, who headed a secretive organization called the Islamic People's Command, to which Erbakan also belonged.[382]

These developments exacerbated tensions between the military and the Welfare Party, which had been building due to a number of factors, including: disagreement over the expulsion of Islamist officers from the army in December 1996; the Welfare Party's attempt to sign a defense cooperation agreement with Iran; Welfare's call for lifting the ban on head-covering for female university students and civil servants; the dispute over building a mosque at Istanbul's Taksim Square; the Iranian-inspired Jerusalem Night (January 31, 1997) in the Welfare-controlled Sincan district of Ankara, where anti-regime slogans were shouted; and Erbakan's reluctance to endorse the National Security Council's February 28, 1997 meeting that called for curbing Islamist activities.[383]

The Welfare Party's anti-democratic position on several issues also disappointed secular public opinion. For example, Erbakan and Justice Minister Sevket Kazan made critical and insulting comments about people who took part in the "One Minute of Darkness for Enlightenment" civil protest in February 1997.[384] Welfare's support for constitutional changes made some worry that it was trying to dilute the secular state. Women worried about the reduction of their rights.[385] The party's allegiance to democracy was also called into question. Islamist dailies including Akit and Yeni Safak were also severely critical of the January-February 1997 protest. Finally, there were many allegations that the Welfare Party had connections with militant Islamist groups.[386]

As a result, tension between the military and the Welfare Party, as well as antagonism between the Islamists and secular public opinion, escalated. This provided a legitimate framework to bring the Welfare Party to court in May 1997. Consequently, the Constitutional Court outlawed the Welfare Party in January 1998, banning Erbakan from politics, on the grounds that the party violated the principles of secularism and the law of the political parties. Moreover, on June 28, 1998, Erbakan was charged with defaming the Constitutional Court by saying that the Court's ruling had no historic value and would eventually rebound against those who had made it.[387] By dissolving the party, the ruling left more than 100 seats vacant in Parliament and orphaned local administrations.

A new party, the Virtue Party (FP), was founded by thirty-three former RP deputies under the leadership of Recai Kutan on December 17, 1997. At the time it had 144 seats in Parliament, which it obtained as a result of the switchover of former RP deputies. The party's conservative wing, controlled by Erbakan, elected the parliamentary group leaders before the reformist wing, led by then Istanbul Mayor Recep Tayip Erdogan, could pull itself together. But the struggle for power between the party's young reformists and those loyal to Erbakan was not over. It eventually resulted in the resignation of four of the reformists (Cemil

Cicek, Ali Coskun, Abduallah Gul, and Abdulkadir Aksu) on July 26, 1999. Their resignation was interpreted as the start of a new party given the fact that since the April 1999 elections, the Constitutional Court had been deliberating about closing down the Virtue Party on charges that it was carrying out antisecular activities and was the successor to the RP. However, the parliamentarians denied any plan to form a new party.

Prior to the 1999 local and general elections, the Virtue Party set up organizations in all districts of the country and began recruiting new members and renewing its membership profile.[388] The party has also tried to soften its antiwomen, anti-democracy image. It recruited a number of highly educated, uppermiddle class modern women such as Nazli Ilicak and Professor Doctor Oya Akgonenc. Women from lower social classes carried the

party to power, and were able to participate in public life as result. But, despite their contribution, they were not represented at the higher ranks. The Virtue Party appointed Ilicak, Akgonenc, and Gulten Celik to its Central Decisionmaking Board. Only Celik wears a head-covering.

Both Turkey's leaders and the party's own supporters ask how the FP differs from the RP. The Virtue Party has signaled that it takes some new approaches. For example, the FP declared support for Turkey's European Union membership, a step the RP opposed for three decades. Virtue's appointment of two women who do not wear head-coverings to its Central Decisionmaking Board stands in clear contrast to the Welfare Party's demand that its supporters observe an Islamic dress code. Indeed, the FP has downplayed the head-covering issue altogether. Third, instead of mentioning the old party's "Islamic mission," Virtue's rhetoric emphasizes democracy, human rights, and personal liberty.[389] The FP presents the head scarf ban as a human rights violation and a suppression of personal liberties, rather than as a matter of religion.[390]

Another change in the Virtue Party's rhetoric is its highlighting of the theme of millet (nation), as opposed to the RP's strong organic link between millet and devlet (state). The implication in the Virtue Party's stance is that the state should be in the service of the people rather than—as in the RP's view—a holy entity that stands far above the people.[391] The FP pledges to create a democratic and humanitarian state that meets the millet's needs. This issue has become a dominant topic in Milli Gazette, a religious newspaper, since January 1998. Moreover, the FP co-opted the Western concept of human rights and democratic norms, and leftist criticism of income inequality in its rhetoric.[392]

Another interesting development is the FP's position on the "Kurdish issue." The RP had not been hesitant to talk about the Kurds' identity and cultural rights without seeming to go further in backing bigger demands. The FP's chairman, Recai Kutan, spoke in favor of "cultural rights," announcing in August 1998: "It would be necessary to recognize some of the rights of Turkey's Kurdish identity. The right to educate and publish in the Kurdish

language would have to be considered after discussions and a normalization period.”[393]

However, the FP became more cautious after the capture of outlawed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan in February 1999.

The FP has tried to change its image in a number of ways. For example, rather than holding social gatherings segregated by gender, as it did in the past, it now organizes dinner parties where men and women mix freely. (Nazli Ilicak and Recai Kutan sang together at a dinner party in 1998.) While such an endeavor alienates religiously conservative supporters, party leaders understand the necessity of improving the party’s image and making concessions.

Islamism in Turkey has grown as a response to social, economic, and political discontent, the causes of which include foreign influences, urbanization, modernization, and secularization. The Islamist movement’s upsurge, the growth of ultranationalism, and Kurdish ethno-nationalism have eroded the center in Turkey. The center-right parties have declined because they did not meet their constituency’s needs or expectations and also failed to absorb the compromising spirit of democratic liberalism.

In the context of modern Turkish political history, the Welfare and Virtue parties must be understood not only in terms of their specific Islamist ideology but also as representative of specific social sectors reacting to circumstances. Equally, and partly as a result of this fact, the erosion of the center-right and increased support for the Islamist and ultra-nationalist parties have not yet created the danger of regime instability.[394] The nationalist secular majority in Turkey,[395] supporters of the DSP and other parties, act as a counterweight to the Islamist and ultranationalist groups both in public life and in Parliament.

While anti-Islamist forces counterbalance Islamist politics, the Islamists are divided over the strategies to be adopted in response to certain developments, including the military’s initiative to curb Islamist activities by

formulating an eleven-point plan in February 1997, and the failure of the Islamist state in Iran reflected in the election of a moderate president, Mohammed Khatami, and the overwhelming victory of moderates in the 2000 parliamentary elections in Iran. The eleven-point plan played a major role in compelling the Turkish Islamists to alter their program, while the developments in Iran had a minor effect in motivating them to reconsider their theory and political action plan.

It is possible to foresee three major trends in the future evolution of the Islamist movement in Turkey by analyzing the current inclinations.[396] First, some of the radical groups that formerly resorted to political violence, such as Hizballah's Ilim faction, the IBDA-C (Islami Buyuk Dogu Akincilari-Cephesi —Islamic Great Eastern Raiders' Front), and the Muslim Youth, will choose to stay outside the system and continue to pursue their radical political agenda without considering reconciliation with the system. Other radicals who did not formerly adopt armed struggle as a strategy will ally with the second set of Islamists, consisting of nonmilitant groups and political parties that have worked within the system to gain a share in political power.[397] While many in the second group continue to employ constitutional political means to obtain political power, some have begun to withdraw from the political arena in response to the state's intolerance of political Islam since the 1997 February National Security Council meeting. Instead they discover new areas of Islam that will insure the survival of their Islamic program. One of their options will be to target the individual and nurture his religiosity and piety by means of Islamic education and cultural activities with an aim of creating a highly religious society that could be politicized at the right time.[398] Their new rhetoric emphasizes that Islam is a religion, not a political ideology. For many of them, even some of those who were inspired by the Iranian revolution and its ideology, Tehran is not a guide for the future. On the contrary, they criticize Tehran on grounds that it uses Islam as a political instrument to build and sustain a nation state. They believe that the Iranian Islamic system has failed but not the Islamist cause and that theory of the latter is valid in all spaces and in all times. The third group chooses to pursue political Islam and work within the existing system by revising its Islamic rhetoric and party program and co-opting the Western concepts of human rights and universal democratic norms. This group has become less averse to Western modernity and norms after admitting that its resistance is futile.

Despite taking different paths and employing diverse plans of action ranging from political undertakings to cultural projects, the different groups still share the same goal: to rebuild the individual and society and revise the nation's thought and politics based on Islam.

The Islamist movement is not likely to lose popular support because Islam has spread to the cultural and political mainstream, and social discontent, which has been one of the key factors sustaining its growth, is not likely to decrease. On the contrary, economic problems, which generally fuel popular disappointment, continue to hit salary and wage earners due to a fall in real wages. Should the government trim agricultural subsidies in an effort to bring Turkey's economy in line with European Union norms, the agricultural sector might also voice its dissatisfaction.[399] Such a situation could lead to a large-scale migration from rural areas to urban areas in a very few years, and in turn, is more likely to increase the number of the unemployed urban poor. This new wave of rural-urban migration would complicate the problem of social dislocation that resulted from migration from rural areas in the Black Sea region and troubled southeastern and eastern provinces from the mid-1980s until the late 1990s. The Islamists or other groups whose members have an antithetical attitude towards the existing system would exploit the likely expansion of the discontented ally, comprising the newly urbanized and economically disadvantaged social classes referred to above.

As a result of the party's own electoral shortcomings and the government's pressure against it—capped by the Virtue Party's closure by the Constitutional Court on June 22, 2001—the Islamists split into two separate parties. Erbakan's supporters created the Saadet Party (The Party of Blissfulness) on July 20, 2001. But on August 11, 2001, Tayyip Erdogan, the former mayor of Istanbul, formed the Akparti (Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi, The Justice and Development Party). Erdogan had been convicted of making a seditious statement after a speech which suggested that Turks had to choose between God and Ataturk. He was temporarily banned from politics.

This development resulted essentially from two factors. On the one hand, there had been intensive external pressure for the Islamists to turn toward a more moderate ideology and strategy. The February 28, 1997 National Security Council meeting had sent a serious warning that the state and

armed forces would move against Islamist forces deemed too radical in seeking to change the basis of the Turkish state. The fall of Erbakan’s government had sent a strong warning signal to the Islamists, reinforced by the banning of Virtue four years later.

On the other hand, there were also genuine conflicts within the party over its doctrine and goals. There was a clear generational aspect of this struggle, with some relatively younger leaders rebelling against Erbakan’s heavy-handed control. To some extent, too, the battle was one for personal power among several contenders and factions.

Each side would argue that it has the proper formula for winning the voter’s support. Erdogan represents a more modernization-oriented democratic approach which, it could be contended, is more likely to be acceptable to the power structure and to Islamists who want to be in tune with the Turkish mainstream. Yet Erbakan’s supporters can claim that by watering down traditional stances, the moderates will lose the backing of the old base of social conservatives and religious devotees.

Only time will tell whether either approach can produce a party that can survive both the voter’s scrutiny and the state’s response. After many decades, Islamist politics have not yet found their place in Turkey’s society and political structure.

[360] For the voting behavior of the Turkish electorate, see Ersin Kalaycioglu, “The Turkish Political System in Transition in the 1980s,” Current Turkish Thought, Vol. 56. (Fall 1985), pp. 2—38; Ersin Kalaycioglu, “Elections and Party Preferences in Turkey: Changes and Continuities in the 1990s,” Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1994), pp. 402—424; Ergun Ozbudun and Frank Tachau, “Social Change and Electoral Behaviour in Turkey: Toward a Critical Realignment,” International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 6 (1975), pp. 460—480; Ergun Ozbudun, “Turkey,” in J. M. Landau, E. Ozbudun and F. Tachau (eds.),

Electoral Politics in the Middle East: Issues, Votes and Elites (London: Croom Helm, 1980), pp. 107—143.

[361] Turkish modernization began in the nineteenth century with the Tanzimat reforms. The Young Ottomans' ideas of constitutionalism, parliamentary government and secular education and the ideas of the Young Turks on a modern nation state provided the intellectual framework of the Turkish modernization.

[362] For the definition of the Islamist and the differences between the radical and moderate Islamists, see Nilufer Narli, "Moderate Against Radical Islamicism in Turkey," Zeitschrift Fur Turkeistudien, Vol. 1, No. 96 (Zentrum Fur Turkeistudien. Essen University, 1996), pp. 35–59.

[363] The history of the Islamist movements goes back to nineteenth century Ottoman rule. The author focuses here on Islamist movements in the Turkish republic.

[364] Tarikats were banned in 1925. They then went underground and were organized as secret brotherhood groups. In the 1980s they discovered new strategies to organize themselves as legal entities. They have established foundations under various names, which enable them to operate legally and have avenues of fund raising.

[365] For example, Kozanli Ibrahim and his friends revolted to demand Arabic Ezan on February 1, 1933 in Bursa; Shaykh Halit' declared himself as Mahdi in December 1935 and a series of bloody insurgencies led by his son Shaykh Kudus ensued; and Kayserili Ahmet Kalayci proclaimed a new religious order in Iskilip and consequently incited the public in 1936. See Cetin Ozek, Devlet ve Din (State and Religion) (Istanbul: Ada Yayinlari, 1986), p. 498.

[366] Particularly, the Nurcus adopted the strategy of forming an alliance with a center right political party. They approached Adnan Menderes, the

chief of the Democratic Party. Seeing his responsiveness to their overtures, they called him “Musluman Menderes” and supported him in the 1950 general elections. They expected Menderes to restore Islam and even include Said-i Nursi’s Risalei Nur articles in the school curriculum. See Cetin Ozek, State and Religion, p. 544.

[367] For further details on the strategies of the Islamist groups, see Narli, “Moderate Against Radical Islamicism in Turkey,” pp. 35–59.

[368] The support of the provincial merchants and the esnaf (small shopkeepers, artisans), and the covert network of the two leading informally organized religious groups, the Nakshibandis and Nurcus, played a role in the surprising electoral success of the National Salvation Party in the 1973 general elections. It obtained 11.8 percent of the total vote while collecting over 15 percent of the vote in twenty provinces of central and eastern Anatolia but not in the urban centers. For a profile of Islamists who voted for the National Salvation Party in the 1973 elections, see Ergun Ozbudun, “Islam and Politics in Modern Turkey: The Case of the National Salvation Party,” in Barbara Freyer Stowasser (ed.), The Islamic Impulse (Washington, Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, Georgetown University, 1987), pp. 142–156; and Binnaz Toprak, Islam and Political Development in Turkey (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981). Similarly, in Iran the bazaari class was an ally of the Islamic Revolution. See Nikki Keddie, “Iranian Revolutions in Comparative Perspective” in Edmund Burke and Ira M. Lapidus (eds.), Islam, Politics and Social Movements (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 293–313.

[369] Bihterin Dinckol, 1982 Anayasasi Cercevesinde ve Anayasa Kararlarinda Laiklik (Laicism in the Constitutional Context and in the 1982 Constitution) (Istanbul: Kazanci Hukuk Yayinlari, 1992), p. 179.

[370] For the Islamist student movement and associations, see Elizabeth Ozdalga, “Civil Society and its Enemies: Reflections on a Debate in the Light of Recent Developments within the Islamic Movement in Turkey” in Elizabeth

Ozdalga and Suna Persson (eds.), Civil Society, Democracy and the Muslim World (London: Curzon, 1997), pp. 73–84.

[371] For the mobility of the perpherial groups to urban centers and their gaining access to secular education, see Yilmaz Esmer and Muge Gocek, “Boundaries of Religious Fundamentalism in Turkey,” survey conducted in Istanbul and Konya in 1994; paper presented at Bogazici University, May 1995. For the Welfare Party’s mobilization of this newly urbanized social group by providing it moral and material support, and in turn, obtaining its electoral support in the 1994 local and 1995 general elections, see Sencer Ayata, “Patronage, Party and State: The Politicisation of Islam in Turkey,” Middle East Journal, Vol. 50, No.1, (1996). pp. 40—58.

[372] On May 25, 1998 the State Security Court (DGM) prosecutor demanded the closure of MUSIAD for violating the laws governing societies and associations. The court also charged MUSIAD Chairman Erol Yarar, a 36-year-old U.S.-educated businessman, with “inciting hatred amongst the people” in a speech he made on October 4, 1997 criticizing a law that brought restrictions on religious education. See Turkish Probe, May 31, 1998, p. 18. According to the Turkish penal code, article 312–2, inciting hatred by making reference to class, race, religion, sect, or regional differences is a crime punishable by a jail sentence of one to three years. It is worth mentioning that the Virtue Party introduced a bill asking for the abolition of Article 312—2. In his speech, Yarar called for a “liberation struggle,” and that constituted a crime according to the prosecutor. Yarar also likened to “dogs” the proponents of the law, which extended compulsory education from five to eight years. He also described the new education law as the work of “nonbelievers” by saying, “uninterrupted education is certainly unreligious education” (“kesintisiz egitim kesin dinsiz egitim”). Yarar’s hearing was held on June 29, 1998 in the State Security Court in Ankara. The prosecutor asked for a one- to three-year prison term. At the hearing on July 29, Yarar denied his opposition to eight-year compulsory education. Turkish Probe, May 31, 1998, p. 12. However, MUSIAD was highly critical of the new arrangements in the education system and the closure of the middle section of the imam- hatip schools in its March 31, 1998 press bulletin. MUSIAD Basin Bulteni, March 31, 1998,

Istanbul; see <[[http://www.musiad.com][http://www.musiad.com]]>. In May 1999 the court convicted Yarar, and he resigned.

[373] MUSIAD Bulteni, May-June 1998, No. 29, p. 37. For the membership profile and activities of MUSIAD, see “MUSIAD in the U.S.” Special Supplement of the Turkish Daily News, May 21, 1997. For further information, see Nilufer Narli, “The Tension between the Center and Peripheral Economy and the Rise of a Counter Business Elite in Turkey,” Islam en Turquie. Les Annales de L’Autre Islam, No. 6 (Paris: INALCO, 1999), pp. 50–72.

[374] It has branch offices in Ankara, Konya, Izmir, Kocaeli, Kayseri, Bursa, Balikesir, Gaziantep, Denizli, Kahramanmarai, Adana, Karadeniz Eregli, Samsun, Corum, Malatya, Sanliurfa, Cankiri, Bandirma, Diyarbakir, Bartin, Gebze, Elazig, Icel, Inegol, Adapazari, Eskisehir, and Antalya.

[375] For the center-periphery conflict and its significance in the rise of the Islamist movement, see Serif Mardin, “Center-Periphery Conflict: A Key to Turkish Politics,” Dedalus, Vol. 102, No. 1, (1973) pp. 169–190.

[376] For example, the Sivas incident on July 2, 1993, when 37 Alevis were burned as a result of an alleged arson attack by Islamists agitated by a speech delivered by Aziz Nesin. According to press reports, Nesin, speaking at an Alevi cultural festival, proclaimed the reign of the 1,000-year-old Quran over. See Turkish Daily News, July 5, 1993. (Nesin had previously angered the Islamists by publishing excerpts from British author Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses.)

[377] Nilufer Narli and Sinan Dirlik, “Turkiye’nin Siyasi Haritasi” (“The Political Map of Turkey”), Yeni Turkiye Dergisi, Vol. 2, No. 9 (May-June 1996), pp. 125—151.

[378] The profile of the Islamists is based on an empirical study by the author: Nilufer Narli, The Islamist Movement, University Students and

Politics in Turkey (unpublished report presented to the Ford Foundation, 1996).

[379] It has been observed that the young urban subproletariat is vulnerable to the radical Islamist movement in Middle Eastern countries as well. See Saad Eddin Ibrahim, “Crises, Elites, and Democratization in the Arab World,” Middle East Journal, Vol. 47, No. 2 (Spring 1993), pp. 293–305. The growing youth population, its lack of access to education and professional opportunities and its potential to turn to extremist movements in the Middle East have been a concern to the students of Middle East politics. See Gad. G. Gilbar, Population Dilemmas in the Middle East (London: Frank Cass, 1997); and Alan Richards, “Economic Imperatives and Political Systems,” Middle East Journal, Vol. 47, No. 2 (1993), pp. 217–227.

[380] Most Kurds are orthodox Sunni Muslims who belong to the Shaafi School, whereas the majority of Turks subscribe to Hanefi doctrine as classified by Islamic law. Kurds have traditionally been religious and involved in the various tarikats that have flourished in eastern Turkey. Tarikat leaders and shaykhs have always had a great influence on the Turkish Kurds owing to their feudal tradition. Shaykhs have been able to dictate decisions of great importance in people’s lives. Along with being a key element in social life, Islamic elements have a political function too. Religious elements can be instrumental in political action. There are cases confirming this hypothesis. The first two decades of the republic witnessed several Kurdish rebellions (for example, the Shaykh Said Revolt in 1925, Agri, Zile and finally Dersim in 1937) led by religious shaykhs and tribal leaders. Islamic as well as ethnic sentiments triggered these revolts.

[381] For information on Turkey’s separatist Kurdish party, the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party), led by Abdullah Ocalan (recently captured, tried, and sentenced to death), see Ismet Imset, The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey 1979—1992. (Istanbul: Turkish Daily News Publications, 1992); and Henri J. Barkey and Grahan Fuller, Turkey’s Kurdish Question, Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, Carnegie Corporation of New York (New York: Rowman and Littfield Publishers, 1998).

[382] For details, see “As If Troubles at Home Were Not Enough ... ,” (no author indicated), Briefing, April 2, 1997, No. 8 (Ankara).

[383] MGK (National Security Council) is a constitutional body. Article 118 of the 1982 constitution establishes the MGK as a body evenly divided between five civilians (the president, prime minister, and ministers of defense, internal affairs, and foreign affairs) and five military officials (the chief of the general staff, the commanders of the army navy, and air force, and the general commander of the gendarmerie). The recommendations of the MGK are given priority during legislative procedure. Article 118 states: “the Council of Ministers shall give priority consideration to the decisions of the National Security Council concerning the measure that it deems necessary for the preservation of the existence and independence of the State, the integrity and indivisibility of the country, and the peace and security of society.”

[384] The “One Minute of Darkness for Enlightenment” civil protest was a response to the public perception of corruption and injustice in Turkey. In 1997 it began with a call for citizens to turn their lights off at 9:00 pm every night. The scope of the protest got larger as thousands of people took to the streets carrying candles, putting them out at exactly 9:00 pm, and holding meetings to discuss ways of attaining their goal, an “enlightened” Turkey. It was largely supported by the center-left parties, but was criticized by the Welfare Party, the ultranationalist party, and the True Path Party.

[385] For example, the Welfare Party opposed a bill passed by the Parliament on January 14, 1998, to protect women and children against domestic violence. For the law (No. 4320), see Resmi Gazete, (Official Gazette), January 17, 1998, No. 23233.

[386] For example, there is an accusation that the former RP minister Uevket Kazan and RP deputy Sevki Yilmaz organized sending 150 Turkish students to Islamic countries, 30 of them to Egypt to receive “Shari’a commando” training. Yeni Yuzyil reported that a number of students

connected with the now defunct RP had made confessions about being sent to Cairo’s Al-Azhar University with false papers. These young people recount that in Egypt they stayed in houses belonging to the National View Organization and that they received armed training at Hizballah camps in Lebanon. They stress that their aim was an armed struggle to set up an Islamic state in Turkey. See Yeni Yuzyil, March 1, 1998, p. 10. An article in the daily Cumhuriyet (March 1, 1998) cited an “RP-linked foundation” as the focal point in the investigation extending from Al Azhar to Hizballah.” Cumhuriyet (March 4, 1998) also reported that Istanbul State Security Court prosecutor Nuh Mete Yuksel indicated that investigators were looking into possible links with Turkish Hizballah and the European National View Organization (AMGT), which was considered to be a subsidiary of the now defunct Welfare Party (RP). Cumhuriyet also reported that the police were seeking three more AMGT officials. AMGT has many hostels and associations in Turkey and in Western Europe, as well as in the Middle East. For the unconstitutional activities of the militants groups, see Ely Karmon, “Islamic Terrorist Activities in Turkey in the 1990s,” Terrorism and Political Violence, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Winter 1998), pp. 101–121.

[387] Erbakan made this statement on January 18, 1998, soon after the closure of his party by the Constitutional Court. See Turkish Daily News, June 30, 1998.

[388] For more on the organization of the FP, see M. Recai Kutan’s press conference, Turkiye’nin Oncelikleri ve Temel Goruslerimiz (“Priorities of Turkey and Fundamentals of the Party”), (Bilkent, Ankara: Semih Offset, December 17, 1998).

[389] University rectors agreed in 1998 to enforce a secular dress code that bans the wearing of head scarves in all universities. In January 1998 a government decree banned religious clothing, including the head scarf, for teachers, officials and students in all schools and universities. Universities and schools refused to register female students unless they submitted ID photographs showing an uncovered head and neck.

[390] Virtue Party Chairman Recai Kutan said, “The headscarf ban was not a matter of religious belief but rather a human rights issue.” Quoted in Turkish Daily News, September 11, 1998.

[391] This analysis is based on an examination of the leading deputies’ speeches and the articles in Milli Gazete, an organ of the Welfare Party/Virtue Party.

[392] Observers have noted that many Islamist groups have adopted the Western concept of human rights as a new strategy to draw larger support and to criticise the state. See Bruce Maddy-Weitzman and Efraim Inbar (eds.), Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East, (London: Frank Cass, 1996).

[393] Quoted in Turkish Daily News, August 13, 1998.

[394] Roy Macridis, Modern Political Systems: Europe (New Jersey: Prentice Hall International, 1987).

[395] A recent survey conducted by Binnaz Toprak and Ali Carkoglu shows that even religiously conservative people tend to support the separation of the state and Islam and are not for an Islamic state. See Toprak and Carkoglu, Turkiye’de Siyasi Islam (Political Islam in Turkey), a survey report submitted to the TESEV Foundation, Istanbul, May 1999.

[396] The analysis of future trends in the Islamist movement and of changes in the theory and action plans of the Islamists is based on in-depth interviews with Islamist intellectuals and reading discussions from the mid-1990s on in Hikmet ve Bilgi quarterly and Yasin Aktay’s book Turk Dininin Sosyolojik Imkani (Sociological Feasibility of Turkish Islam) (Istanbul: Iletisim, 2000).

[397] Islamists in many Middle Eastern countries have abandoned the old strategy of toppling the state and moved in the direction of following legitimate political avenues. Ibrahim A. Karawan, The Islamist Impasse (Adelphi Paper no. 314, London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1997).

[398] While the Toprak and Carkoglu study shows that some religious people support separation of state and religion, religious people have a higher tendency to support political Islam and political parties representing Islamist causes, like the RP/FP. Toprak and Carkoglu, Turkiye'de Siyasi Islam.

[399] The agriculture sector accounts for 14 percent of GDP and employs about half (43 percent) of the labor force. This sector, which is largely excluded from the customs union, continues to be subject to extensive and costly government intervention. Support for the sector has increased in recent years. According to OECD estimates, total transfers almost doubled in the period 1994 to 1997, reaching the equivalent of 7.5 percent of GDP. Support price interventions and the fertilizer subsidy continue to be serious drains on the budget. This is why the government has chosen to restrict and gradually eliminate agricultural subsidies.

** 9. Fethullah Gulen and His Liberal 'Turkish Islam' Movement

Bulent Aras and Omer Caha

The community that has developed under the influence of Fethullah Gulen, a prominent religious leader in Turkey, simultaneously has Islamic, nationalist, liberal, and modern characteristics. Its ability to reconcile traditional Islamic values with modern life and science has won a large, receptive audience. The group has even brought together divergent ideas and people, including the poor and the rich, the educated and the illiterate, Turks and Kurds, and

Muslims and non-Muslims. Gulen’s movement could be a model for the future of Islamic political and social activism.

In comparison to so-called ‘fundamentalist’ Islamic groups, Gulen’s movement’s views on Islam are surprisingly liberal and tolerant of non-Islamic lifestyles. However, this approach may be the result of the long-term, specific experience of the Anatolian people and the unique historical dynamics of Turkish sociocultural life. For example, the movement is influenced by the concept of ‘Turkish Islam’ formulated by some nationalist thinkers, and also the Nurcu or Nur (Light) movement that developed around the writings of Said Nursi.

The main premise of ‘Turkish Islam’ is moderation. Since people of Turkish origin first accepted Islam, they perceived and practiced it under the influence of Sufi ideas. Sufi-oriented Islamic movements kept a certain distance from the politics of their times in contrast to other Islamic movements. For example, the Shi’ites or Haricis defined themselves according to an imagined other (those who do not support the truth) and became associated with specific political stances over the proper nature of the state and who should hold power. Sufi tradition, however, has described itself as being based on the philosophy that all creatures should be loved as God’s physical reflection and objects of the Creator’s own love. There is no place for enemies or ‘others’ in this system.

Islam in Turkish political history, during the reigns of both the Seljuks and the Ottomans, remained under the state’s guidance but as a private matter. The dominant belief was that a truly religious sultan would govern the state according to the principles of justice, equality, and piety. This approach of keeping religion apart from worldly affairs led to a collective memory that regarded Islam as a flexible and tolerant belief system. Thus, it was assumed that religious institutions should adopt flexible attitudes toward the changing situations of their times. In the Ottoman era, there was never a full-fledged theocratic system.

While the principles of Shari’a (Islamic law) were applied in the private sphere, public life was regulated according to customary law formulated

under the authority of the state.[400] This aspect of the Ottoman political system made religion’s role less rigid. Moreover, the empire accepted that it would be a multireligious state, in which Christian and Jewish subjects would continue to be governed by their own laws.

While Western domination of the Islamic world during the nineteenth century led some Muslims to reject Western ideas, the Ottomans adopted many Western innovations. For example, they opened Western-style schools (including women’s schools), promulgated major programs for reform and human rights (the Tanzimat Fermani in 1839 and Islahat Fermani in 1856), developed a constitution, and opened a parliament in 1876. Said Nursi became one of the most insistent supporters of the parliamentary system at that time and later of the republican regime in Turkey.

In addition to this history of a Turco-Islamic heritage, another influence on Gulen’s movement was the Nur movement (also known as the Risale-i Nur movement). The movement was organized around Said Nursi (1877—1961), a prominent religious authority, and his writings, the Risale-i Nur (Letters of Light). It spread throughout Turkey after 1950, despite the state’s efforts, and had special success among the young and those educated in Turkey’s secular education system mainly because Nursi argued that there was no contradiction between religion and science.[401] The Risale-i Nur is well thought of by religious moderates because of its emphasis on the links between Islam and reason, science, and modernity. It also rejects the idea that a clash between the ‘East’ and ‘West’ is either necessary or desirable and advocates the use of reason in issues related to Islamic belief.

Born in Erzurum in eastern Turkey in 1938, Gulen learned Arabic and religion from his father.[402] In 1953 he began his career as a government preacher (the only legal position a preacher can hold in Turkey), and in 1958 he took a teaching position at a mosque in Edirne. Four years later, he transferred to Izmir, where his movement began and came to be known by some as the “Izmir Community.” During the era of military rule starting in 1971, he was arrested for clandestine religious activities (organizing summer camps to disseminate Islamic ideas) and spent seven months in prison. In the early

1980s, the police initiated a case against him, but he was not arrested due to the ruling military junta’s relative tolerance of Islam. During the premiership of Turgut Ozal, Gulen gained official protection. He is now retired and living in both Izmir and Istanbul in modest homes given to him by followers, while continuing to write extensively.[403]

Throughout his career, Gulen, addressed by his followers as “respected teacher” (hocaefendi), has traveled the width and breadth of Turkey. He has also lectured abroad on such subjects as the Quran and contemporary science, the Islamic perception of Darwin, and social justice in Islam.

Gulen has knowledge of both traditional Islamic sources and Western philosophy, and is especially interested in Immanuel Kant.[404] He is an effective speaker in person and on television. His books have become bestsellers in Turkey. As Nuriye Akman, a senior Turkish columnist, concedes:

<quote>

He is like that “old-style gentleman” we read about in old books and see in old films. He says “estagfurullah” [I beg the pardon of God] in every other sentence. He speaks in delicate and polite phrases. He is extremely modest ... He speaks in an even tone knowing what he will say and uses correct grammar and an Ottoman vocabulary.[405]

</quote>

Gulen does not favor the state’s applying Islamic law, the Shari’a. He points out that most Islamic regulations concern people’s private lives and that only a small portion of them concern the state and government. These latter provisions need not be enforced because religion is a private matter, and its requirements should not be imposed on anyone.[406] He looks at Islamic regulations bearing directly on the government—such as those related to taxation and warfare—in the context of contemporary realities.

Concluding that the democratic form of government is the best choice, Gulen is very critical of the regimes in Iran and Saudi Arabia. He accepts Said Nursi's argument that the idea of republicanism is very much in accord with the idea of "consultation" discussed in Islamic sources. Moreover, he fears that an authoritarian regime would impose strict control on differing ideas. At the same time, though, Gulen views the state's role as important in "protecting stability."

Gulen's goals are simultaneously to Islamicize the Turkish nationalist ideology and to Turkify Islam. He hopes to re-establish the link between religion and state that existed in the Ottoman era, when leaders were expected to live their private lives based on Islamic regulations. Such an approach, he argues, would strengthen the state, and thus protect society by widening the state's base of legitimacy and enhancing its ability to mobilize the population.

Gulen holds that the Anatolian people's interpretations and experiences of Islam are different from those of others, especially the Arabs. He writes of an "Anatolian Islam" based on tolerance and excluding harsh restrictions or fanaticism and frequently emphasizes that there should be freedom of worship and thought in Turkey. He proposes two keys to provide peace in society—tolerance and dialogue. "We can build confidence and peace in this country if we treat each other with tolerance."[407] In his view, "no one should condemn another for being a member of a religion or scold him for being an atheist."[408]

His ideas about tolerance and dialogue are not restricted to Muslims but also extend to Christians and Jews. Gulen met twice with Patriarch Bartholomeos, head of the Greek Orthodox Fener Patriarchate in Istanbul, and has also met several times with Christian and Jewish religious leaders to promote interreligious dialogue. In February 1998, for example, he visited the pope in Rome and received a visiting chief rabbi from Israel. The meeting between the pope and Gulen was not received positively by some circles in Turkey. Some argued that this meeting created the impression that Gulen wanted to become the leader of Islam in the world. Others argued that the meeting was a plot to portray him and his community as embracing all sections of society and as enjoying a status higher than the state.

On the question of women’s rights, Gulen has progressive views. He believes that the veiling of women is a detail in Islam, and that “no one should suppress the progress of women through the clothes they wear.” Gulen also states that “no one should be subject to criticism for his or her clothing or thoughts.”[409] Furthermore, he says, “Women can become administrators,” contradicting the views of most Islamic intellectuals. Despite these views, modern professional women in Turkey still find his ideas far from acceptable.

Gulen favors education that leads to integration into the modern world. According to Mehmet Ozkaragoz, a U.S.-educated devotee, “A basic principle of Islam is seeking knowledge. We recognize the West as the best source of technology at the moment although, of course, we would prefer the Muslim world to be the leader.”[410] Moreover, Gulen wishes to merge Islam into the international economic and political systems, and supports Turkey’s bid for membership in the European Union.

Here, too, Gulen is influenced by Said Nursi. While Nursi believed that some actions of nonbelievers harmed humanity’s future, he advocated cooperation among believers of all religions as a countermeasure. Gulen goes a step further and extends his tolerance toward secularists and nonbelievers in Turkey. He sees this approach as a way to revive the multiculturalism of the Ottoman Empire, secure Turkey’s stability, and prevent conflicts such as those between Sunnis and Alevis.

Gulen has had considerable success advancing his aim to create a Muslim community that opposes politicized Islam. No one knows the actual size of Gulen’s large group of sympathizers (known as Fethullahcilar or “the followers of Fethullah,” a name Gulen strongly opposes) but guesses range between 200,000 and 4 million people influenced by his ideas.[411] This community draws much of its support from young urban men, with a special appeal to doctors, academics, and other professionals. It has grown in part by establishing student dormitories, summer camps, high schools, universities, educational and cultural centers, and publications. Although Gulen is its sole leader, a number of his longtime devotees run the community.[412]

Gulen has considerable political weight on the right of the political spectrum, which explains why party leaders are eager to maintain close contacts with him. Since 1994, he has met with a president, a prime minister, the leaders of many parties, and important businessmen. He regularly gives interviews to the country's leading media outlets. In 1997, Turkey's President Suleyman Demirel accepted an award from one of Gulen's organizations and praised the movement's educational activities. Gulen also met with Bulent Ecevit, the longtime leader of Turkey's left and the current prime minister, after which Ecevit reported that their meeting involved a "conversation that focused entirely on religion and philosophy. The meeting had no political dimensions. I found Gulen to be a sincere and candid person. Our meeting was useful."[413] This exchange was remarkable in that it showed Gulen's ideas could also find a receptive audience on the left.

To promote their views, Gulen's followers have set up a wide range of organizations. The Turkish Teachers' Foundation, for example, publishes a monthly journal, Sizinti (Disclosures), and two academic journals, Yeni Umit (New Hope) and The Fountain (published in English). It also organizes national and international symposiums, panel discussions, and conferences. Another foundation, the Journalists' and Writers' Foundation, brings secularist and Islamist intellectuals together in what are called Abant meetings, putting forward the view that no individual or group has a monopoly on interpreting Islam and that secularism does not mean being anti-religious.[414] The foundation has organized conferences and has invited prominent intellectuals to talk on various issues such as on dialogue among civilizations.

An American expert on Islam, Dale F. Eickelman, calls Gulen "Turkey's answer to media-savvy American evangelist Billy Graham ... In televised chat shows, interviews and occasional sermons, Gulen speaks about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events."[415] The Gulen community also has its own media, including the daily newspaper Zaman, the television channel Samanyolu, and the radio station Burc. In addition, it distributes

video- and audiotapes. Those involved in its campaigns include prominent intellectuals from Turkey’s prestigious universities.

The Gulen community owns and runs about 100 schools in Turkey. These institutions use the same curriculum as state schools and are under tight state control, but they also emphasize conservative values such as good manners and respect for elders. The schools are funded by the community and instructors are graduates of some of the best Turkish universities. Once the schools began functioning, they became the focus of further fund-raising efforts and are regarded as providing a high-quality education.

In keeping with his Turkish orientation, Gulen encourages paying attention to the Turkish-speaking republics of the former Soviet Union, where he has gained many loyal followers. In October 1996, Gulen’s followers financed a noninterest-bearing bank, Asya Finans, backed by sixteen partners and $125 million in capital, which aims to raise funds for investments in the Turkic republics. In this way, Gulen hopes to draw the attention of Turkish businessmen to these new countries, and in doing so, solidify links to them.

Followers of Gulen have also founded more than 200 schools around the world from Tanzania to China, but mostly in the Turkic republics. The schools in the Turkic republics support a philosophy based on Turkish nationalism rather than on Islam. As one reporter has stated, “From the Balkans to China, he wants to see elites formed with Turkey as their model.”[416] In Gulen’s view, Turkey’s virtues include its Ottoman heritage, secularism, market economy, and democracy. These schools also admit non-Muslim students, and because of their high quality, and perhaps the use of English as the primary language of instruction, they attract children of the elite and of government officials in various countries. The community supports a secular state model in both Azerbaijan and Central Asia.[417] The Turkish analyst Sahin Alpay noted that graduates of these schools go on to hold important positions in all walks of life in these newly independent states.[418]

Arguing that Gulen’s group fosters the idea of an Islamic umma or a community of Muslims in this region would probably be wrong. The authoritarian leaders of the new republics are highly intolerant of Islamic

activities and Gulen's group is very careful not to provoke these rulers. Small groups are organized to hear a follower of Nursi read and interpret his books. Ideas are also spread through personal relationships. As has been observed by Elisabeth Ozdalga: "The main objective [of the education provided in these schools] is to give the students a good education, without prompting any specific ideological orientation. One basic idea of Gulen's followers is that ethical values are not transmitted openly through persuasion and lessons but through providing good examples in daily conduct."[419] Actually, this way of conveying messages in a subtle manner is no different from the early Islamicization of this region at the hands of Ahmed Yesevi and Bahaeddin Naksibendi. Some analysts describe the community's efforts in this region as Islam blended with Turkish nationalism.[420] However, the Gulen community has also opened schools in non-Muslim areas. More accurately, the community is trying to create the idea of Turkey as a role model and leading power in this region.[421]

This does not mean that Gulen's community has advanced without setbacks or even that it enjoys support from the Turkish state. For example, prosecutors investigated statements made by Gulen on a June 18, 1999 television broad- cast.[422] Prime Minister Ecevit, who said he saw the program, urged that the government look into the matter rather than having a debate in the media about it. He also made a supportive statement about the movement's educational system: "These schools spread Turkish culture and information about Turkey to the world. They are under the continuous supervision of our state."[423]

What was the problem? Gulen had made some vague statements that were somewhat critical of the Turkish establishment. He apologized publicly, but some secularists remained suspicious that he was seeking to gain political power over state institutions, including the army.[424] About a week after the broadcast, President Suleyman Demirel sent a warning to Gulen by saying: "I think that a man of religion should not have political targets. Being a man of religion is a hard task, but being a respected man of religion is only possible by being in compliance with the rules of our religion; that is, it is possible by giving good advice to humanity rather than by being involved in worldly affairs."[425]

Clearly, Gulen and his community could again face such allegations in the future. Some segments of the Turkish bureaucracy will continue to hinder the activities of Gulen's community. For example, YOK, the Higher Education Council, has decided not to recognize universities opened overseas by foundations and corporations that support the Gulen community. According to this decision, students will not be allowed to transfer from universities abroad run by the Gulen community to Turkish universities. Moreover, YOK will not grant any "equivalency degrees" for degrees conferred by such universities.[426]

Public concern about the Gulen community was raised again after allegations were made shortly after the videotape controversy that the community was behind tension that arose between Uzbekistan and Turkey. This led to the closure of some of the schools run by the community in Uzbekistan. However, Ecevit urged calm: "The Uzbek president has several unjust concerns about Turkey Turkey does not intervene in the domestic affairs of other countries.

I attribute great importance to relations with Uzbekistan. We cannot allow these relations to be damaged by unnecessary touchiness."[427]

The Turkish military has staged three coups—in 1960, 1971, and 1980—to restore stability and order in the country. But in June 1997, rather than stage a fourth coup, the army maneuvered the Refah (Welfare) Party, Turkey's largest vote-getter in the 1995 parliamentary elections, out of office. It did so on the grounds that Islamic radicalism was poised to cause a civil uprising which it would be legally obliged to resist, "by force if necessary."[428]

Gulen takes particular care not to antagonize the army. In fact, he tries hard to persuade the military leadership that his activities do not challenge the status quo and should not be regarded as reactionary (a code word for Islamist). For example, he says that, if need be, he would turn over his community's schools to the state.[429] When asked about the threat of reactionaryism being on the agenda of the army-dominated National Security Council (MGK), he replied: "The MGK is a constitutional institution. It is a part of the state. I have never believed that a threat of reactionaryism exists in

Turkey. Turkey needs enlightenment. Reactionaryism means going backward. In an enlightened era which has experienced democracy and secularism, it is impossible for the Turkish people to go back."[430]

While the Turkish army appears to accept Gulen and his followers as a domestic movement, not inspired by any foreign influence such as Iran or Saudi Arabia, the suspicion still exists that he may seek to subvert the military from within by sending his followers to the military academies. If this is true, it means that the community will have a difficult relationship with the military leadership. This may already be the case since it is known that the West Working Group in the office of the chief of the General Staff, has prepared a file dealing with the activities of Gulen's followers focusing on their educational institutions abroad. Members of the military have also visited most of these schools in Asia. Furthermore, the military leadership has shown no desire to be seen with Gulen, unlike secular politicians and intellectuals. Ismail Hakk Karaday, the army's chief of staff, did not even reply to an invitation to an iftar (a breaking of the Ramadan fast) dinner.

A split in the government over Gulen and his community has potentially significant political consequences, for Gulen has found civilian support even while the military has looked askance at his activities. In a dramatic move, as reports circulated that the military leadership planned to discuss Gulen's activities at a National Security Council meeting, both Suleyman Demirel and Bulent Ecevit endorsed him.[431] Despite the fact that Gulen himself has expressed respect for the military, the military is generally opposed to him. Since conservative circles in Turkey hold the military above all other state institutions and never criticize it, if the military were to oppose Gulen strongly, he would lose his civilian support.

Islamist intellectuals who supported the Refah Party and now support the Fazilet (Virtue) Party (formed by Refah supporters when Refah was closed), generally stay clear of Gulen's movement, limiting their remarks to the nature of the curriculum at the community's schools or to assessing Gulen's intentions. Relations with Refah supporters are tense given that Refah supporters widely believe that the secular establishment uses Gulen's community to obstruct their path. Necmettin Erbakan, Refah's longtime

chairman, even accused Gulen of accepting government support to threaten Refah.[432]

In turn, Gulen frequently criticized Refah Party policies and activities. Keeping his distance from the Refah Party contrasted sharply with Gulen's efforts to carry out a dialogue with the secularist parties. Gulen did acknowledge Refah's impressive organization and growth in membership but noted that if other parties had worked as hard, Refah would not have received 21 percent of the vote in the December 1995 elections. He also concluded that the vote for Refah was larger than its actual base of support when he said that "Our friends in Refah may be annoyed, but I think that Refah's electoral share is still around 15 percent—maybe not even that. The great majority of those who vote for Refah are people who are dissatisfied because there is no strong government that inspires confidence in Turkey."[433]

Gulen held the Refah Party itself responsible for the crisis in Turkish politics that pitted it against the secularist military. He has also deemed Refah's removal from office in June 1997 not unfair. "Hopefully, and God willing, no one will come out and try to drag the nation into a vicious circle [like the one in the 1970s] from which we extricated ourselves with much difficulty."[434] Indeed, he sees Turkey as having barely missed entering a deep conflict along the lines of Algeria.

Since 1996, prosecutors have argued that statements such as those of Istanbul's former Mayor Recep Tayyip Erdogan, read from a poem, that "the minarets are our bayonets, the domes our helmets, and the mosques our barracks,"[435] which led to his criminal prosecution in May 1998, prove the party's anti-secular intentions. Thus, they sought to shut down Refah as a threat to Turkey's constitutionally enshrined secular system. They got their way in January 1998, when the chief judge of the Constitutional Court, Ahmet Necdet Sezer, announced Refah's closure on the basis that it had engaged in "actions against the principles of the secular republic."[436]

Gulen rejected comments like those of Erdogan, holding that they "are not binding on believers who respect God in Turkey."[437] He supported the closure of Refah, given his emphasis on the preservation of order, but said it

would be more sensible, for tactical reasons, not to close Refah. Instead, he urged continuing the lawsuit against the party until the next round of elections:

<quote>

“If a trial is on when the election campaign gets under way, public trust in Refah would be shaken. It would be viewed as a party that will be closed. People would not vote for it. Its votes would move, more democratically, largely to the parties that are most closely aligned with the Refah Party. That would achieve the desired objective.”[438]

</quote>

Gulen predicted the Islamists would not gain from having suffered the closure of Refah, and he rejects the idea that Turkey’s new Islamist party, the Fazilet Party, would emerge with more strength among voters. Interestingly, during the media campaign against Gulen in June 1999, the leader of the Fazilet party, Recai Kutan, and some other prominent figures in the party defended Gulen publicly and tried to counter arguments against him. The Islamist media also adopted the same attitude and supported Gulen and his movement when serious questions about him were raised.

Gulen’s June 1999 emergence upon the political scene triggered much controversy among secularist intellectuals, a considerable number of whom have suspected him of using different tactics to reach the same goal as the Islamists. They worry that behind his benign facade, Gulen hides ambitions to turn the country into an Iranian-style Islamic state. The insecurity and intolerance of some secularists cause them to accuse Gulen’s community of being the enemy of the Turkish republic. They also worry that secularist parties have offered Gulen support in exchange for a promise on his part not to endorse the Refah Party.

Rusen Cakir, author of a book on the rise of Islam in Turkey, finds that “the [secularist] parties are promoting him as an alternative to Welfare. They’re using their enemy’s weapon against their enemy.”[439] Another expert on Islamists, Iskender Savasir, made similar remarks, saying that “I cannot say

that Fethullah Hoca is not collaborating with the state."[440] A "radical socialist" weekly, whose sometimes sensationalist and unreliable allegations have been used by the Turkish military, claims that the Gulen group "acquired financial support from the state, particularly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs" and points to Tansu Ciller's having transferred "large sums from her ministry's secret budget" to his schools, seeing this as "one of the reasons for the close relations he has with her."[441]

On the other hand, Gulen has obtained the support of a number of well-known liberal intellectuals, such as the journalists Mehmet Altan, Ali Bayramoglu, Mehmet Barlas, Etyen Mahcupyan, Mehmet Ali Birand, and Cengiz Candar, who argue that the solution to Turkey's problems depends on reaching a consensus. Thus, they like the 'soft' face of Islam he presents. Birand, for example, recently argued that Gulen has original ideas and that all segments of Turkish society, implying the military, should pay attention to his vision. Gulen's critical stance toward the Refah Party also won him the support of some nationalistconservative intellectuals like Altemur Kilic. As a symbol of this support, Gulen's Turkish Journalists and Writers Foundation hosted an iftar dinner in February 1996, at which about a thousand distinguished politicians, businessmen, artists, and intellectuals turned up.

A discussion of the significance of Gulen's movement requires considering both the organizational structure of the movement itself, the movement's place in Turkey's political and economic system, and its influence beyond Turkey.

First, the organizational structure of the movement is seen as hierarchical and somewhat undemocratic, which is somewhat unexpected given the community's liberal attitudes and tolerance of differences. Gulen is the sole leader of the movement and the hierarchical order extends from the top to the bottom through an increasing number of abiler (elder brothers). The ranking is very strict, and each rank's abi (elder brother) obtains only a certain amount of knowledge of the activities occurring or under discussion while agreeing to refrain from asking questions or seeking more knowledge about the higher ranks. An abi or someone under his supervision may, however, talk to other abis informally and also talk to

those assigned to overseeing the activities. Although this sort of structure may be helpful if the members of the community were to face persecution by the government, it does raise serious problems for the development of democracy within the group and creates the likelihood that many followers are left out of the decision-making process. Of course, those entering into this structure do so of their own free will.

As for the movement's standing in Turkish society, it does occupy a special place given the new cultural space created after the liberalization attempts of the 1980s in Turkey. Its tolerant Islamic discourse that seeks consensus aims to integrate its followers into the existing political system. The Gulen movement does not encourage bringing down the government or even challenging the status quo. In fact, because the Gulen movement is highly sensitive about being involved in any controversy, it avoids taking up controversial issues or even entering into public debates. This cautious stance constitutes a self-imposed restriction, and it may prompt more radical Islamic movements to do likewise.

Further, as already noted, Gulen's movement seeks integration with the modern world by reconciling modern and traditional values. This attempt to create a synthesis of ideas resembles the efforts of the last nationalist thinkers of the Ottoman Empire. For example, Ziya Gokalp emphasized the necessity of creating a synthesis based on combining elements taken from Turkish culture (hars) and from Western science and technology. Gulen and his devotees go a step further, accepting Western civilization as a suitable foundation for material life while considering Islamic civilization suitable for spiritual life. It should be noted, though, that given the movement's conservative character, it does appeal to those who find that the Turkish political system is overemphasizing secularism and modernization.

Another way of viewing the movement's place in Turkish society is to consider Gulen's community one among many other civil society organizations, despite its hierarchical structure, given that the community has achieved autonomy from state power and has been able to play a significant role in society— the main characteristics of civil society

organizations. The movement does mobilize a large segment of society, a segment not tied to the state.

The movement must be seen in contrast to a sector that has long been tied closely to the state. A strategy began as early as the 1920s aimed at creating a native bourgeoisie. The result was a social group that received special incentives and protectionist measures. Some enormously wealthy industrialists emerged with strong links to part of the state bureaucracy. Given the state's willingness to give these wealthy industrialists control over the Turkish economy, competition has been prevented from developing and the political will of the people has been rendered ineffective and even meaningless with respect to influencing economic policy.

In the 1990s, however, policies oriented towards greater liberalization and a shift to export-oriented industrialization have led to the emergence of new, dynamic, export-oriented, small and medium-sized businesses, many based in traditionally conservative Anatolian cities. This segment of society has been mobilized by Gulen's movement. The newly emerging export-oriented economic class is likely to challenge the existing economic structure and pressure the state bureaucracy to end the unequal treatment. It might also be said that the economic activities linked to Gulen's movement as well as the educational activities of Gulen's community have become part of an alternative economy.

This aspect of Gulen's movement, with its focus on disciplined work and efforts motivated by national-religious values, makes comparing it to the Protestant movement of the sixteenth century fitting. As Weber argued in his classic book The Protestant Ethics of Capitalism, religious-spiritual values can motivate people to work hard and accumulate wealth. In Turkey's case, given the current insistence upon a strict secular model of government, citizens may be choosing to worship "safely" by working hard to achieve economic modernization and development, or they may view the "self-discipline" Islam encourages as being attained when they work hard. In fact, Gulen uses the term hizmet or service, stating that there is no end to the service that can be carried out to build a peaceful society. At the same time he argues that a person's energy to serve comes from belief and that serving one's society is the most important way to gain God's favor

and a place in paradise. This resembles what Weber called “in- worldly asceticism,” which was significant in the development of capitalism.

As for the significance of Gulen’s movement beyond Turkey, its best potential is in the Turkic countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia, where Gulen’s emphasis on Turkish Islam will probably weaken the appeal of the message coming out of Iran. In the larger Muslim world, Gulen’s movement does pose a potential challenge to Islamism, for its ideas may find receptive audiences among those with access to the outside world—those generally the most prone to Islamism. This said, Gulen’s ideas have a much better chance than his organization, for authoritarian states and a general intolerance for new interpretations of Islam could impede it.

The unique character of Gulen’s movement lies in its attempt to revitalize traditional values as part of modernizing efforts such as the Turkish state’s official modernization program. Thus far, it has had some success as it attempts to harmonize and integrate the historically diverse lands of Turkey and reconcile hundreds of years of tradition with the demands of modernity, not easy tasks. In brief, Gulen seeks to construct a Turkish-style Islam, remember the Ottoman past, Islamicize Turkish nationalism, re-create a legitimate link between the state and religion, emphasize democracy and tolerance, and encourage links with the Turkic republics.

Gulen’s movement seems to have no aspiration to evolve into a political party or seek political power. On the contrary, Gulen continues a long Sufi tradition of seeking to address the spiritual needs of people, to educate the masses, and to provide some stability in times of turmoil. Like many previous Sufi figures (including the towering thirteenth-century figure Jalal al-Din Rumi), he is wrongly suspected of seeking political power. However, any change from this apolitical stance would very much harm the reputation of his community.

Ultimately, the future of the Gulen group will be determined by its ability to evolve into an open-minded, flexible, and democratic community and improve its relations with the Turkish military leadership and secular elites. If these endeavors are successful, then the group could have a major impact

on both the Turkish state and Turkish society and on the changes that take place in Turkey in the coming decades. As for Gulen himself, in a new Turkey he would become an even more important religious figure.

[400] See Niyazi Berkes, The Development of Secularism in Turkey (London: Routledge, 1998).

[401] For further information, see Serif Mardin, Religion and Social Change in Modern Turkey: The Case of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

[402] Erzurum's location near the border between Turkey and Iran, and the large number of immigrants from the Caucasus there, are said to render its Islam state-oriented and nationalistic.

[403] Some of Gulen's writings are available in English: The Infinite Light, The Lights of the Way, Questions, Towards the Lost Paradise, and Truth through Colors [no reference information for these publications]. In addition, the second half of the 1990s witnessed numerous (speculative, popular, and scholarly) studies of Gulen's life and his community. For example, see Oral Calislar, Fethullah Gulen'den Cemalettin Kaplan'a (From Fethullah Gulen to Cemalettin Kaplan) (Istanbul: Pencere Yayinevi, 1998); Eyup Can, Fethullah Gulen Hocaefendi ile Ufuk Turu (A Tour of New Horizons with Fethullah Gulen) (Istanbul: AD Yayinevi, 1995); Nevval Sevindi, Fethullah Gulen ile New York Sohbetleri (Conversations with Fethullah Gulen in New York) (Istanbul: Sabah Yayinevi, 1997); Mehmet Ali Soydan, Fethullah Gulen Olayi (The Case of Fethullah Gulen) (Istanbul: Birey Yayinevi, 1999); Osman Ozsoy, Fethullah Gulen_Hocaefendi ileMulakat (An Interview with Fethullah Gulen) (Istanbul: Alfa Yayinevi, 1998); (n.a.) Medya Aynasinda Fethullah Gulen (Fethullah Gulen as Portrayed by the Media) (Istanbul: Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakflar Yayinlari, 1999).

[404] For example, see M. Fethullah Gulen, Varligin Metafizik Boyutu (The Metaphysical Dimension of Existence) (Istanbul: Feza Yayinevi, 1998).

[405] Nuriye Akman, “Hocaefendi ile Roportaj” (“Interview with Hocaefendi”) Nokta, February 5—11, 1995, pp. 16—18.

[406] Fethullah Gulen, Fasildan Fasila 1 (Izmir: Nil Yayinevi, 1995), p. 223.

[407] Alistair Bell, “Turkish Islamic Leader Defies Radical Label,” Reuters, August 7, 1995.

[408] The Turkish Daily News, February 18, 1995.

[409] Ibid.

[410] Bell, “Turkish Islamic Leader.”

[411] “Hocaefendi Cemaati,” Tempo, February 7, 1997, pp. 46—50.

[412] See the series in Milliyet, August 10—13, 1997.

[413] Ibid.

[414] The Turkish Daily News, July 21, 1998, and Milliyet, July 21, 1998.

[415] Dale F. Eickelman, “Inside the Islamic Reformation,” Wilson Quarterly 22, No. 1 (Winter 1998), pp. 84–85.

[416] Wendy Kristianasen, “New Faces of Islam,” Le Monde Diplomatique (English edition), July 1997, pp. 11–12.

[417] Hurriyet, November 3, 1996.

[418] Milliyet, November 4, 1996.

[419] Elisabeth Ozdalga, “Entrepreneurs with a Mission: Turkish Islamists Building Schools along the Silk Road,” (Paper delivered at the Annual Conference of the North American Middle East Studies Association, Washington, D.C., November 19—22, 1999).

[420] For example, see M. Hakan Yavuz, “Societal Search for a New Contract: Fethullah Gulen, Virtue Party and the Kurds,” SAIS Review, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Winter/Spring 1999), pp. 114–143.

[421] During a series of interviews with students of the community’s high schools in Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan (who were brought to Turkey for a vacation) in August 1999, the students expressed their gratitude and appreciation for their teachers’ attempts to educate them. Their perception of Turkey consisted of the projected image of their teachers—that is, they attributed to all Turkish people the good conduct of their teachers.

[422] Anatolia, June 19, 1999.

[423] Anatolia, June 22, 1999.

[424] TV News Bulletin, June 24, 1999.

[425] Anatolia, June, 24 1999.

[426] Hurriyet, June 27, 1999.

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[431] Nicole Pope, “Generals Get Their Way,” Middle East International, No. 571 (March 27, 1998), p. 14.

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[433] Milliyet, August 31, 1997.

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[436] The New York Times, January 17, 1998, and The Washington Post, January 17, 1998.

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** 10. Islam and Democracy

Ali R. Abootalebi

The study of the role of Islam in politics, society, and the economy since the early 1970s, and particularly after the Iranian revolution, has produced a wide range of academic and policy debates and conversations. The relationship between Islam, civil society, and democracy especially has been of interest to Islamic activists, Islamic clerics (the ‘ulama), intellectuals, and state policymakers. At the heart of the question is whether Islam is compatible with democracy, and, if so, what then accounts for the authoritarianism and absence of democracy in most, if not all, Muslim countries.

Scholars of various persuasions have offered different cultural, economic, social, and political explanations.[442] Historically, the Orientalists’ view emphasized Islam’s cultural essentialism, proposing that Islam was responsible for the sociopolitical ills of Middle Eastern societies, including the absence of democracy. That is, Islam is the independent variable that can

explain the major characteristics of Muslim societies, including the lower level of socioeconomic and political development. Such culturally grounded explanations have been seriously discredited by the neo-Orientalists' arguments that the structural underpinnings of societies can better account for socioeconomic and political inadequacies in the Middle East and elsewhere in the developing world.[443]

Islamic doctrines and beliefs pose no serious opposition to democracy, understood as a political system where the political and civil rights of the individual are guaranteed and practiced through institutional and legal arrangements. The Islamic doctrine holds the state partly responsible for the welfare of society, but ultimately it is through individual participation and the development of civil society that democracy can emerge. And to this end, Islam does recognize the sovereign rights of the individual to promote his or her own self-interest as well as contribute to the welfare of society as a whole.

To understand the relationship between Islam and democracy, one cannot overlook the distinctions among the message of Islam, the diversity of the Islamic movements in ideological composition and tactics, and the power struggle over ideological and political interests among traditionalist 'ulama and Islamists in various Islamic communities. It would be a gross mistake to generalize about the behavior of Muslims and their leaderships across the Islamic world. It would also be a mistake to categorize Muslims as "fundamentalists," "Islamists," or other such types without considering the ideological overlaps among members of such groupings.[444] Indeed, the very nature of Islamic law and its application for the creation of an 'Islamic society' has necessitated different interpretations of law and Islamic leadership from the very beginning. It is therefore quite feasible for an Islamic cleric to simultaneously have conflicting 'conservative' and 'progressive' views on the extent of the individual's rights and duties, as opposed to the state's, in social, economic, and political affairs.

Islamic movements have been diverse in their approaches to propagating the message of Islam. The Islamic movements in Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, the Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere in the Muslim world have had different experiences in their dealings with the state.

But the diversity of Islamic movements in ideological tone, political posturing, and success or failure in challenging the state can largely be explained by differences in preexisting social, economic, and political contexts. Islamic leaders now realize the success of their movements as alternatives to the politics and ideology of the state is conditioned by their ability to deliver material gains to their followers, in addition to the promise of a more spiritually fulfilling life. The appeal by Muslim leaders to the public for political support without actual material benefits cannot succeed in the long run. Thus, the Islamic movements' preoccupation with public welfare programs in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and elsewhere in the Muslim world. Similarly, no 'Islamic' state can, in light of persistent socioeconomic problems, hope to survive indefinitely through ideological rhetoric and the application of coercive policies.

The debate between traditionalist 'ulama and reformist clerical and nonclerical 'civilian' intellectuals on the proper role of Islam in state-society relations has made the Islamic movements of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries potent alternatives to the secular and predominantly authoritarian state. The nineteenthcentury wave of Islamic movements, for example, was preoccupied with anticolonialism and the search for reviving Islam in modern times. A century later and in light of socioeconomic, political, and global challenges facing Muslim societies, Islamic movements are reinventing Islam in fundamental ways.

The debate on the proper role of Islam emphasizes either the direct political role of Islamic clerics in running state affairs, thus bridging the political and religious divide, or the presence of Islam as a sociocultural variable in promoting socioeconomic justice, the rule of law, and political toleration, without direct participation by clerics in the temporal realm of politics, which can corrupt all those involved, religious or not. Either solution has immediate and long-term consequences for the development of civil society and democracy in Muslim countries. But ultimately the success or failure of Islamic movements, whether in charge of the state or in opposition, is largely contingent upon their ability to establish themselves as well organized and institutionalized movements, with clear sociopolitical and economic agendas for dealing with the ills of their respective societies.

In light of the above, this chapter will argue that prospects for democracy in Muslim countries (and in non-Muslim countries, for that matter) are contingent upon the extent of the distribution of socioeconomic resources and political power within society and between the state and society. Islamic movements must be understood not merely on the basis of their declared religious convictions, but also on their interest articulation and participation in the broader struggle between state and society over socioeconomic resources and political power. Islam is no more or less antithetical to democracy than Christianity or Judaism, and the behavior of Islamic movements and their leadership in different Muslim countries must be understood within the larger context of a struggle for power by various groups, including religious groups. Islamic movements, whether ruling the state as in Sudan, Iran, and Afghanistan, or in opposition, as in most Muslim countries, have offered different visions of an ‘Islamic solution’ to the ills of their respective societies. But, as with their secular counterparts, the ultimate goal for these movements has been gaining popular support and control of the state to implement their ‘Islamic’ agendas. Despite the ideological underpinnings of Islam, the behavior of Islamic movements’ leaderships has not fundamentally differed from other political movements in many non-Islamic developing countries.

The wide range of Islamic movements—in social make-up, structure, and program—has left many observers baffled. Since the Iranian revolution there has been a sharpened distinction between two approaches which might be called “fundamentalism” and “Islamism.”

Islamism can embrace both progressive ‘ulama and those urban intellectuals who believe Islamic tenets are compatible with such modern values as freedom and democracy. The Islamist view stands in sharp contrast to that held by the fundamentalist, traditionalist ‘ulama who have had an historical monopoly over the right to interpret Islam and its tenets.[445]

There has been much confusion, especially over the term fundamentalist, which implies a return to the past in recapturing the roots of Islamic religion. There is also an implication here that other readings of Islam are illegitimate, since they supposedly neglect

traditionally accepted concepts in favor of innovations that are often imports from non-Islamic societies.

Robin Wright shows one side of this approach in pointing out that fundamentalist movements also incorporate a great deal of modernity and innovation. Thus, she denies that most Islamic movements today are:

<quote>

‘fundamentalist’: The various Islamic movements are often called ‘fundamentalist’ in the West, but most are in fact not fundamentalist in their agendas. Fundamentalism generally urges passive adherence to literal reading of scriptures and does not advocate change of the social order, instead focusing on reforming the lives of the individual and family. Most of today’s Islamic movements resemble Catholic Liberation theologians who urge active use of original religious doctrine to better the temporal and political lives in a modern world. Islamist or Islamism more accurately describes their forward-looking, interpretive and often even innovative attempts to reconstruct the social order.[446]

</quote>

Ibrahim Yazdi, who claims that all truly Islamic movements are “fundamentalist,” conveys the opposite standpoint. As Yazdi puts it, there are:

<quote>

... two major trends in Islamic movements. One, we call the traditionalist. (The term ‘fundamentalism’ does not reflect the true facts. All of us are fundamentalists according to the definition in Western culture, that whoever believes the Bible is the word of God is a fundamentalist.) There are the tradition-oriented Muslim intelligentsia, the so-called ‘ulama. Then there are the reformist or modernist Muslim intellectuals.[447]

</quote>

Both Islamic fundamentalism and traditionalism are used here interchangeably as referring to opposition to Islamic reformists, or ‘Islamists,’ who are less rigid in their views of Islamic law (Shari’a) and of non-Islamic cultures. In any case, the classification of Muslim movements into traditionalist/fundamentalist and Islam- ist/reformist can be confusing, since Islamic doctrine itself allows for different interpretations and therefore different opinions on Shari’a and its principles. It is quite possible for a traditionalist religious leader (‘alim) to share similar Islamic values with a reformer on the overall position of Islam in society, the economy, and politics. The late Ayatollah Taleqani, who played an important role in Iran’s revolution, for example, had an activist vision of Islam and an Islamic state much closer to Islamist views than to those of Ayatollah Khomeini. The current ideological and political gulf between the ‘moderates’ led by President Muhammad Khatami, and ‘conservatives’ headed by Ayatollah Ali Khamene’i and other conservatives in the Iranian parliament (Majlis), has been widening. The two camps recognize that the Iranian regime’s survival hinges upon their unity, but despite the symbiotic relations that exist between them, differences in ideological interpretations of Islam and its tenets have put them on a collision course.

Indeed, the differences are over more than just moderate or conservative interpretations of Islam, but over a question of practical Islam versus stagnant Islam. Muslim societies will forge ahead with reforms needed for both material gains as well as spiritual uplifting, inspired by Islamic values, with or without the ‘ulama. In other words, the future role in Islam of the ‘ulama, or at least the more rigid ‘ulama, as sole interpreters of the Shari’a and legitimate heirs to the legacy of the Prophet of Islam himself is being challenged.[448]

Thus, it should be stressed that fundamental disagreements remain even among traditionalists over divine versus popular sovereignty. Some, like Abul A’la Mawdudi, founder of the Jamaat-i Islami in India, have argued that if democracy is conceived as a limited form of popular sovereignty, restricted and directed by God’s law, there is no incompatibility with Islam, but Mawdudi concluded that Islam is the very antithesis of secular Western democracy based solely on the sovereignty of the people.[449]

On the other hand, Sayyid Qutb, a leading traditionalist theoretician of the Muslim Brotherhood executed by the Egyptian government in 1966, objected to the idea of popular sovereignty altogether. Qutb believed that “the Islamic state must be based on the Quranic principle of consultation or shura [consultation, on the interpretation of Shari’a], and that the Islamic law or Shari’a is so complete a legal and moral system that no further legislation is possible or necessary.”[450]

Yet the rapidly unfolding events of the 1980s and 1990s have helped popularize the message and broaden support for moderate Islamists, compared to the revolutionary fundamentalists who flourished following Iran’s revolution. The more radical forces have been somewhat discredited by criticism of the Iranian model, their use of violence, and their failure to seize power. The current trend is for Muslim political leaders who favor participation in the electoral process as the way of taking control of the state, and intellectual reformists, who have been engaging in a lively debate on Islam and modernity (e.g., the outlook of Islam on democracy, equality, and human, minority, and women’s rights). The ‘ulama have historically preoccupied themselves with literal interpretation of the Quran and development of Islamic Law that relies basically on the Quran and Sunna (“path” or “tradition,” referring to the traditions about the conduct of the Prophet).[451] In this undertaking, a great deal of analysis has been written on the contributions by such Muslim thinkers as al-Shafi’i (767—820), Ibn Hanbal (780—855), al-Ghazzali (1058—1111), Ibn-Taymiyya (1263—1328), and others. These thinkers paid less attention in their writings to the political dimension of Shari’a than to its theological aspects. Vital questions, such as the right of the individual versus the community (umma), the right to rule and the source of political legitimacy, and the right or duty to rebel against unjust government, have been left underdeveloped. Thus, the scholars have not examined the duties and functions of an Islamic government in detail. As a result, no concrete political philosophy based on Shari’a has ever developed, and Islamic political thought has remained purely specula- tive.[452] Some have even gone so far as to argue that Shari’a never developed as a system of law in the sense it is understood nowadays, and thus invoking Shari’a to enforce autocratic rule by clerics is not legitimate.[453] As Fazlur Rahman has noted, “Islamic law... is not strictly speaking law, since much of it embodies moral and quasi-moral precepts not enforceable in any court. Further, Islamic law, though a certain

part of it came to be enforced almost uniformly throughout the Muslim world (and it is primarily this that bestowed homogeneity upon the entire Muslim world), is on closer examination a body of legal opinion or, as Santillana put it, ‘an endless discussion on the duties of a Muslim’ rather than a neatly formulated code or codes.”[454]

In short, while a detailed theological discussion of the relationship between Islam and democracy is outside the scope of this study,[455] Islamists argue that shura can be interpreted as a democratic principle since it demands open debate among both the ‘ulama and the community at large on issues that concern the public. But traditionalists’ unilinear and rigid view of society and politics has also come increasingly under question among Muslims. Fundamentalist militant groups like the Egyptian al-Gama’, Algeria’s Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), or the Palestinian Hamas have neither been able to expand their bases of support beyond a certain point nor been able to gain power. Their views on Islam and politics are too rigid and outmoded for modern problems, and are even, some would say, un-Islamic. The Taliban movement in Afghanistan in the 1990s under the religious guidance of some ‘ulama imposed such restrictive ‘Islamic’ laws in provinces under their military control, they made both conservative and radical ‘ulama in Iran look like liberal reformists. And Islamic militants in Egypt, Algeria, and elsewhere may be praised as martyrs by some clerics but are denounced as terrorists by others.

Not only are traditionalists everywhere under scrutiny in terms of what they say and do, but the foundation of their power as the only legitimate interpreters of the Shari’a has been shaken. The Arab fundamentalists have even been accused of a false representation of Muslim history, the presentation of a biased and incoherent account of Islamic thought, to further their position and inter- est.[456] And of course, their historically close association with the state further weakens the credibility of some fundamentalists.

The political and economic turmoil in the Middle East has sharpened people’s image and expectations of Muslim groups and their leadership. Increasingly, the capacity to deliver tangible economic goods and basic political rights has become more important than the politics of ideology and rhetoric, Islamic or

not. The Islamic governments of Iran and Sudan, for example, remain somewhat isolated in the international community and face tremendous domestic problems that have led to popular discontent and even uprisings. Saudi Arabia, a self-proclaimed Islamic state, faces increasing economic problems, and while the monarchy claims legitimacy through fundamentalist Wahhabi Islam, it denies the population fundamental political and civil rights that are respected in Islam.

The latest phase of the Islamic movement that began in the 1980s varies distinctly from the Islamic experience in Iran in 1979, in Lebanon after 1982, and among a host of small groups in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria, and elsewhere during the late 1970s and early 1980s.[457] The most conspicuous difference is the tactics of the new Islamists. If extremism characterized the first phase of the fundamentalist movement, the new Islamic movements attempt to work within the state system rather than outside it. Islamists, in other words, have not failed to recognize that pluralism and interdependence are the catchwords of the present day.[458]

Historically, Islam as a religion remained on the periphery of state politics, overshadowed by authoritarian states that propagated secular ideologies and values. Furthermore, the overall structure of the post-World War II international political economy helped consolidate state power over most Muslim societies. The rent collected from oil and gas exports, and external support in the form of military, economic, and financial aid, for example, helped Middle Eastern states monopolize domestic power during the Cold War. The Arab-Israeli conflict also bolstered the Arab states' political hegemony by legitimizing their authoritarianism and providing an excuse for inadequacies in socioeconomic performance.[459]

It is clear to all Muslims that in the Quran and Shari'a, Allah is the ultimate sovereign and everything on Earth and in heaven is under His command. Yet, there is nothing in either source to deny Muslims freedom of action to improve their individual and communal lives; nor does Shari'a promote subservience to the state as a proof of proper Muslim behavior. On the contrary, individuals are regarded as responsible for the salvation and well-being of themselves, their families, and their communities.[460] Thus, blind obedience to a self-proclaimed Islamic state can be as anti-Islamic as open

defiance of such a state. If a government rules in the name of Allah, then it must respect the fact that Allah regards individuals—and not the state—as responsible for their actions, for it is they who will be punished or rewarded accordingly on Judgment Day.[461] On this basis, the Islamists dismiss the idea that further legislation beyond Shari'a is impossible, as confusing the boundary between the overall sovereignty of Allah and the particulars of popular sovereignty.

The debate among Islamists and among some progressive traditionalists—be it in Iran, the Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, or elsewhere—is over the old question: how to reconcile the tenets of Islam with the modern notions of democracy, liberty, justice, and gender equality. In terms of democracy, the traditional meaning of the concept of shura is outdated, according to Islamists. After years of debate, according to Yazdi, "Many [Islamists] have come to the conclusion that general elections and a parliament properly serve that concept of consultation."[462] It is the extent of popular sovereignty and not its existence that is debated. Because of economic, technological, and environmental changes, further development of Shari'a seems inevitable to the Islamists. The development of Shari'a, they argue, need not be looked upon as a move away from Islamic principles, but, on the contrary, as a necessary stepping stone toward reaching an ideal Islamic society— a materially and spiritually developed utopia. An indispensable element in building such a society is freedom of thought and expression, including freedom from government control and suppression. In short, accepting the sovereignty of Allah does not necessarily contradict popular sovereignty.

Thus, Islamic traditionalists' reevaluation of their historical position on socioeconomic and political values is necessary to bring them more in line with the ongoing social and economic transformations in Muslim societies. Indeed, religious personalities such as Ayatollah Taleqani cautioned Iranians on relations between Islam and politics and on the position of the 'ulama in society and polity. As Hasan Turabi puts it, Islam exists in society "as a matter of norms and laws. It is an integrated and total way of life. Therefore government must be limited, because Islamic government would be omnipotent. Government has no business interfering in one's religion or religious prac- tices."[463] So, when it comes to dress codes in Muslim countries, for instance, society would definitely exercise a

measure of censure and encouragement for one form of dress over another. But no organization, such as the Saudi amr bil- maarouf wal-nahi an al-munkar (the injunction “to command the good and forbid evil”), has legal authority to stop women or harass them. Segregation of women is definitely not a part of Islam. This is just conventional, historical Islam. It was totally unknown in the model of Islam or the text of Islam and is unjustified. [464] As for the relation of civil society to the state, according to Turabi, “In general civil society should be left alone, but if a societal function fails, government should step in. Once society picks up the function, then it [the state] should withdraw once more to its limit of security, organizing those aspects of society which must be legally organized.”[465]

The founder of the Nurcu movement in Turkey, Said Nursi (1876–1960), argued that democracy and Islam are not contradictory and indeed democracy and freedom are necessary conditions for the existence of a just society. The individual, he argued, “needs freedom to realize the power of God and, through this realization, the individual will be free from man-made oppression and per- secution.”[466] Nursi further stressed the significance of popular sovereignty and asked for the rule of law in society. The Nurcu (or as it is known in Turkey, Nur) movement “seeks to move Islam from an oral-based tradition to a print-based medium and to raise religious consciousness through education and reason, ... [updating] Islamic vocabulary in terms of the global discourses of science, democracy, and human rights.”[467] The Nur movement today has the support of an estimated two to six million followers.

So, as one scholar of Islam has put it, “[A] major issue in democratization in Muslim societies is whether or not scholars and leaders have successfully made the transition from listing ‘democratic doctrines of Islam’ to creating coherent theories and structures of Islamic democracy that are not simply reformulations of Western perceptions in some Muslim idioms.”[468] But the absence of a constructive dialogue between the traditionalist ‘ulama and the reformist Islamists has widened the gap between the two. The debate on creating legal codes dealing with political, human, and minority rights, civil liberties, gender equality, and the overall relationship of state to society is thus lacking.

One recent premise about state-society relations in the Middle East is that states there are weak and societies strong—the opposite of what was long argued. The Iranian revolution, the rise of Islamist movements in the 1980s, and declining oil prices are cited as proof for this viewpoint. This is taken as grounds for optimism and has led to an increasing interest in state-society relations and in prospects for the emergence of civil society in the region.[469] Thus, “today most scholars confidently affirm that the bases of civil society—both intermediate powers and autonomous social groups—exist in the Middle East.”[470] Even traditional social formations based on blood and marriage, or tribal ties (as in the Gulf monarchies and Yemen), or bonyads—the semi-independent trusts (as in Iran)—are thought to be a part of civil society in the Middle East.[471] The mere presence of such groups, it is argued, deters the power of the state and leads to increased prospects for democratization.

But this position rests on shaky ground. Even the appearance of political parties and formal groups and associations in the Middle East does not by itself necessarily mean a fundamental move toward democracy by state or society. The augmentation of political parties in the region may be more a sign of the state’s adjusting to pressure from Islamic groups and their allies than a genuine political opening on either side. Political parties in the Middle East remain mainly ineffective and play a mostly ceremonial role that serves to legitimate the state and its policies, without change in the composition of the ruling elites. For example, in all national elections in the Middle East since 1980, only in Iran (1989, 1997, 2001), Turkey (1991, 1995) and Israel (1992, 1996, 1999) did a change in the government actually occur. In all other cases, the ruling parties maintained their control over the state.[472] Even in Iran, where the ruling religious elite has affirmed the sovereignty of the people, the new elite has been reluctant to share power with its political opposition.

Although the formalities of a democratic state are in place (for example, elections and debates), the people remain politically and economically without much functional power. What civil society there was in Iran is fading, although intellectual and associational life continues to resist the state, which has come to dominate most aspects of life there.

Moreover, embryonic associations, although they exist in Muslim countries, are poorly organized and remain dependent on patrons within the state. As Carrie Rosefsky Wickham puts it in discussing Egypt: “The emergence of independent sites of social and political expressions within an authoritarian setting is not the same as the emergence of civil society, at least not in its liberal conception.”[473] The emergence of state-controlled quasipluralism in countries such as Egypt and Jordan should not be seen as a shift from one-party rule to pluralism (ta’addudiya) involving numerous political parties and associations.[474]

The real basis of state power in Middle Eastern countries is largely informal and not institutional, for personal, family, and group ties help sustain the executive power of the ruling elites. The pattern of patrimonial leadership is not confined to the Middle East, of course, as many developing countries display the same phenomenon.[475]

The extent of ruling elites’ autocratic power varies among the developing countries. Kuwait and the Persian Gulf shaykhdoms, along with Saudi Arabia and Oman, are perhaps the primary examples of highly traditional autocratic rule. On the other hand, South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Turkey, Tunisia, and Brazil are examples that testify, to various degrees, to the changing balance of state-society relations in favor of society, as institutionalization of independent power relationships is gradually undermining informal and arbitrary state power associations.

The dominant position of the state in the Middle East has meant the dominance of politics by powerful families, elites, and military and bureaucratic officers. The slow emergence of independent groups and associations has been significant. For example, organized labor by itself, or through an alliance with the middle class, can be an effective force capable of checking the power of the state and promoting democracy, although most analysts ignore the role of organized labor in the civil society debate. But in any case, labor unions, a primary agent of civil society, in the Middle East remain either nonexistent or are repressed by the state.

Rachid al-Ghannouchi, the founder of the Tunisian Islamic movement al-Nahda, believes:

<quote>

Once the Islamists are given a chance to comprehend the values of Western modernity, such as democracy and human rights, they will search within Islam for a place for these values where they implant them, nurse them, and cherish them just as the Westerners did before, when they implanted such values in a much less fertile soil.[476]

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That is to say, Islam need not go through a process of secularization as did the West, but must face one of the foremost challenges it has encountered yet: “to outline a regime that is Islamic but also representative and accountable.”[477] Ghannouchi advocates “an Islamic system that features majority rule, free elections, a free press, protection of minorities, equality of all secular and religious parties, and full women’s rights in everything from polling booths, dress codes, and divorce courts to the top job at the presidential palace. Islam’s role is to provide the system with moral values.”[478]

Others, like the Iranian Islamic reformist Abdul Karim Soroush, have argued that there is no contradiction between Islam and the freedoms inherent in democracy. “Islam and democracy are not only compatible, their association is inevitable. In a Muslim society, one without the other is not perfect.”[479] Soroush believes that the will and beliefs of the majority must shape the ideal Islamic state, and that Islam itself is evolving as a religion, which leaves it open to reinterpretation: sacred texts do not change, but interpretation of them is always in flux because the age and the changing conditions in which believers live influence understanding. Furthermore, everyone is entitled to his or her own understanding. No one group of people, including the clergy, has the exclusive right to interpret or reinterpret tenets of the faith. Some understanding may be more learned than others, but no version is automatically more authoritative than another.[480]

Abdul Karim Soroush differs from Rachid al-Ghannouchi on how to free Muslims from their present dilemma. For Ghannouchi, the principle question is how to free the community from backwardness, while for Soroush, “the basic reality and objective is the person, the individual believer, making him a true reformer.” He is interested in showing Muslims how to dwell with the complexity of traditions that for long prevented them from the free implementation of reason and science for the good of the individual. At any rate, “taken together, Soroush and Ghannouchi illustrate the broad alternatives offered by the situation in which Muslim societies now find themselves as they face the inescapable challenges of secularization in the modern world.”[481]

Islam does not have a final authoritative spokesperson for all Muslims, and the Islamic world today is:

<quote>

in a state of disarray and confrontation between extremist religious movements that see themselves as the ‘defenders of Islam’ and authoritarian political regimes that claim to be ‘defenders of modernity.’ Yet, neither Islam nor modernity can be imposed on the people. This dichotomy warns of terrible consequences if the voices of reason and moderation—on both sides—are not allowed to prevail. Democracy offers a practical solution, and, possibly, the only way out of this dangerous situation.[482]

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The prospect for the emergence of civil society depends on the characteristics of the people who form that society. The better educated, and the healthier, wealthier, and more organized the people, and the more broadly resources are spread, the stronger the society will be in protecting itself from domination by the state. Moreover, these resources allow for the formation of institutions that act as the focus of activity where differences in opinions and policies can be debated and resolved without resort to violence. Thus, institutionalization is essential for political stability—for the systematic and orderly channeling of the demands of contesting elites for political leadership. To be democratic, political parties, whether religious or not, must function within an independent institutionalized organizational network

where final decisions are made and executed without constant interference from various layers of their country’s state bureaucracies.

Associations and formal institutions that have played a critical role in Western political systems, however, have been considerably fewer in less developed coun- tries.[483] Chances for a crisis from their nonparticipation increase where the opposition lacks an institutional basis for exerting pressure for participation (for example, religious opposition to the shah prior to the Iranian revolution) or where the state and its participants fail to adapt to changing social and economic forces (for example, Lebanon prior to 1975). On the other hand, institutionalized opposition, whether religious or not, can be successfully incorporated into the political process (for example, Jewish religious opposition parties in Israel and to some degree Islamic opposition in Jordan, Turkey, Pakistan, and Egypt).

In fact, Samuel P. Huntington’s pessimistic view of the incompatibility of Islam and democratic norms is undermined by his own argument for the destabilizing effects of modernization itself and for the stabilizing effects of institutionalization. He points to the revival of Islamic fundamentalism and the poverty of many Islamic states as the fundamental reasons for his pessimism.[484] Yet the revival of Islam and the rise of fundamentalism in Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East has not been an anti-democratic movement aiming at the destruction of democratic values. Given the wide range of responses by Muslims to the West and to one another, the appeal in Muslim countries to unconventional forms of political conduct, including mass uprisings and rioting, is not due to any inherent intolerance of Islam toward democracy and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Islam in its various denominations has always been a source of both social protest against, and social support for, given regimes. The hostility toward the West by some—though not all—Islamic religious groups is aimed not at democratic values but at Western domination and interference in the domestic affairs of these countries.

There seems to be no immediate resolution to the debate among traditionalists, Islamists, and intellectual reformers on Islam and democracy. However, the attempt to develop the political doctrine of Islam by Islamists, intellectual reformists, and some traditionalists need not necessarily be

viewed by other traditionalists as an attempt to entirely undermine the legitimacy of the religious establishment in Muslim countries.[485] Traditional religious leaders in the Muslim world, whether in power (Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the Sudan) or in opposition, must face the fact that, in light of complex socioeconomic and political problems facing Muslim societies in the twenty-first century, their position as legitimate religious/political leaders is bound to erode. The greatest threat to the traditional ‘ulama comes from either their own meager performance as heads of state (for example, in Iran and the Sudan) or their failure in political opposition to formulate and propose comprehensive agendas for resolving socioeconomic and political problems (as in Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait), or from their sectarian fighting, which has resulted in violence and acts of terrorism. Further rifts among traditionalist ‘ulama can be expected, as in Iran, as religious leadership in Muslim states finds itself under pressure to deal with modern problems. The progressive ‘ulama will benefit from an open dialogue with the Islamists in streamlining the tenets of Islam to take into account modern values without abandoning the fundamentals of Islam itself.

As Laith Kubba notes, “The experience of Iran and the Sudan has shown that fundamentalism-in-power cannot solve every problem, and actually complicates the challenge of implementing Islamic values in public life.”[486]

The potential for religious debate and political dialogue between traditionalists and Islamists, including the reformists, can be promising. The Islamists’ pragmatic view of Islam and the traditionalists’ recent popularity can be mutually beneficial in their common struggle for political sovereignty and development. This, however, can occur only when the religious establishment itself favors a fundamental socioeconomic and political restructuring of the status quo.

While it is not easy to predict the behavior of Islamist groups in their quest for power, it is possible to enhance cooperation between Islamists and secular groups in their common struggle against the state and in their future plans for their country. Thus, the question is whether the secular state can pursue a policy of political inclusiveness and allow Islamists to take part in

the political process, given widespread concerns over the long-term fate of individual rights and liberties should the Islamists take control of the state. Some scholars have argued that where the popular will dictates it, Islamists must have the opportunity to rule, even if the future of such rights are not guaranteed. Some have advocated a slow and partial political inclusion of the Islamists. But, as Jerrold Green has argued, some sort of a “national pact must be devised as the best way to secure the democratization process, although devising a means to enforce the pact remain[s] unresolved.”[487]

Muslim countries, like other developing countries though in varying degrees, suffer from acute socio-economic and political problems (e.g., strong and dominant states; weak associational opposition to the state, and an overall distribution of socio-economic resources and power that need to be addressed). Inauguration of democratic elections in Muslim countries without addressing the fundamental problem of uneven distribution of socio-economic and political resources in these countries will not succeed. The religious debate on Islam and democracy must then deal with not only the question of justice and freedom, but also with developing mechanisms necessary to remedy the structural problem of mal-distribution of resources.

An “Islamic” democracy will not embrace all the secular values adopted in the West. However, the initial steps taken toward such an end will need to include a process of institutionalization in Islam. The incorporation of an institutionalized Islam in the process of development will help the cause of democracy should Islamists successfully challenge the hegemony of the traditionalists in both the religious and political arenas. To play the democratic game, religious leaders will have to better organize themselves, to propose alternative plans for socio-economic and political issues facing the country. This in turn can help them maintain legitimacy and popular support, facilitating their struggle for political power. Organization is the key to the success of any group seeking to achieve its goals.

[442] For example, see John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, Islam and Democracy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany, and Paul Noble (eds.), Political Liberalization and

Democratization in the Arab World: Theoretical Perspectives, Vol. 1 (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995); John L. Esposito (ed.), Political Islam: Revolution, Radicalism, or Reform? (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1997).

[443] For a brief overview of Orientalist and neo-Orientalist views, see Yahya Sadowski, “The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate,” Middle East Report, Vol. 23, No. 4 (July-August 1993), pp. 14—21. See also Ali R. Abootalebi, “Democratization in Developing Countries: 1980—1989,” Journal of Developing Areas, Vol. 29, No. 4 (July 1995), pp. 507–530.

[444] The often contradictory ideological and political posturing by both “moderate” and “conservative” religious leaders in post-Khatami Iran stands as a clear example. The conservative and moderate religious ‘ulama, as well as secular and religious democrats, continue to hold inconsistent views on issues with important religious and national implications. For example, even Ayatollah Khamene’i and conservatives in Parliament have not seriously resisted the increasing role of women in politics, society and the economy, despite their orthodox views of women.

[445] The difference between traditionalism/fundamentalism and Islamism is in their views of Islam’s relation to the state, society, and the economy. Admittedly, the classification of religious leaders into these two broad categories may not suit everyone, but for the general purpose of this study this classification should be sufficient. Others have made a similar distinction between fundamentalists and Islamists. See Robin Wright, “Islam, Democracy and the West,” Foreign Affairs, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Summer 1992), pp. 131—145.

[446] Robin Wright, “Islam, Democracy, and the West,” p. 144.

[447] Dr. Yazdi, a university professor and political activist who served as deputy prime minister and foreign minister under the Ayatollah Khomeini, is now Secretary General in the opposition political party the Liberation

Movement of Iran. The status of the Liberation Movement of Iran as opposition party must be viewed with caution, since officially no political parties exist in the Islamic Republic of Iran. See interview conducted by Geoffrey Kemp, “A Seminar with Ibrahim Yazdi,” Middle East Policy, Vol. 3, No. 4 (April 1995), pp. 15—28; quote from p. 16. On December 7, 1998, however, a new party was established by the supporters of President Khatami, called the “Islamic Iran Participation Front.” The Islamic Revolution Tribunal officially banned the Liberation Movement of Iran party on the eve of the Iranian New Year in March 2001 as part of its ongoing crackdown on religious-nationalist leaders that began in summer 2000.

[448] For reformists’ views on the role of Shi’ite ‘ulama in Islam and Shari’a, see a collection of articles and speeches by leading Iranian reformists, including, among others, Abd al-Karim Soroush, Mohsen Kadviar, and Hasan Yusefi Eshkevari, organized by the Islamic Engineers Association and delivered in a seminar in Tehran, in: Islamic Engineers Association, Din va Hukumat (Religion and Governance), (Tehran: Rasa, 1378 [2000]).

[449] Quoted in John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, “Democratization and Islam,” Middle EastJournal, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 427—440. See also Abul A’la Mawdudi, “A Political Theory of Islam,” in John Donohue and John Esposito (eds.), Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 253—254.

[450] Quoted in Esposito and Piscatori, “Democratization and Islam,” p. 436. For more on Qutb’s views on Islam, see John L. Esposito (ed.), Voices of Resurgent Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

[451] Both Sunni and Shi’ite ‘ulama accept the authority of Sunna, although there are some differences in interpretation and the significance of the Prophet’s Sunna. The Shi’ite ‘ulama also rely on the traditions of the Imams, “the rightful heirs of the Prophet,” the last of whom, the Mahdi, remains hidden until his return to rule the Earth.

[452] On this and related issues, see Sami Zubaida, Islam: The People and the State: Political Ideas and Movements in the Middle East (London: I. B. Tauris, 1993).

[453] For a discussion of Islam, Muslims, secularization, and democracy, see Abdou Filali-Ansary, “The Challenge of Secularization,” Journal of Democracy, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1996), pp. 76–80.

[454] Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 32. Cited in Filali-Ansary, “The Challenge of Secularization,” p. 23.

[455] For a recent discussion of various Islamic concepts with implications for democracy (for example, tawhid, shura, khilafa, etc.), see John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, Islam and Democracy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[456] As’ad Abukhalil, “The Incoherence of Islamic Fundamentalism,” Middle East Journal, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Autumn 1994), pp. 677–694.

[457] Robin Wright, “Islam, Democracy and the West,” p. 131. Wright believes that this second phase of the Islamist movement is marked by a different constituency as well.

[458] Wright, “Islam, Democracy, and the West,” p. 132.

[459] See Simon Bromley, Rethinking Middle East Politics (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994).

[460] The Quran (N. J. Dawood, trans., New York: Penguin, 1993), Surah (chapter) 10, Aya (verse) 108.

[461] The Quran (Dawood, trans.), Surah 38, Aya 26.

[462] Geoffrey Kemp interview with Ibrahim Yazdi, “A Seminar with Ibrahim Yazdi,” p. 18. Yazdi claims his interpretation of shura is correct, based on years of debate among Muslim scholars such as Rashid Reza, Maulana Maududi, Ali Shariati, Ayatollah Naini, Mehdi Bazargan, Ayatollah Taligani, and Ayatollah Mutahhari.

[463] Quoted in Louis J. Cantori and Arthur Lowrie, “Islam, Democracy, the State, and the West,” Middle East Policy, Vol. 1, No. 3 (1992), pp. 49–61.

[464] Cantori and Lowrie, “Islam, Democracy, the State, and the West,” p. 58.

[465] Cantori and Lowrie, “Islam, Democracy, the State, and the West,” p. 54.

[466] M. Hakan Yavuz, “Search for a New Social Contract in Turkey: Fethullah Gulen, the Virtue Party and the Kurds,” SAIS Review, Vol. 19, No. 1 (1999), p. 120. On Nursi’s ideas on democracy, See Said Nursi, Risale-I Kulliyat I-II (Istanbul: Yeni Asya Yayinlari, 1996).

[467] M. Hakan Yavuz, “Search for a New Social Contract in Turkey, “ p. 120.

[468] Esposito and Voll, Islam and Democracy, p. 31.

[469] See for example the article by Emmanuel Sivan for the Social Science Research Council project on Civil Society in the Middle East, entitled “The Islamic Resurgence: Civil Society Strikes Back,” Journal of Contemporary History, Vol. 25, (1990), pp. 353— 364. See also Michael C. Hudson, “After the Gulf War: Prospects for Democratization in the Arab World,” Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 3 (Summer 1991), pp. 407—426; Esposito and Piscatori, “Democratization and Islam,” pp. 427^40.

[470] Yahya Sadowski, “The New Orientalism and the Democracy Debate,” Middle East Report, Vol. 23, No. 4 (July-August 1993), pp. 14—21; quote from p. 17.

[471] Richard Augustus Norton and Farhard Kazemi (eds.), Civil Society in the Middle East, Vol. 2, (New York: Brill, 1996), p. 8.

[472] National elections have been held since 1980 in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, and Yemen, as well as in the Palestinian territories. For a discussion of elections and electoral laws in the Arab world, see Marsha Pripstein Posusney, “Behind the Ballot Box: Electoral Engineering in the Arab World,” Middle East Report, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Winter 1998), pp. 12–16.

[473] See Carrie Rosefsky Wickham’s analysis of the case of Egypt, “Beyond Democratization: Political Change in the Arab World,” PS: Political Science and Politics, Vol. 17, No. 3 (September 1994), p. 507.

[474] Michael Hudson, “After the Gulf War,” pp. 427–440.

[475] On ‘patriarchalism’ and ‘patrimonialism,’ see Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947); and Reinhard Bendix, Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait (Garden City: Doubleday, 1962), pp. 330360. For patterns of patrimonialism in the Middle East, see James Bill and Robert

Springborg, Politics in the Middle East, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 2000).

[476] From a lecture by Shaykh Rachid al-Ghannouchi, Chatham House, London, May 9, 1995, in Robin Wright, “Two Visions of Reformism,” Journal ofDemocracy, Vol. 7, No. 2 (April 1996), p. 74.

[477] Mohamed Elhachmi Hamdi, “The Limits of the Western Model,” Journal of Democracy, Vol. 7, No. 2 (April 1996), p. 85.

[478] Robin Wright, “Two Visions of Reformism,” p. 73.

[479] Soroush expressed his views in one of several interviews in Tehran and Washington, D.C., in 1994 and 1995, quoted by Robin Wright “Two Visions,” p. 68. For more on Soroush’s views, see Din va Hukumat (Religion and Governance), 1378 (2000).

[480] Wright, “Two Visions,” p. 70.

[481] Abdou Filali-Ansary, “The Challenge of Secularization,” p. 78.

[482] Ali Mazrui et al., “Preamble,” of Muslim Democrat, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Burtonsville, MD: Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, May 1999), p. 4.

[483] On the role of groups and associations in the Middle East, see Bill and Springborg, Politics in the Middle East, p. 88.

[484] Samuel Huntington, “Will More Countries Become Democratic?” Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 99 (Summer 1994), pp. 193–218.

[485] The writings of Hasan Turabi, Mehdi Bazargan, Ali Yazdi, and Abd al-Karim Soroush, as well as the late Ayatollah Taleqani, are some examples. Mehdi Bazargan, for example, in response to Samuel Huntington's assertion of "the clash of civilizations," commented, before his death, on the positive relationship between Islam and individual rights, peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims, economic development, freedom of action, and democracy. See Mehdi Bazargan, "Is Islam a Global Threat?" (Aya Islam yek khatar-i Jahani Ast?), Rahavard, No. 36 (Tir 1373 [1994]), pp. 48—57.

[486] Laith Kubba, "Recognizing Pluralism," Journal of Democracy, Vol. 7, No. 2 (April 1996), p. 88.

[487] Jerrold Green, Civil Society and the Prospects for Political Reform in the Middle East (New York University Press, 1994), p. 13. The conference was sponsored by the Civil Society in the Middle East Project, convened at the Aspen Institute Wye Conference, Queenstown, Md., Sept. 30—Oct. 1, 1994. Green was among the minority who advocated inclusion without reservation if commanded by popular will, but others such as Graham Fuller and Richard Norton have mixed feelings and more reservations about the inclusion of Islamists in the process of democratization.

** 11. Mediating Middle East Conflicts: An Alternative Approach

George E. Irani

Many Middle Eastern scholars and practitioners trained in the United States have returned to their countries of origin, ready to impart what they learned about Western conflict resolution techniques. But, in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, and other countries in the region, the reaching and practice of conflict

resolution is still a novel phenomenon. Conflict resolution is viewed by many in the Middle East as a false Western panacea that is insensitive to indigenous problems, needs, and political processes. Others see it as a U.S.-concocted scheme intended primarily to facilitate and hasten the processes of peace and normalization between Israel and its Arab neighbors.[488]

In assessing the applicability of Western-based conflict resolution models to non-Western societies, professionals have only begun to realize the importance of acknowledging native ways of thinking and feeling, as well as local rituals for managing and reducing conflicts. As a region with a long history of conflict and Western intervention and mediation, the Middle East makes an interesting case study for students of conflict resolution. Western-style peace-making in the region has been rather superficial. Diplomatic agreements have not “trickled down” to the grassroots precisely because Western mediation models have not taken into account the deep cultural, social, and religious roots that underlie the way Arabs behave when it comes to conflict reduction and reconciliation.

This chapter will discuss Arab-Islamic modes of conflict reduction as an alternative to Western techniques in the Middle East, with a focus on Lebanon.[489] In contrast to U.S.-style mediation, local rites of reconciliation take into consideration the socioeconomic, cultural, and anthropological background in which conflicts erupt and are managed in the Middle East. They also factor in religious beliefs and traditions, and distinguish among different causes and types of conflicts such as family, community, and state conflicts, in mediating disputes.

The first section of this chapter looks at Western and non-Western approaches to conflict resolution and points to important cultural differences in approaching conflict management, including the role of the individual in society, attitudes towards conflict, styles of communication, expectations of mediators, understandings concerning victimization and forgiveness, and the usefulness of governmental (and/or non-governmental) programs and institutions—such as truth commissions—for national reconciliation. The second section considers the geographical, sociological, and cultural influences on the Arab Middle East. It highlights the importance of relationships based on family, patriarchy, gender, kinship, and clientism, and

points to the underlying code of honor (and its counterpart, shame) in conflict and conflict management. The third part considers the concept of ritual and its role in conflict control and reduction (as opposed to conflict resolution) and focuses on the rituals of sulh and musalaha as examples of indigenous Arab modes of settling disputes. The final section considers the implications for policymakers and practitioners and suggests an alternative approach to national reconciliation in Lebanon.

Although conflict is a human universal norm, the nature of conflicts and the methods of resolving them differ from one sociocultural context to another. For instance, in contemporary North America, conflict is commonly perceived to occur between two or more individuals acting as free agents pursuing their own interests. Conflict is often thought of as a symptom of the need for change, and while it can lead to separation, hostility, civil strife, terrorism, and war, it can also stimulate dialogue and produce more socially just solutions. In addition, it can lead to stronger relationships and peace.[490]

A basic assumption made by U.S.-based conflict resolution theorists is that conflict can and should be fully resolved.[491] This philosophy, whereby virtually every conflict can be managed or resolved, clashes with other cultural approaches to conflict.[492] Many conflicts, regardless of their nature, may be intractable, and can evolve through phases of escalation and confrontation as well as phases of calm and a return to the status quo. For this reason, this chapter adopts the idea of conflict control and reduction to depict the processes of settlement and reconciliation in the Arab-Islamic tradition, rather than conflict resolution.

Another basic assumption is that conflict usually erupts because of different interpretations regarding data, issues, values, interests, and relationships.[493] According to the prominent anthropologist Laura Nader: “Conflict results from competition between at least two parties. A party may be a person, a family, a lineage, or a whole community; or it may be a class of ideas, a political organization, a tribe, or a religion. Conflict is occasioned by incompatible desires or aims and by its duration may be distinguished from strife or angry disputes arising from momentary aggravations.”[494]

Conflict in Western perspectives is also viewed as having a positive dimension, acting as a catharsis to redefine relationships between individuals, groups, and nations. Such a perception makes it easier to find adequate settlements or possible resolutions.

During the last ten years, more and more voices within the field of conflict resolution have emphasized the importance of acknowledgment and forgiveness in achieving lasting reconciliation among conflicting parties. Many of the world's most intractable conflicts involve age-old cycles of oppression, victimization, and revenge. Racism and ethnic cleansing are only the most dramatic manifestations of such cycles.

These cyclical conflicts, which can have dangerous and long-lasting political repercussions, are rooted in a psychological dynamic of victimization. Usually, acts of violence, whether inflicted on an individual or a group, are the results of deep feelings of being victimized, regardless of who is the victim or victimizer. One of the guiding principles of U.S.-inspired conflict management and resolution is to help conflicting parties acknowledge one another's psychological concerns and needs so that they will be able to overcome their historic sense of victimization.[495] Overcoming feelings of victimization, which, unfortunately, are endemic to the human condition, is the most important step toward healing in the case of nations and ethnic groups in conflict.

According to Western psychologists, conflict usually erupts because some basic needs have not been fulfilled, such as the needs for shelter, food, selfesteem, love, knowledge, and self-actualization.[496] Indeed, the nonfulfillment of these needs may eventually lead to war if the conflict is not resolved. Conflicting parties must actively listen to each other to be able to mutually acknowledge each other's emotions, views, and needs. Thus, communication skills are fundamental to conflict resolution. In many cultures, the art of listening is drowned out by arguments and the never-ending struggle to get one's point across first. The opposite of listening is not ignoring; rather, it is preparing to respond. Active listening is a method that ensures that the whole meaning of what was said is understood.

Actively listening to all sides of a dispute is a specialty of mediators, who are often employed in Western conflict resolution. The mediator confronts two basic tasks when settling a dispute. First, he or she has to encourage people to negotiate in such a way as to reach an equitable outcome. Second, he or she has to be completely neutral and place the power of decision-making in the hands of the conflicting individuals or groups themselves. Negotiation is another important Western tool. ‘Interest-based’ negotiation focuses on people’s long-term interests, rather than on short-term perspectives, and does not encourage ‘hard’ or ‘soft’ bargaining (such as occurs when one of the parties has to give in or compromise), which usually leads to unsatisfactory ‘positional’ compromises.[497]

Truth and justice commissions have also emerged as popular Western means of national healing. Following the collapse of various dictatorial regimes in Latin America and Central Europe (for example, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland), such commissions were formed to “police the past”—that is, to investigate the extent of human rights violations committed against civilians by the former military juntas and communist governments. These efforts encouraged atonement and remorse for past crimes, which, in turn, helped citizens and governments alike to rebuild democratic institutions. A similar commission was also established in South Africa following the dismantling of apartheid and the election of Nelson Mandela as president.

Lebanon shares some of the problems affecting societies in transition, though it should be noted that the country is not fully sovereign. In April 1994, as a contribution to the ongoing efforts at intercommunal reconciliation in postwar Lebanon, the Lebanese American University assembled on its Byblos campus a group of government officials, NGO activists, students, and lawyers for a three- day conference titled “Acknowledgment, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation: Alternative Approaches to Conflict Resolution in Post-War Lebanon.”[498] The conference focused primarily on the psychological and interpersonal aspects of the Lebanese war, especially the politics of identity and the vicious circle of victimization and vengeance that fueled the long conflict.

Conference participants were initially uncomfortable with and suspicious of Western conflict resolution theory and methods. Participants expressed mixed feelings about the applicability of conflict resolution in the Lebanese social context. A U.S.-educated Christian banker noted that conflict resolution theory was initially forged in labor-management relations in the United States, later applied to business, and then to community relations and academia. He raised an important methodological question: “How can a theory which is supposed to be dealing with definite, programmed, institutionalized relationships deal with the unprogrammed, informal, and random relationships characteristic of social and political contexts in a totally different society?”

A Muslim academic and social activist declared that a better concept would be “conflict management” because “it is impossible completely to solve conflicts; the existence of conflicts goes together with human existence.” He raised the point that conflicts were interrelated: the resolution of one conflict was contingent upon the resolution of other conflicts. “The crisis of Lebanon and the Middle East are the best proof of what I am saying,” he concluded. [499]

The conference also revealed interesting insights into Lebanese conversational culture. The National Director of the Young Women’s Christian Association-Leba- non (YWCA) commented that in Lebanon, when individuals are engaged in “heart-to-heart” conversations, they often interrupt with expressions of empathy and support. “It is not like interrupting rudely. The process of the discussion shows our concern because we are a very emotional people. That is the problem: we usually talk all together. We are active talkers and active listeners!”

While active listening involves remaining silent when the other person is talking, especially in cases of intense argument, in Lebanon, remaining silent is sometimes interpreted as meek acquiescence or agreement. A government representative from the Ministry of Education stated that “in the rural areas of Lebanon, if you do not talk, it means you are dull; the more you talk, the more it is assumed you know. People want to show that they know, especially those who go to town and come back to the village. They always talk.”

The conference also addressed the key role of third-party mediators in disputes. In Lebanese culture, as in Arab culture in general, the mediator is presumed to have all the answers and solutions. He therefore has a great deal of power and responsibility. As one participant put it: “If [the third party] does not provide the answers, he or she is not really respected or considered to be legitimate.” Finally, a number of conference participants expressed their expectations that conference organizers and facilitators would provide ready-made solutions to Lebanon’s woes. This expectation was not unusual in the context of Lebanese culture and politics.

For several centuries, politics in Lebanon have been repeatedly penetrated by outside powers, either to foment strife or to impose solutions. The phenomenon of relying on outsiders for answers and solutions reveals one of the fundamental blind spots in Lebanese political thought: a lack of responsibility for one’s actions and behaviors. At a more practical level, many Lebanese have opted to forget about the war and get on with their lives, even if the wounds and consequences of the war are still very much alive in the collective and individual Lebanese psyches.

If the role of the individual is crucial in Western theory, Lebanon is at a disadvantage. A Lebanese woman educator, while acknowledging the value of the Western concepts of acknowledgment, victimization, communication skills, and interest-based negotiation, pointed out that Western conflict resolution tools in the Lebanese context are hindered by the paradox that Lebanon is a “very individualistic society, but unfortunately, we do not have individuals.” She went on to explain that “in order to have conflict management or conflict resolution, you have to recognize the other. But, you do not have the other if you do not have the individual. That is why there is no reconciliation, forgiveness, and conflict resolution [in Lebanon]. The existence of the individual is essential in this process.”

This trenchant observation neatly summarizes the state of society in postwar Lebanon. Rather than a cohesive group of individuals bound together by an agreed-upon set of rights and obligations, (that is, citizens), the Lebanese instead comprise an agglomeration of competing communities, each of

which requires absolute allegiance and obedience from its members. Every one of these communities feels victimized by the others, so the process of acknowledgment, forgiveness, and reconciliation has to begin at the community level, rather than at the individual level.

The conference also addressed the issue of government accountability for crimes committed during the Lebanese war. In Lebanon’s case, the state’s apparatus was noticeably absent during the long civil war. Thus, the central government and its institutions bear little, if any, direct responsibility for the atrocities committed between 1975 and 1990. Instituting war tribunals or truth and justice commissions in postwar Lebanon without some form of external, third- party intervention would undoubtedly be perceived as an affront by one community against another.[500]

It is important to understand the sociopolitical, cultural, and historical background of the Middle East in order to comprehend why conflict continues to plague the region. The influences shaping the characters and views of the conflicting parties must be considered if any resolution is to have a lasting effect.

Geography impacts people’s behavior and interactions in terms of protection of scarce resources. The Arab Middle East is distinguished geographically by a variety of landscapes. The Arabian Peninsula is characterized by a large desert and other arid landscapes, and a scarcity of water. In the Levant, environmental conditions are more clement. Jordan and some areas of Israel are semiarid and poor in water while Lebanon and Syria are blessed with milder climates and numerous springs and rivers. Lebanon has a rugged mountainous terrain but also the fertile Biqa’a Valley and is self-sufficient in water.

The reality of Middle East ecology historically resulted in three key modes of subsistence: nomadic, village, and urban. Although communities of pastoral nomads, village farmers, and city-dwelling merchants and artisans were historically distinct from one another, they were nonetheless economically interdependent. Their lives and interests were always in actual or potential contact, and quite often in conflict. Although pastoral nomadism has become

increasingly rare as a viable mode of subsistence due to the advent of nation-states with closed borders and the rapid and dramatic urbanization of the region’s population, nomadic peoples and their traditions have nonetheless left a very deep imprint on Middle Eastern culture, society, and politics. One anthropologist hypothesizes that the characteristic form of pastoral nomadism that developed in this semiarid zone accounts for the strikingly similar cultural orientations found throughout the vast area of the Middle East:

<quote>

In the Near East today we find a remarkable similarity among the traditions of many people throughout a large region Islamization, the spread of a religious faith, is often offered as an explanation for this uniformity. But could Islam by itself have become so deeply-rooted among the diverse peoples of such a vast area, unless it was somehow a response to a life experience which all of these people shared in common? ... Extreme arid conditions resulted in independent little herding groups dispersed across the desert and steppe This situation is reflected in the atomistic form which political alliances tended to take.[501]

</quote>

Kinship ties are key to understanding social and political behavior in the Middle East. Despite the creation of modern states following the collapse of colonial rule, the basic unit of identification for the individual is not the state, the ethnic group, or the professional association, but the family.

Sociologically, the peoples of the Middle East remain famous for their loyalty to their families, distinctive rituals of hospitality and conflict mediation, and effective and flexible kin-based collectivities, such as the lineage and the tribe, which until quite recently performed most of the social, economic, and political functions of communities in the absence of centralized state governments.[502]

Patriarchal decision-making plays a powerful role in Middle Eastern family dynamics.[503] The father’s supremacy in his family is an integral part of the

more general authority system and maintains not only the genealogical cohesiveness of the family but also the cohesiveness of social life. This patriarchal pattern of power takes shape in the primacy of the za’im (leader) of the family. The za’im controls and defends the unity of the family both inside and outside of the group and acts as the family referee, managing conflicts that erupt within his family, while controlling solidarity and support between family members. He also acts as the family’s ambassador toward outsiders. Each family in a given village is headed by a za’im, who collectively form the assembly of the village zu’ama’.[504]

Several writers on the Arab Middle East have underlined the fact that the only nation-state in the contemporary Arab Middle East is Egypt.[505] Egypt has an homogeneous population that identifies itself first and foremost as Egyptian. The only sizeable ‘minority,’ the Copts, who number about 6 million, consider themselves to be the descendants of the original Egyptians from Pharaonic times. Their allegiance is to Egypt as both government and country.

In Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, a family—the House of Sa’ud—dominates the body politic, as is the case in the other shaykhdoms of the Arabian Gulf. In Syria and Iraq, families from minority communities rule their respective societies.[506] Since Lebanon obtained independence in 1943, it has been ruled by a few prominent families—both Christian and Muslim—such as the Maronite Catholic Gemayel and Chamoun families, the Sunni El-Solh and Salam families, and the Druze Jumblatt family. As a strategy for survival, the patrilineal kinship system of the Middle East has certainly proved flexible and effective over many centuries under a variety of social, economic, and political conditions. Kinship is implicit in nearly every aspect of life and most social institutions, including religion and morality.

Religion also plays a very important role in both private and public interactions in the Middle East. The sociocultural and historic environment that saw the birth and spread of the world’s three monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—encouraged a close relationship between the private and public in the individual’s life in the Middle East.

In Judaism, the land (eretz), the people (‘am), and the book (torah) cannot be separated. The same applies to Islam, which is a code of conduct, both temporal and spiritual. The Quran dictates the faithfuls’ relations with God and people of other faiths living within the framework of the Islamic nation (umma). Christianity in the Arab world is very similar to Judaism and Islam in defining people’s identities. For example, for some Christians in Lebanon, religious values are superseded by the fight for survival. Religion is thus used in an ethnic sense.[507]

Middle Eastern societies are defined by a variety of ethnic identities. Armenians, Kurds, Jews, Copts, Circassians, and Maronites are only some of the minorities in the contemporary Middle East. The existence of ethnic and ethnoreligious groups predates the rise of Islam and the creation of modern states in the region. In the Quran, “Peoples of the Book” (Christians and Jews) are treated as “protected peoples,” (dhimmis), which literally means those on the conscience (dhimma) of the Islamic community.[508]

Under Ottoman rule, individuals living in the empire did not identify as Ottomans, Turks, Persians, or Arabs, but rather, as Muslims, Christians, Jews, and Druze. The Ottoman administration was controlled by Sunni Muslims and converts from other religions. Under the Ottomans, Islamic tolerance of Christians and Jews was defined by the millet (nations) system. “Under the system local communities of a particular sect were autonomous in the conduct of their spiritual affairs and civil affairs relating closely to religion and community, such as church administration, marriage, inheritance, property, and education.”[509]

Ethnic groups thus identified with their religious leaders more so than with any abstract notion of the state. The millet system estranged Arab Christians from political life and deepened suspicions between them and Muslims, a legacy that eventually exploded in Lebanon. Christians were treated as foreigners and suspected of being agents of foreign powers; their loyalty was often in doubt. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire and in

reaction to their plight, Middle Eastern Christians were at the forefront of the new movement for Arab nationalism, the secular movement in the Arab world, and some among them founded socialist parties, such as the Ba’th (Renaissance) Party now in power in Syria and Iraq.

Political scientist Bassam Tibi notes that:

<quote>

unlike the imperial and the territorial dynastic states that were familiar in Middle Eastern history, the externally imposed new pattern of the nationstate is defined as a national, not as a communal, polity In varying degrees, all states of the Middle East lack this infrastructure In most of the states of the Middle East, sovereignty is nominal.

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<quote>

The tribal-ethnic and sectarian conflicts that the colonial powers exacerbated did not end with the attainment of independence. The newly established nation-states have failed to cope with the social and economic problems created by rapid development because they cannot provide the proper institutions to alleviate these problems. Because the nominal nation-state has not met the challenge, society has resorted to its pre-national ties as a solution, thereby preserving the framework of the patron-client relationship. [510]

</quote>

Social relationships in the contemporary Middle East thus require a melting of the individual’s identity and personality within the framework of his communal group. A Maronite Catholic in Lebanon belongs to his community from birth to death whether he or she likes it or not. In addition, the confessional system, which is pervasive in Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East, means that the individual citizen must be part of a patronage network. Although patron-client relations “play an important role in facilitating the distribution of goods and services among the population

and harnessing popular support behind leaders," patronage ties are essentially asymmetrical: perpetuating these relationships also perpetuates and reinforces the unequal power structure in the starkly stratified societies of the contemporary Middle East.

Patron-client ties ensure that people are kept 'in their place': the rich and powerful maintain their dominant positions, from which they have the advantage of becoming even more rich and powerful, while the less fortunate are kept in their position of dependency, remaining virtually powerless over the decisionmaking processes and larger forces that shape their lives.

Clientelism and the absence of citizenship in the Western sense have profound implications for reconciliation and processes of conflict reduction in the Middle East. Private justice is meted out through a network in which political and/or religious leaders determine the outcome of feuds between clans or conflicts between individuals. Notions of honor and shame also play a key role in this context. Most of the blood feuds among Lebanese, Jordanians, and Palestinians originate from incidents where family honor has been harmed. Usually, women are the direct victims of such tragedies. More and more Arab women are struggling to lessen the impact of honor crimes and fight for the abolition of this feudal tradition.[511]

British sociologist Anthony Giddens wrote that rituals are crucial to both an individual's emotional well-being and communal harmony and social integration:

<quote>

Without ordered ritual and collective involvement, individuals are left without structured ways of coping with tensions and anxieties Communal rites provide a focus for group solidarity at major transitions as well as allocating definite tasks for those involved Something profound is lost together with traditional forms of ritual Traditional ritual ... connected individual action to moral frameworks and to elemental questions about human existence. The loss of ritual is also the loss of such frameworks.[512]

</quote>

This very important observation brings to the fore the malaise that exists in Western society, where anomie and atomistic modes of living have relegated customs and rituals to the trash heap of premodern, nonrational history. In contrast to the family-oriented culture of the Middle East, the individual must fend for himself or herself in Western civilization. In conflicts, individuals in Western societies usually turn to an attorney or a therapist. The family is an alien entity, and alienation leads to violence and despair.

For a country emerging from 16 years of civil strife, priorities do not include training for conflict control and reduction. In Lebanon and other Arab societies, conflict resolution techniques are learned and adopted by professional groups such as businessmen or businesswomen, bankers, or engineers. For the rest of the population, conflict control is handled either by state-controlled courts or by traditional means.

In this context, one of the basic criticisms launched against Western conflict resolution techniques is that they are either too mechanistic or based on therapy- oriented formulas. Although Western methods and skills are relevant and useful, they need to be adapted to indigenous realities.

For instance, the role of social workers in family disputes is not the same in Lebanon as it is in the West. In Lebanon, the majority of social workers are women. They are trained in Lebanon’s major academic institutions, the state-controlled Lebanese University and the Jesuit-controlled Universite Saint-Joseph, and once their degree is completed, they confront the realities of Lebanese society. In conflicts involving couples, they are usually approached by battered wives; husbands, however, often refuse to deal with the social worker. The path to resolution thus goes through the local religious or political za’im, not through the social worker, a typical pattern in patriarchal societies.

Another issue facing social workers attempting to mediate conflicts in Lebanon is child custody matters. In Middle Eastern societies, in the case of

divorce, the father is granted custody of the children. In the instances when mothers try to keep their children, the young ones become hostages in a conflict that pits their father's family against their mother.

These examples highlight the problem with applying Western modes of conflict control and reduction in communally-based societies where patriarchy and religious values are paramount. Arab 'citizens' are not citizens in the Western meaning of individuals bound to one another and the state by an agreed-upon interlocking system of rights and duties. Instead, Arabs belong to communities and abide by their rules and rituals. Of course, there are many young professionals and educated men and women who are struggling to establish secular societies based on individual rights and responsibilities and state accountability. But Arab society is still largely traditional.

In large Arab cities, individuals involved in conflicts are more likely than are villagers to resort to the official legal system to settle their disputes. The legal system, however, is clogged and corruption is pervasive. Moreover, the interpretation of the rule of law in sectarian-based societies or societies based on tribal modes of social interaction has a different meaning. The law is usually that of the powerful and the wealthy (politicians and clergy) or heads of village clans or Bedouin tribes.[513]

The rule of law also has to confront the prevalent and powerful influence of patronage and its strong emphasis on asymmetrical power relationships. For example, an individual who has committed a crime can face both the legal justice system and the tribal mode of conflict control and reduction.

This situation underlines the importance of studying closely modes of reconciliation and conflict control in an Arab-Islamic environment. The observer interested in conflict control and reduction in non-Western societies has to look into the rituals that inform individual and community behavior following a crime or any other illegal action.

Among some Middle Easterners, such as the Lebanese, Jordanians, and Palestinians, rituals are used in private modes of conflict control and reduction. Private modes are processes not controlled by the state whereby customary, traditional steps are taken to restore justice. Sometimes, both private and official justice are invoked simultaneously in fostering reconciliation.

One such ritual is the process of sulh (settlement) and musalaha (reconciliation). According to Islamic law (Shari'a), "the purpose of sulh is to end conflict and hostility among believers so that they may conduct their relationships in peace and amity..... In Islamic law, sulh is a form of contract ('aqd), legally binding on both the individual and community levels."[514] Similar to the private sulh between two believers, "the purpose of [public] sulh is to suspend fighting between [two parties] and establish peace, called mawwada (peace or gentle relationship), for a specific period of time."[515]

The sulh ritual, an institutionalized form of conflict management and control, has its origins in tribal and village contexts. "The sulh ritual stresses the close link between the psychological and political dimensions of communal life through its recognition that injuries between individuals and groups will fester and expand if not acknowledged, repaired, forgiven and transcended."[516]

"Sulh is the best of judgments." This is how the Jordanian Bedouin tribes describe the customary process of settlement and reconciliation. Indeed, given the severity of life conditions in the desert, competing tribes long ago realized that sulh is a better alternative to endless cycles of vengeance.

The judicial system in Lebanon does not include sulh as part of the conflict control process, but sulh rituals are approved and encouraged in rural areas where state control is not very strong. Sulh is used today in the rural areas of the Biqa'a Valley, the Hermel area in eastern Lebanon, and the 'Akkar region of north Lebanon.[517] In Jordan,

sulh is officially recognized by the Jordanian government as a legally acceptable tradition of the Bedouin tribes. And, in Israel, sulh is still used among the Israeli Arabs living in the villages of Galilee.

The Jordanian judge Muhammad Abu-Hassan makes a distinction between public sulh and private sulh. Public sulh is similar to a peace treaty between two countries. It usually takes place as a result of conflicts between two or more tribes which result in death and destruction affecting all the parties involved.[518] In a conflict, each of the tribes involved takes stock of its human and material losses. The tribe with minimum losses compensates the tribe that suffered most, and so on. Tradition has it that stringent conditions are set to settle the tribal conflict definitively. The most famous of these conditions is that the parties in conflict pledge to forget everything that happened and initiate new and friendly relations. The consequences and effects of public sulh apply whether the guilty party was identified or was unknown at the time of the sulh.

Private sulh takes place when both the crime and the guilty party are known. The parties may be of the same tribe or from different tribes. The purpose of private sulh is to make sure that revenge will not take place against the family of the perpetrator.

There are two possible final outcomes of the sulh process: total sulh, or partial or conditional sulh. The former type ends all kinds of conflict between the two parties, who decide thenceforth not to hold any grudges against each other. The latter type ends the conflict between the two parties according to conditions agreed upon during the settlement process.

Consider a brief sketch of how the ritual of settlement and reconciliation is used in the Middle East. Following a murder, the family of the murderer, in order to thwart any attempt at blood revenge, calls on a delegation of mediators comprised of village elders and notables, usually called muslihs or jaha (those who have gained the

esteem of the community). The mediators initiate a process of fact-finding, questioning the parties involved. As soon as the family of the guilty party calls for the mediators' intervention, a hudna (truce) is declared. The task of the muslihs or jaha is not to judge, punish, or condemn the offending party, "but rather, to preserve the good names of both the families involved and to reaffirm the necessity of ongoing relationships within the community. The sulh ritual is not a zero-sum game."[519]

To many practitioners of sulh and musalaha, the toughest cases to settle are usually those involving blood feuds. Sometimes, a blood price is paid to the family of the victim that usually involves an amount of money set by the mediators. The diyya (blood money) or an exchange of goods (sometimes including animals, food, etc.) substitutes for the exchange of death.

The ritual sulh process usually ends in a public ceremony of musalaha (reconciliation) performed in the village square. The families of both the victim and the guilty party line up on both sides of the road and exchange greetings and accept apologies, especially the aggrieved party.

The musalaha ceremony includes four major stages. First comes the act of reconciliation itself, then the two parties shake hands under the supervision of the muslihs or jaha. Next, the family of the murderer visits the home of the victim to drink a cup of bitter coffee, and finally, the ritual concludes with a meal hosted by the family of the offender. The rituals vary in different places but the basic philosophy is based on sulh (settlement), musalaha (reconciliation), musafaha (hand-shaking), and mumalaha ("partaking of salt and bread—that is, breaking bread together).[520]

The Quran is a very important source to understand modes of conflict control and reconciliation in Arab-Islamic societies. The holy book of Islam calls for equity in cases of revenge and for forgiveness in cases of apology and "remission." In the first chapter of the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad

describes the extent and limits of punishment (qisas) and retribution:

<quote>

O ye who believe!

</quote>

<quote>

The law of equality Is prescribed to you In cases of murder: The free for the free, The slave for the slave, The woman for the woman. But if any remission Is made by the brother Of the slain, then grant Any reasonable demand, And compensate him With handsome gratitude. This is a concession And a Mercy

</quote>

<quote>

From your Lord[521]

</quote>

Many of the ethnoreligious conflicts that have emerged over the past ten years are based on centuries-old feelings of victimization and powerlessness. Considering the role of power in persuading enemies to settle and resolve their conflicts is crucial for the success or failure of reconciliation efforts. If conflict control and reduction is to succeed in the new global political order, diplomats, policy-makers, and practitioners must first rethink how power is perceived and used.

According to the political philosopher Hannah Arendt, true power has nothing to do with guns, muscles, threats, or dictators:

<quote>

[P]ower is what keeps the public realm, the potential space of appearance between [people] acting and speaking, in existence Power is always ...a power potential and not an unchangeable, measurable and reliable entity like force or strength. While strength is the natural quality of an individual seen in isolation, power springs up between people when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse. Because of this particularity, which power shares with all potentialities that can only be actualized but never fully materialized, power is to an astonishing degree independent of material factors, either of numbers or means.[522]

</quote>

Empowering victims to help them overcome painful legacies from the past can take place through transformative reconciliation rituals such as sulh and musalaha. “Such rituals readjust individuals and communities to changing aspects of their life-worlds, thereby enabling them to complete difficult and troubling transitions as individuals and as members of a society.”[523]

At the conclusion of the 1994 conference in Lebanon, some participants suggested adapting the ritual of sulh in order to facilitate acknowledgment, apology, and forgiveness at the national, not just communal, level in postwar Lebanon. Ghassan Mokheibar, a prominent Lebanese attorney who has written about traditional reconciliation rituals in Lebanon, has stated that modified processes of sulh and musalaha could play a similar role to that of truth and reconciliation commissions in Latin America and South Africa.

The importance of Arab-Islamic rituals for conflict resolution lies in their communal nature. The problem confronting Western approaches is that the conceptual category of the individual does not have the same validity and importance in the Middle East as it does in Western cultures. In the Middle East, the individual is enmeshed within his or her own group, sect, tribe, or millet. Religion continues to play a crucial role in individual and collective lives.

These and other fundamental features of Middle East society must be taken into consideration when implementing peace processes in the region. Arab states are constructed differently from Western nation-states: the concept of national ‘reconciliation’ must occur within entities that were artificially created after World War II. Further, power in Middle Eastern societies is usually concentrated at the top of the hierarchy, whether in the village za’im or government leaders (presidents, kings, military autocrats). Given the absence of participatory democracy and the pervasiveness of autocratic rule, the population at large cannot be convinced of the desirability of reconciliation unless tangible benefits ensue.

The history of Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Palestinian agreements is not encouraging as far as the transformative power of reconciliation is concerned. To the extent that peace has been achieved in these circumstances, it has resulted from military persuasion and economic enticement. At the popular grassroots level, peace is perceived as a deal imposed by a superpower’s need to stabilize a region of the world whose culture and values are unfathomable except through an Orientalist perspective.

Returning to Hannah Arendt’s definition of power, collective empowerment of the community ought to be undertaken in urban, rural, and remote areas alike in coordination with religious and clan leaders, who can pass along a feeling of empowerment to their communities. As long as Palestinians, Egyptians, Lebanese, Jordanians, Syrians, and other Arabs perceive that the peace process is being imposed on them without addressing age-old grievances, the harder reconciliation with Israel will be. The ritual of sulh and musalaha offers an example to follow and adapt.

[488] See Muhammad Abu-Nimer, “Conflict Resolution in an Islamic Context: Some Conceptual Questions,” Peace and Change, Vol. 21, No.1 (January 1996), pp. 22—40.

[489] Many of the Lebanese quoted in this article were participants in the 1994 conference on “Acknowledgment, Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Lessons from Lebanon.”

[490] The author was introduced to conflict resolution and trained to teach and apply its skills by Dr. Merle Lefkoff, an experienced facilitator based in New Mexico.

[491] This worldview is in line with a utilitarian philosophy that pervades intellectual debates in the United States.

[492] For further details, see Paul Salem, “A Critique of Western Conflict Resolution from a non-Western Perspective,” in Paul Salem (ed.), Conflict Resolution in the Arab World (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1997).

[493] Western processes of conflict resolution range across a continuum that includes situations in which parties have most control (communication, collaboration, and negotiation) to situations where parties have least control (mediation and arbitration).

[494] Laura Nader, “Conflict: Anthropological Aspects,” in David L. Sills, ed. International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 3 and 4 (New York: The MacMillan Co. and The Free Press, 1968), p. 236.

[495] For further discussion of victimization and its central role in the perpetuation of conflicts, see Joseph V. Montville, “Psychoanalytic Enlightenment and the Greening of Diplomacy,” in Vamik D. Volkan, Joseph V. Montville, and Demetrius A. Julius (eds), The Psychodynamics of International Relations, Vol. 2 (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1991).

[496] See Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, 3rd ed. (New York and London: Harper and Row, 1987).

[497] In his influential book Getting to Yes, Roger Fisher writes that interest-based negotiation has four basic elements: 1) separate the people from the problem; 2) focus on interests, not positions; 3) invent options for mutual gain; and 4) insist on using objective criteria. For further details, see Roger Fisher and William Ury, Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In, 2nd ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 1991).

[498] The author, together with his wife, Laurie E. King-Irani, organized the conference in Lebanon. Funded in part by the U.S. Institute of Peace, this conference was the first organized discussion of the applicability and relevance of acknowledgment, forgiveness, and reconciliation to conflicts in Lebanon and the Middle East.

[499] These comments can be found in George Emile Irani, “Acknowledgment, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation in Conflict Resolution: Perspectives from Lebanon,” in George E. Irani and Laurie E. King-Irani (eds.), Lessons from Lebanon (forthcoming).

[500] As of this writing, only one warlord, Dr. Samir Geagea, head of the Maronite Christian-dominated militia of the “Lebanese Forces” (now dissolved), has been put on trial and is serving a life sentence in jail.

[501] Michael Meeker, Literature and Violence in North Arabia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 7.

[502] For further details see Laurie E. King-Irani, “Kinship, Class and Ethnicity: Strategies for Survival in the Contemporary Middle East,” in Deborah Gerner (ed.), Understanding the Contemporary Middle East (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

[503] A thorough, groundbreaking analysis on the role patriarchy plays in the Middle East can be found in Hisham Sharabi, Neopatriarchy: A Theory of Distorted Change in Arab Society (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[504] Ibid.

[505] For a thorough analysis of Egyptian politics and Arab politics in general, see the work of the Lebanese-American scholar Fouad Ajami, The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967 (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[506] In Iraq, Saddam Hussein and his family, from the Sunni Muslim village of Takrit in north-central Iraq, have dominated Iraqi politics since the early 1970s. The same applies to Syria, where President Bashar al-Assad's minority Alawi community holds all reins of power. Saddam Hussein is grooming his son to take over power as Hafiz al- Assad did in Syria.

[507] See George Irani, The Papacy and the Middle East: The Role of the Holy See in the Arab-Israeli Conflict (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989).

[508] Regarding the legal status of non-Muslim minorities, see Antoine Fattal, Le Statut Legal des Non-Musulmans en Pays d'Islam (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1958).

[509] Michael C. Hudson, Arab Politics: The Search for Legitimacy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 58.

[510] Bassam Tibi, "The Simultaneity of the Unsimultaneous: Old Tribes and Imposed Nation-States in the Modern Middle East," in Philip S. Khoury and

Joseph Kostiner (eds.), Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East (Berkeley: University of California Pres, 1990), pp. 147–149.

[511] See Hazem al-Ameen, “Beirut: The Arab Women’s Tribunal Symbolized in an Angry Body,” Al-Hayat, March 6, 1998, p. 24.

[512] Anthony Giddens, Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Modern Age (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 204.

[513] For an excellent analysis of the legal system in the Arab world, see Nathan J. Brown, The Rule of Law in the Arab World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[514] M. Khadduri, “Sulh,” in C. E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W. P. Heinrichs, and G. Lecomte, The Encyclopedia of Islam, Volume IX (Leiden, Holland: Brill, 1997), pp. 845–846.

[515] Ibid.

[516] Laurie E. King-Irani, “Rituals of Reconciliation and Processes of Empowerment in Post-War Lebanon,” in I. William Zartman (ed.), Traditional Cures for Modern Conflicts: African Conflict Medicine (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999).

[517] For further details see Nizar Hamzeh, “The Role of Hizbullah in Conflict Management Within Lebanon’s Shia Community,” in Paul Salem (ed.), 1997, op. cit. pp. 93–118.

[518] For further details on Jordanian bedouin rituals of reconciliation, see Mohammad Abu-Hassan, Turath al-Badu al-Qada’i (Bedouin Customary Law) (Amman, Jordan: Manshurat Da’irat al-Thaqafa wa al-Funun, 1987), pp. 257—259.

[519] King-Irani, op. cit.

[520] For further details on the basic principles of sulh as applied in the Galilee, see Elias J. Jabbour, SULHA: Palestinian Traditional Peacemaking Process (Shefar’am, Israel: House of Hope Publications, 1996).

[521] Surah 1:178 in The Holy Qur’an, Text, Translation and Commentary, Abdullah Yusuf ‘Ali New Revised Edition. (Brentwood, Md: Amana Corporation, 1989).

[522] Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 200–201.

[523] King-Irani, op. cit.

** 12. Liberal Islam: Prospects and Challenges

Charles Kurzman

Although the focus of research and public perception in the West has been on radical Islamic thought and movements, many Muslims adhere to principles that could be described collectively as “liberal Islam.” This term refers to interpretations of Islam that have a special concern regarding such issues as democracy, separating religion from political involvement, women’s rights, freedom of thought, and promoting human progress. In each case, the argument is that both Muslims and religious piety itself would benefit from reforms and a more open society.[524] These attitudes parallel those of

liberalism in other cultures and also of liberal movements in various religious faiths.

It is quite possible that these tendencies will grow more important in the future, perhaps even coming to be the dominant orientation in the years to come. Such a trend could happen because of local factors, modernization and development in Islamic societies, and reasons similar to those that brought about such an evolution in the West.

Liberalism in the Islamic world and liberalism in the West may share common elements, but they are not exactly the same thing. They may both support multireligious coexistence, for example, but go about it in different ways. Within the Islamic discourse, there are three main tropes that I call:

- the “liberal Shari’a”

- the “silent Shari’a”

- the “interpreted Shari’a”

Shari’a is the body of Islamic guidance and precedent that has been handed down from the time of the Prophet Muhammad in seventh-century Arabia.

The ‘liberal Shari’a’ argues that the revelations of the Quran and the practices of the Prophet command Muslims to follow liberal positions. For example, Ali Bulac from Turkey quotes Sura 109, Verse 6 of the Quran: “To you your religion, to me my religion.” He goes into great detail describing the “Medina Document,” a treaty signed by the Prophet Muhammad with the Jewish tribes of Medina in the first moments of the Islamic era:

<quote>

The urgent problem of the day was to end the conflicts and to find a formulation for the co-existence of all sides according to the principles of justice and righteousness. In this respect, the Document is epochal ...A righteous and just, law-respecting ideal project aiming for true peace and stability among people cannot but be based on a contract among different groups (religious, legal, philosophical, political etc.) This is a rich diversity within unity, or a real pluralism.

</quote>

Chandra Muzaffar from Malaysia quotes Sura 49, Verse 13: “O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other, not that ye may despise each other.” The Indian Ali Asghar Engineer quotes Sura 2, Verse 256: “There is no compulsion in religion.”[525] Muhammad Talbi from Tunisia quotes Sura 5, Verse 48: “To each among you, have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way. And if God had enforced His Will, He would have made of you all one people.” Hostile and discriminatory forms of inter-religious relations, according to this trope, are un-Islamic. In the words of Subhi Mahmassani of Lebanon: “There can be no discrimination based on religion in an Islamic system.”

The second trope, the ‘silent Shari’a,’ holds that coexistence is not required by the Shari’a, but is allowed. This trope argues that the Shari’a is silent on certain topics—not because divine revelation was incomplete or faulty, but because the revelation intentionally left certain issues for humans to choose.

For example, Humayun Kabir from India argues that the precedent of the early period of Islam does not apply automatically to later periods:

<quote>

The situation changed as the Muslim empire spread rapidly through large areas of Asia and many different peoples were brought within its fold. Many practical problems arose and Muslim political thinking had to find a place for non-Muslim subjects in a Muslim State ... [In India, today, for example,]

</quote>

<quote>

Muslims have condemned compulsion in religion and admitted that different religions must be given due respect.

</quote>

Syed Vahiduddin, also from India, quotes the same Quranic verse as Muhammad Talbi: “In a pluralistic and multi-religious society one cannot do better than to ponder on the Quranic vision of human conflicts: To every one of you we have appointed a right way and open path. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one community ” (Sura 5, Verse 48) But Vahiduddin

interprets this verse within the context of the changing needs of an evolving Islamic community: the late twentieth century, he writes, was a period when Muslims were “tempted to take an extremely static view of religion. Their preoccupation with issues which are not of capital importance has made them uncompromising not only in inter-religious dialogue but also in inter-Islamic dialogue.”

Similarly, Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia, former leader of the world’s largest Islamic organization and former president of Indonesia, calls the 1945 Indonesian constitution better suited than an exclusively Islamic state for the particularly multicultural setting of contemporary Indonesia. “[T]here is a need for steps to be taken to resist the deterioration of relations between the different religions and faiths in Indonesia,” he writes, and the first of these steps is the defense of democratic freedoms: “First of all, efforts to restore the attitude of mutual respect among people from different faiths should be based on the fundamental legal principles of freedom of speech (even for very small minority groups), the rule of law and equality before the constitution.”[526]

The first trope of liberal Islam holds that the Shari’a requires democracy, and the second trope holds that the Shari’a allows

democracy. But there is a third trope that takes issue with each of the first two. This trope is ‘interpreted Islam.’ In the words of the Iranian ‘Abdul-Karim Soroush, “Religion is divine, but its interpretation is thoroughly human and this-worldly”:

<quote>

The text does not stand alone, it does not carry its own meaning on its shoulders, it needs to be situated in a context, it is theory-laden, its interpretation is in flux, and presuppositions are as actively at work here as elsewhere in the field of understanding. Religious texts are no exception. Therefore their interpretation is subject to expansion and contraction according to the assumptions preceding them and/or the questions enquiring them We look at revelation in the mirror of interpretation, much as a devout scientist looks at creation in the mirror of nature ... [so that] the way for religious democracy and the transcendental unity of religions, which are predicated on religious pluralism, will have been paved.

</quote>

Farid Esack from South Africa cites the words of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, fourth caliph and son-in-law of the Prophet: “this is the Quran, written in straight lines, between two boards [of its binding]; it does not speak with a tongue; it needs interpreters and interpreters are people.” Esack translates this into contemporary terms: “Every interpreter enters the process of interpretation with some preunderstanding of the questions addressed by the text—even of its silences—and brings with him or her certain conceptions as presuppositions of his or her exegesis.” Esack’s pre-understandings emerge from the multireligious struggle against apartheid in South Africa. He argues that this commitment resonates with the spirit of early Islam, when an “emerging theology of religious pluralism was intrinsically wedded to one of liberation.”[527]

Similarly, the Egyptian Hassan Hanafi wrote:

<quote>

There is no one interpretation of a text, but there are many interpretations given the difference in understanding between various interpreters. An interpretation of a text is essentially pluralistic. The text is only a vehicle for human interests and even passions ... The conflict of interpretation is essentially a socio-political conflict, not a theoretical one. Theory indeed is only an epistemological cover-up. Each interpretation expresses the socio-political commitment of the interpreter.

</quote>

Amina Wadud-Muhsin from the United States argues in a similar vein that "when one individual reader with a particular world-view and specific prior text [the language and cultural context in which the text is read] asserts that his or her reading is the only possible or permissible one, it prevents readers in different contexts from coming to terms with their own relationship to the text."

Abdallahi An-Na'im from Sudan said: "There is no such thing as the only possible or valid understanding of the Quran, or conception of Islam, since each is informed by the individual and collective orientation of Muslims ..."[528]

This third trope suggests that religious diversity is inevitable, not just among religious communities but within Islam itself.

Few, if any, of the authors quoted above have read one another's work, despite the fact that they were all born in the first half of the twentieth century. These liberal positions appear to be emerging independently throughout the Islamic world. This simultaneous appearance is due to three historic shifts of the past several decades.

Widespread higher education has broken the traditional religious institutions' monopoly on religious scholarship. Millions of autodidacts now have access to texts and commentaries, such as nonclerics with secular educations: engineers such as Muhammad Shahrur from Syria and Mehdi Bazargan from

Iran; philosophers such as Muhammad Arkun from Algeria (and France) and Tunisian Rachid Ghannushi; and sociologists such as ‘Ali Shari’ati of Iran and Chandra Muzaffar from Malaysia.

For example, Fatima Mernissi from Morocco, trained in sociology rather than theology, examined the hadith (tradition of the Prophet): “Those who entrust their affairs to a woman will never know prosperity!” Consulting a variety of ancient sources, she discovered that the hadith was attributed to Abu Bakra (died circa 671)—born a slave, liberated by the Prophet Muhammad, who rose to high social position in the city of Basra. He is the only source for this hadith, and he reported it 25 years after the Prophet’s death. Mernissi suggests that this hadith, though included in Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari’s collection of traditions, Al-Salih (The Authentic), and widely cited in the Islamic world, is suspect for two reasons.

First, when placed in context, Abu Bakra’s relation of the hadith seems selfserving. He was trying to save his life after the Battle of the Camel (December 656), when, to quote Mernissi, “all those who had not chosen to join ‘Ali’s clan had to justify their action. This can explain why a man like Abu Bakra needed to recall opportune traditions, his record being far from satisfactory, as he had refused to take part in the civil war ... [Although] many of the Companions and inhabitants of Basra chose neutrality in the conflict, only Abu Bakra justified it by the fact that one of the parties was a woman.” (pp. 116—117)

Second, Abu Bakra had once been flogged for giving false testimony in an early court case. According to the rules of hadith scholarship laid out by Imam Malik ibn Anas (710—796 AD), one of the founders of the science of hadith studies, lying disqualifies a source from being counted as a reliable transmitter of hadith. “If one follows the principles of Malik for fiqh [Islamic jurisprudence], Abu Bakra must be rejected as a source of hadith by every good, well-informed Malikite Muslim.” (p. 119)

Thus, in the world of CD-ROMs and global Internet access, anyone literate in Arabic with a personal computer, like Mernissi, can investigate the sources of Islamic law and question the reigning interpretations.

International communication technologies—radio, television, telephones, and the Internet—as well as newspapers and international trade, are bringing educated people from around the world into ever closer contact. The ideals of Western liberalism, like other Western notions such as nationalism, have entered people's homes around the world. People in Gabon, West Africa, for example, watched the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and started demanding democracy themselves, prompting that country's dictator to comment derisively on the "wind from the east [that is, the communist Eastern bloc] that is shaking the coconut trees."[529]

Another example was when Nurcholish Madjid from Indonesia defended freedom of thought by quoting the famous U.S. judge Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809—1894): "The ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of thought to get itself accepted [in the] competition of the market ..." Madjid goes on to say:

<quote>

Among the freedoms of the individual, the freedom[s] to think and to express opinions are the most valuable. We must have a firm conviction that all ideas and forms of thought, however strange they may sound, should be accorded means of expression. It is by no means rare that such ideas and thoughts, initially regarded as generally wrong, are [later] found to be right ... Furthermore, in the confrontation of ideas and thoughts, even error can be of considerable benefit, because it will induce truth to express itself and grow as a strong force. Perhaps it was not entirely small talk when our Prophet said that differences of opinion among his umma [community] were a mercy [from God].

</quote>

A further example of how technology is inducing change in the Islamic world is the tremendous Internet activity surrounding the arrest of former

Malaysian deputy prime minister Anwar Ibrahim, whose trajectory from youthful Islamist militant to liberal reformist coincided with his increasing use of quotations from William Shakespeare and other crosscultural sources. Ibrahim's political career began with a communalist Islamism that scapegoated Chinese Malaysians. In recent years, Ibrahim has become an outspoken proponent of multireligious coexistence, both in Malaysia and at the global level:

<quote>

The experience of contemporary Islam in Southeast Asia has much to contribute not only to Muslims in other regions but possibly also to the world at large. This is due to the fact that the devout Southeast Asian Muslim practices his religion in the context of a truly multicultural world. Especially in Malaysia, a Muslim is never unaware of the presence of people of other faiths; as friends, colleagues, collaborators, partners or even competitors. [530]

</quote>

Supporters of Ibrahim's reform movement contributed to international communication through Web sites such as Anwar Online <[[http://members.tripod.com/~Anwar_Ibrahim][http://members.tripod.com/~Anwar_Ibrahim]]>, Anwar Ibrahim One <[[http://www.anwaribrahim1.com][http://www.anwaribrahim1.com]]>, Gerakan Reformasi <[[http://members.xoom.com/Gerakan][http://members.xoom.com/Gerakan]]>, ADIL <[[http://members.easyspace.com/reformasi][http://members.easyspace.com/reformasi]]>, Reformasi Dot Com (<http://www.reformasi.com>, quoting poetry by Rabindranath Tagore), and Ibrahim's wife's official Web site, <[[http://www.anwaribrahim.org][http://www.anwaribrahim.org]]>.

Some of these sites registered hundreds of thousands of visitors in two or three months. One flashing pro-Ibrahim Web site noted: "Welcome to J's Reformasi Online, the site of the oppressed and depressed!! In the name of Allah, most gracious, most merciful."

Some countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, have tried to block out foreign ideas precisely because they fear these sorts of intercultural interactions. But blocking foreign ideas, to quote U.S. President Woodrow Wilson out of context, “is like using a broom to stop a vast flood.”[531] Few countries will be able to keep up this level of sweeping for long.

A third factor in the rise of liberal Islam is the failure of alternative ideologies. In particular, there appears to be a growing sense that Islamic regimes have not lived up to their promise. The Sudan and Pakistan, for example, have proved to be no less corrupt after the Islamicization of their governments than before. Taliban rule in Afghanistan, it seems fair to generalize, horrified most Muslims.[532]

The number one disappointment for “fundamentalist” Muslims, however, is Iran. The Iranian revolution of 1979 raised tremendous hopes among Islamists in Malaysia, Africa, and throughout the Islamic world. Iran was to be the showpiece of the Islamist movement. For the first time since the seventh century, a truly Islamic society was to be constructed. It has been painful for these people to find that dream unfulfilled.

There are many examples of this painful disillusionment and the liberal outcome that resulted. Consider ‘Abdul-Karim Soroush, a controversial figure who wholeheartedly favored the Islamic Republic in the early years. Soroush participated actively in the revolutionary reorganization of the universities in Iran, which involved getting rid of many fine professors in the name of ideological purity. Yet by the mid-1980s, even this staunch supporter of the Islamic republic had started to distance himself from official committees on which he had served. Within a few years, he came to realize that the Islamic Republic was not ushering in a new era of justice and righteousness. Soroush started to criticize the government and began to call for a reinterpretation of Islamic law and for academic and intellectual freedoms that his university reorganization had disregarded in the early 1980s. These themes, along with his impressive erudition and his talent for public speaking, made Soroush one of the most popular public speakers in Iran in the early 1990s. He spoke at mosques and universities and on the radio, always to big audiences. Naturally, the Iranian government found his words threatening, and Soroush has since been barred from speaking publicly in Iran. He now speaks outside

Iran, when he is allowed to travel, addressing international audiences, mainly in Europe and North America, stressing the commonality of his views with Western interpretations of religion. But the pain of Soroush's break with the Islamic Republic and his disillusionment are apparently so great that he literally cannot deal with his own former hopes and aspirations. In interviews, Soroush denies that he was a supporter of the cultural revolution in Iran or that he was active in the reorganization of the universities.[533] The Islamic Republic in Iran appears not only to be generating liberal ideas, but also may even be erasing the memory of those who once professed Islamist ideals.

Although there are Muslims who find common ground with Western liberals, liberal Islam is not without its detractors. Some claim that liberal Islam is inauthentic, that it is a creation of the West and does not reflect "true" Islamic traditions. "Authenticity movements" have been increasing globally over the past quarter-century, from religious movements such as Islamism or the B. J. P. Hindu nationalist party in India, to ethnic phenomena such as the tribal hostilities that have resulted in gruesome massacres in central Africa. The emphasis on authenticity is not limited to the Islamic world.

One of the crucial characteristics of this renewed interest in authenticity is the idea that one can take a culture and draw a box around it; that a culture can be defined as a discrete entity, separate from other cultures, with well-defined boundaries. In reality, these boundaries are rarely so precise. In Uzbekistan, for example, the government insists that the Now Ruz New Year's celebration was invented in Central Asia, not in Iran—as if cultural practices would be less valuable if they were imported. But of course, claiming to have created the event contributes to Uzbek national pride and identity.

The flip side of this increasing need for cultural ownership is a flurry of criticisms against things or people for not being authentic enough. Because liberal Islam shares concerns with Western liberalism, critics claim, it must not be a valid interpretation of the religion—if X is Western, it cannot be Islamic. This binary opposition ignores the tremendous history of cultural borrowings and influences that have permeated the supposed border over the centuries.

If the first charge is that liberal Islam is inauthentic, and therefore somehow wrong, the second charge argues that liberal Islam should not be tolerated whether or not it is wrong. For example, Gai Eaton, a British Muslim, calls liberal Muslims “Uncle Toms.”[534] (“Uncle Tom” is a derisive term used by African- Americans to describe a black person who is grotesquely servile to whites.) In essence, Eaton is calling liberal concerns treasonous to the cause of Islam. Not only are these concerns wrong, according to Eaton’s way of thinking, but right or wrong, raising these concerns publicly weakens the Islamic world in its struggle with the West. It is like a team sport, where each side demands loyalty from its members and sees any internal critique, any self-critique, as aiding and abetting the other team.

In Iran, for example, the feeling of being besieged by foreign, especially American, hostility is so strong that in order to survive, politicians must prove that they are not “soft” on the “Great Satan.”[535] Iranian politicians who wish to negotiate with the West, or to raise concerns about democracy, human rights, or other issues, are immediately labeled by their political opponents as “soft on Satan.” This pattern is so common and so damaging to liberal concerns that even reformists engage in liberal-bashing in order to ward off criticism. Iran’s president, Muhammad Khatami, is a case in point. Khatami may be more of a politician than a theologian, but his campaign in 1997 adopted liberal positions on civil society, rule of law, and freedom of speech that inspired reformists in Iran and elsewhere in the Islamic world, while making him vulnerable to charges of cultural treason. Possibly to preempt such charges, Khatami interspersed his liberal campaign themes with attacks on some liberal oppositionists, accusing them of having “fallen in the lap of foreigners,” of not being a legitimate political party, and of not coming “from inside society.”[536]

Western ignorance poses yet another challenge for liberal Islam. For centuries, the West has constructed an image of Islam as ‘the Other,’ identifying Islam with its most exotic elements. Islamic faith has been equated with fanaticism, as in Voltaire’s Mahomet, or Fanaticism (1745). Islamic political authority has been equated with despotism, as in Montesquieu’s intentionally redundant phrase “Oriental despotism.” And Islamic tradition has been equated with backwardness and

primitiveness, as in Ernest Renan’s inaugural lecture at the College de France (1862):

<quote>

Islam is the complete negation of Europe ... Islam is the disdain of science, the suppression of civil society; it is the appalling simplicity of the Semitic spirit, restricting the human mind, closing it to all delicate ideas, to all refined sentiment, to all rational research, in order to keep it facing an eternal tautology: God is God.[537]

</quote>

Aside from bias, Western policy must better understand the distinctions within Islamic movements. An example is the recent history of Algeria. The Front de Salvation Islamique (FIS) was divided into liberal and radical factions. During the elections of late 1991 and early 1992, the liberal wing was in the ascendant; its leaders were setting the group’s policy, its candidates were running for office, and it stood a great chance of actually coming to power. ‘Abbasi Madani, the leader of the liberal faction, made a number of statements aimed at calming the fears of Algerians and Westerners about the intentions of the FIS, such as: “Pluralism is a guarantee of cultural wealth, and diversity is needed for development. We are Muslims, but we are not Islam itself ... We do not monopolize religion. Democracy as we understand it means pluralism, choice, and freedom.”[538] The FIS had won 81 percent of the first-round elections in December 1991 and was poised to do equally well in the second round in early January 1992 when the Algerian military, supported by France and the United States, canceled the elections, banned the FIS, and arrested its leaders. The result was that the liberals within the Islamic movement were thoroughly discredited for having proposed an effort to win within the rules of democracy. The radical wing prevailed and even murdered liberal Islamic activists who objected to terrorism, such as Muhammad Sa’id and Abd al-Razak Redjam, who were killed in 1995. The Western inability to believe that there might be such a thing as liberal Islam proved a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There is a growing number of Muslims who share common concerns with Western liberalism, one of which is peaceful multireligious coexistence. There

are three Islamic approaches in this context which, while still very much minority views, seem to be growing. In the ‘liberal Shari’a’ school, Islamic scholars base their arguments on injunctions in the Quran and on precedents from the early years of Islam. Using an argument that might be called the ‘silent Shari’a,’ Islamic scholars argue that the Shari’a does not speak about certain topics—not because the revelation is incomplete or imperfect, but because these matters have been intentionally left to human invention. The third approach is the ‘interpreted Shari’a,’ where Islamic scholars argue that the revelation is divine, but interpretation is human and fallible and inevitably plural.

These liberal approaches to multireligious coexistence have been stimulated by three historic shifts of the past quarter century: the rise of secular higher education in the Islamic world, which has broken the monopoly of the seminaries over religious discourse; the growth of international communications, which has made educated Muslims more aware than ever of the norms and institutions of the West; and the failure of Islamic regimes to deliver an attractive alternative.

These liberal approaches face serious challenges, including accusations of treason and inauthenticity, and a Western ignorance about the existence and importance of this internal Islamic debate.

[524] This paper draws and expands on my anthology, Liberal Islam: A Source-Book (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). All quotations not otherwise cited refer to this work.

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[526] Abdurrahman Wahid, “Religious Tolerance in a Plural Society,” in Damien Kingsbury and Greg Barton (eds.), Difference and Tolerance:

Human Rights Issues in Southeast Asia (Geelong, Australia: Deakin University Press, 1994), p. 42.

[527] Farid Esack, Qur’an, Liberation, and Pluralism (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997), pp. 50, 179.

[528] Abdullahi An-Na’im, “Toward an Islamic Hermeneutics for Human Rights,” in Abdullahi A. Na’im, Jerald D. Gort, Henry M. Vroom (eds.), Human Rights and Religious Values: An Uneasy Relationship? (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), p. 233.

[529] Samuel Decalo, “The Process, Prospects, and Constraints of Democratization in Africa,” African Affairs, Vol. 91, 1992, p. 7.

[530] Anwar Ibrahim, “The Need for Civilizational Dialogue” (Washington, D.C.: Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Georgetown University, Occasional Papers Series, 1995), p. 4.

[531] Arno J. Mayer, Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918—1919 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), p. 602.

[532] Aslam Abdullah, “Shaving Is His Protest Against Coercion,” Los Angeles Times, May 10, 1997.

[533] See the Web site devoted to Soroush’s thought, <[[http://www.seraj.org][http://www.seraj.org]]>, and “Intellectual Autobiography: An Interview,” in Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of Abdolkarim Soroush, translated by Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri (forthcoming).

[534] Gai Eaton, Islam and the Destiny of Man (Albany: State University of New York Press, New York, 1985), p. 12.

[535] Charles Kurzman, “Soft on Satan: Challenges for Iranian-U.S. Rapprochement,” Middle East Policy, Vol. 6, No. 1, June 1998, pp. 63—72.

[536] Salaam (Tehran, Iran), May 6, 1997.

[537] Ernest Renan, Oeuvres Completes (Paris: Calmann-Livy, 1947), Vol. 2, p. 333.

[538] Daniel Brumberg, “Islam, Elections, and Reform in Algeria,” Journal of Democracy, Vol. 2, No. 1, Winter 1991, p. 64.

** 13. Inside the Islamic Reformation

Dale F. Eickelman

Like the printing press in sixteenth-century Europe, the combination of mass education and mass communications is transforming the Muslim-majority world, a broad geographical crescent stretching from North Africa through Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Indonesian archipelago. In unprecedentedly large numbers, the faithful—whether in the vast cosmopolitan city of Istanbul, the suburbs of Paris, or in the remote oases of Oman’s mountainous interior—are examining and debating the fundamentals of Muslim belief and practice in ways that their less self-conscious predecessors in the faith would never have imagined.

Buzzwords such as “fundamentalism” and catchy phrases such as Samuel Huntington’s “West versus Rest” or Daniel Lerner’s “Mecca or mechanization” are of little use in understanding this transformation. They obscure or even distort the immense spiritual and intellectual ferment taking place today among the world’s nearly one billion Muslims, reducing it in most cases to a fanatical rejection of everything modern, liberal, or progressive. To be sure, such fanati- cism—not exclusive to Muslim majority societies—plays a part in what is happening, but it is far from the whole story.

A far more important element is the unprecedented access that ordinary people now have to sources of information and knowledge about religion and other aspects of their society. Quite simply, in country after country, government officials, traditional religious scholars, and officially sanctioned preachers are finding it very hard to monopolize the tools of literate culture. The days have gone when governments and religious authorities can control what their people know and what they think.

What distinguishes the present era from prior ones is the large numbers of believers engaged in the ‘reconstruction’ of religion, community, and society. In an earlier era, political or religious leaders would prescribe, and others were supposed to follow. Today, the major impetus for change in religious and political values comes from below. In France, this has meant an identity shift from being Muslim in France to being French Muslim. In Turkey, it means that an increasing number of Turks, especially those of the younger generation, see themselves as European and Muslim at the same time. And some Iranians argue that the major transformations of the Iranian revolution occurred not in 1978— 1979 but with the coming of age of a new generation of Iranians who were not even born at the time of the revolution. These transformations include a greater sense of autonomy for both women and men and the emergence of a public sphere in which politics and religion are subtly intertwined, and not always in ways anticipated by Iran’s formal religious leaders.

If ‘modernity’ is defined as the emergence of new kinds of public space, including kinds not imagined by preceding generations, then developments in France, Turkey, Iran, Indonesia, and elsewhere suggest that we are living

through an era of profound social transformation for the Muslim-majority world.

Distinctive to the modern era is that discourse and debate about Muslim tradition involves people on a mass scale. It also necessarily involves an awareness of other Muslim and non-Muslim traditions. Mass education and mass communications in the modern world facilitate an awareness of the new and unconventional. In changing the style and scale of possible discourse, they reconfigure the nature of religious thought and action, create new forms of public space, and encourage debate over meaning.

Mass education and mass communications are important in all contemporary world religions. However, the full effects of mass education, especially higher education, began to be felt in much of the Muslim world only since the midtwentieth century and in many countries considerably later. In country after country—including Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, and Indonesia—educational opportunities have dramatically expanded at all levels. Even where adult illiteracy rates in the general populace remain high, as in rural Egypt and Morocco, there is now a critical mass of educated people able to read, think for themselves, and react to religious and political authorities rather than just listen to them. Women’s access to education still lags behind that of men, although the gap is rapidly closing in many countries.

Both mass education and mass communications, particularly the proliferation of media and the means by which people communicate, have had a profound effect on how people think about religion and politics throughout the Muslim world. Multiple means of communication make the unilateral control of information and opinion much more difficult than it was in prior eras and foster, albeit inadvertently, a civil society of dissent. We are still in the early stages of understanding how different media—including print, television, radio, cassettes, and music—influence groups and individuals, encouraging unity in some contexts and fragmentation in others, but a few salient features may be sketched.

At the “high” end of this transformation is the rise to significance of books such as al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an [The Book and the Quran] (1990),

written by the Syrian civil engineer Muhammad Shahrur. This book has sold tens of thousands of copies throughout the Arab world in spite of the fact that its circulation has been banned or discouraged in many places. Its success could not have been imagined before there were large numbers of people able to read it and understand its advocacy of the need to reinterpret ideas of religious authority and tradition and apply Islamic precepts to contemporary society. On issues ranging from the role of women in society to rekindling a “creative interaction” with non-Muslim philosophies, Shahrur argues that Muslims should reinterpret sacred texts and apply them to contemporary social and moral issues.

Shahrur is not alone in attacking both conventional religious wisdom and the intolerant certainties of religious radicals and in arguing instead for a constant and open re-interpretation of how sacred texts apply to social and political life. Another Syrian thinker, the secularist Sadiq Jalal al-’Azm, debated Shaykh Yusif al-Qaradawi, a conservative religious intellectual, on Qatar’s al-Jazira Satellite TV in May 1997. For the first time in the memory of many viewers, the religious conservative came across as the weaker, more defensive voice. Al-Jazira is a new phenomenon in Arab language broadcasting because its talk shows, such as “The Opposite Direction,” feature live discussions on such sensitive issues as women’s role in society, Palestinian refugees, sanctions on Iraq, and democracy and human rights in the Arab world.

Such discussions are unlikely to be rebroadcast on state-controlled television in most Arab nations, where programming on religious and political themes is generally cautious. Nevertheless, satellite technology and videotape render traditional censorship ineffective. Tapes of al-Jazira broadcasts circulate from hand to hand in Morocco, Oman, Syria, Egypt, and elsewhere. Al-Jazira shows that people across the Arab world, just like their counterparts elsewhere in the Muslim- majority world, want open discussion of the issues that affect their lives, and that new communications technologies make it impossible for governments and established religious authorities to stop them.

Other voices also advocate reform. Fethullah Gulen, Turkey’s answer to media-savvy American evangelist Billy Graham, appeals to a mass audience. In televised chat shows, interviews, and occasional sermons, Gulen speaks

about Islam and science, democracy, modernity, religious and ideological tolerance, the importance of education, and current events.

Religious movements such as Turkey's Risale-i Nur appeal increasingly to religious moderates, and in stressing the links between Islam, reason, science, and modernity, and the lack of inherent conflict between 'East' and 'West,' they promote education at all levels, and appeal to a growing number of educated Turks. Iranian, Indonesian, and Malaysian moderates make similar arguments advocating religious and political toleration and pluralism.

As a result of direct and broad access to the printed, broadcast, and taped word, more and more Muslims take it upon themselves to interpret the textual sources—classical or modern—of Islam. Much has been made of the opening up of the economies of many Muslim countries, allowing 'market forces' to reshape economies, no matter how painful the consequences in the short run. In a similar way, intellectual market forces support some forms of religious innovation and activity over others. In Bangladesh, women's romance novels, once a popular secular specialty, now have their Islamic counterparts, making it difficult to distinguish between 'Muslim' romance novels and 'secular' ones.

The result is a collapse of earlier, hierarchical notions of religious authority based on claims to the mastery of fixed bodies of religious texts. Even when there are state-appointed religious authorities—as in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Egypt—there no longer is any guarantee that their word will be heeded, or even that they themselves will follow the lead of the regime. No one group or type of leader in contemporary Muslim societies possesses a monopoly on the management of the sacred.

Without fanfare, the notion that Islam should be the subject of dialogue and civil debate is gaining ground. This new sense of public space is shaped by increasingly open contests over the use of the symbolic language of Islam. Increasingly, discussions in newspapers, on the Internet, on smuggled cassettes, and on television cross-cut and overlap, contributing to a common public space.

New and accessible modes of communication have made these contests increasingly global, so that even local issues take on transnational dimensions. The combination of new media and new contributors to religious and political debates fosters awareness on the part of all actors of the diverse ways in which Islam and Islamic values can be created. It feeds into new senses of a public space that is discursive, performative, and participative, and not confined to formal institutions recognized by state authorities.

Two cautions are in order. The first is that an expanding public sphere need not necessarily indicate more favorable prospects for democracy, any more than civil society necessarily entails democracy. Authoritarian regimes are compatible with an expanding public sphere, although an expanded public sphere offers wider avenues for awareness of competing and alternate forms of religious and political authority. Nor does civil society necessarily entail democracy, although it is a precondition for democracy.

Publicly shared ideas of community, identity, and leadership take new shapes in such engagements, even as many communities and authorities claim an unchanged continuity with the past. Mass education, so important in the development of nationalism in an earlier era, and a proliferation of media and means of communication have multiplied the possibilities for creating communities and networks among them, dissolving prior barriers of space and distance, and opening new grounds for interaction and mutual recognition.

** 14. Islamist Movements in the Middle East: A Survey and Balance Sheet

Barry Rubin

More than two decades after Iran's 1979 Islamist revolution, radical 'fundamentalist' forces in the Middle East have achieved two great victories and suffered two major defeats. These four factors give a clear sense of these movements'— and thus also the region's—present and future situation.

The first great victory is that the Iranian regime has survived. Yet this achievement is seriously undermined by popular dissatisfaction with the regime's performance. A movement led by President Muhammad Khatami has challenged the policies intended to produce an all-embracing Islamic state, though it continues to favor such a structure in a more moderate form.

The second big triumph has been that revolutionary Islamist doctrine and groups have become the principal opposition force throughout the region. In virtually every country, there are organized forces that challenge the current rulers.

At the same time, however, these movements have suffered even more impressive setbacks. First, the spread of upheaval has been far less than its advocates hoped and opponents feared. Radical Islamist groups did not find it easy to seize power where they did, and today their prospects for doing so anywhere else in the Middle East are not good.

The other problem is that popular support for these movements has been limited among Muslims and even among those who are pious. There are many good reasons for Islamist movements' relatively low level of mass support or success. These factors include traditional Islam's rejection of radical Islamism, nationalism's appeal, and incumbent regimes' clever mix of repression and cooptation aimed against these groups.

Radical Islamists claimed, in effect, that they were 'fundamentalists' because they were returning to the historic essence and proper interpretation of Islam. In practice, though, these forces more truly represented an attempt to reinterpret Islam—at least as it was generally practiced—by means of modern ideas and new perspectives. The refusal of most Muslims to accept

this claim lies at the root of the movement's failures to gain hegemony in the region.

A three-part definition of the movement's key premises is useful here:

1. Islam is the answer to the problems of Muslims' society, country, and region. The relative weakness of Muslims and of Arab societies compared to the West, their slow or stagnant economic development, the failure to destroy Israel, domestic and inter-Arab disunity, inequality and injustice, and other such problems have been due to the failure to implement Islam properly.

Many Muslims would agree with the first sentence but they would find other sources of doctrine or causes of the current situation equally or more acceptable. For example, very large numbers of Muslims embrace Arab (or Turkish) nationalism and other political ideologies. A majority of Muslims are more likely to attribute the failures of modern times to a need for economic progress, more democracy, Arab unity, regional peace, or many other factors.

The virtually single-factor explanation of shortcomings, grievances and solutions marks the radical Islamist groups. A Western analogy might be that while there were many liberals and social democrats, intellectuals and workers who accepted elements of Marxist arguments—demands for social justice, strong trade unions, and a redistribution of economic power, etc.—far fewer were able to accept the narrow (deterministic, monistic) views of that doctrine to such an extent that they were prepared to join communist parties.

2. Implementing Islam and resolving the huge problems of the people and countries require the seizure and holding of power by radical Islamist groups, and not by any other type of government or political leadership. The best-known, though hardly sole, proponent and architect of this premise was Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, though not all radical Islamists echo his view that Islamic clerics should be the rulers.

Indeed, in many Arab countries, and also in Iran, the leading clergymen favor conservative Islamic views rather than radical Islamist ones. These traditional doctrines involve accepting the existing rulers, at least as long as they are Muslims, and a division of authority between state and religion. They also discourage the use of violence against other Muslims.

In contrast, the radicals interpret the need for Islam to be in full and direct political power as a core value of Islam. Any view of Islam that does not accept this tenet is illegitimate. In historical terms, the problem here is that Islam existed for many centuries with the domination of the completely opposite idea: A ruler should be properly pious but the state need not be ruled and shaped by Islam. While there have been many exceptions, Islam has usually adopted tolerance and pluralism, at least toward its own adherents.

The radicals claim they are returning to the religion's origins in the seventh century (hence, returning to fundamentals), but in fact theirs is a deviant, even heretical, viewpoint. It must be stressed that this approach is simply not accepted by the majority of Muslims, nor even by the majority of clerics. Even in Iran, there were and are many respected senior clerics who reject Khomeini's views. Indeed, those who reject 'fundamentalism' are often more respected and have better scholarly credentials than those who embrace it.

This factor is an enormous problem for the radicals, who often face an uphill battle to gain or enlarge a base of popular support. A Western analogy here would be that while communist movements claimed to speak on behalf of large social groups—workers, oppressed nations and groups, progressive think- ers—these people usually rejected that purported leadership.

3. The only proper interpretation of Islam is the one offered by a specific political group and its leaders. This premise also poses a serious problem. For if the majority does not accept the doctrine as a whole, even more people will not agree with the details of a given group's ideology, program, tactics, and strategy. While some revolutionary groups draw on one or more

respected Islamic clerics, they are often small and marginal groups. And of course one man's respected cleric may be another man's charlatan or heretic.

Several additional consequences arise from this premise. Such movements are almost inherently intolerant because they claim to speak with the voice of God, while their opponents' views can only be explained as heretical or even satanic. But intolerance can inhibit growth; it turns the majority of Muslims into enemies whose ideas and worship are wrong. Moreover, since there is only one correct line, the radicals often quarrel among themselves. There is rarely room in any organization for more than one charismatic leader. Factions and splits are inevitable, thus weakening the movement and sometimes leading to infighting.

The claims of the radical Islamist groups also pose a huge problem for Muslim citizens. If the revolutionaries' brand of Islam is valid, then their own personal versions are wrong, despite the fact that they and their ancestors have lived within that framework for their entire lives. In this way, Muslims can see the radicals' struggle as an attack on them rather than as a battle on their behalf. Government propaganda often builds very successfully on this theme.

As political actors, revolutionary Islamist groups face a series of difficult problems.

Because religious doctrine is at the core of their ideology, Sunni and Shi'ite Muslim radicals find it difficult—though not always impossible—to cooperate. In some countries, Iran's ethnically Persian and religiously Shi'ite identities are real barriers to attracting Arab and Sunni followers to a doctrine often identified with its revolution. At the same time, Iran's visible failures and internal problems can also discredit the idea that an Islamist revolution would solve all problems. The fact that Islamists deny these factors does not make them any less real.

As was so long true in Arab nationalist groups, handling foreign sponsorship or interference can be a very difficult and divisive challenge for a revolutionary organization. To cite one example, there are about six different factions of (Palestinian) Islamic Jihad each with different sponsorship (Iranian, Syrian, and Libyan). Afghanistan offers similar examples. Some groups became the surrogates or pawns of regimes, whose rulers need not be radical Islamists themselves. The ability of states to offer safe havens, finances, training, military equipment, diplomatic support, and other benefits makes seeking their sponsorship a very tempting proposition for relatively small revolutionary groups.

For example, at a time when Syria was killing and imprisoning Islamist opponents, Iranian interests dictated a strong alliance with Damascus—including massive oil transfers—in order to isolate Iraq. During the 1990–1991 crisis resulting from Iraq's takeover of its neighbor Kuwait, radical Islamists overwhelmingly supported Saddam Hussein, even though he murdered, tortured, and exiled thousands of their colleagues in his own country.

While radical Islamists may decry the existence of separate nation-states, they cannot be ignored. Indeed, Islamist groups often owe their growth and strength to the fact that they are representatives of ethnic or national groups. In Lebanon, Hizballah is essentially a Shi'ite communal party opposing Christian hegemony, a situation that guarantees opposition from the country's other communities. In Syria, the Islamists represent a Sunni majority, the country's traditional rulers, who oppose an essentially non-Muslim (Alawite) government. In Iraq, the movement represents the Shi'ite community against a largely Sunni ruling elite. With the partial exception of the Muslim Brotherhood network— encouraging some cooperation among the Egyptian, Jordanian, Palestinian (Hamas), and Syrian Muslim Brotherhoods—each movement stands mostly on its own in battling a relatively well-financed and well-armed local government.

Similarly, each radical Islamist movement must develop a strategy and tactics appropriate for its individual country with extremely varied environments. Consequently, the groups grow in different directions, set

disparate levels of escalation, and find dissimilar responses to their problems.

Finally, governments are often quite sophisticated in using a wide variety of tactics to counter revolutionary Islamists. These measures include expropriating Islamic symbols, co-opting large elements of Islamic institutions, promoting patriotism and Arab nationalism, or unleashing repression. To cite a few examples:

- Saddam Hussein added the phrase “God is great” to Iraq’s flag and declared his 1990 invasion of Kuwait a holy war. A decade earlier, he murdered Iraq’s leading young radical Shi’ite Islamist cleric and his activist sister.

- Syria’s regime—dominated by a non-Muslim minority group—wiped out one of its own biggest cities in 1982, killing between 10,000 and 30,000 people, to eliminate a center of support for the Islamist movement.

- The kings of Jordan, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia possess considerable Islamic credentials of their own. At one politically sensitive moment, the late King Hussein even grew a beard to court this constituency.

- In Egypt, the government controls a huge Islamic sector, ranging from local mosques to the prestigious al-Azhar religious university. Preachers and teachers in Islamic schools are government employees.

- Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir Arafat created his own satellite Islamist party, assigned Islamist activists who supported him to high posts, and played a clever balancing act between repression and benevolence to keep Hamas in line.

- The Turkish military outmaneuvered the short-lived Welfare Party coalition government in Ankara, forcing Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan to sign a

decree expelling supporters of his own party from the army and ultimately pushing him out of office altogether in 1997.

Aside from questions of ideology, the use of violence is an extremely controversial and sometimes divisive issue. While all radical Islamist movements want to gain power and never relinquish it, there are differences in method, depending on the situation in specific countries and the views of the local leadership. It should be stressed that while small radical Islamist groups employ violence in trying to seize control of several Arab states, the main revolutionary efforts—within Algeria, Egypt, and Lebanon—have steadily declined.

Some radical Islamists have argued that power can be sought by persuasion, using any pluralist openings offered by the system. In addition to elections and propaganda, groups have developed a large variety of grassroots social programs to build a mass base of support by showing their doctrine in action. These efforts include welfare activities and the creation of school systems and youth clubs. Professional associations and student groups can be taken over through institutional elections, even in countries where parliamentary elections are manipulated by the regime. Control of individual mosques and political Islamist preaching is also a useful tactic.

For Islamist politicians, there could be a careerist element in a decision to work inside the system even if an incumbent government will clearly not allow an opposition win. Accepting the role of ‘loyal opposition’ would keep them out of jail, safeguard their existing wealth, and provide opportunities for additional personal benefits and prestige. In effect, they would gain freedom to operate in exchange for accepting certain limits.

This is not meant to suggest that reformism arises from venal considerations, but such factors can certainly make such a choice more attractive. It can also be a pragmatic response to the failure and relatively limited appeal of armed struggle. Movements that become genuinely reformist try to act as pressure

groups to move society toward a more Islamic identity without being able to transform it altogether. It is possible to argue, of course, that this gradualist strategy will eventually arrive at the same result intended by advocates of a revolutionary strategy. Indeed, there is a difference between reformist tactics and a moderation of aims. The movements' opponents often make such an argument, which justifies their ensuring that Islamists never actually take power.

Nevertheless, this trend toward reformist methods that could lead to moderated goals, most clearly true in Turkey and Jordan, could become the dominant trend. But this choice also results in splits, as some militants come to believe that the parent movement has abandoned its original principles. Such was the pattern, for example, in Egypt, where radical groups emerged from the Muslim Brotherhood, whose moderate tactics from the 1970s onward ensured both its survival and its failure to gain power.

There are, indeed, four diverse types of situations for Islamist movements in the Middle East:

1. A highly repressive regime that will kill and imprison radical Islamist activists and ban their movements, as can be seen in Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. In these cases the government's willingness and ability to apply massive force has crushed Islamist insurgencies.

1. A more flexible regime allows Islamists to operate with a large degree of freedom, establishing and administering a wide range of institutions, but it will not allow them to take power. This is the prevailing situation in Algeria and Egypt where, respectively, a military coup and election rigging have been used to limit the Islamist parties. As a result, large elements among radical Islamist forces take up arms to gain power. These conditions have been the most propitious for the development of a bloody Islamist insurgency, though not necessarily a successful one.

1. The most open regimes, such as those in Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Turkey, Israel, and the Palestinian Authority, allow the Islamists a fairer proportion of

representation—and in Turkey's case even temporary executive power—while any violent revolutionary forces are dealt with very severely. This situation is made possible by two factors: The government's legitimacy and the system's strength are secure enough that they do not feel endangered by the Islamist forces; and the Islamists themselves are ready to accept the rules of the game because they judge any attempt to seize power would be suicidal.

1. In some places, Islamist forces try to take the place of a nationalist movement in representing an ethnic group that has a distinct confessional characteristic. As noted above, this applies to Hizballah (Lebanese Shi'ite), the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood (Sunni), and Shi'ite groups in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain. These Shi'ite communities are generally geographically concentrated, relatively poor, historically subject to discrimination, and have a disproportionately small amount of political power.

An Islamist group can also be empowered by claiming the job of leading the community against foreign, non-Muslim forces. This was the case with those fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan as well as Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian Hamas or Islamic Jihad in fighting against Israel. Yet even if they lead a community or direct the fight against infidels, radical Islamist forces are not guaranteed victory. There are always competing—usually nationalist—forces for ethnic loyalties that can usually muster more supporters. Even Hizballah and Hamas, playing on highly popular anti-Israel themes, cannot gain hegemony, respectively, over Amal (the nationalist-oriented Lebanese Shi'ite group) or the Palestinian Authority, which is largely controlled by nationalist Fatah and others from the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The above analysis also indicates the importance and nature of radical Islamist terrorism. Terrorism is not just an insult hurled by the revolutionaries' opponents. It is also a key part of the strategy of some groups. Like those who used similar techniques in Europe a century ago, these radicals believe that bombings and assassinations will delegitimize the government or other enemies and produce a mass uprising. Terrorism also arises from the frustration of groups unable to stage revolutions and increasingly bitter at the masses' refusal to support their cause. The people thus become the enemy.

But there is another way in which terrorism is even more important. By arguing that non-Muslim adversaries have no rights and are enemies of God who should either be driven out or kept out of Muslim territory, the radicals can justify killing any member of a target group—such as Israelis, other communities as in Lebanon, or Western tourists. Such attacks are also designed to raise the revolutionaries' popularity in their own constituency, revenge popular grievances, and show the progress and effectiveness of the organizations involved.

Murdering fellow Muslims is a bigger ideological and practical problem, yet a necessary part of revolutionary armed struggle. Although often contradicted by history—the Iran-Iraq war is a good contemporary example—Muslims are not supposed to wage war on fellow Muslims. The assassination of officials who are Muslims, much less innocent bystanders, often leads to criticism of the radicals as acting improperly in Islamic terms. It brings popular support for government repression. Even suicide bombings against non-Muslims has been criticized by some distinguished clerics as contrary to Islam.

Again, though, it is important to stress that radical Islamist groups have adapted to extremely varied conditions in different countries with distinctive sets of tactics. Three broad categories can be defined, though different organizations may be represented in more than one sector or may change positions over time.

*** Revolutionaries

Revolutionary groups have carried out armed struggle in Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iraq to overturn existing governments and create a radical Islamist state. Aside from Algeria, these are all relatively small underground organizations though they have larger circles of supporters. The most repressive states—Syria and Iraq—have had the greatest success in suppressing such insurgencies, which embody grievances barred from expression, much less solution, through other means. It should again be noted that four of these six movements are also representatives of

ethnic-national communities: Shi’ite in the case of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq; Sunni in the case of Syria.

In Algeria, the full-scale revolt resulted from the military’s refusal to let a broad-based Islamist group, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), attain electoral victory. The FIS, then, is a reluctant revolutionary group and many FIS leaders would be happy to achieve a negotiated solution that would give them a share of power. More extreme groups, such as the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), reject any compromise. Ironically, the regime’s relative openness earlier may have created a situation in which more moderate Islamist forces were forced into extreme responses.

An interesting comparison can be made to the case in Egypt, where the Muslim Brotherhood is the equivalent of the FIS. The government lets the Brotherhood participate in electoral politics, hold parliamentary seats, and function as a movement. But the permissible lines are clearly set. Periodic repression and vote-rigging remind the Brotherhood that it will be crushed if it seems poised to actually seize power. The violent revolutionaries are much smaller groups that split off from the Brotherhood because they thought it too timid. The radicals also build their own campus or neighborhood groups. As in Algeria, government responses have been largely successful in containing and reducing the relatively smaller and badly divided radical forces.

*** National Liberationists

Palestinian and Lebanese groups (and those in Afghanistan as well) have had a dual purpose. While they wish to establish an Islamic state among their own people, their first priority has been fighting others. Hamas and Islamic Jihad have launched terrorist attacks on Israel while competing for popular support with the PLO-ruled Palestinian Authority (PA). The PA arrests their activists and refuses them any formal political power, but there is also a strong measure of mutual tolerance in order to prevent a civil war.

Within Lebanon, Hizballah attacked Israel and its allies in southern Lebanon until the Israeli withdrawal in May 2000. Now Hizballah is putting a higher priority on its efforts to gain power within the Shi'ite community and in the country as a whole. The non-Shi'ite communities, the Lebanese government, and Lebanon's Syrian masters totally opposed Hizballah's program for Lebanon even when they tolerated or helped its attacks against Israel. The big question for Hizballah is to what extent it will shift its tactics from armed struggle against Israel or within Lebanon and instead use electoral means to try to achieve its goals.

Thus, while the Islamist groups flourish and are allowed to service their constituencies with various institutions, they are also kept from progressing toward national rule. As long as Islamists accept these limits, the situation can continue. But a serious effort to alter the power balance would lead to civil wars more closely resembling those in the first group discussed above.

*** Reformists

In Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait, Turkey, Pakistan, and Israel, the main Islamist forces have eschewed violence and acted as social and parliamentary movements. Operating within the legal system allows them to exert influence and bring about some changes. Equally or more important, this situation allows them to build a vast social and educational apparatus of institutions which creates a community of supporters.

These movements become interest groups within society rather than standing in total opposition outside society with the principal goal of overturning it. The constituency obtains patronage and services from the party. The leadership receives various privileges, including financial benefits, power, and prestige that might be lost if it challenges the government. In turn, the tolerance and benefits that the government allows these groups gives them something to protect. Thus, such institutionalization—even if intended to provide a base for revolutionary activities—could become a restraining force.

But ultimately each movement will have to decide whether to limit itself to this role, for neither the existing governments nor the political systems—includ- ing the undemocratic electoral systems—will let the Islamists hold power. This could change in the long run, of course, as different societies develop and if Islamist movements prove their democratic, moderate credentials.

In response, the movements argue that their techniques win followers and provide a springboard for taking power in the future. By appealing to conservative practitioners of a more traditionalist Islam—who oppose or distrust the revolutionary movements—they can dramatically broaden their political base of support. It is also possible or even likely—as has happened with other social and political movements—that they themselves will be transformed into factors that ultimately reinforce rather than subvert the status quo. An ability to live an ‘Islamist’ lifestyle as an individual is, after all, an alternative to trying to transform an entire society. Moreover, there are many issues to be contested—including struggles over the distribution of the national budget—that fall far short of a struggle to seize state power.

Still, the underlying question is to define these groups’ aims. Can they construct a program of changes that would satisfy them within the context of the existing society, or do they still seek its ultimate transition into a very different kind of polity? In short, is their reformism limited only to tactics or does it also embody their goals? This process of rethinking is still going on and, in most cases, has not yet taken hold in the movements, though internal debates and struggles over this issue will probably increase in the future.

The American and French revolutions encouraged a wave of democratic revolutions throughout Europe and elsewhere. The Russian revolution inspired the formation of communist parties that struggled to imitate it for many decades.

The Chinese and Cuban revolutions launched many movements that imitated their strategies in the belief that these victories could be duplicated.

Iran’s revolution should be seen in a similar historical perspective. Islamist groups already existed independently—as did parallel movements in the cases of the other revolutions—but were galvanized and strengthened by the seizure of power by their fellows. These organizations provided a response to the failures in their countries of nationalism and other ideologies, the strains of development, shortcomings of existing regimes, pressures of Westernization, and social grievances. They will continue to develop and evolve for some decades to come.

The seizure of power anywhere by an Islamist movement—though this seems unlikely at present—would again inspire imitators. A demographic wave of young people, along with the incumbent regimes’ failures and growing socioeconomic pressures, may allow radical Islamist groups to grow in size as well as ability to challenge current rulers. Equally, the lack of real democratic systems that would let Islamists win elections could bring an eventual rejection of moderation.

More likely is a long-run trend toward moderation, producing some Islamist parties with a reformist orientation. There are even signs of such developments in Iran, where moderates and radicals struggle over the regime’s orientation. In Turkey, the Islamist party is divided into radical and moderate elements, with the latter realizing the movement can never make much progress until it persuades other Turks that it does not seek to establish an Islamist state.

Islamists could become the equivalent of Christian Democratic parties of Europe or Latin America, or of Israel’s Jewish religious parties. In other words, the party would focus on advocacy regarding specific issues and protecting the interests of its supporters or institutions, rather than seeking to transform society as a whole. Party leaders, potential coalition partners, and rivals will all ask whether an Islamist party that did gain power peacefully would also surrender it under democratic conditions.

A trend toward moderation is by no means inevitable. There are strong pressures from Islamist ideology and individual leaders or factions to maintain a hard line. Equally, the fact that employing moderate means is less likely to result in gaining state power also makes this road less attractive. Finally, the momentum of Iran’s militant faction and potential regional events is by no means exhausted. Yet the progress of Islamist movements has been far from the triumphal march into power hoped for, and predicted, by the Islamists themselves. Trends toward moderation, while still limited, are stronger than they have been in the past. Of course, the situation will vary according to each country’s political culture, situation, and regime.

Perhaps, in the long run, the historical function of Islamist organizations may not be so different from the role religion and social movements have played over the centuries in the West. Such groups formed as responses to the challenges of modernization, nation-building, and the alternative appeals of democracy and dictatorship. Indeed, Islamist movements—despite appearances and their own denials—are part of the broader history of nationalism. Moreover, they oppose what are seen as foreign imports that undermine the tradition and authenticity of their societies. True, they ostensibly stress a primary identity in religious rather than nationalist terms. But in the Middle East, religion is often the main marker of ethnicity.

Ultimately, their choices and institutional structures must be set by a determination of the strategy, tactics, type of society, and variety of political system that would best allow for the expression and preservation of that identity.

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** Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version.]

<biblio>

Abd al-Rahman, Shaykh Umar, 13, 17, 19

al-Abdallah, Shaykh Sa‘ad, 119

al-‘Abidin ‘Ali, Zayn, 3

Absent Truth, The. See al-Haqiqah al-

Gha’ibah

Abu Bakra, 195

Abu Hamza, Shaykh, 5

Abu Hassan, Muhammad, 183

Abu Nidal group, 53

Abu Zaid, Muhammad Fuad, 30

Abu Zayd, Nasr, 118

al-‘Adl wal-Ihsan (Justice and Charity movement), 74, 75, 76

al-Adwah, Khalidm, 113

Afghanistan, 4, 8, 19, 33, 197, 213

AIS (Islamic Salvation Army), 3, 80, 82, 83

Akademi, 46. See also Turkish Islamist movements, publications by

Akgonenc, Dr. Oya, 132

Akinci Yolu, 46. See also Turkish Islamist movements, publications by

Akit, 131. See also Turkish Islamist movements, publications by

Akman, Nuriye, 143

Akparti (Justice and Development Party), 135

Aksoy, Muammar, 45

Aksu, Abdulkadir, 47, 132

Akyol, Natik, 128

al-Alfi, Hassan, 19

Algeria, 3, 6, 80, 84, 161, 212

Islamist activities in, 69, 76, 79, 80—85

Algerian Hamas, 80

Algerian Muslim Brotherhood, 6. See also Social Movement for Peace

Ben ‘Ali, Zayn ‘Abidin, 3, 77, 78, 79

Alpay, Sahin, 146

Altan, Mehmet, 150

Altayli, Fatih, 52

Amal movement, 93, 96, 97, 98, 100

American embassies, attacks on, 19

Amin, Hussain Ahmad, 118

Anatolian Lions, 128. See also MUSIAD

An-Na’im, Abdallahi, 194

Annan, Kofi, 96

Ansari, Muhamad, 109

al-Aqsa mosque, 28

Arab Child’s House, 27

Arafat, Yasir, 211

Arendt, Hannah, 185, 186

Arkun, Muhammad, 118, 194

Arslan, Fathallah, 76

Asghar, Ali, 192

al-Assad, Bashar, 99

al-Assad, Hafiz, 3, 98, 99

Association of Independent Industrialists and Businessmen. See MUSIAD

Asya Finans, 146

Aujjar, Mohammed, 75

awareness. See wa’i

Ba’ath Party (Iraq), 24, 180

Ba’ath Party (Syria), 24, 180

al-Badir, Sulaiman, 115

Bin Badis, Shaykh Abd al-Hamid, 69

al-Baghdadi, Ahmad, 115—116

Bahrain, 3, 212

Barak, Ehud, 91

Barlas, Mehmet, 150

Barri, Nabih, 93

Bartholomeos, Patriarch, 144

Basesgioglu, Murat, 52

Basri, Driss, 72

Bayramoglu, Ali, 150

Bazargan, Mehdi, 194

Bedouin, 109, 183

Belhadj, ‘Ali, 80, 81, 82

Benjedid, Chedli, 80

Benjelloun, Omar, 73

Benkirane, Abdallah, 74

Bethlehem University (prev. Freres College), 30, 36

Bi-aqlam al-Shabab. See Palestinian Hamas, publications by

Bir, Cevik, 56–57

Birand, Mehmet Ali, 150

Bir Zeit University, 30, 33, 36

Boumedienne, Houari, 80

Bourghiba, Habib, 3, 77

Bosnia, 4

Bouteflika, Abd al-‘Aziz, 84

Bouyali, Mustafa, 80

Bulac, Ali, 192

Caliphate. See khilafa

Cagarici, Irfan, 46

Cakir, Rusen, 149

Candar, Cengiz, 150

Celik, Gulten, 132

Celik, Halil, 53

Ceylan, Hasan Huseyni, 53

Ceysullah, 59

Chamoun, 179

CHP (Republican People’s Party), 126, 129

Cicek, Cemil, 131

Ciller, Tansu, 130, 150

Civil society. See al-mujtama‘ al-madani

Coskun, Ali, 132

Cultural Social Society (jam‘iyyat al-

Thaqafah al-Ijtima‘iyah), 107, 108

da’wa, 2

Da’wa associations, 2

Dayton agreements (1995), 4

Demirel, Suleyman, 49, 58, 126, 127,

145, 146, 148

Democratic Forum (al-Manbar al-Dimuqrati), 112

Democratic Left Party (DLP), 51, 125, 130, 133

Democratic Party (DP), 125, 129 dhimmis, 17, 179—180. See also Islam,

Christians and Jews in

Dirani, Mustafa, 100

Djaballah, Shaykh Abdallah, 80

Donmez, Kemal, 52

DSKO. See World Shari’a Liberation

Army

Eaton, Gai, 198

Ecevit, Bulent, 51, 55, 56, 126, 127,

145, 146, 148

Egypt, 3–4, 6, 110, 160, 161, 173, 211,

215

Egyptian Jihad, 5, 29

Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 27, 36, 71, 77, 107, 210, 212, 214

Eickelman, Dale F., 145

EIK-TM. See Turkish Fighters of the

Universal Islamic War of Liberation EKC-SIM. See Universal Brotherhood

Front—Shari’a Revenge Squad Erbakan, Necmettin, 41, 46, 47, 49, 50— 51, 52–53, 56, 125, 127, 131, 135, 148, 211

Erdis, Salih Izzet (Salih Mirzabeyoglu), 51

Erdogan, Recep Tayip, 126, 131, 134,

135, 149

Esack, Farid, 193

Esmerer, Abdurrahman, 128

Ethiopia, 5

Evren, Kenan, 127

al-Faluji, Shaykh ‘Imad, 7

Faraj, Abd al-Salam, 14, 17

Neglected Obligation, The, 13

al-farida al-gha’ibah. See Neglected Obligation (Faraj), The

al-Fasi, ‘Allal, 70

Fatah, 34, 35, 53, 213

fatwa (religious legal edict), 17

Faldlallah, Muhammad Husayn, 97, 98

Fatma Gate, 96

Fazilet Party. See FP

Fellah, Tariq, 75

fiqh, 15

FIS (Islamic Salvation Front), 6—7, 47, 53, 78, 80–83, 160, 199, 214

FIT. See Tunisian Islamic Front

Fighters of the Islamic Revolution (IDAM), 42

FLN (Front de Liberation Nationale), 79, 80

Fountain, The, 145. See also Turkish Teachers’ Foundation

four schools of Islam, the. See madhabs FP (as Virtue Party, as Fazilet Party), 50, 51, 53, 57, 126, 129, 132, 134, 135, 148, 149

France, 70, 84, 92, 204

Freres College. See Bethlehem University

Front de Liberation Nationale. See FLN fundamentalism, 157–158

Gaza Strip, 23, 24, 25, 27, 37

Gemayel family, 179

al-Ghannushi, Rashid, 9, 77–80, 164,

165, 194

gharb, 69, 70

al-Ghazzali, 159

Gholizadeh, Abbas, 45

GIA (Islamic Salvation Group), 3, 18,

44, 81–84, 214

Giddens, Anthony, 181

God’s sovereignty. See hakimmiyya

Gokalp, Ziya, 151

Golan Heights, 100

Graham, Billy, 205

Great Eastern Islamic Fighters Front, The. See IBDA-C

Green, Jerrold, 167

Guessous, Muhammad, 70

Gul, Abdallah, 47, 132

Gulen, Fethullah, 53, 142–144, 146,

149, 152, 205

conception of Turkish Islam, 141, 143144

opposition to, 147–150

political influence of, 145

support to, 144–145, 150

See also Gulen movement

Gulen movement, 144–146, 150–152.

See also Journalists’ and Writers’ Foundation; Turkish Teachers’ Foundation; Gulen, Fethullah

Gurses, Emin, 54

HADEP (People’s Democracy Party), 129–130

hadith, 15

al-Hajji, Yusef, 106

hakimmiyya (God’s sovereignty), 12

Haktanir, Korkmaz, 55

Hama, massacre, 3

Hamas. See Palestinian Hamas

al-Haqiqah al-Gha’ibah (The Absent

Truth), 36

al-Harakah al-Islamiyyah al-Tulabiyyah (The Islamic Student Movement), 34

Harakat al-Islah wal-Tajdid (Movement for Reform and Renewal), 74

Harakat al-Tawhid wal-Islah (Movement for Unification and Reform), 74

Harb, Muhammad, 29

al-Haroun, Dr. Musaid, 114

King Hassan II, 71, 74

policies of, 72–73

Hebrew University, 37

Hebron University, 29

Hermassi, Abd al-Baki, 70

High Education Council. See YOK hijra
(Muhammad’s original flight from

Mecca to Medina), 13, 16

Hizballah, 7, 91, 93–95, 97, 99, 101, 210, 212

Iranian support to, 92, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 101

opposition to, 96–97, 98, 99

struggle against Israel, 92, 93, 95–96, 99–101, 214

Syrian support to, 92, 94, 95, 98, 99, 101

use of violence by, 92, 94

Hizb al-Tahrir al-Islami. See Islamic

Liberation Party

Huntington, Samuel P., 78, 166, 203

al-Husayni, 27

Hussein, Saddam, 3, 210

IBDA-C (The Great Eastern Islamic

Fighters Front), 44, 52, 53, 59, 133

publications by, 46. See also Turkish

Islamist movements, publications by use of violence by, 45, 46, 51, 52

Ibn Anas, Imam Malik, 195

Ibn Hanbal, 159

Ibn Qatada, Shaykh, 5

Ibn Taymiyya, 15, 19, 159

Ibrahim, Anwar, 196

al-Ibrahim, Hassan, 108

ICCB (Union of Islamic Associations

and Societies), 59

ICM. See Islamic Constitutional Move

ment

IDAM. See Fighters of the Islamic Revolution

IKO. See Turkish Islamic Liberation

Army

IKP-C. See Islamic Liberation Party

Front

Ilicak, Nazli, 132, 133

IMO. See Turkish Islamic Fighters Army

Imset, Ismet, 42, 43, 47

INA. See Islamic National Alliance

Independent Islamists, The. See al-

Islamiyyun al-Mustaqillun

Intifada, 27, 32, 35, 36, 101

IPA. See Islamic Popular Alliance

Iran, 8, 35, 44, 54, 55, 143, 158, 160, 161, 163, 167, 204

Islamic Revolution in, 29, 34, 42, 43, 71, 92, 93, 107, 155, 157, 159, 163, 197, 207

and relations with Turkey, 46—48, 50, 55

support to Hizballah by, 92, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 101

support to terrorism by, 44, 47–48, 50, 57

and war with Iraq, 44, 213

Iraq, 179,

and war with Iran, 44, 213

and war with Kuwait, 110, 210, 213

Islam, 155, 161, 180, 208–209

Christians and Jews in, 17, 179–180.

See also dhimmis

civil society in, 157, 163

and democracy, 155, 157, 160, 162,

164, 166, 167

doctrine of, 155, 158, 162

See also ‘ulama; Shari’a

Islamic Action, 45, 46

Islamic Action Front. See Jordanian

Muslim Brotherhood

Islamic Constitutional Movement (ICM),

111, 113, 115, 117

Islamic Group, The (al-Jama’ah al-

Islamiyyah), 34

Islamic information centers, 26

Islamic Jihad Squadrons (Saraya al-Jihad al-Islami), 35

Islamic Jihad Squadrons Jerusalem/the temple (Saraya al-Jihad al-Islami Bait al-Maqdes), 35

Islamic Liberation Party (Hizb al-Tahrir

al-Islami), 24, 42

Islamic Liberation Party Front (IKP-C), 42

Islamic Movement (Islami Hareket), The,

42, 43, 45, 52, 59–60

Islamic National Alliance (INA), 111

Islamic People’s Command, 131

Islamic Popular Alliance (IPA), 111

Islamic Resistance (Islami Direnis). See

Islamic Movement (Islami Hareket)

Islamic Salvation Army. See AIS

Islamic Salvation Front. See FIS

Islamic Salvation Group. See GIA

Islamic Social Reform Society (al-Islah al-

Ijtima‘i), 106, 107, 108, 111

Islamic Student Movement, The. See al-

Harakah al-Islamiyyah al-Tulabiyyah

Islamic University of Gaza, 25, 28, 31,

33, 34, 35, 36

Islamist movements, 1–4, 6, 8, 9, 12,

41, 76, 78, 94, 100, 160, 207, 208, 211–217

activities of, 2, 4, 5, 6, 28, 75, 142

ideology of, 4, 44, 156, 157, 160, 166

and Israel, 28, 33, 34, 36, 49, 53,

56–57, 92, 93, 95–96, 99–101, 213–215

opposition to, 3, 6

publications by, 27–29, 43, 46

use of violence by, 3, 18, 45, 49, 213

Islamist Welfare Party. See RP

al-Islamiyyun al-Mustaqillun (The Inde

pendent Islamists), 34

al-Israa’ wal-Mi’raj, 28

Israel, 4, 12, 24, 25, 37, 163, 177, 212

Hizballah’s struggle against, 92, 93, 95–96, 99–101, 214

and Islamist movements, 28, 33, 34, 36, 49, 53, 56–57, 92, 93, 95–96, 99–101, 213–215

relations with Lebanon, 29, 91, 92, 95, 96, 98, 101, 214

relations with Syria, 95, 99, 100, 101

relations with Turkey, 49, 53, 56–57

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 100, 161

itjihad (legal reinterpretation), 8, 15

‘Iz al-Din Ibrahim, Dr. See al-Shqaqi, Dr. Fathi

‘Iz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, 34

jahiliyya (pagan ignorance), 12, 15

Jalal al-‘Azm, Sadiq, 205

al-Jama’ah al-Islamiyyah (Palestinian). See Islamic Group, The

al-Jama’at al-Islamiyya (Radical Islamic

societies), 7, 11, 12, 19, 160

jama’at. See al-Jama’at al-Islamiyya

Jamaat-i Islami, 159

Jama’at al-Jihad or al-Jihad (Society of

Struggle), 12, 14–16

use of violence by, 13, 17–19

Japanese Red Army, 53

al-Jaza’ira, 83, 205

Jerusalem, 23, 25

jihad, 12, 17, 33

Jordan, 3, 4, 173, 177, 211, 212, 215

Jordanian Communist Party, 24

Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, (Islamic

Action Front), 7, 27, 32, 210

Journalists’ and Writers’ Foundation, 145, 150. See also Gulen movement

JP (Justice Party), 126–127, 129

Jumblatt family, 179

Justice Party. See JP

Justice and Charity movement. See al-

‘Adl wal-Ihsan

Justice and Development Party. See Akparti

Kabir, Humayun, 192

Kabir, Rabah, 82

Kadiris, 59

Kamhi, Jak, 45

Karaday, Ismail Hakk, 148

Karamanoglu, Altan, 53

Karimov, Islam, 53

Kazan, Sevket, 131

Khamene’i, Ayatollah Ali, 44, 53, 57,

98, 158

kharijis, 19

Khatami, Muhammad, 57, 133, 158,

198, 207

Khatib, Abd al-Karim, 74

khilafa (Caliphate), 14, 15, 19, 35

Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah, 34, 43,

44, 80, 84, 97, 158, 208

al-Khorafi, Jassem, 119

Kilic, Altemur, 150

al-Kindari, Jamal, 114

Kirca, Ali, 46

Kislali, Ahmet Taner, 51, 52

al-Kitab wal Quran (Shahrur), 118, 205

Kubba, Laith, 167

Kutlar, Onat, 45, 46

Kurdistan Workers’ Party. See PKK

Kurds, 129, 130, 132, 133

Kutan, Recai, 131, 133, 149

Kuwait, 3, 105, 106, 109, 110, 118,

120, 121, 160, 164, 215

application of Shari’a in, 111–112,

114, 117, 119

and conflict with Iraq, 110, 210 relations with the United States, 110, 116

Kuwait University, 107, 109, 113–114, 120

Kuwaiti Islamic movements, 109, 111

political of activities of, 107–108,

112–115

revival of, 105, 107, 117

Kuwaiti Muslim Brotherhood, 107, 108, 111, 117

bin Ladin, Osama, 19

Lapidot, Anat, 42

League of the Islamic Future. See Rabitat al-Mustaqbal al-Islami

Lebanese American University, 176

Lebanese University, 182

Lebanese Hizballah, 53

Lebanon, 4, 92, 106, 160, 173, 177,

179, 182

Maronite-Sunni community in, 93, 94, 98, 181

and relations with Israel, 29, 91, 92,

95, 96, 98, 101, 214

Shi’ite community in, 91–93, 94, 95

Western culture and, 176, 177

legal reinterpretation. See itjihad

Lerner, Daniel, 203

Libya, 3

Madani, Dr. ‘Abbasi, 80, 81, 82, 199

madhabs (the four schools of Islam), 15

al-Madhkur, Khalid, 117

Madjid, Nurcholish, 195–196

Mahcupyan, Etyen, 150

mahdi, 11, 18

Mahmassani, Subhi, 192

majlis al-shura, 13

Makovsky, Alan, 56, 58

Malatya (Islamic Youth), 61, 133

Mandela, Nelson, 176

al-Manbar al-Dimuqrati. See Democratic

Forum

March 1991, revolt of, 3

Markaba, 100

Mashriq, 69, 70

Mawdudi, Abul A’la, 159

Mawdudi, Mawlana, 77

Mernissi, Fatima, 70–71, 194–195

Merzaq, Madani, 82, 83

MGK. See NSC

MHP. See Nationalist Movement Party

MIA (Mouvement Islamique Arme), 81

Milliyet, 55

Mirzabeyoglu, Salih. See Erdis, Salih Izzet

MIT. See Turkish National Intelligence Organization.

Morocco, 3, 4, 6, 69, 70, 75, 211, 215

Islamist activities in, 73, 75, 76

Motherland Party, 129

Mouvement Islamique Arme. See MIA

Mouvement Populaire Democratique et Constitutionnel. See MPDC

Movement for Reform and Renewal. See

Harakat al-Islah wal-Tajdid

Movement for Unification and Reform.

See Harakat al-Tawhid wal-Islah

MPDC (Mouvement Populaire Democratique et Constitutionnel), 74

Mu’awad, Rene, 94

Mubarak, Hosni, 3, 5, 47

mudawwana (Moroccan personal status law), 72, 76

mufassala kamila (total separation), 16

King Muhammad VI, 71, 72, 73, 75

Muhammad’s original flight from Mecca to Medina. See hijra

mujaddid, 11

mujahidin, 19

al-Mujtama, 117

al-mujtama‘ al-madani (civil society), 78, 157, 163, 165

al-Mukhtar al-Islami. See Islamist movements, publications by

Mumcu, Ugur, 45, 47, 48, 49

al-Muntalaq, 30, 31. See also Palestinian Islamic groups, publications by

musalaha, 174, 183–186. See also Shari’a

MUSIAD (Association of Independent

Industrialists and Businessmen), 128

Muslim Youth Association, 29

Mustafa, Shukri, 13

al-Mutawa, Abdallah, 111, 118

al-Mutayri, Mufaraj Nahar, 113 al-Muti, Abd al-Karim, 74, 75 Muzzaffar, Chandra, 192, 194

Mzali, Muhammad, 78

Nader, Laura, 174–175

al-Nahda movement, 7, 9, 77, 80, 164

Nahnah, Shaykh Mahfoud, 6, 80

al-Najah university, 30, 32, 34, 36

Nakshibendis, 59, 126

Naksibendi, Bahaeddin, 146

NAP (National Action Party), 126—127

Nasrallah, Hasan, 94, 96, 100, 101

Nasser, 11

National Action Party. See NAP

National Order Party. See NOP

National Palestinian Council, 29

National Salvation Party. See NSP

National Union of Kuwaiti Students, 119

National View, 53

National Youth Foundation, 59

Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), 43, 51, 129

Neglected Obligation, The (Faraj), 13

Neo-Destour party, 9

New Jihad Group, The (Vanguards of the Conquest), 18

al-Nidaa. See Palestinian Hamas, publications by

NOP (National Order Party), 125—126

November 17 Organization, 53

NSC (National Security Council), 44, 49, 50, 58, 128, 131, 134, 135, 147

NSP (National Salvation Party), 41, 126–127, 129

al-Nur. See Palestinian Islamic Jihad, publications by

al-Nur al-Ilahi. See Palestinian Islamic

Jihad, publications by

al-Nur al-Rabbani. See Palestinian Islamic

Jihad, publications by

Nur movement, 141, 142, 161, 205

Nurcu movement. See Nur movement

Nurcus, 126

Nursi, Said, 141, 142, 143, 162

Risale-i-Nur, 142

Objektif, 43, 46. See also Turkish Islamist movements, publications by

Ocalan, Abdullah, 53, 54, 55, 58, 133

Ocalan, Osman, 55

Oman, 164, 203

One Minute of Darkness for Enlightenment protest, 131. See also Turkey, political discontent in

Orientalists, 155

Ottoman Empire, 142, 180

Ozal, Turgut, 46, 47, 128, 129, 143

Ozdag, Umit, 54

Ozdalga, Elisabeth, 146

Ozkaragoz, Mehmet, 144

Ozdemir, Hasan, 52

Ozkok, Ertugrul, 51

Ozturk, Prof. Yasar Nuri, 52

pagan ignorance. See jahiliyya

Pakistan, 3, 5, 215

Paladin Howitzer crisis, 116

Palestine, 33, 36

Palestinian Authority, 36, 37, 214

Palestinian Communist Party, 29, 31 Palestinian Hamas (Palestinian Muslim

Brotherhood), 4, 7, 23, 24, 27, 28, 33, 35–36, 47, 160, 210, 213 and activities in universities, 29–31 publications by, 29, 32 social activities of, 26–28 use of violence by, 26

Palestinian Islamic groups, 23, 27, 28,

30, 32, 34

activities of, 28, 29, 33

publications by, 30, 31, See also al-

Muntalaq; al-Nidaa

Palestinian Islamic Jihad 23, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 44, 101, 210, 213, 214 publications by, 29, 34, 35 use of violence by, 35

Palestinian Liberation Organization. See PLO Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood. See

Palestinian Hamas

Palestinian society, 24–26, 36, 37 Pan-Arabism, 1, 70

Parti de la Justice et du Developpement.

See PJD

Party of the Blissfulness. See Saadet Party People’s Democracy Party. See HADEP

People’s Liberation Army of Kurdistan, 53 PJD (Parti de la Justice et du Developpement), 74

PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party), 42, 46, 47–49, 50, 55, 56

use of violence by, 52, 53

PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organiza

tion), 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 36, 213

PMMC Report (Prime Minister’s Monitoring Council), 58

Protestant Ethics of Capitalism, The

(Weber) 151–152

Qadhafi, Muammar, 3, 131

al-Qaradawi, Shaykh Yusuf, 5, 205

al-Qasim, Na’im, 94, 100

Qutb, Sayyid, 11–12, 34, 77, 82, 159

Rabitat al-Mustaqbal al-Islami (League of the Islamic Future), 74

Ra‘d, Muhammad, 101

Radical Islamic movements. See Islamist movements.

Radical Islamic societies. See al-Jama’at al-Islamiyya

Rahman, Fazlur, 159

Rahmet Group, 54

Rassemblement National Democratique. See RND

Redjam, Abd al-Razak, 199

Refah Party, 148, 149

Religious legal edict. See fatwa

Renan, Ernest, 199

Republican People’s Party. See CHP

Resalat, 56

Revivalist. See salafi

al-Risalah. See Palestinian Hamas, publications by

Risale-i-Nur (Nursi), 142

RND (Rassemblement National

Democratique), 82

Rosefsky Wickham, Carrie, 163

RP (Islamist Welfare Party), 41, 47, 48

49, 50, 53, 57, 126, 127, 130, 131,

132, 211

al-Rube‘i, Ahmad, 114

Saadet Party (Party of the Blissfulness),

134

al-Sa‘adoun, Ahmad, 116

Sabah, 106

al-Sabah, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, 119

al-Sabah, Shaykh Sa‘ud Nasser, 116

Sadat, 12, 13, 29

al-Sadiq al-Nayhum, 118

al-Sadr, Musa, 93, 97

Sa’id, Muhammad, 199

al-Salaf organization, 107, 108, 111

salafi, 14, 24, 69, 71, 83

Salam family, 179

Salvation from Hell group, 18

Santillana, 160

Saraya al-Jihad al-Islami. See Islamic Jihad Squadrons

Saraya al-Jihad al-Islami Bait al-Maqdes. See Islamic Jihad Squadrons Jerusa- lem/the temple

Saudi Arabia, 12, 24, 42, 71, 111, 143, 160, 164, 206, 211

Savasir, Iskender, 150

Sawt al-Haqq Wal-Quwah Wal-Hurriyah. See Palestinian Hamas, publications by

Sayari, Sabri, 42

September 1980 military coup, 41, 43, 127

September 11, 2001, attacks of, 19, 121

Sezer, Ahmet Necdet, 149

Shaba’a Farms, 100, 101

Shabiba (lijan al-shabibah lil-‘amal al- ijtima’i, youth committees for social work), 31

al-Shabiba al-Islamiyya, 74, 75

al-Shafi’i, 159

Shafiq, Munir, 8

Shahrur, Muhammad, 118, 194, 205

Al-Kitab wal Quran, 118, 205 al-Shqaqi, Dr. Fathi (pseud. Dr. ‘Iz al-

Din Ibrahim), 29, 44

Shari’a (Islamic law), 5, 14, 15, 19–20, 80, 109, 111, 142, 143, 158, 159, 161, 192, 199, 200. See also Islam; sulh ritual; musalaha

al-Shatti, Dr. Isma‘il, 117

al-Shawayyib, Fahid Abd al-Rahman, 111 al-Shihab. See Palestinian Hamas, publications by

Shu‘ayb, ‘Alya, 115

shura, 8, 77, 159

Siddiqui, Kalim, 43

Sidky, ‘Atef, 19

Sizinti, 145. See also Turkish Teachers’

Foundation

SLA (South Lebanese Army), 96

SMC (Supreme Military Council), 49

Social Movement for Peace, 6

Society of Muslims. See Takfir wal-Hijra

Society of the Rebirth of Islamic Tradition, 111

Society of Struggle. See al-Jama’at al-

Jihad

El-Sohl, 179

Soroush, Abdul Karim, 164, 165, 193,

197

South Lebanese Army. See SLA

Soviet Union, 2, 42

Sudan, 2, 8, 160, 161, 167

Suez Canal, 3

Sufi tradition, 141—142, 152

sulh ritual, 174, 183—186. See also

Shari’a

Sunna, 14

Syria, 3, 33, 58, 110, 160, 177, 179,

211

relations with Israel, 95, 99, 100, 101

support to Hizballah by, 92, 94, 95,

98, 99, 101

Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, 53, 210, 212

Tabligh, 74

Ta’if Agreement, 93, 94, 98

Tajammu al’Islah party, 7

takfir (unbelief), 12, 13

Takfir wal-Hijra or al-Takfir (Society of

Muslims), 13, 15, 17–18

ideology of, 12, 14–16, 19

recruitment by, 13–14,

use of violence by, 18, 19

Talbi, Muhammad, 192, 193

Taleqani, Ayatollah, 158, 162

Taliban, 160

talqin, 5

al-Tamimi, Shaykh As’ad, 35

taqnin al-Shari’a, 7

Taraf, 46. See also IBDA-C, publications by; Turkish Islamist movements,

publications by

tawaghit (idols), 15

Tehvid, 43, 46. See also publications by Turkish Islamist movements

Tekdal, Ahmet, 53

Ten-member consultation committee. See majlis al-shura

Territories, the. See Gaza Strip; West Bank

THKP-C. See Turkish People’s Liberation

Party Front

Tibi, Bassam, 180

TIKB. See Turkish Islamic Liberation

Union

TIK-C. See Turkish Islamic Liberation Front

Total separation. See mufassala kamila

Tozy, Mohamed, 74

True Path Party, 129, 130

TSIK. See Turkish Shari’a Revenge

Commandos

al-Tufayli, Shaykh Subhi, 97, 98

Tunc, Abd al-‘Aziz, 55

Tunisia, 3, 6, 69, 70, 74, 76–77, 79

Tunisian Islamic Front (FIT), 7

al-Turabi, Hasan, 8, 71, 80, 162

Turkes, Alpaslan, 126, 127

Turkey, 3, 7, 41, 47, 51–52, 125–127,

163, 204, 212, 215

conflict between Sunnis and Alevis in,

127, 129 130, 144

political discontent in, 127, 130, 131. See also One Minute of Darkness for Enlightenment protest

and relations with Iran, 46–48, 50, 55

and relations with Israel, 49, 53, 56

57

socioeconomic situation in, 125, 127, 128, 130, 133, 134

Turkish Businessmen’s and Industrialists’ Association. See TUSIAD

Turkish Fighters of the Universal Islamic War of Liberation (EIK-TM), 42

Turkish Hizballah, 42, 43, 44, 47, 52,

54, 59, 60, 133

use of violence by, 45–46, 51, 53

Turkish Islamic Fighters Army (IMO),

42

Turkish Islamic Jihad, 42, 44, 45 Turkish Islamic Liberation Army (IKO), 42

Turkish Islamic Liberation Front (TIK-C), 42

Turkish Islamist movements, 41, 42, 48, 50, 125, 126, 129, 132, 134 ideology of, 44, 127—128 influence of Iran on, 133—134 publications by, 43, 46, 131 use of violence by, 45, 49 See also CHP (Republican People’s

Party); Democratic Left Part (DLP); Democratic Party (DP); Fighters of the Islamic Revolution (IDAM); FP (Fazilet Party); IBDA-C (The Great Eastern Islamic Fighters Front);

ICCB (Union of Islamic Associations and Societies); Islamic Action; Islamic Liberation Party; The Islamic Movement; Nationalist Movement Party (MHP); NOP (National Order Party); NSP (National Salvation Party), PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party); RP (Islamist Welfare Party); Turkish Fighters of the Universal Islamic War of Liberation (EIK-TM); Turkish Hizballah;

Turkish Islamic Fighters Army (IMO); Turkish Islamic Liberation Army (IKO); Turkish Islamic Liberation Front (TIK-C); Turkish Islamic Liberation Union

(TIKB); Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT); Turkish People’s Liberation Party Front (THKP-C); Turkish Shari’a Revenge Commandos (TSIK); Universal Brotherhood Front—Shari’a Revenge Squad (EKC-SIM); World Shari’a Liberation Army (DSKO)

Turkish Islamic Liberation Union (TIKB), 42

Turkish-Islamic Synthesis, 41—42, 46, 49, 57

Turkish National Intelligence Organization (MIT), 42

Turkish People’s Liberation Party Front (THKP-C), 59

Turkish Shari’a Revenge Commandos (TSIK), 42

Turkish Teachers’ Foundation, 145. See also Gulen movement; Fountain, the; Sizinti; Yeni Umit

TUSIAD (Turkish Businessmen’s and

Industrialists’ Association), 128

‘Ubayd, Abd al-Karim, 100

‘ulama, 155, 156, 159, 162, 166

role in Islam of, 157—158

See also Islam

umma, 5, 14, 71, 159

unbelief. See takfir

Union of Islamic Associations and Societies. See ICCB

Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP), 72, 74

United Arab Emirates, 110

United States, 84, 92, 173—176

relations with Kuwait, 110, 116

Universal Brotherhood Front—Shari’a

Revenge Squad (EKC-SIM), 42

Universite Saint-Joseph, 182

UN Resolution 425, 100

USFP. See Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires

al-’Uthman, Layla, 116

Vahiduddin, Syed, 193

Vanguards of the Conquest. See New

Jihad Group, The

Velioglu, Huseyni, 55

Virtue Party. See FP

Voice of Truth, Power and Freedom (Sawt al- Haqq Wal-Quwah Wal-Hurriyah). See Palestinian Hamas, publications by

Wadi al-Anjil, 3

Wadud-Muhsin, Amina, 194

Wahabi, 24

Wahid, Abdurrahman, 193

wa’i (awareness), 28

Waqf, 23, 24, 27

Wasat party, 7, 9

Wendell Holmes, Oliver, 195

West Bank, 23, 24, 25, 27, 36, 37

Western conflict-resolution model of,

173–174, 175, 182

Wilson, Woodrow, 196

World Trade Center, first bombing of, 19

World Shari’a Liberation Army (DSKO), 42

Wright, Robin, 158

Yalcin, Hasan, 53

Yarar, Erol, 128

Yasin, Shaykh Abd al-Salam, 74, 75, 76

al-Yasin, Shaykh Jasim Muhalhal, 111

Yasin, Nadia, 76

Yassin, Shaykh Ahmad, 30

Yazdi, Ibrahim, 158, 161

Yemen, 3, 4, 7

Yeni Safak, 131. See also Turkish Islamist movements, publications by

Yeni Umit, 145. See also Turkish Teachers' Foundation

Yeryuzu, 43, 46. See also Turkish Islamist movements, publications by

Yesevi, Ahmed, 146

Yildiz (Islamic Youth), 60

Yilmaz, Sevki, 53

YOK (High Education Council), 147

Youssoufi, Abd al-Rahmane, 72, 73, 75

Youth committees for social work (lijan al-shabibah lil-'amal al-ijtima'i). See Shabiba

Yuksel, Nuh Mete, 53

al-Zammur, ‘Abbud, 18

al-Zamzami, Fqih, 74

Zartman, I. W., 71

al-Zawahiri, Dr. Ayman, 18

Zeituni, Jamal, 83

Zeroual, Liamine, 82, 84

Ziyad, Abd al-Ilah, 75

Zoubri, ‘Antar, 83

Zubaidi, Sami, 48
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*** Contents

Figures

Introduction

George N. Atiyeh

1. From the Manuscript Age to the Age of Printed Books

Muhsin Mahdi

2. The Koranic Text: From Revelation to Compilation 17

Jacques Berque

3. “Of Making Many Books There Is No End”: The Classical Muslim View 33

Franz Rosenthal

4. Oral Transmission and the Book in Islamic Education 57

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

5. The Book of Life-Metaphors Connected with the Book in Islamic Literatures 71

Annemarie Schimmel

6. Biographical Dictionaries: Inner Structure and Cultural Significance 93

Wadād al-Qāḍī

7. The Book in the Grammatical Tradition: Development in Content and Methods 123

Ramzi Baalbaki

8. Women’s Roles in the Art of Arabic Calligraphy 141

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid

9. Some Illustrations in Islamic Scientific Manuscripts and Their Secrets 149

David A. King

10. A Royal Manuscript and Its Transformation: The Life History of a Book

Priscilla p. Soucek and Filiz Çağman

11. Faris Al-Shidyaq and the Transition from Scribal to Print Culture in the Middle East

Geoffrey Roper

12. The Book in the Modern Arab World: The Cases of Lebanon and Egypt

George N. Atiyeh

13. Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies

Dale F. Eickelman

14. The Book in the Islamic World: A Selective Bibliography

Michael W. Albin

Appendix: Ottoman Imperial Documents Relating to the History of Books and Printing

Notes on Contributors

Index

*** Figures

1.1 A Koran printed in Hamburg, Germany in 1694 by Officina Schultzio-Schilleriana.

1.2 The “Opening” of the first Koran printed in Europe (Venice, ca. 1537) by Alessandro Paganino.

1.3 Title page of Medici edition (Rome, 1593).

2.1 Sample pages of the Bach Mamluk Hajj Zuhayr Koran.

2.2 Sample pages of the Bach Mamluk Hajj Zuhayr Koran.

9.1 Numerous mechanical devices are illustrated and described in this eleventh-century Andalusian treatise, discovered less than 20 years ago.

9.2 A geometrical diagram accompanying the solution of a problem in spherical astronomy.

9.3 An illustration of a non-Ptolemaic planetary model from a treatise of the thirteenth-century Maragha school.

9.4 The astronomers of the Istanbul Observatory with some of their instruments. This miniature is a veritable gold-mine of information which has yet to be fully exploited.

9.5 Non-standard astrolabes illustrated in the treatise on astronomical instruments by al-Marrakushi (Cairo, ca. 1280). The text is based on al-Bîrünî (Central Asia, ca. 1025), who abridged the discussion of them by al-Sijzi (E. Iran, ca. 1000).

9.6 The back of the astrolabe of the Yemeni Sultan al-Ashraf, dated 690/1291. This is the only known Islamic astrolabe on which the back is devoted to astrological information and also one of the few on which the sun, moon, and five planets are indicated by their symbols. The very same pecularities are featured in an illustration found in al-Ashrafs treatise on astrolabe construction—see figure 9.7.

9.7 One of numerous illustrations in al-Ashrafs treatise on astrolabe construction. If any proof were needed that the New York astrolabe was indeed due to al-Ashraf...but none is. The treatise also deals with sundial construction (no medieval sundials are known from the Yemen) and contains the earliest known description of a magnetic compass in any astronomical text.

9.8 The universal astrolabe of Ibn al-Sarraj (Aleppo, 1328.29), the most sophisticated astrolabe ever made.

9.9 An illustration of the rete of a universal astrolabe in Ibn al-Sarraj’s treatise on astronomical instruments.

9.10 On the left, the Ka’bah is depicted—appropriately inclined to the meridian—on a crude cartographic grid from which one can determine the qiblah very approximately by joining one’s city to the Ka’bah (here Bursa is shown connected to the Ka’bah [via Medina]). On the right is a diagram of sacred geography, showing various areas around the Ka’bah and indicating the astronomical horizon phenomena which define their qiblahs.

9.11 A qiblah-indicator from Isfahan, ca. 1710, unique of its genre. The qiblahs and distances from Mecca of 150 localities marked on the cartographic grid—which can be read from the circumferential scale when the diametral rule, centered at Mecca, is laid on the marker for the locality in question—are given accurately for all practical purposes.

9.12 An eleven-sector scheme of sacred geography from a manuscript of al-Qazwmfs Athar al-bilad (Iraq and Syria, ca. 1250). The information on the qiblah in each sector has been suppressed. Also one of the sectors in the original scheme has been omitted by mistake.

9.13 An eight-division scheme of sacred geography from a manuscript of the treatise on cosrnogrphy by Pseudo-Ibn an-Wardi (Aleppo, ca. 1420). There are several different traditions of sacred geography in the numerous manuscripts of his treatise; the illustration in the published text shows two of these but are hopelessly corrupt.

9.14 Two different twelve-sector schemes of sacred geography with associated astronomical horizon phenomena for finding the qiblah, as found in a manuscript of a thirteenth-century Yemeni treatise on folk astronomy.

9.15 An Ottoman scheme of sacred geography with 72 divisions of the world around the Ka’bah, suitable for marking on a horizontal qiblah- indicator—see figure 9.17.

9.16 An Ottoman sundial cum qiblah-indicator on which a scheme of sacred geography has been included on the circular base.

9.17 The imposing ventilator on the Musafirkhane in Cairo, one of the few surviving examples. In medieval times, most buildings in Cairo were fitted with such ventilators, all astronomically oriented.

9.18 A diagram showing the orientation of ventilators in medieval Cairo, found in the treatise on astronomical instruments of Ibn al-Sarraj (Aleppo, ca. 1325).

9.19 The different qiblahs accepted in medieval Cairo. In the case of the southerly qiblahs, any direction between the rising and setting of Canopus would have been considered acceptable.

9.20 On the left is a ground-plan of the Ka’bah (the rectangular shape is here exaggerated) and on the right a diagram which associated the edifice —incorrectly oriented—with the cardinal directions and their intermediaries,the winds, and the qiblahs of various localities.

9.21 The basic orientation of the Ka’bah and the directions of the four “cardinal” winds as recorded in various medieval texts. Actually, the minor axis is aligned with the most southerly setting point of the moon.

9.22 The basic information on the Ka’bah contained in figure 9.20 (r.h.s.). The orientation of the Ka’bah has been “corrected”—in fact (see figure 9.10 (l.h.s.) and figure 9.21), its major axis is at about 30ȯ E. of s.

9.23 A diagram showing 28 traditional divisions of the world, from a manuscript of the geographical treatise of Abu al-Fida’ (Hama, ca. 1320) which never made it into the published text.

10.1 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 775b, Colophon ofNizamf Khamsah.

10.2 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 484b, Colophon of Firdawsl Snâh-nâmah.

10.3 Turk ve Islam Eserleri Müzesi, T. 1950 fol. 464b, Colophon of Khusraw DihlavL ‘Alnah-i Iskandan.

10.4 Topkapi Sarayi Mzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 1510, fol. 7a, “Colophon Signed by Warqah ibn ‘Umar Samarqandi”.

10.5 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 498a, “Firman in the Name of Husayn Bayqara”.

10.6 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. la. Dedication medallion in the name of Husayn Bayqara.

10.7 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 4994, Dedication medallion in the name of Shah Rukh.

10.8 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 6820, “In Praise of Spring.”

10.9 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 13b, “Dahhak Enthroned.”

10.10 Topkapi Sarayi Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 5O2b, “In Praise of His Patron: A Prince Enthroned.”

11.1 The back page of al-Shidyaq’s newspaper, al-Jawa’ib, no. 1077 Istanbul, 19 Ramadan 1298/25 August 1880. The right-hand column gives a price list of al-Jawa’ib Press books available from the newspaper offices, starting with al-Shidyaq’s own works, including the original Paris edition of his alSaq’ala al-saq—“of alien appearance” (‘ala shakl gharib). On the left are other Arabic and Turkish books which can be supplied, including some from “Syrian,” that is, Lebanese, presses, followed by a list of those available from the Egyptian agent of al-Jawa’ib.

11.2 Two pages from al-Shidyaq’s al-Lafiffi kull ma’nâ tarif, Malta, 1839, showing his use of punctuation marks: dash, comma, question mark, and colon. The typeface, which has been admired for its beauty, was specially cut and cast in Malta, almost certainly to his designs. The only incongruous feature is the use of Western numerals for the page signature.

11.3 A-B (together). Autographed manuscript, dated 1850, of an appendix on qalb and ibdal in an early draft of al-Shidyâû’s Kitab al-Jâsüs ’ala al-aâmüs. The text differs from his later published work on the subject (Sirr al-layal h al-qalb wa-al-ibdâlı \ stanM, 1284/1868).

13.1 Statistics on secondary education in Egypt, Morocco, and Oman.

*** Abbreviations

ALECSO = Arab League Educational Cultural Scientific Organization

BRISMES = British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

CMS = Chruch Missionary Society

ENAL = Enterprise Nationale du Livre (Algeria)

GEBO = General Egyptian Book Organization

IBLA = Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes (Tunis)

MELA = Middle East Librarians Association

IRCICA = Research Centre for Islamic History Art and Culture (Istanbul)

SI = Studia Islamica

TKD = Türk Kütüphaneci Derenğı

*** [Epigraph]

Encouraging the study of books in society is one of the purposes of the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, which exists ε ‘to heighten public interest in the role of books and printing in the diffusion of knowledge.” Drawing on the rich resources of the Library of Congress, the conference on which this volume is based brought scholars, librarians, diplomats, and other public officials together to examine the Islamic book and its influence. An exhibition of Islamic books and printed materials prepared by the Library’s Interpretive Programs Office enhanced conference discussions and informed the general public about the role of the book in Islamic civiliiation. The conference and exhibition demonstrated the special significance of the Library of Congress as a center for the study of the history of the book and the printed word.

The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress was established by law in 71977 to stimulate public interest in books, reading, and libraries and to encourage the study of books. Its projects and publications are supported primarily by contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations. The Near East Section and the Center for the Book are pleased to present this volume as a contribution to the study of the history of the book.

John 7 Cole

Director

The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress

** Introduction

A book is obviously not simply a physical thing. It is a living entity. People’s lives are definitely influenced by this old and basic vehicle of communication. Our planet’s civilizations and cultures, one may safely state, did not begin to flourish and expand until the book was invented. Books have become so general and extensive that we need not emphasize what is manifestly plain.

In the West, the study of the book as a vehicle of culture has been common and fruitful, but is not so in the world of Islam. There, the book, so much esteemed and cherished, has not been the subject of many serious studies as an entity and as a vehicle of cultural development. Aware of the need for further studies on the subject, the Library of Congress, which holds one of the largest collections in the world of books and other materials from the Islamic countries, convened an international conference on 8–9 November 1990, and mounted an exhibit in order to discuss and display the role of the book in the development of civilization in the Islamic world. It thus provided an opportunity for a number of distinguished scholars to examine and reflect upon this very important aspect of Islamic civilization, and it is hoped that this would open the doors for further studies. All the papers in this volume, except for my own, were read and discussed, and sometimes debated, by the scholars who wrote them and the scholarly public who attended the conference.

The study of “the book” as an entity is complex and multifaceted. Any such study embraces the origins, production, content, use, and role of books in culture, education, and society in general. The production of books involves materials, formats, script, typography, and illustration, among other things. As an instrument of communication, the book in its many forms has been and still is the greatest factor in the growth, development, and preservation of culture, inasmuch as it carries the knowledge, the ideas, and the messages without which an advanced culture cannot exist. Whether in the form of clay tablet, scroll, codex, or volume, the book remains central to culture. In the words of Dr. Guy Story Brown, Director of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the United States Information Agency, “the idea of culture itself originally emerged in connection with cultivation of learning through the written word.... The idea of the book or centrality of writing as a universal human inheritance in a sense involves a fundamental change in the idea of culture, a change that itself is characteristic of modernity, and underlies the ubiquity of books.”

Although the development of the book, from its rudimentary form into the codex, and later the book manuscript, owes much to Christian scholarship in the Roman and Byzantine periods, the book in the Islamic world was more fundamentally integrated with Islam as a religion and with the Arabic language and script, which were the early means of communication in the Islamic world. Scarcely has the literary life of any other culture played such a role as in Islam. The Koran, referred to as the Book or al-Kitab, has a privileged place in Islam in that it is considered to be the word of God and in that it is inimitable (mu’jizah). It was only natural that The Book affect greatly the course of Arabic and Islamic culture. Under its stimulus, the various sciences (‘ulitm, plural of ‘Um) developed. Science, or learning (‘ilm), by which is meant the whole world of the intellect, engaged the interest of the Muslims more than anything else except perhaps politics during the golden age of Islam, that is, the early part of the Abbasid period. It was a period that saw the elaboration of methods of publication, transcription, bookbinding, and book selling to a great degree. The circulation of books was greatly assisted by the introduction of paper in the eighth century. Literature and the art of the book received a great impetus from the manufacture of paper. The Muslims developed paper manufacturing through the employment of new materials and the discovery of new methods. This was as much a revolution as the one achieved in the fifteenth century by Gutenberg. As Professor Irfan

Shahid says, “Neither parchment nor papyrus was able to bring about such a revolution.” The extraordinary efflorescence of book making is reflected in the large number of repositories, or libraries (maktabat), and the large number of manuscripts that have reached US. Once the printed book came into being and the process of dethroning the manuscript began, opposition to the new technology by the Islamic ·ulama’ grew. The ‘ulama’, until the invention and spread of printing, monopolized the transmission of knowledge. The manuscript, moreover, represented for the Muslims an historic and cultural value. This remains so until today. Most of the Muslim scholars who visit me at the Library of Congress begin their questioning by asking how many Arabic or Islamic manuscripts the Library holds. Printing meant a new cultural direction. The manuscript, which represented the old culture, became the center of controversy between the old and the new. Although it is presented in different forms and on many levels, this controversy remains with us today.

The rise of al-warraq, a person who made a profession out of transcribing books, was a high point in the “Civilization of the Book.” The warraqun (plural of warraq) were the link between men of letters and the general public. They were interested not only in beautiful calligraphy, but also in reproducing correctly and exactly the text. They were not only copyists, but also booksellers, and oftentimes they were men of letters themselves. al-Jahiz (d.255/868), who was a versatile author and a great bookworm, hit upon the idea of hiring booths from the warraqun and spending the nights in their shops reading. In his famous book, Kitab al-hayawan (The Book of Animals), al-Jahiz dedicates a lengthy section to the topic of “the book”. In it he responds to a critic of books by describing the value of the book as a companion, a vehicle of learning, and a versatile tool for the success of all human endeavors. He recites stories about book collecting, calligraphy, ancient writing, the preservation of cultural heritage, translation in general and translation of religious books, book editing, and the conflict between the written and oral traditions. Throughout the history of Islam, oral transmission of “the book” proceeded alongside the written. Many considered the written as merely a corroboration of and complement to the memory.

There is indeed a great need to look into the role of the book in the development of the Islamic world and its culture. The history of the book, not

only as an artifact, but also in terms of intellectual content and physical properties, needs to be seriously explored. An investigation into the creation, manufacture, and use of the book in its written and printed forms has not been systematically approached, although there have been several attempts to do so. The kinship between the book and civilization is obvious yet understudied. Investigating it, as far as the Islamic world is concerned, can offer many insights into the nature and characteristics of that world.

The term “Islamic world” should be clarified. We don’t mean by it the ummah, or community of believers, rather the countries that became mostly Muslim by religion and contributed to the growth and characterization of the widely spread Islamic civilization. The essays and studies in the present volume are, however, concerned only with what might be called the core of the Islamic world, namely, the Middle East.

The distinguished professors and scholars who participated in the conference expounded on many aspects and problems related to the book and its study in the Islamic world. Professor Muhsin Mahdi, in his issue-raising paper, confirms the need for more information on the history of books in the Islamic world. He explains the reasons why the printing of religious books by Muslims came late, as late as the nineteenth century, and wonders why the excellent scribal traditions of dictation, collation, and illustration have not been applied to the exigencies of modern book production. He systematically raises many issues resulting from the introduction of printing, such as the impact of translations on the development of the sciences, languages, and even orthography. Furthermore, he calls for the preservation and sustenance of scholarly traditions and systems while looking forward to the new technologies in the editing and preservation of the great wealth of manuscripts remaining in the Islamic world. Jacques Berque elaborates more abundantly on the meaning of the term al-Kitab (the Book) and the methods used in compiling the text of the Koran in its final form- looking at the early conditions under which the task of compilation was initiated. Looking at the properties having to do with the Koran, Professor Berque discerns a structure of type strongly akin to the synchronal and concludes that the Koranic “edition” attests to a reflective and orderly character and is not a miscellany of disorganidation and arbitrariness. The text of the Koran was the outcome of a laborious effort and is laden with potentialities that have stood the test of time well.

Professor Franz Rosenthal discusses Muslim attitudes ء rd books and the dilemma caused by the abundance of books in terms of quantity and quality. Books were often so plentiful that one could think of discarding some, but this was generally considered wrong. The destruction of books is discussed, when and why it occurred, the meaning and scope of originality, and the relationship between knowledge and books. Rosenthal points out the persistent distinction between oral and written information, a theme that appears in several papers and is effectively handled by Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who discusses the great significance throughout Islamic history of oral transmission in education and the spoken word as compliment to the written text. The Islamic intellectual tradition itself has functioned with the belief that oral tradition is of central importance. Oral teaching always accompanied the written text.

Professor Annemarie Schimmel considers the metaphor connected with

the book in Islamic literature. After discussing the great love Muslims have for books, she deals with the figurative language in which books are used as metaphors in the works of the Persian and Persianate poets, showing the central role the imagery of the book played in Islamic poetry.

Biographical books are among the earliest and most extensive genres of Arabic literature. Professor Wadād al-Qāḍī believes that biographical dictionaries are not only indispensable tools of research, but also a mirror in which are reflected important aspects of the intellectual and cultural development of the

Islamic community. A study of the inner structure of biographical dictionaries produced during the first nine centuries of Islam reveals that development. Professor Ramzi Baalbaki traces the development of the grammatical book by examining three stages in the history of Arabic grammar, based on Sibawayhi’s book (Kitab) as the focal point in this development. He concludes that Sibawayhi’s originality was not to be matched by any of the later grammarians. Professor Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid discusses the role

of Muslim women in learning, and after explaining the position of calligraphy in Islam, he investigates women's role in the copying of Korans and narrates the achievements of several women who distinguished themselves in that field. Professor David King considers the significance of certain categories of book illustrations, especially in works on astronomical instruments, and concludes that there are numerous illustrations in Islamic scientific books which further our understanding of different aspects of Islamic science, and even aspects of Islam and Islamic civilization.

Illuminated and illustrated books in the Islamic world were sought after diligently by kings, princes, and scholars. The special prestige attached to books with a royal or princely provenance appears to have encouraged another method of book collection used by rulers, that of appropriating volumes from each other's libraries. Professor Priscilla Soucek and Dr. Filiz Çağman follow the path of such a volume now kept in the Topkapi Saray in Istanbul.

The transition from scribal to print culture, as exemplified by Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, is ably presented by Dr. Geoffrey Roper, who has shown that al-Shidyaq personifies in his career, as well as in his attitudes, the dawn of a new cultural era for the Arab and Islamic worlds, an era in which the communications revolution caused by the printing press brought radical changes to intellectual, political, and social life. In my article on the book in the Arab world, I survey the history of book publishing in the modem Arab world, describing the general attributes of book production and dissemination, and the prevalent trends that characterized the different periods of the last two centuries. Professor Eickelman's work, although it does not seem to be related to the history of the book as a cultural vehicle, is indirectly related in that it attempts, in a new approach, to show the impact of new means of communication in the field of education, a field that used to be associated almost exclusively with the book.

One can see from the sum total of the studies in this volume that we have only touched upon the surface of a whole new multifaceted discipline, the history of the book as a cultural vehicle. We hope that our efforts will lead to and point the way for further studies on this important and serious subject.

In the editorial work we have sought uniformity but not conformity. We adopted the Library of Congress' transliteration system and one style for the annotations. All foreign words found in Webster's Third New International Dictionary are not italicized. Some proper names are written as they have been commonly used by the press or as they have been established by their owners. Names of cities are transliterated only when there is no English equivalent. The dates appear according to the Hijrl as well as Gregorian calendars. Whenever the solar instead of the lunar system is used for the Hijrl year, this is indicated. The words Koran and tankh are transliterated as Qur'an and ta'rikh whenever the author has requested it.

The editor wishes to thank a great number of colleagues and friends for their most valuable assistance. A special mention, however, should be made of Michael Albin, who did not spare any time or effort in making the conference "The Book in the Islamic World" the success it was, and to John Cole, the director of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress, who co-sponsored the conference and supported it morally, administratively, and financially.

The editor also wishes to take this opportunity to express his gratitude to Shaykh Ahmad Zaki Yamani, the Institute of Turkish Studies, Saudi ARAMCO, the United States Information Agency, and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their financial and moral support, which made holding the conference possible. He also wishes to thank all those staff members in the Near East

Section and the Library of Congress whose help was crucial in organizing the conference and the exhibit that accompanied it, in particular Christopher Murphy, Anne Boni, Doris Hamburg, and Carol Ido.

<right>

George N. Atiyeh

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** 1. From the Manuscript Age to the Age of Printed Books

Muhsin Mahdi

The period of transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books is the second and less important transitional epoch in the history of the book in the Islamic world. The first and more important epoch was the initial emergence of the book during the first two centuries of the Islamic era, the seventh and eighth centuries of the common era. The seriousness and persistence with which scribes and scholars in the Islamic world were able during that period to preserve and transmit the text of the most important of all books in that world, the Koran, and, next, the traditional collections of the sayings and deeds of the Prophet of Islam, meant that, once codified, their preservation and transmission could remain free of the many problems besetting the preservation and transmission of most other books, both religious and secular, during the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books.

In contrast, the disturbing manner in which European printers took liberties with the text of the Koran (when compared to the care taken in printing the Gutenberg Bible, for instance) could not but raise doubts among Muslims regarding the virtues of printing when they first came into contact with the new technology. One look at the title page of the Koran printed in Hamburg in 1694 (figure 1.1) must have made Muslim readers of the Koran think that only the Devil himself could have produced such an ugly and faulty version of their Holy Book; and the same must have been the impression made on them by Alessandro de Paganino’s Venice Koran printed in the 1530s, where the printer, perhaps following some contemporary Arabic vernacular, did not distinguish between certain letters of the alphabet, such as the dal and the dhal (figure 1.2). One would expect a handbook on medicine and medicaments, such as the Arabic text of

Avicenna’s Canon, to be free of printing errors, since errors in a book of this nature can easily lead to unfortunate results. Yet the Medici edition (Rome, 1593) of this work commits a serious grammatical fault, to say nothing of the syntactical infelicities, on the title page itself (figure 1.3). Unlike a faulty manuscript copy by some ignorant scribe, such printed books involve an orderly organization, extensive financing, and the distribution of a large number of copies with the same errors, making it less easy to dismiss them as unimportant or inconsequential incidents.[1]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-2.jpg][Fig. 1.1. The Koran printed in Hamburg, Germany in 1694 by Officina Schultzio-Schilleriana. Copy in Library of Congress.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-3.jpg][Fig. 1.2. The “Opening” of the first printed Koran in Europe (Venice, ca. 1537) by Alessandro de Paganino.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-4.jpg][Fig. 1.3. Title page of Avicenna’s Canon of Medicine printed in Rome, 1593, by the Medici Press.]]

This brings US to the frequently cited objections made in the Islamic world to printing when it was first introduced, delays in introducing the printing of books dealing with religious subjects, and the strictures against printing religious works.[2] Were the initial fears of the dangers of printing books on religious subjects justified? Yes, if we recall the examples just cited. But why were no ways found to overcome such problems before the nineteenth century? Various economic or doctrinal hypotheses have been presented to explain this phenomenon. What is clear is that in many cultural centers in the Islamic world a scribal tradition flourished with standards of accuracy that could not be assured in printed books, especially when the printing was done outside the Islamic world by printers with limited knowledge of the languages involved; and many of the early printers both outside and inside the Islamic world were not Muslims and not well versed in Islamic religious sciences. These strictures did not last; ways were found around them,

primarily in the control of standards that made it possible to print books in all religious subjects, starting with the Koran.

But the expertise shown in the printing of the Koran and the hadith was a carryover from the expertise developed during the manuscript age in the strict disciplines associated with these highly specialized texts. There was, on the other hand, a more general scribal tradition specializing in the transmission of books in the manuscript age and which, depending on the field it was in, had developed specialized techniques and methods of dictation, collation, and illustration that seem to have deteriorated with the advent of printing. Why were those techniques of editing not transferred in an orderly fashion to the exigencies of book production when using movable type? What was the extent of the effort to recover, systematize, improve upon, and make use of the old scribal art in the new conditions? Why was the printed book treated as though it were a manuscript copy, with printed comments placed or variants noted on the margin of the text? The art of textual criticism developed in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century does not seem to have reached the Islamic world, and the beginnings made in introducing it during the present century remain limited and partial. The result has been the loss of knowledge of the techniques and approaches of earlier Islamic scholarship, now replaced by only an incomplete and imperfect knowledge of the new European tradition. A number of works were no doubt edited and printed in an exemplary manner in the Islamic world. It is equally true, nevertheless, that on the whole printing has simply fixed and diffused many books that are hardly superior to any stray manuscript copy untouched by a careful scholarly hand, and others whose scholarly form is mere pretension.

The period of transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books in the Islamic world was long and tortuous, extending over centuries and presenting the student of the history of the book with different sorts of problems from one century to another and from one region of the Islamic world to another. Then, after it largely came to an end sometime during the last half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, a new problem arose: the Islamic world slowly forgot what it meant to depend on scribes and manuscript copies for the creation, diffusion, and transmission of knowledge. In the mind of the vast public at least, printed books came to represent a degree of solidity and authority that went far beyond the solidity

and authority of the manuscript copy or copies of the same book. Not only has the manuscript age by now come to an end in the mind of the public—hardly anyone copies an entire manuscript by hand anymore (unless it is in preparation for printing it, and photographic reproduction and printing have in some cases made even this effort unnecessary)—the manuscript tradition has for all intents and purposes ceased to be alive and to develop as it had done for more than a millennium.

It is impossible, of course, to cover, or even touch upon, all the problems arising from every aspect of the period of transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books. Indeed, it is foolish even to try to do so, given how much remains unknown about the cultural, social, and economic history of the period and how risky it is to establish any causal relation between the introduction and spread of printed books in the Islamic world and particular social, economic, and cultural factors that may have interacted with the introduction of printing and the spread of printed books. Nevertheless, it may be useful to raise some of the questions that need to be answered if one is to gain a fuller picture of what happened during the period of transition and learn about the issues involved in the transformation of books already there in manuscript form into printed books in particular.

There are, to begin with, the numerous cultural and social implications of the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books: the spread of printing in the second half of the nineteenth century went hand in hand with the rise of national sentiment among the various Muslim peoples and, as happened in Europe earlier, Muslims became less and less likely to speak or be able to read more than their own national language and had to have translations from other Islamic languages in order to preserve some of the cultural homogeneity of the Islamic world. There is the role of the state in encouraging translations and the spread of secular culture through control of some of the early presses. There are the new cultural vistas and literary forms opened up through printing. And there is the role of non-Muslim communities in spreading the printing of books, first in Europe and then inside the Islamic world.

Then there are the authors (leaders of mystical fraternities, leading thinkers, reformers, and pamphleteers) who wrote original works during the

nineteenth century and made a massive contribution to cultural change through printed books. There are a number of interesting questions to be asked about the diffusion of the works of those contemporary authors. How many of the original works printed during the period of transition survive today? How did the transition help create a new profession, that of the author engaged not merely in writing or dictating an original copy of his work and presenting it to a prince in the hope of financial reward and otherwise hoping for the best as to its survival and diffusion in manuscript form, but the author who could see his work printed, corrected, published, diffused in many copies, and sold, establishing himself slowly as a professional writer whose works are read immediately upon their publication by wider circles of readers?

To what extent and how fest did such contemporary works, be they literary, scientific, or religious, replace older ones? Who were the authors who commanded large audiences? When did the reading public become so large that only printing could satisfy it? Did printed books create the mass culture and the standardization of reading habits, or was it the emergence of a mass of educated readers that led to the spread of printing? Who was buying or reading the newly printed books? Did the transition merely expand readership or did it change its character as well? How was the expansion of readership connected with the change in the educational system and the emergence of new classes of professionals and educated people, the change from the time students of religion and bureaucrats were the main readers to the time after the emergence of new free professions—teachers and students of the new secular schools, new types of lawyers, doctors, engineers—who began increasingly to collect and read printed books?

Then there is the impact of translations and the role of printing in encouraging the paraphrase and translation of foreign books, especially those from European languages, which were instrumental in introducing modern science and technology to the Islamic world. Finally, one needs to consider such questions as the importance of the press in the diffusion of scientific literature, whether ancient or contemporary and Western, and of technical manuals of medicine, military science and strategy engineering, and so forth.

Then there are the political and economic aspects of the production of printed books. It was precisely that so many identical copies could be made of printed books which made printing into a mass medium, drew the attention of public authorities, religious and secular, and made it possible to exploit printed books as instruments of state policy, to censor them, or to forbid their diffusion when they were thought not to agree with, or to run counter to, the policy of the state, something not easy to accomplish in the manuscript age. But the state also came to own presses; it was able to distribute copies of printed books free of charge; and it acquired the authority to decide which books should be printed for use in its educational system. The state and the mystical fraternities seem

to have been the initial sponsors of the printed book in secular and religious fields, respectively. In the case of the state, a ready clientele, consisting of functionaries and students of technical and generally of secular schools, and government subsidies, made the printing of books on non-religious subjects economically feasible. But the role of the mystical orders in spreading the printing of religious books is a subject that is well worth investigating also. Like the state, they had a ready market in their membership, which made it less risky to undertake the printing of books. Some mystical fraternities had vast memberships spreading out in many countries of the Islamic world, a readership that made the printing of literature of interest to these mystical fraternities economically feasible. When and to what extent did printed religious books begin to compete with printed secular literature, both ancient and contemporary? How did the proportion of the latter grow relative to the total?

To answer such questions, it is important to collect, preserve, and study the archives of publishers wherever they can still be found in the Islamic world, but especially in major centers of printing such as Istanbul, Cairo, and Teheran. One needs to study not only the fact of a book’s publication, but how many editions and printings there were, the size of each, and the pricing of copies. We may even learn from these archives how slow or rapid the transition was from the manuscript age to the age of printed books in each major center. In general, one expects the new technologies to have exceeded by far the old in making books both widely accessible and accessible at greatly reduced prices, and to have penetrated new markets and social and economic strata of society. But did any of this happen? To

what extent and at what point? What was the weight of the role of the state as against such private institutions as religious fraternities or private commercial enterprises? Which books were promoted by which sector? Which books were in demand by which sector of the reading public? What proportion of printed books were read by members of each of the two educational systems, the religious and the scientific or secular, after they parted company, and what portion by the wider public?

Then there is the impact of printing on the development of language. At the beginning of the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books in the Islamic world, the Arabic language was still the international Islamic language in the religious and secular sciences, even though works on modem European science and technology were translated into national languages other than Arabic, such as Turkish and Persian as well. What happened after the introduction of printing? To what extend did Arabic maintain its position? Was Arabic gradually replaced by the other national languages? When did this take place in the case of each nation with a native tongue other than Arabic, and in what fields? That is to say, when and how did languages like Persian, Turkish, and Urdu, in the main vehicles of literary culture and of the administration, become vehicles of modern scientific disciplines as well? How is it that even today, in matters of common concern to the Islamic world, works are written in Arabic by writers from countries such as Iran, India, and Pakistan?[3]

Then there is the impact of printing on the orthography, structure, and vocabulary of each of the languages of the Islamic world. To what extent did printing contribute to simplification and uniformity in any of these aspects of each of these languages? Would the problem of orthography have come to the fore in Turkey without the spread of printing? Would the problem of orthography in Arabic, that is, the unsuccessful campaign for the use of Latin characters, have been even thinkable without the spread of printing? How did printing contribute to the spread and use of punctuation, and why is it that the only strict punctuation system remains the one employed in printing the Koran, while one faces utter confusion, in Arabic at least, in the punctuation of books printed with movable type? Similar questions need to be asked regarding other aspects of scholarly form and techniques, such as

the use of abbreviations. What explains the rise and decline of strict standards of typography, of orthography, punctuation, and design?

Then there is the role of linguistic and literary renaissance in the case of each of the national languages during the nineteenth century in the recovery and diffusion of older works of prose, poetry, narrative—in some cases recovered from rare manuscript collections or libraries not accessible beyond small circles of owners and scholars who happened to be in, or to have traveled to, the place where the collection or library was located. To what extent did printing contribute to the resurrection of works forgotten for a long time and made for another age, with its own taste and preoccupations? How was the development of printing related to the development of language education and literacy? And how important was government intervention in the spread of printing (e.g., the availability of printed readers, grammars, dictionaries)? Above all, to what extent was the diffusion of older works through printing a sign that these works were being read, not merely acquired as collectibles?

It is characteristic of the transformation for the manuscript age to the age of printed books in the Islamic world that it was a continuous process rather than a violent turning point. Originally, the book in the Islamic world had coexisted with an oral tradition in which memory played an important role and writing was intended as an aid to memory. Yet writing is supposed to decrease reliance on memory. The question is the extent to which printing may have accelerated this trend. Apart from the question of memory, however, the writing of books itself underwent many changes as to organization, the materials on and with which books were written, and the techniques used by scribes and readers to assure the book’s integrity and correctness. This scribal and scholarly tradition underwent certain changes over time in the material it used, in the scripts it developed, and in the organization of book production; and local sub-traditions developed in various parts of the Islamic world, in different languages, and in different disciplines. By the time printing had become more than a curiosity in the Islamic world, a strong scribal and scholarly tradition was in place which was devoted to the book in manuscript form; and one of the most urgent tasks of the students of the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books in the Islamic world is to find out precisely what this scribal and scholarly tradition consisted of in the main centers of Islamic civilization

during the eighteenth century its transformation during, the nineteenth, and its role in the introduction of printing. For it is that tradition which was instrumental initially in making the transition to the age of printed books.

One needs to ask, therefore, what were the technical and oiganizational features of the book reproduction industry, not during the manuscript age in general, but at the end of the manuscript age in particular: who engaged in it, patronized it, subsidized it, helped sell the scribes' works, and supplied the materials necessary for the exercise of the profession? Were they merchants, technicians, learned men, calligraphers? Were there scriptoria for the mass production of manuscript copies? What was the market for manuscript copies like in places such as Istanbul, Cairo, or Isfahan? How far did manuscript copies travel, and in which direction? Was the trade confined to the Islamic world? Did the manuscript copies of certain books tend to remain in certain localities and not cross certain borders? For instance, to what extent was the experience of the Ottoman statesman and man of letters Ragib Mehmed Pasa (1699–1763), in looking for Mulla Sadra's Asjar, unique? Ragib Pasa was a voracious book collector who travelled through the Ottoman Empire and occupied important political positions in Syria, Egypt, and Iraq. Yet he tells US that this comprehensive work of illuminationist philosophy and mysticism was not well known in Anatolia and that he had to bring a copy from Iraq, from which then one or two copies were made.[4] Since it is known that a vast number of manuscript copies produced in the Safavid Empire reached Constantinople, and that this particular work was well known throughout the Safavid Empire and the Indian subcontinent, was the absence of this particular book from the book market in Istanbul and the libraries of Anatolia due to its subject matter and doctrinal content? And why even now can one hardly find a lithographic copy of it in Egypt, for instance, when it had served as the basic textbook of philosophy in many schools in Iran and India?[5]

Let us turn to the printing and diffusion of books surviving from the manuscript age. Of the millions of manuscript copies existing at the time when printing began to spread in the Islamic world, not all could be printed; a selection had to be made. By whom and on what basis was this selection made? By the political authority aiming to spread knowledge of the practical arts necessary for building a modern state? By booksellers with a view to large printings and profit? What works and what literary forms disappeared

from view without being remembered except by a new generation of specialists? Were the books most widely diffused in the Islamic world in manuscript form at the time printing was introduced the ones printed? That is, did printing simply continue to feed people's interest in books that were the most widely read before? Who were the ancient Muslim authors selected and printed? How did the ancient Muslim authors not usually read at the end of the manuscript age fare with their new audiences? One could learn a great deal about such questions from studying the holdings of libraries in Istanbul, Cairo, and Teheran that ceased to grow as printing became widespread, provided one realizes that most of the mosque and school libraries did not contain many types of books—popular literature, practical disciplines, astrology, forbidden things—that were diffused and tended to be widely read outside the schools and scholarly circles, and that such books were also the ones more likely to perish. In general, then, one needs to find out what the impact of printing was on the literary culture of the time. To what extent did printing change the type of books available to readers, as compared to before the introduction of printing? How and why did this change take place? What kinds of books were involved? How much of the earlier literature became more widely available? Was this partly due to the ease with which the text of rare manuscript copies of a book could now be multiplied, to access to libraries and collections in places that had been inaccessible before, or to the printing and diffusion of information about manuscript copies through printing in general and manuscript catalogues in particular?

It is a mistake to think that the scribal and scholarly tradition still alive when the transition to printed books was taking place in the Islamic world was as competent or achieved the same high standard when transcribing every kind of book. In addition to the text of the Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet, there were certain disciplines in which accurate and correct transmission was essential. This was largely true of manuscript copies of books in scientific fields, such as astronomy, medicine, and mathematics, where mistakes and corruption could be easily detected by experts and render the manuscript copy almost worthless as far as they were concerned. Many scribes copying manuscripts in these disciplines were themselves experts to some extent or had developed a method of copying that reproduced the exemplar with an unusual degree of precision. In other fields (a vast majority of manuscript copies are in literary fields, such as narratives, history, and geography) the language and sometimes even the content of the work was consciously or unconsciously modernized as

manuscripts were copied from one generation to another. Much of the so-called Middle Arabic features found in manuscript copies of books by early authors can be attributed to this tendency.

In the age of printed books, the musahhih—literally the person in charge of producing a “correct” printed version—performed a task similar to that of

the scribe in the manuscript age, that is, he corrected and sometimes revised the language of the manuscript copy before it was sent to the printer, and the same person contributed to assuring that the proofs were properly corrected and a list of errata was appended to the printed book. Especially during the period of the renaissance of linguistic learning (of the fuşhâ in Arabic, for instance), it was the function of the musahhih to make sure that the language of the manuscript copy prepared for the printer was free of grammatical mistakes and stylistic blunders. But by “good” Arabic during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries one did not mean the stage the language had reached in the eighth or ninth under the Umayyad or Abbasid dynasties; it was already a neoclassical Arabic with its own features.[6] Thus, while the attempt was made to stem the tide of so-called Middle Arabic, and in most cases much of this kind of Arabic was eliminated, there was no assurance that it was replaced by the Arabic current during the second or third century of the Islamic era. And sometimes the attempt to reverse the evolution of the language led to making the printed book more archaic than its author had meant it to be. The revision of the language of all the first four printed versions of The Thousand and One Nights is quite instructive in this respect.

It is therefore also important to trace the fortunes of this scribal and scholarly tradition as printing came to be widespread in the Islamic world; study the role of its representatives as publishers, editors, and proofreaders in printing establishments; and learn about their educational background, first in the religious institutions and then as part of the new Europeanized educational system, where as scholars, teachers, and students they continued to play a significant role in transforming the culture of the manuscript age into the culture of printed books. This will require careful

study of the techniques used in preparing the manuscript for the printer; what manuscript material was reproduced and what manuscript material was not reproduced (the fate of marginal corrections, conjectures, variant readings, and comments) when a manuscript was copied and corrected in preparation for being printed; the extent to which these were reproduced or suppressed or placed in a different position on the page; and whether dispensing with variant readings and the comments in printed books was due to technical or economic reasons.

A systematic study of early printings can instruct US on whether and to what extent the printed text was a better or worse scientific instrument that a manuscript copy of the same book current before the introduction of printing. [7] Yet the printed copy, which may not have been better than an imperfect manuscript copy, was now published in hundreds if not thousands of copies, sought by everyone interested in that book, and taken by the public to represent the book itself, the book to which reference is made and from which quotations are reproduced. It came to have the authority and finality only the author s copy could have claimed in the manuscript age. It is therefore important to find out when and to what extent printed books relegated manuscripts to a secondary position so that readers came to be psychologically oriented to look for, and expect to read, a printed book rather than a manuscript copy; and when and to what extent the habit of reading a manuscript copy—the ability to handle a manuscript copy with ease, interact with it, and learn from it—disappeared from the reading public and became a specialty confined to a few scholars and to those planning to transform the book from manuscript to print. Here again, a study of libraries, public and private, and their use over time, especially those that froze at a particular point in time, could help clarify such questions.[8]

Nevertheless, the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books in the Islamic world is not something that took place in the past only. Even though a lot has happened during the past two centuries or so, in certain respects the transition is still with US. Books in manuscript form continue to be transformed into printed books, and this process will continue for the foreseeable future, since a vast number of books produced during the manuscript age in the Islamic world remain in manuscript form and their transformation, by way of printing, editing, and re-editing, is not likely to come to an end very soon. Indeed, it is hard to conceive of a future date

when the Islamic world will cease to be concerned with the question of the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books and with the many problems connected with the transformation of its heritage at the hand of printers and editors. One can only hope that, slowly, the transition will be controlled by scholars with increasingly better knowledge of the scribal and scholarly tradition that produced the books in the manuscript age, rather than by predators in search of gain or fame.

Nor has the transformation always been directly from the book in manuscript form to the printed book. We recall, for instance, the continuous role played in the transformation of manuscript copies into printed books by photography, microfilming, xeroxing, and, more recently, word processing. Think, for instance, of the accuracy and ease with which photographic reproductions of manuscript copies are now being printed. Is the product of this process a manuscript copy or a printed book? Then there are other techniques, some of which once played a significant intermedian' role between the book in manuscript form and books printed with movable type: lithography, xylography, metal plates—processes that were once current in India, Iran, Egypt, and Morocco. Their use in printing books of common prayers, the Koran, religious tracts of all sorts, and secular books as well, is known.

Just at a time when the Islamic world seems to be reaping the benefits of the technological and cultural revolution brought about by printing, that revolution is being increasingly superseded by another revolution, one that is replacing both the manuscript book and the printed book with the electronic. machine-readable book. This is perhaps the most significant question we must keep in mind as we look at the transition from the manuscript age to that of printed books. But we need to remember also that, even without this recent technological revolution, at least since the beginning of this century the printed book began to lose some of its hold on the human race. One could say that until about 1914 there was no other "mass" communication medium (apart from the human voice of narrators, teachers, and preachers) besides the book, the pamphlet, or the flier. There was no radio or television, no record or tape,

no film, to compete to any significant extent with only a limited role, and illustrations were rather rare and expensive. The printed/written word held a preeminent position; there were as yet no serious competitors to reckon with. Whenever a serious question was disputed in the Islamic community—Wahhabism, coffee drinking, smoking—the dispute was enshrined in printed books, pamphlets, and fliers.

In some respects, the book in electronic, machine-readable form will mean

a return to one of the main features of the manuscript age: copies can be made and subjected to continuous change and improvement, free of the fixed form introduced مجل printing and movable type. With the use of various means of communication, it will be possible to make what is initially a single copy available immediately across the globe and as far as humans can reach beyond this globe, with the possibility that, from one copy, an infinite number of copies can be made, used, and disposed of.

The potential of this revolution is, or should be, of particular interest to those engaged in the effort to collect and organize information about the enormous surviving manuscript heritage of the Islamic world in all Islamic languages. This potential extends far beyond the use currently made of it in cataloging books and manuscripts. Sooner or later, the electronic, machine-readable book—consisting of digitized text, digitized graphics, or a mixture of digitized text and graphics—is likely to replace both the book as it was known in the manuscript age and the book in print; for it will be the most convenient way to access the content of books, including books that exist already in manuscript form or in print. And the electronic, machine-readable form will in turn determine the most convenient ways of packaging the book, just as it was the manuscript and printing that determined its characteristic material components.

Given the speed with which the technology is changing, however, it remains to be seen how many forms the new electronic, machine-readable book will take. It seems certain that the main advantages of the printed book, wide diffusion and an affordable price, will continue to favor certain types of printed books, perhaps those that are popular. Otherwise, many scholarly

works, and generally all works of specialized interest, including illustrations, will be available in electronic form, more easily accessible across the globe, not requiring the publication of a large number of hard copies. The other function of the printed book, that of reproducing the content of books existing in manuscript form, and certainly much of the body of books produced in the manuscript age on which scholars are likely to be working in the future, will be transferred directly from the original manuscript form to electronic, machine-readable form, rather than going through the printing stage, which can now clearly be seen to have been yet another intermediate stage. But whether this transition is carried out successfully or we end up with another mess on our hands depends on how willing we are to learn more about the book in the manuscript age, how willing we are to learn the lessons of the delays and problems encountered during the transition from the manuscript age to the age of printed books, and how determined we are to face and overcome the difficulties encountered during the transition to the age of the electronic, machine-readable book.

[1] To see that such problems can arise in books edited in more recent times by authors who could not be accused of ignorance or malice, one can consult the edition of the work on the proof of prophecies by the tenth-century Isma’îlî thinker Abu Ya’qub al-Sijistam, Ithbat al-nubuwat, ed. ‘Arif Tamir (Beirut, 1966), p.76, where the editor took the liberty of rewriting a paragraph of the original text in twentieth-century Arabic.

[2] The relevant decrees, legal opinions, and related documents have been discussed recently by Wahid Gdoura, Le Debut derimpritnerie arabe a Istanbul et en Syrie (Tunis, 1985), pt. 1, ch. 2, pt. 2, ch. 2: and Fawzi Abdulrazak, “The Kingdom of the Book,” PhD Dissertation, Boston University, 1990, ch. 4.

[3] Consider, for instance, the Arabic writings of thinkers like Khomeini, Mawdudi and 8.8. Nadvi.

[4] Ragib Pasa, Safinat al-Raghib (Bulaq, 1282/1865 or 66), p. 322.

[5] The single lithographic copy of the work I came across in Egypt had been brought there by an Indian scholar and reached the marketplace when his library was sold after his death.

[6] Once, in the manuscript reading room of the old Dar al-Kutub Library building in the Bab al-Khalq, in Cairo, I saw across the table a blind Azharite scholar with a youngster next to him reading from an old manuscript copy and holding a ballpoint pen in his hand to transcribe the text of the manuscript in a notebook. The youngster read aloud as he transcribed the manuscript while the scholar listened, sometimes nodding in approval but frequently instructing the youngster not to transcribe what was in the manuscript copy but what was to the scholar’s mind a more correct version of the text. Worse than this, he seems to have arranged with the youngster that the latter should also correct the text of the manuscript itself with his ballpoint pen. Whether because the scholar was eminent or influential, I do not know, but the keeper of manuscripts at Dar al·Kutub, the late Fu’âd Sayyid, did not dare protest the practice.

[7] Modern editors treat printed books of which they cannot find the manuscript source as just another manuscript copy, with all the potential virtues and defects of a manuscript copy.

[8] I recall, for instance, having to consult some Arabic manuscript copies in the Küprülü Library in Istanbul, where the only other users of the tables and chairs in the reading room, were high school students reading (modern Turkish) school books they had brought with them rather than ary of the manuscript copies for which that library is known to users like myself.

** 2. The Koranic Text: From Revelation to Compilation

Jacques Berque

Nowadays, the term that springs immediately to mind, and that is also commonly used in discourse to designate the Koran, is the word “Book” with a capital letter, that is, “Kitabun” in the indefinite, and “al-Kitabu” with the definite article. Such a designation, however, is not helpful in specifying its subject. In itself, “kitab” is generic rather than specific and, per se, it means nothing more than “written.” It is context alone that can determine precisely whether the designation is of a simple inscription, of a holy writ, of fate as pre-ordained by God, of the roll that those called to justice in the Last Judgment shall wear around their necks, or else of the Koran proper, as is the case here. It should be noted here that the Koranic message, when first revealed to mankind, was not delivered in written form, but rather in the form of intermittent vocal communications, which varied widely in length.

It should also be noted that, according to dominant tradition, the opening word of the Revelation consisted of the well-known injunction “/ˌ7ʏa’ı” of Surah 96. This term, however, is one that we often find a problem with: What does it really mean?

If we take “/ˌ?ra”’ to mean simply “Read,” as is often done, then what text could the imperative “fgra”’ be referring to? Could it be the standard archetypal codex, “al-Imam,” of which the Koran presents itself as an extract? On the other hand, the communication initiated from God to the Prophet had taken, as it has always done, the auditory medium as well as the mediation of the Archangel Gabriel. For a more accurate reflection of this aspect, “Chant or Psalmody” is perhaps a more appropriate translation than simply “Read.”

A third option which should not be excluded out of hand is the translation “assemble or compile.” One reservation, however, is that it references an ulterior operation, now already completed, namely, the collection or recension of all revealed messages. Admittedly, from the point of view of faith, this ordering (sequencing) partakes of divine inspiration, hence of the atemporal and the preordained. Human logic, nonetheless, is liable to be

confounded and puzzled by seeing reference to the collected message at the very opening of the revelation.

In this, indeed, the main psychological and didactic dynamic is not so much to anticipate, but to recollect. Hence there is all the richness that we find in

”,Even the Koran qualifies itself as dhikr, “recall ”حمججلا٦، the uses of the root

inasmuch as it calls up from, the depths of human memory truths long thought obliterated. It also endows upon itself credibility for all time.

Certain listeners even go so far as to claim a special faculty for “re-saying” the revealed message. The function of those “keepers by heart,” or “huffazr is not to be confounded with that of qurra and muqriTn, “readers and reciters.” The astounding reliability of the huffaz’s memory, not uncommon in this type of society, did provide a link between the transcendental communication operating through the voice of the Prophet, and deep resonances evoked in the primary consciousness and discourse of the people.[9]

Shortly after the death of the Prophet, there appeared other modes of preservation. Followers of the faith, according to tradition, began to inscribe the message in segments, more or less long ones; they even attempted to bring the text together as it was being revealed. They used any materials available to them, for instance, scraps of parchments, shoulder blades, palm leaves cut lengthwise, and so on. These picturesque inscriptions, however, provided only limited guarantees of reliability. Apart from discrepancies or inconsistencies, they risked omission. By definition, these fragments were disconnected. Besides, there was no way the followers could have given consideration to the elaborate taxonomy which, starting from a certain date, guided the compiling of the pieces into graduated surahs.

It was the Prophet himself, we are told, who assumed the task of compiling the Koran in written form. His actions were guided by inspiration, though he was aided by secretaries and experts. To one of the most active among them, Zayd ibn Thabit, is attributed the statement: “We were at the Messenger of God’s [house] to collate the Koran from disparate scraps,” or “nu’allifu al-Qur’an min al-riqa’.”[10]

Hence, the setting of the revelation into written form, defective as it was, was nonetheless not wanting for a base in dogma, at least provisional, considering that the order in which the pieces were to be fitted together was in a large measure contingent upon the course of revelation that the Prophet alone could foresee in advance.

In two surahs, 27, The Ant, and 15, Hijr, the opening verses juxtapose the appellations “Koran” and “Kitab”, inverting the order from the one to the other, respectively: “ayatu al-kitabi wa-qura’nin mublnin” and “ayatu al-qura’ni wa-kitabin mublnin.” Shaykh T. Ibn ‘Ashür underlines this chiasmic structure, which puts the stress alternately on revelation as an ongoing process and on the objective entity which it now constitutes. In fact, the two formulations concerned, being close in date of revelation (48th and 54th, respectively), do not allow for the hypothesis of a change in intent from one formulation to the other. It allows for the differentiation to me made between two referents which have come to be generally confounded in subsequent usage. And thus it is all the more reason to question the hypothesis of Bell, whereby a “Koran Period” is to have preceded a “Book Period” at about the time of the Battle of Badr.[11]

Furthermore, it is of interest to note the passages that have to do with putting the revelation “in lines”, mastiiran, in 17, The Night Journey. 58; and 33, The Clans. 6. These texts are classified as 50th and 90th in order of revelation by tradition, and 67th and 103rd according to Noldeke, Theodor that is, for the first surah, long before the Hijrah. Inasmuch as the revelation of the text, as is often the case, keeps referring to temporal data (asbab), the written recording had not only begun, but also was taken into consideration in the revelation itself, along with an

indication we ought not to forget, that of lines being drawn in ink on a surface.

If we are to believe al-Bukhari, the Prophet at his death could not have left a Koran that was fully inscribed, and only four of his Companions then knew the full text of the message by heart.[12] The precariousness of a method of preservation that was fully entrusted to memory naturally gave cause for concern to those responsible. The very concern for the preservation and protection of so sacred a heritage from the hazards of segmented transcriptions or of memories subject to the risks of negligence, oblivion, or death—this is what later on led the caliph ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz to compile the hadlth— prompted a first attempt at systematic compilation under the caliph Abû Bakr. It was done on unbound sheets, qaratis. The effort was renewed in a more systematic way at the time of the cahph ‘Uthman. It succeeded. The text then acquired, in physical appearance and layout, the form that we currently know, that is, that of a coherent text made up of divisions (surahs) and subdivisions (verses). It was Zayd ibn Thabit who presided over this accomplishment.[13]

It was expected, both in establishing the corpus of content, as well as the organization, to follow unswervingly the tradition of the Prophet. The Prophet, we should again emphasize, had himself set this arrangement. The tradition, however, is not so explicit with regard to the comprehensiveness of the initial organization. Reliable sources limit it to the long surahs, the Hawamim, surahs that begin with the two initials H. M. (hâ’mîm), and the Mufassal, commonly understood as the totality of the smaller text placed at the end of the collection.

Such, at least, is the traditional view, one that we have no way of contesting. To do so, like some others have, would trigger endless controversies. We would even be running the risk of endangering any attempt at a scientific approach to the subject. On the other hand, what we can do, and ought to do, is look into the early circumstances of an effort initiated while the revelation was still in progress, and sustained throughout the period of delivery of the message; we could thus cover the whole set of texts throughout its growth. It goes without saying that a chronological sequence

of individualized surahs such as we would be able to reconstruct could not have been proven to be so until a sufficient quantity of verbal material had been amassed in the memories of the reciters. What classification were we to follow, or what order to establish, if, first of all, there had been no identifiable units to be distinguished from one another and placed in a serial order? This, at least, is what common sense would suggest.

A first step was perhaps illustrated in the words of surah u. Hud’. 13ؤ “Produce ten surahs like it (this one)But if the said surah fell in the eleventh place in the sequence of the material collected, it would rank, in the sequence of revelation, 52nd (or even 75th, according to Noldeke). Such a start is troubling indeed.

One should take special note of this remarkable aspect, that the tradition has kept no record of any substantial disagreements over the text. We only know that the Caliph gave orders to burn the already existing codices, just to avert all debate. Was it to avert it or to close it, or both at the same time? In a community so prone to argument of a subject held close to heart by all, one wonders whether or not to attribute the silence of the sources, just as the latter themselves do, to the unanimous consensus of the multiple witnesses (tawatur) (except for slight phonic variations on a text so collated, and eventually on the details of the layout). Once more, we have no grounds to doubt that. But unanimity on such a scale as the believers claim is owing to divine grace rather than to sociological laws of transmission.

Another form of silence that impresses US is one that concerns the reactions that were likely to be stirred up in the process of compiling the Koran, as a result of the shift from the vocal to the visual medium. Obviously, the functions of huffaz and muqrVm were only partially replaced by reading, a skill of little currency at the time. Surely, their ritualistic, psychological and social roles persist up to the present. This fact, however, has not prevented the “written” to assume a certain halo of dignity which it did not possess initially. In matters of religious texts, the transition from the spoken word, a carrier of a breath of life, into signs restorable in resonant equivalents would not generally occur gratuitously. The Bible becomes the echo of a “passion” which affects the word of God when put in script. Such a kenosis does not usually occur

without risks.[14] An affective reaction by some might sanction the despoiling of an original fullness inherent in the breath and voice. A tradition, actually quite isolated, has it that Ummayah ibn Abi al-Salt was the first to have read the written Koran. In no way will this eliminate all adjudication in this case. The association with this suspect poet, envious of prophetism, should it have happened, would not be comfortably accepted.[15]

Still, at the time of the Umayyad caliph ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azîz, who presided over the compilation of hadlth, divergences in approach were noted regarding the issue of the relative suitability of writing as opposed to memory for the preservation of the Sunnah. In this connection, Malik mentions a question put by the Prince to facph and the reassuring answer of the latter: “There is no objection to the recording of science.” This was, after all, the opinion of Abü Hanîfah.[16] It is true that this consultation applied to Sunnah and not to the Koran; a question of principle was nevertheless raised.

We must also stress that in Islam the transcription of the Koran into written form did not in any way substitute completely the use of “live and permanent voice.” In the absence of more positive evidence to invalidate our observation, we consider the reticence of the sources with regard to such a development as somewhat amazing.

At the time and in the region, writing was scriptio defectiva, that is, lacking periods and diacritical marks. The writing medium remained primitive, obviously closer to an elliptical epigraphy than to a genuine form of transcription. The successors of Muhammad, no less than Muhammad himself, could not have ignored the existence of more advanced forms of writing, for instance, Hebrew, Syriac, Greek, and Latin. This is especially true since the Prophet had frequently visited the markets of Byzantine Syria. He must also have seen the scrolls of the Torah in Mecca. He had them presented to him several times. His Companion, Warqah ibn Nawfal, once a Christian, is believed to have transcribed the Gospels in Hebraic characters.

The Koran refers to these works with the ancient biblical term of sajr, plural asfar.[17] The ironic anecdote of the donkey laden with books, carrying with solemn compunction his precious load, conveys a perhaps all too familiar image (62, The Day of Congregation: 5). There were, moreover, other words available to translate a message into conventional signs, using any procedure of stable encoding (tattooing, inscription). Let US recall a verse by Labid: “The flood channels of al-Rayyan, their traces are laid bare, worn smooth, just like writing on the rocks” (kama damina al-wuhiya’ silamuha). Thus goes the mu’allaqah. The critics analyze al-wuhiya’ as a plural form, and the term has more than one appeal to it, especially since it was the one retained for “revelation”. Several examples of Lisan al-‘Ârab attach to the meaning of the term many suggestive undertones, especially those of a secret language, not easily accessible to others, just as we would imagine it was initially done for writing. Let US also cite in this connection the verse of Abu Wajzah al-Sa’dî: 660 dwelling of Asma, which the rippled streams reduced to a wasteland, just like the writing, or the original that the scribe spells.”

As for the material surfaces on which they wrote, we have already mentioned a variety of surfaces utilized by the early reciters of the Koran. For ancient scriptures, for instance, the Torah, which was preserved in volumina which could be unrolled, animal parchment, al-riqq, was used (52, The Mount: 2).

Poetry, furthermore, uses another vocable, qitt, which we can construe as an abbreviation of qifah, “a piece of parchment or paper.” This was indeed a “perfidious scriptum” qitt mudallil, that al-Mutalammis threw into a river when he read into it his own loss. Obviously, the writing was hastily done and “antlike,” munmal, or munammal, a figure of speech used in this context by Abu al-‘Iyâl al-Hudhall.

It is also true that in other periods of paganism, namely, at the time of the letters of Tarafah and al-Mutalammis (Sahifat aTMutalammis),

as well as the imprecatory writings and vows that people used to throw at the Ka’bah at that time, it was the term sahlfah, “surface,” hence, “sheet”, that came to prevail.

When the Koran was finally collated in a systematic way into an official manual, and in order to designate the edited volume, a term with the same root was resorted to, following the two pronunciations of mushaf and mishaf. The first is deemed to be the older one, unless this has to do with a tribal inflection of the m, Tamim being inclined towards a vocalization with i, while Qays leaned towards u. This noun, being still currently in use, was supposed to have been derived from the preterit ushifa, indicating the setting together of a manuscript into leaves, suhuf, the plural of sahlfah. This original term was commonly used to designate a plate made out of wood provided for feeding about five persons. The diminutive sahlfah has long been given the special meaning that concerns US here, namely, “page, sheet, folio.”[18] Since then and until the present, the book wherein the Islamic revelation has been collected was to carry three names:

- aTKitab, where the dominant connotation seems to refer, in the absence of contextual precision, to the archetype held by God;

- Koran (Qur’an), which was a phonic unit subject to a repetitive, continuous psalmody; and

- Mushaf, as a visual object, an assembly of sheets, a “book,” as we now say, which brought among the Arabs the revolution of the book, a revolution that followed, other things being equal, the revolution of tanzfl, or revelation.

Let us compare this second stage with the stage when the message was being communicated at the time of the Prophet. This communication unfolded over a period of about twenty years. It was delivered in successive fragments, in a scattered order. Regrouping it into sets of surahs could not

normally be achieved without a certain maturing in the memory of the Prophet, and of some of his close affiliates, just as the individuatio (to borrow a medieval term) of these future chapters were shaping up. This quality, we shall so call it for the moment, was not to crystallize for the large surahs, such as the surah of al-Baqarah (The Cow) (we are informed of when its revelation started but never when it was completed), before several months, or even years, had elapsed. Inevitably, the dictation of the surahs would interfere with the dictation of other texts.

It is true, some would retort, that this argument will not hold as long as we cannot attribute human normality to a process marked by divine intervention. But the Sunnah, concerned with preserving the strictly human attributes of the Prophet that the Koran explicitly assigned to him, allows for an interpretation along the lines of human normality. Allow me, in a witticism, to help illustrate the notion by which we can come to conceive of so complex a process. This whole process could be visualized as though the Messenger had gradually solved a crossword puzzle, as the letters and boxes were revealed to him in successive and partial strokes. Let US, however, draw away from this playful analogy. What really matters is the inchoate and reflective characteristic of an operation that is essentially diachronic, just like the revelation itself, a characteristic sharply in contrast with the final collection that henceforth we have before our eyes.

This question has to do, let US repeat, with a book that was indeed put out in a rudimentary form; but in spite of this, or rather in spite of the many ways of reading it—eventually reduced to seven—it maintains through recitation, whether individually or collectively, a stable and practically permanent constitution which has endured since then, up to the present.

This book, on which the believers began to meditate, possesses features particular to it alone, when compared to other monotheistic messages to which it refers, that is, the Torah, the Psalms of David, and the Gospels. And if we are to extend the comparison to approximately contemporary works, be it Latin (Digesta), or Greek, Maximus the Confessor, Romanos Melodos, and, more pertinently, The Fount of Wisdom of John

the Damascene, there is no doubt the Koran would present a more vivid contrast. The originality that astounded the Arabs and, soon after, even the Byzantine polemicists, will not but gain in intensity if submitted to a probe of its intrinsic properties, properties of which we are most assured. Being inherent to the Koran, these properties owe nothing to the speculation of others, not to a tradition that we can easily deem as broken, nor to methods anachronic to such things.

Let us turn once more to those properties having to do with the composition of the Koran, for they address best of all its quality as a book. It is exactly here that the majority of Westerners will see nothing more than a miscellany of disorganization and arbitrariness. We believe, however, that we can discern a structure of a type strongly akin to the synchronal. There, for instance, is a didactic recurrence of themes and the proliferation of alliterations, and also the frequent overlapping and merging of motives.

The argument for a synchronal structure suffers, nonetheless, from a central shortcoming. The traditional sequence of the revelation is maintained for eleven surahs, numbered 31 to 51, and these alternately enclose ten non-successive units. Within this entire group stand out such radiant texts as \ö. Yasrn and 40. The Believers; we could perhaps talk here of a central reinforcing support where the two dimensions, the chronological and the synchronal. would converge.

This would be even so much more convincing, since with surah 52. The Mount, begins the second half of the Book, as it is commonly accepted. A change of tone occurs then and there. The short surahs, which have an apocalyptic ring to them, and which proceed from the first Meccan period, pile up in the second part, while the homilies of the third period are symmetrically paralleled in the first part. On the other hand, the surahs of Medina, generally focusing on social matters (organizational and legislative’, are strewn among surahs 49 to 110, over almost the totality of the collected work. All this cannot be due to mere chance.

Many other features of what we ought to call. rightly. the Koranic edition attest to the same reflective, orderly character (even deliberative. 1 daresa\ \. 1 pass over the many mutations of the metatext, or the contents bearing on the discourse itself; the significance of the role grien in many surahs to the median verse; the presence of rhythmic expressions, often decimal; in sum. a number of facts bearing on form as well as content which we stressed elsewhere.[19]

The rejection of a classification of surahs in terms of the sequence of their revelation was an option carrying a crucial demarcation value. The Koranic discourse was thus destined to leave the domain of metahistorx in order to enter, as an object of culture, the history of man. Was it not. after all. complete, and did it not, at the same time, close the era of revelation? By the very movement with which it closed up itself, it made room for human ritualistic and repetitive practices, psalmody, exegesis, and a model; it returned to sacred history Its own levelation, along with the prophetic dictums which have accompanied it.

There is, moreover, an additional aspect which we have not touched upon yet, that is, its potential as an art form. Writing, in Islam, was not to remain a minor art confined only to the pages of a manuscript, nor even a social art. similar to Roman epigraphy. Rather, it was to assume the pro portions of a major art. plastic as well as spiritual, embodied in the superb mural works in stucco, plaster, and so on. which were to succeed one another over the centuries in a manner that has no analogy in the West.[20]

Another development, no less rich in cultural value, is the importance ascribed by Islamic tradition to the “science of letters,” ‘ilm al-huruf. Esoterism, Hermetism, and cosmogony all combined with phonetics and calligraphy in a manner little intelligible to moderns. We cannot but refer in this connection to the analysis recently made in relation to a work by Ibn ‘Arabi.[21] But even though this may be no more than very old speculation, in part preceding Islam. the elaboration of the letters into proper Arabic characters does not seem to have occurred before the third/ninth century.[22]

The final form of the Koran certainly had not been reached by the time the first copies of the Koran were made on parchment, and later on papyrus and paper were made. The caliph ‘Uthman, if we are to believe the tradition, was to have been the first among the copyists. He is said to have been assassinated while holding in his hand a copy of the Koran that he himself had written.[23] His assassin, al-Ghafiql, is said to have kicked the venerable volume with his foot.[24] For what reason? A few years later, the calligrapher Zayd ibn Aslan made a copy of the Koran for ‘A’ishah and another for Hafsah, both widows of the Prophet.[25]

In his comments on the renowned calligraphy of Ibn al-Bawwab (4.413/1022), D s. Rice brings into focus the evolution of styles of writing,[26] starting from the most ancient, the angular, through Kufic, and up to the cursive Naskhi, which prevailed toward the end of the fourth/tenth century. Many of these styles, illustrated with rich colors, were the object of study in a number of scholarly monographs.

For our part, our attention will turn to a Koran, printed in color in Italy by the Tunisian publisher A. Ben ‘Abdallah, based on a photocopy of a text calligraphed by Bach Mamluk Hajj Zuhayr, who had died, almost a centenarian, in 1904. This copy, dating from 1275/1858, was revised by Shaykh Muhammad ‘Ali al-Dalla’.[27] The 619-page volume, ornate with delicate colorings, presents a distinctive peculiarity. On each page, at the rate of one to three times per page, certain words or clusters of words are colored in red. The words affected consist in all grammatical forms,— substantives, pronouns, adjectives, ١’erbs, and so on. The referents did not seem to present any special character. The only oddity is that every time we open the volume flat, these words or clusters of words written in red on the right-hand page, the even-numbered page, also appear exactly at the corresponding place on the left-hand page, the odd-numbered page.

Coincidence, we might say? Impossible, since the same arrangement recurs from one end of the book to the other, or just about. It all begins with the Fatihah, hence to the right, the word al-dln of yawm al-dîn, wa of wa-iyyaka, alladhina of sirat alladhina parallel to the left of the words ladhina of alladhina yu’minuna, of wa of

wa-mimma razaqnahum, alladhina of alladhina yu’minima. Now, is this graphic tour de force due to a judicious prolongation of horizontal features in the body or writing? Undoubtedly, at times, it is. But coincidences or unusual tours de force are both apt to lead to perplexity, then stupor, when, we become aware that those symmetries, no matter how artificial they may be, persist from the beginning of the book to page 600

There is even more. In surah 26, The Poets, symmetry brings back, and recrossing them, nine lines of writing from page 378 to page 381. Translators are well aware of the refrain that recurs, with its own sameness, V. 103 and 104, on pages 121–122, 132–140, and 174–175. We had to have, however, the all too special configuration of this manuscript for these four distichs to overlap respectively two by two, from odd-numbered page to page.

For these regular visual patterns to stand out in 300 other interfaces of the volume, one would need to allow each of the recurrences to be lodged in its proper place through the transcription of fifteen lines on a page and the exact positioning of horizontal pot-hooks and intervals. This is quite strange, since the verbal material which is spread out over the sheets of our volume, as we all know, first appeared in a vocal and discursive manner in a sequence completely different from that of the manuscript.

The Koranic text has always been the focus of research, from philological investigation to numerical speculation. Nowadays, with the aid of computers, the focus has turned to the study of frequency patterns. This is how many features peculiar to the Book are now surfacing. To mention only one, the frequency of the letter qaf in the two Medinan Surahs, 2̈/and al-Shura, was 57 in each, totalling 114 times. This number, curiously, matches the number of surahs in the Book. Based on features of this kind, believers are apt to keep entertaining new arguments in support of the miraculous nature of the Koran. The secular researcher, rightly or wrongly, would see no more into it than an extreme case of internal regularity such as we often detect in the core of a poetic text, like the phonic symmetry noted by H. Meschonic in Victor Hugo, or the anagram of “spleen”

only recently noted by Roman Jacobson in the poem carrying the same title تمجل Baudelaire, and so on.

However, let US suspend the discussion at this point. What matters is to end with a conclusion based on hard evidence, and include a question for a further investigation.

1. The conclusion: The symmetries of the two-color manuscript described above do indeed confirm the highly analytical character of Koranic recension dating from the time of ‘Uthman. This is a conclusion we have reached through methods of internal textual criticism.

By becoming “foliar,” mushaf, the message had found a concrete visual form, quite at variance with its initial rhythm. One is now bound to view it as a “single composition,” jumlah wahidah (25, al-Furqan: 30), or as “unrolled sheets,” suhufun munashsharah (84, al-Mudaththar. 52). These definitions, however, were once disclaimed, and indeed they did not fit into the early stages of the message.

We must bear in mind, though, that it was through organized recitation that the Koranic message sustained its phonic power, connected with a remembrance, with a breath, with a voice, all so linked together as to evoke the image of the collectivity, rather than mere individuality.

Reading, tilawah, in fact, is different from a psalmody, qirn’ah, and, a fortiori, from intonation, taghanni, and from chanting, tartll. Reading calls for exegesis and for tradition, and it seeks an intellectual, in-depth grasp of the text, by meditating on it, and pursuing the analysis of its contents through the appropriate methods of exegesis or hermeneutics.

Materially, as already seen, this process has led to the development of several arts, including calligraphy, illumination, binding, gilding, and so on.

2. As to the question called up earlier, we still uphold the skepticism and doubt underlying the search we are venturing on.

The text of tanzll, “revelation,” turned into a book under ‘Uthman, was the outcome of an elaboration so rich in possibilities that throughout the centuries, it has held fast. What strikes US most in the present study is the active involvement, just less than one generation after the death of the Prophet, of an entire task force of experts designated by the Caliph himself, and apparently not without the full consensus of the Companions.

Yet again, how can we help being intrigued by the complete silence kept by the sources? This feeling will continue to live with US so long as there is no new evidence available to break this silence.

We can ill imagine, indeed, how an attempt at putting the Koran into shape, critical as it was, could have ever happened without arousing some opposition! Given the high stakes involved, one assumes there must have been some reaction, including some reactions that would qualify as hostile, if not even frightening. Is it not likely that some such reaction may well have initiated the uprising that finally took the life of the Caliph who had inaugurated the Mushaf?[28] Perhaps the relatively flimsy excuses invoked by the conspirators in vindication of such an outrageous action could well offer, a contrario, a clue to this action’s motive? This is an assumption that has yet to be, and perhaps never will be, sustained.

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[9] The data summarized below are made explicit in all works dealing with Koranic Islamology, especially R. Blachere, Introduction au Coran, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1959); w. Montgomery Watt, Bell's Introduction to the Qur'an (Edinburgh, 1970); and the introduction of the great commentator Shaykh Muhammad al-Tahir ibn 'Âshür, al-lahrir wa-al-tanwlr (Tunis, 1984), vol. 1.

[10] Ibn 'Ashur, op. cit., 1: 86.

[11] Montgomery Watt, op. cit., pp. 137 ff.

[12] El-Bokhari, Les traditions Islamiques, trans, o. Houdas (Paris, 1908), 3. 527 (Hadlth Anas).

[13] El-Bokhari op. cit., 3: title 66, ch. 3 and r.

[14] See Eugen Biser, "God's Word," in Dictionnaire de theologie, 1988 ed., p. 511ff.

[15] Abu al-Faraj al-Isbahani, Kitab al-aghânî, ed. İbrâhîm al-Abyârî, 31 vols. (Cairo, 1969), 4: 1335.

[16] Malik ibn Anas (al-Imam), al-Muwatta', ed. 'Abd al-Wahhab 'Abd al-Latif (Beirut, 1981), p. 330.

[17] Where another term comes close, phonetically, is in zabr, plural zubur. See Koran, 27: 192: Zubiir awwallna. The term zabur is particularly related to the Psalms of David.

[18] Ibn Manziir, Lisan al-‘Arab (Cairo, 1966).

[19] Reference here is made to the exegetical study which follows the introduction to my translation of the Koran into French (Paris, 1990).

[20] The monumental role of writing is made the subject of a study by Armando Petrucci, La Scrittura ideologia e rappresentazione (Turin, 1986). Emile Male had already brought out the relations between the ornamentation of cathedrals and the illumination of manuscripts. About the calligraphy of the Koran as a strictly regulated art, see Abü ‘Amr ‘Uthman ibn Sa’îd al-Dânî, al-Muqni’ firasm maşahif al-amşâr ma’a kitab al-naqat, ed. M. Sadiq Qamhawl (Cairo, 1978).

[21] See Denis Gril, “La science des lettres,” in Ibn ‘Arabi, Les illuminations de la Mecque, ed. Michel Chodkiewicz (Paris, 1988), p. 385ff.

[22] According to Sahl al-Tustarl (4.283/896) and Ibn Masarrah (d.319/931), for example.

[23] al-Tabari, Les quatre premiers califes, trans. Hermann Zotenberg (Paris, 1981), p. 325.

[24] Manuscript no. 14,246 of the National Library of Tunis. Also, M. Hia, The Prophet’s Establishing a State and His Succession \ةاآلاةمه١ةلع 1988)و p. 147.

[25] Ibn Anas, Muwattd’, p. 344.

[26] D.s. Rice, L’unique manuscritdIbn al-Bawwab, trans, from English, Club de Livre, Philiippe Leband, 1972.

[27] Manuscript no. 14,246 of the National Library of Tunis.

[28] There are indications given by Hichem Djait regarding the participation of the Qurra’, especially those of Kufah, in the rebellion against the Caliph. See his La grande discorde (1988), p. 125ff. and passim. According to Abd Allah ibn al-Ash’ath al-Sijistanî, in his Kitab al-maşâhif(C airo, 1985), p. 20ff., the conflict of the Companion ‘Abd Allah ibn Mas’ûd with the Caliph and with Zayd ibn Thabit on the question of the Koran has left aside the case of transcription.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-5.jpg]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-6.jpg]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-7.jpg][Sample pages of the Bach Mamluk Hajj Zuhayr Koran (Tunisia, 1858)]]

** 3. “Of Making Many Books There Is No End:” The Classical Muslim View

Fran; Rosenthal

In our time, we seem to have reached the point where we may well ask ourselves whether the incessant production of books might not be too much of a good thing. The more books we throw away (actually or figuratively), the more there are to take their place. It is no longer unjustified to hope against hope that book production could be limited, even if, on the face of it, it clearly involves an uphill battle comparable to the limitation of population growth. Of course, those in the book business, whether out in front or in the rear echelons, do not welcome the prospect of reduced production and consider the idea as anything from eccentric to scurrilous to outright dangerous.

Books have been valuable and cherished possessions all through history. For the first time, their devaluation as material objects could possibly have occurred in medieval Islam, what with the introduction of a rather cheap, yet durable, writing material and the feverish and almost global activity in science and scholarship.[29] This could conceivably have happened, but it did not. Before the Muslim era, no reahstic opportunity existed for the feeling to arise that just too many books might be around. The famous verse of Ecclesiastes 12:12: “Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of flesh,” at the most expresses a tentative apprehension as to theoretically uncontrollable quantities of books, and so do other putative complaints about the vastness of existing knowledge.[30] The biblical verse presents many difficulties for the understanding and lends itself to various interpretations. To the best of my—admittedly very limited—knowledge, no unanimity has as yet been reached as to what it really meant in its historical context. Whatever it did mean originally, it does not contain evidence that already in ancient times, people complained about too many books as physical objects being around. There were not, and could not have been.

The fact that Eccl. 12:12 is widely considered a later addition poses a further problem,[31] but this is a minor matter. Among the principal difficulties is, for one, the great variety of meanings of the Hebrew verb “to make” and, in the second colon, the meaning of the hapax legomenon lahag. Recent translations include a conservative “book learning” for “to make = to use,”[32] or “a thing of no purpose” for “no end,”[33] as well as more radical suggestions such as assuming that lahag is in fact parallel to “no end”[34] or re-interpreting the entire passage as “Und lass dich, mein Sohn, von ihnen gut belehren, viele Biicher ohne Unterlass zu benutzen und viel zu meditieren bis zur Korpermiidigkeit.”[35] The question of the applicability of “to make” to “books” appears to have been settled by the existence of an equivalent idiom in Aramaic meaning “producing...a document (spr znh zy ’nh ‘bdt)” and the Akkadian usage of ennesu as a stage in the bookmaking process.[36] The possibility that “making” here might mean “collecting” (with reference to EccL 2:8 “I got me singers”)[37] must be put on hold for the time being, although it would go well with the Arabic idiom of ikthar min al-kutub for collecting many books.[38] However, the production or overproduction of books would seem to be connected in Eccl. 12:12 to the physical process of writing rather than the intellectual task of composing works.

Lahag, translated traditionally as “study” reflecting the Greek translation and a combination with Arabic lahija “to be deeply engaged in something” (preferably, in study)[39] remains uncertain. The derivation from the root hagah (or a Ugaritic hg)[40] cannot be dismissed offhand but leaves room for doubt. Rabbinical associations of lahag with l-~-g and h-g-wy are as much guesswork as modern theories. It should, however, be noted that both ك-^عج and h-g-wy are based upon the uttering of sounds, such as stammering or scoffing. The Targum speaks of “(making) books of wisdom” as parallel to “(the occupation with and understanding of) the words of the Torah.”[41] More to the point, the Syriac translation has man(l)la which is most readily understood as “speech.” Following this lead, a Syriac commentary of Ecclesiastes used “words (melleyr[42] And Arabic knows a noun lahjah in the meaning of “tongue, speech, dialect,” whose history, however, is not quite clear.[43] It is thus possible that lahag, whatever its derivation, refers to some sort of oral expression. This was suspected also by M. ٧. Fox who states that “either ‘study’ or ‘utter’ would make sense here, because study in the ancient world was essentially oral recitation.”[44] Taking it all together, we may conclude that Eccl. 12:12 indeed referred originally to the combination of two modes of study, the reading and reproduction of written materials and oral discussion. Whatever mode was used committed, in the eyes of the author, the student to an endless and painful task.

It may be worth noting that Eccl. 12:12 seems to be more famous now than it was in premodern times. Generally speaking, the verse was not much discussed and, again speaking generally, it was not frequently cited. From the medieval Muslim environment, we have a comment by the tenth-century Karaite Salmon ibn Yeruham, paraphrased by G. Vajda: “Et garde-toi encore des livres innombrables qui ont ete faits.” Man must not attempt to become too wise.

Nobody should make the rounds of cities and markets to search for philosophical and heretical works.[45] Reflecting further the attitude of

certain segments of Muslim scholarship, Abu al-Barakat al-Baghdadl (d. ca. 547/1166) interprets Eccl. 12:12 as a warning against wasting time on books that are an outgrowth of the human imagination, whose study could take up more than a human lifetime. Abu al-Barakat translates lahag as hadhayan “talking nonsense.”[46]

It was too much knowledge, not too many books, that was complained about in ancient times and continued to be complained about through medieval Islam. Knowledge, especially in certain fields, could not be mastered in its entirety; of books there were, in a way, never enough. In the course of time, we often hear it said that works in a given discipline were “many.” For example, Ibn Khallikan (d. 682/1282) said that he did not intend to include caliphs among his biographees, because “the many works on them are sufficient.”[47] Works on history were so many that they obviously could not all be listed.[48] And, in particular, anything connected with hadlth and other religious subjects produced an enormous literature.[49] When an eighth/fourteenth-century scholar wrote a commentary of al-Bukhârî’s Sahih, he was able to draw on 300 earlier commentaries;[50] for him, this was a boast rather than a complaint. This superabundance of specialized works also to an unwholesome restriction to standard works.[51]

Despair in the face of an overwhelming amount of existing knowledge was the almost universal complaint and the situation most generally referred to. The physical problem of the multitude of books was much less obvious. There were many reasons for this state of affairs. In the first place, it has to do with the character of our sources. They were the work of authors who naturally would not wish to play down the desirability of making more books —preferably, of course, their own. Like ourselves, they would rarely be willing to admit that anything of theirs could be superfluous, let alone harmful. In their forewords, the one thing they generally avoided was referring to an existing glut of other works on the subject.[52] A second, more objective reason was the frequent lack of books in a given environment and the constant need to replenish the stock. In an area as vast and diversified as the Muslim world, imbalances in the supply of books were unavoidable. Books that were plentiful in one place were hardly known and accessible in another.[53] Since books were expensive, scholars, with rare exceptions, had to build up their libraries by copying materials with their own hands; this was so not only at the beginning of their careers, but

usually continued throughout their lives. Not many were so fortunate as to be able to buy (or inherit) books or have others do the copying for them as a favor or inexpensively, and it was probably quite unique for a scholar to have a wife whom he could train in proper copying.[54]

A third reason is peculiar to Muslim civilization and of great import for the attitude toward books. It resulted from the never abandoned fiction—very soon to be enshrined in the very center of Muslim intellectual activity, the science of hadith—of the primacy of the spoken word. Books were seen as innovations that came about only after the year 120/738 when the true models of scholarship, the men around Muhammad and most men of the second generation, were dead,[55] and so on. In fact, of course, written books were indispensable almost from the outset, as was admitted in various ways, for instance, by claiming that memory had been good enough among the ancient Arabs to suffice for preserving and safely transmitting all knowledge; among later generations, this was no longer the case.[56] It became a matter of pride to own, or, at least, have access to, as many books as possible. Yet the deep conviction lingered that there was, in addition, something else that was essential for civilization, no matter how many, or how few, books were around. As a result, their numbers were basically inconsequential. Yet even in this climate, subdued feelings not only about the very existence of books but also about their numbers can be observed on occasion. Religious scholars would complain that once knowledge was committed to writing, there developed an unending process of writing “book after book after book,”[57] the implication being that oral transmission was more restricted and thus less contaminated and more reliable than the endless array of written material. Even for secular scholars, the great increase in books (al-kutub wa-al-taşânîf) made it possible for ignoramuses to infiltrate the ranks of qualified intellectuals, and actually diminish the quality of books.[58] In a way, this can be read, as another faint complaint about the proliferation of literature.

There were other ways in which feelings of this sort tried sporadically to work their way to the surface. This is the subject of the following pages.

The formation of large libraries which was eagerly pursued inevitably led to problems caused by quantity and variety. Selectivity in forming a library, be

it that of a private individual or one of semi-public character, was indicated.[59] It was an occasional problem then and, needless to say, has remained one to this day. Not discarding any book was considered the better part of wisdom, even if it was a book on a subject beyond the owner's interest and competence. The brief chapter on "the amassing of books (al-ikthar min aikutub)" in the Khatib al-Baghdâdî's (d. 464/1071) Taqyid al-'Hm "The written fixation of knowledge" contains the essence of medieval thought on the importance of each single book for the educated. As the title suggests, the Taqyid ultimately comes out in favor of the written word but balances and, in a way, conceals the message by first presenting a full array of negative attitudes toward books. The chapter in question deals with three considerations that work against selling any of the books in one's library or not buying books one has the opportunity of buying. Anecdotal as it is, it is best reported in the Khatib's own words.[60]

The first of the three considerations is that a book deemed disposable may later on turn out to be badly needed: "As remarked by some scholar, a person must hoard all kinds of subjects, even subjects he does not know. He must amass works on very many subjects. He must not believe that he can dispense with any subject. If he can dispense with some books on one occasion, he may need them on another. If he is unhappy with them at one time, he may enjoy them at another. If he has no time for them on a given day, he may have time for them on another day. He must not act in a hurry (to sell a book or pass up the opportunity to buy one), lest he later regret very much to have done so. It could happen that someone discards a book and then wants it badly but cannot get hold of it. This may cause him great trouble and many sleepless nights. We have a story about a certain scholar who said: ،Once I sold a book thinking that I did not need it. Then I thought of some matter that was dealt with in that book. I looked for it among all my books but could not find it. I decided to ask some scholar about it the next morning, and I stayed up on my feet all night.' When he was asked why he did not sit down rather than stand, he replied: "I was so perturbed that I could not get a wink of sleep.'"

This scholar only lost a night's sleep and apparently was able to find a replacement in a colleague's library. But it could also be terribly frustrating and expensive to sell or discard a book, as described by the Khatib in the following two stories: "Someone sold a book thinking that he did not need it.

Then he needed and looked for a copy but could not find any either to loan or to buy. The man to whom he had sold his copy had left for his place of residence. He went to him and told him that he would like to cancel the sale and return the purchase price. When the man refused, he asked him to lend him the book, so that he could copy the passage he was interested in. Again, he received a negative response, so he went home frustrated and swore that he would never again sell a book. There was someone else who sold a book which he thought he did not need, but later he did need a passage from it. He went to the new owner and asked him to let him copy the passage in question but was told: 'You won't copy it unless you pav me the price of the entire book.' So he had no choice but to return the price of the book, in order to copy the passage he wanted."[61] The words of someone who was asked why he did not sell the books he did not need sums it all up: "If I do not need them today, I may need them the next day."

The second consideration is that books in fields with which their owner is unfamiliar at the moment may give him the opportunity to familiarize himself with that field. Of course, any field of scholarship has its special interest: "When someone bought a book outside his own special field and asked why he did that, he replied: "When I buy a book outside my own field of learning, I do it in order to make that particular field part of my knowledge." And when someone else was asked why he did not buy books to have them in his house, he replied that it was his lack of knowledge that prevented him from building up a library. He was told that one who does not know buys books in order to know. Again, someone else who used to buy every book he saw replied to the question why he bought books he did not need: "I may need (at some time) what I don't need (now)."[62] We may add here that the Khatib's chapter ends with an anecdote about the great bibliophile al-Jahiz (d. 255/868) to the same effect, with the stress on the idea that all written materials should be investigated as to whether they contain information not found elsewhere. Nothing should ever be dismissed offhand.[63]

The third consideration concerns books as a scholar's indispensable tools. He should therefore have them handy at all times: "A judge," the story goes, "used to go into debt to buy books. Questioned about it he replied: 'Should I not buy something that has taken me so far (in the world, i.e., to a judgeship)?'[64] Further in the same vein: "A carpenter had to sell his ax and saw. He was sad about it and regretted having sold his

tools, until one day he saw a scholar, a neighbor of his, in the booksellers' market selling a book. Now he was consoled. He remarked: 'If a scholar can sell his tools, a craftsman is certainly excusable, or even more so, when he sells his.'

We may conclude from this discourse in praise of books—which is one among many—that books were often so plentiful that one could think of discarding some, but this was generally considered wrong and something one was not supposed to do. There was, however, a dissenting voice if a rather lonely one according to our knowledge. The well-known physician and scientist in eleventh-century Egypt, Ibn Ridwan, tells US that he either sold the books for which he had no use or stored them away in chests. Selling them, he contends, was preferable to storing them.[65] It is not quite clear whether he meant that it was better to put unneeded books back into circulation rather than keeping them out of sight. It is, however, more likely given, Ibn Ridwan's great concern with his finances, that he was unwilling to pass up an opportunity to make some more money. He was well known as the champion of the hotly debated view that learning from books was better than by means of oral instruction. It does not seem that he was complaining about owning too many books, or more than he was able to cope with, although this could have easily been the case.

Large semi-public libraries faced a bigger problem as to what to do with their holdings when they grew too large. Books being valuable, the most common danger for libraries, not the least the libraries of which every college had one with a scholarly librarian, was frequent inroads into their holdings by neglect and theft (the always present danger of accidental destruction by fire or water damage does not concern US here). When large libraries were dissolved, it proved a bonanza for scholars who could acquire or appropriate books cheap or sell worthless or made to appear worthless, library books for their own benefit.[66] The failure to return books borrowed from libraries or individuals was often bemoaned in verse and prose. It was thus probably much more difficult to hold together large libraries than trying to weed out unwanted materials. However, we also hear about an author's hesitancy as to whether his works would be accepted for incorporation into a large library.[67] Selectivity was always practiced by collectors and was required in forming a waqf library.[68]

The deliberate destruction by fire or other means such as erasing (maha), washing off (ghasala), tearing up (kharraqa), or burying (dafana) should be mentioned here, even if it had other motives than the weeding out of books when they had become too many. Regrettably, as elsewhere in the world, book burnings were not unheard of in Islam. They affected principally books adjudged heretical or otherwise religiously objectionable.[69] This contributed to the virtual disappearance of manuscripts of such works over the centuries. Where there were both fervent partisans and violent opponents in substantial numbers, of course, the situation was different. This, for instance, is shown by Ibn ‘Arabi’s (d. 638/1240) voluminous corpus. Even if there were those who wrote fatwas, permitting the destruction of all books by him,[70] or who went to such scurrilous lengths as tying the Kitab al-Fuşüş to the tail of a dog,[71] his innumerable followers saw to it that copies of his works survived. An instructive story’ on the destruction of a work of presumably literary merit is reported in connection with a book by the blind poet al-Ma’am (d. 449/1057) which supposedly criticized the Qur’an. A librarian, of all people, destroyed it. He was challenged by al-Wajlh al-NahwI (532-612/1137[81–1215) with a witty argument: If the work was indeed equal to, or better than, the Qur’an, it would be untouchable; on the other hand, if it was, as there could be no doubt, inferior to it, it ought to be preserved as a witness to the inimitability of the Holy Book.[72] Perhaps, the underlying and unexpressed moral of the al-Wajlh’s remark was disapproval of the destruction of books in general.

The destruction of valuable property such as books expectedly found the attention of jurists. Strict Hanbalite opinion, for instance, was expressed by a scholar of the stature of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah (d. 751/1350). Other schools and individuals saw the matter differently.[73] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah held that no financial responsibility resulted from the destruction of books. It was as legal and free from liability as the destruction of everything connected with wine. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah’s basic tradition is one of Abu Bakr al-Marrudhi (al-Marwazi) (d. 275/888) who consulted Ibn Hanbal (d. 241/855) on whether he thought that he could burn or tear up a book he had borrowed that contained objectionable matters. Ibn Hanbal expressed the view that it was permissible, quoting a tradition to the effect that the Messenger of God once saw a book in ‘Umar’s hand in which ‘Umar had written down material

from the Torah that had pleased him because it agreed with the Qur’an. The Prophet s face showed such anger that ‘Umar rushed to the furnace and threw the book into it. How then, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah continued, would the Prophet have felt had he been able to see books which contradicted the Qur’an and his Sunnah as were published later. Only the Qur’an and the hadlth were permitted to be put down in writing, and this is presented as the view of Ibn Hanbal himself.

All books on TO here, approximately, dogmatic and juridical speculation—and all the more so, all books on other subjects were anathema as leading to error. To err is human, Ibn Hanbal is said to have opined, but the most prone to error are those who write books. While the composition of books was seen as a complicated legal problem, Ibn Hanbal and his followers were adamantly opposed to books that were in conflict with the Qur’an and the Sunnah. It was, however, different with works written against those books; they could fall into any of the positive legal classifications as necessary, preferable, or permitted.[74] It does not take much to realize that we have here a good example of the eternal problem of censorship. Once set in motion, does it have proper limits, and can they be observed without detriment to intellectual life and growth? We do not know the answer.

Another common theme is that of an author himself burning his books or ordering their destructions. Among litterateurs, Abü Hayyan al-Tawhldi (d. after 400/1009) is famous or infamous for having “burned his books at the end of his life because they served no longer any purpose and he did not want those who did not appreciate their worth to have them after his death.” In a letter, in which he defends his action, he speaks of burning his valuable books or washing them off. Having lost everybody near and dear to him, he says, ٤٤1 found it difficult to leave them to people who would play around with them, besmirch my honor when looking into them, gloat over my oversights and mistakes when studying them more closely, and look at each other (and say how) incompetent I am.”[75] This makes it clear that al-Tawhldi speaks about his own books and not about books by others in his library. It would seem a bit curious that he would burn his own works when they included books that had been published and had been in general circulation for a long time. Therefore, speaking about his own “books,” there can be no doubt that he had in mind his unpublished manuscripts and, in particular, his notebooks and drafts.[76] This also applies to, and is

confirmed by, his list of those early Muslims who served as model and excuse for his action. The earliest name in al-Tawhîdî's list is Abu 'Amr ibn al-'Alâ' who buried his books. A Sufi, Dawud al-Tâ'î (d. 205/821)و threw his books into the river,[77] while Yusuf ibn Asbat locked his away in a mountain cave.[78] Another Sufi, Aba Sulayman al-Dârânî, burned his books in a furnace.[79] The great Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161/778) tore his manuscripts to pieces and scattered the pieces in the wind.[80] The last name in the list is that of a teacher of al-Tawhidf Aba Sa'îd al-Sîrâfî (d. 369/979). who exhorted his son (Aba) Muhammad[81] to burn his books if they turned out to play him and others false and distract them from acquiring religious merit; as in the numerous examples from modern times for requests to destroy the literary Nachlass of famous men, this request, of course, may or may not have been honored. The variety of ways for the disposal of books we find in al-Tawhidfs list is owed to his sense of style, and not necessarily to the sources from which he derived his information.

With the possible exception of Abu Sa'îd al-Sîrâfî who, however, was highly praised for his asceticism, all these men were famous exemplars of Muslim piety and religious commitment. Their alleged actions expressed their suspicion of the written word in general. But they hardly were appropriate models for al-Tawhldl who, in spite of pietistic episodes in his life, produced mainly works that were quite worldly in character. As other sources make abundantly clear, the destruction of one's written materials is a topos of the science of hadith and of mysticism. How much reality was connected with the topos, we cannot judge. Later biographers showed a certain lack of enthusiasm for reporting these data.

We thus hear it said already about the first/seventh-century 'Abldah al-Salmam that he called for his "books" and erased them when he lay on his deathbed. Asked for his reason, he replied that he feared that some people might get hold of them who would not treat them properly (yada'unaha ghayr mawadPiha).[82] This seems to be the earliest and, superfluous to say, fictitious example within the tradition of hadith scholarship. The Khatib al-Baghdadl mentions already Ibn Mas'üd among his many examples of men who erased written hadith material .[83] He tells of Abu Qilabah that he willed his "books" to another scholar if the latter survived him; if not, they were to be burned or, according to another recension, torn up.[84] A certain Yunus ibn'Isa meant to burn his books.[85]

Shu’bah ibn al-Hajjaj (d. 160/777) directed his son Sa’d to wash off and bury his “tooks” after his death, which was done.[86] Others buried eighteen chests and baskets of books for Bishr al-Hâfî.[87] It is to the credit of Ibn Hanbal that he could not see any sense in burning books.[88]

These and similar data continued to have a long life. The seventeenth-century Hajj! Khallfah has a list that includes al-Tawhîdî’s Abu ‘Amr ibn al-‘Alâ’, Dawud al-Tâ’î, and Sufyan al-Thawrli. He took their names not from al-Tawhldl but from other sources which he indicates, but which I have been unable to check. He added the Sufi Ibn Abu al-Hawari (6th/12th century) from the Hilyah of Abu Nu’aym al-Işfahânî (d. 430/103(0). The Hilyah presents different recensions, all of which agree that Ibn Abi al-Hawarl was motivated by his conviction that books may serve as guides to gnosis but become superfluous as soon as a person attains gnosis and reaches the Lord.[89]

It is to Hajj! Khallfah’s credit that he clearly distinguished between the two strands that defined all the statements about the destruction of “books.” One of them, he realized, was the need of hadith theoreticians to produce telling evidence for the alleged superiority of oral over written transmission. The other was the persistent claim of pious individuals and devoted mystics to have direct access to the divine which made any material medium such as books altogether unnecessary and undesirable.[90] Hajj! Khallfh considers the view expressed by Ibn Hajar in connection with Dawud al-Tâ’î that the motivation for the destruction of their books by men like him was the prevention of their transmission in a way that might lead to their being branded as “weak transmitters.” On his part, Hâjjî Khallfah realized that more was involved here: “This explanation,” he says, “would not hold for the destruction of their notebooks (dafatir) by Ibn Abi al-Hawârî and his ilk. Dawud al-Tâ’î did what he did because he was concerned about the resulting weakness of his isnad. On the other hand, Ibn Abi al-Hawarl did it because of his asceticism and devotion to God. The explanation why he (and others like him) chose to destroy (their books, instead of selling them or giving them away) might perhaps be (sought in their fear) that, if they had divested themselves of the possession of their dafatir through gift or sale, their emotional (qalbf) attachment to them would not have been severed completely and they could not be sure that

they might not at some time get the urge to go back to them and study them, thereby occupying themselves with something other than God.”[91]

In historical cases, the evidence for such destruction is occasionally ambiguous. Thus, we hear that Ahmad ibn Ismâ’îl ibn Abi al-Su’üd (814-870/ 1412–66) reached the point, probably because of religious scruples (3), where he wanted to give up all his literary activities, and he washed off all his poetical and prose writings, so that only his previously published works survived. However, another source maintains that this did not happen intentionally. When Ibn Abi al-Su’üd was in the process of sorting out the poems he did not like in order to destroy them, a colleague appeared unexpectedly and he went out to meet him. Meanwhile, he ordered someone to destroy the papers on the right in his study. That individual became confused and destroyed the papers which Ibn Abi al-Su’üd wanted to keep. When Ibn Abi al-Su’üd came back and saw what had happened, he was very dismayed (suqitafi yadihi) and destroyed the rest.[92]

Such destruction of papers and notes, or books in our sense, whether historical or not, did not reflect on the size of book production. This, I feel, probably also applies to a statement telling US that, at the time it was made, there were people who disapproved of all authorship (al-taşnîf wa-al-ta’lîf), even of those who were qualified and knowledgeable enough to write books. So far, I have been unable to trace this statement to any source earlier than Badr al-Dîn ibn Jamaah (639-733/1241-1333) who mentions it in his well-known treatise on education, entitled Tadhkimt alsami’ wa-al-mutakallim[93] Ibn Jama’ah strongly disapproves of this attitude. If, he argues, there is no legal disapproval of the written fixation of poetry and entertaining stories, provided no indecency is involved, why, then, should the writing of books on useful religious subjects be disapproved? It is obvious that unqualified people should never be allowed to write books on any subject. As Ibn Jama’ah sees it, the only possible explanation for the disapproval of authoring books is the constant envy and competitiveness among generations (al-tahasud bayna ahi al-a’şâr).[94] Quoting Ibn Jamâ’ah’s view, Hâjjî Khalifah then goes on to criticize it as a reflection

of the popular attitude that considers only the achievements of earlier generations as important and routinely holds contemporary scholars in low esteem, and he treats his readers to the verses:

You who think nothing of contemporaries, considering the ancients to be out in front: The ancients were once young/new, And the young/new will stay on and become ancient.[95]

Neither Ibn Jama’ah nor Hâjjî KhalTfah seem to be correct. The disapproval of composing books may also here be rooted rather in the pietistic/mystic attitude and the long tradition of philosophers (such as Socrates) and, above all, mystics who feel revulsion at the thought of profaning their insights. It is not impossible that the expression could be explained as a complaint about the proliferation of books, but this does not really seem plausible.

The problem of overproduction is more directly addressed in the strong sentiment in favor of abridgements and brief handbooks as against long, comprehensive, and scholarly works. The latter were, of course, always produced in large numbers. They were, in fact, quite characteristic products of medieval Muslim civilization. However, the attitude, serious in part and in part a snobbish pretense, that big books are a nuisance was old and deeply engrained. al-Tawhidi put it succinctly: “Big books are boring (al-kutub al-tiwal mus’imah).[96] As A. Mez stressed long ago, writers of Muslim civilization’s so-called golden age feared nothing more than boring the reader.[97] This fear persisted through the centuries and found expression in the frequently professed aversion to unnecessary length and the claim of having exercised restraint for the sake of brevity. While conciseness had special meaning for the entertaining literature, it soon invaded the scholarly and scientific community where it led to the popularity of compendia. Resistance to the trend never faltered entirely. For instance, in the introduction of his long geographical dictionary, Yaqut (d. 627/1229) expressed himself with strong emotion against any attempt to shorten his work, quoting al-Jahiz as having been of the same mind when he stated forcefully that an author is “like a painter; his work is a painting representing its subject perfectly, and the idea of abridging it means atrocious mutilation.[98] The practice (often also indulged in by us) of exploiting large works for educational and/or commercial reasons by compiling shortened

versions. which, as noted by Yaqut, stood a better chance of achieving wide dissemination, was part and parcel of medieval Muslim life.

It was recognized that progress dictated the creation of larger and better works. Treatments of new and as yet unexplored subjects tended to start out small and then grow to ever larger size in the course of time.[99] Originality was stressed as the fundamental purpose of and justification for writing and was one of the guiding principles of research.[100] The remark, already used by Abu

Tammam (d. 231/846) the poet as a cento,[101] was constantly repeated: “How much did the ancients leave for later generations (kam taraka al-awwalu lil-akhiri).” al-Jahiz is quoted again by Yâqüt as having stated that nothing is more harmful to science and scholarship than the opposite contention that the ancients did not leave anything for later generations, as this had a discouraging and debilitating effect.[102] The consequence, however, was the constant creation of new disciplines and subdisciplines, small at first and then often expanding to barely manageable proportions. With the technical means then available, they were probably unmanageable and required forgetting and discarding. More, and better, techniques are available now and offer a certain, possibly deceptive, measure of hope that we shall be able to keep up with the accumulation of knowledge and of books.

The theoretical approach of philosophers to the overwhelming mass and variety of knowledge put into writing was to suggest, as did al-Tawhidi and al-Miskawayh (d. 422/1030), that “since the particulars (juz’îvât) are infinite, and whatever is infinite cannot achieve existence, it is the generalities of each discipline, which comprise all its particulars inpotentia, that should be aimed at.”[103] Deprived of its technical philosophical trimmings, the idea also lived on and found expression, for instance, in al-Zarkashfs (d. 794/1391) detailed elaboration of the different Quranic sciences. Since, he claims, “the ulum al-Qur’ân are innumerable and the Qur’an’s meanings are inexhaustible, one must deal with them (not exhaustively but) to the degree possible.” And “since earlier scholars composed no work comprising the different topics (anwa’) of Quranic science in the way it was done in relation to

the science of hadith," he wrote his comprehensive work covering forty-six topics, but, he says,

I am aware that every one of these topics cannot be dealt with exhaustively by any human being. If anyone tried, the whole of his life would be spent, and yet, he would not accomplish his task. Therefore, we have restricted ourselves to the principles (uşül) of each topic, with (only) occasional hints at the details (fiışûl), for—quoting Hippocrates without naming him—"the craft is long and life is short."[104] We have dealt with as much as can possibly be achieved by imperfect speech, in accordance with the verse:

They said: Take the essence/eye (!ayri) of everything! I replied: There is excellence in the essence/eye, but the beholder of the essence/the glance of the eye (is imperfect).[105]

In the popular and entertaining literature, a simpler analogy was proposed in a saying which, like the philosophical approach, also had its roots in classical antiquity: Like a bee, an author should select the best flower. A more direct version of the same idea was attributed to ancient Muslims such as 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas (d. 68/686) and Ibn Şîrîn (d. 110/728): "Knowledge is too much for being comprehended in its entirety. Thus, take the best of every knowledge!"[106]

The statement of Ibn 'Abbas was combined later with another one attributed to al-Sha'bî who, like Ibn Şîrîn, lived a generation after Ibn 'Abbas. al-Sha'bî (d. 105/723) supposedly also alluded to Hippocrates without naming him. As he phrased it: "Knowledge is much, and life is little. Thus, take of knowledge the variety of its inner spirit (arwahy—that is, its essences Çuyûri)—and leave alone its outward expression (hurüf)\"[107]

This advice was meant for the creative scholar and intellectual. For the mass of the educated, the compendium, the short exposition of the essentials or high points of a subject or the selective presentation of details,

promised a better approach toward the elusive mastery of knowledge in its infinite variety. Another approach was for an author to justify writing a book by suggesting that his work, being an original product, would serve to replace all other works in the field[108]—this, we might say, being one way of dealing with the avalanche of books. In writing his great chronological work, al-Bırûnî (d. 440/1048), for instance, claimed that the highly educated person who asked him to compose such a work did so in order to have a book that would make it superfluous for him to consult a large number of sources.[109] More commonly, authors expressed on their own the hope or conviction that they were about to replace any need to consult all the earlier works that had dealt with their subject. The large number of titles such as al-Mughni, it may be noted, also attests to this motivation. On the other hand, it could also happen that a would-be author originally thought that the existing literature was exhaustive and made another work on the same subject unnecessary. After much research, however, he discovered that this was not the case, and he was justified in going ahead with his project and compose a more complete work likely to supplant all his predecessors' efforts. He reflected, at the end, "how much the ancients had left for later generations to do."[110]

The production of compendia in order to cope with the great amount of material to be read and digested and to make the acquisition of knowledge easier for the student eventually found full discussion in both its positive and its negative aspects in Ibn Khaldun's Muqaddimah.[111] As Ibn Khaldun (d. 808/1406) saw it, the great number of scholarly works, coupled with the refinement and sophistication reached in many fields, is an obstacle to scholarship, while the great number of brief handbooks is detrimental to the formation of a sound scholarly habit and thus of outstanding scholars. In many disciplines such as grammar[112] the literature is too vast for everything to be perused. More recently, says Ibn Khaldun, this has also come to apply to the many writings on literary criticism which were produced in addition to the four standard works on the subject.[113] An even more crowded field, the science of hadith, had developed an enormous amount of books and this had the consequence that a limited number of basic works was exclusively used for reference.[114] Ibn Khaldun, it seems, considered this a rather dubious development. He did not go as far as to suggest that there were too many books on the market, but he clearly intimated that something was wrong with the prevailing situation and called for remedies if such could be found. Focusing his attention on the handbooks,

abridgements, and compendia, he acknowledged that one of the legitimate purposes of authorship was generally recognized the production of brief and succinct abridgements.[115] The custom, he said, had become popular in his time (although it was, of course, widely practiced in preceding centuries). He considered such abridgements as often awkward but did not object to them as such. He pointed out that on the one hand, they tended to be too succinct and complicated for beginners, while, on the other, they were likely to stultify genuine scholarly minds, for true scholarship, he argued, required the painstaking study of long and detailed works over a considerable extent of time. It is clsar that for Ibn Khaldun and those who followed him, the issue was not seen simply as the superabundance of books, although he realized that it caused a problem. It was rather a question of the proper methods and goals of scholarly and literary activity which were appropriate for a highly developed civilization such as his. These methods and goals, however, happened unavoidably to be dependent on the relentless production and wide availability of books. By his time and very probably much earlier, their numbers had come to seem threatening.

Ibn Khaldun’s discussion greatly impressed Hâjjî Khallfah who utilized it in the introduction of his large catalogue of Arabic books in Istanbul or otherwise known in his time.[116] In his capacity as a bibliographer, Hâjjî Khallfah might well have had special feelings about the cultural significance of the riches of book production in Islam. About seven centuries earlier, the situation was different. In his famous Fihrist, Ibn al-Nadlm (d. 380/990) had already vast numbers of titles to report on, but there was no real reason for him to sense, let alone comment on, too many books. So he concerned himself in his opening pages with the technical aspects of bookmaking which to him meant handwriting and scripts in their various forms and historical development. In the century before Hâjjî Khallfah, Tashkbpriizadeh produced a mammoth catalogue of the sciences, entitled Miftah al-sa’adah. His interest lay in the enormous amount of what he classified as special disciplines that together constituted the sum total of written knowledge no longer to be mastered in its entirety; he had occasion to mention only a limited number of standard works. It is due to Tshkoprizadeh’s influence that Hâjjî Khallfah in his introduction discourses lengthily on knowledge and its multiple disciplines, instead of book production as would have been logical. Thus, he misses out on the opportunity to speculate on the subiect that interests US here most. He remarks, however, in the beginning that an exhaustive bibliography such as

his had become finally necessary, “because the scholarly disciplines and books are many, and the lives of individuals are preciously short.”[117]

In conclusion, let me state that the feeling that there are simply too many books in the world remains a present-day phenomenon and is left to US not only to ponder but also to try to do something about it, if this is in our power. Possibly the fate of our civilization depends on it. In medieval Islam, books as physical objects were valuable since, for the ordinary individual, they were difficult to obtain and to amass; although plentiful in some locations, they could be scarce in others. The censorial destruction of books for one reason or another did occur at times, to the detriment of modern scholarship, but contributed little to limiting the constant increase in the number of books. The relationship between knowledge and books remained determined by a fictitious and, from our point of view, unfortunate distinction between oral and written information. Again, this did not contribute much to diminishing book production. It did, however, give some slight encouragement to the age-old tradition that some type of special secret or sacred knowledge was better left unwritten. Still, in the face of the pretended behef in the superiority of oral transmission, it was generally recognized that all)knowledge was important and would disappear without books. This recognition often extended to the realization that all written materials were valuable and required preservation. The only practical attempts, however, to regulate, if modestly, the flood of books consisted of the production of works that were supposed to take the place of all the previous publications in a given field, and of the composition of handbooks and compendia, but the value and efficacy of these procedures did not remain unquestioned. Before the age of printing and modern technology, this was probably the most that could be done. The Muslim scholars cited here deserve credit for having been aware, if ever so dimly, of the problems resulting from the overproduction of books as an unintended by-product of the intellectual flourishing of their civilization. As it turned out, of making many books there was no end in medieval Islam, and we have every reason to be glad that this was so.

[29] A good brief survey of contemporary scholarship on all aspects of bookmaking is by G. Endress, in Grundriss derarabischen Philologie, ed. by Wolfdietrich Fischer (Wiesbaden, 1983), l:271ff.

[30] While I was working on this paper, the Book Review section of th eNew York Times of 20 March 1989 pubhshed an essay by Arthur Krystal, “On Writing: Let There Be Less,” dealing interestingly with our subject as reflected through the ages. Krystal mentions the Ancient Egyptian statement of Khakheperre-sonbe, which reads in the translation of WK. Simpson: “He said: Would that I had unknown speeches, erudite phrases in new language which has not yet been used, free from the usual repetitions, not the phrases of past speech which (our) forefathers spoke.” See WK. Simpson (ed.). The Literature ofAncient Egypt (New Haven and London, 1972, 1973), pp. 230–33. This should not be understood as a complaint about the existence of too much literature. Rather, it is an expression of the author’s desire to be original. Expectedly, the modern plea for fewer books elicited heated responses among the essay’s readers, as shown by letters to the Book Review of 30 April 1989, p. 5.

[31] An exception is Michael V. Fox, Qohelet and his Contradictions (Sheffield, 1989. Bible and Literature Series 18), p. 311. I am grateful to Robert R. Wilson for bibliographical guidance through the vast ocean of biblical studies.

[32] Cf. R.B.Y. Scott’s commentary on Ecclesiastes in the Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY, 1963).

[33] Fox, op. cit., 237.

[34] According to M. Dahood, cf. H.L. Ginsberg, Koheleth (Tel Aviv 1961), p. 139.

[35] Osweld Loretz, Qohelet und derAlte Orhw? (Freiburg-Basel-Wien, 1964), p. 139.

[36] Cf. Ginsberg, loc. cit.; Michael Fishbane, Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel (Oxford, 1985), pp. 30–32: Fox, op. cit., p. 328f.

[37] The presence of a possessive pronoun, which strengthens the meaning of collecting, would hardly be needed or fit into the syntax of Eccles. 12:12.

[38] It seems as yet undecided whether harbeh (=Aram. Saggi) is used here as an adjective or as an adverb (cf. L Goldin, “The end of Ecclesiastes,” in A. Altmann, ed.. Biblical Motifs [Cambridge, 19661, pp. 135–58.) The adverbial combination, lit., “the much making of books,” appears preferable. In Semitic languages there is no easy distinction between “much” and “too much.” Thus, harbeh in Eccles. 7:16 is translated by Ginsberg “don’t overdo,” cf. his The Five Megilloth (Philadelphia, 1969), p. 68.

[39] Cf. for instance Muhammad ibn al-Rahman al-Sakhw al-Daw’ al-lami’ li-ahl al-Qam al-Tasi’, 12 vols. (Cairo, 1353-55/1934-36), 9:259, “lahija bi-talab al-hadith wa-al-qira\ah:\

[40] See above, n. 6, and M. Dahood, “Canaanite-Phoenician influence in Qoheleth,” in Biblica 33 (1952), p. 219.

[41] According to the publication of A. Sperber, The Bible in Aramaic, 4 vols. in 5, (Leiden. 1968), 5:167.

[42] Cf. w. Strothmann (ed.), Kohelet-Kommentar des Johannes von Apamea (Wiesbaden, 1988. Gottinger Orientforschungen, I Reihe: Syriaca, Band 30), P-182. It is, however, not surprising to find huggaya “meditation” as a translation of lahag, cf. w. Strothmann, Kohelet-Kommentar des Dionvsius bâr Salibi (Wiesbaden, 1988, Band 31).

[43] I am greatly obligated to M. Ullmann for communicating to me his Worterbuch entries for lahjah. They seem to leave doubts in his mind as to the relationship between the root l-h-j and lahjah.

[44] Fox, op. cit., p. 328.

[45] Cf. G. Vajda, Deux Commentaires Karaites sur l’Ecclesiaste (Leiden, 1971), pp. 61, 75.

[46] Aba al-Barakat Hibat Allah al-Baghdadl, al-Mutabar, 3 vols. (Hyderabad, 1357-58/1938-39)و 2:347و line 12ff. I owe this reference to Moshe Perlmann.

In the following generation, Moses Maimonides interpreted the Mishnaic expression “heretical books (.sefarim hitsonim) as including books on history and adab which constitute a waste of time, cf. his commentary on the Mishna Sanhedrin, 71 و, ed. I. Qafih (Jerusalem, 1934), p. 210.

[47] Ibn Khallikan, Wafayat al-a’yan, 8 vols., ed. Ihsan ‘Abbas (Beirut, 1968–72), 1:20.

[48] Cf. al-îjî and al-Sakhawl as quoted in F. Rosenthal, A History of Muslim Historiography² (Leiden. 1968), pp. 24211., 388.

[49] Cf. Murtada al-Zabîdî, ithaf alSadah, 10 vols. (Cairo, 1311/1893). Reprinted in Beirut, 1:273, line 14ff.

[50] Cf. al-Sakhawl, Daw’, 10:21. The number 300 appears again in connection with al-Khiraqfs Mukhtasar. See The

Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd ed. (EI²), SV Hanabila, 3:159, col. 1, line 30 and again s.v. al-Khiraki (H. Laoust), 5:10, col. 1, line 23, but, of course, other figures appear as well. In all cases, it can be assumed to have been a boast about the large number of sources consudted.

[51] Cf. Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah, tr. by F. Rosenthal, 3 vols. (New York, 1958; Princeton, 1967), 2:455. See below, p. 43.

[52] See the most useful dissertation by Peter Freimark on Das Vorwort als literarische Form in der arabischen Literatur (MviVrc, ل%٦١. Ü2, on Latin Prose Prefaces (؟>vü, 1964,Acta Universitatis Stockholmianiae, Studia Latina Stockholmiana 13), Toe Janson apparently found nothing in his material on the overwhelming amount of available books on a given subject, nor did Freimark in Arabic.

[53] Murtada al-Zabîdî, ithaf, 1:274, line 121.

[54] ALSakhawi, Daw’, 2:180, line 4 from bottom.

[55] ALGhazzall, ihya’ulüm al-dîn, 4 vols. in 2 (Cairo, 1372/1953), 1:70, line 4ff., from Abu Talib ai-Makki, Qut al-qulub, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1310/1892)4 :1:159 و vols. in 2 (Cairo, 1351/1932), 2:37.

[56] See, for instance, Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Jami’ bayan al-‘Um, 2 vols., (Cairo, n.d.), l:69f.

[57] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyah, al-Turuq alrhukmlyah (Cairo, 1372/1953), p. 277.

[58] Abu al-Barakat Hibat Allah aLBaghdadi, alUabarfi al-hikmah, 3 vols., (Hyderabad, 1938–39), 1:3.

[59] See below p. 000.

[60] al-Khatlb al-Baghdadi, Taqyld al-‘Um, ed. Youssef Eche (Yusuf al-Tshsh) (Damascus, 1949, reprint 1975), pp. 136–38.

[61] Some trickery might be used by a rare book dealer, in order to raise the fee for lending a book to what the price of the entire book should have been, cf. al-Sakhawl, Daw’, 9:148. The owners of lending libraries as a rule would seem to have been honest and often generous.

[62] Here follow verses attributed to al-Sârî ibn Ahmad al-Kindl, i.e., al-San al-Raffa’. They are not included in the 1355/1936 and 1981 editions of his diwan They deal with the widespread topos of the lasting value of all knowledge and have little to do directly with the subject of books.

[63] Cf. also, for instance, Ibn Hazm, Maratib al-‘ulüm, in Anwar Chejne, Ibn Hazm (Chicago, 1982), text, 234, trans., p. 2O2f. Ibn Hazm also called it an error to decry the amassing of books.

[64] Al-Jahiz already discussed at length the “pleasure” of spending money on books, if it was done for the sake of scholarship and not for purposes of religious ostentation as, he claims, was done by the Manichaeans. Cf. Kitab al-Hayawan, 7 vols., ed. ’Abd al-Salam M. Hârün (Cairo, 1938–45), 1:56. See also Ibn Hazm, loc. cit.

[65] Cf. J. Schacht andM. Meyerhof, The Medico-Philosophical Controversy between Ibn Butlan and Ibn Ridwan of Cairo, Arabic text 5 (Cairo, 1937), p. 38, from Ibn Abi Uşaybi’ah; E Rosenthal, “Die arabische Autobiographic,” Studia Arabica I (Rome, 1937, Analecta Orientalia 14), p. 22, from the manuscript of Ibn Ridwan’s autobiography. The eighteenth-century Murtada al-Zabîdî, ithaf, 1:66, lines 15–67, line 11, still found the passage interesting enough to quote it.

[66] Cf. Youssef Eche, Les Bibliotheques arabes (Damascus, 1967), p. 250. Selling books “by the lot (bi-al-‘adaâ)’’ from a bookseller’s estate might have been necessitated by their large numbers but, above all, indicated general ignorance and a lack of discrimination by potential buyers, cf. al-Sakhawl, Daw’, 3:150, line 6. An ignorant cmutakhallif 9) son of Ibn Yunus would sell the books and works of his father left to him “by the pound cbi-al-artaT),” cf. Al-Şafadî, Wafi (Stuttgart, 1988. Bibliotheca Islamica 6u) 21:226, line 8.

[67] Cf. Eche, op. cit., 104 from Yaqut, Irshad al-anb, ed. D.S. Margoliouth, 7 vols. (Leiden-London, 1907–27), 1:2423 ed. A.F. Rifâ’î, 20 vols. (Cairo, 1355-57/1936-1938), 4:6.

[68] Eche, op. cit., 198, from al-Qiftl, Ikhbar al-‘ulamâ’ bi-akhbar al-hukama’, ed. J. Lippert (Leipzig, 1903), p. 269.

[69] The justification for book burnings was probably always sought in lese-religion. The sad case of a grandson of ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Jîlânî, ‘Abd al-Salam ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab (548-611/1154-1214), whose books on magic and star worship were publicly burned, illustrates the blend of personal, academic, and religious politics with suspicions of heresy that could lead to legal proceedings and autodafes, cf. Ibn al-Tmad, Shadharat al-Dhahab, 8 vols. (Cairo, 1350-51/1931-32), 5:451.

[70] Cf. al-Sakhw Daw’, 3:32, line 17.

[71] Cf. Ibn Hajar, Inba’, 9 vols, (Hyderabad, 1387-96/1967-76), 7:394, anno 823, quoted by al-Sakhawl, Daw’, 3:31.

[72] Cf. Eche, op. cit., 188, following Yaqut, Irshad, ed. Margoliouth, 6:235· ed. Rifa’1, 27:591.

[73] See ibn al-Jamâ’ah, below, p. 42. (regarding the attitude towards the disapproval of writing books.)

[74] Cf. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzlyah, al-Turuq al-hukmiyah, pp. 275–77.

[75] Cf. Yâqüt, Irshad, ed. Margouliouth, 5:386ff.;ed. Rifâ’ı, 15:16, 9:21ff.

[76] Hâjjî Khallfah, Kashfal-Zunun, ed. Serefettin Y Itkaya, 2 vols. (Istanbul, 1945–47), vol. 1, intro., col. 52b, quotes the section of Kuna from Ibn ‘Asakirs History of Damascus as using dafatir in connection with Sufyan al-Thawrl (below no. 52). Although historically, daftar had different meanings (see EI², s.v. “Daftar” [B. Lewis]), in our context “notebooks” is intended. It need hardly be stated expressly that the range of meanings of Arabic Kitab is not coextensive with our “book.”

[77] According to al-Khaftb al-Baghdadi, Tarikh Baghdad, 14 vols., (Cairo, 1349/1931), 8:348, line 2f., Dâwüd al-Tâ’î did so after he felt sure that he no longer needed the books and was ready to devote himself conclusively to solitary divine worship.

[78] Mention of the mountain cave is not found in the biographical notices. They say that he buried his books, with unhappy results for the reliability of his traditions. See al-Bukhari, Tai, 8 vols. (Hyderabad, 1360-78/1941-58), 4 pt. 2:385, Ibn Abî Hatim al-Râzî, Jarh (Hyderabad, 1941–53), 4 pt. 2:218 on the authority of his father Abu Hatim al-Râzî; al-Dhahabl, Mizan al-Tüdâl, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1382/1963), 4:162: Ibn Hajar, Tahdhib aTtahdhib, 12 vols. (Hyderabad, 1325-27/1907-9), 1:408. This does not necessarily indicate that alTawhldl invented the mountain cave for artistic effect—he could have found it in some other source—but it is quite likely.

[79] Abu Sulaymân al-Dârânî was an authority of Ibn Abî al-Hawârî (below, no. 61) و who was a contemporary of Sufyân al-Thawrl.

[80] I have not gone through the large literature on Sufyân to find out whether this information is repeated elsewhere.

[81] The text has Muhammad, but he is presumably Abu Sa'îd's son Abu Muhammad ibn al-Hasan (whose name is occasionally distorted), see Ibn al-Nadim, al-Fihrist, p. 62f., also 31, line 23, as well as Bayard Dodge's English translation, 2 vols. (New York, 1970), 1:136, and the Persian translation by M. Rida Tajaddud (Teheran, 1343/1965), p. 106; 'Alî ibn Yûsuf al-Qifti Inbah al-rhwah, ed. M. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1369-93/195073), 1:314; Ibn Khallikan, Wafayat, ed. Ihsan 'Abbas, 2:79: Sezgin, GAS, 9:98; al-Sîrâfî's long biography in Yaqut, Irshad, ed. Margoliouth, 3:48–125; ed Rifâ'î, 8:142–232, draws on al-Tawhîdî's works, but the request to have his books burned is not mentioned there. On Abu Sa'îd al-Sîrâfî, see also, more recently, G. Endress, "Grammatik und Logik" in Burkhard Moisisch (ed.), Sprach-philosophic in Antike und Mittelalter (Amsterdam, 1987, Bochumer Studien zurr Philosophic 3).

[82] Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqat, ed. E. Sachau and others, 9 vols. (Leiden, 1904–40), 4:63, lines 17ff.;al-Khatîb al-Baghdadi, Taqyld, p. 61; Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, اد' bayan al-'dm, 1:67, لا ح.

[83] Taqyid, p. 39, line llf. Ibn Mas'üd was put on the spot for transmitting a hadfth differently from what his son had written down.

[84] Taqyid, ج.·فى·

[85] Ibid. Yûnus ibn ‘Isa was an authority on Bishr al-Hâfî.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Taqyld, p. 63. According to Ibn Hajar, Tahdhib, 1:445, Bishr disliked the transmission of hadlth and therefore buried his books. Abû Nu’aym has nothing on the subject.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Abû Nu’aym, Hilyat al-awliya’, 10 vols. (Reprint Beirut, 1387/1967), 10.61.

[90] On the other hand, scholars were considered foolish to brag about composing works without recourse to relevant literature. Such disregard of their predecessors meant that they would not know what distinguished their works from those of others, cf. al-Zarkashi, al-Burhanfi ‘ulûm al-Qur’an, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1376/1957), 1:16.

[91] Cf. Hâjjî Khalifoh, Kashf, kintro., col. 32f. The wish to approach God (qasd wajh Allah) was generally accepted goal and precondition for any successful study. Without it, collecting books would be useless, see, for instance, Yûsuf al-Balawi, Kitab alif ba’, 2 vols. (Bûlâq, 1287/1870), 1:17, line 2f.

[92] See al-Sakhawi, Daw’, 1:232[.

[93] See Ibn Jama’ah, Tadhkirah (Hyderabad, 1953), p. 30. In the context, Ibn Jama’ah mentions al-Khat b al-Baghdadi, but the quoted statement is apparently not included in the reference. In a somewhat shortened form, with the omission of the qualified and knowledgeable persons, the statement is quoted by Hâjjî Khalufah, kintro., col. 39. On his

own, it seems Hâjjî Khalîfah adds mutlaqan “absolutely (disapproved).” Tasnif usually referred to the original composition of books. Cf., for instance, al-Sakhâwî> Daw’, 1:46, line 19ff., on the very learned İbrâhîm ibn Khidr: “In spite of his learning, he did not occupy himself with tasnif, although he made valuable notes on many books.” Cf. also Ibn Hajar, al-Durar al-kdminah, 1st ed., 4 vols. (Hyderabad, 1348-50/1929-31), 3:490: idem, Inba’, 1:184, or al-Sakhawi, Daw’, 2:79.

[94] One may compare, from a different time and situation, al-Jâhiz’s remark about an ignoramus who progressed from finding fault with al-Jâhiz’s works to condemning the writing of books in general (·Kitab al-Hayawan, ed. Hârûn, (37–38 1:19و

[95] See also below, p. 44.

[96] Cf. al-Tawhîdî, al-ImtcC wa-al-mu’anasah, ed. Afimad Amîn and Ahmad al-Zayn, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1939–44), 2:194, line 6.

[97] Cf. Mez’s introduction to his edition of Abulkasim, ein bagdader Sittenbild (Heidleberg, 1902), viii f.

[98] Cf. Yâqût, Mu jam al-buldan, ed. F. Wiistenfeld (Gottingen, 1866–73), -The Introductory Chapters of Yaquts Mu’jam al, \ح ١١قيب\ةلد ١٠.٦٦؟.,لم٢لأة؟ل’ةة Buldan (Leiden, 1959), p. 16.

[99] Cf. F. Rosenthal, The Technique and Approach ofMuslim Scholarship (Rome, 1947. Analecta Orientalia 24), p. 43a, and idem, A History of Muslim Historiography², p. 71, n.3.

[100] As indicated in the enumeration of items that justify the writing of books, see below, n. 87.

[101] See Yâqüt, trans. Jwaideh, p. 9, n. 4.

[102] See Yâqüt, Mufam, 1:6, trans. Jwaideh, p. 9. Jwaideh notes that the statement recurs in the biography of al-Jâhiz in Yâqüt, Irshad, ed. Margoliouth, 6:58, ed. Rifâ'î, 16:78.

[103] Al-Tawhd and Miskawayh, al-Hawamil wa-alshawamil, ed. Ahmad Amin and al-Sayyid Ahmad Saqr (Cairo, 1370/1951), p. 268f.

[104] Below, in the reference by al-Sha'bi to the common idea that human life is all too short to know everything, it is not as certain as it is here and elsewhere that the first aphorism is indeed the inspiration, but it seems highly probable.

[105] This appears to be the correct interpretation of the verse to be read:.. .wa-lakin naziru al-'ayni. See al-Zarkashl, Burhan, 1:9, 12, quoted in part by al-Suyütî, Itqan, 2 vols. in 1 (Cairo, 1317/1899), 1:5.

[106] Cf. Freimark, p. 64, referring to al-Washsha', Muwashsha, for Ibn 'Abbas, and to Ibn 'AM Rabbih, 'Iqd, for Ibn Sirin. This latter ascription appears also in al-Balawi, Kitab alif ba', 1:14, line 19.

[107] See 'All al-Ghuzul, Matair al-budur, 2 vols. in 1 (Cairo, 1299-1300/1881) 1:7.

[108] Cf. Freimark, pp. 40ff., 164.

[109] Cf. al-Bîrünî, al-Aîhâr al-baqiyah, ed. Sachau (Leipzig, 1878), p. 4, line 5 quoted by Freimark, p. 142.

[110] Cf. Ibn al-Athîr, al-Nihayah fi gharib al-hadith, 5 vols. (Cairo, 1322/1904), 1:15, line I5f.; 6, line 18; 8, line 15ff.; 9, line 17.

[111] Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah, trans., F. Rosenthal, 3:288–91.

[112] Op. cit., 3:324.

[113] Op. cit., 3:3401·

[114] Op. cit., 2:455.

[115] Op. cit., 3:287. See 284, n. 1123, for parallels. Ibn Khaldün mentions the writing of abridgements as the last of the seven justifications for authorship. Al-Maqarri, Azhar al-riyad, 3 vols. (Cairo, 1358/1939), 3:34, puts abridgements in the sixth place. They were promoted to fourth place in Hâjjî Khalîfah, Lintro., col. 35.

[116] Hâjjî Khalîfah, Kashf, lintro., col. 43f.

[117] Op. cit., Lintro., col. 1. For the allusion to Hippocrates, see above,

** 4. Oral Transmission and the Book in Islamic Education: The Spoken and the Written Word

Seyyed Hossein Nasr

The revelation of the Qur’an was auditory before becoming crystallized in a written text. The Prophet first heard the term iqra’ and only later recited the first revealed verses on the basis of their audition. The whole experience of the Qur’an for Muslims remains to this day first of all an auditory experience and is only later associated with reading in the ordinary sense of the word. There is an ever present, orally heard, and memorized Qur’an in addition to the written version of the Sacred Text, an auditory reality which touches the deepest chords in the souls of the faithful, even if they are unable to read the Arabic text.

Since it is the “Mother of Books” and also the prototype of the written word in Islam, the oral dimension of the Qur’anic reality, combined with the traditional significance of memory in the transmission of knowledge, could not but affect the whole of the Islamic intellectual tradition and educational system. It could not but enliven both the poetic and the prose memory of the Islamic peoples, strengthen the significance of oral transmission, and leave something of its impact upon the very understanding of the book in the context of traditional Islamic culture. As a result of the influence of the Quranic revelation and also other factors related to the rise of the whole Islamic educational system, the significance of the oral tradition and memory as a vehicle for the transmission of knowledge came to complement the written word contained in books, especially those books which became central texts for the teaching of various schools of thought and which figured prominently in the relationship between the traditional master (al-ustadh) and the students (tullab).[118] Such books became more than simply the written text. Rather, they came to accompany and in a sense became immersed in the spoken word, through an oral teaching transmitted from master to student and stored in the memory of those destined to be the recipients of the knowledge in question. Such books were not exclusively written texts whose reality was exhausted by the words inscribed in ink upon parchment.

The oral tradition also played a cultural role in determining which book or books of a particular master would become texts to be discussed in study circles and would act as a vehicle for the transmission of the teachings of the master in question. The oral transmission helped to

establish the authority of teachers who were to follow and it served as the criterion with the aid of which one could distinguish one student from another as far as his closeness to the master and understanding of the latter’s message were concerned, although naturally debates often ensued.

This paper seeks to pursue this theme in one field, namely Islamic philosophy (al-falsafah), and its close ally in later centuries, theoretical gnosis (al-ma’rifah or al-‘irfan), with which it merged especially in Persia and the other eastern lands of the Islamic world. Our analysis is based not so much upon scholarly research, as upon over twenty years of continuous study with traditional masters in Persia in the field of Islamic philosophy and gnosis, masters who would mention at the beginning of their instruction that the good student must learn not only to read correctly the black lines of the text in Arabic or Persian but that he must also be able to read what they would call “the white parts” of the page or what in English would be called reading between the lines.[119] But this reading of the “unwritten” text had to be carried out not according to the student’s individual whim and fancy, but in accordance with the oral transmission stored in the memory of the master and going back through generations of teachers to the original author of the text and ultimately to the founders and major figures of the school in question—figures who also possessed a “vertical” and non-historical relation with the source of that traditional school.

As far as philosophy and gnosis are concerned, there is also a factor of a more external order to consider. In order to avoid the criticism and condemnation of certain exoteric ‘wlama’ and also the uneducated who might misconstrue their teachings, most philosophers couched their ideas in deliberately difficult language whose meaning they then taught orally to their chosen students. Although there are exceptions in this matter, as one sees in the case of Mulla Sadra, the majority of the masters of Islamic philosophy practiced this art of dissimulation through a deliberately complicated language, the key to whose understanding remained in the hands of those well acquainted with the oral tradition which alone could elucidate the meaning or the levels of meaning of the technical vocabulary (al-iştilâhât).[120] The significance of the oral transmission was by no means limited to this function, but this role is also of

some importance in the total understanding of the oral tradition and the spoken word in Islamic intellectual history and education.

Before turning to an examination of the works of individual authors, we should note that, in the context of the traditional educational system, knowledge of a particular figure meant and still means a penetration in depth into the thought of the author in question rather than a study of his thought in breadth. Today, in the modern Western method of study, if a person wishes to master the thought of let us say a St. Thomas or for that matter Kant, he goes back to their original writings in Latin or German and examines all their work. In fact one would not dream of writing a serious book on a particular philosopher before reading all his writing. In the traditional Islamic context, on the contrary, the greatest interpreters of Ibn Sina, whose knowledge of Avicennan metaphysics could not be matched by anyone in the West, would probably have cast no more than a cursory eye over his metaphysical works beyond the ilahiyat of the Shifa', the Najat, and the Isharat, not to speak of the mashshcfi master's numerous other writings. I have seen traditional masters who have spent fifty years studying the Shifa' and the Isharat, often along with numerous commentaries, and who have had an incredible understanding of Ibn Sînâ's ontology without having delved into the many other works of the master dealing with the subject.

In this context it is important also to mention how in a manner that is often mysterious, if viewed from the outside, one or two works of a master survive and become a main text in the teaching of a particular school accompanied by the oral transmission of his teachings, while other works do not enjoy such a status. The reason in certain cases such as that of Ibn Sina are easy to understand while other instances are much more difficult to explain. What distinguished the Tatnhld al-qawa'id of Ibn Turkah or the Kitab al-hidayah of Athlr al-Dîn Abharl from other highly qualified available texts and made the former main items in the traditional curriculum?[121] Must not the answer be sought in the spoken word, the oral transmission which accompanied such texts, and the reception of these teachings by immediate students of the authors in question, students who then propagated these teachings and established the "privileged position" of the works in question? Surely the oral tradition along with the special master-

disciple relationship must be considered, not to speak of intellectual and spiritual links between scholars and philosophers of different generations and the existence of affinities among various figures in the non-historical and atemporal dimensions of reality which remain outside of the framework of intellectual history as understood in the West today.

With these brief comments in mind, let US turn to a few of the outstanding Islamic intellectual figures. The first major Islamic philosopher, al-Kindl, certainly left his mark upon later Peripatetics but left no work behind which came to be established as a text in the traditional curriculum of Islamic philosophy. The towering figure of Ibn Sina in a sense eclipsed such earlier figures as al-Kindl and Abu al-Hasan al-'Amirî, although al-Kindl continued to be honored in later centuries as a great philosopher. The type of studies devoted to his writings by both West and modern Muslim scholars, especially since the discovery of the manuscripts of a large number of his works in Istanbul half a century ago,[122] did not exist among those who kept the torch of mashsha'i philosophy alive in the Islamic world itself, and in fact his particular interpretation of mashshâ'î philosophy did not gain acceptance among later members of this school, namely al-Fârâbî, Ibn Sînâ, and Ibn Rushd.

Turning to the towering figure of al-Fârâbî, again one notes that such major works of his as the Kitab al-huruf remained peripheral to the development of most of later Islamic philosophy and its significance has only recently been discovered as a result of the publication of its Arabic text by M. Mahdi.[123] Even al-Fârâbʏs greatest masterpiece of political philosophy, Ara' ahi aimadmah al-Jadilah, although very influential in the genesis and growth of Islamic political thought, did not become a main text in the later phases of development of the Islamic philosophical tradition. It was only his somewhat enigmatic work, the Fuşûş al-hikmah, considered by a number of modern scholars to be not by him but by Ibn Sînâ, [124] that has continued to be studied and taught over the centuries, accompanied by an oral as well as a written tradition of commentaries. It was enough to attend the teaching sessions of Mahdi İlâhî QumshaT, one of the outstanding traditional masters of hikmah in Persia in recent times who translated this work into Persian,[125] to realize the vast "unwritten philosophy" and the spoken word which have accompanied the written text attributed to al-Fârâbî.

With Ibn Sînâ the presence of the oral transmission, which has survived for a thousand years, becomes felt more than before for anyone who experiences the teachings of the traditional masters of mashshâ'î philosophy. It is in fact a profound lesson in comparative philosophy to juxtapose the understanding of Avicennan ontology by such traditional masters of the subject during this century as 'Allâmah Hâ'irî Yazdî Mazandarânl, author of Hikmat-i Bit 'All, or Mahdi Hairi,[126] and such Western masters of medieval philosophy as E. Gilson and H. Wolfson.[127] The difference in their treatment of the subject emanates not only from different methodologies, but also from the existing oral transmission in the one case and the simply written text in the other. The oral transmission did not certainly prevent different interpretations from being made in the Islamic world itself as one sees in the case of Naşîr al-Dîn Tûsî and Mîr Dâmâd, or the Sadrian interpretation of Ibn Sînâ made by certain followers of the school of Mullâ Şadrâ in the Qajar Period as against the views of a Mirzâ Abu al-Hasan Jilwah.[128] But all of these differences remained within the matrix of the traditional world with the presence of the oral or spoken word as well as the written text and therefore differ from the understanding of Ibn Sînâ emanating from the study of only his written words.

There is no doubt that there have been scholars in the West such as Wolfson or Corbin who had read more of Ibn Sînâ than most of the traditional Persian masters whom we came to know personally. But the latter, who usually limited their study in depth to the Shija' and Isharat, with an occasional interest in the Najat, had an understanding of Ibn Sînâ of a different order resulting from being immersed in an Avicennan world in which the written and the spoken word were combined in a unity that transcended the simply literal, historical, and grammatical understanding of the written text. It is important to note in this context that even the brilliant reconstruction of Ibn Sînâ's "Oriental Philosophy" by Corbin,[129] based so much on the understanding of the later Islamic philosophical tradition, must be seen as a part of the vaster world of Avicennan ontology and cosmology dominated during later centuries by the two basic texts of the Shija' and the Isharat and not in isolation from them.

Nowhere in the history of Islamic philosophy is the significance of the oral transmission and the spoken word more evident than in the case of SuhrawardI, the Master of Illumination (Shaykh al-ishraq), whose masterpiece Hikmat al-ishraq[130] is itself the crystallization in written form of the spoken word received orally both “horizontally” and “vertically”, that is both through unspecified historical sources and the angelic pleroma of which Suhrawardi wrote so vividly.[131] Later Islamic intellectual history knew him primarily through the Hikmat al-ishraq and to some extent the Hayakil al-nür while, in comparison, his other writings, especially the doctrinal works al-Talwihat, al-Muqawamat, and al-Mashari’ wa-al-mutârahât,[132] remained more or less neglected by most later philosophers, Mulla Şadrâ again being an important exception.

The whole nexus between the Hikmat al-ishraq, written so rapidly towards the end of its author’s tragic life, and the later tradition of ishraql philosophy relies upon oral transmission and the spoken word. The figure who revived Suhrawardl’s thought a generation later through his masterly commentary on the Hikmat al-ishraq, namely Muhammad Shahrazun, had not known Suhrawardi personally.[133] Yet he was bound to the master not only by the written text of his works, but also by a spiritual and intellectual bond which definitely must have issued from a living oral tradition. In reading Shahrazurls commentary on the Hikmat al-ishraq as well as his own masterpiece, the as yet unpublished al-Shajarat al-ilahiyah, one feels as if Shahrazuri had sat at the feet of Suhrawardi for many years. What relates the two figures to each other is not only a written text, but also the spoken word or an “unwritten book” which delineated the universe of ishraql wisdom shared by both figures. There must have been a special oral teaching which accompanied the Hikmat al-ishraq surviving Suhrawardi and surfacing later in the works of Shahrazuri and Qutb al-Dîn Shirazi and even during later centuries in the writings of Jalal al-Dîn DawanI and Mulla Şadrâ. How could Mulla Şadrâ have written his glosses „ on the Hikmat a.l-ishrâqi![134] without an oral tradition which linked him beyond the written words of the text to the founder of the School of Illumination? This continuity is what in fact characterizes an intellectual tradition which unfolds over the centuries on the basis not only of what the founding figure has written but also of the oral tradition which he has left behind, a tradition which remains alive through

both the “vertical” renewal of the tradition and the ever present oral transmission, which in turn makes possible successive crystallizations of the doctrines and teachings in question in written form.

The crucial role of oral tradition is also evident in the case of Ibn ‘Arabi whose influence swept over the Islamic world shortly after Suhrawardl. How different the intellectual history of at least the eastern lands of Islam would have been if the Ibn ‘Arabi of the Futuhat al-makkiyah had become better known than the Ibn ‘Arabi of the Fuşüş al-hikam, especially as interpreted by Sadr al-Dîn Qunawl!,[135] Of course the Futühat was known to many authors but not as a whole. Rather, to quote a leading authority on the Futuhat, M. Oiodkiewicz, the work served “as an overflowing cornucopia of symbols, technical terms and ideas from which everyone picked his choice.”[136] In any case it was providential that the Fuşüş seen through Sadr al-Dîn’s interpretation, itself based upon the closest intimacy with Ibn ‘Arabi, became the central work associated with Ibn ‘Arabi and seen primarily as a text of theoretical gnosis which had the profoundest influence upon not only Sufism but also later Islamic philosophy and even theology, as we see in the case of Shah Wallallah of Delhi. Outside the circle which became heir to the Akbarian current of Sufism, Ibn ‘Arabi came to be viewed not so much as the master of practical Sufism and the Sharfah and fiqh interpreted esoterically in the Futuhat, but as the metaphysician of the Fuşüş seen through the eyes of Qunawl, Mu’ayyid al-Dîn Jandi, ‘Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, and others.[137] Even the most characteristic doctrine associated with Ibn ‘Arabi, namely wahdat al-wujüâ, derives from the teachings of his disciples and the oral teachings which must have accompanied the Fuşüş rather than from Ibn ‘Arabfs own written works. ع٧٨٦ do not know what Ibn ‘Arabi taught Sadr al-Dîn and others orally, but we do know how Sadr al-Dîn interpreted the written text of the master in the light of those oral teachings and it is this which is of significance as far as the oral teachings of Ibn ‘Arabî are concerned.

The Ibn ‘Arabi seen by centuries of Islamic metaphysicians and philosophers is not the same as the Ibn ‘Arabi who emerges from a scholarly study of all his works put alongside each other and without recourse to the oral teachings received from a living master. The whole difference between the

Ibn ‘Arabi seen by Kâshânî, Mulla Şadrâ, al-Nabulusi, or Isınâ’îl Haqqi and the one seen by modern scholars, whether they be Westerners or Muslims, but basing themselves solely on the extant texts, is again the spoken word, the oral tradition as it has been transmitted over the centuries by generations of masters, some of whom have claimed direct contact with Ibn ‘Arabi in the “invisible world” Çâlam al-ghayb) besides being heirs to the historical oral tradition of his school.

Whether current Western scholarship accepts the authenticity of this oral tradition or not is of secondary significance. What is most important is that the Islamic intellectual tradition itself has functioned with the belief that the oral tradition is of central importance. In the case of Ibn ‘Arabi, for example, such recent masters as ‘Allamah Tabâtabâ’î or Sayyid Muhammad Kazim Aşşâr, with both of whom we studied gnosis and philosophy for some twenty years,[138] would insist that it was of little use to simply read the text of the Fuşûş and understand the Arabic by oneself. Rather, it was necessary to study it with a real teacher who could also impart to the qualified student the oral tradition which alone can clarify the meaning of the written word. That is why in gnosis, as in philosophy, a person who is said to have really studied the subject is called ustad didah, literally one who has “seen” a master, that is, one who has benentted from the oral teachings and also the presence chudur) of the master who embodies those teachings and who renews and revives them through the very act of living their truths.

Turning to later Islamic philosophy, we see the same principles at work as in earlier centuries. The Sharh al-ishârâî of Naşîr al-Dîn Tusi caused the revival of the school of Ibn Sina. But later traditional philosophers did not consider this work to be solely the product of the exceptional intellectual powers of Naşîr al-Dîn but also the result of the oral transmission of teachings which Tüsî received through several generations of masters stretching from Ibn Sînâ to himself. As for the Sharh al-ishârât, [139] it in turn became a main item of the later philosophical curriculum taught by generations of teachers going back to Tusi and his circle in Maraghah where he imparted oral teachings to accompany this exact and exacting philosophical text.

After Tusi, numerous works inspired by the Avicennan or mashsha’i school appeared in both Arabic and Persian including the encyclopedic work of Qutb al-Dın Shirazi, the Durrat al-taj. But it was again one work, the Kitab al-hidayah

of Athlr al-Dîn Abhari, which became a popular text in educational circles in Persia and was taught and commented upon by many teachers both orally and in writing. One needs only to recall the Sharh al-hidayah of Mulla Şadrâ which gained so much popularity in India that it became the main text for the teaching of mashshâ’1 philosophy in the subcontinent and gradually came to be known as Sadra. When students claimed to have studied Sadra, they did not mean that they had studied the various works of Mulla Şadrâ,[140] but the single text of the Sharh al-hidayah which was again accompanied by an oral teaching. The selection of Abhari’s original work in philosophical circles, as well as Mulla Şadrâ’s later commentary, was based not on the texts alone of these works, but on the accompanying oral teachings and the later masters who were well versed in those teachings and therefore chose to teach those texts rather than numerous other works which were also available.

The same truth holds for the writings of Mir Dâmâd, Mulla Şadrâ, and later philosophers. Whether it was the Qabasat of Mir Dâmâd or the Asfar ofMullâ Şadrâ, an oral teaching always accompanied the written text.[141] In the case of these later figures, the chain of transmission of the oral teachings is much better known. For example, such an undisputed master of the school of Mulla Şadrâ as Sayyid Abd al-Hasan Qazwini, with whom we again had the privilege of studying the Asfiir for many years, could trace his teachers back through the Qajar masters of this school to Mulla Şadrâ himself and displayed an almost “personal” relation to him as if the two were not separated by four centuries of human history. In his presence one felt that his link with Mulla Şadrâ was not only the lithographed edition of the Asfiir which he would hold in his frail hands and read before expounding his commentary and explanation. It was also a common universe of discourse and a lived and experienced intellectual reality which he shared with the Safavid master through the unwritten yet very much alive word, through the spoken truth transmitted orally as well as the written text from which he read. That was why, when he

held the book before his shining eyes and read it, the book revealed another dimension of its meaning, one which would remain hidden if one were to turn to the text oneself without the help of the oral teachings.[142]

The reality of the oral tradition constitutes the reason why the line of transmission of traditional Islamic philosophy is nearly as important as the silsilahs of the Sufis. In the latter case a barakah and initiatory power are transmitted which alone allow the soul to ascend to the higher levels of being, while in the former it is an oral teaching which is the necessary concomitant to the written text, a complement without which the text does not reveal all of its meaning save in exceptional cases. In both instances, there is a truth to be transmitted which is not simply discursive and which cannot be exhausted in letters and words written upon the page, a truth which must remain in part oral to be transmitted to those prepared to receive it.

Although the subject of this essay is limited to the field of Islamic philosophy, it is not possible to speak of the oral tradition and the spoken word without saying a few words about the distinctly Sufi view of the subject. This view was shared in part by many later Islamic philosophers (falasifah) and by those whom we might call theosophers (hukamay-i İlâhî) those thought to be distinguished from what philosophy has come to mean for the most part in the West today.

One cannot speak of the spoken word without mentioning that primordial “book” which is inscribed in the very’ substance of our being and with which the Sufis have dealt more directly than the Islamic philosophers. Jalal al-Dîn Rûmî, whose Mathnawi alone consists of six long volumes of poetry, says:

<verse>

The book of the Sufi is not black lines and words,

It is none other than the whitened heart which is like snow.

</verse>

In the Islamic tradition the heart is the seat of the intellect and the instrument par excellence of original knowledge of which mental activity is a relatively externalized reflection. True knowledge is the knowledge of the heart, and it is here that man carries within himself the real “book” of knowledge. This book is composed of unwritten words. It is the inner chamber wherein the spoken word in the highest sense of the term, which means none other than the Word of God, reverberates. This inner “hook” is not available for all to “read”, for not everyone is able to penetrate into the inner chamber of his or her being, which is the heart, nor possesses a purified heart as white as the snow which has not as yet become sullied by the darkness of man’s passionate soul.

Yet, this inner “book” has resonated and still resonates within the being of certain men and women and through them has left its deepest effect upon the intellectual life of Islam, not only in the domain of theoretical Sufism but also in later Islamic philosophy. It manifests itself directly in many illuminative passages of a philosopher such as Mulla Şadrâ who often refers to such crucial pages of his works as tahqiq[143] ‘arshi, that is, “truth verified through the Throne”, the Throne being not only the Transcendental Throne of God but also the heart which is ‘arsh al-rahman or Throne of the Compassionate.[144]

The significance of the oral tradition, its continuation over the centuries, its “vertical” renewal by certain masters of a particular school, and the emphasis upon the memory to preserve the oral tradition are all affected by the reality of that other inner “book” to which Rûmî refers, a “book” whose reality has always subsisted in the firmament of Islamic intellectual life at whose center stands the Book, namely the Quran which is at once an oral and a written reality. One must never forget that to know something really well and to committ the spoken word to memory in an abiding manner is to know it by heart. It is this knowledge by heart[145] which has made possible, not only in Sufism but also in Islamic philosophy, the continuation of an ever-renewed oral tradition which has played such an

important role in the Islamic education system and the modality of the transmission of knowledge from teacher to disciple over the centuries.

The oral tradition has affected the manner of reading and interpreting the written text, its teaching and transmission, and the role of certain texts and commentaries in the educational circles of the Islamic world. It is even significant in the correct reading of a particular manuscript and in the selection of manuscripts for establishing the text of a particular work. The spoken word is the key to the solution of many enigmas concerning the continuity of certain teachings as in the already mentioned cases of the ishraqT school and the predominance of a particular interpretation over others as in the case of Şİ al-Dîn Qunawfs interpretation of Ibn ‘Arabi. The oral tradition also provides a direct link between the student and a master who might have lived generations ago, enabling the student to study the teachings in question in depth and to concentrate on one or two works which are then penetrated inwardly over a whole lifetime rather than to study horizontally the text of many works written by the same master. There have been exceptions such as Mulla Sadra, who had, in addition to oral instruction, an encyclopedic knowledge of earlier philosophical, theological, and mystical works ranging from al-Fârâbî, al-‘A irl, and Ibn Sînâ to Shahrastânî, Fakhr al-Dîn Razî, al-Ghazzâlî, and Ibn ‘Arabi, a knowledge which he combined with the oral tradition.[146] But usually the oral tradition and the spoken word created a different type of intellectual ambience from the modern one, an ambience in which one or two works surrounded by a vast oral commentary came to constitute knowledge in depth of the teachings of the traditional authority.

The oral tradition transformed the written book from the definitive text which was the sole basis of the ideas to be understood to the gate to a whole living world for which the book became the point of departure. We recall once when studying al-Insan al-kamil of ‘Abd al-Karim al-Jîlî with the late Mahdi İlâhî Qumsha’i, he read the Arabic text and then gave a long discourse on divine love and its manifestations which seemed to have little connection with the outward meaning of al-Jîlî’s words. When asked how these words conveyed such meanings, he answered that one should look at these words as signs to the spiritual world and not in their usual literal meaning and as concepts closed in upon themselves. He added that only by

becoming familiar with these words through understanding the traditional oral commentary upon them would one be able to fly with their help from the earth of literalism to the heaven of symbolism. The nexus between oral tradition and esoteric interpretation of gnostic and philosophical texts must not, however, detract from the outward meaning and diminish the role of oral tradition in enabling the written text to be read correctly, albeit outwardly. The traditional masters insist that the major texts of Islamic thought such as the Isharat or Asfar cannot in fact be “read” correctly without the help of oral tradition, hence the central importance of having studied with a master. In a sense the spoken word makes possible the full understanding and correct “reading” of the written text.

Much of what has been said here is of course to be found mutatis mutandis in other traditions, such as the cabbala in Judaism, and is not exclusive to Islam. But in Islam the oral tradition and the spoken word have played and continue to play even to this day such a central role that their importance must be asserted in the face of all the historicism and positivism which have sought to reduce the reality of the Islamic intellectual tradition to written texts and historically established influences. Historical studies and careful attention paid to the written text do of course also possess their own validity and significance but they cannot become exclusive and totalitarian without destroying the integrity of the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Today not only are the physical remains of the Islamic book in the form of manuscripts being destroyed in many parts of the world, but also much of the oral tradition and the spoken word is being lost as a result of the destruction of the traditional methods of education and transmission. Paradoxically it is therefore necessary to put into writing for posterity and also for the present generation much that was transmitted until now only “from the breast” of one person to another. But in doing so, one should never lose sight of the great significance throughout Islamic history of oral transmission in education and of the spoken word as the complement of the written text. Even today, when due to exceptional historical conditions so much is being recorded and needs to be recorded and preserved in written form, the essence of the oral tradition continues to survive as oral tradition, especially that primordial Word which can only be heard and yet remains eternally inscribed upon the very substance of our soul as human beings.

[118] Concerning the texts used in traditional curricula of the madrasahs and in private circles, see, for example, S.H. Nasr, “The Traditional Texts Used in the Persian Madrasahs,” in his Islamic Life and Thought (London, 1987), ch. 10: M.S. Khan, “The Teaching of Mathematics and Astronomy in the Educational Institutions of Medieval India,” Muslim Educational Quarterly 6 (1989), no. 3: 7–15: and the major study of G. Makdisi, The Rise ofColleges—Institutions ofLeaming in Islam and the West (Edinburgh, 1981), which contains a wealth of information on the use of texts in Islamic madrasahs as well as an extensive bibliography on Islamic education including works on the use of texts in various schools.

[119] On the living tradition of Islamic philosophy in Persia see H. Corbin, “The Force of Traditional Philosophy in Iran Today,” Studies in Comparative Religion (Winter, 1968), pp. 12–263 S.H. Nasr, Islamic Philosophy in Contemporary Persia (Salt Lake City, 1972)3 and T. Izutsu’s introduction to The Metaphysics of Sabzavari, trans. M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu (Delmar, NY, 1977).

[120] Books dealing with these technical terms have therefore been always important and have served as a basis for the exposition of teachers or have complemented for the student the oral explanation of the master. That is why books such as the whole class of al-Iştilâhât al-şüfyah by ‘Abd al-Razzaq Kashani and others, al-Ta’rîfât of Sayyid Sharif al-Jurjani, Kashshaf iştilâhât al-fünûn by al-Tuhawi, and other works on terminology have been so important in the history of Sufism and Islamic philosophy. See the still valuable studies of L. Massignon, especially his Essais sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane bs, l95م١• ,١.l Ml, ل£ Sou, marocain Ahmad ibn ‘Ajiba et son mi’raj-Glossaire de la mystique musulmane (Pans, ل9٦ح>١٠, p. Nwyia, Exegese coranique et langage mystique (Beirut, 1970) J. Nurbakhsh, Sufi Symbolism (London, 1986-): and M. Horten, “Philogogische Unter-suchungen zur islamischen Mystik,” Zeitschrift fur Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete 6 (1928), pp. 57–70. Concerning

JurjanFs Ta’nfat see G. Fliigel (ed.), Definitiones Sejjid Scherif AH... (Leipzig, 1845).

[121] On these little-known figures, as far as the West is concerned, see H. Corbin (with the collaboration of s. H. Nasr and o. Yahya), Histoire de la philosophic islamique (Paris, 1986), pp. 365 ff.; Corbin, En Islam iranieri 3 (Paris, 1972) pp. 233 ff.; and S.H. Nasr, “Theology, Philosophy and Spirituality,” in Nasr (ed.) Islamic Spirituality—Manifestations (New York, 1991), pp. 431 ff.

[122] Discovered by Massignon and published later by M. Abü Rldah as Rasâ’H al-Kindl al-falsafiyah, 2 vols. (Cairo, 1950–1953).

[123] See M. Mahdi, Alfarabi’s Book of Letters (Kitab al-huruf) (Beirut, 1969).

[124] See, for example, s. Pines, “Ibn Sina et l’auteur de la Risalat fuşûş fi’l-hikma,” Revue des Etudes Islamiques (1951), pp. 122–4.

[125] See ilâhı Qumshah, Hikmat-i İlâhî khâşş wa ’amm, vol. 2 (Tehran, A.H. solar 1345).

[126] See, for example, his Hiram-i hasti, (“The Pyramid of Existence”) (Tehran, 1983).

[127] Both Gilson and Wolfson have dealt with Avicennan ontology as expounded by Ibn Sina himself or by later Peripatetics in several of their works, for example E. Gilson, LEtre et l’essence (Paris, 1948); and his Avicenne et lepoint de depart de Duns Scot ؟د Extrait des Archives d’Histoire Doctrinale et Litteraire du MoyenAge 2 (1927). As for H.A. Wolfson, see his “Avicenna, Algazali, and Averroes on Divine

Attributes," Homenaje a Millds-Vallicrosa 2 (Barcelona, 1956), pp. 545–71: and his "Goichon's Three Books on Avicenna's Philosophy," Muslim World 31 (1941), pp. 11–39.

[128] See S.H. Nasr, "The Metaphysics of Sadr al-Dîn Shirazi and Islamic Philosophy in Qajar Iran," in C.E. Bosworth and c. Hillenbrand (eds.), Qajar Iran—Political, Social and Cultural Change 1900–1925 İ·ı·, M), PP. 177–983 and S.J. Ashtiyani's introduction to Mulla Muhammad Ja'far ١لل١·ة, Shal risalat al-masha r of Mulla Sadra ٦%٩١·

[129] See Corbin, Avicenna and the Visionary Recital, trans, w. Trask (Irving, TX, 1980).

[130] See Suhrawardi, Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques, vol. 2 ed. H. Corbin (Tehran, 1977): and H. Corbin, Sohravardi, Le Livre de la sagesse orientale (Paris, 1986).

[131] See S.H. Nasr, Three Muslim Sages (Delmar, NY, 1975), ch. 2.

[132] Even in contemporary scholarship these works have remained relatively neglected in comparison with the Hikmat al-ishraq, edited in its entirety by Corbin, and his complete Persian works, edited by Nasr. Corbin edited the section of these works on metaphysics but not those on logic and natural philosophy. See Suhrawardi, Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques, vols. 1 and 2 ed. Corbin (Tehran, 1976–7): vol. 3 ed. Nasr (Tehran, 1977). Recently H. Ziai has turned to the study of the logic of al-Talwihat and other neglected doctrinal works of Suhrawardi in his Knowledge and Illumination: A Study of Suhrawardi's Hikmat al-Ishraq (Atlanta, GA, 1990).

[133] See H. Ziai, “The Manuscript of al-Shajara al-Ilahiyah, A Philosophical Encyclopedia by Shams al-Din Muhammad Shahrazuri,” (in Persian), Iranshenasi 2 (1990), no. 1: 89–108.

[134] See H. Corbin, “Le theme de la resurrection chez Molla Şadrâ Shirazi (1050/1640) commentateur de SohrawardI (587/1191)”” in Studies in Mysticism and Religion Presented to G. Scholem (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 71–115.

[135] See ل. Morris, “Ibn ‘Arabi and His Interpreters,” Journal of the American Oriental Society 106 (1986), pp. 539–51, 733–56, 107 (1987), pp. 101–19; M. Chodkiewicz, et al.. Les illuminations de la Mecque (Paris, 1988): and the major new study of w. Chittick, The Sufi Path of Knowledge (Albany, NY, 1989).

[136] From a paper delivered at the conference on Medieval Persian Sufi Literature at the University of London in November 1990.

[137] See w. Chittick’s several studies on Sadr al-Dîn al-Qûnawî and his students, e.g., “The Last Will and Testament of Ibn ‘Arabi’s Foremost Disciple and Some Notes on its Author,” Sophia Perennis, 4 (1978), no. 1: 43–58; and “Sadr al-Dm Qunawi on the Oneness of Being,” International Philosophical Quarterly 21 (1981), pp. 171–84.

[138] On ‘Allamah Tabâtabâ’î, whose writings are gradually becoming known in the West, see the introduction of S.H. Nasr to his Shi’ite Islam, trans, and ed. by S.H. Nasr (Albany, NY, 1975). As for ’Aşşâr, unfortunately none of his works have as yet been translated, but some have been published in the original Persian and Arabic, for example, Wahdat-i wujiid wa bada’, ed. with introduction on the author by S.J. Ashtiyanl (Tehran, AH solar 1350).

[139] Printed in both Tehran and Cairo (the Cairo edition edited by s. Dunya, 1960: and the Tehran edition without editor, 3 vols., AH 1378), this work has never been seriously studied by Western scholars of Islamic philosophy, although many have drawn attention to it.

[140] See S.H. Nasr, Ma’ârif-i İslâmî dar İahdn-İ mu’âşir (Tehran, AH solar 1348), ch. 8.

[141] On the relation between Mulla Şadrâ and Mir Dâmâd see S.H. Nasr, The Transcendent Theosophy of Sadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî (Tehran, 1977), pp. 32–3, 40, 41, and 45–46.

[142] S.J. Âshtiyânî has traced the intellectual lineage of such figures and their link with the Safavid masters of the “School of Isfahan” in his already cited introduction to Lâhîjânî and also in his introduction to Mulla Şadrâ, al-Shawahid al-rububiyah (Meshed, 1967).

[143] Mathnawi, ed. R.A. Nicholson (London, 1925–40), ii. 159.

[144] See, for example, his Wisdom of the Throne, trans. J. Morris (Princeton, NJ, 1981), where he refers to such crucial sections as basirah kashfiyah (insight revealed to inner vision) or qa’idah mashriqiyah (principle from the source of illumination).

[145] On the traditional significance of the heart as the seat of knowledge see F. Schuon, L’Oeil du coeur (Paris, 1974).

[146] See Nasr, The Transcendent Theosophy..., pp. 69 ff.

** 5. The Book of Life-Metaphors Connected with the Book in Islamic Literatures

Annemarie Schimmel

“Man is mighty in volume, with him all things are written, but veils and darkness do not allow him to read that knowledge within himself.”[147] This is not a quotation from John Donne’s Devotions, where a similar comparison is used, but from Maulana Jalaladdm RumTs (d. 1273) prose works Fihi mafihi.

The saying well reflects the close relationship between man and book, for as Frithjof Schuon once said with a daring comparison, “God became Book for man [i.e., in the Qur’an] and man must become book for God”—a book in which the secrets of Divine creation can be recognized.[148] Thus, ‘Ah Khan, an officer and poet at the court of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, could describe himself:

<verse>

I am like a book, both silent and talking;

The content of my question is hidden in my answer.[149]

</verse>

The Muslims were great book lovers, and the history of libraries in the Muslim world, from the collections in medieval Baghdad to the famous library of Akbar’s generalissimo ‘Abd al-Rahman Khankhanan (d. 1627), to mention only one major example, is well known. Public and private libraries all over the Muslim world, many of them still uncataloged, give witness to the bibliophilia of scholars and rulers in bygone times.[150] Most of the collectors would probably have agreed with Molla Jâmî (d. 1492) of Herat:

<verse>

There is no better friend in the world than the book;

In the house of grief in this time there is no better consoler,

Every moment a hundred kinds of peace come from it

In the corner of loneliness and it never hurts the heart.[151]

</verse>

Classical Arabic literature contains numerous sayings and verses about books, some of which have been translated into German by Christoph Biirgel in his article “Von Freud und Leid mit Biichern” (About happiness and grief caused by books).[152] There, one hears the collectors’ laments about the loss of books due to theft, to fire, or to “book loving” insects. I once found a long maqamah in highly polished rhymed prose in praise of a glorious tomcat who deserved his master’s eternal gratitude because he saved his master’s library by catching the numerous mice that were interested in the manuscripts, for unscholarly purposes.[153] With a comparison that occurs rather frequently, an Ottoman poet of the sixteenth century sang of his joy in books:

<verse>

The heart of those who are narrow-hearted like the bud

opens like the rose—

It seems that the book is a hundred-petaled rose in spring’[154]

</verse>

Gesu Daraz (d. 1422), the Chishti Sufi saint of Gulbarga in the Deccan, goes so far as to describe his book as his beloved:

<verse>

My book became my beloved —

Thanks to it my pressed heart was opened.

You say: “Lend it to me!”

Has anyone ever lent his beloved [to someone else]?”[155]

</verse>

However, allusions to the actual form of books, let alone descriptions of specific books, seem to be comparatively rare. One may think of allusions to Quran manuscripts in comparison with beautiful human faces or bodies: Khaqanl (d. 1199) suggests to his beloved to wear red and yellow garments, as the Qur’an is written in red and gold (for she is as flawless as a Qur’an page).’[156] Maulana Rumi tells in a delightful story how some ants walked across a beautifully illuminated manuscript and were wondering whether this was a garden with roses and herbs; then they learned that this “garden” was produced by the pen, which served the hand, which in turn was depending upon the arm; the arm, however, relied upon the spirit’s command which was inspired by God—thus, every movement led back to the One and Unique Creator.[157]

Yet, in a small group of verses, Persian-writing poets from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century have composed verses in honor of actual manuscripts. It seems that such descriptions reflected the book culture at the Timurid and Mughal courts, and it is certainly no accident that book imagery became quite prominent during Mughal times. Jami sings of an album which was probably made for his patron, Sultan Husain Baiqara:

<verse>

Before this copy, which is the pleasure ground of intellect and soul, the eye of reason is bewildered.

It is a cheerful garden filled with roses and odoriferous herbs;

The pages are roses and the lines sweet basil, rihan.[158]

</verse>

The last line plays on the double meaning of rihan, rihânî, which is not only “sweet basil”, but also a calligraphic style which was used

mainly in copies of the Qur an and important manuscripts. This pun appears in most Persian and Turkish writings from the Middle Ages onward.

Perhaps the finest description of an album is found in Abu Talib Kalim’s (d. 1650) Diwan. The poet, who lived in Shahjahan’s time, mainly in Kashmir, describes some albums which were collected by Jahangir and then arranged for his son Shahjahan after 1628. Calligraphic pages with superbly illuminated borders alternate with fine miniatures, so that, as he claims, “the tress of the [long] letter lam in the calligraphy is combined with the tresses of the houri-like beauties” on the miniatures. It may well be that he speaks of one of the collections to which parts of the so-called Kevorkian Album in the Metropolitan Museum belonged.[159]

To understand the importance of the metaphors of the book or of writing in Persian and Persianate poetry, it suffices to look at the numerous poems with the (recurrent rhyme) nawisand, “they wrote” or niwishta, “written,” or radifs derived from the Turkish root yazmaq, “to write,” in Ottoman poetry. As much as this imagery may appear repetitive, one can yet find delightful verses by some lesser-known authors, such as the clever comparisons that the south Indian polymath Azad Bilgraml (d. 1784) used in his Mir’ât al-jamal, “The Mirror of Beauty,” to admire his beloved’s tresses:

<verse>

Are these two locks of hair on the whiteness of her cheeks,

Or two marginal columns on the book of beauty?

Or two nights of the two ‘Id that came together,

Or are these two of the seven mu’allaqat hung on the Ka’bah[160]

</verse>

Sometimes, poets offer the reader whole lists of books they had perused during their lifetimes, as did the fourteenth-century North Indian author

Mutahhar Karh (d. 1390), who speaks of WaqidFs historical work, of Nâşirî, that is, the ethical work, Akhlaq-i Nâşirî, and of Abu Hafs ‘Umar al-SuhriwardFs Sufi handbook, ‘Awarif al-ma’ânf, along with some others, which makes US understand what kind of material was used in medieval Indo-Muslim education.[161] Even more sophisticated is a poem by the Urdu poet Wall Deccani (d. after 1707), who describes his state of mind and the beauty of his beloved exclusively in words that are pen-names of poets such as Firdusi, “paradisiacal,” Jami, “cup-like,” Anvari, “most radiant,” Shauqi, “longing,” and so on.[162]

More frequent, however, are allusions to famous books whose titles can be used in puns: ‘Attar’s Mantiq al-tayr, “The Birds’ Language,” and Sa’dî’s Gulistan, “Rose Garden,” appear, as is to be expected, mainly in poetry devoted to spring; NizamFs Khamsah, the “Quintet,” could be connected with the five senses; the Kashf (either Hujwlrfs Kashf al-mahjitb or MaibudhFs Kashf al-asrar) appears now and then as opposed to the rational interpretation of the revelation as is found, according to poetic parlance, in Zamakhsharfs Kashshaf, the important commentary on the Qur’an. Hafiz offers a good example of this combination.[163] On the other hand, Ibn ‘Arabis (d. 1240) Fuşûş alrhikam, “The Bezels of Wisdom,” are used not only in strictly mystical context, but also in love poetry for the lip of the beloved is like faşş, “bezel,” of ruby. Thus, Jâmî, followed by many others, may claim that the life-bestowing lips of his beloved would be worthy of being described in the chapter about Jesus in Ibn ’Arabi’s Fuşûş, for the breath of Jesus quickens the dead as does the kiss of the beloved that quickens the near-dead lover.[164] Similarly, Jami can also see the dangerous, tempting eyes and sweetly smiling lips of his beloved as a commentary on the Qur’anic verse, “He created death and life” (Surah 67, 2), for while the eyes kill with their glance, the sugar lips grant new life.[165]

It is not surprising that the imagery of the book plays such a central role in Islamic poetry. The Qur’an itself uses this imagery frequently: We often hear of the “book of actions” and also of the “kiram al-kcitibm” (surah 8211 و), the noble scribe angels who note down man’s actions in the

books that will be shown at Doomsday and should therefore not be blackened by too many sins.

Nâşir-i Khusrau, the great Ismaili philosopher and poet of the eleventh century, admonishes his readers:

<verse>

The soul is a book, thy deeds are like the writing.

Write not in thy soul aught else than a fair inscription.

Write what is wholly good in the book, brother,

For the pen is in thine own hand.[166]

</verse>

Much later, in the mid-eighteenth century, one finds in the Nöda-i'Andalib of the Delhi mystic Nâşir Muhammad 'Andallb advice which he may have taken from some earlier Sufi poet, but which he may also have written himself:

<verse>

I want to correct the nine books

and to select the manuscript of Existence,

to empty the library of the heart

line by line from unfitting letters,

to purify the picture gallery of the body page by page

from the pictures of eating and sleeping,

to transform the black book of the crimes of the lower soul (nafs)

into the first page of the exordium of good works.[167]

</verse>

But how to perform such a purification?

The poets discovered that there is a way to clean the books blackened by sins, namely, weeping. Most oriental ink is soluble in water, hence, books could be and have been washed off comparatively easily—and what would be a better way than to weep so profusely that the tears of repentance wash off the black writing of the book of actions?

Poets liked this idea, and they often—especially in later times—combined it with the image of the tear as a child that runs away from the eyelashes. Thus, the Kashmiri poet Fam (d. 1670), whose poetry contains a remarkably great number of writing metaphors, says:

<verse>

How many copies did our child see and wash off! But due to its confusion

this child “Tear” has never become acquainted with the book.[168]

</verse>

The same poet refers to emperor Akbar’s device, “Peace with all”, and applies it to the mystical intoxication which makes mankind forget the differences of religions and sects:

<verse>

When the old master of the tavern teaches the book “Peace with all!”,

One can wash off the pages of the different religious sects with the wine of tawhid, [declaration that God is One].[169]

</verse>

One wonders whether his remark was an answer to Baba Fighânî’s (d. 1519) ghazal in which he had joked:

<verse>

Figham, the safinah, [notebook, anthology], of your heart is polluted—

Wash off the dust of griefs with wine from the book![170]

</verse>

In connection, one should remember that the term “book”, kitab, is rarely used for anything but the Qur’an, or at least a religious, important work, while books of poetry are referred to as safinah, “boat,” that is, a small book stitched together at the narrow end. Such safinah became very popular as anthologies in Timurid times, and are usually written in delicate nasta’llq script. Often the designation of a book as daftar occurs, that is, a notebook bound only loosely or consisting of loose pages.[171]

The religious importance of books is reflected time and again in allusions to books by mystics and mystically inclined writers. The Prophet of Islam, being ummi, “illiterate,” appears as the one who did not need any book knowledge but knew everything that had ever been written.[172] Thus, the mystics, too, tried to find access to the great book of creation and to discover and interpret its âyât, its signs. Did not God Himself state that He had put His signs “in the horizons and in yourselves” (surah 41, 52)7 Thus, the magister magnus of theosophical Sufism, the Andalusian Ibn ‘ Arabi, conceived of the whole cosmos as a book, readable to the understanding people, and his near-contemporary in Iran, ’Azizaddin Nasafi, used the same image, as did many other thinkers and poets. An additional feature of this comparison was the fact that surah 68 begins with the words, Nun wa-al-qalam, “Nun, and By the Pen!,” an expression that lead some Sufis in Ibn ‘ArabFs tradition to speculate that the letter nun, as suggested by its very shape, could be interpreted as the primordial inkwell that belongs with the primordial Pen that writes on the Well Preserved Tablet whatever is to happen.[173]

However, the idea that the cosmos or the universe is a book occurs long before Ibn ‘Arabi. Sana’! of Ghazna (d. 1131) writes in his didactic epic, Hadlqat al-haqîqah’.

<verse>

The form of the universe is like a book

in which advice and fetter (pand u band) are together.

Its form is a fetter for the body of the blameworthy,

its qualities are advice for the hearts of the wise.[174]

</verse>

To have understood such advice in the book of the universe was a claim of numerous mystically inclined writers. Akbar’s court poet, Faizi (d. 1595), boasted that he had seen:

</verse>

One by one the details of the notebook, daftar, of existence and place, kawn wa-makan,

and table by table the pages of the calendar of the sky.[175]

</verse>

That means, he was able to understand and interpret the astrological chart, jadwal, which shows how the sphere rules human life.

<verse>

A century later, Fânî offered a fine comparison:

The world is like a book filled with knowledge and justice.

The bookbinder Fate made two volumes of it with two points of return.

The stitching at the back, shirazah, is the sharfah and the different religions are the pages:

Tonight we are all disciples, and the Prophet is the teacher.[176]

</verse>

Interestingly, most poets who used book imagery developed a rather pessimistic worldview, and one is pleasantly surprised when discovering the lines of one Ashraf, a little known Kashmiri poet in Mughal times:

<verse>

Everyone who has seen the notebook of the days from top to bottom,

has seen the day between the lines of the nights,[177]

</verse>

For the book does not only contain the dark and sometimes crooked script of fate, but also the white background, the days of happiness.

There are also other interpretations of the Book of the Universe. One pun that is found in hundreds of verses is that on khatt, which means both “line, script” and “down,” the first black signs of a growing beard on the cheeks and upper lip of a teenage boy.[178] This pun makes it next to impossible to render into a Western language a great number of Persian and Turkish verses which are replete with plays on khatt. A fine example are the lines by Zebun-Nisa (d. 1701), emperor Aurangzeb’s gifted daughter, who writes:

<verse>

I have seen the library of the world page by page—

I have seen your khatt and said: “That’s the real purpose!”[179]

</verse>

The punning with khatt goes back to much earlier days of Persian poetry and is used by Sa’dî (d. 1292), who addresses a beloved:

<verse>

O you: from the booklet of your moral qualities, the husn-i khatt

[“beautiful script” or “lovely down”] is just one chapter,

and sweetness is just one letter from the book of your qualities.[180]

</verse>

As the face was considered to be a book of loveliness, even in a veritable Qur’an copy, the khatt plays a very special role:

<verse>

Due to the musk colored khatt his cheek appeared like the book of beauty,

for the commentator himself has written carefully these marginal notes.[181]

</verse>

The down sprouts by itself, and therefore the poet could think that the black lines of the down were nothing but the author’s commentary of his own book which he wrote, as is customary, on the margins, that is, the cheeks.

Poets allude to the custom to put a dot on a certain place of a manuscript to indicate a verse or a single word or letter which should be chosen for its beauty or elegance:

<verse>

Sit like the point of selection in the margin of the books of the assembly.[182]

</verse>

Thus Fanl admonishes someone who is very special. One often finds verses like the following one by Farigh, another Kashmiri poet:

<verse>

My high nature has selected his stature from out the world;

That means, it has selected the letter alif from this book.[183]

</verse>

The combination of the straight, upright letter alif and the elegant, slender stature of the beloved is commonplace and can be easily combined with the religious interpretation of the alif as pointing to God’s Unity and unicity, as its numerical value is One, and as all the other letters, according to the calligraphic rules of Ibn Muqlah Id. 940), are shaped by measuring the alif just as Adam was created “according to His, God’s form.” Hafiz’s famous verse:

<verse>

There is nothing on the tablet of my heart but the alif of the friend’s stature.

What can I do? My teacher did not give me any other letter to remember, [184]

</verse>

plays most skillfully on the double meaning of alif and has therefore been imitated by innumerable poets.

As already mentioned, the comparison of a beautiful face to a book, in particular to the Qur’an, in whose copies not the smallest mistake must be seen, occurs often in poetry. That is not only the case in Hurilfi poetry, where

comparisons of human limbs with letters and the idea of the entire human being as a divinely written book form the center of the worldview, but also in earlier and later poetry.[185] Writers who may never have heard of Hurufi interpretations of the letters used such comparisons, for they seemed to be quite natural. Thus, a poet in the Indus valley, Isma'il Bakhshi, is quoted as having written:

<verse>

Your face is like a Qur'an copy without any mistake and flaw

which the Pen of Destiny has written exclusively from musk.

The eye and your mouth are verse...dots for stopping, the eye-brows

a maddcih,

the eyelashes signs of declension, the mole and the down letters and dots."[186]

</verse>

Such allusions, especially of the eyebrows to the tughra, of eyes, nose, mouth, ears, and curls to the individual letters of the alphabet, abound in Arabic, Persian, and related poetry.

One aspect of the comparisons of beautiful, pure things with the Qur'an is that the Holy Writ was used for prognostication. Poets made use of this quality of the Qur'an, too, and could compare Love to a Qur'an from which one might be able to receive some information about the future. But, as Amir Khusrau Dihlawl (d. 1325) wrote:

<verse>

When Khusrau opens the Book of Love for prognostication,

From the first page of grief my story appeared.[187]

</verse>

Frequently, the heart is compared to a Qur’an copy, and the custom to write the Holy Book in thirty parts, juz’, made many a poet think that his heart is also a collection of thirty parts. Kalfm, however, expresses his concern differently:

<verse>

I tore my heart to pieces page by page,

For from this book one has rarely seen the prognosis of well-being.[188]

</verse>

The comparison of the heart with the Qur’an leads sometimes to strange exaggerations. Thus, Mir Dard of Delhi (d. 1786), never exactly modest in his mystical claims, compares himself in a subtle way to the Prophet, his ancestor, by remarking:

<verse>

I am unlettered, but I have a heart

thanks to whose mystical grace, faiz, every letter of mine is a book in the world.[189]

</verse>

That is, wisdom is poured onto his heart, which thus produces wonderful, inspired books (he indeed claimed that all his Persian and Urdu works were written under inspiration).

Two centuries before him, ‘UrfT (d. 1591), noted for his grand ambitions, had claimed:

<verse>

Every book for which I am the last chapter—

Its first page is the well-preserved Tablet.[190]

</verse>

This, again, sounds rather like a claim if not to prophethood, at least to the status of the Perfect Man.

However, not every poet used the imagery of the book in this way. More common, and probably easier to appreciate, are verses in which the garden is seen as a book, just as books were compared, by earlier writers, to a garden. Everyone who has studied the elements of Persian is aware of Sa’dî’s line in his Diwan:

<verse>

Every leaf on the green trees is in the eyes of those who understand

a page from the hook of the Creator’s wisdom.[191]

</verse>

Jami sees the “children of spring” practice the letter alif in the garden,[192] and Kalim takes up this idea when he says:

<verse>

Every spring is a child in the school “Garden”

Every bud that ovens becomes his book.[193]

</verse>

The poets in the Islamic world, as elsewhere, loved especially the rose and saw it as a wondrous book with a hundred petals, that is, pages. Most of the later writers would agree with the Mughal poet Urmd:

Urmd, speak like the rose of your heart that is in a hundred pieces;

talk about one page, for this book is all blood.[194]

The combination of the red centifolia with bloodstained pages that resemble the bleeding heart of the lover is quite common in later Persian poetry and is particularly well expressed in FighanTs lines:

Who washed the booklet of the rose with the spring cloud’s weeping?

For every petal is a booklet filled with the blood of the suffering ones![195]

If I understand his train of thought correctly, he means that it was not right that the rain was washing the roses, as these are signs of the martyrs, those who died in unfulfilled longing—and according to Islamic law, martyrs’ bodies are not washed before burial.

In earlier centuries, however, the cheerful, or at least delightful, aspect of the “book Rose” is more prominent:

The rose has made correct its page with dew—

the stamp on this page is all pearls![196]

Thus says Amir Khusrau, and he continues this line with the remark that the line, khatt, of greenery is even prettier than this page. Whether he intends the vernal green in the meadow or the fresh down on his friend’s rose-cheek remains an open question.

But Figham also looks at the safinah, the anthology, of the heart and wishes that every page of the booklet might be in the hand of some charming person:

I want that the safinah of the heart be opened like the rose, page by page (or, petal by petal),

and that every page be in the hand of some angelic beauty![197]

Is not the “rose of the cheek” a lovely book that contains innumerable love songs? Hafiz, as so often, coined the classical formulation of this thought:

Not I alone sing ghazals for the rose of the cheek, for you have thousands of nightingales on all sides[198]

a verse which inter alia contains a fine pun on hazaran, “thousands” and “nightingales”.

The morning breeze opens the “notebook of the rose” to sing of the curls of the beloved.[199] Thus thinks Amir Khusrau, and even a nearly contemporary poet like Iqbal (d. 1938) sees the Creator writing His message on the petals of the tulip.[200]

Persian poets sometimes invented strange metaphors in their spring songs.

One wonders what lead Fânî Kashmiri to compose the verse:

The rose wrote with writing, khatt, of greenery in the book of spring:

The cloud of the wine bottle is better than the sun of spring.[201]

Does he mean to say that rain would be more welcome than sun at this point in time, or else does he claim to prefer wine indeed to the radiant sunshine of a Kashmiri spring day...?

Yet, one is not surprised when the nightingales are heard reciting the Mantiq al-tayr from the book of the roses,[202] for rose petals can play various roles in the imagery of the book. They may just be a book filled with mysterious tales, as in the previous example, or else a book that contains the story of grief:

Every rose petal is a tongue to explain the commentary of grief—

Not in vain does the nightingale lament when it sees the rose.[203]

Thus says one of the greatest Turkish poets, Fuzuli (d. 1556). One of his predecessors, Jami, who influenced him considerably, remarks, however:

I struck together the booklet of the rose like the wind, because in these pages there is no letter about your beauty![204]

How could one leave intact a book which does not speak of the rose-like cheek of the beloved? Fani even wants to blacken rose petals with the color of the tulip;[205] he alludes to the black scar on the heart of the tulip which is compared to the black scar in the suffering lover’s heart, from which one can easily produce a collection of poetry.

To this century, poets have invented comparisons between the book and the garden; thus, the Egyptian poet Sami al-Bârüdi (d. 1904) wrote, at the beginning of this century:

The hand of wind writes letters on the pond that could be read and sung by birds.[206]

Perhaps the finest verses that compare gardens and books are not those in which birds recite from the booklet Rose, but rather the colorful descriptions of the autumnal garden. Jami sees it as a notebook colored by red and yellow leaves—a notebook from which the insightful spectator understands that the “white book”, that is, the snow-covered ground, will soon appear.[207] Fuzuli similarly takes up the radiant colors of autumn, but uses the image ever more ingeniously than Jami:

The scribe of Destiny made from the autumnal leaves a golden sprinkling for the pages of the garden;

Cutting off the stitching, shirazah, of running water [which held in shape the book], autumn has confused the pages of the manuscript of the garden.[208]

Similarities with books could be discovered in all of nature: An early poet of Baghdad did not see the garden or flowers as a book, but discovered a book with lines in the glittering skin of a snake.[209]

One often finds a concretion of abstracts in Persian poetry, and almost “mythical” transformation of material and spiritual objects. An early Persian poet, Akhsikatl, speaks of the “book of poverty”,[210] and Maulana Rumi mentioned “the library of my needs”, which the beloved is supposed[211] to study. When Sana’! claims:

As much as I read the booklet of the lovers,

Yet, in love of you I am still a beginner who learns the alphabet,[212]

he alludes to the fact that love, in its true essence, can never be understood by studying the books that speak about it, and that everyone has to start again with a new experience, with new suffering. Nazlri (d. 1612), the leading poet of Mughal India, took up the same idea:

Ever so many books and Qur’an copies are the register for the chapter Love —

When you find the real tale, you don’t read any page any more![213]

Jami sees it somewhat differently: Although intellectually he wanted to give up loving, yet, the friend’s khatt (down, script) seduced him again:

I washed off the book of Love with the management of reason,

But again, your khatt brought the lesson of the alphabet, abjad, into my head.[214]

The manuscript of Love is usually black—one can combine it with the term muswaddah, “black copy” (i.e., rough draft). This is so, on the one hand, because lovers suffer from melancholia, “black liver,” and from bakht-i siyah, “black fortune,” that is, misfortune, but also because this misfortune is caused by the black tresses and black down of the beloved. Bedil (d. 172 1)و in good Sufi manner, gratefully acknowledges that this black manuscript became radiant when the lesson of beauty was written on it, so that by looking at the friend’s beauty the reader became aware of himself,[215] for the lover is nothing but a mirror for the beloved’s beauty. And one should not forget that even though the book of Love is black, it need not be afraid of God:

for this sin [that is love] was not written in the account-book, jarldah, of the [black] tress.[216]

That, at least, is what Fan! claims.

Poets might boast of their intimate relation with the primordial book or with the Book of Love. Thus, an Indo-Persian poet whose name is barely found in any history of Persian literature claims:

The title of the books of mystery is our fate [samivisht], “what is written on the forehead“

The exordium of the book of Love is our disposition.[217]

But many of them were aware that one should never trust the book of Love. Is it not strange that:

His (the friend’s) mole is in the eyes of the rival and the scar of longing is in my heart—

In the book of love-game the dots have fallen on the wrong places!

Is it right that the rival can study the friend’s beauty spot from a close distance while the poor lover only suffers from the black scars which unfulfilled longing has stamped into his heart? There must be some taşhîf, a wrong placement of the diacritical marks, in this strange book![218]

At a rather late stage of Indo-Persian poetry, combinations of the reed pen, which is used for writing, and the reed mat, burya, on which the derwish, the true lover, is supposed to sleep, can be found. The reed, in

its different aspects as pen, as flute, and as sugarcane, had been praised and described in earlier poetry, but the “Indian style” of Persian poetry abounds in allusions to the reed mat. Thus, Bedil, the most difficult of the poets who wrote in the “Indian style,” excels here, as elsewhere, in difficult cross references:

You break a hundred reed pens to reach the practice of good behavior, adab: There are lines in the book of the school of the reed mat! [219]

For if one sleeps on the reed mat (which was even compared by the poets to the ruler, mastarah, that is needed for good writing),[220] the lines of the hard mat leave their marks on the body and thus “educate” it in proper modest behavior.

Many poets knew that:

The book of generosity and kindness is a sign, ayah, of Mercy,

But the pages of this book do not come together.[221]

For it is hard to find more than a few scattered pages of such books as much as everyone looks out for them.

A book, however, should be stitched carefully in order to keep the pages in the right sequence, and the shirazah, “stitching,” occurs frequently in later Mughal verse—so much so that ‘Abdul Jain Bilgrarm (d. 1743) sees the “wave of the kha\\” appear as the “shirazah off the book of Beauty.“[222]

At about the same time, Bedil saw the vein of the rose petal as the thread of binding for the collection, majmliah of life and

love, a collection in which one finds the blackness of, or the passion for, sawda, the friend’s khatt.[223]

Nazir appears more matter-of-fact when he describes his state:

<verse>

Your love is the stitching of my parts;

Longing for you is the register, fihrist, of my whole being.[224]

</verse>

A century earlier, Fuztill, in the Turkish area, had used the idea of “stitching together” in a somewhat more elegant way:

<verse>

The true lovers stitch together with the thread of the soul

Every book in which the tale, hadith, of your ruby lips is written![225]

</verse>

In the nineteenth century, Ghalib (d. 1869) (who even speaks, in his Urdu verse, of “looking” as the shirazah of the eyelashes)[226] invented a fine image:

<verse>

The story of longing does not fit into binding, alas!

Let this manuscript remain in parts![227]

</verse>

Iqbal, on the other hand, expressed his philosophy of development and longing in a related image:

<verse>

Wish is the stitching for the book of actions—[228]

</verse>

It is only man’s burning wish and striving that makes true, useful action possible.

He is thus quite different from his predecessors in whose verses a melancholy mood overshadows everything, including, and perhaps especially, images connected with the book:

<verse>

The sign of cheerful life is not to be found in the pages of this time,
dahr—

Someone has made a wrong selection from this book![229]

</verse>

Poets did not believe much in hope and expectation, and knew from experience that:

<verse>

It is not good when a goal is attained;

When the page is complete it is turned over.[230]

</verse>

Probably the most outspoken criticism of the Book of Life comes from Sarmad, the Judeo-Persian convert to mystical Islam, who paid with his life for his daring and often seemingly blasphemous utterances after his protector, the Mughal heir apparent Dara Shiköh, had been executed in 1659. The content of his famous quatrain turned out to be true:

<verse>

To trust the promises of humans in the world is wrong.

“Yes”: wrong. “Sure”: wrong. “Tonight”: wrong. “Tomorrow”: wrong.

Don’t ask how the manuscript of the diwan of my life looks;

The script wrong, the meaning wrong, the composition wrong, the orthography wrong![231]

</verse>

No, there was no reason in hoping against hope:

<verse>

Behold my magnanimity: a hundred leaves from the book of Hope have I torn into a hundred pieces and washed them off with tears of blood![232]

</verse>

This little-known poet from the days of Emperor Akbar still sees the possibility of casting away the pages of hope; Ghalib, in nineteenth-century Delhi, is even less positive:

<verse>

Future and past are wish and longing,

It was a “Would it were!” which I wrote in a hundred places.

Not in a single manuscript was the meaning of the word “hope” [as much as] I had written the register of the chapters of wishes.[233]

</verse>

What is existence but a strange, often incomprehensible book? What is left to mankind but tajrid, complete isolation from all created beings, abstaining from wishes and hopes? Perhaps the most impressive description of a wise person’s attitude comes from Khaqani, whose verse seems unsurpassable in depth and expressiveness:

<verse>

I wrote the alphabet of isolation, tajrid, and then, I painted it with the red and yellow of the [red] tears and [pale] face as though it were a nashrah [an amulet for children painted in several color].

When I had learned by heart this alphabet, whose beginning is from nothingness, I forgot the riddle whose title is “Existence”[234]

</verse>

There seems little doubt that this line has inspired one of the famous verses by Mirza Ghalib who wrote, in his Persian Diwan’.

Death is a letter whose title is “Life.”[235]

Poets in former centuries often spoke of God the Creator as the master calligrapher, for they knew:

Creation was not prepared without a creator;

To decorate pages is impossible without the scribe’s writing.[236]

Thus thought Anvarl in the twelfth century. The same concept of the Divine Scribe, so frequently used in a positive way, as in Maulana Rums poetry, [237] is transformed in Ghalib’s introductory lines to his Urdu diwan into a rebellious outcry of the letters against the Divine Master who put them “in a paper shirt,” that is, who wrote them the way He wanted, without apparently caring for the letters’ feelings.[238] What, then, do we know about the meaning of the world?

Kallm admits his ignorance about creation and world in his oft-quoted verse:

We do not know anything of the beginning and the end of this world— The first and last page of this old book have fallen off.[239]

The mystics had always pretended to be averse to bookishness, and many of them pretended, also, to follow the example of the “unlettered Prophet,” or else to know only one letter of the alphabet, that is, alif. But we cannot deny that they probably wrote more books than those whom they criticized for their literary and scholarly activities, so that the output of mystical writings in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, as well as the regional languages of Indo-Pakistan. Southeast Asia, and Africa, seems to have no limits. Yet a book was only a medium which should be studied under the supervision of a master who would know what to teach the disciple and how to explain the difficulties, the inner meaning, according to time-honored and often experiential methods. That is why one finds numerous remarks, especially among Sufis, against the use of books. But even Muhammad Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of the Indian Muslims and spiritual father of Pakistan, criticized the reliance on books, be they philological or scholastic. Is not the Muslim jurisconsult of modern times who knows only books and does not feel true religious experience like Qârün? Under the weight of the dead load of books on Arabic grammar he sinks into the earth, as did Qarun under the burden of his useless treasures, instead of breathing the air of divine Love.[240]

In another metaphor, Iqbal juxtaposes the bookworm, which leads a miserable life in the pages of manuscripts of Farabi and Avicenna, with the moth that casts itself lovingly and longingly into the candle to burn there in ecstasy.[241] He also coined the fine expression:

Love is umm al-kitab, “Mother of the Book,” scholarship is the “Son of the book.”[242]

Love is the primordial basis for revelation, while scholarship is dependent upon written, that is, second-hand, knowledge.

Long before him, Jami had admonished the reader of his Lawa’ih:

Strive to lift the veils, not to collect books.

For by collecting books the veils are not lifted.

Where vuld be the joy of love in traversing books?

Roll up all of them, return to God, and repent![243]

Rûmî had combined the book and the garden, expressing his pity for those who look only at books and, as it were, turn themselves into a library:

If you are a library, you are not someone who seeks the garden of the soul.[244]

For, as he sings in the Mathnawi:

For the lovers, the friend’s beauty is the teacher,

his face is the notebook and lesson and instruction for them.[245]

For it is the page of the heart that matters:

From the undecorated page of the heart I found the reality which you seek in books.[246]

The heart, however, is perfected when it has been polished as a mirror to reflect the beloved’s beauty, which confuses everyone. Therefore, a minor Mughal poet sings:

I keep the sheet of the mirror under the arm instead of a book;

I am the child that reads the alphabet in the schoolhouse of confusion.[247]

What would be a book when one wants the radiant reflection of beauty? Gesu Daraz, whose description of the book as beloved we quoted in the beginning, seems to have changed his opinion and, refuting his own previous statement, writes in another quatrain:

If you have a book as your beloved,

Then you have something that has a black heart!

God forbid that a book be your beloved—

What kind of friendship with Abyssinians and Barbarians![248]

Maulana Rûmî admonished himself in hundreds of ghazals to be silent, and Mir Dard, more than 500 years later, emphasizes the importance of silence, so that the true Speaker and Author, God, can speak:

O you who has wasted this life in debate:

One point of silence is better than a hundred kinds of books![249]

Could any book describe properly what the lover feels?

This notebook has reached its end, but the story still goes on:

One cannot tell the situation of a longing heart even in a hundred notebooks![250]

Thus said Sa’di, and, confronted with the dilemma of wanting to write books and yet knowing that all of them are but a veil, what can one do except follow Sanâ’î’s remark:

First I wrote books with effort great—

At last I broke the pen, confused![251]

[147] Fihi mâfîhi, trans. Arthur John Arberry, Discourses of Rumi (London, 1961).

[148] “Comprendre rislam,” in La Voie des Lettres, ed. Jean Canteins (Paris, 1981), p. 76, note 21.

For the whole problem of calligraphy’s influence on the art of the book, literature in general, and Sufism, see Annemarie Schimmel, Callugraphy and Islamic Culture (New York, 1984; paperback, 1989).

[149] Armaghan-i Pak, ed. Shaykh Muhammad Ikram (Karachi, 1953), p. 259.

[150] Abdul Baqi Nihawandi, Ma’âthir-İ Rahimi, 3 vols., ed. M. Hidayat Hosain (Calcutta, 1916–1931), is devoted to the Khânkhânân’s political and cultural activities. For the deplorable decay of such libraries, however, see Aloys A Catalogue of the Arabic, Persian, and Hindu’stany manuscripts of the Libraries of the King of Oudh, compiled by Order of the Government of India (Calcutta, 1854, repr. Osnabiich, 1979) 1: X: “The books are kept in about forty dilapidated boxes—camel trunks- which are at the same time tenanted by prolific families of rats, and any admirer of Oriental lore who wants to visit this collection will do well to poke with a stick into the boxes before he puts his hand into them, unless he be a zoologist as well as an orientalist.”

[151] ‘Abdurrahman Jami, Dîwân-i kamil, ed. Hashim Riza (Tehran, 1341 H solar/1962), rubai no. 49.

[152] J. Christoph Bürgel, “Von Freud und Leid mit Bdchern. Gereimtes und Anekdotisches aus dem arabischen Mittlealter,” in Einheit in der Vielfalt, Festschrift Peter Lang (Bern/Frankfurt/Paris, 1988).

[153] Annemarie Schimmel, Die orientalische Kaize, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1989), pp. 87–92. The book lover was Abu Ja’far al-Awsî.

[154] Latifi, in Elias J.w. Gibb, History of Ottoman Poetry, 6 vols. (London, 1900–1909: repr. London, 1958–63) 6:165.

[155] ikram, Armaghan-i Pak, p. 161.

[156] Afdaladdin Ibrahim Khaqani, Diwan, ed. Ziâ’addîn Sajjadi (Tehran, n.d.), p. 326.

[157] Jalaladdin Rumi, Mathnawima’nawi, 7 vols., ed. and trans. Reynold Alleyne Nicholson (London, 1925–40), 4: line 5722ff. The story is found in Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali, ihya’ ‘ulumal-din, V. 4, bab al-tawakkul, “The Chapter of Trust in God”, which is Rumi’s source.

[158] Jami, Diwan-i kamil, rubai no. 48.

[159] Stuart Cary Welch et al., The Emperors’ Album (New York, 1987), pp. 42–43.

[160] Annemarie Schimmel, “Islamic Literatures in India,” in History of Indian Literature, vol. VII, ed. Jan Gonda (Wiesbaden, 1973), p. 46.

[161] Ikram, Armaghan-i Pak, p. 142.

[162] Garcin de Tassy, Les Oeuvres de Wali: publies en Hindoustani (Paris, 1834; traduction et notes, Paris 1838).

[163] Hafiz, Diwan, eds. Nadhlr Ahmad and Jalal Nâ’inl (Tehran, 1971), p. 75.

[164] Dlwan-i kamil, p. 470, ghazal no. 78

[165] Jâmî, Diwân-İ kamil, p. 185, ghazal no. 137.

[166] Edward Granville Browne, A Literary History of Persia, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1921), 2:232.

[167] Muhammad Nâşir ‘Andallb, Nâda-i ‘andalib, 2 vols. (Bhopal, 1309/ 1890–91), 1:646.

[168] Muhsin Fam Kashmiri, Diwan, ed. G.L. Tikki (Tehran, 1964), p. 82.

[169] Fanl, Diwan, p. 10.

[170] Bâbâ Fighanl, Diwan, ed. A.s. Khwansarl, 2114 ed. (Tehran, 1340 H solar/1961), ghazal no. 358.

[171] Professor Vincent M. Monteil, Paris, in an oral communication, remarked that in Omar Khayyam’s famous quatrain about the “book under a tree, and wine,” the correct reading is not kitab, “book,” but with the change of one dot, kabab, “roast meat,” which makes much more sense both in the context and in the usage of the term kitab.

[172] Annemarie Schimmel, And Muhammad is His Messenger (Chapel Hill, 1985), Index: s.v. ummi, especially pp. 71–74.

[173] Annemarie Schimmel, Calligraphy and Islamic Culture, p. 79. relying on Sulaiman, Sa’daddln Mustaqlmzadah, Tuhfat al-khattatin, ed. Ibnul Emin Mahmud (Istanbul, 1928), p. 7 (among the forty hadith on writing).

[174] Majdaddin Majdad Sana’!, Hadiqat al-haqiqah, ed. Mudarris Rizawl (Tehran, 1329 H solar/1950), p. 457.

[175] ikram, Armaghan-i Pak, p. 193.

[176] Fanl, Diwan, p. 144.

[177] Muhammad Aşlah, 7adhkirat-i shu ara-yi Kashmir, 5 vols., ed. Sayyid Hussamuddln RashdI (Karachi, 1967–68) 4: 1736. A is the basic text, 1-IV the additional notes supplied by the editor.

[178] Schimmel, Calligraphy and Islamic Culture, Index: s.v. khatt, especially pp. 128–34.

[179] Aşlah, Tadhkirat A, p. 107.

[180] Muslihaddin Sa’dî, Kulliyat, ed. Furughi (Tehran, 1342 H solar/1963), ghazal no. 517, p. 498, line 8.

[181] Aşlah, Tadhkirat A, p. 363.

[182] Fânî, Diwan, p. 135.

[183] Aşlah, Tadhkirat A, p. 275.

[184] Hafiz, Diwan, p. 363 (num no. 9).

[185] Schimmel, Calligraphy and Islamic Culture, pp. 106–11.

[186] Ismâ’îl Bakhshi, quoted in Mir ‘Alîsîr Qani’, Maqalat al-shu’ard’, ed. Sayyid Hussamuddin Râshdî (Karachi, 1956), p. 44.

[187] Amir Khusrau, Diwan-i kamil, ed. Mahmüd Darwish (Tehran, 1343 H solar/1965).

[188] Abu Talib Kalim, Diwan, ed. Partaw Baidâ’î (Tehran, 1336 H solar/ 1957), ghazal no. 214.

[189] Khwajah Mir Dard, Diwan-i farsi (Delhi, 1310/1891-92), p. 65. About Dard’s attitude to writing and books, see Annemarie Schimmel, Pain and Grace (Leiden, 1976), pt. 1.

[190] Muhammad ‘Urfi Shirazi, Kulliyat, ed. Ghulam Husain Jawahiri (Tehran, 1336 H solar/1957), ghazal on p. 283, line 5.

[191] Sa’di, Kulliyat I, ghazal no. 296, p. 282, line 4.

[192] Jami, Diwan-i kamil, rubcTi no. 90.

[193] Kalim, Diwan, ghazal no. 539. Cf. also Khaqani, Diwan, p. 42, “birds in the garden learn the alphabet like little children.”

[194] Aşlah, Tadhkirat A, p. 569.

[195] Fîghânî, Diwan, ghazal no. 151.

[196] Amir Khusrau, Dlwan-i kâmil, no. 336.

[197] Fîghânî, Diwan, ghazal no. 363.

[198] Hafiz, Diwan, p. 119, ghazal no. 59. This verse, which is usually quoted as one of Hafiz’s finest puns, appears only in a footnote.

[199] Amîr Khusrau, Dlwân-İ kamil, no. 476.

[200] Muhammad Iqbal, Zabiir-i ’ajam (Lahore, 1927), pt. 2, no. 29.

[201] Fânî, Diwan, p. 109·

[202] Gi\0\0, History of Ottoman Poetry, 6:80.

[203] Fuzuli, Diwan, ed. Abdulbaki Gdlpinarli (Istanbul, 1948), no. 34.

[204] Jami, Diwân-İ kamil, p. 260, ghazal no. 331.

[205] Fani, Diwan, p. 140.

[206] Carl Brockelmann, Geschichte der arabischen Literatür (Leiden, 1938), suppl. 3: 12.

[207] Jami, Diwân-İ kamil, p. 401, ghazal no. 598.

[208] Fuzüli, Diwan, no. 132.

[209] Ibn Abi ‘Awn, Kitab al-tashbihat, ed. M. Mu’id Khan (London/Leiden, 1960), p. 58.

[210] Daulatshah, Tadhkirat al-shu’ara’, ed. Edward Granville Browne (Leiden, 1900), p. 136.

[211] Jalaladdin Rumi, Diwân-İ kabir yâ Kulliyat-i Shams, 10 vols., ed. Badi’uzzaman Furuzanfor (Tehran, 1957), ghazal no. 1425.

[212] Sana\,Diwan, ed. Mudarris Razawi (Tehran, n.d.), p. 899.

[213] Naziri Nishapuri, Diwan, ed. Mazahir Muşaffa (Tehran, 1340 H solar/1961), ghazal no. 520.

[214] Jami, Diwan-i kamil, p. 884.

[215] Bedil, Diwan (Bombay, 1302/1885), p. 207.

[216] Fani, Diwan, p. 100.

[217] Aşlah, Tadhkirat I, p. 118, line 7 (Ilahi).

[218] ادلآلادح tashif, see ١ة٢٩لأة\-ل؟>خا, al-Tanbih’ald huduth al-tashif, ed. al-Shaykh Muhammad Hasan Al Yasin (Baghdad, 1967). See A. Schimmel, Calligraphy and Islamic Culture, ch. 4, notes 4–6.

[219] Bedil, Kulliyat, 4 vols. (Kabul, 1962–65), 1:5.

[220] Kalim, Diwan, ghazal no. 316.

[221] Fani, Diwan, p. 124.

[222] Qani’, Maqalat al-shu’ara’,. p. 412.

[223] Bedil, Kulliyat, 1:32.

[224] Naziri, Diwan, ghazal no. 483.

[225] Fuzuli, Diwan, no. 71.

[226] Mirza Asadullah Ghalib, Urdu diwan, ed. Hamid Ahmad Khan (Lahore, 1969), p. 155.

[227] Ghalib, Kulliyat-i farsi, 17 vols. (Lahore: University of the Punjab, n.d.), 5: qasidah 36.

[228] Iqbal, Asrar-i khudi (Lahore, 1915), line 285.

[229] Aşlah, Tadhkirat A, p. 593, line 27.

[230] Qudsi, in Aşlah, Tadhkirat III, p. 1249.

[231] ikram, Armaghan-i Pak, p. 239.

[232] Ja’fer Beg Asaf Khan Qazwini, in Badaoni, Muntakhab al-tawarikh, 3 vols., eds. William Nassau Lees and Ahmad All, trans. George S.A. Ranking, WH. Lowe, and Wolseley Haig, (Calcutta, 1865–893 repr. Patna: Academia Asiatica), 3: text 217, trans, p. 301.

[233] Ghalib, Kulliyat-i farsi, 1: no. 284.

[234] Khaqani, Diwan, p. 209.

[235] Ghalib, Kulliyat-i farsi, 1: no. 284.

[236] Anvari, Diwan, ed. Sa’id Nafisi (Tehran, 1958), qasidah fi al-tawhid, p. 175, line 10.

[237] For examples, see Annemarie Schimmel, The Triumphal Sun (London/The Hague, 1978), chapter on “Divine Calligraphy.”

[238] Ghalib, Urdu diwan, no. 1. For the interpretation, see Annemarie Schimmel, A Dance ofSparks: Studies in Ghalib’s Imagery (New Delhi, 1979), chapter on “Calligraphy and Poetry.”

[239] ikram, Armaghan-i Pak, p. 227.

[240] Iqbal, Bâl-i Jibril (Lahore, 1936)و p. 50.

[241] Iqbal, Payam-i mashriq (Lahore, 1923), p. 119.

[242] Iqbal, Zarb-i Kalim (Lahore, 1937), p. 14.

[243] Jami, Lawa ih, no. 40. Bedil, too, combines book collecting with afsurda dili, “having a frozen, dried-up heart,” Kulliyat, 1:226.

[244] Jalaladdin Rumi, Diwân-İ kabir, ghazal no. 2481.

[245] Jalaladdin Rumi, Mathnawi, 3: line 3847.

[246] Fani, Diwan, p.42.

[247] شم·l, Tadhkirat A, 0. 320 ٢Qalaדדdarı.

[248] Gesu Daraz, Anis al-ushshaq (Hyderabad/Deccan, 1940), p. 188.

[249] Dard, Diwan-i farsi, rubcTi no. 82.

[250] Sa’di, Kulliyat, 23: no. 586.

[251] Sanâ’i, Diwan, p. 801.

** 6. Biographical Dictionaries: Inner Structure and Cultural Significance

Wadād al-Qāḍī

Biographical dictionaries seem to be, for the researchers in the Islamic Arabic library, both a blessing and a curse. When a researcher seeks to identify a relatively unknown person whose identification is crucial for his/her research, finding this person’s biography in a biographical dictionary produces unparalleled relief, joy, and a sense of salvation. When he/she does not, however, the frustration is great, and the chances of coming out with solid results are postponed—perhaps indefinitely. And, in fact, it is quite possible that a researcher would not find what he/she is looking for, not only because the Arabic biographical dictionaries, or what has survived of them, do not, and perhaps could not, include the biographies of every single person mentioned in the history of Islamic peoples across the centuries, but also because the promise that those dictionaries have, and the actual evidence of their tremendous usefulness, raise the hopes and aspirations of the researcher, creating thereby an image which does not necessarily stand up to the reality. If X were to identify a poet named Muhammad, my expectation would be that, even if I failed to find his biography in all the available dictionaries on poets, I would eventually find him in Jamal al-Dîn al-Qiftfs (d. 646/1248)[252] dictionary, al-Muhammadun min alshu’ara’ wa ash’aruhum, which has entries for the Arab poets called “Muhammad.” I may not, however, find him there either, the fact being that the book has not survived in its entirety. And there is, after all, another obstacle, namely the sheer number of these biographical dictionaries: they seem to be endless—“in their hundreds or thousands,” as Stephen Humphreys aptly put it[253]—and one is always afraid that one may have forgotten to consult a relevant dictionary, or that a new dictionary has been published without one being aware of it.

Whereas all this is true for anyone who has had to use Arabic biographical dictionaries extensively what is certainly as true is that having to handle these, dictionaries is an experience that puts one in the very midst of one of the major areas of medieval Islamic book production. After all, biographical

composition is a form of historical composition: this is a fact that had been recognized by Muslim scholars of old,[254] and its echoes continue to be heard in modern scholarship today.[255] It is also a fact that is true of other cultures with well-developed historical traditions,[256] although in the Islamic one in particular, the biography, especially in the form of biographical dictionaries, has had an unparalleled level of prominence[257] for a variety of specific, historical reasons.[258]

Given the importance of this genre of writing, it is not surprising that there has been a sizeable number of studies on it. Some of these studies are brief. or detailed, surveys of the literature;[259] others are more analytical.[260] The latter discuss issues such as the motives for writing biographical dictionaries,[261] their origin,[262] provenance,[263] sources,[264] or organization,[265] the criteria for inclusion used by compilers,[266] typical contents of biographies there,[267] and so forth. Few of the studies venture to dwell at length on the question of the development of the genre,[268] and even fewer try to discern a relationship between this development and stations of change in Islamic society and civilization across time.[269] Though admitted,[270] this aspect of studying biographical dictionaries remains almost absent; generally, one gets perceptive remarks about the genre,[271] but the remarks are not linked to social and cultural development.

It is this last idea that the present paper wishes to investigate. The investigation is based on my belief that biographical dictionaries are indeed a mirror in which are reflected some important aspects of the intellectual and cultural development of the Islamic community, at least in the first nine centuries of Islamic civilization. What this study will attempt to do is to highlight these aspects by concentrating mainly, but not exclusively, on the inner structure and organization of biographical dictionaries, produced during these early centuries of Islam.

But let me, before going into the heart of the topic, define what I mean precisely by “biographical dictionaries.” This is necessary not only because there is no equivalent in Arabic for the term “biographical dictionaries” (although the expressions “kutub al-tabaqât”[272] [books on “classes”] or “kutub al-tarajim” [books on biographies] are

frequently used), but also, and more importantly, because there are many genres of writing that come close to being identified as biographical dictionaries when they are, strictly speaking, not: one is to be reminded of how closely biographical dictionaries have been associated with history for example.[273] Thus, a biographical dictionary, as I would define it, is a prose work whose primary structure is that of a series of biographies, regardless of the order in which these biographies succeed each other.

According to this definition, the works that fall into the category of biographical dictionaries in the Arabic Islamic library can be one of two kinds. The first is what I would call “general biographical dictionaries.” These works

include: biographies of individuals from all walks of life, professions, epochs, places, ranks, beliefs, and so forth. Two good examples of this kind are Şalâh al-Dîn al-Şafadî’s (d. 764/1362) voluminous al-Wafi ” and Ibn

al-Tmad al-Hanbalis (d. 1089/1678) large Shadharat aidhahab. The second type is what I would term “restricted biographical dictionaries,” dictionaries which contain biographies of individuals who share one common, yet specific, trait. Most frequently these individuals belong to the same discipline of scholarship: Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti’s (d. 911/1505) Tabaqat al-mufassirin records only the biographies of the interpreters of the Qur’an; Jamal al-Dîn al-Mîzzî’s (d. 742/1341) Tahdhlb al-kamal those of the transmitters of hadith; Abu Ishaq al-Shirâzî’s (d. 476/1083) Tabaqat al-fuqaha’ those of the jurists; Tzz al-Dîn Ibn al-Athîr’s (d. 630/1232) Usd al-ghabah those of the companions of the Prophet; Ibn Qutaybah’s (d. 276/989) alShi’r wa-alshu’ara’ those of the poets; al-Qifts Inbah al-rüwât those of the grammarians and philologists; pseudo-Abu Sulayman al-Manöqî al-Sijistanfs (d. ca. 380/990) (Muntakhab) Siwan al-hikmah those of philosophers, both Greek and Muslim; and Yaqut al-Hamawfs 626/1228 .هع)Mu’jam al-udaba’ (Yftowu as Irshad al-arib ila ma’rifat al-adîbı those of the compilers among the litterateurs, for example. Often, too, these “restricted dictionaries” record the biographies of individuals who share a certain theological or religious orientation, like Ibn al-Murtada’s (d. 840/1436) Tabaqat al-mutazilah, for the Mu’tazili

theologians of the Muslim community until the time of the author, and Abu Nu’aym al-Işfahânʏs (1.430/1038) Hilyat al-awliyd’, for the Muslim ascetics and the Sufis until his day. Others include entries on those individuals who have lived in or passed by a particular city or district, such as al-Khatib al-Baghdadis (d. 463/1070) Ta’rikh Baghdad, which records the biographies of figures connected with the city of Baghdad, or Hamzah ibn Yusuf al-Sahmfs (d.427/1035) Ta’rikh Jurjan, which has entries only for the scholars connected with the town of Jurjan. In still other works, the individuals entered all belong to a particular profession, as one finds in Muhammad ibn Khalaf Waki’s (1.306/918) Akhbar al-qudat, for the judges, and Ibn Abi Uşaybî’ah’s (d. 668/1270) ‘Uyun al-anba’ ft tabaqat al-atibba’, for the physicians and related medical professionals. Or, in other instances, those covered may be individuals who share a peculiar characteristic, no matter how significant or insignificant it is for their work, such as Abu Hatim al-Sijistanfa (d. 248/862) al-Mu’ammarun wa-al-waşayâ, which has entries for prominent figures known for longevity, Şalâh al-Dîn al-Şafadî’s Ak al-himyan fi nukat al-‘umyân, whose entries deal with blind men, and al-Jâhiz’s (d. 255/868) larger al-Burşân wa-al-‘urjân wa-al-‘umyân wa-al-hûlân, which handles the biographies of litterateurs who were lepers, lame, blind, and squint-eyed.

What this definition would exclude are works whose primary structure is not that of a series of biographies, in spite of the fact that they may contain a large number of biographies, and, in fact the biographies included in them may be an essential component of the books, and may be extremely useful for the researchers. Books on genealogies, ansab, for example, often look as if they were biographical dictionaries, but they really are not, since the primary criterion in them is the tribe, clan, and so forth. Accordingly, a work very rich in biographies like al-Baladhuri’s (279/892) Ansab al-ashraf is not to be considered among the biographical dictionaries, for it is, essentially, an indirect history of the early Muslim community as it is envisioned through the achievements of its prominent Arab men. Similarly, several annalistic histories, such as those of al-Tabari (d. 310/922) and Ibn Taghribirdi (d. 874/1470), which often include biographies of individuals at the end of the historical reportings of many years, are by no means biographical dictionaries, just as geographical dictionaries containing many biographies, such as Yaqut al-Hamawi’s Mu jam al-buldan, are not either, because the city, district, or locale is their

primary structural criterion. On a more subtle level, a great deal of biographical information, in biographical form, is available in some lexicons, like al-Murtada al-Zabidfs (d. 1205/1790) Taj al-‘arüs (most frequently under al-mustadrak at the end of the entries), or in works which specialize in documenting the correct spelling and pronunciation of proper names, such as Ibn Makûlâ’s (d. 475/1082) al-Ikmal or Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani’s (d. 852/1448) Tabsiral-muntabih; but, there again, the essential format is not that of biographical dictionaries, properly speaking. Several other kinds of quasi-biographical books also cannot be considered biographical dictionaries since biographies are not the determining factor in their construction. Examples of these include travel books, especially late medieval Maghribi ones, like Ibn Rushayd al-Sabtis (d. 721/1321) Rihlat ibn Rushayd; bibliographical books, like the famous al-Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadlm (1. 380/990 or 412/1021): mashyakhat or baramij books, that is, books which record the life and times of the authors’ teachers,[274] such as the Mashyakhah of Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200) or the Bamamaj of al-Wadi’ashî (d. 749/1338)و large compendia which are encyclopaedic in their scope, such as Ibn Fadi Allah al-‘Umarî’s (d. 749/1348) Masalik al-absar, even if their scope were somehow restricted (such as al-Maqqars [d. 1041/1631] Nafh al-tîb, which is concerned only with the news of Andalusia); major commentaries on famous, important or widely-read early texts, like Ibn Abi al-Hadld’s Nahj al-balaghah, which is a commentary on the sayings, orations, and letters of ‘All ibn Abi Talib; or even books which are concerned with recording the available information on “the firsts,” awa’il, that is, the first persons to perform certain things, such as Abu Hilal al-‘Askarî’s (d. 395/1004) Kitab al-awa’il.

With this clarification out of the way, we can now begin to look at the manner in which the biographical dictionaries reflected some traits of the intellectual and cultural development of the Muslim community in the first nine centuries of Islamic civilization.

1. One of the most striking features of the Arabic biographical dictionaries is that they do not make their appearance until the beginning of the third/ninth century, the two earliest extant dictionaries[275] being Ibn Sa’d’s (d. ca. 230/845) Kitab al-tabaqat al-kablr and Ibn Sallam al-Jumahi’s

(d. ca. 231/846) Tabaqat fuhiil al-shuara'. This by itself is a significant fact, for it indicates that the genre of biographical dictionaries evolved in Islamic civilization at the time when that civilization was beginning to develop a clear self-image, and when it was reaching towards formalizing its stances. It is therefore a genre which is by no means “preliminary” or “simple”; it is one which belongs to the age of the maturing of the civilization in which it arose. This is further confirmed by the fact that this genre was preceded by a presumably simpler genre of writing, namely that of the single biography, or monograph.[276] Unfortunately, none of these monographs, with the exclusion of the Prophet Muhammad's Slrah, have survived. However, Ibn al-Nadim's Fihrist provides US with ample examples of them, such as Abu Mikhnafs (d. 157/774) Kitab al-Mukhtar ibn Abi ‘Ubayd and Kitab Zayd ibn ‘All[277] Ibn al-Kalbfs (d. 206/821) Akhbar al-Abbas ibn'Abd al-Muttalib هاًأة Kitab Musaylimah al-kadhdhab wa-Siiâh[278] and al-Haytham ibn ‘Adi's (d. 207/822) Kitab akhbar Ziyad ibn Abihi and Akhbar aTHasan ibn ‘All wa-wafatihi[279] These and similar works must have been among the basic sources for the early biographical dictionaries. What the biographical dictionaries essentially did was to compile them and to create from them, in addition to other historical and literary sources, complex and elaborate structures.

But perhaps the best evidence we have of the complexity and maturity of the genre of biographical dictionaries in its earliest stages is the structure of the dictionaries themselves. For an examination of the structures of the two works mentioned above (Ibn Sa'd's and Ibn Sallam's) reveals that their authors were struggling hard to simplify complex material, and, where possible, to create clear and comprehensible presentations of their materials, go beyond the unitary vision of things dictated by the earlier, single-format works, and present comprehensive and global visions of the two disciplines they were addressing in their works.

Of the two earliest dictionaries, Ibn Sa'd's Tabaqat is the more complex and much longer one,[280] for in it the author uses so many criteria in organizing his material that one senses that he is working against serious odds to achieve clarity side by side with comprehensiveness. The work is without an introduction; it begins with a

lengthy Slrah, biography, of the Prophet, together with an account of the maghazi, the early campaigns. Immediately following the Prophet’s biography, there is what amounts to a statement of purpose: “Naming those whom we have counted from the companions of the Messenger of God, from the -’ ‘ ‘ - and the Anşâr, and those who lived after them from their offspring (abncTihim) and their followers, of the people of knowledge (fiqh), learning (’،7m), and transmission of hadlth, and what has come down to US about their names, genealogies, agnomens (kuna), and reports (sifatihim), class by class (tabaqatan tabaqah.).”[281] This sentence gives US a clear idea of the comprehensiveness that the author is aiming for; it does not, however, tell US how he is going to arrange the massive amount of material he has: the biographies of the religious scholars who lived in the first two centuries of Islam. In the next main part of the book, however, the reader begins to have a sense of the arrangement. This second part covers the biographies of the Prophet s Companions, and its organization indicates that the author has decided to choose the criterion of “sabiqah” (precedence of priority in accepting Islam) in arranging his entries. I hus, the biographies of first converts to Islam—those who fought in the first major battle which the Prophet fought (the battle of Badr, in the year 2 A.H.)—are entered first. But within this section, another criterion is introduced, namely that of the precedence of the Muhajirun (mainly the earliest Meccan converts from the tribe of Quraysh) over the Anşâr (mainly the later converts from the city of Medina): a tribal/place criterion. In the next section, this criterion is dropped, and the sabiqah criterion is resumed, so that the biographies of both the Muhajirun and the Anşâr who fought at the battle of Uhud (in the year 3 A.H.) and the following battles are mentioned, albeit only if they had been among the emigrants to Abyssinia—still an additional criterion. The last section retains the sabiqah criterion, with a slight twist to it: it includes the biographies of the Muslims who accepted Islam prior to the conquest of Mecca (in the year 8 A.H.). This section concludes the first part on the Companions of the Prophet.

In the following part, which covers most of the remainder of the book, the author abandons the sabiqah criterion completely and assumes two concurrent criteria: place and time. Accordingly, the biographies of the Followers of Medina—the Prophet’s adopted city—are, first, followed by the

biographies of the Followers of Mecca, then those of Tâ’if, Yemen, Yamamah, Bahrain, Kufah, Basrah, Wasit, Mada’in, Baghdad, Khurasan, Syria, the Jazirah, Egypt, then Ayla.[282] Within each of the sections on each center of learning, the biographies are arranged in classes, tabaqat, usually carrying an ordinal number, that is, the first tabaqah, second, third, et cetera. This structure shows not only the place criterion most clearly and the time one a little less,[283] but also the factor of transmission of hadlth or religious learning in general, where there are instances when an older person may narrate from a younger one or from a peer. This factor comes into play in particular in the sections on Kufah and Basrah, where there are many sub-sections within a class depending on which scholars the members of this class narrated hadlth from. Thus, in the section on Kufah, and within the first class, there are ten sub-sections, each of which includes the biographies of those who narrated hadlth from ‘Umar alone,[284] from ‘Umar and ‘All,[285] from ‘All alone,[286] from ‘All and Ibn Mas’ûd,[287] from Ibn Mas’üd alone,[288] and so forth. The presence of this factor in the two sections of this third part is so strong that it amounts to being an independent, additional criterion, thus adding all the more to the complexity of the book’s structure. The book ends with a special part on women, with no subdivision.[289] There the criterion of 5،2٥z،7«/z/time/piety/fame come into play all at once.

The conclusion one can draw from this analysis is that Ibn Sa’d, in the earliest surviving biographical dictionary, achieved comprehensiveness and attempted to achieve clarity regardless of complexity. In spite of all the intertwined criteria, clarity was not far from being reached: we have a large eight-volume work,[290] with over 4,250 entries, recording the biographies of the Companions of the Prophet, then of the Followers of the Companions, then their Followers, then of the Muslim women who played a role in early Islamic society and Islamic learning. It must be noted, however, that the complexity of the work was bound to be overwhelming for any author attempting this genre at such an early point in Islamic culture. The result was that many prominent Muslims came to have more than one biography in the book, simply because they fulfilled several of the criteria the author was struggling to organize and put under control. Also, some information is repeated in several places in the book (though sometimes in different versions), thus pointing to the hardships endured in compiling this pioneering biographical dictionary.

In Ibn Sallam’s Tabaqat,[291] no such overlapping takes place and no poet has more than one entry. The book is better controlled, with a relatively lengthy introduction on literary criticism and the author’s method. Ibn Sallam explains that he is going to divide the Arab poets into two main groups: the pre-Islamic poets and the Islamic poets. Within each group, he is going to have ten classes, and in each class there will be biographies of four poets who are similar to each other in poetical achievement. The book, then, takes into consideration two main criteria: time, then artistic achievement/fame. In general, the book has a much clearer structure; it is also much shorter and its material is more limited. And yet, signs of pioneering efforts persist. The time factor is not always an absolute one: the biographies of the “mukhadramun,” that is, poets who lived partially after its advent, are sometimes put among those of the pre-Islamic poets and sometimes among those of the Islamic ones. The number of classes selected and the strict number of four within each class is so arbitrary that it defies explanation, inasmuch as it is sometimes very difficult to figure out why certain poets were lumped together in one class. But, we have to remember, all this is the result of the struggle of an ambitious author treading on strange, virgin soil: he tries his best, and achieves as much as he can.

This analysis of the inner structure of the two earliest of our biographical dictionaries, written at the beginning of the third/ninth century, point out that in addition to the attempt at complexity and comprehensiveness at that moment in time in Islamic civilization, the civilization had already begun to mature and define itself more clearly.

Ibn Sallam’s dictionary is but a culmination of that civilization’s enduring tendency to compare and contrast poets in terms of output and artistic achievement—eventually with fame. It is a record of the “fuhtül” among the poets, the best of them, that is, those who set the linguistic and artistic standards for other poets for a long time. On the other hand, Ibn Sa’d’s dictionary is, above all, a presentation of the self-image of Islamic civilization at that time, which considered participation in Islamic learning a criterion for prominence in it. And the details of that structure reveal without doubt the importance of the idea of the

sabiqah which was developing then: the earlier one adhered to Islam, the higher his position in learning would be. Thus the Companions come before the Followers. Interestingly enough, the criterion of tribe or tribal grouping had great significance, too. In the Companions' part, the biographies of the Muhajirun come before those of the Anşâr: the Quraysh comes first. The Quraysh is the tribe of the Prophet, and Ibn Sa'd is telling US that the Prophet has a special position. This is why Ibn Sa'd's work begins with Muhammad's Sirah, and two volumes, or almost a quarter of the work, are accorded to it. But the Quraysh is also the stock of the caliphs, the supreme rulers of the Islamic community, now already in power for two centuries. The Quraysh are also the paramount notables, ashraf, among the Arab Muslims. Thus, even after centuries of urbanization and of Islamization of non-Arabs, the supreme Arab tribe, that of the Prophet and the caliphs, is still accorded a distance treatment (cf. Baladhur's Ansab al-ashraf). On the other hand, we have to remember that the Muhajirun mean also Meccans versus Medinans. The precedence of the first vis-â-vis the second, however, is adhered to by the author only in the Companions' part; in the Followers' part, the order is reversed: Medina comes first and is then followed by Mecca. But this is understandable. Islamic civilization then saw Medina as THE center of learning since the main Companions lived in it after the death of the Prophet, and it was in Medina that the Followers took their religious knowledge from the Companions. Medina was also the capital of the first caliphs, the center of the emerging Islamic state, the heir to which was the contemporary Islamic state. After Ibn Sa'd is through with Medina and Mecca, he opts for treating other centers of learning in Arabia, and then he moves to Iraq. In the section on Iraq, he begins with Kufah rather than Basrah, a fact which is significant. Kufah, again, was a kind of capital for a part of rule of the last "Rashidi" caliph, 'All; also, more Followers who had transmitted hadlth and religious learning from the Companions lived there. These two facts, at least, give it precedence over Basrah, in the view of the formative scholars of the early third/ninth century. But Kufah also, much more than Basrah, was the center of the largest number of religious controversies; hence the introduction by the author of the criterion of "the narrator": who your authority is in learning affects the stance you take on various issues, be they legal, political, or theological. The overall image of the Islamic community, as advanced by Ibn Sa'd, is represented by its religious scholars, after the part on the Companions; the mere division of the book into locales, places, or centers of learning indicates how the early Muslims saw their tradition, as one that grew in separate milieus (hence the

contemporaneous rihlahfi talab al-‘Um). Finally, Ibn Sa’d’s handling of women in a separate part is indicative of the view Islamic civilization then took of women’s role, as one which is distinct from the role of men in religious learning: the criteria that apply to the latter need not apply to the first.

2. Looking again at the two earliest biographical dictionaries, one cannot but be struck by the fact that the genre of biographical dictionaries deals with the fields of poetry and religious learning, with an underlying, hidden stratum of history. This is significant, for it indicates that at the time when Islamic civilization had begun to define itself, at the beginning of the third/ninth century, poetry and religious learning came to the forefront as fundamental, defining criteria. Hardly anything need be said about religious learning: without adherence to Islamic learning, its roots as well as its perpetuation, there is no such thing as Islamic civilization, and this is precisely the message of our earliest biographical author, Ibn Sa’d. As for poetry, and Arabic poetry in particular, it is the most firmly rooted Islamic genre which continued in great force after Islam, in spite of early Islamic reservations about its sources and function. This is not the right place to go into the reasons for this continuation; what is relevant to our discussion here is that the major figures in this genre get their biographies recorded at the same time as the religious scholars do, right at the outset of the self-definition of Islamic civilization. Does one sense a dichotomy here? Only in appearance, perhaps, but not in reality. After all, our first comprehensive biographer of the poets chose thtfuhul from those poets. The meaning of the word “fiihur is ambiguous, but it must include at least two things: the artistic and the linguistic abilities of the poets concerned. The artistic component keeps US in the realm of poetry proper, but the linguistic component takes US a little out of it, into an area which brings US back to the religious sphere: Arabic is, after all, the language of the Qur’an. This way, poetry becomes a supporting factor for the definition of a civilization which conceived of itself as primarily religious.

The role of history alongside the two fields of religious learning and poetry at the outset of the genre of biographical dictionaries is quite obvious. In order to be comprehensive requires in the first place that one think in historical terms. Actually, the criterion of time, or a certain chronological setup, is present in both works we have been discussing.[292]

3. The two books under study can be the starting point for examining yet another way in which the biographical dictionaries of the Arabic Islamic library reflected important traits of the intellectual development of the Muslim community. This way revolves around the question of specialization.

One of the most striking things about biographical dictionaries is that they were, right from the start of the genre, and for at least the four following centuries, solely of the “restricted” rather than the “general” kind:[293] most of them dealt with specific fields mostly, although some of them were restricted by criteria other than field. This field-related restriction makes them, in a wav. “specialized” books: one does not look up biographies of other than poets in Ibn Sallam’s Tabaqat, nor for biographies of other than religious authorities in Ibn Sa’d’s Tabaqat. This phenomenon needs explanation, for an observer of any given civilization might expect the reverse: that within a certain genre there should be a tendency towards recording the general first, then the particular. We must not forget two things, however. The first is that the genre of biographical dictionaries belongs to the age of maturity of early Islamic civilization, not of infancy; and the second is that this civilization perceived itself primarily as a religious one, with a necessary linguistic component and a linguistic/poetic one. Specialization was unavoidable; indeed, it is a marker of the civilization at hand. A comparison of the genre of early biographical dictionaries with the related genre of history in its early stages, for example, shows that the tendency towards specialization rather than generality is common between them; it is even stronger in the early historical works than it is in the early biographical dictionaries, as the chapter on the historians in Ibn al-Nadim’s Fihrist shows.

But there is something else to note with regard to “specialization” in the development of the genre of biographical dictionaries, namely that with the passage of time, the tendency towards specialization actually increases. Whereas all the religious scholars are biographical subjects in Ibn Sa’d’s dictionary, a few decades later, Bukhari (d. 256/869) includes in his al-Ta’rlkh al-kabir only the biographies of the hadith transmitters; and, two centuries later, Aba Ishaq al-Shirazi includes in his Tabaqat al-fuqaha’ only the biographies of the jurists. The circle

becomes even narrower, and more specialized, later on. Instead of al-Shirâzî's jurists of all schools, we begin to observe, after him, dictionaries concerned only with jurists from the Maliki (e.g. al-Qâdî 'lyâd's [d. 544/11491 Tartib al-madarik), Hanafi (e.g. Ibn Abi al-Wafâ"s [d. 775/1373] al-Jawahir al-mudiyah), Hanball (e.g. Ibn Aba YaTa al-Farrâ's [d. 526/1131] Tabaqat al-hanabilah) or Shâfî'i (e.g. Tâj al-Dîn al-Subki's [d. 71/1369] Tabaqat al-shafi'iyah al-kubra) rites. And instead of Bukhârî's hadith transmitters, we get special books on reliable transmitters (e.g. al-Mizzfs Tahdhlb al-kamal), or fairly reliable transmitters (e.g.. Shams al-Dîn al-DhahabFs [d. 748/13741 Mizan al-i tidal), or weak transmitters (e.g., Ibn Hajar's Lisan al-mizan). What this tells us is that although the genre of biographical dictionaries began as a specialized genre, its specialization was limited to what the civilization perceived as broadly indicative of itself; it was an "inclusive" rather than an "exclusive" kind of specialization. As for later "sub-specialization" within the genre, it

was bound to happen, as the civilization became more and more advanced and sophisticated. Paradoxically, the writing of general rather than restricted biographical dictionaries began quite late in Islamic civilization, six and a half centuries after the advent of Islam, with Ibn Khallikan's (681/1282) Wafayat al-a'yân. But, again, this is quite natural. A great deal of time was needed before one could see the general picture and reconj biographies of distinguished men in all fields, places, eras, and walks of life.

4. Another feature of biographical dictionaries that appeared rather late in the history of the development of the genre is that of the "continuation," dhayl. By "continuation" I mean that a compiler would take the biographical dictionary of a predecessor, possibly, but not necessarily together with the predecessor's criteria, and, write his own biographical dictionary, including the biographies of the people who lived in the period between the predecessor's time and his own. Interestingly enough, this phenomenon appeared for the first time not in the Islamic East but in the Islamic West, in Andalusia and the Maghrib. The first person to attempt it was Ibn Bashkuwal (d. 578/1183),[294] the very title of his book, Kitab al-şüah [= the book of addendum], clearly conveys a sense of "continuation," and the book is indeed a continuation of Ibn al-Faradi's

(404/1013) Tabaqat al-fuqaha’ wa-abniwat Hl-’Um bi-al-Andalus, on Andalusian religious scholars. Ibn Bashkuwal’s book itself was picked up for continuation in the following century, when Ibn al-Abbar (d. 658/1259), again with an indicative, explicit title, wrote his longer Kitab al-takmilah [= the book of supplement] li-kîtâb alsilah. A few decades later, Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakishi (d. 703/1303) did the same thing with Ibn al-Abbar’s book in his conmeiim, al-Dhaɪɾl wa-al-takmilah wa-al-mawşûl ba’d al-şüah. As the title indicates, this book was meant by the author to be not simply a continuation but also a comprehensive record of the Andalusian and Maghribi scholars until his time, hence the duplication in it of some of the previously recorded biographies.

The phenomenon of continuing the work of a previous compiler in biographical dictionaries is, in my opinion, indicative of the confidence that this genre gained over time, and hence its emergence rather late, a number of centuries after the genre had made its first appearance. The fact that it surfaced for the first time in Andalusia and the Islamic West has its cultural significance. At the time when Ibn Bashkuwal wrote his Kitab al-silah, there was a great deal of intellectual restlessness in Andalusia, expressed in the form of a rebellion against servility to the Islamic East, against considering Andalusia a mere subservient follower of the cultural traditions of the East, or an echoer of every line of intellectual or artistic production taking place there. The most outspoken intellectuals to express this rebellion are three of Andalusia’s greatest thinkers and historians: Ibn Hazm (d. 456/1064), Ibn Havvan (d. 469/1076). and Ibn Bassam (d. 542/1147).[295] In fact, Ibn Hazm wrote a whole treatise on the merits of the Andalusians (Risalahfifadl ahi al-Andalus);[296] whose main message was that the Andalusians made their own undoubted original contribution to Islamic civilization and culture, and his treatise was soon complemented by other Andalusian intellectuals.[297] Ibn Bassam, in the introduction to his huge biographical compendium, al-Dhakhirah fi mahasin ahi al-Jazfrah, quoted Andalusia’s great historian, Ibn Hayyan, in his rebellion against servility to the traditions of the East, and after that he went on to record the biographies of his Andalusian contemporaries from the litterateurs in the rest of his book. It appears to me that by using the “continuation” format to record the biographies of the religious scholars up to their respective times, what Ibn Bashkdwal, Ibn al-

Abbar, and Ibn Abd al-Malik were doing was to precisely highlight the Islamic West’s continued tradition of original scholarship—and on its own; hence the close relationship between the appearance of this phenomenon in the genre of biographical dictionaries and in the Islamic West.

The genre, having taken this direction, could not remain restricted to the West, but was bound to come to the East. Only a few decades after Ibn Bashkuwal wrote his first continuation, Ibn al-Dabithi (d. 637/1239), in the East, wrote a continuation to al-Khatlb al-Baghdadi’s (d. 463/1070) Ta’rikh Baghdad, هح\ا١الآح Dhayl a rikh madinat al-salam Baghdad. لآأه١ ن١اً·بلآ لآة١ا لل١ al-Dabithi brought up to date the biographies of long- and short-term residents of Baghdad who contributed to Islamic civilization. Shortly thereafter, another, longer continuation to the same book appeared, Ibn al-Najjâr’s (d. 643/1245) Dhayl tâ’rîkh Baghdad. A similar process was undertaken a century later by Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi (d. 763/1361), who, in his Fawat al-wafayat, recorded and brought up to date the biographies which were left out by Ibn Khallikan (in his Wafayat al-a’yân), and brought them up to date. At the same time, al-Kutubi’s contemporary, al-Şafadî (d. 763/1361), wrote a comprehensive biographical dictionary, his voluminous al-Wafi bi-al-wafayat, duplicating most of the biographies present in Ibn Khallikan’s and Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi’s dictionaries, thereby doing the same thing Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakishi did with the works of Ibn Bashkuwal and Ibn al-Abbar in the Islamic West.

5. Going back to the inner structure of the biographical dictionaries, one notes that, with the passage of time, these structures become smoother and easier for the user to handle. It was noted above how the signs of complexity, and even abstruseness, marred the structures of the earliest dictionaries (Ibn Sa’d’s and Ibn Sallam’s), making it frequently impossible to predict where a particular biography is to be found, and making it very difficult to use these books without the help of indexes—unless one reads the books in their entirety, of course. This changed rather quickly, progressing step by step. A few decades after these two works appeared, Bukhari (d. 256/870) produced his al-Ta’rikh al-kabir, including in it brief biographies of the transmitters of hadlth. At almost the same time, Ibn Hibban al-Busti (d. 254/868) wrote his Kitab al-majrühîn.

The structure of these latter two dictionaries clearly represent attempts at smoothness; their order is, in principle, based on the letters of the alphabet in their oriental sequence. But the smoothness does not go very far: only the first letter of the first name of a given hadith-transmitter is taken into consideration. Thus people with names like “Ibrahim,” “Ahmad,” “Ishaq,” and “Adam” come first simply because the first letter of their names is an alif. Within this letter, as in all other letters, however, there is no particular order whatsoever: the second letter of the name is not taken into consideration, nor the following letters in the first names. The reader thus knows approximately where the biographies of certain persons are going to be, but only within the large range of the first letter of their first names. A mechanism for smoothness, is, however, added by Bukhari (and Ibn Hibban) to make things a little easier for the user: all the biographies of persons with the same first name are grouped together. Thus, for example, all the “Ibrahims” are grouped together, and all the “Muhammads” are grouped together. This structure proved to be quite influential in the early history of the genre of biographical dictionaries, especially in the field of hadlth-transmission, maybe due to the great stature of Bukhari and Ibn Hibban. Almost a century after these two scholars, al-‘Uqayü (d. 322/934) used their structure in compiling his Kitab al-du’afö’ al-kübîr, and Ibn Abi Hatim al-Razi (d. 327/938) used it in putting into final form what were mainly his father’s notes, his voluminous Kitab al-jarh wa-al-ta’dîl.

It was not until the seventh/thirteenth century that complete smoothness was reached in the inner structures of biographical dictionaries, and that came with the appearance of Yaqut al-HamawI’s Mu’jam al-udaba’ (or Irshad al-arlb). From the time that book appeared onwards, the arrangement of biographies in biographical dictionaries became more and more frequently alphabetical, with all the letters of the first name, as well as those of the father’s name, and sometimes even the grandfather’s name, being taken into consideration. This phenomenon came rather late in the genre of biographical dictionaries in Islamic civilization, but here again, the amount of time needed for the establishment of and confidence in a tradition has to be taken into account. It is to be noted that although the smoother style came to be dominant in the majority of the biographical dictionaries produced, traces of the older, Bukhari/Ibn Hibban style did not disappear. Thus it is that some of our most influential later books carry those traits, namely al-Khatlb al-Baghdadi’s (d.

464/1071) Ta’rikh Baghdad, and, to a lesser extent, Ibn Khallikan’s Wafayat al-a’yân.

6. In al-Khatlb al-Baghdadi’s book, there appears another characteristic of some, but not many, of the later biographical dictionaries in regard to the degree of strictness to which their authors adhered to alphabetical arrangement. Like Bukhari, al-Khatlb adhered only to partial, rather than to full, alphabetization. He followed Bukhari in another very interesting phenomenon, namely that he set aside the biographies of those persons called “Muhammad” and began his book with them, and only after that did he go to the normal sequence of the letters of the alphabet, beginning with the letter alif. Why Bukhari and al-Khatlb chose that particular break from the order that they otherwise adhered to in their respective books is not difficult to explain. “Muhammad” is the name of the Prophet, and it is in deference to him that anybody called by his name is given precedence over people called by other names. In other words, this is an act of piety. Mixing piety with scholarship in a civilization that perceives itself primarily as religious is not strange at all; indeed, one may expect more such expressions of piety. One does find these, in feet. In later works, one meets some biographical dictionaries which not only begin with the “Muhammads,” but also give precedence to the “‘Abd Allahs” within the compound names starting with the letter ‘ayn (‘Abd al-Rahman, ‘Abd al-Malik, ‘Abd al-Wahld, etc.)—a thing that breaks their alphabetical structures much more than does beginning them with the “Muhammads.” A good example of this is al-Şafedî’s al-Wafi bi-al-wafayat, which begins with the “Muhammads” and puts the “‘Abd Allahs” before the other compound names within the letter ‘ayn. Ibn Hajar’s Tahdhib abtahdhlb does not begin with the “Muammads,” but its author follows al-Şafadî in giving priority to the “‘Abd Allahs” within the letter ‘ayn. A11 this is done, again undoubtedly, as an expression of piety: Allah’s name should precede any other names (although al-Rahman, al-Malik, al-Wahld, etc., too, are names of God, but they are descriptive in nature). As acts of piety, such interference with the normal order of the biographical materials was bound to increase rather than decrease with the passage of time: in religious civilizations, the farther away one is from the source, the more one is desirous of expressing piety.

7. Returning to the issue of smoothness, one notes that with the development of the genre of biographical dictionaries and its increasing tendency to make its materials more easily accessible to the readers, methods of organization other than alphabetization were used. The most notable method used is that of arranging biographies within fixed time spans or periods, though arbitrary they may often be. The seeds of this system, it appears to me, were sown by Bukhari's al-7a'rîkh al-şaghîr, a relatively short biographical dictionary whose biographies are arranged, in principle, according to time spans. These time spans, however, are not always the same: the first time period is defined by the lifetime of the first prominent men of Islam, the Prophet and the first four caliphs, that is, until the year 40 A.H. After that, decades are used: "[the biographies of those who died between [the years] 40 [A.H.] and 50 [A.H.]," and so on. Decade-long spans are adhered to in much of the book, but sometimes they change to spans of five years (e.g., the years 211 to 215, 216 to 220), and, towards the end of the book, beginning with the year 250, they change to one-year time spans.

But this was only the beginning, and beginnings are normally rather crude. With time, this system was refined and it became a prime server of the principle of smoothness and ease. Most frequently, time spans of either decades or centuries were used. A good example of the first is the biographical part of al-Dhahabi's comprehensive Ta'rlkh aTIslam. An example of the latter is Taj al-Dîn al-Subki's Tabaqat alshafTiyah al-kubrd, a dictionary of the scholars who followed the Shafi'i rite in law. This book is structured according to centuries, but not for convenience, rather because al-Subki believed that a paramount position should be given to the tradition of the Prophet which says that there will be a reformer (mujaddid) of Islam at the beginning of every century. According to al-Subki, the reformer at the top of the second century [A.H.] was al-Shâfı'1 himself, the founder of the Shâfi'î school (d. 204/819). Every following century until al-Subki's time is shown to have had one great scholar, the reformer, and he is, of course, from the Shâfi'1 school; in al-Subki's book, this reformer normally gets a very long biography within that particular century. By choosing this particular structure for his biographical dictionary, then, al-Subki rendered a clear service to his school, in addition to serving the principle of ease and smoothness.

8. Centuries and decades refer to time, But other biographical dictionaries made place the basis of their structures, with or without considerations of time. Those works that took place as their sole criterion are the biographical dictionaries of cities, and those that took both time and place as their joint criteria are some of the biographical dictionaries of litterateurs.

The biographical dictionaries of cities are numerous in the Arabic Islamic library. We have dictionaries of the outstanding men of Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, Aleppo, Jurjan, Herat, Naysabur, Isfahan, Granada, Bijayah, and others; even a small town like Darayya, in the vicinity of Damascus, found a historian who recorded the biographies of its illustrious men in ‘Abd al-Jabbar al-Khawlam (d. after 365/975), in his Ta’rikh Darayya. Two things must be noted about this category of biographical dictionaries. The first is that they begin to appear clearly only by the fourth/tenth century. [298] The second is that the first products in this category, al-Narshakhfs (d. after 322/943) Ta’rikh Bukhara, and Aba al-‘Arab Tamim’s (d. 333/954) Tabaqat ‘ulama’ Afriqiya wa-Tunis, were not centered around any of the larger centers of learning in the heart of the caliphal lands (Damascus, Baghdad, Cordoba, Cairo), but around farther and less central Islamic cities. These two things, when they are put together, are quite telling: the branch of “histories of cities” within the genre of biographical dictionaries is not an early one; it starts with the beginning of the weakening of the central caliphate and the emergence of other centers of political power in the Islamic empire. NarshakhFs book on the history of Bukhara is a case in point. Although its Arabic original has been lost (only a Persian abridgement has survived[299]), what is certainly known about it is that it was presented in 322/943 to the Samanid amir Nasr ibn Nah. As is well known, the Samanids, with their capital at Bukhara, had been one of the earliest assertive dynasties who in reality, though not in appearance, were practically independent of the central government in Baghdad. As I see it it was only natural that their assertiveness and practical independence should express itself in a separate history of the city of Bukhara. One finds a similar case in the later work of ‘Abd al-Ghafir ibn Isma’il al-FarisFs (529/1134), Kitab al-siyaq li-td’nkh Naysabur. This biographical history of the city of Nishapur did not get written until Nishapur had become a regional capital under the Seljuks. Abu al-‘Arab Tamim’s book on the scholars of Qayrawan and Tunis also has something to do with assertiveness, albeit in a different way. Abu al-‘Arab wrote his book in a distant province that had already been virtually

independent from the central government in Baghdad for over a century, under the Aghlabids. But in the meantime, another power had come to take control in Tunis (in 909): the Ismâ'ilî Shi'ites—the Fatimids. As a staunch Sunni, Maliki scholar, Aba al-'Arab not only refused to admit the new political realities, he actually fought against them. And one way in which he showed his combative, assertive attitude was by writing a book on the scholars of his proud province in its good, pre-Shi'ite days. Thus, only Sunni, mainly Maliki, scholars are included in his book, and no Isma'ili Shi'ite ones are mentioned.

Once the "histories of cities" had become a fixed genre, other books on other cities followed. But Baghdad did not get its share until one century and a half after Bukhara, with al-Khatib al-Baghdadi's Ta rikh Baghdad, and Damascus had to wait over a century after that to get its own history with Ibn 'Asakir's (d. 571/1175) Ta'rlkh madinat Dimashq.

Finally, whereas most of the biographical dictionaries of cities include the biographies of persons of all disciplines who lived in those cities, there were some works whose biographies were restricted to people of specific disciplines or professions, within specific cities. A good example of this comes, once again, from Andalusian namely al-Khüshâm's (d. 366/976) book on the judges of Cordoba, Qudat Qurtubah. Though relatively early, this restriction to the genre never took root in Islamic writing, for understandable reasons, and the books that were produced along its lines remained very few.

9. The regional histories of literature were also late to appear, for reasons similar to those which led to the relatively late appearance of the genre of histories of cities, and none of them appears before the breakup of the central government in Baghdad and the emergence of mini-states, which were often ruled dynastically. The rulers of these states took it upon themselves to play the role of the patrons of art, in imitation of the former, reigning dynasty of the Abbasids and their magnanimous great viziers. Aba Manşür al-Tha'âlibî (d. 429/1037) was the first author to attempt such a regional history of literature. In his famous Yatimat al-dahr, he recorded the biographies of only contem-

poraneous and near-contemporaneous literary figures, those of the fourth/tenth and early fifth/eleventh centuries. To this general criterion of time, the more specific criterion of place is added, and is made to act as the basic structural element on the book. As the author says in his introduction, the Yatimah is divided into four “geographical” parts (with a strong “dynastic” slant to most of them):

a. the litterateurs of the Hamdanids and the poets of their court (i.e., Aleppo, the Jazlrah, and northern Syria) among others of the litterateurs of Syria, Mosul, and the Maghrib;

b. the htterateurs of Iraq and those connected with the Buyids;

c. the litterateurs of the provinces of al-Jabal, Fars, Jurjan, Tabaristan, and the city of Isfahan;

d. the litterateurs of the provinces of Khurasan, especially Nishapur, and Transoxiana. and those connected with the Samanids and the Ghaznavids. [300]

In each of the parts of this main structure, there are sections, or subdivisions, constructed along geographical lines; the biographies of the individual litterateurs foil into the various sections in accordance with the city or region with which they are most closely affiliated. Thus, we have a chapter on the poets of Jurjan, another on the poets of Baghdad, and so forth; even a relatively small town like Bust gets a separate section.

It is not surprising that a number of biographical dictionaries dealing with regional literary history appeared in Andalusia. Here this phenomenon expresses the same vein of self-assertion and rebellion against the accusation of servility to the East that we have met in the “continuation” sub-genre of biographical dictionaries. Ibn Bassam made this very clear in his introduction to al-Dhakhirah, as mentioned above.[301] His

book is actually a clear example of a regional literary biographical dictionary which takes the criterion of place, within Andalusia, as a major structural criterion.[302] One gets the biographies of the Central Andalusians, including the Cordobans, first, then the Andalusians of the West, including the Sevilleans, then those of the East, including the Valencians, and finally the biographies of the non Andalusians who flourished in Andalusia.[303] A century later, another literary history of Andalusia was written, al-Mughribfi hula al-Maghrib, by Ibn Sa'îd al-AndalusI (d. 685/1286). This book also followed the regional divisions, beginning with Western Andalusia, followed by Central Andalusia and ending with Eastern Andalusia.[304]

10. The dictionaries which record the biographies of the Twelver Shi'ites and those of the Sufis require special attention, since their inner structures and the way these structures changed over time are culturally significant.

The first thing one notes about Twelver Shi'ite biographical dictionaries is that none of them appears before the beginning of the fourth/tenth century. This is as understandable as it is significant. The twelfth imam went into occultation in the second half of the third/ninth century, and some time was needed after that to figure out who was going to continue to believe in him, thereby finishing the cycle of adherence to the basic Imami cause. The fourth/ tenth century was also the period when Imami theology and law began to crystallize and be articulated in the works of such scholars as al-Kûlînî (d. 329/941) and al-Shaykh al-Mufid (d. 412/1022). That compiling biographical dictionaries came about at the same time or slightly thereafter is, thus, entirely understandable.

The first Twelver biographical dictionary we have is that of al-Kishshl (d. ca. 360/970), entitled Ikhtiyar ma' rifat al-rijal or Rijalal-Kishshl. The structure that the author chose for his book is very difficult to ascertain. At first sight the structure seems to be chronological, but then this principle falters here and there; at times one thinks that the order of the biographies follows a vague alphabetical arrangement, but then this principle also falters. Two things make the structure of the book even more obscure. These are the sparsity of dates in the biographies, and the fact that it is so filled with hadlth material that one almost loses sight of its essential biographical set-up. All these considerations are culturally

significant. Above all, they indicate that, for the Twelver Shi’ites, the vision of what constituted a member of their community had not been sufficiently clarified yet, and that writing a biographical dictionary meant, at that time, embarking on a new genre unattempted before. In this particular respect, the multiplicity of criteria in the inner structure of al-Kishshi’s book can perhaps be compared to that of Ibn Sa’d’s Tabaqat’, after all, both were pioneering dictionaries in their respective spheres.

After al-Kishshl, the Twelver Shi’ite biographical dictionaries become clearer in inner structure. One sees this in the two dictionaries which succeeded Kishshfs work immediately, namely al-Najashfs (d. 450/1058) Rijal al-Najashl and ai-Tüsi’s (d. 460/1067) Rijal al-Tusi. Since these two authors were contemporaries, it is difficult to ascertain which of their books appeared first. However, judging by the structures of these books, it seems to me that Tûsi’s Rijal was compiled before al-Najashfs. The reason is that whereas al-Najashl arranged his biographies essentially alphabetically (according to the earlier Bukhari model), indicating a simplification and refinement of the genre within Twelver Shfism, al-Tüsî arranged them according to the rather more complex principle of “discipleship” to the various imams, beginning with the disciples of ‘Ali and ending with the disciples of the twelfth imam. AlTusfs arrangement, in principle, should have made his biographies roughly chronological in order. But this actually does not happen, especially since one person could have been the disciple of more than one imam, whence his biography would be repeated twice, three times, or even more. To this already complex set-up another factor is added, namely the manner in which the biographies are to be arranged within the discipleship of the individual imam. Al-Tüsî chose the rough alphabetical principle (all the people with the same first name are grouped together), thereby easing the flow of his biographies to some extent. The sum total of the situation is that al-Tüsî’s book reveals certain, if few, traits of struggle with the genre; whence my assumption that it was written before al-Najashfs only relatively smoothly structured book.

11. The biographical dictionaries of the Sufis are interesting in what they reveal. Like many other sub-genres of biographical dictionaries, they do not begin to appear until quite late, at the beginning of the fifth/eleventh century. As in the case of the Twelver Shi’ite biographical dictionaries, this is as understandable as it is significant. Sufism is a phenomenon that does not

belong to the founding decades of Islam, but to a later period, after asceticism had taken root in society and had undergone a deep metamorphosis in the direction of spirituality and social and intellectual complexity. The first book we have of this genre, al-Sulamfs (d. 412/1021) Tabaqat al-şüfîyah, does not reveal a particular sensitivity to this issue of late date, although one does find in it a certain desire for “historicizing” Sufism. The biographies in the book are arranged chronologically, beginning with the earliest Sufi (al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyad) and ending with contemporary Sufis (the last one is Abu ‘Abd Allah al-Dmawari), but no attempt is made to consider patricians like ɛA11 or al-Hasan al-Başrî as forerunners of Sufis or as Sufis proper. And the same principles are noted in some of the later dictionaries, such as al-Qushayrfs (d. 465/1072) al-Risalah al-qushayriyah. When, however, one reaches the work of Abu Nu’aym al-Isfahani (d. 430/1038)و his Hilyat al-awliya’, the situation changes completely. There, almost all the great figures of Islam who have been known for their outstanding piety, asceticism or great learning are considered “awliya” just like the Sufis. Thus, the biography of the Companion ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab stands side by side in the book with that of the Follower al-Hasan al-Başrî, the jurist al-Shâʏı’i, and the Sufi al-Junayd. The underlying assumption of the author is further strengthened by lengthy citations from the words/works of all those people, giving credibility to the criterion used. Over a century after Abu Nu’aym, Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200) had the opportunity to write a biographical dictionary of the Sufis, his Sifat al-safwah, in whose introduction he criticized Abu Nu’aym for placing so many non-Sufis among his “awliya’?’ He, however, not only followed the wide criterion of Aba Nu’aym, he widened it even further by including in his book a long biography of the Prophet, and a large number of biographies of people without names (for examples ‘ Abidah minjabal Lubnan). This way, Sufism, through the later expressions of the genre of biographical dictionaries, was given greater validity, legitimacy, and even roots, in the very foundation of Islam.

*** Conclusions

I have tried to examine biographical dictionaries as a cultural and intellectual phenomenon in classical Islamic civilization, rather than as merely a large number of compilations within the Arabic Islamic library. This point of

departure permitted me, first, to consider all the biographical dictionaries as variant expressions of one single genre, and, second, to relate the appearance (or lack thereof) of one sub-genre or another of biographical dictionaries to the progressive intellectual and cultural development of the Islamic community in the first nine centuries of Islam. There were several consequences for taking this approach, among them that this paper could not lay any claims to exhaustiveness whatsoever; a single example sufficiently representative of one facet or another of the genre under discussion would be enough. Furthermore, the discussion, in the latter part of the paper, of the biographical dictionaries in some specific areas (Twelver Shi'ism, Sufism) is also not exhaustive; one may wish to experiment with other specific types of biographical dictionaries (those on the philosophers and physicians, for example). But even there the results reached should not be significantly different from what the sample study here offers. On a constructive level, the approach has permitted me to draw some concltisions. The first of these is that the genre of biographical dictionaries emerged only at the time when Islamic civilization was starting to have a definite identity, one which was primarily religious, with a linguistic (Arabic-Qur'anic) and poetic touch to it. In the latter capacity, it portrayed its incorporation of the pre-Islamic Arabic tradition; in the former, although it perceived itself as an heir to the religious heritage of the Near East, it had a definite, specific, individual color to it: an Islamic one, with a new beginning to the tradition. It is because of this that the first biographical dictionary we have, Ibn Sad's Tabaqat, begins with the Sirah of the Prophet, and the Sirah assumes almost a quarter of the size of his multivolume book. But if the Prophet represents the main symbol of the new identity, others also are made to contribute to this identity and to pose as models for the new community through innumerable details of their lives, careers, behaviors, and attitudes. Moreover, those symbols are judged first and foremost in accordance with their temporal proximity to the new phase of human history; hence the introduction of the criterion of "sabiqah'' in the first, fundamental part of the book. The second part, based essentially on the criterion of place or locale, is also connected with the nature of the development of the new community. Its habitat now covers (after the conquests) a large area from Egypt in the west to Khurasan in the east. These new, pride-evoking physical realities bring with them, as the structure of Ibn Sa'd's biographical dictionary would indicate to US, other new realities which may not be as positive as the first, namely that they cause the Muslim authorities to live far apart from each other and to develop variant visions of

the new religion; hence the primacy of the “narrator-source” criterion (within the geographical one) in the part on the Followers and their followers in the book. Even if perceived as regrettable, the fact is admitted. And admission means confidence: the variations can be recorded only because the finalization of the identity is already in place, on its way to being complete. Let US remember that Ibn Sa d wrote his book just at the time when the mihnah was underway, and when the opposition to its course, though small, was not unpromising. A new era was coming, and Ibn Sa’d’s biographical dictionary conveys a sense of the approach of the new identity of the majority of the Muslim community, along with the seeds of a final vision of Islam.

The genre of biographical dictionaries, once begun, continued and developed. This development took a clear line of greater specialization, reflecting the further identification of Muslim groups within the community. At the time when Ibn Sa’d was writing, specialization was as yet unclear among the religious authorities. By the next generation, that of Ahmad ibn Hanbal al-Bukhari, the hadlth transmitters had already emerged as a specialized (and victorious) group, after decades of unconscious building of the image (and reality) of that specialty; hence the beginning of a series of biographical dictionaries right from that generation onwards. The jurists came to emerge as a specialized group shortly thereafter. Biographical dictionaries about them, however, did not emerge until much later, in the fifth/eleventh century, and that was due to developments within the ranks of the jurists themselves. Right from the beginning, the jurists posed as representatives of different local traditions (the Hijaz, Iraq, Syria, Egypt), thereby ending up with “founding” followers, of “schools,” as they are called, each having varying positions in legal details and outlook. It was not until these schools were fully established (with some dying out), at the end of the fourth/tenth century, that the image of the jurists was clear enough to warrant biographical dictionaries which recorded their numbers, views, and achievements; hence the appearance of Abu Ishaq al-Shîrâzî’s Tabaqat al-fuqaha’ in the fifth/eleventh century. With the development of serious animosities between the schools, however, especially in Baghdad and the East in the fourth/tenth and fifth/eleventh centuries, more specialized biographical dictionaries of the jurists of each school began to be compiled. Something similar happened in the field of hadlth, albeit for different reasons, essentially that of authentication— a matter considered of

great importance right from the appearance of the first biographical dictionary of the genre, Bukhârî’s aTTa’nkh aTkabir.

As in the case of the people of hadith and law, other groups came to have biographical dictionaries of their own people, but only after their groups could be identified clearly. Since the identity of the Twelver Shi’ites did not become final until the disappearance of the twelfth imam in second half of the third/ninth century, no Twelver biographical dictionary could appear before the following century. Similarly, the tardiness in the emergence of Sufism until the beginning of the third/ninth century caused the delay in the appearance of the first Sufi biographical dictionary until the next century.

The appearance of biographical dictionaries dealing with people associated with particular cities is related to the emergence of some cities as regional capitals for semi-independent dynasties, the result of a dwindling of the power of the central caliphate; hence its first systematic expressions did not come out before the fourth/tenth century, in connection with cities in the peripheries, not in the center. Bukhara, the capital of the Samanids, was probably the first to come out. It is to be noted, however, that there are some biographical dictionaries in this sub-genre whose explanation cannot stem from this particular political development, ‘Abd al-Jabbar al-Khawlns Tâ’rîkh Darayya being a stark example. In a case such as this, one has to think of the author’s individual motives. In the case of ‘Abd al-Jabbar al-Khawlanl, pride in his town and stock was the reason behind his compiling his book. In the cases of the two huge compendia, al-Khatib al-Baghdâdî’s Tâ’rîkh Baghdad and Ibn ‘Asakir’s Tâ’rîkh madinat Dimashq, the motive was not only pride but also, perhaps, a combination of hope and the fear of change; the winds of change were blowing strongly in Baghdad in the latter half of the fifth/eleventh century, and in Damascus in the latter half of the following century.

Of all the regions addressed by biographical dictionaries in the Arabic Islamic library, Andalusia (and, by extension, the Maghrib) deserves special attention. Its output of biographical dictionaries is connected to a great extent with the intellectual and cultural crisis that its scholars underwent at the beginning of the fifth/eleventh century, following several years of

devastating civil strife at the close of the previous century, the notorious “al-fitnah al-barbarîyah,” and the subsequent loss of political unity in the peninsula. This crisis, as expressed by two of the most towering intellectuals of Andalusia, Ibn Hayyan and Ibn Hazm, both of whom had witnessed the civil war, centered around the widespread vision that the Andalusians adored any model of thought or literature that came from the East, and that, subsequently, Andalusian literature and thought were a mere imitation of their counterparts in the East; they thus lacked originality and a local identity. It is in this atmosphere that the Andalusian biographical dictionaries grew larger and larger in number. Building on the pre-civil war, though young, tradition of biographical dictionaries (al-Khûshânʏs Qudat Qurtubah and Ibn al-Faradi’s Tabaqat al-‘ulamâ’ wa-al-rüwât Hl-‘Um bi-al-Andalus), the post-civil war authors concentrated heavily on their peninsula, and produced many biographical dictionaries and continuations thereof. It is within this vision that we have to see the biographical dictionaries of Ibn Bassam, Ibn Bashkuwal, Ibn al-Abbar, Ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Marrakishi, Ibn Sa’îd al-Andalusi, and even the later works of Ibn al-Khatib and al-Maqqan. The large accumulation of literary output was probably at the basis of the appearance of regional literary histories such as alThaalibfs Yatîmat al-dahr and later al-‘Imâd al-Katib’s al-Kharidah. As expected, Andalusia had its share in this sub-genre.

Although Arabic Islamic biographical dictionaries emerged at the time of the maturity of Islamic civilization, in their first expressions they reveal a relative degree of difficulty in the presentation of their materials. This is due to their attempt at comprehensiveness—a thing quite new in compilation at the beginning of the third/ninth century. What was common before that was the format of the single biography, and they were attempting to put scores of biographies together, making them, at the same time, portray their respective visions of the contemporary stage of the intellectual and cultural development of the Islamic community then. This relative crudeness in inner structure, however, was soon made more refined, and, with the passage of time, achieved complete smoothness when full alphabetization became more or less the standard in compiling biographical dictionaries. It has to be noted, however, that this process took a very long time, and that the cruder forms continued to co-exist with the smoother forms. In the area of hadith in particular, the older forms survived for some time, due to the nature of the discipline (the importance of locating the

transmitters in time for the authenticity question), and Dhahabi’s huge Slyar a lam ainubala’ of the eighth/fourteenth century is an instructive example in this respect. And even when full smoothness was achieved, its form was sometimes interrupted by the piety element (beginning biographical dictionaries with “Muhammads,” among other things), making the inner structures of some biographical dictionaries occasionally less than straightforward.

Perhaps what still needs explanation is the whole phenomenon of biographical dictionaries, for it seems that there are few cultures which have been as prolific in producing biographical dictionaries in premodern times as the Arabic branch of Islamic culture.[305] But this is a huge topic that requires separate examination.

[252] The death date of an author will be mentioned only at the first occurrence of that author’s name, unless it proves particularly useful in a certain context to repeat that information.

[253] R. s. Humphreys, Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry (revised edition, Princeton, 1991), p. 188.

[254] The close association between “tabaqaf ’ and “ta’rikh’’ is very old indeed and dates back to the early stages of the development of the genre in Islam. For one thing, the titles of a sizeable number of biographical dictionaries begin with the word “ta’rîkh,” history [of], such as Bukharfs al-Ta’rikh al-kabir and Ibn ‘Asakir’s Ta’rikh madinat Dimashq (on which see below). For another, several of the foremost compilers of biographical dictionaries have identified their respective works as works of history. Ibn Khallikan, for example, says in his introduction to his celebrated Wifaycit al-a’yân, ed. Ihsan Abbas, 8 vols. (Beirut, 1971–75), 1:19 (on which see below): “This is a concise work in the science of history [hadha mukhtasarunfi al-ta’nkh]“’, there is also (perhaps consequently) a discussion as to whether or not Ibn Khallikan’s

Wafayat is actually his very same al-Ta’rikh al-kablr (see Ihsan ’Abbas’ study of the Wafayat in ibid., 8:69–71 (of the pagination in Arabic numerals). More significantly, the late medieval Muslim historiographers place the various kinds of biographical dictionaries among the branches of historical writing. The most notable among these are Shams al-Dîn al-Dhahabi (d. 748/1347), whose expose is preserved in al-Sakhawfs al-1’lân bi-al-tawblkh li-man dhamma al-îa’rîkh (Cairo, 1349 [A.H.]), pp. 84–108, tr. in F. Rosenthal, A History of Muslim Historiography (Leiden, 1952), pp. 316–58: al-Sakhawi (d. 902/1496), in his al-1’lan, ibid., pp. 104–69, tr. Rosenthal, pp. 358–450: Tashkbpriizadah (d. 968/1560), in his Miftah al-sa’adah (second edition, Haydarabad, 1977), 1:231–48, 263–66 (under the rubric ‘Um al-tawarikh), tr. Rosenthal, pp. 452–56: and Hâjjî Khalîfah (d. 1067/1657), in his Kashf al-£unün ‘an asamlal-kutub wa-al-funun (Offset copy of the Istanbul edition, Baghdad, n.d.) 1:271–333 (under the rubric “‘Um al-ta’rlkh“), but also 2:1095–1107 (under the rubric “‘Um al-tabaqat”).

[255] Several works on Islamic history and historiography discuss biographical dictionaries. See, in chronological order, H.A.R. Gibb, “Ta’nkh,” in Encyclopedia oflslam (first edition), Supplement, pp. 233–45:1. Lichtenstadter, “Arabic and Islamic Historiography,” Muslim World 35 (1945), pp. 126–32: F. Rosenthal, op. cit., pp. 88–94 and passim.; and R.s. Humphreys, Islamic History, op. cit., pp. 188–207 and passim. Sir Hamilton Gibb, in his article “Islamic Biographical Literature” (in Historians of the Middle East, ed. B. Lewis and P.M. Holt [London, 1962], p. 54), says that “the composition of biographical dictionaries in Arabic developed simultaneously and in close association with historical composition.” Rosenthal (p. 89) goes even further and states that “In many Muslim minds, history thus became synonymous with biography.” Much of T. Khalidi’s discussion in his article “Islamic Biographical Dictionaries: A Preliminary Assessment,” Muslim World 63 (1973), pp. 53–65, is based on the relationship between history and biographical dictionary.

[256] Rosenthal, op. cit., pp. 88–89, where the biographical component of Greek and Roman historical literature is mentioned.

[257] According to Rosenthal (ibid.,p. 89), “That biography shared in Muslim historiography from the beginning and that it eventually achieved a dominating position in it is obvious.“

[258] Ibid., pp. 89–90. Rosenthal mentions among those reasons the interest in the Prophet Muhammad’s biography, the dogmatic struggle in Islam, the desire of the, historians to be useful and employable, and the Muslims’ “firm conviction that all politics was the work of individuals and understandable in the light of their personal qualities and experiences....Under the influence of theology, even the history of the various branches of learning was conceived as a collection of biographies of the outstanding scholars” (p. 89). This last point was mentioned also by Gibb in “Islamic Biographical Literature,” p. 54.

[259] For the brief surveys, see Heffening, “Tabakat,” in Encyclopaedia of Islam (first edition), Suppl.: 214–15: M. Abiad, “Origine et developpement des dictionnaires biographiques arabes,” Bulletin d’Etudes Orientates 31 (1979 119801), pp. 7–15. For detailed surveys, see I. Hafsi, “Recherches sur le genre tabaqat,” Arabica 23 (1976), pp. 227–65 and 24 (1977), pp. 1–41, 150–86, which deals with the biographical dictionaries reported in the sources, regardless of whether they have survived or not; p. Auchterlonie, Arabic Biographical Dictionaries: A Summary Guide and Bibliography (Durham, 1987), which, contrary to Hafsi’s work, lists only the published works, and “only the best-known, fullest and most useful biographical dictionaries” (p. 1). All of the medieval Muslim historiographers mentioned in n. 3 above include in their respective exposes surveys of the biographical dictionaries known to them. See also o. Loth, “Ursprung und Bedeutung der Tabakat vornehmlich der des Ibn Sa’d,” Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft 23 (1869), pp. 593–614: G. Levi Della Vida, “Sira,” in Encyclopaedia oflslam (first edition), 4:439–43:لا. لمدح, Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri, I: Historical Texts (Chicago, 1957), pp. 5–31, esp. 7–8:

w. al-Qadl, “Biography,” in Companion to Arabic Literature, ed. L Meisami (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

[260] In particular, the works of Gibb and Khalidi mentioned above, but mainly those of Rosenthal and Humphreys. Hafsi’s long article has many analytical insights, but its structure does not permit these insights to stand out clearly.

[261] Khalidi, for example, says (p. 55): “The final purpose, for all these writers, is moral edification and/or the acquisition of a skill which would enable the Muslim to understand and practice his religion to better advantage.” Gibb’s concept (p. 54) is more complex: “the conception that underlies the older biographical dictionaries is that the history of the Islamic community is essentially the contribution of individual men and women to the building up and transmission of its specific culture; that it is these persons (rather than the political governors) who represent or reflect the active forces in Muslim society in their respective spheres; and that their individual contributions are worthy of being recorded for future generations.”

[262] There is agreement among scholars that biographical dictionaries are an indigenous, not “imported,” Arabic Islamic genre; see Gibb, op. cit., p. 54; Khalidi, op. cit., p. 53; Abiad, op. cit., p. 9.

[263] Modern scholars have suggested a number of “disciplines” as “predecessors” for the biographical dictionaries, notably history, hadlth/hadith criticism, or both; see, Loth, op. cit., pp. 593–601: Heffening, op. cit., p. 215, Gibb, opo. cit., p. 54; Khalidi, op. cit., pp. 53, 59–603 Hafsi, op. cit., p. 227.

[264] This overlaps with the previous category somewhat. In addition to history and hadlth/hadith criticism, the genres of ayyarn (pre-Islamic battles of the Arabs), genealogy, ma’athir-mathalib (virtues and vices) literature, and biography are suggested; see Loth, op. cit., pp. 598–99: Della Vida, op. cit., p. 440: Lichtenstadter, op. cit., p. 129:

Rosenthal, op. cit., p. 88؛ Gibb, op. cit., pp. 54–58; but mainly Abiad, op. cit., pp. 9–12.

[265] Organization is particularly discussed by Abiad and Hafsi.

[266] These are very difficult to enumerate, since they vary tremendously from author to author; nevertheless, see Gibb, op. cit., p. 55: Khalidi, op. cit., pp. 60–62.

[267] Such as name, descent, field, craft, teachers, students, date of death, character, virtues, resume of career, revealing anecdotes, compilations, and so on; see Gibb op. cit., pp. 56–57: Rosenthal, op. cit., pp. 90–91: Khalidi, op. cit., pp. 62–64: but above all, Humphreys, op. cit., pp. 19093.

[268] Such as Rosenthal and Humphreys. Khalidi is interested in the later medieval period (fifth/eleventh through the twelfth/eighteenth century). Hafsi makes many comments about the development of the genre, but the structure(s) he chose for his article make those comments diffused here and there, and hence less clear than they could be. In spite of the promise in its title, Abiad’s article does not have much to say on the question of development.

[269] One remark in which the relationship is made is in Humphreys’ discussion of the change in the criteria of inclusion in biographical dictionaries between the early dictionaries and those compiled in the fourth/tenth century. He says (op. cit., p. 189) “The earlier dictionaries attempted to provide comprehensive coverage for those broad classes (hadlth specialists or poets, usually) which they included in their purview. But in the 4th/10th century we see a growing tendency to include only subgroups, defined by place of residence, legal or theological sect, etc. Such changes in the criteria for inclusion have important cultural implications, obviously; thus there seems to be a feeling that one’s Islam is not defined by his fidelity to Scripture (Qur’an and hadlth), but by the way in which he interprets it, or that a locality can properly be a Muslim’s primary (though not ultimate) focus of cultural identity.”

[270] Gibb (op. cit., p. 54) suggests, for example, that the study of biographical dictionaries entails finding ‘‘the evidence it supplies or indicates as to changing or enduring social and intellectual attitudes or trends.”

[271] Several scholars note, for example, that the early dictionaries were concerned mainly with religious scholars and then broadened their scope (see n. 18 above). Other scholars make additional remarks here and there. Gibb (op. cit., p. 58), for example, notes how the dictionaries “supply almost the sole materials for the social activities and status of women in Muslim communities” and that the “agricultural and industrial arts are thinly represented...although trade and economic activities are by no means neglected in the Mamluk and later dictionaries.” Similarly, Humphreys notes (op. cit., p. 189) that it is “striking and instructive” that “the productive classes of society—the farmers, merchants, and artisans—never made it into the dictionaries as such, though a few persons of such background do appear under a more respectable rubric.”

[272] Some scholars, notably Hafci (op. cit., pp. 229–34), and before him Heffening (op. cit., pp. 214–15), discussed the various meanings of the word “tabaqat.” The numerous identifications offered by Hafsi, in particular, are quite revealing, as they demonstrate the rather complex meaning(s) of the term when it is used in different contexts over the ages. He says (p. 229): “Le terme tabaqa, au singulier, designe le rang attribue a un groupe de personnages ayant ioue un role dans rhistoire a un titre OU a un autre, classe en fonction de criteres determines d’ordre religieux, culturel, scientifique, artistique, etc.”; and on p. 230, he adds: “tabaqa signifie, suivant les epoques: classe, valeur, generation, merite, degre et groupe.” Still on p. 233, he says: “tabaqa evoque egalement 1’idee de gradation.” As for Heffening, his identification is shorter and more direct: “The word means when used of place: similar, lying above one another, and with regard to time: similar, following one another...and especially:...generation, stratum or category...in hadith: the men included in one tabaqa are those who have heard traditions from those in the preceding one and have transmitted to the members of the following category.”

[273] See above, n. 4.

[274] The words “mashyakhah” and “bamamij” are identical in signification, but the first term is used in the Muslim East, the second in the Muslim West. In Andalusia and the Maghrib, the term “fahrasah” is also used (as in Fahrasat ibn Khayr).

[275] There are other, earlier dictionaries which have been lost and whose structure is, hence, impossible to determine. They include: Tabqaat ahi al-’Um wa-al-jahl (classes of the learned and the ignorant), by Wâşil ibn “Ata’ (d. 131/748); Tabaqat alshu ara’ (classes of poets), by al-Yazîdî (d. 200/815); Tabaqat aTfuqaha’ wa-aTmuhaddithln (classes of jurists and hadlth transmitters/traditionists) and Tabaqat man rawa ‘an aTNabi (classes of transmitters from the Prophet), by al-Haytham ibn ‘Adî (d. 207/822)3 Tabaqat aTfursan (classes of cavaliers), by Abu ‘Ubaydah (d. 208/823): see Heffening, op. cit., p. 215 (copied in Abiad, p. 14). See also Hafsi, op. cit., p. 245. It is, however, to be kept in mind that Ibn Sa’d’s book may be very closely related to the work of his teacher al-Wâqidî (d. 207/822), who was of the same generations al-Yazidi, al-Haytham ibn ‘Adi and Abu Ubaydah.

[276] Cf. nn. 12 and 13 above.

[277] al-Fihrist (ed. Rida Tajaddud, Tehran, 1971), pp. 105, 106.

[278] Ibid., pp. 108, 110.

[279] Ibid., p. 112.

[280] See on this book and its structure, the old study of Loth mentioned in n. 8 above, especially pp. 603–5: Gibb, op. cit., pp. 54–55 (where there is a very brief survey of structure); and Hafsi, op. cit., pp. 229–30. 235, and 242–44, where the structure and criteria for organization are discussed without an attempt at comprehensiveness.

[281] Ibn Sa’d, Kitab al-tabaqat al-kabir (ed. E. Sachau, Leiden, 1905–40),

[282] For the significance of this order of the cities, see above the end of section 1.

[283] Since the term “tabaqahr need not indicate, strictly speaking, solely the time factor (although Ibn Sa’d does mention “age” at some points); cf. the meanings of “tabaqah” in n. 21 above.

[284] See Ibn Sa’d, 6:90ff.

[285] Ibid., p. 84ff.

[286] Ibid., p. 151ff.

[287] Ibid., p. 115ff.

[288] Ibid., p. 126ff.

[289] That a whole volume is devoted to women is indeed noteworthy; see also Gibb’s remark in n. 20 above.

[290] The last, ninth, volume of the printed edition contains only the editor’s notes.

[291] On the structure of this dictionary, see Hafsi, op. cit., pp. 230, 239, 245–46. In the introduction to the best edition of the book (ed. Muhammad Mahmud Shakir, second edition, Cairo, 1974), the editor provides an excellent study of the work, including its structure.

[292] See above, n. 3.

[293] Cf. Humphreys’ remark in n. 18 above.

[294] Jim Lindsay, of Westmont College, attracted my attention to a possible earlier “dhayl;’ namely Dhayl tâ’rîkh mavvalîd al-‘ulamâ’ wa-wafayatihim by ‘Abd al-‘A/iz ibn Ahmad al-Kattam (d. 466/1074), which could be a continuation of Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah al-Rabâ’i’s (d. 379/989) Tâ’rîkh mawalid al-‘ulamâ’ wa-wafayatihim. Both books have been recently published in Riyad in 1989 and 1990 respectively. Like Lindsay, however, I have not been able to see those books, nor am I able to identify their authors.

[295] On this phenomenon in Andalusia, see Ibn Bassam’s sharp statement in the introduction to his al-Dhakhirah (ed. Ihsan ‘Abbas, Beirut, 1979), 1:11–16.

[296] Preserved in al-Maqqari, Nafh al-tîb (ed. Ihsan ‘Abbas, Beirut, 1968), 3.156–79.

[297] Ibn Sa’Id also wrote an addendum to this epistle; see ibid., pp. 179–86, as did al-Shaqundi; see ibid., pp. 186–222.

[298] A few books appeared slightly earlier, but they are not typically biographical dictionaries. Ibn Abi Tahir Tayfur’s (d. 280/893) Kitab Baghdad, which has partially survived (Baghdad, 1968), is a literary chronicle, not a biographical dictionary. BahshaFs (d. 292/905) Tâ’rîkh Wasit, which has survived (ed. Kurkis ‘Awwad, Baghdad, 1967), is similar to most other dictionaries of cities in that it begins with an expose of the town of Wasit; however, the entries in it can hardly be called biographies at all: their titles carry persons’ names, but the material under each rubric contains nothing other than the hadiths which those persons have transmitted. In that sense, the book is closer in genre to Bukhârî’s al-Tû’rîkh aTkabir and similar works. See Rosenthal, op. cit., pp. 83, 144–45.

[299] Published in Tehran, 1351 [A.H.]. The book has been translated into English as The History of Bukhara by Richard N. Frye (Cambridge, MA 1954).

[300] See Yatimat al-dahr (reproduction of the Damascus edition, Beirut, 1979), 1:8–9.

[301] See above, n. 45.

[302] In addition to the criterion of time, whence only contemporaries receive biographies.

[303] aTDhakhirah, 1:22–32.

[304] Ibn Said al-Andalusi, al-Mughribfi hula aTMaghrib (ed. Shawql Dayf, Cairo, 1953), 1:33.

[305] See above, n. 6.

** 7. The Book in the Grammatical Tradition: Development in Content and Methods

Ramzi Baalbaki

Through sheer coincidence, the word Kitab has acquired special significance in the field of Arabic grammar. The sudden and premature death ofSlbawayhi meant that his huge but unfinished and unnamed grammatical treatise had to be given a name by his contemporaries. What better a name than “al-Kitab” could they come up with to reflect the grandeur and exhaustiveness of Sibawayhi’s (d. ca. 180/796) work? The term “al-Kitab,” which is an example of an ‘alam bi-al-ghalabah,[306] can thus refer either to the Qur’an or to Sibawayhi’s treatise, which came to be known as Qur’an al-nahw.[307]

The Kitab of STbawayhi is striking in another aspect related to the concept of “book” in Arabic grammatical tradition. It is the first grammatical work written, and, at the same time, the most comprehensive and imposing among a host of grammatical works that have survived. al-Kitab, of course, did not emerge from a vacuum, but it is overwhelming in its material, technical terms, and analytic methods, given the relative scarcity of grammatical activity in the

pre-Sibawayhi period. What is more striking than the unexpected appearance of this major work in grammar is that, unfortunately the later authors added to it hardly anything of real value or importance as far as material and terms are concerned, but tried to depart from some of the analytic methods of

Sibawayhi and from the delicate balance he established between qiyas and sama’. This departure is largely to

blame for the post-Sibawayhi grammarians' inclination to prescriptiveness, and their subjugation of attested usage to a rigid set of rules and to far-fetched explanations which have tarnished the image of nahw and disgraced the nahwiyun, causing them to be viewed not only as poor interpreters,[308] but also as insensitive to the intricacies of Arabic usage. This very insensitivity was at the heart of the emergence of balaghah as a discipline distinct for the lack of originality in the post-Sibawayhi period, characterized by concern for the permissibility of usage—according to the grammarians' criteria. Rather than be concerned with meaning and the disclosure of the impact of the context and the speaker's intention in using the 'awamil (operants, regents), the grammarians' regimen converged on exhausting the different kinds of 'awamil and so-called 'Hal (reasons).

It is obvious that Sibawayhi's Kitab is the focal point in the history of Arabic grammatical writing. Consequently, any study of the "book" in this grammatical tradition is bound to have the Kitab as its point of departure. The present author proposes, in order to trace the development of the grammatical book, to examine three stages in the history of Arabic grammar, based on Sibawayhi as the focal point in this history, and according to the following scheme:

1. The pre-Sibawayhi stage, that is, the early grammatical activity leading to and preceding the phase of ta'lîf, and the reports about grammatical writings in this period;

2. Sibawayhi's Kitab, that is, its content, and the set of grammatical notions and methods it portrays; and

3. The post-Sibawayhi stage, that is, the departure from Sibawayhi's methods of grammatical analysis as exemplified in the work of the main figure after Sibawayhi, namely, Mubarrad.

Although this scheme might appear to have been oversimplified so as to suit the purpose of a general survey, it is basically an accurate representation of the development of grammatical activity. It is lamentable that after Sibawayhi one cannot discern any serious attempt at originality. Thus, the satisfaction with only one post-Sibawayhi stage is a reflection of the irreversible tendency of the grammarians of the third century onward toward complication, standardization and prescriptiveness, rather than a deliberate effort on our part to magnify the schism between Sibawayhi and the later grammarians, at least with regard to grammatical analysis.

The first reference to a “book” in the grammatical tradition is encountered in the biography of the allegedly first grammarian, Abu al-Aswad al-Du’alî (d. 69/688)[309] It is, however, highly improbable that Abu al-Aswad, or anyone trying to write preliminary notes on grammar, could have written a book on grammar, as the account quoted by al-Suyûtî claims, unless by “book” no more than a few pages are meant (hence the reference to it as al-Mukhtasar[310]). It is also highly improbable that this “book” could have covered nahw as such—as other accounts, again quoted by al-Suyûtî, indicate—at this early stage. We are thus left with the limited subjects mentioned in the different accounts.[311] These are the following:

1. The parts of speech (kalam): the noun (ism), which indicates a denominative (mâ anba’a ‘an al-musamma), the verb (fi’1), which is a movement (harakah, i.e., in time), and the particle (harf), which has a meaning not signified by the first two parts. The nouns are further divided into explicit nouns, pronouns, and what is neither of those.

2. The particles governing the accusative: inna, anna, laysa (!), la alia, ka anna, and lakinna. A few other “operants” are mentioned in other accounts, namely, those which govern raf (nominative and/or indicative), nasb (accusative and/or subjunctive), khafd (genitive) and jazm (jussive).

3. Three disparate topics: subject and object, admirative constructions, and the construct state.

These subjects, apart from the first, might well have been those that captured the attention of the grammarians of the first and early second centuries, especially since they are the very subjects liable to solecism (,lahn), which is a major factor in the initiation of Arabic grammatical thinking.[312] The division of kalam into parts could hardly have taken place at this stage, as it was of no great importance to the pedagogical aims of the grammarians then. Moreover, the resemblance between the division into parts of speech and their functions, in the accounts of Abu al-Aswad writing down ‘All s views, on the one hand, and Slbawayhi’s treatment of the subject, on the other, can be understood as part of the attempt to credit ‘All with laying the foundations of grammar, especially since parts of speech are given precedence in the Kitab, and are discussed in its very first lines.[313]

It seems absolutely clear that the concept of qiyas did not cross the minds of grammarians at this stage. Not only is there no mention of it in the accounts, but also the timid and confused attempt at classifying particles (manifested in the inclusion of laysa with five other particles followed by nouns in the accusative) does not seem to correspond at all to the concept of qiyas as used by later grammarians. Neither does it indicate that ’amil and ’amal were of interest in themselves at this stage, as the arrangement according to regimen seems to be initiated only for didactic purposes. One can therefore safely dismiss Ibn Sallam’s statement that Abu al-Aswad was the one who laid the foundation of Arabic (grammar) (awwal man assasa al-‘Arabiyah), one to have devised grammatical qiyas.[314]

Unlike the largely unrealistic and unfounded reports on the grammatical activity—especially in writing—of Abü al-Aswad and his contemporaries, we possess reliable material on the pre-SIbawayhi grammarians of the second century, mainly from Sibawayhi himself. The importance of the grammatical stage following the primitive beginnings of grammatical activity, and preceding that of Sibawayhi, lies in the use of qiyas as a

method of grammatical analysis, an analytical technique which later became the backbone of Arabic grammar.

The main figures of this intermediate stage are:

1. .. 117/735): He is mentioned seven times by Sibawayhi,[315] and these mentions hardly substantiate the view that he represents a trend highly dependent on qiyas,[316] or that he is the first grammarian who can be identified as “Basran.”[317]

2. Isa ibn ‘Umar (d. 149/766): From the twenty references to him in the Kitab, a number of which simply quote him as a transmitter of certain specific usages, ‘Isa cannot be considered as a representative of the qiyasl trend[318] in the same sense the term came to acquire with SIbawayhi and the later grammarians. In other words, the sophistication characteristic of later qiyas cannot apply to him, although one can detect in some of his ideas[319] a tendency to compare two sentences or phrases and infer that one was given the same treatment as the other on the grounds of their similarity.

3. Abu ‘Amr ibn al-‘Alâ’ (d. 154/770): In his Tabaqat,[320] Zubaydi lists him both under the nahwiyun and the lughawiyun. However, evidence from the Kitab, in which he is quoted fifty-seven times, shows that while the term lughawi, lexicographer, is easily applicable to him, the term nahwi, grammarian, is hardly so. He is quoted mainly in relation to Quranic readings,[321] transmission of poetry,[322] and usages by Arabs, [323] in addition to some of his explanations and reasoning in matters related to lughah, rather than nahw.[324]

4. Abu al-Khattab al-Akhfash al-Kabir (d. 177/793): Although Zubaydi[325] lists him under the nahwiyun, and not the lughawiyun, the evidence furnished by Sibawayhi’s Kitab strongly suggests that the opposite is more likely true. There are fifty-eight mentions of him in the Kitab, all, without

exception, on matters concerning lughah, not nahw.[326] Eight of these are on lines of poetry,[327] the rest being on prose material Abu al-Khattab heard from Arabs whose Arabic was usually described by Slbawayhi as being reliable or trustworthy (mawthuq bi-‘Aiabiyatihim).

5. Yunus ibn Habib (d. 182/798): There are 217 mentions of him in the Kitab.[328] In many instances he is quoted as a transmitter of certain usages: two concerning Qur’anic verses,[329] twenty concerning lines of poetry,[330] eighteen concerning usages reported by Abu ‘Amr, or views held by him,[331] and many other cases concerning prose.[332] Apart from al-Khain (see below), YQnus is the earliest grammarian in whose work a definite system can be discerned, sufficiently supported by textual evidence. Elaboration on this system is beyond the scope of this paper, but it should suffice US to point out briefly the main features of his methods of grammatical analysis:

a. He made extensive use of taqdir as an analytical tool. This involved the suppletive insertion of parts of the sentence, mainly the operants which he assumed to be elided.[333]

b. He often formulated grammatical “rules” of universal validity[334]— an extremely important step in the history of grammatical analysis which so far had been mainly concerned with particulars, rather than “rules” which embraced these particulars.

c. He often relied on anomalous examples in drawing conclusions or formulating “rule.”[335] His approach was thus highly reliant on sama’, with an obvious unwillingness to dismiss usages only scarcely used or documented.

6. al-Khalll ibn Ahmad (d. 175/791): Unlike those of the five grammarians above, the role of al-Khalll in the Kitab is integral to the whole work. There are 608 mentions of him in the Kitab, many of which cover whole chapters.[336] Indeed, al-Râzî asserts that Sibawayhi’s

Kitab contains data (‘ulum) gathered from al-Khalll.[337] It would therefore be completely unrealistic to claim that it is possible to examine the linguistic analysis of either al-Khain or STbawayhi in isolation. Any conclusion here referring to Sibawayhi’s methods refers, by definition, to him as well as to his master.

Apart from individual grammarians, Sibawayhi refers seventeen times to a group which he calls nahwiyim.[338] The sense of the designation is not very clear.[339] but it should be noted that six out of these seventeen mentions are in relation to hypothetical examples they constructed, as opposed to what Arabs actually said.

The grammatical activity surveyed above, apart from furnishing the background of Sibawayhi’s book, and indeed, of the grammar book for centuries to come, reveals that despite the preoccupation of Sibawayhi’s predecessors with some basic grammatical phenomena, no grammar book seems to have preceded the Kitab. It is unimaginable that Sibawayhi, who frequently quotes his predecessors and gives them due credit, should have intentionally ignored reference to a grammar book before his. As for the reports that ‘Isa ibn ‘Umar wrote two grammar books, Jami’ and İkmâl,[340] we have no single reference to or quotation from either book in Sibawayhi’s Kitab, or indeed in any later grammatical work, and thus very much doubt the existence of either title.

We are left with no more than a single grammar book which might be claimed to have been written before the Kitab or in the same period; namely, Muqaddimahfial-nahw, by Khalaf al-Ahmar (d. 180/796). There is, however, compelling evidence that this book could not have been written in the second century, let alone that Khalaf al-Ahmar is its author:

1. The book is not attributed to Khalaf in the sources, which do not even accept him as a proper nahwi, since his contribution was mainly in poetry and, to a lesser extent, lexicography.[341] Asmâ’î, himself

not accepted as a nahwi was nevertheless said to have been a better nahwi than Khalaf.[342]

2. The purpose of the book, as explained by the author, is to enable its reader to “improve his language in any book he might write, in poetry he might recite, or in an oration or treatise he might compose.”[343] This is not in tune with the trend in the second part of the second century. In spite of the fact that the beginning of Arabic grammatical activity was related to a didactic purpose, its development thereafter was largely on different lines, and the didactic element does not distinctly re-emerge until late in the third century.

3. The author speaks of grammatical principles (uşîd). particles (adawat), and operants (’awamH),[344] and arranges many parts of his book according to the government of these operants, listing those governing the nominative, accusative, genitive, and so on, under separate headings. This arrangement, and more particularly the uşûl, betrays the fact that the author was writing later than the second century, for this term was not yet used in the sense of grammatical principles or fundamentals of grammar, nor was such an arrangement of headings—characteristic of the fourth century onward—likely to have been used.

4. The author mentions the Basrans and the Kufans in two places, both concerning terminology, saying that the Kufans use the term istitiT for the Basran qat’ or ijra[345] (instigation), and Ijab for tahqlq[346] (void, exception, lacking the general term). But how could such a reference be made at a time when the two “schools” could not yet have been formed.?!

The formative elements of Sibawayhi’s Kitab can thus be reduced to the general grammatical activity preceding him. and especially that of the grammarians he quotes. Having discarded the Muqaddimah attributed to Khalaf as a work of the third or even fourth century, we can confidently conclude that Sibawayhi’s

Kitab is the first book of Arabic grammar. It is interesting to note that this first attempt, which laid the solid foundations of terms and methods alike, has never been surpassed by later authors, nor has its author’s approach to linguistic analysis been seriously challenged, with the single exception of Ibn Madas refutation of the grammarians in his al-Radd ’aid al-nuhat.

Having studied the stage leading to the appearance of the first grammatical treatise, the developments that took place in the nature and methods of grammar books can best be traced by comparing Sibawayhi’s work, on the one hand, with the work of the later grammarians, on the other. We have already suggested that post-Sibawayhi grammarians may be identified as a single group to stress the fact that, from the third century onward, there was an irreversible trend away from some of the essential components of Sibawayhi’s method, resulting in a major change in the concept of what constitutes a grammar book, and for what purpose it is written. Although a detailed study is warranted to trace this development in its various aspects and appreciate the range of differences among grammarians within the general trend, we shall limit this part of the paper to the main features as portrayed in a comparison between Sibawayhi’s Kitab and the first major grammar book to be written after it. namely, al-Muqtadab, by Mubarrad (d. 285/898).

It should be stressed here that Slbawayhi set the main features which characterize the grammar book in general. The difference that one detects between him and the later authors is in aspects of the methods of grammatical analysis; most other features were largely preserved, and the broader ones among them—which should not be lost in the mass of details one encounters in the process of comparison—are the following:

1. The separation between lughah and nahw: The realm of nahw, as presented by Sibawayhi, remained distinct from that of lughah, which has an altogether different history of development.

2. The inclusion of sarf -. Although there was an early realization that the themes of sarf form a distinct entity and may be the exclusive subject of a whole treatise—as they were indeed as early as MazinFs (d. 247/861) Taşrîf— most of the later authors followed Sibawayhi's example in treating the themes of sarf in one treatise, side by side with the linguistic subjects which deal with the jumlah rather than the kalimah. Mubarrad's (d. 285/898) Muqtadab, Ibn al-Sarraj's (d. 316/928) Mujaz and Usui, and ZubaydFs (d. 379/989) Wadih are but a few examples of the continuity of Sibawayhi's method.[347] The phonetic part of sarf, which Sibawayhi considers late in his second volume, also continued to be included in most later books.

3. The shawahid: Not only did the bulk of Sibawayhi's shawahid form the main body of material for the later authors, but they had few additions to make, as they absolutely refused to extend the period of accepted shawahid beyond the second century. It is interesting to note that it was only on the linguistic merit of hadlth that there was a departure from this approach, and then a minor and short-lived one, propagated by proponents of one line of thought—harshly criticized by proponents of another—quite late in the history of grammar.[348]

4. The arrangement of material: Despite minor variations, the arrangement Sibawayhi adopts in the Kitab is generally observed by the later grammarians.

5. The tools of grammatical analysis: Whatever the later grammarians might have introduced to the study of grammar or however they might have drifted away from the delicate balance which Sibawayhi established in his analysis—as between sama' and qiyas, for example—there remains the fact that the "tools" of grammatical analysis used by Sibawayhi —in our view, largely under the influence of al-Khalll—were completely adopted by the later grammarians. Concepts such as taqdir, hadhf 'Ulah, 'amil, ma'mül, asl, and so forth, are featured in the later sources with practically the same range of application as in the Kitab. Furthermore, Sibawayhi's host of terms—again, largely

from al-Khalll[349]—carried through to the later grammarians with only a few additions.[350] It is remarkable that even the Kufan terms, despite some of their idiosyncrasies, are largely similar to the terms used and elaborated on by Sibawayhi.

The major areas of difference between Sibawayhi and the later grammarians —represented here by Mubarrad—that reveal the changes that occurred in grammatical writing are the following:

1. On qiyas and sama'. Both authors use these terms in a largely similar sense, but Mubarrad gives more prominence to the first at the expense of the second. For him, qiyas is not only a method of grammatical analysis, but also a purely intellectual process which could be the arbiter in grammatical questions. His use of terms like minhaj ai-qiyas[351] and haqiqat al-qiyas[352]—which do not occur in the Kitab—points to a more closely defined view of qiyas, whereby it is not only used as a grammatical tool, but also referred to as one.

More importantly, Mubarrad seems to have changed the delicate balance Sibawayhi established between qiyas and sama'. In his system, .Si ba way hi puts limitations on qiyas, and respects sama', so that, apart from four examples,[353] he does not dismiss attested forms as wrong. Mubarrad, on the other hand, frequently considered attested forms as unacceptable or wrong and resorts to dismissing the riwayah to prove his point.[354] The matter takes more serious dimensions when Mubarrad's preference of qiyas over sama' prompts him to apply the former, resulting in forms that are contrary to those attested to by the Arabs through the latter. In his refutation of Mubarrad, Ibn Wallad points out that he and the grammarians are not allowed to apply a qiyas which would, even if it were sound, result in something that does not exist in their language, and endorses Sibawayhi's view that the application of qiyas for generating forms is only acceptable if these forms conform to the speech of the Arabs.[355] Unfortunately, Ibn Wallad's support of Sibawayhi is outweighed by the growing acceptance by the later grammarians of the approach which gives qiyas preeminence

over sama’—an approach which brought about a major change in the nature of a grammar book, the Kitab, leading to a futile exercise in the application of criteria externally imposed by the grammarian on linguistic data.

2. On amal (regimen) and ta in (causation): The idea that any grammatical phenomenon in an utterance must have a cause to explain it, and that this cause can often be represented by the relation of the element that governs to the element governed by it, has dominated the thinking of almost all Arabic grammarians, mainly through the influence of al-Khalll and Sibawayhi. Furthermore, most of the reasons Sibawayhi cites for particular phenomena are adopted by the later grammarians, including Mubarrad.[356] However, a study of Mubarrad’s employment of the two concepts of regimen and causation reveals basic differences between his approach and that of Sibawayhi, especially as evidenced by the terminology expressing the concept of “operant.” In the Kitab, there are fifty occurrences of the terms ‘amil, ‘amilah, and ‘awamil. However, the majority do not express the concept of “operant.”[357] In an expression like wa-kâna al-‘âmilfihî mâ qablahu min al-kalam (the operant in it was the preceding sentence),[358] the word ‘amil cannot be said to stand for the concept of “operant,” as it lacks the degree of abstraction needed for such a concept. In a few other instances,[359] however, the concept is more clearly expressed. Mubarrad, on the other hand, not only expresses this concept with precision,[360] but also speaks

of the different sorts of ‘awdmil, and uses expressions like ‘awamil al-afal,[361] awamil al-asmâ’,[362] tasarruf al-’âmil,[363] and al-’at/’ala ’âmilaynl.[364] Another expression Mubarrad uses is hah al-’awâmil,[365] which shows that the concept of operant has become a “class” in itself. Indeed, he applies language drawn from logic in his discussion of ‘awamil, as in the following passage: fa-idhd ja alta laha ʔawamil ta’mal jtha aimaka an tai’al li-‘awamiliha (awamil wa-kadhalika li-awamil ’awamilihd ilâ mâ lâ nihâyah (if you assign to it operants to act on it, you would need to assign operants to its operants, likewise to the operants of its operants, indefinitely).[366] This approach to ’awdmil continued to be used by the later grammarians and culminated in works devoted totally to

‘awâmil, complete with complex internal division[367]—another noteworthy development in the grammar book.

As for ta’lîl, Mubarrad, like Sibawayhi, assigns causes to explain grammatical phenomena, but his use of this tool is far more sophisticated than Slbawayhi’s. First, he uses the term ‘illah to refer to several phenomena, such as labs,[368] hadhf;[369] ikhtilâf[370] and jawhz[371] Moreover, he uses the term ’Hal to refer, collectively, to the issues or particulars of a certain bâb.[372] This shows how the uninterrupted application of ’illah resulted in a shift of meaning, whereby a grammatical bâb can be said to be made up of a number of ’Hal.

The major features of the difference between Slbawayhi’s use of ta’lîl and that of the later grammarians, represented here by Mubarrad, can be further demonstrated through the following observations:

a. Many of the phenomena for which Mubarrad assigns an ’illah are not given causes by Sibawayhi. Examples include the ’illah for the suffix of the third-person masculine plural being sakin (as in darabu), while that of the third-person feminine plural is not (as in darabna),[373] for many peculiarities of numerals and the tamylz following them,[374] and for the vocative which is mufrad and ending in datnmah.[375]

b. Many of the phenomena to which Sibawayhi assigns one ’illah are explained by Mubarrad by two or more ’Hal.[376] Expressions like wa-sanadhkuru dhdlika bi-istiqsd’ al-’illah JThH[377] show Mubarrad’s tendency to exhaust all the possible reasons for a particular phenomenon.

c. Many of the causes Mubarrad mentions are more complex and sophisticated than those given by Sibawayhi. For instance, whereas Sibawayhi mentions takhfif as the cause for the

kasrah after the kâf in ahlâmikim, used by Bakr ibn Wa’il (akhaffmin an yudammfif,[378] Mubarrad dismisses the usage as unacceptable to ahi al-nazar.[379] And whereas Sibawayhi asserts that the elision of the nün of the dual and plural when the geminate energetic nun is suffixed to a verb in the dual or plural is to avoid disambiguity between the singular and the dual or plural,[380] Mubarrad resorts to qiyds,[381] the complexity of which becomes the target of Ibn Wallad’s criticism.[382]

Just as the approach to ‘awamil (in 1 above) gave rise to a new genre of grammatical books, namely, books on ’awamil, the approach to causation is the main reason for another genre of grammatical books, this time works on asrar (i.e., ‘Hal), as exemplified in Ibn al-Anbârî’s Asrdr ai’Arabiyah and al-Ighrab fl jadal al-i’râb, where causation is pursued as a mental exercise in logic more than as a tool of grammatical interpretation.

3. Regarding subdivisions, Mubarrad and the later grammarians, in general, tend to divide and subdivide grammatical phenomena to treat them more precisely, but often, too, to demonstrate their ability to expand on the subject at hand and present all its particulars under one heading. For example, in dealing with the types of definite nouns, Mubarrad divides them according to the degree of their “definiteness,”[383] whereas Sibawayhi makes no such distinction.[384] Similarly, Mubarrad lists four types of badal,[385] whereas Sibawayhi mentions them in different places,[386] without any attempt to show that they are different types of one concept.

4. As for “logical” considerations, several of these have already been mentioned, and this subject deserves detailed study. One can point out here, however, just a few manifestations of Mubarrad’s “logical” approach to grammar as an example of a drastic change in the nature of the grammar book. These include “fanqala”[387] (hypothetical questions and answers), “ihalah”[388] (reductio ad absurdum), and “tasalsul”[389] (successivity). Furthermore, some of the terms and expressions specific to logic and philosophy clearly feature in passages

like the one in which he arranges the degrees of definiteness,[390] ‘. ٦ لألاة,؟ لأ حاًحلأبخم١a-al-shay١ a’amm ma takallamta bihi, wa-al-jism akhass minhu, wa-al-hayawan akhaşş min al-jism...biannaka taqul kull rajul insan wa-la taqul kull insan rajul” (the thing is the most general connotation of a term, and the body is more specific, and animal is more specific than body. ..so you say every male is a human being but not every human being is a male).

Sibawayhi’s originality was not to be matched by any of the later grammarians. It was only when the new approach of the balaghiyun emerged— mainly out of the preoccupation of the nahwiyun with imposing their own norms on attested usage, and their inability to provide a theory of meaning compatible with their theory on qiyas, ‘amal, and so on—that originality made another appearance. This came with Jurjani’s theory, mainly in his Dala’il al-i’jâz, where he asserts that nahw should be the study of meaning, but that the nahwiyun failed to approach their subject from that angle.[391] But this attempt was again short-lived, and balaghah itself was later plagued with rigidity and the lack of continued revision of theory, Once again, later authors seem to have corrupted the basically sound systems of their forerunners, and thwarted the efforts they made in their first and major books in each of the two subjects.

[306] Ibn ‘Aqls Sharh ’ala alfiyat Ibn Malik, 4 vols., ed. M.M. ‘Abd al-Hamld (Cairo, 1967), 2:185–86

[307] Abu al-Tayyib al-Lughawl, Maratib al-nahwiyin, ed. M.A. Ibrahim (Cairo, 1974), p. 106.

[308] Cp. the saying: ad’afmin hujjat nahwi, in Ibn Khallikan’s Wafayat al-a’yân wa-anba’ abnci[1] al-zaman, 8 vols., ed. I. ‘Abbas (Beirut, 1968–72), 1:119. Examples of some of their poor interpretations are discussed by Ibn Mada’ al-Qurtubl in his <em>al-Radd

’ala al-nuhat, ed. Sh. Dayf (Cairo, 1947). See also F. Tarazl, FT uşül al-lughah wa-al-nahw (Beirut, 1969), pp. 132–33.

[309] al-Suyûtî, Sabab wad’ ’Um al-’arabiyah, in al-Tuhfah al-bahlyah wa-al-turfah alshahiyah (Constantinople, 1885), p. 49ff. For the different accounts on the “first Arab grammarian,” see R. Talmon, “Who Was the First Arab Grammarian? A New Approach to an 011 Problem,” Zeitschriftfiir arabische Linguistik 15 (1985), pp. 128–46.

[310] Ibn al-Anbârî, Nuzhat al-alibba’ fltabaqat al-udaba’, ed. 1. Sâmarrâ’I (Baghdad, 1970), p. 20. Ibn al-Nadlm reports that he once saw four Chinese papers containing material from Abu al-Aswad’s grammatical treatise in the handwriting of Yahya ibn Ya’mar; see al-Fihrist, ed. R. Tajaddud (Tehran, 1971), p. 46. It is very doubtful, however, whether Chinese paper was known to the Arabs by the time of Yahya (d. 129/746), and if Ibn al-Nadlm indeed saw such a manuscript, it was, most probably, forged.

[311] In addition to al-Suyütî and Ibn al-Anbârî, see Ibn Sallam, Tabaqat al-shu’arce, ed I Hell (Leiden, 1916), p. 5; and Zubaydl, Tabaqat al-nahwiyin wa-al-lughawiym, ed. M.A. Ibrahim (Cairo, 1973), pp. 11–12.

[312] This is continuously stressed by the sources, and errors like ashaddu al-harri,” for “mâ ashadda al-harra,” and “inna Allaha barf un min al-mushrikina wa-rasiilihi” for “rasulahu” are invariably cited.

[313] Sibawayhi, Kitab, 2 vols. (BGlaq, 1316-17/1898-99, repr. Baghdad, 1965), 1:2.

[314] Tabaqat al-shu’arcT, p. 5; cp. ZubaydTs Tabaqat, p. 21. Equally untrustworthy is the reference to Nasr ibn ‘Asim as having opened qiyas wide (fataqa al-

qiyas). This is incompatible with Naşr’s grammatical activity, which is usually mentioned along with that of Abü al-Aswad, and said to be similar to it. See al-Qiftl, Inbah al-ruwah ‘ala anbah al-nuhah, 4 vols., ed. M.A. Ibrahim (Cairo, 1950–73)3:343 و.

[315] For this and other statistics about grammarians mentioned in the Kitab, see ةاةلأحلأدا1يلآ al-Halil ibn Ahmad, der Lehrer Slbawaihs, als Grammatiker (Berlin, 1959), pp. 67–75: and the additions and corrections made by G. Troupeau in “Â propos des grammairiens cites par Slbawayhi dans le Kitab,” Arabica 8 (1961), pp. 309–12. See also G. Troupeau’s Lexique-Index du “Kitab” de Slbawayhi (Paris, 1976), pp. 227–31: and ‘A.M. Hârü’s indexes to his edition of the Kitab (Cairo, 1977), pp. 181–961.

[316] As suggested, for example, by A.M. Ansari in “al-Tayyar al-qiyasl fl al-madrasah al-Başriyah,” Bulletin ofthe Faculty of Arts, Cairo University 24 (1962), p. 20.

[317] Sh. Dayf speaks of him as “ustâdh al-madrasah al-Basrivah”; see al-Madaris al-nahwiyah (Cairo, 1968), p. 22: while M.S. Belguedj says: “on avait en effet quelques raisons de le presenter parfois comme le premier grammarien ‘basrite’)1: see “La demarche des premiers grammairiens arabes dans le domaine de la syntaxe,” Arabica 20 (1973), pp. 168–85.

[318] This is contrary to Dayfs interpretation of ‘lsa’s views, in al-Madaris al-nahwiyah, p. 25.

[319] See, for example, Kitab, 1:272, where he allows the accusative in hâdhâ awwalufarisin muqbilan by comparing it with the accusative in hâdhâ rajulun muntaliqan, that is, treating it as a circumstantial accusative, not as an adjective. See also Kitâb, 1:313, where he reads yâ mataran, likening it to yâ rajulan, and explains the accusative through the nunation (i.e., the sign of indefmiteness) common to both.

[320] Tabaqht al-nahwiyin, pp. 35, 159.

[321] Kitab, 1: 238, 316: 2: 167, 289, 297, 358, 417. Note that Aba ‘Amr was one of the seven authorized readers.

[322] Ibid., 1: 253, 437, 446.

[323] Ibid., 1: 293, 320, 396: 2: 81, 167.

[324] Ibid., 1: 208, 265: 2: 15, 28, 63, 149, 208, 237.

[325] Tabaqbt al-nahwiyin, p. 40.

[326] In Zajjajis Majalis ai’ulama’, ed. ‘A.M. Harun (Kuwait, 2nd ed., 1983), P. 124, Abu al-Khattab has only one majlis (no. 75), again on lughah.

[327] Kitab, 1: 40, 103, 153, 271, 369, 462; 2: 12, 17. For the rest of the quotations, see Troupeau’s Lexique-Index, pp. 227–28.

[328] In addition to Reuschel and Troupeau, see A.M. Ansari, Yunus al-Başrî: hayatuhu wa-atharuhu wa-madhahibuhu (Cairo, 1973), pp. 320–21.

[329] 5;/50, 1: 173,236.

[330] Ibid., 1: 25, 77, 131, 359, 333, 289, 253, 241, 207, 201, 182, 161, 140, .174, 160, 54 :2 :486, 423, 468, 422

[331] Ibid., 1: 1, 194, 20153, 48, 23 :2 :453, 397, 360, 293, 273, 265, 208, .183, 125, 1.15 81, 1.12 81, 74, 63

[332] See, for example, Kitab, 1: 115, 174–249, 248, 231, 213, 207, 203, :470, 404, 402 ,311و 316 ,317 ,322 ,345 ,361و 363 ,372و 379 ,382و ,88 ,110 ,113 ,122 ,125 ,127 ,142و 148 ,153 ,190 ,191 ,258,275 ,284 388 ,288 ,278 ,273 ,249 ,226 ,203 ,201 ,192 ,2: 26 ,31 ,35 ,54 ,70 ,73.

[333] Some of the clearest examples of this can be found in Kitab, 1: 147, .412, 398, 328, 256 173 ,252و

[334] Examples of this are his assertion that any noun made of two conjoined nouns is a diptote (2:50), and that the diminutive (iahqir) invariably reveals the origin of the word’s radicals (2:85). See also 2:283, concerning ishmam.

[335] One example is his claim, based on the form manun, the plural of the interrogative particle man, and on the sentence daraba mannun mannan which he heard from an Arab, that manah can be considered to be declinable as is ayyah, and it is therefore permissible to use the forms manatun, manatan, and manatin. See Kitab, ١ر.1ح d. ٠١ب ؟>, Ham’ al-hawami’ sharhjam’ al-jawami’ (Cairo, 1909), 2:153.

Similarly, he allows iyyaka Zaydan on the basis of a poetic shahid (1:140; cf. Zubaydi’s Tabaqat, p. 53).

[336] Reuschel, al-Khalil, p. 18.

[337] al-Suyûtî, al-Iqtirahfi’ilm usulal-nahw, ed. A.M. Qasim (Cairo, 1976), pp. 205–6.

[338] Kitab, 1: 167, 194, 216, 223, 227, 242, 257, 383, 393, 395, 415, 433, 437; 2: 18, 107, 157, 315. Cf. Troupeau, Lexique, NHW, where three other mentions are cited, but only in the context of the seventeen occasions.

[339] For an examination of this term, see M.G. Carter, “Les origines de la grammaire arabe,” Revue des Etudes Islamiques 40 (1972), pp. 69–97.

[340] Fayrüzâbâdî, al-Bulghah fi târîkh a’immat al-lughah, ed. M. Mişrî (Damascus, 1972), pp. 180–81; and al-Suyütî Bughyat al-wu’atfi tabaqat 0/ ·lughawiym wa-ül-nuhât, ed. M.A. Ibrahim (Cairo, 1964–65), pp. 237–38.

[341] Note that Zubaydl lists him under the lughawiyun in his Tabaqat, p. 161.

[342] Ibid., p. 163: cf. Nuzhat al-alibba’, pp. 90–91.

[343] Khalaf al-Ahmar, Muqaddimahfial-nahw, ed. ε1. TanükhT (Damascus, 1961), p.34.

[344] Ibid., 0.34.

[345] Ibid., p. 53.

[346] Ibid., p. 80.

[347] R. Baalbaki, “The relation between nahw and balaga: a comparative study of the methods of Sibawayhi and Gurğâni,” Zeitschrift far arabische Linguistik 11 (1983), p. 7.

[348] For grammarians who included hadlth as a main source of linguistic data, and those who argued the case for its inclusion, see Baghdadi’s Khizanat al-adab wa-lubb lubab lisan al-‘arab (Bulaq, 1299) l:3ff.; and Kh. Hadithl, Mawqvf al-nuhat min al-ihtijaj bi-ai-hadith ai-sharif (3 افهلآ ١٢ؤ%ل١٥: 191–365.

[349] See the section on mustalahat in G.N. ‘Abâbinâ’s Makanat al-Khalll ibn Ahmad fa al-nahw al-‘arabî (Amman, 1984), pp. 157–76.

[350] For example, the addition of ism al-âla (in Kitab, 2:249, “hâdhâ bab mâ ‘ala ta bihi”), and ism al-marrah (in Kitab, 2:246, “hâdhâ bab nazâ’ir darabtuhu darbatan wa-ramaytuhu ramyatan’”’). For other examples, see Dayfs al-Madaris al-nahwiyah, pp. 61–62.

[351] Muhammad ibn Yazid al-Mubarrad, Kitab al-Muqtadab, 4 vols., ed. M.A. ‘Udaymah (Cairo, 1965–66), 3:147; hereafter Muqtadab.

[352] Ibid., 1:177.

[353] These are the passages in which Sibawayhi describes observed linguistic data as unacceptable; see Kitab, 1: 290: 2: 127, 278, 367.

[354] See, for example, Muqtadab, 2: 22, 116–17, 132–33 (cf. Kitab, 1:408); 3:285; and Kamil, ed. w. Wright (Leipzig, 1864–92), p. 22. For evidence of Mubarrad's rejection of riwayah from other sources, see Ibn al-Sarraj's Kitab al-uşûlfîal-nahw, 3 vols., ed. 'A Fatal! (Baghdad, 1973), 1:123; and Ibn Jinnfs al-Khaşâ'iş, 3 vols., ed. M.A. Najjar (Cairo, 1952–56), 1:75. As for usages which Mubarrad dismisses but that Sibawayhi accepts, or only describes as weak but not to be dismissed, cf. five examples from Kitab, 1: 235, 435: 2: 12 1و 144و 294و with their corresponding passages in Muqtadab, 2: 146, 72–73, 249, 336: 1: 269–70.

[355] İntişâr Sibawayhi 'ala al-Mubarrad, in Muqtadab, 3:313, فآةاأ ل.

[356] Examples of this are the agreement that the implicit verb is the operant which brings about the accusative in certain vocative constructions (Kitab, 1:303: Muqtadab, 4:202), and that ihtida' is the operant causing the nominative in the mubtada' (Kitab, 1:278: Muqtadab, 2:49). But for disagreement, see their discussions of the mustathnd (Kitab, 1:369: Muqtadab, 4:390), and of the apodosis (Kitab, 1:449: Muqtadab, 2:82).

[357] As in Kitab, 1: 27, 37, 64, 74, 79, 92, 104,134 ,179 ,202و 228 ,243 ,248 ,277 ,345 ,360 ,362و 440 ,456 ,457 ,465. و, 108 ,121

[358] Ibid., 1:369.

[359] For example, 1: 3, 48, 231, 245, 347: 2: 61. See also F. Praetorius, “Die grammatische Rektion bei den Arabern,” Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenlandischen Gesellschaft 63 (1909), p. 499, where specialized terms connected with ‘awamil, not found in the Kitab, are pointed out.

[360] As in Muqtadab, 2:5: 4:302, for example.

[361] Ibid., 2:10, 75.

[362] Ibid., 2:6, 7, 38, 345.

[363] Ibid., 4: 156, 300.

[364] Kamil, pp. 163, 448.

[365] Muqtadab, 4:317.

[366] Ibid., 4:80.

[367] al-‘Awamil al-mi’ah al-nahwiyah fl uşûl ‘ilm <لا٠لأآ؟ m قح al-‘arabiyah, ed. al-Badrawl Zahran (Cairo, 214 ed., 1988).

[368] Muqtadab, 3:142.

[369] Ibid., 2:269: 3:166.

[370] Ibid., 2:153.

[371] Ibid., 3: 101, 217.

[372] Cf. the expression, “bab anna wa-inna bi-jamr ‘ilalihr (Kamil, p. 49), لAاخم\\ “wa-hadha yushrah ’aid hiyalihi bi-jamr ‘ilalihi’ (Muqtadab, 2:31–32).

[373] Ibid., 1:271.

[374] Ibid., 2:163–69, esp. p. 166 1.12, and p. 167 1.1.

[375] Ibid., 4:204.

[376] Cf., for example, Kitab, 2:153, with Muqtadab, 3:19, for the fathah in the imperfect followed by the energetic nün, and Kitab, 2:36–38, with Muqtadab, 3:374 (cf. Kamil, p.268, and Ibn al-Sarrâj’s Uşûl, 1:424; 2:90), for the final kasrah of feminine forms of the pattern fa’âlî]

[377] Ibid., 2:136.

[378] Kitab, 2:294.

[379] Muqtadab, 1:20.

[380] Kitab, لادرلآ.

[381] Muqtadab, 3:22.

[382] intişar, in Muqtadab, 3:21, margin.

[383] Muqtadab, 4:281.

[384] Kitab, 2:260[.

[385] Muqtadab, 4:297, cf. Kamil, pp. 438–39.

[386] Kitab, 1: 75ff., 218ff., 224., 393ff.

[387] For example, Muqtadab, 2:3–4,: 4:173–76.

[388] Ibid, 1:36: 4:8. See also his use of ihalah as reported in majlis 55 of Zajjâjî's Majalis, p. 96: and in Ibn Jinnfs Khasais, 1:89.

[389] Muqtadab, 3:3743 4:80.

[390] Ibid., 4:280. Cf. Abu al-Baqa', al-Kulliyat (Cairo, n.d.), p. 358.

[391] For the relation between nahw and balaghah, the emergence of the latter as a reaction to the former, and a detailed comparison between the two key figures of the two fields, namely Sibawayhi and Jurjanl, see my article mentioned in note 42 above.

** 8. Women’s Roles in the Art of Arabic Calligraphy

Şalâh al-Dîn al-Munaijid

Those scholars who study the role of women in Islam will notice that throughout the different periods of history, women were actively engaged in every field of endeavor, be it politics, government, or learning. Women were not confined, as some have assumed, to mothering and household occupations.

Women achieved a distinguished position in society by becoming skilled in Arabic composition, and by excelling in penmanship and calligraphy. Quite often, women managed the affairs of palaces, acquired knowledge and became important scholars, and copied books of all genres, including literature, poetry, and Traditions (hadlth). They copied books in a most beautiful way, and competently checked the copies against the originals for correctness. They copied Korans (masahif) and excelled in the manner of presenting them. People in government often relied on women to write the texts of political treaties because of their superior writing abilities.

*** Islam Encourages Learning and Writing

At the advent of Islam, only seventeen men and three women of the clan of Quraysh knew how to write. When the Prophet came, he called upon his followers to become learned, to learn how to read and write. The Holy Koran is explicit in this regard. God swore by the pen. He said, “i, by the pen and what they write,”[392] and God commanded His Messenger to read. He said, “Recite (or read, iqra’) in the name of thy Lord who created, created man from a blood-clot. Recite, and thy Lord is the Most Bountiful, who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know.”[393] God also ordained the cultivation of learning. He said, “Seek ye knowledge even in China.” China, in this context, refers to a remote point, extremely distant from Mecca and Medina (in the absence of modern means of travel and

communication), and very hard to reach. He ordained teaching. He said, “He who is learned among you should teach the others.” God instructed the Messenger to seek knowledge, despite its being a difficult undertaking.

One of the earliest verses of the Koran, revealed just after the emigration of the Prophet to Medina, had to do with debt. God ordained the writing, or recording (kitabah), of debts. He said, “O, ye who believe, when you contract a debt one upon another for a stated term, write it down and let a scribe write it between you in equity.”[394] Henceforth, writing came into fiscal legislation for the recording of contracts and for the protection of peoples’ rights.

The Messenger ordained writing in another area, namely writing a will before death. He encouraged every person to write a will before his death, and to divide his personal property among his heirs or donate it to the poor.

Great interest was shown in studying script and writing, in particular writing down the revelation of the Koran. The Messenger was illiterate, in that he did not know how to read or write. God said, “Not before this didst thou recite any Book, or inscribe it with thy right hand.”[395] The Prophet appointed several from among those Companions of his who knew how to write to be his writing secretaries. These included Abu Bakr, ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, ‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, ‘All ibn Abi Talib, Zayd ibn Thabit, Ubbay ibn Ka’b, Mu’awlyah ibn Abî Şufyân, and Zayd ibn Arqum. He assigned each one of them a specific task. To Zayd ibn Thabit he assigned the writing down of the revelation, for example. The Messenger, furthermore, set up a special desk (suffah) in the mosque for the purpose of teaching, and he appointed a special staff of teachers to teach writing. Among the teachers were ‘Abd Allah ibn Sa’id ibn al-‘Aşş and ‘Ubadah ibn al-Samit. He also sent Mu’âdh ibn Jabal to Yemen and Hadramaut as a teacher.

The Prophet’s interest in teaching was not limited to the education of men; he directed that women, too, should receive proper education. He asked a woman called al-Shafa’ bint ‘Abd Allah al-‘Adawiyah, who was conversant in the art of writing, to teach his daughter Hafşah that art.

The Companions of the Prophet later called on people to learn how to write. ‘ Ali ibn Abi Talib said, “Teach your children writing and marksmanship.” He also said, “Beautiful writing makes the truth clearer,” and “Take up beautiful writing, it is the key to livelihood.” ‘Abd Allah ibn al-‘Abbâs said, “Calligraphy is the tongue of the hand.”

One more thing should be pointed out, as it clearly indicates the Prophet’s concern for promoting learning. When the battle of Badr ended with the victory over the clan of Quraysh, the number of prisoners was high. Most of them did not have the necessary funds for a ransom. The Messenger consented that each prisoner ransom himself by teaching ten Muslims who were versed in the tenets of Islam to read.

The above considerations, together with enthusiasm for learning, directed the Muslims toward the high road of knowledge and the pursuit of writing capability. These same considerations led also to the diffusion of the Arabic script and to the writing of works that numbered in the millions, including works on religion as well as in the humanities. Muslim scholars who got involved in authoring did so prolifically. The works of some individual scholars reached four hundred in number. Mention can be made here of al-Kindl the philosopher, al-Jahiz the writer, al-Madâ’inî the historian, Ibn ‘Arabi the mystic, and al-SuyutT the theologian.

*** The Arabs, Excellence in Calligraphy

In Mecca, the Arabs wrote in a script called the Meccan, an offshoot of the Nabatean script. After the hijrah, the emigration of the Prophet to Medina in 622 C.E., a script called the Medinian evolved. It differed little from the Meccan. The Kufi script appeared after the establishment of the city of Kufah in 638 C E. It marked the beginning of a new era in the history of scripts in that this last and newest script manifested tendencies for improvement and variation.

The Kun script spread along with Islam in all the conquered countries. Each country, however, stamped it with its own particular character, so we began to see the Damascene, or Syrian; the Baghdadi; the Iraqi, or Muhaqqaq; the Egyptian; the Qayrawani; and the Andalusian scripts. Some scripts came to be known after the name of a ruling dynasty, such as the Fatimid, Ayyubi, and Mamluk Kun scripts. The Kun script, in all its variations, remained the script of the masahif, Korans, until the fourth/tenth century. It was then that Ibn Muqlah and Ibn al-Bawwab appeared, and the writing of the masahif in the Naskhi (cursive) script began. The sixth/twelfth century witnesses the complete disappearance of Kufi as the script of Korans; however, it remained used for the decoration of mosques and inscriptions on tombstones. New and more developed styles of script appeared with the passage of time, such as the new Naskh, Ruqa’, Thuluth, Dlwanl, and Ta’liq. Both the Persians and the Turks later excelled in producing other beautiful styles of script.

Using this wealth of scripts, the Muslims produced millions of works and millions of masahif. None of the other ancient civilizations produced as great a number of works as did the Islamic and Arab civilizations--and that includes the Greek, the Syriac, and the Roman.

*** The Place of Calligraphy in Islam

Calligraphy occupied a high position in Islam and played an important role in society for the following reasons:

1. Islam encouraged reading and writing from the very beginning.

2. Calligraphy became an official and religious tool.

3. Arabic script was beautiful and amenable to development.

4. Calligraphers were accoladed and supported by Muslim states.

5. Muslim calligraphers were possessed of genius.

Calligraphy invaded all areas of culture and society. Korans, as well as scientific, religious, and literary works, were penned in beautiful styles of calligraphy. Mosques, tribunes (،minbars), palaces, baths, rugs, pillows, seats, swords, helmets, and even scientific instruments, such as astrolabes and globes, were all embellished with calligraphy and calligraphic designs. What may come as a surprise is that the calligraphers who produced masterpieces that drew worldwide admiration were not all men. Women played a very significant role in the growth of Islamic culture.

*** Women’s Occupations: Calligraphy

Reading and writing helped women acquire a variety of cultural qualifications that enabled them to become scientists, writers, and poets. Furthermore, it prepared them to assume responsible positions in the state and to work in the courts (diwans) of the caliphs helping in the facilitation of all kinds of transactions. As far back as the third/ninth century, al-Jahiz described these active women by saying: “The kings and nobility had bondswomen who undertook all kinds of daily responsibilities joining the workforce or staff of the diwans. There were women who attended to the affairs of people, such as Khalişah, the maid of al-Khayzuran; and ‘Utbah, the maid of Ritah, daughter of Abu al-‘Abbâs al-Saffah; and Sukkar and Turkiyah, the maids of Umm Ja’far. Furthermore, women appeared in public stylishly dressed and nobody decried that or reproached it.”[396]

Sitt Nasim, one of the favorites (hazlyah) at the end of the Abbasid period, played an important role during the caliphate of al-Nâşir li-Dîn Allah (d. 622/1225). The Caliph taught her calligraphy so she was able to write almost beautifully as he did. When, in his old age, his eyesight weakened and senility overtook him, and he became unable to attend to the affairs of the people, he asked her to respond, as she saw fit, to all the

written requests addressed to him. She performed that task for a long time.[397]

Some of the poets and learned men had educated women to assist them. Abu al-‘Atahiyah, the famous poet, had a bondswoman to whom he dictated his poetry, and she copied it down very well. Muhammad ibn al-‘Abbâs ibn al-Furat (d. 384/994), the hadith compiler and hafiz who authored one hundred commentaries on the Koran and one hundred history books, had a bondswoman who check what he copied from other books to make sure that there were no discrepancies. This is not as simple as it seems; it requires a high degree of education.

In the palaces of the caliphs in Spain, al-Nuddar (d. 374/984), a favorite of Caliph al-Hakam ibn ‘Abd al-Nâşir the Umayyad (d. 362/972), distinguished herself. She was not only a poet, but also knoweldgeable in mathematics, and was involved in all aspects of learning and in calligraphy.[398] Lubna (d. 394/1003), the secretary of al-Mustanşir (d. 366/976), was a poetess who excelled in grammar, rhetoric, and mathematics. She produced a variety of fine calligraphic works.[399] And there was Muznah (d. 358/968), the secretary of the Andalusian caliph Nâşir al-Dîn. She was one of the most distinguished calligraphers.[400]

Many women, in fact, distinguished themselves in calligraphy, acquiring rank and importance as a result. Such was the case with Fatimah, the daughter of al-Hasan al-Aqra’. She wrote in mansub style, follwing the manner of the great calligrapher Ibn al-Bawwab. Calligraphers all over the Islamic world imitated her.[401] One day, she wrote a note to Muhammad ibn Manşür al-Kandari, the vizier of Tughril Beg and the first Saljuqi vizier. He was so impressed with her writing style and her eloquence that he presented her with one thousand dinars.[402] When the caliph al-Muqtadir (d. 932) sent the Byzantine emperor a letter declaring a truce between Byzantium and Baghdad, he asked Fatimah to pen it in her beautiful handwriting.[403]

*** Women Scholars and Calligraphy

Women’s concern for copying religious and scientific books as well as poetical anthologies grew as time went by. Their undertakings combined scholarship and beauty. Mention is to be made here of Fatimah (d. 966/1558), the daughter of ‘Abd al-Qadir, better known as Bint Quraymazan. She was a scholar in her own right, and a principal of the ‘Adiliyah khanqah (a school for Sufis) in Aleppo. She copied, by her own hand, a great number of books.[404]

Another woman scholar was Sayyidah (d. 647/1249), the daughter of Abd al-Gham al-‘Abdariyah of Granada, Spain, who knew the Koran by heart and was well known for her philanthropic work and for ransoming prisoners. She copied, by her own hand, the whole of al-Ghazzalis ihya’ ‘ulum al-dîn (The Revival of Religious Sciences).[405] al-Rida, the daughter of al-Fath, was a well known writer in Baghdad. She was a prolific writer and copier, and copied the diwan of Ibn al-Hajjaj, a copy of which the historian al-Şafadî saw. Another well known woman in Baghdad was Shuhdah bint al-Ubrl. Nicknamed “the glory of womanhood,” she was a muhaddithah, a compiler of the hadith, who knew by heart the Traditions of the Messenger of God. She was also called musnidat al-‘Iraq, the Iraqi authority. She penned beautiful calligraphy in the fashion of Fatimah bint al-Aqra’. There was none like her at the time. When she died in 574/1178, the Caliph himself presided over her funeral.[406]

*** Women Excel in the Copying of Korans

The core of our subject is women’s role in the copying of Korans. Women calligraphers practiced this art all over the Islamic world, from Spain to Syria, Iraq, Persia, and India. They even competed with each other in the copying of wonderful Korans.

Historians mention that in the eastern quarters of Cordova there were one hundred and seventy women copying Korans in the Kufi script. They worked day and night by candlelight which illuminated the streets along three parasangs (farsakhs).[407] One woman who copied Korans was the Cordovan ‘A’ishah, the daughter of Ahmad (d. 400/1009). She was a

good poet and calligrapher, and also a bibliophile who collected a great number of books. She was respected and loved by kings.[408]

During the Sanhaji rule in Tunisia, Durrah al-Katibah, the writer, one of the secretaries in the Sanhaji court, acquired great fame. One of her unparalleled works is the Hadinah (The Nursemaid) Koran. In the court of Banii Zîrî there were several foreign bondsmaids, one of whom was from Byzantium. She was captured by pirates during the reign of the SannajI prince al-Manşür, and taken first to Mahdiyah and later to Qayrawan. al-Manşür bought her and changed her name to Fatimah. She was very intelligent, so al-Manşür entrusted her with the nursing of his son, Badis. This is why she came to be known as Fatimah al-Hadinah, that is, the nursemaid. When al-Mu'izz ibn Badis consolidated his power, he raised her position, thus raising the prestige of and respect for his father's nurse and teacher. Fatimah endowed the mosque of 'Uqbah in Qayrawan with valuable books, rare works, and gilded Korans, some of which still exist in the old library. Some of the Korans are written with smelted gold in the old Kufi scripts. One of the endowed Korans was copied by a certain Durrah. On the last page is written, "In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate, Fatimah the Nursemaid, the nursemaid of Abü Manad Badis. I endowed (habastu) this Koran to the Mosque of the City of Qayrawan in the month of Ramadan 410 A H. (1019 C.E.)." And on the other side of the paper is written, "This Koran was copied, diacritically marked, decorated, gilded, and bound by 'All ibn Ahmad al-Warraq for the honorable Nursemaid. May God protect her, at the hand of Durrah, the calligrapher, may God keep her." Fatimah died in 420/1029, but her Koran remains with us.[409]

*** Women Calligraphers in the Ottoman Period

During the Ottoman period, calligraphry gained a very high standing in society. Several women calligraphers flourished. Among them were 'Ibrat; Zahidah Salma Khanum; Sharifah 'A'ishah Khanum; Silfinaz Khanum; Faridah Khanum, the Qastumonian; Khadljah Kuzaydah Khanum Celebi; and Nukliah Khanum.

Many of the Ottoman sultans were themselves calligraphers, as were their mothers. Durrah Khanum, the mother of Sultan Mahmüd Khan, copied a Koran in the year 1172/1758. This Koran was held by the Mahmüdiyah Library in Medina. It is said that it was carried away by the Ottoman Turks to Istanbul when they left the Hijaz.[410] The mother of Sultan ‘Abd al-Majid Khan, who ascended to the throne in 1255/1839, penned a copy of Dala’il al-khaymt, which was also among the holdings of the Mahmüdiyah Library in Medina.

Among the most splendid works of the Turkish women calligraphers is a Koran copied by alshanfah and hafizah Zulaykhah Khatiml al-Sa’dî, the daughter of al-Haii ‘Abd al-Karim Zadah Bisâr-İ Yârı, in 1276/1859. “al-Shanfah” indicates that she was a descendant of the family of the Prophet, and “hafizah” indicates that she was one of those who knew the Koran by heart. The calligrapher who knew the Koran by heart, whether man or woman, was thought to be more trustworthy.

The first two pages of this Koran are splendidly illuminated. Within “The Opening” (al-Fatihah) and the beginning of “The Cow” (al-Baqarah), several âyât (verses) are decorated with very colorful folial and floral designs on a gilded background. Though I have seen many gilded Korans, I don’t believe I have seen anything as beautiful as these two pages. The other pages of this Koran have wide, gilded border surrounded by a fine blue line. The verses are separated by gilded circular designs filled with variated ornamentations. The titles of the surahs are placed within gilded panels, within which the number of the surah is written in white. In the margins, the ahzab (60th part) and ajza’ (30th part) are indicated by circular designs within which the word hizb or juz’ is inscribed. The designs have a head and a tail similar, in a way, to a colored spike, and one of them is differently shaped. The script is in beautiful Naskhi script, the binding is leather filigreed in gold. A Jeddah scholar owns this Koran.

It is believed that there exists a spiritual and mystical bond between women and the letters of the alphabet. One writer described a woman calligrapher

by saying: “Her ink was like the blackness of her hair, her paper was like the tanned skin of her face, her pen was like one of her delicate fingers, and her knife was like the penetrating sword of her sweet looks.” The eyebrows of a beautiful woman have been compared to the Arabic letter nun, her eye to an ’ayn, her temple to a waw, her mouth to a mim, and her braided hair to a shin. For a woman to be considered really beautiful, one of the qualifications was good penmanship. It was said that a lucky woman was one who combined the beauty of body and face with that of character and penmanship.

[392] The Holy Koran, 68:1.

[393] Ibid., 96:1–4.

[394] Ibid., 2:282.

[395] Ibid., 29:48.

[396] ‘Amr ibn Bahr al-Jahiz, Rasa’ll, 2 vols., ed. A.M. Hârün (Cairo, 1964), 2.156.

[397] Khalil ibn Aybak al-Şafadı, al-Wafi bi-al wafayat, ed. Wadād al-Qāḍī (Wiesbaden, 1982), 16:239.

[398] al-Suyütî, Bughyatal-Wuat, 2 vols., ed. M. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim (Cairo, 1965), 2:269.

[399] Loe. cit.

[400] ‘Umar Rida Kahhalah, A’lâm al-nisâ’, 3rd. ed., 5 vols. (Beirut, 1977), 5:49

[401] ‘Abd al-Hayy ibn Ahmad ibn al-‘Imâd, Shadharat al-dhahabfi akhbar man dhahab, 8 vols. in 4 (Beirut, 1966), 4:365.

[402] Loe. cit.

[403] Yaqut al-Hamawl, Mu jam al-udaba’, 7 vols., ed. D.s. Margoliouth, E.J.W. Gibb Memorial (London, 1923–27), 6:113: ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn aLJawzl, al-Muntazam fi târîkh al-umam, 10 vols. (Hyderabad, 1359/1940)9:40 و.

[404] Ibn al-‘Imâd, Shadharat, 8:347.

[405] al-Şafadı, al-Wafi, 16:65.

[406] Ibid., 14:128, ed. by s. Dedering.

[407] Muhammad Kurd ‘All “Ghabir al-Andalus wa-hadiruha,” Majallat al-Majma’ al-‘Ilmi bi-Dimashq 2 (1922), p. 265.

[408] Kahhalah, A’lâm ül-nisâ’, 3:6.

[409] Hasan Husni ‘AM al-Wahhab, Waraqat Tunisiyah, 3 vols. (Tunis, 1964), 1:345و Shahirât al-Tünisîyât, 2nd ed. (Tunis, 1966), pp. 80–82.

[410] Muhammad Tahir al-Kurdl, Târîkh al-khatt al-‘Arabi wa-adabuh (Cairo, 1936), p. 340.

** 9. Some Illustrations in Islamic Scientific Manuscripts and Their Secrets

David A. King

An estimated 10,000 Islamic scientific manuscripts survive in libraries around the world. Although many were copied after the creative period of Islamic science, they bear witness to a scientific tradition which knew no rival from the eighth to the fifteenth centuries. While many of these manuscripts are illustrated, the illustrations have received scant attention from historians. For example, even though some manuscripts of al-Şufı’s Book on Constellations have been studied by art historians, neither a critical study of the available manuscripts nor a comparative study of the various traditions of illustration has been conducted. Moreover, there are other treatises in which constellation figures occur, and other astrological treatises in which there are illustrations that should be of interest to art historians.

Some attention has been paid to the diagrams in works on engineering (see figure 9.1), and scholars have labored over geometrical diagrams to understand the accompanying mathematical procedures (see figure 9.2). Islamic maps have also fared quite well at the hands of historians, and the state of our present knowledge of Islamic cartography is reasonably advanced. Investigations of diagrams of geometrical planetary models led, in the 19505, to the discovery of a tradition lasting several centuries of Islamic modifications to Ptolemaic planetary theory (see figure 9.3).

My present purpose is to demonstrate the significance of various other categories of illustrations which I have worked on recently and which open up new chapters in the field of Islamic science.

*** Some Illustrations in Treatises on Astronomical Instruments

Before mentioning some illustrations in Islamic texts on astronomical instruments, let US look at figure 9.4, from the Shahinshahname, which shows the scene at the Ottoman Observatory in Istanbul. The observatory was built in 1577 and demolished in 1580, and we are lucky indeed to have this miniature. The director, Taqi al-Dîn, is one of the two men contemplating the astrolabe. Some of the books behind him are now in the University Library in Leiden: his mark of ownership is found on several manuscripts in that library. TaqI al-Din himself wrote a treatise on mechanical clocks, and one such clock is featured here. Most of the instruments, notably the astrolabe and two quadrants, and various observational instruments, are of Islamic provenance; one, the terrestrial globe, is European. A terrestrial globe from the workshop of Mercator, with a dedication to Sultan Murad III dated 1579, was auctioned at Christie's of London in 1991; could this be the one illustrated here?

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-8.jpg][Fig. 9.1. Numerous mechanical devices are illustrated and described in this eleventhcentury Andalusian treasure, discovered less than twenty years ago. (MS Florence Bibliotheca Medicea-Laurenziana Or. 152.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-9.jpg][Fig. 9.2. A geometrical diagram accompanying the solution of a problem in spherical astronomy. (From a manuscript in the Universiteitsbibliotheek, Leiden.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-10.jpg][Fig. 9.3. An illustration of a non-Ptolemaic planetary model from a treatise of the thirteenth-century Maragha school. (From a manuscript in the Dar al-Kutub, Cairo.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-11.jpg][Fig. 9 .4 The astronomers of the Istanbul Observatory with some of their instruments This miniature is a veritable gold-mine of information which has yet to be fully exploited CMS Istanbul University Library Yildiz 1404.)]]

A project currently in progress in Frankfurt aims to catalogue all of the historically significant, surviving Islamic astronomical instruments (as well as European to ca. 1550). As many of the instruments as possible are being examined at first hand, and the relevant manuscript sources are also being exploited for information. Sometimes, manuscripts constitute the only available source of information on certain classes of instruments of which no examples have survived.

Figure 95 shows some of the illustrations of unusual astrolabe retia in a treatise on the astrolabe by al-Bîrûnî. These variatons on the standard astrolabe are of considerable historical interest, not least because we now know al-Bîrüns source for his information on them. His predecessor, al-Sijzi, actually mentions the astronomers who devised them and the patrons to whom they dedicated examples of them. Alas, all such instruments have disappeared without a trace, and it is left to the modern historian to piece together the details. Dr. Richard Lorch of Munich is currently preparing a critical analysis of all of the related textual material. Sometimes we are more fortunate in having both text and instrument, although in the following examples the instruments were known to modern scholarship before the texts.

An astrolabe in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York bears the signature of the Yemeni Rasulid Sultan al-Ashraf and is dated 690/1291 (see figure 9.6). A few decades ago, it was pronounced a fake: no Yemeni sultan could have made such an astrolabe. Perhaps, it was speculated, the astrolabe was made for him in Cairo, because the Yemen is a backwater, and no serious astronomy could have been practiced there. We now know of over one hundred Yemeni astronomical manuscripts attesting to an active tradition of astronomy in the Yemen from the tenth century to the twentieth. One of these, preserved in the Egyptian National Library, is an illustrated treatise by al-Ashraf on the construction of the astrolabe and sundial (see figure 9.7). Appended to the text, which may well be in the Sultan’s own hand, is a set of ijazahs by two of his teachers approving six astrolabes which he made and mentioning various features of each. One of these is clearly the New York instrument.

Another case is an astrolabe in the Benaki Museum in Athens which was made by Ibn al-Sarraj in Aleppo in 729/1328 or 1329. It is the most sophisticated astrolabe ever constructed, being universal in five different ways (see figure 9.8). (Most astrolabes have plates serving a series of latitudes; the universal astrolabe with a single plate serving all latitudes was invented in Andalusia in the eleventh century.) A manuscript in Princeton contains an account by the fifteenth-century Egyptian astronomer ‘Abd al-‘Azîz al-Wafâ’T of the use of Ibn al-Sarrâj’s remarkable instrument. (al-Wafa’1 actually owned the astrolabe; his name is engraved on the edge of the rim.) In his treatise, al-Wafâ’î complained that Ibn al-Sarraj had not explained its use, and so he undertook to do this himself. It is fortunate that he did, because the use of some of the parts is not at all obvious. Ibn al-Sarraj emerges as a genius. But who was he? We knew but little about him until 1983, when a richly illustrated manuscript was discovered in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin (miscataloged as a Persian work on the astrolabe). It turned out to be a treatise by Ibn al-Sarraj, probably in his own hand, describing all of the different varieties of instruments known to him, and all those invented by him (see figure 9.9). Although this treatise was clearly written before he developed his quintuply-universal masterpiece, it provides ample evidence of his background and has yet to be exploited for the historical information that it contains.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-12.jpg][Fig. 9.5. Non-standard astrolabes illustrated in the treatise on astronomical instruments by al-Marrakushi (Cairo, ca. 1280). The text is based on al-Birum (Central Asia, ca. 1025), who abridged the discussion of them by al-Sijzi (E. Iran, ca. 1000). (MS Cairo Dar al-Kutub K 3821.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-13.jpg][Fig. 9.6. The back of the astrolabe of the Yemeni Sultan al-Ashraf, dated 690/1291. This is the only known Islamic astrolabe on which the back is devoted to astrological information and also one of the few on which the sun, moon, and five planets are indicated by their symbols. The very same peculiarities are featured in an illustration found in al-Ashrafs treatise on astrolabe construction (see figure 8.7). (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, inv. no. 91.1.535.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-14.jpg][Fig. 9.7. One of numerous illustrations in al-Ashrafs treatise on astrolabe construction. If any proof were needed that the New York astrolabe was indeed due to al-Ashraf... but none is. The treatise also deals with sundial construction (no medieval sundials are known from the Yemen) and contains the earliest known description of a magnetic compass in any astronomical text.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-15.jpg][Fig. 9.8. The universal astrolabe of Ibn al-Sarraj (Aleppo, 1328 or 29), the most sophisticated astrolabe ever made. (Benaki Museum, Athens, inv. no. 13178.)]]

*** Qiblah Maps

Another genre of illustration serves to display the sacred direction (qiblah) of localities in the Muslim world. The map in figure 9.10 (l.h.s), found in an eighteenth-century Egyptian treatise, is a crude cartographic attempt to demonstrate the qiblah in various localities, which are roughly displayed on an orthogonal latitude and longitude grid. Such maps were prepared already in the ninth century, and later others were with a more sophisticated projection of the parallels of latitude and meridians such that the former are straight lines and the latter ellipses. However, most Muslim cartographers, and surely all scientists, knew that one could not merely read the qiblah off a map by simply joining a locality to Mecca and measuring the direction of the line-segment. The scientists knew that the problem had to be solved on a sphere or on a mathematically acceptable two-dimensional representation thereof. Although very few such maps with orthogonal grids specifically designed to find the qiblah are known, in 1989 there appeared at Sotheby’s in London a cartographic representation of a much more sophisticated kind, on which the meridians are no longer equally spaced, and the parallels of latitude are no longer parallel (see figure 9.11). The combination is so devised as to enable the user to read off the qiblah on the circular scale and to read off the distance from Mecca on the diametral rule. The instrument was clearly made in Isfahan around 1710. It is not too much to hope that somewhere in the vast manuscript sources available for further study of Islamic science, a treatise on the construction of such an instrument

might one day be found. In April 1994 it was discovered that the Isfahan world-map represents a cartographic tradition that goes back at least to al-Bîrünî (ca. 1025), who authored a dozen works on mathematical cartography, only two of which are known to have survived. A series of Islamic geographical tables from the fifteenth, fourteenth, and twelfth centuries give, in addition to the usual longitudes and latitudes, here based on al-Bîrün s distinctive values, the qiblah-vahies for 250 localities from Spain to China. The qiblah-values are given to the nearest ten minutes, and it has been shown that they can only have been derived from a world-map centered on Mecca, such as is found on the Isfahan instrument. A preliminary notice of this remarkable cartographic tradition will appear in the article “Samt” in 7716 Encyclopedia of Islam, new edition.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-16.jpg][Fig. 9.9. An illustrtion of the rete of a universal astrolabe in Ibn al-Sarraj’s treatise on astronomical instruments. (MS Dublin Chester Beatty Library 102). By courtesy of the Chester Beatty Library.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-17.jpg][Fig. 9.10. On the left, the Ka’bah is depicted—appropriately inclined to the meridian-on a crude cartographic grid from which one can determine the qiblah very approximately by joining one’s city to the Ka’bah (here Bursa is shown connected to the Ka’bah [via Medina]). On the right is a diagram of sacred geography showing various areas around the Ka’bah and indicating the astronomical horizon phenomena which define their qiblahs. (MS CAiro Dar al-Kutub Tal’at majarnT 811.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-18.jpg][Fig. 9.11. A z/ZWa/i-indicator from Isfahan, ca. 1710, unique of its genre. The qiblahs and distances from Mecca of 150 localities marked on the cartographic grid—which can be read from the circumferential scale when the diametral rule, center at Mecca, is laid on the marker for the locality in question—are given accurately for all practical purposes. (Private collection, photograph from the Museum of the History of Science, Oxford.)]]

*** Diagrams Representing the Sacred Geography of Islam

In various Islamic sources, by no means restricted to scientific texts but including also treatises on the sacred law of Islam and encyclopedias, there are found illustrations of the divisions of the world around the Ka’bah. The diagrams of this kind with twelve divisions of the world around the Ka’bah in the treatises of Yaqut and al-Qazwml are well known (see figure 9.12). Their purpose is to identify regions of the world which have the same qiblah. But these diagrams are secondary, that is, they were based on more elaborate prototypes, in which the way to find the qiblah in each sector was described in detail. The instructions were not to use the qiblahs found by the astronomers using mathematical formulae applied to geographical data, but rather to face the risings and settings of particular fixed stars or of the sun at various times of the year. We now know that schemes for finding the qiblah in different regions by such procedures were advocated from the tenth century onward, and that over the centuries some twenty different schemes of what I call “sacred geography” were formulated. Many of these were illustrated in the manuscripts (see figures 9.10 [r.h.s.] and 9.13–9.15); others were recorded only in words; and some were used on astronomical instruments (see figure 9.16). These popular methods for finding the qiblah were advocated by the legal scholars of Islam, who had little time for the opinions of the scientists. Their authority lay in the fact that such procedures had been used by the sahabah for laying out some of the earliest mosques. But why had the sahabah used such procedures?

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-19.jpg][Fig. 9.12. An eleven-sector scheme of sacred geography from a manuscript of al-QazwlnTs Athar al-bilad (Iraq and Syria, ca. 1250). The information on the qiblah in each sector has been suppressed. Also one of the sectors in the original scheme has been ommitted by mistake (MS Dublin Chester Beatty 4163). By courtesy of the Chester Beatty Library.]]

The earliest Muslims knew that when they were standing in front of the walls of the Ka’bah they were facing significant astronomical directions. Also, the four comers of the Ka’bah were associated with different regions of the world, and intermediate regions with particular segments of the perimeter of the edifice. Thus, when Muslims in those regions wanted to face the appropriate part of the Ka’bah, they should face those very same directions. (This means of facing a distant object is quite reasonable if one bears in mind that the direction of a distant locality is to some extent arbitrary, let alone the direction of a particular part of a distant edifice.) The diagrams were intended to serve as aides-memoires to the faithful, as well as to provide pictorial representations of the entire world and the relation of its regions to the physical focus of Islamic worship, the Ka bah.

*** A Diagram for Laying Out the Foundations of a Ventilator

Another remarkable diagram in Ibn al-Sarrâj’s treatises on instruments purports to display the orientation of the ventilators that were a distinctive feature of the skyline of medieval Cairo (see figures 9.17 and 9.18). Why would such a diagram feature in a treatise on astronomical instruments? Since the 1970s, we have known that in the corpus of astronomical tables that was used in medieval Cairo for timekeeping and regulating the times of prayer, one table enabled the user to find by means of the sun the orientation of the ventilator (badahanj), namely, winter sunrise (ca. 27o s. of E.). Inspection of the sole surviving ventilator of any consequence in modern Cairo reveals that it is aligned with the foundations of the house (the Musafirkhane) on whose roof it stands. Indeed, the house and the whole of the medieval city of Cairo are aligned in this direction, the major thoroughfare of the city being in the perpendicular direction.

The fact is that the entire medieval city of Cairo was oriented in the qiblah of the sahabah, towards winter sunrise. Now, the city was built alongside the old Pharaonic/Roman Canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, which at that point flowed perpendicular to that direction, so either the orientation of Cairo is fortuitous, or—and there is no evidence whatsoever for this—the site was chosen because the rectangular street pattern would be qiblah-oriented. A few years after the city was built, the astronomer Ibn Yunus computed the

qiblah in Cairo to be 37º s. of E., 10º to the south of the qiblah of the sahabah, and the Azhar and al-Hakim Mosques were erected 109 askew to the city-plan. Many of the religious edifices in Cairo constructed by the Mamluks have their outside walls oriented with the city plan and their inside walls and mihrabs aligned with the qiblah of the astronomers. The City of the Dead outside Cairo is aligned with its main axis perpendicular to the qiblah of the astronomers; architecture in al-Qarafah is oriented due south, in keeping with the qiblah favored by the Shâfı’î school. The different qiblahs accepted in medieval Cairo are shown in figure 9.19. Thus, a diagram of a ventilator in an astronomical text led to the discovery of the basic orientations underlying one of the most important Islamic cities.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-20.jpg][Fig. 9.13. An eight-division scheme of sacred geography from a manuscript of the treatise on cosmography by Pseudo-Ibn al-Wardi (Aleppo, ca. 1420). There are several different traditions of sacred geography in the numerous manuscripts of his treatise; the illustration in the published text shows two of these but are hopelessly corrupt. (MS Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi Kiitiiphanesi A 3025.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-21.jpg][Fig. 9.14. Two different twelve-sector schemes of sacred geography with associated astronomical horizon phenomena for finding the qiblah, as found in a manuscript of a thirteenth-century Yemeni treatise on folk astronomy. (MS Milan Biblioteca Ambrosiana Supp. 73.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-22.jpg][Fig. 9.15. An Ottoman scheme of sacred geography with 72 divisions of the world around the Ka’bah, suitable for marking on a horizontal gzW^/i-indicator (see figure 9.17). (MS Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi Kiitiiphanesi B 179.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-23.jpg][Fig. 9.16. An Ottoman sundial cum gzTjfo/i-indicator on which a scheme of sacred geography has been included on the circular base. (Berlin Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Sprenger 2048.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-24.jpg][Fig. 9.17. The imposing ventilator on the Musafirkhane in Cairo, one of the few surviving examples. In medieval times, most buildings in Cairo were fitted with such ventilators, all astronomically oriented (Photo Abu Max.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-25.jpg][Fig. 9.18. A diagram showing the orientation of ventilators in medieval Cairo, found in the treatise on astronomical instruments of Ibn al-Sarraj (Aleppo, ca. 1325) (MS Dublin Chester Beatty Library 102). By courtesy of the Chester Beatty Library.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-26.jpg][Fig. 9.19. The different qiblahs accepted in medieval Cairo. In the case of the southerly qiblahs, any direction between the rising and setting of Canopus would have been considered acceptable.]]

*** An Illustration of the Significance of the Ka’bah

A series of Arabic texts, mostly not illustrated and all recently investigated for the first time, discuss the orientation of the Ka’bah itself. The base is rectangular (not square, as is often stated). See figure 9.20 [l.h.s.], with its major axis pointing toward the rising of Canopus, the brightest star in the southern sky, and its minor axis pointing toward the setting of the sun at the midwinter solstice. (At Mecca, these directions are indeed roughly perpendicular.) Thus, admonitions to face the rising of Canopus as the qiblah are common in Andalusia and Egypt; winter sunset in Iraq and Iran; and summer sunrise in the Sudan and Ethiopia. But there was no unity of opinion about the orientation of the Ka’bah, let alone about the qiblahs in the different regions.

One notion which is not illustrated in any medieval Arabic text, but which is explicit in various wind-schemes described in the manuscript sources, and which underlies the very origin of the word qiblah,

is the following (see figure 9.21). If one stands in front of (istaqbala) the southwest wall of the Ka’bah (facing summer sunrise), one is facing the east (qabul) wind. The north (shamed) wind is on one’s left (shamed), blowing from Syria (alSham), and the South (janub) wind on one’s right (yamin), blowing from the Yemen (al-Yaman). The west wind (dabur) blows on one’s back (dabr). This is evidence enough (and there is more) that the sacred direction (qiblah) of the Arabs in the pre-Islamic period was towards the east. But there are further meteorological and meteoric associations of the Ka’bah, not the least the “Black Stone” embedded in the southeastern corner. While the diagram of the Ka’bah shown in figure 9.20 (r.h.s.) and interpreted in figure 9.22 was taken from an eighteenth-century Egyptian manuscript, its conception was at least half a millennium older; the diagram recaptures some of these associations of the edifice. Note that the Ka’bah is even correctly shown inclined to the meridian. The Aristotelian overtones—the elements and their qualities—are not attested elsewhere, but the geographical features and the association with the winds are. I have argued elsewhere that these pre-Islamic associations of the Ka’bah lend credence to the Islamic belief that the Ka’bah is a copy of a celestial counterpart, al-bayt al-ma’mür. In modern terms, I suggest that this implies that it was built as an architectural representation of a pre-Islamic cosmology, featuring the sun and stars in its alignment and the winds and rains in its attributions.

*** Concluding Remarks

In brief, there are numerous illustrations in the Islamic scientific sources which can further our understanding of different aspects of Islamic science and even aspects of Islamic institutions. One should never rely solely on the illustrations if there is an accompanying text. But the need for facsimile editions of important manuscripts and of comparative studies of illustrated texts should be obvious.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-27.jpg][Fig. 9.20. On the left is a ground-plan of the Ka’bah (the rectangular shape is here exaggerated) and on the right a diagram which associates the edifice—

incorrectly oriented—with the cardinal directions and their intermediaries, the winds, and the qiblahs of various localities. (MS Cairo Dar al-Kutub’ Tal’at majami’ 811.)]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-29.jpg][Fig. 9.21. The basic orientation of the Ka’bah and the directions of the four “cardinal” winds as recorded in various medieval texts. Actually, the minor axis is aligned with the most southerly setting point of the moon.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-28.jpg][Fig. 9.22. The basic information on the Ka’bah contained in figure 9.20 (r.h.s.). The orientation of the Ka’bah has been “corrected”; in fact (see figure 9.10 [l.h.s.] and figure 9.21), its major axis is at about 30ȯ E. of s.]]

One just has to compare the variety of representations of sacred geography in a few manuscripts of texts that are well known and that have already been published, but not in critical editions (for example, al-QazwTni, Yâqüt, and Ibn al-Wardl), to recognize the need for such studies.

In 1986, I was in the Bibliotheca Palatina Exhibition in Heidelberg, looking at a manuscript of Abu al-Fidâ”s geography from the Bibliotheca Vaticana. The manuscript was opened to an illustration of the names of various regions of the world arranged in twenty-eight sectors of a circle (see figure 9.23). The diagram was quite different from any that I had ever seen, yet I knew that there was no such diagram in the 1840 published edition of that text. When I got home, I checked the appropriate place in the text and found a footnote by the editor at the place where Abu al-Fida’ wrote: “I have made a diagram (za’iraja) from which can be found the position of every traditional climate and this is it..The footnote read: “La figure qui se trouve ici dans !’original a ete placee sous forme d’index â la fin du volume.” In fact, the place names in the diagram have been swallowed up in the index and are no longer identifiable.

When preparing facsimile editions of manuscripts, strict guidelines must be followed, otherwise the result can be useless. Tampering with words that

have been partially devoured by worms, removing original folio numbers, reshuffling folios without comment, and merging fragments from different copies of the same work without indication, all these contravene the most basic academic standards. Alas, they are features of the facsimile series published in recent years in Frankfurt, which has already been devastated by one reviewer who is a leading specialist on Arabic manuscripts. But the series has problems other than those which were noted by that reviewer, namely, the meddling with illustrations.

Two examples must suffice here. Firstly, the constellation figures and stars in the illustrations of a fine manuscript of al-Şûfî's Kitab suwar al-kawakib have been altered: the result is thus more suited for the proverbial coffee-table than for the next generation of art historians, who will still have to consult the original manuscript for the illustrations. Secondly, on a diagram of sacred geography in the Istanbul manuscript of the second volume of the encyclopedia entitled Masalik al-abşârfî mamalik al-amşâr, by the early fourteenth-century Mamluk administrator Ibn Fadlallah al-'Umarî, the Quranic verse (3: 97), wa-man dakhalahu kana amin"", "whoever enters (the Ka'bah) will be safe," has been written in gold ink on the representation of the Ka'bah. Now, the modern scribe who "fixed up" the photos of the various manuscripts for the Frankfurt facsimile "edition" erased this inscription to insert another one more bold, and wrote arnin"" with two alifs at the beginning. The illustrations in medieval manuscripts deserve more respect than this.

I hope to have shown how manuscripts in general and illustrations in particular can further our understanding of Islamic heritage. Libraries have these sources in trust and should treat them with the respect they deserve, which means cataloging them and making them available to scholars. We investigators should also treat them with respect, for they hold the key to many a mystery.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-30.jpg][Fig. 9.23. A diagram showing 28 traditional divisions of the world, from a manuscript of the geographical treatise of Abu al-Fida' (Hama, ca. 1320) which never made it into the published text. (MS Vatican arabo 266.)]]

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** 10. A Royal Manuscript and Its Transformation: The Life History of a Book

Priscilla p. Soucek and Fili; Cagman

The focus of this essay is a single volume now in the Topkapi Sarayi Library, Istanbul, Hazine 1510.[411] The importance of this book derives both from its intrinsic quality and from the way in which its life history can be reconstructed on the basis of physical and historical evidence. Despite or perhaps because of its checkered career, this book sheds light on a little studied dimension of Islamic manuscripts—the way they have been transformed from the moment of their initial creation until the present day.

Recent studies have stressed how the rulers of Iran during the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries employed calligraphers, painters, illuminators, and binders to produce sumptuous volumes for their personal libraries. Indeed, the commissioning of books bearing royal names and titles appears to have become an attribute of princely status and power.[412] The special prestige attached to books with a royal or princely provenance appears to have encouraged another method of book collection used by rulers, that of appropriating volumes from each other's libraries.[413] Although there are few documentary records of these transactions, the transfer of books from one owner to another has often left physical traces in the manuscripts which can be used to reconstruct the history of a book.

Elements in a manuscript indicating a change of ownership include repainted dedication pages, altered colophons, and the addition or deletion of library seals. In case of illustrated manuscripts, paintings are not infrequently different in date and provenance from the manuscript's text itself. Sometimes illustrations were added over the text, or even over earlier paintings. The motives which led to the alteration of manuscripts undoubtedly varied, but in some cases a group of manuscripts display similarities in the way they were altered; this makes it possible to speculate about the reasons for such changes.

Hazine 1510 is notable for the variety of transformations it has undergone. It contains evidence that it was originally produced for a royal owner and that it was subsequently seized by a rival ruler. It also has both paintings connected with its original patron and others added at a later date. Some of the later paintings obscure earlier ones, others are added directly over the text. These physical changes were accompanied by efforts to conceal the book's original provenance and date. The technique and style of

the later paintings link Hazine 1510 with a group of manuscripts some of which also have colophons giving similar falsified dates and provenance.

Evidence suggests that Hazine 1510 has had a long and complicated life. Various components of it can be dated over a hundred and fifty year period during which the manuscript probably traveled from Shiraz to Herat and finally to Istanbul. An identification of these phases demands a knowledge of manuscript production under the Muzafferid, Timurid, Safavid, and Ottoman dynasties. It also can be linked with three rulers: the Muzaffarid Shah Shuja', and the Timurids Shah Rukh and Sultan Husayn Bayqara. What is perhaps even more intriguing is that one of its transformations involved more than a hint of fraud; although, who defrauded whom remains a mystery.

Before turning to the various transformations to which Hazine 1510 has been subjected, it is necessary to examine its contents. The text of 760 folios has three distinct components: a Shah-namah of Firdawsi (fols. 20–4840), a dictionary by Asad! Tusi entitled Lughat al-Furs (fols. 4850–4982), and a Khatnsah of Nizami (fols. 4994–775). The manuscript also contains three dated colophons (fols. 7a, 484b, 7750), two dedication pages (fols, la, 4994), and what appears to be a portion of a chancery document (fol. 4984). Another important component is the manuscript's battered but once splendid binding with lacquer painting on the exterior and filigree and molded ornament on the interior. There are poetic inscriptions on the binding's doublure and the exterior of its flap.[414]

This essay on Hazine 1510 attempts to reconstruct the history and evolution of its component parts—the Shah-namah and its associated text Lughat al-Furs, the Khamsah of Nizami and the binding, and to consider how and when they were joined to form the present manuscript. The primary evidence for this study comes from internal evidence in the Hazine 1510 itself and from its comparison to other manuscripts. This analysis will be divided into several sections. First, the text's provenance and the date of its component parts will be established; then its links with the Timurid rulers Shah Rukh and Husayn Bayqara will be studied; and the binding's importance will also be analyzed.

Only the late Ivan Stchoukine has published comments on the artistic character of this manuscript. He refers to Hazine 1510 in three publications, an article and two monographs: one on Turkish painting, and a second on illustrated copies of Nizami's Khamsah.[415] His analysis of Hazine 1510 focused exclusively on its illustrations and was based on the information in F. E. Karatay's catalogue of Persian manuscripts in the Topkapi Sarayi Library, namely that the Shah-namah and Lughat al-furs were copied by Mansur ibn Muhammad ibn Warqah ibn 'Umar Bakhtiyar in 903/1498 and that the Khamsah was completed in 906/1501 by Lutf Allah ibn Yahya ibn Muhammad al-Tabrîzî.[416] Karatay makes no mention of the manuscript's dedicatory medallions, nor does he raise any questions about the veracity of information contained in its colophons.

Stchoukine concluded that paintings in the Shah-namah portion of Hazine 1510 were added in the Safavid period, circa 1520–25, and that those in the Khamsah portion were added in Turkey circa 1570. He finds specific Turkish parallels for both the painting's landscape and figural elements.[417] This position led him to assume that very similar landscape paintings in an often published Anthology dated to 801/1398 were also executed in Istanbul circa 1570.[418] This manuscript is now in the museum of Turkish and Islamic Art, Istanbul, T. 1950.

Recently three Persian scholars have published comments about the character of Hazine 15105 text. The most extensive description is that by J. Khaliql-Mutlaq in his analytical articles discussing the manuscripts of Firdawsfs Shah-namah which he has been using to prepare his edition of that text. In them he describes both the physical characteristics of Hazine 1510 and the importance of its text recension. His description of Hazine 1510 is more precise than that of F. E. Karatay, as he mentions the Shah-namah's two colophons, in addition to its initial medallion and the document on folio 4982. Although he appears somewhat puzzled by its putative date of 903/1498, J. KhaliqFMutlaq stresses the archaic features of Hazine 15105 text and its close kinship with the Florence manuscript dated to 614/1217.[419] He also brought the Lughat al-Furs portion of this manuscript to the attention of F. A. Mujtabâ'î and A. A. Sadiql, who were preparing a new edition of that work. In their preface these authors mention that Hazine 151O's version of the Lughat al-Furs

differs in significant respects from the other manuscripts which they used to prepare their edition. They were not able, however, to evaluate the importance of its idiosyncracies.[420] These Persian scholars, who worked from microfilms, assume the Shah-namah's present colophon date of 903/1498 to be correct.

Despite the attention which has been given to both Hazine 15105 illustrations and to portions of its text no analysis has yet been made of its calligraphy, illumination, or binding, nor of their importance for the manuscript's history. Hence, it is necessary to establish the date and place of the manuscript's origin through an examination of its calligraphy and illumination and by subjecting its colophons to a critical analysis before considering Stchoukine's views on the paintings of Hazine 1510, and those of Khaliql-Mutlaq about its Shah-namah text. A physical examination of Hazine 1510 shows that the two main components of its text, the Shah-namah and the Khamsah, although distinct in their features, are closely related in execution. Both have the same page size (26.1 by 16.3 cm), but they differ in their written surfaces. The Shah-namah has twentyseven lines spaced over 19.2 cm, whereas the Khamsah has twenty-five lines in 17.5 cm.

Despite the fact that both portions of Hazine 1510 have colophon dates from the tenth Hegira century, the character of their illumination and calligraphy connects them with fourteenth-century Shiraz, a city that was a center of both literary culture and manuscript production. Both portions can be proven to belong firmly to that tradition, although at some later moment these connections were intentionally obscured. The affinity of Hazine 1510 with the manuscript tradition of Muzaffarid Shiraz as well as the later deliberate obfuscation of that connection can be documented through a study of its colophons.

The most direct evidence for Hazine 15105 link with Shiraz comes in the Khamsah colophon, folio 775b (figure 10.1). There the calligrapher Lutf Allah al-Tabnzi describes himself as both the manuscript's scribe and illuminator (katabahu wa dhahhabahu) and gives its place of production as Dar al-mulk Shiraz.[421] He also gives his laqab, or honorific epithet, as "Kamal al-Jaiâlî," which

probably links him to the last important Muzaffarid ruler, Jalal al-dîn Shah Shuja’ (ruled 765/1357-786/1384). An examination of the colophon also shows tnat its present date, Rajab 9O6/January-February 1501, is not the original one. Only the terminal element sitt (six) is untouched: the number giving the decade has been virtually erased, and the century was modified so that sab’a miyah (700) has become tis’a miyah (900). The original date contained the numbers 7–6: since remaining traces suggest the missing decade was sab’în (seventy), the original date was probably Rajab 776/December 1374 — January 1375.

An examination of the Shah-namah portion of Hazine 1510 shows that its colophon date of 5 DhQ’ al-Hijjah 903 has been altered, in a similar fashion, by erasing the decade and changing sab’a miyah (700) to tis’a miyah (900) (figure 10.2). In this case the erased decade appears to be thamanin (80) which means that the original date must have been 783/1382, thus also within the reign of Shah Shuja’.

A further confirmation of the Muzaffarid origin of this manuscript is offered by the identity of its scribe who gives his lineage for five generations: Mansur ibn Muhammad ibn Warqah ibn ‘Umar b. Bakhtiyar, and adds a nisbah, “al-Bihbihani,” followed by a geographical gloss: min a’mâl Jabal Jiliiyah (figure 10.2). The same scribe has used a virtually identical signature formula in the well-known Anthology now in the museum of Turkish and Islamic Art (T. 1950) dated to Muharram 0 September-October 1398 mentioned above[422] (figure 10.3).

The geographical references in this signature draw attention to Mansur’s link with the village of Bihbihan in the region of Küh Gildyeh situated northwest of Shiraz. Little is known about Bihbihan, which appears to have been a small settlement in a fertile valley, but it was the successor to a much more important town, Arrajan or Kurat Qubad, which had been situated at the juncture of roads linking Isfahan and Shiraz with Ahwaz, Basrah, and Baghdad. Arrajan was ruined by invasions and conflict between the Isma’ilis and various rulers during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Before its

devastation the area was noted for its fertility and abundant water. The dates and pomegranates of Arrajan were especially prized.[423] It is most unlikely, however, that Bihbihan was a center of manuscript production.[424]

A Shiraz provenance for both the Shah-namah portion of Hazine 1510 and the Anthology, T. 1950 is also suggested by the illumination used in both manuscripts which contains dense gold vegetal scrolls silhouetted against blue, black, white, or green fields.[425] This style of illumination was widely used in Shiraz manuscripts from circa 1370 to circa 1430.[426] As befits a royal commission, the headings of various books in the Hazine 1510 Khamsah are executed with more intense colors and heavier gold pigments than are most Shiraz manuscripts.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-31.jpg][Fig. 10.1. Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 775b, Colophon of NizmI Khamsah]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-32.jpg][Fig. 10.2. Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 484b, Colophon of Firdawsi Shah-namah.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-33.jpg][Fig. 10.3. Turk ve Islam Eserleri Miizesi, T. 1950 fol. 464b, Colophon of Khusraw Dihlavi, ‘Ainah-i Iskandari.]]

The Shah-namah portion of Hazine 1510 also contains two more colophons, one without a signature or date on folio 6b at the conclusion of the text’s preface, and another one on folio 7a (figure 10.4). The latter, written on paper that differs in color and texture from that of the original manuscript, contains the “signature” of one “Warqah ibn ‘Umar Samarqandl,” and is dated 903 A.H./1498.[427] It seems probable that this name was chosen both to mimic that of the original Shah-namah scribe Mansur al-Bihbihanl by using part of his name, “Warqah ibn ‘Umar,” and to harmonize with information contained in the Husayn Bayqara firman now affixed to folio 484a, where the scribe of a Shah-namah manuscript is listed as “Warqah ibn ‘Umar Samarqandl” (figures 10.2, 10.5).

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-34.jpg][Fig. 10.4. Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 7a, “Colopon Signed by Warqah ibn ʕUmar SamarqandT.”]]

The insertion of this superfluous colophon appears connected with other changes made to Hazine 1510, such as the alteration of colophon dates, all of which had as an aim the deliberate transformation of a Muzaffarid manuscript into one linked with eastern Iran and the Timurid Sultan Husayn Bayqara. Possible motives for these changes will be considered below.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-35.jpg][Fig. 10.5. Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 498a, “Firman in the Name of Husayn Bayqara.”]]

Although the illumination and calligraphy of this Shah-namah are of high quality, the manuscript carries no direct indication of the patron’s identity. It does, however, open with a roundel illuminated in a Muzaffarid style which may have once contained the name of its owner. At present this roundel contains the name and titles of the Timurid Husayn Bayqara, who ruled in Herat from 1468 to 1506, written on a heavy gold ground which may well conceal an inscription giving the name of the manuscript’s original owner (figure 10.6).

A scrutiny of the Shah-namah section of Hazine 1510 shows, however, that Husayn Bayqara was not the first Timurid to be connected with it. Three folios bear the library seal of Timur’s son Shah Rukh who ruled from Herat from 1405 to 1447.[428] His name also appears in a dedicatory medallion which has been glued onto the initial page of the manuscript’s Khamsah portion[429] (figure 10.7).

Shah Rukh is less known as a patron of calligraphers and painters than his nephew Iskandar Sultan ibn ‘Umar Shaykh or his sons Baysunghur and Ibrahim Sultan, but he appears to have been a particularly assiduous

collector of manuscripts. Another specimen bearing the imprint of his library seal is a very early copy of Khusraw Dihlavi’s Khamsah dated to 756/1355 which was used by Soviet scholars as the basis for a critical edition. This manuscript was copied in Shiraz and one of its two scribes was Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad known as “Shams al-Hafiz al-Shîrâzî,” who is most probably the poet Hafiz.[430]

Shah Rukh could have acquired his stock of Shiraz manuscripts in a variety of ways. His long struggle with the sons of his brother ‘Umar Shaykh, including his defeat of Iskandar Sultan at Isfahan in Mugarram 817/March-April 1415, and his defeat of Bayqara in Shiraz one year later in the spring of 818/1416, provided him with several opportunities to seize manuscripts.[431]

No attempt has yet been made to compile information about the contents of Shah Rukh’s library, but from published data it appears that his books retained their original colophons or illustrations. The use of his seal or the affixing of a medallion containing his name and titles mark manuscripts as his property, but do not present a claim that the books were originally prepared for him.

As was noted above, the Shah-namah portion of Hazine 1510 opens with a similar medallion proclaiming Sultan Husayn Bayqara as its owner. His name and titles are also included in a firman which has been glued to onto folio 498a below the unsigned colophon of Lughat al-Furs, the text of which follows the Shah-namah (fols. 485–4984) (figure 10.5). Although undated, the Lughat al-Furs manuscript appears to be contemporary with the Shah-namah, thus circa 1382, and was perhaps also copied by Manşür al-Bihbihanl. Th efirman below the colophon on folio 498a makes reference to the cost of a Shah-namah manuscript. Before considering this document, however, it is useful to examine the illustrations and binding of Hazine 1510.

It is now appropriate to consider Stchoukine’s views that both landscape and figural elements of its Khamsah illustrations were Turkish.[432] This position led him to assume that very similar landscape paintings in an

often published Anthology dated to 801/1398, T. 1950, mentioned above, were also executed in Istanbul circa 1570.[433]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-37.jpg][Fig. 10.6 Topkapi Sarayi Muzesi, Hazine 1510, fol la, Dedication Medallion in the

name of Husayn Bayqara.]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-36.jpg][Fig. 10.7. Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 4994, Dedication medallion in the name of Shah Rukh.]]

Despite flaws in his analysis, Stchoukine did draw attention to two significant aspects of the Hazine 1510 Khamsah illustrations: that they contain figures painted in a style often associated with Ottoman Turkey, and that some of them depict landscapes reminiscent of the well-known examples from the 1398 Anthology. What Stchoukine does not seem to have realized is that landscape and figural components of the Khamsah paintings belong to two distinct phases of its creation, and that the later figural compositions now obscure the earlier landscape paintings.

The presence of landscape paintings under Khamsah figural compositions is sometimes evident only from the back of a painted page where metallic pigments have stained the paper. These stains reveal the presence of trees, mountains, streams, and rocks which are hidden by the later compositions.[434] In other cases, portions of the original landscapes serve as a background to the later figural paintings,[435] and in one case the original landscape scene was never overpainted[436] (figure 10.8).

Stchoukine’s conflation of two stages in the Hazine 1510 Khamsah illustrations led him in turn to the wrong conclusion about the connection of its landscape scenes with similar paintings in the Anthology of 1398. Ironically, his conclusion that both were Ottoman Turkish led him to publish repeatedly those paintings in Hazine

1510 in which the late-fourteenth-century compositions were the most visible.[437]

The only one of the fifteen Khamsah paintings in its original condition is a landscape located in the Sharaf-namah folio 682 (figure 10.8). The landscape consists of two ranges of hills, each outlined by a heavy black line. One is highlighted in gold, the other in red. A stream, once silver-colored, arises on the right and flows toward the bottom of the painting, where it is bordered by strongly colored rocks highlighted with gold.

Although similar landscape elements are also prominent in the paintings of the 1398 Anthology copied by Manşûr al-Bihbihanl, there are important differences between the two groups of paintings. The first is visual; some of the Anthology paintings are more complex with up to four ranges of hills one behind the Other.[438] The second distinction is functional; all of the Anthology paintings occupy the spaces left between the colophons and headings of its sections. Thus, they function as end-papers providing visual interest where otherwise there would have been a blank space or an empty page. In Hazine 1510, however, all the paintings are placed within Nizami’s text.

The scene on folio 682b, for instance, is in a passage describing a spring garden, which may explain why it was not repainted (figure 10.8). Several other paintings in Hazine 1510 are also located in passages which describe a setting rather than a dramatic moment. Most of the paintings in Hazine 1510 make extensive use of gold and silver pigments, which are often still visible under the later additions, or which can be seen on the backs of those pages. For example a row of golden hills appears along the top of the scene of Khusraw’s Lion combat, and a purple landscape highlighted by gold and silver is visible under the later figural composition of Farhad carrying Shinn.[439] From these indications it appears that the original paintings in the Khamsah portion of Hazine 1510 were landscapes in rich hues enlivened with gold and silver but without the addition of any human figures.

Stchoukine’s claim that the landscapes from Hazine 1510 and T. 1950 have an Ottoman Turkish character is contradicted by both documentary and

visual evidence. The stylistic features of the Hazine 1510 Khamsah landscape paintings are also paralleled in Muzaffarid manuscripts with figural painting. Tapestry-like settings, the use of rich colors highlighted with gold and silver, as well as a similar treatment of individual motifs are evident in the paintings of a Shah-namah, also in the Topkapi Palace Library, Istanbul, which is dated to 772/1370.[440]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-38.jpg][Fig. 10.8. Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 682b. “In Praise of Spring”]]

Thus an examination of the text and illumination of Hazine 1510 makes clear that both are of Muzaffarid date, and the same can be said with confidence about the landscape paintings which originally illustrated its Khamsah portion. The questions of when and for what reason figural compositions were added over those landscapes are more difficult to answer. First, however, the date and origin of the Shah-namah illustrations must be established.

A close inspection of the Shah-namah portion of Hazine 1510 suggests that it too has been subjected to considerable alteration. It presently has one double-page illustration (fols. 7b-8a) located between the preface’s spurious colophon (fol. 7a) and the opening of the Shah-namah text (fol. 8b). There are also twenty-one paintings of modest size within the text itself. Although there are no traces of Muzaffarid illustrations, the Shah-namah paintings appear to have been executed over the manuscript’s text.

1. Stchoukine has made a sharp distinction between the Khamsah and Shah-namah paintings, calling the former high quality Ottoman work of circa 1570, and the latter mediocre Safavid examples from 1510–20.[441] There are certainly differences of scale and execution between the two groups of paintings: those in the Khamsah are larger and contain more golden highlights, but these distinctions are counter-balanced by numerous similarities. A comparison of “Dahhak enthroned” from the Shah-namah (fol. 13b) with the enthroned prince from the Khamsah (fol. 5O2b)

reveals considerable affinities of the two paintings in compositional structure, coloring, and figural type.

The only major difference between the scenes is that figures in the Shah-namah wear Safavid turbans and kulahs, whereas those in the Khamsah scene have a turban shape closely paralleled in some early Ottoman manuscripts such as the Selim-namah of Shukn executed in the 15205.[442] Even this distinction may be moot because flaking paint reveals that the Safavid turbans of the Shah-namah illustration cover others similar in shape to those in the Khamsah (figures 10.9 and 10.10).

The difficulties which Stchoukine encountered in evaluating the date and provenance of the figural compositions in Hazine 1510 are understandable. The style of their paintings links each with a period of artistic and historical change during the first decades of the sixteenth century which coincided with the formation of the Safavid state, in particular Shah Ismâ’îl’s campaigns in Khurasan during 1510, as well as his defeat by the Ottomans under Sutan Selim in 1514.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-39.jpg][Fig. 10.9. Topkapi Sarayi Miizesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 13b, “Dahhak Enthroned.”]]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-40.jpg][Fig. 10.10. Topkapi Sarayi Muzesi, Hazine 1510, fol. 502b, “In Praise of His Patron: A Prince Enthroned.”]]

Sultan Husayn Bâyaarâ’s son, Badi’ al-Zaman Mirza, was a witness to these events; he was taken to Tabriz by Shah Ismâ’îl in 1510 and then to Istanbul in 1514 by Sultan Selim. The victorious Ottoman army returned to Istanbul laden with booty that included manuscripts from Shah Ismâ’îl’s library, some of which had probably been taken by the Safavids from the Timurid libraries of Herat only a few years earlier. Scribes, illuminators, and painters dislocated by these historical events also moved between Herat, Tabriz, and Istanbul.[443]

These momentous changes are also reflected in the illustrated manuscripts of the period. Traits commonly associated with one center, such as Herat or Tabriz, can be found side by side with others which have clear links to Ottoman patronage. It is against this rather confused background that figural illustrations in both the Shah-namah and Khamsah sections of Hazine 1510 must be studied. Some of the manuscripts with comparable paintings also have colophons linking them to Herat or to the Timurids, but others have a Saravid or Ottoman provenance. Many questions surrounding the place of Hazine 1510 among these manuscripts are beyond the scope of this essay. Here attention will be focused on a reconstruction of that manuscript's history.

Although the two groups of illustrations have much in common, details of each find their closest comparisons in different manuscripts. Thus the Shah-namah illustrations are most comparable to paintings with a clear Safavid pedigree such as those in another Shah-namah copy, Hazine 1499[444] and in a copy of Navâ'î's Khamsah, Revan 810.[445] Manuscripts with the closest artistic ties to the Khamsah paintings can be linked to Ottoman court patronage. They include a copy of 'Al Shir Navâ'î's Gharâ'ıb al-Sighar now in the Egyptian National Library Cairo, copied in 935/1531-32 by Hâjj Muhhmmad al-Tabrizi ibn Mâlik Ahmad, a calligrapher known to have been employed at the Ottoman court,[446] and a second manuscript of Navâ'î's poetry copied by the same calligrapher in 937/153031 now in Oxford.[447]

A group of manuscripts which deserves special scrutiny for its connections to the Khamsah paintings of Hazine 1510 are other examples where paintings have been added over the manuscript's text or inserted into odd spaces in an earlier manuscript. This group includes Hazine 987, a copy of Jamis Dîvân, and on of Navâ'î's Navadir al-Shabab, Revan 805.[448] These manuscripts are illustrated in a style very similar to that used in late-fifteenth-century Iranian manuscripts; this style, however, is also connected with paintings in the Selim-namah of Shukrî and thus, was probably current in Istanbul during the 1520s and 15305. Another link between the illustrative style of

Khamsah portion of Hazine 1510 and Ottoman painting is provided by a Dîvân of Kamâl Khaiandî in Vienna, A.F. 92. This manuscript, copied in western Iran circa 1480, was later illustrated with three large paintings and 1,196 vignettes inserted into gaps in the text. Since in execution illustrations are comparable to ones in the manuscripts copied by Hâjj Muhammad al-Tabrizî mentioned above, it is likely that they were added in Istanbul.[449]

This preliminary survey has suggested a connection between the figural illustrations of Hazine 1510 and artistic currents in Tabriz and Istanbul during the early sixteenth century. Yet, as was demonstrated above. Hazine 1510 was certainly in Herat during the latter decades of the fifteenth century. Evidence concerning the manuscript's historical evolution is also provided by its binding and by its firman in the name of Sultan Husayn Bayqara.

Despite its poor state of preservation, the binding of Hazine 1510 adds an important dimension to the manuscript's history. The lacquer painted outer covers are divided into an inner zone consisting of a field broken by a recessed central medallion with quarter medallions in the comers, and a border zone of four-lobed and oblong cartouches. Except for their recessed medallions, the covers are decorated with gold painting on a black ground. The medallions were painted in red and other colors, and are rimmed by small silver-gilt nails which probably once supported metal filigree ornaments.

The binding's doublure has a central field with black and gilt leather filigree ornament silhouetted against a blue paper ground. The outer zone has four-lobed and oblong gilded cartouches flanked by narrow gold bands. The larger oblong fields contain stamped inscriptions.

The back covers of Islamic bindings generally have an attached flap which can be folded under the front cover. Between the flap and the back cover is a rectangular zone which protects the book's outer margin. Naturally the dimensions of the connecting area should be equivalent to the height of the manuscript to be covered.

An examination of the binding of Hazine 1510 reveals a curious feature. The panel between the back cover and its flap carries two zones of ornament on both the interior and exterior. The flap’s internal decoration is identical to that of the covers—a central zone of leather filigree and a frame of gilt and molded cartouches. On this zone’s lacquer painted exterior ten inscribed cartouches are arranged in two horizontal rows.

These exterior cartouches contain verses describing the book for which the binding was made. The first two refer to Firdawsfs Shah-namah, the second pair speak of Nizâmı and his poetry, and the third group, unfortunately damaged, mention the verses of ‘Alî Shrr Navâ’i. The final couplet praises the book as a whole and reiterates its contents. The concluding hemistich leads: Shah-namah va Khamsah va Dîvân-i Amir. Thus it would appear that the binding of Hazine 1510 was made to contain three texts: the Shah-namah of FirdawsL the Khamsah of Nizami, and an undetermined portion of the Divan of ‘All Shir Navâ’L Perhaps more careful reading of the couplet concerning Navâ’î’s poetry will yield clues as to which portion might have been included. The binding would accommodate forty or fifty more folios. The missing Divan and the absence of a reference to Lughat al-Furs do, however, raise the question of whether this binding was originally made for the manuscripts of Hazine 1510. Before considering this question further it is necessary to discuss other aspects of the binding.

Verses inscribed on cartouches framing both covers and flap of the doublure consist of three rubais or quatrains composed by the Timurid poet ‘Abd al-Rahman Jâmî.[450] Two of them are particularly appropriate for their location, for they describe a book and its binding. One quatrain praises the beauty of the book’s pages, using the metaphor of a flowery meadow. Its pages are compared with rose-petals and its calligraphy with basil.[451] Another quatrain extols the book’s pages because they have given fresh life to ages past and describes the dazzling beauty of the book’s cover, stating that its cover has transformed leather into the turquoise sphere of the sky and that its spine is made from braided sunbeams.[452]

These verses by Jami have a significance which goes beyond the history of Hazine 1510. The second quatrain is of particular interest. Its language about renewing the past, and its metaphors of sun and sky for a book binding appear at first fanciful but may in fact be quite literal descriptions of a special book. These terms could describe a muraqqa’ or album consisting of choice specimens of calligraphy from various periods and bound with a golden, jeweled cover.

Jamfs comparisons of its cover to the turquoise sky and of its spine to braided sunbeams provide a surprisingly accurate decription of some extant bindings. These have covers and flap adorned with fîrûzekârî, a technique in which thin slices of turquoise are inlaid into a metal, usually gold, frame. One binding with fîrûzekârî panels on its covers and flap has a spine of braided gold wire which it is tempting to equate with Jamfs “braided sunbeams.”[453]

Extant bindings with fîrûzekârî-decç>rated covers are of Ottoman court manufacture. The binding mentioned above, for example, is dated 997/1588-89 by the Koran which it contains. The taste for turqoise and gold bindings, however, appears to be of Iranian origin, and the Istanbul examples are often attributed to Persian goldsmiths employed at the Ottoman court.[454] Ottoman court records also mention jeweled bindings sent as gifts by Safavid rulers, although none seem to have survived.[455] Jamfs verse suggests that fîrûzekârî bindings were also produced in Timurid Herat.

Jamfs verses do not reveal the identity of the muraqqa’ for which they were composed, but they may be linked with the most famous Timurid album— one arranged in 879/1474-75 for Sultan Husayn Bayqara. Compiled by royal order, it evidently contained choice specimens of calligaphy and painting donated by persons of culture and learning. Although the album itself is lost, its preface survives in the insha’ manual of a high Timurid official, ‘Abdallah Marvarid.[456]

If Jamfs verses were composed to praise an album compiled for Husayn Bayqara, their later circulation confirms the broader popularity of Timurid

culture. In addition to stamped inscriptions on Hazine 1510, Jamfs quatrain about rose-petals and basil is impressed on the doublure of a richly ornamented Safavid binding.[457] A variant of the second quatrain describing the album’s contents and its dazzling binding is inscribed on the lacquer-painted binding of a 1544 copy of Jâmî’s Khamsah. [458] These examples raise the question of whether there is any particular significance to the use of JamTs poetry on the binding of Hazine 1510.

It is evident that Jâmı’s verses were not composed specifically for the binding of Hazine 1510, but his quatrain about a book with a golden jeweled binding appears particularly apposite for it. Although this binding did not have a spine of braided gold or a cover of turquoises set in gold, it is likely that some kind of metal fittings once covered the medallions on the binding’s cover and flap now ringed by gilded silver nails.

Some Ottoman bindings combine lacquer-painted covers with jeweled ornament. One in the Istanbul University Library with the customary gold over black lacquer field, has jewel-encrusted filigree medallions attached to its cover.[459] The practice of inlaying leather or lacquer bindings with jewels creates an effect reminiscent of both Safavid and Ottoman metalwork where a dark ground is enlivened with gold and jewel inlays or medallions. Some of the finest examples of such metalwork preserved in Istanbul are thought to be of Iranian origin and may even have formed part of the booty from the Ottoman victory of 1514.[460]

The history of lacquer-painted bindings has yet to be written but the technique was used in Herat from the middle of the fifteenth century onward, particularly on a book’s exterior. An early example inscribed with the name of the Timurid prince Babur ibn Baysunghur (d. 861/1457) has exterior covers painted in gold on a black ground and doublures with leather filigree medallions.[461] One of the most splendid Timurid lacquer bindings is on a manuscript of the Hasht Bihisht copied for one of Sultan Husayn Bayqara’s sons, Sultan Muhammad Muhsin in 902/1496-97 by Sultan ‘Alî Mashhadî. All surfaces of its binding are lacquer-painted. The front cover has a medallion scheme, and the back a field of interlocking lobed medallions.[462]

Another lacquer binding connected with Timurid Herat is that on a copy Sultan Husayn Bayqara’s Dîvân in the Topkapi Museum, E.H. 1636.[463] Its scheme follows a traditional pattern with a central medallion and four quarter medallions in the comers. These units are filled with floral scrolls and cloud-bands executed in two tones of gold over a black ground.

In the Hazine 1510 binding, these same motifs are used to fill its field and border cartouches. Indeed, this style of painting appears to have had a considerable vogue and is found on bindings probably produced in both Safavid Iran and Ottoman Turkey. At present, it is often difficult to establish the provenance and date of such bindings probably because of the mobility of craftsmen in this period.

Provisionally, however, the binding of Hazine 1510 seems to have closer links with Iranian than Ottoman examples in the design and execution of its doublure as well as in its use of border cartouches.[464] Sometimes in Safavid bindings a lacquer painted field with scroll and cloud-band designs is paired with both stamped and gilded medallions and similarly ornamented border cartouches.[465] In other cases the external cartouche frame is painted in the fashion seen in Hazine 1510. One binding of this type even has a doublure scheme with a filigree field and border cartouches which is also closely analagous in design to that of Hazine 1510. It is attached to a manuscript dated to 965/1557-58.[466] The doublure of this latter manuscript is, however, also similar in design to that of the Oxford Lisan al-Tayr copied by Hajj Muhammad al-Tabnzi in 937/1530-31 mentioned earlier.[467]

These comparisons highlight one of the key problems facing anyone who wishes to study the history of bindings. It IS at present difficult to distinguish between similarites due to conservatism in the artistic and technical traditions of bindings and chronological ambiguities created by transferring bindings from one manuscript to another. Redecoration or repair of bindings also adds an element of confusion to their chronology.

At present what can be estabhshed is that Hazine 15105 binding was probably made by an Iranian craftsman during the first decades of the sixteenth century in either Iran or Turkey. If it was originally created to house the manuscripts it now contains, it may be contemporary with the insertion of the firman and the changes made to the manuscript’s colophons, that is, sometime after 906/1503.

Now that the contents and binding of Hazine 1510 have been analyzed, it is appropriate to examine the text with the name of Husayn Bayqara mentioned above. This document is written on another piece of paper which has been pasted over the fourteenth-century page (figure 9.5). Although portions of the paper are abraded as though some of the text had been erased and then rewritten,[468] in the main the document appears to be authentic, if truncated. It lacks headings, seals, colophons, and endorsem ents.[469]

The document is written in two different scripts, and has two sections: an upper one in one in black-outlined gold script which contains invocations, the titles and epithets of Husayn Bayqara and the royal decree, and a lower portion in black labeled as a bar-avard, or estimate of expenses, for the production of a Shah-namah manuscript. The text specifies that the manuscript in question is being forwarded to the accountants (mustawfiyan) of the royal Divan along with th efirman proper. The firman requests that individuals listed in the bar-avard be recompensed for the expenses and labor involved in the production a manuscript which must have been presented (unsolicited?) to Sultan Husayn Bayqara. Those named in the bar-avard are probably to be identified with the “skilled men” (ashab-i khibrat) and the “learned” (ahl-i danish) praised in the opening invocation.

The bar-avard also has two sections: an upper one that gives the total cost of the manuscript, four tümâns, 2,450 dinars, and a lower one arranged in five columns, that lists the amounts to be paid to specified individuals. The five columns are labeled (from right to left): kaghaz (paper), kitabat

(copying), tazhib (gilding), jadval (margination), and tasvir (painting).

For each category, the column lists the person(s) to be paid, the cost per item, and the number of items involved. Thus, under paper we see mention of the purchase of kaghaz-i hitayi, or Chinese paper, the name Khwaja Murshıd-İ Kashgarl, the quantity of600 pages (iawraq), and the unit price of twenty dinars a page (waraq) for a total of 12,000 dinars. In the second column, copying, the calligrapher is identified as Mawlana Warqah ibn ‘Umar Samarqandl, who copied 63,000 bayts at 250 dinars per thousand bayts for a total of 15,750 dinars. In the third column under illumination the craftsmen are listed as Sharaf al-Dm and Jalal al-Dîn Kirmanı, and they are to be given a total of 6,000 dinars for executing four illuminated pages. The two marginators, Ustad Ahmad and Mawlana Muhammad Haravi completed sixty juz’ at the price of forty dinars a juz’ for a total of 2,400 dinars. Last comes the painter, ‘Abd-uLWahhab Muşawir-İ Mashhadl, who executed twenty-one scenes at 300 dinars apiece for a total of 6,300 dinars. When added together these sums equal 42,450 dinars, or 4 tümâns, 2,450 dinars. [470]

Various aspects of this text are worthy of closer study, but here the focus will be on its significance for the history of Hazine 1510. This bar-avard describes the cost of a Shah-namah manuscript consisting of 600 leaves, or 60 gatherings, containing 63,000 verses with 4 illuminated headings or pages and 21 paintings. When these numbers are compared to the Shah-namah of Hazine 1510 questions arise. The most difficult to reconcile are the figures concerning the manuscript’s length—63,000 verses on 600 folios or 60 juz’.

The Hazine 1510 Shah-namah, however, has only 484 folios, and approximately 52,000 verses.[471] The relative brevity of this Shah-namah copy has been interpreted by J. Khaliqi-Mutlaq as a sign of its unusual conservatism and fidelity to FirdawsFs original text.[472] Now that Hazine 1510 has been identified as a Muzaffarid manuscript that

probably was copied in 783/1382؎ its relationship to other early, accurate copies of the Shah-namah should receive even greater attention, especially in connection with efforts to reconstruct Firdawsi’s original text.[473]

Thejirman’s data on illuminations and paintings is more compatible than its text description with the present condition of Hazine 1510. The Shah-namah could be described as having four illuminations, namely an initial medallion, folio la, two illuminated pages at the opening of the preface, folios 2b-3a, and a fourth page at the beginning of the poem itself, folio 8b. The listing of twenty-one paintings is also accurate if the double page painting situated between the preface and the body of the poem is excluded. The Shah-namah of Hazine 1510 now has twenty-three paintings, but two of them added on blank pages between the preface and body of the Shah-namah may well have been added to the manuscript at a later date (fols. 7b-8a).

Although it is logical to assume that this document describes the manuscript to which it is affixed, such a conclusion leaves major questions unanswered. The basic discrepancy between the firman and Hazine 1510 lies not in the inconsistency of its numbers but rather stems from its implicit origin and purpose. The document appears to describe a routine court transaction in which Sultan Husayn Bayqara accepted a manuscript presented to him by its makers and ordered them to be recompensed for their efforts. The document’s stress on “people of learning” suggests that some of those involved were scholars, and the relatively small sum to be expended for paintings may imply that they were of modest size and quality. Finally, it does not seem probable that the treasury of Husayn Bayqara would have expended the considerable sums listed here for paper, copying, illumination, and margination if it had been suspected that the manuscript in question had been written, illuminated, and marginated more than a hundred years earlier.

If thefirman and Hazine 1510 had separate origins, what is the significance of their present juncture? Here only a provisional answer to this question can be given. It seems probable that the insertion of this document into Hazine 1510 is connected with alterations in its colophon dates: from

783 to 903 in the Shah-namah and from 776 to 906 in the Khamsah and with the addition of a superflous colophon dated to 903 in the name of “Warqah ibn ‘Umar SamarqandĽ” This scribal name, chosen to harmonize with that of the original Shah-namah calligrapher, was then inserted into th efirman after the name of its original scribe had been erased. The superflous colophon’s use of the nisbah “Samarqandl” buttressed “Warqah’s” credentials as a Timurid calligrapher and strengthened Hazine 15105 connection with Sultan Husayn Bayqara’s firman. A desire to provide a Herat pedigree for Hazine 1510, and to harmonize it with the Shah-namah manuscript described in the firman may also have stimulated the addition of twenty-one paintings to its previously unillustrated Shah-namah text. It is even possible that the addition of Sultan Husayn Bayqara’s name to the Shah-namah’s initial medallion had the same goal.

The changes suggested above seem to have had a related aim and purpose: to transform a manuscript from Muzaffarid Shiraz that had belonged to Shah Rukh into one from Timurid Herat which was linked with the patronage of Sultan Husayn Bayqara. The addition of the now missing Dîvân by ‘All Shir Navâ’î could also have formed part of the same goal and given Hazine 1510 yet another connection with Timurid Herat. A new binding inscribed with the verses of Jami and embellished with jewels may have completed this process of transformation.

In order to examine the plausibility of these hypotheses, the questions surrounding Hazine 1510 must be considered in the larger context of its time. It seems unlikely that these changes antedate the death of Husayn Bayqara in 912/1506, or the end of his dynasty the following year. The pillaging of Herat by the Safavids in 1510 must have put both Timurid documents and manuscripts into wider circulation and may provide the terminus ante quern for various changes made to Hazine 1510.

If the transformation of Hazine 1510 occurred after the end of the Timurid dynasty, with the goal of “Timuridizing” a Muzaffarid manuscript, it must have been done in a place where things Timurid had a high prestige. Three possible locations come to mind: the Uzbek domains of

Khurasan and Transoxiana, Safavid Tabriz, and Ottoman Istanbul. Further investigation is needed before a definite conclusion can be reached, but stylistic features of the paintings added to the Shah-namah and of the manuscript’s binding point to Tabriz, whereas the Khamsah paintings suggest a link to Istanbul. Perhaps both features can be explained by the well-documented presence of Iranian craftsmen at the Ottoman court and the high prestige which Timurid culture and art enjoyed in sixteenth-century Istanbul.

[411] ١٠٠ V. ¥. لآ١حآةاةلا١ Topkapi Sarayı Muesi Kütüphanesi Farsa Yakmalar Katalogu, [hereafter FYK] (Istanbul, 1961), no. 348, p. 131.

[412] Thomas w. Lentz and Glenn D. Lowry, Timur and the Princely Vision (Los Angeles, 1989).

[413] The history of another Topkapi manuscript, Hazine 762, is a good example of the transfer of a book from one royal owner to another. See Ivan Stchoukine (Les Peintures des manuscrits de la “Khamseh” de Nizami au Topkapi Sarayı Müzesi d’Istanbul (Paris, 1966), ms. no. 13, pp. 71–81).

[414] The authors would like to thank A.H. Morton of the University of London for his transcription of numbers contained in th efirman, and K. Eslami of Princeton University for assistance in interpreting the firmans text. They also benefited from discussing the binding’s inscriptions with F. Bagherzadeh of Paris and A.-M. Schimmel of Harvard University.

[415] Stchoukine, “Origine turque des peintures d’une Anthologie persane de 801/1398,” Syria 42 (1965), pp. 139–40, pl. 113 idem, La Peinture turque d’apres les manuscrits illustres ler partie; de Sulayman ler a Osman //· 1520–1622 (Paris, 1966), pp. 64, 111, pl. 25a & b; idem,

Les Peintures des manuscrits, ms. no. 65, pp. 150-51و pls. 79,80.

[416] Karatay, FYK, no. 348, p. 131.

[417] Stchoukine, Peinture turque, pp. 64, 111.

[418] M. Aga-Oglu, “The Landscape Miniatures of an Anthology of the year 1398,” Ars Islamica 3 (1936), pp. 77–98: Stchoukine, “Origine Turque,” pp. 137–39

[419] Jalal KhaliqLMutlaq, “Mu’arrifi wa ‘arzyabLyi barkhi âz dastnavisha-yi Shah-namah,” (2), Iran-namah, 4:1 (1364/1985), 30–31, 35–36, (3)و Iran-namah, 4:2 (1364/1985) 248, 250–53. The authors would like to thank Mr. K. Eslami for bringing these references to their attention.

[420] Asadl TÛSÎ, Lughat-i Furs, ed. Fath Allah MujtabaT, ‘Ah Ashraf Sadiqi, (Tehran, 1365/1986), p. 13. The authors would like to thank Mr. K. Eslami for bringing this publication to their attention.

[421] Lutf Allah also copied a manuscript of Firdawsi’s Shah-namah now in the Egyptian National Library, Cairo, which is dated to 796/1392-94 (1. Stchoukine, “Les Manuscrits illustres musulmans de la bibliotheque du Caire,” Gazette des Beaux Arts 77, no. 3 (January-June 1935), p. 141).

[422] The principal difference between the T. 1950 (fol. 464) colophon and that of Hazine 1510 (fol. 484b) is that the former uses a Persian form for this %\oss·. min a’mal kut gilwyeh.

[423] Heinz Gaube, Die sudpersische Provinz Arragan/Kuh-Giluyeh von der arabischen Eroberung bis ur Safawiden٦eit ٢ي’١حأ١تلة ,1973) ,؟p. 15, 25, 72–77.

[424] As suggested by A. Sarkisian, La Miniature persane du Xlle au XVIIe siecle (Paris, 1929), p. 33.

[425] Hazine 1510, fol. lb, 2a; T. 1950, fol. lb, 2٥.

[426] For an early example see M. Lings, The Quranic Art of Calligraphy and Illumination (Westerham, Kent, 1976), p. 119, pl. 60, and for a late one see ibid., p. 172, pls. 82–83.

[427] The page appears to have been inserted after the manuscript had been written.

[428] Hazine 1510, fols. 6a, 222٩, 377٩.

[429] Hazine 1510, fol. 499a.

[430] Manuscript no. 2179, Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Sciences of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, Miniatures Illuminations ofAmirHosrov Dehlevi’s Works, cd ر{ Suleimanov, pls. 87. 88. Amir Husraw Dikhlavi, AfazZa* al-anwar, ec ‘l A رم Magerramov (Muharramov) (Moscow, 1975), pp. 7476; another probable Shiraz origin once in the library of Shah Rukh is a ذر٢دكل٠ of Farid ai-Dın ‘Attar’s Jawhar al-zât now in the ftsterreichische ٠٠a٠.or.a.h.b.JO‘r_٠e/ Vienna, A f-84؟. ‘I his manuscript also contains the seal ofرمل0.’ضك.’. r jler Beyazt Jl رنم Duda, Islamische Handschriften:, Persische Handschriften, 2 ٠’ols. (Vienna, 1983), vol. 1. pp. 52–53, vol. 2و figs. 8–9.;.

[431] ‘Abd al-Razzaq Sarnarqandf, Matla’ al-Sa’da\n. ed. M. Shafi’ (Lahore, 1946), vol. 11:1, pp. 162, 164–66.

[432] Stchoukine, Peinture turque, pp. 64111 و.

[433] M. Aga-Ctg. ‘ I he landscape Minniatures,” pp. 77–98; Stchoukine, Gngine turque,” pp. 137–39.

[434] Hazine 1519. fols. 51. 545b, 566a, 636b, 675b, 713a, 775b.

[435] Hazine 1516, fols. 5(f2b, 512b, 547b, 563a.

[436] Hazine 1516, fol. 682b.

[437] Stcno.r me Peintures des manuscrits, pls. 79a, 80 See note 4 above.

[438] Some of these lush settings containing palm trees and pomegranates may depict the calligrapher’s na e re • of Kuh Giluyeh.

[439] Hazme 1.516 fols. 5476 563a; see Stchoukine, Peintures des manuscrits, pls. 79a, 40

[440] Hazne 1511 h (ray. “I he School of Shiraz from 1392 to 1453,” in The Arts of the Book, tri Central Asia. 14th-16th Centuries <Vat’ıs, 1979), pı. 34 fig. 71

[441] Stchoukine, Peirtture turque, pp. 64111 و.

[442] Ibid., no. 8, p. 51, pls. 67

[443] F Çağman, ‘7 Yr: Miniatures of the Dıvan-İ Husayni and the Influence of Their Style, ’ in Fifth International Congress of Turkish Art. ed. G. Feher (Budapest, 1978), pp. 231–59, esp. 241–42

[444] كل’ Peinlure turque, no. 26, pp. 58–59; E. A til, Turkish Art (Washington, DC, 1986), pl. 18.

[445] A. S. Levend, Ali Sir Nevai: III: Hamse (Ankara, 1967), illus. between pp. 16–17, 152–53, 215–17, 264–65.

[446] Ibid., pp. 237–38: I. Stchoukine, “Les Manuscrits illustres musulmans de la bibliotheque du Caire,” Gazette des Beaux Arts 77 (January-June 1935), pp. 151–52; L. Binyon, J.v.s. Wilkinson, B. Gray, Persian Miniature Painting (London, 1933), no. 140, p. 133, pl. 90b.

[447] Oxford, Bodleian Library, Or. 195, Navâ’î, Lisan al-Tayr, in Miniatures Illustrations of Alisher Navoi’s Works, pls. 182–91.

[448] Çağman, “Miniatures of the Divan-i Hüseyni,” pp. 229–30, figs. 22–23.

[449] Duda, Islamische Handschriften I, vol. I, pp. 30–33, Abb. 333–37, see above, notes 33 and 34.

[450] [‘Abd al-Rahman Jami], Divan-i kamil-i Jami, ed. H. Radi (Tehran, 13411962), [n.p.], “Rubâ’iyât;’ nos. 48, 77213 و, pp. 815, 818, 835.

[451] Ibid., no. 48, p. 815.

[452] Ibid., no. 213, p. 835.

[453] Topkapi Palace Museum 2/2132, in The Anatolian Civilisations III, “Ottoman” (Istanbul, 1983), no. E 199, pp. 229–30.

[454] See also c. Koseoğlu, The Topkapi Saray Museum: The Treasury (New York, 1980), pl. 81, p. 202.

[455] E Çağman, “Serzergerân Mehmet Usta ve Eserleri, in Kemal Çig’a Armağan (Istanbul, 1984), p. 54, esp. notes 13, 15.

[456] [‘Abdallah Marvand], Staatsschreiben der Timuridenzeit, ed. and trans. H. Roemer (Wiesbaden, 1952), no. 74, pp. 131–34, 199–200, facsimile fols. 744–764 for a transcription of the text, see M. Haravi, “Muraqqa’-sazi dar dawrah-i Tîmüriyân,” Hunar va Mardum, no. 143, 13055, pp. 34–36.

[457] An unidentified binding illustrated on the cover of the first volume of Türkiye Yazmaları Toplu Katalogu (Istanbul, 1982).

[458] A. F. 6 6, Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (D. Duda, Islamische Handschriften: I Persische Handschriften [Vienna, 1983] vol. II, Abb. 35.)

[459] Çağman, “Serzergeran Mehmet Usta,” p. 54, note 14.; Istanbul University Library, A. 6546, a Qur’han copied by Yedikuh Sayyid ‘Abdallah in 1127/1715. The binding may be earlier than the text it encompasses.

[460] Koseoğlu, The Treasury nos. 74–76, p. 200.

[461] Duda, Islamische Handschsriften, vol. I, 71–72; vol. II, Abb. 18–20.

[462] Aslanapa, “Art of Bookbinding,” p. 64, pls. 17–18.

[463] Ibid., p. 63, ill. 29: Çağmen, “Miniatures of the Divan-i Hüseyni,” pp. 231–33.

[464] For examples with a clear Ottoman provenance, see z. Tarundi, “Rûganî Türk Kitap Kaplarinin Erken örnekleri,” in Kemal Cığ’a Armağan, pp. 223, 226–32, figs. 1, 5–11, 13–21: Soliman le Magnifiaue (Paris, 1990), no. 130: M. Rogers and R. Ward, Süleyman the Magnificent (London, 1988)و no. 24a-b, pp. 80–81.

[465] ‘All Shir Navâ’î, Khamsa, Dorn 560, Leningrad State Public Library, in Miniatures Illustrations, pls. 43–58. This manuscript appears to be of sixteenth-century western Iranian origin, although it has a colophon which alleges that it was copied in Timurid Herat in 898/1492-93.

[466] Haldane, Islamic Bookbindings, pl. 83, p. 82.

[467] Miniatures Illustrations, vA. 183.

[468] The most abraded section contains the calligrapher’s name, “Warqah b. Tlmar,” however, his nisbah “al-Samarqandl,” appears to be original.

[469] Concerning the form of firmans see Tadhkirat aTmuluk: a manual of Safavid Administration, ed. trans. V. Minorsky, appendix 4b, pp. 199–200.

[470] The authors would like to thank Prof. A. H. Morton for assistance in reading this document.

[471] Manuscripts of FirdawsFs Shah-namah vary considerably in length, but a length of 63,000 verses would be compatible with a manuscript of 600 folios copied with four text columns of twenty-seven lines to the page, a common page length. See, for example, Hazine 1515 with 622 folios and twenty-three lines per page (F. Karatay, Farsça Yazmalar, no. 334, p. 127).

[472] Khaliqi-Mutlaq, “Mu’arrifi...Shah-namah,” (3)و IN, vol. 4:2, pp. 240, 250–53

[473] This new date would appear to move Hazine 1510 from its current position as number forty-five to number eight in his list of Shah-namah manuscripts arranged by date, and from number fifteen to number six in his listing of complete copies of the text (Ĩ. Khaliqi-Mutlaq, “Mu’arrifi.. .Shah-nama” (1)و IN, vol. 3:3, 1364/1985, pp, 386–387 Ibid., (2), IN, vol. 4:1و pp. 30–31, Ibid., (3)و IN, vol. 4:2,‘PP· 231, 248).

** 11. Faris al-Shidyaq and the Transition from Scribal to Print Culture in the Middle East

Geoffrey Roper

It is well known that printing came late to the Arab and Muslim Middle East; it is also well known that when it did become established, it had significant effects on the intellectual and social development of the area. These have become truisms, because historians have routinely acknowledged and paid lip-service to their importance. However, what they have not done, by and

large, is to analyze, or even to spell out, the progress and consequences of this major transformation of social communication, and the changes in human relationships within Middle Eastern society which flowed from it. Such an undertaking, indeed, has not been possible, even for those few historians who are conscious of the need for it, because the materials for such a study have yet to be assembled. Nevertheless, it is possible to draw attention here briefly to a few general points about the nature of the transition from scribal culture to print culture, before illustrating that transition in the career and writings of one leading figure involved in it.

Although block-printing was practiced in the medieval Muslim Middle East, long before in Europe, the technique does not seem to have developed there beyond the printing of single-leaf amulets and talismans: it was apparently never used for the production of books, which remained entirely in the hands of scribes until the eighteenth century, and predominantly so until well into the nineteenth century, despite the widespread adoption of printing elsewhere. This reflects the maintenance of a monopoly of knowledge by a traditional elite group—the ‘ulama’—whose control over the scribal transmission and dissemination of texts served to reinforce established patterns of authority in Muslim society. It has been pointed out, moreover, that, especially towards the end of the scribal era, “knowledge” often tended to be regarded as a mystical and secret entity, and writers tended accordingly to prefer an obscure style of expression; this in turn encouraged what has been called a “magic garden” mentality, promoting esotericism at the expense of both lucidity and rationality.[474]

Printing eventually served to break this monopoly by creating a new culture based not only on a new means of transmitting texts, but also on a new approach to selecting, writing, and presenting them, aimed at a new kind of reader. In the process, it contributed to a demystification of language and literature, a revival of the classical heritage, and a new self·awareness. These led in turn both to a cultural revival (inahdah) and to political movements of a nationalist character. Although it started, among Muslims, as a means for modernizing rulers to educate, communicate with, and influence a new elite of their own creation, it eventually, as in early modern Europe, penetrated much further into society and into the consciousness of significant sections of the population. In doing so, it helped to redefine peoples’ relations with the sacred, with power and authority, and

with the community.[475] Moreover, although the technology of printing came to the Middle East from Europe, it was not, as some historians have assumed, just a manifestation of, and vehicle for, Westernization: it had its own direct effects, which operated both on the cognitive plane and on the socioeconomic plane.

In the forefront of this process, which amounted to nothing less than the modernization and renewal of the literary and intellectual culture of the Middle East, were certain litterateurs—udaba'— who, as Carter Findley has pointed out, came from the old literary scribal elite, but evolved into the vanguard of the new culture.[476] It is on one of the most celebrated of these that I now wish to focus, and to try to trace in him and through him the emergence of that new, print-based culture and the transformations that it brought.

Faris al-Shidyaq, later Ahmad Faris Efendi, was very much a product of the old scribal culture—not just in a passive sense, but as an active and enthusiastic practitioner and connoisseur of it. Born in Lebanon in the first decade of the nineteenth century into a Maronite family which had traditionally provided clerks, scribes, and tutors for feudal lords,[477] he grew up in a literary household. His father had collected books on a variety of subjects, which the young Faris avidly read, especially literary works and poetry.[478] These books were, of course, all manuscripts: although Arabic printing had been introduced into Lebanon in 1734,[479] and Arabic printed books had also been imported from Europe since the 16th century,[480] they were restricted to Christian religious and liturgical books, produced in quite small quantities for the use of the clergy: literary and educational books were available only in handwritten copies. Following the family tradition, Faris himself became at an early age a professional copyist, and was employed, among other assignments, to copy the registers and chronicles of the amir Haydar al-Shihabl in connection with the compilation of the latter's composite history of Lebanon and neighboring countries.[481] He also produced, for Christian patrons, numerous copies of other works, in both Arabic and Syriac, some of which survived in ecclesiastical and private collections in Lebanon.[482]

al-Shidyaq from the outset strove for high technical and aesthetic standards in his copying. In later years, he remarked, for instance, on the necessity of using the correct implements for writing Arabic—reed pens, not quills;[483] he also recalled that in his youth he had enthusiastically cultivated excellence in handwriting (judat or tajwid al-khatt), and whenever he saw fine script, devoted himself to imitating it.[484] During his stay in Egypt between 1828 and 1835, he continued to copy books for his own use, and possibly for others (although we cannot be certain of this). A copy of ZawzanFs commentary on the Mu’allaqat, for instance, made by him in Cairo in 1833, is extant,[485] and it bears a note that it was still in his possession in 1855/56.[486] He also made notebooks (kurrasah) of extracts of manuscript works that he thought would later be of use to him, such as Damlrfs zoological encyclopedia, Hayat al-hayawan, which he later used when translating an English natural history textbook for publication.[487] Throughout his later life he continued to copy books, and assembled such a large collection of manuscript volumes by this means that he used to worry, so it is said, about what would happen to them after his death.[488] He also made careful copies—often more than one—of his own works, some of which survive in this form.[489]

As well as being a scribe, Faris was an avid reader and collector of manuscripts. During his stay in Egypt, he seems to have immersed himself in classical Arabic literature, most of which at that time was still unpublished, and acquired some manuscripts there.[490] Later, when he went to Europe, he made a point of visiting the great libraries of Paris, London, Cambridge, and Oxford, and reading important works in their collections of Arabic manuscripts.[491] He described in some detail his visit to the British Museum Library (now the British Library) and mentioned some of the works of Arabic literature that he read there—almost certainly, in some cases, for the first, and perhaps the only, time: Ibn Qutaybah, al-Zamakhshan, al-Jahiz, Abu Tammam, and al-Mutanabbl.[492] He noted ruefully that he was not allowed to copy works in their entirety when there, but only to make extracts or summaries.[493] During the last thirty years of his life, when he was living in Istanbul, he frequented the manuscript collections there also, and wrote articles in his newspaper, al-Jawa’ib, enumerating the libraries and their contents, and complaining about the restricted access and poor working conditions in them.[494] Evidence of his love of fine calligraphy and illumination emerges from some of his descriptions of the manuscripts which

he had seen, such as the sumptuous copy of Fîrüzâbâdî’s al-Qamus in the Köprülü Library.[495]

But al-Shidyaq’s main concern when studying manuscripts, especially in this latter period, was always to establish accurate texts that faithfully reflected what the classical authors had written. To this end, he made detailed comparisons and evaluations of the manuscript copies he encountered,[496] and as he did so, he became acutely aware of how some of these texts had become subject to corruption (al-tahrif wa-al-taşhîf) in the process of copying, because of the ignorance and negligence of scribes.[497] He noted that manuscript copies were often defective,[498] that is, lacking part or parts of the text; and he was furthermore aware that much Arabic literature had been lost altogether through the destruction of unique or rare manuscript texts.[499] Moreover, even many of those texts that survived were scarce and hard to locate or obtain, as he had discovered. for instance, when trying to find copies of the diwans of the great classical Arabic poets in Cairo when he was a young man.[500]

So al-Shidyaq was well aware that the revival of Arabic literature and culture depended on bypassing the old scribal tradition, much as he revered it and was a part of it, and finding a new means of transmitting and preserving both classical texts and new writing. Fortunately, the development of his own life and work had shown him that just such a means was now available, that could and should be widely adopted in the service of Arabic learning and letters. From the time that he left his native land in 1826, his career was inextricably bound up with, and dependent on, the use of the printing press. At the beginning of that career, it was still a suspect novelty in the Arab and Muslim Middle East; by the time of his death sixty years later, it had become the normal and accepted method of producing and transmitting Arabic texts.

The first press with which al-Shidyaq was involved was that run by the English Church Missionary Society (CMS) in Malta. He spent about eighteen months there in 1827–28, helping to prepare Christian religious texts—commentaries on the parables of Jesus and a new metrical translation of some of the Psalms[501]—for printing and distribution mainly in Lebanon and Egypt. However, ill health caused him to leave Malta for Egypt, where he

spent the next seven years. During this time, he worked for a while on the newspaper al-Waqâ’i’ al-Misrlyah—the first Arabic newspaper to be published anywhere— and was therefore one of the first Arabs, if not the very first, to practice the craft of journalism.[502] While thus engaged, he no doubt became familiar with the operations of the state press of Muhammad ‘All at Bulaq, where the newspaper was produced. However, it seems that he soon became disillusioned with Egyptian government service, mainly because of delays in payment of his salary,[503] and by 1832 he was again working for the missionaries in Cairo.

At the end of 1835, al-Shidyaq went back to Malta, and over the next six years again helped to prepare and edit translations of a number of Christian religious books; but in addition to these, he also published at the CMS press a series of secular didactic works on geography, natural history, and language. Three of these were written or compiled by him, being his first published works; another was carefully translated by him from English. He also prepared and produced the editioprinceps of an earlier Arabic grammar, the Bahth al-matdlib of Jibril Farhat (Malta, 1836). This was the first of many manuscript works which were to be published at his hands over the next fifty years.

al Shidyaqs role at the Malta Arabic press in the 1830s and 184 s was S’-teh as ıدا ma be him fully c nscirijs رتم(all that ‘٨’a s involved in this new meth nd

its potentialities..Cot only did he prepare copy for ر؛) production and نمارائ nf

,ne press, he al’-/ر actol as a pr tof rcarfer and corrector becoming acutely aware of the importance of vigilance and rneticulousness in these tasks. At the end bull marta tarif, he refers امدد م/-/”, of his own Arabic grammar and reader specifically ıدا his own role in Its printing and asks the reader’s forgiveness for any typographical errors remaining.[504] By that time he had already raised the typographical standards of the Malta press to a much higher level than had existed here previously. Cot only Arabic., but also Ottoman Turkish texts were checked and proofread by him, or was his work erm fined to textual editing and correction he al sr had a

hand in designing and preparing the punches ؛دوكا a new Arabic typeface, in three sizes, which was brought into use in 1838, and which has becri admirer] for its beauty and excellence.[505]

The Arabic press in Malta was closed down in 1842, and for the next, fifteen years al Shidyaq’s rork in the field of crJiting arid publishing bore fruit not in the Arab world, but in Europe. He translatol the whole of the Bible into Arabic arid saw ال through the press in England a major undertaking which must have made him (‘illy acquainted with established printing and publishing practicesat a large-scale scholarly press, in this case William Watts in London.[506] He also had published in Bars in 1455 his own extcrisive autobiographical and literary work, كذ كدك/يك ‘ala al aq, for which a special, new Arabic typeface zzas prepared arid cast[507]--again he corrected all the proofs himself’.[508] He also became interested again m journalism and newspaper publishing a prospectus for a new political journal under his editorship as issuer] in Brance in 1858,[509]

In 1857, al Shidyaq was invited to turns to apply his knowledge of publishing and journalism to the foundation of a new state press and newspaper there.[510] Before this carne to fruition, however certain intrigues at the lunisian court causer] the task to be assignor] to someone else.[511] But. his brief stay in his subsequent)رتم great importance to the development رتم؛ f unis was nevertheless’ carter for it was there that he embraced fslarn, a nr] by doing s:, qualified himself for a new and more influential role in the renewal رتم؛ Arab and Muslim,the nineteenth century رتم؛ culture in the second half.

In 1859 or 1860, اه l Shidyaq went to Istanbul, where he lived tor the rest of his life He seems to have beer appointed in the first place as Chief Corrector (Ra’i al-uahhihn) at the mperial ress (*alMata’a al-Sltaniyah*),[512] his first major task was to launch a nevz Arabic newspaper called al fawdih, which started in 1861 and continuer], with two short interruptions, until 1884. ft was this nezzspaper that brought al Shidyaq his greatest fame, because it was widely distributer], carrying his name, his writing, and his ideas اه ll over the Arab and .Muslim worlds. But. although al Shidyaq had novi achieved

his long-standing ambition to edit and publish an Arabic newspaper, journalism by no means displaced book publishing in his career. In 1868, he published his own large-scale treatise on Arabic etymology, Sirr al-layalfi al-qalb wa-al-îbdâl, at the Imperial Press. Then, in 1870, he established the Jawa'ib Press (Matbdat al-Jawdib) with new equipment, and not only did this take over the printing of the newspaper after which it was named, it also published a long series of books, mostly in Arabic but also some in Turkish. These have teen collected, studied, and enumerated by the eminent al-Shidyaq scholar Mohammed Alwan[513] and it is not necessary to go over that ground here except to note his finding that the number of publications totalled 75, and that they fell into essentially four categories: classical Arabic literature; al-Shidyaq's own works; works by other contemporary authors, mostly his friends, supporters, or patrons; and miscellaneous semi-official Ottoman publications. By the time ofal-Shidyaq's death in 1887, he could truly be said to have been not just one of the greatest Arabic writers of the age, but also one of its foremost editors and publishers.

al-Shidyaq did not just passively accept and make use of the printing press in the furtherance of his own career and reputation: he was also an active protagonist and propagandist of the print revolution. "In truth," he wrote, "all the crafts that have been invented in this world are inferior to the craft of printing. To be sure, the ancients built pyramids, set up monuments, erected statues, fortified strongholds, dug canals and water conduits, and paved military roads; however, those crafts, compared with the craft of printing, are but one degree above savagery. After printing became widespread, there was no longer any likelihood of the disappearance of knowledge which had been disseminated and made public, or the loss of books, as was the case when they were written with the pen."[514] It was, perhaps, because he had been precipitated early in his career into the print-oriented world of Malta and Europe that he did not share the antagonism towards printing and the mass production of books that was felt by many of his contemporaries among the educated Arab elite. The latter were no doubt motivated by their instinctive awareness of the threat that it posed to their monopoly of knowledge and authority. On the contrary al-Shidyaq recognized the undesirability of that restrictive monopoly: "Much of our literature," he complained, "is possessed by a few individuals who do not think it in their interest to give it a wider spread among the people."[515] Printing was the way to break out of this situation. Not only would it help preserve literature

that would otherwise be lost, something to which he attached immense importance, as the previously quoted passage indicates,[516] but it would also make books much easier for everyone to obtain, read, and collect.[517] Printing establishments would even themselves become centers of culture, places for educated people to make for when visiting a country or locality.[518]

al-Shidyaq was aware that the Arabs and Muslims were backward in this matter, because he had studied the history of printing in China and the West, and devoted a substantial section of his book on Europe to it,[519] as well as articles in al-Jawâ’ib\[520] he also described a copy of the Gutenberg Bible of 1455, which he saw in the British Museum, and other early European printed books.[521] But what really impressed him was the sheer volume of book and newspaper publishing in contemporary Europe: in several of his books and articles, he treats the matter at length, giving detailed statistics.[522] This, he considered, was an important cause of Europe’s ascendancy, and the lack of printing an equally important cause of ignorance and decline among the Arabs and Muslims.[523] What were needed, he wrote, were presses “to print…books useful for men, women, and children, and for every single class of people, so that they know what their rights and obligations are (“هل lahum wa-mâ ’alayhim min al-huqüq)?[524] He was thus suggesting that the printed word could bring about social and political, as well as intellectual, emancipation and advancement.

I have sought to demonstrate that al-Shidyaq was both a major participant in and a protagonist of the print revolution in the Middle East. It remains to consider the effects that his activities, and the products of his endeavors, actually had in bringing about the shift from scribal to print culture in the Arab and Muslim Worlds. In discussing the equivalent shift in early modern Europe, the historian Elizabeth Eisenstein has identified three fundamental changes, or rather “clusters of changes,” which printing brought to the processes of communication and transmission by the written word: the much wider dissemination of texts in all fields; their standardization; and their preservation for posterity. Each of these had far-reaching effects, not only on intellectual, but also on social and economic, development.[525] It may be useful, therefore, to apply this conceptual framework to the effects of the print revolution in the nineteenth-century Middle East, and to al-Shidyaq’s part in it.

One of al-Shidyaq’s biographers has made the point that his role in editing books for the press was really a continuation of his former trade as a copyist of manuscripts;[526] this is true up to a point, but it ignores the quite different effects which his new activities had. The Arabic tracts and textbooks which he edited and published in Malta were distributed on a large scale throughout the Middle East and were widely used in schools. al-Shidyaq enumerated some of the earlier Malta books which he himself used when a teacher in Cairo,[527] and these missionary publications were also widely disseminated amongst the Christian populations of Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, and Iraq, as well as finding their way into the hands of some Muslims and, in some cases, into Muslim state schools.[528] The traditional kuttabs, whether Muslim or Christian, had not taught even the Arabic language, still less other subjects, in a systematic, graded manner, and had therefore tended to produce “functional illiterates.”[529] The use of these Malta textbooks, as well as locally produced ones which followed their example, and some which al-Shidyaq later published in Istanbul for the Ottoman state schools,[530] helped to extend basic literacy. Moreover, the provision of instructional books to large numbers of individual pupils, which only printing made possible, encouraged them, at the outset of their education, to regard reading and studying from books as an individual and private activity, and one that was potentially within the reach of all. It is at least possible that some of the changes in perceived relationships between the individual and society, which became apparent among some intellectuals in the Middle East in the latter part of the nineteenth century, may have owed something to this new factor in their earliest childhood intellectual experience.

al-Shidyaq also played a pioneering role in disseminating the means for Arabs to learn European languages. In the scribal era, textbooks for this purpose were to all intents and purposes nonexistent. But a!·Shidyâq’s first published work was an English grammar for the use of Arabs,[531] which was distributed along with other Malta books in the Middle East, and of which a second edition was published at the Jawa’ib Press in Istanbul.[532] He also produced a book of grammatical exercises and dialogues[533] and later, in Paris, a grammar of French in Arabic.[534] Without such aids, the possibilities of Arab intellectuals of that era becoming acquainted with Western

knowledge and culture directly through the medium of print would have been much more restricted than they were.

al-Shidyaq’s activities as a journalist and newspaper publisher were, of course, even more crucial in bringing the printed word to a large Arab and Muslim readership. The role of newspapers and periodicals in creating a new reading public and a new social and political awareness in the nineteenth-century Middle East is, I think, generally appreciated, and this is not the place to consider it in detail. But two points can be mentioned which perhaps are not sufficiently recognized. The impact of journals like al-Jawa’ib went beyond the literate classes, because the reading of them was likely in many situations to have been a group activity. In coffee-houses and other places where people gathered, the illiterate and poorly educated also imbibed the printed word through the reading of extracts and passages out loud by their more literate companions. This applied also to some printed books, especially works of classical literature, such as the Maqamat of Hamadham, printed at al-Shidyaqıs Jawa’ib Press in 1880 in an edition which was specifically intended to “please the reader and the listener” (al-qari’ wa-alsami”).[535] al-Shidyaq also had a policy of serializing some classical works in al-Jawa’ib before publishing them separately, such as al-Amidfs al-Muwazanah bayna Abi Tammam wa-al-Buhturi.[536] Even those that were not serialized were always heavily advertised in the newspaper and distributed by its agents in Tunis,[537] Alexandria,[538] Beirut,[539] and elsewhere, as well as by post from Istanbul.

Nor were al-Shidyaq’s activities as a disseminator confined to his own publications: he also acted as an agent and distributor for contemporary Arabic printed books from other publishers, including those in Tunisia and Lebanon.[540] al-Jawa’ib also carried many notices of newly published Arabic books from a variety of sources, including especially the Bülâq Press in Egypt. This was all in keeping with al-Shidyaq’s mission to spread the benefits of the print revolution as widely as possible (see figure 11.1).

The standardization of texts and of their physical presentation was another important aspect of the print revolution in which al-Shidyaq was fully

involved. Unlike most of his predecessors and contemporaries who prepared editions of classical Arabic works, he went to great trouble to establish sound texts by comparing and collating as many manuscript copies as he could find and noting their differences; and he encouraged others who edited texts for the Jawa’ib Press to do likewise.[541] Only in this way could a worthwhile and authoritative editio princeps be created. But he was well aware that compositors and editors, too, could make errors, and caveats to this effect were included in several of his books,[542] as well as, often, errata lists.[543] The correction of such errors, however, as well as additions and improvements to the texts themselves, could be incorporated into new, revised editions of books—a characteristic feature of the print era, in contrast to the progressive corruption of text in manuscript copies. This applied, of course, equally to new works, such as al-Shidyâq’s own: five of his books were issued in revised editions under his supervision.[544] The awareness that printing could enable standard, corrected, and authoritative texts to become widely available for reference also made it particularly suitable for the promulgation of laws and state regulations, and al-Shidyaq was involved in this also: with Jawa’ib Press published a number of Ottoman legal codes and enactments in both Arabic and Turkish.[545]

The standardization of language itself was another of the effects of printing enumerated by Eisenstein. In the case of Arabic, this was less marked than in Europe, since strict classical norms applied to the written language, and the literary development of the vernaculars was ruled out. But the publications of al-Shidyâq’s grammars, reading book, and textbooks in Malta did play a part in improving the written Arabic used by Arab Christians, which by the early nineteenth century had in many cases deteriorated into something akin to Middle Arabic, or into what he scathingly called rakakah (feebleness or poverty of style).[546] He also introduced into his publications, especially his translations, many newly coined words for new and alien objects and concepts, “for which,” as he pointed out, “no equivalents could be discovered in classical Arabic…and that,” he went on, “is to provoke the Arabs into putting into circulation new post-classical (nuwallad) expressions which will save them from choking on foreign jargon and protect them from an inundation of it.”[547] Some of these neologisms found a permanent place in the language, and are still in use.[548] It was of course the power of print to circulate and reinforce the new usages that gave al-Shidyaq this seminal role in creating new lexical standards and norms for the Arabic language.

It is appropriate to remark here also that not only new vocabulary, but a whole new style of Arabic prose emerged at this time, and al-Shidyaq was one of the prime movers in this development. There is no doubt that he was steeped in the old classical norms and usages, and he also showed himself to be, in many of his writings, quite fond of obscurity and recondite verbiage. But he nevertheless realized that the new patterns of readership created by the print revolution necessitated a new, simpler, and more direct style, geared primarily to the communication of knowledge and ideas rather than to preserving the mystique of a literary elite. This was equally tme when he was writing school textbooks for the Malta press, and when he was deploying the new medium of journalism later in Istanbul. To this print-based creativity of al-Shidyaq, and some of his contemporaries, can perhaps be traced the origins of the modern standard Arabic written language.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-41.jpg][Fig. 11.1. The back page of aLShidyaqa newspaper al-Jawâ’ib. no. 1017, Istanbul, 19 Ramadan 12QS 25 August 1880. The right-hand column gives a price list of aLJawa’ib Press books a١ailable from the newspaper offices, starting with al-Shidaq’s own works, including the original Paris edition of his alSaq ala al-saq—”of alien appearance” dala shax. gharib[On the left are other Arabic and Turkish books which can be supplied, including some from “Syrian.” that is Lebanese, presses, followed by a list of those axailable from the Egyptian agent of al-Javaib. (Cambridge University Library, NPR. B. 411.)]]

But if the advent of printing can be held partly responsible for new linguistic and literary standards, the new ways of presenting and packaging texts, to ease the task of the reader, are wholly due to it. In this development, too, al-Shidyaq played an active role. On the one hand, with his background as a scribe and calligrapher, he was keen to ensure that type styles reflected the best scribal norms. As already mentioned, he accordingly helped to design a new typeface for the Malta Arabic press in the 183053 later, when he set up his own Jawa’ib Press in Istanbul, he ensured that its types followed the established Ottoman Arabic tradition, unlike the “alien form” (shakl gharib) of the typeface with which his autobiography had previously been printed in Paris.[549] On the other hand, he made a determined, even if

only partly successful, attempt to improve and regularize other typographical and design features of the books for which he was responsible: some of these features, as Eisenstein has demonstrated in the case of European printed books, can be of crucial importance in determining their impact on readers. The books produced at the early Turkish and Egyptian presses were usually modelled quite closely on traditional manuscript layouts and styles of presentation. al-Shidyâq's books, however, both those from Malta and those of the Jawa'ib Press, look different. For the most part he abandoned the marginal commentaries and glosses with which earlier books were often festooned. In some cases running heads were introduced, repeating the title or number of the chapter or section at the top of each page as an aid to those referring to the book.[550] Nearly all al-Shidyâq's books have title pages, setting out clearly and systematically not only the title itself, but also the name of the author, the name of the press, the place and date of publication, and whether it is a first or later edition. This was an important innovation of the print era, to which al-Shidyaq became accustomed in Malta and later adopted at his press in Istanbul, one of the first in the Middle East which consistently did this. This practice, as Eisenstein has pointed out, engendered "new habits of placing and dating," as well as helping the subsequent development of more precise cataloging and enumerative bibliography.[551] Another new feature of the print era to be found in most of al-Shidyâq's publications is a table of contents, with page numbers, likewise enabling the reader to make more systematic use of the book.

Page layouts, under al-Shidyq's guidance, also set new standards, being generally more spacious and easier on the eye than most ordinary manuscripts or earlier printed books from the Middle East. Margins are reasonably wide, and, as already mentioned, unencumbered by glosses or commentaries. The spacing between words tends also to be more generous, leaving a better overall ratio between black and white than on most pages of Bulaq or early Turkish printed books, These were features of the Malta Arabic books on which al-Shidyaq worked early in his career, and they later appeared in the products of his Istanbul press, making them easier to read and therefore more accessible to a wider public. Some of them can be considered as forerunners of twentieth-century Arabic book design.[552]

Another feature of the modern Arabic printed book which differentiates it markedly from its manuscript forebears is the use of punctuation. al-

Shidyâq’s attempts in this field, though, were a failure. By the late 18305, he had become familiar with European books and literature, and had observed the usefulness of punctuation marks in clarifying the structure and meaning of passages of prose. In 1839 he published at Malta his primer and, reading book of literary Arabic, al-Lafiffi kull ma’nâ tarif, and boldly decided to introduce Western punctuation into it, using commas, dashes, colons, exclamation marks, question marks, quotation marks, and full stops (see figure 11.2). He set them out in his introduction, explained their use, and urged that they should be generally adopted in Arabic, “since,” he wrote, “that would save the perpetration of much [error] on the paths of exegesis, and safeguard the reader in reading, and the traverser of the pitfalls of delusion. If this is necessary,” he went on, “in Frankish languages, then it is even more necessary in Arabic, because of...the ramification of clauses (tafrf alfumal) one upon another.”[553] This remarkable proposal was, however, far ahead of its time. Although all these punctuation marks appear throughout the first edition of al-Lafif, they were —apart from the full stop— very seldom used even in other Malta books for which al-Shidyaq was responsible. In the second edition of al-Lafif, published in Istanbul at his Jawa’ib Press in 1881, all the punctuation marks were omitted, as well as the relevant section of the introduction from which I have quoted. Not until the twentieth century was full punctuation widely adopted in Arabic.

The bindings of books, as well as their contents, were another field for standardization. Whereas manuscripts were generally bound individually by or for their owners, mass-produced printed books could have standard bindings issued by their publishers. Generally, these were printed wrappers or boards (sometimes cloth-backed)—such were the standard bindings, for instance, of al-Shidyaq’s Malta books. His Jawa’ib Press in Istanbul continued this practice; but it also issued many of its books in cloth or roan bindings, with titles embossed in gilt on the front and the insignia of the press on the back.[554] They thus became homogenized, mass-produced consumer durables, complete with trade marks—harbingers of a new uniform commodity culture.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-42.jpg][Fig. 11.2. Two pages from al-Shidyaq’s al-Lafiffl kull ma’nâ tarif; Malta, 1839, showing his use of punctuation marks: dash, comma, question mark, and

colon. The typeface, which has been admired for its beauty, was specially cut and cast in Malta, almost certainly to his designs. The only incongruous feature is the use of Western numerals for the page signature. (Cambridge University Library, Moh.315.d.l8 sei.)]]

All these elements of standardization which printing brought to the form and content of books contributed to what Eisenstein has called a new “esprit de systeme” and served to “reorder the thought of readers.”[555] It seems reasonable, therefore, to claim that pioneering print-oriented authors and publishers like al-Shidyaq contributed significantly in this way to the emergence of new modes of thought and patterns of consciousness in the modern Middle East.

Along with increased dissemination and standardization of tests, the third “cluster of changes” associated with the print revolution, according to Eisenstein, was their preservation. al-Shidyq’s views on the loss and corruption of Arabic texts in the scribal era, and tlie potential role of printing in preserving them, have already been indicated. His book-publishing activity at his press in Istanbul was largely dedicated to putting into practice what he had earlier advocated. He published there a long series of carefully edited texts of classical Arabic literature, including especially works of poetry and adab. As well as editing some of them himself, he also created a circle or “school” of editors whom he encouraged to apply similar standards: among those whose names are known are Yusuf al-Nabhani and Rasul al-Najjârî.[556] The new works that he published— both his own and those of other writers, such as Khayr al-Dîn al-Tünisî and Yusuf al-Asir—were also thereby assured of a permanent place in the literature: their works might be forgotten or neglected for a while, but they would never perish completely like many of their predecessors of the manuscript era. This meant a new and more confident response to the challenge of creative writing; for whereas previously much literary effort had gone into the task of retrieving, encapsulating, summarizing, and commenting upon past knowledge and past literary achievement, now, in the print era, this could all, in a sense, be taken for granted. New ideas and original thoughts and expression could claim the full energies of writers, who were now secure in the knowledge that, once published, they too, would be safe for posterity. What this eventually brought about was nothing less than a major reorientation of

literature and knowledge— instead of always looking backwards, it could now look forward to new horizons.

This in turn meant a new role for the author, and a new sense of self-awareness and autonomy for writers. al-Shidyaq himself provides a good example of the new role model. Throughout his published works can be sensed a vibrant individualism, even egotism—much of his writing is indeed directly about himself.[557] He also assumes in many places a direct relationship with his readers, addressing them and even suggesting that he is confiding secrets to them.[558] This has been recognized in several studies of European literary history as a feature of the new role of writers in the print era: instead of transmitting texts to present and future audiences or imagined assemblies of fellow scholars, the writer was addressing a large number of persons “who were not gathered together in one place but were scattered in separate dwellings and who, as solitary individuals with divergent interests, were more receptive to intimate interchanges than to broad-gauged rhetorical effects.”[559] Hence, authors emerged who aimed to suggest an intimate relationship with their many unknown readers, while in the process developing their own cult of self: often cited in the case of the European Renaissance[560]—in the Arab renaissance (nahdah) of the nineteenth century, al-Shidyaq can perhaps be seen as a similar phenomenon. This new individualism of the print era also found a manifestation in the conduct of protracted and often vituperative literary disputes between al-Shidyaq and contemporary authors such as Ibrahim al-Yâzijî and Rizqallah Hassun.[561] While such contentions were by no means unknown in literary circles in earlier periods of Arabic literature, the possibilities of print gave them a new potency and currency, encouraging them to be transmitted rapidly across long distances (Hassun lived and published in London, al-Yâzijî in Beirut, while exchanging literary squibs with al-Shidyaq in Istanbul), and bringing them immediately before a wide readership.

But the new authorial assertiveness of al-Shidyaq owed most of all to the fact that printing enabled him to earn his living from writing and publishing. Unlike most of his scribal predecessors, he was not a priest nor an imam nor a legal scholar nor a courtier nor, except for a brief period, a teacher. He was a professional author and editor—an almost completely new phenomenon in the Middle East and the Muslim world. At times, he wrote, translated, and

edited for a salary, as in Malta and Egypt and during part of his stay in England; at other times, he wrote speculatively, aiming to sell the printed editions of his works, such as his travelogues, autobiography, and grammars of French and Arabic. In Istanbul, he became an entrepreneurial author-publisher and newspaper editor.

aLShidyaq's independence, however, was not so absolute that he could dispense entirely with patronage. In the Arab and Muslim worlds, as elsewhere, there had always been, among the rich and powerful, those who had attracted and rewarded writers, especially if the writers provided them with pleasing entertainment or gratified their vanity. al-Shidyaq occasionally played this traditional role, especially when seeking preferment or sponsorship: he wrote a number of odes in praise of the Bey of Tunis and other Tunisian notables, for instance, some of which were printed.[562] But the power of the press offered scope for a new kind of patronage: it could provide literature and information not just to gratify a ruler, but to be disseminated on his behalf, to promote his wider aims and interests—in other words, propaganda. al-Shidyaq became aware of this at an early stage in his career, when he worked for the official Egyptian gazette, al-Waqa'r al-Misriyah, which promoted the policies of the Egyptian ruler Muhammad 'All and which he later sarcastically dubbed a mamdah, or praise-factory.[563] When he had his own newspaper in Istanbul, he was under the patronage of the Ottoman Sultan and generally supported his interests, particularly his pan-Islamic pretensions; but he also received, for much of that time, subventions from the Bey of Tunis, the Khedive of Egypt, and the Nawab of Bhopal.[564] Sometimes, of course, these interests came into conflict, and on two occasions this led to the temporary closure of the newspaper on the Sultan's orders.[565] Not only the paper, but some of the Jawa'ib Press books, also, were designed, and subsidized, to support these interests, including books written by the reformist Tunisian chief minister Khayr al-Dîn and the Nawab of Bhopal, and semi-official pro-Ottoman publications, such as the lavish album of portraits of the sultans edited by al-Shidyaq's son, Salim Faris.[566]

al-Shidyaq was generally able to balance these sources of patronage in such a way as to preserve a fair degree of independence for himself, and this was all the easier because the power of print, coupled with his unprecedented

and unique skills in using it, made him indispensable to his patrons to an extent that court writers of the scribal era never were.

In conclusion, we can perhaps reiterate that al-Shidyaq personified, both in his career and in his attitudes, the dawn of a new cultural era for the Arab and Muslim worlds, in which the communications revolution caused by the printing press brought radical changes in the intellectual, political, and social life of the area. No historical account of the Middle East in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can be adequate unless it takes into account the causes, stages, and consequences of these changes. But for this to be possible, much more must be known about the history of the presses, and the nature of what they produced, than is the case at present. The printing history and historical bibliography of the Middle East has been a shamefully neglected subject, both in comparison with equivalent studies in relation to early modern Europe, and in comparison with the study of Islamic manuscripts. The profile of the subject therefore needs to be raised, and historians, bibliographers, and librarians alike must work to rectify what remains a serious defect in our understanding of a vital aspect of the history of Muslim and Middle Eastern civilization.

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-43.jpg][Fig. 11.3. A-B (together). Autographed manuscript, dated 1850, of an appendix on qalb and ibdal in an early draft of al-Shidyaq’s Kitab al-jâsüs ’ala al-qamus, The text differs from his later published work on the subject (Sirral-layalfial-qalb wa-al-ibdal, Istanbul, 1284/1868). (Cambridge University Library, MS Or. 1446, fols. 81v-82r.)]]

[474] c.v. Findley, “Knowledge and Education in the Modern Middle East: A Compatafwe. N’ɔew:١ ’هلا The Modern Economic History of the Middle East in Its World Context, ed. G. Sabagh (Georgio Levi Della Vida Conferences, 10) (Cambridge, 1989), p. 132.

[475] Cf. R. Chartier, “General Introduction: Print Culture,” in The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe, هج K. أًةلأ ٢أةلأ١, trans. L.G. Cochrane (Cambridge; Oxford, 1989), p. 1.

[476] Findley, op. cit., p. 132.

[477] K.s. Salibi, “The Traditional Historiography of the Maronites,” in Historians of the Middle East, ed. B. Lewis and P.M. Holt (London, 1962), p. 223.

[478] Faris al-Shidyaq, alSaq ‘ala al-sâqfî-mâ huwa al-fariyaq (Paris, 1855), p. 22.

[479] Wahid Gdoura, Le debut de Timprimerie arabe a Istanbul et en Syrie: Evolution de Tenvironnement culturel (1706–1787) (Tunis, 1985), passim.

[480] G. Roper, “The Export of Arabic Books from Europe to the Middle BRISMES: Proceedings of the /989 International Conference on Europe and the Middle East, Oxford, 1989), pp. 233–66.

[481] al-Shidyaq, al-Saq, p. 34; A.H. Hourani, “Historians of Lebanon,” in Historians of the Middle East, ed. B. Lewis and P.M. Holt (London, 1962), pp. 230–32

[482] FHib di Tarrazi, Asdaq ma kan, 3 vols. (Beirut, 1948), 2:192–933 Muhammad ‘Abd al-Ghani Hasan, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq (Cairo, 1966), p. 33.

[483] [G.p. Badger and Faris aLShidyaq], Kitab al-muhawarah al-unsiyah h al-lughatayn al-Inkilidyah wa-al-’Arabiyah ٢جاة٦ 1840) و p. 134.

[484] al-Saq, p.3>A, ١dev:\, Muqaddimat diwan Ahmad Faris Efendi (Istanbul, n.d.), p. 2.

[485] J. Macdonald, University of Leeds, Department of Semitic Languages & Literatures [now Department of Modern Arabic Studies], Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts, III: Arabic Mss 101–150 (59هجعا؟>١ \¥)١١, p. 128 .٦١0, < ٦؟.

[486] Top of first page, before the Bismillah.

[487] [W.F. Mavor], Sharh tabaT al-hayawan, trans. Faris al-Shidyaq (Malta, 1841), pp. 3–4.

[488] Hasan, op. cit., p. 34.

[489] M.B. Alwan, “Ahmad Faris ash-Shidyaq and the West,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Indiana, 1970, pp. 28–29, no. 85, and pp. 226–27, nos. 13–16: ‘Imad al-Sulh, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq: atharuhu wa’asruhu, 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1987), pp. 251–52: A.J. Arberry, “Fresh Light on Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq,” Islamic Culture 26/1 (1952), pp. 156–64: A. Gacek, Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London (London, 1981), p. 183, no. 303.

[490] al-Shidyaq, Muqaddimah, p. 4.

[491] Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, Kitab al-rihlah al-mawsumah bi-al-wasitah ild ma’rifat Malita wa-kashf al-mukhabba’ ‘anfunun Awrubba (1%ذلت ٦١ل٦١\ة ,١ 1867), pp. 128, 338, Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, The Arab Rediscovery of Europe: A Study in Cultural Encounters (Princeton, 1963), p. 121; Al wan, Ahmad Faris, pp. 52, 59, 79.

[492] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, p. 338.

[493] Ibid., p. 337.

[494] Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, Kanz al-ragha’ ib fi muntakhabat al-jawa’ib, 7 vols. (Istanbul, 1288-99/1871-81), 1:154–55, 5:184–85; al-Sulh, op. cit., pp. 130و and 241, no. 1.

[495] Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq, al-Jâsüs ‘ala al-aâmüs (Istanbul, 1299/1881), pp. 93–94.

[496] al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 132.

[497] al-Shidyaq, Muqaddimah, pp. 4, 16–17: al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 241, no. 4.

[498] al-Shidyaq, Muqaddimah, p. 4.

[499] Badger and al-Shidyaq, al-Muhawarah, p. 103: al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, p. 382: al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 130.

[500] al-Shidyaq, Muqaddimah, p. 4.

[501] Details of these and other activities of al-Shidyaq in Malta and Egypt are drawn from the archives of the Church Missionary Society now kept at the University of Birmingham.

[502] al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 34.

[503] al-Shidyaq, al-Saq, p. 337.

[504] Faris al-Shidyaq, al-Lafiffi kull ma’nâ tarif(Malta, 1839), pp. 298–99.

[505] Abu al-Futuh Radwan, Tarlkh Matba’at Bulaq (Cairo, 1953), p. 25, “huwa ghayahfijamal al-khatt wa-judat al-tab’r referring to the 1840 edition 0؟ Kitab al-zdri’, aw, amthal Rabbina Yasu’ al-Mas٦hwa-tafsiruha,icY\was set in these types.

[506] al-Kutub al-Muqaddasah (1857 ١لدآلةا0أا١).

[507] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, pp. 306, 309 al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 73.

[508] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah. p. 309.

[509] riam, Marseilles (1858). Cf. Bibliotheque Nationale, Catalogue general des livres imp rimes de la Bibliotheque Nationale (Varvs, 1912), 49: co\. 930.

[510] See A. Ameuney’s (Antuniyus al-Amyünî) preface to Faris al-Shidyaq’s PoemsIQasa’id (London, 1857), p. (2).

[511] al-Sulh, op. cit., pp. 77–83.

[512] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, p. 6.

[513] Mohammed B. Al wan, “The History and Publications of al-Jawa’ib Press,” MELA Notes 11 (1977), pp. 4–7. Unfortunately, the detailed bibliography of the Press’s publications, referred to in this article, does not seem to have been published.

[514] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, p. 382.

[515] Badger and al-Shidyaq, al-Muhawarah, p. 103.

[516] See also al-Jawa’ib 614, quoted in al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 130.

[517] Badger and al-Shidyaq, al-Muhawarah, pp. 132–133.9.

[518] al-Shidyaq, alSaq, p. 515.

[519] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, pp. 375–82.

[520] al-Shidyaq, Kanz, 1157–60.

[521] al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, p. 337.

[522] Badger and al-Shidyaq, al-Muhawarah, pp. 99, 102, 132: al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, pp. 337–78: idem, Kanz, 1:157–60.

[523] al-Shidyaq, Kanz, 1:161.

[524] al-Shidyaq, alSaq, p. 516.

[525] E.L. Eisenstein, The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge, 1979), passim.

[526] Muhammad Ahmad Khalaf Allah, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq wa-ara’uhu al-lughawiyah wa-al-adabiyah (Cairo, 1955), p. 84.

[527] “Fares Eshediak’s remarks concerning the children in the School at Cairo, of the year 1932,٤” CMS Archives: CM/O73/61.

[528] Cf. numerous reports in the CMS Archives, and in Missionary Register, 1826–53.

[529] Findley, op. cit., p. 133.

[530] al-Sulh, op. cit., pp. 132, and 241, no. 7.

[531] أ١ةآ٦؟> ة\-ة١\\ةلاة٩, al-Bakurah al-shahiyah b nahw al-lughah al-InkilizJyah (Malta, 1836).

[532] u. ٢دأًلأةأ\ Dwcnsoy, Istanbul Belediye Kütüphanesi alfabetik katalog, II: Belediye ve M. Cevdet kitaplar, Arapca ve Farsca basma eserler (VsVavbX, 1954), p. 14, no. 2073.

[533] Badger and al-Shidyaq, Kitab al-muhawarah al-unsiyah (Malta, 1840).

[534] Fares Echckidiak and G. Dugat, Sanad al-rawlfi al-sarfal-Faransawi (Paris, 1854).

[535] Badi al-Zaman al-Hamadham, Maqcimat (Istanbul, 1298/1880), p. 100, colophon.

[536] Istanbul, 1287/1870. Cf. Alwan, “History,” p. 5

[537] See, for example, al-Jawd’ib 872 (1.7.1877)و p. 4, col. 2.

[538] See, for example, ibid. 932 (11.7.1878), p. 4, col. 3.

[539] See, for example, ibid. 1009 (10.6.1880), p. 4, col. 2.

[540] See price list in al-Jawa’ib 1017 (25.8.1880), p. 8, col. 2. Cf. Alwan, “History,” p. 6.

[541] See, for instance, Hamadhani, op. cit., p. 100: idem, Rasa’ll (Istanbul, 1298/1880]), p. 238; Abu Muhammad al-Qasim ibn ‘Alî al-Harîrî, Kitab durrat ’ ‘ awham al-khawâşş (Istanbul, 1299/1881), p. 257, where Ms copies are identified and differences mentioned. Cf. al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 132.

[542] E.g., al-Lafif, p. 299: al-Saq, p. vii.

[543] E.g., Farhat, op. cit. (the list is not present in all copies); al-Shidyaq, al-Rihlah, pp. 387–88: Mikhâ’îl ‘Abd al-Sayyid al-Mişrî, Sulwan al-shâjî ft al-radd ‘ala Ibrahim al-Yazifi (Istanbul, 1289/1872)و after p. 110.

[544] al-Bakitrah (Malta, 1836: Istanbul, 1881): al-Lafif(Malta, 1839: Istanbul, 1881); Kitab al-salawat

al-‘ümmah (Book of Common Prayer) (Malta, 18403 London, 1850); al-Rihlah (Tunis, 1867: Istanbul, 1881): Ghunyat al-talib wa-munyat al-raghib (Istanbul, 1872/1888).

[545] Cf. lists and announcements in al-Jawa’ib.

[546] al-Shidyaq, alSaq, book 2, ch. 3.

[547] Badger and al-Shidyaq, al-Muhawarah, pp. 3–4.

[548] Muştala al-Shihabi, al-Mustalahal al-‘ilmiyahfial-lughah ül-’Arabîyah, 2nd ed. (Damascus, 1965), p. 50: Hasan, op. cit., p. 144: Alwan, “Ahmad Faris,” 210–11.

[549] List of publications available inside front wrapper of Abu Muhammad Ja’far al-Sarraj’s Kitab rnasari’ al-‘ushshaq (Istanbul, 1301/1883).

[550] E.g., al-Shidyaq, al-Jâsüs.

[551] Eisenstein, op. cit., p. 106.

[552] E.g., Hamadhanl, Rasftil, 1880.

[553] al-Shidyaq, al-Lafif, pp. 4–5.

[554] Alwan, “History,” p. 7.

[555] Eisenstein, op. cit., p. 105.

[556] al-Sulh, op. cit., p. 131.

[557] LA. Haywood, Modern Arabic Literature, 7500–7970 (London, 1971), p. 53.

[558] E.g., in al-Saq, pp. 75, 230, etc.

[559] Eisenstein, op. cit., p. 230.

[560] Cf. ibid., and references there cited.

[561] Alwan, “Ahmad Faris,” pp. 64–65.

[562] ¥ةأً’١ة ةج؟>١ةةلاة٩, Qasidah yumdah jiha Ahmad Bash Wall Mamlakat Tunis (Paris, 1851); idem, Poemslöasâ’id.

[563] al-Shidyaq, al-Sâq, p. 255. Cf. Alwan, ‘Ahmad Faris,” p. 41.

[564] Alwan, “Ahmad Faris,” pp. 64–65.

[565] G.p. Badger, “Arabic Journalism,” The Academy 20/497 (1881), p. 3663 idem, “The Press of aTJawdibr ibid. 20/503 (1881), p. 473: Alwan, “History,” p. 5.

[566] Abda’ mâ kân fl suwar Salatin Al ‘ Uthmân/Album des souverains ottomans, ed. Salim Faris (Istanbul, 1188531]).

** 12. The Book in the Modern Arab World: The Cases of Lebanon and Egypt

George N. Atiyeh

The book is not only a vehicle of communication, it is first and foremost the outstanding expression and reflection of a culture. The role and position of the book in a society is bound to the nature, historical circumstances, and psychological configurations of that society. In fact, there is no single pattern that applies to all societies outside the common elements that characterize the human race as a whole, and books are no exception. When one considers the role and position of the book in the Arab world, one needs to take into account the above factors, and bear in mind the basic differences that exist between Western and Arab circumstances and the different forces that have gone into play in the Arab world during the modem and contemporary periods. These forces, different in strength and orientation, while bringing the West closer to the Arab world in certain respects, have been unable to eliminate the basic differences between the two. I do not agree with the racist slogan of Kipling that West is West and East is East and the twain will never meet; I believe that there is a continuous and fundamental attraction between the two, regardless of their differences. The story of the book in the Arab world is an expression of this attraction.

In the Arab world, the art of printing, publishing, and distribution of books on a large scale among all classes and among young and old approached the European level and acquired some semblance of maturity almost four centuries after Gutenberg’s invention. Part of the gap created by time and technology has been filled in some Arab countries, yet there is still a long way to go to bridge the gap completely. Unfortunately many of those, who deal with the book have not always been able to keep what was good in the manuscript era, in terms of scholarship, and take full advantage of what is good in the printing age.

Historically speaking, the Arabic printed book appeared first in Europe, in Italy.[567] Other European countries soon followed suit, such as Holland, France, England, and Germany. The Arabic printed book did not see the light of day in the Arab world until 1706. With this in mind, I will try to survey the development of book production and dissemination, and to examine the role played by books in the renaissance of the Arab world, singling out some outstanding examples that were signs of or landmarks in the generation of new trends or cultural orientations.

The Arab world covers four great geographic regions, North Africa and the Nile Valley on the African continent, and the Arabian peninsula and the Fertile Crescent in Western Asia. This being a large area to cover in a short essay, I will limit myself to surveying the two countries that were and remain pioneers in book production, namely, Lebanon and Egypt. Although in the recent past and at present other Arab countries have been playing an increasingly important role, the roles of Lebanon and Egypt were and remain seminal as far as printed books are concerned.

Intellectually, the modern era in the Arab world experienced, in its early stages, the rise of a number of religious, cultural, and political movements directed at the regeneration of Islam, and also aiming at social and political reforms. Some were fundamentalist, although not radical, in approach, such as the Wahhabi movement in the Arabian Peninsula, and the Senusiyah in Libya. Others were less fundamentalist but still religiously inspired, such as the reformist movement of Khayr al-Dîn in Tunis, and the Salaflyah in Morocco. The common denominator among these movements was regeneration or reform, yet the movements took different forms, approaches, speeds, and goals. In Lebanon and Egypt, contact with the West brought with it a variety of movements, a search for new identities, nationalism, rationalism, and secularism, which grew up side by side with religious and conservative traditionalism.

Lebanon and Egypt had something in common that provided them with certain advantages over other Arab countries. Both had continuous early contact with the West, and during Ottoman rule they shared a certain freedom due to the absence or relaxation of Ottoman control. The Ottoman colonial power, which began in 1516—more or less at the same time as the

first Arabic book was printed in Fano, Italy, in 1514—was weakened when Muhammad ‘All (1805–49) assumed power in Egypt in 1805, and Mount Lebanon assumed certain autonomy under Bashir 11 (1789–1840). Lebanese autonomy grew under the Mutasarrinyah (1864–1914), and provided the Lebanese with more freedom to run their own affairs.

Variation in the degree of control from province to province in the Ottoman Empire and the extent of contact with the West favored some areas above others in providing an environment favorable to cultural growth and the development of particular modernizing situations. Lebanon and Egypt were thus favored. Among the elements that went into the making of modernity were the influence of Western education on literary, political, and social life: the liberation of man’s mind to pursue the truth on his own advocated by a number of progressive intellectuals; and a new world outlook. The role of the book in this development was crucial. In foct, the book helped loosen the strangle-hold of the ‘ulama’, the religious learned men, over education. In most of the Ottoman Empire, including the Arab world, the ‘ulama’ opposed the introduction of printing. It was only in 1727 that the use of the printing press for printing in Arabic script was permitted, and that was only for the production of non-religious materials. Belief in Islam’s superiority over other religions, because the Koran is God’s eternal word, and veneration of the Arabic language as the medium for revealing the word of God, made the ‘ulama’, the Sultan, and others oppose the use of a metal object, coming from Christendom, to reproduce the honored language of revelation. There were certainly other reasons for this opposition, but those listed above were the weightiest ones. Here one wonders if the absence of printing was not an important element in the late arrival of modernism and modern technology to the Empire. Most of the Empire was rather slower in the assimilation and circulation of the new learning, leaving the Arab world far behind the West in terms of progress. Lebanon and Egypt were the first to realize this and to take advantage of the printing press.

Lebanese commercial and educational relations with the West began in the late sixteenth century, yet the printing of books, first introduced by the Christians of Lebanon and Syria, took until the nineteenth century to achieve significant consequences, inasmuch as most of what was printed early on were religious texts meant to teach, mainly to strengthen and defend the

faith. One can easily state that the printing of books in that early period had little effect on the modernization process or on raising the level of culture on a large scale. The seeds of progress, however, were planted.

In an era when the manuscript was the main carrier of information and ideas, one needed to be wealthy in order to afford books. The shop of the warraq (a man who made a profession of transcribing books) became rare, and those few restless spirits who seek knowledge in every age had only church or mosque libraries to resort to. Knowledge had a mystique of its own, and people who possessed it, or owned the tools to acquire it, did not let it go out except sparingly, or often not at all. The dissemination of books on a wide scale did not prevail until the later decades of the nineteenth century when printing with movable type had reached most of the Arab countries and a large reading public became attracted to books. Iraq, for example, had its first movable type press only in 1860 Tunis in 1861, and Morocco in 1912.[568]

It is obvious that there is a symbiotic relationship between books and education. The spread of schools and education in the nineteenth century was accompanied by the development of book production. Like education, book production started hesitantly in the eighteenth century and then began working its way steadily through stages of adaptation and translation, into a stage of more creativity, independence, variation, and much wider influence. Let US look at this process by focusing on the two countries that are most representative of this phenomenon. But before we do that, it should be noted that when we talk about the private publishing that became common at the end of the nineteenth century, we don’t mean publishing houses in the Western sense. Publishing was done either by printing presses that were established primarily for printing books, or by bookstores that were established exclusively for selling books then added publishing and distribution to their activities. What they published, they did, most of the time, at the expense of the author, with little or no control over quality of scholarship or organization of the materials. The gradual move from matbcTah (press) and maktabah (bookstore) to dar (publishing house) was to become fully fledged only in the twentieth century.

*** Lebanon and the Book

Printing in Arabic movable type was introduced into Lebanon[569] as early as 1610, in the Maronite monastery of St. Anthony, located in Quzhayya, in North Lebanon, not far from the famous cedars of Lebanon. Only one book was produced in the short life of this pioneering endeavor. It was an Arabic language Psalter, but in a Karshum[570] typeface. Lebanon had to wait until 1734 for a second and more lasting venture.

During the seventeenth century, the light of learning was kept dimly burning mostly by a group of Maronite clergy who had received education in the Maronite College in Rome. Having developed there a greater sense for scholarship, they were able to inject a new vitality into their church and environment. Outside the Maronite community, there were also glimmers of intellectual and literary life, reflected in a weak but persistent manuscript tradition. Copying of books and calligraphy were very much present among Muslim scholars in different parts of what is now Lebanon, such as in Tripoli and Jabal ‘Amil,[571] as well as in the monasteries, where bishops and patriarchs encouraged their monks to copy books carefully and beautifully. Books were treated, by those who could afford them, judiciously and with the full respect usually afforded to precious things.

During the eighteenth century, education and books received a boost from the establishment of new schools. The French Jesuits established a school in ‘Ayn Tura (1728), and Maronite colleges were established in Zgharta (1735), and ‘Ayn Warqa (1789), which played a prominent role in advancing education and scholarship. The growing need for books was satisfied by publishing them in Europe. They were mostly books in liturgy, teaching language, some classics, and anthologies of pious and ascetic works.

The first printing press that advanced the cause of book production in the Arab world was the one set up by ‘Abdallah Zakhir (1684–1748). Zakhir came to Lebanon from Aleppo, Syria, after the split within the Antiochian Orthodox Church (ca. 1724) and his becoming an advocate of Greek Catholicism. In Aleppo, Zakhir had worked for Patriarch Athanathios Dabbas (1685–1724), who was the first in the Arab world to establish a press with Arabic movable

type (1706). In 1723, Zakhir, a skilled artisan and intellectual, established his own press at the monastery of Yuhanna al-Sabigh, in the town of Shuwayr, in the Kisrwan district. The setting up of this press met the needs of a growing number of readers and of Maronite Christians who began replacing the Syriac language used in their speech, liturgy, and writing with Arabic.

Because of its clear and beautiful type, Zakhir's press became a model for the St. George Orthodox Press, established in Beirut in 1751. Zakhir himself had cut two new typefaces, both more elegant and closer to the rounder and lighter Naskhi style of writing. In fact, by adopting Arabic type and improving the typeface, Zakhir broadened the horizons for the book in the Arab world. The intellectual content of the books produced by these two pioneering presses was mainly theological and devotional in nature. Neither the worldly literature of Europe nor its political and artistic ideas seem to have had any great impact on the subjects of the books. Almost all had either a religious or a linguistic theme. Both the Shuwayr and St. George presses printed the Psalms, which were used not only as a prayer book to be recited during liturgy, but also as a textbook for learning Arabic. The fact that the Psalms were printed fifteen times between 1610 and 1776 was a sign of the growing interest of the Christian population of Lebanon in the Arabic language.[572]

The dissemination of books was confined to religious groups, or among rich and powerful individuals who were fond of books and were attracted by the prestige that goes with amassing books in private libraries. Among the well known libraries were the Arslan family library in 'Ubay, Jirjls Şafâ's in Dayr al-Qamar, and the libraries of Dayr al-Sharfeh, Dayr al-Mukhalliş, and Dayr al-Balamand.[573]

The first half of the nineteenth century saw important political, social, and educational developments take place. The Egyptian Ibrahim Pâshâ, who occupied Syria between 1831 and 1840, started several schools. This gave a powerful impulse to national education. American missionaries set up a press in Beirut. Before moving to Beirut in 1834, the American Press was first established in Malta, where Faris al-Shidyaq, a key figure in the renaissance of Arabic books and literature, was instrumental in improving its typography by designing an attractive new Arabic typeface and by introducing many of the organizational aspects of modem book production.

The American Press of Beirut probably reached the widest audience of any nineteenth-century press in the Arab world by publishing for writers who were in the forefront of the surging literary revival, like Naşîfal-Yazîjî (1800–71) and Butrus al-Bustanl as well as for the professors at the Syrian Protestant College (now the American University of Beirut).

The American missionaries, particularly those of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, were able to attract many Lebanese and Syrians, converting them to Protestantism through their new, attractive, and serious publications. This prompted the Jesuits to counter the evangelizing activities of the Protestant missionaries by setting up their own press in 1848. In a very short time, and using new equipment, the Jesuit press was able to produce thirty books in 350 thousand copies.[574]

A look at publishing around the middle of the century would show that religious works explaining the principles of religion or dealing with spiritual contemplation were the dominant category, ailqtida’ bi-ûl-Masîh (Imitation of Christ), which was first printed by Zakhir in 1739, went into several printings. There were also many works of polemics among Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox. Wortabefs Dalll al-şawâb ilâ sidq aiKitab (The True Guide to the Veracity of the Book), published in 1851, was one of them, as was al-Huââ al-amln fi dahd arcf al-brutastantryln (The Faithful Guide to Refuting the Opinions of the Protestants), by the Jesuit fathers.

Language textbooks were numerous, the most important of which were Bahth al-matfilib fi ‘ilm al-‘arabiyah (A Study of What is Needed to Learn the Arabic Language), which was first printed by the American Press in 1827, then went into several editions, and Majma’ aibahrayn (The Meeting of the Two Seas), by Naşîf al-Yazîjî. In history, we find Tannus al-Shidyaq’s Akhbar al-a’yân fi jabal Lubnan (The History of the Notables of Mount Lebanon) (1859), and Tarikh Salatin Bânû ‘Uthman (History of the Ottoman Sultans) (1858), by Ibrahim al-Najjâr. In geography, Cornelius van Dyke’s al-Mîr’at al-wadiyah fi al-kurah al-ardlyah (The Bright Mirror of the Terrestrial Globe) (1852) was one of

several works published by the American Press. Van Dyke also published works in mathematics and geometry. It was at about this time that translations of Western novels, such as Paul et Virginie, by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, began to appear.

This is only a sample of the books that were read or discussed in schools or in the cultural circles and societies that began to form. The book was able to improve the application of grammatical rules, set new directions for the writing of history, cultivate the mind, and bring to the fore new genres in Arabic literature.

The second half of the nineteenth century saw the extension and expansion of education and the modernization of the Arabic language. The revival of the national language inaugurated a literary renaissance which indirectly produced a nationalist consciousness and a feeling of cultural distinction between what was Arabic or Syrian and what was Ottoman. This was also reflected in the rise of non-missionary, or national, schools, colleges, and associations that invigorated cultural consciousness and national feeling.

With the progress of publishing, both of books and of serials, and a growing desire for more knowledge, the intellectual contents of books became varied and wide in scope. Gradually, the subjects turned away from the religiously didactic and language-related, to books dealing with all fields of human knowledge, inaugurating new trends in literature, politics, and the sciences. As advances in book production and the diversification of subjects and levels of scholarship took place, individually owned and run presses were sprouting up all over the place. The outstanding impact, however, came from the establishment of institutions of higher education to which presses were attached or related, and which undertook publishing and editorial programs. First came the Syrian Protestant College (now the American University of Beirut) in 1866, and then the Catholic St. Joseph University in 1874. Both competed for the minds and souls of Christians and Muslims alike. The competition was not necessarily negative in that it encouraged plurality and coexistence. Each wanted to define itself by excelling in certain specific areas. Up to the end of the century, the Catholic Press focused on the production of language and literary works, grammars, dictionaries, and chrestomathies of current and classical works. Many of these early

publications are, until today, still widely used, for example, the dictionary al-Munjid.

The American University, on the other hand, took a different direction, that of the sciences. It produced books in medicine, natural sciences, astronomy, and also dictionaries. The two presses, however, were guided by strict moral and religious norms, as well as by a high standard of scholarship. They did not publish any work they thought to be of doubtful value. Furthermore, whatever was published was carefully edited and checked for correctness and presentation. In the two translations made of the Bible by the American and Catholic Presses, there was the belief that the exact and correct translation from Hebrew and Greek was not enough unless it were eloquently and clearly expressed and presented. Translation of the Bible had a considerable impact on Arab culture by making it available to the general reading public. Familiarity with the Bible was instrumental in introducing a variety of motifs and notions into modern Arabic literature.

Alongside these venerable presses, there mushroomed a number of presses that were not restrained by the above norms nor by the promptings of the state or religious institutions. Addressing themselves to a new kind of secular readership, they turned to the translation and adaptation of texts for their literary or entertainment value alone. Driven by a desire to sustain and profit from their presses and publishing activities, the many periodicals and journals that began to proliferate serialized original and translated novels, stories, and plays. These were new genres of literature, unlike what had existed previously in popular and classical Arabic works. They catered to the new crop of literate public, mostly for entertainment.[575] Some were written with a didactic purpose behind them, and most had weak plots and were full of interpolations.

The increase in the number of printing presses was due to several causes. The reading public increased greatly with the spread of education; the government was, relatively speaking, tolerant, especially when it did not feel politically threatened; and the growing number of newspapers and periodicals encouraged reading. A lurking desire for greater and surer information led to the publication of reference tools, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and almanacs.

The awakening of the national consciousness translated itself into editions of what were and still are called “heritage” books. This contributed not only to the emergence of modern styles in prose and poetry, but also to energizing the desire to learn more about the history of the country and its ancient cultures. In 1881, Jurjl Yanni (1856–1941) published a history of greater Syria (Tarikh Sûrfyâ), which included Lebanon. Some learned people, such as Nawfal Elias Nawfal (1812–87), began to build their own libraries of classical and other Arabic works and to publish on the history of religions and the sciences.[576]

This cultural awakening, one should emphasize, was not limited to the Christian community, but was shared by their Muslim compatriots. The most eminent expression of the awakening among the Muslims was the creation of al-Maqasid Benevolent Society, which sponsored the establishment of schools in Beirut and the surrounding areas. Among the most distinguished authors and scholars who played a role in its foundation and development v’s al-Shaykh Yüsüf al-AsIr (1815–89),[577] a judge who authored many books and articles on jurisprudence and languages.[578] Because of his great linguistic expertise, he was called upon to help in the translation of the Bible into Arabic. There was also al-Shaykh Ibrahim al-Ahdab (1826–91), another judge and great linguist, and ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Qabbanl (1847–1935), the founder of the newspaper Thamarat al-funun, and a member of al-Funün Society, which should be given credit for buying a press and sponsoring the publication of many books.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Beirut and the rest of Lebanon had more than twenty presses, in addition to the American and Catholic presses. Their output reached several thousand titles and covered all branches of human knowledge. Subject-wise, the end of the century saw the prevalence of humanistic over religious topics; nonetheless, the diversity of subjects was surprising. Topics included the principles of logic, philosophy, literature, natural sciences, history, geography, religious dogma, spiritual readings, rituals, ethics, popular literature, and the newly introduced genres of literature, the novel and the play.

Unlike other Arab countries, the growth of the book industry and the development of printing were carried out by private individuals and institutions, and not by the government. The Lebanese were able to create new fonts, and improve the quality of books and printing in general. Yet books were not always up to good standards in terms of indexing, annotations, structure of the contents, and extent of typographical errors.

The dissemination of books outside the schools was not highly organized. The most common way to advertise a new book, or books in general, was on the book's own cover or last page.[579] In fact, books were sold in general stores, or by the authors themselves. Financing was provided by the author, and at times was subsidized by an association, such as the Muslim al-Funun Society or by a friend of the author.[580]

To publish books, newspapers, and periodicals, one needed to get a permit from the government, especially in Beirut. Because of its growing commercial and educational importance, Beirut was the capital of an Ottoman province (wilayah) in 1888. Until then it had been subordinate to the province of Damascus. The first Ottoman printing law was decreed on 6 January 1857. It was guided by two principles: licensing to publish and prior censorship of all publications. In Lebanon, the effects of this law were slight at first. The presses operated by the various Christian sects were virtually the only ones until the 18705. The Ottoman authorities did not see a great need to censor their publications because they did not present any challenge to the authorities. As of 1871, the position of the maktubji[581] was given greater authority. The occupant of this position was the editor of the official gazette and other government publications, as well as being the censor. In 1885, when exercise of censorship became stricter, books were required to be sent to Istanbul for approval before publication. This prompted many authors to send their books to Cairo for publication, instead. Many of the authors and intellectuals themselves began to move to Egypt during 'Abd al-Hamid the Second's (1876–1908) rule, as it became difficult to publish under the stricter governmental censorship. There were other causes why Syrian and Lebanese authors, journalists, and political activists moved to the Egyptian cities of Cairo and Alexandria.[582] Publishing in the Arab world was greatly invigorated through many decades by this convergence of Syrians and Egyptians. The interaction between Lebanese and Syrian expatriates or

immigrants and Egyptian intellectuals produced exciting and trend-setting publications in which the overriding passions expressed by the intellectuals and political activists was the challenge of modernity, that is, the transformation of a “backward” Arab world into a modern one. As an example, one can give the publications of Farah Antun’s Ibn Rushd wa-falsafatuh (Averroes and His Philosophy) (Alexandria, 1903), in which he advocated rationalism and secularism, and seemingly implied that Islam checked all rational inquiry and all science. These were views that contrasted sharply with the prevalent intellectual and religious atmosphere in Egypt. A controversy between Antun and one of the most enlightened Muslim scholars, Muhammad

I ensued. ‘Abduh, in his work al-Islam wa-al-Nasraniyah ma’a al-’Hm ‘ — ‘ (Islam and Christianity on Science and Civilization) (Cairo, 1902), defended Islam and maintained that Christianity was intolerant by nature and that modern European civilization developed when Europe liberated itself from Christianity. At the end of the century, the endeavors of both the Syrians and the Egyptians converged together to give a great boost to book publishing.

The Young Turk revolution of 1908 broadened for a short period the horizon of freedom. All kinds of associations and political clubs were formed and the number of presses increased. With the growth of higher education at all levels and greater communication with the West, Lebanon entered the first decade of the twentieth century with ample freedom and a greater acceptance of scientific values. But no sooner did Turkey enter the First World War than Mount Lebanon lost its autonomy as well as its intellectual vitality. In 1920, under the French occupation which followed the departure of the Turks, Lebanon regained a great deal of its publishing vitality. The American and Catholic presses reequipped themselves with modern machines from Europe and the United States. In 1927, the Catholic Press began the publication of the monumental series Bibliotheca Arabica Scholasticorum, in addition to its many religious and educational publications. Throughout the following decades, it remained one of the most important publishers. It published books not only for Lebanese authors, but also for scholars and institutions around the world, including such prestigious institutions as L’Ecole des Langues Orientales, of Paris, and the Warburg Institute, of London. Likewise, its publications were disseminated all over the

Arab world, Europe, and the Americas. The dictionary of Father Ma’lûf, al-Munjid, the grammar of Rashid aLShartanl, Mabadi’ al-‘Arablyah, and the literary chrestomathy of Luis Cheikho, Majani al-adab were sent by the thousands to Cairo, the great marketplace for Arabic books.

The American Press alone published 462 books in 143,073 volumes in 1922, these included Bibles in all sizes and formats, religious, educational, and literary works, as well as series in archaeology, the natural sciences, and oriental studies. Its books were disseminated worldwide.[583]

The 19405 saw the rise of individually owned and run publishing houses. The age of dar, a publishing house that finances its own publications and launches them into the marketplace, arrived in Lebanon. Several such houses were established, among which Dar al-Makshuf published mostly in literature, and Dar Şadir-Rîhânî diversified its publications into the fields of law, sociology, history, and the classics. Dar al-‘Hm lil-Malayln (Knowledge for the Millions Publishing House) was another publisher of works on varying topics. Its English-Arabic dictionary, al-Mawrid, is one of the most widely circulated.

Not all the publishers were in Beirut; there were several outside that belonged to religious congregations and played an important role in the history of the book in Lebanon. They were, in a way, heirs to the scholarly traditions of the Lebanese monasteries. The most important ones were al-Matba’ah al-Bülîsîyah, al-Mukhallişlyah Press, and the press of the Lebanese Mission.

The publishing of books and serials reached its peak after the Egyptian Revolution of 1952. The nationalization of the book industry in Egypt, the greater, sometimes chaotic, freedom in Lebanon, and the long tradidion in printing turned Beirut into the Mecca of publishing in and for the Arab world.

In fact, the Arab, and not the Lebanese market, became the main factor in the growth of the book industry. With the opening of the rich markets in the

Arabian peninsula, the focus of interest became set on that part of the world, with its high demand for textbooks, children’s books, and religious works. During the 19705, the number of publishing houses increased tremendously. Most specialized in social, political, or religious publications, and supported the ideological position of one group or another. Beirut became the publishing capital for dissident groups, which flocked to it from all over the Arab world. Books on socialism, nationalism, and secularism were produced for the educated class by these ideological publishers. A great many titles dealt with the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as with solutions to the economic and social problems of the region. Literary works, whether creative, such as poetry or fiction, or literary criticism, equaled all other classes in number. Some poets, such as Nizar Qabbam, and novelists, such Ghadah al-Samman, established publishing houses exclusively for publishing their own works, which were popular all over the Arab world.

Scholarly publishing did not suffer greatly as a result of the changes in interests and directions. New universities, such as the Lebanese, Arab, and Holy Spirit (Kaslik) Universities, had successful publications, though they were limited in scope.

Production of new dictionaries and reprinting of old ones became a major industry, but also a source of confusion regarding new terminology in the sciences. Authors who could not publish in their own countries, and those who wanted good production and wide distribution, relied on Lebanese publishers. The ease and convenience of publishing in Lebanon attracted even the most eminent writers in the Arab world. They contracted with Lebanese publishers to reprint and distribute their works. Najib Mahfüz’s Awlad hciratina was serialized in Egypt, but was printed in book form only in Lebanon, because its publication in book form was prohibited in Egypt. It presented the Prophet Muhammad and other prophets in a manner unacceptable to the ‘ulama’. Even during its civil war of 1975–91, Lebanon remained a major center of publishing, although several other Arab countries established their own publishing houses. Lebanon was also among the first to mount book fairs, now a popular phenomenon in all Arab countries. A sobering fact about Lebanon, however, is that it is common to find there pirated books, and unscholarly editions and reprints of the classics, often with the critical apparatus removed, along with the claim that these are new editions.

*** The Book in Egypt

The decisive events in the modern and contemporary history of Egypt are the French occupation in 1798; the rise of Muhammad All (1805): the British occupation and the ‘Urâbî revolution (1882); the 1919 revolution and the struggle for independence (this is a period historians like to refer to as the liberal era); the 1952 revolution; and the Camp David agreement (1979). Each of these eו ents had a great impact on the book in Egypt.

The first printing presses with movable type came to Egypt in 1798, brought by Napoleon Bonaparte during his invasion of Egypt. Accompanied by fifty savants, historians, geographers, engineers, linguists, and physicians. Napoleon claimed that the presses he brought were to help in making available the books describing Egypt, which his scholars were supposed to and did write. However, the first book printed was not written by the scholars; it was Amthal Luqmcin al-hakim (The Proverbs of Luqman), published by the Orientalist Jean Joseph Marcel. La Description de !’Egypt, the result of the investigations of the scholars brought by Napoleon, was printed long after his armies had left Egypt in 1801. In fact, his publication program was aimed at trying to identify the principles of the French Revolution with Islam. A few Egyptian scholars, their curiosity aroused, visited the press and asked questions on how it could affect culture, but the French impact on Egypt as a whole was only gradually and indirectly felt after the French departure.

The manuscript era did not begin to cede ground until Muhammad ‘All established, in or about 1822, the famous Bulaq Press.[584] Directed first bו Nicholas al-MasabkJ (d. 1830), who was of Lebanese origin, the press soon became the symbol of modernization in the Arab world. After taking office. Muhammad ‘Al realized that the key to successfully opposing the might of the Ottoman Empire and aggressive Europeans like Napoleon lay in education along Western lines, particularly in practical, technical subjects. Between 1822 and 1842, the press at Bulaq published 243 titles in Arabic. Turkish, and Persian. A glance at the titles shows clearly where Muhammad ‘All’s interest was: forty-eight were on military and naval subjects. He had

seen and noted how successful the modern arms of the French had been against the antiquated arms and methods of the Mamluks. It should be noted, however, that the books published in Egypt during the first half of the century were not all in militan' or applied sciences; 55.7 percent were in the humanities, the pure and applied sciences constituted only 27.7 percent, and the social sciences 25.1 percent.[585]

In order to prepare Egyptians for professional schools, and to train officials and translators, Muhammad Al sent students to Europe to study typography, among other things. He also opened several schools, the most famous of which was the school of languages (Madrasat al-alsun). opened in 1836. In 1837 he appointed as its head Rifa'ah Rafi' al-Tahtawi (1801–73). Over the next twenty years, al-Tahtawf wrote or translated thirty-eight books in different subjects, including geography, history, Greek philosophy, as well as military science. Most of these were published by the Bulaq Press. al-Tahtawi had lived in Paris for five years. His book, Takhlis al-Ibriz ilâ talkhis Banz, contains many observations on the manners and customs of the French. The importance of this work, published by Bulaq, resides in telling US how the men who took part in the early modernization of Egypt under Muhammad 'All thought and felt, and the impact of nineteenth-century Europe on a traditionally educated Muslim. The French, al-Tahtawi states in his book, compose books on all subjects, even on such subjects as cooking, which means that even craftsmen must know how to read in order to acquire a complete knowledge of their craft.

Aware that the system of schools he had established could not function without books, Muhammad 'Al bought several presses and attached them to the schools he had founded, such as the Abu Zi'bil Press, attached to the school of medicine.

Bulaq books are sought after now and valued as important early imprints. There were, however, criticisms leveled against their production. The title pages were not independently presented (they were crammed with long introductions inside of which the title and author's name were inserted without distinguishing them visibly from the rest of the text) and the beginnings of new chapters were often not distinguished by larger or different types, scripts, or colors. It was similar, in these respects, to the way

manuscripts were produced. Apparently, it was difficult to jump from the manuscript age to the age of printing all at once. The Bulaq printed books, nonetheless, were clear and easy to read, and they had hardly any typographical errors.

Unlike in Lebanon, the early presses in Egypt were owned and run by the government. Private presses hardly existed in Egypt. We know of an ‘Abd al-Raziq press established in 1837,[586] but there is no evidence that it contributed to book publishing. The role of the private sector was to come later. The social and cultural situation in Egypt around 1840 was not ready yet for the development of private publishing, especially in light of the fact that the Bulaq Press welcomed the printing of non-govemmental books at the expense of their authors for reasonable prices,[587] and that the general public was not yet enlightened enough on the value of books.

The original commitment of the Bulaq Press was to government publications, such as annual reports and the official gazette, al-Waqcdi’ al-Mişrîyah. It nevertheless published a huge number of books in all fields, but mostly in those that conformed or coincided with the ideas of Muhammad ‘All for the revival of Egypt. They included books in the military sciences, textbooks, and books on religious and literary subjects, as well as dictionaries. In fact, the first book ever printed there was an Italian-Arabic dictionary. There were also books that might be considered encyclopedias, such as Ma’rifatnameh, in Turkish, and popular works, such as the One Thousand and One Nights and Lata’if Nasr al-Dîn Khöjâ (The Witty Jokes of Naşr al-Din Khoja).

Bulaq books were often given as gifts by Muhammad ‘All to European royalty or to friends and visitors. They were, in fact, read more outside than inside of Egypt. Apparently, the press did not have a bookstore attached to it. Edward Lane, who visited Egypt between 1833 and 1835 and wrote a detailed account of his stay there, does not mention that he himself had seen one.[588] We know, however, that there were a few bookstores in different parts of the city.[589] A bookstore for Bulaq books was established around 1836, yet the dissemination of books among the population was extremely limited.

The fortunes of the Bulaq Press fluctuated after the death of Muhammad ‘All. In 1862, Sa’îd Pâshâ (1854–63), the ruler of Egypt, realizing that the press had fallen on hard times, donated it to ‘Abd al-Rahman Rushdi on the condition that he would keep printing the laws and the forms needed for government operations. Twenty years later, the press reverted to the government and several enhancements were introduced in equipment and typefaces to make it one of the best in Egypt. In spite of its heavy emphasis on military sciences and textbooks, the influence of the Bulaq Press was great in that it represented a leap from the Middle Ages into the modem age. In the first place, it transformed the way books were produced, making them available cheaply, on a large scale, and in solid and adequate binding. In addition to its service to education, it encouraged more people to read and own books. Likewise, it encouraged more people to publish, thus setting in motion the renaissance of Egypt. As was the case in Lebanon, the translation of books from Western languages enriched the Arabic language by the coining of new words and the resuscitation of others. More importantly, it was the carrier of new ideas and methodologies. In a way, it upset the traditional trend then represented by al-Azhar. The books published by that old institution were not only limited in scope, they were rife with glosses and convoluted language full of rhetoric.

The expansion of book publishing after Muhammad ‘All continued to advance as the private sector, especially bookstores, began to assume the initiative, and the educated public increased in number, particularly during the rule of Ismâ’îl (1863–79). Book shops becoming publishers is a pattern that remains alive until now. It was during Ismâ’H’s rule that the Egyptian National Library was established. There was a hiatus when the number and type of books published was reduced, during the rule of Tawfiq (1879–92)₉ due to a new law restricting publications. As for scholarly publishing, which began to pick up during the second half of the century, special mention should be made of the Institut Francais de lArcheologie Orientale du Caire, founded in 1881 by Gaston Masparo. Since 1900, the Institut has been its own publisher, and also acted for several decades as publisher to the Egyptian Antiquities Service, the Coptic Archaeological Society, the Egyptian Geographical Society, and the illustrious Institut d’Egypte.[590]

With the growth of the newspaper and periodical publishing, the printing presses were improved, especially at the beginning of the British occupation

and during the rise of the nationalist movement that sought independence for Egypt. The British occupation, in certain ways, provided more freedom of expression, as long as it did not conflict with Britain’s imperial policies. Egypt was set on its way to becoming the intellectual and publishing leader of the Arab world. This was done with some significant assistance from the Lebanese and Syrian intellectuals and entrepreneurs who began to immigrate to Cairo and Alexandria.

The role played by the Syrians (al-Shawam) in the book and publishing industries was a major one. One of the earliest private publishing houses was established by an Egyptianized Syrian, Ahmad al-Bâbî al-Halabl, in 1859. In 1894, al-Hilal Bookstore, later called Dar al-Hilal, was established, shortly after the founding of al-Hilal magazine (1892) by Jurjl Zaydan. Dar al-Hilal issued hundreds of books by famous Arab and non-Arab authors in all subjects, and they were distributed all over the world, wherever there were Arabic readers or institutions with Arab studies. One of the most influential presses, Najib Mitrfs Dar al-Ma’arif, played a leading role, together with al-Manar Press, founded by Rashid Rida, the editor and publisher of al-Manar magazine. Another important bookstore and publisher was Yusuf Tuma al-Bustanfs The Arab Bookstore. These presses and bookstores published many books by the Lebanese and Syrian intellectuals who emigrated to Egypt and got involved with their Egyptian counterparts in the reform movements that were characteristic of the Arab awakening. In addition to making available to a wide readership the ideas and methods of the West, they wrote and published on subjects not tackled before, such as Jurjl Zaydan’s book on Tarikh al-lughah al-‘arabiyah (History of the Arabic Language); Ibrahim al-Yazîjî’s Taqwlm al-lisan al-‘arabî (Rectification of the Arabic Tongue); Sulayman al-Bustânî’s translation of Homer’s Iliad, with an introduction that remains until now a source of inspiration for many literary critics; and Khalil Mutran, who introduced dialogue and unity of structure into Arabic poetry.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Egyptian book production had increased tenfold. In her bibliography on books published in Egypt during the nineteenth century, ’Ayidah Nuşayr (Nossair) lists 9,782 works under 107 subject headings. Among them are 2,762 titles dealing with religious subjects, 2,015 in literature, 1,372 in social sciences, 1,092 in history, 705 in philosophy, and only 242 in the natural sciences. Textbooks numbered 372.

Cairo, with its cosmopolitan environment and high rate of literacy compared to most Arab cities, grew into a giant book market and intellectual center. The period between the 1920s and 1952 is dubbed correctly by many scholars as the liberal age in Egypt. It was a period in which the great writers, such as Taha Hussein, Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, Mahmud ‘Abbas al-Aqqad, Tawfiq al-Hakim, and Ahmad Amm, among others, wrote, theorized on literary criticism, and proposed new orientations for social development in a flowing and elegant language. This was the period that saw the publication of two of the most controversial works in the contemporary history of the Arab world.

In his Fl alshi’r al-jâhilî (On Pre-Islamic Poetry), Taha Hussein, while trying to prove that pre-Islamic poetry was really non pre-Islamic, but had been forged in the post-Islamic period, advocated the use of Cartesian methodology, a method that, if applied to the texts of religion, might cast doubt on their authenticity. In al-Islam wa-uşül al-hukm (Islam and the Principles of Government), ‘Â1Î ‘Abd al-Raziq advocated the idea that the caliphate is not a necessary part of Islam. The implication of this was to sanctify the establishment of a secular state. Rebuttal of these two books was so intense that an entire bibliography could be devoted-to the topic.

This period also saw new endeavors to improve the quality of books. One of the most significant enterprises was the non-profit organization Lajnat al-Ta’llf wa-al-Tarjamah wa-al-Nashr (The Committee for Writing, Translation, and Publishing), directed by a number of eminent intellectuals who felt the need to compensate for the low cultural level of commerciai publishing. The private sector was motivated mostly by profit, which publishers found highly accessible by issuing books of religious nature or pulp fiction. The prominence of religious and heritage books was strengthened by the establishment of the Dar al-‘Ulûm Faculty at al-Azhar University, and by an increasing number of Islamic associations advocating religion as the best defense against colonialism, political as well as cultural. Islamic heritage books and religious pamphleteering became strongly represented on the book publishing scene and so remain until the present time.

With the coming of the 1952 revolution, the scene changed dramatically. Nasser’s Philosophy of the Revolution and al-Mithaa (Charter) of the Arab Socialist Union (the party of the government), set in motion (and turmoil) the nationalization of the publishing industry, in order to help the society transform itself rapidly into a socialist one. Dar al-Hilal, Dar al-Ahram, and Dar al-Ma’arif were taken over by the government, but were given semi-autonomous status. A massive publishing organization was created, al-Mu’assasah al-‘Ammah lil-Ta’lîf wa-al-Nashr (the General Authority for Writing and Publishing), and a governmental plan was drawn. The plan consisted of publishing books and periodicals that it was thought would meet the cultural, literary, political, social, scientific, and religious needs of Egypt. Publishing was to deal with social questions and the Arab revolution, and also with providing Arab libraries with the best in Arab and world heritage. Translations of the best works in world literature were to be undertaken (the One Thousand Books Project), but would not be limited to Western works; African, Asiatic, and Latin American titles would also be inc! uded.[591]

In 1972, al-Hay’ah al-Misryah al-‘Âmmah lü-Kitâb (the General Egyptian Book Organization, or GEBO) replaced the General Authority for Writing and Publishing. It was defined as a non-profit enterprise. All book-related activities, including the National Library and the National Archives, were consolidated and placed under its wings. Among the many activities GEBO now sponsors is an annual international book fair during the last week of January.

At present, the Egyptian government, through GEBO and the semi-autonomous publishing giants of Dar al-Ahram, Dar al-Hilal, and Dar al-Ma arif, remains the largest publisher, in spite of the fact that there is little intervention in the publishing plans of these institutions and the fact that commercial private publishing has been on the increase since President Sadat’s open-door policy was established.

*** The Agonies of the Arabic Book

I would have liked to talk about the ecstatic pleasure one derives from the many good works published all over the Arab world, but given the overwhelming number of problems that afflict the Arabic book, one cannot gloss over the glaring reality. Although I will deal mostly with the Egyptian book, the problems are not limited to that country; they apply to most Arab countries, in varying degrees.

The problems facing the book in Egypt may be described as technological, economic, political, and organizational. The four are naturally interrelated and need to be looked at jointly. While struggling with its Arab socialism experiment, Egypt sought and was able to raise the standard of living of its masses. The book was considered one of the basic tools for cultural, economic, and social development. Because of several factors, however, the book suffered on many fronts in terms of quality and dissemination. Tharwat ‘Ukashah, the minister of culture, in a statement made in 1967 stated that, “We find it [the book), dangerously behind in spite of the many efforts, forces, allocated funds, and material and moral encouragement.”[592]

Its new socialized structure alienated Egypt from other Arab countries culturally, and from the technological revolution in printing that was taking place in the 1970s. The decline of book publishing in Cairo took place at the same time as Lebanese publishers were modernizing their equipment and becoming big and efficient distributors of books all over the Arab world. Beirut became the Arab publishing capital, replacing Cairo. The absence of clear copyright laws, and the inconsistent implementation thereof, contributed to the problems in Cairo. Beirut became the beneficiary and the culprit in most cases of copyright violations. Several of Beirut’s publishers excelled in book piracy, a matter morally reprehensible, but hailed by many as making available, and cheaply, works that would not have been available otherwise.

Politics was another factor that influenced the relative decline in book production. Egypt was alienated during the time of the Nasser regime from Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, both big markets for Egyptian books, and from the rest of the Arab world after the Camp David Agreement (1979), when it was boycotted by the members of the League of Arab States. Furthermore,

government intervention, which supported only the public sector, created a discouraging atmosphere for authors and publishers.

In 1972, the UNESCO-sponsored Year of the Book, the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) held a conference in Doha, Qatar (4–10 December) on the dissemination and distribution of the Arabic book. Mr. Bahij ’Uthman, then the president of the Lebanese Union of Publishers, reported on the difficulties in disseminating Arabic books. According to his account, books coming out in one Arab country and going to other countries, like Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Libya, and others, have to receive the imprimatur of a censor before distribution. In some other countries, all imported books have to be distributed by the public sector distribution agencies, which leads to the same kind of restrictions on access. In fact, most of the present distribution companies prefer to distribute newspapers and magazines because it is less risky and more profitable. Smuggling of books by secondary exporters is also a common phenomenon. Reading habits are still not well developed, and with competition from audio-visual media, this situation is not likely to improve. Illiteracy rates are still high. Most works are printed in editions of less than five thousand copies, for an Arab population of 180 million. Moreover, most Arab countries have not yet developed adequately their national libraries or national bibliographies.

Probably the greatest agonies come from an indirect pressure, the control exercised by religious authorities over the doctrinal purity of any book that might be construed as having even an indirect bearing upon the tenets of Islam, and in some cases Christianity. Notwithstanding the sophistication of many Arab writers and their concerns for scholarly research methods and presentation, many are the books that still lack precision in the texts, and suffer from typographical errors, and many are the publishers who seek the least expensive printing and paper, are negligent in placing footnotes, making indexes, ensuring correct and exact citations, and including all the bibliographic information needed on the title page. In conclusion, the Arabic book, in spite of the many and great strides taken towards better, more beautiful presentation, advanced scholarly approaches, and sophisticated language during two centuries of expansion, still has a long way to go. Furthermore, in my opinion, the abundance of religious tracts and belles-lettres has not served to produce a more coherent and cohesive society

especially when one considers the many problems and conflicts that trouble the Arab world today.

[567] The earliest Arabic work that has reached US is a book of Christian prayer, Kitab şalât alsawai (Horlogium breve), which was printed in Fano in 1514. The first Koran printed was one printed around 1537 in Venice by Alessandro de Paganino. See Angela Nuovo, “El Corano arabe ritrovato,” La Bibliofilia 89, no. 3 (1987), pp. 237–71. Books in Arabic were produced in Italy by Typographia Medicea, established in 1585 at the advice of Pope Gregory XIII. In addition to the Bible, the press published Avicenna’s Canon Medicinae and al-Idnsfs Kitab Nuzhat al Mushtaq. See Josee Balagna, Limprimerie Arabe en Occident (XVT, xvn’, et xvin siecle) (Paris, 1984).

[568] See, on the history of printing in Arab countries, Khain Sabat, Târîkh al-tiba ahfial-sharq al-‘arabî, 2nded. (Cairo, 1966); see also the dissertations of Moncef Chenoufi, “Le probleme des origines de rimprimerie et de la presse arabe en Tunisie dans sa relation avec la Renaissance (.Nahda) 1847–1887,” Universite de Paris IV, 1970: Fawzi Abdulrazak, “The Kingdom of the Book: The History of Printing as an Agent of Change in Morocco between 1865 and 1912,)” Harvard University, 1989: and Wahid Ghdoura, Le debut de rimprimerie, arabe a Istanbul et en Syrie (1706–1787) (Tunis, 1985).

[569] The reference to Lebanon in this article does not take into account the historical difference between Mount Lebanon, which did not include Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, and other areas, and Greater Lebanon, which was proclaimed by General Gouraud, High Commissioner of the French Republic. Lebanon became a republic in 1926, and gained its independence from the French in 1943.

[570] Karshunî is Arabic in Syriac script.

[571] Jabal ‘Amil is in southern Lebanon and is inhabited mostly by Shi’ite Muslims. See Muhammad Khain al-Murâdî, Silk al-durarfi a’yân al-qam al-thanÎ ‘ashar, 4 vols. (Cairo, 1301/1883: repr. Baghdad, 1968), 1:7.

[572] See Basile Aggoula, “Le livre libanais,” in Exposition le livre et le Liban jusqu’a 1900 (Paris, 1982), p. 308.

[573] See Muhammad Kurd ‘Aki, Khutat al-Sham, 6 vols. in 3, 3rd ed. (Damascus, 1983), 6:197.

[574] Khalil Sabat, Târîkh al-übâ’ah fi al-sharq al-‘arabî, 2nd ed. (Cairo, 1966), p. 52.

[575] Sixteen of Alexander Dumas’ (pere) novels were translated, including such vworks as The Count of Monte Christo, The Three Musketeers, etc. See M. Yüsüf Najm, al-Qissahfial-adabal-‘arabîal-hadith, 3rded. (Beirut, 1966), pp. 21–31.

[576] The private library of Nawfal was sold to the American University of Beirut.

[577] For more information on al-Asir and al-Ahdab, see Marun ‘Abbud, Ruwwad al-nahdah al-hadlthah (1952, أل١اًةذآ), pp. 72–77.

[578] Several books of polemical emendations or corrections of linguistic errors were produced as the language was being transformed from ornate and verbose to a more direct and substantial style. Sa’îd al-Shartunl published al-Sahm al-şâ’ib fi takhtTat ghunyat al-talib (The Correctly Hitting Arrow in Faulting Ghunyat al-Tlib), a criticism of A. Faris al-Shidyâq’s Ghunyat al-talib, a grammar book promoting the new style advocated by al-Shidyaq. Both al-Ahdab and Al-Aslr in turn published rebuttals of alSahm.

[579] An example of such advertisement reads: “This book is sold in Beirut by Messrs Karulla, Fathallah Tajir and Yusuf Kamid.” See Le livre et le Liban, p. 309. Dr. Yusuf Khoury of The American University of Beirut called my attention to al-Maktabah al-Jârrû’ah, a bookstore established by Khain and Amin al-Khoury in 1877 in Beirut. The 1888/89 catalog of the bookstore lists titles published by the bookstore, and religious, scientific, medical, and literary works sold there, including titles from Turkey, Egypt, Mosul (Iraq), and Germany.

[580] See the title page of Yusuf al-Dibs’ book, Mughnl al-muta’allim (The Enricher of the Learned) (Beirut, 1869), where it says, “It was printed at the expense of the author and his friend Rizqallah Khadra.”

[581] See ‘Abd al-‘Azîz ‘Awad, a/-Wârah al-‘Uthmaniyahfi wilayat Sürîyâ, 1864-19/4 (Cairo, 1969), p. 91.

[582] On the Syrians and Lebanese in Egypt, see the chapter on this subject in Albert Hourani, The Emergence ofthe Modem Middle East (Berkeley, 1981), pp. 103–23: also, Thomas Philipp, The Syrians in Egypt (Stuttgart, 1985).

[583] Nasrallah, op. cit., p. 91.

[584] On the Bulaq Press, known later as al-Matba’ah al-Amlrlyah, see the excellent work of Abü al-Futuh Radwan, Tarikh Matba’at Bulaq (Cairo, 1953).

[585] See the English language introduction in ‘Ayidah Nuşayr (Aida I. Arabic Books Published in Egypt in the Nineteenth Century ٢ةاًا٠١ ع 1990). The percentages total more than one hundred because some titles’ subjects overlap categories.

[586] Sabat, op. cit., p. 175.

[587] Radwan, op cit., p. 260.

[588] Edward Lane, An Account of the Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians Written in Egypt During the Years 1833–35, (London, 1836), p. 190, “The booksellers in Cairo are, I am informed, only eight in number and their shops are but 111 stocked.”

[589] Michaud et Poujoulat, Correspondence d’Orient, 8 vols. in 4, 6:299, Letter 112, Cairo, April, 1831: cited in Radwan, op. cit., p. 300.

[590] John Rodenbeck, “A Scholarly Publisher in Egypt,” Scholarly Publishing (July 1985), p. 320.

[591] Sha’ban Khalfah, Dar al-Kutub al-Qawmlyah (Cairo, 1991), pp. 267–68.

[592] Government of Egypt, Ministry of Culture, “al-Kitab al-‘arablf in Arba’at mu’tamarat (Cairo, 1917), p. 209.

** 13. Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Societies

Dale F. Eickelman

Mass higher education in the Arab and Muslim worlds is reshaping conceptions of self, religion, nation, and politics. It is as basic to reconfiguring notions of self and society in the Arab world of the late twentieth century as was the introduction of printed books in sixteenth-century rural France.[593] Ironically, however, we know more about the uses of literacy in medieval and premodern Europe than in the contemporary Muslim and Arab worlds. Many scholars have noted linkages between advanced education and religious activists, or “fundamentalists,” that they are reinstituting older forms of religious understanding and action rather than creating, even if inadvertently, new ones. The result is to deflect attention from both conceptual innovations and emerging networks for communication and action that affect virtually all Muslims and profoundly shape the direction of contemporary Muslim thought. Fundamentalism, the claims of its adherents notwithstanding, is a distinctly modern phenomenon.[594]

In this article I examine the “objectification” of the religious imagination in the Muslim Middle East, the process by which three kinds of questions come to be foregrounded in the consciousness of large numbers of believers: “What is my religion?” “Why is it important to my life?,” and “How do my beliefs guide my conduct?” Objectification does not mean seeing religion as a uniform or monolithic entity, although it is precisely that for some thinkers. I argue that these explicit and “objective” questions are distinctively modern ones that increasingly shape the discourse and practice of all Muslims, even as some legitimize their practices and beliefs by asserting a return to authentic established traditions. I focus on how, at this time in history and in certain contexts, religions have been objectified in the consciousness of many people. In part, this issue is easier to address than why, but it is also more neglected. For something like religion to be objectified in people’s consciousness, it must be discussed, and this entails discourse. If, for reasons of political intimidation or social deference, people do not discuss it directly, then it is discussed publicly for them by “experts” with whom they may or may not agree.

Distinctive to the modern era, this discourse and debate about tradition involve large numbers of people. They also necessarily involve an awareness of other Muslim and non-Muslim traditions, even if understandings of these other traditions are often distorted. Mass education and mass communication facilitate such awareness and, in changing the style and scale of possible discourse, reconfigure the nature of religious thought and action and encourage explicit debate over meaning. Although both mass education and mass communication are important in all contemporary world religions, the full effects of mass education, especially higher education, are just beginning to be felt in much of the Muslim world.

My approach in this article is not linear and evolutionary—in this respect it differs from Habermas',[595] although it is inspired by his emphasis upon forms of communicative action in other respects—but contextual; I seek to describe the salient characteristics of an integrated cultural transformation. Bourdieu's[596] studies of higher education, which explore correspondences and affinities among status, authority, and the "ways of knowing" inculcated by various educational institutions, can serve as a point of departure for understanding the dramatic transformations of religious authority that are occurring in much of the Muslim world today. Bourdieu is most effective in suggesting how the complex practices of educational institutions reproduce unequal relations of wealth and authority in society, but less so in showing how even repressive political systems leave room for contestation.[597] Indeed, some form of resistance to a society's central institutions would appear critical for sustaining the cultural construction of authoritative discourse, if only to coopt sources of possible opposition and dissent. In this respect, Gramsci[598] serves as a useful complement to Bourdieu, who emphasizes the reproduction of existing social arrangements. Although conceptually less tidy, Gramsci suggests that intellectuals and their discourse, although constrained by the established social order, never just reproduce it but create, even if inadvertently, the seeds of resistance and contestation. In order to focus on the development of new "authoritative" discourses and resistance to them, I seek to place such discourses in their specific historical and political contexts.

Some elements of contemporary Islamic ideologies deflect attention away from such specific contexts. Muslims conventionally represent themselves as "People of the Book," yet until recently most Muslims—and certainly those in

the Middle East—were not sufficiently literate to read or comprehend directly the Qur’an or other religious texts. Nonetheless, the idea of the book and the text has long pervaded many social contexts. In this respect, the uses of literacy and of the spoken and written word in the Arab “core” of the Muslim world strongly resemble those in the so-called Muslim “periphery.”[599] Even where texts are not present, people behave as if they are. The idea of the Book, by analogy with the divine text of the Qur’an,[600] conveys for many Muslims the idea that valued knowledge is fixed and memorizable. In Morocco, the cognitive style associated with Islamic knowledge remains closely tied to popular understandings of Islam and has important analogies in nonreligious spheres of knowledge.[601]

Memorization of the Qur’an continues to be a virtually unquestioned form of cultural capital for Moroccans, although few still memorize it in its entirety, as was common for an earlier generation. Quranic memorization served as a paradigm for subsequent learning in the religious sciences as well as in other fields of knowledge; ideally, texts were mnemonically “possessed.” Beginning in the 19205 and 1930s, the Moroccan elite began to send their sons to the schools of the French protectorate. As this occurred, the prestige of Islamic higher education, left increasingly to students from rural regions, suffered a rapid decline, although the popular idea of knowledge as fixed and memorizable still prevailed.[602] The advent of mass higher education since the 1970s, however, challenges this paradigm and offers an alternative cognitive style.

*** Religiosity and Mass Higher Education

Major changes in basic religious or political perceptions often occur incrementally and are not perceived as significant at the time. Only in retrospect are they recognized as sharp breaks with the past. Discussing ties of dependence in feudal Europe, Marc Bloch[603] wrote that successive generations did not consciously create new social forms but instead gave rise to them “in the process of trying to adapt the old.” Much the same can be said of mass higher education. Even when mass higher education is used to sustain old patterns of belief and authority, its very structure engenders new “authoritative” ways of thinking about self, religion, and politics.

For the most part, mass higher education is a recent phenomenon in the Middle East. It began in earnest only in the 19505. Fifteen to twenty years later, that is, by 1975 or 1980, after large numbers of students began to complete its advanced cycles, its consequences could be more clearly discerned. In Egypt, the number of primary school pupils more than doubled in the decade following the 1952 revolution. Corresponding increases in secondary and university education began in the mid-1960s (see fig. 13.1). The timing of educational expansion varies for other parts of the Middle East. Major educational expansion in Morocco began in the 19605.[604] In Oman, a case to be considered in detail here, educational opportunities began to expand significantly only in the 19705. In 1972–73, there were 25,000 students at all levels in Oman. By 1982–83, there were 142,000, and by 1987–88, 276,000. In 1975–76, a mere 22 students were enrolled in secondary education within Oman. By 1987–88, this number had risen to 13,500. In postsecondary education, a critical mass among Omanis emerged only in the late 1980s.[605]

[[g-n-george-n-atiyeh-the-book-in-the-islamic-world-44.jpg][Fig. 13.1. Statistics on secondary education in Egypt, Morocco, and Oman.]]

A complementary measure of change is book production. As of 1982, the Arab world was producing 40 books per million inhabitants, far below the world average of 162 titles per million. Although more recent figures are unavailable, the gap appears to be closing rapidly.[606] Likewise, the first cohort of Moroccan to benefit from mass higher education in Arabic, as opposed to French, and to have acquired their pervasive “habits of thought”[607] in the country’s national language, is creating a demand for the “re-imagining”[608] of Islam and national identity. Only in the last few years has a significant readership for “quality” books in Arabic developed in Morocco.[609] For the increasingly influential cohort of university graduates, reading is a means of “appropriating,”[610] organizing, and making objective ideas of society, religion, and self

*** Authoritative Discourse

With the spread of mass higher education in the Muslim world, access to the Quran as well as to other books and the ways of knowing inculcated by them, has shifted in form. Religious authority in earlier generations derived from the mastery of authoritative texts studied under recognized scholars. Mass education fosters a direct, albeit selective, access to the printed word and a break with earlier traditions of authority. As Hassan al-Turabi, the Sorbonne-educated leader of the Muslim Brothers in the Sudan and a former attorney-general, has said, “Because all knowledge is divine and religious, a chemist, an engineer, an economist, [and] a jurist are all’ulama’ [religious scholars].”[611] Thus, the privileged position of traditionally educated religious scholars has eroded. Although religious activism has many sources, it appeals mainly to those who have benefited from modern education. In 1953, for example, only 22 percent of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers were not of the educated urban middle classes.[612] In the occupied West Bank after 1967, the occupying authorities encouraged religious activism in order to counter secular nationalism; belatedly, they discovered that popular religious protest offered an equally if not more tenacious opposition to their authority. As early as 1979, a poll at one West Bank university indicated that 43 percent of the students identified themselves with fundamentalist rather than with secular nationalist organizations. Throughout the occupied territories, youths “with a relatively high educational level” are the core of these groups.[613] Muslim fundamentalist discourse, such as that of Morocco’s ‘Abd al-Salam Yasin, [614] assumes a familiarity with the language of Marxist and other “Western” discourses, against which it confidently reacts. Belief and practice are now expressed in public and explicit forms and are more directly related to political action than they previously were.

Sayyid Qutb’s Ma’âlimfîal-tanq (Signposts),[615] said to be the most widely read book among younger Muslims worldwide, would never have had the impact it did without the spread of mass education and the access to analytical and exegetical texts that such education provides. In Iran, the Friday sermon has become the focal political event; in it, government speakers explain policies, problems, and events of the week to audiences much wider than any assembled during the Shah’s regime, notwithstanding the Pahlavi state’s full control over mass communications. These sermons often refer to published sources and arguments for authority, implying an audience familiar with texts and the principles of citation. Not all of the audience can follow such arguments in detail, but they recognize the

forms of authority. Even the nonreligious and the antireligious are obliged to follow the sermons to remain abreast of political developments, and the sermons themselves presume an awareness of world events and an ability to understand policy.

*** Religion as System and Object

A second consequence of mass higher education is perhaps most evident from contemporary fundamentalist discourse, in which religious beliefs are seen as systems to be distinguished from one another. The fundamentalist thinker Sayyid Qutb, executed by Nasser in 1966, described Islam as a “system” (minhaj) of beliefs and doctrines. Qutb saw Islam as self-contained, yet thinking of religion in this way makes it possible to borrow from other systems and to incorporate changes,[616] thereby increasing the system’s viability. When fundamentalists declare that they are engaged in the “Islamization” of their society, they make explicit their sense of religious beliefs as an objective system. Thus, since the 1980s, Moroccans have commonly referred to activists as “the Muslims” (al-muslimun). Irony is far from absent, since all but about 20,000 of Morocco’s 26 million citizens are Muslim.

*** Language and Community

Finally, the standardized language of mass higher education encourages new senses of coimmunity and affinity. Anderson[617] argues, for example, that the rise of written vernacular languages in Europe since the sixteenth century and the spread of print technology have created language communities wider than those of face-to-face interactions yet narrower than the communities created by shared sacred languages. With modifications, this premise can be transposed to many Islamic contexts.

One indication of shifts in the religious imagination of a younger, educated generation in many parts of the Middle East is the effort of the state to coopt fundamentalist discourse. In Morocco in the 19605 and early 19705, both the monarchy and its political opposition employed a “developmentalist” idiom

in which “religious” issues were separated from “political” ones. By the late 19705, the public language of the monarchy’s supporters was much more religiously oriented, and the monarch asserted that he was developing a cadre of Ministry of the Interior officials trained in administration and Islamic thought. He claimed that his political actions were modeled upon those of the Prophet Muhammad:

<quote>

In all modesty, Hassan’s school is the school of Muhammad V...and the school of Muhammad ٧ is that of the Prophet.... Most of US know the Prophet only as messenger of God....His political and diplomatic life remain unknown and we await the day when someone firmly attached to his religion and proud of its teachings will write on this subject.[618]

</quote>

From North Africa to Jordan, Egypt, and Turkey, the impact of modern mass education is pervasive. In the context of a set national curriculum in which Islamic studies is one subject among many, students are taught about the unity of Muslim thought and practice. An impersonal relation between students and curriculum is stressed, and matters of controversy among Muslims are excluded. Even while teaching that Islam permeates all aspects of life, the formal principles of Islamic doctrine and practice are compartmentalized and made an object of study. As mentioned earlier, Sayyid Qutb employed terms such as “curriculum” (minhaj) to describe Muslim doctrine as a system of closely related beliefs and principles. This pervasive notion of system is a profoundly new element in modern religious thought, as are the catechisms that are now becoming common for many Muslims, including Ibâdî Muslims who, together with the better known and more numerous Sunni and Shfah, form the third major doctrinal cluster (madhhah) in the wider Islamic community. Such catechisms help their schooled users to understand the key thinkers of their tradition and to explain doctrinal tenets to other Muslims.[619]

*** Religion and Education in Oman

The adoption of mass higher education in Oman[620] is sufficiently recent that I was able to witness its beginning in the late 19705. Schooling became widely available after the 1970 palace coup in which Qabus ibn Saʿīd replaced his father, Saʿīd ibn Taymur (1932–70), as ruler. By the early 19805, Oman had a sufficient number of secondary school graduates, members of the armed services and civilian government with in-service training, and university students abroad (and, since the opening of Sultan Qaboos University in 1986, in Oman itself) to engender a transformation in what constitutes authoritative religious discourse. The shift to a print- and cassette-based religiosity and the exposure of large numbers of young Omanis to a written, formal, “modern standard” Arabic through schooling and the mass media have altered the style and content of authoritative religious discourse and the role it plays in shaping and constraining domestic and regional politics.[621]

The overall trend has been one of turning away from ritual and symbolic contexts in which—to cite an account of a contemporary Mayan community in Guatemala—“meaning comes to rest more on usage than on referentiality; learning consists of improvisation rather than rationalization; and mastery of form ultimately takes precedence over understanding of context,”[622] and toward intellectualism and an explicit statement of belief inseparable from the study of texts, or at least an invocation of them. Because the discourse of Oman’s mufti, Shaykh Ahmad ibn Hamad al-Khahli, is authorized, frequent, and publicly accessible, it provides an accurate reading of contemporary religious trends even as it reflects and responds to competing Muslim voices.

For example, when in 1986 a senior religious authority in Saudi Arabia issued a fatwa (authoritative religious interpretation) that was interpreted as hostile to the Ibadiyah, al-Khaim, who is Ibâdî, responded in a nationally televised address by invoking specific texts and thinkers as his authorities. Indeed, the perceived attack from an unsympathetic Muslim authority was part of an overall pattern of competing Muslim discourses shaped by discursive texts.[623] The major difference between the Ibadiyah of Oman and their counterparts in Algeria and Libya is that modern educational opportunities came last to Oman. Students and other Omanis looked to the mufti to formulate appropriate ways of explaining Ibâdî interpretations of Islam to other Muslims. These students constitute the development of explicit statements of belief and practice. Indeed, Oman’s

mufti rarely puts his ideas in writing himself, but they are frequently promulgated through cassettes and public addresses that are later transcribed (and occasionally translated) for use in discussing Islam with other Muslims or representing Omani religious traditions to outsiders.[624] One cassette, for example, responds to a letter from an Omani student in the United States who had written the mufti that some of his “Sünnî brothers” had warned against allowing Ibâdîs to lead prayers or participate “in the administration of our mosques and Islamic Centers in this place on the claim that they are a section of the Khawarij,” an early Islamic revolutionary sect that advocated death for Muslims not adhering strictly to its tenets. The student had asked for guidance in responding to such claims and “the reason for not circulating [Ibâdî] books and references in the libraries and in the Muslim Universities.”[625]

Religiously minded younger Omanis, especially those who take seriously the critiques of contemporary Arab and Muslim fundamentalist and radical thinkers, such as the late Sayyid Qutb, find Shaykh al-Khalîlî’s arguments persuasive. The mufti, despite the fact that he holds a government sinecure, cites with approval books banned in Oman, giving the appearance of autonomy from state censorship and control. As in Egypt,[626] state authorities, by “authorizing” some radical discourse, encompass and control it. Omanis harbor few illusions that Shaykh al-Khalîlî’s invocation of prohibited literature will have any effect on its continued interdiction. The mufti’s discourse shows how a spokesperson for the ruling elite can coopt discourse of the opposition, including Marxism, and integrate some traditional practices, such as the dars, into modern contexts in order to sustain authority. Some of the mufti’s most biting critiques are offered as quotations or paraphrases from other writers, which distances him from formulations he nonetheless offers with approval. Shaykh al-Khaim is careful to specify authors, titles, page numbers, and often even publishers—a form of citation familiar to members of his audience with a modern education but absent from traditional religious discourse.

Shaykh al-Khalîlî’s discourse is almost exclusively oral, so that even newspaper summaries of his views are edited by others.[627] He regularly travels throughout the Sultanate, meeting with religious notables, and draws large crowds for his public lessons. When the ruler ordered special prayers in support of the Palestinian people in March 1988, the mufti led the

congregation in one of Oman’s largest mosques. Through regular radio programs and a weekly newspaper column, he offers fatwas in response to queries from Omanis. Shaykh al-Khalîlî’s frequent participation in international Islamic conferences—in Jidda, in Cairo, and at Sultan Qaboos University in February and March 1988 alone—is extensively reported. In addition to undertaking this heavy schedule of speaking, the mufti plays a pivotal role in committees that shape public religious expression in schools, the media, and the “suggested” texts for Friday sermons. Again, however, these sermons are in formal Arabic, and thus their specific content is understood only by traditionally educated religious scholars and those who have received a modern education.

Shaykh al-Khalîlî’s articulation of Islamic issues contrasts sharply with the pattern that prevailed in Oman until the 1970s. For the Ibadîyah, the older pattern was sustained by an interlocking universe of religious notables whose literary output centered on poetry and tribal histories that were circulated largely in manuscript form among the educated elite.[628] Alternative constructions of Islam and of Muslim identity were marginal concerns. Textual references were primarily to Omani scholars and did not reflect debate or confrontation with the wider Muslim community. For instance, in Oman of the 1920s and 1930s, the presence of the prominent Tripohtanian Ibâdî writer and Arab nationalist Sulayman al-Bârûnî (1870–1940) had no significant influence on the form of religious discourse.[629] In many parts of Oman, Sünnî, Shî’î, and Ibâdî communities were closely intertwined, but their relations were of juxtaposition rather than of dialogue and interaction. Members of each community were aware of the religious practices of the others, but this awareness did not engender a systematic formulation of sectarian distinctions. This awareness came to the forefront with the introduction of modern education.

Until the last two decades, Ibadi, Sünnî, and Shî’î doctrines and practices were not explicitly thought of as systems that could be compared and contrasted. What was practiced was assumed to be Islamic, pure and simple. Omanis were, of course, aware of other Muslim communities, some very close at hand, but the other communities and their interpretations of doctrine and practice were at the periphery of the moral imagination of religious intellectuals and others.

The intensification of government services, education, and control since 1970 has heightened people’s imagination of Oman as a political community, [630] with territorial limits and spheres of authority accepted by both the ruler’s supporters and his opponents. Although this transformation was accelerated after 1970, it was well under way before then. Sultan Saʿīd may have been a reactionary in the last decades of his rule, but his repressive actions brought a new unity to Oman’s diverse sectarian and ethnic population; their dislike of him engendered a sense of unity that could not be broken even by enticements from neighboring countries then opposed to Oman.[631] The government of Sultan Saʿīd may have been weak in scale, scope, and services, but it provided a clearly defined center against which its opponents united as Omanis. In 1965, a United Nations team that had conducted extensive interviews with Omani exiles in Saudi Arabia, Cairo, and elsewhere concluded:

<quote>

Most persons interviewed made it clear that they would prefer to see Oman united as one country. Some had in mind the unification of the territories previously controlled by the Sultan and the Imam, while others wished to see the Trucial Sheikhdoms also included as part of the future Oman. One person said that there was no Muscat, only Oman. Another said that people from Oman and from Muscat were all Omanis... Oman had been one country before its division and it should be one country again.[632]

</quote>

In post-1970 Oman, the state has heightened the sense of national identity by vastly expanding education, the bureaucracy, the police, military and security services, business opportunities, and by providing infrastructure and communication facilities. In textbooks and formal discourse, Omanis are treated as “citizens” (iaimuwatinun), a role with implied obligations to and reciprocal expectations of the state, the ruler, and his close associates. “Nation” (watari) in the northern Oman interior no longer primarily means one’s community or tribal territory, but Oman itself. Many young Omanis perceive the obligations and expectations framed by the state’s new rhetoric as hypocritical, but this rhetoric

nonetheless forms the articulated standard by which policies and decisions are justified. Indeed, requesting the government to adhere to its stated principles is a tolerated form of dissent.

Mass education has had a major impact on the style of religiosity of younger Omanis, even as state authorities seek to use education to preserve “traditional” values and to distance religion from the political sphere. At its most basic, the style of intellectual technology introduced by modern schooling constitutes a significant break with the earlier emphasis upon the written word, mediated by an oral tradition and oriented toward a mastery of accepted religious texts acquired through study under religious scholars recognized by the wider community. At least in formal terms, a curriculum of specifically delineated subjects and prescribed texts is taught by a changing array of teachers, and competence is measured by examination. Nonetheless, as seen in the iconic value of the mufti among Omanis who cannot follow his lessons in formal Arabic, replete with spoken references and page citations, the older style of religiosity exists alongside the new one and is selectively incorporated into contemporary dominant discourse.

The prescribed curriculum has made Islamic studies a nonsectarian subject. This “generic” Islam includes such topics as the life of the Prophet Muhammad and those of his sayings (hadlth) that Sunni, Ibadl, and Shri Muslims all accept as authentic. As a consequence, the curriculum includes no discussion of the development of Ibadism or of major doctrinal divisions within the Muslim community. The same “generic” Islam is propagated in Omani newspapers and periodicals and in the Friday sermons carried on Oman radio and television.

An unintended consequence of making Islam a part of the curriculum is to make it a subject that must be “explained” and “understood.” Yet treating Islam as a system of beliefs and practices implicitly highlights differences within the Muslim community. Thus one Omani from the interior, now a police official, recalled his experiences as a boarder at a secondary school in the late 1970s, his first close association with Omanis from sects other than his own:

<quote>

In religion classes, the teachers, who were mostly Egyptian, were careful to cite only sayings of the Prophet that were accepted by all the sects [madhahib]. Once, when a teacher quoted one not accepted as authentic by the Shî’ah, they walked out of class and staged a protest. We never discussed sectarian matters in class; that was forbidden. In the dormitories, our discussions were often intense. Our purpose wasn’t to convince others to change their sect [maanhab], but to make the best argument possible for our side [tarafina]. (Interview, New York, 20 May 1985)

</quote>

Such discussion requires participants to emphasize the distinctive features of their beliefs. The previously cited letter from a student to Shaykh al-Khalrh indicates that the awareness of sectarian differences is further accentuated when Omanis participate in religious activities with their counterparts, sometimes perceived as hostile or misinformed, from Muslim groups outside Oman.

Participation in Muslim associations and study groups, as well as exposure to video and audio cassettes and the literature of various groups, also shifts shared perceptions of Islamic thought and the context in which it is shaped. Ready access to the printed word and to expositions of Islamic doctrine in transnational Arabic (as opposed to regional and local dialects) largely derives from modern mass education, radio, television, and cassettes and is fairly recent for most Omanis. The state creates and sustains a communications network that touches the lives of most citizens. In other cases, the state interdicts certain communications or expressions of opinion.

The movement to institute Friday sermons at mosques throughout Oman in the 1980s constituted a subtle challenge to state authority. At the same time, it illustrated the importance of the shift from ritual to explicit statements of belief. Among the Ibadlyah of Oman’s northern interior, only the imam in Nizwa offered Friday sermons prior the the “new era.” As young Omanis became educated, however, many of them led movements to have Friday sermons read in mosques throughout the interior, as is now done. One of

Oman’s first generation of village schoolteachers observed of the northern Oman interior, “People here do not know Islam; they pray and sacrifice, but they do not know why” (interview, Nizwa region, 9 March 1988). Before the mid-1970s, statements such as this would have been almost incomprehensible in most towns and villages, but by the late 1980s they had become so common that older persons, who disagreed with the notion that “being Muslim” entailed an ability to articulate a credo, could “interpret” such comments for me and could identify the characteristics of those most likely to share them: younger, educated Omanis.

This nascent intelligentsia is independent of state authority and often skeptical of it, pointing out discrepancies between what they see as the law of the Sultanate and the prescriptions of Islamic law (sharpah). Yet these same critics are products of the modern state, educated and employed by it, and they concur with the state, at least for the present, on the limits of public discourse. The mufti’s allusions to earlier forms of—and deviations from—Islamic rule are applied by some of his audience to contemporary local situations. At the same time, however, the mufti is the Omani representative to the Islamic Conference Organization and other international religious bodies. Even arrangements for the hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca) pass through governmental organizations and are bound by regulations established by state authorities. In 1987, the minister of justice announced plans to coordinate “objective” programs in religious education, sermons, and media discussion of religious issues to “enlighten the public on religious matters and to urge the believers to fulfill their obligations.”[633] It could be misleading to speak of an Omani, Pakistani, Saudi, French, and Moroccan Islam, but the boundaries, administrative and economic ties, and traditions of national entities implicitly shape religious discourse, just as a print-oriented, modernist Islam induces the specific discussion of sectarian diveigences. In Oman, as in other countries, much Islamic literature circulates in samizdat form, not because it is “subversive” in the sense of attacking the state, but because it has not found explicit approval. For example, one Algerian book[634] provides a catechism of Ibâdî beliefs and “correct” sources and indicates its “stand-alone” nature by appending a glossary of key historical events, personalities, and theological terms (kalamiyah) so that interested readers can acquire a “proper” understanding without the tutorials of traditional Islamic learning. Such books had no audience in Oman a decade ago and were not in local circulation.

*** Conclusion

Oman provides a recent example of a general shift to a religious activism that marginalized the authority of traditional religious leaders, a trend paralleled elsewhere among both Muslim and non-Muslim populations, including those in Indonesia and India.[635] With this transformation, religious authority shifts from elite specialists recognized as masters of religious texts and often inaccessible rhetorical forms to religious and political activists who seek open religious discussion and action and whose authority is based upon persuasion and the interpretation of accessible texts. This shift reshapes national cultures and politics because it constitutes a critique of arbitrary state authority and questions state efforts, as in Oman and Morocco, to coopt religious activism. While the full political concomitants of the shift are beyond the scope of this article, there are indications among Sh 1 Arab intellectuals in the Gulf, for example, that even the Quran is no longer invoked as an unquestioned source for the legitimization of democratic moves because, as an Arab Gulf businessman put it, “terms such as ‘consultation’ [shûrâ] occur only infrequently and do not constitute a fully developed political theory” (interview, Washington, DC, 27 April 1990). Such a statement implies a reading and analysis of the Qur’an as a text and an explicit notion of theory and interpretation.

The new forms of religious understandings are pervasive but do not inexorably displace older forms. Elements of traditional religious understandings often survive in altered form. Many aspects of madrasah (mosque school) education remain significant. In Morocco, for example, the models of peer learning in madrasah education and in religious brotherhoods have been taken over by religious activists, who are often obliged to meet surreptitiously because of state sanctions against them.

The monarchy, for its part, uses the Qarawiym mosque-university to train senior administrators in the religious sciences in an effort to accord the state greater legitimacy; and religious lessons (dars), often with the

monarch in attendance, are broadcast nightly throughout Ramadan, the Muslim lunar month of fasting.[636] In some parts of rural Morocco, wealthy Muslims sponsor small madrasahs, in which men of learning who congregate to study religious texts in the older mnemonic tradition are fed and lodged at the patron’s expense. Fanny Colonna (personal communication, 1975) observed that in the Gurara region of southern Algeria, known for its tradition of religious learning, Quranic schooling was considered better adapted to local needs than the schooling provided by the state. Support for Qur’anic schooling thus also served as a vehicle for contesting state authority.

Madrasahs in Iran now serve as places to train the political elite, a reversal of their role before the 1979 revolution, when many madrasah students were drop-outs from secular higher education, which required them to pass entrance examinations.[637] Because they are trained in both traditional and modern schools, young Iranian mullahs are able to “bridge” religious styles, utilizing aspects of both forms of religious expression as circumstances warrant. Text-based religious activism may constitute a new dominant religiosity but this, does not prevent its carriers from selectively incorporating older forms. Elsewhere, as in the Arabian peninsula and in an Islamicizing Pakistan, jurists and teachers of the religious sciences for all levels of state education receive highly modified forms of what is nonetheless called “traditional” Islamic education.

The Prophet Muhammad’s contemporaries, whose lives bridged the pre-Islamic age of ignorance and the age of Islam, were called mukhadrams. Moroccan intellectuals now in their forties sometimes apply this term to themselves. Many shared the hope of imminent political and economic reform in the heady years after independence. Now they share a disenchantment with the commitment to reform of an earlier generation, having seen that the end of colonial domination, like the enthusiasms for secular ideologies in the 19605 and early 1970s, brought no significant transformations. Some have placed their hopes in the new forms of religiosity with their implicit promise of reform and renewal. Many, however, do so in a way critically different from that of their predecessors. They apply the term mukhadram to themselves, but also point out how their practical understanding of religion differs from that of their seventh-century counterparts. They are not just conscious of

adhering to (or reacting against) innovative forms of religious belief and practice; they also think of these new forms as systems that can be differentiated from others and consciously reworked. This consciousness of form prevents authoritative knowledge from being monolithic and states from coopting an objectified Islam for themselves: alternatives can always be envisaged, even as the determinative power of historical context is recognized. As antipathetic as some contemporary Muslim religious activists say they are to the “West” they nonetheless share with those who live in the West a commitment to texts, analysis, synthesis, and personal authority that draws upon their own traditions and heritage.

*** Notes

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[593] See, on the introduction of printed books, Natalie Zemon Davis, ,Modern France ؛Society and Culture in Early ١ لأل;Veop\e ٱلأ%ٱاه علأ١ ٱ٠لآ١ٱ“ ed. N.z. Davis (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 189–226. Set جلاه00ل٢١٢ة\ة The Logic of Writing and the OrganUation of Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986): and Brian Stock, The Implications of Literacy (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983).

[594] See Bruce B. Lawrence, Defenders ofGod: Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989).

[595] See Jurgen Habermas, Communication and the Evolution of Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979).

[596] See Pierre Bourdieu, Homo Academicus (London: Polity Press, 1988).

[597] See Jean Comaroff, Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance: The Culture and History of a South African People (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

[598] Antonio Gramsci, “The Intellectuals,” in Selections from the Prison Notebooks, ed. and trans. Q. Hoare and G.N. Smith (New York: International Publishers, 1971), pp. 3–43.

[599] Michael Lambeck, “Certain Knowledge, Contestable Authority: Power and Practice on the Islamic Periphery,” American Ethnologist 17 (1990), pp. 23–40.

[600] Johannes Pederson, The Arabic Book, trans. G. French (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

[601] Dale F. Eickelman, “The Art of Memory: Islamic Education and Its Social Reproduction,” Comparative Studies in Society and History 20 (1978), pp. 465–516. See also the author’s Knowledge and Power in Morocco !Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[602] Ibid. See also Jacques Berque, “Dans le Maroc Nouveau: Le role d’une universite islamique,” Annales d’histiore economique et sociale 10 (1938), pp. 193–207: and “Lieus et moments du reformisme islamique,” in Maghreb: Histoire et societes, ed. J.B. (Paris: Editions]. Duculot, 1974), pp. 162–88.

[603] See Marc Bloch, Feudal Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964 [19391).

[604] World Bank, World Development Reports, volumes for 1981–1989 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981–89).

[605] The statistics on which these graphs are based are necessarily approximate, as countries frequently change their classification of educational institutions. In smaller countries such as Oman, students in military and police academies and in specialized courses sponsored by government ministries are excluded from the statistics on secondary and postsecondary education. Further, students whose education is supported by private funds, a significant phenomenon in a state with oil revenues, are underreported. See Sultanate of Oman (Development Council, Technical Secretariat), Statistical Year Book, volumes for 1979–1989 (Muscat: Directorate General of National Statistics).

[606] Ives Gonzalez-Quijano, “Le livre arabe et !’edition en Egypt,” Bulletin du Centre de Documentation Economiques, Juridiques et Sociales, Cairo. 15 (1989), special issue, p. 18.

[607] See Bourdieu, op. cit., and his La noblesse d’etat (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1989). See also M’hammed Sabour, Homo Academicus Arabicus (Joensuu, Finland: University of Joensuu Pubheations in Social Sciences, no. 11, 1988).

[608] See Benedict R. Anderson, Imagined Communities (London: Verso, 1983).

[609] Michael w. Albin, “Moroccan-American Bibliography,” in The Atlantic Connection: 200 Years of Moroccan-American Relations, 7786–1986, ١٥٥.. Bookin-Weiner and M. El Mansour (Rabat: Edino Press, 1990), pp. 5–18.

[610] ١ة. ٢لأةاًا٦ج The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France, trans. L.G. Chochrane (Princetort, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 6–11.

[611] James Piscatori, Islam in a World of Nation-States (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986). See p. 19, where the author cites Hassan al-Turabi.

[612] Ibid., p. 29.

[613] Jean-Francois Legrain. “Islamistes et lutte national palestinienne dans les territoires occupes par Israel,” Revue francaise de science politique 6 (1986), p. 229.

[614] See Abd Assalam Yassine, La Revolution a / ’heure de l ’Islam (Grignac-la-Nerthe, France, 1981).

[615] Sayyid Qutb, Ma’alim fi al-tarlq [Signposts] (Cairo, Dar al-Shuruq, 1981).

[616] William E. Shepard, “Islam as a ‘System’ in the Later Writings of Sayyid Qutb,” Middle Eastern Studies 25 (1989), pp. 45–46.

[617] Anderson, op. cit.

[618] Hassan 11 (King of Morocco), Discours et interviews (Rabat: Ministry of Information, 1984), p. 162.

[619] See, for example, Bakir ibn Saʿīd A’washt, Dirasdt Islamlyah fi al-uşül al-Ibadlyah (Cairo, 1988). Ibâdî Muslims constitute just under half of Oman’s indigenous population of about 1.1 million. Significant Ibâdî

communities are also found in East Africa, Libya, and southern Algeria. Non-Ibâdî examples of catechisms include Muhammad Hamidullah’s Introduction to Islam, 2nd ed. (Gary, IN, 1970), intended as a “correspondence course on Islam” and available in several languages, and Mehmet Soymen’s Concise Islamic Catechism, trans. I. Ekmeleddin (Ankara: Directorate of Religious Affairs, 1979), which was translated from Turkish into English as a “manual” for English-speaking Muslims.

[620] The country’s official name until 1970 was the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, reflecting a de facto division of the northern half of the country from 1913, following a religious uprising in the northern interior, to 1955 (the coast was controlled by the sultan, the interior by a theocratic Ibâdî imam). With British support in 1955, the northern interior was assimilated into the sultan’s domains and the imam fled into exile in Saudi Arabia. A major uprising two years later required British intervention to suppress. From 1957 to 1970, Arab League supporters of the imam-in-exile urged the United Nations to recognize Oman’s northern interior as an independent state.

[621] Dale F. Eickelman, “Ibadism and the Sectarian Perspective,” in Oman: Economic, Social and Strategic Developments, ed. B.R. Pridham (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 31–50: also the author’s “National Identity and Religious Discourse in Contemporary Oman,” International Journal of Islamic and Arabic Studies 6 (1989), pp. 1–20.

[622] John Watanabe, Mayan Saints and Souls in a Changing World (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1992), p. 99. For Sumatra, see John Bowen, Sumatran Politics and Poetics: Gayo History, 1900–1989(New ١خلآةلأ, CT. ١a\e University Press, 1991).

[623] Eickelman, “National Identity,” p. 1–20

[624] See Ahmad ibn Hamad al-Khaini, Who Are the Ibadhis?, trans. Ahmad Hamud Al-Maamiry (Zanzibar: al-Khayirah Press, 1988): also

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[625] al-Khaim, Who Are the Ibadhis?, p. 1.

[626] See Timothy Mitchell, “L’experience de femprisonnement dans le A cows amiste؛’ لأل Intellectuels et militants de !’Islam contemporain, eA. G. Kepel and Y. Richard (Paris: Seuil, 1990), pp. 193–212.

[627] Sayf ibn Nâşir al-Kharûşî, ed. “Muhadarat al-’isrâ’ wa-al-mi’râj, yuhaddithuha samahat al-Shaykh Ahmad ibn Hamad al-Khaini” (Speech on Prophet Muhammad’s Night Journey to the Seventh Heaven by His Eminence Shaykh Ahmad ibn Hamad al-Khaini), TJman, 25 March 1988, p. 11.

[628] Dale F. Eickelman, “Religious Knowledge in Inner Qman,” Journal of Oman Studies 6 (1983), pp. 163–72.

[629] John E. Peterson, “Arab Nationalism and the Idealist Politician: The Career of Sulayman al-Bârünî,” in Law, Personalities, and Politics of the Middle East: Essays in Honor of Majid Khadduri, ةة. ١. آ٠’ل؟>٢ة١ل٠اً’ا ةاًها G.s. ١٩ةآاًا% (Washington, DC: The Middle East Institute, 1988), pp. 31–50.

[630] Anderson, op. cit., pp. 15–16.

[631] United Nations General Assembly, 19th Session, The Question ofOman: Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Oman, A/5846, Annex no. 16, 22 January 1965.

[632] Ibid., p. 65.

[633] Times of Oman (Muscat), 17 December 1987, p. 5.

[634] Awasht, op. cit.

[635] Bowen, op. cit., pp. 242–57. See also Robert W. Hefner, “The Political Economy of Islamic Conversion of Modem East Java,” in Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning, ed. W.R. Roff (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 53–78: Trikoli N. Madan, “Secularism in Its Place,” Journal of Asian Studies 6 (1987), pp. 747–593 and Ananda F. Wood, Knowledge Before Printing and After: The Indian Tradition in Changing Kerala (Delhi: Qxford University Press, 1985).

[636] Eickelman, “Religion in Polity and Society,” in The Political Economy of Morocco, ed. I William Zartman (New York, Praeger, 1987), p. 91.

[637] Yann Richard, L’islam chi’ite: Croyances et ideologies (Paris: Fayard, 1991): and personal communication, 1987.

** 14. The Book in the Islamic World: A Selective Bibliography

Michael W. Albin

This bibliography aims to provide those interested in studies of the book in the Islamic world with an introductory list of research up to 1990. It is being issued on the occasion of the International Conference on the Book in the Islamic World, held 8–9 November 1990, at the Library of Congress. Although the field of Islamic book studies is of very recent vintage, there is a substantial body of scholarship from as early as the 19405 on relevant topics. Scholars from many countries, working independently, have

contributed to this research. Indeed, a comprehensive bibliography would be many times larger than the current list. In order to orient the user to the material selected for inclusion, the bibliography is divided into four broad categories: General works, including classics of what has come to be called histoire du livre, as well as theoretical works on writing, reading, and liteacy; The Manuscript Tradition, under which heading are works concerned with the production and transmission of Islamic piety and learning, and the book arts in the classical age; Print Culture, which brings together research on the introduction of the printing press and congeries of effects brought about by printed books and periodicals; and, finally, the Book and Society, covering general works on the impact of books on the education and intellectual life of Muslims during the past two centuries.

Although it may not seem proper to single out works for special note, certain writings have become established as classics and must be consulted by specialists in Islamic culture as well as scholars from other disciplines who need general background on the book in Islam. The earliest of these may be F. Rosenthal's The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship تآ.آر للم94ר١. Carter's The Invention of Printing: China and Its Spread Westward (1955) has been quoted and debated for what it has to say about the "barriers" to the printing press. The works by Ibn Durustawayh (ed. 1977) and al-Şülî (ed. 1922) represent a larger body of guides for writers and clerks in the age before printing. A. Radwan's work (1953) on the Bulaq Press of Cairo is the first and most important work to date on this famous press, and includes many documents affording insights into life in the printshop. Last, but perhaps most important of all, is the work that lay the foundation for Islamic book studies East and West, the Fihrist of Ibn al-Nadlm, happily available to US in English translation, thanks to Bayard Dodge.

By way of explanation and apology for the laige section on printing history let it be said that this is the result of the special interest of the compiler and the rich holdings of the Library of Congress in this field. The study of the history of the Islamic book being in its infancy, each and every epoch and facet of books, bookmaking, and book use is in need of further research. Of the making of books about books there should be no end.

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** Appendix: Ottoman Imperial Documents Relating to tlie History of Books and Printing

*** A Copy of a Decree Issued by
His Imperial Majesty the Padishah Murad Han{1}

Be it here by known to all governors, sea captains, judges, and other officials stationed in the Imperial domain that two European merchants by the name of Anton and Orasyu [Horatio] Bandini, being bearers of Imperial permission to conduct trade, are buying and selling and doing business by importing certain goods and valuable printed books and pamphlets in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. Some persons are opening up their shipments by force, and with little or no payment at all are taking their wares and interfering with their trade. It is therefore directed that the said merchants and their agents and employees be allowed to carry on their business in safety and that their merchandise be not seized, and that whosoever disobeys this decree of mine be reported immediately. It is also ordered that their books and goods be purchased in return for the payment of the correct price and that there should no longer be any complaints in this matter. Written in Constantinople on the first of Zilhicce in the year of the Hijrah 996.

*** As It Becomes Necessary It Will Be Accomplished
(a Copy of the Imperial Rescript, a Copy of the Noble Imperial Order){2}

This exalted royal order is given to that pinnacle of illustrious persons and notables, the official of the Grand Vezir, Sait, and to that educated select servant of the Palace, Ibrahim, may his nobility increase. It is known that upon the establishment of the rising sun of the religion of Muhammad and that with the brightness of the dawn of Ahmed’s religious community, may God bless him, and it is understood that since that time the enlightened and meritorious masters of religion, God bless them, wrote books and tracts of science and knowledge in order to protect and conserve the verses of the Koran, the traditions of the Prophet, and the entirety of knowledge. And these words served to maintain the good order of the people, and make known the laws of religion and state, and the organization of the state and community. Editing books and writings and collecting eloquent collections of poetry, they progressed and wrote histories and accounts and worked for the preservation and defense of knowledge and works of culture, facilitating and disseminating sciences and arts. People knowledgeable in Arabic and Persian profited from their explaining and teaching, and organizing the regulations for each of the particular sciences and disciplines. This being proper, in order that they would possess eternal happiness in this world and the next and gain a good reward, they did not cease writing valuable and knowledgeable books and tracts. However, with the passing of days and with the years going by as the Chingizids, created chaotic disturbances and Hulâgu rose to power, and with resplendent Andalusia in the hands of the Europeans, and with the convulsions of wars, killing, and destruction, most literary works have disappeared with their authors. Therefore, today in the Muslim lands the dictionaries of Cevheri and Van Kulu in the Arabic language, and books of history and, copies of scientific works which were burned are rare. Also, people did not give proper care and attention, and lacked concern about copying, so works were not carefully copied. These rare books are an inspiration to students of the arts and sciences and to seekers af knowledge.

Among the technical processes, printing is like coining money and impressing paper with a signet ring. Books produced by printing cause several thousand volumes to be produced from a single volume, all of which are accurate copies. With little effort there is great return, making this a desirable activity to pursue. By virtue of your having composed a learned tract about, and having expertise in, the various above-mentioned activities, you will see to the necessities and expenditures without loss of time, so that

on a fortunate day this Western technique will be unveiled like a bride and will not again be hidden. It will be a reason for Muslims to say prayers for you and praise you to the end of time. Excepting books of religious law, Koranic exegesis, the traditions of the Prophet, and theology, you asked the Radishah’s permission in the aforementioned tract to print dictionaries, history books, medical books, astronomy and geography books, travelogues, and books about logic. The aforementioned tract was referred to that very learned religious scholar, that most meritoriously pious mariner on the stormy sea of religious questions, that wellspring of the river of legal opinions, that wearer of the garment of piety, the Şeyh-Ül-Islüm and learned jurisconsult, Mevlana Abdullah, may Almighty God increase his goodness. The question was asked: Zeyd claiming expertise in the science of printing, illuminating, and producing copies of the letters and words of dictionaries, logic, philosophy, and astronomy texts, and like works, thus being able to produce exact copies of these books, is there not permission in the Holy Law for this good work? The one who is an expert at printing seeks a legal opinion because producing an accurate edition of a work in a short time, with no errors and many copies, results in there being an increased number of books, which is a benefit to the community. The answer is: Being able to produce this great benefit, this person receives permission with the condition that several educated persons be appointed as proof readers. Great benefit will come from the order based on that legal opinion, allowing for the exception of the religious subjects mentioned in the tract written with the pearl pen of wisdom. This legal opinion is well prepared and it stands out in a vast ocean as exemplary in the Şeyh’s career. What falls from his pen in the form of authoritative opinion is an overflowing garden, a basin of sweet water, a river which waters the desert with springs. The Imperial permission becomes proper on account of this well-explained authoritative declaration, this perfectly eloquent and noble opinion. Copies will be printed of dictionaries, and books about logic, astronomy and similar subjects, and so that the printed books will be free from printing mistakes, the wise, respected and meritorious religious scholar specializing in Islamic Law, the excellent Kazi of Istanbul, Mevlana Ishak, and Selaniki’s Kazi, Mevlana Sahib, and Ghalata’s Kazi, Mevlana Asad, may their merits be increased, and from the illustrious religious orders, the pillar of the righteous religious scholars, the Seyh of the Kasim Paşa Mevlevihane, Mevlana Musa, may his wisdom and knowledge increase, will oversee the proofreading. With the actual setting up of the press, the above-mentioned books in history, astronomy, geography, logic and so forth, after they pass the review of the

learned scholars, shall become numerous. However, you will take special care to see that the copies remain free from error and depend on the noble learned men for this. Ordered in the middle of Zulka’de in the year 1139 in Istanbul the protected.

*** In the Name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate. And by That Seek God’s Aid, the Tract Entitled, “the Usefulness of Printing”{3}

It is known that it is the inevitable will of God and sovereign divine decree that a community, a society, a people, or an individual, having a desire [to fulfill], becomes successful, blessed, and distinguished if the ruler assents. It is the will of God to arrange everything for the benefit of His servants, who are people of perfect faith, who, by means of His perfect beneficence, unveil the bride of His kindness and expose His hidden desires. This humble, ineloquent person of low endowment, who has need of Almighty God’s mercy, in order to become educated, some years ago sought a degree of clear understanding of the glory of ancient peoples and the adventures of the children of Adam. I read a number of histories of ancient nations and works of various religious men; like an ant I industriously studied, but achieved only a poor understanding. There came to me a sudden, clear inspiration, that there are means and instruments that societies and groups of people could use for benefiting the organization of important human matters and for the glory and power of the empire and the state by which the various ancient states mentioned above became well-ordered, powerful, and enlightened, and preserved and perpetuated their religions. And in countries without law or order there was brought into existence order, intelligence, merit, and right guidance. They [the ancients] did not pause for one second in making inventions, artifices, and praiseworthy works. Certainly, modern men follow the path of the ancients; at present in many a state and nation, various educated scholars are producing laws and organizing state and society. This is a means of perpetuating the state organization and of preserving the history of the state and society. It is a means of protection, and a defense against change and alteration on account of falsehoods or untruths according to religion and morals, and a way of creating safety from sudden catastrophes and the changes arising in

the poor memory of men caused by the passing of days and years, thus enabling the laws and ordinances of the state and society to be kept correctly, as if they were a compact inscribed in stone, copper, or iron. They have made many books in order to create a means to knowledge and education by open discussion, and they have made an easy road to invention and innovation. If this point is studied intensely, with the aim of one’s becoming learned in the goodness of religion and the merits of states, then these books, written as if on a tablet created by strength and purpose from emerald, ruby, gold, and silver, are a means for the religion and state of Islam to continue the glory of the state and the good ordering of

the important affairs of the community. Books are also a tool for perfecting the nation and the state, a method of increasing the majesty of the empire, and of becoming the protector and preserver, until the last day, of arts and sciences and recorded events from the miscalculations of man. And these writings create a solidarity in the community against factions and disorder, and the laws and regulations preserve the good order of the community from change and innovation. Without need for further explanation, it suddenly became very plain that as an aid and help to the general public, the path to follow was to make an effort to publish in the world, in large numbers, books on the necessary arts and sciences, books that are sound and accurate and in every way acceptable. This [printing of books] is a noble profession and beautiful calling. In order to become free from public and private questioning, and in order for him to become responsible for the completion of this important work, and so that it is clear that he is on a true, straight road in this work, a royal indication and command to this servant is necessary.

*** An Explanation of the Benefits of Printing Books

Being interested in the history of ancient nations, it is not obscured or veiled from the eyes that the Beni Israil, in accordance with the commands of their scriptures, have gained distinction through their preserving of the holy Torah, the preservation and conservation of the scriptures of “the protected peoples” being necessary. For fear of their being miscopied by passing through the hands of numerous copyists, they did not seek to publish widely their religious books and the Torah. The destructive

war of Nebuchadnezzar occurred because of their sinfulness in Jerusalem. By this evil fortune of the Beni Israil, Jerusalem was completely conquered, the Ark of the Covenant destroyed, and the copies of the Torah and important books gathered by the people in their homes were thrown into the fire. Therefore, most of the books were lost to posterity. The commands of the Holy Law were the means of education for the Beni Israil, but the true copies and unreliable transmissions thereof became indistinguishable, and the people fell under the authority and leadership of Jesus. When the Christians collected the verses of the noble Gospels, they were heedless of their benefits, and were careless and lazy about preserving them and did not think intelligently about publishing this knowledge among the people. When sainted Jesus, God praise that most illustrious prophet, was taken up to the precincts of heaven, the Christians, falling to quarreling about dogma, splitting into many factions, became followers of false paths and ways of unbelief. Valuing the majesty of the Islamic state and the revealed law of the Prophet, may God strengthen, exalt, and glorify him until the day of judgment, the elders of Islam were not heedless of this abyss of horrors nor were they confused about this source of peril. They shunned and avoided this degree of laziness. With the manifestation of the Koran in great glory, the elders took care that every word of the proclaimed Holy Law, every document or page which had been collected and written down, especially the traditions of the Prophet (that sublime path), they made sure that these original texts and the names of their transmitters were collected and organized into books and collections of wisdom. In this matter they desired to copy and write down without defect their remembrances and the acquired knowledge of the Muslims, preserving it in its details and generality, and they wished to disseminate it and make it available to the general Muslim public. This dissemination was a blessing to the entire community. However, with this community being continuously busy with jihad to the East and West, in a short time the majority of Muslims were confused about the splendid miracles, blessed events, and meritorious, blessed prayers. Learned religious leaders, perfect teachers, and the wisest interpreters of law and religious questions, using the Koran, the traditions, and the consensus of the community, and applying the methodology of analogy, they expended much energy bringing to light accurate interpretations and a sound methodology of interpretation in order to correct false practices and to achieve good. Religious scholars did not cease writing books on various sciences and arts or educating and sending forth students in order to guide the affairs of the people of the community. They produced innovative works, and they knew the blessings of paradise because of the benefit and merit they brought to

themselves and their community by this splendid effort. They enabled the struggle for righteousness to continue in this community from its beginning and until the last day. Both the earliest and the latest scholars produced books and compilations which were collected together, but later they were destroyed by war and violence, especially during the evil time of violent confusion caused by the tribulations of the Chingizids when the books of Central Asia were thrown into the Jayhun, leaving no trace behind. When Hulâgu conquered the Abbasids, the books and compositions of the scholars and writers were dumped in the Tigris and their writings washed away, and thus beautiful and intelligent works vanished without leaving a trace. Later, after a long period of the tribulations of this world, the country of Andalusia was torn from the arms of Islam. In the Maghrib, the sun of science set in the oppressive darkness of the Europeans. In former times, the Umayyads conquered the Frankish factions in Andalusia, and by several paths came to great wealth, and they produced many Islamic books. However, now, in the lands of Islam, it is a fact that these books are rare and only a handful remain; throughout all the Islamic domain these books are rare. In the same manner as mentioned above, disturbed conditions, destructive events, and destroying fires each became a terrible malady for books, causing students of the sciences to suffer severe difficulties. The men of the current age, being followers of ease and being exhausted, and having debilitating wealth and ease, ignore beauty; consequently, innovative works are not appreciated or preserved. On one hand, the attitude toward the importance of many works, and of books generally, is laziness and heedlessness, and to a degree learning is despised, so that in this happy place, this mighty city, this vast country, may God preserve it from calamities and evil fortune, in the entire Ottoman domains, dictionaries, like Cevheri and Van Kulu in the Arabic language, and the necessary copies of books on history and biography, and works and volumes on like subjects that are important, are scarce and rare. It goes without saying that these books are brimming with information.

*** An Explanatory Summation About Printing

Among the arts, the art of printing is a beneficial one; among productive activities, printing is one full of benefits. Printing is a type of inscribing analogous to the action of engraving and writing by the pressing of words and lines on a page, it is like coining money or inscribing walls, or like the impression from a signet ring when pressed down upon a document.

The first benefit among the benefits of printing: ل١ة ١حاآحدا٢ةةا\٠ضة ٦١ innovative art is a clear explainer of the source and wellspring of all the sources, and is an answer to the needs of the people for Islamic books. In order to master Arabic, accurate and comprehensive dictionaries are important. Furthermore, if there are numerous books on history, astronomy, logic, the affairs of the state and nation, and geography, this altogether will create tremendous educational benefits.

The second benefit: From the first appearance of the religion and empire of Islam, in order to well and properly oiganize and strengthen religion, state, and the important affairs of the community, numtiers of interpreters and compilers of nobility and intelligence made compilations and wrote books using the tool of interpretation. The work of the noble compilers and interpreters will become a means of renewal and restoration, because newly printed books, both numerous and accurate, being restored and invigorated as if they had been recently authored, will publish and present to the Muslims all the knowledge of their authors.

The third benefit: With books produced by the art of printing, it is possible to make beautiful calligraphy and splendid specimens of correct composition, eloquent expression, accurate arrangement, and excellent diction, without any mistakes, flaws, or errors. Students of the sciences, in studying and examining such books, are safe from mistakes and are secure from wasting time, because for teaching and learning, accurate texts are a necessity. It becomes unnecessary to compare many texts in order to obtain a correct understanding, and this facilitates learning in the sciences. A peculiarity of books written by pen is that the ink fades due to dampness and drying, and the writing disappears. However, using the methods of printing, its products’ ink becomes stable and enduring, and the illustrations and text are not spoiled by water and dampness; they are safe and secure from the misfortune of becoming wet.

The fourth benefit: That printed works become items of commerce is another beneficial result. When a book is printed, there are several thousand exactly identical copies, and printing is a means of

producing many clear, excellent, perfect books in a short time. Therefore, books become inexpensive, and students both rich and poor can obtain books and acquire a proper education in the desirable sciences and diplomas in religious studies.

The fifth benefit: With printing, the indexes and tables of contents of books can be made both by summary and in detail. The summary will appear at the beginning of the book, the detailed listing at the end. In the beginning of the books, by means of Indian numerals, will be indicated the proper place of the chapters and sections, thereby organizing the contents of the book so that the sections and chapters are indicated. If it is necessary to refer to the book, its contents and organization are immediately accessible. The second index allows the terms and words used in the book to be found instantly. This index will be placed at the end of the book. This index is to be organized alphabetically and the sought-after information found by this method has its place in the book indicated.

The sixth benefit: With the price of books becoming low, every single person can possess books, and furthermore, the widespread dissemination of books in town and country serves as a means of reducing ignorance.

The seventh benefit: By becoming numerous through the printing process, books become a foundation for the strength of the empire. Spreading throughout the Ottoman domains, the books of noble and desired sciences will become numerous in the cities and towns, and the libraries will become full of books.

Furthermore, this country’s students will become better educated, and the outlying regions will become more settled and better organized on account of having more books.

The eighth benefit: In the Islamic world the divine duty of jihad has not been abandoned and the warriors are firm. The illustrious Ottoman state, may God preserve it until judgement day, possesses thunderous

canons, fierce incendiaries, powerful muskets, and in the activities of the science of war is like the various European masters and its enemies do not pose a difficulty. In the activity of jihad the kings from the Ottoman house, may God support them to the day of judgment, are the leaders and most perfect examples for the Muslims. Because they have attained the perfection of glory and fame among Muslims due to their waging jihad, they will enliven and invigorate the Muslims, and are exalted on account of this. However, it is more worthy to assent to printing, that being a way to make many books exist in the shadow of their royal happiness.

The ninth benefit: All the Christian countries, in making collections in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, found these books valuable. The aforementioned books, upon being printed, became important and particularly desirable; law.

medicine, Euclidean geometry, and other such works were printed in the three languages, and the quality of the books thus produced can clearly be seen. They are fill! of misspellings and mistakes, and the letters and lines are not easily read. There is no one, finding in his hands a book in Western letters and style, who will see in it any semblance of beauty and decoration or correctness in spelling and orthography. These books are being found in the lands of Islam, having been produced in quantity, and they have become desirable, and are inexpensive. However, their quality and finish is as given above. Those buying and selling books in the Islamic countries are gathering and collecting a benefit, while the Muslims are lower than the unbelievers and polytheists who are taking precedence. In this particular matter, that is, working to make the Muslims take precedence in the book trade, there is a necessary incumbent responsibility, and this gives life to the hope of being allowed to print books.

The tenth benefit: The particularities of this beneficial art’s present establishment in the Ottoman state, as mentioned several times in thorough speech and writing, giving an accurate and certain knowledge to all that this is a most useful and beneficial activity, are such that because of its merits several people have become hopeful of establishing this activity and have made applications to do so. If the discussed activity is a desirable activity, but because of many problems is difficult to accomplish, and if on

the verge of its occurring a happy fortune does not appear and there is truly delay, the source and reason for these problems exist in the preparation. At the time of consenting by royal order to the completion of this matter, for the strengthening of science, the lord of the fortunate conjunction and of the age, the conqueror of nations of Iran and Turan, the glorious, the noble, the powerful Emperor of the world, may God exalt and strengthen him, with His Majesty's support your servant will overcome doubt and solve the difficulties with God's help, and this Western activity become visible where it was formerly invisible. This art's introduction being arranged, and its appearing on a propitious day because of the Imperial assent, it will cause a glorious exaltation of fortune and unceasing joy. Books, like those mentioned above, coming into being in the Ottoman domains, completely aside from their meeting the needs of the Muslims, is an important event in itself, ennobling Islam and being a means to happiness of the Muslims. The various peoples of the world, that is, the Arabs and foreigners, the people of the Turks, Tatars and Turkmen, Kurds, Uzbeks, Chagatay, Hindi and Sindi, Persians and Maghribis, Yemenis, Greeks, Ethiopians and the Sudanese, all together having been exalted by Islam, they have need of various kinds of books. Therefore, introducing and bringing about this important and great work certainly increases and augments the glory and majesty of the Ottoman state, and is the cause of a glorious victory for the Empire and a splendid preface and a glorious superscription, lasting until the day of judgment. It will be remembered with goodness by the tongues of the world and will bring forth the good prayers of all believers; without dispute, printing is a means to enliven and make happy the Muslims.

Except for those on law, exegesis, traditions, and theology, books will be printed, such as dictionaries, histories, medical texts and science books, philosophy and astronomy books, and information about nature, geography, and travelogues. By its grace and majesty, publication of the glorious royal rescript giving royal permission in this matter from the exalted world-renowned Emperor, defender of the faith's exalted position, is fitting. His support, through his glorious name, for establishing this innovative Western technique in order to produce abundant numbers of books, is an excellent work, making his honor independent of the need of proof. The majestic legal concurrence comprising the Imperial rescript and the legal opinion of the religious authorities is necessary; therefore, this noble and majestic command will be printed at the beginning of the book to be published and will be independent of the text of the book, making it apparent to one and all

that printing is desirable and approved. Furthtrmore, his excellency, the Şeyh-ül-Islâm, that excellent juris-consult and master of the masters of religion, his approval of this beneficial activity, this source of benefits, and his approval of this great endeavor, this noble striving, and of its being the cause for benefits to one and all, will also be published. In setting about this activity, the pronouncement of royal permission, the indication of noble support from the leaders of the religious scholars, and the other self-apparent merits of printing indicate that in every way printing conforms to the Holy Law. Furthermore, with the pronouncement and statement of support being placed in the beginning of every copy, the doubts of all people will be erased. When the book is printed, in order to be accurate and free of any defect or mistake in respect to the perfection of its composition and language, by our own consent, three or four persons will be employed as proofreaders, with their appointment being included in the royal order which is to be printed in the beginning of the first book from the press; this will act as an assurance to the people. Finally, by way of introduction, a brief summary of the merits and benefits of printing will be presented in a clear, two or three page tract in order to inform the community. All will then become cognizant and all the world will offer her their blessings and prayers.

<right>

Translated by

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** Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version]

’Abd al-’Aziz al-Wafa’1, 158

’Abd al-Ghafir ibn Ismâ’îl al-Fârisî, 108

’Abd al-Jabbar al-Khawlanl, 107

’Abd Allah ibn Abi Ishaq, 125

’Abd Allah ibn al-’Abbâs, 44, 45, 142

’Abd Allah ibn sa’îd ibn al-’Aşş, 142

’Abd al-Rahman Jami, see Jami

’Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, 62

’Abd al-Salam ibn ’Abd al-Wahhab, 51

’Abd al-Hamld the Second, 241

’Abdallah Marvarld, 198

’Abdul Jalil Bilgraml, 82

Abdulrazak, Fawzi, 14

’Abd-ul-Wahhab Muşawir-İ Mashhadl, 201

’Abldah al-Salmanl, 41

Abu al-’Arab Tamim, 107, 108

Abu Al-Aswad al-Du’alî, 124

Abu al-Barak al-Baghdadl, 35

Abu al-Fida, 174

Abu al-Hasan al-’Amiri, 59, 66

Abu al-Hasan Jilwah, 60

Abu al-’Iyâl al-Hudhall, 22

Abu al-Khattab al-Akhfash al-Kablr, 126

Abu ’Amr ibn al-’Alâ’, 126

Abu Bakr, caliph, 142

Abu bakr al-Marriidhl (al-MarwazI), 39

Abu Hanlfah, 21

Abu Hatim al-Sijistanl, 95

Abu Hayyan al-Tawhldl, 40, 41, 43, 44

Abu Hilal al-’Askari, 96

Abu Ishaq al-ShirazI, 95, 102

Abu Manşür al-Tha’âlibî, 108

Abu Mikhnaf, 97

Abu Nu’aym al-Işfahânî, 41, 95, 111

Abu Qilabah, 41

Abu SaTd al-Sîrâfî, 40, 41

Abu Sulayman al-Mantiqi al-Sijistanl, 95

Abu Talib Kallm, 73, 78, 84

Abu Tammam, 44

Abu Zi’bil Press, 245

al-Ahdab, Ibrahim, 240

Ahmad al-Bâbî al-Halabl, 247

Ahmad Amin, 247

Ahmad ibn IsmaTl ibn Abi al-SuUd, 42

Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, 247

Ahmed III, 284

A’ishah, 146

Akbar, 75

Akhsikatl, 81

Alexandria, 241

’All, 125

’All ’Abd al-Raziq, 248

’All ibn Abi Talib, 142

’All Khan, 71

’All Mashhadl, 199

’All Shir Navâ’î, 196, 197, 202

alif, 7,85

Alwan, Mohammed, 214

American Press of Beirut, 237, 242

American missionaries, 237, 238

American University of Beirut, 239

Amir Khusrau Dihlawl, 78–80, 188

Andalusia, 284, 288

Anderson, Benedict R., 260

Anvarl, 84

Al-’Aqqad, Mahmud ’Abbas, 247

Arab-Israeli conflict, 243

Arab Socialist Union, 248

Arabian peninsula, 267

Arabic language, 235, 237, 238: grammar, 1233 grammatical principles, 128

Arrajan, 182, 186

Arslan family library, 237

Asfar of Mulla Sadra, 9

AsmaT, 127

astrolabe, 154

al-‘A tar, Farid al-DIn, 73

Athanathios Dabbas, 237

Athlr al-DIn Abhari, 59, 63

authority, religious, 266

Avicenna, see Ibn Sina

’awamil (operants), 124, 125, 130–132

Ayidah Nuşayr, 247

Ayn Tura, 236

Ayn Warqa, 236

Azad Bilgraml, 73

al-Azhar, 246

‘Azlzaddln Nasafi, 75

Baba Fighanl, 75, 79

Babur ibn Baysunghur, 199

Bach Mamluk Hajj Zuhayr, 25

Badi al-Zaman Mirza, 196

Badr al-DIn ibn Jama ah, 42, 43

Bahlj ‘Uthman, 250

Bakhtiyar, Manşür ibn ‘Umar, 181, 182

al-Baladhuri, 96

Bandini, Anton, 283

Bandini, Orasyu (Horatio), 283

bar-avard, 200

Bashir II, 234

Basrah, 98

Bayqara, see Sultan Husain Baiqara

Bedil, 81–83

Beirut, 237, 240–243, 249

Bell, Richard, 19

Beni Israil, 287

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, 238

Bey of Tunis, 223

Bible, 20, 239, 240: Gutenberg Bible, 215

Bihbihan, 182, 186

bindings, 220: Ottoman, 199: Safavid, 200

Bint Quraymazan, 145

biographical dictionaries, 93:

alphabetical arrangement, 105:

arrangement by place, 107:

arrangement by discipline, 108: arrangement by time span, 1063 definition, 94ᑊ dhayl, 103: general, 103: inner structure, 104: restricted, 102 smoothness, 106: specialization, 102· structure, 97, 105: of Sufis, 111: of Twelver Shi Ites, 109 al-Bîrünî, 45, 154, 159 Bloch, Marc, 257 Book,

see also Kitab, 17 Book of the Universe, 76 Book of Love, 82 books, xiii, 36, 284, 287: in Arab

World, 233: Arabic, 249, 250: burnings, 39: commissioning, 179: as a companion, XV: copying, 35: destruction, 39: diffusion, 9: dissemination, 235, 237, 240, 246, 250: education, 235: in Egypt, 243: electronic, machine-readable, 12, 13: heritage books, 240, 248: imagery, 74, 78: inner, 65: Lebanon, 236: Malta Arabic, 220: need for, 36: printed, 5, 6: printed, spread of, 5: production, 33: provenance, 179: publishing, 241: role of, XV, 235: as tools, 38: trade, 291: transfer of, 179: written, 66

Bourdieu, Pierre, 256 al-Bukhari, 19, 102, 104–106 Bulaq books, 220, 245

Bulaq Press, 212, 217, 245–246

Biirgel, J. Christoph, 71 Butrus al-Bustani, 237

cabbala, 66

Cairo, 164, 170, 241, 242, 249 calligraphy, 143, 144: Ottoman period, 146

Camp David aggrement, 244 Canon of Avicenna, 1 Catholic Press, 239, 242 censorship, 40

Cevheri (aLJawhari), 284, 289 Cheikho, Luis, 242

Chester Beatty Library, 159

Chingizids, 288

Chodkiewicz, Michel, 62

Christianity, 241

Colonna, Fanny, 267

communications revolution, 224

compendia, 43, 45

Corbin, Henry, 60, 61

Cordova, 145

Cornelius van Dyke, 238

curriculum, 264

Dar al-Ahram, 248

Dar al-Hilal, 247, 248

Dar a-llm lil-Malayln, 242

Dar al-Maarif, 247, 248

Dar al-Makshuf, 242

Dar al-‘Ulüm Faculty, 248

Dar Şâdir-Rîhânî, 242

Dara Shikoh, 83

Dayf, Shawql, 134

Dayr al-Balamand, 237

Dayr al-Mukhalliş, 237

Dayr al-Sharfeh, 237

dhikr, 18

dictionaries, 243

Djait, Hichem, 29

Durrah al-Katibah, 146

Durrah Khanum, 146

L’Ecole des Langues Orientales, 242

education, 255, 264: Islamic, 267:

mass, 265

Egypt, 234, 247, 249 257, 260

Egyptian Revolution of 1952, 242244 و

Egyptian National Library, 246

Eisenstein, Elizabeth, 215, 217

English Church Missionary Society, 212

esoteric interpretation, 66

European printers, 1

European languages, 216

Fakhr al-Dîn RazI, 66

Fanl, 75–77, 80, 82

Fano, Italy, 234

al-Fârâbî, 60, 66

Farah Antun, 241

Farhat, Jibril, 212

Farigh, 77

Fatimah, 145

fatwas, 262

Fox, M.v.,34

Frankfurt, 174

Friday sermons, 263–265

Frithjof Schuon, 71

fuhul, 101

fundamentalism, 255 al-Funun Society, 240, 241 Fuzuli, 80, 83

Gdoura, Wahid, 14

Gesu Daraz, 72, 86

Ghalib, 83, 84 al-Ghazzall, 66

Gibb, Sir Hamilton, 116, 117, 119

Gilson, Etienne, 60 gnosis, 58, 6263 و God the Creator, 84

Gospels, 287

Gramsci, Antonio, 256

greater Syria, 240

Hâ’iri Yazdl MazandaranI, 60

Habermas, Jurgen, 256 hadlth, 4, 264, 288 Hafiz, 73, 77, 79

Hafsah, 142

Hafsi, 117, 119

HajjlKhallfah, 41, 42, 43, 46

Hamzah ibn Yusuf al-Sahml, 95

Hashi Bihisht, 199

Hassun, Rizqallah, 222

Hawamrni, 19

al-Hay’ah al-Misrlyah al-‘Ammah lil-

Kitab, 248

Haydar al-Shihabl, 210 al-Haytham ibn Ǻ Adi, 97 Herat, 196, 198, 199
huffaz, 18, 20

Hulâgu, 284, 288

Humphreys, R. Stephen, 93, 116, 118,

119 نم

Husayn Bayqara, see Sultan Husain Baiqara

Ibadi Muslims (Ibadiyah), 261–263

Ibn (Abd al-Malik al-Marrakishl, 103, 104

Ibn Abi al-Hadld, 96

Ibn Abi al-Hawârî, 4142 و

Ibn Abi al-Wafa’, 102

Ibn Abi Hatim al-Râzî, 105

Ibn Abi Usaybi’ah, 95

Ibn Abi Ya’la al-Farra, 102

Ibn al-Abbar, 103, 104

Ibn al-Anbarl, *Abd al-Rahman ibn

Muhammad (d. 577/1181), 132

Ibn al-Bawwab, 25, 143

Ibn al-Dabithl, 104

Ibn al-Faradl, 103

Ibn al-‘Imâd al-Hanball, 95

Ibn al-Jawzl, 96, 111

Ibn al-Kalbl, 97

Ibn al-Murtada, 95

Ibn al-Nadlm, 46, 96, 97, 102

Ibn al-Najjar, 104

Ibn al-Sarraj, Muhammad ibn al-Sârî, 129, 154, 158, 159, 164

Ibn ‘ Arabi, Muhyl al-Dîn, 24, 39, 62, 66,74,75, 143

Ibn Asakir, 108

Ibn Ahur, al-Tahir, 18

Ibn Bashkuwal, 103, 104

Ibn Bassam, 103, 109

Ibn Fadi Allah al-‘Umarî, 96, 174

Ibn Hajar alAsqalanl, 96, 102, 106

Ibn Hanbal, Ahmad, 39–41

Ibn Hayyan, 103, 104

Ibn Hazm, 103

Ibn Hibban al-BusG, 104 105

Ibn Jamah, see Badr al-Dîn ibn Jama’ah

Ibn Khaldun, ʕAbd al-Rahman, 45, 46

Ibn Khallikan, 35, 103, 105, 115

Ibn Mada’, Ahmad ibn ’Abd al-

Rahman, 128

Ibn Makülâ, 96

Ibn Masud, 41

Ibn Muqlah, 143

Ibn Qayyim al-JawzIyah, 39

Ibn Qutaybah, 95

Ibn Ridwan, al-Hasan (d. 453/1061), 38

Ibn Rushayd Al-Sabtl, 96

Ibn Sad, 97, 100–102, 112, 113

Ibn Said al-AndalusI, 109

Ibn Sallam al-Jumâhî, 97, 99, 100, 102

Ibn Shakir al-Kutubl, 104

Ibn Sina (Avicenna), 59, 66

Ibn Sirin, Abu Bakr Muhammad, 44

Ibn TaghribirdI, 96

Ibn Turkah, 59

Ibn Wallad, Ahmad ibn Muhammad, 130

Ibn Yunus, 170

Ibrahim Müteferrika, 284, 286

Ibrahim Pâshâ, 237

’//a/, 124

illustrations, 149

‘Um al-huruf, 24

al-lmam, 17

Institut Francais de lArcheologie

Orientale du Caire, 246

international book fair, 249

Iqbal, Muhammad, 80, 83, 85

iqra’, 17, 57

Iran, 259, 267

Iraq, 235

(Isa ibn ʖmar, 126, 127

Isfahan, 159

Islam, 234, 235, 258, 260, 264

Islamic civilization, 99–102

Islamic Conference Organization, 266

Islamic ideologies, 256

Islamic state, 287

Isma’11 BakhshI, 77

Isma’11 Haqql, 62

Isma’11, 246

Istanbul, 215, 241

Jabal Ail, 236

al-Jahiz, Abu xiv, 38, 43, 44,

95, 143, 144

Jalal al-Dîn al-Suyütî, 95

Jalal al-Dîn DawanI, 61

Jalal al-Dîn Kirmanî, 201

Jalal al-Dîn Rûmî, 64, 71, 72, 81,

84–86

Jamal al-Dın al-Mizzi, 95, 102

Jamal al-Dîn al-Qiftl, 93, 95

Jami, 71, 72, 74, 79, 80, 81, 85, 196, 198, 202

al-Jawa’ib, 211, 213

Jawa’ib Press, 214

Jayhun, 288

Jean Joseph Marcel, 244

Jerusalem, 287

Jesuits, 238

Jesus, 287

jihad, 290

Jordan, 260

aLJurjanl, ’Abd al-Qahir, (d. 471/1078), 132

Ka’bah, 164, 171: orientation, 171

Kamal Khujandl, 196

Karatay, F.E., 181

Khalaf al-Ahmar, 127

Khalidi, 1. 116, 117

al-Khain ibn Ahmad, 127, 129, 130

Khalil Mutran, 247

aLKhallll, Ahmad ibn Hamad, 261–263, 265

KhaliqI, Mutlaq, J., 181, 201

Khalişah, 144

Khamsah, 180, 182, 190, 191, 193, 196, 199

KhaqanI, Afdal al-Dîn, 7284 و al-Khatlb al-Baghdadl, 36, 37, 41, 95, 104–106, 108

khatt, 6 77,79–83

Khawarij, 262

Khayr al-Dîn al-Tünisî, 222, 223, in

Tunis, 234

Khedive of Egypt, 223

al-Khüshânî, 108

Khwaja Murshîd-İ Kashgari, 201

al-Kindî, 59, 143

aLKishshî, 110

kitdb, see also books, 17, 75

Kitab, 18, 123

al-Kitab, 22

Kitab of Slbawayhl, 128

knowledge, 35, 46, 209

Koran (Qur’an), xiv, 1, 17, 22, 65, 77, 78, 235, 256, 266, 267, 284, 287, 288: compilation, 23: form, 25· Hadinah Koran, 146: Hamburg, 1: memorization, 257: miraculous nature, 26: preservation, 18: properties, 23: revelation, 57

Krystal, Arthur, 47

Kufah, 98, 100

al-Külînî, 110

Labd, 21

lahag, 34

Lajnat al-Ta’lîf, 248

Lane, Edwardd, 246 learning, 261

Lebanese Mission, 242

Lebanon, 234, 242, 251

liberal age, 247

libraries, 36: history, 71: public, 38

Library of Congress, Center for the Book, xii

literacy, 8

literature, Arabic, 71

lithography, 12 litterateurs, 210

Lisan al-Tayr, 200

Lorch, Richard, 154 love, 81, 85

Lubna, 144

Lughat al-Furs, 180, 181

al-Ma’arri, Abu al-Ala’, 39 al-Madâ’inî, 143 madrasah, 267

the Maghrib, 288

Mahdi Hairi, 60

Mahdi İlâhî QumshaT, 60, 66

Mahdi, Muhsin, 60

Mahfuz, Najib, 243

MaktubjLTM

Male, fimile, 28

Malta, 212

Malta Arabic press, 213, 219, 237

Mamluks,‘244

al-Manar Press, 247

Manşür aLBihbihanl, 187, 188, 191

Muhammad Shahrazurl, 61 al-Muʕizz ibn Badis, 146 al-Mukhallişlyah Press, 242 Mulla Sadra, 58, 6166, 63 و al-Munjid, I muqri’m, 20 muraqqa’, 198 musahhih, 10 mushaf; 22, 26 al-Murtada al-Zabidl, 96 Muslim Brothers, 259 Mutahhar Karh, 73 al-Mutalammis, 22

MutasarriTyah, 234

al-Muwazanah of al-Amidl, 216

Muznah, 145

mystical fraternities, 6, 7

al-NabulusI, ʕAbd al-Gham, 62 nahdah, 210

nahw, 123, 124

al-Najashl, 110

al-Najjar, Ibrahim, 238

Napoleon Bonaparte, 244

al-Narshakhl, 107

Nasif al-Yazîjî, 237, 238

Nâşir Muhammad ‘Andallb, 74

Nâşir-i Khusrau, 74

Nasr ibn ʕAsim, 133

Nasser, Jamal ʕAbd al-, 248, 249

National Archives, 248

National Library, 248

Nawab of Bhopal, 223

Nawfal Elias Nawfal, 240

Nazlrl, 81, 83

Nebuchadnezzar, 287

Nishapur, 108

Nizami, 73, 197

Nizwa, 265

Ndldeke, Theodor, 19, 20 non-Muslim communities, 5

North Africa, 260 novels, 239, 240 al-Nuddar, 144

objectification, 255

Oman, 257, 261, 264, 266

Omanis, 262–265

Omar Khayyam, 88

oral information, 47

oral tradition, 8, 57, 58, 62, 65, 264; in Islam, 66

oral transmission, 36, 57, 59, 60, 61

orthography, 8

Ottoman Observatory, 149

Ottoman state, 290

Ottoman rule, 234

Ottoman printing law, 241

Padishah, 285

page layouts, 220

Pakistan, 267

Palestine question, 243

paper, xiv; Chinese, 133

Petrucci, Armando, 28

philosophy, 63, 64: Islamic, 58;

mashshcTi, 60, 63: Oriental

(IshraqO, 61

photographic reproductions, 12

pilgrimage, 266

plays, 240

poetry, Arabic, 101: Hurûfî, 77

preservation, 19, 221

the press, 6

presses, state ownership, 6

print revolution, 215

printing, 4, 209, 210, 214, 215, 233,

235, 285, 286: Arabic, 210: benefits, 189: and the Holy Law, 292: impact on language, 7: linguistic and literary standards, 219: press, 212, 235

proof readers, 285

Protestantism, 238

Psalms, 237

Psalter, 236

publishers, archives of, 7

publishing houses, 236, 242

punctuation, 220

al-Qabbanl, ’Abd al-Qadir, 240

QabbanI, Nizar, 243

Qabus ibn Sa’îd, 261

aLQadl ’Iyad, 102

aLQarafah, 170

Qarawlyln, 267

al-Qazwlnl, 64, 162

qiblah, 159: finding, 164: pre-lslamic, 171

qiyas, 125, 130

Qur’an, see Koran

Quraysh, 100, 141

qurra, 18

QurrcC, 29

al-Qushayri, 111

Qutb al·Dîn Shirazi, 61, 63

Quzhayya, 236

Ragib Mehmed Paşa, 9

Ramadan, 267

Rasul aLNajjarl, 222 rationalism, 241 religious authority, 259 renaissance, 8

Rice, D.S., 25

al-Rida, 145

Rida, Rashid, 247

al-rîqq 22

Rose, the, 79

rose, 80

Rosenthal, Franz, 116

RushdI, (Abd al-Rahman, 246

<ʕsabiqahı9

Sa’di, 2186, 78, 76, 73 و

Sadr al-Dîn Qunawl, 62, 65

safinah, 15

Safa, Jirjls, 237

safr, 21

sahlfah, 22

Sa id Pâshâ, 246

St. George Orthodox Press, 237

St. Joseph University, 239

Sait Efendi, 284

Salafiyah, 234

Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Safadi, 95, 104, 106

Salim Faris, 223

Salmon ibn Yeruham, 34

sama’, 130

Sami al-Bârüdî, 80 al-Samman, Ghadah, 243

Sanai of Ghazna, 75, 81, 86 al-Sâq ’ala al-sâq 213 sarf; 129

Sarmad, 83

Saudi Arabia, 249

Sayyid, Fu’âd, 15

Sayyid Qutb, 259–262

Sayyidah, 145

school of languages, 244 science, Islamic, 149 scribal tradition, 4, 9, 212 script, Andalusian, 143, Kufi, 143, Muhaqqaq, 143

secularism, 241

Selim-namah, 193, 196 Şeyh-‘ûl-Islam, 285, 292 al-Sha’bî, ’Amir, 45 al-Shâfâ’ bint ’Abd Allah al-’AdawIyah, 142

al-Shâfı’1, 107

Shah Isma’11, 193, 196

Shah Rukh, 180, 188, 202

Shah Shuja’, 180

Shah Wallallah of Delhi, 62 Shah-namah, 180–182, 193, 196, 197 Shahid, Irfan, xiv ShahrastanI, 66

Shams al-Dln al-Dhahabl, 102, 107, 116 Shams al-Hafiz al-Shlrazl, 188 sharTah, 129

Shaykh al-Khallll, see al-Khallll,

Ahmad ibn Hamad al-Shaykh al-Mufid 110 Shfah, 265 al-Shidyaq, Ffis, 210, 237: collector of

Mss., 211: copyist, 211: as disseminator, 216: effects of activities, 215: in Istanbul, 213: as journalist, 216: publications, 214: as role model, 222: in Tunis, 213 al-Shidyaq, Tannus, 238 Shu’bah ibn al-Hajjaj, 41 Shuhdah bint al-Ubri, 145 shura, 6 Shuwayr, 237

Slbawayhl, 123, 127, 129, 130, 132

al-Sijzl, 154

Sirr al-layal, 214

Sitt Nasim, 144

standardization, 220, 221

standardization of texts, 217

state, role of, 7

Stchoukine, Ivan, 180, 181–190, 188
191, 193

al-Şüfı, 149, 174

Sufis, 64

Sufism, 62, 65

Sufyan al-Thawri, 40, 41

al-Suhrawardl, Yahya, 61

Sukkar, 144

al-Sulaml, 111

Sulayman al-Bârünl, 263

Sulayman al-Bustanl, 247

Sultan al·Ashraf, 154

Sultan Husain Baiqara (Bayqara), 72,

180, 187, 188, 197–200, 202

Sultan Muhammad Muhsin, 199

Sultan Murad III, 154

Sultan Qaboos University, 261

Sultan Said, 263

Sultan Selim, 193, 196

surahs, 24

Syriac language, 237

Syrian Protestant College, 237, 239

Syrians, 247

talll, 131

tabaqat, 115

al-Tabari, 96

TabatabaT, Muhammad Husayn, 63

tables of contents, 219

Tabriz, 196

al-TabrlzI, Lutf Allah, 181, 182

al TabrizI, Muhammad ibn Malik

Ahmad, 196, 200

Taha Hussein, 247, 248

al-Tahtawi, Rifa’ah Raff, 244

Taj al-Dln al-Subki, 102, 107

Tamir, ’Arif, 14

tanzJl, ‘ll

TaqI al-Dln, 154

Targum, 34

Tashkopriizadeh, 46, 116

tawatur, 20

Tawfiq (Khedive), 246

Tawfiq al-Hakim, 247

al-Tawhidl, see Abu Hayyan al-Tawhldl technological revolution, 13 textbooks, 238 textual criticism, 4

Throne of God, 65

Tigris, 288

tilâwah2

title pages, 219

Topkapi Sarayi Library, 179

Torah, 287

traditions, of the Prophet, Isee hadlth

translations, 5; impact of, 6

Tripoli, 236

Tunis, 235

Tunisia, 249

al-Turabi, Hassan, 259

Turkey, 242, 260

Turklyah, 144

al-Tüsî, 60, 63, 110

typeface, 213, 219: Arabic, 237

‘Ubadah ibn al-Samit, 142

Ubbay ibn Ka’b, 142

Ubbay ibn Ka’b, 142

‘Ukashah, Tharwat, 249

‘ulama’, xiv, 58, 209, 235, 243, 259

Ullmann, M. 49

‘ulum al-Qur Ğn, 44

Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘AzIz, 19, 21

TJmar ibn al-Khattab, 142

Umayyads, 288

Umld, 79

Ummayah ibn Abi al-Salt, 20

United Nations, 263

al-‘Uqayl, 105

‘Urâbî revolution, 243

‘Urfi, 78

‘Utbah, 144

‘Uthman ibn ‘Affan, caliph, 25, 142

Van Kulu, 284, 289

ventilator, 164

Vesiletu-t Tibaa, 286

al-Wadi’ashl, 96

aLWajlh al-Nah 39

Wall Deccani, 73

al-Waqa’i* al-Misnyah, 212

كلاس library, 39

Warburg Institute, 242

Warqah ibn Nawfal, 21

Warqah ibn (Umar Samarqandl, 187, 201, 202

al-warraq, xiv, 235

West Bank, 259

William Watts, 213

Wolfson, Hairy A., 60

women, 99, 101, 141: copying of

Korans, 145: occupations, 144: scholars, 145

word, spoken, 36

Wortabet, w. Thomas, 238

writing, 21, 24, 28

Yanni, Jurjl, 240

Yaqut al-Hamawi, 43, 44, 95, 105, 162

Yasin, Abd al-Salam, 259

al-YazIjl, Ibrahim, 222, 247

Yemen, 154

Young Turks, 242

Yunus ibn Habib, 126

Yusuf al-AsIr, 222, 240

Yusuf Tümâ al-Bustanl, 247

Zakhir, ‘Abdallah, 236–238

Zamakhsharl, 73

al-Zarkashl, Muhammad ibn Bahadir, 44

Zawzanl, 211

Zayd ibn Arqum, 142

Zayd ibn Aslan, 25

Zayd ibn Thabit, 18, 19, 142

Zaydan, Jurjl, 247

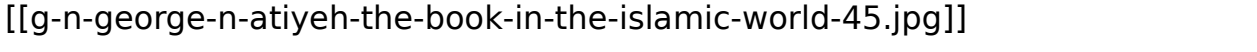
Zebun-Nisa, 76

Zgharta, 236

Zubaydl, Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, 129

Zulaykhah Khatiml al-Sa’dî, 146

** [Back Cover]



THE BOOK IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD

THE WRITTEN WORD AND

COMMUNICATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

George N. Atiyeh, editor

<quote>

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grammatical tradition; womens contribution to calligraphy; scientific manuscripts; the transition from scribal to print culture; publishing in the modern Arab World; and the new electronic media, a non-book vehicle of communication, and its impact on education.

George N. Atiyeh is the head of the Near East Section at the Library of Congress. He has authored and edited a number of books and articles, among which are al-Kindi, the Philosopher ئ(the Arabs-, The Contemporary Middle East, 1948–1973: A Bibliography; and Arab Civilization: Challenges and Responses.

State University of New York Press

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{1} The Firman (Royal decree) of Sultan Murad III given in October 1588, which allowed European merchants to import books printed in the Arabic script.

{2} The Firman of Ahmed 111, given in 1139/1727, authorizing Sait Efendi and Ibrahim Müteferrika to open a printing house using Arabic script. Authorization was limited to books on practical, that is, secular subjects and excluded those dealing with Islamic sciences.

{3} The essay by Ibrahim Müteferrika entitled Vesiletu-t Tibaa, on the usefulness of printing, in which he exposes the losses incurred by Islamic learning from the absence of the art of printing and the great benefits its establishment would bring to Muslims in general and Ottomans in particular.

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** [Front Matter]

*** [Synopsis]

From the introduction:

<quote>

“Regional cults are found in many parts of the world. They are cults of the middle range — more far-reaching than any parochial cult of the little community, yet less inclusive in belief and membership than a world religion in its most universal form. Their central places are shrines in townsand villages, by cross-roads or even in the wild, apart from human habitation,

where great populations from various communities or their representatives come to supplicate, sacrifice or simply make pilgrimages.”

</quote>

This book (which is derived from the 1976 ASA Conference) is the first attempt by social anthropologists to create a theoretical framework for the comparative analysis of these cults. It gives the study of religious organizations a new perspective on major historical transformation from the pre-colonial past to the neo-colonial present, in North and South-central Africa, South America and the Middle East. It advances a basic debateabout opposed theories of religion and society inspired by Robertson Smith, Durkheim and Marx. The focus is on the problems of change in trans-cultural symbolism and relationships which cross political, economic or ethnic boundaries. Most of the case studies are from South-central Africa, allowing a comprehensive view of cults in a core area over a long period of time. The overall coverage is also inclusive of Islamic marabouts, Christian and non-Christian prophets, local territorial mediums, High God oracles. Numerous maps, diagrams and charts illustrate the distribution and regional patterns of the various cults.

The book introduces new concepts and a rich body of data of interest to social anthropologists, sociologists, students of comparative religion, history, politics, economic development and cultural evolution.

*** Association of Social Anthropologists: A Series of Monographs

13. J.B. Loudon, Social Anthropology and Medicine — 1976

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For Max Gluckman

In Memory

*** Contents

Introduction

RICHARD P. WERBNER

Beyond Naive Holism

Level Specific Analysis

Turner’s Exclusive and Inclusive Domains

The ‘Correspondence’ Theory

Elitist versus Egalitarian Regional Cults

Hierarchy and the Waxing and Waning of Cults

The Interpenetration of Cults

Future Research

References

Part One: Islamic Cult Regions: Historical Interaction or Symbolic Congruence

1. Ideological Change and Regional Cults:

Maraboutism and Ties of ‘Closeness’ in Western Morocco

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Ideologies and the Social Order

Maraboutism as a Part-Ideology

The Sherqawi Zawya

Maraboutism and “Closeness”

Maraboutic Descent

Ideology and Practice

Sacrifices and Social Groups

Conclusion

References

2. Communal and Individual Pilgrimage:

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EMANUEL MARX

Introduction: The Region and the Wider Universe in the Cult

Three Tribes and their Setting in the Peninsula

‘Tribal Organization’ as Ideology

Annual Migration and Pilgrimage

The Symbolism of Saints’Tombs

References

Part Two: Regional and Non-Regional Alternatives: The Waxing and Waning of Cults

3. Disparate Regional Cults and a Unitary Field in Zimbabwe
KINGSLEY GARBETT

Introduction: The Interpenetration of Cults

The Region of Mutota

The Land-Shrine Community

Lineal and Territorial Aspects

Change in Ritual Territories

Expansion and the Regional Medium

The Decline of Chthonic Cults

Kupara’s Recruitment

The Linking of Local and Territorial Cults

Conclusion

References

4. Bush Negro Regional Cults: A Materialist Explanation

BONNO THODEN VAN VELZEN

Introduction: Radical Economic Change and Cults

Heydays

The Spread of a Regional Cult and its Centralization

Theology

Allocation of Resources and Internal Distribution

Gaan Tata’s Bulwark on the Tapanahoni

Gaan Tata’s Decline

A New Regional Cult?

Summary

References

5. A Continuing Dialogue: Prophets and Local Shrines among the Tonga of Zambia

ELIZABETH COLSON

Cults and their Publics

The Setting and the Cults

Shrine Custodians

Prophets and the Greater Community

The Diversification of Society

Continuity and Change in the Cults

The Gwembe Resettlement: A Test Case

Prophets and Custodians

References

6. Regional and Non-Regional Cults of Affliction in Western Zambia

WIM M.J. VAN BINSBERGEN

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Non-Rcgional Cults of Affliction

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General Characteristics

The Development of Nzila and Bituma as Regional Cults

Conclusion

References

Part Three: Regional Instability: Cult Policy and Competition for Resources

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RICHARD P. WERBNER

Introduction: The Definition of Regions

Change in Congregations

The Development of a Region and the Limits of its Expansion

The Priesthood and its Managerial Problems

Hierarchy and the Making of Oracular Policy

References

8.

Cult Idioms and the Dialectics of a Region

J.M. SCHOFFELEERS

Introduction

The Formal Organisation of the Cult

The Chiefs and the Shrine

The Spirit Medium and the Informal Operation of the Cult

The Medium’s Entourage

The Mbona Medium and the Chiefs

The Encounter between Medium and Principals

Rumour and Possession

The Conceptualization of a Regional Community

References

Notes on Contributors

Author Index

Subject Index

**** Maps

Introduction

1 Regional Cults in South-Central Africa

Chapter 1

1 Spheres of Sherqawi Influence in Western Morocco

Chapter 2

1 Holy Tombs in South Sinai

Chapter 3

1 Region of Mutota: Spirit Provinces and Chthonic Cult Areas, Dande (1963) Zimbabwe

2 The Ritual Field of the Region of Mutota (1963–69), Zimbabwe

Chapter 4

1 Gaan Tata Cult and Christian Mission Posts (c. 1900), Surinam

Chapter 5

1 Prophets and Local Shrines: Zambian Tonga and their Neighbours in Zimbabwe

Chapter 6

1 Ethnic Groups and Localities in Western Zambia

2 Origin and Spread of the Nzila and Bituma Regional Cults

Chapter 7

1 Congregations and Shrines of the High God Cult, Northeastern Botswana facing

2 Territorial Divisions in Northeastern Botswana

3 Interlocal Shrine and Band of Adepts, Northeastern Botswana

4 Congregations of Southwestern Region, Botswana and Zimbabwe

Chapter 8

1 Mbona Shrine and Surrounding Chiefdoms (1975), Malawi

**** Diagrams

Chapter 7

1. Regions and their Surrounding Vicinities

2. Cult Domain and Ecological Zones: Distribution of Oracles

Genealogies

Chapter 3

1 Perpetual Relations among Korekore, Chthonic and Chikunda Regional Cults

2 Mutota’s Descendants

3 Succession to Mediumships

Chapter 7

1 Genealogy of a Band of Adepts

**** Tables

Chapter 2

1 Bedouin Tribes of South Sinai

Chapter 3

1 Index of Spirit Provinces shown in Map I

Chapter 7

1 Succession of Adepts

2 Recruitment of Junior Adepts

3 Recruitment of Senior Adepts

**** Charts

Chapter 7

1 Grades of Shrine

2 Western Regions of the High God Cult

Chapter 8

1 Resume of Origin Myths of Two Principals

2 Mbona Mediums in the Twentieth Century

** Introduction

by Richard P. Werbner

*** Beyond Naive Holism

Essential relations with a wider context get stripped away when a small group, little community or tribe is studied as an isolated whole. This idea is virtually a commonplace, and it is now conventional, also, to reject the method as a fault of earlier studies. Yet relatively little advance has been made beyond naive holism — indeed, it may be winning new advocates (Barth 1975; Douglas 1970). The challenge remains one that Max Gluckman raised in his early work (1940, 1942): to analyse change in fields of relations that cross political, economic or ethnic boundaries.

These essays on regional cults, which derive mainly from papers presented at the 1976 A.S.A. Conference in Manchester, take up that challenge.

Regional cults are found in many parts of the world. They are cults of the middle range — more far-reaching than any parochial cult of the little community, yet less inclusive in belief and membership than a world religion in its most universal form. Their central places are shrines in towns and villages, by cross-roads or even in the wild, apart from human habitation, where great populations from various communities or their representatives, come to supplicate, sacrifice, or simply make pilgrimage. They are cults which have a topography of their own, conceptually defined by the people themselves and marked apart from other features of cultural landscapes by ritual activities (on ritual topography see Turner 1974 : 183).

Diverse as the cases in this book are — cults of Islamic marabouts, Christian and non-Christian prophets, local and territorial mediums, High God oracles — they represent much less than the full range of regional cults. Their forms in different parts of the world are far too many to be covered in a single book. Hence this selection is concentrated in two ways. First, along with cases from North Africa, the Middle East and South America, there is a fairly representative coverage in one part of the world, South-Central Africa (see Map 1). Second, besides such ethnographic concentration, there is a theoretical focus: our primary concern is to explain change in the ideology and organization of cults which are based on a central place and its relations with its hinterland or smaller dependent centres. In Carol A. Smith’s terms these cults are ‘nodal forms of organization’ (Smith 1976b : 9), and though our focus is somewhat like hers, the differences in our theoretical interests need to be seen from the outset.

*** Level Specific Analysis

The major collection of essays edited by Smith (1976a, 1976b) develops a ‘level-specific regional analysis’, to give the approach a label of its own. Concerned primarily with complex societies, this approach relies on a model of levels — local, regional, national — and focuses specifically on the level (this may be a set, rather than a single level) that is always intermediate between the other levels in the model, namely the regional. Analytically, the limitation to a specific level has considerably force, at least for the comparative purposes which Smith and her contributors have in mind. Their cross-societal generalizations apply to standard units; they avoid the misplaced comparison of unlike orders of relations. But the gain in comparability is costly. Indeed, without radical modification it is too costly for the approach to be applied in order to make sense of change in regional cult organization and ideology.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-1.jpg]]

In empirical terms, the cost arises because the approach makes no room for certain activities and phenomena which are crucial in regional cults. As Smith stresses, regional analysis aims to show how

<quote>

‘flows of goods, services, information, and people through [a] network of centres ... structure and maintain internodal relations’ (Smith 1976b : 8, Smith’s italics).

</quote>

In regional cults such flows run across major political or ethnic boundaries. Hence the characteristic direction of the flows, along with the cult’s distinctive topography, is of specific theoretical interest. However, the level-specific approach ignores activities overriding and not congruent with the

boundaries and subdivisions of a nation. Similarly neglected are the phenomena which define international or non-national regions. Theoretically, the approach introduces a bias towards nesting relations and it does not allow for cultural variability, i.e., the variable importance of different conceptions held by the people studied themselves of their fields of relations. To overcome these and other limitations calls for quite a different approach to regional analysis, without the three tiered model or its level-specific assumptions. Hence, our analysis of regional cults takes as problematic and subject to explanation what level-specific regional analysis neglects or takes for granted.

Our theoretical interests lead us to pay most attention to the historical transformation of cult regions. How do the people themselves define and organize their cult regions over time, through radical economic or political change and also in more stable periods? How do religious ideas and practices alter as cult regions become more or less inclusive? What impact do regional and non-regional cults have on each other, and how do they wax and wane in relation to each other? Some of these are problems which Victor Turner, too, considers in a discussion of ‘Pilgrimages as Social Processes’ (1974 : 166–230). Turner’s suggestions differ somewhat from ours, and it is fruitful to clarify some of the differences, particularly because a good part of our work builds on this and other discussions of his (Turner 1957, 1967, 1968, 1975).

*** Turner’s Exclusive and Inclusive Domains

Parallel dichotomies are at the heart of Turner’s argument: inclusiveness versus exclusiveness, peripherality versus centrality, generic versus particularistic relationships, egalitarianism or homogeneity versus nonegalitarianism or differentiation. For our purposes, the most crucial is a dichotomy

<quote>

between politico-jural rituals focused on localized subsystems of social groups and structural positions, and rituals concerned with the unity and continuity of wider, more diffuse communities’ (Turner 1974 : 197).

</quote>

Only a few of his conclusions need concern us here, although it is through these dichotomies that he arrives at a much larger body of conclusions, along with a general perspective on the very process of pilgrimage itself. Three conclusions are relevant here: first, about opposed types of cult; second, about how far cult ideologies represent or correspond with various politico-jural relations; and finally, about the dialectical way that one type of cult becomes its opposite.

The conclusions have to do with opposed types of cult in two kinds of society, once more a dichotomous division. On the one hand, Turner refers, in ‘certain traditional African societies’, to earth and fertility cults (most of which are regional cults in our terms) versus ancestral and political cults (apparently non-regional). On the other hand, he refers, in ‘complex large-scale societies and historical religions’, to pilgrimages and the organization of pilgrimage centres (again, mainly regional) versus localized religious activities focused on local shrines, ‘which are themselves parts of bounded social fields, and which may constitute units in hierarchical or segmentary politico-ritual structures’ (Turner 1974 : 186) (again, apparently non-regional). This is his suggestion about the African cults:

<quote>

... ancestral and political cults and their local embodiments tend to represent crucial power divisions and classificatory distinctions within and among politically discrete groups, while earth and fertility cults represent ritual bond between those groups, and even, as in the case of the Tallensi tendencies toward still wider bonding. The first type stresses exclusiveness, the second inclusiveness. The first emphasizes selfish and sectional interests and conflict over them; the second, disinterestedness and shared values’ (Turner 1974 : 185).

</quote>

Similarly, he sees a parallel in the contrasting kind of society:

<quote>

‘The networks formed by intersecting pilgrimage routes ... represent at the level of pre-industrial, politically centralized, high-agricultural cultures, the homologues of those reticulating the earth shrines and shrines of non-ancestral spirits and deities found in many stateless societies in sub-Saharan Africa with simple agricultural technology.

Here the peripherality of pilgrimage centers distinguishes them from the centrality of state and provincial capitals and other politico-economic units. It further distinguishes them from centers of ecclesiastical structure such as the sees or diocesan centers of arch-bishops and bishops’ (1974 : 197).

</quote>

The great utility of this contrast is its illumination of extreme cases. Like other ideal typologies, however, it tends to represent as mutually exclusive alternatives — the halves of parallel dichotomies — what are, in fact, aspects which combine in a surprising variety of ways within a range of actual cases. In this book the chapters on Islamic and African cult regions provide such cases not covered by the typology. The point is perhaps best illustrated first by Schoffeleer’s chapter, because he views an earth or territorial cult — the Mbona cult of Malawi and Mozambique — in terms of dichotomies that are comparable to Turner’s Moreover, Schoffeleers resolves a paradox which is important for Turner’s discussion. As Schoffeleers puts it for the Mbona cult:

<quote>

‘The very organization which asserts social difference and privilege becomes the vehicle through which the denial of difference and privilege is affirmed’.

</quote>

Boundedness and political divisions are represented by the Mbona cult’s localized congregations and its principals. As chiefs, the latter come from the

autochthonous ethnic group, the Mang’anja, with a legendary, or rather, ‘traditional’ realm, i.e., the current bounds of the cult’s region, and in legendary times, all their chiefdoms were under the centralized rule of a single paramount chief. Not that the cult region merely replicates some political organization which exists apart from the cult’s activities: the political communities which it covers are in different countries, and they do not now exist as one body under any paramount ruler or even a single government. Instead, the cult region has its own nodal organization, and its own centre alone provides the focus for the region, quite distinct from any other political or economic centres. Its spirit medium, usually an immigrant rather than an autochthon, but never a chief or cult principal, makes his pronouncements on the public morality of chiefs and criticizes their relations with their people. But he does so only during seances at the region’s innermost shrine, while he is possessed by the spirit of Mbona. For the whole region and from its centre he speaks with an authority that goes beyond that of any central government and is independent of it; thus, he readily becomes a focus of resistance to unpopular measures imposed by the government.

The centre of this territorial cult is the extra-territorial sanctuary, an area beyond the territorial jurisdiction of any government and thus free of its taxes and rules of land tenure. Within it, and well apart from the seat of any legendary paramount is the cult’s innermost shrine. Within the sanctuary also, the cult hero, Mbona, was murdered, according to myth, at the first paramount’s command, after Mbona became a rival for political influence because of his powers as a rainmaker. It is according to the location of events associated with Mbona’s martyrdom that the sanctuary is centralised and set apart in cult topography. Hence the myth about the sanctuary emphasizes more than separateness, externality or even centralization: it ‘projects an image of a region which is unified on the basis of common concerns and a common morality’, but it also presents a paradigm for power struggles and an opposition between chiefly and non-chiefly ritual authority.

Whereas Turner suggests that types of cult fit a ‘polar distinction between cultural domains of exclusivity and inclusivity’ (1974 : 186), Schoffeleers demonstrates that both such domains are polarised within the Mbona cult. Each donjain is emphasized by different protagonists who oppose each other in the cult. From one viewpoint, the Mbona cult appears as an unstable combination of both of Turner’s types, and it is unstable just

as the domains themselves are, in relation to each other. Schoffeleers shows that there is a persistent struggle between the representatives of political hierarchy — the cult principals as chiefs — who assert the legitimacy of social differentiation, and the representative of their people — the medium — who puts forward ‘the conception of a non-differentiated society’ [what Turner might call ‘ideological communitas’ (1974 : 1697]. Furthermore, the dialectic in this struggle is such that the representative of the people comes to appeal increasingly to more inclusive conceptions and idioms:

<quote>

Mbona is now said to be the “Son of God” (Mwana wa Mulungu) and the “black Jesus” (Yesu wakuda), who is the guardian spirit of all ethnic groups, and not just of the Mang’anja.’

</quote>

Here, to carry the argument a step further, we must turn to Colson’s analysis of cults and their publics among Tonga in different ecological zones of Zambia. In some respects the Tonga prophet cult, compared with the Mbona cult, represents an extreme at the very margin of the range of regional cults. Insofar as a region emerges in the prophet cult, it is characterized by diffuseness and ephemeral, weak, even uncertain centralization, instead of clear ritual demarcation, recognised boundedness, and a firmly anchored nodal organization for the whole region. Hence the Tonga case illuminates the grey, marginal area of relations between cult exclusiveness or inclusiveness and continuities or discontinuities in local communities.

Colson concentrates her analysis on the changing interplay between the local and the prophet cult. The local cult always has a well-defined constituency, unlike the prophetic cult. In the local cult there are numerous ’district’ or neighbourhood land shrines which are the centres of small, discrete ritual areas whose shrine custodians are independent of each other. Neither the custodians nor their land shrines form any hierarchy or more inclusive body. Colson establishes that the local cult and its communal ritual give concrete expression to the continuity and exclusiveness that a particular, highly localized agricultural community may have. The cult is stable in its land shrines and ritual — indeed, more stable than Colson herself

understood on the basis of her earliest fieldwork (Colson 1948, reprinted in 1962) In the light of her continuing observation from 1946 to 1973, she now considers that ‘local shrines are remarkably viable’: they survive despite resettlement and the relocation of neighbourhoods. Over the years of her research among Plateau and Gwembe Tonga, she heard of no new local shrines. Her long-term evidence points to a great measure of cult autonomy, rather than immediate responsiveness to local fluctuations and the movements of shifting cultivators. Important as the vagaries of local shifts in villages and their populations are, they do not directly bring about the rise and fall of local shrines: land shrines have a life of their own.

The relation between the local and the prophet cults is, in the main, complementary, though not unproblematic or unchanging. The prophet serves a variable clientele and, while possessed by spirits identified with no known social community (spirits of the wild, of long dead prophets, foreign spirits and most recently, angels and God), provides warnings about personal or communal troubles and guidance about ritual for healing or rain. Most are minor prophets and play their part within an immediate vicinity roughly the same as, or little more than their own local shrine community. Colson observes:

<quote>

Though they claim a power that stems from beyond the community, and is independent of it, they are subject to the community controls. They link their messages to the local order ... These prophets are, therefore, among the principal upholders of community, the land shrines and the existing custodianships.’

</quote>

For both prophet and local cults in the narrowest order of relations — the local order — it can be said, in Turner’s terms, that the main emphasis is on the exclusive domain, boundedness and stability.

Beyond the narrowest order, the prophet cult is more flexible. It alters its emphasis, whereas the more rigid local cult does not, and remains virtually

contained within the local order. Moreover, the flexibility of the prophet cult threatens to become a danger to the local cult, rather than merely a complement to its rigidity. Recently, prophets have proliferated along with waves of new cults of possession by angels, God, and alien spirits (see chapter six where van Binsbergen explains the importance of this phenomenon in other parts of Zambia, also). Through' its major prophets the prophet cult addresses itself nowadays to 'the expanding universe' of the country at large, and thus more to the changing inclusive domain. These prophets still build shrines where offerings are made for rain and the public good by communal delegations from near and far neighbourhoods. But now clients' personal needs bring them to major prophets as distant healers. Such prophets appeal to a widespread, heterogeneous clientele from diverse ethnic groups and urban as well as rural areas. It is here, in the wider order of relations, that the prophet cult is most strikingly flexible in response to the economic and ethnic diversification in the country at large.

The Tonga case has telling implications for Turner's dichotomous typology. Whether a single cult (such as the Tonga prophet cult) gives greater emphasis, during a period of its history, to one domain or another may depend on the order of relations involved: the narrower the order, the greater the emphasis on the exclusive domain, and conversely. Nowadays, the inclusive domain concerns major prophets perhaps more than ever before, and certainly more than it does the run of minor prophets. Clearly, Turner's typology does not adequately allow for such internal relativity: that is, the variation within a cult according to different orders of relations. Yet, as the Tonga case proves, such internal relativity may be crucially important.

The Tonga case raises a further point about the central places of a cult and the folk conception of regionalism. This point leads aside somewhat from our discussion of Turner's conclusions. But it must be considered here, because it is important for regional analysis in general, and our perspective in the Tonga case in particular. Colson's evidence is that, in one sense, regionalism is still in its infancy as a folk conception among Tonga:

<quote>

‘Even the idea of a social unit of all Tonga is a recent creation and is still likely to be invoked principally in the national political arena though the continued importance of the shrine of Monze may have political overtones of which lam unaware (my italics)’.

</quote>

In the part I stress Colson allows for something problematic about the most famous Tonga shrine, Monze’s. It is a matter of historical record that Monze’s shrine was the central place of a very great, perhaps the greatest, Tonga prophet of the nineteenth century: he received delegations from Tonga, Ila and Sala neighbourhoods as much as 100 miles away. No longer does any prophet reside by Monze’s shrine, yet it continues to serve a very wide vicinity, and not merely a single local community. Delegations seeking rain still come to Monze’s shrine from near and far and, significantly, from distant neighbourhoods in another ecological zone where rain is even more scarce. Why so? Or rather, what does this imply about the central places of a cult among Tonga?

The clues to the answer are in Colson’s data on prophets. Although my interpretation differs somewhat from hers, it also takes account of the apparent tenuousness of formal regional relations. From time to time, prophets of a distinct kind have arisen — regional prophets, in my view — and they have arisen in the same central area, as shown on Map I of chapter five. This central area is on the escarpment edge in the high rainfall zone. In the nineteenth century Monze was one regional prophet, and close by Chibwe was another, from the 1940’s until her death in the 1960’s when her shrine ceased to be a centre for distant delegations. Colson records, ‘By 1950 various less-noted prophets were attempting to share in her prestige by claiming to have received her authorization to serve as local deputies’ (1958 : 34).

Formally, the regional organisation in this cult is rudimentary, without an extensive chain of formal linkages, elaborate devices for control of delegates, or an effective hierarchy of command. Fluctuations in the reach of particular major prophets or shrines are apparently meteoric. Diffuseness, rather than boundedness, is a characteristic of their catchment areas for the visiting

communal delegations or minor prophets, and the cult thus lacks any culturally defined regions like the de jure territory of the Mbona cult. Indeed, the differences in culture between Tonga and their Shona neighbours in another higher rainfall zone represent no barrier to Tonga use of Shona spirit-mediums as prophets: some Tonga delegations from the lower rainfall zone supplicate with the Shona mediums for rain.

What the prophet cult has is a region (or regions) of the de facto kind. It is characterized by the flow of cult traffic, along with dependence for ritual services: a vague hinterland relies on the cardinal points in a central area. These cardinal points are represented by the prophets or shrines that become the focus of the widest communal traffic in the cult. Significantly, the delegations go from the lower rainfall zone's communities to the cardinal points in a higher rainfall zone, never downwards to the lower rainfall zone's shrine or prophet. It is a regularity observed in certain other cults also, such as the High God cult which I discuss in chapter seven. The directional cult traffic, flowing along with other trends of migration, carries forward the interdependence between people of different climatic or ecological zones, and a ritual region overlaps or cuts across these zones. Of course, not all cult regions are cross-zonal, as Marx argues for South Sinai in chapter two. However, I must make one further comment first, before I can discuss his argument.

The present sites of major prophets are central places more accessible for a widespread, heterogeneous clientele. Nowadays, Colson reports, 'the most powerful set up their headquarters on the railway and bus routes rather than in the high rainfall zone'. In that zone, for the time being therefore, it is a prophetless shrine, Monze's, which serves the communal traffic as a cardinal focus. I infer that despite the diversification in the country at large, cross-zonal interests do continue to underpin ritual centrality and stabilize the prevailing direction of the communal traffic. Even more, the patterns of cult traffic themselves have a resilience which makes for continuity through change.

*** The 'Correspondence' Theory

So far this discussion has explored problems which arise in studies of African cults. Others that Turner would regard as associated with ‘historical religions and complex large-scale societies’ must be considered now. There is a major disagreement in approach to religious organization and ideologies, and some contributors to this book are closer to Turner’s views than others. The disagreement appears most sharply, perhaps, in the studies of Islamic pilgrimage and marabouts’ cults by Marx and Eickelman. Not surprisingly, at the very nub of it lies a classical theory, Robertson Smith’s ‘correspondence theory’, and a long anthropological tradition stemming from him via Durkheim. The theory asserts a correspondence, in Eickelman’s terms, ‘between symbolic representations of the social world and patterns of conduct’. By developing Robertson Smith’s fine insight into the ‘community of the god’, Marx supports the theory. Eickelman rejects it, on the basis of Moroccan data, in order to get a better grasp of the ideology and practice of maraboutism in different historical contexts. Marx concentrates on the interests represented in Bedouin pilgrimages and symbolised by their marabouts and tombs. The issues are critical for the analysis of regional cults elsewhere. Hence Thoden van Velzen, van Binsbergen and I explicitly debate them also. However, here the disagreement is best appreciated against the background of a single historical religion and in two studies which advance our immediate discussion of Turner’s conclusions.

The ‘community of the god’ is a conception of boundedness, within the exclusive domain in Turner’s terms. Membership in the ritual congregation is on a closed basis; its members share rights in resources, recognition of their vital interdependence, or a concern with the maintenance of a group. The correspondence theory suggests that their cult’s spiritual subjects (i.e. marabouts or patron saints) and material objects (tombs, shrine buildings, shrouds and other ‘paraphernalia) stand for something else: there is a symbolic representation — Marx would go so far as to say ‘a very precise image’ — of particular interests (in the case in point, territorial interests). It fits Turner’s understanding of the exclusive domain, also, that the ‘community of the god’ has its own shrines, the foci of segments, in central locations valued for communal control of crucial resources. After all, the contrary — the peripherality of shrines — would express and foster the tendency towards universalism, openness, and emanicipation from the community (Turner 1974 : 193f).

Thus Marx observes the following about the social unit mainly involved in communal pilgrimage among the South Sinai Bedouin: ‘The tribe claims not so much to control a clearly bounded territory, but defined points in it and paths leading through it’. Accordingly, he finds the communal pilgrimage shrines on routes, by water points and at cross-roads that are highly valued for their strategic importance in trade and pastoralism. His evidence is best, and thus he concentrates, on one of two clusters of shrines. It is the one confined to the very heart of South Sinai, with its shrines on or near the main east-west passage through the mountains. These shrines, sited close to the edge of what a tribe claims as its own, are centralized at points where tribes meet or divide, rather than right by the more inaccessible settlements recently built as fastnesses in the mountains. Each shrine, except the peninsula’s most senior one (Nebi Saleh which is near Mount Moses, that worldwide pilgrimage centre for Moslems, Christians and, nowadays, Jews) serves a single tribe and its sections as a central meeting place for communal ritual. Annually, it is a distinct social unit, the section or tribe, that sponsors its own occasion: members share their animal sacrifices in the name of the one, universal God (the marabout is an intercessor, not a lesser god) and create commensal bonds with each other and their guests at the shrine. When the five main tribes of the mountains all make communal pilgrimages to the same shrine, Nebi Saleh, they do so in turn, on separate occasions. For some time, however, even this shrine has had a narrower reach. Communal pilgrimages are now held there only by the largest tribe, the Muzeneh, which of course asserts claims to the peninsula’s most central points and the senior shrine itself. Apparently, the change took place before the Israeli occupation ended smuggling and thus altered the value of passages and intertribal interests.

Marx surmises

<quote>

‘that the location turned this tomb into the central meeting place of the Bedouin of the mountains; it is situated on the cross-roads of the major east-west and north-south mountain passes, and close to water. In view of the great importance of smuggling in those days (pre-1965), each tribe attached major significance to its rights of passage through the mountains, as well as

to co-ordination of activities and maintaining peaceful relations with other tribes’.

</quote>

Having gone with Marx on pilgrimage to the top of Mount Moses, I am tempted to pursue a wider concern. Cult regionalism is not tribalism writ large. Marx is himself very frankly puzzled by some aspects of the shrines and their significance for Bedouin — in my view, rightly so, because these aspects challenge him to break the frame of his analysis. Furthermore, they go right to the crux of our discussion of the exclusive and inclusive domains in relation to regional cults.

One shrine with its own marabout, shroud, and tomb is enough, at least for the purposes of a single section or tribe as a ‘community of the god’, and from the viewpoint of a correspondence theory. More than one is too many, and several differentiated ones for a certain tribe alone and none of the others does not fit at all. Admittedly, Marx’s understanding of marabouts and tombs goes beyond Robertson Smith’s insight into the religious representation of boundedness. Marx perceives that an enshrined marabout has an inclusive aspect also, ‘a second face’ so to speak, just as ‘tribesmen reserve certain rights in territory for themselves, but ... other rights are expressly opened up to all Tawara [literally, ‘of the Mount’, i.e. Sinai Bedouin collectively] on a mutual basis, i.e. rights to pasture, drinking water and, without prejudice to the tribe’s interests, passage also. However, while this perception of correspondence reaches the common denominator in the general run of instances, it stops our understanding short. Left more of a puzzle is the overall configuration of these shrines and marabouts, which is not a correlate of the pragmatic interests of Bedouin qua tribesmen. What is the significance of the differentiation of cult centres and their more universalistic aspects? How does this relate to their distribution in space, to cult topography? And what does all this imply about the cult itself?

Marx leads us a good part of the way towards the answer, despite the burden of the correspondence theory. He unpacks the symbolic significance of the three marabouts, including the cult’s senior, whose shrines at the geographical heart of the peninsula, so strategic in its mountains and

passages, form an innermost cluster around the worldwide pilgrimage centre on Mount Moses (Jebel Musa) and the Christian monastery of Saint Catherine. His interpretation leads me to suggest that this innermost cluster lays down a central configuration in the cult's topography, and it is defined by the cult's cardinal orientation. Nowadays, with the largest tribe as hosts, communal pilgrims go from Faranja to Nebi Saleh to Nebi Harun (see Map I in chapter two). Each shrine, as a station in the pilgrimage circuit, has a positional significance, but all together convey the configuration's pattern. In space it is a movement towards Mount Moses (the peninsula's holiest place for individual pilgrims, whose holiness the Bedouin compare to Mecca's) and the monastery (by which the shrine of Harun, the priest Aaron, is fittingly sited). Symbolically, there is an increase in inclusiveness, moving from the most particularistic and tribal marabout, the host pilgrims' tribal ancestor Faraj, to the senior marabout of the region, the pre-Islamic Arabian prophet (some say, another tribe's ancestor) Saleh, and last to the most universal figure, Moses's brother the prophet Harun. Nowhere else is there a repetition of this pattern, just as nowhere else is there a focus for the traffic of individual pilgrims that is comparable in its holiness to the region's centrally sited holy place, on top of Mount Moses. To have considered individual pilgrimage at length along with the communal would have taken Marx well beyond the limits set for a single essay. But allowing for this limitation, the point here applies to both kinds of pilgrimage. On the whole the pilgrim shrines are central, rather than being instances of 'sacred peripherality', in Turner's terms (1974 : 195); yet neither in organization nor ideology does the cult replicate the rest of what might be called 'Bedouin society'. The cult has its own cardinal orientation, and this is towards the greatest inclusiveness at its very centre. Moreover, without any permanent staff and for both the individual and communal traffic, a nodal organisation is sustained overall through ritual activities. Here it is 'sacred centrality' which expresses and fosters the tendency towards universalism and openness (cf. Turner loc.cit., on Mecca).

Whereas Marx casts light on enshrined marabouts among Bedouin, with their characteristic egalitarianism or rather, subtle, unformalized differentiation, Eickelman illuminates the enshrined along with the living marabouts based in a Moroccan town, Boujad, where an elite is culturally recognized and, even more, legitimized through maraboutism and the notion of baraka or grace. Like Marx, Eickelman recognizes aspects of maraboutism which, taken in isolation, would support a correspondence

theory’s one-to-one correlations. However, Eickelman’s data compel him to take account also of disparities which do not fit a correspondence theory whether it be, as he demonstrates, the version of Robertson Smith, Gellner, or Shils. Eickelman observes:

<quote>

‘Maraboutism is especially linked to two key concepts through which Moroccans make sense of existing social arrangements: obligation (haqq) and closeness (qaraba)’.

</quote>

With these concepts, some’Moroccans draw an analogy, man is to God as man is to man, which makes sense of both relationships in particularistic terms. There is a flow of benefits in each, and it is contingent upon specific bonds: the greater the obligation and the closer the bond, the greater the flow of benefits ’ (and conversely also, of course). Such reasoning, implicit in belief in marabouts (with the benefits of grace or baraka contingent upon closeness to God), is virtually the correspondence theory in a folk version. It is a great strength in such a folk version, and a crippling weakness in analysis, to absorb differences and give them a semblance of similarity, irrespective of varying historical contexts. Eickelman’s analysis grasps the differences and contextualizes transformations recognized by the people along with others they do not, and perhaps cannot, recognize.

As he shows, change takes place at different rates and with more radical consequences in certain parts of the Sherqawi lodge’s region. Away from town and the regional pilgrimage centre, in tribal sections or rural local communities believers in marabouts continue to seek dyadic bonds with members of a town-based elite. Partly through local feasts and commensality, the aim still is to put under obligation the living marabouts or marabouts’ descendants who come on visits to their clients’ communities. Moreover, some tribal sections are still able to insist, despite opposition from townsfolk, that their annual pilgrimage to the town centre must be an occasion for animal sacrifice, public feasting, commensality and all that this implies in the creation of specific bonds of obligation and the maintenance of covenants. Against such continuity runs a counter tendency which is most

apparent at the centre in town, though it is of consequence elsewhere also. Offerings are converted into cash by Sherqawi visitors and the caretakers of major Sherqawi shrines. Moreover, whereas in the past marabouts and the economic and polical elite were virtually one and the same, living marabouts are now few, and not of the Sherqawi elite that has contemporary political and economic importance. Furthermore, many of this Sherqawi elite now dissociate themselves from maraboutic enterprises and ‘seek to redefine the activities of some of their kinsmen and ancestors in the light of the formal doctrines of reformist, modernist Islam’. Thus along with a tendency still most evident in the hinterland of the region, Eickelman points to a counter-tendency which is foremost at the centre, though not restricted to it. The counter-tendency is to favour mediation or the relaying of grace through an enshrined marabout, rather than any living person, and even further, to turn away from the personification of grace towards formal Islam which is universalistic and thus ‘requires no direct analogy with the nature of the local social order’.

*** Elitist versus Egalitarian Regional Cults

At the risk of being taken to task for a lack of consistency — in the light of my general criticism of dichotomous typologies and Turner’s in particular — lam tempted to make use of one for comparative purposes here: elitist versus egalitarian regional cults. Ralph Waldo Emerson’s homely adage, from his celebrated essay on Self-Reliance, urges me on: ‘A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds’. I find the typology useful to clarify certain patterns and to show how their permutations are regular in the four cases mainly considered so far. The first kind of cult, the elitist, is characterized by processes which bring an elite and its public into dialectical opposition over the relative emphasis given in the cult to the exclusive or inclusive domains. Our examples of the Mbona cult and the Sherqawi maraboutic lodge illustrate this, and together represent an elementary permutation: the pattern in one appears in the other in reverse.

Briefly, to begin once again with the Mbona cult, the public appeals through its representative — so centrally placed in his extra-territorial sanctuary — to a conception of an undifferentiated society. It turns to universalism without ethnic bounds in the image of the black Jesus, whereas the elite of cult

principals asserts its tribal authority and is particularistic in its appeal. By contrast in the case of the Sherqawi lodge, it is the public in the rural local community, the tribal section and elsewhere which appeals to greater particularism and continues to seek ‘closeness’ to a living person with grace or baraka as well as commensal bonds through shared sacrifice at an enshrined marabout’s holyplace. The centrally placed Sherqawi elite, on the other hand, now turn to universalism in the form of reformist Islam or they seek to free the offering of donations from commensality and its association with boundedness and the most particularistic oneness.

Underlying these inverse patterns is one or perhaps several regularities. In the elitist cults the emphasis on the inclusive domain is increased from the cult centre, rather than from elsewhere. Who fosters this increase depends on who is in control of the centre. On the one hand, the public or its representative fosters it where the centre is an extra-territorial one, under a religious authority and beyond the elite’s. Here the Mbona cult is the case in point. On the other hand, the increase comes to be fostered by members of the elite where the religious centre is the political one under the elite’s own control. Further studies of elitist regional cults are needed to clarify what are the limiting conditions for this regularity. But the point that must be stressed is that this is a regularity of cult organization and ideology; it is not a mere reflection or replication of some other social order. Religious change from particularism to greater universalism has its own momentum rather than being a mere correlate or after-effect of other transformations.

Constant in both these cases of elitist regional cults is the stability of the centre. In both this remains in a fixed location and is somewhat like a stationary capital, providing an established point of reference around which cult relations refocus. There is an alternative in which the cult centre is still the cardinal point for refocusing but itself shifts in location and is somewhat like the mobile headquarters of an army on the march, ever ready to be pushed forward with each major advance of the cult. This alternative, especially important under certain conditions of cult expansion, still correlates central control or cult centrality with the greater emphasis on the inclusive domain, as shown by Evans-Pritchard (1949: 70 f) in his classic account of the Libyan based Sanusi Order. Emrys Peters is working on a detailed reanalysis of the Order’s development, which will illuminate our discussion further. Here the comparison between elitist and egalitarian cults

has to be explored on the basis of our four cases in order to complete a view of these as one whole set.

Our cases of egalitarian regional cults are the Tonga prophet cult and the South Sinai maraboutic cult. Each is characteristically free of any political elite with special ritual roles in the cult. The South Sinai case is a straightforward instance of a familiar regularity in that the cult's stable centre is the focus of an increasing inclusiveness. The difference here is a lack of any dialectical opposition between recognised protagonists of the different domains. Perhaps less straightforward and thus more revealing is the Tonga case. Not only is the location of a given center variable within the more enduring focal area of the higher rainfall zone but cult centrality itself is also intermittent, somewhat ambiguous and problematic. Nowadays formerly peripheral points attract prophets and they scatter away from established shrines. Seen in relation to the other cases, it suggests the hypothesis that the greater the central instability, the more cult peripherality comes into its own for refocusing a greater emphasis on the inclusive domain.

So far all of my comments about this set of cases have been made with a general condition, common to them all, left implicit. It must be made explicit now in order to bring the next, contrasting set of cases into relief. Briefly, none of the first are clearly hierarchical whereas four of the second are; as will be seen, this poses further problems for analysis. Along with the lack of hierarchy goes a variation from cult to cult in the degree to which there is a unified ranking of cult shrines and holyplaces, although none rival the more formalized ordering in some of the second set's cases. The variation is as follows. At one extreme is the Tonga cult which is without overall ranking but whose prophets and shrines are distinguished according to their participation in different orders of relations. Next comes the South Sinai marabout cult with its one acknowledged senior but somewhat ambiguous or unranked standing for other shrines. After these egalitarian regional cults come the two elitist ones, the Mbona cult and the Sherqawi lodge in that order. The regional medium of Mbona alone speaks for the whole of his region, and the lesser territorial mediums are restricted to narrower local constituencies. Finally, apart from the local maraboutic tombs which are points of domestic pilgrimage for women and children, the Sherqawi lodge has two grades of shrine within the pilgrimage center of the town of Boujad. Each quarter has

its own shrine for rural and urban pilgrims, and above this grade is the one main shrine for them all, that of the lodge's founder Sidi Mhammed Sherqi.

*** Hierarchy and the Waxing and Waning of Cults

To understand the importance of hierarchy and how it develops along with other cult transformations we must now consider our second set of cases. Our analysis of the waxing and waning of cults must be extended to cover a further range of problems, and shifts from non-regional to regional cults have to be explained. Already our discussion has moved towards the third of Turner's conclusions, which is about cult transformations, and it helps to clarify our views for us to examine this conclusion explicitly, at this point, with further light from the rest of our cases.

Turner argues that 'Pilgrimage centers, in fact, generate a "field" ' (1974 : 226). Around pilgrimage centers a process of oscillation takes place or, more forcefully, gets its impetus: shrines, once peripheral and apart from 'politico-economic centers', attract people who make them structurally central; and then, over time, they revert back to peripherality. The model of the perpetual pendulum has no hold here, however, because it is a cumulative process, in Turner's view. He considers that 'pilgrimages sometimes generate cities and consolidate regions' and yet 'they are sometimes also the ritualized vestiges of former sociopolitical systems' (1974 : 227). In other words, "the field" generated by pilgrimage centers is, at once, more and other than any contemporary 'sociopolitical system' with which it is, in fact, in a dialectical relation: increasing boundedness bears within itself the seeds of its own destruction, and conversely. Yet the question which has to be answered here is this. Across which boundaries, and in which respects, can a regional cult extend its hierarchy and yet still assert the kind of boundedness which, by its very nature, the hierarchy requires?

Turner's own classic studies of the Ndembu cults of affliction, as reconsidered by van Binsbergen in a wider context and within an historical perspective, open the way to an answer. The first step that van Binsbergen takes is to free the concept of cults of affliction from any necessary bondage to the unitary

social system. It is a radical departure from Turner's view which left in the background crucial continuities in the ritual field:

<quote>

'But, by and large, the function of maintaining the unity of the widest social unit, the Ndembu people, devolves mainly upon the ritual system, although the ritual system spreads even wider than this' (Turner 1957 : 292 my italics).

</quote>

Turner's view is tied not merely to Ndembu but, more fundamentally, to a single tribe or society taken as a ritually integrated whole. Yet successive cults of affliction sweep like waves of fashion across Western Zambia's cultural and tribal boundaries. Hence van Binsbergen suggests that

<quote>

'The non-ancestral cults of affliction represent an attempt to come to terms (both conceptually and interactionally) with the reality of extensive, inter-ethnic, interlocal contacts'.

</quote>

It is no paradox, however, that van Binsbergen's observations, even more than Turner's, illuminate the significance of local factors in the cults. Elsewhere I have argued (1971 : 318f) that Turner's evidence does not sustain his conceptual model of rituals of affliction. According to Turner's model, individuals associate in these rituals on an ad hoc and ephemeral basis; their community is the community of shared suffering, no other; they form a congregation, as van Binsbergen puts it, 'in a pattern that cuts across, rather than reinforces the structure of distinct local communities'. Turner's evidence, on the other hand, shows that a major performance of a ritual of affliction has primarily an invited congregation whose members nearly all have prior ties of one kind or another with the sponsors. The occasion provides an index, in effect a Who's Who, of people and relationships important for the sponsors, but there.is no ritualization of a

structure of localized groups, their divisions or boundaries. This kind of indexical occasion mobilizes as a congregation the interpersonal sector which is dispersed around a village, rather than the village itself in ritual isolation. Thus it is not the kind of event which emphasizes virtually random inclusiveness or participation ‘from all over the Ndembu region’ (Turner 1957 : 295). Here van Binsbergen examines the local organization of the cults more closely than Turner does, and thus establishes that, at least among the Nkoya of Western Zambia, cults like those of the Ndembu are fragmented into numerous, small and unstable, localized factions, each with its own leader, distinct songs, and peculiar paraphernalia. Not that van Binsbergen regards merely the politics and economic transactions in the cults; he is careful to bring into perspective also the pull of belief and liturgy in the healing ritual.

The next step van Binsbergen takes follows from his historical approach. He distinguishes types of cult of affliction and examines their development. Already familiar is the non-regional type, which covers the Ndembu examples also: the cult has its pecular emblems, its own highly specific idioms and subjects, and it is widespread, perhaps with many local variations, among a multitude of culturally different people. What it lacks is any central place, hierarchy, or overall organizational focus. Only the regional cult of affliction has these features along with the others and, significantly, even more of a conceptual emphasis on inclusiveness, with a shift towards greater attention to a High God. To explain the transformation, van Binsbergen traces a creative process of religious innovation, with its taproot continuously drawing on (or sloughing away) the transcultural, general idiom of the earlier, but still current, non-regional cults. He rejects an ‘imitation theory’, which reduces the essential dimension of the change, and makes it depend simply on the existence of a Christian church as an organizational model to be copied. Moreover, he shows that innovation itself becomes a proof of spiritual grace: whereas followers of any leader in a non-regional cult regard him as a mere transmitter of a received idiom, the regional cult’s members attribute its basic design to their founder’s prophetic visions and insights. In fact, much of the cult innovation is on a pragmatic, ad hoc basis. It has to be understood as a gradual series of choices in response to growing acceptance or rejection of the cult by a wider public. Furthermore, it is not an evolution in a single direction, and a cult may lapse from the newer type into the older one and become non-regional.

How does one cult — and not another — firmly establish a hierarchy, with secure centralized control of cult assets and services, while expanding the regional catchment area over town and country and the span of cult membership across socio-economic strata and ethnic groups? Detailed historical comparison is necessary for the explanation, and van Binsbergen compares the career of one cult, formerly regional, with another that is now vast, multi-ethnic and still expanding not only in Zambia but in Botswana also: respectively, these are the Bituma and Nzila cults. The relative placement and mobility of the founder's own group counts along, of course, with the founder's capacity to mobilize his fellows in it. Nzila's founder initially appealed to Luvale immigrants like himself and even beyond them to others who also came in a great influx from Angola into an area of Zambia with towns of major economic and political importance. With the increasing penetration of the immigrants went the greater spread of the cult. At first, the diagnosis and final treatment of member's afflictions remained (with the possible exception of the limited autonomy allowed a single deputy and branch in another district) the monopoly of the founder and his designated heir. They moved the cult's main shrine to a central place right by one of the two major towns and thus secured a suitable headquarters for urban as well as rural supplicants. Eventually, other branches were also allowed some autonomy in healing, but central control was stabilized by the careful registration of all members, 'by the Annual Convention at the cult's headquarters, by the [centralised] distribution of essential paraphernalia, and by formal examinations concerning the cult's beliefs and regulations'. Not only did this result in an idiom quite distinct from that of any non-regional cult of affliction — and thus made it harder for the new cult to lapse into the old cultic background — but it also established, van Binsbergen argues, 'clearly recognised principles of legitimation, controlled from headquarters, outside which no cult leader pursuing the Nzila idiom could claim ritual efficacy'.

A more illuminating contrast could hardly be found than the career of the Bituma cult. Having failed from the start to convert many of his fellow Angolans, the founder, himself an Mbunda, concentrated his appeal on rural villagers, mainly Nkoya. His cult became trapped in their relative poverty, their hinterland's local power-blocks, and the limitations of their labour migration to distant towns where they never gained much of a foothold.

Anchorage in their district stultified the further expansion of the cult’s region. The district had only a small township as its administrative centre and was ethnically more homogeneous as well as economically less differentiated than the breeding ground of the Nzila cult. When Bituma’s founder died, the cult fragmented; it became little more than other non-regional cults. Never did it develop, in van Binsbergen’s terms, ‘an adequate structure through which the founder’s charisma could be routinised and channelled without becoming dissipated or usurped’.

In both cases van Binsbergen sees a constant factor as foremost: the structural characteristics of the immediate arena in which the cult arises. His argument is that the viability of the cult is contingent upon these characteristics above all and that the structure of the cult has to be commensurate with them.

It is an argument which Thoden van Velzen takes a stage further in seeking a materialist explanation of the waxing and waning of regional cults in Surinam. Just as waves of cults of affliction sweep across Central Africa, so do High God cults come and go in Surinam among Bush Negroes and, at times, among Creoles also. Like van Binsbergen, Thoden van Velzen considers it essential, therefore, that the cultic background out of which a regional cult emerges and into which it lapses be given its full weight in analysis. But for Thoden van Velzen even more problematic, and thus more central in his argument, is the accumulation by the cult of valuables or assets: How does such accumulation affect the survival and raison d’etre of a cult hierarchy and, even more fundamentally, how does the overall religious transformation relate to change in modes of production and distribution? His argument also contributes to other, perhaps even more general debates, because his main case is about a cult, Gaan Tata, which invites comparison with cargo cults, that favourite concern in dispute about the rationality or irrationality of religious belief and practice. Gaan Tata is, in a sense, a cargo cult in reverse. In it, too, the moral redemption of men, purity, cleansing from sin, all depended on waste, and the waste was on a grand scale: great heaps of European trade goods — household utensils, Victorian bric-a-brac, mantlepiece decorations, gold chains, shoes, plastic ware — were left to rot in dedication to the High God (Gaan Tata). The sudden, unexpected enrichment of the Surinam interior’s boat entrepreneurs, due to the discovery of gold which brought with it a deluge of imported goods quite

without precedent, gave the cult its initial opportunity and basic concern. It was not that the cult demanded, as some millenarian movements do (cf. Douglas 1970 : 137), that people reject their own material values or those of Europeans. The wasted goods were quite highly valued imports, as in a cargo cult. For that very reason, they became God's business: like other new interlocal relations, such new riches, to be made in river transport across communal boundaries, were not to be left to look after themselves, but were made sense of, and controlled, religiously.

If, as Douglas suggests, cargo cults are 'cults of revolt against the way the social structure seems to be working' (1970 : 139), then we may say that in reverse what we find is a 'cult of regularization' (cf. also Moore 1975 : 219f). A cult of regularization enhances economic inequalities, rather than levels them; and it legitimizes a new status quo, rather than a restoration of the old. Gaan Tata is such a cult. It hid its waste, from outsiders especially, in a secret bush shrine. It reduced the circulation of European material goods and limited them even more to an elite, rather than providing, after the fashion of a cargo cult, the ritual means to bring the goods flowing in from the outside. Moreover, it redirected the circulation away from the main European centre, Surinam's capital, on the coast and towards the cult's own headquarters in the interior. Fittingly for a cult of regularization, its headquarters was sited at a centre of current and continuing political importance, the capital of the Paramount Chief (Gaanman) of the largest Bush Negro tribe.

Thoden van Velzen points out:

<quote>

'As part of Gaan Tata's commandments, the [boat] entrepreneurs were given a set of standards that proved their usefulness in contacts between Bush Negroes from various areas and with different cultural backgrounds; the cult, for example, gave religious sanction to peacefulness: even the shedding of a single drop of blood could arouse Gaan Tata's wrath ... Significantly, any boatsman who established a good relation with the Gaan Tata oracles through timely presents and acts of deference — soliciting help in case of

illness — could rest assured that his reputation would be protected [from accusations of witchcraft]’.

</quote>

He argues further:

<quote>

‘The cult was directed at eradicating an internal evil, witchcraft, that was felt to dog the steps of the nouveaux riches’.

</quote>

Hence the cult introduced an alternative to the customary conciliatory ritual for the dead: one treatment for the witches and sinners, another for the “respectable”. Sinners or witches were believed to die from Gaan Tata’s wrath, so no elaborate death rites for them. Their legacies, polluting to their relatives, were brought as “God’s cargoes” to the cult’s priests, who gave back a small, cleansed share, kept part for themselves, and left great heaps dedicated to Gaan Tata. The relatives and local community made a death the occasion for costly celebration among themselves — the customary death rites — only when someone was declared, after a post mortem inquest, to be “respectable”.

Thoden van Velzen argues that the career of the cult was closely geared to radical economic change introduced from outside the cult region. The boom in river transport entrepreneurship produced along with wealth a qualitative change in interlocal and cross-cultural relations which was essential for the cult’s overall centralization and effective hierarchy. Then came a drastic economic slump when the interior’s extractive industries, gold and Balata, collapsed. Not long afterwards the cult itself fragmented into a number of parochial cults, without any central control or uniform ritual practice and dogma. The cult’s career, until the next radical economic change, took the course of what might be described as a downwards spiral. The more the priests retrenched through short term solutions to their own pressing religious and organizational problems, the less was the cult able to respond

to the current concerns of its public. Once a new labour elite emerged with the next radical economic change, a different regional cult began in opposition to the remnants of the old one. The opposition was based in a rival political centre within the old cult's heartland, and the new cult, like the old in its heyday, regularized and legitimized the wax of inequality. Protest and revolt there was, perhaps, but in defense of new privilege: once again a fresh cult gave the newly prosperous members of a rising labour elite protection against witchcraft and also a fresh imprimatur in the form of special certificates to their own innocence of witchcraft.

A key point must be kept in sight, given the stress in Thoden van Velzen's argument on radical economic change. Yesterday's cult of regularization becomes today's anachronism, not merely through external change or radical discontinuities in the milieu of the cult but through cumulative change in the cult itself. Indeed, every regional cult builds up a momentum of its own over time which has to be taken into account in explaining its response to radical economic change or any challenge to the viability of its regional organization. That is why in my own study of a High God cult, southern Africa's cult of Mwali, I pay special attention, as does Thoden van Velzen, to the underlying orientation of the cult's leadership and to endemic instability within its organization. The question is, How far does this orientation alter over time, and what directions does such instability take regularly as well as in sudden, perhaps unprecedented shifts?

Historical evidence and my own observation shows that from precolonial times to the present there has been a continuity in orientation within the cult of Mwali. The central concern of the messages from the cult's oracles was and still is to conserve order in the world and maintain the welfare of the land, its people and their economy. It is not surprising that such conservatism is fostered by a cult with a certain, lasting fixity in its hierarchical centralization. What is surprising is the combination of such fixity with instability in the coverage and definition of regions, impermanence in the sites of oracles, variability in priestly succession and great fluctuations in affiliated congregations and their staff. On the one hand, this High God cult has a small, limited number of regional oracles that are ranked in a stabilized, unified order according to their restricted distribution within a central heartland. Similarly, the ranks of its staff form a hierarchy with relatively exclusive criteria for recruitment: the higher the rank, the narrower

and more exclusive are the criteria, and recruitment to the inner circle of priests is on the most exclusive basis. On the other hand, its land shrines lack an overall pecking order; they are widely dispersed and highly variable in standing, a multitude without a known size. Like their congregations, they rise and fall in importance as foci of ritual collaboration (some disappear completely), and pass through what I regard as three grades — local, interlocal, and regional.

Significantly, this cult is one of those to which Turner seems to refer when he suggests that earth cults stress inclusiveness, rather than ‘selfish and sectional interests and conflict over them’ (Turner 1974: 185). Yet the cult fits no polar extreme in Turner’s terms. Admittedly, never does its ritual offer a straightforward representation of the various political divisions within its vast domain (see Map 1). But it does thrive on indexical occasions — on the very stuff of micropolitics — when the relations between competitors are put to the test of ritual collaboration or avoidance, when the scale of local commitment and investment in the cult is proved, when still unresolved territorial and political ambiguities are given a somewhat anticipatory definition, heralding new power divisions. At the same time, its ritual, characteristically rich in symbolism with transcultural meaning, memorializes events that are broadly significant for every congregation, be it mainly Kalanga, Karanga, Venda, Ndau, Khurutse, Ndebele or any other. Moreover, its theology directs attention to the macrocosm, the order beyond that of the congregation or any single community. I show in my essay that the cult’s macrocosmic conceptions ‘are a significant factor in behaviour because they are of such a kind that communities can continue to define their broadest consensus through them irrespective of their differences, hostilities and competition’. With its capacity to override or encompass quite marked cultural differences, the cult continually admits newcomers irrespective of their ethnic origins. Thus highly sensitive and responsive as the cult is to micro-political change, it is no less concerned with ‘wider bonding ... disinterestedness and shared values’ (Turner loc.cit.) Indeed, it is dynamic tension between inclusiveness and exclusiveness which gives the cult much of its momentum and renewed viability from one historical context to another.

It may be, as Turner suggests, that studies of African cults of the earth, most strikingly the Tallensi case, tend to have to say little about ‘factional conflict’

(idem). But the cult of Mwali can hardly be studied adequately without a discussion of politics and policy making in various arenas, from the most petty to one grand enough to embrace the cult's vast domain across southern Africa. Indeed, it has been much debated in the literature on the cult, though mainly from the viewpoints of white settlers, how the cult responded in crises, especially during an early war against white rule in 1896. I suggest that, even during crises or rather then most of all, the cult has been constrained to favour political compromise in its widest policy — its cardinal oracles make pronouncements which do not commit the whole cult to one side only during a struggle — and that this balancing has been in response to the diversity of peoples and interests which the cult must encompass. In no way does this suggestion deny the cult its part in rallying moral sentiment against exploitation and the abuse of power: some of its songs ring with moral outrage against alien rule; its oracles have urged resistance against the inroads of a cash economy; they have also warned about the dangers of party politics. Rather this suggestion takes account of the fact that the cult's ultimate dependence is on voluntary consent; its appeal is to the most general consensus, which it may focus but cannot invent.

A two-way process of politics has taken place. The cult has had its impact on changes in the distribution of power within various arenas and so, too, have nationwide conflicts and factional struggles, both within and between local communities and Christian churches, contributed to political competition within the cult itself. To demonstrate this point in detail part of my discussion concentrates on one region, its development, its leaders' careers, their disputes, managerial problems and tactics. Necessarily, territorial encroachment and the expansion of political communities and churches figure prominently in my analysis, because individual and communal migration, in part due to the appropriation of the central highlands of Botswana and Zimbabwe for European ranches, has been a considerable factor in the region's politics, contributing to a growing shortage of land and increasingly diversifying the region ethnically. Similarly weighted analytically are shifts in the flow of transactions, because these have affected the control of assets and the accumulation of great wealth by the region's leaders, especially its priest and his heirs. Furthermore, I show why it has been critically important to have a secure base in a political community on the wax in order to command a centre for the region as a whole. It would be a gross error to turn the region's sequences of political competition into a

series of successful manipulations by Machiavellian masterminds in collusion with each other, or on the other hand, to exaggerate the ad hoc element in decision making in the cult. My argument avoids both these pitfalls by establishing how regularities in the sequences relate to competitors' long and short term objectives as well as to the highly pragmatic, situational adjustments which they make without any grand design in view.

*** The Interpenetration of Cults

Through an examination of how different kinds of cult interpenetrate in Zimbabwe, Garbett reaches a closely related argument. Garbett rejects the view that the ritual field formed by the interpenetration of the cults can be understood as extensively controllable or manipulable by a single focus of ritual authority, such as one spirit medium. He argues,

<quote>

'Only within limited local arenas is it meaningful to speak of strategy ... The appearance of strategy, when the total ritual field is viewed over time, arises not from the manipulations of particular mediums, coordinated in terms of some overall plan — the key actors rarely if ever meet and do not collude — but from the emergent properties of the ritual field itself' (Garbett's italics).

</quote>

He is careful to point out, also, that methodological problems arise — problems which come up repeatedly in our studies of regional cults — because the vastness of this ritual field puts it well beyond the practical reach of a single fieldworker. He regards the ritual field, therefore, from the perspective of the Korekore cult which he has studied in depth in Zimbabwe, and relies on historical evidence and anthropological studies of linked cults in order to contextualize his own observations.

The processes he analyses link a regional cult with quite different, noncentralized cults which overlap from one part of the ritual field to another. These cults, so different in organization and ideology, might loosely be categorized as earth cults: they are broadly concerned with general morality and man's dependence on the earth, and they receive supplicants from wider vicinities extending beyond individual political communities. However, only the clearly centralized regional cult has ranked mediums in a recognized hierarchy with jurisdiction over well-defined ritual territories. Its sacred topography, while changeable and flexible like certain other aspects of the cult — and Garbett stresses that some aspects are even more flexible and unstable than these — is regarded by the people themselves as enduring and unchanging from mythic time, not an expression of current political boundaries. The whole landscape, ritually divided and sub-divided into 'spirit provinces', is full of fine boundaries 'established' in mythic time, though they may be actually 'discovered' by spirit mediums quite recently. By contrast, the most widespead of the linked cults, the Zezuru local cult, is more like the Tonga prophet cult, lacking demarcated constituencies and with unranked but graded mediums whose clientele varies accordingly: the minor medium serves the local order, clients from his immediate community or kin, whereas the major medium has a wider clientele, dispersed and more diverse (cf. Fry 1976: 34f, in his terms the Zezuru mediums are 'lower-level' and 'higher-level', respectively). Moreover, like Tonga and other Zambian prophets, the Zezuru ones have recently multiplied in droves, with a striking exaggeration of the familiar pattern of meteoric careers for many. Here the resemblances, like certain crucial differences, are not fortuitous or merely matters of typological comparison: they are evidence of the properties of a wider ritual field, and continuities and discontinuities within it. Taking the Korekore cult as the field's centre, it extends from a centralized regional cult to its periphery in non-centralized or weakly centralized cults, respectively the Zezuru to the south and the Tonga to the north (see Map 1). Similarly, across the field, there is a correlated variation in the conceptual or symbolic elaboration of hierarchy relative to the Korekore cult. At the periphery the elaboration is somewhat less among Tonga than Zezuru, who make a conceptual analogy between their political hierarchy — village headman, subchief, chief — and their pattern of spiritual authority — near ancestors, remote ancestors, heroes — although the mediums possessed by these spirits may be competitors with mutually disputed and ambiguous standing. Among Zezuru yesterday's disciple is often in the process of becoming today's rival and perhaps even tomorrow's master:

<quote>

‘Although the system is thought of in stable hierarchical terms, and although there is a certain stability of authority relations between spirit-mediums, the pattern of relationships between the spirits and their mediums at any one point of time depends more on the abilities of the mediums than on anything else’ (Fry 1976 : 44–45).

</quote>

The relations between the disparate cults are unstable as are the cults themselves, in certain respects. Yet the processes in the wider ritual field cannot be understood as merely changeless oscillations between hierarchy and non-hierarchy or centralization and non-centralization. Garbett rejects the all-too familiar pendulum model in order to comprehend the changing interdependence between the disparate cults. To appreciate the advance he makes it is useful to contrast his approach with that of Fry (1976) who also discusses the Zezuru and Korekore cults but from an alternative vantage-ground, Fry’s own, sensitive observations of the Zuzuru. As Fry sees it, each cult corresponds to its society; one society being the opposite of the other, the cults are opposites, too. The Zezuru are ‘dynamic and radical’ ‘in the front line of “progress” ’ and ‘cultural nationalism’ (Fry 1976 : 66); correspondingly their cult is highly flexible:

<quote>

‘While the Zezuru experience rapid change, and unpredictable future, rapid economic or political success on the basis of personal charisma ... so their religious life features dynamic charismatic spirit-mediums and a highly fluid and little-controlled pantheon of spirits’ (Fry 1976 : 66–67).

</quote>

Fry is aware that the contrast has an element of caricature in it, but he pursues it nevertheless:

<quote>

‘It is perhaps an overstatement to regard the Korekore as a stagnant society, living in the past, but it would nevertheless go some way to explaining the ‘bureaucratisation’ of [their] spirit-medium cult as part of the running down process. The mediums perpetuate the glorious past, which is changeless and as rigid as the cult organisation itself’ (1976 : 66).

</quote>

The trouble with such a picture of ‘bureaucratisation’ and ‘rigidity’ is that it selects features, somewhat arbitrarily, out of context and so gets them out of proportion. Hence the Korekore cult appears to be hierarchical and stable beyond belief. Partly, Fry gets it wrong, because from his grounding in the Zezuru cult (whose mediums have a clientele without an apparent or well-defined constituency), Fry sees as the sole alternative a cult having mediums with constituencies only. In fact, however, the Korekore mediums have both constituency and clientele, and it is essential to recognize the area of indeterminacy in the relations between constituency and clientele. Thus Garbett observes:

<quote>

‘A medium who establishes a reputation for effective cures and for bringing rain may draw supplicants [i.e. a clientele] to him from a wider vicinity that extends far beyond the boundaries of his spirit province [his constituency] or even his region ... Some mediums, by expanding their vicinity of supplicants, come to have reputations which far outweigh their, possibly, humble positions in the formal hierarchy of mediums. Ultimately, this may lead to friction between a junior medium and one more senior about their respective jurisdiction and spheres of ritual authority, and the intervention of the senior medium may be required’.

</quote>

Quite unlike the caricature, the Korekore cult in reality, Garbett shows, emerges through the mediums’ lobbying for consensus, through their competition for backing among themselves, for greater reputation with followers, and through their continuous reconstruction of the mythic past in

the light of their understandings of the present and their aspirations for the future. The ‘bureaucratic’ Korekore mediums turn out to be ‘charismatic’, ‘dynamic’, after all; and to demonstrate this point Garbett enables us to follow closely a regional medium’s behavour in the critical context of the seance, because this is the context par excellence for development in the cult. It is where ritual authority is proved or disproved, where displays of ritual knowledge and competence put power and authority at risk. In his analysis Garbet also gives full weight to transactions over material resources and tangible cult assets. Indeed, he evaluates the critical factors in a pattern of expansion through his detailed case material on the regional medium of Mutota’s spirit, George Kupara. Kupara abided by the cult’s doctrines discouraging personal enrichment at the expense of the wealth in trust to the spirit. His aim was not accumulation in the spirit’s name, but rather largesse which enhanced the spirit’s reputation along with his own, of course, and thus contributed to the continuing expansion of his region and its vicinity. Such expansion thrived on the redistribution and recirculation of cult income and the conversion of cult fees into debts or loans subject to interest charges that were ‘quickly forgotten’: i.e., became the halo of good-will needed for wider ritual authority.

So far I have barely touched upon the subject of the interdependence between the disparate cults. Yet it is this part of Garbett’s study which does most to advance our understanding of the wider ritual field. The problems for the people themselves, like the anthropologist, are in good measure conceptual and demand that they, too, make a translation of culture. Seen from a Korekore perspective, non-hierarchical relations among the Zezuru have to be comprehended by and through the hierarchical cult among the Korekore. One of the ways that it is done is through a shared genealogical idiom which allows the establishment of kinship and filiation between the Zezuru local spirits and the Korekore territorial ones and thus relationships between their mediums. Garbett draws our attention to the distinctive configuration that the genealogy of the Korekore ancestor Mutota has: in graphic terms, it can be roughly described as a ‘T’ shape rather than the inverted ‘V’ the shape so familiar in the genealogies of segmentary lineages. The apical ancestor is Mutota, and his ‘children’ (the top of the ‘T’) are not only virtually without issue but also somewhat indeterminate genealogically — or rather, what their number and birth order may be is ignored as a subject of cultural knowledge. Hence there

is leeway for the inclusion of more or less spirits and thus mediums, without definition of their rank or seniority vis-a-vis each other: they are all ‘children’, peers alike subordinate to the one ‘father’, Mutota. As for the rest of the genealogy, after a fixed line of names, which a candidate for mediumship has to cite as a proof of competence and legitimacy, the rest does define hierarchy and rank but for the mediums of the Korekore themselves. Thus with one simple conceptual framework Korekore are able to comprehend cultural and transcultural relations, because that \framework includes both areas of ambiguity and areas of apparent definition of the rank and limits to the inclusion of spirits and their mediums.

His discussion of the various ways that the people themselves bridge the disparate cults by making translations from one culture to another leads Garbett to a further question. Under what conditions do mediums or would-be mediums of the non-hierarchical local cult turn for legitimation to the regional medium of the hierarchical cult? And what consequences for stability or instability follow due to the reaction of each cult on the other? It is a measure of the force of his answers that he takes into account both the long-term properties of the wider .ritual field and the most recent transformations in the last phase of colonialism.

*** Future Research

These essays begin a new phase in the anthropological study of regional cults. It is the first time that the cults are treated as a major focus of comparative analysis. Hence much of our work is devoted to the tightly argued presentation of a substantial body of evidence on a limited number of main cases, rather than on any broad survey of the subject. We are well aware that some of our generalizations are tentative, as befits the initial stage of enquiry into a vast subject. Our aim is to provide a major body of hypotheses, to raise fresh questions even beyond our immediate reach in answers, and thus to prepare the ground for future research into change in religious organization and ideology.

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* Part One: Islamic Cult Regions: Historical Interaction or Symbolic Congruence

** 1. Ideological Change and Regional Cults: Maraboutism and Ties of “Closeness” in Western Morocco

by Dale F. Eickelman

This study presents an account of the main structure of the ties between the Sherqawi religious lodge (zawya) of western Morocco and its clientele, the idealogical base for the maintenance of these ties, and how both the actual ties and the values on which they are based have altered and, in turn, have been altered by changing historical and political contexts. [1] Through these topics I pursue a more general concern with the classic sociological theme of the interrelation between symbolic representations of the world and patterns of social conduct. In particular, I am concerned with maraboutism, a predominant (although not unique) version of Islam as locally received in Morocco. I argue that like most implicit ideologies (or in a sense that is explained shortly, a part-ideology), maraboutism is closely tied to basic Moroccan conceptions of the social order, notably the notion here translated as “closeness.” I further argue that such ideologies must be understood as socially maintained activities and related to specific historical contexts. I seek to place maraboutism in such a perspective and to

indicate how this approach is more satisfactory than alternative ones which treat maraboutism as analytically “timless” or which posit a stable interrelation between the realms of ideology and social action.

*** Ideologies and the Social Order

Because the relation between symbolic representations of the social order and patterns of social conduct is such an enduring sociological problem, I think it useful to indicate what I regard as the shortcomings of certain earlier approaches. An older academic tradition asserted a correspondence between the two realms without regarding the exact nature of their interrelation as problematic. Thus Robertson Smith (1919) related successive modifications in the messages of Old Testament prophets to the specific historical circumstances in which they originated. Smith clearly perceived both social changes and inconsistencies in the prophetic ideologies, yet regarded Victorian notions of progress and Christian assumptions about the gradual enlightenment of mankind as sufficient to account for them (Beidelman 1974: 38). Similarly, the “simple” societies that Durkheim and his collaborators chose to investigate allowed them to presume an elegant one-to-one correlation between ideology and social action (Durkheim 1915; Mauss 1966; see also Evans-Pritchard 1940). Edward Shils is a contemporary representative of the “correspondence” tradition to the extent that he regards the core symbols, values, and beliefs of a society as concretely represented by such physical manifestations as capitols, cult centres, and social and political boundaries (Shils 1975: 3).

In some contexts the straightforward postulate of an at least partial reflection between the two realms still possesses analytical utility. In Shils’ case it is applied in an original way to the symbolism which underlies modern nation states. Yet, in general, it is now competent but sterile to reiterate that ideologies sometimes support actual social arrangements and vice versa. Or, in the less hyperbolic language of Sally Falk Moore, one consequence of accepting such a straightforward correspondence between the two realms is to imply that “social arrangements” are “simply imperfect approximations of ideal models” (1969: 400).

The notion of correspondence masks the two-way interaction which occurs between symbolic conceptions of the social order and patterns of social action. The idea of interaction, as opposed to correspondence, necessarily implies a lack of fit between the two analytical levels at any given moment. Relatively few anthropologists have sought to trace out in concrete detail the consequences of such interaction. Those who have tend to be concerned with only one direction of it, the manipulation of ideological principles at the level of social action. Below I briefly analyze one such approach because it places my ensuing discussion in a more meaningful perspective. In an excellent article entitled “Descent and Legal Fiction” (1969), Moore argues that systems of descent, legal systems, and religious ideologies describe and explain the nature of the social universe. At the same time they provide a means for manipulating it. To illustrate her general argument, she argues that any descent system should be seen “as an ideology of identities that can be adapted for use as an organizing principle, rather than as an organizing principle in the first place” (Moore 1969:381). When adapted as an organizing principle, descent ideology or any other system of symbolic representations can vary considerably as it is manipulated for practical ends. Even when jural rights are ideologically claimed to emanate from a single principle such as descent, they usually derive from several and cannot effectively be traced to a single source (Moore 1969: 396).

In anthropological analyses which are concerned primarily with the ramifications of symbol systems as they serve as practical guides to and rationalizations for social action, there is a tendency to simplify the argument by treating symbol systems analytically as “timeless.” Occasionally this is made explicit (e.g., Schneider and Smith 1973: 6). A consequence of this approach is that what might be regarded as the communicative aspects of the relation of symbol systems to social action remain unstressed. After all, ideological systems are social activities that are maintained through various forms of expression, including ritual action. In the course of being expressed, such ideologies become modified and in turn modify the direction of social action. Thus, to be fully comprehended in relation to social action, such ideological systems must be seen in at least some of their successive historical modifications.

There is a closely related issue which it is appropriate to introduce here. Moore (1969: 400) implies that most ideological systems are analogous to

the descent systems which directly concern her. As difficult as the analysis of descent systems might appear in some respects, I would argue that from an analytic point of view some ideologies, especially those considered religious, are often less distinctly bounded. Thus in most world religious traditions there is an inherent tension between formal ideological tenets propagated and accepted by an educated, religious elite and, coexisting with them, an implicit ideology of religion as locally practised and understood. The latter substantially overlaps with equally implicit, locally held assumptions about the nature of the social world. From an analytic point of view it is difficult to categorize such beliefs as “religious” and as Runciman has indicated, labelling such beliefs as ideology or simply as beliefs about the conduct of life is just as adequate (1970: 75–76). Indeed, from the viewpoint of the social elite in most religious traditions, the religious practices and attitudes of subordinate groups or persons frequently are considered uncivilized, pathological, or, in the case which concerns this article, un-Islamic. Yet for those who maintain such beliefs, they usually are taken for granted as authentic expressions of the religious tradition in which they participate. North African maraboutism is one such ideology. Precisely because it appears so closely tied to aspects of local society, maraboutism affords a particularly useful means of tracing the interaction between ideology and the social order.

*** Maraboutism as a Part-Ideology

Since the terms marabout[2] and maraboutism have been used in a variety of ways, I specify my own usage below and then indicate how marabouts form a part of Islam as locally understood. In the Moroccan context, marabouts are persons living or dead (dead, that is, only from an outside observer’s point of view) thought to have a special relation toward God which makes them particularly well placed to serve as intermediaries with the supernatural and to communicate God’s grace (Baraka) to their clients. Maraboutism is the usually implicit ideology and the ritual activities associated with such beliefs. Like any successful ideology, maraboutism and the ritual comportment associated with it have been flexible enough to accommodate changing historical situations. Marabouts and similar holy men elsewhere in the Muslim world are seen by their supporters as elements in a particularistic hierarchy through whom the supernatural pervades, sustains, and affects the universe.

In a Weberian sense such a conception might be seen as a “magical” accretion to Islam; but from the viewpoint of tribesmen, peasants, and townsmen who hold such beliefs and act upon them, intermediaries with God are an integral part of Islam as they understand it. They regard themselves as Muslims, pure and simple, although they are aware of the disfavour in which such beliefs are held by Muslim scripturalists and reformists. Consequently, clients of marabouts often dissimulate their beliefs in front of such persons, especially in contemporary contexts.

Now and in the past, those who express and accept maraboutism are consciously aware of an alternative, formally articulated vision of Islam antithetical to their own. For this reason, maraboutism can be considered a part-ideology. It is never found in isolation, but co-exists with formal Islamic ideology. Further, it largely overlaps with locally maintained assumptions concerning the social order. Because of its implicit patterning upon (and patterning of) existing social realities, maraboutism can be considered a conservative ideology in Mannheim’s sense of the term (1971: 152–153). It does not have to be consciously articulated and defended in order to be maintained since it takes as its legitimation “the way things are,” to use a popular Moroccan expression to refer to the social present. This implicitness undoubtedly is one of the reasons why there have been relatively few discussions of maraboutic ideology in North African ethnographic literature, as opposed to police-dossier style accounts of the leadership, genealogical claims and mystic ties, and regions of influence of maraboutic orders (e.g., Depont and Coppolani 1897; Drague 1951).

The conjuncture of conflicting patterns of belief can be found in most world religions. Along these lines, Ernst Troeltsch (1960) has argued that Christianity can be seen as constantly in tension with social reality. Consequently its social history is one of shifts at various levels of compromise and noncompromise with the world. I think that a similar argument is critical to comprehending maraboutic beliefs. The Islamic tradition as it has emerged in various societies has generally contained conceptions of man’s relations with God both as comprising and lacking intermediaries. The Qur’an, as scripturalists and Muslim reformists vigorously stress, portrays all men as equal before God with no privileged intermediaries toward him.

In contrast, the strength of maraboutism rests on the implicit assumption that relations between men and God work just like all other social ties. Moroccans who act upon maraboutic beliefs explicitly see the relation of God with his marabouts as nearly analogous to patron-client ties in ordinary society. As one informant related, God, like a minister or the king, is too powerful to be approached directly, so the client works through a marabout who is “close” both to him and to God (Eickelman 1976: 161–162).[3]

Taken together in various syntheses according to historical context, the antithetical notions of formal Islam and maraboutism (or similar partideologies elsewhere in the Muslim world) have enabled Islam, analytically considered as a religious tradition, to encompass many varieties of social experience and to be regarded by its adherents at any given time as a meaningful religious representation of reality.

*** The Sherqawi Zawya

Since maraboutism is largely tied to specific social contexts, here I briefly sketch the Sherqawi religious lodge’s social history and the changing scope of its activities before considering the maraboutic ideology and cult associated with it. Asa major regional pilgrimage centre, the Sherqawi zawya of Boujad annually draws tens of thousands of pilgrims, singly and in groups, and currently can claim as clients most of the tribal collectivities of the western plains (see Map 1), many individuals from nearby towns, and scattered ones from elsewhere in Morocco. Approximately one-third of the town’s inhabitants, roughly twenty thousand as of 1970, claim Sherquawi descent; continuing Sherqawi dominance of the town’s economy and administrative offices gives Boujad the flavour of a “company” town. This dominance has levelled off, but the town is still primarily identified with the zawya.

The religious lodge was founded at the end of the sixteenth century by the marabout Sidi Mhammed Sherqi (d. 1601). Within a century it became a leading intellectual centre in Morocco. Through a series of shrewd political

moves, the successive lords (Sid-s) of the zawya managed to enhance its influence in a tumultuous political climate. Hagiographies and court histories of this early period give little indication of the relation of the Sherqawa with their clientele or their internal rivalries, but by the end of the 18th century its prestige was such that Sultan Muhammed ben ‘Abdallah (reigned 1757–1790) feared its prominence and destroyed most of the town, including a collective granary used by the region’s client tribes. The Sultan also led the principal Sherqawi marabout of the time, Sid i-Hajj l-‘Arbi (d. 1819), to forced residence with the royal entourage in Marrakesh. The marabout used the occasion to accept as donations extensive agricultural estates (‘azib-s) from tribal collectivities in the south (see Map I) and to extend the Sherqawi sphere of influence (Eickelman 1972–1973: 44). By the early 19th century Sid 1-Hajj l-‘Arbi was considered one of the two most powerful marabouts in Morocco (Ali Bey 1816:1, 176–177).

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A fuller picture of the activities of the zawya emerges by the latter half of the 19th century. Leading Sherqawa were able to influence the sultan and his entourage and in turn were considered significant enough to be watched, accommodated, and carefully manipulated by them. The Sherqawa exercised intermittently a de facto control over Makhzen (central government) appointments in the area, acted as intermediaries to the Makhzen on behalf of clients, secured the safe passage of commerce through the area, mediated tribal disputes, and performed a myriad of other roles. Clients from Rabat, Sale, Fes, Meknes, and the Tafilalt area to the south regularly sent offerings to leading Sherqawi marabouts, as did rural local communities (dawwar-s) and tribal sections (fakhda-s). Most collective client relations with the Sherqawa were in the area indicated on the map, but there were also a few groups as far south as the Sus and in the High Atlas mountains. These links, as with those in the main sphere of Sherqawi influence, depend largely upon the social landscape as perceived by the Sherqawa and their clientele at any given moment, as in the case of the lands acquired by Sid l-‘Arbi (d. 1819). His descendents still possess these lands and maintain ties with clients in the area.[4]

Client allegiances frequently shifted among various internal Sherqawi factions and occasionally away from them entirely. The vicissitudes of Sherqawi agricultural estates and subsidiary religious lodges, especially those located on the Shawya plain (for which documentation is more abundant), indicate how fragile and shifting was the balance of power among competing persons and factions. The sultan, his entourage, and local Makhzen officials often were at odds with each other. Each calculated the possibilities and advantages to themselves of enhancing or detracting from Sherqawi prestige, depending upon their estimation of interests at any given moment. Rival Sherqawa, merchants, rural strongmen, men of learning (‘ulama), and religious lodges elsewhere in Morocco made similar calculations of their own interests, the strength of the Sherqawa (or more accurately, of individual dominant Sherqawa), and the immediate opportunities available to them (Eickelman 1976: 31–64).

Growing French influence in the early 20th century at first added only another component to this multicentered shifting of alliances, but the social and political roles of the Sherqawa abruptly altered with the imposition of the protectorate in 1912. Prominent Sherqawa lost many of their preprotectorate privileges but were given local administrative sinecures, preferential access to French educational facilities, and favourable treatment as notables in administrative matters. The bases for social honour (in Weber’s sense of the term) rapidly shifted. For instance, to the end of the 19th century, leading Sherqawi marabouts maintained reputations as men of religious learning and were acknowledged as such by ‘ulama in Morocco’s leading cities. Yet by the 1920’s only a few isolated Sherqawa held such reputations. Still, given their competitive edge as notables, leading Sherqawa were generally able to shift their social, political and economic roles so as to maintain their social honour and elite status during the protectorate and after independence in 1956. Even as some leading educated Sherqawa deliberately dissociated themselves from maraboutic practices, clients of the Sherqawa continued to regard the success of some Sherqawa in any significant activity as a consequence of their maraboutic status and sought out those Sherqawa willing to maintain maraboutic ties with them.

Although the scope of activities performed by marabouts or kinsmen acting as proxies on their behalf has contracted and the size of offerings and sacrifices to them also has diminished, most rural Moroccans in the sphere of Sherqawi influence and a large number of urban Moroccans continue to maintain ties with the Sherqawa. In a few cases, as I have indicated, new ties have been established. The pattern appears to be the same for at least some religious lodges elsewhere in Morocco (e.g., Hatt 1974). Competition for acquiring a maraboutic reputation is no longer a principal means of maintaining social honour or power in Morocco, so few men actively seek reputations as living marabouts. But enshrined marabouts are another matter, and some persons who claim descent from them continue to “work” (ta-ykhdem) clients and to receive substantial donations of cash and produce for their efforts. Educated Sherqawa prefer to emphasize the piety, scholarship, and illustrious descent of their maraboutic predecessors rather than the popular conception of marabouts as “close” to God an J thus capable of efficaciously conveying his grace. In some contexts the association of the Sherqawa with maraboutism can be a distinct embarrassment. Yet maraboutism is far from residual in Moroccan society, for reasons that are described below.

*** Maraboutism and “Closeness”

Any ideological system is influenced by the social order in which it is expressed, and part-ideologies such as maraboutism are so closely tied to existing social arrangements that they cannot be comprehended without reference to them. Maraboutism is especially linked to two key concepts through which Moroccans make sense of existing social arrangements: obligation (haqq) and closeness (qaraba) (Eickelman 1976: 96–99, 141–149). Obligations are contracted and exchanged through —rvices or offers of support. They are the culturally accepted means by which persons bond themselves to each other in Moroccan society and which determine the social honour of persons in relation to each other. Moroccans speak of having obligations “in” or “over” other persons, indicating the asymmetrical nature of the ties so created. All relationships impose obligations of calculable intensity. There is a considerable latitude within which such obligations can be contracted; thus ties of kinship and descent in themselves do not determine the nature and intensity of such ties. In general, persons strive for flexibility in relations

where they are under obligation to others, while at the same time fixing as firmly as possible relations in which they hold obligations “over” other persons. Their goal is to preserve autonomy whenever possible and to be free to shift obligations as opportunities arise to enhance their social position.

“Closeness” is a form of relationship which is said to exist between persons bound together by multiple personal obligations and common interests and who regularly can be expected to act on each other’s behalf. Closeness is acting as if ties of obligation exist with another person which are so compelling that they are generally expressed in the idiom of kinship. This is because kinship ties, at least those involving common descent (‘blood’),were considered at the symbolic level to be permanent and unbreakable. Some relations of closeness are based upon kinship, although as stated, closeness based upon kinship is generally not sharply differentiated from closeness based upon other grounds. Closeness also develops out of patronage and clientship, residential propinquity or neighbourliness, membership in rural local communities or other “tribal” entities, and common occupation. Quite frequently these bases for closeness overlap and persons deliberately seek to make them do so. A brother can also be a client and a neighbour may seek to be considered a kinsmen, if it will enhance his status or secure practical advantages.

Ties involving marabouts are a particular instance of the concept of closeness. Below I first discuss the closeness said to exist between marabouts and their clients, then the complementary issue of the maintenance and legitimation of elite status within a maraboutic descent group.

The primary consideration in the client’s eye view of marabouts is that they are close (qrib) to God and therefore capable of influencing him or at least of relaying his grace. Having or acquiring a reputation for grace is sufficient for being a marabout, but the most-influential of them are distinguished by a number of complementary attributes. One of these is the claim of patrilineal descent from long-established marabouts such as Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, who have descendants actively maintaining their shrines and other cultic apparatus and thus indicating closeness to their ancestor.

Marabouts claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammed, or, in the case of the Sherqawa, from Sidi ‘Umar (d. 644), the second caliph in Islam, are especially prominent. Such persons intermarry as equals but do not give their daughters in marriage to “commoners” (fawam), those who cannot claim either type of privileged descent. Second, marabouts are generally attributed with some degree of religious knowledge (‘Urn) and always with mystic insight. Both of these qualities are reputedly transmitted to them through dyadic ties with earlier generations of maraboutic scholars and mystics.[5] Finally, marabouts must be willing to transmit their baraka to their clients or to have someone claiming closeness to them who does so on their behalf.

Despite the formal ideological claim that only God knows who is “close” to him, clients necessarily seek this-wordly signs to determine who marabouts are. Within the limits of their prosperity and other considerations, clients seek ties with those marabouts or their descendants thought most capable of sustaining-or enhancing their interests. A primary contemporary sign of baraka is the ability of marabouts or some of their descendants to maintain a prosperous life-style based at least in part upon their clients’ offerings. In the past another sign of the mystic powers of marabouts was their ability to act politically on behalf of their clients. Sherqawa can still occasionally do so, as I have indicated above. Such political successes are popularly attributed to Sherqawi baraka whether or not the Sherqawi involved actively seeks to be regarded as a marabout or takes material advantage of Boujad’s pilgrim traffic.

Like other social ties, those with marabouts are thought to depend upon continuing exchanges of obligations. The principal problem for believers in marabouts is how to create and maintain such ties with marabouts or those “close” to them (descendants or other persons) in order to ensure a flow of grace to sustain their particular concerns. They seek to contract personal, dyadic bonds of obligation with marabouts in order to compel marabouts to act on their behalf.

*** Maraboutic Descent

Marabouts with descendants and with established cults are considered the most prestigious, since the well-being of their descendants and their cult is a concrete indication of the benefits of closeness to them. A maraboutic descent group is one which shares certain rights and prerogatives on the basis of a recognized claim to common maraboutic descent. The concept of closeness is crucial to understanding such claims. Ideologically, Sherqawi status is expressed in the idiom of patrilineal descent from the marabout Sidi Mhammed Sherqi. Yet such formal determination of status is rarely invoked and is frequently impossible on a practical basis. Hence it is possible to acquire Sherqawi status, even in Boujad itself, and not have such claims directly challenged, by “known” Sherqawa. In practice, one is “known” (me‘ruf) asaSherqawi on the basis of a combination of attributes. These include residence in a Sherqawi quarter, marriage patterns, political and economic alliances, and other aspects of comportment. Most Sherqawa are known through face-to-face relations among themselves and to their clients.

The acquiesence of known Sherqawa to such assertions of Sherqawi status can be explained on two levels, the analytical and that of social practice. Analytically, it is useful to employ Scheffler’s distinction between descent categories and descent gfoups (1965: 62). The idiom of descent in itself gives form only to categories of persons which can remain only vaguely bounded. Membership in such a category does not imply an obligation to act in common with other members of that category. However, perceived common interests can encourage the formation of descent groups out of such categories. On the related practical level of actual social arrangements, I already have indicated that Moroccans constantly re-evaluate their ties of closeness in terms of maintaining and whenever possible enhancing their social status. Thus in some instances the attribute of being a Sherqawi is a relatively minor component of social identity; in others it can play a major role.

Sherqawi descent groups show the same flexible patterns of boundary as do other collectivities in Moroccan society. Currently, the Sherqawa are divided into eight descent groups.[6] Six are considered to descend from sons of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, although no one claims to know the intervening genealogical links. Some persons refer to written records which legitimize such links, but these never are produced and cannot be located. The

remaining two groups are the most prominent. They claim descent from another of the marabout's sons, but in addition claim as eponymous ancestors 19th century Sherqawi "lords," so designated because they effectively controlled the zawya or at least a substantial part of its resources. Each of these descent groups has a quarter (derb) in the town where the core of its membership resides, although non-Sherqawi also reside in these quarters. Each descent group possesses a shrine of its common ancestor, although this is not necessarily located in its quarter and many Sherqawi shrines are not directly linked to any specific descent group.

The same concept of closeness underlies claimed relations of kinship among the Sherqawa as among commoners. Substantial material and social benefits are associated with Sherqawi descent for at least some Sherqawa. Hence the genealogies tracing their descent are generally more complex than is the case for commoners. Or so the Sherqawa assert. Yet the only component of their genealogy which the Sherqawa commonly know is the name-chain (silsila)of the "lords" of the zawya. This name-chain stretches in an unbroken line back to Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, with variants occuring only over the "lords" of the last century. Earlier factional disputes are not socially significant and are not reflected in the name-chain.

All Sherqawa point to this name-chain as legitimating their status, but only members of the two most prominent "mainline" descent groups can actually trace agnatic ties with the Sherqawi lords. With few exceptions, the most prominent Sherqawa of the past century come from these two descent groups. For reasons of shared material interests and prestige, members of the two "mainline" groups show a much greater concern over the boundaries of their groups than do other Sherqawa.They generally can trace in detail their genealogical ties over at least three generations and possess a more precise knowledge of the scope of their kinship ties with contemporaries. They sharply distinguish between persons who claim closeness to them solely on such bases as residential propinquity and those related through agnatic and affinal ties. These two mainline groups have substantial common interests and in general have managed to defend them. They have kept largely undivided estates from their prominent ancestors of the last century. Through Islamic inheritance many of them are thus entitled to substantial

revenues in addition to their shares in the offerings at the main shrine (shares available in principle to all Sherqawa).

Sherqawa active in the maraboutic “trade” seek to manifest closeness to leading Sherqawa before their clients. This is despite the fact that most prominent Sherqawa of today, even when popularly regarded as marabouts, no longer take an active part in maraboutic enterprises. Identification with the two mainline descent groups gives persons a competitive edge in maintaining status, but participation in the aristocracy or inner elite of the Sherqawa (or esteem in clients’ eyes) is not determined exclusively by descent group membership. For example, a member of one of the non-mainline descent groups, a textile merchant, successfully entered politics shortly after independence. At first he actively dissociated himself from Sherqawi maraboutic activities (because the mainline Sherqawa failed to support him in election campaigns) and in fact became prayer leader (imam) of one of Boujad’s two principal mosques. In recent years he has consolidated his influence by claiming,at least away from Boujad, to be lord of the zawya and of the mainline Sherqawa. He employs his visible hold over a rural clientele as a means of legitimating his political influence.

Until the beginning of this century, Sherqawi descent and maraboutic status were largely coterminous. The principal means for a Sherqawi to acquire social dominance was to seek to be regarded as a marabout and to attract a clientele. The means of acquiring social prominence are now more varied. The immediate descendants of late 19th and early 20th centuries Sherqawi marabouts have often maintained elite status, at least when they have acquired an education or adapted successfully to modern commercial and political activities. Through these activities it is possible to maintain a social position that identity primarily as a marabout no longer allows. Many of the Sherqawi elite dissociate themselves from the maraboutic interests of some of their kinsmen because such activities would open them to attack and ridicule from educated persons. Such Sherqawa seek to redefine the activities of some of their kinsmen and ancestors in light of the formal doctrines of reformist, modernist Islam. By any criteria, some Sherqawa have been prominent in Morocco for centuries. — as marabouts, counselors of sultans, religious scholars, and recently as educators, merchants, ministers of state, doctors, judges,

administrators, and in one case, as a sociologist. The very success of these Sherqawa is taken by maraboutic clients as a sign of continuing Sherqawi religious prominence.The elegant Sherqawi shrines are maintained through their donations.

*** Ideology and Practice

The analytic distinction has already been made between maraboutism as an ideology and maraboutism as a concrete set of social practices. The contracting economic bases of marabouts, especially living marabouts, has had an impact on the ideology of maraboutism. It is this impact that I now wish to discuss in reference to the Sherqawi maraboutic cult. Ideologically, marabouts and maraboutic cults form a symbolic base for order in society. Maraboutic cults such as that of the Sherqawa are identified with specific towns and regions, although the correlations between maraboutic cults and specific rural or urban local communities are not immutable and some groups may even divide their allegiances among several maraboutic cults. The implicit ideology of such cults also provides a bridge between the divine template for human conduct as revealed in the Qur’an and periodically renewed by reformist movements in Islam, and the realities of “the way things are” in Moroccan society. Maraboutic cults are linked to specific social forms but are more than a reflection of such forms. This is indicated by the analysis of the means through which specific ties with marabouts are maintained.

There are both collective and individual ties with Sherqawi marabouts. Presently, only tribal groups maintain collective ties with the Sherqawa, although in preprotectorate times urban quarters and occupational groups in western Morocco also did so. In certain parts of Morocco, including Marrakesh (Jemma 1971), collective urban ties still exist. Individual ties are maintained by both townsmen and tribesmen.

Personal and collective ties of obligation with marabouts rest on a similar base, so that the form which collective and personal ties take and their distribution are not sharply distinguished. In both cases the fundamental unit of social structure is the person rather than their attributes or statuses as

members of groups. Thus, persons participating in collective sacrifices and offerings say that they do so because in that manner they are able to present a more substantial sacrifice or offering to a marabout and thus more forcefully indicate their faith in him. In other words, persons deal with marabouts collectively rather than individually in order to have more “word” with the marabout. Of course, such ties also denote the boundaries of particular social groups at any moment.

The accompanying map indicates a large, contiguous sphere of Sherqawi influence covering the Shawya and Tadla plains. In rural contexts, the Sherqawa are the dominant religious lodge in the area, although to a lesser extent other maraboutic orders also are represented. The urban situation is slightly more complex, but only due to post-1912 developments (with the exception of a few coastal towns including Casablanca). It also should be kept in mind that Boujad was the only town of significance in the interior of the area prior to 1912. An important earlier form of ties with the Sherqawa took the form of urban religious brotherhoods[7] (tariqa-s), whose members met weekly, usually on Friday afternoons, in a local lodge (zawya) maintained for that purpose. There are indications that these lodges may have been related to trading networks based upon Boujad in the late 19th century (Eickelman 1976: 199). They exist alongside non-Sherqawi religious lodges, most of which gained adherents in the early years of the protectorate, when merchants and craftsmen joined them as a means of asserting independence from the Sherqawa. From the early 1930s onward these brotherhoods declined in face of reformist Islam and the emerging nationalist movement.

Personally contracted ties with the Sherqawa are much more widespread than those of brotherhoods in the urban setting. Significant numbers of townsmen occasionally travel to Boujad to visit Sherqawi shrines there, as well as prominent non-Sherqawi shrines elsewhere. Generally, however, only townsmen of rural origin in western Morocco make regular offerings to the Sherqawa over extended periods of time. More substantial in terms of aggregate value are the donations of animals and cash irregularly made by persons who seek the intervention of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi or other principal Sherqawi marabouts in cures of illness and infertility. These offerings occur only at times of personal or household crisis and to a lesser degree are also made to non-Sherqawi marabouts.

The ties between the Sherqawa and specific tribal groups in western Morocco at first appear more stable than the amorphous, discontinuous ones sustained in urban settings. The ritajor sphere of Sherqawi influence has remained relatively constant since at least the 1880s. This is in large part because a succession of sultans in the late 19th century deliberately sought to extend Sherqawi influence in the area at the expense of other maraboutic lodges. In 1901 this policy was formally reversed, but by then the sultanate was unable effectively to impose its will in the area. From 1907 onward the French used Sherqawi influence for their own ends. Once the pax gallica was formally established in 1912, spheres of maraboutic influence were largely frozen in place. This is in contrast with the 19th century and what is known of earlier periods, when the geographical sphere of Sherqawi influence expanded and contracted with political and economic currents. In the 1880s, for instance, the Sherqawa had clients in the Middle Atlas mountains and actively sought to extend their influence in that direction (Eickelman 1976 : 55). The existence of Sherqawi agents, holdings, and clientele in key Moroccan cities outside their main sphere of influence, such as Fes, Meknes, Marrakesh, and Sale can similarly be explained in terms of their seeking to widen the scope of their activities. Of course, the geographical pattern of Sherqawi influence is partially related to ecological constraints. Some geographical features tend effectively to impede communication in certain directions. Consistently more important, however, were the patterns of social and political alignments at any given moment. This explains in part the patterns of Sherqawi influence in an area as far away as the Sus valley. Certain Sherqawa were effectively able to create and maintain ties with groups and individuals there and the development of ties with the Sherqawa was considered more advantageous than the development of ties with local maraboutic descent groups. Such decisions depend upon judgements of the efficacy ot particular marabouts and the availability of particular marabouts or their descendants.

Myths relating the exploits of particular marabouts are a crucial element in maraboutic ideology. Those for the Sherqawa are known throughout western Morocco and resemble in form those associated with marabouts and maraboutic descent groups elsewhere. To the extent that these myths frequently invoke place names and other features peculiar to specific geographic divisions, they are localized. Yet these characteristics are almost

incidental to the stress in the myths upon how marabouts become tied to specific groups or persons. For example, one myth relates how the entire area that surrounds Boujad was wilderness when Sidi Mhammed Sherqi first arrived there (Eickelman and Draioui 1973: 201–205). The marabout located water, cleared the forest, and forced wild animals out of the area. Then he called upon various groups to settle there and establish a covenant fahd; bay‘a) with him. So far I have collected roughly sixty myths, including variants, dealing with Sherqawa. Virtually all of them concern the means by which covenants are established and honored between named groups and Sidi Mhammed Sherqi and his sons. Such covenants are represented as being maintained through such means as sacrifice, the giving of women to the Sherqawa, the claim of a common, distant ancestor between the marabout and his clients, and the claim of mere physical propinquity in the distant past.

In exchange for sacrifices and the renewal of the covenant, Sherqawi marabouts appear as guarantors of the moral order insofar as it affects their clients; in some cases the clients are made Muslim at the same time a covenant is established. One common theme in the myths is that of Sherqawi marabouts defending covenanted groups from unjust tyrants. The ties of the Sherqawa with other maraboutic centres and with Mecca are also frequently stressed. Although in real life Sherqawi marabouts and other Sherqawa have made the pilgrimage to Mecca, there are few sustained ties with other maraboutic descent groups. The social order depicted in the myths is constructed out of particularistic bonds of obligations, but the myths also depict the submission of both marabouts and clients to an Islamic code of conduct.

Covenants with the Sherqawa are particularistic but far from being primordial. Most client tribal groups in western Morocco claim that their covenant with the Sherqawa was sealed in “early” times (Bekri). “Early” is that range of time, internally atemporal, which forms a backdrop to the ordinary, fully known social horizon (see Eickelman 1977). Events that occurred in early times are thought to have a significant impact upon current social alignments but the full social context of such early events is considered unknown and unknowable. Significantly, the tribal groups mentioned in the covenants of the myths are not “real life” collectivities in the sense of being effective units of social action either now

or in the historically known past. Tribal names mentioned in the myths are generally those from which many existing groups claim to have derived, but even this is not always the case. It is useful to think of the names mentioned in these myths as together forming a conceptual grid through which covenants can be legitimated as well as shifted as occasion warrants through the “discovery” of alternate formulations of the grid.

The notions of obligation and closeness underlie the dyadic bonds through which marabouts and their clients remain “connected” (mtesslin). A “connection” can be accomplished in three complementary ways. The first is through offerings and communal meals with those living descendants of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi, not themselves considered marabouts, who claim specific ties with certain tribal sections and rural local communities. These descendants are called “visitors” (zewwar-s)[8] because they literally visit clients’ households and tents twice each year — in spring when herds are traditionally divided and in early summer just after harvesting — to collect the offerings (zyara) considered the due of the marabout. When they make donations or offer communal meals, clients specifically remind the visitor that he is to accept them on behalf of his ancestor. In return, visitors offer an invocation (da‘wa) to their maraboutic ancestor in front of their clients. Visitors know each individual involved and carefully specify the particular concerns of each household: the desire for male offspring, good harvests, the wellbeing of persons and animals. In the past, visitors also mediated tribal disputes and brought major matters to the attention of more influential Sherqawa. When clients are in town, their Sherqawi visitors occasionally assist them in various matters, but in general the visitors no longer can serve as efficacious intermediaries in practical matters. An interesting consequence is that clients now explain their offerings to visitors as alms to the poor (sadaqa) and treat the visitors in an offhand way. Still, contact with visitors is considered necessary in order to maintain ties with their maraboutic ancestors.

The second way of remaining connected is through annual sacrifices at the shrine of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi and those of certain of his descendants. These are made in the presence of living Sherqawa, as well as the visitors associated with particular pilgrims and pilgrim groups who again act on behalf of the marabout. Such sacrifices can be made by individuals who seek

specific favours from marabouts and are made regularly throughout the year. Here I discuss primarily the collective offerings that are made. Most collective sacrifices are made each fall during the festival of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi. This is not a single event, but a period of roughly two weeks during which client groups make a pilgrimage to Boujad. For transhumant groups, the festival generally coincides with the move from summer to winter pastures. Especially over the last two decades, the Sherqawa have discouraged actual sacrifices, although many still occur. One reason for their discouragement is pressure from other townsmen, including Sherqawa, who are embarrassed by what they consider the more “primitive” forms of maraboutism (although a similar argument is never made concerning the sacrifice of an animal for feast days recognized by “formal” Islam). Another reason is the desire on the part of the Sherqawa involved in the pilgrim “trade,” as they refer to it, to live from the proceeds of the pilgrim traffic. To this end, they persuade pilgrims whenever possible that the offer of a sacrificial animal or the equivalent in cash has the same benefit as a sacrifice.

In some cases, sacrificial animals are slaughtered but immediately sold at regular prices at a butcher’s shop; in most cases, however, Sherqawa dispose of the animal (or offerings in kind) through regular market channels.

An unanticipated consequence of the gradual abandonment of actual sacrifices and the greater demand for marketable offerings is the rapid attrition of client donations. Traditional offerings of cereals and of animals to a lesser extent were considered largely outside of the domain of the cash economy prior to the severe economic dislocations of the Second World War. It is true that to a certain extent obligations to marabouts were always thought of in terms analogous to the market situation. In all forms of “remaining connected,” acrimonious bargaining often occurs over the size of an offering or sacrifice. Nineteenth century correspondence attests to the fact that such bargaining is not recent. I stress analogous because informants emphasize that a cash value cannot be placed on any bond of closeness or obligation, including those with marabouts.

Yet under current conditions the scope of maraboutic powers is much more circumscribed than it was in the past and virtually inexistent in the realms of

politics and economics. Clients get less out of maintaining such obligations than they did in the past. In addition, when Sherqawi visitors and the caretakers of major Sherqawi shrines convert offerings into cash at the market, often before the eyes of their clients, the latter are encouraged to consider their ties with marabouts as identical with those of the marketplace. Doubt in the prevalence of marabouts has always been present (cf. Firth 1974), but under present conditions this doubt becomes systematic and encourages consideration of the tenets of formal Islam as the only valid religious expression.

The final means of remaining connected with the Sherqawa is through offerings and communal meals with living marabouts. I have already mentioned why this practice is rapidly disappearing. Living marabouts have difficulty in maintaining their reputation due to decreasing influence and revenues and are stigmatized by educated Muslims. Unlike enshrined marabouts, living ones are not insulated from direct calculations of their efficacy and comments upon the lavishness, or baraka, shown by their hospitality. Once again, as the benefits of maintaining obligations with marabouts become more vague and indistinct, not only do pilgrims place less value in maintaining such obligations, but maraboutism as an implicit ideology ceases to make sense in terms of the concepts of obligation and closeness.

*** Sacrifices and Social Groups

Another dimension of maraboutic ties is the means by which groups are formed that collectively sacrifice and make offerings. As an example I use the Sma’la of the upper Tadla plain, located about twenty kilometers to the north of Boujad. They are one of the most “traditional” tribes of the area in that they remain largely transhumant (as were virtually all the tribes of the area prior to the 1920s) and vigorously maintain their covenants with the Sherqawa. Therefore their current practices (and those documented for the protectorate and the pre-1912 period) provide more insight into precolonial practices than is the case for groups that have been more radically affected by subsequent political and economic transformations. The nature of tribal society in this early period is significant because maraboutism has been primarily linked in Morocco to “segmentary” tribal societies. Here I present

an alternate account of traditional rural society as it existed in some parts of Morocco and which does not necessitate postulating a radical dichotomy between past and present social forms.

The pasture lands of the Sma'la are still collectively owned; only recently has legislation been passed which, when eventually implemented, will convert all "tribal" lands into private ownership. Agricultural lands are owned by individuals, as was also the case in the region during the preprotectorate period. Herds are also individually owned, although in practice the head of each tent (household) or herding unit exercises effective control over the disposition of animals owned by individuals residing with him. Agreements over grazing rights were made with neighbouring groups both on a person-to-person basis and on the basis of larger collectivities. Even among the "traditional" Sma'la, therefore, individuals had a considerable area of latitude in which they could manipulate their social identities. Such latitude is administratively inconvenient, so the colonial administration and its post-1956 Moroccan successor discouraged small-scale, informal pastoral agreements, sometimes using the pretext that only agreements binding on the larger, administratively recognized tribal subdivisions were really "traditional." Neat administrative organigrams of tribal organization and administrative jurisdictions would be damaged by acknowledging a continuous flux in social alignments.

Tribesmen employ the idiom of agnation to describe relations among themselves, but political relations are conceptualized in other idioms as well. Nor was the idiom of agnation more pervasive in the historically known past, which in this case means since the late 19th century. Tribesmen often use the analogies of the tree and the human body to describe their interrelationships. To follow through the first analogy, as one tribesman said: "We are like the branches of a tree, but each branch is on its own." Similarly, in some contexts tribesmen assert that they are all linked through ties of blood, but explicitly deny that the claim of such ties obliges them now or obliged them in the past to act in specified ways. In other words, social and political action flows along numerous lines: kinship, patron-client relations, and other bonds of necessity or mutual interest. The area of latitude in which rural Moroccans can shift their social ties is more circumscribed than in an urban milieu, but it is still fairly considerable.

When tribesmen are asked to describe their relations with the Sherqawa, they frequently begin by discussing the nature of the rural local community (dawwar). The term literally means “circle.” In the era of preprotectorate insecurity, household heads of local communities pitched their tents in a circle during transhumance. They collectively agreed upon pastoral movements and upon the tenor of their relations with other groups. Members of local communities claim to be linked through agnatic ties but are unable to demonstrate specifically that such ties encompass all members of their group. When asked to trace such relations in detail, tribal informants invariably responded that only someone older could do so. In turn, elderly informants vaguely referred to “earlier times” as the period when the local community was entirely linked through traceable agnatic relations. In actuality, local communities commonly consist of several agnatic cores linked by complex affinal and contractual ties.

There are two significant criteria for the existence of a rural local community. First is the general willingness of its members to support each other in mutual interests. Second is the capacity to act collectively on certain ritual and political occasions. The comparison with the earlier discussion of maraboutic descent groups (or for that matter any other such groups in Morocco) should be clear. Each local community has a council (jma’a), although this is not a formal body as has frequently been assumed by protectorate administrators or their Moroccan successors. Any adult male household head who has an interest in the issues at hand participates, although the opinions of those who are economically or politically weak tend to be discounted or ignored in favour of those with more substantial material interests and persuasive skills. When necessary or convenient, such councils informally agree upon a spokesman (mqaddem) to represent them to outsiders. Each local community also has its own mosque, burial ground, and maraboutic tomb. The latter is usually a derelict structure to which no offerings are made except for candles and small coins left by the local community’s women and children. At any time, each household or tent belongs to only one local community. Membership is demonstrated by sustained ties of “closeness,” a concept which I earlier illustrated in relation to the urban Sherqawa.

The refusal or inability of a tent to contribute to certain collective obligations does not in itself indicate dissociation from a local community, but it affects the capacity of a household head to have a say in the community's affairs. When a definitive break occurs a household shifts its allegiance to another local community, although its rights in agricultural land remain unchanged. When a group of tents or households breaks away and forms a separate local community, it is distinguished by its own mosque, burial ground, and maraboutic tomb. One of the numerous unused structures usually is appropriated for the purpose, although new tombs occasionally are built.[9]

When Sherqawi visitors arrive in local communities, they usually deal with a spokesman agreed upon for that purpose. He sees that the offerings of grain and animals are forthcoming from the households of his group and cajoles recalcitrant members. A similar informal arrangement is made at the level of tribal sections (fakhda-s) in jointly contributing sheep or bulls for sacrifice (for all Sma'la tribal sections refuse substitutes for sacrifices) at the main Sherqawi shrine in Boujad. No such sacrifices are made at the level of the Sma'la acting as a "tribal" collectivity, nor were they in the known past.

Existing social alignments can be discerned through the clusters of persons that contribute to various maraboutic obligations. More specifically, the conduct of individuals and groups at the annual festival of Sidi Mhammed Sherqi constitutes a publication of new social alignments. These are revealed in the arrangement of tents, patterns of offering and sacrifice, and the part taken by local communities and tribal sections in "powder plays" (tehrak-s)' tom pct it i vc displays of horsemanship. Such "powder plays" among the Sma'la, as with groups participating in similar activities elsewhere in Morocco, are always accompanied by heavy, serious betting between the groups involved. In part these competitions reflect the lack of formal rules inherent in the Moroccan concept of closeness. I he judgment of their outcome is left to the competitors themselves and to any support they can muster among onlookers. Differences that develop during the annual festival often themselves engender new lines of social demarcation.

Once such shills in the composition of groups are effected, appropriate realignments are made in how these groups conceive of their relations with one another. Similar adjustments occur when groups or individuals decide that their link to a specific Sherqawi “visitor” can or should be replaced by one more efficacious.

Available evidence for the preprotectorate past suggests that the rural social order and its relation to maraboutism was basically similar in pattern to what I have described above. Of course, it can be argued that the political and economic transformations of the last sixty years have been so substantial that tribal organization described primarily from contemporary ethnographic evidence or the contemporary remembrance of things past differs fundamentally from that of the preprotectorate era. Some basic shifts have occurred. Since the protectorate, for instance, administrative intervention has greatly restricted the possibilities of intergroup hostilities. Matters previously settled among the tribes themselves or through maraboutic mediation now almost inevitably involve government intervention.

Two sets of events involving the Sma’la and other groups in western Morocco during the preprotectorate era are known in sufficient detail to suggest an essential continuity in local conceptions of the social order. One was the manner in which resistance was organized against the French for three years beginning with 1910. Rapid shifts of alignment occurred that indicate a flexible, opportunistic perception of the mechanics of alliance formation. A similar flexibility is evident in examining the repercussions of the struggle for the sultanate between the brothers Mulay Abd l-‘Aziz and Mulay Hafed which began in 1907. Protracted local disputes over water rights and other matters, maraboutic allegiances both to Sherqawi factions and other maraboutic centers, the attitudes of local communities and tribal sections about the legitimacy of the two rival sultans, and assessments of the wisdom of resistance to the French all entered into consideration. The alignments of the various collectivities involved bore minimal relation to asserted agnatic relationships.

My concern with extending my argument to at least the known precolonial past is to indicate that there is no need for a “special” explanation of the relation of maraboutism to the tribal social order. The most widely known

discussion of this issue in English is contained in the writings of Ernest Gellner. He is primarily concerned with the role of marabouts in social structures which qualify as “segmentary” and which no longer prevail in Morocco. Thus Gellner’s argument is necessarily relegated to the precolonial past when he considers it reasonable to assume that the society in the High Atlas region which he studied was in a stable “kind of Social Contract situation” over an indefinite period (1963: 146; 1969: 158–159). Insofar as present-day institutions can be assumed to have been in “a kind of sociological ice-box” (Gellner 1973: 59), he argues that they can be taken as reliable indicators of past situations.

A principal drawback to this set of assumptions is that it offers no explanation for the role of marabouts and the ideology of maraboutism in non-segmentary situations in the past or for the continuing, albeit modified, significance of both the ideology of maraboutism and the activities of maraboutic cults in the present. Prior to the appearance of the Islamic reform movement in Algeria in the early decades of this century, maraboutism was so persuasive that most urban and rural Algerians took it for Islam pure and simple (Merad 1967: 58). Merad’s statement can be applied even more firmly to Morocco. As for the present, as indicated earlier, rituals associated with marabouts have held their own in many urban and rural milieux (Hatt 1974: 25; Pacques 1971; Jemma 1971; Eickelman 1974a: 229). Contrary to the fervent desires of some Muslim reformists and other educated Moroccans, the ideology and practice of maraboutism has not just melted away in the face of recent social and economic transformations. At least with respect to religious belief and practice, these facts argue against assuming a radical discontinuity between past and present in Morocco’s social history, and especially against any one-to-one relation of ideology with the social order at any historical moment.[10]

*** Conclusion

The Moroccan concept of closeness relates to maraboutism on two levels. As an organizing principle for social arrangements, it underlies such diverse social forms as descent groups (including maraboutic ones), urban quarters, tribal sections and rural local communities, and ties between marabouts and their clients. Closeness as an organizing principle is essential for

comprehending the particular implicit ideology and social relations described in this paper. I have indicated the diversity of historical and social-contexts in which closeness operates to suggest its variable relation to maraboutism taken as social ideology and practice. Any one set of “social arrangements” considered in isolation with maraboutism as an ideology would lead to an analytically unjustified assumption of a one-to-one link between them.

Maraboutism like any other ideology is socially maintained. It is based partially upon an implicit analogy between ordinary social relations and those which prevail between men and the supernatural. In fact, for those who accept maraboutism, there has traditionally been no sharp division between the two realms. Persons considered “close” to marabouts, especially members ot their descent groups associated with cult activities, are thought to have a special influence over them. The notions of obligation and closeness make these ties comprehensible.

This paper has been concerned with two sorts of transformations which occur in relations between marabouts and their clients. First is the continuous revaluing ot the utility of specific social ties, including those which exist between marabouts and their clients. These can lead to the rise or fall in the fortunes of specific marabouts, maraboutic descent groups, or regional pilgrimage centres such as Boujad. In themselves, this form of realignment does not substantially modify the content of maraboutism as an implicit ideology.

The second form of transformation directly modifes the form of maraboutic ideology and analytically is the more interesting (and neglected) form. It concerns shifts in social action which engender ideological change. Put succinctly, my position is that to be understood sociologically, maraboutism has to be considered in a range of historical contexts. In the preprotectorate past, now only a lived experience for the most elderly of Moroccans, marabouts had a much greater range of social action than they have had in later periods. Living marabouts complemented enshrined ones and directly or through proxies could choose to affect the circumstances of their clients. More recently, the political and economic activities of marabouts became markedly circumscribed, until what remains to them is primarily a “religious” sphere of influence distinct from practical concerns. In earlier periods such

an explicit distinction did not exist. With marabouts in the past, the intercession of the supernatural in such concerns was a daily occurrence. Now the benefits which derive from sustaining ties with marabouts and their descendants are vague and ill-defined.

The form in which ties between marabouts and clients are established and reaffirmed has also shifted and this has had more radical consequences for maraboutism as an ideology. Few persons can sustain reputations as living marabouts, and clients in any case have less to do with them. Both living marabouts and maraboutic “visitors” have encouraged the substitution of sacrifices for other forms of offering, and when offered goods in kind have directly converted them for cash through regular market channels. A consequence of this shift has been to encourage clients to consider their transactions with marabouts just as they would all other transactions. When viewed in this fashion, there is no perceptible benefit in maintaining ties with marabouts. Maraboutism ceases to make sense as part of “the way things are.”

Finally, the strength of maraboutism is precisely in its being taken as an implicit ideology. Those who support marabouts are aware in outline of the tenets of “formal” Islam and indicate their support for it through building mosques — most rural local communities have one — and hiring Qur’anic teachers. Although formal Islam also claims to be related to all aspects of life, there is no direct, personified means by which the supernatural can pervade the social order as is the case with maraboutism. Formal Islam thus requires no direct analogy with the nature of the local social order. In contemporary Moroccan society this disjuncture allows it increasingly to be taken as a religious representation of the world more meaningful than maraboutism.

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** 2. Communal and Individual Pilgrimage: The Region of Saints' Tombs in South Sinai[11]

by Emanuel Marx

*** Introduction: The Region and the Wider Universe in the Cult

Regionalism among the Bedouin tribes of South Sinai is more or less confined to their area's geographical boundaries. It has one main concern: the sharing of certain of the area's resources for the benefit of all the tribes who inhabit it. This is clearly represented by the Bedouin themselves in their cult of saints and holy tombs. But their cult refers to an even wider entity also: the Bedouin's insistence that the saint is only a mediator between man and God indicates that they refer to a wider universe. In their experience this is the world in which they work and from where they obtain most of their food and other supplies. This world is located chiefly outside the borders of South Sinai and, even more importantly, the Bedouins do not exert influence on its activities. A distant government and other external organizations determine much of their lives, but contact with, not to mention influence over, these forces is minimal. For the bureaucratic chain does not fully extend to the Bedouin; and their own appointed representatives, the sheikhs, do not greatly influence officials at the centre. So the Bedouin place their reliance on a 'spiritual' representative, the saint, who is at least close to God and able to influence him.

The cult of saints has been reported from many parts of Islam (Levy 1962: 258). The majority of Islamic leaders do not object to this practice. Linant de Bellefonds (1974: 355) claims that "The permissibility of visiting tombs was admitted very early on by idjma' [consensual canonical law]; all the [law] schools....even went so far as to recommend the practice". Some authors claim that it "represents a striking deviation from the genuine prophetic tradition" (Grunebaum 1951: 67), perhaps because, by western standards, it is logically inconsistent with a strict monotheism. It is practised not only in regions where "official, genuine literate Islam....is present only in a minimal form" (Gellner 1972: 59); it is found also in cities, villages, and even in association with mosques (Canaan 1927: 2; Eickelman 1976: 112). Nor is it an "expression of that necessity....for a world religion to come to terms with....a multiplicity of local forms of faith and yet maintain the essence of its own identity" (Geertz 1968: 48). For centre and periphery are united in the same faith, and its various orthodox and heterodox forms are spread almost uniformly throughout its realm.

The cult of saints is, then, neither a parochial phenomenon, a series of quaint local traditions, nor a deviation from official Islam. Its very ubiquity should preclude such conclusions. It should be viewed as a link between local societies and the “wider society", as conceptualized by the locals. Much of the essay is devoted to a demonstration of this thesis.

However widespread the cult of saint is, it appears to be less common among nomadic pastoralists. Musil (1928: 417) states categorically:

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“The Bedouins know of no communion with the saints. In the whole inner desert there is not a single holy grave or shrine erected in honour of a saint....When they make short sojourns in the settled territory, where by every village the dome of a shrine rises above the real or imaginary grave of some man or woman whom public opinion considers to be a saint, they never pay any attention to these domes."

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But among the Bedouin of South Sinai and, incidentally, among those of Cyrenaica (Evans-Pritchard 1949: 66–7: on recent changes see Peters 1976),the visiting of shrines and pilgrimages is an important feature of social life. If we gain some insights into the sociology of the cult of saints in Sinai, we might improve our understanding of such cults elsewhere, and interpret their absence among some nomadic pastoralists. I suggest that tribal pilgrimages elsewhere, too, develop, in response to similar situations: in tribal or other economically undifferentiated hinterlands that depend on external forces (natural forces, or an external state and economy) over which they exert little influence. A society that controls its affairs to a considerable extent, will not resort to communal pilgrimages.

A further basic point must be made. To understand the importance of the cult in South Sinai it is essential to appreciate variations in communal pilgrimage. In this essay such questions as why tribes should celebrate an annual reunion, why the reunions of each tribe follow a different pattern, and why the attendance at them fluctuates from year to year will be asked. Lastly, the

significance of the holy tombs will be examined. Why do they mark the sites of the gatherings of one or several tribes? This touches on some of the problems discussed by Robertson Smith nearly a century ago in his Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (1889). It will become evident that some of his views have stood the test of time.

*** Three Tribes and their Setting in the Peninsula

Every year towards the end of summer members of the Bedouin tribes in South Sinai congregate at certain Saints' tombs in their area. There are about twenty well-known tombs in the southern half of the peninsula, and they are all located at major cross-roads and not far from water sources. Some are found close to centres of population, while others are far from them. Throughout the year individual Bedouin visit tombs whose resident saint, they think, can help them with their problems. Only at some of these tombs do annual tribal gatherings take place. I intend to look closely at the annual pilgrimages of three tribes, the Muzeneh, the Awlad Sa'id, and the Jebaliyeh. The Muzeneh meet for three consecutive days and make the round of three holy tombs located within a range of 20 kilometres; from the tomb of their founding ancestor Faraj, they move to that of the prophet (nebi) Saleh, and thence to that of Aron, the brother of Moses. The Awlad Sa'id gather once a year at the tomb of 'Ali Abu Taleb, the third Khalif. As for the Jebaliyeh, their sections gather on separate occasions at the tomb of Sheikh 'Awad, a holy man whose antecedents are unclear.

Other saints' tombs at which tribal gatherings take place are: Sheikh Qra'i for the 'Aleqat, Sheikh Suliman Nfe'i for the Qaragha, al-Hashash for the small Hamada, and the female saint Sheikha Swerha for the Sawalha. All these major shrines are classified by Bedouin as maqam (literally "place") a term widely used in the Islamic world to denote an important holy place, mostly, but not always, associated with a saint's tomb. Here, in Sinai, maqam means a shrine whose patron saint is buried elsewhere.

Tribesmen attend these gatherings in order to meet their friends, relatives and visitors from other tribes, and to reaffirm their membership of the tribe and the right to use its resources. For the greater part of the year tribesmen

are dispersed in small groups and many men work most of the time outside their tribal land and even outside South Sinai. The tribal reunions are the culmination of their efforts to maintain the ties with other Bedouin. The variations in the tribal reunions are connected to the different habitat and economies of the three tribes, as shown, among other things, in their annual migrations.

South Sinai is the mountainous southern part of the Sinai peninsula up to the Tih Plateau. It covers an area of about 17,000 square kilometres. Most of its interior is bare and rugged; high plateaus interspersed with mountains, build up to the Mount Sinai massif at the centre. The highest peak in the peninsula is Jebel Katarina, 2642 meters and other mountains are nearly as high. Asphalted roads run close to the sea shore round the tip of the peninsula. In the interior of the country there are only mud tracks, mostly running on an east to. west axis. Some of these are suitable for trucks and other rugged vehicles. There is no regular public transportation of any kind, but the Bedouin car fleet, of over a hundred vehicles, mostly American and Russian jeeps, pickups and a few trucks, mostly in a bad state of repair, is up for hire. Parts of the peninsula are inaccessible to motor cars, and can be reached by camel, often only by circuitous routes.

The peninsula is arid, with small amounts of rain-fall in the cool winter months, between November and March. In the coastal sector, the annual average precipitation is about 10 milimetres and in the high mountains—about 60 milimetres (Gdnor 1973: 35). Rain-fall is also very irregular, and in all parts but the high mountains there are often two to three consecutive years without rain-fall. The spatial distribution of rains is also very changeable, and in consequence there are few reliable pastures. Any sizable rain causes floods in the lower reaches of wadis and often results in serious damage to Bedouin property. Sometimes most of a year’s rain-fall comes in a single downpour. Some of these torrential rains may occur in early summer. A flood that occurred in May 1968 destroyed hundreds of palm trees, houses and gardens, and ruined several major motor tracks. Another occurred in February 1975, with results almost as disastrous.

The winter months are usually cool. In the mountains there are each year cold spells, with temperatures occasionally falling as low as —10° (14°F).

Summer temperatures are uniformly high, and in the low-lying areas often climb up to 40° (105°F) during the day, and in the mountains to around 30°.

The vegetation is adapted to the harsh climate, and relies largely on ground water. During the long dry summer, most plants wither, and only the ubiquitous ba’tharan, (arthemisia), ajram (anabasis) and some other shrubs seem to withstand the heat successfully. But after rains colourful annuals appear. Some plants come to life even in the absence of rain; milder weather after a cold spell entices them out of the ground. There are few sources of surface water in the region, except immediately after rains. Water is mostly obtained from wells dug by enterprising Bedouin. In recent years government sunk several deep wells to which all Bedouin have equal access.

There is reason to believe that a small and highly mobile population of nomadic pastoralists could maintain themselves in South Sinai, provided they had access to all parts of the peninsula. It appears that a few Muzeneh and Awlad Sa’id households subsist exclusively on their flocks.

No grain is grown in South Sinai, and the fruit and vegetables grown labouriously in small plots suffice for the needs of a household during a few weeks in summer. Practically all the food consumed in Sinai is imported from outside the peninsuja. In the past, when employment was scarce and communications slow and laborious, Bedouin devoted more attention to their gardens. Some households, especially among the Jebaliyeh, relied on them for their livelihood. Since the early 70’s, wage labour became easily available and the incomes of Bedouin rose rapidly. As a result Bedouin spend less time in their gardens, but still maintain them in reasonable condition.

South Sinai is inhabited by over 6,000 Bedouin, giving a population density of less than one person per 2 square kilometres. A considerable part of this population lives close to the main east-west passage through the mountainous interior, Wadi Firan—Saint Catherine—Wadi Nash. Although every Bedouin has a place or at least an area, that he considers his home ground, there are few permanent settlements of Bedouin and these have stabilised in recent years as local employment opportunities improved, and

new wells were put in operation. The trend began in the mid-fifties when smuggling of narcotics accelerated and Bedouin invested some of the profits in wells and orchards. Some of these settlements, such as Bir Zrer and Bir ‘Oqda, were established in relatively inaccessible places, for understandable reasons. The copious ground water supply in Wadi Firan allowed Bedouin to remain for many months in one place and to cultivate fruit and vegetables. The permanent employment found in Saint Catherine’s monastery in the mountains gave rise to a Bedouin village in its vicinity. These trends were intensified after the Israelis took over in 1967. Though smuggling became almost extinct, more jobs became available locally, and new wells were dug. As a result, Bedouin households now tend to spend much longer periods in their home grounds.

Permanent settlements were few until the 50’s. There was the little port of al-Tur on the Red Sea with a population of about 500 souls, mostly sailors and fishermen. Some of these men were Bedouin. Near al-Tur there was a quarantine station for Egyptians returning from the annual pilgrimage to the holy places of Islam in Mecca, which provided seasonal work for many Bedouin. The other permanent settlement, Saint Catherine’s monastery on Mount Sinai, is inhabited by 10—12 Greek monks. Founded in the sixth century and continuously occupied since, it is rightly viewed by Bedouin as the only stable institution in the peninsula, more permanent and reliable than ephemeral governments. In the 50’s, the Egyptians began to develop the peninsula. They set up civilian headquarters in Abu Znema, north of al-Tur, built army camps and an air field, constructed roads along the Red Sea coast, and began to exploit on a commercial scale the oil fields, and the gypsum and manganese deposits found near the Red Sea coast.

*** ‘Tribal Organization’ as Ideology

The Bedouin of South Sinai consider themselves to be tribesmen, in two senses: first, they belong to an administrative unit at the head of which stands a chief (sheikh) chosen by the members, whose appointment is confirmed by government. Second, membership of the tribe confers various territorial rights: to “build a house" anywhere in their roughly defined territory, which in practice means settling in an oasis; to have preferential access to pastures and to employment in it; and to participate in

smuggling activities passing through it. This last is a recent transformation of the former monopoly on conducting travellers through the territory (Neibuhr 1799, 1: 141,153). The tribe claims not so much to control a clearly bounded territory, but defined points in it and paths leading through it. When asked to describe their tribal territory, Bedouin present one with a list of salient points, such as oases, wells and pastures, but there is much disagreement between their statements about boundaries and considerable overlap between tribes. This is to be expected in a country whose practical value to the Bedouin is located in particular tracts. At any moment a considerable proportion of the men may be working outside the territory, and their flocks herding in the grounds of other tribes. This did not deter administrators and travellers from sketching tribal maps which neatly apportion all of South Sinai between the tribes (Murray 1935: 247; Israel Army 1962: map 3; Glassner 1974: 35).

The Bedouin conceptualize.their social organization in two ideologies: the tribe and the annual pilgrimages. Each ideology refers to different aspects of social life, and is invoked in different contexts. And yet they seem to complement each other in important ways, which will be discussed later.

The so-called “tribal organization” is, on one level of discourse, a device through which people conceptualize their belonging to the tribe and their rights of access to the resources of the tribe, and to the pastures of South Sinai. The individual becomes a tribesman through belonging to two groups. First, he belongs to a small group of agnates, some of whose members reside in the tribal area, while others may be outside it. Second, through this group he connects up with a more inclusive descent group which is associated with a vaguely defined part of the tribal territory; and third, he views this group as a sub-division of the tribe, the group that owns the territory. The transition from the agnatic group to a territorial one is accomplished in several steps, because each group serves a different function. Yet the conception of the tribe as a homologous series of ever-widening groups is valuable to them, for it allows them to visualise the tribe as a combination of small forces capable of defending territory, in a country where the central government is far away and rights are maintained by might. The tribal chief does not necessarily figure in this conception of the tribe. Bedouin usually describe the chiefs as “government chiefs, who really represent only thier personal interest”. They do, however, admit that the chiefs act as liaison officers between the

government authorities—and in the case of the Jebaliyeh also between the monks of Saint Catherine’s—and the tribesmen.

In more detail, the tribe is made up in this manner: each Bedouin is born into an agnatic descent group. The group called a family (’eleh), is named after an ancestor who lived two to four generations ago and bears either his real or his nickname (naqbah or nabadh). Some people cannot trace the details of their connection to this patronym. Bearers of the patronym do not necessarily camp together or own joint property, and there is no formal leader. Some of the bearers of the patronym, often close agnates, may, in company with cognates or even non-relatives, engage in joint economic ventures, for instance in smuggling. Others, and even the members of the economic partnership themselves, may then consider this as an activity of the agnatic descent group, oblivious to the fact that not all members participate in the joint activity and that some non-members are involved.

Several patronymic groups are affiliated to a large unit, which is, at one and the same time, considered a large descent group and a sub-unit of the tribe and which, supposedly, is associated with a not too clearly defined part of the tribal territory. This unit is called a quarter (ruba’, pl. rubu’), or branch (fara , pl. furu’), indicating that it is a sub-division of a larger unit, the tribe. Tribesmen freely admit that their patronyms are not necessarily descendants of the ancestors of the ruba ’ and that some tribesmen originated outside the tribe and joined the ruba’ within living memory. The members of the ruba’do not all reside in the territory associated with their ancestor. A respected member ot one of the constituent groups—not necessarily of a large or wealthy one—is elected elder, and his home becomes a meetingplace for members of the group. This man distributes resources allocated to the group by external agencies, such as work supplied by the government, and in this context acts as representative of the tribal chief. He also makes the arrangements for periodical reunions of the group. The tribe is conceptualized as a group founded by a single eponym, whose sons—and as the term ruba’ implies, there are often four—are the ancestors of the ruba’. This tribe, as distinct from the administrative tribe headed by the chief, exists exclusively as an organisation for the control of territory and initiates few joint political or

economic activities. Bedouin often argue that the tribe as a whole pays blood-compensation (diyah), but no instance has come to my knowledge. The tribesmen are united by joint ownership of territorial resources, and some of them combine forces to prevent encroachments of outsiders. Thus I was told that some years ago an Awlad Sa’id man had constructed a stone house near a route which the Jebaliyeh claimed as their own. One of the Jebaliyeh elders warned him that he was welcome to set up a tent in that place, but not a house. The Awlad Sa’id man moved away, and the house was then torn down. The tribesmen do get together only at the annual pilgrimage.

The genealogies of the tribes and the rubu ’ may remain unchanged for many generations. They may, however, alter because of territorial realignments. Patronymics change in accordance with demographic processes. Individuals and patronymic groups move from ruba’ to ruba’, but do not usually shift from their tribe to another.

Bedouin often migrate relatively short distances in their tribal territory. But they claim that “membership of the tribe also gives them access to all the pastures of South Sinai". They consider their tribes to belong to an alliance, which “in the past elected a common leader and moderator”, and together they are called the people of Mount Sinai (Tawarah, s. Turi). The confederation is not represented in the genealogies by an apical ancestor. Government occasionally appointed one of the tribal chiefs as paramount chief, but this appointment was mainly ceremonial, and the chief never exercised control over the population. Pastures are frequently shared by members of several tribes; whenever this happens, the herdsmen may camp together, irrespective of their tribal affiliation.

Six tribes are usually considered members of the alliance of Tawara: the Muzeneh and Alequat who together constitute one moiety, the Sawalha, Qarasha and Awlad Sa’id—the other; and the Jebaliyeh, who are slightly inferior members of the alliance. Two other small tribes, the Hamada and the Beni Wasel, are viewed as remnants of the ancient inhabitants of the country who lost their land, but are tacitly accepted as belonging to the Tawara. Only the Huwetat tribesmen are thought to be intruders without right to land; and indeed most of them appear to have

entered the area as late as after the First World War. They only do not perform the annual tribal pilgrimage.

Here is a list of tribes arranged by size. The figures are based on Ben-David (1972: 113), taken from a census carried out by the Israeli authorities in 1968. Later information largely confirms these figures, and I made only-slight corrections.

**** Bedouin Tribes of South Sinai

The Muzeneh are the largest tribe and also occupy the largest territory. Murray (1935: 265) describes them as camel and sheep breeders many of whom “have lately taken to fishing". Their control of the east coast put them in an ideal position for receiving narcotics from Saudi Arabia, and passing them on to other middlemen in Sinai. The final destination was usually Egypt. Smuggling thrived until about 1970, when it was stopped almost completely by the Israeli authorities. Some of the best known organizers of smuggling bands stem from this tribe, and Bedouin estimate that about 30 per cent of its income was derived from smuggling. There are some fishermen and sailors among the Muzeneh, but only few tribesmen own flocks of goats and sheep large enough for subsistence. Bedouin claim that 50 to 60 animals are the minimum needed. One of the few men I met who owned a flock of that size claimed that he obtained an average monthly revenue of IL 400, in addition to which he obtained IL 200 from National Insurance. Altogether he had a monthly income of IL 600 (approximately £40). Most households live on the wage labour of one or more males, who earn IL 40 a day or more (nearly £3). While almost every household raises five to six goats or sheep, most people claim that they do not expect to make a profit on animals. For part of the dry season the animals are fed millet or corn, imported from outside Sinai. The small flocks are herded by women and girls. This seems to have been the situation for a long time, since H.S. Palmer (1906; 69–72) found in 1869 that flocks were tended exclusively by girls, that men earned their living away from home (though not as wage labourers but as caravaneers), and that they bought corn with the money earned (similarly E.H. Palmer 1871: 81–82; Keller 1900: 26).

While their movements are influenced by the needs of their animals, Bedouin must also take into account other requirements. Women and girls are expected to return home in the evening and perform household chores. Therefore, theyxio not venture too far afield with their flock. Camps must remain close, but not too close, to water, usually at a distance of 2—3 kilometres from it, and near sources of firewood, such as broom (ratam), acacias (seyal), or tamarisks (tarfa), and amenities, such as shops and roads. Therefore, they cannot provide the most favourable herding conditions for the animals, and cannot make their flocks pay.

The Awlad Sa’id live in the mountains west of Saint Catherine’s. They straddle all the roads along the east-west axis, and control some of the best pasture areas. Only a small area of high mountains has been left to Jebaliyeh tribesmen. The Awlad Sa’id, too, used to engage in smuggling. They rely to a somewhat greater extent than the Muzeneh on flocks, and not a few of them possess small and relatively neglected orchards in the mountains. In the past their camels carried pilgrims from Egypt and supplies from al-Tur to the monastery. Now they, too, depend largely on wage labour.

The habitat of the Jebaliyeh is the high mountain. Their flocks are even smaller than those of the other two tribes, and there are households without animals. As their small territory includes no major mountain pass, they are more or less excluded from smuggling activities. They specialise in horticulture. Every tribesman owns an orchard in the high mountains, which is regularly watered and cultivated, even when its owners live elsewhere. Tribesmen claim that in the past they used to market their fruit in al-Tur, and with the money they just managed to buy a year’s supply of grain, but could not afford other items such as tea, sugar and clothing. So the tribesmen sought employment in the area and outside it. Saint Catherine’s monastery traditionally employs between 20 to 30 Jebaliyeh tribesmen and also a few Awlad Sa’id. While its workers are paid much lower wages than those in the labour market, it can offer them two advantages:— work near home and work that is relatively secure. The monastery’s employees often remain in their jobs throughout their working life, and even after retirement the monastery gives these men small but regular food rations. Tribesmen complain about the meagre pay, but remain in their jobs, for no-one knows what the future has in store. The Jebaliyeh also used to supply guides for

pilgrims who wished to visit the many sites in the vicinity of the monastery associated with the works of Moses.

Jebaliyeh “explain” that their close ties with the monastery go back into history. Their ancestor was a Greek slave, named Constantine. When the monastery was established, he was one of a number of slaves sent out to serve the monks. This story both establishes the link to the monastery and the tribe’s claim to a territory “for it is owned by the monastery”. While individual tribesmen admit to various origins, their attachment to one of the tribe’s four branches gives them a right to enjoy the advantages of their links.

As their territory is too small for herding and as the monastery could employ only a few men, the Jebaliyeh were among the first wage labourers. As a result some of them acquired skills, and as builders and well-diggers worked all over the peninsula. They still rely on wage labour for most of their income, and the men regularly work in the towns or the Abu Rudes oil installations. Between 30 to 50 men are usually employed by the Israeli administration.

Jebaliyeh households move as a rule between two locations: for most of the year, and especially during the cooler months, they stay in the “low-lying” areas at a height of about 1,600 metres; during the hot summer months they move into the mountains to enjoy the fresh air and the fruits of their orchards. A similar transhumance is observed by the Awlad Sa’id but it takes place at a lower altitude. Their cool summer sites are at about the same height as the “sheltered” winter sites of the Jebaliyeh.

All three tribes, then, depend on wage labour for their living, and men spend long periods working away from home. At the same time, they behave as if they were pastoralists or gardeners, although many people admit that they either make little money out of their flocks and gardens, or even lose it on them. Why do Bedouin then resist moving their families nearer to the places of work? The answer is twofold. Some Bedouin who established themselves in secure jobs settle in the towns and cities of Egypt, and are often followed by kinsmen. But these people are generally out of the view of the other

tribesmen, who maintain the fiction that they are always drawn back to their homeland. A Jebaliyeh man put it thus:—

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“Our country is arid, nothing grows in it. Last night the dew froze and burnt (sic) my tomato plants. The same happens to the almond and apple blossoms. Nor is it a good country for goats, you always have to supplement their food and lose on them. Only its landscapes are beautiful and in summer the climate is good, but our livelihood (rizq) is obtained outside. I always return to it though, because my family lives here. And I do not leave because my country is dear to me. I am tied to it by my navel-string. For when a child is born, the father buries the navel-string and the placenta deep in the ground”.

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The sentimental attachment of this man and others to the land conveys its importance as a secure base. When compared to the income obtained by wage labour its resources are of little value. The gardens and flocks are maintained although they do not pay. For work is insecure, and the political future uncertain. If anything should go wrong Bedouin could always fall back on the resources of their country and by some serious effort they could increase their garden produce, and they could migrate with their flocks so as to make the best out of the available pasture. Men leave their homes in the tribal area, and allow their gardens and flocks to “tick over”, because these are their economic base. Should the need arise, these could be built up, and provide a small income. This became evident late in 1975, during the negotiations between Egypt and Israel over an “interim agreement” in Sinai. Suddenly there was a flourish of activity in the basic economy. Bedouin stopped the sale of animals and there was great interest in gardens. Some people acquired gardens, others dug wells and planted new gardens. Thus they prepared for the possibility of losing their work.

Smuggling is to be viewed as a secondary accommodation to prevailing conditions. As people must stay in this wild and inhospitable country, they are available for any work that presents itself there. In spite of high risks, and the not extravagant wages, numerous people were engaged in the business

and viewed it as an accepted and respectable way of making a living. Only a handful of men made fortunes out of smuggling. Smuggling reinforces tribal allegiance as the control over routes is a precondition for entering the game.

*** Annual Migration and Pilgrimage

Uncertainty about the political and economic future, then, ties these people to their country and to the tribe, and makes them behave as if they were pastoralists and gardeners in the accepted sense. As a result, not only do many men spend a great deal of time away from their families and kin, but families are also widely distributed in small camps. While individuals move about a great deal, for much of the year they meet only some of the people on whom they depend for mutual assistance and reassurance. Relationships require maintenance. When persons do not interact regularly, they lose confidence in their relationship. Would it stand the test of a critical situation? Therefore, each Bedouin strives to visit his relatives and friends, and the opportunity to see many of them at one time presents itself in late summer. At that time the dates ripen, and the Bedouin congregate in the oases until the harvest is over. These large concentrations, in turn, form the basis for the organization of tribal gatherings.

Both the Muzeneh and the Awlad Sa’id go through annual migrations. Their pastoral year begins in spring (rabi’), the time when the weather becomes a little warmer and verdure springs up. This usually happens around February. In the mountains spring comes round every year, but in the lower areas only if there has been some rain in winter. Then the tribesmen leave their winter quarters, relatively large stationary tent camps, and some of them divide up into small camps of two—three tents in order to exploit the pasture wherever it is available. Even hquseholds with few animals may join in these movements, which are largely determined by the requirements of the larger flocks, because they wish to be close to relatives. Other catnps may be larger and remain almost immobile. They are made up of households whose income depends on wage labour, and who put little emphasis on herding.

Spring pasture does not last long and the owners of flocks move into the few reliable early summer pastures, such as Wadi Rahaba and Wadi Slaf. The stationary camps move a short distance from the sheltered winter camping site to one that allows in the refreshing breezes.

The annual migratory cycle reaches the point of maximum concentration in summer. The pasture is exhausted and water sources dry up. People converge on the remaining wells in the oases or on the sea-shore and harvest their dates or, in the case of the Jebaliyeh, repair to their gardens in the mountains. Here tribesmen gather in large groups, there is much visiting and among the Muzeneh young men organize dances nearly every night. After the fruit have been picked and the time comes to move, the elders of the tribe call for a tribal gathering. The gathering not only fits into the seasonal pattern of maximum concentration of tribesmen, it also enhances it. This is the only occasion when the ‘tribe’ visibly becomes a group. At other times it does not operate as one political unit, though members are frequently aware that they act as tribesmen, for instance when they plant gardens, build houses or engage in smuggling.

The tribal gatherings, like the individual pilgrimages to saints’ tombs, are called “visits” (ziyara, locally pronounced zuwara). This is the term used elsewhere, too, for pilgrimages to holy places, with the exception of that to Mecca, for which the distinctive term hajj is employed. While the pilgrimage to the summit of Jebel Musa is often compared with that to Mecca, it is nevertheless a zuwara. Each year a number of men and women make the still arduous and costly journey to Mecca.

What is it that makes a considerable number of tribesmen participate in the communal or individual pilgrimages? There is very little persuasion involved; the organizers of a communal pilgrimage are respected members of their communities, but few of them are tribal chiefs or leaders with a strong hold on people. Their main preparations are to collect from the people in the neighbourhood contributions for the tribal sacrifice, which are eventually returned to the donors in the form of boiled meat, and jointly to set the date of the pilgrimage. An attraction of the pilgrimage is that the individual considers it as beneficial. The reputations of the major shrines have spread

widely. Not only the tribesmen on whose territory they are situated believe in their powers, but also many others. Some shrines are known to Bedouin from central Sinai. All these places attract individual pilgrims from all over the peninsula; The eves'of Monday and Friday are considered as propitious for pilgrimage. On these days, throughout most of the year, individual households make their way to a shrine of their choice. In many instances this will be one of the holy tombs, but there are also a few other sites, among which the summit of Jebel Musa (where Moses is said to have received the Tablets of the Law) is the most venerated. In these pilgrimages people either redeem vows made when in danger or make requests. As the saint only mediates requests to almighty God, a visit to any holy tomb, perhaps the closest one, should do. Yet, people are slightly sceptical, and trust their own experience and that of their relatives, which shows that some saints intercede more efficiently in some matters than in others. As individual experience varies widely, no real specialization has developed among the saints. But one result has been that people from all parts of South Sinai visit all the holy tombs, and that they often range far afield. Thus members of one patronymic group of the Jebaliyeh visited at various times during the last four —five years the following sites: A women who had not conceived for two years ascended Jebel Musa with her family; a man sought to protect the wellbeing of his family by taking them on an outing to Sheikh 'Awad; two men took their flocks by car to Sheikh Habus in order to safeguard their health; one man carried his family by camel to Nebi Saleh, on recovering from an illness; and an old lady regularly expressed her wish to make the expensive pilgrimage to Mecca "next year". Similarly, people all over South Sinai visit nearby and distant shrines, and all the saints are respected throughout this part of the peninsula.

This situation affects tribal gatherings in two ways. First, the commonly shared belief in saints' tombs, and in saints as intercessors with God, is one of the foundations of the tribal pilgrimage. Each of the individuals who participates in the gathering believes that he obtains a spiritual benefit. It must be added, however, that he may also expect material advantages, perhaps meet debtors or offer a car or a camel for sale. Bedouin see nothing incongruous in the seeking of spiritual and material benefits at the same time. They do not conceive of purely spiritual or purely material occasions, as found in specialised industrial societies.

Second, all the participants in the gathering, whether belonging to the celebrating tribe or not, respect the saint's tomb, and consider it the equal of the saints' tombs of other tribes. Even Nebi Saleh, whose tomb is the recognised centre of the tribal gatherings, is not considered superior to the others. Individual pilgrims do not prefer him in any way to the others, and often many weeks pass between one pilgrim and the next. This equality of saints expresses an important facet of the gatherings: that they are not held exclusively for the members of one tribe, but that people from other tribes can also attend. Indeed, people say explicitly that the gatherings are expected to attract visitors from other tribes. Thus, the meeting-place of the Bedouin of South Sinai shifts periodically from one site to another. At each gathering one tribe slightly dominates because of its numerical preponderance, but never becomes superior to the others. Not so long ago, people say up to 1965, at least five tribes, the Sawalha, Awlad Sa'id, Qararsha, Muzeneh and Jebaliyeh, held separate annual tribal gatherings at Nebi Saleh. I can only surmise that the location turned this tomb into the central meeting place of the Bedouin of the mountains; it is situated on the cross-roads of the major east—west and north—south mountain passes, and close to water. In view of the great importance of smuggling in those days, each tribe attached major significance to its rights of passage through the mountains, as well as to co-ordination of activities and maintaining peaceful relations with other tribes.

Today each tribe has its own meeting-place, in the areas it customarily frequents. There are two clusters of such sites. In the west, not far from the sea are the pilgrimage centres of the 'Aleqat, Qararsha and Hamada tribes. They are located close to the main concentrations of the population, whose employment is found in the towns in and around Sinai. Before the Israelis took over, some people worked in the mines and industries of the area, but the majority worked all year round as migrant labourers, and approximately half of them eventually settled in Egypt proper. For these mobile people, the saint's tomb is close to home, as it points out their claims to the territory. The other cluster of pilgrimage ventres, which will be examined in greater detail, are those of the Muzeneh, Awlad Sa'id and Jebaliyeh. They are located in the mountains, at the edges of each tribe's territory, and here pilgrimage requires most people to leave their homes and to move elsewhere. They go through a rite of passage, "beginning in a Familiar Place, going to a Far Place, and returning, ideally, 'changed', to a Familiar Place" (Turner 1973: 213). These tribesmen are already tied to the land, for here their basic economy

lies. Here, where the attachment to the land is given, Bedouin seek in their pilgrimages to forge or maintain relationships in the tribe and outside it. The individual is drawn away from his round of daily life and its circumscribed field of relationships, and brought to another place where he meets people from a wide area.

The date of the tribal gathering is set by a few elders, who take into account all the relevant factors. A Bedouin explained these;

<quote>

“The date of the gathering is fixed perhaps two months in advance, so that the news will get to all tribesfhen. Conditions of work are taken into account as well as the end of the date harvest (masif) in Wadi Firan (the dates there ripen later), and the position of the stars. Only after canopus (thraiah) and other stars rise, the mutton becomes suitable for eating, before that the goats are too lean and their meat is hard to digest”.

</quote>

To complicate matters further, the feasts are held on Thursday afternoons, the eve of the Muslim day of rest, and during the full moon.

The dales of the tribal gatherings vary but little over the years. I he earliest reported date gives the end of July (Burckhardt 1822: 489). ‘I he gatherings I attended, or on which I possess details, all took place between the end of June and the beginning of September. In this respect there was no difference between the Muzeneh, the Awlad Sa’id and the Jebaliyeh.

My data on attendance are incomplete, but they do show that in recent years it varied considerably. Ihus for the Muzeneh gathering at Nebi Saleh in 1970, 100–150 men are reported (Mcshel 1971: 95). In following years the numbers declined sharply, until in 1973 only 50 men were reported to be present. In 1975 the figure climbed up to nearly 200 men.

The Awlad Sa’id attended their tribal meet at Abu Taleb more regularly. At the gathering in July 1973 that I attended about 70 men gathered in the rectangular open-sided hut opposite the saint’s tomb, l or the following year Kapara (1975: 193) reports 40–50 men in the big hut, while others were still arriving. In contrast to the Muzeneh, whose attendance declined up to 1973, and went up again in the following year, the Awlad Sa’id pattern was stable. Most of the men attended each year.

I he Jebaliyeh were different again. I ribesmen claimed that in the past they had had annual tribal gatherings which started at Nebi Saleh, who in the eyes of all tribes is the senior saint, and at whose tomb several tribes gathered, on separate occasions, f rom there they used to move on to Nebi Harun (the reputed tomb of Aron, the high priest), near Saint Catherine’s monastery. This gathering was held for the last time in 1965. After that there were no more gatherings of the whole tribe, but in August 1973 I attended a gathering of about 65 to 70 men of the Awlad Jindi sub-tribe at Shekh ‘Awad, and in August 1975 another one at the same place at which nearly all the Awlad Jindi men were present. A month later another sub-tribe, the Wuhebat, held a gathering of their own at Sheikh ‘Awad. I was told that previously they had not had such gatherings.

A clear pattern emerges here: though the gatherings never ceased, attendance declined when more work was available and it was expected that the favourable conditions would continue. This was particularly true for the Muzeneh and Jebaliyeh, who largely depended on wage labour. People who regularly turned up at the gatherings were those who had a predominant interest in herding, and also the former smugglers, who presented themselves as keepers of tradition. When I asked why others did not turn up I was often told that they were away working and would not jeopardize their jobs. So the men who had an interest in maintaining the tribe showed up at all meetings and those whose employment was secure did not. After 1973, the employed people also took part in the gatherings. This was the result of a new kind of uncertainty. At the time work was plentiful, and well paid, but the political future of Sinai was uncertain. The Egyptians and Israelis were negotiating under the aegis of Dr. Kissinger, the Israelis were giving up territory in Sinai, and no one could know where this was going to end. The extended negotiations for peacemaking only brought doubts and insecurity for the Bedouin. An Awlad Jindi man employed by the government as driver

had often told me that he never attended tribal gatherings. These were for the old people he thought. In 1975 he attended for the first time and explained that his wife had begged him to go and that he could not refuse her wish. He did not admit, perhaps not even to himself, that the future was uncertain and that he might have to rely to a larger extent than hitherto on the help of agnates and tribesmen. At the time he was toying with the idea of setting up a repair shop for motor-cars. Tribesmen could thus I become more important even as customers.

The two levels of the individual's involvement in the pilgrimage are shown in the eating arrangements. At each gathering there is a communal meal. Several sheep or a young camel are slaughtered and all the men who contributed to the price attend the meal. The animals are bought and cooking arrangements made by an elder of the group. In the late afternoon or evening all the men gather for a festive meal. They pray together and then sit down in a large circle for a meal. Each man's name is announced for all to hear, then his portion of meat, wrapped in a flap of flat bread, is passed along a chain of servers up to the announcer who hands it to the man. There is no visible leader at these functions, no speeches and announcements are made. Visitors from other tribes are welcome and also given portions of meat. Chiefs and notables mingle with other men and no special area is reserved for them. At one of the Muzeneh gatherings the paramount chief of the tribe put in a short appearance, to pay respect to a gathering at which he did not preside. At the Awlad Sa'id gatherings the two tribal chiefs were present all the time and moved among the people. The Jebaliyeh chief did not attend the Awlad Jindi meetings at all.

This was the formal part of the gathering of the tribe as a territorial unit. But men did not stay all the time in the circle of tribesmen. All around the saint's tomb related families set up small circles of their own. Here men, women and children shared in a joint meal. Each group slaughtered a goat or a sheep and in addition to meat other dishes were prepared. The women in particular wore their finest dresses, embroidered with silver and gold thread. The atmosphere was relaxed and women spoke up freely, even making jokes with sexual innuendos. There was much mutual visiting. The men, most of the time, made the rounds of friends, now and again returning for a few minutes with their families. At these gatherings people reaffirmed their friendly relations and, incidentally, settled debts and disputes and initiated

commercial dealings such as the sale of animals and cars, and other joint activities. Shopkeepers, too, had arrived and made brisk sales of cola bottles and sweets.

Leadership there was, but it was muted. The tribe as an administrative organisation was not brought into play, so that the appointed chiefs either did not attend or came as visitors. The Awlad Sa’id chiefs, the Awlad Jindi headman and the other elders acted as organisers, they provided a service for members of their group and, just as in daily life, they facilitated communication among them. But at the gathering itself they did not stand out. Thus Kapara (1975: 192–194) spent a day at an Awlad Sa’id gathering and did not notice the chiefs.

*** The Symbolism of Saints’ Tombs

The significance of the tribal gatherings has gradully emerged. There remains the question why the meeting-places should be saints’ tombs. I shall examine the symbolism of these holy places, in the hope of obtaining an answer, even be it an incomplete one. I take a ‘symbol’ to be a sign replete with many interrelated meanings. In this working definition, which bears resemblance to Sapir’s (1934: 493) characterisation of the ‘condensation symbol’, I wish to stress the richness of meaning as an identifying mark of the symbol, as opposed to the mechanical multiplication of mental associations that may attach to a particular sign. The meanings of the condensation symbol express, as Sapir (1934: 493) pointed out, “a condensation of energy, its actual significance being out of all proportion to the apparent triviality of meaning suggested by its mere form”. To this I would add that much of the emotional impact of ‘condensation symbols’ derives from the fact that they evoke numerous meanings simultaneously. The secret of this immediate impact probably lies in the symbol’s full integration in the daily routine of its users. Because of this, many students of society today agree that an external observer can tap the multiple meanings of symbols only through intimate knowledge of both native conceptions of their society and of the social contexts in which the symbols are invoked. The whole gamut of a symbol’s contextual uses, as well as the associated symbols and contexts, must be explored, before it is properly understood.

But once this is done one may find that each segment of the meaning of a symbol has a degree of precision that is often unsuspected.

I shall attempt to unravel three of the major strands in the mesh of meanings attached to the saint's tomb, which have until now remained in the background: the significance of the building erected over the tomb, the tomb itself, and details of the saint's person.

I would argue that the building is a very precise image of the Bedouin's conception that territorial rights are vested in the tribe, and that their essence is the tribesman's exclusive right to build a house on tribal land. Geertz's (1968: 49) concise description of the Moroccan shrine fits that of South Sinai too: "[It] is a squat, white, usually domed, block-like stone building set under a tree, on a hilltop, or isolated, like an abandoned pillbox, in the middle of an open plain." (See also Canaan 1927: 11). One might add that each shrine has a door, and usually also a small window. Only the dome, often crowned with a crescent, and in a few shrines a prayer niche facing in the direction of Mecca, distinguish the shrine from an ordinary house, and indicate that it serves a religious purpose. We already know that Bedouin consider the building of a house as the essential territorial right, and do not permit outsiders to build houses in areas controlled by the tribe. The shrine signifies, among other things, the territorial claims of the tribe whose pilgrimage centre it is. As other tribes may also visit the shrine, the owning tribe's rights obviously must be limited, while others obtain rights to pass through the tribe's land and to pasture their animals on it. On another level, the use of the saint's tomb as a symbol of tribal ownership indicates that territorial rights are protected by supernatural sanctions, but not by the might of the whole tribe. Bedouin store property, such as tents and farming implements, inside or near the holy tomb, secure in the belief that it is protected by the saint. They recount stories about misfortunes that befell would-be thieves, until they returned the stolen property to the tomb. Construction of a saint's tomb or repairs to one, are acts intended to claim rights in land. When Ghanem Jum'a, a wealthy Muzeneh, built the shrine of Faraj, the tribe's ancestor, in the 1960s, he reasserted 'the tribe's sovereignty over the area which was at the time becoming the main supply centre in South Sinai, and the major sales depot of the mobile merchants from al-'Arish who control nearly all the commerce in the peninsula. Similarly, Jebaliyeh elders every few years invite their tribesmen to subscribe

money for repairs to the shrine of Sheikh ’Awad. This building activity reasserts a tribe’s rights to the holy tomb, and through it—to territory; and incidentally, in this way all the shrines are kept in a good state of repair.

The saint’s tomb occupies the centre of the building, to allow visitors to circumambulate. The tomb rises to a height of about three feet. It is covered by a shroud made of white or green cloth, on which sometimes the Islamic creed and the saint’s name are embroidered. There are usually several layers of shrouds, for each time a shroud is worn and torn it remains in place and a new one is placed on top of it. It is always doubtful whether the holy tomb actually contains a human body. While the tomb of Nebi Saleh is solidly built and one cannot therefore know whether anyone is buried in it, the tomb of Ali Abu Taleb consists of a flimsy wooden frame, just sufficient to carry the layers of embroidered shrouds. Canaan (1927: 22) remarks, with regard to Palestinian sanctuaries, that “the tomb is often not in the shrine, but outside of it ... it is not at all necessary that there should be a tomb ... connected with the place to make it a shrine." In South Sinai the Bedouin have gone a step further: they insist that no-one is buried in a maqam. As proof they cite the

<quote>

“well-known fact that Nebi Saleh is buried in Ramla, in Israel, and that even the Sheikhs Habus and Abu Shabib have each two holy tombs. Only one of these holds a grave (turba), while the other is a place for gatherings of men (maq’ad).”

</quote>

All the shrines with tribal gatherings are, in Bedouin eyes, maqams, irrespective of whether anyone is buried there or not. This attitude releases the tomb of an association with a tribal ancestor. The saint himself is disembodied and, shed of his earthly vestiges, he moves into closer communion with God.

Most people cannot say anything definite about the saint’s person, except that he was a holy man during his lifetime, as proven by instances in which

he rescued individuals from various tribes in miraculous ways. Occasionally people hazard guesses about the antecedents of a saint. While some say that Nebi Saleh was a pre-Islamic Arabian prophet, others think that perhaps he was the ancestor of the Sawalha. The same uncertainty seems to have prevailed over a century ago, when Robinson (1841: I 215) reported: “The history of the Saint is uncertain; but our Arabs held him to be a progenitor of their tribe, the Sawaliha.” Sheikh ’Awad is also said by some Jebaliyeh to belong to their tribe, while the Muzeneh consider Sheikh Abu Zaid to have been a Sawark Bedouin (from North Sinai). The only saint who appears to be an acknowledged tribal ancestor is Faraj of the Muzeneh. But his tomb is not reckoned among the maqams it is named after a group, the Faranja, and not after the ancestor Faraj; and only in recent years was a shrine built over the tomb. Yet the fact remains that Faranja is one of the Muzeneh’s three pilgrimage sites, and one has to conclude that, in a sense, the saint is an emblem of the tribe.

The three holy tombs visited by the Muzeneh allow us to define more clearly the symbolic significance of the saint, for the person of each of the three saints gives special emphasis to one aspect: Faranja symbolizes the unity of the tribe, as well as its descent from the North Arabian Muzeneh (Doughty 1937: Il 381). Nebi Saleh represents both the unity of the Tawara, of South Sinai as one region to which all its inhabitants have access, and the inclusion of South Sinai in the Islamic world and, by extension, in the state that control Sinai. Nebi Harun again stands for the connection with the monastery of Saint Catherine’s and the privileges associated with it on one hand, and on the other—for the Islamic community. For Moses and Aron are included in Islamic hagiography. I cannot explain this specialization of the three Muzeneh saints, for in other tribes all the symbolic aspects merge in a single saint.

On a higher level of abstraction, the three Muzeneh saints stand for ideologies that are deeply engrained in Bedouin thought and concern areas of their social life: agnation and tribal organization, the saints’ cult and the regionalism of South Sinai, and the universalism of Islam and, by extension, all the external world impinging on the Bedouin and not controlled by them. These are not, of course, the only ideologies employed by Bedouin. Even in the saints’ cult another ideology, namely kinship, plays an important part: it underlies the belief in the efficacy of the saints’ intercession with God, and it is expressed in the family sacrifices that are made parallel to the tribal ones.

The ideology of agnation informs “bounded” activities, such as the control over rights in land, protecting property and the setting up of groups. To this kind of activity applies Robertson Smith’s (1894: 150) dictum that holiness is “a restriction on the licence of man in the free use of natural things”. In the Arabian context, he believes that "at most sanctuaries embracing a stretch of pasture ground, the right of grazing was free to the community of the god, but not to outsiders” (Smith 1894: 144). In South Sinai the rights thus reserved are those over oases and their fruit-trees, irrigation from wells and the tribal smuggling routes, and they are compressed in the right to build a house on tribal land.

For each restriction on the use of resources there must be a corresponding opening up of resources, as exemplified in this statement, also taken from Robertson Smith (1894: 111):

<quote>

“The Arabs regard rain as depending on the ... seasons, which affect all tribes alike within a wide range; and so when the showers of heaven are ascribed to a god, that god is Allah, the supreme and non-tribal deity.”

</quote>

Evidently these tribesmen reserve certain rights in territory for themselves, but also grant rights to pasture on it to others, on a basis of mutuality. Robertson Smith cannot admit that the “tribal deity” also stands for Allah; to imply that the same people believe in two gods, one tribal and one supreme, at the same time, is as far as he dare go. In South Sinai the saint is clearly associated with God. While he intercedes with God on behalf of his tribe, he also works on behalf of individuals from any tribe, and is thus never an exclusive patron of his own people. He represents both restrictions on the use of the country’s resources in favour of some people, and access to the remaining resources to others. There is no paradox in this, for rights are always specific, so that every prohibition has its complementary permission. Thus in South Sinai certain rights in land, wells and roads are reserved for tribesmen, and other rights are expressly opened up to all

Tawara: land everywhere is available to anyone for pasture, drinking water for men and animals may be drawn from any well, even when surrounded by a fence, and every Bedouin can travel freely anywhere in the peninsula, as long as he does not infringe local privileges of employment or uses another tribe’s smuggling route.

The ideologies of agnation and of the saints’ cult not only complement each other; they are also linked up, through the person of the saint. The ambiguous position of the saint, who is sometimes thought of as a tribal patron, perhaps even an ancestor and at others just a holy man about whom little is known, or maybe even a Bedouin from a distant tribe, is evidence of his two faces. One pulls him toward the tribe, the other towards the world.

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* Part Two: Regional and Non-Regional Alternatives: The Waxing and Waning of Cults

** 3. Disparate Regional Cults and a Unitary Ritual Field in Zimbabwe[12]

*by Kingsley Garbett

<quote>

“I am a well-built house in which the little spirits shelter ... Nyabapa, Gweera, Chingoo, Goronga and Chaminhuka are the poles and fibres which built me,

the Outspread One, who stretches out over all the earth. The lesser spirits are the fibres, but my children are the poles.”

George Kupara, speaking as Mutota.

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*** Introduction: The Interpenetration of Cults

Perhaps the greatest temptation in a discussion of regional cults is to treat each one as a separate entity. This arises because, what strikes an observer immediately is the presence of sharp cultural and organisational differences. Often, regional cults that are closest in location are quite distinct in kind. But to yield to this temptation easily leads to a wrong reading of the dynamics of the cults. Here the fundamental problem is how one cult or region waxes and wanes in relation to others. Not that this necessarily requires observation of a series of cults. Admittedly, to cover in depth as much as one cult or even a single region is, often enough, beyond the reach of a lone fieldworker. But the need is to bring one cult or region into focus within the context of its relations with others. It is essential to take account of the interpenetration of cults within a wider field of ritual relations. Only thus can analysis reach a right explanation of transformations in a single cult along with changes in the connections between and across the cult’s regions.

In this paper I centre my analysis on the expansion of one region in Zimbabwe, that of the Korekore ancestor Mutota. I take into account ritual relations among people who are ethnically distinct neighbours, the Korekore, Tavara, and Zezuru, but who speak dialects of the same language and take part in the same wider field of political and economic relations. In its spatial extent this field extends over an area of about 30,000 square miles and includes several million people. My analysis shows how two quite unlike cults interpenetrate and connect with each other within this wider field. In some respects the two kinds of cults do resemble each other. Both are broadly concerned with regulating man’s relation to the earth and with matters of general morality. Both involve beliefs in spirit possession and are organised

through spirit mediums. Given these similarities, however, the cognitive and organisational differences appear all the more striking.

To take the cult of territorial spirits first, this includes Mutota's region along with those of at least two others, Chingoo and Nyabapa. The cult's domain among the Korekore extends throughout the Zambezi valley between the Angwa and Mukumvura rivers, northwards into Mozambique,[13] and into part of the adjacent southern escarpment (see Map 2). Here all land, whether now occupied or not, is divided into ritual areas which are regions and parts of regions, 'spirit provinces' in my terms. These spirit provinces vary considerably in size from a few hundred acres to several hundred square miles in extent. Each is associated with a territorial spirit who is believed to be the remote ancestor in control of the territory from ancient times to the present. The boundaries which demarcate each spirit province are well known. Moreover, they have an autonomy of their own. They are not adjusted to fit other divisions, such as current political ones. They do not necessarily coincide with the boundaries of chiefdoms or with modern administrative and international boundaries.

As for the territorial spirits themselves, some are said to be mhondoro ('lions'). Among Korekore speakers this designation is-reserved specifically for those remote ancestors who, according to belief, ate special medicines (mbanda) when alive, and thus ensured that their spirits would return to inhabit animal hosts, usually lions, but occasionally pythons and birds, and speak, from time to time, through human mediums (svikiro). Each of these remote ancestoral spirits has a place in a genealogy and thus in a conceptual hierarchy. Similarly, the spirits' mediums are hierarchically ranked and allocated to the defined territories over which their possessing spirits are thought to have particular control. Mediums are usually installed as young men and remain in office until they die. Very occasionally, one hears accounts of mediums being ousted from office because of some gross misdemeanour but, in general, a medium's position is secure. Each medium is assisted by an acolyte (mutape or nechombo). This is an hereditary position and, when a medium dies, it is the duty of the acolyte first to announce the death to the senior medium of the region, then to repair and maintain the spirit house (zumba) in which possession occurs, until a new medium appears.

In ritual contexts one never hears the term for the High God, Mwari, and a region's apical ancestor, such as Mutota, is regarded as a creator being. The objects of the cult are, thus, the remote ancestors who, according to myth, established each region and its spirit provinces. Significantly, they did so through conquest, according to the origin myth of Mutota's region. In myth, too, expansion must be explained, but it is made out to be a matter of the remote ancestor's ancient history, rather than a current process, as I shall show it to be.

The second and contrasting cult is that of local spirits, such as Nehanda and Chaminhuka to name only the most prominent. Its domain among Zezuru extends broadly through Central and Western Mashonaland to include the administrative districts of Hartley, Marandellas and Mrewa, and the southern parts of the districts of Lomagundi and Mazoe (see Map 2). Some of the most important of the local spirits, such as Chaminhuka and perhaps Nehanda, are held never to have been mortal and are believed to mediate between man, lesser spirits and the High God, Mwari.[14] Other local spirits are chthonic beings of the underground and pools or ancestors without known genealogical links to the living; and still others are important ancestors of chiefly lineages whose influence extends beyond their original chiefdoms and descendants. Moreover, some of the spirits are considered to be more powerful or more pervasive in their influence, and to this extent there appears to be a conceptual hierarchy, albeit an ambiguous one, in the cult of local spirits. However, there are no clearly defined and regulated hierarchies of mediums associated with particular centres. Nor is there always a single medium for one spirit. A number of mediums, often in widely separated areas, may be accepted as subject to possession by the same spirit and yet not clearly linked with each other. Finally, and perhaps most critically, for purposes of an initial comparison with the cult of territorial spirits, there is the difference in ritual jurisdiction over blocks of land and particular parts of the earth. In the cult of local spirits, specific mediums may be communal ones closely associated with certain sets of chiefdoms, but the local spirits themselves are not, in general, figures of territorial authority. Conceptually, these spirits, quite unlike the territorial ones, lack distinct territories of their own. In terms of cult organisation, their mediums lack jurisdiction over clearly defined ritual areas, other than those which correspond to current political divisions. In brief, the two cults are like opposite sides of the same

coin. Viewed in the abstract, as kinds of cult, one appears hierarchical and territorially defined, and the other virtually the contrary, non-hierarchical and territorially undefined, though sometimes communally or locally defined. However, to go beyond this appearance in order to understand how the cults interpenetrate and how one transforms into the other is the main aim of this paper.

Lest my argument be taken to be merely another analysis of an oscillation between ideal types, I must stress from the outset that I am concerned both with the regional expansion and the interpenetration of cults. Briefly in advance of my argument, and perhaps too briefly, three of the ways in which the cults interpenetrate each other's organisation need to be highlighted. First, there is a tendency towards connection through at least one shared inner circle of leaders: at least one set of close patrikin gains key or senior mediumships in regions of both cults. Second, there is cross-cult affiliation: mediums in one cult may enter into a formal relationship and attach themselves to those in another. Thirdly, cross-cult confirmation occurs: mediums of one may validate the authority or legitimacy of some of the other's mediums. It would take me well beyond the limits of this paper to consider fully the cognitive management of such organizational interpenetration. Clearly, there must be to some degree a translation of one set of beliefs into another, given the cultural differences in belief in local and territorial spirits. To show how this and other cross-cult problems of cognition are managed along with organisational problems, I shall examine the situation of a medium's seance. My account will document in particular one such translation of beliefs and the way that Zezuru spirits are presented as, and transposed into, the remote ancestor spirits of Korekore. At various points, I deliberately extend my analysis to the limits of the data. Occasionally, I go beyond the data to indulge in informed speculation. This is particularly so when I use data from secondary sources. I am dealing with a large and complex field seen mainly from the perspective of one cult. Many of the leaders and important mediums of other cults I did not meet: they lived and operated many miles away from me. Yet to ignore them, and the connections between them, leads to a failure to comprehend significant issues concerning the interpenetration of Korekore and Zezuru cults.

*** The Region of Mutota

The Korekore region of Mutota is but one of the cult regions which exist in and near the Zambezi Valley. The various regions are formally connected to each other by perpetual kinship (see Genealogy 1); each region's senior medium, and occasionally lesser mediums, take on relationships held to have existed in the past between prominent ancestors in the regions. In Mutota's case, perpetual kinship links his region to those of Chingoo and Nyabapa: he is held to have had these two 'brothers'. The relative seniority of these 'brothers' is not known or recognised and they are presented as equals. Chingoo was recently represented by a senior medium operating with a small hierarchy of mediums under him in the administrative area known as Sipolilo Tribal Trust Land. Similarly, the medium of Nybapa heads a hierarchy of mediums in the Kandeya Tribal Trust Land near to Mt. Darwin.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-4.jpg][Genealogy 1: Perpetual Relations among Korekore, Chthonic and Chikunda Regional Cults]]

Once or twice a year messengers travel between the senior mediums. This maintains formal relations between the three 'brothers' through a symbolic procedure: they never meet face-to-face. The messengers carry small containers of snuff (nhekwe) into which a senior medium has 'breathed' a message. In a seance, the container is unstoppered, the message 'listened to', and a similar 'message' is breathed into the container. The messenger is then sent on his way. The same procedure is used within a regional hierarchy: similar messages are regularly exchanged between mediums in Mutota's hierarchy, for example. However, within a region such 'messages' when initiated by a junior medium are transmitted to the regional medium more often through a chain of mediums more senior in the hierarchy, and often the messenger carries a brief verbal message about ritual matters in addition. Between regions the symbolic exchange of 'messages' expresses formal equality among regional mediums: within a region it expresses and emphasizes hierarchical relations.

Messengers, who receive a small fee, are chosen from a medium's staff or from among trusted associates. Significantly, a messenger bearing a snuff container should be allowed to pass through any territory without hindrance:

it should be sufficient for him to show the snuff container and to state that he is a messenger of a mhondoro for him to be given safe passage. Nor should he be questioned as to his mission as an ordinary traveller might: it is considered secret.

The need for the formal exchange of messages among mediums arises, as Korekore view it, from the belief that it is mystically dangerous for two or more spirits active as mhondoro to occupy simultaneously the same ritual space. By extension, it is believed to be mortally dangerous for an established medium to come into Ihe presence of, or enter the territory of, another medium without both having taken extensive ritual precautions. Thus, a medium may not cross the boundary of his spirit province without taking such precautions; in some cases he may even have to be blindfolded and carried over the boundary. When established mediums visit the senior medium of the region, they stay outside his hamlet at a special place until, protected by medicines, they are called into his presence at a seance.

In addition to expressing the formal relations among mediums, the regular transmission of symbolic messages also serves to convey to a senior medium which mediums within his region still form part of it and which are still functioning. The repeated failure of a medium to send a messenger to the senior medium over a period of two or three years may be a cause for concern and, unless the senior medium meanwhile receives formal notification of the medium’s death, he may well send his own messenger to establish exactly what has happened..

In general, Korekore conceptualize regions as autonomous ritual territories internally subdivided into areas of various sizes: both the region’s boundaries and those of the sub-divisions are held to be ancient and immutable. If pressed, Korekore acknowledge that when an ancestor becomes a mhondoro and speaks through a human medium for the first time, then an adjustment of ritual areas may be necessary, for each mhondoro and its medium must have a territory; there are no itinerant mediums in Korekore regional cults. However, they argue that it is not that a new ritual territory has to be demarcated but rather that an ancient one, long forgotten, has now been rediscovered. When the medium of the recent ancestor Mzarabani (Genealogy 2: Nl) appeared for final testing

in 1963, he was told by Mutota's medium to seek out the land centred on Mzarabani's grave. This was held to be located on the west bank of the Msengezi river, adjacent to Chuzu's spirit province (Map 1: VI,k), in what until then had been accepted as the spirit province of Chivere and Chikuyo.

Cognitively and organizationally, there is sufficient flexibility to accommodate a variety of contingencies without the basic conceptions of the antiquity and immutability of ritual boundaries appearing to be challenged. For example, some territorial spirits, such as Negomo, are credited with more than one territory. A medium of such a spirit, therefore, may have the option of living in either of the territories. In fact, there is a general belief that all territorial spirits have additional, small, ritual territories scattered through the region but few of these are known. Korekore argue that the mhondoro will make them known should the occasion warrant it. This belief, and the fact that it is accepted that a medium may operate in a spirit province other than that of his possessing spirit, enables mediums who have been displaced from their own spirit provinces to operate from a legitimate territorial base. For example, the medium of the Korekore Nehanda, whose spirit-province (Map 1: II, 1, m) extends into Mozambique, fled in the twenties from her village there to escape the attention of the Portuguese authorities and took up residence in the land of her 'brother' Kagoro. A more complex case concerns the relations between the senior medium of Mutota and Chihwahwa's medium. In 1958, the senior medium was displaced by the colonial administration from Gota, on the plateau, in terms of the Land Apportionment Act. He chose to settle as near to his spirit province as possible on the southern boundary of the spirit province of Kasekete and Chihwahwa (Map 1: VI,g). Chihwahwa, however, was represented by a medium with a considerable reputation and a large vicinity. He argued that Mutota's medium had now placed him in mortal danger. The senior medium countered this by arguing that since the whole of the region was Mutota's, he could settle wherever he chose. Eventually, after a protracted dispute, Chihwahwa's medium moved in 1962 to take up residence at a site said to be sacred to Chihwahwa within the small spirit province of Chuzu (Map 1: VI,k).

Table 1: Index of Spirit Provinces Shown in Map 1[15][16][17]

| Spirit | **A** | **B** | **Boundaries of Spirit Provinces** |

| Mutota | A1 | VII,d-f | N: Escarpment; W: Nyahoko; S: Chimuwere; E: Kadzi |

| Chiobvu | B1 | VI-VII,h-k | N & W: Utete; S: Beyond Escarpment (?) E: Slope break |

| Sundo | B2 | VII,o-p | Unmapped. N: Escarpment |

| Kagoro | B3 | III-VII,k-n | N: Edge of Forest; W: Kadziruve & Msengezi; S: Escarpment; E: Nzou-Mvunda |

| Nyajore | B5 | IV-V,a | Unmapped, Approximate location shown |

| Nehanda | B7 | I-II,k-m | N: Into Mozambique (?); W: Nyatwao & Karo; S: Hwatonda; W: Msengezi |

| Nebedza | B8 | I-III,j-m | N: Kadzi & into Mozambique (?); W: Katsawa; S: Kafungura & Msengezi; E: Nyakutitatu, Karo & Nyatwao |

| Madzomba | B15 | I,g-h | a knoll ringed by baobabs; N: Mututa & Chamukura; E & S: headwaters of Kusuka & Karemwe |

| Kadembo | C2 | II-IV,h-j | N: Kada & Kadzi; E: Katsawa, Kafungura & Msengezi; S: Sapa; W: Kada & Pote |

| Nyahuma | C4 | II-V,d-g | N: Bwase; W: Hunyani; S: Ambi; E: Mahuwi |

| Kachenje | D1 | II-III;g-h | N: Headwaters of tributaries of Kadzi & a Musiga tree, Mujinga. W: Watershed between Kadzi & Bwase; S & E: Kada and headwaters of Bwase |

| Karambera | D2 | IV-VI,d-f | N: Gwira & Kautyora; W: Karoi; S: Escarpment; E: Ambi |

| Chikuyo | D3 | III-V,a-d | N & E: Dande; S: Escarpment; W: Hunyani |

| Svembere | E1 | III,d | N & W: Ambi & Dande; S: Kautyora; E: Gwira |

| Marumba | E2 | IV-VI,c-d | N & E: Karoi; W: Dande; S: Escarpment |

| Chivere | E4 | IV-VI,h-j | N: Sapa & Nyanzou; W: Kadzi, Mahuwi, Karo & Katonha; S: Escarpment; E: Msengezi & Utete |

| Seremwe | F1 | III-IV,b | Unmapped. Approximate location shown |

| Negomo | F2 | II,m | N: Msengezi; W & S: Msingwa-Dande; E: Hoya & Stream (?) |

| Negomo | F2 | II,c | Unmapped. Approximate location shown |

| Katuu | G1 | III,b-c | Unmapped. Approximate location shown |

| Siti | H1 | III-V,k | N & W: Msengezi; S: Moyo; E: Kadziruve |

| Mukombwe | H2 | V,p | Unmapped. Approximate location shown. Extends into Mozambique |

| Chiurinyanga | | II-III,l-m | N: Karo; W: Kariramombe & Mutaure; S: Forest edge; E: Msengezi & Msingwa Dande |

| Zezi | J1 | III,k-l | N: Hwatonda; E: Nyakutitatu; S & W: Msengezi |

| Kasekete | J2 | V-VII,g-h | N: Headwaters of Mahuwi & Kadzi tributaries; W: Mahuwi; S: Escarpment; EfKatonho |

| Chipute | K1 | V-VI,f-g | N & E: Sakonde; S: Escarpment; W: Ambi |

| Chihwahwa | K2 | V-VII,g-h | See Kasekete |

| Chitsungo | M1 | V-VI,a | N & W: Hunyani; S: Escarpment; E: Nyakakutu |

| Chuzu | M2 | VI,k | Ox-bow Meander, Msengezi |

| Kasindi | M4 | III-VII,n-p | N & E: Hoya; S: Escarpment; W: Nzou-Mvunda |

| Chiruka | M5 | II-III,n | N & E: Hoya; W: Msingwa Dande; S: Forest edge |

| Bamwomwe | T | I-II.i-j | N & W: Karemwe; E: Headwaters of Kusuka; S: Kadzi & Kada |

| Musuma | Ch. | VI,c | The Nyagwikwi Depression |

| Pfunze | Ch. | III,l | N: Msengezi; W: Kadziruve; S: Forest edge; W: Mutaure |

| Madzivamhako | S | III-V,k | See Siti |

| Mukarazi | ? | I-IV,d-g | N: Mozambique!?); W: Hunyani; S: Bwase, E: Watershead of Bwase and Kada |

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-5.jpg][Genealogy 2: Mutota’s Descendants
Starred descendants were represented by mediums in 1963
Those in italics are also Zezuru local spirits
Roman numerals refer to Map 1.]]

Whilst anomalies arise, I stress that I recorded very few and that many appeared to have resulted from the intrusion of the colonial powers into the domains of the cults. Those which did occur were accommodated in such a way as to maintain the basic elements of cult organization and belief, the hierarchical relations among mediums and the close relation between the medium, his possessing spirit and a particular, bounded, ritual Territory. Thus, the Korekore regions and their constituent parts appear as ancient in origin and part of an enduring and unchanging reality.

Lengthy origin myths supported by complex genealogies validate the present-day distribution of regions and the relation between ritual territories within regions. The myths describe how Mutota's sons and their descendants swept down upon the Tavara people over-running them and dividing the land among themselves.[18] In myth the Zambezi valley at this time is depicted as being under the secular control of Tavara chiefs and under the ritual authority of powerful chthonic beings, among them Dzivaguru and his sons Karuva and Musuma Nyamukokoko and the latter's guardian, Chimombe.[19] The Tavara chiefs are said to have been defeated by superior physical force and the chthonic beings, who are usually held to have disappeared into the earth, by trickery and the use of superior mystical powers. In some versions of the myth, the chthonic beings, as ultimate 'owners of the earth', are associated with a territorial cult and are held to have provided rain for the Korekore invaders who supplicated them and offered tribute at a number of shrines. In other versions of the myth, particularly those related by the regional medium of Mutota and other mediums senior in his hierarchy, the over-riding ritual supremacy of the chthonic beings and their role in providing rain is minimized, and they are either reduced, as in the case of Musuma, to spirits of purely local influence, or designated as the objects of veneration of separate, circumscribed, regional cults such as those of Dzivaguru and his son Karuva, and of Chimombe.

Evidence from the ethnography of the Zambezi Valley east of Kariba, strongly suggests that the way in which the mediums of the Mutota cult relate the origin myth so as to circumscribe and minimize the influence of the chthonic cults is of relatively recent origin and can be related to the decline of the Dzivaguru cult and the concomitant rise of the Mututa cult which began in the twenties. I shall argue that this resulted from the need of the Mutota cult

to appear manifestly autonomous particularly in its relations with Zezuru local cults.

The extent of the region of the Dzivaguru cult in the late nineteenth century is reasonably well documented and it covered a wide territory including at least part of what is now held to be the autonomous region of the Mutota cult. Tribute offered to the mediums of Dzivaguru and his son Karuva are reported to have come from many different Korekore groups both east and west of the cult's centre at Choma (Map 2). Old men living in the east of Mutota's region recalled how, in their youth, tribute was sent to Dzivaguru at Choma. Bourdillon (1972a, 1972b) has reported that among the easternmost Korekore in the Valley, a number of local cults of chiefly ancestors occur in conjunction with a territorial cult of Dzivaguru. In the east, beyond the Angwa river, there is a territorial cult centred on Chimombe, a chthonic being (Campbell 1957; Nicolle 1937), which also exists alongside local cults of Korekore ancestors. I am tempted to speculate that the decline of the Dzivaguru cult and the rise of the Mutota cult accelerated processes which had begun earlier with the collapse of the Mwene Mutapa dynasty in the eighteenth century (cf. Abraham 1959; 1964; 1966; Beach 1972) whereby what had been a Korekore cult of royal ancestors, possible centred on royal graves, operating alongside a separately organized chthonic earth cult was transformed into a regional territorial cult. Chiefly ancestors came to be accorded the powers of chthonic beings, and the mediums who represented them became associated with fixed territories. Such an interpretation would go some way to explaining the general form of the Mutota cult and also account for some of its unique features.

However, whatever be one's reading of the meagre documentary and oral evidence concerning the remote past, I would strongly maintain that the variations presently observed in the regional cults of the Zambezi Valley are not to be interpreted simply or mainly as the ossified residues of a remote history as, for example, the historian Abraham (1966) has argued.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-6.jpg]]

They result from on-going secular and ritual processes which continue to affect both inter- and intra-regional relations among the cults. Contrary to Korekore belief which, as I have stated, stresses the antiquity of the cults and the immutability of their ritual territories, the evidence indicates that ritual territories are adjusted both inter- and intra-regionally in response to secular and ritual processes and that concomitant changes occur in the validating myths. Intra-regional adjustment occurs in response to largely secular processes which affect the frequency with which spirit provinces are created and new mediums appear, whilst inter-regional adjustments occur in relation to secular and ritual processes, set in a much wider field, which affect the waxing and waning of cults in relation to one another. The two processes of adjustment, which I consider in more detail later, though ultimately connected are of different orders and have different durations.

Nevertheless, whilst I have emphasised that there is adjustment in ritual territories both inter- and intra-regionally, let me not convey the impression that this occurs rapidly. The process is relatively slow and occurs over several generations so that for any one generation of Korekore, the appearance of continuity in the organization of the cult and the lack of change in the number and size of ritual territories accords reasonably well with their belief. Korekore, however, are a highly mobile people. A period of uxorilocal residence and bride-service, coupled with the operation of exogamic rules, complicated nowadays by a high rate of male circulatory labour migration, scatters men and women over wide areas. These processes, together with competition among senior men within hamlets and neighbourhoods for followings, and the need to seek out, periodically, new areas of forest suitable for swidden agriculture, make hamlets unstable units which are periodically shifting and proliferating. It is not surprising, therefore, that the smallest unit of cult organization at the local level, the land-shrine community, is itself ephemeral, often persisting for only a generation or two.

*** The Land-Shrine Community

Within a spirit province, hamlets tend to cluster in relation to a source of water and a stretch of alluvial soil with a high water table suitable for almost continuous cultivation. Often, each cluster contains a small core of patrilineal relatives who may claim to have all once lived together in one hamlet. Each

cluster usually constitutes a separate community with its own land shrine, and as the cluster waxes and wanes with the movement of people so does the land shrine community alter. In small spirit provinces there may be only one such community but frequently there are several. Each year when the rains are due (December) and, less commonly nowadays at harvest time (April/May), members of a land shrine community meet at a tree shrine, often a prominent Baobab tree, to make offerings to the territorial spirits. (While first fruits are still offered to the territorial spirit, this is now more commonly done on a separate and individual basis by heads of households in their own fields.) All households within the community are expected to contribute grain for the beer and flour to be offered at the shrine. This is prepared ritually by pre-pubertal girls and post-menopahsal women chosen from all the hamlets which constitute the community.

Those who offer together at a land shrine constitute a moral community (see Garbett 1969). They act together to deal with such polluting offences as murder, suicide, incest, witchcraft and sorcery, or to resolve disputes which may lead to such offences. It is believed that these offences pollute the earth, incur the wrath of the territorial spirit and render the land shrine ritual inefficacious. The territorial spirit shows his wrath principally by withholding rain, by sending birds, locusts and insects to attack crops, by inflicting cattle or humans with sterility and by killing with thunderbolts. Thus when people living within a spirit province speak with the spirit through his medium, they may seek advice on such matters as rainfall, offences against the earth and the fertility of humans, cattle and crops. But they may do this as individuals or as representatives of a particular land shrine community. Elsewhere (Garbett 1969) I have described how spirit mediums stress the dangers of mystical retribution flowing from an unresolved secular issue and thus come to play a prominent role in the resolution of local or communal disputes. However, whilst offences which are the particular concern of territorial spirits may involve a secular chief, he usually participates at a shrine as an ordinary elder. A chief does not organize or coordinate the ritual at the various land shrines within his chiefdom. In this respect, ritual and secular spheres are organizationally distinct.

*** Lineal and Territorial Aspects of a Regional Cult

Lest this point be misunderstood, I must summarize an argument which I have put more fully elsewhere (Garbett 1966). Korekore who claim patrilineal descent from Mutota form chiefly descent groups in a number of chiefdoms in Mutota's region. Invariably, one finds that the founder of a chiefdom, an ancestor two or three generations removed from the oldest living, is recognized as a mhondoro ('lion') spirit and is represented by a medium. An especially important duty of a medium of this type is, after a chief's death, to select from a number of candidates the next chief and to install him in office. Generally, the chief's patrikin first raise such a matter with the medium who represents the most junior lineal ancestor speaking as a mhondoro. If he is unable to resolve it satisfactorily, it will be taken to the next medium senior in the hierarchy and so forth, until the senior and regional medium is reached. I have described in some detail (Garbett 1966) the kind of politicking which occurs nowadays over chiefly succession and which comes to involve not only various factions and several mediums of the hierarchy but also officers of the district and provincial administrations. I stressed in that account the delaying tactics which mediums employ as they attempt to assess the balance of support in favour of one candidate or another and wait for some consensus to emerge.

From this summary, and my discussion above, it can be seen that there are two aspects of the Korekore cult which relate to the crucial position of the regional medium. The first or lineal aspect derives from the fact that patrilineal descendants may come from wherever they live to consult a medium representing the ancestor.. Consultations usually relate to illness and misfortune due to the affliction of ancestral spirits and to matters of inheritance and succession. The second or territorial aspect derives from the fact that people living within a spirit province may consult its medium and seek to placate its territorial spirit's wrath. The regional medium's position is crucial, because it is held at a level that is maximal for the intersection of the two aspects. He alone can be consulted by any person living anywhere in the region's provinces and also by a patrilineal descendant of the region's apical ancestor coming from wherever he may live.

There is a further aspect which relates to the regional medium's position but which entails relations that are personal primarily, rather than hierarchical and lineal or territorial. A medium who establishes a reputation for wisdom in settling disputes, for exorcising malevolent spirits, for effective cures and for

bringing rain may draw supplicants to him from a wider vicinity that extends far beyond the boundaries of his spirit province or even his region. For example, the vicinity of Mutota's regional medium extended south as far as Hartley District (130 miles), south east as far as Bikita (300 miles) and as far west as Urungwe (95 miles) (See Map 2). The supplicants from the wider vicinity, unless they are lineal descendants of the territorial spirit, use the medium very much as they would use an ordinary diviner (ng'anga). Some mediums, by expanding their vicinity of supplicants, come to have reputations which far outweigh their, possibly, humble positions in the formal hierarchy of mediums. Ultimately, this may lead to friction between a junior medium and one more senior about their respective jurisdiction and spheres of ritual authority, and the intervention of the senior medium may be required.

*** Change in Ritual Territories

I stressed earlier that Korekore maintain that the present distribution of ritual territories between and within regions is ancient and immutable. I now consider the processes by which intra-regional adjustments in ritual territories occur before turning to consider the wider field of inter-regional relations.

Evidence indicates and logic suggests that spirit provinces must be adjusted in response to secular processes which affect the frequency with which new mediums appear and new spirit provinces are created. These processes have their origin in the competition among royals for chiefly titles which, in the past, often led to fission and the establishment of new chiefdoms and chiefships. I have indicated that invariably within two or three generations of the foundation of a new chiefdom a medium appeared to represent its founding ancestor and to regulate the succession to the new chiefship. Each new medium was installed in a 'new' spirit province which was often within or near the territory of the chiefdom, centred on what was said to be the first chief's grave, but was always defined within some previously existing spirit province. Mediums who had responsibility for regulating succession to the parent chiefdoms relinquished their direct responsibility for this to new mediums who became their subordinates in the hierarchy. However, they were available for appeals against the decisions of their subordinates and

appear to have continued to have had an important role in mediating relations between the new chiefdoms. Hence, the evidence indicates that the secular processes which gave rise to the establishment of new chiefdoms also led to the proliferation of spirit provinces and the appearance of new mediums. However, there were contrary processes operating. Chiefdoms were established through conquest and thus formed at the expense of existing ones. As the mediums linked with former chiefdoms became less directly involved in secular issues and matters of succession, there was a tendency for their positions not to be succeeded to after their deaths, though their spirit provinces remained and the names of their possessing spirits were retained as ancestors in the genealogy. It is noticeable in Mutota's genealogy (Genealogy 2) how none of his descendants from Generations D to J is represented by a medium. Thus, the factors which led to the demise of some chiefdoms also led to the eventual loss of significance of the mediumships associated with them.

Whilst it is clear that certain mediumships junior in the hierarchy have been terminated, certain senior mediumships, by contrast, appear to have been filled by a succession of mediums over long periods of time. At this level, where mediums are remote from direct involvement in day-to-day secular issues and in chiefly succession, different processes operate. Spirit provinces associated with ancestors at higher genealogical levels tend to be large and'new' spirit provinces are established as sub-divisions of them. In the west of the Dande, for example, Nyahuma's spirit province is held to have once extended from the Bwase stream (Map 1: II,e) in the north to the escarpment in the south but became sub-divided among his sons, grandsons and other descendants. Similarly, Kagoro's spirit province to the east (Map 1: IV-VI;K—N) is hqld to have once extended from the Msengezi in the west to the Hoya river and then later became sub-divided. Where such sub-divisions are said to have occurred, the medium representing the ancestor of the original, now divided territory, is held to have some degree of control over the mediums and spirit provinces within it, irrespective of those mediums' formal ranking in the genealogically derived hierarchy. Nyahuma's medium in the past, for example, is said to have received tribute from Chitsungo's medium despite the fact that in the formal hierarchy the medium of Chihwahwa was his immediate superior. There is therefore, some tendency for the hierarchical affiliations of junior mediums to be cross-cut by their territorial affiliation.

One can therefore reconstrue Map I as a set of large ritual territories associated with remote ancestors such as Kagoro, Nyahuma, Nebedza and Nehanda who, significantly, have all been represented by mediums over long spans of time. These large ritual territories, therefore, appear to provide an enduring territorial and organizational basis for the cult and persist despite sub-division within them. The mediums allocated to them are above the level of adjustment and change which affects the positions of junior mediums and are thus crucial for the on-going organisation of the cult. Furthermore, such mediums have important additional duties within the cult and in relation to other cults. As I indicated earlier, perpetual kinship links the Mutota region to a number of others (see Genealogy 1). Mediums of one cult enter into relationship with mediums of other cults in terms of these perpetual relations. Nebedza's medium in addition to acting as head of the Mutota region during inter-regna also maintains relations with the Chikunda regional cult through his "son-in-law" the medium of Kanyemba, brother of the founder of the Chapoto dynasty. In the past Kagoro's medium maintained formal relations with the Dzivaguru cult region as a "son-in-law" of Dzivaguru's medium and all transactions with the cult were conducted through him. Similarly Nyahuina's medium maintained relations with the chthonic cult region of Musuma.

Mediums occupying these key positions in a cult are ranked immediately below the regional medium and, with the exception of Nyahuma, are presented as his 'children'. It is critical for the cult's organisation that the regional medium maintains regular contact with them and exercises control over them. He does this by the regular transmission of symbolic messages, by receiving tribute from them and by issuing directives through them to be transmitted to local populations either through sub-ordinate mediums where these exist or, in their absence, directly to the elders of the land sh*rine communities. Such directives may include matters ranging from those of purely ritual concern such as the conduct of land shrine rituals or the behaviour of subordinate mediums, to those which, whilst of ritual significance, may impinge directly on the economic life of communities, such as the enforcement of rest days (chisi), restrictions on the use of fish poisons and prohibitions affecting diet and modes of cultivation. In addition, should one of these senior mediums commit some misdemeanour,

he may be summoned to appear before the regional medium to account for his behaviour and he may even be fined.

*** Expansion and the Regional Medium

Since the twenties, there is no doubt that the influence of the cult of Mutota has increased considerably. Since that time, the subordination of the cult to that of Dzivaguru has ended, at least two ritual territories have been incorporated directly into Mutota’s region and its overall influence has been expanded and extended far beyond the domain of Korekore cults into the Zezuru cult of local spirits.

The region of Mutota, and indeed the cult to which it belongs, has been much influenced in its current form and extent by the most recent medium of Mutota, the late George Kupara. The three factors which have been most important for his influence are first, his personal qualities; second, the condition of linked cults and regions at his installation and during his period of office; and third, his connections with and recruitment from an inner circle of kin who are an elite in both local and territorial cults. I will consider each factor in turn. In 1963 when I lived with him, Kupara was about 65 and had been in office since his possession as a young man in 1919. He died in 1973. Physically, he had a striking appearance: he was tall, lean, with bright piercing eyes and an expressive face. Like other mediums, he dressed simply, but distinctively, in a black cloth worn, toga fashion, around his waist and drawn over his left shoulder. Around his neck he wore a thick, elaborate, plait of fine black beads and on his wrists, black bangles of horn. He had a sharp mind, an extensive knowledge of herbal remedies and a phenomenal ability to retain genealogical detail and the minutiae of diverse myths of origin. His obvious charismatic qualities were revealed particularly through the drama of the seance.

Seances were held in a spirit house (zumba; great house) situated in the bush about a hundred yards from the regional medium’s hamlet. Its only openings were two doors, one facing south which the medium used, the other facing north which the acolyte and supplicants used. Seances were conducted in total darkness beginning around midnight and

continuing until dawn. After some preliminaries, supplicants were guided by the acolyte into the darkness of the spirit house and seated along its west wall facing the medium who lay stretched out on his stomach covered completely by a black cloth and a fur blanket. With no visual cues whatsoever, the drama of the seance depended entirely upon the medium's vocal control and oratorical skills. Kupara was a supreme master of mamhuko, a rythmical, free-verse, speech form used by mediums. He would be fierce and terrifying with the sceptical or recalcitrant; gentle, playful, grandfatherly, with the awed and the afraid.

About half the matters raised with the medium at seances concerned personal and familial misfortune. ^XA supplicant might enquire about his illness, or why he could not keep a job, or a woman might ask why she had not borne children. Generally, the regional medium would deal with such matters routinely without a great deal of discussion, quickly identifying a witch, an ancestor or some other spirit as the cause of the misfortune. He would dispense herbs to deal with symptoms, charms to protect against witchcraft and prescribe standard rituals to placate ancestors or exorcise afflicting spirits. Frequently, after hearing a supplicant's name, origin and praise names, Kupara was able to give a genealogy of the supplicant's ancestors, a feat which, if the supplicant was from a distant area, appeared particularly impressive.

Supplicants who came to consult the senior medium paid a small fee (chitekwe) to call the spirit and were expected to make further gifts of black cloth and money during the course of the seance according to their means and the nature of their problem. At the end of the seance, Kupara would apportion a small amount of money to himself, to his acolyte, and to any other officer of the cult in attendance. Any remaining money was regarded as belonging to the spirit and was given into the care of the acolyte. This money was used to buy grain to feed the many supplicants and their companions who came to Kupara's hamlet through the course of the year. Significantly, it is also used to make relatively substantial loans and gifts which seldom appear to be repaid even though a nominal interest may be charged. I recorded loans varying from £5 to £20. These appear to have been given to enhance the reputation of 'Mutota' for generosity and for not amassing wealth at the expense of ordinary people. Loans, however, do not create any kind of debt dependency and most appear to be quickly

forgotten. What the senior medium retained as personal income was just enough to enable him not to work extensively in his gardens and to keep his family modestly clothed.[20] Over the year, taking into account receipts and payments, he more or less broke even. In this region, therefore, the principal officers do not acquire a great deal of personal wealth through the operation of the cult.

Whilst in seance the senior medium's performances were consistently impressive, he reserved his most spectacular displays for visiting mediums and candidates for mediumship. With visiting mediums, clad in a black and white costume, with fur headress and false beard, he would participate in a competitive dancing display in which he would scoff at their dancing abilities, to the amusement of onlookers. With candidates for mediumship, he was much more serious. Such candidates were expected to become possessed during the seance, to identify their possessing spirit and to give genealogical and biographical information about it to validate their mediumship. Kupara reacted particularly sharply if he considered a candidate to be making a false claim to mediumship. This happened when two candidates, referred to him by the medium of the Zezuru Nehanda, claimed to represent Chaminhuka. They failed to become properly possessed and he burst out angrily, "Do you want to be delighted by being told that you have a mhondoro? I am not like an ngozi (adept) who rubs and shakes people's heads to bring out the ngozi.[21] I really want a candidate to speak out everything I ask him. You come from very far away saying, 'We have spirits', but you do not speak. What am I to make of that?" He then directed criticism at Nehanda's medium, through her acolyte who was present, saying that he wanted to know why she had sent him 'eggs' (ie, 'speechless mediums').[22] Was she trying to test Mutota's ability to discover whht was in the 'eggs'? Conversely, when candidates for mediumships gave particularly striking performances (such as were given by the child medium Gutsa and the female medium of Chikare, cases which will be considered again later) the medium would continue for weeks afterwards to uphold them to other candidates as examples of how a person truly possessed by a mhondoro should behave.

I have dwelt on Kupara's behaviour in the context of the seance because it must be stressed that it is only in this context that a medium can establish his reputation, create relationships with supplicants and other mediums and

so expand his vicinity and increase his influence. A medium who becomes old and fails to sustain his performance in seances rapidly loses his vicinity whilst a young medium, who succeeds to an established prestigious mediumship, may find that he has not the ability to sustain the vicinity of his predecessor (cf. Bourdillon 1972). The ritual authority associated with a medium's office and the prestige which may come from an expanded vicinity are conceptualized as not attaching to the medium but to his possessing spirit. Outside of the context of the seance a medium is, in a real sense, powerless. Kupara, himself, like many mediums I observed, was a lonely man. He had few close friends or local kin. Of course, the disruptive move from Gota had detached him from local support within his spirit province but, even there, whilst he appears to have had a strong connection with a local headman, Mushoshoma, who acted on occasions as a ritual assistant, Kupara did not have connections which could be construed as providing him with any kind of local secular power base. Indeed, a medium must appear to be detached and avoid an obviously close association with one faction or another otherwise he runs the risk of being accused of faking possession and giving partial decisions. Kupara's loneliness also stemmed from his ambiguous identity: was he to be treated as an ordinary mortal or as the ancestor, Mutota, personified? This uncertainty, which tended to pervade all his interactions with neighbours and locals, created a continuous tension. In addition, neighbours and locals would comment on the quality of his performances at seances and, in gossip — even occasionally to his face — would allege that he faked possession on certain occasions. It was difficult for Kupara to distance himself from those with whom he was in daily contact, and the tension in his relationship with locals was manifested in a formal joking relationship: he was addressed as aSekuru (Honoured Grandfather) which is a joking category. Visiting supplicants, by contrast, would address him very respectfully as aMvura (Lord Rain).

This tension also extended to Kupara's relations with his staff, the acolyte (mutape), the ritual assistant (dunzvi) and, to a lesser degree, with 'the wife of the spirit' (mukaranga) who, as a young girl has been offered into the service of the spirit, but who had later become his wife. In 1963, Kupara's acolyte was a man of about fifty. He was third in the present line of acolytes, established during the mediumship of Gavanga, Kupara's predecessor (see Genealogy 3). He had succeeded his father some twenty years previously. He was head of the hamlet in which the senior medium lived and was a popular man with a reputation for

uprightness and fair dealing. He was responsible for the day-to-day management of the seances and local affairs of the cult. Significantly, he addressed Kupara, even when they were alone, as ’aMvura and never as ’aSekuru. The two did not spend a great deal of time together, and all formal business pertaining to the cult was only discussed at seances. Like other mediums, Kupara, unpossessed, would not discuss matters of the spirit, claiming to have no knowledge of what had occurred during seances. In the context of the seance, whilst acting in a supportive role to Kupara, the acolyte was very much subservient to him and addressed the ‘spirit’ humbly and respectfully. This was true also of the ritual assistant, a very old man, who performed ad hoc rituals for the spirit of Mutota, and of the ‘wife of the spirit’ who attended the medium when he first becomes possessed and assisted in the treatment of women with reproductive disorders. Kupara’s staff, therefore, were very much under his control. They did not exercise any influence over his behaviour during seances nor did they meet or collude with him before a seance. It would appear, therefore, that what the mediumship of Mutota became during Kupara’s lifetime stemmed very much from the personal initiatives which he took in response to issues arising in the context of the seances. Of course, in many matters, particularly those with secular consequences, his actions were constrained by a watchful public and by the opinions of other mediums. In the cult’s external relations and in the expansion of his own vicinity, he had more freedom of action since the consequences of his actions had no immediate local effect. But even here, whilst there were certain policies which it seems clear he wished to pursue — such as the attachment of a medium of Chaminhuka to the cult — the opinion of other mediums and the public acted as a constraint. However, I do not consider that one can determine any overall long-term strategy underlying the whole of Kupara’s actions. As revealed through the forty seances which I observed, Kupara’s behaviour can best be understood in terms of four separate but related objectives: to uphold mediumship as a general value in a situation in which it was being assailed by the colonial administration, by missionary activity and by separatist sects (cf. Ranger 1970: 220); to maintain and increase the prestige of Mutota as a spirit in comparison with the spirits of other chthonic and Korekore cults; to expand his vicinity and hence increase his own prestige as a medium; to protect himself from the scepticism of neighbours and locals. Thus, overall, his actions can be interpreted in terms of a series of tactics in which one or more of these objectives was paramount. I shall return to a discussion of these crucial issues later.

*** The Decline of Chthonic Cults

Kupara came to office just before the chthonic Tavara cults of Dzivaguru and Karuva went into sharp decline. In 1922, after a ritual murder, the administration arrested and imprisoned all the officers of the Dzivaguru and Karuva cult. With the exception of the acolyte of Karuva and a junior medium of the Dzivaguru cult operating from Mozambique, they were never replaced (Bourdillon 1972a; 1972b). Whilst the sacred grove of Karuva at Nhenhene, near Choma (Map 2) is still tended and offerings are made there, this chthonic cult has never again attained the prominence which it clearly had at an earlier period when Korekore, through their mediums, would supplicate for rain.

At the end of nineteenth century, there appear to have been four cults of chthonic beings, mostly associated with the Tavara, of ritual significance to Korekore living in the Zambezi Valley and immediately adjacent areas of the plateau: those of Dzivaguru and his son Karuva, of Musuma and of Chimombe. Korekore in the region of Mutota tend to speak of them nowadays as if they were all part of one cult and, in myth, make Chimombe the guardian of Musuma who, in turn, is made a brother of Karuva (see Genealogy 1). They also replace Dzivaguru with Karuva and do not now distinguish their separate cults. Further east, near Choma, these connections are not made and all the chthonic cults are held to be quite distinct. It is difficult now to reconstruct how the cults operated in the past: there has been no medium of Dzivaguru for over fifty years whilst Musuma’s shrine has decayed and its ritual officers have died or dispersed. Chimombe’s cult virtually collapsed in the late fifties when its principal officers were among people moved by the colonial administration and resettled on the plateau.

From what can be gathered from early reports (see Bourdillon 1972b), legends, and accounts of elders, Korekore acknowledged the chthonic beings as “owners of the earth” and would supplicate them, through their mediums, for rain. Each cult, with the possible exception of that of Dzivaguru, had a centre, with a shrine, a medium and a staff. Wheiher each cult constituted a region with a bounded territory cannot now be established. Broadly, the

region of the Chimombe cult appears to have extended west from the Angwa river, that of Musuma, east, from the Angwa to the Kadzi river, and that of Dzivaguru from the Kadzi eastwards, with intrusions to the north into Mozambique and south, well-beyond the Zambezi escarpment. Karuva's region appears to have extended to include the chiefdom of Choma, at which his famous shrine is located, and the neighbouring Tavara chiefdoms of Chiswiti and Gosa (now in Mozambique) as well as the immediately adjacent region, to the south, of the Korekore ancestor, Nyabapa. In myth, Nyabapa is said to have overcome Karuva by a trick. He then disappeared into a pool in the sacred grove at Nhenhene, from where he is held to control the rainfall and the fertility of the earth over the whole of his region. Periodically, when the virgin (Nechiswa) who tended Karuva's shrine at Nhenhene was held to have been defiled, her supposed defiler was burnt alive as a sacrifice to Karuva. It was such a sacrifice which caused the intervention of the colonial authorities in 1922. The Dzivaguru cult, to which the Karuva cult and all Korekore cults within its domain were, in some sense, subordinate, was clearly the most extensive and important of all the chthonic cults. However, at least in the late nineteenth century, it appears to have operated without a central shrine and headquarters. In the remote past, the medium of Dzivaguru was the "leading religious figure" at the court of the Mwene Mutapa(cf. Ranger 1963; 1970).

Outside of the region of the Mutota cult, the cults of Dzivaguru and Karuva have a continuing, if diminished significance. Both Bourdillon (1972b) and Gelfand (1962) have reported that despite the absence of mediums and a full staff of ritual officers, the chief of Choma, acting as acolyte, receives regular delegations, once or twice a year, from neighbouring and some more distant, easterly areas, who bring gifts of cloth to be offered to Karuva in the sacred grove. Whilst the officers of the Korekore cult of Nyabapa are ambivalent about the superordinate or subordinate status of the cults of Karuva and Dzivaguru (Bourdillon 1972b), the medium of Nyabapa still sends tribute to the sacred grove. This is quite unlike the position within the Mutota cult where all mediums and especially the regional medium, completely repudiate any notions of the cult's subordination to that of Dzivaguru and, pointedly, do not send tribute. They treat the Dzivaguru cult as an equivalent, autonomous, regional cult, denying the efficacy of Dzivaguru's power over rainfall and fertility within the boundaries of Mutota's region. This appears to have been the position since at least the thirties when, as far as I

could establish, the last tribute was sent from Mutota's region, via Kagoro's medium, to Choma.

The evidence concerning the relations between the Dzivaguru cult and Korekore regional cults would appear to indicate that, with the exception of the Mutota cult, the ritual significance of the Dzivaguru cult has continued despite its very weak organizational significance. By contrast, the mediums of the Mutota cult, deny the ritual and organizational significance of any of the chthonic cults. I suggest that this may be related to the rise in influence of the Mutota cult in a wider field of ritual relations in which it became important that its autonomy and supremacy were fully manifested.

*** Kupara's Recruitment

As for the third factor in Kupara's influence on the Mutota's cult, his connection to, and recruitment from an elite: his family and lineage had a long association with important mediumships in both the local and territorial cults. By descent he was not Korekore. He claimed to be a Zezuru descended from Shayachimwe, the founder of Hwata, a chiefdom supposedly once powerful and still of some influence. (See Genealogy 3, for this and the following relationships). His predecessor as medium, who died before Kupara was born, was his own grandfather, Gavanga. Another close kinsman was also crucial. The man who tended him during the years of his possession and who helped install him in office was his father's brother, Nhamuyebonde. Nhamuyebonde was himself a medium of an important Korekore ancestor (Chiurinyanga; Genealogy 2: I, 1) and because this close kinsman was involved with the succession to a number of Korekore chiefdoms at the time of Kupara's installation and later, it appears likely that Kupara was able to gain information and learn how to deal with the tangles of mediumship. Kin in the local cult of Zezuru were in some respects even more important for Kupara's part in regional expansion. The first medium of the Zezuru Nehanda to become attached to the Hwata dynasty was Chapo. She is said to have become the wife of Shayachimwe, the first Hwata. After her death, Charwe, a classificatory sister of Kupara's grandfather, succeeded to the Nehandaship. She was the famous medium who was hanged for her prominent role in the uprising of 1896 and its aftermath (Ranger, 1970, 10). Some time after her death, probably in 1906 (see Ranger, 1970: 10), a classificatory sister of

Kupara, Matiirira became possessed by Nehanda. She died sometime in the fifties. Thus, at various times the descendants of the once powerful chief Hwata held important mediumships in both cults and for a considerable part of his life Kupara had a close relative, Matiirira, in control of the Zezuru mediumship of Nehanda at Mrewa. This provided Kupara with an established and fruitful link for referrals from the local cult: the medium of the Zezuru Nehanda at Mrewa continued to be responsible for referring local mediums of the Zezuru cult to Mutota's medium in order for them to be tested and for the most prominent of them to become formally attached to the territorial cult and Mutota's region. Such formal attachment is achieved through what amounts to a cross-cult translation of belief: i.e., the mediums' local spirits are transposed into Korekore ancestral spirits which are then accepted as children of Mutota.

To clarify this further in order to demonstrate how relationships are extended from one cult into the other, it is essential to consider the conceptual framework which Korekore themselves use to comprehend this situation. I refer to the genealogy of remote ancestors (Genealogy 2). Mutota's genealogy has a distinctive pattern which calls for explanation. It is shaped like a "T" rather than, say, the inverted "V" so common in lineages. The first generation of descendants is a great band, somehow largely without issue. Generally, Mutota is credited with some 16 to 20 children, almost all of whom are not said to have had descendants.[23] Indeed, usually only one is credited with his own line, but even this extends in the manner of a king list, for ten generations, before there is any significant segmentation. The identity of many in the list of Mutota's children is not surprising and only calls for brief comment. They are members of the Korekore pantheon of remote ancestors; their spirit provinces are in and around the Zambezi valley. As I indicated earlier, many of the ancestors at this genealogical level are credited with having had large spirit provinces which later were sub-divided. Some of the mediums representing them, I have argued, are significant in maintaining the enduring territorial and organizational basis of the cult and its external relations with other cults. Placed in the hierarchy at this level, these senior mediums are above the secular processes which affect the emergence of new mediums, the delineation of new spirit provinces and the segmentary processes which affect its lower levels. What does call for fuller comment, however, is that these Korekore ancestors are named in relationship with others quite unlike them. Two of these have spirit provinces but appear to have been added to the genealogy in recent times

whilst others have no spirit provinces, and I infer from external evidence that they are part of the Zezuru cult and are local spirits.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-7.jpg][Genealogy 3: Succession to Mediumships]]

The two ancestors with spirit provinces who appear to have been added to the genealogy are Madzomba (Genealogy 2: Bl5) and Chiobvu (B,l). I consider only Madzomba's case since I have strong evidence on it and also because I consider it provides insight into the general cognitive model which is used to attach Zezuru local spirits to the Mutota cult. My evidence on Chiobvu's attachment is weaker but is similar in its essentials.

Madzomba's spirit province (Map 1: I,h) lies some 20 miles due north of the hamlet in which the medium of Mutota was living in 1963. I was told by the acolyte of Mutota's medium and others that they had all been aware of the medium of Madzomba for many years. Indeed, five previous mediums are recalled and the mediumship appears to have been regularly occupied and long-established. In the past, the mediumship was firmly associated with the Tavara ancestral cult of Bamwomwe and Madzomba was held to have been his 'sister's son' (muzukuru). In 1957 or 1958, shortly after the death of Bamwomwe's medium, the medium of Madzomba suddenly appeared and asked to consult Mutota. At a seance he is said to have elaborated a myth in which Madzomba's mother, supposedly a wife of Mutota, had been driven away by Mutota's son, Nebedza, after having failed a withcraft ordeal (muteyo). Eventually, she was taken as a slave by Chief Dotito in the northeast. Later she and Madzomba escaped and sought sanctuary with Bamwomwe. Madzomba's medium concluded by offering himself as a "long-lost son" of Mutota. This account was accepted by the regional medium and by other senior mediums. Madzomba's name is now regularly included by all of them in their recitations of Mutota's genealogy and Madzomba's medium is firmly established within the region of the Mutota cult. As we shall observe, this device of establishing in myth that a spirit is a long-lost child of Mutota appears to be one which is cognitively acceptable and one which is used to attach Zezuru local spirits to the cult of Mutota. It is delightfully simple and yet it is reversible. A slight alteration to the story, making the woman pregnant after she leaves or runs

away, makes the child illegitimate without any necessity to deny the whole myth. I have not heard this reversal used in the context of denying the claims of mediums, but it is frequently used to exclude descent groups from participating in the succession to a chiefship.

Examples of those cited as children of Mutota who are clearly identifiable as local spirits of Zezuru cults are Goronga, a well known local spirit (see Ranger 1967: 211) associated with the Lomagundi District, Nyamuswa (Gelfand 1959: 18); Chifwanya, who features early in the Korekore origin myth as leaving Mutota at the escarpment and returning to Mrewa; Chikare, whose case I consider later, and probably, Beperere. Somewhat in a conceptual category by herself is Nehanda, as befits the spirit of a medium with perhaps the most important role in cross-cult relations. She is what might be called a “transcult spirit” in that she is now both a local and a territorial spirit, rather than merely a local spirit assimilated through kinship into the genealogy of remote ancestors. Thus she has mediums both as the renowned local spirit among the Zezuru and as a daughter of Mutota and ‘mother’ of all Korekore. Korekore accept the existence of two mediums of Nehanda: the one operating in the Mrewa area, the other operating in the Zambezi Valley and temporarily living in the spirit province of her ‘brother’, as I have noted. Nevertheless, Korekore argue that there is only one Nehanda and that her spirit possesses mediums, at different times, in two places. In fact, in the sixties, three mediums of the Zezuru Nehanda were operating, one at Mrewa, one in the Mhondoro Tribal Trust Land and the other at Rwizi. As we shall observe, considerable rivalry existed between the mediums from Mrewa and Mhondoro. Already, in the late nineteenth century both a Korekore and a Zezuru medium were operating. This indicates the continuing importance not merely of the transcult spirit and her medium but even more of the extension of relationships across the cults.

*** The Linking of Local and Territorial Cults

Now we can appreciate more of the significance of the pattern of Mutota’s genealogy with its inclusion of unlike spirits together in relationships with the apical ancestor. I shall comment on the features that are most illuminating for my discussion of the linking of cults. These features allow for expansion along with the inclusion of non-hierarchical and hierarchical relations, in

accord with the situation which the genealogy comprehends. Having numerous ‘children’ without issue (ie, the top of the ‘T’ and upper part of the genealogy) allows the assimilation of local spirits, and thus the incorporation of their riiediums to occur in an ambiguous way that fits their lack of hierarchy. So long as the birth order is not specified and the total number of children unknown or not fixed, more and more relationships can be extended to local mediums without them having to constitute a hierarchy among themselves. Another feature is the long line prior to segmentation in the genealogy. The long line provides a fixed set of reference points, which a candidate medium can cite for legitimacy. Moreover, the rest of the genealogy with its segmentation defines the hierarchical relations.

As I shall document through case material later, the senior medium plays a key role in the revision of the genealogy which is necessary for the formal attachment of additional mediums. I would stress here that a senior medium such as Mutota’s cannot simply alter the genealogy at his whim. There are a number of prominent mediums well versed in the ‘orthodox’ Korekore genealogy. Nevertheless, there is uncertainty among all of them as to exactly how many children Mutota was supposed to have had and what their birth order was and so forth. Adding a child or two, particularly when they have no descent line associated with them is not difficult but, and it is an important qualification, such amendments to be meaningful must receive wider acceptance and more validation. More complex revisions of the genealogy, which imply further relationships and perhaps special standing for some mediums, may be more difficult and less readily validated. To illustrate briefly from the case I discuss more fully later, Mutota’s senior medium acknowledged the claim of a visitor, a medium of the local spirit Chikare, that her spirit was the daughter of Mutota. The new relationship was established and the genealogy amended at a seance in my presence. Within a few months other prominent mediums in the Zambezi valley began to recount the tale of how Motota had found his long lost daughter, Chikare. The truth of her medium’s claim was accepted. However, the senior medium tried to elaborate the relationship and make a more complex amendment of the genealogy, unsuccessfully. He was fond of adding the name of that other prominent local spirit Chaminhuka to the genealogy as a son of Mutota. He went further and, at a public seance after the visit of the medium of Chikare, made her out to be a uterine sister of Chaminhuka; both were said to be children of one mother, Marumbi, a further genealogical amendment. This was not accepted by other mediums. Their unwillingness to accept

Chaminhuka as a son of Mutota may well have stemmed from the fact that the Zezuru myths concerning Chaminhuka's miraculous powers, his adventures and encounters with the Ndebele, were widely known not only by them but by ordinary Korekore. Indeed, they are often told, along with others of Korekore heroes, as "bed-time" stories to children. Korekore conceptualize Chaminhuka as a creator being, equivalent in power to Mutota. It would have taken a particularly convincing medium of Chaminhuka to have altered this well-established view. Whilst two candidates for the mediumship were referred to Mutota's medium by the Zezuru Nehanda in 1964, both gave abysmal performances in seance. One, as I noted earlier, failed to speak; the other, although he attempted to speak, was confused and ill at ease. He was advised by Mutota's medium that an alien spirit was intervening to prevent his full possession by Chaminhuka's spirit and he was told to return to Nehanda's medium for treatment and instruction. The senior medium once again expressed his anger at Nehanda's medium for sending him someone whom she had not tested adequately herself. Significantly, however, the candidate, who came from a village, Mushake, in which I lived in 1958, told me that he was convinced that he was possessed by Chaminhuka but that the alien spirit and Mutota's anger at Nehanda had prevented him from becoming properly possessed. He then said, "Truly, Chaminhuka is the son of Mutota, as Mutota says. I believe that he is because when I was sent here, Nehanda told me that I was to go to my father to be tested". This statement strongly suggests that not only had Nehanda's medium a similar interest to Mutota's medium in wanting to incorporate Chaminhuka directly into the Mutota cult but also that she was suggesting the idiom in which candidates for certain important mediumships should present themselves when they were tested. This further suggests, that Nehanda's medium had some special knowledge of Korekore mythology and of the Mutota cult and the case of the Chikare medium adds weight to this. It is possible that she acquired some of this knowledge from her husband who is Korekore, a descendant of Chuzu (Genealogy 2: Ml), and who also acts as her acolyte. I should stress that she and Mutota's medium had only met once, in 1962, when she presented herself for testing by him and was accepted as a genuine successor to the former medium, his classificatory sister, Matiirira.

Of the fourteen mediums who came to be tested by Mutota's medium during the seven months from October 1963 when I lived with him, all save one came from the Zezuru cult of local spirits.[24] Ten of them were referred to Mutota's medium by the medium of Nehanda. Most were sent simply to

establish that they were genuinely possessed: neither they nor Mutota's medium made any attempt to translate their spirits into Korekore ancestors. Only in the case of prestigious mediumships such as those of Chikare and Chaminhuka was this attempted. But it is more than the prestige of the mediumship which is significant: all the Zezuru spirits accepted as children of Mutota are those whose influence is held to span a number of local groups and none are ancestral spirits with specific genealogical connection with the living. In the Zezuru cult of local spirits, mediurris possessed by spirits of this order, are those who validate the possession of lesser mediums and thus have a significant coordinating and organizational role. Thus, they are in some respects the equivalents of such senior mediums in the Korekore territorial cult as those who represent Nebedza, Kagoro, Nehanda and Nyahuma. Hence, the appropriateness of inserting the spirits they represent into the higher levels of the Mutota genealogy.

The connection between the territorial cult of Mutota and the Zezuru cult of local spirits has existed at least since the mediumship of Mutota was held by Gavanga, Kupara's grandfather, at the end of the nineteenth century. This connection, was expanded and developed under the mediumship of Kupara, first through his classificatory sister, Matiirira, and then through her succesor to the Nehandaship. Nevertheless, there seems to have been a break in referrals to the Mutota cult of perhaps ten years after Matiirjra's death inthe fifties before her successor made a successful bid to re-establish the link in 1962. Why this should have occurred I cannot fully determine. I never met any of the Zezuru mediums of Nehanda: they all lived and operated over a hundred miles from my field area. However, from my own knowledge of the Mrewa area in 1958, from Fry's (1976) study in an adjacent area and from Chavanduka's (1970) study of a Zezuru succession dispute, certain matter are clear. In the late fifties, the Mrewa and Mhondoro mediums of Nehanda came into competition over the succession of the Zezuru chiefship of Hwata. Briefly, two factions became involved in a lengthy succession dispute after the death of Chief Hwata XI in 1952, one supporting his son, the Acting Chief Henry, the other supporting another candidate, Samuel. The medium of the ancestor Gutsa, responsible for nominating a new chief was dead. Henry and his faction eventually brought forward a man whom they claimed was possessed by Gutsa. After divination had confirmed this, the medium nominated Henry as chief and the administration duly installed him as Chief Hwata XII. Meanwhile, Samuel and his faction went to inform the Mrewa medium of Nehanda that they were convinced that the Gutsa medium

supporting Henry was false and that they had a youth who seemed to be possessed by Gutsa's spirit. The Mrewa medium ordered all the parties to the dispute to assemble at the burial place of Hwata chiefs, at Mazoe, where she would establish which of the two mediums of Gutsa was genuine. Henry and his faction, alarmed, went off to consult the Mhondoro medium of Nehanda. She assured them that their medium of Gutsa was genuinely possessed and that Henry was rightfully chief. After this the two factions became bitterly opposed and eventually Henry, Chief Hwata XII, led his own following away from the Chiweshe Tribal Trust Land to settle in the Zambezi Valley in an area recently offered to him by the administration. I consider it extremely significant, in the light of this succession dispute and the rivalry between the Nehanda mediums, that within a year of the failure of the faction she supported to get the decision to appoint Henry as chief, reversed, the Mrewa medium of Nehanda should have presented herself for testing and acceptance by Mutota's medium. In October, 1963, she then sent the child medium of Gutsa to have his possession validated by the senior medium.

The Mrewa medium's rival at Mhondoro was a famous medium, extremely well-connected through her marriage to Chief Mashayamombe whose dynasty has long been associated with anti-colonial risings and political movements (see Ranger 1966). I suggest that the Mrewa Nehanda's moves to re-activate the "dormant" link with the Mutota cult and also to refer to the senior medium candidates for key mediumships such as those of Chaminhuka and Chikare, were tactics in the competition with her formidable rival whose position, possibly, was so well established that she did not consider it necessary to seek any external connection or validation.

It is also clear, that through the late fifties and early sixties, there was a general recrudescence of the cult of local spirits among the Zezuru. I observed it partially in 1958 in the Mrewa District, and Fry (1976) has considered it at length. He has argued that the recrudescence was associated with a general cultural and political movement away from institutions associated with colonialism in a situation in which overt political action was severely restricted. Many new mediums appeared during this time, some claiming to represent spirits long forgotten or which had not 'spoken' for many years. There were many cases also in which there were multiple claims to the same mediumship. As a consequence of this flood of new mediums, 'it seems highly likely that mediums occupying the key

mediumships, which had on the whole endured, had begun to sort out rival claims and to impose some order, albeit only partial, on an extremely fluid situation. Without some order, their own positions would become uncertain and threatened. One way of doing this, I suggest, was to turn to the Mutota cult which, with its high prestige and hierarchical order, could fix the positions of at least some of the key Zezuru mediumships in relation to each other and then validate the claims of lesser mediums referred by their incumbents.

To substantiate this argument and develop it further, I now consider the case of a woman, aged about 40 who came from Nyamweda in the Hartley District (about 130 miles to the south). She claimed to be possessed by the spirit of Chikare and to have been operating as a medium for some years. She said that she had been sent by the medium of the Zezuru Nehanda from Mrewa. Chikare is a famous local spirit in the Zezuru cult and, in 1896, her then medium, together with the medium of Goronga, was prominent in the uprising (Ranger 1967: 211; Gelfand 1959: 17).

The medium of Chikare arrived in February 1964 with a retinue of 17 people including drummers, mbira players and ritual officers. At a public seance held at the small dancing arena outside the spirit house the senior medium of Mutota asked the women, now possessed, who she was. “I am your daughter, Chikare”, she replied. “I was lost for many years but now I have found you. I come to greet you, father.” This response clearly staggered the senior medium. He became silent for a while, growled, then hummed a Korekore war song, he took snuff, gargled with water,[25] sang another song, then broke into mamhuko which occupied him for another half-hour: all devices which I had noted that he used when he wished to delay making a response. He then said abruptly, “I have only one daughter, Nehanda”. Chikare’s medium replied, “I am your daughter, Chikare. I am the elder sister of Nehanda. I was born after Nyajore. My elder brothers were Chiobvu, Sundo ...” And here she began to recite part of Mutota’s genealogy. She ended, “I was lost in the war. I was reared in another place. My younger sister Nehanda found me and she has sent me to greet you. I greet you, father”. Again, the senior medium hestitated. Suddenly, he said, “Yes! Yes! You are my daughter! Truly, you are my daughter! He then went on to describe how Korekore had fought many wars and how during the fighting some of his wives and children had been captured or fled. In fact, what

emerged was a very similar story to the one which Madzomba’s medium was said to have presented when he was tested and formally incorporated into the Mutota cult. Thus, Chikare’s medium was accepted. Some months after she had departed a steady stream of supplicants and candidates for mediumship began to come from the Hartley District where she lived, directed by her to Mutota’s medium.

The evidence of this seance and the external evidence relating to the names given in the genealogy of Mutota demonstrate how certain spirits of the Zezuru cult become added to the Korekore pantheon of remote ancestors and how their mediums become formally incorporated into the cult of Mutota. Chikare’s mediumship was long established, of high prestige and was associated with a set of lesser mediumships I have indicated that all the mediumships incorporated into the Mutota cult were of this type. I have suggested that in periods of flux or when there is competition among rival claimants to a key mediumship, one of the ways in which some order may be imposed, albeit partial, within the Zezuru cult, is by reference to the Mutota cult.

*** Conclusion

In general terms, two processes appear to have been occurring in the cult of Zezuru local spirits in relation to the Mutota cult: one in which mediums were simply seeking external validation and the other in which certain key mediumships were fully incorporated into the Mutota cult. The first process can be related to the tendency within the Zezuru cult for a number to appear all claiming to be possessed by the same spirit. In part, as the Hwata succession dispute illustrates, this tendency can be related to secular processes occurring within chiefdoms. Factions seek validation for their actions from an ancestral spirit through a medium: each faction has, or produces, its own medium. This in turn necessitates factions seeking further validation for such mediums from other, more prestigious mediums. Here again, however, the same pattern appears to be repeated. Each faction seeks out from a number claiming to be possessed by the same spirit, one who will validate its own medium. In such situations, therefore, it seems that further validation is sought completely external to the Zezuru cult. No doubt, this tendency was exacerbated during the recrudescence of the Zezuru cult.

The second process, however, is much more complex for it is not simply a matter of the external validation of a medium but involves his or her actual incorporation into the Mutota cult. The Mutota cult, with its high prestige and hierarchical order, validates and fixes at least some of the key Zezuru mediumships in relation to one another. But, for the Mutota cult, the actual incorporation of such mediumships within it is an aspect of its expansion into the domain of the Zezuru cult. The medium of Nehanda, in referring Chikare's medium for testing and incorporation was, in part, using the Mutota cult in her competition with her rival. She appeared to be attempting to establish a set of senior mediums, with their subordinates, all acknowledging her as the one, true medium of the Zezuru Nehanda. But validation and incorporation are not simply cognitive phenomena, they have far reaching organizational implications. The act of incorporation brings mediums of both cults into one ritual field. Within this field, through the network of relationships among mediums, people, tribute and communications flow.

The ritual field has cognitive and organizational aspects or sub-fields: the first is relatively stable through time, the second, inherently unstable. Cognitively, the Zezuru and Korekore cults become partially interlocked by the translation of one set of spirits into the other: Zezuru local spirits become Korekore ancestors. Once this has been accomplished and buttressed by supporting myths, the cognitive field, as the prime example of the translation of the Nehanda spirit illustrates, appears to be stable and relatively enduring. It provides a model and an idiom which certain Zezuru mediums can use, from time to time, to attach themselves to the Mutota cult. But it must be clearly understood that the fact that a Zezuru spirit is translated into a Korekore ancestor does not mean that one Zezuru mediumship is permanently incorporated into the Korekore cult even if the Korekore mediums and particularly the senior medium of Mutota conceptualize it thus. Mediumship among Zezuru is radically different from mediumship among Korekore. Organizationally, there is no one fixed set of offices in the Zezuru cult arranged in an enduring hierarchy. There may be several mediums, each with considerable local support, claiming to represent the same spirit. The fact that one of these is recognized and incorporated into the Mutota cult does not permanently resolve the question of who is genuine and who is not. What it does do, I suggest, is to bring certain mediums into a common organizational frame, for limited spans of time. Nevertheless, much of significance within the Zezuru cult continues to occur outside of this frame.

Inherently, in its organizational aspect, the ritual field is unstable. This instability arises within the Zezuru cult because of the charismatic nature of mediumship, the related phenomenon of multiple possession and the resulting lack of a clearly defined organisational hierarchy. There is always a striving for coherence and stability within this field by certain mediums who attempt to bring other mediumships under their control but this very striving, since it involves competition and the denial of the claims of others, produces further instability. Incorporation within the Korekore territorial cult cannot permanently fix the relations of Zezuru mediums to one another. It can only impose a temporary, fragile, stability. This is because the mediumships incorporated into the Korekore cult are not offices in the strict sense with a single incumbent and regular succession: they depend greatly on the charismatic qualities of particular mediums and the extent to which they can expand their vicinities. By contrast, mediumship is an office within the Mutota cult with rules regulating its incumbency. Nevertheless, here, too, there is a charismatic element and I have stressed how the cult's expansion depended upon the personal qualities of its senior medium, George Kupara.

I have examined the ritual field created by the interpenetration of the two cults largely from the perspective of Kupara. It is clear that under his leadership, the Mutota cult has grown to prominence since the twenties and now greatly overshadows the formerly powerful chthonic Tavara cults and other neighbouring Korekore cults. Uniquely placed, through family connection and having personal qualities which enhanced his formal role, Kupara maintained and expanded the connection between the Korekore and Zezuru cults. Nevertheless, it would be an error to view the ritual field formed by the interpenetration of the two cults as extensively controllable or manipulable by him. He was but one of a number of foci of ritual authority. The interpenetration of the two cults cannot be understood in terms of a grand strategy formulated by him or by Zezuru mediums, either acting separately, or in collusion. Only within limited local arenas is it meaningful to speak of strategy. I have touched on the Zezuru Nehanda's rivalry with the Mhondoro Nehanda in relation to the Hwata succession and suggested that her desire to have herself accepted by the Mutota cult, together with other rqediums supporting her, was an aspect of this. Similarly, the senior medium of Mutota can be shown to have acted strategically in relation to the chthonic cults, certain Korekore succession disputes (see Garbett, 1966) and in his

relations with other Korekore mediums. The appearance of strategy, when the total ritual field is viewed over time, arises not from the manipulations of particular mediums, coordinated in terms of some overall plan — the key actors rarely if ever meet and do not collude — but from the emergent properties of the ritual field itself. These arise from the dialectical relationship existing between the two cults. The order and relative stability of the region of the Mutota cult attracts Zezuru mediums as offering some solution to the indeterminancy of their positions within the Zezuru cult, this in turn leads to an increase in the prestige of both the Mutota cult and its leader. Thereby, its leader is able to establish the ascendancy of the cult, expand his own vicinity, and increase his ritual authority over his subordinates within the cult which further increases the cult's order and stability. However, the order which attachment to the Mutota cult imposes on Zezuru mediums is only partial and transient. Of itself, it creates further instability, basically because order and hierarchy are fundamentally incompatible with the charismatic, non-hierarchical nature of Zezuru mediumship. Finally, the charismatic element in Korekore mediumship itself suggests that with the death of the senior medium of Mutota and the collapse of his vast vicinity, many of the organizational linkages between the Zezuru and Korekore cults will be ruptured. Only at the cognitive level will the links endure, carried forward and elaborated in myth, to form the basis for the dialectical generation of new patterns of organizational inter-connections between the two cults during the next incumbency.

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** 4. Bush Negro Regional Cults: A Materialist Explanation[26]

by Bonno Thoden van Velzen

*** Introduction: Radical Economic Change and Cults

In the 188O’s, a centralised, hierarchical cult appealing to a High God— Gaan Tata[27] arose among a group of Bush Negroes in Surinam’s interior. Around 1890, the cult spread rapidly throughout the six Bush Negro tribes and across most of their numerous rivers, and became the established cult of the whole region. Covering great distances, the Bush Negroes made their pilgrimages to the cult’s central shrines on the Tapanahoni River, in the south east of the country (Spalburg 1896–1900). A subsidiary shrine established by Gaan Tata’s priests at Santigron, only fifteen kilometres from Surinam’s

capital Paramaribo, was visited by an impressive number of Creoles from the coast (De Ziel 1973: 40). Thus for a period the cult's clientele came from various ethnic groups, with widely different backgrounds. Then the cult declined. In some valleys of its former region it ceased to have any adherents at all. Elsewhere it became fractionized and fell apart into a number of local congregations. While the central oracle's priests continued to wield considerable power in Gaan Tata's heartland on the Tapanahoni, their authority over other Bush Negro areas was only nominal. First and foremost, it had been a regional cult of entrepreneurs, of successful boat owners who controlled river traffic when gold was discovered in the interior of Surinam and French Guiana. They brought fortunes back home, until the transport market went from boom to bust with the collapse of the gold and balata industries in the 1920's. The flow of tribute towards the cult's central shrines became a trickle, the regional authority of the Gaan Tata priests had vanished. On the Tapanahoni, a parochial Gaan Tata cult continued to dominate religious and political life until 1972. Then a new prophetic movement swept this parochial cult away.

This paper will explain the rise and fall of the Gaan Tata cult. The explanation suggests that the emergence of the cult and its later decline is a dependent variable of radical economic change. The alteration of a mode of production is responsible for the birth of the Gaan Tata cult and its first flourishing decades; later reduction in income and resources without any great changes in the mode of production caused the fractonization of the cult. In the 1960's, a new pattern of resource distribution within a new political context invited reactions from a new type of religious leadership. Intervening variables, such as the expenditure of resources within the cult on death rites and the destruction of the property of witches, influenced the cult's career also, as riches and regional surplus turned into scarcity and poverty. But these variables are secondary. What is primary is the economic change, coming from outside the cult region, which introduced and later destroyed its basis. With the economic impoverishment of the region, Gaan Tata as a regional cult ceased to be viable. Prophets with aspirations for regional leadership had to await the introduction of new resources into the area; they came at the end of the 1960's. A new cult is now attempting to establish itself on a regional basis.

As for the Bush Negroes or Maroons themselves, they are descendents of slaves, brought to Surinam from West Africa. Their ancestors, escaped from the plantations, fought a successful guerilla war against the Dutch planters and their mercenaries, and managed to establish semi-independent tribes in the interior. The most populous of the six Bush Negro tribes are the Djuka (about 4,000 in 1900 and 15,000 in 1970). They have their villages both in the interior, to the south, along the Tapanahoni, Maroni and Lawa rivers, and in the coastal plain, to the north east, along the Cottica, Commewijne and lower Saramacca rivers (see Map 1). The other groups, in rough order of size from the next largest, are located as follows:

1. the Saramaka in the centre of the country, along the Suriname River and its tributaries;

1. the Matawai, a much smaller group, to the west along the upper reaches of the Saramacca River;

1. the Aluku or Boni to the east on the banks of the Lawa River;

1. the Paramaka, also in the east, along the Maroni River; and

1. the Kwinti, an offshoot of the Matawai, to the far west along the Tibiti and Coppename rivers.

In 1970, there were approximately 40,000 Bush Negroes in Surinam.

*** Heydays

It was in the second half of the nineteenth century that the hinterland of the Guianas became a focus of international economic interest with the discovery of gold. Although deposits were scattered widely over Surinam and French Guiana, they were mainly to be found in the interior which is covered

by the dense South American rain forest. So transport for the gold-diggers had to follow the rivers flowing to the Atlantic from the mountaineous region on the border with Brazil. This form of traffic posed serious problems: about 40 to 70 kilometres from the ocean all rivers are blocked by natural barriers of rapids and falls: and worse still, these obstacles repeat themselves every 5 or 10 kilometres. On each trip, a boat crew had to look for a path through the rapids which was different from the one taken in preceding months: water levels were different from one month to the next as a result of variations in rainfall. There was only one group that could unlock the interior for the thousands of gold-diggers that came from all places of the earth in search of El Dorado: the Bush Negroes. They had the means of conveyance adapted to these shallow and treacherous waters: the dug-out canoe. Only they knew where to go in the continuously shifting meanders of rapids, and they had the nerve and the skill to do so. Their only competitors were the Amerindians, but their numbers were too small to influence conditions on the transport market. Quickly, the Bush Negroes gained a monopoly over river transport. They used it to exact high wages and high freight prices. The best way to bring out their strong economic position is to compare it with that of the elite among the Creole workers in Paramaribo, the capital. Creoles under contract with gold companies or balata bleeders considered themselves fortunate if they earned two florins (approximately $0.80) a day, well above what other labourers in Paramaribo could hope to get. Around 1900, it was impossible to employ a Bush Negro for such wages; employers were tucky if they could hire him for double that amount. The income of the Bush Negro boat owner was truly astonishing, in contemporary terms. Between 1880 and 1920, the average income of these entrepreneurs seldom fell below 2,500 florins ($1000) per annum, and for many years was well above 3,000 florins ($1200) (De Beet and Thoden van Velzen 1977).

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-8.jpg][Map 1: Gaan Tata Cult and Christian Mission Posts (c.1900), Surinam]]

An appreciation of the fortunes these entrepreneurs earned is one important step in the argument. But to understand the rise of the Gaan Tata movement, it is even more important to consider the radical changes that had taken place in the mode of production. Formerly, before 1880, Bush Negroes were predominantly lumber workers. In large numbers, they had left their villages on the Tapanahoni to settle in permanent villages or temporary bush camps

along the banks of the Commewijne, Cottica and Courmotibo rivers. They either had fixed places of residence, or stayed long enough at one place, to be accompanied by their wives and children. Often, a number of matrilineal relatives made the move of residence to the Cottica region together. The lumber workers clung together because they regularly needed help for hauling tree trunks to the river banks. This was an ideal economic underpinning for the ideology of the corporate matrilineal group with its stress on mutual sharing and responsibility; it also meant a boost for the distributive mechanisms for the levelling of income differences which had been part of Bush Negro culture for more than 200 years.

River transport altered the organization of work considerably. Between Albina and St. Laurent at the mouth of the Maroni River on the one hand, and the main gold fields of the Lawa on the other, lie 270 kilometres of river; to the rich gold fields of the Inini the distance was even greater: 350 kilometres. A Bush Negro who set out to work as a river carrier did not need the help of many relatives: the services of one or two sons or sister's sons would be quite enough. He could also team up with one adult kinsman or a friend and the boat crew would be completed. He did not any longer depend on the assistance of his matrilineal kin; quite the contrary, they had become a liability. Thus, the entrepreneurs could amass small fortunes, while there was hunger and deprivation in many villages of the Tapanahoni River.

The Gaan Tata cult was sparked off almost simultaneously with the first gold rush in the Lawa-Maroni basin (1885–1888). As we have seen, the thousands of gold-diggers that came from all over the world, were willing to pay incredibly high prices for transport to the Dorado.[28] Elders, who were no longer strong enough to carry heavy equipment through the rapids, and some spirit mediums, could siphon off some of this new wealth through the Gaan Tata oracles (Morssink 1934). As part of Gaan Tata's commandments, the entrepreneurs were given a set of standards that proved their usefulness in contacts between Bush Negroes from various areas and with different cultural backgrounds; the cult, for example, gave religious sanction to peacefulness: even the shedding of a single drop of blood could arouse Gaan Tata's wrath. The priests also guaranteed the moral stature of its believers by subjecting them to an ordeal. Thus, the residents of villages and bush camps along the 'traffic lanes' could invite the boatsmen to spend the night with them without any risk. But larger than the threat from the external enemy,

loomed that from within the once close-knit kin group, the matrilineage. Gaan Tata priests assured the entrepreneurs that their God would take care of any envious relative who had turned his eyes on them. Significantly, any boatsman who established a good relation with the Gaan Tata oracles through timely presents and acts of deference—soliciting help in case of illness—could rest assured that his reputation would be protected. Any accusation of witchcraft or other malevolent acts directed at these ‘friends of the oracle’ would be declared null and void at these centres of communication, the only ones in the Bush Negro society.

Other clues for our understanding of the Gaan Tata cult come from looking at the wider political scene of which these Bush Negro communities formed part. The land to the southeast between the Lawa and Tapanahoni rivers had been contested by France and The Netherlands, until it was allocated by arbitration to the Dutch in 1891. Yet relationships between the two colonial administrations were to remain uneasy for a long time, both after all shared the Maroni-Lawa basin, rich with gold. The Dutch considered it vital that there be cooperation between them and the Djuka in particular, for control of areas where colonial officials seldom penetrated. Harmonious relations were dented somewhat by too obvious Djuka sabotage of mission schools and by their resistance to Dutch exploration of the borderland with Brazil in 1904 and 1907 (Franssen Herderschee 1905; De Goeje 1908). But before the great strike of the Bush Negro boatmen in 1921, the overall picture remained one of calculated but usually satisfactory partnership.[29] Founders and early leaders of the Gaan Tata cult, such as the Djuka tribal chief Oseisie, and to a lesser extent also Agumasakka, felt entitled to remuneration and sought, first of all, to secure favours from the colonial administration: they were taking care of Dutch interests in the interior. Indeed, on several occasions, cult leaders and headmen of the Djuka Bush Negroes had cooperated with the Dutch in attempts to curb the price rises of the freight carriers, which the gold companies considered excessive. Moreover, against the missions, the Gaan Tata priests were usually on the defensive, preferring a modus vivendi to open war.[30] Thus an external enemy, the colonial administration or the missions, was not the prime target of the cult. The cult was directed at eradicating an internal evil, witchcraft, that was felt to dog the steps of the nouveaux riches. Society should be purged of its hidden enemies, the witches or ‘traitors within the gates’ (Mayer 1970: 60). This was the matrix of economic and political conditions in which the Gaan Tata cult arose. We shall later see how deeply the theology and basic ethics of the cult

were influenced by these conditions. But first we will present a brief account of the spread of the cult and its centralization.

*** The spread of a regional cult and its centralization

The new cult orginated around 1885 to the southeast in the interior among the Djuka in the valley of the Tapanahoni River, had its first successes in Djuka settlements in the coastal plain in 1891, but soon made inroads into the territory of other tribal groups as well. There was at least one western village of Saramaka which had accepted Gaan Tata worship before 1892 (Albitrouw 1892–1896; Albitrouw + 1915), but it seems likely that other Saramaka villages had also gone over to Gaan Tata at a very early stage.[31] The Gaan Tata priests had even more dramatic successes in 1892 and 1893 in the far west in the villages of the Matawai, who had earlier been the first to be converted to Christianity; and in 1895 also in the far west, even the small and remote group of Kwinti came under the spell of Gaan Tata (Kraag 1894–1896). Right from the beginning, a stronghold of Gaan Tata in the northwest was the village of Santigron, which had a mixed population of Djuka, Saramaka and a few Matawai. It was from here that Gaan Tata's advocates travelled south to Matawai villages in 1892 and 1893. Its location near the coast and less than fifteen kilometres from the capital of Surinam, Paramaribo, made Santigron a place of pilgrimage for many Creoles in the city who heard about the new powerful god (De Ziel 1973: 40). Special expeditions were organized by Christian missions to preach against the 'false God' and undo the impact of Gaan Tata's message on their Matawi following (BHW 1895: 12–42). But despite their efforts to wipe out the cult, they were only partly successful; a quarter of a century later Gaan Tata was still worshipped in secret in a few Matawai villages.[32]

In its heyday the cult had a regional organization which kept its leaders in contact with one another. In the 189O's the leading priests at the regional centres on the Tapanahoni river kept in touch with believers on the Surinam River and its tributaries (NB 1904: 255) and sent messages to their junors, priests such as Brokohamaka, at the northeast's main centre on the Cottica River. In their turn, these northeastern priests were in communication with others in the northwest at Santigron (NB 1892: 574) and in the west at Kriki-Pandasi on the Sara Creek (MBB 1893: 181). Even in the 1920's, there were

still lines of communication with Sara Creek villagers and with a Saramaka village on the Pikin Rio tributary of the Suriname (Junker 1923).

The organization of the cult was centralized and hierarchical. Bush Negroes from other rivers came to the centre on the Tapanahoni, not the other way round. The hierarchy was also asserted through the constant flow of tribute towards the Tapanahoni shrines. In 1894, every settlement on the Cottica and Commewijne rivers, which boasted of a village headman, had to pay a special tax of 128 florins ($51) to the Gaan Tata priests of the Tapanahoni (MBB 1895: 53). In 1917, a small Saramaka village paid 320 florins for the right to open a Gaan Tata shrine, an enormous sum of money at that time, more than what most labourers in Paramaribo would earn in a whole year (Junker 1925: 154). That money was sent directly to the Tapanahoni River and the Djuka village of Dritabiki, then the main place of worship for Gaan Tata. Significantly, not all that was owed Gaan Tata was paid, at least not immediately. It was reported to the colonial administration (Junker 1923) that at least 19 Djuka from Sara Creek villages were heavily in debt to Gaan Tata priests at Dritabiki. Even some Christians in the area were helping to collect the money so that the curse of Gaan Tata, then threatening their matrilineal group, might be bought off. Many of the debtors were living in poverty with not enough food to eat. In 1923, the most prestigious of the village headmen in the Sara Creek area was held responsible for the collection of these debts. The threat was: If payment did not arrive, Gaan Tata would kill him! (Ibid.). Even more important for our understanding of the dominant position of the centre, was the obligation to bring the legacies of witches to the Tapanahoni shrines (MITT. 1896: 76). Leerdam, writing in 1957, but probably referring to a much earlier period, noted that the effects of the dead who had been found guilty of witchcraft were with great difficulty transported from the Sara valley to Dritabiki. Instead of crossing the watershed between the Sara and Tapanahoni, which was too arduous with fully loaded boats, they followed the Sara and Suriname rivers downstream, then east along the Cottica, crossing the watershed to eastern Surinam, and finally upstream again along the Maroni and Tapanahoni rivers. And all the time they had to be on their guard not to lose or break a single object on their long journey, while hauling their boats through the rapids and’carrying the goods over slippery stones at difficult spots.

Although there were many Gaan Tata shrines and oracles left in the 1960’s, worship was on the wane among the Saramaka and had disappeared almost completely from the Matawai villages. Moreover, there was hardly any communication between the centre (Tapanahoni) and remaining outposts (Santigron and Totikampu on the Saramacca, Agiti-Ondro on the Cottica, Dangogo on the Pikin Rio and a few other places). The authority of the tribal chief who was also high priest of the Gaan Tata oracle, was recognized in theory but not in practice (cf. Kbbben 1976). The cult’s decline and fractionization was fundamental: no longer did the Djuka from the Sara Creek, Commewijne or Cottica rivers (i.e. from the central, north, and northeast areas) take pains to bring the possessions of the witches across numerous rapids and falls to lower these in front of the Gaan Tata priests at Dritabiki on the Tapanahoni River. In the central and northern sectors, around villages such as Santigron, Agiti-Ondro and probably also Dangogo, vigorous but parochial cults survived. Nowadays, among the Kwinti of the Coppename River, the process of fractionization has reached the point where the small group of Gaan Tata adherents even deny the Djuka origin of their parochial cult (Personal Communication, Chris de Beet). On the Tapanahoni religious life had all the appearances of normalcy with the Gaan Tata oracles at Dritibiki and Granbori unchallenged. That was the situation in the 1960’s to which I shall return at the end of this paper.

*** Theology

The corner stones of Bush Negro religion are four, five or sometimes six pantheons, each independent of the other. A supreme deity is recognized whose role is seen as so restricted that we may safely speak of a deus otiosus. at regular intervals throughout the history of the Bush Negroes, this ‘traditional’ cosmology is challenged by a Great Deity or High God cult. Central to this alternative world view is a supreme deity who is active in the world and does interfere in human affairs. Man’s aim in life, first and foremost, is to find favour in the eyes of this new deity, who will protect his faithful followers from other supernatural powers and dangers. His commands are rather specific, and when his demands are met, such as refraining from witchcraft, man can count on divine grace.

This view of man’s destiny is radically different from the traditional conception, which makes success and harmony hinge on a proper compromise that man has to find between the claims of diverse supernatural agencies. In various ways, this Great Deity (Gaan Gadu) cult suppresses or contravenes traditional forms of religious behaviour, such as spirit possession. The cult strikes against the vested interests of ‘traditional’ religion. Each wave of Great Deity fervour is accompanied by a radicalization of attitudes; feelings of inadequacy and remorse over past failures express themselves in acts of iconoclasm and neglect of daily economic and social routines.

The Gaan Tata cult is one of many Great Deity of Gaan Gadu movements in Bush Negro history. Gaan Tata, also known as Gaan Gadu, Bigi Gadu, Massa Jehovah, Gwang wella or Bakaa (European or Outsider)[33] Mitt 1895: 52), is the God that led the Djuka out of slavery and guided them in their battles with the colonial mercenaries. In the 188O’s, with the fears of witchcraft steadily rising, he was called upon to safeguard his people. But it was believed that he would only protect those who were pure in heart. They had to enter into a covenant with him by drinking a potion (Swell). This was the religion’s main sacrament and ordeal: those who survived proved themselves to be the faithful worthy of God’s protection; those who died were the witches. There was a marked preoccupation with the danger of witchcraft and most ritual was concerned with it.

However, the vindictiveness of this new deity was a familiar phenomenon in Bush Negro religion, and a characteristic he shared with many deities of ‘traditional’ cosmology such as avenging spirits (Hurault 1961: 221–235; Price 1973; Thoden van Velzen 1966b). More unfamiliar was the fact that this High God, like Jehovah, not only scrutinized their deeds but followed their thinking and feeling as well. He was the God “that looked down into their hearts" and from whom no evil thoughts could be hidden. Punishment would be meted out to those who nourished feelings of envy, hatred and resentment: these states of mind seduce the individual to employ witchcraft. Along with the commandment “Thou shalt not commit witchcraft”, there were other moral injunctions, prohibiting suicide, physical aggression and upholding the integrity of cultural institutions that markedly set off Bush Negro culture from those of other ethnic groups in Surinam. The emphasis

the Gaan Tata priests placed on the rules of menstrual seclusion, is a case in point. At the same time, it should be stressed that the Gaan Tata cult acquired surprisingly few anti-white or even anti-missionary features. With great success, Gaan Tata's priests succeeded in hiding.rites and holy places from the eyes of the outsiders, but they never preached militancy against the whites. This was a corollary to the exigencies of common interests between Djuka Bush Negroes and colonial administration, as indicated above.

These moral demands also aimed at underpinning peace and cooperation ii. a wide region and among larger groups than lineage and village. The good man no longer was merely a good kinsman or neighbour perhaps, a man who fulfilled all obligations and was loyal to his kith and kin. Virtue could now be defined according to a universally valid standard: the good individual is not corrupted by the evil powers of witchcraft. Successful submission to a poison ordeal, a drink from the sacred potion, proved his purity and he could now move freely in wider circles.

Theology and ethics remained basically unchanged in the central sector of the cult along the Tapanahoni river before the new parochial cult arose (see Thoden van Velzen and Van Wetering 1975) and even after the Gaan Tata cult declines and became fractionized into a number of local congregations. However, the edge of iconoclasm had worn off. The major moral norms, those prohibiting witchcraft, suicide and the infliction of serious physical harm, were upheld as vigorously as in the early years. But some transgressions no longer were counted as sins against Gaan Tata: adultery, for example, came to be treated as a purely secular offence. Apart from the mild disdain shown by Gaan Tata priests to other manifestations of religiosity, such as fits of spirit possession, Gaan Tata lore was welded into perfect unity with traditional beliefs. Nevertheless, to a high priest from the cult's central sector, the Gaan Tata ritual that others performed elsewhere seemed to be a lapse into error. After one of the last of the high priests had occasion to visit the Cottica River and one of the cult's few remaining outposts, he publicly complained about the many ways his colleagues had strayed from the true path of Gaan Tata worship. He mentioned some examples: offerings were made at the wrong shrines; liquor was used for libations at the most holy places while it should have been beer ("that biting, burning stuff at such a holy place!"). At the same time, he confessed that

there was very little he could do about it: “People from the Cottica are headstrong, they don’t listen to me, later they will agree that I was right, but then it may be too late!” The process of fractionization had gone too far to reverse.

*** Allocation of resources and internal distribution

The boatmen brought about an enormous influx of resources into Djuka society. However, there were very few possibilities for investment open to these entrepreneurs. To acquire more land made little sense: land was an open resource, readily available, but the labour force that could be hired was small and, above all, the costs of exporting agricultural products over hundreds of miles, over rapids and falls, would be prohibitive. The only investment that made sense was the replacement, every few years, of the big dug-out canoe; however, the 200 guilders required for the purchase were but a small percentage of what could be earned within that period of time. To marry more women was another possible investment, but it was a risky policy because it meant incurring cumbersome obligations towards each wife’s matrilineage. This may have been an important inducement for many Bush Negro entrepreneurs to marry Creole women from the coast. What usually happened was that the entrepreneur saved his money by burying it in bottles in the ground, spent his money on luxury goods for ostentatious display or— less important in quantitative terms—bought presents for elders in positions of power and influence.

Given this evidence that the possibilities for entrepreneurial investments were extremely limited, we should now devote our attention to the societal mechanisms of resource distribution, to levelling practices and to groups that controlled the internal flow of resources. Two of these groups need to be discussed: the traditional association of the gravediggers and the priests of Gaan Tata. The questions posed are: to what extent and in what ways did these groups profit from the new affluence and what did this signify for the position of Gaan Tata as a regional cult?

One of the most important institutions of the Gaan Tata cult was the confiscation of the legacies of all those who had died at the behest of this

wrathful deity. The traditional inquest into death was the basis on which the decision was taken whether or not the goods of the dead had to be cleansed and then confiscated as God’s cargoes. The core of the inquest was the ancient West African tradition of ‘carrying the corpse’ (Rattray 1927: 167–174), kept alive by Surinam’s Bush Negroes. The corpse was tied to a litter and carried on the heads of two bearers through the village. Questions were put to the deceased’s spirit by elders following the bier. The spirit replied through the bearers’ movements. The new element was that the Gaan Tata priests were not satisfied with answering the question of cause—which supernatural agency or what person killed the deceased; they also insisted on receiving a verdict on his moral character: each death was then classified as either a witch’s death (wist dede), a sinner’s death (misi dede) or a respectable death (jooka dede). It was only the property of the ‘respectable’ dead that did not have to become a God’s cargo. In 1962, as a result of these inquiries, seven out of every ten dead were stigmatized as witches (wisiman); of the remaining three, two were posthumously condemned as sinners against the laws of Gaan Tata, and only one allowed a ‘respectable death’.

The inquest that diagnosed the cause of death and determined the moral character of the deceased, was supervised by the association of gravediggers (oloman). As these posthumous verdicts were of obvious economic and social importance, we need to discuss the position of the gravediggers and their relation to the Gaan Tata priests in some detail.

During adolescence Djuka men have a choice between two associations: they can join the gravediggers or the coffin-makers (kisiman). The task of the last association was limited to what the name suggests. The coffinmakers had little work to do because ‘sinners’ and ‘witches’ were not entitled to a coffin; their corpses were left unburied at reserved spots in the jungle (witches) or put in a shallow grave (sinners). Thus, the coffin-makers convened only after the demise of a ‘respectable’ person. While making a coffin, gravediggers and coffin-makers indulged in horseplay at each other’s expense, and in sham attacks; and they attempted to get as large as possible a share from the communal meal at the end of a day’s work.

The gravediggers had many more responsibilities: they attended to the internment of the deceased and took charge of the ritual for the dead. From their ranks, they selected the bearers of the corpse and the interrogators of the deceased’s spirit. Immediately after a demise, gravediggers from the village where it occurred, and from neighbouring villages, would meet. Even gravediggers from far-away places who happened to be visiting or passing through were expected to participate. Within a couple of«hours after the demise, work would start. Usually, there would be two stints of carrying the corpse. Relatives of the deceased were invited to share in the tasks of carrying and interrogating. In this way, later charges of fraud were preempted by letting the relatives share in the responsibility of the verdict.

On the surface, relationships within the association of gravediggers appear strongly egalitarian, but a closer inspection shows that some held key positions. These leaders or bosses (basi), as they were called, assisted by a few elders selected from the relatives of the deceased, formed the committee that supervised the interrogation. This same body was also responsible for the decisive communique issued after the carrying of the corpse.

Within the arena of power, the bosses of the gravediggers were in no way competitors with the Gaan Tata priests. The committees could only convene for specific reasons — burial and death rites — often at unexpected moments, and on each occasion these bodies were differently constituted. Thus, although the decisions taken were important, the bosses could not develop strategies or even policies and therefore did not form a power group that could stand up to the Gaan Tata priests. Moreover, their political position was far from enviable. To prevent charges of fraud from the bereaved relatives, who could and often did accuse them of playing into the hands of the Gaan Tata priests, was one of their concerns. To prevent being blamed by the Gaan Tata oracle was equally pressing. In many cases, there was a chance that one or more ot the bosses would either be a Gaan Tata priest or an elder sufficiently associated with Gaan Tata’s oracle to be partisan. The latter were apt to remember dubious statements, signs of hesitancy on the part of the bearers at certain questions, many months after the inquest had taken place. In order to escape the dilemma, the bosses of the gravediggers often clouded their statements with oblique phrasing, or, by clever wording, presented verdicts that allowed for later refutation by the Gaan Tata oracle

(Thoden van Velzen 1975). For all these reasons, the association of gravediggers could not develop into a power group that would grow in importance as more and more resources flowed into Djuka society, nor were they to gain considerable emoluments from this position. Before turning to the only other group that controlled the internal flow of resources, the Gaan Tata priests, we first need to discuss some levelling practices that have been part of Bush Negro religion for centuries, i.e. the costly death rites. This is necessary, because they affected the life chances of the regional cult considerably.

There is a sequence of death rites, which are held at fixed stages after the death of any adult. The burial ritual which often lasts for five or six days, or even longer, is only a first stage. Then the gravediggers and coffin-makers have to be offered meals and gifts; and the dancers at nightly ceremonial occasions are regaled with refreshments. Moreover, the deceased should be honoured with clothes that are pushed into the roomy coffin. Three days after the burial there is another ritual, which again is repeated three months later. Both are accompanied by libations, and the ceremonial distribution of drink and food for the community. The relatives of the bereaved carry the brunt of it. Most expensive is the celebration closing the mourning period at some twelve or eighteen months after death. At this anniversary the feasts may last for more than a week and include a banquet for the ghosts of the ancestors, a large-scale distribution of food and daily libations. Anniversary expenditures run into hundreds of guilders. At the turn of the century, Spalburg (1899: 41) estimated the expenses as ‘usually above 300 florins’ ($120). Furthermore, there are always reasons for performing an extra ritual to mollify the spirit of the deceased: perhaps a lack of piety shown by the surviving spouse or a remarriage without proper ritual care. Whatever the case may be, the conclusion is easily arrived at that a great wrong had been done to the deceased during his lifetime so that a conciliatory ritual to placate the ghost is now called for. All told, enormous amounts of resources, in time and in money, are spent on these death rites.

The Gaan Tata cult introduced additions and changes to these rites which had.far-reaching consequences. Not only were the death rites for ‘witches’ and ‘sinners’ made less elaborate and less costly. Their deaths ceased to be occasions for economic transactions exclusively within local and kinship relations. Their deaths provided occasions for the removal of goods from

these relations, rather than for the consumption of food and the redistribution of durables primarily among relatives. The goods became regional in their significance. The relatives of a witch or sinner were obliged to bring his effects as God’s cargoes to the cult’s regional shrines situated in the village of Dritabiki on the Tapanahoni River. During one year in the later period of the cult, in 1962, 35 of such cargoes were received by the Gaan Tata priests. At first sight, this series of rites appears to be a levelling institution par excellence. The obvious course for the priests would be to try and lay their hands on the effects of the wealthiest among the deceased, thereby levelling most economic differences but creating another rift within Djuka society— the priesthood versus the laymen. But is this what actually happened; were these the consequences for Djuka society? An examination of the daily routines of the Gaan Tata priesthood shows that the answer should be a qualified ‘no’.

First, part of the God’s cargo was returned to the relatives, approximately 30 to 40%. Of the remainder, many valuables and all cash were kept by the priests. But an astounding amount of goods, part of it valuable, was left to rot at Santi Goon, Gaan Tata’s secret shrine in the bush. This clearly demonstrates that they had not taken the God’s cargoes solely for personal enrichment or an income for themselves, their favourites or the rest of the cult’s staff. They clearly had set aside a large portion for Gaan Tata. Purchased goods—household utensils, Victorian bric-a-brac bought by the early entrepreneurs, mantlepiece decorations, gold chains, shoes, plastic wares—were abandoned. Great heaps of goods in varying states of decay remained from the beginning till the last days of the cult. In 1972, adherents of the new prophetic cult salvaged some of the durables and brought them back in boat loads for redistribution.

Secondly, we should not ignore the fact that the relatives of the bereaved and the gravediggers often surrendered the effects voluntarily, even thrust them upon the Gaan Tata priests so that these would discharge them of the dangerous legacy of ‘the traitor within the gate’ and its polluting effects. Admittedly the evidence for the priests’ greed is unequivocal. In many instances I know of, they brought pressure to bear upon both gravediggers and elders of the village concerned to change the verdict of the inquest away from ‘a respectable death’. But many villages were too far away to be effectively controlled; political opposition to the religious establishment was

strong at times; and the priests of Gaan Tata also had a reputation to protect. In brief, not all God's cargoes that arrived at Dritabiki came as a result of applied political pressure or even in anticipation of it.

Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, is the information on the social categories of persons that the cargoes came from. Van Wetering (1973): 59) provides some quantitative facts. Of the 116 deaths (59 men, 57 women) that occurred between 1960 and 1970, and on which information is available, only 39 posthumously obtained the verdict of respectability. And of these, only 13 were women, which makes the relation between 'woman' and 'witch' statistically significant (Van Wetering 1973: 59, 286). As women are generally much poorer than men, these data should caution against any quick conclusion of 'levelling'. Moreover, it has been my impression that village headmen and wealthy elders usually did not meet with divine disgrace upon their deaths. But to predict at the death of an old woman what the verdict would be was not a hard task: a witch.

Thus, the priests by not being able to touch some of the bigger legacies, had no prominent levelling role. In fact, they sustained the entrepreneurs by protecting their reputation at the oracles and condemning poorer relatives for any gossip or slander aimed at these boatmen. In this way, they shielded them effectively from levelling coalitions within the village. Later, the new prophetic cult of Akalali would render the same services to the labour elite in pfesent-day Surinam. In conclusion, we can say that Gaan Tata religion did little to bridge the gap between rich and poor; it preserved and sustained divisions within their society.

*** Gaan Tata's Bulwark on the Tapanahoni

In the 1960's the parochial Gaan Tata cult of the Tapanahoni seemed little affected by the great changes that had taken place in Surinam's interior after 1925. There were many oracles in the 30 villages of the Tapanahoni with their 6,000 inhabitants, but the Gaan Tata oracles of Granbori and Dritabiki held sway. Certainly in Dritabiki at least, things did appear 'as of old'.[34] A group of about ten priests gave direction to the operation of the Gaan Tata oracle and they regularly convened for that purpose. During 1962, the oracle

was consulted on approximately 125 days regarding a total of 424 cases. The clientele of the Dritabiki oracle flocked from most Tapanahoni villages, a sprinkling came from other Djuka areas and some were Saramaka or Boni. Most were ill, and wished to learn the reasons for their misfortune and what could be done about it. Although usually an illness was attributed to supernatural causes, the priests often managed to link these causes to lack of responsibility or even complicity of living persons. Sometimes, this sequence was reversed in that a person was ordered to appear before the oracle, where soon the priests proclaimed that their client's life was threatened by evil forces almost impossible to ward off at this late moment. The client concerned could do little but beg the priests to help him survive. This assistance was never withheld and the honorarium demanded seemed trifling in comparison to the dangers averted, or at least such was the official view. But let us first examine the workings of the oracle.

In the Gaan Tata cult as in other Bush Negro cults, the deity made his wishes known through oracles. Just as a deceased's spirit replied to questions at an inquest through the movements of bearers carrying his corpse tied to a litter, so too Gaan Tata replied to questions through the movements of the bearers of his oracle. This was a small bundle tied to a plank which two Gaan Tata priests carried. The bundle presumably contained sacred objects such as hair and nail parings of famous ancestors, and it was revered as the tabernacle of Gaan Tata. It was hidden from view by long draperies which touched the ground when the ends of the plank rested on the heads of two bearers. Other priests standing in front of the bearers put questions to the oracle. Gaan Tata replied through the movements of the bearers in this way, a forward move signified an affirmative, a backward or sideways one a negative answer. Wild, chaotic movements indicated the High God's vivid displeasure. This 'dialogue' between god and priests always took place at some distance from the laymen so that they could not overhear what was being discussed. A high priest was in charge of the oracle: after receiving a whispered report from his subordinate priests, he issued a final communique to the meeting of elders. As a rule, the oracle sessions were held in public in front of the temple, an ordinary but bigger hut where sacred objects were stored. At the main oracle of Dritabiki, the elders of that village, and those of a few surrounding villages, were expected to attend these sessions.

Although an oracular session usually started with a patient soliciting for assistance, opportunities for political manoeuvres often presented themselves. Take, for instance, the case of a village headman disliked by the chief for his independent stance in many political confrontations. His wife had fallen ill, and although the case did not look very serious, he had consented to escort her to the oracle at Dritabiki. There the priests had a surprise in store for him. Those charged with interpreting the movements of the bearers, reported that the illness of the headman's wife was of the gravest nature; a diagnosis that had to be taken seriously although all present at the oracle could see the woman walking cheerfully through the village. Subsequently, the village headman was blamed for being the source of all suffering: his irresponsible neglect of his wife's ancestors had caused their wrath, after which the ghosts in retaliation had visited sickness upon the woman. The priest .charged the headman a stiff fee for treatment. The position of the village headman was undermined and he was punished for not being sufficiently compliant.

Roles of critical importance at the oracle, such as front bearer of the holy bundle, were often given to a high priest's personal dependents or fugitive clients. Every high priest was surrounded by such people who had left their native villages in order to settle with a protector. Some stayed a few years, others prolonged their stay indefinitely. In some cases elders forced to flee their villages as witches were, a few years later, in a position to judge the actions of their former prosecutors: they, the fugitives, were carrying the tabernacle of Gaan Tata. But most of the clients had a much more humble task to perform. The female clients kept the high priest's official residence clean, emptied chamber pots and did other household chores. Most other clients prepared and cultivated his gardens. If the high priest needed volunteers for a corvee at short notice, he usually recruited them from among his clients. The high priest kept this small, but loyal labour force till the middle of 1972, when the new cult had taken over. Fugitives then fled to Njoen Konde, the centre of the new movement and Akalali's village.

Besides their share in the God's cargoes, priests enjoyed other forms of income, such as fees. These were seldom exorbitant and for religious and medical treatment amounted to one bottle of rum, four pieces of cloth and twelve bottles of beer. The retail price of these goods in the Taponahoni region was about 25 Surinam florins (approximately $13). Occasionally,

instead of payment in kind, money was demanded; sometimes as much as 32 Surinam guilders (approximately $17). In 1962, 62 fees were imposed but only 30 actually collected. There was no pressure to pay straightaway: a debt paid two or three years later was just as welcome. But if some one returned to the oracle after a couple of years with an unpaid debt for previous treatment, it was virtually certain that the outstanding debt would be indicated as the cause of this new affliction. In serious cases, the priests usually demanded an extra payment along with the usual fee for a consultation. Four litres of rum was the normal fee which had to be paid before a consultation could be held. But it did happen that the priests settled for less or even waived the session costs altogether.

One may wonder what the priests did with the large quantities of rum they received. Some of it went to the storage room in Gaan Tata's temple. A part was consumed immediately: the priests gave one glass of rum to each of those present at the oracular sessions, but only when the last case for that day had been dealt with. The elders regarded this as a small compensation for the time spent at the meetings. Moreover, the high priest regularly presented his collaborators with a few litres of rum to enable them to entertain in a proper manner the numerous elders and patients who called on them. Additionally, a great quantity of rum was earmarked for the corvees organized for dignitaries such as the tribal chief and a few of the prominent priests.

Special taxes were sometimes imposed. In 1962, for example, the priests informed the faithful that they felt Gaan Tata punished his people too severely. The priests were quick to add that they would not object to a harsh and merciless treatment of witches. Their concern was with the respectable citizen who had suffered an occasional lapse and was likely to have his life taken away by their vindictive God. The high priest intended to mollify the Great Deity. Therefore, he proposed to the village headmen that each of the thirteen matrilineal clans of the Djuka on the Tapanahoni should donate 32 Surinam guilders ($18) for this purpose. The money was collected at the end of 1962 and handed over to the high priest who pocketed it and, I suspect, used it for his own convenience.

*** Gaan Tata's Decline

Some of the forces that had destroyed the fabric of the Gaan Tata movement as a regional cult, were also at work undermining the parochial cult of the 1960’s. Let us examine these more closely.

First, the resource basis of the Djuka and other Bush Negroes, the total of all forms of income taken together, rapidly melted away in the 1920’s. The gold rush was over at the beginning and the balata boom at the end of that decade. As a consequence, there was less money to be tapped by medicinemen, spirit mediums or the priesthood of Gaan Tata. All who had lived off these entrepreneurs were then in trouble. Fewer patients came to the oracle-, they brought less money; gone also were the rich friends of the oracle who had bought them such handsome presents. As a consequence, the priests no longer had the wherewithal to add force to their arguments or even to send delegations and messengers to the Gaan Tata outposts.

As the impoverishment of the region grew, centrifugal tendencies became stronger. The question “why pay tribute to the far-away Tapanahoni, what can we expect to gain from them?” had been asked before, but was now posed with more force. Sometime in the early 193O’s, the Djuka of the northeastern area, the Cottica, stopped bringing God’s cargoes to the Tapanahoni. Other areas rapidly followed suit and soon developed their own organisation for the cleansing, redistribution and dumping of the God’s cargoes.

Although many Djuka and other Bush Negroes continued to work as freight carriers, the decline of river transport had set in around 1925. In 1921 (Koloniaal Verslag), it was mentioned for the first time that Bush Negroes were willing again to resume their old occupation of lumber work. This trend must have accelerated during the late 1920’s and the 1930’s with the consequence that the numbers of those who relied on the norms and ethics of the Gaan Tata cult for free movement among other Bush Negroes, were dwindling. General impoverishment tended to have the same influence. As the rift between rich and poor grew less significant, witchcraft fears allayed. With poverty spreading, the number of Bush Negroes who lived

in terror of the malevolence of the envious kinsman or neighbour, declined. Now, there was less need for an anti-witchcraft movement.

After 1930, only a trickle of money and goods reached the main Gaan Tata oracles. Throughout the cult's old region there was a drastic reduction in income. Moreover, where there was heavy expenditure on ritual costs, this went for a community's death rites rather than for the specialized services of the Gaan Tata priests.

The priests adjusted to this unknown austerity by lowering their sights, for example, by demanding smaller fees. But-they also had recourse to measures that were profitable in the short run but detrimental when seen over a longer time period. The priests began reducing the number of their staff and they also paid less to those who stayed on. This new generation of priests proved to be less tractable than their well-paid predecessors had been. For example, it happened occasionally that a front bearer of the holy bundle refused to perform his duties. This put the high priest in a difficult position because front bearers were considered specialists. In 1962, there were only two of them and refusal to work occurred when one of them had left for a short period, with the high priest's permission. More common but equally costly, were the repeated absences of periods of leave that a high priest could not refuse to grant. This created a vicious circle. Not being able to pay the priests fully meant fewer working days, this led to fewer patients and thus less income for the priests.

In order to secure higher incomes, the Gaan Tata priests had recourse to an even more hazardous strategy. As we have seen, the gravediggers were responsible for the inquest into the cause of death and for the verdict on the moral character of the deceased. In the 1960's, the priests put pressure on the gravediggers to give as many verdicts of a sinner's or witch's death as they could, and to resist demands of the relatives that the deceased be recognized as a respectable citizen. In the cluster of villages around the main shrine at Dritabiki it was not particularly difficult to do this. One or more of the gravediggers at the death ritual would either be a Gaan Tata priest or a close associate as an elder at Dritabiki. It was often suspected that these notables acted as spies. Any uncertainty about the reputation of the deceased would be reported back to Dritabiki and this could then lead to a

change of verdict. After the gravediggers had arrived at a judgement, the verdict had to be communicated to Dritabiki. For Dritabiki and neighbouring villages the priests of the oracle knew the proposed verdict even before the relatives were informed and could—and often did—alter it. In 1962, 21 out of 30 deceased were considered witches, 6 were condemned as ‘sinners’ and only three qualified as ‘respectable citizens’. In this way, 27 out of 30 legacies fell to the Dritabiki oracle (Van Wetering 1973: 56). For the whole decade from 1961 to 1970, the number of ‘respectable deaths’ was much higher: 34% against only 10% in 1962. The longer period, however, includes the years aftgr 1964, when the positions of high priest and tribal chief (gaanman) were not held by one man; considerable confusion and rivalry then disrupted the workings of the oracle. Yet, the percentage of legacies confiscated remained amazingly high.

*** A new regional cult?

During the last days of the Gaan Tata cult discontent had spread. Whereas during the early 1960’s it came to the surface in private conversations, malpractices were openly debated in the early 1970’s. In 1972, a prophet, Akalali, launched a new cult. It should not have come as a surprise that he took the institution of the God’s cargoes as his prime target: he pointed this out as the signal abuse of the Gaan Tata priests, the epitomy of corruption. With a few daring manoeuvres, and supported by a considerable following, Akalali put an end to the work of the Gaan Tata priests; he then invited the people of the Tapanahoni to rescue whatever they could from Santi Goon, the cult’s storage place in the bush. The history of this take-over, the reasons for its stunning success, need not detain us here (cf. Thoden van Velzen and Van Wetering 1975). What is pertinent to our theme is not the fact that the parochial cult of Gaan Tata was replaced,[35] but that it was supplanted by a parochial cult with regional ambitions and even some degree of regional success. What prompted the new religious leadership to reach out for the whole of Surinam’s interior, instead of resting on the laurels of its Tapanahoni victories? The reasons, I would submit, are essentially the same as those that caused the rise of the Gaan Tata cult: a massive injection of new resources and new sharp divisions within Bush Negro society which generate anxiety.

Two developments seem relevant. Around 1955, the government of Surinam launched an ambitious programme for the exploration of the interior: air strips were constructed; roads were laid out far into the rain forest to pry it open for lumbering companies; geologists embarked on a systematic survey of the hinterland; a hydro-electric dam was built on the Suriname River. With support of the World Health Organization, a campaign to eradicate malaria in Surinam's interior was launched. Like the gold-diggers of old, the medical doctors of the anti-malaria campaign, the geologists, the engineers all were dependent on the Bush Negroes for transport. Top officials of the departments concerned employed the tribal chiefs as brokers. In this way, many jobs fell to the young relatives of the chief and the Gaan Tata priests at Dritabiki.

Then, in 1963, an even more important development set in; for the first time in Surinam's history the Bush Negroes were given the right to vote in a national election. It soon appeared that the few seats Bush Negroes held in the Staten, Surinam's parliament, were of strategic importance. Their representatives could virtually decide who would rule Surinam: the Hindostani, descendents of contract labourers brought over from India, or the Creoles. Skin colour, or a common cultural heritage, were not enough for the Bush Negroes to decide whom they would choose. More was needed, and it was delivered. New jobs were created; many an elder was promoted to village headman or village assistant, both pf these paid positions. In 1973, the one village of Dritabiki, which has less than 500 inhabitants, had a tribal chief and no fewer than 14 headmen and assistants to guard over its welfare. For many of the younger men at Dritabiki, jobs, had been furnished. On top of this, during the months preceding the elections, representatives from both main parties came to deliver boat loads full of food, liquor and corrugated iron at the landing stages of many Tapanahoni villages.

These goods were not evenly spread over the Bush Negro population. Much of it was pumped through old channels, the political middlemen at Dritabiki: the tribal chief and the priests of Gaan Tata. The flag of the main Creole political party was hoisted over Gaan Tata's oracle. Obesity, cases of high blood pressure, began to take their toll among the well-to-do at Dritabiki. For the people of neighbouring villages, the privileged position of the tribal chief, priests and their relatives was a stone of offence, an open invitation for a take-over bid. Akalali came from a neighbouring village that had taken a

leading part in opposition to Dritabiki before. After the take-over, Surinamese officials, quick to accommodate to the political realities, promoted the prophet to village headman. After the 1973 elections, when the Tapanahoni seat in parliament was lost by the Hindostani coalition, the new Creole government made Akalali a village headman of the first rank (Hoofdkapitein).

We should try to get the wider perspective in view: the new demand for Bush Negro river transport and the massive political patronage were a Surinam-wide phenomenon. Paradoxically, the opening up of the interior had started off its depopulation. The men left for the labour-recruiting centres, in particular to Paramaribo. As a result, a village such as Dritabiki had lost two-thirds of its population. A'change in attitude, a readiness to adjust to coastal ways of life, became notable (Thoden van Velzen 1966: 21). However, a new period of full employment, like that of the gold-rush days, was not to come. The majority of Bush Negro migrants had swelled the ranks of the unemployed proletariat. A new division arose among the Bush Negroes: the employed versus the unemployed and those who went from one part-time job to another. In many ways, the employed occupied the position of a labour aristocracy. This would even hold on a national level; in the 1960's Djuka boatmen working for government services earned twice as much as the Javanese sugar-cane cutters of the coast. The privileged workers jealously guarded their position and were apprehensive about the possible consequences of this new economic rift. It should therefore not come as a surprise that the Akalali cult of the 1970's was again an anti-witchcraft movement. Equally, in line with the earlier position of the Gaan Tata priests, the young employed men who came to the Tapanahoni for the New Year celebrations of 1974, had business to do with Akalali, sporting colourful woollen sweaters, they came in boats driven by outboard motors, a few even in chartered planes, to obtain a certificate that they themselves were not witches and also for protection against witches. Both wishes were satisfied. In the first days of 1974, Akalali screened approximately 200 persons for any signs of witchcraft: none of the afluent young labour migrants who deposited such substantial cash gifts in his coffers, was pointed out as a witch. From the 200, about 15 were set apart as witches, and most of these were old women; none of the male witches had a job, they were destitute people and often ill as well.

Akalali had to cater for the demands of a ‘national’ clientele, Bush Negroes from all tribes in Surinam who were anxious to prove that they were ‘clean’ and who were in want of emotional security and protection against their envious brothers. The traditional social building blocks of society, the matrilineages, were again breaking up. Many Bush Negroes in Paramaribo had shaken off the obligations imposed by these groups, but were still in need of protection and security; Akalali appeared to take care of this and thus the privileged flocked to the new shrines of the Tapanahoni in such great numbers. The great majority of these were Djuka, but invitations soon reached Akalali from other areas in Surinam. In 1973, he spent a number of weeks in Paramaribo’ where hundreds of migrants visited him. In 1974, he travelled to the Djuka of the Cottica area and to the Paramaka to conduct large-scale witch cleansing rites. Early in 1975, he was invited by some Matawai to cleanse the village of their tribal chief, a Christian bulwark, from witchcraft. In 1975, he performed anti-witchcraft rites in some Saramaka villages in the central part of the country. Although these travels outside his Tapanahoni stronghold were not consolidated by the setting up of local branches, the recurring demand for Akalali’s services from various areas made his cult more than a parochial one.

*** Summary

The first stage in the history of the Gaan Tata cult (1885–1925) can be directly linked with the alteration in the mode of production. The Djuka, as most other Bush Negroes, left lumber work for more profitable employment in river transport. This entailed a loss of functional utility for the corporate matrilineal kin group which had proved to be so instrumental in the organisation of work in the lumber camp. As the proximity and assistance of relatives no longer were necessary, kinship obligations became a burden. The new unit of production, the boat crew, consisted of only three men; there were no phases in the production process when larger numbers of workmen were required: smaller work units thus, but not isolated atoms. As the crews moved over vast areas in the river basin, their common interests were peaceful relations with other residents, easy movement among strangers and unstrained relations with the District Commissioner and his assistants. The Gaan Tata movement honoured these instrumental needs by stressing the values of peacefulness, honesty towards employers and rejection of any parochial ideology stressing family, lineage or even tribal interests.

Equally significant, the Gaan Tata priests showed themselves partial to the privileged socio-economic group of that time, the freight carriers. While the gap between wealthy and poor was widening, Gaan Tata's priests saw to the emotional needs of the boatmen by affording them protection against witches. As the Gaan Tata priests controlled the only centres of information on a supra-village level, they could intervene on behalf of their wealthy clientele by upholding their reputation.

For the second phase (1925–1955), the argument gets much more complex. The period began with a steep decline in freight prices, from fl.25 per barrel for the Albina-Lawa trip in 1909 to fl.7 in 1930. More gradually, a diversification in the mode of production took place: many Bush Negroes returned to lumber work, others worked off and on as freight carriers, depending on the sluggish demand. The impoverishment of the freight carriers is the main independent variable for our explanations of developments during the second phase. The diversification,came to reinforce the first factor, but in order to gain a clear view of the main lines of cause and effect, I will ignore it.

The impoverishment of the boatmen had two consequences: (1) the gap between wealthy and poor narrowed as the entrepreneurs saw their income reduced to a fraction of what it had been before; there was now less to fear from the witches as they possessed fewer things people could be envious about. Hence the demand for an anti-witchcraft cult became less pressing. (2) As an immediate result of the dwindling fortunes of the entrepreneurs, the priests saw their income sharply reduced. The high cost of the death rites further squeezed the available resources. The massive dumping of property at the secret bush shrine of Santi Goon, was only the most spectacular way of taking resources out of circulation. The cycle of death rites with the many libations and the huge communal meals also tended to dissipate reserves.

The dependent variable then is the breaking up of the regional cult of Gaan Tata in a number of local congregations. There was less demand for an anti-witchcraft cult, less 'push' from the various areas. There was also less 'pull' as the centre on the Tapanahoni no longer had the power assets to steer

taxes, tribute and clients towards its oracles. As we have seen, they had been forced to abdicate the right to collect and redistribute the God’s cargoes from other Djuka areas, meaning a lower level of income. Very few normal lines of contact between centre and periphery could be maintained. The Gaan Tata priests in the centre were painfully aware of the many deviations from what were considered the standard ritual proceedings in the Tapanahoni area. They did not condone these, but there was nothing they could do to redress the situation. The process of disintegration had gone too far; the economic basis for a healthy regional cult no longer existed.

The third phase (195 5-present) began with a new demand for the specialized services of Djuka boatmen. But full employment, as in the days of the gold rushes, was out of the question; a few hundred Bush Negroes could man all the boats of the various government services working in the interior. The labour demand of the lumbering and bauxite companies of Surinam could only absorb some of the Bush Negroes. The result was the emergence of an unemployed Bush Negro proletariat in Paramaribo; men who settled in the same neighbourhoods as their more fortunate kinsmen, waiting for a job.

The cleavage between wealthy and poor grew wider when the main national parties began vying for the favour of the Bush Negro electorate: new patronage jobs, new village headmen, boat loads full of gifts arrived, but the glut tended to concentrate at certain points in society.

The two basic conditions that gave rise to the Gaan Tata cult are also evident in the new cult of Akalali. The massive migration of Bush Negroes from their old tribal areas to Paramaribo blurred cultural differences: again Bush Negroes had to work and live among strangers. The ethos of the cult had to bridge cultural differences instead of stressing them. But it is partial to one segment in the new socio-economic division that emerged among Bush Negroes: just like the Gaan Tata cult, the Akalali cult supports the successful. The vitality of both cults derived from a clear choice in favour of the privileged.

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abbreviations of the names of missionary journals

BHW: Berichten uit de Heiden-Wereld uitgegeven door het Zendingsgenootschap der Broedergemeente te Zeist

MBB: Missions-Blatt aus der Briidergemeine

MITT: Mitteilungen aus der Brudergemeine

NB: Nachrichten aus der Brudergemeine

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** 5. A Continuing Dialogue: Prophets and Local Shrines among the Tonga of Zambia by Elizabeth Colson

Acknowledgements: This paper is based on field research among Plateau Tonga of Mazabuka District (now divided among Mazabuka, Monze and Choma Districts) and Gwembe or Valley Tonga of Gwembe District. I worked in Mazabuka District, August 1946—September 1947, June 1948—August 1950, and September 1968, and have paid brief visits to friends there over the years. My last visit was in August 1973. My field work among Gwembe Tonga was carried out July 1949, September 1956—September 1957, January 1960, September 1962—September 1963, July—August 1965, 3 days September 1968, July—December 1972, and June—August 1973. I

have drawn on the field notes of Thayer Scudder, my colleague in a long-term study of Gwembe District. His notes date from September 1956—September 1957, September 1962—September 1963, 1967, 1970, May-October 1972, and June—September 1973. Over the years we have discussed the Gwembe data many times until it is now impossible to be sure which of us is responsible for orginating any particular interpretation. Paul Syanemba recorded a diary for us in 1972—73 on which I have drawn. Scudder and Richard Werbner commented on early drafts of this paper.

The research has been supported by various agencies: the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (now the Institute for African Studies in the University of Zambia), the Joint Committee on Africa of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies, National Science Foundation Grant No. GS—3295, the Small Grants Committee of the National Institute of Mental Health, the Kafue Basin Committee, the African Committee of the University of California, the Research Committee of the University of California (Berkeley), and the California Institute of Technology. The California Institute of Technology gave me the rare privilege of serving as a Fairchild Fellow during 1975—76 and so gave the leisure to return to old field notes and to write this paper. The map is at the end, page 136.

*** Cults and their publics

No cult which primarily functions to serve the particular interests of a territorial community on a regular basis can serve a general public unless it radically alters its practice and its constituency: a cult serving a wider constituency on an ad hoc non-exclusive basis may well serve the special purposes of local communities. The two can co-exist and reinforce each other. The cult with universal claims then serves as a further court of appeals when a local cult does not satisfy its adherents. An appeal to such higher authority is subject to public review or at the behest of local officials, which implies that delegations go for consultation with an oracle or other universalistic cult as messengers of a local community and representatives of its power structure. The oracle will be asked to confirm the continuities upon which the local community depends in regulating its life rather than requested to provide guidance in some radical departure from accepted

practice. This was true in ancient Greece where each small city state had its own cult, associated with its fate as a human community, but delegations went to consult the Oracle of Delphi, or perhaps Dodona, which served the entire classical world for many centuries.

The same interplay between local cult and oracle or prophet cult appears today among the Tonga of Zambia. The two cults appeal to the same basic human desires for health and prosperity. They incorporate comparable beliefs about how humans, the natural world, and divinity are interrelated. They share a common vocabulary and much symbolism. By and large they deal in the same kinds of messages. Both reflect the nature of the land the Tonga occupy and their concepts of social order. Yet the two cults remain distinct because they are seen as serving different purposes: each local cult under its custodian is a symbol of the continuity of a particular community, while the oracles and their prophets provide reassurance and guidance in emergency or dilemma to a fluctuating public. Today the economy of central Africa is diversifying, even in rural areas. The prophet cult is responsive to the new interests and many prophets are redefining their role so that their primary mission is to serve individuals rather than communities. The local cult is less able to respond to such diversification. Many local communities no longer have a local shrine or rally to support community rituals linked to agriculture or any other common interest. But in some communities local shrines still exist and elders still gather around them to invoke the associated spirits and assure them of continued respect and support in return for their care of the common interest.

*** The Setting and the Cults

Plateau and Gwembe Tonga occupy much of Zambia’s Southern Province, while Gwembe Tonga also live beyond the Zambezi River and man-made Lake Kariba in northwestern Zimbabwe (Colson 1958, 1960, 1962, 1971; Scudder 1962, 1971). Their terrain varies from the undulating reasonably well-watered plains of the Zambian plateau, through the rugged hills of the Zambezi escarpment, and drops to what was once the floodplain of the Zambezi River and is now Lake Kariba, before rising again through the Zimbabwe escarpment. Altitude varies from between 4,500 and 1,300 feet. Rainfall is highly variable, both locally and from year to year. The highest

average rainfall is recorded at the edge of the escarpments which receive something like 38 inches annually: this drops to 31 inches on the Zambian plateau and to 25 inches in the Zambezi floodplain. As one goes east or west from the escarpment edge, rainfall declines and also becomes more uncertain. In the Zambezi floodplain an annual variation of from less than 15 to more than 30 inches has been recorded. But this was before Lake Kariba altered the microclimate and probably raised rainfall about its shores (Scudder, 1962, p.9).

Language links the Tonga with other communities in Southern and Central Provinces. In the Zimbabwe escarpment, on the other hand, they meet with Shona-speakers. The archaeological record indicates that iron-age settlers arrived in the first millenium with .their crops and livestock (Fagan, 1967). The Tonga may be descended from them although they have also incorporated more recent comers including Shona-speaking migrants from Zimbabwe. Old trade routes which crossed their country once linked them to the Rozwi, Karanga and Korekore states of the Zimbabwe highlands and lower Zambezi.

Whatever the earlier political relationships of Tonga communities with these kingdoms or with the Lozi kingdom of the upper Zambezi, by late nineteenth century they lived in independent polities, most of these no larger than a single neighbourhood inhabited by from 400 to 1,000 people. Each small polity was usually under the aegis of a shrine or shrines (malende or kokalia), whose custodian, usually called a sikatongo (‘person of the old settlement place’), represented the matrilineal descent group of the founder of the shrine and the founder himself. Henceforth I shall refer to such a shrine as a local shrine although elsewhere I have sometimes termed them “earth shrines” because they relate people to the earth they occupy, or “rain shrines” because Tonga emphasize their importance in appeals for rain. I shall call the sikatongo associated with such a shrine a custodian, though again sometimes I have used the term “earth priest” in earlier publications. Frequently the shrine was conceived of as the embodiment of the dwelling of the first couple who by settling in the neighborhood had transformed it from a wilderness and introduced the human routines associated with the building of homesteads and the cultivation of the soil. The shades of the couple then were held to continue to watch over the community they had founded, and in

this case the matrilineal descent group of the wife also had responsibilities in the rituals. Less commonly a local shrine was said to have been initiated by a prophet, but that at his or her death custodianship passed to a matrilineal kinsman or kinswoman rather than to another prophet. In either case the spirit associated with a local shrine usually was called basangu, used also for spirits which speak through a prophet and sometimes also for any spirit. Unlike other such spirits, however, those regarded as originating from first settlers were held to have power only in the specific locality known to them as living men and women. There they were said to “know the country” and to be effective in dealing with it. Otherwise they were merely mizimu, ancestral shades, with power over their own descendants and members of their descent groups.

Local shrine communities were small, reflecting the highly localized nature of the rainfall pattern. Those living only a few miles apart can have very different weather and regulate their planting, weeding, and harvesting by different schedules; and their harvests differ accordingly from year to year. Prophets, on the other hand, are not so confined. Some received delegations from communities as much as a hundred miles from their own location. Prophets were involved in the unbounded social network which linked all parts of Tonga-country and ultimately those in Tonga-country with other parts of Central Africa. Political boundaries provided no convenient grid for organizing social relationships and the spirits associated with prophets did not represent any regional alliances or association with a defined geographical space. People traded, visited, and once raided over many miles, but movement in general was from the Zambezi to the plateaux along an east-west axis since this associated those in different ecological zones, brought access to different resources, and gave the greatest possibility of supplementing local food shortages. By the end of the nineteenth century, men were also going out to work along the same routes which continued to channel the flow of traffic from the Zambezi to the plateaux. That all known territory was subject to some of the same forces was evident from the fact that in some years drought or good rains were general. But if rain fell anywhere it was in the escarpment edges where rose most of the rivers and streams flowing across both the plateau and the Gwembe Valley. Significantly enough, the most important prophets seem to have lived in the high rainfall zones of the escarpments, either in Zambia or Zimbabwe, though minor prophets were scattered everywhere and probably most neighbourhoods contained a prophet or two. The vast majority had purely neighbourhood

reputations and therefore served the same population as the local shrine of the neighbourhood whatever their claims to a wider mission.

*** Shrine Custodians

Custodians had official duties associated with the annual cycle. When officiating in the ritual, they were addressed as basangu although they were not expected to be subject to possession. This distinguished them from prophets who spoke from basangu and sometimes as basangu.

Custodians were expected only to continue routines which had proved effective in dealing with the earth and its forces. They did not exercise political rule or represent their neighbourhoods to other communities. In only a few places was anything comparable to the office of chief in existence. More commonly someone known as ulanyika (“warden of the country“), who might also be a custodian had some relationship to hunting and might claim rights in animals killed in the neighbourhood (Scudder, 1962 (pp. 111–129, 196–197). The de facto political leaders were usually vigorous men who could mobilize a following to dominate a neighbourhood or a number of neighbourhoods, but they created no office and held no ritual role in the community. If no one succeeded in dominating, the political community was a republic of independent homestead heads who acknowledged the ritual guidance of the local shrine custodian and the discipline of knowing that they were all vulnerable from actions that angered the shrine spirits. The Tonga stress the independence of each adult—or at least each adult male—and the autonomy of individual homesteads rather than a hierarchy of authority.

The matrilineal descent groups which regulated marriage, inheritance and succession, and which also provided for self-help, were usually egalitarian in organization. They rarely numbered over forty adults and these were dispersed among a number of neighbourhoods and dependent upon those with whom they intermarried and associated. Each descent group made offerings to its own ancestral shades, but this cult of the shades was distinct from the local shrine cult.

*** Prophets and the Greater Community

Prophets spoke as the vehicles of basangu and could be addressed as basangu or baami ba imvula (“lords of the rain”) in identification with their possessing spirits. Henceforth I shall use basangu specifically for the spirits that “visit” or “enter” prophets. These, unlike the local shrine spirits, were identified as spirits of the wild, or as shades of long dead prophets, or as foreign spirits — thus they were identified with no known social community and could affect any. Indeed, they were spoken of as “visitors,” emphasizing their transitory connection with their prophets and their prophets’ locale. Some prophets say that their basangu manifests itself as a snake which crawls into the body through the mouth and they forbid the killing of a snake within their homestead. Others visualize their basangu as tiny lions or buffaloes. To the best of my knowledge Gwembe prophets do not claim possession by spirits associated with local shrines though they may contact such spirits through the intermediation of their own basangu and so learn their grievances and how to pacify their anger: I am less certain that this is true on the plateau.

Especially in Gwembe District, people identify basangu as a class, or a particular basangu, with the mhondoro spirits of the Shona (Garbett 1966: Gelfand 1956; 11–34; Daneel 1970; Ranger 1966). Thus the spirit of Chibwe Handabo, claimed by various prophets on the Zambian Pleateau and in Gwembe Valley, is said to come from Shona country and to be the same as mundolo, the Tonga pronunciation of mhondoro. But the Tonga do not seem to personalize the basangu or to be interested in their histories. The basangu have names, sometimes places of origin, but that is about all. For that matter, most Tonga do not seem to be concerned with which basangu is present and many do not know the names even of basangu associated with prophets in their neighbourhood. The various known basangu are not ranked in terms of spiritual power or linked into a system by using a genealogy or other method of stating relationship. Here the Tonga differ markedly from the Shona who try to draw the various oracle spirits into a common system

reflecting the hierarchical relationships of Shona society. The Tonga think of their basangu as free to behave in the same independent egalitarian fashion in which they themselves behave.

Anyone may become a prophet. It is assumed that basangu choose their vehicles at their own pleasure from any descent group or locality, and there is no reason why a basangu should continue to visit a locality where it has had a vehicle. Basangu enter, men, women, and children, but children become active prophets only on maturity. Significantly, prophets need not be married; it is the shrine custodian who represents ordered society who must have a spouse. In recent years more women than men have become prophets, but there is no good evidence on how long this has been true and some reason to think the situation may be changing. Any number of prophets may be active at the same time; indeed, several basangu may announce themselves within the same neighbourhood in the same brief time span. Various prophets also claim possession by the same basangu. The names of a few basangu are widely known,* and prophets all over Tonga country claim to be their vehicle. Such claimants work independently of each other and do not form a cultic corporation to advance the influence of their common basangu. But basangu are thought to be in contact with one another. They are thought to spend much time in the bush, in hollow trees, standing pools, springs, rock outcrops; but they also visit each other. They are said to withhold the rain or send epidemics or other troubles to alert communities to their demands or as a punishment on all those in the countryside for an infringement of the respect due their prophets and their chosen sites. But they are not all powerful, and in the last analysis it is God who sends the rains and orders the world.

Basangu cannot be invoked as agents of individual ends. They are not appealed to for vengeance against some other community-or faction within a community or personal enemy. They are thus neutral in human disputes. Presumably they symbolize the general relationships between the forces of nature and human society rather than the division of that society into particular communities, whether these be based on neighbourhoods or descent groups.

If prophets have no formal organization, they ought to be in harmony and all basangu are assumed to have common interests. Quarrels between their vehicles anger the basangu, and drought may be attributed to antagonism between prophets. In fact, however, prophets vie with each other for recognition and their influence fluctuates enormously even within a short period of time. Each neighbourhood, and indeed each homestead, appears to have the option of choosing which prophet it will patronize on any particular occasion, although I have heard a prophet chide consultants for coming in small groups rather than in full strength. Only prophets who are also diviners receive individual clients, i.e., those asking about a concern such as illness specific to an individual or household. Basangu concern themselves only about public matters.

Most prophets have local reputations and are consulted by delegations only from their own neighbourhood or at most from within their immediate vicinity, a radius of no more than five or six miles. The reality of their claim to possession is also treated with scepticism. The few famous prophets who have inspired great respect draw occasional delegations from many parts of the country, but are probably consulted regularly only by their own neighbourhood or by other neighbourhoods in their immediate vicinity. When an appeal is made to such a prophet for rain, the rain is expected to accompany the delegation back to its home territory. These prophets also warn of trouble coming unless people throughout the countryside heed their message, receive and wear a particular charm, or comply with some new or half-forgotten ruling. They are therefore able to introduce innovations in ritual, including local ritual. In southern Gwembe in the 195O’s, Thursday was observed as a rest day on the orders of such a prophet: Sunday was the chosen day of another.

In the late nineteenth century the prophet now called Monze, the name of his basangu, received delegations from many Tonga, Ila, and Sala communities, some coming from Zambezi neighbourhoods as much as 100 miles away. Monze lived on the Zambian plateau not far from the escarpment edge in the high rainfall zone (Livingstone 1857: 554–555; Syaamusonde and Shilling 1947: 47–56). His successor was recognised as a major chief during the colonial period. Rain rituals were carried out at the shrine associated with

the two men at least as late as 1972 and the shrine served more than a single local community. The basangu Monze is still claimed as a possessing spirit by contemporary • prophets. In the midtwentieth century the most powerful prophet among Zambian Tonga was Chibwe, who lived not far from where Livingstone first met Monze. Her basangu was Chibwe Handabo. She was occasionally consulted by delegations from Mazabuka, Gwembe and Namwala districts. Lesser prophets of midcentury usually visited Chibwe soon after first announcing themselves and cited her recognition of them as fellow prophets as proof of their own calling. Two I talked with, one on the plateau in the 1940's and one in Gwembe in the 1970's, claimed that Chibwe had said the people who lived near them should come to them rather than make the long journey to her homestead. After her death in the 1960's, her shrine appears to have become dormant, but new prophets are still claiming possession by Chibwe Handabo.

In the 1950's some Gwembe neighbourhoods sent delegations to the shrine of Monze even though it no longer had a resident prophet, others sent to the prophet Chibwe, and still others sent to mhondoro prophets in the Zimbabwe escarpment. Of these last, the prophet near Gokwe seemed the most popular. Adjacent communities might send their delegations in different directions. The delegations were sent only in a year of drought and after consultations with prophets of the vicinity had brought no rain. »Some communities had no memory of having consulted prophets outside their immediate ken. Scudder and I have never been able to determine what influenced the choice, though we note that if Gwembe neighbourhoods consult distant prophets, then these live in the'highlands where the rainfall is greatest and where the storm clouds can be seen to gather. We have no record of any Plateau Tonga delegations visiting Gwembe or Shona highlands in search of rain or other assistance or of Zimbabwe highland delegations coming to Zambezi prophets. The choice of prophets certainly is not affected by considerations of ethnic identification, and basangu are not thought to have ethnic or territorial loyalties. Thus people are free to consult whichever prophets they regard as most likely to be effective and other than this probably follow their own convenience and familiarity with the intervening country.

Freedom of choice is also encouraged by the fact that all prophets seem to use a modicum of symbolism common to central Africa. They wear wristlets

of black or dark blue beads, colours associated with rain clouds. Those who approach them for rain take black or blue beads. Those who wish an end to continuous rain take white beads because white is associated with clouds which carry no rain. Red beads or anything red in colour is taboo during consultation because red symbolizes blood. An appropriate gift is a hoe blade, symbol of cultivation (and of femaleness). Spears and axes, symbols of maleness and the hunt and war, do not appear to be used as gifts to either prophets or local shrines, though we have one instance of a novice prophet receiving a hoe and a spear from an established prophet. Often petitioners take seed to a prophet and receive in turn blessed seed to mix with their own seed for planting. If a prophet announces that the basangu want an offering carried out at a local shrine, this usually involves slaughter of a black chicken, goat, or ox—any trace of white being forbidden since this would bring lightning with the rain. The animal should be held so that it cannot struggle, since the struggle symbolizes wind which blows grain about. The meat should be roasted without salt. Informants have not been able, or willing, to make the symbolism here involved explicit, but salt is “hot” and the spirits are asked to be cool “as water is cool.” Delegations appealing to a prophet proceed in much the same fashion throughout Tonga contry, adopting the same posture (sitting with legs straight before them on the ground), clapping with the same rhythm, and using a common repertoire of rain songs. This is also the way they present themselves when appealing for rain at a local shrine or in the homestead of a shrine custodian.

Neither Scudder nor I have beem present when a Tonga delegation has approached a Shona mhondoro, nor have we visited a mhondoro, but we are told that at Gokwe and elsewhere they are coached in a more formal ceremonial and must deal with subordinates instead of going directly to the prophet as they do in Tonga country. No Tonga prophet of the old styles seems to have an entourage or maintain an establishment. Both Livingstone and Selous (1893: 211–212) commented on the lack of such an entourage for Monze, then the most famous Tonga prophet. Today at most one helper, usually a spouse or resident kinsman or kinswoman, assists in seances and interprets pronouncements. A prophet’s homestead is usually no more elaborate than any other and sometimes is poorer than most. It is marked, if it is marked, only by the presence of a small hut shrine standing near the dwelling of the prophet. The prophet except during consultation is addressed and treated as an ordinary mortal although each prophet has special rules with respect to sleeping, food, or

other behavior which he or she observes at all times. It is only in possession, or when a delegation requests a prophet to seek possession, that the prophet is treated with respect and regarded as having authority.

*** The Diversification of Society

Before the mid twentieth century, Tonga prophets were primarily consulted about agricultural hazards, pestilence, and cattle plagues. Until the last decade of the nineteenth century the Tonga were subsistence farmers, though hunting, fishing, and gathering provided a good deal of the diet and much of the zest of living. Thereafter, the need for a cash income drew them.into other activities. They turned first to labour migration.The Plateau Tonga were able to shift to cash crop maize farming in the 1920s and 1930s and raise cattle for the market,but Gwembe Tonga continued as labour migrants until the late 1950s and even in the 1970s many are away at work intermittently. In recent years the economy of both plateau and valley has been diversified and both have shared in the advances made by Zambia since independence in 1964. Most villages are now accessible by road. Some Tonga have cars and tractors. People move easily from rural areas to the towns and cities to visit kin, seek work, shop, or consult government agencies. Townspeople in turn visit rural kin and invest savings in rural areas. Many children are in secondary school and look forward to professional jobs and to associating with fellow professionals. They take their beliefs and values in part from alien sources (Colson and Scudder 1976).

Work opportunities, and increasingly the policy of the Zambian Government, bring immigrants from other parts of Zambia and central Africa to live in Tonga neighbourhoods. Administrative and technical personnel associate with educated Tonga men and women who are similarly employed or occupied in large-scale farming. Others, who come as labourers, fishermen, or small traders, associate with the mass of villagers. If they stay, they learn ciTonga, as did earlier immigrants, most of whom ultimately merged into the Tonga population where diversity of origin is quickly forgotton (Colson 1966).

Present day Southern Province communities, even rural ones, are heterogeneous. Their populations differ in education, experience, occupation, and in the demands they make on life. Many, including the most prosperous farmers, business men and civil servants, dislike the system of matrilineal inheritance and wish to emphasize the nuclear family rather than the matrilineal descent group. Many think of themselves primarily as citizens of Zambia rather than as citizens of a neighbourhood. Those regularly employed are less concerned with rain and local harvests. Missions have been active since early in the twentieth century and by the 1970's churches had been built in many neighbourhoods. Any who went to school before the mid 1960's spent some years under Christian teaching. Some Tonga are Christians. Some are agnostics. Some fear witches and medicines but deny that ancestral shades or such spirits as basangu can affect the living. Still others firmly believe in what they regard as the tested wisdom left to them by their ancestors. In communities where the majority support these beliefs, as is true particularly in many neighbourhoods in Gwembe, even the agnostic may find it expedient to make offerings and take part in other rituals. Conformity then encourages belief.

In our study of Gwembe District, Scudder and I have observed a progressive change among many who as young men and school boys in 1956 proclaimed themselves opponents of the ancestral cult and local shrines and held that prophets and diviners only cheated the people. They have become increasingly involved in all three cults as the years pass and they have become the responsible householders of the 1960's and 1970's with children, stock, and crops at risk.

Everywhere the cults have been affected by the increasing mobility and diversified interests of the population. In the 1970's, the various cults received little official support. Officials and other rural elite do not seem to take part in offerings to the shades or appeals to basangu or rituals at local shrines unless they are chiefs who belong to custodial lineages. The latter continue to sponsor rituals associated with their local shrine since it is the link with the past which, forms the nexus of their continuing position and the reason for their recognition by government. In general, however, we have been impressed by the tenacity with which both local shrines and the prophet cult maintain themselves.

*** Continuity and Change in the Cults

On the plateau, people were shifting cultivators. Until land shortage finally stabilized the fields, homesteads moved gradually across the land. Local shrine communities seemed tenuously linked to particular localities and the social units risked dispersal and the outmoding of their local cults as homesteads entered into new combinations or responded to different expectations of rain. The flexibility of the cult of the basangu and the prophets' right to make pronouncements calling for the institution of new local rituals seemed to cater to this situation. An overlap in terminology, symbolism, and ritual behaviour between the local shrine cult and the prophet cult meant that the line between them was easily blurred.Theoretically, these circumstances should make it easy for people to turn to prophets who moved with them or were encountered in the shift to provide them with a new shrine and a new line of shrine custodians to serve the emerging community. Originally I thought this must have happened frequently in the past and I attributed the short histories and abbreviated genealogies of Plateau Tonga shrines and shrine custodians to the brevity of life of shrines associated with communities of shifting cultivators (Colson 1948). Longer experience now makes me doubt this interpretation since it does not take into account the general disinterest in the past which has been characteristic of so many Tonga. Among egalitarian people such as the Tonga of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, history is unlikely to be a major preoccupation; genealogies will be truncated; time usually is telescoped into a span that covers perhaps two or three generations beyond senior people. This span is enough to root institutions in the past and justify them to the future.

On the Zambezi River, Gwembe Tonga lived in communities stabilized by access to alluvial soils and good water. In the mid 1950's they were no more able than Plateau Tonga in the late 1940's of providing lengthy histories for their local shrines or lengthy genealogies covering several generations of shrine custodians. Like the shifting cultivators of the plateau, they began the histories towards the end of the nineteenth century, in the time of their grandparents and great grandparents. Some, indeed, said that they themselves remembered the first shrine custodian though they placed the

founding of the local shrine itself before their memory began. They also spoke only of recent prophets. None of those they mentioned seemed to predate the prophet Monze who was visited by Livingstone in 1854 and by Selous in 1888.

To my knowledge no archaeological work has been done at any shrine sites and so there is no independent check on age. However, Tonga informants say that local shrines may be abandoned if they are perceived to be ineffective or if their communities die out or disperse, though they also say some member of the custodial descent group ought to stay in the old locality. If the spirits want the shrines reestablished, they will let their wishes be known soon enough. Some neighbourhoods have two or more shrines, each under a custodian of a different descent group. The shrines are then said to serve different functions or one is said to have been largely superseded when a basangu speaking through a prophet directed people to institute a new shrine.

Nevertheless, increasing data, mostly from Gwembe District, indicate that local shrines are remarkably viable and that prophets rarely institute shrines which outlast their own lifetime or effective period as prophet. In the nineteen years we have followed events in Gwembe District, we have heard of no new local shrines. I have heard of none being initiated among Plateau Tonga since 1946. In these same years prophets have proliferated and with them their personal shrines. The more important cater for more than a local clientele and are multifunctional. If they are associated with rain, as some are, they are also associated with curing. Their owners deal in medicines for success in business and other enterprises and provide protection against witches and other dangers. Their very eclecticism and appeal to wide-ranging interests of a mobile population stand in the way of their coming to represent the continuities of small agricultural communities. But even those prophets who have stayed closer to the traditional role of basangu prophets have not initiated a local shrine cult or inserted themselves or their successors into the office of sikatongo associated with such a shrine.

This failure is particularly marked given the fact that the period of our observation coincides with the massive resettlement of Gwembe Tonga

which wiped out the familiar territory of most Gwembe neighbourhoods and any claim to legitimacy based on first settlement. %

*** The Gwembe Resettlement: A Test Case

In 1958 some 60,000 Gwembe Tonga were forced to move when 2,000 square miles was given to Lake Kariba. In preparation for the filling of the lake and the establishment of fishing grounds, their old terrain was cleared. Bulldozers which smashed through villages also razed local shrines and their associated trees. People said they were being thrown away into the bush where they would become like animals since neither their local shrine spirits nor their shrine custodians knew the controlling forces. In fact they were moved either to uninhabited bush with which no one had ritual associations or they were given part of the territory of settled neighbourhoods which had their own shrines and custodians. The majority of those within Zambia were resettled on higher land above the lake shore along the tributary rivers whose deltas they had cutlivated. Several thousand were shifted to the plateau. Another six thousand from Chipepo Chieftaincy in central Gwembe were moved one hundred miles downstream to Lusitu, below the dam site. Here they were settled in the territory of Chief Sigongo, many of whose people were descendents of Korekore immigrants from Rhodesia or of Chikunda from further down the Zambezi (Lancaster 1974).

Immediately following resettlement it appeared only too evident that shrine custodians of resettled communities had lost their office along with their shrines. Immigrants either joined the established community rituals of their new neighbours, or they tried to cope without ritual protection other than that provided by their own ancestral shades. Or they invested in protective medicine. In Lusitu the incoming settlers were told both by Chief Sigongo and by the custodian of the major shrine in Lusitu that they were strangers and must not build either local shrines or spirit gate shrines (cilyango). The latter are associated with descent group rituals. They were warned that spirits already in the area would be angry at a challenge to their authority. They gave more credence to this warning when many died during their first years in Lusitu. They attributed the death to ingozi, a medicine said to have been left in the ground by ancient inhabitants to destroy those who settled where they themselves had

died. People also said the land did not know them or the spirits associated with their communities and it was pointless to build local shrines.

Elsewhere neither established custodians nor political officials seem to have actually forbidden immigrants to build their shrines, but the immigrants usually did not build. We heard of a few instances where they did. In one case, in 1961, the shrine was struck by lightning. This confirmed the belief that local shrine spirits already entrenched in the area claimed exclusive jurisdiction, and even those who had moved into previously uninhabited bush did not try to build.

The prophets moved into the vacuum left by the loss of local shrines and the custodial office. Prophets active before resettlement indeed at first denied being subject to possession after the move saying their basangu had abandoned them. This may reflect their dependence on local cues in predicting rainfall, but we think it also indicates a temporary loss of faith in basangu which had shown themselves powerless in preventing the loss of the homeland. We have no evidence that any Gwembe neighbourhood sent out a delegation to any prophet in the escarpment during these years of stress though the escarpment remained unchanged. Nevertheless, within two years of resettlement, prophets again became active. First new prophets announced themselves. These usually claimed possession by some new kind of spirit or by some widely known basangu or at least by a basangu previously known in their new locale. Sometimes the new prophet emerged under tutelage of a prophet already working in the region. In Lusitu, the first prophets became active early in 1960. They called themselves mangelo (‘angels’) rather than basangu and seem to have been influenced by contact with one of the separatist sects of Zimbabwe or Zambia since they adpoted a white gown, used invocations including the name of Jesus, and might display the bible during consultations. Moreover they could be consulted at any time of the year whereas basangu prophets usually are active only during the season associated with the rains crop. The new prophets made their major impact in dealing with the immigrants’ fear of the strange land which they believed was hostile to them (Scudder 1968). Not all Tonga, however, were prepared to give respect to mangelo. Rather they equated mangelo with the spirits associated with the

possession dances which sweep central Africa (Colson 1969). By 1965, some of the old basangu prophets resettled in Lusitu were again intimating that they were subject to possession and others were claiming possession by basangu. People were coming to clap before them for rain. By 1972, several had built shrines in their own door-yards and even Chief Sigongo’s people had begun to clap before them and ask for seed for use in planting, protection from insects, and adequate rain.

In central Gwembe, where most Chipepo people were resettled, new prophets began to make pronouncements in late 1960, though here they called themselves basangu and concerned themselves primarily with rain rather than illness. When mangelo possession arrived in 1963, it was treated as a possession dance or equated with doctoring. But in central Gwembe, people were resettled in their old hinterland and had no such fear of their new locale as had the Lusitu settlers. By 1962 some who had been prophets before resettlement again claimed the presence of their basangu and were being consulted. Our records for southern Gwembe, in Mwemba chieftaincy, are more ambiguous, but we think the first new prophets began to function in late 1960 or early 1961. Even so many of those resettled preferred to consult prophets they found already established in the hills.

For some years, prophets made different demands from those we heard in 1956 when we attended consultations with prophets in Chipepo. Then they typically attributed drought to a failure of shrine custodians to follow rules left by shrine founders, or to people ignoring the custodian’s precedence in initiating agricultural routines, or to encroachment on territory associated with a shrine. To appease the angry spirits and bring rain, people were told to repair the shrine and carry out the appropriate rituals in conjunction with the custodian. Prophets active in the early 1960’s in resettled communities attributed drought to sorcery or to a lack of respect for their basangu. We have instances of prophets sending messengers to call people from surrounding neighbourhoods to greet a visitor (i.e., a basangu) and receive blessed seed for planting. Thereby, of course, they gave assurance from the spirits that the soils could produce and so alleviated one of the major fears of the resettled. In any event, the prophets ignored the former custodians and made no suggestion that their behavior or the absence of their shrines affected the general welfare. Former

custodians continued to make offerings to ancestral shades, who had once also been local shrine spirits, but they did so only in kinship offerings, either in the house doorway or at a spirit gate, the sites associated with ancestral shades.

In 1962 and 1965, resettled custodians and members of their descent groups sometimes said they expected to rebuild the shrines and claimed still to be guardians of their communities. Others laughed at this. The spirits of the shrines were sometimes said to have remained behind in flooded country, although ancestral shades and the basangu of the prophets were regarded as able to follow people in their migrations. Even the death of a former custodian in 1963 was attributed to witchcraft and not to his neglect of ritual duty. His grave site did not become a new local shrine. By 1965 divination on the death of members of custodial descent groups had begun to point to the anger of shrine spirits at being given no home, but the general public regarded such divinations with scepticism. When we asked if by living and dying in the resettlement area, a former shrine custodian might re-establish katongo (‘right of old settlement’), most informants maintained that katongo came only from long ago and could not be established now in this generation. Or, they said, if it could be established, it was probable that it would be attached to the descent group of sofne prophet whose grave or homestead site might become the focus of a new local shrine and whose successor would become sikatongo, shrine custodian. There were those, however, who said that one good thing given them by resettlement was the demise of the old agricultural rituals and the freeing of each cultivator to proceed at his or her own pace (Colson 1971: 226–232).

We predicted that if local shrines were reestablished this would be through the prophets, who certainly saw themselves as free to innovate. So far this has not happened. Since 1962 various prophets have died and been buried in the new localities and they have begun to merge with the ancient dead. Their own shades are invoked in the ancestral cults of their descent groups and their children, but their shrines have disintegrated and their basangu said to have gone to other vehicles or be tarrying for a while in the bush. But local shrines are being reestablished in a few neighbourhoods and these are the shrines known at the Zambezi. Those

custodians who are still alive are being held to acocunt again and where custodians have died, successors are being recognized.

Our best information comes from CHEZIA neighbourhood, in Chipepo Chieftaincy in central Gwembe. This is one of the four Gwembe neighbourhoods we have been following intensively since 1956. It then had two local shrines, each under a custodian of a different descent group. Three villages were resettled in their old hinterland. Those who built close to homesteads in KOMA neighbourhood began to associate themselves with the KOMA shrine, while the rest who built homesteads and cleared fields in an area not known to have ever been previously cultivated no longer associated themselves with a shrine. One of the two former local shrine custodians stayed in the resettled community, still known as CHEZIA, but was not active as a custodian from 1958 until about 1971 when he built a spirit-gate in anticipation of a sign that he should build the local shrine associated with his line. The other custodian left CHEZIA and then died. His shade was inherited by a member of his descent group. In 1966 the inheritor responded to various divinations on family and lineage illnesses by building a shrine. Apparently resident prophets had not called for any such building. The inheritor dies in turn and again a successor was chosen. The shrine was rebuilt in 1970, this time with various members of the CHEZIA community contributing their labour in the old fashion. In 1972–73 the rains failed. Members of the community first consulted two women prophets resident in the neighbourhood. One had practised at the Zambezi but not for some years after the move; the other was first possessed in 1960. They reported that the basangu and the local shrine spirits wished the community to join in rituals, some of which had last been performed in 1957 before resettlement. In the following days this was done, the two custodians playing their appropriate roles. The ritual, as recorded in the diary kept for us by a member of the CHEZIA community who had been only a boy in 1957, is very comparable to what we recorded in 1957 although over fifteen years had elapsed and there had been drastic changes in the personnel carrying out the rites. Belief in the efficacy of shrines and ritual was reinforced when heavy rains fell. But some weeks later when again the rains had stopped, the CHEZIA people consulted a third prophet living in the neighbourhood. He had been possessed sometime after 1965. Most people considered him subject to mangelo or some other spirit associated with a possession dance and denied that he was a basangu prophet. Now he extorted a general acknowledgement that he was indeed a

basangu prophet, though he faced the delegation with a bible open upon his knees. He demanded and received a hoe of ancient manufacture, the gift appropriate to a basangu. He then announced that the basangu was angry because one of the custodians had disrespectfully called it a mangelo and the same custodian had improperly performed his share of the ritual. The prophet ordered the custodian to make recompense both to his own spirit-gate and to the local shrine of the other custodian.

I In Lusitu, at least one local shrine was re-established under its old custodian prior to 1971–72. But in 1973 most Lusitu informants said that they still depended either on the local shrines of Sigongo people or on their own basangu prophets. In southern Gwembe, people of the Mwemba neighbourhood we are following also continue to rely upon prophets. The grave of a basangu prophet who died in 1971 has not become a shrine. Instead people consult a woman of another descent group who first claimed possession in 1971 and confirmed her status by a visit to an established prophet in the escarpment in 1972.

*** Prophets and Custodians

The nature of the prophet’s role and the political realities of the neighbourhood life work against the usurping of the custodianship by the prophet.

Prophets are affected by the general egalitarian character of Tonga social organization. If they had a corps of helpers there would be those with a vested interest in the perpetuation of a prophet’s own cult after the prophet’s death, but they do not build a bureaucratic order that could institutionalize their charisma. The basangu, for which the prophet is only a vehicle, is thought to be free to move t.o new vehicles unassociated with the old. It is only loosely associated with the shrine built for it by the prophet even during the prophet’s life. The shrine is but a temporary abode in which the spirit is only occasionally resident. Local shrines, and their immediate environs, are always in some sense sacred and should not be disturbed. The prophet’s shrine, in contrast, stands in the

dooryard where children play about it. It does not inspire respect in itself. The very multiplicity of prophets also works against any one acquiring a following with exclusive allegiance.

The demise of the prophet then usually means the demise of the associated shrine and the dispersal of such clientele as the prophet has. No surviving staff exists with an interest in reminding people of the dead prophet's power, and people are unlikely to associate any new difficulties they face with neglect of the prophet's grave or shrine given that they never had any obligation to respect one prophet over another. They would first consult a living prophet. Even one from the same lineage as the dead prophet must speak as the vehicle of a basangu to receive a hearing and this means stressing his or her own relationship with the spirits. There is no reason to invoke the now dead prophet.

Pronouncements almost invariably involve some failure in the relationship between humans and divinity, but those who consult prophets evaluate the message transmitted to them in terms of probabilities. If a message is too alien to their experience or calls for something outside their power to comply, they are likely to reject it. There is a sameness about the pronouncements of prophets, perhaps because the questioning directed to them by representatives of the consulting community more or less dictate the acceptable answers.

Prophets who have a largely local clientele have an incentive to attribute misfortune to behaviour about which local people are uneasy but need to direct attention from possible delinquencies in their own behaviour as basangu vehicles. In Gwembe failure to rebuild the old shrines must have been a source of concern since people accepted this diagnosis of current troubles once the resettlement had receded into the past and was no longer the focus of all grievances. Continuing divinations put pressure on the prophets to revise their messages to conform to the growing consensus. When they did so, they also assured people of the continuing viability of their social unit. The explanation, however, also absolved the prophets of any responsibility as prophets for drought or other trouble—it was the community as a community which had done wrong and its own representative, the custodian, who was most flagrantly at fault. In some instances, personal

rivalries were also in issue. Tension does exist between resident prophets and shrine custodians who base their claims to office on different sources of legitimacy. A prophet can humiliate a custodian but only by accusing him of negligence in office and this means giving him legitimacy. To invoke other explanations of community distress is to miss a golden opportunity to pay off old scores. The community is relieved to accept the explanation because it can put pressure on the custodian and check compliance by its own knowledge of appropriate routine.

Distant prophets who are not involved in local rivalries still look to the community order in framing their messages, since they can assume the organisation of a neighbourhood. It should be remembered that prophets speak to communities and the only community with the power to exact atonement from a culprit or general cooperation in ritual or observance of taboo is the neighbourhood community. A delegation also wants to receive an answer to its problem which lies within the area of its own competence. Even the most influential prophets cannot improvise the machinery which would coordinate the populations of larger regions for regular observance of complex intermeshed ceremonial. The more universal the message, the more likely it is that people will be asked to observe some single easily performed ritual, such as the wearing of a charm or the observance of a day of rest. Formerly, political divisions did not exist above the neighbourhood to provide a framework of authority to which prophets could attach themselves and so compliance with any message was left to general consensus or the power structure of a neighbourhood. The chieftaincies and districts instituted by the colonial government extended political boundaries, but few chiefs were able to make good their claim to ritual primacy within their own districts. People for the most part regarded their chiefs as administrative officers of government rather than their own hereditary representatives. Even the idea of a social unit of all Tonga is a recent creation and is still likely to be invoked principally in the national political arena, though the continued importance of the shrine of Monze may have political overtones of which I am aware.

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At the present time the most ambitious prophets largely ignore the underpinning of community and treat more commonly with individual than

with communal affairs. They continue to claim association with universal powers and hope to attract clients from anywhere in Zambia. They also receive clients throughout the year which means that their role is filled more than intermittently and periodically. They expect to receive payment in cash or livestock in return for service and so receive far more than the customary offerings of grain, beads, cloth and hoes which are appropriate for basangu. Most claim possession by a number of different kinds of spirits, of which basangu is only one. Some claim to be vehicles of God or angels, forces seen as more in keeping with the expanding universe in which people now live. They build shrines where appeal may be made for rain, but they see themselves as primarily healers who treat spiritual and physical ailments or as providers of protection against the dangers of contemporary life. They appeal to the diversified population of contemporary Zambia which consults them about the problems encountered as people move between town and country, shift their occupations, encounter new associates, cope with new uncertainties. Significantly, the most powerful set up their headquarters on the railway and bus routes rather than in the high rainfall zone of the escarpment edge, and their clients come from both cities and countryside.

Concern for the affairs of the land is left largely to lesser prophets who serve communities of which they themselves are members. Though they claim a power that stems from beyond the community, and is independent of it, they are subject to the community controls. They link their messages to the local order. That needs at best only one or two shrines to cater to its sense of harmony with the land it occupies. These prophets are therefore among the principal upholders of community, the land shrines, and the existing custodianships.

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** 6. Regional and Non-regional Cults of Affliction in Western Zambia[36]

by Wim M.J. Van Binsbergen

*** 1. Introduction

A generic relation holds between two types of cult of affliction in Zambia's Western Province (formerly Barotseland). Cults of one type, the non-regional, form a substratum out of which cults of the other type, the regional, may spring forth under certain conditions, and into which they submerge again under different conditions. To understand this process and the conditions that govern it, I shall first describe the non-regional cults of affliction and then define the general characteristics by which the others set themselves apart from the substratum. Finally, I shall compare in some detail the development of two regional cults in order to make clear the importance of two series of variables: each distinct cult's characteristics of idiom and internal organizational structure, and the structural characteristics of the geographical area which the cult transforms into a cultic region.

Several working definitions are useful in order to establish the contrast, briefly, between the types of cult within the general class of cults of affliction. The first type covers a few regional cults which have three main characteristics. Each of these regional cults has a specific idiom of its own. This idiom is pursued by a number of local congregations spread over an area of thousands of square kilometres. Thirdly, and most importantly, an interlocal formal organization binds these dispersed congregations through the interactions of the cult's officials. In this way the geographical

area over which the cult spreads is transformed into a region. What structures a cult's region is thus the processes of interlocal communication, interaction and distribution which the cult gives rise to. By contrast, the second type covers cults which I shall call non-regional. A cult of this type, too, has a specific cult idiom which is pursued by a number of congregations. However, although it may have spread over a vast area, it has not yet transformed the area into a region of its own, or it has ceased to do so and a former region has become merely a non-regional area.

As for the general class of cults of affliction, in terms of cult idiom individual affliction invariably stands out as a major concern. This is central in Turner's classic studies (1957; 1962; 1968) and in the earlier works (Kuntz 1932; White 1949; Gluckman 1943, 1951; McCulloch 1951: 72f; Turner 1952) which he developed. Turner coined the phrase, 'cult of affliction', to denote a cult (religious subsystem) characterised by two elements: (a) the cultural interpretation of misfortune (bodily disorders, bad luck) in terms of exceptionally strong domination by a specific non-human agent; (b) the attempt to remove the misfortune by having the afflicted join the cult venerating that specific agent. The major ritual forms of this class of cults consist of divinatory ritual in order to identify the agent, and initiation ritual through which the agent's domination of the afflicted is Emphatically recognised before an audience. In the standard local interpretation, the invisible agent inflicts misfortune as a manifest sign of his hitherto hidden relationship with the afflicted. The purpose of the ritual is to acknowledge the agent's presence and to pay him formal respect (by such conventional means as drumming, singing, clapping of hands, offering of beer, beads, white cloth and money). After this the misfortune is supposed to cease. The afflicted lives on as a member of that agent's specific cult; he participates in cult sessions to reinforce his good relations with the agent and to assist others, similarly afflicted, to be initiated into the same cult.

Cults of affliction represent a domihant class of cults in present-day Western Zambia. However, in addition there are ancestral cults, individual specialists' cults, chiefly cults and various types of Christian cults.[37] Of these, Christian cults and the major chiefly cults are regional (Van Binsbergen 1976d, 1977a).

*** 2. Non-Regional Cults of Affliction

**** 2.1. Main Characteristics

Non-regional cults of affliction occur in scores of versions throughout Western Zambia and surrounding areas (Carter 1972; Van Binsbergen 1972b, 1976d). These various cults have much in common. They differ from each other mainly in the following respects: the associated paraphernalia (e.g. type of adept's shrine, musical instruments, vegetal medicine, ritual objects and bodily adornment used); the specific misfortunes for which each cult caters; and the name and alleged nature of the invisible agent venerated in each cult. Each cult is locally known by the name of this specific agent. Some particularly successful cults are encountered over large areas and are mentioned repeatedly in the literature; these include such cults as mayimbwe, muba, songo, viyaya, liyala and bindele.

We are indebted to Turner for his masterly description and analysis of some cults of affliction among the Ndembu. He shows the role of these cults in the succession of "social dramas" that make up the micro-history of villages over a time-span of several decades. However, he does not analyse the historical dimension of these cults themselves (cf. Shorter 1972: 141). In Turner's work these cults are viewed as given institutions that are manipulated within the local social process, rather than as the dynamic outcomes of a process of religious change that in itself needs elucidation.

White (1949, 1961) was the first to explore the cults' historical dimension. He pointed to a major conceptual shift that has affected cults of affliction in Luvale country, since the 1930's. The shift was away from cults that claimed local ancestors (particularly diviners and hunters) as their afflicting agents. It was towards new cults that attributed affliction to abstract, scarcely personalized agents whose names were reminiscent of contacts with distant alien groups, African and European. Some of these new cults were songo (after the Songo people of Angola), ndeke

(airplane), bindele (white people or people clad in white: either Europeans or alien African traders). Turner's (1957: 296f) and my own fieldwork suggest, moreover, that the conceptual shift was accompanied by a shift in the recruitment pattern of the cults' congregations. This structural shift was from a ritual congregation that was rather coterminous with the local community and that focussed on communal symbols (village shrine, ancestors), to a congregation whose members, individually drawn from a series of adjacent local communities, would associate for ad hoc ritual purposes in a pattern that cuts across, rather than reinforces the structure of distinct local communities. However, as I shall show, in contrast to Turner's observations, my data point to the significance of local factors in the cults (see below, 2.4).

White suggested that the conceptual shift may be attributed to a complex of interrelated changes. These included increased interlocal contacts (through 19th century long-distance trade and 20th century labour migration), the breakdown of the village community, and the emergence of new causal models for the interpretation of misfortune. White interpreted these new models (featuring new, impersonal, non-ancestral affliction agents) as the conceptual response to the widening of the social horizon beyond the area where the ancestors could be thought to hold sway.

Elsewhere I have developed White's stimulating ideas in the light of more comprehensive data on religious change in this part of Central Africa (Van Binsbergen 1976d). There I argue that the emergence of these non-regional cults of affliction represents just one specific outcome in an overall process of religious transformation. This process has extended over centuries and, as other outcomes, has produced such religious forms as chiefly cults, prophetism concentrating on "ecological" concern for the land and its produce, eschatological prophetism, and sorcery eradication movements. Throughout a succession of emerging religious forms, the overall process produced systematic changes in religious idiom. These changes can be conveniently mapped along five dimensions: the perception of time; the degree of "ecological" concern; conceptions concerning the nature of supernatural beings; the degree of individual-centredness; and the interpretation of evil. Ultimately, major political and economic changes can be seen as the motor behind the overall religious transformation. In this context I am thinking primarily of the increase of interlocal structures of

political and economic power, distribution, and movement of people due to precolonial and colonial state-formation, raiding, long distance trade, and labour migration. These extra-religious changes called for new religious forms (including non-regional cults of affliction) that were capable of legitimating the new structures and that could meet the existential and interpretative needs of the people involved.

My field data mainly derive from the Nkoya, an ethnic group inhabiting the wooded plateau of central Western Zambia (Clay 1945; McCulloch 1951; Symon 1959; Van Binsbergen 1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1976c). Among the Nkoya, ancestral cults of affliction have continued to exist until today, but the great majority of affliction cases is now treated within the more recent, non-ancestral cults, particularly those of the non-regional type to which the present section is devoted. People recognize the recent nature of these cults, and can state the period in which a particular cult first reached their area. The non-ancestral, non-regional cults of affliction spread like fashions or epidemics. For many cults occurring in an area it is known from which direction they arrived; they became locally associated with ethnic groups living in that direction, and are sometimes held, incorrectly, to represent those groups' ancestral ritual.[38] Intervals of a few years would pass between a new cult's arrival and its being forced out of fashion by the arrival of yet another one. As an area is hit by a succession of cult fashions, many people come to be initiated into more than one cult. As a fashion wears out, the ritual for that cult will be staged less frequently and fresh cases of affliction will be attributed mainly to more recently arrived cults.

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However, cult leaders keep staging the rituals of non-ancestral cults of somewhat older vintage. In this way they revive their ritual links with adepts whom they initiated some years before and who may since have taken not only to other cults but also to other leaders.

The spread and contemporary distribution of non-ancestral non-regional cults of affliction show that Central African ethnic groups ("tribes") are not rigidly bounded, either geographically or culturally (cf. Van Binsbergen) 1975). The

cults spread easily from one ethnic group to another, despite such great language differences as between Luvale and Lenje, Tonga and Lozi. Moreover, immigrant adepts from a distant ethnic group often proved acceptable as local cult leaders (a point emphasized by Symon 1959). Cult songs have sometimes been translated into a local language, but have often been retained in the original language of the ethnic group from which this cult was borrowed locally. Sometimes the original ethnic group even gave its name to the cult (songo, chimbandu). All this bears out the fact that, among other aspects, the non-ancestral cults of affliction represent an attempt to come to terms (both conceptually and interactionally) with the reality of extensive, inter-ethnic, interlocal contacts.

**** 2.2 Ritual

Usually the differences between the non-regional, non-ancestral cults of affliction which occur in one area, are slight. There is somewhat of a tendency—it is not invariable—to associate certain paraphernalia (a peculiar type of headdress or scapular, miniature axes and hoes, fly-switches etc.) and certain bodily movements with particular cults. The main way, however, to tell one cult from another is from the contents of the songs that are chanted during the sessions. Below are some typical song texts:

| 1
 Bakeshabe iyale yomana
yowelile mama
bamikupe iyale yomama
iyale yomama
lyiyo mama yowelile
(text used alternatively for kasheba, bamikupe and mushelu)
2
Tu ba kombele
biyaya bi neza
tu ba kombele
biyaya mama
(text for biyaya)

3
Ba ka lenda mawulu mu pange
mu ni yoyise
lelo moyo
mu pange mu ni yoyise
bi nakunisisayela lelo moyo
ba nganga na ba nganga
kumpanga bafako
(text for kalenda-mawulu) |
From kasheba,really, mother,
I am ill, mother
from bamikupe, really mother,
I am ill, mother
o mother, I am ill

We pray
for biyaya has come
we pray
for biyaya, mother

For this foot disease, treat me
to make me alive
today the life
treat me to make me alive
they don’t restore my life today
these cult leaders or those cult leaders
they don’t treat me |

These songs are sung by a small chorus of adepts, instructed and led by a cult's local leader, usually a woman. The adepts (usually women) stand in a semi-circle which is closed by a row of (male) musicians. Within this enclosure the cult leader and one or more novices dance, and enter into a trance. Before the session starts the leader has undertaken to treat the novices. She exhorts the latter, the chorus and the musicians so that the novices' movements may catch up and gradually harmonize with the music. Thus the novices may reach ecstasy. In the course of most sessions vegetal medicine is prepared from a selection of plant species which varies with each cult. Although each session tends to be dominated by the songs and ritual for one particular cult (the one in which the leader excels), often elements of other cults are used in abundance. This is particularly the case when a patient cannot be brought to respond properly to a session's main cult. Then one cult after another has to be tried in order to arrive at the correct diagnosis and treatment. Sessions last through the night and end at dawn with the final distribution of medicine to novices and adepts and occasionally to non-participant onlookers. For in contrast with the situation in the extreme north-west of Zambia, as described by Turner, in this area a small audience of non-adepts is present at every session, to share in the beer, to help out with the music, and to witness the patients' struggle for healing.

**** 2.3 Morality

Part of the night's proceedings is, however, private: the therapeutic conversations which the leader and some senior adepts have with each novice. Their aim is to ascertain the specific personal conditions under which the affliction, dormant until then, has become manifest. Such conditions include a recent death, ill-will and suspected sorcery in the patient's environment, or the occurrence of a major healer, diviner or hunter among the patient's deceased kin.

The information obtained in the "anamnesis"[39], however, is not fed into the patient's social environment. The information only serves to identify, to the officiants' satisfaction, the occasion at which the affliction agent chose to manifest itself. Even if this occasion highlights interpersonal conflict and illicit

aggression (in the way of sorcery), moral redress, rehabilitation or prosecution never become the cult's concern. Once the diagnosis in terms of the cult's etiology has been pronounced, the cult tries to curb the invisible agent's harmful effects, but does not try to take away any group-dynamical causes of the misfortune. The non-ancestral, non-regional cults of affliction aim at individual readjustment. They fight symptoms of maladjustment but do not try to expose or resolve any underlying social tension. Nor are they meant to do so. These cults are concerned with suffering, and not with morality. Their frame of reference features patients afflicted by essentially unpredictable, non-human agents—and not victims injured by human evil-doers or by the effects (through ancestral revenge) of their own sins.

The non-ancestral non-regional cults, however, exist side by side with rival and alternative approaches to misfortune, which do emphasize morality and guilt, reparation and retaliation. Among the contemporary Nkoya, these rival approaches are frequently applied. They include: divinatory and redressive ritual in the idiom of ancestral intervention; similar ritual in the idiom of sorcery and counter-sorcery; litigation in more or less formal courts of law (Van Binsbergen 1976c); and finally regional cults of affliction, whose relation to non-regional cults with regard to morality I shall discuss below in section 3. A number of venues for redress are thus open to an individual facing misfortune. The choice is largely his own. He may apply to a diviner/healer known for diagnosis in terms of a cult of affliction, rather than to one who habitually propounds interpretations in terms of ancestors or sorcery; or he may apply to a court. The actor's underlying decision model is complex and can only be analysed on the basis of detailed description of the various institutions involved, and of specific extended cases. However, if one pursues the option of cults of affliction, this can be safely said to indicate one's reluctance to publicly present one's misfortune as caused by human conflict (sorcery, court) or guilty neglect in one's dealings with kin (ancestors). Such reluctance usually reflects lack of power, material resources and social support; the victim can neither answer a challenge through counter-sorcery and litigation, nor face such public disapproval as offences punished by ancestors inspire. Non-ancestral cults of affliction, however, interpret misfortune as an entirely individual condition which (in contrast with sorcery, ancestral intervention, or litigation) is not primarily determined by the victim's interaction with other people—although such interaction may form the occasion for the hidden affliction to manifest itself for the first time. Amongst the institutions dealing with misfortune, these cults have, therefore,

a marked competitive advantage among certain people: those who are dependent, relatively powerless, and short of social credit. Little wonder, then, that most of the patients in the non-ancestral cults of affliction are women and youths. Mature and elderly men, as a rule, pursue other venues for redress. And if they involve themselves at all in such cults of affliction, it is not as patients, but (occasionally) as cult leaders, as musicians, and particularly as sponsors for their womenfolk.

This implies that at least for women, as patients, the cults of affliction do not provide an idiom of internalized powerlessness, but rather an alternative way to demand, and receive., male support—albeit outside the arenas where mature men compete with each other. This, of course, does not preclude such competition between leaders and sponsors (see Werbner, 1971–1972: 235).

**** 2.4 Roles, Personnel and Organization

For a successful session all the following conditions have to be met. The cult leader must be generally recognized and accomplished. The chorus (of a minimal size of four or five adepts) must know the basic song texts and must be prepared to assist in the proceedings. Musicians are needed who know or can quickly pick up the music peculiar to the various cults, and who are prepared to follow the directions of the leader. Musical instruments, beer and firewood are required. And finally, somebody has to organize and meet its expenses.

In a rural society where firewood is becoming less abundant, where beer has become a marketable commodity,and where drums and other instruments are scarce and privately owned, the logistics of the sessions often turn out to be quite complicated and problematic. Each session necessarily involves the sponsor, and the other participants in the session, in a network of transactions and obligations that both reflect, and bear upon, the extrareligious social process in the community. Good musicians cannot always be recruited from amongst a sponsor’s close kin, and even if they can, they often demand a payment roughly equivalent to a day’s wages. The adepts who constitute the chorus, do not receive any remuneration beyond a

share in the beer that the sponsor furnishes for the cult leader. Besides this beer, and occasional gifts of white cloth, bottled fizzy drinks, bottled beer and other luxuries, the leader receives a small sum of money for the diagnosis and treatment during the session. This sum is again equivalent to a day’s wages. Even more important, the leader establishes a firm claim (actionable in court) against a much larger sum, easily a month’s wages. This large fee is payable any time after the patient has made significant improvement—no matter what additional treatments are pursued elsewhere.

From the sponsor’s side, therefore, the session involves immediate costs that are considerable, both in social and financial terms and, if the treatment is successful, heavy debts in the future. For the leader, the session means a significant gain immediately, and very likely a large financial claim in the future. At the same time, it also means a public test both of ritual skill and of such management power as is required for the mobilization of the chorus in the first place (it is the sponsor’s responsibility to recruit the musicians), and for the leader’s control over adepts and musicians during the many hours of the session. The adepts in the chorus clearly hold a key position. They are indispensible to the leader’s success but hardly share in the latter’s ‘ benefits.

The basic organizational form of non-regional cults of affliction is a smdll faction of loyal adepts around a leader, all living within walking or cycling distance from each other: within a radius not exceeding 10 kilometres, and usually much less. The leader can control the chorus’ adepts in two cases, which often coincide: when the adepts are themselves still under a course of treatment with the same leader (and treatment may, partly for this reason, be extended over a period of years); and when the adepts are very close kin of the leader. Kinship ties among the Nkoya are, however, not automatically effective in bringing about and maintaining solidary social relationships. In order to be effective they need to be backed up by frequent interaction, e.g. through co-residence. Attachments between kin are readily disrupted as people change their residence in order to seek their economic and local-political fortune elsewhere, among a different set of real or putative kin. Such individual intra-rural geographical mobility is extremely frequent and, in fact, constitutes a major structural theme in Nkoya society. Likewise, the curative link between leader and adept is often threatened, both by rival leaders who compete for adepts (as well as for new

patients), and by the senior adept's own aspiration to set up as a leader herself. Therefore, within (and between) the cultic factions tensions and conflicts are rife; and these tend to come to the fore during sessions, when the leader is most dependent upon the adepts. I have never attended a session that was not repeatedly interrupted by heated argument between the officiants. After a session there tend to be shifts in the faction's internal structure of relationships, and even in its membership.

The leader's status is rather insecure. Non-regional cults of affliction define the roles of leader, adept and novice, but they do not stipulate in detail the requirements by which one gets access to these statuses. These cults do not have a formal organization with fixed rules of eligibiity to office. Instead, recognized ritual leadership is a matter of public opinion. Whoever can persuade others to let themselves be treated by her, and can mobilize the necessary assistance, is a cult leader. On the other hand, a leader whose curative effectiveness begins to be doubted by many (partly as a result of her being forced out of competition by rivals) loses her patients and adepts.

How does one get launched as a leader? Long-term apprenticeship as an adept of an established leader is one way. In the take-off period as a leader, other standard methods to woo public opinion include self-appointed curative capabilities which are claimed to derive from dreams, from accession to the name of a deceased relative who was a well-known healer, or from a serious psycho-physical disturbance now overcome by a recovery— so that one is now acquainted, better than most people, with the experience of illness and death. Gradually, new*songs (often featuring the name of the leader herself), an original choice of paraphernalia, a notebook in which the names of treated patients may be recorded, fake or real licenses issued by local authorities, can all help to lend credibility and identity to the new leader. In this search for a personal "trade-mark", considerable expense and creativity is invested; even though the result is usually a permutation of the same limited set of elements used by all leaders and all non-regional cults of affliction.

The main condition, however, to make the grade as a cult leader is the construction of a local network of loyal adepts who can assist in the treatment of new patients.

My use of the term “faction” for the basic local unit of officiants, has suggested the problematic internal dynamics, the shifting membership of these units, and (as a major cause of this) the intense competition between units. In the immediate social environment of each afflicted individual, a number of leaders with their temporarily loyal adepts are active. Leaders are in competition with each other both for the senior adepts on whom their practice is dependent, and for new novices who will boost the leader’s public status and bring in large fees.

The fees enhance a leader’s power in two ways. Once received, this wealth is largely redistributed in non-ritual transactions with kin and neighbours. But since most fees cannot be paid immediately, they also tie the patients to the leader with heavy debts. Both ways, the leader’s power must have considerable effect on the extra-religious social process. Moreover, the fees are so high and cash is so scarce in the villages, that the modern cults can be properly said to constitute a major redistributive economic institution. This holds true not only between villages, but also between village and town. Rural-based leaders treat afflicted urban migrants either by receiving them on short visits in the rural area, or by travelling to town at irregular intervals.

Both within and outside the religious domain, leaders hold enviable positions which they are constantly defending against the encroachment of others. As adepts and leaders have usually been initiated into more than one non-regional cult of affliction, and as the basic idiom of these cults is constant and well-known, an adept’s shift from one leader to another (which often means: from one cult to another) presents no great difficulties in terms of knowledge and skills. Leaders greatly resent it when such a shift diminishes their effective following. For this reason, leaders tend to avoid each other and, when they operate within the same social field, are often at daggers drawn because of having snatched each other’s followers in the past. Sometimes, however, leaders combine locally, stage sessions together and visit each other’s sessions as guests of honour. On such occasions, emphasis is on manifestations of mutual professional respect, symbolized by the ostentatious furnishing of a chair for each leader[40]. But even then each leader is on her guard lest her colleagues make too favourable an impression on the audience, or attempt to lure adepts and patients away. Only when

such professional contacts are backed up by residence in each other’s proximity along with close kinship ties and good extra-religious relations in general, can they be seen to develop into stable, prolonged co-operation. In such a case leaders are no longer afraid of mutual poaching; they share patients and adepts.

These local ritual factions with their occasional co-operation between leaders, constitute all the rudimentary organizational structure that the non-regional cults of affliction possess. Leaders are predominantly ritual entrepreneurs, who exploit a local market on the basis of the population s general adherence to the cult of affliction model. Even between leaders in different localities who profess that they specialise in the same named cult (e.g. Viyaya), there is normally no contact—and often downright avoidance. Each may have learned this cult’s ritual in a different place, may have added her own innovations, and would have her own local clientele to consider. The differences between the ritual performances of two such leaders of the same cult may be greater than those between leaders who avowedly specialize in different cults. Each elaborates on the general idiom of the cults of affliction in her own personal way, without any interlocal formal organization binding local leaders or dictating any orthodoxy. Public opinion is prepared to accept a leader’s reputation and following as proofs of expertise, and it favours any innovation that does not greatly run counter to local canons of decency. But such public opinion concerning the cults is in itself mainly a response to the actions and pronouncements of the cult leaders. Thus it is by virtue of a widespread cultural model that each non-regional cult of affliction exists: each cult has its unstructured series of small factions which are disconnected, local and rather ephemeral. The widespread cultural model is continuously reinforced, at the grass-roots level, by the uncoordinated activities of hundreds of leaders in search of wealth, power, ritual prestige, and self-expression.

**** 2.5 Ritual Leadership as a Callin

While exploring the political and economic dimensions of the non-regional cults of affliction, we should avoid reducing them to these and nothing more. Leaders, adepts, patients and outsiders are keenly aware of the economic

and local-political aspects of the cults. Yet all of them Consider the cults' healing efficacy their overriding justification.

The leaders, mainly elderly women, are not cynical operators and no more. They are gifted and passionate manipulators of symbols: song texts, paraphernalia, dramatic effects—and cash. Through an existential crisis earlier in life they have often paid the price (not just financially) towards becoming specialists in human suffering and some of its remedies. Their life-histories tell of prolonged illness, periods of insanity, ridicule by fellowvillagers confronted with the aspiring leader's first, clumsy attempts at being a healer, and more recently the treachery of once loyal patients who have at last set up as leaders themselves and no longer pay respects to one who, in her own view, fought for their very lives. A leader's strikingly intense and agile performance during the long nocturnal sessions may be partly motivated by a drive for money and power. But it has as much to do with art, while the prime concern is to heal a fellowman. If the ritual does not appear to succeed, it is not only a threat to professional prestige, but also compassion that forces the leader to exert herself for hours at a stretch, finally to bring the patient to join in the rhythm—thus making recovery possible.

Better than anyone else, the leader understands and believes in the idiom of the cults of affliction. She is the mediator of a conceptual system which is commensurate with the changing social order in which she and her patients find themselves. Offering deliverance from suffering is a professional calling for which the easy life, food, marriage, all have to be sacrificed. The leader Kashikashika vividly describes how her calling affects her life:

<quote>

"At home I have no time to eat. I eat with one hand, keeping one hand on the head of a patient. (Laying-on of hands is a minor form of treatment in the cults in which she specialises.) I have no time to dress, but instead walk about in my short petticoats. I have no time to sleep. In the middle of the night people come and knock at my door for treatment.

“Years ago, a man fell in love with me and wanted marriage. I told him: ‘Before I go and live with you, realize how my calling affects my life. I shall often have to go out in the night. Sometime I shall have to stay away from you for three months at a stretch, to attend to my patients!’ But he did not want to listen and went ahead with the marriage. After a month he started complaining, and we soon divorced. Now I am married again, with one of my patients. He says: ‘Look, she has cured me. Should I complain when she goes out and stays away to cure others like me?...’.”

</quote>

The husband is present and amply confirms that this is indeed his view of the matter.

Underneath this testimony of professional sacrifice there is, unmistakably, a note of pride and female power quite characteristic of elderly Nkoya women, and of cult leaders a fortiori. But at any rate, calling obliges; and many leaders have strict personal standards as to the size of fees, the requirements for proper diagnosis, and the ethics of dealing with uncooperative debtors amongst their patients.[41] Without exception, leaders have themselves suffered, in the past, from the afflictions they treat, and usually they are still in frequent silent communication with their own affliction agent, inside. Allegedly, the agent advises on the leader’s wellbeing, but he does not take mockery and is sure to punish a cheating leader of his cult. Adepts and patients are aware of this security device, too, and as a rule expect fair play from the cult leaders they deal with.

The high revenues and other benefits in terms of power and prestige associated with cult leadership, can hardly fail to appeal to the ambitious and calculating sides of the incumbents’ character. Yet I would maintain that the requirements in terms of artistic and emotional dedication, and in terms of self-confidence vis-a-vis the symbols manipulated in the cults, are such as to make the sham leader, who stages for money’s sake a ritual whose efficacy she secretly denies, a rare occurrence.

*** 3. Regional Cults of Affliction in Western Zambia: General Characteristics

Due to a succession of non-regional cults of affliction that had been spreading over Western Zambia for several decades, the general idiom of such cults had become established by the 193O’s. By this time the new type of regional cult of affliction emerged. So far, three cults of this type have been studied: Nzila (also known as the Twelve Society), Bituma, and Moya. It is likely, however, that Western Zambia has witnessed the rise of several more, which subsequent research may throw light upon. The first description of Nzila is by Reynolds (1963: 133f), on the basis of an administrative report by I.H. Whethey in 1957.[42] In 1972, Miss M. Muntemba carried out research into this cult, mainly in the Livingstone area (Muntemba 1972); I am greatly indebted to her for the lengthy conversations we have had on the subject. The Bituma cult played a major role in my Nkoya fieldwork (cf. Van Binsbergen 1972a for a preliminary account of the cult). Ranger (1972) gives lengthy excerpts from both Muntemba’s and my own descriptions. The Moya cult is briefly discussed by Ikacana (1971: 33); although this author mentions the healer Liminanganga as this cult’s main leader in Kaoma (then Mankoya) district, thus suggesting a certain centralization that is characteristic of a regional cult, his further discussion gives the impression that by the 1940’s Moya was a non-regional cult. During my fieldwork in the early 1970’s, however, a regional cult of the same name was active in the eastern part of the district, where, headed by a prophet called Moya after his cult, it had penetrated only a few years previously—but perhaps not for the first time. My limited data on this cult do not enable me to decide whether it became a regional cult only recently, or was already one in Ikacana’s time.

Like the factional, non-regional cults described above, these three regional cults are cults of affliction. They interpret disease and misfortune by reference to a non-human agent, and attempt to redress the disorder through divination and subsequent initiation into the cult. As cults of affliction deriving from the same cultural area, the regional and non-regional cults have on the surface much in common. However, there are very significant differences between the two types.

The most striking aspect of Nzila, Bituma and Moya is their regional organization. These cults each have a central place, which is the seat of the

cult’s supreme leader. Cult officers appointed by the leader are responsible for sections of the total area over which the cult has spread. They communicate regularly between local cult congregations and headquarters. In close cooperation with the supreme leader, they recruit new local adepts and leaders, enforce observance of the cult’s regulations (e.g. concerning the size of fees for treatment, and the forwarding of a portion of the fees to headquarters), supervise the ritual locally, and guard against undue autonomy and ritual deviation of local leaders. In contrast with the non-regional cults, effective leadership of a local congregation depends not so much on the manipulation of public opinion and the control of a loyal local ritual following, but primarily on admission and promotion within the cult’s hierarchy, subject to approval from headquarters. Literacy, in its simplest forms, plays a role; one may keep a record of the number of patients healed, of their names, and of the fixed fees for each type of treatment. The regional cults are more or less formal organizations that enforce, among local cult leaders, ritual conformity, compliance with the cult’s authority structure, and the forwarding of funds, over areas of many thousand square kilometres.

We have seen how leaders in non-regional cults of affliction tend to make considerable innovations upon the cultic material they use. Also, these leaders have usually gone through deep personal crises before establishing themselves as cult leaders. In these respects they have much in common with the founders of Nzila, Bituma and Moya. However, in the case of the non-regional cults a leader’s specific innovations and personal history are played down as irrelevant. The leader is viewed not as the inventor but as the mere transmitter of cultic forms which, allegedly, have already existed elsewhere and which could have been made available locally by any other leader. The regional cults, by contrast, are quite sharply considered to be founded by a particular prophet, whose name, visions, life history, the process in the course of which he shaped his cult, are all held to be very important and are often known even among non-adepts. In contrast with the leaders of non-regional cults of affliction, Chana (founder of Nzila), Simbinga (founder of Bituma), and Moya (founder of the Moya cult) all started out as charismatic leaders in the Weberian sense (Weber 1969: 358f). Each displayed what I have elsewhere (Van Binsbergen 1976d: 71) called the “standard biographical pattern for Central-African religious innovators”. Each reached prophethood through the same stages. Falling victim to a chronic disease or defect is a first stage. Chana was a leper and suffered from the bindele affliction which, however, the non-regional

bindele cult proved unable to cure. (Later the difference between Chana's affliction and bindele was acknowledged by renaming the former nzila: "path".) Simbinga and Moya likewise suffered from afflictions of a nature until then unknown. In the next stage the affliction would develop to a crisis (which in the cases of Simbinga and Moya allegedly involved temporary death, in Simbinga's case even burial). In this crisis the prophet allegedly received very specific messages and directions from the supernatural agent claiming responsibility for the affliction. Following the indications received in the messages, the prophet would be able to recover. He would then have the power and the calling to apply his new insights to those in his social environment who were similarly afflicted. These first patients (twelve in Chana's case, seven in Simbinga's) would form the original core of the cult, soon to be augmented through the combined efforts of prophet and initial followers.

The regional cults do not merely share the affliction-cult idiom with the non-regional cults. The former actually emerged upon the substratum of these earlier, non-regional cults. All three started as an individual's response to an affliction that could have been cured within the established non-regional cults of affliction. Instead, the three patients devised their own cults.

Now why did these three prospective prophets fail to get healed within the existing non-regional cults of affliction? For all three, contemporary informants claim that they had tried such treatment; in Chana's and Moya's case, modern medical services were consulted as well. The standard course of their crises suggests that, in addition to any bodily disorders, a profound mental struggle was involved, bearing on existential problems such as the meaning of suffering and the interpretation of the universe. The then current, non-regional cults revolved around affliction-causing agents of an abstract and hardly personalized nature, mainly conveying associations with alienness and neighbouring ethnic groups. The solutions the three prospective prophets were seeking were to be—to judge from what they came up with—of a less particularistic and human scope. In the accounts of the founders' original visions and in their current interpretations of affliction cases and their treatment, the three regional cults propound strikingly similar, new conceptions concerning the nature of the supernatural agents involved in affliction. Chana, Simbinga and Moya attributed .their visions, their miraculous recovery and their subsequent healing power to entities-

closely associated with or, identical to, the High God. In Chana’s case this was a spirit who in dreams and visions manifested itself as a white being, exhorting him to acknowledge God, invoke God’s help, and preach about God to his patients. Simbinga had similar visions, which he interpreted in terms of an Angel (Angero) from God. Moya’s interpretations concentrate on the Life-Spirit (Moya), source of life and capable of dispensing health and illness at will. These are concepts of a much greater universality and with much more specifically theistic connotations than the affliction-causing principles of the non-regional cults.

But while this conceptual shift may have primarily sprung from the specific existential problems of the three prophets, the latter were at the same time yielding to a general tendency which since the beginning of this century has been encountered in quite a number of religious innovations in Western Zambian. Most of these movements had no specific concern with healing. They include a number of Ila prophets, amongst whom is the great prophet Mupumani (1913) whose movement had an impact throughout Western Zambia and the surrounding countries; minor eschatological prophets in Mamwala, Kalabo and Mwinilunga; the numerous Watchtower preachers and dippers moving through the area in the late 1920’s and the 1930’s; and even the Christian missionaries. All these religious innovators displayed the same conceptual shift towards ever greater prominence of the High God (Van Binsbergen 1976d).

A final major difference between the regional and the non-regional cults of affliction is that the former do display a moral element which, as we have seen, is lacking in the latter. Chana was instructed by the Spirit:

<quote>

“to teach the people what to do and what not" (Muntemba 1972: 2).

</quote>

He was given

<quote>

“rules and instructions he was to teach his people at the Sunday afternoon gatherings.(...) the rules centre around purity of mind and spirit as the key to a healthy body. At the Livingstone branch service about one hour and thirty minutes are given to instructing the people, in the form of question and answer, in how to attain purity. (...) Members are exhorted to keep clean thoughts and clean minds by not bearing malice against their husband or wife, their brothers, sisters, in-laws and neighbours but instead to love. They are warned against bearing false witness, to avoid quarrelling and drink, drink which often leads to quarrels and other irresponsible acts. They are admonished against eating certain foods (...) which are considered unclean and which would therefore foul the body and soul of man” (Muntemba 1972: 5f).

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Reynolds gives a similar picture and emphasizes the patients’ surrender of sorcery apparatus in this context (1963: 135, 138).

In the teachings of Simbinga and Moya the same emphasis on purity versus pollution is encountered. For them, the whole range of local medicine represents evil and pollution in its fundamental form. When Simbinga was called to prophethood in the early 1930’s, he immediately launched a fierce attack on local herbalists, diviners, and leaders of non-regional cults of affliction. He wanted them to give up their manipulations of material apparatuses, paraphernalia and medicine, and instead accept his own interpretation of misfortune (which by this time, however, was still blurred and inconsistent), and his treatment by means of laying-on of hands, prayer and dancing.

This is a moral issue for various reasons. First, much local medicine was (and is) locally applied for purposes which, however common in the local society, were considered immoral acts of sorcery: to attain excessive power and success; to harm or kill rivals and enemies. Moreover, especially the most powerful medicine derived from sinful manipulations of human bodies that were killed or desecrated for the purpose. And finally, on the basis of his visions Simbinga, like the two other prophets, presented an alternative

theory of causation of affliction, whose universalist and theistic overtones implied a moral rejection of previous, medicine-centred interpretations.

Simbinga was at first unsuccessful in his attack. The local practitioners proved disinclined to accept his views. They mobilized public opinion against Simbinga and after a relapse of his affliction he had to leave his area. He travelled to the north-west (to the Balovale—now Zambezi—area). After a few years he returned with a revised version of his cult. This time material paraphernalia, divining apparatus, and vegetal medicine had been given a prominent place in the Bituma idiom. However, the cult has retained its abhorrence of all other forms of medicine and material apparatus, and still considers envy, rivalry and sorcery the main occasions upsetting the harmony between a man and his Angel—interpreting the Bituma affliction as the manifestation of such disruption.

The Moya cult has adopted a rather similar position. But whereas Bituma, though conscious of the dangers involved, does not absolutely forbid its adepts the possession and manipulation of medicine, Moya does—including hunting or fishing medicine, or products from modern dispensaries. In both cults, adepts and particularly leaders are continually aware of the dangers of pollution that threaten them everywhere. For this reason they may avoid certain persons and activities. However, beyond the reluctance to apply sorcery medicine to further their own interests, the purity-orientated personal morality as derived from the regional cults appears to have little impact on everyday life.

For even if the regional cults differ from the non-regional ones with regard to moral connotations, they are quite similar in a more fundamental respect. Both types of cults are based on an individual-centred interpretation of misfortune: misfortune is considered solely a matter of the relationship between victim and an unpredictable supernatural agent. These cults do not link misfortune to the small-scale social proceses in which the victims are involved, and therefore cannot have a direct impact on such processes.

There is an intimate relation between these three outstanding features of the regional cults: their founders’ charisma, the appeal to more universal,

theistic supernatural agents, and the introduction of a moral element. In the idiom of spirit possession, association with alien or neighbouring ethnic groups might well provide a basis for personal charisma. But somehow this seems less effective in a society where through interlocal contacts across ethnic boundaries, such association has become commonplace over the past century, and where a considerable variety of religious innovatory movements have already effected an overall tendency towards greater prominence of the High God. Under these conditions, visionary experiences involving supernatural entities of a much wider scope are more likely to endow exceptional individuals with the charismatic qualities that could lead to effective mobilization over a vast area. In other words, I suggest that the founders' charisma, and their propounding of universalist, theistic supernatural agents, imply each other.

Although universalist, theistic concepts were circulating in the area well outside the sphere of missionary Christianity, the three prophets started out under the latter s direct influence. Prior to their appearance as prophets, both Chana and Simbinga had been thoroughly exposed to missionary Christianity. Chana's parents had been converts of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, and Chana belonged to this church before his prophetic calling. He even continued to adhere to this church while heading the Nzila cult (Muntemba 1972: 7f. Reynolds 1963: 133f suggests the contrary). Simbinga was among the first evangelists of the fundamentalist South Africa General Mission at Luampa, and appears to have received further Christian teaching as a labour migrant in South Africa. Although very little is known yet of Moya's biography, the preponderance of Christian elements in the ritual of his cult (bible copies, church bells, and a supernatural entity whose name is the current local translation of the Christian concept of the "Holy Ghost") reveals a similar background.

If the universalist, theistic elements endowed the prophets with just the amount of charisma they required to set up regional cults, their propounding of moral elements fits well into the same picture. As Weber (1969: 361) wrote, "From a substantive point of view, every charismatic authority would have to subscribe to the proposition, 'It is written..., but I say unto you...' The genuine prophet, like the genuine military leader and every true leader in this sense, preaches, creates, or demands new obligations".

However, the development of a regional cult organization is an aspect not of charismatic leadership itself, but of its subsequent routinization (Weber 1969: 363f). Given the charisma, universalist and theistic agents, and moral emphasis by which the regional cults differ from the substratum of non-regional cults of affliction from which they sprang, the development of more or less formal interlocal organization does by no means follow automatically. Instead, such development represents a major analytical problem. Apart from the ill-documented Moya cult, we are fortunate in having, in the Nzila and Bituma cults, two reasonably well-known cases whose development into regional cults displays such divergence, that a detailed comparison is likely to yield some insights into the general dynamics of regional cults.

*** 4. The Development of Nzila and Bituma as Regional Cults

**** 4.1 Nzila

After a spell of labour migration in Zimbabwe, Chana returned to his village in Kalabo district. He developed his affliction, cured himself through the methods shown to him in his visions, and appeared as a prophet in the early 1940's.[43] His methods involved the erection of a shrine, daily ablutions in this shrine with water medicated by selected herbs, and nocturnal ritual dances. Having recovered, Chana successfully applied this method to his first twelve patients, thus obtaining his first followers: the twelve first Nzila "doctors". Subsequent visions instructed him to put faith in God, to organize weekly services for Him on Saturday afternoons and to extend his activities to moral teachings. Thus a formal ritual routine was worked out, quite reminiscent of a Christian church service; the influence, in particular, of the Seventh Day Adventist Church is unmistakable (Muntemba 1972: passim; Reynolds 1963: 137). Assisted by his doctors, Chana treated a rapidly increasing number of patients in the Kalabo, Mongu, Senanga and Kaoma districts. A cult centre was erected near Mongu, the capital of the then Barotse Province (now Western Province). The growth of the cult was such that already in 1952 a larger building had to be constructed. At the cult centre, Chana would personally diagnose the patients' affliction as his own. After the diagnosis, the patient would return to his place of residence, where

under the guidance of one of the doctors he would construct a windbreak in which he was to wash every morning, using medicated water. This would be continued until the patient appeared to be cured—which could take up to five months. Patient and attending doctor would then apply again to the cult centre, where Chana would subject the former to a series of tests in order to ascertain if he was truly cured. Some of these tests would be public and within sight of the weekly gatherings at the centre, whereas the final test would take place in Chana's sacred enclosure (Reynolds 1963: 136f). This finished, the patient would be told what he had to pay:

<quote>

'Payment is normally in the form of livestock; a cow, a few pigs or goats, but frequently, a fairly substantial sum of money has to be paid. He must also bring a beast to slaughter for the feast that night' (Reynolds 1963:137).

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During this feast the cured patient would be installed as a new doctor of the Nzila cult. This gave him the right to build his own sacred enclosure at his own residence. He would have authority to attend on new patients during their months of ritual washing, but could not use his own sacred enclosure to diagnose or pronounce final recovery: this would have to be carried out at the cult centre, by Chana personally.

In the mid-1950's the Mongu centre under Chana's direct leadership catered for the Mongu, Kalabo, and Kaoma district; a subsidiary branch, led by one of the twelve doctors, was then already in operation in the Senanga district. Branches soon began to proliferate. Muntemba (1972: 3) reports that

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"By the late 1950's it (the cult) had spread to most areas in Zambia that had strong Western Province influences and also to Bulawayo and parts of Botswana. In the 1960's branches were started in most towns along the line of rail including the Copperbelt. (...) People not only from Western Province but from other societies became Nzila members as well. The movement was

registered as the Zambia Nzila Sect in 1966. Its membership stood at 80,000 people ihen. On 30th March, 1972, the membership figure stood at 96,872."

</quote>

Thus in a quarter of a century the Nzila cult developed from a core of a handful of followers around a charismatic leader, into a fully-fledged interlocal formal organization with government recognition, branches and property (in the form of buildings for worship) in most major towns of Zambia. The supreme leader's personal control over the crucial stages in the healing of each patient became, of course, no longer practicable. Branches and their leaders now enjoy a certain autonomy, which is however effectively checked by an interlocal organizational structure ensuring overall conformity of both belief and ritual, central administration of membership figures, and centralised control over the recruitment and performance of officers. This control is effected by the Annual Convention at the cult's headquarters, by the distribution of essential paraphernalia,[44] and by formal examinations concerning the cult's beliefs and regulations.

Here a creative process must be appreciated in order to see the general significance of this development of a regional organization in the Nzila cult. Imitation is not the crux of this development; Nzila is far more than a mere copy on the model of a Christian church. A failure to appreciate this leads Wilson (1975) to a radical misreading of the cult, and a wrong generalization about the primacy of imitation in the organizational development of sects. From Reynolds' account of Nzila, Wilson (1975: 92f) wrongly infers that Nzila developed no other congregations than the Mongu one over which Chana presided. Wilson goes on to speculate that

<quote>

"the abilities and facilities necessary for a more elaborate structure, however, were probably not yet available in Barotseland. Only where an organizational model of another type of movement can be imitated should we expect thaumaturgical responses (such as witchcraft-eradication movements and cults of affliction—WVB) to take on these structural characteristics which we associate with sects in advanced society. Such

imitation, combining central direction with branch churches over a wide area, first occurred in this region in the Lumpa church.” (1975: 93f).

</quote>

Applied to the Lumpa church of Alice Lenshina the explanation in terms of an imitation of the mission as organizational model (Wilson 1975: 94f) is gross and superficial—particularly in view of Roberts’ authoritative statement that “there is very little information of any kind on the internal organization of the Lumpa church—a most important subject which perhaps will never properly be elucidated” (Roberts 1972: 3; see also Ranger 1973, for a critical review of Wilson’s approach, and Van Binsbergen 1977b).

Wilson’s errors are plain. Nzila did evolve branches over a very wide area, and even Reynolds mentions the early Senanga branch. Therefore, the structural requirements for a regional organization were obviously met in Barotseland in the 1940’s. The Bituma and Moya cults, as I will discuss below, show that Nzila was not even the only cult to develop such regional organization. Admittedly, all three cults borrowed part of their idiom from Christian churches (this is clearly what Wilson means by “another type of movement”). Moreover, the fact that Nzila was embedded in a social environment dominated by formal, bureaucratic organizations (including Christian churches) appears to have favoured Nzila’s expansion (see section 4.4 below). Nevertheless, it is a gross error to explain the development of regional organization as merely an imitation of the Christian church model. Such an explanation wholly ignores the creative process by which new organizational solutions have been gradually worked out in Nzila and similar cults. These solutions were primarily determined not by the desire to imitate an outside organizational model, but, as I demonstrate in the following discussion, by the founders’ personalities, their relations with their early followers and the structural characteristics of the cults’ regions.

**** 4.2 Bituma

The development of Bituma is much less of a success story. Simbinga’s first attempt to found a cult failed. Public opinion rejected his claims of

prophethood. His first activities (which included the propagation of unusual healing methods and the free distribution of his herd of cattle) were considered the acts of a madman. His early attack on what he considered the impurity of established healers and diviners, including his cousin Kapata, contributed to his public rejection. He left the area. However, when he returned in the late 1930's, he was in possession of an elaborate collection of paraphernalia,[45] and much more developed views concerning the nature of the afflictioncausing Angel. The affliction henceforth became known as Bituma ("sent him") or Chituma ("message"), referring to Simbinga's prophetic commission or (according to other present-day informants) to the Angel, who sends affliction and is himself sent by the High God. Simbinga shifted the area of his activities towards the east: the central and eastern parts of Kaoma district. There he treated his first seven patients, including Kapata. Kapata, and several others among these first followers, only joined Bituma after a career of intense personal crises involving previous initiation into such non-regional cults of affliction as kayongo and mayimbwe. In this respect they were Simbinga's junior colleagues, rather than his disciples; they had access to experiences similar to those on which Simbinga's charisma was based.

Simbinga built for himself a small, hut-like shrine (called kreki, "church") and made his initial followers do the same at their own places of residence. At these shrines healing sessions would be held at irregular intervals, according to the demand from patients. The session would start and conclude with prayer, and be built around songs featuring Simbinga and crucial signs of his prophetic calling: his communication with heaven, and his rising from death:

| 1
Tukuyako, tukuyako We are going, we are going
ku ngonda, ku ngonda to the moon, to the moon
(allegedly the first song Simbinga composed when he rose from death, claiming that he had been at the moon).

2
Thangwe ngoma Start beating the drum
ngwa Shimbinga here comes Simbinga
(a song Simbinga used during ritual dances in the first years).

3
Kombelela nganga
wayamukalunga Shimbanda-mwane
nganga yetu yele
kombelele nganga
wayamukalunga Shimbanda-mwane
Shimbinga-mwane kombelelelanga

wayamukalunga mwane
Kapata yele kombelele nganga

wayamukalunga

mwane
(a major song of the later period). |
We are going, we are going
to the moon, to the moon

Start beating the drum
here comes Simbinga

Clap hands for the cult leader
you were in the grave, Great Healer,
you are out cult leader, indeed
clap hands for the cult leader
you were in the grave, Great Healer,
we are continuously clapping hands for Simbinga the Great
Great one, who were in the grave
Kapata indeed we clap hands for the cult leader
Great One, you were in the grave |

However, despite such distinctive elements as the regional organization centring around a charismatic leader, the theistic interpretation of affliction, and the purity-centred morality, the Bituma sessions in themselves remained, in their outside appearance, very close to the general idiom of the non-regional cults of affliction described above.

The cult took on well in Kaoma district, where in the 1940’s—1960’s a few thousand people were initiated. A more precise number cannot be given since in contrast with the Nzila cult no central records of membership were kept. (Individual leaders did keep records of their own patients, along with a price-list of various treatments available.)

In addition to the seven initial followers, about a dozen more leaders were appointed during Simbinga’s lifetime. These leaders would meet each New Year’s Day at the cult’s Annual Convention around Simbinga’s shrine, where they would hand over part of their patients’ fees and would enjoy a collective meal of white chickens.

In the 1950’s several leaders settled in Lusaka and other line-of-rail towns, where they held sessions for urban migrants from Kaoma district.

Meanwhile old tensions between Simbinga and Kapata (going back to the time of Simbinga’s first appearance as a prophet) became manifest again. They concentrated on the cult’s leadership and on the use of the cult’s funds. Simbinga had married a woman from the eastern part of Kaoma district and enjoyed the loyalty of the Bituma leaders there, several of whom were his

close affines. Kapata had settled in the central part of the district, and other Bituma leaders there sided with him. Simbinga's sudden death during a hunting party (1960) was the occasion for the cult to fall apart. The leaders around Kapata (including those in town who hailed from the central part of the district) accepted his succession to the cult's leadership. They continued to visit the Annual Convention, now at Kapata's shrine, and to forward part of their fees to him. Those in the eastern part of the district (and urban leaders hailing from there) have severed their connection with the cult's organization and have since practised the Bituma ritual as independent, individual cult leaders, without any organization being maintained between them. For them and their patients, Bituma has lost its regional character and has become merely another non-regional cult of affliction among the many prevailing locally. These eastern leaders retain a reminiscence of Simbinga's original, theistic and universal visions. However, for those of their patients that have been initiated only recently, these associations are virtually lost. Surviving only in the central part of the district and among a few urban leaders, Bituma has elsewhere returned to the substratum of the factional, non-regional cults from which it sprang.

Thus the development of Nzila and Bituma has been very different indeed. We shall presently try to identify some of the factors responsible for this difference.

**** 4.3 Bituma and Nzila compared from within

Let us first look at both cults from within: their internal structure and specific idiom.

As Reynolds rightly observed (1963: 137), during the first two decades of Nzila, Chana succeeded in maintaining control over crucial phases of the ritual. He kept most of his doctors in the position of mere assistants, without autonomous ritual powers. Only Chana's heir (nominated by Chana himself), and presumably his Senanga deputy, were allowed to exercise ritual powers on their own behalf. As the cults spread further, effective devices were worked out to safeguard the cult's unity and perpetuation even when it ramified into a number of geographically distant branches. A body of

centralized administration, the Annual Convention, explicit regulations, indispensible paraphernalia whose distribution was strictly controlled, all in combination constituted an adequate structure through which the founder's charisma could be routinized and channelled without becoming dissipated or usurped. These devices constitute clearly recognized principles of legitimation, controlled from headquarters, outside which no cult leader pursuing the Nzila idiom could claim ritual efficacy. The gradual adoption of these devices rendered an ever-increasing specific identity to the Nzila cult. It more and more diverted from the substratum of non-regional cults. Nzila's interpretational idiom and cultic procedures became so specific that a relapse into the non-regional substratum became increasingly unlikely.

This may have been due not only to the cult's internal authority structure. Through the very large number of adepts and the participation of nonadepts in the mass services (Reynolds 1963: 136), the Nzila cult must have become something of a generally recognized social institution in the society of Western Zambia. Nzila's definition and perpetuaton came to be based not just on concepts and actions of leaders and adepts within the cult, but also on public opinion. The latter's influence is suggested by the one case of a break-away from Nzila cited by Muntemba. There the protagonist had to adopt an idiom explicitly different from Nzila; and even so, Nzila turned out to be so well established that after a temporary decline the population again made a mass demand on its services:

<quote>

"Two years ago Nzila was thought to be on the decline in the Mulobezi area when a former Nzila healer decided to leave the sect to concentrate on pure faith healing which he thought (and Christian leaders accepted) was more Christian. People went to him from all over Livingstone area and his activities met their needs. Yet now this man's authority is on the decline as more people turn back to Nzila." (Muntemba 1972:Ilf)

</quote>

A very specific ideology and ritual, and a well-defined structure of organization and authority, externally supported by expectations among the

general population, produced for Nzila effective checks against the threat of fragmentation and kept the cult from returning to the non-regional phase.

By contrast, Simbinga failed to assert himself as a continually indispensible source of charisma vis-a-vis the other Bituma leaders. Once initiated, the latter could all act independently. Moreover, at least some of them had had experiences similar to those from which Simbinga derived his charisma. Simbinga's personal status in Bituma was far less exalted than Chana's in Nzila. The great benefits in terms of prestige, power and income attached to independent leadership along the non-regional model, produced a strong tendency towards fragmentation. Little could counteract this tendency but the leaders' personal emotional attachment to Simbinga, which ceased to have organizational relevance when he died. Moreover, in order to possess ritual efficacy in the eyes of adepts and of the general population, Bituma leaders were by no means dependent on paraphernalia that could only be obtained from the cult's headquarters and that, once obtained, would only be regarded as legitimating leadership as long as their owner continued to belong to the cult's organization. Instead, Bituma leaders freely obtained and augmented their paraphernalia, which were similar not only to Simbinga's but also to those in use in the non-regional cults of affliction: white clothes, scapulars, fly-switches, bells, etc. And although the cult certainly became an established institution in Kaoma district, in its public manifestations it remained so close to the well-established non-regional cults of affliction, that any external check (in the way of expectations from the general population, concerning ritual and organization) against relapse in the direction of these non-regional cults, could not have been strong.

As a regional cult, Bituma was far less powerfully designed than Nzila. Not so much Bituma's decline, but its part survival around Kapata seems to pose a problem. Personal ties based on past treatment supported the relationship between Kapata and his loyal leaders after Simbinga's death. In addition, however, there appear to be more systematic reasons for the survival of Bituma in the central part of Kaoma district, which will become clear as we now turn to a discussion of the structural characteristics of the regions of Bituma and Nzila.

Let us sum up the position. Nzila and Bituma sprang from the same substratum of non-regional cults of affliction, and both were triggered by very similar personal experiences of their founders. What then explains their their very different development? Part of an answer lies in personality differences: Chana was clearly a more creative innovator and organizer than Simbinga. Another part lies in the nature of social relationships between the leaders and their initial followers: in contrast with Chana's selfconfident and unchallenged control, Simbinga was much more of a primus inter pares and had to compromise with the cultic backgrounds and ambitions of his initial followers. The differences between the cults' organizational structures and ritual idioms as they were gradually worked out, provide, as a third part of an answer, such explanations as I have just attempted to give in the present section. However, it would appear that these organizational differences in themselves largely derived from the differences in structural characteristics between the Bituma and Nzila regions.

**** 4.4 Nzila's and Bituma's Regions Compared

Although the regions of both cults extend into towns outside Western Zambia, the processes that have shaped the cults in the first two decades after the founders' first appearance as prophets have taken place within Western Zambia. I feel therefore justified in concentrating on that area, and I refrain from discussing the cults' wider ramifications.

Map 2 outlines the geographical location of the regions of both cults in this area, and indicated the main direction of spread. By comparison with Map I and with the geographical material contained in Davies (1971), a number of striking differences between these two regions can be observed.

Demographically the differences are considerable (Davies 1971:42–47). The Nzila region has, by and large, a higher density of population. In addition to small administrative centres at Kalabo, Senanga and Sesheke (which are perfectly comparable to Kaoma in the centre of the Bituma region), the Nzila region includes the only two significant towns in this area: Mongu and Livingstone.[46] Nzila's headquarters are near Mongu, whilst the Livingstone

area (extending into the commercial timber concessions around Mulobezi) appears in Muntemba’s description as a major growth area of Nzila. By contrast Bituma has been a rural affair, whose present headquarters are located at about 25 kilometres from Kaoma. Admittedly, Bituma does have a few hundred urban adepts: but these are almost exclusively lower-class migrants from Kaoma district who, unable to become stabilized urbanites, keep circulating between town and village, and in many cases go through the Bituma ritual not in town but in the village. The occurrence, in the Mongu and Livingstone-Mulobezi area, of male/female sex ratios of more than 100 (as compared to under 70 in the Bituma region) further bears out the demographic difference.[47]

The demographic situation has important implications for the regional cults. Where population density is low (in the eastern part of Kaoma district it drops under 7 inhabitants per km²), the creation of local congregations and the maintenance of interlocal ties between them poses serious problems in terms of the number of people available, transport, and communications in general. The factional nature of the non-regional cults of affliction is partly explicable in this light. Similar problems play a much smaller role in densely populated areas, and a fortiori in towns.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-11.jpg]]

More important perhaps, the demographic differences reveal a social-structural difference between the situation of the typical Bituma adept in comparison with the typical Nzila adept. Bituma caters for a stagnated peasantry whose experience with urban living may be considerable (due to labour migration), but whose prime identification and source of economic and social security is the village. Modern institutions, and particularly formal, bureaucratic organizations in the political and economic sphere do penetrate from the metropolitan and national centres into the peripheral village scene, and determine the villagers’ lives to an ever increasing extent. Bui these institutions and organizations, with physical outlets at the district centres mainly, are seldom visible at the village scene. Their impact on rural life does not imply that the villagers frequently participate in them or identify with them—quite the contrary. Debarred from substantial economic and political participation in the wider national context, the people in the Bituma region

see themselves primarily as part of an economic and political order whose major concerns and transactions refer to local, largely pre-capitalist, historical structures. Bureaucratic organizations set, from a distance, the narrow confines for the local social process but do not play a prominent role in the participants' subjective life-world. And it is primarily from the latter that we can hope to expect a solution to the problem of differential adoption of religious forms—that is, if we agree to view religion mainly as an interpretative and legitimating structure.

The social-structural situation that is typical of the Bituma region, does obtain in parts of the Nzila region as well. But in the latter's centres of gravity (Mongu, Livingstone-Mulobezi) the structural context is very different. Here people live in an urban or peri-urban environment, where their life to a large extent consists of participation in economic and political formal, bureaucratic organizations: civil service, industrial and commercial enterprises, schools, medical services, churches, political parties, recreational associations, etc. Understanding of, and identification with, complex patterns of formal task definition and bureaucratically legitimated authority based on legal rules, are essential for both psychological comfort and for economic survival in town and in the peri-urban and rural extensions of urban-based formal organizations. Parkin (1966) has emphasized the potential of urban voluntary organisations to become mechanisms of adaptation to the organizational structure of modern urban life. Nzila is likely to play a role in this respect. But what is more important in the context of the present argument, is that Nzila's being embedded, from the 1940's on, in a general urban organizational environment, did provide, in the perception of Nzila's potential patients and adepts, obvious organizational models and patterns of bureaucratic legitimatidn by reference to which this cult could successfully make the transition from direct to routinized charisma.

Whilst no doubt providing a solution for some of the problems engendered in its adepts by their confrontation with modern urban organizational structures, Nzila copied an organizational model derived from this very structure (and therefore recognizable, and acceptable, to its adepts). This appears to have been an important factor in Nzila's development into a successful regional cult.

The knowledge of such models and patterns was surely available in the Bituma region as well. But there such a formal organizational structure did not correspond with the peasants' subjective reality: the organizational micro-structure of their rural society. Nzila developed a regional organizational structure borrowed from and commensurate with the urban society by which it was surrounded. Bituma, after attempts towards regional organization, to a large extent lapsed back into a fragmented, factionalized organizational structure which is not only typical of the pre-existing non-regional cults of affliction, but which is also (in ways I cannot elaborate on here) in line with the fragmented economic and political structure of Nkoya village society.

I am not suggesting, though, that the structure of this rural society was entirely incompatible with formal, interlocal religious organization. Christian missions throughout Western Zambia demonstrate that such religious organizations are viable provided they receive ample political and logistic backing from national and metropolitan centres (a condition obviously not met in the case of Bituma). Missions are important for an understanding of the development of the regional cults in several other respects. They were among the few formal, bureaucratic organizations that were visibly present in the rural areas. In this way they introduced the rural population to a pattern of social organization prevailing in urban contexts. In addition the missions contributed to the ideological shift towards greater prominence of the High God, among the general population of Western Zambia.

Both Simbinga and Chana were exposed to local missions. But whereas Nzila subsequently spread in an area that was very heavily missionized, and where Christianity grew rapidly in the 1940's, Bituma spread in an area where missionary activity was very limited and in fact declining in the 1940's (map 2).[48] By consequence, Nzila could benefit much more than Bituma from the missions' instilling, in the minds of potential adepts, such attitudes and organizational models as are conducive to a regional cult organization.

The relation between Nzila and Christianity was and is extremely tolerant.

Muntemba points out (1972: 12f) that Nzila has developed a considerable degree of symbiosis with Christian churches. Many of the adepts and patients are Christians, even some Nzila leaders are church leaders, and Chana has remained a member of the Seventh Day Adventist Church throughout his life. In the early stages ot Bituma, on the contrary, Simbinga denounced membership of Christian churches, claiming that “now we have bur own church ’. In later years this antagonism made way for tolerance and at present the cult is indifferent with regard to its patients’ and adepts’ religious affiliations.

A final point ot difference between Nzila and Bituma revolves around the role that ethnicity has played in the development of either cult. Belonging to the Luvale ethnic group, Chana was an Angolan immigrant: one of the many thousands that have moved into the rural areas throughout Western Zambia since the 1920’s (Clay 1945; Colson 1970). Chana utilized Luvale ethnic identity to get his cult off the ground in the first instance. Nzila’s spread closely followed the penetration of Angolan immigrants in the area. However,

<quote>

“by the later 1940’s the movement had spread to other parts of the Western Province and drew adherents not only from the Luvale (…) but from the Lozi as well as other groups in the Province.” (Muntemba 1972:3)

</quote>

The mono-ethnic element now appears no longer to play a role in Nzila.

By contrast, Simbinga could hardly rely on ethnic support. He belonged to the Mbunda ethnic group and was an Angolan immigrant like Chana. Unable to find recognition and support among his own people, at the time of his first appearance as a prophet, he turned to the Nkoya who have lived in Kaoma district at least since the last century. The majority of Bituma leaders that Simbinga initiated were Nkoya, Kapata being a notable exception. Instead of utilizing the enormous numerical potential of the Angolan immigrants, as Chana did, Simbinga thus concentrated on a relatively small ethnic group tied to a rather small territory that was increasingly encroached upon by

Angolan immigrants, and with no substantial portion of stabilized urbanites among their number. Concentration on the Nkoya is likely to have contributed to the lack of expansion of Bituma. On the other hand, this very concentration made the Bituma cult into a distinctive cultural feature, a sign of Nkoya identity especially among Nkoya migrants in town. Before that time, only the mayimbwe non-regional cult had played that role to some extent.

Ethnicity, or rather local rivalry in an ethnic disguise, also played a role in the later decline of Bituma as a regional cult. The central and eastern parts of Kaoma district form two subdivisions (“Nkoya proper” and “Mashasha”) of the Nkoya ethnic group. Despite frequent intermarriage and intra-rural residential mobility between these two subdivisions, they display mutual antagonism based on a different political, administrative and mission history. Each subdivision has its own senior chief. There are close kin relations between the Mashasha chief and Bituma leaders in the eastern subdivision, and the same is true of the chief in the central subdivision and the Bituma leaders there. The latterday cleavage between Simbinga and Kapata, even though both are non-Nkoya, coincided with one between ethnically-articulated power-blocks in the political structure of the district.

The preceding argument suggests systematic reasons why, with the decline of Bituma, Kapata could yet retain around him some remnants of the cult’s regional organization. Density of population is much higher in the central part of Kaoma district (and particularly north-west of Maoma township, where Kapata’s village is situated) than it is in the eastern part. Moreover, the large Mangango mission (created in the early 1950’s some 15 kilometres north-west of the earlier Mukunkiki site), the annexed hospital, and the secular enterprise it has generated in the way of trading firms and cooperatives, along with the proximity of Kaoma and of Luampa mission, create a structural and ideological milieu more favourable for an interlocal regional cult, than exists in the eastern part of the district.

**** 4.5 Conclusion

My analysis of two recent Zambian regional cults is based, to a large extent, on far from complete, oral-historical data. Even though I can analyse these data against the background of acquaintance with the area, with the non-regional cults of affliction from which the regional cults in question emerged, and with main trends in the religious history of Central Africa in general, the whole argument remains too tentative to approach a theory of the dynamics of regional cults. However, my argument does lead to a few comparative generalizations.

Every regional cult seems to face a dual problem. On the one hand, it has to develop a distinct, specific cultic idiom (in terms of both ideology and ritual). On the other hand, it requires a formal organizational structure which shares out ritual authority sufficiently widely among officials to enable them to cover an entire region, whilst retaining these officials within an authority-legitimizing structure of such effectiveness as to prevent them from either breaking away from the cult or, within its organization, pursuing too deviant an idiom. The dialectical process in which solutions for this problem are worked out with varying success, is determined by a number of factors. In addition to personality traits and interpersonal relationships of the personnel involved, crucial factors appear to be of two kinds. First, the specific nature of a cult's organizational devices to a large extent determines its chances of survival as a regional cult. Secondly, these organizational devices are partly determined by the structural characteristics which obtain in the geographical area that the cult is to transform into a region. My argument suggests the importance, among these structural characteristics of the region, of demographic patterns and of the occurrence, besides the cult in question,, of other religious and non-religious, formal, interlocal organizations. However, only application to more, and better data from other parts of the world can throw light on the validity of these suggestions.

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* Part Three: Regional Instability: Cult Policy and Competition for Resources

** 7. Continuity and Policy in Southern Africa’s High God Cult[49]

*by Richard P. Werbner

*** Introduction: The Definition of Regions

The more a cult spreads across major ethnic and political boundaries, the more its organization may have to be variable and its ritual and symbolism transcultural. A cult in the middle range—neither exclusively parochial nor extremely universalistic—poses special problems. It calls for a theoretical approach that grasps variations in organization and ritual from one rather narrow context to another. Yet it also calls for another order of data and a wider perspective in order to make sense of the cult relations which transcend these narrow contexts. There is no question of alternatives: either to focus on the narrow or the more inclusive context. Both must be regarded, and in relation to each other, because the cult is in some senses both parochial and universalistic. That is why in this essay on a vast yet middle range cult, a High God cult in Southern Africa, fine nuances of cult activity and microhistories are brought into focus in a single perspective along with the connected regional relations and macrohistorical change.

Southern Africa’s most widespread High God cult, the cult of Mwali or Mwari, has its congregations divided in spatially distinct regions, each with its own central staff and oracle and its own adepts and communal shrines. Each region extends over thousands of square miles across ethnic,[50] district and even international boundaries. Yet each is somewhat concentrated in one part or another of the cult’s total domain. Not that any region has a

continuous territory of its own: every region is scattered irregularly. Moreover, the congregations of different regions come between each other. A region is a set of many, separated pieces—the locally defined congregations—and it is in its pieces that a region is spatially distinct. There is more to a region, however, than the distribution of its congregations. From region to region there are also overlapping vicinities. The area from which supplicants come to consult a regional oracle as individuals rather than on behalf of congregations is a region's vicinity. Every region has a wider vicinity around it, beyond its congregations, from which it receives individual supplicants. Moreover, supplicants who come from a single congregation consult oracles in various regions, and these thus have vicinities which overlap. The overlap is selective, however, in that supplicants from one region go to certain others only, and they tend to favour oracles'more in one direction than another.

Regions also have other features of distribution, besides distinctness and selective overlap. Other features appear in the relations between regions and their enclaves and borderlands. The enclaves are territorial communities which do not themselves join any region, although they are virtually surrounded by affiliated congregations. Conversely, the borderlands are the territorial communities which block cult expansion and remain at the outer limit beyond any region. The enclaves tend to be less permanent and fluctuate back and forth from non-affiliation to membership in a region, whereas the borderlands are more enduring as barriers against cult expansion.

Finally, to complete an initial view of the regions' spatial relations, something must be said about centralization. Not only does each region have at least one regional centre for an oracle, but the regions all together are centralized. Their heartland is where virtually all the oracles are sited, and it is a geographically central location, an inner area of highlands that has special importance for the surrounding lowlands in the rest of the cult's domain. Moreover, the centralization is such that the heartland itself has a gradient, a decreasing order of oracles from centre to periphery: roughly, the closer an oracle is to the heartland's centre, the higher is its standing in terms of recognised seniority. The most central oracle is paramount, and in relation to it there are at least two junior lines, each with no more than four oracles under a senior or cardinal oracle. This order relates to permanence in

location in that the cardinal oracles, including the paramount one, are relatively fixed; they move their sites the least, if at all.[51]

Both in number and distribution the regions are limited. They are virtually confined to a major ecological zone of savanna or mopane bush veld which runs from Botswana's central and eastern districts across the south of Zimbabwe and into Mozambique and the Transvaal of South Africa (for this zone see Keay 1959; Newman 1971: 119).[52] Their heartland is the high veld or highlands which cross Botswana and Zimbabwe, and their cardinal oracles are centrally sited in the Matopo Hills within a smaller ecological zone of wooded steppe[53] that is surrounded by the major ecological zone. Not that the regions cover the whole of this major zone: with peripheral, and thus revealing exceptions, only areas of dispersed, though sometimes quite dense settlements with relatively mobile and ethnically heterogeneous populations have congregations. This virtually[54] excludes the territorial communities that are based on large nucleated villages and led by Tswana in the zone's southwest. There is an oracular cult in the southwest in the Tswapong Hills, but it holds sway only in the smaller, less strongly centralized villages. Moreover, this is a cult of the microcosm,[55] rather than a cult of the macrocosm (see Horton 1975), as is the High God cult.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-12.jpg][Diagram 1: Regions and their Surrounding Vicinities]]

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-13.jpg][Diagram 2: Cult Domain and Ecological Zones: Distribution of Oracles]]

Within the major ecological zone of savanna, regions compete for congregations and wax and wane in relation to each other. They are unstable, but they do not change arbitrarily. Gradually and continuously, congregations which in themselves vary transfer their allegiance back and forth, from region to region. This transfer takes place during the lifetime of the priest who leads the region,[56] often for several decades or more, though it is all the more frequent at his death. Indeed, after a priest's death, a long period often passes without a successor in full control of the priest's office. During such an interregnum, perhaps for as much as a decade or

more, the region appears to disintegrate and be partially taken over by others. Sometimes the disintegration lasts; somewhat new regions then emerge, without an increase in the total number of regions.

The cult's beliefs recognize and allow for such change. Even the site of the most senior oracle, now at Njelele (Snake Eagle),[57] is believed to be one site in a series that began elsewhere among Venda, who are now in the Transvaal to the south.[58] This oracle, like all others, is held to have ultimately come from a foreign site, though its origins were within the cult's total domain. Any priest may resite his oracle and virtually everyone does. He may move it from cave to cave or hollow boabab tree, on one hill then another. He need not keep to one site throughout his lifetime. He may consult the oracle at a series in succession or at a pair of sites or more, during the same period. From time to time, he may even leave his own centre to live with another priest for months or perhaps longer. Similarly, succession to office is also variable, and people recall only a few successors. A priest's son is his preferred successor, or alternatively a brother (see also Richards 1942: 55; Daneel 1970: 46). However, these are sometimes disqualified or lacking. The successor may then be another close relative or a newcomer who may claim descent from Njelele's founder, Njenje, within a rather short patriline.[59] Usually, two generations is the most a priest claims in succession from his region's founder. However, no direct succession need occur within a region, and an oracle may end with its founder.

Just as a region waxes and wanes so too do its many shrine congregations. The congregations change in span, kind and composition: a chiefdom or any of its parts, one territorial community or several, may become one shrine congregation. The variation is from the kind of congregation which is a whole territorial community (i.e. a chiefdom or a large or small division of it, a section or ward) to the kind which is a local cluster, (i.e. a select set of nearby, roughly contiguous communities and not a whole territorial division). Examples are shown on Map 1: a whole chieftancy (Habangana —D), a section (the south of Musojane—C, wards Cl, C2, C6, C8, CIO), a single ward (C9 of Musojane) and a local cluster (wards B3, B5, B7, B8, B9, of Masunga). Rarely does a congregation last as much as a generation with the same composition in territorial communities. Each congregation expands or contracts in accord with highly localized conditions, and these fluctuate from one small valley to the next (see Werbner 1975). The process is sensitive to

local shifts in population, in the support a territorial ruler can mobilize, and in his commitment to a particular priest or even the cult itself.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-14.jpg]]

To understand how congregations vary four aspects must be examined in detail. These are the scale of a congregation's assets such as its donated fund and offerings, the grade of its shrine, the categories of its staff, and its coverage and composition. Later I take up each aspect in that order. But first lest my view be misunderstood, I must make it plain that cult change is not a process in which the cult's parts, such as regions or congregations, make a closed adjustment to each other, subject merely to constraints of a political, economic, or ecological kind. There are alternative cults, such as faith-healing and separatist churches; and the High God cult changes in relation to the organization and theology of these alternative, and sometimes opposed, cults.[60] Nor is this a passive relation, or a completely one-sided one. Representatives go back and forth, on an ad hoc basis, between the staff of various regions and the shrines and centres of different cults and also ritual associations, such as diviners' unions, for example, 'The Botswana Dingaka Association' (Mpaphadzi 1975a and b; Modongo 1975) and 'The Herbalist Association of Africa'. The opposition and rivalry between the cults and ritual associations contributes to rivalry and competition within the High God cult itself. Because of this a priest or would-be leader of a region has a changing series of managerial problems, some of which arise outside of his own cult or region. In due course I discuss these problems along with others that affect policy-making at an oracle. However, a further caution must be given in order for the later discussion to be tightly understood.

This caution has to do with the analysis of strategic action. My argument takes account of long and short-term planning by well-informed cult leaders. Sometimes they hold to the same general orientation for a considerable period of time, and this affects the way they understand the very fine and up-to-date intelligence which they may get even about remote local changes in their regions and elsewhere. But this is not to say that there is some grand and deliberate design and that cult leaders act or choose their policies in accord with it.

*** Change in Congregations

Every congregation goes through a career of graded shrines in accord with its cult assets and investments. The grades are from a local, to an interlocal, to a regional shrine. Chart I shows the defining features of each grade along with its current distribution on Map 1. Very few communities progress to the higher grades. None remain there for as much as two generations without interruption and return to a lower grade or withdrawal from the cult and want of a shrine. This holds true in the western regions and, I infer, elsewhere too. The congregations which invest more than others attain the higher grades and accumulate the more enduring cult assets—both goods and personnel. But even these are, in certain critical respects, fluid rather than completely fixed. They do not, indeed cannot, anchor a congregation permanently to a particular region, though they may delay a congregation's decline within the cult. Nevertheless, lest I convey the impression of completely localized fluctuation, I must point out, in advance of my later discussion, that the assets of congregations and regions are checked by the cult's central organization. Changes in such assets—the slaughter of a black cow, the death of a priest, adept, messenger or affiliated chief and their replacement—should all be reported to a cardinal oracle in the Matapo Hills. Moreover, a cult fine for these changes may be levied centrally.

There are two categories of staff that are perhaps most important for change in a congregation. These are: first, the congregation's messenger (ntumwa), who is accompanied by one carrier or more, (nsengi)[61] and second, the cult adept (hosana or mwana wa Mwali, child of Mwali). The messenger is regarded as a courier, rather than a delegate with independent authority. His errand is on a territorial ruler's behalf to communicate and carry out transactions with other congregations, shrines and oracles. To the oracle, he carries offerings along with the congregation's petitions for rain, fertility and seeds, that are blessed and ritually treated against pests. From the oracle he brings back, besides the seeds, a declaration of Mwali's response in accord with the state of the land and moral order of the congregation, whether it observes Mwali's rest days and respects His injunctions such as not to fight and spill blood or kill certain insects, birds, and reptiles; not to sell too much grain or produce,

like melons, customarily given free; not to play, especially during the rainy season, the incessant records that blare throughout sales at beer drinks; and, positively, to settle a man’s estate, fill his vacant office, and destroy his abandoned hut after his death. Daneel (1970: 73f) reports an instance of a prominent messenger who got the oracle at Matonjeni and its staff to take a side in a community’s succession dispute. However, an oracle does not regularly declare the winner of that kind of political struggle; and it is not usual for a messenger to seek to have the oracle mediate a dispute over succession to territorial office.

Chart 1: Grades of Shrine

| | GRADE I— LOCAL | GRADE II— INTERLOCAL | GRADE III— REGIONAL |

| Distribution on Map I | A18, A7, B3, C2, Tsamaya | C7 | D3, A15 |

| Kalanga Terms | Tanga (Nanga), ‘Ring’ | Gota (Daka), ‘Hut’ | Dombo (Ntolo), ‘Hill’ |

| Form | Clearing in ring around trees in fallows of local descent line | Clearing in ring; huts | Clearing in ring; more huts; oracle within congregation |

| Public | Mainly local (a ward or adjacent wards) | Local; some of near communities | Regional representation |

| Adepts’ Band | Own local band lacking or small | Local band; visitors | Local Band; visitors |

| Circulation of Messengers | Own staff to and from oracles and other shrines | Own staff; occasional visits by nearby congregations’ staff | Own staff; seasonal visits, at least, by staff of distant congregations |

| Offerings | Beer, rarely goats | Beer, goats, occasionally cattle | Beer, goats, at times cattle almost annually |

| Traffic in Supplicants | Absent, except rarely en route to regional shrine | Absent, except rarely en route to regional shrine | Continuous flow of afflicted and other supplicants |

Note: Trees of shrines are Mpani (Colophosperma Mopane), Nzeze (Peltophorum Africanum), Nthula (Sclerocarya Caffra).

The messenger is the cult official most bound to a particular congregation, its concerns and interests. He owes his appointment to his standing as an elder within that congregation, though he may also claim that his father was a messenger elsewhere. In some instances, a ward headman himself acts as messenger for his own ward and a set of others. Preferably, the one chosen at a meeting of the territorial ruler's relatives is a close paternal relative, a seminal brother or parallel cousin, or under special circumstances a close affine. It is crucial for the incorporation in the cult of diverse congregations that a man can hold the messenger's office irrespective of his ethnic origin or his kinship with a past messenger: Kalanga, Karanga, Venda, Khurutse, Ndebele, Ndau, all hold this office on behalf of their own congregations, whereas the offices of priest and adept are more restricted. As the ethnic composition changes within the cult's total domain so too may the composition of its messengers change, according to the petitions for affiliation by new congregations.

The messenger has a crucial part to play in the maintenance and growth of a shrine congregation. It is his duty to look after the collection of funds and livestock, to organize the brewing of beer for seasonal dances and shrine feasts, and to arrange for the annual repair of the shrine, if it has huts. On his efforts depends much of the local conversion of private goods into the cult's assets or its staff's benefits. A man stands little chance of becoming or remaining a prominent messenger, responsible for a prosperous or higher grade shrine, unless he is himself relatively rich and surrounded by numerous relatives who are ready, along with him, to contribute substantially to the cult. Only when they become, like him, great investors in the cult, can his congregation transcend its boundaries, in various respects, by securing and sustaining the grade of shrine that requires the congregation's own set or band of adepts.

Adepts, who are at once a major channel for and index of local investment in the cult, are part of its more universalistic staff. Like a priest and unlike a messenger, they may perform anywhere in the cult's total domain. Indeed, wherever invited, they may give their ritual services. They pray and chant laments to Mwali[62] and sing of the oracles and famous adepts of the past and present. They mime things and memorialize events of broad significance

to every congregation in the cult’s domain: they dance with a stick or a wildebeest’s tail in a shrine’s clearing, or ring, sometimes like a fatted cow, an eagle, a game animal or horse, an elder bent with age, a marksman or hunter with a gun, a soldier on military drill with a rifle, or an afflicted victim. After a bout of dancing to three drums, they suffer stylized fits of dramatic, epileptoid possession, when they are ‘tied’ (svungwa) by Mwali, rather than possessed by a lesser or ancestral spirit.[63] They writhe and roll about in the dust, like a person punished by Mwali’s love. Some adepts perform feats: they rub hot coals from the fire on their backs and remain unburnt, as far as I could tell. While their suffering is believed to be on behalf of each congregation as a whole, they are also offered gifts for the sake of individuals-who seek a private blessing. Members of the public at a ritual donate beads, safety pins, or a few pence at a time, and make personal petitions silently or in a whisper to the adepts. For example, an old woman whose daughter’s breasts had run dry not long after childbirth, fixed a safety pin on a female adept’s pleated skirt and whispered an appeal for milk to one of Mwali’s three manifestations: Banyanchaba (The Mistress of Tribes)[64] whose one breast suckles all, mankind, animals, and birds.[65]

Such universalistic aspects of an adept’s status can be understood more, once highly particularistic criteria for succession, recruitment, and seniority are grasped. This will also clarify a crucial fact and its implications: that an adept’s status by comparison to a messenger’s is restricted ethnically and more under a priest’s control. A cult belief is that Mwali chooses each adept to succeed a close relative, and makes His choice known through possession after a more or less severe affliction. The symptoms in the roughly sixty cases which I recorded were severe anxiety, persisting headaches, attacks of hysteria, swelling of the elbows and aches all over the body, constant fatigue and weakness, crippling illness, and infertility. Most adepts claim a predecessor who is an ancestor no more than one generation removed from the oldest living generation and at most three generations from Ego. The relationship claimed is usually through the adept’s mother or father’s mother, but the predecessor is not the adept’s mother herself. In the cases I recorded only fourteen out of sixty-two adepts claimed to succeed a patrilineal ancestor. These cases cover the adepts who resided or performed during 1964–65 in the former Tati Reserve, a part of the cult’s domain shown on Map I and all within about 30 miles of a priest’s home and oracle. (For the distribution in detail, see Table I: Succession of Adepts.) Kalanga say that a

person must be of the ‘stock’ (ludzi) of adepts to become an hosana of Mwali. This is a restriction which compels all adepts, irrespective of their own ethnic identities, to claim a predecessor, within living memory, with a Kalanga or Venda ethnic identity. All adepts thus claim common ethnic origins. Significantly, whether to recognise this and a person’s other qualifications, such as Mwali’s choice through possession, is a matter for the priest and his oracle to decide; and I will consider this shortly. The point that must be stressed here is this: on the basis of a claim to a common ethnic origin, ethnically different people can be admitted to the adept’s status. The cult is open to expansion and it includes ethnic newcomers as adepts. Indeed, matrilateral succession, the prevailing mode, fits, and, even more, fosters such inclusion through intermarriage among people from the various patrilineal societies in the cult’s domain. Above all, it is the penetration of newcomers’ communities by their predecessors in the cult that the succession and distribution of adepts represents; for example, the penetration of Ndebele or Khurutse by Kalanga and of them, in turn, by Venda.

Table 1: Succession of Adepts

Deceased Predecessor’s Relationship to Ego	Ego’s Sex
	Male	Female
father’s father	5	5
father’s father’s sister	0	3
father’s father’s father	0	1
father’s mother	1	8
father’s mother’s sister	1	0
father’s mother’s brother	1	1
father’s mother’s mother	0	1
mother’s father	4	4
mother’s mother	1	9

| mother’s mother’s sister | 1 | 0 |

| mother’s mother’s father | 0 | 1 |

| mother’s father’s mother | 1 | 3 |

| mother’s father’s father | 1 | 0 |

| mother’s father’s father’s sister | 0 | 1 |

| mother’s mother’s mother | 1 | 3 |

| unknown | 1 | 4 |

| **Total adepts** | **18** | **44** |

Table 2: Recruitment of Junior Adepts

| Immediate Senior’s Relationship to Ego | Ego’s Age and Status at Recruitment |

| | Unmarried Boy | Unmarried Man | Unmarried Girl | Married Woman |

| son | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| daughter | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

| brother | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

| sister | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 |

| father | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| mother | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| father’s sister | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |

| father’s sister’s daughter | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| father’s brother’s daughter | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| father’s brother’s son | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| father’s mother’s brother’s daughter | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

| mother’s sister | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 |

| mother’s sister’s son | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| mother’s sister’s daughter | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |

| mother’s brother’s daughter | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

| mother’s mother’s sister | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| mother’s mother’s brother’s daughter | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

| unknown | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

| Total | 8 | 6 | 21 | 12 |

Table 3: Recruitment of Senior Adepts

| Age and Status at Recruitment |

| Unmarried Boy | Unmarried Man | Unmarried Girl | Married Woman |

| 3 | 1 | 5 | 6 |

Two further points must be made about restricted succession and its implications for the penetration of groups and communities. The first and immediate point illuminates how adepts and their kin connect within and across congregations. The second point needs to be considered later, since it concerns the extension of the priest’s own connections, and requires a detailed discussion of how the adepts recruited are a selection who have close kin or origins in the priest’s own home area.

Adepts enter the cult by joining bands or sets of relatives, in a series. Seniority is recognised thus: the earlier in the series, the more senior the adept, irrespective of kinship or other statuses. Usually, a recruit’s closest living relative in the cult, listed as the immediate senior in Table 2, is within the range of the recruit’s first cousins and their parents (i.e. at least 38 out of the 47 junior adepts; see Table 2 for further details). Recruitment follows from one rather close relative to another. The set of links between all of a band’s adepts has a greater range. A band must extend beyond the range of any individual link. Otherwise, little or none of the diversity within a congregation can be represented in the composition of its adepts. Among Kalanga, at least, each congregation—indeed, each component ward—

includes sets of relatives, related in a variety of ways which, of course, change over time. Moreover, no single descent group is in the overwhelming majority or is even the largest in a ward, for very long (see Werbner 1971a, 1975). Thus to fit the highly variable and diverse composition of congregations, a band has to extend like a chain of short but cumulative links. The more the diverse sets of relatives meet the entry qualifications and —as will be seen immediately—the entry costs, the more comprehensive a band becomes. Similarly, as adepts change their residence, so too does a band change its local extension and thus the extension of ritual collaboration across congregations. Distance is an important factor: usually the closer the adepts remain, the more regularly do they return to their original congregation's shrine and rejoin a band during a performance. Genealogy I illustrates, for 1964–65, one band's series of adepts, shown in Roman numerals, and its current extension in terms of kinship and wards, in Arabic numerals. This band belongs to the interlocal shrine located in ward B7 of Musojane Chiefdom; it began in the early 1950's, when the daughter of its first messenger became an adept.

It is usually a messenger who establishes his congregation's band by sponsoring one of his dependants (his mother, sister, wife, son or daughter) to become the band's founder and most senior adept. His kin and affines then follow his lead, and sponsor their own dependants. The cost is considerable. Not much need be spent at first, while reaching a decision to sponsor a candidate: less than a pound or two in diviners' fees, paid by a close relative (a father, mother's brother, husband, or other elder with jural responsibility for an afflicted person) or, rarely, the candidate himself. This or another relative makes the next, larger donations once a candidate gets endorsed and urged to 'go forward' at seances. The close relative who becomes the sponsor takes the candidate forward to the priest's oracle, preferably accompanied by an immediate senior or some other related adept. For the candidate's treatment and initiation the priest receives an obligatory gift from the sponsor (fupa, to give for ritual services), often as much as ten pounds. The priest does not charge a fee. Payment must also be made for the adept's costume (which may become an heirloom), a kilt, preferably dark like a rain cloud, leg rattles and strings of many, brightly coloured beads. From the oracle's supplies, however, the priest allows the adept a black sash, limbo, a badge of recognition which is given at the oracle's command. Besides his gift, the sponsor may also namata 'make an offering to supplicate for a

favour’ at the oracle and provide beer and perhaps a goat for slaughter. The sponsor then incurs a further obligation, to give a black cow to be dedicated to Mwali for the adept’s sake and, eventually, to be sacrificed and eaten mainly by the priest and adepts, though anyone from messenger to anthropologist may be honoured with a thigh. Such giving is not for once only. The same man may sponsor as many as two or three adepts. Repeated donations of stock for sacrifice are expected over a period of years, especially from messengers and territorial rulers whose generosity sets the pace for the growth or decline of a congregation and its band.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-15.jpg][1: Genealogy of a Band of Adepts]]

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-16.jpg]]

Some of this expenditure circulates or remains within a congregation rather than concentrates in the priest’s hands. Members of the congregation themselves thus have a stake in the material as well as intangible returns from investment in the cult. Within three or four years, depending on an adept’s participation and performances at home and elsewhere, the adept may earn back for himself (or herself) a sponsor’s initial cash expenditure. This income, which continues as profit, is in small sums from the public at performances, plus about a pound a year from the priest himself for an active adept. Similarly, the priest usually returns to a messenger a pound or more from the congregation’s donated fund, for expenses en route to the oracle. To a major donor, an important messenger or ruler, he sometimes gives a larger sum and goods. For example, for about ten years, while the southwestern priest, Ntogwa, kept an oracle in ward D15 of Ramokate Chiefdom, and until the decline of its regional shrine late in the 1960’s, the priest annually gave the ward’s headman about five pounds and a big sack of sugar.

Nevertheless, their stakes in the circulation of cult goods and investments are such that congregations may still shift from one region or priest to another. The stakes are not of a kind to stabilize a congregation’s affiliation, irrespective of the succession of messengers and territorial rulers and

irrespective of adepts' personal preferences. The messenger who escalates the pace of donations and thus the importance of a shrine achieves a personal stake, materially and, in the spread of adepts as a band among his close kin and affines, organisationally also. This increasing personal stake attaches him more and more to a particular priest. However, the greater the stake one messenger achieves, the greater the hurdle for his successor. Primarily, this is due to change in the composition of the congregation, which also alters the set of relatives around the successor in that generation or the next. Despite such change, the successor is expected to begin with payments in accord with the established grade of the shrine, including a fine for his predecessor's death. He cannot gradually build up investment as his predecessor did. A decline in contributions and offerings readily becomes a matter for recrimination between the priest, messenger, and members of the congregation, until exasperated the priest may announce that he has broken with them and they may return to a former oracle of theirs.

Thus a messenger often begins by continuing with his predecessor's priest and then shifts to another one or simply rests so that his wards, left without any messenger, may cease to be one congregation in the cult. Similar careers hold for adepts. All are free, as befits the universalistic aspect of their status, to serve the priest of their choice, though sets of adepts usually choose collectively. Some remain attached to their initial priest, despite their congregation's shifts. Others become dissatisfied, for various reasons, and press their congregation to change priest along with them. Adepts thus hasten or retard a shift. They are not a barrier against instability in regions and their congregations. On the contrary, they are an essential force in the progress of a congregation through the grades of shrine; that is, in the process by which a congregation defines itself through a local shrine, transcends its own boundaries through an interlocal one, and becomes a major focus of ritual collaboration through a regional one.

Here a point that must be stressed is this: ritual collaboration is no deus ex machina, and does not resolve or redress conflict between communities or congregations. Admittedly, 'to settle down the country' (gadzikanya shango), to make peace with and on the land, is an avowed aim of adepts' performances; and though quarrels do sometimes break out, it is forbidden to disturb the peace of a shrine. However, there is no necessity that opposed communities, such as

chiefdoms which compete for territory, collaborate in ritual. Such communities have an alternative to ritual collaboration: avoidance. A region is a set of scattered congregations, and opposed communities often resort to membership in alternative regions in order to avoid ritual collaboration with each other. Nevertheless, occasions for ritual collaboration do provide opportunities—sometimes even the necessity—for testing and proving the relations between competitors. This is so particularly in those ambiguous border areas where people from different territorial communities come to be mixed together and interspersed (see Werbner 1975: 115–17). For example, in a valley which the chiefdoms of Habangana and Musojane (D and C on Maps I and 2) disputed, people from each chiefdom were so interspersed that no clear boundary divided them, until Habangana expanded across the valley at Musojane's expense. Ritual action as a phase in the competition was a test of strength. Irrespective of their affiliation to one chiefdom or the other, people in the valley joined together in one congregation and thus proved that the valley was not divided within the cult. Even more, they anticipated the gain by one chiefdom, Habangana: they affiliated their congregation to the region centred on that chiefdom and where the chiefdom as a whole belonged. Thus a clear anticipatory definition was given through ritual collaboration across the valley, before the territorial and political ambiguity was resolved. Moreover, the congregations of one chiefdom continued to avoid those of the other for several decades until after a further adjustment between the chiefdoms took place, f*

*** The Development of a Region and the Limits of its Expansion

To see change in congregations within a wider context, it is essential to consider at least one region and its relations in detail. The region I know best is the southwestern, formerly under the late priest Ntogwa Matafeni Dube, and I will therefore concentrate my discussion on this region. The conditions which are perhaps most crucial for the southwestern region relate to emigration and territorial encroachment. During Ntogwa's long career as priest, high rates of individual mobility (Werbner 1975: 99) have swelled into great tides of emigration towards the west and south. Partly, this has been due to a higher rate of human and animal population increase with resulting greater pressure on land and, in places, severe scarcity of land. Fundamentally, it has been due to the expropriation of the central highlands

of Botswana and Zimbabwe for European ranches. These divided or displaced numerous chiefdoms and led to the founding of others, such as Habangana and Musojane. Most importantly, the land available to their people was restricted, both in Zimbabwe and in Botswana (Werbner 1971a and forthcoming).

Expansion from one chiefdom, Habangana, and migration from it to various others as much as a hundred miles away provided a main stem around which the southwestern region developed. As a youth the priest himself, Ntogwa, had been an immigrant from Zimbabwe, though after settling in Habangana Chiefdom he came to be known as ‘a man of Habangana’. Between 1914 and 1940, the Protectorate administration repeatedly had to allow this chiefdom to take over territory along with people from its weaker neighbour, Musojane Chiefdom. The region’s staff and oracle were thus drawn along with the chiefdom into problems of territorial encroachment and expansion. The expansion and emigration enabled Ntogwa to extend his cult connections widely yet retain some control over them through the selection of adepts with close kin or origins in his home chiefdom. However, a halt to Habangana’s expansion, for various reasons, became a threat to the further development of Ntogwa’s region. This he tried to overcome late in his career, somewhat unsuccessfully, through a more direct commitment to other areas of the region. What he did not do, though his children did, was marry anyone from the chiefdoms in the region’s heartland (shown in Map 1) other than Habangana. In his old age he took his other wives from the periphery of the region in the west (from Tonota, Chadibe, and Mathaipngwane in the Central District, where he also established a hamlet) just as earlier he had married eastern wives (from the areas of his youth in Zimbabwe). Throughout the region’s heartland, he spread his points of access strategically, in two ways. First, he distributed his wives and children in hamlets at the frontiers of each of the heartland’s chiefdoms, and his oracle at a site accessible to a railway station. Second, he established an alternative oracle with its own regional shrine in the only chiefdom that had much room for immigration or more livestock, i.e. Habangana’s greatest rival, Ramokate Chiefdom (A on Map 1). However, this strategic placement and wide division of his family brought its own pressing problems, mainly due to local instability and succession disputes (see above page); and after less than a decade, he retreated to Habangana, with his entire family except for his far western wives and children. Until his death, four or five years later, he continued to devote

himself much more to the western areas than any others, and admitted new adepts from there almost exclusively.

This account of Ntogwa's career and his region's development raises a tough question, which calls for further research. What sets the limits to a region's expansion and extension? The most obvious part of the answer relates to competition between regions and to the priest's own perceptions. Much of Ntogwa's region was defined relatively in a competition for congregations between his region and at least one other, mainly the north region of Manyangwa II. Significantly, this competition was absent in the far southwest, which may have been a further reason for Ntogwa's preoccupation with this area late in his life: he largely withdrew from the main areas of established competition. Yet it was Ntogwa himself who perceived quite early in his career that there had to be another region besides his in the whole of the west. Within his region alone he could not manage the total area covered by several regions now. Using a customary formula, Ntogwa reported to the cardinal oracle at Njelele that "All these people are too heavy for me.' He requested another priest, 'Give me another to help me.' Ntogwa then insured that this other was a protege of his own and closely bound to him. He trained his protege, apparently a son of Manyangwa I; brought him for confirmation at Njelele; installed him in the north; took Manyangwa H's sister and gave him his own daughter in marriage; and continued to visit and help him for long periods. When I asked this daughter (Manyangwa II's wife) about the interspersion of the regions' congregations, she insisted that the two priests never fought over the country. She said,

<quote>

'It is the black people themselves who did this. When they complained against father [Ntogwa], they went to Manyangwa and when they complained against him, they came here. We have our home in Botswana; Manyangwa has his in [Zimbabwe] 'Rhodesia'. But if people want to jump over from one to the other, it is alright; there is no fault.'

</quote>

The mutual definition of the regions is, thus, in part a product of co-operation and adjustment between the priests in response to their recognized and shared interests in the management of competition.

The evidence from the southwestern region suggests another part of the answer to the question of what sets the limits to a region. Ethnic links or historic ties and past affiliations are inadequate and are not in themselves enough of a basis for extending a cult region far into communities of large, nucleated villages. The inadequacy and limitation persists even when the cult's staff try to enhance these links and further various interests through their personal contacts and through heavy investments of resources. I must stress that this limitation by large, nucleated villages is not simply a matter of a lack of cultural familiarity with the cult. Kalanga themselves spread far and wide among ethnically different people and beyond the cult s domain into the borderlands' nucleated villages. Moreover, they have done so for at least one century and perhaps several. However, Kalanga have not managed to establish cult congregations in the borderlands, with perhaps one peripheral exception, although as individual supplicants they come to the oracles[66] even from Serowe, the Central District's sprawling capital.

My immediate point about the borderlands requires that I discuss briefly the apparent exception, which I mentioned. This is on the periphery of the southwestern region at Tonota, the northernmost of the large nucleated villages. The messenger there, Radipitsi, holds the most senior title among the Khurutse, who are Tswana-speaking. But he does not hold the major political office or chiefship that once went with his senior title. Radipitsi claims direct descent from a Chief Rauwe who sent cult messengers to an oracle, while he lived among Kalanga. Under the colonial Tati Company this chief was paramount over Kalanga in the region's heartland from about 1898 until he and other Khurutse were compelled to withdraw south to Tonota in 1913 (Werbner 1971a: 33f). However, Radipitsi's interest in the north is not a matter of past history only. Recently, he approached the head of the Tati Land Board (his Khurutse cousin Chief Ramokate), which is now responsible for much of the Company's former land in the north. He expressed his desire to return north soon in order to settle in State Lands near Ntogwa's daughter, Galani, at Thema Shanga. In the meantime, as messenger, Radipitsi continues to assert a political claim, seniority, and a connection with the north and the region's heartland. He acts as messenger, however, on behalf

of villagers from his own immediate locality. It is a distinct, and somewhat independent part, rather than the big village as a whole or its chief (the Senior Sub-Tribal Authority), which participates in the southwestern region. In Radipitsi's small and exceptional congregation the southwestern region has reached an outer limit of the cult's domain.

One further point about expansion must be made here. Just as ethnic and historic ties are inadequate as a basis for the extension of a region so too in the cult's history ethnic differences in themselves have not been a barrier to expansion. At a moment in time, however, certain enclaves may be defined ethnically, but this may not be permanent. An example of such an enclave is in the heartland of the southwestern region; it is the whole chiefdom of Moroka (E on Map 1) which has no adepts or shrine, though the regional shrine in Habangana is virtually on its borders. The founders of Moroka Chiefdom and their descendants along with a main body of Barolong immigrants who arrived after 1915 have largely remained ethnically separate from and, in some respects, opposed to the Kalanga among whom they live. The more the ethnic separation is modified through marriage, the more likely is the incorporation (or re-incorporation) of this area into the cult, a process already well advanced, as shown by the marriage of the priest's son Vumbu to a Barolong wife.

To complete the answer to the question about the limits to cult or regional expansion and extension calls for a comparative analysis beyond this essay's scope, indeed beyond the data now available to me. A fuller answer will be reached when more is known about religious organization in relation to basic aspects of competition in big, nucleated villages, such as how their component communities' boundaries fluctuate and, how their ruling elites vary along with concentrations of power and wealth.

*** The Priesthood and Its Managerial Problems

How does a priest cope with the continual and sporadic changes in his region's many congregations? How does he, at the same time, also accumulate assets and control adepts and their connections? The cult funds and offerings in a region generate varying opportunities to accumulate

assets. Every household’s adults are expected to contribute a few pence a year, voluntarily, to their congregation’s fund which is brought to the priest to be offered (namata) at his oracle. However, actual contributions are made more selectively.[67] As a congregation waxes and wanes so does its fund and other offerings such as grain for beer or black cows or goats for slaughter at shrine feasts. It may happen that as many as ten or fifteen head of cattle are kept in trust by a priest for a particular community, (Daneel 1970: 41; Richards 1942: 55). Nevertheless, rarely are even a few head kept in trust within the congregation for long; they are sacrificed, die naturally, or are embezzled.[68] Similarly, every region ought to have a least one shrine at which a granary is kept full of grain for passers-by or supplicants at the oracle. However, only one of the western regions, Manyangwa’s, now maintains such a public granary?[69] By far the greatest accumulation of assets in cattle, cash, and dependants is a personal one that belongs to the priest himself.

At the peak of his career, a priest may be rich in capital, the head of a very large family, and in charge of a great turn-over in cult transactions. For example, the southwestern priest, Ntogwa, kept ten wives and their children, for whom he paid heavily in bridewealth, a personal man-servant, and many retainers as herdsmen. At the time of his death in his eighties in 1972, he left an estate of hundreds of head of cattle, numerous two-hundred pound sacks of grain, a substantial bank account and large sums in small change, a donkey cart, a ruined tractor, and a greater assortment of consumer goods than most Kalanga could afford. His gross turn-over in the cult can be estimated, roughly, from the extent of his region during 1964–65 (see Map 4): at least seven communities in Zimbabwe[70] and fourteen in Botswana, [71] plus about half this total where his adepts lived in wards not affiliated to his region. All together this represents a considerable gross turn-over from a catchment area well over a hundred miles in length. Yet to keep many dependants and be very rich, a priest needs a source of income besides messengers’ congregational transactions and sponsors’ gifts for initiation. In these his gross turn-over may be great yet his net income low or inadequate for all his dependants, since he must return a share to the cult’s staff.

A priest has a more lucrative source for his net income from the cult: a great stream of gifts, often as much as £10 a visit, from afflicted supplicants’, who, throughout the year, consult the oracle about individual affairs, rather than

seasonally about communal ones. However, the individual supplicants' traffic, so crucial for a priest's accumulation of great wealth, is not and cannot be divorced from the congregational traffic: one sustains the other. A priest must manage both together, or risk a decline in both. This is so, in part, because the priest gets funds from the supplicant's traffic which he can use, as he sees fit, to subsidise transactions with messengers and their congregations. For example, to continue to give five pounds to an important messenger, despite a shortfall or decline in his congregation's contributions (i.e. the messenger from D15, mentioned on page 196). Yet perhaps even more fundamental is the significance that one traffic has for the other in organisational terms. Each provides personnel and contacts for the other: the seasonal and more fixed for the continual but somewhat more ad hoc; and vice versa. However, the more far reaching traffic, the supplicants; seems to represent a region's potential and may set limits for its variation. This traffic comes from well beyond a priest's current region, and brings to it some of its future staff. Thus members of wards about to form a congregation or would-be-messengers may first come to an oracle as individual pilgrims; or a messenger from a congregation that is established in one region may throw out a feeler for an alternative, while on a personal visit to another oracle.

[[r-p-richard-p-werbner-regional-cults-17.jpg]]

This traffic, although somewhat more ad hoc, is directed, nevertheless, through regular channels. A supplicant, referred to the oracle by one diviner, may be referred back by it to another diviner elsewhere for further help and treatment; first, of course, the oracle may pronounce on the cause of the supplicant's affliction or misfortune. There is, thus, a two-way traffic between diviners and an oracle, directed through specific referrals and carried on with authoritative advice and counselling. The diviners themselves may visit the oracle. However, the priest also maintains his contact with them and first-hand, up-to-date information on local conditions, through the frequent circuits that he makes round his region's congregations and beyond them. For example, even in very old age, Ntogwa visited most of his congregations at least once a year, and annually danced, for payment, at places hundreds of miles apart, from Botswana's capital to Bulawayo in Zimbabwe. In the past, through such circuits, a priest carried out a further role: public witchfinder for a congregation. Kalanga elders recall occasions

when a priest such as the northwest's, Njenjema, while on a visit to a community, spoke to an apparently empty hut from the front outside it and got a response from within in the oracle's voice. This accused someone by name or clan and ordered the person to cease the practice of sorcery. I observed no such occasion; nor could I get adequate confirmation of claims, which I doubt, that public witchfinding no longer happens in the cult. Consequently, some important managerial problems in a priest's career must await further study, and can merely be indicated here.

However, my observations of these circuits do enable me to reach certain conclusions. Perhaps even more than the major property from a priest's estate, which is inherited rather straightforwardly by rule and practice (the bulk for a senior wife's first-born son, in effect as a trustee for the family as a whole), a priest's successor needs to take over the cult sphere which the late priest managed through frequent circuits and long journeys. This is a highly personal sphere. It demands that a successor acquire intangibles of reputation, i.e. for authoritative knowledge of the herbs needed for patients or to treat seeds, ritually, against pests. It also demands, of course, organisational expertise—effective first-hand knowledge of and contact with patients, diviners, and the other cult officials spread over great distances. Yet reputation and organisational expertise, unlike inherited property, have to be gained gradually. Admittedly, they may be gained in good measure by a potential successor, before a priest dies, through the potential successor's service as his closest associate and companion on the circuits. But this gain hardly eliminates delays and disputes about the transmission of a priest's assets or about succession to his office. Indeed, such a gain may be the crux of delays and disputes, because a recognised heir to a priest's main property may have to come to terms with another potential successor, the closest associate and companion of the late priest.

Ntogwa's case illustrates the opposition between inheritance and personal achievement, and its consequences. For various reasons, Ntogwa relied more heavily, for cult purposes, on two of his daughters, Nlahliwe and Galani, than on his senior son and main heir, Vumbu. Nlahliwe was his first wife's first-born who married and then separated from the northern region's priest. She went with her father on trips to the central oracles. Galani was his third wife's first-born, and she accompanied and helped her father on most of his other trips. She regularly took charge, on his behalf, of performances at

shrines, and she became, after him, the region’s most famous dancer: indeed, her father often sang, at shrines, ‘Galani is the senior’ (i.e. of the hosana adepts). In contrast Vumbu, an accomplished dancer though not an hosana,[72] almost never accompanied his father. He knew little about his father’s herbs, and he remained away working on the railway in Bulawayo, except for brief visits to his wife and children in his father’s hamlet. After Ntogwa’s death Vumbu was chosen to succeed his father by many of the region’s messengers and their rulers, led by Chief Habangana from Ntogwa’s home chiefdom. However, some important messengers and rulers did not go to the selection meeting, notably Chief Ramokate from the chiefdom which rivals Habangana in size and other respects. For confirmation and installation, Vumbu was sent, along with Habangana’s messenger and porters, to the cardinal oracle at Dula in Zimbabwe. He returned triumphantly with a black sash, given by the cardinal oracle as a badge of recognition; but when he addressed his own region’s oracle at Habangana Chiefdom, in the presence of a great assembly of messengers, he failed to get a response from Mwali’s Voice. On his visit to Dula, neither of his prominent sisters, Nlahliwe and Galani, accompanied him: a quarrel and bitter recriminations between him and Galani had already become public knowledge. Moreover, a member of the family, who had good reason to be certain, assured me that the Voice would not be heard so long as they continued to quarrel and not make peace with each other.

In the meantime, Galani has been increasing her prominence in the region through her continued circuits around it and by establishing a new, personal base of her own. After a year’s pause to mark her father’s death, she resumed charge of performances at some Kalanga and Khurutse shrines[73] to the southwest, in the Central District. To the southeast, she chose a site suitable for a new oracle. She left the former Tati Reserve and her father’s hamlet in Habangana Chiefdom, and moved south to an area of growing settlement—indeed, the region’s area of greatest growth in settlement—where she built her own hamlet at Thema Shanga. This site is next to a rocky kopje (a granite knoll) with Bushman cave paintings and thus, as she told a confidante, especially suited to impress supplicants with its ancient significance. Moreover, its location in the State Lands gives her a contemporary vantage ground that is crucially comparable to Habangana Chiefdom at the time it gained the regional oracle around 1914. Just as Habangana had then, so too the territory around her site has now a very recently enhanced political significance, besides room for immigration and

expansion of settlement (presently lacking at Habangana). Then Habangana was, in various respects, foremost among the set of newly independent Kalanga chiefdoms in the Tati Reserve (see Werbner 1971a). Similarly, the new political community on the State Lands, formed under one territorial ruler[74] by the Government, is potentially the most prominent in the region. It covers a large part of the State Lands (including Thema Shanga) that were acquired by the nation in 1969 from a colonial company; and it exceeds Habangana in size and perhaps already in population also. At Thema Shanga, Galani thus has a base for the kind of shrine which only a major political community on the wax can sustain as the centre of a whole region. However, it is essential for such a shrine that the territorial ruler, his messenger, and other local followers make a strong commitment of support along with considerable investment in the cult. Galani, for various reasons, requires more time to secure such support, if she can.

Primarily, the unresolved problem is whether she can turn her personal base in the supplicants' traffic into a springboard sufficient to reach command of the congregational traffic. Besides her great organisational expertise, she has an important advantage due to her widespread reputation for mastery of her father's herbs, which she is said to have taken in great sacks to her own hamlet. So far she has been able to attract to her for treatment not only supplicants but would-be-adepts also. Since her father's death she has continued to initiate some from the region's periphery in the Central District, though not from its old heartland to the east in the former Tati Reserve. These and some other adepts closely related to her call her their leader, ntungamili, and insist that she must be recognised as regional priest. Along with them a few rulers and messengers from the Central District, most prominently the Khurutse Radipitsi from Tonota, have publically taken her side and invited her to take charge of performances at shrines. Others from the region's heartland, including the Khurutse Chief Ramokate, have aided and encouraged her without such public recognition. But most have continued to favour her brother Vumbu or begun to throw out feelers for an alternative, affiliation to the northern region.

Such opposition within the region's heartland, led by most of its messengers and rulers, has forced Galani to develop her personal base more with the help of separatist churches, particularly the one heavily supported by Radipitsi and other Khurutse. Through the churches she has access to local

communities and organised bodies and thus an alternative to those represented by established messengers. In return, she has had to make a personal commitment to the separatists that is greater than her father's was. Even her father sent and received sufferers who went in a two-way traffic to and from separatists. He attended their services, and included Christian prayers in shrine rituals. The further step Galani herself has had to make is the assumption of a separatist church leader's role along with public conversion and affirmation of church membership. It is a step she told me she was forced to take to protect herself ritually against sorcery from closely related enemies. However, this step, in turn, has put another part of her supplicants' traffic at risk and provoked further opposition, this time from some of her father's other collaborators who are the separatists' own opponents and lead a diviners' union. In June 1975, they staged an encounter with her, according to their president's statement in the Botswana Daily News, 'Because she used a Christian church as a cover up, (Mpaphadzi 1975)'.[75] Their intention was 'to set aside Galani who self-installed herself as our god's chief minister' (ibid.). However, the encounter was indecisive: Galani has retained a personal base in the cult, but neither she nor any one else has succeeded Ntogwa and taken charge of a region as a whole.

Every interregnum has its distinctive problems. Yet this cult phase is one among others that are not only connected with it but must also respond to certain structural constraints which continue from phase to phase and affect the careers of a series of priests.

*** Hierarchy and the Making of Oracular Policy

So far, with regard to areas of dispersed settlement and small competing political communities, I have examined the regional instability, relative impermanence of oracles, variability in priestly succession, and fluctuations in congregations and their staff. I must now show that the regions do remain constant, in a sense, and further consider the relations between priests and oracles in order to clarify the making of oracular policy.

Regions do not proliferate in the High God cult. My observations of the western regions over a fifteen year period, participants' memories, and documentary sources from 1896 onwards lead me to this conclusion. In response to population increase, migration, war, the dislocation of individuals and communities under colonial rule, and other major political change, the regions altered vis-a-vis each other. Their relative coverage and definition changed, but not their maximum number. Chart II shows that no more than three regional oracles have been in the west for at least the past eighty years, throughout a succession of priests and oracle sites. I do not have equally good evidence for other regions.[76] The available evidence shows the continuity of three cardinal oracles: Njelele (Cockin 1879; Richards 1942: 55; during an interregnum, Gelfand 1966: 37), Matonjeni (Cockin'ibid., Daneel 1970: 40) Dula/Umkombo (Cockin 1879; under Maswabi III, Gelfand 1966: 35f; see also Daneel 1970: 47 on the priestess Kombo at Matonjeni).

Chart 2: Western Regions of the High God Cult

| REGION | DATES | PLACE | PRIEST'S NAME AND RELATIONSHIP | DOCUMENTARY SOURCE |

| 1. SOUTHWEST | Pre-1896 | (a) Near Mangwe; Bango Chiefdom? | Zviposa. Child of Njenje. Zimbabwe. | (On messenger Hobani, Burnham & Armstrong 1896, in Ranger 1967: 187) |

| | Early 1900's | INTERREGNUM |

| | ca.1914 | (b) Jackalas 1; southwest of Habangana Chiefdom, Botswana. | Fulele 'Cloud (Rainless).. Child of Njenje. | Plumtree N.C. 1914: N 3/31/1-5 |

| | Early 1920's | (c) Nimakwali; southwest of (b). (d) Luswingo; southwest of (c), Habangana Chiefdom, Botswana. | Ntogwa, 'Taken (by God)'. Daughter's son of Njenje. |

| | Late 1950's | (e) Tamba Palale; West of (d) Ramokate Chiefdom, Botswana |

| | 1972 to present | INTERREGNUM
Preliminaries at Thema Shanga
Southwest of (d) | | Mpaphadzi 1975 a & b; Modongo 1975. |

| 2. NORTHWEST | 1876 | (a) Maitengwe River; Meng we Chiefdom? | ? Unknown | Holub 1881: 64. |

| | 1896 | (b) Dombo Dema; South of (a), Nilikau Chiefdom (west of Tegwani River), Zimbabwe. | Njenjema ‘Twinkles (Variegation) Child of Njenje | Reed 1896:LMS 18/9/1896; Ranger 1967: 190. |

| | ?? | INTERREGNUM |

| | 1930’s? | (c)—
? south of (b) | Maboni
Son of Njenjema | Sebina 1947: 84. |

| | ?? early 1950’s | INTERREGNUM | | Modongo 1975. |

| 3. NORTH | ca. 1904 | (a) — East of Maitengwe River, Nata Tribal Trust Land, Zimbabwe. | Manyang wa I. | Administrator’s Office, S.R. 1904: Al 1/2/12/11 in Ranger 1967:205. |

| | ca. 1920 | INTERREGNUM |

| | late 1920’s | (b) — Nkwasenga, Matiwayile Hill, Nata Tribal Trust Land, Zimbabwe. | Mandibenga (Palali), ‘You rejected me’. Son of Manyangwa I. |

Such overall constancy in regions is, crucially, an aspect of cult hierarchy. Far more checks the number of regions or priests than merely local conditions. Each cardinal oracle has its juniors. To be installed, with full authority, a would-be priest of a junior oracle requires a cardinal oracle’s recognition, which may be given through the grant of a black sash. Among the western oracles under Njelele and Dula, the line of seniority, and thus of some authority, corresponds to their geographical location: the farther east and the closer to Njelele, the more senior. Traditionally, this line is an historical sequence: Mwali arrived at each oracle according to its seniority (see note 8). There are also kinship and affinal links between some priests, if not all. But these links do not provide a conceptual framework for relations between regions or oracles. By reference to his kinship with Njelele’s founder, a priest may claim that he has more or less personal seniority among other priests. Such personal seniority, however, does not locate his oracle in a line of seniority within the cult hierarchy. To illustrate, Ntogwa recognised that his oracle was junior to Manyangwa’s. Personally, he claimed, he was senior to Manyangwa. Manyangwa I was a sister’s son of Njelele’s founder; that is, junior in kinship to Ntogwa. Moreover, Ntogwa

boasted that his relationship to the founder placed him among the most senior priests, ‘We have no “senior fathers" (batatenkulu) only “junior fathers" (batatenini)’; thus he claimed that Tapa, another priest, with whom he had lived at another oracle (not of the western line), was his ‘junior father’.

As for the relations between the cardinal oracles themselves, these must be, for the moment, the subject of guesswork. I have yet to visit a cardinal oracle. I venture to guess, however, that the trinity of cardinal oracles—Njelele, Matonjeni, anu Dula—stand in relation to each other as do the Beings in the cult’s Trinity: Father, Mother and Son. The distribution of oracles in the hills corresponds to the celestial location of the Trinity: in the south, the Father and Njelele; in the east, the Mother and Matonjeni; and in the west, the Son and Dula.

Although it would be ideal to give a detailed account of the lines of oracles along with the hierarchical relations in the cult, less than the ideal must do, at present, for lack of information. The only list available to me that has been recorded at a cardinal oracle is incomplete, (it omits Ntogwa and Njenjema), and it has no stated order. Maswabi III told it to Gelfand (1966: 40) as an account of attendance at Dula, rather than as an account of the order in which oracles were established and thus the order or line of seniority (see above note 10 for the order as it is known among Kalanga in the western regions). Again, it would be ideal to spell out the transactions, rights and duties which make the lines into a hierarchy, and to show how laymen and cult officials use the hierarchy. Unfortunately, too little is known for more than an initial sketch. I have already discussed various hierarchical relations in installation, in the required accounting for cult assets, and in the directed flow of replacement payments (i.e. a cardinal oracle demands an ‘axe’—currently a cash equivalent—for replacement of a dead adept).

Two further aspects of co-ordinated control and authority must be mentioned, briefly. First, a junior priest is expected to take certain actions with his senior’s consent, after consultation. An example significant also for my later analysis of policy-making illustrates this. Ntogwa described three steps when he told me how Njenjema of the northwestern oracle rescued a missionary, Reed, before Ndebele warriors attacked (a rescue confirmed by

Reed’s letter of 1/9/1896). Njenjema first took Reed under his protection to Manyangwa, his senior (wola), then reported (biga) Reed, and finally brought him to the safety of a settlers’ town, Bulawayo (see also Reed 4/4/1896 in Ranger 1967: 189). In anticipation of my later analysis, I must stress that these priests, and later their oracles, acted in co-ordination, according to a hierarchy of authority. The second aspect is this: besides such occasional co-operation, priests meet and consult the High God in council, when they collaborate seasonally in ritual at a cardinal oracle. They are said to sit then in a semi-circle, according to seniority, on both sides of the cardinal oracle’s priest, in their midst. Such councils have yet to be studied. They do appear, however, to provide a central and collective check on the affairs of individual priests and their standing, along with an oppor tunity for the most general pronouncements on issues of broad or universal concern.

A critical conclusion follows from my argument about cult hierarchy along with competition. Negatively, it is the rejection of a view, which I call the crisis conception of the cults. More positively, it is an appreciation of continuity despite, and in part in response to, political and economic change, even disruption. As for the crisis conception, this overruns the past eighty years of literature on the cults, since the so-called rebellion in nineteenth century Zimbabwe (Selous 1896: 14f; Campbell 1926; Jackson 1925; Tredgold 1956; Gann 1965: 134f; Ransford 1968: 8). Initially, this conception was fostered by white settlers along with their Ndebele allies or helpers to explain—or rather explain away—the war’s aims and inspiration. Yet, oddly enough, the most modern version comes from the British historian who provides the most closely documented and masterly assessment of the earlier versions: Ranger (1967).[77] Moreover, Daneel (1970, 1971), who insightfully reports clues contrary to this conception, follows Ranger’s lead, nevertheless. This oddity is, of course, a proper subject for writers of historiography to explain. My task is to make plain the inadequacy of the crisis conception, and put forward a better alternative. I must reserve for elsewhere a close examination of the historical data.

In brief, the most modern version runs as follows. A grave crisis, indeed the unprecedented catastrophe of white conquest, drove cult leaders to renounce their religious opposition to violence. Immediately after the onset of colonial rule, they ‘lent both their moral support and their organisational

apparatus to the preparations for the rebellion... Curiously enough there is least evidence about the Njelele shrine, which all authorities agreed to be the senior and most influential', (Ranger 1967: 148–9 my italics).

Fundamentally, this crisis conception of the cults is wrong because it obscures that the diverse interests within the cult's domain called for a broad consensus in oracular policy. A war policy against white settlers, and thus for a restoration of a conquered Ndebele kingdom, suited the interests of people in no more than a small fraction of this domain. It was a fraction that included some non-Ndebele; they were connected with the Ndebele regiments, for example the people at the area's eastern fringe in Belingwe among whom a small number of Ndebele also lived (Selous 1896: 238). The people in the rest of the domain had one policy, and they were the ones who co-ordinated their action over the widest area. The policy of protecting the white settlers, even fighting in their defence against the restoration of Ndebele dominance, was, as seen at that time, more in the interests of the people who adopted it throughout a great crescent around the Ndebele kingdom's stronghold in the highlands of Zimbabwe. This crescent runs from east to west across Ndau, Karanga, Venda and Kalanga country (see Map I in the Introduction).[78] The cardinal and regional oracles of this vast crescent had to have—indeed, did have—a policy in accord with that of their people: there is neither evidence nor reason to think otherwise.

Even before 1893, when the colonial conquest put an end to the Ndebele kingdom, the staff of the cardinal oracles had interests which were, in various senses, unlike and greater than the Ndebele kingdom's. This staff stood for the High.God's hierarchy of authority which was beyond, prior to, and much more far-reaching than one king's. They were thus accused of being presumptuous and of committing acts of lese-majeste. In order to punish them, the Ndebele king let loose against them his personal bodyguard (the Imbizu regiment, and also the Insuka regiment), and some of the cult staff were killed. However, to argue that cult leaders did not take part in the 1896 war party merely because of their past history of conflict with a recently dead Ndebele king would be to clutch at a straw. What must be grasped are the underlying constraints and the predicaments at the very heart of their theology and their authority.

‘The shrines (daka) are many; God is one,’ Kalanga say, Their High God’s oneness transcends, in their theology, the recognized disparities, even hostilities between the communities that seek His blessings. It is the macrocosm, the order beyond that of the congregation or any single community, towards which their theology directs their attention. The right to free movement on religious errands across communal borders is basic; such borders must not be closed against the cult staff or supplicants. Moreover, while any murder offends God, the shedding of an adept’s blood is a grave sin, considered tantamount to killing oneself, since it causes a ‘standstill’ (chamwi), when rain fears to sow the earth, and men may die of hunger. Furthermore, the portion of the earth that individuals and communities have they hold from God, its Creator and ultimate Owner. In fighting over it (see Werbner 1975: 109f), they commit a sin which must be paid for. Not that their conception represents a single wider society: that would be, in theological terms, to reduce the macrocosm to a microcosm with its defined boundaries. Conversely, the microcosm must be sustained vis-d-vis the macrocosm: the autonomy of communities must be respected. Thus a person ought to die or at least be buried in .his or her own community; i.e. preferably the person’s home ward or in a European’s case, a hometown and not the countryside. Otherwise, the corpse becomes a chamwi.

Again, it would be clutching at a straw to argue that such cosmological conceptions or even the whole of their theology dictated the actual responses of the cult staff in a crisis. Yet equally trivial is insistence on another elementary and primary cause such as the one in any materialist view which disregards the cosmological conceptions. These conceptions are a significant factor in behaviour because they are of such a kind that communities can continue to define their broadest consensus through them irrespective of their differences, hostilities and competition. In a crisis, the more inclusive the majority who are rallied through the cults, the more comprehensive and fundamental is the appeal to such cosmological conceptions. Even the minority, in its somewhat unsuccessful call for wider support during the 1896 war (the so-called mass commitment—Ranger 1967: 353), had to recast these conceptions rather than make radical religious innovations. Thus a more fundamentally wrong view could hardly be put, in my opinion, than the following:

<quote>

‘These hints justify us in finding in the risings of 1896–7 [including the war to the east among Shona], though in different proportions, the same elements which are so clearly detectable in the twentieth century millenarian movements with which they are in other ways so comparable’ (Ranger 1967: 354).

</quote>

In my view the need to respond to a broad consensus, the cult procedures for the discovery and definition of such consensus (i.e. through councils at the cardinal oracles), the commitment to macrocosmic conceptions, all acted—and continue to act—as constraints on the cult leadership as a whole. Admittedly, the cult hierarchy was and is sustained through a capacity to collect, store, and allocate great resources and riches. But, in turn, this capacity must be sustained through voluntary consent for collaboration between communities. And it is here, in the winning of consent, that the predicament at the heart of the hierarchy’s authority lies.

One last point about oracular policy-making must suffice here. According to the crisis conception, in its modern version, the cults’ alternative to armed resistance has been, throughout most of the colonial period, a ‘sort of despairing passivity’ (Ranger 1967: 378) (see my note 14). Again the contrary is the case, as shown very clearly in the following account, which has numerous parallels elsewhere in the cult’s domain:

<quote>

‘Nyusa [Messengers] brought the instructions that [black people] were not to sell grain to white people except for salt, and then as little grain … as possible, as Mwari desired them to obtain their salt at Brak [sz’c., brackish] places or by burning salt grasses, as they did before the white people came. Should they barter grain for salt, they were to cover their baskets so that Mwali could not see it. [They] were told through Manyusa [messengers] that Mwari would send a great wind and that all the white people would leave the country in the night. On their departure, Mwari would introduce other white

men who would charge I shilling tax only, and sell goods at a quarter of their present price.' (Franklin 1932: 82).

</quote>

As seen by some sophisticated Kalanga, such as an ex-headmaster, 'Mwali is a conservative God. He does not like change. He wants the old ways.' Indeed, to some Kalanga Mwali appears to have a devotion to customs for their own sake. Yet this appearance, though not a disguise, is nevertheless a cover for the enduring orientation of cult policy. It is conservative, but with economic and political concerns which are as basic in a neo-colonial period as in a colonial one. The oracles' messages have repeatedly advocated resistance to the inroads of a cash economy. They have urged the people to store their grain, to rely on mutual aid in agriculture, to brew beer for the co-operative labour of work bees, and not to be at the mercy of sales. 'Why do you sell all your grain, and not keep some to help the children?' As Ntogwa's daughter told me, 'Mwali objects to sales, for the country is not sold. It is given to its owners.' Similarly, in accord with the tide of popular opposition in Zimbabwe to measures for European control of agriculture (i.e. through the making of ridges and fences), the oracles' messages have condemned the measures: they spoil the land and cause 'standstills' (zwichamwi) of rain. Cult policy has been even more directly active politically (rather than 'passively despairing') in other respects also. At the time of the first elections prior to Botswana's Independence, the messages warned of the dangers of party politics; i.e. that office is given by people according to law, and not fought over. Furthermore, in 1974 the message brought back to Botswana shrines from the northern oracle in Zimbabwe was. 'The rain is held back because of those who fight over the country, those of Smith, Nkomo and Kaunda.' Thus the central concern of the oracles' messages was and still is to conserve order in the world and maintain the welfare of the land, its people and their economy. Continuity is the policy of the cults, and to explain it fully calls for a consideration of changes in the ecology and geopolitics of a vast domain of Southern Africa.

My account is concentrated primarily on the cult's western regions in Zimbabwe and Botswana. The reason for this is simple: I know them through long-term observation. However, as I have shown, these regions have to be

understood in relation to others. There are wider sets of regions, and there is a definite order among the limited number of regions in each set. Moreover, the cult itself is an organized, if somewhat unstable, whole. It is hierarchical and centralized, and its staff are' ranked and recruited accordingly: the higher the rank, the narrower and more exclusive are the criteria for recruitment, and recruitment to the inner circle of priests is on the most exclusive basis. Furthermore, certain conditions have long prevailed across regions and virtually across the whole of the cult's domain. Perhaps most crucially, these conditions have favoured, even compelled, the relocation of communities or their boundaries and great waves of individual migration. The populations that have thus come to live side by side in dispersed hamlets and homesteads have become more and more diverse ethnically. That is why the cult has had to have the capacity to override cultural differences and admit newcomers, irrespective of ethnic origins. In directing their attention towards the macrocosm and a High God, the cult appeals to a more universal order: this order transcends their differences. It is essential to appreciate, however, that various constraints continue to operate, and are anticipated by the people themselves, because the cult's domain continues to be set within a field of relations which is somewhat like a patchwork. This field is made up of the diverse and competing congregations and communities in each region, the variable sets of supplicants in its vicinity, and disparate, even opposed churches and ritual associations. All these parts are hardly constant or alike in importance. Indeed, through a particular priest's efforts the importance of a part of the patchwork may alter or a new part may be introduced. Moreover, a priest must commit his various resources, and thus gets more involved in one part than another. Yet a part is not the whole, and radical change in a part need not transform the whole. It is the disparity and diversity of competing or opposed parts that continues to constrain responses within the cult and the orientation of its leaders.

My analysis of this High God cult illuminates that it is essential to study changes in regional relations in order to understand a cult which reaches, both in ideology and organization, beyond the boundaries of any single political community, whether this be a tribe or a nation. The supposed wholeness of a single society cannot provide the starting point for an analysis of such a cult. Nor can it be explained by reference to some 'correspondence' between religion and the social order of any single community: the cult's regions are not a replica of the social divisions which exist apart from ritual relations. On the contrary, the cult's regions, like all its

ritual relations, have an autonomy of their own. Their transformation must be studied in its own right, therefore, and not as some dependent variable of other phenomena.

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** 8. Cult Idioms and the Dialectics of a Region

J. M. Schoffeleers

*** Introduction

In the ritual cycle of the Mbona cult of southern Malawi and adjacent areas of Mozambique the most prominent event is of a sociologically distinct kind. It is the only occasion when its various participants act in unison. Outside the context of the Mbona cult they belong to different countries, to different administrative units within these countries, to different churches and to several other groups and sets which pursue their own, sometimes conflicting interests. Only in the Mbona cult do they have a conceptual basis for concerted action which transcends these boundaries and which brings them together in a kind of overarching region.

The event which requires their ritual collaboration is the rebuilding of the shrine and organisational centre of the cult. This shrine is like a hut, with the

usual proportions, and highly perishable. It often has to be rebuilt, on average every five years but there are no rigidly fixed intervals. The decision to perform the ritual of rebuilding depends as much on the condition of the shrine as on the need for a ritual in order to counteract some calamity. In any case, rebuilding requires protracted consultations between the formal leadership of the cult and the rulers of the various chiefdoms of the region, on which occasion old animosities are habitually revived and fresh ones created. Often the ritual has to be postponed, because the parties involved are unable to reach unanimity. However, they may be forced to act by the cult medium who, while in a state of possession, personifies the deity and compels the various factions to make peace so that the act of rebuilding may proceed. One also observes on this occasion a general resurgence of people's faith in Mbona. Ancient myths are retold and refashioned; rumours about strange omens circulate and, when the shrine is finally rebuilt, a great many contributions are made in the form of food and labour.

Mbona's shrine is located at a short distance from the township of Nsanje in southern Malawi. The earliest known recorded mention of its existence dates from the time of Livingstone's travels through the area, but apparently it is much older (see Schoffeleers 1972). Local tradition associates its origin with the occupation of the region by the Mang'anja, a Chewa-speaking people (Tew 1950), who had already developed a centralised state system by the end of the sixteenth century. According to this tradition, Mbona was a rain-maker of great repute who, on account of his influence with people, aroused the wrath of the first paramount, Lundu, who had him killed. After the execution the rain-maker's head was severed from his body and shown to the people to prove that he was no longer alive. Subsequently, however, a violent storm began to rage. In it all the executioners perished. Mbona's spirit then took possession of a villager, and through his mouth Mbona made known that his head had to be buried and a shrine erected over its resting place. Mbona also ordered the paramount Lundu to provide a woman to live at the shrine as Mbona's wife. The paramount complied; then rains fell, and the country prospered. This is the essence of the myth, as it is recounted to this day.

What characterizes this region in the first place is the shared belief that only the cult and its staff has the means to counteract such calamities as droughts, floods, locusts and epidemics, and that it is therefore in the

interest of all to support the cult. Yet the authority of the cult and its staff reaches beyond these pragmatic considerations. On the basis of the equally common belief that natural disasters do not happen independently but are caused by an angry deity in punishment of sins, the cult's staff also pronounces on the nature of these sins and thereby on social behaviour in general. In consequence of its acceptance of this authority the cult region is more than a collection of pragmatically motivated people; it also presents itself as a moral community with its own axioms and values and its own standards of conduct.

To understand how people conceptualize their region in the context of the cult two conceptions and the dialectical relations between them need to be analysed. These contrasting conceptions are respectively hierarchical and egalitarian in orientation. The first is embedded in the activities and mythical representations of the formal leadership of the cult, and it underscores the legitimacy of the traditional (or quasi-traditional) political organisation. The second underlies the activities and myths of the population and the medium, and it emphasizes values and concerns which transcend all forms of political and economic inequality including that between chief and subject. The hierarchical conception asserts itself in the day-to-day operation of the cult. The egalitarian conception, on the other hand, although continuously present as an undercurrent, asserts itself only intermittently, when the medium is possessed and during the processes which generate such possession. During the possession sequence, the authority of the medium takes precedence over that of the formal leaders of the cult, all of whom are also government acknowledged chiefs. Indeed, the medium may request that they act for the cult and their people in ways which they might otherwise have been unwilling to undertake. The cult leaders, on their part, may refuse to attend or accept the medium's demands: they may declare that his possession is simulated. The possession event thus assumes the character of a contest between a formal and an informal type of leadership within the cult organisation. Furthermore, such an event constitutes a moment in time when the two conceptions of the region are brought into direct confrontation by their respective protagonists.

Clearly, there are critical factors which influence the decision of the cult leadership whether or not to attend the mediumistic seance. The most critical of these factors is the degree of support that the medium receives

from the people. It is not accidental that this support finds its expression in the outbursts of rumour which precede possession. The evidence suggests that such outbursts provide the contents of the communication transmitted by the medium. Consequently, the possession sequence has been regarded both as the summation and the climax of a wider process which, in principle, involves all the people.

Three main steps are necessary for my argument about the cult processes and conceptualizations. The first step which begins this paper is to examine the formal leadership in relation to the cult organisation and its political setting. Next the medium's position has to be considered in relation, on the one hand, to the formal leadership of the cult and, on the other hand, to the entire population. Finally, the actions of the two kinds of cult leader — the formal leadership and the medium — have to be related to the two opposing conceptions of a region.

*** The Formal Organisation of the Cult

The organisation in its present day form may be envisaged as operating within four spatial categories that form four concentric circles (see Map I). In the innermost circle are the shrine grounds, some ten acres in extent, which comprise a sacred forest, the shrine proper, a place of assembly, and a small settlement where the attendants live. The shrine grounds are considered to be outside the jurisdiction of any secular authority, and they are therefore not subject to government rules and regulations concerning land use; nor do its inhabitants pay taxes. The next circle corresponds to a land area of about twelve square miles which directly surrounds the shrine grounds. This area, known as Khulubvi, is demarcated by topographical features associated with Mbona's martyrdom. Prominent among these is the sacred pool which is supposed to have originated when blood flowing from Mbona's body turned into water. Within this area reside the territorial chiefs who are the principals of the cult, the minor officials, and the cult medium. All of these hold their positions partly by virtue of their association with this spatial category. The third circle corresponds to the district of Nsanje which is the administrative division within which the principals act as territorial chiefs, subject to the policies of the central government. The outer circle corresponds to the entire area over which the Mang'anja are dominant in a traditional sense. This area

is co-terminous with the cult region and covers part of Malawi as well as Mozambique. Apart from the Mang’anja, who consider themselves autochthonous, its population consists of a number of other ethnic groups that have moved in more recently and mostly from the Zambezi valley. The Mang’anja have remained dominant in traditional politics by dint of occupying all the chieftaincies, whereas the immigrants are only represented in village headmanships. On the other hand, many immigrants have been successful economically as rice and cotton growers, fishing entrepreneurs, cattle raisers and shopkeepers. Moreover, on this basis they have been able to secure prominent positions in the Malawi Congress Party. The cult organisation formally emphasizes the same division between autochthons and immigrants that is characteristic of the system of chieftainship: foreigners are not supposed to hold major positions in the cult.

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*** The Chiefs and the Shrine

All Mang’anja territorial chiefs are agents of the cult by virtue of their office. They are consulted about the performance of major rituals; they receive requests for and organise the collection of contributions to the shrine, and they have the right to attend on major ritual occasions. Moreover, when a particular area suffers from drought or some other calamity, petitions to the shrine organisation for ritual assistance are made through its chief. Theoretically, therefore, the Mang’anja chiefs, whilst divided by different administrative systems, appear as one body in the Mbona cult. They can be said to share a common estate, i.e. the cult organisation; to hold common jural responsibilities in respect of that estate, and to be capable of concerted action for the maintenance of that estate.

As agents of the cult, the chiefs are differentiated according to their location in relation to Khulubvi, the ritual area marked off by events in the myth of Mbona’s death. The principals are the chiefs within Khulubvi, and it is through those outside it that the shrine organisation maintains its contact with the other areas of the region. The principals, like the rest of the chiefs, have independent jurisdiction over cult matters in their own constituencies,

but in addition they also exercise authority over the shrine grounds, its personnel, and the performance of rituals at the shrine. They have authority to grant permission for the performance of rituals on behalf of other chiefdoms; to appoint or dismiss personnel; to judge cases of violation of the shrine grounds, and to preside over any deliberation which concerns the conduct of the cult. For most of the colonial and post-colonial period there have been three principals, but in 1968 one of them was divested of his office for reasons to be discussed immediately. The relationships between the principals are characterized by perpetual conflict due to continuous attempts on the part of each of them to achieve ascendancy over his peers, which in turn leads to frequent accusations of abuse of authority and to allegations of sorcery.

This quest for primacy is expressed in the origin myths of each principal's office. I will consider each in turn and later present a schematic resume of two versions in Chart I. Chief A claims the right to primacy because his apical ancestor was granted exclusive jurisdiction over Khulubvi by one of the Mang'anja paramounts. Chief A's ancestor had then delegated the right to offer sacrifices to Chief B's ancestor, but without granting him any secular jurisdiction. This, Chief A maintains, was the situation till the introduction of the colonial government, when B obtained his chiefly title from the government under false pretenses. C's right to the office of principal. was even less defensible, according to this version, as his ancestors had been no more than ordinary headmen in precolonial times.

Chart I: Resume of Origin Myths of Two Principals

| Issues of Conflict: | A's version | B's version |

| Original nature of ego's authority | Secular and ritual | Ritual and secular |

| Grantor Onego's authority | Secular authority (Paramount) | Ritual authority (Mbona) |

| Original nature of rival's authority | Ritual only | Secular only |

| Grantor of rival's original authority | A's ancestor | B's ancestor |

| Nature of rival’s illegal action | B assumes secular authority
B makers himself independent | A makes himself independent and assumes ritual authority |

Chief B’s version of the myth is that Mbona himself appointed Chief B’s apical ancestor to be priest and granted him secular jurisdiction over the entire area of Khulubvi. Chief A’s predecessors were then given part of Khulubvi to administer on behalf of B’s lineage. Chief A, in his turn, subdelegated part of his jurisdiction to an ancestor of Chief C, who then became a sub-chief.

Chief C’s account is less clear, which is probably due to the fact that his office is of rather recent origin. One of his predecessors was among the first converts of the Protestant mission which was established in 1900. It was partly due to mission protection that he was officially recognized chief in 1913 and raised above a predecessor of A, who became his sub-chief. This relation was maintained until 1968, when the Malawi government restored A to the chiefship and reduced C to the status of senior headman. In 1972, C was even divested of that position following charges of slander and sorcery against A.

To underStand these conflicting accounts it is convenient, to limit discussion to A and B, and omit C, for the moment. Their differences have been schematized in Chart I.

The two rival versions show a common sequential structure which evolves in three parts: (1) A superior authority (either that of the paramount or the cult organisation) grants someone combined ritual/secular authority over the Khulubvi area; (2) the grantee delegates either the ritual or the secular part to another person; (3) the person thus given one part appropriates the other part which is lacking and makes himself the equal of the person who delegates him.

Reduced to its essentials, the cause of the conflict appears to be the illegal appropriation, by one’s rival, of one type of authority on the basis of the

other type. Thus one of the two is accused of extending his ritual authority to the field of secular authority, and the other is accused of having done the opposite. Each in fact assumes that the combined exercise of the two authorities is legitimate in his own case (and, by implication, also in the case of his grantor), but not in the case of his rival. This, I believe, is more than a conflict between two rivals over a particular right; it is also, and more profoundly so, a questioning of the right itself. It reveals in its own way the profound tension between ritual and secular authority which appears to pervade the cult at all levels: its mythology, its formal organisation and its informal operation.

The permanent condition of conflict between the principals reaches its climax on two different occasions and in two different settings which are nevertheless in many ways related. One of these occasions is the rebuilding of the shrine; the other presents itself whenever the district administration contemplates changes in the boundaries of chiefdoms or in the positions of individual chiefs. The Nsanje district administration has for one of its constituent bodies a chiefs' council whose chairman is the district commissioner, now known as the government agent. The chiefs' council, in its turn, is responsible to the district council on which it is represented and to which it makes recommendations. A perennial problem of the Nsanje district administration has been the relative smallness of the chiefdoms in the southern part of the district, a state of affairs historically attributable to the presence of the Mbona shrine. Consequently, there have been a number of attempts, partly for the sake of administrative efficiency, partly for the sake of more intensive political control, to arrange them into larger units. Between 1913, when chiefdoms for the first time became officially recognized administrative units, and the present, there have been eight alterations of boundaries, five of which involved the Khulubvi area. In each case this led to severe competitive struggles and to the creation of a powerful undercurrent of hostility in the relationships between individual chiefs.

Competition for chiefships in the district affects the cult in a number of ways. Such competition is inextricably enmeshed with the competition between the principals: their standing with the district administration is a major factor in their quest for primacy. It also affects the relationships between principals and neighbouring chiefs to the extent that the latter frequently refuse to support the shrine organisation. Even a catastrophic drought may not be

sufficient to rally the local chiefs around the shrine. A case in point is the drought in 1948–9, this led to a general revival of rain cults in Malawi, but in Nsanje it coincided with one of these periodic power struggles, and a number of chiefs did not rally around the shrine. Finally, the competition emphasizes the ambiguous position of chiefs operating within a system of modern government. A chief's position under such a 'system is more directly dependent on the support of the government in power than on the support of the population. Capable individuals may be able to steer a cautious course between the demands of one party and the other, but the conflict is never far from the surface. In the Nsanje district, where the most sensitive issues have traditionally been those relating to taxation, cotton prices and agricultural regulations, this situation has at times led to occasions when the chiefs, including the cult principals, were expected to implement government policy whereas the cult medium encouraged disobedience and resistance.

Against this background of conflict and ambiguity it may be asked how the principals are able to exercise effective authority. Part of the answer is that their position is similar to that of other chiefs in that their authority largely depends on the support which the central government is willing and able to provide. This constraint appears at its clearest in the history of principal C who was ultimately deposed but who, while his favour with the government lasted, was able to maintain his authority in the cult. In addition to this, the principals, like all Mag'anja chiefs, are credited with the power to withhold rains or cause some other calamity. However, in their case, this power along with their cult jurisdiction is believed to operate also beyond the boundaries of their chiefdom. To illustrate briefly, in December 1967 principal B had requested his people to repair the grass roof of his house, but without success. At the same time there was the threat of a drought, the rains having already been a few weeks late. It was decided to offer a sacrifice, but B refused to be present. No rain fell after the sacrifice, and since it was the general opinion that this was due to the sorcery of the principal, apologies were offered and the roof repaired.

The religious and secular authority of the principals, although protected by the same sanctions, are in part challenged by different agencies. In their role of secular rulers they are subject to challenges by the central government represented in the person of the district commissioner; as religious

authorities they are particularly open to challenges by the people represented in the person of the medium.

*** The Spirit Medium and the Informal Operation of the Cult

Within the cultural idiom of the Mang’anja a medium is a person who is able and authorized to receive and transmit messages thought to emanate directly from supernatural beings. The word ‘directly’ serves to distinguish mediums from ordinary diviners whose contact with the supernatural, insolar as it is thought to exist, is mediated through some external object. I’he distinction between medium and common diviners is socially important, among other reasons, because divination is sometimes used deliberately by chiefs who wish to avoid the services of spirit mediums. Contact with the supernatural is commonly established through trance during possession. The medium is said to be seized (-gwidwa) by a spirit (mzimu) and, while in a condition of dissociation (-gwa), he babbles and raves (-bwebweta). His utterings are often unintelligible to outsiders unless ‘translated’ by the medium’s acolyte or interpreter.

In the course of their history the Mang’anja have developed or adopted a variety of mediumistic institutions. Broadly, Mang’anja distinguish between mediums who operate on behalf of private interests and those whose concern is with public interests. The former specialise in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases, whilst the latter — whom I designate territorial mediums — predict and explain disturbances in the natural environment. Territorial mediumships show significant variations according to differences in sex, means of contact with the divine, relationships with chiefly lineages, and the spatial extent of their jurisdiction (Schoffeleers 1974). Thus some mediumships are exclusively held by women; others by men and women. A few receive their revelations in dreams, while the majority receive and transmit them through possession. Some are members of the local chief’s lineage; others operate independently. Finally, some have local significance, whereas others such as the Mbona mediums have regional significance. Politically, the most crucial variable is that of the relationship between medium and chief. For it is considered that, where a medium is a member of the ruling lineage, he will be close to the interests of that lineage, and that,

where he is not so related, there is a definite potential for opposition to the ruling lineage’s interests. Indeed, it would appear that the history of territorial mediumship among the Mang’anja can be validly interpreted only in terms of these two conflicting tendencies.

Chart 2: Mbona Mediums in the Twentieth Century

| Name of Medium | Sex | Period of activity (approx.) |Biographical Notes |

| I Mbote | Male | c.1900–1914 | Immigrant lineage; independent; divested |

| 2 Mbandera | Female | c.1920–1930 | Full sister of 1; independent; died in office |

| 3 Onsewa | Female | c.1930–1933 | Relative of principal B; died m office |

| 4 Edward Harrison | Male | c. 1933–1943 | Relative of principal B; died in office |

| 5 Jailos Thom | Male | 1946–1951 | Younger brother s son of I and 2; independent; died in office |

| 6 Thapuleni Mybeck | Male | 1952- | Claimed to be relative of principal B; rejected as medium |

| 7 Joseph Thom | Male | 1954-to date | Younger brother of 5; independent |

Much the same can be maintained of the post-1900 history of the Mbona mediums (see Chart 2). The leading mediums during this period have been members of an immigrant lineage whose ancestress had been granted asylum at the shrine. The present medium of that line, like his predecessors, is quite definitely independent of the principals with whom, moreover, he is in almost continuous conflict. Other mediums of this period, however, have belonged to the lineage of one of the principals. One of them, Edward Harrison, enjoyed considerable renown between the mid-thirties and 1943. His was a case in which attachment to a chiefly lineage could be successfully combined with the confidence of the population. His success was due to the convergence of several favourable factors, including Edward’s own personality, the popularity of the principal whose kinsman he was, and the

political circumstances of the time.After Edward’s death, however, the credibility of the chiefs came increasingly to be questioned during opposition to unwanted agricultural reforms and the imposition in September 1953 of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. It would have been difficult in such a climate for any medium closely related to a chief to maintain himself. Although at least one aspirant did try, he was unsuccessful, and the Mbona mediumship has from 1946 onwards remained in the hands of independents.

*** The Medium’s Entourage

One particular facet which needs to be made explicit is that the Mbona mediumship, at least in its present form, is not being used as an oracle in the sense that the medium can be called upon to provide divinely inspired solutions to such problems as succession disputes. Possession is conceived of as an event which is entirely dependent on the initiative of the divinity, and solutions to specific problems, insofar as they are provided, are not given at the request of one or other party but only in response to a general feeling of crisis. This has the important implication that the medium need not be in any way better informed than the average inhabitant of the region. All he needs is to keep in tune with the general sentiment of the population. In accordance with this principle, the medium does not travel widely; nor does he maintain a network of informants. What information he needs he can, in principle, pick up from village or market talk. There is one exception to this, which is that he must be better informed than the average person about what goes on at the shrine. However, since he lives nearby, and since little remains secret on account of the conflicts between the principals, this constitutes no particular problem.

Still, the medium has a small entourage of kinsmen and sympathizers who in various ways assist and support him. Within this entourage the important roles are those of the medium’s guardian (kholo) and of his acolyte/interpreter (womasula). The former is the head of the lineage section (mbumba) to which the medium belongs, and he is always male. The latter may be any adult member .of the lineage, but

preference is given to a woman of mature age. The guardian as the head of the lineage is co-responsible for the actions of its members, including the medium, unless their relationship is severed on account of some conflict. He is further entitled to act on behalf of a lineage member when he or she is permanently or temporarily incapable of acting on his or her own behalf. This is considered to be the case when the medium is possessed. It is the guardian who then takes command by sending messages to the principals and by formally receiving them, if they decide to come.

The task of the interpreter, usually a woman, is to render the ravings and mumblings of the medium intelligible and understandable to those to whom they are directed, and to convey the replies of the latter back to the medium. Her role is a critical one in the sense that the outcome of the seance partly depends on her ability to formulate. She has therefore to be a person of proven ability. The choice of an interpreter is the exclusive affair of the lineage to which the medium belongs. Should one medium die and another emerge from the same lineage, as has been the case with the present medium, then the interpreter will also serve the next medium. If, on the other hand, the next medium comes from a different lineage, then she will cease to function as an interpreter. The point really is that medium, guardian and interpreter co-operate in the interest of their own lineage which stands to benefit from its association with the mediumship. In the past, it seems that successful mediumship could, given the right conditions, be converted into one or other form of hereditary secular authority. This no longer is the case, but the present medium and his kinsmen seem to think that he or his successor may possibly become the sole head of the cult. This at least is the interpretation which the principals give of the fact that the staff have built a separate possession hut which at the same time is used as a shrine. It appears, therefore, that the hostility between the medium and the principals, which is so much a feature of the present situation, is not merely incidental, rather, it is to be viewed as a logical consequence of the fact that the medium is a potential rival of the principals, both in their role of secular rulers and in their role of heads of the cult organisation.

*** The Mbona Medium and the Chiefs

The Mbona medium becomes possessed rather infrequently, at intervals of several years. Such possession maybe provoked by three different types of events, viz. environmental calamities, offences against the social order, and offences against the cult. In actual fact, it may be difficult to establish in any particular case which of the three is to be regarded as the activating factor, since nature, society and cult appear to form an indivisible triad. Environmental and climatic disturbances are routinely explained in terms of social disturbances and vice versa, while both again are connected with the cult as the censor of public mores and as possessing the means of expiation. Whatever the immediate cause of possession, it invariably involves a pronouncement on the social and moral condition of the community. Moreover, there is a further general aspect of the message transmitted by the medium: it is always centrally concerned with the behaviour of the chiefs and with the relationships between the chiefs and the population. Characteristically, the chiefs have to bear the brunt of the medium's criticism, either because they are accused of siding with the central government against the population, or because they are accused of failing to put an end to social abuses within their territories.

The antagonism between medium and chiefs, which manifests itself in possession, is equally apparent outside it. The present medium continuously criticises the actions of chiefs, particularly the Khulubvi chiefs. In their turn, they criticise the medium for trying to enhance his status by unlawful means. The chiefs are particularly critical of the fact that, with the help of kinsmen and sympathizers, the present medium has built for himself a large shrine with an altar to which he retires when possessed. They regard this as a departure from tradition and as a sign that he wants to make himself independent of the cult organisation. It is a striking fact, however, that despite these allegedly unlawful acts, they have left the medium in peace. One of the principals whom I questioned on this point replied that, notwithstanding such obvious irregularities, one still ought to respect the medium, since he spoke with the voice of Mbona. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that mediums in the past have sometimes been discredited by the chiefs, one may ask why they have not done so to the present incumbent. The most likely answer is that he enjoys considerable reputation among the people, both because of the capable manner in which he performs his role and because of the courage which he has shown in crises. He was for instance one of the..persons arrested as one of the suspected leaders during the political riots of March 1959.

The principals may also express their disagreement with the medium by refusing to attend a possession seance. They themselves state that this depends on whether possession is real or feigned, and they claim that they are able to judge this by the medium's behaviour. Thus principal B once said of a candidate medium who presented himself in the early 1950s (number 6 in Chart 2), "I went to listen to his ravings, but when I heard what he had to say, I turned away in disgust. The man was a drunkard." Nevertheless, the fact that they may decide to stay away from the seance before they have actually observed the medium suggests that their judgment may be based on an entirely different criterion. My suggestion would be that the criterion actually applied is their view of the degree of political pressure which generates a seance in a particular case. If this pressure is considered insufficient, chances are that possession will be declared false, and that none of the principals will attend.

Lest this suggestion be taken to imply that those involved do not actually believe in the reality of spirit possession, I must stress that all my evidence indicates, that they do. My suggestion does point to the fact that they may be using conscious and unconscious criteria at one and the same time. Much the same can be said of the medium. Although, from the political viewpoint, the art of mediumship consists in choosing the right moment for possession, the medium himself may be under the impression that it occurs spontaneously.

*** The Encounter between Medium and Principals

Formal encounters between medium and principals take place in the context of the possession sequence which is always precipitated by a combination of social, environmental, and cultic factors. A closer look at the rebuilding of the shrine will clarify some of the factors in the cult itself which trigger such a possession sequence.

The shrine is made of perishable materials — grass, reeds, wood and bamboo — all particularly subject to rot and destruction by white ants.

Permanent materials must not be used and are not allowed; nor may repairs be carried out. The shrine remains untouched, apart from the occasional sweeping of its interior, till the next rebuilding. The act of rebuilding is accompanied by two further rituals, namely the induction of the spirit wife and an animal sacrifice on behalf of the entire population. In the past the spirit wife would live permanently at the shrine, but nowadays a woman is chosen who stays there only for the duration of the ceremony. These actions require the co-operation of the paramount chief, Lundu, and of a number of senior chiefs, all of whom are supposed to perform certain parts of the ritual. The lesser chiefs are mainly involved through the collection of grain and other victuals for the sacrifice and the feeding of those who participate. As mentioned earlier, a good many always refuse to co-operate because of their conflicts with the principals. The principals may make attempts at reconciliation or they may try to bring pressure to bear on the unwilling through the offices of friendly chiefs, but the outcome is always the same: the rebuilding is performed with the help of substitutes and in what is considered to be a simplified and adapted form. The traditional ritual, as preserved in oral accounts, has in its entirety never been performed since the middle of the last century, and it is doubtful whether it ever has been. At any rate, the way the rebuilding is to be carried out nowadays is the source of endless altercation between those who may be conveniently labelled the ‘purists’ and the more ‘practically minded’. One party demands that tradition be followed to the letter; the other allows for adaptation and simplification. This dispute is in reality a political one. No chief will ever admit that he refuses co-operation because he has been outdone politically. Rather, he will maintain that his reason is a conservative one: he is opposed to the principals and senior chiefs who no longer care for the cult or perform its ritual according to the way of the past. The political losers thus tend to become the ‘ritual purists’. The usual result of these altercations, however, is that negotiations drag on without a decision being taken.

The negotiations about the rebuilding of the shrine are a major source of rumour among the people. While on the whole uninformed about the details, people, even when they live at a great distance from the shrine, are aware of the essentials which they interpret in their own fashion. The medium, on the other hand, living close by the shrine, is fully informed about what goes on, although he does not directly participate in the negotiations himself. In the case of the present medium possession announces itself days beforehand through severe aches in the back and the head. The decisive sign, according

to his own information, comes when he Sees a small cloud moving at great speed through an otherwise bright sky. If he is away visiting, or working his gardens, he returns and tells his wife. Throughout the rest of the day he shivers and mumbles, and towards evening he is secluded in his special possession hut where he wraps himself in a black cloth. Messages are then sent by his guardian and relatives to the principals and their assistants.

This summoning is a critical point in the possession sequence, for those called may or may not come depending on their reading of the situation. If possession occurs in the midst of a drought or some other calamity, the decision will be easier to take. Failure to come might be interpreted as a sign of sorcery, and the principal would then pit himself against the medium and the population, which involves considerable risk. The less pronounced the element of environmental and climatic crisis, therefore, the greater will be the chance of a clash of wills between medium and principals. If indeed the majority do not show up, the medium's career is in jeopardy and it may be irreparably damaged. If, on the other hand, a majority has assembled, the medium begins to stir and his acolyte, who is his interpreter, holds a roll call from behind the reed door of the hut. This is followed by the message proper, which is in three parts, First, the nature of the crisis is stated; then an explanation is given in terms of some delict committed; finally, the means to avert disaster are indicated and a promise solicited.

The next critical moment arrives when it is time for the spokesman of the principals to reply. If everything goes well, he makes a formal act of submission by addressing the medium as his senior; by confessing to neglect of the shrine and such other offences as may have been mentioned by the medium; and by promising that things will be done as requested. In that case, the medium gives a parting admonition in a conciliatory tone and all disperse. If, however, the principals find it impossible to accept the terms posed by the medium, or if they feel offended by the medium's denunciations, the session may break up and the medium's future is once again in jeopardy.

The specific and immediate effect of intervention by the mediumist is the rebuilding of the shrine which ideally signals the end of a period of contestation and the beginning of a new era of unity and co-operation. The

traditional accounts of the ritual lay particular stress on this aspect. Thus, no household was to give more than one cob of maize or head of millet “so that the gifts of all would form part of the libational beer”. Nobody was allowed to carry more than one shaft of reed or a bundle of grass thicker than one’s own arm “so that the labours of all would be required to rebuild the shrine”. This injunction is no longer followed, if it ever was, but the contributions in the form of food and labour are still impressive as is the participation by the people in the ceremony itself.

*** Rumour and Possession

The three types of events which may provoke spirit possession may also provoke spates of fantastic rumour. The following are instances of rumours which circulated in the late 1960s, at a time when particularly vigorous efforts were made to rebuild the shrine and to revive certain features of ancient organisation.

According to one of these stories Mbona had sent a monkey from the sacred forest to Lundu with the message that he, Mbona, wanted a wife from the paramount as had been customary in the past. Lundu, however, not only declined to grant the request, but he also had the monkey put to death. Because of this atrocious behaviour all monkeys are said to have left the sacred forest, which in turn was interpreted as a sign that Mbona himself had withdrawn from the shrine and that some serious calamity would follow. In fact, and not only in legend, Lundu had indeed received several requests from the shrine organisation to re-institute the old custom of providing a spirit wife; he had, however, refused to comply on the ground that such a thing was no longer possible in modern times. Perhaps the killing of the monkey also had some substance: someone may have seen such an animal killed near Lundu’s village. However this may be, the rumour itself was clearly being structured like the myth of Mbona’s death; only the sequence was reversed. Instead of the killing preceding the request for a woman it now came after the request. This again expresses another and more fundamental difference, viz. that the original Lundu had been penitent, whereas the present incumbent had not.

Another rumour was that fishermen on the Shire River had dragged up a small iron box from which emerged a little man with a pronounced limp. When asked how he got his limp, he said he had broken his leg walking through gardens which had been ridged, and that he was now on his way to the District Commissioner to tell him that this practice must be discontinued. In another version of the same rumour Mbona was supposed to have declared (presumably through the medium) that he would no longer bless the gardens, because he might break his leg due to the ridges.

According to a third rumour, the waters of the sacred pool had turned red. This was taken as an omen of worse things to follow. Finally, there circulated rumours to the effect that the medium had already become possessed, and that he had spoken out on several issues concerning the cult and the region.

The body of rumour of which these particular instances formed part had at least four distinctive effects. They undoubtedly contributed to a revival of the people's awareness of the cult on a regional level. Moreover, some of the rumours at least seemed to represent a collective effort by the people to establish unanimity on issues of general concern. Furthermore, they appeared to provide much of the pressure which finally generated the possession seance. Finally, they also determined the contents of the message which the medium was to communicate.

As to the spatial aspect of these rumours, only a general estimate can be given. I made no effort to establish with any degree of accuracy how widely they had spread, but the fact that they were repeated to me in locations some ninety miles apart may serve as a general indication of their appeal. Nor was it difficult to establish that these rumours were part of, and in their own way contributed to, a revival of people's interest in the cult. Indeed, for several weeks there was talk of little else. As for the causal connection between the outbursts of rumour and the possession event, particular attention needs to be paid to the rumours concerning the medium, since these provide the most explicit indication of such a connection. The very fact that it was widely rumoured that possession had already taken place meant that it was part of people's expectations in this situation. In addition, those rumours purported to broadcast what the medium had said and thus expressed what people expected him to say.

I was not able at the time to establish whether information about his own alleged prophecies did in fact filter back to the medium. If it did, as I suppose was the case, he never mentioned it. On the other hand, it became clear in the course of several interviews with him that he very much shared the concerns which they expressed. His complaint, however, was the quite significant one that the people remained too divided and too indifferent for him to force the principals and their fellow chiefs into action. He said this primarily in connection with the reinstatement of Mbona's wife, but he obviously meant it to apply to other issues as well. The significance of this complaint is that it suggested, at the very least, that the medium himself was conscious of the fact that he could not operate without the support of the people in general.

Peter Lienhardt (1975: 130) has recently argued that "rumours of the more fantastic sort represent or may represent complexities of public feeling that cannot be made articulate at a more thoughtful level", and furthermore, that "they join people's sympathies in a consensus of an unthinking or at least uncritical kind". Whilst agreeing that, in the'case described here, rumour very much seemed to have the effect of establishing and expressing widespread consensus on certain issues, I do not think that this consensus was of an unthinking or uncritical kind. Nor would I agree that these issues could not be made articulate at a more thoughtful level. Indeed, it is not difficult in our case to show that at least some of the issues had been the subject of articulate discussion. This was not only so with regard to the reinstatement of Mbona's wife, which had been endlessly discussed by the shrine officials, but also with regard to the ridging of the gardens, the pros and cons of which were continuously being assessed by villagers and agricultural instructors. What the rumours did though, was to establish an alternative level of discussion, where quite different, non-rational arguments were brought into play, and where the emphasis shifted from technical to social considerations. It is possible and indeed most likely that a number of people whose attitude to modern agricultural methods was not altogether unfavourable, were thereby swayed in the other direction, but even so, one hesitates to apply such epithets as 'uncritical' and 'unthinking*. It would be more realistic to view rumour in this case as part of an ongoing process of self-assessment in which the people of the region tried to come to terms with factors of change and division within its boundaries.

**** The Conceptualization of a Regional Community

In the foregoing description an explicit distinction has been made between the formal and informal operation of the Mbona cult. Formally, it has been suggested, the cult operates through a leadership which, although divided by participation in different states and administrations, is regarded in the cult as one elite group. From this viewpoint, then, the cult may be said to support a system of social differentiation in which a relatively small aristocratic group sees itself as possessing an unquestionable right to political rule. Our discussion of the informal operation of the cult has, in a sense, reversed this picture by showing that in certain situations and under certain conditions the interests of the people could be made to prevail over those of the principals and the chiefs. The key figure in this process is the medium who has recourse to possession and who could use it, given sufficient popular support, to effectively confront the traditional political establishment.

In this final section further aspects of the contrast between modes of operation can now be considered. First, it has a pronounced ideological content which has to be made explicit here. Second, the social antagonism enacted through it has to be seen more broadly. This antagonism is not confined to the chief-subject relationship: it extends to antagonism of every kind which affects the population as a whole. To pursue the first point, it is useful to start with the striking ideological differences in the bodies of cultic myth which are characteristic of the group of principals and chiefs on the one hand, and of the medium and the people on the other.

The myths of the principals and chiefs are fundamentally concerned with history, the legitimation of their positions and, in a more general way, the legitimacy of social inequality by discrimination between aristocrats and commoners and between autochthons and immigrants. The myths of the medium and the population, by comparison, have a pronounced ahistorical character. This is pointedly illustrated by the fact that the present medium, for all his influence and importance, has almost no knowledge of or interest in the history of the cult. His interest is entirely in the present, notably in the deeds of principals and chiefs and the manifestations of public discontent. It

would be fairly easy for the medium to acquaint himself with the details of history, as easy as it would be for any inhabitant of the district. The fact that he does not avail himself of this opportunity and that he feels no need to do so reflects a deep-seated aversion. This is readily understandable, given his identity: he himself belongs to an immigrant family, and gains no legitimacy from cult history.

What has been said of the medium equally applies to the people at large. Their myths reveal a similar lack of concern with history and a similar emphasis on Mbona's relevance to the present condition of society. They differ further from the myths of the chiefs in that they project an image of a region which is unified on the basis of common concerns and a common morality. Distinctions between chiefs and commoners or between autochthons and immigrants are left unmentioned and are implicitly denied. Whereas the myths of principals and chiefs are cast in a purely traditional idiom, those of the medium and the people at large have increasingly come to be expressed in biblical language. Mbona is now said to be the 'Son of God' (Mwana wa Mulungu) and the 'black Jesus' (Yesu wakuda), who is the guardian spirit of all ethnic groups, and not just of the Mang'anja. The fact that the older traditions do not mention Mbona's father, a logical correlate of a matrilineal system of succession and inheritance, has been converted into a myth of virgin birth which once again de-emphasizes the ethnic factor. The Christian bible has thus provided an external idiom to which neither Mang'anja nor immigrant can lay exclusive claim, and on the basis of which both may unite.

The concept of a non-differehtiated society is put forward as the ideology of a region through the formal organisation of the cult. For it is the formal organisation which defines that region as a spatial entity and makes it visible to itself through its ritual. Paradoxically, therefore, the very organisation which asserts social difference and privilege becomes the vehicle through which the denial of difference and privilege is affirmed. There occurs here & functional transposition which is activated, as we have seen, by a concurrent awareness of social and environmental threats. In the light of this observation, climatic and environmental calamities, or the fear of such calamities, are not only to be viewed as causes of cultic revival but also as activators of an alternative mode of conceptualizing its constituency.

A particular quality of this process of conceptualization is that, in principle, it concerns itself with all instances of social inequality which affect the population as a whole, but that it subsumes them all under the chief-subject relationship. The same suggestion has been made earlier in different terms: i.e., that the communication transmitted by the medium in the possession sequence is always centrally concerned with the behaviour of the chiefs and with the relations between chiefs and people. The chiefs are held accountable for the existence or persistence of almost every kind of social grievance, whether this springs from central government policy, from the actions of the chiefs themselves or one or other section of the people. That this should be so is partly due to the extensiveness of the chiefs' jurisdiction and partly to the ambiguousness of their authority, which makes them both the representatives of the central administration vis-a-vis the people and the representatives of the people vis-a-vis the central administration. In situations of social discontent they thus become, from the viewpoint of the population, either the ones who have been instrumental in causing the discontent, or the ones who are in a position to eliminate the cause of discontent, or both. It is this viewpoint which finds its dramatic expression in the encounter between the medium and the principals.

It would be gratifying at this point to conclude the analysis, were it not for one unresolved question: What explains the situation in which the medium is close to the interests of the principals, as apparently was the case between 1930 and 1946? In a wider context this raises questions about the structural position of the medium. Given the chief-subject relationship as a constant factor in the region's organisation, how is it that at one time the mediumship appears to support the social differentiation which this relationship implies, whereas at another time it manifests itself as decidely antagonistic to the same differentiation? My explanation would be that this depends primarily on the degree to which the functioning of chieftainship is problematic in the perception of the people. Such was the case, for instance, after 1946, when the credibility of the chiefs had increasingly come to be questioned in connection with the federation issue and the introduction of agricultural reform. This, as has been noted, made it difficult, if not impossible, for any medium to maintain close ties with the principals and, through them, with the chiefs. The structural position of the medium, then, is changeable, and not fixed. It would, however, be incorrect to view it as oscillating between the

interests of the traditional political establishment and those of the people, for it has to remain within the orbit of the latter. Only insofar as public sentiment gives assent to the chiefs' performance of their office can the medium support them and the chieftainship. Whenever this is the case, one would expect also that the contrast between the formal and informal operation of the cult and between the two conceptions of a region would become submerged. The structural position of the medium would thus be an indicator of the degree to which tensions within the region have become acute.

Essentially, what has been maintained in the present essay is that the Mbona cult functions as a mechanism by means of which the inhabitants of a particular geographic area perceive themselves as constituting a region. This perception springs from two different sources, each of which endows it with an entirely different character. One of these sources is the formal organisation of the cult which projects the image of a hierarchically structured region, and which thereby underscores the legitimacy of social differentiation. The other sources are widespread feelings of anxiety and discontent with issues that cannot be effectively dealt with by isolated groups. These feelings are characteristically focussed on the chiefs, and they are cast in a symbolic idiom which in various ways denies the legitimacy of social differentiation. The situation which ultimately emerges is that of a co-existence of two opposing conceptions of a region and of an alternating movement by which now one then the other conception is given emphasis. [79]

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** Author Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version]

<biblio>

Abraham, D. P., 67, 82

Albitrouw, Izaak, 99

Ali Bey (Domingo Badia y Leblich), 9

Barth, F., and holistic analysis, ix

Beach, D. N., 67, 82

de Beet, Chris, 93, 96, 97, 99, 100

de Beet, M., 99

Beidelman, T. O., 4

de Bellefonds, Linant, 29

Ben-David, J., 36

Berque, Jacque, 22, 25

Bhardwaj, S. M.,

Boissevain, Jeremy, 7

van Binsbergen, W. M. J., xv, xviii, 140, 141, 142, 152, 153, 155

Bourdillon, M. F. C., 76, 78, 79

Burckhardt, J. L., 43

Franklin, H., 211

Franssen Herderschee, A., 98

Fry, Peter, 86, 87

Gann, L. H., 208

Ganor, A., 32

Garbett, G.K., 70, 71, 90, 123

Geertz, Clifford, 30, 45

Gelfand, M., 79, 83, 87, 123, 177, 207, 208

Gellner, Ernest: on correspondence theory, xxi; on Islam, 29; on marabouts, 23–24; on segmentation, 25

Glasner, M. I., 34

Gluckman, M.: on affliction of individuals, 140; change within the wider social context, ix; on cults among the Lozi, Nkoyo, Totela, 143

de Goeje, C. H., 98

Grunebaum, G. E. von, 29

Campbell, A. A. (Mziki), 177, 208

Campbell, A. C., 67

Canaan, T., 30, 45, 46

Carter, M., 141

Chavanduka, G. L., 86

Christian, William A. Jr., 7

Clay, G.C. R., 142, 169

Cockin, J., 181, 188, 207

Colson, E., xiv-xvii, 120, 127, 128, 131, 132, 169

Hatt, Doyle, 10, 24

Holub, Emil, 177, 181

Hurault, Jean, 101

Ikacana,N. S., 143, 152

Jackson, G. H., 208

Jemma, D., 15, 24

Junker, L., 99, 100

Daneel, M. L„ 123, 177, 182, 184, 187, 188, 199, 207,209

Davies, D. H., 165

Davis, Merle, 165

Doke, C. M., 143

Douglas, M., and holistic analysis, ix;

cargo cults, xxv (see also Mary Tew)

Draioui, Bouzekri, 17

Durkheim, Emile: and correspondence theory, xviii; on ideology and social action, 4

Eickelman, Dale F., xviii, xxi, 9, 10, 17, 18,22,24, 30

Emerson, Ralph Waldo, xxii

Evans-Pritchard, E. E.: on Bedouin of Cyrenaica, 30; on ideology and social action, 4;

Fagan, B., 121

Firth, Raymond, on marabouts, 20

Kapara, Y., 45

Keay, R. W. J., 178

Keller, A., 37

Knothe, C., 177, 207

Kobben, A. J. F., 100

Kolb, W. L., 140

Kraag, Christiaan, 99

Kuntz, M., 140, 143

Lancaster, C. S., 130

Leerdam, H., 100

Levy, R., 29

Lienhardt, Peter, 235

Livingstone, D., 125, 126, 129

McCulloch, M., 140, 142, 143

Mannheim, Karl, 6

Marx, E., xvii-xxi

Mauss, Marcel, on ideology and social action, 4

Ranger, T. O., 77, 79, 80, 83, 87, 123, 152, 159, 177, 181, 188,207–211

Ransford, O., 208

Rattray, R. S., 103

Reed, G. C. H., 208

Reynolds, B., 152, 155, 157, 158f, 163

Richards, J. B., 177, 182, 199, 207

Roberts, A. D., 159

Runciman, W. G., 5

van Warmelo, N. J., 177

Weber, M., 153, 157

Werbner, R. P., xviii, 119, 184, 188,

195f, 198, 204, 210

van Wetering, W., 102, 106, 111, 112

White, C.M.N., 140, 141

Wilson, B. r. 159

Wilson, B. R., 159 de Ziel, H. F.,93,99

Sapir, E., 45

Schapera, I., 177

Scheffler, Harold W., 13

Schneider, David M., 5

Schoffeleers, J. M., xiii, xiv, 219

Schwellnus, E., 177, 207

Scudder, T., 199, 120, 122, 125–128, 131

Sebina, A. M., 177

Selous, F. C., 126, 129, 208, 210

Shils, Edward, on correspondence

theory, xxi, 4

Shilling, Paul, 125

Shorter, A., 141

von Sicard, Harold, 177

Smith, Carol A., ix, xi

Smith, Raymond T., 5

</biblio>

** Subject Index

[Page numbers don’t correspond to this version]

Note: References are listed at the end of each article, and these lists are not indexed separately.

<biblio>

Acolytes: as interpreters of mediums, 229, 230, 233; Korekore, 57, 74, 75, 79; and relations with Korekore medium, 77

Adepts: and congregational change, 195; and cult songs, 145; death of, 185; duties of, 187–188; as index of investment in cult, 187; as ritual faction, 147,

149; seniority of, 191; social structural characteristics of, 167; succession of, 190; value in ritual, 147

Affinity: and cultic participation, 191; in Morocco, 21; relations between priests, 207. See also Marriage

Affliction, causation theory, 155. See also Misfortune

Agnates, as tribesmen, 34

Agnatic descent group: described, 34–35; and economic cooperation, 34.

Agnation: as ideology, 47, 48; in Morocco, 21; obligations of, 21. See also Kinship.

Agnosticism, and Tonga, 128

Agricultural ritual, Korekore, 73

Alien spirits, 143

Alliance formation, in Morocco, 23

Ancestors, 146

Ancestor ghosts, Bush Negro, 105

Ancestral shades, Tonga, 121, 123, 130, 132

Ancestral spirits: and Korekore territorial cult, 56; as local spirits, 57

Angels, xv, 131

Animals, as sacrificial offerings, 19, 22, 40,44, 158, 194, 199

Atonement, among Tonga, 135

Attire, of Korekore medium, 74, 75

Authority: of cult principals, 223, 226; distinction and tension between secular and ritual elements, 225, 227; of gravediggers' leaders, 104; illegal appropriation of, 225; of Korekore mediums, 76; of Mbona cult medium, xiii; of medium, precedence over chiefs', 220, 230–231; of priests, 94, 208; of regional oracle, 93, 100; of Tonga local shrine custodians, 122; of Tonga prophets, 127; of Zezuru local spirits, 58

Authority structure, of cult of affliction, 163

Avenging spirits, and similarity of Bush Negro High God, 101

Avoidance, between communities, 195

Awlad Sa'id: environment and economy of, 37, 38, 39; as pastoralists, 32, pilgrimages and gatherings of, 31, 42, 43,44, 45

Baraka (God's grace), and maraboutism, xxi, xxii, 6, 12, 20

Barotseland, cults of affliction in, 139

Basangu, 121 f; ethnic and territorial loyalties, 126; properties of, 124; spirit manifestations, 123

Bedouin: major ideologies of, 47; pastoralism described, 36; regionalism, 47; settlements of in Sinai, 33; symbolization of territorial rights, xix, 45–46; wage labor, 37–38;

Belief: of cult leadership, 150; patterns of, 6; shared tribal, 41, 220; variation in Tonga, 128

Bethania Mission Apostolic Church, 184

Biographical patterns, for religious innovators, 153

Bituma: dispute over cult funds, 162;

meaning of cult name, 161

Bituma cult, 160–165, 167, 168, 169, 170. See also Cults

Botswana: cult policy in, 212; ecological zones of, 178; priest’s income from, 200; restrictions on land, 196

Botswana Dingaka Association, 184

Boundaries, of social groups, 16

Boundedness: of Central African ethnic groups, 144; and concept of “community of the god,“ xviii, xix; as emphasized by Tonga cults, xv; and ideology of agnation, 47–48; of Mbona cult, xiii

Bridewealth, 200

Bureaucratic organizations, 167

Bush Negro cult: decline of, 100; distribution of, 94; emergence and decline of, 94; fractionization of, 93, 94, 100, 102; history of, 98–100. See also Cults

Calling, and ritual leadership, 150

Cargo cult, xxviii

Carrying the corpse, among Bush Negroes, 103, 104

Cash economy, oracular resistance to, 212

Central place: of Bush Negro regional cult, 93, 99; decline of Bush Negro, 115; dominance among Bush Negroes, 100; See also Shrines

Centralization, and cult regions, 178

Chaminhuka, 57f. See also Local spirits Charisma, xxvii, 161, 164, 167; of a Korekore medium, 74; and ritual field instability, 91, and Zezuru cult instability, 90

Charismatic leaders, 153, 156, 157, 161 Chiefly succession: and adjustment of 9

spirit provinces, 71; and Korekore mediums, 70, 72; and Kupara’s early experience, 80; and significance of mediumships, 72; and Zezuru mediums, 86

Chiefs: Bedouin, at tribal gatherings, 44–45; credibility of, 238; criticized by mediums, xiii; government acknowledged, 220; and myths of Mbona cult, 236–237; principals of Mbona cult, xvi, 221,223

Chiefships, competition for and effects on cults, 226

Christianity: and Bush Negro opposition, 98; churches as cults, 140; influences on cults of affliction, 157–158, 160, 168–169; influences on Mbona cult, xiv, 237; and Korekore mediums, 77; and payments to regional cult, 100; previous experiences of cult prophets in, 157, 169; and rise of regional cult, 99; social history of, 6; and Tonga, 127–128

Chthonic beings: Korekore, 66, 67; as owners of the earth, 78

Chthonic cults: decline of Korekore, 78; domain of Korekore, 78–79; Korekore, 67; and relation to territorial cults, 79. See also Cults

Chthonic spirits, and Zezuru local cults, 57

Clientele: of Korekore regional mediums, 71; of new parochial cult, 113; of parochial oracle, 107; of regional cult, 93; in service of priests, 108–109; of Tonga prophets, xvi, 125, 129, 136. See also Patron-clients relationships

Closeness: definition of, 11; as organising principle, 24

Coffin-makers, Bush Negro, 104

Cognitive management, of cult interpenetration, 58

Cognitive phenomena, 89

Colonial administration: and chthonic cults, 78; impact on cults of, 61, 66; and mediums, 77; and regional cult, 98, 102

Colonialism, and Moroccan lodges, 10 Commensality, xxii, xxiii

Competition: between congregations, 197; between cults, 184, 195; between Zezuru mediums, 86; between Zezuru mediums and instability, 90

“Condensation symbol,” defined, 45

Conflict, between Mbona cultists and

principals, 230, 231, 232

Congregations: competition between, 197; gradations of, 185, 195; of Mbona cult, xiii; staff of, cult adept, 185; staff of, messenger, 185; staff of, porter, 185

Consensus, and Korekore chiefly succession, 71

Correspondence, between ideologies of agnation and saints’ cults, 48

Correspondence theory, xviii-xxii, 4, 213

Creator, ancestor as, 57

Crisis concept, 208–209

Cross-cult: affiliation, 58; dialectics, 90; elite, 74; history of connections, 86; instability, 91; interpenetration, 88; interpenetration as emergent property of ritual field, 90; kinship of mediums, 80; rivalry of mediums, 83; rupture, 91; spirits, 83; translation of belief, 80; validation of mediums, 58, 87, 88. See also Cults

Cults

of affliction: cheating in, 151; communications networks of, 152–153; conceptual shift in, 141; introduced, 139–140; leadership of, 148–150; non-regional, xxvii, 139, 141–152, 154, 155; organizational structure of, 149–150, 170; participation in by women, 146; as redistributive economic institution, 149; regional, 139,. 152–170; regional organization of, 152–153; structural shift in, 141

congregations, 119; gradations of, 185, 195; variations in, 184, 194

general: ancestral, xii, 142–143; cargo, xxviii; changes in, 184; clientele vs. constituency, 120; connection of leaders, 58; and cross-cultural standards, 97; and cultural model, xi, 150; effects of political and economic changes, 142; egalitarian, xxii f; elitist, xxii f; expansion of, 58; hierarchy of, xxiv, 153, 207, 208; inclusive and exclusive domains of, x, xvi, xviii-xxii;

interpenetration, xvii, 55, 58; “levelspecific regional analysis,” ix-xi; of macrocosm, 181; of microcosm, 181; as “nodal forms of organization,” ix, xiii, xxi; non-ancestral, xii, 142–143, 145; organizational problems in Shona, 58; parallel dichotomies in analysis of, xii-xiv, xvi; and political change, 142; of regularization, xxviii; separatist church, as alternative, 184; transformation of regions, xi; succession of leadership of, 148; within urban contexts, xvi, xxvi, 167. See also Bituma cult, Bush Negro, Chthonic cults, Cross-cult, High God cult, Local cult, Mbona cult, Nzila cult, Parochial cult, Prophet cult, Regional cults, Saints’ cults, Sherqawi, Territorial cults, Zezuru cult

Cult policy, 211–212

Cultic expansion, and ethnicity, 143–144,190, 198,212

Cyrenaica, Bedouin of, 30

Dawwar (rural local community), 21–22 Death rites: and changes made by regional cult, 105–106; as influence on cult development, 94, 105; as levelling practices, 105

Debts: as cause of affliction. 109; to regional cult, 100; resulting from ritual success, 147, 149; settlement of Bedouin, 44

Deity, as punisher, 220

Demography, of Bituma and Nzila regions, 165

Deprivation hypothesis, 146

Descent: categories, 13; as ideology, 4; as jural rights, 4; Maraboutic, 12–15; and territorial rights, 34

Descent groups: congregational membership of, 191; Sherqawi, 13

Diagnosis: of cause of death by Bush Negro gravediggers, 104; by cult adepts, 145, 146; Korekore, 74; of misfortune by Bush Negro priests, 107–108

Dialectics: of cross-cult relationships, 90, in cult organization, 170

Dietary prohibitions, Korekore, 73

Divination: Korekore, 74; Zezuru, 86

Divinatory ritual, 140

Divine grace, from Bush Negro High God, 101 See also Grace

Diviners: distinguished from mediums, 227; opposition to separatist churches, 205; referals to oracles, 202

Diyah (blood compensation), among Bedouin, 35

Domains, of cults, xvi, xviii-xxii

Donations: and selection of adepts, 191; to Sherqawi lodges, 16, 19

Dreams, revelations in, 148, 227

Dzivaguru, 67f. See also Territorial cult

Earth cults, xii. See also Territorial cult

Ecological zones: and local shrines, 129; and powerful prophets, 136; Tonga, xvi-xvii, 120, 122, 125

Ecology: and distribution of High God regions, 178–182; and distribution of Sherqawi lodges, 17; prophecies relating to, xvi, 142; of South Sinai, 31–32

Economic change: and cults, 93, 94; and decline of parochial cult, 110–111; and rise of new parochial cult, 112; Tonga, 127

Economic inequality, between chief and subjects, 220

Egalitarianism: apparent among Bush Negro grave-diggers, 104; Basangu, 123; among Bush Negroes, 96; and role of regional priests, 106–107; Tonga, 123; and Tonga history, 129; and Tonga prophets, 134

Egypt: effects of negotiations with Israel, 39, 43–44; as source of jobs for Sinai Bedouin, 38, 42

Elite: cross-cult, 74; and Korekore mediums, 80; and Tonga ritual, 128.

Emigration, 196

Enclaves, defined, 178

Eschatology, 142, 154

Ethnic boundaries, 177

Ethnic groups, cult associations between, xvi, 154

Ethnicity: and cult expansion, 143–144, 190, 198, 212; and cultic officials, 187,190; and intermarriage, 169, 198–199; as local rivalry, 169–170; as mobilizing factor, 169

Expansion, of Korekore cults, 74

Factions, in ritual cults, 147, 149, 167

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasa-land, effects of imposition of, 229

Fees: of Bush Negro priests, 109; of Korekore mediums, 75; reduction of Bush Negro priests', 110

Fission, of Korekore chiefdoms, 71

Flexibility, of Tonga prophet cults, xv

Fluidity: of cultic assets, 185; in

Sam'la tribal relations, 20, 21

Fractionization, of regional cult, 93, 94, 100, 102

Gaan Tata, 93f

Games, among Moroccan tribes, 22–23

Genealogies: acceptance of revision of, 84–85; of Bedouin, 35; and inclusion of Zezuru local spirits, 83–84; of Korekore territorial spirits, 56, 80; as legitimation, 13, 14; revision of, 84, 88; truncated among Tonga, 218–129

Gifts, to priest, 200

God’s cargoes, 103; attacked by new cult, 111; distribution of, 106; new distribution of, 110

Gold, effect on Bush Negroes of discovery of, 96–97

Gossip, and Korekore mediums, 77; See also Mbona cult

Grace, and maraboutism, xxii, 10, 11, 12. See also Divine grace

Grave-diggers: Bush Negro, 103; as holders of inquests, 104; leaders of, 104; pressure from priests upon, 111

Great Deity, of Bush Negroes. See also High God

Healing, from cult ritual, 145, 148

Herbalist Association of Africa, 184

Hierarchy: of Bush Negro regional cult, 99; of Korekore mediums, 56; of Korekore mediums, cross-cut, 72–73; of Korekore mediums related to genealogy, 84; of Korekore territorial spirits, 56; in local cult and territorial cult, 87, 89; of Zezuru local spirits, 57

High God: associated with cults of affliction, 154, 168; of Bush Negroes, xxvii, 93; as challenge to traditional cosmology, 101; conceptual shift towards in cults of affliction, xxvi, 155, 156, 168; and Korekore, 57; as rebellion leader, 101; ritual consultation of, 208, 212; and Zezuru, 57

High God cults: Gaan Tata, 93f; expansion of, 196–199; faith-healing as alternative, 184; investments in, 187, 194; located, 177, macrocosmic, 181; opposition and rivalry between, 184, 195; as participants in rebellion, 209–211; recruitment to hierarchy, 212; regional stability, 205; Trinity of, 207. See also Cults

Historical change, and cultism, 177

Historical context, of maraboutism, 25

Historical structures, and reference to by cult participants, 167

History: as legitimization, 237; and myths of Mbona cult, 236–237; span of, among Tonga, 129

Holistic analysis, faults of, ix

Holy tombs: description of, 45, 46; pilgrimage to, 29, 40–41; significance of location of, 42; as symbol, 45–46

Iconoclasm, in a regional cult, 101 Ideological change, and maraboutism, 25 ,

Ideology: of agnation, 47, 48; of Bedouin social organization, 34; and cult organization, 163, 170; cultic, shift in, 141; maraboutism as partideology, 6, 10; mediation by cult leader, 151; as myth, 17, 236–237; part-ideology, 3; prophetic, 4; realms of, 3; reasons for participation in Bituma cult, 167; systems of, 5

Idiom of universalism, 237

Imagery, Biblical, 163; 237

Inclusiveness: of parochial cult, 116; of regional cult, 102, 114

Income, Bedouin, 36–37

Incorporation: permanency of, 89; of

Zezuru local spirits, 88

Inheritance, of priests’ estates, 202

Initiation ritual, 140

Innovation: and theology, 156; and

Tonga prophets, 125

Innovator of cult, 164

Inquests: held by Bush Negro gravediggers, 104; held by Bush Negro priests, 103; and verdicts altered, 111

Interaction theory, 4

Investment, limited possibilities for

Bush Negro entrepreneurs of, 103

Invocations, of Tonga prophets, 131

Islam: code of conduct, 18; and cults of saints, 29; inheritance, for Sherqawa, 14; maraboutism. as version of, 3, 6;

reformist movements, xxii, 15, 24

Islamic community, symbolized by saints, 47

Islamic hagiography, 47

Israel, effects of negotiations with Egypt, 39, 43–44

Jebaliyeh: environment and economy of, 37–38; pilgrimages and gatherings of, 31,42,43,44

Joking: and Bedouin women, 44; and

Korekore mediums, 77

Kalanga: burial ritual, 188; congregations of, 191, 197–198, 203; order of shrines, 208; participation in High God cult, 177; and succession of adepts, 190; theology, 210; tradition, origins of senior oracles, 182; Zimbabwe rebellion, 209

Karanga: participation in High God cult, 177; Zimbabwe rebellion, 209

Khurutse: participation in High God cult, 177, 203; and succession of adepts, 190

Kinship: and cultic participation, 191; as ideology, 47; importance of, between medium and ruling chiefs, 227, 229–230; maintenance of dependent upon co-residence, 148; perpetual,

Korekore, 58, 73; and relations between adepts and priests, 190;

relations between priests, 207; ties among Nkoya, 147–148. See also Affinity and Agnation Korekore: agricultural ritual of, 73; belief in antiquity of, 69; demarcation of, 61; domain of, 56; historical origins of, 67; mediums of, 70, 72. See also Cults

Kupara, George, 74–80, 90; See also Medium

Land: basic in economy, 42; rights in, 48; scarcity of, 196; sentimental value of, 39

Land-shrine community, Korekore, 69; See also Kalanga, Tonga

Land-shrine rituals, and regulation by regional medium, 73

Leadership

Bedouin, at tribal gatherings, 44

Cultic: competition within, 149; formal opposed to informal, 220–221, 236; mythical representations of, 220; opposition within, 148, 220; restraints on, 211; strategies of, 184–185; urban, 162

Organization of Bush Negro regional cult, 99

Lenje, cult expansion, 144

Literacy, 153

Loans, by Korekore mediums, 75

Local cult, 120; domain of Zezuru, 57; external validation of, 89; and interplay with prophet cult, xiv-xv; and support by territorial cult, 87; and territorial cult, 83. See also Cult

Local shrines, 121; hut, 126; memory of, 129; non-proliferation of, 129; re-establishment of, 132; ritual jurisdiction 130; tenacity of, 128; viability of, 129

Local spirits: assimilated to territorial cult, 82; and incorporation into genealogy of territorial spirits, 87–88; recrudescence of Zezuru, 87; spirit provinces and Zezuru, 82; and territorial authority, 58; as territorial spirits, 83; and Zezuru conceptual hierarchy, 57

Lozi, cult expansion of, 144

Luvale, cult expansion of, 144

Malawi Congress Party, 223

Mamhuko, 14 (Praises)

Mang’anja: as autochthonous group, xiii, 221, 223; mediums, 227; participation in Mbona cult, 219, 221

Mangelo, 131, See also Prophets Maraboutic tomb, 22 Maraboutism: bonds with clients, 18; as closeness, xxi, xxii, 10, 11; defined for Morocco, 6; and descent, 11, 12–15, 21; and elite status, 11; and group formation, 20; in an historical context, xviii, 25; as ideology, XViii, 5,20, 24–26; and marriage, 11; in Morocco, xviii, 3; and myth, 17–18; as obligation, xxi, 10, 11, 15; as part-ideology, 6, and power in Morocco, 10

Marriage: and ethnic groups, 198–199; as strategy of priest, 196. See also Affinity

Materialism, 93

Mbona: myths of, xiv, 219–220, 221, 223, 224, 234–235; possession by, xiii

Mbona cult: boundedness of, xiii; ritual cycle of, 219. See also Cults

Mecca, 18, xxv

Mediums: acolytes-interpreters of, 229, 230, 233; attire of Korekore, 74, 75; as bankers, 75; and chiefly succession, 70, 72, 86; communal, 57; competition between, 86; constraints upon, 77; control of staff of, 77; cross-cult confirmation of, 58; and cross-cult links, 87; and cross-cult rivalry, 83; decline of income of Bush Negro, 110; and descent, 80; distinguished from oracles, 229; drawn from elite, 80; fines upon, 73; genealogy and hierarchy of, 84; guardians of, 229–230, 233; hierarchy of Korekore, 69, 67, 70–72; hierarchy cross-cut, 73; influence from seance, 76; and jurisdiction of Zezuru, 58; Korekore, 56–57; Mang’anja, description of, xiii, 227; Mbona, ancestress of, 228–229; as mediators, 72; messengers of Korekore, 69; of Mutota, 74; and mystical retribution, 70; myths of, 236–237; new Zezuru, 87; objectives of, 77–78; oppositions to chiefs, xvi, 230–231; organizational instability of, 90; and origin myth, 67; as personification of

deity, 219, as political activist, 231; and rebellion, 80, 87; regional, 72; and revision of genealogy, 84; and spirit provinces, 60; and tribute, 72; and validation of candidates, 75, 80; validation of Zezuru, 80, 85; wealth of Bush Negroes, 97

Mediumship: as hereditary secular authority, 230; structural position of, 238–239

Messenger; congregational, duties des

cribed, 185–187; gifts to, 200; and

relations with priests, 195; selective

determinants of, 187

Mhondoro, 56f; and territory, 61

Migrant labor: among Bedouin, 42; cult prophet as, 157

Migration: Bedouin, 35, 38; Bedouin, annual cycle of, 39–40; labor, effects of 141–142

Misfortune: cause of Korekore, 74; cultic interpretation of, 140; diagnosis by Bush Negro priests of, 107; interpretation of, 156; and Korekore territorial spirits, 71; Tonga prophets’ interpretation of, 135. See also Affliction

Missions, 168

Mode of production, change in Bush Negroes, xxviii, 94, 96–97, 114–116

Monopoly, of transport by Bush Negroes, 96

Monze, xvi-xvii, 125f

Moral community, Korekore, 70

Moral and natural disturbances, 132

Morality: in non-ancestral cults, 145–146; in regional cults of affliction, 155–156

Morocco: “closeness” in concept of social order, 3, 10–12, 21, 23, 24–25; and maraboutic beliefs, 6–7, 10, 20; and prominence of Sherqawa, 15; urban ties with Sherqawa, 15, 17

Mosque: leadership and lodge, 14; in rural local community, 22

Mozambique: ecological zones of, 178;

location of Mbona cult, 219

Mtembo’s Church of Christ, 184

Mutape. See Acolyte

Mutota, 56f. See also Territorial cult

Mutuality, and rights to pasture land, 48 Muzeneh: environment and economy of, 36–37, 39; as pastoralists, 32; pilgrimages and gatherings of, xix, 31, 42, 43,

Mwali (or Mwari) cult, 177; See also High God.

Myth: and claims of mediums, 83; as cult propaganda, 234–235; ideological differences in, within Mbona cult, 236–237; Korekore origin, 66; and maraboutism, 17–18; of Mbona, 219–220, 221, 223, 224, 234–235; of origin of cult principals, 223–225; as support

of cross-cult trickery in, 79

Namzwa, participation in High God cult, 177

Nationalism, and Islam, 16

Natural disaster, and Tonga cult response, 125,132

Ndau, Zimbabwe rebellion, 209

Ndebele: participation in High God cult, 177; and succession of adepts, 190; and Zimbabwe rebellion, 208–210

Ndembu, cults of affliction among, xxv, 141

Nechombo, 57f. See also Acolyte Nehanda, 57f. See also Local spirits Nkoya: ancestral cults of affliction among, 142; early participation in Bituma cult, 169; kinship ties among, 147–148; as urban migrants, 169; women’s power, 151

Nzila cult, xxvii, 157–160, 167, 168, 169. See also Cult

Offerings: assets of congregation, 184; to chtonic cults, 79; Korekore, 69–70; Tonga, 126, 132

Oracles, 119–120; of Bush Negro cult, 93–108; coordinated actions of, 208; decline of authority of, 93; Delphi, 120; geographical locations of, 178; injunctions by, 185–187; origin and sites of, 182; of parochial cult, 107; and

political manoeuvring, 108; political significance of location, 196–199, 204; questioning of, 108; as regional centre, 178; and regionalism, 178; ritual indoctrination of adepts, 191–192; senior or cardinal, 178, 181, 182, 185, 197, 203, 207, 208, 210; and

wealth, 97

Ordeals, of Bush Negroes, 97, 101, 102 Organizational model’s, Nzila cult and, 167–168

Pantheons, Bush Negro, 101

Paraphernalia, 148, 159, 160, 164

Parochial cult: Bush Negro, 94; replacement of Bush Negro, 111–112; causes of decline of Bush Negro, 110; as survival of regional cult, 100. See also Cult

Particularism, xviii, xxii; in lodges, xx, 18

Pastoralism, as economic base, 39

Pastoralists, nomadic, participation in saints cults, 30

Patrilineality, and adept succession, 190

Patron-client relationship, 7; and closeness, 11; and maraboutism, 11, 12, 25. See also Clientele

Peasantry, participation in Bituma cult, 167

Pilgrim “trade,” 19, 194f

Pilgrimage: Bedouin, described, 41;

Bedouin, as ideology, 34; Bedouin, participation in, xix, 40–41; to Boujad, 19; of Creoles, 99; leaders of, 40; to Mecca, 18, 40; network of routes, xii, xiii; reasons for tribal, 41; as rite of passage, 42; structural similarities of tribal, 30

Political boundaries, 177

Political divisions: and authority among Tonga, 122; and Korekore spirit provinces, 56; Tonga, 121; and Tonga cult, 135

Political inequality, between chief and subjects, 220

Pollution, 70, 155, 156, 160

Population density, for Bituma and Nzila regions, 165

Possession: characteristics of, 188, 190; confirmation of, 85; as contest between formal and informal leadership, 220; of cult adepts, 188; described for Mbona cult, 227, 230, 233; dispute about, 86; and egalitarian conception, 220; fake, 76; as result of mounting social, environmental and cultic factors, 232–234; suppressed by High God cult, 101; of Tonga prophets, 131; validation of Zezuru, 86–87

Power: changes in as contributors to religious transformation, 142; female, 151; maraboutic, scope of, 19; and maraboutism, 10; in ritual, 146; of Tonga prophets, xv

Pre-capitalist structures, reference to by cult participants, 167

Priests: of Bush Negro oracle, 93; coordinated actions of, 208; death of, 182, 185; and disposal of legacies, 106–107; donations to, 191, 199; gifts to, 200; and inquests, 103; leader of cult region, 181; maintenance of reputation, 202; managerial problems of, 184, 199f; partial to privileged group, 114; personal wealth of, 109, 199; of regional cult and missionaries, 98; reliance in separatist churches, 204–205; sacrifices by, 194, 199; seasonal councils of, 208; and strategies to combat declining incomes, 110–111; succession of, 182, 187, 202–205; as validators of moral status, 97

Property, Morocco, ownership of, 20 Prophets

Bush Negroes: and economic change, 94; and institution of new cult, 111; and political involvement, 113

general: as founder of cult of affliction, 153–154; as healer, xvi; relations with clientele, xv

Tonga: after resettlement, 133; ambitious, 136; appeal to clientele, 136; authority of, 127; and Basangu, 122; competition among, 124; confirmation of, 125, 134 death of, 134; demands of, 133; distribution of clientele, 121–122; most powerful, 125; origin of spirits of, 123–124; redefinition of role, 120; and shrine custodians, 135; symbolism, 126

Prophet cult, 120; and local cult, 128; tenacity of Tonga, 128

Prophets’ shrines: and local shrines, 134; proliferation of, 129; reinstatement of, 131

Public opinion, and medium’s freedom of action, 77

rebuilding shrines, 232–233; as response to calamity, 219; Tonga agri

Purity, 155,156, 162

Qur’an, 6, 15, 26

Rebellion: and High God leadership, 101; and Zezuru mediums, 80, 87

Regional cults, 55; change in organization and ideology, xi; and chthonic beings, 67; competition for congregations, 181; and economic change, 94; evolution and devolution of, 93, 100, 139–140, 182; fractionization of, 93 , 94, 100, 102; history of Bush Negroes, 98–100; new, 111; and receipt of legacies, 100, 103, 106; structural characteristics of, 130, 159, 165, 168; among Tonga, xiv; widespread distribution of, ix; of Zambezi valley, 67. See also Cults

Regional expansion, of cults, 58

Regional medium, Korekore, 71

Regional organization, of regional cults of affliction, 152–153, 163

Regional pilgrimage center, xxi, 7

Regionalism: among Bedouin, 29; among Tonga, 135–146

Regions, 55; comparison of Bituma and Nzila, 164–165; as cult congregation. 177–178; distribution of Korekore, 66; identity with maraboutic cult, 15; of influence, 6

Regularization, cults of, xxviii

Relationships, Bedouin maintenance of, 39, 42

Religious lodge, Sherqawi, 7

Religious transformation, in cults of affliction, 142

Resettlement, of Tonga, 130

Residence: of adepts, 191; and maintenance of kinship ties, 148

Resources, Bedouin, restrictions on use of, 48

Responsibilities, jural, 191,223

Rest days, Korekore, 73

Rite of passage, pilgrimage as, 42

Ritual: and adepts, 188; of Bush Negro dead, 104; conformity by Tonga nonbelievers, 128; divinatory, 140; factions in, 147, 149; of initiation, 140; politics of, 147, 149, 151; of

Punishment: by Basangu, 124; of feelings by High God, 101–102 cultural, 131, 132; and Tonga elite, 128; transactions in, 147, 149, 151; as transcultural, 177

Ritual collaboration, 195, 219

Ritual cycle, of Mbona cult, 219

Ritual field: and inclusion of two cults, 89; instability of, 90; and secular field, 70; sub-fields of, 89; in Zimbabwe, 55

Ritual innovation, in cults of affliction, 148,153

Ritual jurisdiction: of Tonga local shrines, 130; of Zezuru local spirits, 57

Ritual territories, adjustment of Korekore, 61, 66, 69, 71, 73

Rumor, as widespread consensus, 234–236. See also Gossip

Sacrament, of Bush Negro regional cult, 101

Sacrifice: and chthonic cults, 79; collective groups for, xix, 20; by cult priests, 199; and maraboutism, 19, 20, 22, 26; in Mbona cult, 226, 232; as part of kinship ideology, 47; prior to pilgrimage, 40; at ritual indoctrination of adepts, 194; Tonga, 126

Saint Catherine’s Monastery, xx 33, 37, 43

Saints: associated with God, 48; efficiency of, 41; equality of, 41; lack of specialization, 41; as

mediator, 29, 41, 48; origins of, 47; symbolic significance of, 47. See also Maraboutism

Saints’ cults, sphere of influence of, 29–30. See also Sherqawi

Saints’ tombs, general location of, xix xx, 31

Sanctuary, 83, 108–109

Satirical songs, 205 note 24

Saudi Arabia, narcotics trade, 36

Seance: of incorporation into Korekore spirit genealogy, 87–88; Korekore, 74; and Korekore mediums’ influence, 76; in Mbona cult, xiii

Segmentary societies, in Morocco, 20, 24

Separatist sects, 77

Seventh Day Adventist Church, 157, 158, 169

Sherqawi: and clients, 9, 10; elites, xxii, 14–15; expansion of, 16–17; lodges and urban ties, 15; sphere of influence of lodges, xxi, 16–17

Sherqawi politics, 7, 9

Shrine custodians: and Basangu, 122; and prophets, 135; after resettlement, 130, 133; Tonga, xv, 121

Shrine grounds, Mbona cult, described, 221

Shrines: as central places of regional cults, ix; of chthonic cults, 78; as communal symbol, 141; congregations of, xix, 182; Mbona cult, rebuilding of, 219, 232; payment for opening of Bush Negro, 99; peripherality of, xxiv xxv; as recipients of legacies, 106; of regional cult, 93; reputations of Bedouin, 40–41; Sherqawi main, 14; symbolizing control over crucial resources, xviii. See also Holy tombs, Local shrines, Prophets’ shrines, Cults

Sin, 146

Sinners: burial of, 104; changes in categories of, 102; posthumous condemnation of, 103

Smugglers, keepers of tradition, 43

Smuggling: in South Sinai, xix, 33, 34, 36, 37; and tribal allegiance, 39

Snuff, 69, 88

Social inequality, myth as legitimization of, 236–239

Song texts, 144, 161

Sorcery, 145, 146, 155, 156, 202, 205, 223, 226, 233

South Africa General Mission, 157

South Sinai: ecology of, 31–33; as location of saints’ cults, 30–31

Spatial categories, of cult organization, 221

Spirit mediums. See also Mediums

Spirits: manifestations of Korekore, 56;

Tonga conceptions, 123; and Tonga prophets, xv. See also Basangu

Spirit provinces: adjustment of, 71; and genealogies, 82; Korekore, 56; and land-shrine communities, 69; and mediums, 69, 61; new, 72

Staff, of Bush Negro oracle, 108–109

Strategies, of cult leaders, 184, 196

Succession: of adepts, 190; of cult leadership, 148; of priests, 182, 187

Suffrage, and rise of a parochial cult, 112–112

Supplicants: gifts to priests, 200; to regional oracles, 178

Svikiro, 56f. See also Mediums

Swidden agriculture, Korekore, 69

Symbol: definition of, 45; holy tomb as, 45; as integrative unit, 45; as systems, 5

Symbolic messages, of Korekore mediums, 69, 61, 73

Symbolism: of Tonga prophets, 126; transcultural, 177

Tallensi, xii

Taxes, imposed by Bush Negro priests, 99, 109

Territorial cult: expansion into domain of local cult, 89; Korekore, 56–69; of local spirit, 83: See also Cults, Dzivaguru, Earth cults

Territorial spirits: conceptual hierarchy of, 56; and land-shrine communities, 69; as lions, 56; wrath of, 70

Theology: of Bush Negro regional cult, 101–102; Islamic, 6; Kalanga, 210; relationships between cults, 184

Tonga: cult expansion, 144; and land shrines, xiv-xv

Traffic in supplicants, 194; See also Pilgrimage

Transport

Bush Negroes: decline of river, 110; later increase in interior, 112; monopoly of, 96; wealth derived from, 97

and traffic movement of Tonga, 122

and location of Tonga prophets, 136

Transhumance, Bedouin, 38, 39–40

Translation of belief, 80

Transvaal, ecological zones of, 178

Tree shrines, Korekore, 69

Tribal ancestor, association with holy tomb, 47

Tribal organization, as conceptualization, 34

Tribal reunions: Bedouin, attendance at, 43; among Bedouin, reasons, for, 31, 42; influence of economic factors, 43; influence of political factors on, 43–44; as pilgrimage, 42

Tribalism, and cult regionalism, xix

Tribe: Bedouin as administrative unit, 33, 45; Bedouin as territorial rights, 33; ecological influences on, 40; as political unit, 40; rights to holy tomb, 41, 46; territorial unit, 44; as visible group,40

Tribute

Bush Negroes: decline of, 93, 110; to regional cult, 99 general: between Korekore mediums, 72: to chthonic cult, 79; to territorial cult, 67

Trickery in myth, 79

Typology, of cults, xii-xiii, xvi

Universalism: of Bush Negro High God cult, 102; characteristic of cults, xviii, xxii, 120, 154, 157, 177; and status of adepts, 188; and Tonga prophets' claims, 136; and Tonga ritual, 135, See also High God cult

Urban centres, of Bituma and Nzila regions, 165, 169

Urban voluntary organizations, as mechanisms for adaptation to urban life, 167

Validation: of chiefly succession, 86, 88–89; of genealogical amendment, 84; of local spirits, 88; of mediums, 75, 80, 87, 88–89; of moral stature by Bush Negro priests, 97; of moral stature by ordeal, 101, 102

Venda: origins of senior oracle, 182; participation in High God cult, 177; and succession of adepts, 190; and Zimbabwe rebellion, 209

Vicinity: collapse of, 91; expansion of Korekore mediums', 77, 78; of Korekore regional mediums, 71; of Tonga prophets, 124

Visions, of cult prophets, 153–154

Wage labor: Bedouin, 37–38; and transhumance, 38

Water wells, for Bedouin, 32

Wealth, of Korekore mediums, 75

Witchcraft: abatement of fears of, 110; and burial, 104; Bush Negroes, 94; as cause of misfortune, 74, 82; and new parochial cult, 113–114; and payments to regional cult, 100; posthumous accusations of, 103, 106–107; and protection by High God, 101; regional cult prohibition of, 102; threat to nouveau riche of, 98, 113; voiding of accusations of, 97

Witchfinding, 202

Women: as adepts, 145; Bedouin, 37; Bedouin and sexual joking, 44; as cult leaders, 149, 150; mediums in Mbona cult, 227, 228–230; participation as cult leaders, 203–205; as patients of non-ancestral cults of affliction, 146; powers of, 151

Zambia: Christian missions in, 168; cults of affliction in, 139, 140, 141, 152, 154, 158, 163, 165, 168, 170; immigration to, from Angola, 169

Zambia Nzila Sect, 159

Zezuru cult: cult instability, 90; divination, 86; expansion and personality of mediums, 90; High God of, 57; local spirits of, 58, mediums, of, 86; myth and interpenetration of, 83. See also Cults

Zimbabwe: cult prophet in, 157; ecological zones of, 178; expression of cult policy, 212; nineteenth century rebellion in, 208–210; priest’s income from, 200; restrictions on land, 196

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[1] This paper is based on fieldwork in Boujad, Morocco, and its environs from October 1968 until June 1970. It was sponsored by the Foreign Area Fellowship Program and the National Institute of Mental Health, to whom I am deeply grateful. Additonal fieldwork ensued in the summers of 1972 and 1973 and was sponsored, respectively, by the Foreign Currency Program of the Smithsonian Institution and the Social Science Research Council. The transliteration of Arabic terms in this text is based upon colloquial usage. The plurals of most Arabic words are indicated here by the addition of to the singular forms, except for those few which frequently occur in Western literature. However, to avoid awkward circumlocutions, the maraboutic descent group discussed in this paper are Sherqawi in the singular and adjectival forms, Sherqawa in the plural, as they are in Arabic. Because of publishing economies, I have been unable to indicate emphatic consonants by the use of special transliteration marks. For comments on this paper I wish to thank Karen I. Blue, T.O. Beidelman, Nicholas S. Hopkins, and especially Richard P. Werbner.

[2] Although rarely used as such marabout is an English word. I deliberately use this term rather than saint to avoid facile analogies to the Christian context. Although both North African marabouts and the saints of Mediterranean Europe serve as intermediaries to the supernatural and frequently are associated with specific places and clientele, they occur in significantly different cultural contexts which cannot usefully be equated, as Turner has persuasively argued (1974: 56–71).

[3] For similar analogies concerning saints in the European Mediterranean, see Boissevain (1966: 30–31) and Christian (1972: 44).

[4] The acquisition of clientele independent from immediate ecological considerations continues to be the case. In recent years a Boujad Sherqawi active in electoral politics (when they are possible) has successfully sought maraboutic status in certain villages in the Sus area and has collected substantial donations. These are provided in part by wealthy Casablanca merchants who originate from these villages and seek to facilitate their business enterprises in return. Other villagers sought to become his clients on the basis of less practical “religious” ends.

[5] This baraka, as these attributes are popularly considered, can be acquired equally from kinsmen and nonkinsmen. The “closeness” through which these qualities are transmitted is frequently envisaged in highly concrete terms in maraboutic myths. In one case, bread is prepared by a marabout and eaten by his disciple. In another instance, a Sherqawi child sucks the fingers and toes of a sleeping marabout.

[6] I specify currently because a number of other sons of the marabout are recognized, some of whom have shrines in Boujad. Both in the past and today, Moroccans recognize the possibility of other descent groups being “discovered” (or sociologically speaking, of descent groups crystallizing out of descent categories).

[7] For a further discussion of these brotherhoods, see Eickelman (1976: 224–227).

[8] The same descriptive term designates pilgrims who visit maraboutic shrines.

[9] A similar process takes place in the formation of urban quarters (Eickelman 1974b). By rough calculation, there is a maraboutic shrine for every six square kilometres, or one for every 150 persons, on the western plains of Morocco. Comparable figures prevail for the High Atlas mountains (Berque 1957: 7). It is futile to place much faith in such a census, but it does indicate the prevalence of maraboutism. Of course, the vast majority of such shrines draw only miniscule offerings and clientele.

[10] Because Jacques Berque's interpretation of maraboutic cults is the most prominent one in French literature on Morocco, it is useful briefly to analyze it here. While Gellner relies upon the logically elegant imagery of segmentation to describe "tribal" social structure, Berque elaborates a botanical metaphor to conceptualize Moroccan social forms, especially those of High Atlas Berbers. For Berque, these forms resemble "a hopelessly tangled undergrowth, formed of miniscule twigs, with the roots of each extending to all points of the horizon" (1953: 263). Having extracted full value from the botanical metaphor, Berque proceeds to an incendiary one to describe historical shifts in the distribution of power: "tribal hegemonies, personal power, spiritual or dynastic expansion flame up and die out like torches. Their radiation lacks depth. It is spread out over a milieu diverse and diffuse at the same time, fragmented but universal" (1953: 269). Berque sees maraboutic cults as an integral part of Moroccan social identity from at least the eighteenth century to the present (1953: 270). The title of the article, "Qu'est-ce qu'une 'tribu' nord-africaine" is probably meant to evoke Renan's "Qu'est-ce-qu'une nation?" (1887) and thus suggests the significance which Berque attributes to the study of "tribal" social identities. Unfortunately, however, his general argument, as opposed to his Ethnography of the Seksawa (1955), is limited to a presentation of his key metaphors and an analysis of prior scholarly assumptions toward local and tribal identities. Yet in various other writings, Berque acknowledges the persistence of maraboutism in diverse historical and social circumstances (e.g. 1949: 82–84; 1957).

[11] Field work in South Sinai was carried out between 1971 and 1976. I spent a total of eight months in the field. In 1973–4 Miss Shuli Hartman participated in the research and carried out field work. The Ford Foundation, through the Israel Foundation Trustees, supported the project and this help is gratefully acknowledged. The South Sinai Administration, and especially

Moshe Sela, greatly facilitated my work. The comments of the participants in the 1976 ASA Conference, particularly Ernest Gellner, Raymond Firth, Shuli Hartman and Richard Werbner, were of great help in the revision of this essay. Map I is at the end of the article on page 49.

[12] Fieldwork was carried out among Zezuru of Musami, Mrewa for three months in 1958 and among Korekore of the Sipolilo and Darwin Districts over a period of 25 months during 1960–61 and 1963–64. I make grateful acknowledgements to the Leverhulme Trustees, to the International African Institute and to the Research Council of the University College of Rhodesia, for generous support.

I particularly wish to express my debt to the late George Kupara, the ‘Lion’ of Mutota, who welcomed me to his seances and patiently instructed me in the ways of the Mutota cult.

In writing, I have used the ethnographic present, occasionally, for convenience. However, it must be borne in mind that throughout the seventies the whole of the Zambezi Valley has been the scene of intense military activity. The Korekore are now very much in the front line of the struggle for an independent Zimbabwe. Sadly, many have been concentrated in ‘fortified villages’ and a number of mediums of the cult of Mutota have come under the close scrutiny of the colonial military. The medium of the Korekore Nehanda fled to Mozambique to escape their attentions and one, the medium of Chihwahwa, was imprisoned for 20 years, allegedly, for aiding guerillas. The senior medium of Mutota ended his days in a village surrounded by security officers who vetted every supplicant who came to him.

[13] I was not able to enter Mozambique to establish how far the cult extended. Korekore say that the cult’s region extends to the northern escarpment of the Zambezi valley. I was able to establish that the spirit provinces of Nebedza and Nehanda did extend into Mozambique.

[14] Often spoken of as ‘Lions of the Heavens’ (Mhondoro dze Matenga) and called ‘supra-tribal’ in much of the literature (see Gelfand 1959; Abraham 1966).

[15] All names, unless otherwise stated are of rivers or streams. With the exception of the Bwase (‘Gwase’) River, all streams and rivers which appear on official maps have been named as they appear there. Many are wrongly recorded. For example, in Chikorekore, Kadziruve is Kadzuruve, Ambi is Hambe, Hunyani is Manyami, Mahuwi is Mauhwi, Katsawa is Katsahwe, etc.

[16] Boundaries were established by working from one land-shrine community to the next and asking to whom the “beer of the earth” (hwahwa hwe pasi) was offered. Forest boundaries were established by joining hunting parties and noting the different spirits to which hunters made symbolic offerings of leaves and twigs. The eastern part of Map 1, including the chiefdoms of Mzarabani and Kasekete and the west bank of the Msengezi, was mapped in 1960–61. The remaining areas were mapped in 1963–64.

[17] References under A refer to Genealogy 2 and under B, to Map I. Under A, T refers to Tavara, Ch. to Chthonic, S to Stranger. The affiliation of Mukarazi was not fully determined. Almost certainly, this spirit forms part of the Chikunda cult of Kanyemba.

[18] Mutota dies because his sons conspired together to prevent him knowing that he had reached the Zambezi Valley. He was thus placed in mystical danger. As he died, he stated that unless one of his sons had intercourse with his daughter, Nehanda, his body could not be buried. Eventually, Nebedza slept with his sister. The ground then opened miraculously to receive Mutota’s body. From this incestuous union all present day Korekore are held to derive.

[19] I have distinguished chthonic beings from ordinary Tavara chiefs in terms of the powers accorded to them in the myth by Korekore. Tavara chiefs are described as being killed by ordinary, physical means; the chthonic

beings are always overcome by mystical means. Some Tavara do not make this distinction and claim the chthonic beings as their ancestors. In some accounts Musuma and Nyamukokoko are distinguished as two beings. Korekore in the Dande hold that Musuma Nyamukokoko was a son of Dzivaguru who was raised in Chimombe's village. Later, Chimombe is said to have moved from the Dande, leaving Musuma behind, to land beyond the Hunyani and Angwa rivers.

[20] In the past, mediums were forbidden to cultivate and were maintained by tribute in grain given by members of their spirit provinces. Even now a medium obtains a dispensation from his spirit before he begins to cultivate.

[21] An ngozi is an afflicting ancestral spirit. In most areas of the Valley, one will find ngozi possession cults. Their organisation tends to cut across the land shrine communities. A candidate for ngozi possession is seated on a mat and senior adepts of the cult will rub his head vigorously, from time to time, to aid possession.

[22] An unpossessed medium is referred to as Novana. Often, a medium speaks of himself as a container or pocket (homwe) for the spirit.

[23] Abraham (1959) has presented a composite of several genealogies collected throughout the Zambezi Valley. In this, segmentation occurs earlier. Nevertheless, only Nebedza, of the 16 children of Mutota given, is credited with a line of descendants (see also Beach 1972).

[24] Mediums do not drink immediately before or during seances. The spirit is held to enter the stomach. Drinking water would both cool and displace it.

[25] I attended 40 seances at which 74 separate issues were raised by 63 supplicants. Supplicants together with their companions and retinue numbered in all, 153.

[26] Field work in the Tapanahoni area of Surinam took place from June 1961 till November 1962, during August 1965, in September and October 1970 and again for a few weeks in December 1973 and January 1974. The first and second periods were financed by The Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO), the third period by the Afrika-Sudiecentrum at Leyden. My stay in 1973–1974 was supported by the University of Utrecht. I feel indebted to Chris de Beet and Diane Vernon for valuable criticism of an earlier draft and for drawin attention to documents in French and Dutch archives.

[27] The name Gaan Tata has fallen into disuse. Nowadays, the Djuka usually refer to Gaan Gadu or Bigi Gadu (Thoden van Velzen 1966a). Kersten, a missionary who visited the Tapanahoni in 1895 (MBB 1896: 185), noted that the name Gaan Gadu was also used by high priest Labi Agumasakka. Other names mentioned in the earliest accounts of the movement are Masa Jehovah and Bakaa (MITT 1895: 52), respectively ‘Sir Jehovah’ and ‘European’. I have preferred to use the name Gaan Tata as this distinguished the movement from the other High God or Great Deity cults that periodically erupted in Bush Negro territory; adherents of these cults often called the central divinity Gaan Gadu.

[28] In 1885, gold-diggers were willing to pay 32 florins ($12.40) per barrel, the unit of freight. Ten years later, freight prices on the Albina-Lawa route were down to 10 florins ($4), to skyrocket again to levels of 32,50 and even 50 florins during the second gold rush (1901–1904) in the Lawa basin (De Beet and Thoden van Velzen 1977). The colonial administration repeatedly attempted to curb price rises by putting pressure on tribal chiefs. They had to wait for the decrease in the demand for transport, before these efforts were successful.

[29] The attitude of government officials tdwards the cult varied considerably. Usually, at the turn of the century, the higher echelons showed themselves opposed to any aggressive policy towards the Gaan Tata priests. However, officials at the lower levels at times supported the missionaries in

attempts to suppress the cult. Such divergencies enabled the Gaan Tata priests to operate an oracle at Santigron, fifteen kilometres from the capital.

[30] But of course some clashes did take place: at Moarimbomofo in 1892 (MBB 1893: 179–180), 1894 (MITT 1896: 70–71); at Dritabiki in 1900 (MITT 1901: 598), at Koffiekamp in 1892 (MBB 1892: 367–368) and in 1893 (MITT 1895: 317–318); and again at a Cottica village (MBB 1907: 62–66) where Djuka men and women dragged their kinsman Kwassi Hendriks from the hands of a missionary who was about to baptize him.

[31] Modern ethnography has been deplorably silent on the history of the cult, its spread throughout the interior and its present-day functioning.

[32] Personal communication, Chris and Miriam de Beet.

[33] ‘Outsiders’ is my translation for Bakaa. All those who are neither Bush Negroes nor Amerindians are called Bakaa by the Djuka.

[34] Quite healthy Gaan Tata cults continued to exist in other areas as well. In 1962,-Agiti-Ondro on the Cottica River was thriving with patients and supplicants. To a lesser extent this, also seemed to have been the case at Santigron and Toti-Kampu on the Saramacca River. Gaan Tata worship also continued at several places on the Suriname River.

[35] Apparently, only the Tapanahoni’s parochial cult was destroyed. Other parochial Gaan Tata cults are thriving.

[36] This paper is based on my research into Central African religious change, in which I have been engaged since 1971. Fieldwork was undertaken alternatingly in Lusaka and Kaoma district, Western Province, Zambia, during 27 months, from February 1972 to April 1974. Of this period, rural research was carried out in February 1973, May-June 1973 and August-April 1974.

Research both in Lusaka and Kaoma district concentrated on the Nkoya ethnic group but in addition involved religious and political organizations of a much wider scope. A research grant from the University of Zambia covered initial research expenses in the period February-April 1972. In 1973–74 I was a Research Affiliate of the University of Zambia's Institute for African Studies, in which capacity I benefited from its various research facilities. The Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) provided a writing-up grant for the period 1974–75. The University of Leiden paid towards my participation in the 1976 ASA conference, which led to the present paper. While registering my indebtedness and gratitude vis-a-vis these various instutitions, the Zambian authorities and my informants, I wish to thank in particular the following people: Denes Shiyowe for excellent research assistance; Henny van Rijn, my wife, for sharing much of the fieldwork and analysis; the late Max Gluckman, Andre Kobben, Maud Muntemba, Bob Papstein, Terry Ranger, Mathew Schoffeleers, Jaap Van Velsen, and Richard Werbner who over the years through comments and discussions, have contributed to my analysis; and finally Richard Werbner for his most stimulating editorial efforts towards the production of the present paper.

[37] Christian churches are cults in terms of my definition of cult. However, they would be distinguished from cults in the dominant sociological approach to types of religious organization, which has been developed on the basis of the writings of Troeltsch, Von Wiese, Becker, and Yinger (cf. Kolb 1964; O'Dea 1968).

[38] The following associations between non-regional cults of affliction and ethnic groups are recognized in Western Zambia: the songo cult is associated with the Songo people of Angola (McCulloch 1951), and introduced in Western Zambia by the Luvale (Ikacana 1971), chimbandu with the Angolan Ovimbundu (McCulloch 1951); kayongo with the Luvale (Kuntz 1932) or in general with Angolan immigrants (my fieldnotes); kalendamawulu with the Lozi (my fieldnotes); blyaya or slyaya with the Luvale (Ikacana 1971, my fieldnotes); liyala with the Lozi (Kuntz 1932; Gluckman 1951); macoba with the Kaonde (Kuntz 1932); mayimbwe with the Nkoya (Kuntz 1932; Gluckman 1951; Ikacana 1971; my fieldnotes); kasheba with the Kaonde (my

fieldnotes); muba with the Totale (Gluckman 1951; Ikacana 1971, who also mentions the neighbouring Toka); Lenje (my fieldnotes), or even groups further to the east, like the Lamba (Doke 1931) and the Ambo (Stefaniszyn 1964).

[39] “Anamnesis” is used here in the technical, medical sense of a patient’s own account of the history of his complaint.

[40] In this context one should bear in mind that most cult leaders are women, who in extra-religious public settings are not supposed to sit on chairs.

[41] This might be read to constitute a moral aspect, in contrast with what I have said above about the amoral nature of these cults. However, this concern with fair play points in a different direction—just as the ethics of fair play do not turn soccer or the retail trade into a predominantly moral institution.

[42] Mongu district files; the report could not be consulted.

[43] Reynolds (1963: 133) mentions the date of 1944, Muntemba (1972: 1) 1940.

[44] Initially a jar of chalk, and church bells (Reynolds 1963: 135, 137); later also a sacred cup for the administering of medicine (Muntemba 1972: 5, 11).

[45] The paraphernalia which Simbinga brought from his journey, and which to this day are in possession of his widow (one of my chief informants), were mainly the following. In three differently-coloured bottles (allegedly brought from Johannesburg by somebody else, and for secular purposes) Simbinga had collected water from three rivers: the Zambezi,.Jhe Kabompo and the Lungwebungu. These bottles he used as divining device: only a patient who managed to indicate which bottle contained water from which river could be

considered to suffer from Bituma, and thus be eligible for treatment. In addition Simbinga brought a round, grey stone (about 10 cm diameter); a mpande shell partly covered with copper-wire; a flyswitch made of eland-tail; a number of cowrie shells; a genet skin (mbomba) a circular ornament, made of parts of white water-lily sown into strings of white beads; a small copper bell of European manufacture; and finally a leather-bound copy of an Afrikaans hymnbook (Di Berijmde Psalms, 1936). For the healing ritual, Simbinga would dress in fully white clothes. Although I cannot elaborate on this point here, to one familiar with the material culture and symbolism of Western Zambian cultures it will be clear that Simbinga's choice of paraphernalia was largely based on widespread conventional symbolism in this area, and reflected personal idiosyncrasies only to a limited degree—except in their combination.

[46] In the 1969 census Mongu had 10,700 inhabitants, Livingstone 43,000 inhabitants, and the other centres mentioned less than 4,000 inhabitants (Davies 1971: 126).

[47] Despite increase in population, the relative demographic difference between the Bituma and Nzila regions was of essentially the same nature as in the 1930's, when Mongu and Livingstone had already been provincial and national capitals respectively for several decades, and (cf. Merle Davis 1933, appendix map) population density in Western Zambia showed variations similar to the present-day distribution.

[48] Map 2 gives, inter alia, an overview of the size, growth and distribution of Christianity in Western Zambia between the years 1929 and 1948, the crucial period for the emergence and early development of Nzila and Bituma. Basic figures were derived from: Northern Rhodesia, 1929, 1937, 1948.

[49] I began my study of this cult in the course of fifteen months fieldwork in Zimbabwe during *1960–61, and continued the fieldwork in Botswana for the following periods: 1964–65, fifteen months; 1969, three months; 1974, one

month. I wish to thank the Fulbright Commission, the University of Manchester, and the Social Science Research Council (U.K.) for grants and leave for the research. I am grateful also to the many Kalanga and Khurutse, cult officials and laymen alike, who helped me to understand the cult, especially the southwestern priest, Mr. Ntogwa Matafeni Dube, Reverend Mongwa Tjuma, Mr. Mpubuli Matenge Ngulube and their families. Public personalities and places referred to here are historically significant and too readily recognisable to be disguised. I have therefore not used pseudonyms, as I usually do to protect personal identities.

[50] Included in the cult are such ethnically different people as Kalanga (Holub 1881; O'Neill 1920; Richards 1942; Sebina 1947; Gelfand 1966), Karanga (Knothe 1888; von Sicard 1952; Daneel 1970, 1971), Venda (Schwellnus 1888; Stayt 1931; van Warmelo 1940) Ndau (Daneel 1970: 57), Khurutse (Shapera 1971), Ndebele (Campbell 1926; Ranger 1967), and others. I am not sure whether Namzwa to the north, near Wankie, have congregations.

[51] Cockin, a missionary at Hope Fountain in 1879, mentions three oracles in the Matopo Hills (Cockin 1879, cited in Ranger 1967: 145), as follows, relative to his mission station, Ematjetjeni (Matonjeni) to the east, Entjeleli (Njelele) to the south, and Umkombo to the south-west. (I am grateful to Mr. Richard Brown for supplying me with Cockin's full text.) Another oracle, contemporary with them, is mentioned by Holub for the northwest in 1876 at the Maitengwe River (Holub 1881: 64). Note that all these oracles continue into the twentieth century. Ranger misreads Cockin's report floc. cit.). He eliminates one of the central oracles; he mistakes a lesser oracle outside the central Matopo Hills near Mangwe for a cardinal oracle. This misreading leads Ranger into an ad hoc view of the cult in its response to change; he obscures continuity in the cult.

[52] The cult's domain also coincides, roughly, with the distribution of Khami-type Iron Age buildings (with the exception of Mtoko, in the east). (For a map see Summers 1961: 9.) The somewhat wider distribution of Zimbabwe-type buildings extends beyond the present cult domain into the Korekore-Zezuru

areas to the north, where cults of local and territorial spirits have their domains (see chapter 3 above).

[53] This smaller zone of wooded steppe with abundant Acacia and Comiphora has somewhat higher rainfall.

[54] I discuss an apparent exception below, page 200.

[55] My assessment is on the basis of a preliminary study of the cult of komana, which I carried out in 1972–3 during a year's fieldwork among Tswapong in central Botswana.

[56] At a cardinal oracle of Matonjeni, two offices are distinguished: that of shrine keeper, customarily a Venda, and that of priest, customarily from the Shoko (Monkey) clan among Mbire. This distinction is not maintained in the western regions. Lumbi, minstrel, is the term commonly used for the priest Ntogwa, who also spoke of himself as 'Leader', ntungamili. Similarly, here unlike at Matonjeni, the term hosana is used for both male and female adepts.

[57] Newman (1971) records, 'In the Matopos Hills in Rhodesia there is a remarkably dense population [of eagles], possibly t(ie most concentrated eagle population known anywhere in the world' (59). Note that snake eagle is a friend of man in that it preys on snakes. I am tempted to suggest that the two figures of the famous Zimbabwe figurine may be a snake eagle or a martial eagle and its prey, a monitor lizard.

[58] According to Kalanga tradition, the oracle of Mwali came from: 1) Lutombo Lutema to 2) Bambudzi, 3) Zhomba, 4) Chizeze, 5) Mavula Majena, 6) Njelele, 7) Dula, 8) Manyangwa, 9) Njenjema, 10) Ntogwa.

[59] In the region that I know best, the priest Ntogwa succeeded his mother's sister's son, Fulele, and also claimed that Njenje was his maternal

grandfather. He claimed Venda origin for his patriline in a Zebra clan (Dube or Ntembo). Njenjema, a priest of the northwest, was of Njenje's clan, a Monkey (Shoko or Ncube, praise name Luvimbi). Manyangwa, the northern priest, is a Leya.

[60] Daneel (1974: 109) stresses hostility and opposition between Zionist churches and the cult staff at the cardinal oracle of Matonjeni, though he also mentions more co-operative relations between the cult and Ethiopian-type churches. In Botswana the southwestern priest, Ntogwa, co-operated in various ways with leaders of the Bethannia Mission Apostolic Church and J. E. Mtembo's Church of Christ.

[61] A messenger explained the distinction between him and the porter thus, "I carry the truth; he carries the blankets." In fact, this messenger was slightly deaf, and at a public meeting, the porter gave most of the report about their pilgrimage to their regional oracle. It is common for a porter to become a messenger, in turn.

[62] Ranger (1967: 378) reads his own interpretation, somewhat mistakenly, into a cult lament which Mr. Timon Mongwa Tjuma transcribed for me, and I translated with his help. The text is not 'a despairing lament for the ruin created in the Shona world by the white man and the powerlessness of the defeated to do anything about it'. Nor does it express 'a mood of despondency' (Daneel 1970: 35). It expresses moral outrage and complaint—indeed, a refusal to be defeated—as shown by the chorus and remarks at the time. The prevailing attitude of protest and complaint in cult songs is explained thus by Kalanga themselves, 'A child must cry so that his father will heed his suffering.'

[63] At a different time, and on a domestic occasion, an adept may act as a host of Mazenge and be possessed by a bush spirit. (See Werbner 1964, 1971, 1972 and also Daneel 1970: 51 on Jukwa possession in the cult of Mwari.)

[64] Her Husband, Shologulu, (The Great Head), dwells in the sky to the south, Her Son, Lunji (The Awl), to the west; and She Herself, to the east. She and Her Son go back and forth and communicate with each other and Shologulu via a shooting star. Note that Kalanga bury a corpse with its orientation in accord with the trinity thus: its face towards the south, its head to the east, and feet to the west, along the sun's path.

[65] When an elder, after reciting Her praise poetry, professed to me the conventional piety that She has one breast because that suffices for all, another elder interjected, 'Tell him the truth—it's because she is too stingy that she has only one.' Her parts are half a person's: one eye, ear, nose, arm and leg. (See also Cockin 1879 for an early missionary's report.)

[66] Note that Kalanga, both from the cult's domain and outside it, also approach the Tswapong oracle as supplicants; some Kalanga claim Tswapong ethnic origins.

[67] The fund is conceived of as one whole from the congregation. Neighbours know, at the time, who contributes, since the collections are made or announced at public meetings. But it is taboo to make a permanent record of this public knowledge, by writing down a list of donors and contributions.

[68] A close kinsman of a deceased cult messenger once boasted to me about the debt his kinsman incurred through such embezzlement.*

[69] Another is at a cardinal oracle in the Matopo Hills, which is called Dula (Granary), apparently after the shape of its rock. In the past, during the youth of the oldest living elders, valuables were stored at the senior cardinal oracle, Njelele, including durables such as hoes, and consumer goods, i.e. tobacco, hides, cloth. A ruler or locally important elder was, on occasion, given a hoe from the store.

[70] i.e.: Chichi, Mapokani, Vaka, Mpini, Makwela, Jeshen, Madlambudzi.

[71] i.e.: besides the six shown in detail on Map 4 (including Letsholathebe outside the Tati Reserve), Mpapo, Nkange, Dagwe, Goshwe, Sinete, Mzonga, Matobo, Tonota.

[72] Vumbu was, like his father, a dancer of hosho (the gourd rattle) and a singer of its somewhat satirical ballads. This dance is performed for recreation and ridicule at rituals and also beer parties. It is the dance Mwali prefers to the Gumba-Gumba and pop music on records. See above page 187. Note also that Galani, too, never became possessed or wore a black sash, though she otherwise dressed and danced as a hosana.

[73] From north to south in 1974: Mathamngwane, Tonota, Mmadinare.

[74] This was formed about 1972 under Letsholathebe, Senior Headman in the official grade and a chief in my terms.

[75] I am grateful to Mr. Harry Finnigan for the Botswana Daily News references. In reply to my enquiries and at Mr. Finnigan’s suggestion, the News reporter, Mr. Mishingo Mpaphadzi, kindly wrote for me a further, unpublished account.

[76] Other oracles apparently under Mtonjeni are these two: 1) the oracle sometimes known as Magubu (perhaps a hereditary title) which has been southeast of Fort Usher and under Mtabani then Magubu (Richards 1942: 55; ‘Majuba’, Gelfand 1966: 35f; Maguhu, Daneel 1970: 41) and 2) the oracle at Shangonyima/Jahunda in turn under Tapa, Mike, Kamba (Knothe: 1888; Schwellnus: 1888, Posselt 1927: 530f; Richards, ibid.). The first oracle is the one that figures so largely, indeed too largely, in Ranger’s account (1967: 149); the second has been especially important for Venda in the Transvaal and in the Gwanda District south of the central highlands.

[77] Ranger (1967: 187) misreports that I was ‘told that [a] high priest had been shot at Mangwe in 1896 by a fellow American’. Despite his assertion, it is not so that ‘There can be little doubt that the man killed and called Jobani or Tshobani was the High Priest of Mwari for the southwest, remembered by the Kalanga today under the name Habangana (my italics).’ Kalanga told me that during the war, Armstrong murdered Chief Bango’s messenger, his parallel cousin. Hobani (no connection with Botswana’s Chief Habangana of the same totem, Zebra, but not of the Bango clariy, Zviposa, the priest, continued to perform near Mangwe, clandestinely, even after the war. His oracle was a junior southwestern one. In 1960/61, I observed that Chief Bango sent adepts and a messenger to the cardinal oracle of the priest Maswabi at Dula in Kubutu cave.

[78] Ranger (1967) misses the general accord in the crescent from Chilimanzi south and eastwards and including Gutu, Chibi, Ndanga along with others, because he isolates each instance and treats as exceptional any congregation such as Ndanga’s which opposed the war (see Selous 1896: 238).

[79] The fieldwork on which this paper is based was carried out in 1967–8 and in 1973–4. The earlier part was financed by a Nuffield sociological scholarship; the latter by a grant-in-aid from the University of Malawi. I wish to record my indebtedness to both organisations and to my research assistant Mr. E. C. Mandala.

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*** Contents

Introduction 3

Liberal Islam and Its Islamic Context

Charles Kurzman

Part I

Against Theocracy

Message Not Government, Religion Not State AH Abd Al-Raziq

Legislative Authority

Muhammad Khalaf-Allah

Taleqani’s Last Sermon

Mahmud Taleqani

Shari’a: The Codification of Islamic Law

Muhammad Sa’Id Al-‘Ashmawi

Part II

Democracy

The Indonesian Revolution

Muhammad Natsir

Accountability, Parliament, and Ijtihad

S.M. Zafar

Religion and Liberty

Mehdi Bazargan

Christian-Muslim Democracy

Dimasangcay A. Pundato

Participation in Non-Islamic Government

Rachid Ghannouchi

Democracy and Shura

Sadek J. Sulaiman

Part III

Rights of Women

Unveiling and Veiling

Nazira Zein-Ed-Din

Politics and the Muslim Woman

Benazir Bhutto

A Feminist Interpretation of Women’s Rights in Islam

Fatima Mernissi

Qur’an and Woman

Amina Wadud-Muhsin

Islam and the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women

Muhammad Shahrour

Part IV

Rights of Non-Muslims

Minorities in a Democracy

Humayun Kabir

Universalism in Islam

Chandra Muzaffar

Religious Liberty

Mohamed Talbi

The Medina Document

Ali Bulag

The Downhill Path and Defense, Not Surrender

Rusmir Mahmutcehajic *

Part V

Freedom of Thought

Humanity and Islam

Aii Shari’Ati

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

Rethinking Islam Today

Mohamed Arkoun

Shari’a and Basic Human Rights Concerns ‘Abchlllchii Ahmed An-Na’Im

The Problem of ‘Ulama’

Alhaji Adeleke Dirisu Ajijola

The Evolution and Devolution of Religious Knowledge

Abdul-Karim Soroush

Part VI

Progress

The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam

Muhammad Iqbal

The Second Message of Islam Mahmoud Mohamed Taha

The Necessity of Renewing Islamic Thought and Reinvigorating Religious Understanding

Nurcholish Madjid

Islam and Humanism

Mamadiou Dia

Islam and Modernity

Fazlur Rahman

Islam and the Challenge of the Modern World

Shabbir Akhtar

Glossary

Index of Qur’Anic Citations

Index of Personal Names

** Introduction: Liberal Islam and Its Islamic Context

Charles Kurzman

“Liberal Islam” may sound like a contradiction in terms. For centuries, the West has identified Islam with its most exotic elements. Islamic faith is equated with fanaticism, as in Voltaire’s Mahomet, or Fanaticism (1745).[1] Islamic political authority is equated with despotism, as in Montesquieu’s intentionally redundant phrase “Oriental despotism” or Francis Bacon’s definition (1612): “A monarchy, where there is no nobility at all, is ever a pure and absolute tyranny; as that of the Turks.” Islamic military practices are equated with terror and rape, as in Eugene Delacroix’s famous painting “Massacre at Chios” (1824). Islamic tradition is equated with backwardness and primitiveness, as in Ernest Renan’s inaugural lecture at the College de France (1862), one of the founding documents of modern Orientalism:

<quote>

Islam is the complete negation of Europe ... Islam is the disdain of science, the suppression of civil society; it is the appalling simplicity of the Semitic spirit, restricting the human mind, closing it to all delicate ideas, to all refined sentiment, to all rational research, in order to keep it facing an eternal tautology: God is God.[2]

</quote>

These themes continue today, as Western perceptions of Islam identify the religion with threatening images of theocracy and terrorism. The Iranian revolution of 1979 and the rise of Islamic radicalism from West Africa to Southeast Asia contribute to the impression that a new Cold War is looming.[3] Within the academic world, too, the study of Islam has devoted considerable attention to radical interpretations of the religion, as witnessed in academic works with alarming titles such as Radical Islam, Militant Islam, and Sacred Rage. Indeed, some Muslims agree with Western Orientalists that Islam is timeless and unchanging, that Muslims must interpret the word of God as literally as possible, and that East

and West are mutually exclusive and inexorably opposed. A Pakistani Muslim, for example, has written: “Those who think of reforming or modernizing Islam are misguided, and their efforts are bound to fail.... Why should it be modernized, when it is already perfect and pure, universal, and for all time?”[4]

Yet the Orientalist view of Islam should not be mistaken for the whole of Islam. In historical terms, Islam has consisted of countless varied interpretations, among these a tradition that voices concerns parallel to those of Western liberalism. Exponents of this tradition have expressed resentment that their positions “have been generally ignored by Western scholars and members of the media who appear to prefer to highlight the sensationalism of extremist discourse that captures the attention of Western audiences.”[5] Among the concerns of this neglected tradition are opposition to theocracy, support for democracy, guarantees of the rights of women and nonMuslims in Islamic countries, defense of freedom of thought, and belief in the potential for human progress—themes that form the six sections of this volume. Voicing such concerns can be dangerous in some countries, and proponents of this tradition have suffered for their beliefs, as discussed later in this chapter. Others, it should be noted, have benefited from relations with Western counterparts; this book, for instance, may confer a certain legitimacy on the authors who are included.

Just what to call this tradition presents a bit of a problem. I have followed the suggestion of legal scholar Asaf Ali Asghar Fyzee (India, 1899–1981), who wrote: “We need not bother about nomenclature, but if some name has to be given to it, let us call it ‘Liberal Islam.’”[6] I use the term liberal with several caveats: First, the authors in this collection do not necessarily self-identify as liberals. Second, the authors may not espouse all aspects of liberal ideology, even if they subscribe to some. Third, the term “liberal” has negative connotations in parts of the Islamic world, where it is associated with foreign domination, unfettered capitalism, hypocritical paeans to rights, and hostility to Islam. Fourth, the concept of “liberal Islam” should be viewed as only a heuristic device, not a hard-and-fast category. Fifth, I make no claims as to the “correctness” of liberal interpretations of Islam. I am not qualified to engage in such debates; I wish only to describe them.

A small group of Western scholars has begun to examine liberal Islam, in what amounts to a paradigm shift in the academic study of Islam. Building on earlier studies of regional diversity within Islam, the new focus on liberal Islam heralds an increasing recognition of ideological diversity within Islam. Leonard Binder, for instance, discusses a variety of Islamic thinkers whose tenets overlap partially with Western liberalism and the relations that these tenets have with other elements of Islam. Abdallah Laroui examines the changing concept of liberty in Islam, explicitly noting the debate over the origin and application of the term in the Arabic-speaking world. Kevin Dwyer interviewed human-rights activists in North Africa and detailed their struggles with competing visions of progress and the good society.[7] In this book, I intend to contribute to this intellectual project by making the texts of major liberal Islamic thinkers available in English in a single anthology.

In addition, I want here to contribute to the literature on liberal Islam by emphasizing its Islamic context. It is common in analyses of liberal Islam to compare it with Western liberalism, with the implication ofjudgment according to Western standards; such work runs the risk of criticism such as that leveled against one Western author, who has been accused of being "mostly interested in Muslims who, in effect, speak her mind back to her in terms that she finds familiar, and who reassure her of the supremacy of her own Western values."[8] Insofar as the study of liberal Islam focuses on its Islamic dimension, however, I believe it escapes such criticism. The similarity of liberal Islam and Western liberalism does not imply that liberal Muslims are stale and reassuring imitators of Western philosophy. Many of their writings are firmly rooted in Qur'anic exegesis, in the lives of the Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims, and in traditional Islamic forms of debate.

The next section traces the development of liberal Islam and its ongoing debate with two other major traditions, customary and revivalist Islam. It then identifies three modes of liberal Islam in terms of their readings of basic Islamic sources. The last section explains the selection criteria for the authors and themes included in this volume and introduces each of them briefly in terms of the three modes of liberal Islam.

*** The History of a Debate

Virtually every region of the Islamic world has witnessed parallel debates over the past two centuries between three traditions of socioreligious interpretation. These traditions overlap and intertwine and should not be considered mutually exclusive or internally homogeneous, but as heuristic devices the three labels provide significant insight into the recent history of Islamic discourse. The first tradition may be called customary Islam, characterized by the combination of regional practices and those that are shared throughout the Islamic world. In Morocco, the customary tradition includes reverence for saintly figures that some Muslims feel have no basis in Islamic scripture; in Indonesia, the customary tradition includes ritual displays of spirituality and power that express regional cultural traditions.[9] We might also mention drumming in West African Islam and other musical traditions throughout the Islamic world, belief in spirits among Kurdish and other Muslims, celebration of the pre-Islamic New Year and other holy dates in Iran and elsewhere, caste-like social hierarchies in South Asian Islam, belief in persons and objects with magical powers, and so on. With no apparent ill ease, local custom may even contravene injunctions that are commonly acknowledged as pillars of Islamic faith, as in Southeast Asia, where “in some localities pilgrimage to sacred stones is regarded as an acceptable substitute for the haj”—the pilgrimage to Mecca—which “is regarded as an Arabian trick to hoodwink the Faithful.”[10] The customary tradition represents the great majority of Muslims in most places and times. Yet the customary tradition is not a unitary phenomenon, since each region of the Islamic world has forged its own version of customary practice. Thus the customary tradition tends to be justified in local terms, not global ones: identity (this is the way “we” do things), prudence (it can’t hurt to propitiate the powerful, be they spirits or spirit-infused humans), and linkages to the past (loyalty to one’s teacher, one’s teacher’s teacher, and so on).[11]

The second tradition, and the most common alternative to customary Islam, is revivalist Islam, also known variously as Islamism, fundamentalism, or Wahhabism. This tradition attacks the customary interpretation as being insufficiently attentive to the letter of Islamic doctrine. Against local deviations, the revivalist tradition urges a renewed emphasis on the Arabic language (the language of revelation), the illegitimacy of local political institutions (as usurpers of God’s sovereignty),

the authority of the revivalists as the sole qualified interpretators of Islam, sometimes drastic expressions of personal piety, and the revival of practices from the early period of Islam. Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s revivalist movement in eighteenth-century Arabia—the prototype for all such movements since—was aimed precisely at ridding the Islamic heartland of the customary tradition, the un-Islamic practices that had returned to the region in the millennium after Islam was revealed. A more recent example is Tayyib ‘Uqbi of Algeria (died 1960), who attacked customary Islam as heresy: “I have never performed the circumambulation [of a saint’s shrine] ... nor propitiatory sacrifices.... I do not invoke the dead.... Invoke whom you will, I shall never surrender to your idolatry.”[12]

Many analyses of Islamic debates stop with these two traditions, the customary and the revivalist, and ignore a third major tradition that is the focus of this volume. Liberal Islam, like revivalist Islam, defines itself in contrast to the customary tradition and calls upon the precedent of the early period of Islam in order to delegitimate present-day practices. Yet liberal Islam calls upon the past in the name of modernity, while revivalists might be said to call upon modernity (for example, electronic technologies) in the name of the past. There are various versions of Islamic liberalism (several modes are discussed here later), but one common element is the critique of both the customary and revivalist traditions for what liberals sometimes term “backwardness,” which in their view has prevented the Islamic world from enjoying the fruits of modernity: economic progress, democracy, legal rights, and so on. Instead, the liberal tradition argues that Islam, properly understood, is compatible with—or even a precursor to—Western liberalism.

These three interpretations of Islam have battled virtually continuously throughout the Islamic world for more than a century, with revivalism making occasionally significant inroads into the customary tradition and liberalism making somewhat less of a mark. Indeed, liberal Islam has more often been victim than victor.

Liberal Islam emerged out of the revivalist movements of the eighteenth century, a fertile period for Islamic debate.[13] Politically, the great Muslim dynasties of the Mediterranean basin (the Ottoman Empire), Southwest Asia

(the Safavid dynasty), and South Asia (the Mughul dynasty) were in various stages of collapse. Evangelically, Islam was continuing to win converts to the west, in West Africa, and the east, in Southeast Asia. Theologically, scholarly migration throughout the Islamic world accelerated, creating an international community of religious scholars who had either studied at the great centers of learning in Arabia or apprenticed under someone who had.

These scholars launched a series of revivalist movements that sought to rid Islam of un-Islamic practices not sanctioned by orthodox sources. The solution, according to the revivalists, was to replace the customary tradition with theologically sound Islamic teaching—namely, the teaching of revivalist religious scholars, who essentially argued that the authority of custom be replaced by the authority of the original sources of Islam, as interpreted by the revivalists.

This international community of revivalist scholars had its intellectual center in the great schools of Arabia, where Muslims from all lands visited as pilgrims or lived as students and then returned to their homes inspired to do battle with un-Islamic customary practices: Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab from the Nejd region of Arabia, Shaykh Jibril ibn ‘Umar al-Aqdisi from West Africa, Haji Miskin from Sumatra, Hajji Shari’at Allah and Ahmad Brelwi from South Asia, and Ma Mingxin from China.[14]

Liberal Islam has its roots in this revivalist context, in the person of Shah Wali-Allah (India, 1703–1762). Born in the last years of the Mughul dynasty, Wali-Allah inherited his father’s position as head of a religious seminary. To complete his education, he traveled to Mecca, the holy site and seminary center in Arabia. On his return, he began to espouse a form of revivalism heralded by later liberals as the intellectual forebear of liberal Islam. Like other revivalists, Wali-Allah perceived Islam to be in danger, sought to revitalize the Islamic community through a combination of theological renovation and sociopolitical organization, and viewed the customary tradition as a major source of Islam’s problems.

Wali-Allah, however, developed a considerably more humanistic response to the customary tradition than did the Wahhabis and other revivalists. He was,

for example, relatively tolerant of certain practices that other revivalists considered beyond the pale, arguing that Islamic law—while divinely inspired—must be adapted for the needs of different peoples and eras. If local custom is not in accordance with orthodox Islamic prescriptions, “it is not considered desirable to replace it by a different one [Islamic law] which is absolutely unknown to them [the local people].... The basic purpose is that these reforms should be introduced in such a way that [the local people’s] faculty of reasoning is satisfied and does not repel them.”[15] The importance of human reasoning was a recurrent emphasis in Wali-Allah’s work and a major precedent for later liberal Muslim thinkers, as in this Wali-Allah quotation translated by a twentieth-century liberal: “Time has come that the religious law of Islam should be brought into the open fully dressed in reason and argument.”[16] Fazlur Rahman (Pakistan-United States, 1919–1988), a liberal whose work is excerpted in chapter 32, summarized Wali-Allah’s approach as follows:

<quote>

So far as the Law is concerned, Waliy-Ullah did not stop at the medieval Muslim Schools of law but went back to its original sources, the Quran and the Apostolic Tradition and recommended ijtihad—exercise of independent judgment as opposed to the imitative following of medieval authorities.... The fundamental religious and moral fountains of mankind are the same in all times and climes, he holds, but have to adjust themselves to and re-express themselves in terms of the genius of a particular age and of a particular people.... Islam, being a universal religion, had to find a vehicle of flesh and blood whereby to propagate itself and was bound to be coloured by that vehicle—the Arab tradition and way of life. But in different cultures, this vehicle will obviously undergo a change.[17]

</quote>

Yet Wali-Allah was in many ways a revivalist. Despite his comments about dealing reasonably with local un-Islamic customs, he was highly intolerant of practices that he felt were equivalent to apostasy, such as visiting the tombs of great men to pray for intercession. Despite his comments about the age of reason—contemporaneous but apparently unconnected with European enlightenment sentiment—Wali-Allah did not place any great stock in “modern” forms of knowledge and deemed traditional Islamic scholarship to

be sufficient to meet the demands of the contemporary world: “If I had been convinced that the good of this age depended upon the free circulation of Mathematics, Astronomy, Architecture, Technology and Engineering, I would have devoted my energies to their spread.”[18] Instead of these novel forms of education, Wali-Allah emphasized traditional Islamic training and held that only graduates of this training were competent to practice ijtihad. On occasion, Wali-Allah appeared to suggest that only he was competent to practice ijtihad and that all other Muslims must practice taqlid (imitation) and follow his teachings. In statements that come close to messianism, Wali-Allah wrote that God appeared to him in a dream and appointed him leader of the world and reviver of Islam.[19]

An analogous development occurred in Shi’i Islam, with Aqa Muhammad Baqir Bihbihani (Iran, 1705–1790) playing a role similar to that of Wali-Allah. Bihbihani also was born into a leading clerical family and trained in traditional modes. He, too, converted to a position, later known as the Usuli school, that emphasized ijtihad. Also like Wali-Allah, Bihbihani combined the conservative concept of taqlid and the potentially liberal concept of ijtihad by restricting the practice of ijtihad to competent religious scholars. This view evolved in the nineteenth century into the position that each era must obey a single religious scholar as the marja’-i taqlid, or source of imitation, though this concept involves no hint of divine inspiration, as in Wali-Allah’s work.[20]

Only in the nineteenth century, however, did liberal Islam begin to distinguish itself more clearly from revivalism, and it did so both intellectually and institutionally. On the intellectual plane, first, liberals began to separate ijtihadfrom taqlid, reason from authority. Most of the major figures of nineteenth century liberal Islam echoed these themes:

<quote>

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (born in Iran, 1838–1897): “In their beliefs they [the members of each community] must shun submission to conjectures and not

be content with mere taqlid of their ancestors. For if man believes in things without proof or reason, makes a practice of following unproven opinions, and is satisfied to imitate and follow his ancestors, his mind inevitably desists from intellectual movement, and little by little stupidity and imbecility overcome him—until his mind becomes completely idle and he becomes unable to perceive his own good and evil; and adversity and misfortune overtake him from all sides.[21]

Sayyid Ahmad Khan (India, 1817–1898) and Sayyid Mahdi Ali Khan (India, 1837–1907): “Taqlid is not incumbent [on the believer]. Every person is entitled to ijtihad in those matters concerning which there is no explicitly revealed text in Qur’an and sunna [the practice of the Prophet].”[22]

Muhammad ‘Abduh (Egypt, 1849–1905): “First, to liberate thought from the shackles of taqlid ... to return, in the acquisition of religious knowledge, to its first sources, and to weigh them in the scales of human reason, which God has created in order to prevent excess or adulteration in religion ... and to prove that, seen in this light, religion must be accounted a friend to science, pushing man to investigate the secrets of existence....”[23]

</quote>

Taqlid became anathema to liberals of the early twentieth century, as it symbolized the popular influence of the liberals’ traditionalist opponents. Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi (Ottoman Syria, 1866–1914), for example, called taqlid “a leprosy which has spread widely among the people ... an infectious disease, a general paralysis, a stupefying lunacy plunging man into apathy and indolence.”[24] Ijtihad, by contrast, allowed Islam to be interpreted in accordance with the perceived needs of the modern age. Nonetheless, considerable disagreement existed as to what these needs might be: whether to resist European rule or acquiesce, whether to reform traditional schools or establish new ones, whether to relax or restore religious practices. Liberals of this period criticized one another almost as enthusiastically as they criticized customary and revivalist Islam.

The expansion of the right to practice ijtihad directly threatened the authority of both revivalist and customary Islamic leaders, in that it urged all Muslims to study Islam for themselves and, in effect, to be their own authority. However, few if any nineteenth-century liberals drew from this the twentieth-century conclusion that the opinions of the people should dictate public affairs. Instead, the liberals sought to impose themselves as tutelary authorities, and their primary means of activism was in the field of educational reform. Though many liberals of this period were themselves the product of traditional religious educations, they deemed these institutions insufficient to meet the needs of the day and sought to reform them or to create new institutions combining traditional and modern approaches. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, for example, founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, India; ‘Abduh attempted to reform the ancient al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt; al-Afghani was involved in the early years of Istanbul University in the Ottoman Empire. In addition, we may cite:

- Rifa’a Rafi’ al-Tahtawi (Egypt, 1801–1873), trained at al-Azhar in Cairo, who lived for several years in Paris as religious instructor to a group of Egyptian students; on his return to Egypt, he sought to develop a new educational system that incorporated both Islamic and European elements.

- Shihab al-Din Maijani (Russia, 1818–1889) and Ahmad Makhdum Danesh (Bukhara, 1827–1897), both trained in traditional schools at Bukhara, who worked to reform the curriculum in this seminary city by introducing secular subjects.

- Ismail Bey Gasprinskii (Russia, 1851–1914), trained in Islamic primary and Russian secondary schools, who founded a large network of modern (jadid) schools throughout Russia that combined secular and religious education.

- Shaykh Muhammad Tahir Jalaluddin (Sumatra-Malaysia, 1867–1957), Kiyai Haji Ahmad Dahlan (Java-Indonesia, 1869–1923), and Ahmad Surkati (Sudan-Indonesia, 1872–1943), all of whom studied at al-Azhar or in Mecca and later helped to found reformist schools in Southeast Asia.

- Wang Haoran (China, 1848–1918), influenced by al-Azhar and pan-Islamic sentiments centered at Istanbul, who founded reformist schools and Islamic organizations in China.

The distinguishing feature of these new reforms was their introduction of Western subjects into the traditional curriculum, a practice that reflected the liberals' second intellectual contribution: respect for "modernity." While revivalists sought to cure the ills of the Muslim world by refocusing on the seventh-century sources of the Islamic faith, liberals sought to combine this refocus with an additional focus on Western disciplines such as engineering and military science, medicine and natural science, comparative legal studies and social science, and modern languages. For this reason, liberal Islam of the period is generally known by the rubric of "Islamic modernism."

These educational institutions that the liberals reformed or founded, spawning further liberal graduates, formed the first of three institutional bases for liberal Islam. By the early twentieth century, liberals were in charge of al-Azhar in Egypt, the leading schools of the Ottoman Empire, the system ofjadid (new) schools in the Muslim regions of Russia, the Aligarh and other leading Islamic universities in South Asia, and the Muhammadiya school system in Indonesia.

The second institutional base, somewhat shakier, was journalism. As literacy increased, Islamic liberals made active use of this new medium to communicate with their followers. Indeed, the names of many leading liberals of the era are associated with periodicals: Namik Kemal's Tasvir-i Efkar (Herald of Ideas) and Hurriyet (Liberty) in Ottoman Turkish, 1865–1870; Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Tahzib al-Akhlaq (Refinement of Morals) in Urdu, 1870–1896; Gasprinskii's Tercuman/Perevodchik (The Interpreter) in Tatar

Turkish and Russian, 1883–1914; al-Afghani and ‘Abduh’s al-‘Urwa al-Wuthqa (The Strongest Link) in Arabic, 1884; Mirza Malkom Khan’s Qanun (The Law) in Persian, 1890–1898; Muhammad Rashid Rida’s al-Manar (The Lighthouse) in Arabic, 1898–1935; Jalaluddin’s al-Imam (The Leader) in Malay, 1906–1908; Rizaeddin Fakhreddin’s Shura (Consultation) in Tatar Turkish, 1908–1917; Mahmud Tarzi’s Siraj al-Akhbar (The Lamp of the News) in Afghani Persian, 1911–1918; Abdullah Ahmad’s Al Munir El Manar (Light of the Victors) in Indonesian, 1911–1916; Abu’l-Kalam Azad’s al-Hilal (The Crescent) in Urdu, 1912–1914; Mahmud Khoja Behbudiy’s Ayina (The Mirror) in Uzbek Turkish, 1913–1916; and others. Some of these periodicals were short-lived, and some had to be published in Europe because of political pressure in Islamic countries. Still, these journals had a tremendous reach and influence among educated Muslims: for example, Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq’s al-Jawa’ib (Rumors), published in Constantinople, was read “in all countries of the Arabic speech” in the 1870s, according to a British observer, and was even found “in the Nejd [Arabian] merchants’ houses at Bombay”; Rashid Rida’s al-Manar “was widely read in the Islamic world and was a major factor in shaping Muslim thought from North Africa to Southeast Asia”; Gasprinskii’s Tercuman was influential in China.[25]

A third institutional base was an international network of intellectuals centered primarily on Muhammad ‘Abduh and his disciples in Cairo. Not only were ‘Abduh’s books and his followers’ newspapers, in particular al-Manar, read throughout the Islamic world—Cairo also became a central site for liberals to visit and study, just as Mecca and Medina had been for revivalists a century earlier. Diverse figures such as Jalaluddin, Dahlan, Syekh Ahmad Khatib (Sumatra, 1855–1916) Abdullah Ahmad (Sumatra, died 1933), and Sayid Syekh al-Hadi (Malaya, 1867–1934) from Southeast Asia, Sayyid Ahmad bin Sumayt (Comoros-Zanzibar, 1861–1925), Muhammad Kurd ‘Ali (Syria, 1876–1952), Abu Shu’ayb al-Dukkali (Morocco, 1878–1937), Abd al-‘Aziz al-Tha’alibi (Tunisia, 1879–1944), Ha Decheng (China, 1888–1943), and Abu’l-Kalam Azad (India, 1888–1958) returned from Cairo to spread the liberal message in their own regions. A secondary center for this international network was Istanbul, capital of the Ottoman Empire, whose

influential students included Gasprinskii from Crimea, Mehmed Dzemaludin * Causevic* (Bosnia, died 1937), ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Maghribi (Ottoman Syria, 1867–1956), Numan Chelebi Jihan (Russia, 1885–1918), and Abdal Rauf Fitrat (Bukhara, 1886–1938). A few scholars, such as Musa Yarullah Bigi (Russia, 1874–1949), trained at both Cairo and Istanbul. Numerous others maintained contact with these centers through correspondence, meetings abroad, and the traffic in publications.

Liberals reached the apogee of their power in the first two decades of the twentieth century. During the nineteenth century, liberal reforms had begun at the behest of modernizing monarchs (Mehmet ‘Ali in Egypt, Mahmud II in the Ottoman Empire, Ahmad Bey in Tunisia) more interested in military and administrative efficiency than in liberalism or Islam; they had continued under prime ministers (Amir Kabir in Persia, Mithat Pasa* in the Ottoman Empire, Khayr al-Din in Tunisia) who introduced liberal educational or political reforms but lasted only several years in office. By contrast, the early twentieth century saw liberal Islam rise to significant political influence in its own right. In colonized regions, Muslim communities came to be represented by liberal organizations such as Ittifaq al-Muslimin (Russia), the Muhammadiya (Dutch Indonesia), and the Aligarh establishment (British India). In still-independent lands, liberals gained state power through constitutional revolutions in Iran (1906) and the Ottoman Empire (1908). Unlike the reforms of the previous century, granted from the top down, these revolutions were foisted upon reluctant monarchs. Among the key supporters of the Persian constitutional movement were Sayyid Muhammad Tabataba’i (Iran, 1843–1921), Sayyid ‘Abdullah Behbehani (Iran, 1846–1910), and other religious scholars who participated in the revolutionary mobilization and played large roles in the parliamentary government that followed.[26] The Young Turks in the Ottoman Empire made considerable use of liberal clerics such as the Sheyh-ul-Islam, the leader of the clerical establishment in the empire, who told a British interviewer: “Our [Islamic] law, rightly interpreted, is in accordance with the principles of representative government.... [The Ottoman Constitution] becomes binding upon those who profess Islam. Especially those who are called to lead, our ‘ulama’, are bound to help actively in carrying out the Constitution.”[27] Liberal religious scholars were not the sole movers in these democratic experiments, and many of the leading figures had to be pressured into maintaining a consistently pro-democratic line by activists among their followers.

Nonetheless, state sponsorship gave the liberals a tremendous advantage over their theological opponents.

This advantageous position proved to be temporary. The new democracies in Iran and the Ottoman Empire succumbed to the combined onslaught of revivalist Islam and secular military might. In the Ottoman Empire, a revivalist organization incited a mutiny in the capital, calling for the implementation of the shari'a, Islamic law, in place of the constitution. In response, the largely secular armed forces marched on the capital and suppressed both the liberal parliament and its clerical allies. In Iran, revivalists politicked actively against the constitution and parliament and supported the coups d'etat of 1908 and 1911.

Elsewhere, revivalists sought to cast liberals as apostates, as in this statement by a Russian Muslim leader: "Whoever believes in God and Muhammad must be an enemy of the modernists. For them the shari'a demands the death penalty."[28] Such accusations were inevitable, as the liberals' attempt to learn about and from the West exposed them to charges of inauthenticity and betrayal of their own cultural tradition. "The modernist aroused suspicion even about his loyalty to Islam, and he was accused of being a pale reflection of the West and of sacrificing Islam at its altar," according to Rahman.[29] Indeed, this is the image of modernist Islam that appears to have stuck.[30] Many later liberal Muslims have accordingly distanced themselves from liberals of the modernist period. "The tragedy," according to 'Ali Shari'ati (Iran, 1933–1977), "is that, on the one hand, those who have controlled our religion over the past two centuries have transformed it into its present static form and, on the other hand, our enlightened people who understand the present age and the needs of our generation and time, do not understand religion...."[31] Few of the liberal authors in this volume cite 'Abduh and his contemporaries approvingly.

While some liberals of this era were no doubt guilty of these charges, adopting the Orientalist perspective and calling Islam backwards and unsalvageable—"There is no second civilization; civilization means European civilization," according to one Ottoman reformer[32]—most liberals of the modernist period were far more protective of Islamic faith and culture than

they are generally given credit for. For most of them, the goal was not to displace Islam but to rejuvenate it.

Indeed, it is ironic that liberal Islam was accused of secularism, since secularism was largely responsible for undermining it. Beginning in the 1920s, educated Muslims who might otherwise have subscribed to liberal Islam now turned in large numbers to secular ideologies such as nationalism and socialism. Widespread secularization undermined liberalism in a second way by creating a sense of crisis within Islam that favored revivalists: “Faith rather than explanation or formulation of Faith, intuitive certainty rather than discursive thought-content becomes the cry of the hour.”[33] For example, ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Raziq (Egypt, 1888–1966; chapter 1) was fired from his position at al-Azhar in 1925 for arguing that Islam leaves the form of government to human invention. This liberal position might not have been considered beyond the pale several years earlier, prior to the abolition of the seventh-century-old Ottoman caliphate by Turkish secularists. Al-Azhar had become more conservative; even ‘Abduh’s disciple Rashid Rida condemned ‘Abd al-Raziq. Western observers contended that liberal Islam had become stagnant.[34]

Still, liberal Islamic thinkers helped to found or shape a number of anticolonial movements in the 1920s and 1930s: ‘Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis’s Association of Algerian Religious Scholars, Muhammad Iqbal’s All-India Muslim League, Muhammad ‘Allal al-Fasi’s Istiqlal party in Morocco, and ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Tha’alibi’s Destour party in Tunisia. In addition, the decolonization of Islamic countries renewed debates over Islamic governance, for example, in India, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Pakistan, debates in which liberals participated. However, liberal Islam was largely overtaken by other ideological trends during the middle part of the twentieth century.

Since the 1970s, however, liberal Islam has enjoyed a renewed popularity. The timing is perhaps unexpected, since it is precisely the period when Islamic revivalism has also gained adherents. The two traditions have clashed on numerous occasions, usually in intellectual debate but sometimes violently.

Liberals of diverse ideologies are disproportionately the victims of such violence, among them:

- Mahmoud Mohamed Taha (Sudan, circa 1910–1985), who opposed the revivalist Sudanese government's interpretation of shari'a law, was executed for alleged apostasy in 1985.

- Subhi al-Salih (Lebanon, died 1986), a former vice-mufti of Lebanon, who argued for "opening of all gates of ijtihad" and banning taqlid, was assassinated by Shi'i gunmen in 1986.

- Farag Fuda (Egypt, 1945–1992), a liberal politician and columnist who criticized Islamic extremism, was assassinated in 1992.

- Maulvi Farook (India, 1945–1990) and Qazi Nissar Ahmed (India, 1948–1994), both Muslim religious scholars and proponents of rights for Muslims in the Kashmir region of India, were killed in 1990 and 1994, respectively, for opposing the violent tactics of Islamic separatists in the region. Yassin Malik, another critic of violence, was attacked several times in 1994 but survived.

- Mohammad Sa'id (Algeria, circa 1947–1995) and Abderrazak Redjam (Algeria, circa 1957–1995), both prominent activists in the Islamist movement in Algeria, were executed along with several dozen followers by a militant Islamist faction in 1995 after they had publicly objected to the faction's violent methods.

On a less violent scale, a number of the authors included in this volume have been subjected to confrontations that go beyond intellectual debate. Muhammad Khalaf-Allah (Egypt, born 1916; chapter 2) was urged not just to burn all the copies of his work but also to reaffirm his faith in Islam and renew his marriage vows; Mehdi Bazargan (Iran, 1907–1995; chapter 7) was

hounded out of the prime ministership and then out of parliament in Iran; Muhammad Shahrour (Syria, born 1938; chapter 15) saw his work banned in several Middle Eastern countries; Abdul-Karim Soroush (Iran, born 1945; chapter 26) has been barred from speaking publicly in Iran and publicly threatened with assassination.

Some liberals are understandably depressed about their unpromising position in contemporary Islamic debates. Indeed, Hassan Hanafi (Egypt, born 1935) has placed this pessimism at the heart of his analysis of Islamic history, arguing that nonliberal interpretations of Arab-Islamic heritage have become so firmly entrenched that Arabs have lost the ability to debate and learn.[35] One scholar concludes that with the rise of Islamic revivalism since the 1970s, “the time for Muslim liberalism has certainly passed.”[36] Another scholar suggests that liberal Islam faces an “impossible life”: “In one Moslem society after another, to write of liberalism ... is to write obituaries of men who took on impossible odds, and then failed.”[37]

At the same time, however, there are indications that pessimism may be premature. On the intellectual plane, liberal Islamic thinkers are building a more self-confident liberalism that apologizes neither for its liberalism nor for its Islamic essence. The contemporary generation is far more familiar with Western society and education than were previous generations. Many of the authors in this volume received postgraduate degrees in Europe and North America; unlike nineteenth-century liberals who called for the implementation of Western disciplines that they themselves were ill-trained in, their late-twentieth-century descendants approach “modern” themes from a position of strength. ‘Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im (Sudan-United States, born 1946), Mohamed Arkoun (Algeria-France, born 1928), and Rahman, for example, have been certified by faculty positions at elite Western universities. At the same time, contemporary liberals are more confident than their ancestors in asserting the need for Islamic contributions to modern problems. In part because their familiarity with the West allows them to critique it more confidently, in part because of the renewed self-respect that militant revivalist Islam has generated, contemporary liberals are able to argue that the West is suffering from a spiritual crisis—any number of Western sources can be cited in support—that Islam may help to cure. By contrast, liberal Muslims of a century ago were considerably less critical of the West.

A further source of optimism for liberal Islam is the rising level of education in the Muslim world. Literacy allows Muslims to read the Qur'an and other Islamic sources for themselves, rather than rely on religious scholars, and as traditional religious schools have lost their monopoly on education over the past century, an increasing number of Muslims have applied their nonreligious education to develop novel approaches to Islam. Recall the large percentage of nineteenth-century liberals who were trained traditionally; by contrast, many of the authors in this volume are the products of secular educations: Bazargan and Shahrour were trained as engineers, Arkoun and Rachid Ghannouchi (Tunisia, born 1941) as philosophers, Chandra Muzaffar (Malaysia, born 1947) and Shari'ati as social scientists, and so on. In addition to providing the theorists for liberalism, expanding systems of education are providing an audience as well. For example, Shahrour's first book was a bestseller in North Africa, though it had to be copied clandestinely; Shari'ati's work is especially popular among university students; Soroush is frequently discussed by Iranians on the Internet.

A final cause for optimism is the emergence of an organizational infrastructure for liberal Islam. Multidenominational organizations have emerged in Malaysia (Aliran), the Philippines (Christian-Muslim Democracy), Senegal (Yewwu Yewwi), and elsewhere with the aim of fostering peaceful co-existence among religious communities and combating intolerance, Islamic and otherwise. In addition, a number of research institutes have been founded to support research, publications, translations (including several in this volume), and conferences. One of the earliest such organizations was the Islamic Research Institute in Pakistan, which Rahman ran until revivalists forced his resignation in the 1960s. Also in the early 1960s, Bazargan, Mahmud Taleqani (Iran, 1911–1979), and other liberals established the Freedom Movement of Iran, which urged liberal reforms on both Islamic institutions and secular ones. Many similar organizations are located in the West: the International Institute of Islamic Thought in Herndon, Virginia; the Institute for Research and Islamic Studies in Houston, Texas; the World and Islam Studies Enterprise in Tampa, Florida; the Liberty for Muslim World human-rights organization in London, England; and the Ibn Khaldun Society

in London and Washington, D.C., among others.[38] These organizations' activities appear to be aimed both at Westerners, by showing the non-"fanatical" face of Islam, and at Muslims, in the attempt to disseminate liberal perspectives within the Islamic world. As such, they represent the first real effort since the late nineteenth century to generate an international scholarly movement of liberal Islam.

*** Modes of Liberal Islam

Liberal Islam operates in two intellectual contexts: one Islamic and one Western-oriented. The authors in this volume place different emphases on each, yet all can be analyzed in terms of either context, as Islamic liberals (a subset of liberalism) or as liberal Muslims (a subset of Islam). Much of the academic literature on these authors takes the first approach: Just how liberal are Islamic liberals? Do Islamic variants of liberalism meet Western standards of liberalism? Leonard Binder's erudite analysis of Islamic Liberalism largely takes this approach, weighing elements of the thought of leading Egyptian writers against Western traditions. I wish to take the opposite tack: to examine liberal Muslims in light of Islamic tradition.

This context is the one that most liberal Muslims themselves appear to favor, even those such as Mamadiou Dia (Senegal, born 1911; chapter 30), whose work deals more with French Christian theology than with Islamic theologians. Dia and other liberals seem to be highly sensitive to charges of cultural inauthenticity and view their work as a renewal of, not an escape from, long-standing debates within Islam. Dia writes: "Islamic authenticity requires a return to the sources, that is, to the Qur'an and to the [sunna], not to take shelter there, to drown current cares there, but to draw from thence elements for the renovation and revitalization of Islamic philosophy."

Taking these Islamic debates as the context, we may identify three principal "modes" of liberal Islam. These involve the relationship of liberalism to the primary sources of Islam: the divinely revealed book (Qur'an) and the divinely inspired practice of the Prophet Muhammad (.sunna), which together constitute the basis for Islamic law (shari'a).

The first mode takes liberal positions as being explicitly sanctioned by the shari’a; the second mode argues that Muslims are free to adopt liberal positions on subjects that the shari’a leaves open to human ingenuity; the third mode suggests that the shari’a, while divinely inspired, is subject to multiple human interpretations. I call these modes liberal, silent, and interpreted. Examples are taken from the authors in this volume and from other liberal Islamic thinkers whose works could not be included in this volume for lack of space, but whose ideas and reputations deserve to be more widely recognized.

**** The Liberal Shari’a

The first mode holds that the shari’a is itself liberal, if interpreted properly. For instance, Ali Bulay (Turkey, born 1951), one of the leading liberal Islamists in Turkey, argues in previously untranslated articles (chapter 19) that the Medina Document—by which the Prophet Muhammad granted rights to non-Muslims living under Muslim rule—presents a model of how the shari’a solves contemporary problems in a liberal manner. Abdur Rahman I. Doi (India-Nigeria, born 1933) argues that the Qur’an is the world’s first constitution and that European Christians discovered constitutionalism only centuries later. Maurice Bucaille (France, born 1920) argues that the Qur’an prefigures methods of scientific inquiry that secular scientists took centuries longer to understand. Shafique Ali Khan (Pakistan, born 1936) and Abdelkebir Alaoui M’Daghri (Morocco, born 1942) argue that the shari’a establishes freedom of thought.[39]

The “liberal shari’a” mode of liberal Islam is undoubtedly the most influential form of liberal Islam. I propose three explanations. First, it avoids the charge of inauthenticity by grounding liberal positions solidly in orthodox Islamic sources. Second, it suggests that liberal positions are not merely human choices but divine commands (leading to the anomalous position, which Western liberalism suffers from as well, ofjustifying liberalism by reference to illiberalism, such as “God-given” rights).[40] Third, it appeals to pride of discovery: To argue that liberal Islam predates Western liberalism is a powerful rhetorical strategy among peoples who have too often internalized Western images of inferiority and backwardness.

Yet this mode of liberal Islamic discourse is most susceptible to theoretical counterattacks on orthodox theological grounds. The “liberal shari’a” must be argued on the home turf, as it were, of orthodoxy: the detailed analysis of the meaning of the Qur’an, the sifting of reliable chains of oral transmission of the traditions of the Prophet, the very sort of research for which orthodox scholars are extensively trained. Bulay and Bazargan, by contrast, are basically autodidacts venturing into textual analysis for which others are better prepared. I do not mean to judge this work but rather to point out that it is a difficult intellectual venture. By contrast, the other two modes of liberal Islam strategically shift the field of debate away from these orthodox strongholds.

**** The Silent Shari’a

The second mode of liberal Islamic argumentation holds that the shari’a is silent on certain topics. Legal scholar Muhammad Salim Al-‘Awwa (Egypt, contemporary) summarizes this approach as follows:

<quote>

If Islam does not “mention” something, this indicates one of two things: either that it is not stated anywhere in the traditional sources or that Muslims have never practiced it thoughout their history. In the first case, the non-mentioning of something implies that it is permitted. The only exception to this rule is the subject of worship.... In the second case ... [i]t is only natural that Muslims should respond to changes and developments at all times and in all circumstances.[41]

</quote>

‘Abd al-Raziq (chapter 1), the controversial Egyptian scholar, helped to pioneer this trope in the 1920s by arguing that the shari’a does not specify the form that the state should take, thus allowing the establishment of liberal democracies. As Islamic scholar Muhammad Sa’id Al-‘Ashmawi (Egypt, born 1932) notes in chapter 4: “Of some 6000 Qur’anic

verses, only 200 have a legal aspect, that is, approximately one-thirtieth of the Qur’an, including the verses which were abrogated by subsequent ones.” He and others have concluded, therefore, that the Qur’an does not dictate the adoption of any particular form of government:

<quote>

[T]he shari ‘a of God, as embodied in Qur’an and sunna, does not bind mankind in mu’amalat (worldly dealings) except by providing a few broad principles of guidance and a limited number of injunctions. The shari ‘a only rarely concerns itself with details. The confinement of the shari ‘a to broad principles and its silence in other spheres are due to divine wisdom and mercy.... The fact that the shari ‘a is silent on these points —and we should bear in mind that, as the Qur’an remarks, “God is not forgetful”—means only that the application of the general injunctions of the shari ‘a to the multifarious details of human life, and the confrontation of new problems according to the dictates of maslaha (public good) have been left to the discretion of the body of conscious Muslims.[42]

</quote>

<quote>

There is nothing in the Islamic shari ‘a that compels one to bind religion to a state-setting. The shari ‘a does not deal with any specific form of government.[43]

</quote>

<quote>

The Qur’an came to ask them [the Muslims] to cease directing queries to the Prophet, peace be upon him, that required revelation.... Leaving these matters to the people causes the people to develop and grow, and permits change.[44]

</quote>

The “silent shari’a” relies on Qur’anic exegesis to make its central point. However, its burden of proof is somewhat lower than the “liberal shari’a’s” in that it needs only to show positive injunctions for human decision-making abilities in the abstract, rather than for specific liberal practices. It thus removes entire arenas of human action from the field of Qur’anic scholarship, where orthodox training has a distinct advantage, and places them in the field of public debate.

The weakness of the “silent shari’a” mode of liberalism is its connotation—which liberals of this mode would no doubt deny—that God’s revelation is incomplete. It is vulnerable to the counterargument that God’s message encompasses all aspects of human life and that religion and politics are not separate in Islam. ‘Abd al-Raziq has been critiqued sharply from this perspective, in the 1920s and since, even by liberals of the “liberal shari’a” mode such as Rashid Rida and Muhammad Dia’ al-Din al-Rayyis (Egypt, mid-twentieth century).[45]

On occasion “silent shari’a” arguments appear to warrant the charge of hostility toward Islamic revelation, as in the case of the socialist organization called the Muslim Committee for a Progressive Nigeria, which opposed the implementation of shari’a law in the 1970s on the grounds that it offered “no positive answer for such chronic problems such as starvation, unemployment, rotten cities, high rents, failures of U.P.E. [Universal Primary Education], disease control, etc.”[46] Yet other liberal authors of this mode take care to phrase the silence of the shari’a in positive terms, speaking of God’s “wisdom and mercy,” as in the quotation from Sa’id Ramadan (Egypt, mid-twentieth century), in leaving certain matters to human deliberation.

A further weakness of the “silent shari’a” mode of liberalism is that it leaves little room to challenge illiberal elements that are not silent in the shari’a. The Qur’an speaks on a number of occasions, for example, of the propriety of slave owning, the ransoming of prisoners of war, and the maiming of criminals; if these practices are explicitly sanctioned by divine revelation, liberals of the “silent

shari’a” mode can object only that the Qur’anic message is limited in its application. Shah Wali-Allah, for example, argued that Islam, while universal and timeless, takes on the form of the particular people and age to whom it was first revealed. By implication, certain of the commands and regulations contained in the shari’a may be tailored to seventh-century Arabia and not intended to bind all peoples and times. A number of authors in this volume make a similar argument with regard to specific topics, such as the status of women. Taha (chapter 28), by contrast, makes this argument in its boldest form, arguing that large sections of the Qur’an were intended for temporary use only (what Taha calls the First Message of Islam), until the Muslim community was prepared to receive the ultimate truths of Islam (what Taha calls the Second Message), which grant far more human choice and autonomy. According to Taha, the permanent injunctions were revealed first, when the Prophet Muhammad lived in Mecca, before he took temporal power; the temporary injunctions were revealed later, when the Prophet Muhammad ruled the city of Medina, and applied to the needs of the era. Taha argues that the earlier revelation abrogates the later (in contrast to “liberal shari’a” authors such as Bulay who argue that the later experience at Medina abrogates the earlier).

This theoretical position is a difficult one. First, it makes the challenging argument that the shari’a is silent even on topics it appears to speak clearly about. Second, it gets drawn back into the home ground of orthodox scholarship, namely, textual analysis of classic sources. Third, it limits portions of revelation in a way that some scholars find heretical. Taha himself was executed by Sudanese authorities, in part on these grounds, in 1985.

**** The Interpreted Shari’a

The third mode of liberal Islamic argumentation, and the one closest to Western liberal sensibilities, holds that the shari’a is mediated by human interpretation. In this view, the shari’a is divine, but human interpretations are conflicting and fallible. This trope is the most vulnerable to accusations of relativism, but liberals such as Muhammad Asad (Leopold Weiss, Austria-Pakistan, born 1900) draw on sources within the shari’a such as the saying of the Prophet Muhammad: “The

differences of opinion among the learned within my community are [a sign of] God's grace."[47] According to another saying of the Prophet: "The Qur'an is malleable, capable of many types of interpretation. Interpret it, therefore, according to the best possible type."[48] Muhammad Bahr al-'Ulum (Iraq, born 1927), a Shi'i religious scholar and prominent supporter of the Iraqi democracy movement, cites two verses from the Qur'an in this regard: "The right to differ in ideas, positions, and methods is acknowledged so that one does not deprive others of their convictions. 'Had your Lord pleased, He would have made mankind a single nation.' (Sura 11, Verse 118) 'There was a time when men were one nation. They disagreed among themselves....' (Sura 10, Verse 19)."[49]

Other liberals argue on empirical grounds that interpretative diversity is one of the hallmarks of the Islamic tradition. Arkoun has stated categorically: "ideological deviation occurs within the framework of Islamic thought each time that an author, echoing more or less faithfully a school, a community, or a tradition, transforms Qur'anic discourse from an open into a closed cognitive system."[50] Rafik Zakaria (India, born 1920) concludes, "As we have noticed in the course of our survey, on none of the basic issues involving religion and politics, was there at any time consensus among the 'ulama' [religious scholars]."[51] Ziauddin Sardar (Pakistan-England, born 1951) argues that Islamic epistemology has long emphasized "diversity of ways of knowing" that "are equally valid in Islam."[52] Soroush (chapter 26) argues that religious interpretation, Islamic and otherwise, is always a human phenomenon and subject to multiple perspectives: "Revealed religion, of course, is divine, but not so for the science of religion, which is a thoroughly human production and construction. It is human in the sense that it is imprinted by virtually all characteristics of human beings, both noble and mean."

A third basis for the "interpreted shari'a" is normative: that disagreement in interpretation is useful for the community of Muslims. For example, Islamic scholar Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (Egypt-Qatar, born 1926) justifies diversity of opinion in practical terms:

<quote>

My worst fear for the Islamic Movement is that it opposes the free thinkers among its children and closes the door to renewal and ijtihad, confining itself to only one type of thinking that does not accept any other viewpoints.... The end result will be for the Movement to lose the creative minds among its ranks and eventually fall prey to stagnation. ...[53]

</quote>

Along parallel lines, Sa'id Binsa'id (Morocco, contemporary) has argued that proper understanding of religious truths requires dialogue; radicals who coerce their opponents into silence can only "worship God in ignorance."[54] 'Abdelfatah Mourou (Tunisia, contemporary), a leading Islamist who protested the movement's growing intolerance, wished to found a more liberal Islamic party in order to garner wider support: "When we enter the political arena, I won't say that those on my side go to heaven and those who oppose me will go to hell. Everything I suggest will be open to debate."[55] 'Abbasi Madani (Algeria, born 1931), considered one of the more liberal leaders of the Algerian Islamic movement, has spoken in favor of democracy in similarly pragmatic terms:

<quote>

Pluralism is a guarantee of cultural wealth, and diversity is needed for development. We are Muslims, but we are not Islam itself.... We do not monopolize religion. Democracy as we understand it means pluralism, choice, and freedom.[56]

</quote>

Fahmi Huwaydi (Egypt, born 1937) argues that democracy is so crucial to the development of the Islamic world that if democracy is not already sanctioned in Islam, "We ought to 'invent' it by any means possible."[57]

One of the recurrent themes in this mode of liberal Islam is that human interpretations should not be raised to the same plane as divine revelation, since human interpretations are fallible and open to debate. Yet, ironically, the "interpreted shari'a" may be vulnerable to accusations that

it reduces revelation to the level of fallible human interpretation. These liberals stand accused of the very confusion that they criticize.

For example, M’Daghri, a Moroccan cabinet minister and proponent of the “liberal shari’a,” pauses in his defense of freedom of thought in Islam to attack Fatima Mernissi (Morocco, born 1940), whose analysis of debates over women’s rights in the early days of Islam is excerpted in this volume (chapter 13). Mernissi’s work— he does not mention the author or title by name—“describes the Qur’an as being obscure and contradictory, claiming that there were two movements in strife with each other around the question of women’s rights.... The whole book is nothing more than sheer, doubtful questioning of the legitimacy of the Qur’an and the hadith [traditions of the Prophet], and a series of groundless misgivings levelled to the Prophet’s august companions.”[58] Mernissi argues on historical grounds that interpretations of revelation may be contested; her critic takes her to be contesting revelation itself, an act that is not covered by the “liberal shari’a’s” protections for freedom of thought. Mohammad Charfi (Tunisia, born 1946), a human-rights activist, has expressed concerns about such counterattacks:

You know, here in Tunisia, we are very attached to the notion of interpretation or ijtihad. ... And logically, in order to guarantee the freedom of ijtihad, you have to, in effect, suppress punishment for apostasy. Why? Because if you suggest an ijtihad that goes against establishment thinking, and if your right to express and argue for your right to express and argue for your ijtihad isn’t guaranteed, you may be accused of apostasy, of no longer following Islam.[59]

This fear of being accused of apostasy applies to all forms of liberal Islam— indeed, it hangs over all Islamic thought that is not impeccably orthodox— but is especially potent in the case of the “interpreted shari’a,” given the sensitive nature of its challenge to orthodox scholars. Whereas the “liberal shari’a” mode leaps into the fray of orthodox scholarship and the “silent shari’a” mode tries to carve out areas where orthodox scholarship does not have the final say, the “interpreted shari’a” mode denies that orthodox scholarship

ever has the final say. It takes the 1,400-year history of scholarly debate and wields it against the scholars engaging in the debate. Every theoretical advance is taken as evidence of interpretive variation; every great mind is presented as a reframer of divine revelation. Short of renouncing their own history, orthodox scholars can only respond to the “interpreted shari’a” by casting it out of the bounds of permissible debate. [60]

*** Selection of Authors and Themes

The authors in this volume were selected according to the criteria that they be:

- “liberal” in some sense of the word (in particular, those who express opposition to Islamic revivalism)

- “Islamic” in some sense of the word (those who believe that Islam has an important role in the contemporary world, as opposed to secularists)

- widely read in their own countries, if not also beyond national boundaries

- geographically representative of the entire Islamic world

- ideologically representative of the variety of liberal Islam

- temporally representative of the post-caliphate era (1920s to the present) but with special emphasis on the contemporary period

The resulting roster includes 32 authors from 19 countries: 18 from Asia, including 8 from the Middle East, 6 from South Asia, and 4 from Southeast Asia; 12 from Africa, including 8 from North Africa and 4 from sub-Saharan

Africa; and 1 each from Europe and North America. Five of the authors are Shi'i, the rest Sunni. Twelve of the selections were first written in the 1990s, 8 in the 1980s, 6 in the 1970s, 3 in the 1960s, 1 in the 1950s, 1 in the 1930s, and 2 in the 1920s (the chapters are arranged in chronological order within each section). Three have never been published; 8 have not been published in English; 9 were published in English but not in Britain or North America; 5 were published in Britain or North America by small research institutes and have not received widespread distribution. The introductions are my work, except where specified.

In order to maintain consistency among the selections, spelling and grammar have been standardized according to U.S. usage, even in selections previously published in English. The name of God has also been translated into English throughout. Transliteration follows the standard Arabic system except that: All diacriticals are omitted save 'cyn and hamza; non-Arabic words are transliterated according to common practice in the country of origin; authors' preferences for transliteration of their names are respected, where these preferences are known; and words common in English are spelled according to English usage. All dates are given in the Christian calendar, also known as the Common Era, except where specified. Quotations from the Qur'an have been translated with the assistance of Al-Qur'an: A Contemporary Translation, translated by Ahmed Ali, revised definitive edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988). The editor's annotations are set off with brackets; these annotations have been generated primarily through consultation with John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World, 4 volumes (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and E. van Donzel, Islamic Desk Reference, Compiled from the Encyclopedia ofIslam (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994). Annotation is omitted where information has not proved to be available.

The pieces have been divided into six sections according to liberal theme:

**** Against Theocracy

Liberal Muslims object to the implementation of the shari’a on several grounds. The traditional argument, pioneered by ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Raziq (chapter 1) and echoed by Khalaf-Allah (chapter 2), applies the “silent shari’a” mode: divine revelation has left the form of government for human construction. The Prophet Muhammad was the leader of the polity, as well as the leader of the faith, but did not establish principles for successor governments. As expressed at the recent founding meeting of the Ibn Khaldun Society: “Since the Qur’an emphasizes a just society rather than an ideological state, the form the state takes is not mandated.... [Muslims] should regard the Qur’an as a moral edifice rather than a code of laws. Thus, the new Muslim state will, in effect, be a secular state, with the proviso that the term ‘secular state’ should not be understood in a negative sense. Such a state can protect religion against political manipulation by state authorities....”[61]

A further objection to theocracy focuses on the corrupting influence that political power necessarily has on those who rule in the name of God. Taleqani (chapter 3), a leader of the Iranian revolution, expressed his misgivings about the emerging theocracy in Iran in the last sermon before his death in 1979, criticizing “police restrictions imposed upon the people sometimes in the name of religion, which is the most frightening of all.” Similarly, Matori Abdul Djalil (Indonesia, contemporary), former secretary-general of the United Development Party, an Islamic coalition, has stated: “Whenever man acts as the agent of God, then there will be no democracy and theocracy will corrupt. If one group of people say they get legitimacy to govern from God, then they will use God as an instrument against others. And this is fundamentally undemocratic.”[62]

Another objection argues that the demand for shari’a law distracts Muslims from pressing issues. ‘Abd al-Hamid Ibn Badis of Algeria (1889–1940), founder of the Association of Algerian Religious Scholars, argued during the controversy surrounding the abolition of the Ottoman caliphate in the 1920s that certain European powers—in particular, the British—wished to restore the caliphate for their own purposes. He warned against revivalists who offered Islamic cover for these plots: “Islamic nation today, stop being vain and deceived and enslaved by these scare-tactics, even if they do emanate from under cloaks and turbans [clerical garb]!”[63]

Fuad Zakariyya (Egypt, born 1927), a philosophy professor, put it this way in the 1980s:

<quote>

The important element of [the revivalists'] rosy dream is that the application of the shari'a will automatically evaporate all the problems from which we suffer. How? No one knows. Most seem to believe deep in their hearts that divine providence will guard us in the application of the shari'a. Afterwards, the forces of heaven will intervene to solve our problems without anyone making any effort.[64]

</quote>

A final objection suggests that those who call for the implementation of shari'alaw fundamentally misunderstand the status of shari'a. Al-'Ashmawi (chapter 4) notes that the Qur'an refers to shari'a as a path, not as a ready-made system of law, waiting to be put in practice. Aziz Al-Azmeh (Syria-England, born 1947) argues that revivalists reduce Islamic law to a handful of symbolic elements, such as bans on alcohol and usury, that are taken to represent the rule of Islam. Yet recasting these elements of faith as law transforms them into modern ideology, a shift that removes the context that provided their original justification.[65]

**** For Democracy

The second theme, democracy, is largely argued in the "liberal shari'a" mode, with special emphasis laid on the concept of shura, or consultation, which is taken to allow or require the expression of the popular will in matters of state. (Let us keep in mind that democracy need not be limited to the specific institutional forms that it has taken in the United States or elsewhere.[66]) Bazargan (chapter 7) and Sadek J. Sulaiman (Oman, born 1933; chapter 10) are this volume's primary proponents of shura -as-democracy. Bazargan's son 'Abdul 'Ali Bazargan (Iran, born 1941)—a leading member of his father's opposition group, the Liberation Movement of Iran—has also written extensively on this

topic, detailing the precedents for shura in the shari’a and arguing that “an Islamic government without shura is not different from a dictatorship.”[67] Similarly, Hassan al-Alkim (United Arab Emirates, born 1958) argues that shura does not mean merely consultation but the legislative power of representative bodies: “Islam emphasizes that the people have the right to control their president and to advise him as well as to criticize him.”[68] Ebrahim Yazdi (Iran, born 1931), Bazargan’s successor as leader of the Freedom Movement of Iran, finds an alternative justification for democracy in the Islamic assertion of faith (shahada), “There is no deity but God.” According to Yazdi, this belief demands:

<quote>

the renunciation of the sovereignty claims and lordship of any one man, or group of men, over other human beings. It is [God’s] design and command that man must be his own master and be free to govern himself. Man must not permit anyone to manipulate his will and life. Man must not tolerate despotism and dictatorship.[69]

</quote>

Muhammad bin al-‘Arbi al-‘Alawi (Morocco, 1880–1964) argued on analogous lines in 1962, “The right that the rulers have given themselves to formulate a constitution and to appropriate for themselves means to make it pass by forcing the people to vote for it are in flagrant contradiction with the principles of Islam and are contrary to the national interest.”[70]

Other authors, such as Al-‘Awwa of Egypt (quoted previously), adopt the “silent shari’a” mode in support of political pluralism. Indeed, Al-‘Awwa dismisses the “liberal shari’a” approach explicitly, arguing that shura by itself is vague and provides insufficient justification for democratic practices. In the early period of Islam, he writes, “Islam at that time had only prescribed shura (consultation) as a method for making the choice. What matters is that the umma (community) should be able to exercise its free will in choosing and appointing the ruler.... The actual procedure is left for the community to determine, and may therefore differ from time to time and

from one place to another."[71] S.M. Zafar (Pakistan, born 1930; chapter 6) adopts a similar stance, arguing that systems of government accountability must be adapted to meet the needs of different communities; parliamentary rule, he writes, is simply the most effective means of ensuring accountability in the contemporary era.

A further approach to democracy is a pragmatic version of the "silent shari'a," as exemplified by Muhammad Natsir (Indonesia, 1908–1993; chapter 5), Dimasangcay A. Pundato (Philippines, born 1947; chapter 8), and Ghannouchi (chapter 9). All cite Qur'anic precedent, but their primary argument is the need for democracy in particular national conditions. For Natsir, these conditions are the creation of the Republic of Indonesia out of the highly diverse islands of the Dutch East Indies. Natsir, a nationalist, defends the new democracy as an expression of the characteristics of the Indonesian people. Pundato sees democratic coalitions with Christians as the best way to safeguard the rights of the Muslim minority in the Philippine islands. Ghannouchi speaks to the condition of Muslims living under nonMuslim rule (including secular government by Muslims), arguing that participating in a non- Muslim democracy is better for these Muslims than suffering under a nondemocracy.

A final approach to democracy involves the "interpreted shari'a" mode. For example, Zaki Ahmad (Egypt, contemporary) identifies four traditions of pluralism within Islam: the practice of the early generations of Islam, centuries of scholarly debates over Islamic jurisprudence, prescriptions in favor of freedom within the shari'a, and pragmatic appeals for peaceful coexistence among diverse peoples.[72] On a more theoretical plane, Muhammad Asad, an Austrian convert to Islam, justifies democratic procedures through the fallibility of human interpretation, along with a reference to the "liberal shari'a" principle of shura:

<quote>

Nevertheless, it is difficult to see what alternative there could be, within a legislative body, to the principle of majority decisions? Who is to establish, from case to case, whether the majority or the minority is right? Whose

opinion shall prevail? One might, of course, suggest that the final verdict should rest with the amir [ruler]; but quite apart from the fact that the granting of such absolute power to any one person militates against the principle of amruhum shura a baynaham [whose affairs are conducted according to shura— Qur’an, Sura 42, Verse 38] so strongly insisted upon by the Law of Islam—is it not equally possible that the amir is mistaken, while the view of the majority is right? Is there any Divine guarantee attached to his views?[73]

</quote>

**** Rights of Women

Liberal Islamic positions on the rights of women—unlike those on democracy—have to contend with a number of statements in the Qur’an and the sunna that appear to run in direct contradiction. For example, verses of the Qur’an discuss male polygamy, men’s unilateral right to divorce, men’s greater rights of inheritance, and the greater weight of male legal testimony. Traditions of the Prophet discuss veiling, gender segregation, and women’s unsuitability for leadership of a Muslim community. Liberal scholars have challenged these statements in several ways. First, they reexamine the statements and find them less hostile to women’s rights than previously supposed. Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan, born 1953; chapter 12) and Amina Wadud-Muhsin (United States, born 1952; chapter 14) pursue this strategy with extended discussions of Qur’anic verses that are often interpreted to justify male domination over women. This approach attributes women’s exploitation in Islam to prerevelation and postrevelation social customs, not to the message of Islam. Interestingly, some revivalists have adopted similar arguments, most famously Hasan Turabi (Sudan, born 1932), whose widely read 1973 pamphlet on women and Islam states baldly that the seclusion of women and restriction of their rights is a result of customary misreadings of the shari’a:

<quote>

A revolution against the condition of women in the traditional Muslim societies is inevitable. The Islamists are urged by their own ideals to reform the traditional society and to close the gap between the fallen historical

reality and the desired model of ideal Islam. This is even more urgent with respect to the present state of women.[74]

</quote>

Sometimes combined with this is the separate argument that antiwomen statements refer to the conditions of seventh-century Arabia and are not necessarily applicable to other times and places. These verses are then weighed against more liberal portions of the shari’a, which, it is argued, enjoy greater authenticity. Nazira Zein-ed- Din (Lebanon, born circa 1905; chapter 11) takes up this argument, suggesting that God’s revelation permitted the continuation of pre-Islamic Arab customs such as polygamy and slavery only in order to ease the Arabs’ transition to Islam, and that the Prophet Muhammad died before he could fully eradicate these customs, as Islam intended. Another example comes from Isa Wali (Nigeria, 1929–1967), a government clerk and Islamic scholar whose 1956 articles on women in Islam “provoked a wide-ranging debate throughout northern Nigeria.”[75] Wali begins with the standard argument that the shari’a’s position on women has been historically misunderstood or ignored, to the detriment of women:

<quote>

In order to get a clear picture [of the position of women in Islam] one must start by drawing a clear distinction between custom and religion. People so often confuse the two, that in so many cases custom is even trying to gain an upper hand over the religion.

</quote>

He goes on to suggest, however, that certain parts of the shari’a are in keeping with oppressive customs, such as male polygamy. These injunctions, Wali argues, were only intended to be temporary:

<quote>

In a small community, as the Muslim Arabs were then, denuded of its manpower by incessant wars, there was bound to be a surplus of a large number of women who must be protected and supported. Unless these women were legally wedded and got economic support and social esteem, they were bound to become a disgrace and danger to society. Under such circumstances, therefore, a legalized restricted polygamy became a social necessity.... It was never meant to be a permanent feature in the society. It was never meant to be an ideal married life. It was allowed in strictly emergency cases as an expediency, rather than as a principle. And, in the absence of such causes now, in the twentieth century, there is no justification for it.[76]

</quote>

A further approach, a version of the “silent shari’a,” accepts the seemingly antiwomen statements but argues that they do not prohibit women from organizing to protect their rights. For example, feminists in the Islamic Republic of Iran have succeeded in passing legislation requiring couples to sign a prenuptial agreement granting women divorce rights equal to men. Asghar Ali Engineer (India, born 1940) has criticized Islamic leaders who cling to illiberal elements of the shari’a in the name of communal survival:

<quote>

Islam allows ijtihad (creative interpretation). However in the the Indian subcontinent taqlid (unthinking imitation) has reigned supreme and there have been very few instances of ijtihad. It is high time that Indian Muslims used the provision of ijtihad in secular India.... While it may not be possible to scrap Muslim personal law altogether, the Muslims should adopt a resilient and creative attitude towards it. They should accept certain necessary changes in it, such as abolishing triple divorce in one sitting [the male right to divorce his wife by saying “I divorce you” three times].[77]

</quote>

A final approach to discomfiting statements about women in the shari’a involves the multiplicity of interpretations to which these statements are subject. Rather than replace an incorrect interpretation with a more faithful one, this approach suggests that all interpretation is human and fallible. Shahrour (chapter 15), for example, argues that “jurisprudential ruling bears the historical stamp of the era in which it was created and the society in which it was shaped.” Mernissi (chapter 13) writes in this “interpreted shari’a” mode that the Companions of the Prophet—revered in Islamic scholarship as the source of testimony about the statements and actions of the Prophet—disagreed about basic facets of religious injunctions with regard to women. Indeed, she quotes one Companion as being hesitant to relate testimony out of fear of misspeaking:

<quote>

If I wanted to, I could recite traditions about the Prophet for two days without stopping. What keeps me from doing it is that I have seen some of the Companions of the

Messenger of God who heard exactly what I myself heard, who saw what I saw, and those men recounted hadith. Those traditions are not exactly what we heard. And I am afraid of hallucinating, as they hallucinate. [78]

</quote>

*** The Rights of Non-Muslims

The issue of interreligious relations arose in the first years of Islam in the context of Muslim conquest of non-Muslims. The shari’a granted non-Muslims, especially the “peoples of the book” (Jews and Christians), the right to continue practicing their own religions, so long as they granted allegiance and paid tribute to their Muslim rulers. Bulay (chapter 19) takes this system as a model for humane treatment of non-Muslims in the contemporary world.

Yet other authors argue—the “silent shari’a”—that Muslims are presented with circumstances somewhat different from those in which the shari’a was established. According to Syed Vahiduddin (India, born 1909), the late twentieth century is a period:

<quote>

when Muslims are tempted to take an extremely static view of religion. Their preoccupation with issues which are not of capital importance has made them uncompromising not only in inter-religious dialogue but also in inter-Islamic dialogue.... In a pluralistic and multi-religious society one cannot do better than to ponder on the Qur’anic vision of human conflicts:

To every one of you we have appointed a right way and open path. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one community but that He may try you in what befalls you. So push forward in good works; unto Allah shall you move back all together and He will let you know of that whereon you are at variance. (Sura 5, Verse 48)[79]

</quote>

The “silent shari’a” approach seems particularly conducive in countries where Muslims live under non-Muslim rule. Humayun Kabir (India, 1906–1969; chapter 16) and Pundato (chapter 8) represent liberal responses to such situations in India and the Philipines, both men standing in opposition to Islamic separatist movements. Muzaffar (chapter 17) and Rusmir Mahmutcehajic * (chapter 20) speak to a somewhat different situation: in Malaysia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, a slim Muslim majority rules but with far less power over non-Muslim communities than the Prophet and early Muslims enjoyed. Interestingly, these authors do not appeal to early Islamic precedent, preferring to construct arguments around more general Islamic themes of tolerance and diversity. Similarly, in Lebanon, Indonesia, and Egypt, where sizeable minorities are non-Muslim, Sobhi Rajab Mahmassani (Lebanon, born 1911) has argued that discrimination based on religion is impossible in an Islamic system; Abdurrahman Wahid (Indonesia, born 1940), leader of the largest religious organization in Indonesia and founder of that country’s Forum for Democracy, has stressed that “an Islamic society in Indonesia is treason against the Constitution because it will make non-

Muslims second-class citizens”; and Tariq al-Bishri (Egypt, born 1933) has urged that Christian Copts be included with Muslims as integral partners in Egyptian nationalism.[80]

Mohamed Talbi (Tunisia, born 1921; chapter 18) approaches the topic of interreligious relations in the abstract, arguing in all three modes: He cites positive injunctions towards good treatment of non-Muslims (the “liberal shari’a”)’; he argues that the general injunction of tolerance allows the construction of intercommunal dialogue, regardless of past precedent (the “silent shari’a”)’; and he challenges intolerant elements of the shari’a, specifically on the penalty for apostasy, as potentially dubious (the “interpreted shari’a”). Like Muzaffar, Pundato, and others, Talbi has translated his liberal positions into political action, joining with liberals from other faiths in ecumenical dialogue and calling for a reduction of religious tensions.

**** Freedom of Thought

This heading covers the topic of intellectual disagreement, which is at the heart of liberal Islam. Indeed, freedom of thought is logically prior to other liberal tenets, since liberals must defend freedom of thought in order to justify their expression of other positions. Generally discussed under the rubric of ijtihad (considered earlier in this introduction), freedom of thought involves the stretching of two boundaries: who may speak and what may be spoken. The question of “who may speak”—that is, who may legitimately practice ijtihad—is of crucial importance for liberals without orthodox religious educations. Shahrour (chapter 15), for example, trained in engineering, proposes that his method of analyzing the Qur’an is “scientific,” an attempt to undermine the implicitly unscientific methods of traditional scholars. It is fortunate for liberal Islamic scholars that a number of prominent revivalists also lack orthodox educational credentials and often argue themselves that such credentials are not required for the practice of ijtihad. Naturally, the holders of such credentials are likely to disagree. As for what may be spoken, this boundary is too fluid to begin to define.

The “liberal shari’a” approach to the freedom of thought argues that God has made humans to be thinkers and that the shari’a encourages Muslims to investigate and reflect. “This word ‘freedom’ is the word that God chose for the blessed ones in paradise,” wrote Aminu Kano (Nigeria, born 1920).[81] ‘Ali Shari’ati (chapter 21) is a particularly influential exponent of this position, combining these views with vehement criticism of religious scholars who would monopolize the interpretation of Islam. Al-Qaradawi (chapter 22) cites specific injunctions on the toleration of opposing views, especially views on religious obligations, and criticizes extremists who would foist their interpretation of religious obligations upon all Muslims. Along similar lines, Abdelwahab El-Affendi (Sudan, born 1955) opposes revivalist movements that deprive Muslims of the “freedom to sin,” thereby depriving them also of “the freedom to be virtuous”: “This was certainly not God’s purpose when He created man and woman and endowed each with free will.”[82] Ghulam Ahmad Parwez (India-Pakistan, born 1903) has argued that the Qur’an’s protection of individual freedom is so strong that it overrides all forms of authority: “No person has the right to compel any other person to obey his orders: ‘It is not [possible] for any human being unto whom God has given the Scripture and wisdom and prophethood that he should afterward have said unto mankind: Be slaves of me instead of God.’ (Sura 3, Verse 79)”[83]

The “silent shari’a” approach argues on pragmatic grounds that freedom of thought is useful for the intellectual advancement of the Muslim world and is therefore permissible according to general injunctions in favor of the well-being of the community of believers. Alhaji Adeleke Dirisu Ajijola (Nigeria, born 1932; chapter 25) offers one example of this form of reasoning. Another example comes from Haji Andi Mappetahang Fatwa (Indonesia, born 1939), who defended himself in a 1985 sham trial along these general lines:

<quote>

Under the blessing of freedom, people must be given protection in developing the activities of investigation and consequent contemplation. Society must be given the liberty to think and to hold opinions. Such is the society envisioned by a democracy.[84]

</quote>

Laith Kubba (Iraq-England, born 1954), director of the International Forum for Islamic Dialogue in London, offers a similar argument:

<quote>

As Muslims devise strategies for economic growth in a competitive world and redefine their priorities, their outlook will shift from the abstract concepts and values of Islam to the realities of the Muslim world. They will continue to turn to Islam as a source of personal and communal identity and moral guidance, but they will also critically assess the legacy handed down by previous generations who may have narrowed Islam in ways that had less to do with the essence of the faith than with historical accidents and parochial circumstances.[85]

</quote>

Kubba's argument also broaches the "interpreted shari'a" mode, with the suggestion that religious interpretations may be the product of particular historical conditions. According to Husain Ahmad Amin (Egypt, born 1932), Muslim jurists of the early centuries of Islam went so far as to "invent hadiths [traditions of the Prophet] that would incorporate their opinions and could cope with current developments, and then attribute them to the Prophet."[86] The "sociologization" of religious interpretation forms the heart of Arkoun's deconstructionist-linguistic approach (chapter 23) and Soroush's sociology-of-knowledge approach (chapter 26). What distinguishes these authors from nonbelievers' approaches to Islamic interpretation is their firm belief in Islam and in the need for a reinterpretation of tenets more in keeping with contemporary social conditions.

Arkoun has also written on the topic of human rights, which forms a distinct subcategory within the theme of individual freedoms. Arkoun begins by discussing the Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, prepared in 1980 by the Islamic Council for Europe in response to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that lies firmly in what we are calling the "liberal shari'a"mode. The declaration is entirely

grounded in statements from the shari’a and argues that “Islam gave humanity an ideal code of human rights 1400 years ago.” Arkoun calls this approach “mimetic overbidding; it picks up the enunciations of Western declarations and confers upon them an Islamic origin.” Arkoun prefers to ground an Islamic approach to human rights in the social and political conditions of the Islamic world—the actual practices of Muslims, rulers and ruled, that provide precedent for human rights—but is not entirely sanguine about the prospects for this project in the near term.[87]

By contrast, An-Na’im (chapter 24) is somewhat more optimistic. A human-rights activist as well as a scholar, he, too, argues in the “interpreted shari’a” mode that the historical context of the early Muslim jurists shaped their interpretation of public law. He appears to feel that present conditions allow an alternative, “enlightened” construction of the principle of reciprocity—the granting of rights to others in return for their granting of rights to you—which he sees as the basis for a nonethnocentric conception of universal human rights.

**** Progress

The final category in this book refers to authors who view modernity and change as potentially positive developments. This attitude reflects a significant departure from traditional views in Islam, which view contemporary history as decline and continuous departure from the revered early days of revelation. Progress in this view can mean only a recovery of past practices, and, indeed, much revivalist activism has adopted the rubric of “renewal,” “renaissance,” and “return to first principles.” Nonetheless, few revivalists actually desire a full-fledged return to the world of seventh-century Arabia. Imam Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran, for example, was himself an inveterate radio listener and used modern technologies such as telephones, audiocassettes, photocopying, and British shortwave radio broadcasts to promulgate his revivalist message. After the revolution, Khomeini allowed the appearance of women on radio and television, chess playing, and certain forms of music. When other religious leaders objected, he responded: “I feel it necessary to express my despair about your understanding of the divine injunctions and that of the [Shi’i] traditions.... The way you interpret the

traditions, the new civilization should be destroyed and the people should live in shackles or live forever in the desert."[88]

Liberal Muslims, like the revivalists, seek to ground their interpretation of Islam in a return to original sources. What distinguishes liberal Islam from revivalist Islam, in terms of progress, is the willingness to see change as a good thing in itself. Khomeini and other revivalists are pleased to borrow modern technologies from nonMuslims, but only as a means to the end of reviving the pure practice of Islam, as they interpret it. Liberals, by contrast, consider change itself—though not all forms of change, of course—part of proper Islamic practice.

The most influential liberal Muslim of the twentieth century, Muhammad Iqbal (India, 1877–1938; chapter 27), placed "the principle of movement" at the heart of his theology. Iqbal works in all three modes of liberal Islam: the "interpreted shari'a" (Islamic legal systems "are after all individual interpretations, and as such cannot claim any finality"); the "silent shari'a" (the Qur'an is "far from leaving no scope for human thought and legislation"); and, his primary mode, the "liberal shari'a," whereby he argues that the essence of Islam, properly understood, is evolutionary change. Similarly, Mohammad Akram Khan (Bengal, India, 1868–1968) has suggested, "What is Islam is not stationary, what is stagnant is not Islam. Islam welcomes all creative innovations. Islam never lacked nor ever will lack in providing solutions to any problem in the world, because its gate of ijtihad remains open at all times."[89]

Taha (chapter 28) also writes in the "liberal shari'a" mode, though he uses the term shari'a to refer to one part of the teaching of Islam, the "first message of Islam," as he calls it, which was intended for the people of seventh-century Arabia. Taha argues that, beyond this first message, Islam contains an evolutionary directive that urges Muslims to aspire to a higher plane of religious consciousness, in keeping with the "second message of Islam." Muslims of the late twentieth century, Taha suggests, are ready to move into this higher phase.

The “silent shari’a” approach has tended to be less heterodox. Both Nurcholish Madjid (Indonesia, born 1939; chapter 29) and Shabbir Akhtar (Pakistan-England, born 1960; chapter 32) argue that the blanket rejection of modernity and historical change has ossified Islamic thought, stifled the religion’s ability to speak to “modern” Muslims, and sacrificed the positive potentialities of modernity. Similarly, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi (Sudan, born 1935) makes “the case for social change”: Because Islam prescribes “no particular system” of government, economics, international relations, or legislation, Muslims are not bound by traditional approaches. Rather than seek shelter in traditionalism or accept Western culture and reject traditionalism entirely, al-Mahdi proposes a third path: “separating Islam from the traditionalist thesis, separating modernization from the acculturation syndrome [that is, the acceptance of Western culture], and establishing a synthesis which is both Islamic and modern.”[90]

Within the “interpreted shari’a” mode, Hassan Hanafi of Egypt has proposed the compatibility of Islam and progress through the construction of an Islamic liberation theology analogous to Christian ones:

<quote>

There is no eternal theology which fits every time and every space. Theology is always an expression of the spirit of the time. Every time gave us two spirits: The spirit of the institutional religion, which is always conservative, formal and static. It tries to keep the status quo of things. It formulates a theology for the elite and for the upper class. It monopolizes the interpretation, prevents any opposition and even oppresses the masses. The second spirit is progressive, concrete and dynamic. It tries to change the status quo of things. It formulates a theology for the masses and for the oppressed classes.

There is no one interpretation of a text, but there are many interpretations given the difference in understanding between different interpreters. An interpretation of a text is essentially pluralistic. The text is only a vehicle for human interests and even passions.... The conflict of interpretation is essentially a socio-political conflict, not a theoretical one. Theory indeed is

only an epistemological cover-up. Each interpretation expresses the socio-political commitment of the interpreter.[91]

</quote>

Similarly, Syed Vahiduddin of India has challenged:

<quote>

the tacit assumption that Islam, as it unfolded from its birth, was complete and perfect in all its expressions. Hence any supposed deviation from the earliest pattern must carry its own condemnation. But as the Qur’an’s vision of God cannot be confined exclusively to any one of its historical expressions, religion itself cannot be a static construct made once and for all without revealing fresh nuances in its historical development. This static concept of religion neglects the truth that at no point of history can all possibilities be exhausted, though a given point in history might be pregnant with implications for the future. History is a process of creative expression; not a perpetual repetition, and hence it is presumptuous to limit Islam to its classical expression.[92]

</quote>

Rahman (chapter 31) also writes in an “interpreted shari’a” mode: “To insist on absolute uniformity of interpretation is neither possible nor desirable.” Indeed, he writes, “difference of opinion, provided it is meaningful, has to be assigned a high positive value.”[93] Rahman criticizes traditional Islamic thought for clinging to the interpretations of the past rather than meeting the challenge of change. At the same time, he also criticizes revivalists for dismissing earlier interpretations in an attempt to return afresh to original sources. Rahman prefers to develop new interpretations of original sources while studying the interpretations of the past, both to learn from their insights and to understand them as products of their historical environments. Rahman is keenly aware of the difficulties involved in reforming Islamic thought and of the generations of earlier reformers who have largely failed in the attempt. He proposes to effect this reform through a focus on educational institutions, a gigantic task that requires a critical mass of reformist thinkers and reformist ideas. The size of

the present book suggests that this movement may, indeed, be reaching its critical mass—that liberal Islam need no longer be considered a contradiction in terms.

* Part I—Against Theocracy

** 1. Message Not Government, Religion Not State

‘Ali ‘Abd al-Raziq

‘Ali ‘Abd al-Raziq (Egypt, 1888–1966) unleashed a storm of debate with this controversial short book. A shari’a (Islamic law) judge and an academic at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, ‘Abd al-Raziq argued that Islam does not specify any particular form of government, thus allowing Muslims to create democratic regimes. This reasoning may have been intended to undermine the Egyptian king’s claims to the caliphate in the wake of the elimination of the Ottoman caliphate in 1924.[94] However, the argument is worded in general terms, thereby challenging the holistic view of Islam as comprising both spirituality and politics. ‘Abd al-Raziq was fired from his judgeship and his academic position and was even criticized by Islamic modernists such as Rashid Rida.[95] Beyond the borders of Egypt, his book “generated violent controversy throughout the Muslim world” and “continues to stimulate debate” today.[96] Other portions of ‘Abd al-Raziq’s book were translated into English from a French edition in 1982.[97]

*** 1

I saw then that there exist obstacles that are not easily overcome by those who are of the opinion that the Prophet, peace be upon him, in addition to the Message [which he carried], was also a political king and a founder of a political state. I saw that every time these people attempted to avoid a trap, they would fall into the next, and each time they attempted to rid themselves of a problem, the problem would confront them again more intensely than before.

There remains before the reader just one school of thought, and I hope that the reader will find that it offers a convenient starting point.... This is that Muhammad, peace be upon him, was a Messenger of a religious call, full of religiosity, untainted by a tendency to kingship or a call for government, and that he did not have a government, nor did he rule, and that he, peace be upon him, did not establish a kingdom, in the political sense of the term or anything synonymous with it. For he was but a messenger like his brethren, the preceding messengers. He was not a king nor the founder of a state, nor did he seek to rule. The above may not be a well-known view, and may in fact be resented by many Muslims, although it has great vision and is based on strong evidence.

*** 2

Before we proceed to prove this, we must warn readers about an error that they may fall into unless they observe [the following] accurately and carefully—namely that the Message in itself obliges the Messenger to have some kind of leadership and authority over his people, but this is nothing like the leadership of kings and the authority they have over their subjects. Therefore, one should not confuse the leadership of the Message with that of kings, since they are so different that they could be opposites. Readers have seen that the leadership of Moses and Jesus with regards to their followers was not a kingly leadership, rather it was similar to the leadership of most messengers.

*** 3

The nature of the honest religious call obliges its carrier to have primarily a perfection of the senses, whereby he will lack nothing in his body, sentiments, or feelings, and have nothing that would repulse. And, he must have—because he is a leader—a strong presence to awe those around him, and an attraction that would make him sympathetic enough that men and women would love him. He must also have spiritual perfection, which is necessary for his communication with the other world.

The Message requires its carrier to enjoy considerable social distinction among his people; and as it has been said: “God does not raise a prophet unless he is loved by his people, and unless he commands authority over his clan.”[98] The Message also requires its carrier to have the kind of strength which will prepare him to influence the minds of people so that they will heed his call. For God, may He be elevated, does not take the Message lightly and does not raise a messenger of righteousness unless He wants his call to be heeded, and that its teachings be engraved on the tables of the world, eternally preserved and intermixed with the realities of this world: “We have sent no apostle but that he should be obeyed by the will of God.” (Qur’an, Sura 4, Verse 64)[99] “Surely messengers have been mocked before you; but what they had mocked rebounded on the mockers themselves. Say: ‘Travel in the land and see what happened to those who disbelieved.’” (Sura 6, Verse 10) “But God wished to confirm the truth by His words, and wipe the unbelievers out to the last, so that Truth may be affirmed and falsehood negated, even though the sinners be averse.” (Sura 8, Verses 7–8) “Our word had already been given before to Our servants, the apostles, that they would be helped. And that certainly, Our armies will be victorious [over them].” (Sura 37, Verses 171–173) “We will certainly help Our messengers and those who believe, in this world and on the day the witnesses take the stand, the day when their excuses will not benefit the evil-doers, and the condemnation and evil abode will be theirs.” (Sura 40, Verses 51–52) The status of the Message grants its carrier a wider authority than that which exists between ruler and ruled, and even wider than that of a father over his children.

The Messenger may tackle the politics of his people as a king would, but the Prophet has a unique duty which he shares with no one, namely to communicate with the souls embedded in bodies, and to remove visual

obstacles in order to look in upon the hearts embedded in chests. He has the right, nay, he must open up the hearts of his followers in order to reach the sources of love and hate, of good and evil, the passages of thought, the places of obsessions, the origins of intentions, the repository of morality. His is open work in general politics and concealed work in managing the relationship between partners, allies, master and slave, parents and children, and those relationships that only husband and wife are privy to. He has patronage over that which is manifest and that which is latent in life, as well as the management of the affairs of body and soul, and our worldly and heavenly relationships. He directs the politics of worldly living and that of the next world. The Message gives its carrier—as it is seen and beyond the way it is being seen—the right to communicate with each soul, care for it and manage its affairs, as well as the right to unlimited free conduct for every heart.

*** 4

Readers should note that, in addition to the above, the Message of the Prophet, peace be upon him, specialized in a myriad of things that other messengers did not deal with. For he, peace be upon him, came with a call that God chose for him to rally the people to. And God ordained that he deliver it in its entirety, and that he preside over it in order to complete the call to religion, so that grace be established and conflict not arise, and so that all religion be to God. This Message grants its carrier the kind of extreme perfection that human nature seeks to achieve, the kind of psychological strength that is the end-limit of what God had fated for His chosen messengers, and enough of God’s support that would be compatible with this great and general call. In this vein, God has said: “Great have been the blessings of God on you.” (Sura 4, Verse 113) “For you are always before Our eyes.” (Sura 52, Verse 48). And in the hadith [tradition of the Prophet]: “By God, God will never humiliate you.”[100] “For—without boasting of it—of all of Adam’s children, I am my Lord’s favorite.”[101]

For this purpose, the authority of the Prophet, peace be upon him, was, because of his Message, a general authority; his orders to Muslims were obeyed; and his government was comprehensive. For nothing that the arm of government can reach is beyond the authority of the Prophet, peace be upon

him, and any imaginable kind of leadership or authority is included in the Prophet’s, peace be upon him, reign over the believers.

If it is reasoned that it is possible for a messenger’s authority over his people to have gradations, then I would say that Muhammad, peace be upon him, should have the right to exercise the highest possible authority of all messengers, peace be upon them, command the highest possible obedience, have the strength of the prophecy, the authority of the Message, and the influence of the honest call, which God had fated to be raised over the call to wrongdoing and to remain on earth. The authority is sent by Heaven, from God, to him whose divine revelation is delivered by Heaven’s angels. This sacred power, special to those worshipers of God whom He had raised as messengers, does not hold within it the meaning of kingship, nor does it resemble the power of kings, nor can the [authority of the] sultan of all sultans approximate it. This is the true leadership of the call to God and of the delivery of His Message, not kingly leadership. It is a message and a religion; it is a prophetic government not a government of sultans.

Once again we warn the reader not to confuse the two kinds of governments, and not to conflate the two kinds of trusteeships—the trusteeship of the Messenger, on account of his being a messenger, and the trusteeship of powerful kings. The Messenger’s trusteeship over his people is a spiritual trusteeship whose origin is faith from the heart, and the heart’s true submission followed by the submission of the body. On the other hand, the trusteeship of the ruler is a material one. It depends on subduing bodies without any connection to the heart. While the former is a trusteeship leading to God, the latter is one for managing life’s concerns and populating the earth. While the former is religion, the latter is the world. The former is divine, the latter is human. The former is a religious leadership, the latter a political one—and there is much distance between politics and religion.

*** 5

Having said this, we would like to draw readers’ attention to something else. There exist a number of words [dealing with our subject matter] that are used as synonyms, and others as antonyms. A disagreement or a difference

in point of view arises as a result of such usage. In addition, this creates a confusion in judgment. Such words are “king,” “sultan,” “ruler,” “commander,” “caliph,” “state,” “kingdom,” “government,” “caliphate,” and so on. If we were to ask if the Prophet, peace be upon him, was a king or not, we would be asking if he, peace be upon him, had attributes other than being a messenger. Would it be correct to state that he indeed founded, or began to found, a political unity or not? Kingship in our use of it here—and there is no embarrassment faced by the reader who may wish to call him caliph, sultan, commander, or whatever pleases him—means a ruler over a people who have political unity and who have civilization. As for “government,” “state,” “sultanate,” or “kingdom,” we mean that which political scientists mean by the English words “kingship,” “state,” or “government” and the like.

We do not doubt that Islam constitutes religious unity or that Muslims form a unified group; or that the Prophet called for that political unity and had in fact achieved it before his death; and that he, peace be upon him, headed this religious unity as its only prayer leader (imam), its strong manager, its master whose orders are never questioned. And that in the interest of this Islamic unity, he, peace be upon him, struggled with all his might, and with the victorious support of God, conquered. He, peace be upon him, received the support of God’s angels until he delivered his Message and completed his trusteeship. For he, peace be upon him, had the kind of authority over his people that no king before him or after him ever had. “The Prophet is closer to the faithful than they are themselves.” (Sura 33, Verse 6) “No believing men and women have any choice in a matter after God and His Messenger have decided it. Whoever disobeys God and His Messenger has clearly lost the way and gone astray.” (Sura 33, Verse 36)

And he who wants to term this religious unity a state and this authority of the Prophet, peace be upon him—which was an absolute authority—a kingship or caliphate, and the Prophet himself, peace be upon him, a king, caliph, or sultan, and so on, he is free to do so. For this is a matter of semantics which should not stop us here. What is important in what we have said is the meaning, and that we have specified to the reader with precision.

The crucial thing is to find out whether the leadership of the Prophet, peace be upon him, over his people was the leadership of the Message, or a kingly leadership. And whether the different aspects of his trusteeship that we observe at times in the biography [of the Prophet], peace be upon him, were aspects of a political state, or of a religious leadership. And whether this unity over which the Prophet, peace be upon him, presided was a unity of a state and a government or a religious unity proper, not a political one. And, finally, whether he, peace be upon him, was only a messenger or a king and a messenger.

*** 6

The Glorious Qur’an supports the view that the Prophet, peace be upon him, had nothing to do with political kingship. Qur’anic verses are in agreement that his heavenly work did not go beyond delivering the Message, which is free of all meanings of authority. “He who obeys the Messenger obeys God; and if some turn away (remember) we have not sent you as a warden over them.” (Sura 4, Verse 80) “This (Book) has been called by your people a falsehood, though it is the truth. Say: ‘I am not a warden over you. A time is fixed in every prophecy; you will come to know in time.’” (Sura 6, Verse[s] 66–67) “So follow what is revealed to you by your Lord, for homage is due to no one but God, and turn away from idolators. Had He willed it, they would not have been idolators. We have not appointed you their guardian, nor are your their pleader.” (Sura 6, Verses 106–107) “If your Lord had willed it, all the people on the earth would have come to believe, one and all.” (Sura 10, Verse 99) “Say: ‘O people, the truth has come to you from your Lord, so he who follows the right path does so for himself, and he who goes astray errs against himself, and I am not a guardian over you.’” (Sura 10, Verse 108) “We have not sent you as warden over them.” (Sura 17, Verse 54) “Have you considered he take his own lust as his god? Can you act as a trustee for him?” (Sura 25, Verse 43) “We have sent down this Book to you with the truth for all mankind. So, he who comes to guidance does so for himself, and he who goes astray does so for his own loss; on you does not lie their guardianship.” (Sura 39, Verse 41) “If they turn away (you are not responsible); we have not appointed you a warden over them. Your duty is to deliver the message.” (Sura 42, Verse 48) “We are cognisant of what they say; but it is not for you to compel them. So keep on reminding through the Qur’an whoever fears my warning.” (Sura 50, Verse 45) “Remind them: you

are surely a reminder. You are not a warden over them, other than him who turns his back and denies, in which case he will be punished by God with the severest punishment.” (Sura 88, Verses 21–24)

As the reader can see, the Qur’an clearly prohibits the Prophet, peace be upon him, from serving as a guardian of people, or their trustee, or a subduer ... or a dominator. Moreover, he did not have the right to force people to become believers. In addition, he who is not a guardian or a dominator is not a king; for the prerequisite to kingship is absolute domination and might, which constitute an authority without limits. And he who was not a trustee over his people is also not a king. For God has said: “Muhammad is not the father of any of man among you, but messenger of God, and the seal of the prophets. God has knowledge of every thing.” (Sura 33, Verse 40)

The Qur’an is clear that Muhammad, peace be upon him, had no rights over his people except that of delivering the Message; and, had he, peace be upon him, been a king, he would have had the right to govern his people. For kings have other rights beside the Message, and other sources of legitimation beside the Message, and an influence other than its influence. “Tell them: ‘I am not master of my own gain or loss but as God may please. If had the knowledge of the Unknown, I would have enjoyed abundance of the good, and no evil would have touched me. I am only a bearer of warnings and bringer of happy news for those who believe.’” (Sura 7, Verse 188) “You may perhaps omit some of what has been revealed to you, and may be disheartened because they say: ‘Why was no treasure sent down to him, or an angel to accompany him?’ Yet you have been sent to warn alone, for God takes care of every thing.” (Sura 11, Verse 12) “But you are only a bearer of warnings, and a guide for every nation.” (Sura 13, Verse 7) “Say: ‘I am only a man like you, but it has been communicated to me that your Lord is one and single God, and that whosoever hopes to meet his Lord should do what is right, and not associate any one in the worship of his Lord.’” (Sura 18, Verse 110) “Tell them: ‘O people, it is my duty to warn you clearly.’” (Sura 22, Verse 49) “Only this has been revealed to me: that I am a distinct warner.” (Sura 38, Verse 70) “Say: ‘I am a man like you, (but) it is revealed to me that your God is one God.’” (Sura 41, Verse 6)

As readers have observed, the Qur’an is clear that Muhammad, peace be upon him, was but a Messenger preceded by other Messengers, and it is also clear that he, peace be upon him, had only to deliver God’s Message to people and that he was not commissioned to do anything except deliver it. And it is not incumbent upon him [to ensure] that the people accept what he brought them, nor is it incumbent upon him to force them into believing in it. “If you turn away, remember, that the duty of Our Messenger is to give you a clear warning.” (Sura 5, Verse 92) “It is for the Prophet to convey the Message: God knows what you reveal and what you hide.” (Sura 5, Verse 99) “Have they not bethought themselves that their companion is mad? He is only a plain admonisher.” (Sura 7, Verse 184) “Are the people astonished that a man who is one of them was commanded by Us to warn them and to bring glad tidings to those who believe that they are on sound footing with their Lord?” (Sura 10, Verse 2) “Whether We allow you to see (the punishment) we have promised them, or end your life before (its execution), it is certainly for you to convey the Message; the reckoning is for Us to do.” (Sura 13, Verse 40) “Need messengers do anything except to convey the Message in clearest terms?” (Sura 16, Verse 35) “We have sent down this Book to you that you might explain to them what it is that they are differing about, and as guidance and a grace for those who believe.” (Sura 16, Verse 64) “If they still turn away, your duty is to warn them in clear terms.” (Sura 16, Verse 82) “We have sent you only to give good news and to warn.” (Sura 17, Verse 105) “So we have made this (Qur’an) easy in your tongue that you may give good news to those who take heed, and warn the people who are contentious.” (Sura 19, Verse 97) “Ta Ha.[102] We have not sent down the Qur’an to you that you should be burdened, but as an admonition for him who fears.” (Sura 20, Verses 1–3) “The duty of the Messenger is to convey the Message clearly.” (Sura 24, Verse 54) “Yet we have sent you only to give good tidings and to warn.” (Sura 25, Verse 56) “(Say:) ‘I am commanded to worship the Lord of this land He has blessed, to Whom all things belong; and I am commanded to be one of those who submit,[103] and to recite the Qur’an.’ Whoever comes to guidance does so for himself; as for him who stays astray, tell him: ‘I am only a warner.’” (Sura 27, Verses 91–92) “‘But if you deny, then many a people have denied before you. The duty of the Messenger is to convey the Message clearly.’” (Sura 29, Verse 18) “O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness and a bearer of happy tidings and an admonisher, and to call (people) to (know) God by His leave, and as a lamp resplendent.” (Sura 33, Verses 45–46) “We have sent you only as a bearer of good tidings and admonisher for all mankind; yet most people do not understand.” (Sura 34, Verse 28) “There is no madness about your

companion. He is a warner against the dreadful affliction (that awaits).” (Sura 34, Verse 46) “You are only a bearer of warnings. We have sent you with the truth, to give glad tidings, and to warn. Never has there been a community to which an admonisher was not sent.” (Sura 35, Verses 23–24) “(The messengers said:) ‘Our duty is to convey the Message clearly.’” (Sura 36, Verse 17) “Say: ‘I am only a warner, and there is no other god but God, the One, the Omnipotent.’” (Sura 38, Verse 65) “Say: ‘I am not a new Messenger to come, nor do I know what is to be done to me or you. I only follow what is revealed to me. My duty is only to warn you clearly.’” (Sura 46, Verse 9) “We have sent you as witness [of the truth] and harbinger of good news and a warner.” (Sura 48, Verse 8) “Obey God and the Prophet, and beware. If you turn away, remember, that the duty of Our Messenger is to give you a clear warning.” (Sura 5, Verse 92) “Say: ‘God alone has knowledge. My duty is only to warn you clearly.’” (Sura 67, Verse 26) “Say: ‘I call on my Lord alone and I do not associate any one with Him.’ Say: ‘Neither is your loss within my power nor bringing you to guidance.’ Say: ‘No one can save me from God, nor can I find a place of refuge apart from Him, unless I convey from God and deliver His Message.’” (Sura 72, Verses 20–23)

*** 7

If we were to go beyond God’s Book to the sunna [practice] of the Prophet, peace be upon him, we would find the matter even clearer, and the argument more insistent:

One of the Prophet’s biographers[104] narrates the story of a man who came upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, to take care of a matter. As he stood before him, an intense shiver and fear overtook him. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “Be calm, for I am no king nor a subduer, for I am the son of a woman of Quraysh who used to eat dried meat in Mecca.” And it has been said in the hadith that when the Prophet was given the choice by the angel Israfil of being a king-prophet or a worshipping prophet, the Prophet, peace be upon him, looked up to [the angel] Gabriel, peace be upon him, as his consultant. Gabriel looked down to the ground, indicating humility. And as the story goes, Gabriel indicated for him to be humble. So the Prophet said: “A worshipping prophet.” As is evident, this makes it very

clear that the Prophet, peace be upon him, was not a king, and did not seek kingship, nor did he, peace be upon him, desire it.

Look between the two covers of the Qur’an for open or latent evidence supporting those who think that the Islamic religion has a political character, and then look for evidence, as hard as you can, among the hadiths of the Prophet, peace be upon him—these pure sources of religion which are within your hands, close to you. If you were to look in them for evidence or anything resembling it, you will find no proof, only guesses, and guessing does not replace Truth.

*** 8

Islam is a religious call to God and is a school of thought, from among many such schools, which seeks to reform a certain type of people, guiding them to what will render them closer to God, may He be elevated, and opening up the path to everlasting happiness, which God had prepared for His righteous worshipers. [Islam] is a religious unity that God sought as a bond linking all people, and with which he wanted to surround all the regions of the earth.

It is a pure sacred call to the people of this world, the red [Arabs] and the black [Africans] among them, that they be beholden to one God, that they be one nation worshipping one God, and that they be brothers in their worship of Him. It is a call to the highest example of worldly peace. That it be adopted with the perfection befitting it [the world]. It is a call to the happiness that God prepared for the world; for this is the mercy of Heaven and Earth and God’s bounty for this world. Calling on the world to be a fraternity in religion is a reasonable call. There is in the nature of human beings a readiness to achieve it.

Indeed God, may He be elevated, has pledged that this call be heeded. “Think not that God would go back on His promise.” (Sura 14, Verse 47) “God has promised to make those of you who believe and do right, leaders in the land, as He made those before them, and will establish their faith which He has chosen for them, and change their fear into security. They will worship

Me and not associate any one with Me. But those who disbelieve after this will be reprobates.” (Sura 24, Verse 55) “It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true faith, so that He may exalt it over every other creed. God is sufficient as a witness.” (Sura 48, Verse 28) “Who is more unjust than he who invents a lie against God when he is called to submit? God does not show the evil-doers the way. They want to extinguish the light of God by uttering blasphemies. But God wills to perfect His light, however the disbelievers may dislike it. It is He who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the true way to raise it above all faiths, however the idolators may dislike it.” (Sura 61, Verses 7–9)

It is reasonable to say that the world could adopt one religion and that all human beings could be organized into one religious union. However, for the entire world to adopt one government and to be grouped in a shared political union would be foreign to human nature and have nothing to do with God’s will. For this is a worldly aim, and God, may He be elevated, has rendered it a matter to be resolved by our minds, and has left people free to manage it in the manner that their minds, knowledge, interests, desires, and tendencies would guide them. God’s wisdom in this aims at maintaining differences among people. “But if your Lord had pleased, He could have made all human beings into one community (umma). But they would still have differed from one another, except those on whom your Lord had mercy.” (Sura 11, Verses 118–119) In addition, in order that competition continue among people so that [the] population [of the earth] would be achieved. “If God did not make people deter one another, this earth would indeed be depraved. But gracious is God to the people of the world.” (Sura 2, Verse 251) And, so that the Book’s purpose be achieved and God’s will be done.

This is one of the worldly concerns on which the Prophet, peace be upon him, had denied himself the right to pass judgment or arbitration. For he, peace be upon him, stated that “you are more knowledgeable of your worldly concerns.” This is a worldly concern; and the world from beginning to end, and all that it encompasses of concerns and goals, is too trivial for God to have it managed by anything beside the minds He endowed us with, and what He had placed within us of sentiments and desires, and what He had taught us of names and of what things are called; all this is too trivial for God to raise a Messenger to deal with, and it is too trivial for God’s Messengers to be concerned with and occupy themselves in managing it.

*** 9

The reader should not be alarmed by what he may occasionally observe in the biography of the Prophet, peace be upon him, which may seem to him like government work, as if it had the appearance of kingship and statehood. If the reader were to scrutinize it, he would not find it so. Rather, it was only a means that the Prophet, peace be upon him, would seek for the strengthening of his religion, in support of the call. And it is not strange thatjihad [religious struggle] is one such means. It is a violent and tough way, but who knows, evil may be necessary at times for good to be achieved. Perhaps, destruction becomes imperative in order that construction take place.

<quote>

They have said that it [jihad] is not free of problems, and we said that this is God’s way in His creation. For the struggle between good and evil and between good thinking and evil thinking will persist in this world until God puts a stop to it. If God were to bring forth the springtime upon an arid land in order to revive what is dead in it, to benefit from its harvest and to grow its plants, would its worth be diminished if it came upon an obstacle in its way and overstepped it, or if it came upon a house with strong foundations and destroyed it?[105]

</quote>

<quote>

They said: Have you conquered! and God’s messengers were sent not to kill a soul, nor did they come to murder anyone.

Ignorance and leading astray, dreams and inanities, for you have conquered with the sword what you had first conquered with the pen.

When those of good ilk followed you on their own, [it was left to] the sword to take care of common and ignorant people.

If you confront evil with good, you will tire of the confrontation,

But if you confront it with evil, you shall vanquish it.

For you have taught them all that they did not know

Including fighting and what it encompasses of morality.[106]

</quote>

*** 10

From this, the reader can see that it is not only the Qur’an which prohibits us from thinking that the Prophet, peace be upon him, was calling upon us, along with his religious Message, to found a political state. Nor is it only the sunna which also prohibits us from doing so. Rather, along with the Book and the sunna comes the wisdom of reason and what the meaning of the Message and its nature reveal. For the trusteeship of Muhammad, peace be upon him, over the believers is the trusteeship of the Message, untainted by anything that has to do with government.

Away with it, for there was no government, no state, and nothing of the tendencies to politics, nor of the aims of kings and commanders.

Perhaps, the reader has by now been guided to what he had questioned about the lack of any aspect of government or the aims of a state during the prophetic epoch. The reader now knows that there was no governmental organization, nor were there trustees or judges, a seat of government, and so on. Hopefully, the darkness of this dilemma which the reader faced has by

now been transformed into light, and fire has been transformed into coolness and peace of mind.

** 2. Legislative Authority

Muhammad Khalaf-Allah

Muhammad Khalaf-Allah (Egypt, 1916–1997) first gained notoriety in the early 1950s for his literary analysis of the Qur’an. The purpose of the Qur’an, he argued, was not to record historical facts but to exhort listeners to Islam. A number of Qur’anic scholars took offense at the implication that the Qur’an was not factually complete, and Khalaf-Allah was subjected to scathing criticism in the Egyptian press.[107] His work in the 1970s continued to upset traditionalists and revivalists. In The Qur’an and the State, excerpted here, Khalaf- Allah goes beyond ‘Abd al-Raziq’s argument that Islam is compatible with democracy; instead, writes Khalaf-Allah, it lays out the basic tenets of democracy and requires Muslims to work out the implementation. In short, divine revelation does not simply allow democracy; it requires democracy. “This is a new and novel idea, which cannot be found outside of Khalaf-Allah’s thought,” according to one commentator.[108] Chapter 3, “Legislative Authority,” excerpted here, discusses the revelation of the shura (consultation) system of governance and its importance for secular, parliamentary authority. Khalaf-Allah is not an easy author to follow, in Arabic or English, as he tries to build his argument on sound Qur’anic reasoning. His conclusions, however, are straightforward and bold.

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<quote>

And seek their counsel in all affairs. And when you have come to a decision, place your trust in God alone.

<right>

(Qur’an, Sura 3, Verse 159)[109]

</quote>

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When this verse was revealed by God, Muhammad, son of ‘Abdullah, peace be upon him, knew that the shura [consultation] system had become obligatory.

From that day on, he would have to perform the duties for which God had chosen him to be a messenger and prophet. He had to explain to the people the signs that were revealed to them. In such a situation, the Messenger’s explanation was not simply abstract, in the sense that he cannot limit himself to reciting the verse to the people and writing it on a patch of cloth—rather, he must explain its relevance to them in practice.

In this situation, a practical explanation means transforming the idea from an intellectual value into a social reality that people can use as a resource in their everyday life…. What we are referring to—the organic relationship between idea and action—is that to which the bounteous Qur’an had referred in numerous verses when it linked faith and action. Faith according to the bounteous Qur’an is not righteous unless it derives from the spiritual value of acting for the purpose of the general interest, and achieving the good for all. When action does not derive from faith in the principle and doctrine [of religion], it inevitably becomes a harmful act—harmful to he who takes it and harmful to the collectivity.

The Qur’anic verses which juxtapose faith to action are so numerous that we are relieved from citing many of them in this regard. All Muslims have heard them from [Qur’an] reciters, or have recited them from the Qur’an if they are reciters, or during prayers if they are worshippers.

The Qur’anic verse which obliges the Prophet, peace be upon him, to seek shura was not the first of its kind; it had been preceded by another revealed verse speaking of shura. Whereas our verse is a Medinan verse, the other verse is Meccan.[110] The Meccan verse is the one in which the bounteous Qur’an praises the believers for having Muhammad, peace be upon him, among them, when it states: “And they run their affairs by shura among themselves.” The difference between the two verses is based on the fact that one of them [the Medinan verse] is obligatory, while the other is not—it limits itself to congratulation.

Explaining this Qur’anic phenomenon is not very difficult. The explanation derives from our perception of the historical situation of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and of Muslims in Mecca and Medina. In Mecca, Muslims were a small minority. They were oppressed, and the call [to Islam] was to a certain extent clandestine. And they were unable—this was their situation—to establish institutions with legislative authorities beside the authority of God, may He be praised and elevated.

Things changed in Medina, where Muslims were the rulers, whom people turned to as the new power, which undertook to rebuild life anew on new foundations— foundations established by the entirety of [God’s] revelation. The Prophet and his Companions elaborate the details and make legislation which God delegated to the Prophet and to Muslims. The situation in Medina was such that it allowed the establishment of legislative institutions; and the Qur’an came to demand of the Prophet that he be committed to the establishment of those institutions, now that circumstances allowed them during the Medinan period. The Prophet established the legislative institution in response to this Qur’anic verse.

*** 2

The Prophet, peace be upon him, established the legislative institution relying on the previous verse and another Medinan verse: “And when any tidings of peace or war come to them, they spread the news around. Had they gone to the Messenger or to those in authority among them, then those who check and scrutinize would have resolved it.” (Sura 4, Verse 83) Whereas the first verse obliges the Prophet to establish this institution, this verse specifies this institution’s fields of action, while simultaneously specifying which form such action is to take. The fields of action are the fields of security, fear, and the like. And the form which such action takes is one whereby Muslims would refer matters that concern them to the Messenger and to those in authority among them, in order that they work through them in their minds and conclude with the opinion that will realize the general interest.

And all this happened at the same time that the Qur’an was still being revealed. What this means is that during the life of the Prophet, peace be upon him, there existed two legislative authorities: God’s authority, may He be praised and elevated, and the authority of the Prophet and those in authority among the Muslims. And the field of divine authority is these ideas which provide an image of the divine self and which clarify religious beliefs, and from which derive religious permission and prohibition.

As for human authority, the authority which belongs to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and to those in authority, it is concerned with worldly matters—especially that which deals with security, wars, political, economic, and administrative matters, etc.

Professor Imam Shaykh Muhammad ‘Abduh [Egyptian modernist, 1849–1905] settled this matter when he stated: “And he counseled them in the general matter which is the policy of the community in war and peace, in fear and security, and in other concerns of their worldly interests.”

What is meant by this is the community’s worldly concerns, not a purely religious concern whose realm is that of revelation, which is not of opinion. For if religious matters, like doctrines, worship, what is permitted and what is prohibited, were concerns decided by consultation, then religion itself would have been the work of human beings. Religion is established by God. No one may have an opinion on it, either during the lifetime of the Prophet, peace be upon him, or afterwards....

[We end up with] this statement about God’s delegation of worldly concerns to Muslims and their decisions about what they see as benefiting the general interest—this helps us to understand the following Qur’anic verse:

<quote>

O, believers, do not ask about things which, if made known to you, may vex you. But if you ask about them when the Qur’an is being revealed, they will be unfolded to you. God has overlooked [your failings] in this [respect], for God is forgiving and forbearing. Such things were asked by a people before you, but disbelieved them afterwards. (Sura 5, Verses 101–102)

</quote>

This verse speaks of events that occurred during the Prophet’s lifetime, peace be upon him, when the first Muslims would go to him with questions about unresolved matters, asking him to explain the opinion of religion in these matters. The Prophet would turn to the Lord hoping that He would send down from Heaven a verse that would respond to their queries and answer their requests. The Qur’an came to ask them to cease directing queries to the Prophet, peace be upon him, that required revelation. It requested this from them, explaining the reasons which necessitate it. These reasons are as follows:

1. There is a possibility that an answer to their question may harm them in terms of commissioning them to carry out a strenuous task, or to abandon tasks to which they were accustomed and which their souls enjoyed.

2. When they ask questions at the time when the bounteous Qur’an is being revealed, then it becomes imperative that there be a response and that opinion be given in the matter.

3. For those who came before them, asking many questions and waiting for revelation to answer them—whether to take action or not—was not at all in their interest. Because of this, they became disbelievers.

4. Those matters that change with the change of place and time should be left to the people to decide what they consider to be in their interest in the time during which they live, the place where they reside, and in the community to which they belong.

Leaving these matters to the people causes the people to develop and grow, and permits change. As for turning to Heaven and awaiting revelation that provides a point of view in a certain matter, this would render the decision constant and stagnant, incapable of growing or changing, no matter how much times change and places multiply.

The bounteous Qur’an requests that they cease [posing] these questions so that they would not be like their predecessors and follow their path of disbelief when interests change along with the change in time and place. The stance of the bounteous Qur’an emphasizes that this agrees with historical patterns and social laws.

What we have just arrived at allows us the following conclusion: we must stop directing questions to religious scholars—those questions whose aim is to find out the opinion of these religious scholars in matters of worldly living. Religious scholars can perform the duties of prophets, peace be upon them, in explanation and in analysis of Qur’anic texts—especially that which deals with beliefs, worship, and [social] interactions. But the religious scholars cannot do what the prophets, peace be upon them, could not do.

The bounteous Qur’an obliged the Prophet to seek the counsel of his Companions, to decide with them how to achieve the general interest, and to execute that decision without awaiting revelation. In this vein, God’s statement, “And when you have come to a decision, place your trust in God alone,” means: execute this decision without waiting for divine opinion.

The establishment of legislative authority is what guarantees the achievement of legislative goals, according to the Qur’anic verse: “And seek their counsel in all affairs.” The establishment of such an authority is what makes possible various ways of responding to these numerous questions which people pose as they seek to know the basis or the principle on whose foundations we must conduct our worldly living. Our attitude toward religious scholars should be our attitude toward the Prophet, peace be upon him: that which deals with [Qur’anic] texts, we requested of him that he clarify and explain; for that which did not deal with Qur’anic texts, we turn to the legislative authority, we turn to those who are specialized [in secular governance], those who respond to people’s concerns—we turn to those in authority.

*** 3

The Prophet, peace be upon him, established this legislative authority, which oversaw and decided matters with him. There existed no specific place for this institution; rather, its members used to meet with the Prophet, peace be upon him, at any place that they saw fit, or wherever circumstances required them to look into matters. We believe that the mosque or the home of the Prophet, peace be upon him, was the preferred place for such a meeting.

The number of Muslims was so small at that time that it facilitated their meeting at such places for counsel. The Prophet, peace be upon him, used to follow this principle [of shura]—which is one of the principles of Islam—during his life as circumstances allowed, and as the particular situation permitted. He used to consult those Muslims who were with him, and he would consult some of his personal friends, if the disclosure or publicity of the matter would have been harmful. He consulted the great majority of his Companions and the Emigrants [those who emigrated with

the Prophet from Mecca to Medina] on the day of the battle of Badr, when he found out that the [tribe of] Quraysh had left Mecca for the purpose of war. It did not take long for the Emigrants and the Ansar [residents of Medina who adopted Islam] to give their approval. It has been said that once he received the news of the caravan and of the Quraysh, God's Messenger, may God's prayers and benediction be upon him, consulted with his Companions, with the Ansar being the first among them. God's Messenger said: "Show me the way, O people." Sa'd ibn Mu'adh [al-Nu'man] al-Aws [Companion of the Prophet, died 627] arose, saying, "By God, it would seem that you want us, O Messenger of God." [The Prophet] said, "Yes." Sa'd said:

<quote>

I am responding on behalf of the Ansar. For we have had faith in you and we believed you and we witnessed the righteousness that you brought. And as a result of that, we gave you our pledges and our covenants to hear and obey you. So, depart where you wish, for we are with you, for He who sent you has sent you with righteousness, and if you were to show us this sea and then you crossed it, we would cross it with you, with no one of us staying behind....

</quote>

When the Prophet, may God's peace and benediction be upon him, consulted with his friends, he would accede to their opinion and would not hold fast to his own opinion. Of the narratives that deal with this is an incident which the narrators have told us of: The Companions of the Prophet, God's approval be upon them, would not offer their opinions contradicting what the Prophet had said on worldly matters except after knowing that what he had said was an opinion and not derived from revelation—as they did on the day of [the battle of] Badr. The Prophet came to the source of water closest to Badr and camped by it. Al-Habbab bin Mundhir bin al-Jammuh said, "O, Messenger of God, have you seen this location? If this location was chosen for you by God, it is not our place to object to it, or it an opinion about war and a stratagem?" [The Prophet], peace be upon him, said: "It is rather an opinion about war and a stratagem." Al-Habbab said: "O, Messenger of God, this is not a good location, so rise up with the people until we come upon a source of water that is closer to the people, to camp there and then penetrate [the desert] far beyond it." [The Prophet], may God's peace and benediction be upon

him, said to him: “Your opinion has shown the way.” And he [the Prophet] followed his opinion.

The Prophet asked his Companions for counsel the day of [the battle of] Uhud. He would consult with them on every matter except that which was revealed to him, which he would execute without counsel, and Muslims would help him execute as well.

All this took place when Muslims were a small minority with the Prophet in Medina. When Muslims increased in number and Islam’s rule expanded through conquest to areas far from Medina—when there were men of status and opinion among the Muslims in every tribe and every village—there had to be a system of counsel that would guarantee, for those who are far from the centers of power and from the seat of the caliphate, participation in legislative decisions that dealt with issues of worldly living.

But the Prophet, peace be upon him, wisely chose not to establish this system. We will mention the [following] reasons:

1. The matter [of shura] changes with the changes in the social situation of the people in time and place. The period in which [the Prophet], peace be upon him, lived after the conquest of Mecca—which saw the beginning of the acceptance of God’s religion by multitudes of people—was too short to allow for the establishment of such a system. [The Prophet], peace be upon him, died after a few years of the conquest of Mecca. This is in addition to [the Prophet’s], peace be upon him, realization that this situation will only increase in magnitude as God opens up realms to his people and subdues people before them.

All of this was an obstacle to the establishment of a basis for counsel that would work for the umma [Muslim community] in the year of the conquest and afterwards, during the remaining period of the Prophet s life and the following period when realms were being opened and civilized people were accepting Islam or coming under the sovereignty of Islam.

The rules that applied at that time could not be good for all times, or [else the rules] that applied to the situation of the Arabs in their simplicity would apply thereafter to all peoples. It was wiser, then, for the Prophet, peace be upon him, to leave the establishment of such a system to the umma, so that they might establish in every age a system that is suitable for that age and that serves their interests in different circumstances.

2. Had the Prophet, may God’s peace and benediction be upon him, established temporary rules for counsel, according to the needs of that time, Muslims would have adopted them as a religious ordinance and would have followed them in every time and places, although this is not a religious matter....

Some would go so far as to say that [the Prophet], peace be upon him, could have established such a system and then stipulated that the umma would have the right to change and alter this system so that it would be compatible with the temporal or cultural development of the Muslim people. The answer to such a claim is that people would have continued to consider the words of [the Prophet], peace be upon him, on a matter of worldly living as a religious injunction. They would have continued thus, although they knew that he, peace be upon him, said, “You are more knowledgeable of your concerns,” and, “That which deals with your religion, [refer it] to me, and that which deals with your worldly concerns, you are more knowledgeable of that.”

If a just person were to contemplate this matter, and if such a person knew the true feelings, on this matter, of the different classes of believers, the public and private ones, it would be plainly clear to him that it would be difficult for most people to accept changing something that the Prophet, peace be upon him, had established for the umma—although they may be permitted to do so. They would go very far in their various interpretations of his position. They would say, for example, that he was committed to the people’s right to change and alter [the system] as a sign of his modesty and good manners, and that [in doing so], he was explaining to

us this truth in order that we not renege on our opinions, but that, at any rate, his opinion would be the higher one.

3. Had he [the Prophet] established this system on his own account, he would not have been practicing counsel, which God had ordered him to do. It would be impossible for him, peace be upon him, to do this, since he would never disobey any order issued by God, may He be praised and elevated.

And had he established it in counsel with his contemporaries, the Companions and Emigrants, he would have decided the matter according to the opinion of the majority, as on the day of [the battle of] Uhud. The opinion of the majority on the day of Uhud was different from his, and he acceded to the opinion of the majority, which later appeared to be wrong. In addition, he, peace be upon him, did not want legislation to be issued by them, which the umma would have been beholden to for all time, and which would have provided the base and foundation for the establishment of Islamic government. It was wiser to leave the establishment of such a system to the umma so that they may establish in every age [a system] that their preparation and their scientific and cultural achievement qualifies them to establish.

The conclusion of this section is that the establishment of such a system [of shura] was one of those matters that God had delegated to Muslims to establish. He did so purposely, not out of forgetfulness or inattention, for He does not err or forget. Muslims have an interest in establishing such a system. It is up to them to establish it on a basis that is good for the time period in which they live and for the nation to which they belong.

We will state this one more time: God has delegated to Muslims the treatment of such a system on the basis of matters that are connected to worldly interests. Such matters for Him are matters of security and fear. We conclude with this statement from the interpretation of al-Manar [The Lighthouse, modernist Islamic newspaper, early twentieth century]:

The matter in which there is no doubt is that God has guided us to the best and most perfect of foundations and rules on which to build our government and to establish our state. And he gave us the task of building, thus granting us absolute freedom and full independence in our worldly concerns and social interests. He has done so by making our concerns a matter of counsel among us. Those knowledgeable ones of status, whom we trust, look into these concerns and decide on our behalf in every period that which serves our interests and bestows happiness on our people.

*** 4

Here is a third verse [from the Qur'an] that charts out the path that believers must follow in dealing with matters related to security and fear, that involve issues of their worldly living. In this third verse another issue arises, which is knowledge of the attributes that fit those who are beside the Prophet, peace be upon him, when such matters are discussed—holding a dialogue with him on the matter and participating in decision-making with him.

It is clear that those who are beside him are the people of whom the legislative body consists, during his time and after. This Qur'anic verse is God's statement: "And when any tidings of peace or war come to them, they spread the news around. Had they gone to the Messenger or to those in authority among them, then those who check and scrutinize would have resolved it." (Sura 4, Verse 83)

The people whom the Qur'an calls "those in authority" are those who are beside the Prophet, peace be upon him. The legislative body which they comprise has the right to look into matters and to deduce the legal ruling in the case—deducing it from the texts or from scholarly works on the basis of the goal of the general good and the general interest.

Thinkers disagree as to who "those in authority" are. One group states that they are the rulers, princes, kings, sultans, allies, and so on. Others deny that

this is what is meant by the verse and state that what is meant are specialists who have knowledge, knowhow, and experience enough to qualify them to oversee people's concerns. And, that they must be trusted by all people.

Their rejection of the logic of the first group in specifying the meaning of "those in authority" is based on a simple yet strong intellectual foundation. They state those addressed in this verse are the community of believers who were the contemporaries of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and that this address is directing them to refer all matters of security and fear to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and to "those in authority." It is also true that "those in authority" themselves are contemporaries of the Prophet, peace be upon him, and that there was no prince or ruler or king or caliph or the like beside the Prophet. Only the Emigrants, the Ansar, and the Companions stood beside the Prophet. Among them were the people with know-how and status whom the Prophet consulted. It is they whom the Qur'an addressed as "those in authority."

On this basis, it is impossible to interpret "those in authority" to mean ruler, princes, and the like. These [thinkers] go further in explaining to us the reasons for which the first group offered such an opinion—that the people with that opinion are actually those who have authority themselves. Those who have authority wanted the scholars of interpretation and religion to interpret "those in authority" to mean princes, rulers, and the like. In doing so, they were aiming to control the masses. For when the masses are told that obeying rulers, princes, sultans, and caliphs is a religious matter, they submit to them with voluntary, not coerced obedience.

Reaching this interpretation of this phenomenon, and uncovering its motives and goals contains within it the accusation by the [second group of] interpreters, that [the first group] did not explain what is right but what the rulers desire.

We would do better to follow the second group and explain their school of thought in specifying the meaning of "those in authority." Professor Imam Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh states "that 'those in authority' in our time are

these: the great scholars, the commanders of soldiers, judges, big agriculturalists and merchants, the owners of public interests, heads of cooperatives and companies, heads of [political] parties, and the geniuses among the writers, physicians, and lawyers. Those whom the umma trusts and to whom they refer their problems, no matter where they are." The people of every country know who among them is trustworthy and whose opinion is the most respected. It is easy for the head of government in every country to recognize them and to call upon them for counsel, if he so wished.

As ['Abduh] states: those countries whose authority derives from the basis of counsel have delegated to the people the right to elect those whom they trust to make the laws and oversee the government's execution of them, and to elect those whom we trust to the courts and to administrative councils, etc.

Such elections will not be considered legitimate by us unless the people have absolute choice in the elections, without governmental or other kinds of pressure, without coaxing or coercion. The purpose of this is that the people [should] know their rights to such elections and their aims. If others were to be elected due to the use of governmental authority or that of some other party, such elections would be illegitimate, and those elected would not have the authority of "those in authority." From this it follows that obeying them would not be a duty legitimated by the [above] verse; rather, the matter would enter the realm of the authority of those who defeat others. This situation is illustrated by the similarity between someone who is forced to elect a man to be a representative of the umma for a so-called legislative authority, if he is coerced, and someone who marries or buys [something] through coercion—neither his wife nor his purchase will be permitted to him by God.

The above statements by the Imam ['Abduh] lead us to the conclusion that there are two rules: the rule of selecting "those in authority," and the electoral rule that is applied in those countries that build their authority on the basis of counsel. The Professor Imam's ['Abduh's] mention of the second rule indicates that general elections had not yet been mandated during his lifetime, and that governing was not parliamentary.

Today, we practice our electoral life based on the second rule. We have a parliament, and in it there are a variety of specialized committees overseeing matters from a technical perspective, which they then refer to parliament for a decision. Some people say that this suffices, and that parliament is shura, consisting of members who are “those in authority.”

It is not exactly so. For “those in authority” are a special type of people. They are experienced in life and have dealt practically with technical and vocational matters, and in doing so, have acquired the know-how which made them trustworthy to the people and capable of handling their concerns. Here we suggest a practical procedure which helps to combine the two rules: the rule of selecting “those in authority” and the rule of general elections, in order that the matter of forming a legislative authority be resolved on a good foundation, in accordance with the first meaning of “those in authority.” This suggestion can be summarized as follows:

First, the size of the legislative council should be double the number of electoral districts. There is no objection to reducing the current number of electoral districts, so that the public treasury will not be charged large sums of money.

Second, people will elect one member for each district. This member will serve as the representative of the people. The duty of the people’s representative is to convey to the council the desires of the people for reform and the problems of their daily living which inhibit their labor and production.

Third, those who represent the vocational and technical institutions in parliament should be selected on the basis that they will serve as “those in authority.” They should look into problems that the people’s representatives bring to them, study the solutions, and then make decisions whose execution is obligatory. These decisions must be made with the approval of all members, both those elected by the people and those selected by the vocational and technical institutions.

In this way we combine the old and the new in the counsel system. We take from the old the group of “those in authority,” the people with influence, those who participate in the shura, and from the new we take the constitutional systems forming parliaments or legislative bodies. This is the only way to establish our modern state on the basis of our traditions and in the spirit of our religion. In doing so, we achieve the general good of all citizens, and we render the rights of the people and those of religion compatible.

Obeying these people is mandated by the Qur’anic text: “Obey God and obey the Messenger and those of you in authority.” (Sura 4, verse 58)

The Professor Imam [‘Abduh] states on the issue of “those in authority” and their authority, which the bounteous Qur’an has bestowed upon them, that if they were to agree on a matter or on a judgment, they must be obeyed, provided that they be from among us; that they not contradict God’s ordinances or the sunna [practice] of His Messenger which was handed down to us; that they be selected to look into matters ... and that they be in agreement over general interests—the only things over which “those in authority” have any authority. As for worship and religious matters, this does not involve those with influence—for that is taken solely from God and His Messenger. No one should have an opinion on these matters, except to understand them.

The people must accept these judgments and submit to them in secret and in public. In this, the people will not be submitting or humbling themselves to any human being, nor lie outside the circle of the unity of God, whose slogan is: “For the lawgiver is God, and judgment belongs to God, who has ordained that you will not worship anyone but Him.”

The people will follow God’s ordinances, the judgment of His Messenger, may God’s peace and benediction be upon him, or their own orders, which were deduced on their behalf by the community of “those in authority” and those with influence, know-how, and experience from amongst them, in whom they

have placed their trust, feeling secure in their loyalty and agreement as to what is best for them.

*** 5

The orthodox caliphs [the first four caliphs who followed the Prophet Muhammad] and their just judges knew the heads of the community as well as those with knowledge, sound opinion, and religion. They knew that these were “those in authority” and called upon them when the need arose. The umma oversaw their prince, so that if he made a mistake, even the weakest of men or women would reproach him for it.

None of the orthodox caliphs had any sense of chauvinism that would have allowed them to be despotic toward the Muslims if so desired.... The orthodox caliphs were loyal to [the principles of] “those in authority” participating in governance and abiding by their opinion on things about which there was no [Qur’anic] text, because of the strength of their religiosity and their justice, and because this was ordained [by God]. Even if [the caliph] desired, he could not adopt—though Islam was at the zenith of its power—a sense of chauvinism that he would use to rule arbitrarily without “those in authority.”

The Umayyads [caliphs, 661–750] shook the structure of Islamic authority away from the basis of shura by developing a chauvinism in Syria, through which, by trickery and violence, they destroyed the authority of “those in authority” over the rest of the Muslims and kept all authority to themselves. Thus the prince answered to the authority of his group, not to the authority of “those in authority” among the Muslims. Little by little, they strayed from the guidance of religion.

Then came the ‘Abbasids [caliphs, 750–1258] with Persian and Turkish chauvinism. Then came power plays among the kings of the different sects with their own chauvinism. Islamic government was no longer based on obedience to God, His Messenger, and “those in authority.” Rather, it removed “those in authority” from public authority.

As for obeying God and His Messenger by being just and returning trust deposits to their owners, this varied according to the degree of difference in knowledge and religion among the princes. The judgments of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Aziz [caliph, 682–720] were comparable to the orthodox caliphs in justice—but he was unable to return the greatest trust deposit to its rightful owners, because his chauvinism had monopolized the love of authority and leadership.

Then followed the authority of the Ottoman kings [reigned 1281–1924] with their nationalist chauvinism, and the well-known strength of their Janissary army. These [soldiers] were not selected from “those in authority,” nor from those knowledgeable in Islamic jurisprudence, nor those of sound opinion, who would normally have been the people with influence among Muslims. They were mixtures of Muslims and unbelievers whom the sultans took and raised in military style. They then became Muslim soldiers, and then soldiers of different mixtures.

*** 6

What remains is a balancing act between what scholars have concluded and what is taking place in modern states. The [following] text is from the Imam [‘Abduh]. He states, may God have mercy on his soul, that there exists only a simple difference between the basic law which the [Qur’anic] verse mandated and the basic laws of the highest forms of government of our time [European governments]—and we are closer to what is correct. They [the Europeans] say that the umma is the source of laws. We say the same thing with regard to matters for which there is no Qur’anic reference or mention in the sunna, as the Imam [Fakhr al-Din] al-Razi [1149–1209] has stated. And very few things have such references [in the Qur’an].

They [the Europeans] say there must exist those who would represent the people so that what they decide would be as if the people had decided it. We too say the same thing. They say that this is known as elections, and that they have different ways of organizing them. We have not been limited by the bounteous Qur’an to a specific way. We have the right to follow in every age the way we feel will achieve what is intended. [God] called those who represent the people “those in authority,” which means those who are distinguished among the people, to whom people’s interests are referred, whom the people feel safe in following. They may be confined to the center of government at times, as they were at the beginning of Islam.

They [the Europeans] say that if [the representatives] agree, the government must execute that which they agree upon. And the people must obey. They have the right to bring down the ruler if he does not execute their law. And we say the same thing. This is the real consensus which we consider to be one of the fundaments of our law.

They [the Europeans] say that if they disagree, the opinion of the majority should be followed. We know that the Prophet acceded to the opinion of the majority, even if it was incorrect, as occurred during the battle of Uhud. And this position on his part, peace be upon him, trained us.

The opinion of the majority is not the correct opinion—but it is the one on which people with real interests agree.

** 3. Taleqani’s Last Sermon

Mahmud Taleqani

Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani (Iran, 1911–1979) established a reputation as a reformist within the Shi'i Muslim religious establishment in the early 1960s when he helped to lead (along with Mehdi Bazargan, whose work is also included in this volume) a religious movement aimed at revitalizing both Islamic theory and Iranian politics.[111] Arrested and jailed repeatedly by the monarchy for his political opposition, Taleqani was released for the last time in the fall of 1978 and immediately became one of the most respected leaders of the Iranian Revolution. Upon the shah's fall in early 1979, Taleqani began to chart a course somewhat independent of the official policies of Imam Ruhollah Khomeini, particularly in his defense of Islamic leftists and local elections.[112] The final sermon before his death in September 1979, excerpted here, is famous among Iranian oppositionists for its sharp criticism of religious oppression. The sermon's reference to Sanandaj (capital of the Kurdish region of northwest Iran) concerns Taleqani's attempted mediation between Kurds who sought autonomy through local councils—a political structure that Taleqani preferred—and the central government in Tehran, already organizing itself in an authoritarian direction. Taleqani's mediation failed and the councils were crushed militarily.[113] Brief portions of this sermon have been translated in more colorful language by Suroosh Irfani.[114]

<quote>

Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk, described in the [Jewish] Torah and the [Christian] Gospel, who enjoins righteousness and forbids wickedness, makes lawful what is good and prohibits what is bad, who relieves them of their burdens, and the yoke that lies upon them. Those who believe and honor and help him, and follow the light sent with him, are those who will attain their goal.

<right>

(Qur'an, Sura 7, Verse 157)[115]

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Those who follow this great Prophet, this exalted leader of humanity, this Prophet of the common folk, who arose from among the masses of the people, from among the illiterates and for them, for their benefit, not from among one specific group, the class specified in the verse “the Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk.” This Prophet, whom the other prophets had foretold, fulfilled their prophecy and their mission [as stated in] the verse “described in the Torah and the Gospel.” This Prophet came in order to raise the people to righteousness, to free them from wickedness, this Prophet came to make lawful all the good that previous religions had forbade, to remove the yokes and prohibit what is bad. The verse “who relieves them of their burdens”: he removes the heavy burdens which lay upon the shoulders of humanity, and opens the bridges that had been closed to the people’s mind and thought, to the people’s living and life.

This goal was the basis for the moral of “enjoining righteousness and forbidding wickedness,” the moral of banning the Kharijites [an early sect of Islam], removing burdens and yokes. What does “burden” mean? It means ... those impositions of mind and thought and belief which the world of paganism and unbelief had imposed upon the minds and thoughts of the people, the class system which had been imposed and bound upon the mass of the people, those laws and rules and customs which had burdened the people with back-breaking impositions, those deceits which had bound the mind and movement of the people hand and foot. This Prophet came to remove all this and expose these deceits. This was the goal of this Prophet—that is, to free the people, to free them from class oppression, to free them from pagan thoughts which had been imposed upon them, to free them from the ordinances and laws which had imposed for the benefit of one group, one class, over others.

This was the mission of your Prophet, [and] we also must pursue this same mission. These martyrs also were pursuing this same mission, against imposed culture, against imposed economics, against imposed laws, against police restrictions imposed upon the people sometimes in the name of religion, which is the most frightening of all. This is what the bishops and monks and their cooperation with the ruling classes have imposed on the

people in the name of religion. This is the most frightening imposition: that which is not of God, which is not on the side of truth, has been bound upon the people hand and foot in the name of God. They have blocked people from evolving, they do not allow the right of protest, they do not allow the right of criticism, they do not allow the right of tree activity for people and Muslims and the free people of the world. This too is a “burden.” This too is a yoke. These are the yokes for which the Prophet was sent, to save humanity afflicted with all these deceits, so that following this Prophet, we might save ourselves and save others.

The call of Islam is the call to mercy and freedom. The start of each sura begins in the name of two mercies, a general mercy and a specific mercy: “In the name of God the merciful and compassionate” and “We have sent you as a mercy unto all the creatures of the world.” [Qur’an, Sura 21, Verse 107] In this mercy is mercy for all people. Even the sinner who is condemned to death—under Islamic law there is mercy for him too, that his sins might be cleansed of his residual evil, and that people may become free [through] mercy to others. His [the Prophet’s] jihad [religious struggle] was mercy, his hijra [migration from Mecca to Medina] was mercy, his laws were mercy, his guidance over principles was mercy—the Islamic order ought to be based on mercy.

If we begin by carrying out this mission of God’s mercy for our own people and others, many problems will be solved, many of these convulsions [of postrevolutionary Iranian society] will disappear. Already oppressed people throughout the country do not believe that the mission of Islam and of our revolution [against the shah] is for freedom, because [freedom] has been so little seen in these problems which arose in Kurdistan. If we had tried prevention instead of punishment, if when I went to Sanandaj [the capital of Iranian Kurdistan] I had acted with both hands, if I had contacted these people [the Kurds] under the care of mercy, under the auspices of mercy, and the armed bands had been removed from them, those armed bands imposed on them, imposed on them by the evil traitorous regime [of the shah], then perhaps these problems would not have occurred, or would have occurred less....

But we have not yet recognized the goal of Islam. We all talk about the Islamic revolution—ask yourself, what is the goal of Islam? This group, that group, “they curse one another.” [Qur’an, Sura 29, Verse 25] This one contradicts that one, this one calls that one reactionary, this one calls that one deviationist. But we have not yet recognized what Islam demands, what the purpose of Islam is. If the goals are recognized, if we start on the path toward the goal, many of these confrontations will be reduced....

** 4. Shari’a: The Codification of Islamic Law

Muhammad Sa’id Al- ‘Ashmawi

Muhammad Sa’id Al-‘Ashmawi (Egypt, born 1932), chief judge of the High Court of Appeals and the High Court of State Security, may well have passed sentence on the Islamic radicals who have waged a campaign against the authoritarian Egyptian state. In the book excerpted here, he condemns the radicals in a different manner, criticizing the theological basis for their calls for an “Islamic state.” His “vigorous” attack[116] on what he calls “political Islam”[117] provoked “intense reactions” when it was published in Egypt in 1987, angering conservatives—including the head of the state-run Islamic university, the Shaykh al-Azhar—and pleasing liberals, even oppositionists who infrequently sympathize with top state officials.[118]

Since the adoption of the Egyptian Constitution in 1971, which states that “the principles of Islamic Law (shari’a) are a principal source of legislation,” the question of the codification of the shari’a has taken on a political dimension. This concerns the ruling as well as the opposition parties, the moderate religious scholars (‘ulama’), as well as preachers who know how to play upon tensions. Because of such politicization, discussion of the law does not rise above the level of political

agitation and superficial reflection and feelings. This politicization is to the detriment of serious approaches which seek to be impartial.

Thus, the first Egyptian Congress of Justice organized in Cairo in April, 1986, proposed in one of its recommendations “the elaboration of projects of law drawing from the shari’a and a revision of all laws in effect in order to bring them into conformity with the shari’a.” That recommendation raises many questions. Is it true, as has been said here and there, that the recommendations of the Congress reflect more the opinion of the religious scholars than of the judges, and if so is one speaking of the opinion of all the judges or of only a part of them? Is it a matter of applying the shari’a in a sense that implies the abrogation of all Egyptian laws and their recodification in a specific manner—or is it a matter of maintaining present laws once they have been amended so as to suppress any dispositions contrary to the shari’a ? Was the recommendation adopted on the basis of serious and impartial studies or did it reflect merely the conflicts which trouble Egyptian political life? Finally, should one conclude that our judiciary has renounced the prestigious patrimony it built up during a whole century and which is rightly its pride and that of all Egypt?

Our people—or better still, the entire Arab people—hold a very high opinion of the Egyptian judiciary. They have the right to expect, when it faces a matter as delicate as this, that it does so with the seriousness and serenity which ordinarily characterize its work. They expect to find in its recommendations the rigor and logic it devotes to editing and researching its judgments.

It is with such serenity and rigor that we intend to reflect here on the problems posed by the codification of the shari’a. First, we shall give the term a precise definition. To do so we shall refer to the dispositions of the Qur’an and the prophetic tradition regarding the Prophet (sunna), and then to the Egyptian legislative and constitutional texts in which it is mentioned. By comparing its senses in these two types of norms we shall be able to determine to what degree the two understandings are concordant or contradictory. Only then will we know how to modify or complete our legislation.

*** The Term Shari’a in the Qur’an

The term shari’a appears as such only once in the Qur’an: “Men we set thee upon an open way (shari’a) of the Command; therefore follow it” (Sura 45, Verse 18), but one finds there three other terms from the same root (Sura 42, Verse 13; Sura 5, Verse 48; Sura 42, Verse 21). In all these places shari’a signifies not judicial norms but the route or the way. The Qur’anic sense is the one given in all the dictionaries of the Arab language: the verb shari’a signifies to go to water, and the names shar’a and shari’a mean either to give to drink or the road or the slope leading down to the water.[119]

At first shari’a was used in the sense of a path or way of God. To this were integrated the legal rules revealed in the Qur’an; then those which appear in the prophetic verbal traditions (hadith), and later the exegesis, glosses, opinions, personal opinions (ijtihads), religious opinions (fatwas), and judgments—in brief, all that completes and clarifies these fundamental rules in order to constitute Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) as this has taken shape in history. In the profane sciences, one can use a word in the sense it has acquired in the course of a long history; nothing authorizes us to do so when it is a matter of a Qur’anic term. There any changes of meaning lead inevitably to deforming the sense of the text and thus to corrupting Revelation. Authentic Islamic fundamentalism should always begin by rediscovering the sense had by the Qur’anic term at the time of their revelation, based upon the Qur’an itself and on the ancient sources. To restrain oneself to only their present sense leads to grave danger for Islam and for the whole society.

*** The Term Shari’a in Egyptian Law

In Article 7 of the Penal Code of 1937 one finds, “In no case are the dispositions of the present Code to limit the personal rights defined by the shari’a”; moreover, Article 1(a)(2) of the 1948 Civil Code states

that in the absence of any applicable legislative decision, the judge will rule according to precedent, or lacking that, according to the principles of the shari’a, or where this is silent the judge will have recourse to natural law and the rules of equity.” That text introduced for the first time in Egyptian legislation the expression “principles of the Islamic shari’a.” The legislation did not clarify what is to be understood by that expression. Nevertheless the preparatory work of the Civil Code shows that it means the combination of principles common to the different schools of Islamic jurisprudence.[120] In other words, in 1948 the legislature chose the usual meaning of the term.

Since then Article 2 of the 1971 Egyptian Constitution (“the principles of the Islamic shari’a are a principal source of legislation”) was modified by the constitutional amendment of May 22, 1980: “The principles of the shari’a are the principle source of legislation.” Although the 1971 Constitution is not accompanied by an explanatory memorandum or a collection of preparatory works permitting one to know what the legislature understood by “principles of the Islamic shari’a,” there is every reason to think that in the constitution this expression has the same meaning as in the Civil Code: in this sense the report of the ad hoc commission charged with preparing the 1980 amendment indicates explicitly that “by this expression the commission has in mind the set of principles common to the school of Islamic jurisprudence.”

It is not necessary to state that there is nothing in the preparatory works, or in similar references, which aid in knowing the intention of the legislator in using the phrase “principles of Islamic shari’a,” which could be considered as contradicting the text. In effect, if the text does not allow us to decide between the two senses of the term shari’a, it is only such documents that allow us to know what was willed by the legislator. It would be purely arbitrary to say that this text makes implicit allusion to the first sense of shari’a. There is no reason why the legislator would make allusion in such legislative texts as the Constitution or the Civil Code to “the way of God.” Such terms come naturally from morality and piety, but have nothing to do with legal language. Furthermore, the word “principles” signifies properly the essential bases on which something is founded and nothing else, whereas the way of God constitutes an indivisible

whole which includes at the same time both the foundations and the edifice constructed thereupon. At most one could say that the principles or foundations are moral or cultural rules; that they are not, in any case, legal norms.

Consequently, the expression “principles of the Islamic shari’a” designates without the shadow of a doubt “the set of principles common to different schools of Islamic jurisprudence.”

If, despite that objective demonstration, one continues to think that it designates the only Qur’anic legal norms, we would say that these norms cannot constitute the principles or foundations of the shari’a because they are fashioned in different places and are not general norms. Moreover, they cannot serve as a basis for other norms if they are considered as the totality of the norms. That would be possible only if one understands by this that they constitute the bases from which Islamic jurisprudence deduces and derives its other norms, in which case one returns to our point of departure, namely, that the “principles of the shari’a” designate the totality of the norms common to the different schools of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh).

This does not dispense us from examining the legal norms mentioned in the Qur’an and comparing them with Egyptian legislation to see to what point they are or are not in conformity and whether or not it is necessary to codify and rework Egyptian legislation in order to remove any lack of conformity.

*** Legal Norms in the Qur’an

Of some 6,000 Qur’anic verses, only 200 have a legal aspect, that is, approximately one thirtieth of the Qur’an, including the verses which were abrogated by subsequent ones. This shows that the principal object of the Qur’an is moral in nature: it is concerned to inscribe the fault in the soul of the believer, to elevate his conscience and morality in order that it might be its own proper shari’a in the sense of the way leading to God. Also, even when a Qur’anic law is applicable, this should be in the context of

faith and justice, beyond any judicial partiality or deviation. On the other hand, judicial norms being by nature local and temporary, God more often left expressly to humans the work of regulating the details and the freedom to review them with a view to possibly substituting others in function of the needs of each country and epoch. Let us examine these norms.

In civil matters, the Qur’an contains only one normative verse: “God has permitted selling, and forbidden usury” (Sura 2, Verse 275), but it does not specify what should be understood by selling and by usury. Despite this general authorization of selling, the exegetes from the strictest to the moderate, basing themselves on certain hadiths, had prohibited certain forms of selling such as the sale of the entire fruits of a tree (muzabana), a sale before the harvest (muzaqala), the sale of a fixed portion prior to the harvest (muzara’a), etc.

We have shown elsewhere[121] what distinguishes usury which is forbidden by the Qur’an from the regulations concerning interest in Egyptian law: in substance, illicit usury is in reality only a loan at excessive cost. By exploiting the need of the borrower this results in his having to reimburse many times over the cost of the principal and could result in his being enslaved if he proved incapable of paying off the debt. It is reported that the Prophet himself had ordered the enslavement of a man named Sorak because he had not paid off the loan he had contracted.

As that verse was the only one containing an objective norm in civil matters, all provisions regarding relations between people (mu’amalat) had to be worked out by Islamic jurisprudence. That is why the Egyptian legislature was able to indicate in its preparatory work for the Civil Code that most of the dispositions of the Code “could easily be from the different dispositions of schools of Islamic shari’a.” And when in 1981, in the context of projects of Islamization of law, the project of the code of behavior (mu’amalat) intended to replace the actual Civil Code was presented to the general assembly of the Supreme Court of Cassation its

report stated: “If our Constitution stipulated that the shari’a is the principal source of legislation, that does not imply that we should reject our Civil Code of 1948 whose elaboration lasted over twenty years and whose solutions, resulting from deep study, are derived in large part from norms of the shari’a. This is pointed out in the explanatory memorandum which, moreover, makes explicit the foundation in Islamic jurisprudence of a number of these dispositions.” Thus that assembly, as true representative of the Egyptian judiciary, decided definitively the question of the codification of the shari’a in civil matters.

There remain nonetheless two problems which merit closer examination: that of interest on debts, which for some constitutes a form of usury prohibited by religious law, and that of insurance contracts which some consider—wrongly in our view—as speculative contracts and hence as illicit. These two questions should be the object of a debate, as open as possible, to which the judges and all religious scholars should contribute, a debate that is really free and limited solely by a frame of authentic free opinion (ijtihad) as described above.

In matters of procedure, the Qur’an has only one verse relative to the proof of debts: “O believers, when you contract a debt one upon another for a stated term, write it down ... with the certification of two male witnesses” (Sura 2, Verse 282). The sense of this verse, limited to the certification of a debt, has been extended by Islamic jurisprudence to all evidence, including that in penal matters. One can legitimately hold then that extension is valid in one specific country and epoch and not in other circumstances. The objective of religious scholars when they have imposed a specific form of evidence in relation to Qur’anic punishments was to restrict as much as possible their application so that the civil punishments could be applied to all crimes, including those subject to a Qur’anic punishment.

In the manner of personal law, all Egyptian legal prescriptions relative to marriage, divorce, and inheritance are taken explicitly from the Qur’an, the prophetic tradition regarding the Prophet (sunna), and some prescriptions of Islamic Law which the legislature has considered to be the most adequate to the needs of society.

In penal manners, the Qur’anic penalties (hudud) strictly speaking are four: theft (amputation of the hand), calumnious accusation of fornication (80 lashes), adultery (100 lashes) and brigandage (execution, crucifixion, banishment or jail). The penalties for apostasy and drinking alcohol are not strictly speaking Qur’anic penalties, as the first is based on the two hadiths and the second was set by ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib [the Prophet’s son-in-law and fourth caliph, reigned 656–661] by analogy with the penalty for the calumnious accusation of fornication.

At any rate, many conditions must be fulfilled in order that these Qur’anic penalties be applied. The most important is that one be in a community of pious and honorable believers who have installed political, economic and social justice. This is necessary so that the judgment rendered in the name of religious law not be utilized for other purposes, and that the chastisements imposed in the name of Islam not be applied to Muslims by unjust governments or by harsh tribunals on the basis of arbitrary arrests or false witness, as has been too often the case throughout Islamic history and even more so in our day.

Contrary to a broadly accepted idea, Islam does not require that society apply systematically the Qur’anic punishments. On the contrary, it enjoins it to show tolerance and clemency. Thus, Muhammad said: “Strive to be merciful one to another in the application of Qur’anic punishments.” Each time society, by tolerance, avoids the application of Qur’anic punishments, it acts according to the spirit of Islam and the request of its Prophet. That same rule specifies that when a judge is presented with a crime subject to a legal punishment he should withhold application of that punishment if any doubt subsists as regards the facts, the witnesses, the victims or the author of the crime, according to the prophetic verbal traditions (hadith): “avoid the application of the legal penalty (hudud) in case of doubt.” Thus it is reported that under the caliphate of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab [reigned 634–644], a woman came and admitted in the presence of ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib to having committed adultery subject to the legal punishment. ‘Ali said to ‘Umar: “Commander of the believers, this woman does not take account of the gravity of her words.” And they agreed that there was

therefore doubt which would withhold the Qur’anic punishment despite her admission.

These Qur’anic punishments are so surrounded by conditions that in practice they are practically inapplicable; moreover, to these general conditions are added particular conditions for each penalty. Take for example theft: the object of theft must be marked by the seal of the owner and be in a well-guarded place, which excludes pilfering, open plundering and pickpocketing; it must have a money value; the robber must not be in great need; finally, for the majority ofjurists the Qur’anic punishment for theft cannot be applied if the robber has some “quasi-ownership” on the goods stolen, as is notably the case with public goods. For the punishment of fornication, there are required four reliable witnesses who have seen the crime with their own eyes from beginning to end and can swear “that a thread could not have passed between the man and the woman”—conditions which have not been satisfied once in the whole history of Islam. As for the punishment for robbery, all schools of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) agree that it should not apply if the bandit repents before having been apprehended, in conformity with the end of the verse regarding that punishment: “except for such as repent, before you have power over them” (Sura 5, Verse 34).

More broadly, the majority ofjurists think that the Qur’anic punishments cannot be applied against one who repents after the crime and before the execution of the punishment: an adage says for example “no amputation for the repentant.” This is because for the Prophet these chastisements are purificatory punishments which should be applied only with the consent of the sinner and should be withheld if he repents, that is, if he wishes to escape it. Thus, the Companions came one day to find the Prophet in order to report that a woman guilty of fornication had begun to be stoned but had fled; being caught again the punishments had been inflicted till death. The Prophet then became angry and said: “Why did you not abandon her to her fate?” It is better then not to apply a penalty to a guilty person who does not willingly accept it.

As regards the law of the talon [retribution], the Qur’an refers to it only in the case of injuries, wounds, blows and homicide: “O believers, prescribed for you is retaliation, in the case of murder” (Sura 2, Verse 178). As regards the

talon for blows and wounds, it is evoked only in a verse alluding to a Jewish law and not as a rule to be applied to Muslims (“We have prescribed for them [i.e., for the Jews] a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth. Wounds fall under the law of the talon”—Sura 5, Verse 45). The law “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” was introduced in Islamic Law by jurists on the basis of the adage “the Law of our predecessors binds us as well except for what was abrogated” and a prophetic verbal tradition (hadith) which alludes to it without mentioning it explicitly. Thus, Islamic thought confuses shari’a—that is to say, the Qur’anic norm—with Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh)—that is to say, what results from the free opinion (ijtihad) ofjurists. As a result it has thought the law “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” to be a religious prescription and an integral part of the shari’a. In fact, if that law was a fundamental law which God wished to impose on Muslims it would not have been left to the evaluation ofjurists, but clearly stated in the Qur’an. Further, jurists who cite the adage “the law of our predecessors binds us as well except for what was abrogated” use it in a selective manner. They ignore it in the case of numerous earlier prescriptions which were not abrogated—for example, that which condemns to death one who strikes his parents.

The law of the talon poses another problem: it is not applicable when the victim or those responsible for him pardon the guilty person, whether or not that person has made financial recompense (diya). But to admit that a pardon may annul the penalty is, in our modern societies, extremely dangerous, for one risks thereby encouraging the guilty to put all sorts of pressure on the victim to obtain their pardon and to escape chastisement. It is enough to know a little of penal justice to know the extent to which pressure can be put upon victims in order that they modify or falsify their testimony so that the evidence can be subject to controversy in the judicial process. What will happen if these pressures would make it possible to stop the process itself? Our judicial system authorizes the retraction of an action as a civil matter, but not in a criminal matter for that would threaten the whole society, which is the reason why such a retraction is reserved solely to the public prosecutor. That system is better adapted to actual social conditions and does not contravene shari’a.

Since the Revelation, its four or six penalties (hudud) have never sufficed to stop criminality, which has always taken many forms. Islamic doctrine had to invent another institution, that of civil penalties (ta’zir). Through these, public authority—executive or legislative as the case may be—could designate as criminal any act it judged prejudicial to public security, to the rights of persons, to their goods or to their honor. It could punish such acts by the penalty it considered necessary, including even capital punishment. In our opinion, these civil penalties constitute the heart of the Islamic penal system. This very flexible system allows for the repression of all forms of criminality according as they appear. It can apply itself also to crimes punished by Qur’anic punishment wherever their conditions are not fulfilled. It permits the application of punishment for infractions under the law of the talon even when those culpable have been pardoned by the victim or those responsible for him, as is foreseen in the Egyptian penal code now in force. In other words, our entire penal law depends upon civil penalties and thus does not infringe at all upon shari’a. The penal code differs only in the results to which its free opinion (ijtihad) concludes in conformity with the social conditions of the epoch.

It is thus, in substance, that the issue of the codification of the shari’a must be posed: taking into account the profane as well as the religious points of view. The whole issue of conflict between the penal code and the shari’a is false, for Egyptian civil law, its penal law and its personal statutes are in conformity with the dispositions of shari’a and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). But when it comes to a political slogan, a pretext for self-seeking or a springboard to power, what was revealed by God is mixed with what was created by humans. Such a mixture risks destroying not only Islamic jurisprudence but the Egyptian legal system, which has resulted from a century ofjurisprudential and doctrinal development.

Before concluding, we would suggest here some issues directly involved in our subject.

1. Those who accuse the Egyptian legislature of having turned things upside down in 1883 by replacing the provisions of the shari’a by the

current legal system should begin by studying more closely the legal system in force in Ottoman Egypt (1517–1883), which they abusively liken to shari’a. During that period, the law, which derived from the sultan, ceased upon his death. If certain provisions remained in vigor, that was by the sole force of custom. The magistrates named by Istanbul were not remunerated, but could place a tax upon trials. Of this they kept a part for themselves and sent the rest to the Minister of Foreign Affairs with a view to assuring the renewal of their appointment—a system designed by nature to seriously corrupt the judiciary. The competence ofjudges was limited to civil affairs. During the entire Ottoman period there were only two known cases of an application of the Qur’anic punishments and in these the principle, “Avoid the application of the legal punishment (hadd) in case of doubt,” was not well understood. As regards civil punishment, the judge could enter in only when there was a conflict between two people. His competence was limited to establishing the facts; the police authority pronounced judgment and carried out its execution. Further, if a criminal endangered the security of the State the judge lost all competence in favor of the police authorities. Judges had no independence, the instructions and charges were not organized, the judgments—whether from the judge or from an entirely different authority—were not provided with reasons and there were neither procedures of appeal nor a system of defense for the accused.

Could one say that the Egyptian Legislature of 1883 wanted to reject the shari’a when it sought to reform a corrupt state in which absolute power was the rule? This it did by elaborating a legal system which was clear, healthy and modern, and founded upon legislative codes over which the Egyptian judiciary has watched for a century. Should one accuse it of having substituted order for disorder, the power of the judiciary for that of the prince, modernity for backwardness?

2. Islamic jurisprudence is certainly general and exhaustive, but it dates from the first centuries of Islam. Since the 4th century A.H. (10th century A.D.), the door of independent opinion (ijtihad) was closed and Islamic thought ceased to enrich itself, to develop and innovate. By contrast, since 1883 in Egypt jurisprudence and legal theory have developed an original and modern outlook which, drawing on the best in Islamic Law, have given it a new completeness, variety, precision and force. That theory and jurisprudence have spread through

numerous Arab countries, thus constituting an imposing patrimony which everyone today—people, judges and governments—should protect and not allow to be endangered.

3. Regarding the verse “When news comes to them, be it a matter of security or fear, they broadcast it; if they had referred it to the Messenger and to those in authority among them to ask their advice they would have known if they should trust it, for one refers habitually to their opinion” (Sura 5, Verse 83), exegesis cites this dialogue between the Prophet and Mu’adh ibn Jabal [died 627], his governor in Yemen: “How do you decide litigation between persons?” Muhammad asked him. “By means of the Qur’an,” he responded.... “And if not?” ... “By means of the tradition regarding the Prophet (sunna).” ... “And if not?” ... “By the opinion that I form through my efforts at independent opinion (ijtihad)”

On the basis of this verse and tradition it is said that independent opinion (ijtihad) constitutes an obligation for Islam. This has been surrounded with such restrictions that it has come down to repeating the judgments of the predecessors and sustaining the privileges proper to an elite. Because of the confusion between shari’a and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) and between rules relating to cultural practices (‘ibadat) and rules concerning relations between people (mu’amalat), this group has come to constitute itself into a kind of clergy.

Because of such confusion, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) lost sight of the fact that independent opinion (ijtihad) could not be practiced in the same way in matters regarding cult and those between people (mu’amalat). As regards the first, being regulated by the foundations of the law (usul)—that is to say, essentially the Qur’an and the tradition regarding the Prophet (sunna)—the only free opinion possible is that of reasoning by analogy on the basis of these laws (usul). As the second was practically absent in these foundations and must govern deeds and situations unknown at the time of the Prophet and the first development of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), it is logical, even necessary, that it be the object of a free interpretation (ijtihad). In such cases this must go beyond

simple analogy or deduction on the basis of earlier opinions; with a view to the general welfare and in response to social conditions it must be truly creative. Ifjurists had been capable of theorizing the experience of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, they would have left us a theory of the temporality of norms. Unfortunately, with but a few exceptions, they did not go beyond a casuist logic.

One finds nonetheless, among some, the beginnings of this type of reflection in this sense. Thus the great Hanifite jurist, [Muhammad Amin] Ibn ‘Abidin [circa 17831836], wrote: “Numerous legal rules change in function according to the times, by reason of the modification of customs, of necessity or of the change in times. If they do not change they would cause difficulties and harm people, thereby restricting the rule of shari’a which directs us to smooth out difficulties and to avoid all prejudice.” A similar observation can be found from [Muhammad] Ibn Qayyim [al-Jawziyya, 1292–1350]: “God the All-Powerful did not limit the pointers and directives ofjustice to but one path, rejecting the others as useless; on the contrary, from this Law it appears clearly that His intention is to establish law and justice; also, when one finds this path one should prescribe to what it decides and declares to be necessary.” On his part, the Hanbalite [Najm al-Din] al-Towfi [died 1316] specifies:

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If a text implies any damage to the general interest (maslaha), it is the latter which should prevail.—But some say, that is against the text.—On the contrary, it reinforces the text, which was revealed in order to safeguard human welfare.—But, some would say, the text is better situated to know where their welfare lies, because it comes from God or His Prophet.—The text is unchanging, whereas human concerns are changing. To take into consideration that interest is to take into consideration that text in its integrity, and to respect the prophetic verbal traditions (hadith): “You are more in touch with worldly affairs.”

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Does Egyptian common law, aside from some exceptions, propose anything other than the installation ofjustice in society? Does not the action of the

Egyptian judiciary, developed by serious and persevering work, seek to establish justice, law and security? If there is still someone who, after all that, could pretend that Egyptian courts and laws impede shari’a and the government of Divine Revelation, we would refer to what we have said above [in an earlier chapter of ‘Ashmawi’s book] regarding the terms shari’a and hukm [government], and recall the adage of Islamic jurisprudence according to which: “where one finds the common interest there is situated the Law of God.” Politics is the art of being in conformity with the spirit of that Law, and not with its letter; general welfare comes before the letter of the law. Supposing—and this is only a supposition—that there did exist in Egyptian legislation a text contrary to such and such a text or opinion of Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), would not the opinion cited above justify recourse to a decision in the interest of society—for example, in order to avoid discord or to avoid an ordeal which might not help anyone?

4. In a recent article, a judge wrote: “We should note that when the codes still in force were promulgated it was not specified that they were founded upon the dispositions of shari’a, which shows that there was no such intention on the part of the legislator. But the application of the shari’arequires the existence of an intention for anything related to religion. Hence, we should revise these dispositions which do not seem to contradict the shari’a and then repromulgate the whole Code.”[122]

That position is untenable: if in Islam in matters of cult the proclamation of intention is obligatory for individuals—though not for states and governments—in matters of daily behavior (mu’amalat) only external acts are considered (“God alone knows inner thoughts”); contracts and transfers of property have force without their authors having to make known their intentions. No one has ever pretended that a public official had to declare his intention in order that the laws he promulgates be valid. And how could that be done? Must that intention be proclaimed by the Chief of State or the government, by the Speaker of the People’s Assembly or the presidents of the legislative commissions, or must it be subject to an examination of conscience by members of the legislative assembly? Must one be content with the majority opinion or require unanimity? Must one say

that the lack of intention or a doubt in that regard suffices to render the law illicit?

Such proposals would constitute a prohibited innovation (bid’a). We have established, with great effort to overcome all doubt, that there is no contradiction between Egyptian legislation and Islamic Law (shari’a); or if not that it is so small that it can be transcended either on the basis of independent opinion (ijtihad) or because of the general welfare and the need to avoid discord and trouble command one to recognize reality as it is. Would one now present that bid’a pretending that Egyptian legislation, though in conformity with shari’a, does not specify the intention of the legislator and hence that the intention needs to be proclaimed before promulgating that legislation anew? That would mean suppressing the Egyptian laws in order to repromulgate them in a given sense in order that certain persons would have a special right of surveillance or guardianship. Would that not mean dismantling our entire legal and judicial system in order to rebuild them upon new bases and intentions made up from all sorts of pieces which are neither those of the ancients nor those of anyone else? ...

Such political conceptions of religion are extremely dangerous for Islam and for its shari’a. They imply the worst threats to Egypt; they would break in two its legal and judiciary systems, as well as the country itself, and declare an end to contemporary Egyptian Islamic Law, all without this being required by anything in religion or in shari’a.

* Part II— Democracy

** 5. The Indonesian Revolution

Muhammad Natsir

Born in Sumatra, Muhammad Natsir (Indonesia, 1908–1993) was among the first Indonesians to receive a European education. He combined this Western training with his Islamic beliefs to create a modernist interpretation of Islam, which he promoted as leader of the modernist wing of the Consultative Congress of Indonesian Muslims (the Masjumi party) during the 1940s and 1940s.[123] After Indonesia regained its independence, Natsir rose to the prime ministership, serving for a year in 1950–1951. Thereafter, through his speeches and interviews, he “became identified as the champion of liberal parliamentary democracy.”[124] In the following essay from 1955, Natsir urges Muslims to accept the secular Indonesian state (analogous to the Kabir and Zafar essays in this volume). In 1958, Natsir appears to have abandoned these views, siding with an Islamic revolutionary movement in Sumatra, serving several years in prison, and emerging with far more rigid theological positions. The younger generation of Indonesian Islamic reformers, represented by Nurcholish Madjid in this volume, viewed Natsir as a recalcitrant member of the old guard.[125]

We fought for an [independent] state and initiated the Revolution on 17 August 1945. But it was not on 17 August 1945 that the struggle for freedom was begun.

The struggle, pitting political force against political force, between the people of Indonesia and the Dutch colonial government is more than nine years old. In a political sense, the struggle began in 1905 [actually 1911—Translator] with the establishment, by Haji Samanhudi [died 1956] and his friends, of the Sarekat Dagang Islam [Islamic Business Association]. The SarekatDagangIslam was followed in 1908 by Budi Utomo [High Endeavor Association].

In 1912 the Partai Sarekat Islam [Islamic Association Party] came into existence—the first-ever mass organization. That was the moment when we began to pit political strength against the imperialists by drawing on the political strength of the common people.

But really, with regard to the fight for Indonesian independence—or, at the very least, for selfdefense against subjugation—it had all begun much earlier than that. One may note down the name of heroes such as Sultan Hasanuddin [sultan of Gowa, 1653–1669], Teungku Cik de Tiro [religious scholar of Aceh, died 1890], Imam Bonjol [Sumatran revivalist, died circa 1837], Diponegoro [Javanese prince, died 1855], Sultan Hidayat [presumably Hidayatullah, sultan of Banjar, reigned 18601862], and others of the great inexhaustible spirit of selfsacrifice.

We know that, in some regions, it was only at the end of the 19th century, or the beginning of the 20th, that the arms of the imperialists were able to subdue popular resistance. In some parts of our homeland—such as Sulawesi, Sumatra and elsewhere—it seems that our people did not quickly lay down their weapons. They were conscious of their weakness with regard to weapons and material resources but they had weapons which were not material, weapons immaterial—as people would now say—that is to say: the weapons of conviction and firmness of purpose in defending themselves against colonialism.

*** The Colonial Domination of Man Over Man

With such weapons as were available, the people opposed the great and varied armament of the colonialists. Their non-material strength lay in their conviction of God’s instruction: that they should hold themselves accursed if they were to let themselves be subjugated. Such beliefs as these are rooted in their very flesh and blood. Truly, there is no possible reconciliation between religious faith and colonial domination. The spirit of faith is a spirit opposed to tyranny, “to the exploitation of man by man,” as people say

these days. They would feel as though they had not fulfilled the divine command, as though their religion was not yet perfected were they to allow themselves, or their folk, to be exploited by other groups or races. And that was as it ought to have been, for the religion they confessed numbered among its most important teachings, this, that one should oppose every case of the exploitation of man by man in any form whatever.

In its essence the teaching of Islam constitutes a revolution in opposing and wiping out every form of exploitation. Whether the exploitation bears the name of capitalism, imperialism, colonialism, Communism or Fascism—that s a question left to whoever wishes to be concerned with nomenclature. Such then is the spirit of freedom alive and burning in the minds of the Muslims of Indonesia. For centuries this spirit has been the source of strength for our people and it was this spirit too which built up and up and impelled us to proclaim, in the year of 1945, the independence of the Republic of Indonesia.

*** The Meekest Nation

The world, on hearing the Proclamation [of Indonesian independence], was astounded and amazed because all of a sudden, our nation took a form other than what had been portrayed from the beginning. [The Dutch] had given the Indonesian people the title “het zachtste volk der aarde”(the softest people in the world)—gentle of spirit in the sense of willing compliance and being content under the rule of the acknowledged masters. But this most gentle folk now, suddenly, has undergone a metamorphosis, a radical change.

If formerly they might have been likened to sheep or goats which only follow, now, suddenly they became like tigers showing such courage and extraordinary valor that they have astounded men in foreign lands. Then there occurred events such as those in Surabaya, Semarang, Bandung and elsewhere through the length and breadth of the Indonesian archipelago. It seemed as though our people had buried deep in their souls a treasury of velour which, at its appointed time, was to burst out. In a condition of utter lack and without arms to oppose the allied armies which were bringing back the Dutch, it was that non-material weapon which rose among the

Indonesian people. Raised by the leaders and men at the forefront of the Revolution, it touched a chord in the hearts of the multitude by means of a spiritual call which has often reverberated in the ears of that multitude.

*** The Call “Allah-U-Akbar” (God is Great)

We heard the call and the cry on the radio to marshal the hidden energy. Millions of our people, men and women, old and young still recall the appeal of Bung Tomo [Sutomo, revolutionary leader, 1920–1983] through Radio Surabaya [in 1946]. He summoned the theologians, the religious teachers, through the whole of Indonesia with the call “Allah-u-akbar.” We greatly value it, that there should have been a young hero such as Bung Tomo. It was not just that he appeared bravely at the front leading the struggle, but also that he knew what many people don’t often know: that is, he knew where lay the key of strength in this nation of ours. He opened the lock on the hearts of the multitude with the words “Allah-u-akbar. “ He knew where to find friends. He also knew who were the friends who could rouse up energy and stir it to a high pitch. He sought those friends among the spiritual guides, whose names are never seen in newspapers and never inserted in the lists of leaders of political parties. He sought out spiritual guides—the ones called ‘ulama’ and kiayi—in the villages. He called and cried aloud, saying: Let us together open the lock to the hearts and minds of the people with the words “Allah-u-akbar. “ And in that way all the energy desired seethed up and flooded over in abundance. So it was too with material requirements.

The young pemuda [freedom fighters], there being that summons which held the key to their hearts, without hesitation constituted themselves as defensive forces, as barriers to protect their homes and villages, to fortify their homes and villages from the bullets of the enemy. Many of them fell as heroes, knights and martyrs. The women folk too did not want to be left behind; not even the very old were content to sit at home. For that, they received neither wage nor salary; nor were they ordered to go.

The only orders they received came from their own hearts, which had responded to the cry “Allah-u-akbar”’

*** Holy Sign

That holy call became a sign for those who gave the call. It was clear to them that there was a motivating force among the Indonesian people which could marshal energy to confront disasters coming from the outside. And this was no mere motivation which could stir and unite people to crush an enemy who wanted to oppress; it was also capable of drawing out energy and power on a large scale such that, if one were skilled enough to direct it, it could build and give content to this nation of ours. Every leader is fortunate who is aware of this, and who knows also how to use this great force. And, on the other hand, sad is the fate of the state if its leaders have not the skill to use this potential, so that it explodes and becomes incendiary, or remains completely unexploited. At present we are searching for the way, and we have these questions to answer:

- What meaning do we wish to give our nation state?

- How do we give meaning to Independence?

Such questions we must answer, in the interests of future generations, the young men and women who will replace us.

*** The Great Task

We face a great task and duty in the story of our people. Our nation is writing its history in the setting of world history.

We must answer the questions above together. Giving meaning to Independence: for us this is an action within the framework of expressing

thanks and gratitude. We return thanks to God who, in such a short time (namely, just five years) favored us with such a mighty achievement in the form of our own, independent, Indonesia. This Republic of Indonesia of which we have taken possession is, we feel convinced, the gift of God for which we must thank Him.

There is much lacking in this republic of ours. Many are its shortcomings. There is much which we find unsatisfactory. However, with all its blemishes clinging to it, we must accept the Republic with feelings of gratitude and of benediction. For the faithful of Islam the expression of gratitude for a blessing is an obligation.

But it must be borne in mind that expressing thanks for divine favor is not merely being glad and joyful while releasing every instinct for pleasure and luxury. Expressing thanks for divine favor entails acceptance with consciousness of the way things are with all their potential weaknesses and strengths latent within them. Receiving with the intention of making improvements. Improving that which is still not good, strengthening that which is not strong, while making whole that which is still imperfect. That’s what it means to express thanks for divine favor. And it’s definitely not a matter of rejection, or of using scorched-earth policies, after having seen the many blemishes in what you hold in your hands.

Disgruntled people—those who, having received, feel a sense of deprivation—they are not the ones who know how to express thanks. There is but one teaching, one guide—to which we adhere—namely the word of God, the gist of which is:

<quote>

If you know how to show gratitude, I shall multiply many times what you have received. But, if you are thankless, unappreciative and unable to value it, spending your time in complaint and rejecting all of it because it is not enough, know then that my punishment is bitter punishment indeed. (Qur’an, Sura 14, Verse 7)

</quote>

We do not wish to become ungrateful reprobates. Such is the Republic of Indonesia we received, come let us nurture it, strengthen it and cultivate it from within with every good basis for healthy growth hereafter.

Because of that, answering the question, “What is the best way we can improve and perfect the blessing we have received?” is not so difficult for the faithful of Islam. We have been blessed with a homeland of such fertile earth and such good climate. Neither very hot nor very cold. It does not rain in flooding torrents as it does it in other tropical regions. Its heat is not a blazing, burning heat, which dries up and makes the fields of grass into fields of stone and sand. Our nation is a very prosperous land and abounds in natural wealth. Meanwhile, if we contemplate its human resources—again the praise is to the Lord—we would not be shamed, were we to be compared with the peoples of other nations. Our nation has a high culture. The culture referred to does not mean only the fruits of intellectual cleverness; it also refers to fine character and disposition which is pervaded by its internal basis of tasamuh (indulgence, forbearance), a basis of tolerance, people say nowadays. Discord and violent controversy are not one of our qualities.

*** Tolerance

In other nations—as in India for example—religious problems between the Hindus and Islam often cause discord and difficult troublesome problems leading to fights and large-scale bloodshed never knowing peace. In our country, things are not like that. This is a positive benefit; something most glorious in the ranks of our people.

The wealth of natural resources remained comparatively undeveloped by the imperialists during those hundreds of years. It’s just some few percent which they took at the end. There is not yet here any large-scale industrialization as there is in the West. Industrialization of a revolutionary kind, which shakes the structure of society, has not yet built up to anything very disturbing in our society.

Feudalism, which distinguished the status of one group from that of another, was not something which reigned unchecked in our homeland. Our people possessed a quality which lived deeply rooted in their very bones, to wit: the quality to which we often refer as gotong-royong [mutual aid]. The conflict between what they call capitalism and the proletariat in our country has not—all praise to God—become basic, as has happened in Western nations since mid-way through last century.

In brief, it can be said we have a homeland still clear of the seeds of that which is capable of causing upset. This is something fresh and new which we want to develop. This is the base of our development. One might even say that a nation possessing the qualities and the geographical and sociological situation which Indonesia has, with a populace of between 75 to 80 million, is a state possessing special gifts, capable of making its own road into the future, consonant with the environment and the climate and the humanity of Indonesia itself.

*** Our Own Method

There would be no point were we to go looking for methods which may or may not work well in other countries. There would be no point in our adopting wholesale all those other systems and methods. We can look for our own methods and systems, in accord with our material and our talents, in accord with the mentality of the great part of our people.

For us of the Muslim community, we are permitted to experience it just as it was instilled into his disciples by our Master, the Prophet Muhammad—may the Lord bless him and give him peace—thirteen and a half centuries ago. They also staged a great revolution to raise a very weak community into one of high degree, one which had great capacities. It was, to wit, a saying of the Prophet that, when we recall it today, gets right to the point. The occasion of his utterance was the joyful return of the people from the battles that had culminated in victory; they were glad and rejoicing because they had finally accomplished a difficult task with brilliant results. Said he: “We have just

come back from a minor battle, from the lesser struggle” (raja’na mina jihaci’l-asgar)—even though that struggle had resulted in the shedding of blood and the loss of life, even though it had been murderous and utterly destructive. Yet in spite of this, he spoke of it as a small-scale battle, a minor battle—jihcuiasgar. And he went on to say, the community would confront another phase in the development of the revolution, called the jihad akbar, the greater struggle, greater than anything before, in which there would no sound of swords—nor of rifles—in which there would be no killing and being killed, no incendiarism, but which nevertheless would be more difficult than the holy struggles of the past. The struggle—the jihadu’n-nafs—would be a struggle to develop one’s own personality, to build up the identity of the Community, building up national strength and capabilities. This holy struggle would be more difficult than the struggle or battle with just the one slogan: “Kill the enemy—as many as possible.” This battle of the self (jihadu’n-nafs) is a struggle needing an organized plan, perseverance and a farseeing view, constant and enduring patience. Such a holy battle, the struggle to build up personal identity, and the Community, is a long-term struggle, a difficult struggle for those who seriously and earnestly want to carry it through!

It does not seem wrong to compare our struggle at this time to what our Master, the Prophet Muhammad—may the Lord bless him and give him peace—meant by the phrase ofjihad akbar (the greater struggle).

In this regard we give thanks that we have guides in how to build up personality and how to build up society.

*** The Prophet Muhammad as a Revolutionary Leader

Muhammad—may the Lord bless him and give him peace—was a revolutionary leader. One of the elements of his revolution was the abolition of every form of the exploitation of man by man and the elimination ofpoverty and misery, as people put it these days.

Every teaching of Islam is, both in content and direction, concerned with the abolition of the exploitation of man by man and the elimination of poverty.

He said: “Poverty and misery are next to godlessness.” So poverty and misery are not to be let loose to rage unchecked around us, as they lead mankind into a state of rebellion against God. Good men may fall from grace, if poverty and misery reign unchecked. If character is not to deteriorate, if demoralization is to be checked, one method of curing it is wipe out poverty and misery. In the practical instruction given by Islam, every single one of us must use his own strengths and powers to increase and multiply production, to increase output so that we can elevate the quality of life of mankind and can mete out, in an orderly and fair way, the riches and the necessary goods. Why, zakat [obligatory Islamic tax] is only a small part of the system, and so too is sadaqa [voluntary charity]. Nonetheless, rampant misery and poverty can be abolished just by zakat and sadaqa, provided that they are administered in an orderly way.

*** Freedom from Poverty, Suffering, and Oppression

The whole system put forward as a way of life by Muhammad—the Lord bless him and give him peace—is clear and explicit in its broad outline. That is, it is to create a society which lives in harmony. We, as the community of Islam, are not permitted to allow ourselves to accept poverty and misery. We have been commanded not to forget our fate here on earth. We have been told to use anything and everything about us, by deploying the forces of nature, things of metal, the products of the oceans, and so on to facilitate the harmony of life. God provided all of that for mankind. And all of that can elevate the life of man, so that it becomes a life of harmony and brilliance and man can feel the blessings of divine favor.

*** The System of Production

According to the teaching of Islam, capital, or wealth, should not be accumulated without bringing about an increase in production. Gold and silver are not to be stored up just to be looked at and counted over repeatedly; they should be put into the wheels of production, invested in the productive process to increase happiness and the common welfare. God has pronounced His threat to men who accumulate unproductive property, namely on those called yaknizuna’dh-dhahab, that is: people who store up unproductive gold and silver to no useful purpose (Sura 9, Verse 34).

Wealth must not be static; it must be put into circulation so that the unemployed get work and the level of production can meet the needs of society. Or, in other words: while capital must be made productive, it is desirable that the employers or those who command capital should not be motivated exclusively by the profit motive but should give great weight to development and the needs of the community.

*** Basic Human Rights

In the search for the good life and the well-ordered community, philosophers and sociologists as well as freedom fighters from all over the world have come to an agreement framed in a charter named “[The Universal Declaration of] Basic Human Rights.” The United Nations has a separate section for drawing up what they call basic rights for mankind. Nearly all the free nations of the world have recognized those basic rights as a conceptual basis to be made into a foundation for the development both of nations and of essential human nature.

Those basic human rights include, among other things, the rights to free speech and the free expression of opinion, the freedom to profess a religion, the right to a decent standard of living, the right to strike when this is necessary—yes, all sorts of rights. The charter of basic human rights is so arranged as to remind men that there should be no person under the exploitation of other men. It reminds each person, himself, that he should refuse to be used as a tool by other men. This is definitely a step in the right direction.

But it is not clear what these basic human rights have achieved. It has not yet been absorbed into the consciousness of each individual exactly what is his right, what is not his right, so that among the communities of the human race, those basic rights have yet to be frilly realized.

Man is instructed to fight for his rights. He must strive to attain his rights. Those who hold those rights will not just acquiesce to be taken over by him to whom the rights properly belong: he will defend that which he believes belongs to him. As a consequence of this being-aware-of-rights and that not-yielding-of-rights there is a clash between the holders and the entitled.

Organized labor says: “We have the right, you refuse to concede it; we shall use the strike weapon.” The employers say: “No, we want to see how strong you are. We are not going to concede even the slightest part of those rights without a struggle!”

And so a fight ensues with rights won and lost, and from the seizing of rights there arises a kind of system usually dubbed, these days, as “the struggle for life”—a snatching of life based on claim and counter claim, the consequence of which is that the strongest emerge on top while the weakest goes to the wall.

In western nations, it is this “struggle for life” outlook which holds sway at the moment, the search for life—even though other people might be crushed in the process.

But, we may ask, is that indeed the only road by which to achieve life and social welfare? The teaching of Islam, in confronting this vexed problem, holds a different outlook. Without in any way diminishing the necessity for each individual to know what his rights are, Islam first and foremost teaches

that it is not a matter of “What are my rights?” but, for a Muslim, “What are the obligations which I have to fulfill?” ...

The basis of the Islamic approach to this problem has already been laid down by the great Prophet Muhammad himself—may the Lord bless him and give him peace—when he said, “No man has perfect faith who does not love his brother (man) as he loves himself.” It is on this basis that Islam holds the opinion that the employers’ group and the workers’ group do not constitute two classes each representing particular exclusive interests that conflict with each other and cannot be brought together. Islam considers both employer and worker as factors of industry each having his function, responsibility and share, each of the same importance in the process of producing the commodities which society needs....

The Islamic way of settling problems on the basis of mutual affection and mutual understanding and respect for the interests of the other party is the best way. That is without increasing hatred and enmity as is entailed by the concept of class conflict, which does nothing to reduce the possibility of the new danger in the tyranny of the trade unions. With the achievement of harmonious relations between employers and workers, organizations will change in nature and they will function as executive bodies which care for and elevate the degree of mutual understanding between management and the workers themselves. Thus, they will no longer represent two class heroes which in mutual confrontation are already under the power of mutual suspicion and mutual distrust! ...

Such is the essential teaching of Islam in bringing groups closer together, one stratum with other strata in society. It makes obligation the point of emphasis, that is what each one, individually, has to carry out.

Hence Islam teaches two kinds of obligation, namely fardu ‘ain and fardu kifaya. Fardu ‘ain is individual duty, the duty of the individual towards his God. This cannot be passed on to someone else, just as worship, the fast and the pilgrimage cannot be contracted out wholesale to other people. Next to fardu ‘ain there is fardu kifaya which must be carried out for one’s fellow men, for society.

Each individual must perform his fardu kifaya for the community. These two fardu or duties may not be ignored. Should one be withdrawn, all that remains is 50 percent: it is not whole. In this second type there are included what people now speak of as the social, the economic, and the political. Call it economic, call it political, call it social: it’s all actually [embraced] within Islam.

*** Values of Religion

Religion and the profession of religion in Islam have such a close connection to humane values that the estimation of a man’s religious profession is based on what he does and how he does it to fulfill his responsibilities towards humanity. There are warnings in the Qur’an for the man who makes an insincere pretense of religion— called “one who makes a lie of his religion”—even though he bobs up and down [in fake prayer] five times in each 24 hours and fasts through the whole month of Ramadan. He will yet be known as the man who made a lie of his religion if he will not cast the slightest glance to the side to alleviate the plight of the orphans, the poor and destitute. “Do you know who it is who made his religion into a lie?”—so runs the rhetorical question in the Qur’an, which it then goes on to explain and answer itself, namely: “people who do not care for orphans, who do not protect the poor, those who let misery flourish, who feel quite content living to themselves, who give not the slightest regard to beggars.” Those are the people who make a lie of their religion. Such is the teaching of the Qur’an (Sura 107, Verses 1 -4).

The values of the individual and the worth of his religious profession are measured by the attitude he adopts with regard to the community. If we wish to be constructive, we must strive to bring about a society which, structurally, has the qualities of tasamuh [tolerance] and gotong-royong [mutual aid]. The spirit of gotong-royong internally is a fertilizer for the fulfillment offardu kifaya. There is no longer any doubt that such a system fits exactly with the mentality of the Indonesian people. In this Indonesia of ours there is no chance that any system based on the conflict of group with group or class with class will emerge. The system which meshes with the Indonesian

national mentality is harmony of life as a fixture, but there is gotong-royong as well. Such is the teaching brought by the Great Leader of the Revolution, the Prophet Muhammad—may the Lord bless him and give him peace.

*** Fanaticism

[The Prophet] brought a teaching for the abolition of what is called ta'assub or what people often refer to by the term "fanaticism" (although the expression fanaticism is not an exact translation of ta'assub). But let's use the word fanaticism meaning fanaticism in the broadest sense. Fanaticism in ideas, fanaticism in defending one's race and kin group. In this connection I had better put something forward, because often people assume that Islam is opposed to the very existence of races or nations—in short, they say, Islam repudiates the existence of race, as though those who have embraced Islam have lost their nationhood altogether. Such is not the truth. We can be dutiful Muslims while, at the same time, we sing with joy "Indonesia, my native land" [the Indonesian national anthem]. How are we going to lose our "Indonesianness" seeing that it was God Himself who made us into distinct races and nations such as can be seen at present, all over the surface of the earth. We must be able to be happy and to rejoice in showing to the outside world that this is how we, the people of Indonesia, are: this is our language, this is our culture, this is our hand-drawn batik fabric, these are our vital statistics, such are our carvings, such is our music, and so on.

There's nothing wrong in all that. We are even ordered to make our cultural contribution to the culture of the world at large. As a nation we are a member of the larger family of nations.

There is no need for the Muslim to have to strip himself of his nationality and culture. In the teaching of Islam, it is said that humanity has been made in different groups: different nations and different races. Even their languages vary. This isfitra, or "natural," as people say nowadays. The end of the verse says li't-ta'arafu: so that you might become mutually acquainted the one with the other. How boring it would be were we

to see all the people of this world of no more than one skin color. If white, then all white; if black, then all black! In that case, in pursuit of variety—wanting to taste it—we might fly to the moon or to the stars in search of other people.

*** Equality of Rights

Therefore, the natural condition or the effective law of God in effect among humankind will stay that way. But let us not feel, just because we have white skins, that we are, at once, superior to the nation whose skin has the color of the sawo fruit so that we feel we have acquired the basic right to take them under our imperial protection. Or, should we by chance have sawo-colored skins, let us not feel ourselves to be superior to people with black skins. That kind of thing is not healthy nationalism. That has evolved into racial conceit, racial arrogance, xenophobia. Such a concept of nationalism is indeed forbidden by Islam. Islam is a system which does away with racial fanaticism, narrow chauvinism—that which Westerners nowadays call racism. That way of thought, which Islam prohibits, is, according to our religious scholars (faqih), ‘asabiya jahiliya.

I want to say, once again, that, far from wanting to wipe out nations and nationhood, Islam has set down the bases for prosperous life on both the national and ethnic levels—on the basis of mutual respect, mutual acquaintance, give and take. If we are the Indonesian nation, take pride, if it pleases, in being Indonesian! But, beware, let us not slide into narrow chauvinism, headed in the direction of fascism or totalitarianism.

Do not rest assured that fascism or totalitarianism (or the rest) will not be able to grow in this our nation. It could quite easily grow. Fascism and the like constitute a mode of thought independent of whether skin color be white or black or ripe sawo, etc. We must be careful that fascism and the like do not grow in this democratic nation of ours which holds to the sovereignty of Almighty God. This is the responsibility of every Muslim.

*** Racism is a Monstrous Disease

Racism is acknowledged to be one of the sources of the sicknesses of the world, giving rise to war after war. Chauvinism gives rise to forms of racism which are more dangerous for society, as for example the rise of fascist and totalitarian thought and other examples of the same sort of thing. [Adolf] Hitler [German Nazi leader, 1889–1945] said that the “Herrenvolk” was the master race; the rest were mixed races which could not be left to live their own lives; they needed the domination of the master race.

All of that evolves from ‘asabiya jahiliya.

For those groups who would be happier listening to, or would be quicker to accept, what we are propounding here if it were written in a foreign-language publication—say English—I would like to introduce them to a professor named [Arnold Joseph] Toynbee [1889–1975], one of the most excellent English historians of the present time. He writes in his book, Civilization on Trial, as follows: “The world at present has two diseases for which men have yet to discover the cure. They are racism and alcohol.” In a full and frank analysis, Toynbee declares that racism and alcohol are sources of the world’s commotion. Toynbee goes on to say: “If there is one system which can smash racism and the problem of alcohol, it is Islam alone.”

Toynbee is not a Muslim; he is a Christian. As a scientist he looks at facts as facts. He simply analyzes one state of affairs after another. Such were the words of Toynbee, speaking frankly and honestly.

** 6—Accountability, Parliament, and Ljtihad

S.M. Zafar

Pakistan was created in 1947 as a Muslim homeland for South Asians, but its founders disagreed whether the new nation should be organized democratically or theocratically, with secular government or Islamic government, Western civil laws or Islamic shari ‘a law.[126] The debate over these issues was initially settled in favor of the secularists, but the succeeding decades did not dampen the controversy. By 1980, when the following selection was published, the secularist position was largely out of favor, and the military regime was set to impose shari’a law—hence the importance of this work by S.M. Zafar (Pakistan, born 1930). As secretary-general of the defunct Muslim League (Pagara Group), Zafar enjoyed Islamic credentials; as a lawyer and head of the Pakistan Human Rights Organization, Zafar was keenly interested in ensuring the rule of civil law. Zafar argues in this excerpt that an elected parliament is both grounded in Islamic precedent and necessary for holding the government accountable in the modern world.[127]

In the title of this chapter I have combined three topics because there is a very close and deep relation between the three. In Islamic teachings, distinction is commonly made between matters of religion (‘ibadat) and worldly matters (mu’amalat).

“Religious matters” connote the relation between humankind and God, and “worldly matters” connote the relation between humans and [other humans]. Religious matters are generally bilateral; as an analogy, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Thus religion brings humankind closer to God. Through religion, humans realize the existence of the authority of God.

In Islam, the details and shape of religious matters are determined. If they are presented properly with complete morals, then it is to be hoped that in society, there will be a majority of people who will be familiar with God’s divinity and authority, and it is hoped that this sort of people, to please God, will try to fulfill His every command.

With respect to religion, the responsibility of the government is to manage and arrange its institutions related to religious matters, that is, the mosques, Halal Consideration Committee [to evaluate permissible Islamic practices], hajj [pilgrimage] policy, the respect of Ramadan [the month of dawn-to-dusk fasting], and so on. But if the government doesn’t do even this much, then all persons must still perform their religious duties. And we all know that several respected scholars, even while living in non-Muslim communities, still fulfilled their religious duties. And they reached a high level of spiritual attainment.

But worldly matters are different from religious matters. This is not a bilateral relationship. Rather, on one side, it is a relation among people, and on the other side, it includes the authority of the rules determined by God. In worldly matters, a person’s responsibility is not as it is in religion. Rather, on the contrary, in worldly matters, responsibility often falls on more than one person, or on a group. In other words, this relation isn’t represented as one line, but rather as a triangle, rectangle, or other various geometric figures. With respect to the laws pertaining to worldly matters, Islam in some places gives full details, and in other places describes them only in brief. And for the application of these laws according to a specific situation, the necessity [of knowing] the specific details always arises. And when the situation itself changes, then of course the specifics of the situation also change. That is, just as when dots are put in various places, new triangles, rectangles, polygons are continually formed, so worldly matters can be construed in multiple forms.

However, one single thing must definitely be remembered: that with respect to worldly matters, one dot is fixed: the commands of God, described in the form of a law.

By way of example, take one small business regulation. There is a command that one must give the correct measurement of goods being sold. This rule has taken on the form of a triangle. Now if goods-sellers don't give the correct measurement then they act against God's command, and they earn God's displeasure. They are responsible on the Day of Judgment. But the issue doesn't end here. The rule is not enforced in action. Goods-buyers are also involved in this matter, and it is their right to receive the correct amount of goods. Even though sellers are answerable to God, [the buyers] don't receive any benefits, and therefore, they have the right to ask in return that the existing God-given government authority should assist them in this matter, and this government should save them from the person who sells them short. And when the government, having acknowledged their rights, makes a law which can save buyers from dishonest sellers, or can punish them, then the triangle becomes complete. Otherwise, a gap is left.

Let's extend this example and see that if the government announces that the weights for measuring goods will be issued with the government's official stamp, then instead of three, four dots appear on the field. The goods buyer, the seller, the government official who issues the correctly calibrated, government stamped weights, and then this command [of God] that goods must be weighed properly. If these dots are connected to one another, then instead of a triangle, then a square or rectangle is formed. At this time, with respect to the government official who is appointed to work on the weights, the law must be made that at the time of the issuance of the weights, [the official] shouldn't do anyone a favor or shortchange anybody. For example, the Electricity Act is a law under which the people who connect electrical meters must follow the special instructions issued, and those who don't follow this are criminal.

We will now extend this example even further. If the government announces that [the business of] manufacturing the weights and stamping them shall be given to a particular company, and the weights issued by this company will be provided by government workers and officials to the shop owners, then a new point appears. Now if we connect all of these dots together, then this time a pentagon is formed. And there will be a separate law made regarding

this company. Thus we see that just as new details come before us, it is necessary to make new laws.

These laws are not given in the Qur’an or in hadith [traditions of the Prophet], nor could they be given. Then who will make them? One lone ministry of law itself cannot make so many regulations relating to society’s hundreds and thousands of divisions. And no matter how wise and devout an emperor or sultan is, he can’t keep an eye on all aspects of society. For this work, such an institution is necessary whose members have some connection with worldly matters and in which, after thorough debate, the process of making laws is established—not only so that in this institution every point of view and every school of thought and ideas has the opportunity to be completely and freely expressed, but also so that if the majority within this institution cannot make just laws, then the public can hold this institution accountable, and having removed its members, can install new members in their place. Parliament is the only such institution which can fulfill the above conditions, necessities and demands.

In all of Pakistan’s constitutions, legislative work has been handed over to the Assembly or Parliament. In the present 1973 Constitution too, this capacity has been given to Parliament alone. Moreover, this Constitution was made by a Constitutional Assembly, which was a truly representative institution. When Governor-General Malik Ghulam Muhammad dissolved the Constitutional Assembly in 1954, then a decision of the Supreme Court compelled him to establish a new Constitutional Assembly. Therefore the new Constitutional Assembly was elected and in 1955 it made a Constitution. Likewise, the 1973 Constitution was also made by an officially elected Assembly and was ratified.

Now [we shall] study the various clauses of this constitution. Among them most are such that in order to categorize them, one cannot refer to Qur’an or hadith. For example, in the 1956 Constitution, the federal structure that was created and the way balance was brought about between East and West Pakistan was the result of the particular conditions of Pakistan. To seek precedent for this from the time of the [first] four caliphs or to seek justification in the Qur’an and hadith is useless and impossible. Moreover, we cannot find any precedent in the history of Islam for making

rules related to the way the budget should be presented in Parliament, which issues can be debated but not voted upon, if the budget cannot be ratified what effect would this have on the government, and all of the other items and articles [in the Constitution] designed to control the government's right to impose taxes and bring into debate its wrong policies.

The rule that the government can impose a tax on the people only after having had the [tax] law ratified in the representative assembly of the people was accepted 200 years ago and now it has been proven that without representation whatever revenue the government collects would not be a tax, but rather a penalty or fine.

In Pakistan, where there are several reasons for the bad tradition of avoiding taxes, there is also another reason: that Pakistan most of the time has not had a representative government. With respect to zakat [religiously mandated contributions], the question arises whether the government itself can collect zakat from the public or not. On this point, Islamic scholars have different opinions.

In our opinion, however, money like zakat also cannot be collected from the people and its correct expenditure cannot be made until the people's representative assembly approves the corresponding law. And for every revenue that a government must collect from any person because the government wants to spend it for a particular collective purpose, that person has the right to hold the government accountable. Once Hazrat [his excellency] 'Umar Farooq ['Umar ibn al-Khattab, second caliph, 634–644] was asked how his garment was made so long when the fabric he had obtained in the spoils of war were insufficient. Hazrat 'Umar Farooq answered that he had his garment made by adding his son's share. And because of this answer, the questioner had his objection satisfied.

But today, in a country which has a population of more than 70 million, how many questions can every citizen who enters the mosque ask of the responsible person [at the mosque], when that citizen won't know the answer to 99 percent of the questions and will have in turn to ask the

secretary of the relevant department, who will not be praying at the mosque. To solve this problem, the present Assembly is arranged so as to reserve a one-week period to answer such questions, during which time the people can call the government and its employees to account. In that period, a detailed system of asking questions is determined, [taking into account] which question is connected with which day and with which department. And permission is also given during this period to ask further questions about previous questions.

In the laws of Islam, the most prominent is the law of accountability. No [school of] Islamic jurisprudence denies that Muslim government is liable to accountability and impeachment. All government agents, judges, and civil servants are accountable for their own actions. [There is the] concept of the Day of Judgment, according to which all people will have to give a complete account of all of their good and bad actions. Its application is not only to religious matters, but to worldly matters as well, and due to the immediacy of worldly matters, this rule also applies to the government.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, says, “Watch out, among you every person is a leader and every person is responsible for their own people, and the greatest leader of the Muslims, who governs all, is also answerable to the people.” AndHazrat ‘Umar says, “If even one goat’s kid is lost on the banks of the Euphrates River, then I am afraid that God will question me about it.” Not only God will question us, but as has been said before, worldly matters are not only between God and people, and [the questioning] must be thorough between people and people also. Consequently, the people should also question the government; parliament is the best means for this, and the thorough interrogation of the government can only be done by a representative assembly.

In addition to the necessity of making general rules and being accountable, there is a very clear necessity of an Assembly in matters of ijtihad [Islamic interpretation]. First of all, we don’t accept that the gate of ijtihad is closed forever. Who closed it? Why was it closed? And how long will it remain closed? These are the kind of questions for which history doesn’t have any clear answer. If the purpose of ijtihad is the application of wisdom and learning, then to say

that ijtihad is no more, is a negation of Islam. Admittedly, we understand that in the name of ijtihad permission cannot be given for changing Islam’s teachings and its rules. This is the reason that at the end of the 8th century hijri [late fourteenth century A.D.] and especially at the beginning of the 9th century hijri [early fifteenth century A.D.], Islamic theoreticians became worried that an attempt was being made to change the basic worldly matters of Islam through ijtihad and that this should be stopped somehow. To preserve the community from this kind of ijtihad, these Islamic theoreticians curtailed even their own rights, and prevented themselves and others from practicing ijtihad. Moreover, that time was a period of decline in Islamic history. Therefore, for the benefit of the community, the consensus was reached that ijtihad should be left alone for the time being. But it is true that this attempt is in no way synonymous with permanently closing the gate of ijtihad. Now this is a period of Islamic revival, and it is very necessary that attention should be given to ijtihad. In this connection, we all know about the contribution from ‘Allama [Muhammad] Iqbal [Indian philosopher, 1877–1938; see chapter 27]. He called the decision of the Turkish Assembly ijtihad and he himself participated in ijtihad [to decide] that the burden of the caliphate could be shouldered by a single assembly.

We admit that the conditions of ijtihad are very severe and that Islamic jurisprudence makes it very difficult. The conditions that religious scholars have established for ijtihad are as follows:

1. In addition to the knowledge of Qur’an, a person should be familiar with literature also. He should have complete knowledge of the text of the Qur’an; he should know when every verse was revealed and what the circumstances of its revelation were; he should be well acquainted with the literal meaning of every word in the Qur’an; and besides this, he should know what connotations are hidden within these words.

2. He should have memorized the entire Qur’an.

3. He should have complete mastery of the science of hadith and command of at least 3000 major hadiths.

4. He must be very devout and pious.

5. He must be completely familiar with the science of Islamic jurisprudence (that is, with all five branches offiqh).

In addition to these conditions, Imam [Abu Hamid Muhammad] Ghazzali [1058–1111] and Imam [Fakhr al-Din] Razi [1149–1209] placed strongest emphasis on the intellectual ability of those who practice ijtihad. Of course, in fulfilling the aforementioned conditions, their knowledge increases. Thus it is clear that the conditions of ijtihad are very difficult.

Today, for any citizen to fulfill these conditions is especially difficult, because now, in addition to the aforementioned knowledge, it is also important that the person who practices ijtihad should be familiar with the needs of the current period, and he should know the rules of economics and be familiar with the rules of atomic energy. In addition, he should have complete mastery over problems of sociology and psychology.

These days, one cannot find people who can retain an encyclopedic range of knowledge in their memories. In fact, in every field of knowledge, so much advancement has occurred that it is completely impossible for one person, spending his entire life acquiring knowledge of Qur’an and hadith, to be able to obtain familiarity with and knowledge of other fields. Likewise, the scientist, doctor, or economist is busy in his own field, obtaining mastery and knowledge. Will that person be able to achieve sufficient status in the knowledge of Qur’an and hadith which would give him the right to perform ijtihad? Under these conditions, if there is no institution in which all fields can be combined, then Muslim society will have to survive on guesswork for new laws. But the answers to all of the questions raised by the needs of the present period cannot be answered through guesswork. Therefore, only an Assembly where

the religious scholars sit down with the other representatives of the public and hold thorough debate on every issue can make the laws.

Ziauddin Sardar, a research scholar at Shah ‘Abdul ‘Aziz University in Jiddah [Saudi Arabia], wrote a book entitled The Future of Muslim Civilization[128]; in this book, he has made a very important point on the subject of ijtihad. “I reached the conclusion that ijtihadon an individual basis is impossible. However, if the work of ijtihad is handed over to an institution in which there is the opportunity to bring together all fields of knowledge, then ijtihad will be possible and easy.”

This is the only reason that the Islamic scholars of Pakistan have supported a parliamentary system. In 1950 and 1951 the religious scholars [‘ulanui]\ of Pakistan collectively supported the [proposal] that the elected assembly be allowed to pass legislation. When Pakistan’s draft constitution was being prepared in 1955, the whole ‘ukmm’ of Pakistan analyzed [the constitution] on only one point: whether anything in it was against Islam. They presented some recommendations, including one that national elections should be held very soon. However, nobody from that institution rejected the Assembly as a lawmaking body. Likewise, in the popular revolution of 1977, the political parties in favor of a religious approach took part vigorously and strongly pushed for elections. Thus it is correct to say that the people of Pakistan and the Uikmm’ think alike that through election, permanent institutions should be established; that the national government should also be established through elections; that if somehow the government becomes less acceptable, then it can be removed and a new government should be elected.

Quaid-i-Azam [Great Leader] Muhammad Ali Jinnah [1876–1948, the founder of Pakistan] thought differently. Instead, he wanted to make Pakistan a modern democratic state [as distinct from an Islamic state]. Now in Pakistan, in the name of Islam, this experiment is under way, and for this reason it is important that we should decide about the government system with complete faith and security, so there won’t be any lack of practical support.

In Pakistan, democracy has not failed. Rather, since the desire for democracy is now in [the people's] hearts and minds, we can conclude that the powers who oppose democracy and want to stop its progress have failed. But in this situation, we again are standing at the crossroads of democracy and monarchy.

The sort of temperaments that have an inclination toward dictatorship consider parliament their rival and generally view a parliament that has a certain degree of autonomy troublesome for them. [Adolf] Hitler [German Nazi leader, 1889–1945] called parliament a club of idle dreamers. [Benito] Mussolini [Italian fascist leader, 1883–1945] thought of parliament as nothing more than a forum for his own speeches. In Pakistan too, political tensions, quarrels, and disputes have continued to arise regarding the authority of the president and prime minister vis-a-vis the Assembly. It was due to these quarrels that [Pakistani Governor-General] Malik Ghulam Muhammad [1895–1956] dissolved the Constitutional Assembly [in 1954] when a legal document was introduced into this Assembly weakening the powers of the president.

In the 1973 Constitution, there was a specific clause added to the law which weakened the authority of the Assembly and increased the authority of the prime minister, making the latter very powerful. Thus it is clear that parliament plays an important role in limiting the increase in the powers of the current ruler and making him adhere to one [system of] law and keeping the president and prime minister within decided limits. How can this institution be rejected on the grounds that it is un-Islamic? In short, to call un-Islamic the institution which provides a means of accountability and a means of collective ijtihad and which can stand in the way of dictatorship is very unjust to Islam and presents Islam incorrectly. The result of this line of reasoning is that Muslims are frightened of accountability and avoid ijtihad, and Muslims think that a kingdom, monarchy, and even dictatorship are valid styles of Islamic government, even though they are not.

On the contrary, accountability, ijtihad, and democracy are Islam’s true foundation, by means of which Islam establishes a just and equitable society. And as long as the human intellect cannot create any institution better than parliament, there should be no problem in adopting this institution. Moreover, as the great Andalusian Muslim scholar Abu Ishaq Shatibi [died 1388] said, once we distinguish between religious matters (‘ibadat) and local custom (‘adat), every society should adopt only those religious practices which are determined solely by Islam. As for worldly matters, which fall under the category of ‘adat, there is a concession that traditional ways and customs can be adopted on the condition that they should not conflict with the rules of Islam.

We think that parliament is a logical necessity and mandatory for accountability and ijtihad. There is no substitute for this institution in the contemporary era. If we don’t adopt it, there are only two prospects before us. One is this, that as under the communist system, ultimate permanent power will be given to a political party like the Communist Party, and this would be the only party or group in the nation which is responsible for writing the Constitution and laws and applying them. In this situation, no matter what decision the leaders make, obedience becomes compulsory, and freedom of thought and of ideas disappears.

The second prospect is that a single ‘ulama’ council is set up which can perform the work of legislation, relying for the most part on conjecture and occasionally resorting to ijtihad. But this is an extremely dangerous prospect, because in such a situation lie the origins of popishness. Furthermore, [grounds for] confrontation between the people and the ‘ulama’ are generated. ‘Allama Iqbal was strongly opposed to this proposal and he wrote that to give special authority to one group of the ‘ulcmai’ is a grave error. Instead, Hazrat ‘Allama [Iqbal] presented the counter-proposal that the ‘ulcmai’ should be in Parliament as representatives of the people, so long as laws are made in an Assembly where the debate allows total freedom of opinion.

Thus the best and most perfect way is this: the ‘uhmm’ should retain its connection with the people, and [its members] should be sufficiently popular on the strength of their knowledge and wisdom and the power of their character and nature, that they will be voted into the elected Assembly.

** 7—Religion and Liberty

Mehdi Bazargan

Born into a devout family of merchants, Mehdi Bazargan (Iran, 1907–1995) was a Frenchtrained engineer, a lay Islamic scholar, and a long-time pro-democracy activist. A deputy prime minister when the nationalists came briefly to power in the early 1950s, Bazargan also participated with Ayatollah Mahmud Taleqani (chapter 3) and others in a reform movement in the early 1960s aimed at democratizing the Shi’i clerical establishment.[129] Bazargan was imprisoned several times during the 1960s and 1970s for his nonviolent opposition to the shah of Iran through groups such as the Liberation Movement of Iran, which he cofounded in 1961, and the Iranian Human Rights Association, which he cofounded in 1977. When the shah was forced out of Iran by revolution in 1979, Imam Ruhollah Khomeini appointed Bazargan as provisional prime minister, but he resigned within a year, complaining that radical clerics were undermining his government. He continued to serve in the Iranian parliament for several years, harassed by his radical opponents, then lived in a sort of political limbo until his death in early 1995, a barely tolerated symbol of opposition to the radical-lslamic government.[130]

<quote>

O Prophet, We have sent you as a witness and a bearer of happy tidings and an admonisher, and to call [men] to God by His leave, and as a lamp resplendent.

<right>

(Qur’an, Sura 33, Verse 45)[131]

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</quote>

*** The European Renaissance and the Church

In one of the nights of the month of Ramadan of 1981, we gathered in a friend’s house to break fast and hold vigil. On that occasion, an old friend and colleague of mine, Mr. ‘Ezzatallah Sahabi [Iran, born 1932], delivered a speech on the European origins of the notion of freedom.[132] He argued that the roots of modern liberalism lie in the 17th century, when the feudal governments of Europe were struggling to free themselves from the hegemony of the pope and the [Catholic Christian] church. In those days independent and sovereign nation-states did not exist. Every town or principality was under the tutelage of a lord or noble. These nobles and feudal rulers were, in turn, under the influence of the local priests and the Holy See of Rome. The most chaotic of these countries happened to be Italy. Here a philosopher emerged by the name of [Niccolo] Machiavelli [1469–1527], whose book The Prince outlined the philosophy that came to be known as Machiavellianism.[133]

Pursuant to the liberation of the states from the hegemony of the Catholic church and the pope, free and scientific thought sought to liberate itself from the terrible hegemony of the Inquisition. As a result, the hold of the religious tradition and authority over people’s thoughts and lives was loosened; but it took a toll on the lives of such great scientists as Galileo [Galilei, 1564–

1642]. Investigating minds and blossoming intellects could no longer suffer the rigidity, stagnation, and tyranny of the Catholic clergy.

The next step in the European Renaissance was the religious reformation and Protestantism that was ushered in under the leadership of Martin Luther (1483–1546), John Calvin (1509–1564), and others. Protestants rejected the superstitions and religious restrictions of Catholicism. They aimed to return Christianity to its pristine simplicity, spirituality, and liberty. The same was true of the quest for the freedom of art and culture.[134] The movement culminated in the quest for social and political liberties demanded by the great French Revolution (1789–1799) and other democratic regimes. The forerunners of this movement were [Jean-Jacques] Rousseau [1712–1778], [Francois-Marie] Voltaire [1694–1778], [Charles de Secondat, baron de] Montesquieu [1689–1755], and other Encyclopedists [French philosophers of the eighteenth century], who were generally anti-clerical, atheistic, or agnostic.

The speaker went on to propose that Western democracy and individual liberties, their service to human civilization and progress notwithstanding, have been incapable of responding to human needs, economic problems, and social inequities. Hence the advent of socialism, communism, and existentialism in the wake of nationalism and liberalism, and the indefatigable search for freedom and justice.

*** Religious Scholars[135] and Freedom

Let us return now to the original question: whether or not the liberal political and intellectual movement that triggered Europe’s great leap forward was an essentially anti-religious, anti-church, and anti-clerical movement.

We need to first explore the origins of the church’s opposition to freedom. The question is whether this antagonism was due to particular doctrinal and historical circumstances or a result of universal properties of all religions at all times. The answer seems simple enough. Setting aside the question of the truth and authenticity of religion, it seems reasonable to expect that God

who, by definition, is omniscient, omnipotent, sovereign, and aware of the good and evil is better qualified to judge what is proper for human beings than human beings themselves. Does this belief leave any other option for believers than unconditional surrender to God's will? Furthermore, the priests and church, considering themselves successors of Jesus and representatives of God—and any religious scholars who consider themselves custodians and guardians of the people of God—would necessarily expect the people to follow and revere them, and to subordinate reason and science to the revealed commandments.

You realize that this doctrine leaves no room for the freedom and will of the people to administer their own affairs and to question—much less reject—the representatives of God who claim immunity from error as successors to the Prophet. Thus it seems that human reason and religious rule are mutually exclusive. Contrary to the Prophet's words—"The government can survive unbelief but not injustice"—it seems that the absolute rule of religious scholars would be necessary for the salvation of society, unless society renounces religion altogether. Consequently, democracy, science, investigation, expertise, and erudition seem to be the necessary results of denouncing religion and the religious scholars, while the acceptance of the sovereignty of God and the stewardship on earth of the church or religious scholars would lead to tyranny, enslavement, inquisition,[136] and violence. Ironically, then, the "heavenly" rule of God on earth would require surveillance, censorship, arrest, and torture. Violence against insiders and outsiders alike would be deemed the very essence ofjustice and charity. In such a society, the minutest criticism, discord, and transgression in matters ritual, administrative, political, and even personal would be considered as a transgression against God and His representatives.

According to the foregoing account, religious governments, not unlike Marxist states, cannot tolerate the freedom of ideas and criticism. Free expression and assembly, as well as strikes or demonstrations would be unthinkable; and the ruling party's judgment and execution would be swift and categorical. Both religious and Marxist governments recognize freedom and rationality only for their docile followers. For everyone else, freedom signifies nothing but corruption, confusion, promiscuity, and denunciation of the ruling ideology and regime.

*** Freedom and Love

Not long ago in our country [Iran], parents used to tightly swaddle their infants (this practice may still persist in the countryside). The idea was to keep the baby from causing trouble and courting danger. In my father's household there was an old compassionate woman from the Kerman region by the name of Mirza Baji, may she rest in peace. She would teach us the recitation of the Qur'an and the prayers. She had many children, none of whom survived. After her children grew too old to be swaddled, she told us, she would tie them down with a piece of rope so they would not wander by the side of the pool and drown, or engage in dangerous games while she was away doing chores.

Restrictions, as this anecdote demonstrates, are not necessarily hostile measures. One should not attribute the oppressive rule of the medieval church entirely to ill- intent and enmity. Indeed, many of the fathers of the church seem to have been devout, kind, and innocent of abuse or arrogance. [137] It follows, then, that any religion and religious leadership that considers itself responsible for the realization of divine rule over the people, will of necessity become oblivious to human life, rights, and dignity, and will resort to coercion. This will eventually breed ignorance, slavery, and violence. People, in their turn, will sooner or later free themselves from the yoke of religious tyranny. Sometimes they do so without losing their basic belief in God, but often they end up hating religion along with the religious rulers.

That is why—throughout Western civilization, whether under democracy, fascism, or socialism—the idea of the separation of religion and state and the notion of the secular (that is, non-religious, and in a sense, anti-religious) form of government prevails. The more progressive the ideology, the more anti-religious the government.

*** What Divine Religion is Really Like

Now, the question is whether all of God’s emissaries, particularly the founders of Islam, approved of the medieval Christian practices. Are religion and freedom essentially mutually exclusive? Were God’s prophets instructed to instigate bloody revolutions on earth, beheading skeptics, destroying anti-revolutionaries, sowing the seeds of hatred and discord, and swaddling or tying down the youths in the schoolyard of religion, like our late Mirza Baji?

The Qur’an explains the mission of the prophets both directly, through commandments, and indirectly, through the explication of the general divine plan of creation. What we learn from the story of the prophets and our own slogan, “There is no god but God,” is that the mission of the prophets has been to liberate human beings, not to enslave them. But liberation from what and from whom?

First, from the idols or imagined gods, that is, from the illusion of idolatry. Second, from the deception of the devil, or the temptations of the flesh, and in a wider sense, from compulsive worship of worldly goods. Third, from religious imposters, false guardians of temples and religions who propagated idolatry and opposed the prophets. Fourth, from the kings, louts, and possessors of the power and the riches, and the oppressors of the time.

In Suras 7, 10, 11, 14, 21, 23, 26, 27, 29, 37, and others that recount the prophets’ struggles, we frequently find the supreme command, “O people of God, worship none other than God.” Noah stated: “Do not worship anyone but God.” [Sura 11, Verse 26] In suras such as 20 and 28 that speak specifically ofHazrat [his excellency] Moses, God commands Moses and Aaron to say to the pharaoh, “Send the Children of Israel with us (that we may take them to their own territory and nation), and do not oppress them.” ... They were not told to curse or humiliate him but to “speak to him gently, so he may take heed or come to have fear (of God and the consequences of His action).” [Sura 20, Verses 47, 44]

We are told, with regard to Satan: “Did I not commit you, O children of Adam, not to worship Satan who is your acknowledged foe?” (Sura 36, Verse 60) We are commanded to resist the tyrannical temptation of the flesh, and to reject the rule of tyrants: “And do not follow the squanderers.” And: “The patrons of

unbelievers are idols [and devils] who lead them from light into darkness. They are the residents of Hell, and will there for ever abide." (Sura 2, Verse 257)

God would not liberate us from the darkness and the tyrants to enslave us at the hand of His prophets and messengers. The Qur'an unequivocally announces: "There is no compulsion in religion." [Sura 2, Verse 256] It even urges the exalted Prophet [that is, Muhammad] not to worry about the derision and rejection of the idolaters and those who oppose him and indulge in sin: "And if your Lord had willed, all the people on the earth would have come to believe, one and all. Are you going to compel the people to believe except by God's dispensation?" (Sura 10, Verses [99–100]) In Sura 33, Verses 45–48, the Prophet's office is defined and limited to serving as witness and example, bearing glad tidings and admonishment, calling to God, and providing a guiding light. It recommends tolerance in the face of harassment of the infidels and the hypocrites and reliance upon God. You see, God Himself abhors the imposition and propagation of religion by force and coercive measures. Nor does he wish the instantaneous destruction of the unbelievers and the hypocrites.

Truly, there is a great difference between God's religion and the religion born of human illusion and ill-intent!

God not only leaves people free to be "either thankful or ungrateful" [Sura 76, Verse 3] and gives a grace period when they sin; He also assists believers and unbelievers alike on their chosen paths.[138]

God's relationship with people is not based on coercion, enslavement, enmity, or violence, but on freedom and love. With regard to virtues we have [the Qur'anic phrase] "God loves"; with regard to vices we have "God does not love." If we have troubles, they are the result of our own desires and deeds: "God did not surely wrong them, they wronged themselves." (Sura 9, Verse 70) Certainly there is accountability, but there is no pressure or coercion.

*** Satan and Freedom

You must wonder why God has given us permission to sin, and whether an Islamic government would give us such a permission! You would be even more astounded when you consider that God Himself created Satan. When Lucifer refused to follow God’s will and was expelled from the heaven, God gave him until Judgment Day to try to entice human beings to indulge in rebellion, destruction, and injustice.

The presence and influence of Satan on the human mind constitutes an opposing force or a counter-pole to the power of creation, reason, and prudence. It exposes us to temptation and confusion, that is, it forces us to question and to choose. Free will is a gift that God has endowed upon humanity. The question why humanity is blessed with such a gift cannot be addressed here in the detail it deserves. Suffice it to say that the ultimate reason and effect of this freedom is the realization of humankind’s status as “God’s steward” on earth. Freedom is essential for our creativity and spiritual evolution. Had free will been denied to us we would follow an inevitable path guided by animal instincts. Protected against doubt, we would remain as stationary in our position as ants, horses, and pigeons. Free will and liberty, fraught with weakness, confusion, and concerns as they are, provoke us to concentrate, think, decide, and move. As such, they are the tools of extraordinary evolution and progress among human beings as compared to animals. Reason, perception, will, and morality are all results of free will and liberty.

Freedom is God’s gift to His steward on earth, humankind. Whoever takes away this freedom is guilty of the greatest treason against humankind.[139]

*** Religion and Politics

We have stated that the confrontation of the medieval church and the liberation movements led to the separation of religion and politics in the West. This conflict also accounts for the widespread disenchantment of intellectuals and scientists from religion, which has continued well into the

20th century. The situation has been totally different in the Islamic world.

Among Sunni Muslims [the majority sect in Islam] and under the [Sunni] caliphs, government dominated religion and the religious scholars. The caliphs were the religious as well as the temporal leaders of the society. They were the ones who designated leaders of the Friday prayers, governors, and ministers. Judges too were either appointed by the caliphs, or incapable of challenging their rule. The caliphs were commanders in chief, supreme judges, and treasurers. They considered themselves the embodiment of the Qur'anic verse: "O believers, obey God, and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you." (Sura 4, Verse 62) They thus claimed to be absolute sovereigns and autocrats. The farther we get from the early days of Islam, the more we encounter this kind of tyranny. After the "rightful caliphs" [the first four caliphs of Islam], the right of citizens to criticize and disagree with their leader was abrogated.

Among the Shi'i scholars it was different different. As long as they were an oppressed minority, they did not address questions of government and political rule. In the wake of the rebellions against the Umayyad and 'Abbasid caliphs [reigned 661–750 and 750–1258, respectively], and in the course of the gradual independence from the regime of Baghdad, the Sunni and the Shi'i governments in Iran reverted to the ancient regime of absolute monarchy. Although a number of monarchs, such as Mahmud Ghaznavi [971–1030] or the Deylamis [also known as Buyids], Safavis, and Qajars [Persian dynasties, reigned 945–1055, 1502–1736, and 1794–1925, respectively] were religious-minded and ostentatiously righteous, and although they generally held religious scholars in high esteem, religion and politics remained, for all intents and purposes, separate. The leaders of the Shi'i religion were independent of the state and inattentive to social, administrative, and political affairs. They received their tithes and other religious contributions directly from the people and the merchants. Up until the Iranian Constitutional Revolution [1906], religious scholars seldom engaged in juridical functions. A handful of them executed religious penalties within their jurisdiction. However, they largely concerned themselves with education, scholarship, and the issuing of edicts. Since the supreme religious leaders were the recipients of many complaints from the people, they would occasionally protest and lecture the government, or else, they would briefly

interfere in the executive functions of the state. Other than these episodic events though, the separation of the religion and politics remained a practical reality. Even in our days, the religious handbooks known as “Explanation of Questions”[140] devote entire chapters to the ritual details of prayers, fasts, and pilgrimages to Mecca, but ignore discussion of morality and education, much less social and political issues.[141] Kings had no right to interfere in the affairs of religion, and religious scholars did not concern themselves with the affairs of government.

Religious scholars had a prominent, if temporary and partial, role in the Constitutional Revolution. They helped draft the constitution and participated in the first terms of parliament, and in the ministries of education and justice. But they soon withdrew. In the struggles after September 11, 1941 [the installation of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi by the British], in the nationalist movement and the nationalization of the oil industry [in 1951], only a handful of religious scholars were enthusiastically engaged. In the wake of the coup d’etat of August 19, 1953, and in the activities of the movement of national resistance, these gentlemen had a limited role and little aspiration for leadership.[142]

After [the religious protests of] June 5, 1963, the “Movement of the Religious Scholars,” with the decisive and unequivocal arrival of Imam [Ruhollah] Khomeini [1902–1989] on the scene of struggle and politics, seized the initiative and leadership of the [1979 Iranian] revolution and the Islamic Republic [instituted in 1979]. Young religious scholars, politically active intellectuals, and revolutionary seminary students were particularly attuned to his message. The separation of religion and state, explicitly rejected in the struggles of nationalists as well as Islamic intellectuals since the 1940s, was condemned and nullified during the [1979] revolution. The doctrine of “Mandate of the Jurisprudent” was explicitly introduced into the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a paramount principle. The religious scholars cast their shadow upon the government.

The “Mandate of the Jurisprudent” or the sovereignty of religious scholars that is now being propagated with the help of the state propaganda, is an important and subtle issue that needs to be scrutinized from religious, legal, historical, social, and political viewpoints. It should be implemented in such a

way as not to violate the authenticity of Islam and human freedom, as outlined in the Qur’an and the tradition.

*** Religion and the Nation

Let me now turn to the question of the relationship of religion to government and, by implication, the question of Islamic government.

The relationship of God and people has been outlined. We have established that the monotheistic religions and Islam, in particular, have lavished great respect and care on individual rights. They all consider mankind as free, responsible, and autonomous. The question is whether an Islamic government would set certain limits on individual and group freedom; or whether it would sanction unconstrained liberty? If there is to be a measure of constraint and discipline, then how and by whom would it be implemented?

The Qur’an and sunna [the practice of the Prophet] clearly answer this question. With regard to the essence and precepts of religion and the laws of creation, God is the only lawgiver: “There is no rule but that which belongs to God.” From this point of view, the prophets and holy books explicate the evolutionary path and fundamental imperatives that God has laid out for humanity. They inform us of our final destiny and responsibilities. The exalted Prophet did not consult anyone concerning divine commandments. Muslims, the people of the book, the hypocrites, and the idolaters were equally excluded from the sacred realm of revelation: “a Book whose verses are set clear and distinct, which comes from God most wise and all-knowing” (Sura 11, Verse 1); and elsewhere: “So judge between them in the light of what has been revealed by God, and do not follow their whims[…].” (Sura 5, Verse [<verbatim>49</verbatim>]) In a country with an Islamic government, God is the undisputed and absolute sovereign: “Have they taken others beside Him as protectors? It is God who protects; it is He who gives life to the dead, for He has power over every thing. In whatever matter you disagree the ultimate judgment rests with God.” (Sura 42, Verses [9–10]) The world-view and the ideology, the philosophical anthropology, and the constitutional laws—that is, the foundations of the government—should

be based on, and inspired by the Book and sunna. Ordinary laws, too, should not contradict those ordinances. It is entirely proper, even necessary, that the parliament of an Islamic country is comprised of people's representatives who are acquainted with the tenets of Islam, and who are God-fearing, reasonable, prudent, and trustworthy; so they legislate in accordance with Islam's fundamental tenets and ultimate goals. (Iran's previous constitution [of 1906] stipulated that five first-tier religious scholars, selected by the religious leadership, should be present to ascertain that the laws were in accordance with religious principles. However, this provision was never implemented.)

But as regards the administration of the country, the text of the Qur'an undeniably proposes that the affairs and governance of the nation be based on shura [consultation]. In Sura Shura (Sura 42), Verses [36–38] and 41–43 describe the commonwealth of the faithful as solidary and cooperative, in keeping with the motto "their affairs (the management of affairs) are settled (by) consultation among them." (Sura 42, Verse 38)[143] Even the Prophet himself, who was the fulcrum of revelation and the beloved of the faithful was ordered to "take counsel with them in the affair" (Sura 3, Verse [<verbatim>159</verbatim>]) even with the rude individuals at the bottom of society who sought pardon upon the exposure of their transgression.

The practice of the Prophet and 'Ali [ibn Abi Talib, the Prophet's son-in-law, reigned 656–661], who consulted their disciples and followers and implemented the majority's opinion, even where it was against their own convictions,[144] is a clear illustration of the Islamic system of government. It signifies the principle of people's participation in their own affairs, their self-determination, and, to use the contemporary parlance, the national sovereignty. The hadith [tradition of the Prophet] that states: "Every one of you is a shepherd (of the community), and all are responsible for their dependents and herd," also expressed a reciprocal social responsibility and public involvement, and in a different manner announced the principle of democracy, "sovereignty of the people over the people" (11 centuries before Europe). Islamic government cannot help but be at once consultative, democratic, and divinely inspired.

Thus, in Islamic government the relations among individuals and the administration of society are predicated upon relative shared freedom and mutual responsibility. The religious duty to “call others to virtue and to warn them against vice,” to stand for justice and truth, presuppose freedom of opinion and criticism. It is the same for [the duty of] guiding the perplexed, educating the ignorant, defending the oppressed, and finally advocating truth, patience, and mercy, which appears throughout the Qur’an, the sunna, and the prayers.[145] In emphasizing the freedom of expression and belief, it is enough to listen to the opinions of others and select the best of them.…[146] Islam permits difference of opinions even within the realm of the tenets of religion, let alone in administrative and governmental issues. Shi’i theology, under the rubric of ijtihad [Islamic interpretation], has left the gate of such debates open until the end of the time and the resurrection of the messiah (may God hasten his rise). This has been the Shi’i position throughout history.

There are two issues that need to be clarified at this juncture: Whether following a religious authority or a “source of imitation” in the Shi’i faith means blind and unquestioning emulation, and more importantly, whether the opponents of Islam and the opponents of Islamic government have the right to express their opinions. Concerning the first issue, it should be stated that, based on the Qur’anic verses and Islamic commandments, the relationship between God and the people is direct and unmediated. The role of the prophets, Imams [in Shi’i theology, the infallible heirs of the Prophet], and infallible saints is merely to call people toward God and to make them responsible before Him.[147] There is no doubt that one should learn from those who are better informed and more virtuous. But this does not mean relinquishing individual responsibility and free will. The Qur’an states: “Do not follow that of which you hast no knowledge. Verily the ear, the eye, the heart, each will be questioned.” (Sura 17, Verse 36) In a similar vein, the Ruler of the Faithful [‘Ali] advises his governor in Egypt: “Never use the excuse that you are just obeying orders with closed eyes. You are personally responsible before God.” Also, the Prophet is quoted as having said: “There is no obedience of a mortal in disobedience of God.” ‘Ali even held his subjects (that is, citizens) responsible for advice and sympathetic criticism of their leaders.

The second issue is more delicate. Unfortunately our Shi’i jurisprudence and religious scholars, having been excluded from governmental affairs in the past, have not elaborated on the principles and rules of Islamic government, or the limits of freedoms such as are discussed these days. Thus it is hard to provide a definitive answer to this question. While religious manuals and books have sometimes discussed these issues ... Shi’i scholars have generally ignored these issues. We have one book, Tanbih al-umma va tanzih al-milla (A Reminder and a Cleansing for the Faithful), by Mr. [Muhammad Husayn] Na’ini [1860–1936], and other lectures and books after September 1941.[148] Furthermore, there is no practical model for a flawless Islamic government, except for the 10 years of the exalted Prophet’s rule in Medina, peace be upon him [622–632]; five years of the tumultuous rule of ‘Ali [656–661]; and the five months’ rule of Imam Hasan [son of ‘Ali, 661], culminating in a peace treaty with Mu’awiya [reigned 661–680]. It is indisputable, though, that the struggles and the mission of all prophets, including those of the last Prophet, involved debating the idolaters and enemies.

They heard their opponents’ arguments calmly and never heaped invectives and threats on them. They tolerated and welcomed debate. This was the practice of the Prophet of Islam, when he was weak in Mecca as well as when he was strong in Medina. The Qur’an commanded him to be kind and tolerant. Verses revealed in Medina bid the Prophet to give refuge to the idolaters who were in a state of war with him, so they would have an opportunity to hear God’s message. If they were not persuaded, then they were to be returned, unharmed, to their homes.[149] The infallible Imams debated a host of critical, even derisive opponents. Nevertheless, they never mistreated or abused them in any way. The leader of the faithful [‘Ali] during his rule waived the oath of allegiance and those who refused it continued to enjoy full civil rights and privileges. He did not banish the “hypocritical” groups, even though he was aware of their conspiracies and enmity. All his battles were defensive. He never initiated a battle. Nor did he ever tire of admonishing his enemies. The extent of freedom of opinion and criticism in the early days of Islam was such that when the second caliph, ‘Umar [ibn al-Khattab, reigned 634–644], asked during a public address, that the faithful correct him if he ever wanders from the straight path, an ordinary citizen rose and told the short-tempered commander: “If you wander from the straight path I will straighten you with my sword!”

Certainly apostasy—that is, the denial of God and departure from the nation of Islam—has a severe penalty, up to and including death. Professor Marcel Boisard, professor of the college of law at Geneva and author of the book LHumanisme de l'Islam (The Humanism of Islam), suggests that the cause of this severity may have had to do with the political aspect of the act, not the religious nature of it.

The most regrettable consequence of wrapping personal opinions and political and administrative decisions in the garb of religiosity and then presenting them as pure Islam is that to oppose these decisions would be to fight with God! In this manner, the inevitable blending of politics and spirituality exposes Islamic society to the tyranny of the medieval church, with the concomitant eclipse of freedom, truth, virtue, progress, health, and prosperity. In the words of the exalted Prophet: "A community in which the rights of the weak cannot be enjoyed without a stuttering tongue (a certain difficulty and fear) will never be cleansed of corruption." ...

Islam—based on the Qur'anic principle, "Some of us should not take others as our guardians"—recognizes no person, whether actual or legal, as an absolute sovereign qualified to usurp the divine rights of human beings to freedom and honor.

The Qur'an declares: "You have indeed a noble example in the Prophet of God." (Sura 33, Verse 21) It is edifying to note his protective attitude and behavior toward individuals, even the Hypocrites. In a dark and inclement night, the Prophet, peace be upon him, while returning from the battle of Tabuk, reached a dangerous precipice. Accidentally (or miraculously!) a flash of lightning revealed a group of the Hypocrites, who were lurking to scare the Prophet's camel and send him hurtling to the bottom of the valley. Although this conspiracy was foiled, the Prophet did not publicize the conspirators' plans and did not seek revenge. He even made the camel driver Huzayfa ibn Yaman, who had witnessed the event, take an oath not to recount the event for as long as he lived. Another tradition has it that the son of 'Abdallah ibn Ubai [died 631], the leader of the Hypocrites, who had caused numerous problems for the Prophet and his companions, came to the Prophet and

asked for permission to kill his own father. The Prophet reminded him that he was duty-bound to respect and protect his father at all times. ‘Abdallah, however, continued to conspire against the Prophet until the end of his life. After ‘Abdallah’s death, the Prophet said, “Had God not commanded it, I would not pray on his body.”[150] “You have indeed a noble example in the Prophet of God”!

**** Freedom as a Vital Necessity for Government and Religion

Let me reiterate: freedom means freedom to oppose, criticize, and object—even if the criticism is untrue and unjust. Where there is freedom there are opponents and currents that disturb routine stability and normalcy. Otherwise, freedom would be meaningless and useless.

This notion of freedom is hard for many zealous—if sincere—people to digest, as they consider such a freedom unwise and deleterious to the survival of the nascent Islamic Republic [of Iran]. They may even consider it a blunder on their part to have allowed this notion of freedom to prevail in the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

However, omniscient, compassionate God has not only sanctioned freedom in many affairs, he has made it the very foundation of survival and revival in the world. Let me elaborate on this point.

*** Opposition, the Cause of Movement and Life

In general, an object in a given force field will, of necessity, behave in a calculable and predictable way. For any object, whether a stone, a plant, or a human society, force means movement. For example, a piece of metal that is released within earth’s gravitational field will fall in a straight line. Its position and velocity are calculable at every moment. Similarly, the behavior of a human being who is motivated only by the demands of his or her appetite is predictable. However, if in the place of one force, two or more forces are introduced—for example if a powerful magnet is placed in the path of the

falling piece of metal—its trajectory and velocity will change. It will, to use a poetic expression, be freed from the slavery of a single cause of motion. The scenario is most intriguing when the affected object has the power to choose its level of susceptibility to the external influences. That is, when it has “free will.” In this case, the person whose choice is not readily predicable and calculable for others—or even for oneself—could be said to possess “free will.”

Therefore, freedom requires, as the case of Satan’s temptations teach us, the existence of an oppositional force, along with a power of choice on behalf of the individual or the society. Opposition promulgates movement and change, which may, in turn, lead to decline or progress, depending on the choice of the agent involved.

Motion and change in the case of inanimate objects, even constructed objects such as machines, lead to erosion and deterioration (in the jargon of thermodynamic theory, the increase of entropy). In other words, inanimate objects aim at final rest and quiet.

However, objects endowed with life, particularly human beings, thrive on movement and opposition. They acquire new capabilities and aptitudes and accumulate experience and virtue because of opposition and change. Movement, a result of need, agitation, and love, is a blessing and a source of survival and evolution, while rigidity is a cause of stasis, decline, and death. Animals and human beings, once they feel need, danger, or attraction, tend to move, willy-nilly, either toward the object of their desire or away from the source of danger. Therefore, without opposition, as a source of motivation or agitation there would be no progress.[151] The oppositional motivator can lead to reform and revival.[152]

Our Islamic Revolution, our nationalist struggles, revivalist Islamic associations and movements, the earlier Constitutional Revolution of Iran—the awakening and activism of the Eastern countries in general after several

hundred years of slumber and humiliation—were all the result of the encounter with Western civilization. The wondrous European Renaissance too was a result of conflicts, dissatisfactions, and objections to medieval Christian hegemony.

Similarly, the missions of the prophets were in the past the source of conflicts that revolutionized towns and tribes that were wallowing in the darkness of idolatry and the cesspool of corruption and inequity.

Conflict, one of whose quintessential representations for human beings is Satan, is the cause of a plethora of blessed events, from the natural cycle of life here on earth to the higher cycle of resurrection in the hereafter. The Qur'an frequently compares the colossal events of Judgment Day with seasonal rain and the revival of life on earth. Rain itself is the result of atmospheric disturbances and opposing forces of cold and warm weather systems. The science of meteorology has established, through hourly reports from weather stations, that rain-bearing continental weather fronts are comprised of successive fronts of dense clouds. These clouds are the result of expanding, rising, and condensing warm tropical weather and its collision with the cold and heavy weather systems that flow from the northern regions. The heavy winds occupy the lower areas and push the warm humid weather up.[153]

*** The Opponents of Freedom

The opponents of freedom resort to the adage: "A head that does not ache does not need to be wrapped." Their argument goes like this: We know we are on the true path. We believe in Islam and possess good will and proper judgment. What need is there for further inquiry and learning? We can simply devote ourselves, body and soul, to the realization of the true doctrine. The entire nation and its leadership support this endeavor. Why should we let the enemies of God and the republic, the supporters of America, or those who do not follow our line—in short, people of suspicious intent or judgment—to muddy the waters, confuse minds, disturb society, and weaken the government? Such freedom and criticism will provide fodder for foreign radio propaganda which will, in turn, cause our youth to hesitate or deviate from

the straight path. It is thus better to remove all the impediments from the path of the revolution and to conduct our affairs quickly and effectively—that is, without the nagging distractions of free expression and opposition.

These gentlemen, even if they are sincere, are deluded and naive about their own monopoly of the truth and about the notion of freedom. Freedom is not a luxury; it is a necessity. When freedom is banished, tyranny will take its place.

In the first place, those whose belief system is based on reason and truth are not afraid of opponents' criticism and propaganda. In the words of Sa'di [Persian poet, 1184–1292], "He who has clear accounts, has no fear of accountants."

Secondly, freedom of expression, opposition, and criticism awakens the negligent and holds back treason, monopoly, and tyranny. If the objections are unjustified, let the accused respond and thus dispel the clouds of suspicion and slander. This will strengthen the national resolve. The Qur'an considers such examinations as the means of separating the good from the bad.[154] Conversely, suppression of freedom is an indication of a fundamental weakness or flaw in the government's intentions or actions. Consider the following Qur'anic debate: a believer in the pharaoh's family reasons with his affluent and powerful kin to listen to the message of Moses: "If he is a liar, his lie will be his own loss; but in case he speaks the truth, some of what he predicts will befall you." (Sura 40, Verse 28) In response, the pharaoh reiterates the argument of all dictators, tyrants, and zealots: "I show you only what I see (is right); and guide you but to the right path." [Sura 40, Verse 29] How can people exercise their religious obligation to call others to virtue and to warn them against vice in an Islamic society, without the freedom of conscience and expression, and in the absence of political and legal security? These are duties that Muslims are recommended to fulfill lest evil-doers dominate them and their prayers remain unanswered.

Thus the survival of a just system and its progress on the path of virtue and excellence is guaranteed by the freedom of expression and legal opposition. The protection of religion against abuse, ignorance, superstition, and

deviance, too, requires that the mace of excommunication and compulsion be removed from society and the media. It is necessary to avoid painting a varnish of religiosity and godliness on human affairs, save that which necessarily and authentically belongs to religion. It is also necessary that some room is left for reflection and maneuver in all debates.

We have established, under the rubric of “Religion and Nation,” that God addresses people themselves immediately and directly, without intermediaries. Everyone is directly responsible, and people’s reason, knowledge, thought, perception, reflection, and will are the ultimate arbiter. We have the Qur’anic injunction, “If you do not know, then ask the keepers of (knowledge and) remembrance,” (Sura 21, Verse 7) which indicates that it is proper to inquire, and to augment one’s knowledge. In the meantime, the Qur’an has envisioned, without censure, the existence and expression of disagreements and differences of opinion among the faithful. It recommends the disagreements with the rulers to be referred to the Prophet and to God; which in our days, would mean the body of religious knowledge.[155]

Disagreement becomes unacceptable and disruptive only when it takes place at the executive level and when the responsible managers, instead of harmony and disciplined cooperation, engage in discord and in-fighting, each playing their own tune and doing their own thing. The principle of division of powers and their mutual non-interference and orderly checks and balances pervades Iran’s old and new constitutions, and those of other parliamentary democratic systems. People and their representatives have a right to discuss, investigate, supervise, and decide public affairs within certain limits and without interfering in the progress, rigor, and effective management of the executive affairs as determined by the legislature. And now let me address the questions that were posed earlier:

*** The First Question

Has Islam abandoned people to do whatever they please? Is there no responsibility and restraint in this world?

Being free and autonomous is one thing, and being responsible for one's beliefs and actions quite another. God has given us freedom of opinion and action within certain parameters, but He has given us plenty of warning through His messengers and holy books, that rebellion, disbelief, and injustice will have dire results that will follow from our actions both in this life and in the hereafter. The consequences may be heeded and avoided beforehand, or they may be understood only after they have materialized, as stated in Sura 30, Verse [<verbatim>41</verbatim>]: "Corruption has spread over land and sea from what men have done (and do) themselves that (God may let) them taste a little bit of what they have done: They may come back [to the right path]."

God bestows both freedom and guidance concerning the consequences of actions. His mercy is infinite and His vengeance great. Thus freedom exists; so do responsibility and restraint. The choice is ours.

*** The Second Question

Should the Islamic government and the religious scholars in the leadership not check crime and treason? Should chaos and license rule?

First, the issue of individual liberty in violation of others' rights has been addressed in the first question. Absolute freedom of choice, as we understand it in the Qur'an, prevails in the relationship of God and man—not in that of society and the individual, where mutual rights and responsibilities are at stake. God may forgive transgression against His laws but, as we know, God cannot forgive people for transgressing against the rights of people. We do not enjoy the same level of freedom in our dealings with other people as we do in our personal relationship with God.

Second, religious scholars, as religious scholars, have no rights or responsibilities save those delegated to them within the democratic system of the Islamic government.

Third, self-defense and the prevention of injustice and corruption in an Islamic society are not only warranted but required. The principle of “neither inflicting nor suffering harm” is paramount in Islam, both on the individual and the societal level. Since everyone is entitled to enjoy a measure of freedom and honor, the freedom of all is necessarily limited. Furthermore, being a beneficiary of social privileges creates mutual responsibilities that the Islamic government, derived from people’s will, is duty-bound to supervise.

The details of this issue and the form of intervention of the state and participation of the people, which should be exercised with utmost justice and mercy, are a separate discussion that should be analyzed under the rubric of Islamic government.

** 8—Christian-Muslim Democracy

Dimasangcay A. Pundato

Muslims are a minority of under 10 percent in the Philippines, concentrated largely on the island of Mindanao. The Moro National Liberation Front, the largest organization representing the Muslims, has waged a war of independence since the 1970s. In 1982, the Reformist Group headed by Dimasangcay A. Pundato (Philippines, born 1947) broke from the front, objecting to the undemocratic internal structure of the movement and the socialist leanings of the movement’s leaders, and accepting autonomy rather than independence as the goal of the movement.[156] In the mid-1980s, the Reformist Group joined other pro-democracy forces in peaceful protest against the dictatorship. When the dictatorship fell in 1986, the Reformist Group, along with other Muslim groups such as the United Muslim Democrats of the Philippines, worked with the government to improve the position of

Muslims in the Philippines, while the MNLF resumed its war of independence. In the speech and letter published here, Pundato explains his commitment to the democratic process and urges even closer cooperation among Christians and Muslims.

*** Making International Politics More Humane

Peace be upon all of you!

Let me recall the peroration of a speech delivered before the 94th American Newspaper Publishers Association Convention in Honolulu, Hawaii, on August 24, 1980:

<quote>

I ask you, publishers of America, to please help us open the eyes of your policymakers. Democracy is still the wave of the future. Help us make it less bloody to ride with the wave.

</quote>

The speech demolished the pretensions of the erstwhile dictator of the Philippines, who had gone to Hawaii with a grand entourage to address that convention.

It was the dictator who was originally the only one invited to explain the situation in the Philippines.

When the organizers of the convention discovered an unfilled time slot in the program, they asked the speaker to address them.

The speaker was then in self-imposed exile in the United States, waging a campaign for freedom and democracy for the Philippines. He was carrying on the tradition of the Filipino intellectuals and propagandists in Spain and Europe towards the end of the 19th century who were fighting for reforms in the Philippines, then a colony of Spain.

The speaker was Raul S. Manglapus [Philippines, born 1918]. That his efforts, together with thousands of Filipino exiles and immigrants to the United States, were efficacious is borne by the fact that the Philippines, after the glorious non-violent People Power Revolution in 1986, is once again a free and democratic republic. Today, as chairman of the Center for Christian-Muslim Democracy, he is the host of this conference.

Similarly, there were Muslim Filipinos waging a campaign for freedom and democracy for the Muslims in the Philippines. I was among the Muslim idealists shuttling between the Philippines and other parts of Asia, the Middle East, and the United States, seeking support for our armed resistance and economic sanctions against the Philippines to hasten the crumbling down of the dictatorship.

As Secretary Manglapus pointed out in one of his speeches in the United States, the Muslims battling the dictatorship were inspired by the Qur’anic precepts on freedom and democracy.

Though the Christian opposition and the Muslim rebels were not formally coordinated along organizational lines, theirs were parallel moves. Their Holy Books, the Bible and the Qur’an, provided the foundation for such commitments.

In 1985, the Reformist Group of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), of which I am Chairman, giving substance to this thesis, entered into a

Memorandum of Agreement with the Ninoy Aquino Movement to work jointly for freedom and democracy in the Philippines.

This turned out later to be the first-ever formal agreement forged between a Moro front and a Filipino movement based in the United States.

Earlier in time, however, in 1982, at a meeting in Singapore with the Filipino martyr Ninoy Aquino [1932–1993], we renewed our commitment to support his struggle for the restoration of democracy in the Philippines. That he did not live long enough to see the full flowering of his vision gives us pain, yet we feel consoled that he did not die in vain.

I must modestly admit that our efforts evinced some fruition. A number of structural reforms affecting Muslims were introduced in the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Treatment of, and attitude towards, Muslims have generally improved.

The creation of the Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA) which vastly improved the strengthening of Muslim cultural practices and traditional institutions in the Philippines had somehow provided a sustaining force to further buttress this recognition.

It is under the regime of President Corazon Aquino [1986–1992] that the Muslim Filipinos were able to fully appreciate the realization of one of their aspirations as a people: that of the total implementation of the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines, when President Aquino appointed more shari’a [Islamic law] judges and directed the conduct of shari’a training seminars and the administration of the Shari’a Bar Examinations this year.

Even the participation of our country in international Qur’an reading competitions has been expanded. While before, our participation in such assemblies was limited to the one being regularly held in Malaysia, under our

present dispensation we are also participating in the Qur’an reading competition in Bangkok, Thailand, and in Jakarta, Indonesia.

More than ever, the conduct of the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia has been so well co-ordinated. The Department of Foreign Affairs and other agencies of government have been actively involved in this yearly affair.

More, however, has to be done for the Muslims. Thus, under the mandates of the 1987 Constitution, an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was organized. Today, the Autonomous Region has gradually but steadily been addressing the administrative needs and development requirements of the region.

In many colleges and universities offering political science courses throughout the world, in scholarly journals, in the popular press, there is a perceptible timidity in articulating how deeply anchored democracy is in Islamic Law.

Even in countries like Pakistan that have adopted the Western manifestation of democracy, that is, relying on suffrage for legitimizing or changing leaders, there is only a minimal resort to the ideological claim that Islam not only allows democracy but in fact prescribes and enjoins it. The silence suggests there is general acceptance that the practice of democracy was an inheritance from its association with Great Britain rather than the carrying out, though in Western form, of an Islamic precept.

The debate in Pakistan that singularly stood out with a touch of Islamic ideology was on the status of women: whether in an Islamic society a woman can be elected Head of State. Those in favor had recourse to Sura 2, Verse 228, of the Glorious Qur’an, that serves as foundation for democracy:

<quote>

And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable. Never will I suffer to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. To men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn.

</quote>

In a brief but masterly discourse in Marawi City, Philippines, on his conferment of an honorary Doctor of Laws at the Mindanao State University on May 6, 1976, Dr. Hassan ‘Abdallah A. Sheikh [born 1934], Saudi Arabian Minister of Education, disproved those disparaging “Islamic law as not fit for ruling and guiding societies.”

He said that “to understand the extent of dignity and freedom granted by Islam to its followers, it would be wise to briefly mention some of the modern articles that comprise the Human Rights Declaration adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948.”

Then he cited and explicated verses of the Qur’an and passages from the sunna [practice] of the Prophet to illustrate that the modern call for freedom and dignity was vouchsafed by Islamic law centuries earlier.

Observers must not be taken too much by forms in the assessment of democracy in Islamic countries because democracy is covered by Sura 42, Verse 38, of the Holy Book: “Those ... who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation....” Leaders are urged to seek counsel from the wise. This is the essence of SuraAl-Shura [Sura 42], Verse 36, of the Qur’an, and I quote:

<quote>

Pass over (their faults) and ask for (God’s) forgiveness for them, and consult them in affairs (of moment). Then, when those (have) taken a decision, put thy trust in God.

</quote>

Today, when Eastern Europe, the USSR, and China are in the grip of democratic fervor, in many instances toppling communist regimes outright, it seems it is easier to hold that democracy is more germane to them than in Islamic countries or countries with predominantly Muslim populations. The democratic wave is irresistible.

Earlier, some countries in Western Europe and Latin America restored democracy in their system. In celebration and to bear witness to the significance of such a tide, a conference on newly-restored democracy was held in Manila, Philippines, in June 1988.

It is safe to say that over three-fifths, perhaps even four-fifths, of the world's populations are Christians and Muslims. To grasp an idea of how numerous Muslims are, consider that China and the USSR each have at least over 100 million Muslims in their midst.

I think that this conference is the first, or at least one of the first, held to begin seeing in the proper international perspective how powerful, creative and human Christian-Muslim Democracy is.

If political movements and governments are formed by religious values that affirm dignity and freedom, values enshrined in the Holy Books, the Bible and the Qur'an, our world would be a kinder, more generous, progressive, dynamic and peaceful world.

Islam is "Heaven's message to all mankind, Arabs, non-Arabs, wealthy or poor, black or white." And it precisely admits a bond with Christianity, which shares similar principles and roots with it. Thus, the Qur'an in SuraAl-'Imran [Sura 3], Verse 84, states:

<quote>

Say ye: We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord; we make no difference between one another of them; and we bow to God (in Islam).

</quote>

Certainly more research and exchange of views between Christian and Muslim Democrats are in order. Experiments on the juxtaposition of the democratic underpinnings of the two religions are essential. And such experiments are best effected not only in the quiet of the library but in actual maneuvering in the political arena.

Thus, the formation of the United Muslim Democrats of the Philippines was keenly followed by some Christian and Muslim groups in Indonesia.

It is true, Christians in the predominantly Muslim population of Indonesia are not discriminated against in appointments to high civilian and military positions. But the possibility of actually organizing a similar party in Indonesia compelled them to serious thought, and how they plied with questions the Filipinos who attended the religious leaders' conference on national development.

The members of the European community, essentially Christians, are familiar with the Muslim world.

Some have deeply imbibed the Islamic culture—for example, Spain—because of long historical association. Some have fought against it, as in the Crusades. Some have colonized portions of it, and even as de-colonization has become a reality, their links are as firm as ever because millions from former colonies have settled in Europe. I understand there are at least three million in France. There is a vast reservoir of knowledge of the Muslim world and Islam in the European community.

I think, however, that the impetus for the study of Christian-Muslim Democracy as an aid to making international politics more humane and attuned to the raising of the dignity and freedom of the individual is undeniably ardent in this part of the world. But to paraphrase a Christian acceptance of a sad predicament, the intellect and the morale are willing, but the resources are weak.

In the manner of Raul S. Manglapus speaking before the American Newspaper Publishers Association, but admittedly with less eloquence,

<quote>

I ask you, members of the European community: please help us in our endeavor to plumb the depth of Christian-Muslim Democracy. Christian-Muslim Democracy is the Wave of the Future. Help us spread it wide and fast so more may happily ride with the wave.

</quote>

And finally, allow me to close this note with Sura 49, Verse 13, of the Glorious Qur’an, and I quote:

<quote>

Mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other, not that ye may despise (each other).

</quote>

Peace be upon you. Thank you.

*** Letter to Secretary Manglapus

Dear Secretary Manglapus: Last June 9 [1990], at the conference on “Christian-Muslim Democracy: Wave of the Future,” I was very elated to affirm with Her Excellency, President Corazon C. Aquino, together with Honorable Siegbert Alber, Honorable Gunter Rinsche, Honorable Carlos Robles-Piquer, Honorable Gabriele Sboarina (all of the European Parliament), and Honorable Exequiel B. Javier, Mr. Amado Luis Lagdameo, and yourself, our shared commitment to freedom, justice and democracy.

I decided then to seek membership in the Center for Christian-Muslim Democracy, though not in the manner of Saul who underwent a conversion and became St. Paul, because I needed no conversion as far as dedication to freedom and democracy is concerned.

I, in fact, joined the Muslim armed rebellion when the dictatorship that was toppled in 1986 trampled freedom and democracy underfoot in southern Philippines. And later, when I was based abroad, I signed agreements for a joint struggle against the dictatorship with Christian groups who had similar commitments to democracy and freedom.

The Center, I believe, is the best entity to study and spread the creative force of the ideology of Christian-Muslim democracy.

The MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) Reformist Group counts at least 16,000 members and a far larger number of sympathizers. I will not be so presumptuous as to aver that by a unilateral decree, all of them would be instant adherents of Christian-Muslim Democracy. While I could claim their loyalty, I must admit I would have to explain to a sizeable portion of them this twin-ideology which I believe would be the most puissant guiding force to lift this country from its general malaise and the quagmire of indirection.

But I know enough of leadership to know of their longing for hope and stability, know enough of their rational capacity to expect that, afforded sufficient enlightenment, they would be as staunch believers of Christian-Muslim Democracy as I am.

And from their eventual advocacy and day-to-day affirmation and living out of the ideology of Christian-Muslim Democracy, I trust the larger Muslim community would be one with them in this inspiring ideology rooted in the Holy Qur’an and the Holy Bible.

Signed, Dimasangcay A. Pundato, June 12, 1991

** 9—Participation in Non-Islamic Government

Rachid Ghannouchi

Rachid Ghannouchi (Tunisia, born 1941) received a philosophy degree at the University of Damascus and, after a year of study in France, returned to Tunisia in 1969 as a high school teacher. The following year, Ghannouchi helped to establish a reformist movement that opposed the secular socialism of the ruling party in Tunisia and proffered a modernist interpretation of Islam. This movement, formalized as the Islamic Tendency Movement—now called the Renaissance party—grew to become the leading political opposition in Tunisia, and Ghannouchi its leading figure. After a decade in and out of prison for his political activities, Ghannouchi left Tunisia for Europe in the early 1990s. While similar movements elsewhere in North Africa have turned to armed revolt and antidemocratic rhetoric, Ghannouchi continues to resist radicalization.[157] In this paper, Ghannouchi argues for democratic power-sharing as a nonviolent means to effect a transition to Islamic rule.

*** Introduction

This paper attempts to answer the question related to the position of Islam regarding the participation of its followers in establishing or administering a non-Islamic regime.

Prior to attempting to provide an answer to this question certain facts need to be underlined:

First: the fact that a concept for an Islamic government does exist, and that it is the religious duty of Muslims, both individuals and groups, to work for the establishment of such a government.

Second: the fact that such an Islamic government, in the circumstances under discussion, is nonexistent, and that had it been in existence, a Muslim would have no option but to support it and work for the reformation of such elements of corruption as might exist within it.

Third: the fact that the present circumstances do not seem to favor the establishment of an Islamic government. So much effort has been exerted in order to establish such a government, and despite their failure so far, it is the duty of all Muslims to continue the effort and cooperate in order to fulfill God’s commandment and establish justice on earth.

The Holy Qur’an says: “O you who believe! stand out firmly for God, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others towards you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just, that is next to piety, and fear God. For God is well-acquainted with all that you do.” (Sura 5, Verse 8)

In the same sura, Verse 49 reads: “Judge between them by what God has revealed, and follow not their vain desires,” while Verse 44 reads: “Those who do not judge by what God has revealed, they are unbelievers.”

*** Exceptional Circumstances

The scope of this discussion does not apply to the normal situation when the Muslim community can establish the system of its intellectual, political, economic, international and other relations on the basis of Islam and in conformity with its faith and cultural heritage—the heritage which continues to be deep-rooted in the hearts and souls of Muslims despite the attempts of Western colonial occupation to undermine its fundamental principles.

The discussion here focuses on the exceptional situation when the community of believers is unable to accomplish its goal of establishing the Islamic government directly. In this case the community is faced with tough options.

Realism and flexibility are among the most important features of Islamic methodology. These features explain the fact that this religion is an eternal way of life that is suitable for all times and all places. Furthermore, the lives of human communities, including the community of Muslims, are in continuous dynamism just like the life of an individual human being. Fluctuations between health and sickness, victory and defeat, success and failure, progress and slipping back, strength and weakness are only natural. Therefore, it is imperative that a religion which came for the purpose of improving the life of all humans wherever and whenever they exist should have the capacity to respond to all emerging situations and forms of development through which the Muslim communities may pass. And in doing so, such a religion would have to draw the main straight lines as well as the bending ones; that is, it would not just be content with drawing the lines for the absolute fundamentals during normal circumstances, but would also define the rules and mechanisms which ought to be followed and observed during exceptional extra-ordinary circumstances. In this way the believers remain in close contact with the fundamentals of the shari’a [religious law] in the situations of both strength and weakness.

*** The Fiqh (Jurisprudence) of Requirements and Necessities

The Muslims’ heritage ofjurisprudence is the greatest and richest legal or canonical heritage ever possessed by any single community, so much so that the Muslims can justifiably be called the community ofjurisprudence. The greatness of this jurisprudence stems from the fact that it is founded upon major legislative foundations known as ‘ilm al-usul (the science of fundamentals), which is a great Islamic science.

This science was studied thoroughly and developed over the years by highly talented and authoritative scholars. The apex of this development was reached by Al- Andalusi [Abu Ishaq] Al-Shatibi [died 1388] whose studies and thoughts were complementary to those of his predecessor Imam [Abu ‘Abdallah Muhammad] al-Shafi’i [767- 820]. The learned scholars who dedicated their lives to this important realm of knowledge believed in the greatness of Islam; they thoroughly studied the revelation (Qur’an), the sunna [practice of the Prophet], and the heritage ofjurisprudence. They also took into consideration the various practical experiences and applications ofjurisprudence throughout the centuries together with the sum of knowledge acquired by man during their own time.

Through this collection of the sources of knowledge, and in the light of their understanding of the purposes and objectives of Islam, they formulated a set of fundamentals for legislation whose ultimate goal is to serve the interests of man—the very essence of the message of Islam.

Al-Shatibi says: “From our exploration of the shari’a, we have concluded that it was only set up to serve the interests of man. This is a conclusion no one can dispute, even [Fakhr al-Din] Al-Razi [1149–1209]. Canon laws were made for only one purpose:

<quote>

to serve the interests of humans in this life and the hereafter. God says in the Qur’an: ‘We sent you not but as a mercy for all creatures.’ (Sura 21, Verse 107) ‘God does not wish to place you in difficulty, but to purify you, and to complete His favor to you.’ (Sura 5, Verse 6) ‘In the Law of Equality there is (saving of) life to you.’ (Sura 2, Verse 179)”[158]

</quote>

In his book Al-Muwafaqat, Al-Shatibi details the types of requirements which Messengers were sent to fulfill in the lives of humans. He categorized them into “essential requirements” without which life would be ruined; these requirements include the protection of faith, of life, of progeny, of wealth and of the mind. Then he spoke of the “special requirements” without which man would be in distress and hardship. They include the requirement to enjoy lawful and good things in life. Finally, he spoke of “ameliorative requirements” whose absence would not seriously undermine life. These include the various manners related for instance to eating and drinking etc. The fulfillment of such requirements is ahead at improving the quality of life.[159]

The general inclination in contemporary Islamic political thought is to adopt Al- Shatibi’s concept of the purposes of religion, namely that religion was revealed only to fulfill and protect the needs and interests of mankind in this life and the hereafter, as a general framework for tackling new problems with the Muslim society. Within the framework of this general perspective or purpose of the shari’a, the details of religion find their appropriate place as branches of the fundamentals. Within the same perspective, all new problems in the lives not only of Muslims but of all humanity, can find proper solutions that guarantee the fulfillment of their requirements.

In this way evils can be averted without any need for violating the provisions of God’s divine law, since this law already includes general principles from which new deductions can be made whenever life progresses or changes. Some of these principles apply to standard situations and normal circumstances, while others deal with exceptional situations and extraordinary circumstances. An example to the latter is the principle of

“necessities eliminate prohibitions” (necessity knows no law). This principle is a Qur’anic principle. God says:

<quote>

But if one is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience nor transgressing due limits, then is he guiltless. (Sura 2, Verse 173)

</quote>

Similar to this are the principle of balancing between the better and the worse and opting for that which seems to best serve the general interest of the people, and the principle of outcomes or consequences according to which acts are judged on the basis of what they lead to. The decisive criterion in all cases is the fulfillment of the needs of humans and serving their best interests.[160]

*** Power-Sharing in a Non-Islamic Government

The general rule in judging the acts of humans is that all actions are permissible unless a prohibition is specified. The prohibition in this case is derived from the commandment to implement the law of God and not to resort to adopting laws other than His. It is therefore a must for all Muslims to do what they can in order to obey God’s commandment and establish His governance. But what if the Muslims are unable to do so? The rule is that we are obliged to do only that which we can: “No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear.” (Sura 2, Verse 233)

The Islamic government is one in which:

1. Supreme legislative authority is for the shari’a, that is the revealed law of Islam, which transcends all laws. Within this context, it is the responsibility of scholars to deduce detailed laws and regulations to be used as guidelines by judges. The head of the Islamic state is the leader of the

executive body entrusted with the responsibility of implementing such laws and regulations.

1. Political power belongs to the community (umma), which should adopt a form of shura, which is a system of mandatory consultation.

If this kind of government is possible, it is then the duty of the believers to spare no effort in establishing it. However, if this is not possible, what must the community do?

On the basis of the general fundamentals of Islam and its purposes of accomplishing the needs and serving the rest of the public (and these include the protection of faith, souls, wealth and the prevention of evils), it is incumbent upon the community of the faithful to avoid passivism and isolationism. Every Muslim has a responsibility toward the task of establishing the Islamic government. If such a task is not possible, then Muslims must endeavor to accomplish whatever can be accomplished.

Power-sharing in a Muslim or a non-Muslim environment becomes a necessity in order to lay the foundations of the social order. This power-sharing may not necessarily be based on Islamic shari’a law. However, it must be based on an important foundation of the Islamic government, namely shura, or the authority of the umma, so as to prevent the evils of dictatorship, foreign domination, or local anarchy. Such a process of power- sharing may also aim to achieve a national or a humanistic interest such as independence, development, social solidarity, civil liberties, human rights, political pluralism, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press, or liberty for mosques and Islamic activities.

Can any Muslim community afford to hesitate in participating in the establishment of a secular democratic system if it is unable to establish an Islamic democratic one? The answer is no. It is the religious duty of the Muslims, as individuals and as communities, to contribute to the efforts to establish such a system. In this way, the Muslims would seek the

establishment of the government of rationale due to their inability to establish the government of shari’a—as Ibn Khaldun [historian 1332--1406] put it.[161]

*** Documented Cases

Several events can be quoted from the Qur’an, the sunna, and Islamic history to prove that Muslims, as individuals or as communities, are permitted to participate in establishing or administering non-Islamic governments in order to achieve good and avoid evil.

In one chapter of the Qur’an we are told the story of Yusuf (Joseph), who was thrown into the well by his brothers and was then rescued, to end up in the Pharaoh’s palace in Egypt where he was subjected to trial and seduction. It is worth noting that this young man, who was imprisoned and mistreated, seized the moment when it was right and expressed readiness to take charge of the most important office in the Pharaoh’s government, believing it was his duty to rescue many nations that were threatened by famine and drought. He did not wait for the Egyptian people to renounce paganism and embrace his monotheist religion so as to form the foundation for an Islamic government.

What that young man had in mind was the fact that religion has come to serve the people and fulfill their essential needs. Yusuf had the conviction that rescuing the people from starvation, and consequently from annihilation, could not wait. He saw that he was able to help, and he did help. Through his effective participation in administering the affairs of the people he performed his other responsibility of calling for Islam and admonishing the people to reform their lives and renounce evils.

The detailed narration of the story of Yusuf in the Qur’an is a clear testimony that his approach is commendable. What happened with Yusuf can happen to Muslims anywhere and at any time. In similar circumstances, Muslims have no option but to participate politically in establishing and administering non-Islamic governments in order to serve the interests of the

umma and prevent evils. Failing to do so will lead to undermining these interests and to allowing evils to spread and dominate society.

The second example is that of the Negus (the Emperor of Ethiopia) who lived during the early years of Islam. The Prophet advised some of his companions who were being severely persecuted to migrate to Abyssinia, describing the Negus as “the king in whose country none is wronged.” The presence of the small Muslim community in Abyssinia resulted in the Negus embracing Islam, although he did not effect any amendments to his government in the direction of implementing the shari’a, as such an attempt could have threatened his kingship and endangered the lives of his guests. The story of that noble king has been documented in Islamic history and continues to be narrated to this day. The Prophet instructed his followers to perform a prayer for the king’s soul when the news of his death reached them.

Commenting on this, Ibn Taymiyya [1263–1328] said, “We know definitely that he could not implement the law of the Qur’an in his community because his people would not have permitted him to. Despite that, the Negus and all those who are similar to him found their way to the pleasure of God in eternity although they could not abide by the laws of Islam, and could only rule using that which could be implemented in the given circumstances.”[162]

The third example is that of hilf al-fudul, that is the pact or alliance of al-fudul.[163] This was an agreement among several pre-Islamic Arab tribes to support the wronged, maintain close relations with relatives and take good care of them. The Prophet did witness the signing of the alliance prior to his prophethood, and said afterwards that if he were to be invited to a similar alliance in Islam he would have accepted without reservation. He further stressed that any good and noble contract made injahiliya [the pre-Islamic era] is automatically endorsed by Islam.[164] It is thus concluded that the community of believers may participate in an alliance aimed at preventing injustice and oppression, at serving the interests of mankind, at protecting human rights, at recognizing the authority of the people and at rotating powerholding through a system of

elections. The faithful can pursue all these noble objectives even with those who do not share the same faith or ideology.

The fourth example is that of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz [682–720]. This Umayyad caliph, whose rulership did not exceed two years, is considered by historians and scholars to be the fifth guided caliph because of his piety and justice, although more than half a century separated him from the last of the four guided caliphs [the first successors to the Prophet]. Although he was a king who inherited kingship, he was unhappy with the monarchy, and in principle did not approve of it. However. he could not alter the system and was unable to restore the right of the umma in a consultative-style government due to the accumulation of corruption over the years. Nonetheless, he managed to significantly reform many bad practices, and restored justice and fairness. By accepting the monarchy, which he did not approve of, he was able to do many good things, and no one said he was wrong or misguided in his actions.

*** Contemporary Considerations

An Islamic government is based on a number of values which if accomplished in their totality, would result in a perfect or near- perfect system. But it may not be possible for all such values to be implemented, and therefore some must suffice in certain circumstances in order for a just government to exist. A just government, even if not Islamic, is considered very close to the Islamic one, because justice is the most important feature of an Islamic government, and it has been said that justice is the law of God.

[‘Abdallah] Ibn ‘Aqil [circa 1294–1367] defined al-siyasa al-shari’a (Islamic administrative policy) as the actions which bring the people closer to good and distance them from evil, even if such actions were not advocated by the Prophet or revealed from the Heavens.

He further explained that describing these actions using the phrase “those that conform with the Islamic law (shar’)” in order to imply that such actions should not contradict the shar’, is justified.

However, if one means by such a phrase that such actions must specifically be mentioned in the Qur’an or the sunna, then this is wrong and can be taken to imply that the companions of the Prophet themselves went wrong. After all, they initiated many new policies and took numerous measures in order to fulfill the needs of the society in response to new developments or changing circumstances.[165]

In contemporary times, numerous examples can be cited to show that Islamic individuals and groups have entered into alliances in order to prevent evil or in order to serve the community within a non-Islamic framework. This is happening despite the fact that many scholars still insist that such measures should not be pursued.[166] With due respect, these scholars make life difficult for the Muslims unnecessarily. Their opinions impose restrictions on a policy which is definitely permissible and lawful, and which is intended to equip the Muslims with the ability to react positively in situations that can be very difficult indeed.

To cite only a few examples of such situations:

First: About one third of the Muslims in the world are minorities in the countries they live in, that is to say they have no hope in the foreseeable future of governing their countries in an Islamic way. Many of these Muslim minorities face threats of exile or annihilation due to ethnic cleansing and other pressures. What options does Islamic jurisprudence have for them? Some people have been suggesting that such minorities should emigrate to countries that have Muslim majorities. If this were possible, and it is normally impossible, what good would it do them? Or is such a suggestion another plot against the Muslims in order to drive them out of their homes? There are those who advise Muslim minorities to isolate themselves and wait, but this too contradicts the very essence of the Islamic message, which encourages the faithful to be positive, active and involved.

The best option for such minorities is to enter into alliances with secular democratic groups. They can then work towards the establishment of a secular democratic government which will respect human rights, ensuring

security and freedom of expression and belief—essential requirements of mankind that Islam has come to fulfill.

The accomplishment of such important values in any society will immediately transform it, in the Islamic conception, from dar al-harb, a land of hostility and war against Islam, to a land of peace and tranquillity. Al-Imam Al-Nawawi [1233–1277] defines dar al-harb as the country in which the faithful cannot practice their religious duties freely, and consequently emigrating from it becomes an imperative duty. [167] True democracies are not like this; they guarantee the freedom of worship and belief.

Second: There are many Islamic communities or movements that exist in countries that have Muslim majorities but which happen to be ruled by dictatorships claiming to be Islamic or by dictatorships hostile to Islam. Such Islamic movements may not be able to reform the regime or change it alone. Does the shari’a object to cooperation and alliance between these movements and secular parties that also work and struggle to topple the dictatorships and establish secular democracies that would respect humans and guarantee their liberties? No, not at all.

Third: Similarly, the Islamic groups which exist in Muslim majority countries governed by dictatorships may be able to attract majority support from the public and establish an Islamic government. However, such a transition may incite hostility towards them from within their own country or from other countries, rendering the newly-formed Islamic government susceptible to oppression or other forms of pressures that may end with its collapse.

Is there any reason why such groups cannot agree or coordinate either secular groups in ordeal to isolate the existing oppressive power and establish a secular democracy, postponing the long-term objective of establishing an Islamic government until circumstances permit? Certainly, there is nothing against that.

It should be emphasized that the choice in this case is not between Islamic government and a non-Islamic one, but between dictatorship and democracy.

Fourth: The Islamic groups which exist in countries colonized by foreign powers. Is there any reason why they should not form a united front with the secular groups in order to confront the common enemy of a national alternative, in which the Muslims would have a better life than under the colonial authority? Certainly, there is nothing to prevent them from doing so.

*** Conclusion

If the establishment of the Islamic government is the short or long-term goal of every Islamic group in order to implement God’s commandments, the shari’a does take into consideration the possibility that such a goal may not be easily accomplished, and therefore an alternative is provided. Under exceptional circumstances, Islamic groups may forge alliances with non-Islamic groups in order to establish a pluralistic government system in which power is held by the majority party.

Such an alliance may also exist for the purpose of deterring aggression or getting rid of a dictatorship. In all cases, the alliance must not include provisions that would in any way undermine Islam, or impose restrictions on those who work for Islam and who seek to establish its system in the land. [168]

These arguments are based on:

- the principle of supporting that which brings good and suppressing that which produces evil.

- the rule that what an imperative duty is essentially dependent on is imperative in itself.

- the rule of consequences or outcomes.

- the principle of necessity.

What is most important is that a Muslim must remain positive and actively engaged in the effort to implement the revealed laws of God, whether partially or in their totality, depending on circumstances and resources. The essence of God's laws, for which all divine messages were sent, is the establishment ofjustice for mankind.

"We sent aforetime our Messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of right and wrong), that men may stand forth in justice." (Sura 57, Verse 25)

It should however be emphasized that the problem facing the concept of power- sharing does not lie in the difficulty of convincing the Islamists to accept democracy, pluralism and power-sharing. The current general trend in Islamic circles is to adopt power-sharing—even in a secular style government—as a means for achieving mutual goals such as national solidarity, respect for human rights, civil liberties, cultural, social and economic development, and the deterrence of external threats.

The real problem lies in convincing the "other," that is the ruling regimes, of the principle of "the people's sovereignty" and of the right of Islamists—just like other political groups—to form political parties, engage in political activities and compete for power or share in power through democratic means.

The punishment of the Islamic victors in the Tunisian and Algerian elections—which have regrettably been taking place with the consent of Western democracies and the support of local "secular theological elites"[169] that are allied with the oppressive regimes in both countries—provides a decisive

evidence that the root of the problem in the Muslim world lies in the hegemony of despotism. Our main task now is to combat despotism in favor of a genuine and true transition to democracy.

** 10. Democracy and Shura

Sadek J. Sulaiman

Sadek Jawad Sulaiman (Oman, born 1933), like many Omanis who came of age before the oil era, left his country in the 1950s. He worked as a journalist in Kuwait prior to his return to Oman in 1973. From 1976 until 1983, he worked for Oman's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was director of political affairs (1977–1979) and ambassador to the United States (1979–1983). Since 1983, he has divided his time between Washington and Oman. This chapter was first presented as a talk in August 1996 at the al-Hiwar (Dialogue) Center in Washington, D.C., a discussion group of Arab intellectuals, diplomats, and businessmen. Sulaiman's comparison between the Qur'anic principle of shura and democracy as it has developed in the United States may at first appear unexpected. Sulaiman explains: "Many Arabs understand democracy as a slogan. Only by understanding it in history and practice does its compatibility with shura emerge."[170] In the context of the Gulf states, Sulaiman's argument—that the "logic of shura, like the logic of democracy, does not accept hereditary rule, for wisdom and competence are never the monopoly of any one individual or family"—is bold and innovative.

The subject of this discussion is vital for initiating a change in Arab public life, for the relationship between democracy and shura touches the essence of our national existence (qawmiyya). It determines the quality of our civic experience and the world we would like to leave for future generations. For this reason the subject merits our full attention.

*** Democracy

Democracy literally means rule by the people, and this distinguishes it from any pattern of governance not deriving its legitimacy from the people's choice. Americans define democracy in the words of their 16th president, Abraham Lincoln [1809–1865]: "Rule of the people, by the people, for the people." The definition I usually offer is "public participation in decisions affecting public life."

This participation can be either direct or indirect. In direct participation, the people decide the results by a majority vote. They discuss the issue at hand, then reach a decision representing the collective wisdom. Something akin to this happens in "town meetings." A clear example is when people vote on a "proposition"—a term Americans use when an issue that has generated considerable controversy is referred to the public for resolution. Proposition 187 in 1995 in California, denying public services to illegal immigrants, is a notable example of direct participation. Another is the referendum in 1995 by which Canadians in Quebec rejected the separation of their province. With indirect participation, the people do not specifically decide issues but elect people to represent their views and make decisions. The elected representatives perform this task within the written parameters of a constitution.

The American constitutional system is based on indirect participation, and the republican system in American constitutional law is centered on the principle of representation. It is appropriate to note, however, that the dynamism of the media in recent years has generated more direct participation in policy-making and legislating. The influence that media talk shows and opinion polls have on elected officials is unmistakably clear.

Democracy’s core principle is equality, the affirmation that all people are equal. Any discrimination among people on the basis of race, gender, religion, or lineage is inherently invalid. All people are endowed with inalienable human rights. To secure these rights, governments derive their legitimacy from the consent of the governed.

The chief characteristics of the democratic system are:

1. Freedom of speech, whereby citizens are able openly to state their views on public issues without impediment or fear, regardless of whether such views are critical or supportive of the government. In the democratic system, it is important for officials to know how the people feel about policies they adopt and decisions they make.

2. Free elections in which citizens regularly, in accordance with precise and constitutionally protected procedures, elect people they entrust with the affairs of governance. Elections legitimize all levels of representation, from the city council to the presidency of the state.

3. Majority rule and minority rights: In the democratic system, decisions are made by the majority, based on the general conviction that the judgment of the majority is more likely to be right than that of the minority. But majority rule does not give a free hand to the majority to do as it wants. Embedded in the democratic principle is the commitment that certain fundamental citizens’ rights shall not be violated—for example, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and the free exercise of religion.

4. Political parties in the democratic system play an important role. By means of political parties, people freely associate on the basis of their convictions about how to achieve a fulfilling life for themselves, their family, and their posterity.

5. Separation between the legislative, the executive, and the judiciary, whereby constitutional checks and balances among these three branches of government prevent potential exploitative practices.

6. Constitutional authority is the supreme authority on the validity of any statutory law or executive directive. Constitutional authority means supremacy of the rule of law, not the rule of individuals, in the resolution of any public matter.

7. Freedom of action for individuals and groups, provided they do not infringe on the common good. From this derives the freedom to own property, the freedom to work, the freedom to pursue personal goals, and the freedom to form various associations and corporations.

These elements are common to any bona fide democratic system. They are particularly well articulated in the American constitutional system under which we live and whose characteristics, as a great and unique experience in the formation and evolution of nations, we try to understand.

The essentials of the American democratic experience were present at its origin but expanded in scope and evolved in application over time. For example, even though the principle of equality as a foundational idea was firmly established in the Declaration of Independence in 1776, the right for free men to vote on an equal basis was not granted until 1850. Black males were not allowed to vote until the 15th constitutional amendment in 1870. Females, both free and slave, were not given the right to vote until the 19th constitutional amendment in 1920. Finally, the poll tax was not abolished until the 24th constitutional amendment in 1964.

Thus we see that the American state, one considered an exemplar of democratic systems, although based on a constitution, did not have its constitutionality complete at birth, nor is it complete today. This is because the democratic principle, although recognized as a universal human principle since ancient times, continues to demand better fulfillment in the

experiences of all nations. We also see that the democratic principle is one thing and our endeavors to realize its requirements, something else. In this latter sense, there is no such thing as an ideal democratic society. We must distinguish, on the one hand, between societies that uphold the democratic principle and endeavor to attain its fulfillment, and societies whose rulers reject the democratic principle, exercise autocratic rule and privilege, and deny equality as a moral imperative.

*** Shura

As a concept and as a principle, shura in Islam does not differ from democracy. Both shura and democracy arise from the central consideration that collective deliberation is more likely to lead to a fair and sound result for the social good than individual preference. Both concepts also assume that majority judgment tends to be more comprehensive and accurate than minority judgment. As principles, shura and democracy proceed from the core idea that all people are equal in rights and responsibilities. Both thereby commit to the rule of the people through application of the law rather than the rule of individuals or a family through autocratic decree. Both affirm that a more comprehensive fulfillment of the principles and values by which humanity prospers cannot be achieved in a non-democratic, non-shura environment.

I do not see shura as rejecting or incompatible with the basic elements of a democratic system. The Qur’an mentions shura as a principle governing the public life of the society of the faithful rather than a specifically ordained system of governance. As such, the more any system constitutionally, institutionally, and practically fulfills the principle of shura—or, for that matter, the democratic principle—the more Islamic that system becomes.

There are cultural specifics rooted in the history of every nation that might justify differences in how the democratic principle is applied, but no Arab or Islamic cultural specifics explain the level of civic degeneration with which we Arabs are afflicted today. It is neither an Arab particularity nor an article

of the Islamic faith that freedom of speech be suffocated in our national experience, that our people be denied free elections, that our affairs be conducted without the benefit of consensus, and that peaceful political activity be forbidden to our masses. It is neither Arabic nor Islamic that our nation’s fate should rest in the hands of a few persons unbound by constitutional restraints.

Some people claim that Arabs are not yet ready for democratic or shura governance and that they do not appreciate the democratic principle and values needed to embrace the rule of law, as opposed to the rule of individuals. Such a claim is perverse, unfair, or bad judgment. Any nation that emerged from the civilization of Islam was enjoined to exercise shura. Such nations were nurtured with the principles ofjustice, equality, and human dignity, values which sustain and enhance the human experience. Such nations simply cannot be less qualified to exercise democracy than other nations.

I regard democracy and shura as synonymous in conception and principle, although they may differ in details of application to conform to local custom. They reject any government lacking the legitimacy of free elections, accountability, and the people’s power, through the constitutional process, to impeach the ruler for violation of trust. The logic of shura, like the logic of democracy, does not accept hereditary rule, for wisdom and competence are never the monopoly of any one individual or family. Likewise, shura and democracy both reject government by force, for any rule sustained by coercion is illegitimate. Moreover, both forbid privileges—political, social, economic—claimed on the basis of tribal lineage or social prestige.

Shura and democracy are thus one and the same concept. They prod us to find better and better realizations of the principles ofjustice, equality, and human dignity in our collective socio-political experience. These principles merit implementation in national life across the entire Arab homeland. Let us hope that shura or democracy—the choice of terms makes no difference—will find supporters who aspire to a new Arab renaissance.

* Part III—Rights of Women

** 11. Unveiling and Veiling

Nazira Zein-ed-Din

Nazira Zein-ed-Din (Ottoman Lebanon, born circa 1905), the daughter of a high-ranking Lebanese judge, was a theological prodigy. In the summer of 1927, as a young woman, she began to research Islamic teachings on the subject of hijab, the modest clothing required of Muslim women. She was motivated by the contrast between recent incidents in Syria, where women were prevented from leaving their homes without the veil, and Turkey, where secular reformers encouraged women to remove the veil.[171] Zein-ed-Din published her findings—excerpted here—in 1928, arguing that veiling was anachronistic and that Islam, properly understood, treats women as the equals of men, perhaps even their betters. The book was immediately controversial. Within a year, she had published a follow-up volume containing letters of support and vehement criticism, including the accusation that a young woman could not have written such a work.[172] Zein-ed-Din’s subsequent career has been difficult to trace.

*** Two Views: One View on the Unveiled World and the Other on the Veiled World

Ladies and gentlemen, in the beginning I compared opposites, the numbers of the veiled and the unveiled. I found that the veiled are not more than a few million Muslims living in towns. Those in the villages of the Islamic world and more than 1700 million in other nations are not veiled. They have rejected the veil that they had previously worn. I have noticed that the nations that have given up the veil are the nations that have advanced in intellectual and material life. Such advancement is not equaled in the veiled nations. The unveiled nations are the ones that have discovered through research and study the secrets of nature and have brought the physical elements under their control, as you see and know. But the veiled nations have not unearthed any secret and have not put any of the physical elements under their control but only sing the songs of a glorious past and ancient tradition. With such singing they sleep in stagnation.

I have seen many intellectuals of the nations where women are still veiled advocating unveiling, but I haven’t seen anyone in the unveiled nations advocating or preferring the veil. That is, I haven’t seen anyone who has tried unveiling and then has preferred the veil. Even if some Westerner in his hypocritical words makes the veil appear in a favorable light, he is only pleased with the beauty of the Oriental veil while at the same time he would reject the veiling of his mother, wife, sisters, and daughters because of the harm in the veil he favors for others.

I cannot imagine that in the advanced nations which have discovered the secrets of nature and harnessed its powers, which have not let anything pass without examining it to the fullest, where the struggle between right and wrong is continuous until right becomes victorious, nations which have produced works on social subjects we view as masterpieces of literature and sociology, have neglected to study veiling and unveiling to understand the benefits and disadvantages. I cannot think that our own ignorance brings us any greater understanding of what honor is than the unveiled nations possess in learning nor that our conduct is superior to theirs, nor that their women going outside unveiled enjoying their freedom is evidence of their lower conduct and corrupt morals.

Yes, I looked into all that and I could not but consider it evidence of their superior education and elevated conduct. When our esteemed ladies who

wear the veil go to a Western country, they take off the veil and the men accompanying them do not prevent them from doing this the way they do when they are at home or after they return. This is because we have more faith in the conduct of Westerners than in our own conduct. The conduct of Westerners has been influenced by mingling with women and thus Western men have based their habits and morals on logic and reason looking to benefits and positive results while our conduct and morals are based on our customs whatever they may be.

I shall never forget a conversation between an Eastern man advocating the veil and an unveiled Western woman who enjoyed her freedom and independence. The Easterner said to the Westerner, “Our nature cannot accept your customs. Our customs are more noble than yours and our men support our women. The man according to his right walks in front of his wife but in your country the woman walks in front of the man as if she were the provider.”

The Western woman said, “If you really want to protect your wife please let her go in front of you so that you can watch out for her for the way our men do, rather than letting her walk behind you so that she would misuse her freedom and get hurt.”

The Eastern man paused and said, “Truly, Westerners ground their customs in reason. Reason alone should dictate custom.”

It is not fitting for us to say that we who are only a few million, most of whom are not advanced, are more honorable than the one and a half billion people (in the world), most of whom are more advanced than we are.

It is not honorable for us to deny our shortcomings and believe we are perfect and claim that our customs are the best customs for every time and place. This conceit and false presumption is a barrier to the reform we seek. When the nation feels its shortcomings, that is the first step in its advancement.

It is inconceivable that we claim to be defenders of honor while the veil is our strongest shield. We must understand as everyone else does that honor is rooted in the heart and chastity comes from within and not from a piece of transparent material lowered over the face.

We have to realize, as the advanced unveiled world does, that good behavior and honor come from sound upbringing grounded in noble principles and virtues. We are shortsighted if we think that the veil keeps evil away from women and that those in the rest of the world exceeding one and a half billion are all in the wrong while we are in the right.

*** He Who Bears Falsehood to the People Has to Provide Evidence to Them

I have mentioned the above, ladies and gentlemen, fearful that I might be confronted by someone who does not use logic and reasoning to make his points, but relies on untruths concerning the advanced unveiled nations. He may look where vice is but he does not wish to rise up to see where virtue resides. He might have seen their baser women and generalizes from them, subsuming the noble and honorable in his generalization, and hurls accusing arrows of untruths at them even though human beings should not be like flies pouncing on tails (of animals) and ignoring their heads.

He does not dare to lord scientific and industrial knowledge over the unveiled nations because these are tangible matters. Therefore he accuses them of lack of morals and good conduct because these are not tangible. Thus he is overwhelming in this even though his accusation is false.

You know gentlemen, nations are like trees whose rotten fruits fall to the ground and vermin, humans and animals go after them. Those who are wise

and advanced look only to the good and ripe fruits, by which the tree is identified.

My antagonist seems to be ignorant of that or is playing the role of the ignorant. He wants to know the tree by the fallen fruits he sees beneath it. Moreover, he does not want to recognize that in every nation, however advanced, there is a lower class overcome by corruption whose morals and conduct have deteriorated because they did not have the chance to be educated and to develop so that they could reach the higher level in the nation.

Gentlemen, we should do our best to see to it that the majority in our nation are able to have an education and the means to develop. Then it would be possible for us to be proud before our nations....

We should not believe everything we hear and take our evidence from falsehood, especially evidence that brings great evil to the nation by obstructing reform and maintaining continual backwardness.

We should abstain from hurling lies and falsehoods at others, which is alien to morality and decent debate and only brings down those who lie. Instead we should subscribe to truth, sound reasoning, unbiased knowledge, and correct behavior. In accordance with the will of God Almighty and the will of His Prophet, may God bless him....

*** How Men Should Support Women

Gentlemen, you have heard the response of the Western woman to the Eastern man who was proud to support his woman and to walk in front of her. Yes, let men support women in principle. Every man supports his own wife spending money on her, but he has no authority over any other woman. A verse from the Qur’an was sent by God about this in relation to Sa’d ibn al-Rabi from al-Naqba and his wife Habiba; the words are related specifically to husband and wife. Men should know that authority is limited by the benefit

deriving from it. Therefore, men should attain high moral development as God wants and society requires. This would make women strong and self-dependent, for when people have virtue, dignity, and honor they turn away from evil, not out of fear of punishment, nor because of reward, nor because of an immovable obstacle, but because evil is ugly and such a person would not allow herself to engage in lowly acts.

The Prophet, God bless him, said, “I was sent to help you attain the highest morality.” Does not the highest morality come from the soul? Pieces of cloth over faces shall never be a measure of morality.

*** The Veil (Niqab) is an Insult to Men and Women

It is not beneficial to men and women that men should just support women physically and financially, nor is it beneficial that man rule over those whom the shari’a [Islamic law] did not give him the right. It greatly harms the two sexes that every man continues to insult his mother, daughter, wife, and sister, suspiciously accusing them of bad morals and keeping them confined to a cage, as the venerable Qasim Amin [Egypt, 1865–1908] said, “With their wings cut off, heads bent down, and eyes closed. For him (man) is freedom and for them (women) enslavement. For him is education and for them ignorance. For him is sound reasoning and for them inferior reasoning. For him is light and open space and for them darkness and imprisonment. For him are orders and for them obedience and patience. For him is everything in the universe and for them part of the whole he has captured.”

May God be merciful to Qasim and bless his pen, about which “The Poet of the Two Countries” has said, “He tears down the ugly and builds the beautiful, returning to the sunna [the practices of the Prophet] of the Drawer. He sheds light even when he writes with the dark water of the night.”

Unfortunately, if the veil (hijab) implies the inability of the woman to protect herself without it, it also reveals that man, however well

brought up and in spite of supporting the woman, is a traitor and a thief of honor; his evil should be feared and it is better that the woman escapes from him.

*** You, Man, the Supporter

If some women, because of the ignorance into which you have cast them, have not recognized the insult to them and to men by the veil, is it easy for you, the man who has kept himself free seeking perfection and good conduct, to bear this insult that comes to you and to your mother, daughter, wife, and sister?

Does the woman who escapes from you, or approaches you lowering the veil over her face, or turns her back on you, confirm your high status, as she might think and say and you might think and say, or is it a great insult? Does this constitute the woman’s decorum, chastity and modesty? If so, then men should not be without these precious attributes; let them wear veils and let them meet each other and meet women lowering veils over their faces the way women do....

On Man’s Superiority in His Rights to Inheritance, Legal Testimony, Polygamy, and Arbitrariness in Divorce as Evidence Not to His Advantage But Against Him

I noticed in some of the articles written against women and their liberation, as well as against their removal of the veil, that the authors boast of the fact that in his Holy Qur’an, God favored men over women—mind and soul—in three different matters:

<quote>

First, God made a woman entitled to inherit only half of what a man inherits.

Second, God considers her testimony (legally) worth only half of his.

Third, He, the Almighty, allowed a man to marry up to four wives and divorce them at will, without their consent.

</quote>

The authors of these articles conclude from this that the woman is mentally and spiritually inferior. Hence they think that God, the Almighty, decided to favor a man over a woman in these three areas. But as far as I am concerned, I conclude otherwise. I understand the argument to be against men rather than in their favor.

Indeed, I examine Islam through the greatest words of God and the sayings of His Prophet. I then see God enthroned in greatness, freedom, equality, justice, goodness, and perfection. I become so overwhelmed and so elated that I feel my soul about to leave my body. I only wish that those who pretend to protect Islam and raise its banners would look in the same way as I do and see what I see. I wish they did not look at Islam through the narrow vision of commentaries and interpretations which interpret Islam in ways they want to see it. Islam is far beyond that. It is much greater.

God’s permissibility only showed man’s cruel heart, his inability to submit to truth and justice, and his immoral character, acquired from the worst pre-Islamic customs. Such a character, as is well known, is in contradiction with the nature of noble human mentality.

Man subjected to slavery those he deemed weak among women as among men, treating them according to his whims like merchandise or cattle. Had it not been for the viciousness in his mind, his misguided soul and cruel heart, God would not have granted him then such allowances that He disliked and which were meant to vanish with time.

We have thus far seen [in earlier sections of the author's book] what the woman's condition was, under the yoke of man throughout the world in general and in pre- Islamic Arabia in particular, just before the Qur'an was revealed to our Prophet, God bless him and grant him salvation.

God dislikes slavery. He dislikes polygamy and any violation of women's rights. God loathes divorce. His divine throne shakes every time the word is uttered on earth, as I will explain in detail below in a discussion of divorce [not included in this excerpt].

God revealed His holy message all filled with the spirit of freedom, justice and equality among people. He does not differentiate between them for His esteem, except on the basis of their faith in Him. How would then the Almighty condone the enslavement of His human creation in whom He instilled life, and for whom He ordered angels to bow in honor and respect? Did God, we might ask, instill life in the strong who take others into slavery but not in the weak who are enslaved by others? Of course not! God gave life to all. Yet, since the days of Adam, peace be upon him, man has disobeyed God and gone astray.

If Adam himself, who was a prophet, "disobeyed God's order and went astray," what of his male offspring who have realized their strength and became misguided by it? In their arrogant ways, they took into slavery whoever they saw as weak.

God sent His Prophet, peace and salvation be upon him, to mankind in that corrupt land of ignorance. He warned him in these holy words: "If you were rude and arrogant, people would desert you." And as goes one of the Prophet's own sayings: "Teach others, be lenient not harsh, preach but do not alienate anyone."

In his book Al-Islam ruh al-madaniyya [Islam, The Spirit of Civilization], Shaykh [Mustafa] Al-Ghalayini [Ottoman Empire-Lebanon, 1886–1945] wrote: “It was considered wise in Islam not to totally abolish some of the reprehensible traditions such as polygamy, as there were so many difficulties involved.” He also went on to say: “Slavery and harsh treatment of captives are odious acts by Islamic standards. Slavery was considered inherited from the era of savageness. Politically, however, it was not ruled absolutely forbidden in those days.” In fact if all those customs had been entirely abolished by God, several problems would have ensued. The least of these is that men would have broken away from God’s religion and deserted His Prophet. Moreover, not many of His commandments would have been obeyed.

In pre-Islamic Arabia, women as well as male slaves were under the domination of financially powerful men who owned them and enjoyed them at will. These materialistic men used to get as infatuated with their wealth as they were with themselves. A man in those days would own as many as one hundred women and a large number of male slaves. Like property or cattle they were inherited as a part of an estate. How can we then take it for granted that they could be set free from man’s ownership and made equal to him in every way, at the same time, and not in a gradual fashion? God said in the Holy Qur’an, “And if We willed it for them to either kill themselves or leave their land, only a few of them would.” [Sura 4, Verse 66] Thus it was out of God’s wisdom to eliminate some of these reprehensible customs, while leaving traces of them to turn men’s attention to Him so they would not give up His religion and abandon His Prophet.

As for a woman’s legal testimony, should the fact that it is considered worth only half of that of a man’s be grounds for women’s mental inferiority? If so, a nonMuslim’s legal testimony for or against a Muslim is not accepted; can that also be considered evidence for non-Muslims’ mental inferiority? Or was it rather a decision resulting from some unusual circumstances in those days?

In the final analysis, it was no other than God’s kindness to the woman to consider her testimony worth half that of a man’s. The latter interpreted it as a privilege and became satisfied with it. In reality, legal testimony is no other

than a bothersome obligation. It is as if God wanted to reassure men and relieve women from such an obligation at the same time. It seems as if testimony were expressly ruled outside a woman’s competence, so that only men would be called upon to testify in courts. There is no reason to believe that God decided that because of a deficiency in the woman’s faith or intelligence. Women possess a great deal of goodness and spiritual righteousness, and as the Prophet’s saying goes, “One good woman is better than a thousand improper men.”

Through God’s wisdom, the persistence of a few traces of those bad customs is a way of soothing the minds of those who practice them. His wisdom is revealed in several ways and verses. In the tradition of His Prophet, God bless him and grant him salvation, there is proof that the dangers in the persistence of such traces of vile traditions are removed. Thus their impact is reduced and they become acceptable rather than offensive.

God knew that people with insight would erase all traces of reprehensible customs, following this way the wisdom implied by those Qur’anic verses and Prophet’s teachings. God was indeed aware that such wisdom was not unknown to His people. Hence he allowed the taking of slaves but was eager for their freedom, in the same way that He was yearning to abolish polygamy and end discrimination between men and women in their rights. This is one of the interpretations suggested by the famous scholar Muhammad ‘Abduh [Egypt, 1849–1905].

Below however is another quotation from [Muhammad] Jamil Bayhum [Lebanon, 1887–1978], the author of Al-Mar’afi al-tarikh wa al-shara’i’ [Woman in History and Religious Legal Systems]:

<quote>

Some commentators have interpreted these opinions as implying a ban on polygamy, because allowing it must depend on fairness in treatment while such indiscriminate justice is highly improbable. But this is in no way an uncommon interpretation as long as laws are subject to considerations of

culture and civilization. Just as Christians were somehow able to discover that their religion prohibits polygamy, when it actually did not object to it, it would be easy for Muslims to enact legislation forbidding polygamy, in appreciation of the general world condition, progress and the advancement of women.

</quote>

Indeed that would be easier for Muslims than making laws condoning all the vile sins such as drinking alcohol, prostitution, usury and idolatry, or disapproving of some of God’s ordinances like stoning, requital or other legal punishments. Such laws are constantly being enacted.

Don’t you see that slavery was discontinued in Islamic countries like everywhere else and that punishment is administered to whoever engages in it? Don’t you see that polygamy has become considered evil by enlightened communities around us, and that the great independent Islamic nation of Turkey has banned it and reserves for it the harshest of punishments?

Don’t you see that, through government laws, Islamic countries have made a woman’s legal testimony equal to a man’s both in witnessing legal punishment as well as in other cases? They gave her equal right for inheriting land, and in Turkey, a woman’s right is equal to that of a man for testimony in all cases and transactions, and in inheritance for any kind of property.

By enacting laws to eliminate those vile traditions, the Islamic governments were not in contradiction with God’s message and the teachings of His Prophet. Those governments understood the reasoning behind those teachings. They abolished slavery and ended any discrimination between man and woman. Not only did they interpret the surface meanings of those Qur’anic verses and Prophet s teaching; but also they interpreted their essence in depth in the manner of people with insight and reason.

This is indeed an important and broad subject. To cover it with a presentation of convincing evidence would require lengthy explications that are beyond the scope of my present lecture series. God willing, I shall deal with it in a special lecture.

Nevertheless, I think that we should realize right now the reason which led to the persistence of those reprehensible customs and why they had such an impact on the absolute equality of man and woman and amongst men (as slaves and free men). Perhaps that reason is man's cruelty, his error, arbitrariness, and the evil side in his character prevailing over the good side. That is what led God's wisdom, to permit something reprehensible that He never condoned as fair and just.

Right now, we must realize that this reason for that has nothing to do with a woman's faith or her intelligence. In no way was the inequality between a helpless slave and a powerful free man a result of mental or spiritual deficiency so that inequality between man and woman in the matters mentioned should result from her mental and spiritual deficiency.

If God had truly condoned slavery, polygamy and inequality between man and woman, He would not have made the man accountable for expenditures for the woman's dowry, her support and that of her children's which are equal or greater than what she misses in inheritance. If so, indeed, God would not have established laws leading to the disappearance of slavery and the avoidance of polygamy; and His Prophet would not have preferred females over males in several matters. In fact, here are some of his sayings:

<quote>

When you give to your children, be fair in your giving and give equally. If I personally had a preference to make (in giving to my own), I would prefer giving to my daughters.

Whoever goes to market and buys something to bring back home, especially for the females in his family, will enjoy God’s care, and whoever is in God’s care will be protected from all suffering.

Purchasing a choice gift for members of your family is like giving charity. Priority should go to the females, because bringing joy to a female is like crying humbly in fear and respect of God and whoever cries in fear of God will be spared from the fires of Hell.

</quote>

Therefore if females were deficient in mind and in faith, they would not be worthy of such preferential thoughts by the Prophet of God. He is much beyond preferring stupidity over intelligence, and a lack of faith over an abundance of it. He once also said, “Fear God in your treatment of the weak, slaves and women.”

As for this last piece of advice given by the Prophet of God, we must stand facing Mecca, humbly and in reverence, in order to hear it. He uttered it from his death bed, at a time he was in distress, because he had not completely removed all of the differences between the slaves and the free, and between men and women. He uttered the following final words, his voice stammering, until his very last word:

<quote>

Prayer ... Prayer ... If any slaves are in your possession, do not burden them with what they are unable to do. God. God ... of Women. They are in your hands.... You took them with God’s trust.

</quote>

He uttered these words and passed away. Peace be upon you, o Prophet of God, peace be upon you, o beloved of God. Peace be upon you, Lord of the first and last prophets. Peace be upon you the day you were born, the day you died, and the day you will be resurrected.

** 12. Politics and the Muslim Woman

Benazir Bhutto

Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan, born 1953), twice prime minister of Pakistan (1988–1990 and 1993–1996), is known more for her political activities than for her religious scholarship. Following the overthrow and execution of her father, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Benazir Bhutto adopted the leadership of his Pakistani People’s Party and opposed the Islamic regime of General Zia-ul-Haq. She spent years in jail, under house arrest, and in exile. As a political leader in an Islamic country, Bhutto has naturally been sensitive to charges that Islam prohibits women from holding such positions.[173] In the speech excerpted here, from her period of exile, she argues that Islamic law does not treat women as inferior to men or incapable of leadership.[174]

I think one of the first things that we must appreciate about the religion of Islam is that there is no one interpretation to it. Islam has certain religious aspects and has some aspects which relate to relations between man and man in society. Just as we have different religious sects in Islam, upholding different religious views—whether it is the Shi’is, the Sunnis, the Malakis, the Hanafis, the Barelwis[175]—so, too, we have different interpretations with regard to the more secular aspects of the duties incumbent upon the Muslim.

I would describe Islam in two main categories: reactionary Islam and progressive Islam. We can have a reactionary interpretation of Islam which

tries to uphold the status quo, or we can have a progressive interpretation of Islam which tries to move with a changing world, which believes in human dignity, which believes in consensus, and which believes in giving women their due right.

I know that some authors have speculated that women in Islamic countries can never achieve self- actualization or a degree of assertiveness unless they look at this from a non-Islamic point of view. I don't agree with that at all. I believe that Islam within it provides justice and equality for women, and I think that those aspects of Islam which have been highlighted by the mullas [religious scholars] do not do a service to our religion. When I use the term mullas, please don't try to think of them in the same terms as the clergy. Christianity has a clergy. Islam does not have a clergy. The relationship between a Muslim and God is direct. There is no need for somebody to intervene. The mullas try to intervene. The mullas give their own interpretation. But I think there are growing movements, as more and more people in Muslim countries, both men and women, achieve education and begin to examine the Qur'an in the light of their education, they are beginning not to agree with the mullas on their orthodox or reactionary version of Islam.

Let us start with the story of the Fall. Unlike Christianity, it is not Eve who tempts Adam into tasting the apple and being responsible for original sin. According to Islam—and I mention this because I believe that Islam is an egalitarian religion—both Adam and Eve are tempted, both are warned, both do not heed the warning, and therefore the Fall occurs.

As far as opportunity is concerned, in Islam there is equal opportunity for both men and women. I refer to the Sura Ya Sin [Sura 36, Verses 34–35], which says: "We produce orchids and date gardens and vines, and we cause springs to gush forth, that they may enjoy the fruits of it." God does not give fruits, orchids, or the fruit of the soil just for men to enjoy or men to plow; he gives it for both men and women. What, in terms of income and opportunity, is available, is available to both man and woman. Sura an-Nisa [Sura 4, Verse 32]: "To men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn."

As regards the law of inheritance, some scholars make a great degree of the fact that inheritance law gives twice the amount to a son, and half the amount to a daughter [Sura 4, Verse 11]. Well, maybe if you look at it in isolation, but not if you look at it in the whole aspect, because it is made abundantly clear that the woman's share is for the use of the woman alone. A man gets two-thirds. One-third—the equivalent of the woman's—is for his own use. The addition one-third that a man gets is to provide provision for his wife and children. This is the obligation on the man. He gets that extra share so that he can provide for the family, the wife and the children. The wife is not responsible for the welfare of the husband, nor is she responsible for the welfare of the children. The wife is not even responsible for suckling her own child. If she chooses not to suckle her child, she does not have to. If she chooses to suckle her child, it is for the husband to provide her with the provisions....

But when it is the case, for instance, of parents, then the Qur'an says, "For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each if the deceased left children." [Sura 4, Verse 11] It does not say that the father must get double and the woman must get half.... It goes on again to make an equal application when it says, "If the man or woman, who has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother and a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth. If more than two brothers and sisters, they shall share [one third of the estate after payment of legacies and debts]." [Sura 4, Verse 12] ... On the whole, the Qur'an proves that it has a balanced outlook whether it refers to men or to women.

As far as forgiveness and reward are concerned, similar conditions are set down for both men and for women. I refer to Sura "The Clan" [Sura 33, Verse 35]: "Men who surrender unto God, and women who surrender, and men who believe, and women who believe, and men who speak the truth, and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere in righteousness, and women who persevere, and men who are humble, and women who are humble, and men who give alms, and women who give alms, and men who fast, and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty, and women who guard their modesty, and men who remember God much, and women who remember, God has prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward." There

are no special considerations set out for the male sex to show that in the eyes of God they are deserving of special considerations.

In Sura “Repentance” [Sura 9, Verse 71], again emphasis is laid on equal advice to men and women: “The believing man and the believing woman, all loyalty to one another, they enjoin noble deeds and forbid dishonor. They perform prayer and say the alms, and obey God and His Messenger. On them will God have mercy.” If it is a matter of entering paradise, again Sura Luqman [Sura 31, Verse 8] says: “If any do righteousness”—be they male or female—“and have faith, they will enter paradise.” As regards theft, if you look at the Sura “Tablespread” [Sura 5, Verse 38]: “As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hand.”

Now this doesn’t have to do with Muslim women, but I would like to add at this juncture that within Islam there are two kinds of interpretations: One is the rigid interpretation, and one is a conceptual interpretation. Thus, in the rigid or mulla-istic sense, “Cut off their hand” would mean “Cut offtheir hand” even today. But in the conceptual analysis of Islam, “Cut offtheir hand” would mean “Adopt those means which will prevent thievery occurring again.” And again, these means may change with the advance of society. It may involve psychiatric help, it may involve having them kept in a separate home, but the main idea is whether you look at it rigidly, “Cut off their hand,” or whether you look at it conceptually, “Do not provide the means for them to do that theft again.”

When it is adultery, again: “The adulterer and adulteress, give them a hundred stripes.” [Sura 24, Verse 2] That is Sura “Light.” Again I would say that there is the rigid interpretation and the conceptual interpretation, and I think that most progressive Muslims believe in the conceptual interpretation because they believe Islam is a dynamic religion for all times and ages.

In behavior toward parents, in the Sura “Israelites” [Sura 17, Verses 23–24] it again says, “Be kind to parents [...] and out of kindness lower to them the wing of humility and say, ‘My Lord, bestow on them your mercy, even as they cherished me in childhood.’” The reference is both to men and women. And that is the predominant theme of the Qur’an. The references are to men and

women. The references are not to men as being characteristic of certain qualities and separate qualities for women. It is not a reference to the male sex as being endowed with some superior attributes and to the woman as being endowed with inferior attributes. The attributes are the same. Both are the creatures of God. Both have certain rights. Both have certain duties. Both have certain obligations. If they want to go to Heaven, they have to behave in a special manner. If they want to do good in this earth, they have to give alms to the needy, they have to help orphans—the behavior is applicable to both men and women. It is not religion which makes the difference. The difference comes from man-made law. It comes from the fact that soon after the Prophet died, it was not the Islam of the Prophet that remained. What took place was the emergence or the reassertiveness of the patriarchal society, and religion was taken over to justify the norms of the tribal society, rather than the point that the Prophet had made in replacing the tribal society with a religion that aimed to cut across narrow loyalties and sought to create a new community, or umma, on the basis of Islam and the message of God.

Now there are certain interpretations within the Qur’an Sharif [the Holy Qur’an] which are extremely ambiguous. Some people interpret them in favor of the conservatives; some people interpret them in favor of the reactionaries. One of these occurs in Sura “The Romans” [Sura 30, Verse 21]: “He created from you helpmates from your self that you might find rest in them.” This is an interpretation that progressives will give: Because it says, “He created from you,” it does not say, “He created from men.” “He created from you” means He created from mankind, or the human race, help-mates. But then other interpretations are given which claim what it said is, God created out of you, out of man, mates that you might find rest in them. And the conservatives use this to say that women were created for men to find rest. Or rather, that they were created to be in the service of man rather than being equal to man.

Arabic is a very complex language. It is a language that many Muslims don’t even understand, because Islam is not only in the Arab countries, but has spread far and beyond. These scholars and these mullas usually argue on these points. One mulla will say that God created women for rest and therefore women are to be used by men. Another one will say no, He created them from amongst yourself. So it

depends very much on the matter of interpretation. But which way should interpretation go? Should it go against the basic grain of the entire message of the religion, or should it be in consonance with the basic message of that religion? When the basic message of Islam was for justice and for equality, when it came as a religion to liberate mankind from superstition and ignorance, to provide education and improvements, then I think it is quite clear for modern Islamic thinkers that it is a religion which did not provide for discrimination and ought to be interpreted in the light of its main thematic message, rather than to make ambiguous statements go against the basic theme of the message.

There are many other aspects of Islam which are taken up, again, to provide controversy on whether men and women are equal or not. One of these is the law of evidence. Now the law of evidence: in one specific part of the Qur'an, it is said that if you are going to take a loan or a debt, two men are needed or four women. Now this "two men are needed or four women" has been changed by certain societies, including Pakistan under the present military ruler [Mohammad Zia-ii-Haq, 1924–1988], to mean that the worth of a woman is half that of a man, and that if a woman is killed, compensation will be paid that is half that of a man; and if in a court of law there is evidence, then the woman's evidence will be worth half that of the man. There is no justification for this whatsoever because if the evidence of a woman is worth half that of a man, it would have been clearly stated in the Qur'an. It would not have been related to debts or loans, it would have said that in matters pertaining to legal affairs the evidence of a woman will be half that of a man, or it would have said that in the matter of murder the compensation will be half that of a man. Instead, in terms of compensation, the Qur'an Sharif goes on to say that if you can have retributions, a slave for a slave, a free man for a free man, a woman for a woman, or if the parties agree, they can come to an agreement on blood money or they can set a slave free [Sura 4, Verse 92]. Now the Qur'an says, "set a slave free." It doesn't say that if a woman is murdered set half a slave free. The Qur'an itself makes no distinction at all. It is man and it is the mullas who claim to be the clergy of Islam—and no clergy exist in Islam—who make these discriminations and who give the wrong impression of our religion not only to the outside world but to Muslims ourselves.

The law of evidence, which some Muslim countries following reactionary paths have adopted, conveniently forgets that the first witness to Islam was a woman, and that was the Prophet’s wife, Khadija [died 619]. The only witness to the martyrdom of the third caliph ‘Uthman [reigned 644–656] was his wife, Nila. So when women themselves have been accepted in early Islam as sole witnesses, then what right do those people have, who come much later, to declare that women are worth only half a man’s evidence and that if they are killed, their compensation should be half.

The other aspect that is pointed out that women are discriminated against is the question of inheritance, which I have already dealt with. I don’t think I’ll say more on that.

The third is the right of divorce and polygamy. It is often said that Islam provides for four wives for a man. But in my interpretation of this, and in the interpretation of many other Muslims, that is simply not true.

What the Qur’an does say, and I quote: “Marry as many women as you wish, wives two or three or four. If you fear not to treat them equally, marry only one. […] I doubt you will be able to be just between your wives, even if you try.” [Sura 4, Verses 3 and 129] So if God Himself and His message says that He doubts that you can be equal, I don’t know how any man can turn around and say that “God has given me this right to get married more than once.”

… The Prophet Muhammad, throughout the life of his first wife, Khadija, never married again. The Prophet’s son-in-law, and who was more or less like an adopted son, Hazrat ‘Ali [circa 596–661], during the lifetime of his first wife, Bibi [Madame] Fatima [circa 605–633], never married more than once. The marriages that took place later were more out of necessity of warfare, widows, or even of tribal connections. Thus to say that a man could be allowed to marry four times, at will, is not something that you can find a strong argument for in the Qur’an.

And if you look at Muslim society, it is not often that the vast Muslim population goes on marrying two, three, four [wives]. It is something that is

related just to the privileged class. They can afford to do that. And they didn't, as the caliphate ruled and the Muslim empire ruled, they didn't just marry two, three, or four women, they went on to keep harems with hundreds of concubines. None of that had anything to do with Islam, either.

A woman in Islam, when she marries, does not take her husband's name. That is again something that has come about more as a matter of exposure to other customs or traditions. A woman in Islam is an identity in her own right. She is not an extension first of her father and then an extension of her husband. She asserts herself from the moment she is born; she is a person with the characteristics she develops, and she keeps her own name. The ideal of identity is just being appreciated in the West, where many people are beginning to keep their own name.

Aside from these provisions from the Qur'an Sharif, which I have been drawing your attention to, I would like to say that within Islamic history there are very strong roles for women. For instance, the Prophet's wife, Bibi Khadija, was a woman of independent means. She had her own business, she traded, she dealt with society at large, she employed the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, when he was a young boy, and subsequently, Bibi Khadija herself sent a proposal [of marriage] to the Prophet. So she is the very image of somebody who is independent, assertive, and does not conform to the passive description of women in Muslim societies that we have grown accustomed to hearing about. Bibi Khadija was fifteen years older than the Prophet, and she was also known, not only as the wife of the Prophet, but as the Mother of all believers.

Bibi Khadija is a symbol, one can say, for all the sects of Islam. Within the two major sects of Shi'ism and Sunnism, both sects provide for [other] powerful role models for women. The Shi'ite sect provides for Bibi Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet, who from a very small age saw the humiliation that her father faced in spreading his message. When he was taunted, when things were thrown at him, it was Bibi Fatima who was by his side. When they had to face confinement and exile, she, along with her mother, was with him. Hers is a figure of endurance. It is not only a figure of endurance, but after the death of the Prophet, hers is also a figure fighting politically for what she considers is her usurped right—usurpation in terms of the caliphate going to

Abu Bakr [reigned 632–634] instead of going to Hazrat ‘Ali, and also usurpation in what she considers to be her property seized unlawfully by the caliphate. So she is a woman who does not accept what has happened to her after the death of the Prophet. She goes to the Helpers, she speaks to them of her plight, and she adopts a political role until her death.

Within the Sunni version there is Bibi ‘A’isha [wife of the Prophet, circa 614–678], who is also put forward as a politically astute woman, who, after the death of the Prophet, was responsible for many of the Traditions that have been handed down to us, who was the one who proposed the caliphate of Hazrat ‘Uthman, and held out the shirt of the Prophet Muhammad, and said that, “Even before this shirt has decayed, you have to ordain someone like Hazrat ‘Uthman.” She made her views known. She was an extremely bold person. Not only did she make her views known; when she opposed something, she went to the battlefield and fought against it.

So when we have such powerful role models of women—of the mother, Bibi Khadija; of the daughter, Bibi Fatima; of the wife, Bibi ‘A’isha—then one must ask, why is it that today in Muslim countries, one does not see that much of women? One does not hear that much of women. Why is it that women are secluded? Why is it that women are subject to social control? Why is that women are not given their due share of property? ... It has got nothing to do with the religion, but it has got very much to do with material or man-made considerations....

I have tried to show you Islam as being a very liberal religion toward women, as giving women their own identity, giving women the right to choose their husbands: If they are not happy with their spouse they don’t have to keep him. When the divorce law [the nuptial agreement between a man and woman] is written, it is a contract of how you live together; you can write in that contract that “I want the right to divorce you”; you can write in that contract that “in the event of divorce I want to be maintained according to the style that I am accustomed to.”

All these considerations are there, and yet women are backward, and they are backward not because Islam has made them backward, but because the

societies that they live in are societies which have upheld the privileged class and which have subsisted on a policy of discrimination against a wide segment of the population....

Before I conclude on this aspect of the powerful role within Islam of women, I would like to quote from the Qur'an, the Sura "The Ant" [Sura 27, Verse 23]: "I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given abundance of all things, and hers is a mighty throne." It is not Islam which is averse to women rulers, I think—it is men.

** 13. A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam

Fatima Mernissi

Fatima Mernissi (Morocco, born 1940), "one of the best known Arab-Muslim feminists," was part of the first generation of Moroccan women to be granted access to higher education. She studied at the Mohammed V University in Rabat and went on to receive her doctorate in sociology in the United States in 1973. She returned to Morocco to teach at her alma mater and currently works at a research institute in Rabat. "She is a recognized public figure in her own country," and her work has been translated into several European languages.[176] According to a fellow academic, Mernissi is the first Muslim woman in the Middle East to succeed "in extricating herself from the issue of cultural loyalty and betrayal" that plagues so many Muslim feminists torn between their double identities.[177] According to a fellow African Muslim, Mernissi represents "the aspirations of women who, while remaining Muslims, wish to live in modernity."[178] One of the recurring themes of Mernissi's work is the mistreatment of women in Islamic societies. In this excerpt, Mernissi argues that the Qur'an and other Islamic sources have been systematically misinterpreted on the subject of the position of women.

“Can a woman be a leader of Muslims?” I asked my grocer, who, like most grocers in Morocco, is a true “barometer” of public opinion.

“I take refuge in God!” he exclaimed, shocked, despite the friendly relations between us. Aghast at the idea, he almost dropped the half-dozen eggs I had come to buy.

“May God protect us from the catastrophes of the times!” mumbled a customer who was buying olives, as he made as if to spit. My grocer is a fanatic about cleanliness, and not even denouncing a heresy justifies dirtying the floor in his view.

A second customer, a schoolteacher whom I vaguely knew from the newsstand, stood slowly caressing his wet mint leaves, and then hit me with a hadith [tradition of the Prophet] that he knew would be fatal: “Those who entrust their affairs to a woman will never know prosperity!” Silence fell on the scene. There was nothing I could say. In a Muslim theocracy, a hadith is no small matter. The hadith collections are works that record in minute detail what the Prophet said and did. They constitute, along with the Qur’an (the book revealed by God), both the source of law and the standard for distinguishing the true from the false, the permitted from the forbidden—they have shaped Muslim ethics and values.

I discreetly left the grocery store without another word. What could I have said to counterbalance the force of that political aphorism, which is as implacable as it is popular?

Silenced, defeated, and furious, I suddenly felt the urgent need to inform myself about this hadith and to search out the texts where it is

mentioned, to understand better its extraordinary power over the ordinary citizens of a modern state.

A glance at the latest Moroccan election statistics supports the “prediction” uttered in the grocery store. Although the constitution gives women the right to vote and be elected, political reality grants them only the former. In the legislative elections of 1977, the eight women who stood for election found no favor with the six and a half million voters, of whom three million were women. At the opening of Parliament, there was not one woman present, and the men were settled among their male peers as usual, just as in the cafes. Six years later, in the municipal elections of 1983, 307 women were bold enough to stand as candidates, and almost three and a half million women voters went to the polls. Only 36 women won election, as against 65,502 men![179]

To interpret the relationship between the massive participation of women voters and the small number of women elected as a sign of stagnation and backwardness would be in accordance with the usual stereotypes applied to the Arab world. However, it would be more insightful to see it as a reflection of changing times and the intensity of the conflicts between the aspirations of women, who take the constitution of their country seriously, and the resistance of men, who imagine, despite the laws in force, that power is necessarily male. This makes me want to shed light on those obscure zones of resistance, those entrenched attitudes, in order to understand the symbolic—even explosive—significance of that act which elsewhere in the world is an ordinary event: a woman’s vote. For this reason, my misadventure in a neighborhood grocery store had more than symbolic importance for me. Revealing the misogynistic attitude of my neighbors, it indicated to me the path I should follow to better understand it—a study of the religious texts that everybody knows but no one really probes, with the exception of the authorities on the subject: the mullas [religious scholars] and imams [prayer leaders].

Going through the religious literature is no small task. First of all, one is overwhelmed by the number of volumes, and one immediately understands why the average Muslim can never know as much as an imam. [Muhammad ibn Isma’il] Al-Bukhari’s [810–870] prestigious collection of

traditions, Al-Sahih (The Authentic), is in four volumes with an abstruse commentary by one [Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Hadi] al-Sindi [died 1726], who is extremely sparing with his comments.[180] Now, without a very good commentary a non-expert will have difficulty reading a religious text of the ninth century.... This is because, for each hadith, it is necessary to check the identity of the Companion of the Prophet who uttered it, and in what circumstances and with what objective in mind, as well as the chain of people who passed it along—and there are more fraudulent traditions than authentic ones. For each hadith, al-Bukhari gives the results of his investigation. If he speaks of X or Y, you have to check which Companion is being referred to, what battle is being discussed, in order to make sense of the dialogue or scene that is being transcribed. In addition, al-Bukhari doesn’t use just one informant; there are dozens of them in the dozens of volumes. You must be careful not to go astray. The smallest mistake about the informant can cost you months of work.

What is the best way of making this check? First of all, you should make contact with the experts in religious science (faqihs) in your city. According to moral teaching and the traditional conventions, if you contact afaqih for information about the sources of a hadith or a Qur’anic verse, he must assist you. Knowledge is to be shared, according to the promise of the Prophet himself. Fath al-bari by [Ibn Hajar] al-‘Asqalani (he died in year 852 of the hejira [1372–1449 A.D.]) was recommended to me by several people I consulted. It consists of 17 volumes that one can consult in libraries during their opening hours. But the vastness of the task and the rather limited reading time is enough to discourage most researchers.

The schoolteacher in the grocery store was right: the hadith “those who entrust their affairs to a woman will never know prosperity” was there in al-‘Asqalani’s 13th volume, where he quotes al-Bukhari’s Sahih, that is, those traditions that al-Bukhari classified as authentic after a rigorous process of selection, verifications, and counter-verifications.[181] Al-Bukhari’s work has been one of the most highly respected references for 12 centuries. This hadith is the sledgehammer argument used by those who want to exclude women from politics. One also finds it in the work of other authorities known for their

scholarly rigor, such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal [780855], the author of the Musnad and founder of the Hanbali school, one of the four great schools ofjurisprudence of the Sunni Muslim world.[182]

This hadith is so important that it is practically impossible to discuss the question of women's political rights without referring to it, debating it, and taking a position on it....

According to al-Bukhari, it is supposed to have been Abu Bakra [died circa 671] who heard the Prophet say: "Those who entrust their affairs to a woman will never know prosperity." Since this hadith is included in the Sahih—those thousands of authentic hadith accepted by the meticulous al-Bukhari—it is a priori considered true and therefore unassailable without proof to the contrary, since we are here in scientific terrain. So nothing bars me, as a Muslim woman, from making a double investigation—historical and methodological—of this hadith and its author, and especially of the conditions in which it was first put to use. Who uttered this hadith, where, when, why, and to whom?

Abu Bakra was a Companion who had known the Prophet during his lifetime and who spent enough time in his company to be able to report the hadith that he is supposed to have spoken. According to him, the Prophet pronounced this hadith when he learned that the Persians had named a woman to rule them. "When Kisra died, the Prophet, intrigued by the news, asked: 'And who has replaced him in command?' The answer was: 'They have entrusted power to his daughter.'"[183] It was at that moment, according to Abu Bakra, that the Prophet is supposed to have made the observation about women.

In 628 A.D., at the time of those interminable wars between the Romans and the Persians, Heraclius, the Roman emperor, had invaded the Persian realm, occupied Ctesiphon, which was situated very near the Sassanid capital, and Khusraw Pavis, the Persian king, had been assassinated. Perhaps it was this event that Abu Bakra alluded to. Actually, after the death of the son of Khusraw, there was a period of instability between 629 and 632 A.D., and

various claimants to the throne of the Sassanid empire emerged, including two women.[184] Could this be the incident that led the Prophet to pronounce the hadith against women? Al-Bukhari does not go that far; he just reports the words of Abu Bakra—that is, the content of the hadith itself—and the reference to a woman having taken power among the Persians. To find out more about Abu Bakra, we must turn to the huge work of Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani.

In the 17 volumes of the Fath al-bari, al-‘Asqalani does a line-by-line commentary on al-Bukhari. For each hadith of the Sahih, al-‘Asqalani gives us the historical clarification: the political events that served as background, a description of the battles, the identity of the conflicting parties, the identity of the transmitters and their opinions, and finally the debates concerning their reliability—everything needed to satisfy the curiosity of the researcher.

On what occasion did Abu Bakra recall these words of the Prophet, and why did he feel the need to recount them? Abu Bakra must have had a fabulous memory, because he recalled them a quarter of a century after the death of the Prophet, at the time that the caliph ‘Ali [reigned 656–661] retook Basra after having defeated ‘A’isha [wife of the Prophet, circa 614–678] at the Battle of the Camel.[185]

Before occupying Basra, ‘A’isha went on pilgrimage to Mecca, where she learned the news of the assassination of ‘Uthman [caliph, 644–656] at Medina and the naming of ‘Ali as the fourth caliph. It was while she was in Mecca that she decided to take command of the army that was challenging the choice of ‘Ali. Days and days of indecision then followed. Should she go to Kufa or Basra? She needed to have an important city with enough malcontents to aid her cause and let her set up her headquarters. After numerous contacts, negotiations, and discussions, she chose Basra. Abu Bakra was one of the notables of that city and, like all of them, in a difficult position. Should he take up arms against ‘Ali, the cousin of the Prophet and the caliph, challenged maybe but legitimate, or should he take up arms against ‘A’isha, the “lover of the Beloved of God” and the “wife of the Prophet on earth and in paradise”?[186] If one realizes, moreover, that he

had become a notable in that Iraqi city, which was not his native city, one can better understand the extent of his unease.

It can be said that Islam brought him good fortune. Before being converted, Abu Bakra had the hard, humiliating life of a slave in the city of Ta'if, where only the aristocracy had the right to high office. In year 8 A.H. (630 A.D.) the Prophet decided that it was time for him to undertake the conquest of Ta'if. He had just conquered Mecca, making a triumphal entry into that city, and now felt himself strong enough to subdue the inhabitants of Ta'if, who were still resisting Islam. But they put up a strong defense. The Prophet camped outside the city and besieged the citadel for 18 days. In vain. The chief tribe that controlled the city, the Banu Tamim, and their allies were entrenched in the fort and used bows and arrows against the attackers, causing casualties among Muhammad's army. Twelve of his men were killed, causing him distress, as he had hoped to win without losses. Each soldier was a Companion; he knew their families; this was not an anonymous army. He decided to lift the siege and depart. But before doing so, he sent messengers to proclaim around the fort and the besieged city that all slaves who left the citadel and joined his ranks would be freed.[187] A dozen slaves answered his call, and Abu Bakra was one of them. The Prophet declared them free men, despite the protests of their masters, and after their conversion to Islam they became the brothers and equals of all.[188] In this way, Abu Bakra found both Islam and freedom.

And then we see him a few years later, a notable in an Iraqi city, the incarnation of Muhammad's dream—that all the poor, the humiliated of the world, could accede to power and wealth. The rapid rise of this one Companion summarizes very well what Islam meant for a man like Abu Bakra, who would never have been able to imagine leaving his native city as a free man and especially changing his social status so quickly: "You, the Arabs, were in an unspeakable state of degradation, powerlessness, and profligacy. The Islam of God and Muhammad saved you and led you to where you are now."[189] In fact, since his conversion Abu Bakra had scaled the social ladder at a dizzying pace: "Abu Bakra was very pious and remained so throughout his life. His children were among the notables of Basra as a result of their fortune and their erudition."[190] ...

So why was he led to dig into his memory and make the prodigious effort of recalling the words that the Prophet was supposed to have uttered 25 years before? The first detail to be noted—and it is far from being negligible—is that Abu Bakra recalled his hadith after the Battle of the Camel. At that time, ‘A’isha’s situation was scarcely enviable. She was politically wiped out: 13,000 of her supporters had fallen on the field of battle.[191] ‘Ali had retaken the city of Basra, and all those who had not chosen to join ‘Ali’s clan had to justify their action. This can explain why a man like Abu Bakra needed to recall opportune traditions, his record being far from satisfactory, as he had refused to take part in the civil war. Not only did he refrain from taking part, but, like many of the Companions who had opted for nonparticipation, he had made his position known officially. ‘A’isha, who often used to accompany the Prophet on military expeditions, knew the procedure for the negotiations that took place before the military occupation of a city and had conducted matters correctly. Before besieging the city, she had sent messengers with letters to all the notables of the city, explaining to them the reasons that had impelled her to rebel against ‘Ali, her intentions, and the objectives that she wanted to attain, and finally inviting them to support her.[192] It was a true campaign of information and persuasion, a preliminary military tactic in which the Prophet excelled. And ‘A’isha was going to use the mosque as the meeting place for a public discussion to inform the population before occupying the city. Abu Bakra was thus contacted from the beginning in his capacity as a notable of the city.[193]

‘A’isha did not take this course of action only because of faithfulness to Muhammad’s methods. There was a more important reason. This was the first time since the death of the Prophet that the Muslims found themselves on opposite sides in a conflict. This was the situation that Muhammad had described as the worst possible for Islam:fitna, civil war, which turned the weapons of the Muslims inward instead of directing them, as God wished, outward, in order to conquer and dominate the world. So ‘A’isha had to explain her uprising against ‘Ali. She reproached him for not having brought the murderers of ‘Uthman, the assassinated third caliph, to justice. Some of those who had besieged ‘Uthman and whose identity was known were in ‘Ali’s army as military leaders. Many Muslims must have thought as ‘A’isha did, because a large part of the city of Basra welcomed her, giving her men and weapons. After driving out the governor who represented ‘Ali, ‘A’isha set up her headquarters in Basra, and with her two allies, Talha [ibn ‘Ubayd Allah al-Taymi, died 656] and al-Zubair [ibn al-‘Awwam, seventh

century], members of the Quraysh tribe like herself, she continued her campaign of information, negotiation, and persuasion through individual interviews and speeches in the mosques, pressing the crowds to support her against the “unjust” caliph. It was year 36 A.H. (656 A.D.), and public opinion was divided: should one obey an “unjust” caliph (who did not punish the killers of ‘Uthman), or should one rebel against him and support ‘A’isha, even if that rebellion led to civil disorder?

For those who held the first opinion, the gravest danger that the Muslim nation could face was not that of being ruled by an unjust leader, but rather of falling into civil war. Let us not forget that the word “Islam” means “submission.” If the leader was challenged, the fundamental principle of Islam as order was in danger. The others thought that the lack ofjustice in the Muslim chief of state was more serious than civil war. A Muslim must not turn his back when he sees his leader commit injustices and reprehensible acts (munkar): “The Prophet said: ‘If people see munkar and they do not try to remedy it, they incur divine punishment.’” Another version of this hadith is: “Let him who sees a situation in which munkar is being perpetrated endeavor to change it.”[194] This was the argument of the group that assassinated Anwar Sadat [1918–1981] of Egypt, and is representative of the very prolific literature of the Muslim extremists of today.[195]

At Basra in year 36 the dilemma that confronted a Muslim—whether to obey an unjust caliph or to take up arms against him—was not just being posed in the circles of the ruling elite. The mosques were veritable plenary assemblies where the leaders came to discuss with the people they governed the decisions to be taken in the conflict between ‘A’isha and ‘Ali, and it must be pointed out (after reading the minutes of those meetings) that the people spoke up and demanded to be informed about what was going on. The ordinary people did not even know what the quarrel was about; for those citizens the important problem was the absence of democracy. It seemed mad to them to get involved without knowing the motives that were driving the leaders and the conflicts that divided them. They gave as the reason for their refusal to get involved on either side the lack of democracy in the selection of the caliph. In one of the debates that took place at the Basra mosque when ‘A’isha’s partners were invited by the people to explain their motives, a young man who did not belong to the elite made a speech that

illuminated a whole area that was not very clear in the dynamics of Islam at the beginning and is often “forgotten” today—the nondemocratic dimension of Islam, which was noted and felt as such by the ordinary people. This young man took the floor in the Basra mosque, an act that would cost him his life, and addressing the allies and representatives of ‘A’isha who were pushing him toward subversion, said to them:

<quote>

It is true that youMuhajirun [the original migrants from Mecca] [196] were the first to respond to the Prophet’s call. You had the privilege of becoming Muslims before all the others. But everyone had that privilege later and everyone converted to Islam. Then, after the death of the Prophet, you selected a man from among you without consulting us [the common people, who were not part of the elite]. After his death, you got together and you named another [caliph], still without asking our advice.... You chose ‘Uthman, you swore your allegiance to him, still without consulting us. You became displeased with his behavior, and you decided to declare war without consulting us. You decided, still without consulting us, to select ‘Ali and swear allegiance to him. So what are you blaming him for now? Why have you decided to fight him? Has he committed an illegal act? Has he done something reprehensible? Explain to us what is going on. We must be convinced if we are to decide to take part in this war. So what is going on? Why are you fighting?[197]

</quote>

Thus the decision not to participate in this civil war was not an exceptional one, limited to a few members of the elite. The mosques were full of people who found it absurd to follow leaders who wanted to lead the community into tearing each other to pieces. Abu Bakra was not in any way an exception.

When he was contacted by ‘A’isha, Abu Bakra made known his response to her: he was againstfitna. He is supposed to have said to her (according to the way he told it after the battle):

<quote>

It is true that you are our umm [mother, alluding to her title of “Mother of Believers,” which the Prophet bestowed on his wives during his last years]; it is true that as such you have rights over us. But I heard the Prophet say: “Those who entrust power [mulk] to a woman will never know prosperity.”[198]

</quote>

Although, as we have just seen, many of the Companions and inhabitants of Basra chose neutrality in the conflict, only Abu Bakra justified it by the fact that one of the parties was a woman.

According to al-Tabari’s account, Basra, after ‘A’isha’s defeat, lived through many days of understandable anxiety. Was ‘Ali going to take revenge on those who had not supported him, one of whom was Abu Bakra? “In the end ‘Ali proclaimed a general amnesty.... All those who threw down their arms, he announced on the day of the battle, and those who returned to their homes would be spared.”[199] “‘Ali spent some days on the battlefield; he buried the dead of both sides and said a common funeral prayer for them before returning to the city.”[200]

Nevertheless, everything was not quite so simple, if we take the example of Abu Musa al-Ash’ari [614–662], another Muslim pacifist who had refused to get involved in a civil war that he regarded as senseless. Abu Musa al-Ash’ari lost both position and fortune. However, it is true that the situations of Abu Musa and Abu Bakra are not comparable, except for their refusal to get involved. Abu Bakra’s support was solicited by ‘A’isha, the losing party, while that of Abu Musa was sought by ‘Ali, the victor. Abu Musa was none other than a governor in ‘Ali’s service, his representative, and the symbol of the Muslim state as the head of the Iraqi town of Kufa. ‘Ali, before proceeding to Basra, then occupied by ‘A’isha, sent emissaries to Abu Musa demanding that he mobilize the people and urgently send him troops and weapons. Not only did Abu Musa personally choose not to obey his caliph, but he also thought himself obligated to “consult with” the population he governed. He decided to involve the people, whom he called together in the mosque for information and discussion, and to enlighten them about the position of the Prophet on the subject of civil war. Abu Musa recited to them the

hadith condemning fitna, and ordered them to disobey the caliph and not answer his call to enlist. For him, the duty of a Muslim in the case offitna was absolute opposition to any participation. He recited many hadith at the Kufa mosque, all of them againstfitna—against civil war plain and simple. It was not a question of the sex of the leader![201] Al-Bukhari assembled all hadith on the subject of civil war in a chapter entitled “Al-Fitna”; among them was Abu Bakra’s hadith—the only one to give as a reason for neutrality the gender of one of the opponents.[202]

What is surprising to the modern reader who leafs through the chronicles of that famous Battle of the Camel is the respect that the people, whatever their position toward the war, showed to ‘A’isha. Very rare were the occasions on which she was insulted—and even then it was never by one of the political leaders, but by some of the ordinary people.[203] The historians recall that only the Shi’i chroniclers (the pro-‘Ali ones) find fault with ‘A’isha. Why, then, did Abu Bakra distinguish himself by a completely unprecedented misogynistic attitude?

Abu Musa al-Ash’ari was dismissed from his post and banished from Kufa by ‘Ali. He was replaced by a governor who was less of a pacifist, and above all more tractable.[204] If this happened to Abu Musa, the situation of other “pacifists” who were less highly placed was very delicate indeed. It would seem providential to also remember having heard a hadith that intimated an order not to participate in a war if a woman was at the head of the army.

Abu Bakra also remembered other hadith just as providential at critical moments. After the assassination of ‘Ali, Mu’awiya [ibn Abi Sufyan] the Umayyad [circa 605–680] could only legitimately claim the caliphate if Hasan [624–669], the son of ‘Ali and thus his successor, declared in writing that he renounced his rights. And this he did under pressure and bargaining that were more or less acknowledged.[205] It was at this moment that Abu Bakra recalled a hadith that could not have been more pertinent, under political circumstances that had unforeseen repercussions. He is supposed to have heard the Prophet say that “Hasan [the son of ‘Ali]

will be the man of reconciliation."[206] Hasan would have been a very small baby when the Prophet, his grandfather (through his daughter Fatima), would have said that! Abu Bakra had a truly astonishing memory for politically opportune hadith which curiously—and most effectively—fitted into the stream of history.

Once the historical context of a hadith was clarified, it was time to go on to its critical evaluation by applying to it one of the methodological rules that the religious scholars had defined as principles of the process of verification.[207] The first of these rules was to consider "this religion as a science," in the tradition of Imam Malik ibn Anas (born in year 93 A.H. [710–796 A.D.]), who was considered, with [Abu 'Abdallah Muhammad] Shafi'i [767–820] and Abu Hanifa [circa 699–767], one of "the three most famous imams in Islam because of their contribution to the elaboration of the knowledge that enables the believer to distinguish the permitted from the forbidden."[208] Malik ibn Anas never ceased saying:

<quote>

This religion is a science, so pay attention to those from whom you learn it. I had the good fortune to be born [in Medina] at a time when 70 persons [Companions] who could recite hadith were still alive. They used to go to the mosque and start speaking: The Prophet said so and so. I did not collect any of the hadith that they recounted, not because these people were not trustworthy, but because I saw that they were dealing in matters for which they were not qualified.[209]

</quote>

According to him, it was not enough just to have lived at the time of the Prophet in order to become a source of hadith. It was also necessary to have a certain background that qualified you to speak: "Ignorant persons must be disregarded." How could they be considered sources of knowledge when they did not have the necessary intellectual capacity? But ignorance and intellectual capacity were not the only criteria for evaluating the narrators of hadith. The most important criteria were moral.

According to Malik, some persons could not under any circumstances transmit a hadith:

<quote>

Knowledge [al-‘lm] cannot be received from a mentally deficient person, nor from someone who is in the grip of passion and who might incite bid’a [innovation], nor from a liar who recounts anything at all to people.... And finally one should not receive knowledge from a shaykh, even a respected and very pious one, if he has not mastered the learning that he is supposed to transmit.[210]

</quote>

Malik directs suspicion at the transmitters, emphasizes the necessity for Muslims to be on their guard, and even advises us to take the daily behavior of sources into consideration as a criterion for their reliability:

<quote>

There are some people whom I rejected as narrators of hadith, not because they lied in their role as men of science by recounting false hadith that the Prophet did not say, but just simply because I saw them lying in their relations with people, in their daily relationships that had nothing to do with religion.[211]

</quote>

If we apply this rule to Abu Bakra, he would have to be immediately eliminated, since one of the biographies of him tells us that he was convicted of and flogged for false testimony by the caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab [reigned 634–644].[212] This happened during a very serious case that ‘Umar punished by execution—a case involving zina [fornication], an illicit sex act. In order to end the sexual licentiousness and promiscuity that existed in pre-Islamic Arabia and in an effort to control paternity, Islam condemned all sexual relations outside marriage or

ownership as zina, encouraging women and men to marry and labeling celibacy as the open door to temptations of all kinds. It gave men the right to have several wives and to divorce them easily and replace them by others, provided that it was all within the framework of Muslim marriage.

‘Umar, the second caliph of a new community still under the influence of pre-Islamic customs, had to act rapidly and severely to see that a key idea of Islam, the patriarchal family, became rooted in the minds of believers. Capital punishment for zina would only be applied if four witnesses testified to having seen the adultery with their own eyes and at the same time. These were conditions so difficult to prove that it made this punishment more a deterrent than a realistic threat. It was necessary, moreover, to avoid having enmities and slanders lead to the condemnation of innocent persons. If there were only three witnesses who saw the accused in flagrante delicto, their testimony was not valid. In addition, any witness who slandered someone by accusing him of the crime of zina would incur the punishment for slander—he would be flogged for false testimony.[213]

Now this was what happened in the case of Abu Bakra. He was one of the four witnesses who came before ‘Umar to officially make the accusation of zina against a well-known person, a Companion and a prominent political man, al-Mughira ibn Shu’ba [died 670]. The four witnesses testified before ‘Umar that they had seen al-Mughira ibn Shu’ba in the act of fornication. ‘Umar began his investigation, and one of the four witnesses then admitted that he was not really sure of having seen everything. The doubt on the part of one of the witnesses made the others subject to punishment by flogging for slander, and Abu Bakra was flogged.

If one follows the principles of Malik forfiqh [Islamic jurisprudence], Abu Bakra must be rejected as a source of hadith by every good, well-informed Malikite Muslim.

To close this investigation, let us take a brief look at the attitude of the religious scholars of the first centuries toward that misogynistic hadith that is presented to us today as sacred, unassailable

truth. Even though it was collected as sahih (authentic) by al-Bukhari and others, that hadith was hotly contested and debated by many. The scholars did not agree on the weight to give that hadith on women and politics. Assuredly there were some who used it as an argument for excluding women from decision making. But there were others who found that argument unfounded and unconvincing. Al-Tabari was one of those religious authorities who took a position against it, not finding it a sufficient basis for depriving women of their power of decision making and for justifying their exclusion from politics.[214]

After having tried to set straight the historical record—the line of transmitters and witnesses who gave their account of a troubled historical epoch—I can only advise redoubled vigilance when, taking the sacred as an argument, someone hurls at the believer as basic truth a political axiom so terrible and with such grave historical consequences as the one we have been investigating. Nevertheless, we will see that this “misogynistic” hadith, although it is exemplary, is not a unique case.

Throughout my childhood I had a very ambivalent relationship with the Qur’an. It was taught to us in a Qur’anic school in a particularly ferocious manner. But to my childish mind only the highly fanciful Islam of my illiterate grandmother, Lalla Yasmina, opened the door for me to a poetic religion.... This dual attitude that I had toward the sacred text was going to remain with me. Depending on how it is used, the sacred text can be a threshold for escape or an insurmountable barrier. It can be that rare music that leads to dreaming or simply a dispiriting routine. It all depends on the person who invokes it. However, for me, the older I grew, the fainter the music became. In secondary school the history of religion course was studded with traditions. Many of them from appropriate pages of al-Bukhari, which the teacher recited to us, made me feel extremely ill at ease: “The Prophet said that the dog, the ass, and woman interrupt prayer if they pass in front of the believer, interposing themselves between him and the qibla [the direction of Mecca].”[215] ...

By lumping [woman] in with two familiar animals, the author of the hadith inevitably makes her a being who belongs to the animal kingdom. It is enough for a woman to appear in the field of vision for contact

with the qibla—that is, the divine—to be disturbed. Like the dog and the ass, she destroys the symbolic relation with the divine by her presence. One has to interrupt one’s prayer and begin again.

Arab civilization being a civilization of the written word, the only point of view we have on this question is that of Abu Hurayra [died 678]. According to [Shams al-Din] Ibn Marzuq [1311–1379], when someone invoked in front of ‘A’isha the hadith that said that the three causes of interruption of prayer were dogs, asses, and women, she answered them: “You compare us now to asses and dogs. In the name of God, I have seen the Prophet saying his prayers while I was there, lying on the bed between him and the qibla. And in order not to disturb him, I didn’t move.”[216] The believers used to come to ‘A’isha for verification of what they had heard, confident of her judgment, not only because of her closeness to the Prophet, but because of her own abilities:

<quote>

I have seen groups of the most eminent companions of the Prophet ask her questions concerning the fara’id [the daily duties of the Muslim, the rituals, etc.], and Ibn ‘Ata’ said: “‘A’isha was, among all the people, the one who had the most knowledge offiqh, the one who was the most educated and, compared to those who surrounded her, the one whose judgment was the best.”[217]

</quote>

Despite her words of caution, the influence of Abu Hurayra has nevertheless infiltrated the most prestigious religious texts, among them the Sahih of al-Bukhari, who apparently did not always feel obliged to insert the corrections provided by ‘A’isha. The subject of many of these hadith is the “polluting” essence of femaleness.

To understand the importance for Islam of that aspect of femaleness, evoking disturbance and sullying, we would do well to look at the personality of Abu Hurayra, who, as it were, gave it legal force. Without wanting to play the role of psychoanalytical detective, I can say that the fate of Abu Hurayra and his

ambivalence toward women are wrapped up in the story of his name. Abu Hurayra, meaning literally “Father of the Little Female Cat,” had previously been called “Servant of the Sun” (‘Abd al-Shams).[218] The Prophet decided to change that name, which had a very strong sense of idolatry about it. “Servant of the Sun” was originally from Yemen, that part of Arabia where not only the sun, a female star in Arabic, was worshipped, but where women also ruled in public and private life. Yemen was the land of the Queen of Sheba, Bilqis [tenth century B.C.], that queen who fascinated King Solomon [reigned 962–922 B.C.], who ruled over a happy kingdom, and who put her mark on Arab memory, since she appears in the Qur’an:

<quote>

[Hud-hud] said: “I have found (a thing) that thou apprehendest not, and I come unto thee from Sheba with sure tidings.”

Lo! I found a woman ruling over them, and she hath been given (abundance) of all things, and hers is a mighty throne.

I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of God.... (Sura 27, Verses 22–24)

</quote>

Abu Hurayra came from the Yemeni tribe of the Daws.[219] At the age of 30 the man named “Servant of the Sun” was converted to Islam. The Prophet gave him the name ‘Abdallah (Servant of God) and nick-named him Abu Hurayra (Father of the Little Female Cat) because he used to walk around with a little female cat that he adored.[220] But Abu Hurayra was not happy with this nickname, for he did not like the trace of femininity in it: “Abu Hurayra said: ‘Don’t call me Abu Hurayra. The Prophet nicknamed me Abu Hirr [Father of the Male Cat], and the male is better than the female.’”[221] He had another reason to feel sensitive about this subject of femininity—he did not have a very masculine job. In a Medina that was in a state of full-blown economic development, where the Medinese, especially the Jews, made an art of agriculture, and the immigrant Meccans continued their commercial activities and managed to combine them with military

expeditions, Abu Hurayra preferred, according to his own comments, to be in the company of the Prophet. He served him and sometimes “helped out in the women’s apartments.”[222] This fact might clear up the mystery about his hatred of women, and also of female cats, the two seeming to be strangely linked in his mind.

He had such a fixation about female cats and women that he recalled that the Prophet had pronounced a hadith concerning the two creatures—and in which the female cat comes off much better than the woman. But ‘A’isha contradicted him, a Companion recounted:

<quote>

We were with ‘A’isha, and Abu Hurayra was with us. ‘A’isha said to him: “Father of the Little Cat, is it you who said that you heard the Prophet declare that a woman went to hell because she starved a little female cat and didn’t give it anything to drink?”

“I did hear the Prophet say that,” responded Father of the Little Cat.

“A believer is too valuable in the eyes of God,” retorted ‘A’isha, “for Him to torture that person because of a cat.... Father of the Little Cat, the next time you undertake to repeat the words of the Prophet, watch out what you recount.”[223]

</quote>

It is not surprising that Abu Hurayra attacked ‘A’isha in return for that. She might be “The Mother of the Believers” and “The Lover of the Lover of God,” but she contradicted him too often. One day he lost patience and defended himself against an attack by ‘A’isha. When she said to him, “Abu Hurayra, you relate hadith that you never heard,” he replied sharply, “O Mother, all I did was collect hadith, while you were too busy with make-up and your mirror.”[224]

One of the constant themes of conflict in Islam from the very beginning is what to do about menstrual periods and the sex act. Are periods the source of sullying? ‘A’isha and the other wives of the Prophet never lost any opportunity to insist that the Prophet did not have the phobic attitude of pre-Islamic Arabia on that subject. Did the Prophet purify himself after making love during the holy month of Ramadan? “I heard Abu Hurayra recount that he whom the dawn finds sullied (janaban, referring to sullying by the sex act) may not fast.”[225] Upon hearing this new law decreed by Abu Hurayra, the Companions hastened to the wives of the Prophet to reassure themselves about it: “They posed the question to Umm Salama [wife of the Prophet, circa 596–682] and ‘A’isha.... They responded: ‘The Prophet used to spend the night sullied without making any ritual of purification, and in the morning he fasted.’”[226] The Companions, greatly perplexed, returned to Abu Hurayra:

<quote>

“Ah, so. They said that?” he responded.

“Yes, they said that,” repeated the Companions, feeling more and more troubled, because Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. Abu Hurayra then confessed, under pressure, that he had not heard it directly from the Prophet, but from someone else. He reconsidered what he had said, and later it was learned that just before his death he completely retracted his words.[227]

</quote>

Abu Hurayra was not the only one to report hadith about the purification ritual, and this was a real bone of contention between ‘A’isha and the Companions. “[‘Abdallah] ibn ‘Umar [died 693] ordered women who were doing the purification ritual to undo their braids [before touching their hair with wet hands].” ‘A’isha is supposed to have responded when someone reported to her the teaching that he was propounding: “That’s strange.... Why, when he was about it, didn’t he order them to shave their heads? When I used to wash myself with the Prophet, we purified ourselves with the same bucket of water. I passed my wet hand over my braids three times, and I never undid them!”[228] ‘A’isha insisted on these corrections because she

was conscious of the implications of what was being said. Pre-Islamic Arabia regarded sexuality, and the menstruating woman in particular, as a source of pollution, as a pole of negative forces. This theory about pollution expressed a vision of femaleness that was conveyed through a whole system of superstitions and beliefs that Muhammad wanted to condemn. He saw it as, on the one hand, the essence of the jahiliya [pre-Islamic era], and, on the other hand, the essence of the beliefs of the Jewish community of Medina.

The religious scholars who took part in the debate on the subject of pollution, recorded at length in the religious literature, came down on the side of ‘A’isha. Their argument was that her version of the hadith seemed to agree more with the attitude of the Prophet, who tried by all means to “struggle against superstition in all its forms.”[229]

This was not a matter that interested only the imams. The caliphs were also greatly concerned about it: “Mu’awiya ibn Abi Sufyan [reigned 661–680] asked Umm Habiba, the wife of the Prophet [circa 588–680], if the Prophet—may God pray for him—had ever prayed in the garments in which he had made love. She said yes, he had, because he saw nothing bad in it.”[230] Imam al-Nasa’i explains to us why he laid such stress on the subject of menstruation in his chapter on the purification ritual. The Prophet, he said, wanted to react against the phobic behavior of the Jewish population of Medina, who declared a woman who was having her period unclean: “He ordered them [the male believers who had asked him questions on this subject] to eat with their wives, drink with them, share their bed, and do everything with them that they wanted except copulate.”[231]

The books offiqh devote whole chapters to the purification rituals that every Muslim must carry out five times a day before praying. It is undeniable that Islam has an attitude bordering on anxiety about bodily cleanliness, which induces in many people an almost neurotic strictness. Our religious education begins with attention focused on the body, its secretions, its fluids, its orifices, which the child must learn to constantly observe and control. The sex act imposes a more elaborate ritual for the grown man and woman, and after menstruating the woman must wash her entire body according to a precise ritual. Islam stresses the fact that sex and

menstruation are really extraordinary (in the literal meaning of the word) events, but they do not make the woman a negative pole that “annihilates” in some way the presence of the divine and upsets its order. But apparently the Prophet’s message, 14 centuries later, has still not been absorbed into customs throughout the Muslim world, if I judge by the occasions when I was refused admittance at the doors of mosques in Penang, Malaysia, in Baghdad, Iraq, and in Kairouan, Tunisia.

According to the meticulous al-Nasa’i, Maymuna [circa 593–672], one of the wives of the Prophet (he had nine at the time, that concerns us here, the last years of his life in Medina), said: “It happened that the Prophet recited the Qur’an with his head on the knee of one of us while she was having her period. It also happened that one of us brought his prayer rug to the mosque and laid it down while she was having her period.”[232] Already at the time that Imam al-Nasa’i was writing (he was born in year 214 or 215 A.H., 830 A.D.), the scholars suspected that there was a message there that was disturbing the misogyny ingrained in the peoples of the Arab Mediterranean area, before and after the Prophet, and they made great efforts not to betray that very disturbing aspect of the Prophet’s message. These religious scholars, who saw in misogyny the danger of betrayal of the Prophet, doubled their precautions and did a thorough investigation of the sex life of the Prophet by listening to the reports of his wives, the only credible sources on this subject. They accumulated details about his life at home as well as in the mosque. Ibn Sa’d devoted a chapter of his book to the layout of the Prophet’s house. This chapter, as we shall soon see, is extremely important for the clarification of a key dimension of Islam: the total revolution it represented vis-a-vis the Judeo-Christian tradition and the pre-Islamic period with regard to women. However, very quickly the misogynistic trend reasserted itself among the religious scholars and gained the upper hand. We will see the resurgence in many hadith of that superstitious fear of femaleness that the Prophet wanted to eradicate.

One can read among al-Bukhari’s “authentic” hadith the following one: “Three things bring bad luck: house, woman, and horse.”[233] Al-Bukhari did not include other versions of this hadith, although the rule was to give one or more contradictory versions in order to show readers conflicting points of view, and thus to permit them to be sufficiently well informed to decide for themselves about practices that were

the subject of dispute. However, there is no trace in al-Bukhari of ‘A’isha’s refutation of this hadith:

<quote>

They told ‘A’isha that Abu Hurayra was asserting that the Messenger of God said: “Three things bring bad luck: house, woman, and horse.” ‘A’isha responded: “Abu Hurayra learned his lessons very badly. He came into our house when the Prophet was in the middle of a sentence. He only heard the end of it. What the Prophet said was: ‘May God refute the Jews; they say three things bring bad luck: house, woman, and horse.’”[234]

</quote>

Not only did al-Bukhari not include this correction, but he treated the hadith as if there was no question about it. He cited it three times, each time with a different transmission chain. This procedure generally strengthens a hadith and gives the impression of consensus concerning it. No mention was made of the dispute between ‘A’isha and Abu Hurayra on this subject. Worse yet, al-Bukhari followed this misogynistic hadith with another along the same lines which reflected the same vision of femaleness as a pole of destruction and ill luck: “The Prophet said: ‘I do not leave after me any cause of trouble more fatal to man than women.’”[235] The source of this hadith is ‘Abdallah ibn ‘Umar (the son of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, the second caliph), who was known for his rare asceticism and for nights interrupted by prayers and purifications.[236] ‘Abdallah was a source very highly valued by Bukhari. He was the author of another famous hadith, in which he throws women into hell: “‘Abdallah ibn ‘Umar said: ‘The Prophet said: “I took a look at paradise, and I noted that the majority of the people there were poor people. I took a look at hell, and I noted that there women were the majority.”’”[237]

What conclusion must one draw from this? That even the authentic hadith must be vigilantly examined with a magnifying glass? That is our right, Malik ibn Anas tells us. Al-Bukhari, like all religious scholars, began his work of collecting by asking for God’s help and acknowledging that only He is infallible. It is our tradition to question everything and everybody,

especially the religious scholars and imams. And it is more than ever necessary for us to disinter our true tradition from the centuries of oblivion that have managed to obscure it. But we must also guard against falling into generalizations and saying that all the imams were and are misogynistic. That is not true today and was not true yesterday. The example of this is Imam Zarkashi, who, luckily for us, recorded in writing all of ‘A’isha’s objections.

Imam Zarkashi was of Turkish origin, but born in Egypt in the middle of the 14th century A.D. (year 745 A.H.). Like all the scholars of his time, he traveled throughout the Muslim world in search of knowledge. He specialized in religious knowledge and left behind no less than 30 compendiums. Many of these are lost to modern researchers, and we know only their titles. Among those that have come down to us is a book devoted to ‘A’isha’s contribution to Islam, her contribution as a source of religious knowledge. The book begins as follows:

<quote>

‘A’isha is the Mother of the Believers.... She is the lover of the Messenger of God.... She lived with him for eight years and five months; she was 18 years old at the time of the death of the Prophet.... She lived to be 65 years old. We are indebted to her for 1,210 hadiths.[238]

</quote>

And he explains:

<quote>

This book is devoted to her particular contribution in this field, especially the points on which she disagreed with others, the points to which she supplied added information, the points on which she was in complete disagreement with the religious scholars of her time .... I have entitled this book Collection of ‘A’isha’s Corrections to the Statements of the Companions.[239]

</quote>

This book remained in manuscript form until 1939. [Jamal al-Din] Al-Afghani [1838–1897] discovered it while doing research for his biography of ‘A’isha in the al-Dahiriya Library of Damascus, Syria. Why did Imam Zarkashi, one of the greatest scholars of the Shafi’i school of his time, undertake his work on ‘A’isha? A work that, by all accounts, he must have considered extremely important, since he dedicated his book to the Judge of Judges (qadi al-qudat)—the equivalent of the Minister of Justice today, the supreme authority in religious matters in a Muslim city. Because, he says, “the Prophet recognized ‘A’isha’s importance to such an extent that he said: ‘Draw a part of your religion from little al-humayra [red woman].’”[240] One of the Prophet’s favorite pet names for ‘A’isha was al-humayra, referring to her very white skin made radiant by a light sunburn, something rather rare in the Hijaz, the northern part of Arabia.[241]

‘A’isha disputed many of Abu Hurayra’s hadith and declared to whoever wanted to hear it: “He is not a good listener, and when he is asked a question, he gives wrong answers.”[242] ‘A’isha could take the liberty of criticizing him because she had an excellent memory: “I never saw anyone who had so much knowledge about religion, poetry, and medicine as ‘A’isha.”[243] Abu Hurayra knew how to rile her. “But who has heard about that from Abu al-Qasim [the Prophet’s surname]?” she exclaimed when someone recounted to her another of Abu Hurayra’s traditions, this time describing what the Prophet did after making love.[244]

It is not wasted effort for us to tarry over the personality of Abu Hurayra, the author of hadith that saturate the daily life of every modern Muslim woman. He has been the source of an enormous amount of commentary in the religious literature. But he was and still is the object of controversy, and there is far from being unanimity on him as a reliable source. The most recent book about him, jointly published by a Lebanese and an Iraqi firm, is a tribute written by one of his admirers who devotes not less than 500 pages to defending him. ‘Abd al-Mun’im Salih al-‘Ali gave his book a rather eloquent title: In Defense of Abu Hurayra.[245] It was obviously a success, since a new edition was published in 1983. The author begins by asserting that “the Zionists and their allies and supporters have found another weapon against Islam; it is to introduce doubt about the

narrators of traditions ... and especially about those who were the source of many hadith.”[246] This gives an idea of the intensity of the controversy surrounding Abu Hurayra. What is certain is that Abu Hurayra, long before Zionism, was attacked by Companions of his own generation. He had a very dubious reputation from the beginning, and al-Bukhari was aware of it, since he reports that “people said that Abu Hurayra recounts too many hadith.”[247] ‘Abd al-Mun’im, to his credit, cites all the incidents in which he was strongly challenged, including by those other than ‘A’isha. He assures us that ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, the second orthodox caliph, did not say that “the worst liar among the narrators of hadith is Abu Hurayra.”[248] He disputes the claim that ‘Umar threatened to exile him, to send him back to his native Yemen, if he continued to recount hadith.[249]

‘Umar, who enjoyed an unparalleled influence on the Prophet and the Muslim community of yesterday (and still does today) because of his prestige as a man of politics, his boldness in military matters, his strong personality, and his horror of lying, avoided recounting hadith. He was terrified at the idea of not being accurate. For that reason, ‘Umar was one of those Companions who preferred to rely on their own judgment rather than trust their memory, which they considered dangerously fallible.[250] He was very irritated by the facile manner in which Abu Hurayra reeled off hadith: “‘Umar al-Khattab,” we can read in al-‘Asqalani’s biography of him, “is supposed to have remarked as follows about Abu Hurayra: ‘We have many things to say, but we are afraid to say them, and that man there has no restraint.’”[251]

For the pious Companion the fallibility of memory was an occasion for meditating on the fragility of existence in the face of the flowing river of time, which steals not only youth, but especially memory. ‘Umar ibn Hasin [seventh century], another Companion who was conscious of the treacherousness of memory, said:

<quote>

If I wanted to, I could recite traditions about the Prophet for two days without stopping. What keeps me from doing it is that I have seen some of the

Companions of the Messenger of God who heard exactly what I myself heard, who saw what I saw, and those men recounted hadith. Those traditions are not exactly what we heard. And I am afraid of hallucinating, as they hallucinate.[252]

</quote>

The Arabic word is yushba, literally “to hallucinate,” that is, to see a reality that does not exist but that has the appearance of reality.

Abu Hurayra, on the contrary, for the three years that he spent in the company of the Prophet, would accomplish the tour de force of recalling 5,300 hadith.[253] Al- Bukhari listed 800 experts who cited him as their source.[254] Here is how Abu Hurayra explains his excellent memory: “I said to the Prophet: ‘I listen attentively, I take in many of your ideas, but I forget many.’”[255] Then the Prophet is supposed to have told him to spread out his cloak while he was speaking to him, and afterwards to pick it up at the end of the session. “And this is the reason that I no longer forgot anything.”[256] Telling the story of the cloak was not the best way to be convincing in a religion like Islam, which has a horror of mysteries of all sorts, where Muhammad resisted the pressure of his contemporaries to perform miracles and magical acts, and where the religious scholars became well-versed from very early on in an exaggerated pragmatism.

Abu Hurayra also gave another explanation that was a bit more realistic than the first. The other Companions, he said, put their energy into business matters and spent their time in the bazaars drawing up contracts and increasing their fortunes, while he had nothing else to do but follow the Prophet everywhere.[257] ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, who was well known for his physical vigor and who awoke the city every day to say the dawn prayer, disliked lazy people who loafed around without any definite occupation. He summoned Abu Hurayra on one occasion to offer him a job. To his great surprise, Abu Hurayra declined the offer. ‘Umar, who did not consider such things a joking matter, said to him:

<quote>

“You refuse to work? Better people than you have begged for work.”

“Who are those people who are better than me?” inquired Abu Hurayra.

“Joseph, the son of Jacob, for example,” said ‘Umar to put an end to a conversation that was getting out of hand.

“He,” said Abu Hurayra flippantly, “was a prophet, the son of a prophet, and I am Abu Hurayra, son of Umayma [his mother].”[258]

</quote>

With this anecdote we come back to our point of departure, the relationship of “Father of the Little Female Cat” to femaleness and to the very mysterious and dangerous link between the sacred and women. All the monotheistic religions are shot through by the conflict between the divine and the feminine, but none more so than Islam, which has opted for the occultation of the feminine, at least symbolically, by trying to veil it, to hide it, to mask it. Islam as sexual practice unfolds with a very special theatricality since it is acted out in a scene where the hijab [veil] occupies a central position. This almost phobic attitude toward women is all the more surprising since we have seen that the Prophet has encouraged his adherents to renounce it as representative of the jahiliya and its superstitions. This leads me to ask: Is it possible that Islam’s message had only a limited and superficial effect on deeply superstitious seventh-century Arabs who failed to integrate its novel approaches to the world and to women? Is it possible that the hijab, the attempt to veil women, that is claimed today to be basic to Muslim identity, is nothing but the expression of the persistence of the pre-Islamic mentality, the jahiliya mentality that Islam was supposed to annihilate?

** 14. Qur’an and Woman

Amina Wadud-Muhsin

Muslims number more than 3 million in the United States and constitute one of the country’s fastest-growing religious groups. African-Americans, comprising a third of this Islamic community—most of the rest are immigrants from Islamic countries and their descendants—have traditionally practiced heterodox forms of Islam not recognized as “Islamic” by Muslim scholars in other countries. Since Malcolm X’s (1925–1965) famous pilgrimage in 1964, however, many African-American Muslims have adopted more orthodox Islamic practices. At the same time, African-American Muslims have brought their own historical experiences to bear on their Islamic faith. [259] A leading representative of this approach is Amina Wadud-Muhsin (United States, born 1952), a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia. Wadud-Muhsin combines gendered readings of the Qur’an with the experience of African-American women to argue that Islamic injunctions must be interpreted in relation to specific historical circumstances.

*** Introduction: How Perceptions of Woman Influence Interpretation of the Qur’an

My objective in undertaking this research was to make a “reading” of the Qur’an that would be meaningful to women living in the modern era. By “reading” I mean the process of reviewing the words and their context in order to derive an understanding of the text. Every “reading” reflects, in part, the intentions of the text, as well as the “prior text”[260] of the one who makes the “reading.” Although each “reading” is unique, the understanding of various readers of a single text will converge on many points.

In this “Introduction” I will give the background to this work. In particular, I will look at how the perception of woman influences the interpretations of the Qur’an’s position on women. I will give an overview of my own perspective of woman and of the methods of interpretation I used in analyzing the Qur’an which have led to some new conclusions.

No method of Qur’anic exegesis is fully objective. Each exegete makes some subjective choices. Some details of their interpretations reflect their subjective choices and not necessarily the intent of the text. Yet, often, no distinction is made between text and interpretation. I put interpretations of woman in the Qur’an into three categories: “traditional,” reactive, and holistic.

The first category of Qur’anic interpretation I call “traditional.” Traditional tafasir (exegetical works) give interpretations of the entire Qur’an, whether from the modern or classical periods, with certain objectives in mind. Those objectives could be legal, esoteric, grammatical, rhetorical, or historical. Although these objectives may lead to differences in the tafasir, one similarity in these works is their atomistic methodology. They begin with the first verse of the first chapter and proceed to the second verse of the first chapter—one verse at a time—until the end of the Book. Little or no effort is made to recognize themes and to discuss the relationship of the Qur’an to itself, thematically. A brief mention of one verse’s relation to another verse may be rendered but these are haphazard with no underlying hermeneutical principle applied. A methodology for linking similar Qur’anic ideas, syntactical structures, principles, or themes together is almost non-existent.[261]

However, what concerns me most about “traditional” tafasir is that they were exclusively written by males. This means that men and men’s experiences were included and women and women’s experiences were either excluded or interpreted through the male vision, perspective, desire, or needs of woman.[262] In the final analysis, the creation of the basic paradigms through which we examine and discuss the Qur’an and Qur’anic interpretation were generated without the participation and firsthand

representation of women. Their voicelessness during critical periods of development in Qur’anic interpretation has not gone unnoticed, but it has been mistakenly equated with voicelessness in the text itself.

The second category of Qur’anic interpretation concerned with the issue of woman consists primarily of modern scholars’ reactions to severe handicaps for woman as an individual and as a member of society which have been attributed to the text. In this category are many women and/or persons opposed to the Qur’anic message (or more precisely, to Islam) altogether. They use the poor status of women in Muslim societies as justification for their “reactions.” These reactions have also failed to draw a distinction between the interpretation and the text.[263]

The objectives sought and methods used, often come from feminist ideals and rationales. Although they are often concerned with valid issues, the absence of a comprehensive analysis of the Qur’an sometimes causes them to vindicate the position of women on grounds entirely incongruous with the Qur’anic position on woman. This shortcoming must be overcome in order to make use of a most effective tool for the liberation of Muslim women: demonstrating the link between that liberation and this primary source of Islamic ideology and theology.

The interpretations which reconsider the whole method of Qur’anic exegesis with regard to various modern social, moral, economic, and political concerns —including the issue of woman—represent the final category. It is in this category that I place this work. This category is relatively new, and there has been no substantial consideration of the particular issue of woman in the light of the entire Qur’an and its major principles.

I propose to make a “reading” of the Qur’an from within the female experience and without the stereotypes which have been the framework for many of the male interpretations. In the final analysis, this reading will confront some of the conclusions drawn on this subject. Because I am analyzing the text and not the interpretations of that text, my treatment of this issue differs from many of the existing works on this topic.

**** Methodology: A Hermeneutical Model

A hermeneutical model is concerned with three aspects of the text, in order to support its conclusions: (1) the context in which the text was written (in the case of the Qur’an, in which it was revealed); (2) the grammatical composition of the text (how it says what it says); and (3) the whole text, its Weltanschauung or world-view. Often, differences of opinion can be traced to variations in emphasis between these three aspects.

I argue against some conventional interpretations, especially about certain words used in the Qur’an to discuss and fulfill universal guidance. I render some discussions, heretofore considered as gendered, into neutral terms. Other discussions, heretofore considered as universal, I render specific on the basis of their limitations and on the expression in terms specific to seventh-century Arabia. Some historical information with regard to occasions of revelation and the general period of revelation was considered here.

Thus, I attempt to use the method of Qur’anic interpretation proposed by Fazlur Rahman [Pakistan-United States, 1919–1988]. He suggests that all Qur’anic passages, revealed as they were in a specific time in history and within certain general and particular circumstances, were given expression relative to those circumstances. However, the message is not limited to that time or those circumstances historically. A reader must understand the implications of the Qur’anic expressions during the time in which they were expressed in order to determine their proper meaning. That meaning gives the intention of the rulings or principles in the particular verse.

Believers from another circumstance must make practical applications in accordance with how that original intention is reflected or manifested in the new environments. In modern times this is what is meant by the “spirit” of the Qur’an. To get at that “spirit,” however, there must be some comprehensible and organized hermeneutical model.[264]

The initial question behind my research was, why does the Qur’an specify males and females on some occasions (like “Believing males and Believing females”— masculine plural followed by feminine plural forms), while on other occasions it uses a more generic (“Oh you who believe …”—masculine plural) form? From my perspective on the Qur’an, every usage of the masculine plural form is intended to include males and females, equally, unless it includes specific indication for its exclusive application to males.

The plural in Arabic is used to denote three or more rational beings. Thus the following Arabic sentences:

A. Al-tullab fi al-ghurfa (masculine plural noun) means

(1) three or more students in the room—including at least one male

(2) three or more exclusively male students in the room.

B. Al-talibat fi al-ghurfa (feminine plural form) means

(1) three or more female students in the room.

As there is no form exclusively for males, the only way to determine if the masculine plural form (al-tullab fi al-ghurfa [A]) is exclusively for males (2) would be through some specific indication in the text. Thus:

C. Al-tullab wa al-talibat fi al-ghurfa indicates that the use of the masculine plural (al-tullab) refers exclusively to males since the inclusion of the female plural form distinguishes the female students present.[265]

All the verses which contained any reference to women, separately or together with men, were analyzed with the traditional method of tafsir al-Qur’an bi al-Qur’an (interpretation of the Qur’an based on the Qur’an itself). However, I elaborated these particular terms of this method. Each verse was analyzed: (1) in its context; (2) in the context of discussions on similar topics in the Qur’an; (3) in the light of similar language and syntactical structures used elsewhere in the Qur’an; (4) in the light of overriding Qur’anic principles; and (5) within the context of the Qur’anic Weltanschauung, or world-view.

**** Language and Prior Text

One unique element for reading and understanding any text is the prior text of the individual reader: the language and cultural context in which the text is read. It is inescapable and represents, on the one hand, the rich varieties that naturally occur between readers, and, on the other hand, the uniqueness of each.

Prior text adds considerably to the perspective and conclusions of the interpretation. It exposes the individuality of the exegete. This is neither good nor bad in and of itself. However, when one individual reader with a particular world-view and specific prior text asserts that his or her reading is the only possible or permissible one, it prevents readers in different contexts from coming to terms with their own relationship to the text.

To avoid the potential of relativism, there is continuity and permanence in the Qur’anic text itself as exemplified even through various readings by their points of convergence. However, in order for the Qur’an to achieve its objective to act as a catalyst affecting behavior in society, each social context must understand the fundamental and unchangeable principles of that text, and then implement them in their own unique reflection. It is not the text or its principles that change, but the capacity and particularity of the understanding and reflection of the principles of the text within a community of people.

Thus, each individual reader interacts with the text. However, the assertion that there is only one interpretation of the Qur’an limits the extent of the text. The Qur’an must be flexible enough to accommodate innumerable cultural situations because of its claims to be universally beneficial to those who believe.[266] Therefore, to force it to have a single cultural perspective —even the cultural perspective of the original community of the Prophet— severely limits its application and contradicts the stated universal purpose of the Book itself.

**** The Prior Text of Gender-Specific Languages

The significance of masculine and feminine forms, whether used distinctively or to make generic indications, was an important part of my analysis. Perspectives on gender, particularly on the understanding of what constitutes feminine or masculine behavior, and the roles of men and women in society, are based on one’s cultural context. Gender-specific languages, such as Arabic, create a particular prior text for the speakers of that language. Everything is classified male or female. English, Malay, and other languages do not share this prior text with Arabic. This results in a distinction between the various readings of the Qur’an. This distinction becomes apparent in the interpretation of the text and the conclusions drawn from the function of the text with regard to gender.

With regard to Arabic, the language of the Qur’an, I approach the text from the outside. This frees me to make observations which are not imprisoned in the context of a gender-distinct language.

<quote>

There exists a very strong, but one-sided and thus untrustworthy, idea that in order better to understand a foreign culture, one must enter into it, forgetting one’s own, and view the world through the eyes of this foreign culture. This idea, as I have said, is one-sided. Of course, a certain entry as a living being into a foreign culture, the possibility of seeing the world through its eyes, is a necessary part of the process of understanding it; but if this were the only aspect of this understanding, it would merely be

duplication and would not entail anything new or enriching. Creative understanding does not renounce itself, its own place in time, its own culture; and it forgets nothing. In order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understands to be located outside the object of his or her creative understanding—in time, in space, and in culture.[267] (Emphasis mine.)

</quote>

A new look at Qur’anic language with regard to gender is especially necessary in the light of the absence of an Arabic neuter. Although each word in Arabic is designated as masculine or feminine, it does not follow that each use of masculine or feminine persons is necessarily restricted to the mentioned gender—from the perspective of universal Qur’anic guidance.[268] A divine text must overcome the natural restrictions of the language of human communication. Those who argue that the Qur’an cannot be translated believe that there is some necessary correlation between Arabic and the message itself. I will demonstrate that gender distinction, an inherent flaw, necessary for human communication in the Arabic, is overcome by the text in order to fulfill its intention of universal guidance.

**** Perspectives on Women

“Most men have at one time or another heard, or perhaps even believed, that women are ‘inferior’ and ‘unequal’ to men.”[269] I worked against the back-drop of common prejudices and attitudes among Muslims towards women which have not only affected the position of women in Muslim societies but also affected the interpretation of the position of women in the Qur’an. One such belief is that there are essential distinctions between men and women reflected in creation, capacity and function in society, accessibility to guidance (particularly to Qur’anic guidance), and in the rewards due to them in the Hereafter.

Although there are distinctions between women and men, I argue that they are not of their essential natures. More importantly, I argue against the values that have been attributed to these distinctions. Such

attributed values describe women as weak, inferior, inherently evil, intellectually incapable, and spiritually lacking. These evaluations have been used to claim that women are unsuitable for performing certain tasks, or for functioning in some ways in society.

The woman has been restricted to functions related to her biology. The man, on the other hand, is evaluated as superior to and more significant than woman, an inherent leader and caretaker, with extensive capacity to perform tasks that the woman cannot. Consequently, men are more human, enjoying completely the choice of movement, employment, and social, political and economic participation on the basis of human individuality, motivation, and opportunity This is actually an institutionalized compensation for the reverse situation.

<quote>

Woman alone gives birth to children, nurses them, and is their primary nurturer in their early formative years. Moreover, the social and economic roles that commonly have been defined as the province of the male have never been performed exclusively by men. Subconsciously, men are aware of this fact.... The male has never had an exclusive social or economic role that woman could not participate in too....

Awareness of woman’s monopoly was psychologically repressed and overshadowed by institutionalizing and socially legitimating male values that had the effect of creating self-fulfilling prophecies.[270] (Emphasis mine.)

</quote>

**** Distinctions Between Men and Women

The Qur’an acknowledges the anatomical distinction between male and female. It also acknowledges that members of each gender function in a manner which reflects the well-defined distinctions held by the culture to which those members belong. These distinctions are an important part of how cultures function. For this reason, it would be unwise if the Qur’an failed

to acknowledge and, in fact, sympathize with culturally determined, functional distinctions.

<quote>

As they are divided, so genders are also interwoven differently in each culture and time. They can rule separate territories and rarely intertwine, or they can be knotted like the lines in the Book of Kells. Sometimes no basket can be plaited, no fire kindled, without the collaboration of two sets of hands. Each culture brings the genders together in its unique way.[271]

</quote>

The Qur’an does not attempt to annihilate the differences between men and women or to erase the significance of functional gender distinctions which help every society to run smoothly and fulfill its needs. In fact, compatible mutually supportive functional relationships between men and women can be seen as part of the goal of the Qur’an with regard to society.[272] However, the Qur’an does not propose or support a singular role or single definition of a set of roles, exclusively, for each gender across every culture.

The Qur’an acknowledges that men and women function as individuals and in society. However, there is no detailed prescription set on how to Junction, culturally. Such a specification would be an imposition that would reduce the Qur’an from a universal text to a culturally specific text—a claim that many have erroneously made. What the Qur’an proposes is transcendental in time and space.[273]

Gender distinctions and distinct gender functions contribute to the perceptions of morally appropriate behavior in a given society. Since the Qur’an is moral guidance, it must relate to the perceptions of morality—no matter how gender- specified—which are held by individuals in various societies. Yet, the mere fact that the Qur’an was revealed in seventh-century Arabia when the Arabs held certain perceptions and misconceptions about women and were involved in certain specific lewd practices against them resulted in some injunctions specific to that culture.

Some prevailing practices were so bad they had to be prohibited explicitly and immediately: infanticide, sexual abuse of slave girls, denial of inheritance to women, zihar,[274] to name a few of the most common. Other practices had to be modified: polygamy, unconstrained divorce, conjugal violence, and concubinage, for example. With regard to some practices, the Qur’an seems to have remained neutral: social patriarchy, marital patriarchy, economic hierarchy, the division of labor between males and females within a particular family.

Some women activists today openly question this neutrality. Why didn’t the Qur’an just explicitly prohibit these practices? If the evolution of the text and its overall objective is consumed under one—albeit important—aspect of social interaction, say consciousness-raising with regard to women, then the Qur’an is made subservient to that aspect, rather than the other way around. There is an essential acknowledgment of the relationship between men and women as they function in society, but it is not the sole nor primary objective of the text.

In addition, certain practices encouraged by the Qur’an may be restricted to that society which practiced them, but the Qur’an is “not confined to, or exhausted by, (one) society and its history....”[275] Therefore, each new Islamic society must understand the principles intended by the particulars. Those principles are eternal and can be applied in various social contexts.

For example, in Arabia at the time of the revelation, women of wealthy and powerful tribes were veiled and secluded as an indication of protection. The Qur’an acknowledges the virtue of modesty and demonstrates it through the prevailing practices. The principle of modesty is important—not the veiling and seclusion which were manifestations particular to that context. These were culturally and economically determined demonstrations of modesty.[276] Modesty is not a privilege of the economically advantaged only: all believing women deserve the utmost respect and protection of their modesty—however it is observed in various societies.

Modesty is beneficial for maintaining a certain moral fiber in various cultures and should therefore be maintained—but on the basis of faith: not economics, politics or other forms of access and coercion. This is perhaps why Yusuf Ali [1872–1952] translates Sura 24, Verse 31 “what (must ordinarily) appear”[277] (with regard to uncovered parts), to indicate that (ordinarily) there are culturally determined guidelines for modesty.

This method of restricting the particulars to a specific context, extracting the principles intended by the Qur’an through that particular, and then applying those principles to other particulars in various cultural contexts, forms a major variation from previous exegetical methodologies. The movement from principles to particulars can only be done by the members of whatever particular context a principle is to be applied. Therefore, interpretation of the Qur’an can never be final....

*** Rights and Roles of Women: Some Controversies

**** Woman is Not Just Biology

Because woman’s primary distinction is on the basis of her childbearing ability, it is seen as her primary function. The use of “primary” has had negative connotations in that it has been held to imply that women can only be mothers. Therefore, women’s entire upbringing must be to cultivate devoted wives and ideal mothers in preparation for this function.

There is no term in the Qur’an which indicates that childbearing is “primary” to a woman. No indication is given that mothering is her exclusive role. It demonstrates the fact that a woman (though certainly not all women) is the exclusive human capable of bearing children. This capacity is essential to the continuation of human existence. This function becomes primary only with regard to the continuity of the human race. In other words, since only the woman can bear children, it is of primary importance that she does.

Although it does not restrict the female to functioning as a mother, the Qur’an is emphatic about the reverence, sympathy, and responsibility due to the female procreator. “O humankind ... have taqwa[278] towards God in Whom you claim your rights of one another, and (have taqwa) towards the wombs (that bore you).” (Sura 4, Verse 1) This verse is often interpreted as indicating respect for women in general.[279] I specify this verse as indicating respect for the needed procreative capacity of women. I do not diminish respect from women as a class, but I do specify, from the Qur’anic perspective, the significance of the function of child-bearing, which is exclusively performed by women.[280] The reverence given to the fulfillment of this function helps explain how the Qufan explicitly delineates a function for males which creates a balance in human relations.[281]

No other function is similarly exclusive to one gender or the other. This brings to mind the popular misconception that since only males have had the responsibility of risala,[282] it indicates something special about that class. Both men and women have been included in divine communication as the recipients of wahy,[283] but there is no Qur’anic example of a woman with the responsibility of risala. However, all those chosen for this responsibility were exceptional.

This is not a biological association with males representing their primary function and expressing a universal norm for all men. In fact, given the difficulty they have faced in getting others to accept the message when these exceptional men have come from poor classes, the likelihood of failure for the message might have been greater if women, who are given so little regard in most societies, were selected to deliver the message. It is strategy for effectiveness, not a statement of divine preference.[284]

Besides the two functions discussed above, every other function has real or potential participation by both males and females. However, there is still a wide range of functional distinctions between individuals considered in the Qur’an. The questions that must be asked then are: What is the value of the functional distinctions between individuals? Do these functional distinctions

and the values placed on them delineate specific values for males and females in society? Are these values intra-Qur’anic or extra-Qur’anic?

In particular, several verses from the Qur’an have frequently been used to support the claims of the inherent superiority of males over females. These verses contain two terms which have been used to indicate value in the functional distinctions between individuals and groups on earth. I will review these terms, how they have been used in the Qur’an, and in the overall context of Qur’anic justice.

The first term is daraja (plural: darajat), “step, degree or level.” A daraja exists not only on earth between people but also between the Hereafter and earth,[285] between levels in Heaven and in Hell. The other term, faddala, is often used in conjunction with darajat. I have translated faddala “to prefer,” with a verbal noun (tafdil) meaning “preference.” Often the preference given is spoken of in terms offadl, which I translate as (God’s) “benevolence.”

**** Daraja

An individual or group can earn or be granted a daraja over another. The Qur’an specifies, for example, that by striving in the way of God with one’s wealth and one’s person (Sura 4, Verse 95) or by immigrating for God (Sura 9, Verse 20), one can obtain a daraja. However, most often the daraja is obtained through an unspecified category of doing “good” deeds (Suras 20, Verse 75; 6, Verse 132; 46, Verse 19).

Distinguishing between individuals or groups on the basis of “deeds” involves problems with regard to the value of women in society and as individuals. Although the Qur’an distinguishes on the basis of deeds, it does not set values for particular deeds. This leaves each social system to

determine the value of different kinds of deeds at will. They have always done this and “every society has distinguished men’s work from women’s work.”[286] The problem is that “Men’s work is usually regarded as more valuable than women’s work, no matter how arbitrary the division of labor.”[287]

On the one hand, the Qur’an supports distinctions on the basis of deeds, but on the other hand, it does not determine the actual value of specific deeds. This leads to the interpretation that the Qur’an supports values of deeds as determined by individual societies. Actually, the Qur’an’s neutrality allows for the natural variations that exist.

With regard to the daraja obtained through deeds, however, the Qur’an has stipulated several points which should affect evaluation in society. First, all deeds performed with taqwa are more valuable. Second, “Unto men a fortune from that which they have earned and unto women a fortune from that which they have earned.” (Sura 4, Verse 32) The deeds may be different, but recompense is given based on what one does. It does not matter how the deeds are divided between the males and the females in a particular social context.

Another implication of a “fortune from what one earns” is that whenever anyone performs tasks normally attributed to the other gender in addition to his or her own normal tasks, he or she will earn an additional reward. For example, Moses meets two women from Madyan, where ordinarily the males tended the animals. However, because there was no able-bodied male in the family to perform this task according to the norm (the father being an old man), the women were required to be extraordinarily useful.

There is no indication that these women were immoral in their performance of this task, because fulfilling the tasks needed for survival takes precedence over socially determined roles. Similarly, in post-slavery America, the Black female was given employment instead of the Black male. In many families, she became the sole supporter. This necessity, in addition to her fulfillment of the ordinary tasks of bearing and rearing children, should have given her more. A flexible perspective on the fulfillment of necessity would have

benefited her. Instead, she was subject to a double burden and, often, violence at home from a husband who felt displaced.

Each social context divides the labor between the male and the female in such a way as to allow for the optimal function of that society. The Qur’an does not divide the labor and establish a monolithic order for every social system which completely disregards the natural variations in society. On the contrary, it acknowledges the need for variations when it states that the human race is divided “into nations and tribes that you might know one another.” (Sura 49, Verse 13) Then it gives each group, and each member of the group—the males and the females—recompense in accordance to deeds performed.

This is an important social universal in the Qur’an. It allows and encourages each individual social context to determine its functional distinctions between members, but applies a single system of equitable recompense which can be adopted in every social context. This is also one reason why certain social systems have remained stagnant in their consideration of the potential roles of women. The Qur’an does not specifically determine the roles, and the individual nations have not considered all the possibilities.

As for the daraja which is “given” by God, it is even more illusive than the daraja for unspecified deeds. There is a distinction on the basis of knowledge: “God will exalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge, to high ranks [darajat].” (Sura 58, Verse 11) “We raised by grades [darajat] (of mercy) whom We will, and over all endued with knowledge there is one more knowing.” (Sura 12, Verse 76)

There are also social and economic distinctions: “We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world, and raised some of them above others in ranks [darajat] that some of them may take labor from others; and the mercy of God is better than (the wealth) that they amass.” (Sura 43, Verse 32)[288] It is also clear, however, that wealth is not a “real” distinguishing characteristic, but a functional distinction apparent to humankind and valued within society.

The daraja given by God serves another significant function—to test the inhabitants of the earth: “He it is Who has placed you as viceroys of the earth and has exalted some of you in ranks [darajat] above others, that He may try you by (the test of) that which He has given you.” (Sura 6, Verse 165)

Finally, it is necessary to discuss the one verse which distinguishes a daraja between men and women:

<quote>

Women who are divorced shall wait, keeping themselves apart, three (monthly) courses. And it is not lawful for them that they conceal that which God has created in their wombs if they believe in God and the Last Day. And their husbands would do better to take them back in that case if they desire a reconciliation. And [(the rights) due to the women are similar to (the rights) against them, (or responsibilities they owe) with regard to] the ma’ruf, and men have a degree [daraja] above them (feminine plural). God is Mighty, Wise. (Sura 2, Verse 228)

</quote>

This verse has been taken to mean that a daraja exists between all men and all women, in every context. However, the context of the discussion is clearly with regard to divorce: men have an advantage over women. In the Qur’an the advantage men have is that of being individually able to pronounce divorce against their wives without arbitration or assistance. Divorce is granted to a woman, on the other hand, only after intervention of an authority (for example, a judge).

Considering the details given, daraja in this verse must be restricted to the subject at hand.[289] To attribute an unrestricted value to one gender over another contradicts the equity established throughout the Qur’an with regard to the individual: each nafs [soul] shall have in accordance to what it earns. Yet, the verse is presumed to state what men

have believed and wanted others to believe: that society operates hierarchically with the male on top. Finally, this verse states: “[(the rights) due to the women are similar to (the rights) against them, (or responsibilities they owe) with regard to] the ma’ruf. The term ma’ruf occurs in other instances with regard to the treatment of women in society. [Muhammad Marmaduke] Pickthall [Britain, 1875–1936] translates it as “kindness,” but its implications are much wider than that. It is a passive participle of the verbal root “to know,” and as such indicates something “obvious,” “well known,” or “conventionally accepted.”[290] However, with regard to treatment, it also has dimensions of equitable, courteous and beneficial.[291]

In this verse (Sura 2, Verse 228), it precedes the daraja statement to indicate its precedence. In other words, the basis for equitable treatment is conventionally agreed upon in society. With regard to this, the rights and the responsibilities of the woman and the man are the same. Again, the expression places a limitation rather than a universal perspective on this issue because convention is relative to time and place.

**** Faddala

As with daraja, the Qur’an states explicitly that God has preferred [faddala] some of creation over others. Like daraja, this preference is also discussed in specific terms. First, humankind is preferred over the rest of creation (Sura 17, Verse 70). Then, occasionally, one group of people have been preferred over another.[292] Finally, some of the prophets are preferred over others (Suras 2, Verse 253; 6, Verse 86; 17, Verse 55). It is interesting to note, however, that “preference” is not absolute. Although the Qur’an states that some prophets are preferred over others, it also states that no distinction is made between them (Sura 2, Verse 285). This indicates that, in the Qur’anic usage, preference is relative.

Like daraja, faddala is also given to test the one to whom it is given. Unlike daraja, however, faddala cannot be earned by performing certain deeds. It can only be given by God, Who has it

and grants it to whom He wishes and in the form He wishes. Others do not have it and cannot give it. They can only be recipients of His fadl.

With regard to faddala, men and women, the following verse is central:

<quote>

Men are [qawwamuna ‘ala] women, [on the basis] of what God has [preferred] (faddala) some of them over others, and [on the basis] of what they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are [qanitat],[293] guarding in secret that which God has guarded. As for those from whom you fear [nushuz], admonish them, banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then, if they obey you, seek not a way against them. (Sura 4, Verse 34)

</quote>

Needless to say, this verse covers a great deal more than just preference. This is classically viewed as the single most important verse with regard to the relationship between men and women: “men are qawwamuna ‘ala women.” Before discussing this, however, I want to point out that this correlation is determined on the basis of two things: (1) what “preference” has been given, and (2) “what they spend of their property (for support of women),” that is, a socioeconomic norm and ideal.

The translation I have inserted, “on the basis of,” comes from the bi[294] used in this verse. In a sentence, it implies that the characteristics or contents before bi are determined “on the basis” of what comes after bi. In this verse it means that men are qawwamuna ‘ala women only if the following two conditions exist. The first condition is “preference,” and the other is that they support the women from their means. “If either condition fails, then the man is not ‘qawwam’ over that woman.”[295]

My first concern then isfaddala. The verse says the position between men and women is based on “what” God has preferred. With regard to material preference, there is only one Qur’anic reference which specifies that God has determined for men a portion greater than for women: inheritance.[296] The share for a male is twice that for the female (Sura 4, Verse 7) within a single family. The absolute inheritance for all men will not always be more than that for all women. The exact amount left depends on the family’s wealth in the first place. In addition, if Sura 4, Verse 34 refers to a preference demonstrated in inheritance, then such a materialistic preference is also not absolute. This connection is often favored because the other condition for qiwama is that “they spend of their property (for the support of women).” Thus, there is a reciprocity between privileges and responsibilities. Men have the responsibility of paying out of their wealth for the support of women, and they are consequently granted a double share of inheritance.

However, it cannot be overlooked that “many men interpret the above passage” as an unconditional indication of the preference of men over women. They assert that “men were created by God superior to women (in strength and reason).”

<quote>

However, this interpretation ... is (i) unwarranted and (ii) inconsistent with other Islamic teachings.... [T]he interpretation is unwarranted because there is no reference in the passage to male physical or intellectual superiority. [297]

</quote>

Faddala cannot be unconditional because Sura 4, Verse 34 does not read “they (masculine plural) are preferred over them (feminine plural).” It reads “ba’d(some) of them over ba’d (others).” The use of ba’d relates to what obviously has been observed in the human context. All men do not excel over all women in all manners.

Some men excel over some women in some manners. Likewise, some women excel over some men in some manners.[298] So, whatever God has preferred, it is still not absolute.

If “what” God has preferred is restricted to the material (and specifically inheritance), then the extent and nature of the preference is explained by the Qur’an. Even if “what” God has preferred is more than just the preference given in inheritance, it is, nevertheless, still restricted to “some of them” over “some others” by the wording in this context:

<quote>

Men are “qawwamun” over women in matters where God gave some of the men more than some of the women, and in what the men spend of their money, then clearly men as a class are not “qawwamun” over women as a class.[299]

</quote>

However, further understanding of this distinction requires further explanation of qawwamuna ‘ala. What does it mean, and what are the parameters of its application?

As for the meaning, Pickthall translates this as “in charge of.” [Abu’l Qasim Mahmud] Al-Zamakhshari [1075–1144][300] says it means that “men are in charge of the affairs of women.” [Abul A’la] Mawdudi [1903–1979][301] says, “Men are the managers of the affairs of women because God has made the one superior to the other....” Azizah al-Hibri [Lebanon, born 1943] objects to any translation which implies that men are protectors or maintainers because “the basic notion here is one of moral guidance and caring”[302] and also because:

<quote>

only under extreme conditions (for example, insanity) does the Muslim woman lose her right to self-determination…. Yet men have used this passage to exercise absolute authority over women. They also use it to argue for the male’s divinely ordained and inherent superiority.[303]

</quote>

Some questions beg asking concerning the parameters of application: Are all men qawwamuna ‘ala all women? Is it restricted to the family, such that the men of a family are qawwamuna ‘ala the women of that family? Or, is it even more restricted, to the marital tie such that only husbands are qawwamuna ‘ala wives? All of these possibilities have been given.

Generally, an individual scholar[304] who considers faddala an unconditional preference of males over females does not restrict qiwama to the family relationship but applies it to society at large. Men, the superior beings, are qawwamuna ‘ala women, the dependent, inferior beings.

Sayyid Qutb,[305] whose discussion I will consider at length, considers qiwama an issue of concern for the family within society. He restricts Sura 4, Verse 34, in some ways, then, to the relationship between the husband and the wife. He believes that providing for the females gives the male the privilege of being qawwamuna ‘ala the female.

He gives qiwama a decided dimension of material maintenance. The rationale behind restricting this verse to the context of husband and wife is partly due to the fact that the remainder of the verse discusses other details of concern to the marital relationship.

In addition, the following verse uses the dual, indicating that it is concerned with the context between the two: the husband and wife. However, preceding verses discuss terms of relations between male members of society and female members of society.

I apply this verse to society at large but not on the basis of inherent superiority of men over women, or of God's preference of men over women. Rather, I extend the functional relationship which Sayyid Qutb proposes between the husband and the wife towards the collective good concerning the relationship between men and women in society at large. My main consideration is the responsibility and right of women to bear children.

Sayyid Qutb says, "The man and the woman are both from God's creation and God ... never intends to oppress anyone from His creation."[306] Both the man and the woman are members of the most significant institution of society, the family. The family is initiated by marriage between one man and one woman. Within the family, each member has certain responsibilities. For obvious biological reasons, a primary responsibility for the woman is childbearing.

The child-bearing responsibility is of grave importance: human existence depends upon it. This responsibility requires a great deal of physical strength, stamina, intelligence, and deep personal commitment.[307] Yet, while this responsibility is so obvious and important, what is the responsibility of the male in this family and society at large? For simple balance and justice in creation, and to avoid oppression, his responsibility must be equally significant to the continuation of the human race. The Qur'an establishes his responsibility as qiwama: seeing to it that the woman is not burdened with additional responsibilities which jeopardize that primary demanding responsibility that only she can fulfill.

Ideally, everything she needs to fulfill her primary responsibility comfortably should be supplied in society, by the male: this means physical protection as well as material sustenance. Otherwise, "it would be a serious oppression against the woman."[308]

This ideal scenario establishes an equitable and mutually dependent relationship. However, it does not allow for many of today's realities. What happens in societies experiencing a population overload, such as China and India? What happens in capitalistic societies like America, where a single income is no longer sufficient to maintain a reasonably comfortable life-style? What happens when a woman is barren? Does she still deserve qiwama like other women? What happens to the balance of responsibility when the man cannot provide materially, as was often the case during slavery and post-slavery U.S.?

All of these issues cannot be resolved if we look narrowly at verse Sura 4, Verse 34. Therefore, the Qur'an must eternally be reviewed with regard to human exchange and mutual responsibility between males and females. This verse establishes an ideal obligation for men with regard to women to create a balanced and shared society. This responsibility is neither biological nor inherent, but it is valuable. An attitude inclined towards responsibility must be cultivated. It is easy enough to see the cases in which it has not been acquired.

However, such an attitude should not be restricted to mere material qiwama. In broader terms, it should apply to the spiritual, moral, intellectual, and psychological dimensions as well. Such a perspective on qiwama will allow men to truly fulfill their khilafa (trusteeship) on the earth, as ordained by God upon human creation. Such an attitude will overcome the competitive and hierarchical thinking which destroys rather than nurtures.

Men are encouraged to fulfill their trusteeship of the earth—especially in relationships with women, the child-bearers and traditional caretakers. What women have learned through bearing and caring for children, men can begin to experience, starting with their attitudes to and treatment of women.

** 15. Islam and the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women

Muhammad Shahrour

Muhammad Shahrour (Syria, born 1938) attended primary and secondary school in Damascus. When he was nineteen, he went to Moscow to study engineering. Although not a Marxist, Shahrour was fascinated by Marxist theory and practice, which played a role in shaping his writing on Islamic themes.[309] Shahrour returned to Syria in 1964 but left again in 1968 to study for his master's and doctoral degrees in soil mechanics and foundation engineering at the University College, Dublin, Ireland. He became a faculty member at the University of Damascus on his return to Syria in 1972 and a partner in a successful civil engineering firm. His first book, Al-Kitab wa-l-Qur'an: qira'a mu'asira [The Book and the Qur'an: A Contemporary Reading], more than 800 pages long and nearly half a month's salary for an educated professional in Syria, became a best-seller throughout the Arab world following its publication in 1990.[310] Using modern linguistics and frequent metaphors and analogies drawn from engineering and the sciences, Shahrour argues that the Qur'an should be read and interpreted, not through the prism of centuries of jurisprudence, but as if "the Prophet just died and informed us of this Book."[311] The essay translated here, originally prepared in response to written questions posed by the editor of a Kuwaiti newspaper, defends the right of Muslim women to participate in the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women, held at Beijing, China, in 1995. More self-contained than Shahrour's books,[312] it shows how he invokes and interprets Qur'anic texts to address contemporary social and religious themes.

I certainly see the need for convening conferences like this one because the issues concern both men and women. Human rights are abused in many countries, and tyranny and political despotism are primary oppressors. From a purely historical perspective, women fall under two forms of oppression. First, like men, they are politically, economically, and socially subjugated; second, they live in a male-oriented society. A quick glance at world statistics shows us that women possess 1/1000th of the world's aggregate wealth and receive 10 percent of the world's total wages despite comprising 50 percent of the world's population. This situation prevails in many countries regardless of people's religion. As Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1292–1350) wrote, "Wherever justice exists, the rule of God is found."

God is the Lord of all peoples, and all peoples are our brothers in religion and equal to us as God's creations. The cause of justice is served when a conference is convened in Beijing or elsewhere for the purpose of fighting oppression and despotism. Indeed, such a conference promotes justice. The desire for justice is shared by all peoples and open discussion is the principal means of communication among people. Justice and Islam are the basis of this search; violence, oppression, injustice, and despotism are deviations which we are obliged to oppose whether these deviations exist between peoples, individuals, or men and women.

For this reason, separate conferences for women, men, and children would only be opposed by a person of limited vision, a person who is unaware of the information revolution which has occurred in the last half of the 20th century, shortening distances and making the world a small village. Such a person has not realized that the era of concealing information from people with iron curtains has passed, and the time of forbidding people to read, listen and view has vanished forever. The information revolution has given us something important—knowledge. It has helped us move to a new level of awareness, expressing opinions, taking stands, and respecting other opinions.

The Beijing world conference on women embodies the stage of expressing opinion publicly, listening to other opinions, and acknowledging their existence. This positive outcome is not in any way alien to our beliefs as Muslims. We will never forget the slogan—political, intellectual, and social—

with which the Prophet Muhammad confronted the polytheists: “Don’t block the way between me and my people.” People’s convictions are not generated by violence and coercion, but by peaceful and open dialogue. Open dialogues do not frighten us as Muslims. Fear is created by a lack of self-confidence and by weak suppositions which cannot be sustained in dialogues with others. We, by the grace of God, possess the self-confidence which enables us to face others without shrinking or questioning motives.

Accepting all participant groups in this conference, no matter how diverse their beliefs, orientations, and perspective, should happen as a matter of principle. This is precisely what I alluded to in my comment on the freedom of opinion and respecting the views of others.

The participation of organizations of sexual deviants and prostitutes in the debates over women’s issues—and I refer to debates only—is certainly legitimate. The conference is not able to pass binding resolutions or take measures for resolving the problems of women in any way.

I am speaking of a world conference of women which has 50,000 participants. There will be sexual deviants and prostitutes among them—they might even have organizations—but the conference is not a gathering of prostitutes in either purpose or form. Lust, prostitution and sexual deviancy are as old as history. They will exist in the future. We carry the banner of a true living religion, believing in the coexistence of good and evil, with an unbreakable bond between them. God has tied them together with the phenomenon of death in his wisdom-giving revelation: “Every soul shall have a taste of death, and We test you by evil and by good by way of trial. To Us must ye return.” (Qur’an, Sura 21, Verse 35) In other words, as long as there is life and death, good and evil will evolve together. This requires us to abandon the idea that a day will come when all people on earth will become believers, everyone will become atheists, or all women will become virtuous.

Conference recommendations are one thing, and resolutions are something else. There is an important issue here which we must not overlook. There are high ideals, commandments, and general moral laws that tie people together. These high ideals, commandments, and moral laws do not yield to

debate in conferences and votes in assemblies, irrespective of religious, political, or national beliefs.

I don’t believe that people at the conference wish to subject the issues of false testimony or parental abuse to discussion or vote. These issues do not require deliberation. The role of religious moral principles is evident in such matters, and these religious principles are more basic than political or economic ones.

Respected, remarkable women are taking part in the Beijing conference. I see the need for Muslim women to take part alongside them, so that they will be able to object by reasonable argument to those recommendations which violate moral law and high ideals. It is the right of Muslim women to voice such opposition at these conferences.

When I emphasize high ideals and moral laws as basic to the contemporary Islamic positions, I point implicitly to the need to refrain from making jurisprudential (fiqh) rulings the basis for argument. There are two reasons the jurisprudential rulings, especially those related to women, are not an appropriate basis. First, Muslims disagree among themselves about them. Second, jurisprudential ruling bears the historical stamp of the era in which it was created and the society in which it was shaped. These rulings have been forged in the context of political despotism on the one hand, and male authority on the other. A clear case specific to women is mut’a marriage [among Shi’i Muslims, a temporary, contractual marriage], which some Muslims accept and others do not.

I believe that it is legitimate to continue developing jurisprudential rulings (fiqh) but not the core of Islamic jurisprudence, the divine revelation (alshar’), in matters relating to women’s status. I also believe that the development of Islamic jurisprudence should include matters related to men and to society as a whole in accordance with the following premises.

1. Distinguishing between divinely sanctioned (halal) and the divinely prohibited (haram), the humanly permissible (masmuh) and the humanly forbidden (mamnu’), and believing that Islam is a religion compatible with human nature. The basic tenet of Islam is that everything not specifically prohibited is permitted.

2. The only authority for divine prohibitions (tahrim) is God, although humankind may allow or disallow. Consider God’s statement, “Fight those who believe not in God nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Messenger.” (Qur’an, Sura 9, Verse 29)

The order to fight in this verse is based on two assumptions. The first [as is clear from the verse’s Arabic wording—Translator] is that fighting involves two sides. The second is that the other non-Muslim side is the aggressor. This assumption is derived from God’s saying, “If anyone commits aggression against you, then fight him back in exactly the same way.” (Qur’an, Sura 2, Verse 194) The command is invoked against those who “do not believe in God and in the Last Day,” that is, the atheists who are not concerned with what God and His Prophet have divinely forbidden. A last important observation is in “that which God and His Messenger have forbidden.” God’s forbidding and the Prophet’s forbidding are interconnected. This means that the Prophet forbids that which God forbids. If the Prophet could forbid on his own, the passage would say, “What God forbids and what His Messenger forbids.” The Qur’an [Sura 66, Verse 1] confirms this statement: “O Prophet! Why holdest thou to be forbidden that which God has made lawful to thee.” No one has the right to forbid that which God has declared divinely lawful. We understand from this that the Prophet allowed and disallowed various things, but did not make lawful the divinely forbidden or forbid the divinely sanctioned. There are good examples in the Prophet’s conduct and sayings. If everything that Muhammad did and said was divinely inspired, it would imply that the Prophet had been transformed into a preprogrammed robot, and robots aren’t suitable examples for humanity.

Then came the Companions of the Prophet. All that they did and said represents human judgment and does not relate to the divinely sanctioned or forbidden. As such, their actions and words have historical relevance in terms of laying down rules and regulations for their societies without

crossing into the realm of the divinely sanctioned and forbidden. Let us illustrate this with a hypothetical example:

If the Prophet had lived in the time of the automobile and had commanded people to keep to the right side of the road when driving, then driving on the right would have become—according to jurisprudential principles—an Islamic law. Australia, for example, where driving is on the left, would have been deemed in violation of Islamic law, and we don't see this interpretation as correct.

3. Islamic revelation began with Noah and ended with Muhammad. One of the goals of Qur'anic stories is to give a clear picture of this development. All messengers and prophets were Muslims. But Islam embodies the capacity to evolve through legislation and morality. This provides a backbone for Islamic belief and practice. It does not mean that evolution contradicts verses from the wisdom-giving revelation. Rather, the seal of Muhammad's revelation means the achievement of universality with Islam and humankind may adopt such customs not specifically mentioned in the revelation. People are required, however, to remain within the boundaries set forth in revelation. By this process, Islamic jurisprudence develops continuously.

4. The ways in which humankind acquires knowledge in the 20th century influence how it reads and understands divine revelation. For example, now that we know more about procreation, we understand the basic distinctions between genitor and father, genetrix and mother, distinctions that the revelation made, even though most of the first jurists did not. Recognizing these distinctions gives us new perspectives on jurisprudence, adding to our adjustment of earlier rulings related to such things as inheritance and adoption, while adhering to the text and essence of the revealed verses. What has happened here is that our understanding of these verses has changed in accordance with changes in our objective knowledge.

In this manner, we understand how the course of human history and the development of universal knowledge about humanity and its environment is the only phenomenon that reveals and authenticates the content of the

Qur’an. Its authenticity does not depend on knowledge specific to any given era, generation, or individual.

* Part IV—Rights of Non-muslims

** 16. Minorities in a Democracy

Humayun Kabir

The partition of the British colonies in South Asia in 1947 left 100 million Muslims in the newly independent nation of India, but Muslim Indians comprise only 12 percent of the population of India. The Muslims of India are therefore keenly interested in protection of the rights of minorities.[313] This theme is prominent in the work of Humayun Kabir (India, 1906–1969), one of the premier political and intellectual leaders of the Muslim community of India. Born and raised in the West Bengal region and educated both in India and at Oxford University, Kabir supported the Indian nationalist movement and opposed Islamic demands for partition. After independence, he served in the Indian parliament for more than a decade, held a series of cabinet posts, and represented India at a variety of United Nations educational programs.[314] At the same time, he wrote and lectured on Islam, developing a modernist and humanist interpretation that emphasized religious tolerance and cross-cultural communication.

Many think that the diversity of India and consequent multiplicity of centers of power is a source of weakness for the country. I have always held the

contrary view. I feel that the greater the number of centers of power in a people—provided the centers of power are held in some kind of a balance with one another, and there is harmony among them—the stronger the country. Where you have a completely homogeneous, monolithic society, the chances of survival of that society or community are always less than those of a heterogeneous society in which there are many centers of power, many ways of expression. The reason for this is easy to understand. Since society is changing, circumstances are changing, a monolithic society may not be able to react to a new situation with complete success. But if there is a heterogeneous society, one element or other in that heterogeneous society may respond to the new situation, and help to preserve the community as a whole. Diversity of response and distribution of power are therefore sources of strength, not causes of weakness. The history of India is itself a shining example of this fact. More monolithic societies have disappeared, but the more, shall I say, democratic form of Indian society lives. In spite of the fact that there was no political democracy here, the distribution of power in a number of centers, the existence of different types of communities within what one may call a loose federal social framework, has enabled India to survive. Wherever society shows such diversity, wherever different groups exist side by side, the chances of survival of the entire community are greater.

Now how does this link up with our problem today? Today, there is a common citizenship in India. Power has to be exercised in terms of common programs and common attitudes and common ideals. At the same time there are groups based on the fact of language or religion or political beliefs or economic interests. I would suggest for your consideration that if these groups are rigid and unchangeable, especially at the level of political action, it would create a problem for this country. I have always been against political parties based on religion, political parties based on caste, not because there is anything intrinsically evil in any of them, but because in the modern world, in the kind of society in which we function, this type of attachment of a political program to a group based on birth—which is comparatively rigid and inalienable, which cannot be changed easily—creates difficulties for society as well as the group itself.

One other interesting phenomenon has to be remembered in this context. Wherever group consciousness is strong, it is the minority which suffers

most. If group consciousness can be diffused and dispersed, the minorities get many privileges, many advantages, which they would not get, if group consciousness became strong. Majorities are in any case in a position of advantage. I think it should be one of the aims of every minority group to see that the group consciousness of the majority becomes diffused. This can be done only if right issues are selected. If groups are constituted on grounds other than rigid and inalienable factors like religion, caste, tribe, or language, we can change or modify more easily the composition and number of the groups within society.

Even rigid groups may change under the pressure of events, but in their case the changes are far more difficult to effect. Proselytization on a large scale is almost impossible in the modern world. And therefore for any religious group to think that it will convert all the members of some other religious group to its own religion is not practical politics today. Languages can also spread, but here also the experience of history shows that linguistic boundaries are one of the most rigid things in the world. The political boundaries of Europe have changed again and again during the last four or five hundred years, but the linguistic boundaries of Europe have hardly changed. Even political suppression has not been able to stifle the linguistic minorities. If persecution could kill a language, Polish would have been killed many years ago. No language can be killed by persecution without exterminating the people speaking the language. Similarly, we cannot easily change tribal or caste organizations. All such groups suffer from a lack of flexibility. In the modern world, where politics is expanding its scope and where political power is impinging on almost every sphere of life, we have to be specially careful of the way in which interests are organized into groups. If a minority group is based on considerations which cannot be easily changed, it will ultimately be the minority itself which will suffer.

On the other hand, if groups are formed on considerations which are flexible, it will make for greater mobility among groups and therefore ultimately for greater cohesion within the community. Persons from any part of the country or belonging to any birth group can come and join such organizations on the basis of their political belief or economic affiliation. I know that economic classes also have a certain degree of rigidity, but the degree of rigidity in economic stratification is far less than that in a caste or religious or linguistic structure. Similarly, cultural groups show greater flexibility than groups

based on the fact of birth. If groups are formed on the basis of cultural ideals, there again the ease in movement from one group to another would be far greater than where there are water-tight compartments based on religion, language or caste.

The greatest danger to national unity arises where a group seeks to combine all these rigid elements. Where a unit based on birth includes all the factors like religion, language, caste, and tribe and links them up with political, economic and cultural affiliations, such a group would seek to repel all other groups and have hardly any cross associations with them. On the other hand, when individuals belong to different groups for different purposes, and there are many cross currents which cut across group loyalties, we have a better balanced and healthier national community. In fact, the more cross associations we have, the better for everyone concerned and the better for the health of a democracy.

I would like to return to the point that the essence of democracy lies in the distribution of power in a number of different centers. Such distribution of power can be on the basis of community groups; it can also be on the basis of interest. I have just suggested that where the distribution is on the basis of community groups, based on the fact of birth, there are dangers to social unity. But having said this, I would also say that groups based on birth cannot be completely overlooked in our national context. We have to face facts as they are, especially in a country like India. Some people resent the existence of linguistic or religious or caste groups and would like to eliminate them. We may disapprove, but the linguistic groups will remain. We may dislike it, but the religious groups will also remain. All that we can do is to see that they do not become too rigid, that all these diversities do not tend to ossify, that they do not tend to combine in a way so that the same group is characterized by all these differences. That would be the greatest danger, but having recognized the danger, we may say that the multiplicity of groups also serves a function in modern democracy in India....

The problem of group relations goes very far back in history. The concept of the secular State is something which is relatively novel. In the days before the dawn of history, the same individual was simultaneously prophet, priest and king. There was no distinction between what we call religious and

secular functions. We find this among the Aryans in India and we find it among the Aryans in Europe. This was equally true of the non-Aryan groups who lived in different areas of the world and some of whom developed great and rich civilizations of their own. Anthropology tells us that in almost every social group, the prophet, the priest and the king were rolled into one for a very long time.

It is interesting to note that perhaps the first conscious attempt to differentiate the religious from the secular functions is found in a saying of Jesus Christ. Many of you remember his famous statement: “Render unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and render unto God that which belongs to God.” I do not remember the exact words, but this is the sense of what Jesus said. Christ thus did attempt to make a distinction between a person’s religious loyalties and his obligations in the political field. As far as I recollect, this is perhaps the first recognition of a distinction between religious and political loyalties. It would thus be fair to say that we have the origin of the secular State in this famous statement.

Theoretically, the secular State emerged as late as the time of Jesus, but in practice, the rudiments of the secular State had appeared long before. This was perhaps inevitable. Whenever men professing different faiths were brought under one rule—as in the Persian or the Babylonian Empire, the Assyrian Empire or some of the Empires in India—men following one faith had to make allowances for people professing other faiths. Where men followed different customs, and yet lived within the same territory, it was inevitable that accommodation among them should grow. Without such adjustments the State would break up. Theoretically, the State accepted one particular religion and the king was the defender of that faith. To some extent, this idea persists even today. Practice however differed sharply from theory. Normal men and women want to lead a life of cooperation and friendship with their neighbors and hence some kind of accommodation was established from very early times. That theory still lags behind practice is obvious, when we see that a kingdom like the United Kingdom—very progressive in many ways—still describes its ruler as the Defender of the Faith. A person who does not belong to the Anglican Church cannot be ruler of England. In practice, if not in theory, we find similar restrictions in other parts of the world. Some of you will remember that only seven years ago, when Mr. [John F.] Kennedy [1917–1963] was seeking election to the office of

the President of the USA, it was for a long time debated whether he would be elected because of his religious faith. While in practice the idea of a secular State has steadily gained acceptance, in theory it remained for a long time unrecognized and is still unrecognized in large areas of the world.

The practical recognition of the secular State dates back fairly early in India. We have the early division of the people into the Buddhists and the Hindus. Some may object that there were perhaps no Hindus at the time. It has been argued seriously that the idea of the Hindu as such is a comparatively recent development. In any case, there were in ancient India the six orthodox Schools and there were the heterodox Schools like the Buddhists and the Jains.

We find in both the great Mauryan Empire in the north [321–185 B.C.] and the Vijaya Empire in the south [fifth century B.C.-65 A.D.] a great deal of toleration of all faiths. It will perhaps amuse some of you to hear of the way in which the principle of toleration operated in South India. In the Vijaya Empire, the kings were mostly Hindus and the queens were generally Buddhists. The kings extended protection and patronage to the Brahmanical priests. The queens extended equal protection and patronage to the Buddhist Sramanas and Bhikshus. As long as this balance was maintained and support given to the Brahmins and the Brahmanical faith as well as to the Buddhists and the Buddhist faith, the Vijaya Empire flourished. When at a later stage, one of the kings started persecuting the Buddhists, the decay of the Empire began. We have parallels in northern India as well, in the pre-Muslim and the Muslim period. The idea of the secular State thus goes back fairly far in Indian history, certainly to the times of Chandragupta Maurya [reigned 321–297 B.C.] and to the times of the great kings of Amaravati and Vijayapuri.

A new situation arose when Muslims first established their rule in India. In the beginning, Muslim political thinking, like the political thinking of almost all nations of the world of the time, recognized no distinction between religion and the State. In fact, every religion then claimed the total allegiance of

man. This was true of Christianity, this was true of all the different forms of the Hindu faith, this was true of Islam. In the early days of Islam, the man who was the khalifa [caliph] was not only the secular but also the religious head of the State. It was claimed that no one should be selected as the khalifa unless he was capable of exercising also the religious leadership of the community. This was of course pure theory. Practice began to differ within a few decades. After the death of the Prophet, even when Abu Bakr Siddiqi was elected the khalifa [reigned 632–634], there were some protests. There were some followers of ‘Ali [son-in-law of the Prophet, circa 596–661] who said that ‘Ali should have been the first khalifa and not Abu Bakr. ‘Ali himself repudiated them and accepted Abu Bakr as the khalifa but the voice of dissension had already risen. The same problem arose with greater intensity at the time of the election of ‘Umar [ibn al-Khattab, reigned 634–644]. These two elections were however generally welcome but dissensions became much more bitter at the time of the election of ‘Uthman [reigned 644–656] and ‘Ali himself [reigned 656–661]. Many of you remember the story of Karbala and the martyrdom of Husayn [younger son of ‘Ali, 626–680]. Mu’awiya [ibn Abi Sufyan, circa 605–680] had raised the banner of revolt against the election of Hasan [elder son of ‘Ali, 624–669] and declared that he should be elected the khalifa. There was a compromise by which Mu’awiya was accepted but it was also laid down that after his death, Hasan and Husayn in that order should be elected the khalifa. Mu’awiya’s son Yazid [circa 642–683] repudiated the agreement and the conflict was resolved by the fighting in Karbala leading to the martyrdom of Hussain. The opposition to Mu’awiya and Yazid was mainly on religious grounds, so that theoretically there was still the demand that the State shall be a religious State and there shall be no distinction between secular and religious duties, obligations and rights.

The situation changed as the Muslim empire spread rapidly through large areas of Asia and many different peoples were brought within its fold. Many practical problems arose and Muslim political thinking had to find a place for non-Muslim subjects in a Muslim State. Their existence was recognized in theory by introducing a novel idea, the idea of dhimmi. Dhimmi means the protected people, who had to pay a special tax, the jizya, because they took no share in guarding the State. Muslims were required to bear arms in defense of the State and were exempted from this tax, but those who were not required to bear arms, or

purchased exemption, had to pay the tax. They had thus no obligation to defend the country but enjoyed the security guaranteed by the State and were required to pay a special tax instead. This is the notorious, famous, infamous, whichever way you put it, jizya. Jizya was thus nothing but a kind of polltax by which a person purchased the right of not being called to arms. Some modern States have the system of draft, by which every adult male has to undergo military training for a specified period. A citizen can however get out of the draft in certain ways. In a sense, the jizya was an anticipation of these devices for it provided a mode of payment through which a man could escape the draft, but it had an invidious character as it applied only to non-Muslims.

New considerations came into the picture when the Muslims came to India. Whatever may have been the theory, the men who ruled India found that unless there was accommodation among the different religious communities who lived in the country and a great deal of toleration by the ruler, their rule would not last. History has proved again and again that one cannot rule by might alone. Such rule may last for a while but if the entire people are determined to overthrow a foreign yoke, such foreign rule cannot last very long. Some of these early Muslim rulers in India soon discovered that whatever may be said in theory, in practice they had to accommodate their subjects in many ways. If they sometimes oppressed their Hindu subjects, they oppressed their Muslim subjects with equal gusto. ‘Ala’uddin Khalji’s [reigned 1296–1316] is a name which readily comes to one’s mind in this context. He put a tax on all the nobles and made no distinction between a Hindu noble and a Muslim noble. Nobles could not inter-marry without his permission. Nobles could not keep retainers beyond a certain number. ‘Ala’uddin was concerned not with religion nor mainly with the interest of this group or that group. He was interested primarily in maintaining his own power. Whoever challenged his power was immediately curbed and punished. A good deal of the persecution in this period may be explained in terms of this desire to maintain one’s own authority. When the ruler felt secure, he tried to give good administration to the people. He recognized that contented subjects were his best protection. Throughout the Pathan period, religious and political toleration grew steadily.

I would like to draw your attention to another interesting feature of the spread of Islam in India. It is noteworthy that the largest concentration of

Muslims is not in the capital cities but in the distant regions and in certain special areas. There is a very heavy concentration in East Bengal which is far from Delhi. We find similar heavy concentration in Kerala which hardly ever came under Muslim rule. We find fairly heavy concentration in certain selected areas of Madras. The continuous influx of new groups of Muslims added to the Muslim population of the Punjab but even then the Punjab always had a sizable non-Muslim population. The explanation which has been offered for this fact is that by and large the spread of Islam in India, as in other parts of the world, was due to the teachings of the Sufis and the Saints and not the political power of the rulers. In the case of Indonesia, those of you who are students of Indonesian history will remember that Indonesia was never conquered by Muslims and it was Arab traders who took Islam to Indonesia. Similarly it was Arab traders who brought Islam to Kerala and Muslim merchants and Sufis who brought it to Sylhet and Chittagong.

We may point to find another interesting pattern in the growth of Islam within India. Wherever the Arabs went, there was a greater cultural assimilation and far greater give and take between the different communities than in areas where Islam was taken by the newly converted Turkish rulers. It was largely these Turks who dominated the political and military fields in North India. Wherever they took Islam, there was a certain amount of persecution, but wherever the Arabs brought Islam, there was on the whole greater accommodation. We thus find that the number of Muslims was greater in the areas under Arab influence, in the areas where Sufis and Saints and Fakirs taught. In these areas the religion generally spread as a revolutionary and liberating force.

We do not always remember today that when Islam first appeared on the stage of world history, it came as a great liberal and democratic movement. It was a revolt of the intellectual as well as a revolt of the underprivileged. It brought a message of equality and fraternity for all sections of the people, and transcended the barriers created by race, color and language. [George] Bernard Shaw [Irish author, 1856–1950] in one of his books has said that the most severe test of race and color equality is the test of marriage. In every other type of contact between different communities, one can cheat. You can once in the year be together in a great religious congregation and fraternize. Once in a year you can dine together, once in a year you can join in a pilgrimage to Kaba or Kashi. The test of marriage is very different. Bernard

Shaw points out that this is the test which Islam has passed with credit. Islam did largely break down the barriers of color and the barriers of race. In fact, almost all the human barriers came down once people accepted Islam. This was one reason why large numbers of the underprivileged everywhere accepted and still accept Islam.

Another reason for the rapid spread of Islam was the opening up of opportunity for vast sections of the people. It is again an interesting fact of history that till the advent of Islam, most religions had made education a preserve of the select few. In ancient Egypt and indeed in almost all parts of the world, knowledge was recognized as power and because knowledge was and is power, knowledge was the prerogative of a privileged class. It was Islam which broke that barrier down and made knowledge accessible and indeed obligatory on a universal scale. In practice there was however a great gap between what was laid down and what was actually carried out. It is one of the ironies of history that in India at least, Islam which has declared that it is an obligation for every man and woman to acquire learning, the Muslims are one of the most backward communities so far as education is concerned. This holds for men as well as women, though for women the position is even worse.

For the reasons indicated above, the Muslim population increased rapidly in India. So long as the ruler was either a Muslim or a Hindu, the position was comparatively simple. In Muslim political thought, apart from States where both the ruler and the ruled were Muslims, lawgivers had allowed for two kinds of situation, a situation in which there is a Muslim ruler and a large number of non-Muslim subjects and also the situation in which there is a non-Muslim ruler and Muslim subjects. But Muslim political thought had not provided for the situation which has developed in India today, the situation in which Muslims are citizens in a secular State. In this situation, they are neither the sole rulers nor merely the ruled. We can put it in another way and say that they are rulers and ruled simultaneously. As a citizen of India, a Muslim shares in the sovereignty of the people. As a citizen of India, he is subject to the laws of the State like any other citizen professing any religion. In a democratic State, every citizen has a share in sovereignty and therefore we have in India today this unique situation, a situation which has never before faced Muslim people anywhere in the world. They are not merely ruled, but neither are they merely rulers. They are rulers and the

ruled at the same time. Further they are not rulers by themselves, they are rulers in association with people of many different religions.

Considered from this point of view, the situation in India today presents a great challenge and also a great opportunity to Muslims and other Indians. We have a recognition of this fact in the Indian Constitution. It is one of the first instances where we have a self-confessed secular State which explicitly recognizes that the State cannot prosper and perhaps cannot even survive without adherence to the secular principle. Here we have to remember another fact. There are some people in India and elsewhere who think that secularism is a concession to the different minority groups. In one sense it certainly is. Over 85 percent of the total population of India belong broadly to what we call the Hindu faith. All the other minorities together number less than 15 percent. If therefore the majority community of India had wished, there was nothing to prevent them from declaring India as a Hindu State or a Brahmanical State. But the framers of the Indian Constitution had great political foresight. They had the wisdom to see that in the peculiar circumstances of India and the scientific developments of the modern world, the concept of a religious State would not work. I will explain this in a moment.

Let us assume that some party comes to power in India which is militantly religious. In the Indian context, such a party can only be a Hindu party. Even if the Muslims become militantly religious, they form only 11 or 12 percent of the population and cannot have a decisive say in the political affairs of the country. Christians with less than two percent will have even less influence. Sikhs, they are less than one percent, will also not make much of an impact. If there can be any militant religious party it can be only a Hindu party. Supposing such a party comes into power and declares that India would not be a secular State, but a State following a particular religion, the Hindu religion, the question would immediately arise: which Hindu religion? Those of you who are familiar with Indian religious thought know that the Hindu faith itself is a great confederation of different beliefs and different religious systems. You have within the Hindu fold people who believe in one God and one God alone, who are as strict monotheists as Muslims or Sikhs or the staunchest Unitarians in the Christian Church. You have also Hindus who believe in three Gods or believe in a thousand Gods. There is in fact a saying that for the 300 million Indian people there are 330 million gods. You have

also atheists who are perfectly good Hindus, for there have been Rishis or Saints who professed atheism and are still recognized as Rishis.

If therefore India decided to be a religious State, the question would immediately arise: Will it be Vaishnava? Will it be Saiva? Will it be Lingait? Will it be Jaina? What will be the faith and in which form? The unity of India would probably be shattered again as it has been shattered so often in the past. We have in our past history the record of Kings changing their faith and asking their people to change their faiths. Vaishnava temples were converted into Saiva temples, and vice-versa. In fact you find similar phenomena throughout the world. Not only in India but everywhere in Asia, Europe and Africa. With the change of faith by the King, there was a change of character, a change of beliefs and of religious worship of the people but in the end it led nowhere.

This is not the only difficulty a non-secular religious State would face in India. There would be differences on the basis of caste as well. Caste has no doubt lost ground in recent times. It has lost ground primarily because of industrialization and improvement in means of transport and communication. Certainly ideas have also played a part and we have to remember with gratitude the reformers from Buddha [sixth-fifth centuries B.C.] to [Rabindranath] Tagore [1861–1941] and [Mahatma Mohandas K.] Gandhi [1869–1948]. But a far more important part has been played by the fact of industrialization and improvement in the means of transport and communication. When you are in a country bus in India, probably 50 people are put in a bus which is meant to hold only 30. Questions about caste or untouchability become completely irrelevant in such a situation. The conductor or the driver of the bus will have no sympathy at all if you say: I do not want to sit next to that man. He will in all likelihood ask you to get down and put two more men in your place. Transport and communication, industrialization and urbanization along with the anonymity which towns give are breaking down caste barriers. But if the secular ideal ever breaks down, some of the old ideas would re-affirm themselves, and the result would be that Indian unity will itself be threatened.

A secular State is therefore necessary in India not in the interest of the minorities alone—they also would certainly gain, there is no doubt about it—

but it is in the interest of all the people of India including the majority community. That is why in our Constitution we find a guarantee of equal rights and opportunities for every citizen regardless of caste, religion, sex, language or race. The entire list of the differences which distinguish and divide human beings, they are all as far as one can reckon mentioned in the Constitution and it is said: All these distinctions shall be overlooked and as Indian citizens they shall have equal rights and equal opportunities. The highest office is open to any person of any religious profession. Representation in the legislatures, in trade and industry is equally open to all. In fact the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has to a very large extent been incorporated in the Indian Constitution....

While the relations between Hindus and Muslims in India are friendly in normal times, we find time and again outbreaks of violence that result in destruction and death. There must be a reason for this and this can only be some flaw in the attitude of religious toleration which both communities accept as the normal mode of life. For Hindus, this flaw can be traced to caste exclusiveness, which leads to a lack of regard for men of other religious faiths. Indifference and even contempt for men of other religions is perhaps a natural corollary to untouchability within the Hindu social fold. This indifference or contempt may not be conscious or deliberate and there may also be cases where in fact there is no feeling of contempt or hatred, but those who suffer from the effects of untouchability do not make any distinction between conscious and unconscious motives or their absence. For them, the fact of discrimination in everyday life is enough to rouse their resentment and lead to feelings of anger and hatred which break out whenever an opportunity offers.

For historical and political reasons, Muslims feel this sense of discrimination more acutely than members of other Indian communities. It is true that there has been a small Christian community in the country for some two thousand years. It is however small in number and for centuries remained confined to a narrow corner of the land. In addition, Indian Christians never exercised political power and did not therefore pose any challenge to the majority community. Muslims have on the other hand been spread throughout the subcontinent from the day of their first appearance in India. Their number, their distribution and above all their exercise of military and political power

made the problem of untouchability between them and the Hindus one full of explosive possibilities.

There is a parallel flaw in the Muslim attitude to other religions. Islam categorically declares that there must be no compulsion in religion and each individual must be left free to follow the faith of his choice. While Muslims thus recognize that there are many religions in the world, there is one basic difference between Hinduism and Islam in their attitude to this diversity. For Hindus, the diverse ways of worship have arisen because of different human needs and all have equal validity. For Muslims, the diversity has arisen because of human failing which has led to the distortion of a single pristine truth. According to Islam, all religions were initially the same, but in course of time became distorted by custom and circumstance. It was to rectify these distortions that prophets appeared in succession in different parts of the world, but no prophet preached a new religion. Thus the Prophet Muhammad was not the originator of Islam, but only the last in a long line of prophets who had all taught an identical faith. Any deviation from this original religion is therefore for Muslims a deviation from Truth.

When these two religious attitudes met in India, there was an attempt at reconciliation from both sides. Hindus have for centuries recognized the validity of different professions and practices in the sphere of religion. Within Hinduism itself, there is the widest variety of faiths and customs. A place has been found in the Hindu pantheon for even those who rebelled against traditional Hinduism. Thus, the Buddha is regarded today as one of the Hindu Avatars. Christ and Muhammad have also found places of honor in the Hindu mind. Similarly, Muslims have condemned compulsion in religion and admitted that different religions must be given due respect. The accommodation achieved in India between Hindus and Muslims is seen in the many instances where Hindus worship at Muslim shrines and Muslims pay homage to Hindu religious teachers and saints.

In spite of such accommodation, the psychological separation between Hindus and Muslims has not however been overcome. Social and political factors have contributed to this, but a major reason is the difference in religious outlook mentioned above. Among orthodox Muslims, there are many who look upon all nonMuslims, particularly Hindus, as

kafirs or unbelievers. Among Hindus, there are many who look upon Muslims as mlechhas or unclean. For Hindus, such an attitude was in the past partially a defense reaction to protect the Hindu community against the political power and religious proselytization of Muslims. After the advent of the British, superiority in education and economic position strengthened such feelings. Among Muslims, political pride and a sense of religious superiority led to the same attitude. This was reinforced by a defense reaction after they lost their economic and political advantages under British rule. The root cause for Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India therefore derives from this attitude of exclusiveness. Because of this Muslims look upon Hindus as kafirs and Hindus return the compliment by looking upon Muslims as mlechhas.

In order to create the psychological atmosphere where the two communities can develop a sense of national identity while retaining their special group characteristics, it is necessary to bring about a change of attitude among both Hindus and Muslims. In the case of Hindus, what is needed is a change in the snobbery born out of caste exclusiveness. Due to industrialization and urbanization, the process of break-up of caste has already begun. As education spreads, the process is bound to be accelerated, though one has to admit that in recent years caste has had an unexpected lease of life given to it by political forces. The democratic process of elections has in certain cases led to an ossification of caste and this is most marked where elections are in small constituencies. With larger areas and greater mixture of population, the governing power of caste is bound to diminish and ultimately disappear. In fact, we already see the beginning of a new type of social grouping where Hindus and Muslims belonging to the same economic class or educational background tend to draw nearer to one another than to their co-religionists in different social categories. This applies even more to Hindus of different castes.

Among Muslims also, the process of change has begun in the recognition of the philosophic and other truths embedded in Hindu, Buddhist or Christian thought. This recognition has however to be linked up with the Muslim religious belief that prophets have been sent to every country in every age. While Muslim religious thought insists that true religion is one and only one, it also recognizes that this pristine truth has been sent to every people in every age in a form acceptable to them. This has introduced a respect for

diversity of faith, but such respect finds easy and wide acceptance only when the people following different faiths claim to be the followers of a recognized prophet. That is why we find throughout the Muslim world a distinction between those who are called the people of the Book and others. According to orthodox Muslim thought, a Christian or a Jew has deviated from the pristine teaching of true religion, but nevertheless he has a position of privilege among nonMuslims and is entitled to special consideration. The clearest evidence of this is found in the law which permits marriage between Muslims and followers of a Book but forbids a Muslim to marry a non-believer.

Once therefore it is accepted that Hindus are ahl al-kitab or people of the Book, it would remove one of the major psychological barriers between the two communities. A book is given to a people through a prophet and according to the Qur’an, prophets were sent to every country in every age. It is further stated that no apostle has been sent except to teach in the language of his people so that they might easily understand him. Many such prophets were sent before the Prophet Muhammad, some of whom are mentioned in the Qur’an and others not. The Qur’an does not give their number but according to an authentic tradition [of the Prophet], it was almost two hundred thousand.

The Qur’an also lays down the criteria of a kitab or a revealed Book. A revealed Book conveys the message of God and is not the composition of any man. It preaches the unity of God as well as the responsibility of man for his actions. The criterion easily fits in with the Vedas and the Gita. Both, according to Hindu tradition, are apaurusheya, i.e., not the handiwork of man but of divine origin. The Qur’an insists on the unity of Godhead and claims that this is the basis of all true religion. The Rig Veda also proclaims, “He is one, though sages call Him by many names.” The Atharva Veda declares that renown and glory, force and happiness, splendor, food and nourishment belong to him who only thinks of God as “One without a second.... He is the Sole, the simple One, the One alone.” One could easily imagine that these passages were taken from the Qur’an.

In the light of the Qur’anic declaration that prophets have been sent to every country in every age to preach in the language of its people, it seems certain that there must have been many prophets in India. Surely when so many prophets were sent to Palestine within a few hundred years, a vast country with so ancient a history as India could not be denied that privilege. In fact we find in the Indian tradition conceptions which fit in with the concepts of revelation and prophethood. The description of the Vedas as shruti or heard fits in with the Qur’anic concept of revelation where the prophet hears what is revealed to him. Similarly, the concept of avatar in Hinduism appears as an Indian version of the concept of prophet in Islam. A prophet is a man on whom God’s message descends. Avatar from the root meaning of the word could mean exactly the same thing. It is a matter for interpretation whether the avatar is regarded as an incarnation of God or a vehicle through whom God’s message is revealed. The role that Christianity has ascribed to Christ is an interesting commentary on this and shows how easily these two interpretations can merge.

The Qur’an states that only some prophets are mentioned but the majority remain unnamed. Among the names that are explicitly mentioned, there is at least one which could refer to an Indian prophet. In Sura 21 [Verse 85; also Sura 38, Verse 48] there is a reference to “Dhu’l Kifl.” This can be roughly translated as Prince of Kufl and could very well refer to the Buddha who was Prince of Kapilavastu [sixth-fifth century B.C.]. There is no “p” in Arabic so that “p” sounds are converted either to “f or “b.” Similarly, Dhu’l-Qurnain [Sira 18, Verses 83–98] mentioned in the Qur’an has been differently identified by Sir Syed Ahmad [Khan, 1817–1898] with Chehwang-te, the Chinese emperor-sage [Xuan Di, reigned 74–48 B.C.], with Alexander [Macedonian emperor, 356–323 B.C.] by Abdullah Yusuf Ali [1872–1952], and with Cyrus [Persian emperor, circa 590–529 B.C.] by Maulana [Abu al-Kalam] Azad [1888–1958].

It may be argued that whatever may have been the religion of the Vedas, Hinduism today is not monotheistic and has many idols. Such an argument admits by implication the claim of the Vedas to be a revealed Book. At the most it could therefore be said that the pristine purity of Vedic faith has been distorted. It may be pointed out that a similar development has taken place in Christianity as well. There are pictures and images of Mary and Jesus in

most Christian churches. In spite of this, Christians are recognized as ahl al-kitab. On the same basis, Hindus should also be regarded as people of the Book.

Images came to the Christian churches at a later date. This is equally true of Hinduism. As far as is known, idol worship was introduced into India in the wake of Alexander’s invasion. Even in early Buddhism, there is no image of the Buddha. It is only after the Greeks came to India and brought their statuary that we get the first life-like images of the Buddha. Hinduism borrowed image worship from the later phases of Buddhism. It is interesting to note that the word “but” [idol] in Persian as well as in Urdu is a corruption of Budh or Buddha, indicating the close connection between the representation of the Buddha and idol worship. Finally, even in traditional Hinduism of today, the fact that the idol is discarded and thrown into a river after the religious ceremony proves that the idol is not the object of worship but only a symbol to help the devotee to concentrate.

There are Arabic scholars who hold that the term kafir was restricted only to certain idolatrous tribes in Arabia and cannot be applied to those who claim to have a Book. Hindus claim to have a Book and there is no reason to dispute that claim. The description they give of their religion as Sanatan Dharma or the perennial faith has a close affinity to the Muslim conception of Islam as the one faith that has persisted through the ages. If in spite of modification and changes, Jews and Christians are recognized as ahl al-kitab or people of the Book, is there any reason to deny that title to Hindus?

** 17. Universalism in Islam

Chandra Muzaffar

Since the late 1960s, Malaysia has witnessed tensions and occasionally open conflict between the Muslim community, which comprises a slight majority, and non-Muslim Chinese and South Asians. This communalism has taken both ethnic and religious forms because of the combination of ethnicity (Malay) and religion (Islam) in the identity of Bumiputra (literally, son of the soil).[315] Chandra Muzaffar (Malaysia, born 1947), a political scientist and civic activist, has analyzed Malay communalism in his academic work and combated it in his civic work, in particular, the multicommunal, pro-democracy organization Aliran Kesedaran Negara (National Awareness Movement), which he founded in the late 1970s and led until the early 1990s. In the 1990s, Muzaffar founded an international organization, the Just World Trust, which seeks to promote similar ideals globally, and coauthored a declaration on human rights that was adopted by more than two hundred Asian and Pacific nongovernmental organizations. Muzaffar has been harassed by the Malaysian government for his criticism of its undemocratic practices.[316]

The Universalism of Islam is an open proclamation to everyone—Muslim and non-Muslim alike—that communalism is totally alien to the spirit and philosophy of Islam.

This proclamation is particularly relevant in a society like ours. It is unfortunate that over the decades Islam in Malaysia has come to be seen in communal perspectives. “Communal” in this context does not mean mere association with a particular community. It is perhaps unavoidable that in a situation where all Malays are Muslims, Islam will be perceived as a Malay religion by both Malays and non-Malays. As long as there is sufficient awareness that Islam does not belong exclusively to the Malays and that there are millions upon millions of non-Malays who are also Muslims, no one can say that such a perception is in itself communal.[317]

What makes the prevailing attitude towards Islam communal is the tendency to link the religion with what I shall call Malayism and Bumiputraism when it is apparent that both the premises of these two almost identical “isms” and their implications have nothing to do with Islam. By Malayism I mean that whole philosophy that argues that, as the indigenous community, the Malays have certain political, economic and cultural rights that distinguish them from the non-indigenous communities [primarily Chinese and South Asians]. Bumiputraism rests upon the same premise except that it also encompasses indigenous non-Malay, non-Muslim communities whose interests may, at certain points, conflict with those of the Malays.[318] A clear instance would be the political pre-eminence of the Malays, which is not just pre-eminence in relation to the non-indigenous communities but also pre-eminence in relation to the non-Malay, non-Muslim indigenous communities.[319]

Since both Malayism and Bumiputraism are founded upon the notion of an indigenous people, let us consider this factor from the point of view of Islam. The Islamic party of Malaysia (PAS [Partai Islam Se-Malaysia, or Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party]) has all along demanded the “restoration of Malay sovereignty” primarily because of the indigenous status of the community.[320] What is important to us is that its demand has invariably been presented in the name of Islam. Even a cursory analysis of PAS’s philosophy will reveal that its insistence upon Malay political pre-eminence, Malay economic pre-eminence and Malay cultural pre-eminence have been articulated as a way of protecting the integrity of Islam.[321]

Now Islam does not recognize an indigenous/non-indigenous dichotomy as the basis of any social system. If terms like indigenous (Bumiputra) and non-indigenous (non-Bumiputra) are used merely as descriptions of categories within the population which have emerged as a result of the evolution of the Malaysian nation, it would not be altogether antithetical to Islamic principles. For then the categories concerned would be of historical rather than social relevance. But since the PAS argument is that public life should be conducted on the basis of an indigenous/non-indigenous dichotomy one would be right in describing it as an un-Islamic stance. There are three important reasons for saying so. Firstly, it is seldom realized that by distinguishing the indigenous community from the non-indigenous communities one is, in fact, dividing the Muslims since there are Muslims who are non-Bumiputras just as there are Bumiputras who are non-Muslims. Islamic teachings are opposed to

any covert or overt attempt to divide Muslims. This is borne out by the importance attached to the very well-known principle in Islam that “the Believers are but a single Brotherhood, so make peace and reconciliation between your two contending brothers” (Qur’an, Sura Al-Hujurat [Sura 49], Verse 10).[322] Lest this idea of Muslim unity be misunderstood it must be stressed that Islam does not advocate an obscurantist sort of unity without considering the ethical foundations of that unity. As proof, it is stated in the Qur’an that “God will not leave the Believers in the state in which ye are now until He separates what is evil from what is good.” (Sura Al-‘Imran [Sura 3], Verse 179) Dividing non-indigenous Muslims from indigenous Muslims in matters relating to politics, economics, education and culture is certainly not a case of separating evil from good! Secondly, even if all Bumiputras were Muslims and all non-Bumiputras non-Muslims, it would still be wrong to differentiate between the two groups in employment, education, and other similar areas where the paramount consideration should be the welfare of the human being. The Qur’an itself prohibits such discrimination (Sura Al-Baqara [Sura 2], Verse 272). The constitution of Medina formulated by Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him) provided equal rights and responsibilities to Muslims and non-Muslims alike.[323] Illustrious caliphs in early Islam like Abu Bakr [reigned 632–634], ‘Umar [reigned 634–644], and ‘Ali [reigned 656–661] took great pains to ensure that their non-Muslim citizens were well looked after. According to the 8th century Hanafi jurist Abu Yusuf, the second caliph ‘Umar even fixed special pensions for the non-Muslims living in Damascus.[324] Thirdly, by placing the whole Bumiputra/non-Bumiputra dichotomy at the center of things one has, in a sense, elevated ethnicity and ancestry to a level which is repugnant to genuine Islamic values. One of the hadiths (sayings of Prophet Muhammad) reminds mankind that “there is no pride whatsoever in ancestry; there is no merit in an Arab as against a non-Arab nor in a non-Arab as against an Arab.”[325] What is at the kernel of Islam is not ethnicity or ancestry but the unity of God. And the one most significant implication of that unity is the unity of the whole of mankind. The Qur’an for instance, observes,

<quote>

O mankind! We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other, not that ye may despise each other. Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of God

is he who is the most righteous of you. (Sura Hujurat [Sura 49], Verse 13)

</quote>

This concept of unity is in fact linked to the idea of equality within the human community as suggested in SuraAl- Imam [Sura 3], Verse 195. [326] In other words, the very endeavor to sustain and strengthen ethnic dichotomies like the indigenous/non-indigenous distinction amounts to a denunciation of the central principle of Islam itself—the principle of the unity of God or towhid.

Obviously then, PAS cannot justify Bumiputraism by using or misusing Islam. Of course it is not just PAS that advocates Bumiputraism. It is, as we know, the whole basis of public policy formulation. However, in all fairness to the UMNO-led [United Malays National Organization] government which is responsible for this, it must be recognized that it does not justify Bumiputraism in the name of Islam.[327]

That Bumiputraism cannot be defended from an Islamic point of view is something that very few Muslims in Malaysia are aware of. Even where there is some awareness, there doesn’t seem to be a willingness to articulate such a view in public. This is true of almost all Muslim groups in the country, including those who argue that PAS is un-Islamic and that they represent pure, pristine Islam. That is why I have never believed for one moment that the tremendous interest in Islam manifested in recent years by educated youths and others who are part of the urban environment reflects the emergence of a genuine Islamic consciousness.[328] To establish this point, I shall undertake a brief analysis of the so-called “rising tide of Islam” of the 1970s. I hope to show that Islam in Malaysia is still clothed in communal garb; that Muslims in Malaysia have yet to understand what the universal spirit of Islam means in reality.

It is no mere coincidence that this “Islamic tide” has risen in the 1970s. For the 1970s has seen the emergence of the Malay community as a significant component of the urban environment, especially the Kuala Lumpur

environment.[329] It is estimated that by 1980, 32 percent of the urban population would be Malay.[330] In a society where ethnic consciousness is pervasive, Malays who have just become part of a largely non-Malay milieu are bound to develop an awareness of their ethnic background which may not have been there when they were amongst their own ethnic kind in the rural areas. One can argue that even in societies where ethnic consciousness is not as pervasive, a first-generation community in a somewhat alien setting is expected to manifest a similar psychological response. A sense of insecurity, a feeling of suspicion, of distrust, are some of the accompanying elements of this increased ethnic awareness. Islam provides a useful channel for the expression of this awareness since it touches the life of an ordinary Malay in a thousand different ways. No other cultural symbol of the Malay community can be as effective. The Malay language expresses only one dimension of Malay identity and besides, since 1970, it has become increasingly the language of social communication of non-Malays as well.[331] It cannot therefore be used as an avenue for expressing “Malayness.” But Islam on the other hand, as it is understood here, can be used as the rationale for dressing in a certain way, staying away from certain groups, avoiding certain places and, most of all, adhering to certain beliefs and ideas. More specifically, this explains why some Muslim women in colleges and universities, firms and factories—more than their counterparts in the padi-fields and rubber small-holdings—are so concerned about dressing in the “proper Islamic way,” about avoiding male company, about staying away from cinemas and so on. It also explains, I suppose, why there is so much concern among certain Muslim circles in the cities about whether “tanggung halal” [that which is permissible] signs displayed in some non-Muslim eating shops are genuine or not.[332]

What all this shows is that as a reaction to the non-Malay, non-Muslim dominated urban environment, certain segments of the urban Malay community are seeking to carve out a distinctive identity, establish a separate ethnic presence. As I have tried to explain, this search is not the outcome of a sudden realization of what it is to be a Muslim in terms of dress or social intercourse; rather it stems from a feeling of deep insecurity that compels the individual concerned to protect his “Malayness.” This is why he chooses only those elements from Islam which will help him maintain his separateness, his distinctiveness. After all, an Islamic identity is much more than dress forms or modes of social intercourse. Is not a Muslim also defined on the basis of his commitment to truth and justice, his readiness to fight

oppression and corruption, his willingness to help the poor, the weak, his capacity for charity, for kindness? There are numerous verses in the Qur’an that support such an idea of a Muslim identity. One such verse says,

<quote>

And show him the two highways? But he hath made no haste on the path that is steep, and what will explain to thee the path that is steep? It is freeing the bondman; or the giving of food in a day of privation, to the orphan with claims of relationship, or to the indigent down in the dust. Then will he be of those who believe and enjoin patience (constancy and self-restraint), and enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion. Such are the Companions of the Right Hand. (Sura Al-Balad [Sura 90], Verses 10–18)

</quote>

Another verse says,

<quote>

Seest thou one who denies the Judgment (to come)? Then such as the (man) who repulses the orphan (with harshness). And encourages not the feeding of the indigent. So woe to the worshippers who are neglectful of their prayers. Those who (want but) to be seen (of man) but refuse (to supply) (even) neighborly needs. (Sura AlMa’un [Sura 107], Verses 1–7)

</quote>

Of course, defining the identity of a Muslim in terms of his kindness to the poor will not serve the purpose of maintaining a separate identity since kindness like compassion is a sentiment, a value, which any human being, Muslim or non-Muslim, Malay or non-Malay, is capable of. If, on the other hand, one emphasizes dress or food or various rituals which are specific and exclusive to the religion, one would be highlighting forms and practices which others cannot share. Thus, one would be able to sustain a Muslim/non-

Muslim dichotomy which at the emotional-psychological level equals a Malay/non-Malay, a Bumiputra/non-Bumiputra dichotomy.

So far, I have shown that the interest in Islam in the 1970s is closely aligned to the crystallization of ethnic consciousness in a new urban environment. Insecurity has been suggested as one of the propelling forces behind this consciousness. There is, however, another psychological force which is also at work at the same time—a force which superficially at least appears to contradict the feeling of insecurity we have just analyzed. The political climate of the 1970s with its emphasis upon Malay interests and aspirations in the economy, in politics, and in the cultural life of the nation has bestowed various Malay groups with a sense of confidence about the legitimacy of their demands.[333] Confidence of this sort derived from an overall political situation where the Malay position is undoubtedly strong and powerful can, of course, co-exist quite happily with insecurity generated by a specific urban environment where the Malay position is neither strong nor powerful as yet. It is because there is this confidence that Malay groups are more vocal than ever before in demanding an Islamic administration based upon the Qur’an and the sunna (the way of the Prophet), Islamic laws, an Islamic economic system, an Islamic education system, indeed, a total Islamic society.[334] There are a number of things about these demands which must be noted. Firstly, as I have mentioned, the stronger Malay political position—an ethnic phenomenon—is at the root of these demands. Secondly, like the obsession with dress and rituals, the interest in Islamic laws cannot possibly evoke any empathy from the non-Muslims since Islamic laws are also, on the whole, very specific to the religion. It would have been different if the concern was with fighting exploitation or ensuring self-reliance—goals which are highly cherished in Islam—since they have an appeal that transcends religious boundaries. The emphasis given to Islamic laws and Islamic administration only helps to underline the differences that exist between Muslims and non-Muslims and, by implication, Malays and non-Malays. In that sense, it reveals the true character of the whole agitation for an Islamic state. Thirdly, if it were a genuine Islamic movement inspired by a genuine Islamic consciousness there would have been an increasing endeavor to study and analyze the structure and content of an Islamic society in Malaysia. This is particularly important in our context because the non-Muslim segment is a little more than half of the total population. How this large number of non-Muslims would fit into an Islamic society, what their rights and roles would be, what responsibilities they would share with the

Muslims, how they would relate to an Islamic legislature or judicial system—all these and a number of other issues should have been debated and discussed in depth and detail. The fact is there has been no such effort. This lack of interest in the position and status of the non-Muslims among the so-called “Champions of Islam” of the 1970s is no different from the total lack of concern for the non-Muslims and non-Malays exhibited by PAS in the 1950s and 1960s. It is because there isn’t this concern, that no Muslim group in the country has taken up cudgels on behalf of the non- Muslim poor. Yet, the humanitarian ideals which lie at the heart of Islam, the noble examples of the Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him) and the great caliphs which I had alluded to earlier, would demand such a response.

Once again, this negative attitude of various Muslim groups exposes the real nature of their political struggle. It is just another way of preserving Malayism. To understand this better, one has to compare the situation here with the attitudes that prevailed among Islamic groups in Indonesia from the 1930s right up to the 1960s. In spite of a smaller non-Muslim population, leaders of the Masyumi [party] in particular, like Muhammad Natsir [1908–1993], spent so much time and effort elucidating the rights and responsibilities of non-Muslims in the Islamic state they envisaged for Indonesia.[335] One of their more important intellectual commitments was the quest for common principles that could unite Muslims and non-Muslims—a commitment which conforms with Qur’anic ideals.[336] In this connection, no Muslim group in Malaysia has ever bothered to embark upon such a mission, though, at the level of social philosophy, there are many outstanding similarities between Islam and aspects of Chinese culture and Hindu thought.[337] The reason is, of course, obvious. It is because Islam is seen from a communal angle—not a universal perspective. Finally, one would have thought that those who seek to establish an Islamic state would first examine critically the ideas, beliefs and attitudes of the Muslim community itself, in order to discover if these are elements which need to be jettisoned in the endeavor to create a genuine Islamic spirit. Apart from the occasional blast at some insignificant ritual like Mandi Safar or puja ceremonies,[338] Muslim groups have maintained an embarrassing silence in relation to more fundamental ideas and attitudes within Malay society. These are ideas and attitudes which need to be rectified in the interest of Islam. One such important idea which I have already analyzed is the whole notion of Bumiputraism. If the post-1970 Muslim movement was genuinely Islamic it would have at least attempted to show Muslims how a concept based upon

ethnicity and ancestry—or upon residence and territory if you like—does not synchronize with Islamic values. The willingness to live with Bumiputraism, and worse still, defend it at times, shows that the real spirit of Islam has not crystallized. After all, Islam is a religion which has even questioned nationalism—let alone the perpetuation of communal dichotomies within a nation. Muhammad Iqbal [1877–1938], one of the greatest Muslims of this century, argued that territorial or racial nationalism was foreign to the spirit of Islam. As one writer on Iqbal put it,

<quote>

He [Iqbal] was convinced now that it would be a tragically retrograde step if the Muslim World began to try to remedy its frustrations by replacing the global Islamic sentiment by aggressive nationalism of the Western type. He conceived of Islam as a universal religion which envisaged all humanity as a unity. But the Islam of his time had become narrow, rigid and static. He conceived of life as evolutionary and dynamic. He came to the conclusion that a fossilized religious dogmatism could not generate an outlook that would lead 25 to the self-realization of individuals and communities.[339]

</quote>

It is this universal character of Islam, its conception of humanity as a unity, that we have attempted to present in this book. For this purpose we have chosen four illustrious names from Islamic history [Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207–1273), Shah Wali Allah Dihlawi (1702–1762), Abul Kalam Azad (1888–1958), and Ameer Ali (18491928)].... ALIRAN hopes that through the writings of these great thinkers the Malaysian public will achieve a deeper understanding of Islam. Because the views they have espoused are hardly known in our country, we can expect a number of our readers to express some misgivings.

But whatever their misgivings, it is our fervent prayer that they will go on looking for the truth in a sincere and rational manner. For in this quest for truth lies the future of Islam.

** 18. Religious Liberty

Mohamed Talbi

Mohamed Talbi (Tunisia, born 1921) received his doctorate in history from the Sorbonne in 1968. Now a professor emeritus at the University of Tunis, Talbi began teaching there in the late 1950s and served as dean of Arts and Sciences in the late 1960s. In his retirement, Talbi has turned from his professional focus on medieval Islamic history to an enthusiastic participation in interreligious dialogue. His contributions to a variety of European and North American conferences and journals argue that Islam allows freedom of religion and that the traditional death penalty for apostasy involves a misreading of the Qur'an.

*** From Old Relations to a New Context

Religious liberty, as a common human concern and international preoccupation, is relatively new. In the old ages the problem was irrelevant. During antiquity all people felt it natural to worship the deities of their city. It was the job of these deities to protect the house and to look after the family and the welfare of the state. The deities of Carthage were by nature the enemies of the deities of Rome. In that context refusal to worship the deities of the city was disloyalty to the state.

The situation was almost the same inside the biblical tradition. In the Bible Yahweh acts as the Jews' God. He constantly warns His people not to worship any other deity and to obey His law. This people, with one God, is also a physical entity—the twelve tribes descended from Abraham by Isaac and Jacob with a land, Palestine. The Jewish community is an ideal prototype of unity: it obeys the law of blood, place, and religion. Judaism is the perfect prototype of an ethnically homogeneous community rooted in religion and shaped into a land and a state. To speak of religious liberty in such a case is absurd. There is no choice other than sticking to the state-community, or

leaving it. Jews who convert to another religion cease ipso facto to belong to their state-community. So their conversion is felt as betrayal, and as such it warrants the penalty of death. If we dwelt on the case of the Jewish community as a prototype, it is because that case is not without similarity to the classical Islamic umma [community] as it has been shaped by traditional theology.

For historical reasons the situation changed with the appearance of Christian preaching. From the beginning this preaching was not linked with the state, and Jesus' people, the Jewish community, rejected the call. Jesus ordered his disciples "to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's." (Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 22, Verse 21) This revolutionary attempt to dissociate state from religion, and to ensure freedom of individual conscience, failed. The time was not yet ripe. Consequently the Roman state considered the first Christians to be disloyal subjects, because of their refusal to pay honor to the deities of their city and of their social group. Accordingly, they were treated as rebels. The right to self-determination and to religious liberty was denied them. They could not act freely in accordance with conscience.

To condense much history: church and state soon found that they needed each other. Intolerance of the dominant social or religious group soon asserted itself everywhere with internal and external wars, and many forms of discrimination and persecution. Of course the Islamic world, though relatively tolerant, was not an exception. As everywhere else, human rights have been violated or ignored. But that does not mean, as we shall see, that Islam as such authorizes violation of these fundamental rights.

Now, to avoid looking on the dark side of things, we have to add that our common past was not entirely ugly and somber. We can also cite eras of tolerance, respect, comprehension, and dialogue. Nevertheless, not until the 19th century do we see the right to freethinking claimed. Political liberalism and the philosophical studies were then in vogue, and in fact what was claimed was not the right to think freely, but the right not to believe. So religious liberty became a synonym of secularism, agnosticism, and atheism. Consequently, a stubborn fight has been waged against religious liberty because of misidentification. To deal with the subject

honestly and dispassionately, we must free ourselves from this false conception.

It must be admitted that religious liberty is today rooted in our social life. Since the Declaration of the Human Rights in 1945, this concept has emerged as an essential part of international law.

On the other hand, we live in a pluralistic world destined to be increasingly so. I wrote elsewhere that each human has the right to be different and already our planet is too small for our ambitions and dreams. In this new world, which is in rapid gestation, there is no more room for exclusiveness. We have to accept each other as we are. Diversity is the law of our time. Today, by virtue of expanding and sophisticated mass media, every human is truly the neighbor of every human.

In our Islamic countries we have been, since the beginning, in the habit of living side- by- side with communities of different faiths. It has not always been easy—as past and recent events could document. But only recently have we begun to be confronted with secularism. It is now our turn to experience from within the growth of agnosticism and atheism. We have to be conscious of this overwhelming change in our societies and, accordingly, exercise our theological thinking in this new and unprecedented context.

But first, and before going any further, what is religious liberty? Is it only the right to be an unbeliever? One may indeed say that religious liberty is but one aspect of the question—and from my point of view the negative one. In fact, religious liberty is basically the right to decide for one’s self, without any kind of pressure, fear, or anxiety; the right to believe or not to believe; the right to assume with full consciousness one’s destiny; the right, of course, to rid oneself of superstitions inherited from the Dark Ages; but also the right to espouse the faith of one’s choice, to worship and to bear witness freely. Is this definition in harmony with the Qur’an’s basic teachings?

*** Qur’an: The Basic Principles

Religious liberty is founded, from a Qur’anic perspective, first and foremost, on the divinely ordered nature of the human. The human is not a being among many others. Among the whole range of creatures only humans have duties and obligations. They are an exceptional being. They cannot be reduced to their body, because humans, before everything else, are a spirit, a spirit given the power to conceive the Absolute and to ascend to God. If humans have this exceptional power and this privileged position inside the Creation, it is because God “breathed into them something of His spirit.” (Qur’an, Sura 32, Verse 9) Of course humans, like all living animals, are matter. They have a body created “from sounding clay, from mud molded into shape” (Sura 15, Verse 28). But they received the Spirit. They have two sides: a lower side—their clay—and a higher side—the Spirit of God. This higher side, comments A. Yusuf Ali [1872–1952], “if rightly used, would give man superiority over other creatures.”

Humankind’s privileged position inside the order of Creation is illustrated in the Qur’an in the scene where we see the angels receiving the order to prostrate themselves before Adam (Sura 15, Verse 29; Sura 38, Verse 72), the heavenly prototype of humankind. In a way, and provided we keep humans in their place as creature, we may say as Muslims—in harmony with Abraham’s other spiritual descendants, Jews and Christians—that God created humans in His image. A hadith, saying of the Prophet, although questioned, authorizes this statement. So we can say that on the level of the Spirit, all persons, whatsoever may be their physical or intellectual abilities and aptitudes, are really equal. They have the same “breath” of God in them, and by virtue of this “breath” they have the ability to ascend to Him and to respond freely to His call. Consequently they have the same dignity and sacredness, and because of this dignity and sacredness they are equally and fully entitled to enjoy the right to self-determination on earth and for the hereafter. So from a Qur’anic perspective we may say that human rights are rooted in what every human is by nature, and this is by virtue of God’s plan and creation. Thus the cornerstone of all human rights is religious liberty.

From a Muslim perspective humans are not the mere fruit of “hazard and necessity.” Their creation obeys a plan and a purpose. Through the “breath”

they have received the faculty to be at one with God; and their response, to have meaning, must be free. The teachings of the Qur’an are clear: Humans are privileged beings with “spiritual favors” (Sura 17, Verse 70); they had not been “created in jest” (Sura 23, Verse 115); they have a mission and they are God’s “Viceregent on Earth” (Sura 2, Verse 30). They proceed from God with a mission to fulfill, their destiny is ultimately to return to Him. “Whoso do right, do it for their own soul; and whoso do wrong, do so to its detriment. Then to your Lord will you all be brought back.” (Sura 45, Verse 15)

It is necessary that all persons may choose their way freely and without coercion. All persons must conscientiously fulfill their own destiny. The Qur’an states clearly that compulsion is incompatible with religion.

<quote>

There should be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from Error. Whosoever rejects Evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trust-worthy hand-hold, that never breaks. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Sura 2, Verse 256)

</quote>

To my best knowledge, among all the other revealed texts, only the Qur’an stresses religious liberty so unambiguously. The reason is that faith, to be true and reliable, must be a voluntary act. In this connect it is worthwhile to underline that the quoted verse was used to reprove some Jews and Christians, newly converted to Islam in Medina, who were willing to convert their children also to their new faith. So it is clearly stressed that faith is an individual concern and commitment, and that even parents must refrain from interfering with it. Faith, as stressed in the basic text of Islam in clear and indisputable words, is a voluntary act born out of conviction and freedom.

In fact, even God refrains from subduing against His will. This too is clearly expressed in the Qur’an. Faith is a free gift, God’s gift. Humans can accept or refuse it. They have the faculty to open their heart and their reason to God’s gift. Guidance (hudan) has been sent to them. They are warmly invited to listen to God’s call. God warns them in clear and non-ambiguous

terms. As it is underlined in the quoted verse stressing human freedom: “Truth stands out clear from Error.” It is up to human to make their choice. The human condition—and that is the price of human dignity and sacredness—is not without something tragic in it. Humans can be misled. They are able to make the wrong choice and to stray from the right path.

In a word, they have the capacity to resist God’s call, and this capacity is the criterion of their true freedom. Even the Messenger whose mission is properly to convey God’s call and message is helpless in such a situation. He is clearly and firmly warned to respect human freedom and God’s mystery. “If it had been thy Lord’s will, all who are on the earth would have believed, all of them. Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!” (Sura 10, Verse 99) A. Yusuf Ali, in his translation of the Qur’an, comments on that verse in this way:

<quote>

Men of faith must not be impatient or angry if they have to contend against Unfaith, and most important of all, they must guard against the temptation of forcing Faith, that is, imposing it on others by physical compulsion, or any other forms of compulsion such as social pressure, or inducements held out by wealth or position, or other adventitious advantages. Forced faith is no faith.

</quote>

The Apostle’s mission—and all the more ours—is strictly restricted to advise, warn, convey a message, and admonish without compelling. He is ordered: “Admonish, for thou art but an admonisher. Thou hast no authority to compel them” (Sura 88, Verses 21–22). In other words, God has set humans truly and tragically free. What He wants is, in full consciousness and freedom, willing and obedient response to His call—and that is the very meaning of the Arabic word “Islam.”

I do not mean that we should adopt an attitude of abandon and indifference. In fact, we have to avoid extremes. We have, of course, to refrain from interfering in the inner life of another, as I have stressed. It is time to add

that we must avoid also being indifferent or careless about one another. We must convey God’s message. This obligation of faith also needs stressing.

We are tempted today to shut ourselves up and to live comfortably wrapped in our own thoughts, indifferent to our neighbors. But this is not God’s purpose. God Himself sets the example. He is nearer to humankind “than humans’ own jugular vein” (Sura 50, Verse 16) and He knows better than we do our inmost desires, and what these desires “whisper” (tuwaswisu) to us (Sura 50, Verse 16). So He stands by us, and He speaks unceasingly to each of us, warning and promising with a divine pedagogy that fits all persons of different social and intellectual classes, using images, symbols, and words that He only may use with total sovereignty.

And God urges us to follow His example, and to turn our steps towards all our brothers in humanity, beyond all kinds of frontiers, the confessional ones included.

<quote>

O mankind! We created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other. Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of God, are those who are the most righteous of you. And God is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (Sura 49, Verse 13)

</quote>

A. Yusuf Ali comments:

<quote>

This is addressed to all mankind, and not only to the Muslim brotherhood, though it is understood that in a perfect world the two would be synonymous. As it is, mankind is descended from one pair of parents. Their tribes, races, and nations are convenient labels by which we may know

certain differing characteristics. Before God they are all one, and he gets most honor who is most righteous.

</quote>

In other words humans are not created for solitariness and impervious individuality. They are created for community, relationship, and dialogue. Their fulfillment is in their reconciliation both to God and to people. We have to find the way, in each case, to realize this double reconciliation, without betraying God and without damaging the inner life of the other. To do so, we have to listen to God's advice:

<quote>

Do not argue with the People of the Book unless it is in the most courteous manner, except for those of them who do wrong. And say: "We believe in the Revelation which has come down to us and in that which came down to you. Our God and your God is one, and to Him we submit." (Sura 29, Verse 46)

</quote>

The Arabic word used in this verse, and rendered in the translation by the verb "to submit," is "Muslimun"—"Muslims." To be a true Muslim is to live in courteous dialogue with peoples of other faiths and ideologies, and ultimately to submit to God. We must show concern to our neighbors. We have duties to them, and we are not islands of loneliness. The attitude of respectful courtesy recommended by the Qur'an must be expanded to embrace all mankind, believers and unbelievers, except for those who "do wrong"—the unjust and violent, who resort deliberately to fist or argument. In such a case it is better to avoid so-called dialogue.

In short, from my Muslim perspective, our duty is to bear witness courteously and respectfully for the inner liberty of our neighbors and for their sacredness. We must also be ready to give them an honest hearing. We have to remember, as Muslims, that a hadith of our Prophet states: "The believer is unceasingly in search of wisdom, wherever he finds it he grasps it." Another saying adds: "Look for science everywhere, even as far as

in China.” And, finally, it is up to God to judge, for we, as limited human beings, know only in part. Let us quote:

<quote>

To each among you, have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way. And if God had enforced His Will, He would have made of you all one people. But His plan is to test you in what He hath given you. So strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to God. Then will He inform you of that wherein you differed. (Sura 5, Verse 51)

Say: “O God! Creator of the heavens and the earth! Knower of all that is hidden and open! It is thou that wilt judge between Thy Servants in those matters about which they have differed.” (Sura 39, Verse 46)

</quote>

*** Beyond the Limits Imposed by Traditional Theology

Though all Muslims are bound by the Qur’an’s basic teachings, Muslim traditional theology, for historical reasons, in my opinion, does not always reflect the spirit of the Qur’an. I’ll cite briefly two important cases: the case of the dhimmis—the confessional minorities in the medieval Islamic empire—and the case of apostates.

Let us start with the dhimmis. If the doors of many countries have been opened by force or jihad [religious struggle], to pave the way for Islam, Islam itself has never been imposed by compulsion. From this point of view the teachings of the Qur’an have been observed. They protected the dhimmis against the most unbearable forms of religious intolerance. In particular, with two or three exceptions, the dhimmis have never been prevented from following the religion of their choice, from worshipping, or organizing their communities in

accordance with their own law. Their situation has even been improved by Islamic conquest. They enjoyed long periods of tolerance and real prosperity, often holding high positions in the administration, in the court, and in economic activities.

But it is a fact that they suffered, from time to time, here and there, from discrimination. Things worsened after the reign of al-Mutawakkil (847- 861). Discrimination, especially in dress, was openly humiliating. The oppression culminated in Egypt during the reign of al-Hakim (966–1021), who may not have been sane.

In the medieval context of wars, hostilities, and treacheries, discrimination or open oppression has always been prompted, or strongly backed, by the theologians. We have to remember that it was not then a virtue—according to the medieval mentality wherever—to consider all human beings as equal. How, then, to consider equal truth and error, true believers and heretics!

So in appraising the past we must always take circumstances into account. Above all, we must strive to avoid the same situations and errors. In any case, the Qur'an's basic teachings lay down a clear line of conduct. They teach us to respect the dignity and freedom of one another. In a world where giant holocausts have been perpetrated, where human rights are still manipulated or blandly ignored, our modern Muslim theologians must denounce all forms of discriminations as crimes strictly and explicitly condemned by the Qur'an.

On the other hand, we must consider the case of the apostate. In this field, too, traditional theology did not stick to the spirit of the Qur'an; rather, it abridged the liberty to choose one's religion.

According to this theology, though conversion to Islam must be, and is in fact, without coercion, it is practically impossible, once inside Islam, to get out of it. Conversion from Islam to another religion is considered treason, and the apostate is subject to the death penalty. For their interpretation, the traditional theologians rely on the precedent of the first caliph of Islam, Abu

Bakr ([reigned] 632–634), who energetically fought the tribes that rejected his authority after the Prophet’s death, and refused to pay him the alms taxes. He likened their rebellion to apostasy. Also, they cite the authority of this hadith: “Anyone who changes religion must be put to death.”

During the history of Islam, I am not aware of any historical or current application of the law condemning the apostate to death. However, during the 1970s, in Egypt, the Islamists narrowly failed to enforce this law against Copts who converted to Islam, generally to marry Muslim women, and then, if the marriage failed, returned to their Coptic religion. Recently some Tunisian atheists have expressed their concern about this law.

So the case of the apostate in Islam, though mostly theoretical, needs to be cleared up. First, the hadith upon which the theologians assert the death penalty is always more or less mixed, in the books of hadith, with rebellion and highway robbery. The cases of “apostates” killed during the Prophet’s life or shortly after his death are without exception those persons who, as a consequence of their “apostasy,” turned their weapons against the Muslims, whose community was at that time small and vulnerable. The penalty of death appears in these circumstances as an act of self-defense. It is undoubtedly for that reason that the Hanafi School offiqh [Islamic jurisprudence] does not condemn to death the woman apostate, “because women, contrary to men, are not fit for war.”

On the other hand, the hadith authorizing the penalty of death is not technically mutawatir [epistemologically in the clear], and consequently it is not, according to the traditional system of hadith, binding. And above all, from a modern point of view, this hadith can and must be questioned. In my opinion, we have many good reasons to consider it a forgery.

It may been forged under the influence of Leviticus, Chapter 24, Verse 16, and Deuteronomy, Chapter 13, Verses 2–19, where the Israelites were ordered to stone the apostate to death.

In any case, the hadith in question is at variance with the teachings of the Qur’an, where there is no mention of the death penalty required against the apostate. During the life of the Prophet apostasy presented itself at various times, and several verses [of the Qur’an] deal with it. In all, without exception, punishment of the apostate who persists in rejection of Islam is left to God’s judgment and to the afterlife. The cases mentioned in the Qur’an and by the commentators concern, on the one hand, individuals and tribes who become turncoats, and, on the other hand, persons attracted by the “Peoples of the Book,” Jews and Christians, to their faith (Sura 2, Verse 109; Sura 3, Verses 99–100). Taking into account the special situation, the Qur’an argues, warns, or recommends the attitude to take, without ever threatening death.

**** 1. The Qur’an Argues

From a Muslim perspective, the Qur’an recognizes all previous revelations, authenticates and perfects them.

<quote>

Say: “We believe in God, and in what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, and the Tribes, and in that which was given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets, from their Lord. We make no distinction between anyone of them, and to God we submit (Muslimun).” (Sura 3, Verse 84)

</quote>

It does not follow that one is permitted, at the convenience of the moment, to change religion as one changes a coat. Such behavior denotes lack of true faith. It is for this reason that the following verse insists on the universal meaning of Islam, a call directed to all of mankind: “If anyone desires a

religion other than Islam, never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers." (Sura 3, Verse 85)

Accordingly, apostates are warned: those who choose apostasy, after being sincerely convinced that Islam is the Truth, are unjust, and as such they are bereaved of God's guidance, with all the consequences that follow for their salvation. "How shall God guide those who reject faith after they accepted it, and bore witness that the Apostle was true, and that clear signs had come to them? But God guides not a people unjust." (Sura 3, Verse 86; see too the following Verses 87–91)

On the other hand, the Qur'an denounces "Peoples of the Book" who exert pressure on Muslims to induce them to retract. There is no doubt that polemics between the emerging Islam and the old religions were sharp. In this atmosphere the Qur'an urges people who espouse Islam to stick firmly to their new faith until their death; to close their ranks, to refuse to listen to those who strive to render them apostates, and to keep out of their trap. They are also reminded of their former state of disunion, when they were "on the brink of the Pit of Fire"; and they are exhorted to ensure their final salvation:

<quote>

Say, "O People of the Book: Why obstruct ye those who believe, from the Path of God, seeking to make it crooked, while ye were yourselves witness thereof? But God is not unmindful of all that ye do."

O ye who believe! If you obey a faction of those who have been given the Book, they will turn your back into disbelievers after you have believed.

And how would you disbelieve, while to you are rehearsed the signs of God, and His Messenger is among you? And he who holds fast to God is indeed guided to the Right Path.

O ye who believe! Fear God as He should be feared, and die not except in the state of Islam.

And hold fast, all together, by the Rope of God, and be not divided, and remember God’s favor on you: for ye were enemies, and He joined your Hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; and ye were on the brink of the Pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus doth God make His Signs clear to you, that ye may be guided.

Let there arise out of you a Community inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain felicity. (Sura 3, Verses 99–104)

</quote>

Thus, unceasingly and by all means, the Qur’an strives to raise new Muslims’ spirit, in order to prevent them from falling into apostasy. The argumentation is only moral. The Qur’an goes on: It is “from selfish envy” that “quite a number of the People of the Book wish they could turn you back to infidelity” (Sura 2, Verse 109; see too Sura 3, Verse 149); you have not to fear them. “God is you Protector, and He is the best of helpers, soon shall He cast terror into the hearts of the unbelievers” (Sura 3, Verses 150–151); “your real friends are God, His Messenger, and the believers ... therefore take not for friends those who take your religion for a mockery or sport.” (Sura 5, Verses 58–60) And, finally, those who in spite of all this counsel allow themselves to be tempted by apostasy, are forewarned: If they desert the Cause, the Cause will not fail. Others will bring it to a head.

<quote>

O ye who believe! If any from among you turn back from their faith, soon will God produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, lowly with the Believers, mighty against the Rejecters, striving in the way of God, and never afraid of the reproaches of a fault finder. That is the grace of God, which He will bestow on whom He pleaseth. And God is Bountiful, All-Knowing. (Sura 5, Verse 57; see too Sura 47, Verse 38)

</quote>

Finally, the apostates are given this notice: they “will not injure God in the least, but He will make their deeds of no effect.” (Sura 47, Verse 32)

**** 2. The Qur’an Warns

The young Muslim community is thus given many reasons to stick to the new religion. Members are also warned that their salvation depends on their not departing from their faith. They are urged to follow the true spirit of Islam, which is defined in two ways: First, they will love God and God will love them; second, they will be humble among their brethren, but they will not fear wrong-doers and they will not consort with them. If by fear, weakness, or time-serving, they fall into apostasy, the loss will be theirs and punishment will be hard in the Hereafter. “And if any of you turn back from their faith, and die in unbelief, their works will bear no fruit in this life. And in the Hereafter they will be companions of the Fire, and will abide therein.” (Sura 2, Verse 217) The apostates lay themselves open to “the curse of God, of His angels, and of all mankind” (Sura 3, Verse 87), except for “those who repent thereafter, and amend, for God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Sura 3, Verses 8991). They will “taste the penalty for rejecting faith” (Sura 3, Verse 106; see too Verse 140). Such people are entirely in the hands of Evil (Sura 47, Verse 25). They secretly plot with enemies (Sura 47, Verses 26–27), and “they obstruct the way to God.” (Sura 47, Verses 32, 34) As a result “God will not forgive them.” (Sura 47, Verse 34)

**** 3. The Qur’an Advises

How to deal with obstinate and ill-disposed apostates? How to treat those who try to draw them into their camp, or to manipulate them? Let us underline once more that there is no mention in the Qur’an of any kind of penalty, including death. To use the Arab technical word, we say that there is no specific hadd [limitation] in this matter.

On the contrary, Muslims are advised to “forgive and overlook till God accomplishes His purpose, for God hath power over all things.” (Sura 2, Verse 109) In other words, no punishment on earth. The case does not answer to the Law. The debate is between God and the apostate’s conscience, and it is not our role to interfere in it.

Muslims are authorized to take up arms in only one case, self-defense, when they are attacked and their faith seriously jeopardized. In such a case “fighting” (al-qital) is “prescribed” (kutiba), even if they “dislike it” (kurhun lakum) (Sura 2, Verse 194). To summarize—Muslims are urged not to yield, when their conscience is at stake, and to take up arms against “those who will not cease fighting you until they turn you back from your faith, if they can.” (Sura 2, Verse 217)

*** Conclusion

It is thus evident that religious liberty, with all its ramifications, is not new inside Islam. The Qur’an deals at length with it. In the core of this problem we meet the ticklish subject of apostasy. We have seen that the Qur’an argues, warns, advises, but never resorts to the sword. The reason is that argument is meaningless in matters of faith. In our pluralistic world our theologians must take that into account.

We can never underline enough that religious liberty is not an act of charity or a tolerant concession to mislead persons. It is a fundamental right for everyone. To claim it for myselfj implies ipso facto that I am disposed to claim it for my neighbor too.

Religious liberty is not the equivalent of atheism. My right, and my duty also, is to bear witness, by fair means, of my own faith, and to convey God’s call. Ultimately it is up to each person to respond or not to respond to this call.

From a Muslim perspective, and on the basis of the Qur’an’s teachings, religious liberty is fundamentally and ultimately an act of respect for God’s

Sovereignty and for the mystery of His plan for humankind, who have been given the terrible privilege of building on their own responsibility, their destiny on earth and for the hereafter. Finally, to respect human freedom is to respect God’s plan.

To be a True Muslim is to submit to this plan. It is, in the literal sense of the word, to put one’s self, voluntarily and freely, with confidence and love, in the hands of God.

** 19—The Medina Document

Ali Bulay

Ali Bulay (Turkey, born 1951) is a leading figure among the growing group of Muslim intellectuals in Turkey. His first book, published in the late 1970s, achieved the status of “a kind of manifesto of the Muslim intellectuals.”[340] Bulay argues that Islam represents a viable alternative to Western political systems that solves many of the social and political ills associated with the West, but only if Muslim intellectuals undertake a systematic analysis of Islam’s applicability to modern problems. His more recent work has attempted to supply some of this analysis[341] and begun to focus on the issue of pluralism, particularly ethnic and religious pluralism. Bulay’s basis for analysis is the Medina Document, a contract signed by the Prophet Muhammad, Jews, and polytheists granting Muslims the right to rule in the Arabian city and at the same time protecting the rights of other groups.

With the hijra [the exodus of the Muslims from Mecca to Medina in 622] and subsequent developments, there were three main social groups in Medina: Muslims, Jews and the Polytheist Arabs.

The Muslim group consisted of refugees from Mecca and the Ansar [literally “helpers,” these were Medinans who accepted Islam]. The Ansar were composed of the Aws [tribe] and the Khazraj [tribe]. This kind of social structure was alien to the ancient traditions of the whole Arabian peninsula. In traditional tribal life social organization depended on blood and kinship ties, while in Medina, for the first time, people from totally divergent geographical, ethnic and cultural backgrounds gathered and identified themselves as a distinct social group. Later the Roman Suhayl, the Persian Salman and the Kurdish Gavan would be added to this group. Indeed, the second article of the Medina Document [translated and discussed in this chapter] would designate this social group as “an umma [community] distinct from other people” on a religious and legal basis.

Yet, of course, Medina did not consist only of Muslims. There were its ancient inhabitants: Jews and the Arabs who did not accept Islam. Hazrat [his excellency] Muhammad (peace be upon him) faced the important problem of reconciling and unifying these social groups, of discovering the formula for co-existence.[342] But how was he going to do it?

It now appears that Hazrat Muhammad started out by tracing the social, religious and demographic composition of Medina. For this purpose, he had a population census taken, an undertaking quite strange for its time. Can we say that, in addition to the [pioneering] Medina Document, we encounter the first census here, where the inhabitants of the town were recorded one by one (man, woman, child, the old) in a notebook? Whatever the answer, there is no doubt that the act was “new and strange” for Arabs. According to a report from Huzayfa [ibn al-Yaman, companion of the Prophet]: “God’s Messenger said to us: ‘Bring me the names of (each of) the people who chose Islam as their religion and those who became Muslims.’ And we wrote down and brought 1500 names to him.”[343]

From the census they found that 10,000 people lived in Medina, of which 1,500 were Muslims, 4,000 were Jews and 4,500 were Polytheist Arabs. The Prophet took another step and determined the physical city boundaries of Medina by marking its four corners. In this way he specified the land included in a “city-state,” which was to be designated as the “protected area (harem) remaining within the Medina (Yathrib) valley” in article 39 of the Medina Document.

Naturally Muslims were pleased with this undertaking, and the Jews also seemed pleased with this social and political organization. Only the Mushriks (Polytheists) of Medina were disturbed. They perceived a potential threat,[344] which is not difficult to understand. Since the Prophet and his followers had had to migrate [from Mecca to Medina] due to unbearable pressures exerted by the Polytheists of Mecca, it is unthinkable that he would be on good terms with other unbelievers. Moreover, right after the hijra, news had started to arrive from Mecca that the Quraish [tribe of Mecca] would continue chasing them and was planning an attack on Medina soon.

In the event of such a struggle, what would the position of the Polytheists of Medina be? Would not the Quraish blame them, asking why they accepted Muhammad? Might not a conflict arise between them and the Muslims even before such an attack? There was a de facto possibility. How was co-existence possible in such a conjuncture?

Hazrat Muhammad was preoccupied with the settlement of the migrant Meccans and their adaptation to the new environment, while on the other hand he was trying to gain the confidence of the Jews and the Polytheist Arabs. He declared that his aim was not to establish an absolute rule over Medina, but to assure the security of his religious community as well as the necessary conditions for the propagation of the new religion. In fact, even in the [earlier Qur’anic] revelations of Mecca, a political principle had been adopted stating, “To you your religion, to me my religion.” (Sura 109, Verse 6) However, the Quraish, refusing this multireligious pluralist project, had blocked the spread of the religious message and tortured those who wanted to become Muslims.

Because of these factors, one would not expect the Prophet to change the strategy he had been following. Under these conditions, his life in Medina would implement the Meccan revelations on the social, legal, and institutional levels. It would transform the vision of Mecca into practice in Medina; and this was what happened. In other words, he demonstrated, to every one and every community, possible ways of co-existing through the realization of a pluralist social project based on religious and legal autonomy. Of course, the religious message would be propagated; but no one would be coerced to convert through force and pressure; those who converted would meet no opposition, as they had in Mecca.

When they first arrived in Medina, the Ansar of Medina and the chiefs of the families (naqib) from Mecca gathered in a big meeting.... The first 23 articles of the Medina Document, decided upon in this meeting, established the social and legal relationships of the new Muslim group in written decrees.

After the completion of the work, Hazrat Muhammad, peace be upon him, consulted the representatives of the non-Muslim social groups, just as he had consulted the Muslim leaders. All of them agreed upon the basic principles constituting the foundations of a new “city- state” in a gathering in the house of Anas [ibn Malik, Companion of the Prophet, 710–796]. The “constitution” of this new state was recorded in writing and this is the Document that we hold in our hands now.

Now let us take a closer look at the decrees of the Document in order to render the subject more comprehensible:

*** The Medina Document[345]

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

1. This book (document) has been prepared by Muhammad the Prophet of God, on behalf of the believers of Quraysh [the emigrants from Mecca] and Yathrib [Medina], the Muslims and those who have joined them, and those fighting along with them.

2. Surely, they form an umma (group) apart from the rest of humankind.

3. The migrants of Quraysh shall defray the cost of bloodshed among themselves as has been the custom and shall join in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

4. The Banu ‘Awf shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed, and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

5. The Banu’l-Harith shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed, and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

6. The Banu Sa’ida shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed to and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

7. The Banu Jusham shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed to and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

8. The Banu’n-Najjar shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed to and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

9. The Banu ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed to and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

10. The Banu’n-Nabit shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed to and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

11. The Banu’l-Aws shall continue to pay the costs of their bloodshed as they have been accustomed to and each group shall participate in ransoming their war prisoners according to the proper and approved principles ofjustice among the believers.

12. The Muslims shall not leave anyone among them under financial burden (in this situation), and shall pay the debts thereof arising from ransoms for war prisoners and costs of bloodshed, according to the proper and approved principles.

12B. No Muslim shall oppose the mawla (person with whom a contractual brotherhood has been established) of another Muslim. (According to another reading: No Muslim may enter into an agreement with the mawla of another Muslim, so as to harm the latter.)

13. All God-fearing Muslims shall be against the person who intends to commit an aggressive and unjust act among them, or who aims to infringe one’s right or to cause turmoil among believers. And even if this person is the offspring of one of them, they shall all raise their hands against him.

14. No Muslim shall kill another Muslim for the sake of an unbeliever and shall assist an unbeliever at the expense of a Muslim.

15. God’s possession (protection and assurance) is one; (a protection acknowledged by the least important of the Muslims) applies to them all. This is because a Muslim is the mawla (brother) of another, apart from rest of the people.

16. Among Jews, those who submit to us shall receive our assistance and protection; they shall not be oppressed, nor shall we give assistance to their enemies.

17. Peace is one among Muslims. No Muslim, in a war fought in the path of God, may agree to a peace accord by excluding other believers. This peace shall only be made among them (Muslims) according to the principles of generalizability and justice.

18. All those (military) groups joining us in war shall be relieved in turn.

19. Muslims shall take revenge for each other of the blood shed for (the sake of) God.

20. Surely, God-fearing Muslims follow the best and the straightest path.

20B. No polytheist may protect the life and property of one of the Quraish and can intervene with a believer in this matter (may not prevent an attack on the Quraish).

21. If it is proven with certainty that one person has killed a Muslim and the guardian (defender) of the victim does not grant a pardon, rules of retaliation shall operate; in this case all Muslims shall be against him. It is only halal (right) for them to act in compliance (with this rule).

22. It is not halal (right) for any Muslim believing in God and the Day of Judgment, accepting the contents of this sheet (document), to assist a murderer and to provide protection for him; whoever helps him and provides protection shall receive the curse and wrath of God on the Day of Judgment, when financial compensation or sacrifice shall no longer be accepted.

23. Any issue over which you are divided shall be taken to God and Muhammad.

24. Jews along with Muslims shall bear (their own) war expenses during war.

25. The Jews of Banu’Awf, together with Muslims[346] constitute an umma (group). The religion of the Jews is for themselves, the religion of Muslims for themselves. This includes both their mawla and themselves personally.

25B. But whoever performs an unjust action or commits a crime shall harm solely himself and members of his family.

26. The Jews of Banu’n-Najjar shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf.

27. The Jews of Banu’l-Harith shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf.

28. The Jews of Banu Sa’ida shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf.

29. The Jews of Banu Jusham shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf.

30. The Jews of Banu’l-Aws shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf.

31. The Jews of Banu Tha’laba shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf. But whoever performs an unjust action or commits a crime shall harm solely himself and members of his family.

32. The Jafna (family) is a branch of the Tha’laba [tribe] and because of this they shall be considered as the Tha’laba.

33. Banu’sh-Shutaiba shall have the same (rights) as the Jews of Banu ‘Awf. (The rules) shall be obeyed absolutely; no one shall break them.

34. The mawla of the Tha’laba shall be considered as Tha’laba themselves.

35. Those who have taken refuge with the Jews (bitana) shall be considered as Jews themselves.

36. Among them (Jews) none may go (on a military campaign with the Muslims) without the permission of Muhammad.

36B. It shall not be forbidden to take revenge of a wound. Surely if a person happens to kill another, both he and his family shall be responsible as a consequence, otherwise there shall be injustice (meaning any person not

obeying this rule shall have been unjust). God is with those who best obey this Document.

37. (In case of war) Jews bear their expenses and the Muslims theirs. Surely they shall cooperate among themselves, in opposing those who wage war against the people designated on this sheet (document). There shall be benevolence and good behavior between them. (The rules) shall be obeyed absolutely; no one shall break them.

37B. No one may commit a crime against his ally; surely the oppressed shall receive help.

38. Jews along with Muslims shall bear the expenses of wars fought together.

39. On behalf of a person designated by this sheet (document), the Yathrib valley (j’awf) constitutes a harem (protected) territory.

40. Any person under protection (jar) is like the protector himself; he shall not be oppressed nor shall he commit any crime.

41. Excepting those with permission to give protection, no one may be given the right to protection.

42. All cases of murder and fighting that occur among the people designated in this sheet (Document) shall be taken to God and His Messenger Muhammad. God is with those who best obey this Document.

43. Neither the Quraish nor those assisting them shall receive protection.

44. There shall be cooperation among them (Muslims and Jews) against those who invade the Yathrib.

45. If they (the Jews) are invited (by the Muslims) to adhere to a peace agreement or to take part in a peace agreement, they shall either directly sign it or participate in it. If they (the Jews) suggest the same things (to the Muslims), they shall have the same rights from the Muslims; excepting cases of war over religious issues.

45B. Each group is responsible for the area belonging to it (with regards to its defense and other needs).

46. The Jews of al-Aws, meaning their mawla and themselves, shall have the same rights agreed upon on this sheet (document), with strict and complete obedience from the people designated on this sheet (document). (The rules) shall be obeyed absolutely; no one shall break them. God is with those who best and truly observe the rules described on this sheet (document).

47. This book (document) shall not protect the perpetrator of an unjust act or a crime from punishment. Whoever goes to war shall have security and whoever remains in Medina shall also have security; except those who commit an unjust act or a crime. God and His Messenger Muhammad shall protect those who observe (this sheet) with complete loyalty and care.

*** Constitutive Principles Implicit in the Articles

According to [Muhammad] Hamidullah [born 1908], “This constitution carries the title and privilege of being not only the first Islamic state constitution but also the first constitution on earth announced by a state.”[347] The Italian historian [Leone] Caetani [1869–1935] calls it a “document” without using the term “constitution” and adds, “The document is a book of the Prophet Muhammad so that it is not anyone else but Muhammad himself who wrote (or who had it written). Others, meaning Muslims, Jews and Polytheists, have

adopted it.”[348] It should not be deduced from these words of Caetani that the Prophet dictated to others a text prepared by himself, or that he made them sign it by default. Information from [Malik ibn] Anas [Companion of the Prophet, 710–796] and other sources indicates that the Document took shape as a result of negotiations and as a product of social consensus.

And this is the true interpretation, because it is unimaginable that a person who snuck out of Mecca in the middle of the night to migrate to Medina would be able to impose the text of an agreement that serves his own purposes and interests on people stronger both militarily and numerically. It should be remembered that his [the Prophet’s] supporters made up only 15 percent of the total city population. No, this does not make sense.

One of the main factors contributing to the acceptance of this social contract was the chaotic and insecure condition of Medina, which was worn out by 120 years of wars and conflicts. It is as if Medina awaited its savior. It could not, by itself and through the existing social forces, find a political and social formulation for peace and stability. Because of war Medina stagnated economically, and it appeared to be generating even more new conflicts. At just such a critical period a stranger showed all groups how to coexist in partnership, inviting everyone to exist on legal foundations, according to the principle of “you are what you are.”

The fact that terms like “wounding,” “killing,” “costs of bloodshed,” “ransom for freedom” are uttered frequently in the text reflects the normal condition of a society shaken and worn out by long years of internal strife. The urgent problem of the day was to end the conflicts and to find a formulation for the co-existence of all sides according to the principles ofjustice and righteousness. In this respect, the Document is epochal. Its historical nature and the small number of the people signing it are insignificant with respect to its constitutive principles.

The second important point is the fact that such a project enabled everyone to be accepted by each other as a natural reality without resorting to domination, the legalization of respect for each other’s ways of living and thinking, and protection under the law.

Another point to be noted is this: The Medina Document proposes a social project not based on “domination” but on “participation” by all social groups. According to the project offered by the Document, Muslims will live as free people in the direction indicated by God and Hazrat Muhammad, in safety, and will propagate their religion. The same rights apply to the Jews and others.

Here we underline the first constitutive principle that can be drawn from the Document:

<quote>

A righteous and just, law-respecting ideal project aiming for true peace and stability among people cannot but be based on a contract among different groups (religious, legal, philosophical, political, etc.). During the preparation of the contract, the members or the representatives of the social groups should be present, the articles of the contract (basic principles) should be decided in a free environment, involving discussions and negotiations of the different parties involved....

</quote>

Since the groups in the social scene are heterogeneous, each article should reflect a common interest and should be settled democratically. Every common interest constitutes an article of the covenant, and every article concerning points of disagreement is left to the groups themselves. Commonalities belong to the sphere of the covenant; differences belong to the autonomous sphere. This is a rich diversity within unity, or a real pluralism.

The second constitutive principle is the selection of the concept of participation as the starting point, rather than domination, because a totalitarian or unitarian political structure cannot allow for diversities. The Medina Document cites Muslims and Jews tribe by tribe (one by one). It deals with the Polytheists in a different article (Article 20B). Immigrants, the Ansar,

Banu ‘Awf, Banu’l-Harith, Banu Sa’ida, Banu Jusham, Banu’n-Najjar, Banu ‘Amr ibn ‘Awf, Banu’n-Nabit, Banu’l-Aws (Articles 1–11); and again, among the Jews, the tribes Banu ‘Awf, Banu’n-Najjar, Banu’l-Harith, Banu Sa’ida, Banu Jusham, Banu’l-Aws, Banu Tha’laba, Jafna, Banu’sh-Shutaiba (Articles 25–33) and their mawla—all are cited one by one.

Mawla [brothers] are a tribe, family or group connected to or in contract with another tribe without having a blood or kinship relationship to it. In other words, each social group that becomes a party to the contract by affixing its name and signature represents the other groups connected to it while acknowledging equivalent rights and responsibilities for them. However Article 20B adopts special decrees for the Polytheists, supported by Article 43. This is in order to prevent the Polytheists of Medina from establishing any political or military relationships with the Polytheists of Mecca. Actually, the Polytheists of Medina did not intend to ally with the Meccans; in fact, they feared its consequences. Yet, they too, like the others, wanted to have all the rights and freedoms permitted within the City, as described in Article 39. The Document guarantees the right to demand these rights as well. Consequently, we know that after the battles of Badr and Uhud fought against the Meccans, the Polytheist parties to the contract continued to live in Medina without serious conflicts occurring between them and the Muslims.

The mentioning of the tribes one by one is in order to acknowledge the identities of the religious and ethnic collectivities existing in the society. The tribal leaders probably demanded this in particular.

The conclusion to be drawn here is this: each religious and ethnic group enjoys complete cultural and legal autonomy. In other words, in such areas as religion, lawmaking, judiciary, education, trade, culture, art, and the organization of daily life, each group will remain as it is and will express itself through the cultural and legal criteria it defines. The guarantee of this religious and legal autonomy is Article 25, which declares: “The religion of the Jews is for themselves, the religion of Muslims for themselves. This includes both their mawla and themselves personally.”

The decree demanding that possible conflicts should be taken to Hazrat Muhammad, in Article 42, was proposed by the Jews and the Polytheists, as we know both from the Qur’an and the hadith [traditions of the Prophet] as well as from other sources. For reasons mentioned above, the chaotic conditions in Medina had disrupted the trust between tribes. With this specific article, the groups agree to carry the case to a “higher judiciary authority” whenever they cannot solve the conflicts among themselves. This higher judiciary authority is Hazrat Muhammad, being trustworthy, impartial and an outsider to Medina. The Qur’an granted to the Prophet the authority to handle their cases, if he was willing to do so (Sura 5, Verse 42). As a result, the Prophet left them free to choose every time they consulted him, asking them, “How do you want me to decide, according to the Qur’an or the Torah?” In this arrangement, the Prophet did not act as a “judge” but as a “referee.” It should be added that the practice of resolving the cases of non-Muslims or leaving them with their own courts and laws has formed part of the dhimmi [minority groups] law since then, lasting until the final days of the Ottomans [reigned 1281–1924].

Another constitutive principle emerges here: in a pluralist society, several legal systems, not necessarily one single system, may coexist. Of course if conflicts arise among groups due to contradictions between laws—which are expected to arise—in these cases either the Court ofMazalim [Injustice] extends its authority to decide the case, as was the case historically; or higher courts formed by the legal representatives of all legal communities may be established. In my opinion, the best solution is to leave the injured party free to choose among legal systems; this is possible from the perspective of Islamic law.

The 23rd article of the Document makes the Prophet the absolute ruler of the Muslim social group. This is natural, since the Muslims have agreed to follow him from the beginning by giving allegiance to him. This is an attitude consistent with the basic Islamic assumption of not separating religious practice, belief and law from each other. The constitutive principle behind these decrees underlines the fact that Islam is a religion binding only on the Muslims.

Those who claim that the Islamic model is totalitarian are not sufficiently aware of this fact. If the people have the right to freely choose their religion, their laws and ways of living must of necessity be consistent with their beliefs and ideas. In this sense, Islamic religion and law binds Muslims; it does not include or bind others, nor does it expect others to behave according to this law. In factHazrat ‘Umar [second caliph, reigned 634–644] was not pleased to see a non-Muslim female slave covering her head, saying that covering the head is a decree relevant for those who accept Islam in its entirety.

On the other hand, the Document transcends all religious and social groups with its objective rulings. In other words, Muslims, Jews and Polytheists cannot break its general guidelines. In this sense, the Document, erected as a result of mutual agreement, stands above the Qur’an, the Torah and the established customs.

Articles 4 and 11 endorse the autonomy of the social groups. According to these, the tribes shall compensate for bloodshed, as was customary, and shall ransom war prisoners. They will settle their financial liabilities among themselves, where these will be determined through mutual agreements (Articles 3, 12, and 37). However, the guilty will not be protected by tribal ties of blood and kinship, as they were in the old system; when someone commits a crime, the individuals of the tribe will not be held responsible. Thus the crime and the punishment will become individualized (Articles 22 and 31B). This was a revolution by itself. In this new structure, where the guilty and the criminal are not protected—no matter which group they belong to—the consolidation ofjustice and safety is raised to the status of a common and collective responsibility; the parties—individuals within a bloc—being held responsible to each other (Articles 12, 13, 21). Following this, Article 12B concedes the possibility of individuals making contracts with mawla of other individuals, separately. As I understand it, this and other decrees take the right of granting visas away from the state and accord it directly to individuals and groups.

Other articles of the Document can be briefly summarized as follows: The concept of country and defended frontiers were introduced by Article 39, an innovation in those historical circumstances. The tribal structure based upon

blood and kinship ties was thus transcended, as people gathered around a higher political association ordered in groups (or legal collectivities), and any kind of conflict and violation of law among families and tribes of Medina was prohibited. The term haram used in the Document means defended frontier, and refers to the territorial integrity of a political union. The term corresponding to this political union in the Document is umma (Articles 2, 25). In this sense umma is the political union consisting of Muslims, Jews and Polytheists. This union is a social project which does not discriminate on the basis of race, language, religion, sect and ethnic origins (Articles 1, 2, 16 and 25), since it is founded upon religious, cultural and legal autonomy.

In relationships among individuals and groups, universally transcendent ideals agreed by all and basic ethical principles rule (Article 47). Still, in order for these to operate, a written legal text regulating the entirety of social relationships is needed. Because of this, the Document presents itself as “book” (Articles 1, 47) or “sheet” (Articles 22, 39, 42, 46, etc.), two terms which connote a sense of obligation in the traditional culture of the day. The Qur’an, too, defines itself as “the book” and states that various books and sheets were revealed to past prophets.[349]

While the Document demands full obedience to the rule of law, binding everyone (Articles 37, 37B), the act of war has been removed from the realm of single individuals and tribes and has been passed to the central government (Articles 17, 18). War will be announced by a decision of the central government reached through consent. One of the most important reasons for war can be to form a front of solidarity against external attacks. In such a war of defense, the parties to the agreement undertake mutual financial and military responsibilities, fighting all together (Articles 15, 18, 19, 24). However, common responsibility does not exist in wars fought in the name of religion (Article 45). Accordingly, if Muslims happen to be warring with others—outside Medina—for religion, the Jews and the Polytheists of Medina do not have to join them. The battles of Badr and Uhud took place outside of Medina, because of this article.

Justice in social life, the organization of legal procedures and the judiciary will be taken care of by delegating these powers to the central authority and not to the judgments and initiatives of individuals (Article 13).

While the Document transfers power to the central authority (the state?) in judiciary, defense, and the proclamation of war—legislation, culture, science, arts, economy, education, health and other services are left to civil society. Through other reports from the Prophet, we know that the government is restricted to such areas as taxing, judiciary, and defense; whereas other areas remain with civil society.

Other conclusions can be drawn from the general decrees of the Document, yet this is not the proper place. The importance of the Document for us lies in the fact that it was written as a result of negotiations and deliberations among three different religious and social groups in year 622, and put into practice.

Personally, I believe that some constitutive principles can be reached by generalization and abstraction from the decrees of the Document, and that these principles can, in the last analysis, support a possible pluralist project. Islamic law, when considered apart from the Qur'an, the hadith, and the specific local-historical experience of Muslims, carries decrees that support and extend such a project. In our region [the Middle East], where the Arab-Israeli war of many years, the recent Azeri-Armenian war, the feuding religious communities in Lebanon, the ethnic predicament in the Balkans, the Kurdish problem, et cetera, exist, we need pluralist projects allowing the co-existence of all religious, ethnic and political groups based on partnership, choice, and participation.

*** The Possible Project of Living Together

What is the best form of government? ... One of the miraculous works of the Prophet, the Medina Document, is a historical and concrete example [of how to answer this question]. The document concerned is not an artificial utopia

or a theoretical political exercise. It has entered written history as a legal document employed systematically and concretely from 622 to 632.

The principles of this legal document establish the framework of political unity, and the meanings they bestow upon the concepts of politics and power are still important today.

Briefly defined, the Medina Document is the legal manuscript for political unity. The general framework of this document presents itself as a social project [for Islamic intellectuals today].

First of all, the document defines the parties entered into the contract (the Muslims, the Jews, and non-believers) as distinct “ummas” (Medina Document, Articles 2 and 25). Here, umma, as a technical term, corresponds to a political unit. If the term had meant the political unit of the Muslims in the traditional sense, the Jews and the non-believers in Article 25 would have been accepted as Muslims; and this is inconceivable....

When we look at the issue of power from the perspective of the Muslims—who are, like others, naturally sociable,[350] who have to live together and enter into political organization—the question under what conditions they become powerful becomes important. The answer to this question lies in the totality of meaning bestowed by Islam as a religion on life in general. And no doubt, for any Muslim the meaning of life is living according to God’s satisfaction and worshipping him. For a Muslim, there is no nobler and more legitimate meaning of life. Muslims learn how to live in accordance with God’s pleasure from the holy shari’a, promulgated and concretely shown to them by the Prophet. Shari’a is the manuscript of Divine Law, and the sum total of the principles and laws of living in accordance with the divine will.

For a Muslim, the desire to live according to the divine legal order of Islam never diminishes. On the contrary, as he enters more and more into the universe of knowledge of the religion to which he belongs, this desire

increases. Besides this, the second big task of a Muslim is to promulgate to others the truths of the religion, which he accepts as the source of all Truth. A Muslim can never avoid or neglect this duty.... If a Muslim can fulfill this dual mission within the social organization he finds himself in, he is powerful.

The final objective of the difficult struggle that filled the lives of all prophets and the final Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, was to make possible the free milieu, the conducive social environment where this mission can realize itself. What Muslims understand offreedom is nothing but the eradication of the obstacles that prevent them from living their religion completely and promulgating it to others....

The fact that the Prophet migrated to the free environment of Medina and suggested to other religious-ethnic groups that they sign a contract based on these two demands is the first step showing that political power can be configured outside the central ideology. If a central ideology is not to be imposed on groups belonging to different religions and beliefs, if they are given the freedom to choose their religion and ideology, and if there is no interference with the lifestyles that correspond to their choice, then the concrete guarantee of this lies not in a singular, but in a pluralistic legal system.

In this respect, Islam gives preeminence to the principle that law cannot be separated from religion. According to this principle, if there is no official religion or ideology represented by the governing apparatus and imposed from the top down, then it would be contradictory for the same apparatus to impose an official and single legal system. As a natural extension, if there is no coercion in the choice of religion (Qur’an, Sura 2, Verse 256), then there should be no pressure and compulsion on the laws embraced by different religions, philosophical beliefs, or ideologies. A person who chooses this or that religion, chooses, at the same time, the legal system which is a manifestation of that particular religion. Leaving people free to choose their religion, yet creating obstacles in their choice of a legal system—and that is precisely what the modern [secular] state is doing—means interference with the essence of religion. Any interference with religion divides the personality of the believer and makes him culturally schizophrenic. Witness the widespread schizophrenia we see in every realm of life today....

As long as they do not enter into war with Muslims (Qur’an, Sura 60, Verses 8–9), those who belong to different religions and beliefs can lead their lives according to their own religious and legal systems.[351] Just like those non-believers who entered into a contract with the Prophet in Medina, those who do not want to be Muslims— they can be Jewish, Christian, secular, atheist and so on—choose their own religion, world view, ideology or some other thought system, and declare what kind of a legal system they foresee in accordance with their religion or secular system.

Within the framework of the Medina Document, those who choose a religion and a legal system and declare their choices compose a legal group, and these groups are accepted as parties to the establishment of political unity.

In this model we propose, political power is internalized by the contractors in terms of choice of religion and declaration of a legal system. Politics in this model is understood as a technique or art of governance that makes the organization of the parties possible....

In this respect, realms of activities such as legislation, culture, education, science, economy, health and the like, are left to the legal groups and the governing apparatus is limited to the executive. Since the executive branch undertakes common and indivisible services at the material, routine, and technical level, financial resources (taxes) and a certain amount of legislation will be necessary. Each of the parties, proportional to their financial means and population potential, will participate in the expenses. The legislative assemblies within the executive domain (village, town, province, region, nation) will consist of members elected by the legal groups.

Since the founding principles which establish the model of political unity are based on the free selection by the groups of their religion and legal systems, there will be no need for ghettos or religious and ethnic purification. As historical experience demonstrates to us [discussed in an earlier section],

where there are no reasons for the organization of ghettos and for mass purifications, people show a great desire to live together.

The productive debate[352] that began when the Medina Document came onto the current agenda leads to a reconsideration of certain basic assumptions and concepts that appear to have enjoyed universal consensus. The Document has a potential richness which makes it conducive to bringing new dimensions to the concepts of politics, power, and state. In addition, one should add that the Document, which was implemented by the Prophet, peace be upon him, is not independent of the Qur’an and something outside of it. Rather, as part of the Prophet’s sunna [practices], it is a manifestation of the Qur’an and a practical model of the Qur’an’s lifegiving and redeeming principles.

If the totality of the relationships between pro-found contemporary problems and the founding principles of the legal document signed by distinct social groups 1400 years ago are read correctly, then we can conceive of the state as something beyond an apparatus controlling every aspect of life.

This blueprint of an alternative social project—which requires maturation through widespread and continual discussions—contributes to the solution of the problem by reducing the state to executive activity and limiting the executive to the provision of common and indivisible services. However, what opens the door to real pluralism is the fact that individuals and groups can define their own identities and choose their own religion and legal systems. Experience shows that unless the realms of economy, culture, science, education, art, health, communication and so on are taken away from the control of the centralized state and transferred to groups with different religions and identities, real pluralism cannot be envisioned. The precondition for such a revolutionary design is to bring the singular quality of law to an end and to leave this realm, among others, to the discretion of legal groups.

What material form government should take, based on the principles discussed above, is an issue that ought to be determined by the legal groups that are the founders of political unity. In this respect, the fact that this

political organization is based on participation from the bottom up, rather than on singular sovereignty, distinguishes it from other forms of government.

Finally, one further reason why we emphasize the Medina Document is the necessity to transcend modernity itself. The Medina Document is the source of a blueprint that may be an alternative to a modern state that is becoming more totalitarian, overtly and covertly, through raw or sophisticated methods and means. Whoever deals with the “state” or “modernity” realizes immediately that one has to deal with both.

** 20—The Downhill Path and Defense, Not Surrender

Rusmir Mahmutcehajic

Rusmir Mahmutcehajic (Yugoslavia-Bosnia, born 1948), a professor of electrical engineering, served in several cabinet posts in the first years of Bosnia-Herzegovina’s independence from Yugoslavia, 1991–1993. During this period, Bosnia’s Serb and Croat minorities—supported by the neighboring countries of Serbia (the dominant remaining segment of Yugoslavia) and Croatia—embarked on secessionist campaigns that involved the “ethnic cleansing” of Bosnian Muslims, who comprise almost 40 percent of the nation’s population, in areas under Serb and Croat control. The mass eviction, pillage, rape, and murder of Muslims drove the Bosnian government to adopt an increasingly strident Islamic identity. Mahmutcehajic and other Bosnian Muslims objected to this response as inconsistent with Bosnia’s destiny of “unity within diversity.”[353] As he explains in the second excerpt here, Mahmutcehajic protested by resigning from the cabinet in 1993 and has turned to the historical study of Islam in Bosnia, particularly its Sufi traditions. While Mahmutcehajic defends multicultural pluralism, he appears

to identify “democracy” with its most virulent, xenophobic expressions, as exemplified for Mahmutcehajic by contemporary Serbia and Croatia.

*** The Downward Path

**** 1.

Speaking in 1924 about the book D’Orient et Occident [On East and West] by Rene Guenon [French author, 1886–1951], Leon Daudet [French author, 18671942] indicates, inter alia, the possibility of summarizing Guenon’s statement as follows:

<quote>

Since the time of Encyclopaedists [eighteenth century], and even earlier—since the Reformation [sixteenth century]—the West has been brought into a state of intellectual anarchy, which is true inhumanity. Civilization, on which the West prides itself so greatly, relies on a sum of material and industrial achievements which multiply the chances of war and invasion; these are built on a very fragile moral and intellectual base, and on no metaphysical base whatsoever. The West is in greater danger from within, through feeble-mindedness, than from the outside, where it has to be admitted that its situation is not totally safe either....

</quote>

Since Bosnia is “the West’s soft underbelly,” it inevitably suffers from the effects of this “intellectual anarchy,” this “multiplication of chances for war and invasion,” this “danger from within,” et cetera, in that it relies on solutions and solvers from outside that are alien to the true nature of Bosnia’s expression of unity in diversity.

In spite of Bosnia’s vast and indisputable inner power, Bosnian politics still has not found its path. Yet this path, which leads in the opposite direction to today’s long downhill slope, must exist. But how can it be found without the courage to face up to and fight one’s own weaknesses, which hold one back first from understanding and then from acting?

**** 2.

Today, when the greater part of Bosnia is under military occupation and outside the control of the Bosnian authorities, we must return to the contradictory plans from which the conflicts and the anti-Bosnian on-slaught arose. Bosnia’s awareness of herself as a country has emerged from the long course of history, turning gradually to a memory and a prophecy of a state. When the Croat and Serb peoples tied their ethnic identities to plans for statehood, Bosnia became an arena for efforts to extend the Croat and Serb states. The response to these claims was an increased awareness of Bosnia’s statehood, which because of Bosnia’s personality, could not possibly be the same as the states being planned around it. Serbia launched a full- scale onslaught on Bosnia, intending to absorb Bosnia into its own state, and destroying everything that stood in its way. According to the Croat national plan, part of Bosnia was needed to round out the boundaries of the hypothesized Croatian nationstate. Thus Bosnia, as a single entity, found itself under attack by twin schemes for Greater States, which had taken to heart the world’s cynical deviation from transcendent principles. Bosnia’s unity in diversity is founded in religious tradition, and is thus seen as outdated. It is closer to the transcendent origins ofjustice, therefore it is seen as a potential threat to the Supreme God of Western civilization: global stability based on modern-day secularism.

**** 3.

The shape of nationalist rule in Serbia and Croatia, the source of their anti-Bosnian claims, is only a reflection of the present shape of power in the modern world. Bosnia cannot oppose them if she remains a mere reflection of the governmental systems of her enemies. Bosnian statehood, which is at present fighting for its survival, is also grappling with the question of the

foundations of its governmental system and the direction of its development. This indicates a need to re- examine the entire structure of power, in order to assess whether changes for the better or for the worse have taken place.

In the modern world, many would claim that only two forms of rule can be discerned—democracy and dictatorship. In order to determine how the Bosnian power structure reflects the opinion of the majority—starting from the principle that any people gets the government it deserves—we should first point to two essential features of the power hierarchy to which both democracy and dictatorship belong.

**** 4.

Plato [Greek philosopher, circa 427–347 B.C.], in his Politea—which can be translated as “State” or “System of State”—poses the question: What is the ideal form of rule? Although many of his conclusions can be disputed in detail, they generally correspond to solutions which have arisen throughout history. For the purposes of this overview, it is important to determine the full distance between the ideal concept and the lowest reality to which it can degenerate. According to Plato, this goes from aristocracy (the rule of the best)—which for him is the ideal form of rule—through timocracy, oligarchy, and democracy to tyranny. To express Plato’s idea in modern political jargon, the terms used nowadays would be theocracy for aristocracy, and dictatorship or demagogy for tyranny; the remaining two forms of rule can be disregarded for the purposes of clarity. These forms of rule were in most cases oligarchic, expressed as various forms of rule by a monarch and his nobility or an elite. Such forms of rule could in principle be called autocracies, since they recognize transcendent principles, regardless of how far they may be violated in practice. They are, in any case, less principled than theocracy, which is a higher-order system of rule. Principled autocracy is constantly in danger of becoming a de facto unprincipled dictatorship. The next step in the process of degeneration from principled autocracy is democracy, in which, according to Plato, the dominant concepts are those of freedom and equality. Democracy, by its very nature, is a forerunner of dictatorship or demagogy. (Whether modern advocates of democracy like it or not, history since the Plato’s time has at

least not proved him wrong.) Since the course of degeneration is not straight down a slippery slope, but oscillates around an underlying trend, apparent deviations from what Plato describes are possible, so that chaos may be interrupted by principled autocracy, which is always less evil than the dangers of demagogy.

**** 5.

As for Bosnia and its neighbors, a somewhat primitive principled autocracy in communist Yugoslavia was followed by formal democracy—a transition phase before the establishing of unprincipled autocracies in Belgrade and Zagreb, whose course was one of obvious degeneration into dictatorship and demagogy. Their aim was to have the same degeneration, preferably at an even faster rate, take place in Bosnia, because this would enable them to draw a long-desired borderline between “Serbdom” and “Croatdom” in the shape of two nation-states, whose appearance would mean the disappearance of Bosnia. Preserving Bosnian rule within a democratic frame-work was therefore the best way of opposing the aggressive and hostile claims of her neighbors. Guiding the Bosnian people through a “narrow gate” [Qur’an, Sura 7, Verse 40; Bible, Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 7, Verses 13–14] with a “steep uphill path” to follow [Qur’an, Sura 90, Verses 11–12] should lead to a common weal manifested through transcendent principles-a fact that the best amongst us realize. This is how to safeguard the sources of power to oppose the destruction of Bosnia. It demands, however, discipline plus a thorough and hard-headed examination and restriction of low-level freedoms as conditions for the struggle against total destruction, which is exacerbated by the power of self-degeneration. As a condition for staying true to their original goals, Bosnia’s forces need to be able to recognize the various forms of rule, both at grass-roots and national level. The schemes of destruction launched against Bosnia tend nowadays to be labeled “fascist.” Thus a complex phenomenon manifested in a certain system of rule is simply given the external label of “utterly evil,” without recognizing or analyzing the essential features of what we call “fascist” or “nazi.” Such a recognition and analysis requires an insight into the position of each ruling system on a scale which determines its position vis- a-vis others, its direction of change, and its relative relationship to the modalities of political reality or its absolute relationship towards systems based on principles.

**** 6.

The three most representative forms of fascist ideology—in Italy in the 1920s, in Germany at the beginning of the 1930s, and in Spain by their end—appeared in conditions of social upheaval and turmoil. Although they reflect distortions of individual consciousness and society which are to be found throughout the history of mankind, their links with the geopolitical concepts and the extraordinary technological and organizational possibilities of the modern world indicate the need for further study.

Bosnia is today in a state of social upheaval, and the turmoil that is now in its third year shows no sign of coming to an end. The tide of fascism in Serbia and amongst Serbs throughout the South Slav region has prompted the growth and build-up of fascism in neighboring countries, primarily in Croatia and among the Croats. Bosnia therefore found herself caught between, and finally in, the two fascist maelstroms. Both have tried, whether consciously or sub-consciously, to generate fascisms among the peoples they see as an obstacle to their imperialist goals. For fascism amongst Bosnian Muslims could never gain enough power to threaten Serb and Croat fascism. However, its existence is of great importance, since it justifies the crimes perpetrated by Serb and Croat fascists against Bosnian Muslims. The military and economic power at the disposal of the Serb and Croat fascists and their expectations of world support all favor the Greater Serb and Greater Croat grand plans. Bosnian Muslims, therefore, find themselves pushed from both sides, directly and indirectly, into nationalist exclusivity and a fascism of their own. Such a possibility reared its ugly head with the first signs of Greater Serb and Greater Croat designs for the destruction of Bosnia. Bosnian Muslims were offered, as a reward for giving up a united Bosnia and Herzegovina, a hypothetical “Muslim state,” an “Islamic jamahiriya” [republic], the “tutelage of certain distant countries,” and so on. At the same time, both in public and in secret, the very people who made these offers also made allegations against Bosnian Muslims to the members of the ruling elite, allegations about what they themselves had forced then Muslims into, by which means they hoped to justify their military attacks against Bosnia and Herzegovina. But the politics

of the Bosnian Muslims successfully managed to outmaneuver the tactics of their enemies.

Since the ambitions of the Greater Serb and Greater Croat nationalists to break up Bosnia and Herzegovina as an integral state will never go away, the danger of a potential Bosnian Muslim (or simply “Muslim”) fascism will not disappear either. It is therefore of great political importance to be ever-vigilant in unmasking all forms of fascist consciousness amongst Bosnian Muslims and its manifestations in the political life of our country.

**** 7.

The first characteristic of fascism is the adulation of the collective, usually personified as the state, at the expense of the individual. This leads one to despise and persecute all forms of liberalism, rationalism, democracy, promoting instead the sovereignty of an individual identified with one political party, one race and one state. Political decisions and discussions in such conditions take on a mystic tone, while destruction, persecution and murder become a framework which supports the Messianic role of the individual and those loyal to him. There is no collective decision-making and consequently public performances aim at promoting the illusion that this is precisely what the people wants and that it firmly supports the individual’s every act. The able are suppressed and withdraw, while the incapable and the power- hungry enter the political stage. Empty apologies for the leader take the place of discussion and advice, creating the illusion that the majority is on his side. This environment of chaos and social dramatics enable the ruler to turn the desperate expectations of the majority into a cheap source of assumed support. What is gained is simply support in the struggle against the “enemy of the people and the country,” who tends to be anyone disloyal to the leader. In such an atmosphere, a utopian vision of a new world order replaces the active management of state and society. Those in his entourage counter any justifiable criticism of the political actions of the “leader,” assuming they accept the evidence, with the words: “Everything considered, he simply has no alternative.”

Today there are many who, betraying their unconscious support of a nascent Bosnian Muslim fascism, speak of a “political reality” in which a united Bosnia and Herzegovina is an impossibility. As an alternative they offer—to be frank, without the necessary courage and determination—a “Muslim state.” Thus they indirectly conceal the obviously less-than-perfect abilities of our leaders to defend the state they have been entrusted with. For with their appeal to Realpolitik they aim to spread the falsehood that the present situation is our inescapable destiny, and that salvaging what we can from it is our best option....

*** Defense, Not Surrender: An Interview

The book Living Bosnia was published after my decision to withdraw from all areas of the governmental activities. I believe that all I do can only be explained by my allegiance to Bosnia and my implacable hostility to its destroyers. These thugs and criminals fabricated a cunning scheme to raze Bosnia to the ground. Part of this plan was to inveigle forces within Bosnia into believing that Bosnia is not an organic unity, but a mechanistic assembly of several components; and once certain organic elements of Bosnia’s unity have accepted that they are just parts in some mechanism, it will not be difficult to set them against each other in such a way that they are forced to split up into separate but dead components. Bosnian Muslims are the focus of this plan. According to this evil scheme, they must be prompted to withdraw to their own “ethno-religious space,” thus providing their own evidence for the impossibility of Bosnia. In this they must be made to believe that in accepting the lie about the impossibility of Bosnia, they are not accepting the impossibility of their own existence. Yet it is obvious that in so doing they are working directly against themselves and their own existence. The pressures from outside and the plots from within are aimed at inciting the break-up or dissolution of Bosnia—which the warriors of the anti-Bosnian onslaught see as their ideal. This dangerous trick is intended to incite Bosnian Muslims into forgetting about her Serbs or Croats, and anything that does not transparently belong to their religion, people or politics. Their hopes are to be focused on imaginary rescuers from outside, intervention from heaven, the mercy and charity of the world’s mighty, and so on. Their determination to organize for the purposes of their own defense should be constantly weakened, and what is closest to them should be made the most distant; they should be fed false hopes and prevented from looking

ahead and being concerned about their future. Wherever our enemies have put their plan into action, they have done an effective job of destroying Bosnia and her Muslims. Our answer to their plan should be to reverse the sequence: first our own duty, then that of the world; first think of the traitors and the criminals in our midst, and only then of the enemy without; first organize ourselves, and only then disorganize our enemies; first use up our own resources and only then beg for alms, and so on. This is how, from the very outset, I saw the enemy's strategy of destroying Bosnia and our response to it. As early as 1990 I pointed this out in my political writings, trying to explain this evil deception. However, it is obvious that there are some today whose lack of insight into the course of history and inability to see ahead have led them to side with our enemy's trickery, thus allying themselves with the campaign against Bosnia and the Bosnians. The scope of enemy operations does not end at the front line where they do battle with our soldiers. Enemy action is not only spent on destroying everything in our territories that their jackboots have marched over. The enemy is not satisfied with raining lethal missiles at a distance down on our cities. His intention is to affect and undermine, by means of well-planned and shrewdly-organized actions, our politics and opinions as a whole, in order to assist him in achieving his final goal—the destruction of Bosnia and her Muslims. You must be familiar, I expect, with how often my views have been falsified and misinterpreted. The sheer amount of lies about myself and my words has confused even my friends. In the attitude of our enemies to what I have said or written, I have seen a confirmation of their fears lest their plans be revealed. This made me happy, not worried. But I am unhappy and worried at all the distorted views and inability to see deception which are expressed amongst us. In order to point out these deceptions even more directly, some of my friends suggested publishing a selection of my texts and interviews that came into existence before I decided to withdraw from national politics. And so that's why Oslobodenje's Ljubljana office published my book Living Bosnia: Political Essays & Interviews.[354] ...

Bosnia nowadays is still seen by neighboring states only as a space for them to expand into. But then they come up against strong resistance from Bosnia's unity in diversity. The external anti-Bosnian forces need to destroy this unity, in order to use the rubble of Bosnia as material for the building of new states unlike any that have ever existed in this region. These plans are neither feeble-minded or simplistic. They are skillfully thought through. They are often backed by powerful high priests of evil, chosen by nationalist

politics as the “most prestigious and leading intellectuals of our race.” After four years of war and the two or three years preceding it, it is quite possible to reconstruct the key elements of the secret plans for the destruction of Bosnia. They almost certainly have the following features: firstly, their starting point is the fact that three separate elements exist in Bosnia: Muslim, Croat and Serb; the future of the latter two should be joined to Croatia and Serbia, while the Muslim element should be depicted as something dangerous, whose nature makes it unfit to be part of European civilization. These plans mean that Bosnian Muslims have to be depicted as carriers of noxious ambitions and ideologies, thus setting them against the whole of Western sensibilities and politics. But portraying them in this light is not enough to guarantee their destruction. Pseudo-Islamic fanaticism, displays of rhetoric, exclusivity under the veil of religion, and so on, should also be fomented amongst them. This will be perceived as a peril threatening both Bosnia’s Croats and Bosnia’s Serbs with humiliation and destruction. This will inevitably result in the “legitimate right of the Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs to ask for assistance and support from Croatia and Serbia, who have both the right and the moral obligation to lend such assistance.” The enemy plan as described above aims to reduce the totality of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s culture, history and statehood to that of her Muslims; and the more convincingly her Muslims can be portrayed as “Islamic radicals”—a label for pseudo-Islam, instigated and cherished by Islam’s enemies—the easier her enemy’s final goal will be to attain. This is the strategy by which the enemies of Bosnia aim to destroy all the bridges between Bosnia’s individual elements and rip out the threads that bind them into a unity. When the bridges and the threads within Bosnia’s unity grow few and far between and the break-up of Bosnia is clear for all to see, then the question of global stability will be raised in world politics. All in all, Serbia and Croatia seem to play a much more significant role in the protection of global stability than the survival of Bosnian Muslims and the Bosnia-Herzegovinian state. The Bosnian Muslims as a political concept, are, according to the plotters of Bosnia’s destruction, a potential threat to global stability; their allegiance to Islam (or rather pseudo-Islam) should, their enemies claim, justify their eventual destruction for the sake of world stability....

So why did I decide to withdraw from the Government? When I did not manage to convince the people I was working with on strengthening and defending the Bosnian political process about what I saw as essential, it was only logical for me to withdraw from that process. I felt it was my moral

obligation to express my disagreement and refuse to participate further in such a political set-up. Power is perhaps the worst vice of all. All who aspire to it speak about goodness, justice and beauty, and so on as goals, with power only an indispensable means to these ends. When they get this power, many of them completely forget the goals which justified their ambitions. Power itself becomes their supreme good. They worship it as if it were a god. All those who do not praise and support them are their opponents and enemies. Their obsession with power clouds their reason. When I no longer had a contribution to make through my belief in a tree Bosnia as unity in diversity, I refused to participate in the structure of power just for the sake of power. And I thank God for having being able to resist power as a vice and having stayed faithful to my beliefs.

* Part V—Freedom of Thought

** 21—Humanity and Islam

‘Ali Shari’ati

<quote>

‘Ali Shari’ati (Iran, 1933–1977) may be one of the most popular figures in Iran today. During the Iranian Revolution of 1979, his photograph and his writings appeared throughout the country, and the subsequent cold shoulder he received from the clerical leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran may have served to improve his reputation. Shari’ati was born and raised in northeastern Iran, the son of a religious scholar but educated in secular schools, including the Sorbonne, where he received his doctorate. Upon his return to Iran, Shari’ati launched a career as a lecturer—first at the University of Mashhad, then at the Hosseiniyeh Ershad in Tehran, a religious educational institution, where he built a large following, especially among university students, for his critique of oppressive political and religious establishments. After being tolerated by the Pahlavi regime for several years, he was

imprisoned in 1973, and the Hosseiniyeh was shut down. Soon after his release from prison, he died in London. The following lecture from around 1969 defends the concept of free will in Islam.[355]

</quote>

Ladies and Gentlemen: Today I want to talk about humankind.[356] At present, humankind is more enigmatic and more unknown than any other period. And ever since the end of the 19th century, scientists, writers, and thinkers have each evaluated humankind in various ways. Yes, humankind's position today is shakier than any other period in history.

My basic thesis is that today's humankind is generally incarcerated within several prisons, and naturally it becomes a true human being only if it can liberate itself from these deterministic conditions. What are these determinisms and how can humankind free itself from their grip? Before I can answer these inquiries, I must define humankind.

A friend of mine who was doing some research on the Qur'an, once stated that there are two words for humankind in the Qur'an: bashar and insan. For instance, sometimes the Qur'an states, "I am a bashar like you" (Sura 18, Verse 110) and at other times it states, "Insan was created impatient." (Sura 17, Verse 11) Thus, by using bashar, the Qur'an is talking about the two-footed creature that emerged at the end of the evolutionary chain of which there are two billion on earth now. On the other hand, insan is that unusual and enigmatic being that has a special definition that does not apply to any other phenomena in nature. So, there are two kinds of humans; one who is the subject-matter of poets, philosophers, and religion, and another that is the subject-matter of biology. Further, the first kind, bashar, is that particular being that contains physiological, biological, and psychological characteristics which are shared by all humans, regardless of whether they are black, white, yellow, Western, religious or non-religious; it is based upon physical laws that medicine, physiology, psychology, and so forth have discovered. Meanwhile, humankind in its second connotation consists of the truth of being insan, possessing exceptional characteristics which cause each member of the

human race to attain certain degrees of insaniyat [humanness, humanity]. Accordingly, we are all bashar but not necessarily insan. Thus, from among all humans, everyone is as much bashar as the rest, but there are some who have attained insaniyat, and there are others who are in the process of becoming an insan; either little or to an exalting degree.

Bashar is a “being” while insan is a “becoming.” Insan differs from bashar and all other natural phenomena such as animals, trees, et cetera, because it is a “becoming.” Take, for instance, the termites. If we inspect their buildings in Africa, we notice that ever since a million years ago they have been building the same thing over and over again. Thus, a termite is (exists), no matter how many more years it is going to live on earth; it will always have an immutable definition. The same is true of other creatures, including bashar. A science fiction writer has written about this type of human in the account of a scientist from earth who went to Mars:

<quote>

While walking on the streets of Mars, the scientist found out that there was a conference in one of the universities about a Martian scientist who had traveled to earth. He attended the conference. The Martian scientist went behind the lectern and said: “The theory about life on earth was confirmed. The latest findings show that there is life, one of which is called bashar. Of course, I cannot exactly define what bashar looks like since you don’t have the slightest inkling of it in your heads. In short, it looks like a kheek [sheepskin bag] that contains two holes and four little [feet] and hands. They crawl hither and thither on earth with such an amazingly wild struggle unseen anywhere in the firmament. Bashars have a lust for killing one another. Sometimes large groups of them (who are unrelated to the other parts of the earth) get armed with modern weaponry, leave their houses and jobs and attack one another. At first, I thought all was done for obtaining food, but later I noticed they just killed one another and left. Bashar has a history of self-mortification and suicide. And all its energy goes towards killing one another without reason. They don’t need each other’s flesh and blood since their staples come from other sources. After massacring one

another they leave with pride and invent epics. For collecting food they use their little hands. They do not eat all their aromatic and delicious fruits, they take them home and set them on fire and boil them and consequently they become sick and plead doctors to pull them out of their stomachs. This is why doctors are very rich and respectable on earth. While bashar has dominated the earth, they have lunacies unseen in any other animal!”

</quote>

Although it is embarrassing, this is an accurate description of what we mean by bashar. When we study human history—I mean the history of human stupidities—it is longer and consistently more interesting than the history of his understandings. This bashar is a monkey that has not evolved since time immemorial. Its weapons, clothing, and food all have changed but its characteristics are very much the same. There is no difference between Genghis Khan [Mongol monarch, 1162–1227] ruling over the wild tribes, the great emperors ruling over the great civilized societies, and those individuals who are at the present reigning over the great civilized civilizations. Of course, the only difference is that Genghis was honestly saying that he had come to kill, while today’s civilized leaders assert that they want to make peace. And so, it is the mode of talking and explanation which has evolved; otherwise, lying, disparity, murder, and looting have intensified. This is bashar.

But humankind in its essence, as an exalted truth, consists of ideal and sublime qualities that we must strive to attain. Namely, they are the types of characteristics that do not exist in bashar ... and the aim of humanity is to become insan. Mind you that becoming insan is not a stationary event, rather, it is a perpetual process of becoming and an everlasting evolution towards infinity.

The Qur’anic verse “To God we belong, and to Him we return” (Sura 2, Verse 156)[357] is a philosophy of anthropology. Unlike Sufism, which claims that man reaches God and imagines Him to be stationary, the word “ilaihi” [in this verse] means “towards Him” rather than “in Him.” For instance, [Abu’l-Mughith] Hallaj [Persian mystic executed for

heresy, 857–922] claimed that he reached God, and he implied that God was a fixed point. God is infinite, everlasting, and absolute. Thus humankind’s journey towards Him is perpetual and eternal; there is no pause. This is the connotation of becoming an insan.

Insan has three characteristics: (a) self-consciousness, (b) the ability to make choices; and, (c) the ability to create. All of humankind’s other characteristics derive from these three. We are, therefore, insan relative to the degree of our self-consciousness and our creativities. Accordingly, when the characteristics of an ideal insan is clarified, we must try to identify the factors that hinder humankind in its becoming, and by removing them we can pursue our inherent and instinctive movement in the process of becoming an insan.

[Rene] Descartes [French philosopher, 1596–1650] once said, “I think, therefore I am.” He doubted everything but his own existence. And he built his whole philosophical work upon this doubt. A second statement was made by [Andre] Gide [French intellectual, 1869–1951], “I feel, therefore I am,” and a third by [Albert] Camus [French intellectual, 1913–1960], “I revolt, therefore I am.” All these assertions are correct, but the most exalting becoming, peculiar to humankind, is referred to by Camus.

So long as Adam was in Heaven and had not sinned he was not an insan, he was an angel. In Heaven, he was just a consumer. Once he ate the fruit of wisdom, vision, and rebellion, he was kicked out. He descended to earth to struggle in order to shoulder his own life, just like parents who kick their child out; this is an indication that children have to accept responsibility for their own life. This is on a par with [Jean-Paul] Sartre’s [French philosopher, 1905–1980] “ delaissement,” which means “left on its own.” In other words, humans, unlike animals—which are guided by their instincts and do not choose their own lives—have to bear responsibility for their own life. This is insan, who has attained consciousness by revolting against Heaven, and even God. This is a new creation in the universe, capable of attaining salvation by obeying God and praying to Him through choice. And so, the praying of an unaware individual who can’t revolt, just like an animal, is useless. What is expected,

then, is the obedience of someone who has sinned. And insan is the only creature in nature who can choose (and disobedience is indicative of the ability to choose). This is what Camus meant by revolt; either against a social order or against one's own nature; while Descartes' "I think, therefore I am" and Gide's "I feel, therefore I am" confirm the "is-ness" of humankind rather than its "becoming." To summarize what I have said so far:

1. Insan is a conscious creature, that is, the only creature in all of nature who has attained self-consciousness, which I define as "perceiving one's quality and nature, perceiving the quality and the nature of the universe, and perceiving one's relationship with the universe." We are insan to the extent that we are conscious of these three principles.

1. Humankind is a chooser, that is, the only being who is not only capable of revolting against nature and the order which is ruling over it, but can revolt against its own natural, physical, and psychological needs. Humans can choose things which have neither been imposed on them by nature, nor is their body fit to choose them. This is the most sublime aspect of insaniyat. Accomplishing such tasks is peculiar to God alone. Animals are mere machines whose instincts push them to all directions. For instance, exactly once a year the sexual urges in a sheep emerge; this is a compulsion and the animal has no choice. Once the appetite is gone the animal forgets its love. This is a deterministic characteristic in a sheep.

It is only humans who can revolt, contrary to the demands of their nature. Despite their selfishness, they can commit suicide, and despite their natural instincts which call on them to protect their life and body, they sacrifice themselves for others. Or, despite all the natural characteristics which call them to a comfortable life, they can revolt, sin, or resort to asceticism and piousness. These are indications that humankind is the only being who can choose.

1. Humans are creatures who create; from the smallest to the largest thing is the manifestation of God's power in their nature. Unlike some who define

the human as an animal who makes tools, it is only humans who can make things that go beyond tools.

Humans' creativity emerges when their needs evolve to the point that what their wants are does not exist in nature. This is indicative of the fact that humankind was created. So long as humans are contented with what nature offers them, they are a natural animal pursuing what nature provides them. If, however, they reach a point when nature alone cannot satisfy them, their needs and feelings evolve beyond the totality of nature's powers, creativities, and possibilities. This is the point at which, as [Martin] Heidegger [German philosopher, 1889–1976] stated, "humankind feels lonesome" because it feels that it does not belong here, and realizes that its genius is different than its materialistic nature and that humans are different from other animals. They feel that they are attracted towards ideals which do not exist in nature. Thus they want to fly, but nature did not give them wings; they begin to build a ship, plane, satellite, or space- ship.

Technology is the totality of humankind's creativity by which it tries to harness the forces of nature which are not within its easy reach. For instance, although oil is in the ground, humans cannot extract it with the possibilities that nature has provided for them. Thus, the petroleum industry offers new possibilities which nature withheld from them.

Humankind's second creation is of a different kind; it is the artistic creation which is one of the Divine's manifestations of humankind's soul, and the definition of humankind as a "tool-making animal" falls apart here. Art, just like technology, is the manifestation of humankind's creative aptitude in nature. Technology is the creation of humankind so that it can reach the things that already exist in nature, while art is the creativity of humankind so that it can have the things that it needs, but that do not exist in nature; it is an extra-natural activity. So, constructiveness and ingenuity are two of humankind's characteristics which are the third dimension of the human soul.

In short, humans are a three-dimensional being with three aptitudes; they are conscious of themselves and the world, they can choose, and they can

create. All these attributes belong to the Lord and human-kind is in the likeness of Him. Since I do not want to create a partner for God, by “likeness” I mean humans are creatures who are capable, unlike nature, of utilizing and nourishing God’s sublime attributes in themselves and of continuing to evolve. The famous saying of the Prophet Muhammad—“Adapt your character to that of God”—tells us that we must assimilate the Lord’s attributes. That is, insan—not bashar—becomes God’s vicegerent on earth; the latter is the vicegerent of monkeys as well as the extension of their evolution. It is only insan who can revolt, choose, gain consciousness, and create in a relative way (God creates in the absolute sense).

At the present, these “choosers” are incarcerated within several determinisms—prisons—that prevent them from gaining self-consciousness, making choices, and creating. Unfortunately the grandest tragedy facing humans today is that, to the extent that various ideologies do away with their needs and bestow relative selfconsciousness upon them and give power and evolution to their societies, to the same extent they leave the “self out and send humans to oblivion. How can such ideologies forget humankind? Some of these ideologies are as follows:

Materialism. Materialism recognizes humankind to be composed of material essence. With this definition it imprisons humans within the evolutionary frame limited to being matter. If this is the case, it is impossible for them to evolve beyond the capacity of the matter’s dimensions itself.

Naturalism. This is another victimizer of humankind which burgeoned from the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century. Naturalism believes that originality belongs to a living being, though without consciousness, which is called nature, and humankind is one of its products. Thus, I am free, I can choose, and I can feel because of nature’s will. As we can see, humans’ freedom is once again limited to the possibilities which nature has bestowed upon their disposition and aptitude....

Existentialism. Although the existentialism of Sartre, Heidegger, and [S0ren] Kierkegaard [Danish philosopher, 1813–1855] is non-theistic, it believes that humankind's makeup is different and contrary to all other creatures in nature; this is especially true of Sartre's. But it is surprising since Sartre does not believe in God and metaphysics, yet he separates humankind from all other creatures in nature. He believes that animals' total essence appeared first but humankind's essence emerged later. Why does he say this? "Because," he states, "when we remove God, we have to fit humankind into material nature," and consequently we sacrifice it. Therefore, in order not to sacrifice humankind, Sartre resorts to this line of reasoning: "In animals essence precedes existence, while in humans existence precedes essence." For instance, if I ask a carpenter, "What are you making?" he would respond, "A chair." "What is a chair?" I ask. He continues, "A chair has four legs, a seat," and so on. Such descriptions are the essence of the chair, although it is not in existence yet.

However, according to Sartre, humankind is unlike a chair. Its existence emerged first. But what is it now? Nothing! We do not know yet! Humankind's "how-ness and who-ness" will emerge later; they depend upon human will. Thus, according to existentialism humans shape their own essence any way they wish. This is why Sartre believes that if we strip humans of their volition and choice they will no longer remain insan. Sartre is scared, and justly so, since, if we take materialism and naturalism as foundations, as we do today, we incarcerate humankind in petrified molds.

Pantheism. Despite the fact that Pantheism is a theistic idealism, it, too, sacrifices humankind. Pantheism (providential determinism) exists among some Muslim sects, Indians, Sufis, and Catholics. For instance, Catholics believe that God determined humans' fate before they came to this world. Here again, humankind is sacrificed by predestination. As Hafiz [Persian poet, circa 1325–1390] said:

<quote>

Since the destiny was determined without our presence,

Don’t carp if it is a bit disagreeable.

</quote>

That is, when we were being created, no one asked our opinion; God made us the way He pleased. And later He let us loose on earth. Another poet parodied Hafiz, “Don’t find fault if all of it displeases thee!” This is determinism; what can we do? Even objecting is considered wrong! It is like Camus’s objection. They asked him:

<quote>

QUESTION: Who are you protesting against?

CAMUS: God.

QUESTION: Do you believe in God?

CAMUS: No!

QUESTION: ... Then who are you protesting against? You do not seem to believe in any responsible force in the universe, yet you are protesting.

CAMUS: Yes, I am protesting. I am protesting against no one, yet I am protesting![358]

</quote>

This is like throwing punches in the air. When God’s will does not take human choice and will into account, then humankind is not responsible. And when humans have no responsibility, they are not insan.

Historicism. This school believes that humankind is the product of history. The Iranian, Islamic, and Shi’ite histories have molded my personality. “If I were living during the French revolution, instead of my actual position in history, I would have had a different language, sentiment, and characteristics.” So, human characteristics fall in the hands of a will that is called Historicism. How do I make a choice then? Any way history wishes for me. Accordingly, if I am a Muslim and I speak Persian, it is due to the will of history; that is, by the same token that nature chooses the color of our skin, history chooses the color of our soul.

Sociologism. This school believes that social environment and social order are the shapers of humankind. If I am generous it is due to my feudalistic order, and if I am brave it is due to the tribal environment under which I was reared. Further, it is believed that the social order, composed of social relations, productive order, ownership order, the tools of production, and the bureaucracy of the ruler—which all make up my society—are all factors that shape my personality any way they want.

There is no “individual” or a “chooser” in sociologism; so, there is no insan, since the latter is capable of saying, “I,” or, “I chose this for such and thus reasons....”

Biologism. This school tries to elevate humankind a little from its petrified and materialistic frame. This is an indication that 20th-century scientists can no longer understand and explain humankind through their dry and narrow materialistic definitions of the 17th, 18th, and the 19th centuries. Biologism consists of the originality of the totality of the physiological characteristics that, in a complex and developed amalgam, make up the human.

Although biologism looks at humankind as more exalted than a common natural or material phenomenon, it still negates humans as conscious and free beings. When I am a victim of my own unconscious and biological forces, then I am no longer an “I.” For instance, biology believes fat people are kind,

or thin people are intelligent. Thus it appears that intelligence is related to body weight and kindness is related to biological makeup and so on.[359]

I am not negating naturalism, sociologism, or historicism; I accept them all, but I believe that humans are capable of choice. This being—humankind—throughout its evolutionary process is a natural, historical, and material phenomenon; it is shaped by its environment. When people live, for instance, in a tribe, it is not because they chose this mode of living (no one has). The fact that these individuals live in a tent, migrating from place to place, is due to a particular social and productive order which made them tent-dwellers. Or, the natural order forces some people to hunt, fish, and live in jungles. When villagers become city-dwellers their traditions, morality, and morale also change, and such changes are not due to their choice, rather they are due to the prevailing productive system which required a change of characteristics in them. In short, humankind is what nature, history, and society make of it, and if we change the environment humankind will also change....

What I am saying is that humans, throughout their evolutionary processes—their transformation from bashar to insan—liberates themselves from such determinism. For instance, the originality of geography was so popular in the 19th century that one of its harbingers, Ibn Khaldun [Tunisian historian, 1332–1406], proposed that the form of societies changed relative to their geographic conditions. Of course, he was right then, but it is not so today. Today, to the extent that humans evolve, to that extent they can free themselves from such determinism.

Well, how can humans ... free themselves from naturalism? This is easier to understand because in this century we are just beginning to free ourselves from naturalism.[360] Today, industry and the new civilization are freeing humans from naturalism more than any other time in the past. People who live in the African Sahara are capable—despite the natural conditions imposed upon them—of creating modern living conditions on par with North Americans' for themselves. Or take the earth's gravity, which is another determinism. Gravity was so natural to us that we thought it was part of our bodies. But today we are no longer a slave to gravity. In addition, we are no

longer bound to the style of climatic (regional) agriculture. In the past, humans had to live where there was river, jungle, water, and so forth, otherwise they would die. Today, however they can live in a desert and build themselves a great civilization. How do humans free themselves from determinism? By becoming familiar with nature's determinism and the laws which rule over nature and their effects upon themselves. The way to study these is science. Familiarity with nature or science has made it possible for humans to create technology which has one aim; to save humans from nature's determinism. Those who attack technology as an agent which has metamorphosed and sacrificed humankind have a point. But the same technology can also save humankind. In the past, in order to have food and clothing, humans had to work 10–12 hours a day. This was a natural determinism. However, technology stepped up the rate of production and consequently working hours were reduced. Today, if we are witnessing individuals who are working longer hours than the pre-technological period, it is because the bourgeoisie keeps creating more consumption and consequently production must be stepped up.

How can we save ourselves from the prison of history? If humans can (with the aid of science) discover the laws and the variables that reign over history, and if we can find out how such variables affect our thinking processes, our wills, our sentiments and our morals, we can certainly save ourselves from historical determinism. At the present there are societies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that have covered several historical cycles in one leap without having had to go through each separate stage. Historically, societies must pass through certain stages. But to the extent that such societies find historical self-consciousness and their free-thinkers become familiar with their particular historical epoch and its makeup, to that extent these societies can skip several cycles. We are now witnessing societies which were tentdwellers or slaves, but suddenly, by revolting against history, they leaped to the bourgeois stage. This is the process of getting rid of society by knowing the determinism of history, movement of history, and the discovery of the deterministic laws of history.

With regards to sociological determinism we know that in the past individuals grew relative to their societal demands. However, today, to the extent that sociology grows and discovers social and class relations and understands political philosophy and governance and becomes socially aware, to that

extent, as [Karl] Jaspers [German philosopher, 1883–1969] states, “Men who are shaped by their societies become the builders of societies.” In the past, a tent-dwelling and a feudal community or a backward village did not have the slightest doubt about its religions, traditions, or governments. These were held to be as sacred, immutable, and selfevident as the sun. It never entered the minds of these people that it was possible to live differently, or that they could revolt against their own beliefs. But today’s humans can consciously choose as well as reject their religion.

Religion is one of those factors that society either offers or imposes upon its members. But today it is different. The productive, economic, and ownership orders as well as traditions, social and class relations, rights and family privileges, and social groups, relative to today’s self-conscious humans, are all unlike the past, when they were held to be immutable, everlasting, sacred, and Heavenly facts. Rather, they are phenomena which humans can think about, change, reform, choose, and negate. All these revolutions, changes, and reforms bear witness to the fact that today’s humans have freed themselves from the prison of society. Humans accomplished this task by studying sociology and comparative studies of different social orders. Science can help them to completely free themselves.

*** One’s Self

The last prison, one’s self, is the worst of all, since it is the one that has rendered humankind the most helpless prisoner. It is surprising that now, more than any other time in history, although humans have been able to save themselves from the aforementioned prisons, they are more helpless than ever in the face of this last prison. And it is the existence of this prison which has rendered the others vain and futile. Why have today’s humans, who have freed themselves from the prison of nature, history and society, reached this absurdity? Today’s humans, though they are more knowledgeable and capable than any other time in history, know less than ever what to do. Why can’t humans leave their cell? It is too hard. In the past, the aforementioned prisons placed four walls around my existence and I was aware of my own incarceration. For instance, when humans were primitive, they were aware of the existence of a river or a jungle next to them; they had to become a fisherman or a hunter. They felt the presence of

such determinism in the past, but with respect to this last one there is no wall around human existence. It is a prison that I carry within myself. This is why becoming self-conscious and familiar with this prison is the hardest task of all. Here, the prison and the prisoner are the same; that is, the disease and the patient have merged together. This is why getting rid of the malaise is so arduous!

Another problem is that humans can break out of the prison of history, nature, or an existing social order with the help of science. But, unfortunately, they cannot extricate themselves from the prison of the self by seeking help from science, since the latter is the possession of the prisoner. This is why the “self does not feel that it has buried a free “I” in it. Rather, the self feels that, as an absolute being, it must free itself from the prison of nature, society, and history; it can free itself but it reaches futility. At this point I would like to present general principles: (a) at first, all humans have needs; (b) they fulfill their needs and embrace comfort; (c) comfort terminates in futility; (d) futility ends up in rebellion; and (e) rebellion ends up in ascetism and subjectivity. These principles have been true ever since Adam. Today’s hippie-ism, existentialism, our past aristocracy which ended up in Sufism, the Indochinese aristocracy which terminated in Sufism and nirvana (negating the material life), and the new bourgeoisie which has ended up in negating the material life, confirm the veracity of my generalizations.

Humans value their material ideals so long as they have not accomplished them. Once they have them, they reach futility. Thus human ideals must be so lofty that they cannot reach a dead end; if they do they will end in futility. And it is obvious that prisoners of their own determinism—even if they conquer nature—will still be “armed but helpless.” Jean Izoulet [French author, 1854–1929] states that, “A writer wrote about a prince who wallowed in gold and riches, yet suffered from an incurable inner sickness. The France of today is like this prince.” But I believe that it is today’s humankind that is like that prince; it is more helpless than ever.

In the middle of the large Rotterdam square in Holland there is an interesting statue whose parts are all displaced. For instance, its neck has slipped a bit to one side, its arms have popped out of their joints, and so on. The whole

thing is distorted in such a way that viewers think it is about to collapse. But the statue is made of stone. The sculptor wanted to personify post-World War II humankind, the humans of our age who have become as strong as rock, but more than ever in danger of being annihilated. Why? Because freedom from the earlier prisons have left him with a great deal of unprecedented power, so much that they are able to bombard Mars and guide an intricate machine into outer space, yet so weak that if you add an extra $12.00 to their salary they will work for you against their boss!

Once I heard that slavery is still popular in some parts of Africa; people capture the primitive tribes and sell them somewhere else. But I have seen slavery with my own eyes in the West. At Cambridge and the Sorbonne the best human brains are being auctioned off. The entrepreneurs from America, Europe, Russia, and elsewhere all come to buy the talented students. They all offer attractive prices, a car, a chauffeur, and whatnot. Finally, students choose the best offer. Why? Because they are slaves. The company wants these students to save society from the prison of nature or history while they themselves are helpless beings and slaves of their own selves. The difficulty is that, since this last prison is part of humankind’s own dimensions, it cannot rebel against itself.

As you see, it is not possible to get out of this last prison with the aid of science. How is it possible then? With love. What is love? I don’t mean Sufi and theosophic love and whatnot, which are different kinds of prisons. By love I mean an Almighty force (beyond my rational and discretionary faculties) in the very depth of my being that can blow me apart and help me to rebel against my self. Since the prison is inside me, my insides must be set aflame. How? Why fire? Why can’t I liberate myself from this prison by utilizing my rational faculties? [Vilfredo] Pareto [Italian philosopher and social scientist, 1848–1923] believes that problems can be divided into three categories: (1) logical acts like living, receiving a salary, putting clothes on, thinking, studying, and whatnot; (2) illogical acts carried out by crazies and screwballs; and (3) alogical acts that belong to neither of the two former categories. Logic consists of discovering causalities so that I can employ them in my needs. But sometimes humans destroy all their worldly belongings and ambitions for something more exalting. For instance, they may set themselves on fire (without anything in return) so that their society can be saved.[361] This is not a logical act. The roots of such act go to

morality. Love consists of a power which invites me to go against my profits and well-being and sacrifice myself for others and the ideals that I hold so dear.

If I don’t lie to you, it is because I don’t want you to lie to me in the bazaar. Or, I don’t write bad checks because I want to establish good credit. These are called discretionary virtues, business based upon rationality and logic. On the other hand, when I tell a truth that I know will cost my life or belongings, my “ insaniyat” will emerge and my “I” will stand tall. Which insan ? The one (that was buried in the dungeon of my own self a while ago) and is now walking towards becoming an insan under the sun of faith and love.

[Friedrich] Nietzsche [1844–1900] was a great philosopher and genius.... But in his youth he was an arrogant man who said, “Force is genuine, truth belongs to the powerful,” and so on. However, in his old age he changed to a kind humanist, so much so that he did a strange thing. The same man who believed that helping others was a sign of weakness and weak men should be forgotten,[362] one day, while he was passing through the streets he saw an overturned cart. The loaded cart had fallen on the horse and the cart driver was trying to get the horse up on its feet by flogging the animal ruthlessly. The horse would jump periodically under the heavy lashes but would again collapse under the burden with a broken leg. Nietzsche was angered and asked the cart driver not to beat the horse. He advised the man that he should empty the cart first, but the man did not pay attention and continued beating the animal. Finally, Nietzsche grabbed the collar of the driver, who turned around and kicked Nietzsche so hard that he went home and died. This story may strike us as contradictory. In the “I” of every human there are two dimensions: one that becomes excited at the beauty and grandeur ofNietzsche’s soul that sacrificed himself in order to help an animal, and the other that mocks such a stupid incident in which a genius died in order to keep a horse alive. This act is neither logical nor illogical; it is alogical, beyond logical analysis. This is ethics and love. When we love someone in order to be loved, or when we are kind to someone so that we can receive a favor, we are businesspeople. Love consists of giving up everything for the sake of a goal and asking nothing in return. This requires one to make a great choice. What is that choice? To choose to die—or some other objective—so another can live and some ideals can be realized.

After a logical stage, the fourth stage is to sacrifice oneself. At this point humans enter the stage of “ithar” [self-sacrificing generosity], a word that does not exist in any other language. Here, humans choose someone else over themselves, in other words, they sacrifice themselves for others. It is obvious that from among the two deaths—another person’s and their own—they have chosen their own death. This may be the end of one’s life, profit, fame, happiness, comfort, bread, and whatnot.

Thus all humans can free themselves from the last prison—which is frightening and contains invisible walls—through the power of ithar. It is a love which, beyond rationality and logic, invites us to negate and rebel against ourselves in order to work towards a goal or for the sake of others. It is in this stage that a free human is born, and this is the most exalting level of becoming an insan.

Humans as liberators, creators, and conscious choosers can free themselves from the prison of nature and history with the aid of science. They can free themselves from their social order with the aid of sociology. But in order to free themselves from the prison of their selves, as [Sarvepalli] Radhakrishnan [Indian philosopher, 1888–1975] states, “They need religion and love.”

We humans have been invited to this world with a duty and a responsibility to devise a plot. What plot? A scheme in which humankind, God, and love are involved to initiate a new creation and a new insan. This is what I mean by human responsibility.

** 22—Extremism

YusufAl-Qaradawi

Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (Egypt-Qatar, born 1926), dean of the law school at the University of Qatar, wrote the following essay in 1981 as an attempt to undermine rising Islamic extremism, especially in his home country of Egypt. In particular, Al-Qaradawi's work is an extended critique of a small radical organization, the Society of Excoriation and Exodus, which kidnapped and killed an Egyptian religious official in 1977. Al-Qaradawi argues that, while extremist religious practices are allowed in Islam, they may not be forced on others.

Logicians argue that one cannot pass a judgment on something unless one has a clear conception of it, because the unknown and the undefined cannot be judged. Therefore, we first have to determine what "religious extremism" means before we can condemn or applaud it. We can do so by considering its reality and its most distinguishing characteristics. Literally, extremism means being situated at the farthest possible point from the center. Figuratively, it indicates a similar remoteness in religion and thought, as well as behavior. One of the main consequences of extremism is exposure to danger and insecurity.[363] Islam, therefore, recommends moderation and balance in everything: in belief, worship, conduct, and legislation. This is the straightforward path that God, the most exalted, calls al-sirat al-mustaqim [the straight path], one distinct from all the others which are followed by those who earn God's anger and those who go astray. Moderation, or balance, is not only a general characteristic of Islam, it is a fundamental landmark. The Qur'an says: "Thus have we made of you an umma [community] justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves." (Sura 2, Verse 143) As such, the Muslim umma is a nation ofjustice and moderation; it witnesses every deviation from the "straightforward path" in this life and in the hereafter. Islamic texts call upon Muslims to exercise moderation and to reject and oppose all kinds of extremism: ghuluw [excessiveness], tanattu'

[transgressing, meticulous religiosity], and tashdid [strictness, austerity]. A close examination of such texts shows that Islam emphatically warns against, and discourages, ghuluw. Let us consider the following hadiths [traditions of the Prophet]:

1. “Beware of excessiveness in religion. [People] before you have perished as a result of [such] excessiveness.”[364] The people referred to above are the people of other religions, especially ahl al-kitab [the people of the book]—Jews and Christians, mainly the Christians. The Qur’an addresses these people:

<quote>

Say: “O People of the Book! Exceed not in your religion the bounds [of what is proper], trespassing beyond the truth, nor follow the vain desires of people who went wrong in times gone by who misled many, and strayed [themselves] from the even Way.” (Sura 5, Verse 77)

</quote>

Muslims have therefore been warned not to follow in their steps: he who learns from the mistakes of others indeed lives a happier life. Furthermore, the reason behind the above hadith is to alert us to the fact that excessiveness may crop up as an insignificant action that we unwittingly allow to continue and develop into a menace. After reaching Muzdalifa [a town in Arabia] during his last hajj [pilgrimage], the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked [‘Abdallah] Ibn ‘Abbas [619–686] to gather some stones for him. Ibn ‘Abbas selected small stones. Upon seeing the stones, the Prophet, peace be upon him, approved of their size and said: “Yes, with such [stones do stone Satan]. Beware of excessiveness in religion.”[365] This clearly indicates that Muslims should not be so zealous as to believe that using larger stones is better, thus gradually allowing excessiveness to creep into their lives. Al-Imam Ibn Taymiyya [1263–1328] argues that this warning against excessiveness applies to all forms of belief, worship, and transactions, and notes that since the Christians are more excessive in faith and in practice than any other sect, God, the most exalted, admonishes them in the Qur’an, “Do not exceed the limits of your religion.” (Sura 4, Verse 171)

2. “Ruined were those who indulged in tanattu’.” And he [the Prophet] repeated this thrice.[366] Imam al-Nawawi [1233–1277] said that the people referred to here, “those indulging in tanattu’,” i.e., those who go beyond the limit in their utterance as well as in their action. Evidently the above two hadiths emphatically assert that the consequence of excessiveness and zealotry will be the complete loss of this life and of the hereafter.

3. The Prophet, peace be upon him, used to say: “Do not overburden yourselves, lest you perish. People [before you] overburdened themselves and perished. Their remains are found in hermitages and monasteries.”[367] Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, always condemned any tendency toward religious excessiveness. He cautioned those of his companions who were excessive in worship, or who were too ascetic, especially when this went beyond the moderate Islamic position. Islam seeks to create a balance between the needs of the body and those of the soul, between the right of man to live life to its full, and the right of the Creator to be worshipped by man, which is man’s reason for being....

The Qur’an disapproves of and rejects the tendency to prohibit worldly goods and ornaments which God has provided for his servants. In a verse revealed in Mecca, God, the most exalted, says:

<quote>

O Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer. Eat and drink, but waste not by excess, for God loves not those who waste.

Say: “Who has forbidden the beautiful gifts of God which He has produced for His servants, and the things clean and pure which He has provided for sustenance?” (Sura 7, Verses 31–32)

</quote>

In another sura, revealed in Medina, God, the most exalted, addresses the believers similarly:

<quote>

O you who believe! Make not unlawful the good things which God has made lawful for you. But commit no excess, for God does not like those given to excess. Eat of the things which God has provided you, lawful and good, but fear God, in Whom you believe. (Sura 5, Verses 86–88)

</quote>

These verses explain to the believers the true Islamic way of enjoying worldly goods and of resisting the excessiveness found in other religions. It is reported that the situational context for the revelation of these two verses was when a group of the Prophet's companions decided to castrate themselves and to roam the land like monks.

Ibn 'Abbas, may God be pleased with him, also reported: "A man came upon the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said, 'O Messenger of God, whenever I eat of this meat I [always] have a desire to make love, therefore, I have decided to abstain from eating meat.'" Consequently the verses were revealed.[368] ...

*** 1. Defects of Religious Extremism

All these warnings against extremism and excessiveness are necessary because of the serious defects inherent in such tendencies. The first defect is that excessiveness is too disagreeable for ordinary human nature to endure or tolerate. Even if a few human beings could put up with excessiveness for a short time, the majority would not be able to do so. God's legislation addresses the whole of humanity, not a special group who may have a unique capacity for endurance. This is why the Prophet, peace be upon him,

was once angry with his eminent companion Mu’adh [ibn Jabal, died 627], because the latter led the people one day in prayer and so prolonged it that one of the people went to the Prophet and complained. The Prophet, peace be upon him, said to Mu’adh: “O Mu’adh! Are you putting the people on trial?” and repeated it thrice.[369]

On another occasion he addressed an imam [prayer leader] with unusual anger: “Some of you make people dislike prayer. So whoever among you leads people in prayer should keep it short, short because amongst them are the weak, the old, and the one who has business to attend to.”[370] ...

The second defect is that excessiveness is short-lived. Since man’s capacity for endurance and perseverance is naturally limited, and since man can easily become bored, he cannot endure any excessive practice for long. Even if he puts up with it for a while, he will soon be overcome by fatigue, physically and spiritually, and will eventually give up even the little he can naturally do, or he may even take a different course altogether substituting excessiveness with complete negligence and laxity. I have often met people who were known for their strictness and extremism; then I lost contact with them for a while. When I inquired about them after a period of time, I found out that they had either deviated and taken the opposite extreme, or had, at least, lagged behind like the “hasty one” referred to in the following hadith: “He [the hasty one] neither covers the desired distance nor spares the back [of his camel].”[371] ...

How superb is the Prophet’s advice to all Muslims not to overburden themselves in worship and to be moderate so that they will not be overcome by fatigue and finally fail to continue. He said: “Religion is very easy, and whoever overburdens himself will not be able to continue in that way. Be right [without excessiveness or negligence], near [perfection], and have good tidings [in being rewarded for your deeds].”[372]

The third defect is that excessive practice jeopardizes other rights and obligations. A sage once said in this respect: “Every extravagance is somehow bound to be associated with a lost right.”

When the Prophet, peace be upon him, learned that ‘Abdallah ibn ‘Umar [died 693] was so absorbed in worship that he even neglected his duty toward his wife, he said to him: “O ‘Abdallah! Have I not been correctly informed that you fast during the day and offer worship throughout the night?” ‘Abdallah replied, “Yes, O Messenger of God!” The Prophet, peace be upon him, then said: “Don’t do that. Instead, fast and then break your fast; worship during the night but also sleep. Your body has a right on you, your wife has a right on you, and your guest has a right on you.”[373] ...

*** 2. The Concept of Religious Extremism

I would like at this point to draw attention to two important observations. First: The degree of a person’s piety as well as that of the society in which he lives affect his judgment of others as far as extremism, moderation, and laxity are concerned. A religious society usually produces a person sensitively aversive to any deviation or negligence, however slight it may be. Judging by the criteria of his own practice and background, such a person would be surprised to find that there are Muslims who do not worship at night or fast. This is historically obvious. When examining the deeds and practices of people, the nearer one gets to the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him, his companions and the first generation of Muslims, the less worthy seem the deeds and practices of the pious among the later generations. Hence the gist of the saying: “The merits of those nearest to God are but the demerits of the righteous.” ...

Second: It is unfair to accuse a person of “religious extremism” simply because he has adopted a “hard-line” juristic opinion of certain religious scholars. If a person is convinced that his opinion is right and that he is bound by it according to religious law, he is free to do so even if others think that the juristic evidence is weak. He is only responsible for what he thinks and believes even if, in so doing, he overburdens himself, especially since he is not content with only limiting himself to the categorical obligations

required of him but seeks God’s pleasure through supererogatory performances. People naturally differ on these matters....

*** 3. Manifestations of Extremism

The first indications of extremism include bigotry and intolerance, which make a person obstinately devoted to his own opinions and prejudices, as well as rigidity, which deprives him of clarity of vision regarding the interests of other human beings, the purposes of religious law, or the circumstances of the age. Such a person does not allow any opportunity for dialogue with others so that he may compare his opinion with theirs, and chooses to follow what appears to him most sound. We equally condemn this person’s attempt to suppress and discard the opinions of others, just as we condemn the similar attitude of his accusers and opponents. Indeed, we emphatically condemn his attitude if he claims that he alone is right and everybody else is wrong, accusing those who have different ideas and opinions of ignorance and self-interest, and those with different behavior of disobedience and sin, as if he were an infallible prophet and his words were divinely revealed. This attitude contradicts the consensus of the Islamic community, that what every person says can be totally or partly accepted or rejected, except, of course, the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him.

Strangely, though some of these people take liberty in exercising ijtihad [Islamic interpretation] in the most complicated matters and issues and pass notional and whimsical judgments, yet they would deprive the contemporary expert religious scholars—singly or collectively—of the right to exercise ijtihad regarding statements which contradict theirs. Some of them never hesitate to give ridiculous opinions on, and interpretations of, the Qur’an and sunna [practices of the Prophet]; opinions which are contradictory to those handed down to us by our forefathers, or subsequently arrived at by contemporary scholars. This indifference is due to their presumption to be on an equal footing with Abu Bakr [first caliph, reigned 632–634], ‘Umar [second caliph, reigned 634–644], ‘Ali [fourth caliph, reigned 656–661], and Ibn ‘Abbas, may God be pleased with them. This presumption might be less grave if these people admitted

that their contemporaries who hold different views or approaches are also capable of ijtihad like themselves; but they would not.

Bigotry is the clearest evidence of extremism. An extremist seems to address people in this way: “I have the right to speak, your duty is to listen. I have the right to lead, your duty is to follow. My opinion is right, it cannot be wrong. Your opinion is wrong, it can never be right.” Thus, a bigot can never come to terms with others. Agreement is possible and can be reached when people hold moderate positions, but a bigot neither knows nor believes in moderation. He stands in relation to people as the East stand in relation to the West—the nearer you get to one, the further you move away from the other.

The issue becomes even more critical when such a person develops the tendency to coerce others, not necessarily physically but by accusing them of innovations, laxity, unbelief, and deviation. Such intellectual terrorism is as terrifying as physical terrorism.

The second characteristic of extremism manifests itself in a perpetual commitment to excessiveness, and in attempts to force others to do likewise, despite the existence of good reasons for facilitation and the fact that God, the most exalted, has not ordained it. A person motivated by piety and caution may, if he so wishes, choose a hard-line opinion in some matters and on certain occasions. But this should not become so habitual that he rejects facilitation when he needs it. Such an attitude is not in keeping with the teachings of the Qur’an or sunna, as is clear from the following verse: “God intends every facility for you; He does not want to put you to difficulties.” (Sura 2, Verse 185)

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said ... “Facilitate [matters] and do not make [matters] difficult.” The Prophet also said: “God loves that His dispensations [to make matters easier] be accepted, as He dislikes [to see people] committing disobedience.”[374] It is also reported that “Whenever the Prophet, peace be upon him, was given a choice between two options, he always chose the easiest, unless it was a sin.”[375] ...

A bedouin once asked the Prophet, peace be upon him, about the obligatory prescriptions required of him. The Prophet, peace be upon him, mentioned only three: prayer, zakat taxation, and fasting during Ramadan. When the bedouin asked if there was anything else he must do, the Prophet, peace be upon him, replied in the negative, adding that the bedouin could volunteer to do more if he so wished. As he was leaving, the bedouin swore never to increase or decrease what the Prophet, peace be upon him, had asked him to do. When the Prophet, peace be upon him, heard this he said, “If he is saying the truth, he will succeed” or “he will be granted paradise.”[376]

If a Muslim in this age observes the religious obligations, maintains loyalty to God, the most exalted, and His Messenger, peace be upon him, and eschews the most heinous of sins, he should be accommodated in the fold of Islam and regarded as one of its advocates. Even if he commits some minor sins, the merits gained by his observance of the five daily prayers, the Friday [Sabbath] prayers, fasting [during the month of Ramadan], and so on will expiate his small faults.

The Qur’an says: “Good deeds remove those that are evil” (Sura 11, Verse 114), and in another verse: “If you eschew the most heinous of the things which are forbidden, We shall expel out of you all the evil in you and admit you to a state of great honor.” (Sura 4, Verse 31) In view of the above evidence from the Qur’an and sunna, how could we expel a Muslim from the fold of Islam merely because of his commitment to certain controversial matters that we are not sure are permissible or forbidden, or because of his failure to perform practices that we are not certain are obligatory or recommended. This is why I object to the tendency of some pious people to adopt and cling to hard-line opinions, not only in their own personal practice but also in influencing others to do the same. I also object to the charges leveled by such people against any Muslim scholar who disagrees with their line of thought by opting for facilitation in the light of the Qur’an and sunna in order to relieve people of distress and undue restrictions in their religious practice.

The third characteristic of extremism is the over-burdening of others without regard for time and place—applying Islamic principles to people in non-Muslim countries or to people who have only recently converted to Islam, as well as to Muslims who are newly devout. With all these, emphasis should not be put on minor or controversial issues, but on fundamentals. Efforts should be made to correct their concepts and understanding of Islam before anything else. Once the correct beliefs are firmly established, then one can begin to explain the five pillars of Islam and gradually to emphasize those aspects which make a Muslim's belief and practice compatible, and his entire life an embodiment of what is pleasing to God, the most exalted. This fact was recognized by the Prophet Muhammad himself, peace be upon him, when he sent Mu'adh, may God be pleased with him, to Yemen. He told him:

<quote>

You are going to [meet] people of a [divine] scripture, and when you reach them call them to witness that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is His Messenger. And if they obey you in that, then tell them that God has enjoined on them five prayers to be performed every day and night. And if they obey you in that, then tell them that God has enjoined upon them taxation, to be taken from the rich amongst them and given to the poor amongst them.[377]

</quote>

Notice the gradation in the Prophet's advice to Mu'adh, may God be pleased with him.

I was shocked and dismayed during a tour of North America to find that devout young Muslims have initiated a great controversy because Muslims sit on chairs during the Saturday and Sunday lectures in mosques instead of sitting on mats on the ground, and do not face Mecca as Muslims do, and also because those who attend wear shirts and trousers rather than loose outer coverings, and sit at dining tables to eat rather than on the ground. I was angered by this kind of thinking and behavior in the heart of North America. I therefore addressed these people:

<quote>

It would be more worthwhile in this materialistic society to make your paramount concern the call to monotheism and the worship of God, the most exalted, to remind people of the hereafter, of the noble Islamic values, and to warn them of the heinous acts in which the materially developed countries have been totally immersed. The norms of behavior and improvements in religious practice are governed by time as well as place, and should be introduced only after the more necessary and fundamental tenets have been firmly established.

</quote>

In another Islamic center, people were creating a considerable fuss over the showing of a historical or educational film in a mosque, claiming that “mosques have been turned into movie theaters,” but forgetting that the purpose of the mosque is to serve the worldly as well as spiritual interest of Muslims. During the time of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, the mosque was the center of religion and of the state, as well as of social activities. We are all aware of the Prophet’s granting permission to a group of people from Abyssinia to sport with their spears in the middle of his mosque, and that he allowed ‘A’isha [wife of the Prophet, circa 614678], may God be pleased with her, to watch them.[378]

The fourth characteristic of extremism manifests itself in harshness in the treatment of people, roughness in the manner of approach, and crudeness in calling people to Islam, all of which are contrary to the teachings of the Qur’an and sunna. God, the most exalted, commands us to call to Islam and to His teachings with wisdom, not with foolishness; with amicability, not with harsh words: “Invite [all] to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching, and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious.” (Sura 16, Verse 125) [The Qur’an] also describes the Prophet, peace be upon him, thus: “Now has come unto you a Messenger from among yourselves. It grieves him that you should perish, ardently anxious is he over you. To the believers he is kind and merciful.” (Sura 9, Verse 128) The Qur’an also addressed the Prophet, peace be upon him, defining his relationship with his companions: “It is part of the mercy of

God that you [Muhammad] deal justly with them. If you were severe and hard-hearted they would have broken away from you.” (Sura 3, Verse 159)

... [The call to Islam] cannot succeed without wisdom and amicability, and without taking into consideration human nature—man’s obstinacy, resistance to change, and argumentativeness. These characteristics necessitate the exercise of kindness and gentleness when attempting to reach man’s heart and mind so that his hardness can be softened, his rigidity abated and his pride checked. This approach was described for us in the Qur’an as having been followed by earlier prophets and sincere believers who called people to the worship of God, the most exalted. Examples can be found in Abraham’s call to his father and people, in Shu’aib’s call to his people [the ancient people of Midyan], in Moses’ call to the Pharaoh ... in [Muhammad’s] call (Sura 36, Verse 20), as well as in the calls of others who directed people to the truth and righteousness....

No wonder then that people experienced in the call reject and disapprove of the young people’s manner in arguing with those who hold different opinions! Rather than calling people to the Way of God, the most exalted, with wisdom, they are quite often harsh, rough, and crude. No distinction is made between the old and the young; no special consideration is given to those whose age or status deserves special respect, that is, parents, teachers, the learned, or those who have precedence in the call and the struggle. Nor do the young people differentiate between those sectors in the community—such as the laity, the illiterate, and the misled—who are ceaselessly battling to earn a living, and those who actively resist Islam out of malice or treason, not ignorance.

Such lack of insight is still dominant in Muslim society, despite the fact that the early scholars of hadith literature distinguished very clearly between common innovators who do not call others to their innovation, and those who deliberately publicize and defend their innovations. The reports of the former were accepted, while those of the latter were rejected.

Suspicion and distrust are also manifestations of extremism. An extremist readily accuses people and quickly passes judgment contrary to the generally accepted norm: “innocent until proven guilty.” He considers a person guilty the moment he suspects him of something. He jumps to conclusions rather than looking for explanations. The slightest mistake is blown out of all proportion; a mistake becomes a sin, and a sin a mortal sin. Such a reaction is a stark violation of the spirit and teachings of Islam which encourage Muslims to think well of other Muslims, to try to find an excuse for their misbehavior, and to help them improve their words and deeds.

The religious sincerity and integrity of those who disagree with such an extremist are always called into question. An extremist would depict people as being guilty of transgression, innovation, or disrespect for the Prophet’s sunna even if their views are solidly based upon authentic Islamic texts.

One could cite many examples: If you argue that carrying a stick or eating while sitting on the ground has nothing to do with the sunna, you would be accused of disrespect for the Prophet himself, peace be upon him. Not even learned Muslim scholars are spared such accusations. If a scholar renders a decision that facilitates matters for Muslims, he is considered lax on religious issues; if a Muslim preacher tries to call people to Islam in a manner suitable to the spirit and the taste of the age, he is accused of succumbing to and patronizing Western civilization.

Moreover, these accusations are not only hurled at the living but also at the dead, who are unable to defend themselves. No one holding a different opinion can escape unjust indiscriminate accusations, such as being a Freemason, a predeterminist Jahmi, or a rationalist Mu’tazilite.[379] Even the four great jurists of Islam who established the main Islamic juristic schools and who have earned the respect of the majority of Muslims throughout the centuries have not escaped the venomous slander of the extremists. Indeed, the whole history of the Muslim community after the fourth century A.H., with its glorious legacy and unprecedented civilization, has been a target of unjustified criticism. It is considered by the extremists as being the source of

contemporary evils, the roots of our malaise. To some extremists, it was a period of conflict and discord, of struggle for personal power; for others, a period of ignorance and even mortal sin.

This destructive tendency is not new. Extremists existed even during the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him. Once, an extremist among the Ansar [literally helpers, meaning the Muslims of Medina] accused the Prophet, peace be upon him, of favoritism in his division and distribution of the spoils of war.

The gravest shortcoming of the contemporary extremists is suspicion. If they understood and comprehended the Qur'an and sunna, they would discover that both seek to foster in the mind of each and every Muslim the confidence and trust of other fellow Muslims.

A Muslim is not even allowed to publicize the minor mistakes and faults of others or become blind to their merits, though some people are interested in criticizing others and in praising themselves. "Therefore, justify not yourselves: He knows best who it is that guards against evil." (Sura 53, Verse 32) Indeed, Islam strongly warns against two characteristics: despairing of God's mercy and suspecting fellow human beings. God, the most exalted, says: "O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much [as possible]: for suspicion in some cases is a sin." (Sura 49, Verse 12) The Prophet, peace be upon him, also says in this respect: "Avoid suspicion, for suspicion is the false element in talk."[380] ...

Extremism reaches its utmost limit when a single group deprives all people of the right to safety and protection, and instead sanctions their killing and the confiscation of their lives and property. This, of course, occurs when an extremist holds all people—except those in his group—to be unbelievers. This kind of extremism severs any bond between such a person and the rest of the Islamic community. This is the trap into which the Khawarij fell during the dawn of Islam, although they were known for their strict observance of religious duties such as prayer, fasting, and recitation of the Qur'an. However, their thinking rather than their conscience was distorted and

corrupt. Hence they were so infatuated with their belief and behavior that they unintentionally deviated from the right path.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, described the devotion of such people by saying: “Any of you would hold insignificant his own prayer compared with their [the Khawarij’s] prayer, and his nightly devotions compared with their nightly devotions, his recitation [of the Qur’an] compared with their recitation.”[381] Nevertheless, he said of them: “They would recite the Qur’an but it would not go beyond their throat, and they pass through religion without a mark.”[382] This means that they slip out of religion as an arrow slips out of its bow. The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said of them that they regard it as their duty to “destroy adherents of Islam and save the idol-worshippers.”[383]

This is why when a Muslim fell into their hands and was asked about his identity, he replied that he was a polytheist curious to find out about God’s message and book. On hearing this the Khawarij told the man that they would protect him and grant him safe passage. In support of their decision, they recited the following verse from the Qur’an:

<quote>

If one amongst the pagans asks you for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the Word of God; and then escort him to where he may be secure. That is because they are men without knowledge. (Sura 9, Verse 6)

</quote>

The irony is that if the man had admitted that he was a Muslim they would have killed him. Unfortunately, some Muslims have not yet learned this lesson. The Jama’at al-Takfr wa al-Hijra [Society of Excoriation and Exodus, a militant Islamic group in Egypt] seems to be following in the footsteps of the Khawarij. They readily brand as an unbeliever anybody who commits a sin and does not immediately repent. Even more worthy of condemnation, in their view, are the rulers who do not implement the shari’a, as well as people who submit to such rulers. Still more sinful in their view are the religious scholars who do not openly condemn

such people as unbelievers, as well as those who reject the group’s beliefs and submit to the laws elaborated by the four great jurists of Islam on the basis of consensus: logical deduction, public welfare, or fairness. Moreover, anyone who first pledges support for their cause and joins their group, then decides to leave it—for one reason or another—is considered an apostate and must be put to death. Indeed, they hold all history after the fourth century A.H. as periods of ignorance and unbelief, worshipping the idol of tradition rather than God, the most exalted.[384]

In this way, the group became so excessive in accusing people of unbelief that they spared neither the dead nor the living. The group has thus run into deep trouble, because accusing a Muslim of unbelief is a very serious matter, with very serious consequences—his killing and the confiscation of his property become lawful. As an apostate, he must be separated from his wife and children; there can be no bond between him and other Muslims; he must be deprived of his inheritance and cannot bequeath to others; he must be denied Islamic burial and the prayer for the deceased; and he must not be buried in a Muslim graveyard.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “When a Muslim calls another Muslim an unbeliever, then surely one of them is such.”[385] This means that unless the accusation is validated and substantiated, it will fall back on the accuser, who will face great danger in this world and in the hereafter.

Usama ibn Zayd [Companion of the Prophet, died circa 673] said: “If a man says, ‘I witness that there is no god but God,’ he has embraced Islam, and his life and property should be granted safety. If he said so in fear or to protect himself from the sword, he will account for that before God. We should [judge] the apparent.”’[386] The Prophet, peace be upon him, rebuked Usama when he discovered that the latter had killed a man who had uttered the shahada [acceptance of Islam] following a battle in which the man’s tribe was defeated. When Usama argued that he thought—at the time—that the man did so to save himself, out of fear, the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: “Did you look into his heart after he had confessed that there is no god but God?” Usama relates: “He [the Prophet] continued repeating this to me till I wished I had not embraced Islam before that day.”

Religious law teaches that those who embrace Islam with certainty of mind can only be expelled from its fold by proven and substantiated evidence. Even major sins such as murder, fornication, and drinking alcohol do not justify the accusation of unbeliever, provided that the person concerned does not show disrespect for, reject, or refuse to recognize religious law.

This is why the Qur’an established brotherly love between the person who commits a premeditated murder and the next of kin of the victim, as this verse shows: “And for him who is forgiven somewhat by his [injured] brother, prosecution according to usage and payment unto him in kindness.” (Sura 2, Verse 178)[387]

The Prophet, peace be upon him, also addressed a person who cursed an alcoholic who had already been punished several times for alcoholism: “Do not curse him; he loves God and His Messenger.”[388]

Further, religious law has prescribed different punishments for crimes such as murder, fornication, and drunkenness. Had all of these been unbelief, then they would have been punished in accordance with the law of apostasy.

All the obscure and vague evidence on which the extremists base their accusations are refuted by fundamental and categorical texts in both the Qur’an and sunna. This issue was settled by the Islamic community centuries ago—it is futile to try to revive and renew it.

** 23—Rethinking Islam Today

Mohamed Arkoun

Mohamed Arkoun (Algeria-France, born 1928) received his doctorate at the Sorbonne in Paris and joined the faculty there as Professor of Islamic Thought in 1963. In a series of works since the early 1970s, Arkoun has attempted to reshape Islamic interpretation through the use of contemporary social-scientific, particularly linguistic, methods. “One of the most articulate ... liberal Muslims,”[389] Arkoun has embarked on “an intellectual crusade,”[390] engaging Islamic radicals in debate and arguing for pluralism within Islam, acceptance of multiple interpretations of the sacred texts, and a more self-conscious attitude toward one’s own interpretation.[391] The following chapter serves as an introduction to and summary of Arkoun’s work; its style is somewhat more accessible than his French work.

<quote>

Shall I seek other than God for Judge, when He is who hath revealed unto you the Book, fully explained? Those unto whom we gave the Book know that it is revealed from thy Lord in truth. So be not (O Muhammad) of the waverers. Perfected is the word of thy Lord in truth and justice. There is naught that can change His word. He is the Hearer, the Knower. (Qur’an, Sura 6, Verses 114–115)

</quote>

Islam holds historical significance for all of us, but at the same time, our understanding of this phenomenon is sadly inadequate. There is a need to encourage and initiate audacious, free, productive thinking on Islam today. The so-called Islamic revivalism has monopolized the discourse on Islam; the social scientists, moreover, do not pay attention to what I call the “silent Islam”—the Islam of true believers who attach more importance to the religious relationship with the absolute of God than to the vehement demonstrations of political movements. I refer to the Islam of thinkers and intellectuals who are having great difficulties inserting their critical approach

into a social and cultural space that is, at present, totally dominated by militant ideologies.

My own ambition as a Muslim intellectual is not the result of my academic training; rather, it is rooted in my existential experience. I entered high school in Oran and then the university in Algiers. It was the colonial time in Algeria, and like all Algerians, I was continually shocked by the sharp, hard confrontation between the conquering French culture and language and my own Algerian culture. (I speak Berber and Arabic.) When I heard lectures on Islam at the University of Algiers I was, like others, deeply disappointed by the intellectual poverty of the presentation, especially when burning issues were raised in Algerian society between 1950 and 1954. The national movement for liberation was countering the colonial claim to represent modern civilization by emphasizing the Arab-Muslim personality of Algeria. As a result of this brutal confrontation I resolved (1) to understand the Arab-Muslim personality claimed by the nationalist movement, and (2) to determine the extent to which the modern civilization, represented by the colonial power, should be considered a universal civilization.

These are the roots of my psychological concerns. As a scholar and a teacher at the Sorbonne since 1961, I have never stopped this ijtihad [Islamic interpretation], my intellectual effort to find adequate answers to my two initial questions. At the same time, this explains my method and my epistemology. For me, as a historian of Islamic thought, there is one cultural space stretching from the Indian to the Atlantic Oceans. This space is, of course, extremely rich in its languages and ethno-cultural variety. It also has been influenced by two axial traditions of thinking: the ancient Middle Eastern culture, which has a special place for Greek thought, and the monotheism taught by the prophets. I learned to discover Islam in this wide, rich, intricate space, which is why I am not comfortable with the English title imposed on me for this lecture. I could not find a relevant translation of the French Penser I’Islam or the Arabic Kayfa na’ qilu al-Islam. Penser I’Islam suggests the free use of reason aimed at elaborating a new and coherent vision which integrates the new situations faced by societies and the living elements of Muslim tradition. Here I emphasize freedom. Rethinking Islam could suggest that I am repeating the well- known position of the islahi—the reformist thinking represented since the 19th century by the

salafi school [revivalists, literally followers of the pious ancestors]. I want to avoid any parallel between the modern perspective of radical critical thought applied to any subject and the islahi thinking which, in the Islamic tradition, is a mythical attitude more or less mixed with the historical approach to the problems related to religious vision.

I favor the historical approach, with its modern enlarged curiosities, because it includes the study of mythical knowledge as being not limited to the primitive archaic mentality, according to the definitions imposed by the positivist historicist school since the 19th century. On the contrary, the main intellectual endeavor represented by thinking Islam or any religion today is to evaluate, with a new epistemological perspective, the characteristics and intricacy of systems of knowledge—both the historical and the mythical. I would even say that both are still interacting and interrelated in our modern thought after at least three hundred years of rationalism and historicism. There is no need to insist on the idea that thinking Islam today is a task much more urgent and significant than all the scholastic discussions of Orientalism; the ultimate goal of the project is to develop—through the example set by Islam as a religion and a social-historical space—a new epistemological strategy for the comparative study of cultures. All the polemics recently directed against Orientalism show clearly that so-called modern scholarship remains far from any epistemological project that would free Islam from the essentialist, substantialist postulates of classical metaphysics. Islam, in these discussions, is assumed to be a specific, essential, unchangeable system of thought, beliefs, and nonbeliefs, one which is superior or inferior (according to Muslims or non-Muslims) to the Western (or Christian) system. It is time to stop this irrelevant confrontation between two dogmatic attitudes—the theological claims of believers and the ideological postulates of positivist rationalism. The study of religions, in particular, is handicapped by the rigid definitions and methods inherited from theology and classical metaphysics. The history of religion has collected facts and descriptions of various religions, but religion as a universal dimension of human existence is not approached from the relevant epistemological perspective. This weakness in modern thought is even more clearly illustrated by the poor, conformist, and sometimes polemical literature on the religions of the Book, as we shall see.

For all these reasons, it is necessary to clear away the obstacles found in Islamic as well as Orientalist literature on Islam and to devote more attention in our universities to teaching and studying history as an anthropology of the past and not only as a narrative account of facts. I insist on a historical, sociological, anthropological approach not to deny the importance of the theological and philosophical, but to enrich them by the inclusion of the concrete historical and social conditions in which Islam always has been practiced. My method is one of deconstruction. For centuries religions have dominated the construction of different, intricate Weltanschauungen [worldviews] through which all realities were perceived, judged, classified, accepted, and rejected without the possibility of looking back at the mentalhistorical process which led to each Weltanschauungen [worldview]. The strategy of deconstruction is possible only with modern critical epistemology. Reason needs to be free from the ontology, transcendentalism, and substantialism in which it has made itself a prisoner, especially in the various theologies elaborated through Greek logic and metaphysics.

Thus presented, the enterprise of thinking Islam today can only be achieved—if ever—by dynamic teams of thinkers, writers, artists, scholars, politicians, and economic producers. I am aware that long and deeply-rooted traditions of thinking cannot be changed or even revised through a few essays or suggestions made by individuals. But I believe that thoughts have their own force and life. Some, at least, could survive and break through the wall of uncontrolled beliefs and dominating ideologies.

Where can we start under these conditions? Where is the authorized voice or the accepted theory which could give expression to an Islam integrated into our modern, scientific mentality and at the same time into the religious experience of Muslims? In other words, is it possible to articulate a modern vision of Islam which could have the same impact on the community as the Risala [Treatise] of [Abu'Abdallah Muhammad] Shafi'i [767–820] or Ihya' 'ulum al-din [Revival of the Religious Sciences] of [Abu Hamid Muhammad] Ghazzali [1058–1111]? I refer to these two major books because they illustrate the same intellectual initiative as the one I propose, namely, to integrate, as Shafi'i and Ghazzali did, new disciplines, new knowledge, and new historical insights into Islam as a spiritual and historical vision of human existence.

Actually, I started this project with an article written in 1969 in which I asked “How to read the Qur’an?” One necessarily has to start with the Qur’an because, historically, everything started with what I called the “Experience of Medina,” including the communication of the Qur’an received as revelation and the historical process through which a social group, named believers (mu’minun), emerged and dominated other groups—named unbelievers, infidels, hypocrites, polytheists (kafirun, munafiqun, mushrikun). For the first time in the history of Qur’anic exegesis, I raised the crucial issue of reading texts according to the new epistemology introduced by modern linguistics and semiotics. When I applied this epistemology to the reading of the Fatiha, I received the usual response that there is nothing new in this essay; everything already has been well explained through classical exegesis. Other essays collected in my book, Lectures du Coran [Readings of the Qur’an] (Paris, France: Maisonneuve-Larose, 1982), did not evoke more interest either among Orientalists or Muslims who read French. I mention this fact because it illustrates clearly the concept of epistemological space.

It is true that I use grammatical and lexicographic material collected by classical exegeses. However, the epistemological perspective of linguistic analysis is totally different from the theological postulates accepted without discussion in the Islamic, Christian, and Jewish traditions of thought. This will appear in the following analyses.

I shall not insist any longer here on the decisive importance of linguistics and semeiotics in rethinking the cognitive status of religious discourse. Rather, I would like to stress various views already developed in several essays which I collected in my Critique de la raison Islamique [Critique of Islamic Reason] (Paris, France: Maisonneuve-Larose, 1984). I shall tackle the following points:

1. Tools for new thinking.

2. Modes of thinking.

3. From the unthinkable to the thinkable.

4. Societies of the Book.

5. Strategy for deconstruction.

6. Revelation and history.

Many other problems must be raised and solved because Islam has regulated every aspect of individual and collective life; but my wish here is to indicate a general direction of thinking and the main conditions necessary to practice an ijtihad recognized equally by Muslims and modern scholars.

*** 1. Tools for New Thinking

Periodization of the history of thought and literature has been dictated by political events. We speak currently of the Umayyad, ‘Abbasid, and Ottoman periods [661750, 750–1258, and 1281–1924, respectively]. However, there are more enlightening criteria that we can use to distinguish periods of change in the history of thought. We must consider the discontinuities affecting the conceptual framework used in a given cultural space. The concepts of reason and science (’ ilm) used in the Qur’an, for example, are not the same as those developed later by the falasifa [philosophers], according to the Platonic and the Aristotelian schools. However, the concepts elaborated in Qur’anic discourse are still used more or less accurately today because the episteme introduced by the Qur’an has not been intellectually reconsidered.

Episteme is a better criterion for the study of thought because it concerns the structure of the discourse—the implicit postulates which

command the syntactic construction of the discourse. To control the epistemological validity of any discourse, it is necessary to discover and analyze the implicit postulates. This work has never been done for any discourse in Islamic thought (I refer to my essay “Logocentrisme et verite religieuse selon Abu al-Hasan al-‘Amiri” [Logocentrism and Religious Truth according to Abu al-Hasan al-‘Amiri], in Essais sur lapensee Islamique [Essays on Islamic Thought], Paris, France: Maisonneuve-Larose, third edition, 1984). This is why I must insist here on the new episteme implicit in the web of concepts used in human and social sciences since the late sixties.

It is not possible, for example, to use in Arabic the expression “problem of God,” associating God and mushkil (problem); God cannot be considered as problematic. He is well-known, well-presented in the Qur’an; man has only to meditate, internalize, and worship what God revealed of Himself in His own words. The classical discussion of the attributes has not been accepted by all schools; and finally the attributes are recited as the most beautiful names of God (asma’Allah al-husna) but are neglected as subjects of intellectual inquiry.

This means that all the cultures and systems of thought related to pagan, polytheistic, jahili (pre-Islamic), or modern secularized societies are maintained in the domain of the unthinkable and, consequently, remain unthought in the domain of “orthodox” Islamic thought or the thinkable. In European societies since the 16th century, the historical role that the study of classical antiquity played in initiating the modern ideas of free thinking and free examination of reality is significant; based on this link we can understand the intellectual gap between Muslim orthodoxy and Western secularized thought (see Marc Auge, Genie du paganisme [The Genius of Paganism], Paris, France: Gallimard, 1982).

Tradition, orthodoxy, myth, authority, and historicity do not yet have relevant conceptualizations in Arabic. Myth is translated as ustura [plural: asatir], which is totally misleading because the Qur’an uses the word for the false tales and images related in “the fables of the ancient people,” and these asatir are opposed to the truthful

stories (qasas haqq or ahsan al-qasas) told by God in the Qur’an. The concept of myth as it is used in contemporary anthropology is related more to qasas than to ustura, but even anthropology has not yet clarified the difference between myth and mythology, mystification and mythologization, as well as the semantic relationship between myth and symbol and the role of the metaphor in mythical and symbolic discourse.

We still approach these concepts and use them with a rationalist positivist system of definitions, as the Qur’an did with asatir al-awwalin (pre-Islamic mythology of the ancient people). However, the Qur’an created a symbolic alternative to the competing mythical and symbolic constructions of the ancient cultures in the Middle East. Our positivist rationalism criticizes symbols and myths and proposes, as an alternative, scientific conceptualism. We have neither a theory of symbol nor a clear conception of the metaphor to read, with a totalizing perspective, the religious texts. Religious tradition is one of the major problems we should rethink today. First, religions are mythical, symbolic, ritualistic ways of being, thinking, and knowing. They were conceived in and addressed to societies still dominated by oral and not written cultures. Scriptural religions based on a revealed Book contributed to a decisive change with far-reaching effects on the nature and functions of religion itself. Christianity and Islam (more than Judaism, until the creation of the Israeli state) became official ideologies used by a centralizing state which created written historiography and archives.

There is no possibility today of rethinking any religious tradition without making a careful distinction between the mythical dimension linked to oral cultures and the official ideological functions of the religion. We shall come back to this point because it is a permanent way of thinking that religion revealed and that social, cultural, and political activity maintained.

Tradition and orthodoxy are also unthought, unelaborated concepts in Islamic traditional thought. Tradition is reduced to a collection of “authentic” texts recognized in each community: Shi’i, Sunni, and Khariji. If we add to the Qur’an and hadith [traditions of the Prophet], the methodology used to derive the shari’a [Islamic

law] and the corpus juris [body of law] in the various schools, we have other subdivisions of the three axes of Islamic tradition. I tried to introduce the concept of an exhaustive tradition worked up by a critical, modern confrontation of all the collections used by the communities, regardless of the “orthodox” limits traced by the classical authorities ([Muhammad ibn Isma’il] Bukhari [810–870] and Muslim [ibn al-Hajjaj, circa 821–875] for the Sunnis; [Abu Ja’far Muhammad] Kulayni [died 940], [Abu Ja’far Muhammad] Ibn Babawayh [923–991], [Muhammad al-Hasan] al-Tusi [995–1067] for the Imamis; [‘Abdallah] Ibn ‘Ibad [seventh century] and others for the Kharijis). This concept is used by the Islamic revolution in Iran, but more as an ideological tool to accomplish the political unity of the umma [community of Muslims]. The historical confrontation of the corpuses, and the theoretical elaboration of a new, coherent science of Usul al-fiqh [principles of Islamic jurisprudence] and Usul al-din [principles of religion], are still unexplored and necessary tasks.

Beyond the concept of an exhaustive tradition based on a new definition of the usul [principles], there is the concept of tradition as it is used in anthropology today—the sum of customs, laws, institutions, beliefs, rituals, and cultural values which constitute the identity of each ethno-linguistic group. This level of tradition has been partially integrated by the shari’a under the name of ‘urf [custom] or ‘amal [judicial practice] (like al-‘amal al-fasi in Fas), but it is covered and legitimized by the Usuli methodology of the jurists. This aspect of tradition can be expressed in Arabic by taqalid [plural of taqlid, the imitation of leading religious scholars], but the concept of exhaustive tradition can be expressed by the word sunna only if it is re-elaborated in the perspective I mentioned.

Likewise, orthodoxy refers to two values. For the believers, it is the authentic expression of the religion as it has been taught by the pious ancestors (al-salaf al-salih); the “orthodox” literature describes opposing groups as “sects” (firaq). For the historian, orthodoxy refers to the ideological use of religion by the competing groups in the same political space, like the Sunnis who supported the caliphate—legitimized afterwards by the jurists—and who called themselves “the followers of the

tradition and the united community” (ahl al-sunna wa-al-jama’a). All the other groups were given polemical, disqualifying names like rawafid[Shi’is, literally rejectors], khawarij [Kharijites, literally withdrawers], and batiniyya [Isma’ilis, literally seekers of hidden meanings]. The Imamis called themselves “the followers of infallibility and justice” (ahl al-‘isma wa- al-‘acfala), referring to an orthodoxy opposed to that of the Sunnis.

There has been no effort (ijtihad) to separate orthodoxy as a militant ideological endeavor, a tool of legitimation for the state and the “values” enforced by this state, from religion as a way proposed to man to discover the Absolute. This is another task for our modern project of rethinking Islam, and other religions.

*** 2. Modes of Thinking

I would like to clarify and differentiate between the two modes of thinking that Muslim thinkers adopted at the inception of intellectual modernity in their societies (not only in thought), that is, since the beginning of the Nahda [Renaissance] in the 19th century. I do not need to emphasize the well- known trend of salafi reformist thought initiated by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani [1838–1897] and Muhammad ‘Abduh [1849–1905]. It is what I call the islahi way of thinking which has characterized Islamic thought since the death of the Prophet. The principle common to all Muslim thinkers, the ‘ulmm’ mujtahidun [religious scholars qualified to conduct ijtihad], as well as to historians who adopted the theological framework imposed by the division of time into two parts—before/after the hijra [the exodus of Muslims from Mecca to Medina in 622] (like before/after Christ)—is that all the transcendent divine Truth has been delivered to mankind by the Revelation and concretely realized by the Prophet through historical initiatives in Medina. There is, then, a definite model of perfect historical action for mankind, not only for Muslims. All groups at any time and in any social and cultural environment are bound to go back to this model in order to achieve the spirit and the perfection shown by the Prophet,

his companions, and the first generation of Muslims called the pious ancestors (al-salaf al-salih).

This vision has been faithfully adopted and assumed by the program of the International Institute of Islamic Thought (founded in 1981 in Washington, D.C., “for the reform and progress of Islamic thought”). The publication of the Institute’s International Conference in the Islamicization of Knowledge notes that the “human mind by itself with its limitations cannot comprehend the totality of the matter.” This means that there is an “Islamic framework” constantly valid, transcendent, authentic, and universal in which all human activities and initiatives ought to be controlled and correctly integrated. Since the Islamic framework is part of the “Islamic legacy,” one must always look back to the time when the Truth was formulated and implemented either in the model set in Medina by the Prophet and the Revelation or by recognized ‘ulama’mujtahidun who correctly derived the shari’a using the rules of valid ijtihad.

This is at the same time a methodology, an epistemology, and a theory of history. It is certainly an operative intellectual framework used and perpetuated by generations of Muslims since the debate on authority and power started inside the community according to patterns of thinking and representing the world specific to the islahi movement. I do not want to engage in a discussion of the intellectual and scientific relevance of this mental attitude which is now generalized on a worldwide scale by so-called Islamic revivalism.

To rethink Islam one must comprehend the sociocultural genesis of islahi thinking and its impact on the historical destiny of the societies where this thinking has been or is actually dominant. To assess the epistemological validity of islahi thinking, one has to start from the radical and initial problems concerning the generative process, the structure and the ideological use of knowledge. By this, I mean any kind and level of knowledge produced by man living, acting, and thinking in a given soci al-historical situation. Radical thinking refers to the biological, historical, linguistic, semiotic condition shared by people as natural beings. From this perspective, the Revelation of Islam is only one attempt, among many others, to emancipate human beings from the natural limitations of their

biological, historical, and linguistic condition. That is why, today, “Islamicizing knowledge” must be preceded by a radical epistemological critique of knowledge at the deepest level of its construction as an operative system used by a group in a given social-historical space. We need to differentiate ideological discourses produced by groups for assessing their own identity, power, and protection, from ideational discourses, which are controlled along the socio-historical process of their elaboration in terms of the new critical epistemology.

Given the sociological diffusion today of islahi thinking, I must insist on the characteristics of this critical epistemology applied not only for thinking Islam, but also, beyond the rich example of Islamic tradition, for a rationality based on a comparative theory of all cultural traditions and historical experiences.

Any attempt to think an object of knowledge relies on epistemic postulates, as I have said. The difference between the new emerging rationality and all inherited rationalities—including Islamic reason—is that the implicit postulates are made explicit and used not as undemonstrated certitudes revealed by God or formed by a transcendental intellect, but as modest, heuristic trends for research. In this spirit, here are six fundamental heuristic lines of thinking to recapitulate Islamic knowledge and to confront it with contemporary knowledge in the process of elaboration.

1. Human beings emerge as such in societies through various changing uses. Each use in the society is converted into a sign of this use, which means that realities are expressed through languages as systems of signs. Signs are the radical issue for a critical, controlled knowledge. This issue occurs prior to any attempt to interpret Revelation. Holy scripture itself is communicated through natural languages used as systems of signs, and we know that each sign is a locus of convergent operations (perception, expression, interpretation, translation, communication) engaging all of the relations between language and thought.

Remark 1.1: This line of research is directly opposed to a set of postulates developed and shared by Islamic thought on the privilege of the

Arabic language elected by God to “teach Adam all the names.” The ultimate teaching is the Qur’an as revealed in the Arabic language. These postulates command the whole construction of Usul al-din and Usul al-fiqh as a correct methodology with which to derive from the holy texts the divine laws. The core of Islamic thought is thus represented as a linguistic and semantic issue. (This is true for all religious traditions based on written texts.)

Remark 1.2: This same line is equally opposed to the philological, historicist, positivist postulates imposed by Western thinking since the 16th century. That is why we have made a clear distinction between the modernity (or rationality) of the Classical Age and the heuristic trends of the present rationality (Prefigurative Age). (I refer to my book, L’Islam hier-demain [Islam Yesterday-Tomorrow], second edition, Paris, France: Buchet-Chastel, 1982.)

2. All semiotic productions of a human being in the process of his social and cultural emergence are subject to historical change which I call historicity. As a semiotic articulation of meaning for social and cultural uses, the Qur’an is subject to historicity. This means that there is no access to the absolute outside the phenomenal world of our terrestrial, historical existence. The various expressions given to the ontology, the first being the truth and the transcendence by theological and metaphysical reason, have neglected historicity as a dimension of the truth. Changing tools, concepts, definitions, and postulates are used to shape the truth.

Remark 2.1: This line is opposed to all medieval thinking based on stable essences and substances. The concept of Revelation should be reworked in the light of semiotic systems subjected to historicity. The Mu’tazili theory of God’s created speech deserves special consideration along this new line.

Remark 2.2: The Aristotelian definition of formal logic and abstract categories also needs to be revised in the context of the semiotic theory of meaning and the historicity of reason.

3. There are many levels and forms of reason interacting with levels and forms of imagination as is shown in the tension between logos [words subject to debate] and mythos [unquestioned words], or symbol and concept, metaphor and reality, or proper meaning, zahir [literal external meaning] and batin [inner meaning] in Islam.

Recent anthropology has opened up the field of collective social imaginaire[392] not considered by traditional historiography and classical theology. Imagination and social imaginaire are reconsidered as dynamic faculties of knowledge and action. All the mobilizing ideologies, expressed in a religious or a secular framework, are produced, received, and used by social imaginaire, which also is related to imagination. The concept of social imaginaire needs more elaboration through many societies and historical examples. In Muslim societies, its role today is as decisive as in the Middle Ages because rationalist culture has less impact and presence there than in Western societies, which, nevertheless, also have their own imaginaire competing with various levels and forms of rationality.

4. Discourse as an ideological articulation of realities as they are perceived and used by different competing groups occurs prior to the faith. Faith is shaped, expressed, and actualized in and through discourse. Conversely, faith, after it has taken shape and roots through religious, political, or scientific discourse, imposes its own direction and postulates to subsequent discourses and behaviors (individual and collective).

Remark 4.1: The concept or notion of faith given by God and the classical theories of free will, grace, and predestination need to be re-elaborated within the concrete context of discourses through which any system of beliefs is expressed and assimilated. Faith is the crystallization of images, representations, and ideas commonly shared by each group engaged in the same historical experience. It is more than the personal relation to religious beliefs; but it claims a spiritual or a metaphysical dimension to give a transcendental significance to the political, social, ethical

and aesthetic values to which refers each individual inside each unified social group, or community.

5. The traditional system of legitimization, represented by Usul al-din and Usul al-fiqh, no longer has epistemological relevance. The new system is not yet established in a unanimously approved form inside the umma. But is it possible today, given the principles of critical epistemology, to propose a system of knowledge or science particular to Islamic thought? What are the theoretical conditions of a modern theology not only for political institutions, but also for universal knowledge, in the three revealed religions? We are in a crisis of legitimacy; that is why we can speak only of heuristic ways of thinking.

Remark 5.1: This line is opposed to the dogmatic assurance of theology based on the unquestionable legitimacy of the shari'a derived from Revelation or the classical ontology of the first Being, the neo- Platonic One, the Origin from which the Intellect derives and to which it desires to return. That is why the problem of the state and civil society is crucial today. Why should an individual obey the state? How is the legitimacy of power monopolized by a group over all other established groups?

6. The search for ultimate meaning depends on the radical question concerning the relevance and existence of an ultimate meaning. We have no right to reject the possibility of its existence. What is questionable is how to base all our thoughts on the postulate of its existence. Again, we encounter the true responsibility of the critical reason: To reach a better understanding of the relationship between meaning and reality, we must, first, improve our intellectual equipment—vocabulary, methods, strategies, procedures, definitions, and horizons of inquiry.

To illustrate all these theoretical perspectives, let us give an example from classical Islamic thought. Ghazzali (died 505 A.H./1111 A.D.) and [Abu'l-Walid Muhammad] Ibn Rushd (died 595 A.H./1198 A.D.) developed an interesting attempt to think Islam in their historical context. We do not need an exhaustive analysis of their discussion. The most relevant to our

project is to be found in Faysal al-tafriqa bayn al-Islam wa-al-zandaqa [The Decisive Criterion for Distinguishing between Islam and Unbelief] by Ghazzali and Fasl al-Maqal [On the Harmony ofReligion and Philosophy] written as an answer by Ibn Rushd. Ghazzali declared the falasifa infidels on three bases: They deny the resurrection of the body; they deny the knowledge of particulars (juziyyat) by God; and they claim that God is anterior ontologically, not chronologically, to the world. These three theses are matters of belief, not demonstrative knowledge. The falasifa have been wrong in trying to transfer to demonstrative knowledge matters which, in fact, depend on belief. Ibn Rushd used the methodology of Usul al-fiqh to solve a philosophical question; even the formulation of the problem, at the beginning of the Fasl, is typically juridical.

This does not mean that Ghazzali chose the right way to tackle the question. Actually, the most significant teaching for us is to identify, through the discussion, the epistemic limits and the epistemological obstacles of Islamic thought as it has been used by its two illustrious representatives. The new task here is not to describe the arguments (see G.H. Hourani, editor and translator of Fasl), but to think the consequences of the epistemic and epistemological discontinuities between classical Islamic thought (all included in medieval thought) and modern thought (Classical Age, from the 15th to the 20th century, up to the 1950s; Prefigurative Age of a new thought, since the 1950s). Before we move ahead in the search for an unfettered way of thinking Islam today, it is worth noting some theories on the medieval system of intelligibility as it is shown in Ghazzali and Ibn Rushd’s discussion.

1. Both thinkers accept the cognitive priority of revealed truth in the Qur’an. Reason has to be submitted totally to this clearly formulated truth (Ghazzali) or to be elaborated as a coherent articulation of the truth established through demonstrative knowledge (in the conceptual and logical framework of Aristotelian methodology and philosophy) and the revealed truth. This last contention is served by intermingling or interweaving juridical and philosophical methodologies.

2. Both mix at different degrees but with a common psychology commanded by beliefs between religious convictions and legal norms on one side (ahkam, explicated by the science of Usul al-din and Usul al-fiqh) and philosophical methodology and representations on the other side. Left to themselves, the milk-sisters (shar' [religious law] and hikma [wisdom]) are "companions by nature and friends by essence and instinct" (Fasl, p. 26).

3. Both ignore the decisive dimension of historicity to which even the revealed message is subjected. Historicity is the unthinkable and the unthought in medieval thought. It will be the conquest—not yet everywhere complete—of intellectual modernity.[393]

4. Historiography (tarikh) has been practiced in Islamic thought as a collection of information, events, biographies (tarajim, siyar), genealogies (nasab), knowledge of countries (buldan), and various other subjects. This collection of facts is related to a chronology representing time as stable, without a dynamic movement of change and progress. No link is established between time as a historical dynamic process (historicity) and the elements of knowledge collected by historiography. Ibn Khaldun [Tunisian historian, 1332–1406] can be cited as the exception who introduced the concept of society as an object of knowledge and thought,[394] but even he could not think of religion, society, history, or philosophy as related levels and ways to achieve an improved intelligibility. On the contrary, he contributed to eliminating philosophy and to isolating the Ash'ari vision of Islam from history as a global evolution of societies influenced by various theological expressions of Islam.

5. In the case of Islamic thought, the triumph of two major official orthodoxies with the Sunnis (since the fifth century A.H.) and the Shi'a (first with the Fatimids and second with the Safavids in Iran) imposed a mode of thinking narrower than those illustrated in the classical period (first to fifth century A.H.). Contemporary Islamic thought is under the influence of categories, themes, beliefs, and procedures of reasoning developed during

the scholastic age (seventh to eight century A.H.) more than it is open to the pluralism which characterized classical thought.

6. The historical evolution and intellectual structure of Islamic thought create the necessity of starting with a critique of Islamic reason (theological, legal, historiographical) as well as of philosophical reason as it has been understood and used through Aristotelian, Platonic, and Plotinist traditions (or legacies).

We shall not do this here.[395] We have to think more clearly about new conditions and ways to think Islam today.

Intellectual modernity started with Renaissance and Reform movements in 16th-century Europe. The study of pagan antiquity and the demand for freedom to read the Bible without the mediation of priests (or “managers of the sacred,” as they are sometimes called) changed the conditions of intellectual activities. Later, scientific discoveries, political revolutions, secularized knowledge, and historically criticized knowledge (historicism practiced as philosophies of history) changed more radically the whole intellectual structure of thought for the generations involved in the Industrial Revolution with its continuous consequences.

This evolution was achieved in Europe without any participation of Islamic thought or Muslim societies dominated, on the contrary, by a rigid, narrow conservatism. This is why Muslims do not feel concerned by the secularized culture and thought produced since the 16th century. It is legitimate, in this historical process leading to intellectual modernity, to differentiate between the ideological aspects limited to the conjunctural situations of Western societies and the anthropological structures of knowledge discovered through scientific research. Islamic thought has to reject or criticize the former and to apply the latter in its own contexts.

We cannot, for example, accept the concept of secularization or laicte as it has been historically elaborated and used in Western societies. There is a political and social dimension of this concept

represented by the struggle for power and the tools of legitimization between the church and the bourgeoisie. The intellectual implications of the issue concern the possibility—political and cultural—of separating education, learning, and research from any control by the state as well as by the church. This possibility remains problematical everywhere.

Similarly, we cannot interpret religion merely as positivist historicism and secularism did in the 19th century. Religion is addressed not only to miserable, uncultivated, primitive people who have not yet received the light of rational knowledge; human and social sciences, since 1950–60, have changed the ways of thinking and knowing by introducing a pluralist changing concept of rationality, according to which religion is interpreted in a wider perspective of knowledge and existence.

The project of thinking Islam is basically a response to two major needs: (1) the particular need of Muslim societies to think, for the first time, about their own problems which had been made unthinkable by the triumph of orthodox scholastic thought; and (2) the need of contemporary thought in general to open new fields and discover new horizons of knowledge, through a systematic cross cultural approach to the fundamental problems of human existence. These problems are raised and answered in their own ways by the traditional religions.

*** 3. From the Unthinkable to the Thinkable

Islam is presented and lived as a definite system of beliefs and non-beliefs which cannot be submitted to any critical inquiry. Thus, it divides the space of thinking into two parts: the unthinkable and the thinkable. Both concepts are historical and not, at first, philosophical. The respective domain of each of them changes through history and varies from one social group to another. Before the systemization by Shafi’i of the concept of sunna and the Usuli use of it, many aspects of Islamic thought were still thinkable. They became unthinkable after the triumph of Shafi’i’s theory and also the elaboration of authentic “collections,” as mentioned earlier. Similarly, the problems related to the historical process of collecting the Qur’an in an official mushaf [complete text of the Qur’an]

became more and more unthinkable under the official pressure of the caliphate because the Qur’an has been used since the beginning of the Islamic state to legitimize political power and to unify the umma. The last official decision closing any discussion of the readings of the received orthodox mushaf was made by the qadi [judge] [Ahmad ibn Musa] Ibn Mujahid after the trial of [Abu’l-Hasan Muhammad] Ibn Shanabudh (fourth century A.H./tenth century A.D.).

We can add a third significant example to show how a thinkable is transformed into an unthinkable by the ideological decision of the leading politico-religious group. The Mu’tazila endeavored by their ijtihad to make thinkable the decisive question of God’s created speech, but in the fifth century A.H. the caliph al-Qadir [bi-‘llah, 947–1031] made this question unthinkable by imposing, in his famous ‘Aqida [Creed], the dogma of the uncreated Qur’an as the “orthodox” belief (see G. Makdisi, Ibn ‘Aqil et la resurgence de l’Islam traditionaliste au XIe siecle [Ibn ‘Aqil and the Resurgence of Traditionalist Islam in the Eleventh Century], Damascus, Syria, 1963).

As we have said, the unthinkable or the not yet thought (l’impense) in Islamic thought has been enlarged since intellectual modernity was elaborated in the West. All the theories developed by sociology and anthropology on religion are still unknown, or rejected as irrelevant, by contemporary Islamic thought without any intellectual argument or scientific consideration.

It is true that traditional religions play decisive roles in our secularized, modernized societies. We even see secular religions emerging in industrialized societies, like fascism in Germany and Italy, Stalinism and Maoism in the communist world, and many new sects in liberal democracies. If we look at the revealed religions through the parameters set by recent secular religions, we are obliged to introduce new criteria to define religion as a universal phenomenon. To the traditional view of religion as totally revealed, created, and given by God, we cannot simply substitute the sociological theory of religion generated by a sociohistorical process according to the cultural values and representations available in each group,

community, or society. We must rethink the whole question of the nature and the functions of religion through the traditional theory of divine origin and the modern secular explanation of religion as a social historical production.

This means, in the case of Islam, rewriting the whole history of Islam as a revealed religion and as an active factor, among others, in the historical evolution of societies where it has been or still is received as a religion. Orientalist scholars have already started this study, inquiring even into the social and cultural conditions of the jahiliya period in which Islam emerged; but I do not know any Orientalist who has raised the epistemological problems implicit in this historicist approach. No single intellectual effort is devoted to considering the consequences of historicist presentations of the origins and functions of a religion given and received as being revealed.[396]

We need to create an intellectual and cultural framework in which all historical, sociological, anthropological, and psychological presentations of revealed religions could be integrated into a system of thought and evolving knowledge. We cannot abandon the problem of revelation as irrelevant to human and social studies and let it be monopolized by theological speculation. One has to ask, then, why sociology and anthropology have been interested in the question of the sacred and in ritual, but not in revelation. Why, conversely, has theology considered revelation, but not so much the sacred and the secular, until it has been influenced by anthropology and social sciences?

To move a step further in these complex interrelated difficulties and theories, let us try to work out the concept of the “Societies of the Book” (Societes du Livre).

*** 4. The Societies of the Book

I introduce this concept as a historical category to deepen the analysis of the revealed religions. I emphasize first the significant fact that the three revealed religions have not yet been studied comparatively as we have

suggested above. Instead, there is an ancient polemical literature. A descriptive literature, especially on Islam and Christianity, is being developed in line with the Islamic-Christian dialogue. but the theological postulates received in each tradition are still dominating the analyses of the revealed religions.

Scholarship has not yet contributed to changing the intellectual approach in this field of research and reflection. Departments of history of religion or of comparative religions devote a larger place to Judaism and Christianity than to Islam. There are many departments in very famous universities, like Princeton or the Sorbonne, where no chair exists for teaching Islam, and I know that these departments do not even utilize the existing departments of Near Eastern studies or languages because they have different scientific concerns. The books written by Orientalists on Islam are limited and irrelevant. They do not show any comparative curiosity or epistemological critique beyond the traditional theological definitions of the different schools. [397]

This is why the problem of revelation is one of the key topics, but it has been neglected by modern scholarship despite its fundamental role in the historical genesis of societies where Judaic, Christian, and Islamic expressions are found.

I call Societies of the Book those that have been shaped since the Middle Ages by the Book as a religious and a cultural phenomenon. The Book has two meanings in this perspective. The Heavenly Book preserved by God and containing the entire word of God is called Umm al-Kitab [Mother of the Book] in the Qur’an. Geo Widengren [born 1907] has demonstrated the very ancient origin of this conception in Near East religious history (see his Muhammad, The Apostle of God and the Heavenly Book, Uppsala, 1955). The importance of this belief for our purpose is that it refers to the verticality which has constituted the religious imaginaire in the Near East. Truth is located in Heaven with God, who reveals it in time and through the medium He chooses: the prophets, Himself incarnated in the “Son” who lived among people, the Book transmitted by the messenger Muhammad. There are different modalities for the delivery of parts (not the whole) of the

Heavenly Book, but the Word of God as God Himself is the same from the point of view of the anthropological structures of religious imaginaire.

The modalities for the delivery of parts of the Heavenly Book have been interpreted by each community, raised and guided by a prophet, as the absolute expression of God Himself. The cultural, linguistic, and social aspects of these modalities were unthinkable in the mythical framework of knowledge particular to people who received the “revelations.” When theologians came to systematize in conceptual, demonstrative ways the relations between the Word of God (Umm al-Kitab) and its manifested forms in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Arabic, they used either literalist exegesis of the scripture itself or rational categories and procedures influenced by Greek philosophy. Grammar and logic have been used as two different ways to reach and to deliver the meaning of the manifested revelation in relation to the grammatical and logical “reading,” but they did not lead to a radical critique of the postulates used in the different exegeses developed in the Middle Ages. This issue needs to be rethought today in light of the new knowledge of language, mind, logic, and history, which means that all the ancient exegesis has to be reworked, too. We are obliged today to consider differently the second meaning of the concept of Book in our expression “Societies of the Book.” The Mu’tazila touched on this point in their theory of God’s created speech. The Mushaf, as well as the Bible, are the manifested, incarnated word of God in human languages, transmitted orally by human voices, or fixed in written material. One has to answer here to a Christian objection on the specificity of Christian revelation made through Jesus as the incarnated God, not through human mediators. As I said, this is a difference in modality, not in the relation between the Heavenly Book and its terrestrial manifestations through religious imaginaire. Theological theorization transformed into substantial transcendental truths revealed by God what, in fact, had been historical, social, and cultural events and manifestations. The delivery of the Word of God by Jesus in a given society and period of history, using the Aramaic language, is a historical event just like the delivery of the Qur’an by Muhammad. That Jesus is presented as the “Son of God” and the Qur’an a speech worded by God Himself are theological definitions used in systems of beliefs and non-beliefs particular to Christian and Islamic dogma. These definitions do not change the linguistic and historical fact that the messages of Jesus, Muhammad, (and, of course, the prophets of Israel) are transmitted

in human languages and collected in an “orthodox” closed corpus (Bible, Gospels, and Qur’an) in concrete historical conditions. Then, the Heavenly Book is accessible to the believers only through the written version of the books or scriptures adopted by the three communities. This second aspect of the Book is then submitted to all the constraints of arbitrary historicity. The books or scriptures are read and interpreted by the historical communities in concrete, changing, social, political, and cultural situations.

The societies where the Book—or Holy Scriptures—is used as the revelation of the divine will developed a global vision of the world, history, meaning, and human destiny by the use of hermeneutic procedures. All juridical, ethical, political, and intellectual norms had to be derived from the textual forms of the revelation. The Torah, Canon Law, and the shari’a have been elaborated on the basis of the same vision of revealed Truth and “rational” procedures from which norms have been derived. There is a common conception of human destiny commanded by the eschatological perspective (the search for salvation by obedience to God’s will) and guided in this world by the norms of the law.

The new dimension which I aim to explain by the concept of the Societies of the Book is the process of historicization of a divine category: Revelation. The believers in the three religions claim, even in the context of our secularized culture, that divine law derived from Revelation is not subject to historicity. It cannot be changed by any human legislation and it is a totally rationalized law. Scientific knowledge cannot demonstrate that this belief is based on a wrong assumption, but it can explain how it is possible psychologically to maintain the affirmation of a revealed law in the form presented in the Torah, Canon Law, and the shari’a, against the evidence of its historicity.

Traditional theological thought has not used the concept of social imaginaire and the related notions of myth, symbol, sign, or metaphor in the new meanings already mentioned. It refers constantly to reason as the faculty of true knowledge, differentiated from knowledge based on the representations of the imagination. The methodology elaborated and used by jurists-theologians shares with the

Aristotelian tradition the same postulate of rationality as founding the true knowledge and excluding the constructions of the imagination. In fact, an analysis of the discourse produced by both trends of thinking—the theological and the philosophical—reveals a simultaneous use of reason and imagination. Beliefs and convictions are often used as “arguments” to “demonstrate” propositions of knowledge. In this stage of thinking, metaphor is understood and used as a rhetorical device to add an aesthetic emotion to the real content of the words; it was not perceived in its creative force as a semantic innovation or in its power to shift the discourse to a global metaphorical organization requiring the full participation of a coherent imagination. The philosophers, however, recognized the power that imagination as a faculty of privileged knowledge bestowed on the Prophet especially. [Abu ‘Ali al-Husayn] Ibn Sina [980–1037] and [Abu Bakr Muhammad] Ibn Tufayl [died 1185] used this faculty in each of their accounts of Hayy ibn Yaqzan [character in a philosophical allegory], but this did not create a trend comparable to the logocentrism of the jurists, the theologians, and the falasifa who favored Aristotelianism.

This lack of attention to the imagination did not prevent the general activity of social imaginaire—the collective representations of the realities according to the system of beliefs and non-beliefs introduced by revelation in the Societies of the Book. The social imaginaire is partially elaborated and controlled by the ‘ulama’ with their ‘Aqa’id [Creeds] (like the one written by Ibn Batta [917–997], French translation by H. Laoust, La profession de foi d’Ibn Batta [The Profession of Faith of Ibn Batta], Damascus, Syria [Institut franyais de Damas], 1958); but it is structured as well by beliefs and representations taken from the cultures preceding Islam. In all Islamic societies, there are two levels of traditions—the deepest archaic level going back to the jahiliya of each society and the more recent level represented by Islamic beliefs, norms, and practices as they have been developed since the foundation of the Muslim state. The revealed Book assumed a great importance because it provided a strategy of integration for all norms, beliefs, and practices proper to each social group. This means that the social imaginaire is generated by the interacting layers of traditions, so that it is not correct from an anthropological point of view to describe the Societies of the Book as if they were produced exclusively by the Book used as their constitution. The revealed Book had an influence on all cultural activities and political institutions to some extent. It generated a

civilization of written culture opposed to, or differentiated from, the oral civilization.

The key to the Societies of the Book is thus the intensive dialectic developed everywhere between two strongly competitive forces: On the one hand, there is the state using the phenomenon of the Book in its two dimensions—the transcendent, divine, ontological message and the written literature and culture derived from it. This comprises the official culture produced and used under the ideological supervision of the state, that is, the orthodox religion defined and enforced by doctors of law (jurists-theologians). On the other hand, there are the non-integrated, resisting groups using oral, non-official culture and keeping alive non-orthodox beliefs (called heresies and condemned by the official ‘ulama’). The struggle between the reformed church and the Catholic church in the 16th century is a typical example of this competition. In Islam, we have many examples in history from the first century to the contemporary revivalist movements. The segmentary groups perpetuating oral cultures and traditions and adhering to archaic beliefs under the name of Islam, have resisted to their integration into the Muslim state. This is why the ‘ulama’—ancient and contemporary—regularly condemned the “superstitions” and “heresies” of these groups, as long as they resisted the norms of the Societies of the Book.

This model is more than a contemplative Weltanschauung; it is and remains an active paradigm of historical action with which the Societies of the Book generated their structure and destiny. Religions are superior to any scientific theory because they give imaginative solutions to permanent issues in human life, and they mobilize the social imaginaire with beliefs, mythical explanations, and rites. (For more explanations, see my Lectures du Coran.)

*** 5. Strategies for Deconstruction

Thus far, we have presented elements and forces acting in the Societies of the Book. This is not sufficient for thinking in new ways about the opposition between Societies of the Book and secularized societies. Thinking about this opposition is thinking from a new perspective about human destiny with two

major historical results. The Societies of the Book, as well as the secularized societies, have shown the intellectual limits and the empirical failures of their respective paradigms for historical action.

Thinking about our new historical situation is a positive enterprise. We are not aiming for a negative critique of the previous attempts at the emancipation of human existence as much as we wish to propose relevant answers to pending and pressing questions. This is why we prefer to speak about a strategy for deconstruction. We need to deconstruct the social imaginaire structured over centuries by the phenomenon of the Book as well as the secularizing forces of the material civilization[398] since the 17th century.

We speak of one social imaginaire because secularization has not totally eliminated from any society all the elements, principles, and postulates organizing the social imaginaire in the Societies of the Book.

This is, I know, a controversial point among historians. Karl Lowith (Meaning in History, 1968) has shown that so-called modern ideas are just the secularized reshaping and re-expressing of medieval Christian ideas. More recently, Regis Debray (Critique de la raison politique [Critique of Political Reason], Paris: Gallimard, 1981) underlined the Christian origins of the present socialist utopia.

Hans Blumenberg tried to refute these positions in his dissertation on The Legitimacy of the Modern Age (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983). He showed how modernity is an alternative to Christian medieval conceptions. According to him, the modern idea of progress is the product of an imminent process of development rather than a messianic one. Long-term scientific progress guided by pluralist method and experimentation, continuity of problems rather than solutions, and history as a positive whole process cut from the transcendent God, are characteristics of the modern age. Should one, then, accept the definition of secularization as a long-term process through which religious ties, attitudes toward transcendence, the expectation of an afterlife,

ritual performances, firmly established forms of speech, a typical structure of the individual imaginaire, specific articulation and use of reason and imagination, become a private concern separated from public life? One could add the triumph of pragmatism, which gives priority to action over contemplation, verification over truth, method over system, logic over rhetoric, future over past, and becoming over being.

Along this line of thinking, secularization is usually presented as one of the following: a decaying of the former capacity for receiving divine inspiration and guidance; a cultural and political program of emancipation from theological thinking and ecclesiastical dominance; the domination of nature to increase the powers of man; or the substitution of a public system of education for the private one. This is known in France as laicite, which often has been expressed as a militant attitude against the religious vision of the world, as we saw during 1982–1983 when the socialist government wanted to “unify” the national educational system (see Guy Gautier, La laicite en miroir [Secularism in the Mirror], Paris: Grasset, 1985).

Whatever the relevance of these observations to the long-term process of change undertaken first in Western societies and extended more and more to the rest of the world, two remarks are in order. First, references to traditional religions—especially the three revealed religions—are frequent and even dominating everywhere. Second, secular “religions,” like fascism, Stalinism, and Maoism, are produced by contemporary societies and govern the social imaginaire with their so-called values, norms, aims, beliefs, and representations. Secularism appears, then, as a change of methods, styles, procedures, and forms of expression in human existence; but it does not affect the ultimate force structuring and generating the human condition through the existential and historical process.

How can we obtain a clear vision of this force and describe it? Religions have mobilized it, shaped it, and formulated it by using various cultural systems, myths, rites, beliefs, and institutions. Modern ideologies do the same by using secularized languages and collective organizations. What is the common unifying reality of all these religious and ideological constructions? To answer this question we must avoid the usual opposition between the

“true” religious teaching and the “false” secularist conceptions. We will be better able to discover the reality if we deconstruct methodically all the manifested cultural constructions in the various societies. Returning to the Societies of the Book, we can show a deep, common mechanism described by Marcel Gauchet (Le desenchantement du monde [The Disenchantment of the World], Paris: Gallimard, 1985) as “the debt of meaning.”

All known societies are built on an order, a hierarchy of values and powers maintained and enforced by a political power. On what conditions is a political power accepted and obeyed by the members of the society? How is it legitimized? There is no possible legitimation of any exercised power without an authority spontaneously internalized by each individual as an ultimate reference to the absolute truth. In traditional societies, authority is the privilege of a charismatic leader able to mediate the meaning located in an extra- or super-worldliness, meaning possessed by a god (or gods), and this leader delivers it in various ways to human beings. Thus, this process creates a recognition of debt in each individual consciousness and, consequently, an adherence to all the commandments of the leader.

The example of Islam gives a clear illustration of this general mechanism, one which is at the same time psychological, social, political, and cultural. A very small group of believers followed Muhammad, a charismatic leader related to the known paradigm of prophets and messengers of God in the history of salvation common to the “People of the Book.” Muhammad, supported and inspired by God, had the ability to create a new relationship to the divine through two simultaneous and interacting initiatives as all charismatic leaders do with different levels of success and innovation. He announced the absolute truth in an unusual Arabic form of expression, and he engaged the group in successive, concrete experiences of social, political, and institutional change. The Revelation translated into a sublime, symbolic, and transcendental language the daily public life of the group whose identity and imaginaire were separated from the hostile, non-converted groups (called infidels, hypocrites, enemies of God, errants, and bedouins). We can follow in the Qur’an the growth of a new collective social-cultural imaginaire nourished by new systems of connotation whose semantic substance was not primarily an abstract vision of an idealistic

dreaming mind but the historic crystallization of events shared at the time by all the members of the group.

The “debt of meaning” incurred in such conditions is the most constraining for the individuals who are the actors of their own destiny. The relation to the source of authority is not separated from obedience to the political power exercised in the name of this authority. But already, in this first stage of setting up and internalizing the debt of meaning, we must pay special attention to a structural process not yet deconstructed by historians and anthropologists.

When we write the history of these twenty years (612–632) during which Muhammad created a new community, we mention the principal events in a narrative style. We neglect to point out the use made of these events by later generations of believers. In other words, how does the “debt of meaning” historically operate on the collective imaginaire to produce the concrete destiny of each group in each society? There is, in fact, a double line to follow in writing the history of societies commanded by an initial “debt of meaning” incurred in the Inaugural Age. The first is to index, describe, and articulate all the significant events and facts that occurred in each period; the second is to analyze the mental representations of these events, facts, and actions shaping the collective imaginaire which becomes the moving force of history. This study of psychological discussions of history is more explanatory than the positivist narration of “objective” history. It shows the powerful capacity of imagination to create symbolic figures and paradigms of meaning from very ordinary events and persons, at the first stage, then the transformation of these symbols into collective representations structuring the social imaginaire.

Thus, the idealized figures of Muhammad, ‘Ali [son-in-law of the Prophet, circa 596–661], Husayn [son of ‘Ali, 626–680], and other imams have been constructed to enlighten and legitimize the historical development of the community. The biographies (sira) of Muhammad and ‘Ali, as they have been fixed in the Sunni and Shi’i traditions, are the typical production of the same social imaginaire influenced by a highly elaborated mythical vision provided by the Qur’an. The whole Qur’anic discourse is already a perfect

sublimation of the concrete history produced by the small group of “believers” in Mecca and Medina.

The point I want to make here is that historians of Islam, so far, have not considered the question of the imaginaire as an important historical field. I have mentioned this concept several times because it is unavoidable when we want to relate political, social, and cultural events to their psychological origins and impacts. The narrative history suggests that all the events are understandable according to a “rational” system of knowledge. No one historian raises the question: How does one rationalize, for example, the history of Salvation as it is proposed by the Holy Scriptures —Bible, Gospels, and Qur’an-and as it is received, integrated, and used by the individual and the collective imaginaire ? There is no possibility to interpret the whole literature derived from those Scriptures without taking into account the representations of Salvation perpetuated in the behaviors and the thinking activity of all believers, so that all history produced in the Societies of the Book is legitimized and assimilated by the imaginaire of Salvation, not by any “rational” construction. The theological and juridical systems elaborated by so-called “reason” are also related to the imaginaire of Salvation.

The writing and the understanding of the so-called “Islamic” history would change totally if we accept to open the field of research on social imaginaire, and the anthropological structures of this imaginaire as we can describe it, for example, through Ihya ‘uhim al-din of Ghazzali, the literature of Qur’an exegesis, the present discourse of Islamist movements (I refer to my essay, “L’Islam dans l’histoire” [Islam in History], in Maghreb-Mashreq, number 102, 1985).

*** 6. Revelation and History

The strategy of deconstruction leads to the ultimate decisive confrontation in the Societies of the Book. When we discover the function of social imaginaire as producing the history of the group, we cannot maintain the theory of revelation as it has been elaborated previously, that

is, as images produced by the complex phenomenon of prophetic intervention.

The Qur’an insists on the necessity of man to listen. to be aware, to reflect, to penetrate, to understand, and to meditate. All these verbs refer to intellectual activities leading to a kind of rationalization based on existential paradigms revealed with the history of salvation. Medieval thought derived from this an essentialist, substantialist, and unchangeable concept of rationality guaranteed by a divine intellect. Modern knowledge, on the contrary, is based on the concept of social-historical space continuously constructed and deconstructed by the activities of the social actors. Each group fights to impose its hegemony over the others not only through political power (control of the state) but also through a cultural system presented as the universal one. Seen from this perspective, the Qur’an is the expression of the historical process which led the small group of believers to power. This process is social, political, cultural, and psychological. Through it, the Qur’an, presented as the revelation and received as such by the individual and the collective memory, is continuously reproduced, rewritten, reread, and re-expressed in a changing soci al-historical space.

History is the actual incarnation of the revelation as it is interpreted by the ‘ulama’ and preserved in the collective memory. Revelation maintains the possibility of giving a “transcendent” legitimization to the social order and the historical process accepted by the group. But this possibility can be maintained only as long as the cognitive system, based on social imaginaire, is not replaced by a new, more plausible rationality linked to a different organization of the social-historical space. This is one reason for the known opposition between falasifa and mutakallimun, or fuqaha’ [religious jurisprudents].

The struggle between the inherited thinkable and the not yet thought has become more intense in Muslim societies since the violent introduction of intellectual modernity; but, as we have seen, the same struggle between the paradigms of knowledge and action started in Western societies in the 16th century. The result has been the inversion of the priorities fixed by the revelation. Economic life and thought had been submitted to

ethical-religious principles until the triumph of the capitalist system of production and exchange, which replaced the symbolic exchanges practiced in traditional societies with the rule of profit.

Within this new value system, ethical thinking has less relevance than the technical regulations of the market and the efficient control of productive forces. Democracy limits the source of authority to the acquiescence expressed in different circumstances of various professional or political groups. There is no longer any reference to the transcendental origin of authority. The question of revelation is thus eliminated; it is neither solved intellectually nor maintained as a plausible truth according to the pragmatic reason prevailing in so-called modern thought. All relations are based on the respective power of nations, groups, and individuals; ethical principles, founded on metaphysical or religious visions, lose their appeal. I do not mean that we have to go back to the “revealed” truth according to islahi thinking. I am stressing a major difficulty of our time: the rupture between ethics and materialism. At the same time, social imaginaire is not more controlled or used in a better way by “scientific” knowledge. Rather, it is mobilized more than ever by ideologues who take advantage of the modern mass media to disseminate slogans taken from religious (in Muslim societies) or secular ideologies, or from a mixture of both (in the so-called socialist regimes).

If we sum up the foregoing analysis and observations, we can stress the following propositions:

1. The social-historical space in which religions emerged, exercised their functions, and shaped cultures and collective sensibilities is being replaced by the secular positivist space of scientific knowledge, technological activities, material civilization, individual pragmatic ethics and law.

2. Scientific knowledge is divided into separate, technical, highly specialized disciplines. Religions, on the contrary, have provided global, unified, and unifying systems of beliefs and non-beliefs, knowledge and practice, as well as pragmatic solutions to the fundamental problems of human destiny: life,

death, love, justice, hope, truth, eternity, transcendence, and the absolute. The nostalgia for a unified vision explains the re-emergence of religion.

3. Positivist scientific knowledge has discredited or eliminated religious functions in society without providing an adequate alternative to religion as a symbol of human existence and a source of unifying ethical values for the group. This happened in Western societies under the name of secularism (or laicisme in French), liberalism, and socialism.

4. Present thought has not yet recognized the positive aspect of secularism as a cultural and intellectual way to overcome fanatic divisions imposed by the dogmatic, superstitious use of religion. At the same time, the specific role of religion as a source for symbols in human existence also goes unrecognized.

5. Islam is not better prepared than Christianity to face the challenge of secularism, intellectual modernity, and technological civilization. The so-called religious revivalism is a powerful secular movement disguised by religious discourse, rites, and collective behaviors; but it is a secularization without the intellectual support needed to maintain the metaphysical mode of thinking and to search for an ethical coherence in human behavior. Theological and ethical thinking has reappeared in contemporary Islamic thought in the form of the ideology of liberation (political and economic). There is little intellectual concern with genuine religious issues like the consciousness of culpability, the eschatological perspective, or revelation as a springboard for mythical or symbolic thinking.

6. The concept that the Societies of the Book could help to build a new humanism which would integrate religions as cultures and not as dogmas for confessional groups (or tawa’if, as in Lebanon or Ireland) is not taken seriously either in theology or in the social scientific study of religions. But there is hope that semiotics and linguistics can create the possibility of reading religious texts in the new way we have mentioned.

7. The study of Islam today suffers particularly from the ideological obstacles created, since the 19th century, by the decay of the Muslim intellectual tradition, as it had developed from the first to the fifth century A.H., and by the economic pressure of the West, the general trend of positivist rationalism and material civilization, the powerful impact of demography since the late 1950s and the necessity of building a modern state and unifying the nation.

8. World system economists insist on the opposition between the center and the periphery. Likewise, in intellectual evolution, we should pay attention to the increasing domination of Western patterns of thought which have not been duly criticized, controlled, or mastered in Western societies themselves. Islam, which has a rich cultural tradition, is facing major issues in a generalized climate of semantic disorder; our thinking should be directed to the dangers resulting from this threat.

9. We should not forget that man agrees to obey, to be devoted, and to obligate his life when he feels a “debt of meaning” to a natural or a supernatural being. This may be the ultimate legitimacy of the state understood as the power accepted and obeyed by a group, community, or nation. The crisis of meaning started when each individual claimed himself as the source of all or true meaning; in this case, there is no longer any transcendent authority. Relations of power are substituted for relations of symbolic exchanges of meaning. To whom do we owe a “debt of meaning”?

It is our responsibility to answer this question after man has changed himself by his own initiatives, discoveries, performances, and errors. It seems that the answer will be conjectural and more and more bound to empirical research instead of to divine guidance taught by traditional religions. I learned through the Algerian war of liberation how all revolutionary movements need to be backed by a struggle for meaning, and I discovered how meaning is manipulated by forces devoted to the conquest of power. The conflict between meaning and power has been, is, and will be the permanent condition through which man tries to emerge as a thinking being.

In the full light of this experience, the question arises again: Should we Islamicize knowledge according to the revealed discourse, or should we consider Islam in the context of a universal quest for meaning? Many paths are open again. Let us explore them with confidence, hope, and lucidity.

** 24—Shari’a and Basic Human Rights Concerns

‘Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im

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Some of the issues discussed [in earlier chapters of An-Na’im’s book] in relation to constitutionalism and criminal justice can be seen as issues of human rights in the domestic context of the modern nation-state. In that context, however, they are commonly known as fundamental constitutional rights. As used in this chapter, the term human rights refers to

those rights recognized by and promoted through international law and institutions. Thus, although fundamental constitutional rights and international human rights are both concerned with the same type of claim or entitlement, the former deals with these claims and/or entitlements in the context of a domestic legal system while the latter deals with them in the context of the international legal system.

In accordance with the fundamental purpose of this book—to enable Muslims to exercise their right to self- determination without violating the rights of others to the same—this chapter will attempt to identify areas of conflict between shari’a [Islamic law] and universal standards of human rights and seek a reconciliation and positive relationship between the two systems. The hypothesis of this chapter, like that of the preceding chapters, is that if they implement historical shari’a, Muslims cannot exercise their right to self-determination without violating the rights of others. It is possible, however, to achieve a balance within the framework of Islam as a whole by developing appropriate principles of modern Islamic public law.

Stating the objectives of the chapter in this way raises the initial question of the relevance of so-called universal human rights to shari’a, or for that matter to Islam itself. Why should universal human rights be a criterion for judging shari’aand an objective of modern Islamic public law?

*** Universality of Human Rights

Article 1.3 of the Charter of the United Nations ... imposes on all members of the United Nations the obligation to cooperate in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex (gender), language, or religion. But the charter did not define the terms human rights and fundamental freedoms. That task was undertaken by the United Nations in a series of declarations, conventions, and covenants drafted and adopted since 1948.[400] The U.N. human rights documents and regional documents of Europe, the Americas, and Africa[401] all have the same premise—that there shall be

universal standards of human rights which must be observed by all countries of the world, or countries of the region in the case of regional documents.

There is some debate as to the genuine universality of some of these standards,[402] and there are some serious problems of enforcement. This does not mean, however, that there are no universal and binding standards or that enforcement efforts should be abandoned. The position adopted here is that there are certain universal standards of human rights which are binding under international law and that every effort should be made to enforce them in practice. Thus the principle of respect for and protection of human rights has been described as jus cogens, that is, such a fundamental principle of international law that states may not repudiate by their agreement.[403] This would, of course, be true of respect for and protection of human rights in principle. It is easier to give examples of human rights of this stature, such as the prohibition of genocide and slavery, than to define the concept in a categorical fashion. Nevertheless, such a definition, or at least a criterion by which human rights may be identified, will be attempted below.

The main difficulty with working to establish universal standards across cultural, and particularly religious, boundaries is that each tradition has its own internal frame of reference because each tradition derives the validity of its precepts and norms from its own sources. If a cultural, especially religious, tradition relates to other traditions at all, it is likely to do so in a negative and perhaps even hostile way. To claim the loyalty and conformity of its members, a cultural or religious tradition would normally assert its own superiority over other traditions.[404]

Nevertheless, there is a common normative principle shared by all the major cultural traditions which, if construed in an enlightened manner, is capable of sustaining universal standards of human rights. That is the principle that one should treat other people as he or she wishes to be treated by them. This golden rule, referred to earlier as the principle of reciprocity, is shared by all the major religious traditions of the world. Moreover, the moral and logical force of this simple proposition can easily be appreciated by all human beings of whatever cultural tradition or philosophical persuasion.

It is not easy to place oneself in the exact position of another person, especially if that other person is of a different gender or religious belief.[405] The purpose of the principle of reciprocity, as applied to the present argument, is that one should try to achieve the closest possible approximation to placing oneself in the position of the other person. Assuming that one is in the exact position of the other person in all material respects, including gender and religious belief or other convictions, what basic human rights would one demand?

It should be emphasized that reciprocity is mutual so that when one identifies with another person, one would ascribe equivalent reciprocity to the belief system of the other person. Thus, when person X accepts the status or belief of person Y for the purposes of conceding Vs right to the same treatment which X would demand for himself, X would assume that Y accepts the same principle of reciprocity toward X by conceding to X the same rights he would demand for himself. In other words, X should not be entitled to deny Y's rights on the grounds that Y is unlikely to afford X the same rights because Y's belief system does not impose that obligation upon Y. If Y's belief system in fact fails to accord X the same rights, the answer would be for X to insist on reciprocity from Y rather than abdicate his obligation to afford Y the same rights he would claim for himself.

The problem with using the principle of reciprocity in this context is the tendency of cultural, and particularly religious, traditions to restrict the application of the principle to other members of its cultural or religious tradition, if not to a certain group within the given tradition.[406] The historical conception of the principle of reciprocity under shari'a did not apply to women and non-Muslims to the same extent that it applied to Muslim men.[407] In other words, by granting women and nonMuslims a lower status and sanctioning discriminatory treatment against them, shari'a denies women and non-Muslims the same degree of honor and human dignity it guarantees to Muslim men.

This general problem will have to be addressed within each cultural tradition. In the case of Islam, for example, one must be able to establish a technique

for reinterpreting the basic sources, the Qur’an and sunna [practice of the Prophet], in a way that would enable us to remove the basis of discrimination against women and non-Muslims. The technique I find most promising has already been explained in [an earlier section] and applied to questions of constitutionalism, criminal justice, and international relations. In the remainder of this chapter, I hope to explain the inadequacy of shari’a as a basis for human rights in the Muslim context and propose an alternative Islamic foundation for universal human rights.

Without going into the details of arguments that may be too closely identified with a particular cultural tradition,[408] one can make the following basic transcultural justification for universal standards of human rights. The criteria I would adopt for identifying universal human rights is that they are rights to which human beings are entitled by virtue of being human. In other words, universal standards of human rights are, by definition, appreciated by a wide variety of cultural traditions because they pertain to the inherent dignity and well-being of every human being, regardless of race, gender, language, or religion.[409] It follows that the practical test by which these rights should be identified is whether the right in question is claimed by the particular cultural tradition for its own members. Applying the principle of reciprocity among all human beings rather than just among the members of a particular group, I would argue that universal human rights are those which a cultural tradition would claim for its own members and must therefore concede to members of other traditions if it is to expect reciprocal treatment from those others.

In content and substance, I submit that universal human rights are based on the two primary forces that motivate all human behavior, the will to live and the will to be free.[410] Through the will to live, human beings have always striven to secure their food, shelter, health, and all other means for the preservation of life. Moreover, people have always striven to improve the quality of their lives through the development and manipulation of available physical resources and through political struggle to achieve the fair and equitable distribution of wealth and power among the members of the particular community. At one level, the will to be free overlaps with the will to live, in that it is the will to be free from physical constraints and to be secure in food, shelter, health, and other necessities of a good life. At another level,

the will to be free exceeds the will to live in that it is the driving force behind the pursuit of spiritual, moral, and artistic well-being and excellence.

The right to seek the satisfaction of the legitimate claims of these two forces is granted by every cultural tradition to its own members and must therefore, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, be granted to the members of other traditions. This is, in my view, the basis of the universality of certain minimum human rights. By applying this simple criterion, we can identify those rights, claims, and entitlements that ought to be protected as human rights even if they are not identified as such by any formal document.

**** Relevant Standards of Human Rights

Our primary concern here is to establish cross-cultural foundations for the universality of human rights. Consequently, other major and important issues, such as the relationship between strategic goals and tactical means, the question of hierarchy and trade-offs between different sets of rights, and the legitimacy of permitting derogations from certain obligations in times of emergency are not discussed in this book.

Being consistent with its own historical context, shari’a restricted the application of the principle of reciprocity in relation to women and non-Muslims. As frequently suggested throughout this book, the inadequacy of the public law of shari’a can only be understood and supplemented through a consideration of the impact of the historical context within which shari’a was constructed by the founding jurists of the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. out of the original sources of Islam. In that historical context, it was natural for the Muslim jurists to restrict the “other person” in the reciprocity rule to other Muslim men. This is a common feature of all historical cultural traditions and is also reflected in attitudes and policies of modern nation- states. It is for this aspect of the historical interpretation of the principle of reciprocity that I have said earlier that this principle can sustain universal human rights “if it is construed in an enlightened manner.” An enlightened construction would extend the “other person” to all human beings, regardless of gender, religion, race, or language.

If such an enlightened construction is to be effective in changing Muslim attitudes and policies, two conditions must be satisfied. First, the proposed broad construction of the other person has to be valid and credible from the Islamic point of view. This can be done only through Islamic arguments that repudiate the historical restrictive construction and support the alternative broader construction. Second, other cultural and religious traditions must undertake a similar process of enlightened construction. It seems to me that the historical restriction of the other person to male members of one's own culture was unavoidable when other cultural traditions practiced similar exclusion of women and nonmembers of the particular culture. It would therefore seem to follow that we need to overcome historical hostility and resentment through concurrent action, each working within his or her own cultural tradition toward the same goal.

In the following outline of the relevant universal human rights, it is useful to quote international custom and treaties that recognize these rights because they establish norms that are binding on Muslim states under international law. In quoting these documents, however, it is not suggested that the given rights are accepted as universal simply because they are recognized as such by the documents. Rather, the rights are recognized by the documents because they are universal human rights, that is, rights to which every human being is entitled by virtue of being human.

Slavery is one of the most serious impediments on both the will to live and the will to be free. Although it has been practiced by every major human civilization throughout history, slavery, in the sense of institutionalized and legal ownership of human beings as chattel, has finally come to be universally condemned and outlawed by both domestic and international law. [411] More effort is needed to eradicate all shades and forms of economic exploitation and degradation reminiscent of slavery. In the present context, however, we are concerned with slavery as a legal institution.

The abolition of slavery may well be the first example of the acceptance of an international human right as a limitation on domestic jurisdiction.[412] In other words, the antislavery movement established a precedent for

recognizing the principle that the violation of a universal human right by one country is the legitimate concern of other countries.[413] As a result of this movement, a series of international agreements was concluded, culminating in one of the most widely ratified conventions condemning and prohibiting slavery under international law.[414] Moreover, several major international treaties have since reiterated the prohibition of slavery and required signatory states to outlaw and eliminate its practice in their domestic jurisdictions.[415]

Another early example of international cooperation in the field of human rights is the movement to eliminate the persecution of and discrimination against religious minorities.[416] Besides the moral abhorrence of such practices, persecution and discrimination on grounds of religion were perceived to be among the major causes of international conflict and war.[417] Consequently, a number of international treaties declared such persecution and discrimination a violation of human rights.[418]

A third area of emerging universal human rights, as defined above, is the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of gender. Although this right did not receive international attention as early as the other two rights, it has now come to be recognized as a universal human right under a variety of international conventions.[419]

The principle of nondiscrimination does not preclude all differential treatment on grounds such as race, gender, or religion. In this respect, I would agree with the proposition that one has to judge the nature of differential treatment in light of its purpose. “If the purpose or effect is to nullify or impair the enjoyment of human rights on an equal footing, the practice is discriminatory.”[420] In this way, one would accept action that has the purpose or effect of enhancing rather than impairing the enjoyment of human rights on an equal footing.[421] It is not necessary to go into these issues in detail in this context. What is being affirmed here is that discrimination on grounds such as gender and religion violates human rights....

*** Shari’a and Human Rights

In [an earlier chapter] it was argued that the historical context within which shari’a was constructed and applied by the early Muslims explained and justified its sanction of Muslim antagonism toward non-Muslims and its countenance of the use of force against them. By the same token, shari’a‘s position on what is known in modern terminology as human rights was also justified by the historical context. During the formative stages of shari’a (and for the next millennium at least) there was no conception of universal human rights anywhere in the world. Slavery was an established and lawful institution in many parts of the world throughout this period. Until the 19th century A.D., moreover, it was normal throughout the world to determine a person’s status and rights by his religion. Similarly, up to the 20th century A.D., women were not normally recognized as persons capable of exercising legal rights and capacities comparable to those enjoyed by men. Full citizenship and its benefits were to be restricted to the men of certain ethnic or racial groups within a particular polity in the same way that status and its benefits were restricted by shari’a to Muslim men. The most that shari’a could do, and did in fact do, in that historical context was to modify and lighten the harsh consequences of slavery and discrimination on grounds of religion or gender. [422]

Once again, to argue that shari’a‘s restrictive view of human rights was justified by the historical context and that it was an improvement on the preexisting situation is not to say that this view is still justified. On the contrary, my position is that since shari’a‘s view of human rights was justified by the historical context, it ceases to be so justified in the present drastically different context. By the same token that shari’a as a practical legal system could not have disregarded the conception of human rights prevailing at the time it purported to apply in the seventh century, modern Islamic law cannot disregard the present conception of human rights if it is to be applied today. In an early short piece, Khadduri said: “Human rights in Islam, as prescribed by the divine law [shari’a], are the privilege only of persons of full legal capacity. A person with full legal capacity is a living human being of mature age, free, and of Moslem faith. It follows, accordingly, that non-Moslems and slaves who lived in the Islamic state were only partially protected by law or had no

legal capacity at all."[423] While accepting this statement as a substantially accurate presentation of the position under shari'a,[424] I would add the following qualification with respect to the status of Muslim women: although it is true that they have full legal capacity under shari'a in relation to civil and commercial law matters, in the sense that they have the requisite legal personality to hold and dispose of property and otherwise acquire or lose civil liabilities in their own independent right, Muslim women do not enjoy human rights on an equal footing with Muslim men under shari'a. Moreover, in accepting Khadduri's statement of the position under shari'a, I would also reiterate my often-stated position that this aspect of shari'a is not the final word of Islam on the subject. As I shall argue at the end of this chapter, an alternative formulation of Islamic public law which would eliminate these limitations on human rights is both desirable and possible.

When we consider writings by contemporary Muslim scholars, we find that most of the published expositions of human rights in Islam are not helpful because they overlook the problems of slavery and discrimination against women and non-Muslims.[425]

One of the better discussions of human rights in Islam, which shows sensitivity to gender discrimination, is that by Riffat Hassan entitled "On Human Rights and the Qur'anic Perspectives."[426] The problem with this article is that it is selective in its choice of the Qur'anic perspectives. In overlooking some relevant verses of the Qur'an, the author fails to confront those Qur'anic perspectives which are not consistent with her vision of the Qur'anic perspectives on human rights. As will be suggested at the end of this chapter, the only effective approach to achieve sufficient reform of shari'a in relation to universal human rights is to cite sources in the Qur'an and sunna which are inconsistent with universal human rights and explain them in historical context, while citing those sources which are supportive of human rights as the basis of the legally applicable principles and rules of Islamic law today.

In contrast to the generally evasive approach of the majority of Muslim writers on human rights issues, a few other Muslim writers have adopted a more honest and candid approach. A good example of this approach is

Sultanhussein Tabandeh’s Muslim Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This short book has the merit of clearly indicating the inconsistencies between shari’a and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights in relation to the status of women and non-Muslims.[427] Tabandeh notes these inconsistencies to argue that Muslims are not bound by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in these respects, whereas I am suggesting that it is shari’a which should be revised, from an Islamic point of view, to provide for these universal human rights. I welcome the clear statement of the inconsistencies between shari’a and universal human rights as part of my argument for Islamic law reform. It should be recalled, however, that the proposed reform must maintain its Islamic legitimacy if it is to be effective in changing Muslim attitudes and policies on these issues.

For our purposes here, we need not go into an exhaustive statement of all human rights because there are no fundamental problems with shari’a except for slavery and discrimination on grounds of gender and religion. It is more to the point to focus on those human rights standards which are violated by shari’a, the prohibition of slavery and discrimination on grounds of gender and religion.

**** Slavery

It is obvious that shari’a did not introduce slavery, which was the norm throughout the world at the time. Shari’a recognized slavery as an institution but sought to restrict the sources of acquisition of slaves, to improve their condition, and to encourage their emancipation through a variety of religious and civil methods.[428] Nevertheless, slavery is lawful under shari’a to the present day.[429] It is unlikely today that institutionalized slavery will be formally sanctioned in any Muslim country.[430] If the right conditions under which slaves may be acquired should arise today and someone was made a slave under those conditions, shari’a would protect the “rights” of both the master and the slave in the same way it did 13 centuries ago. In this respect, one would appreciate the candid and honest statement of the situation under shari’a by Tabandeh, who noted the absence of any possibility

of finding confirmation of the legality of the enslavement of any person today, and then proceeded to say:

<quote>

Nonetheless, should the legal condition for the enslavement of anyone be proven (because he had been taken prisoner fighting against Islam with a view to its extirpation and persisted in invincible ignorance in his sacrilegious and infidel convictions, or because there did exist legal proof that all his ancestors without exception had been slaves descended from a person taken prisoner conducting a warfare of such invincible ignorance) Islam would be bound to recognize such slavery as legal, even though recommending the freeing of the person and if possible his conversion, in this modern age.[431]

</quote>

In accepting this as an accurate statement of shari'a, I am not accepting this aspect of shari'aas the final and conclusive law of Islam. In this light, it would be lawful, from shari'a's point of view, if slavery is reestablished in a modern Islamic state. As I have argued in [a previous chapter], however, there is the possibility of replacing these dated and archaic aspects of shari'a with modern and humane principles of Islamic law. Such an enlightened construction would prohibit slavery as a matter of Islamic law. Thus it is shari'a and not Islam that "would be bound to recognize such slavery" under Tabandeh's statement.

To make an Islamic argument for the prohibition of slavery, we first need to know the circumstances under which slavery is permitted by shari'a and its rules regarding the treatment and emancipation of slaves.

There is no verse in the Qur'an which directly sanctions the enslavement of any person, but many verses do so by implication when, for example, the Qur'an speaks of a Muslim's right to cohabit with his slave concubine, which clearly presupposes the existence of such slave women. The same can be said of sunna on the subject.[432] The only way a person who

is born free may be brought into slavery under shari’a is through military defeat in a war sanctioned by shari’a.[433] According to the founding jurists, subjecting the vanquished unbelievers to slavery is one of the options open to Muslims under shari’a. Thus the Shafi’i school allowed the imam [leader] four options in dealing with prisoners of war: immediate execution, enslavement, or release with or without ransom. The Maliki school restricted the options to execution, enslavement, or release with ransom, and the Hanafi school reduced them further to either execution or enslavement.[434]

Once a person is brought into slavery through military conquest or is born to slave parents, he or she remains a slave until emancipated. While a slave, he or she may be employed in whatever manner deemed fit by his or her master but must be treated with kindness and compassion as required by shari’a.[435] That does not preclude the sale of slaves in principle, but it may place some limitations on the conditions under which the sale is concluded, such as a requirement not to separate a mother and child when they are sold as slaves.[436]

Shari’a encouraged the emancipation of slaves through a variety of methods. The emancipation of slaves is designated by Sura 9, Verse 60, and Sura 2, Verse 177, of the Qur’an as one of the prescribed items of expenditure of the official treasury or private charity. Moreover, the emancipation of a slave is prescribed by some verses of the Qur’an, such as Sura 4, Verse 92, and Sura 58, Verse 3, as religious penance and atonement for some sins, and recommended by others, such as Sura 2, Verse 177, and Sura 89, Verses 11–13, as a most meritorious act. Sura 24, Verse 33, of the Qur’an encourages a Muslim to grant the wish of a slave who wants to contract with the master for emancipation in exchange for the payment of a certain sum of money or performance of certain services.

Given the entrenched position of slavery throughout the world at the time, Islam had no choice but to recognize the institution of slavery in that historical context and do its best to improve the conditions under which slaves were to endure their unfortunate status. It can also be argued that Islam was aiming at the elimination of slavery by restricting its incidence and encouraging its termination. But since there was no internal mechanism by

which slavery was to be rendered unlawful by shari’a, it continued to be lawful under that system of law up to the present day.

Riffat Hassan quoted with approval the argument made by G.A. Parwez [India-Pakistan, born 1903] to the effect that since the Qur’an restricted the source of slavery to prisoners of war, and then prescribed in Sura 47, Verse 4, that prisoners of war were to be set free either for ransom or as a favor, it follows that “the door for future slavery was thus closed by the Qur’an forever. Whatever happened in subsequent history was the responsibility of the Muslims and not of the Qur’an.”[437] Similarly, it is sometimes argued by modern Muslims that this verse of the Qur’an prohibits the enslavement of captives after a war with Muslims. The relevant part of this verse may be translated as follows: “When you meet the unbelievers [in battle], smite at their necks [kill them]. Once you have thoroughly subdued them, then [hold] and bind [them]. Thereafter [practice] either generosity [by freeing them without compensation] or [for] ransom, until war is terminated.”

These arguments are, in my view, examples of selective citation of shari’a sources leading to serious distortion and confusion. When we consider that both the Qur’an and sunna did recognize and regulate slavery in a number of ways, that the Prophet himself and leading Companions had slaves, and that all the founding jurists of shari’a took the existence of slavery for granted and elaborated rules for its regulation, we cannot dismiss the matter as the alleged failure of generations of Muslims to implement the intention of the Qur’an to abolish slavery. Despite the apparent limitation by this verse of the options open to Muslims over their captives, it is a historical fact that Muslim armies, during and after the Prophet’s time, have continued to exercise the option to enslave their captives. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the founding jurists of shari’a did not perceive this verse as excluding the option of enslavement of captives.[438] This verse may now be used in an argument for prohibiting enslavement as a matter of Islamic law, but this possible construction of the verse should not be confused with the position under shari’a as it has been established by early Muslim practice and authoritatively stated by the founding jurists.

I believe that the early Muslims were correct in interpreting the Qur’an and sunna as recognizing the institution of slavery in the historical context of early Islam. In the current historical context and with a new principle of interpretation such as the one proposed in the present study, the basic premise of the argument by modern Muslims against slavery may now be used to abolish slavery under Islamic law in an authoritative manner. Although those arguments cannot be accepted to alter the legal and historical fact that shari’a recognized slavery, and continues to do so to the present day, they provide a very significant indication of the eagerness of modern Muslims to abolish slavery in Islamic law. Modern Muslims should welcome the evolutionary approach proposed by Ustadh [Teacher] Mahmoud Mohamed Taha. As applied to slavery, for example, that principle would conclude that though shari’a implemented the transitional legislative intent to permit slavery, subject to certain limitations and safeguards, modern Islamic law should now implement the fundamental Islamic legislative intent to prohibit slavery forever.

When slavery was eventually abolished in modern Muslim states, in some cases as late as the 1960s and after, that result was achieved through secular law and not shari’a.[439] Given the formal abolition of slavery in all Muslim countries, some may argue that it is no longer an issue. I disagree and believe that slavery is a fundamental human rights issue for Muslims until it is abolished in Islamic law.

In my view, it is utterly abhorrent and morally indefensible for shari’a to continue to sanction slavery today, regardless of the prospects of its practice. Moreover, the fact that slavery is permissible under shari’a does have serious practical consequences not only in perpetuating negative social attitudes toward former slaves and segments of the population that used to be a source of slaves but also in legitimizing forms of secret practices akin to slavery. In the Sudan, for example, images of slavery under shari’a and Islamic literature continue to support negative stereotypes of Sudanese from the southern and western parts of the country, which were sources of slaves until the late 19th century. Moreover, recent news reports indicate that Muslim tribesmen of southwestern Sudan feel justified in capturing nonMuslims from southern Sudan and keeping them in secret slavery.

**** Discrimination on Grounds of Gender and Religion

A similar analysis applies to discrimination against women and non-Muslims under shari’a. Both types of discrimination were the norm at the time.[440] While accepting such discrimination in principle, shari’a restricted its incidence and reduced its scope.[441] Nevertheless, when viewed in modern perspective, principles of shari’a sanctioning serious and unacceptable discrimination on grounds of gender and religion are, in my view, untenable today.

According to shari’a, non-Muslims may live within a Muslim state either under the status of dhimmi [protected religious groups] for non-Muslim subjects or the status of aman (pledge of security or safe-conduct) for non-Muslim aliens.[442] Various examples of discrimination under the public law of shari’a on grounds of religion were given in the chapters on constitutionalism and criminal justice. As explained earlier, personal and private law matters for non-Muslims within an Islamic state were left to their own personal law and communal arrangements for administration. Should the matter involve a Muslim, shari’a would apply.

Discriminatory shari’a rules of personal and private law include the following:

· A Muslim man may marry a Christian or Jewish woman, but a Christian or Jewish man may not marry a Muslim woman.[443] Both Muslim men and women are precluded from marrying an unbeliever, that is, one who does not believe in one of the heavenly revealed scriptures.[444]

- Difference in religion is a total bar to inheritance. Thus a Muslim may neither inherit from nor leave inheritance to a non-Muslim.[445]

Examples of discrimination on grounds of gender in family and private law include the following:[446]

- A Muslim man may be married to up to four wives at the same time but a Muslim woman can only be married to one man at a time.[447]

- A Muslim man may divorce his wife, or any of his wives, by unilateral repudiation, talaq, without having to give any reasons or justify his action to any person or authority. In contrast, a Muslim woman can obtain divorce only by consent of the husband or by judicial decree for limited specific grounds such as the husband’s inability or unwillingness to provide for his wife.[448]

- In inheritance, a Muslim woman receives less than the share of a Muslim man when both have equal degree of relationship to the deceased person.[449]

We are not concerned here with the historical justification of these instances of discrimination on grounds of religion or gender. Reasonable people may differ in their view of the historical sufficiency of any justifications that may be offered for any particular instance of discrimination. For example, it may be argued that economic and social conditions of seventh-century Arabia did not justify some or all of the discriminatory rules cited above. It is my submission, however, that regardless of differences over the historical sufficiency ofjustifications, these instances of discrimination against women and non-Muslims under shari’a are no longer justified.

It should be emphasized here that such unacceptable discrimination exists despite the modern reforms of personal law in several Muslim countries. As explained in [a previous chapter], these efforts cannot achieve the desired degree of reform because of the internal limitations of reform within the framework of historical shari’a. Moreover, the limited benefits achieved through these modern reforms are constantly challenged and threatened by more fundamental principles of shari’a which

remain intact in the jurisprudence and legal practice of the countries that introduced those reforms.

In light of the preceding discussion, the following conclusions seem justified. First, in continuing to recognize slavery as a lawful institution, even if only in theory, shari’a is in complete violation of a most fundamental and universal human right. It is very significant that slavery was abolished in the Muslim world through secular law and not shari’a and that shari’a does not object to the reinstitution of slavery under its own conditions regarding the source of slaves and conditions for their treatment. Although the vast majority of contemporary Muslims abhor slavery, it remains part of their religious law.

Second, discrimination on grounds of religion and gender under shari’a also violates established universal human rights. Discrimination on grounds of religion has been found to be one of the major causes of international conflict and war because other countries that sympathize with the persecuted non- Muslim minority are likely to be prompted into acting in support of the victims of religious discrimination, thereby creating a situation of international conflict and possibly war. More important, it is my submission that discrimination on grounds of either gender or religion is morally repugnant and politically untenable today.

These are, in my view, the most serious points of conflict and tension between shari’a and universal human rights as defined in the present study. Before proceeding to an application of the method of reconciliation adopted in this book, it may be helpful to highlight the relevance of this conflict and tension. Is it of purely historical interest or is it relevant to the current policy and practice of Muslim states?

*** Current Muslim Ambivalence on Human Rights

The basic inconsistency between a historical, religiously determined conception of individual and collective rights under shari’a and a contemporary universalistic conception of human rights is clearly reflected in the ambivalence of modern Muslim states on the issue. The policies of these countries are influenced, whether consciously or unconsciously, by inherently contradictory forces. On one hand, there is the pull of historical religious traditions which sanction discrimination on grounds of religion and gender. On the other hand, there is the push of modernist domestic and international forces in favor of human rights and against discrimination on grounds of religion or gender. This ambivalence is reflected, in my view, in the subscription by some Muslim countries to international human rights documents which they are unable to uphold within their national jurisdictions because of the role of shari’a in the domestic legal systems of those countries.

It is difficult to provide detailed and conclusive documentation of human rights violations in many countries, especially in the Muslim world, because of the lack of verifiable records.[450] Moreover, it is much more difficult to link those violations, to the extent that they are documented, to the influence of shari’a.[451] Nevertheless, the ambivalence of Muslim countries in the field of human rights can be illustrated by comparing the content of the international human rights documents to which a particular Muslim country has subscribed and the shari’a rules being enforced in that country as a matter of domestic law. A clear example can be found by contrasting Egypt’s international obligation to eliminate discrimination on grounds of gender with rules of shari’a personal law that apply to Muslims in Egypt.[452]

Article 1 of the 1979 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to which Egypt is a party, defines discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.” Articles 3 to 16 of the convention implement this definition through very specific and precise provisions for the elimination of

discrimination against women in the fields of political and public life, education, employment, health care, and others.

In ratifying this convention, Egypt entered reservations on Articles 9, 16, and 29. Although the reservations on Articles 9 and 29, dealing with nationality of children and submission to arbitration under the convention, may be based on national policy not necessarily related to shari’a, the one on Article 16 is expressly related to shari’a. Whereas the article requires complete equality between men and women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations during the marriage and upon its dissolution, Egypt’s reservation states that its obligations “must be without prejudice to the Islamic shari’a provisions.” In this way, it can be said that Egypt is aware of the conflict between the international obligation established by that article and its own shari’a personal law for Muslims. As long as this is the only aspect of Egyptian law based on shari’a which is inconsistent with Egypt’s obligation under this convention and other international human rights instruments, it can be said that Egypt is honest in its position and serious in its intention to honor its international human rights obligations. That is not enough. Egypt and all other Muslim countries should bring every aspect of their law, including personal law for Muslims, into complete conformity with human rights standards.

Given the various ways in which shari’a discriminates against women and non-Muslims and the powerful influence of shari’a on private as well as official Muslim behavior throughout the world, however, it is reasonable to conclude that more serious consequences of Muslim ambivalence on human rights are unavoidable. Moreover, this ambivalence is likely to increase in scope and degree if the current trend toward greater Islamization of public life in Muslim countries should continue.

The relevance of shari’a to contemporary Muslim practice raises the basic issue of how to reconcile shari’a with universal standards of human rights. As in the case of similar issues raised in our

discussion of questions of constitutionalism, criminal justice, and international law, reconciliation can be achieved only through the drastic reform of shari’a. It now remains to be seen how the reform technique explained earlier operates in achieving the desired reconciliation between Islamic law and universal human rights from within the Islamic tradition.

*** Universal Human Rights in Islam

Once again, and in culmination of the basic argument of this book, we come to the same conclusion. Unless the basis of modern Islamic law is shifted away from those texts of the Qur’an and sunna of the Medina stage,[453] which constituted the foundations of the construction of shari’a, there is no way of avoiding drastic and serious violation of universal standards of human rights. There is no way to abolish slavery as a legal institution and no way to eliminate all forms and shades of discrimination against women and non-Muslims as long as we remain bound by the framework of shari’a. As stated in [a previous chapter] and explained in relation to constitutionalism, criminal justice, and international law, the traditional techniques of reform within the framework of shari’a are inadequate for achieving the necessary degree of reform. To achieve that degree of reform, we must be able to set aside clear and definite texts of the Qur’an and sunna of the Medina stage as having served their transitional purpose and implement those texts of the Meccan stage which were previously inappropriate for practical application but are now the only way to proceed.

A similar approach is proposed for achieving the reconciliation of Islamic law with the full range of universal human rights identified through the criteria indicated earlier in this chapter. The key to the success of this part of the effort is to convince Muslims that the other person with whom they must identify and accept as their equal in human dignity and rights includes all other human beings, regardless of gender and religion. This would require an explanation of why the verses of antagonism which instructed Muslims to be awliya, friends and supporters, of each other and disassociate themselves from all non-Muslims, should not apply today. It would also

require showing that Sura 4, Verse 34, of the Qur’an, which establishes general male guardianship over women, and other verses which establish specific instances of discrimination against women, should not be implemented today.

In accordance with the logic of the evolutionary principle proposed by Ustadh Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, the texts of the Qur’an emphasizing exclusive Muslim solidarity were revealed during the Medina stage to provide the emerging Muslim community with psychological support in the face of the violent adversity of nonMuslims. In contrast to these verses, the fundamental and eternal message of Islam, as revealed in the Qur’an of the Mecca period, preached the solidarity of all humanity. In view of the vital need for peaceful coexistence in today’s global human society, Muslims should emphasize the eternal message of universal solidarity of the Qur’an of the Mecca period rather than the exclusive Muslim solidarity of the transitional Medina message. Otherwise, Muslims would only provoke counter exclusive solidarity by non-Muslims, thereby repudiating the prospects for peaceful co-existence and cooperation in promoting and protecting universal human rights.

The application of Ustadh Mahmoud’s evolutionary principle to male qawwama, guardianship, over women has already been explained. Male guardianship over women has been rationalized by Sura 4, Verse 34, as following from the economic and security dependence of women on men. Because such dependence is no longer necessarily true, argued Ustadh Mahmoud, male guardianship over women should be terminated. Both men and women should now be equally free and equally responsible before the law, which guarantees economic opportunity and security for all members of the community.

The application of this evolutionary principle of interpretation to specific instances of discrimination against women and non-Muslims can be illustrated by the rule of shari’a prohibiting marriage between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man. This rule is based on the combined operation of the guardianship of the man, in this case the husband, over his wife, and that of a Muslim over a non-Muslim. Since a non-Muslim husband may not be the guardian of his Muslim wife, shari’a prohibits

such a marriage. If either form of guardianship, of a husband over his wife or of a Muslim over a non-Muslim, is repudiated, there would be no justification for prohibiting marriage between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man. The evolutionary principle of Ustadh Mahmoud would repudiate both types of guardianship.

The evolutionary principle will also repudiate another possible rationale of the prohibition of marriage between a Muslim woman and a non-Muslim man, namely, the assumption that a wife is more susceptible to influence by her husband than vice versa. In other words, it appears to be assumed that if such a marriage is permitted, it is more likely that the non- Muslim husband will draw his Muslim wife away from Islam than that she will draw him to Islam. This rationale is, of course, part of the wider sociological phenomenon, namely, the lack of confidence in a woman's integrity and good judgment. Educational and other efforts are needed to repudiate this sociological phenomenon in all its manifestations. Besides its immediate practical impact, legal reform can also be an effective tool of education and leadership. This task can be begun by removing, through the application of the evolutionary principle of Ustadh Mahmoud, all aspects of the law which discriminate against women, thereby encouraging and sustaining a positive view of women.

*** Conclusion

Salman Rushdie [born 1947], an Indian-born Muslim novelist who became a British citizen, published in Britain a novel entitled Satanic Verses in September 1988. In various parts of the novel, and especially in a dream sequence therein, irreverent references are made to the Prophet of Islam, his wives, and leading Companions. Although made in metaphorical fictitious form, the associations and negative connotations are obvious.

Within a few months, thousands of Muslims were demonstrating in various parts of the Muslim world, burning copies of the book, and demanding that it be banned not only in their own countries but throughout the world. Some of the demonstrators called for the death of Rushdie. In mid-February 1989,

Imam [Ruhollah] Khomeini of Iran [1902–1989] issued a declaration in which he called on Muslims to kill Rushdie and any person associated with the publication and sale of the book. When Rushdie issued a statement a few days later expressing his regrets for any affront and anguish his book may have caused Muslims, Khomeini responded by saying that Rushdie's apology would not be accepted and that he should be killed even if he repented and recanted his insults to Islam and the Muslims. These events were widely reported in the media all over the world.

In the following remarks, I am assuming, for the sake of argument, that Rushdie's book is extremely offensive to Muslims. I am also assuming that freedom of expression is not absolute. It is conceivable that a published work, whether claiming to be a work of fiction or scholarship, can cause such harm to some identifiable private or public interest as to justify the banning or restriction of its circulation. Although I believe that it should be extremely difficult to make a convincing case for banning a work, I am assuming that it is not impossible to do so. Moreover, I am also assuming that Rushdie's book warrants examination with a view to its possible banning by the appropriate authorities.

Assuming all this, I find it extremely disturbing that thousands of Muslims in many parts of the world are demanding not only the banning of the book but also the murder of the author. What is even more disturbing is that a head of a Muslim country, Imam Khomeini of Iran, has called on Muslims to seek out and murder a citizen of another country, and a non-Muslim country at that, without the benefit of trial and a chance to defend himself. Khomeini does not speak for all the Shi'i Muslims of the world, let alone the Sunni Muslims, who are by far the vast majority of Muslims today. Nevertheless, since the vast majority of Muslims have failed to condemn Khomeini's action, they are to be taken as acquiescing to it.

Even though shari'a rules of procedure are extremely underdeveloped, many Muslims would argue that sufficient authority can be found to support the conclusion that Khomeini's action is totally wrong and invalid in shari'a for at least three reasons. First, assuming that Khomeini is the undisputed ruler of an Islamic state (dar al-Islam), his jurisdiction under shari'a does not extend

to a non-Islamic state (dar al-harb). In modern terms, shari’a does not give the ruler of an Islamic state the power to punish the citizen of a non-Islamic state. Second, even if Khomeini were to have jurisdiction over Rushdie on the absurd ground that the ruler of an Islamic state has universal jurisdiction over Muslims anywhere in the world, shari’a requires that a person be charged with an offense and allowed a chance to defend himself before he may be punished. Third, repentance and recantation of heretic views is always a complete defense against a charge of apostasy (ridda), which is presumably the offense Rushdie is supposed to have committed.

All of these objections to Khomeini’s action are procedural and formal in nature. That thousands of Muslims in many parts of the Muslim world have demanded the death of Rushdie can only mean that they continue to perceive this to be the appropriate penalty for apostasy. In other words, Muslims are saying that if Rushdie is subject to the jurisdiction of an Islamic state, was duly charged and tried, and refused to recant his views, he should be put to death. This is the prevailing view of shari’a, which is not disputed by the vast majority of Muslims, who are demanding the application of shari’a today as the public law of Muslim countries. Even those Muslims who argue that the death penalty is not required by shari’a for peaceable nonviolent apostasy would still have to concede the variety of other negative legal consequences to the apostate noted earlier, including the possibility of a discretionary punishment (ta’zir) short of death.

Although I know this to be the position under shari’a, I am unable as a Muslim to accept the law of apostasy as part of the law of Islam today. If the prevailing view of apostasy remains valid today, a Muslim could be put to death for expressing views in a given Muslim country which are deemed by the dominant view in that country to be tantamount to apostasy. For example, from some Sunni perspectives, the views of many Shi’i Muslims amount to apostasy; and from some Shi’i perspectives, the views of many Sunni Muslims amount to apostasy. If the shari’a law of apostasy is to be applied today, it would be conceivable for some Shi’i Muslims to be sentenced to death in a Sunni country and vice versa.

Furthermore, it is conceivable for a Muslim within the Sunni tradition, for example, to be put to death for apostasy by the authorities even though many contemporary Muslims regard that person to be an exemplary Muslim. Numerous examples can be cited from Muslim history of leading Sufi (Muslim mystic) men who were killed for apostasy despite their large following among Muslims at the time. Other examples can be cited of currently respected scholars, such as Ibn Taymiyya [12631328], who could have been put to death under the pretext of the shari’a law of apostasy if their opponents were in control of the machinery of the state at the time. Many modern Muslim intellectuals, such as ‘Ali ‘Abd al-Raziq [1888–1966], have been denounced and threatened with death for expressing profound scholarly views. Ustadh Mahmoud Mohamed Taha was executed for apostasy in the Sudan in January 1985 for his views on Islamic reform.

These instances would suggest to me that toleration of unorthodoxy and dissent is vital for the spiritual and intellectual benefit of Islam itself. The shari’a law of apostasy can easily be abused and has been abused in the past to suppress political opposition and inhibit spiritual and intellectual growth. This aspect of shari’a is fundamentally inconsistent with the numerous provisions of the Qur’an and sunna which enjoin freedom of religion and expression.

Another aspect of the historical experience of Muslims brought into focus by the Rushdie affair is the tradition of direct violent action and self-help, which goes back to the earliest times of Islam. Examples can be cited of the Prophet instructing Muslims to kill someone on sight or to correct an injustice by direct action. Unless these instances are identified and explained in their specific historical contexts or other special circumstances, they will continue to be used to undermine the rule of law and motivate terrorist action.

The Rushdie affair has attracted much attention because of its international, especially Western, dimension. Although I am fully aware of the realities of international power politics, I still believe that this affair is useful in publicizing the drastic incompatibility between shari’a and modern standards of international relations and human rights. Some of those who rushed to defend Rushdie no doubt had their ulterior motives; some

may have acted out of spite for Islam and Muslims. As a Muslim, however, I have to concede that it was Muslim actions that gave occasion for such reactions. More important, I am concerned with the views of men and women of goodwill and sensitivity and wish to emphasize the value of this affair in illustrating the need for Islamic reform.

Although many contemporary Muslims would privately object to shari’a‘s suppression of freedom of belief and expression, very few are willing to express their objections publicly for fear of being branded as apostates themselves—guilt by association. Other Muslims would find it difficult to admit their objections, even to themselves, for fear of losing their faith in the process. As long as the public law of shari’a continues to be regarded as the only valid view of the law of Islam, most Muslims would find it extremely difficult to object to any of its principles and rules or to resist their practical implementation, however repugnant and inappropriate they may find them to be.

The public law of shari’a has not been applied for many generations in most parts of the Muslim world. Moreover, the nature and style of classical treatises on shari’a make them generally inaccessible even to the highly educated contemporary Muslim. As a result of these and other factors, the vast majority of Muslims today are unaware of the full implications of the modem application of the public law of shari’a. If contemporary Muslims can clearly envisage the ways in which the application of shari’a would affect their daily lives, and if they were given a free choice in opposing the application of shari’a without the threat of prosecution for apostasy or the fear of losing their faith in Islam, I believe that most of them would strongly oppose the application of shari’a today.

The fundamental objective of this book is to start a process of drastic reform of Islamic law that would enable Muslims to seek to achieve their right to selfdetermination in terms of an Islamic identity (whether Sunni, Shi’i, or variations thereof), including the application of Islamic law, without violating the rights of others to self-determination. To this end, the book explains the negative consequences of the modern application of shari’a to demonstrate that it is not the appropriate vehicle for Islamic

self-determination in the present context. An Islamic alternative to shari’a is provided as the appropriate framework for Muslims to exercise their right to self-determination while fully respecting the rights of others, whether within their own countries or in other lands.

Reference has already been made to the difficulties facing Muslims who would otherwise criticize shari’a and oppose its application today. To help these Muslims overcome their inhibitions, I have shown that shari’a was in fact constructed by Muslim jurists over the first three centuries of Islam. Although derived from the fundamental divine sources of Islam, the Qur’an and sunna, shari’a is not divine because it is the product of human interpretation of those sources. Moreover, this process of construction through human interpretation took place within a specific historical context which is drastically different from our own. It should therefore be possible for contemporary Muslims to undertake a similar process of interpretation and application of the Qur’an and sunna in the present historical context to develop an alternative public law of Islam which is appropriate for implementation today.

In addition to explaining and documenting the validity of this premise, I have suggested that the reform methodology developed by the late Sudanese Muslim reformer Ustadh Mahmoud Mohamed Taha appears to be the most appropriate means for constructing the modern public law of Islam out of the Qur’an and sunna as interpreted in the present historical context. Whether this particular methodology is accepted or rejected by contemporary Muslims, the need for drastic reform of the public law of shari’a is beyond dispute.

Optimism is a necessity of life, especially for a Muslim today. As a Muslim optimist, I believe in the power of ideas, when expounded in the right way at the right time, to inspire significant social and political change. I also believe in the progressive force of life and the ability of people to struggle for and achieve a quality of life compatible with their human dignity and well-being. It would be irresponsible wishful thinking on my part, however, to overlook the power of reactionary forces or to underestimate the difficulties facing the struggle for human dignity and well-being.

I am painfully aware that the vast majority of the Muslim peoples throughout the world live at a superficial level of both Islam and modern civilization. Although they claim adherence to Islam and exhibit apparent commitment to its ritualistic formalities, most contemporary Muslims fail to appreciate and live up to its moral and spiritual essence. Moreover, although they have grown accustomed to enjoying the benefits of modern technology and claim adherence to modern institutions, the majority of Muslim peoples have little appreciation of the values and ways of thinking that underlie and sustain that technology and those institutions. Many distinguished modern Muslim scholars have lamented this state of affairs in the Muslim world, but as long as it persists, the voices of fanaticism will find receptive ears and the forces of regression will have eager followers.

It may therefore appear presumptuous to expect a book that is written in English and is likely to be banned in some Muslim countries to have any significant impact in the Muslim world. Despite the oppressive nature of most political regimes and the conservative orientation of many societies in the Muslim world, however, I believe that the ideas expressed here will reach the hearts and minds of many Muslims. For one thing, most of these ideas already exist, perhaps in somewhat rudimentary and reticent form, in the hearts and minds of many Muslims, especially the younger generations, who are the more active agents of social change. It is my hope and expectation that this book will act as a catalyst for change in the Muslim world by presenting these ideas in a systematic and comprehensive fashion and providing them with an Islamic rationale, Moreover, the cultural interdependence of the modern world is making it increasingly difficult to exclude ideas and diminish their impact.

Contemporary Muslims are not the only audience for this book. Although issues of Islamic law reform and social and political change in the Muslim world are primarily the business of the peoples of Muslim countries, these matters are the legitimate concern of all humankind because of their impact on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of human beings. Conversely, the peoples of Muslim countries should be concerned with similar matters in non-Muslim lands. Humanity can no longer disclaim responsibility for the fate of human beings in any part of the world. This is

the glorious achievement of the modern international human rights movement. All the peoples of the world are hereby invited to assist Muslims in their predicament and to accept the assistance of Muslims to non-Muslims in their predicaments. It should be emphasized, however, that these efforts of mutual assistance must be undertaken with due sensitivity and goodwill if they are to be most effective.

It is my conviction as a Muslim that the public law of shari’a does not represent the law of Islam which contemporary Muslims are supposed to implement in fulfillment of their religious obligation. I also strongly believe that the application of the public law of shari’a today will be counterproductive and detrimental to Muslims and to Islam itself. I hope that this book, with the help and guidance of God, will contribute in bringing all Muslims to a clear realization of these facts and in enabling them to develop and implement the appropriate public law of Islam for today.

My trust in God leads me to believe that current efforts to implement the public law of shari’a will fail because they are harmful to the best interests of Islam and the Muslims. These efforts will fail because the public law of shari’a is fundamentally inconsistent with the realities of modern life. This is my firm conviction as a Muslim. My only concern is to avoid the human suffering which is likely to be caused by this doomed endeavor. May this book, by the grace of God, contribute to minimizing that suffering.

** 25—The Problem of ‘Ulama’

Alhaji Adeleke Dirisu Ajijola

Islamic reformers in Nigeria are divided in numerous factions, some of them liberal and most of them not. The more moderate reformers tend to be members of the political elite, which has ruled Nigeria for much of the independence period through military dictatorship; their religious liberalism does not always carry over into their political beliefs.[454]$$$ By contrast, Alhaji Adeleke Dirisu Ajijola (Nigeria, born 1932), an attorney and prolific author on Islamic themes, espouses reform in both the political and religious arenas. In this text, Ajijola forcefully defends the right of all Muslims to interpret religious doctrine, contesting the monopoly of the ‘ulama’ (religious scholars).

The ‘ulcmai’ in Islam simply form a category of citizens specialized in Islamic humanistic culture and little knowledge of Muslim law. Those who are advanced in Islamic legal studies are given the name offuqaha’ or jurists. Normally disputes or cases pertaining to religious matter may be referred to them.

It must, however, be noted that ‘ulanai’ are not what clerics are in Christian communities or in any other religions, for in Islam, there is neither clergy nor an intermediary between man and God.

But today in Nigeria, the ‘ulcmai’ have taken over as the leaders of Muslim communities—a job they are not equipped to handle properly. It must be conceded that the survival of Islamic learning in the present-day Nigeria is due to their uncompromising efforts. Credit must also be given to them for religious education.

Nevertheless, at the present time they are giving wrong education to our young men and women, for any young person who devotes himself only to religious education as presently thought without incorporating professional

education as it is imparted today, is ill equipped for the struggle of life and the race for progress in fast-changing Nigeria.

Many of the ‘ulanai’ who have become Muslim leaders have themselves lost the true spirit of Islam. They do not have the ability to interpret the principles and law of Islam in the light of changing conditions. They have little juristic insight or practical wisdom. They lack the power of action and are utterly incapable of reducing the external and flexible principles of Islam from the book of God, and the teaching of the Prophet to the changing conditions of life.

On the contrary, they are obsessed with the past and addicted to uncritical acceptance and blind imitation of ancient dead Muslim jurists’ views, especially those of the Maliki school of [Islamic] law on all issues. Some of the so-called learned and highly [educated] government officials among the so-called qadis [Islamic judges] equate the Qur’an with the work of ancient jurists—with the consequence that whenever any problem arose, they did not turn to the divine book, the Holy Qur’an which is above the limitation of time and space, but instead devoted their attention to books produced by the ancient jurists who are men like themselves.

With great respect to the ancient jurists who have made great contributions to Islam, these men with all their great qualities were not apostles of God. Their wisdom and foresight could never transcend the limitations of their time and condition and varying circumstances of life of their age.

The teaching of these jurists, however wise and pious, are not at all capable of guiding the Muslim on the eve of the 21st century of the Christian era, at a time when the conditions as well as the practical fields of human activities have undergone a revolutionary change, which only God Almighty could know and which could not possibly have been foreseen centuries earlier by any person not endowed with prophetic insight and powers.

The ‘ulcmai’ were not equipped with the required instruments to proffer alternative lines of development. They were merely interested in condemning the evils of Western civilization without appreciating the good in it. This has led to inertia and inaction. They forget that the trend of events in the modern world cannot be countered with outdated logic, outworn argument; the ‘ulaw’ cannot gain anything by closing their eyes to the reality of modern Nigeria.

It is a pity that our ‘ulaw’ did not try seriously to comprehend the prevailing trends and the mental make-up of modern men and women in Nigeria. They are incapable of proffering solutions to the various complicated intellectual economic, political and practical problems that the new conditions of life have created for the Muslim of the present age. They merely go to Mecca without noticing the legal, economic and social evolution that is taking place in Saudi Arabia.

Even in the manner in which they are trying to explain, the teaching and law of Islam appear to be calculated to repel rather than attract the modern educated mind. Indeed some of their explanations are so crude that they are a disservice to Islam.

Many of these ‘ulcmai’ still live in the past. ‘Ulama’ were the standard bearers of Islamic learning and culture of the past, but because of deficiencies in their education they are incapable of leading and guiding modern Muslims in any spheres of life.

Their concern is to force Nigerian Muslims to apply the so-called Maliki school of law in all legal matters. To them this is the panacea solution to the problem facing the Muslims.

There are other groups of Muslims who have Western education and whose motto is to succeed in world affairs. These groups join other similar groups of nonMuslim religion [primarily Christianity] in controlling the intellectual, literary, economic and political affairs ofNigeria.

But unlike their non- Muslim counterparts who take active part in their religion, they are ignorant of the principles and essential features of Islam. They are alien to the spirit of Islamic culture and are unaware of the character of communal organization of Islam and its social law, except for its spark of faith in the recesses of their mind.

The Muslim in this group does not at all differ from a non-Muslim. When there is any conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims, they immediately condemn their fellow Muslims, branding them as intolerant. Yet, it is this group of Muslims that have Western education and possess intellectual, technical and practical power, and it is they alone, with non-Muslims of the other group, that possess the capacity and the strength to govern the affairs of Nigeria. The UnOma” and the Western-educated Muslims are diametrically opposed and often at loggerheads with each other. This is a dangerous situation which must be resolved in the interests of Islam. This situation is blamed on ‘ulmrni’ and Muslim leaders whose duty right at the onset of colonization ofNigeria was to bestir themselves and try to comprehend the principles and essential future of the new civilization of the West, and make the best use of their sons and daughters who acquired this education.

This should have avoided the present struggle between the stagnant and backward cultural position of Muslim leaders, the ‘ulama’, and the civilization of the West, which the Western-educated Muslims have acquired, throbbing with life and zeal with light of knowledge and the vigor of activities.

This problem can be solved only through the interpretation of the principle of Islamic theology and law in the light of changing conditions. The Muslims must go back to the Qur’an to find remedy to their problems.... But it is tragic that Nigerian ‘ulcmai’ seem to shun any such endeavors calling them to revert to the principal source of Islamic civilization to find solutions to Muslims’ problems.

To progress, the educated Muslim has to study the intellectual and scientific foundation on which the edifice of Western civilization has been raised.

With the help of ijtihad [Islamic interpretation], they should [seek] to persuade the Muslims to accept and press into service the useful practical knowledge and scientific discoveries that enable Western nations to achieve such remarkable material progress. They should fit these new instruments of progress in keeping with the principles of Islam, into the educational system and social life of Muslims.

Islam resolves the supposed conflicts between science and religion; it does not ask Muslims to ignore the law of nature and reject what is established through positive scientific observation and calculations. On the contrary, it exacts its followers to study the law of nature and derive benefits from them.

Rational speculation is the foundation of Islam. The Qur’an, which urges men to consider the universe for themselves, laid the foundation of scientific research. The Qur’an stresses scientific investigation by urging people to find out the secrets of creation for themselves. “Do they not consider how camels have been created, nor how the sky has been lifted, nor how the mountains have been created, not even how the earth has been flattened?” [Sura 88, Verses 17–20].

The Qur’an reconciles science and religion, [while] the stand accepted today as materialism appears to have reached its climax and has found itself in urgent need of spiritual values.

In order to awaken man’s faith in one God, it does not use miracles but ordinary faculty of human reason. Later on, in order to awaken belief in the prophets and in the divine revelations, Islam presents that great miracle known as the Qur’an (which in itself is both an understandable science and the intelligible word of God).

It does not expect that man should accept Islam with passive faith, without the active application of his intelligence. Rather, it invites him to understand it, to meditate on it to the limit which human intelligence and reason permit, and it challenges him to find a way to deny its superiority, or find a work which could be its equal (Sura 2, Verse 24).

The importance which is assigned to reason and difference of opinion in Islam is such that for the majority of Muslims, when there is an irreconcilable conflict between an alleged tradition and reason, the latter must prevail and the tradition must be rejected as spurious. Difference of opinion has been described by the Qur'an as a continuous aspect of human life and even as a purpose of creation. "And if thy Lord had willed, he verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they cease not to differ, save those on whom thy Lord hath mercy, and for that He did create them" (Sura 11, Verses 118–119). Now, a religion which has its basis in rational speculation, and which gives such a broad scope to reason, a religion that orders the use of all the faculties bestowed upon man by God, and consequently the one which is greatest of all, namely, his intelligence, how could such a religion be an obstacle in the way of science and philosophy?

When the courts and schools of Islam were lighthouses, when knowledge reached Europe which was at that time in the midst of the darkness of the Middle Ages; when the thoughts of Muslim philosophers reached such heights that they led the way for Western scholars; when Harun ar-Rashid [caliph, circa 763–809] required a school for the study of various sciences to be attached to each mosque; and when libraries rich in hundreds and thousands of books were opened to scholars all over the Islamic world, were the Muslims not the first to apply experimental methods, long before Francis Bacon [English scientist, 1561–1626] proclaimed their necessity?

The development of chemistry, of astronomy, the propagation of Greek science, the promotion of the study of medicine and the discovery of various physical laws— are not these to the credit of the Muslims?

It is an admitted fact that Muslims made notable contributions in the fields of mathematics, chemistry and physical sciences, the greatest being the use of

objective experiments to test the veracity of facts. The achievements of Jabir Ibn Hayyan (Geber) [Syrian scientist, 721- 776] were outstanding and constituted, until the eighteenth century, the foundation of modern chemistry. The name of the anthropologist and free thinker Abu ‘Uthman ‘Amr Ibn Bahr Al-Jahiz (died 869) is ranked amongst the most distinguished pioneers of this discipline. He was a radical theologian, whose books are still read for the elegance of his Arabic prose.

If this is so, then it is wrong to say as many Christians in Nigeria assume, that it is in the nature of Islamic religion to create obstacles in the way of the progress of science. Let us say instead that at times statesmanship was compelled, in order to preserve peace in certain territories, to repress currents of thoughts which the rulers believed could become dangerous to the public order, that political and sometimes personal struggles, rather than religious causes, have in the past determined the attitudes of theologians, lawmakers, traditionalists and philosophers.

It must, however, be recognized that even today in certain Muslim environments, there are strong objections to rational science and to modern industry. Such traditional Muslims remain strongly bound to their old traditions, based on their school of law.

Some Muslims are even filled with exaggerated fanaticisms. There are still jurists who are so attached to the literal expressions ofjuristic work which they regard as fundamental that they refuse to express an opinion when a new case appears for which no clue is to be found in these juristic work; or they try to keep the case in abeyance until they succeed in agreeing on a well-accepted opinion of one of their preferred authors—but it is not fair to accuse the spirit of Islam of rigidity and immobility, simply because of certain local situations and customs that are to be found in particular historical conditions today, or because of the over-rigid mentality of certain Muslim groups who accepted the juristic work as divine law.

But, unfortunately, many Muslim leaders in Nigeria have not adopted scientific methods, but follow blindly the views of the ancient jurists, particularly those of the Maliki school of law. They argue only that they want to establish an Islamic way of life; they forget that this way of life must relate to the reality of life in Nigeria, otherwise this ideal will remain a mere slogan and deception.

The Islamic way of life to me means scientific advancement and progress coupled with Islamic principles which should make Muslims remain spiritually and morally human beings and not machines.

The Nigerian Muslims like their non-Muslims brothers are engaged in a titanic struggle against poverty, hunger and disease. They know that their lot can be improved only by superior knowledge which science and technology bring with them.

At the beginning of Islam, there was cross-fertilization of knowledge existing in the Orient and Occident. It is an interesting fact of history that at that time the stimulation for scientific development flowed from Muslims to non-Muslims and today it must flow from non-Muslims to Muslims.

I do not think that it is derogatory to learn science and technology from a non-Muslim, but in learning new things from others, the Muslim should retain those good things that are wonderful and beautiful in Islamic teaching, doctrines that are capable of removing friction amongst individuals and nations.

The Muslim should have an open mind and an open heart in adopting good things from other people. Muslim scientists must develop critical minds and use initiative, independence and persistence when dealing with European scientific discovery.

European scientists were able to lay the foundation of technological and industrial power because they devoted themselves to further inquiry and

research. Muslim scientists similarly have to acquire knowledge with continuous and painstaking efforts at extending the frontiers of knowledge.

Today is the age of science and the civilization of science. Anyone desirous of living an honorable life cannot escape the use of modern science. The quicker the ‘ulama’ and Muslims enter the age of science the better.

The basic problems of Nigeria today in the field of science and technology are associated with a search for greater productivity and a higher standard of living for its populace. This is why Muslims must lay emphasis on scientific education with a bias towards Islamic studies.

*** Why Islamic Law Should be Applied

Modern man is threatened by a world created by himself; he is faced with the conversion of mind to naturalism, dogmatic secularism and opposition to belief in the Transcendent.

The true remedy, therefore, for the ills that affect mankind and threaten to overwhelm it today and tomorrow is for man to turn to God with single-minded purpose and make his peace with Him, having sincerely determined that in all matters, whatever, His guiding rule shall be....

That is why the Muslims all over the world want the application of Islamic civil law. Islamic civil law sets forth and places at man’s disposal a most effective and potent means of achieving the purpose of life. It is the best of all God’s numberless bounties bestowed upon man; it is indispensable for the beneficent growth of man in the epoch now unfolding before him....

But, the real question is not whether Islamic civil law should be applied or not, which all Muslims accept, but whether Nigeria should continue to apply classical juristic work without any modification or whether Islamic civil law in

Nigeria should be applied within the primary source of Islamic law, i.e. the Qur’an and tradition of the Prophet....

The problem of Muslims in Nigeria is that many of the so-called Arabists believe that juristic work is so comprehensive that it provides solutions to all human problems for all times.

But, with all the comprehensiveness of the juristic works, this system is after all an individual interpretation and as such cannot claim any finality. Did the founders of our schools of laws ever claim finality for their reasoning and interpretation? “Never.”

The teaching of the Qur’an that life is a process of progressive creation necessitates that each generation, guided but unhampered by the work of its predecessors, should be permitted to solve its own problems.

Unfortunately many Muslims and non-Muslims regard the systems [prescribed] by various juristic school as the shari’a [Islamic law], although the juristic works constitute a long development of interpretation of the term ijtihad or reasoning. But this reasoning, to be accepted, must always rest on the texts of the Qur’an and the accepted sunna [practices of the Prophet]. But this juristic reasoning is always apt to vary from jurist to jurist and from time to time. The variety of opinion within juristic reasoning implies on the one hand a wealth ofjuridical [sources] and the remarkable techniques of interpreting the shari’a to solve the problems of their days. This, however, must be subordinated to the binding texts of the shari’a. A particular juristic notion may be rigid or may be wrong, nor should any juristic school or group of schools be identified with the Holy Qur’an and Prophet of Islam.

The principles in the Qur’an have great potentialities of expansion and development by interpretation from age to age to meet the changing conditions of man. It seeks to guide its followers in secular as well as spiritual

affairs. It gave the world a sound conception of state, society and law unrivaled by any other religion or civilization.

Today it is recognized that Islamic civil law is a living force and, progressing in many Muslim countries within its accepted limits imposed by the divine command, is capable of meeting the challenge of the modern age.

Islamic civil law takes the whole of human conduct for its field. The verse conspectus of the jurists' work was not contained in Qur'an or the sunna. The jurists used their reason to interpret the law to solve the problem of their days. The problem facing the Muslim today could hardly have been conceived by the classical writers. Why then should the Muslims of today consider the jurists' views as divine law, and as such regard it as basically immutable?

The Qur'an and the sunna have always been regarded by the early doctors of Muslim laws as providing them a ground work of legal principles which far from leaving no scope for thought and legislative activities, had enabled them to evolve a practical legal system. The most significant is that there is no comparative system of civil law even in the so-called developed countries that can rival the excellency of Islamic civil law....

The Muslims of the present age must find solutions to their problems from the Holy Qur'an and the sunna. This they can only do by exerting their energy and reasoning in conducting research into the Holy Qufan and interpreting it in the light of modern scientific knowledge. But the Muslims will never develop as long as they blindly follow and accept as final the view ofjuristic works which were meant to solve the problems of 700 to 1300, which in my view is not relevant to the problems of the Muslims on the eve of 21st century of the Christian era.

It is tragic for the Muslims of Nigeria that Muslim leaders, particularly the Arabists occupying high official positions, have themselves lost the true spirit of Islam. They do not have the ability to interpret the principles and laws of Islam in the light of the changing conditions.... On the contrary, they are

obsessed with the past and addicted to uncritical acceptance and blind imitation of antique Muslim juristic works as a final authority on Islam....

I am not advocating for the total rejection ofjuristic opinion, but I am opposed to following them blindly as if they are the final authority on Islam. The present generation of Muslims may gain from their work on how they have interpreted the shari’a to meet and solve the problems of their days. But present- day Muslims must never regard juristic reasoning as final. They must use their own intelligence to interpret the shari’a to meet the problems of today.

** 26—The Evolution and Devolution of Religious Knowledge

Abdul-Karim Soroush

Abdul-Karim Soroush (Iran, born 1945), a pharmacologist and philosopher educated in Iran and England, was until recently a dean at the Research Institute for Human Sciences in Tehran and “one of the most prominent speakers in Iran in the 1990s,” lecturing at mosques, universities, and over the radio.[455]$$$ Soroush used this prominent position to argue forcefully for a rethinking of Islam’s relationship to the non-Muslim West. In particular, his studies in the philosophy of science have led him to suggest that Islamic nations can and must allow scientific advance, including relatively free conditions for researchers, and that religion can be studied “rationally” like other phenomena.[456]$$$ In this essay, Soroush argues that religion is divine but religious interpretation is human, fallible, and even sociologically determined. Such positions have put Soroush at odds with other Islamic scholars in Iran. In the mid-1990s, Soroush received death threats for his theological positions, was physically attacked on two occasions, has been banned from public lectures, and may lose his job.[457]$$$

The science of nature is a human endeavor to understand nature, and the science of religion is a human endeavor to understand religion. All understanding assumes suppositions and entails “categorization,” that is, subsuming the particular under universal categories and concepts. Understanding religion is no exception. It is preceded by certain assumptions and principles which are necessary conditions for its intelligibility and interpretation.

This seemingly Kantian position is more than familiar today, but a century ago not only was it a blasphemous view concerning religion, but a dubious one even in the case of natural sciences. The positivism of [John Stuart] Mill [English philosopher, 1806–1873] and [Francis] Bacon [English philosopher, 1561–1626] based itself on the idea that “brute facts” were available and only needed an open eye to be captured by observation. But later developments in the philosophy of science demonstrated clearly, to their utter disappointment, that these “brute facts” existed nowhere except in the barren lands of wild hallucinations of speculators. Even in simple inductive research, where the regular association of successive events is under scrutiny, one cannot be sure of the complete list of the relevant factors nor of the right aspects of the events subject to generalization. In all these cases one has to be equipped with a preassumed picture of the scene of research in order to know where to begin and where to end, what to include and explain and what to exclude as irrelevant or unimportant. These schemes are not sacrosanct; they can be criticized, modified, refined or perhaps redefined, but two things are absolutely certain about them: number one, their absolute inevitability in the field of research and for the purpose of understanding; number two, their transcendence and independence relative to the world of experiment.

Now, more important than all that is their impact on the whole context of the final product of the research. Preassumptions are not like chemical catalysts whose function is only to facilitate an otherwise slow chemical reaction, but rather like a matchmaker whose mediation determines who marries whom

and shapes the whole structure of the ensuing family, within the conceivable and available possibilities of the age. The main and radical difference between positivist and post-positivist philosophy is the recognition of the fact, on the part of philosophers, that observation does not stand alone; it is theory-laden. In other words it is, of necessity, preceded by theories on the one hand and colored by the same theories on the other. Interestingly enough, scientific instruments which seem to provide us with careful observation and measurements, such as microscopes and nuclear magnetic resonance devices, are nothing but complex theoretical assumptions arranged and objectified in such a way as to allow us to put certain questions to nature and obtain answers therefrom.

The theory-ladenness of observations has been shown to be a fact of the history of science, as well as an implicit requirement of the method of science, that is, the logic of the understanding of nature. This important and pivotal insight, permeating the whole body of science, has been able to link areas as far apart from each other as logic, history, and the sociology of science, re-molding them into a unified whole, namely the contemporary post-positivistic philosophy of science.

In the same sense and exactly for the same reasons, one can say that the text does not stand alone, it does not carry its own meaning on its shoulders, it needs to be situated in a context, it is theory-laden, its interpretation is in flux, and presuppositions are as actively at work here as elsewhere in the field of understanding. Religious texts are no exception. Therefore their interpretation is subject to expansion and contraction according to the assumptions preceding them and/or the questions enquiring them. These assumptions can be of very different nature, ranging from philosophical, historical, and theological to the more specific assumptions such as linguistic and sociological ones. (These are part of the worldview of the age, which need not and do not usually enter the mind through formal education, but are utilized inadvertently and fluently.)

Now, since presuppositions are age-bound, can change and do change in fact, religious knowledge, or the science of religion which is the product of comprehending it, will be in continuous flux, and since it is only through those presuppositions that one can hear the voice of revelation—hence the

religion itself is silent—and since the interpretation of the text is social by nature and depends on the community of experts, like all learned activities it will be an independent dynamic entity, abstracting from individual interpreters; containing right and wrong, certain and dubious ideas—the wrong ones being as important as the right ones from the evolutionary point of view. It is a branch of knowledge, no less, no more.

The outcome of the preceding concise arguments can be briefly listed as follows:

1. Religion, or revelation for that matter, is silent.

2. The science of religion is relative, that is, relative to presuppositions.

3. The science of religion is age-bound, because presuppositions are.

4. Revealed religion itself may be true and free from contradictions, but the science of religion is not necessarily so.

5. Religion may be perfect or comprehensive, but not so for the science of religion.

6. Religion is divine, but its interpretation is thoroughly human and this-worldly.

That is the story of religion. All this implies that religion is always surrounded by a host of contemporaneous data and deliberations, in constant give and take with them, the interpretation of which remains constant so long as these external elements are constant; once they change, the change will be reflected in the understanding of religion as well. Therefore it is not because of conspiracy or aberration of mind or illegitimate manipulation or extravagant interpretations that the science of religion changes. Rather, it is

the natural product of the evolution of human understanding in non-religious fields and contexts that forces religion to be comprehended differently. And as mentioned above, external factors are responsible not only for the change, but also for the constancy of religious interpretation throughout the ages.

The worldview of classical humanity—its view of nature, man, God, history, language, society, happiness, certainty, reason, knowledge and the like—was reflected in its understanding of religion in the same manner and to the same extent as the worldview of modern humanity has exerted its influence on the science of religion. Each interpretation, of course, seems as natural and as true as the other to the party concerned.

This rough statement of the position of the “evolution and devolution of religious knowledge” may seem a pretty straightforward a priori piece of epistemology, not unfamiliar to hermeneuticists and philosophers of science. But it has two serious shortcomings. First, it may not look convincing or revealing enough to more historically minded scholars, who may ask for more historical data and a posteriori justification in support of the suggested doctrine. Second, it may seem a flatly false and even blasphemous idea about religion, whose revelatory nature, according to true believers, guarantees its constancy, relevance, and truth throughout history. Relativity and change are characteristics of man- made systems whose application to divine revelation would be utterly misplaced. In addition to that, it seems as if the doctrine puts religion at the mercy of extra- religious principles whose truth and accuracy are not certain, compromising the whole message of religion, whose main mission is to offer fallible humanity an infallible source of certainty and information.

Both questions are too complex to be treated here in depth and in full. But certain remarks are in order.

First, as to the demand of historians. The conflict between science and religion in Europe from the 16th century onwards is a very telling case. At first glance science made mincemeat of religion, disproved it in an unsurpassed manner, and demonstrated its reactionary nature forever.

(This is clearly a positivistic orientation that makes the meaning transparent for the unarmed observer.) But for more serious thinkers, religious and otherwise, and from an epistemological standpoint, it was a matchless opportunity to uncover the essence of those epoch- making champions. It showed at least that the clergy, trying in earnest to comprehend revelation, had generously and undeliberately utilized their medieval and premedieval worldviews to acquire the “true” interpretation of the Book, and of course they could not have done otherwise. All they should have realized, and it was later realized thoroughly indeed, thanks to the blessed conflict, was that a new constellation of suppositions was also conceivable in which religion might seem more consistent with the wisdom of the age. Reinterpretations began, and they were as we now know, nothing but revisions made in light of extra- religious shifts. It was seldom the case that words were found to be mistranslated from Greek or Syriac. Rather, debates on the language of religion revealed the depth of the indebtedness of textual interpretation to the implicit principles and presuppositions of the believers. It should be obvious by now that it is not enough for an interpreter to give simply a consistent interpretation of a whole text; interpretation must also be consistent with the received wisdom of the age.

Horrifying as this might sound, one has to notice that this has been the actual practice of all serious religious thinkers of all ages. In Iran, for instance, [Molla] Sadroddin Shirazi [1571–1640] and his followers are proud that they have successfully reconciled shari’a [Islamic law], ‘itfan [mysticism], and philosophy—in short, revelation and reason. This can only occur through a reinterpretation of shari’a according to the principles of philosophy, that is, to subsume it under philosophical categories. Some might think that Sadroddin’s rational justification of the dogmas of religion is the proper essence of his efforts to reconcile reason and revelation. But to put matters this way is to put the cart before the horse. In order to justify a statement rationally, one has to rationalize it first, that is, define its concept and categories in such a way as to render them liable to rational justification. Take the case of bodily resurrection (ma’ad). Sadroddin says quite explicitly that it does not become a true philosopher to be content with a simple belief in ma’ad; rather he must secure a rational understanding thereof. He must accept, for instance, an Aristotelian definition of the body as consisting of form and matter, and he must also accept Sadroddin’s principle that the form, rather than the matter, is the primary constituent element of

the body, in order to justify bodily resurrection in a rational metaphysical way (bodies being resurrected in form rather than in matter). In other words, philosophical understanding of the text precedes the philosophical justification of it.

Therefore, the desired reconciliation between religion and philosophy cannot be purchased except at the expense of one being colored by the other; that is, only a conceptually philosophical religion (or, more meticulously put, a philosophized comprehension of a religious text) can be reconciled with philosophy, and a conceptual mystification of the religion would always precede the mystical justification of it, and so forth.

Mystical and philosophical Islam are but two conceivable kinds of Islam, better articulated and refined than others at the present, but in practice there are virtually innumerable types of Islam, all sharing the common feature of being in balance with the believers' extra-religious system of thought. Now, disputing the validity of those mystical and philosophical interpretations of the text is missing the point completely. These are parts and moments of the history of religion; all science is a mixture of right and wrong ideas. Despite the fact that every scientist tries hard to secure hard facts and true ideas, science itself, transcending the beliefs and opinions of this or that particular scientist, cannot but consist of errors, misunderstandings, dubious hypotheses, arguments and counterarguments, side by side with firmly established facts and conclusions. To see only the good side of the story is to distort history. There, defeats are as important as victories, and both are of the same value as far as the evolutionary life of science is concerned. The science of religion, to repeat the same point again, is no exception.

As another example take the case of tafsir bira'y, that is, the interpretation of the Qur'an according to one's wishes and views (ra'y comes from ru'ya, meaning "to see," so that "view" is the exact rendering of the word). Muslims have been severely warned against this kind of interpretation, and a tradition of the Prophet has it that he who interprets the Qur'an in conformity with his views, his dwelling place (in the hereafter) will be filled with fire.

Controversies over the exact meaning and applicability of tafsir-bi-ra’y are never-ending. Everybody claims to have avoided it while at the same time accusing others of committing the sin of subjecting the Qur’an to his own views, and rightly so, and no one really shows the way out. It has proved to be a hard nut to crack. In our own time ‘Allama Mohammad Husayn Tabataba’i [1903–1981], the author of Tafsir al-Mizan [The Scale, an Analysis of the Qur’an, 20 volumes, 1954–1972], suffered from the same charge despite his own warning in the introduction to his commentary against mixing up tatbiq (conforming) and tafsir (commenting).

The gracious advice of some of the uninitiated, that the objective commentator accomplishes the impossible task of wiping from mind every idea and opinion, except perhaps grammar and vocabulary, should be taken with a grain of salt. It is impossible because the history of religion demonstrates clearly that no one has ever been able to comply with this advice. Even more disastrously, to do so would be undesirable as well, because it would render the whole task of interpretation unrealizable. One has, at the least, to take a position as to whether God speaks in figurative language or not. Surely this position cannot be derived from the texts of religion themselves, or we will be trapped in a vicious circle. Therefore the position and its negation are both views (ra’y) to be adopted prior to the act of interpretation. So how are we to understand the threatening warning about objective and opinion-free interpretation of the Qur’an? Isn’t it the case that all interpretations are theoryladen? If so, then isn’t it better to take the warning as meaning simply not to base our interpretation on unsubstantiated theories? Yes. That is all. Therefore, everything hinges upon the extratextual positions again.

Tabataba’i, in his commentary, names theologians, philosophers, Sufis, and modernists as four groups who did not take care to extract the exact meaning of the text, but rather tried to impose their own views upon it, and committed ta’wil [claiming an internal meaning in contrast to the outward meaning], which is the paradigmatic case of tafsir bi-ra’y, in order to make verses of the Qur’an conform to their positions. In the case of modernists he specifically mentions the ta’wil

they made about ‘assh (throne), kursi (chair), lowh (tablet), qalam (pen), interpreting these terms so as to imply material things (Tabataba’i, p. 7). He goes on to say that all these methods have one serious shortcoming in common, namely, imposing extratextual scientific and/or philosophical meanings on verses, thereby converting some of the literal meanings of the words into metaphors and some of the direct meanings into ta’wil.

His own method, according to Tabataba’i, is to collate one part of the text to another in order to construct the meaning through this hermeneutical circle. But he gives us at least one explicit hint as to the implicit foundations of his method, namely, that the language of the Qur’an is not to be taken too materialistically, because neither the materiality nor the actual structure of things are included in the meanings of words, only their functions are intended. Take the word “scale” (mizan), for instance, whose meaning does not include “having pans.” Digital scales are scales too. Perhaps future generations will witness totally different kinds of scales that we cannot dream of today. But one thing is certain: so long as something functions as a scale, it can be called a scale, no matter what it is made from or how it works. This paves the way, according to Tabataba’i, for us to grasp the true meaning of words like mizan (scale), lowh (tablet), and arsh (throne) in the Qur’an, and for us to avoid repeating the mistakes of those superficial theologians and traditionalists who took the words to imply familiar material things. The idea, of course, comes from Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali [philosopher, 1058–1111] (and later [Jalal al-Din] Rumi [poet, 1207–1273] and Fayz Kashani [Mulla Muhsin, circa 1598–1680]). Al-Ghazzali is adamant in his Mishkat al-Anwar [The Niche of Lights] that the word “light” (nur), for instance, literally implies the immaterial light, and that its application to familiar physical light is entirely metaphorical.

Again, disputing the validity of these conclusions is totally irrelevant. What matters from the vantage point of epistemology is to notice the lofty suppositions that are at work here, and the testimony of one of the great members of the dynasty of commentators, namely, Tabataba’i, about the history of tafsir [textual analysis] (indeed, the whole history of religion) as being tampered with by the uneducated views and improper wishes of mystics, philosophers, theologians, traditionalists and modernists

alike. Modifying tone and terms, we can state the same fact as follows: the science of religion has been under continuous construction and reconstruction by various commentators and interpreters during its long history, and religion is nothing but the history of the science of religion, of course.

We come to the conclusion then that the whole history of the sincere efforts of commentators to liberate Qur’anic commentary from the infiltration of external ideas have ended in one sharp and important result, namely, the practical unavoidability of such infiltration, together with its epistemological inevitability. In other words, it is in practice unavoidable because it is epistemologically inevitable.

Another example may serve the purpose better. The commentator Tabataba’i, who is at the same time also a metaphysician of the first rank, tries laboriously to show that the principle of causality is endorsed by the Qur’an, whereas Jalal al-Din Rumi, the great Iranian mystic poet of the 7th century A.H., points exactly in the opposite direction, that is, that indeterminism is the lesson to be drawn from the Qur’an:

<quote>

The prophets came in order to cut the cord of causes: They flung their miracles at Saturn.

The whole of the Qur’an consists in the cutting off of causes. Its theme is the glory of the poor and the destruction of Abu Lahab [early enemy of Islam].

In like manner, from the beginning of the Qur’an to the end, is the abandonment of causes and means. (Mathnavi [Couplets], volume 3, verses 2517, 2520, 2525)

</quote>

Also of some interest is the criticism that Tabataba’i levels against [Mulla Mohammad Baqer] Majlesi, the great traditionalist (muhaddith) of the 11th century A.H. [1627–1698 A.D.] and the compiler of Bihar al-anwar [Seas of Light] in 110 volumes. Majlesi’s persuasion was anti-philosophical—hence his rejection of words like ruh [spirit] and nafs [soul] as referring to immaterial entities. Tabataba’i takes issue with him not on the literal meanings of words but on one of the main suppositions he imputes to Majlesi, namely, the idea that the language of religion is addressed only to laymen. According to Tabataba’i, this is not the case, that some of the sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his progeny are addressed to experts as well, so that one must look at them with a trained eye. Tabataba’i thinks that Majlesi’s mistrust of philosophy and philosophers has led him to infer incorrect and superficial meanings from some of the deepest and most exalted texts of Islam.

The case of mutashabihat is even more telling. According to SuraAl-‘Imran (Sura 3, Verse 7), the verses of the Qur’an are divided into two major classes, muhkamat and mutashabihat, roughly referring to verses having certain and uncertain implications, respectively. Few verses in the Qur’an are as controversial as this one. Commentators’ major controversial revolve around two central points: first, the exact meaning of these terms; second, the secret and the expediency of those “ambiguous” verses revealed to the Prophet. Some have argued that only the disconnected characters in the beginning of each sura are mutashabih, and all else is muhkam. Some have held that all verses covering resurrection and the attributes of God are mutashabih; still others have maintained that only verses concerning practical rituals and observances are muhkam; others consider only abrogated verses to be mutashabih; and one can find various other views as well.

As to the second point, namely, the question why the Qur’an contains such unclear verses, one comes across many curious hypotheses. These are but a few of them:

1. Mutashabihat are there in order for the believers to be distinguished from unbelievers. Faith cannot be but blind. True believers approve of all verses of the Qur’an, despite the fact that some of them offer no clear interpretation, but nonbelievers rely on their own reason and reject verses with unjustifiable or unclear meanings.

2. Mutashabihat are instrumental in mobilizing and cultivating reason, which is so dear to the Creator; hence their importance and their need to be incorporated in the Qur’an.

3. Mutashabihat attract the ill-hearted to the Qur’an in order to find materials for their devilish purposes; but this very act may sometimes lead them to the right path and may enlighten their hearts through the study of the Qur’an as a whole, both mutashabihat and muhkamat.

4. Religion and revelation are intended for all people, learned and otherwise; therefore, some very exalted ideas have to be conveyed in a very simple language, in the process mutilating facts and statements. Mutashabihat are verses in which language is under severe strain, due to the loftiness of the guest and the tininess of the nest (to borrow an analogy from Rumi).

As can be seen, none of these views really deals with the requirements of textual interpretation; therefore all of them miss the important point that the presence of mutashabihat in the Qur’an is something inherent in the text, emerging in the context of interpretation, and has nothing to do with testing unbelievers and so on. The issue of mutashabihat is not confined to the Qur’an alone. All texts, especially revealed ones, should be expected to contain muhkamat as well as mutashabihat, whose existence is the clear cause and effect of the expansion and contraction of the science of religion. Once one looks carefully at the process of understanding texts, which is always to subject to presuppositions, the true meaning of and reason for their presence in the Qur’an becomes evident. Interestingly enough, the Qur’an itself does not give any clue as to how mutashabihat can be determined and

distinguished from other verses, and the whole history of Islam clearly shows that virtually every verse of the Qur’an has been suspected at one time or another of being mutashabih, which is clear evidence in favor of the suggestion that all this stems from the nature of interpretation and interpreters’ presuppositions.

As an instance of a non-linguistic presupposition, I may point to the problems one expects religion to solve—in brief, the question of expectations. Now this has got a very long and well-known theological ancestry reaching back to the vexed question of why people are in need of prophets. This is clearly an extra-religious question, the answer to which can have a profound impact on the way one interprets the text. Theologians who think that people cannot lead a happy life, individually and socially, without receiving guidance from prophets, naturally expect religions to advise people not only how to purify their souls and worship their creator, but also how to marry, wash, clean, eat, transact business, hire employees, lend money, punish criminals, and—above all—rule the country. These expectations of course induce one to search the text carefully and meticulously, lest one miss the minutest point alluding faintly to these anticipated matters, taking every hint seriously and building an entire edifice out of it. This is of course the dominant view in the Muslim world today.

But to those theologians who think otherwise, the content of the text is to be divided into two parts, essentials and accidentals, accidentals being functions of the cultural, social, and historical environment of the delivery of the main message, and more generally those points and allusions which are considered to be beyond the proper field of expectations. There are many hadiths (sayings of the Prophet) concerning treatment of diseases, say, but nobody really considers them essential to Islam because that is not what makes people needy of prophets. People themselves can find the facts about diseases and drugs through trial and error. If that is so, then what about philosophy, economics, politics, and the like? Are these also beyond the proper field of the mission of prophets? These are very crucial and hotly debated questions among Muslim intellectuals today, but the main issue sometimes remains untouched or unattended, namely the extra-

textuality of the question of expectations. These problems are not to be decided on the strength of text and tradition or historical facts. On the contrary, tradition and the text should be explained in light of the expectations.

Treating these questions requires a good deal of philosophy, politics, sociology, and history, and that is what gives the science of religion the flavor of the age. That also explains why the true ijtihad(rational adjudication) in disciplines such asfiqh [Islamic jurisprudence] cannot materialize unless a true ijtihadin first principles has taken place beforehand. This, in turn, shows why fiqh has been so stagnant in religious seminaries in recent centuries. Since fiqh is a “consumer” science, its stagnation is due to the lack of dynamism on the part of the “producer” disciplines like economics, political philosophy, and ‘Ilm al-Imran (the sociology of Ibn Khaldun [13321406]). These constitute the relevant reasons for the stagnation. The story of the causes is different, of course.

The status and significance of religious revivalism and intellectualism can now be better understood. Broadly speaking, revivalism can transpire in two different manners, positive and negative. Negative revivalism consists in purging and purifying current religious understanding of alien elements and doing justice to the more neglected dimensions thereof—the great champion of the field being al-Ghazzali, no doubt. Positive revivalism, by contrast, is more attentive to and more deeply concerned with the extra-religious factors and foundations required for and relevant to the time-bound comprehension of the text. The most prominent representative of this orientation is Muhammad Iqbal [India, 1877–1938], whose main complaint was directed to the dominance of Greek thought over Islamic culture. Both al-Ghazzali and Iqbal serve the same purpose, of course, namely, to keep the mission of religion alive. The difference is due to the first-order and second-order epistemological outlooks of the two forms of reform.

This brings me to the end of my treatment of the first question. But before leaving this part of the discussion, I would like to emphasize the point that religious reform in our time cannot succeed unless one is vigilant to the

continuous new developments taking place in the different areas of thought. Mottos like “back to the roots” or “try the neglected sources” or “find a brave inspired thinker” can be very misleading. No reform can take place without re-shuffling the traditional suppositions, and no reshuffling will be forthcoming unless one is well acquainted with both revelation and ideas developed outside the sphere of revelation. The truths uncovered inside and outside the sphere of revelation sooner or later approach an equilibrium. To combat the stagnation one has to mobilize the external sources. Muslims’ decadent understanding of the sacred texts was a consequence of the decadent civilizational, cultural, and social climate, rather than vice versa.

Now as to the second charge, namely, betraying the sacredness of the text, sacrificing its eternal message at the doorstep of the vagaries of the age, and undermining the certitude of faith, I’d better start with a short dialogue which took place recently between a friend and myself. “What is your position on the Islamization of knowledge?” he asked me quite seriously, and then added in a jocular way, “Perhaps you opt for a scientization of Islam rather than Islamization of knowledge?” “Neither of the two,” I replied. “I opt for the humanization of religion.” That was my reply, and in fact it is the basic foundation on which the whole edifice of “The Evolution and Devolution of Religious Knowledge” is erected. Revealed religion, of course, is divine, but not so for the science of religion, which is a thoroughly human production and construction. It is human in the sense that it is imprinted by virtually all characteristics of human beings, both noble and mean.

Rationality, prejudice, egoism, truth-seeking, obliviousness, greed, fallibility, partiality, complacency, easygoingness, acquisitiveness, and the like all have their due share in the science of religion and all influence it in one way or another. True, the revelation is divine, but what about the interpretation of the revelation?

The interpretation no doubt may be conjectural, fallible, changeable, partial, fallacious, one-sided, misguided, prejudiced, culture-bound, and incomplete, but this is what the Source of Revelation has ordained it to be. We are fallible human beings and that is our lot from Truth. The case of religion is no better than the case of nature. There also we are captives of our humanity. No human science is sacred, the science of religion being no exception. But of

course, the revelation itself is different. Therefore the dichotomy of the revelation/interpretation should be kept intact. We are all immersed in an ocean of interpretations, and whenever one tries to offer the “true” interpretation of the text, he makes himself even more engaged. To capture the true intention of the Revelator is an ideal toward which all of us approach collectively, but in the end we may discover that the true intention of the Revelator was nothing but the collective endeavor of mankind itself. Here the action and its telos coincide. This is not to desacralize the sacred or to secularize religion; it is the simple and at the same time subtle instance of the naturalization of the supernatural, or if you like, the manifestation of the supernatural as and in the natural.

The secular view is blind to the supernatural, but here we look at human interpretation as revelation descended anew, from the heaven of the text to the earth of interpretation through the angel of the reason of the age, after being revealed to the Prophet once in the past. In other words we look at revelation in the mirror of interpretation, much as a devout scientist looks at creation in the mirror of nature. Of progress we are not certain, but evolution is certainly guaranteed.

Now there is a sharp difference between faith and knowledge. Faith is always personal and private, and firmer or less firm, but knowledge cannot be but collective, public, and fallible. A higher-order look at the historical process of the evolution of knowledge shows us that despite the firm belief of individual believers in their own interpretation of revelation, the caravan of knowledge, informed by all kinds of complexities and contrarieties, is breaking its way ahead, feeding on the controversies, competitions, and cooperations of its members, irrespective of their individual desires and faiths. Our lot is nothing but to hope. That is what Jalal al-Din Rumi has exhorted us:

<quote>

The merchant of timid disposition and frail spirit Neither gains nor loses in his quest.

Nay, he suffers loss, for he is deprived and despicable.

Only he that is an eater of flames will find the light.

Inasmuch as affairs turn upon hope,

The affairs of religion are most worthy.

Here it is most permitted to knock at the door.

Naught but hope is possible. (Mathnavi, volume 3, verses 3084–3092)

</quote>

Once that is understood, the way for religious democracy and the transcendental unity of religions, which are predicated on religious pluralism, will have been paved— these being but two fruits of that auspicious tree.

<quote>

Seest thou not how God sets forth a parable: a goodly word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed and whose branches reach to the heavens. It brings forth its fruits at all times by the leave of its Lord. (Qur’an, Sura 14, Verses 24–25)

</quote>

* Part VI— Progress

** 27—The Principle of Movement in the Structure of Islam

Muhammad Iqbal

Muhammad Iqbal (India, 1877–1938)—poet, philosopher, lawyer—is widely considered the spiritual father of Pakistan. His presidential address to the Muslim League in 1930 helped to launch the movement toward the partition of British South Asia into two nations, the predominantly Muslim Pakistan and the predominantly Hindu India.[458] As important as his political legacy is Iqbal's position as "a driving force for Islamic modernism in South Asia."[459] Iqbal leveled sharp criticism against the rigidity of traditional religious exegesis and called for a renewed emphasis on "movement" in the interpretation of Islam.

As a cultural movement Islam rejects the old static view of the universe, and reaches a dynamic view. As an emotional system of unification it recognizes the worth of the individual as such, and rejects blood-relationship as a basis of human unity. Blood-relationship is earth-rootedness. The search for a purely psychological foundation of human unity becomes possible only with the perception that all human life is spiritual in its origin. Such a perception is creative of fresh loyalties without any ceremonial to keep them alive, and makes it possible for man to emancipate himself from the earth. Christianity which had originally appeared as a monastic order was tried by Constantine [Roman emperor, reigned 306–337] as a system of unification. Its failure to work as such a system drove the Emperor Julian [reigned 361363] to return to the old gods of Rome on which he attempted to put philosophical interpretations. A modern historian of civilization has thus depicted the state of the civilized world about the time when Islam appeared on the stage of History:

<quote>

It seemed then that the great civilization that it had taken four thousand years to construct was on the verge of disintegration, and that mankind was likely to return to that condition of barbarism where every tribe and sect was against the next, and law and order were unknown. The old tribal sanctions had lost their power. Hence the old imperial methods would no longer operate. The new sanctions created by Christianity were working division and destruction instead of unity and order. It was a time fraught with tragedy. Civilization, like a gigantic tree whose foliage had overarched the world and whose branches had borne the golden fruits of art and science and literature, stood tottering, its trunk no longer alive with the flowing sap of devotion and reverence, but rotted to the core, riven by the storms of war, and held together only by the cords of ancient customs and laws, that might snap at any moment. Was there any emotional culture that could be brought in to gather mankind once more into unity and to save civilization? This culture must be something of a new type, for the old sanctions and ceremonials were dead, and to build up others of the same kind would be the work of centuries.

</quote>

The writer then proceeds to tell us that the world stood in need of a new culture to take the place of the culture of the throne, and the systems of unification which were based on blood-relationship. It is amazing, he adds, that such a culture should have arisen from Arabia just at the time when it was most needed. There is, however, nothing amazing in the phenomenon. The world-life intuitively sees its own needs, and at critical moments defines its own direction. This is what, in the language of religion, we call prophetic revelation. It is only natural that Islam should have flashed across the consciousness of a simple people untouched by any of the ancient cultures, and occupying a geographical position where three continents meet together. The new culture finds the foundation of world unity in the principle of towhid [one- ness]. Islam, as a polity, is only a practical means of making this principle a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind. It demands loyalty to God, not to thrones. And since God is the ultimate spiritual basis of all life, loyalty to God virtually amounts to man’s loyalty to his own ideal nature. The ultimate spiritual basis of all life, as conceived by Islam, is eternal and reveals itself in variety and change. A society based on such a conception of Reality must reconcile, in its life, the categories of permanence and change. It must possess eternal

principles to regulate its collective life; for the eternal gives us a foothold in the world of perpetual change. But eternal principles when they are understood to exclude all possibilities of change which, according to the Qur’an, is one of the greatest “signs” of God, tend to immobilize what is essentially mobile in its nature. The failure of Europe in political and social science illustrates the former principle; the immobility of Islam during the last 500 years illustrates the latter. What then is the principle of movement in the structure of Islam? This is known as ijtihad [Islamic interpretation].

The word literally means “to exert.” In the terminology of Islamic law it means to exert with a view to form an independent judgment on a legal question. The idea, I believe, has its origin in a well-known verse of the Qur’an—“And to those who exert We show Our path.” [Sura 29, Verse 69] We find it more definitely adumbrated in a tradition of the Holy Prophet. When Mu’adh [ibn Jabal, died 627] was appointed ruler of Yemen, the Prophet is reported to have asked him as to how he would decide matters coming up before him. “I will judge matters according to the Book of God,” said Mu’adh. “But if the Book of God contains nothing to guide you?” “Then I will act on the precedents of the Prophet of God.” “But if the precedents fail?” “Then I will exert to form my own judgment.” The student of the history of Islam, however, is well aware that with the political expansion of Islam systematic legal thought became an absolute necessity, and our early doctors of law, both of Arabian and non-Arabian descent, worked ceaselessly until all the accumulated wealth of legal thought found a final expression in our recognized schools of law. These schools of law recognize three degrees of ijtihad: (1) complete authority in legislation which is practically confined to the founders of the schools, (2) relative authority which is to be exercised within the limits of a particular school, and (3) special authority which relates to the determining of the law applicable to a particular case left undetermined by the founders. In this paper I am concerned with the first degree of ijtihad only, i.e. complete authority in legislation. The theoretical possibility of this degree of ijtihad is admitted by the Sunnis, but in practice it has always been denied ever since the establishment of the schools, inasmuch as the idea of complete ijtihad is hedged round by conditions which are wellnigh impossible of realization in a single individual. Such an attitude seems exceedingly strange in a system of law based mainly on the groundwork provided by the Qur’an which embodies an essentially dynamic outlook on

life. It is, therefore, necessary, before we proceed farther, to discover the causes of this intellectual attitude which has reduced the Law of Islam practically to a state of immobility. Some European writers think that the stationary character of the Law of Islam is due to the influence of the Turks. This is an entirely superficial view, for the legal schools of Islam had been finally established long before the Turkish influence began to work in the history of Islam. The real causes are, in my opinion, as follows:

1. We are all familiar with the Rationalist movement which appeared in the church of Islam during the early days of the ‘Abbasids [caliphs, reigned 750–1258], and the bitter controversies which it raised. Take for instance the one important point of controversy between the two camps—the conservative dogma of the eternity of the Qur’an. When Rationalists denied it because they thought that this was only another form of the Christian dogma of the eternity of the word; on the other hand, the conservative thinkers whom the later ‘Abbasids, fearing the political implications of Rationalism, gave their full support, thought that by denying the eternity of the Qur’an the Rationalists were undermining the very foundations of Muslim society. [Ibrahim ibn Sayyar] Nazzam [circa 775–845], for instance, practically rejected the traditions [hadiths], and openly declared Abu Hurayra [a Companion of the Prophet, died 678] to be an untrustworthy reporter. Thus, partly owing to a misunderstanding of the ultimate motives of Rationalism, and partly owing to the unrestrained thought of particular Rationalists, conservative thinkers regarded this movement as a force of disintegration, and considered it a danger to the stability of Islam as a social polity. Their main purpose, therefore, was to preserve the social integrity of Islam, and to realize that the only course open to them was to utilize the binding force of shari’a [Islamic law], and to make the structure of their legal system as rigorous as possible.

2. The rise and growth of ascetic Sufism, which gradually developed under influences of a non-Islamic character, a purely speculative side, is to a large extent responsible for this attitude. On its purely religious side Sufism fostered a kind of revolt against the verbal quibbles of our early doctors. The case of [Abu ‘Abdallah] Sufyan Sauri [715–778] is an instance in point. He was one of the acutest legal minds of his time, and was nearly the founder of a school of law; but being also intensely spiritual, the dry-as-dust subtleties of contemporary legists drove him to ascetic Sufism. On its speculative side

which developed later, Sufism is a form of freethought and in alliance with Rationalism. The emphasis that it laid on the distinction of zahir and batin (Appearance and Reality) created an attitude of indifference to all that applies to Appearance and not to Reality.

This spirit of total other-worldliness in later Sufism obscured men's vision of a very important aspect of Islam as a social polity, and offering the prospect of unrestrained thought on its speculative side it attracted and finally absorbed the best minds in Islam. The Muslim state was thus left generally in the hands of intellectual mediocrities, and the unthinking masses of Islam, having no personalities of a higher calibre to guide them, found their security only in blindly following the schools.

On the top of all this came the destruction of Baghdad—the center of Muslim intellectual life—in the middle of the 13th century. This was indeed a great blow, and all the contemporary historians of the invasion of Tartars describe the havoc of Baghdad with a half-suppressed pessimism about the future of Islam. For fear of further disintegration, which is only natural in such a period of political decay, the conservative thinkers of Islam focused all their efforts on the one point of preserving a uniform social life for the people by a jealous exclusion of all innovations in the law of shari'a as expounded by the early doctors of Islam. Their leading idea was social order, and there is no doubt that they were partly right, because organization does to a certain extent counteract the forces of decay. But they did not see, and our modern 'ulama' [religious scholars] do not see, that the ultimate fate of a people does not depend so much on organization as on the worth and power of individual men. In an overorganized society the individual is altogether crushed out of existence. He gains the whole wealth of social thought around him and loses his own soul. Thus a false reverence for past history and its artificial resurrection constitute no remedy for a people's decay. "The verdict of history," as a modern writer has happily put it, "is that worn out ideas have never risen to power among a people who have worn them out." The only effective power, therefore, that counteracts the forces of decay in a people is the rearing of self-concentrated individuals. Such individuals alone reveal the depth of life. They disclose new standards in the light of which we begin to see that our environment is not wholly inviolable and requires revision. The tendency to overorganization by a false reverence of the past as manifested in the legists

of Islam in the 13th century and later, was contrary to the inner impulse of Islam, and consequently invoked the powerful reaction of Ibn Taymiyya, one of the most indefatigable writers and preachers of Islam, who was born in 1263, five years after the destruction of Baghdad.

Ibn Taymiyya was brought up in Hanbalite tradition. Claiming freedom of ijtihad for himself he rose in revolt against the finality of the schools, and went back to first principles in order to make a fresh start. Like [Abu Muhammad ‘Ali] Ibn Hazm [994–1064]—the founder of Zahiri school of law—he rejected the Hanafite principle of reasoning by analogy and ijma’ [consensus] as understood by older legists for he thought agreement was the basis of all superstition. And there is no doubt that, considering the moral and intellectual decrepitude of his times, he was right in doing so. In the 16th century [Jalal-al-Din] Suyuti [died 1505] claimed the same privilege of ijtihad to which he added the idea of a renovator at the beginning of each century. But the spirit of Ibn Taymiyya’s teaching found a fuller expression in a movement of immense potentialities which arose in the 18th century from the sands of Nejd [Arabia], described by [Duncan Black] Macdonald [Orientalist, 1863–1943] as the “cleanest spot in the decadent world of Islam.” It is really the first throb of life in modern Islam. To the inspiration of this movement are traceable, directly or indirectly, nearly all the great modern movements of Muslim Asia and Africa, e.g., the Sennusi movement, the Pan-Islamic movement, and the Babi movement, which is only a Persian reflex of Arabian Protestantism. The great puritan reformer, Muhammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, who was born in 1700, studied in Medina, traveled in Persia, and finally succeeded in spreading the fire of his restless soul throughout the whole world of Islam. He was similar in spirit to [Abu Hamid] Ghazzali’s [1058–1111] disciple, Muhammad Ibn Tumart [1077–1130]—the Berber puritan reformer of Islam who appeared amidst the decay of Muslim Spain, and gave her a fresh inspiration. We are, however, not concerned with the political career of this movement, which was terminated by the armies of Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha [ruler of Egypt, circa 1768- 1849]. The essential thing to note is the spirit of freedom manifested in it: though inwardly this movement, too, is conservative in its own fashion. While it rises in revolt against the finality of the schools, and vigorously asserts the right of private judgment, its vision of the past is wholly uncritical, and in matters of law it mainly falls back on the traditions of the Prophet.

Passing on to Turkey, we find that the idea of ijtihad, reinforced and broadened by modern philosophical ideas, has long been working in the religious and political thought of the Turkish nation. This is clear from Halim Sabri's [Sibay *, Ottoman Empire and Turkey, 1883–1946] new theory of Islamic Law, grounded on modern sociological concepts. If the renaissance of Islam is a fact, and I believe it is a fact, we too one day, like the Turks, will have to re-evaluate our intellectual inheritance. And if we cannot make any original contribution to the general thought of Islam, we may, by healthy conservative criticism, serve at least as a check on the rapid movement of liberalism in the world of Islam.[460]

I now proceed to give you some idea of religiopolitical thought in Turkey which will indicate to you how the power of ijtihad is manifested in recent thought and activity in that country. There were, a short time ago, two main lines of thought in Turkey represented by the Nationalist Party and the Party of religious reform. The point of supreme interest with the Nationalist Party is above all the State and not Religion. With these thinkers religion as such has no independent function. The state is the essential factor in national life which determines the character and function of all other factors. They, therefore, reject old ideas about the function of State and Religion, and accentuate the separation of Church and State. Now the structure of Islam as a religio-political system, no doubt, does permit such a view, though personally I think it is a mistake to suppose that the idea of state is more dominant and rules all other ideas embodied in the system of Islam. In Islam the spiritual and the temporal are not two distinct domains, and the nature of an act, however secular in its import, is determined by the attitude of mind with which the agent does it. It is the invisible mental background of the act which ultimately determines its character. An act is temporal or profane if it is done in a spirit of detachment from the infinite complexity of life behind it; it is spiritual if it is inspired by that complexity. In Islam it is the same reality which appears as Church looked at from one point of view and State from another. It is not true to say that Church and State are two sides or facets of the same thing. Islam is a single unanalyzable reality which is one or the other as your point of view varies. The point is extremely far-reaching and a full elucidation of it will involve us in a highly philosophical discussion. Suffice it to say that this ancient mistake arose out of the bifurcation of the unity of man into two distinct and separate realities which

somehow have a point of contact, but which are in essence opposed to each other. The truth, however, is that matter is spirit in space-time reference. The unity called man is body when you look at it as acting in regard to what we call the external world; it is mind or soul when you look at it as acting in regard to the ultimate aim and ideal of such acting. The essence of towhid as a working idea is equality, solidarity, and freedom. The state, from the Islamic standpoint, is an endeavor to transform these ideal principles into space-time forces, an aspiration to realize them in a definite human organization. It is in this sense alone that the state in Islam is a theocracy, not in the sense that it is headed by a representative of God on earth who can always screen his despotic will behind his supposed infallibility. The critics of Islam have lost sight of this important consideration. The ultimate Reality, according to the Qur'an, is spiritual, and its life consists in its temporal activity. The spirit finds its opportunities in the natural, the material, the secular. All that is secular is therefore sacred in the roots of its being. The greatest service that modern thought has rendered to Islam, and as a matter of fact to all religion, consists in its criticism of what we call material or natural—a criticism which discloses that the merely material has no substance until we discover it rooted in the spiritual. There is no such thing as a profane world. All this immensity of matter constitutes a scope for the self-realization of spirit. All is holy ground. As the Prophet so beautifully puts it: "The whole of this earth is a mosque." The state according to Islam is only an effort to realize the spiritual in a human organization. But in this sense all state, not based on mere domination and aiming at the realization of ideal principles, is theocratic.

The truth is that the Turkish nationalists assimilated the idea of the separation of Church and State from the history of European political ideas. Primitive Christianity was founded, not as a political or civil unit, but as a monastic order in a profane world, having nothing to do with civil affairs, and obeying the Roman authority practically in all matters. The result of this was that when the State became Christian, State and Church confronted each other as distinct powers with interminable boundary disputes between them. Such a thing could never happen in Islam; for Islam was from the very beginning a civil society, having received from the Qur'an a set of simple legal principles which, like the twelve tables of the Romans, carried, as experience subsequently proved, great potentialities of expansion and development by interpretation. The Nationalist theory of state, therefore, is misleading inasmuch as it suggests a dualism which does not exist in Islam.

The Religious Reform Party, on the other hand, led by Said Halim Pasha [1863–1921; Ottoman Grand Vizier, or prime minister, 1913–1916], insisted on the fundamental fact that Islam is a harmony of idealism and positivism; and, as a unity of the eternal verities of freedom, equality, and solidarity, has no fatherland. “As there is no English Mathematics, German Astronomy or French Chemistry,” says the Grand Vizier, “so there is no Turkish, Arabian, Persian or Indian Islam. Just as the universal character of scientific truths engenders varieties of scientific national cultures which in their totality represent human knowledge, much in the same way the universal character of Islamic verities creates varieties of national, moral and social ideals.” Modern culture based as it is on national egoism is, according to this keen-sighted writer, only another form of barbarism. It is the result of an over-developed industrialism through which men satisfy their primitive instincts and inclinations. He, however, deplores that during the course of history the moral and social ideals of Islam have been gradually de-Islamized through the influence of local character, and pre-Islamic superstitions of Muslim nations.

These ideals today are more Iranian, Turkish, or Arabian than Islamic. The pure brow of the principle of towhid has received more or less an impress of heathenism, and the universal and impersonal character of the ethical ideals of Islam has been lost through a process of localization. The only alternative open to us, then, is to tear off from Islam the hard crust which has immobilized an essentially dynamic outlook on life, and to rediscover the original verities of freedom, equality, and solidarity with a view to rebuild our moral, social, and political ideals out of their original simplicity and universality. Such are the views of the Grand Vizier of Turkey. You will see that following a line of thought more in tune with the spirit of Islam, he reaches practically the same conclusion as the Nationalist Party, that is to say, the freedom of ijtihadwith a view to rebuild the law of shari’a in the light of modern thought and experience.

Let us now see how the Grand National Assembly [Turkey’s parliament] has exercised this power of ijtihadin regard to the institution of khilafat [caliphate]. According to Sunni Law the appointment of an imam [leader] or khalifa [caliph] is absolutely indispensable. The first question that arises in this connection is this—Should the Caliphate be vested in a single person? Turkey’s ijtihad is that according to the spirit of Islam the Caliphate or Imamate can be vested in a body of persons, or an elected Assembly. The religious doctors of Islam in Egypt and India, so far as I know, have not yet expressed themselves on this point. Personally, I believe the Turkish view is perfectly sound. It is hardly necessary to argue this point. The republican form of government is not only thoroughly consistent with the spirit of Islam, but has also become a necessity in view of the new forces that are set free in the world of Islam.

In order to understand the Turkish view let us seek the guidance of Ibn Khaldun [1332–1406]—first philosophical historian of Islam. Ibn Khaldun, in his famous Prolegomena, mentions three distinct views of the idea of Universal Caliphate in Islam: (1) That Universal Imamate is a Divine institution, and is consequently indispensable; (2) that it is merely a matter of expediency; (3) that there is no need of such an institution. The last view was taken by the Khawarji.[461] It seems that modern Turkey has shifted from the first to the second view, i.e., to the view of the Mu’tazila[462] who regarded Universal Imamate as a matter of expediency only. The Turks argue that in our political thinking we must be guided by our past political experience which points unmistakably to the fact that the idea of Universal Imamate has failed in practice. It was a workable idea when the Empire of Islam was intact. Since the break-up of this Empire independent political units have arisen. The idea has ceased to be operative and cannot work as a living factor in the organization of modern Islam. Far from serving any useful purpose it has really stood in the way of a reunion of Independent Muslim States. Persia has stood aloof from the Turks in view of her doctrinal differences regarding the khilafat; Morocco has always looked askance at them, and Arabia has cherished private ambition. And all these ruptures in Islam for the sake of a mere symbol of a power which departed long ago. Why should we not, he can further argue, learn from experience in our political thinking? Did not Qazi Abu Bakr Baqilani [Iraq, died 1013] drop the condition of qarshiyat [membership in the Quraysh tribe of the Prophet] in the khalifa in view of the facts

of experience, i.e., the political fall of the Quraysh and their consequent inability to rule the world of Islam? Centuries ago Ibn Khaldun, who personally believed in the condition of qarshiyat in the khalifa, argued much in the same way. Since the power of the Quraysh, he says, has gone, there is no alternative but to accept the most powerful man as Imam in the country where he happens to be powerful. Thus Ibn Khaldun, realizing the hard logic of facts, suggests a view which may be regarded as the first dim vision of an International Islam fairly in sight today. Such is the attitude of the modern Turk, inspired as he is by the realities of experiences, and not by the scholastic reasoning ofjurists who lived and thought under different conditions of life.

To my mind these arguments, if rightly appreciated, indicate the birth of an International ideal which, though forming the very essence of Islam, has been hitherto overshadowed or rather displaced by Arabian Imperialism of the centuries of Islam. This new ideal is clearly reflected in the work of the great nationalist poet Zia [Gokalp] [Turkey, 1875–1924], whose songs, inspired by the philosophy of Auguste Comte [French social theorist, 1798–1857], have done a great deal in shaping the present thought of Turkey. I reproduce the substance of one of his poems from Professor [August] Fischer’s [1922] German translation:

<quote>

In order to create a really effective political unity of Islam, all Moslem countries must first become independent: and then in their totality they should range themselves under one Caliph. Is such a thing possible at the present moment? If not today, one must wait. In the meantime the caliph must reduce his own house to order and lay the foundation of a workable modern state.

In the international world the weak find no sympathy; power alone deserves respect.

</quote>

These lines clearly indicate the trend of modern Islam. For the present every Moslem nation must sink into her own deeper self, temporarily focus her vision on herself alone, until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics. A true and living unity, according the nationalist thinkers, is not so easy as to be achieved by a merely symbolical overlordship. It is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonized by the unifying bond of a common spiritual aspiration. It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a League ofNations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members.

From the same poet the following passage from a poem called “Religion and Science” will throw some further light on the general religious outlook which is being gradually shaped in the world of Islam today:

<quote>

Who were the first spiritual leaders of mankind? Without doubt the Prophets and Holy men. In every period religion has led philosophy; From it alone morality and art receive light. But then religion grows weak, and loses her original ardor! Holy men disappear, and spiritual leadership becomes, in name, the heritage of the Doctors of Law! The leading star of the Doctors of Law is tradition; They drag religion with force on this track; but philosophy says: “My leading star is reason: you go right, I go left.”

Both religion and philosophy claim the soul of man and draw it on either side!

When this struggle is going on pregnant experience delivers up positive science, and this young leader of thought says, “Tradition is history and Reason is the method of history! Both interpret and desire to reach the same indefinable something!”

But what is this something?

Is it a spiritualized heart?

If so, then take my last word—Religion is positive science, the purpose of which is to spiritualize the heart of man!

</quote>

It is clear from these lines how beautifully the poet has adopted the Comtian idea of the three stages of man’s intellectual development, i.e., theological, metaphysical, and scientific—to the religious outlook of Islam. And the view of religion embodied in these lines determines the poet’s attitude towards the position of Arabic in the educational system of Turkey. He says:

<quote>

The land where the call to prayer resounds in Turkish; where those who pray understand the meaning of their religion; the land where the Qur’an is learnt in Turkish; where every man, big or small, knows full well the command of God; O! Son of Turkey! that land is thy fatherland!

</quote>

If the aim of religion is the spiritualization of the heart, then it must penetrate the soul of man, and it can best penetrate the inner man, according to the poet, only if its spiritualizing ideas are clothed in his mother tongue. Most people in India will condemn this displacement of Arabic by Turkish. For reasons which will appear later the poet’s ijtihad is open to grave objections, but it must be admitted that the reform suggested by him is not without a parallel in the past history of Islam. We find that when Muhammad Ibn Tumart—the Mehdi of Muslim Spain—who was a Berber by nationality, came to power, and established the pontifical rule of the Mawahidin, he ordered for the sake of the illiterate Berbers, that the Qur’an should be translated and read in the Berber language; that the call to prayer should be given in Berber; and that all the functionaries of the Church must

know the Berber language. In another passage the poet gives his ideal of womanhood. In his zeal for the equality of man and woman he wishes to see radical changes in the family law of Islam as it is understood and practiced today:

<quote>

There is the woman, my mother, my sister, or my daughter; it is she who calls up the most sacred emotions from the depths of my life! There is my beloved, my sun, my moon and my star; it is she who makes me understand the poetry of life! How could the Holy Law of God regard these beautiful creatures as despicable beings? Surely there is an error in the interpretation of the Qur’an by the learned?

The foundation of the nation and the state is the family!

As long as the full worth of the woman is not realized, national life remains incomplete.

The upbringing of the family must correspond with justice;

Therefore equality is necessary in three things—in divorce, in separation, and in inheritance.

As long as the woman is counted half the man as regards inheritance and one fourth of man in matrimony, neither the family nor the country will be elevated. For other rights we have opened national courts of justice;

The family, on the other hand, we have left in the hands of schools.

I do not know why we have left the woman in the lurch?

Does she not work for the land? Or, will she turn her needle into a sharp bayonet to tear off her rights from our hands through a revolution?

</quote>

The truth is that among the Muslim nations of today, Turkey alone has shaken off its dogmatic slumber, and attained self-consciousness. She alone has claimed her right of intellectual freedom; she alone has passed from the ideal to the real—a transition which entails keen intellectual and moral struggle. To her the growing complexities of a mobile and broadening life are sure to bring new situations suggesting new points of view, and necessitating fresh interpretations of principles which are only of an academic interest to a people who have never experienced the joy of spiritual expansion. It is, I think, the English thinker Hobbes who makes this acute observation that to have a succession of identical thoughts and feelings is to have no thoughts and feelings at all. Such is the lot of most Muslim countries today. They are mechanically repeating old values, whereas the Turk is on the way to creating new values. He has passed through great experiences which have revealed his deeper self to him. In him life has begun to move, change, and amplify, giving birth to new desires, bringing new difficulties and suggesting new interpretations. The question which confronts him today, and which is likely to confront other Muslim countries in the near future is whether the Law of Islam is capable of evolution—a question which will require great intellectual effort, and is sure to be answered in the affirmative; provided the world of Islam approaches it in the spirit of ‘Umar [Companion of the Prophet and second caliph, 592- 644]—the first critical and independent mind in Islam who, at the last moments of the Prophet, had the moral courage to utter these remarkable words: “The Book of God is sufficient for us.”

We heartily welcome the liberal movement in modern Islam; but it must also be admitted that the appearance of liberal ideas in Islam constitutes also the most critical moment in the history of Islam. Liberalism has a tendency to act as a force of disintegration, and the race-idea which appears to be working in modern Islam with greater force than ever may ultimately wipe off the broad human outlook which Muslim people have imbibed from their religion. Further, our religious and political reformers in their zeal for liberalism may overstep the proper limits of reform in the absence of a check on their youthful fervor. We are today passing through a period similar to that of the

Protestant revolution in Europe, and the lesson which the rise and outcome of [Martin] Luther's [16th-century Protestant Reformation] movement teaches should not be lost on us. A careful reading of history shows that the Reformation was essentially a political movement, and the net result of it in Europe was a gradual displacement of the universal ethics of Christianity by systems of national ethics. The result of this tendency we have seen with our own eyes in the Great European War [World War I] which, far from bringing any workable synthesis of the two opposing systems of ethics, has made the European situation still more intolerable. It is the duty of the leaders of the world of Islam today to understand the real meaning of what has happened in Europe, and then to move forward with self-control and a clear insight into the ultimate aims of Islam as a social polity.

I have given you some idea of the history and working of ijtihad in modern Islam. I now proceed to see whether the history and structure of the Law of Islam indicate the possibility of any fresh interpretation of its principles. In other words, the question that I want to raise is—Is the Law of Islam capable of evolution? [Max] Horten [born 1874], Professor of Semitic Philology at the University of Bonn, raises the same question in connection with the Philosophy and Theology of Islam. Reviewing the work of Muslim thinkers in the sphere of purely religious thought he points out that the history of Islam may aptly be described as a gradual interaction, harmony, and mutual deepening of two distinct forces, i.e., the element of Aryan culture and knowledge on the one hand, and a Semitic religion on the other. The Muslim has always adjusted his religious outlook to the elements of culture which he assimilated from the peoples that surrounded him. From 800 to 1100, says Horten, not less than one hundred systems of theology appeared in Islam, a fact which bears ample testimony to the elasticity of Islamic thought as well as to the ceaseless activity of our early thinkers. Thus, in view of the revelations of a deeper study of Muslim literature and thought, this living European Orientalist has been driven to the following conclusion: "The spirit of Islam is so broad that it is practically boundless. With the exception of atheistic ideas alone it has assimilated all the attainable ideas of surrounding peoples, and given them its own peculiar direction of development."

The assimilative spirit of Islam is even more manifest in the sphere of law. Says Professor [C. Snouck] Hurgronje [1857–1936], the Dutch critic of Islam:

When we read the history of the development of Islamic Law we find that, on the one hand, the doctors of every age, on the slightest stimulus, condemn one another to the point of mutual accusations of heresy; and, on the other hand, the very same people, with greater and greater unity of purpose, try to reconcile the similar quarrels of their predecessors.

These views of modern European critics of Islam make it perfectly clear that, with the return of new life, the inner catholicity of the spirit of Islam is bound to work itself out in spite of the rigorous conservatism of our doctors. And I have no doubt that a deeper study of the enormous legal literature of Islam is sure to rid the modern critic of the superficial opinion that the Law of Islam is stationary and incapable of development. Unfortunately, the conservative Muslim public of this country is not yet quite ready for a critical discussion offiqh [Islamic jurisprudence], which, if undertaken, is likely to displease most people, and raise sectarian controversies; yet I venture to offer a few remarks on the point before us.

1. In the first place, we should bear in mind that from the earliest times, practically up to the rise of the ‘Abbasids, there was no written law of Islam apart from the Qur’an.

2. Secondly, it is worthy of note that from about the middle of the first century up to the beginning of the fourth not less than nineteen schools of law and legal opinion appeared in Islam. This fact alone is sufficient to show how incessantly our early doctors of law worked in order to meet the necessities of a growing civilization. With the expansion of conquest and the consequent widening of the outlook of Islam these early legists had to take a wider view of things, and to study local conditions of life and habits of new peoples that came within the fold of Islam. A careful study of the various schools of legal opinion, in the light of contemporary social and political history, reveals that they gradually passed from the deductive to the inductive attitude in their efforts at interpretation.

3. Thirdly, when we study the four accepted sources of Islamic Law and the controversies which they invoked, the supposed rigidity of our recognized schools evaporates, and the possibility of a further evolution becomes perfectly clear. Let us briefly discuss these sources.

(a) The Qur’an. The primary source of the Law of Islam is the Qur’an. The Qur’an, however, is not a legal code. Its main purpose, as I have said before, is to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his relation with God and the universe. No doubt the Qur’an does lay down a few general principles and rules of a legal nature, especially relating to the family—the ultimate basis of social life. But why are these rules made part of a revelation the ultimate aim of which is man’s higher life? The answer to this question is furnished by the history of Christianity which appeared as a powerful reaction against the spirit of legality manifested in Judaism. By setting up an ideal of other-worldliness it no doubt did succeed in spiritualizing life, but its individualism could see no spiritual value in the complexity of human social relations. “Primitive Christianity,” says [Friedrich] Naumann [1860–1919] in his Briefe uber Religion, “attached no value to the preservation of the state, law, organization, production. It simply does not reflect on the conditions of human society.” And Naumann concludes: “Hence we either dare to aim at being without a state, and thus throwing ourselves deliberately into the arms of anarchy, or we decide to possess, alongside of our religious creed, a political creed as well.” Thus the Qur’an considers it necessary to unite religion and State, ethics and politics in a single revelation much in the same way as Plato [Greece, 427–347 B.C.], does in his Republic.

The important point to note in this connection, however, is the dynamic outlook of the Qur’an. I have fully discussed its origin and history. It is obvious that with such an outlook the Holy Book of Islam cannot be inimical to the idea of evolution. Only we should not forget that life is not change, pure and simple. It has within it elements of conservation also. While enjoying his creative activity, and always focusing his energies on the discovery of new vistas of life, man has a feeling of uneasiness in the presence of his own unfoldment. In his forward movement he cannot help looking back to his past, and faces his own inward expansion with a certain amount of fear. The spirit of man in its forward movement is restrained by forces which seem to be working in the opposite direction. This is only

another way of saying that life moves with the weight of its own past on its back, and that in any view of social change the value and function of the forces of conservatism cannot be lost sight of. It is with this organic insight into the essential teaching of the Qur'an that modern Rationalism ought to approach our existing institutions. No people can afford to reject their past entirely; for it is their past that has made their personal identity. And in a society like Islam the problem of a revision of old institutions becomes still more delicate, and the responsibility of the reformer assumes a far more serious aspect. Islam is non-territorial in its character, and its aim is to furnish a model for the final combination of humanity by drawing its adherents from a variety of mutually repellent races, and then transforming this atomic aggregate into a people possessing a self-consciousness of their own. This was not an easy task to accomplish. Yet Islam, by means of its well-conceived institutions, has succeeded to a very great extent in creating something like a collective will and conscience in this heterogeneous mass. In the evolution of such a society even the immutability of socially harmless rules relating to eating and drinking, purity or impurity, has a life-value of its own, inasmuch as it tends to give such society a specific inwardness, and further secures that external and internal uniformity which counteracts the forces of heterogeneity always latent in a society of a composite character. The critic of these institutions must therefore try to secure, before he undertakes to handle them, a clear insight into the ultimate significance of the social experiment embodied in Islam. He must look at their structure, not from the standpoint of social advantage or disadvantage to this or that country, but from the point of view of the larger purpose which is being gradually worked out in the life of mankind as a whole.

Turning now to the groundwork of legal principles in the Qur'an, it is perfectly clear that far from leaving no scope for human thought and legislative activity the intensive breadth of these principles virtually acts as an awakener of human thought. Our early doctors of law taking their clue mainly from this groundwork evolved a number of legal systems; and the student of Islamic history knows very well that nearly half the triumphs of Islam as a social and political power were due to the legal acuteness of these doctors. "Next to the Romans," says [Alfred] Von Kremer [Orientalist, 1828–1889], "there is no other nation besides the Arabs which could call its own a system of law so carefully worked out." But with all their comprehensiveness, these systems are after all individual interpretations, and as such cannot claim any finality. I know the 'ulama' of Islam claim finality for

the popular schools of Islamic Law, though they never found it possible to deny the theoretical possibility of a complete ijtihad. I have tried to explain the causes which, in my opinion, determined this attitude of the ‘ulama’; but since things have changed and the world of Islam is today confronted and affected by new forces set free by the extraordinary development of human thought in all its directions, I see no reason why this attitude should be maintained any longer. Did the founders of our schools ever claim finality for their reasonings and interpretations? Never. The claim of the present generation of Muslim liberals to re-interpret the foundational legal principles, in the light of their own experience and the altered conditions of modern life is, in my opinion, perfectly justified. The teaching of the Qur’an that life is a process of progressive creation necessitates that each generation, guided but unhampered by the work of its predecessors, should be permitted to solve its own problems.

You will, I think, remind me here of the Turkish poet Zia, whom I quoted a moment ago, and ask whether the equality of man and woman demanded by him, equality, that is to say, in point of divorce, separation, and inheritance, is possible according to Islamic Law. I do not know whether the awakening of women in Turkey has created demands which cannot be met without a fresh interpretation of foundational principles. In the Punjab [region in northern India], as everybody knows, there have been cases in which Muslim women wishing to get rid of undesirable husbands have been driven to apostasy. Nothing could be more distant from the aims of a missionary religion. The Law of Islam, says the great Spanish jurist Imam [Abu Ishaq al-] Shatibi [died 1388] in his Al-Muwafiqat [i usul al-shari’a] [The Correspondences on the Methodology of Islamic Law], aims at protecting five things—din [religion], nafs [soul], ‘aql [intellect], mal [property], and nasl [progeny]. Applying this test I venture to ask: “Does the working of the rule relating to apostasy, as laid down in the hidaya [guidance], tend to protect the interests of the Faith in this country?” In view of the intense conservatism of the Muslims of India, Indian judges cannot but stick to what are called standard worlds. The result is that while the peoples are moving the law remains stationary.

With regard to the Turkish poet’s demand, I am afraid he does not seem to know much about the family law of Islam. Nor does he seem to understand

the economic significance of the Qur’anic rule of inheritance. Marriage, according to Islamic Law, is a civil contract. The wife at the time of marriage is at liberty to get the husband’s power of divorce delegated to her on stated conditions, and thus secure equality of divorce with her husband. The reform suggested by the poet relating to the rule of inheritance is based on a misunderstanding. From the inequality of their legal shares it must not be supposed that the rule assumes the superiority of males over females. Such an assumption would be contrary to the spirit of Islam. The Qur’an says: “And for women are rights over men similar to those for men over women” [Sura 2, Verse 228].

The share of the daughter is determined not by any inferiority inherent in her, but in view of her economic opportunities, and the place she occupies in the social structure of which she is part and parcel. Further, according to the poet’s own theory of society, the rule of inheritance must be regarded not as an isolated factor in the distribution of wealth, but as one factor among others working together for the same end. While the daughter, according to Islamic Law, is held to be full owner of the property given to her both by the father and the husband at the time of her marriage; while, further, she absolutely owns her dower-money which may be prompt or deferred according to her own choice, and in lieu of which she can hold possession of the whole of her husband’s property till payment, the responsibility of maintaining her throughout her life is wholly thrown on the husband. If you judge the working of the rule of inheritance from this point of view, you will find that there is no material difference between the economic position of sons and daughters, and it is really by this apparent inequality of their legal shares that the law secures the equality demanded by the Turkish poet. The truth is that the principles underlying the Qur’anic law of inheritance—this supremely original branch of Islamic Law as Von Kremer describes it—have not yet received from Muslim lawyers the attention they deserve. Modern society with its bitter class- struggles ought to set us thinking; and if we study our laws in reference to the impending revolution in modern economic life, we are likely to discover, in the foundational principles, hitherto unrevealed aspects which we can work out with a renewed faith in the wisdom of these principles.

(b) The hadith [traditions of the Prophet]. The second great source of Islamic Law is the traditions of the Holy Prophet. These have been

the subject of great discussion both in ancient and modern times. Among their modern critics Professor [Ignacz] Goldziher [Orientalist, 1850–1921] has subjected them to a searching examination in the light of modern canons of historical criticism, and arrives at the conclusion that they are, on the whole, untrustworthy. N.P. Aghnides [born 1883], after examining the Muslim methods of determining the genuineness of a tradition, and pointing out the theoretical possibilities of error, arrives at the following conclusion:

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It must be said in conclusion that the preceding considerations represented only theoretical possibilities and that the question how far these possibilities have become actualities is largely a matter of how far the actual circumstances offered inducements for making use of the possibilities. Doubtless the latter, relatively speaking, were few, and affected only a small proportion of the entire sunna [practice of the Prophet, a chief source of Islamic law]. It may therefore be said that for the most part the collections of sunna considered by the Muslims as canonical are genuine records of the rise and early growth of Islam. (Mohammedan Theories of Finance)

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For our present purposes, however, we must distinguish traditions of a purely legal import from those which are of a non-legal character. With regard to the former, there arises a very important question as to how far they embody the pre-Islamic usages of Arabia which were in some cases left intact, and in others modified by the Prophet. It is difficult to make this discovery, for our early writers do not always refer to pre-Islamic usages. Nor is it possible to discover that the usages, left intact by express or tacit approval of the Prophet, were intended to be universal in their application. Shah Wali-Ullah [India, 1703–1762] has a very illuminating discussion on the point. I reproduce here the substance of his view. The prophetic method of teaching, according to Shah Wali-Ullah, is that, generally speaking, the law revealed by a prophet takes especial notice of the habits, ways, and peculiarities of the people to whom he is specifically sent. The prophet who aims at all-embracing principles, however, can neither reveal different principles for different peoples, nor leaves them to work out their own rules of conduct. His method is to train one particular people, and to use them as a nucleus for

the building up of a universal shari’a. In doing so he accentuates the principles underlying the social life of all mankind, and applies them to concrete cases in the light of the specific habits of the people immediately before him. The shari’a values (ahkam) resulting from this application (e.g., rules relating to penalties for crimes) are in a sense specific to that people; and since their observance is not an end in itself they cannot be strictly enforced in the case of future generations. It was perhaps in view of this that Abu Hanifa [circa 699–767], who had a keen insight into the universal character of Islam, made practically no use of these traditions. The fact that he introduced the principle of istihsan, i.e., juristic preference, which necessitates a careful study of actual conditions in legal thinking, throws further light on the motives which determined his attitude towards this source of Islamic Law. It is said that Abu Hanifa made no use of traditions because there were no regular collections in his day. In the first place, it is not true to say that there were no collections in his day, as the collections of Abdul Malik [Ibn Jurayj, 699–767] and [Muhammad ibn Muslim] Zuhri [670-circa 737] were made not less than thirty years before the death of Abu Hanifa. But even if we suppose that these collections never reached him, or that they did not contain traditions of a legal import, Abu Hanifa, like Malik and Ahmad ibn Hanbal [780–855] after him, could have easily made his own collection if he had deemed such a thing necessary. On the whole, then, the attitude of Abu Hanifa towards the traditions of a purely legal import is to my mind perfectly sound; and if modern Liberalism considers it safer not to make any indiscriminate use of them as a source of law, it will be only following one of the greatest exponents of Islamic Law in Sunni Islam. It is, however, impossible to deny the fact that the traditionists, by insisting on the value of the concrete case as against the tendency to abstract thinking in law, have done the greatest service to the Law of Islam. And a further intelligent study of the literature of traditions, if used as indicative of the spirit in which the Prophet himself interpreted his Revelation, may still be of great help in understanding the life-value of the legal principles enunciated in the Qur’an. A complete grasp of their life-value alone can equip us in our endeavor to re-interpret the foundational principles.

(c) The ijma’ [consensus]. The third source of Islamic Law is ijma’ which is, in my opinion, perhaps the most important legal notion in Islam. It is, however, strange that this important notion, while invoking great academic discussions in early Islam, remained practically a

mere idea, and rarely assumed the form of a permanent institution in any Islamic country. Possibly its transformation into a permanent legislative institution was contrary to the political interests of the kind of absolute monarchy that grew up in Islam immediately after the fourth caliph. It was, I think, favorable to the interest of the Umayyad and the ‘Abbasid caliphs [reigned 661–750 and 750–1258, respectively] to leave the power of ijtihadto individual mujtahids [religious scholars] rather than encourage the formation of a permanent assembly which might become too powerful for them. It is, however, extremely satisfactory to note that the pressure of new world forces and the political experience of European nations are impressing on the mind of modern Islam the value and possibilities of the idea of ijma’. The growth of republican spirit and the gradual formation of legislative assemblies in Muslim lands constitute a great step in advance. The transfer of the power of ijtihad from individual representatives of schools to a Muslim legislative assembly which, in view of the growth of opposing sects, is the only possible form ijma’ can take in modern times, will secure contributions to legal discussion from laymen who happen to possess a keen insight into affairs. In this way alone we can stir into activity the dormant spirit of life in our legal system, and give it an evolutionary outlook. In India, however, difficulties are likely to arise; for it is doubtful whether a non-Muslim legislative assembly can exercise the power of ijtihad.

But there are one or two questions which must be raised and answered in regard to the ijma’. Can the ijma’ repeal the Qur’an? It is unnecessary to raise this question before a Muslim audience; but I consider it necessary to do so in view of a very misleading statement by a European critic in a book called Mohammedan Theories ofFinance—published by Columbia University. The author of this book says, without citing any authority, that according to some Hanafi and Mu’tazila writers the ijma’ can repeal the Qur’an. There is not the slightest justification for such a statement in the legal literature of Islam. Not even a tradition of the Prophet can have any such effect. It seems to me that the author is misled by the word naskh in the writings of our early doctors to whom, as Imam Shatibi points out in Al-Muwafiqat, volume 3, page 65, this word, when used in discussions relating to the ijma’ of the companions [of the Prophet], meant only the power to extend or limit the application of a Qur’anic rule of law, and not the power to repeal or supersede it by another

rule of law. And even in the exercise of this power the legal theory, as [‘Ali ibn Abi ‘Ali] Amidi—a Shafi’i doctor of law who died about the middle of the seventh century [A.H., or 1233 A.D.], and whose work is recently published in Egypt—tells us, is that the companions must have been in possession of a shari’a value (hukm) entitling them to such a limitation or extension.

But supposing the companions have unanimously decided a certain point, the further question is whether later generations are bound by their decision. [Muhammad ibn ‘Ali] Shaukani [circa 1760–1839] has fully discussed this point, and cited the views held by writers belonging to different schools. I think it is necessary in this connection to discriminate between a decision relating to a question of fact and the one relating to a question of law. In the former case, as for instance, when the question arose whether the two small suras [chapters] known as “Mu ‘awwazatan “ formed part of the Qur’an or not, and the companions unanimously decided that they did, we are bound by their decision, obviously because the companions alone were in a position to know the fact. In the latter case the question is one of interpretation only, and I venture to think, on the authority of [Abu’l- Hasan] Karkhi [died 952], that later generations are not bound by the decision of the companions. Says Karkhi: “The sunna of the companions is binding in matters which cannot be cleared up by qiyas [analogical reasoning], but it is not so in matters which can be established by qiyas.”

One more question may be asked as to the legislative activity of a modern Muslim assembly which must consist, at least for the present, mostly of men possessing no knowledge of the subtleties of Islamic Law. Such an assembly may make grave mistakes in their interpretation of law. How can we exclude or at least reduce the possibilities of erroneous interpretation? The Persian constitution of 1906 provided a separate ecclesiastical committee of ‘ulama’—“conversant with the affairs of the world”—having power to supervise the legislative activity of the majlis [parliament]. This, in my opinion, dangerous arrangement is probably necessary in view of the Persian [Shi’i] constitutional theory.[463] According to that theory, I believe, the king is a mere custodian of the realm which really belongs to the Absent Imam. The ‘ulama’, as representatives of the Imam, consider themselves entitled to supervise the

whole life of the community; though I fail to understand how, in the absence of an apostolic succession, they establish their claim to represent the Imam. But whatever may be the Persian constitutional theory, the arrangement is not free from danger, and may be tried, if at all, only as a temporary measure in Sunni countries. The ‘ularrni’ should form a vital part of a Muslim legislative assembly helping and guiding free discussion on questions relating to law. The only effective remedy for the possibilities of erroneous interpretations is to reform the present system of legal education in Islamic countries, to extend its sphere, and to combine it with an intelligent study of modern jurisprudence.

The qiyas. The fourth basis offiqh is qiyas, i.e., the use of analogical reasoning in legislation. In view of different social and agricultural conditions prevailing in the countries conquered by Islam, the school of Abu Hanifa seem to have found, on the whole, little or no guidance from the precedents recorded in the literature of traditions. The only alternative open to them was to resort to speculative reason in their interpretations. The application of Aristotelian logic, however, though suggested by the discovery of new conditions in Iraq, was likely to prove exceedingly harmful in the preliminary stages of legal development. The intricate behavior of life cannot be subjected to hard and fast rules logically deducible from certain general notions. Yet looked at through the spectacles of Aristotle’s logic it appears to be a mechanism pure and simple with no internal principle of movement. Thus the school of Abu Hanifa tended to ignore the creative freedom and arbitrariness of life, and hoped to build a logically perfect legal system on the lines of pure reason. The legists of Hijaz [Arabia], however, true to the practical genius of their race, raised strong protests against the scholastic subtleties of the legists of Iraq, and their tendency to imagine unreal cases which they rightly thought would turn the Law of Islam into a kind of lifeless mechanism. These bitter controversies among the early doctors of Islam led to a critical definition of the limitations, conditions, and correctives of qiyas which, though originally appeared as a mere disguise for the mujtahids personal opinion, eventually became a source of life and movement in the Law of Islam. The spirit of the acute criticism of Malik and [Abu ‘Abdallah Muhammad] Shafi’i [767–820] on Abu Hanifa’s principle of qiyas, as a source of law, constitutes really an effective Semitic restraint on the Aryan tendency to seize the abstract in preference to the concrete, to enjoy the idea rather than the event. This was really a

controversy between the advocates of deductive and inductive methods in legal research. The legists of Iraq originally emphasized the eternal aspect of the “notion,” while those of Hijaz laid stress on its temporal aspect. The latter, however, did not see the full significance of their own position, and their instinctive partiality to the legal tradition of Hijaz narrowed their vision to the “precedents” that had actually happened in the days of the Prophet and his companions. No doubt they recognized the value of the concrete, but at the same time they eternalized it, rarely resorting to qiyas based on the study of the concrete as such. Their criticism of Abu Hanifa and his school, however, emancipated the concrete as it were, and brought out the necessity of observing the actual movement and variety of life in the interpretation ofjuristic principles. Thus the school of Abu Hanifa which fully assimilated the results of this controversy is absolutely free in its essential principle and possesses much greater power of creative adaptation than any other school of Islamic Law. But contrary to the spirit of his own school the modern Hanafi legist has eternalized the interpretations of the founder or his immediate followers much in the same way as the early critics of Abu Hanifa eternalized the decisions given on concrete cases. Properly understood and applied, the essential principle of this school, i.e., qiyas, as Shafi’i rightly says, is only another name for ijtihad which, within the limits of the revealed texts, is absolutely free; and its importance as a principle can be seen from the fact that, according to most of the doctors, as Qazi Shaukani tells us, it was permitted even in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. The closing of the door of ijtihad is pure fiction suggested partly by the crystallization of legal thought in Islam, and partly by that intellectual laziness which, especially in the period of spiritual decay, turns great thinkers into idols. If some of the later doctors have upheld this fiction, modern Islam is not bound by this voluntary surrender of intellectual independence. Sarkashi writing in the 10th century of the Hijra[464] rightly observes:

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If the upholders of this fiction mean that the previous writers had more facilities, while the later writers had more difficulties in their way, it is nonsense; for it does not require much understanding to see that ijtihad for later doctors is easier than for the earlier doctors. Indeed the commentaries on the Qur’an and sunna have been

compiled and multiplied to such an extent that the mujtahid of today has more material for interpretation than he needs.

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This brief discussion, I hope, will make it clear to you that neither in the foundational principles nor in the structure of our systems, as we find them today, is there anything to justify the present attitude. Equipped with penetrative thought and fresh experience the world of Islam should courageously proceed to the work of reconstruction before them. This work of reconstruction, however, has a far more serious aspect than mere adjustment to modern conditions of life. The Great European War bringing in its wake the awakening of Turkey—the element of stability in the world of Islam, as a French writer has recently described her—and the new economic experiment tried in the neighborhood of Muslim Asia, must open our eyes to the inner meaning and destiny of Islam. Humanity needs three things today —a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis. Modern Europe has, no doubt, built idealistic systems on these lines, but experience shows that truth revealed through pure reason is incapable of bringing that fire of living conviction which personal revelation alone can bring. This is the reason why pure thought has so little influenced men, while religion has always elevated individuals, and transformed whole societies. The idealism of Europe never became a living factor in her life, and the result is a perverted ego seeking itself through mutually intolerant democracies whose sole function is to exploit the poor in the interest of the rich. Believe me, Europe today is the greatest hindrance in the way of man’s ethical advancement. The Muslim, on the other hand, is in possession of these ultimate ideas on the basis of a revelation, which, speaking from the inmost depths of life, internalizes its own apparent externality. With him the spiritual basis of life is a matter of conviction for which even the least enlightened man among us can easily lay down his life; and in view of the basic idea of Islam that there can be no further revelation binding on man, we ought to be spiritually one of the most emancipated peoples on earth. Early Muslims emerging out of the spiritual slavery of pre-Islamic Asia were not in a position to realize the true significance of this basic idea. Let the Muslim of today appreciate his position, reconstruct his social life in the light of ultimate principles, and

evolve, out of the hitherto partially revealed purpose of Islam, that spiritual democracy which is the ultimate aim of Islam.

** 28—The Second Message of Islam

Mahmoud Mohamed Taha

Mahmoud Mohamed Taha (Sudan, circa 1910–1985) received his university degree in Khartoum, Sudan, and worked for many years as a civil engineer, specializing in irrigation. At the same time, he was active in the Sudanese independence movement. In 1945, he helped to found the Republican Party and then spent several years in jail as a result of his activism. After independence, his followers founded the Republican Brothers, which Taha led until his execution in 1985. The founding document of this organization, first drafted in the early 1950s and published in 1967—excerpted here—presents Taha's unorthodox view that the earlier Qur'anic revelations (revealed in Mecca before the Prophet gained political power) should be granted greater importance than the later revelations, which refer more narrowly to the conditions of the Prophet's rule in Medina. This view brought Taha into conflict with the Sudanese government's implementation of more orthodox Islamic laws in the 1980s. His protest against these policies led to his arrest and execution.[465]

*** Introduction to the Third Edition

This is the introduction to the third edition of The Second Message of Islam. The first edition was published in January 1967 A.D., in the revered month of Ramadan 1386 A.H. The second edition was published in April 1968 A.D., in the month of Muharram 1388 A.H. At the time of the

second edition we were, however, preoccupied with other business and could not give that edition an introduction of its own.

This book, The Second Message of Islam, is new in every respect.... Besides being new, it is also totally “strange,” that is, unexpected, since it proclaims the return of a renewed Islam. Such “strangeness,” however, is to be expected, especially by informed Muslims. The Prophet is reported to have said: “Islam started as a stranger, and it shall return as a stranger in the same way it started. Blessed are the strangers! They asked: Who are the strangers, O Messenger of God? He replied: Those who revive my sunna [practice of the Prophet] after it had been abandoned.”

Thus, the return of a revived Islam is by nature strange, that is to say, mysterious and unexpected. Those who criticize this book for its “strangeness,” therefore, reveal both a lack of understanding and of patience. We need not concern ourselves here with those who oppose this book’s message out of misunderstanding and deliberate distortion out of bad faith. But we must emphasize that the apparent “strangeness” of this message is inherent in the nature of Islamic revival. Understanding this book requires patience, diligence, and close scrutiny. If the reader is able to persist, his mind shall be open to a new understanding of the Qur’an and Islam, and he shall be rewarded for his perseverance, God willing.

*** Sunna and Shari’a

In the above quoted hadith [tradition of the Prophet], the Prophet referred to the strangers and said they were those who revive his sunna after it had been abandoned. Those who call for such a revival become strangers amongst their own people, because such a call involves a divergence from what people are accustomed to. They are strangers by virtue of their adherence to the truth amongst people for whom the truth is a stranger. If people have experienced falsehood for so long, then because of their long unfamiliarity with the truth, they come to accept falsehood as the truth.

It is mistakenly believed by some that the sunna consists of all the acts and words of the Prophet, as well as his approval of the action of others. This is not true, because his teachings to others and approval of their conduct relate to shari’a [Islamic law]. Only the Prophet’s personal deeds, and his utterances that reflect the state of his heart in its knowledge of God, constitute sunna. The Prophet’s statements which were designed to teach the people their religion are shari’a. The difference between shari’a and sunna is the difference between the Message and the Prophethood. In other words, it reflects the difference between the standard of the generality of Muslims of all levels, and the standard of the Prophet, which is a tremendous difference indeed.

Sunna relates to the personal practice of the Prophet, while in shari’a the Prophet descends from the level of his own personal practice to the level of his people in order to teach them according to their capabilities, thereby requiring them to act within their capacities. Sunna is his prophethood, while shari’a is his message. With respect to his message, the Prophet said: “We the prophets have been instructed to address people in accordance with the level of their understanding.”

*** Al-Islam and Al-‘Iman

There is a common failure to appreciate the fine distinction between islam [submission to God] and ‘iman [faith]. ‘Iman is widely and mistakenly believed to be superior to islam. This mistaken belief is due to an inability to appreciate the circumstances of the time. The time when such belief sufficed is over, as we have now reached a point when the understanding of religion has developed and evolved from the level of ‘iman to the level of islam. The distinction can be explained as follows:

Islam is an intellectual process by which the diligent worshiper proceeds on a ladder of seven steps, the first being islam, secondly ‘mam. thirdly ihsan [beneficence], fourthly ‘llm al-yaqin, fifthly ‘ilm ‘ayn al-yaqin, sixthly ‘ilm haqq al-yaqin, and seventhly islam once more.[466] But islam at the higher stage differs in degree from islam at the initial stage. At the initial stage, islam is merely external or apparent submission, while in the final state it is both external and internal (genuine) submission. Islam at the initial stage concerns speech and action, while in the final stage it is intelligent surrender and submission and acceptance of God both in private and in public. At the initial stage islam is inferior to ‘iman, while at the final stage it is superior to ‘main. Many theologians whom we know today are unable to make this distinction.

Religious scholars have been confused by the hadith involving Gabriel, reported by ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab [Companion of the Prophet, 592–644], who said:

As we were seated with the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, there came a man wearing [clean] white clothes, with very dark hair. None of us knew him, yet he did not show the signs of travel. He sat near the Messenger of God, peace be upon him, and placed his knees next to his [the Prophet’s] knees, and placed his hands on his [the Prophet’s] thighs and said: O, Muhammad, tell me about islam. … He [the Prophet] said: islam is to declare that there is no god but God, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God; to say the prayers; pay zakat taxes; fast the month of Ramadan, and do pilgrimage to the House [of God], if you can afford it. He said: You are right. We wondered how he could ask him and then confirm he was right. Then he [the man] said: Tell me about ‘iman. He [the Prophet] replied: ‘iman is to believe in God, His angels, His Books, Messengers, fate whether good or bad, and the hereafter. He [the man] said: you are right. Then he asked: tell me about ihsan. He [the Prophet] replied: ihsan is to worship God as if you see Him, and although you do not see Him, be certain that He can see you. He [the man] said: you are right. Then he said: Tell me when is the final hour? He [the Prophet]

replied: the one being asked does not know of it more than the one who asks. He [the man] said: Tell me of its signs? He [the Prophet] replied: When the woman gives birth to her mistress, and when you see the bare-footed and naked shepherds practice extravagance. He said: You are right. Then he left. We stayed a while, then the Messenger, peace be upon him, said: O ‘Umar, do you know the one who was asking the questions? I replied, God and His Messenger know better. He said: This is Gabriel, who came to teach you your religion.

Many religious scholars interpreted this to mean that Islam proceeds in three stages: islam, ‘iman, and ihsan. Since it is said in the Qur’an, concerning the Bedouins, “The Bedouins said amanna (we believe); tell them you have not believed, but say aslamna (we submit) and ‘iman (true belief) did not enter your hearts yet” (Sura 49, Verse 14), it seems obvious to these scholars that ‘iman is higher in degree than islam. Those scholars failed to appreciate that the issue needs close consideration.

**** The Truth of the Matter

The truth of the matter is that islam, as conveyed in the Qur’an, comes in two stages: the stage of dogma (‘aqicfa) and the stage of the truth (haqiqa) or knowledge. Each of these two stages has three levels.

The levels of dogma are islam, ‘mam, and ihsan, while the levels of knowledge are ‘ilm al-yaqin, ‘ilm ‘ayn al-yaqin, and ‘ilm haqq al-yaqin. Finally, there is a seventh stage in the ladder of evolution, which is islam, which completes the cycle. The end of religious evolution resembles the beginning, yet they are not identical. The beginning is islam and the end is islam, but there is a vast difference between islam at the beginning of religious evolution and islam at the end. The stage of ‘aquh is the stage of the nation ofMu’minin [Believers], which is the nation of the First Message of Islam.

The stage of knowledge is the stage of the nation ofMuslimin [Muslims, literally Those Who Submit], which is the nation of the Second Message of Islam. This nation has not come yet, although its vanguard have appeared individually throughout human history, in the form of prophets, with the final prophet being the Prophet Muhammad ibn Abdullahi, may he receive the highest blessing and utmost peace. It was Muhammad who prophesied the coming of the nation ofMuslimin and brought its message, as contained in general terms in the Qur'an, and detailed it in the sunna. When the nation of Muslimin comes, it shall begin at the same point as the nation ofMu'minin, namely at a stage of dogma or 'aqida But it shall not stop at the third step of the ladder, where Gabriel stopped in his questions. It shall continue to evolve to the end of the ladder, thereby combining both dogma as well as knowledge. In other words, the coming nation is a nation of both Muslimin as well as Mu'minin at one and the same time, while the first nation was one ofMu'minin (believers) and notMuslimin (submitters) in the final sense of islam [as total and intelligent surrender to God].

It must be noted that Gabriel stopped in his questions at the end of the level of dogma, 'aqida, because he had come to explain religion to the nation ofMu'minin, and not to the nation ofMuslimin, which had not yet come.

Muhammad is the Messenger of the First Message, and he is also the Messenger of the Second Message. While he explained the First Message in detail, he only outlined the Second Message. Its elaboration now requires a fresh understanding of the Qur'an. That is the purpose of this book.

Those who approach this book with an open mind will be guided along the right path. We ask God for rectification and success in our endeavor; He is the best Lord....

*** The First Message of Islam

**** Nation of Mu’Minin

We have said that the Qur’an was divided between ‘iman and islam, as well as being revealed in two parts as Meccan and Medinese. The Meccan Qur’an was revealed first. In other words, people were invited to adopt Islam [in the ultimate sense] first, and when they failed to do so, and it was practically demonstrated that they were below its standard, they were addressed in accordance with their abilities. This offer of the higher standard is the conclusive argument against people referred to in the verse: “And We will surely try you until We make manifest those among you who strive [for the cause of God] and those who are steadfast. And We will make known the truth about you.” (Sura 47, Verse 31) This experiment and consequent practical experience is for the benefit of mankind because God’s knowledge does not occur afresh (hadith).[467] The phrase “those who strive” means major jihad, namely, striving to control the self.[468] “And those who are steadfast” refers to endurance of the state of distance from God. “And We will make known the truth about you” means to extract thoughts that are repressed in your subconscious—your sir al-sir.

The verses which demonstrate descent from ultimate Islam to the level of ‘main are numerous—for example, the verse, “O believers (mu’minin), fear God as He ought to be feared, and become true submitters (muslimin) before you die.” (Sura 3, Verse 102) When the believers (mu’minin) said “which of us can fear God as He ought to be feared?” the Qur’an descended in another verse to the level of “Fear God as much as you can, listen and obey and pay alms, as that is good for yourselves, and those who are rid of their own selfishness are the truly successful ones.” (Sura 64, Verse 16)

When the verse, “Those who believe without obscuring their belief with unfairness have security, and they are truly guided” (Sura 6, Verse 82) was revealed, people found it too difficult to comply with, and they said: “O Messenger of God, which one of us is not unfair to himself?” He replied: “It is not what you mean. Did you not hear what God’s true slave (Luqman) said: O

son, do not disbelieve in God, such disbelief is great unfairness. The verse means disbelief.” The believers were relieved because they knew that they had not disbelieved since the time they came to believe. In fact the Prophet explained the verse to them at the level of mu’minin, knowing that its explanation at the level of the muslimin was above their ability, because “unfairness” then means subtle polytheism in the sense mentioned in the verse of the sir al-sir. “All shall submit to the living and all-sustaining God. And he indeed has failed who holds iniquity.” (Sura 20, Verse 111)

It is reported about the verse, “Those who believe without obscuring their belief with unfairness have security, and they are truly guided,” that the Prophet said: “I was told that I am one of them.” The Prophet is not merely one of the believers (mu’minin), as he is the first of the true submitters to God (muslimin): “Say: ‘My prayer and my worship and my life and my death are [all] for God the Lord of all creation. He has no partner. And so am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit (muslimin).’” (Sura 6, Verse 163)

We have said that the nation of the First Message are muslimin. While the Qur’an described muslimin at the time of Moses as the Jews, and at the time of Jesus as Christians, it describes them at the time of the First Muhammadan Message as mu’minin or “those who believed.” Listen to the Qur’an: “Surely, those who believe and the Jews and the Christians and the Sabians who so believe in God and the Last Day, and do good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear [shall come] upon them, nor shall they grieve.” (Sura 2, Verse 62) Again, it says, “Surely, those who have believed, and the Jews, and the Sabians, and the Christians who so believe in God and the Last Day and do good deeds—on them [shall come] no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (Sura 5, Verse 69) Another instructive verse reads:

<quote>

O believers (mu’minin), believe in God, His Messenger, and the Book that He revealed to His Messenger, and the Book revealed previously.

He who disbelieves in God, His angels, books, messengers, and the Final Day, has grossly strayed from the path. (Sura 4, Verse 136)

</quote>

So He calls them mu’minin (believers) and yet invites them to further belief, more ‘iman.

The verses: “O believers (mu’minin), fear God as He ought to be feared, and become true submitters (muslimin) before you die,” and “Fear God as much as you can, and listen and obey and pay alms, as that is good for yourselves, and those who are rid of their own selfishness are the truly successful ones” clearly have two different meanings—one setting an original precept and the other a subsidiary one. It is also clear that the real objective is the achievement of the original precept. When it was shown that it was impracticable to do so, it was postponed and the intermediate objective of implementing the subsidiary precept was sought. When the conditions necessary for achieving the original objective, that is to say, when both individual as well as collective human capacities are sufficiently mature, the original precept shall be restored. This is the reason why the original precepts of religion were postponed, and the subsidiary precepts were implemented [as transitional measures] as shall be explained below.

*** Jihad Is Not an Original Precept in Islam

Islam’s original view is that a person is free until it is shown, in practice, that he or she is unable to properly discharge the duty of such freedom. Freedom is a natural right corresponding to a duty, namely, its proper exercise. Once a free person is unable to fulfill the duty of his or her freedom, such freedom shall be withdrawn under a law which is consistent with the constitution, that is, a law which reconciles the need of the individual for absolute individual freedom, and the need of the community for total social justice. As already stated, this is the law of mu’awada (reciprocity).

This was Islam’s original and fundamental principle. The propagation of Islam began with the verses of persuasion in Mecca where the verse “Propagate the path of your Lord in wisdom and peaceable advice, and argue with them in a kind manner. Your Lord is more knowledgeable of those who stray from His path, and He is more knowledgeable of the guided ones” (Sura 16, Verse 125) and many other similar verses were revealed. This approach was continued for 13 years, during which time much of the miraculous Qur’an was revealed, and many men, women, and children were transformed under the guidance of the new discipline. The early Muslims curtailed their own aggression against the unbelievers, endured hurt, sacrificed their comforts sincerely and self-denyingly in the cause of spreading their religion, without weakening or submitting. Their lives were the supreme expression of their religion and consisted of sincere worship, kindness, and peaceful coexistence with all other people.

God says: “I have created jinn [spirits] and people for no reason except that they may worship Me.” (Sura 51, Verse 56) And He favored people with the mind, body, and comforts that enable them to worship Him and appreciate His Grace. He also says: “God enjoins ‘adl [justice], ihsan, the doing of good to others, and benevolence to the next of kin; and forbids indecency, lewdness, manifest evil, and transgression. He admonishes you that you may take heed.” (Sura 16, Verse 90) Again, God says:

<quote>

and that you slay not your children for fear of poverty—it is We who provide for you and for them—and that you approach not foul deeds, whether open or secret; and that you slay not the self, which God has forbidden save in accordance (with the demands of) justice. That is what He has enjoined upon you, that you may understand. (Sura 6, Verse 151)

</quote>

All this the Qur’an produced in the new religion, and the Prophet and his Companions delivered by their words and example, all to the best interest and advantage of their people.

Nevertheless, their people persisted in worshiping the stone they carved, severing relations with the next of kin, destroying life, and burying girls alive, [469] thereby abusing their freedom, and rendering it liable to be withdrawn. Since at that time there was no law except the sword, the sword was used to that effect [abridging freedom]. Thus, implementation shifted from the verse, “Then remind them, as you are only a reminder. You have no dominion over them” (Sura 8, Verses 21–22), to the verse, “except he who shuns and disbelieves, on whom God shall inflict the greatest suffering.” (Sura 88, Verses 23–24) It is as if God said, “We have granted you, Muhammad, dominion over anyone who shuns and disbelieves, so that God shall subject him to minor suffering at your hands through fighting, then God shall also subject him to the greatest suffering in hell.” “It is to Us that they shall return. Then We shall hold them to account.” (Sura 88, Verses 25–26) Thus the two first verses were abrogated or repealed by the two second verses. In this way, all the verses of persuasion, though they constitute the primary or original principle, were abrogated or repealed by the verses of compulsion (jihad). This exception was necessitated by the circumstances of the time and the inadequacy of the human capability to discharge properly the duty of freedom at that time. Hence the Prophet said:

<quote>

I have been instructed to fight people until they declare that “There is no god but God,” and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God (et cetera). Once they do, they will have secured their lives and property, unless they violate the law. And I leave their sincerity to be judged by God.

</quote>

Some Muslim scholars believe that Islamic wars were purely defensive wars, a mistaken belief prompted by their keenness to refute claims by the Orientalists that Islam spread by means of the sword. In fact, the sword was used to curtail the abuse of freedom.

Islam used persuasion for 13 years in propagating its clearly valid message for the individual and the community. When the addressees failed to

discharge properly the duties of their freedom, they lost this freedom, and the Prophet was appointed as their guardian until they came of age. However, once they embraced the new religion and observed the sanctity of life and property, and the social claims of their kith and kin, as they had been instructed, the sword was suspended, and abuses of freedom were penalized according to new laws. Hence the development of Islamic shari’a law, and the establishment of a new type of government.

In justifying the use of the sword, we may describe it as a surgeon’s lancet and not a butcher’s knife. When used with sufficient wisdom, mercy, and knowledge, it uplifted the individual and purified society. God said to this effect:

<quote>

We have sent Our Messengers with the clear signs, and revealed with them the Book and the scales, so that people should maintain the fair balance, and decreed iron with much hardship and benefits to people, so that God may discover who supports Him and His Messengers sincerely. God is All-Powerful and Self-Sufficient. (Sura 57, Verse 25)

</quote>

“We have sent Our Messengers with the clear signs” indicates the conclusive proof of the validity of their messages; “and revealed with them the Book” refers to the principle that “There is no god but God.” “The scales” means the shari’a to adjudicate between slave [man] and the Lord on the one hand, and between one slave and another on the other hand, “so that people should maintain the fair balance,” that is to say, be fair in their dealings.

The part “and decreed iron with much hardship and benefits to People” signifies that God has enacted fighting with the sword in order to curtail the freedom of those who abuse it, so that the sword brings them to their senses, thereby allowing them to earn their freedom and benefit from their life. That is, of course, besides other benefits which may be derived from

iron, which we need not enumerate here. The part “so that God may discover who supports Him and His Messengers sincerely” is to discover out of practical experience for man’s own benefit, because fighting is hateful and difficult. In other words, the object was to see who would endure the hardship of war for the sake of God and in support of the oppressed, by maintaining the fair balance between each individual and himself, and between himself and others. “God is All-Powerful and Self-Sufficient” implies that He is so Powerful that He needs no support from anyone else, and nothing can be gained from Him except through His own Grace.

What can be gained from Him in this context is victory. So the verse refers in a subtle way to another verse: “O believers, if you support [the cause of] God, He will help you and will make your steps firm.” (Sura 47, Verse 7) So if you support the cause of God by supporting His Prophet in order to maintain the balance, God shall help you and give you victory over your own lower selves. In other words, if you stand by the cause of God in minor jihad (fighting), He shall support You and give you victory in the major jihad (self-control) where one is helpless without God’s help, and no one can give you victory except Him. To “make your steps firm” means tranquillity and peace of mind, and includes, of course, physical courage in battle.

In treating ailments of the heart it is wise to begin with gentle means, and to resort to strict measures only when absolutely necessary, deferring drastic treatment to the very end. Suffering death by the sword in this life is really an aspect of suffering hell in the next life, since both are punishments for disbelief. Whoever adds to his own disbelief by inciting others to disbelief or to shun the path of God must be suppressed before he takes up arms in the cause of disbelief. God says:

<quote>

Those who spend their money in order to shun the path of God shall spend it, achieve only sorrow, and still be defeated. The infidels shall be gathered in hell, so that God may distinguish the bad from the good and set the bad apart and cast them all in hell. These indeed are the losers. Tell the infidels that if they repent, they shall be forgiven for what they have done, but if

they persist, then they shall be dealt with as were similar people before them. Fight them to prevent chaos, and so that all religion is rendered unto God; if they give up, then God has insight in what they do. (Sura 8, Verses 36–39)

</quote>

When we consider God’s expression, “the infidels shall be gathered in hell, so that God may distinguish the bad from the good,” we can readily appreciate that the cause of suffering is disbelief. “God has no need for your suffering if you are thankful and believing, God is All-Thankful and All-Knowledgeable.” (Sura 4, Verse 147) The part of the above text, “Fight them to prevent chaos,” means so that there will be no disbelief, its propagation, or the shunning of the path of faith. “[S]o that all religion is rendered unto God” reflects the original purpose of fighting: “Your Lord commanded [that you] worship none but Him.” (Sura 17, Verse 23) This is the design which He shall accomplish regardless of the wishes of the infidels.

In another verse God says: “Fight them to prevent chaos, and in order to render religion unto God; if they desist, then there can be no hostility except against the wrongdoers.” (Sura 2, Verse 193) The wrongdoers are of two levels. On one level there are those who worship other than God, and persist in doing so, while on the other level there are those who appear to submit to God in obedience, but transgress upon the rights of other people and do them injustice. The verse decrees that freedom be withdrawn from those who abuse it, such withdrawal being proportionate to the degree of abuse: for the disbelievers the law of war, and hardship of iron, while to the transgressors, the law of peace and adjudication of rights. This is the meaning of the expression “then there can be no hostility except against the wrongdoers.”

Postponement from the original principles to the subsidiary principles signifies descent from the level of islam to the level of ‘imcm. This is referred to in the verse “And We have revealed to you the Reminder [the Qur’an] so that you may explain to mankind that which has been sent down to them, and that they may reflect.” (Sura 16, Verse 44) The phrase “we have revealed to you the Reminder” means the

whole of the Qur’an including the original principle—islam—as well as the subsidiary (‘iman). “So that you may explain to mankind that which has been sent down to them” means to detail through legislation, and to explain, in various other ways, to the believers (mu’minin) what has been brought down to their level. “[T]hat they may reflect,” means that perhaps such reflection, while implementing the subsidiary principle, may lead them to the original principle they were unable to implement at the beginning. Here is a subtle reference to the ascent up the various levels of Islam, starting with initial Islam, and ascending by means of clear thinking, guided speech, and sincere action: “Unto Him ascends the pure words, being elevated by good deeds.” (Sura 35, Verse 10)

Thus we reach an extremely important conclusion: many aspects of the present Islamic shari’a are not the original principles or objectives of Islam. They merely reflect a descent in accordance with the circumstances of the time and the limitations of human ability.

**** Slavery is Not an Original Precept in Islam

Islam’s original principle is freedom. But the Islamic religion was revealed to a society in which slavery was an integral part of the socioeconomic order. It was also a society that was shown in practice to be incapable of properly exercising its freedom, and therefore its individual members needed guidance; hence the consequent enactment ofjihad. In Islamic jihad, the Muslims first had to offer to the unbelievers the new religion. If they refused to accept it, they had the second option of paying jizya [tax] and living under Muslim government, while practicing their own religion and enjoying personal security. If they also refused the option of jizya, the Muslims would fight them and if victorious take some of them as slaves, thereby adding to the number of those already in slavery.

The rationale of such servitude is to be found in the principle of reciprocity (mu’awada). If an individual is invited to become the slave of God but refuses, such refusal is symptomatic of ignorance that calls for a

period of training. The individual prepares to submit voluntarily to the servitude of God by becoming the slave of another person, thereby learning obedience and humility, which are becoming of a slave. Reciprocity (mu’awada) here rules that if a free person refuses to become the slave of God, he may be subjugated and made the slave of a slave of God, in fair and just retribution: “And whoso does an atom’s weight of evil will also see it” (Sura 99, Verse 8)....

*** The Second Message of Islam

The Second Message is Islam. The Prophet himself imparted this Second Message without elaboration or detail, except for such overlaps between the First Message and the Second Message as ‘ibadat and hudud [worship practices and the specified penalties]. God says: “Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed My grace upon you, and sanctioned Islam as your religion.” (Sura 5, Verse 3) That day was the day of ‘arafa [ninth day of the month Dhu’l-Hijja] on hajat al-wada’ (the farewell pilgrimage) of the eighth year A.H., which was a Friday. This verse is the last verse of the Qur’an to be revealed, and is the ultimate word of the Divine Message.

God has accepted Islam for mankind so that we may accept it, because anything that is not initiated by Him cannot be undertaken by us. God says: “Then He forgave them in order that they may repent.” (Sura 9, Verse 118) [470]

Many people considered the phrase, “Today I have perfected your religion for you,” as implying that Islam itself has been fully achieved by mankind on earth on that day. The verse “And We have revealed to you the Reminder [the Qur’an] so that you may explain to mankind that which has been sent down to them” (Sura 16, Verse 44) was also taken to mean that the Qur’an has already been finally and conclusively explained. Nothing, however, is further from the truth than this view. “Explanation” of the Qur’an has been only in terms of [expedient] legislation, the shari’a, and interpretation to the extent appropriate for the time of such explanation and

in accordance with the capacity of the audience and the abilities of the people.

The Qur’an can never be finally and conclusively explained. Islam, too, can never be concluded. Progress in it is eternal: “Surely, the [true] religion with God is Islam.” (Sura 3, Verse 19) “With God” [is eternal] beyond time and space. Progress into Islam by means of the Qur’an is progress towards God in infinitude (itlaq). As such it has not been, and can never be, fully and conclusively explained. It is its revelation into mashaf [Arabic text] as a Book that has been concluded, but its explanation has not.

This is how one should understand the difference between “revealed” and “explain” in the verse “And we have revealed to you the Reminder [the Qur’an] so that you may explain to mankind that which has been sent down to them, and they may reflect.” According to the prevailing understanding of Muslim scholars, the two notions are synonymous, while in fact they are not. The level of understanding in the phrase “that which has been sent down to them” does not refer to the whole of the Qur’an but only to the part subject to explanation, namely, the First Message, and sections where the First and the Second Messages overlap.

The Qur’an was revealed with dual meanings. God says in this connection:

<quote>

God has revealed the best speech in a Book of similar and dual meanings, from which the skin of those who fear their Lord creeps! Then their skin and hearts soften to dhikr [remembrance through worship of God]. That is the guidance of God with which He guides whomsoever He wishes, and he whom God misguided has no other guide. (Sura 30, Verse 23)

</quote>

The word “similar” implies that there is some similarity between the Qur’an at its base and at its peak, its front and back. Its zahir and batin, “dual meanings,” refer to its two levels of meaning: a

distant meaning with the Lord, and a nearer meaning that has come down to the slave [of God].

The whole of the Qur’an is of dual meanings: every verse and word and even every letter has a dual meaning. The reason for this is that the Qur’an is the Lord’s speech to His slave. The similarity in the Qur’an is due to the similarity between the Lord and the slave, expressed by the Prophet in the hadith, “God has created Adam [man] after His Own image.” God expresses the same meaning in the verse: “O people, fear your Lord, Who has created you from a single Self.” (Sura 4, Verse 1) That “single Self’ means His Own Blessed and Exalted Self.

The word Islam, for example, has a near meaning exposed by the Qur’an in the verse, “The Bedouins said amanna [we believe]; tell them you have not believed, but say aslamna [we submit] and ‘mam [true belief] did not enter your hearts yet.” (Sura 49, Verse 14) This is what we termed initial Islam which, we said, is not taken by God as significant. Islam has a further meaning which lies with God in infinity. To this further meaning comes the reference in the verse: “Oh believers [mu’minin], fear God as He ought to be feared and become true submitters [muslimin] before you die.” (Sura 3, Verse 102)

It goes without saying that no one fears God as He ought to be feared except God Himself. This is, therefore, a methodology of ascent to God through many levels of servitude, humility, and submission. Servitude is infinite, just like Lordship. Absolute servitude to God requires absolute knowledge of God, and this only God can achieve. “Say no one knows what is in heaven and earth, the Unknown, except God.” (Sura 27, Verse 65) The Unknown here means God Himself so it is as if He said, “No one knows God except God Himself.” In our book Rasalat al-salah [The Message of Righteousness], which may be consulted in this context, we have shown how servitude [to God] is freedom.

Islam is a method of ascent to servitude, and the Qur’an is the Book which leads the way. This quality of the Qur’an is the reason it was revealed, as indicated in the verse, “And, indeed, We rendered the Qur’an for the sake of

dhikr, remembrance through worship, is there anyone who would take heed?” (Sura 54, Verse 17) The Qur’an reminds us of servitude which we have accepted and then forgotten:

<quote>

And [remember] when thy Lord brought forth from Adam’s children—out of their loins—their offspring and made them bear witness against their own selves saying, “Am I not your Lord?” They said: “Yes, we admit this.” [This He did] lest you should say on the Day of Resurrection, “we were surely unaware of this.” Or [lest] you should say, [it was] only our fathers [who] associated co-partners [with God] in the past and we were merely a generation after them. Will Thou then destroy us for what those, who lied, did? And thus do We make clear the Signs, [that they may be admonished] and that they may return [to God]. (Sura 7, Verses 172–174)

</quote>

So that they may return to God in servitude and submission, through Islam.

As the Qur’an is the methodology of ascent to God, “We said: Go forth hence, all of you. And if there comes to you guidance from Me, then whoso shall follow My guidance, on them [shall come] no fear, nor shall they grieve.” (Sura 2, Verse 38) Since the Qur’an is that guidance, then it has its beginning with God, and its end with us. If we proceed properly through its levels, we shall recover the paradise we lost through the sin of Adam, and ascend into infinity (itlaq). God said of the Qur’an: “Alif lam min.[471] That is certainly the Book which contains guidance for the God fearing.” (Sura 2, Verses 1 -2) Of those who fear God who are guided by the Qur’an, He said: “Those who fear God are in paradise, and a river, on a seat of truth, with the Most Able King.” (Sura 54, Verse 54) These are levels or grades, beginning with paradise, then the river, then the seat of truth, and finally with the Most Able King in infinity. Such levels vary from physical paradise—which is the paradise lost through sin, to the Absolute in His itlaq. The Qur’an guides to all this, hence it is inexhaustible: “Say, if every sea became ink for the words of my Lord, surely, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if a similar amount is brought as additional supply.” (Sura 18, Verse 109) For this reason

it is false to assert that the Qur’an may be finally and conclusively explained. The Qur’an is God’s dhat [Self or Soul] which has descended, out of pure grace, to levels comprehensible by the slaves, thereby becoming the Qur’an in its various levels of descent: dhikr, Qur’an, and furqan.[472] Furqan was the most effective form of Arabic expression to indicate the two levels of Qur’an and dhikr. The Qur’an was rendered into the form of Arabic expression so that we might understand from God. God says in this respect: “We have rendered it into Arabic so that you may understand.” (Sura 43, Verse 3) This verse and other similar verses have misled many Muslim scholars into believing that the Qur’an itself is Arabic, in the sense that its meanings may be exhaustively understood through the Arabic language. It is not so, as we have explained when discussing Qur’anic chapters starting with letters of the alphabet, above.

Being so supreme, Islam has never been achieved by any nation up to the present day. The nation of muslimin has not yet come. It is expected to come, however, in the future of humanity. Its day of emergence shall be the day of the ultimate pilgrimage, the day when the Divine statement “Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed My grace upon you, and sanctioned Islam as your religion” (Sura 5, Verse 3) is realized in practice.

Muhammad, in his time, was the pioneer of the muslimin to come. It was as if he came to his nation, the nation of the mu’minin from the future. He was not one of them, as he was the only Muslim amongst them. “Say: My prayer and my worship and my life and my death are [all] for God the Lord of all creation. He has no partner. And so am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit [muslimin].” (Sura 6, Verse 163) Abu Bakr [died 634], the second best man, was the most superior of all the believers (mu’minin), yet there was a huge gap between him and the Prophet. It was to future muslimin that the Prophet referred, when he said:

<quote>

“How I long for my brothers who have not come yet.” And Abu Bakr said: “Are we not your brothers, O Messenger of God?” He replied: “No, you are my Companions!” Then he said again: “How I long for my brothers who have not come yet!” Then Abu Bakr said: “Are we not your brothers, O Messenger for God?” He said: “No, you are my Companions!” Then He said for the third time: “How I long for my brothers who have not come yet!” They asked: “Who are your brothers, O Messenger of God?” He said: “A people who come at the end of time, of whom the active one shall have seventy times as much reward as you have.” They asked: “Seventy times as much as we have or they have?” He replied: “As you have.” They asked: “Why?” He replied: “Because you find assistance in doing good, and they find no assistance.”

</quote>

**** The Muslims (Muslimin)

The Muslims, as a nation, have not yet come, but the Prophet prophesied their coming, towards the end of time, when circumstances are suitable, and God’s promise is fulfilled: “And he who seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him and in the Hereafter he shall be among the losers.” (Sura 3, Verse 85) On that day all people shall embrace religion and find no alternative, because religion provides the only answers.

We believe that the earth is preparing for the emergence of the Islamic shari’a of the true submitters (muslimin), which shall establish the new civilization. In view of the bankruptcy of contemporary social philosophies, there is no alternative. As stated at the outset of this book, the whole of humanity today is in an ideological wilderness, with Western civilization lost and bankrupt,[473] and with issues of democracy, socialism, and individual freedom persistently demanding answers. Yet there is no answer except through the cross-fertilization of Western civilization, or to be more precise, Western material progress, with a new spirit, namely, the spirit of Islam. Islam appears to be the only ideology capable of resolving the existing conflict between the individual and the community and between the individual and the universe, as we have already demonstrated.

We should not confuse the name Muslims with the traditional name given to the present nation. We have already stated that the present nation derives its name from the initial Islam. Actually, present Muslim society is the nation of the mu’minin [believers]. No nation up to now has deserved the name muslimin. Any mention of Islam with respect to previous nations refers merely to initial Islam, except for the pioneers of humanity who achieved ultimate Islam, or rather a degree of the ultimate Islam, as the ultimate Islam can never be exhaustively achieved. Such pioneers are, therefore, the pioneers of the nation of muslimin which has not come yet. God says in this connection:

And [remember the time] when Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House [praying]: “Our Lord, accept [this] from us for Thou art the All-Hearing, the AllKnowing. Our Lord, make both of us submissive to Thee and make of our offspring a people submissive to Thee. And show us our ways of worship and turn to us with mercy; for Thou art Oft-Returning [with compassion, and art] Merciful. And, Our Lord, raise up among them a Messenger from among themselves, who may recite to them Thy Signs and teach them the Book and Wisdom and may purify them; surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise.” And who will turn away from the religion of Abraham but he who makes a fool of himself. Him did We choose in this world, and in the next he will surely be among the righteous. When his Lord said to him, “Submit,” he said, “I [hereby] submit to the Lord of the worlds.” The same did Abraham enjoin upon his sons—and Jacob [also—saying,] “O my sons, truly God has chosen this religion for you; so let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of complete submission.” Were you present when death came to Jacob, when he said to his sons, “What will you worship after me?” They answered, “We will worship thy God, the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, the One God; and to Him we submit ourselves.” (Sura 2, Verses 127–133)

The phrase “Our Lord, make both of us submissive to Thee” refers to ultimate Islam, and they [Abraham and Ishmael] were in fact muslimin [in this sense of ultimate Islam]. But the phrase “and make of our offspring a people submissive to Thee” indicates, in the short run, a Muslim nation in the sense of initial Islam, which shall evolve and develop into the ultimate Islam. Their prayers have been answered. Abraham advised his sons that there is no god except God, and so did Jacob: “O my

sons, truly God has chosen this religion for you; so let not death overtake you except when you are in a state of complete submission”—that is to say, remain holding fast to the creed and maintain that “there is no god but God” until your death. Their answer, “we will worship thy God, the God of thy fathers Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, the One God; and to Him we submit ourselves,” refers to the initial Islam.

God also said: “As I inspired the disciples [of Jesus] to believe in Me, and in My Messengers, they said: We do believe, and You shall bear witness that we have submitted (muslimin).” (Sura 5, Verse 111) Their Islam here is synonymous with ‘main [faith], as required in the revelation. God in the revelation required them to believe. When they did believe and declared this, they thought that their ‘mum was Islam, so they said: “You shall bear witness that we have submitted (muslimin).” A knowledgeable person can hear the Lord replying: “Do not say we have surrendered, but say we believe.” They had not surrendered in the sense of the ultimate Islam. They merely surrendered in the sense of the initial Islam.

The disciples were Muslims in the sense of initial Islam, since even the first stage of ultimate Islam requires moving out of the law for the community as a whole, and entering upon shari’afardiya, the law for the individual. Individuality is achieved only after perfect compliance with the law for the community, until one is able to properly exercise his absolute individual freedom. The ultimate Islam is the level of individualities.

Individuality cannot be achieved by anyone who is divided within himself. When the conscious mind is no longer in conflict with the subconscious, unity of being is attained, and this is characterized by wholesomeness of the heart, clarity of thought, and beauty of body, thereby realizing a full and comprehensive intellectual and emotional life. “The next life is the ultimate life if they only know.” (Sura 29, Verse 64) Ultimate life, free from defects, disease, and death, indeed the opposite of death.

To restore unity to one’s being is for an individual to think as he wishes, speak what he thinks, and act according to his speech. This is the objective

of Islam: “O believers, why do you say what you do not do? It is most hateful to God that you say what you do not do.” (Sura 61, Verses 2–3)

**** The Good Society

This superior state can only be reached through a two-fold method: first, the good society, and secondly, the scientific educational method to be adopted by the individual in order to liberate himself from inherited fear.

The good society is one that is based on three equalities: economic equality, today known as socialism, or the sharing of wealth; political equality or democracy, or sharing in political decisions which affect daily life; and social equality which, to some extent, results from socialism and democracy, and is characterized by a lack of social classes and discrimination based on color, faith, race, or sex. In the good society, people are judged according to their intellectual and moral character, as reflected in their public and private lives and demonstrated in the spirit of public service at all times and through every means. Social equality aims at removing social classes and differences between urban and rural life by providing equal opportunities for cultural refinement. The criterion of social equality is that marriage [the most fundamental and intimate relation] is possible between any man and any woman. This is the accurate test of social equality.

A good society also enjoys tolerant public opinion, permitting different life-styles and manners, as long as these are beneficial to society.

Public opinion has its own judgments over and above those of the law and may be more effective than legislation itself in deterring deviants and offenders. Public opinion may, of course, condemn any type of conduct it disapproves, but it must always do so only by nonviolent means, since violence usually results in one of two evil responses: counterviolence or hypocrisy. Sometimes public opinion can be enacted as legislation if this is consistent with the constitution as described above [that is, legislation that reconciles the individual need for absolute individual freedom and society’s need for complete social justice]....

**** Political Equality: Democracy

Again, we will not discuss democracy in detail here, as it will be discussed in our book Islam Is Democratic and Socialist. Just as socialism is the product of the struggle between the “haves” and the “have nots” in the material sphere, democracy is the product of the struggle between those same extremes in the political sphere. Its purpose is the sharing of power. Democracy parallels socialism; they are as two wings of society. In the same way that a bird does not fly with one wing, so does society need the two wings of democracy and socialism.

Socialism, which requires greater social awareness, is preceded by democracy which, in the beginning, may be exercised by only a few enlightened individuals. Scientific socialism also needs, as a base, the riches of developed capitalism as well as the advances of modern technology. Primitive, native socialism, however, has its origins in ancient history.

Democracy was born in Athens, the most culturally advanced of the Greek city- states. Each of those cities had its own independent government. As the city- states were small, it was easy for the entire population to participate in government through public assemblies. Greek democracy was, therefore, direct democracy, with no need for an elected house of representatives or executives of modern democratic governments. In Greece officials were elected annually, and elections were often conducted by poll. The Athenians believed that participation in public affairs was the right and duty of every citizen. (However, they did not regard women and slaves as citizens). Pericles [circa 495–429 B.C.], their greatest orator, speaking on behalf of Athenian democracy in the funeral oration following the war against Sparta in the year 430 B.C., described Athenian democracy as follows:

<quote>

[Our government] favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we took to the laws, they afford equal justice to all in their private differences; if to social standing, advancement in public life falls to

reputation for capacity, class considerations not being allowed to interfere with merit; nor again does poverty bar the way; if a man is able to serve the state, he is not hindered by the obscurity of his condition. The freedom which we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life. There, far from exercising a jealous surveillance over each other, we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbor for doing what he likes, or even to indulge in those injurious looks which cannot fail to be offensive, although they inflict no positive penalty. But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens. Against this fear is our chief safeguard, teaching us to obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly such as regard the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace.

Further, we provide plenty of means for the mind to refresh itself from business. We celebrate games and sacrifices all the year round, and the elegance of our private establishments forms a daily source of pleasure and helps to banish the spleen; while the magnitude of our city draws the produce of the world into our harbor, so that to the Athenian the fruits of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of his own.

... We cultivate refinement without extravagance and knowledge without effeminacy; wealth we employ more for use than for show, and place the real disgrace of poverty not in owning to the fact but in declining the struggle against it. Our public men have, besides politics, their private affairs to attend to, and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters, for, unlike any other nation we regard him who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless. We Athenians are able to judge at all events if we cannot originate, and instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling-block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all.[474]

</quote>

Athenian democracy, as described by Pericles, continued to grow and develop in various parts of the world after the city’s demise. This type of democracy manifested certain principles and a distinctive approach to life—

recognizing the dignity of man and attempting to manage human affairs in accordance with justice, truth, and popular acceptance. Modern democracy has established certain principles, the most important of which may be summarized as follows:

1. Recognition of basic equality between all individuals.

2. The value of the individual as above that of the state.

3. Government as the servant of the people.

4. The rule of law.

5. Appeal to reason, experiment, and experience.

6. The rule of the majority, with utmost respect for rights of the minority.

7. Democratic method and procedures used to achieve objectives.

Democratic methods and procedures are not an end in themselves, but rather means to an end that lies behind them. The object of democracy is not simply to establish legislative, executive, and judicial organs, since all these are but means to realize the dignity of man. Democracy is not merely a way of government; it is also a way of life. The individual human being is the end, and everything else is a means to that end. The respect and high regard which people have for the democratic approach to government are due to the fact that it is the best approach to achieving the dignity of the individual.

There remain, however, some inadequacies in the present democratic approach, although these are much less pronounced than the deficiencies of

Marxism. We leave its detailed examination for our coming book, Islam Is Democratic and Socialist.

The dignity of man is derived from the fact that he is the most capable of all living things in learning and developing. The value of democracy is that it is the type of government most capable of providing opportunities for man to realize his dignity and honor. In a dictatorship, however, the government denies individuals the right to experiment and assume responsibility, thereby retarding their intellectual, emotional, and moral growth. In contrast to dictatorship, democracy is based on the right to make mistakes. This does not mean that individuals are encouraged to make mistakes for the sake of making mistakes, but rather it is recognition of the fact that freedom requires a choice between various modes of action. Democracy implies learning how to choose, choosing well, and correcting previous mistakes. In fact, all self-discipline and the true exercise of freedom are a series of individual actions in choice and implementation. In other words, freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of action all require that one accepts responsibility for mistakes in speech and action in accordance with law that is consistent with the constitution.

Democracy is therefore the right to make mistakes, as we learn from the hadith of the Prophet: “If you do not make mistakes, and then ask for forgiveness, God shall replace you by people who make mistakes, ask for forgiveness, and are forgiven.”

Human dignity is so dear to God that individual freedom is not subject to any guardianship, not even that of the Prophet, irrespective of his impeccable morality. God says: “Then remind them, as you are only a reminder. You have no dominion over them.” (Sura 88, Verses 21–22) Reference here is made to the polytheists who refused to worship God and tended the idols, worshipping them and sacrificing to them. Even the Messenger Muhammad, who was not seeking power for himself and whom God described in the Qur’an: “You are of great moral character” (Sura 68, Verse 4) [was not allowed to have dominion even over such a backward people]. This indicated that no man is perfect enough to be entrusted with the freedom of others, and that the price of freedom is continuous individual vigilance in

safeguarding such freedom. In fact, individual freedom is a fundamental right with a corresponding duty, namely, the proper exercise of such freedom.

Since the society of mu’minin was incapable of exercising individual freedom in choice and action, the Prophet was appointed as a guardian to prepare them for the responsibility of absolute individual freedom. While exercising such guardianship, he insisted on giving them the right to make mistakes, whenever possible, without subjecting them to undue hardship or difficulty. In that way he was preparing them for democracy, for which they had to be sufficiently mature and intelligent. Such was the order of God when He said:

<quote>

And it is by the Great Mercy of God that you are kind towards them, and if you had been rough and hard-hearted, they would surely have dispersed from around you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them, and consult them; and when you are resolved, then put your trust in God. Surely, God loves those who put their trust [in Him]. (Sura 3, Verse 159)

</quote>

This is the verse of shura [consultation], and consultation, whenever mentioned, whether in this verse or in the following verse—“those who answered the call of their Lord, and perform the prayer, and their affairs are [decided] by shura [mutual consultation] and pay alms from what We have provided for them” (Sura 42, Verse 38)—does not refer to democracy. Shura, however, was a necessary stage in preparation for democracy, in due course.

Shura is not an original Islamic precept, but rather a subsidiary one. It is not democracy, but rather the rule of the mature individual who is preparing the nation to become democratic. The original precept of democracy is based on the verse, “Then remind them, as you are only a reminder. You have no dominion over them.” (Sura 88, Verses 21–22)

By the same token, zakat [Islamic taxation] is not a socialist practice; it is rather capitalist and is based on the verse, “Take alms out of their wealth, so that you may cleanse them and purify them thereby. And pray for them; your prayer indeed is [a source of] tranquillity for them. And God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” (Sura 9, Verse 103) Thus, zakat is not an original precept of Islam, but rather a subsidiary one. Its purpose is to prepare people psychologically and materially for socialism in due course. The original precept which the verse of zakat abrogated is that which reads, “When they ask you what to give away, say all that you do not need” (Sura 2, Verse 219), as explained above.

The Second Message calls for a return from the subsidiary verses to the original verses, which were temporarily abrogated because of circumstances and material and human limitations. We must now elevate legislation by evolving and basing it on the original Qur’anic verses. In this way we shall welcome the age of socialism and democracy and open the way to absolute individual freedom through worship and humane dealing with other people. This is the shari’a law of the nation of the Muslims (muslimin) that is yet to come, as the earth is now preparing to receive it. It is the duty of the people of the Qur’an [present- day Muslims] to pave the way for muslimin. And that is the purpose of this book....

** 29—The Necessity of Renewing Islamic Thought and Reinvigorating Religious Understanding

Nurcholish Madjid

<quote>

A native of Java, educated through college level at Islamic schools, Nurcholish Madjid (Indonesia, born 1939) rose to national prominence in the

late 1960s as leader of the Islamic Students Association. In a speech of January 2, 1970, the first of two translated here, Madjid called for deep-seated changes in Islam to keep pace with changes in the world, even using the controversial term secularism.[475] He had not intended for this speech to be circulated or published—indeed, he later called the talk's bluntness "a tactical blunder"—but he did not disavow the ideas expressed in the speech.[476] The second talk translated here, delivered in 1972, was an attempt to develop these ideas further, and his 1984 doctoral dissertation under Fazlur Rahman at the University of Chicago (see chapter 31)—on the thirteenth-to-fourteenth-century Islamic reformer Ibn Taymiyya—sought to "reexplain" his views with greater historical and philosophical sophistication.[477] Still an active and controversial figure in Indonesian Islamic debates, Madjid now heads a private Islamic research institute.[478]

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*** The Necessity of Renewing Islamic Thought and the Problem of the Integration of the Umma

**** 1. Introduction

The incentive to discuss the problem as reflected in the title stems from the established fact that Indonesian Muslims are again experiencing inertia in thought and development of Islamic teachings, and the loss of "psychological striking force!" in their struggle. The umma [Islamic community] is immediately confronted with a dilemma: should it choose to blaze the trail of regeneration within itself at the expense of long-coveted integration, or should it cling to the preservation of efforts toward integration even though it has to bear the consequences of inertia in thought and the loss of invulnerable moral forces? The incompatibility between the need for renovation and the need for integration is seen in the fact that when a section of the community takes the initiative in renewal, another section will react unfavorably towards it. History has repeatedly shown the truth of this phenomenon.

**** 2. Islam Yes, Islamic Party No?

One of the encouraging facts about Islam in Indonesia at present is its rapid expansion, particularly in terms of its (formal) adherents. Areas which previously had not known the religion are now accepting it; in fact (in some areas) they are making it the principal religion of the inhabitants alongside the other religions which already existed there. A greater interest in Islam is being shown by people in the higher social classes; even if they do not practice it themselves they at least show such an interest in their official attitudes. But we have a question that still needs to be answered, that is, to what extent is that development a result of genuine attraction to the ideas of Islam as presented by its leaders, verbally or in written form?

Or can this Islamic quantitative growth be regarded as nothing more than a phenomenon of social adaptation because of recent political developments in the country, namely, the defeat of the communists which gave the impression of Muslim victory? (Such social adaptation occurred in the period of Orde lama [Old Order, 19451965] as well, because at that time President Sukarno was always demonstrating, with great enthusiasm, his interest in Islam and, similarly, toward Marxism— whatever people might have speculated about the motives behind this.)

The answer to the above questions might be found by putting down the next question: to what extent were they attracted to Islamic parties and organizations? Except for a few, it is clear that they were not attracted to Islamic parties or organizations. Their attitude might be formulated thus, more or less: “Islam yes, Islamic party no!” So if Islamic parties constitute a receptacle of ideas which are going to be fought for on the basis of Islam, then it is obvious that those ideas are now unattractive. In other words, those ideas and Islamic thinking are now becoming fossilized and obsolete, devoid of dynamism. Moreover these Islamic parties have failed to build a positive and sympathetic image; in fact they have an image that is just the opposite. (The reputation of a section of the umma with respect to corruption, for example, is, as time passes, mounting.)

**** 3. Quantity Versus Quality

It is usually regarded as a truism that quality is more important than quantity. But what the umma is now doing in Indonesia is precisely the opposite: giving more importance to quantity than quality. It cannot be denied that unity gives a greater guarantee of achieving the aims, of a struggle than disunity. But can that unity exist in a dynamic form and become a dynamic force if it is not based on dynamic ideas? (“There cannot be revolutionary actions without revolutionary theories,” said [Vladimir Ilich] Lenin [Russian socialist, 1870–1924].) Dynamism is, at any rate, more decisive than a static state, even though the latter means a greater number of people. The paralysis of the umma these days is due, among other things, to the fact that it is closing tight its eyes to the defects on its body. This necessitates the existence of a movement aimed at the renovation of ideas so that the defects may be removed.

**** 4. Liberalization of Outlook Towards the Present “Teachings of Islam”

If we have reached the decision to undertake renovation within the umma, then where do we start? In connection with this problem we might quote the statement of Andre Beaufre [French military strategist, 1902–1975]: “Our traditional lines of thought must go overboard, for it is now far more important to be able to look ahead than to have large scale of force whose effectiveness is problematical.” The reminder that a small group can triumph over a larger group shows the importance of dynamics in comparison with quantity. No doubt what is still better is a combination of both. But if this is not possible, then the choice has to be between the two of them, and that choice has to be “dynamics.” We would like to deduce from the above quotation the meaning that renewal has to start with two closely related actions, that is, freeing oneself from traditional values and seeking values which are oriented toward the future. The orientation to the past and excessive nostalgia have to be replaced by a forward-looking attitude. To that end we need a process which, for the sake of simplicity, we shall call the liberalization process. That process will be applied to the “teachings and views of Islam” which exist today. It involves other processes:

***** a—Secularization.

By “secularization” is not meant the application of secularism, because “secularism” is the name for an ideology, a new closed worldview which functions very much like a new religion. What is meant here is all forms of “liberating development.” This liberating process is particularly needed because the umma, as a result of its own historical growth, is no longer capable of distinguishing—among the values which they consider Islamic—those that are transcendental from those that are temporal. In fact the hierarchy of values is often the reverse; the transcendental becomes temporal and vice versa, or everything becomes transcendental and valued as ukhrawi [pertaining to the hereafter] without exception. Even though they (the Muslims) perhaps do not express it in words, or may even deny it, still that attitude is reflected in their day-to-day activity. The consequences of this, as we already know, are most injurious: Islam assumes the same value as tradition, and to be Islamic is the same in degree as being traditionalist. Since the defense of Islam has come to be the same as the defense of tradition, an impression is created whereby Islamic strength is seen as the reactionary strength of tradition. The glasses through which Muslims see the scale of values have made them unable to respond properly to the development of thought in the world today.

So, by “secularization” one does not mean the application of secularism and the transformation of Muslims into secularists. What is intended is the “temporalizing” of values which are in fact worldly, and the freeing of the umma from the tendency to spiritualize them. In this manner the mental readiness to always test and retest the truth of a value in the face of material, moral or historical facts [may] become a characteristic of Muslims.

Further, it is intended by “secularization” that the temporal role of man as God’s “vicegerent” (caliph) on earth be fully consummated. Acting as vicegerent of God provides man with enough space for his freedom to choose and decide for himself, in the context of improving his life on this earth, whatever steps and measures [he deems fit], and at the same time it acknowledges man’s responsibility for those actions before God.

But what has happened now is that the umma has lost its creativity in this temporal life to the extent that it leaves the impression that it has decided not to act rather than [risk making a] mistake. In other words it has lost the spirit of ijtihad [Islamic interpretation].

In fact, as a logical consequence of towhid [belief in the unity of God], Muslims should automatically possess an attitude that is realistic and in accordance with what is towards the world and its problems. The fact that absolute transcendence pertains solely to God should actually give rise to an attitude of “desacralization” towards that which is other than God, namely, the world, its problems and values which are related to it. For to sacralize anything other than God is, in reality, shirk [polytheism], the opposite of towhid. So now secularization acquires its concrete meaning, that is, desacralization of everything other than that which truly possesses divine attributes, in other words, the world.

The object of the process of desacralization is everything pertaining to the world, both moral and material. Values are included among moral worldly objects, while matter constitutes the material objects. Now, if one hears the statement that “Islam is Bolshevism plus God” (Muhammad Iqbal [1877–1938]), one of its meanings is that the outlook of Islam regarding the world and its problems is the same as that of the communists (realistic, in accordance with what is, and without giving a value to the object more than that which it actually possesses). The only difference is that Islam postulates the existence of a transcendental being—God. The Islamic Weltanschauung [worldview] regarding the relationship between the universe and God is like that of the body, with the head above and the legs below (terms used by [Karl] Marx [German socialist, 1818–1883]). This means that [for Muslims] faith in God forms the basis of [their] outlook towards the universe, and not the reverse as in dialectical materialism.

***** b—Intellectual Freedom.

One liberal Islamic institution of higher learning, Balai Pendidikan “Darussalam” at Gontor, Ponorogo (East Java), has as its motto, “Freedom of Thought”—following “Lofty Character,” “Healthy Body,” and “Broad Knowledge.” Among the freedoms of the individual, the freedom to think and to express opinions are the most valuable. We must have a firm conviction that all ideas and forms of thought, however strange they may sound, should be accorded means of expression. It is by no means rare that such ideas and thoughts, initially regarded as generally wrong, are [later] found to be right. This has been the experience of every reform movement, whether individual or organizational, everywhere in the world. Furthermore, in the confrontation of ideas and thoughts, even error can be of considerable benefit, because it will induce truth to express itself and grow as a strong force.

Perhaps it was not entirely small talk when our Prophet said that differences of opinion among his umma were a mercy [from God]. Freedom of thought was very well explained by Oliver Wendell Holmes [U.S. judge, 1809–1894] when he said: “The ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas—that the best test of truth is the power of thought to get itself accepted [in the] competition of the market, and that truth is the only ground upon which their wishes can safely be carried out.”

Because of the absence of fresh ideas we have lost what we described above as “psychological striking force.” This is due to the fact that there is not a single freethinking body which focuses its attention on the immediate needs of continuously developing social conditions, whether in the economic, political or social arenas. Be that as it may, we still have to admit that our Islamically based ideas can best solve those problems if they are adjusted, refreshed, renewed and organized (coordinated) in such a way that they are in step with the realities of the present age. For example, the [Islamic] teaching concerning shura or mushawara [consultation] has been generally accepted by the umma as almost if not exactly identical with the concept of democracy that originated in the West. But on the other hand, the principal teachings of Islam on social justice and the care and protection of the weak, the poor, and the oppressed, as contained in many passages of the Qur’an, has yet to find expression in ideas formulated for practical application in dynamic and progressive terms. This is so because the umma, it appears, still views with horror

the word “socialism,” which like “democracy” originated in the West, and has a meaning which is quite similar to the corresponding Islamic concepts.

If this is not due to the absence of freedom of thought, then what psychological impediment is there within the umma? It has also made the umma incapable of taking initiatives in the development of this worldly society. Initiatives are always taken by others first, and as a result strategic positions that have to do with concepts and ideas fall into their hands. Islam is then excluded from those [strategic positions]. It is indeed important to realize that just as in military operations, wherein one vies for a vantage position on the battlefield and by capturing it prevents the enemy from occupying it, so also in the psychological game of politics one may capture positions of intellectual influence and hold on to them only to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy or other people. It is in this aspect that we see the main weakness of the umma. All of this is, once again, the consequence of the absence of freedom of thought, confusion in the hierarchy of values as to what constitutes the transcendental and what the temporal, the mode of thinking which is too encrusted with taboos, presumptions, and so on.

***** c—The “Idea of Progress” and Open Attitudes.

In point of fact, if a Muslim is truly consistent with the teachings [of Islam], then the value of the “idea of Progress,” like all other values of truth, need not be stated, because it is, in fact, already part of these teachings.

The idea of progress springs from the concept that man is intrinsically good, pure, and yearns for truth and progress (man was created by God withfitra [natural disposition to the good] and endowed with the hanif quality [that is, inclined to truth]).

Because of this, one of the manifestations of the existence of the idea of progress is the belief in the future of man throughout his history. So there is no need to be afraid of the changes which always occur in the temporal

value system of man. A reactionary attitude and a closed mentality in fact stem from a pessimistic view of history.

Therefore, consistent with the idea of progress is an open mental attitude, in the form of a readiness to accept and to take (temporal) values from whatever source as long as they contain truth. In accordance with the intellectual freedom mentioned above we have to be ready to observe the development of ideas concerning man across the widest possible spectrum, and then choose among them those which, according to objective criteria, contain truth. It is very difficult to comprehend why, in spite of the fact that their Holy Book clearly lays down that they “should give their ears to ideas and follow the best of them” (Sura 39, Verse 18), the umma today is more closed in its mental attitude. It is also stated that an open attitude is an indication that the person possessing it has received guidance from God, while the “closed” mentality described as “… bosom close and narrow as if he were engaged in sheer ascent” (Sura 6, Verse 126)[479] is one of the signs of being in error. If Islam is indeed neither a culture nor a civilization but a foundation for both, then where will Islamic culture and civilization find the materials to build themselves up if not from the entire surface of the earth, in the form of the universal human heritage. History provides unquestionable testimony to this fact. The Muslims came out of the Arabian peninsula having only a strong faith derived from the Qur’an and the sunna [practice of the Prophet]. Then from the newly conquered regions they discovered the legacies of humanity both from the West (Greek and Roman) and from the East (Persian). They later developed those legacies on the basis of principles which they brought from the desert of the Arabian peninsula and made them as their own. Was it not this creation of theirs that eventually gave birth to what we now know as the culture and civilization of Islam, of which we are so proud?

**** 5. A “Liberal” Group of Renovators is Needed

Reform movements have been emerging on the stage of history, both in Indonesia and in the world at large. We have now, in Indonesia, organizations with the renovatory aspirations such as the Muhammadiya [The Muhammadiya Association, founded 1912], Al-Irshad [Society for Reform and Guidance, founded 1920s], and Persis [Islamic

Union, founded 1926]. But history also records—and we must frankly admit—that they have now ceased to be renovators. Why?

The reason is that, in the long run, they have become rigid, probably as a result of not being able to capture the spirit of dynamism and progressiveness from the idea of renovation itself. On the other hand, organizations which history records as counter- reformist such as Nahdlatul Ulama [Renaissance of the Religious Scholars, founded 1926], Al-Washliya [Unshakeable Association, founded 1930], Persatuan Ulama Indonesia [Union of Indonesian Religious Scholars, founded 1917], and others, have now acted on their own, and have accepted values that previously were the monopoly of the renovators, although this attitude of theirs is due to the pressure of unavoidable historical laws. Moreover, they did not adopt those values with the requisite degree of seriousness or accept them formally as a principal view-point. The consequence of this is that a general state of stagnancy has now struck the umma: Islamic organizations that, at the time of their inception, were antitraditional and opposed to sectarianism have become traditionalist and schismatic, while other organizations, which originally rejected new values but have now accepted them, at no time intended to adopt the new values as principal attitudes in life. Hence a new and liberal group of Islamic renovators is required. As for the meaning of the word liberal, we have already given it above. But the term has further implications, as a logical consequence, namely, nontraditionalism and nonsectarianism.

What is further demanded here is that there has to be the capability and the courage constantly to review the group’s (sect’s) own values. Those values need not be brought forth again if only the Islamic community is consistent with its own teachings. For nontraditionalism is nothing more than the converse of the attitude: “We found our fathers subscribing to a particular set of values, and we receive guidance from their legacies” (Sura 43, Verse 22), while nonsectarianism is the converse of the attitude: “each group prides itself with what it has.” (Sura 30, Verse 32) Both attitudes are condemned in the Holy Book. To return to what we referred to earlier, the values of Islam are in fact dynamic, not static. Apart from the articles of faith (the most important of which is belief in God) and the fundamentals of worship coupled with some of the most fundamental social values which are

deemed not likely to undergo change, Islam does not provide definitive formulations so far as temporal actions are concerned. Except for the fundamental value of taqwa [fear of God], which grows out of faith in God and worship of Him, there are no fixed values. [Most] values are cultural values which have, of necessity, to develop continuously in accordance with the laws of change and development (everything other than God undergoes destruction or change) (Sura 28, Verse 88).

Therefore the values of Islam are those that conform to humanity's true nature or to universal truths and are supported by taqwa towards God. Those values are Islamic if they basically do not contradict 'iman [faith] or taqwa, and are good according to humanity and its development.

Today, the struggle to improve the welfare of mankind is not the monopoly of the umma. The whole of mankind, by relying on reason and the mind, has become involved in the attempts to discover the best ways of improving collective human life. In this modern age such expressions of human thought are encountered in those terms now heard so often, such as democracy, socialism, citizenship, communism and so forth.

However erroneous these ideas may later be proved by history, they nevertheless represent the summit of human intelligence concerning our own social life, as a result of the realistic and intellectually stimulating observation of social and historical phenomena. Now we have to learn to employ the best of these ideas according to Islamic yardsticks and endeavor to develop them further with the same realism and the same diligence in thinking. This is the essence of the meaning of the ijtihad or renewal which we desire. Therefore ijtihad or renewal ought to be a continuous process of original thinking based on the evaluation of social and historical phenomena which, from time to time, need to be reviewed in order to determine whether they are really erroneous. Ijtihad is a process such that misunderstanding or its problems will result in a bitter fruit—failure. Nevertheless it is still much lighter than the burden of social and historical stagnation brought about by absence of renewal. Hence it is not possible for ijtihad and a meaningful renovation to take place if we do not have research organizations with strong foundations; if we

do not have a first-rate method of analyzing all kinds of situations; and if we do not have accurate knowledge of the developments of human discoveries in the social or natural spheres. It appears that we are still far away from that comforting situation.

To sum up, the renewal effort is the task of those who come from that section of society that has the greatest capability to understand and to think. In other words it is the task of the educated. So the responsibility of educated people is indeed heavy—before mankind in history and before God in the hereafter. It is hoped that the major knowledge- and education-oriented organizations within the Islamic community ... can act as pioneers in promoting and carrying out this stupendous task through a kind of relationship which is more solid and better coordinated, without forgetting other liberal elements among existing Islamic associations.

With God alone are success and guidance.

*** Reinvigorating Religious Understanding in the Indonesian Muslim Community

**** Preface

The opportunity given to me by the Dewan Kesenian Jakarta [Jakarta Arts Council] to take part in the present literary program is indeed a great honor. For this honor I should like to thank the D.K.J., especially the Daily Activities Council.

This opportunity must be put to use in the best possible way. I shall use it to restate my thesis. I have earlier presented that thesis under the heading, “The Necessity of Renewing Islamic Thought and the Problem of the Integration of the Umma” [see previous section] on January 13, 1970. Now I shall present it again under a slightly different title, as may be seen above.

It is felt necessary to restate that thesis so that the misconceptions which then developed may be minimized. The thesis is being presented here with a simplification in the use of terms in addition to improvement—wherever possible—in the arrangement of words.

Hopefully that aim is still in keeping with the theme decided by the D.K.J. for this program, namely, “The Younger Generation and Religious Thinking in Islam,” as is printed in the Calendar of Events, October 1972.

**** Introduction

The reinvigoration of religious understanding is presently felt to be extremely important by those who are aware of it, particularly within the Indonesian Muslim community. The conceptions which are available at present are somewhat crippled. In the face of the criticisms of the younger generation, those crippled ideas have become unattractive and “withered.”

Every conception or idea will determine the shape of the social character of its adherents. That social character will then color their actions and life behavior, and will consequently direct the course of their life’s destiny. So if a change in their lot is desired, then there has to be first and foremost a transformation in the conceptions and ideas which rule over their community.

In the case of Islam, the sources of its teachings are in our hands. Those sources, particularly the Qur’an, have been preserved, in terms of sounds and pronunciation, from the beginning. But (Muslim) man’s understanding of the principal teachings contained in them is always growing. This happens because of developments in human civilization which regularly provide new inputs to the world of ideas.

But not all this growing understanding is creative and correct. Sometimes it is extremely vulgar or coarse, to the extent that it renders religious concepts superficial. Examples of this are the ideas of modern apologetics. The apology came about as a means of defending Islam against the invasion of

modern Western culture. In that situation Muslims confronted the invasion from a position of weakness. This apology, originating from a weaker position, sometimes revealed an inferiority complex. This is the reason why all apologetic ideas, in their essence, do not contain original creativeness.

Not every apologetic idea, however, was a failure. Some of them have, in fact, been so influential that they have given satisfaction to the Muslim community, calmed its restlessness and restored its spirit to endure and fight against the influence of foreign culture. But precisely because they were basically no more than apology, their potentialities were limited.

It is ironical that these apologetic tendencies are found at their strongest among modern Muslims, or—to be more exact—pseudomodern Muslims. These are precisely the people who know of and have enjoyed the blessings of Western civilization—both moral and material—but they do not possess within themselves the inner certitude of being Muslim. This is either due to their background or, more important, to their inability to make the adjustment between modern civilization and the religion they desire to believe in so firmly.

**** The Principle of ‘Iman

To begin with, Islam is obviously a religion. As a religion its kernel is conviction. There is no need to dwell here on the necessity of having a conviction, whatever its form and content may be. It is a fact that life is impossible without conviction at all.

Right conviction, in Islam, is called “’ iman.” Literally this means belief. In this matter belief in God stands first and above everything else. This is not a mere belief in God’s existence. What is more important is the believing attitude, or having faith in God.

‘Iman is more of a product of an inner spiritual response than rational deduction. It is the state of the soul which is full of appreciation of

God. This appreciation develops through a complete assimilation of God’s qualities as contained in His “beautiful Names” (Arabic al-asma’ al-husna).

The attitude which is appreciative of God constitutes the core of human religious experience. This attitude is also known as “taqwa.” It is the spirit of Godconsciousness in a faithful man. It represents one of the highest forms of spiritual life....

And now we note a point which is pertinent to this discussion; that is, that ‘iman, taqwa, and the religious experience of the appreciation of divinity, as explained above, are spiritual in nature. This means that these values are connected to something that is entirely intrinsic in a person, namely, sincerity. Hence they have to grow out of free and independent choice. For this reason, these religious values are highly individual in nature. They may vary [in quality], especially if there is external pressure. They are man’s most personal and most deep-rooted possessions. They are perfectly preserved in the innermost chambers of the heart or moral conscience. Such religiosity is so perfectly hidden and preserved in the breast that only God knows of it and only He can evaluate it. The person concerned can only feel it, but is not able to explain or reveal it to others properly because of the limitations of the mind and language.

**** The Principle of ‘Amal Salih

We mentioned earlier that when someone has the consciousness of God, it will become a strong and stable guiding principle and foundation of life. The reason for this is that when taqwa takes possession of the inner self and its attitudes, it will determine, out of the state of spiritual purity, the form and value of motivation for all acts in life or culture. This cannot but come from the desire to achieve a higher level of divine appreciation, toward the ultimate completion of the sense of purity—the “consent” or rida of God Himself.

Indeed the motivation, desire, and inclination to attain the good, the pure, and the true are qualities intrinsic to man because of his humanity. In accordance with his fitra or “original nature” which is pure, man is intrinsically inclined to that which is holy (hanif). He is further inclined, naturally, to yearn for the ultimate and absolute purity, namely, God, who is absolutely Pure, True, Good, and Absolute in all His qualities.

But it is precisely because God is the Ultimate Absolute, that He is beyond the ken of human comprehension. Man can only reach toward Him by following a way that channels his innate yearning and longing. Although man cannot hope, in this life, to reach God, he can, however, obtain God’s consent or rida, which would be felt by him spiritually in the form of divine appreciation. Indeed the highest stage of a spiritual life is that inner attitude which is wholly appreciative of God, coupled with the feeling of being contented with and resignation in God. This experience is a sign that God too is pleased and has given His assent. It should be borne in mind, however, that the forms of religious experience are highly individual in nature, and carry with them the implications we described earlier.

Since God, the goal of life and object of appreciation, is the Ultimate Absolute, and as such His essence is beyond comprehension, then what can be done—and should be done—is continuously to approach Him by following a way that leads to Him. This means that man should always strive to develop and expand his religious appreciation through “exploration” which will yield new experiences. This process cannot stop even for one moment, for each stop means finalization and absolutization, and this would mean, indirectly, laying claim to having attained and comprehended God, the Absolute. This would imply that God was being brought into the area of human comprehension, in which He becomes relative, loses His Absoluteness and assumes the relativity of nature and man himself with all its limitations. So it is in this process that knows no surcease that we Muslims are taught to make supplication to God every moment, particularly in our moments of formal communication (especially the canonical prayers) with God so that He may always guide them on the straight and right path.

Let us return to the question of man and humanity. It is already explained that man possesses an intrinsic inclination to that which is holy in

accordance with his pure original self. Now this spiritual tendency expresses itself outwardly in the form of character. Man is basically a moral creature and when taqwa or appreciation of God is in accord with one's humanity orfitra then it also means strengthening this humanity orfitra and sharpening its innate inclination to the holy. Hence religion and religiosity function as the perfecter of man's noble character which intrinsically resides in him.

What then is the tangible form of that sublime character? None other than actions (or 'amal) and deeds that are harmonious and consonant or salih [appropriate] in their comprehensive relationship with the living environment, especially in interpersonal relationships....

But how does man understand and know the God-created laws that control the domain of life, whose vastness is unlimited? Since the universe is limitless, the laws which govern it must also be limitless. Such indeed is the case: God's laws repose in His knowledge, which embraces the whole universe. [So vast is God's knowledge that] "if every piece of wood on this earth were to become a pen in order to write down God's knowledge, and all the seas became ink, added to by seas seven times over, it would still not be possible to finish writing down the knowledge of God." Such is the picture given in the Qur'an (Sura 30, Verse 27).

It is inconceivable that God would teach man all His knowledge. Neither man nor any other creature has the capacity to understand it all at once. But man still needs to know and understand to some degree the scheme of God in order to assist himself somewhat in creating a life that is coherent, harmonious, and happy. Out of His mercy, God gave man an instrument by which he could come to some understanding of these laws. That instrument is the specifically human faculty called "mind," "reason," or "intellect." With that instrument the opportunity to undertake the task of developing this world opens up for man. This intellectual faculty truly constitutes man's superiority over other creatures, including angels, to such an extent that he is honored as God's vicegerent on earth.

So, with that faculty man is given the opportunity to understand the domain of his life, both the natural and the social aspects. If his understanding is correct and he follows it conscientiously, then he will be able, to some extent, to shape the good earthly life. That ability is, no doubt, limited. The knowledge that he can acquire is likewise meager. But even that limited amount of knowledge is highly beneficial to man, because it is useful in his life. It is only by marshalling his rational capacity that man can, to some degree, develop his earthly existence in a better way....

Let us return to the aspect of material life mentioned above. Unlike the aspect of spiritual life which is inward and personal, the aspect of rational life is not personal in nature, at least not all of it. For it can be tackled together with others. In fact, in many respects it certainly depends on others. All the more so when it is realized that the rational faculty is limited in such a way that its findings in the form of knowledge are relative in nature, that is, they may be wrong. So a cooperative effort among men is necessary to counter-balance these weaknesses or reduce them. That cooperation expresses itself in openness of attitude toward criticisms, evaluations or improvements, in keeping with the development of overall human knowledge. So there are two principles, ‘iman and ‘amal salih, and a subprinciple, that ofjoint effort in search of truth and progress.

Owing to its relativity as a rational product of limited capacity, knowledge is always developing from moment to moment. One who closes himself to the development of his knowledge is really denying the relativity and limitations of his reason. This means that he is making his knowledge and reason absolute. In truth he becomes an absolutist man. And since only God is absolute, he is thereby competing with God. It has already been explained that this is an extraordinarily grave evil against man’s true nature. The sin of shirk is unpardonable. We realize that absolutism is damaging to the human race, since it closes all doors to progress and development, whereas all things change. Only the Absolute, God, does not undergo change. Certainly there is no greater evil than to block the historical development of the human race, for that means destroying it totally.

So the dimension of material earthly life pertains to knowledge (‘ilm) while that of spiritual transcendental life pertains to faith

(‘iman). For that reason their respective approaches have to be differentiated. As we have argued at great length, obviously these two aspects of life cannot be separated. The acts of every individual are, first of all, inseparable from the inner self, the spirit. The forms of their relationship do have influence and consequence; in fact they determine the nature of his life in the hereafter. Nevertheless, their respective approaches must be differentiated on account of the differences in dimension.

The dimensional differences between these two types of life correspond with the dimensional difference between ‘iman and ‘ilm. The former grows and develops on the basis of revelation (belief), while the latter owes its growth to rationality. Because of this difference in dimension, the approach to either could be made in abeyance of the other. For example, in the approach to worldly existence, or knowledge, there is nothing to hinder two persons of different faiths working together. Or a man may achieve a low or high level of achievement without the influence of the spiritual aspect.... But, of course, man has to strive for the highest possible status in both aspects of life. Hence although the Qur’an, for example, contains many references to the transitoriness and deceptions of worldly life, it enjoins, nevertheless, that man should work for “the good in this world and the good in the hereafter.” (Sura 2, Verse 201) Since the two dimensions and approaches are different, the two kinds of happiness cannot be achieved simultaneously by means of one method. Whoever aims for the dimensions of earthly life will attain [the good of that life] and whoever aims for the dimensions of transcendental life will attain [the good thereof]. Pursuing either one does not automatically result in getting the other as well. One is reminded that anyone who strives only for the worldly life will not receive any returns in the hereafter. Similarly, those who strive only for happiness in the hereafter are reminded not to forget their portion in this world (Sura 28, Verse 77).... It is putting faith and knowledge together that enables man to perform ‘amal salih, thereby attaining the highest degree of his humanity....

**** Apologia Concerning the Islamic State

This is an additional discussion, by way of an observation on one of the forms of religious concept within the umma. It is necessary to discuss

this because of the urgent need to undertake some clarification concerning it.

The idea of the “Islamic state” has been in the habit of emerging with great force within the Muslim community at certain periods in the past. We are grateful that it does not exist now—at least, so it seems outwardly, although remnants of it still linger.

Viewed from the perspective of the history and development of thought, the emergence of the idea of the Islamic state represents, in reality, a kind of apologetic tendency, as indicated in the heading. That apology arose from at least two bases:

The first was an apology in relation to modern Western ideologies such as democracy, socialism, communism and others. These ideologies are often totalitarian in character, in the sense that they are comprehensive in scope and cover every sphere of life in detail, particularly the political, social, economic, and cultural spheres, and others besides. The apology in relation to modern ideologies gave rise to an ideological-political understanding of Islam which then led to the ideal of an “Islamic state” just as there existed democratic states, socialist states, communist states, and so forth. This totalitarian ideological-political apperception led to the emergence of apologetic thinking which declared that Islam was not merely a religion, such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, and others, whose domains of efficacy are the spiritual, wherein is arranged the relationship between God and man. Islam, it was claimed, is “din “ [religion]. With the word “din “ it was hoped and intended that a totalitarian meaning would be conveyed, which would include all aspects of life—political, economic, social, cultural, and so on. The apology, it seems, was deemed necessary because in modern life, dominated by Western patterns, the most important aspects of life are the political, economic, social, and the rest, other than- spiritual. It is understandable that this dangerous cultural invasion destroyed the self-esteem of the umma, which was backward in precisely those abovementioned aspects, and brought about a sense of inferiority. Thus the apology was a compensation for an inferiority complex. The reason for this was that the umma (through its apologists) tried, with apologia that produced the totalitarian ideological-

political appreciation, to prove that Islam was actually superior to or at least on par with Western civilization, whose modern ideologies embraced the economic, political, social, and other domains—precisely those in which the Muslims failed.

As an apology, these ideas had only a brief span of life. After having temporarily satisfied the Muslims and restored their self-respect, the ideas were finally proved to be false. Like a boomerang they struck back at the umma. Its condition now is probably more pathetic than at the beginning. Such is the fate of ideas resulting from apology, whether they have been put down in writing or not.

The apology that Islam is “din, “ that it is not merely political appreciation—is untenable from several points of view. First of all, from the linguistic point of view, there is obvious inconsistency. The word “din “ in the Qur’an is used also to designate other religions, including the polytheism of the Meccan Quraish tribe. So the word simply means religion; Islam is therefore a religion.

Secondly, there is the question of point of departure. Although it is not realized or, more exactly, not admitted, it can be clearly seen that the motive force behind the apology is an inferiority complex. This is the feeling that unless Islam, in addition to dealing as a religion with the spiritual domain, also embraces other spheres of life, it does not stand on a par with Western ideologies. This means indirectly admitting the superiority of the political, economic, social, and other aspects of material life over the spiritual or religious. This mode of thinking clearly represents a Muslim’s total defeat before the onslaught of the Western materialistic way of thinking. Actually, if a Muslim truly realizes the position of the religious or spiritual aspect of life and is really cognizant and convinced of the superiority of Islam, he will not experience this sense of inferiority. On the contrary, he will have a sense of self-respect in facing anyone. Fortified by a firm conviction in himself and in his religion, he would then become creative in other fields, and with his mind freed from any sense of inferiority, he would readily learn from others who are superior in these fields. Another point is that it can be proved that in the sources of Islamic teaching—particularly the Qur’an—the

domain of efficiency in which Islam is most emphatic and most lucid is the spiritual, the domain of religious matters.

Legalism represents the second factor which led some sections of the Muslim community to the apologetic concept of an “Islamic state.” This legalism produced an understanding of Islam which was wholly legalistic, in the form of an Islamic perspective which portrayed Islam as a structure and compendium of law. This legalism is an extension of “fiqh-ism.” Fiqh is the codification of [Islamic] law resulting from the labors of Muslim savants in the second and third centuries of the Muslim era [eighth and ninth centuries A.D.]. The codification was undertaken to fulfill the needs of a legal system which regulated the government and the state which, at that time, embraced a very large region and a huge populace. This “fiqh-ism” is so dominant in the Muslim community that even reformist movements for the most part still concentrate their objectives in that domain. This legal composition is sometimes also called shari’a [Islamic law]. The “Islamic state” is likewise an apology by which the Muslim umma hopes to be able to manifest laws and regulations, Islamic shari’a, that are superior to other laws. But it is already clear that, despite the renovations of the reformists, fiqh has lost its relevance to the present mode of living. Its complete renovation, however, such that it might become suitable for modern life, would require a comprehensive knowledge of modern life in all its aspects, so that this does not become an interest and a [matter of the] competency of the Muslim umma alone, but also of others. Its result, then, does not have to be in the form of Islamic law per se, but a law which embraces everybody for the regulation of a life shared by all.

From a more fundamental point of view, the concept of “Islamic state” is a distortion of the [properly] proportioned relationship between state and religion. The state is one of the aspects of worldly life whose dimension is rational and collective, while religion is an aspect of another kind of life whose dimension is spiritual and personal.

Of course, it is not possible, as explained earlier, to separate state and religion. Through the individual citizen an inseparable connection exists

between motivation (or inner attitude derived from being part of a state) and action (or outward stance derived from being part of a state).

** 30. Islam and Humanism

Mamadiou Dia

Mamadiou Dia (Senegal, born 1911) was a schoolteacher, a headmaster, and a journalist before turning to politics in the mid-1940s. He served as a senator of the French Republic, representing Senegal; then after independence, he was prime minister of Senegal for four years. Dia's long collaboration with President Leopold Sedar Senghor, a non-Muslim, symbolized the relative absence of religious strife in Senegal, where the population is more than four-fifths Muslim. Nonetheless, Dia broke with Senghor in 1962 and was jailed for a dozen years. During his incarceration, Dia turned from politics to religion, integrating his fervent socialism into a theory of "Islamic humanism."[480]$$$ In a series of books on Islam published after his release from prison, Dia argues that interpretation of Islam must respond positively to the modern world, as Christianity has. Dia refers frequently to recent French theology for inspiration and methodological guidance—the effect being an opacity somewhat different from the Qur'anic exegesis of other works in this book.

*** Theological Bases of Islamic Humanism

All projects of Islamic renovation, in order to survive, must be based on solidly established theoretical foundations that call for a reflection on [the original] sources. The Islamic humanism that is being sought cannot forget this lesson, which results from the history of modernist reformism itself. In order to face the problems of the day, Islam needs first to affirm itself as ethical and religious value as much as spiritual personality. To resolve its own problems and confront the modern ideologies, it requires an adequate ideological apparatus built on an authentic Islamic philosophy. Islamic authenticity requires a return to the sources, that is, to the Qur'an and to the [sunna], not to take shelter there, to drown current cares there, but to draw from thence elements for the renovation and revitalization of Islamic philosophy. It is thus to a confrontation with the sources which we must submit any reformism, in order to know if there exist or not, in Islam, the ideological bases of a humanism integrating reason, the person, history; and if so, to try to determine in what measure the ideology of Islam lends itself to an enlargement to the dimensions of a universal humanism....

*** Islam and History

**** Historicity and Qur'anic Exegesis

A correct exegesis of the Qur'an, as we have already indicated, leads to a consideration of Islam as both esoteric and exoteric, haqiqa [truth] and shari'a [Islamic law], meta-history and history. Man, in accepting the burden of the amana [faith] on the day of the Covenant, has affirmed his Promethean character before God. It matters little that this event cannot be dated, since it is situated in pre-existence: the Muslim retains the symbol of it; he knows that he is the inheritor of this celestial being that had the crazy audacity to designate him for conquest. This spiritual filiation leaves him no doubt about his Promethean vocation and exempts him from asking God to descend to earth in order to make history. If he tried to forget this vocation, the shahada [acceptance of Islam][481] and the shari'aremind him of it at all times. First, the shahada—which, as we already know, is not

pure contemplation, pure spiritualization, but Promethean effort to be faithful to the pact concluded with God. The history which was in virtuality in the celestial sojourn of man, begins, not with Islam, nor with Christianity or Judaism, but well before, with Adam descended to earth, less to expiate a sin than to accomplish the promise made to God: the promise to witness out of benevolence and out of his creative power through imitation of the creation, on a human scale. The continuity of destiny born of meta-history obliges the Muslim to adopt a conquering and creative attitude towards the world. In inviting him to meditate on the beauties of creation, on universal harmony, in exciting his curiosity, the Qur'an engages him—one cannot deny this—in the path of discovery and creativity which leads to salvation. But if the shahada appears thus as the source of the Islamic philosophy of history, as the ontological foundation of the Promethean vocation of Islam, if it is historic conscience, it is through the shari'a that it becomes praxis, concrete history, lived experience, acted faith. Through the shari'a the Muslim descends from the peaks of spirituality, installs himself in temporality, takes possession of the world, not to transform it into an eternal dwelling, but to set it up as a way station necessary for the pursuit of his transhistorical voyage. With the shari'a are born the written event, dated, the countability of time passing from qualitative to quantitative, the organization of a living community, the edification of a culture of totality responding to the needs of the totality which is man. It is the Muslim response, on the temporal plane, to the appeal of the shahada which invites us to remain faithful to the totality, to reject any dualist worldview, and to realize the earthly vocation of man in a trans-historical perspective.

**** The Islamic Response to History

It is thus a positive response to history that the sources prescribe, and in fact the Islamic response is marked by positivity. It appears in the dynamism of Islam which, scarcely 15 years after the death of the prophet, extends its influence over three continents, contributing thereafter to the origin of the modern international economy; in the glory of the experimental sciences of the 'Abbasids [reigned 750–1258], which introduced "the foreign themes of Greek aesthetic statistics" with the utilization "of singular numbers, irrationals, trigonometry and algebra" (Louis Massignon). It is written in the

vitality and liberalism of the political institutions that inspired democratic constitutions while remaining faithful to theocracy, giving birth sometimes to secular regimes such as the Socialist Republic of Lahsa [presumably al-Ahsa', capital of the Qarmati state in eastern Arabia, tenth to eleventh centuries], whose revolutionary zeal bordered on heresy; [and the] the caliphate of Baghdad [762–1258], during the same epoch, whose caliphs remained content to be no more than "president of Islam," renouncing theocratic privileges, including the Friday sermon.[482] It bursts through "this gushing of creative power" (Wilfred Cantwell Smith) of medieval Islam, which not only built new empires, doubling by its conquest the geographic sphere of influence of classical Islam, but favored the blossoming of the cultures of the converted peoples: Persians, Turks, Indonesians. It is that Islam becomes very quickly— alas!—the faith and the raison d'etre of a ruling class, overflowing with dynamism and entrepreneurial spirit. From a religion of adversity, of salvation in defeat, it transformed into a "religion of triumph in success, of salvation in victory, accomplishment, and power," a religion of effectiveness, of the creation of the project whereby history confirms faith. During this conquering period ... the "shahid, that is, the martyr who fights and dies in the path of God," gives his life, "not against history but with it, for the historic and earthly success of Islam, for the triumph of its cause, for the expansion of its domination in the world."[483] It is significant that a pious theologian as classical as ['Ali ibn Muhammad] al-Mawardi [Iraq, circa 974–1058] comes to construct an abad [eternity; here, utopia] of the world based on the fecundity of the soil as the source of ease and riches; on hope as a grace "placed in the heart of man," so that civilization extends itself over the world, and to prefigure, even before [Henri de] Saint-Simon [French social theorist, 1760–1825], the common exploitation of the natural resources unequally distributed throughout the earth, on the basis of mutual aid. But for our purpose, the positive character of the response of Islam manifests itself above all in the idea of progress that Islamic thinkers and philosophers have brought to light. These are, above all, secular thinkers and philosophers. It is the physician [Abu Bakr Muhammad] Razi [Persia, 864–925], whose philosophy is founded on the notions of "demiurge," of "materia prima," of "space and time," who distinguishes between absolute time and limited time, who proclaims the mission of the philosophers "to awaken souls." It is the mathematician [Abu Rayhan] Biruni [Persia, 973-circa 1050] who professes a philosophy of history based, in imitation of the yogas of India, on the cycles corresponding to the periods of universal cataclysms. It is [Abu Yusuf Ya'qub] Al-Kindi [Arabia, circa 801–866] who, rallying to the idea of a creation ex nihilo, established the

distinction between the divine world and the world of nature, the world of becoming and that of change, between the revealed truth and the philosophical truth. It is Averroes (Ibn Rushd) [Spain-Morocco, died 1198] who by his Aristotelian rationalism—that in reality never abandoned the dialectic of esoteric ta'wil [interpretation]—will give rise after the live curiosity of Middle Age Christianity, to the enthusiasm of Ernest Renan [French Orientalist, 1823–1892], who will make a free thinker out of him, when he was never anything but an Islamic free thinker. But, at least as much as secular thought, it is religious thought itself that is affected by the philosophical idea of progress. It is that which attests to the audacious enterprise of the Isma'ili gnosis, which, after Al- Kindi, allows itself to calculate the cycle of the revelation, throws itself into the science of balance, "quantitative science," who proposes to measure "the intelligence, the soul of the world, nature, forms, stars," without forgetting "the animal, the vegetable, the mineral" and above all the letters (Henry Corbin, p. 186), which presents itself as an anticipation of "the energy of the soul," manifesting even the ambition to "build robots, artificial humans" (Louis Massignon).

One may also say that it is this Islam which, with pan-divine Averroism, is at the root of the "scientism" that has contaminated the West through the mediation of medieval Christianity. The fact that Islamic orthodoxy does not repudiate Averroism, nor Averroes, nor even the Isma'ili quantitatism, is the proof that in Islam, philosophical progress is not necessarily a heresy. On the contrary, through the richness of its philosophical culture, the result of a synthesis of diverse elements, autochthonous and foreign, Islam shows that it is open to cross-fertilization, that it can make itself "woman" and become the matrix of a historic, progressive, original culture, which is something else than the product of syncretism....

*** Islam Confronts Contemporary Humanism

**** Elements for an Islamic Humanism of the Twentieth Century

Islam has not, truly, remained indifferent in the face of the problem of its adaptation to the modern world. Reformism represents a praiseworthy effort,

both of secular elites and progressive ‘uhmai’ [religious scholars], to elaborate a constructive and dynamic version of Islam. Unfortunately, the responses of reformism are false responses to the problems which it confronts. The effort of the ‘ulama’ is shackled by the vision of the past from which they do not succeed in detaching themselves; reform is conceived in relation to the past and not as a function of the present. It is the institutions of the past that are asked to respond to the needs of the present; it is the past which they wish to revive in the present, or, in other words, the present is viewed as past, as attested to by the attitude of modernist exegesis which exhausts itself demonstrating the Qur’anic origin of the most modern discoveries. The reformism of the ‘ulamf far from situating itself in our world, cannot respond to its challenges.

The modernists of Western inspiration, in sacrificing the unitary character of Islam to a dualist point of view which is totally foreign to it, propose less a reform than a dissolution and, in the greatest of their hypotheses, a Christianization of Islam. They do not believe, nor renew; they destroy in servile imitation. This “reformism” poses more problems than it resolves. In its more moderate form, it puts fidelity to institutions before fidelity to faith. Its modernism is nothing more than a facade of modernism which pastes modern ideas on a foundation of archaism. The paradox of Islamic modernism is that it totally ignores modern problems, which are confused with ancient themes dressed up as modernity. Thus, traditional theology remains at the center of modernist thought, with the old debate on free will which has lost none of its formal character since the Mu’tazilites,[484] the old debate on power, on imamat [leadership], which is modernized by the name secularity. No doubt reformism has sensed the necessity of reopening ijtihad [Islamic interpretation] as preliminary to the development of all free thought and all philosophical progress. But the fact even of posing this demand that it must satisfy bears witness to a fidelity to established hierarchy and institutions, taking precedence over fidelity to God and to authentic Islam, which excludes all authority. What reformism lacks is the spirit of reform: the debate over ijtihad in a world where free discussion poses no theoretical problem is the clear proof of the subordination of modernism to the traditional. Modernist Islam is more attuned to the Ancients than to the Moderns, more attached to written and fixed witness than to the living word of God, more concerned about material identity than about creative

originality. Its responses concern our world less than the world of the past: they are worth less for our history than for the history of previous Islamic generations.

**** For a New Signification of Islam Founded on a Creative Vision of God

Islam the creator is founded not on a God cut off from the world and from men, imposing His Law from outside, instituting His Justice externally, but on the contrary, on a living God, present in heaven and on earth. Islam is a gift of God, a guide- book, a light on behalf of man. It is God going towards His creature, responding to its anguish; it is word, message of benevolence directed towards all of humanity. Fidelity to Islam is thus, first of all, fidelity to the word of God, fidelity to the Messages which must be attested to by the institutions, the rules of life conforming to His directive. That is to say, by its temporal and spiritual manifestation on earth, Islam cannot be anything but the creation of the Muslims, both response to God, response to their own problems and to the problems of the world. It is, for the Muslims, the place where history is made, according to the designs of God, under His protective gaze and his benevolent guidance: “the straight path.” Institutional Islam— manifestation of the faith to the Message—is thus a human product, a product of successive generations of Muslims, carrying necessarily the imprint of the epochs, obeying the dynamics of evolution, in order to be a worthwhile response for the different ages of humanity. Faithfulness to God cannot be, therefore, a loyalism with regard to the institutions of the brilliant Islamic Middle Ages, which accomplished its mission with the means of its time, but the will to create for the Islam of the 20th century efficacious institutions in conformity with the spirit of the Message, that is, institutions introducing the Justice of God in a dehumanized universe, institutions endowed with the power to make heard the message of fraternity in a world where a mechanical and irresponsible human order tends to be substituted for a rational, fraternal human order. To witness God in such a world is to restore His living reality, to rediscover the sense of divine engagement, the sentiment of the divine presence among us, to respond to divine grace with an active piety which is the only thing we can offer of ourselves. We must restore the idea of a personal God, without anthropomorphism, in affirming as against modernism that in a desacralized world where God is banished, man cannot recognize

man, but his shadow, and as against Mu’tazilite rationalism and its survivors that transcendentalism well understood cannot suppress that which makes God a living reality for man in this world. The new humanism calls for a theology which, renewing the authentic spirit of Islam, which is a philosophy before being a juridical construct, defines God not as a given, but as a giver, “an absolute demand on the heart of the subject,” implying at all moments a liaison with God, reclaiming a continuous effort to invent a solution to the problem, to discover the truth.[485] Only an Islamic theology that gives God the image of a modern Divinity, a theology which is founded on a God “nearby, progressive, universal” (Pierre Teilhard de Chardin [French philosopher-anthropologist, 1881–1955]), which humanizes faith, which aids us in discovering a supernatural accorded to our century, which makes Islam and human coincide, can become the source of a real renewal, capable of avoiding “the schism” which threatens us. The shock which the rise of the great modern myths of socialization, progress, alienation have provoked among the Muslim masses and in the consciences of the elites, tends to constitute, in the wise remark of Teilhard de Chardin, “a veritable religion not ofjoyous adoration but of disinterested conquest, undoubtedly generating high spiritual forces,” substituting in people’s consciences “the sense of the world” for God, makes urgent the elaboration of a new signification of religion which incorporates in its perspectives the sense of progress, the sense of humanity, the sense of the earth. Contemporary Islam clearly has more need of theological purpose, of philosophical creation, than ofjuridical erudition.

The elaboration even of this new theology calls for a renewed conceptual apparatus. Neither utilitarian and superficial rationalism, the Mu’tazilite inspiration that the most liberal juridical schools have not managed to break free of, nor the modernist doctrines, so poor in the scheme of thought, can serve as a foundation for such an enterprise. It is a matter of forging a new conceptual apparatus. First, with properly Islamic elements, in making an appeal to the Islamic gnosis, particularly to Shi’i gnosis.[486] This school has given us the notion ofPlenome, “the mysterious synthesis of the Uncreated and the Created,” which Sunni prudence has put at the bottom of the barrel, a fertile development capable of constituting the base of a theology of the dynamic relations of God to the Universe, worthy of our times; the Ismaili notion of hadd [limitation], which expresses a metaphysical hierarchy, interpreted in the same sense as transcendence, allows

one to understand, without heresy, how God can reveal Himself as a Person, with which becomes possible a relation of knowing and love.

But to be adaptable to the needs of a modern theology, the conceptual apparatus must borrow from outside. Only a vigorous Muslim thought, endowed with sophisticated conceptual tools, can respond to the questions that the modern conscience poses. Contemporary Islam cannot content itself with the science of hadith [traditions of the Prophet] andfiqh [Islamic jurisprudence]: it must add to the traditional knowledge the knowledge of the great modern philosophies: religious philosophies and secular philosophies. It must integrate modern knowledge into its ancestral knowledge. To this end, it must reserve a place of honor for the study of contemporary Christianity, instruct itself better in its dogmas, including that of Incarnation, study systematically its thinkers: first, its theologians whose thought is no less an enrichment of all humanity for being of the Church; next, its lay writers who are nourished at its maternal breast and whose works, so profoundly convergent, resound in our universe of violence like a veritable Gospel of new times. Modern Islamic humanism cannot ignore the philosophy of the new Church, for lack of a more complete knowledge of Christian philosophy: it cannot ignore Saint-Simonian thought, Teilhardian thought, Samaritan thought, that of Emmanuel Mounier [French social philosopher, 1905–1950], that of Francois Perroux [French economist, born 1903], the thoughts of visionaries who, in the Christian world, respond to the anguish and to the interrogations of a world that wishes to be total in order to survive. In particular, Islamic theology must lean on the recent aspects of Christian theology, on the sacralization and dynamization of dogmas such as the cult of the heart of Jesus, which, responding to the prayer of Teilhard de Chardin, seems to evolve from Christ the King, “external power that could not be but juridical and static,” to Christ the Universal, “Saving Mover, Master and End of evolution,” binding to the reality of his human nature “the personality of elements which it reunites, though without the danger of pantheism, without pagan naturalism leading to the materialist conquest of the Earth.” It is the living example of a theology which poses itself “as savior of the most current hopes of the Earth,” which associates “the spirit of detachment and the spirit of conquest; the spirit of tradition and the spirit of adventurous research; the spirit of the Earth and the spirit of God.” In this line of thought, the works of the last

Council appear to carry elements of meditation richer for Islam than the declaration on the Jews.

Islamic theology must also be open to secular thought, to contemporary human sciences: philosophy, history, sociology, economics, even when they are of materialist and atheist inspiration. First, because to refute atheism and materialism, one must know them. Next, because atheist materialism—as we have just shown—is far from eliminating all spirituality and all cosmicity; on the contrary, it demands a positive humanism, a new religion, all the more formidable in that it responds concretely to the aspirations of man today. Its critique of traditional religions has more than a negative aspect: it has a purifying and methodological role that is not foreign to the progress of the observed doctrines, where one is sensitive to its influence. As Jean Lacroix notes, “The negative dialectic is an essential element of the knowledge of God.” But what makes atheism a force to contend with at this time is that it is no longer a critique, but constructive. It is no longer materialist, but spiritualist. It has become a place for the formation of universalizing human values which no modern religion can allow itself to ignore. Islamic humanism cannot ignore either the contribution of Marxism or the contribution of contemporary existentialisms, the new concepts with which they have enriched dialectical analysis and thought, the forces of humanization that they have worked up and which are far from contradicting their theoretical foundations. Without a doubt, it is often a matter of formulas that translate metaphysical intentions which the materialist language hardly seizes on for their communicative value, the propulsive force necessary for any modern theology. In insisting on the complex totality of being, on participation as a condition of existence, in refusing the Aristotelian dualism for a dialectic of unity that “reestablishes in its continuity the living tissue that an imprudent analysis has disjoined (Gabriel Marcel [French philosopher, 1889–1973]), the contemporary existential formulas open the path to a fertile meditation on ontological mystery and give a new foundation to a theory of metaphysical knowledge, which integrates Cartesian thought in order to surpass it, in reconstituting the destroyed totality, the link with existence, in correcting the discussion through love” (Jeanne Delhomme). Let us take care that it is not a matter of a syncretism, but of a re-creation demanding immense work, both critical and constructive, in order to reconcile all this with our specific experience. It is in speaking the language of the 20th century, in using the conceptual tools of modern man, in making theology an original

synthesis of spiritual and intellectual elements equal to the needs of our time, emerging in a philosophy both of truth and of reality that is reconciled with objectivity and allows [us]—no longer to look at the world from outside as a spectacle, but to participate in the drama that is being played. By assuming both cosmic and new earthly responsibilities, Islam will have a real significance for the men of our world.

**** For an Islamic Praxis Founded on the Renewal of Historic Reality

To live in the world is to think and act together, it is to think in order to act, it is to act in thinking.[487] To be of this world, Islam must—at the same time that it elaborates a new theory of knowledge—construct a praxis based on the total renewal of historic reality.

History has proved [Islam's] capacity for adaptation to sociological and human realities, but here too, one should not be content with a reference to the past. In a world transformed by science and technology, such as never before, it must respond to new challenges with bold and constructive innovations such as never before. Let us repeat once more: the golden age of Islamic civilization that was the Middle Ages, knew how to confront its problems of the scientific and technological revolution. It knew how to generate economic and social institutions and structures adapted to its level, as demonstrated by its model of socialization founded on a structure of work which was not embarrassed to appeal to servile labor. Ancient Islam, of the age of economic and financial take-off, was able to pass from a primitive economy of plunder to a modern economy by resolving the problem of capital formation, contrary to Islamic law, through the official practice of shifting the sin of usury onto its Jewish and Christian compatriots. Contemporary Islam finds itself confronted with an economic and social structure that excludes the recourse to slavery, even for utilization towards collective ends, the recourse to the pernicious process of the shifting of sin onto the Other: the modern economy is an entirely different economy, with a new employment structure and a new capital structure that put [even] the best prepared secular organizations to a harsh test. To witness God in the 20th century is to make history with the tools and the organizational structures of our times. God is neither anachronistic nor archaic: He is eternal Life, the Life whose complexion is

that of the times. To bear witness to His presence is to render possible the reading of His Signs in a universe of machines that strips away all signs. To bear witness with the means of the epoch, that is, to adopt modern science and technology, not as new divinities but as means of realization of an efficacious human praxis, as means of liberation and disalienation as much as instruments of conquest. It is to make the world of believers not a universe of pariahs, of the powerless and the resigned, but an efficacious world, dynamic, enterprising, responsive to the challenges of hunger, poverty, illness, and ignorance, which the promises of a better in the beyond cannot satisfy for so many of the human masses who suffer in the world, where the faith of the faithful, instead of confining [them] to hopelessness, gives the right to share in the hopes which science and technology bring. To make Islam significant in a world … whose rationality informs all men, which "judges others and judges itself according to quantifiable results in its struggle with external nature, according to their wealth in the means of production" (Eric Weil)—this forms a vital and concrete element of the new humanism by rendering it capable of making dams rise up from the ground, atomic energy plants, modern working cities, no longer of course with the rod of Moses or the sword of 'Ali [son-in-law of the Prophet and fourth caliph, circa 596–661], but with this modern grace of God that is contemporary technology. It is no longer a matter of being assisted, but of being initiated, of being introduced to the sanctuary of the secrets of modernity, of becoming a demiurge both without idolatry and without perverse vanity, in drinking at the source of the new knowledges, in entering in direct relation with Prometheus, jeering the divinities but giving grace to God. It involves, in a word, inaugurating the era of true cooperation in rising to the level of scientific and technological creator, for "the inherited cultural objects that were not made by us, are not, strictly speaking, ever made by us: they only become ours in the form that we invent [them] and by the new meanings that we give them."[488] A progressive Islam that moves deliberately and resolutely towards science, in the shadow of which it has grown, nourishing itself from its sap, armed with a renovated conceptual tool lofty enough to serve as an "animating revelation" for research. By incorporating science and technology, Islam gives itself the means to contribute to the restoration of the reign of the Spirit on earth, the means of maintaining theology at the side of anthropology, of making their meanings coincide, and of rescuing the Islamic world from the temptation of a new metaphysics. By incorporating modern science—which is essentially "open," disinterested, relativist, endowed with a power of acceleration that communicates to spirits, to technologies and to industries—Islam binds itself

to universal dialogue, ties itself to contacts and communications between men and their groups, enables itself to assure the extension and deepening of the “existence together” that is characteristic of our historic epoch, to favor “the opening of closed doctrines, closed institutions, and closed groups,”[489] to help to liberate itself from the excesses of subjectivism and of traditional dogmatisms. The accomplishment of the new responsibilities of Islam demands reconciliation with a science once again modest and comprehensive....

**** For a New Islamic Culture

Any Islamic renovation worthy of the name must make Islamic culture more than a “culture-ornament,” but an operative culture which allies production and belief in being; more than a culture-affirmation, better than a culture-heritage, but a “culture-opening on the whole of the real of the becoming”; a culture which turns towards reconciliation, which becomes a place where each has the possibility of “meeting the man” in the other; a culture which would be in accord with a world in evolution where man knows how to live for something other than what he makes, for other beings who he is[490]; a culture, finally, which would have the will to center the new society on man and his double vocation, historic and transhistoric, which returns, in sum, to a theory of man as the inevitable philosophical immediacy.

To pose the problem of a culture of creation and of metaphysical fidelity, that is to say, the whole problem of humanism, in the face of classical humanism, is to pose the problem of means, the problem of new men, the emergence of new structures and mentalities, the reestablishment of equilibrium between the new culture and the new nature, between the historic conscience and the semantic conscience, the junction between “a certain modernity” and “a certain tradition”: it is the instrument, the technology of the awaited revolution. It presupposes a new pedagogy, a new spirit, appealing to innovation, generating curiosity and disagreement, developing the taste for research, drawing its themes from history and elaborating them; a pedagogy freed from criticism considered as an end in itself, freed from this sort of “hierotropism” that polarizes thought, invests it wholly in religious sciences, which disparages the natural world to exalt only the supernatural world; a pedagogy that puts an end to the dichotomy of Islamic culture in order to

create a unified culture thanks to cultural values, unified, notably in the domain of language, of literature, and of art, where the two worlds coexist, ignoring one another. The new education—essentially unifying, formative, permanent, creative—will have as its home the school: the school open to all; the University: the University open to all; but also the workshop, the factory, the fields, the cooperatives; penetrating in all milieux, everywhere introducing progress, that is to say, the spirit of invention and the spirit of truth, thus rendering the entire society educational, pedagogical. It will be the education of the teacher as much as the student, education of the teacher himself, who must make for himself a new mentality in order to be in a position to renovate his teaching, to invent a new dialect of teacher to student, transforming this teaching in a “possibility of future teachings and diverse communications,”[491] to accept, by means of inevitable ruptures, the innovations that permit survival while modifying the system. If it [education] remains committed to tolerance, it will not proclaim itself neutral for long, it will be openly normative in order to be faithful to the wager implied by the culture that it has a mission to dispense: it will teach, along with the sense of the historic, the sense of the technological, the living tradition, confronting it with life in order to make it bear fruit, the language of signs and symbols. When necessary, it will defend the social semantic, both against the excesses of contemporary formalist exegesis and against “the historicizing or idealist references of the traditional modes of thought” (Jacques Berque [1910–1995]). It will make Islamic culture a fertile and original synthesis in realizing the reconciliation of man’s being and nature’s being, that violated and disfigured nature which must become “the garden of causes and effects” but also grace, communion, “the proximity of the cosmic.” The new education, in order to be the instrument of a culture-opening on the world, will teach, finally, worldliness, universality, but not without attending to the creation of a distinct personality, to the affirmation of the specificity that makes sense of the response of Islamic society to history. Insofar as it is revealed as capable of accommodating all of human existence, of founding a personality that is flexible and available in a “mobile world,” the new education will accomplish its creative and universalizing mission.

To win the combat of the new humanism, that is, the real combat of history, contemporary Islam definitely has nothing to lose at the level of fundamentals: at the level of the infrastructure which in this dialectic is nothing but metaphysics. But if words have meaning, if to

restore is something other than adding block to block, superimposing superstructures, but making anew that which is at the same time authentic, then, it will have to resolve to replace the ancient edifice by a new, reconstructed elaboration on the fundamentals. It is more than a reform, it is a revolution in the structures of the Islamic world that the triumph of humanism, and the pursuit by Islam of its earthly responsibilities, demand. After the revolution against the Other, which was nothing but a revolt, a negation, the revolution against the Self, the real revolution: that of the positivity of the second birth, which has a constructive mission. To design itself less for desacralization than for demanding that the sacred integrate the human and the new; to renounce the transformation of Islam into a fundamentalist (integree) religion in favor of re-making an integrating religion, companion of man and world; to propose to Islam, mobilizing the creative power of the Qur'an, a new finality on the scale of our universe, instead of absolving it of its temporal mission, which is inseparable from its spiritual mission. To make of the world of Islam (dar al-Islam) an immense people and a vast chorus, a Temple where each servant of the Cult is also a creator, a Promethean hero; to make a world of objectification and adoration at the same time, a land of having and being where each act of production is an act of surpassing which returns to a dialect of verticality, significance, and creativity—such is the profound sense of the new challenge that Islam must face in order to respond to the hopes of400 million men and women. Through the boiling that is agitating the Islamic world, through the proliferation of experiences and attempts, even aborted ones, something is giving a sign that, though it be still a stammer, is unmistakable in its meaning: a "yes," poorly articulated, but absolute and definitive.

** 31. Islam and Modernity

Fazlur Rahman

Fazlur Rahman (Pakistan-United States, 1919–1988) was born and raised in the British colonies that would later become Pakistan. He embarked on an academic career that took him to graduate degrees at Punjab University and Oxford and teaching positions in Islamic philosophy in England and Canada. He returned to Pakistan in 1961 to lead the Central Institute of Islamic Research in Karachi, a state-sponsored organization that Rahman mobilized to battle religious traditionalists and radicals. Rahman's modernist views were controversial: "his detractors referred to him as 'the destroyer of hadiths [traditions of the Prophet] because of his insistence on judging the weight of hadith reports in light of the overall spirit of the Qur'an."[492] Rahman returned to academia in 1968 as a professor at the University of Chicago, where he continued to argue for a modern reinterpretation of Islam.[493] "A measure of this leading thinker's impact," a colleague wrote after Rahman's death in 1988, "is that wherever I have traveled in the world ... I have never met a Muslim scholar or other specialist on Islam who has not heard of Fazlur Rahman or who is neutral about his contributions."[494]

Muhammad Shibli Nu'mani [Islamic reformer, India, died 1914] wrote in his Safarnama [Travelogue] (his own account of his visit to the Middle East, May-October 1892), after talking about the potential benefits of the Dar al-'Ulum [university] at Cairo, "But those people who have been once as much as touched by traditional education, remain forever irreconcilably estranged from modern learning."[495] In the same work he quotes Muhammad 'Abduh [Egyptian modernist, 1849–1905] as saying to him, after bemoaning the plight of al-Azhar [University in Cairo], about the Egyptian products of Western education, "These are even more misguided."[496] This dilemma that characterized education in the days of Shibli and 'Abduh in the "forward" lands of Islam—lands that had a highly developed traditional education as well as a recently adopted modern Western-style education—is, as the preceding pages have demonstrated, still as real today. The reason is that, despite a widespread and sometimes deep consciousness of the dichotomy of education, all efforts at a genuine integration have so far been largely unfruitful.

Let us first analyze more closely the basic features of the attempts at reforming education insofar as Islam is concerned. There are basically two aspects of this reformist orientation. One approach is to accept modern secular education as it has developed generally speaking in the West and to attempt to “Islamize” it—that is, to inform it with certain key concepts of Islam. This approach has had two distinct goals, although they are not always distinguished from one another: first, to mold the character of students with Islamic values for individual and collective life, and, second, to enable the adepts of modern education to imbue their respective fields of learning at higher levels, using an Islamic perspective to transform, where necessary, both the content and the orientation of these fields. The two goals are closely connected in the sense that molding character with Islamic values is naturally undertaken basically at the primary level of education when students are young and impressionable. However, if nothing is done to imbue fields of higher learning with an Islamic orientation, or if attempts to do so are unsuccessful, when young boys and girls reach the higher stages of education their outlook is bound to be secularized, or they are very likely to shed whatever Islamic orientation they have had— which has been happening on a large scale.

“Imbuing higher fields of learning with Islamic values” is a phrase whose meaning must be made more precise. All human knowledge may be divided into what are called “natural” or exact sciences, whose generalizations are called “laws of nature,” and the fields of learning that have been called “humanities” and “social sciences.” Although the content of physical or exact sciences cannot by definition be interfered with—else they will be falsified—their orientation can be given a value character. Sometimes certain mistaken ideological attitudes try to interfere with the content of these sciences as well, as, for example, when Stalin ordered Russian biologists to emphasize the influence of environment at the expense of heredity. Under such influences or pressures, science must become a mockery, but it is possible and highly desirable for a scientist to know the consequences his investigations have for mankind. It is also equally and, indeed, urgently important for scientific knowledge to be a unity and to give an overall picture of the universe in order to answer the all-important questions, “Does it mean anything? Does it point to a higher will and purpose?” Or is it, to use Whitehead’s famous words, “a mere hurrying of

material endlessly, meaninglessly”? The first is a practical question, the second a “theoretical” one but with obvious practical implications.

Social sciences and humanities are obviously relevant to values, and values are relevant to them. This is of course not to say that they are subjective, although subjectivism often does enter into them, sometimes palpably. But to be value-oriented is certainly not by itself to be subjective, provided values do not remain mere assumptions but are “objectified.” Although metaphysical speculation is the area of human intellectual endeavor that is perhaps the remotest from factual objectivity, yet it need not be, as [F.H.] Bradley [English philosopher, 1846–1924] put it, “the finding of bad reasons for what we already believe on instinct.” If metaphysics enjoys the least freedom from assumed premises, man enjoys the least freedom from metaphysics in that metaphysical beliefs are the most ultimate and pervasively relevant to human attitudes; it is consciously or unconsciously the source of all values and of the meaning we attach to life itself. It is therefore all-important that this very ground of formation of our attitudes be as much informed as possible. Positivism may be negative enough to dismiss it as “meaningless”; yet positivism had rendered great service to a genuine metaphysics by exploding the empty thought shell in which the greatest human minds used to incarcerate themselves. Metaphysics, in my understanding, is the unity of knowledge and the meaning and orientation this unity gives to life. If this unity is the unity of knowledge, how can it be all that subjective? It is a faith grounded in knowledge.

There has not been much by way of an Islamic metaphysics, at least in modern times. In the medieval centuries there were Muslim metaphysicians, some of them brilliant, original, and influential; but the primary basis of their entire Weltanschauung [worldview] was Hellenic thought, not the Qur’an. Some of their doctrines were repugnant to the orthodoxy, which took such fright that down the centuries all metaphysical thought became anathema to it. Among the orthodox there has not been a lack of men of deep insight, but there has been no systematic and coherent body of metaphysical thought fully informed by the Qur’anic Weltanschauung, which is itself remarkably coherent. In modern times, Muhammad Iqbal’s Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam[497] is the only systematic attempt. But, despite the fact that Iqbal had certain basic and rare insights into the nature of Islam as an

attitude to life, this work cannot be said to be based on Qur’anic teaching: the structural elements of its thought are too contemporary to be an adequate basis for an ongoing Islamic metaphysical endeavor (although I certainly disagree with H.A.R. Gibb’s assessment according to which Ash’arite theology, for example, is more faithful to the Qur’anic matrix of ideas than Iqbal’s thought). What is true is that Iqbal’s thought, like all modern liberal thought, is essentially a personal effort, while [Abu’l-Hasan] Ash’ari’s [873–935] theology, as a credal system, consisted of certain formal principles that he claimed to have drawn from the Qur’an and on the basis of which he elaborated a full- fledged theological system. But, besides the question whether a modern outlook can have room for hard-and-fast and cut-and-dried formal creeds, this does not mean that Ash’arite theology represented Islam more faithfully than did Iqbal; on the contrary, that theology represents, in my view, an almost total distortion of Islam and was, in fact, a one-sided and extreme reaction to the Mu’tazilite rationalist theology.

However, to resume what I was saying about the Muslims’ aim of Islamizing the several fields of learning, this aim cannot be really fulfilled unless Muslims effectively perform the intellectual task of elaborating an Islamic metaphysics on the basis of the Qur’an. An overall worldview of Islam has to be first, if provisionally, attempted if various specific fields of intellectual endeavor are to cohere as informed by Islam. In medieval Islam, even if Ash’arite theology was Islamically wayward, it certainly tried—sometimes with remarkable efficiency—to permeate the intellectual disciplines of Islam, like law, Sufism, and even the outlook on history. In modern times, however, although many Muslims are conscious of the desirability and even necessity of investing factual knowledge with Islamic values, the result is so far perhaps less than negligible—although there is no dearth of booklets and pamphlets on “Islam and this” and “Islam and that,” which occasionally do contain valuable insights and often a good deal of ingenuity but are essentially marred by an apologetic attitude. More recently, a number of conferences and seminars have been held in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan (the former’s latter-day spiritual client) on such topics as “Islam and Education,” “Islam and Economics,” or “Islam and Psychology.” I have not seen any publications so far, if any have resulted from this feverish activity. One cannot, of course, expect any spectacular results as yet, but the effort is worth continuing.

I said earlier that the effort to inculcate an Islamic character in young students is not likely to succeed if the higher fields of learning remain completely secular, that is, unpurposeful with regard to their effect on the future of mankind. Indeed, even in the West, attempts at molding young students' character have failed because when these boys and girls grow up they find all life around them practically secular, and they become disillusioned with their childhood orientation, which comes to seem a kind of "pious fraud." In fact, they often grow up with a vengeance and, barring other factors to the contrary, become more secular-minded than their parents. The same is very much true of Muslim children, although in Muslim society the social temper still plays a major role in curbing open deviations and utter secularization. But if moral values are to be observed or at least not flouted under social pressure, this hardly goes altogether to the credit of the efficacy of the Islamic spirit. We shall have to come back later to this all-important issue; in the meantime, we must discuss the problem of what is meant by reforming Islamic education itself since, unless some solution to this is forthcoming, it is futile even to raise the question of the Islamization of knowledge: it is the upholders of Islamic learning who have to bear the primary responsibility of Islamizing secular knowledge by their creative intellectual efforts.

In essence, then, the whole problem of "modernizing" Islamic education, that is, rendering it capable of creative Islamic intellectual productivity in all fields of intellectual endeavor together with the serious commitment to Islam that the madrasa system has generally been able to impart, is the problem of expanding the Muslim's intellectual vision by raising his intellectual standards. For expansion of vision is a function of rising to heights; the lower down you come the less space you can see, and the more you think yourself master of that little space under your narrow vision. And here appears the stark contrast between the actual Muslim attitudes and the demands of the Qur'an. The Qur'an sets a very high value on knowledge, and the Prophet himself is ordered to pray to God: "O Lord! increase my knowledge." (Sura 20, Verse 114) Indeed, the Qur'an itself is firmly of the view that the more knowledge one has, the more capable of faith and commitment one will be. There is absolutely no other view of the relationship of faith and knowledge that one can legitimately derive from the Qur'an. It is true that the Qur'an is highly critical, for example, of Meccan tradesmen who

“know well the externalities of the lower (that is, material) life but are heedless of its ends.” (Sura 30, Verse 7) But this is precisely the point I am making here—that a knowledge that does not expand the horizons of one’s vision and action is truncated and injurious knowledge. But how can one have knowledge of the “ends” of life—that is, of higher values—without knowing actual reality? If the Muslim modernist has done nothing else, he has adduced such formidable evidence from the Qur’an for the absolute necessity to faith of a knowledge of the universe, of man, and of history, that all Muslims today at least pay lip service to it.

But, by contrast, the Muslim attitude to knowledge in the later medieval centuries is so negative that if one puts it beside the Qur’an one cannot help being appalled. According to this attitude, higher knowledge and faith are mutually dysfunctional and increase at each other’s expense. Knowledge thus appears to be purely secular, as is basically the case with all “modern” positive knowledge—indeed, even modern “religious” knowledge is secular, or else it is considered positively injurious to faith. Sometimes an arbitrary distinction is drawn between “religious” and “nonreligious” sciences; the former have, of course, to be acquired at the expense of the latter. Sometimes a distinction is drawn between the “more urgent” knowledge—that of law and/or theological propositions—and “the less urgent or less important” positive sciences. And often enough, indeed, a distinction is drawn between “good” knowledge and “bad” knowledge, for example, of philosophy or music, while a third category is posited of more or less “useless” knowledge such as mathematics. There are several causes of these pernicious distinctions. One of these I have already pointed out, namely, the fear of philosophy and of intellectualism in general. Another important reason certainly was, as I indicated in chapter 2 [not included in this excerpt], that a knowledge of orthodox disciplines, particularly of law, was an almost sure passport to employment, whereas mathematics or astronomy brought little by way of a livelihood, let alone of fame, and medicine was accepted as a necessary though inferior endeavor. [Abu Hamid Muhammad] Al-Ghazzali [10581111], in his criticism of a slogan of medical men—“First [attend to] your body and then [to] your religion [or soul]”—typifies the medieval orthodox attitude to medicine when he says that by such catchy slogans these people want to deceive the simpleminded public as to the real order of priorities.

Whatever the reason, the stark contrast between the Qur’an and the medieval Muslim pursuits of knowledge is obvious. During approximately the past one hundred years ... Muslims have displayed an increasing awareness of reforming traditional education and integrating the old knowledge with the modern. But this development has been marred by certain important, indeed, fundamental weaknesses that it is essential to elucidate before we can look at the future with greater clarity and a more constructive outlook. The first important block to any reform is the phenomenon I have called neorevivalism or neofundamentalism. Before the advent of classical modernism, there had existed a revivalism or fundamentalism since the 18th century. The “Wahhabi” movement [in Arabia] and other kindred or parallel reform phenomena wanted to reconstruct Islamic spirituality and morality on the basis of a return to the pristine “purity” of Islam. The current post-modernist fundamentalism, in an important way, is novel because its basic elan is anti-Western (and, by implication of course, anti-Westernism). Hence its condemnation of classical modernism as a purely Westernizing force. Classical modernists were, of course, not all of a piece, and it is true that some of these modernists went to extremes in their espousal of Western thought, morality, society, and so on. Such phenomena are neither unexpected nor unnatural when rapid change occurs, particularly when it derives from a living source like the West. But just as the classical modernist had picked upon certain specific issues to be considered and modernist positions to be adopted thereupon—democracy, science, status of women, and such—so now the neofundamentalist, after—as I said before—borrowing certain things from classical modernism, largely rejected its content and, in turn, picked upon certain specific issues as “Islamic” par excellence and accused the classical modernist of having succumbed to the West and having sold Islam cheaply there. The pet issues with the neofundamentalist are the ban on bank interest, the ban on family planning, the status of women (contra the modernist), collection of zakat taxes, and so forth—things that will most distinguish Muslims from the West. Thus, while the modernist was engaged by the West through attraction, the neorevivalist is equally haunted by the West through repulsion. The most important and urgent thing to do from this point of view is to “disengage” mentally from the West and to cultivate an independent but understanding attitude toward it, as toward any other civilization, though more particularly to the West because it is the source of much of the social change occurring throughout the world. So long as Muslims remain mentally locked with the West in one way or the other, they will not be able to act independently and autonomously.

The neorevivalist has undoubtedly served as a corrective not only for several types of excesses in classical modernism but, above all, for secularist trends that would otherwise have spread much faster in Muslim societies. That is to say, neorevivalism has reoriented the modern-educated lay Muslim emotionally toward Islam. But the greatest weakness of neorevivalism, and the greatest disservice it has done to Islam, is an almost total lack of positive effective Islamic thinking and scholarship within its ranks, its intellectual bankruptcy, and its substitution of cliche mongering for serious intellectual endeavor. It has often contended, with a real point, that the learning of the conservative traditional ‘ulama’, instead of turning Muslims toward the Qur’an, has turned them away from it. But its own way of turning to the Qur’an has been no more than, as I said above, picking upon certain selected issues whereby it could crown itself by “distinguishing” Muslims from the rest of the world, particularly from the West. The traditionalist ‘ulama’, if their education has suffered from a disorientation toward the purposes of the Qur’an, have nevertheless built up an imposing edifice of learning that invests their personalities with a certain depth; the neorevivalist is, by contrast, a shallow and superficial person—really rooted neither in the Qur’an nor in traditional intellectual culture, of which he knows practically nothing. Because he has no serious intellectual depth or breadth, his consolation and pride both are to chant ceaselessly the song that Islam is “very simple” and “straightforward,” without knowing what these words mean. In a sense, of course, the Qur’an is simple and uncomplicated, as is all genuine religion—in contradistinction to theology—but in another and more meaningful sense a book like the Qur’an, which gradually appeared over almost twenty-three years, is highly complicated—as complicated as life itself. The essence of the matter is that the neorevivalist has produced no Islamic educational system worthy of the name, and this is primarily because, having become rightly dissatisfied with much of the traditional learning of the ‘ulama’, he himself has been unable to devise any methodology, any structural strategy, for understanding Islam or for interpreting the Qur’an.

Second, the reform efforts that have taken place so far have been in two directions. In one direction, this reform has occurred almost entirely within the framework of traditional education itself. Generated largely by the premodernist reform phenomena whose impetus still continues to some

extent, this reform has tended to “simplify” the traditional syllabus, which it finds heavily loaded with “extraneous” materials such as medieval theology, certain branches of philosophy (such as logic), and a plethora of works on Islamic law. This simplification consists in dropping most or all works in these medieval disciplines and accentuating hadith [traditions of the Prophet], occasionally Arabic language and literature, and, in certain cases, principles of Qur’anic interpretation (but not the Qur’an—that is, its text—as such), in consistency with the religious ideology of these premodernist reformist movements that aimed to “purify” Islam from later accretions. This is confirmed by the developments concerning the subcontinent that I sketched out toward the end of chapter 1 [not included in this excerpt].

In the second direction, a variety of developments have occurred that can be summed up by saying that they all represent an effort to combine and integrate the modern branches of learning with the old ones. In such cases, the years of curriculum have been extended and brought in line with the curricular span of modern schools and colleges, or, as I noted for Indonesia, supplemented by afternoon classes held after the modern lay education of the present-day schools—thus lengthening the day rather than increasing the number of curricular years. At the college level, however, even in the Indonesian experiment, the effort is directed at combining modern subjects with the old.

The most important of these experiments are undoubtedly those of al-Azhar of Egypt and the new system of Islamic education introduced in Turkey since the late 1940s. Al-Azhar has behind it a long tradition of medieval Islamic learning, and therefore, understandably, its conservatism in the field of religious studies is still very strong. Consequently, the modern subjects like philosophy, sociology, and psychology do not seem to have a deep impact, since they essentially trail behind the medieval learning. In Turkey, on the other hand, where traditional education had been completely destroyed, it is being reintroduced afresh, while the modern disciplines are almost at the same level as in the lay schools—indeed, all over in the developing countries. Turkey is fortunate in having to make a fresh start because it has the opportunity to interpret the medieval intellectual heritage and give it a new shape—which, as we shall see presently, is a basic desideratum in all current attempts to integrate the modern and the traditional and which has been satisfied only to a limited degree at al-Azhar in the fields of theology and law.

At present, the “integration” I spoke of above is basically absent because of the largely mechanical character of instruction and because ofjuxtaposition of the old with the new. It is true that all these reforms are confronted with a vicious circle in that, on the one hand, unless adequate teachers are available with minds already integrated and creative, instruction will remain sterile even given goodwill and talent on the part of students, while, on the other, such teachers cannot be produced on a sufficient scale unless, substantively speaking, an integrated curriculum is made available. This vicious circle can be broken only at the first point—if there come into being some first- class minds who can interpret the old in terms of the new as regards substance and turn the new into the service of the old as regards ideals. This, then, must be followed by the writing of new textbooks on theology, ethics, and so forth. Such minds cannot be produced at will, but something can certainly be done in this respect—namely, to recruit from the best talent available and to provide the necessary incentives for a committed intellectual career in this field. Today, most of the students who are attracted to this field are those who have failed to gain entrance to more lucrative careers. This shows how little awareness there is that creating minds is both more difficult and, in the last analysis, more urgent than constructing bridges. There is little doubt that most Eastern societies have been laboring under the false and totally self-deceptive impression that they suffer from an over-plenitude of spirituality and spiritual insights while the West, barren in this respect, has outstripped them in material technology and that now they need only get the latter. That the West has outstripped the East in science and technology is correct; what seems to be a fiction is that the East is replete with spirituality, for, if this were so, why should the East—or the Muslim societies—suffer from the mental and spiritual dichotomy of which I have mainly been speaking here?

Second, an important problem that has plagued Muslim societies since the dawn of democracy in them is the peculiar relationship of religion and politics and the pitiable subjugation of the former to the latter. Indeed, it was this pernicious phenomenon that forced Kemal Ataturk [founder of modern Turkey, 1881–1938] to opt for secularism. Secularism is not the answer—quite the opposite. But the politics being waged most of the time in these countries is hardly less pernicious in its effects than secularism itself. For, instead of setting themselves to genuinely interpret Islamic goals to be

realized through political and government channels—which would subjugate politics to interpreted Islamic values (whether these values or goals turn out to be conservative or liberal, fundamentalist or modern for different parties) — what happens most of the time is a ruthless exploitation of Islam for party politics and group interests that subjects Islam not only to politics but to day-to-day politics; Islam thus becomes sheer demagoguery. Unfortunately, the so-called Islamic parties in several countries are the most blatantly guilty of such systematic political manipulation of religion. The slogan “in Islam religion and politics are inseparable” is employed to dupe the common man into accepting that, instead of politics or the state serving the long-range objectives of Islam, Islam should come to serve the immediate and myopic objectives of party politics. Reform and reconstruction of that powerful instrument for the shaping of minds—education—is inconceivable in these circumstances. The secularist, who is in any case already alienated from Islam, becomes all the more confirmed in his cynicism about men of religion, the dislocation between their aims and their claims, even though secularism itself may be a child of incurable cynicism about man’s real nature.

And yet the most important single channel of both these latter reforms—the correct envisioning of priorities and the saving of religion from the vagaries of day-to-day politics—is education itself. I must therefore turn to a consideration of the possible solution to the problems I have raised in the field of the reform of Islamic education itself: how it can become meaningful in the modern intellectual and spiritual setting, not so much to save religion from modernity—which is, after all, only a partisan interest—but to save modern man from himself through religion.

*** Some Considerations Toward a Solution

**** Toward an Understanding of Islam

The first essential step to relieve the vicious circle just mentioned is, for the Muslim, to distinguish clearly between normative Islam and historical Islam. Unless effective and sustained efforts are made in this direction, there is no way visible for the creation of the kind of Islamic mind I have been speaking ofjust now. No amount of mechanical juxtaposition of old and new subjects

and disciplines can produce this kind of mind. If the spark for the modernization of old Islamic learning and for the Islamization of the new is to arise, then the original thrust of Islam—of the Qur'an and Muhammad—must be clearly resurrected so that the conformities and deformities of historical Islam may be clearly judged by it. In the first chapter I indicated by what process this normative Islam had understandably, perhaps inevitably, but often by no means justifiably passed into its historical forms. In that chapter I also indicated how this resurrection may be accomplished—namely, by studying the Qur'an's social pronouncements and legal enactments in the light of its general moral teaching and particularly under the impact of its stated objectives (or principles, if one prefers this expression) on the one hand and against the background of their historical-social milieu on the other. Since this method has been made fairly clear in that chapter and particularly in the Introduction, there is no need to repeat it here, but certain other questions concerning it must be answered.

Is this method not yet another form of fundamentalism that will once again, in a new and more "scientific" way, create another idol to arrest Muslims' forward progress? After all, all fundamentalists, like the Wahhabis and subsequently their neofundamentalist successors such as the Ikhwan [Muslim Brotherhood], have just said this, namely, that Muslims must go back to the original and pristine Islam; yet they have been arrested at a certain point. Again, the Muslim modernist has also explicitly held that Muslims must go back to the original and pristine Islam; yet they have come up with certain doctrines that both the fundamentalist and the conservative have failed to recognize as Islamic—indeed, as anything but Western, that is, un-Islamic! What is, then the guarantee, or at least the likelihood, that the pursuit of the new solution will not be arrested at a certain point, or that the results reached will not be so bewilderingly chaotic and contradictory?

The answer is that neither the fundamentalist nor the modernist had a clear enough method. That fundamentalist movements in Islam have been arrested is not due to their claims, for they claimed ijtihad, that is, new thinking in Islam. How can anyone arrest new thought, particularly when it is claimed that the essence of the Islamic thought process rests on ijtihad? Actually it is even something of a misnomer to call such phenomena in Islam "fundamentalist" except insofar as they emphasize the

basis of Islam as being the two original sources: the Qur’an and the sunna [practice] of the Prophet Muhammad. Otherwise they emphasize ijtihad, original thought, which is something forbidden by Western fundamentalists who, while emphasizing the Bible as the “fundament,” reject original or new thought. It is also something of an irony to pit the so-called Muslim fundamentalists against the Muslim modernists, since, so far as their acclaimed procedure goes, the Muslim modernists say exactly the same thing as the so-called Muslim fundamentalists say: that Muslims must go back to the original and definitive sources of Islam and perform ijtihad on that basis.

To resume my answer to this important question: the so-called fundamentalists and modernists have come up with radically different answers to some basic issues according to their respective environments, but neither has had a clear enough method of interpreting the Qur’an and the sunna. As I pointed out in the previous section, the neorevivalist has no method worthy of the name except to react, on certain important social issues, to the classical modernist. I also pointed out earlier that the classical modernist had no method except to treat ad hoc issues that seemed to him to require solution for Muslim society but that were historically of Western inspiration and that he attempted to solve, often with remarkable plausibility, in the light of Qur’anic teaching. As for the premodernist revivalist, he had certainly worked within the traditional perimeters of Islam and had found that Muslim individual and collective life had become permeated with degrading superstitions that, according to the Qur’anic monotheism, were a form of shirk [polytheism] and must therefore be eradicated. This was undoubtedly sound, but for the rest the premodernist revivalist neither had nor bothered to seek a methodology of Qur’anic interpretation that would be sound in scholarship, rationally reliable, and faithful to the Qur’an itself.

Although the method I have advocated here is new in form, nevertheless its elements are all traditional. It is the biographers of the Prophet, the hadith collectors, the historians, and the Qur’an commentators who have preserved for us the general social-historical background of the Qur’an and the Prophet’s activity and in particular the background (sha’n alnuzul) of the particular passages of the Qur’an—despite the divergence of accounts about the latter in some cases. This

would surely not have been done but for their strong belief that this background is necessary for our understanding of the Qur’an. It is strange, however, that no systematic attempt has ever been made to understand the Qur’an in the order in which it was revealed, that is, by setting the specific cases of the shu’un al-nuzul, or “occasions of revelation,” in some order in the general background that is no other than the activity of the Prophet (the sunna in the proper sense) and its social environment. If this method is pursued, most arbitrary and fanciful interpretations will at once be ruled out, since a definite enough anchoring point will be available. It is only because the Qur’an was not treated as a coherent whole by many Muslim thinkers that the metaphysical part, which should form the necessary backdrop to a coherent elaboration of the moral, social, and legal message of the Qur’an, in particular received the wildest interpretations at the hands of the so-called esoteric school, be they Sufis, Batinis, philosophers, or even some mutakallimun (theologians), while the majority of the orthodox became dusty-dry literalists far removed from any genuine insight into the depths of the Qur’an. The Qur’an, despite its distinction within its own body of “firm” and “ambiguous” verses (Sura 3, Verse 7)—which has been made so much of by several speculative minds, but which seems to refer to verses of specific and general import—categorically states in numerous places that it is coherent and that it is free from inconsistencies—a claim that is well attested by any closer study of it, which is not vitiated by extravagant preconceived notions (for example, Sura 11, Verse 11; Sura 22, Verse 52; Sura 4, Verse 82; and all such verses where the Qur’an speaks of itself as tafsil, that is, a “firm exposition”). Indeed, Sura 3, Verse 7 itself strongly suggests—and it has very often been so interpreted—that the “ambiguous” verses are to be taken in the light of, although in turn as being matricial to, the “firm” ones.

Yet none of this means that any significant interpretation of the Qur’an can be absolutely monolithic. Nothing could be further from the truth. For one thing, we know from numerous reports that the Prophet’s Companions themselves sometimes understood certain Qur’anic verses differently, and this was within his knowledge. Further, the Qur’an, as I have often reiterated, is a document that grew within a background, from the flesh and blood of actual history; it is therefore both as “straightforward” and as organically coherent as life itself. Any attempt to take it with a literalist, partialist superficiality and lifeless rigidity will, to use A.J. Arberry’s phrase, “crush its gossamer wings to powder.” For example, on the question of murder, the

Qur’an essentially confirms the pre-Islamic Arab forms of settlement either by blood money or by “life for life,” adding that forgiveness is better. From this, all our lawyers deduced the principle that murder is a private crime against the bereaved family, which has therefore to decide whether the murderer will be forgiven, whether he should pay for the murder in money, or whether he should be killed in revenge. However, the Qur’an also enunciates a more general principle stating that “whosoever kills a person unrightfully or without a mischief (that is, a war) on the earth, it is as though he has killed all humanity; while he who saves one person, it is as though he has saved all humanity” (Sura 5, Verse 32), which obviously makes murder a crime against society rather than a private crime against a family. But our lawyers never brought this verse to bear on the issue of murder.

To insist on absolute uniformity of interpretation is therefore neither possible nor desirable. What is important is first of all to use the kind of method I am advocating to eliminate vagrant interpretations. For the rest, every interpreter must explicitly state his general assumptions with regard to Qur’anic interpretation in general and specific assumptions and premises with regard to specific issues or passages. Once his assumptions are made explicit, then discussion among differing interpreters is possible and subjectivity is further reduced. But the kinds of differences about the conception of God—whether he is the ground of the being that manifests itself through every existent and is therefore to be contemplated, or whether he is the ultimate and transcendent principle that has simply to be established and “proved” like a mathematical formula, or whether he is the creator-commander who has to be worshipped and obeyed, and so forth—should surely be capable of being sorted out for public and collective life at least, leaving scope for private idiosyncrasies, which in any case cannot cease.

Such interpretive attempts can be made by individual scholars, but they can obviously be made by teamwork as well. What is certain is that there have to be several attempts so that, through discussion and debate, the community at large can accept some interpretations and discard others. It is obviously not necessary that a certain interpretation once accepted must continue to

be accepted; there is always both room and necessity for new interpretations, for this is, in truth, an ongoing process. But such bona fide attempts by competent scholars are, as I said before, the only way to break the vicious circle of “where to start” the process of reform in Islamic education. For the first logical step now is the creation of new intellectual materials, since the mechanical part of the process of reform in terms of combining old and new subjects in new reformed schools or setting up afternoon Islamic schools to supplement the morning “regular schools” is by now well underway in virtually all Muslim lands.

Nor is this first step impossible to achieve. The greatest difficulty that will be experienced is not the new step itself but extricating one’s feet from the stagnant waters of the old Qur’anic exegesis, which may contain many pearls but which, on the whole, impedes rather than promotes a real understanding of the Qur’an. Qur’an commentaries are, of course, not all of the same value, some being purely subjective distortions, others of real importance in providing both insight and historical information; but the approach being advocated herein is new—although, as I said before, its elements are all in the tradition itself. The new step simply consists in studying the Qur’an in its total and specific background (and doing this study systematically in a historical order), not just studying it verse by verse or passage by passage with an isolated “occasion of revelation” (sha’n al-nuzul).

*** Reconstruction of the Islamic Sciences

*** The Historical Period

The proposition that the shari’a [Islamic] law and institutions have to be derived methodically and systematically from the Qur’an and the example of the Prophet (i.e., his total performance) in the manner described above does not mean that Islamic sciences, as they have originated and developed historically, have to be ignored or discarded. Indeed, they cannot be ignored or discarded for certain basic reasons. First of all, it is historic Islam that gives continuity to the intellectual and spiritual being of the community. No community can annul its past and hope to create a future

being for itself—as that community. A basic fallacy of an Ataturkish kind of “reform” consists precisely in an effort to shed the historical being of the community and to seek a future without it. It is important, however, to understand precisely the meaning of what I am saying, which is not that we should necessarily go slow with reform through gradual steps by a process of partial and ad hoc adjustments. My argument has been, in fact, against an ad hoc policy, because, whatever its practical wisdom (which is dubious), it necessarily distorts vision by making it myopic. And it is, in any case, a policy Muslims can ill afford at the present juncture, since the gap between what is and what ought to be is much too great. It must also constantly be borne in mind that the Muslim community has developed over the centuries (say, since the tenth/eleventh) a temper whereby it can swallow small changes without perceptibly moving forward. The factor that has produced this tremendous digestive power can be called conservatism or the spirit of ijma’ (consensus), depending upon the point of view one chooses to adopt, but the fact remains that it is extremely difficult to move the community as a whole. If one studies the vast and rich juristic and speculative literature of Islam (even leaving out the protean Sufism), one finds startling, indeed, revolutionary ideas in the writings of men who were high “orthodox” authorities, but none of these have left any trace on the being of the community. Changes in the community have always occurred when the cumulative process has reached a stage of outburst that literally re-forms orthodoxy. For this reason also, I am against a partialist, patchy, slow adjustment approach.

The meaning of my proposition that historic formulations of Islam—juristic, theological, spiritual—can be neither ignored nor discarded consists of two parts. The first, as I just hinted above, is that if we took the Qur’an at this point of history, as though it had been revealed just now—for that is what discarding historical Islam would mean (from this perspective, the sunna or the performance of the Prophet himself serves, in part, as historical Islam for an understanding of the Qur’an)—we would not be able even to understand it. Religiously speaking, no doubt, the Qur’an has to be taken as though it were revealed to the conscience of every believer—and Sufis have sometimes taken this to an extreme—but it can be so revealed to the conscience of a believer only after it has been properly understood, which requires putting its legal and social enunciations in their historical setting. Besides, within historical Islam differences in religious attitude can be discerned, for, as I pointed out early in chapter 1, the

Companions of the Prophet—his immediate audience—understood the Qur’an and the Prophet’s own performance more pragmatically than did the later generations, who increasingly became prisoners of their own principles, on the basis of which they elaborated the Qur’anic teaching. Such early history is also involved in our understanding of Islam, not in terms of accepting all of its content but as a general pragmatic guide.

The second part of the meaning of this proposition is that we must make a thorough study, a historically systematic study, of the development of Islamic disciplines. This has to be primarily a critical study that will show us on the screen, as it were, the career of Islam at the hands of Muslims. But in religious terms it will be finally judged by the criterion of the Qur’an itself—the Qur’an as we will have understood it by the procedure described above. The need for a critical study of our intellectual Islamic past is ever more urgent because, owing to a peculiar psychological complex we have developed vis-a-vis the West, we have come to defend that past as though it were our God. Our sensitivities to the various parts or aspects of this past, of course, differ, although almost all of it has become generally sacred to us. The greatest sensitivity surrounds the hadith, although it is generally accepted that, except the Qur’an, all else is liable to the corrupting hand of history. Indeed, a critique of hadith should not only remove a big mental block but should promote fresh thinking about Islam. Further, if a certain hadith is shown to be historically unsound, it need not be discarded, for it may contain a good principle, and a good principle, no matter where it comes from, should be adopted. This is not the place to go into details, which I have elaborated in chapter 2 ofmy Islamic Methodology in History (Karachi, 1965)....

**** Systematic Reconstruction

***** Theology.

A historical critique of theological developments in Islam is the first step toward a reconstruction of Islamic theology. This critique, as I said before, should reveal the extent of the dislocation between the worldview of the

Qur’an and various schools of theological speculation in Islam and point the way toward a new theology. Leaving aside the various extravagant speculative theological doctrines of the Batinis (Muslim esotericists) and many Sufis, the opposing schools of “rational” (Mu’tazilite) and “traditionalist” (the Ash’arite) theology teach a student an effective lesson on this highly sensitive issue. While admitting that all theological formulations necessarily carry on their brows the dust of time, one still must demand that such formulations be faithful at least to the basic structure of ideas of the religion they claim to represent. But who would claim that the Mu’tazilite doctrines of the negation of attributes of God, of the necessity of excluding God’s power from the sphere of human actions and limiting it to the realm of nature, of denial of God’s forgiveness of sins, are faithful to the teaching of the Qur’an? And, even more so, who can claim that the Ash’arite reaction in terms of the doctrines of the omnipotence of God at the expense of all human power and will, of the purposelessness of divine commands and prohibitions, of making works essentially irrelevant to faith, of the denial of cause and effect, and, consequently, the elevation of atomism to the position of a cardinal principle of the Islamic creed was representative of the Qur’anic teaching on God, man, or nature? A system of theology may be logically coherent yet totally false to the religion it claims to formulate, for what can one say of a theological system that reigned supreme in the greater part of the Islamic world for the best part of a millennium and whose votaries—some of them august names in the history of Islamic thought like al-Ghazzali and [Fakhr al-Din] al-Razi [1149–1209]—vied with one another in producing ever fresh arguments to prove that man can be said “to act” only metaphysically, not really, since the only real “actor” is God?

It is to the credit of premodernist revivalism and modernism that they tried to undermine this thousand-year-old sacred folly and to invite Muslims back to the refreshing fountain of the Qur’an. But whereas premodernist fundamentalism was good at demolishing the choking prison and letting in fresh air, it refused to build any new edifice. Rather, it believed that all edifices are really prisons, or inevitably become so, and that religion is better off without a theology, which in its eyes amounted to a crime against religion. As for modernism, it has, for the most part, dealt with matters social and political issue by issue, not as a social or political philosophy. Democracy is Islamic, but concepts like human rights and social justice (which are certainly declared to be Islamic) are not much discussed; egalitarianism is emphasized, but its nature and limits, if any, do not come up as problems;

Islam has given women rights, but why and what kinds of rights and by what rationale are not clear. Most modernists are very reticent about a theology, a philosophy, a worldview. In Muhammad ‘Abduh’s work theology is minimal, although he did much to resurrect Mu’tazila-type rationalism; Sayyid Ahmad Khan [Indian modernist, 1817–1898] called desperately for a new kalam (theology) consonant with the requirements of the age and felt sure that, unless theology was reformulated afresh, Islam would be in real and grave danger—like all other religions. At his instance, Muhammad Shibli wrote two books in Urdu—a history of theology in Islam called ‘Ilm al-Kalam and a systematic theology called Kalam—wherein he attempted to restate arguments for God’s existence, prophethood, revelation, and such, relying heavily, like Sayyid Ahmad Khan himself, upon medieval Muslim philosophers like [Abu ‘All al-Husayn] Ibn Sina [1908–1037].

It was the philosopher-poet Muhammad Iqbal who essayed a new approach to Islamic theology in his Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. Iqbal was a keen student of modern Western philosophy as well as of Islamic mysticism (essentially in Persian), but he was not a scholar of the Islamic theological tradition or of the Qur’an (which, however, he read a great deal for inspiration). Iqbal appears to me to have very rightly perceived that the basic impulse of the Qur’an was dynamic and action oriented—seeking to direct history on a spiritual value pattern and attempting to create a world order. As I said earlier, I do not accept the judgment of the late H.A.R. Gibb that one cannot consider Iqbal’s work even as a point of departure for building a new Islamic theology; it seems to me that Gibb was probably thinking in terms of a new system of Islamic credalformulae. It is, however, correct to say that Iqbal’s attempt is very much dated, since he took seriously his contemporary scientists who tried to prove a dynamic free will in man on the basis of the new subatomic scientific data, which they interpreted as meaning that the physical world was “free” of the chain of cause and effect! It is true too that Iqbal did not carry out any systematic inquiry into the teaching of the Qur’an but picked and chose from its verses—as he did with other traditional material—to prove certain theses at least some of which were the result of his general insight into the Qur’an but which, above all, seemed to him to suit most the contemporary needs of a stagnant Muslim society. He then expressed these theses in terms of such contemporary evolutionary theories as those of [Henri] Bergson [1859–1941] and [Alfred North] Whitehead [1861–1947]. My disagreement with Iqbal is

therefore not over his concept of God—as the ultimate source of creative energy that can be appropriated by individuals and societies in certain ways—but with his formulation of this concept and the method by which he attempts to deduce it from the Qur’an.

This account further demonstrates the necessity of the procedure I have advocated for a systematic interpretation of the Qur’an. For the theological or metaphysical statements of the Qur’an, the specific revelational background is not necessary, as it is for its social-legal pronouncements, nor do the commentators usually give it, but certainly without a systematic study the Qur’anic worldview cannot emerge. It cannot be denied that any such interpretation will necessarily be influenced by contemporary modes of thought; this is also required in the sense that only in this way can the message of the Qur’an become relevant to the contemporary situation. But it is quite another thing to couch the Qur’anic message in terms of a particular theory, no matter how attractive, sensational, or popular it may seem—in fact, the more topical a theory is, the less suitable it is as a vehicle of expression of an eternal message. It is also possible that this is what Gibb meant by his critique of Iqbal, but then it is possible to separate Iqbal’s basic insights into the nature of Islam from the doctrines in terms of which he has formulated them.

***** Law and ethics.

Muslim scholars have never attempted an ethics of the Qur’an, systematically or otherwise. Yet no one who has done any careful study of the Qur’an can fail to be impressed by its ethical fervor. Its ethics, indeed, is its essence, and it is also the necessary link between theology and law. It is true that the Qur’an tends to concretize the ethical, to clothe the general in a particular paradigm, and to translate the ethical into legal or quasi-legal commands. But it is precisely a sign of its moral fervor that it is not content only with generalizable ethical propositions but is keen on translating them into actual paradigms. However, as I have repeatedly pointed out, the Qur’an always explicates the objectives or principles that are the essence of its laws.

The Muslims’ failure to make a clear distinction between Qur’anic ethics and law has resulted in a contusion between the two. Neither ethics nor law ever became a discipline in itself. Islamic law, in fact, is not law in a modern sense; it is a treasure of legal materials thrown up during long centuries of endless discussions, upon which modern Islamic legal systems can certainly be built, but only a part of which could ever be enforced in court. No doubt the mixing together of law and morality gave a certain character to Islamic law that is uniquely precious—namely, it kept the moral motivation, without which any law must become a plaything of legal tricksters and manipulators, alive within the law. However, to keep law permeated with a living moral sense it is not necessary to ignore the distinction between the two, only to keep law organically related to morality, that is, to keep law Islamic and prevent its secularization.

The Qur’an calls itself “guidance for mankind” (hudan li’l-nas) and by the same term designates earlier revealed documents. Its central moral concept for man is taqwa, which is usually translated as “piety” or “God-fearingness” but which in the various Qur’anic contexts may be defined as “a mental state of responsibility from which an agent’s actions proceed but which recognizes that the criterion ofjudgment upon them lies outside him.” The whole business of the Qur’an appears to be centered on the attempt to induce such a state in man. The idea of a secular law, insofar as it makes this state indifferent to its obedience, which is consequently conceived in mechanical terms, is the very abnegation of taqwa. The increasingly chaotic state of affairs in Western societies and the gradual erosion of an inner sense of responsibility represent a complex situation, but this situation is undoubtedly linked with a process through which law ceased to maintain any organic relation to morality.

Nor is Islamic theology, for that matter, a case of pure intellectualism, unaffective and ineffective, a pure artificial construct that tries to vie with philosophy, which at least claims to start from assumptions of natural reason rather than from given dogmatic beliefs that it claims “to prove.” Islamic theology is certainly an intellectual endeavor, but it is so in the sense that it gives a coherent and faithful account of what is there in the Qur’an so that a believing person or a person prone to believe can give consent both from the mind and from the heart and make this world view his or her mental and spiritual home. Insofar as it provides that intellectual home for the mind, it

can be taught; insofar as it provides a spiritual haven for the heart, it can be preached. A theology that can perform neither of these two functions is the stark bone of religion. Al-Ghazzali had long ago condemned the official “science of theology” because it was neither spiritually satisfying nor intellectually satisfactory—he called it the game of intellectual children! Yet this seems to be the fate of most historical theologies.

Just as preaching is an expression of theology for the heart, even so must it give rise to morality or an ethical value system to guide man and to instill in him the sense of moral responsibility that the Qur’an calls taqwa. A God that speaks neither to the intellect of man nor to his heart, nor yet can generate a system of values for man, is considerably worse than nothing and is better off dead. The moral values are the crucial pivot of the entire overall system, and from them flows the law. The law is therefore the last part in this chain and governs all the “religious,” social, political, and economic institutions of the society. Because law is to be formulated on the basis of the moral values, it will necessarily be organically related to the latter. But because it governs the day-to-day life of the society, with necessary social change it has to be reinterpreted. Should the process of reinterpretation stop, obviously the society must either stagnate or else rebel and take the road of secularism. In either case the whole structure of theology, morality, and law will eventually collapse.

The question of who should interpret law has been acute in Islamic societies because of the historical accident that the so-called law (fiqh) has been the result of the work of private lawyers, while in the later medieval centuries governments—particularly the Ottoman government—had to promulgate laws on issues not covered by the shari’a law. Although the state-made law was basically sanctioned by certain general principles in the shari’a law itself, nevertheless a dichotomy of the sources of law was unavoidable, and this process paved the way for the secularization of law in several Muslim countries—most systematically in Turkey. With the introduction of parliamentary institutions, law-making has become the business of lay parliamentarians, but there are large-scale protests from the ‘ulama’ and their supporters that law-making must be vested in the ‘ulama’ institutions. For centuries, however, law-making in the ‘ularmi’ institutions has been stagnant, and it is no longer feasible to reverse the new arrangements. The

only way to produce genuine Islamic law is to enlighten public conscience, particularly that of the educated classes, with Islamic values. This, in fact, underlines the necessity of working out Islamic ethics systematically from the Qur’an and making such works accessible to the general reader. There is no shortcut to this process for the production of Islamic law. There is no doubt that a wider study of earlier works of Islamic jurisprudence and law will help. If first-rate works on the history of Islamic law and jurisprudence are written—as I have argued must be done—these should be made required reading in the schools of law as part of the normal curriculum. In this way, key Islamic legal and moral concepts would gradually come to inform the legal profession. In many Muslim countries the lawyers themselves are keen to learn more about Islamic law. Perhaps an international committee of Muslim jurists could be organized with first-rate traditionalist scholars of law and jurisprudence of various medieval schools to undertake major works in the field. At present, al-Azhar happens to be the most hopeful center for such a development.

***** Philosophy.

In medieval Islam, a series of brilliant and original men had built, on the basis of Greek philosophical thought, a comprehensive and systematic view of the universe and of man, which they were able to synthesize with certain key concepts and doctrines of Islam to the satisfaction of themselves and many of the sophisticated Muslim intelligentsia. As I said earlier, this body of thought, called philosophy (falsafa), gave violent affront to the orthodoxy on several issues, and since then philosophy has been a discipline non grata in the Muslim educational system throughout a large part of the Muslim world. As I pointed out earlier, this was only one type of philosophy, with which nevertheless the fate of all philosophy was bound up in the eyes of the orthodox, and this circumstance caused a great deal of harm both to the orthodoxy (which suffered from a lack of ideas and their challenge) and to philosophy. Philosophy did continue to be cultivated at a high level in Iran, but this was done away from the orthodox fold—and even the Shi’i orthodox fold—and therefore the two hardly ever met. Philosophy is, however, a perennial intellectual need and has to be allowed to flourish both for its own sake and for the sake of other disciplines, since it inculcates a much-needed analytical-critical spirit and generates new ideas that become important intellectual tools for other sciences, not least for religion and theology.

Therefore a people that deprives itself of philosophy necessarily exposes itself to starvation in terms of fresh ideas—in fact, it commits intellectual suicide.

The generation of ideas by philosophy is basically a function of its critical-analytical activity. This activity has to be free. Most probably, philosophy as such cannot create any beliefs about reality and its nature, since its function is to analyze data of experience—sense experience, aesthetic experience, or religious experience. Philosophy, therefore, is not a rival of theology but should be helpful to it, for the object of the latter is to build a worldview on the basis of the Qur'an with the help of the intellectual tools provided, in part, by philosophy. Certain philosophical views may create tensions with certain theological doctrines; in this case either that particular philosophical view may be Islamically questionable or it may be that a particular theological doctrine is questionable. In any case, possible or actual tensions are not an excuse for banning philosophy in the name of a self- righteous theology, or vice versa: I have said already, and my argument has assumed all along in this work, that difference of opinion, provided it is meaningful, has to be assigned a high positive value, for it is only through confrontation of different and opposing views that truth gradually emerges. In fact, there is no privileged point in the process of human thought where the Truth can be said to have dawned.

Because medieval Muslim philosophy was a particular type of philosophical system, one must ask whether it is correct or wise to ban all philosophy falsafa) as such. There can be any number of philosophies depending on point of view, the assumptions a particular philosopher makes, and the problems he starts out to solve, namely, those that seem to him to be most important, whether in the field of metaphysics, or ethics, or epistemology, or logic, or whatever. To say that all philosophy must of necessity contradict theology or its suppositions is to play not only a naive game but a dangerous one. I can say without fear of contradiction that, for the Qur'an, knowledge—that is, the creation of ideas—is an activity of the highest possible value. Otherwise why did it ask the Prophet to continue to pray for "increase in knowledge"? Why did it untiringly emphasize delving into the universe, into history, and into man's own inner life? Is the banning or discouragement of pure thought compatible with this kind of demand? What does Islam have to fear from human thought and why? These are

questions that must be answered by those “friends of religion” who want to keep their religion in a hothouse, secluded from the open air.

***** The social sciences.

Social sciences, as systematized bodies of knowledge, that is, as disciplines, are a modern phenomenon. They are undoubtedly a very important development, since, the object of their study being man in society, they can they tell us so much about how collectivities actually behave in various fields of human belief and action. At the beginning of this chapter I said something about Muslims’ desire to Islamize these sciences or bodies of knowledge. There is no doubt that here again the vicious circle I have repeatedly spoken of can be broken only at the level of an intellectual activity where works are produced not only to inform how societies actually behave but to show how they can be imbued with Islamic values conducive to the establishment of an ethical social order in the world.

As a system of values, Islam naturally cannot favor a laissez-faire society. On the other hand, Islam knows well that coercion does not pay or even work. As for indoctrination in the sense of brainwashing, I have already pointed out that this technique of creating future generations of the faithful in fact ultimately backfires. If in the past social pressures helped indoctrination in the sense that people rarely rebelled openly, this situation is increasingly changing, since social pressures are weakening and, owing to a number of apparently irreversible factors, are bound to continue to weaken. In fact, an intense and irrational faith in a subjective humanism among several present-day “liberated” circles has led many to “leave our children alone when they are young so that they can choose their own way of life when they are adults” and the like. Such statements, often made in good faith (although at least as often they are merely a cheap cover for disowning parental responsibility), in fact betray a lack of concern for the future of humanity. For, if humans could grow by themselves, highly sophisticated religious and educational systems would not have developed in the first place. And what we are seeing develop in societies whose liberals think they are the first secular liberals in human history is that, instead of growing into humans, many of the new generation are in fact growing into animals. To remedy the

crudity and even cruelty of a self-righteous traditional system is one thing. To throw out the baby with the bath water is quite another.

Indoctrination, however, necessarily occurs only where dogmas come in: the greater the dogma content, the greater the need for indoctrination; the greater the ethical content, the less the need for indoctrination. It is a pity of pities that the ethical content of societies is being washed out because of a general rebellion against dogmas. Dogmas, again, are not all of the same level, for there are relatively “rational” dogmas, that is, such as are tied to the ethical content of a system. In any case, universal ethical values are the crux of the being of a society: the debate about the relativity of moral values in societies is born of a liberalism that in the process of liberalization has become so perverted as to destroy those very moral values it set out to liberate from the constraints of dogma. From my point of view, which is confessedly and necessarily normative, therefore, the best of social sciences is history—if done well and objectively. This is because history, being long range, contains lessons in a way that a study of the contemporary aborigines of Australia, for example, does not. Macrohistory, if done really well, is the best service a social scientist can do for mankind. This is the reason the Qur’an invites us again and again “to travel on the earth and see the end of nations.” Microhistory—for example, a study of the postal service in the United States in the 1850s—is of use only insofar as it contributes to our knowledge of the behavior of man and its consequences; otherwise it is pure curiosity or a means to securing an academic post in a modern institution of learning.

Modern societies have acquired far more complexity than ancient and medieval societies. Particularly in the fields of economics, politics, communication, and education, modern societies have evolved thought, institutions, and structures incomparably more complex and sophisticated than those of any society within human experience. Yet we must not be deluded into thinking that because of their sophistication and complexity modern societies are any less subject to the basic laws of right and wrong. Part of modern sophistication, in fact, means that these societies have become more aware, or at least have the means to become more aware, of the possible sources of such social dislocations as might threaten to derange it. All such dislocations are finally rooted in the sense of right and wrong that is the conscience of the social mind. But it is always touch and go whether

the conscience of a given social mind does in fact manage to reflect right and wrong with adequate objectivity. Since modern societies are, then, subject to the laws of rights and wrong just as were earlier, and in many ways simpler, societies, the lessons of history are as relevant to them as they were to the earlier ones. But, despite the increasingly sophisticated warning systems of today, the ethical impulse in certain important respects seems to have become, if anything, weaker. It is true that earlier societies were much more dogmatic in certain respects and therefore exposed themselves to dangers, while modern sophistication means less dogmatism, overtly at least. But this competence of modern societies to adjust to necessary change is often like a doctor who treats symptoms rather than the disease. No matter how much a doctor gains competence in treating symptoms while ignoring or being ignorant of the underlying disease, the life of his patient cannot be much prolonged. It is to be feared that modern civilization, while sophisticating means and methods to almost no end, has developed cardinal deficiencies in basic insights into human nature.

It is therefore essential that social scientists who study contemporary societies be exposed to the sobering lessons of history, for the history of mankind, whether earlier societies were aware of this or not, is indivisible in the sense that the basic human forces—and it is the human forces that are basic to history—are the same all over the globe. This is certainly the view of the Qur’an, which is singularly free of genetics and genes. If Muslim social scientists are to be involved in social engineering, this is all the more necessary. There is a considerable body of what may be called social thought in the Qur’an, which talks incessantly about the rise and fall of societies and civilizations, of the moral decrepitude of nations, of the succession of civilizations or “the inheritance of the earth,” of the function of leadership, of prosperity and peace and their opposites, and especially of “those who sow corruption on the earth but think they are reformers.” This body of thought should be organized next to the pure moral thought of the Qur’an and the lessons from history upon which the Qur’an is so insistent. Unless the material of the Qur’an is well systematized, it can be dangerously misleading to apply individual and isolated verses to situations, as most Muslim preachers and even many intellectuals tend to do.

The views of the Qur’an will also remain at the level of pure abstraction unless a thorough factual survey is made of the relevant social

data. It is of the greatest importance to determine exactly where society is at present before deciding where it can go. To talk about reforming society without scientifically determining where the society is, is certainly like a doctor treating a patient without taking his case history or examining him. In fact, there is a sense in which even a meaningful formulation of Qur’anic thought will be dependent upon such a factual study and a proper method for interpreting facts; the converse, as I underlined in the Introduction, is also true. In other words, as with other fields discussed above, the study of the social sciences is a process, not something that is established once and for all. In fact, it is more so than any other field, for its subject matter—social behavior—is constantly in the process of creation.

** 32. Islam and the Challenge of the Modern World

Shabbir Akhtar

Shabbir Akhtar (Pakistan-England, born 1960) attended college in England and received his doctorate in the philosophy of religion in Canada. He worked for a time as a local community relations officer in England, but his calling appears to be broader in scope. Since the late 1980s, Akhtar has published a series of books that aim to speak for the Islamic community of England. At the same time, Akhtar has also taken on the role of religious reformer within this community. One of his primary themes is the need to confront and learn from modernity—a challenge that contemporary Islamic theology has shied away from, he argues.[498] In A Faith for All Seasons, excerpted here, Akhtar is so successful at representing secular perspectives that “a number of Muslims felt he had lost his faith, and he was heavily criticised in the Muslim press.”[499]

“There are two ways of getting home,” wrote G.K. Chesterton [English author, 1874–1936], “and one of them is to stay there.”[500] No doubt that is the safer option; for some it is the only option. But there is another itinerary too. In this book I have urged Muslims to leave, if temporarily, the House of Islam, to venture through the alien world of rejection and rival patterns of religious conviction: to venture beyond dogma and unargued assumption, in the larger attempt to become acquainted not only with the a priori theologies of scripture but also with the sometimes recalcitrant realities of a world and human nature under their usual tuition.

The journey thus far has not been easy; and the rest is harder still. For we must now make our way back to the household of faith, back on the road to Mecca. And yet we have, of course, traversed the forbidden ground; we have seen the vast disarray of conflicting beliefs and ideologies vying with one another for our allegiance. An untested faith that prefers the security of unargued assumption, a faith whose votaries never lift their heads above the dogmatic parapet—that is no longer for us. “Thou shalt think!” is the first commandment of a characteristically modern piety. For in seeking to come to terms with modernity, we must develop a new rationalism, one that must reverently and conscientiously refuse to cherish the unempirical or otherwise questionable assumptions still so innocently enjoyed by a traditional piety. Can we, then, find a way back to the House of Islam and take our place in it as authentic members and genuine adherents?

*** I

Perceptive Western listeners to Arab radio services relaying the Qur’an in the month of Ramadan can sense the competing noise and impact of more powerful neighboring stations as these intermittently drown out the reciter’s voice. A somewhat fanciful observation; but it may well serve to symbolize Islam seeking an audience in the contemporary world of profane leisure, irreligious confidences, opposed values, and most characteristically, louder voices.

The voice of God in the daily life of Muslims is often only faintly and intermittently heard. But it is, at least within the range of transmission, still heard. It is rare that the noisy turbulence of the vicinity drowns out the entire recited sequence; the partial segment reaches the alert ear. But it has to be an attentive intelligence, given to what the Qur’an calls reflection (tadabbur).

Equally, one might say, it has to be a message worthy of our attention, couched in a relevant idiom, voiced in an appropriately attractive way. The Qur’an, like proper Christian preaching, has an exceptionally intelligent earnestness at its core. The art of beautiful recitation of the Qur’an is a mature and extensively cultivated one in Islam, especially Arab Islam, giving Qur’an reciters the same kind of kudos in Muslim society as opera singers have in Western culture. The concern with achieving a dramatic impact upon contemporary audiences is utterly central to any attempt to repossess the legacy of Muhammad for the needs of the age of reason. Yet the message seems increasingly irrelevant. Even its intelligent earnestness these days is often mistaken, particularly by outsiders, as being at one remove from, if not identical with, unworthy passion: in a word, fanaticism.

Yet the need for the preacher and the reciter has rarely been greater. For religions are not saved or even best served by intellectual efforts alone. If the thinker has a word in this affair, the preacher has the decisive one. It is the preacher who is forever exhorting, warning, advising in the accents of scripture—thereby creating disciples who are, by God’s grace, inwardly repentant and outwardly concerned to effect social righteousness.

The scripture of Islam aims to persuade and educate us and thereby motivate right conduct. In its striking Arabic eloquence, it registers powerfully even on the rejecting and uncomprehending mind. But the full force of its compassionate coercion, if we may so term it, is felt only by the thoughtful listener.

The Qur’an frequently calls upon its audiences to give heed to its sequences. And much is done to facilitate its reception in the wayward human constituency. Thus, for example, the Qur’an weaves backwards and forwards

into the fabric of the present a concern with the past—a past that is dead as history yet alive as a source of guidance. The text is sprinkled with heart-searching meditations that serve to give the reader pause—and the text, too, as it were—in midstream for deliberation. The result is the concise argumentativeness of prosaic literature but the charmingly incongruous effect of poetry in the dramatic impact of the sentences. In fine, the author has found the right tone of “voice” for preaching to the unconverted.

The voice from the radio conveys the word of God, received as proclamation and directive, delivered as sermon and imperative. It is piety and devotion in the highest sense, a reminder of mission and vocation. Through it breathe the allied ethical accents of demands unfulfilled, the intimations of nemesis, and the urgency of repentance, both individual and collective. The interval between birth and death—life itself—is to be properly punctuated by reflection on its elemental seriousness. Reminder is needed here constantly. Profane distraction must be subdued; the voice of mission must speak even when the listeners refuse to listen or when pressures, external or internal, conspire to silence, absorb or deflect it.

*** II

“Don’t bother about being modern. Unfortunately it is the one thing that, whatever you do, you cannot avoid.” Can’t you? This remark of the late Salvador Dali [Spanish artist, 1904–1989], in his rather pretentious autobiography, The Diary of a Genius,[501] is oddly thoughtful, even discerning, especially if we may borrow it for our purposes here as a comment on modern religious conviction. For even “traditional” believers are far more secularized today than they themselves might imagine. Modernity, the circumstance of being “modern,” is, in a central sense, inescapable. It is the necessary context for every tolerably well-informed life-journey undertaken in the contemporary world.

Yet there is a choice. One need not be too eager to catch up on the facts; one can cultivate a kind of deliberate and bloody-minded will to obscurantism. Indeed even that is unnecessary once innate security of mind strikes alliance with laziness. The results, in the case of Islam, are well known. At least since

the end of the 19th century, the entire House of Islam has been surviving on an intellectual overdraft.

A signal hindrance to the development of Islamic thought in the West in the coming years is what may be called “the problem of temperament.” An ideology, especially one aiming at the common good, must avoid reactionary and polemical impulses as the chief sources of its motivation. Unless Muslim reflection is actuated by motives nobler than an undifferentiated dislike of the West and all things Western, it has no chance of a hearing. (Remember that “the West” is no longer some amorphous realm, some abstract foe, out there in some distant land: Muslims are in the West.) We are all in search of an audience these days; and it is not easy to get anyone to listen, let alone to listen for long. A modern preacher either captures or loses an urbanized audience within the first three minutes of his sermon.

To cultivate “rejectionist” and isolationist attitudes is to invite accusations of apology. Moreover, such attitudes severely sap the energy of the faithful intellect. In any case, a shrill voice is an unworthy accompaniment of truth.

Many Muslims believe that contempt for our current situation of secularity and religious pluralism is an adequate substitute for an intellectual reckoning with it. Throughout this work, I have excoriated such a conceit. Here it is sufficient to pass summary judgment and pass on. That Muslim believers have always placed a sturdy trust in the ultimate truth of the Islamic scripture is all well and good. But such security of conviction must itself reckon, if it is intellectually aware and morally honest, with the facts of post-Enlightenment culture. Modern faith should properly allow room for a pertinent variety of anxiety: an anxiety free from contempt for hostile challenge, an anxiety devoid of hatred of alien belief. For there are secular and religious groups whose members sometimes reject Islamic presuppositions for reasons that cannot be dismissed as shallow or trivial.

The reason for this “new” style in Islamic religiosity is itself specifically Islamic in complexion. The didactic element in Islam is least properly presented in a shrill and unreflective tone precisely because it is then

deracinated from the Islamic scripture’s own deeply meditative context with all its constant calls for reverent reflection (tadabbur). The current Muslim tendency to discuss narrowly dogmatic issues in an unrelievedly authoritarian mood is the best way of imprisoning latently massive scriptural powers. A cramped and degradingly minor Muslim intellectual ambition today effectively gives the lie to the Islamic claim that the Qur’an is a “miracle of reason and speech” vouchsafed to “the best community ever brought forth among mankind.” There is work to be done; and, notwithstanding Dali, there is merit in being modern, for it is possible to continue to live in the past—a past that is both a fetter and a release.

*** III

Is contemporary man then indeed the measure of all things? Should he be? I have argued that the starting point of our modern attempt to achieve an eternal perspective—a modern theology—must be an attempt to take the full measure of man. We begin with men and women under an empty sky. Such an emphasis is categorically foreign to a traditional Islamic piety that both begins and ends with God. But there is, as I argued in part 2, some Qur’anic warrant for taking the human condition seriously, if only as an index to God and the transcendent. Within the Qur’an of course any attempt to give man his due necessarily involves giving God his due, so to speak.

This new style of religiosity may strike one as entailing an unduly large concession to modern thought. But there is no real cause for alarm in the Muslim theological camp. Wherever we may begin, we religious thinkers can safely be trusted (as Marxists well know) to arrive finally at God. Naturally, one supposes; for that is our job. And, more seriously, because a correct theology must contain in its premises (and hence in its conclusion) a true statement about man and hence about God. There is a really good conceptual mix here: if theological conclusions about deity are false, the implied theological statements about humanity must also have been untrue. If theological statements about the nature of God are true, a valid anthropology must already have been implicit in the premises.

To understand the nature of God is not equivalent to providing a sound anthropology. But any full understanding of the nature of God will involve some understanding of the created order placed under a divine sovereignty. The theist will argue that any full understanding of man would imply some fundamental if implicit reference to God. For the consciousness of the divine alone constitutes the authentically human.

The starting point is of great importance. But, as in the formation of some systems of mathematics, we should begin where we need to begin. Thus, for example, if we are engaged in the development of Muslim theology and expounding it for the needs of the traditional pious mind confident of faith's claims, there is no harm in beginning—and even ending—with God. For many deeply religious people, man is, at every level, tributary to the divine Creator. However, in other areas, the starting point may well have to be different. For example, in Christian-Muslim dialogue, it is preferable, though not necessary, to begin at the level of the human condition and then explore as to which of the two faiths gives the most "satisfying" characterization of the human and hence of God. God can enter the picture indirectly or, if you like, as an inference from the premises implied or stated. When it comes to the non-theistic faiths and atheistic humanism, God cannot be the starting point of responsible exchange with the rejector. There, man is necessarily, in the first instance at least, the measure of all faiths. We must begin with man; the theist hopes, naturally, that we need not end there. But that must be the hope of a valid epistemology, not the presumption of a dogmatic temper.

Wherever we may begin, we must end with God. Modern Protestant thought, of a reductionist and revisionist vintage, has sometimes lost God in the intricate procedures of theology. Fortunately the supernatural emphasis remains integral to Islam; the human and natural remain tributary and derivative.

A due recognition of the importance of man is likely to be misunderstood in many ways. For example, to say, with Christian thinkers like the Reverend Kenneth Cragg, "Let God be God," is to endow man with an excessive significance and thereby misunderstand Islam or, for that matter, any theism.[502] For God is God— independent of our recognition or acceptance. Even if God's truth can, at worst, fail to be accepted in a sinful human

constituency, it remains truth none the less. On every score, this is the Qur’an’s message. “Let man be man” is the true creed of Islam. For man is debased, denatured, disfigured, devalued by kufr (disbelief) and idolatry; man attains authentically human stature via Islam. It is man, not God, who must submit his will. God is not a Muslim; he does not need anything and certainly not anything from us in order to be truly divine. He is, in a manner of speaking, necessarily Himself.

To come to terms with modernity is one thing; changing a revealed Islam to suit human whim shaped by passing fashion is quite another. It is a rarely noted tribute to the authentic conviction of the religious intelligentsia of Islam that they suppressed the very conditions in which a neo-Islamic belief could take root. Islam is Islam and remains so. An Islam molded under the concentrated pressures of secularity and interreligious encounter must nevertheless be recognizably a faith bearing a family resemblance to traditional Islam. My attempt at a reverent skepticism in these pages is in the service of rediscovering the old Islam, not of inventing a new heresy. The only dogmatism which is charming and profound, in religions as in individuals, is the one at once aware both of itself as well as of alternative patterns of belief. To learn to face fully the skeptical gaze of modernity is not a license for any wholesale disowning of authentically Muslim dogmas in the tradition. It is only because we today still wish to retain Islam as a complete vision that we need to identify, record and religiously contend with various new theological puzzles. Once we simply sacrifice the problematic parts of revealed scripture—as some Protestant Christians do—we either alter altogether the grounds of our puzzlement or else feel no need to be puzzled at all.

*** IV

A true Muslim is never a man of many dogmas. For, at the end of the chapter, there is only one dogma, concerning which he has no option: Allah-u-akbar [God is great]. This confession of the greatness of

God is central to the Muslim imagination. It punctuates the prayer and, when sincerely confessed, transforms the heart and mind. Indeed, even the most obscure and flickering recognition of its worth adds dignity to a life being lived in a complex industrial-commercial society that sets great store by worthless ephemera.

The confession of the overwhelming greatness of God is by no means distinctive to Islam. Every theism is grounded in such a recognition. But it is the manner in which such a conviction continues to leaven the whole of an authentic Muslim life which seems to set Islam apart today as a pre-eminently practical faith.

There is no necessary triumphalism about such a claim. For one can state the strength of Islamic conviction as a fact rather than as a boast. In any case, the Qur'an is concerned with both sides of the idolatrous coin: if the profane is to be repudiated as profane, the sacred is to be worshipped as sacred. If we should categorically refuse to worship forces unworthy of it, we must equally categorically embrace worship of forces worthy of it. "There is no God but God" is a twofold declaration, vigilantly denying the efficacy of purely profane realities while categorically enjoining a trust in the power of the unique Deity. To utter, therefore, with meaning and conscious intent, the creed of Islam is to discover the full nature and bounds of one's duty as a created being.

Modern living is a tall order: a personal quest for fulfillment limited by all the tortured choices of an age of uncertainty, an attempt to recognize and fulfill obligations to oneself, the family, the nation and the global society of mankind. For the Muslim believer these attempts are themselves secondary to a larger attempt to please his Creator, who is to be actively recognized as being greater (akbar) than this purely human network of expectations, duties and hopes. A tall order indeed! In such a context, the Muslim sees his Islam as a unified enterprise of private faith and public practice, which cultivates the fullest appreciation of whatever is good and wholesome while actively inviting the most permanent quarrel with the forces of what the Qur'an calls zulm (wrongdoing), whether personal or communal. For what is the worth of a piety that retires from the

real world of varied voices, whether innocent and caring, or, more frequently, irate and tired?

What, then, is it to be religious today? To be religious is to see oneself continuously as an exile in the midst of natural existence. This is not to say—it would be plainly untrue—that one is not of this world or in this world nor, most importantly, that one is under a religious obligation to entertain hopes of a false Utopia here or elsewhere. Nor is true religion a warrant for uprooting oneself from the soil of existence by refusing to give personal passions their due: faith has its own resources for easing the burden of private emotion, such as the natural desire for legitimate power and (licit) sexual gratification. It is certainly not for Islam to undermine the normal aspirations of human beings by demanding some deliberate and sustained detachment from the sensuous, the natural, the immediate and the temporal. No, the truly religious ideal involves an intense effort to pass through ordinary human experience and sanctify every episode, whether immediately or retrospectively, by celebrating the good while turning the realization of wrongdoing into an occasion for repentance. In doing that, one is merely practicing the conviction that “God is greater.”

*** V

Such a religious view of the universe would merely indulge our speculative ingenuity—unless it had practical consequences. And these are legion. Choice here settles on three motifs that are dominant in any contemporary discussion of the Islamic religion as a relevant charter for human society. All three are authentically Qur’anic, proclaiming as each does the greatness of God; all are increasingly significant as this century draws to a close: man as custodian of Nature and technology, man as a socio-sexual creature, and man as a tenant with a fixed lease on physical life in this world. We may, for convenience, call these the problems of technology, sexuality and mortality, respectively. The first two are explored briefly here, the third in section VI.

Some of the Qur’an’s comments on the religious significance of Nature and an auxiliary technology are profound in a way we today more readily appreciate than did Muhammad’s own contemporaries. Within the scripture

of Islam there is, in the Reverend Kenneth Cragg's apt phrase, "a theology of ecology."[503] Unless technology is itself placed under a constraining sovereignty—unless Allah-u-akbar is also the scientists' slogan—all our scientific achievements may well radically come to grief. A merciful creator has placed the natural world in our trust. Do we know the duties of stewardship? Can we discharge these properly if we recognize no responsibility to forces greater than the human? The Qur'an's implied verdict is unequivocal. A science and technology freed of all reference and responsibility to the transcendent will cause irreversible damage even while, paradoxically, aiming to confer immeasurable benefit. For a generation that lives under the increasingly darkening shadow of global nuclear holocaust, such a verdict is neither extreme nor rooted in some outdated dogma.

Man too is part of a universal order of mercy and provision. The inaugural revelation already, if we may move on to our second theme, makes a reference to the basic mystery of procreation. "Recite in the name of thy Lord who created man from a bloodclot ('alaq)" (Sura 96, Verses 1–2; interpreted). Throughout the Qur'an, there are many reverent allusions to human sexuality and its consequences as among the signs of God for a people given to sustained reflection (tadabbur). The male-female division and the benefits of mutual love and compassion flowing from it are divine portents.

Within the Muslim scripture, the sacred and the sexual are often discussed in association. It is as though sexuality is next to godliness in the Islamic lexicon! There is no doubt that the sexual act hides within it deeply religious significances, notwithstanding its essentially legal as opposed to sacramental status in Islam. At the very least, it is an invitation to reflection. For the Qur'anic confidence seems to be that a destiny brought close to the texture of its own origin and dependence (its biological root and the promise of the human fruit) could hardly fail to register the power and caring wisdom of its creator. Humility is certainly not out of place in an area of deep mutual vulnerability. Given the large and varied liabilities and significances of the sexual office—the delicacy of an intimacy that conceals temptations to exploitation, the inevitability of far-reaching consequences of our choices here—the Qur'anic stress is surely salutary.

This is particularly true today. For within the area of the sexual demand upon the human frame, the Qur’anic warning against reducing “the best form” (akhsani- taqwim, Sura 95, Verse 4; interpreted) to “the lowest of the low” (asfala-saflin, Sura 95, Verse 5; interpreted) acquires impressively contemporary meanings. When we survey the opposed modern view of sexuality as an arena for the celebration of our emancipation —a form of recreation—we can well understand why the fear of God is an appropriate concomitant of the will to sexuality. The prostitution of sex, serving and served by profane interests, notably commercial pornography, is an almost inevitable consequence of the rupture of the traditional liaison between the sexual and the sacred. Given the peculiarly powerful proclivity of the sexual demand to degenerate into what is, stripped of the garment (libas)[504] of piety and compassion, merely base and humiliating, the fear of God, in recognition of his greatness, is the best possible background to the activities of the sexual instinct.

It is in this context that one should broach the vexed subject of Islam’s legal charter for a truly erotic society. The traditional Muslim custom of segregating men and women in order to protect women against aggressive kinds of male desire has led to charges of sexual apartheid. But one must not judge too hastily here. The aim of Islam’s admittedly paternalistic provisions for women is to secure valid norms of modesty, male and female, so that sexual appetite can be indulged with wholesome enjoyment. Within recognized and appropriately liberal limits, men and women can develop a sexual potential, enjoying it without fear of private sin or public reproach. Beyond that there is a clear and legally enforced recognition of the dangers of injury to the dignity of involved parties. Given the power of sex as an instinctual energy, the need for control and harness is virtually axiomatic. Any kind of irresponsible adventurism here spells disaster. Certainly, the recent Western experiment, with all its auxiliary techniques for sexual gratification, has produced an increasingly sordid sensuality retrospectively embittered by its own paradoxical loss of natural eroticism.

It is, ironically, the Islamic wish for an authentically erotic, a properly sensual, culture that has led to its endorsement of severely scrupulous, almost puritanical, attitudes towards the abuse of the sexual instinct. Traditional Islam’s notorious “extreme” (hudud) ordinances for

sexual offenses cannot be properly understood without a compelling sense of the scripture’s own high estimate of the sexual office.

The veil is no doubt an apt symbol for the sexual culture the Qur’an sanctions and encourages men and women to cultivate. For it well captures the idea of a reverent invitation that, variously, in the hands of female adventurism or male-sponsored desires, may deteriorate into what is irreverently suggestive, even base. The invitation is also a liability, just as in the case of Nature whose religious significance may well be lost in the more superficial invitation to seek control and technological dominion. The veil could enslave, cramp or distort even valid sexual ambition; or it could successfully serve as an index to the truly erotic culture.

*** VI

In that largely unaccountable desire for immortality which is a unique feature of our species, religious believers may claim a distinctively rational ground. Theism offers, through its faith in the immortality of the soul, important hopes and distinctive ambitions. Though many conceptual difficulties beset this religious belief in survival beyond the grave, it is not clear that it is incoherent. At any rate, acceptance of this conviction has given an overriding purpose to countless human beings throughout history. Certainly, by standing robust witness to an afterlife, Islam has produced an impressive record of zestful bravery and purposeful courage in the context of holy struggle against militant forms of evil.

The Qur’an is alert, on multiple levels, to the fact of transience. All things, including human generations, pass away. Only “thy Lord, full of majesty” is exempt from the indifferent ravages of time. As for the rest of us, God has decreed time as an index to the fragility of all, especially the sinful, society.

In these meditative contexts, where the Qur’anic mood is in dangerous proximity to the forbidden impulse of tragedy, there is a peculiarly moving beauty in the language which translation drastically reduces. It is a language, at any rate, that indelibly impressed those in the contemplative traditions of

Islamic theism. For the Arabs, the Qur’an is the first document to impose a specifically religious significance on the facts of human impermanence and mortality. No adequate philosophy of man and his place in the titanic immensity called the universe could conceivably omit references to this centrally relevant truth of our condition. The pre-Islamic Arabs were naturally impressed by the transience of all things mortal; most entertained tragic notions. In the event Islam was destined to frustrate the will to tragedy while radically satisfying the residual desire for a conclusive triumph over the limitations of physical extinction.

That there was in Muhammad’s Arabia a national longing for some successful transcendence of the natural and human order is amply evidenced in pagan poetry. The Qur’an offers in conscious opposition to such pagan poetry, a new approach to physical extinction. For Islam, like every responsible metaphysic of man, accepts and psychically reckons with the fact of death. It completely changed its significance for the Arabs. The Qur’an distances itself from the martial ethos of pre-Islamic Arabia with its strong traditions of muru’a (virility) displayed in courage and recklessness. But, in a manner typical of its religious genius, it effectively transformed the protest against death by recruiting the old recklessness for a new cause, thereby dignifying the recklessness while ensuring the cause.

If Islamic history overflows with episodes of courageous sacrifice of life for the cause of faith, it is at least partly because a due recognition of the greatness of God, according to the Qur’an, necessitates such dramatic gestures. Though there are many, including unspectacular, ways of pleasing God, martyrdom is, according to all learned authorities, unquestionably the best. Tradition has confidently maintained that martyrs for the cause of Islam are the only exceptions to the rule of strict reckoning on the awful day ofjudgment. (Muhammad, incidentally, will be judged like anyone else since he died a natural death.)

The Qur’an takes martyrdom seriously. It denies that martyrs are dead; rather, believers are instructed to say, martyrs are living in the presence of God, satisfied and rejoicing in their new state. This is no reductionist sentimentalism that merely allows the dead to live in the memories of the living—with good and evil leaving some permanent heritage while its agents

have long left the scene. The Qur’an has a strikingly robust doctrine about an afterlife, with contrasted fates awaiting the good and the bad. Those who endorse the greatness of God may validly entertain high hopes of entering Paradise. As for the rest, for whom their own whims were greater (akbar) than God, the sacred volume has a clear message. Their destination is Hell, which is, [Jean-Paul] Sartre [1905–1980] notwithstanding, by no means just other people.

*** VII

“Every path,” declared the late Ayatollah [Ruhollah] Khomeini [Iranian leader, 1902–1989], “can lead to Hell.” Some paths much quicker than others, one might immediately add. (The comment is as true, if not more so, than the maxim that inspires it.) Khomeini himself goes on to list science, mysticism, theology, ethics and, surprisingly, even monotheism as all capable of leading to perdition. It is an apt observation for our purposes here, intimating as it does the dangers of abusing powerful and profound faiths. The potential threat of “political religion,” for want of a better phrase, is all too obvious, especially when it strikes alliance with human arrogance and lust for domination.

There can be no easy complacency these days, arguing as we do for the necessity of religion to generations that barely care. There are many today who have no wish to be “saved,” to be “successful” in the eyes of God. Islam offers spiritual success to those who prefer failure. It is no small paradox; but there we have it. It is a religious puzzle we must accept on faith and move on. But it is always right and unequivocally just to seek, no matter how painful, a full and permanent controversy with those who reject Islam without adequate basis, who disbelieve in its inspiration while cynically exploiting it for purely political or personal ends.

Such an engagement with the rejectors, however, does not allow us to impose upon them any militancy of our own persuasion. That way lies Hell and alienation. For the interests of Islam are not properly served by encouraging the hypocritical element, already extremely large among the educated and secularized classes in the House of Islam. In such a

rendezvous, painful as it is to the committed Muslim, God has the last word. For them their works, and to us ours.

*** VIII

“What should it profit a house in the night that a lamp is set forth on its roof —when all is dark within?” Sheikh Abu Hamid al-Ghazzali’s [1058–1111] rhetorical question, attributed to Jesus of Nazareth,[505] brings us to the last turn on the road to Mecca. I have already remarked in the Preface that Muslims have clearly failed to interpret and appropriate Islam properly for the needs of the modern age. There are many reasons for this failure; the chief ones are the shallowness of intellectual responses to the challenges of modernity and an increasing shallowness in the life of faith.

Al-Ghazzali’s question well catches the problem. A little religion is a very dangerous thing. Within the House of Islam, there is today a great need for self-criticism and introspection, both severely jeopardized by the emphasis on a purely external, somewhat legalistic, religious observance. Muslims are religiously obliged to turn inward, to take the full measure of their own failings, and try to effect social and personal criticism in the larger attempt to seek the mercy of God. Islam may well be the best religion with the worst followers.

The pen may be mightier than the sword; but prayer is certainly so. Muslims need to develop, deepen the life of faith. A deeper spirituality, with prayer at its core, will constitute an important part of the characteristically religious reckoning with secularity. Religions are not saved by mental efforts alone. We must live as faithful people; we must strengthen our style of dealing with modernity by living within the parameters of faith, by actively striving for a genuine religiosity that seeks and finds resources for honest, including intellectually honest, living in a difficult age. There are many theological puzzles on our hands; the silence of God is increasingly oppressive, heavier each day on the heart of every reflective believer. And yet here too prayer has its place: “Our Lord, burden us not with what we have not the strength to bear.” (Sura 2, Verse 286)

Faith needs to move mountains: the mountains of doubt, hesitation, unclarity, weakness of will. The opening chapter of the Qur’an well captures the flavor of this religious imperative, one that underlines one entirely indispensable mood of the authentically religious temper. “Thee alone we worship, Thee alone we ask for help,” says the sura [Sura 1, Verse 4]. Could there be a better way of imposing an embargo on every false ideal, an operative veto on any attempt to seek support from purely human sources? This indeed is the voice of the truly iconoclastic conscience. But to attain here the right kind of trust in God—an effortless trust—requires effort, sustained labor. “Guide us in the straight path,” the sura continues [Sura 1, Verse 5]. The mood for submission (islam) is well captured in the imperative “Ihdena” (Guide us!)—gracefully requesting the grace of God, yet enjoining human effort in the making of the plea.

There may be certainties and consolations when we get to the heavenly city—but there are few left on the road to it. It will be a difficult journey; and we have miles to go before we sleep. But I hope Muslims can improve on these admittedly rudimentary beginnings.

It is a revealing feature of the Muslim mind that, though the Muslim calendar has put an end to it [in 1979], the 14th century [A.H.] still lingers on. There is a curious kind of finality about this century in the voice of the simple believer as well as in that of the sophisticated religionist. There is a very keen sense of an impending crisis in this world, heightened by prophetic warnings of imminence ofjudgment.

The Muslim 14th century has, however, ended; and the 15th has already reached a tenth of its span. Islam is now fully in a modern world of competing ideologies and penetrating skepticisms, mostly of Anglo-American provenance, that look with justified suspicion on any exclusivist dogmatic claim. Trust in God is no longer enough; we must tie the camel first. Muslim destinies today need to be shaped partly by conscious choice and struggle. We must earn the right to a future.

* Glossary

** A

ahl al-kitab,—People of the Book (Christians, Jews, Muslims)

akbar,—greater

Allah-u-akbar,—God is great

Ansar,—literally “helpers,” meaning the Muslims of Medina accompanying the Prophet

‘aqida (plural: ‘aqa’id),—creed

asatir,—myths

asma’ Allah al-husna,—the beautiful names of God

** B

bashar,—human

batin,—inner meaning

** D

dar al-harb,—land of war, non-Islamic lands

dar al-Islam,—land of Islam, Islamic lands

daraja,—degree, rank

dhikr,—remembrance of God

dhimmi,—protected religious minorities

** F

faddala,—to prefer

falasifa,—philosophers

falsafa,—philosophy

faqih (plural: fuqaha’),—religious scholar

fardu (plural: fara’id),—Islamic duty

fiqh,—Islamic jurisprudence

fitna,—civil war

fitra,—natural disposition to the good

** H

hadd,—limitation

hadith,—tradition of the Prophet

hajj,—pilgrimage

halal,—divinely sanctioned

hanif,—inclined to truth

haqiqa,—truth

haram,—prohibited, protected

hazrat,—excellency

hijab,—veil

hijra,—migration of the Muslims from Mecca to Medina in year 622

hudan,—guidance

hudud,—Islamic penalties

hukm (plural: ahkam),—judgment, rule, government

** I

ihsan,—beneficence

ijma’,—consensus

ijtihad,—Islamic interpretation

‘ilm,—science, knowledge

imam,—leader

‘iman,—faith

insan,—human being

insaniyat,—humanity

islam,—submission to God

ithar,—self-sacrificing generosity

itlaq,—infinity

** J

jadid,—new, modern

jahiliya,—the pre-Islamic era

jihad,—religious struggle

jizya,—tax on dhimmi

** K

kafir (plural: kafirun),—unbeliever

khilafa,—trusteeship, caliphate

kitab,—book

kufr,—disbelief

** M

mal,—property

ma’ruf,—common decency

maslaha,—public interest

mawla,—blood brother

mu’amalat,—Islamic civil law, code of behavior

mu’awada,—reciprocity

mujtahid,—religious scholar

mu’min (plural: mu’minin),—believer

mushrik,—polytheist

muslimin,—Muslims; literally, those who submit

mutashabih,—uncertain

** N

nafs,—soul

** Q

qadi (or qazi),— Islamic judge

qawwam,—in charge of

qiwama,—responsibility

qiyas,—analogical reasoning

** R

risala,—divine inspiration

** S

shahada,—witnessing, acceptance of Islam

sha’n al-nuzul (plural: shu’un),— occasion of revelation

shar’,—divine revelation, Islamic law

shari’a,—Islamic law

shirk,—polytheism

shura,—consultation

sunna,—practice of the Prophet

sura,—chapter of the Qur’an

** T

tadabbur,—reverent reflection

tafasir,—exegetical works

tafsir,—interpretation, analysis

tanattu’,—trangressing, meticulous religiosity

taqlid (plural: taqalid)

taqwa,—fear of God, piety

tasamuh,—tolerance

ta’wil,—intepretation

ta’zir,—civil penalties

towhid,—unity

** U

‘ulama’,—religious scholars

umm,—mother

umma,—community

ustadh,—teacher

usul,—principles

** Z

zahir,—external meaning

zakat,—Islamic tax

* Index of Qur’anic Citations

Sura 1, Verse 4: 327

Sura 1, Verse 5: 327

Sura 2, Verses 1–2: 278

Sura 2, Verses 2–3: 130

Sura 2, Verse 21: 232

Sura 2, Verse 24: 241

Sura 2, Verse 30: 163

Sura 2, Verse 38: 278

Sura 2, Verse 47: 136

Sura 2, Verse 62: 273

Sura 2, Verse 109: 166, 167

Sura 2, Verse 122: 136

Sura 2, Verse 143: 196

Sura 2, Verse 156: 189

Sura 2, Verse 173: 91

Sura 2, Verse 177: 230

Sura 2, Verse 178: 53, 204

Sura 2, Verse 179: 91

Sura 2, Verse 185: 200

Sura 2, Verse 187: 324

Sura 2, Verse 193: 276

Sura 2, Verse 194: 141, 167

Sura 2, Verse 201: 292

Sura 2, Verse 217: 167

Sura 2, Verse 219: 283

Sura 2, Verses 221–227: 135

Sura 2, Verses 226–232: 232

Sura 2, Verse 228: 87, 135, 265

Sura 2, Verse 233: 91

Sura 2, Verse 251: 35

Sura 2, Verse 253: 136

Sura 2, Verse 256: 76, 163, 177

Sura 2, Verse 257: 76

Sura 2, Verse 272: 157

Sura 2, Verse 275: 51

Sura 2, Verse 282: 52

Sura 2, Verse 285: 136

Sura 2, Verse 286: 327

Sura 3, Verse 7: 249, 311

Sura 3, Verse 19: 277

Sura 3, Verses 64–66: 160

Sura 3, Verse 79: 24

Sura 3, Verse 84: 87, 166

Sura 3, Verse 85: 166, 279

Sura 3, Verse 86: 166

Sura 3, Verse 87: 167

Sura 3, Verses 87–91: 166

Sura 3, Verses 89–91: 167

Sura 3, Verses 99–100: 166

Sura 3, Verses 99–104: 166

Sura 3, Verse 102: 273, 278

Sura 3, Verse 106: 167

Sura 3, Verse 140: 167

Sura 3, Verse 141: 83

Sura 3, Verse 149: 167

Sura 3, Verses 150–151: 167

Sura 3, Verse 154: 83

Sura 3, Verse 159: 37, 79, 201, 283

Sura 3, Verse 179: 156–157

Sura 3, Verse 195: 157

Sura 4, Verse 1: 133, 278

Sura 4, Verse 2: 232

Sura 4, Verse 3: 110

Sura 4, Verse 7: 136

Sura 4, Verse 11: 108, 232

Sura 4, Verse 12: 108

Sura 4, Verse 31: 200

Sura 4, Verse 32: 108, 134

Sura 4, Verse 34: 136–138, 231, 234–235

Sura 4, Verse 36: 229

Sura 4, Verse 58: 44

Sura 4, Verse 59: 83

Sura 4, Verse 62: 77

Sura 4, Verse 64: 30

Sura 4, Verse 66: 105

Sura 4, Verse 80: 32

Sura 4, Verse 82: 311

Sura 4, Verse 83: 38, 42

Sura 4, Verse 92: 110, 230

Sura 4, Verse 95: 134

Sura 4, Verse 113: 31

Sura 4, Verse 129: 110

Sura 4, Verse 136: 274

Sura 4, Verse 141: 231

Sura 4, Verse 147: 276

Sura 4, Verse 171: 197

Sura 4, Verse 176: 232

Sura 5, Verse 3: 277, 279

Sura 5, Verse 5: 232

Sura 5, Verse 6: 91

Sura 5, Verse 8: 90

Sura 5, Verse 32: 311

Sura 5, Verse 34: 53

Sura 5, Verse 38: 108

Sura 5, Verse 42: 174

Sura 5, Verse 44: 90

Sura 5, Verse 45: 53

Sura 5, Verse 48: 50

Sura 5, Verse 49: 78, 90

Sura 5, Verse 51: 164

Sura 5, Verse 57: 167

Sura 5, Verses 58–60: 167

Sura 5, Verse 69: 273

Sura 5, Verse 77: 197

Sura 5, Verse 82: 75

Sura 5, Verse 83: 55

Sura 5, Verses 86–88: 197

Sura 5, Verse 92: 33, 34

Sura 5, Verse 99: 33

Sura 5, Verses 101–102: 39

Sura 5, Verse 111: 280

Sura 6, Verse 10: 30

Sura 6, Verses 66–67: 32

Sura 6, Verse 82: 273

Sura 6, Verse 86: 136

Sura 6, Verses 106–107: 32

Sura 6, Verses 114–115: 205

Sura 6, Verse 126: 288

Sura 6, Verse 132: 134

Sura 6, Verse 151: 274

Sura 6, Verse 154: 176

Sura 6, Verse 163: 273, 279

Sura 6, Verse 165: 135

Sura 7, Verses 31–32: 197

Sura 7, Verse 40: 136, 181

Sura 7, Verse 157: 46

Sura 7, Verses 172–174: 278

Sura 7, Verse 184: 33

Sura 7, Verse 188: 33

Sura 8, Verses 7–8: 30

Sura 8, Verses 21–22: 274–275

Sura 8, Verses 36–39: 276

Sura 9, Verse 6: 80, 203

Sura 9, Verse 10: 232

Sura 9, Verse 20: 134

Sura 9, Verse 29: 141

Sura 9, Verse 34: 64

Sura 9, Verse 60: 230

Sura 9, Verse 70: 76

Sura 9, Verse 71: 108

Sura 9, Verse 103: 283

Sura 9, Verse 118: 277

Sura 9, Verse 128: 201

Sura 10, Verse 2: 33

Sura 10, Verse 19: 16

Sura 10, Verse 99: 32, 163

Sura 10, Verses 99–100: 76

Sura 10, Verse 108: 32

Sura 11, Verse 1: 78

Sura 11, Verse 11: 311

Sura 11, Verse 12: 33

Sura 11, Verse 26: 76

Sura 11, Verse 114: 200

Sura 11, Verse 118: 16

Sura 11, Verse 118–119: 35, 241

Sura 12, Verse 76: 135

Sura 12, Verse 108: 80

Sura 13, Verse 7: 33

Sura 13, Verse 40: 33

Sura 14, Verse 7: 62

Sura 14, Verses 24–25: 251

Sura 14, Verse 47: 35

Sura 15, Verse 28: 162

Sura 15, Verse 29: 162–163

Sura 16, Verse 35: 33

Sura 16, Verse 44: 276, 277

Sura 16, Verse 64: 33

Sura 16, Verse 82: 33

Sura 16, Verse 90: 274

Sura 16, Verse 125: 201, 274

Sura 17, Verse 2: 176

Sura 17, Verse 11: 188

Sura 17, Verse 20: 76

Sura 17, Verse 21: 134

Sura 17, Verse 23: 276

Sura 17, Verses 23–24: 109

Sura 17, Verse 36: 80

Sura 17, Verse 54: 32

Sura 17, Verse 55: 136

Sura 17, Verse 70: 136, 163

Sura 17, Verse 105: 33

Sura 18, Verse 109: 278

Sura 18, Verse 110: 33, 188

Sura 19, Verse 97: 33

Sura 20, Verses 1–3: 33

Sura 20, Verse 44: 76

Sura 20, Verse 47: 76

Sura 20, Verse 75: 134

Sura 20, Verse 111: 273

Sura 20, Verse 114: 307

Sura 21, Verse 7: 83

Sura 21, Verse 35: 140

Sura 21, Verse 85: 153

Sura 21, Verse 107: 47, 91

Sura 22, Verse 49: 33

Sura 22, Verse 52: 311

Sura 22, Verse 75: 133

Sura 23, Verse 115: 163

Sura 24, Verse 2: 109

Sura 24, Verse 31: 132

Sura 24, Verse 33: 230

Sura 24, Verse 54: 33

Sura 24, Verse 55: 35

Sura 25, Verse 43: 32

Sura 25, Verse 56: 33

Sura 27, Verses 22–24: 121

Sura 27, Verse 23: 111

Sura 27, Verse 65: 278

Sura 27, Verses 91–92: 33

Sura 28, Verse 77: 292

Sura 28, Verse 88: 288

Sura 29, Verse 18: 34

Sura 29, Verse 25: 48

Sura 29, Verse 46: 164

Sura 29, Verse 64: 280

Sura 29, Verse 69: 256

Sura 30, Verse 7: 307

Sura 30, Verse 21: 109

Sura 30, Verse 23: 277

Sura 30, Verse 27: 291

Sura 30, Verse 32: 288

Sura 30, Verse 41: 83–84

Sura 31, Verse 8: 108

Sura 32, Verse 9: 162

Sura 33, Verse 6: 32

Sura 33, Verse 21: 81

Sura 33, Verse 35: 108

Sura 33, Verse 36: 32

Sura 33, Verse 40: 33

Sura 33, Verse 45: 73

Sura 33, Verses 45–46: 34

Sura 33, Verses 45–48: 76

Sura 34, Verse 28: 34

Sura 34, Verse 46: 34

Sura 35, Verse 10: 276

Sura 35, Verses 23–24: 34

Sura 36, Verse 17: 34

Sura 36, Verse 20: 201

Sura 36, Verses 34–35: 108

Sura 36, Verse 60: 76

Sura 37, Verses 171–173: 30

Sura 38, Verse 48: 153

Sura 38, Verse 65: 34

Sura 38, Verse 70: 33

Sura 38, Verse 72: 162–163

Sura 39, Verses 17–18: 79

Sura 39, Verse 18: 288

Sura 39, Verse 41: 32

Sura 39, Verse 46: 164

Sura 40, Verse 28: 83

Sura 40, Verse 29: 83

Sura 40, Verses 51–52: 30

Sura 41, Verse 5: 80

Sura 41, Verse 6: 33

Sura 42, Verses 9–10: 78

Sura 42, Verse 13: 50

Sura 42, Verse 21: 50

Sura 42, Verse 36: 87

Sura 42, Verses 36–38: 79

Sura 42, Verse 38: 79, 87, 283

Sura 42, Verses 41–43: 79

Sura 42, Verse 48: 32

Sura 43, Verse 3: 278

Sura 43, Verse 22: 288

Sura 43, Verse 32: 135

Sura 45, Verse 15: 163

Sura 45, Verse 18: 50

Sura 46, Verse 9: 34

Sura 46, Verse 19: 134

Sura 47, Verse 4: 230

Sura 47, Verse 7: 275

Sura 47, Verse 25: 167

Sura 47, Verses 26–27: 167

Sura 47, Verse 31: 273

Sura 47, Verse 32: 167

Sura 47, Verse 34: 167

Sura 47, Verse 38: 167

Sura 48, Verse 8: 34

Sura 48, Verse 28: 35

Sura 49, Verse 10: 156

Sura 49, Verse 12: 202

Sura 49, Verse 12: 75

Sura 49, Verse 13: 88, 134, 157, 164

Sura 49, Verse 14: 272, 278

Sura 50, Verse 16: 164

Sura 50, Verse 45: 32

Sura 51, Verse 56: 274

Sura 52, Verse 48: 31

Sura 53, Verse 32: 202

Sura 53, Verse 36: 176

Sura 54, Verse 17: 278

Sura 54, Verse 54: 278

Sura 57, Verse 25: 95, 275

Sura 57, Verse 27: 197

Sura 58, Verse 3: 230

Sura 58, Verse 11: 135

Sura 60, Verses 8–9: 177

Sura 61, Verses 2–3: 280

Sura 61, Verses 7–9: 35

Sura 64, Verse 16: 273

Sura 66, Verse 1: 141

Sura 67, Verse 26: 34

Sura 68, Verse 4: 282

Sura 72, Verses 20–23: 34

Sura 76, Verse 3: 76

Sura 87, Verse 19: 176

Sura 88, Verses 17–20: 241

Sura 88, Verses 21–24: 33

Sura 88, Verses 21–22: 164, 282, 283

Sura 88, Verses 23–24: 275

Sura 88, Verses 25–26: 275

Sura 89, Verses 11–13: 230

Sura 90, Verses 10–18: 158

Sura 90, Verses 11–12: 181

Sura 95, Verse 4: 324

Sura 95, Verse 5: 324

Sura 96, Verses 1–2: 324

Sura 99, Verse 8: 277

Sura 107, Verses 1–7: 158

Sura 107, Verses 1–4: 65

Sura 109, Verse 6: 170

* Index of Personal Names

** A

Aaron, 76

‘Abd al-Raziq, ‘Ali, v, 11, 15, 19, 29–36, 37, 236

‘Abdallah ibn Ubai, 81

‘Abdallah ibn ‘Umar, 122, 123, 198, 200

‘Abduh, Muhammad, 8, 9, 10, 11, 35, 39, 42–45, 105, 209, 304, 314

Abraham, 87, 161, 163, 166, 201, 279–280

Abrahamian, Ervand, 46

Abu al-Khayr, ‘Abd al-Rahman, 203

Abu Bakr, 111, 148, 157, 165, 199, 279

Abu Bakra, 114–119

Abu Da’ud al-Sijistani, 93, 197

Abu Hanifa, 118, 266, 267, 268

Abu Hurayra, 120–126, 198, 257

Abu Lahab, 248

Abu ‘Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam, 172

Abu Yusuf Ya’qub Al-Kindi, 157, 297

Abu Zahra, Muhammad, 125

Adam, 31, 76, 104, 108, 163, 189, 193, 197, 211, 278, 296

Afary, Janet, 10

Afghani (Asadabadi), Jamal al-Din al-, 8, 9, 124, 209

Afkhami, Mahnaz, 101

Aghnides, Nicolas P., 265

Ahmad, Abdullah, 9, 10

Ahmad, Aziz, 7, 24

Ahmad Bey, 10

Ahmad Khan, Sayyid, 8, 9, 153, 314

Ahmad, Khurshid, 7

Ahmad, Leila, 112

Ahmad, Mumtaz, 67, 255

Ahmad, Syed, 153

Ahmad, Zainal Abidin, 157

Ahmad, Zaki, 20–21

Ahmed, Ishtiaq, 4, 67

Ahmed, Qazi Nissar, 12

‘A’isha bint Abi Bakr, 31, 111, 115–118, 120–124, 201

Ait Sabbah, Fatna, 128

Ajami, Fouad, 12

Ajijola, Alhaji Adeleke Dirisu, vi, 24, 239–243

Akhavi, Shahrough, 46, 47, 187

Akhtar, Shabbir, vii, 26, 319–327

‘Alawi, Muhammad bin al-‘Arbi, 20

Alber, Siegbert, 88

Alexander, 153

‘Ali ibn Abi Talib, 52, 53, 79, 80, 110, 111, 115–118, 148, 157, 199, 219, 301

Ali, Ahmed, 18, 30, 37, 47, 73

‘Ali, Muhammad Kurd, 10

Ali, Ameer, 160, 231

‘Ali al-‘Uzzi, ‘Abd al-Mun’im Salih, 121, 124, 125

Alidust, A., 11

Alkim, Hassan al-, 20

Allworth, Edward, 10

Ameer Ali, 160, 231

Amidi, ‘Ali ibn Abi ‘Ali, 267

Amin, Husain Ahmad, 24

Amin, Qasim, 103

Amir Kabir, 10

‘Amiri, Abu al-Hasan al-, 208

Anas ibn Malik, 31, 118–119, 123, 170, 173, 197

Anawati, Georges C., 15, 29, 49, 215

An-Na’im, ‘Abdullahi Ahmed, vi-vii, 12, 25, 222–238

Ansari, Hamied N., 116

Ansari, S.S., 169, 170

Ansari, Zafar Ishaq, 7

Appleby, R. Scott, 25, 244

Aqdisi, Shaykh Jibril ibn ‘Umar al-, 6

‘Aqqad, ‘Abbas Mahmud al-, 137

Aquino, Benigno (Ninoy), 86

Aquino, Corazon, 86, 88

Arberry, A.J., 311

Aristotle, 267

Arkoun, Mohamed, vi, 11, 12, 13, 16, 24–25, 205–221

Asad, Muhammad, 16, 21, 204

Ash’ari, Abu’l-Hasan, 306

Ash’ari, Abu Musa al-, 117, 118

‘Ashmawi, Muhammad Sa’id al-, v, 15, 19, 29, 49–56

‘Asqalani, see Ibn Hajar al’Asqalani

Ataturk, Mustafa Kemal, 309

Auge, Marc, 208

‘Awwa, Muhammad Salim al-, 14–15, 20

Ayoub, Mahmoud, 16

Ayubi, Nazih N., 4, 24, 49

Azad, Maulana Abu al-Kalam, 9, 10, 153, 160

Azmeh, Aziz Al-, 12, 19

** B

Bacon, Francis, 3, 241, 245

Badran, Ali, v

Badran, Margot, v-vi

Bahr al-‘Ulum, Muhammad, 16

Bakhtin, M.M., 130

Balic *, Smail, 179

Baljon, J.M.S., 7

Banu, U.A.B. Razia Akter, 25

Baqilani, Qazi Abu Bakr, 260

Barton, Greg, 284

Bassiouni, M. Cherif, 226

Bayat, Mangol, 10

Bayhaqi, Abu’l-Fadl Muhammad Katib ibn al-, 200

Bayhum, Muhammad Jamil, 105

Bazargan, ‘Abdul ‘Ali, 20

Bazargan, Mehdi, v, 12, 13, 14, 20, 46, 73–84

Bazzaz, Abu Bakr Muhammad al-, 198

Beaufre, Andre, 285

Bechert, Heinz, 215

Behbehani, Sayyid ‘Abdullah, 10

Behbudiy, Mahmud Khoja, 9

Bello, Ahmadu, 21

Bergson, Henri, 314

Berki, A. Himmet, 169

Berque, Jacques, 302

Beus, Spomenka, vi

Bhutto, Benazir, vi, 21, 107–111

Bhutto, Zulfikar Ali, 107

Bigi, Musa Yarullah, 10

Bihbihani, Aqa Muhammad Baqir, 7–8

Bilqis, 121, 131

Binder, Leonard, 4, 13, 14, 23, 67

Binsa’id, Sa’id, 17

Biruni, Abu Rayhan, 297

Bishri, Tariq al-, 23

Blumenberg, Hans, 218

Boisard, Marcel, 80

Bonjol, Imam, 60

Boroujerdi, Mehrzad, 244

Boulby, Marion, 89

Bowden, John, 179

Bradley, F.H., 305

Braudel, Fernand, 217

Brelwi, Ahmad, 6

Brumberg, Daniel, 17

Brunschwig, R., 229

Bucaille, Maurice, 14

Buddha, 151, 152, 153

Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Isma’il al-, 30, 113, 114, 118, 120, 123, 125, 170, 198, 200, 201, 203, 204, 209

Bula$, Ali, vi, 14, 16, 22, 169–178

Bulliet, Richard W., 16

Burns, Peter, v, 24

Buxton, Charles Roden, 10

** C

Caetani, Leone, 173

Calvin, John, 74

Camus, Albert, 189, 191

Capotorti, Francisco, 226

Castoriadis, Cornelius, 211

Causevic*, Mehmed Dzemaludin*, 10

Charfi, Mohammad, 18

Che Man, W.K., 85

Chehabi, H.E., 46, 73, 187

Chehwang-te, 153

Chen, Lung-chu, 226

Chesterton, G.K., 319

Cik di Tiro, Teungku, 60

Clark, Peter, 139

Clarke, Peter B., 15, 239

Cole, Juan, 8

Commins, David Dean, 8

Comte, Auguste, 260

Constantine, 255

Cook, Stanley A., 132

Cooke, Miriam, vi

Corbin, Henry, 297

Coulson, Noel, 231, 232

Cowan, Milton J., 135

Cragg, Kenneth, 295, 322, 324

Cuthell, David D., 11

Cyrus, 153

** D

Dabashi, Hamid, 46, 187

Dahlan, Haji Ahmad, 9, 34

Dali, Salvador, 320, 321

Danesh, Ahmad Makhdum, 9

Daniel, Norman, 3

Davis, Eric, 29

Davis, Gloria, 284

Daud, Wan Mohd. Nor Wan, 132

Daudet, Leon, 179

Debray, Regis, 218

Delacroix, Eugene, 3

Delhomme, Jeanne, 300

Denner, Arthur, 3

Denny, Frederick Mathewson, 304

Descartes, Rene, 189

Dia, Mamadiou, vii, 11, 13, 295–303

Dihlawi, Shah Wali Allah, 160

Diponegoro, 60

Doi, Abdur Rahman I., 14

d’Ollone, H.M.G., 9

Donnelly, Jack, 223

Donohue, John J., 4, 29

Dorraj, Manuchehr, 73

Dudley, James, 233

Dukkali, Abu Shu’ayb al-, 10

Duran, Khalid, 179, 270

Dwyer, Kevin, 4, 18

** E

Eickelman, Dale F., v-vi, 17

El-Affendi, Abdelwahab, 24

Elginty, Khalid, 89

El-Kharboutly, Maitre A., 233

Ellen, Roy F., 5

Emerson, Caryl, 130

Engineer, Asghar Ali, 22

Ercan, Betigul, vi

Esposito, John L., 3, 18, 20, 26, 29, 46, 59, 67, 73, 85, 89, 112, 127, 155, 187, 205, 255, 270, 304

Eve, 108

** F

Fakhreddin, Rizaeddin, 9

Faris, Dr. Muhammad Abu, 93

Farook, Maulvi, 12

Faruqi, Isma’il al-, 228

Fasi, Muhammad ‘Allal al-, 11

Fatima, 110, 111, 118

Fatwa, Haji Andi Mappetahang, 24

Fayez, Ghulam M., vi

Fayz Kashani (Mulla Muhsin), 248

Federspiel, Howard M., 59, 284

Feisthauer, Joseph, 215

Fischer, August, 260

Fitrat, Abdal Rauf, 10

Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn, 49

Fuda, Farag, 12

Fyzee, Asaf Ali Asghar, 4

** G

Gabriel (Jibril), 34, 271–272

Galanter, Marc, 227

Galilei, Galileo, 74

Gallagher, Nancy, 13

Gandhi, Mohandas K., 151

Gardet, Louis, 215

Gasprinskii (Gaspirali), Ismail Bey, 9, 10

Gauchet, Marcel, 218

Gautier, Guy, 218

Gavan, 169

Geertz, Clifford, 5

Gellner, Ernest, 6

Genceli, Ali, 170

Genghis Khan, 188

Ghalayini, Mustafa al-, 105

GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz, 127

Ghannouchi, Rashid, v, 13, 20, 89–95

Ghazzali, Abu Hamid Muhammad al-, 70, 207, 212, 219, 248, 250, 258, 307, 314, 315, 326

Gibb, Hamilton A.R., 11, 232, 306, 314, 315

Gide, Andre, 189

Gokalp, Zia, 260–262, 264–265

Goldziher, Ignacz, 265

Govorse, Joseph, 282

Graham, William A., 5

Greenidge, C.W.W., 231

Guenon, Rene, 179

Gueron, Georges, 302

** H

Ha Decheng, 10

Habbab bin Mundhir bin al-Jammuh, al-, 40

Habiba, 103

Haddad, Wadi Zaidan, 145

Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck, 4, 17, 21, 37, 127, 145

Hadi, Sayid Syekh al-, 10

Hafiz, 191

Hajjaj, Muslim ibn al-, 30, 93, 197, 203, 209

Hakim, al-, 165

Hakim al-Naysaburi, M., 197

Hakim, Khalifah Abdul, 160

Hallaj, Abu’l-Mughith, 189

Hamdi, Mohamed Elhachmi, 5

Hamed, F., 16

Hamidullah, Muhammad, 171, 173, 231

Hammoud, Salah-Dine, vi

Hanafi, Hassan, 12, 26

Hanbal, Ahmad ibn, 114, 197, 200, 266

Harun ar-Rashid, 241

Hasan ibn ‘Ali, 80, 118, 148

Hasanuddin, Sultan, 60

Hassan, M. Kamal, vii, 155

Hassan, Rif, 228, 230

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich, 244

Heidegger, Martin, 190, 244

Henkin, Louis, 226

Heraclius, 114

Herbert, David, 319

Hibri, Azizah al-, 136, 137

Hidayatallah, Sultan, 60

Hippler, Jochen, 3

Hitler, Adolf, 66, 71

Hodgson, Marshall G.S., 114

Holmes, Oliver Wendell, 287

Holquist, Michael, 130

Hooker, M.B., 5

Horten, Max, 262

Hourani, Albert, 8, 9, 29

Howard, Rhoda, 223

Huntington, Samuel P., 3

Hurgronje, C. Snouck, 263

Husayn ibn ‘Ali, 148, 219

Hussain, Yasmin, 15

Hussein, Aziza, 233

Huwaydi, Fahmi, 17

Huzayfa ibn al-Yaman, 81, 170

** I

Ibn ‘Abbas, ‘Abdallah, 197, 198, 199

Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, 118–119

Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhab, Muhammad, 6, 258

Ibn ‘Abidin, Muhammad Amin, 55

Ibn ‘Aqil, 93, 214

Ibn ‘Ata’, 120

Ibn al-Athir, ‘Izz al-Din, 115, 119

Ibn Babawayh, Abu Ja’far Muhammad, 209

Ibn Badis, ‘Abd al-Hamid, 11, 19

Ibn Bata, 217

Ibn al-Dayba’, ‘Abd al-Rahman, 30

Ibn al-Fara’, Abu Ya’la, 197

Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, 114–118, 120–121, 123–126

Ibn Hayyan, Jabir, 241

Ibn Hazm, Abu Muhammad ‘Ali, 258

Ibn Hisham, ‘Abd al-Malik, 172

Ibn ‘Ibad, ‘Abdallah, 209

Ibn Jurayj, Abdul Malik, 266, 268

Ibn Kathir, ‘Imad al-Din, 197, 198, 230

Ibn Khaldun, 92, 192, 213, 250, 260

Ibn Maja, Abu ‘Abdallah, 197

Ibn Marzuq, Shams al-Din, 120

Ibn Mujahid, Ahmad ibn Musa, 214

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Muhammad, 55, 93, 140

Ibn Rushd, Abu’l-Walid Muhammad, 212, 297

Ibn Sa’d, Muhammad, 115, 123

Ibn Shanabudh, Abu’l-Hasan Muhammad, 214

Ibn Sina, Abu ‘Ali al-Husayn, 216, 314

Ibn Taymiyya, Ahmad ibn ‘Abd al-Halim, 92–93, 197, 236, 258, 284

Ibn Tufayl, Abu Bakr Muhammad, 216

Ibn Tumart, Muhammad, 258, 261

Ibrahim, Ahmad, 15

Ibrahim, Anwar, 157

Illich, Ivan, 131

Imam, Ahmed Naji al-, 15

Imam Sajjad (Zayn al-‘Abidin ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn), 79

Iqbal, Muhammad, vii, 11, 25, 70, 160, 250, 255–269, 286, 306, 314, 315

Irfani, Suroosh, 47

Isaac, 87, 161, 280

Ishaque, Khalid M., 228

Isma’il (Ishmael), 87, 166, 279–280

Israfil, 34

Izoulet, Jean, 193

** J

Jabir ibn ‘Abdallah, 198

Jabir Ibn Hayyan, 241

Jacob Ya ‘qub, 87, 125, 161, 166, 280

Jadaane, Fahmi, 19, 37

Jahiz, Abu ‘Uthman ‘Amr Ibn Bahr al-, 241

Jalaluddin, Shaykh Muhammad Tahir, 9, 10

Jaspers, Karl, 193

Jawziyya, Muhammad Ibn Qayyim al-, 55, 93, 140

Jesus, 30, 74, 87, 133, 147, 152, 153, 161, 166, 216, 273, 280, 299, 326

Jihan, Numan Chelebi, 10

Jinnah, Muhammad Ali, 71

Jones, Francis R., vi

Juergensmeyer, Mark, 3

Julian, 255

** K

Kabir, Humayun, vi, 23, 59, 145–154

Kano, Aminu, 23

Karkhi, Abu’l-Hasan, 267

Keane, John, 4

Keddie, Nikki R., 8

Kemal, Namik, 9

Kennedy, John F., 147

Kepel, Gilles, 244

Keskioglu *, Osman, 169

Khadduri, Majid, 227–228, 229, 230, 231

Khadija, 110–111

Khalaf-Allah, Muhammad Ahmad, v, 12, 15, 19, 37–45

Khalji, ‘Ala’uddin, 149

Khamlichi, Ahmed al-, 118

Khan, Genghis, 188

Khan, Mohammad Akram, 25

Khan, Sayyid Ahmad, 8, 9, 153, 314

Khan, Shafique Ali, 14

Khatib, Shaykh Ahmad, 10

Khayr al-Din, 10

Khomeini, Ruhollah, 25, 46, 47, 73, 78, 80, 235–236, 326

Khuri, Richard K., 12

Kierkegaard, S0ren, 190

Kindi, Abu Yusuf Ya’qub Al-, 157, 297

Kisra, 114

Koksal, Duygu, vi

Kramers, J.H., 232

Krishnaswami, Arcot, 226

Kubba, Laith, 24

Kulayni, Abu Ja’far Muhammad, 209

Kung, Hans, 25, 179, 215

Kurzman, Charles, v, vii, 3–26

** L

Lacroix, Jean, 299, 300, 302

Lagdameo, Amado Luis, 88

Lakeland, Mary Jo, vi, 128

Lambton, Ann K.S., 73

Lane, Edward William, 135

Laoust, Henri, 217

Laroui, Abdallah, 4

Lasswell, Harold D., 226

Lazzerini, Edward, 10

Leary, Virginia A., 155

Lee, Robert D., 11, 205

Lenin, Vladimir Ilich, 285

Lev, Daniel S., 155

Levtzion, Nehemia, 6

Levy, Reuben, 229, 231

Lewis, Bernard, 93

Lewis, Philip, 319

Liebesny, Herbert, 229, 231

Lincoln, Abraham, 96

Linden, Ian, 15

Lowith, Karl, 218

Luciani, Giacomo, 19, 37

Lueg, Andrea, 3

Luqman, 273

Luther, Martin, 74, 262

** M

Ma Mingxin, 6

Macdonald, Duncan Black, 258

Machiavelli, Niccolo, 74

Madani, ‘Abbasi, 17

Madjid, Nurcholish, vii, 26, 59, 284–294

Maghribi, ‘Abd al-Qadir al-, 10

Magnarella, Paul J., 270

Mahdi, al-Sadiq al-, 26

Mahmassani, Sobhi Rajab, 23

Mahmud II, 10

Mahmud Ghaznavi, 77

Mahmutcehajic*, Rusmir, vi, 23, 179–184

Majlesi, Mulla Mohammad Baqer, 248

Majul, Cesar Adib, 85

Makdisi, George, 214

Malcolm X, 127

Malik, Hafeez, 255

Malik, Yassin, 12

Malkom Khan, Mirza, 9

Malti-Douglas, Fedwa, 205

Manglapus, Raul S., 86, 88

Marcel, Gabriel, 300

Mardin, Serif*, 12, 244

Marjani, Fatollah, vi

Marjani, Shihab al-Din, 9

Martin, Vanessa, 10

Marty, Martin E., 25, 244

Marx, Karl, 286

Maryam (Mary), 133, 153

Massad, Joseph, v Massignon, Louis, 296, 297

Mas’udi, 116–118

Matori Abdul Djalil, 19

Matthew, 161, 181, 326

Maurya, Chandragupta, 148

Mawardi, ‘Ali ibn Muhammad, al-, 297

Mawdudi, Sayyid Abul A’la, 7, 93, 137, 157

Mayer, Ann Elizabeth, 23, 25, 222

Maymuna, 123

Mazaheri, Aly, 296

McCloud, Aminah Beverly, 127

McDougal, Myles S., 226

McGhee, Vern W., 130

McKean, Warwick, 223, 226

McLean, George F., 49

M’Daghri, Abdelkebir Alaoui, 14, 17

Meeker, Michael E., 169

Mehmet ‘Ali, 10

Mernissi, Fatima, vi, 17, 22, 112–126

Meron, Theodore, 223

Mill, John Stuart, 245

Milne, R.S., 156

Mir, Mustansir, 128

Mirza Baji, 75

Miskawayh, 213

Miskin, Haji, 6

Mithat Pasa*, 10

Mohd. Nor Wan Daud, Wan, 132

Moltmann, Jurgen, 25, 179

Montesquieu, Charles de Secondat, 3, 74

Moreau, Rene Luc, 195

Mortimer, Edward, 223

Moses, 30, 76, 83, 87, 133, 134, 166, 201, 273, 301

Mounier, Emmanuel, 299

Mourou, ‘Abdelfatah, 17

Mu’adh ibn Jabal, 55, 198, 200–201, 256

Mu’awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, 80–20, 122, 118, 148

Mughira ibn Shu’ba al-, 119

Muhammad ‘Ali Pasha, 258

Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah, Prophet, passim

Muhammad, Malik Ghulam, 69

Muhammad, Mi’raj, 7

Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, 78

Mulla Muhsin (Fayz Kashani), 248

Munawi, ‘Abd al-Ra’uf ibn Taj al-‘Arifin al-, 198

Munson, Henry, Jr., 20

Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, 30, 93, 197, 203, 209

Mussolini, Benito, 71

Mutalib, Hussin, 155

Mutawakkil, al-, 165

Muzaffar, Chandra, vi, 13, 23, 155–160

Muztar, A.D., 7

** N

Nafi’, Bashir, 95

Naim, C.M., 255

Na’ini, Muhammad Husayn, 80

Najjar, Hussayn Fawzi al-, 15

Nanda, Ved P., 226

Nasa’i, Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman, 122, 123, 197, 198

Nashat, Guity, 231

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, 5

Natsir, Muhammad, v, 20, 59–66, 159–160

Naumann, Friedrich, 263

Nawawi, al-, 94, 197

Nazzam, Ibrahim ibn Sayyar, 257

Nedvi, S.M. Ahmed, 169, 170

Nietzsche, Friedrich, 194

Nila, 110

Noah, 76, 141

Noer, Deliar, 59

Noorbaksh, Mehdi, 20

Nuri, Yahya, 80

** O

Oki?, M. Tayyib, 170

** P

Paden, John N., 21, 23

Paige, Glenn D., 4

Pareto, Vilfredo, 194

Parwez, Ghulam Ahmad, 24, 230

Paul, 88

Pavis, Khusraw, 114

Pellat, Charles, 93

Pericles, 281–282

Perroux, Francois, 299, 301

Pickthall, Muhammad Marmaduke, 135, 137

Piscatori, James P., 20

Plato, 180–181, 263

Popper, Karl, 244

Procter-Smith, Marjorie, 128

Pundato, Dimasangcay A., v, 20, 23, 85–88

** Q

Qaddura, Zahiya, 124

Qadir bi-‘llah, al-, 214

Qalamdaran, Haydar ‘Ali, 80

Qaradawi, YusufAl-, vi, 17, 23, 196–204

Qasimi, Jamal al-Din al-, 8

Qutb, Sayyid, 132, 137–138

** R

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli, 195

Rahman, Fazlur, vii, 7, 11, 12, 13, 26, 128, 129, 132, 229, 231, 284, 304–318

Rajaee, Farhang, 11, 25, 244

Ramadan, Said, 15, 16

Ramage, Douglas E., 19, 23, 284

Ramcharan, B.G., 223

Rashid Rida, Muhammad, 9, 11, 15, 29

Rassam, Amal, 112

Ratnam, K.J., 155, 156

Rayyis, Muhammad Dia’ al-Din al-, 15

Razi, Abu Bakr Muhammad, 297

Razi, Fakhr al-Din al-, 45, 70, 90, 314

Redjam, Abderrazak, 12

Renan, Ernest, 3, 297

Richard, Yann, 244

Ricklets, M.C., 284

Rinsche, Gunter, 88

Rizvi, Saiyid Athar Abbas, 7

Robles-Piquer, Carlos, 88

Rodinson, Maxime, 3

Roff, William R., 6

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 74

Rumi, Jalal al-Din, 160, 248, 249, 251

Rushdie, Salman, 235–236

** S

Sabbah, Fatna Ait, 128

Sachedina, Abdulaziz, 187

Sa’d ibn al-Rabi, 103

Sa’d ibn Mu’adh al-Nu’manal-Aws, 40

Sadat, Anwar, 116

Sa’di, Muslah al-Din, 82

Sadr, Muhammad Baqir, 78

Sadri, Mahmoud, v

Sagiv, David, 19, 49

Sahabi, ‘Ezzatallah, 73

Sahabi, Yadallah, 74

Said Halim Pasha, 259

Said, Edward, 3

Sa’id, Mohammad, 12

Saint-Simon, Henri, 297

Sajoo, Amyn B., 4, 155, 284

Salih, Subhi al-, 12

Salman, 169

Samanhudi, Haji, 59

Sandel, Michael J., 14

Sardar, Ziauddin, 17, 71

Sarkashi, 268

Sarraf, Tahmoores, 46

Sartre, Jean-Paul, 189, 190–191, 326

Saul, 88

Sauri, Abu ‘Abdallah Sufyan, 257

Sawi, Salah Al-, 95

Sboarina, Gabriele, 88

Schacht, Joseph, 232

Schachter, Oscar, 224

Schmidt, Alvin J., 131

Senghor, Leopold Sedar, 295

Shaaban, Bouthaina, 101

Shafi’i, Abu ‘Abdallah Muhammad, 90, 118, 124, 207, 214, 230, 268

Shahin, Emad Eldin, 89

Shahrour, Muhammad, vi, 12, 13, 23, 139–142

Shaikh-Ali, A.S. Al-, vi

Sharama, Arvind, 227

Shari’at Allah, Hajji, 6

Shari’ati, ‘Ali, vi, 11, 13, 16, 23, 47, 187–195

Sharif, M.M., 160

Shatibi, Abu Ishaq al-, 72, 90–91, 264, 267

Shaukani, Muhammad ibn ‘Ali, 267, 268

Shaw, George Bernard, 149

Shawqi, Ahmad Bik, 36

Sheikh, Hassan ‘Abdallah A., 87

Sheldon, W.H., 192

Shepard, William E., 49

Shestack, Jerome J., 223, 224

Shibli Nu’mani, Muhammad, 304, 314

Shidyaq, Ahmad Faris al-, 9

Shihata, Ibrahim, 231

Shirazi, Molla Sadroddin, 246

Shu’aib, 201

Sibay *, Halim Sabit, 258

Siddique, Sharon, 15

Sindi, Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Hadi al-, 113

Smith, Jane I., 127, 227

Smith, Wilfred Cantwell, 11, 215, 296

Smith, William Robertson, 132

Solomon, 121

Sonn, Tamara, 304

Soroush, Abdul-Karim, vi, 12, 13, 17, 24, 244–251

Sow, Fatoumata, 112

Stalin, Josef, 305

Stoddard, Philip H., 11

Suhayl, 169

Sukarno, 285

Sulaiman, Sadek J., v, 20, 96–98, 139

Sullivan, Margaret W., 11

Sumayt, Sayyid Ahmad bin, 10

Surkati, Ahmad, 9

Sutomo, Bung Tomo, 61

Suyuti, Jalal al-Din al-, 197, 258

** T

Tabandeh, Sultanhussein, 224, 228, 229, 232

Tabari, Abu Ja’far Muhammad al-, 115–118, 200

Tabataba’i, ‘Allama Mohammad Husayn, 247–249

Tabataba’i, Sayyid Muhammad, 10

Tagore, Rabindranath, 151

Taha, Mahmoud Mohamed, vii, 12, 16, 25, 222, 225, 231, 234, 235, 236, 237, 270–283

Tahtawi, Rifa’a Rafi’ al-, 9

Taj, Afroz, v

Talbi, Mohamed, vi, 23, 161–168

Taleqani, Mahmud, v, 13, 19, 46–48, 73

Talha ibn ‘Ubayd Allah al-Taymi, 116

Tamimi, Azzam, v, 4, 15, 20

Tapper, Richard, 169

Tarvis, Carol, 134

Tarzi, Mahmud, 9

Tehrani, ‘Ali, 80

Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre, 299

Tha’alibi, ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-, 10, 11

Thornberry, Patrick, 224, 226

Thucydides, 282

Tibi, Bassam, 4, 15

Tirmidhi, Abu ‘Isa Muhammad al-, 31, 200

Tomo, Bung, 61

Towfi, Najm al-Din al-, 55

Toynbee, Arnold Joseph, 66

Troll, Christian W., 8, 145

Tug *, Salih, 171

Turabi, Hasan, 21

Tusi, Muhammad al-Hasan al-, 209

** U

Umayma, 126

Umm Habiba, 122

Umm Salama, 122

Umm Musa, 133

‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, 44, 93

‘Umar ibn al-Khattab, 53, 55, 69, 70, 80, 119, 123, 125, 148, 157, 175, 199, 262, 271–272

‘Umar ibn Hasin, 125

‘Uqbi, Tayyib, 6

Usama ibn Zayd, 203

‘Uthman, 110, 111, 115, 116, 117, 148

‘Uzzi, ‘Abd al-Mun’im Salih ‘Ali al-, 121, 124, 125

** V

Vahiduddin, Syed, 22–23, 26

Vakili, Valla, 244

Valensi, Lucette, 3

van Donzel, E.J., 18

Van Dyke, Vernon, 227

Van Ess, Josef, 215

Vasil, R.K., 155

Veinus, Roger, 3

Voll, John Obert, 4, 6, 9, 20

Voltaire, Francois Marie Arouet de, 3, 74

Von Grunebaum, G.E., 24

Von Kremer, Alfred, 264, 265

Von Stietencron, Heinrich, 215

Vorys, Karl von, 155

** W

Wade, Carole, 134

Wadud-Muhsin, Amina, vi, 21, 127–138

Wafi, Ali Abdel Wahid, 228

Wahid, Abdurrahman, 23

Wali, Isa, 21–22

Wali-Allah, Shah, 6–8, 16, 265

Wang Haoran, 9

Wasfy, Mohamed B.E., vi

Watt, Wm. Montgomery, 205

Wehr, Hans, 135

Weil, Eric, 300, 301

Weiss, Leopold, 204

Welch, Claude E., Jr., 155

Whitehead, Alfred North, 305, 314

Widengren, Geo, 215

Woodward, Mark R., 59

** X

X, Malcolm, 127

Xuan Di, 153

** Y

Yalyin, Huseyin Cahit, 173

Yasmina, Lalla, 120

Yavari-d’Hellencourt, Nouchine, 16

Yazdi, Ebrahim, 20–51

Yazid, 148

Yusuf (Joseph), 92, 125

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah, 132, 153, 156, 157, 162, 163, 164

** Z

Zafar, S.M., v, 20, 59, 67–72

Zakaria, Rafik, 16–17

Zakariyya, Fuad, 19

Zamakhshari, Abu’l Qasim Mahmud al-, 137

Zanjani, Sayyid Abolfazl, 81

Zarkashi, Muhammad ibn Bahadur, 121–124, 268

Zartman, I. William, 4

Zayn al-‘Abidin ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn, 79

Zein-ed-Din, Nazira, v-vi, 21, 101–111

Zia-ii-Haq, Mohammad, 107, 109

Zubair ibn al-‘Awwam, al-, 116

Zuhri, Muhammad ibn Muslim, 266

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[48] Mahmoud Ayoub, The Qur’an and Its Interpreters, volume 1 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), p. 23.

[49] Ayatollah Syed Mohammad Bahrul Uloom, “Islam, Democracy, and the Future of Iraq,” in Under Siege: Islam and Democracy, edited by Richard W. Bulliet (New York: The Middle East Institute of Columbia University, 1994), p. 26.

[50] Arkoun, Rethinking Islam, p. 94.

[51] Rafik Zakaria, The Struggle within Islam (London: Penguin, 1988), p. 288.

[52] Ziauddin Sardar, Islamic Futures: The Shape of Ideas to Come (London: Mansell, 1985), pp. 102–103.

[53] Yousef Al-Qaradawi, Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase (Cairo: Dar Al-Nashr for Egyptian Universities, 1992), pp. 143–144.

[54] Dale F. Eickelman, “Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back,” MESA Bulletin, volume 27, number 2, December 1993, p. 167.

[55] Reuter’s, March 31, 1991.

[56] Quoted in Daniel Brumberg, “Islam, Elections, and Reform in Algeria,” Journal of Democracy, volume 2, number 1, Winter 1991, p. 64.

[57] Haddad, “Islamists and the Challenge of Pluralism,” p. 18.

[58] Alaoui MDaghri, La Liberte de pensee, p. 38.

[59] Dwyer, Arab Voices, p. 176.

[60] Another possible orthodox response might be to consider past interpretations as having laid the basis for contemporary interpretations. However, the appeal to historical progress is more congenial to liberal Islam than to traditionalists or revivalists. See the discussion of this topic later in this chapter.

[61] “Ibn Khaldun Society—Common Ground,” Trans-StateIslam, volume 3, number 1, Spring 1997, p. 23.

[62] Douglas E. Ramage, Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam, and the Ideology of Tolerance (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 68.

[63] Fahmi Jadane, “Notions of the State in Contemporary Arab-Islamic Writings,” in Giacomo Luciani, editor, The Arab State (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 251–252.

[64] David Sagiv, Fundamentalism and Intellectuals in Egypt, 1973–1993 (London: Frank Cass, 1995), p. 117.

[65] Al-Azmeh, Islams and Modernities, pp. 25–26.

[66] John L. Esposito and James P. Piscatori, “Democratization and Islam,” Middle East Journal, volume 45, number 3, Summer 1991, pp. 427–440; Esposito and Voll, Islam and Democracy; John O. Voll and John L. Esposito, “Islam’s Democratic Essence,” Middle East Quarterly, volume 1, number 3, September 1994, pp. 3–11.

[67] Mehdi Noorbaksh, “Religion, Politics, and Ideological Trends in Contemporary Iran,” in Jamal S. al-Suwaidi, editor, Iran and the Gulf: A Search for Stability (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates: Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, 1996), pp. 33–34.

[68] Hassan Al-Alkim, “Islam and Democracy: Mutually Reinforcing or Incompatible?” in Azzam Tamimi, editor, Power-Sharing Islam? (London: Liberty for Muslim World Publications, 1993), pp. 81–83.

[69] Ebrahim Yazdi, “Democracy and Human Rights in Islam and Europe,” unpublished text of a speech at the International Conference on Europe and the Islamic World, Bonn, Germany, November 15–16, 1995, p. 3.

[70] Henry Munson, Jr., Religion and Power in Morocco (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 111.

[71] Al-‘Awwa, “Political Pluralism,” p. 70.

[72] Haddad, “Islamists and the Challenge of Pluralism,” pp. 7–8.

[73] Asad, The Principles of State and Government, p. 49.

[74] Hasan Turabi, Women in Islam and Muslim Society (London: Milestones Publishers, circa 1991), p. 46.

[75] John N. Paden, Religion and Political Culture in Kano (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 290; see also John N. Paden, Ahmadu Bello: Sardauna of Sokoto (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1986), p. 302.

[76] Isa Wali, “The True Position of Women in Islam,” The Nigerian Citizen (Zaria, Nigeria), July 14, 1956, p. 3; July 21, 1956, p. 3.

[77] Asghar Ali Engineer, The Rights of Women in Islam (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), pp. 170, 161.

[78] See p. 125.

[79] Syed Vahiduddin, Islamic Experience in Contemporary Thought (Delhi, India: Chanakya Publications, 1986), pp. 108–109.

[80] Ann Elizabeth Mayer, Islam and Human Rights: Tradition and Politics, second edition, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1995), p. 128; Ramage, Politics in Indonesia, p. 64; Binder, Islamic Liberalism, pp. 269–288.

[81] Paden, Religion and Political Culture in Kano, p. 289.

[82] Abdelwahab El-Affendi, Who Needs an Islamic State? (London, England: Grey Seal, 1991), p. 57.

[83] Ghulam Ahmad Parwez, “Two Contrasting Systems,” translated in Aziz Ahmad and G.E. Von Grunebaum, editors, Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857–1968 (Weisbaden, West Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1970), p. 171.

[84] Haji Andi Mappetahang Fatwa, “Some Political Views and Attitudes,” translated by Peter Burns, Indonesia Reports, number 16, June 1986, p. 18.

[85] Laith Kubba, “Islam and Liberal Democracy: Recognizing Pluralism,” Journal of Democracy, volume 7, number 2, April 1996, p. 89.

[86] Quoted in Ayubi, Political Islam, p. 207.

[87] Arkoun, Rethinking Islam, pp. 106–113. An abridged English translation of the declaration is published in Islam: A Challenge for Christianity, edited by Hans Kung and Jurgen Moltmann (London: SCM Press; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), pp. 140–150. See also the “Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam,” adopted by the Nineteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, August 5, 1990 (United Nations Document A/CONF.157/PC/35); and, more generally, Mayer, Islam and Human Rights.

[88] Farhang Rajaee, “Islam and Modernity: The Reconstruction of an Alternative Shi’ite Islamic Worldview in Iran,” in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, editors, Fundamentalisms and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 116.

[89] U.A.B. Razia Akter Banu, Islam in Bangladesh (Leiden: Brill, 1992), p. 48.

[90] al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, “Islam—Society and Change,” in John L. Esposito, editor, Voices of Resurgent Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 236–239.

[91] Hassan Hanafi, Religious Dialogue and Revolution (Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1977), p. 202; Hassan Hanafi, Religion, Ideology, and Development (Cairo: Anglo-Egyptian Bookshop, 1995), volume 1, pp. 417–418.

[92] Vahiduddin, Islamic Experience in Contemporary Thought, pp. 63–64.

[93] See below, pp. 312, 317.

[94] Albert Hourani, Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 184–192.

[95] Georges C. Anawati, “Un Plaidayer pour un Islam eclaire (mustanir): Le Livre du Juge Mohammad Sa’id al-‘Ashmawi, Al-Islam al-siyasi (L’Islampolitique)” (French: A Plea for an Enlightened [Mustanir] Islam: The Book of Judge Muhammad Sa’id al-‘Ashmawi, Al-Islam al-siyasi [Political Islam]), Mideo, volume 19, 1989, pp. 124–125.

[96] Eric Davis, “‘Abd al-Raziq, ‘Ali,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 1, pp. 5, 7.

[97] John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito, editors, Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 29–37.

[98] As the two Shaykhs [Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, circa 821–875, and Muhammad ibn Isma'il Bukhari, 810–870] have narrated: "Thus prophets are sent from the best families of their clans ..." which is part of a long hadith [tradition of the Prophet]. See Taysir al-wusul ila al-jami' al-usul [The Facilitation of Arriving at the Compendium of Fundamentals, by 'Abd al-Rahman Ibn al-Dayba' (1461–1537)], part 3, p. 320.

[99] [Translations of Qur'anic verses are taken, with modifications, from Al-Qur'an: A Contemporary Translation, translated by Ahmed Ali, revised definitive edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).—Editor]

[100] Reported by 'A'isha [wife of the Prophet, circa 614–678] at the beginning of the Revelation. Recorded by the two Shaykhs.

[101] Reported by Anas [ibn Malik, a companion of the Prophet, 710–796], recorded by [Abu 'Isa Muhammad] al-Tirmidhi [collector of hadith, died 892].

[102] [Two letters of the Arabic alphabet. 28 of 114 suras of the Qur'an begin with letters.—Editor]

[103] ["Muslim" means "one who submits" to God.—Editor]

[104] The Biography of the Prophet, by Ahmad bin Zayni Dahlan, who died in the year 1304 of the hijra [1923 A.D.]. From the book entitled Iktifa' al-qanu' bima huwa matbu' [The Contentment of the Satisfied with What Is Printed].

[105] Risalat al-tawhid [Treatise on Unity], by Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh [1849–1905], pp. 122–123.

[106] Ahmad Bik Shawqi [1868–1932].

[107] Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, Contemporary Islam and the Challenge of History (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1982), pp. 46–53.

[108] Fahmi Jadaane, “Notions of the State in Contemporary Arab-Islamic Writings,” in Giacomo Luciani, editor, The Arab State (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 280.

[109] [Translations of Qur’anic verses are taken, with modifications, from Al-Qur’an: A Contemporary Translation, translated by Ahmed Ali, revised definitive edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).—Editor]

[110] [Meccan verses were revealed to the Prophet in Mecca, prior to the hijra [emigration] of 622 A.D.; Medinan verses were revealed to the Prophet in Medina, after the hijra. —Editor]

[111] Shahrough Akhavi, Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1980), pp. 117–129; H.E. Chehabi, Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 154 et passim; Hamid Dabashi, Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundations of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (New York: New York University Press, 1993), pp. 216–272; H.E. Chehabi, “Taleqani, Mahmud,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 4, pp. 181–182.

[112] Ervand Abrahamian, The Iranian Mojahedin (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989); Tahmoores Sarraf, Cry of a Nation:

The Saga of the Iranian Revolution (New York: Peter Lang, 1990), pp. 149–151.

[113] Shahrough Akhavi, “Islam, Politics and Society in the Thought of Ayatullah Khomeini, Ayatullah Taliqani and Ali Shariati,” Middle Eastern Studies, volume 24, number 4, October 1988, p. 424.

[114] Suroosh Irfani, Iran’s Islamic Revolution (London: Zed, 1983), p. ii.

[115] [Translations of Qur’anic verses are taken, with modifications, from Al-Qur’ an: A Contemporary Translation, translated by Ahmed Ali, revised definitive edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).—Editor]

[116] Nazih N. Ayubi, Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World (London,: Routledge, 1991), p. 203.

[117] This was the original title of ‘Ashmawi’s book. Other writings of ‘Ashmawi are now available in English in Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, editor, Against Islamic Extremism (Gainesville, Fl.: University Press of Florida, 1998).

[118] David Sagiv, “Judge Ashmawi and Militant Islam in Egypt,” Middle Eastern Studies, volume 28, number 3, July 1992, pp. 531–546; Georges C. Anawati, “Un Plaidayer pour un Islam eclaire (mustanir): Le Livre du Juge Mohammad Sa’id al-‘Ashmawi, Al-Islam al-siyasi (LIslam politique)” (French: A Plea for an Enlightened [Mustanir] Islam: The Book of Judge Muhammad Sa’id al-‘Ashmawi, Al-Islam alsiyasi [Political Islam]), Mideo, volume 19, 1989, pp. 91–128; William E. Shepard, “Muhammad Sa’id al-‘Ashmawi and the Application of the Shari’a in Egypt,” International Journal of Middle East Studies, volume 28, number 1, February 1996, pp. 39–58.

[119] Lisan al-‘Arab [Dictionary of Arabic], article on “Shara’a. “

[120] Collection of Preparatory Work for the Civil Code, volume 1, pp. 184, 189, 191.

[121] See M.S. al-‘Ashmawi, Al-Riba wa’l-fa’ idafi’ l-Islam (Usury and Interest in Islam) (Cairo: Dar Sina, 1988).

[122] Majallat al-qudat [Judges’ Journal], numbers 3–4, March-April, 1986, p. 44.

[123] Howard M. Federspiel, Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia (Ithaca, N.Y.: Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1970); Deliar Noer, The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900–1942 (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[124] Peter Burns, Revelation and Revolution: Natsir and the Panca Sila (Townsville, Australia: Committee of South-East Asian Studies, James Cook University of North Queensland, Southeast Asian Monograph Series No. 9, 1981), p. 31.

[125] Mark R. Woodward, “Natsir, Mohammad,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, pp. 239–240.

[126] Leonard Binder, Religion and Politics in Pakistan (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Mumtaz Ahmad, “Pakistan,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern

Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, pp. 289–293.

[127] Ishtiaq Ahmed, The Concept of an Islamic State: An Analysis of the Ideological Controversy in Pakistan (London: Frances Pinter, 1987), pp. 36, 150–162.

[128] [English-language edition published in 1987 in London by Mansell.—Editor]

[129] Ann K.S. Lambton, “A Reconsideration of the Position of theMarj’a al-Taqlid and the Religious Institution,” Studia Islamica, volume 20, 1964, pp. 115–135.

[130] H.E. Chehabi, Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990); Manochehr Dorraj, “Bazargan, Mehdi,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 1, pp. 211–213.

[131] [Translations of Qur’anic verses are taken, with modifications, from Al-Qur’an: A Contemporary Translation, translated by Ahmed Ali, revised definitive edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988). Bazargan’s slightly different numbering of verses has been edited to conform to the other selections in this collection.—Editor]

[132] [Sahabi, the son of Bazargan’s long-time colleague Yadallah Sahabi, had emerged as leader of the left wing of Bazargan’s Freedom Movement of Iran. While remaining liberal, Sahabi is more critical of Western-style liberal democracy than Bazargan. A subtext of Bazargan’s speech is a defense of liberalism against the left wing of the Freedom Movement, as well as against anti-democratic forces in the Islamic Republic.—Translator]

[133] For further information on this thesis and its comparison with other social philosophies, see my book Be’ sat va ide’ olozhi [Prophetic Mission and Ideology], part I.

[134] The Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries commenced with a renewed interest in the Greek art in Italy, particularly after the advent of the print technology.

[135] [The author uses the terms ‘ulama’ and ruhaniyat interchangeably. Both are translated here as “religious scholars.”—Editor]

[136] [Inquisition is] contrary to the Qur’an, which states: “O you who believe, avoid most suspicions: some suspicions are indeed sins. So do not pry into others’ secrets and not backbite.” (Sura 49, Verse 12)

[137] The Holy Qur’an, too, states that “there are priests and monks and scholars among them, and they are not arrogant.” [Sura 5, Verse 82]

[138] Sura 17, Verse [<verbatim>20</verbatim>]: “We bestow the gifts of your Lord on these and those, for the gifts of your Lord are not restricted.” The answer to the first question, whether Islam has left people to do whatever they wish in this world without any obligations or limits, will be addressed at the end of this article.

[139] The charter of the Freedom Movement of Iran, May 15, 1961, declares: “The servitude of God requires refusal of servitude of any other master. Gratefulness to God is contingent upon gaining freedom and utilizing it to attain rights, justice, and service.” The question arising from this proposition, whether Islamic government should refrain from checking corruption and decadence in society, will be addressed at the end of the article.

[140] [Such compilations of religious opinions are a relatively modern phenomenon in Shi i ritual observance. Akin to the Jewish tradition of “Responsa,” these essays are authored by independent religious scholars who aspire to be a “source of imitation” for other Shi’i Muslims. Those who choose to follow the religious edicts of a particular “source of imitation” seek his views on specific subjects in these essays.—Translator]

[141] The late martyr Muhammad Baqir Sadr [Iraqi religious scholar, 1935–1980] states in one of his essays, translated [from Arabic into Persian] under the title Hamrah ba tahavol-e ijtihad [Accompanying the Evolution of Ijtihad (Islamic Interpretation)]: “the move toward ijtihad among the Shi’is was almost coeval with their withdrawal from politics ... and this departure from politics ... gave rise to the idea that the proper arena for religious thought is ... bringing the individual—not the society—into compliance with religion. Thus it was that in the opinion of religious jurisprudence, ijtihad came to be applied to the Muslim individual rather than Muslim society.”

[142] [The author played a crucial and well-documented role in these events. —Translator]

[143] The word “among” means among those who are members of society and responsible and the owners of the property in question, not those without work and responsibility, for instance employees and laborers....

[144] The same verse that states “and consult them concerning the affair” [Sura 3, Verse 159] advises the following: (after consultation and the soliciting of opinions), once you have reached a decision, then place your trust in God. That is, have confidence in the virtue of its [the decision’s] outcome.

[145] In the dawn and dusk prayer called “The Manuscript of Imam Sajjad” [Zayn al-‘Abidin ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn, circa 656–714], we read: “O our nurturing teacher, grant us success in this day and this night and in all our days so we

can practice goodness, avoid evil ... defy falsehood, serve the truth, guide the confused, and help the weak....”

[146] Sura 39, Verses 17–18: “So give glad tidings to My creatures. Those who listen to the Word and follow the best it contains, are the ones who have been guided by God, and are men of wisdom.”

[147] Sura 12, Verse 108: “Say: ‘My way, and that of my followers, is to call you to God with full perception. All glory to God, I am not an idolater.’” See also Sura 41, Verse 5.

[148] For instance, Hokumat dar Islam [Government in Islam], by [Haydar ‘Ali] Qalamdaran; Be’sat va ide’ olozhi [Prophetic Mission and Ideology], by [Mehdi] Bazargan; Hokumat-e Islami [Islamic Government], by Yahya Nuri; and Medina-ye fazeleh, ya sistem-e hokumat dar Islam [Learned Medina (Utopia), or the System of Government in Islam], by ‘Ali Tehrani. Also, Imam Khomeini has presented his own opinion of Islamic government in his Velayat-e faqih [Mandate of the Jurisprudent].

[149] Sura 9, Verse 6: “And if an idolater seeks protection, then give him asylum that he may hear the word of God. Then escort him to a place of safety, for they are people who do not know.”

[150] These two narratives are taken from Mosir-e enqelabe Islami [The Course of the Islamic Revolution], notes dated September 12, 1980, by Ayatollah Hajji Sayyid Abolfazl Zanjani.

[151] See my ‘Eshq va parastesh, ya termodinamik-e ensan [Love and Worship, or the Thermodynamics of Humanity].

[152] It is obvious that opposition in this context is an external force, different from materialist-dialectical opposition, involving an internal antithesis that is said to be inevitable, global, and social.

[153] See [my] book Bad va baran dar Quran [Wind and Rain in the Qur’an] where many verses (more than 115 passages) are quoted that bear witness to this argument. [A series of citations follows.—Editor]

[154] Sura 3, Verse 141: “This is so that God may try the faithful and destroy the unbelievers.” Sura 3, Verse 154: “God had to try them to bring out what they concealed in their breasts, and to bring out the secrets of their hearts, for God knows your innermost thoughts.”

[155] The text of Sura 4, Verse [<verbatim>59</verbatim>], is as follows: “O you who believe, obey God, and obey the Prophet and those in authority among you; and if (mutual opposition occurs and) you are at variance over something, refer this (matter and disagreement) to God and the Messenger. […]” It is noteworthy that on five or six other occasions the faithful are told to obey God and the Prophet; only in this occasion is the phrase “those in authority” added, and that is qualified by the phrase “among you” (which could mean elected rulers). It is further stipulated that in case there appears a disagreement between the people and the rulers it should be referred to the other two authorities [God and the Prophet].

[156] W.K. Che Man, Muslim Separatism: The Moros of Southern Philippines and the Malays of Southern Thailand (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 197–199; Che Man, “Moro National Liberation Front,” and Cesar Adib Majul, “Philippines,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, pp. 132–133 and 326–328; Majul, The Contemporary Muslim Movement in the Philippines (Berkeley, Calif.: Mizan Press, 1985).

[157] Marion Boulby, “The Islamic Challenge: Tunisia since Independence,” Third World Quarterly, volume 10, Number 2, April 1988, pp. 590–614; Khalid Elginty, “The Rhetoric of Rashid Ghanushi,” Arab Studies Journal, volume 3, number 1, Spring 1995, pp. 101–119; Emad Eldin Shahin, “Ghannushi, Rashid al-;” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 2, pp. 60–61.

[158] Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi, Al-Muwafaqat fi usul al-shar a] [The Correspondences on the Methodology of Islamic Law], volume 2, pp. 6–8.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Ibid.

[161] Ibn Khaldun, Al-Muqaddima [The Introduction].

[162] Ibn Taymiyya, Al-Fatawa [Religious Judgments], volume 19, pp. 218–219.

[163] [The term’s meaning is debated; see C. Pellat, “Hilf al-fudul,” Encyclopedia of Islam, second edition, volume 2, edited by B. Lewis, et al. (Leiden: E.J. Brill; London: Luzac and Company, 1971), p. 389.—Editor]

[164] Muslim [ibn al-Hajjaj, 821–875] and Abu Da’ud [al-Sijistani, 817–889]. [Both men are authors of hadith collections.—Editor]

[165] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya [1292–1350], Al-Turuq al-hukmiyya [The Ways of Governance], p. 13.

[166] [Abul A’la] Mawdudi [1903–1979], The Islamic Government; Dr. M[uhammad] Abu Faris, Tahrim al-musharaka fil-hukuma [The Illegality of Participation in the Government].

[167] Imam Al-Nawawi, Al-Arba’un hadithan [Forty Hadiths].

[168] Dr. Salah Al-Sawi, Al-Ta ‘addudiya al-siyasiyya f aldawla al-Islamiyya [Political Pluralism in Islamic Government, 1992], p. 142.

[169] Dr. Bashir Nafi’ article in Al-Hayat [Life], number 10984, March 9, 1993.

[170] Interview with Dale F. Eickelman, November 9, 1996.

[171] Bouthaina Shaaban, “The Muted Voices of Women Interpreters,” in Mahnaz Afkhami, editor, Faith and Freedom: Women’s Human Rights in the Muslim World (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1995), p. 65.

[172] “Biographical Note,” Women’s Studies International Forum, volume 5, number 2, 1982, p. 223.

[173] Benazir Bhutto, Daughter of Destiny (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), pp. 368, 392.

[174] See also Benazir Bhutto, “The Fight for the Liberation of Women” (Remarks at the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women, Beijing, China,

September 4, 1995), Women’s Studies Quarterly, volume 24, numbers 1–2, Spring-Summer 1996, pp. 91–97.

[175] [This list includes the two largest sects of Islam, Sunnism and Shi’ism; two schools of thought within Sunnism, the Hanafis and the Malakis; and a revivalist sect founded in northern India in the late nineteenth century, the Barelwis.—Editor]

[176] Amal Rassam, “Mernissi, Fatima,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, pp. 93–94.

[177] Leila Ahmad, “Feminism and Feminist Movements in the Middle East,” Women’s Studies International Forum, volume 5, number 2, 1982, pp. 153–168.

[178] Fatoumata Sow, “Le Harem Politique” (The Political Harem), in Fippu, Journal de Yewwu Yewwi pour la liberation des femmes (Fight Back, Journal of “Liberation through Consciousness” for the Liberation of Women) (Dakar, Senegal), number 2, April 1989, p. 33.

[179] Morocco, Ministere de l’Artisanat et des Affaires Sociales, Les Femmes marocaines dans le developpement economique et social, decennie 1975–1985 [Moroccan Women in Social and Economic Development, the Decade 1975–1985].

[180] Al-Bukhari, Al-Sahih (Collection of Authentic Hadiths), with commentary by al-Sindi (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Ma’rifa, 1978). The hadith quoted by the schoolteacher is in volume 4, p. 226.

[181] Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Huda al-sari, muqaddimatFath al-bari [The Traveller’s Guide, Introduction to “The Creator’s Conquest’”], commonly known as Fath al-bari [The Creator’s Conquest]. It comprises al-Bukhari’s text with a commentary by al-‘Asqalani. The hadith that concerns us here, on the necessity of excluding women from power, is found on p. 46 of volume 13 of the edition of Al-Matba’a al-Bahiya al-Misriya (1928) and on p. 166 of volume 16 of the edition of Maktaba Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi fi Misr (1963). (Future page references are to the 1928 edition.)

[182] The Muslim world is divided into two parts: the Sunnis (orthodox) and the Shi’ites (literally, schismatics). Each group has its own specific texts offiqh (religious knowledge), especially as regards sources of the shari ‘a (legislation and laws). The Sunnis are split between four madhahib (schools).... The differences between them most frequently relate to details of juridical procedures.

[183] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 46.

[184] See Hodgson, Venture of Islam, volume 1, p. 199.

[185] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 46.

[186] On this dilemma and the division that it occasioned, see ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 49. On the political implications and the philosophical debates that the Battle of the Camel aroused, see the extraordinary description by [Abu Ja’far Muhammad] Tabari [died 922] in his Tarikh al-umam wa al-muluk [History of Imams and Kings] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Al-Fikr, 1979), volume 5, pp. 156–225.

[187] [Muhammad] Ibn Sa’d [784–845], [Kitab] al-tabaqat al-kubra [The Great Book of Classes] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar Sadir, no date), volume 3, p. 159.

[188] Ibn Sa’d, Al-Tabaqat, p. 159.

[189] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 622.

[190] [‘Izz al-Din] Ibn al-Athir [1160–1233], Usd al-ghaba f [ma’rifat] al-sahaba [The Lions of the Forest, on Knowing the Companions of the Prophet] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Fikr li al-Tiba’a wa al-Tawzi’, no date), volume 5, p. 38.

[191] Mas’udi [died 956], Muruj [al-zahab] [Meadows of Gold], volume 2, p. 380; and the French translation of this work, Les Prairies d’ or [Prairies of Gold], volume 3, p. 646.

[192] Tabari, Tarikh, volume 5, p. 182.

[193] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 46.

[194] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, pp. 50 and 51 for the first version, and p. 44 for the second.

[195] See the analysis of Hamied N. Ansari, “The Islamic Militants in Egyptian Politics,” International Journal of Middle East Studies, volume 16, number 1, 1984, pp. 123–144.

[196] [Bracketed comments in indented quotations in this chapter are the author’s, not the editor’s.—Editor]

[197] Tabari, Tarikh, volume 5, p. 179.

[198] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 46.

[199] Mas’udi, Muruj, volume 2, p. 378; and the French translation, volume 2, p. 644.

[200] Tabari, Tarikh, volume 5, p. 221.

[201] Tabari, Tarikh, volume 5, p. 188.

[202] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 4, pp. 221ff.

[203] Mas’udi, Les Prairies dor, volume 2, p. 645.

[204] Tabari, Tarikh, volume 5, p. 190.

[205] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, pp. 51ff; Mas’udi, Muruj, volume 3, pp. 4ff; and al-Tabari, Mohammed, Sceau des prophetes [Muhammad, Seal of the Prophets] (Paris: Sindbad, 1980), volume 6, p. 95.

[206] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 56.

[207] For assistance with the research for this chapter, I am indebted to Professor Ahmed al-Khamlichi, Chairman of the Department of Private Law, Faculte de Droit, Universite Mohammed V, Rabat, Morocco.

[208] Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr [978–1070], Al-Intiqa’ fi fadl althalath al-a’imma al-fuqaha’ [The Selection, on the Merits of the Three Founding Jurists] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiya, no date), pp. 10, 16.

[209] Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Al-Intiqa’, p. 16.

[210] Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Al-Intiqa’, p. 16.

[211] Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr, Al-Intiqa’, p. 15.

[212] Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-ghaba, volume 5, p. 38.

[213] ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab institutionalized the recourse to capital punishment for fornication; his contemporaries were not at all in agreement with his position. See Bukhari, Sahih, volume 4, pp. 146ff.... ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab ... was [also] the instigator of the wearing of the veil and was in complete disagreement with the Prophet about the way to treat women.

[214] ‘Asqalani, Fath al-bari, volume 13, p. 47.

[215] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 1, p. 99.

[216] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 1, p. 199.

[217] Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba f tamyiz al-sahaba [A Biographical Dictionary of the Companions of the Prophet] (Cairo: Maktaba al-Dirasa al-Islamiya Dar al-Nahda, no date), volume 8, p. 18.

[218] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 427.

[219] ‘Abd al-Mun’im Salih al-‘Ali al-‘Uzzi, Difa’ ‘an Abi Hurayra [In Defense of Abu Hurayra], second edition (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Qalam; Baghdad: Maktaba al-Nahda, 1981), p. 13.

[220] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 426.

[221] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 434.

[222] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 441.

[223] Imam [Muhammad ibn Bahadur al-]Zarkashi [circa 1344–1392], Al-Ijaba li-irad ma istadrakathu ‘A isha ‘ala alsahaba [Collection of’A ‘isha’s Corrections to the Statements of the Companions], second edition (Beirut, Lebanon: Al-Maktab al-Islami, 1980), p. 118.

[224] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 440.

[225] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 112.

[226] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 112.

[227] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, pp. 112, 113.

[228] Imam Zarkashi, A l-Ijaba, p. 111.

[229] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 115.

[230] Imam [Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman al-]Nasa’i [830–915], Sunan [Hadith Collection] (Cairo: Al-Matba’a al-Misriya, no date), volume 1, p. 155.

[231] Nasa’i, Sunan, volume 1, p. 155.

[232] Nasa’i, Sunan, volume 1, p. 147.

[233] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 3, p. 243.

[234] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 113.

[235] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 3, p. 243.

[236] The biography of ‘Abdallah ibn ‘Umar can be found in ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 4, pp. 182ff.

[237] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 4, p. 137.

[238] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, pp. 37, 38.

[239] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 32.

[240] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 31.

[241] Zahiya Qaddura, ‘A ‘isha, Umm al-mu’minin [‘A’isha, Mother of the Faithful] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kitab al-Lubnani, 1976).

[242] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 116.

[243] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 8, p. 17.

[244] Imam Zarkashi, Al-Ijaba, p. 120.

[245] [Al-‘Ali] al-‘Uzzi, Difa’.

[246] [Al-‘Ali] al-‘Uzzi, Difa’, p. 7.

[247] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 1, p. 34.

[248] [Al-‘Ali] al-‘Uzzi,Difa’, p. 122.

[249] [Al-‘Ali] al-‘Uzzi,Difa’, p. 122.

[250] Muhammad Abu Zahra, Malik [Malik ibn Anas, 710–796] (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr al-‘Arabi, no date), p. 146.

[251] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 440.

[252] Abu Zahra, Malik, p. 145.

[253] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 432.

[254] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 1, p. 34.

[255] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 1, p. 34.

[256] Bukhari, Sahih, volume 1, p. 34.

[257] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 517.

[258] ‘Asqalani, Al-Isaba, volume 7, p. 517.

[259] Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Jane I. Smith, Muslim Communities in North America (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994); Haddad and Smith, “United States of America,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 4, pp. 277–284; Aminah Beverly McCloud, African American Islam (New York: Routledge, 1995); Kambiz GhaneaBassiri, Competing Visions of Islam in the United States (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997), especially pp. 126–131.

[260] The perpectives, circumstances, and background of the individual. This concept will be discussed at greater length below.

[261] One notable exception in English is Fazlur Rahman’s Major Themes of the Qur’an (Chicago and Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1980). In addition, see Mustansir Mir, Thematic and Structural Coherence in the Qur’an: A Study of ‘Islahi’s Concept of Nazm (University of Michigan Microfilms International, 1987), which gives a comprehensive analysis of the significance of theme to Qur’anic organization and, consequently, its exegesis.

[262] See Marjorie Procter-Smith, In Her Own Rite: Reconstructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1990), chapter 1, pp. 13–35, on the significance of inclusion and exclusion of women in religious dialogue.

[263] For example, Fatna A[it] Sabbah in her book Woman in the Muslim Unconscious, translated by Mary Jo Lakeland from the French (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), discusses valid points with regard to this issue, but when she discusses the Qur'an, she fails to distinguish between the Qur'an and the Qur'anic interpreters.

[264] For details of Fazlur Rahman's discussion of the above double movement methodology—"from the present situation to Qur'anic times, then back to the present"—for particular communities, see his Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), Introduction, especially pp. 4–9.

[265] This is a direct contradiction of the classical models which propose that the masculine plural form means male (exclusively). Thus, language is used to make male the norm, and by implication, the female must be abnormal.

[266] This is the Scripture wherein there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off (evil), who believe in the unseen, establish worship, and spend of that We have bestowed upon them.... (Sura 2, Verses 2–3)

[267] M.M. Bakhtin, Speech Genres and Other Late Essays, translated by Vern W. McGhee, edited by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), pp. 6–7.

[268] This recurrent problem in "reading" the Qur'an causes readers to justify limiting to women statements made using feminine forms and figures; see chapter 3 below concerning Bilqis. [Not included in this excerpt.—Editor] Although she is a good leader—that happens to be a woman—she is not taken as a universal example of leadership. Statements using masculine

forms or figures are limited to men and extended to women only by qiyas (analytical reasoning).

[269] Alvin J. Schmidt, Veiled and Silenced: How Culture Shaped Sexist Theology (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1989), Introduction, p. xiii.

[270] Schmidt, Veiled and Silenced, pp. 59–60.

[271] Ivan Illich, Gender (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), pp. 106–107.

[272] See Sayyid Qutb [1903–1966], Fi zilal al-Qur’an [In the Shade of the Qur’an] (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1980), volume 2 (of 6), pp. 642–643, where he discusses the shared beliefs and responsibility between men and women in the Islamic social system of justice.

[273] Fazlur Rahman, Islam and Modernity, pp. 5–7, discusses the moral values of the Qur’an in “extra-historical transcendental” terms; that is, the moral value extracted from a particular verse goes beyond the time and place of the specific instance at which that verse and its injunction was occasioned.

[274] The practice of stating that one’s wife was as “the back of my mother,” which would make conjugal relations impossible, but would not totally free the woman for remarriage.

[275] Wan Mohd. Nor Wan Daud, The Concept of Knowledge in Islam and Its Implications for Education in a Developing Country (London: Mansell, 1989), p. 7.

[276] See William Robertson Smith, Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, edited by Stanley A. Cook (London: A. and C. Black, 1907).

[277] Translation by A. Yusuf Ali, The Holy Qur’an: Text, Translation, and Commentary, U.S. edition (Elmhurst, N.Y.: Tahrike Tarsile Qur’an, 1987).

[278] [Fear of God.—Editor]

[279] It should not be overlooked in my literal interpretation, that “the wombs that bore you” is also used as a metaphor for the blood ties of family relations in general.

[280] To further substantiate this point of view, see the discussion of Mary, Mother of Jesus, in chapter 2. [Not included in this excerpt.—Editor]

[281] Which I will discuss in detail below.

[282] There is a distinction between wahy, receiving divine communication, and risala, receiving divine communication concerning the destiny of humankind, which includes the obligation to transmit the information of that wahy to humankind at large.

[283] Maryam [Mary, the mother of Jesus] and Umm Musa [the mother of Moses] among the women.

[284] See, for example, Sura 22, Verse 75.

[285] “See how We prefer one above another, and verily the Hereafter will be greater in darajat and greater in preference [tafdil].” (Sura 17, Verse 21) [Bracketed terms in Qur’anic quotations are the author’s, not the editor’s.—Editor]

[286] Carol Tarvis and Carole Wade, The Longest War: Sex Differences in Perspective, second edition (Orlando, Fl.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984), p. 3.

[287] Tarvis and Wade, The Longest War, p. 20.

[288] This is one of the verses which demonstrates that an Islamic society allows for economic classes.

[289] In addition, the preceding verses 221–227 discuss at length other details related to marriage, divorce, and widowhood.

[290] Edward William Lane, An Arab-English Lexicon (London: Librairie du Liban, 1980), part 5, p. 2017.

[291] As defined by Milton J. Cowan, A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic, third edition, edited by Hans Wehr (Ithaca, N.Y.: Spoken Language Services, 1976).

[292] For example, the Children of Israel were preferred over “other creatures” (the same term has been translated in chapter 1, the Fatiha, as “the worlds”) in Sura 2, Verses 47 and 122; and Sura 7, Verse 40. This preference is usually understood to mean that they were chosen to receive prophets and the revelations.

[293] [Obedient.—Editor]

[294] This is the ba al-sababiyya known in Arabic as the bi for a reason or purpose. It establishes a conditional relationship between two parts of a sentence or clause. The first part is conditional upon, and cannot be attributed without, the second part.

[295] Azizah al-Hibri, “A Study of Islamic Herstory: Or How Did We Ever Get into This Mess?” Women and Islam: Women’s Studies International Forum, volume 5, number 2, 1982, p. 218.

[296] Which I will discuss in detail below.

[297] Al-Hibri, “A Study of Islamic Herstory,” pp. 217–218.

[298] I have translated ba’d in its usual meaning of “some” or “a portion of.” However, there is also usage of ba’dplus masculine plural noun plus ba’d, which means “each other” with no particular number or gender implied. In other words, a degree of vagueness surrounds this statement. It could also mean women have a preference over men.

[299] Al-Hibri, “A Study of Islamic Herstory,” p. 218.

[300] Al-Kashshaf ‘an haqa’ iq al-tanzil wa ‘uyun al-aqawil fi wujuh al-tawil [The Revealer of the True Meanings of the Revelation and Select Opinions concerning Interpretations of the Text] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Ma’arif, no date), volume 1 (of 4), p. 523.

[301] Al-Kashshaf, volume 2, p. 117.

[302] Al-Hibri, “A Study of Islamic Herstory,” p. 217.

[303] Al-Hibri, “A Study of Islamic Herstory,” p. 218.

[304] For example, I would include Pickthall because he translates this passage as unrestricted “men are in charge of women.” Al-Zamakhshari, in Al-Kashshaf, volume 1, p. 523, states the terms he believes of God’s preference of men over women. ‘Abbas Mahmud Al-‘Aqqad [1889–1964], Al-Mar’afi al-Qur’an [Woman in the Qur’an] (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1962), p. 7, states the same. Finally, Mawdudi interprets it this way.

[305] Al-Kashshaf, volume 2, pp. 648–653.

[306] Qutb, Fi zilal al-Qur’an, volume 2, p. 650.

[307] Qutb, Fi zilal al-Qur’an, volume 2, p. 650.

[308] Qutb, Fi zilal al-Qur’an, volume 2, p. 650.

[309] Interview with Dale F. Eickelman and Sadek J. Sulaiman, Damascus, March 22, 1996.

[310] Dale F. Eickelman, “Islamic Liberalism Strikes Back,” Middle East Studies Association Bulletin, volume 27, number 2, December 1993, pp. 163–168; Peter Clark, “The Shahrur Phenomenon: A Liberal Islamic Voice from Syria,” Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, volume 7, number 3, October 1996, pp. 337–341.

[311] Muhammad Shahrour, al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an: Qira’a mu’asira (The Book and the Qur’an: A Contemporary

Reading) (Damascus: Al-Ahali li-l-Taba’a wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi’a, 1990), p. 44.

[312] In addition to Al-Kitab wa-l-Qur’an, Shahrour is the author of Dirasat al-Islamiyya mu’asira f dawla wa-l-mujtama’ (Contemporary Islamic Studies in State and Society) (Damascus: Al-Ahali li-l-Taba’a wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi’a, 1994), which contains an introduction replying to the critics of his first book (pp. 15–46); and Al-Islam wa-l-iman: Manzuma al-qiyam (Islam and Faith: A Treatise on Values) (Damascus: Al-Ahali li-l-Taba’a wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzi’a, 1996).

[313] On recent debates within Indian Islam, see Christian W. Troll, “Sharing Islamically in the Pluralistic Nation-State of India: The Views of Some Contemporary Indian Muslim Leaders and Thinkers,” in Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Zaidan Haddad, editors, Christian-Muslim Encounters (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), pp. 245–262.

[314] Science, Philosophy and Culture: Essays Presented in Honour of Humayun Kabir’s Sixty-Second Birthday (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1968), pp. xi-xii.

[315] M. Kamal Hassan, “Malaysia,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, pp. 35–38; Hussin Mutalib, Islam and Ethnicity in Malay Politics (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1990); Chandra Muzaffar, “Ethnicity, Ethnic Conflict, and Human Rights in Malaysia,” in Claude E. Welch Jr. and Virginia A. Leary, editors, Asian Perspectives on Human Rights (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1990), pp. 107–141; K. J. Ratnam, Communalism in the Political Process in Malaya (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: University of Malaya Press, 1965); R. K. Vasil, Ethnic Politics in Malaysia (New Delhi: Radiant, 1980);

Karl von Vorys, Democracy without Consensus: Communalism and Political Stability in Malaysia (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).

[316] Daniel S. Lev, “Human Rights NGOs [Non-Governmental Organizations] in Indonesia and Malaysia,” in Welch and Leary, Asian Perspectives on Human Rights, pp. 142–161; Amyn B. Sajoo, Pluralism in “Old Societies and New States”: Emerging ASEAN Contexts (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1994), pp. 53–54; and Sajoo, “Pondering the ‘Periphery’: Pluralist Trends in Southeast Asia,” Muslim Politics Report, number 8, Summer 1996, p. 5.

[317] There is this awareness, though non-Malays who become Muslims are sometimes referred to as people who have “masukMelayu”(become Malays). “MasukMelayu, “ however, need not be interpreted literally; it could simply mean those who have adopted the religion of the Malays.

[318] These communities would be the Kadazans, Ibans, and others of East Malaysia in the main and some of the Orang Asli of West Malaysia.

[319] In both Sabah and Sarawak, for instance, the Chief Ministership and certain other important political offices are held by indigenous Muslims, though non-Muslim indigenous communities are numerically stronger in both states. For a fuller discussion of politics in these states, see K.J. Ratnam and R.S. Milne, New States in a New Nation (London: Frank Cass, 1974).

[320] See “Amanat Yang di-Pertua Agong PAS Ulang Tahun 1958” [The 1958 Anniversary Speech of the President of the PAS], in Cenderamata Pembukaan Bangunan PAS Kelantan & Kongres PAS ke 13 [Souvenir Program in Conjunction with the Opening of the PAS’s Building in Kelantan and the Thirteenth PAS Congress].

[321] For a detailed analysis see my “Protection of the Malay Community: A study of UMNO’s Position and Opposition Attitudes,” Masters Thesis, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 1974.

[322] See A. Yusuf Ali [1872–1952], The Holy Qur’an: Text, Translation and Commentary (Lahore, Pakistan: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1972).

[323] For a discussion on the Constitution of Medina, see Zainal Abidin Ahmad, Piagam Nabi Muhammad s.a.w. [Charter of the Prophet Muhammad, Peace Be upon Him] (Jakarta, Indonesia: Bulan Bintang, 1973).

[324] See Sayyid Abul A’la Mawdudi, The Islamic Law and Constitution (Lahore, Pakistan: Islamic Publications Ltd.), p. 312.

[325] Mawdudi, The Islamic Law and Constitution, p. 159.

[326] In commenting upon that sura, Yusuf Ali notes, “In Islam, the equal status of the sexes is not only recognized but insisted on. If sex distinction, which is a distinction in nature, does not count in spiritual matters, still less of course would count artificial distinctions such as rank, wealth, position, race, color, birth, etc.” A. Yusuf Ali, The Holy Qur’an, p. 175.

[327] For the UMNO leadership as a whole, Bumiputraism is apparently justified on its own basis. Some analysis of this is available in my “The New Economic Policy and the Quest for National Unity,” Fifth Malaysian Economic Convention (Malaysian Economic Association, 1978).

[328] Two points, however, must be made. Firstly, there are without any doubt a number of Muslim youths who understand genuine Islamic principles. See, for instance, the view of Anwar Ibrahim [born 1947] (President, Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia [Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia], or ABIM), in Bintang Timur [Eastern

Star], 1st March 1979. Secondly, the world-wide interest in Islam among young Muslims has also had some bearing upon the Malaysian situation, but I do not consider it a crucial factor.

[329] This is due to both the rural-urban drift which has been on since Merdeka [Independence, 1957], and the New Economic Policy (NEP) [since the early 1970s] which among other things emphasizes Malay participation in commerce and industry.

[330] See The Star, 20 March 1979.

[331] This is partly due to the implementation of Malay as the main medium of education since 1970.

[332] The crucial word here is “halal” (legitimate). “Halal” signs therefore refer to foods that Muslims are allowed to eat. There has been a great deal of discussion about this in Utusan Malaysia [Malaysian Messenger] and Utusan Melayu [Malay Messenger, daily newspapers in Kuala Lumpur] in the last two years or so.

[333] The genesis of this whole atmosphere is discussed in my “Some Political Perspectives on the New Economic Policy,” Fourth Malaysian Economic Convention (Malaysian Economic Association, 1977).

[334] The development of these demands finds some mention in my “Dominant Concepts and Dissenting Ideas on Malay Society and Malay Rule from the Malacca Period to the Merdeka Period,” Doctoral Thesis, University of Singapore, 1977.

[335] See various parts in Muhammad Natsir, Capita Selecta [Selected Works], volumes I and II (Jakarta, Indonesia: Pustaka Pendis, 1957).

[336] The Qur’anic call for common principles is contained in Sura Al-‘Imran [Sura 3], Verses 64–66.

[337] For some discussion of common values, see my “Values in the Education System,” New Directions (Singapore), March 1976.

[338] “Mandi Safar” is a sort of purification bath confined mainly to Muslim groups in Malacca. It is pre-Islamic in origin and has some roots in Hindu custom. One of the better known puja ceremonies was the puja conducted for fishermen going out to sea. It was once popular in Kelantan. The former PAS government banned it.

[339] See Khalifah Abdul Hakim’s “Renaissance in Indo-Pakistan: Iqbal,” in M.M. Sharif, editor, A History of Muslim Philosophy, volume 2 (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1966), p. 1619.

[340] Michael E. Meeker, “The New Muslim Intellectuals in the Republic of Turkey,” in Richard Tapper, editor, Islam in Modern Turkey (London: I.B. Tauris, 1991), pp. 197–198.

[341] For instance, Ali Bulay, Islam ve Demokrasi (Islam and Democracy) (Istanbul: Beyan Yayinlari, 1993).

[342] A. Himmet Berki and Osman Keskioglu, Hatemu’l Enbiya Hz. Muhammed ve Hayati [The Seal of the Prophets, Hazrat Muhammad, and His Life], 7th edition (Ankara, Turkey, 1978), p. 204; S.M. Ahmed Nedvi and S.S. Ansari, Asr-l Saadet [The Era of Prosperity, Namely the Reign of the Prophet], translated [into Turkish] by A. Genceli (Istanbul, 1985), volume 1, p. 64.

[343] [Muhammad ibn Isma’il] Bukhari [810–870, hadith compiler], 56/181, number 1; M. Tayyib Oki?, “Islamiyette * Ilk* Nufus Sayimi” [The First Census in Islam], Ankara Universitesi Ilahiyat* Fakultesi Dergisi [Ankara University Theology Faculty Review], volume 7, 1958–1959, pp. 11ff

[344] S.M. Ahmed Nedvi and S.S. Ansari, volume 1, p. 64.

[345] We owe our recognition of the Document in the Islamic world to Professor Muhammad Hamidullah.... See his Islam * Peygamberi [The Prophet oflslam], translated [into

Turkish] by Professor Salih Tug*, fifth edition (Istanbul, 1990), volume 1, pp. 200ff [The following is translated from Bulan’s Turkish rendition.—Editor]

[346] In [‘Abd al-Malik] Ibn Hisham [died 833] this is written as ma’a (with), and in Abu ‘Ubayd [al-Qasim ibn Sallam, 770–838] as min (of). [These two authors, the most important sources for the text of the Medina Document, disagree on wording in a number of places. —Editor]

[347] Hamidullah, volume 1, p. 189.

[348] L. Caetani, Annali [delllslam] [The History of Islam] (Milan, Italy, 1903), translated [into Turkish] by Huseyin Cahit [Yal?in, 1874–1957] as Islam * Tarihi [The History of Islam] (Istanbul, 1924), volume 3, p. 112.

[349] See Sura 6, Verse 154; Sura 17, Verse 2; Sura 53, Verse 36; Sura 87, Verse 19; et cetera.

[350] [Earlier sections of the article discussed humans' natural sociability.—Editor]

[351] This conceptual frame should be considered as distinct from the Islamic treatment of dhimmi law, because the dhimmi status explains the legal order appropriate for nonMuslims who did not want to live amongst the Muslims and warred with them and were defeated. Our concern here is the conditions of non-Muslims, like those in Medina, who wanted to live amongst the Muslims and participated as equal parties to the political organization, in the form of legal groups, free people according to the general principles of the legal contract which they signed [with the Muslims].

[352] [A long footnote listing recent publications on this issue has been deleted.—Editor]

[353] Khalid Durdn, "Bosnia: Background to a Tragedy," Church and Society, volume 84, number 3, January-February 1994, pp. 72–82; Smail Balic, "Bosnia: The Challenge of a Tolerant Islam," translated by John Bowden, in Hans Kiing and Jiirgen Moltman, editors, *Islam: A Challenge for Christianity* (London: SCM Press; Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), pp. 3–10; Rusmir Mahmud-Cehajié, "Understanding the Suffering: A Sufi Perspective on the Plight of Bosnia's Muslims," *Islamic World Report*, volume 1, 1996, pp. 51–63.

[354] [The author wrote a column for the independent newspaper Oslobodenje in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.—Editor]

[355] Among the numerous treatments of Shari'ati's life and work, the following are notable for going beyond hagiography: H.E. Chehabi, Iranian Politics and Religious Modernism (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press); Hamid Dabashi, Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundations of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (New York: New York University Press, 1993), pp. 102–146; Shahrough Akhavi, "Shari'ati, 'Ali," in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the

Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 4, pp. 46–50; Abdulaziz Sachedina, “Ali Shariati: Ideologue of the Iranian Revolution,” in John L. Esposito, editor, Voices of Resurgent Islam (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 191–214.

[356] [Because the word insan has no gender, it is translated here as “humankind” rather than as “man.”—Editor]

[357] Nowadays this verse is said when a death occurs! When progressive and logical ideas fall into the hands of a corrupt and fanatic society, they, too, cause corruption. This applies to this Qur’anic verse.

[358] [Shari’ati is paraphrasing.—Translator]

[359] This is not a new subject. From time immemorial these ideas have been popular among common people. [The best-known morphologist is W.H. Sheldon, The Varieties of Temperament (New York: Harper and Row, 1942).—Translator]

[360] The belief that water, weather, mountainous climate, and so forth shape our character.

[361] [During the war in Vietnam, some Buddhist monks immolated themselves in public as a political statement.—Translator]

[362] Like Eskimos who abandon their elders in ice and snow to die because they can no longer produce.

[363] This notion was expressed in a couplet [quoted in the original text] by an Arabian poet who believed that his tribe was safe and a haven before becoming vulnerable when nibbled by calamities and forced into an extreme position.

[364] Reported by Ahmad [ibn Hanbal, 780–855], [Abu ‘Abd al-Rahman] al-Nasa’i [830–915], and [Abu ‘Abdallah] Ibn Maja [824–887] in their Sunan [Hadith collections].

[365] Reported by al-Imam Ahmad [ibn Hanbal], in hisMusnad[Hadith collection], al-Nasa’i and [‘Imad al-Din] Ibn Kathir [circa 1300–1373] in their Sunan [Hadith collections], and [Muhammad ibn ‘Abdallah] al-Hakim [al-Naysaburi, 933–1014] in his Mustadrak [’ ala sahihayn] [supplement to the authentic Hadith collections], on the authority of [‘Abdallah] Ibn ‘Abbas.

[366] Reported by Muslim [ibn al-Hajjaj, hadith compiler, circa 821–875]. [Jalal-al-Din] Al-Suyuti [died 1505] attributed this hadith to both Ahmad [ibn Hanbal] and Abu Dau’d [al-Sijistani, 817–889].

[367] Reported by Abu Ya’la [Ibn al-Fara’, died 1066] in hisMusnad[Hadith collection], on the authority of Malik ibn Anas [companion of the Prophet, 710–796]. Cited by Ibn Kathir in his interpretation of Sura 57, Verse 27, namely: “But the monasticism which they themselves invented, We did not prescribe for them.”

[368] Mukhtasar [The Handbook] of Ibn Kathir, volume 1, p. 541.

[369] Reported by [Muhammad ibn Isma’il] Al-Bukhari [810–870, hadith compiler].

[370] Reported by Al-Bukhari.

[371] Reported by [Abu Bakr Muhammad] al-Bazzaz [died 965], on the authority of Jabir [ibn ‘Abdallah, Companion of the Prophet, died 697], with a weak isnad [authentic oral history].

[372] Reported by al-Bukhari and al-Nasa’i on the authority of Abu Hurayra [Companion of the Prophet, died 678]. Explained by [‘Abd al-Ra’uf ibn Taj al-‘Arifin] al-Munawi [died 1621].

[373] Reported by al-Bukhari.

[374] Reported by al-Imam Ahmad [ibn Hanbal] and [Abu’l-Fadl Muhammad Katib ibn] al-Bayhaqi [995–1077] on the authority of [‘Abdallah] Ibn ‘Umar, and by [Abu Ja’far Muhammad] al-Tabari [died 922] on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas.

[375] Reported by al-Bukhari and [Abu ‘Isa Muhammad] al-Tirmidhi [hadith compiler, died 892].

[376] Reported by al-Bukhari.

[377] Authenticated by all authorities.

[378] Reported by al-Bukhari and others.

[379] [The latter two are theological positions historically dismissed as heretical.—Editor]

[380] Authenticated by all authorities.

[381] Reported by Muslim [ibn al-Hajjaj].

[382] Reported by Muslim [ibn al-Hajjaj].

[383] Reported by Muslim [ibn al-Hajjaj].

[384] See ‘Abd al-Rahman Abu al-Khayr, Dhikrayati ma’a Jama’at al-Muslimin (al-Takfir wa al-Hijra) [My Memoires of the Society of Muslims (Society of Excoriation and Exodus)].

[385] Reported by al-Bukhari.

[386] Reported by al-Bukhari.

[387] Translation by Muhammad Asad [born Leopold Weiss, Austria-Pakistan, born 1900].

[388] Reported by al-Bukhari.

[389] Wm. Montgomery Watt, “A Contemporary Muslim Thinker,” The Scottish Journal of Religious Studies, volume 6, number 1, Spring 1985, pp. 5–10.

[390] Fedwa Malti-Douglas, “Arkoun, Mohammed,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 1, pp. 139–140.

[391] Robert D. Lee, Overcoming Tradition and Modernity (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 143–174. Among Arkoun’s works are Lectures du Coran (Readings from the Qur’an) (Paris: G.P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1982); Pour

une critique de raison Islamique (For a Critique of Islamic Reason) (Paris: G.P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1984); LIslam: Morale et politique (Islam: Morals and Politics) (Paris: UNESCO and Desclee de Brouwer, 1986); and Ouvertures sur l'Islam translated by Robert D. Lee, as Rethinking Islam (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994).

[392] I prefer to use the French word for this important concept because it has no exact correspondent in English. See C. Castoriadis, L 'Institution imaginaire de la societe [The Imaginary Institution of Society] (Paris: Seuil, 1977).

[393] See my Tarikhiyyat al-fikr al-'arabi al-Islami [Historicity of Arab Islamic Thought] (Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Inma' al-'Arabi, 1985).

[394] Miskawayh [932–1030] did this before in his philosophical and historiographical works. See my Humanisms arabe au IVe/Xe siecle [Arab Humanism in the Fourth Century A.H./Tenth Century A.D.], second edition (Paris: Vrin, 1982).

[395] See my essays in Critique de la raison Islamique [Critique of Islamic Reason] (Paris: [G.P. Maisonneuve et Larose], 1984); and L'Islam: Morale et politique [Islam: Morals and Politics] (Paris: UNESCO-Desclee de Brouwer, 1986).

[396] Given and received are technical terms in linguistic and literary analyses. Islam is given as revealed in the grammatical structure of Qur'anic discourse, and it is received as such by the psychological consciousness generated by this discourse and the ritual performances prescribed by it. For more thorough elaboration of this approach, I refer to my essay, The Concept of Revelation: From Ahl al-Kitab to the Societies of the Book ([Claremont, Calif.:] The Claremont Graduate School, 1987).

[397] The comparative approach, attempted by L. Gardet and G. Anawati in their Introduction a la theologie musulmane [Introduction to Islamic Theology] [Paris: I. Vrin, 1948], is commanded by the postulates of Thomist theology. W.C. Smith has tried to open the field, including the case of Islam. See the recent book by Hans Kung, J. Van Ess, H. Von Stietencron, and H. Bechert, Le Christianisme et les religions du monde, Islam, Hindouisme, Bouddhisme [Christianity and the Religions of the World: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism], translated from German by Joseph Feisthauer (Paris: Seuil, 1986).

[398] I use this expression according to its historical elaboration by F[ernand] Braudel [1902–1985].

[399] Ann Elizabeth Mayer, Islam and Human Rights (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 54, 113.

[400] See generally, United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights, United Nations Document ST/HR/2/Rev. 1, United Nations sales number E. 79.XIV.6 (1980); and B.G. Ramcharan, editor, Human Rights Thirty Years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (The Hague, Netherlands: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979).

[401] These are the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950, the American Convention on Human Rights of 1969, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981.

[402] See, for example, Jack Donnelly, "Human Rights and Human Dignity: An Analytic Critique of Non-Western Conceptions of Human Rights," American Political Science Review, volume 76, June 1982, p. 303; and Rhoda Howard and Jack Donnelly, "Human Dignity, Human Rights and Political Regimes," American Political Science Review, volume 80, September 1986, p. 801.

For a survey of the main problems and theories in justification and support of universal standards of human rights, see Jerome J. Shestack, “The Jurisprudence of Human Rights,” in Theodore Meron, Human Rights in International Law: Legal and Policy Issues (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), p. 69.

[403] Warwick McKean, Equality and Discrimination under International Law (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), pp. 280–281.

[404] Official spokesmen of the Islamic Republic of Iran have voiced their belief that they are bound by Islamic law and not international human rights standards. See a collection of these statements in Edward Mortimer, “Islam and Human Rights,” Index on Censorship, volume 12, number 5, 1983, pp. 5–6.

[405] The same would be true of other differences such as race or ethnicity, language, and so on. But because shari ‘a does not sanction discrimination on any other grounds except gender and religion, this chapter will focus on these two grounds of discrimination.

[406] In the context of the modern nation-state, this tendency is reflected in general intolerance of minorities, whether religious or otherwise. Thus it has been said that “the ideals of national unity manifested by a central concentration of power; by a common language, culture and religion; and by economic and geographical limits, all so fundamental to the self-identification of the new states, tended also to express themselves in intolerant and repressive attitudes toward those who were perceived or perceived themselves as ‘others’” (Patrick Thornberry, “Is There a Phoenix in the Ashes? International Law and Minority Rights,” Texas International Law Journal, volume 15, Summer 1980, p. 421).

[407] Although this is the unavoidable conclusion of the briefest survey of the relevant principles and rules of shari’a, it is rarely admitted by contemporary Muslim writers on the subject.

One of the rare exceptions in modern Muslim writings is Sultanhussein Tabandeh, A Muslim Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (London: F.T. Goulding and Company, 1970), pp. 17–20 and passim, where the author states clearly and defends the exclusion of women and non-Muslims from the full range of human rights under shari’a.

[408] For example, the theories surveyed by Shestack, “Jurisprudence of Human Rights,” pp. 85 and forward, appear to be primarily based on the Western tradition. In fact, the available literature on the philosophical notions of “rights” and “universal human rights,” reviewed in Shestack, pp. 70–85, is not very useful for our purposes because it is primarily based on Western cultural tradition.

[409] Oscar Schachter, in his editorial comment, “Human Dignity as a Normative Concept,” American Journal of International Law, volume 77, 1983, p. 853, has suggested that it may be philosophically significant to derive human rights from the inherent dignity of human beings. But as Schachter himself has shown, the term human dignity has its own definitional problems.

[410] Here I am adopting the analysis of Ustadh [Teacher] Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, Second Message of Islam (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1987), pp. 80 and forward.

[411] Myles S. McDougal, Harold D. Lasswell, and Lungchu Chen, Human Rights and World Public Order (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 473–508; and V.

Nanda and C. Bassiouni, “Slavery and the Slave Trade: Steps towards Eradication,” Santa Clara Law Review, volume 12, 1972, p. 424.

Article 8 of the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956 requires states party to the convention to communicate to the secretary general of the United Nations copies of any laws, regulations, and administrative measures enacted or put into effect to implement the provisions of this convention. This documentation is to be used by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations as a basis for further recommendations on this subject.

[412] McKean, Equality and Discrimination under International Law, pp. 116–21.

[413] Louis Henkin, et al., International Law: Cases and Materials, second edition (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing, 1987), p. 982.

[414] The main current slavery convention was signed on September 25, 1926, and entered into force on March 9, 1927 (60 L.N.T.S. 253). More recent international treaties on the subject include the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, which was signed on September 7, 1956, and entered into force on April 30, 1957 (18 T.I.A.S. No. 6418, 266 U.N.T.S. 3).

[415] See, for example, Article 5 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and Article 8 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. This last article is exempt by Article 4 of the convention from derogation, that is, no state party to the convention may ever derogate from its obligation to prohibit slavery and the slave trade and servitude under any circumstances. Moreover, Articles 6 and 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, providing for the right to work, render slavery obsolete.

[416] Arcot Krishnaswami, Study of Discrimination in the Matter of Religious Rights and Practices (New York: United Nations, 1960), pp. 11–12; and Francisco Capotorti, Study of the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (New York: United Nations, 1979), pp. 1–3.

[417] This was true among states professing different sects within the same religion as well as among those adhering to different religions. Thus various European peace treaties since the 17th century have provided for the protection of Protestants within Catholic territory and vice versa. See Thornberry, “Is There a Phoenix in the Ashes?” p. 426 and accompanying notes.

[418] See, for example, Articles 1.3 and 55(c) of the United Nations Charter, Article 2 of the African Charter, and Article 2 of the Civil and Political Rights Covenant.

For a comprehensive survey and analysis of current treaty-based guarantees against such discrimination since the end of World War II, see Capotorti, Study of the Rights, pp. 26–41.

[419] The principle of nondiscrimination provided for in the articles cited in the previous note apply equally to discrimination on grounds of gender. Moreover, several specialized conventions specifically apply to the rights of women, such as the Convention on the Political Rights of Women of 1953 (193 U.N.T.S. 135). The most comprehensive of this class of international treaties is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979.

[420] Vernon Van Dyke, Human Rights, Ethnicity and Discrimination (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 194.

[421] This differential treatment, known as affirmative action or positive discrimination, has its own problems in practice. See, for example, Marc Galanter, Competing Equalities (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), for an explanation of these problems as they have arisen through the recent application of this principle in the Indian context.

[422] As was explained in chapter 4, the status of dhimmi [protected peoples] under shari ‘a guaranteed non-Muslims security of person and property and a degree of communal autonomy.

Shari ‘a also recognized for women an independent legal personality, including the full capacity to hold and dispose of property in their own right and certain minimum rights in family law and inheritance. See generally, Jane I. Smith, “Islam,” in Arvind Sharama, editor, Women in World Religions (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 235.

[423] Majid Khadduri, “Human Rights in Islam,” Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, number 243, 1946, p. 79.

[424] In a recent substantially revised version of this paper Khadduri omitted the above-quoted statement. Though emphasizing the need for reform and compliance with current international standards of human rights, Khadduri’s revised version does not dispute the accuracy of the statement from his 1946 paper. See Majid Khadduri, The Islamic Conception ofjustice (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 233.

[425] See, for example, Ali Abdel Wahid Wafi, “Human Rights in Islam,” Islamic Quarterly, Volume 11, 1967, p. 64; Khalid M. Ishaque, “Human Rights in Islamic Law,” International Commission of Jurists Review, volume 12, 1974, p. 51; and Isma’il al-Faruqi, “Islam and Human Rights,” Islamic Quarterly, volume 27, 1983, p. 12.

[426] Riffat Hassan, “On Human Rights and the Qur’anic Perspectives,” Journal of Ecumenical Studies, volume 19, 1982, p. 51.

[427] Tabandeh, Muslim Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, pp. 18–20 and 35–45. Reference to these and other points made in this book was made [in an earlier chapter].

[428] Fazlur Rahman, Islam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 38; and Majid Khadduri, War and Peace in the Law of Islam (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1955), p. 130.

For a comprehensive treatment of slavery in shari’a and in history see R. Brunschwig, “’Abd,” in Encyclopedia of Islam, new edition, volume 1, pp. 24–40. See also Reuben Levy, The Social Structure of Islam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), pp. 73–85.

[429] Modernist arguments that slavery should have been abolished by shari ‘a will be considered below.

[430] I am not concerned here with secret slavery and semislavery, which exist in many parts of the world.

[431] Tabandeh, Muslim Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, p. 27.

[432] For reports of sunna and other early traditions showing the free practice of slavery during the Prophet’s time see Majid Khadduri, The Islamic Law of Nations (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966), pp. 80 and forward.

[433] This, of course, does not cover the purchase of slaves, which is treated by shari’a jurists as part of the law of sale. See Brunschwig, “‘Abd.”

[434] Majid Khadduri and Herbert Liebesny, Law in the Middle East (Washington, D.C.: Middle East Institute, 1955), pp. 355–356. For a documented account of these options and differences of opinion among the jurists in matters of detail see Khadduri, War and Peace in the Law of Islam, pp. 126–130.

[435] For example, Sura 4, Verse 36 of the Qur’an instructs Muslims to “do good” and to treat their parents, relatives, orphans, slaves, and others well.

[436] Khadduri, War and Peace in the Law of Islam, pp. 131–32.

[437] Hassan, “On Human Rights and the Qur’anic Perspectives,” p. 59.

[438] In his explanation of this verse, [‘Imad al-Din] Ibn Kathir [circa 1300–1373] does not mention any implication of prohibition of the enslavement option. Rather, he quotes [Abu ‘Abdallah Muhammad] Shafi’i’s [767–820] statement of the four options open to the ruler over captives of war: execution, enslavement, or release with or without ransom.

[439] Slavery was abolished in Bahrain in 1937, Kuwait in 1947, and Qatar in 1952. See C.W.W. Greenidge, “Slavery in the Middle East,” Middle Eastern Affairs, December 1956, p. 439.

[440] Levy, Social Structure of Islam, pp. 91–134 and passim, for comparisons between various aspects of the status of women before and during the early Islamic period.

[441] On the relative improvements in the status of women introduced by shari’a see Sayed Ameer Ali, The Spirit of Islam (London: Christophers, 1922), pp. 222–257; Fazlur Rahman, “Status of Women in the Qur’an,” in Guity Nashat, editor, Women and Revolution in Iran (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1983), p. 37; and Noel Coulson, A History of Islamic Law (Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, 1964), pp. 14–15.

[442] On the acquisition of the status of aman and its consequences see Muhammad Hamidullah, Muslim Conduct of State, fifth edition (Lahore, Pakistan: Sh. M. Ashraf, 1966) pp. 201202; Khadduri and Liebesny, Law in the Middle East, pp. 361–62; and Ibrahim Shihata, “Islamic Law and the World Community,” Harvard International Club Journal, volume 4, 1962, pp. 108–109.

[443] Although this is the position of all major schools of Islamic jurisprudence, it is not based on direct Qur’anic prohibition of such marriages. Rather, it is based on the derivative argument that since Sura 4, Verse 34 of the Qur’an entitles the husband to exercise authority over his wife while stating, as in Sura 4, Verse 141, that a non-Muslim may never exercise authority over a Muslim, it follows that a man from the People of the Book, such as a Christian or Jew, may never marry a Muslim woman.

This reasoning will be repudiated at the end of this chapter through the application of the evolutionary principle of construction of Islamic sources.

[444] This was the construction given by the founding jurists to Sura 2, Verse 21; Sura 5, Verse 5; and Sura 9, Verse 10, of the Qur’an.

[445] Joseph Schacht, An Introduction to Islamic Law (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964), p. 170.

[446] On the contrast between shari ‘a view of the status and rights of women and that envisaged by Article 16 of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights see Tabandeh, Muslim Commentary on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, pp. 35–67.

[447] Sura 4, Verse 2, of the Qur’an. See Coulson, History of Islamic Law, pp. 18–19.

[448] This is the construction given by the founding jurists to Sura 2, Verses 226–232 of the Qur’an. Look under talaq in H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, editors, Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1953), pp. 564–567.

[449] Sura 4, Verses 11 and 176, of the Qur’an.

[450] Reports by nongovernmental organizations, such as Amnesty International and the Arab Human Rights Organization, and other monitoring documentation, such as Human Rights Internet Reporter, may be the best available sources of documentation for human rights violations. But because most Muslim countries are governed by authoritarian regimes, information about human rights violations is difficult to obtain.

[451] For an effort to do so see James Dudley, “Human Rights Practices in the Arab States: The Modern Impact of Shari ‘a Values,” Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law, volume 12, 1982, p. 55.

[452] Shari ‘a is the family law for Muslims in Egypt. See Maitre A. El-Kharboutly and Aziza Hussein, “Law and the Status of Women in the Arab Republic of Egypt,” Columbia Human Rights Law Review, volume 8, 1976, p. 35.

[453] [The distinction between the Mecca and Medina stages is derived from the work of Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, who is also included in this volume.—Editor]

[454] Peter Clarke, “Islamic Reform in Contemporary Nigeria,” Third World Quarterly, volume 10, number 3, April 1988, p. 521.

[455] Farhang Rajaee, “Islam and Modernity: The Reconstruction of an Alternative Shi’ite Islamic Worldview in Iran,” in Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby, editors, Fundamentalisms and Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 111.

[456] Mehrzad Boroujerdi, “The Encounter of Post-Revolutionary Thought in Iran with Hegel, Heidegger, and Popper,” in Serif * Mardin, editor, Cultural Transitions in the Middle East (Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1994), pp. 236–259; Yann Richard, “Clercs et Intellectuels de la Republique Islamique d’Iran” (Clerics and Intellectuals of the Islamic Republic of Iran), in Gilles Kepel and Yann Richard, editors, Intellectuels et militants de l’Islam contemporain (Intellectuals and Militants of Contemporary Islam) (Paris: Seuil, 1990), pp. 48–58; Valla Vakili, Debating Religion and Politics in Iran: The Religions Thought of Abdolkarim Soroush (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, occasional paper no. 2, 1996).

[457] Index on Censorship, volume 25, number 4, July-August 1996, pp. 165–178.

[458] This speech and several essays on Iqbal’s political thought appear in C.M. Naim, editor, Iqbal, Jinnah, and Pakistan (Syracuse, N.Y.: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, 1979).

[459] Mumtaz Ahmad, “Pakistan,” and Hafeez Malik, “Iqbal, Muhammad,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic

World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, p. 296, and volume 2, pp. 221–224.

[460] [Iqbal equates “liberalism” with secularism.—Editor]

[461] [The Khawarji, or Kharijites, were an early Islamic sect often called “puritanical” for their focus on the extirpation of sin.—Editor]

[462] [The Mu’tazilites were an early Islamic sect that helped to found Islamic philosophy on ancient Greek philosophical methods.—Editor]

[463] [Persia, now called Iran, is the primary home of the minority Shi’i sect of Islam, as distinct from the majority Sunni sect. Shi’is, unlike Sunnis, believe that the Prophet’s twelfth successor, referred to as the Absent or Hidden Imam, has been in occultation since the ninth century and will return as the messiah.—Editor]

[464] [Possibly Muhammad ibn Bahadur Zarkashi, eighth century A.H./fourteenth century A.D.—Editor]

[465] Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na’im, “Translator’s Introduction,” in Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, The Second Message of Islam (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1987); Khalid Duran, “An Alternative to Islamism: The Evolutionary Thought of Mahmud Taha,” Cross Currents, volume 42, number 4, Winter 1992–1993, pp. 453–467; Paul J. Magnarella, “Republican Brothers,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, pp. 429–430.

[466] [These somewhat technical terms refer to the various degrees of piety and perfection of conduct and lifestyle, in accordance with religious and moral norms and ethics.— Translator]

[467] [God in His comprehensive and all-preceding knowledge already knew that Islam would be rejected when first offered in Mecca, but He conducted the experiment for our sake, so that we should know with certainty. God’s knowledge is ancient and external beyond time, qadim and not hadith. —Translator]

[468] [Reference here is to the hadith where the Prophet describes self-control as the primary and major jihad or self-exertion.—Translator]

[469] [In pre-Islamic days, the Arabs used to bury their daughters alive to avoid any shame they might cause to them, if taken by their enemies, and to avoid having to defend and feed them generally.—Translator]

[470] [That is to say, people’s repentance is initiated by God before it can be undertaken by them.—Translator

[471] [Three letters of the Arabic alphabet. 28 of 114 suras of the Qur’an begin with letters.—Editor

[472] [These terms refer to the Qur’an at different levels of knowledge and understanding of the truth in its batin, beyond the superficial zahir meaning of the text.—Translator

[473] [As indicated earlier in his book, the author includes both the Marxist and liberal traditions when he refers to Western civilization.—Translator

[474] These extracts, corresponding roughly to the part quoted by the author in Arabic, are quoted here as translated by Joseph Govorse, in The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War (New York: Modern Library, 1934), pp. 104–105.

[475] For differing interpretations of Madjid's views, see Muhammad Kamal Hassan in Muslim Intellectual Responses to "New Order" Modernization in Indonesia (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kementerian Pelajaran, Malaysia, 1980), pp. 89–99; and Greg Barton, "The International Context of the Emergence of Islamic Neo-Modernism in Indonesia," pp. 69–82 in M.C. Ricklets, editor, Islam in the Indonesian Social Context (Clayton, Australia: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, Annual Indonesian Lectures, number 15, 1991).

[476] Nurcholish Madjid, "The Issue of Modernization among Muslims in Indonesia," pp. 143–155 in Gloria Davis, editor, What Is Modern Indonesian Culture? (Athens, Ohio: Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1979).

[477] Howard M. Federspiel, Muslim Intellectuals and National Development in Indonesia (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 1992), p. 42.

[478] Douglas E. Ramage, Politics in Indonesia: Democracy, Islam, and the Ideology of Tolerance (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 218; Amyn B. Sajoo, "Pondering the 'Periphery': Pluralist Trends in Southeast Asia," Muslim Politics Report, number 8, Summer 1996, p. 5.

[479] [Note the author's liberal interpretation of the verse.—Translator]

[480] Kenneth Cragg, "Mamadou Dia of Senegal," in The Pen and the Faith: Eight Modern Muslim Writers and the Qur'an (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp. 33–52; Rene Luc Moreau, Africains Musulmans (African Muslims) (Paris: Presence Africaine; Abidjan: Inades, 1982), pp. 275–279.

[481] [The shahada, which translates literally as witnessing, is repeated at all prayers.—Editor]

[482] Aly Mazaheri, La vie quotidienne des musulmans au Moyen Age [The Everyday Life of Muslims in the Middle Ages, 1951].

[483] W[ilfred Cantwell] Smith, Islam in Modern [History, 1957].

[484] [The Mu’talizites were an early Islamic sect that helped to found Islamic philosophy on ancient Greek philosophical methods.—Editor]

[485] To take up the admirable formulas of J. Lacroix in a different context.

[486] I speak as a Sunni—a Sunni convinced that doctrinal pluralism cannot exclude fraternal exchange in the heart of the umma [Islamic community].

[487] We are paraphrasing a formula of Eric Weil’s.

[488] F. Perroux, “Alienation et creation collective” [Alienation and Collective Creation], ISEA, June 1964, p. 40.

[489] F. Perroux, op. cit.

[490] Georges Gueron, Perspective no. 5.

[491] The expression is J. Lacroix’s.

[492] Tamara Sonn, “Rahman, Fazlur,” in John L. Esposito, editor, The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), volume 3, p. 408.

[493] Tamara Sonn, “Fazlur Rahman’s Islamic Methodology,” The Muslim World, volume 81, numbers 3–4, July-October 1991, pp. 212–230.

[494] Frederick Mathewson Denny, “Fazlur Rahman: Muslim Intellectual,” The Muslim World, volume 79, number 2, April 1989, pp. 91–101.

[495] Muhammad Shibli Nu’mani, Safarnama (Lahore, Pakistan: Ghulam ‘Ali and Sons, 1961), pp. 285–286.

[496] Shibli Nu’mani, p. 349.

[497] [A chapter of Iqbal’s work is included in this volume.—Editor]

[498] Philip Lewis, Islamic Britain: Religion, Politics and Identity among British Muslims (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994).

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[500] The Everlasting Man (London: Burns and Oates, 1974), originally published in 1925, p. 9.

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[502] Kenneth Cragg, The Pen and the Faith (London: Allen and Unwin, 1985), chapter 7.

[503] “The Great Perhaps,” in Resurgence, number 137, 1990, pp. 47–48.

[504] The term is Qur’anic. A man and woman are said to be like garments for each other [Sura 2, Verse 187].

[505] The Revival of the Religious Sciences, book 111, section 198, Cairo edition. Compare the passage in Matthew, chapter 23, verse 27.

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ANTHROPOLOGISTS IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

SPEAKING OUT ON WAR, PEACE, AND AMERICAN POWER

EDITED BY ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ

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FOR JORGE, ERNESTO, AND VERÓNICA

*** Contents

Acknowledgments

INTRODUCTION

Anthropologists in the Public Sphere: Speaking

Out on War, Peace, and American Power

PART I: WAR, PEACE, AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY 21

CHAPTER 1: FRANZ BOAS 23

“Scientists as Spies” (The Nation, 1919)

CHAPTER 2: MARGARET MEAD 26

“Warfare Is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity” (Asia, 1940)

CHAPTER 3: MARSHALL SAHLINS 34

“Once You’ve Broken Him Down...” (The Nation, 1965)

CHAPTER 4: GERALD D. BERREMAN 46

“Contemporary Anthropology and Moral Accountability” (To See Ourselves, 1973)

CHAPTER 5: LAURA NADER 52

“Two Plus Two Equals Zero—War and Peace Reconsidered” (Radcliffe Quarterly, 1983)

CHAPTER 6: BEATRIZ MANZ 58

“Dollars That Forge Guatemalan Chains” (New York Times, 1985)

CHAPTER 7: DAVID PRICE 62

“Anthropologists as Spies” (The Nation, 2000)

CHAPTER 8: PIERRE BOURDIEU 71

“Abuse of Power by the Advocates of Reason” (Acts of Resistance, 1998)

PART II: PRESCIENT ANTHROPOLOGY:

DIAGNOSING CRISES ABROAD 73

CHAPTER 9: ROBERT M. HAYDEN 75

“West Must Correct Its Mistakes in Yugoslavia”

(Baltimore Sun, 1992)

CHAPTER 10: ROBERT M. HAYDEN 78

“NATO Fuels the Balkan Fire”

(Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 1999)

CHAPTER 11: ANNA SIMONS 82

“No Exit from Somalia”

(Washington Post, 1991)

CHAPTER 12: ANNA SIMONS 84

“Our Abysmal Ignorance about Somalia” (Washington Post, 1992)

CHAPTER 13: ANNA SIMONS 88

“The Somalia Trap” (Washington Post, 1993)

CHAPTER 14: WINIFRED TATE 91

“Increased U.S. Military Aid to Colombia

Won’t Curb Drug Trafficking”

(San Francisco Chronicle, 1999)

CHAPTER 15: WINIFRED TATE 94

“Colombia: Rules of the Game”

(Foreign Policy in Focus, 2001)

CHAPTER 16: LESLEY GILL 97

“Unveiling U.S. Policy in Colombia”

(Foreign Policy in Focus, 2002)

CHAPTER 17: MARC EDELMAN 102

“The Price of Free Trade: Famine” (Los Angeles Times, 2002)

CHAPTER 18: ALI QLEIBO 105

“How Two Truths Make One Tragedy” (The Independent, 2000)

CHAPTER 19: JETT HALPER 108

“The Matrix of Control”

(Media Monitors Network, 2001)

CHAPTER 20: JETT HALPER 112

“After the Invasion: Now What?”

(CounterPunch, 2002)

CHAPTER 21: HUGH GUSTERSON 117

“If U.S. Dumps Test Ban Treaty,

China Will Rejoice” (Los Angeles Times, 2001)

PART III: PRELUDE TO SEPTEMBER 11 121

CHAPTER 22: ASHRAT GHANI 123

“Cut Off the Arms Flow and Let Afghans Unite” (Los Angeles Times, 1989)

CHAPTER 23: JAMES MERRYMAN 127

“U.S. Can Strengthen African Ties in Wake of Terrorism with Aid, Clear Policies”

(Harrisburg Patriot-News, 1998)

CHAPTER 24: ROBERT TERNEA 130

“Egyptians Don’t Like Saddam, But...” (Austin American-Statesman, 1991)

CHAPTER 25: BARBARA NIMRI AZIZ 133 “Gravesites—Environmental Ruin in Iraq” (Metal of Dishonor, 1997)

CHAPTER 26: TADWA EL GUINDI 140

“U.N. Should Act to Protect Muslim Women” (Newsday, 1998)

CHAPTER 27: ZIEBA SHORISH-SHAMLEY, INTERVIEWED

BY JANA WENDT 144

“Women under the Taliban” (Dateline, 2001)

CHAPTER 28: WILLIAM O. BEEMAN 147

“Follow the Oil Trail—Mess in Afghanistan Partly Our Government’s Fault”

(Pacific News Service, 1998)

PART IV: ANTHROPOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS

OF SEPTEMBER 11 151

CHAPTER 29: CATHERINE LUTZ 153

“Our Legacy of War”

(Chronicle of Higher Education, 2001)

CHAPTER 30: DAVID HARVEY, TALAL ASAD, CINDI KATZ, NEIL SMITH, AND IDA SUSSER 156 “Local Horror/Global Response”

(Chronicle of Higher Education: Colloquy, 2001)

CHAPTER 31: WILLIAM O. BEEMAN 158

“A War Our Great-Grandchildren Will Be Fighting—Understanding Osama Bin Laden” (Pacific News Service, 2001)

CHAPTER 32: JANET MCINTOSH 161

“What Have the 9/11 Investigators Overlooked?” (Christian Science Monitor, 2002)

CHAPTER 33: WADE DAVIS 165

“We Need a Global Declaration of Interdependence” (International Herald Tribune, 2002)

PART V: ON AFGHANISTAN, CENTRAL ASIA, AND THE MIDDLE EAST 171

CHAPTER 34: ROBERT CANFIELD 173

“Nation Is Home to Afghans, Mujahedeen, Taliban, Afghan-Arabs, to Name a Few” (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 2001)

CHAPTER 35: ASHRAF GHANI 176

“The Folly of Quick Action in Afghanistan” (Financial Times, 2001)

CHAPTER 36: NAZIF SHAHRANI 180 “Afghanistan Can Learn from Its Past” (New York Times, 2001)

CHAPTER 37: ZIEBA SHORISH-SHAMLEY, INTERVIEWED BY AMY GOODMAN 183

“Women in the New Afghanistan” (Democracy Now! 2001)

CHAPTER 38: DAVID B. EDWARDS AND SHAHMAHMOOD MIAKHEL 189

“Enlisting Afghan Aid” (People’s Geography Project, 2001)

CHAPTER 39: KAMRAN ASDAR ALI 192

“Pakistan’s Dilemma” (Middle East Report Online, 2001)

CHAPTER 40: FRANCESCA MEREU, WITH SERGEI ARUTYUNOV AND IAN CHESNOV 197

“War Destroyed Chechnya’s Clan Structure” (Middle East News Online, 2002)

PART VI: EXAMINING MILITARISM AND THE “WAR ON TERROR” 203

CHAPTER 41: WILLIAM O. BEEMAN 205

“U.S. Anti-Terrorist Message Won’t Fly in Islamic World” (Pacific News Service, 2001)

CHAPTER 42: DAVID PRICE 208

“Terror and Indigenous Peoples: War without End”

(CounterPunch, 2001)

CHAPTER 43: JOHN BURDICK 211

“Afghan War Could Be Recruiting Tool for Terrorists” (Syracuse Post-Standard, 2001)

CHAPTER 44: DALE F. EICKELMAN 214

“First, Know the Enemy, Then Act” (Los Angeles Times, 2001)

CHAPTER 45: JOHN BURDICK 219

“Sept. 11 Exposes Futile Search for ‘Perfect’ Missile Defense” (Syracuse Post-Standard, 2001)

CHAPTER 46: ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ 222

“Ignorance Is Not Bliss” (San Francisco Chronicle, 2002)

CHAPTER 47: MAHMOOD MAMDANI 226

“Turn Off Your Tunnel Vision” (Washington Post, 2002)

CHAPTER 48: THOMAS MCKENNA, INTERVIEWED BY NERMEEN SHAIKH 229

“The Roots of Muslim Separatism in the Philippines” (AsiaSource, 2002)

PART VII: ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND CIVIL LIBERTIES 237

CHAPTER 49: ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ 239

“Lynne Cheney-Joe Lieberman Group Puts Out a Blacklist” (San Jose Mercury News, 2001)

CHAPTER 50: DAVID PRICE 243

“Academia under Attack: Sketches for a New Blacklist” (CounterPunch, 2001)

CHAPTER 51: HUGH GUSTERSON, INTERVIEWED BY SHARON BASCO 247

“Lynne Cheney’s Free Speech Blacklist” (TomPaine.com, 2002)

CHAPTER 52: LAURA NADER

“Harmony Coerced Is Freedom Denied” (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2001)

EPILOGUE: Unconventional Anthropology: Challenging the Myths of Continuous War 257

List of Contributors 269

Permissions 273

Index 279

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** Introduction: Anthropologists in the Public Sphere

Speaking Out on War, Peace, and American Power

ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ

Every time intellectuals have the chance to speak yet do not speak, they join the forces that train men not to be able to think and imagine and feel in morally and politically adequate ways. When they do not demand that the secrecy that makes elite decisions absolute and unchallengeable be removed, they too are part of the passive conspiracy to kill off public scrutiny. When they do not speak, when they do not demand, when they do not think and feel and act as intellectuals... they contribute to the moral paralysis, the intellectual rigidity, that now grip both leaders and led around the world.

—C. WRIGHT MILLS, THE CAUSES OF WORLD WAR III (1958)

It is time to divert at least some of our research energies away from the minutiae of diverse problems and to focus on their broader context. What has been missing is perspective ...Anthropology appears to be a discipline that can show us how we got where we are and suggest how we might get out.

—JOHN BODLEY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND CONTEMPORARY HUMAN PROBLEMS (1985)

*** Anthropology for the General Public

This book is about anthropologists communicating what they know about culture, society, history, and power with the general public. Their statements are short, pointed, and passionate, based on experience and immersion in the subject matter—not fly-by-night observations.

In the 1930s and 1940s, some American anthropologists were so influential, and their work so well known, that they were literally household names. In magazines and newspaper articles and in public debates, Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead (all of Columbia University), as well as Ashley Montagu, regularly commented upon issues of national and international politics and culture using language that almost any literate person could understand.

It is not unusual for anthropologists in other countries to address broad audiences—for example, in Mexico, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Margarita Nolasco, and Roger Bartra often contribute commentaries to daily newspapers such as La Jornada and Reforma. In France, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Pierre Bourdieu published frequently in Le Monde and other periodicals. Brazil, India, and other countries also have anthropologists who are national figures.

Today few anthropologists could be considered celebrities in the United States, but that does not mean that none speak to the public. The contemporary picture is more disperse, with hundreds of individuals reaching out to wider audiences—in local newspapers, on radio programs and television shows, at schools, museums, libraries, and bookstores, and with community organizations. As the discipline has expanded, it has become more diverse and eclectic. Not surprisingly, efforts at publicizing anthropological knowledge are more varied and decentralized.

There is a wide range of projects under way to disseminate anthropology within the United States. An anthropologist at Virginia Polytechnic, Samuel Cook, has spent years working with community groups in the Appalachian region to draw attention to the environmentally destructive practice of mountaintop removal by coal mining companies. Robert Borofsky of Hawaii Pacific University is revitalizing public anthropology by searching for new avenues to make anthropological knowledge accessible to nonspecialists. His projects include the compilation of concise summaries of articles published in the discipline’s most widely circulated journals. Recently, anthropology graduate students at the University of California, Berkeley, edited an

anthology, September 11: Contexts and Consequences, to help broaden public knowledge about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Thousands of copies now circulate among those seeking a better understanding of fast-moving foreign policies. Eric Prokosch, whose anthropological analysis of antipersonnel weapons in The Technology of Killing (1995) provides critical information for researchers and the lay public, is perhaps best known for working with Amnesty International in campaigns to end torture and the death penalty. Still others, such as Jan English-Lueck from San Jose State University, are introducing anthropology to high school, junior high, and elementary school students, not only as a way of recruiting future generations of anthropologists, but also to train young minds to think comparatively and critically.

This collection of readings focuses on another group of anthropologists working to publicize their knowledge through the popular press. Specifically, they make use of mass media to diffuse information about U.S. foreign policy and its impact upon other societies. Most of the pieces included here have appeared in newspapers, magazines, or online journals, while a few others are from interviews on television or radio programs. These anthropologists are participant-observers and citizen-scholars whose work appeals directly to the American public.

Although all the contributors have been trained as anthropologists, not all are academics. Some are graduate students, while others are professors or professors emeriti. The collection also includes pieces by anthropologists working for nonprofit or nongovernmental organizations, popular magazines, radio stations, and activist groups. At first sight, it is striking that the majority of the articles have been written by anthropologists who are not based at the old prestige centers of the discipline—the academic departments of elite universities such as Columbia University. Yet an anthropology attuned to public audiences may well reemerge from the profession’s peripheries, if greater tolerance for experimentation is permitted from off-center locations.

A common thread links the individual articles and interviews: they may be read as cultural critiques of American Empire. The emergence and extension

of this empire and the corporatization of government are among the most important historical facts of our time and have inspired recent studies by social scientists, economists, and other scholars.[1] Some of the contributors to this book directly address aspects of U.S. governmental foreign policy and its effects in Latin America, the Balkans, Central Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Others focus on the role of social scientists in U.S. imperialist projects. Still others examine connections between “free” trade, corporate power, and the role of military regimes in establishing and maintaining a “New World Order” in the service of multinational corporations.

The anthropologists included in this book are sophisticated in their use of cross-cultural comparison and history, and recognize that cultures are complex and change over time. Most are keenly aware—based on first hand experience—that the analysis of power and control in variegated forms on a global scale is necessary for understanding contemporary realities. The Cold War, economic development programs, and now the “war on terror” have had dramatic effects on people in the “Third World.”

In some cases, an anthropologist’s repeated efforts to make a prognosis appear clearly as open warnings to policy makers about the possible consequences of government action. Such commentaries are published but more often than not ignored by policy makers—this has especially been true in recent years. When the situation becomes a crisis, the anthropologist writes again, and recommendations once again are not used. After the crisis has come to a head and disaster has occurred, the anthropologist tries to draw a lesson from it, and he or she is sometimes invited in to fix things after the fact.

Lack of response from policy makers to early warnings might partially explain the surge in cultural critiques that have emerged since the attacks of September 11. Literally dozens of anthropologists have written and spoken about multiple aspects of the tragic events and their aftermath, often with tremendous urgency. For this reason, the geographic center of gravity of this collection falls in the Middle East and Central Asia, since the media, government officials, and ordinary Americans have looked upon these areas with interest and concern. Many of the authors counter ethnocentric or

stereotypical views of a region’s peoples by helping readers understand its cultural complexity and historical connections to Europe and the United States. Confronting persistent ignorance with persistent appeals to reason may lead to change if public opinion can be impacted. Although policy makers may not be quick to use anthropological commentaries, the general public often does a better job. It is to spark citizen thought and action that we write, since without the push and pull of ordinary citizens, there is no democracy.

A publicly engaged anthropology is more necessary now than ever before—not in spite of, but because of, what some call corporate colonialism and what others call free trade. Speaking out and insisting that anthropology play a role in public discussions is especially critical as private interests recruit anthropologists to help promote an expanding multinational corporate dominion by transforming peasants, huntergatherers, pastoralists, refugees, and immigrants into mass consumers.

*** Why Anthropology?

Daily newspapers, evening news programs, and weekly magazines report on a long list of pressing issues. Economic globalization and its contradictory effects, ethnic strife, biotechnology, multiculturalism, fundamentalisms and religious revival, nuclear proliferation, the nature of human intelligence, and the state of the environment frequently make headlines. So do seemingly endless wars on terrorism and drugs.

Topics such as these beg for thoughtful analysis. Many self-described experts, however, often suffer from myopia, ethnocentrism, lack of imagination, and, sometimes, dubious credentials. More and more of them are public relations people posing as independent third parties who conduct scientific research for the highest bidder while concealing conflicts of interest.[2] Others who have been assigned the name “pundits” attempt to speak with authority about topics they often know little about.[3] Some of them speak about culture and civilization as if they had come up with the concepts themselves—and abuse them daily.

Considering this sad state of affairs, anthropologists may be uniquely positioned to speak with knowledge and insight. The anthropological lens focuses on humans holistically and cross-culturally, never losing sight of long-term historical processes. Good anthropology integrates culture, language, biology, and history to answer questions about humans and the societies they have made.

At a time when technical experts are trained to think in reductionistic terms by breaking problems into tinier and tinier pieces, to view issues from an ethnocentric perspective ignorant of other cultures, and to live in the present without remembering the past, many anthropologists still strive to be generalists. This contrasts sharply with the approach of many policy makers in our country, who act under the flawed assumption that human troubles can be bracketed off and separated from history, culture, politics, and the future.

Yet we have learned that humans are not automatons. The human horizon has myriad possibilities: Homo sapiens is a creature that sometimes cooperates but just as frequently conflicts, a creature of habit and reflex but also of creativity and innovation, of selfishness but also of altruism. Some of the most persistent and perplexing questions seek to discover how and why groups of people coalesce or break apart—how human relationships hang together or unravel, what changes, what does not. We have long been interested in the question of survival— how, under situations of tremendous ecological, political, or economic pressure, men and women innovate or acquiesce.[4]

Perhaps as importantly, most cultural anthropologists undertake extended fieldwork, living in a different society for a year or more in an effort to understand things “from the native’s point of view.” We live and talk with real people and piece together complex realties from interviews, observations, documents, and other sources. Anthropologists are interested in streets, barrios, ghettos, villages, and refugee camps as well as airport lobbies, first-class hotels, theaters, and bars.

This wide-angle lens gives us a powerful tool for critiquing contemporary life, since we are at once culturally immersed and detached. With insight, anthropologists have challenged deeply held convictions about affluence and poverty, as when Marshall Sahlins suggested that limited wants—not just the accumulation of material goods—might be an alternative basis for defining wealth.[5] Or about science—as when Bronislaw Malinowski insisted that all peoples have magic, religion, and science.[6] Or about sexual norms—as when Margaret Mead informed us that sexual practices are not universal.[7] Or about “race” —as when Franz Boas demonstrated that biological variation within human populations is much greater than the variation between them — an early critique of biological hierarchies.[8] Time and again, anthropological awareness of alternatives has opened new paths for the future.

Sometimes anthropology has demonstrated an uncanny ability to diagnose problems before they become crises. Anthropological prescience has sometimes foretold events months or years in advance. As we shall see, some anthropologists have very publicly predicted impending political and humanitarian disasters in Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and Afghanistan, to name a few. In the selections in this volume, authors have pointed to specific conditions that signal serious trouble ahead in Central America, Pakistan, the Middle East, and the United States. This work, based upon on-the-ground experience and intimate cultural knowledge, suggests a novel approach towards foreign policy in which anthropologists might take a leading role: a preventive diplomacy that aims to forestall (rather than await) future crises by addressing root causes. Current approaches based upon gunboat diplomacy and Realpolitik have proven to be unsustainable in economic and humanitarian terms—or indeed in survival terms.

*** Speaking Out as a Public Service

On the surface it is peculiar—even bizarre—that U.S. anthropologists don’t have an even more public face, especially since so many either work at public institutions of higher learning or directly for government agencies. Taxpayers underwrite much of our work, legislators allocate the funds—but what are they getting in return? Granted, many of us teach, but should this

be the extent of our public service? Should service include governmental policy recommendations? Expert testimony before congressional committees? Education of the general public?

We might step back in time, to the period before anthropology in the United States was based in universities. A century ago many of its practitioners were based in museums, public spaces for educating as well as entertaining the public. Some argued that for anthropology to survive, museums had to attract large numbers of laypeople—or else wither away from irrelevance and public indifference. The subject matter was inherently interesting, but the problem, still relevant today, was how to pitch information to the general public in a palatable yet enlightening way.

As more anthropologists became full-time academics in the twentieth century, concern for making knowledge public sometimes lapsed. Activities and publications thought to be nonacademic were seldom useful for attaining tenure (or for promotions), and the gap between academic and nonacademic anthropology widened. Today, the term “journalistic” is sometimes used to stigmatize such work. As a colleague once said, “You have to have two discussions going at the same time— one with the geeks in the department and another with the ordinary folks.”

In many cases, university professors have abandoned ordinary folks altogether and are just talking to each other. Kendall Thu of Iowa State observes this when he points out that some cultural anthropologists “have been pursuing trendy issues of postmodernism, blurred genres and identities, hermeneutic interpretation, voices of hegemony, and reflexivity... we are making ourselves increasingly irrelevant to contemporary policy and politics.” [9] This is not to dismiss postmodern approaches—after all, they have partly inspired critiques of hegemonic discourses, including “Orientalist” discourses that have produced stereotypes of “the East”—but where they are found, introversion and self-absorption have undermined their potential connections to real world affairs. Malaysian anthropologist Wazir Karim argues that much of academic anthropology has isolated itself by refusing to confront pressing political issues such as the use of “Western” knowledge by “Third World” elites for the repression of workers, peasants, women, and indigenous people.[10] And Laura Nader recently noted that

“anthropology is presently vastly hampered by both secrecy and selfcensorship and in danger of becoming insular to the point of irrelevance except for literary and cultural studies concerns.” [11]

In recent decades, anthropologists have become increasingly specialized and consequently fenced into narrow subspecialties and fields. Many are unable to communicate with wider publics. Critics have observed this phenomenon more generally across the social sciences and humanities, while others have commented upon the decline of “public intellectuals” in the United States in the twentieth century. This may be the culmination of historical processes: since at least the 1870s, social scientists who have publicly challenged established structures of power in the United States—particularly corporate power—have often been marginalized, persecuted, or stripped of their positions for allegedly violating the norms of an objective and value-free science.[12] Yet as economist Douglas Dowd once noted, “The alternatives are not ‘neutrality’ and ‘advocacy.’ To be uncommitted is not to be neutral, but to be committed—consciously or not—to the status quo.” [13] We might take heart in knowing that there are clear exceptions to the rule of intellectual confinement among U.S. academics, as in the case of Edward Said, Patricia J. Williams, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Cornel West, Juliet Schor, Noam Chomsky, and Saskia Sassen, all of whom communicate with broad publics.

There are more reasons why anthropologists do not reach wider audiences. At the same time that political and critical perspectives have arisen, the corporate media is becoming more restrictive and homogenous. The range of political perspectives has demonstrably narrowed in the last decade, according to media watchdog groups and foreign observers of U.S. conformity.

Factors internal to the discipline may also play a role in anthropologists opting out of communication with wider publics. A host of everyday practices function as barriers between academic anthropologists and nonprofessionals, including the business model of the AAA (and increasingly of academic departments), annual meetings held in luxury hotels, hiring practices and patron-client relationships that tend to exclude women and minorities, and

class-based distinctions such as dress, speech, and other practices that reinforce the relatively narrow boundaries of the academic culture.

The need for anthropological input is great. Although many men and women have vast information about the world at their fingertips, never before have so many known so little about it. The acceleration of everyday life, along with passive, seductive, and addictive forms of leisure, block the exchange of knowledge, even easily accessible knowledge. Many ordinary people want to understand how their lives are connected to economic boom and bust, migration, corporate dominion, and war. We have an important role to play in this enterprise, as our predecessors did in the 1920s, the 1940s, and the late 1960s.

A reconnected anthropology might begin by looking at one of the most exotic cultures ever invented—our own. An economic anthropologist from Mars would probably be surprised that in a country where equality is highly valued, the wealthiest 1 percent of the population owns approximately 45 percent of the total assets. In 2001, the average CEO earned 500 times more than the average blue-collar worker, and more than 1,200 times more than the minimum wage worker. Assembly plants continue to close in the Rust Belt, the Deep South, and Silicon Valley, as jobs are exported to Latin America and Southeast Asia where labor costs are cheap and environmental laws are lax or ignored.

If our interplanetary visitor examined politics, he or she might also be intrigued by the collapse of Enron and the apparent contradictions between democracy in theory and in practice. More than half of the members of the House of Representatives and 71 of 100 senators have accepted campaign contributions from Enron, and George W. Bush accepted more than half a million dollars between 1994 and 2001. When eleven congressional committees were scheduled to investigate the company, reports surfaced that of the 248 members of Congress charged with the investigations, no less than 212 received “soft money” campaign contributions from either Enron or its accounting firm, Arthur Anderson.

Undoubtedly fascinated with the contradictory culture of the United States, our extraterrestrial colleague might move on to an analysis of legal systems and find it remarkable that in the present period, certain fundamental guarantees protected by constitutional law have been suspended. The FBI, CIA, and armed forces under the Bush administration have detained more than 1,000 Muslim and Arab people living in the United States in violation of their Constitutional rights, subjected hundreds of millions to greater surveillance, and declared a unilateral “war on terror” in utter disregard of international law. In March 2003 the Bush administration launched a war against Iraq while ignoring the U.N. Security Council.

In times like these, anthropological voices might shed light on cultural contradictions in our own society, the divergence between cultural ideals and realities and what happens as a result, and new possibilities for human action in a democratic society.

This might be a public service and even a civic duty: to observe and comment upon the United States today, the most powerful country on the planet; the relationships between its government officials, military establishment, and multinational corporations; and the effects and consequences of American Empire on the people that we have lived with and learned from in our research.

*** Anthropologists as Citizen-Scholars

Civic duty can be defined in different ways, and so can civic anthropology. During World War II, many prominent anthropologists in the United States contributed to the war effort. Ruth Benedict wrote her famous study of “culture at a distance,” The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, to better understand the Japanese; Margaret Mead tried to analyze problems facing American GIs in England; George P. Murdock expanded the Human Relations Area Files with funding from the military; and Clyde Kluckhohn worked with the Office of Strategic Services or OSS (the precursor to the CIA), along with dozens of anthropologists. Others worked directly with Army and Navy intelligence and the Office of War Information (OWI).

These experiences indicate that public engagement does not always result in progressive politics or even humane policies. In fact, cultural knowledge has sometimes been applied during extraordinarily dark chapters in U.S. history. For instance, although anthropologists working for the OWI attempted to “convince the military that they did not have to engage in acts of genocidal annihilation” against Japan to end the war, others working as “community analysts” for the War Relocation Authority enthusiastically advised the government on how to efficiently administer internment camps where approximately 120,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans were incarcerated on U.S. soil.[14] There are many other examples, including the case of Gregory Bateson, who while working with the OSS “applied his principles of schismo-genesis to foster disorder among minority populations” in South Asia.[15] Though Bateson would later regret participating in such projects, others did not. Elements of this research were later used in psychological warfare operations and “culture cracking” strategies employed by the CIA in Vietnam and other countries. Our discipline’s involvement in World War II reminds us that the application of anthropological knowledge—especially in the direct service of wartime government agencies—is not free of possible contradictions, paradoxes, and ethical dilemmas.

After World War II, anthropologists continued conducting covert operations for the CIA. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) collaborated secretly with the agency in the early 1950s to create a directory of the association’s members with information about their research. Eventually, documents revealed that some anthropologists had undertaken clandestine projects with the U.S. military in its war in Southeast Asia in which they provided detailed ethnographic data on peasant communities, prepared surveys and reports on counterinsurgency, and gave information about the region’s geography.[16] When word of this became public in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a fact-finding AAA committee headed by Margaret Mead reported no wrongdoing on the part of those involved, to the dismay of many members, particularly younger ones. For some social scientists, clearing the way for public debate on the war in Indochina began to take precedence over informing the CIA, the armed forces, and the military’s think tanks. Critical to this shift was a change in notions of accountability: To which constituencies should the anthropologist be accountable? To the federal government and its

subcontractors? To the subjects of his or her research? Or directly to the country and the American public?

When anthropologists found that ethnographic information was being used in ways they never intended—for example, to inflict harm upon people such as peasants suspected of being Communist sympathizers—they did not stand helplessly by. They mobilized themselves, rolled up their sleeves, and got to work. It seems clear that by the mid-1960s, a new kind of anthropology was emerging that for some redefined civic responsibility. For this group, civic duty wasn't necessarily unequivocal support for an undeclared U.S. war in Vietnam, or rallying behind the president to support the war. An alternative definition of civic duty might mean protection and promotion of freedom, reason, and equality—even if that conflicted with official government policy.

The painful political lessons of World War II and Vietnam shook our discipline and the academy to their cores. We learned that the militaryindustrial complex described by President Eisenhower in his 1961 farewell address to the country might undermine America's liberties and democratic processes—and our professional autonomy.

Anthropologists were at the forefront during this transformation.[17] Marshall Sahlins is credited with creating the teach-in at the University of Michigan in 1965, with help from colleagues such as Eric Wolf and, at UC Berkeley, Gerald Berreman. During teach-ins students, professors, and citizens would meet after hours (sometimes in all-night sessions) to read and discuss books and articles about the history and culture of Southeast Asia, Latin America, and areas of the world undergoing upheaval and to talk about current events, especially the war in Vietnam. In 1969 Dell Hymes edited Reinventing Anthropology, which among other things called for an anthropology relevant to the times, an awareness of its colonial roots, greater inclusion of minorities in the discipline, and the study of powerful institutions.[18] Others including Laura Nader spoke to community groups such as Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs in order to inform older people about issues concerning young people: free speech, civil rights, women's rights, and Vietnam. Still others insisted that anthropologists be accountable primarily to American principles. Many insisted that the interests of field subjects take precedence over military interests, and succeeded in writing a

code of ethics for the American Anthropological Association reflecting this concern—at great risk to their professional careers.[19] (The code of ethics was passed in 1970, but as we shall see in Selection 7, it was diluted in the 1980s.) In different ways these scholars brought universities into the public spotlight, in some cases for the first time in many years, breaking the silence of the McCarthy era.

These scholars shifted their efforts to inform the general public and broaden public debate on issues of war and peace. Others continued informing the generals in the military. Those reaching the general public taught students and laypeople important information useful for carrying out the challenging work of participatory democracy.

*** Reconnecting Anthropology

What about today? If we focus upon the accelerating expansion of U.S. influence across the globe—and the imminent crises provoked by these new colonial relationships largely invisible to Americans—we find a growing number of examples of a publicly engaged anthropology that communicates directly with the citizenry, independently of official governmental channels. Some are speaking out and living up to the professional and public responsibilities of the discipline—a critical task in the current wartime climate of national fear and uncertainty.[20] Anthropologist David Price has recently suggested that “in times of war we have a fundamental duty as scholars and citizens to counter the limited views of American and allied policy makers... efforts in this direction would be most effective if we operate as citizen-scholars outside of governmental agencies.” This collection samples such independent scholarship.

It begins with “War, Peace, and Social Responsibility,” a section written by anthropologists over a span of eighty years. Franz Boas’ letter to the editor of The Nation, “Scientists as Spies,” is a classic example of how anthropologists have engaged pressing contemporary issues—in this case, the use of social scientists for espionage during World War I. His brief letter aroused so much controversy that it led to his expulsion from the AAA. The next piece is a 1940 article by Boas’s student, Margaret Mead, who in

“Warfare Is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity” makes an appeal for alternative means of resolving global conflicts. The next selections revisit the Vietnam era. In 1965 Marshall Sahlins shocked readers with an account of psychological torture techniques described to him by U.S. military advisers. Gerald D. Berreman discusses anthropology’s lack of accountability following revelations that some of its practitioners had been involved in clandestine counterinsurgency projects. “Two Plus Two Equals Zero,” a selection by Laura Nader written in the early 1980s, describes the unplanned, unconscious, and incremental movement toward war in our society at a time of unprecedented growth of the nuclear arsenal. “Dollars That Forge Guatemalan Chains” is a commentary by Beatriz Manz which documents the brutality of the civil war in Guatemala and the U.S. role in supporting the state military in that conflict. David Price’s contribution, “Anthropologists as Spies,” revisits the topic introduced by Boas in 1919. After examining the espionage cases mentioned by Boas, Price singles out the AAA’s long-standing reluctance to issue statements condemning covert research and espionage. He notes that the economic realities of the present era may make spying even more attractive to some: “As increasing numbers of anthropologists find employment in corporations, anthropological research becomes not a quest for scientific truth, as in the days of Boas, but a quest for secret or proprietary data for governmental or corporate sponsors.” The section concludes with a commentary by Pierre Bourdieu entitled, “Abuse of Power by the Advocates of Reason,” which critiques multinational corporate regimes, the World Bank, and the IMF on the grounds that they are impoverishing entire regions and provoking violent backlash.

The next section, “Prescient Anthropology,” zeroes in on the work of anthropologists describing international crises in the making—sometimes years in advance. For example, Robert M. Hayden, who conducted field research in the former Yugoslavia and India, published an early warning in 1991 about the impending threat of ethnic conflict in the post-Cold War era. His words read prophetically, years before the massacres in Rwanda or the former Yugoslavia. Another article by Hayden critiques the unprecedented NATO bombing of Kosovo in 1999. Anna Simons published a series of op-ed pieces for the Washington Post on the desperate conditions in Somalia long before Black Hawk Down. Her words tell the story of a nation devastated by civil war, famine, and refugees. They also convey concern for lack of media coverage and a poorly informed group of policy “experts.” Her words too were visionary; they foretold and then analyzed the

botched U.S. mission in Somalia. Other contributors are prescient in their analyses. Articles by Winifred Tate and Lesley Gill critique U.S. military aid to Colombia (specifically, its use in the “war on drugs”) and emphasize the necessity for a peaceful resolution to that country’s internal conflicts, while Marc Edelman’s commentary focuses on the link between free trade policies and famine in Central America. The Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and the worsening crisis there are the focus of contributions from a Palestinian anthropologist, Ali Qleibo, and an Israeli anthropologist, Jeff Halper (coordinator of the Israeli Committee against House Demolitions). The section ends with Hugh Gusterson’s critique of our government’s proposals to dump the comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty.

The section “Prelude to September 11” includes articles and interviews describing grave crises in Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Ashraf Ghani, an anthropologist recently appointed as Afghanistan’s finance minister, was by early 1989 warning that abandoning that country could have disastrous consequences over the long term. James Merryman’s piece, written following the 1998 attacks on American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, suggests that aid to the families of hundreds of African victims and a clearer foreign policy might improve our country’s standing in those countries. Robert Fernea and Barbara Nimri Aziz focus on various aspects of the first Gulf War and the aftermath of the economic embargo. Fadwa El Guindi, writing years before most Americans had heard of the Taliban, published an op-ed piece describing the plight of women in Algeria, Afghanistan, and several other predominantly Muslim societies. An interview with Zieba Shorish-Shamley describes different aspects of the Taliban’s repression of women. The section concludes with William O. Beeman’s 1998 analysis of the “mess in Afghanistan” and the role of oil corporations seeking to secure a route to the petroleum reserves of the Caspian Sea.

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon inspired a great many responses from academics, and the section “Anthropological Interpretations of September 11” presents some of the most thoughtful and well articulated. Catherine Lutz, who has recently focused her career on the relationship between society and the military in the United States, writes that our country has been in “a permanent state of war” since the late 1930s but that for many Americans this has not been visible because conflict has been “outsourced to the global south.” David Harvey, Talal Asad, and colleagues

from the CUNY Graduate Center strongly condemn the attacks and then make an impassioned appeal for the United States to refrain from the "intensification of erroneous policies and practices" overseas. William O. Beeman's article focuses on the dangers of engaging bin Laden and his allies in a shortsighted war of revenge. In separate articles, Janet McIntosh and Wade Davis critique the inability or unwillingness of our leaders to come to terms with the role of the United States in creating the conditions that led to the attacks of September 11.

The next section is "On Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Middle East." Robert Canfield's piece emphasizes the complexity of Afghanistan and painstakingly outlines the relationships between the Taliban, mujahedeen, "Arab-Afghans" (including bin Laden), and different ethnic groups within Afghanistan. Ashraf Ghani's contribution examines the complexity of the political situation in Afghanistan and the possible risks of quick military action there by our armed forces. Nazif Shahrani counsels the eventual formation of a new Afghanistan based on the stability of past models: "The international community should encourage the creation of a government that recognizes the crucial role of the local and regional communities in self-governance, as existed in earlier eras in Afghanistan." The next selection is an interview with Zieba Shorish-Shamley at meetings in Brussels, Belgium, in which Afghan women's groups were creating a common set of demands. She emphasizes the need for women to be fairly represented in Afghanistan's new government. David Edwards and Shahmahmood Miakhel stress the importance of enlisting the aid of ordinary Afghans in confronting the Taliban regime. Kamran Asdar Ali focuses on the dilemmas faced by Pakistan following the events of September 11, specifically the tensions faced by its leaders in the face of mounting domestic criti-

cism for cooperation with the United States. Finally, an article based on interviews with Sergei Arutyunov and Ian Chesnov describes how the Russian war on Chechnya has destroyed kinship structures that formed the basis of social life. According to the report, "Chechnya's younger people… are disoriented, and are now looking for new authority figures—a search that in many instances leads them to the radical Wahhabi Islamic sect or leaders of criminal rings."

In the next section, “Examining Militarism and the ‘War on Terror,”’ anthropologists explore several pressing issues after September 11. William O. Beeman’s commentary challenges the assumptions of U.S. leaders proclaiming anti-terrorist messages by delving into the centuries-old patterns of Western exploitation of societies in the Middle East. David Price notes that the vague definition and use of the word “terrorism” as a catchall phrase has led to its rapid adoption by Russian leaders to describe Chechnya’s separatists, by Chinese leaders to describe Uighur separatists, and by others. Consequently, the “war on terror” poses a threat to native peoples and ethnic minorities throughout the world. In separate commentaries, John Burdick and Roberto J. González argue that U.S. bombing raids over Afghanistan—and the resulting civilian casualties—are making future terrorist attacks on the United States more, not less, likely to occur. Dale F. Eickelman’s contribution makes a critical point: that new media technologies including video and satellite images, computers, and advanced telecommunications are a part of daily life in the Arab-speaking world. Mahmood Mamdani makes an impassioned plea for U.S. policy makers not to allow the “war on terror” to permit U.S.-African relations to slide back to the Cold War era. The section closes with a Thomas McKenna interview which explores the historical roots of Muslim separatism in the Philippines. The wide-ranging interview touches upon the effects of Spanish and U.S. colonialism on Muslim identity, as well as more recent developments.

The final section, “Academic Freedom and Civil Liberties,” analyzes attacks on constitutional guarantees within the United States. Roberto J. González and David Price examine the implications of a document circulated by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni in late 2001, which singles out dozens of academics for allegedly being “short on patriotism,” while Hugh Gusterson—the first scholar named in the report—takes issue with the way in which its authors take statements out of context. More importantly, he also describes how this fits a long historical pattern of scapegoating that tends to occur in our country during times of war. Laura Nader’s article, published two months before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, is about “coercive harmony”—imposed social harmony—and its consequences. The concept’s relevance in the post-September 11 period is clear, as many Americans feel pressure to fall into line with the dictates of the Bush administration’s policies. She writes: “Coercive harmony can stifle dissent for a while. But if dissent is too tightly bottled up, it will explode... Academics should not be party to establishing an ideology of consensus on our

increasingly corporatized campuses. Instead, we have a duty to investigate the dangers of coercive harmony and to expose repression when it poses as consensus.”

Taken as a whole, the collection makes a strong case for the relevance of anthropology to the contemporary world, as well as for the strength and vitality of tried and true techniques used by its practitioners.

*** An Argument for Public Anthropology

Many academics have been trained to think that writing for the public is not worth doing because it is perceived as politically risky. But is there any truth to this assertion? Is anthropology perceived as a subversive activity?

On the surface, these appear to be challenging times for academic freedom. In October 2001, a Washington, D.C.-based group called the American Council of Trustees and Alumni published a report titled Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America. It documented 117 campus incidents as “evidence” of academic antiAmericanism and was distributed to university regents, trustees, and administrators. Of the forty-five scholars cited in the report, five were anthropologists. More anthropologists were included than scholars of any other discipline.

It seems that anthropologists were highly visible on the list because ours is a field that contextualizes and integrates multiple points of view —social, political, economic, and historical—and of course because many of us do this kind of work in foreign countries. What has changed radically is not anthropology but the time in which we are living. Today, some view contextual, historical knowledge about other cultures as subversive, unpatriotic, and possibly un-American!

But fortunately, they appear to be on the margins. The response to the ACTA report was dramatic and critics on the right and the left protested. Lynne

Cheney and Joseph Lieberman, who co-founded ACTA in 1995, distanced themselves from the report.

Because of a surge in publicly engaged anthropology since September 11—including participation in campus rallies and teach-ins—it is clear that anthropologists have an important job ahead. Threats and blacklists are a sign that we are following in the footsteps of Boas, Mead, Montagu, and others who spoke up and were harshly criticized for their views by some and lauded by others.

The rewards of participating in a publicly engaged anthropology more than compensate for the challenges. Writing for and speaking with the general public is intellectually challenging, politically satisfying—and exhilarating.

Such work is intellectually challenging because it encourages the translation and distillation of complex ideas into a language that nonspecialists can understand. (Imagine explaining the meaning of cultural relativism or social solidarity or the significance of clans to a person who has never taken an anthropology course or read a book on the topic.) The limitations are severe—the typical op-ed piece is limited to 750 words. This is a focused kind of writing and speaking that takes time, effort, and verbal economy. It promotes the use of appropriate metaphors, logical argumentation, precise timing, and conciseness.

Politically, this work can be satisfying because it connects us to our civic duties and provides a public service: citizen education. By articulating thoughtful, informed perspectives for a wide audience, we are providing interested people with viewpoints that might otherwise go unmentioned, particularly in the current climate of self-censorship on the part of the corporate media and the public at large. We might even think of this work as democratic outreach, or social science in the service of society, or even civic anthropology for the twenty-first century. Perhaps a clearer articulation of the vital role played by citizen-scholars would lead to a new valuation of intellectual work in the public interest and recognition of this work in tenure reviews. In this regard, the U.S. case is almost unique. In most countries of

the world, intellectuals are expected to be participants in citizen causes and do so, sometimes at the risk of being jailed—or worse.

Finally, writing and speaking with the general public can be exhilarating. Letters or phone calls in response to an op-ed piece can be educational and used as tools for reflection. They may lead to connections with community groups, activists, policy makers, or invitations to write and speak publicly. And not least of all, communication with the public dramatically demonstrates to students that anthropology does indeed have a public face and relevance in the contemporary world.

Recently Robert Borofsky asked Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth what steps might be taken to draw more anthropologists into public engagements. He answered: “The image that comes to mind is of American anthropologists, like penguins on the edge of an ice sheet afraid that something in the water will eat them. They stand on the ice and push and push each other until one falls in, and then they see what happens to him. If nothing bad happens, then they might be willing to dive in, too.” [21]

The contributors to this collection are jumping into chilly waters. The experience can be startling, refreshing, and exhilarating. Others have taken the plunge as well: the extraordinary and inspiring efforts of Cultural Survival and Living Beyond Culture exemplify a kind of public engagement being carried out by valiant anthropologists whose work is deeply rooted in indigenous and local struggles. As more and more anthropologists and students embark upon such adventures, they are sure to find strength in numbers. We have much to contribute, and even more to gain.

[1] See Chalmers A. Johnson, Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2000); Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000 (New York: Vintage Books, 1989); Paul Sweezy, Harry Magdoff, John Bellamy Foster, and Robert McChesney,

“U.S. Military Bases and Empire,” Monthly Review, March 2002, pp. 1–16.

[2] This trend is described in Sheldon Rampton and John Stauber, Trust Us, We’re Experts! (New York: Tarcher Putnam, 2001).

[3] The term “pundit” is derived from the Hindi term pandit, meaning “religious scholar,” and was adopted by British colonists in India in 1816 as a term meaning “learned person.” Today the word preserves a bit of irony and questioning of the person’s authority.

[4] See Laura Nader, “Anthropology!” American Anthropologist 103, no. 3 (September 2001): 1–12.

[5] See Marshall Sahlins, Stone Age Economics (Chicago: Aldine, 1972), pp. 1–39.

[6] See Bronislaw Malinowski, Magic, Science, Religion, and Other Essays (Garden City, N.J.: Anchor Doubleday, 1948 [1925]).

[7] See Margaret Mead, Coming of Age in Samoa (Washington, D.C.: American Museum of Natural History, 1928).

[8] See Franz Boas, Race, Language, and Culture (New York: Macmillan, 1940).

[9] See Kendall M. Thu, “Anthropologists Should Return to the Roots of Their Discipline,” Chronicle of Higher Education (April 30, 1999): A56.

[10] See Wazir Karim, “Anthropology without Tears: How a ‘Local’ Sees the ‘Local’ and the ‘Global,”’ in Henrietta Moore, ed., The Future of Anthropological Knowledge (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 115–138.

[11] Quoted March 29, 1999, in a symposium of the American Association for the Advancement of Science titled “Secrecy in Science” at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Accessed from the electronic text of her comments, as posted at <[[http://www.aaas.org/spp/secrecy/Presents/nader.htm] [http://www.aaas.org/spp/secrecy/Presents/nader.htm]]>.

[12] See Mary O. Furner, Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professionalization of American Social Science, 1865–1905 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1975). For one account of the decline of public intellectuals in the twentieth century, see Russell Jacoby, The Last Intellectuals (New York: Basic Books, 1987).

[13] See Douglas Dowd, “Thorstein Veblen and C. Wright Mills: Social Science and Social Criticism,” in Irving Horowitz, ed., The New Sociology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 54–66.

[14] David Price, “Lessons from Second World War Anthropology,” Anthropology Today 18, no. 3 (June 2002): 18. See also Orin Starn, “Engineering Internment: Anthropologists and the War Relocation Authority,” American Ethnologist 13, no. 4 (December 1996): 700–720.

[15] See David Price, “Past Wars, Present Dangers, Future Anthropologies,” Anthropology Today 18, no. 1 (March 2002): 3–5.

[16] See Eric R. Wolf and Joseph G. Jorgensen, “Anthropology on the Warpath in Thailand,” New York Review of Books, November 19, 1970, pp. 26–35.

[17] See Laura Nader, “The Phantom Factor: Impact of the Cold War on Anthropology,” in Noam Chomsky, ed., The Cold War & the University (New York: New Press, 1997), pp. 107–146.

[18] See Dell Hymes, ed., Reinventing Anthropology (New York: Vintage, 1969). The contributions by Gerald D. Berreman, William S. Willis, Jr., Eric Wolf, and Laura Nader are especially relevant.

[19] See Eric Wakin, Anthropology Goes to War: Professional Ethics and Counterinsurgency in Thailand (Madison: University of Wisconsin Center for Asian Studies, 1992).

[20] See Laura Nader, “Breaking the Silence—Politics and Professional Autonomy.” Anthropological Quarterly (winter 2001): 155–163.

[21] Quoted in “Envisioning a More Public Anthropology: An Interview with Fredrik Barth,” April 18, 2001. Accessed from electronic text posted at <[[http://www.publicanthropology.org/Journals/Engaging-Ideas/barth.htm.] [http://www.publicanthropology.org/Journals/Engaging-Ideas/barth.htm.]]>

* Part I: War, Peace, and Social Responsibility

** Chapter 1: Scientists as Spies

The Nation, October 16, 1919

FRANZ BOAS

Franz Boas (1858–1942), who founded the first American academic department of anthropology at Columbia University in 1898, wrote many popular articles in the early 1900s on issues including race problems, immigration, and U.S. involvement in World War I. He profoundly believed that scientific knowledge widely disseminated could potentially lead to popular enlightenment and social reform.[22]

In the following article, Boas condemns anthropologists recruited by the U.S. government for espionage during World War I. He was especially outraged to learn that two of the spies had used contacts that he had provided to them for research purposes. When the issue came before the American Anthropological Association in 1920, Boas was censured and removed from office.

Boas had become an American citizen in 1891, yet remained sympathetic to his native Germany. He publicly opposed U.S. entry into World War I. These circumstances undoubtedly made him even more sensitive to the idea of his fellow anthropologists engaging in espionage for the American side.

In an eloquent letter to the editor published in the New York Times on January 8, 1916, Boas revealed his own changing attitudes about U.S. foreign policy in the context of a rapidly expanding American Empire: “At the time of my arrival more than thirty years ago, I was filled with admiration of American political ideals... I thought of it as a country that would not tolerate interference with its own interests, but that would also refrain from oppression of unwilling subjects... A rude awakening came in 1898, when the aggressive imperialism of that period [in Cuba, the Philippines, etc.] showed that the ideal had been a dream... The America that had stood for right, and right only, seemed dead; and in its place stood a young giant, eager to grow at the expense of others.” [23]

To the Editor of The Nation:

Sir: In his war address to Congress, President Wilson dwelt at great length on the theory that only autocracies maintain spies; that these are not needed in democracies. At the time that the President made this statement, the Government of the United States had in its employ several spies of unknown number. I am not concerned here with the familiar discrepancies between the President's words and the actual facts, although we may perhaps have to accept his statement as meaning correctly that we live under an autocracy; that our democracy is a fiction. The point against which I wish to enter a vigorous protest is that a number of men who follow science as their profession, men whom I refuse to designate any longer as scientists, have prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies.

A soldier whose business is murder as a fine art, a diplomat whose calling is based on deception and secretiveness, a politician whose very life consists in compromises with his conscience, a business man whose aim is personal profit within the limits allowed by a lenient law—such may be excused if they set patriotic devotion above common everyday decency and perform services as spies. They merely accept the code of morality to which modern society still conforms. Not so the scientist. The very essence of his life is the service of truth. We all know scientists who in private life do not come up to the standard of truthfulness, but who, nevertheless, would not consciously falsify the results of their researches. It is bad enough if we have to put up with these, because they reveal a lack of strength of character that is liable to distort the results of their work. A person, however, who uses science as a cover for political spying, who demeans himself to pose before a foreign government as an investigator and asks for assistance in his alleged researches in order to carry on, under this cloak, his political machinations, prostitutes science in an unpardonable way and forfeits the right to be classed as a scientist.

By accident, incontrovertible proof has come to my hands that at least four men who carry on anthropological work, while employed as government agents, introduced themselves to foreign governments as representatives of scientific institutions in the United States, and as sent out for the purpose of carrying on scientific researches. They have not only shaken the belief in the truthfulness of science, but they have also done the greatest possible disservice to scientific inquiry. In consequence of their acts every nation will look with distrust upon the visiting foreign investigator who wants to do

honest work, suspecting sinister designs. Such action has raised a new barrier against the development of international friendly cooperation.

[22] See George W. Stocking Jr., “Anthropology and Society,” in Franz Boas, A Franz Boas Reader (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 307–309. Following the German sociological tradition of Max Weber, Boas assumed that as scientists, anthropologists should hold themselves to a high standard of objectivity—even when they produced truths threatening powerful interests. This was clearly exemplified in Boas’ attacks on racism: since racial hierarchies were based upon faulty science, racist policies had no rational justification.

[23] Ibid., pp. 331–332.

*** Suggestions for Further Reading

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** Chapter 2: Warfare is Only an Invention—not a Biological Necessity

Asia, 1940

MARGARET MEAD

Margaret Mead (1901–1978) was among Boas' most renowned students. Like her mentor, she made anthropological knowledge accessible to the general public and frequently critiqued aspects of American culture.

Along with dozens of anthropologists, Mead served as a government adviser during World War II. Together with Ruth Benedict she founded the Columbia University Research in Contemporary Cultures project, which was under the auspices of the U.S. Office of Naval Research and analyzed the cultures of America's enemies and allies, including Germany, Japan, England, France, and the Soviet Union.

Mead was profoundly affected by the advent of a nuclear age, after U.S. planes bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Throughout her career, she publicly expressed opposition to war as a means of resolving conflict—perhaps a contradictory stance in light of her involvement with U.S. military and intelligence efforts. She once said, "Those who still cling to the old, simple definition of patriotism have not yet recognized that since Hiroshima there cannot be winners and losers in a war, but only losers. And they are vocal out of desperation about a world they do not understand." [24]

The following article was published in 1940, as Nazi Germany invaded Europe and the Japanese swept across Asia. Mead's argument is lucid and powerful: that war is a cultural phenomenon, not a biological one. It still stands as a thought-provoking counterpoint to those who assert that warfare is a part of human nature. Readers should be aware of the occasional use of outdated terminology such as "simple peoples," which reflects the persistence of elements of Victorian-era social evolutionism in American anthropology as late as the 1940s.

Mead has had many critics over the years. Perhaps the sharpest rebukes have come from those critical of the contradictions between her public antiwar statements and writings and her tacit support of U.S. foreign policy.

Anthropologist Peter Worsely notes, “Mead’s political stance... [and] her criticisms of Western institutions [are] always vitiated by her commitment to U.S. foreign policy... Mead’s theoretical posture of concern about the danger of global war never prevented her continuing in the service of the U.S. State Department and the military long after World War II.” [25]

Is war a biological necessity, a sociological inevitability, or just a bad invention? Those who argue for the first view endow man with such pugnacious instincts that some outlet in aggressive behavior is necessary if man is to reach full human stature. It was this point of view which lay behind William James’s famous essay, “The Moral Equivalent of War,” in which he tried to retain the warlike virtues and channel them in new directions. A similar point of view has lain behind the Soviet Union’s attempt to make competition between groups rather than between individuals. A basic, competitive, aggressive, warring human nature is assumed, and those who wish to outlaw war or outlaw competitiveness merely try to find new and less socially destructive ways in which these biologically given aspects of man’s nature can find expression. Then there are those who take the second view: warfare is the inevitable concomitant of the development of the state, the struggle for land and natural resources, of class societies springing not from the nature of man, but, from the nature of history. War is nevertheless inevitable unless we change our social system and outlaw classes, the struggle for power, and possessions; and in the event of our success warfare would disappear, as a symptom vanishes when the disease is cured.

One may hold a sort of compromise position between these two extremes; one may claim that all aggression springs from the frustration of man’s biologically determined drives and that, since all forms of culture are frustrating, it is certain each new generation will be aggressive and the aggression will find its natural and inevitable expression in race war, class war, nationalistic war, and so on. All three of these positions are very popular today among those who think seriously about the problems of war and its possible prevention, but I wish to urge another point of view, less defeatist, perhaps, than the first and third and more accurate than the second: that is, that warfare, by which I mean recognized conflict between two groups as groups, in which each group puts an army (even if the army is only fifteen

pygmies) into the field to fight and kill, if possible, some of the members of the army of the other group—that warfare of this sort is an invention like any other of the inventions in terms of which we order our lives, such as writing, marriage, cooking our food instead of eating it raw, trial by jury, or burial of the dead, and so on. Some of this list anyone will grant are inventions: trial by jury is confined to very limited portions of the globe; we know that there are tribes that do not bury their dead but instead expose or cremate them; and we know that only part of the human race has had the knowledge of writing as its cultural inheritance. But, whenever a way of doing things is found universally, such as the use of fire or the practice of some form of marriage, we tend to think at once that it is not an invention at all but an attribute of humanity itself. And yet even such universals as marriage and the use of fire are inventions like the rest, very basic ones, inventions which were, perhaps, necessary if human history was to take the turn that it has taken, but nevertheless inventions. At some point in his social development man was undoubtedly without the institution of marriage or the knowledge of the use of fire.

The case for warfare is much clearer because there are peoples even today who have no warfare. Of these the Eskimos are perhaps the most conspicuous examples, but the Lepchas of Sikkim described by Geoffrey Gorer in Himalayan Village are as good. Neither of these peoples understands war, not even defensive warfare. The idea of warfare is lacking, and this idea is as essential to really carrying on war as an alphabet or a syllabary is to writing. But, whereas the Lepchas are a gentle, unquarrelsome people, and the advocates of other points of view might argue that they are not full human beings or that they had never been frustrated and so had no aggression to expend in warfare, the Eskimo case gives no such possibility of interpretation. The Eskimos are not a mild and meek people; many of them are turbulent and troublesome. Fights, theft of wives, murder, cannibalism, occur among them—all outbursts of passionate men goaded by desire or intolerable circumstance. Here are men faced with hunger, men faced with loss of their wives, men faced with the threat of extermination by other men, and here are orphan children, growing up miserably with no one to care for them, mocked and neglected by those about them. The personality necessary for war, the circumstances necessary to goad men to desperation are present, but there is no war. When a traveling Eskimo entered a settlement, he might have had to fight the strongest man in the settlement to establish his position among them, but

this was a test of strength and bravery, not war. The idea of warfare, of one group organizing against another group to maim and wound and kill them was absent. And, without that idea, passions might rage but there was no war.

But, it may be argued, is not this because the Eskimos have such a low and undeveloped form of social organization? They own no land, they move from place to place, camping, it is true, season after season on the same site, but this is not something to fight for as the modern nations of the world fight for land and raw materials. They have no permanent possessions that can be looted, no towns that can be burned. They have no social classes to produce stress and strains within the society which might force it to go to war outside. Does not the absence of war among the Eskimos, while disproving the biological necessity of war, just go to confirm the point that it is the state of development of the society which accounts for war and nothing else?

We find the answer among the pygmy peoples of the Andaman Islands in the Bay of Bengal. The Andamans also represent an exceedingly low level of society; they are a hunting and food-gathering people; they live in tiny hordes without any class stratification; their houses are simpler than the snow houses of the Eskimo. But they knew about warfare. The army might contain only fifteen determined pygmies marching in a straight line, but it was the real thing nonetheless. Tiny army met tiny army in open battle, blows were exchanged, casualties suffered, and the state of warfare could only be concluded by a peacemaking ceremony.

Similarly, among the Australian aborigines, who built no permanent dwellings but wandered from water hole to water hole over their almost desert country, warfare—and rules of “international law”—were highly developed. The student of social evolution will seek in vain for his obvious causes of war—struggle for lands, struggle for power of one group over another, expansion of population, need to divert the minds of a populace restive under tyranny, or even the ambition of a successful leader to enhance his own prestige. All are absent, but warfare as a practice remained, and men engaged in it and killed one another in the course of a war because killing is what is done in wars.

From instances like these it becomes apparent that an inquiry into the causes of war misses the fundamental point as completely as does an insistence upon the biological necessity of war. If a people have an idea of going to war and the idea that war is the way in which certain situations, defined within their society, are to be handled, they will sometimes go to war. If they are a mild and unaggressive people, like the Pueblo Indians, they may limit themselves to defensive warfare, but they will be forced to think in terms of war because there are peoples near them who have warfare as a pattern, and offensive, raiding, pillaging warfare at that. When the pattern of warfare is known, people like the Pueblo Indians will defend themselves, taking advantage of the natural defenses of their mesa village site, and people like the Lepchas, having no natural defenses and no idea of warfare, will merely submit to the invader. But the essential point remains the same. There is a way of behaving which is known to a given people and labeled as an appropriate form of behavior; a bold and warlike people like the Sioux or the Maori may label warfare as desirable as well as possible, a mild people like the Pueblo Indians may label warfare as undesirable, but to the minds of both peoples the possibility of warfare is present. Their thoughts, their hopes, their plans are oriented about this idea— that warfare may be selected as the way to meet some situation.

So simple peoples and civilized peoples, mild peoples and violent, assertive peoples, will all go to war if they have the invention, just as those peoples who have the custom of dueling will have duels and peoples who have the pattern of vendetta will indulge in vendetta. And, conversely, peoples who do not know of dueling will not fight duels, even though their wives are seduced and their daughters ravished; they may on occasion commit murder but they will not fight duels. Cultures which lack the idea of the vendetta will not meet every quarrel in this way. A people can use only the forms it has. So the Balinese have their special way of dealing with a quarrel between two individuals: if the two feel that the causes of quarrel are heavy, they may go and register their quarrel in the temple before the gods, and, making offerings, they may swear never to have anything to do with each other again. But in other societies, although individuals might feel as full of animosity and as unwilling to have any further contact as do the Balinese, they cannot register their quarrel with the gods and go on quietly about their

business because registering quarrels with the gods is not an invention of which they know.

Yet, if it be granted that warfare is, after all, an invention, it may nevertheless be an invention that lends itself to certain types of personality, to the exigent needs of autocrats, to the expansionist desires of crowded peoples, to the desire for plunder and rape and loot which is engendered by a dull and frustrating life. What, then, can we say of this congruence between warfare and its uses? If it is a form which fits so well, is not this congruence the essential point? But even here the primitive material causes us to wonder, because there are tribes who go to war merely for glory, having no quarrel with the enemy, suffering from no tyrant within their boundaries, anxious neither for land nor loot nor women, but merely anxious to win prestige which within that tribe has been declared obtainable only by war and without which no young man can hope to win his sweetheart's smile of approval. But if, as was the case with the Bush Negroes of Dutch Guiana, it is artistic ability which is necessary to win a girl's approval, the same young man would have to be carving rather than going out on a war party.

In many parts of the world, war is a game in which the individual can win counters—counters which bring him prestige in the eyes of his own sex or of the opposite sex; he plays for these counters as he might, in our society, strive for a tennis championship. Warfare is a frame for such prestige-seeking merely because it calls for the display of certain skills and certain virtues; all of these skills—riding straight, shooting straight, dodging the missiles of the enemy and sending one's own straight to the mark—can be equally well exercised in some other framework and, equally, the virtues—endurance, bravery, loyalty, steadfastness—can be displayed in other contexts. The tie-up between proving oneself a man and proving this by a success in organized killing is due to a definition which many societies have made of manliness. And often, even in those societies which counted success in warfare a proof of human worth, strange turns were given to the idea, as when the Plains Indians gave their highest awards to the man who touched a live enemy rather than to the man who brought in a scalp—from a dead enemy—because the latter was less risky. Warfare is just an invention known to the majority of human societies by which they permit their young men either to accumulate prestige or avenge their honor or acquire loot or wives or slaves or sago lands or cattle or appease the blood lust of their gods or

the restless souls of the recently dead. It is just an invention, older and more widespread than the jury system, but nonetheless an invention.

But, once we have said this, have we said anything at all? Despite a few instances, dear to the hearts of controversialists, of the loss of the useful arts, once an invention is made which proves congruent with human needs or social forms, it tends to persist. Grant that war is an invention, that it is not a biological necessity nor the outcome of certain special types of social forms, still once the invention is made, what are we to do about it? The Indian who had been subsisting on the buffalo for generations because with his primitive weapons he could slaughter only a limited number of buffalo did not return to his primitive weapons when he saw that the white man's more efficient weapons were exterminating the buffalo. A desire for the white man's cloth may mortgage the South Sea Islander to the white man's plantation, but he does not return to making bark cloth, which would have left him free. Once an invention is known and accepted, men do not easily relinquish it. The skilled workers may smash the first steam looms which they feel are to be their undoing, but they accept them in the end, and no movement which has insisted upon the mere abandonment of usable inventions has ever had much success. Warfare is here, as part of our thought; the deeds of warriors are immortalized in the words of our poets, the toys of our children are modeled upon the weapons of the soldier, the frame of reference within which our statesmen and our diplomats work always contains war. If we know that it is not inevitable, that it is due to historical accident that warfare is one of the ways in which we think of behaving, are we given any hope by that? What hope is there of persuading nations to abandon war, nations so thoroughly imbued with the idea that resort to war is, if not actually desirable and noble, at least inevitable whenever certain defined circumstances arise?

In answer to this question I think we might turn to the history of other social inventions, and inventions which must once have seemed as finally entrenched as warfare. Take the methods of trial which preceded the jury system: ordeal and trial by combat. Unfair, capricious, alien as they are to our feeling today, they were once the only methods open to individuals accused of some offense. The invention of trial by jury gradually replaced these methods until only witches, and finally not even witches, had to resort to the ordeal. And for a long time the jury system seemed the best and finest

method of settling legal disputes, but today new inventions, trial before judges only or before commissions, are replacing the jury system. In each case the old method was replaced by a new social invention. The ordeal did not go out because people thought it unjust or wrong; it went out because a method more congruent with the institutions and feelings of the period was invented. And, if we despair over the way in which war seems such an ingrained habit of most of the human race, we can take comfort from the fact that a poor invention will usually give place to a better invention.

For this, two conditions, at least, are necessary. The people must recognize the defects of the old invention, and someone must make a new one. Propaganda against warfare, documentation of its terrible cost in human suffering and social waste, these prepare the ground by teaching people to feel that warfare is a defective social institution. There is further needed a belief that social invention is possible and the invention of new methods which will render warfare as out of date as the tractor is making the plough, or the motor car the horse and buggy. A form of behavior becomes out of date only when something else takes its place, and, in order to invent forms of behavior which will make war obsolete, it is a first requirement to believe that an invention is possible.

[24] Quoted in William O. Beeman, “Postscript to September 11: What Would Margaret Mead Say?” Pacific News Service, November 27, 2001.

[25] See Lenora Foerstel and Angela Gilliam, eds., Confronting the Margaret Mead Legacy: Scholarship, Empire, and the South Pacific. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992).

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** Chapter 3: “Once You’ve Broken Him Down...”

The Nation, October 25, 1965

MARSHALL SAHLINS

For some anthropologists, public engagement has meant organizing public forums for open discussion of critical events. In the spring of 1965, a handful of professors at the University of Michigan initiated a series of such meetings when they canceled classes and held public lectures (or “teach-ins”) on the Vietnam War to protest the government’s escalation of the conflict. (The term “teach-in” was derived from the sit-ins in which African Americans and their sympathizers challenged segregation practices by engaging in civil disobedience during the late 1950s and early 1960s.) Among those who coordinated the first teach-in was Marshall Sahlins, a young anthropology professor credited with conceiving the idea. Weeks later, the organizers challenged U.S. government officials to a public debate in Washington, D.C. which was called the National Teach-In. It received national and international media attention.[26]

In August 1965, Sahlins went to Vietnam on a fact-finding mission as a representative of the Inter-University Committee (the sponsors of the National Teach-In). The following article, written by Sahlins for The Nation shortly after his visit, consists of a gripping and revelatory interview he conducted with two U.S. military advisers in the Mekong Delta after accompanying them on a nighttime patrol at the Cambodian border. It reveals the use of psychological torture by American personnel.

Recent events suggest that such tactics may once again be part of our military's arsenal. A December 26, 2002, report published in the Washington Post described how U.S. intelligence officials were subjecting suspected Al Qaeda and Taliban forces to "stress and duress" techniques, as well as transporting them to third countries (with poor human rights records) for interrogation.[27]

Advanced anti-communism trades places with the enemy. It becomes opposite-communism, and "opposites" are things alike in every respect save one. The final stages of American dissolution in Vietnam will be marked by imitation of the enemy's techniques. I have heard it foreshadowed in the talk of Saigon officialdom: discipline, a senior American civilian officer told me, is what the South Vietnamese government needs; power, he said, is the only thing the Chinese can understand; history, he said, will prove us right. In a remote provincial outpost I found two Americans who had appropriated as their own draconian Chinese methods of interrogation and indoctrination ("motivation" is the American newspeak). The forced destruction of people's beliefs is no longer properly described as something "they" do. Torturously exacted confession and conversion are no longer things we fight against: these are now part of our own arsenal, weapons of our own struggle.

The two Americans were leaders of a "motivation" team working among Vietnamese Popular Forces.[28] The team included four Vietnamese instructor-cadres, two of these ex-Vietcong. The dominant of the two Americans was a field representative of a civilian agency; he was assisted by a Special Forces officer. Both were highly qualified, competent in Vietnamese language and custom, and dedicated to Vietnam and their vision of its future. Their program was anticommunist revolution: they were training Popular

Forces as revolutionary cadres. The texts were classic communist handbooks on revolutionary warfare, books these Americans studied and clearly admired; it does not go too far to say they were disciples, or at least revisionist disciples, of Mao Zedong, Ho Chi Minh, and Che Guevara.

I lived in with them for a night and a good part of a day. They briefed me and allowed me to see the work for myself. But it is not of this guerrilla program that I write. It is of a discussion I had with the Americans about torture and the transformation of Vietcong prisoners to anticommunism. The two Americans allowed they had some experience with it, and some ideas of how it is properly done.

The interrogation methods the Americans described are copied from those used most effectively by the Chinese, as they themselves explained. (Of course, there are precedents—for example, the Inquisition.) The treatment seems a compressed and abbreviated version of the procedures used on American POWs during the Korean War. The interrogator has at most four or five days before he must send the prisoner on. Physical torture is precluded. A special type of “mental torture” (their term) is instead inflicted. But it aims not merely at eliciting military information. The prisoner’s disclosures are at the same time a betrayal of his cause and a confession of his errors, a renunciation of belief.

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If the technique really is effective, and the Americans claim it is, I think it must be because of some rather special qualities of revolutionary warfare and warriors. It has to be understood that a Vietcong prisoner comes in with certain comprehensions and expectations that are deeply entwined with his revolutionary (“communist”) commitment. A guerrilla movement depends decisively on secrecy. Its members are visible daily to the enemy but must be unknown to him; they maintain a hinterland conspiracy of silence; a single traitor wrecks the organization of a whole village, perhaps a district. The guerrilla thus understands that secrecy is a first principle of the revolution. But, by the same token, intelligence becomes a first principle of the counterrevolution. The prisoner, therefore, expects to be tortured for

information and ultimately killed if he remains steadfast. He meets his interrogators prepared to resist the worst: it is a test of his revolutionary soul.

Something must be said as well of the two Americans who described the interrogation methods to me. First—and it is a thing seriously to consider—these men are not strangers, not people who have been metamorphosed by some satanic forces to a point beyond our understanding or recognition. Met on a college campus or in a business office, they would not attract unusual attention. Their attitudes toward Vietnam are indeed more scholarly than demonic. They want to involve themselves in the country. They profess with sincerity their respect for the people—so much that they actively wish them a better fate. And now consider this interview, what they said and what they revealed of themselves. After I left them I had the sickening feeling of “there but forthegraceofGod...”

The main protagonist—identified as “Mr. X”—describes himself as an “agnostic atheist,” but clearly he believes in the Devil if not in God. In fact, his is a holy work: to exorcise the Communist devils possessing Vietcong. He undertakes the prisoner’s “conversion” for the prisoner’s own good: he is “helping” the man, saving him. I ask, “What gives you the right?” “Your belief,” he answers. It gives him the right to “proselytize.”

And now consider this interview, what they said and what they revealed of themselves. What follow are excerpts from a tape recording I made of our conversation. Three asterisks in the transcript indicate that a portion of the interview is skipped over; three dots, that a portion of an answer is elided; and a word in parenthesis followed by a question mark indicates an imperfect rendering on the tape and my guess of the word involved.

MR. X: At this time [the prisoner] kind of feels an emotional dependence upon you because for two days you’ve been protecting him from the big, outside ugly world that he doesn’t understand: feeding him good chow, talking with him, calling him a [kambelo?] of the NLF, not the derogatory term of Vietcong... Then you indicate that this nice treatment that he’s had so far [has] not been disinterested good treatment,

that we expect his cooperation. This again reintroduces the whole issue of the big, ugly outside world. What's going to happen to him now? Well, he might tell you a couple of things, beginning with rather innocuous things. Well, you can imply that you knew that already, what you're really after are better things and this might rather [uncalm?] him. Then you might say, "Jeez, that scrape you got on your shoulder... it obviously needs attention; we'll have to give you some penicillin." And while you're giving him the penicillin, you're telling him that, "You know, there are these other types of people who just..."

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MR. X: Actually again, this is the technique that Captain [Y]... and myself have been trying to promote in an advisory relationship. Again, it's a technique that's been used most effectively by the Chinese, in which you've pulled the man out of his familiar environment: he's dependent ... upon you for his continual wellbeing. And even though the prisoner may [resist?], it's kind of an emotional interdependence that's created, and what you try and do is [use?] this emotional interdependence in such a way that he comes to the point where he must tell you what he knows.

SAHLINS: It's in effect brainwashing—is that the point of this?

MR. X: No, what it is, is breaking him down. But... once you've broken him down, it comes to the point where he wakes up in a sweat one morning and tells you, "All right." Then he tells you the names of the two people in his cell; or, he gives you the location of the camp that he just recently came from. Then you're through with him, in practical terms. You've got what you needed to continue operating. But at this point, if you really believe in anything yourself, what you've got to do is give him something to hope for before you send him back for further processing. Because you have just brought this individual to the lowest point in his life in terms of human meaning and existence. So at that point, that's when you've got to stress

that, “Well now we’re releasing you for further processing. But for you, what you’ve just told us is the beginning of a positive affirmation. We just can’t process you right into our unit now; because you don’t know what we stand for and what we’re fighting for, but we hope that someday you will be joining us.” See, we don’t have time to get any brainwashing. The Chinese can do that because they have POWs for months and months and months. If we get a guy, we’ve got him for two to five days, and then he’s out of our hands. In that two to five days, we’ve got to get the information we need. But we will not get the information we need by physical torture. We’ve got to get it by an emotional and mental torture. And you can do that because that’s what they’re least adequately prepared for. It’s what Americans are least adequately prepared for when they find themselves in the other side’s hands.

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SAHLINS: What kind of control do you have over Arvin [Vietnam army] types of interrogation [i.e., physical torture]?

MR. X: Well again, that’s an advisory function. And what you’re trying to do is —this is just a traditional, feudal Asian society, mainland style—and what you’re trying to do is change the course of warfare in Asia. To some extent this has been done: the Chinese People’s Liberation Army; it’s happened probably in the Japanese army, the Japanese Self-Defense and Home Defense Armies. But until the end of World War II, we always thought of the Japanese army as a real cruel, vindictive bunch of cutthroats. Well, it turned out in post-World War II analysis that the Bataan Death March was something that they handled to the best of their ability, given the available transport and the way that they would have handled their own prisoners. They just moved them, and they moved them as fast as they could. People who couldn’t keep up the pace in some cases were helped and in some other cases—just according to the individual guard—were bashed and thrown aside. Vietnamese to our eyes seem rather cruel sometimes to prisoners, but they’re not doing this with any ideological vengeance. They’re doing that

because that’s just been the bent of warfare in Mainland Asia for a thousand years, and what we have got to try to do is sophisticate it, and tell them, “Look, that’s just not the way.” It’s a slow process; we’re attempting a reformation of a whole society.

SAHLINS: What practical is being done to discourage this kind of thing?

MR. X: Well, guidance on the spot—

CAPTAIN D (Sahlins’ escort): It’s up to the individual advisers— MR. X: The individual adviser giving guidance on the spot.

CAPTAIN D: Sometimes it’s successful, sometimes not— CAPTAIN Y: In most cases, it’s not.

SAHLINS: From what you say about mental torture, you wouldn’t make any distinction in the morality of either kind [i.e., physical versus mental torture]?

MR. X: Hell, no! I don’t make any distinction in morality at all: torture is torture, and when you fuck around with a guy’s mind and his whole basic raison d’être, you’re really hurting him—especially when he’s prepared mentally, spiritually, for the physical torture.

SAHLINS: Then the attempt to discourage Vietnamese water torture ...isjust because the other type [mental torture] doesn’t offend American sensibilities as much?

MR. X: No, it’s not because of that. Because we don’t concern ourselves here with American sensibilities. We concern ourselves with what will work.

CAPTAIN Y: It’s relatively ineffective.

MR. X: It’s ineffective. It may sound hard-boiled to say that we don’t concern ourselves with American sensibilities—but we don’t. We’re concerning ourselves with Vietnamese sensibilities.

SAHLINS: What about the sensibilities of the Americans who are involved... the person who’s torturing?

MR. X: To most of the Americans, to most of the simple-minded Americans who get involved in Vietnam—that’s all the Boobus americanus that H. L. Mencken spoke about—undoubtedly they think that the mental and emotional torture we’re talking about is the least objectionable, because they’ve never really paused to seriously reflect about it themselves; or perhaps they did not go through the experience of being a POW in the Korean Conflict themselves. And they can probably tell you, “Oh, Jesus, I’d try and stop that physical torture, because I know it’s just wrong”—you know. But we think that we’re looking into it a little more deeply, and we see that the mental and spiritual torture that we bring a man through to the point where he voluntarily gives you the information is pretty rough stuff to get involved in too. But it works.

SAHLINS: How do you offset the damage to yourself?

MR. X: Your belief. Your belief: you have to sincerely believe that in the long run you’re helping this man. It’s like an AA cure. If you’re just breaking the guy down for the sake of getting a poor helpless alcoholic who’s hipped on NLF propaganda to admit that he was wrong and give you the information, then you’re going to send him out in the street a crushed derelict, then there’s something wrong with you. But you have to really believe, as we do—although we get discouraged sometimes by our [Vietnamese] counterparts—you have to really believe that you’re helping this guy to something better.

SAHLINS: Conversion from communism is involved in the torture.

MR. X: Conversion from anything to anything involves a certain degree of self-torture. We just accelerated the process because we need that fucking information.

SAHLINS: This is better for him?

MR. X: He’s alive, and you can still help him...

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MR. X: Most Americans, unfortunately, don’t bother to think deeply about the stuff they get involved in and they make superficial judgments: “Well, it’s wrong to torture this guy physically because we’re all part of the same (background?)”—

CAPTAIN Y: If you ask you’ll get probably 80 percent of the people [U.S. military] will say, “Well, I didn’t get involved in it. When they capture them, when they capture the Vietnamese communists, I just turn my back and go and have a cigarette.”

MR. X: They take a drink from their canteen and light up a cigarette. And that’s discouraging... I’d rather get—not get involved in it, not in the actual physical torture myself—but I’d rather be right there and see it done, and then laugh like a horse when it doesn’t work and they don’t get the information. And then in the long run you’re affecting the situation when you just laugh at this guy and say: “Look, you think he’s gonna break? So you cut up his stomach a little bit and his insides fell out...Hegotthelast laugh on you, because he didn’t talk a bit.” And maybe it’ll make the guy think, you know, and ten times later, after ten more people have faded out because he

physically tortured them, maybe he'll say: "Okay, wise American adviser, what would you do?"... We have a moral responsibility, it seems to me, once we've stepped into this country, to involve ourselves in the complete fabric of the country and to understand it, and then try and help the Vietnamese to look at some different alternatives... We should be acting as a catalyst, as a thinking catalyst in Vietnam. But you cannot be a catalyst unless you know the entire fabric of the thing. And lighting up a cigarette when they bring a prisoner in for questioning is—well, that's an immoral—

CAPTAIN Y: It's just like saying, "It doesn't happen."

MR. X: That's just about the height of immorality, I think. To think that you can just absolve yourself. That's saying that every man is an island; or at least when it is comfortable, when it's comfortable for me to be an island unto myself, then I am; and the bell's tolling for that poor fucker under the knife, not me. That's real bad. And again, it's a simple-minded approach.

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[Mr. X had mentioned that one of the rules imparted to the cadres in training was "be kind to prisoners." I asked if that wasn't a rule he disobeyed.]

MR. X: Well, if the final result of it is—it's a cruel process—but the result of bringing him closer to you, of conversion—it's a tortuous process of conversion—but the result is a kind one...Ifyou believe in your program, this is what you do...

SAHLINS: Do you believe in breaking people down so they agree with your program? And breaking them down justifies the end?

MR. X: No... That’s why we would not take a guy who’s been broken directly into our unit at this time...

SAHLINS: Either you will rehabilitate him by converting him to your belief or you’re going to leave him a mental wreck... Can your ends be so God-given as to give you this right among humanity to do this?

MR. X: I don’t know. I don’t really believe anybody’s hands are Godgiven. I’m an agnostic atheist.

SAHLINS: No, your ends. I’m not asking you for religious beliefs. What I’m asking is, do you believe you have the right to impose by this method—

MR. X: I think I’ve got the right to try. Nobody’s got the right to succeed—guaranteed. But everybody’s got the right to promote and proselytize what they believe.

* * *

CAPTAIN Y: If we do not break this guy, if we do not attempt to change his ideas, then in essence what have we done? We’ve said that basically he’s right!

SAHLINS: No, that isn’t so. One agrees to disagree as a matter of principle in a democratic system.

MR. X: Oh wait, this is [where] we began… I've had some tremendous conversations with these guys, and we begin by agreeing to disagree. But you can soon get this guy so flustered and so shaken up that before he knows it, he's agreeing with you—because his assumptions to begin with were rather vulnerable.

SAHLINS: But that isn't the issue here. The issue here is whether you will impose your will by this technique, which is—

MR. X: We don't know what our will is yet.

SAHLINS: You will impose your ideas by this technique— MR. X: What ideas?

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SAHLINS:… I asked the question, how do you justify the effect upon yourself of acting in this way? And you said you're doing the guy a service. Now, I'm asking you, do you believe you have the right to impose your will on somebody, impose what you believe— MR. X: We are not imposing our will. We are not imposing will. Even after you've broken him and gotten the information, he's still a free agent.

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MR. X: Not impose will—if he fails to accept… an alternative. And not our alternative; there are a number of alternatives. Because in essence that's what we're trying to show him.

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SAHLINS: So as a matter of fact by this process you either transform him from that belief into one of a range of acceptable beliefs, or you will leave him a mental wreck—

MR. X: But we don’t leave him this way. We have brought him to a point where he realizes that the faith he placed in his previous system was essentially not powerful. He has volunteered the information. At this point he’s got to find a new way. He’s got to have a way out of his dilemma, and the people at the training centers should be skillful enough to point out to him a number of alternatives.

SAHLINS: We come back to the question: whether you have the right—by these techniques, which are external to him—to deny him [the] belief that he came in with in his hand and only accept a set of alternatives which you propose?

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MR. X: Listen, I’ve met guys…WehadaguyinPhuYenProvince in the summer of ’63 who was the Propaganda Director for the NLF in that province; and boy, we just worked ourselves literally ragged in four days trying to bring that guy to the point where he’d tell us a few things, and he was tremendous—just tremendous. Didn’t tell us a thing.

SAHLINS: You admire this guy?

MR. X: Tremendous—tremendous.

SAHLINS: So you admire more a person who will not acquiesce to the thing that you say is right than one who does?

MR. X: No, not true. I didn’t say that at all. I admire a guy who will tortuously admit—if he really believes—that, “Oh Jesus, I never thought about that before. Those guys [NLF] they told me something else; and you’re really doing something else.” A guy like that who will examine his previously arrived conclusions and change his mind, I admire that—

SAHLINS: That’s very admirable, but it doesn’t describe the process you went through, which was to leave him in a situation where either he takes his set of alternatives which you give him or he is a mental wreck.

MR. X: Remember, this was an act of affirmation on his part, where he yields the information voluntarily. But it’s only a beginning; it’s only a beginning; and it’s not fair to leave him at the point where he’s just made the beginning.

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MR. X: It’s just like an alcoholic. An alcoholic can attend the meetings and he can see everybody else get embarrassed; and if he doesn’t want to join them he can just back out again. But once a guy begins to join this little society of alcoholics—

CAPTAIN Y: These cadres we have [as instructors]—these ex-VCs, ex-NLF, ex-Viet Minh—they all in some way or another gave up something in their own mind when they turned, came to the government.

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MR. X:... what we're trying to show these guys when we're interrogating them, through this tortuous process, is that you're not better [off] under the NLF. "Your whole series of assumptions has got to be re-examined here, and we're here to help you re-examine them. And, Jesus, there's some guys here have got some more basic ideas of how they'd like to examine you, but we're just holding these guys off ... and we'll take good care of you." That's the kind of a dirty trick—[but] when you've only got four days...

SAHLINS: Have you done this with Vietcong?

MR. X: We don't do anything because we're advisers—in every sense.

[26] See Elinor Langer, "National Teach-In," Science (May 21,1965): 1075–1077; see also Marshall Sahlins, "The Future of the National Teach-In: A History," in Marshall Sahlins, Culture in Practice: Selected Essays (New York: Zone Books, 2000), pp. 209–218.

[27] See Dana Priest and Barton Gellman, "'Stress and Duress' Tactics Used on Terrorism Suspects Held in Secret Overseas Facilities," Washington Post, December 26, 2002, p. A1.

[28] The Vietnamese Popular Forces were anticommunist troops. The Vietcong, referred to later in this article as the National Liberation Forces (NLF), were Communist.

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** Chapter 4: Contemporary Anthropology and Moral Accountability

Thomas Weaver, ed., To See Ourselves, 1973

GERALD D. BERREMAN

By 1970 documentary evidence surfaced which implicated the involvement of American anthropologists and other social scientists in clandestine counterinsurgency work from 1965 to 1969. In 1965, anthropologists were reported to have participated in Project Camelot, a CIA-supported counterinsurgency program in Latin America. And during the American wars in Indochina, documents taken from the office of a UCLA anthropologist revealed that several anthropologists had secretly assisted the war effort by providing information about Thai culture and communities to the U.S. military.[29]

In this article (first delivered as a talk in 1967), Gerald D. Berreman critiques the notion of a “value-free” social science. He notes that clandestine

anthropological activities sponsored by the Department of Defense and other parts of the U.S. military establishment can have disastrous political, professional, and ethical consequences.[30] Berreman has consistently sought to keep anthropological research in the public domain, available to anyone.

Berreman's contribution to ethics in anthropology included a leading role in the American Anthropological Association's standing Committee on Ethics. In November 1970, he and the other committee members formulated the "Principles of Professional Responsibility," which the association adopted in May 1971. The document states that the "anthropologist's paramount responsibility is to those he [or she] studies. When there is a conflict of interest, these individuals must come first." [31]

The notion that contemporary world events are irrelevant to the professional concerns of anthropologists was laid neatly to rest at the 1966 meeting of the American Anthropological Association when Dr. Michael Harner rose to challenge the ruling of the president-elect that a resolution condemning the United States' role in the war in Vietnam was out of order because it did not "advance the science of anthropology" or "further the professional interests of anthropologists." Dr. Harner suggested that "genocide is not in the professional interests of anthropologists." With that, the chair was voted down.

The dogma that public issues are beyond the interests or competence of those who study and teach about man comprises myopic and sterile professionalism, and a fear of commitment which is both irresponsible and irrelevant. Its result is to dehumanize "the most humanist of the sciences," as Eric Wolf has called our discipline; to betray utterly the opportunity and obligation which he has claimed for anthropology, namely: "the creation of an image of man that will be adequate to the experience of our time."

That neutrality in science is illusory is a point which has been made often and well.

The famous anthropologist Franz Boas was alert to startlingly similar problems in the uses of anthropology and anthropologists during World War I, and deplored them publicly. “A number of men who follow science as their profession [including ‘at least four men who carry on anthropological work’]... have prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies,” he wrote in 1919.

If science has no responsibility, scientists do. Scientists are people. They cannot escape values in the choices they make nor in the consequences of their acts.

If anthropologists choose to collect their data and make their analyses without regard to their use—leaving that choice to others—they may believe that they are adhering to the most rigorous scientific canons. But to say nothing is not to be neutral. To say nothing is as much a significant act as to say something. Douglas Dowd noted that “the alternatives are not ‘neutrality’ and ‘advocacy.’ To be uncommitted is not to be neutral, but to be committed—consciously or not—to the status quo; it is, in C. Wright Mills’ phrase, ‘to celebrate the present.”’

Silence permits others in the society who are less reticent, perhaps less scrupulous, almost certainly less informed, to make their own use of scientific findings. It leaves to politicians and journalists, to entrepreneurs, scoundrels, and madmen, as well as to statesmen and benefactors—but especially to the powerful—the interpretation and manipulation of matters about which they frequently know little, and of whose implications they know less, and nearly always far less than those who collected the material or made the analyses. It is therefore wishful thinking of the most elemental sort to assume that anthropo-

logical work can be put before the public without context or interpretation, there to be judged freely and intelligently on its merits without prejudice or manipulation, and to be acted upon accordingly. To assume that is to contribute to misuse born of ignorance or worse. Scientists cannot divorce themselves from the consequences of their scientific acts any more

than they can from those of any of their other acts as human beings. This is a fact of existence in human society and it is a tenet of democracy.

Science—even social science—has finally arrived in our society. The rewards to be obtained for supplying social science data and social science interpretations of the right kinds and in the right places are generous. The intellectual today can join the hired myth-makers and apologists of Madison Avenue and Washington. On campus he can be the paid consultant or the academic entrepreneur and grantsman. As Irving Howe has remarked, “For once, the carrots are real.” In this context, the prevalence of social scientists whose eyes are on the main chance rather than on the condition of man should not be surprising. This is the context within which we find social scientists whose “ideology of non-involvement in the social effects of scientific research,” Sidney Willhelm noted, simply frees them from social responsibility, creating an “unaccountable scientific aristocracy,” closely allied to the governmental, military, and corporate elites who buy their services and validate their heady status. As Noam Chomsky has written, “The problems with which research is concerned are those posed by the Pentagon or the great corporations, not, say, by the revolutionaries of Northeast Brazil or by SNCC [the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee]. Nor am I aware of a research project devoted to the problem of how poorly armed guerrillas might more effectively resist a brutal and devastating military technology.” Yet such alternative problems would be likely to interest at least some social scientists.

The rationale which supports this scientific unaccountability among moral men is the myth of a value-free social science. This myth has been exposed to all but its most avid beneficiaries and the most credulous in its audience, as we have seen in this section. Yet it still serves to maintain a whole segment of the profession—or at least to sustain the symbiotic relationship between that segment of social scientists and the corporate foundations and governmental agencies who buy its findings, using them only as and if they see fit. It was Alexander Leighton who said that administrators use the findings of social scientists as a drunk uses a lamp post—for support rather than illumination. It is not important what social scientists say so much as how what they say is used. That depends upon how amenable it is to use and that is where the myth of freedom from values is crucial, and where the social responsibility of the social scientist lies.

The myth of value-freedom in physical science disappeared in the atomic cloud. In social science it is fading, as we have seen, in the dust of Camelot, the blood of Vietnam, and the duplicity of the CIA.

Today, if scientific truth is to be understood and acted upon, those who discover and know it must forcefully announce not only their knowledge, but its implications and consequences. As Winetrout says in the closing paragraph of his essay honoring the courageous [sociologist C. Wright] Mills: “In our present-day world, it is not enough to be scholarly; one must be concerned and angry enough to shout. It is not enough to understand the world; one must seek to change it.”

No doubt, the world will change; no doubt, the social scientist’s knowledge will contribute to that change. His responsibility is to see that this knowledge is used for humane changes. Simply, scientists must be responsible for what they do.

Thirty years ago, Robert Lynd maintained that “either the social sciences know more than do...de facto leaders of the culture as to what the findings of research mean, as to the options the institutional system presents, as to what human personalities want, why they want them, and how desirable changes can be effected, or the vast current industry of social science is an empty facade.” To repeat Kathleen Gough’s question, “Who is to evaluate and suggest guidelines for human society, if not those who study it?”

Our positive responsibility as scientists is to present what we know and what inferences we draw from our knowledge as clearly, thoughtfully, and responsibly as we can. This is a value position with practical and humane consequences. We have already heard from C. Wright Mills. In another work, he decried the “divorce of knowledge from power,” and wrote:

As a type of social man, the intellectual does not have any one political direction, but the work of any man of knowledge, if he is the genuine article, does have a distinct kind of political relevance: His politics, in the first instance, are the politics of truth, for his job is the maintenance of an adequate definition of reality. Insofar as he is politically adroit, the main tenet of his politics is to find out as much of the truth as he can, and to tell it to the right people, at the right time, and in the right way. Or, stated negatively: to deny publicly what he knows to be false, whenever it appears in the assertions of no matter whom; and whether it be by virtue of official secret or an honest error. The intellectual ought to be the moral conscience of his society, at least with reference to the value of truth, for in the defining instance, that is his politics. And he ought also to be a man absorbed in the attempt to know what is real and what is unreal.[32]

I know of no statement which speaks to the responsibility of social scientists in our time as cogently as that one.

Douglas Dowd identifies the focal point of opposition by the young and by intellectuals in the word hypocrisy—hypocrisy in American deeds versus American words. This is where we as scientists and as teachers have a major responsibility: to speak the truth; to provide “an adequate definition of reality.” Candor is a major precondition for trust and for rational action, and this is what is lacking or threatened in our society—in foreign policy, in race relations, in poverty programs, in support of scholarship and research, in university administration, in virtually every sphere of our national life.

The reaction of many anthropologists is to say and do nothing about the problems of the day; to retreat into research, administration, or teaching. Lulled by activity into a sense of purpose, accomplishment, and virtue, they hope that things will somehow work out. Do we need Edmund Burke to remind us that “the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men [and, I might add, informed men] to do nothing”?

Anthropologists have not lacked outspoken champions of truth— truth about race, about poverty, about professional ethics, about the heavy hands of government and private capital in formulating research, about war, and

especially about the war in Indo-China. Probably anthropologists have more of them in proportion to their numbers than any other academic discipline and any other profession. But we need to emphasize and value these contributions in order to counteract the powerful and irresponsible professionalism which belittles or condemns these humane endeavors in favor of the mindless and trivial successes obtained under the illusion of freedom from responsibility for one's self and one's work.

In a world where anything scientists learn is likely to be put to immediate and effective use for ends beyond their control and antithetical to their values, anthropologists must choose their research undertakings with an eye to their implications. They must demand the right to have a hand or at least a say in the use of what they do as a condition for doing it.

We anthropologists must seek to apply our knowledge and skills to real problems, defined by us and not simply accepted from the sources which provide our funds. We must ask questions which address the problems of our time rather than merely those which minimize or obscure them. Nor does the incompleteness of our knowledge disqualify us scientifically, rationally, or morally from asserting what we know. Mills pointed out 20 years ago that "if one half of the relevant knowledge which we now possess were really put into the service of the ideals which leaders mouth, these ideals could be realized in short order." Gouldner has followed logically with the statement: "The issue...is not whether we know enough; the real questions are whether we have the courage to say and use what we know." This is why we must not be timid in asserting ourselves individually and collectively wherever we can. This is why our professional association should not now be chary to express views on matters of public policy just as we have not been in the past (as you have seen in the Resolutions) and just as other such groups express views on such matters. For students of human behavior to decline comment on human behavior is irresponsibility in a democracy, no matter how controversial the issues.

[29] See Irving Horowitz, ed., The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1968); see also Eric R. Wolf and

Joseph G. Jorgenson, “Anthropology on the Warpath in Thailand,” New York Review of Books, November 19, 1970, pp. 26–35.

[30] See also Gerald D. Berreman, “Academic Colonialism—Not So Innocent Abroad,” The Nation, November 10, 1969, pp. 505–508.

[31] The code of ethics was published in the Newsletter of the American Anthropological Association, November 1970, pp. 15–16.

[32] “On Knowledge and Power,” in Irving Horowitz, ed. Power, Politics, and People (New York: Ballantine Books, 1964), p. 611.

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** Chapter 5: Two Plus Two Equals Zero—War and Peace Reconsidered

Radcliffe Quarterly, March 1983

LAURA NADER

In the 1980s, many Americans expressed a growing concern over the escalation of the nuclear arms race between the United States and the

Soviet Union. Laura Nader took a strong public stand against pro-nuclear policies throughout this period, and used anthropological ideas about group dynamics and cultural control to inform her critiques. As early as 1969, she recommended that anthropologists begin to “study up”—that is, research powerful institutions and bureaucracies— and her work among nuclear physicists demonstrates how social scientists can shed light on the practices of high-tech cultures.

In this article, Nader examines the drift toward war in a nuclear age. She argues that institutionalized insanity, organizational survival, and short-term self-interest on the part of policy makers and the military-industrial complex may jeopardize the long-term survival of humanity.

The people responsible for the current nuclear arms policies are a small number of men who circulate between government laboratories, universities, the defense and military establishment, and defense contracting industries. These people promote the belief that we need nuclear capabilities, that we can win a nuclear war or keep the peace through nuclear buildup. They promulgate refined distinctions that make it appear that there are serious internal debates on nuclear arms. As the nuclear debate expands, I am increasingly hearing people say that Americans are being led down the path to a national Jonestown and that other governments may be performing the same function for their people.

Actually the analogy to Jonestown does not quite hold: Jones needed followers to have a Jonestown. Yet there is some similarity. While

Americans are not actively following, perhaps they trust that somewhere in the government different sides of the arguments surrounding the nuclear arms race are being openly debated. Open debate will only happen, however, if citizens themselves broaden the debate and question official “wisdom,” a process that is beginning to occur.

Among well-known citizens who have helped broaden and deepen the debate are individuals who are or who have been insiders to nuclear research.

Scientists like Hans Bethe, Herbert York, Robert Wilson, and the late George Kistiakovsky, who were involved as division heads or group leaders in the Manhattan Project or as government laboratory leaders since World War II, have defected from a group-think mentality. The merging of interest between such scientists and the grassroots peace movements concerned about the wisdom of a $222 billion defense program that could lead to global annihilation has added a new dimension to the peace movement. And just plain people are more often making the observations that could be useful reminders to insulated minds. One such observation appeared in a letter-to-the-editor section of a major newspaper noting that President Reagan's naming the MX [missile] a "Peacekeeper" is like "Robespierre describing the guillotine as a headache remedy." Another letter discusses the Orwellian "war is peace" thesis in which a constant state of war allowed the superpowers to control populations and maintain a war economy. As insiders and outsiders join forces, the dangers, the hoax, and the prospects of a different future will become more specified.

The dangers have become policy under the present administration. Although defense and detente were central ideas in earlier debates, increasingly we hear about first strike and winning a protracted nuclear war. Nuclear suicide is being contemplated as a way to preserve our Western civilization and our American democracy. Peaceful coexistence with the Soviets is no longer a goal; rather, we hear talk about radically altering the nature of Soviet society through confrontation. This becomes abundantly clear in Robert Scheer's new book With Enough Shovels (1982), and there is among some an obsession that a postnuclear victory (sic) would ensure destruction of Soviet political authority and cause "the emergence of a postwar world order compatible with Western values." The notion that the Soviets are responsible for general world unrest goes unqualified in these circles.

There are three concepts that have influenced my thinking about war over the past decade. They are institutionalized insanity, organizational survival, and short-term self-interest. Institutionalized insanity operates in groups, has immunity from the forces of society that would come down hard on insane individuals, and has not been widely recognized as a social problem, even though insanity in groups exhibits many of the same qualities as insanity in individuals. Herb York refers to the problem of insanity in his interview with

Mr. Scheer: “What’s going on right now is that the crazier analysts have risen to higher positions than is normally the case.” Senator Alan Cranston refers to an interview that Scheer had with [Undersecretary of Defense] T. K. Jones that went “far beyond the bounds of reasonable, rational, responsible thinking,” when the latter made the now infamous suggestion: If there are enough shovels to go around, everybody’s going to make it. The Reagan reference to Russians as “godless” monsters is additional proof of the thinking that leads to messianic planning to defend presumed U.S. vulnerabilities. I say presumed, because both inside and outside the administration deficiencies in nuclear arms arguments have been challenged or qualified by Hans Bethe, Admiral Hyman Rickover ([author of] No Holds Barred, 1982), and many others.[33]

The architects of the present administration are said to be intellectuals, people who in the words of Mr. Scheer can separate their rhetoric from the consequences of what they advocate. Another view was revealed to me recently by a man who had worked in the Pentagon for more than 25 years. When I asked him if the Pentagon were studying the problem of depressed white middle-aged men in positions of power and responsibility, he added, “and who are being advised by depressed men.”

*** Organizational Survival

The concept of organizational survival has been used to understand organizational behavior. For no matter what the explicit goals of an organization are, its most central, albeit usually implicit goal, is its own survival. An organization takes on a life of its own. Although both institutionalized insanity and organizational survival are ubiquitous, they are of particular importance in the nuclear arms race. If institutionalized insanity operates among military and defense people, behavior in their circles that outsiders might think crazy (like the idea that somebody can win a nuclear war) goes undetected and undebated. This situation can persist for a long enough period to ensure that many organizations have invested so much in policies arising from this insanity that organizational survival begins to take precedence over national or even personal survival. Ideologies and rationales are developed within these groups to defend the plan of action. These defenses are reinforced by actual or perceived outside criticism, and become

so strong that the insanity is further strengthened. Ideological obsessions among bureaucrats may more often be the result of powerlessness than the political persuasion of the government.

*** Permanent War Economy

The defense industry is self-interested and profit motivated, as Admiral Rickover made abundantly clear in his last testimony before Congress. World War II heralded the beginning of close ties between industry and defense. In fact, Washington was such a soft touch that, according to Richard Barnet’s Roots of War (1972), Charles E. Wilson of General Electric, who recognized the profitability of the emerging defense industry, talked of “building a permanent war economy.” During the Eisenhower years, the theory developed among liberal politicians, economists, and business that high military spending would stimulate the economy. This theory was put into practice during the Kennedy administration through an enormous increase in military spending. Due to government sponsorship, defense industries profit from the benefits of long-term contracts, interest-free loans, payment by government of most plant and capital equipment, and government willingness to pay prices subjected to continuous upward renegotiation. These industries are among the biggest, most powerful, technologically advanced units of economic power in the country, and U.S. National Security policy is directed by elite groups largely recruited from business. Critics of government-industry relations have argued that exorbitant prices for poor quality products, and rampant fraud should encourage the government to produce its own products. While Admiral Rickover has been very specific about the fraud problem, others have argued that high-level military spending is having an adverse effect on the civilian economy. Increased military spending has weakened the U.S. position in the international marketplace and increased inflation at home.

I would suggest that we examine the rational and nonrational aspects of the arms race when considering what we should do. The nuclear freeze is a first step, one that if implemented, could give us time to address more fundamental societal questions. There may be something about the way our society has changed since the 1930s that is legitimizing the drift to war. I remember my father saying years ago that we had never found a civilian

economic solution to the Great Depression, we simply postponed solutions by going to war. In fact, preparing for war has become endemic to the superpowers. There may be internal structural reasons beyond opposing ideologies that are behind this pattern.

*** Danger and Opportunity

When we despair, we need to remember that these are times of danger and opportunity. The antinuclear movement is wise to plan its actions in steps beginning with the nuclear freeze and no-first-use declarations. At the same time, we need to develop positive economies and futures for nation-state societies that are not dependent on war for continued existence. To achieve these goals, those concerned with the arms race might well link up with the environmental movements and with healthy alternatives being worked on by the women's movements. There will be specific recommendations for getting out of this drift toward nuclear war that follow patterns of logical reasoning, i.e., "Nuclear war is not good for your health, and here are a series of paths that lead to exit." What we also need are plans for drawing people away from nuclear drift and toward positive goals. In addition to Nuclear Nightmares by Nigel Calder (1980) we need to visualize peaceful worlds, a world bent on creation versus destruction, on communication rather than distrust between nations. The role of citizen will be crucial in this process: our voices will not be hindered by bureaucracies. In Our Depleted Society (1965), Seymour Melman has written on what we could do with our $222 billion if the emphasis on the arms race were reduced. There has been talk about the economic successes of Japan and West Germany. Why can't we imagine what the economies of the U.S. and the USSR might be without the arms race? Can we find solutions for the Great Depression that do not include warfare and use these solutions as a positive enticement away from nuclear war? Can we address the very serious problem of personal powerlessness among top-level officials in countries like the U.S. or the USSR?

I am arguing that we recognize the limits placed upon our leaders, both military and civilian, and that we realize the role we need to play in generating the necessary optimism to empower people to become active. Under such conditions we could think about developing economies

appropriate to the conditions of peace and force ourselves to recognize the differences between wasteful versus adequate defense spending. National security may be best guaranteed by a healthy society. We need to lead the contest between nations into other areas such as peace-time high technology. This will require us to heed Admiral Rickover's advice, which has been echoed elsewhere: "Look at how our society is put together—political and economic power is increasingly being concentrated among a few large corporations and their officers." This is not the American dream, not what Jefferson contemplated. This is not what we would fight a war to preserve, but it may be what some might fight a war to obliterate when we can no longer tolerate the gap between what we would like to be and what we are.

[33] Dr. Hans Bethe, physicist, led the theoretical division of the Manhattan Project and won the 1967 Nobel Prize in Physics. Admiral Hyman Rickover (1900–1986) was a longtime U.S. naval officer and engineer who developed the world's first nuclear-powered engines and the first atomic-powered submarine, the USS Nautilus, launched in 1954.

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** Chapter 6: Dollars That Forge Guatemalan Chains

New York Times, March 18, 1985

BEATRIZ MANZ

The specter of nuclear holocaust haunted Americans during the Cold War era, but conventional wars also raged abroad in the 1970s and 1980s, often with U.S. support. The twentieth-century history of Guatemala was extraordinarily bloody. Since the colonial era, a small elite has controlled most of the country’s land and indigenous farmers have been forced to work their plantations. In the 1900s many plantations were owned and operated by U.S. corporations such as United Fruit Company. In 1951, Jacobo Arbenz was elected president on a platform of land reform and soon began expropriating fields for redistribution to peasants. But in 1954, the CIA engineered a coup which left Guatemala in the hands of a military dictatorship. Over the next forty years, approximately two hundred thousand people—mostly Mayans—were killed by armed groups openly funded by the United States in the name of halting communism. Guatemala is among the clearest examples of U.S.-sponsored state terror in recent history.

In this article, Beatriz Manz describes the scale of Guatemalan violence and the continuing role of the United States in perpetuating the terror. But the bloodshed did not end, and was not directed solely at Mayan peasants. In 1990, assassins killed Guatemalan anthropologist Myrna Mack; her murder was almost certainly politically motivated. Not until 1996 did the government and the opposition sign U.N.-sponsored peace accords, formally ending the thirty-year civil war.

Freedom of Information Act documents released in 1999 confirm that as early as the 1960s U.S. officials helped to implement a counterinsurgency strategy relying upon death squads (consisting of plainclothes Guatemalan military agents) to eliminate suspected “subversives.” During a visit to Central America in March 1999, President Clinton apologized for U.S. involvement in Guatemala’s civil war.

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The Administration is proposing a major increase, from $13 million to $35 million, in security assistance to Guatemala based on a dual deception—that human rights have improved under General Oscar Humberto Mejía Victores and that the military will soon turn over power to an elected civilian government.

In contrast to virtually every independent human rights organization, a State Department report on Guatemala issued last month maintained that “overall human rights conditions improved in 1984.” In fact, ghastly violence—beatings, rape, torture, mutilations, and assassinations—has become a normal state of affairs. Nor is it a secret war: hundreds of people have been publicly abducted, and mutilated corpses are strewn throughout the countryside. More than 150 articles have appeared in the Guatemalan press detailing killings, disappearances, and gruesome atrocities in the last three months alone.

The military has come to rely on terror as the centerpiece of a counterinsurgency campaign designed to smash the guerrillas’ base of support—to disrupt life among hundreds of thousands of ordinary Guatemalan villagers. The results of this campaign are staggering even by the bloody standards of Guatemala. Some 100,000 children are said to have lost one or both parents to political violence. Of the one million inhabitants in the northwestern part of the country, the center of army activity, 150,000 have fled to Mexico and 250,000 have been displaced or had their lives severely disrupted. In one highland municipality, 46 villages were abandoned. One of these villages, Finca San Francisco Nenton, was the site of a military massacre of 302 men, women, and children, on July 17, 1982.

In the years since then, selective killings and abductions have more or less replaced large-scale massacres, but the architects of yesterday's slaughter are still designing policy. In fact, many of those responsible for atrocities have been promoted rather than punished—and killings and disappearances still occur daily, at a rate of more than 100 a month.

In this climate, the generals have declared that elections will be held on October 27, 1985. This may look good to Washington, but what could elections mean to Guatemalans when the army has crippled or destroyed most independent organizations and virtually the entire country is consumed with fear? The average Guatemalan would not presume to criticize or organize openly against the status quo.

Whether or not elections take place, the military is simply not about to relinquish real power. The occupant of the presidential palace may wear a pinstripe suit instead of a uniform, but the army will still remain in charge. The generals will continue to impose the lopsided pattern of landownership and income distribution that has given rise to much of the conflict. All potential civilian candidates recognize this, and none who might favor land reform dare propose it.

Nor does anyone imagine that the military will relinquish the power it has amassed in the countryside through civil patrols and model villages. The army has conscripted 900,000 predominantly Indian men into unpaid patrols and begun to intern 100,000 Indians in 70 model villages. Together, the two policies are forcefully transforming the lives of the indigenous population.

In fact, far from getting ready to give up power, the army is further entrenching itself in realms normally controlled by civilians. A November 1984 law, for example, extends military control over virtually all rural reconstruction and development efforts—precisely the area where much of the proposed United States economic aid would go.

New security assistance could only send a signal that atrocities are acceptable. It would also be sure to further strengthen the military’s control. Is there an alternative? Aid should be limited to economic assistance and it should be dependent on three conditions: it should go to local communities and not be managed by the military; those guilty of atrocities must be brought to justice; peasant organizations and grassroots groups must be able to function freely.

The choice is clear: we can bankroll the further entrenchment of the military, or we can support the establishment of a stable and just Guatemalan society.

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** Chapter 7: Anthropologists as Spies

The Nation, November 20, 2000

DAVID PRICE

In this article, David Price revisits the issue of clandestine anthropological research raised in the earlier pieces by Boas (Chapter 1) and Berreman (Chapter 4). Using documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, Price traces the historical ties between anthropologists, the CIA, and its precursor (the Office of Strategic Services or OSS) from World War I to the 1991 Gulf War. He also discusses the significance of modifications to the

American Anthropological Association’s “Principles of Professional Responsibility” (see Chapter 4) that have diluted the original document’s emphasis on nonsecrecy in research and the primary responsibility of anthropologists to those they study.

Price concludes with a sobering warning: “Unless the scientific community takes steps to denounce such [espionage] activities using the clearest possible language and providing sanctions against those who do so, we can anticipate that such actions will continue with impunity during some future crisis or war.” It remains to be seen whether anthropologists will once again serve as spies in the “war on terror” declared by George W. Bush.

On December 20, 1919, under the heading “Scientists as Spies,” The Nation published a letter by Franz Boas, the father of academic anthropology in America. Boas charged that four American anthropologists, whom he did not name, had abused their professional research positions by conducting espionage in Central America during the First World War. Boas strongly condemned their actions, writing that they had “prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies.” Anthropologists spying for their country severely betrayed their science and damaged the credibility of all anthropological research, Boas wrote; a scientist who uses his research as a cover for political spying forfeits the right to be classified as a scientist.

The most significant reaction to this letter occurred ten days later at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), when the association’s governing council voted to censure Boas, effectively removing him from the council and pressuring him to resign from the national research council. Three out of four of the accused spies (their names, we now know, were Samuel Lothrop, Sylvanus Morley, and Herbert Spinden) voted for censure; the fourth (John Mason) did not. Later Mason wrote Boas an apologetic letter explaining that he’d spied out of a sense of patriotic duty.

A variety of extraneous factors contributed to Boas’s censure (chief among these being institutional rivalries, personal differences, and possibly anti-Semitism). The AAA’s governing council was concerned less about the accuracy of his charges than about the possibility that publicizing them

might endanger the ability of others to undertake fieldwork. It accused him of “abuse” of his professional position for political ends.

In 1919 American anthropology avoided facing the ethical questions Boas raised about anthropologists’ using their work as a cover for spying. And it has refused to face them ever since. The AAA’s current code of ethics contains no specific prohibitions concerning espionage or secretive research. Some of the same anthropologists who spied during World War I did so in the next war. During the early cold war Ruth Benedict and lesser-known colleagues worked for the RAND Corporation and the Office of Naval Research. In the Vietnam War, anthropologists worked on projects with strategic military applications.

Until recently there was little investigation of either the veracity of Boas’s accusation in 1919 or the ethical strength of his complaint. But FBI documents released to me under the Freedom of Information Act shed new light on both of these issues.

The FBI produced 280 pages of documents pertaining to one of the individuals Boas accused—the Harvard archeologist Samuel Lothrop. Lothrop’s FBI file establishes that during World War I he indeed spied for Naval Intelligence, performing “highly commendable” work in the Caribbean until “his identity as an Agent of Naval Intelligence became known.” What is more, World War II saw him back in harness, serving in the Special Intelligence Service (SIS), which J. Edgar Hoover created within the FBI to undertake and coordinate all intelligence activity in Central and South America. During the war the SIS stationed approximately 350 agents throughout South America, where they collected intelligence, subverted Axis networks, and at times assisted in the interruption of the flow of raw materials from Axis sources. Lothrop was stationed in Lima, Peru, where he monitored imports, exports, and political developments. To maintain his cover he pretended to undertake archeological investigations.

From his arrival in Lima in mid-December 1940, Lothrop was dogged by constant worries that his communications with Washington were being intercepted by British, Peruvian, Japanese, or German intelligence operatives.

By August 1941 he became concerned that his lack of significant archeological progress might lead to the discovery of his true work in Peru. Lothrop reported his fears of being detected to FBI headquarters: “As regards the archaeological cover for my work in Peru, it was based on the understanding that I was to be in the country six months or less. It is wearing thin and some day somebody is going to start asking why an archaeologist spends most of his time in towns asking questions. This won’t happen as soon as it might because the Rockefeller grant for research in Peru makes me a contact man between the field workers and the government.”

Lothrop was referring to the Rockefeller Foundation, which financed twenty archaeologists who were excavating in Peru, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela, and Central America. He also used his ties to a variety of academic and research institutions—including Harvard, the Peabody Museum, the Institute of Andean Research, and the Carnegie Institute—as cover in Peru. Archeologist Gordon Willey, who worked on an Institute of Andean Research Project in Peru and had some contact with Lothrop at this time, recalled that “it was sort of widely known on the loose grapevine that Sam was carrying on some kind of espionage work, much of which seemed to be keeping his eye on German patrons of the Hotel Bolivar Bar.”

In fact, Lothrop was considered a valuable agent who collected important information on Peruvian politics and leading public figures of a nature usually difficult to secure. An FBI evaluation reported that headquarters “occasionally receive[s] information of sufficient importance from Mr. Lothrop to transmit to the President.” Lothrop’s principal source was an assistant to the Peruvian minister of government and police. In the spring of 1944 this informant resigned his governmental position and began “working exclusively under the direction of Dr. Lothrop.” In May 1944 the U.S. Embassy reported that Lothrop’s principal informant was fully aware of Lothrop’s connection to the SIS and FBI.

Lothrop’s cover was compromised by four Peruvian investigators in the employ of his top informant. His informant had been heard bragging to the Peruvian police that he made more by working for the U.S. Embassy than the police made working for the Peruvian government.

The FBI decided to test the reliability of Lothrop's key informant by assigning him to collect information on nonexistent events and individuals. The informant was given background information about a nonexistent upcoming anti-Jewish rally that he was to attend, including a list of specific individuals who would be present. Though the rally did not occur, the informant provided a full report on it. He also filed detailed reports on a nonexistent commemorative celebration of the bombing of Pearl Harbor held in a distant town, and on a fictitious German spy who supposedly had jumped ship in Peru.

Lothrop was instructed not to tell the informant that his duplicity had been detected; instead, he was to say he was out of funds to pay for informants. Lothrop refused to believe his informant was lying and sent a letter of resignation to J. Edgar Hoover. His resignation was accepted and he returned to the United States to resume his academic duties at Harvard's Peabody Museum and the Carnegie Institute.

What is now known about Lothrop's long career of espionage suggests that the censure of Boas by the AAA in 1919 sent a clear message to him and others that espionage under cover of science in the service of the state is acceptable. In each of the wars and military actions that followed the First World War anthropologists confronted, or more often repressed, the very issues raised by Boas in his 1919 letter to The Nation.

While almost every prominent living U.S. anthropologist (including Ruth Benedict, Gregory Bateson, Clyde Kluckhohn, and Margaret Mead) contributed to the World War II war effort, they seldom did so under the false pretext of fieldwork, as Lothrop did. Without endorsing the wide variety of activities to which anthropological skills were applied in the service of the military, a fundamental ethical distinction can be made between those who (as Boas put it) "prostituted science by using it as a cover for their activities as spies" and those who did not. World War II did, however, stimulate frank, though muted, discussions of the propriety of anthropologists' using their knowledge of those they studied in times of war, creating conditions in which, as anthropologist Laura Thompson put it, they became "technicians

for hire to the highest bidder." Although the racist tenets of Nazism were an affront to the anthropological view of the inherent equality of humankind, Boas (who died in 1942) would probably have condemned anthropologists who used science as a cover for espionage during World War II. Approximately half of America's anthropologists contributed to the war effort, with dozens of prominent members of the profession working for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), Army and Navy intelligence, and the Office of War Information.

In the following decades there were numerous private and public interactions between anthropologists and the intelligence community. Some anthropologists applied their skills at the CIA after its inception in 1947 and may still be doing so today. For some of them this was a logical transition from their wartime espionage work with the OSS and other organizations; others regarded the CIA as an agency concerned with gathering information to assist policy makers rather than a secret branch of government that subverted foreign governments and waged clandestine war on the Soviet Union and its allies. Still other anthropologists unwittingly received research funding from CIA fronts like the Human Ecology Fund.

The American Anthropological Association also secretly collaborated with the CIA. In the early 1950s the AAA's executive board negotiated a secret agreement with the CIA under which agency personnel and computers were used to produce a cross-listed directory of AAA members, showing their geographical and linguistic areas of expertise along with summaries of research interests. Under this agreement the CIA kept copies of the database for its own purposes with no questions asked. And none were, if for no other reason than that the executive board had agreed to keep the arrangement a secret. What use the CIA made of this database is not known, but the relationship with the AAA was part of an established agency policy of making use of America's academic brain trust.

Anthropologists' knowledge of the languages and cultures of the people inhabiting the regions of the Third World where the agency was waging its declared and undeclared wars would have been invaluable to the CIA. The extent to which this occurred is the focus of ongoing archival and FOIA research. When the CIA overthrew Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954, an

anthropologist reported, under a pseudonym, to the State Department's intelligence and research division on the political affiliations of the prisoners taken by the military in the coup.

During the Korean War linguists and ethnographers assisted America's involvement with little vocal conflict of conscience. Norwegian sociologist Johan Galtung's revelations in 1965 of Project Camelot, in which anthropologists were reported to be working on unclassified counterinsurgency programs in Latin America, ignited controversy in the AAA. During America's wars in Southeast Asia the AAA was thrown into a state of upheaval after documents purloined from the private office of UCLA anthropologist Michael Moerman revealed that several anthropologists had secretly used their ethnographic knowledge to assist the war effort.

As a result of inquiries made into these revelations, the 1971 annual meeting of the AAA became the scene of a tumultuous showdown after a fact-finding committee chaired by Margaret Mead maneuvered to create a report finding no wrongdoing on the part of the accused anthropologists. An acrimonious debate resulted in the rejection of the Mead report by the voting members of the association. As historian Eric Wakin noted in his book Anthropology Goes to War, this "represented an organized body of younger anthropologists rejecting the values of its elders." But the unresolved ethical issue of anthropologists spying during the First and Second World Wars provided a backdrop to the 1971 showdown. Almost two decades later, during the [1991] Gulf War, proposals by conservatives in the AAA that its members assist allied efforts against Iraq provoked only minor opposition.

Today most anthropologists are still loath to acknowledge, much less study, known connections between anthropology and the intelligence community. As with any controversial topic, it is not thought to be a good "career builder." But more significant, there is a general perception that to rake over anthropology's past links, witting and unwitting, with the intelligence community could reduce opportunities for U.S. anthropologists to conduct fieldwork in foreign nations.

In the course of research in this area I have been told by other anthropologists in no uncertain terms that to raise such questions could endanger the lives of fieldworkers around the globe. This is not a point to be taken lightly, as many anthropologists work in remote settings controlled by hostile governmental or guerrilla forces. Suspicions that one is a U.S. intelligence agent, whether valid or not, could have fatal consequences. As Boas prophetically wrote in his original complaint against Lothrop and his cohorts, “In consequence of their acts every nation will look with distrust upon the visiting foreign investigator who wants to do honest work, suspecting sinister designs. Such action has raised a new barrier against the development of international friendly cooperation.” But until U.S. anthropology examines its past and sets rules forbidding both secret research and collaboration with intelligence agencies, these dangers will continue.

Over the past several decades the explicit condemnations of secretive research have been removed from the AAA’s code of ethics—the “Principles of Professional Responsibility” (PPR). In 1971 the PPR specifically declared that “no secret research, no secret reports or debriefings of any kind should be agreed to or given” by members of the AAA. By 1990 the attenuation of anthropological ethics had reached a point where anthropologists were merely “under no professional obligation to provide reports or debriefing of any kind to government officials or employees, unless they have individually and explicitly agreed to do so in the terms of employment.” These changes were largely accomplished in the 1984 revision of the PPR that Gerald Berreman characterized as reflecting the new “Reaganethics” of the association: In the prevailing climate of deregulation the responsibility for ethical review was shifted from the association to individual judgments.

As anthropologist Laura Nader noted, these Reagan-era changes were primarily “moves to protect academic careers... downplaying anthropologists’ paramount responsibility to those they study.” The current PPR may be interpreted to mean that anthropologists don’t have to be spies unless they want to or have agreed to do so in a contract. A 1995 Commission to Review the AAA Statements on Ethics declared that the committee on ethics had neither the authority nor the resources to investigate or arbitrate complaints of ethical violations and would “no longer

adjudicate claims of unethical behavior and focus its efforts and resources on an ethics education program."

Members of the current ethics committee believe that even though the AAA explicitly removed language forbidding secretive research or spying, there are clauses in the current code that imply (rather than state) that such conduct should not be allowed—though without sanctions, this stricture is essentially meaningless. Archeologist Joe Watkins, chairman of the ethics committee, believes that if an anthropologist were caught spying today, "the AAA would not do anything to investigate the activity or to reprimand the individual, even if the individual had not been candid [about the true purpose of the research]. I'm not sure that there is anything the association would do as an association, but perhaps public awareness would work to keep such practitioners in line, like the Pueblo clowns' work to control the societal miscreants." Watkins is referring to Pueblo cultures' use of clowns to ridicule miscreants.[34] Although it is debatable whether anthropologist intelligence operatives would fear sanctions imposed by the AAA, it is incongruous to argue that they would fear public ridicule more. Enforcing a ban on covert research would be difficult, but to give up on even the possibility of investigating such wrongdoing sends the wrong message to the world and to the intelligence agencies bent on recruiting anthropologists.

Many factors have contributed to the AAA's retreat from statements condemning espionage and covert research. Key among these are the century-old difficulties inherent in keeping an intrinsically diverse group of scholars aligned under the framework of a single association. A combination of atavistic and market forces has driven apart members of a field once mythically united around the holistic integration of the findings of archeology and physical, cultural and linguistic anthropology. As some "applied anthropologists" move from classroom employment to working in governmental and industrial settings, statements condemning spying have made increasing numbers of practitioners uncomfortable—and this discomfort suggests much about the nature of some applied anthropological work. The activities encompassed under the heading of applied anthropology are extremely diverse, ranging from heartfelt and underpaid activist-based research for NGOs around the world to production of secret ethnographies and time-allocation studies of industrial and blue-collar workplaces for the private consumption of management.

As increasing numbers of anthropologists find employment in corporations, anthropological research becomes not a quest for scientific truth, as in the days of Boas, but a quest for secret or proprietary data for governmental or corporate sponsors. The AAA's current stance of inaction sends the dangerous message to the underdeveloped world that the world's largest anthropological organization will take no action against anthropologists whose fieldwork is a front for espionage. As the training of anthropology graduate students becomes increasingly dependent on programs like the 1991 National Security Education Program—with its required governmental-service payback stipulations— the issue takes on increased (though seldom discussed) importance.

It is unknown whether any members of the AAA are currently engaged in espionage, but unless the scientific community takes steps to denounce such activities using the clearest possible language and providing sanctions against those who do so, we can anticipate that such actions will continue with impunity during some future crisis or war.

Many in the American Anthropological Association are frustrated with its decision neither to explicitly prohibit nor to penalize secretive government research. It is time for U.S. anthropologists to examine the political consequences of their history and take a hard, thoughtful look at Boas's complaint and the implications implicit in the association's refusal to condemn secret research and to reenact sanctions against anthropologists engaging in espionage.

[34] "Miscreants" refers to those who engage in socially deviant behavior. Among the Pueblo and certain other Native American cultures, clowns traditionally mimicked the behavior of deviants in public settings (for example, at ritual celebrations), thereby reproaching the offenders.

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** Chapter 8: Abuse of Power by the Advocates of Reason

Acts of Resistance, 1998

The late Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2001), renowned French sociologist and anthropologist, was a frequent contributor to national debates on culture, economic policy, globalization, and immigration. He once said of his public commentaries: “I would not have engaged in public position-taking if I had not, each time, had the perhaps illusory sense of being forced into it by a kind of legitimate rage, close to something like a sense of duty.” [35]

Throughout the 1990s, Bourdieu was particularly concerned about the destructive effects of economic neoliberalism, including the policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, institutions whose prescriptions have often led to human suffering and political instability in the Third World, according to some economists, for example, Joseph Stiglitz.[36] In the following commentary, originally delivered at a public discussion organized by the International Parliament of Writers at the 1995 Frankfurt Book Fair, Bourdieu describes “terrorist violence” as a revolt against the modernday “imperialism... of international bodies.”

From deep inside the Islamic countries there comes a very profound question with regard to the false universalism of the West, or what I call the imperialism of the universal. France has been the supreme incarnation of this imperialism, which in this very country has given rise to a national populism, associated for me with the name of Herder.[37] If it is true that one form of universalism is no more than a nationalism which invokes the universal (human rights, etc.) in order to impose itself, then it becomes less easy to write off all fundamentalist reaction against it as reactionary.

Scientific rationalism—the rationalism of the mathematical models which inspire the policy of the IMF or the World Bank, that of the law firms, great juridical multinationals which impose the traditions of American law on the whole planet, that of rational-action theories, etc.—is both the expression and the justification of a Western arrogance, which leads people to act as if they had the monopoly of reason and could set themselves up as world policemen, in other words, as selfappointed holders of the monopoly of legitimate violence, capable of applying the force of arms in the service of universal justice.

Terrorist violence, through the irrationalism of the despair which is almost always at its root, refers back to the inert violence of the powers which invoke reason. Economic coercion is often dressed up in juridical reasons. Imperialism drapes itself in the legitimacy of international bodies. And, through the very hypocrisy of the rationalizations intended to mask its double standards, it tends to provoke or justify, among the Arab, South American, or African peoples, a very profound revolt against the reason which cannot be separated from the abuses of power which are armed or justified by reason (economic, scientific, or any other). These “irrationalisms” are partly the product of our rationalism, imperialist, invasive, and conquering or mediocre, narrow, defensive, regressive, and repressive, depending on the place and time.

One is still defending reason when one fights those who mask their abuses of power under the appearances of reason or who use the weapons of reason to consolidate or justify an arbitrary empire.

[35] Quoted in Pierre Bourdieu, Acts of Resistance (New York: New Press, 1998), p. vii.

[36] Stiglitz, winner of the 2001 Nobel Prize in Economics, outlines his critique in Globalization and Its Discontents (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002).

[37] See Pierre Bourdieu, “Deux impérialismes de l’universel,” in C. Fauré and T. Bishop, eds., L’Amérique des Fracais (Paris: Editions François Bourin, 1992).

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* Part II: Prescient Anthropology Diagnosing Crises Abroad

** Chapter 9: West Must Correct Its Mistakes in Yugoslavia

Baltimore Sun, August 16, 1992

ROBERT M. HAYDEN

In the period following the Cold War, ethnic and religious conflicts flared in numerous parts of the world, in some cases for the first time in many decades. Robert M. Hayden was among the first to document and analyze this phenomenon. As an anthropologist who has conducted field research in Yugoslavia and India, two multiethnic and multireligious states, Hayden has analyzed these cultural dynamics in his work.

Among the first international post-Cold War crises was the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the subsequent civil war between Serbs, Bosnians, and Croatians. In this piece, Hayden analyzes how the diplomatic failures of the United States and European countries led to the escalation and increasing violence of the conflict.

The disgusting brutality of the Serbian campaign in Bosnia makes it easy to view the whole Bosnian tragedy as the fault of the Serbs. Yet the Bosnian war, and Serbian campaign itself, are in large measure the result of diplomatic errors by the Europeans and Americans.

If the war is to be stopped, its causes must be addressed. To do so will require recognition of these errors.

The most fundamental error was to accept the disintegration of Yugoslavia. It was always clear that the country would not fall apart cleanly because of the complex intermingling of nationalities there.

There was a basic error of logic: If Yugoslavia could not exist as a multiethnic state, how could the various republics do so?

At the level of cynical Realpolitik, the answer was simple. In the newly independent republics, state chauvinism would replace state socialism, with the majority in each state permitted to discriminate systematically against the largest scapegoat minority under a pious cover of “democracy.” This cynical solution has been applied in Slovenia and Croatia and in the Baltic republics of the former Soviet Union. However, there was a flaw in the

reasoning. What if the hated scapegoat minority rose up in arms and rebelled?

With the collapse of Yugoslavia, the most vulnerable minorities in Croatia and Bosnia were the Serbs. In both regions, Serbs were already sensitive because of the ghastly civil war of 1941–45. The then fascist “Independent State of Croatia,” which included Bosnia, implemented a policy of genocide against the Serbs. In Bosnia itself, allied Croat and Muslim forces massacred Serbs, who responded by killing Muslims.

Viewed in this historical context, then, Serb fears of oppression and worse were understandable. They were hardly reassured by a Croatian government that today belittles the wartime genocide or by a coalition of Muslims and Croats to separate Bosnia’s Serbs from Yugoslavia.

In this context of fear, the European Community and U.S. insistence on the inviolability of borders put the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia in the unenviable position of the Kurds in Iraq. Their rejection of the borders was to be expected, even as the brutality of their resistance can only be condemned. But this was the first blunder: to ratify the destruction of Yugoslavia without redrawing borders.

The second blunder was the premature recognition of Bosnia before a political solution could be reached. Bosnian Serbs had clearly shown that they rejected such a state unless they could have political autonomy amounting to virtual independence. It was clear to all who knew anything about Yugoslavia that the recognition of an independent Bosnia in these circumstances would ignite a civil war. Lord Carrington, the EC special representative to Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance, the former U.S. Secretary of State, and Warren Zimmerman, U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia, had counseled against it. Unfortunately, they were right.

Despite the simplistic war cries of that odd couple, Margaret Thatcher and Bill Clinton, the Bosnian tragedy cannot be solved by military action. While America tries to treat the Bosnian war as an international conflict, it is in fact

a civil war. The Serbs fighting the Bosnian government are Bosnian Serbs—albeit supported by Serbia—who have been incorporated into a “sovereign” Bosnia against their own will. They boycotted the referendum on Bosnian independence and did not want to secede from Yugoslavia.

Any attempt to defend the territorial integrity of Bosnia will require a long war of conquest against these Bosnian Serbs. Military action would be as tough as fighting the Viet Cong. Nor would action against Serbia help Bosnia. The United States could destroy Serbia, but to do so would impoverish another 10 million people, most of whom oppose the war. It would also create a few million more refugees. It will not force Bosnia’s Serbs to submit to a Muslim-Croat coalition government.

At this stage, any attempt to preserve Bosnia will lead to a longer, bloodier, more horrible war. A better approach would be to accept that the recognition of Bosnia with its existing boundaries was a gross error and to draw new borders, presumably accompanied by transfers of population, a “solution” patterned after the partition of India in 1947.

To save face, the United States and EC may be able to insist on the fiction of a Bosnian “state” which is actually a confederation of autonomous cantons, a temporary solution that would probably soon lead to the secession of the Serbian and Croatian cantons and their attachment to the mother republics.

Patterning the division of Bosnia on the partition of India is hardly a completely satisfactory solution. As that experience shows, such a solution is itself grotesque and will lead only to permanent armed hostility in what used to be Yugoslavia. Yet an unhappy result was foreordained once the EC and the United States gave in to Germany’s insistence on the destruction of the Yugoslavia that had been created after the German defeat in World War I and reconstituted after the German defeat in World War II. Having rejected multinational Yugoslavia, the EC and the United States cannot create a multinational Bosnia. To attempt to do so will enlarge the Balkans tragedy.

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** Chapter 10: Nato Fuels the Balkan Fire

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, March 28, 1999

ROBERT M. HAYDEN

After the conflicts between Serbs, Bosnians, and Croatians subsided, another dispute exploded in the southern Yugoslavian province of Kosovo. Problems began almost immediately after the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, when Slobodan Milosevic ended a policy (implemented by Tito) which granted autonomy to Kosovo from 1974 to 1989. By the end of this period, the vast majority of those living in Kosovo were ethnic Albanians.

In response to the new policy of direct rule, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) began attacking Serbian police and civilians in 1997. Serb forces responded by killing KLAforces and Albanian civilians, and the conflict quickly escalated, resulting in approximately 2,000 deaths and several hundred thousand refugees.

On March 24, 1999, U.S.-led NATO air forces initiated a bombing campaign against Yugoslav targets, in violation of international law and the U.N. Charter. Although many Clinton administration officials argued that the attacks were necessary to prevent greater bloodshed, U.S. State Department

and Pentagon officials indicated that Serbian paramilitary atrocities directed at Kosovar Albanian civilians escalated in the weeks following the bombing. [38] In this article, Hayden issues a sharp critique of the NATO campaign.

On March 24, the United States led NATO into the first campaign of military aggression against a sovereign state in Europe since World War II. It did so against the principles of international law and of the United Nations charter. It also did so against the rulings of the Nuremberg trials, which declared that “to initiate a war of aggression... is not only an international crime, it is the supreme international crime.”

That NATO is an aggressor is not in doubt. While hardly a “republic” under the dictatorship of Slobodan Milosevic, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is clearly a state with internationally recognized borders. NATO is attacking that state militarily, brazenly, although Yugoslavia has not attacked or even threatened any NATO country.

To be sure, Serbian forces have attacked ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, a province that has been part of Serbia since 1913. While Kosovo had a very mixed population in the past, during the years of its “autonomy” under ethnic Albanian rule (1974–1989), it became almost 90 percent Albanian. The Serbian police have been brutal in response to an armed uprising by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), which began to attack Serb police and to murder Serb civilians in 1997.

The resulting conflict has been horrible and tragic. It is hardly unique in the world, however, nor even particularly noteworthy in terms of victims. For example, the Turkish campaigns against the Kurds in Turkey and in Iraq have killed far more people and destroyed far more villages than the Serb campaigns in Kosovo. Yet NATO is not bombing Turkey (which is, of course, a NATO member).

Perhaps the niceties of international law may be forgotten if the cause is right. But what is the cause?

President Clinton has said that we are attacking Yugoslavia to protect the Albanians there from a Serb offensive, to prevent a wider war, to uphold our values, to protect our interests, and to advance the cause of peace. Yet few actions could be less likely to produce these results than the massive assaults now being conducted on Serbia.

Protect the Albanians? It was clear before NATO's aggression that the most likely result of air attacks would be an increase in fighting in Kosovo, and this has happened. The Serbs, committed to holding onto their territory, have increased their attacks on the KLA. The KLA, having gained NATO as its air force, has increased its attacks on the Serbs. Caught in the middle are the people of Kosovo, who are now fleeing the increased fighting. Thus NATO has caused a new wave of refugees.

Prevent a wider war? As the increasing flows of refugees reach Albania and Macedonia, they threaten to disrupt those fragile states. Macedonia is particularly vulnerable, since relations between the Slav Macedonian majority and ethnic Albanian minority there are already uneasy. On the second day of NATO attacks on Serbia, thousands of demonstrators, waving Macedonian flags, attacked the American Embassy, and the Macedonian government stated that anti-NATO sentiment was increasing.

So much for, to use Bill Clinton's words, "defusing the Balkans pow-

der keg." Uphold our values? Which values? Isn't international law one of our values?

Here, the relevant comparison is with Iraq, where the United States conducted the [1991] Gulf war because Saddam Hussein had invaded a neighboring state, thus changing borders by force. In Kosovo, the United States has led NATO into attacking a sovereign state, thus threatening to change borders by force.

Or perhaps the “values” are the need to protect civilians from military attack. In that case, the United States will need to put Turkey on its target list, not to mention Israel, which has attacked civilians in Lebanon (part of which it also occupies) with some frequency for many years now.

Of course, Bill Clinton referred to “genocide” in his speech justifying the attacks on Yugoslavia. Yet in Kosovo, about 2,000 people have died in two years, in the course of the brutal repression of an armed insurrection. This is a condition usually called “civil war.” Tragic, yes. Incidents of war crimes, almost certainly. But “genocide,” no. This is an insult to the memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

Do our values include terrorizing the innocent populations of Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, Nis, and other Serbian cities? Do they include damaging the power and water supplies of these people? Do they include destroying the livelihood of these people? Are our values, in fact, the same as those we condemned during the siege of Sarajevo by the Serbs (and failed to notice during the siege of Mostar by the Croats)?

Advance the cause of peace? Increasing conflict, and radically increasing the risk of even greater war, seems an odd way to achieve this goal. Advance our interests? Perhaps. But what are our interests in this case? Bill Clinton has not said. And when we know what they are, will they justify the violations of international law and the betrayal of our supposed values that are manifested by NATO’s massive aggression against Yugoslavia?

In a transparent display of hypocrisy, President Clinton has said that NATO is not waging war against the people of Yugoslavia, but against their government. Can anyone believe that people under attack will hate anyone other than the attackers?

NATO’s aggression has betrayed those who oppose Milosevic’s dictatorship, thus strengthening the rule of the man whom Bill Clinton accurately described as “a dictator who has done nothing since the cold war ended but

start new wars and pour gasoline on the flames of ethnic and religious division.”

There is now a new arsonist in the volatile Balkans: NATO.

[38] See Noam Chomsky, “Crisis in the Balkans,” pp. 34–50 in Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs (Cambridge: South End Press, 2000).

** Chapter 11: No Exit From Somalia

Washington Post, May 15, 1991

ANNA SIMONS

Among the most catastrophic post-Cold War crises was the civil war in Somalia. Like Afghanistan, Somalia was heavily armed by the United States during the 1980s for the alleged purpose of deterring Soviet expansion. The American-backed leadership, however, looted the national treasury and repressed dissent, and many Somalis resented U.S. support of the corrupt regime. By 1991, civil war had exploded.

The following three commentaries by Anna Simons offer an anthropologist’s view of the situation over time. They courageously suggest policy options that would be controversial among many anthropologists and government officials, yet reflect intimate knowledge of the region and local cultures.

In the following 1991 article, written at a time when Somalia barely registered in the U.S. media, Simons urges policy makers to take note of the

looming crisis there. She also offers a concrete suggestion for helping Somalis escape the bloodshed.

Conditions for many Somalis are as bad as they are for the Kurds and Bangladeshis, yet because there are no journalists in Somalia, news of the catastrophe there barely trickles out.

Since December, Somalia's capital has been unlivable for hundreds of thousands of Somalis, if not more. Beyond the toll of dead and injured, civil war has utterly devastated the social structure, laid waste the infrastructure and destroyed any semblance of civil order throughout the country. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of Somalis are stuck along the borders of a nation which, for all intents and purposes, no longer exists—with no exit.

Many Somalis are perched on the Kenyan border. However, Kenya has long viewed Somalis with suspicion and ambivalence, and to judge from what Somali friends have written, their applications for refugee status are not being processed at all quickly (if at all), nor is Kenya granting Somalis visas to travel in Kenya or through Kenya to anywhere else. Nor must Kenya have much incentive to do so; no country is making it easy for Somalis to enter.

Thus, even the best-educated and most upstanding and middle class of the Somalis—those who worked for the government or ran businesses and owned restaurants—have been left desperate, destitute, and deserted. This is what one Somali on the Kenyan border writes: "Here the condition is something beyond your imagination. Even the water is very scarce. Don't ask about medicine. Never talk about a house to rent. Food is very scarce. Even if you get food you may not get the purchasing power [money]."

Another good friend watched his handicapped sister raped by militia, after bandits stripped his entire family of everything they owned. Now he fears being shot whenever he tries to cross the border into Kenya to mail a letter—to plead for help.

Meanwhile, Kuwait desperately needs hundreds of thousands of pairs of hands for its massive cleanup and repair.

Kuwait has long hosted Somali workers. Indeed, one returned American soldier saw at least one truckload of jubilant Somalis celebrating the liberation of Kuwait City in Kuwait City—some Somalis clearly stuck out the occupation alongside Kuwaitis.

Somalis are Muslims, like Kuwaitis, and Somalia is also a member of the Arab League. Under normal circumstances I am sure Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states would have tried to head off the civil war in Somalia (as they have so often done in the past). However, they can hardly be blamed for having been preoccupied by recent events so much closer to home.

Nevertheless, now there is occasion to pay attention again, and to offer a simple, temporary but life-saving solution to tens—perhaps hundreds—of thousands of Somalis.

Offer those Somalis on the Kenyan border transit to Kuwait, employment in the cleanup effort in Kuwait and refuge in Kuwait until they have the opportunity to return safely to set their own devastated house in order again.

** Chapter 12: Our Abysmal Ignorance About Somalia

Washington Post, December 6, 1992

ANNA SIMONS

Once the fighting in Somalia appeared to be waning in November and December 1992, the outgoing Bush administration decided to move U.S.

troops into the country on a massive scale under the auspices of the United Nations. In 1993 Clinton supported the intervention as a humanitarian mission, although critics charged that the famine was ending by the time American soldiers arrived on the scene. In many ways, the operation had the appearance of a public relations mission.

In this article, published as U.S. troops were on the way to Somalia, Simons expresses grave concern that “we Americans literally do not know what we are getting into,” and provides readers with basic information about the history and politics of the country. She unambiguously drives her main argument home: the vast majority of so-called Somali experts lack fundamental knowledge about the region.

As the troops and the network anchors head for Somalia, I have this feeling—one that has grown with every passing morning news show, talk show, and evening newscast—that we Americans literally do not know what we are getting into.

The amount of misinformation that has been circulating and recirculating on Somalia is shameful. Perhaps we’ll become better informed as U.S. involvement there deepens, but I’m not counting on it. I only hope that we don’t learn the truth the hard way.

There are only a handful of non-Somalis in America—a very small handful—who should be regarded as experts on Somalia. Currently, however, the term is being loosely applied to a number of people who may indeed be expert in something—international relations, military strategy, low-intensity conflict, humanitarian assistance, or maybe just public relations—but don’t know much at all about Somalia. Nevertheless, they’re being heard from.

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Begin with the military front. To dismiss armed Somalis as an ineffectual, ragtag lot is to not only underestimate the tenacity of people who might well

oppose foreign intervention but also to ignore guerrilla experience that has been built up in Somalia over a long period. Opposition groups have been active for more than 10 years in a region that is, in many ways, far more inhospitable than the wide-open sands where U.S. troops practiced before going to war in Kuwait and Iraq.

Moreover, the military experts are being either overconfident—and thus careless—or are just plain not leveling with the American public in some of their pronouncements. As one military adviser who helped train the Somali army has pointed out, the weapons the Somalis have are the same sort of weapons the North Vietnamese used so effectively against our more massive firepower. Plus, three years ago there were substantive reports of chemical weapons being stockpiled in Somalia. The country received weapons not only from the United States and the Soviet Union, but also from Libya and other Arab nations.

And has anyone mentioned the stockpiles of heavy weapons still buried in the bush? Or the initial effectiveness of the Somalis when they fought the Ethiopians in the Ogaden War? [39]

It is ironic that the same media networks that have previously reported on the skill of Somali poachers in decimating East Africa’s wildlife population have not made the connection between such adeptness at outmaneuvering crack police units and the potential ability to outfox some of our own military forces.

At the other end of the expert spectrum are those who claim knowledge of foreign policy and Africa and are spouting things like, “Elders ruled Somalia peacefully for centuries.” In fact, Somalia has existed as a sovereign country only since 1960, and even before colonialism drew boundaries, the strength of various clans and subclans was always variable and shifting with regard to who was in control of what areas and what people.

In fact, this is precisely what now appears to have revived in the northern and northeastern sectors of Somalia: zones of influence exist within which

there is relative calm. Who is considering the Somalis in those areas and how their balance of power will be altered with the insertion of American or U.N. troops into the south, and the subsequent resurrection by outsiders of some sort of government for all of Somalia?

No Somalis I know who reside in this country are being consulted as to what should or could be done. In part this is because the State Department has rightly viewed Somalis as too partisan; every Somali in this country, whether the holder of a doctorate or the owner of a convenience store, has relatives somewhere in Somalia and thus strong interests and opinions concerning how things should be done there. There is tremendous disagreement within the U.S. Somali community, disagreement that in many ways parallels the discord in Somalia itself.

But this makes it far too easy for Americans at the State Department, in the Pentagon, and elsewhere in government to dismiss the full range of Somali viewpoints. Clearly, it is all part of the broader resolution: If getting food to starving Somalis cannot be handled diplomatically, then maybe it’s time to knock heads together. And perhaps it is.

But what is at issue for the long haul is an extremely complicated, extremely different, and extremely foreign situation. We should be heading into it with a good deal more knowledge than has so far been provided us by so-called experts.

[39] The Ogaden War (1977–1979) was fought between Somalia and Ethiopia over the disputed Ogaden province. The Soviet-backed Ethiopian army was able to reclaim the territory after a successful invasion by Somali forces in 1977.

** Chapter 13: The Somalia Trap

Washington Post, August 15, 1993

ANNA SIMONS

Simons’ third commentary urges policy makers in the Clinton administration to act decisively in Somalia, but her recommendations were largely ignored. Less than two months after the publication of Simons’ piece, eighteen elite U.S. Army Rangers were killed after their helicopter was shot down in a botched operation in Mogadishu to capture Mohammed Aideed, a local strongman. Within a month, Clinton announced that U.S. troops would begin withdrawing from Somalia.

Before considering withdrawal from Somalia, two key questions must be asked: What was our purpose in embroiling ourselves in Somalia in the first place, and have we achieved our goals?

One reason for choosing withdrawal now may well be that neither question will be any more answerable two years from now than two weeks or two months from now. Our purposes continue to appear as murky today as they did in November and December, while whatever we may have helped achieve for Somalis likely will vanish as soon as we pull out. In other words, we have hoisted ourselves on our own petard such that the real question becomes: At what price can we retreat with honor? And the answer to that question is the simplest by far: We cannot.

The trap we have erected for ourselves is this: Our insertion into Somalia was ill-conceived and impracticable from the outset. Putting the best possible spin on it, it seems to have stemmed from a heartfelt need to get horrific images of starving people off nightly television newscasts. So far, this has been our only success. Somalia remains off the airwaves. It is only when U.S. soldiers have been shot and killed (not even shot and wounded) that broadcasts reluctantly swing from Bosnia back to the Horn of Africa.

Yet this rapidly achieved silence (implying success, but hiding failure) came at the price of not bothering to understand the fundamentals of what was occurring in Somalia. For instance, our assumption that a country with no government would be easy to enter was correct, but our assumptions about restoring order so that we may leave again have been pitifully naive. Even worse, we have never successfully convinced the people we intervened to help that we have had their best interests at heart. Rather, a nagging suspicion for many Somalis (and—not uncoincidentally—many of the soldiers we have sent to Somalia) has been that we seek something more: oil, a military base, a stop to the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, an affirmation of our superpower status, a policeman's trial run at creating order out of lawlessness.

Indeed, such suspicions—that we have ulterior motives and that Somalis themselves are incidental to larger goals—fuel some of what now goes on in Mogadishu. Why should Somalis trust our intentions, particularly when these intentions have yet to be clarified? In this sense, Mohamed Farah Aideed does not deserve all our blame. Or if he does, it is in large measure because he personifies our mistakes in once again treating with and then treating badly someone whose power we initially enhanced but now can't control.

So what should we do?

If we withdraw from Somalia, we must realize we lose more than just face. We potentially lose the ability to intervene easily in countries where other peoples will need us in the future. And we potentially destroy what remains of the Somalia we have been shoring up.

However, if this is the decision that is in the best interests of this country, then for the sake of Somalis all forces should be withdrawn from that country, including all humanitarian assistance organizations. It was the aid agencies that supplied bandits with just enough food and money for ammunition and arms to keep them going and at one another's throats before we intervened. Without their assistance, maybe Somali suffering won't be quite so prolonged, and Somali might will be able to make Somali

right much more quickly. Two regions of Somalia (the northeast and the self-declared northern country of Somaliland) already prove this point.

But if it is our might that should make right, then we need to do it with a different attitude. We need to take charge. Critics abroad and in universities here will scream neocolonialism, while many Americans will rightly wonder why we are helping reengineer a remote African country when we have so many dire social problems of our own.

Nevertheless, if our position in the world requires us to help police it, then Somalia is the place to begin because—like it or not—we are already there.

However, should this be our choice, we must recognize that we are already at a disadvantage. Recent history should have taught us to first understand Somalis and Somalia, and sooner rather than later. Still, it might not be too late if we address the hard questions now and answer them honestly.

*** Suggestions for Further Reading

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** Chapter 14: Increased U.S. Military Aid to Colombia Won’t Curb Drug Trafficking

San Francisco Chronicle, August 19, 1999

WINIFRED TATE

In the 1990s, the official justification for U.S. involvement in many Latin American countries shifted from the Cold War struggle against communism to the “war on drugs.” This shift resulted largely in efforts to eradicate sources of narcotic drugs—especially marijuana, coca, and poppy plants.

The “war on drugs,” like any conventional war, has relied upon military personnel, equipment, and tactics. In the 1990s, more than fifty thousand U.S. troops passed through nearly every country in the region and approximately fifteen thousand Latin American military and police agents were trained in the United States. Yet evidence indicates that many of the armed forces receiving U.S. assistance have dismal human rights records and that the war on drugs may be a cover for destroying opposition groups and insurgents.

Colombia, which produces much of the cocaine consumed in the United States, is a case in point. For more than thirty-five years the Colombian military and right-wing paramilitary groups have fought a guerrilla war against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, which have proposed state control over the economy. All sides have used drug money in varying degrees to finance the war, and all have reportedly engaged in human rights abuses, including assaults upon civilians, kidnappings, torture, rape, and extrajudicial executions. According to recent reports, some U.S. contractors have helped plan and support these operations.[40]

The following article, by Winifred Tate of the Washington Office on Latin America, was written as the Clinton administration proposed an escalation of military support for Colombia.

The long-neglected conflict in Colombia is emerging as Latin America's major crisis and pulling the United States ever more deeply into an unwinnable war. Escalating political violence, an entrenched insurgency, increasing illicit drug production, and growing concern from Colombia's neighbors about the conflict spilling over have policy makers in Washington searching for a solution to the problems besetting Colombia.

Many U.S. policy makers and military leaders are calling for increased U.S. aid for the Colombian military. But this will only serve to pull the United States closer to the most abusive military forces in the hemisphere without reducing illicit drug production or contributing to stability and democracy in that beleaguered country.

Though the Colombian army has declared itself "reformed," the nation's military is far from a new institution. Military collusion with paramilitary activity on a local and regional level continues, and paramilitary violence has escalated in the past six months. These groups target alleged guerrilla sympathizers, but their net of terror has been cast wide over a growing number of Colombian peace leaders and members of civil society. More than 400 people have been killed or "disappeared" in the first three months of this year alone, and tens of thousands more have been forced to flee their homes.

Two generals have been cashiered because of evidence of participating in human rights abuses, but the army continues to harbor many officers linked to rights violations, including high-level commanders. General Rafael Hernández López, for example, was named chief of staff of the Colombian Armed Forces, despite a pending investigation for his alleged participation in the 1996 kidnapping and murder of a guerrilla leader's family member. Human rights organizations and Colombian judicial authorities have gathered extensive evidence of his implication in numerous human rights violations, including summary executions, forced disappearances, rape, and torture committed by soldiers under his command. Increased military aid is not likely to improve the military's human rights performance.

In 1990, the United States sent a team of military advisers to Colombia to review that country's military intelligence organizations and recommend changes. Colombia's military intelligence apparatus was reorganized, and clandestine intelligence networks were established that, in at least one case, functioned as paramilitary death squads. One such group, Naval Intelligence Network No. 7, was responsible for the murder of more than 50 civilians. Five military officials, including Lt. Col. Rodrigo Quiñónez, were found guilty last year of creating and financing this paramilitary group in order to murder local opposition leaders and union organizers. Quinonez remains on active duty, with only a letter of reprimand in his file.

Now, drug czar Barry McCaffrey has requested $40 million in aid for "regional intelligence programs," part of a nearly $600 million emergency aid package for Colombia. This despite concerns substantiated by a General Accounting Office report revealing that U.S. intelligence shared with the Colombian military lacks mechanisms "to ensure that it is not being used for other than counternarcotics purposes."

Support for the Colombian military is pulling the United States into the quagmire of a protracted and dirty counterinsurgency struggle, with no clear policy objective. There is no evidence that focusing counternarcotics efforts on battling the country's largest guerrilla group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia or FARC, will reduce coca production. In fact, right-wing paramilitary groups, linked to the Colombian security forces, are more deeply involved in drug trafficking. Aerial fumigation has pushed a desperate peasant population further into the jungle—or into the arms of the insurgency.

While only Colombians can resolve their crisis, the international community—and particularly the United States—can and should do much to support an eventual negotiated settlement. We should begin by correcting the overwhelming imbalance in U.S. aid: more than $230 million in predominantly military assistance for counternarcotics operations, less than $10 million for development, judicial and law enforcement, and human rights.

On March 10, President Clinton apologized for the U.S. role in Guatemala’s long internal conflict, saying that “support for military forces or intelligence units which engaged in violent and widespread repression... was wrong, and the United States must not repeat that mistake.” Now, a matter of months after the president’s historic apology, we risk repeating that mistake by intervening in a counterinsurgency war that the United States cannot win.

Clear support for human rights and civilian democracy will prevent the need for future apologies to Colombians who have suffered enough in the name of misguided counternarcotics policies.

[40] See T. Christian Miller, “Colombia: Videotape Shows Americans’ Role in Village Bombing,” Los Angeles Times, March 16, 2003, p. A4.

** Chapter 15: Colombia: Rules of the Game

Foreign Policy in Focus, February 16, 2001

[[http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org][www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org]]

WINIFRED

In July 2000 the U.S. Congress passed the Clinton ad- TATE ministration’s “Plan Colombia,” a $1.3 billion three-year program to ratchet up U.S. military aid and training to Colombia. Colombia is now the third-largest recipient of U.S. military assistance. In this article, Winifred Tate cautions against the possible consequences of increasing such aid, given the miserable human rights record of the Colombian military.

When the U.S. and Colombia meet on the soccer field in Miami this Saturday, the rules are clear, the time is fixed, the game is officiated, and one team will win. In contrast, the U.S. is playing a far different game in Colombia: there

are no rules, no referee, a maze of different “teams,” and no clear end. The playing field is a battlefield. No one wins; everyone loses.

I have just returned from a five-day fact-finding trip to Colombia’s southern state of Putumayo, where U.S.-trained army battalions have been deployed since December and where thousands of acres are being sprayed with herbicides.

The results are not good. Indigenous and peasant farmers have had their food supply destroyed by U. S.-funded aerial spraying. A grade school garden and a government-sponsored alternative agriculture project designed to teach peasants to grow cash crops other than coca were destroyed by fumigation. Paramilitary gunmen have gone on killing sprees whose total toll will never be known.

There are some very unhappy conclusions to be drawn:

First, the U.S. is teamed up with the most abusive military force in the hemisphere. And Colombia’s military, in turn, frequently works hand in glove with brutal paramilitary forces that are estimated to be responsible for three-quarters of the politically motivated civilian murders. Members of the Colombian military help the paramilitaries with intelligence, logistics, and transportation, and by blocking official investigations into their activities. This directly violates the human rights conditions set by Congress as a prerequisite for U.S. military assistance. During the first 18 days of January alone, paramilitary groups committed 26 massacres; in one incident paramilitary thugs beat more than 20 people to death with sledgehammers and stones. Yet U.S. aid continues to flow.

Second, there’s no clear end. The $1.3 billion extraordinary aid package passed by Congress last July was sold as a one-time emergency appropriation, a part of “Plan Colombia” that would end the civil war and bring peace and economic growth. Now the U.S. military is asking Congress for an additional $1 billion a year, continuing into the foreseeable future.

Third, the strategy is unclear. While Plan Colombia was sold to the American public as a counter-drug plan, U.S. funds were earmarked primarily for military aid to train, equip, and transport three new Colombian army battalions, blurring the lines between counterinsurgency and counternarcotics missions. U.S. policy makers are desperate to appear hard on drugs; but for Colombians this is not a war on drugs, it is the fifth decade of a counterinsurgency struggle.

Fourth, there aren't two sides: there's a maze of intertwined, overlapping, and heavily armed competitors. The drug cartels, under the protection of paramilitary forces, have diversified their operations, finding new production and trafficking routes. Colombian guerrillas, primarily the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC), have financed their expansion through profits from the drug trade, but their objective is territorial control and pursuing a war against the state. After more than 40 years, this war will not be won on the battlefield, but at the negotiating table.

Fifth, there are no winners. Ordinary Colombians lose. Human rights lose. Peace loses. The region loses. There have already been clashes between guerrillas and paramilitaries in surrounding countries. And the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has begun preparing camps along the border for thousands of displaced persons. The U.S. war on drugs is pushing drug cultivation and trafficking into floundering Ecuador, Peru, and the fragile Amazon ecosystems.

The U.S. loses. Our most important interests and objectives in the region—including strengthening democracy, promoting human rights and the rule of law, and fostering trade and investment—are being severely undermined. Treatment programs for addicts go underfunded at home, and, despite spending some $19 billion a year on the war on drugs, illegal narcotics remain cheap and plentiful within America.

It's time for a new U.S. game plan in Colombia. First, we must send an unequivocal message to the Colombian military that it must cut its ties with

paramilitary forces. Second, we must put our money into proven programs of supporting human rights, rule of law, and economic development. Finally, we must solve our drug problem at home with effective medical treatment and educational solutions to this largely public health problem.

If the U.S. team played soccer the way we're engaging Colombia, we'd score minus 50 goals, the team would be billions of dollars in the red, and 10 percent of the spectators would wind up dead. Maybe it's time for a new game plan.

** Chapter 16: Unveiling U.S. Policy in Colombia

Foreign Policy in Focus, April 19, 2002
[[http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org][www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org]]

LESLEY GILL

Lamentably, the Bush administration has not only maintained the levels of military support established under Plan Colombia but expanded funding to other South American countries. Under the Andean Regional Initiative, military funding has been expanded to six neighboring countries.

By February 2002, when peace talks between the Colombian government and FARC leaders collapsed, it was clear that U.S. involvement in Colombia was likely to expand beyond the realm of counternarcotics efforts, especially in the post-September 11 climate. In this article, Lesley Gill describes the potential pitfalls of labeling the FARC a terrorist group while ignoring the violence perpetrated by right-wing paramilitaries. Her commentary is a sharp condemnation of U.S. aerial fumigation policies that destroy the livelihood of peasant farmers in the name of counterterrorism.

As the drumbeat in the "war against terror" becomes louder in Washington, the Bush administration is prepared to involve the U.S. more directly in

Colombia’s 40-year civil war. President Bush now advocates the use of U.S. advisers and equipment in a campaign against guerrillas who want to overthrow the Colombian government. Although the U.S. has already been tacitly supporting counterinsurgency operations in Colombia, Bush’s initiative would up the policy ante by openly committing the U.S. to the defeat of the guerrillas and eliminating the distinction between counternarcotics and counterinsurgency operations.

The September 11 tragedy provides the administration with the rationale to directly target guerrilla insurgents, whom it labels “terrorists” and blames for the recent collapse of peace talks. As I discovered on a recent fact-finding trip to the coca-growing region of southern Colombia, however, the aims of U.S. policy have been evident to peasants there for some time. It is here that indiscriminate aerial spraying of coca fields serves less to promote alternative development than to displace peasants from an area controlled by the FARC, Colombia’s oldest and largest guerrilla organization.

In the department of Putumayo, over half of the 350,000 inhabitants depend on coca for a livelihood. It is the only crop that can be marketed in a region where stable roads do not exist, and it provides some families with a modest living that would be unobtainable by other means. But coca—the basis of cocaine—also exposes them to intense levels of violence, as profits from its cultivation are sustained by the illegal drug traffic. Families are therefore eager to adopt viable alternatives.

Yet alternative development has always been subordinate to a repressive military and fumigation strategy. The U.S. seems less interested in assisting peasants to find substitutes for coca than in reducing the area under cultivation by almost any means necessary. The U.S. government now states that it will no longer promote alternative crops to peasants whose coca fields are eradicated in U. S.-financed fumigation operations. Only $145 million of Plan Colombia—a $1.3 billion, mostly military aid package approved in mid-2000 by President Clinton—is dedicated to crop substitution programs, and a coercive system of social pacts, designed to channel aid to peasants who agree to manually eradicate coca, has little credibility with local people.

In the southern department of Putumayo, where most of Colombian coca is produced, some 37,000 growers consented in 2000 to destroy their coca within six months after the arrival of financial assistance or face the fumigation of their fields with herbicide. Peasants soon discovered that financial assistance was either slow to arrive or never came, and by the end of 2001, the U.S. Agency for International Development had spent only 10 percent of what it had allocated for alternative development. To make matters worse, adhering to the terms of the government's pacts turned out to be no guarantee against fumigation.

The first round of aerial fumigation took place between December 24, 2000, and January 7, 2001, and, according to the U.S. embassy, it destroyed 30,000 hectares in the municipalities of Orito, San Miguel, and Valle de Guamuez. The Catholic Church, however, stated that coca represented only 15,000 hectares; the rest of the area was planted in food crops. In November 2001, spraying began again in San Miguel and Valle de Guamuez, even though little or no U.S. government aid had reached pact signers who remained in compliance with the eradication agreements.

The experience of one peasant whom I met in Putumayo reflected those of many others. This individual signed a pact along with 70 members of his community, but, because he never received the promised development aid, the man borrowed $12,000 to plant black pepper and offset the imminent loss of his coca. Then he stuck a white flag in the field to signal that the black pepper crop was legal. When the spray planes returned on November 24, 2001, they destroyed the entire pepper field as well as fruit trees, coffee bushes, cassava, corn, and pasture. All of this raises disturbing questions both about Washington's commitment to alternative development and about the real aims of its fumigation program in guerrilla strongholds.

A U.S. embassy official who requested anonymity told me that reducing the total area under coca cultivation—not alternative development—is the cornerstone of U.S. policy in Colombia. "It may be best that people simply abandon the area or make their own decisions about how to survive," he said. "People need to understand that the [U.S.] government absolutely will not tolerate coca cultivation." Yet since the fumigation operations began, coca cultivation has increased rather than decreased. In addition, a U. S.-

trained counternarcotics force has been unable to dislodge the FARC from rural areas of Putumayo.

When confronted with evidence of food crop destruction, embassy officials explain that, although aerial spraying is supposed to be done from 30 feet up, the presence of guerrillas in Putumayo forces planes to 90 feet, which causes the herbicide to drift onto neighboring fields. But though drift may explain some of the damage, it does not account completely for the level of destruction in Putumayo. Independent Colombian and U.S. observers have reported the devastation of food crops that are far from coca fields. In these cases, one Colombian expert on alternative development notes, “the only explanation is that [fumigation] was intentional,” calculated to destroy peasant morale in areas under FARC control and displace them to other areas of the country. In fact, analysts and peasants alike conclude that displacement has long been a strategy, not an effect, of Colombia’s civil war. The fumigation campaign has unfolded in a context in which the Colombian government cannot defeat the guerrillas militarily and peace talks have collapsed.

Guerrillas control nearly half of the national territory, and last year alone, they repeatedly attacked an oil pipeline operated by Occidental Petroleum. For the U.S., protecting the supply of Colombian oil is especially important as conflicts in the Middle East worsen, and President Bush recently requested $98 million to train and equip Colombian counterinsurgency battalions who guard the pipeline. In addition, the administration’s $882 million “Andean Regional Initiative,” which was approved last December, earmarked 63 percent of the Colombia funding for military uses.

The portrayal of the FARC as international terrorist “evil doers” is simply the latest in a series of Washington’s label shifts. During the cold war, Washington defined the FARC as “communist subversives,” but this label became obsolete with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the expansion of the drug war in the 1990s, when U.S. propagandists deployed the more politically expedient term “narcoguerrilla” to delegitimize the rebels. Although today both the FARC and the other main guerrilla group, the National Liberation Army (ELN), benefit from coca production and processing,

they do not control the major national and international drug trafficking networks.

Moreover, the narcoguerrilla concept blurs the social and political differences that distinguish the two guerrilla groups from the drug traffickers and from each other. It also obscures the involvement of the paramilitaries, sectors of the military, and members of the political establishment in the drug traffic. Since September 11, new portrayals of the FARC as an international terrorist organization have not been supported by evidence. Although guerrilla tactics against Colombian citizens and select foreigners working in Colombia expose the insurgents to charges of terrorism, the FARC's military operations beyond Colombian borders are restricted to occasional forays into the sparsely populated border regions of neighboring countries.

Equating the FARC with international terrorism creates a double standard with respect to other armed actors in the Colombian conflict. Washington policy makers say relatively little about the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), a federated organization of local paramilitary groups allied with the U. S-backed Colombian security forces. Although the State Department lists the AUC, along with the FARC and ELN, as a terrorist organization and agrees with human rights groups who blame paramilitaries for 70 percent of Colombia's human rights violations, U.S. policies largely ignore the AUC's links to the Colombian military, which uses the organization as an ally in the battle against leftists. The AUC is therefore relatively free to expand its power and to murder ordinary Colombians, as Bush's war on terror targets the FARC.

The U.S. should stop using the threat of terrorism to justify its involvement in counterinsurgency operations in Colombia. Colombia is in the middle of a complex civil war, and the Bush administration needs to recognize the differences between this 40-year-old domestic conflict and global terrorism.

** Chapter 17: The Price of Free Trade: Famine

Los Angeles Times, March 22, 2002

MARC EDELMAN

This article focuses on another part of Latin America undergoing rapid upheaval—Central America. Marc Edelman examines the negative impact of “free” trade agreements on the livelihood of farmers struggling to survive in an era of economic deregulation. International coffee prices are at forty-year lows, due largely to the World Bank’s promotion of coffee cultivation in Vietnam and Indonesia. This has led to a global glut that undermines the ability of millions of Latin American farmers to provide their families with an adequate cash income. At the same time, local markets have been flooded with U.S.-produced corn (which is heavily subsidized by taxpayers), making it unprofitable to cultivate the region’s most important subsistence crop.

The appearance of this article in March 2002 was especially timely, since the Bush administration was promoting the idea of a “Free Trade Area of the Americas,” designed to further lower tariff barriers in the region.

Increasingly, Central Americans face two choices: migrate or starve. Edelman’s piece may be read as a diagnosis of a steadily deteriorating situation in the United States’ own backyard.

Central America is in the grip of famine, and if President Bush mentions it when he visits El Salvador on Sunday, he will likely suggest that free trade is the solution.

Yet Bush’s proposed Central American Free Trade Agreement is hardly going to remedy the worsening disaster in rural Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Unregulated markets are a large part of the reason why 700,000 Central Americans face starvation and nearly one million more suffer serious food shortages.

Hardest hit are coffee plantation workers and maize farmers. Coffee prices have spiraled downward since the 1989 collapse of the International Coffee Agreement, which assigned countries production quotas. In the past few years, prices plummeted further with a surge in exports from Vietnam and Indonesia, where the World Bank encouraged expansion of coffee acreage.

With the market glutted, many coffee farmers did not bother to harvest this year. The result has been evictions from plantation housing, increased migration to teeming slums, and severe hunger among unemployed coffee workers.

Maize farmers too have been feeling the free-market squeeze. Since 1992, Central America has had intra-regional free trade in grains and almost no tariff protection against low-cost imports. Forced to compete with highly subsidized U.S. farmers, many Central American farmers have abandoned food production, gone bankrupt, and lost their land.

Some of Central America's most conservative figures—Guatemalan President Alfonso Portillo and Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo—acknowledge that the intensity and suddenness of the food emergency make it a famine, worse than the hunger characteristic of the region.

Famine is always rooted in economic policies and political decisions, as Amartya Sen, the 1998 Nobel Prize winner in economics, has long maintained. Sen also points out that famines do not occur in democracies, where contested elections and vigorous journalistic oversight force policy makers to try to prevent occurrences that might threaten constituents or allow opponents to make political hay.

U.S. policy makers should ask, then, what the widening famine says about Central American democracy, for which Washington spent billions of dollars and waged three proxy wars during the 1980s.

Apparently, the gap between rulers and ruled in the four affected countries is so large that policy makers feel little pressure to address the crisis. No wonder polls show that a mere 35 percent of Hondurans, 24 percent of Nicaraguans, 21 percent of Salvadorans, and 16 percent of Guatemalans say they are “satisfied” with how democracy functions in their countries.

Right now, tens of thousands of Central Americans are heading north. In contrast to the 1980s and early 1990s, most are not escaping war and repression. Many are abandoning farms that failed because of globalized trade and the dumping of U.S. grain. Others are fleeing liberalized interest rates so high that they have no hope of ever starting a small business. Still others are trying to escape life in the free trade zones, where factory owners enjoy huge public subsidies and workers face immense obstacles in organizing for a living wage.

Central American land could produce decent living standards for small farmers if they could obtain small-scale irrigation systems, better access to land, secure title to property, low-cost credit, and shelter from unfair competition and the ravages of global market forces.

These measures would give even the poorest of the poor a stake in their societies, but they would require elites to take popular needs seriously. Public sectors eviscerated by privatization and budget cuts can’t address the inequalities that globalization generates.

Rural Central Americans are already reeling after a decade or more of free-market reforms. President Bush’s trade proposals could be the knockout blow.

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** Chapter 18: How Two Truths Make One Tragedy

The Independent, October 22, 2000

ALI QLEIBO

On September 27, 2000, Ariel Sharon, then leader the of the Israeli opposition Likud party, entered the Haram al-Sharif in East Jerusalem, the site of the gold Dome of the Rock that is among the holiest Islamic shrines. The esplanade is also revered by Jews, who call it the Temple Mount after a temple destroyed there in A.D. 70. When Sharon, who was protected by hundreds of Israeli riot police, descended nearly an hour later, he was met by Palestinians who heaved chairs, trash cans, and stones at the Israeli forces. The latter retaliated by firing tear gas and rubber bullets. Predominantly Arab East Jerusalem has been under illegal Israeli occupation since 1967.

Sharon’s unannounced visit provoked outrage on the part of Palestinians because of his leading role in the 1982 Sabra and Shatila massacres in the Palestinian refugee camps of Beirut, in which Lebanese militiamen—allied with and armed by the Israeli Defense Forces—killed more than 1,000 men, women, and children. At the time, Sharon was defense minister. Not surprisingly, his visit to the Haram al-Sharif sparked a spontaneous popular uprising that has now become known as the Second Intifada.

The following article, written by Palestinian anthropologist Ali Qleibo weeks after the beginning of the Second Intifada, examines the dilemma faced by Palestinians in the wake of escalating violence. His words speak of the extreme forms of everyday violence suffered by the people of the region, of hopelessness, despair, and courage.

As the violence continued last week, Palestinians could be divided into two groups—those who feel that if they don't fight they will be overlooked, and those who feel that to resort to violence is to undermine their human dignity.

But what is the same for all Palestinians is that they have sustained a major blow. Any sense of security they could have entertained has faded. "El-hamdillah ala Salamtak" ("Welcome back to safety") has replaced the more traditional greeting "Salaam aleik'um" ("Peace be upon you").

As people adjusted to the upheavals of the past three weeks they started to leave their houses. In a state of shock they wandered around, searching for familiar faces, reassuring themselves that life still went on, that our city was still there and that others had survived the disaster.

I remember the night, three weeks ago, after Ariel Sharon, the Israeli opposition leader, had visited the Muslim shrine, the Haram al-Sharif. Violence had broken out. I went into the old city to visit my neighbors. All my friends had survived the ordeal unscathed.

"Did you go and defend the Haram al-Sharif [Temple Mount]?" I asked. Ghassan, a friend and once an activist, said: "If Arafat needs martyrs, the politicians ought to send their own sons. I am happy my son is in medical school in Cairo. Before, I would gladly offer my children as martyrs. I would still offer them provided the leaders stand with their children next to us."

Everyone I knew faced things with disengaged interest. The "stone throwing" was seen as a political contrivance to prod the stalling peace talks. The news

leaked out that the Israelis were planning to take over a part of the mosque as a synagogue. Danger threatened our Haram al-Sharif. The Palestinians split into two groups. As I waited in line to buy bread, I overheard a middle-aged man lecture a youth. “If we do not protect the Dome of the Rock,” he said, “who would?” The young man answered: “A good Muslim is one who does his Muslim duties and stays alive.” The older man explained: “This is not a question of nationalism, it is a matter of faith.” The young man retorted. “The Noble Sanctuary has a God to protect it.” Before the Oslo peace talks everyone would have rushed to the Noble Sanctuary. Most people I ran into had turned skeptical, suspicious of dubious politics, and apathetic.

At this critical point the picture of Mohammed el-Durrah came into the foreground. This was the boy whose father, trying to avoid the fighting at Natzarim, led him home from school through a short cut, only to get caught in the crossfire. The sight of the boy being shot dead hit a deep chord.

The Oslo agreement has actually made it worse for Palestinians, because it appeared to the outside world that we were enjoying peace. All that has happened is that Israeli occupation has become the status quo. Palestinians continue to suffer—they are harassed, their travel is restricted, their land confiscated, unemployment is high, salaries are low.

It was after the burial of one of the Palestinian martyrs that “the lynching” took place. Two Israeli soldiers were caught and it was immediately assumed that they were “Arabists”—Israelis who disguise themselves as Arabs and infiltrate the protesters, planting bombs, shooting, and killing. The soldiers were escorted to the police station past the funeral parade.

My friend Khalil was horrified. “It is not Muslim, it is not Arab, it has nothing to do with our culture,” he said. Victims to the mob, victims to corrupt leadership, victims to military occupation; blind hate triumphed momentarily.

Remorse followed. In Ramallah vigils have been held for the past two nights. Candlelit “peace parades” have taken place in which people walk mournfully

past el-Manarah square. A voice mumbled: “But no one cares about our hundred martyrs. Settlers attack helpless farmers. Last week they stoned one to death.” Another voice answered: “It is our dignity as human beings that we must struggle for.”

Israeli occupation puts the Palestinian in a dilemma: if he is quiet he is overlooked; once he expresses resistance he is condemned.

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** Chapter 19: The Matrix of Control

Media Monitors Network, 2001 [[http://www.mediamonitors.net] [www.mediamonitors.net]]

JEFF HALPER

The following piece was written in the months following the second Palestinian intifada, which began in September 2000 in response to the provocative visit of Ariel Sharon to the Islamic shrine of Haram al-Sharif, in

East Jerusalem (see Chapter 18). At the time, Sharon was leader of the Israeli right-wing opposition party.

In this piece, Jeff Halper describes the Israeli strategy of maintaining control over the West Bank and Gaza by means of a matrix of roads, checkpoints, settlements, waterways, and other barriers that segment the Palestinian territories. This matrix, he argues, is crucial to understanding why Palestinians are unwilling to accept Israel's offer to give back 94 percent of the Palestinians' pre-1967 borders—the 6 percent would effectively slice the West Bank and Gaza into a series of isolated islands, not contiguous territories.

Such an arrangement violates U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which calls for an end to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and the reestablishment of the pre-1967 borders between Israel and the Palestinian territories. Although Israel has not complied with this resolution, the United States currently provides the country with more than $3 billion annually in aid, most of which is used for military purposes.

The Japanese and East Asians have a game called Go. Unlike the Western game of chess, where two opponents try to defeat each other by taking off pieces, the aim of Go is completely different. You win not by defeating but by immobilizing your opponent by controlling key points on the matrix. This strategy was used effectively in Vietnam, where small forces of Viet Cong were able to pin down and virtually paralyze some half-million American soldiers possessing overwhelming firepower.

In effect, Israel has done the same thing to the Palestinians on the

West Bank and Gaza and in East Jerusalem. Since 1967 it has put into place a matrix, similar to that of the Go board, that has virtually paralyzed the Palestinian population. The matrix is composed of several overlapping layers.

First is the actual physical control of key links and nodes that create the matrix of control—settlements and their extended “master plans”; a massive system of highways and bypass roads (including wide “sanitary” margins); army bases and industrial parks at key locations; closed military areas; “nature preserves;” control of aquifers and other natural resources; internal checkpoints and control of all border crossings; areas A, B, C, D, H-1, H-2, and much more. These define the matrix of constricted Palestinian enclaves and effectively divide them from one another. They also give Israel control of key nodes.

The second layer of the matrix is bureaucratic and legal—all the planning, permits, and policies that entangle the Palestinian population in a tight web of restrictions. These include political zoning of land as agricultural in order to freeze the natural development of towns and villages; a politically motivated system of building permits, enforced by house demolitions, designed to confine the population to its constricted enclaves; land expropriation for (solely Israeli) “public purposes”; restrictions of planting and the wholesale destruction of Palestinian crops; licensing and inspection of Palestinian businesses; closure; restrictions on movement and travel; and more. Although Israel is careful to present its policies as “legal,” in fact they are not. The failure to guarantee Palestinians the basic human rights provided by the Geneva Convention and other international covenants—upon which Israel has signed—is patently illegal. The extensive use of the Israeli court system, which invariably rules against Palestinians, as a means of controlling the local population makes a mockery of the link between law and justice. All these confine Palestinians to isolated cantons, control their movement, and maintain Israeli hegemony.

The third layer of the matrix involves the use of violence to maintain control over the matrix—the military occupation itself, including massive imprisonment and torture; the extensive use of collaborators to control the local population; pressures exerted on families to sell their lands; the undemocratic, arbitrary, and violent rule of the Military Commander of the West Bank and the Civil Administration. What Israelis know of this system they justify in terms of “security.”

The average Israeli has no concept of this matrix, and so for most Israelis "peace" means simply giving up the minimum territory that would "satisfy" the Palestinians and ending "terrorism." Average Palestinians are highly attuned to the presence of the matrix, since they hit up against it every time they move. But it is crucial to the achievement of a just and viable peace that the nature of the matrix as an integrated system of control be fully comprehended. The Palestinians can wrest 95 percent of the Occupied Territories from Israel, can oversee the dismantling of almost all the settlements, and can establish a recognized state, but unless they effectively dismantle the matrix of control a viable Palestinian state will elude them. It is not control of territory alone that is important; it is identifying and neutralizing the key nodes of the matrix.

The structure and workings of the matrix—and especially its controlling nodes—are subtle and require careful analysis. Some of its control points are obvious. The E-1 area of 13,000 dunums [41] between Jerusalem and Ma'aleh Adumim that was recently annexed effectively cuts the West Bank in two and is antithetical to any notion of a viable Palestinian state. Still, Barak apparently promised the National Religious Party that the order would not be rescinded, and not much protest to that has been voiced. Other nodes are less obvious. The Israeli-conceived road system of Jerusalem and the West Bank, for example, converges in the area of Ma'aleh Adumim. Even if the Palestinians gain control of the surrounding region but leave that one settlement, Israel simply has to declare Ma'aleh Adumim a "closed military area" in order to paralyze movement within any Palestinian entity. Even more subtle nodes of control exist elsewhere. Only a several-meter-wide strip between Ramallah and Bir Zeit, just enough for one Israeli military jeep, is sufficient for controlling movement in that area. A narrow Israeli strip between Bethlehem and Beit Sahour, as well as similar slivers all over the West Bank, contribute to the matrix of control.

Settlements are crucial to preserving the matrix, not so much because of the land they occupy, but because of the control mechanisms that necessarily surround them. Thus, while the settlements take up only about 1.5 percent of the West Bank, their master plans cover more than 6 percent. Add to that the supporting infrastructure of roads (bypass roads, conceived in Oslo as being only minor roads connecting settlements, have become a major mechanism of control), of industrial areas, of military installations and other "security"

arrangements, of checkpoints and so on, and it becomes obvious that leaving a tiny yet strategically located settlement in place effectively nullifies the gaining of territory around it.

The only meaningful way to dismantle the matrix is to eliminate it completely. That means removing all the settlements from Palestinian territory, replacing closure and checkpoints by normal (and minimal) border arrangements agreed upon by both sides, and removing Israeli military presence to agreed-upon security points on the external borders, only for a limited period of time. But if this turns out not to be possible and an Israeli presence remains, it is imperative that it not constitute a matrix of control.

Understanding the matrix and its workings is critical for Palestinian success in the negotiations. The very gap between Israel and Palestinian map-making abilities and uses is worrying. As an Israeli who seeks a just and viable peace between our peoples, I hope the Palestinian negotiating team utilizes all the expertise at its disposal to avoid concessions that will in the end leave Palestine little more than a Bantustan.

[41] Equivalent to 13 square km.

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** Chapter 20: After the Invasion: Now What?

CounterPunch, April 12, 2002

JEFF HALPER

As this book is going to press, it is clear that Halper’s words have accurately predicted the escalation of the conflict. The Israeli Defense Forces mounted bloody invasions of the West Bank and Gaza beginning in March 2002. Dozens of Palestinian suicide bombers retaliated with brutal attacks upon densely populated civilian and military areas. This article was written after U.S.-made Apache helicopters attacked Palestinian refugee camps in the towns of Jenin and Nablus, in March and April 2002. More than 50 Palestinians were killed in Jenin alone.[42] In July 2002, 15 people—nearly all women and children—were killed in a nighttime F-16 missile attack on a crowded Gaza apartment building.[43]

Two years after the beginning of the Second Intifada, approximately 2,000 Palestinians and 300 Israelis have been killed. There is no immediate end in sight to the Middle East crisis.

The fall of the Jenin refugee camp and the crushing of resistance in the casbah of Nablus, April 9—the twelfth day of the Israelis' final push to defeat the Palestinians—marks the end of yet another stage of the Palestinians' struggle for self-determination. On April 10, when Powell meets the Spanish president of the European Union, it will become clear whether the "political process" that must now emerge will lead to a viable and truly sovereign Palestinian state or to the dependent ministate Israel has had in mind since the start of the Oslo process in 1993.

This is an either-or situation; nothing can bridge the fundamental interests separating the two sides. The Palestinians, who have already agreed on a demilitarized and semisovereign state on only 22 percent of mandatory Palestine, must receive a state that is territorially coherent, economically viable, and in control of its borders and natural resources, with full access to Jerusalem and a meaningful degree of sovereignty. Israel, which needs a Palestinian ministate to "relieve" it of the 3 million Palestinian residents of the Occupied Territories who pose a threat to the "Jewish character" of the state, will not agree to relinquish control or to fully dismantle its infrastructure of settlements and bypass roads. It is determined to maintain its occupation in one form or another. Only one of these two options is possible: either a viable Palestinian state or a dependent Bantustan.

With the breaking of Palestinian resistance on April 9, Sharon would appear to have reasons to rejoice. The multipronged strategy of his "national unity" government to force the Palestinians to accept a Bantustan seems to have achieved its major goals:

1. A campaign of attrition has steadily eroded the Palestinians' ability to resist the occupation. The demolition of hundreds of Palestinian homes, massive expropriation of fertile farmland, a permanent economic "closure" that has imprisoned and impoverished the population, curfews and sieges lasting months, induced emigration of thousands of middle-class families, and the widespread use of collaborators to undermine Palestinian society have all taken their toll.

2. Massive military actions against the fragile Palestinian infrastructure and population centers using the most sophisticated and powerful of U.S. conventional weapons—F-16s, Apache helicopters equipped with laser-guided missiles, tanks and artillery—culminating in the current all-out invasion of Palestinian areas—are intended to beat the Palestinians into submissiveness. Although seemingly in response to Palestinian terrorist attacks and carefully cast as part of America's War against Terrorism, these military actions are proactive, exploiting terrorist attacks to achieve political goals of continued domination.

3. Delegitimizing Arafat, whom Sharon has called "our bin Laden," "irrelevant," and head of a "terror-sponsoring entity" (the Palestinian Authority), is essential if Israel is to install (with American help) a more "compliant" Palestinian leader who will agree to a ministate. Just as South Africa had to find African "leaders" that would lend legitimacy to their Bantustans, so must Israel find a Palestinian figure willing to be president of a ministate, thereby agreeing to and legitimizing Israel's control over most of the West Bank, Greater Jerusalem, and perhaps parts of Gaza.

4. Creating irreversible "facts" on the ground. While deflecting attention to its role as a peace-seeking "victim" of Palestinian aggressiveness, Israel never paused for a moment in expanding settlements and constructing its own infrastructure that would ensure its control over the Occupied Territories, even if a Palestinian ministate were to come into being. The vaunted Mitchell Commission's recommendations of freezing Israel's settlements have already been rendered irrelevant. Israel has all the land, settlements, and settlers it needs. Once it completes the construction its 480 kilometers of highways and bypass roads linking the settlements while creating massive barriers to Palestinian movement—a $3 billion project entirely funded by the United States—its hold on the Occupied Territories may be irreversible.

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5. Reliance on the American Congress to protect Israel from those forces—European, Arab, international (member states of the U.N.)— who would pressure it to dismantle its occupation completely in the interests of a viable

Palestinian state. The uncritical support of Congress is Israel's trump card; it provides it with an impenetrable shelter from outside pressures. The U.S. administration may (only may) press for a meaningful political process following Israel's suppression of Palestinian "violence," but Congress will ensure that it be an open-ended process of negotiations lasting years. At best, Israel strives for interim agreements rather than a final status settlement, for these will preserve its de facto control over the Occupied Territories.

Will Israel succeed? Sharon thinks so. He believes that Europe, critical as it might be, has no independent foreign policy apart from the U.S. The Arab countries have some limited clout—the U.S. will press Israel to make concessions so that the Arabs will submit to an attack on Iraq—but those concessions will stop far from a complete end to the occupation. Both Israel and the Arab world know Congress's "red lines" on Israel, and they fall much closer to a Palestinian ministate than to a viable and truly sovereign one.

Still, it is up to us, the international civil society of NGOs, faithbased organizations, political groups, human rights advocates, and just plain world citizens, to monitor the fateful period we are now entering. April 10 begins our test. Having shed the naïveté of Oslo, we must follow the upcoming political process with eyes wide open and critical. Our goal must be to see a viable, sovereign state emerge in all the Occupied Territories (giving the Palestinians the right to negotiate border adjustments and other compromises they see fit). Unlike Oslo, the political process must have a just peace—a viable Palestinian state and a just resolution of the refugee issue, as well as Israel's security concerns—as its explicit goal. And it must have a binding timetable.

In the Oslo process and during the past year and a half of Israeli repression, the international community let the Palestinians down. It did not insist on negotiations that would lead to Palestinian selfdetermination (after seven years of negotiations, the Palestinians ended up confined to tiny, impoverished islands while Israel doubled its settler population). And it did not provide the protection and support available to the Palestinians through international law, according to which the occupation was illegal, unjust, and immoral in every respect. One cannot criticize an oppressed people's resort

to armed resistance—even terrorism—when it finds itself abandoned by the international community that offers its only source of redress. We must not again allow occupation, repression, and violence to overwhelm the progress towards a just peace as we have over the past decade. It is truly time to end the occupation.

[42] See Justin Huggler, “Jenin: The Camp That Became a Slaughterhouse,” The Independent, April 14, 2002.

[43] See John Kifner, “Gaza Mourns Bombing Victims,” New York Times, July 24, 2002.

** Chapter 21: If U.S. Dumps Test Ban Treaty, China Will Rejoice

Los Angeles Times, July 29, 2001

HUGH GUSTERSON

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), negotiated in the mid-1990s, completely prohibited the testing of all nuclear weapons. Bill Clinton signed the treaty in September 1996 and although the Senate refused to ratify it, the United States has abided by its terms.

Under the presidency of George W. Bush, the future U.S. commitment to the terms of this treaty is uncertain. During the 2000 presidential campaign, Bush repeatedly voiced his opposition to CTBT, and in the months following his inauguration he continued to express criticism of the treaty.

In this commentary, Hugh Gusterson argues that if the United States buries the CTBT, China, Russia, India, and Pakistan are likely to use this as a pretext

to accelerate the development and testing of their own nuclear stockpiles. Gusterson, who was an antinuclear activist in the 1980s, did field research in the town of Livermore, California, the site of a nuclear weapons development facility.

The prescience of the piece is extraordinary in light of recent events. In 2001, the Bush administration commissioned a study to determine how quickly mothballed Nevada nuclear test sites could be made operational. Then, in March 2002, the Los Angeles Times reported that a “Nuclear Posture Review” had been prepared by administration officials, which among other things advocated the development of new, low-yield “bunker-busting bombs” with nuclear warheads.

At approximately the same time, the conflict between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir region led many to speculate that a nuclear war might be within the realm of possibility in South Asia. Although the tension eased somewhat in the summer of 2002, critics argue that a nuclear confrontation still threatens the region.

According to recent news reports, President Bush is looking for ways to bury the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and has directed the nuclear complex to move into a higher state of readiness for a nuclear test. Chinese President Jiang Zemin and hardliners in his government must be getting ready to break out the champagne, since no country stands to gain as much from a resumption of testing as China— except perhaps Russia, India, and Pakistan. The country with the most to lose is the United States.

When the CTBT was being negotiated in the mid-1990s, some Pentagon officials and scientists within the U.S. nuclear-weapons complex pushed for a treaty that would allow small nuclear tests of a few hundred tons. The Russian and Chinese delegations to the test-ban talks also wanted a treaty that permitted some testing: China wanted to exempt “peaceful” nuclear explosions (for canal and dam construction); the Russians wanted a treaty that allowed tests of a few hundred tons, thinking that this would make it easier to ensure that their aging nuclear weapons still worked and to maintain expertise at their nuclear-weapons laboratories.

After an extensive interagency debate, the U.S. government decided to hold out for a complete test ban. The U.S. concluded that it was much easier to verify such a ban than a treaty that permitted, say, 200-ton but not 300-ton tests. U.S. defense officials also decided that, with 1,030 nuclear tests under its belt (versus 715 by the former Soviet Union and 45 by China), the U.S. had a well-tested and reliable nuclear stockpile that could not be greatly improved. The U.S. feared that further nuclear testing might enable other countries to catch up and hoped that a global ban on nuclear testing would be a daunting obstacle to countries seeking to develop anything but the most primitive and unreliable nuclear weapons. This decision, endorsed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was made not by starry-eyed antinuclear idealists but by hard-headed realists in the defense bureaucracy, who saw a test ban as in the vital interest of the U.S. Retired Gen. John Shalikashvili, former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was commissioned by the White House last year to reevaluate that decision. He concluded that “an objective and thorough net assessment shows convincingly that U.S. interests, as well as those of friends and allies, will be served by the treaty’s entry into force.”

Conservative critics of the test ban treaty say that it prevents us from knowing if our weapons still work. While it is true that detonating a weapon provides the most literal assurance that a weapon works (or did until it was destroyed by the test), such tests were infrequent even in the heyday of nuclear testing, when they were mainly used to validate improvements to the arsenal. However, as part of a bargain within the defense bureaucracy, the Clinton administration replaced nuclear explosive testing with a handsomely funded program for simulated testing and nondestructive surveillance of the stockpile. This Stockpile Stewardship and Maintenance Program currently receives about $5 billion a year. No other country’s nuclear-weapons establishment comes close to this.

When the CTBT was negotiated, the Russians and the Chinese grumbled that it put the U.S. at an unfair advantage because its nuclear test experience and top-of-the-line simulation technology would enable it to care for its nuclear stockpile while theirs crumbled.

If the U.S. kills the CTBT, Russia and China will be able to test again. This will make it easier for the Russians, who cannot match the U.S. weapons stewardship program, to ensure that their poorly maintained weapons work and to train a new generation of weapons scientists. It will also make it easier for the Chinese, who currently have only single-warhead missiles, to perfect new missiles with multiple warheads. These will, of course, be a valuable asset against the Bush administration's cherished ballistic missile defense system.

Meanwhile, India, which tried to block the CTBT in the United Nations in 1996, would also welcome a resumption of testing. India's 1998 tests revealed design flaws in its hydrogen bombs, and Indian scientists are eager to test again to find out whether they have succeeded in correcting these flaws. If India tests, Pakistan will follow.

If the U.S. resumes nuclear testing, it will also run the risk of being perceived as what it likes to call a rogue state. When France broke its self-imposed testing moratorium in the early 1990s, it was surprised to find itself the target of protests and boycotts all over the world. President Francois Mitterand hurriedly cut short the series of tests. One of the reasons the five official nuclear powers agreed to surrender nuclear testing in the mid-1990s is that the Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1970— one of the few arms control treaties the Bush administration has not attacked—committed them to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the arms race at an early date."

By 1995 the nonnuclear powers, running out of patience, were threatening not to extend the Non-Proliferation Treaty indefinitely without a test ban. In exchange for their extension of the treaty, the nuclear powers made a commitment to end nuclear testing. It would be no small thing to renege on this commitment.

Finally, a resumption of nuclear testing could well reawaken a sleeping giant at home—the domestic antinuclear movement. The Reagan administration's intensification of the arms race in the 1980s brought hundreds of thousands of people into the streets of New York City for a protest in 1982—the largest

street demonstration in American history. On a single day the same year, 1,300 people were arrested for civil disobedience at one of the three nuclear weapons laboratories in the U.S. Does the Bush administration want to return us to those days?

If the Bush administration buries the CTBT, it will enable the Russians, the Chinese, the Indians, and the Pakistanis to narrow the gap between their nuclear stockpiles and ours, it will exacerbate international perceptions that the U.S. government lectures others on their behavior while doing as it pleases, and it threatens to unleash social unrest at home. This is a high price to pay for being a little more certain that the greatest nuclear arsenal on earth is still reliable.

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* Part III: Prelude to September 11

** Chapter 22: Cut Off the Arms Flow and Let Afghans Unite

Los Angeles Times, February 15, 1989

ASHRAF GHANI

In January 1989, the Soviet army retreated from Afghanistan following a bitter ten-year war to defend the country's communist government against Afghan resistance groups. Many of them were armed by the U.S.-backed Pakistani intelligence agency. Also supported by the Pakistani and Saudi governments were the mujahedeen or "holy warriors," radical Muslim fighters who had come from dozens of countries to drive out the Soviets. Among them was Osama bin Laden, who would spend much of his time in Afghanistan seeking to spread Wahhabism.[44] In 1986, CIA director William Casey personally went to Afghanistan to review the mujahedeen groups who had been supplied with American-made Stinger antiaircraft missiles and trained by U.S. advisers.[45] This war—essentially a Cold War conflict between the Soviets and U.S. mercenary armies—left the country in shambles, with millions of Afghans in dire need of humanitarian aid.

In this commentary Ashraf Ghani, a native of Afghanistan who studied and taught anthropology in the United States before his appointment as Afghan finance minister in 2002, implored the Bush administration to discontinue arms shipments to the region, which was rapidly slipping into political chaos. He also strongly recommended that the United States and United Nations initiate a process of political and economic reconstruction—advice which was effectively ignored.

Ultimately, Ghani's warnings proved to be prophetic.Warring factions terrorized the country for the next five years. Then, at the end of 1994, a radical Islamic organization emerged—the Taliban. Their triumph was due in part to continued military support from U.S.-backed Pakistani intelligence. By 1996 they gained control of the major Afghan cities and ruled the country for the next five years.

The Soviets have left Afghanistan, making the collapse of the besieged puppet regime in Kabul just a matter of time. President Bush has a unique opportunity to define a positive agenda for the future of that country, yet for now he has chosen to merely affirm that the United States will continue to supply the Afghan resistance with military assistance.

Rather than additional means of destruction, the Afghan people are most in need of constructive measures. The Bush Administration could insist that the Afghan people be given the right to self-determination and take the initiative by channeling future economic assistance only to a government so freely chosen. By doing so, it could help thwart blatant Pakistani and Iranian attempts at determining the future of Afghanistan and at fanning the flames of civil war.

The Afghan people have no desire that the United States micromanage their politics. Rather, they wish that the United States would stop colluding with the Pakistani generals in choosing the cast of political actors and writing the script for the future of their country.

Over the years Washington has been entrusting Pakistani military intelligence with the distribution of more than $2 billion in military and financial aid and with the allocation of Stinger missiles to the Afghan resistance.

As long as the Soviet army was occupying their country, Afghan refugees had no choice but to accept the price exacted by Pakistan. Pakistani generals not only insisted on picking seven individuals acceptable to them to act as leaders of the resistance based in Pakistan; they also considered it their privilege to decide how and when to favor any of these groups. Local leaders inside Afghanistan, in need of arms and money, had no choice but to declare affiliation with one of these parties. The departure of the Soviet forces, however, frees the resistance inside Afghanistan from this dependence. Should a legitimate interim government emerge, one reflecting the aspirations of the Afghan people and committed to the reconstruction of the country, the commanders are likely to support its authority.

But the situation as it stands now finds Islamabad frantically trying to give its seven-party alliance the mantle of legitimacy by convening a consultative council, or shoora.

Simultaneously, Tehran is adding a sectarian dimension to the already intricate balancing act by demanding a significant role for eight Shiite parties that are based in Iran. Reports filtering out from inside Afghanistan also tell of Pakistani generals who have been urging resistance commanders to attack the cities, regardless of the bloodbath and the chaos that are sure to ensue. Only the restraint shown by commanders of the resistance has thus far prevented the execution of these plans.

In the absence of an interim government truly representative of the Afghan people, there is no incentive for the peaceful surrender of Kabul and other cities still in the hands of the Soviet-backed regime. Nearly three million civilians, locked in besieged Kabul and already on the brink of starvation, are sure to suffer tremendous losses should the encircling resistance groups attack the capital.

Surely the slaughtering of civilians of Kabul is not what the Bush administration wants its “kinder, gentler America” to contribute to.

There is still time for Bush to act decisively by delaying any shipment of arms and clearly supporting a political solution. The President can call for a referendum under the auspices of the United Nations—a logical choice following the Geneva Accords of last April that made the withdrawal of the Soviet forces possible. The referendum would be held simultaneously in Pakistan, Iran, and the parts of Afghanistan that are free of the Soviet-backed regime.

Such a referendum would ascertain the relative weight of each of the 15 pro-Pakistani or pro-Iranian parties, as well as that of independent groups or leaders. It would allow the emergence of a responsible and accountable leadership that the Afghan people could call their own.

After all, let us not forget that, aside from the nine years of Soviet occupation, Afghanistan can boast of nearly 300 years of recorded history of self-rule. And, as one resistance commander has been quoted by Western correspondents, there can be no compromise on “liberty, dignity and honor.”

If Washington ceases to view Afghans as mercenaries in its anti-Soviet crusade, it might be able to understand their longings for independence, peace, and prosperity.

[44] Wahhabism is a strict and austere form of Islam within the Sunni tradition. It was begun by Abdul Wahab (1703–1792) as a movement to curb the influence of Sufism among the Arab Bedouin, but beginning in the 1970s its spread became an important part of Saudi foreign policy.

[45] See Ahmed Rashid, Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil, and Fundamentalism in Central Asia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 127.

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** Chapter 23: U.s. Can Strengthen African Ties in Wake of Terrorism With Aid, Clear Policies

Harrisburg Patriot-News, August 24, 1998

JAMES MERRYMAN

On August 7,1998, two car bombs exploded outside of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Nearly three hundred people died (nearly all of them Africans) and approximately five thousand were injured in the two blasts. Several months later, investigators concluded that operatives linked to Osama bin Laden had probably orchestrated the attacks.

In this piece, anthropology professor James Merryman (who was in Kenya at the time of the bombings) argues that the “Africans are the major victims, not the cause,” of the attacks. He suggests that U.S. officials provide emergency assistance and continue to promote Africa’s economic development as a way of preventing further instability.

In spite of Merryman’s advice, the Clinton administration responded to the embassy attacks by sending U.S. warplanes on bombing raids in August 1998 to destroy a factory in Sudan and terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. It was alleged that bin Laden operatives were producing chemical weapons at the factory site. The buildings were, in fact, an important pharmaceutical complex that produced medicine for the Sudanese people. Later it was revealed that the United States had no conclusive evidence that chemical weapons had been produced there.[46]

The United States has an obligation to assist Kenya and Tanzania to repair the physical damage to their respective capitals following the insidious terrorist attacks on the U.S. embassies in those East African countries. The U.S. also needs to continue short-term economic and medical aid to the residents impacted by the terrorists' violence.

Following President Clinton's historic visit to Africa, the United States has a unique opportunity to make good on its promises of support. Failure to do so will undermine U.S. credibility and subvert our attempts to work closely with African governments elsewhere to increase U.S. embassy security and ensure the welfare of Americans living abroad in Africa.

The U.S. can have a more secure diplomatic presence and create a productive business climate only by cultivating the best possible relations with each host country in Africa.

Although the Cold War with its ideological struggle for Third World minds has ended, the global community will not allow the U.S. to comfortably slip back into isolation. The mantle of singular superpower means that Africa's problems are not easy for us to avoid, be it the debacle of intervention in Somalia or suffering condemnation by world opinion for refusing early intervention in the genocidal bloodbath of Rwanda.

Economically, Africa holds vast resources including the world's largest reserves of gold and diamonds and a wide array of exotic metals vital to aerospace and information technology. Africa has more than a halfbillion potential consumers of American products at a time when our Asian export markets are weakening.

There are major opportunities for U.S. investment in Africa, along with an increasingly well trained workforce. These potentials, however, can only be realized in the context of political and economic stability. U.S. interests are served by a secure Africa.

Both Tanzania and Kenya have maintained uninterrupted civilian rule since gaining their independence and stand in stark contrast to the model of anarchic civilian rule and the jack-booted oppression of military regimes played out across the continent. Although the U.S. has maintained largely positive relations with Kenya and Tanzania, the political ambience of U.S. foreign policy with the two countries has been mixed over the past 35 years.

U.S.-Kenya relations have been strained in recent years in response to America's persistent insistence on Western-style multiparty elections and linking that position to levels in U.S. economic aid to Kenya. There is growing political unrest, coupled with a runaway population growth rate that has not kept pace with economic growth.

Tourism, based on Kenya's abundant wildlife and majestic scenery, has long been the country's main foreign exchange earner. However, Kenya's position as Africa's premier safari center has eroded due to a somewhat deserved reputation for "iffy" political stability and increasing personal security problems due to regionally unchecked highway banditry and growing bands of urban thieves and hooligans.

Unfortunately, the bombings will undoubtedly have an additional negative impact on tourism, at least in the short run.

In all fairness to Kenya and Tanzania, the U.S. must make its message clear. Africans are the major victims, not the cause, of these atrocities. The terrorists, having inflicted their damage, are unlikely to strike again in these two locations.

The U.S. has a major role to play in promoting Africa's development. Supplying appropriate interim aid to sustain stability in Kenya and Tanzania is a vital piece of this development.

As Americans we owe this much to the 200-plus Africans killed and 5,000 injured for merely being there as innocent bystanders on the battlefield of America’s global war with terrorism.

[46] See Seymour Hersh, “The Missiles of August,” New Yorker, October 12, 1998, pp. 34–41. See also Tim Weiner and James Risen, “Decision to Strike Factory in Sudan Based on Surmise,” New York Times, September 21, 1998.

** Chapter 24: Egyptians Don’t Like Saddam, but...

Austin American-Statesman, January 14, 1991

ROBERT FERNEA

On August 2,1990, Iraq’s armed forces invaded and occupied Kuwait, a small country rich in oil reserves.

Although the U.S. government had maintained exceptionally friendly relations with Iraqi president Saddam Hussein throughout the 1980s—even after he ordered Iraqi troops to use poison gas against Kurdish people in his own country in 1988—the invasion of Kuwait dramatically changed the relationship.

In the tense months that followed, the U.N. Security Council passed resolutions giving Iraq until January 15, 1991, to withdraw from Kuwait. Otherwise, “all necessary means” would be used to ensure compliance. Hussein ignored the resolutions. In the meantime, the Bush administration assembled a coalition of thirty-three countries for military operations, including Saudi Arabia, which allowed the United States to construct military bases on its soil for the first time. (This outraged many Muslims, since Mecca

and Medina—both in Saudi Arabia—are Islam's two holiest sites.) On January 17, the U.S.-led coalition attacked Iraq and the first Gulf War had begun.

The following commentary was written by Robert Fernea shortly after a failed January 9, 1991, meeting in Geneva between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz. Fernea, with more than forty years of experience working in the Middle East, gives insight into why many people in the countries of the region feel enmity toward the United States. In particular, he draws attention to the fact that U.S. support for Israel's invasion and occupation of the Palestinian territories—actions which violate U.N. Security Council resolutions—contrasts sharply with the condemnation of Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

The collapse of peace talks in Geneva has left my friends here in Egypt convinced that there will be a war between Iraq and, principally, the United States. However, their attitudes toward this vary, just as they have varied toward the gulf crisis since its outset.

Especially among younger Egyptians, a feeling of wanting to get on with a change of the status quo outweighs the more cautious outlook typical of the older generation, who fear the unforeseeable consequences of an armed conflict in this region. Among Egyptians of all ages, the more optimistic see a war ending quickly; the less optimistic are not so sure.

Perhaps these feelings are shared by many Americans.

It may be more difficult for Americans to appreciate how successful Saddam Hussein's repeated attempts to link the gulf crisis with the Palestinian-Israeli conflict have been in this part of the world.

Over and over again, editorial writers and Egyptians of all ages and walks of life point out that while the United States has rushed to the aid of Kuwait, an undemocratic state with an elitist government, we have refused to pressure Israel to follow the many United Nations resolutions unfavorable to Israel's

perceived interests. The Gaza Strip and the West Bank, plus the more recently acquired Israeli security zone in southern Lebanon, are all seen by Arabs to be illegal occupations, basically no different from the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

Iraq is not popular in Egypt. Many thousands of expatriated Egyptians suffered directly from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

Nevertheless, enmities between Egypt and Iraq are between fellow Arabs, who feel they have a common reason for complaint about Western policies toward the long-standing Arab-Israeli conflict. The old Middle Eastern saying, “My brothers against my cousins, but my brothers and cousins against the world,” should be borne in mind in this regard.

As the likelihood of war increases by the hour, one also thinks of the story about Pandora’s box; what miseries will be released upon the world if the lid is removed from armed conflict by our failure to find a peaceful solution to the present crisis? Will America and the West find itself standing against the whole Arab world? Will Christians and Jews end up pitted against Muslims—everywhere?

So here in Cairo, many hope that President Bush might be flexible about agreeing to discuss all the territorial disputes in the Middle East in return for Saddam’s departure from Kuwait.

The Arab-Israeli conflict has gone on nearly a half-century. Thousands of lives have been lost and the normal course of human lives interrupted. Surely the United States could be responsive to the desire for peace in the Middle East without making a hero of Saddam and without going to war.

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** Chapter 25: Gravesites —Environmental Ruin in Iraq

Depleted Uranium Education Project, ed., Metal of Dishonor, 1997

BARBARA The first Gulf War ended with a full Iraqi retreat from NIMRI AZIZ Kuwait followed by a cease-fire that went into effect on February 28, 1991. In this 1997 commentary, anthropologist and radio journalist Barbara Nimri Aziz focuses on the environmental and human costs of the war. Depleted uranium munitions fired by U.S. tanks and warplanes have irradiated cities and the countryside, and seem to have triggered a chain of diseases including leukemia, cancers, and birth defects. The release of toxic chemicals has also contributed to these problems. And the destruction of Iraq’s infrastructure (including sources of fresh water and hospitals) has also made it more difficult for Iraqis to stay healthy.

Strict economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations in August 1990 soon took a devastating toll on the country. More than one million Iraqis died as the result of the sanctions, which blocked the importation of vital medicines such as chemotherapy drugs and agricultural inputs.

As this book goes to press, Iraq is gripped with the devastation of a second Gulf War, which has left thousands of civilians dead and many others in dire need of humanitarian aid. In addition, U.S. and British forces used depleted uranium shells in March and April 2003, according to reports.[47]

The chain of death created by the [1991] Gulf War is a scary thing. I'm not talking about black skies over the blazing oil wells of Kuwait, or charred remains of soldiers on the sand, or the incinerated families who had sought protection in a bomb shelter. Those are familiar images of death, recognizable, and however painful, they are finite. With the end of hostilities, they disappear.

The really scary part comes later—now—when we find that things which looked alive are really dead or doomed.

I refer to a chain of deadly pollution, the kind that creeps up on us, first with vague complaints, then with the persistence of strange illnesses, then with more testimonials of similar symptoms. We slowly recognize that disparate efforts which first appear unrelated are, in fact, connected.

We have the sickening sense of something spreading, without limits, of something embedded so deep within the system that it's unreachable. Our inquiries are met with denials. So, to begin, all we seek to do is confront it. We just want to stand on the gravesite as if it were a known, finite place.

This is our feeling, I think, as we hear more and more documentation regarding Gulf War syndrome and its link to the use, by the Pentagon, of depleted uranium weaponry during the 1991 war.

Evidence is mounting, and those soldiers who find themselves stricken are growing in number, networking and uniting in a swelling movement of people who refuse to accept government disclaimers that these soldiers might be the victims of some new dangerous materials the Pentagon used. A public movement to ban depleted uranium is growing and attracting more media attention in the U.S.

Many Iraqis were killed outright by the weapons that blew apart their vehicles and their bunkers. Those who survived the onslaught and fled must have ingested and carried with them the fumes and toxic dust created by the bombardments. There is also the uranium waste—three hundred tons of it, according to reports—left on the battlefield.

Today the entire population of Iraq is besieged by diseases. We know that waterborne parasites and bacteria and malnutrition in Iraq are responsible for many recognizable diseases, and for wasting and death. But what about reports of a sharp rise in spontaneous abortions, cancers, and other “new diseases”? The Iraqi Ministry of Health is systematically documenting some of these health problems. Dr. Siegwart Guenther of the Austrian Yellow Cross International is also studying evidence of possible Gulf War syndrome inside Iraq and the high incidence across the country of abnormal births.[48]

*** Iraqi Scientists Most Concerned about Radiation

Those most concerned about radiation and other kinds of pollution are Iraqis. Their entire population is probably afflicted. And essential empirical evidence of strange illnesses in the Iraqi population is being gathered by their own scientists. Iraq still has a highly trained community of biologists, environmentalists, energy specialists, cancer researchers, etc., most of whom earned advanced degrees in the U.S. or Great Britain. With access to the entire country, they are capable of conducting the needed research.

Until the embargo and war, these scholars were in the international scientific community; they published widely and they took part in international scientific gatherings.

Because of the embargo, however, their careful on-site work and their disturbing findings are not as widely known as they should be, partly because these men and women are now denied professional contact with their peers overseas and are therefore unable to offer comparative statistics and work together with concerned scientists worldwide to find solutions and recommend treatments.

This is happening when health and environmental conditions inside Iraq are deteriorating, and bad conditions generated by the war are spreading, creating a catastrophe of accelerating proportions and unknown ramifications.

The Pentagon, which has been trying so hard to suppress information about the extent, occurrence, and possible source of Gulf War syndrome among its own personnel, would doubtless want to keep any Iraqi source silent on this matter as well. Even a scientist researching the hazardous effects of the war finds herself or himself effectively blocked from reporting important relevant findings.

Dr. Huda Ammash is one of those Iraqi scientists who should be speaking to her international colleagues. She is presently an environmental biologist and professor at Baghdad University, having undertaken graduate studies in the U.S. where she obtained her Ph.D. from the University of Missouri.

Working with governmental departments of agriculture, health, and environment, Ammash is now undertaking research in Iraq. When I met her in 1995, she kindly shared her report with me. She is most concerned with the enormous energy emission and light energy from the massive bombing in the forty days of war in 1991 and the resulting ionization.[49]

“We know that ionization causes radiation,” she said. “It is now diffused throughout the entire airspace of Iraq and has likely spread to our neighbors as well, possibly as far north as the southern border of Russia.”

Dr. Ammash calculates that “the prolonged effect of this ionization is, over a period of more than ten years, equal to one hundred Chernobyls.”

Dr. Ammash and others note that “an outbreak of meningitis in children concentrated in one Baghdad locality is highly unusual and may be a manifestation of high ionization levels. It has never been seen in Iraq before and, under the circumstances of the embargo, Iraq can provide no immunization against it.” She notes the alarm among doctors she interviewed who report that “99 percent of the victims of this disease are children.” Ammash accumulated reports that show cancer increasing at rapid and abnormal rates; child leukemia is especially rampant, with some areas of south Iraq showing a fourfold rise in these few years. Breast cancer in young women (age thirty and under) is also many times higher than in 1990 in certain parts of Iraq.

In addition, the Iraqi environment is subject to a mass of other chemical and microbial pollutants released into the atmosphere because of indirect results of the war. Ammash points out, for example, how “damage to bombed and crippled industrial plants resulted in the leakage of millions of liters of chemical pollutants—black oil, fuel oil, liquid sulfur, concentrated sulfuric acid, ammonia, and insecticides—into the atmosphere. Fumes created by the bombardment of more than 380 oil wells produced toxic gases and acid rain.”

Bombardment of chemical factories damaged their gas purification units and thus created tremendous air pollution as well. If these filters can’t function, dangerous gases are allowed to escape from cement factories. Up to the present, the imposition of sanctions prevents the repair of these industrial filters. Untreated heavy waters from industrial centers are the media for

growth of microbes, mainly typhoid, malta fever, and other pathogenic bacteria.

Ammash also reports fourteen crop diseases—including covered smut, sazamia moth, yellow crust, spickulated drought disease, gladosporium disease, and epical bent—which were never before recorded in Iraq's history. These are now infecting date trees and citrus trees.

When I arrived back in Baghdad, I followed up my research in Mosul with discussions with agriculture officials and with visits to small, local farms engaged in mixed agriculture. I spoke with experts at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a U.N. agency in Baghdad since before the [1991] Gulf War. Their mandate is to assist any nation to increase its food production, and they are trying to help Iraq in this area. Now, more than ever, with food unobtainable from abroad, Iraq is obliged to reverse its rather neglected agricultural policy with active food production schemes. Since the imposition of the embargo, Iraq has been trying to do so, bringing more land under grain production and improving irrigation.

*** Iraq Could Be Self-Sufficient

FAO officials were unequivocal about prospects. "Iraq could be selfsufficient in grain," said director Amir Khalil. "It has the water; it has the land; it has the expertise." Yet, despite efforts and the growing food crisis, production was declining. Why?

For agriculture experts and farmers alike, the explanation is simple: "No herbicides, no pesticides, no fertilizer, no improved seed." The animal husbandry and poultry situation is as severe as the grain crisis. Without vaccines and other medicines, all of which Iraq cannot furnish itself, animals —like people and plants—cannot survive.

According to a 1995 FAO report, dairy herds had gone down 40 percent since 1990. Before the war, dairy cows numbered just over 1.5 million; by 1995,

their number fell to only 1 million. Water buffaloes suffered an even worse fate, and goat herds have declined from 1.3 million to fewer than a quarter of a million. Iraq's poultry system with 106 million hatching hens was virtually wiped out overnight by the bombing when electrically run poultry sheds across the country—8,400 units— shut down. Without vaccines and specialized, treated food, moreover, hens cannot survive long.

Why this devastation? Largely because agricultural imports, all essential in food production in any modern state today, are unavailable.

If we are to believe FAO's own reports, it seems that another weapon in this cowardly secret war is the denial of agricultural essentials—a kind of sabotage—to ensure Iraq cannot become food self-sufficient.

It is ominous that it was also during my field research in a farming community that I found the first shocking evidence of a little discussed plague in the human population.

In the course of extended conversations with local farmers after my inspection of the fields, we spoke about social life. One farmer remarked that marriages were fewer now. "Why?" I asked. The answer was straightforward. "Young people fear the birth of malformed fetuses and stillbirths." How was this?

"We look around our village," they said. "Everyone knows couples in the village who had deformed babies in the last four years."

With the help of these farmers and the local schoolteacher, I took an ad hoc survey. They had 160 houses here, and among these they counted 20 households where malformed babies had been born. My hosts noted that most of the fathers of these stillborn and abnormal births in their village are men who served in the army during the [1991] Gulf War. They noted many spontaneous abortions, but we did not include these. I had heard in Baghdad

that more spontaneous abortions are reported across the country now than were before 1990.

The Iraqi Ministry of Health could not provide me with any statistics about this development at that time. But my inquiries at five hospitals (in Mosul, Baghdad, and Kerbala) revealed that the number of abnormal births recorded in hospitals had dramatically increased. Recalling their personal experience, all doctors with whom I spoke estimated they see ten times more such births today than five years ago. One doctor in Mosul said she saw two cases a year before 1991; she now sees four or five cases a month. The symptoms?

“Babies born without ears, without eyes, without limbs or with foreshortened limbs, without formed genitalia, with cleft palate, clubfoot, enlarged heads.” One doctor reported her first knowledge of a case of congenital leukemia.

*** “How Can I Have Any Plans?”

A professor of poultry science had accompanied us to the fields in Mosul. From seeing how he walked and stood, I already suspected he himself was unwell. Nevertheless, I inquired about his plans for further research. I still remember the bewildered look on his face when I asked him this.

“Plans? Madam,” he said softly, “I am trying to feed my family; I am looking for medicine for my ill father. How can I have plans?”

I asked Dr. Ammash the same question. “It is difficult for anyone to have a plan,” she quietly explained. “You have a plan when you have a settled situation—known circumstances. We don’t have that anywhere in Iraq. My immediate plan is to provide tomorrow’s means for life for my children, to help my students into another successful day. After that, I don’t know.”

[47] See Neil Mackay, “U.S. Forces’ Use of Depleted Uranium Weapons Is ‘Illegal,”’ Sunday Herald (Scotland).

[48] For information on depleted uranium and its effects, see Siegwart Horst-Guenther, “How DU Shell Residues Poison Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia,” in Depleted Uranium Education Project, ed., Metal of Dishonor, 2d ed. (New York: International Action Center, 1997). See also Akira Tashiro, Discounted Casualties: The Human Cost of Depleted Uranium (Hiroshima: Chugoku Shimbun Press, 2001).

See also La Guerre Radioactive Secrete [Invisible War: Depleted Uranium and the Politics of Radiation], February 2000; Martin Meissonier, director; Paul Moreira, executive producer. A film produced by Canal+ and available at <[[http://www.canalplus.fr/emissions/90mn/contact.asp][www.canalplus.fr/emissions/90mn/contact.asp]]>. U.S. distributor: Damacio López, 1322 Lopezville, Socorro, NM 84801; tel.: 505-838-0263; e-mail: [[mailto:idust@sdc.org][idust@sdc.org]].

[49] See Huda Ammash, “Toxic Pollution, the Gulf War, and Sanctions,” in Anthony Arnove, ed., Iraq under Siege (Boston: South End Press, 2000), pp. 205215, and Barbara Nimri Aziz, “Targets, Not Victims,” in Anthony Arnove, ed., Iraq under Siege (Boston: South End Press, 2000), pp. 161–170.

** Chapter 26: U.N. Should Act to Protect Muslim Women

Newsday, April 13, 1998

FADWA The civil war that has gripped Algeria for more than

EL GUINDI a decade has claimed more than a hundred thousand lives, mostly civilians. Since its independence from France in 1962, the country has been

ruled by a single party, the National Liberation Front (FLN). By the mid-1980s an opposition group, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), had appealed to Algerians unhappy with the incompetence and religious repression imposed under FLN rule. By the early 1990s, the FIS had gathered a wide base of popular support.

The FIS's popularity pressured the country's leadership to reform the political process, and in 1993 Algeria's first democratic multiparty elections were held. When it was apparent that the FIS would win parliamentary elections, military and secular elites ousted the president, annulled the elections, banned the FIS, and declared a state of emergency. Then the country descended into a spiral of violence from which it has yet to emerge.

Although the Algerian government claimed that operatives from the FIS and the radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA) were responsible for terrorist attacks, massacres, and atrocities, it consistently refused to allow U.N. observers entry into the country to investigate these claims until mid-1998. Human rights groups report that Algerian security forces are responsible for much, if not most, of the violence.

In the following article Fadwa El Guindi appeals for the United Nations and United States to act quickly to improve the Algerian situation. She focuses on the atrocities committed against Muslim women.

Lamentably, the situation has not improved appreciably since the time this commentary appeared. According to a recent Amnesty International report, "A human rights crisis continues to blight Algeria. The number of people killed each month by the security forces, state-armed militias and armed groups in the context of the armed conflict remains shockingly high. Reports of torture and ill-treatment by the security forces—including of women and children as young as 15—continue to be... widespread, even though the climate of fear in the country means that reported cases may represent only the tip of the iceberg." [50]

By 1993, the Islamic Salvation Front had galvanized a wide and popular Algerian base of support and was expected to win elections. The Arab street, a popular and growing force of public opinion and nonmilitant resistance, had expressed desire for political change.

Had the will of the people been allowed to take its course democratically, the world would have seen a different political landscape in Algeria.

Instead, more than 60,000 people have reportedly died in the civil war between the government and the Islamic opposition since the voided 1993 election. In more recent developments, many innocent Algerian civilians in villages—mostly women and children—have been killed in brutal attacks blamed on Islamic groups. There is a clear need for human rights groups and the United Nations to take active roles in seeking to halt such atrocities. The United States has a responsibility to ease regional tensions that contribute strongly to the local instabilities by, for example, putting pressure on Israel to comply with peace agreements and U.N. resolutions. It must also end sanctions against Iraq, which have caused human suffering and bitterness in the region.

For members of Islamic groups to engage in senseless brutalities contradicts patterns of resistance consistent throughout the Arab world among similar organizations. It is also contrary to common sense. After all, the victims in Algeria’s case are the attackers’ own mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters. Why should Islamic groups challenging local undemocratic regimes and simultaneously destabilizing postcolonial forces unleash their anger on their own families? In the past six years, more than 3,700 women were killed in Algerian attacks, including massacres of villagers. Many women, kidnapped and raped, have subsequently been found dead with their throats cut. These brutalities confused observers and analysts of Arab politics.

Rape is an ultimate violation designed to break Muslims by dishonoring their families and humiliating Muslim men. This was the case in the Serbian attacks on Bosnians. But these rapists were considered “enemies from outside the Islamic fold.” It makes no sense for groups whose identity de guerre is Islamic to rape their own Muslim women, whatever the nature of

the conflict. And, in the case of Algeria, Muslims around the world dissociated themselves from these un-Islamic brutalities and violations of sanctity.

The questions remain, however: Who is doing this? And why? Recent reports by the U.S. State Department, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch implicated Algerian security forces in systematic torture, arbitrary arrests, and summary executions.

The Algerian government has consistently refused to allow an international committee of inquiry access to the country to investigate human rights abuses by both sides in the civil war. The reason is likely that such an investigation will prove embarrassing to the Algerian government.

The gravity of the violations can be explained in cultural terms. In traditional Arab culture, the family is the center around which the sociomoral universe exists. Women are the center of the family's sacred identity and the guardians of the Arab family's honor and reputation. Motherhood is considered sacred. Nationhood is expressed in "motherland" terms. The Arabic words for women, household, and sacred sanctity are close derivatives of the same root.

To undermine or attack the Muslim woman destabilizes the core of the sociomoral system. The Arab-Islamic judicial system long recognized rape as a serious crime that received capital punishment—at a time when rape in America was considered sex, not crime. That is precisely why those at war with Muslims and trying to break them choose the path of raping and killing Muslim women. A cultural strength, Islam's placing women at the heart of sacredness is turned into a grave human rights violation in times of conflict and crisis. These are not random acts. They are systematic, racist, and sexist, and they violate international human rights.

Whether these brutalities are by insiders or outsiders, the world organizations entrusted with protecting human rights and lives must intervene. Just as in Bosnia, the world cannot remain a spectator. The raping of Muslim women must be entered as a crime tried in international tribunals.

Western feminist groups, which on short notice become activated over issues of whether Muslim women have the right to drive cars, unveil, or join the workforce, must now demonstrate compassion for the more serious issue of brutal raping and butchering of Muslim women.

This is particularly significant since the strong destabilizing factor underlying such crises comes from a poorly conceived U.S. foreign policy that consistently underestimates the role of the Arab street and is too static to adjust flexibly to the emergent political (Islamic) landscape in the region.

[50] See Amnesty International Document MDE 28/009/2002 (April 19, 2002). Online version at <http://web.amnesty.org/ai.nsf/Index/MDE280092002?OpenDocument&of=COUNTRIES/ALGERIA>.

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** Chapter 27: Women Under the Taliban

Dateline (Australia) March 14, 2001

In March 2001 the Taliban provoked widespread outrage when they sent fighter planes to destroy two colossal statues of Buddha in Afghanistan’s

Bamiyan province, approximately one hundred miles northwest of Kabul. One of the statues, thought to have been constructed in the seventh century A.D. (during Central Asia's pre-Islamic era), measured more than fifty meters high.

In the following interview, Zieba Shorish-Shamley, anthropologist and executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based organization Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan, notes that the destruction of the statues was a loss to humanity, but so too are the Taliban's human rights violations against women and ethnic minorities. Women in particular have become "ghosts" in their own country.

In the late 1990s, Shorish-Shamley persuaded the Feminist Majority to organize a petition drive to garner support for Afghan women living under the Taliban regime. Her efforts eventually helped to pressure the Clinton administration to take a tougher stance against the Taliban, who were once unconditionally accepted by most U.S. policy makers.

The destruction of two stone Buddhas in Afghanistan this week has cast new light on the Taliban regime which now claims control of 90 percent of the country. While thousands of people have been killed in more than 20 years of war in Afghanistan, it seems that no single act has so outraged the world community. Even fellow Muslims have condemned the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas as not sanctioned by the Koran. Ironically, it has taken this very public and defiant act of cultural vandalism to draw new attention to the plight of the Afghans themselves.

JANA WENDT: Zieba Shorish-Shamley, there has been an international outcry over the Taliban's destruction of the Bamiyan statues. As someone who's been working for women living under the Taliban, what did you make of all this attention?

ZIEBA SHORISH-SHAMLEY: I think the attention is great in the sense that as an anthropologist, obviously I care a great deal for our national heritage and historical artifacts.

However, I think the world and the international community should have had an outcry such as this when a lot of ethnic people were massacred by the Taliban about two or three times, as well as thousands of Afghan women that have died, and are dying under the Taliban rule because they're not allowed to work, they're not allowed to have equal access to the health care system, and they're virtual prisoners in their own society under the Taliban rule.

I think the genocide and the culture of genocide and human rights violations and war crimes, crimes against humanity—all of this goes together, and the word "outcry" should include all of those atrocities as well.

JW: You've been working for women's rights for a long time. Why do you think that these statues have suddenly captured the imagination and harnessed the outrage of the world?

ZSS: The outcry is because these Buddhas, or the statues, did not belong just to the Afghan people. They belonged to humanity. Afghanistan has been the crossroad of Asia, and during the time of the Silk Route many cultures went through there, so destroying them and denying humanity and future generations such beautiful, irreplaceable works of art is a crime against mankind, humankind.

JW: I wonder if you can give me a brief picture of the life of a woman today under the Taliban.

ZSS: A woman, an Afghan woman, today under the Taliban rule is voiceless, an invisible nonbeing, and does not have the most basic rights that are necessary for human existence. The Afghan women have become ghosts, shadows, and cannot participate in the public sphere of their society. And although they are the majority of the Afghan population, they have no voice.

So they are prisoners, they are virtual prisoners, and most of them are dying —hundreds of times we have appealed to the world, and it seems that the world doesn't hear their cries and their voices. So Afghan women's condition is the most horrible that you can think of or can imagine. That is the [plight of the] Afghan woman.

JW: Is there any way that the world attention to the Bamiyan statues may help you to press the point of women's human rights inside Afghanistan?

ZSS:... My organization, Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan, has called for a tribunal. We want an international tribunal to be formed by the U.N. and to bring the Taliban and other criminals that commit war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide—cultural genocide—to justice.

However, the issue has to be pushed, and that is why we are appealing to all the people of the world to write to their governments, to urge their governments to put pressure on the U.N. to form this tribunal, an international tribunal, and to find a solution and end the misery of Afghan people. They have been going through this for 23 years of war, and instead of it getting better, it is getting worse and worse, and now under the Taliban rule...itis the darkest moment in the Afghan people's life and history.

JW: Zieba Shorish-Shamley, I appreciate your time this evening.

ZSS: Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to bring the voices of my suffering people to the people of Australia.

** Chapter 28: Follow the Oil Trail —Mess in Afghanistan Partly Our Government's Fault

Pacific News Service, August 24, 1998

[[http://www.pacificnews.org][www.pacificnews.org]]

WILLIAM O. BEEMAN

In this commentary, anthropologist and Pacific News Service contributor William O. Beeman eloquently traces the complex connections between the 1998 terrorist bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania (see Chapter 20), the rise of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (see Chapters 19 and 24), Osama bin Laden, and the economics of oil. He analyzes how pipeline politics in the Caspian Sea—one of the world's richest oil regions—is driving U.S. foreign policy in Central Asia. Beeman's piece is both a critique of American Realpolitik and an appeal for U.S. policy makers to seriously consider the roles played by religion and ideology in the world of politics.

We must face the fact that if President Clinton is right about who bombed our embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, the action came in part as the result of the muddled actions of our own government.

The story is worthy of a Tom Clancy novel.

It is no secret, especially in the region, that the United States, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia have been supporting the fundamentalist Taliban in their war for control of Afghanistan for some time. The U.S. has never openly acknowledged this connection, but it has been confirmed by both intelligence sources and charitable institutions in Pakistan.

Given U.S. rhetoric regarding the Middle East, the Taliban would seem to be strange partners. They are a brutal fundamentalist group that has conducted a cultural scorched-earth policy for Afghanistan. They have committed atrocities against their enemies and their own citizens—according to extensive documentation. So why would the United States support them?

Middle Easterners understand. As the ancient saying goes, “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.” In Afghanistan the dominant ethnic groups are the Pushtuns, who spill over the border into Pakistan, and the Tajiks, whose language is a form of Persian. The Pushtun Taliban have virtually eliminated their Tajik opposition, which had been heavily supported by Iran. And so, according to this line of reasoning, the United States—as an enemy of Iran—must be a friend of the Taliban.

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But this does not fully explain why the United States would support such a group—or for that matter why Pakistan, itself a fundamentalist Islamic state, would risk the wrath of Tehran’s religious government. The answer to this part of the question has nothing to do with religion or ethnicity—but only with the economics of oil.

To the north of Afghanistan is one of the world’s wealthiest oil fields, on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea in republics formed since the breakup of the Soviet Union. Here, U.S. oil companies are involved in a boom larger than any in the last 40 years in this region. Untold wealth is at stake—but it depends on getting the oil out of the landlocked region through a warm-water port.

The simplest and cheapest route is through Iran. This route is favored by all oil companies, because it involves building a short pipeline and then transshipping the oil through the existing Iranian network.

The U.S. government has such antipathy to Iran that it is willing to do anything to prevent this. An alternate route would go through Afghanistan and Pakistan—but this would require securing the agreement of the powers-that-be in Afghanistan.

From the U.S. standpoint, the way to deny Iran everything is for the anti-Iranian Taliban to win in Afghanistan and agree to the pipeline through their territory. The Pakistanis would also benefit from this arrangement—which is why they are willing to defy the Iranians.

Enter Osama bin Laden, a sworn enemy of the United States living in Afghanistan. His forces could see that the Taliban would eventually end up in the American camp. Thus his bombing of U.S. embassies in East Africa (there are none in Afghanistan) was accompanied by a message calling for Americans to get out of “Islamic countries.” By this he meant specifically Afghanistan.

The U.S. response was to bomb bin Laden’s outposts while carefully noting that his forces were “not supported by any state.” This statement is an attempt to rescue the Taliban relationship, while sending Taliban leaders the message that they must ditch bin Laden. American missiles also took out a factory in the Sudan, but that was only a smokescreen.

Now matters are really in a mess. Iran has actually issued a statement supporting the U.S. actions. The Taliban are angry, and American citizens across the globe are now the targets of the most fanatical of Islamic militants. The U.S. may even lose control of the pipeline.

Every time the United States attempts one of these slick back-door deals, U.S. citizens get burned. Our foreign policy community never seems to learn that religion and ideology are as strong a force in this region as money or guns.

We underestimate these factors every time, and this gets us in trouble every time.

* Part IV: Anthropological Interpretations of September 11

** Chapter 29: Our Legacy of War

Chronicle of Higher Education, September 28, 2001

CATHERINE LUTZ

In the 1990s Catherine Lutz conducted anthropological research in Fayetteville, North Carolina, near Fort Bragg, one of the largest military bases in the United States. Her work has focused on the effects of militarism at home, and in the book Homefront she notes that the United States has been in a permanent state of war for most of the last century—although rarely has this been visible to most Americans since World War II.

Now, as she argues in this response to the attacks of September 11, the war has finally come home.

Although I was deeply saddened and angered by the horrific events of September 11, I was not shocked, because in the decade I have spent studying American society and its military, I have learned that we have already been in a permanent state of war since the late 1930s. Mainly outsourced to the global south since 1945, this war has now come home to roost.

While this long war has sometimes drawn on elevated ideals like antifascism, more often it has been carried on in the name of stability for any regime that would don an anticommunist mantle and allow American business access, hiding a rotten core of systematic terrorism against its own people, often with our weapons and training. Those terrorists were labeled realists, and the long reign of nuclear terror by the Soviet Union and the United States—who together took aim at millions of people in skyscrapers and hovels—was called defense, or even peace. Its architects were called men of honor.

This new war that President Bush has declared can draw on the decades-long public-relations campaigns intended to convince us that the larger the American arsenal, the safer we are, and on the idea that war elevates moral character in its supporters.

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But my research has shown me that many American soldiers and veterans are not nearly so sure. Some have been among war's most ardent critics, and some remain soul-wounded and attached to each other in fellowships of affliction. Their experiences will never match the rhetoric and safety of the elites now planning a conflagration.

As Bush talks about hunting the terrorists from their holes, and begins to elide terrorists and whole populations, I am reminded of the racial hatred that has preceded, stoked, and been inflamed by nearly every one of the twentieth century's wars. But over the past several days, hope has overtaken my pessimism as I've talked with students. So far, they have refused the simplicities and the vengefulness of the voices on television, whose framing devices overwhelmingly ask when and where the United States will strike, not how that could possibly accomplish a safe future.

Instead, students are questioning and seeking meaning in these events. The instructor of one class I attended as a guest speaker described how angry she was at the perpetrators and asked people to say if they were, too. Many hands went up along with mine, but when asked why, their reasons were many and nuanced. One was angry that the New York and Washington victims had not been protected (despite a $300 billion military budget), another that human beings continue to stoop to violence, another that her world had lost its security. While the administration has reduced all this into a single feeling, with one swift sword attached, those students' thoughtful, passionate varieties of anger are openings to reflection, learning, and a response more ethical than indiscriminate force.

The parallel of this day of infamy is not Pearl Harbor—in 1941, a colonial outpost in a once-sovereign Hawaiian nation. It is 1947, when a new kind of war was also declared, via executive orders and the National Security Act—a war, it was said, in which the enemy would no longer fight in the open, a war requiring the sacrifice of some freedom and principle. It gave birth to McCarthyism, to slaughters in places like Vietnam and Guatemala; and it took the fruits of our labor and our children.

The perpetrators of this latest terror should be identified in an open process and imprisoned. If one is Osama bin Laden, send the international police for him, and pick up Henry Kissinger and Augusto Pinochet on the way home. The weeping, surviving families of New York, Washington, Chile, Haiti, South Africa, the Somme, Ukraine, Cambodia, and Vietnam call us to bring their murderers to account, not to send legions more to join them in their grief.

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** Chapter 30: Local Horror/global Response

Chronicle of Higher Education: Colloquy, September 2001 [[http://www.chronicle.com][www.chronicle.com]]

This article, written days after the September 11 attacks, reflects the horror and outrage felt by many Americans in the aftermath of the tragic events of that day. But the authors—most of whom are affiliated with the anthropology program at City University of New York—are also critical of the “erroneous policies and practices” of the United States around the globe.

This is a difficult time for those of us who are deeply critical of U.S. military, financial, and commercial policies and practices around the globe. There is, we categorically insist, nothing, absolutely nothing, in those policies and practices that would even remotely justify the insane horror unleashed in the United States on September 11. We share the sense of shock, outrage, sadness, and anger felt in New York and Washington, around the country, and across the globe.

By the same token, there is nothing in these horrendous events to justify the continuation, let alone the intensification, of erroneous policies and practices. The catalog of flaws that have for so long distressed us still stands. The callous disregard shown by U.S. financial and commercial interests for global poverty and suffering; the militarism that backs authoritarian regimes wherever convenient to U.S. interests; the broad indifference (widespread throughout the U.S.) to the death and suffering inflicted on repressed, marginalized, or minority populations around the globe; the insensitivity of U.S.-led globalization practices to local cultures, interests, and traditions; the failure to act to prevent genocidal practices (in Rwanda, for example); the disregard for environmental degradation and resource depletion; irresponsibly selfinterested behavior with respect to a wide range of international issues such as missile defenses, global warming, AIDS, and labor rights; the use of international institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank for partisan U.S. political purposes; and the shallow and often hypocritical stances with respect to human rights—none of these can be justified by last week’s events.

We wish to reaffirm our critical postures with respect to all such issues no matter how difficult it may be to articulate them freely in these times.

The sheer horror and insanity of what happened last week is a crushing burden on rational thought and reasoned action. Signs of distinctively American brands of zealotry and fanaticism, of ethnic scapegoating, of authoritarianism to the detriment of basic freedoms and civil liberties, abound. Such trends must be resisted. It is also our fervent hope that the righteous wrath and indignation felt around the country (understandable sentiments which we share) might mature into serious reflection on how to make the world a decent habitation for all, how to make real democracy work everywhere, how to make freedom mean something more than freedom of the market, and how to create a more egalitarian and caring world characterized by justice, tolerance, diversity, and love.

This, far more than any amount of saber rattling and military action, is, surely, a far more constructive way to secure a safer and juster world for our children.

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** Chapter 31: A War Our Greatgrandchildren Will Be Fighting—Understanding Osama Bin Laden

Pacific News Service, September 14, 2001 [[http://www.pacificnews.org][www.pacificnews.org]]

WILLIAM O. BEEMAN

This piece by William O. Beeman was among the first anthropological commentaries that appeared nation

ally in the wake of the September 11 attacks. Based upon his research on the Middle East, terrorism, and U.S. foreign policy, he succinctly outlines why bin Laden and his associates might have been involved in orchestrating the attacks, and describes the structure of their organization. He suggests that the brutality of the acts of September 11 is an indication of the level of anger and frustration generated abroad by U.S. actions that restrict movements for self-determination in other parts of the world. By drawing examples from Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the Palestinian territories, as well as other countries, Beeman outlines some of the possible motives for the attacks.

The United States risks a severe miscalculation in dealing with the destruction of the World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon on Tuesday.

This event is not an isolated instance of violence. This is not an act of war. It is one symptom of a cancer that threatens to metastasize. The root cause is not terrorist activity, as has been widely stated. It is the relationship between

the United States and the Islamic world. Until this central cancerous problem is treated, Americans will never be free from fear.

Merely locating and hunting down a single guilty party in this case will not stop future violence: Such an action will not destroy the organization of terrorist cells already established throughout the world. Of greater importance, it will do nothing to alleviate the residual enmity against America that will remain at large in the world, continuing to motivate violence.

The perpetrators of the first attack on the World Trade Center, in 1993, were caught and convicted. This did not stop the attack on Tuesday.

The chief suspect is the Saudi Arabian Osama bin Laden or his surrogates. He has been mischaracterized as an anti-American terrorist. He should rather be thought of as someone who would do anything to protect Islam.

Bin Laden began his career fighting the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979, when he was 22 years old. He has not only resisted the Soviets but also the Serbians in Yugoslavia. His anger was directed against the United States primarily because of the U.S. presence in the Gulf region, more particularly in Saudi Arabia, the site of the most sacred Islamic religious sites.

According to bin Laden, during the [1991] Gulf War, America coopted the rulers of Saudi Arabia to establish a military presence in order to kill Muslims in Iraq. In a religious decree issued in 1998, he gave religious legitimacy to attacks on Americans in order to stop the United States from occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places. His decree also extends to Jerusalem, home of the second-most sacred Muslim site, the al-Aqsa Mosque.[51]

The depth of his historical vision is clear when, in his decree, he characterizes Americans as crusaders, harking back to the Medieval

Crusades, in which the Holy Lands, then occupied by Muslims, were captured by European Christians.

He will not cease his opposition until the United States leaves the region. Paradoxically, his strategy for persuading the United States to do so seems drawn from the American foreign-policy playbook. When the United States disapproves of the behavior of another nation, it turns up the heat on that nation through embargoes, economic sanctions, or withdrawal of diplomatic representation.

In the case of Iraq following the Gulf War, America employed military action, resulting in the loss of civilian life. The State Department has theorized that if the people of a rogue nation experience enough suffering, they will overthrow their rulers or compel them to adopt more sensible behavior. The terrorist actions in New York and Washington are a clear and ironic implementation of this strategy against the United States.

Bin Laden takes no credit for actions emanating from his training camps in Afghanistan. He has no desire for self-aggrandizement. A true ideologue, he believes that his mission is sacred, and he wants only to see clear results. For this reason, the structure of his organization is essentially tribal-cellular, in modern political terms. His followers are as fervent and intense in their belief as he is. They carry out their actions because they believe in the rightness of their cause, not because of bin Laden’s orders or approval.

Groups are trained in Afghanistan, and then establish their own centers in places as far-flung as Canada, Africa, and Europe. Each cell is technologically sophisticated, and may have a different set of motivations for attacking the United States.

Palestinian members of his group see Americans as supporters of Israel in the current conflict between the two nations. In the Palestinian view, Ariel Sharon’s ascendancy to leadership of Israel has triggered a new era, with U.S. government officials failing to pressure the Israeli government to end violence against Palestinians.

Palestinian cell members will not cease their opposition until the United States changes its relationship with the Israeli state. The mujahedeen fighters in Lebanon also direct their hostility against Israel and the United States. They also operate against the Maronite Christian community in their own country, who were supported by the French from World War I until the end of World War II. They will not cease their operations until the region is firmly in Islamic hands.

Above all, Americans need to remember that the rest of the world has an absolute right to self-determination that is as defensible as our own. Despicable acts of mayhem such as those committed in New York and Washington are a measure of the revulsion that others feel at our actions that seemingly limit those rights. If we perpetuate a cycle of hate and revenge, this conflict will escalate into a war that our greatgrandchildren will be fighting.

[51] Also known as Haram al-Sharif (see Chapters 18–20).

** Chapter 32: What Have the 9/11 Investigators Overlooked?

Christian Science Monitor, July 11, 2002

JANET MCINTOSH

In May 2002, reports surfaced indicating that the FBI, the CIA, and members of the Bush administration failed to “connect the dots” regarding specific clues and warnings which might have prevented the September 11 attacks. In this commentary, Janet McIntosh argues that the administration also suffers from a “lapsed ability to see the global political landscape from any perspective” outside its own—that is, ethnocentrism. Based on her research and experience in a predominantly Muslim area of Kenya, she suggests that

each act of hypocrisy, false denial, or fabrication made by U.S. officials can potentially fan the flames of terrorism.

McIntosh's article implies that the ongoing international "war on terror," focused on disrupting terrorist plots, is a short-term palliative likely to exacerbate anti-U.S. sentiment over the long run.

Last month, we heard quite a furor about how the FBI and CIA failed us in the months leading up to September 11. How, like children wielding a dull crayon, they failed to "connect the dots." Congress is probing; the media is probing; even Egypt and Britain claim that they warned the U.S. about terrorist attacks. And now the government is gearing up for a new federal information clearinghouse: the freshly empowered and consolidated Department of Homeland Security.

While pundits consider the nuts and bolts of such a proposal, we seem to have forgotten that the administration was ill informed, not only about the means of terrorism, but about one of the deepest motives behind it.

The USA is widely loathed, but our leaders never fully grasped that before last September. Shortly after the attacks, President Bush claimed to be "amazed" that anyone hates America, because "I know how good we are." This naïveté is a failure of "intelligence"—not the kind the FBI and CIA specialize in, but a lapsed ability to see the global political landscape from any perspective outside one's own.

My own exposure to such alternative perspectives was painfully enhanced during my fieldwork as an anthropologist in East Africa. I happened to be living in a Muslim area of coastal Kenya in 1998 when the U.S. embassies were bombed in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam. The FBI swarmed to the Muslimized areas of the coast, eventually arresting a man (Mohammed Sadiq Odeh) who had circulated through the same towns, even the same apartment buildings, where I did my research.

The vast majority of my Muslim Swahili friends and acquaintances would never dream of committing such vicious acts and were sorry for the loss of life. At the same time, however, a conspiracy theory began to billow through the community: the United States, through a CIA operation, had willfully obliterated its own embassies in order to have an excuse for open season on Muslims. President Clinton's subsequent bombings of a pharmaceutical company in Sudan and an Al Qaeda training site in Afghanistan (back when Al Qaeda was not so infamous) merely confirmed my friends' impression that Muslims worldwide were victims of a capricious American bully.

Conspiracy theories, it turns out, were hardly new to them; several Swahili men bolstered their case by showing me a photocopied letter ostensibly written by then British prime minister John Major to his Foreign Office minister, Douglas Hogg, in 1993. In the letter, Major describes colluding with the United States and other Western nations to ensure that the Muslim population are "totally displaced" from Bosnia-Herzegovina to prevent the emergence of a "possible Islamic state in Europe." These harsh prescriptions, he writes, emerge from a "real-politic [sic]" based on a broader European "Christian-Civilization and ethic [sic]."

At first, I was maddened by what I saw as the paranoid slant of these narratives, and I argued vigorously against them. I pointed out the wild exaggerations and near-hilarious grammatical solecisms in the "John Major" letter that clearly indicate it wasn't penned by an elite Englishman. I argued that while the CIA is hardly a compassionate body, it would never cost the U.S. so much financial damage and inconvenience only to justify Clinton's haphazard retaliatory gestures. My friends were unmoved. Why?

Conspiracy theories say a lot about their perpetrators. They are weapons of the weak, usually circulated by subordinate groups who feel oppressed. They don't require evidence to make the rounds; what they need is perceived plausibility. My Swahili friends pointed to the scores of children who have died in Iraq because ofU.S. sanctions. They pointed to Western media bias that favors Israel over Palestine and even to the sixteenth-century Portuguese destruction of Muslim towns on the East African coast, a historical moment that stands, to them, as a synecdoche for Western/Christian hostility.

They are knowledgeable about world history (even if such knowledge is marred by bias and fear), well connected to Muslim communities in other nations, and, as a result, highly suspicious of the United States government. The conspiracy theory surrounding the embassy bombings seemed like one way of saying: We may not have direct evidence for our claim, but judging from your track record, you might well have done it.

President Bush might be baffled by such accusations, but they are a potent symptom of the low regard in which our country is held. I wonder, furthermore, if our future attackers are aggrieved, not only by U.S. political actions, but also by the failure of our country to validate their feelings of oppression. Dare I say, in fact, that the despicable final videotape of Daniel Pearl contains a vital clue about terrorism that has been overlooked.

Pearl's murderers force him to say that he had come to a new understanding of their point of view, and to compare his anguish in captivity to that of the prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. The video-makers interspersed Pearl's scripted words with images of dead and weeping Middle Easterners, presumably victims of U.S. political and military actions. In crafting this pastiche, it is as if they were splicing together a fantasy world in which Americans finally understood, in the depths of their hearts, the suffering and resentment of some Muslim peoples.

Our government should know that fathoming the point of view of potential terrorists is not the same as approving of their acts, but it became "un-American" right around the time Lynn Cheney's ACTA task force spit-roasted a list of academics for pointing out why the U.S. is so reviled. Yet to refuse to grasp terrorists' perspective is to encourage a shortsightedness that will cost everyone dearly.

So what solution could possibly remedy this problem? I don't aspire to fix a global mess, but my experiences in Kenya provided a sharp reminder of the fact that a vast number of Muslims across the world (most of them peaceful, humane people, and a few of them not) are weighing our country's actions.

Every U.S. hypocrisy, fib, or denial is registered; every U.S. policy is picked over for the way it affects Muslims on political, economic, and humanitarian grounds. A just foreign policy then, especially on issues like sanctions against Iraq and the U.S. support for Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, is the avenue to peace.

Social justice and fairness have not yet motivated the United States government to overhaul such policies, but perhaps, once it realizes this is the only long-term solution to terror at home, it will be willing to do so on grounds of self-defense.

** Chapter 33: We Need a Global Declaration of Interdependence

International Herald Tribune, July 6, 2002

WADE DAVIS

In this article, Canadian anthropologist Wade Davis reflects upon the events of September 11 to explore a potential source of further conflict—the deepening rift between the world's rich and poor. Western development models have often led to "disparity, dislocation, and dispossession" in the Third World, which may well be among the most profound dangers to world peace in the coming years. Davis informs readers that "anthropology suggests that when peoples and cultures are squeezed, extreme ideologies sometimes emerge."

When President George W. Bush asked, after September 11, "Why do they hate us?" this was not a rhetorical question. Americans really wanted to know, and still do, for their innocence had been shattered.

The president suggested that the reason was the very greatness of America, as if the liberal institutions of government had somehow provoked homicidal rage in fanatics incapable of embracing freedom.

Other, dissenting voices claimed that, to the contrary, the problem lay in the tendency of the United States to support, notably in the Middle East, repressive regimes whose values are antithetical to the ideals of American democracy.

Both sides were partially right, but both overlooked the deeper issue, in part because they persisted in examining the world through American eyes.

America, of course, has always looked inward. A nation born in isolation cannot be expected to be troubled by the election of a president who has rarely been abroad, or a Congress in which 25 percent of members do not hold passports. Wealth too can be blinding. The United States with less than 5 percent of the world’s population produces 21 percent of the global economic output.

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Such a country does not easily grasp the reality of a world in which 1.3 billion people get by on less than $1 a day. A land wired for the Internet readily forgets that the majority of the world’s population has never had a phone call, let alone sent an e-mail.

A culture that celebrates the individual at the expense of family and community has difficulty understanding that in most of the world the community still prevails, for the destiny of the individual remains inextricably linked to the fate of the collective.

Even as the United States came to dominate the geopolitical scene, as it has since 1945, the American people resisted engagement with the world. Such cultural myopia was rendered obsolete in an instant on September 11. In the immediate wake of the tragedy, I was often asked, as an anthropologist, for explanations.

Condemning the attacks in the strongest terms, I nevertheless encouraged people to consider the forces that gave rise to Osama bin Laden's movement.While it would be reassuring to view Al Qaeda as an isolated phenomenon, I feared that the organization was a manifestation of a deeper and broader conflict between those who have and those who have nothing.

I also encouraged my American friends to turn the anthropological lens upon their own culture, if only to catch a glimpse of how Americans might appear to people born in other lands. When the rest of the world looks to the West, and to America in particular, they see many wondrous things. But they also see a culture that reveres marriage yet allows half of its marriages to end in divorce; that admires its elderly yet permits grandparents to live with grandchildren in only 6 percent of its households; that loves its children yet embraces a slogan—"24/7"— that implies total devotion to the workplace at the expense of family.

Technological wizardry is balanced by a model of production and consumption that compromises the life supports of the planet. Extreme would be one word for a culture that does little to curtail industrial processes that threaten to transform the biochemistry of the atmosphere. The American way of life, brilliant and inspired in so many ways, is nevertheless not the paragon of humanity's potential.

For much of the Middle East in particular, the West is synonymous, not only with questionable values and a flood of commercial products, but also with failure. Gamal Abdel Nasser's notion of a pan-Arabic state was based on a thoroughly Western and secular model of socialist development, a dream that collapsed in corruption and despotism. The Shah of Iran provoked the Iranian revolution by thrusting not the Koran but modernity as he saw it down the throats of his people.

The Western model of development has failed in the Middle East and elsewhere because it has been based on the false promise that people who follow its prescriptive dictates will in time achieve the material prosperity enjoyed by a handful of nations of the West. Even were this possible, it is not at all clear that it would be desirable.

To raise consumption of energy and materials throughout the world to Western levels, given current population projections, would require the resources of four planet Earths by the year 2100. To do so with the one world we have would imply so severely compromising the biosphere that the Earth would be unrecognizable.

Given the values that drive most decisions in the international community, this is not about to happen. In reality, development for the vast majority of the peoples of the world has been a process in which the individual is torn from his past, propelled into an uncertain future, only to secure a place on the bottom rung of an economic ladder that goes nowhere.

Anthropology suggests that when peoples and cultures are squeezed, extreme ideologies sometimes emerge, inspired by strange and unexpected beliefs. However unique the circumstances that forged its abominable impulses, Al Qaeda is nevertheless reminiscent of these revitalization movements. We must strive to understand its roots, for the chaotic conditions of disintegration and disenfranchisement that led to Al Qaeda are found among disaffected populations throughout the world.

We live in an age of disintegration. At the beginning of this century there were 60 nation states. Today there are 190, most of them poor and highly unstable. The real story lies in the cities. Throughout the world urbanization, with all of its fickle and forlorn promises, has drawn people by the millions into squalor.

The nation-state, as Harvard sociologist Daniel Bell wrote, has become too small for the big problems of the world and too big for the little problems of the world. Outside of the major industrial nations, globalization has not brought integration and harmony, but rather a firestorm of change that has swept away languages and cultures, ancient skills and visionary wisdom. This is the hidden backdrop of our era.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, I was asked at a lecture in Los Angeles to name the seminal event of the twentieth century. Without hesitation I suggested the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in 1914.

The question then turned to September 11, and it struck me that a hundred years from now that fateful date may well loom as the defining moment of this new century, the day when two worlds, long kept apart by geography and circumstance, came together in violent conflict. If there is one lesson to be learned from September 11, it is that power does not translate into security.

The voices of the poor, who deal each moment with the consequences of environmental degradation, political corruption, overpopulation, the gross distortion in the distribution of wealth and the consumption of resources, who share few of the material benefits of modernity, will no longer be silent.

True peace and security for the twenty-first century will only come about when we find a way to address the underlying issues of disparity, dislocation, and dispossession that have provoked the madness of our age. We desperately need a global acknowledgment of the fact that no people and no nation can truly prosper unless the bounty of our collective ingenuity and opportunities are available and accessible to all.

We must aspire to create a new international spirit of pluralism, a true global democracy in which unique cultures, large and small, are allowed the right to exist, even as we learn and live together, enriched by the deepest reaches of our imaginings. We need a global declaration of interdependence. In the

wake of September 11 this is not idle or naive rhetoric, but rather a matter of survival.

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* Part V: on Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Middle East

** Chapter 34: Nation is Home to Afghans, Mujahedeen, Taliban, Afghan-Arabs, to Name a Few

St. Louis Post-Dispatch, September 23, 2001

ROBERT CANFIELD

Immediately following September 11, U.S. media attention zeroed in on Afghanistan, whose Taliban government hosted Osama bin Laden and members of the Al Qaeda network, prime suspects in the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks.

In this piece, anthropology professor Robert Canfield provides a wealth of background information for understanding the linguistic, ethnic, religious, and political complexity of Afghanistan. In describing the rise of the mujahedeen (holy warrior) groups in the 1980s, he reminds readers that

these organizations were officially supported by Pakistan and the CIA in an effort to repel the Soviet army and defeat Afghanistan's communist government. When the United States withdrew support without any plan for helping to reconstruct the country, rival factions began fighting for control. Out of this chaos emerged the Taliban.

Two weeks after the publication of this commentary, U.S. forces initiated a massive bombing campaign that killed thousands of Taliban troops, Al Qaeda fighters, and Afghan civilians.

No Afghans participated in the bombings of September 11 and only one kind of "Afghan," the Taliban, has any connection with Osama bin Laden (the presumed mastermind). The Taliban are not typical "Afghans" anyway.

Afghanistan, which may be a crucial target of U.S. forces, is notoriously diverse. Almost two dozen language groups exist in that country, which is divided religiously among Sunni, Shia and Ismaili Muslims, along with a few historically accepted Hindus (and now a tiny group of Christian converts from Islam, most of them fearful and secretive).

Indeed, the Muslims are subdivided in their orientations toward Islam and even Islamic radicalism comes in several varieties.

Scarcely any Muslim in Afghanistan would have approved of the bombings of September 11. Most Afghans' commitment to Islam has never been particularly shrill, perhaps because Afghanistan was never under sustained colonial domination.

The places where radical Islamic ideologies developed, notably Egypt and India, were long subject to European control. The radical Islam that exists in Afghanistan was imported during the anti-Soviet struggle of the 1980s. And the Islam of the notorious Taliban is something else, a creation of special circumstances after the Soviet-Afghan war.

The term “Afghan” originally referred to a particular ethnic type, who are otherwise known as “Pushtun” or (in Pakistan) “Pathan.” These “true Afghans” speak Pushtu (Pashto) and are organized tribally, at least in many rural areas. The elite of the country have typically been of Afghan extraction.

Some of the peoples in the country have resented and resisted Pushtun domination and call themselves by their ethnic and linguistic identities —“Hazara,” “Uzbek,” “Tajik,” etc.—to distinguish themselves from the Pushtun. They nevertheless identify themselves as “Afghan” to people (like most Americans) who know little about internal Afghanistan affairs.

Mujahedeen means “holy warriors” and was claimed, especially after 1980, by those people who opposed the Afghan communist government and its Soviet sponsors. Seven of the many mujahedeen organizations were supported officially by Pakistan and the CIA, which tried (with only moderate success) to orchestrate the resistance activities against the communist regimes.

The mujahedeen were able to force the Soviets out of Afghanistan in 1989 and eventually to bring down the Afghan communist government in 1992. Between 1992 and 1996 they fought fiercely among themselves over control of Kabul. Elsewhere in the country they carved the landscape into their own respective fiefdoms, effecting a widespread collapse of social order.

The Taliban arose in the context of that disorder. They are the products of the Islamic schools that were set up among the Afghan refugees during the war. Most of the schools were small and taught by local mullahs, but they were a useful escape from the refugee camps, as they provided food and lodging for the boys that their own families could scarcely muster.

The Taliban are mostly Pushtun and generally they have little understanding of the other groups in the country. In truth, they know nothing about the history of Afghanistan, even of the recent Soviet-Afghan conflict.

Centered on the religious schools and their dormitories, the Taliban (“students”) had a different understanding of the world from their families in the refugee camps. Journalist and author Ahmad Rashid calls them “orphans” of the war whose essential anchorage was the “puritan Islam” they were taught. Most of the Taliban speak only Pushtu and Urdu—an indication that in fact they are (at least culturally) Pakistanis, not Afghans.

Arab-Afghans, including Osama bin Laden, joined the resistance against the Soviets. They were accepted among the Pushtun parties, especially those favored by the Pakistanis and Saudis, but were rebuffed by the Persian-speaking parties of the north. Many of them were trained during the war and dispersed into other parts of the Arab world after the war, where they became active in radical movements.

In recent years, however, as the Taliban have been fighting what is left of the mujahedeen, now known as the Northern Alliance, many Arab-Afghans have become allied with the Taliban. These Arab-Afghans are the only elements in the country that have any affinity with or commitment to the destruction of Western society and culture.

It remains to be seen which, if any, of them were involved in the bombing on September 11.

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** Chapter 35: The Folly of Quick Action in Afghanistan

Financial Times, September 27, 2001

ASHRAF GHANI

In this article, published days before the U.S. military initiated bombing raids over Afghanistan in an effort

to destroy the Taliban and Al Qaeda, Ashraf Ghani warns of the possible consequences of a hastily planned war. He notes that the rise of the Taliban can be linked to ill-devised U.S. policies in the region in the 1990s, and that only a credible U.N. plan for reconstruction will succeed in gaining the trust of the population.

By November 2001, the Taliban had abandoned Kabul and Kandahar, their last remaining strongholds. After Hamid Karzai was elected president at a meeting of elders in May 2002, he appointed Ashraf Ghani as finance minister.

As this book goes to press, much of the international support recommended by Ghani has not been forthcoming. Only a fraction of the $2 billion pledged by donor countries for reconstruction has arrived, and this may represent one of the greatest challenges facing the new administration.[52] Although international peacekeepers have achieved relative tranquility in the capital city of Kabul, other regions remain unstable as local bosses struggle for power.

The battle of Afghanistan is the Bush administration’s to lose. The Afghan population is ready for change. The networks of support from Pakistan that have been the mainstay of the Taliban regime are disrupted. Afghanistan’s neighboring countries and the Arab and Islamic regimes would all be pleased to see a change of regime.

Afghans are poor but have sophisticated notions of legitimacy. Compared with the average American, the average Afghan is keenly interested in world events that affect them and do not miss a single broadcast of the BBC.

Most are disenchanted with the Taliban for its failures to address the well-being of the people, its subordination of the internal needs of the country to external adventurism, and for bringing confrontation with the U.S.

Having witnessed massive use of force by the Red army and the destruction wrought by a long civil war, Afghans are fearful of anarchy and a new phase of warlordism supported by the U.S. Should use of force lead to large-scale civilian casualties, disruption of the lives of people, and a new exodus of the Afghan population to neighboring countries that do not want them, the disenchantment with the Taliban could easily be turned into sympathy and then support for a new militant movement in the region.

The U.S. administration has two options. It can either deal with the symptoms and the visible symbols of the extremist movement or it can address the underlying causes of terrorism and support forces that would be

willing to disrupt and destroy the networks that have turned Afghanistan into a launching pad for isolationist and extremist movements.

Dealing with the symptoms would involve military assaults within days or weeks, funneling large amounts of money and matériel to warlords opposed to the Taliban and the creation of alliances with neighboring regimes that could use the opportunity to deny the aspirations of their own people for democratic change. Such an approach would enmesh the U.S. in a series of very complicated relationships in the region. These relationships could in turn spawn networks that could be turned against the West in the longer term.

A more methodical approach would begin from the premise that the fundamental issue in Afghanistan is the creation of a state that would have legitimacy at home, in the region, and internationally. Only a nationalist state would have the capacity and commitment to break and destroy the networks of terror.

There is a significant asset and a central constraint in addressing this issue. In spite of nine years of civil war, no group in the country has asked for the dismemberment of the country. Afghan nationalism is strong and a potential basis for the creation of a stable and legitimate government that would offer a formula for accommodating the aspirations of various linguistic and regional groups. Yet no group or individual commands sufficient legitimacy or has articulated a vision and concrete program of action to convince the population that their aspirations for peace and prosperity can be addressed.

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Forging a methodical approach would require acting on lessons from past U.S. engagement in Afghanistan. First, dealing with Afghanistan cannot be outsourced to one of the governments in the region. The U.S. outsourced the

management of the resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan to Pakistan, and the current situation is a tragic consequence of that decision.

Second, the U.S. cannot funnel large amounts of money and arms to discredited warlords who are now lining up to offer their services. This approach has been tried and resulted in the destruction of the capital city and the emergence of the Taliban.

Third, an interim Afghan government cannot be cobbled together in a couple of weeks. That was tried and led to the civil war among armed factions that had little unity of purpose or sense of accountability.

Fourth, funneling resources to political parties or nongovernmental organizations that are not willing to be accountable to the people for the use of those resources can only lead to alienation of the population. Adoption of that strategy during the Soviet occupation brought little benefit.

Fifth, the United Nations cannot play a constructive role if it does not receive the full backing of the U.S. In recent years, there have been several very capable special envoys whose efforts have not succeeded because of the lukewarm support of the U.S. and the opposition of regional governments.

Establishing a legitimate government in Afghanistan requires a multipronged approach. To gain the trust of the population, a credible program for reconstruction of the country has to be offered. This would require assembling the younger group of Afghan technocrats who have gained success in industrialized countries, as well as many agencies that have had the commitment to stay through the course of the events in Afghanistan.

Critical to the success of this effort would be to design mechanisms for accountability and transparency of management of resources to be provided for reconstruction. Pakistan and the neighboring states should be persuaded to accept and support the creation ofa broad-based Afghan nationalist government. The role of the U.N. special envoy could be enhanced to help

establish a transitional government composed of a cross-section of Afghans. This process would only be credible if officials in the U.S. government avoided the temptation of imposing lists drawn on the basis of their personal contacts or insistence on giving Afghanistan’s octogenarian former king a decisive role in the process.

Establishment of the transitional government would also require the establishment of an army and a police force. Once these arrangements are in place, the use of military force against Osama bin Laden and the hard core of his Taliban allies could be followed by an orderly process of transfer of power.

The administration has an option. It can act quickly, or wisely. The world prays that wisdom may guide policy.

[52] See Ian Fisher, “Ready to Rebuild, Afghans Await Promised Aid,” New York Times, August 25, 2002.

** Chapter 36: Afghanistan Can Learn From Its Past

New York Times, October 14, 2001

NAZIF SHAHRANI

Even before U.S. war planes began bombing Taliban positions in October 2001, concerned observers asked: Who will rule Afghanistan once the Taliban is gone?

In this article, Professor Nazif Shahrani argues that the country will enjoy a democratic government only if a decentralized political system is established. He warns that “the painful lesson of Afghanistan’s history has

been that strong centralized government in any form leads to abuses of power” because the country is marked by ethnic divisions.

The context of Shahrani’s editorial is important. There was great concern at this time that the U.S. government would seek to reestablish the octogenarian former monarch, Muhammad Zahir Shah, who had been living in exile in Italy for twenty years.

The people of Afghanistan, after a century of misrule, are in desperate need of a way to govern themselves that will offer some defense against the abuses of power that have marked Afghan history. Now that President Bush has acknowledged the need to help build a stable government in Afghanistan, perhaps under leadership of the United Nations, many are asking: Who should rule? Once the Taliban are defeated, several parties want to rule: the ex-king, Muhammad Zahir Shah; the Pashtun ethnic group; the opposition Northern Alliance; and of course the Taliban. But the better question is: How should Afghanistan govern itself?

The mechanism most often being mentioned is centralized government controlled by an alliance of some combination of ethnic groups. Yet the painful lesson of Afghanistan’s history has been that strong centralized government in any form leads to abuses of power. The

United Nations special envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, is probably in the best position to sort out the complex inner conflicts and alliances inside Afghanistan. But everyone concerned should realize that democratic governance cannot be achieved by handing power over to a party, tribe, or group, or a combination of these, no matter how broad-based.

Instead, what Afghanistan needs is a loosening of centralized power and help in envisioning and creating a decentralized government with a strong national constitution. Providing this help could be the longest-lasting accomplishment the antiterror coalition could make, not only for Afghanistan, but in the service of its own wider goals.

Modern Afghanistan was cobbled together as a buffer state in the late nineteenth century by British India and czarist Russia, with its first modern ruler, Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, picked from among the princelings of a warring Pashtun clan. In return for giving up control of the country's foreign affairs to Britain, he received arms and money to conquer various ethnic and linguistic groups: other Pashtuns, Tajik, Farsiwan, Uzbek, Turkmen, Baluch, Hazara, Aimaq, and others. Infamous for his cruelty and dubbed the Iron Amir by his colonial masters, he established a firm foundation for an oppressive, corrupt centralized system. A brief experiment with constitutional monarchy from 1965 to 1973, under Zahir Shah, was aborted by a palace coup, followed in 1978 by the Soviet-inspired communist regime that plunged the country into an abyss of continual proxy wars culminating in the rise of the Taliban.

The aims of the Taliban under Mullah Muhammad Omar are similar to those of the British-installed Iron Amir: the military conquest and subjugation of all the self-governing non-Pashtun territories. And like him, they use an extremist form of Islam as a justification for terrorizing those they assume to be enemies into submission. What is novel in the Taliban's effort is their alliance with international terrorism.

The old monarchy and Taliban regimes also share the common myth, first fabricated by British India, that the Pashtun have the exclusive right to rule in Afghanistan. This myth, echoed approvingly today by Pakistani generals and politicians, has brought Afghanistan to disaster.

The international community should encourage the creation of a government that recognizes the crucial role of the local and regional communities in self-governance, as existed in earlier eras in Afghanistan. Indeed, these kinds of local governing structures reemerged in the period of anti-Soviet and anticommunist jihad during the 1980s and early 1990s. Areas then controlled by mujahedeen groups established rudimentary governments that ran schools, police units, and courts; these local groups evolved into five major regional coalitions of communities, consisting of several provinces each. The

new government of Afghanistan should embrace the principles of community selfgovernance at village, district, and provincial levels.

Local autonomy and the political integrity of every ethnic and sectarian segment of Afghan society should be guaranteed by a national constitution and a decentralized federal governance structure.

Giving Afghanistan a functional and stable governing system will require patience and an honest transitional government. It will also require the supervision of a United Nations-mandated international peacekeeping force in Afghanistan. While the ex-king should be allowed to play a role in such a transitional government, every effort must be made to keep his old corrupt cronies from infiltrating the new government. Care must also be taken to keep Pakistan from dictating the shape of the new government and to keep the corrupt elements of the mujahedeen groups and the previous communist regime from any positions of power.

The task is daunting, but the rewards are liberation from terror for the people of Afghanistan and a new precedent for combating the conditions that give rise to terrorism elsewhere.

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** Chapter 37: Women in the New Afghanistan

Democracy Now! (Pacifica Radio), December 4, 2001

By mid-November 2001, U.S. and British forces had ousted the Taliban from power. In the final days of that month, the United Nations convened a series of meetings in Bonn, Germany, between Afghan factions to create a political plan for the future. Despite protests from many organizations, all buta handful of the participants in the conference were male.

On December 4, anthropologist and activist Zieba Shorish-Shamley of the Women’s Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan was interviewed from Brussels, Belgium, by Amy Goodman. There, approximately fifty representatives participated in an Afghan women’s conference to discuss unified demands on women’s issues in post-Taliban Afghanistan. Shorish-Shamley emphasizes the need for women to participate in all phases of the reconstruction process.

AMY GOODMAN: The four Afghan factions holding talks in Bonn, Germany, have reached agreement on a U.N. blueprint for rebuilding the country’s political system. The deal came early yesterday morning after the Northern Alliance, the largest delegation, finally submitted a list of its candidates for a 29-member interim administration to rule Afghanistan. The next step, expected to begin immediately, will be to choose which factions get which jobs. The interim administration will rule for six months, until a commission is formed to convene a loya jirga, a traditional grand assembly. The assembly would then elect a transitional government to rule for about two years, until a constitution is drawn up and elections are held. Under intense international pressure, the interim administration is expected to include at least one woman as one of the five deputy prime ministers and

several other women as ministers. While talks continue in Bonn, talks of another sort are under way in Brussels, Belgium, where the first Afghan women's summit is being held. Fifty Afghan women representing a wide range of ethnic and religious groups and political views have gathered, supported by women's rights groups from around the world. They are working to forge unified demands on the need for women's equality and for their full participation in conflict resolution efforts and in the formation of a future Afghan government. We go now to Brussels, to Zieba Shorish-Shamley, with the Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan. Thanks for stepping outside the meeting. Can you tell us what the situation is there?

ZIEBA SHORISH-SHAMLEY: The gathering at Brussels is for Afghan women to come up with a blueprint of their own as to what they want and their involvement in the peace process, as well as reconstruction of the future government of Afghanistan. In other words, whoever the Afghan government may be in the future, our message is that there has to be a proportionate representation of women in every aspect of the Afghan future—not only [in] the reconstruction [but in] the government [as well], because the women were not really represented proportionately at the Bonn process. So at this [meeting] the women are talking about what they want, and hopefully by the end of this summit we will have come up with a declaration of what their requests are and what their demands are.

AG: But this summit isn't binding in any way?

ZSS: No, it is not binding, but we will try to push what comes out of this summit at the U.N. (international level), as well as [with] the key government players, Six plus Two,[53] ... who are involved in Afghanistan. Afghan women's rights have been violated for too long; they have been kept out of the reconstruction and actually ... everything has been stripped from them, all the basic human rights that are required for human existence. So, therefore, without the Afghan women I do not think that Afghanistan will be adequately reconstructed, because 55 to 60 percent of the population of Afghanistan are women. And there won't be any peace without justice and the Afghan women demand to be involved in every aspect of their society.

AG: Zieba Shorish-Shamley, what do you think of the formulas they came up with in Bonn? The interim administration of Afghanistan is expected to include at least one woman as one of the five deputy prime ministers, and several other women as ministers.

ZSS: Well that tells you right there, it doesn't represent Afghan women. Afghan women are up to 55 percent or 60 percent of the population of the country. I do not understand, as an Afghan woman, why the U.N. and other countries always tell us Afghan women... [have] to please the warring factions and the political parties who have been in power who were the cause of the oppression of Afghan women. Somebody has to listen to the Afghan women because they... [are] not going to be satisfied with one woman represented in the interim government. They would not be represented proportionately; by that I mean there should be more women than the men in the loya jirga. So again I say there will not be peace without justice and we will demand and we will deliver our message to the future so-called government of Afghanistan, whoever it may be ... Another message—I am talking about Women for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan—if they do not include proportional representation of Afghan women in the government in the reconstruction and future of Afghanistan... we will resist them, we will mobilize the world as we did against the Taliban, and we will mobilize it against them as well. So we are determined on this, and we will not compromise these rights, because the rights are not only given to us by Islam, they are also given to us by the United [Nations] charter. So we want these rights, and we want full participation, and we want the restoration of Afghan women's rights, and that is our demand, and we will not budge.

AG: Is the U.N. participating in your talks?

ZSS: Yes, the [OXFAM] executive director, Ms. Heizer, is here, as well as Ms. Angela King, who is representing the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. So they are here as well as people from the European Parliament or Union. So there are many important women here and as I said, we don't have any problem with the women [who are] important people, we have a problem with the men in the U.N., as well as in Afghanistan, as well as in governments,

because they seem to be selling us out to please the warring factions who have abused our rights and who have caused the severe oppression of the Afghan women. So they should negotiate with us, with the Afghan women, as well as with the people of Afghanistan. And another demand that we have is that the local autonomy of Afghanistan—the local populations' autonomy—must be respected. No one can impose a government from outside onto Afghan people.

AG: To what extent are you, the Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan, communicating with or possibly negotiating with the Afghan military, the Northern Alliance— those that are going to be in power now?

ZSS: They haven't contacted us. I don't think they care for us because we ask for something that is ours, we ask for justice. Neither have the other political parties who are involved in the Bonn process. They know that we would not compromise the rights of Afghan women for anything... We haven't been contacted, and that doesn't bother us. We want the rights of the women to be restored, so we go to the international community and we go to the people of Afghanistan... If this government or future government is elected, [if] it's democratic, representing all women, all different ethnic groups of Afghanistan as well as women, and women are included in reconstruction and every other aspect of the public domain, [then] we don't have any problem with that government, we will support it 100 percent. But if they're going to play the game again, and just hang on to the power and do not share the power with more than half of the society, that's not going to work out— that's going to fail. And the reason the U.N. peace negotiations so far have failed in Afghanistan is because the U.N. has always negotiated with the warring factions, the people in power, or countries surrounding Afghanistan who supported the warring factions and caused all the misery... So what we want is for the U.N. and U.S., which is a key player, and the other Six plus Two [countries] who are involved in Afghanistan to... stop negotiating with them.

They should negotiate with the people of Afghanistan—the people ... have the right to self-determination. And I don't think the people of Afghanistan in

any way are against women's involvement in the reconstruction and other building of our country, or in the government of Afghan society.

AG: Zieba Shorish-Shamley of the Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights, when the Northern Alliance took Kabul, the women, a group of about 100 women led by Suralia Perlika attempted to march to the United Nations demanding their rights and lifting up their burqas.[54] They were stopped, not by the Taliban, but by the Northern Alliance. What do you know of the group in Kabul right now?

ZSS: Well there are some elements within the Northern Alliance that are not bad, but there are elements in the Northern Alliance [who], according to ... Women's Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan, are war criminals. We have ...calledontheU.N. to investigate and bring to justice the war criminals of the Soviet era, war criminals during the mujahedeen, and war criminals during the Taliban... Well, that tells you by itself [what happens] when the women are stopped from demonstrating and from expressing themselves, which is their right. Not only the U.N. rights which came fifty years ago... these rights were [also] given to the Moslems, to the Afghan women in sixth century A.D. When the Northern Alliance does that, not only does it violate the international law, it violates the Islamic law...Wehavetogetwomen involved and we have to struggle for full restoration of Afghan women, it doesn't matter who the government is.

AG: Finally, how do you see women on the ground in Afghanistan building up civil society right now?

ZSS: Well they are trying in this meeting that we have. There are women already in the refugee camps, and some inside Afghanistan, that are trying to put their lives together, trying to educate children, to help on many, many issues that are too vast to talk about. What is happening in Afghanistan to Afghan women right now [is that] Afghan women and children need food, shelter, and medical care. Many women are dying, and the latest report...by the World Health Organization last week [reported that] because of wearing the burqa, the rate of tuberculosis has risen very high among Afghan women, because they were denied sunshine under the Taliban rule. As well... there

are 300,000 to 400,000 pregnant women inside Afghanistan without any prenatal, delivery or postnatal care...Sothattells you how dire the need is for medical attention in Afghanistan. At the same time, what we want is for the U.N. to move and demilitarize the city of Kabul. The peacekeeping forces of the U.N.—or as they decided, of some Moslem countries that have offered [to participate]—should move into the city of Kabul. There has to be security, and security for women. For the women of Afghanistan, there is no security... there is no sense of peace. So they should be protected, but the first thing that I urge the international community [to do] is to get food to them as soon as possible...

AG: Zieba Shorish-Shamley, thank you for taking time—coming out of the meeting where you are in Brussels—to speak with our listeners and viewers around the country on the “War and Peace Report.” Thank you.

[53] “Six plus Two” countries are the six countries bordering Afghanistan (Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, China, and Pakistan), plus the two Cold War superpowers (United States and Russia).

[54] The burqa is a garment for women that covers the entire body, including the face. Under the Taliban’s rule, Afghan women were required to wear burqas, which became a symbol of the government’s repression of females.

** Chapter 38. Enlisting Afghan Aid

People’s Geography Project, September 2001
[[http://www.peoplesgeography.com][www.peoplesgeography.com]]

In this article, which appeared in late September 2001, anthropologist David B. Edwards and Afghan journalist Shahmahmood Miakhel argue that U.S. leaders may be stepping into a trap if they attack Afghanistan. Rather than see Afghans as enemies, the Bush administration should see them as potential allies

against the Taliban regime. They conclude by emphasizing the need to create a secure future for Afghanistan as a strategy to avoid future terrorist infiltration there.

Osama bin Laden is waiting for George Bush to attack Afghanistan. It is the response he expects, and he can't wait. For him, this is a holy war, a clash of civilizations, and he has no compunction about using Afghans as kindling to start a conflagration that would involve the entire Muslim world. One hopes the policy makers in Washington realize where bin Laden's strategy leads and will think carefully about how to avoid his trap.

To develop a strategy that confounds bin Laden's plans, we must begin by thinking of Afghans not as enemies but as potential allies. It is no coincidence that none of the names so far identified in the list of hijackers are Afghans. Bin Laden and his Arab followers live in restricted enclaves, and few Afghans outside the Taliban regime itself harbor any sympathies for his cause. Afghanistan now, no less than during the decade of Soviet control, is an occupied nation, and we must enlist in our struggle the many Afghans inside the country and out who would welcome the opportunity to unseat the Taliban and get rid of the Arab interlopers in their country. Two steps must be taken to draw these people into the international community in its attack on bin Laden and his supporters.

First, the international community must assemble experienced Afghan leaders to provide the nucleus of an interim government. This group should include exiled moderates who were forced out of the political picture first by the extremist resistance parties in Peshawar back in the 1980s and then by the Taliban. They must be joined by the handful of moderate commanders forced into exile by the Taliban that Afghans still trust. The number of recognized Afghan leaders who have managed to both survive and maintain their reputation in the polarized politics of the last two decades is small, but they exist and must be persuaded to put aside their partisan disputes and participate in a transitional coalition to govern Afghanistan until democratic elections can be held. As this group is brought together, Afghans generally must be convinced that these leaders will not be puppets of the United

States or any other foreign power. Similarly, Afghanistan's neighbors must understand that the interim government will avoid foreign entanglements and dedicate itself to the immediate goals of reestablishing the foundations of government, helping the Afghan people become economically self-sufficient, and preparing the ground for general elections.

The second step is an international commitment made up front to provide a massive influx of development assistance to reconstruct the economic and social infrastructure of Afghan society. After 23 years of foreign occupation and civil war, the country's roads, irrigation systems, and electrical grid are in a state of ruin, and Afghanistan now is in the grip of a drought that has turned much of the region into a desert. Afghans remember well that the international community largely forgot about them after the Soviets withdrew from their country, and they must be assured that this will not happen again and that we will work with them to rebuild the vibrant and modernizing society that existed prior to the Marxist revolution of 1978. Without such commitments, Afghans will find little reason to take the risks that opposing bin Laden and the Taliban will entail. On the other hand, the promise of sustained international support for Afghanistan will send a message not only to Afghans, but to Muslims generally that the West is committed to their welfare rather than their destruction.

No group has suffered more in the last quarter century than the Afghans, but they are a resilient people and will be a formidable foe again if they believe themselves to be under invasion from a foreign enemy.

We must frame our response to the terrorist outrage not as an assault but as a liberation—from oppressive rulers, unwanted guests, and the economic calamity that is their everyday reality. Respected Afghan leaders must be at the forefront of our efforts, and it must be clear that our intentions are to help rebuild rather than to destroy. Those of us who have enjoyed the prosperity of the last two decades must recognize that terrorism is born of political and economic despair. If we fail to take into account Afghanistan's future, as well as its past and present, Afghanistan will remain a place where terrorists can find safe haven, and all the military might in the world won't make us safe again.

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** Chapter 39: Pakistan’s Dilemma

Middle East Report Online, September 19, 2001 [[http://www.merip.org][www.merip.org]]

KAMRAN ASDAR ALI

Throughout the late 1980s and into the 1990s, Afghan resistance fighters and mujahedeen groups received funding and support channeled through the Pakistani intelligence agency from CIA sources (see Chapter 28). The Pakistani government provided the Taliban with support after their rise to power in the mid-1990s, and was one of only two countries to grant the Taliban government formal recognition (the other was Saudi Arabia). The Bush and Clinton administrations, seeking to undercut Iran’s role in Afghan politics, largely ignored the Taliban’s repressive policies and Pakistan’s responsibility in supporting them.

This article by Kamran Asdar Ali describes the dilemma faced by Pakistani officials in the critical days following September 11, when the Bush administration began shifting its focus away from the alleged suicide hijackers (nearly all of whom were Saudi nationals legally in the United States) to toppling the Taliban regime, hosts of Osama bin Laden. U.S. officials sought Pakistani support for the impending Afghan war, and placed that country's leaders in the position of alienating orthodox Muslims outraged by the possibility of aerial attacks that would eventually inflict thousands of civilian casualties.

As this book goes to press, political instability continues to plague Pakistan. U.S. special forces began operating within the country's borders in February 2002, allegedly in search ofAl Qaeda members, to the dismay of many Pakistanis. Hardly a week goes by without news of attacks on civilian targets by Muslim extremists. President Pervez Musharraf has responded with increasingly repressive policies that may further undermine the country's stability.

Pakistani media reports indicate that on the evening of September 14 the president, General Pervez Musharraf, met with his cabinet and national security team in a marathon session lasting until the early hours of the next morning. The task at hand was to decide if the Pakistani government should accede to the demands made by the United States in the aftermath of the September 11 tragedies, demands related to the still-emerging U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, accused of harboring prime suspect Osama bin Laden. The U.S. request came in the form of a virtual threat. Media reports tell us that the Pakistani government has been asked to restrict the movements of goods and supplies to Afghanistan, seize the assets of Afghan/ Taliban leaders, provide logistical support to the U.S. armed forces along with the use of Pakistani airspace if the need arises and, most importantly, share up-to-date intelligence on bin Laden and his followers in Afghanistan.

In the late 1970s, another Pakistani general, Zia ul Haq, must have convened a meeting similar to Musharraf's. Then, the military junta was asked to play a crucial role in support of the U. S.-financed resistance to the Soviet forces occupying Afghanistan. That decision was undoubtedly an easier one for the dictator Zia ul Haq and his advisers. The general had been in power for two

years, and his religiously conservative regime was already unpopular at home and abroad. Supporting the U.S. would grant his government badly needed legitimacy on the world stage. Zia ul Haq also anticipated a U.S. aid package to help the Pakistani state address its perpetual social and economic problems.

To the skeptical Pakistani population, the military regime portrayed its intervention in Afghan affairs as humanitarian and political assistance to fellow Muslims. But the junta's decision to play ball with the U.S. was also taken for geostrategic reasons. Since Pakistan's independence in 1947, relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan had been strained, due to boundary disputes and the feared spillage of Pashtun nationalism across the border. Afghan rulers and elements of Pakistan's Pashtun population in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) bordering Afghanistan periodically questioned the artificial line that the British had drawn to divide a culturally and ethnically continuous area into parts of British India and Afghanistan in the mid-nineteenth century. On occasion Afghanistan presented arguments for a greater Pashtun state, to include parts of Pakistan's northern territory.

Hence, with openly hostile India on their eastern flank, Pakistani military strategists have also regarded their not-so-friendly western neighbor with anxiety. This state of affairs was aggravated by the communist-led coup in Afghanistan in 1978, and the subsequent Soviet invasion of that country in the winter of 1979. The U.S.-backed resistance to the Afghan regime guaranteed, at least in the minds of the Pakistani military leaders, a somewhat concrete resolution of their Afghan problem.

The mass displacement of the Afghan population, the destruction of their homes and villages, and the loss of 1.5 million Afghan lives during that country's long civil war have somehow been erased from the consciousness of the Western media. Nor do many outside Pakistan remember the Afghan war's impact on Pakistani civil, cultural, and political life.

The Pakistani military used the infusion of international aid to strengthen its Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI), which became the principal liaison between U.S. intelligence agencies and the varied factions of the

Afghan resistance movement known as the mujahedeen. The ISI assumed a lead role in suppressing democratic dissent within Pakistan. With well over 90,000 men under its aegis, the ISI remains an independent power base within Pakistan's government structure. There are no constitutional checks and balances on its operations. Its leadership consists of highly motivated and, in most cases, religiously zealous officers who are concerned with safeguarding what they consider to be the spatial and ideological boundaries of the Pakistani state. Hence, the ISI has been directly or indirectly involved in all major domestic and international decisions made by successive military and civilian governments over the last two decades.

On the political level, the economic and development aid helped Zia ul Haq to consolidate his plan for Islamization of the country. Some of the legacies of this era are evidentiary laws based on the Koranic law or sharia, the creation of sharia courts, laws that discriminate against minorities and women, and the dreaded blasphemy laws which continue to restrict the civil and political rights of Pakistani citizens. Development funds were also used to establish and maintain madrassas (religious schools) in different parts of the country. Zia ul Haq and his junta considered the students and graduates of these schools the foot soldiers who would support the dictator as he pressed ahead with his agenda to build an Islamic polity and a theocratic state. Another legacy of the war was the unprecedented infiltration of Pakistani society by drugs and arms. Profits from drug and weapons trafficking helped finance the covert war in Afghanistan, while funneling enormous wealth to a section of the Pakistani military brass.

But the triumph of the Afghan resistance forces in 1992 did not result in what the Pakistani military had always desired: a stable Afghanistan following the dictates of Islamabad. With the Cold War already a fading memory, the U.S. and other Western countries virtually abandoned the victorious mujahedeen, making only vague promises of development aid to rebuild war-ravished Afghanistan. In subsequent years, infighting among the new Afghan leadership—and their growing independence from the ISI—led Pakistan to intensify its involvement in the affairs of this struggling state. The Taliban, a radical faction of madrassa students under the guidance of Mullah Mohammed Omar of Kandahar, were bankrolled by the Pakistani military on their path to victory in 1995–1996.

From the perspective of the generals in Islamabad, the Taliban's loyalty to and dependence on them, at least, would guarantee a safer and less volatile western border. In addition, the Pakistanis were interested in secure routes to the landlocked Central Asian states. A stable Taliban-led Afghanistan would contribute to a larger geopolitical strategy wherein Pakistan, the U.S., and international petroleum companies envisioned multiple pipelines transporting oil and natural gas from the mineral-rich Central Asian countries to Pakistani ports on the Persian Gulf. But the strongly independent and unpredictable nature of the Taliban regime, and the continuing war in northern Afghanistan, have over the last two few years dampened the initial excitement that these schemes had generated in Pakistan and elsewhere.

More than a decade after his death in an airplane explosion, Zia ul Haq's ghost lingers on, as Pakistani cultural life shifts toward embracing orthodox Islamic values in both public and private spaces. Further, as the state has forsaken the task of providing systematic educational and employment opportunities to its constituents, the madrassa system has become an avenue for a large percentage of the rural and urban poor seeking social and cultural advancement. The millions trained in the madrassas have emerged as highly organized and violent power brokers who can destabilize any regime that manages to take power. The Pakistani state and military have cynically deployed these forces against internal opposition and recruited them for the state's other covert war, in Kashmir. The price of such manipulation is that, a decade after Zia's death, Pakistan remains today a politically unstable place, rife with growing ethnic and sectarian violence.

The differences between the late 1970s and September 2001 far outweigh the similarities. Musharraf has also been in power for two years, and he is also unpopular domestically and internationally. But Musharraf's military junta may not be able to push its new Afghan policy as easily as the previous dictator did. The same madrassa-trained forces that were nurtured by Zia ul Haq, and used to bolster the rule of governments since he died, could now meet Musharraf with sharp and violent resistance.

Meanwhile, the indices for health and education in Pakistan are among the lowest in the world. Violence and lawlessness are endemic, and most people eke out a living under the official poverty line. Combined with religious militancy and the easy availability of weapons, this puts Pakistan in a socially explosive situation. By accepting the U.S. demands in exchange for fresh promises of international largesse, the Pakistani military may be saving its own skin from the wrath of a U.S.-led coalition. But in the process, the regime once more appears willing to plunge Pakistan into an uncharted future, with no regard for such stability as remains in Pakistani social life.

Among most Pakistanis and Afghanis, the promise of U.S. assistance in exchange for strategic support falls on deaf ears. These people remember a series of broken Western promises, most recently when the U.S. and its allies did not provide much-needed development assistance in the early 1990s. When the Berlin Wall fell, it seems, so did U.S. and Western interest in countries which had done the West’s bidding to accelerate the Cold War’s demise. One hopes against reason that in its current high-stakes game the Pakistani military does not take the long-suffering populations of Pakistan and Afghanistan on yet another disastrous ride.

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** Chapter 40: War Destroyed Chechnya’s Clan Structure

Middle East News Online, January 5, 2002

The people of Chechnya, in the Northern Caucus region, have been seeking independence from Russia since the dissolution of the Soviet Union more than a decade ago. In an effort to maintain control over Chechnya, Russia has engaged rebel fighters in a bloody war that has devastated the predominantly Muslim society.

This article by Francesca Mereu appeared two months after Russian president Vladimir Putin announced that the war in Chechnya was also a “war on terrorism.” The piece contains a great deal of information about the disintegration of Chechen social structures, which is described by Russian anthropologists Sergei Arutyunov and Ian Chesnov. According to Arutyunov, the destruction of traditional clans, or taips, has increased the influence of Wahhabi leaders advocating an extremely strict form of Islam.

With the world’s attention largely focused on the U.S-led military campaign in Afghanistan, Russia’s two-year-old war in the breakaway republic of Chechnya—which it defends as a battle against terrorism— continues unabated. The Russian military said on 3 January that it had killed more than 100 rebels in a special operation that ended a week of fierce fighting.

The war—Chechnya’s second such conflict with Russia in a decade —has claimed thousands of lives and has irreparably altered the traditional bonds of religion and family structure that shape Chechen society...

The Chechens of Russia’s North Caucasus region are a tight-knit society based on extended families, or clans, guided by a council of elders. These clans, which traditionally lived together in a single village, are called taips. During Stalin’s infamous deportation of Chechens to Central Asia, the links remained strong between members of a single taip; and even now, as war and social unrest have forced thousands of Chechens to leave their home villages and scatter throughout the republic or abandon the region altogether, the links continue to endure.

There are more than 150 taips in Chechnya, each with its own traditions and council of elders. Respect for elders is paramount in Chechnya, where a clan's oldest members traditionally have the final say. But in recent years, the elders' absolute authority has given way to an arrangement of making recommendations to the taip that can be, but are not always, followed.

According to Sergei Arutyunov, a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the head of the Caucasus department at Moscow's Ethnology Institute:

[A] clan may have more or less informal elders. These elders may form a kind of council—a clan council—which may give nonobligatory recommendations. [The elders] have no power to enforce these recommendations. But they may give some valid recommendations, which will probably be more or less followed by the majority of clan members.

Ian Chesnov, an anthropology professor at Russia's State Humanitarian University in Moscow, has spent several years in Chechnya studying cultural traits. Chesnov says that according to Caucasus tradition, a member of a taip is never abandoned in time of trouble. To the contrary, a taip acts as a kind of family network that makes sure all members have the support they need.

The taip forms the core of Chechen society—and, many Chechens believe, predetermines the characteristics and personalities of its members. The perceived link between clan and character type is so strong that taips are considered a key aspect of the region's political life as well.

Chechen warlord Salman Raduev, who in late December was sentenced to life in prison for terrorism and murder, is a member of the Gordaloy taip. His crimes, including a 1996 raid on the southern Russian town of Kizlyar in which 78 people were killed, dishonored all the members of the taip—including Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov, whose wife is a member of the Gordaloy taip.

Valery Batuev, a reporter on Caucasus issues for the Vremya MN, a Russian daily, says Maskhadov—often criticized for what is seen as an inability to maintain control over rival factions within Chechnya—was unable to arrest or condemn Raduev, since doing so would have meant conflicts within the taip.

Chechnya's taips fall into nine distinct "tukums," or tribes. Legend holds that all Chechens descend from an original family of nine brothers, a belief represented by the Chechen symbol, which depicts a wolf encircled by nine stars. Batuev describes the tukums' function:

The taips are organized into nine tukums. A tukum is a politicalmilitary union meant to function in cases of [outside] threats or aggression. [The tukums] used to unify all the [Chechen] nation and the taips.

A tukum has no leader and is composed of a loose group of clans that share a common ancestry. Batuev says that although in the past tukums were able to organize fighting in case of war, in recent times they have played a role that is more symbolic than military. During Chechnya's two latest military conflicts, the tukums had little influence over events.

Together, Chechnya's two wars with Russia have cut its population by half. Many Chechens have fled their homes to escape the bloody conflict, and many have died—some 50,000 in the 1994–1996 war alone. Before that war, Chechnya's population stood at some 1.2 million. By 1999, estimates had dropped to between 600,000 and 780,000 people. The capital city of Grozny once had 400,000 residents. Now, analysts say, there are fewer than 40,000 people remaining.

Such drastic demographic shifts have inevitably left their mark on Chechnya's tukum and taip structures. According to Arutyunov, the republic is undergoing a severe identity crisis.

Just 10 years ago, he says, Chechnya's younger generations had every reason to expect that their lives would progress much as their parents' had—with marriage, children, and the building of a career. This meant that young people still turned to their fathers or taip elders for advice, and the clan's older generations helped arrange good marriages and interesting, well-paid jobs for the young. But now, Arutyunov says, Chechen society has changed:

Now, in most cases, the influence of [older] people is lost, and as a rule—except for some very rich and influential people—a father is hardly in a position to arrange a decent and profitable marriage for his son. He is in no position to put him into any good job. And so the authority, the prestige, the influence of this elder generation is destroyed.

Chechnya's younger people, Arutyunov continues, are disoriented, and are now looking for new authority figures—a search that in many instances leads them to the radical Wahhabi Islamic sect or leaders of criminal rings. The generation gap has gotten so severe, Arutyunov says, that there have been several reported cases of young Chechen men beating their fathers to death. Just a few years ago, this was the strictest taboo in the Chechen social code.

... Islam was introduced into Chechnya over a period of centuries, gaining a number of converts by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but not taking firm root until well into the eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.

The Chechens were converted to the Sunni branch of Islam, with particular emphasis on its mystic Sufi form. Sufism has come to mean those who are interested in finding a way or practice toward inner awakening and enlightenment...

More than 800 mosques and numerous Islamic schools were located in Chechnya at the turn of the twentieth century. But from 1928 to 1941, Soviet dictator Josef Stalin tried to eliminate the country's Islamic traditions. Most mosques were closed, and Muslim clerics and believers in the Chechen and Ingush republics were arrested, deported, or executed—in all, some 14,000

people. Sufi spiritual leaders and believers were labeled “counterrevolutionaries”...

In Chechnya and Ingushetia, the control of the organs of Soviet power remained in Russian hands, with no concessions to local authorities, as in other Soviet Muslim republics. Only in 1979 did Soviet authorities allow the opening of a few mosques, to stop the growth of clandestine Sufi brotherhoods. Indeed, the orders themselves organized their own clandestine Arabic classes and schools where the Koran was taught. In Chechnya and Ingushetia, there were 5 legal and 292 clandestine mosques.

When Mikhail Gorbachev’s program of economic, political, and social restructuring, or perestroika, began in 1986, it also brought about wage cuts, price hikes, food shortages, and unemployment. The North Caucasus republics were not spared. On the one hand, massive unemployment caused the rise of criminal structures, destabilizing Chechen society. On the other hand, people enjoyed more religious freedom.

... Sufi brotherhoods were unable to function in the new conditions. The sheiks were able to exercise their moral authority only in conditions of relative social peace. But from the start of perestroika, that peace was under threat. This situation encouraged the spreading of a fundamentalist movement called Wahhabism.

Said Yakhyev is a Sufi spiritual leader who teaches Islam at Moscow State University. Yakhyev lived in Chechnya during perestroika. He explains how and why this radical Islamic religious movement took easy root in Chechnya:

Wahhabism in Chechnya began to spread in the 1980s in the period of glasnost, when [new] things were allowed. And people who got freedom [for the first time] began to think about a new kind of religion, about new ideas. It was very fashionable at the time. Wahhabism was able to spread in Chechnya because at the time nobody was able to face it and to negate its false dogmas.

There was no real religious opposition to it, and now it is the same...

The Wahhabis' influence became stronger in Chechnya after the Russian military campaigns in the republic. Many years of war impoverished and destabilized Chechen society, and the Wahhabis used this situation to their advantage...

Today, many families have lost everything in the wars. Few can afford to continue the burial tradition. Some families are forced to borrow money for funeral banquets. According to Arutyunov, it is now common for young members of a family to tell people who arrive for a funeral to leave. And these impressionable young people, after listening to Wahhabi leaders, begin to believe that the burial tradition is wrong and in opposition to real Muslim principles. According to the Wahhabis, Islamic law forbids rejoicing or eating at the funeral of a fellow Muslim.

Arutyunov says many young people are beginning to think the Wahhabis teach principles that have more relevance to current life in Chechnya.

It is strongly contrary to [Chechen] customary laws and habits, but many people will listen and say, "This guy [a Wahhabi leader] is right." He has reasons to talk so. Indeed, the custom is bad, because fulfilling the custom means to ruin his family.

In 1999, correspondent Oleg Kusov interviewed young people in Gudermes, the second-largest town in Chechnya. They told him they would follow the Wahhabi principles because the Wahhabis gave them $100 a month—a large amount of money the traditional Sufi orders are unlikely to be able to pay.

... The differences between the Wahhabi followers and the Sufi can best be understood in their differing concepts of the jihad:

Wahhabis follow the old concept of jihad, meaning the holy war to convert the infidels. The Sufis have another interpretation of jihad. They see it not as a war against the infidels, but as a war that a Muslim has to fight against his own defects to try to reach perfection.

The Russian military refers to Chechen field commanders as Wahhabis. But Anna Politkovskaya, a journalist with Novaya Gazeta who has covered the Russian-Chechen conflict, contends that this is a mistake.

According to Politkovskaya, Chechen field commanders loyal to Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov defend Chechen national traditions and oppose fundamentalist groups like the Wahhabis, since they believe they will destabilize Chechen national unity. Another group, according to Politkovskaya, consists of those who surround field commanders like Shamil Basaev and Khattab. This group seeks an Arab-style Islamization of Chechnya.

The Sufi brotherhoods try to keep their distance from the conflict. With no end to the war in sight, many believers and spiritual leaders have left Chechnya for neighboring Ingushetia or Russia...

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* Part VI: Examining Militarism and the “War on Terror”

** Chapter 41: U.S. Anti-terrorist Message Won’t Fly in Islamic World

Pacific News Service, October 11, 2001 [[http://www.pacificnews.org][www.pacificnews.org]]

WILLIAM O. BEEMAN

Many anthropologists use historical analysis to help understand contemporary human cultures and soci

eties. In this article, William O. Beeman explains that for many people in the Islamic world—particularly in the Middle East—the “war on terror” declared by George W. Bush in the days following the September 11 attacks may appear continuous with centuries of colonial domination at the hands of British, French, Russian, and American empires.

President George W. Bush has stated that the United States is fighting terrorism—not Islam—in its military response to the September 11 attacks. But Muslims throughout the world dismiss this admirable notion, perceiving America’s deeds to be at odds with its words. They say the United States is continuing a familiar pattern of exploitation by Western nations in the Middle East.

The colonial powers of Europe—Great Britain, France, and Russia— began their exploitation of the Islamic world shortly after the establishment of the industrial revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Before that time, Middle Eastern nations had an arguably superior civilization to that of Europe. But the industrializing Europeans suddenly leapfrogged over the rest of the world with superior transportation, military power, and economic institutions. They made incursions into the Islamic world, gobbling up territory and bankrupting traditional manufacturing, such as textiles. With faster ships and advanced financial institutions, they bypassed Middle Eastern middlemen in trading with East and Southeast Asia.

The Middle Eastern rulers were desperate for cash to modernize their nations. They therefore entered into a devil's bargain with Europeans, selling "concessions" to the agricultural, mineral, financial, and transportation rights of their nations. The rulers were enriched in these deals, and so were the Europeans.

However, the people of these countries lost their patrimony.

This touched off two great Islamic anticolonial movements. One was led by Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, an Iranian, who preached Islamic reform and resistance to colonial powers in the late-nineteenth century. The other movement was led by the Jadidists—intellectuals in Tataristan, a Turkic region in southern Russia, who encouraged the peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia to break away from Europe and establish their own national identities.

The Islamic resistance did not stop the Europeans from pursuing military and economic dominance in the Middle East until the end of World War II. Adding insult to injury was a perceived contempt on the part of Europeans for Middle Eastern civilization.

Following World War II, a series of coups and revolutions brought nationalist governments to the fore throughout the region. The Islamic resistance had begun. The West reacted by identifying compliant rulers with a talent for

autocratic rule and propping them up with guns and financial support. This seemed to perpetuate the nineteenth century pattern of alliance between Europeans and corrupt local rulers with the aim of exploiting local people.

After 1972 Great Britain withdrew entirely from the region, and the United States, fearful of Soviet influence, stepped up its presence with military, political, and economic support for local rulers in Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, among others.

Now in America’s fight against terrorism, its principal partners are again Great Britain and Russia. People in the Islamic world look at this current alliance and immediately see the same nineteenth-century actors carrying out the same pattern of damaging behavior. Even the current rulers of the region realize this, and have backpedaled and equivocated to avoid appearing to be pawns of the United States. No matter how much President Bush protests that we are not attacking Islam, his credibility in the Middle East is zero.

To make the American message believable, Washington must at least acknowledge the unfortunate historic pattern of colonialist exploitation, with which it has become linked, and make a plausible declaration of a break with the past. The people of the region would greet an appeal for a new era in U.S.-Middle East relations with understandable skepticism at first. However, if America followed these words with credible deeds—such as full internationalization of military forces in the Gulf region, and provision of strong leadership to solve the dilemma of Israeli-Palestinian relations—President Bush might be able to persuade the Islamic world to believe his sentiments.

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** Chapter 42: Terror and Indigenous Peoples: War Without End

CounterPunch, November 3, 2001

[[http://www.counterpunch.org][www.counterpunch.org]]

DAVID PRICE

After George W. Bush declared a vaguely defined “war on terrorism,” he immediately began seeking new international allies. Russia, China, and Israel quickly adopted the language of antiterrorism to condemn the self-determination struggles of the Chechens, Uighurs, and Palestinians, respectively—all groups that have legitimate territorial disputes with the nation-states that rule them.

In this selection David Price warns that some nation-states could use the war on terrorism as a pretext to initiate or intensify the repression of indigenous people and ethnic and religious minorities around the world.

When President Bush declared war on terrorism with his neo-McCarthyistic threat to the world that “you are either with us or with the terrorists,” he struck a chord with many frightened Americans, but other peoples around the world heard other important harmonics within this chord. For many of the world’s indigenous peoples, these words brought terror and anticipation of new levels of outright oppression from the nation-states that repressively surround and manage them.

In the time since this declaration, the president has not clarified who these new terrorist enemies are, and the administration and its allies have since carefully avoided defining just who is and who isn't a terrorist—beyond this initial defining claim that they are those who are against "us." The administration understands that any behavioral definition of terrorism risks exposing the nonsense of behaviorally distinguishing between such categories of actors as terrorists, freedom fighters, and military forces. The relativist adage that the difference between a terrorist and a freedom fighter depends on who owns the newspaper that reports on their actions, seems to be forgotten by many on the American left who watched Washington play roughshod with the self-determination of peoples of Central America in the 1980s. While a few pundits note the dangers of engaging in a war without any identifiable landmark of victory, there are equally real dangers to many minority populations around the world if the governments managing their native lands are given the green light to repress them as "terrorists."

As the United Nations supports new antiterrorist policies, we find new levels of cooperation and agreement among member nations, though these talks occur with an explicit agreement that terrorism shall remain undefined. Concerns are being raised by international human rights groups and the German foreign minister that these policies will usher in high levels of state terrorism against minority populations, but for the most part these objections have been suppressed in the interest of a newfound unity of purpose.

There are growing fears among anthropologists and others who work with indigenous peoples around the world that this new secret war on terrorism will have devastating effects on indigenous peoples' struggles for human rights and political recognition. Many fear that Secretary of State Powell, the coalition builder, will purchase the cooperation and approval of national leaders around the world by adopting policies in which the United States will not protest or intervene when these states suppress and annihilate their own ethnic minority populations. When police and military units use force against these groups, their actions are "legitimate," while the use of these same tactics—even defensively—by indigenous groups, minority populations or separatist groups, become "terrorism."

As Powell signals Russia that the U.S. can learn to see their bloody war in Chechnya as part of the global war on terrorism, this signal is welcomed by other world leaders wishing a free hand to deal with their own domestic indigenous troubles. Most of the world's nationstates maintain hostile relations with one or more troublesome domestic groups contesting power relations; these hostile relations are frequently marked by violence and counterviolence. The idiom of power dictates that the violence of the state is legitimized as peace keeping, while that of the dispossessed becomes terrorism. But acts of "terrorism" are not limited to acts of violence. The range of nonviolent actions that have in the past been defined as terrorism is disturbing and has included teaching native languages and engaging in outlawed religious or cultural ceremonies.

The world is filled with peoples who have legitimate, historical disputes with the nation-states that rule them. Whether it is the Basques in Spain, the Irish in the United Kingdom, the Tamils in Sri Lanka, Zapatistas in Mexico, Chechens in Russia, or hundreds of other groups of native peoples, there are contentious battles for power that will rapidly become even more lopsided if the current hysteria of ill-defined antiterrorism is allowed to continue. The postcolonial wars of Africa smolder along ethnic lines in which minorities and the lesser-armed are freely defined as terrorists. We need to demand that our government clarify what deals have been made with other governments regarding their treatment of native peoples.

While many of the payoffs to client nations for joining the U.S.-led coalition before the [1991] Gulf War were monetary (for example, the U.S. forgave half of Egypt's crippling $60 billion dollar debt for symbolically joining the Western coalition), there are signs that one currency of payoff in the war on "terrorism" will be the granting of a new degree of latitude for coalition members to oppress their troublesome internal resistance groups. Powell seems willing to encourage such potentially genocidal tit-for-tat arrangements if this will buy him a coalition willing to risk the wrath of this new yet-to-be-named enemy.

While the current military focus is on Afghanistan and the surrounding region, the Bush administration's suggestion that this could be a 40-year war on terrorism, much like the Cold War, threatens to bring harm to hundreds of

indigenous groups around the world. Currently, many on the American left appear divided in their opposition to and support for this new Afghan war. Be this as it may, the left must resist the temptation to transfer this newfound fear of “terrorism” into support for the oppression of indigenous peoples around the globe.

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** Chapter 43: Afghan War Could Be Recruiting Tool for Terrorists

Syracuse Post-Standard, November 8, 2001

JOHN BURDICK

This piece, written by John Burdick in the weeks following the U.S. air attacks over Afghanistan, sounds a warning call. He argues that if the Afghan conflict results in civilian casualties and exacerbates humanitarian crises, it could help extremists find new recruits among those suffering the consequences of

war. The same might be said of the broader international “war on terror” spearheaded by the United States.

Although the demise of the Taliban occurred relatively rapidly (by November 2001 they had abandoned all major Afghan cities), U.S. bombing over targets in Afghanistan—and the resulting civilian casualties—continues as this book goes to press, and political instability bordering on lawlessness plagues much of the country’s territory.[55]

When I watch the news of U.S. military action in Afghanistan, my biggest question is: How does this action make the world safer for my two elementary-school-aged children?

Unfortunately, the more I learn about the situation, the more I believe that attacking Afghanistan is making the world a more, not less, dangerous place, and making terrorist attacks more, not less, likely on U.S. citizens here and abroad.

When I listen carefully to our leaders, the message I hear is that this military action cannot really reduce the power of al-Qaeda itself. They have told us that we are dealing with a loose network of cells with operatives in up to 60 countries who can work independently from multiple locations, and that even as communications are cut from Afghanistan, threats to U.S. citizens are so real and constant that we must learn to live with them “indefinitely.” Our own secretary of defense has said the aim is no longer to get Osama bin Laden, and that he doubts we will ever catch him. We are dealing with a multiple-headed Hydra— hit it in one place and it pops up in another.

Meanwhile, the longer it takes to overthrow the Taliban, the more dangerous this military strategy becomes. Our leaders are telling us that replacing the Taliban may take a very long time indeed. If the fight is going to be long, that means civilian casualties will mount, and the likelihood of many Afghans dying from starvation increases. As the war drags on, more and more people throughout the world are likely to become convinced that this is a war

against Muslims. They will respond as they already are doing, by entering a jihad against the United States.

I have read reports that there are thousands of Muslims congregating on the border with Afghanistan, ready to fight the United States; thousands more are signing up in countries like Indonesia, the largest Muslim nation in the world.

The U.S. response so far has simply been to threaten yet more military action, against yet more countries. Do we intend to threaten, simultaneously, up to 60 countries with military action? Even though all the evidence we have is that there is no quicker way to shore up shaky authoritarian regimes than by attacking them—as we have learned in Iraq and Libya, for example? And as civilians die in any such attacks, that the United States is only increasing the will of others to fight against us, expanding the pool of people throughout the world who are so enraged that they line up to enter into terrorist cells?

Our leaders tell us that one of the most important ways to combat terrorism is to “dry up the swamp” in which they operate. That makes sense to me. But that must mean more than cutting off their financial lifelines. It should mean draining the motivations from the people who are now ready and willing to march as recruits in their shadowy armies.

There is a realistic alternative to the present policy. Before October 7, the United States was leading a broad-based effort to form an international coalition that could endure the test of time. Never before had the United States enjoyed so much international sympathy—a sentiment fast disappearing as bombs fall on Kabul. With that sympathy, the United States had already won two unprecedented victories: the withdrawal of many millions of dollars in aid to the Taliban from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. By freezing bin Laden’s assets and gaining high-quality intelligence from nearby countries, we would have denied the Taliban their main incentive for protecting bin Laden: millions in protection money.

By launching a campaign of words that separated bin Laden as Saudi from the Afghan people, that separated him as a fanatic from peaceloving Muslims everywhere, we could have “drained the swamp” of his supporters and demonstrated to the world that pluralistic democracy, not fundamentalism, enjoys the moral high ground in the world. Backed by a genuine, strong coalition to provide intelligence and cooperation on cutting off aid from the Taliban, and turning to the United Nations for the possible enforcement of international law, we could have pressured the Taliban to turn over bin Laden.

Of course, such a policy would have been slow. But our leaders have urged us to be patient. I take them at their word. If we can be patient while thousands of people are being killed and dying, we certainly can be patient while they are not. If we can be patient while the world is becoming a more dangerous place for ourselves and our children, certainly we can be patient while they are not.

[55] See Dexter Filkins, “Flaws in U.S. Air War Left Hundreds of Civilians Dead,” New York Times, July 21, 2002. See also Robert Fisk, “Afghanistan Is on the Brink of Another Disaster,” The Independent, August 14, 2002.

** Chapter 44: First, Know the Enemy, Then Act

Los Angeles Times, December 9, 2001

DALE F. EICKELMAN

Following the attacks of September 11, the mass media, U.S. policy makers, and others began to focus on a possible culprit: a decentralized international network known as Al-Qaeda, with roots in Afghanistan among the multinational force of mujahedeen fighters once supported by the CIA. In this

article, Dale F. Eickelman argues against the “fundamentalist” stereotypes often associated with terrorist attacks against U.S. targets. He maintains that Al Qaeda is thoroughly modern and makes effective use of new media to communicate with millions of people across the Middle East and beyond.

Eickelman concludes with a point emphasized in many of the commentaries in this volume—that the best long-term counterterrorism strategy for the United States would involve encouraging Middle Eastern countries to respond to their populations’ demands for political self-determination.

In retrospect, the December 2000 report of the U.S. National Intelligence Council, Global Trends 2015, was chillingly prescient. It predicted that “terrorist tactics will become increasingly sophisticated and designed to achieve mass casualties.” At the same time, it envisioned a trend away from state-supported political terrorism and toward “more diverse, free-wheeling, transnational networks—enabled by information technology.” It forecast attacks “on U.S. soil.”

Now that those attacks have come, America will have to devise strategies to cope with terrorism—as have, to greater and lesser effect, England, Northern Ireland, France, Spain, Colombia, Peru, Sri Lanka, Japan, Algeria, Turkey, and Israel.

As each of those countries has come to realize, the first step is to know one’s enemy. Al Qaeda differs from other terrorist movements in selecting targets on a global rather than a regional or local scale and in using tactics that initially defied the imaginations of the most experienced counterterrorist specialists. Al Qaeda is also thoroughly modern, representing the dark side of globalization. Its membership transcends national boundaries, drawing from Muslim countries throughout the Middle East and South Asia.

In a strange irony, the group’s multinational makeup has its roots in the U.S. and Saudi-approved recruitment of transnational Arab and other foreign fighters to the cause of expelling the Soviets from Afghanistan after they invaded in 1979. Al Qaeda, whose leadership includes many first drawn to

Afghanistan in support of the anti-Soviet cause, has developed into a flexible multinational organization. Despite determined international surveillance, it has moved cash, people, and weapons across frontiers.

Like the drug lords of Colombia in the 1980s, Al Qaeda is defensively organized. Its chain of command is not formal and hierarchical, so it is less open to destruction and interdiction. The Colombian drug lords offered plata o plomo—silver or lead, a bribe or a bullet—to induce cooperation or acquiescence. Al Qaeda, claiming to act in the name of Islam, pays out less than the drug barons because it makes stronger ideological claims. Its message may appeal only to a tiny minority, but, for that minority, Al Qaeda's ideological appeals, calls to action, and track record are convincing.

In part, the group's success can be traced to its ability to effectively use the tools of the pop culture it rejects. An Al Qaeda recruitment video that circulated widely in the Middle East prior to September 11 demonstrated that the group's propaganda skills reached the "Arab street"—its target audience—more effectively than the Western superpowers or many Arab governments. The video begins with the attack on the USS Cole. It then moves to a quick-cut montage of aggression against Muslims in Palestine, Jerusalem, Lebanon, Chechnya, Kashmir, and Indonesia. Many of the images are from Western news clips that still bear the BBC or CNN logos. The scenes are juxtaposed with images ofa scholarly bin Laden, posing in front of bookshelves or seated on the ground like a religious scholar. Then, putting to rest any thought that this is an organization of wimps, come clips of Al Qaeda military training in Afghanistan, including target practice on a projected image of Bill Clinton.

So, knowing the enemy, how do we devise strategies for managing the risk of living in a world with Al Qaeda? The war against terrorism has already brought short-term abridgements of human rights and political liberties, both domestically and internationally—especially in Central Asia and the Middle East. But these are not long-term solutions to reducing the threat posed by Al Qaeda and like-minded groups and may even be counterproductive.

Addressing underlying issues of poverty, unemployment, and global economic imbalances—however desirable—is also not sufficient. Poverty and unemployment do not in themselves breed terrorism. Many of the most dedicated terrorists and advocates of extreme violence are affluent professionals or scions of the middle class. And some members of Al Qaeda's top leadership—including bin Laden and his Egyptian colleague, medical doctor Ayman Zawahiri—come from the wealthiest stratum of society.

Yet, they have grasped what the U.S. and its allies have not: how to appeal to disaffected elements of the Arab street, an increasingly educated public that today has access to a wide range of uncensored media and information that creates a desire for accountability from governments. In villages and small towns in Egypt and Iraq in the late 1960s, I frequently saw men at coffee shops or seated in circles, with one of the few literates reading aloud to the others. In Morocco in the early 1970s, rural people sometimes asked me to "translate" newscasts from the standard transnational Arabic of the state radio into their colloquial Arabic. Today this is no longer required. Mass education and new communications technologies enable large numbers of Arabs to hear and see Al Qaeda's message directly.

The growth—and challenge—of this new public was widely recognized in U.S. policy circles well before September 11. In testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in February 2001, CIA Director George J. Tenet cited the Arab street, in explaining that "the right catalyst—such as the outbreak of Israeli-Palestinian violence —can move people to act. Through access to the Internet and other means of communication, a restive public is increasingly capable of taking action without any identifiable leadership or organizational structure."

Because many governments in the Middle East are deeply suspicious of an open press, nongovernmental organizations, and open expression, it is no surprise that the public is increasingly influenced by the often extreme and hard-to-censor "new media." Leadership can remain anonymous, an advantage in the Middle East, which, in general, has a democracy deficit and a demonstrated propensity for cracking down on critics.

One consequence of this democracy deficit is to magnify the power of the street in the Arab world. Bin Laden speaks in the vivid language of popular Islamic preachers and builds on a deep and widespread resentment against the West and local ruling elites identified with it. The lack of formal outlets to express diverse political opinions makes it easier for terrorists like bin Laden, who cloaks himself in religion, to hijack some in his audience and motivate a lethal few to action.

We must accept that there will always be ideas available to justify intolerance and violence, and there will also always be ways for terrorists to manipulate open societies for their own nefarious ends. Countering radical ideologies and theologies of violence is not easy. Yet, the very proliferation of voices arguing in open debate about the role of Islam in the modern world and in contemporary society can contribute significantly to defusing terrorist appeals to the street. Public opinion is easier to hijack in the absence of full debate. Without public discussion, ideas are reduced to their simplest and starkest terms. That is why British prime minister Tony Blair's response to Al Qaeda videotaped propaganda on Qatar's Al Jazeera satellite TV last October—he immediately asked Al Jazeera for equal time to reply—was more appropriate than the first U.S. response, which was to call for censoring the broadcast of Al Qaeda tapes.

The best long-term way to mitigate the continuing threat of terrorism is to encourage Middle Eastern states to be more responsive to their populations' demands for participation. Some countries, including some of our allies, see such "open society" activities as subversive—as Egypt demonstrated in May when a security court sentenced civil rights activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim to seven years of hard labor for criticizing the regime and calling into question the fairness of recent elections.

It is no easy job to convince Arab states that it is in their interest to create open societies. But they must recognize that increasing levels of education, greater ease of travel, and the rise of new communications media are turning the Arab street into a public sphere in which large numbers of people—and not just a political and economic elite—want a say in governance and public issues. Some countries, like Morocco, have been moving steadily in that direction. The terrorist option has no appeal to Moroccans. They have a

greater stake in their society. The example of neighboring Algeria offers Moroccans a harrowing example of the alternative, and the Moroccan street speaks of it often.

There are liberal as well as illiberal voices in the Middle East and multiple contenders for the guardianship and interpretation of Islamic beliefs and values. Giving larger numbers of people a greater stake in decision-making in their societies and the opportunity to express their views will undermine the appeal of the terrorist alternative—and diminish its appeal to the street.

** Chapter 45: Sept. 11 Exposes Futile Search for “Perfect” Missile Defense

Syracuse Post-Standard, December 18, 2001

JOHN BURDICK

In this article, John Burdick exposes the folly of George W. Bush’s abandonment of the international Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in order to pursue the development of a missile defense shield. He reminds us that the events of September 11 demonstrate that low-tech weapons may be deployed with devastating effects, and that the creation of a missile defense program would only encourage China, India, and Pakistan to build up their nuclear stockpiles.

When placed in the context of Bush’s opposition to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (see Chapter 21) and the “Nuclear Posture Review” recently prepared by the Bush administration, which recommends research and possible development of “mini-nukes,” Burdick’s message is all the more urgent.

President George Bush’s declaration that the United States will withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in six months’ time is a grave mistake that will have very negative, unanticipated consequences. The president

says the United States needs a free hand to develop its missile-defense shield. Many Americans see the attacks of September 11 as justifying missile defense more than ever. Upon more careful consideration, however, I hope they will realize that going ahead with missile defense is wrong.

Is it possible to build an impenetrable missile-defense shield? Some think we could pull it off. After all, if we split the atom and put a man on the moon, why shouldn't we be able to create a system that will distinguish, in a split second, dummy from real missiles thousands of miles away, target them with pinpoint accuracy and destroy them? Maybe we can. The problem is that the task is not just to create a system that can do this, but that can do it flawlessly.

In the history of inventions, there has never been the need to create a perfect system. Putting men on the moon, even splitting atoms, are accomplishments that allow for margins of error. If a moon-ship lands 10 feet off of the bull's-eye, or atoms in an atom-smasher escape being smashed, no cities are thereby incinerated. Never before have scientists and engineers been asked to create a system in which a tiny imperfection could result in the deaths of millions.

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So heavy is this weight that last year, 50 Nobel prize-winning physicists from around the world signed a letter to the president stating their judgment that a perfect shield could not be built, and that therefore no such system should be pursued. Even Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld agrees a perfect system cannot be built; but his conclusion is that "even an imperfect shield can serve as a deterrent."

But is it? Why, in the end, would countries with nuclear capabilities be deterred from shooting an ICBM at us? Quite simply, because of our capacity to retaliate immediately with overwhelming force to easily traced missile launch pads. Some countries might be headed up by madmen willing to sacrifice their people for the joy of seeing a mushroom cloud over the United

States. But one cannot have it both ways. If we are dealing with madmen, then why should we expect an imperfect shield would deter them? If we accept that they may be deterred at all, then we should simply rely on the strongest kind of deterrence—the threat of retaliation. That is, we should rely on the basic principles of the ABM Treaty, as we have for the last 30 years.

Now it is said the real threat may in fact no longer be “rogue” states; it is, rather, groups such as al-Qaeda. If Osama bin Laden and his followers were willing to kill thousands, wouldn’t they be willing to kill millions? Certainly. But being willing and being able are entirely different things. Terrorists cannot launch intercontinental missiles; they wreak havoc with low-cost attacks, such as flying airplanes into buildings or releasing biological or “dirty radiation” bombs. The attacks of September 11 have demonstrated that the United States was looking in the wrong place for what threatens us. Low-tech, nonnuclear attacks are the most clear and present danger facing the United States, not nuclear-tipped rockets.

Missile defense could be chalked up as simple misallocation of funds, were not its international consequences so grave. China has already stated that if we start building a defense shield, it will increase its nuclear arsenal in order to overwhelm it. If China does this, India and then Pakistan will feel pressured to follow suit. Russia, in turn, has stated that, faced with the new U.S. policy, it will stop reducing, and may increase its own nuclear arsenal.

In such a world, no country will have an incentive to invest resources in nonproliferation of nuclear materials, making the likelihood of these materials ending up in the hands of terrorists (in the form of “dirty bombs” deliverable in the back of pickup trucks) all the more likely.

A world in which the United States has withdrawn from the ABM Treaty is thus inherently a more dangerous world. It is more urgent than ever that Bush reconsider his stand that the treaty is a relic of the past. It just may be the safeguard of the future.

** Chapter 46: Ignorance is Not Bliss

San Francisco Chronicle, January 2, 2002

ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ

Throughout the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan (which began in October 2001), the mainstream media in the United States effectively ignored the question of civilian casualties—euphemistically called “collateral damage” by Pentagon and Defense Department officials. As in the case of the [1991] Persian Gulf War, the Pentagon maintained strict control over access to battle zones and asked reporters to submit materials for review. But by December 2001, credible reports of high numbers of civilian casualties began to appear in the alternative and European media.[56]

In this article, Roberto J. González draws attention to the issue of civilian casualties and the complacent role played by the corporate media cartel. His piece was published following a U.S. air attack over a village in Afghanistan’s Paktia province, in which approximately fifty civilians were killed.

Since the publication of this article, U.S. attacks on civilians have continued, including most recently a July 2002 bombing raid on a wedding party in the village of Kakrak, in which more than fifty people were killed.

For the past three months, Pentagon officials have veiled an essential aspect of the “war on terrorism”: civilian casualties in Afghanistan. Blocking access to information about the human costs of U.S. bombing—and its consequences—might create a dangerous future for Americans.

Such restrictions keep us from understanding how the rest of the world views the war, and why it might provoke future attacks on the United States. They may also breed complacency, ignorance, and national insecurity.

Measures taken by military officials obscure information about the effects of U.S. bombing.

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For example, since October 11, the Pentagon has purchased exclusive rights to all satellite images from Space Imaging, a U.S. company that produces accurate pictures that might allow independent media to survey bomb damage.

In addition, U.S. bombs destroyed Al-Jazeera's television station in Kabul in October. The Qatar-based independent network reaches much of the Arab world and frequently broadcasts images from Afghanistan.

Official acknowledgment of civilian deaths has been minimal.

Descriptions of heavily bombed frontline positions never mention that they sometimes traverse densely populated neighborhoods. Frequently, officials claim that civilian deaths "cannot be independently confirmed."

Yet, according to a recent report by Professor Marc Herold, an economist at the University of New Hampshire, the number of Afghan civilians killed by American bombs has surpassed casualties from September 11.

Herold's report—the first independent survey of its kind—claims that 3,767 civilian deaths were caused by U.S. bombing between October 7 and December 10. Not included are indirect deaths caused by land mines or lack of water, food, or medicine.

The data, drawn from independent news sources and firsthand accounts, include: dates, locations, types of munitions used, and sources. Much of it is

based upon mainstream British, French, and Indian press agencies such as the BBC and the India Times.

While respected news agencies abroad have reviewed Herold’s report, the American media have largely ignored it. Only a few journals and Internet sites and the radio program Democracy Now! have analyzed it.

Why have the U.S. media missed the story?

Part of the explanation may be related to the industry itself. Recent mergers between media corporations have homogenized news, especially television news. AOL/Time Warner, Viacom, News Corporation, Disney, and GE own CNN, CBS News, Fox News, ABC News and NBC, respectively.

Many Americans rely exclusively upon this cartel for information on the “war on terrorism,” which is presented more as entertainment than news.

Broadcasts include repetitive accounts of the search for Osama bin Laden, trivia about weapons, war images that resemble video games, and footage of cheerful Afghans trimming their beards and playing music.

These pictures are punctuated by angry pundits and politicians who reduce complex events to simplified formulas (“good versus evil”) using language reminiscent of Hollywood Westerns (“dead or alive”).

Whether such misinformation stems from Pentagon pressure, fear of offending advertisers, or shabby journalism is largely irrelevant. The effect is the same: Warfare is presented as light entertainment.

While American viewers remain oblivious, Europeans, Asians, and others have access to information about the catastrophic effects of U.S. bombing.

They have seen images of dead and wounded civilians and the many widows, widowers, and orphans created by Operation Enduring Freedom.

Many are convinced that this is a U.S. crusade against Islam, and with each passing week, violent “blowback”—the CIA’s term for unintended foreign policy consequences—appears more likely.

Ignorance may be dangerous in the current climate.

Murky official statements and a distracted mass media deny us information which might help prevent future attacks.

George Orwell once noted that in free societies, censorship is more sophisticated and thorough than in dictatorships because “unpopular ideas can be silenced, and inconvenient facts kept dark, without any need for an official ban.”

But keeping Americans in the dark about inconvenient facts in Afghanistan is reckless at best, and potentially dangerous.

Civilian deaths should be openly acknowledged by the Pentagon and reported by the mass media if we wish to minimize the possibility of future attacks on American soil.

[56] See “Afghan Civilian Death Toll Rises,” Financial Times, December 24, 2001. See also Seumas Milne, “The Innocent Dead in a Coward’s War,” The Guardian, December 20, 2001.

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** Chapter 46: Turn Off Your Tunnel Vision

Washington Post, January 6, 2002

MAHMOOD MAMDANI

By the beginning of 2002, the U.S. “war on terror” had expanded to many countries, including the Philippines, Georgia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, among others. Professor Mahmood Mamdani cautions that an overly zealous search for Al Qaeda members could negatively affect U.S.-African relations if it leads to repression or state terrorism directed against Africans. He recalls the “American embrace of terrorism” in Angola, Mozambique, and other countries throughout the Cold War, and U.S. complacency in the years following.

The Pentagon’s search for al Qaeda members in Somalia is the latest indication that September 11 could have an adverse effect on U.S. relations with African nations. To understand why, think back to 1975, when the United States was defeated in Indochina and the Portuguese empire collapsed in Africa. The same events that Africans celebrated as ushering in the end of European colonialism opened a new phase in the Cold War: There was a shift, not only in the Cold War’s center of gravity from Indochina to southern Africa, but also in the methods of waging it. Official America harnessed, even

cultivated, terrorism in the struggle against movements it saw as Soviet proxies. Yes, I do mean “terrorism,” which Washington supports when it backs groups for whom the preferred method of operation is destroying the infrastructure of civilian life.

The post-Vietnam embrace of terrorism did not end with the Cold War. Right up until September 11, America counseled African governments to “reconcile” with terrorist groups. Since then, that has given way to a demand for justice. But just as reconciliation became a code word for impunity, the danger now is that “justice” will mean bloody revenge.

Reconciliation became a strategy to undermine newly won state independence; the campaign against terrorism risks demonizing dissent.

I was a young lecturer at the University of Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania in 1975, and I remember well the U.S. approach to southern Africa then and in the years that followed. Faced with the possibility of a decisive victory in Angola by the MPLA, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, which it saw as a Soviet proxy, Washington encouraged South Africa to intervene militarily in support of UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola. But South African military assistance only tarnished UNITA with the brush of apartheid and weakened it. Preoccupied with how to bring South Africa out of political isolation to contain movements such as the MPLA, the Reagan administration announced a major policy shift: “constructive engagement” with the apartheid regime.

The American embrace of terrorism was global—in Angola; in Mozambique, where it supported RENAMO, the Mozambique National Resistance; in Nicaragua (the contras); and in Afghanistan (the mujahedeen). Terrorism distinguished itself from guerrilla war by making civilians its preferred target. What official America today calls collateral damage was not an unfortunate byproduct of war; it was the very point of terrorism. And the point of collateral damage was never military, always political.

When South Africa curtailed assistance to UNITA in 1991, U.S. aid was stepped up. The hope was that terrorism would deliver a political victory in Angola, as it had indeed in Nicaragua. The logic was simple: If the level of collateral damage could be made unacceptably high, the people would surely vote the terrorists into power.

Even after the Cold War, the tolerance for terror remained high. The callous Western response to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda was no exception. Nor was January 6, 1999, when Revolutionary United Front gunmen maimed and raped their way across Freetown, Sierra Leone, killing more than 5,000 civilians in a day. The U.S. response was to pressure the government to share power with the rebels.

If the Cold War was an umbrella under which America sheltered right-wing dictators in power and embraced terrorists out of power, the danger is now the temptation to view Africa while preoccupied with a single overriding concern—this time terrorism—and to once again ignore African realities.

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** Chapter 47: The Roots of Muslim Separatism in the Philippines

AsiaSource, January 2002
[[http://www.asiasource.org][www.asiasource.org]]

In January 2001, the United States announced that it would send six hundred military “advisers” to help train Philippine troops for battle with armed Muslim separatists on the southern island of Mindanao. Critics immediately charged that the “war on terror” might take the form of an American-led worldwide crackdown on separatists challenging the hegemony of U.S. allies, no matter how corrupt or repressive they might be. In the following interview, Thomas McKenna discusses the history of Muslim separatism in the Philippines and also analyzes the effects of Spanish and American colonialism on Muslim identity.

NERMEEN SHAIKH: The South of the Philippines, where the minority Muslim population is concentrated, managed to evade Spanish colonialism for 300 years. Could you please explain the significance of this, if any, for Muslim-Christian relations in the postcolonial context?

THOMAS MCKENNA: Because of their evasion of Spanish colonialism, Philippine Muslims comprise the largest category of unhispanicized inhabitants of the Philippines. Although they live in the only predominately Christian country in Southeast Asia, they share their religious culture with the neighboring majority Muslim nations of Indonesia and Malaysia. They also retain aspects of an indigenous pre-Islamic and precolonial Philippine culture — expressed in dress, music, political traditions, and a variety of folk beliefs and practices—that are similar to those found elsewhere in island Southeast Asia but are today almost entirely absent among Christian Filipinos. Thus, while Philippine Christians and Muslims inhabit the same state and are linked

together by various attachments, they are separated by a significant cultural gulf as the result of historical circumstances. I argue in my book that cultural differences do not by themselves create ethnic conflict. However, Christian Filipinos, including representatives of the Philippine state, have often tended to view Philippine Muslims as socially backward and untrustworthy precisely because of their history of resistance to hispanicization. For their part, Philippine Muslims have tended to be highly suspicious of the intentions of the Philippine government and generally wary of Christian Filipinos. These prejudices and suspicions notwithstanding, Muslims and Christians have been able to coexist peacefully in the southern Philippines for most of the time they have lived together.

NS: You suggest in your book, Muslim Rulers and Rebels, that the Muslim nationalist movement emerged out of the period of American colonialism (1899–1946), and not Spanish colonialism, and, in fact, that the American colonial authorities actively encouraged its development. Could you please elaborate on this?

TM: I state in my book that American colonial authorities encouraged the development of a transcendent ethnoreligious identity among Philippine Muslims. That unified identity then formed the basis of the nationalist “Bangsamoro” identity of the Muslim separatist movement, begun in the late 1960s. Philippine Muslim armed resistance to Spanish aggression was very real and obviously effective, but it was not a unified Islamic resistance in the sense sometimes imagined. As elsewhere in Southeast Asia, sultanates just as often fought with one another, sometimes forging temporary alliances with the Spaniards to do so. Nevertheless, the ability of southern sultanates individually to withstand Spanish hegemony for more than 300 years is a testament to their military and diplomatic prowess. As stated in my book, certain perceptive American colonial agents realized that the “Moros” were not unified and thought it would be a good thing to unite them under leaders the Americans regarded as “enlightened” (i.e., Westernized). American colonial intentions were complex, but a primary intention seems to have been to prepare Philippine Muslims for the eventual end of American colonialism and their inclusion in an independent Philippine republic as a consolidated and relatively progressive ethnic minority. It was a naive intention, and events, of course, didn’t work out that way. But colonial practices did have the effect of encouraging the development of a unified

Philippine Muslim (or Bangsamoro) identity. Not incidentally, American colonialism also provided a lingua franca—English—for contemporary Muslim separatists. Philippine Muslims are linguistically diverse and, as is the case with Christian Filipinos, English has provided a neutral political language.

NS: You also mention that the Muslim nationalist movement in the Philippines describes itself as both Islamic and anticolonial. Could you explain how this self-conception emerged and whether it is shared by the different factions of the separatist movement today?

TM: The Muslim nationalist movement is anticolonial in the same sense as any other nationalist movement in Southeast Asia, including Philippine nationalism. The difference is that Muslim separatists see Spanish and American colonialism in the Muslim Philippines as having been supplanted by colonial rule from Manila under the Philippine republic. The Islamic aspect is far more complicated, primarily because there are differing interpretations of what it means to be Islamic. The Muslim separatist movement is a self-consciously Islamic movement in the sense that its political fronts, to various degrees, envision that a Philippine Muslim nation (or autonomous region) will be influenced by an Islamic model of governance. To my knowledge neither the MNLF nor the MILF has articulated a detailed plan for governing an autonomous region or independent nation based on an Islamic model.[57] There is no clear model from the history of the Muslim Philippines. None of the Philippine sultanates complied at all closely to Quranic (shariah) law in their legal codes. I have suggested in my book that statements by the leadership of the MNLF and the MILF about the “Islamic” nature of their movement should be interpreted quite generally to refer to the defense of Philippine Muslim territory and traditions, as a response to Philippine Christian chauvinism, and as a desire to strengthen social and political connections between Philippine Muslims and the Islamic world. What [the armed Muslim separatist group] Abu Sayyaf means by “Islamic” is difficult for observers (or at least this observer) to ascertain.

NS: In your book you argue that the remote causes of Muslim separatism in the Philippines may be traced to Western colonizers but the more proximate cause can be found in the policies of the post-1946, Christian-dominated Philippine state. Can you outline some of the policies and practices that may

have either exacerbated or created antagonisms between the Muslim minority and the Christian majority?

TM: Until the 1950s, Muslims formed the majority population of almost every region of the southern Philippines. Soon after the founding of the republic in 1946, the Philippine government began to sponsor large-scale migration from the poor and politically troublesome regions of the north and central parts of the country to the agricultural frontiers of the lightly populated southern islands. The large, fertile, and underpopulated island of Mindanao became the primary destination for Christian migration to the southern Philippines, and by the late 1960s Mindanao Muslims found themselves a relatively impoverished minority in their own homeland. While the scale of Christian immigration to Mindanao itself caused inevitable dislocations, the manner of its occurrence also produced glaring disparities between Christian settlers and Muslim farmers. From 1946 onward, the government provided steadily more opportunities and assistance to settlers from the North. By contrast, government services available to Muslims were not only meager, compared to those obtained by immigrant Christians, but were also fewer than they had received under the colonial regime. The new Christian communities became linked to trade centers and to one another by networks of roads, while Muslim communities remained relatively isolated. The late 1960s also saw an unusually antagonistic stance toward Muslims on the part of the new national administration of Ferdinand Marcos.

NS: Could you briefly explain the distinctions between the three principal groups representing Muslim grievances in the presentday Philippines: the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and Abu Sayyaf?

TM: The MNLF, founded and led by Nur Misuari, is the original underground political front of the Muslim separatist rebellion. Misuari is a signatory to the Tripoli Agreement of 1976, the first peace agreement signed between Muslim separatists and the Philippine government. Until fairly recently, the MNLF was the only separatist armed organization with which the government was willing to negotiate in any substantive way. The MILF dates from 1984 as a separate organization but can trace its roots back to the beginnings of modern Muslim separatism. Its leader, Hashim Salamat, was second in

command of the MNLF until 1979. The MILF is headquartered in central Mindanao, is well organized, and has thousands of fighters and broad popular support in rural villages. Although the MILF has stressed the Islamic aspect of the separatist movement, and has somewhat more Islamic clerics in leadership positions (Salamat himself is a cleric), the stated goals and policies of the two groups do not differ significantly. The Abu Sayyaf faction is of relatively recent origin, appearing only in 1995, and is centered on the island of Basilan. They are a small, radical, and somewhat mysterious group with limited popular support. While the Abu Sayyaf faction has garnered more headlines in the past five years with its killings and kidnappings of Christians, it is by far the smallest of the three groups. Both the MNLF and the MILF have condemned the activities of the Abu Sayyaf.

NS: It has been suggested that Abu Sayyaf, the most militant of these organizations, was initially supported by the Philippine military to discredit the separatist movement and create divisions between Muslims. Do you think there is any truth to these claims?

TM: I have heard these sorts of claims myself from Philippine Muslims since 1995, although I haven't seen any credible evidence to support them. It is not surprising that such suggestions have been made. Abu Sayyaf is a very mysterious and perplexing group, and some of the activities credited to or claimed by them seem highly irrational and counterproductive.

NS: In 1996 the Moro National Liberation Front reached an agreement with the government, and the group laid down its arms. Could you explain what became of this agreement and why it is that the Philippine Congress never ratified it? Analysts have suggested that the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which was established following the agreement, is not working at all. Do you agree with this claim, and if so, why do you think this has been the case?

TM: The 1996 Peace Agreement between the Republic of the Philippines and the MNLF did not require ratification by the Philippine Congress. However, many Philippine legislators did not support the agreement and were able to take a number of steps to limit or eliminate funding for implementation and

to pressure the administration to water down the provisions of the final agreement. Opposition in congress to the peace agreement seems to have been led by Christian senators and representatives from Mindanao. The 1996 Peace Agreement arranged for the implementation of the original Tripoli Agreement in two phases. First, it created a transitional administrative structure known as the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD). Nur Misuari, the founder and chairman of the MNLF, was made chairman of the SPCPD and won election as governor of the ARMM. The second phase of the 1996 Peace Agreement, which was originally scheduled to begin in September 1999, called for the establishment of a new regional autonomous government.

Despite the initial promise of the 1996 Peace Agreement, it has stalled badly in its implementation and is in serious danger of unraveling altogether. The September 1999 deadline for initiating the second phase of the agreement has come and gone. The autonomy agreement is stuck in its initial transition phase and has made very little progress in achieving either peace or development in the Muslim South. While the reasons for the failure of the most recent attempt to achieve meaningful autonomy for Philippine Muslims are complex, two particular (and indirectly related) problems stand out. First, due in part to congressional opposition, the SPCPD was provided entirely inadequate levels of power and resources. Not only was the SPCPD deprived of any internal taxation authority, its overall authority was severely restricted.

The second particular problem is that the 1996 Peace Agreement has not brought peace to Muslim Mindanao. The Philippine government decided to negotiate only with the main Muslim separatist faction—the MNLF led by Nur Misuari, a signatory to the original Tripoli Agreement. The MILF had sufficient military might and civilian support to wage war against the government but was ignored. After some initial armed encounters with government troops shortly after the 1996 Peace Agreement was signed, the MILF signed a ceasefire agreement with the government, in 1997, and entered into peace talks. Negotiations proceeded slowly and were interrupted by occasional skirmishes. Since late 1999, however, fighting has intensified, and in early 2000 the MILF withdrew from peace talks. At this moment (June 2000), fighting between the MILF and government troops is more intense and

widespread than at any time since the signing of the Tripoli Agreement and threatens to erupt into a resumption of war.

NS: What international factors have contributed to the conflict between Muslim separatists and the Philippine state?

TM: Muammar Kadaffi has been involved in various ways, some of them quite positive in terms of seeking a settlement. The original 1976 peace agreement was signed in Libya. Libya has also sheltered and supported MNLF fighters at various times. So have Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. I think, however, that the most substantive and positive contribution has come from the Organization of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (OIC, for short), a very influential international body made up of foreign ministers of Muslim states. The OIC publicized the grievances of the separatists very early on. It pressured the Philippine government to negotiate with the MNLF and threatened a reduction of oil supplies to Manila. It arranged the first peace agreement and has been very active in facilitating negotiations and arranging agreements, including the most recent, ever since.

[57] The MNLF and the MILF are the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, respectively.

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* Part VII: Academic Freedom and Civil Liberties

** Chapter 48: Lynne Cheney—Joe Lieberman Group Puts Out a Blacklist

San Jose Mercury News, December 13, 2001

ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ

In October 2001, members of an influential Washington-based organization called the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) issued a thirty-eight-page document entitled Defending Civilization, which accused U.S. universities of “failing America.” As evidence, its authors listed more than one hundred allegedly unpatriotic campus incidents. The document accused more than forty professors of engaging in what ACTA called anti-American activities.

The chilling effect of post-September 11 censorship was not limited to the academy. Television comedy shows, books, and even cartoons were subjected to censorship, including Aaron McGruder’s comic strip The Boondocks (see page 240), which editors pulled from several newspapers.

In this piece, Roberto J. González responds to the ACTA report by arguing that universities are among the few remaining institutions in American society in which ideas may be openly exchanged. He argues that debate, critique, and dissent have been vital elements in American democracy.

An aggressive attack on freedom has been launched upon America’s college campuses. Its perpetrators seek the elimination of ideas and activities that place September 11 in historical context, or critique the so-called war on terrorism.

The offensive, spearheaded by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, a Washington-based group, threatens free speech, democratic debate and the integrity of higher education. In an incendiary report, Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America, the American Council claims that “college and university faculty have been the weak link in America’s response” to September 11. It also asserts that “when a nation’s intellectuals are unwilling to defend its civilization, they give comfort to its adversaries.”

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The report documents 117 campus incidents as “evidence” of antiAmericanism. More than 40 professors are named, including the president of Wesleyan University, who suggested in an open letter that “disparities and injustices” in American society and the world can lead to hatred and violence.

Other examples abound. A Yale professor is criticized for saying, “It is from the desperate, angry and bereaved that these suicide pilots came.” A professor emeritus from the University of Oregon is listed for recommending that “we need to understand the reasons behind the terrifying hatred directed against the U.S. and find ways to act that will not foment more hatred for generations to come.”

Dozens more comments, taken out of context and culled from secondary sources, are presented as examples of an unpatriotic academy.

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni was founded in 1995 by Lynne Cheney, the vice president’s wife, and Senator Joseph Lieberman. Its web site claims that it contributed $3.4 billion to colleges and universities last year, making it “the largest private source of support for higher education.” Cheney is cited several times in the report, and is reportedly a close associate of its authors, Jerry Martin and Anne Neal.

Although the council's stated objectives include the protection of academic freedom, the report resembles a blacklist. In a chilling use of doublespeak, it affirms the right of professors to speak out, yet condemns those who have attempted to give context to September 11, encourage critical thinking, or share knowledge about other cultures. Faculty are accused of being "short on patriotism" for attempting to give students the analytical tools they need to become informed citizens.

Many of those blacklisted are top scholars in their fields, and it appears that the report represents a kind of academic terrorism designed to strike fear into other academics by making examples of respected professors.

The report might also function to extend control over sites of democratic debate—our universities—where freedom of expression is not only permitted but encouraged.

At my campus, symposiums, teach-ins, and lectures about religion, terrorism, Central Asia, the Middle East, and U.S. foreign policy have been organized recently. A teach-in entitled "Background for Understanding" drew hundreds of students, faculty, and citizens from many political and intellectual perspectives. The audience had the opportunity to ask questions and comment freely. The discussion was lively and at times contentious.

As a microcosm of society, the university is a place where people of different ethnicities, religions, generations, and class backgrounds exchange ideas and opinions. Anyone who has visited Bay Area colleges knows that they are especially rich places for intercultural exchange.

The vigorous and often heated debates typical of such encounters are a hallmark of democratic processes. On most campuses this can still be done freely, but official accusations of anti-Americanism might intimidate and silence some voices.

That is not patriotism, but fascism. The American Council’s position is inaccurate and irresponsible. Critique, debate, and exchange— not blind consensus or self-censorship—have characterized America since its inception.

Our universities are not failing America. On the contrary, they are among the few institutions offering alternatives to canned mainstream media reports.

The targeting of scholars who participate in civic debates might signal the emergence of a new McCarthyism directed at the academy. Before it escalates into a full-blown witch hunt in the name of “defending civilization,” faculty, students, and citizens should speak out against these acts of academic terrorism.

** Chapter 49: Academia Under Attack Sketches for a New Blacklist

CounterPunch, November 21, 2001

[[http://www.counterpunch.org][www.counterpunch.org]]

DAVID PRICE In this commentary, David Price links the ACTA report Defending Civilization to a pattern of censorship that has appeared in various moments in U.S. history, most notably in the early 1950s when Senator Joseph McCarthy directed a political witch hunt against suspected communist collaborators.

Price’s piece describes how the champions of “civilization” typically claim that “the institutions and practices of the ruling classes and the state are desirable” while condemning other points of view. He notes that the critiques expressed by some academics are contemporary examples of points of view upsetting to those in the higher circles of power.

My office is cluttered with over 20,000 pages of FBI files chronicling the damage inflicted on academic freedom in America by McCarthyism. These hundreds of different files tell divergent stories with various twists, turns, and morals, but most of them are bound together by a simple feature: the names of these individuals whose lives were invaded and altered appeared somewhere, sometime, on lists of subversives, and the FBI read these lists and opened investigatory files (or added to existing files) on these individuals. There were countless lists of suspect academics printed in publications such as the American Mercury, Readers Digest, and newsletters of the American Legion and various religious denominations. Most often these individuals had taken public stands on unpopular issues such as peace and racial, economic, and gender equality.

These lists are making a comeback, as once again intellectuals with minority views are being identified and tracked by censorial groups. One such group is the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). The ACTA is a Washington, D.C.-based organization with the proclaimed mission of being “dedicated to academic freedom, quality and accountability.” Oddly enough, its primary means of reaching this stated goal is by intimidating scholars who assert these principles of academic freedom in ways that run counter to the ACTA’s narrow views of the past and present.

The ACTA recently produced a 38-page pamphlet that in many ways reads like a prototype of a neo-McCarthyist blacklist for our new hot war. The pamphlet, Defending Civilization: How our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It, compiles 117 quotes from respected American academicians critical of current U.S. policies. These quotes range from gentle questions concerning the propriety of specific actions to radical critiques of American policies and practices, but the quotes lead the ACTA to make the charge that “college and university faculty have been the weak link in America’s response to the attack” of September 11.

ACTA chairwoman emerita and national “Second Lady,” Lynne Cheney, is quoted on the pamphlet’s cover endorsing the need for Americans to study the past—though the envisioned past she’d have us study is clearly compartmentalized in ways that serve hegemonic interpretations of the current crisis. Cheney tells us that “living in liberty is such a precious thing”

as the pamphlet compiles a list of Americans whose liberties the ACTA would like to see reduced. But Republicans like Cheney are not alone to blame for this pamphlet designed to threaten those who would actually practice academic freedom.

Besides Cheney, the remaining members of the ACTA governing board are two of Cheney's National Endowment for the Humanities colleagues, Jerry Martin and Anne Neal, and two conservative Democrats, Joseph Lieberman and Richard Lamm.

The pamphlet has a few tantalizingly strident quotes, such as the widely publicized (and later apologized for) quote by University of New Mexico historian Richard Berthold that "anyone who can blow up the Pentagon gets my vote," but most of the quotes are moderate in their view and tenor. In fact, one of the remarkable things about this pamphlet is how relatively tame or even commonsensical many of the quotes are, for example, CCNY sophomore Nuriel Heckler's observation "We don't feel military action will stop terrorism, but it will lead to racism and hate" or Jesse Jackson's statement that we should "build bridges and relationships, not simply bombs and walls."

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To the ACTA, such moderate suggestions are too much and must be shouted down.

This pamphlet title's use of the term "civilization" is significant. As anthropologist Thomas Patterson recognizes, traditionally "civilization's champions have claimed that the institutions and practices of the ruling classes and the state are desirable and necessary in that they maintain order and underwrite the conquest of nature." That academics are not choosing to engage in supporting this modern conquest is indeed disappointing to the ACTA.

That American intellectuals would raise the ire of censor-prone conservatives like those at the ACTA is natural. The refusal of academics to reduce the current war to simplistic analyses of good versus evil, or civilization versus tribalism should be upsetting to those who view intellectuals' chief duty as rationalizing the actions ofstate.TheACTA is opposed to independent thought during this time of war, and it seems to sense no danger in its wish to muzzle and intimidate knowledgeable individuals who are trying to add more information to an ill-informed public during a time a crisis.

The American Association of University Professors (an organization that abandoned many professors during the days of McCarthyism) has thus far come out with strong support for the principles of academic freedom. Last month Mary Burgan, the AAUP general secretary, noted that "a distrust of intellectuals has always lurked beneath the surface of American popular opinion. Now it has begun to leak out again—either through the frontal assault in the partial reporting by the New York Post of a forum at the City University of New York, or the sideswipes at campus teach-ins by a respected columnist like Tom Friedman or others such as John Leo." So far the AAUP is standing on the side of academic freedom, but this is a fight in which we must remain ever vigilant.

There is no criticism too strong for those who would intimidate and stifle free thought and expression—especially during times such as these when knowledgeable scholars' access to the public via the media is being curtailed. That members of the ACTA's board are among those who can bend the ear of our new Homeland Security Office should cause us all grave concern, and we must be doubly vigilant in protecting those of us who exercise our right to dissent.

** Chapter 50: Lynne Cheney's Free Speech Blacklist

TomPaine.com, November 18, 2002
[[http://www.tompaine.com][www.tompaine.com]]

Hugh Gusterson was the first academic quoted in the ACTA report Defending Civilization. In this interview with Sharon Basco, he considers the ACTA's use of intimidation, scapegoating, and propaganda as techniques of control, and reflects upon the historical link between war and repression of dissenters in U.S. history.

Gusterson also makes a point that resonates strongly with many of the articles in this collection: "The role and the purpose of the university in America is not to cheerlead for whatever the chosen policy of the American government is. The role and purpose of the university isto pursue knowledge and to encourage people to think critically."

SHARON BASCO: Professor Hugh Gusterson, you're the first academic quoted in the report entitled Defending Civilization: How Our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It.

One of the opening paragraphs of that report says, "While America's elected officials from both parties and media commentators from across the spectrum condemned the attacks and followed the President in calling evil by its rightful name, many faculty demurred. Some refused to make judgments. Many invoked tolerance and diversity as antidotes to evil."

You're the first academic quoted in this report, which states this: "Hugh Gusterson, professor of anthropology and science and technology studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology: 'Imagine the real suffering and grief of people in other countries. The best way to begin a war on terrorism might be to look in the mirror.' " That's the end of your quote.

HUGH GUSTERSON: One interesting thing I want to observe about that quote is where they chose to begin it. It's a quote from a speech I made at a peace rally at MIT, shortly after September 11. And I took as my theme the difficulty of imagining the real suffering of other people. And just before that quote they select, I talked about how difficult it is for us to imagine the suffering of the people at the World Trade Center as they were dying.

And then I went on from there to invite the audience to try and imagine the suffering of people in Afghanistan if we were to go and declare war on the people in Afghanistan. Of course, the quote is carefully cut so it seems that I only care about the suffering of people in other countries and not about the suffering of Americans as well. That's part of a process of distortion that I think marks the report more generally.

But also more generally I'd like to make a point that universities are not adjuncts of the American government. The role and the purpose of the university in America is not to cheerlead for whatever the chosen policy of the American government is. The role and purpose of the university is to pursue knowledge and to encourage people to think critically. And in my speech at the peace rally I was encouraging students and anyone who was listening to think critically about American foreign policy, about the fact that Americans have not only been victims of violence, but that Americans have often inflicted violence on people in other countries— in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Vietnam, for example—and the people in those other countries might see U.S. actions as being terrorist actions in their own way.

SB: Have you spoken to anyone at the American Council of Trustees and Alumni about the accusations in the report and about your words being taken out of context?

HG: I haven't spoken to anyone at the American Council of Trustees and Alumni. They never called me to check the quote. And one thing I would like to say. The report makes the argument that political correctness reigns supreme on American campuses today. And the people who do feel inclined to support the U.S. government feel intimidated by the climate of political correctness from giving voice to their true feelings.

And I have to say, looking around me at MIT, this is just complete junk. In their report, they cite five different quotes from people at MIT. Four of those quotes come from the peace rally where I spoke. There's a fifth quote from Noam Chomsky, from a public lecture he gave. And you would think from

reading their report that these are the only public statements that have been made about September 11 here at MIT. But it’s just not true. There was a whole series of panel discussions organized by the university administration. So, for example, the Center for International Studies did a panel within a few days of September 11. There were four panelists; only one of those panelists in any way criticized American foreign policy. Two of the others called for assassinating Osama bin Laden, or for declaring war on Afghanistan. When that panel was repeated on two subsequent occasions, the person who had criticized U.S. foreign policy was dropped from the panel. There was another panel discussion called “Technology and Terror.” There were six panelists, including myself. I was the only one of the panelists on that panel who said anything critical about American foreign policy.

So actually, if you look at MIT, there’s a vibrant discussion about the implications of September 11. Many people have called publicly for military action and the people who’ve criticized military action are actually a minority of the recorded statements. You can go to the MIT news service and check this out.

What the authors of the report did is that they very carefully selected only those comments that were critical of American foreign policy and tried to pretend that those comments represented the entire range of debate at MIT. This is a complete distortion and fabrication.

SB: What do you think they’re trying to do with this report? You’re an anthropologist, you study human beings and their culture, their relationships. What’s your professional viewpoint on this Defending Civilization report?

HG: Lynne Cheney has been on a mission for over a decade now to try to clamp down on dissent on campus, and to clamp down on multiculturalist perspectives in education. And I think this fits with a long-term agenda she has. We see at this moment, after September 11, that many groups are opportunistically using the current crisis to try and push an agenda that they had long before September 11. And I think that’s part of what Lynne Cheney and this group are up to.

But more than that, I think that any student of American history can tell you that whenever the country is at war, whenever there is a national crisis, it's very clear that the government attempts to clamp down on dissenters, on aliens and so on. This goes all the way back to the Sedition Act shortly after the founding of the Republic—you see it in the mass deportations around the time of World War I, the trial and execution of Sacco and Vanzetti, you see it in the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and in McCarthyism.

This fits within that pattern. It's an attempt to intimidate internal critics within the United States, to keep them quiet, to say that in a time of crisis there's only one correct opinion, and it's the official orthodox government opinion. And I find it ironic, actually, that Lynne Cheney and the American Council of Trustees and Alumni are calling in this report for more American history on campus, for compulsory classes in American history. Because I think if you study America history you see quite clearly that they fit into this long-standing historical pattern of scapegoating internal critics in times of crisis. It's a very ugly historical pattern.

SB: The report seems to rationalize and anticipate criticisms from people who don't agree with Lynne Cheney's organization. They say in part: "Let us be clear. This is not an argument for limiting free speech on college campuses. Indeed the robust exchange of ideas is essential to a free society. But it is equally important and never more so than in these unsettling times to insist that colleges and universities transmit our history and heritage to the next generation." And then there's an underlined sentence: "Academic freedom does not mean freedom from criticism."

HG: I take strong exception to this comment for two reasons. First of all, as an academic, I live on debate. I thrive on debate. I love people to argue with me about what I've written, what I've said, and I live to debate with other people.

If anyone from the American Council of Trustees and Alumni wants to debate me on my views on the war on Afghanistan, I will be delighted to debate them.

This is not about debate. It’s about blacklisting people. It’s one thing to do a detailed analysis of someone’s written or spoken opinions, and suggest why you think they’re wrong. That’s not what this report is about. This report is about compiling a list of people who they think are deviants as an attempt to intimidate those people.

The second thing I would say is that the report uses the classic technique of propaganda. In propaganda you impute your own sins to the other side. We saw this with Soviet propaganda, for example. Every time the Soviets invaded a country, they would talk about the other country having committed aggression against the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union acting out of self-defense.

Cigarette ads do the same thing. They take the perceived weakness of their product, and they turn it around in advertisements. They say that cigarettes make people attractive, cigarettes taste nice, and so on.

And this report uses the classic techniques of advertising and propaganda. They are about intimidation. They are about curtailing the free expression of dissent on campus. Instead, they accuse internal dissenters—who are in a minority in American society— of trying to curtail other people’s free speech.

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** Chapter 51: Harmony Coerced is Freedom Denied

Chronicle of Higher Education, July 13, 2001

LAURA NADER In this piece, Laura Nader applies anthropological theory and research to an important public issue: the emergence of coercive harmony as an ideology of control in American life. She reminds readers that critique, contention, and dissent have a long history in the United States. Abandoning that tradition might mask repression, or disguise injustice and repression as civility, patriotism, or the American Way.

Although this commentary was written months before September 11, 2001, it is more relevant today than when it initially appeared. News editors, college professors, students, employees, and other citizens have reported coming under fire for expressing views critical of the Bush administration. In light of the rapid changes that have curtailed civil liberties, Nader’s words should give us pause.

We have heard a lot recently about the need for consensus, social harmony, and civility. At the end of the presidential election, for instance, both George W. Bush and Al Gore spoke of the importance of unity. But Americans need to remember that our country was founded by dissenters. We need to be reminded periodically of all the good that has come from outrage and indignation, and of what happens to democracy when people don’t speak out.

In “Seduced by Civility,” a 1996 article in The Nation, Benjamin DeMott looks at the current state of political manners and the crisis of democratic values. He points out that in the nineteenth century, people who

criticized abolitionists for being uncivil were the ones who were willing to let slavery continue. His conclusion is that we must recognize today's incivility for what it is: a justified rejection of the powers that be, who are more interested in civility than in poverty.

I believe that indignation can make Americans more engaged citizens—and isn't that a basic purpose of most colleges and universities? I am appalled to hear young people speak positively about not being judgmental. (I'm sure that when a student said, in an evaluation of my course, "Dr. Nader is a pretty good professor, except she has opinions," the remark wasn't intended to be a compliment; nonetheless, I took it as one.)

Many college students today were taught dispute resolution in elementary and secondary school, at the cost of trading justice for harmony. Often, what they remember is that they were silenced for the sake of civility. As professors, we ought to encourage our students to express their opinions—with outrage, when it is justified, as it often is. It is our duty to teach students the importance of protest when our society makes the unthinkable appear normal—when we dump nuclear waste on American Indian reservations, broaden the gap between the haves and the have-nots even during a time of plenty, and give Ritalin to millions of American children.

Social scientists are taught to notice patterns that regulate speech or social life. Sometimes we follow such patterns through time and space, to see if we have stumbled upon something of social and cultural significance. In The History of Manners, Norbert Elias examined the links between manners, or etiquette, and social control. He was interested in how "civilizing processes," as he called them, take place and how they are interrelated with the organization of Western societies into states. He believed that the standards for human behavior gradually shift over the centuries toward greater restrictions. For example, he found that people in Western societies became less tolerant of spitting in public when they learned that the practice was acceptable in the non-Western societies they saw as less advanced. My interest in manners as a way of controlling behavior came from my work on village law among the Zapotec Indians of Oaxaca, Mexico. I found that the villagers I studied were highly litigious, yet valued harmony and compromise in the courtroom. I came to see their

support of harmony as part of a strategy to preserve their autonomy. As long as the village kept its house in order, there was minimal interference from the Mexican government. Five hundred years of colonization had taught the villagers to use harmony for political purposes.

When I looked at legal reform in the United States, I also found harmony being used as a control, this time by the powerful. In the 1970s, something called alternative dispute resolution was born. It was a reform movement in response to the new cases (proponents of the movement called them “garbage cases”) that were entering the courts after the social turmoil of the 1960s—cases about civil rights, environmental and consumer rights, Native American and gender issues, and so forth. The movement favored compromise over adversarial procedures, harmony over social justice. Its mandatory mediation and binding arbitration cost us our right to sue. It was a war against the contentious.

Since the 1970s, alternative dispute resolution has gone beyond the law, creeping into our schools, places of work, hospitals, and homes. Tracking the spread of such coercive harmony is not easy. Because it has permeated society over time, most people come to take it for granted or assume it is benign. Conversely, conflicts and disagreement have come to seem bad, to be avoided at all costs. I once received a note from a lumber activist thanking me for coining the term “coercive harmony.” It had enabled her to recognize the repression of environmental activism under the banner of consensus and “win-win” solutions in the Clinton administration’s policy on logging.

Coercive harmony has often accompanied large-scale social movements, including Western colonialism, Christian missionary work, and globalization. Historians like Jerold Auerbach, at Wellesley College, postulate that in the United States, the use of harmony as a form of social regulation by the government occurs in cycles. Conflict—for example, during the Civil War and the protests of the 1960s—gets out of control, harmony is imposed, and after a time of calm, dissent erupts again.

Europeans today are less concerned about harmony than Americans are. During last year’s presidential campaign, many Europeans wondered why the candidates did not seem to know how to debate. One reason is that Americans consider it bad manners to be contentious. In fact, the anthropologist Paul Bohannan notes that Americans have two categories of behavior: polite and rude. The British, he says, add a third: civil, meaning that you pull no punches when you criticize, but that you do so without jeering. As he puts it, an American has to be your close friend before giving you anything but praise when he reviews your manuscript. The British don’t make that kind of mistake; they understand that you really want to know the weak points before publication.

The use of coercive harmony in the United States has led us to confuse all criticism with carping and being negative. We don’t share the Europeans’ zest for controversy. As Robin Lakoff, a linguist at the University of California at Berkeley, says, we want to be perceived as nice. And we put up with circumstances that Europeans would consider outrageous—for example, the absence of universal health care or the fact that fewer than 52 percent of eligible voters cast ballots in the last election.

What should be unacceptable has come to strike us as so normal that when we hear someone speaking frankly, we are startled. Not long ago, in an appearance on The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, Frank Wolak, an economics professor at Stanford University, whitewashed the role of the utilities in the California energy crisis. Not surprising. What did seem surprising was the comment that followed from Bruce Brugmann, editor of the San Francisco Bay Guardian, who said that the professor should be working for the utilities rather than Stanford.

Coercive harmony can stifle dissent for a while. But if dissent is too tightly bottled up, it will explode—as happened in the 1960s riots in Watts, Newark, and other places. And the explosions don’t all come from members of ethnic minorities: Witness the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.

Academics should not be party to establishing an ideology of consensus on our increasingly corporatized campuses. Instead, we have a duty to

investigate the dangers of coercive harmony and to expose repression when it poses as consensus.

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** Chapter 52: Unconventional Anthropology Challenging the Myths of Continuous War

ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ

The study of man is confronted with an unprecedented situation: never before have so few, by their actions and inactions, had the power of life and death over so many of the species.

—LAURA NADER, “UP THE ANTHROPOLOGIST—PERSPECTIVES GAINED FROM STUDYING UP” (1969)

We must realize that the discourse of technical rationality is part of the problem as well as part of the solution and that, unless we ask fundamental political questions about the relationship between the U.S. and the rest of the world, the U.S. will find the cognitive and technological tools of modernity being used against it.

—HUGH GUSTERSON, “THE MCNAMARA COMPLEX” (2001)

*** Anthropology and American Imperialism

Many of the contributors to this anthology chronicle the emergence of U.S. global hegemony over the course of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. The “American century of war and empire” [58] has had broad repercussions overseas—and also within our country—as communities, economies, and political systems have been transformed and often contended with the imperialist dreams of power elites.

While few would dispute such historical facts, within the United States there are different interpretations of what U.S. imperialism represents. Many neoconservatives wholeheartedly agree that such hegemony exists, yet consider it to be not only justifiable but desirable on grounds that such a system is essentially benevolent, moral, and progressive. Every imperial project has its ideological justifications; “manifest destiny,” “white man’s burden,” “economic development,” and “New World Order” have rationalized civilizing missions in different historical periods. Following an ethnocentric logic, recent attempts by our leaders to encourage “regime change” in such diverse locations as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Venezuela might appear rational and desirable, even when they violate international law.

Where have anthropologists stood on this issue? A generation ago, Kathleen Gough observed that British, French, and American anthropologists had

generally not questioned frameworks of colonial power: “Anthropology is a child of Western imperialism... We tended to accept the imperialist framework as given, perhaps partly because we were influenced by the dominant theories of our time, and partly because at that time there was little anyone could do to dismantle the empire.” [59]

Today, after witnessing struggles for independence in Africa, Asia, and the Americas, many anthropologists would likely be critical of any imperial system. Empires have historically denied the right of selfdetermination to colonized peoples and violently repressed them when they challenged structures of power. When anthropologists conducted ethnographic research or extended fieldwork abroad, the brutal political realities of colonialism often appeared in plain view. After the 1960s, the discipline generally became more attuned to global interconnections and inequalities.[60] The fact that participant observation tended to place the anthropologist in personal relationships with ordinary people probably magnified the effects of imperial systems on small-scale societies. By the nature of their work, anthropologists are positioned to grasp the big picture from the perspectives of individual lives, and consequently many have been outspoken in their critiques of imperialism—including the current U.S. version, which starkly contrasts with the principles upon which our country was founded.

Perhaps this is most clearly visible in U.S. military expansion. In recent months—with alarming speed and no public debate—our leaders have deployed military troops and advisers to parts of the world that were previously off-limits, including the Philippines, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Colombia, Yemen, and Georgia.

The case of Iraq provides us with an alarming example of the new U.S. expansionism. When the Bush administration launched an invasion of Iraq in March and April 2003, it dramatically demonstrated the lengths to which it would go to accelerate the U.S. drive for total global dominance. This was clearly foreshadowed by its National Security Strategy, a policy document advocating unilateral military action as the preferred means for projecting U.S. power.

After initially seeking approval from the U.N. Security Council to disarm Iraq (a process which led to the reintroduction of U.N. weapons inspectors to Iraq in late 2002), the U.S. and U.K. eventually abandoned efforts to work within the system of international law. Bush administration officials claimed at various moments that Iraq must be attacked in order to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, for purposes of “regime change,” and to bring democracy to the region.

In response, millions of Americans across the country demonstrated their opposition to war in a series of rallies between October 2002 and March 2003—a sight not seen on U.S. streets since the Vietnam era. Tens of millions more demonstrated around the world.

But in spite of popular opposition, the United States and United Kingdom proceeded to attack Iraq, beginning with massive bombing raids over the city of Baghdad in late March 2003 followed by a blitzkrieg-style land invasion. Although it may be many years before we know the full extent of the destruction and death of the second Gulf War, it is clear that thousands of civilians were killed.

As this book goes to press, the U.S. maintains approximately 150,000 troops in Iraq and has imposed the authority of the Pentagon’s Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. The military occupation and the Pentagon’s rulers resemble a colonial administration in many ways.

In spite of the U.S. troop presence, looters and snipers continue wreaking havoc and instability upon large portions of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. U.S. troops secured the building housing the Ministry of Oil but allowed thieves (probably members of organized crime rings) to steal thousands of priceless artifacts from the national museum of archaeology. They also allowed arsonists to burn the national library and other buildings containing historic archives and religious texts. The losses are of such significance that eminent scholars have, without hyperbole, compared these events to the burning of the library at Alexandria.

In the political vacuum created by the dismantling of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party, Shiite leaders—some of whom are clerics favoring an Islamic state—are stepping in to fill the void. This is of signal importance, since 60 percent of Iraq's population consists of Shiite Muslims, many of whom were severely limited in expressing their political power (and many of their religious traditions) under Saddam Hussein's secular rule. While the clerics clearly command a great deal of popular support, Bush administration officials have unequivocally stated that they will not accept a theocratic state. Iraq's political future is unclear, but the Bush administration appears determined to maintain tight boundaries around the shape and character of its postwar government. In the meantime, casualities of war mount.

Like the Roman, Spanish, and British Empires of previous eras, the United States has spread its military forces far and wide to maintain global hegemony, but on a scale unprecedented in human history. Today our country spends more each year on the military (approximately $400 billion) than the next nine largest national defense budgets combined. The web of U.S. military bases extends across seventy countries and territories over the globe.

*** September 11 and the "War on Terror": The Uses of Continuous War

In a recent lecture, MIT linguistics professor Noam Chomsky noted that "the war on terrorism was not declared on September 11; rather, it was redeclared, using the same rhetoric as the first declaration 20 years earlier." [61] Mainstream news reports indicate a remarkable continuity in the military actions of the United States and its allies against countries deemed to be supporters of terrorist organizations—actions that have included assassinations, torture, mass murder, atrocities, and war crimes in Algeria, Libya, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Indonesia, the Philippines, Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala, and many other countries. It is also significant that government officials directing the contemporary "war on terror" include many of the same people charged with fighting "terrorist" threats two decades ago: Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, Colin Powell,

John Negroponte, and others. From this perspective, recent events resemble a war without end.

The idea of a society engaged in continuous war—what anthropologist Catherine Lutz has called a “form of peacetime that is in fact war” conducted in faraway lands [62]—is reminiscent of both the totalitarian society envisioned by George Orwell in 1984 and recent statements made by our leaders regarding the “war on terror.” By issuing a constant stream of warnings and press releases (some without foundation) about possible terrorist attacks, distorting the truth while subtly and not so subtly threatening dissenters, and directing the fear, wrath, and insecurity of citizens against one another, the leaders of such states sometimes succeed in confounding and manipulating millions of people. This was as true in Nazi Germany as it was in the negative utopia of 1984. We may be witnessing similar processes at work in our country today.

Orwell linked the continuous war between world powers to the manipulation of reality: “When war is continuous there is no such thing as military necessity... the most palpable facts can be denied or disregarded... almost any perversion of thought can be safely practiced ... The rulers of such a state are absolute, as the Pharaohs or the Caesars could not be... they can twist reality into whatever shape they choose.” [63]

Continuous conflict, together with an insistence that our country is in a state of war against shadowy enemies scattered across dozens of countries, may function as a controlling process creating fear in the minds of citizens. As in the case of Cold War panic over communism in the United States, the widespread selling of fear by members of the Bush cabinet has effectively pried more support from the public and Congress for growing military budgets. Currently, more than half of our government’s discretionary spending is dedicated to the military—more than five times the amount dedicated to education. We should bear in mind the January 17, 1961, farewell address of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in which he cautioned us about how the “military-industrial complex” might threaten freedom, democracy, and cherished American values.

The demonization of non-Western others is undergoing a new phase. In the present context, many groups around the world seeking to assert self-determination in a way that potentially threatens U.S. economic interests or those of its allies are branded with predictable labels by heads of state:

“Terrorist,” like “bandit,” designates an enemy of the Western establishment, somebody who stands in the way of Western aims. What Western states do is never banditry or terrorism, even if their actions fit Western definitions of these terms and are declared by Western political entities like the International Court of Justice to be in violation of international law... The West remains the repository of civilized values and humane methods, which is being challenged by “barbarians.” [64]

This observation is even more compelling when put in the current context: In 2002 our government refused to recognize the legitimacy of the newly formed International Criminal Court, a legal body established to prosecute war crimes, and in 2003 it spearheaded an unprovoked attack, invasion, and occupation of a sovereign nation (Iraq) without U.N. approval—a direct violation of the U.N. Charter.

In Orwell’s fictional account, the general public is incapable of distinguishing the government’s official versions of history from reality due to direct censorship and manipulation of language. But to what degree do these controls function in our own society—and at what level of popular consciousness?

*** The Culture Industry and Mainstream Media

A recent report in the London newspaper The Guardian sheds light on some of the controls promoted by a continuous “war on terror.” The headline is both revelatory and shocking: “U.S. Media Cowed by Patriotic Fever, Says CBS Star.” The article features an interview with CBS News anchor Dan Rather, an icon of American television, who comments on the forces of what he calls “patriotism run amok” after September 11:

It is an obscene comparison... but you know there was a time in South Africa that people would put flaming tires around people's necks if they dissented. And in some ways the fear is that you will be necklaced here, you will have a flaming tire of lack of patriotism put around your neck. Now it is that fear that keeps journalists from asking the toughest of the tough questions... There has never been an American war, small or large, in which access has been so limited as this one... Limiting access, limiting information to cover the backsides of those who are in charge of the war, is extremely dangerous and cannot and should not be accepted.[65]

Rather's comments point to a number of factors: self-censorship, fear of punishment for speaking out against the party line, and limited access to battle zones. That one of the most influential television reporters in our country can be subjected to such pressures should make us stop and think.

For critics of U.S. mainstream media, other mechanisms of information control are well known, particularly those associated with the influence of commercial pressures. Mergers and the consolidation of media firms have linked together television, radio, music, publishing, and Internet providers, which has resulted in a handful of multinational media conglomerates that effectively serve to filter much of the information content of news. Threats from advertisers, sponsors, and organized lobbies occasionally pressure editorial boards, publishers, and producers to reject controversial stories or to frame current events in particular ways or else threaten to withhold underwriting.

Journalists are often subjected to a wide range of filters including press controls, bureaucratic hierarchies, reporting conventions, news organizations, and a set of career rewards and punishments that impact their choice of topics, as well as the style in which they present their reports. The multiplicity of ways in which business interests discipline reporters is the subject of a rich ethnographic account of foreign correspondents by anthropologist Mark Pedelty. He explains that "the ideological content of news texts is representative of the world view of the stockholders, executives, owners, and especially, advertisers who produce, manage, and

profit from news production.” [66] In a system in which the major news producers are subsidiaries of multinational media corporations, the pressures to conform and self-censor may be overwhelming.

Media watchdog groups such as Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) have extensively documented the effects of such connections and potential conflicts of interest. Their investigations help us understand otherwise confounding phenomena: the portrayal of the September 11 attacks as attacks upon civilians rather than attacks upon symbols of American economic and military power; the omission of international human rights reports critical of U.S. policies from mainstream news broadcasts; and the dearth of reporting on the antiwar movement.

*** Anthropology’s Promise: Exploding the Myths of “Crackpot Realism”

It appears that a new generation of “crackpot realists”—those who think that the only realistic way of resolving political problems can be found in total war, mass murder, and the use of brute force (even if in violation of international laws)—are in command of our country.[67] The specter of nuclear war once again looms before us, as the current Bush administration has abandoned nuclear test ban treaties, produced a list of countries as potential targets for future attacks, and openly discussed the possible development of “small-scale” nuclear weapons, much to the chagrin of America’s closest allies. As if that were not enough, the administration released a document entitled National Security Strategy on September 20, 2002, which outlines a new foreign policy doctrine advocating “pre-emption,” “first-strikes,” and unilateral action as preferred means for maintaining American “unparalleled military strength” and global dominance. The 2003 Gulf War may represent the initial phase of a long-range project to expand U.S. hegemony and project U.S. power across the globe, an idea explicitly promoted by the think tank Project for the New American Century.

The words of Hannah Arendt are particularly relevant: “There are, indeed, few things that are more frightening than the steadily increasing prestige of scientifically minded brain trusters in the councils of government during the

last decades. The trouble is not that they are cold-blooded enough to ‘think the unthinkable,’ but that they do not think.” [68] Anthropologists have analyzed a tendency toward irrational rationality among bureaucratic elites in military-industrial settings: Hugh Gusterson calls it “the McNamara complex,” while Laura Nader uses the term “institutionalized insanity.”

In these unconventional times, anthropologists have a historic role to play in the public arena, detecting general patterns that might lead to a more enlightened U.S. engagement with global politics. Various themes resonate throughout the commentaries: the repeated call for greater U.N. involvement in conflicts, rather than unilateral military actions by our government and its allies; the need for a fuller, more sophisticated U.S. understanding of other cultures—that is, cultural relativism as a political exigency; the importance of our country actively seeking peaceful solutions rather than reacting to violence with heavy-handed retaliatory attacks (preventive diplomacy instead of gunboat diplomacy); the need for democratic governments—with our country in the lead—to make objectives and actions more transparent; and the recognition that lasting peace can only be realized in a world that is more just. What can be more in line with U.S. principles than a world in which justice and the rule of law prevail?

In times of war, anthropologists need to encourage critical thinking. Although some will undoubtedly argue that our discipline should work for government agencies in wartime, the history of U.S. anthropology reveals that such a road is fraught with danger. We should remain cautious and vigilant about how military and intelligence agencies might recruit anthropologists or deploy cultural knowledge in the “war on terror” declared by George W. Bush. During the current period of academic downsizing, career opportunities for anthropologists are shrinking, and new opportunities for employment in the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and private think tanks as cultural experts might seem particularly appealing to those struggling to find steady employment. Anthropologists should resist temptation as a matter of professional responsibility—at the very least, we should insist on professional autonomy. As David Price has argued, state-managed anthropological wartime research has frequently devastated indigenous cultures: “As social scientists are now being recruited to assist in ethnic and racial ‘terrorist profiling’ campaigns... we have a professional duty to speak out against the

futility and bigotry of such abuses.” [69] The destructive potential is too great to risk using culture as a weapon.

In the context of the “war on terror,” we might begin by taking positive steps to dispel the myths, misunderstandings, and ethnocentrism currently circulating throughout our country, often created by public relations firms and private think tanks and propagated by the corporate mass media. This might serve as an alternative to agency work for those wishing to engage with wider publics. As points of departure, we might consider the following objectives:

1. We could inform the public of the double standard systematically applied to the term “terrorism.” In nearly all mainstream reports and in the words of the vast majority of official policy makers, “terrorism” is reserved for those who would challenge the United States or its allies, even when the latter are in violation of international law. “State terrorism” is not a term that is used in the mainstream media, yet violence directed by states against their own people has claimed many more lives than nonstate terrorism during the twentieth century (in Indonesia, Guatemala, Angola, and Nicaragua, to name a few). Typically, such aggression has been ignored or described as “retaliation”—or, more commonly, “selfdefense.”

2. We could remind the public that “preemptive” attacks and “regime change,” directed or supported by our military and the CIA, have not led to regional stability in the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, or other regions. This has also been true in the past, as history has shown time and time again.[70] Furthermore, history has also shown that air attacks almost always result in civilian casualties, either directly (due to bombing) or indirectly (due to the public health and other humanitarian crises following such raids). The strategy of massive bombing, while perhaps minimizing U.S. war casualties, has frequently led to bitterness, anger, and outright hostility directed toward our country on the part of civilians whose lives have been devastated. The idea that a lasting peace can emerge from a strategy of war and indiscriminate annihilation is unfounded.

3. We could expose the use of euphemisms, doublespeak, and misinformation in Pentagon briefings, presidential speeches, and the mainstream media. Reporters, politicians, and pundits uncritically use such terms as “defense” rather than “war,” “freedom fighters” rather than “paramilitary groups,” “terrorists” rather than “revolutionaries,” “collateral damage” rather than “civilian casualties,” “stress and duress” rather than “torture,” and “surgical strikes” rather than “missile and bombing attacks,” among many others.

4. We could inspire the general public to learn more about other societies, and to recognize that people in many parts of the world have rejected neoliberal models of economic development and certain World Bank and IMF recommendations. For years, media reports have equated “free trade” with (political) freedom, even when the historical record is replete with free-trading dictatorships, such as Marcos’ Philippines, Salinas’ Mexico, and Suharto’s Indonesia.

5. We could describe the emergence and character of the international power elite, and the social and cultural implications of the corporatization of our government. Like the subjects of C. Wright Mills’ The Power Elite, the contemporary ruling classes may be linked across military, industrial, and political institutions, but today they operate on a truly global scale. For example, the Carlyle Group, a $12 billion private equity firm based in Washington, includes as its advisers former president Fidel Ramos of the Philippines, former South Korean prime minister Park Tae Joon, former British prime minister John Major, former Speaker of the House Thomas Foley, former president George Bush Sr., and former secretary of state James Baker III, among many others. The group represents “a new spin on Washington’s revolving door between business and government, where lobbying by former officials is restricted but soliciting investments is not... Carlyle has upped the ante and taken the practice global.” [71] Another example comes from the massive contracts for postwar reconstruction in Iraq that the Bush administration awarded to Bechtel and Halliburton. Dick Cheney served as the CEO of Halliburton before becoming vice president.[72] In short, there is still much work to be done in tracing the connections between U.S. foreign policy, the financial interests of multinational corporations, and the revolving doors between government, industry, and the military.

A new politics of responsibility requires that intellectuals in general and anthropologists in particular examine global structures of power and acquiescence affecting us all. It also demands that we break the monopoly of ideas, disseminate critical perspectives, and communicate with broader publics. By establishing connections, an informed and revitalized citizenry may still reclaim their roles as protagonists of history. The United States has given the world a vision of democracy that is worth turning into practice—and we can take a leading role. In the words of one anthropologist,

I am aware that this discussion is unconventional anthropology;

but these are unconventional times. We are all involved in unconventional and portentous military and political events... These events have worldwide consequences. It is time that we accepted some unconventional responsibility for our acts, be they acts of commission or of omission.[73]

Accepting this responsibility will help us realize both the potential and the promise of a renewed anthropology.

[58] Catherine Lutz, Homefront: A Military City and the American Twentieth Century (Boston: Beacon Press), p. 4.

[59] Kathleen Gough, “New Proposals for Anthropologists,” Current Anthropology 9, no. 5 (December 1968): 403–407.

[60] It is also true that even before World War II, some anthropologists recognized that using cultural knowledge against field subjects—the use of culture as a weapon—was ethically problematic. For a description of Melville Herskovitz’s writings about this dilemma, see David Price, “Lessons from Second World War Anthropology,” Anthropology Today 18, no. 3 (June 2002): 16. For an early anthropological critique of U.S. imperialism, see

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[61] Noam Chomsky, “The Journalist from Mars,” Extra! 15, no. 2 (April 2002): 10.

[62] Lutz, p. 8.

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[64] Edward Herman and Gerry O’Sullivan, The “Terrorism” Industry (New York: Pantheon Books, 1989), pp. 6–7.

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[69] David Price, “Lessons from Second World War Anthropology,” Anthropology Today 18, no. 3 (June 2002): 20.

[70] Ramsey Clark pointed this out in an interview with Amy Goodman on Democracy Now! (Pacifica Radio), March 20, 2002.

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[72] In April 2003, the CBS news program 60 Minutes reported that the Pentagon awarded a two-year no-bid contract to Halliburton for reconstructing Iraqi oil fields. The contract is worth up to $7 billion. The contract was awarded without competitive bidding. See Steve Kroft, “Halliburton: All in the Family,” 60 Minutes, April 27, 2003.

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** [Back Matter]

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*** Index

Aborigines, Australian, 29

Abu Sayyaf, 231–233

Academic freedom, threats to, 241251

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, (AIDS), 157

Afghanistan, 258: civilian casualties in, 222–225; civil war in, 173–175, 194; condition of women in, 144146, 183–188; consequences of U.S. war, 127, 211–213, 222–225, 248, 258; ethnic composition of, 147148, 173–175; history of, 180–182, 215; Islamic extremists in, 162, 176, 181–182, 189–191, 215; mujahedeen in, 123, 173–175, 182, 215; Pakistani relations with, 177–178, 193, 194–196; politics in, 180–188; reconstruction of, 176–179, 190191; under Taliban rule, 144–149, 173–177; U.N. policies towards, 179–182, 186–187; U.S. policies towards, 123–125, 144, 147–149, 176–179, 189–191, 226–227; war with Soviet Union, 123–125, 173175, 177–178, 189–190, 193–194, 215

Africa: consequences of “war on terror” in, 129, 226–228; foreign investment, 128; natural resources, 128; postcolonial wars, 210; U.S. policies towards, 127–129

Aideed, Mohammed, 88–89 Al-Afghani, Jamal al-Din, 206

Algeria, 217: civil war in, 140–143; condition of women in, 140–143; independence from France, 140; U.S. policies towards, 140–143; violence in, 140–143, 214, 260

Ali, Kamran Asdar, 15, 192

Al Jazeera, 217, 223

Al Qaeda, 34, 175, 211, 221: and globalization, 214–218; as manifestation of global inequality, 166; as revitalization movement, 166; search for, 226; structure of, 160; training camps, 162

American Anthropological Association (AAA), 8, 11, 12, 23: censure of Franz Boas by, 63, 65, 70; collaboration with CIA, 66–67; and Gulf War, 67; Principles of Professional Responsibility, 46, 62, 67–70

American Association of University Professors (AAUP), 246

American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA): blacklist of academics, 17–18, 163, 239–251; history of, 240–241, 243–244

Ammash, Huda, 135

Amnesty International, 2, 140, 142

Andaman Islanders, 29

Andean Regional Initiative, 97, 100

Angola, 265: South African intervention in, 227; U.S. involvement in, 226–227

Anthropologists: as citizen-scholars, 10; and Cold War, 11; and colonialism, 258–259; communication with general public, 8,17–18, 51; diagnoses of U.S. foreign policy, 3–4; employment of, by corporations, 69; involvement in counterinsurgency, 46–49; outreach efforts by, 2–4, 11–19; perspectives of, 4–6; role of in public sphere, 264–267; social responsibility of, 4, 6–12, 24–25, 46–51; as spies, 23–25, 47, 62–70; and Vietnam War, 11, 34, 63; and “war on terror,” 265–267; and World War I, 23–25; and World War II, 10–11, 26, 63, 65–66

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, 219, 221 Appalachia, 2

Arafat, Yasser, 106, 113 Arbenz, Jacobo, 58, 66 Arendt, Hannah, 264 Armed Islamic Group, 140 Arms race, nuclear (See Nuclear arms race)

Arthur Anderson, 9

Arutyunov, Sergei, 16, 197–202 Auerbach, Jerold, 254

Australia, 146

Aziz, Barbara Nimri, 14, 133

Baker, James, 266

Balinese, conflict resolution of, 30 Balkans, 78–81, 159

Bangladeshis, 82

Bantustan, 111, 113

Barnet, Richard, 55

Barth, Fredrik, 19

Bartra, Roger, 2

Basaev, Shamil, 202

Basques, 210

Bateson, Gregory, 10, 65

Batnev, Valery, 198

Bechtel Corporation, 267

Beeman, William O., 15, 16, 147, 158, 205

Bell, Daniel, 168

Benedict, Ruth, 2, 10: involvement in World War II research, 26, 63, 65

Berreman, Gerald, 12, 13, 46, 62, 68

Berthold, Richard, 244

Bethe, Hans, 53, 54

Bin Laden, Osama, 179, 192–193, 249: association with Al Qaeda, 147, 149, 158–160, 173–175, 189, 192–193, 215–217; role in Soviet-Afghan war, 123; role in U.S. embassy bombings, 127; search for, 211–213, 221, 224

Birth defects, in post-war Iraq, 134, 137–138

Blair, Tony, 217

Boas, Franz, 2, 6, 13, 23, 47, 62: censure of by AAA, 63, 65, 70

Bodley, John, 1

Bohannan, Paul, 254

Borofsky, Robert, 2, 19

Bosnia, 142, 162: civil war in, 75–77; territorial integrity of, 76–77

Bosnians, 75–77, 141

Bourdieu, Pierre, 2, 13, 71

Brahimi, Lakhdar, 181

Brainwashing, 34–45

Brazil, 2

Brugmann, Bruce, 255

Burdick, John, 16, 211, 219

Burgan, Mary, 246

Burke, Edmund, 50

Bush, George H. W., 131, 266: presidential administration of, 123–125, 130–132, 208, 210

Bush, George W., 9, 62, 163, 165, 179, 252: Afghanistan policy, 180, 189; Central America policy, 102–104; Colombia policy, 97, 99–100, 221, 252; presidential administration of, 9, 161–164, 205–207, 258–260; withdrawal from Anti-Ballistic

Missile Treaty, 219, 221

Calder, Nigel, 56

Cambodia, 155

Canfield, Robert, 15, 173

Carlyle Group, 266–267

Carrington, Lord, 76

Casey, William, 123

Chechnya: clans, 197–200; Islamic extremism in, 200–202; repression of Muslims in, 215; Sufism in, 197–198, 200–202; Wahhabism in, 197, 200–202; war in, 197–202, 210

Cheney, Lynne, 163, 239–241, 244, 249–250

Cheney, Richard (Dick), 260, 267 Chesnov, Ian, 16, 197–198

Chile, 155

China: nuclear weapons, 219, 221 Chomsky, Noam, 8, 48, 249, 260 Clans, Chechen, 197–200

Clinton, Bill, 58: Balkans policy, 76;

Colombia policy, 93; presidential administration of, 78–80; Somalia policy, 84, 88; Sudan policy, 162

Coca (See Narcotics)

Cold War, 123, 194, 196, 261: consequences in Third World countries, 3, 128; as justification for state terrorism, 226–227; similarity to “war on terror,” 210; and threat of nuclear war, 153–155

Colombia, 214, 258: civil war, 91–104; destruction of crops in, 94, 97–99; human rights abuses by military, 91–93, 94–96; oil corporations in, 99–100; U.S. aid to, 91–101; U.S. counternarcotics efforts, 91–101

Colonialism: anthropological critiques of, 258; British, 193, 205, 260; European, 205–206; French, 205; ideological justifications for, 258; in Middle East, 205–207; Roman, 260; Russian, 205; Spanish, 229–231, 260; United States, 3, 206–207, 230–231, 257–260

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, 117–120, 219

Conflict resolution: ordeal, 32; trial by jury, 32

Cook, Sam, 2

Corporations: influence in U.S. politics, 3, 9, 266–267; mass media, 8, 224, 263; and military-industrial complex, 52–57; oil interests in

Colombia, 99–100; support of scientific research by, 48–49

Cranston, Alan, 54

Croatia, 76

Croats, 76–77

Cultural Survival, 19

Davis, Wade, 15, 165

Dell, Hymes, 12

DeMott, Benjamin, 252

Depleted uranium, 133–134

Detentions: of Arabs and Muslims in U.S., 9; of “enemy combatants” in Guantanamo Bay, 163; of Japanese-Americans in U.S., 250

Development, economic, 3

Diplomacy, preventive, 6, 264

Dowd, Douglas, 47, 50

Drugs, narcotic (See Narcotics)

Dutch Guiana, 31

Edelman, Marc, 14, 102

Edwards, David B., 15, 189

Egypt, 216: response to Middle East crises, 130–132; role in Gulf War, 210; U.S. support for, 206

Eickelman, Dale F., 16, 214

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 11, 55, 261

El-Durrah, Mohammed, 106

El Guindi, Fadwa, 14, 140

Elias, Norbert, 253

El Salvador, 102–103, 248, 260

English-Lueck, Jan, 2

Enron, 9

Environment: impact of Gulf War on, 133–139

Eskimos, lack of warfare among, 28–29

Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting

(FAIR), 263

Famine, in Central America, 102–104

Fear: uses of in contemporary U.S., 261; uses of in Nazi Germany, 261

Fernea, Robert, 14, 130

Foley, Thomas, 266

Fort Bragg (North Carolina), 150

France, 2, 214

Free Trade Area of the Americas, 102–103

Friedman, Thomas, 246

Gates, Henry Louis, Jr., 8

Georgia, 226, 258

Germany, 26, 56, 77

Ghani, Ashraf, 14, 15, 123, 176

Gill, Lesley, 14, 97

Globalization, corporate, 71–72, 102–104, 156

Gonzalez, Roberto J., 16, 222, 239

Goodman, Amy, 183

Gorbachev, Mikhail, 200

Gore, Albert, 252

Gorer, Geoffrey, 27

Gough, Kathleen, 49, 258

Gouldner, Alvin, 51

Guantanamo Bay, 163

Guatemala, 93, 102–103, 155, 265: civil war in, 58; death squads, 58; human rights violations in, 59, 260; indigenous people of, 58–61; political violence in, 59–61, 260; role of CIA in civil war, 58–61

Guevara, Ernesto “Che,” 35

Gulf War, 80, 210: effects on agriculture, 136–137; environmental impact of, 133–139; health effects of, 133–139; response to by AAA, 67; role of Egypt in, 210; role of Saudi Arabia in, 159; Syndrome, 134

Gusterson, Hugh, 14, 16, 117, 247, 257, 264

Haiti, 155, 260

Halliburton Corporation, 267

Halper, Jeff, 14, 108, 112

Haram al-Sharif, 105–106, 108, 160

Harmony, coercive, 252–255

Harner, Michael, 46–47

Harvey, David, 15, 156

Hayden, Robert M., 14, 75, 78

Heckler, Nuriel, 244

Hernandez Lopez, Rafael, 92

Herold, Marc, 223–224

Hogg, Douglas, 193

Honduras, 102–103

Hoover, J. Edgar, 63, 65

Human Relations Area Files (HRAF), 10

Human Rights Watch, 142

Hussein, Saddam, 80, 130–132, 259260

Ibrahim, Saad Eddin, 217

India, 2, 75, 77: conflict with Pakistan, 117; nuclear weapons, 117, 219, 221; under British rule, 181, 193

Indonesia, 102–103, 215, 260, 265: as predominantly Muslim nation, 212, 229

Inequality, economic: in Guatemala, 58; as source of potential conflict, 165–168; inU.S., 9

Institutionalized insanity, 53–54, 264 Intellectuals, public, 1, 8, 47–51 International Court of Justice, 261 International Criminal Court, 262 International Monetary Fund (IMF), 71, 72, 157, 266

Intifada, second, 106, 108, 113

Iran: involvement in Afghan politics, 124–125; relations with Taliban, 147–148; revolution in, 167, support of by U.S., 206

Iraq, 85, 258, 260: agriculture in, 136–137; environmental damage in, 133–139; and Gulf War, 9, 130, 133–139; health crises, 133–136, 137–139; impact of U.N. sanctions on, 133; invasion of Kuwait by, 130–133; post-war instability, 259–260; relationship with U.S., 130–132; Shiite population in, 259; use of poison gas against Kurds, 130; U.S. occupation of, 259–260; U.S. war against, 258–260

Irish, 210

Islamic extremism, 89, 217–218: in Afghanistan, 173–175; Afghan war as recruiting tool for, 181–182, 189–191; in Chechnya, 200–202; in Pakistan, 192, 194–195

Islamic resistance: historical context of, 206–207; in Soviet Union, 200; U.S. support of in Afghanistan, 123–124

Islamic Salvation Front, 140–141 Israel, 80, 158, 160: attacks on Palestinian territories by, 112–113; human rights violations, 109, 113; occupation of Lebanon by, 131; occupation of Palestinian territories by, 105–116, 130–131; suicide bombings in, 106, 112, 115, 214; U.S. aid to, 108, 113–115; U.S. policy towards, 163–164

Jackson, Jesse, 244

Japan, 10, 26, 56, 214

Japanese-Americans, internment of, 10, 250

Jiang, Zemin, 118

Jones, T. K., 54

Kadaffi, Muammar, 234–235

Karim, Wazir, 7

Karzai, Hamid, 176

Kashmir, 215

Kennedy, John F., 55

Kenya, 161, 163: bombing of U.S. embassy in, 127–129, 147

Khan, Abdur Rahman, 181

King, Angela, 185

Kissinger, Henry, 155

Kluckhohn, Clyde, 10, 65

Koran, 167

Kosovo: conflict in, 78–81; ethnic Albanians in, 78–79; history of, 79; NATO bombing of, 78–81; refugees from, 78–80

Kosovo Liberation Army, 78–79

Kurds, 82, 130

Kusov, Oleg, 202

Kuwait, 83, 85: invasion of by Iraq, 130–132; relationship with U.S., 130–132, 206

Kyrgystan, 258

Lakoff, Robin, 254–255

Lamm, Richard, 244

Lebanon, 80, 160, 215: massacre of

Palestinian refugees in, 106; under

Israeli occupation, 131

Leighton, Alexander, 48

Leo, John, 246

Lepchas, lack of warfare among, 28, 30

Levi-Strauss, Claude, 2

Libya, 235, 260

Lieberman, Joseph, 240, 244

Likud party, 105

Living Beyond Culture, 19

Lothrop, Samuel, 63–65

Loya jirga, 183–185

Lutz, Catherine, 15, 153, 260

Lynd, Robert, 49

Macaffrey, Barry, 93

Macedonia, 80

Mack, Myrna, 58

Major, John, 162, 266

Malaysia, 229

Malinowski, Bronislaw, 6

Mamdani, Mahmood, 16, 226

Manhattan Project, 53

Manz, Beatriz, 13, 58

Mao, Zedong, 35

Maori, warfare among, 30

Marijuana (See Narcotics)

Martin, Jerry, 241, 244

Maskhadov, Aslan, 198, 202

Mason, John, 63

Mass media: censorship in, 154;

corporatization of, 8, 224, 263; critiques of, 262–263;

homogenization of, 8; reporting in Afghanistan, 224–225;

self-censorship, 262–263

Mayans, 59–61

McCarthy, Joseph, 243

McCarthyism, 155, 246, 250; in the

post-September 11 era, 242

McGruder, Aaron, 239

McIntosh, Janet, 15, 161

McKenna, Thomas, 16, 229

Mead, Margaret, 2, 6, 11, 13, 65: involvement in World War II research, 10, 26–27

Mejia Victores, Oscar Humberto, 59

Melman, Seymour, 56

Mencken, H. L., 40

Merryman, James, 14, 127

Mexico, 2, 210, 253

Miakhel, Shahmamood, 15, 187

Middle East: conflict in, 105–116;

peace accords, 106, 110, 112, 115

Military-industrial complex, 52–57, 261, 266–267

Mills, C. Wright, 1, 47, 49–50, 51, 266

Milosevic, Slobodan, 78

Minh, Ho Chi, 35

Missile defense shield, 219–221

Misuari, Nur, 232

Moerman, Michael, 67

Montagu, Ashley, 2

Morley, Sylvanus, 63

Morocco, 216–217

Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), 231–235

Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), 231–235

Mozambique: U.S. involvement in, 226–227

Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO), 227

Mujahedeen, 123, 173–175, 182 (See also Islamic resistance)

Murdock, George P., 10

Musharraf, Pervez, 192, 195–196

Nader, Laura, 7, 13, 16, 52, 252, 257, 264

Narcotics, 91; and Colombia, 91–96; U.S. eradication efforts, 94–95, 97–99

Nasser, Abdel, 167

National Liberation Army (Colombia), 100

National Liberation Forces (See Viet Cong)

National Liberation Front (Algeria), 140

National Security Act, 155

National Security Strategy, 259, 264

National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), 227

Neal, Anne, 241, 244

Negroponte, John, 260

Neoliberalism, 71

Nicaragua, 102–103, 265: U.S. involvement in, 226–227, 248

Nolasco, Margarita, 2

North American Treaty Organization (NATO), bombing of Kosovo, 78–81

Northern Alliance, 175, 180: treatment of women by, 181, 186–187

Northern Ireland, 214

Nuclear arms race, 55–56, 120, 153155

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, 119–120

Nuclear Posture Review, 117, 219

Nuclear weapons, 52–57: Chinese, 117–120; impact of in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, 26; Indian, 117120; movement against, 56, 120; Pakistani, 117–120; proliferation of, 219–221; resumption of development by U.S., 117–120, 264; Russian, 117–120; “small-scale,” 264; U.S., 117

Obando y Bravo, Miguel, 103

Occidental Petroleum, 99

Office of Strategic Services (See U.S.

Central Intelligence Agency)

Ogaden War, 86

Oil: in Caspian Sea, 147–149; in Colombia, 99–100; and U.S. foreign policy, 147–149

Omar, Mohammed, 181, 195

Organizational survival, 54–55

Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), 235

Orwell, George, 225, 260–261, 262

Pakistan, 226, 235: conflict with India, 117; Islamic extremism in, 192, 194–195; nuclear weapons, 117, 219, 221; politics in, 192, 194, 195–196; in post-September 11 context, 192–196; relationship with Afghanistan, 177–178, 193, 194–196; relationship with U.S., 192–196; support for Islamic extremists in Afghanistan, 123, 173175; support for Taliban, 147–149, 181, 192, 195, 212

Palestinians: human rights violations of, 109, 113; living conditions of, 108–113; massacre of refugees in Lebanon, 106; restriction of movement, 106–107; unemployment among, 109

Palestinian territories, 158, 215; cantonization of, 108–113; Israeli attacks upon, 112–113; Israeli occupation of, 105–116; Israeli settlements in, 110–111, 113–114

Panama: U.S. involvement in, 248 Park Tae Joon, 266

Patterson, Thomas, 244

Pearl, Daniel, 163

Pearl Harbor, 65, 155

Pedelty, Mark, 263

Pentagon, 2, 158 (See also U.S. Department of Defense)

Perlika, Suralia, 186

Permanent war economy, 55–57

Peru, 64, 214

Philippines: history of, 229–235; Muslim-Christian relations in, 229–235; Muslim separatist movements in, 229–235; Spanish colonialism in, 229–231; U.S. involvement in, 226, 229–231, 258, 260

Pinochet, Augusto, 155

Plains Indians, 31

Plan Colombia, 94–98

Politkovskaya, Anna, 202

Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), 227

Portillo, Alfonso, 103

Powell, Colin, 112, 209, 260

Price, David, 13, 16, 62, 208

Prisoners of war, 35, 39, 40

Project Camelot, 46, 49, 66

Prokosh, Eric, 2

Propaganda, 251: of mass media, 266; of U.S. government, 266; of Viet

Cong, 44–45

Public sphere: role of anthropologists in, 264–267

Pueblo Indians, 29–30

Pushtuns, 148

Qleibo, Ali, 14, 105

Quinonez, Rodrigo, 92

Radnev, Salman, 198

Ramos, Fidel, 266

Rape, 141–143

Rashid, Ahmed, 175

Rather, Dan, 262

Reagan, Ronald, 53, 120

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), 91–93, 95, 97–100

Rickover, Hyman, 54, 55, 57

Rockefeller Foundation, 64

Rumsfeld, Donald, 220, 260

Russia: during czarist era, 181; war in Chechnya, 197–202, 210

Rwanda, 227

Sadiq Odeh, Mohammed, 162

Sahlins, Marshall, 6, 12, 13, 34

Said, Edward, 8

Salamat, Hashim, 232

Sassen, Saskia, 8

Saudi Arabia, 83, 158, 235, 260: and

Gulf War, 159; support for Islamic extremists in Afghanistan, 173175; support for Taliban, 147–149, 212; support of by U.S., 206; U.S.

military bases in, 159

Scheer, Robert, 53–54

Schor, Juliet, 8

Sedition Act, 250

Sen, Amartya, 103

September 11 attacks, 2, 4, 100, 173175, 219, 221, 226: and Al Qaeda, 214–216; as catalyst for “war on terror,” 260; censorship in aftermath of, 241–251, 262–263; and cultural myopia, 165–168; and

Middle East Conflict, 160; motives for attacks, 158–160; symbolic importance of, 263; U.S. response to, 205–207

Serbs, history of, 76; military campaign in Bosnia, 75–76

Shah, Reza, 167

Shah, Zakir, 180

Shahrani, Nazif, 15, 180

Shalikashvili, John, 118

Sharia law, 194

Sharon, Ariel, 105–106, 108, 113, 160, 164

Shorish-Shamley, Zieba, 14, 144, 183

Sierra Leone, 227

Silk Route, 145

Simons, Anna, 14, 82, 84, 88

Sioux, warfare among, 30

Slovenia, 76

Somalia, 226: civil war in, 82–83;

history of, 84–86; relations with Kenya, 83; relations with Kuwait, 83; U.N. involvement in, 84, 86;

U.S. arms shipments to, 82, 86;

U.S. intervention in, 84–90; U.S. withdrawal from, 88–90

Somme, 155

South Africa, 155, 262: involvement in Angola, 227

Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD), 234

Soviet Union, 27: arms race with U.S., 52–53, 153; involvement in Angola, 227; persecution of Muslims in, 200; war in Afghanistan, 123–125, 173–175, 177–178, 189–190, 193–194, 215

Spain, 210, 214

Spinder, Herbert, 63

Sri Lanka, 210, 214

Stalin, Josef, 197, 200

Stavenhagen, Rodolfo, 2

Stiglitz, Joseph, 71

Stockpile Stewardship and Maintenance Program, 119

Sudan, U.S. bombing of, 127, 162

Sufism, 197–198, 200–202

Suicide bombings, Middle East, 106, 112, 115

Taips (See Clans, Chechen)

Tajiks, 148

Taliban, 123, 189–190: ascent to power of, 147–149, 173–177, 180182, 212; human rights violations by, 144–146; Pakistani support of, 192, 195; torture of by U.S. military personnel, 34; treatment of women by, 144–146, 187; U.S. relations with, 144, 176–177, 212–213

Tamils, 210

Tanzania, 227: bombing of U.S. embassy in, 127–129, 147

Tate, Winifred, 14, 91, 94

Teach-in, 18, 34

Temple Mount, 105–106, 108, 160

Tenet, George, 216

Terrorism, 214: in Afghanistan, 191; carried out by states, 59–61, 153155, 209–210, 226–227, 248, 260, 265; in Colombia, 100–101; as label used to

define enemies of Western states, 261; as response to economic coercion, 72; as response to Israeli occupation, 106, 112, 115; as response to U.S. bombing, 211–213, 266; root causes of, 161–169

Thatcher, Margaret, 76

Third World, 3, 128

Thompson, Laura, 65

Torture: by U.S. military personnel, 34; in Vietnam War, 34–45; in Guatemala, 59

Turkey, 79–80, 214, 260

Ukraine, 155

Ul Haq, Zia, 193, 195–196

United Fruit Company, 58

United Kingdom, 206, 210, 214, 259

United Nations: Charter, 262; policies towards Afghanistan, 179182, 186–187; role in stabilizing Algerian civil war, 140–143; Security Council, 9, 259; Security Council Resolution #242, 108; and U.S., 9, 264

United States, 165–169: arms race with Soviet Union, 52–53, 153155; bombing of Sudan by, 127, 162; detentions of Arabs and Muslims in, 9, 163;

disregard of international law, 259, 262; importance of oil in foreign policy, 147–149; inequality in, 9; intervention in Somalia, 84–90; legal reform in, 253; Middle East foreign policy, 130–132, 165–169, 205–207; military expansion of, 258–260; occupation of Iraq, 259260; and “permanent state of war,” 153–155; permanent war economy in, 55–56; policies towards Afghanistan, 176–179; policies towards African countries, 127–129; policies towards Colombia, 91–101; policies towards Philippines, 229–231; political system, 9; relations with Afghanistan, 147–149, 176–179; relations with Islamic world, 158–160; relations with Israel, 163–164; relations with Pakistan, 192–196; and rise of Taliban, 176–177; support for client states, 153–155; support for mujahedeen and Taliban, 123–125, 147–149; and U.N., 262; unilateralism, 259, 264; use of violence against other countries, 156–157, 248, 266; war in Afghanistan, 127, 211–213, 222–225; war in Gulf, 210; war with Iraq, 258–260; war in Vietnam, 34–45

U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 9, 10–11, 224, 265: collaboration with AAA, 66–67; role in Guatemalan civil war, 58–61; role in supporting mujahedeen, 173175, 192; and September 11 attacks, 161–162

U.S. Department of Defense, 2, 54, 78, 86, 134, 222–224: Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, 259

U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 161, 246

U.S. Department of State, 66, 78, 86, 100, 142

U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 9, 243; files on anthropologists, 63; and September 11 attacks, 161–162

U.S. Office of War Information, 10, 66

U.S. War Relocation Authority, 10 Uzbekistan, 258

Vance, Cyrus, 76

Venezuela, 258

Viet Cong, 35, 38, 41, 77, 108

Vietnam, 10, 34–45, 49–50, 108, 155: coffee production, 102–103; U.S. war in, 35–45, 248

Vietnamese Popular Forces, 35

Wahhabism, 123, 197, 200–202 (See also Islamic extremism)

Wakin, Eric, 67

War: in Afghanistan, 127, 211–213, 222–225; in Chechnya, 199–200; continuous, 261–262; as cultural invention, 26–33; on drugs, 91–96; in Guatemala, 58–61; in Iraq, 210, 258–260; nuclear, 26, 52–57, 153; permanent, 153–155, 261–262; and racism, 154; veterans' attitudes towards, 153; in Vietnam, 34–45 "War on terror," 3, 9, 113, 205–207, 210: and abridgement of human rights, 215–216; and anti-U. S. sentiment, 161–164; Chinese response to, 208–210; consequences in African countries, 129, 226–228; consequences in Chechnya, 209210; consequences in Colombia, 97; consequences for indigenous peoples and minorities, 208–210; consequences in Philippines, 229; consequences on Third World countries, 3; historical context of, 205–207, 260; as reaction to September 11 attacks, 260; risk of using cultural knowledge for, 265; Russian response to, 208—210; similarities to Cold War, 210;

U.N. response to, 209

Watkins, Joe, 68

West, Cornel, 8

Willey, Gordon, 64

Williams, James, 27

Williams, Patricia J., 8

Wilson, Charles E., 55

Wilson, Robert, 53

Wilson, Woodrow, 24

Wolak, Frank, 255

Wolf, Eric, 12, 47

Wolfowitz, Paul, 260

Women: atrocities against in Algerian civil war, 140–143; role of in Afghanistan, 183–188; treatment of by Northern Alliance, 181, 186–187; treatment of by Taliban, 144–146, 187

Women’s Alliance for Peace and Human Rights in Afghanistan, 183

World Bank, 71, 72, 102–103, 157, 266

World Health Organization (WHO), 187

World Trade Center, 2, 158

Worsely, Peter, 27

Yakhyev, Said, 201

Yemen, 226, 258

York, Herbert, 53, 54

Yugoslavia: conflict in, 75–77; disintegration of, 75–77

Zapatistas, 210

Zapotecs, 253

Zawahiri, Ayman, 216

Zimmerman, Warren, 76

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*** Contents

Authors

Editor’s Introduction

Adam Garfinkle

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s Snowflake of October 16, 2003

LANDSCAPES

1 Bush Is Right: Democracy Is the Answer

Amir Taheri

2 Terrorism: Sources and Cures

Graham E. Fuller

3 Liberalism and the War on Terrorism

Lisa Anderson

4 International Humanitarian Legal Standards and the Principle of Global Ethics in the War on Terrorism

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Michele Durocher Dunne

COUNTRY PORTRAITS

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Dale F. Eickelman

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M. A. Muqtedar Khan

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Ellen Laipson

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Robert Satloff

LAST EXHIBIT

16 Anti-Americanism, U.S. Foreign Policy, and the War on Terrorism

Adam Garfinkle

Index

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*** Editor’s Introduction

As virtually everyone is now prepared to admit, the problem of dealing with the threat of terrorism in an age of extant and potential weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation is daunting. As conceived by the U.S. government, this problem, in practical policy terms, has two main parts: the military (or “kinetic,” as it is called in the Pentagon) parts, and all the other parts.

The kinetic part is easily defined: using the military to kill terrorists “with a global reach,” disrupt their infrastructure, and dissuade those who fund terrorists and their state sponsors upon threat (and occasionally actual visitation) of physical injury.

The nonkinetic parts are often euphemized as the “drain the swamp” or, better, the “hearts and minds” problem. These nonmilitary aspects focus on terrorism’s motivation and recruitment patterns, the sociology of terrorist groups that leads them to mobilize, compete, and strike; and the underlying social conditions said to feed that motivation and those recruitment patterns.

The kinetic and nonkinetic aspects of the war on terrorism are clearly related. If a potential terrorist realizes that he will very likely fail in his political aims and stand a good chance of dying for his efforts, this, it may be presumed, will reduce his incentive to engage in terrorism.

However, the military side of the war against terrorism is only a necessary, not a sufficient, aspect of the solution. Weapons of mass destruction are activated by ideas of mass destruction, and these ideas arise from a complex of historical and social factors. Ideas of mass destruction,

however, are not inevitable, and U.S. government policy can be formed to minimize their production and activation.

Such policy concerning the nonkinetic aspects of the war on terrorism is not a sidebar to the war on terrorism but a crucial part of it. If such actions are not taken, the military aspects of the war on terrorism could end up increasing the motivation for terrorism and recruitment into terrorist organizations. Clearly, while some potential terrorists will think better of bucking American power, others may be encouraged by some combination of personality traits, religious beliefs, and social context to seek out martyrdom in the face of a superior but alien power. This is why overthrowing the Taliban regime and eliminating a regime in Iraq with a long history of support for terrorism (if not specifically for al Qaeda) must be construed as merely a start in the war on terrorism—and not an entirely clear-cut start, at that. To recall Churchill's famous remark, these two campaigns may be "the end of the beginning," but they are unlikely to be seen in historical perspective as anything more than that.

Now, what about that social context? No honest observer can doubt that a range of social and political pathologies afflicts the Muslim and particularly the Arab world. This affliction is attested to most vividly by Muslims and Arabs themselves. Although the motivation for terrorism is obviously related to these pathologies, it is not identical to them. After all, these social pathologies existed before terrorism became a serious national security concern of the United States and its allies; so it follows that terrorism is not an inevitable by-product of such problems. Moreover, it will take generations to deal with the social and political problems of the greater Middle East, but dealing with mass-casualty terrorism cannot wait generations. For practical purposes, then, the problem of terrorism is separable, and must be separated, from the general issue of the social and political modernization of the Muslim and Arab worlds.

Getting at the nonkinetic aspects of the war on terrorism can be conceived as consisting of immediate, midterm, and long-term parts. The essence at all stages, however, appears to be fourfold:

Stigmatize the idea of murdering civilians for any political cause whatsoever, just as slavery, piracy, and human ritual sacrifice were so stigmatized in previous generations.

1. Identify and stop the flow of money and other resources at all levels from those who approve of terrorism to those who carry it out, redirecting that money and those resources to positive ends, as possible.

1. Refute, tirelessly and skillfully, the almost endless distortions of U.S. policies and motivations that are promulgated by Islamist propagandists (and others) and that inexorably make Americans and their allies targets of hatred and violence.

1. Work patiently at social, economic, and political reform (generally in that order) in Muslim-majority countries and among Muslim communities outside the Middle East and South Asia where terrorist cadres are known to have arisen.

The way U.S. and allied governments go about these basic tasks may involve many methods. One method has to do with persuasion and pressure at the private diplomatic level, especially as regards financial flows and other kinds of support for terrorism. This persuasion and pressure are where the kinetic and nonkinetic aspects of the war on terrorism have their most obvious relation. From the very start, the use of force, first in Afghanistan and then in Iraq, was designed to have both literal and demonstration effects. The demonstration effects were to flow from the literal effects, addressed to regimes such as those in Syria, Sudan, Libya, and Iran, for whom support for terrorism has been at some level not ideological but tactical and opportunistic. This method was one element of the Bush Doctrine, as it came to be called.[1]

At its inception, this intended demonstration effect was much maligned by critics. But look at what has happened. Sudan quickly turned state’s evidence in private to the United States, and the significant progress made toward ending Sudan’s civil war on reasonable terms owes much to the

reduction of Khartoum’s demands. In the background to the decisions made by the Sudanese government, there hovered implicitly an American “or else.”

The Libyan decision in early March 2003 to do a dramatic about-face on support for terrorism and its WMD efforts looks to be another case in point of the diplomatic power of the American “or else.” In this case, British and U.S. diplomacy played a major role in what deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage called “muscular multilateralism.”

The Iranian decision to come at least partly clean on its own secret nuclear weapons program, as well as on its deliberate long-standing deception of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), seems to follow in train. Syria remains problematic in many ways, but grabbing al Qaeda operatives with $23 million and letting this be known, as happened in December 2003, can be interpreted as an insurance policy against being next on the list of an American axis of evil. Many in Washington hope that the regime in Pyongyang will get the message, too.

Power is important, and using it to win is very important. But much of what is required to win the war against terrorist recruiting and support cannot usefully be thought of as a spinoff of military efforts. Much of what is required is informational in nature. Some has to do with radio, television, and print media aimed at Muslim and Arab audiences. Some has to do with embassy outreach programs and related activities. Partnerships between government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), or outright private sector efforts, may make sense for many activities in which heavy and direct government participation may be unwise.

In all these methods, however, energy should be directed toward engaging and supporting religious, educational, intellectual, and cultural elites to stigmatize terrorism in ways that resonate with indigenous values and metaphors. The “brand America” method, which relies on Madison Avenue trope, will not work, because it too much reminds listeners of the materialist culture they tend to identify as the problem.

The purpose of this book is to aid in the development not only of general ideas but also of practical steps to undermine the fetid intellectual basis that sustains the grotesque notion that terrorism is a legitimate method of political struggle. We can disrupt and minimize recruitment patterns to terrorism organizations, and, less certainly and with more difficulty, we can affect the underlying conditions that lead some people to wander in such a direction.

To do so will take a major intellectual effort and then an equally serious effort to operationalize our knowledge. If it is to succeed, this effort cannot afford two types of vulgarity: that of anti-Muslim stereotyping and that of left-wing political correctness, where unpleasant truths may not be uttered in polite company. Such unfettered efforts are currently taking place in government, to be sure. Unfortunately, these efforts have not been making as much headway as even their champions would like, nor as much as they admit. They need and want help. The secretary of defense said so himself in his famous leaked “snowflake” of October 2003. This book is designed to be an answer, at least in part, to that snowflake, the full text of which is provided at the end of this introduction.

I want to acknowledge the support of the Hoover Institution and the encouragement of its director, John Raisian, in the development and publication of this book as part of its National Security Forum series. A debt of gratitude is also due Tod Lindberg, editor of Policy Review and a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, for his discerning editorial counsel. And, of course, I want to thank all the contributing authors who, despite already busy schedules, took the time to prepare essays for this volume.

Rather than put together a standard Hoover Institution collection of ten or twelve essays, each about 5,000 words in length, I have roughly doubled the number of essays and roughly halved their average length. I did this to involve a greater number of perspectives, for many perspectives are needed to do the subject justice. Moreover, as those who have worked in senior government positions know, principal decision makers do not typically read lengthy analytical discourses; they read memos. Therefore, I wanted the essays in this book to be closer to the literary form to which senior decision

makers are accustomed, hoping to make it more likely that at least some decision makers will read them.

I also selected authors all of whom can work in at least one Middle Eastern language and whose intimacy with the social settings and political cultures involved is beyond question. I did this, I confess, because of a lingering irritation. There has been a great and natural surge of interest in all things Middle Eastern and Islamic since September 11, 2001, and a horde of clever but often untutored journalists has risen to satisfy that interest. The results have not been particularly edifying. One simply cannot learn the nuances of the Middle East and of Islamic culture in a few days, weeks, or even months under the pressure of a magazine deadline. Those who think they can, or think they have actually done so, only illustrate how truly clueless they are: What they do know is so modest that they cannot fathom what they do not know. Thus, my decision as to author qualification is not no to journalists (there are some represented here), but rather no to amateurs.

I asked some authors to focus on the diplomatic aspects, some on media and information management, and some on educational and religious aspects of the problem. I asked some to focus on particular countries or questions. I asked all to consider immediate, midterm, and longer-term aspects of the problem. Most of all, I asked all authors to write as though they were addressing senior policy makers; I asked them to write crisply, to the point, and as specifically as the venue allowed. I also asked them to write quickly, so that we would not get stuck, as is so typical, in a drawn-out process that would render many ideas and proposals obsolete before their time.

I got some of what I asked for. But not every writer I invited accepted. Not all who accepted produced an essay. Not everyone was as crisp, as specific, and as quick as I had hoped. This has left some gaps, geographical and thematic, in the result. No essay focuses on Egypt or on Afghanistan, for example, which is unfortunate. Shutting down terrorist finances is not covered in as detailed a fashion as I had hoped, because little that one can say about this effort in public is worth saying, and what is worth saying cannot be said in public. The same goes for many aspects of intelligence and law-enforcement cooperation across borders.

There is more than I expected in the volume about public diplomacy; there is also more controversy over methods than I expected. The release of the Djerejian Report on public diplomacy, sponsored by secretary of state Colin L. Powell, after this project began but before it was completed, has only raised the prominence of the subject; but alas, obviously, for reasons of timing, the authors in this book were unable to attend fully to that report.[2]

I do not agree with everything said in this book, but I have seen my role as editor as that of intellectual impresario, not as censor. To use a sartorial metaphor, I have chosen the fabrics and defined the kinds of garments to be made, but I have neither crafted nor worn them.

I have also had a difficult time deciding on an order of presentation, not least because those who looked at specific countries did not leave off commenting more generally (which is good), and those who aimed to comment more generally sometimes invoked specific examples (which is also good). Though these are good traits, it makes for tremulous organization of the collection as a whole.

This does not disturb me, however, and it should not disturb you, dear reader. This book’s imperfect cohesion reflects well, I think, where the country and the world are with regard to this problem: colloquially put, both are all over the place, which is part of the problem. (In any event, beyond this introduction, I decided to put my own two cents into this collection to make up for its frailties, to the extent I can.)

For all of the book’s imperfections, the result is still a valuable one. The range and quality of the analyses, the sophistication of the disagreements, and the nuggets of specific proposals in this volume justify the effort exerted to produce it. Moreover, the fact that the collection works as a kind of political Rorschach test has a value of its own. Put this cluster of questions, as I did, before a group of experienced and intelligent men and women from America, Europe, and the Middle East, ask them to be practically minded and swift in their response, and this, exactly, is what you

get. Years from now, perhaps, those wiser from experience than we are today will learn something just from that alone. One may hope so, anyway.

Adam Garfinkle Washington, D.C. December 25, 2003

[1] See the remarks of Richard Perle, “After September 11: A Conversation,” The National Interest, no. 65-S (Thanksgiving 2001): 84.

[2] The formal title of this report is Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab & Muslim World (Washington, D.C.: Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Muslim World, October 1, 2003).

*** Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s Snowflake of October 16, 2003

TO: Gen. Dick Myers; Paul Wolfowitz; Gen. Pete Pace; Doug Feith

FROM: Donald Rumsfeld

SUBJECT: Global War on Terrorism

The questions I posed to combatant commanders this week were: Are we winning or losing the Global War on Terror? Is DoD changing fast enough to deal with the new 21st century security environment? Can a big institution change fast enough? Is the USG changing fast enough?

DoD has been organized, trained and equipped to fight big armies, navies and air forces. It is not possible to change DoD fast enough to successfully fight the global war on terror; an alternative might be to try to fashion a new institution, either within DoD or elsewhere—one that seamlessly focuses the capabilities of several departments and agencies on this key problem.

With respect to global terrorism, the record since Septermber 11th seems to be:

- We are having mixed results with Al Qaida, although we have put considerable pressure on them—nonetheless, a great many remain at large.

- USG has made reasonable progress in capturing or killing the top 55 Iraqis.

- USG has made somewhat slower progress tracking down the Taliban—Omar, Hekmatyar, etc.

- With respect to the Ansar Al-Islam, we are just getting started.

Have we fashioned the right mix of rewards, amnesty, protection and confidence in the US?

Does DoD need to think through new ways to organize, train, equip and focus to deal with the global war on terror?

Are the changes we have and are making too modest and incremental? My impression is that we have not yet made truly bold moves, although we have made many sensible, logical moves in the right direction, but are they enough?

Today, we lack metrics to know if we are winning or losing the global war on terror. Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassas and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?

Does the US need to fashion a broad, integrated plan to stop the next generation of terrorists? The US is putting relatively little effort into a long-range plan, but we are putting a great deal of effort into trying to stop terrorists. The cost-benefit ratio is against us! Our cost is billions against the terrorists' costs of millions.

- Do we need a new organization?

- How do we stop those who are financing the radical madrassa schools?

- Is our current situation such that "the harder we work, the behinder we get"?

It is pretty clear that the coalition can win in Afghanistan and Iraq in one way or another, but it will be a long, hard slog.

Does CIA need a new finding?

Should we create a private foundation to entice radical madrassas to a more moderate course?

What else should we be considering?

Please be prepared to discuss this at our meeting on Saturday or Monday.

Thanks.

* Landscapes

** 1. Bush Is Right: Democracy Is the Answer

Amir Taheri

On April 9, 2003, Muslims throughout the world watched with a mixture of shock and awe as a statue of the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was pulled down in the center of Baghdad. Few may have regretted the fall of the statue. Islam bans images and icons as symbols of shirk, or pantheism—the gravest of sins in Muhammad’s strict monotheistic vision. There is another reason few lamented the regime: Saddam’s reign of terror had entered Islamic history as one of the blackest chapters of the postcolonial era.

So it is true that the Muslim world felt shock and awe, but not in the way the U.S. military intended. The actual feelings they felt and the reasons for those feelings need to be carefully understood.

*** Shock and Awe: The Real Thing

The shock and awe that many Muslims felt that April was real enough. It was as if the clock of history had been turned back to the early days of colonialism in the nineteenth century. For the first time in more than eight decades, Western armies were marching into the capital of a major Muslim state with the express mission of overthrowing its regime.

The entry of the American-led army into Baghdad had a far more dramatic effect than the Red Army's march into Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan, on Christmas Eve 1979. Back then, appearances had been preserved: a puppet Afghan regime had invited the Soviets to intervene, ostensibly to ward off attacks from Pakistan. In addition, most Muslims see Afghanistan as a wild realm—they call it "the land of insolence"—on the margins of Islam. Iraq, however, is regarded by many as the very heart of the Muslim world, recalling the "golden era" when Baghdad was the capital of an Islamic empire stretching from China to the Mediterranean Sea.

There was another reason for shock and awe. Whereas no one had seen the Soviet entry in Kabul on live television, the U.S.-led conquest of Baghdad, after just three weeks of what looked like an easy march from Kuwait, was broadcast live and watched by hundreds of millions of viewers.

*** The Muslim Debate

No one knows how long the shock-and-awe effect of Iraq's liberation may last in the Muslim world. What is certain is that the events of April 2003 could have an enduring effect on Muslims in general and Arabs in particular. What happened in Iraq could either work as a wake-up call to Muslims, especially Arabs, or serve as the leaven for a fresh bread of bitterness.

Both possibilities are present in the torrent of Arab and Muslim comment that preceded, accompanied, and followed the liberation of Iraq. There have been many calls on Arabs and Muslims in general to use the occasion for posing questions about their place in a world built and managed by "others." Some commentators have called on Muslims to adopt the cause of social, political, and economic reform and to attempt a long overdue aggiornomento.[3] Others have called for the opposite, demanding that Muslims close ranks, further distance themselves from the "alien world," and nurse their chagrin in the hope that, one day, Allah shall offer them an opportunity for revenge.[4]

A period of introspection and stocktaking may well be useful for both Muslims and the coalition of democracies led by the United States. Sooner or later, however, the two sides will have to enter into a dialogue to review their relations and work out a new modus vivendi.

What should that dialogue really be about?

In the year that preceded the American-led intervention in Iraq, the George W. Bush administration advanced a number of at times contradictory reasons and claims to justify the war. The main reason put forward in the diplomatic arena was that Hussein's regime had violated seventeen UN resolutions and was building an arsenal of forbidden weapons. Those reasons were, and remain, justified. But the principal reason for the U.S.-led intervention must be sought in the Bush administration's national security doctrine.

Shaped in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the Bush Doctrine identifies global terrorism, sponsored or supported by "rogue states," as the principal threat to U.S. and global security. The analysis on which the doctrine is based asserts that only the dismantling of the rogue regimes and their replacement with democracies can once and for all remove the threat of global terrorism. That is because democracies do not sponsor terrorism, nor do democracies become bases of aggression against each other. Seen in that context, the regime change in Baghdad is only a first step on a long road that is to lead, first, to the establishment of a democratic system in Iraq and, then, to democratization throughout the Arab and Muslim worlds.

This, of course, is precisely what President Bush declared to be his goal in his November 6, 2003, speech at the National Endowment for Democracy. This goal constitutes a generational commitment to a vast program, one that is bound to go beyond President Bush's second term, provided he is reelected.

With few exceptions, the Muslim world, and the Arab countries in particular, represent an area of darkness as far as democratization is concerned. Few in the Muslim world have been touched by the historic changes that started with the fall of the Berlin Wall. Nor have many of them adapted well to the

economic changes introduced under globalization since the 1990s. The Muslim world, representing some 18 percent of the planet's population, accounts for almost 70 percent of the globe's political prisoners and more than 80 percent of the world's political executions. Of the fifty-three predominantly Muslim countries, only two, Bangladesh and Turkey, hold reasonably fair elections that lead to orderly changes of government.

Most Muslim countries have also experienced economic stagnation or decline in the past twenty years, as their demography has spiraled out of control. A by now well-known UN-sponsored report on human development in the Arab world, published in 2002, told a tale of woe about countries that, though endowed with immense natural resources, live close to starvation with little prospects of sustained development.[5]

To assert further that the Muslim world provides fertile ground for terrorism is an understatement. In at least thirty Muslim countries, terrorism, practiced either by the state or its opponents, is an integral part of political life. In several others, more classical forms of violence, including political murder, are used in the context of an often zoological struggle for power. A string of transnational terrorist groups enjoy varying degrees of support and maintain different types of logistical, financial, and training bases in a number of Muslim countries.

At the same time, the Muslim world really is the theater of what could be described as a civil war of ideas between modernizers, who preach democratization, and traditionalists, who urge Muslims to wall themselves in and adopt a defensive attitude toward what they regard as a hostile international system. Although this is not the first time this debate has been started, it is a peculiar debate this time around. For the first time in decades, perhaps a few centuries even, none of the Muslim countries can claim a leadership role and offer a coherent world vision. Traditionally, three Muslim countries—Iran, Turkey, and Egypt—have offered the Muslim world intellectual leadership in political and cultural fields. Today, however, none is in a position to do so.

Iran finds itself in an historic impasse under a discredited regime. Turkey has set aside its Muslim credentials in favor of European ambitions shared even by the neo-Islamist coalition now in power. Egypt, under a septuagenarian dictator, has lost even its traditional audience in the Arab world. One other country that might have provided a measure of leadership is Saudi Arabia, but this kingdom is politically paralyzed under a geriatric leadership that has proved unable to shape a vision for its own country, let alone the Muslim world as a whole.

*** The Right American Role

Since the Muslims cannot drive their own debate to a useful conclusion, the United States must push them to do it—and it should, not least because the Bush administration’s central thesis is correct: democratization is essential, not only for American security but also for social and economic development in the Muslim world. The question is how to bring about that democratization.

The Iraqi experience may or may not work, though I think it will. Provided the United States is prepared to stay the course, as it did in postwar Germany and Japan, President Bush’s dream of transforming Iraq into a model of democracy for the Muslim world has a decent chance of success. But obviously, the United States cannot invade all Muslim states and occupy them long enough to establish democratic institutions, and the demonstration effect of a successful Iraqi democracy will not, by itself, be enough to reshape the region.

At the same time, the Muslim world simply cannot work its way out of the historic impasse in which it finds itself without outside help, at least not in the foreseeable future. In a sense, the Muslim world today resembles the Communist bloc in the late 1980s. Obvious differences notwithstanding, both exhibit a bankrupt ideology, corrupt elites, and economic decline—all combined with a growing desire at the base for opening to the West and seeking a share in the freedom and prosperity offered by the modern world. Perhaps this similarity offers a clue as to what to do.

Toward the end of the 1960s, the Western democracies decided to engage the Communist bloc in a network of relationships that went beyond the confrontational approach of the early Cold War. The new approach led to the diplomatic recognition of Communist China, the “opening to the East” exercise in Germany, and, more broadly, the policy of détente developed by the first Nixon administration.

A case could be made (and certainly was made) that these exercises merely prolonged the life of the Soviet bloc by providing it with economic aid, credit facilities, access to markets, and, perhaps more important, a presumption of moral equality with the West. Those who support that argument insist that the Soviet bloc ultimately collapsed because it could not meet the military, economic, and ethical challenge presented by a confrontational Reagan administration in the 1980s.

Many have considered the two trajectories of U.S. policy from the late 1960s to the late 1980s as contradictory. In retrospect, however, the two paths appear more as two phases of a dialectical movement. The policy of détente obliged the Soviet bloc to adhere to minimum rules of conduct that it might have otherwise rejected. Those rules promoted standards for behavior both inside and outside the bloc. The dissident movements could take shape without fear of executions and mass deportations, as had been the case in the Stalinist era. Advocates of change within the Soviet bloc knew that they were not alone and that the Western democracies regarded them as allies. The prospect of Soviet tanks again rolling into the capitals of Eastern Europe, as they had done in 1956 and 1968, receded. Reagan’s confrontational approach succeeded partly because the Soviet bloc had become so dependent on the West in trade, economic, technological, and diplomatic terms and partly because, thanks to Western penetration of various kinds, the Kremlin lost its verve, its self-confidence, and its own sense of moral singularity.

*** Encore! Another Final Act

One key element of détente consisted of negotiations that led to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. Though not a binding treaty, it was, in a sense perhaps,

more important: It promulgated standards of behavior that could not be ignored. It took the political debate out of the ideological context, fixed by Marxist-Leninists, by emphasizing rules that would one day be claimed by Mikhail Gorbachev as “universal values.” The question is: Can the Muslim world be engaged in a similar dialogue, leading to accords similar to those of the Helsinki Final Act?

The question merits consideration. Muslim states need political, social, and cultural reforms. They need to review their behavior at home and abroad. But few, even if they had the incentive, enjoy the legitimacy and the political strength to propose such reforms, let alone to implement them.

Nevertheless, all Muslim states are signatories to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to almost all the conventions drafted to implement it. It is no mystery, however, that almost all of those states violate the spirit and the letter of the declaration on a daily basis. It is important for the democratic world to insist that Muslim states honor their own signatures and respect their own commitments. Muslim states must be made to understand that there is a global public space regulated by international law that, though respectful of religious and cultural diversity, rejects transgression in the name of “alterity.”

Committing the Muslim states to something like the Helsinki Final Act would be only the first step. The democracies also need to review their overall relations with the Muslim world, not least the political aspects of the West’s high-end commercial relationships, especially with the Arabs.

For some major industrial nations, the Muslim world is nothing but a source of raw materials, notably oil, and a lucrative though distorted and lawless market. Some Western businesses, including major multinationals, have violated many rules when it comes to dealing with Muslim states. For example, Muslim states account for almost 27 percent of all arms purchases outside the NATO area. It is no mystery, too, that more than a thousand Western and Russian companies helped build Saddam Hussein’s war machine, including his nuclear center of Osirak. As is well known, or ought to be, France built Osirak after Jacques Chirac, then prime minister, signed an

agreement with Saddam Hussein, then vice president of Iraq, in 1975. There are striking photographs of that day that make for most interesting viewing.

Muslim despots are very much encouraged by the lack of courage that some Western governments show in attempting to defend and promote democratic values and human rights. The European Union, for example, has agreed to change the label it uses for talks with Iran from “critical dialogue” to “comprehensive dialogue” to please the mullahs, who believe they are above criticism. Although the EU has feigned toughness in dealing with the Iranian nuclear weapons program, it refuses to call obvious Iranian violations of the Nonproliferation Treaty what they are. The EU also refuses to seriously hold up the implementation of trade arrangements over the matter. The EU’s view toward the Iranian mullahs closely resembles the fellow who keeps feeding carrot soup to a lion in the belief that the lion will eventually become a vegetarian.

Unrolling the red carpet for despots, including those open to charges of crimes against humanity, and visiting them in their capitals to pay respect are other signs of European cowardice when it comes to upholding the values that provided the backbone of the Helsinki Final Act.

This is not an entirely new idea, by the way. Committing the Muslim nations to common standards of behavior was one of the goals pursued by the late Malaysian prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, who subsequently became secretary-general of the Islamic Conference Organization. In 1970, Abdul Rahman circulated the text of a proposed charter that spelled out an “Islamic understanding” of human rights and that committed the Muslim states to a wide range of reforms. The proposed charter envisaged the nonrecognition of regimes created through military coups d’état and sanctions against governments found guilty of violating the basic rights of citizens. The proposal went nowhere because most Muslim states saw the risks as too high and the rewards as illusory.

Turgut Özal, then Turkey’s prime minister, made a similar proposal in 1986. But he, too, achieved little success because his call for reform was not backed by economic and military power.

Since then, various Muslim states have committed themselves to similar standards of behavior by joining a variety of regional groupings that include Western and other non-Muslim powers. These groupings include the Barcelona process and the Asia-Pacific summit. In addition, the EU has concluded bilateral accords with a number of Muslim states. It is important now to link all those accords and reinforce them in the form of a single memorandum of understanding between the Muslim world and the major democratic powers. Such a memorandum would provide the terms of reference that the democratic world could use to provide moral and material support for the growing reform movements in the Muslim world. Military action against some despotic regimes may still be necessary, but the idea that the Muslim world could be democratized through military invasion and occupation, on the Iraqi model, is unrealistic, to say the least.

In most Muslim countries today, there are identifiable democratic forces that the major democracies must support. Establishing contacts with thousands of nongovernmental organizations in the context of a people-to-people relationship will enable the democracies to help strengthen civil society in many Muslim countries. The time to pursue these goals is now.

This scenario is possible. Everyone who cares about this subject, which, after all, will define much about our future, must realize that the debate between the Muslim world and the democracies is not a theological one. Whatever version of Islam may be in the ascendancy in the Muslim world at present is irrelevant to the purpose at hand. People are, and ought to be, free to believe whatever they like. What concerns the rest of the world is the effect of any set of beliefs on the international public space. And there lies the problem. The Muslim world is sinking in economic failure, political despotism, cultural turpitude, and social crisis—all of which produce violence and terrorism. To emerge from this quagmire, Muslim states need a helping hand. It is in the best interests of the democracies to offer that helping hand. No time like the present.

[3] Among those who have sounded the wake-up call are such columnists as Turki al-Hamad, Abdul-Rahman al-Rashed, and Bakr Oweida among the Arabs and Ahmad Ahrar, Abdul-Karim Sorush, and Emadeddin Baqi in Iran.

[4] The theme of a defensive wall has been hammered in by sympathizers of the now largely defunct al Qaeda terrorist organization, but it has received some support from more traditionalist Islamic thinkers, such as the Moroccan Muhammad Abed al-Jaberi.

[5] The UN Development Programme report on Human Development in the Arab Countries, 2002.

** 2. Terrorism: Sources and Cures

Graham E. Fuller

Terrorism is a method of political struggle or warfare available to any player, including individuals, groups, and states. Its history is as old as human conflict. Yet terrorism has taken on greater salience with the increasing ability of small groups to employ ever more dangerous and lethal forms of attack against the public or the state.

Furthermore, terrorism is a great equalizer of power. It is, colloquially put, the poor man’s weapon. Not surprisingly, great powers tend to be far more distressed at the potential equalization of power afforded by terrorism than are small powers. This was clearly demonstrated when the United States was itself targeted by terrorism; only then did the U.S. government define terrorism as a serious global problem. Before terrorism was directly targeted against its own homeland, Washington did not consider it a serious problem, even though many other countries had suffered such attacks for decades.

In addition, America’s international strategy under the Bush administration has increased both the profile and the problem posed by terrorism.

Dominated by a neoconservative philosophy and a strategic global vision of unparalleled ambition to remake the world, U.S. policy has, ironically, increasingly become a lightning rod for global terrorism, propagating the “global” nature of the problem. This increase has become even more evident as American soldiers on patrol in Iraq can now be attacked by foreign guerrillas on a more level playing field than ever before.

In short, terrorism is, and has always been, a problem; but it is the victimization of the United States itself, which sits atop the international power hierarchy, that has made terrorism a more prominent and pressing issue. The reaction of the United States in launching the global war on terrorism has raised the profile of the terrorism issue to unprecedented heights, so that it now dominates most aspects of the Bush administration’s foreign policy.

*** Problems of Definition

Analyses of terrorism—and ascriptions as to its causes and remedies—are hampered by an absence of any agreed-upon definitions. As a consequence, casual and arbitrary invocations of the term terrorism tend to serve the interests of the speaker. Those who possess the power to define the problem are well positioned to define the solution, even when there is considerable disagreement on the matter.

Nonetheless, at a minimum, most observers would agree that terrorism involves attacks against “innocent” civilians and noncombatants in the fulfillment of political goals. Many insist that terrorism, by definition, can be conducted only by nonstate actors, but a serious treatment of the phenomenon cannot exclude the use of “terror” by the state itself against its own or other citizens. In this case, the broader definition is better: the failure to include terror perpetrated by the state exculpates the state from what may be one primary cause of terrorism.

Westerners socialized into certain articles of faith about the nature of the Western state have trouble accepting the idea that the state itself could be

capable of terrorism. Specifically, we learn from Weberian traditions that the state, by definition, has a “monopoly over the legal use of violence.” Such a definition enjoys understandable resonance in the West precisely because most Western states represent the will of the public as expressed in free elections. Electorates have the ability to remove unwanted or dangerous leaders. The democratic state is expected to act in a fair and impartial way and hence should be the sole instrument entrusted with the use of violence against its own citizens.

In most of the rest of the world, however, regimes are not elected, lack basic democratic legitimacy, cannot be removed by the public at large, and routinely employ forms of intimidation and terrorist brutality to maintain a monopoly of political power. The terrors of the Stalinist, fascist, and Maoist state are obvious historical examples. Beleaguered populations often turn to violence or terrorism as a response to the illegitimate and repressive state.

Thus, a key psychological notion lies behind much of the perception and use of terror: terrorism is often seen in the developing world to be more “justified,” or at least less morally reprehensible, when the weak use it against the strong as their main, or only, weapon of resistance. Ironically, contemporary values of human rights and democracy, and concepts of national self-determination and social justice, may have stimulated the use of terror among oppressed or frustrated groups in a misguided search for “justice” on the international and national level. Many oppressed peoples used to take their condition for granted; they no longer do.

In addition, for both descriptive and policy purposes, analysts of terrorism distinguish among types of terrorism. One important basic distinction concerns the dimensions and specificity of the group’s goals. Groups with millenarian, apocalyptic goals with global ambitions (al Qaeda, Aum Shinrikyo, Baader-Meinhof, and such) differ from those with regional, local, and finite goals (usually nationalist goals, such as those of Chechens, Palestinians, Tamil Tigers, Basques, and so on). The limited and concrete goals and grievances of some groups can be negotiated—even resolved—in ways that millenarian goals cannot.

Of course, discussion of the causes of terrorism can never justify reversion to terrorism. However, discussion can suggest possible lines of approach to try to lessen terrorism. Modern societies, after all, do legally treat quite differently the various ways in which human lives are taken, distinguishing among first- and second-degree murder, manslaughter, criminal negligence, and capital punishment.

Nor does the existence of genuine grievances automatically lead to terrorism: Witness the deplorable conditions extant in much of Africa, where indigenous terrorism directed against the state is rare. The state in Africa is weak, however, making guerrilla war from the bush more effective than terrorism against a pudgy state. In Latin America, anti-U.S. terror was at one time widespread, but is currently minimal. This change has to do partly with the democratization of governance across most of the region.

Looked at side by side, the two examples of Africa and Latin America teach us something important: terrorism is ineffectual when the state is transparent, and it is unnecessary and unsustainable when the state is democratic. This brings us to the Muslim and particularly the Arab world, where states are, in the main, neither transparent nor democratic.

*** Definitions Applied

There is no doubt that today the Muslim world is the primary source and locus of terrorism. The reasons for this are complex and can be long debated, but the very existence of a vast “Muslim world” is itself one factor. In today’s wired world, the international community of Muslims—the umma—is exquisitely attuned to the grievances of Muslims everywhere. Muslims can directly identify with the problems of other Muslims and are inclined to see themselves as a civilization under siege on a global level.

The echo chamber effect of the wired umma—reinforcing a sense of collective grievance—is a distinctive feature not found in other violent cultures around the world. Africans, for example, rarely speak with a

common African voice about “African grievances,” even in very violent cultures.

Many more reasons can be adduced to help explain—but not explain away—the salience of terrorism in the contemporary Muslim world: a millennium or more of periodic geopolitical clashes between various European forces and their most immediate cultural neighbor (the Muslim world); the historical uniqueness of the founding of the state of Israel, populated by people coming mostly from Europe on territory that was seen as inherently Muslim; and the high economic stakes swirling around vital energy resources that have facilitated a history of Western intervention in the Muslim world. And finally, we have the pervasiveness of authoritarian rule, sometimes facilitated, sometimes merely tolerated, by U.S. policies. A Muslim sense of helplessness, cynicism, frustration, and impotence in being unable to change any feature of domestic repression, or to affect the international forces that bolster that domestic order, clearly contributes to radical and violent responses.

The phenomenon of national liberation movements among Muslim minorities seeking freedom from harsh non-Muslim rule is especially important at the local level: Bosnians, Palestinians, Kosovars, Chechens, Kashmiris, Uighurs, Moros, and others all have turned to local violence in struggles that eventually become internationalized into yet another “Muslim cause.” (Note that intra-Muslim separatist movements, such as those of the Kurds in Turkey or the Berbers in Algeria, do not fall into the category of “Muslim causes” and are also more amenable to solution.) These cases of local terrorism are quite distant from the phenomenon of al Qaeda, even if there is some incidental or opportunistic interaction. In this context, the crucial distinction between terrorism (against civilians) and guerrilla war (against authority) becomes vital. All terrorists are unprivileged combatants according to international law, wearing neither uniform nor insignia, but not all unprivileged combatants are terrorists.

The grievances, challenges, and conflicts of the Middle East are, of course, not new. They all long precede the modern phenomenon of international terrorism in the name of Islam. Yet grievances always find vehicles for expression, and today it is Islam, or Islamism, that serves as a vehicle for

grievances and aspirations earlier expressed by Arab nationalism or Marxism-Leninism. Indeed, Palestinian terrorism has gone through each of these iterations in which one and then another ideology was adopted as a vehicle and later cast off. But all were aimed at achieving the same thing: an independent Palestinian state. In Uzbekistan, Islam was all but dead after seventy years of Communist repression. However, within less than a decade after independence, Islam became the vehicle of choice for combating a new, neo-Stalinist “national” Uzbek regime.

The success of the Islamist mujahideen in their jihad in Afghanistan against Soviet occupation lent special adrenaline to the Islamist cause, demonstrating that Islamism could even defeat a superpower (with a little help from U.S. arms). In other words, a disparate collection of local Muslim grievances has come to be reconfigured into one grander, more resonant, more global, and “civilizational” cause. These accumulated regional grievances—some legitimate, others ambiguous, a few fanciful—reached a head in the horrific events of September 11. Does that event represent a watershed, a high point of terrorism in international politics, or is it merely the most dramatic early expression in what may be an era of ongoing terrorist violence?

*** What Is to Be Done?

The answer to the question of what is to be done matters, because it should size and define the U.S. response. The trouble is, the answer is not obvious.

After the drama of September 11, the U.S. government made a good beginning at harnessing the moral indignation of the world to work in greater concert against international terrorism. Important progress has been made in identifying individuals, their modus operandi, and their mechanisms of travel and funding. New counterterrorism measures have immensely complicated the task of the terrorist, even if these measures may never completely eliminate terrorism. (This is another reason for treating terrorism as crime and not war: war comes to an end, but crime does not.) This kind of international cooperation needs to be enhanced and deepened, routinized and institutionalized.

International terrorist movements, as proclaimed by the Bush administration, should be the primary target of such global cooperation, but what constitutes “international” is in part a political judgment. Are locally based movements with local goals that nevertheless maintain international contacts part of international terrorism?

If we do not maintain the distinction, we risk stoking the kind of terrorism most dangerous to us. One of the major failings of the Bush administration’s global war on terrorism (GWOT) is that it is too expansively defined, permitting nearly all dictators and regimes to embrace it and to declare their own local opponents all to be terrorists—and hence legitimate targets of the larger antiterrorism struggle. In effect, the GWOT has given license to many nasty regimes to depoliticize and then criminalize any local resistance and ethnic movements that have recourse to political violence—and this in countries where nearly all resistance to the state is treated violently. Across the globe, states like Russia, China, Israel, India, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, the Philippines, and others have exploited the GWOT for their own ends, and in so doing, they have usually increased internal repression. In most of these cases, the criminalization of legitimate political grievances has worsened the problem, heightened tensions, and intensified anti-American feeling.

In the Middle East, the problems associated with this dynamic are particularly complex and problematic. Few regimes in that area are legitimate in terms of popular support and electoral legitimacy. Until legal channels exist for the expression of grievances—often not just by minorities but also by the majority of the population against unpopular authoritarian regimes—there will be latent sympathy for acts of violence against the repressive state.

Of course, nearly all Muslims are aware that true acts of terrorism are criminal and violate the principles of Islam, but because of widespread anger against regimes, or against U.S. interventionism, these acts are rationalized as understandable and hence justifiable in some way. This very mood of frustration, anger, helplessness, and impotence creates a social environment of acquiescence toward many terrorist acts, especially those of an anti-

American or antiregime nature. There will be no serious progress against terrorism until this environment of social permissiveness toward terrorism is altered. Unfortunately, force is the least effective tool in altering this mood of permissiveness and acquiescence.

How might terrorism come to be perceived differently by society in ways that will facilitate its disappearance? The United States itself might be a hypothetical case in point.

The bombing in Oklahoma City was condemned by nearly all Americans as an outrage, without qualification. But suppose such an incident had been perpetrated in the 1960s by African Americans? There would, of course, have been widespread condemnation of the act, but there would have been plenty of “buts,” just as there were in discussing race riots in Watts, Detroit, and other places. Many Americans, while condemning the act, might have reasoned that the event was not surprising given social conditions among African Americans. Many African Americans would have felt considerable ambivalence about such an act.

This hypothetical case resembles the attitudes of most Muslims today toward terror against the United States and against repressive regional regimes: awareness that it is wrong, and against Islam, “but ….” This socially sanctioned “but” will be altered only when the broad public perceives that such an act is unjustifiable by any standard and that the cost to society from such acts is unacceptably high.

Punishment visited from abroad, as in the GWOT, may impose high costs upon Muslim societies, but it is unlikely to carry moral persuasiveness. It is more likely to touch off counterproductive consequences elsewhere. In realistic terms, a broad social reaction across the Muslim world against terrorism will regrettably be a long time in coming, at least in a number of societies where conditions are especially conducive to frustration and violence. To be successful, that type of reaction will require action by elected Muslim leaders who enjoy the legitimacy to move against such criminal acts. Leaders lacking this legitimacy will find limited popular support in crushing perpetrators of political violence. Chechen,

Kashmiri, and Palestinian leaders, for example, will enjoy popular support in stamping out terrorist action from within their ranks only when the public at large feels that such acts are not only against religious principles, but also no longer justifiable because they are unnecessary in light of the ascent of legitimate state power.

The United States thus needs to combine reformist and punitive measures in meeting this complex challenge. As to the latter, the failure of the United States to respond to attack, or to those regimes that abet and encourage attack, would display a dangerous weakness. But punitive measures have little demonstration effect, so they should be used only when absolutely necessary. Even more than punitive measures, we need to engage in both conflict resolution and the promotion of genuine institutional reform abroad.

Local grievances that breed violence, though complex, are manageable, particularly when combined with the legitimizing weight of international cooperation as opposed to unpopular unilateral action. When local grievances are dealt with, local actors will be less drawn to the "internationalization" of diverse and abstruse "Muslim causes." Nonlocal millenarian terrorists will then find a much more limited pool of recruits available for their quixotic causes and a much greater local willingness to deal with such terrorists harshly.

In addition, we must work to reduce the number of non-democratic regimes that repress and terrorize their own people, thereby giving rise to the legitimation of apocalyptic terrorist responses. That is a very difficult task, and, regrettably, we are a long way from achieving it right now. President Bush has recognized this facet of the problem, notably in his November 6, 2003 speech at the National Endowment of Democracy. But whether the administration, or its successors, can match wise action to soaring rhetoric in a serious way remains to be seen.

This analytic framework will not satisfy a policy maker looking for a quick and efficacious way to win the war against terror. There is no such way. Heightened police work and international cooperation can make international terrorism more manageable, but as long as radical conditions and grievances

exist, especially in the special conditions of the Muslim world, radical vehicles to express them will be found. If the “solution” to the problem of terrorism will be long in coming, let’s remember that the problem that exploded on September 11 was a long time in coming, too.

** 3. Liberalism and the War on Terrorism

Lisa Anderson

The events of September 11 focused minds around the world in a dreadful way. Suddenly, terrorism, which has always been ghastly, seemed immensely powerful. The whole world seemed to stop in its tracks, stunned by the audacity, the damage, the anger that the events of the day represented. The government of the most powerful country in the world seemed bewildered—almost unhinged—by the attack. Within hours, the Bush administration concentrated its attention on military responses. The U.S. government’s construction of the attack not as a crime but an act of war met very little opposition, at least among Americans, and it justified a massive military effort, first against Afghanistan and then, less directly, in Iraq.

This accent on force was neither the only policy response available at the time nor is it the only option open to the United States today. There was, from the outset, a minority opinion—within and, more vocally, outside the government—that advocated a multilateral policing operation, framed by international law. Typically, this position was associated with an emphasis on a limited military response and a refusal to credit the authors of the attacks with the sort of influence in the Muslim world both they and the Bush administration seemed to accord them. It also rested on a conviction that the attacks—indeed, the very appearance of al Qaeda and other Islamist movements—were indications of deeper problems whose solution would require a broad-based and multi-faceted approach.

Until the aftermath of the war in Iraq, the Bush administration evinced little interest in this line of argument. Having taken office declaring that “we don’t do nation-building,” the president and his advisers approached the challenge

of September 11 less as the symptom of a systemic or organic problem in the Middle East and more as what might be called—with apologies to Durkheim—a mechanical puzzle. That is, they appeared to believe that by unseating a couple of already unpopular governments (say, Afghanistan and Iraq), intimidating a few others, rounding up several thousand people who might have connections with al Qaeda, monitoring illicit transfers of money, and tightening up visa procedures, they would have the problem under control, perhaps even solved.

However, attacks on Americans increased rather than declined as these measures were taken—largely, of course, because these measures put more Americans directly in harm's way in Iraq and Afghanistan. Whether recruitment to groups espousing anti-American aims actually increased worldwide as a result of the administration's conduct of its war on terrorism is impossible to know, but it is certainly plausible. In any event, the Bush administration was soon forced to concede that something very like nation-building—or more accurately, state-building—was indeed on the agenda.

Rather than simply trumpet "I told you so," those who argued earlier for a more inclusive and multipronged response should now seize this new opportunity. Instead of castigating the misguided architects of the war on terrorism, all of us who care both about the well-being of Americans and the security and prosperity of the rest of the world—indeed, who believe the two may be linked—should consider the nature of the deeper troubles that spawned the attacks and the U.S. policies that might constructively contribute to addressing them.

*** Three Considerations, Three Tasks

At least three features of such a consideration are important. First, as suggested, it is not actually nations that we should contemplate helping to build but states and civil governments. Second, taking seriously the efforts to construct such institutions abroad will demand that we be more faithful to our own institutions at home and to the values they represent. Finally, we must think seriously about how we choose our

prospective partners in these projects of reconstruction and development. Let me take each of these points in turn.

The distinction between nations, on one hand, and states and civil governments, on the other, points to the difference between those elements of our social lives that reflect personal identity—language, ethnic attachments, religious affiliations, national identity—and those constructed to allow us to enjoy those attachments and identities undisturbed. The United States has no business building, or even helping to build, nations or ethnic groups or religions. But there may be something to be said for assisting in building states, or better still, commonwealths—societies of people, as John Locke put it in his justly famous 1689 Letter Concerning Toleration, “constituted only for the procuring, preserving and advancing of their civil interests.” By “civil interests,” Locke intended “life, liberty, health and indolency of body; and the possession of outward things, such as money, lands, houses, furniture, and the like.” In other words, it is the responsibility of governments to preserve and protect the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

These are the ideas and values that underlie such policies as democracy promotion, advocacy of the rule of law, governance programs, and human rights monitoring. They are all, in their own way, efforts to instill respect for the liberal institutions that permit individuals and communities to enjoy their personal affections and private attachments in peace. Far too often in U.S. policy circles, these programs have seemed expendable in, or even detrimental to, our pursuit of other purposes, such as economic development or, more often, military security. Yet, if nothing else, the attacks of September 11 demonstrate that, in this global era, neither personal security nor collective prosperity—our treasured “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”—are secure in the absence of the institutions that procure, preserve, and advance such interests around the world.

By no coincidence at all, Locke’s argument should sound very familiar to Americans—it is the bedrock of our liberal tradition, codified in our very own Bill of Rights. It says nothing about language or ethnicity, nationalism, or, most important, religious preference. Indeed, Locke’s whole purpose was to “distinguish exactly the business of civil government from that of religion.”

To uphold this attachment to the civil government of a commonwealth may be difficult in the face of the taunting religious rationales that the authors of the attacks of September 11 offered. Yet the temptation to respond in kind must be energetically resisted.The Bush administration's reaction—not simply in President George W. Bush's initial reference to a "crusade" against this enemy but in the moral justification of the war on terrorism as a "righteous cause" against an enemy that is "absolutely evil"—conveyed a message that is deeply antithetical to the liberal purposes of what might be called commonwealth-building. The Bush administration's enthusiasm for "faith-based initiatives," whether in war or welfare, cannot privilege religious commitments—of any kind—over the preservation of liberal rights without distorting and confusing the purposes of the United States in the world.

Moreover, America will not be able to advocate effectively for institutions based on liberal rights abroad if we are not scrupulous in their observance at home. Obviously, terrorists have little sympathy with a world in which the process of arriving at a conclusion—electoral competition, for example, or trial by jury—is as important as the conclusion itself—a new government or policy, a determination of guilt or innocence. In the face of the insult and injury of the attacks of September 11, some Americans have been tempted to follow suit, suspending adherence to conventional procedures and declaring a virtual state of emergency in which virtuous ends excuse deplorable means.

The temptation to cheat to win is a powerful one, particularly when confronting an enemy that seems to know no restraint. But ultimately, what is true of terrorism is also true of the response: certain means are never justified, no matter what the end. We cannot compromise our commitment to the rule of law and remain either the society for which we are fighting or a society we will be able to persuade others to emulate.

Commonwealth-building thus entails two sets of demands—those we make on ourselves and those we may make on others. We cannot bend the law at home—creating novel classifications of convenience like "unlawful combatants" for terrorist suspects, according them the rights of neither

criminal suspects nor prisoners of war. If we evade the recognized standards of the laws of war, for example, or suspend habeas corpus to hold individuals suspected of terrorist attachments without trial for months, we cannot expect others to observe the rule of law elsewhere.

Let us imagine for a moment that we do succeed in meeting our own high standards. If we were to regain our equilibrium and acknowledge the foundational importance of the liberal values embedded in both our own Constitution and in many of the international institutions to which our deference has long been far too cavalier, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with whom would we talk in the Middle East or the Muslim world?

It is certainly not self-evident to most Americans, including policy makers, that the region in which Osama bin Laden and his confederates cavort, stretching from Morocco to Afghanistan or even Indonesia, is home to many liberals. Certainly, the area's many admirers of bin Laden, who celebrate his ability to upset the world's last superpower, to threaten local governments around the region, and to divide the free world against itself, are not liberals. Nor, it must be said, are any of the region's governments, whatever lip service they may pay to liberalism whenever Congress is considering next year's foreign and military aid authorizations.

Yet there are increasingly vocal, articulate voices in the region itself—people who are refusing to let their societies sink into a war between the illiberal tyranny of the regimes and the nihilist anarchy of the opposition. These will be our true allies in building commonwealths.

Note that I said allies, not collaborators or instruments. Listen to the authors of the Arab Human Development Report:

<quote>

The only way to meet the challenge [in Iraq] is to enable the Iraqi people to exercise their basic rights in accordance with international law, free

themselves from occupation, recover their wealth, under a system of good governance representing the Iraqi people and take charge of rebuilding their country from a human development perspective.

</quote>

This is the voice of people who share the values Locke articulated, arguing for a vision, as they put it, “guaranteeing the key freedoms of opinion, speech and assembly through good governance bounded by the law.” So, yes, there are liberals in the Middle East. They are prominent academics, journalists, NGO activists, business consultants, international organization representatives, even the occasional government minister or parliamentarian. Rather than ignore them, portraying the battle in the region as one simply between friendly, pliant governments and divisive, dangerous oppositions or, even worse, between absolute and singular incarnations of good and evil, we should listen for, and indeed amplify, these voices.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the liberal authors of the Arab Human Development Report also exhibit an attachment to self-reliance that most Americans would certainly recognize and celebrate in themselves. Anyone who has ever tried to learn to do something only to be told it would be easier if the putative instructor just did the job alone will know part of the frustration of liberals in the Arab world. Building a commonwealth is indeed a complex project, but for that very reason, it cannot be bought off the shelf in some ideological supermarket and delivered fully assembled.

It will only be in working with allies like these liberals that we will be able to fully understand the nature of the deeper troubles that spawned the attacks. Judging from what our potential allies are already telling us, in the Arab Human Development Report and elsewhere, the lack of investment in education, in scientific research and development, in empowering women has had a corrosive effect on the economies and societies of the region, leaving too many young people, ignorant, frustrated, and understandably furious. There is much the rest of the world, including the United States, could do to rectify those deficits.

To do so, however, requires more than simply directing aid and technical assistance to family-planning projects, investing in local universities and scientific research centers, providing tax credits to technology companies willing to invest in building the information technology infrastructure in the region—although all of that would be desirable. It requires more than simply resisting the temptation to view policy toward the region wholly through the lens of terrorism and counterterrorism—although that is essential. It requires, most important, much greater respect for and fidelity to the liberal values to which we say we adhere, both at home and abroad.

** 4. International Humanitarian Legal Standards and the Principle of Global Ethics in the War on Terrorism

El Hassan bin Talal

The philosopher Jean-François Revel has said, “The ideologist twists the neck of reality to suit his ideologies, whilst the seeker of truth gives up his ideologies to understand reality.” Revel’s insight is worth pondering in the midst of the war on terrorism, because terrorism is at once about ideology and reality. Likewise, the place of law and norms in international politics is also a matter of ideology and reality. It is the nexus of the two that should particularly concern us today.

Since September 11, 2001, a quantum leap has occurred in our shared vulnerability and shared consciousness. We inhabit “one world and ten thousand cultures.” However, unless the various actors, including the United Nations, nongovernmental organizations, transnational corporations, civil society, and individuals, are given the opportunity to be understood, and unless lateral thinking develops between these many and varied entities, multilateralism will inevitably fall to unilateralism, both in ideology and in reality.

Law is critical to the articulation of an effective multilateralism. According to UN under-secretary-general for legal affairs, Hans Corell, “International law is theoretically about justice and the rule of law but, more immediately, it is

about accommodation, not just political accommodation but accommodation of principles and values based upon the interrelationship, or interexistence, of humankind."[6] Here, ideology meets reality in a constructive sense, so that in this context, the United Nations is a necessary institution in world politics, which is, by nature, multilateral. Bulldozing this institution endangers sacrificing universalism at the altar of rogue imperialism.

*** Law and the War on Terrorism

The world's major faith traditions share the belief that the use of armed force may only be justified in self-defense, on behalf of a grave cause, as an option of last resort, and even then subject to strict limitations. Restarting the dialogue in international law is fundamentally about preserving the universality of the human values and ethical traditions that world religions have long championed and promoted.

In Islam, it is clear that the Qur'an is a pluralistic scripture, affirmative of other traditions as well as its own.[7] It is not only in the "West" that many are asking why it is that the understanding of the Divine is often distorted through the prism of violence.[8] Muslim jurists have historically reacted sharply against groups that were deemed enemies of humankind.[9] Those groups were designated as muharibs (literally "fighters") who spread terror in society and were not to be given refuge by anyone at any place. According to Khaled Abou el Fadl, Muslim jurists have historically argued that any Muslim or non-Muslim territory sheltering such a group is hostile territory that may be attacked by legitimate, mainstream Islamic forces. Most important, these doctrines were asserted as religious imperatives. Regardless of the desired goals or ideological justifications, the terrorizing of the defenseless was recognized as a moral wrong and an offense against society and God.

The debate within Islamic intellectual circles about the appropriate Islamic response to terrorism has also placed the question of suicide bombings at center stage. Authors such as Sohail Hashmi, for example, have discussed challenges to two fundamental principles of Islamic ethics: the prohibitions against suicide and the deliberate killing of noncombatants.[10] Suicide for

any reason has been strongly condemned throughout Islamic history, and its practice is extremely rare in Islamic societies. In the context of war, however, the line between suicide and combat is often extremely fine and easily crossed. Nonetheless, Hashmi contends, the Prophet Muhammad sought to draw a clear line separating martyrdom in battle from suicide: “The Muslim fighter enters battle not with the intention of dying, but with the conviction that if he should die, it is for reasons beyond his control. Martyrdom is the Will of God, not humans.”

Others have been even more Islamically unequivocal, stating that the “religion” of Osama bin Laden has more in common with movements that arise out of a “cultic milieu,” or “a parallel religious tradition of disparaged and deviant interpretations and practices that challenge the authority of prevailing religions with rival claims to truth.”[11] The latter interpretation of jihad legitimizes violence and terror as a theological imperative—jihadism. Illusions thus come to dominate reality as sloganism takes hold among sections of disenfranchised and disgruntled populations.[12] Amid such an ideational reality, Ziaddun Sardar argues that “a persuasive moral God is replaced by a coercive, political one.”

At the political level, the September 11 attacks have been described, among other things, as a violation of Islamic law and ethics. Neither the people killed or injured nor the properties destroyed qualified as legitimate targets in any system of law, especially Islamic law. That position was reinforced by public statements and communiqués, such as the Final Statement of the Emergency Conference of Islamic States’ Foreign Ministers in Doha, Qatar, a month after the atrocities.

At a more fundamentally grassroots level, it is difficult to disagree with Muslim commentators, such as Sayyid Rida al-Sadiq: “One of the most painful spectacles for any principled Muslim to behold these days is that of enraged Muslim sentiment being paraded as Islamic ‘Jihad.’” Indeed, it is paradoxical that “those who are most fanatical about the forms of the religion end up violating those very forms themselves: suicide and mass murder are alike illegal in any school of Islamic law. A slippery slope leads from religious formalism to sacrilegious fanaticism.”[13]

We cannot ignore the internal challenges that give rise to fanaticism. Lack of political freedom in many Muslim countries undercuts Islamic-Western engagement in numerous ways—from the restrictions it places on media and citizen activism to the ways in which it limits the full expression of the diverse views and cultures that exists in Muslim countries. This is one reason that Muslims in the West are a key to cultivating meaningful engagement and mutual respect. It also serves as a reminder of the importance of intracommunal dialogue in Muslim countries.[14]

The relationship between Islam and Western international law has been uniquely affected by the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the subsequent consecutive “liberations” of Afghanistan and Iraq. But Islam is not a geopolitical entity. It is a universal message capable of integration with diverse and very different cultures, including American and European cultures. When we put aside the idea of a “clash of civilizations” and begin to examine religion, we find widespread agreement on principles and humanitarian aims, especially among the three great monotheistic faiths. Bridges of understanding need to be established between Muslim countries and the West, with emphasis on education, media, and young people. There is an urgent need to communicate about America to the Muslim world and for Americans to gain increased understanding of Muslim cultures. This must not to be done in the form of propaganda disguised as educational outreach. It should instead be done positively, honestly, and seriously, at a levelfully commensurate with the challenges of the post–September 11 world—a world that has brought to the fore an array of complex issues relating to citizenship, foreign policy, and civil and political rights.[15]

In the aftermath of September 11, the overwhelming majority of Muslim individuals and organizations condemned the attacks unequivocally. Yet, in the minds of many Muslims in the West, a clear distinction was felt between the unacceptability of the act itself and the very genuine grievances it purported to represent. The media, however, and some leaders (notably Silvio Berlusconi of Italy and Margaret Thatcher of the United Kingdom) tended, in some cases, to blur the distinction. For the Muslim community, the immediate fallout from the attacks was dual: On the one hand was the community’s explicit condemnation of the attacks. On the other was the fact

that this community still faced a kind of public inquisition over its loyalty to the state, which later fed into the rekindling of debates relating to civil liberties. In polarized settings, social solidarity, the cornerstone of citizenship, may be embedded in racial—not civic—networks, affecting the way the public domain is governed.[16] This, one would argue, applies at both the international as well as the domestic level of policy making.

Do we want the world to collapse into a Hobbesian state of nature, which, if one believes humanity to be essentially good, is an unnatural state of affairs? That is the fear if multilateralism fails to hold sway against unilateralism in international law and order. Alongside the strident voices of the hawks in Washington, crying for broader strikes against perceived targets in the Middle East, other voices are calling for more measured and culturally sensitive approaches that will provide security for the future—the “soft security” of human dignity, self-worth, and confidence. For instance, a Council on Foreign Relations report concluded that the long-term vision for Iraq, among other things, should “welcome the fullest possible involvement in peacekeeping, reconciliation, and reconstruction efforts by multilateral organisations, such as the United Nations, neighbouring states (especially the Arab world), non-Arab Muslim countries, and other Western partners.”[17]

Amid what appears to be an increasingly hegemonic vision for the new world order, it is refreshing and consoling to see many in the United States paying heed to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, which offers a multilateral approach to the challenges confronting international peace and security, emphasizing development of friendly relations and achievment of international cooperation in a variety of fields. It is during these windows of rational reflection in Washington that one might recall that the United Nations, the international institutions, and the system of alliances and treaty relationships formed in the aftermath of World War II were achieved in large part because of American leadership and engagement.[18] Those institutions and alliances succeeded not because of any specific threat that had emerged but because of a genuine spirit of international cooperation and respect. Isn’t it time for all to comply with international laws and norms? A culture of compliance is necessary for our troubled world. Any attempt to change the existing laws and norms should come from within the world’s cultures, not from without.

*** American Realities

Today, American leadership appears to operate within a matrix of fear and isolation, resulting in unilateral militarism and cultural disengagement that are reflected in the passing of Resolution 1373 on September 28, 2001, as a direct response to the events of September 11. That resolution, which essentially accepted the American interpretation of terrorism and support for terrorism, was oblivious to the many far-reaching repercussions and unintended consequences of a measure whose ad hoc nature has since been questioned by human rights organizations, bodies, and personalities. One certainly cannot build good international law in a crisis atmosphere. Nowhere are the repercussions of such an international response (multilateral in ideology, unilateral in reality) more apparent than in the Middle East, where American strategic and economic interests have been articulated through President George W. Bush's proposed Middle East Free Trade Area and Middle East Partnership Initiative "to bring the Middle East into an expanding circle of opportunity."[19]

Expanding circles of opportunity in the Middle East is an exercise in futility as long as U.S. strategy in the region continues to operate according to the priorities of oil and security as opposed to humanitarianism. By 2020, the United States is expected to consume an additional 7.4 million barrels of oil per day, reaching approximately 27.5 million barrels per day (about 24 percent of the world's estimated daily consumption of approximately 112 million barrels per day). It is forecast that with the continued slow decline of U.S. domestic production over this period, the United States will become gradually more dependent on imported oil over the next twenty years.[20]

To articulate a positive vision for all, but to ignore one's own responsibilities to bring that vision about, is perhaps what leads some observers, like Javad Zarif, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, to argue that Washington is "confusing unilateralism with leadership."[21] Zarif's position is that U.S. hegemonic ambition ignores "our common vulnerability to threats which require close cooperation among members of the international community."

Some Americans have taken a similar approach. Senator Joseph Biden has aptly warned that foreign policy cannot be conducted at the extremes:

<quote>

What we need isn't the death of internationalism or the denial of stark national interest, but a more enlightened nationalism—one that understands the value of institutions but allows us to use military force, without apology or apprehension if we have to, but does not allow us to be so blinded by the overwhelming power of our armed forces that we fail to see the benefit of sharing the risks and the costs with others. We have to understand and be willing to accept that giving a bigger role to the United Nations and NATO means sharing control. The truth is that we missed a tremendous opportunity after 9/11 to lead in a way that actually encouraged others to follow. We missed an opportunity, in the aftermath of our spectacular military victory, to ask those who were not with us in the war to be partners in the peace.[22]

</quote>

The irony, particularly in the context of the ideology/reality dichotomy, is that while the United States sees itself as supporting freedom from oppression, in the region itself, the United States is, as Soumaya Ghanoushi has put it, "widely regarded by many … as a crucial obstacle in [the] struggle for freedom from oppression."[23]

*** The European Perspective

The European Union has recognized both the link among development, poverty, and conflict and the role of development cooperation in conflict prevention: "Violent conflict causes massive humanitarian suffering, undermines development and human rights and stifles economic growth."[24] Moreover, one might recall the 1999 Hague Appeal for Peace, which is dedicated to "the delegitimization of war, seeking to refocus on a world vision wherein violent conflict is publicly acknowledged as illegitimate, illegal, and fundamentally unjust." To ensure that conflict prevention and peace-building form a central part of development policy, the EU declares

that it is important that the issue be further “mainstreamed” within EU policy.

The United States should perhaps follow the EU example in developing and integrating a civilian crisis management capacity in the Middle East. From a peace-building perspective, more attention certainly needs to be given to linking crisis management with longer-term conflict prevention strategies. In the Middle East, in particular, what is needed is a code of conduct, a “partnership for peace,” an Eastern Mediterranean Treaty Organization, or perhaps a Middle Eastern version of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

An articulation of the relevant agenda for any such organization would include the need for a WMD-free zone; a clear definition of terror (both state and nonstate); concrete steps, adequately funded, to redress both manifestations and causes of terror; a humanitarian Marshall Plan (as opposed to a “martial” plan, the likes of which we still see in so many postconflict arenas); transparency guaranteed by government, with a focus on poverty alleviation; education; and interactive citizens’ media whereby the people of the region can promote their own dialogue.

If the European Union is dedicated to true multilateralism and appreciates the impact of “soft power” in today’s world, perhaps it will lead such a new architectural effort.

*** Breaking the Political Economy of Despair

As a member of the group of advisers to the UN Dialogue of Civilizations process, I was struck by the aptness of the phrase “the indignities of the 1990s.” The aim was, of course, to counterbalance those indignities by creating a paradigmatic shift in our ideas about where we, as humanity, are and how we wish to move forward. Also, as a member of the high-level panel charged by the UN secretary-general to work with the high commissioner for human rights to follow up on the action plan of the 2001 World Conference against Racism, I believe this could be done by following “a humanitarian

vision based on an ‘ethic of human solidarity,’ stressing the centrality of human dignity, respect for diversity and the importance of effective measures of protection for civilians,” as emphasized by this panel. “A possible way to achieve this could be through the development of a ‘Racial Equality Index’ similar to the ‘Human Development Index’ developed and used by the United Nations Development Programme.”

Perhaps thinking globally and acting regionally—which requires a sharing not only of ideas but also of the instruments and tools, including international law, that make such cooperation viable and successful—will help shift not only our entrenched ideological positions but the reality as well. The overemphasis on the military dimension has, in the past, given rise to what may be termed the political economy of despair. My late brother, His Majesty King Hussein, put it this way at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 1996:

<quote>

The murder and torture of innocent people is not exclusive to one race or nation or to followers of any one religion. It is vital therefore that terrorism be tackled at the international level in a multilateral way, and not in a gung-ho partisan manner. Thus, there is an urgent need to develop a universally acceptable global ethic of human solidarity in which the term “ethics” ought not to be limited to the moral aspect only, but also cover the common sociocultural values that are universal and which have stood the test of time. Implicit within this ethic of human solidarity is the requirement for an overarching matrix of International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law.

</quote>

The question is, will Washington limit itself to a merely punitive agenda to treat only the symptoms of crisis in the Muslim world? In the international coalition at this time, Muslim countries have to take the initiative and attempt to provide a solution rather than just follow America or Britain. The Organization of the Islamic Conference condemned the September 11 attacks but linked the fight against terrorism with the Palestinian situation. One cannot deny the centrality of Palestine to the wider question, but the Muslim world needs to build a coalition among its own states that will twist the neck of current reality by moving toward the creation of integrated

strategies that will delegitimize the terrorists, drain the proverbial swamp, and deal with its root causes. As seekers of truth, we owe future generations the legacy of a new reality based on global commons.

[6] Hans Corell, “Developing the Rule of Law among Nations: A Challenge to the United Nations,” The Steinkraus-Cohen International Law Lecture, London, July 7, 2003.

[7] Karen Armstrong in The Guardian, June 20, 2002.

[8] Akbar S. Ahmed, “Islam and the Rest of the World,” speech to the Muslim Council in Washington, D.C., 2003.

[9] See Khaled Abou el Fadl, “Islam: Images, Politics, Paradox,” Middle East Report 221 (Winter 2001), in Islam and the Theology of Power (Los Angeles: UCLA Center for the Study of Religion, 2001).

[10] Sohail H. Hashmi, “Not What the Prophet Would Want: How Can Islamic Scholars Sanction Suicidal Tactics?” Washington Post, June 9, 2002.

[11] Jean E. Rosenfeld, The Religion of Usamah bin Ladin: Terror as the Hand of God (Los Angeles: UCLA Center for the Study of Religion, 2002).

[12] Khalid S. al-Khater, “Thinking about Arab-American Relations: A New Perspective,” MERIA 7, no. 2 (June 2003).

[13] Sayyid Rida al-Sadiq, “At War with the Spirit of Islam,” Dialogue (London) (August 2003).

[14] Report of Partners in Humanity Working Meeting, Amman, Jordan, July 26–29, 2003.

[15] Sayyed Nadeem Kazmi, “Educational Outreach in Muslim States: Implications and Responses,” The Conflict, Security and Development Group Bulletin, Department for International Development, London (March-April 2002).

[16] United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) Conference on Racism and Public Policy, September 3–5, 2001, Durban, South Africa.

[17] Edward P. Djerejian and Frank G. Wisner, Report of the Independent Working Group, under the auspices of the Council on Foreign Relations and James Baker III Institute, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2003.

[18] Robert T. Grey, Jr., “Warmongering without Representation: Unilateralism Is Not the American Way,” San Francisco Chronicle, January 15, 2003.

[19] The quote is from President George W. Bush’s speech of May 9, 2003.

[20] J.A. Russell, “Searching for a Post-Saddam Regional Security Architecture,” MERIA 7, no. 2 (March 2003).

[21] H.E. Javad Zarif, “Indispensable Power: Hegemonic Tendencies in a Globalized World,” Harvard International Review (Winter 2003).

[22] Senator Joseph Biden, “National Dialogue on Iraq + One Year,” The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., July 31, 2003.

[23] Soumaya Ghanoushi, “The Origins of Extremism: Theology or Reality?” Islam 21 (London) (December 2001).

[24] “Ensuring Progress in the Prevention of Violent Conflict,” priorities for the Greek and Italian EU presidencies 2003, April 2003.

** 5. Ending Support for Terrorism in the Muslim World

Michele Durocher Dunne

On September 11, 2001, I was finishing lunch in Cairo with an Egyptian friend when I received a call on my mobile phone with shocking news. As I relayed the news to Mohammed bit by bit, we both rose from our seats and fled—I to the U.S. embassy (where I was a political officer), and he to an office of the Egyptian presidency (where he was an adviser). After a few initial days of understandable security panic, the embassy opened a book of condolences. Soon Egyptians from many walks of life—diplomats and business tycoons, yes, but also entire classes of schoolchildren—lined up for days to sign that book, many of them weeping and bearing flowers.

At the same time, however, the international media conveyed images of Egyptians and other Arabs expressing joy, or at least grim satisfaction, at the attacks. Over the ensuing months, many Egyptians who professed to be friends to the United States said to me, in effect, “I’m sorry this happened, but you had it coming.”

With this mixed picture as background, let us pose two questions: What is the problem the United States faces in the Muslim world? And what should we do about it?

Regarding what to do, as a start, I posit that the U.S. government, with all the many tools and vast power at its disposal, cannot directly change the thinking or behavior of Muslims who support the use of terrorism. Nor can the U.S. government directly alter the policies of Middle Eastern governments that acquiesce to terrorism, play double games with terrorists, or oppress their people in ways that feed terrorism. And clearly, the U.S. government cannot use, ought not use, and in any case has no intention of using military force against every country in the Middle East whose counterterrorism policies we find less than perfect.

It is equally important to know, however, what the U.S. government can do. It can put the tremendous power and influence it possesses to work in combating both the phenomenon of terrorism itself and the problems that give rise to support for terrorism among Muslims. To do this, however, the U.S. government would need to change the way it deals with governments of Arab and other Muslim countries. Doing so would require an integrated policy approach, not just military and law-enforcement efforts dressed up with public diplomacy.

To say any more of such an approach, however, requires us to first return to the problem.

*** What the Problem Is…and Is Not

In addition to the phenomenon of terrorist acts themselves—which has been the focus of intensive military, diplomatic, and law-enforcement efforts since September 2001—there is the nagging issue of why many (though by no means all) Muslims in various parts of the world expressed the opinion after September 11 that the attacks were justified or at least understandable. American observers have suggested a number of explanations: that active or passive support for the use of terrorism springs from something endemic to

Islam or to Arab culture; that such support springs from the perceived threat that American culture and globalization pose to Islam; that such support is a response to oppression by local rulers; that such support reflects strong objections to U.S. policies in the Middle East.

The fact that those who carried out the attacks of September 11 (and other Muslims who saw those attacks as justified in some way) came originally from countries where they were oppressed politically and otherwise, and that they nursed deep grievances against U.S. policies, is difficult to deny. Regarding the Arab countries in particular, I have often been struck by the difficulty of disentangling the various sources of grievance toward the United States. It is as if there were a deep well of resentment with various contributing streams—American policy regarding Israel and Palestine; the U.S. military presence on the Arabian peninsula and in the Persian Gulf; U.S. support for governments that oppress politically and that are inept or worse economically; and the resulting exclusion of many Arabs from the benefits of globalization, with which, of course, the United States is closely identified.

Anger toward the United States due to its support for Israel, which despite the many years of U.S. efforts for peace often redounds to the disadvantage of Palestinians, is an important factor, but by no means is it the only one. And it is a factor with symbolic as well as actual impact; the Palestinian issue feeds a feeling among many Arabs—and apparently many non-Arab Muslims as well—of humiliation by association.

Similarly, the presence of U.S. military forces in Saudi Arabia (greatly reduced in the summer of 2003) and elsewhere in the region creates another source of humiliation for Muslims, who see it as demonstrating that they are unable to deal with their most basic problems, even the protection of their own sacred places. Needless to say, U.S. military action to remove Saddam Hussein’s regime and the resulting occupation of Iraq merely point out one more glaring problem that Arabs have been unable to take care of themselves.

In addition to the more obvious problems of Palestine and Iraq, it is many Arabs’ sense of helplessness in changing their own very difficult domestic

political and economic conditions that fuels their anger at the United States. The United States is almost universally held responsible, whether fairly or not, for supporting the governments that perpetuate those terrible conditions. It is on this matter that I will focus in describing what the problem is and how to address it.

Arguably, grievances, however deeply felt, do not fully explain why horrific violence against innocent people is viewed as a legitimate response. But bitter feelings of humiliation and helplessness, spiked with the Islamic extremists' call to reject and attack the new global order authored by the United States, make a powerful brew. One way to capture this dynamic is through an economic metaphor: there is a desperate demand for solutions to desperate problems in the Arab world, and a well-funded supply of Islamic extremist ideas and groups rise to meet that demand.

The supply side of the question—namely, the funding and political support of Islamic extremist ideas and groups exported from the Arabian Peninsula to many other Arab and Muslim countries — is undoubtedly a serious problem. Cutting off funds and other forms of support to those who either commit terrorist attacks or justify them through religious or political teachings is indispensable. It must be a top priority within the context of an overall strategy.

Dealing with the supply side alone, however, is not enough, because extremists in many countries have deep roots and can easily replace recruits who are captured or killed. The demand side is just as important. In other words, if Saudi Arabia (and Iran, for that matter) were to disappear from the face of the earth tomorrow, Islamic extremists would survive in many other countries, unaided from the outside, because miserable local conditions have created a demand (and a large pool of recruits) for the radical solutions the extremists feign to supply.

In thinking about how the United States should approach the conditions that generate a demand or support for terrorism, I start from the premise that American influence and resources in the Arab world have not been, are not now, and cannot be neutral. To quote Bob Dylan, "We're gonna have to serve

somebody," and a serious rethinking of whom in the Arab world our policies and assistance programs are serving is long overdue.

There are two realities that we need to acknowledge before we can get anywhere. First, until recently, U.S. priorities in the region have been so narrowly drawn—security of oil supplies; guaranteed military access; a sometimes cautious, sometimes energetic pursuit of Israeli-Palestinian peace—as to cause the United States to bolster regimes whose domestic policies are economic and political disasters. Although not necessarily the intent of the U.S. government, it remains the case that Arab domestic issues were ignored for too many years. The Bush administration deserves credit for being the first to see things differently, and the president's National Endowment for Democracy speech of November 6, 2003, is by far the most dramatic presidential statement on this issue in more than half a century. But it remains unclear how seriously and skillfully the issue will be addressed.

Second, the State Department has devoted far too little attention to managing diplomatic relationships in the Arab world, in many cases leaving that job to the Defense Department. One need only contrast the record of frequent, routinely scheduled travel by senior Defense Department officials to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and other Arab countries in recent years (long before September 11 and the war in Iraq) with the infrequent trips of senior State Department officials. The huge imbalance of resources that the two departments have in hand, plus the absence of any State Department equivalent to the military commanders in chief who can operate on a regional basis, only compounds the implications of the lack of high-level State Department leadership.

One consequence of all this was that as long as our basic needs, narrowly defined, were being assured, little effort was devoted to all the other aspects of our relationships with these countries. We did not bother much to manage impressions, refute untruths, or pay close attention to political, economic, and social life inside these countries.

To sum up then, what is the problem? The problem, we now realize, is that what goes on inside Middle Eastern countries has important security

consequences for us. Unfortunately, our ability to affect those goings-on has been compromised by the legacy of our attending exclusively to more traditional security problems—namely, those of the Cold War. What is not the problem? The problem is not proving whether everything the Arabs say about the United States and U.S. policy is true. We cannot escape from the fact that the conditions under which Arabs and many other Muslims live lead them to believe it is all true.

*** What to Do … and Not to Do

If the United States must now begin to concern itself with domestic conditions in Arab countries with which it has important relationships (and in some cases significant assistance programs), how should it do so?

American influence, though far from neutral, is also generally indirect. With few exceptions, we cannot directly change conditions in other countries, and in any case, we would not be willing to commit the resources required even to make a serious attempt. It is instructive to remember what any twelve-step program tells its participants: you cannot change another person or his or her behavior directly. What the United States can do is change its own behavior toward the governments in question, which in turn would change dynamics between the United States and actors (whether governments or not) in those countries, and which, in turn, may cause those actors to change their behavior.

It hardly wants emphasis that this process is unpredictable and not completely controllable. But it has the virtue of being based in reality and has a reasonable chance of success. Self-delusion or arguing about our ability to change things directly does not.

A policy review must also start from the premise that something is seriously amiss regarding any country where we have a significant relationship, but where there is nonetheless significant support for anti-U.S. terrorism. We need to understand which forces our current relationships are serving and how we would have to change those relationships so that they serve those

inside and outside governments whose interests accord with ours and who will give their people a stake in a viable system: forces for liberal, market economies; for the rule of law and respect for women's rights; for accountable, participatory political systems; for religious toleration and nonviolence. Nothing less will suit—not these days.

Any such strategy must involve all the tools at the U.S. government's disposal: diplomatic engagement, military relationships, assistance programs, public diplomacy, and engagement with American private enterprise and nongovernmental organizations. Public diplomacy efforts—glossy magazines for Arab youth, satellite television to compete with al-Jazeera, pop radio programs like Radio Sawa and Radio Farda, campaigns to show religious tolerance and diversity in the United States—are positive in their own way. But they have impact only if accompanied by a responsible reorientation of our policies and assistance programs. Arabs, Iranians, Pakistanis, and others are not stupid people; they will not buy rhetoric without a corresponding reality for very long.

Similarly, assistance programs to promote political and economic reform and to improve education or free media, for example, will fall flat or backfire unless they are part of an overall strategy of engagement with governments. Simply put, how seriously will any Arab leader take our assistance or public diplomacy programs to promote reform and moderation when those subjects are never on the agenda of high-level conversations?

For policy purposes, we need a country-by-country diagnosis of the nature of the problem—specifically, why people in Saudi Arabia or Egypt or Pakistan or Indonesia would support or sympathize with those who commit or advocate terrorism against Americans. The reasons need not be, and probably are not, the same in every case. Next, we need to look with fresh eyes at what the United States can do—and what the United States should urge the governments in question to do—to address the problems and grievances that have led to this sad state of affairs.

Following the diagnosis and a cold-eyed examination of our current relations with what involves twenty-two Arab countries and at least that many more

majority-Muslim countries, the U.S. government should formulate policy to begin the long, messy, and uncertain process of using our influence to push things in the right direction. No doubt, we will need to work with other major donors, including international financial institutions, to multiply our efforts.

All of this will be difficult and will involve painstaking work. The furthest the Bush administration has gone in addressing underlying support for terrorism in the Arab world has been through the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), announced by Secretary of State Powell in December 2002. The initiative seeks to use existing and new economic assistance to Middle East countries to promote economic, political, and educational reform and the empowerment of women. Although the initiative is undoubtedly positive and deserves support, it is not, or not yet, a comprehensive strategy. It is still divorced from U.S. military assistance, for example, and has little connection to public diplomacy efforts. Moreover, there is no parallel initiative for Muslims outside the Middle East in such important countries as Indonesia, Pakistan, or Nigeria.

So what to do? We need to take the domestic political, economic, and social dynamics of Arab and Muslim countries seriously, and we need to rebalance our overall policy objectives to reflect that reality. What not to do? We do not have to ruin existing relationships with the Saudi, Egyptian, and other Arab governments, or undermine Israeli security, or abandon our interests in the traditional objectives of oil, peace, and strategic access. The task is hard enough as it is without painting it as both impossible and ridiculous. What is needed is a filling out and maturation of our relationships with governments and peoples of the region to show that we believe domestic reform is badly needed in many countries, for their good and for ours.

*** Getting Organized

The Middle East Partnership Initiative offers a window on how the organization of the U.S. government affects its ability to deal with the Muslim world. Strict division of bureaucratic responsibilities along regional lines in the Departments of State and Defense discourages productive thinking about problems that cross regions. Bureaucrats in regional bureaus consider it not

only a prerogative but also a duty to combat any transregional priority that might cut into their freedom to make decisions about policies and money within their narrow and short-term perspectives. (Readers who have not worked in the U.S. government might find this statement cynical; those who have are liable to find it a gross understatement.)

That is why there should be a designated high-level official, for example a special assistant to the president, to oversee the development and implementation of policy strategies on using our influence to help end support for terrorism in the Muslim world. The special assistant would coordinate with those working the supply side of the problem (intelligence and law-enforcement efforts to stop terrorist acts, as well as diplomacy to end funding and other forms of support to extremist Islamists), and those working the demand side (diplomatic assistance and public diplomacy efforts to address conditions that generate support for terrorism) to ensure that efforts are coherent and mutually reinforcing. The existing bureaucracy is simply incapable of changing course without strong leadership, and it will tend to cut initiatives (such as MEPI) down to a size that fits into the old scheme of priorities.

The reality is that if there is no one accountable for doing a difficult job in government, that job will not get done. Is it possible that, after the thousands of lives lost and billions of dollars spent on combating terrorism through military action and law enforcement, the U.S. government will fail to effectively combat the underlying sources of support for terrorism because it was simply too much trouble to ask the bureaucracy to operate differently? Yes, it is possible.

* Country Portraits

** 6. Islam, Modernity, and Public Diplomacy in the Arab World: A Moroccan Snapshot

Dale F. Eickelman

Prior to the coalition invasion in Iraq, one of the hottest topics of intellectual debate in the Arab world, as well as on al-Jazeera satellite television, was “Islam and modernity” (al-Islam wa al-hadatha). Discussions of religion and modernity framed even the widely discussed 2002 Arab development report. The fact that such a document is accessible in several languages via the Internet throughout the Arab world and elsewhere also shows the rapidly changing ground rules for public discussion and debate.[25]

Islam and Islam’s relation to modern society are central topics in present-day debate and discourse. What is not thoroughly modern and up to date—in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States—are understandings of the role that religion plays in contemporary social life. Ironically, the secular bias of Western modernization theory has deflected attention away from the pervasive role of religious practices and values in contemporary societies, particularly in the Muslim-majority world.

*** Modernization Theory and Religion

In the early 1960s, a leading American public intellectual saw the Muslim world as facing an unpalatable choice: either “neo-Islamic totalitarianism” intent on “resurrecting the past” or a “reformist Islam” that would open “the sluice gates and [be] swamped by the deluge.”[26] Another suggested that Middle Eastern societies faced the stark choice of “Mecca or mechanization.”[27] At the least, such views suggested an intensely negative assessment of the possibilities of indigenous evolution in Muslim societies.

Common to all variants of modernization theory is the assumption of a declining role for religion, except as a private matter. To move toward modernity, political leaders must displace the authority of religious leaders and devalue the importance of traditional religious institutions. Modernity is seen as an “enlargement of human freedoms” and an “enhancement of the range of choices” as people begin to “take charge” of themselves.[28] In this

view, religion can retain its influence only by conforming to the norms of “rationality” and relativism, accepting secularization, and becoming subordinate to science, economic concerns, and the state.

Recent history offers formidable challenges to Western modernization theory. Of all third world countries, Iran had undergone enormous state-driven modernization prior to 1978–79. Nonetheless, the state’s greatest challenge emanated from the growing urban middle classes, those who had benefited the most from modernization. Revolution, not political stability, was the result. Moreover, religious sentiment and leadership, not the secular intelligentsia, gave coherence and force to the revolution.

Modernization theory also deflected attention away from other politically influential religious movements in the 1970s, such as the rise of Solidarity in Poland, liberation theology throughout Latin America, and protestant fundamentalism as a force in American politics. In the words of philosopher Richard Rorty, religion usually functions as a “conversation-stopper” outside of circles of believers.[29] That’s why Western modernization experts viewed secular nationalisms, including the rise of the Ba’ath party in Syria and Iraq, as forces for modernization and development.

*** The Return of Religion

Although it is easy to be critical of Samuel Huntington’s “clash” argument because of its reliance on superseded ideas of culture, he was one of the first political scientists to spur colleagues and policy makers to reemphasize the roles of culture and tradition in political and international relations.[30] Decades before Huntington’s argument, sociologist and public intellectual Edward Shils vigorously argued that traditions are not merely unquestioned residues from earlier eras; instead, they are actively maintained clusters of cultural concepts, shared understandings, and practices that make political and social life possible.[31] These pervasive cultural understandings coexist with and shape the experience of modernity. In this sense, ethnicity, caste, and clientelism can be as distinctly modern as the idea of individual choice.

Politics, like religion, is a struggle over people's imaginations, a competition and contest over the meanings of symbols. This means that politics encompasses tradition, not only in the form of practices and shared understandings but also in the interpretation of symbols and the control of institutions, formal and informal, that produce and sustain those symbols. Politics also involves cooperation in and contest over symbolic production and control of the institutions, formal and informal, that serve as the symbolic arbiters of society.

The role of symbolic politics in general, or of "Muslim politics" in the sense of a field for debate as opposed to a bloc of uniform belief and practice, could be seen as less exceptional if the European experience with secularism were kept in mind. Religious discourse was a basic precondition for the rise of the early modern public sphere in Europe.[32] Indeed, contemporary defenders of secularism often exaggerate the durability and open-mindedness of thoroughly secular institutions, be they in the United States, Turkey, or India. In the context of the Muslim-majority Middle East, the militant secularism of some governing elites—the Turkish officer corps, for example—has been associated until recently with authoritarianism and intolerance more than with "enlightenment" values.

Because the Muslim-majority world remains feared by those who regard it as the last outpost of the antimodern, the role of religious intellectuals in contributing to an emerging public sphere is often overlooked. This public sphere is rapidly expanding because of the growth of higher education, the increasing ease of travel, and the proliferation of media and means of communication. Both mass education and mass communication, particularly the proliferation of media, profoundly influence how people think about the language of religious and political authority throughout the Muslim world. It is only a minor paradox that a strong indication of modernity is the way in which a decentralized al Qaeda has succeeded in organization and practice in the face of determined efforts to eradicate it.

*** Terrorism's Thoroughly Modern Face

Terrorism in the name of Islam also has a thoroughly modern face. Osama bin Laden no longer makes many videos, but when he did, his rehearsed message and presentation of self was as thoroughly modern as that of French-educated Pol Pot. Bin Laden may have tried to reinvent a traditional Islamic warrior “look,” but his sense of the past is an invented one. The language and content of his videotaped appeals, such as a recruitment video that appeared in late spring of 2001, were even more contemporary than his camouflage jacket, Kalashnikov rifle, and Timex watch. The CNN-like video, complete with “zippers”—running text beneath the images—was as fast-paced as a U.S. Army recruitment video or a U.S. presidential campaign ad.

Indeed, bin Laden is thoroughly imbued with the values of the modern world, even if only to reject them. He studied English at a private school and used English for his civil engineering courses. His many business enterprises flourished under highly adverse conditions. He sustained flexible, multinational organizations in the face of enemies—moving cash, people, and armaments undetected across frontiers.

Unlike most of his colleagues, bin Laden has been a highly visible poster child for transnational religious terrorism. Underestimating the intelligence, commitment, and tenacity of international terrorists would be an error as tragic as assuming that they are on the run. The best candidates for terrorist activities, like candidates for “martyrdom” operations, appear not to be maladjusted, undereducated, suicidal misfits; rather, they are intelligent, committed, motivated individuals willing to sacrifice material and emotional comforts because they regard their religion as their most important personal value.[33] The spring 2001 al Qaeda recruitment video appeals to those wishing to devote themselves to a higher cause, and organized, experienced cadres appear able to recruit those most capable of advancing the cause.

In the past few years, to speak about “public Islam” and the “common good” (al-maslaha al-’amma)—a Qur’anically sanctioned term that has more resonance than calls to civil society and that is used for this purpose by many of those who support civil society—requires tenacity and courage. Colombia may still lead the world in the number of deaths directly attributable to terrorism, but the events of September 11, the October 2002 bombings in Bali, the May 2003 “kamikaze” attacks in Saudi Arabia and

Morocco, the November attacks in Riyadh and Istanbul, and the continued bombings and violence elsewhere, including Jerusalem and Baghdad, test the limits of civility and tolerance. One place to begin looking for changing attitudes is the so-called Arab “street.”

*** The New Arab “Street” in Morocco

The Arab “street”—a term that is rapidly disappearing from Washington shorthand—has rapidly evolved in the past two decades from the shapeless and manipulated image that the term once evoked in the West. Throughout the Arab world, Iran, and Turkey, there is a more concrete awareness than in the past of the benefits and characteristics of more open societies. From March 20, 2003, a day after the first British and U.S. bombs fell on selected targets in Baghdad, until early June of that year, I was “embedded” in the old madina of Fez, twelve minutes by fast walk from the nearest drivable road. Complete with donkeys, mules, pushcarts, CD and cassette shops selling the latest pirated pop music, and satellite TVs in coffee shops, Fez’s madina must qualify as the quintessential Arab “street.”

Many of my neighbors lived at the economic edge, buying minuscule amounts of cooking oil and supplies meal by meal and often on credit because of meager incomes. Having been away from Fez for eight years, I was surprised by the prevalence of satellite television or access to it in coffee shops. During the first weeks of the Iraqi invasion, almost everyone’s last choice for news was Morocco’s state-run television, watched only for the “official” story. Qatar’s al-Jazeera satellite TV was usually the channel of choice, although competing Arabic satellite news channels, especially al-’Arabiya, were also closely watched. One did not have to be wealthy to watch satellite TV. Few Fassis read newspapers for understanding the latest events—only 1 percent of Moroccans regularly do. In contrast, about 4 percent of Algerians regularly read newspapers in spite of Algeria’s much lower rate of literacy.[34]

After the fall of Saddam’s regime—announced April 10 in Asharq al-Awsat (London), the premier international Arabic language newspaper; repeated endlessly on most Arab satellite channels; and

grudgingly conceded by Morocco’s partisan local press—discussion along my particular Arab “street” was uncannily like discussions in the Western press: What happens next? Will America (Britain was scarcely mentioned) bring a better government? What will be the Turkish reaction, especially if Iraq’s Kurds are given a voice in government?

Although the term democracy (al-dimuqratiya) was used only by the educated, many people were aware of restrictions placed on their genuine political participation. Freedom of the press and relief from government manipulation of the electoral political process were themes understood by many more. Discussions of politics and the implications of the “regime change” in Iraq were more animated in private homes than on the Arab “street.”

In 2003, the perpetrators of the May 16 bombings in Casablanca carefully timed them as a media event. Moroccans were finishing a week of celebrations for the naming ceremony for the monarch’s first child, Hassan III. The evening news on state television was still showing images of celebrations throughout the country and the monarch’s visits to major religious shrines in Fez and Meknes. In Marrakech, on the night of May 15, I witnessed dancing in the streets (young men only, of course, as is locally “proper”) and heard a band playing the then popular Arabic song, “Give Me a Visa, Give Me a Passport.” The televised pageantry the next evening was splendid and the television announcers breathless in proclaiming the people’s joy and unity with the ’Alawi dynasty and the king’s designated successor, the infant “deputy of the era” (wali al-’ahd). The coordinated bomb attacks in the center of Casablanca were aimed at Jewish and foreign targets, including the Jewish cemetery next to the old madina, a Spanish restaurant, and a hotel often used by tourists from Israel and in which a Moroccan-American seminar on counterterrorism had just concluded. These attacks quickly displaced news of the royal birth.

The May 17 evening television news showed the devastation, including photographs of the mainly Moroccan victims and their relatives. The king visited the scenes of carnage and comforted the survivors; television showed all. The palace spokesperson declared that the investigation would be

“transparent,” punishment of the perpetrators would be “without mercy,” and Morocco’s steps toward “democracy” would not be derailed—the latter of which was a reference to local elections postponed from April to September 2003 because of concerns of growing Islamist influence.

The public face of response was horror and shock. The private face is harder to read. Because the monarch spoke out, few people offered contrary opinions in public. After a summer 1994 terrorist bombing in Marrakech’s main square, the Djema‘a el-Fina, the national manhunt quickly tracked down the perpetrators and had widespread popular support. As one Islamic activist explained to me at the time, this was a national issue, not a political one, and people volunteered leads to the police throughout Morocco.

A similar outcome to the 2003 bombings will offer a measure of the current balance of political forces. Although Moroccans spoke less about the Casablanca bombings than they did about the invasion of Iraq in late March and early April 2003, the level of public awareness and concern was high. A few days after the Casablanca bombings, state television was filled with images of projects to relieve the desperate poverty of Morocco’s shantytowns. The Ministry of Education announced that illiteracy rates will be reduced in the next few years, and the Ministry of Pious Endowments and Religious Affairs announced plans to remove extremist preachers from mosques. Many Moroccans, including journalists with some of the small circulation weekly reviews, have rediscovered the “forgotten” inhabitants, such as the squalid Sidi Moumen shantytown on the outskirts of Casablanca, home to most of Casablanca’s May 16 “kamikaze” bombers. Yet most Moroccans remain skeptical about how long or how deep this “rediscovery” of Morocco’s poor and disadvantaged will persist.

The Japanese term kamikaze, the preferred term used by Moroccan government spokespeople in the wake of the Casablanca bombings, was an interesting choice because it avoided the direct invocation of a religious term, such as the Arabic shahid (“martyr”) or its direct denial as intihari (“suicide”). Kamikaze carries less contextual baggage, and thus becomes the first Japanese term to enter Moroccan colloquial usage and Arabic usage in general. It also possibly indicates the ambivalence of state spokespeople in public about choosing

Arabic terms that would have unequivocally denied religious legitimacy to all those who would use such tactics in support of causes elsewhere. The good news is that the invocation of a Japanese term at least occasioned public, although not broadcast, discussion and debate. One wonders, however, how long it will be before people start using the term Islamikaze.

*** Discovering Open Societies and Making Them Work

The substantial growth in mass education over the past three decades, the proliferation and accessibility of new media and communications, and the increasing ease of travel make it impossible for state and religious authorities to monopolize the tools of literature and culture. The ideas, images, and practices of alternative social and political worlds have become a daily occurrence. They enter domestic space through satellite and cable television, and the alternate realities are better understood than in the past. Rapidly rising literacy levels and familiarity with an educated Arabic formerly restricted to an elite facilitate this better comprehension. They also rehearse viewers to respond to those in authority in the common Arabic of the classroom and the media.

Ideas of just rule, religious or otherwise, are not fixed, even if some radicals claim otherwise. Such notions are debated, argued, often fought about, and re-formed in practice. Such debates are occurring throughout the region. A needed first step is to recognize the contours, obstacles, and false starts, both internal to the region's different countries and external, to making governance less arbitrary and authoritarian.

In April 2003, a Moroccan journalist, commenting on the shortcomings of Morocco's September 2002 elections and their relevance to the September 2003 local elections, wrote, "I am no longer interested in transparency as an end in itself, but rather as an instrument of political negotiation to brandish several months prior to [our] local elections." He concluded, "Communication does not necessarily mean credibility."[35] Perhaps not. However, the ability to communicate in a common language, confront authority in it, compare multiple sources of information on other people's experiences with similar issues elsewhere, and obtain reliable information and share it rapidly—

abilities held until recently only by state authorities and a political elite—have dramatically changed shared understandings of religion and politics throughout the Arab Middle East. They have also altered the prospects for open societies and democracy.

The government's response to the November terrorist attacks is being carefully watched by all Moroccans, and efforts to characterize Islamists in general as "Stalinist fascists" or "intellectual fascists" may suffer severe backlash, especially in cities such as Casablanca, Tangier, Fez, Meknes, Rabat, and Marrakech, as well as in the universities, where Islamist thought and practice—although not terrorism—are gaining ground faster than the government and many others care to admit.

Such challenges are not regional alone, and foreign powers that act in the region to encourage more open societies must now match deeds with words. Successes, like shortcomings, will now become known in real time. Modernity offers opportunities as well as challenges. If U.S. military strength and efficacy is now matched by a persuasive and effective public diplomacy that works, encouraging open societies and making progress in resolving even the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, then we will have the most powerful means imaginable to turn the Arab "street" into a forum in which vast numbers of people, not just a political and economic elite, will have a say.

Of course, many of these voices will seek ideas of just rule in religion. We may find this use of religion in the public square unfamiliar, but, as in Turkey and possibly in postwar Iraq, the religiously committed can learn to become moderates and to work toward achieving open societies. Although achieving this goal will be more demanding than was regime change in Iraq, it is an opportunity that can, and must, be seized.

[25] See Yves Gonzalez-Quijano, "The Birth of a Media Ecosystem: Lebanon in the Internet Age," in New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging

Public Sphere, ed. Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 61–79.

[26] Manfred Halpern, The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), 129.

[27] Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (New York: Free Press, 1964 [1958]), 405.

[28] T. N. Madan, “Secularism in Its Place,” Journal of Asian Studies 6 (1987): 747–59.

[29] Cited in John Keane, “The Limits of Secularism,” Times Literary Supplement (January 9, 1999), 12.

[30] Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” Foreign Affairs 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22–49. For comments on Huntington’s argument as it applies specifically to the Muslim world, see Dale F. Eickelman, “Muslim Politics: The Prospects for Democracy in North Africa and the Middle East,” in Islam, Democracy, and the State in North Africa, ed. John Entelis, 35–38 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

[31] Edward Shils, The Intellectuals and the Powers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 17.

[32] Dominique Colas, Civil Society and Fanaticism: Conjoined Histories, trans. Amy Jacobs (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[33] For a summary of studies on would-be martyrs and attitudes toward them, see Scott Atran, “Who Wants to Be a Martyr?” New York Times, May 5, 2003.

[34] Oumama Draoui, “Le livre dans un piteux état,” Le Journal hebdomadaire (Casablanca), (May 3–9, 2003): 28.

[35] Driss Ksikes, “Un Hold-up avorté?” Tel Quel 72 (April 5–11, 2003): 28–37.

** 7. The Challenges of Euro-Islam

Olivier Roy

Even if Islam-related terrorist attacks in Europe never achieve the level of those perpetrated in the United States or Indonesia, western Europe has played a major role as a base for planning and organization for al Qaeda’s cells: the World Trade Center (WTC) attack was planned by the Hamburg cell of al Qaeda; Ahmed Ressam was linked with a French radical network; Richard Reid was recruited in a British jail; and Zacharias Moussaoui found his calling in a London mosque.

Moreover, al Qaeda is not the only radical Islamic group active in western Europe. Other networks (like Kelkal in 1995 and the Roubaix group in 1996) have acted independently, mostly sharing ideas and recruiting along patterns similar to those of al Qaeda. Similarly, new independent groups could arise in the future. The issue of radicalization and violence thus goes beyond the present problem posed by al Qaeda and could continue or increase even if al Qaeda itself is destroyed. This is, roughly speaking, the scope of the challenge of Euro-Islam.

*** Who Are the Terrorists?

Islamic radicals in western Europe fall roughly into three categories: foreign residents, second-generation immigrants (most often native-born), and converts.

The first category is that of young Middle Easterners who come to Europe as students, mostly in modern disciplines, who speak Arabic, and who are from middle-class backgrounds. The WTC pilots are an excellent example of this first category, who often become born-again Muslims only after coming to Europe and before joining a radical group.

The second category is made up of second-generation European Muslims, some educated but many more school dropouts, who usually come from rather destitute neighborhoods. They speak European languages as their first language and often are European citizens.

The third category, the smallest in number but not necessarily in significance, is made up of converts, many of whom became Muslim while spending time in jail.

Members of all three categories follow the same general trajectory of radicalization, the key to which is that they break ties with their milieu of origin. They almost invariably become born-again Muslims (or converts) by joining a mosque known to host radical imams, and soon after that (in the span of less than a year), they turn politically radical and go (or try to go) to fight a jihad abroad. Before September 11, that meant going to Afghanistan. Since May 2003, it may mean going to Iraq.[36]

It is noteworthy that almost none of these radicals have gone to their country of origin or of their families' origin to wage jihad. And they have usually gone to the "peripheral" jihad—to Bosnia, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Kashmir, or New York—rather than to the Middle East. (Two Pak-Britons did perpetrate a terrorist attack in Tel Aviv in spring 2003, but this is, so far, the only exception to the rule.)

In addition, almost all of these terrorists broke completely with their families only after entering their process of radicalization. Having done so, they usually became urban nomads of sorts, often changing places and even countries. Thus, these terrorists are largely supranational and socially atomized. They also tend to have a Westernized trajectory in studies (urban planning, computer science), in languages (all are fluent in Western languages), and in matrimonial affairs (often marrying or dating European women).

Such a Western profile is not only a function of their sociological situation, it is also a condition of success: they live in total immersion in a Western society. The strength and the weakness of Islamic radicals in western Europe is precisely their lack of rooting among the European Muslim population. The strengths are that they can hardly be spotted by the police before going into action or be traced by police penetration of the local Muslim population. It is also difficult to penetrate their networks because they are cut off from the outside world and are highly mobile. But the weakness is that they have problems of recruitment and logistics because they do not relate well to ordinary “civilian” fellow Muslims.

*** Reasons for Radicalization

There is no clear-cut sociological profile of the Islamic radicals beyond that sketched out above. There is nothing exact or precise to link them to a given socioeconomic situation. More precisely, the reasons that may push them toward violence are not specific enough and include such characteristics shared by a larger population that deals with similar situations in very different ways. Explanations based on poverty, exclusion, racism, acculturation, and so forth may contain kernels of truth, but they are not specific enough to be of much practical help in stopping terrorists from acting.

For example, there is clearly a generational dimension at work here. Islamic radicalism is a youth movement. Frustration is obviously a key element in

their radicalization, but it seems to have more to do with a particular psychological dimension than with a social or economic one. A common factor among known radicals is a concern for self-image and a desire to reconstruct the self through action. In this sense, young radicals are more in search of an opportunity for spectacular action where they will be personally and directly involved than with the long-term, patient building of a political organization that could extend the social and political base of their networks. They are more present-oriented activists than future-oriented constructivists. They are thus far different from the Comintern agents of the 1920s and 1930s.

This narcissist dimension explains both the commitment to suicide actions and the difficulty such people have in working underground without the perspective and prospect of action. Without terrorism, they do not exist. This commitment to immediate or midterm action, as opposed to long-term political action, is probably the greatest weakness of radical Islamism in Europe, but it also makes them very hard to catch and stop.

But clearly, only a small fraction of alienated Muslim youth evinces these characteristics. Very few become terrorists. There is no obvious or practical way to tell one trajectory from others because, as noted above, it is less sociological than psychological.

Another significant pattern in Euro-Islamist radicalization is the blending of Islamic wording and phraseology with a typically Western anti-imperialism and third-worldist radicalism. For the most part, Euro-Islamist targets are the same ones that the Western ultra-Leftist movements of the 1970s identified. Islamists, however, seek mass terrorism, and they do not target political or business personalities, as the European ultra-Left used to do. Nevertheless, the paradigm of ultra-Leftist terrorism from the 1970s might provide a bridge in future to non-Islamic radicals, perhaps even to some in the so-called antiglobalization movement.

But again, such ideologies are believed by many Islamic residents in western Europe, and only a few such ideologues become terrorists. So, we can array

several perhaps necessary conditions for identifying an Islamist terrorist in Europe, but we cannot specify what the sufficient conditions are.

*** Threats and Perspectives

Since September 11 and the anti-Taliban campaign in Afghanistan, Islamist terrorists have been faced with two new problems that have immediate consequences for their ability to act in or from western Europe: organizational problems and political problems.

No longer is there easy sanctuary for Islamist radicals in EU countries to meet, train, and forge esprit de corps and links with other groups—in a word, to coalesce a ragtag collection of activists into a cohesive and disciplined organization. It is becoming far more difficult to get organized and maintain communications with leaders within and outside the country. A specific dimension of al Qaeda was its “veteran’s solidarity”: many young radicals, who met first as a group of “buddies” in a Western country, turned into an efficient cell only after having lived in Afghanistan or after being led by someone who had been in Afghanistan and returned. Moreover, a distinctive pattern of al Qaeda was that personal links between veterans of the Afghan jihad had turned into an efficient but flexible chain of command, which is obviously no longer the case.

As to political problems, the West’s “demonizing” of Islam has put the Muslim population in the West on the defensive. Although this demonizing may have turned some individuals more radical, it has convinced most Muslims living in the West to adopt a clearer attitude and to advocate a greater integration into Western societies. European authorities have contributed to isolating the radicals by responding positively, at least in terms of rhetoric, to that quest for recognition and integration. Isolation among and alienation from the European Muslim population is now one of the radicals’ main challenges.

As a consequence of these developments, two new patterns of Islamic radicalism will probably develop. The first we may call “franchising.” Local groups based on local solidarities—most likely those of neighborhood,

extended family, and university—with few or no ties to al Qaeda, will assume the label and act according to what they see as al Qaeda’s ideology and strategy. The second will be a quest for allies and support beyond the pale of Islamic fundamentalism. Radicals may try to find allies and fellow travelers at the expense of the purity of their ideological message. They could find it among the European ultra-Left or, less probably, the ultra-Right. They could find allies among other “liberation” movements (for instance, ex-Ba’athis in Iraq). Some might even serve as proxies or “gun-holders” for rogue states.

*** Counterterrorism in Europe

Whatever the differences among the European countries, including their appraisal of U.S. policy, EU members share many elements in common.

First, all European governments are reluctant to drastically alter their legal systems and basic political approaches to terrorism. The reason is that the issue of homeland security was raised and essentially settled a long time ago due to a more “indigenous” terrorism (ETA, IRA, Baader-Meinhof, Action Directe, Brigadi Rossi, and so on). In this sense, the Europeans have a more seasoned and experienced counterterrorism homeland apparatus than do the Americans. In countries where the “Islamic” threat had been identified at least a decade ago (as in France), the security apparatus is rather efficient. The recent crisis has engendered greater cooperation among the different countries, as well as with the United States, in most cases. But this cooperation has not led to the importation of political differences among governments into the security function, partly because procedures are institutionalized and partly because this is not a new concern. This has remained much the case even after the March 2004 train bombings in Madrid.

Second, as far as European countries are concerned, the fight against terrorism is a matter of police and intelligence, not military action. These tools are efficient to the extent that transnational cooperation works. In this sense, the new terrorist threat has accelerated a trend already in existence.

The growing isolation of Islamic radicals in Europe should allow the Europeans to continue with this “soft” approach: police and intelligence services are efficient and will probably be sufficient tools of counterterrorism for Europe. However, such a policy will never totally eradicate terrorism. The European tradition of terrorism and political violence that has forged the experience of the counterterrorist institutions makes it easier for young activists to become violent. Put a little differently, the stigma attached to doing such violent things is relatively weaker. Young guys who want to become radical and seek out some sort of spectacular action to validate their confused and injured manhood will not be stopped by this soft approach. Even concentrating on root causes—on the sociology and motivations of the radicals—while important for understanding the radicals’ mode of recruitment, will be of little use in drying up the ground on which these radicals prosper. The aim of European policy is not eradication; it is making terrorism a residual factor that can be lived with.

Such a “soft” approach is sustainable in Europe only under one condition: that Islamic radicalism remains a fringe movement. The real danger is in Islamic radicalism enlarging its social base or connecting with other potentially radical movements or governments. The challenge is not to go at the roots of terrorism, as European government spokespeople never tire of saying, for that is well-nigh impossible and will not eradicate terrorism in any case. The challenge is to prevent the radical fringe from finding a broad political base among the local Muslim population.

To regain their momentum and create that base, Euro-Islamic radicals will have to achieve two strategic goals: mobilize other Muslims and link up with non-Muslim radicals.

Eventually, Euro-Islamic leaders will try to mobilize a sufficient part of the Muslim community to provide shelter, logistics, recruits, reliable communications, and so on. To do that, the activists will have to change their patterns of recruitment, which are currently based on spotting some individuals and taking them out of their social milieu. They will have to engage in a more collective dawa (“proselytizing”), which

would put them on the same path as many nonpolitical conservative and even fundamentalist organizations (like the Tabligh or the Salafis). Interestingly enough, many radical groups (like the London-based Hizb ul-Tahrir) share the views of al Qaeda but think the latter has been premature to launch jihad. They believe that one should first mobilize the Muslim community through intensive proselytizing and political activity.

Eventually, too, Islamist leaders will probably try to establish some sort of joint venture with the remnants of the European extreme Left who share the same hatred for “imperialism.” Converts may play a particularly significant role here. Let us not forget that Carlos the Jackal himself converted to Islam in jail and is now praising Osama bin Laden to the hilt.

*** Pushing for a “Western” Islam

The key issue is thus the attitude of the Muslim population in Europe toward radicalism and terrorism. And for three main reasons, the Muslim population in Europe is a far larger political stake, and plays a far greater political role, than the Muslim population in the United States.

First, unlike the United States, Muslim migrants are the main source of immigration in Europe. Second, that migration originates from the close neighboring southern countries. Legal immigration to the United States is far more diverse in its origins. Third, that migration has created the bulk of the underclass and jobless youth. (In the United States, migrants want to find, and generally do find, jobs that make them quickly upwardly mobile.)

The social, geographic, political, and strategic implications of Muslim immigration to Europe are intertwined. In that light, European countries should pursue a double objective: isolate the Islamic radicals with the support of their own Muslim population, and seek out at least the neutrality of the nonviolent conservative fundamentalists among them. Two different approaches have been in competition in Europe in this regard. The multiculturalist approach, tried mainly in Great Britain, treats Muslims as a minority group that should be addressed collectively and that

should possibly benefit from a specific status. The integrationist approach, which describes that of France, seeks to grant full citizenship to Muslims as individuals but not to consider them as a separate community under any ethnic, cultural, or religious paradigm.

Neither approach seems to be working all that well. The multicultural approach tends to create ghettos. In Great Britain, the Dobson Report (2001) advised the government to stop pushing in this direction and to adapt a more integrative approach. The integrationist approach, however, ignores the quest for a new identity among uprooted Muslims. In France, amid an ongoing debate, the government has decided to establish an official representation of Muslims as a faith group, but not as a cultural or ethnic minority.

However awkwardly, a common approach is slowly emerging in Europe—dealing with the Muslim population in purely religious terms. Encouraging the emergence of a European Islam will help integrate the Muslims, weaken links with foreign countries, and provide a Western-compatible religious identity. The problem thus far is that some governments (like that of France), as well as the bulk of public opinion, equate European Islam with “liberal” Islam. Calling on the Muslims to adapt the basic tenets of Islam to the Western concept of a religion is a mistake.

For example, to officially sponsor “good and liberal” Muslims would be a sort of kiss of death. It would deprive such liberal organizations and leaders of any legitimacy. Besides, the main motivation for youth radicalization is not theological, because youth is not interested in a theological debate. Instead, political radicalization is the main driving force. Moreover, modern secular states should not regulate theology as a matter of policy.

Is there a better approach? Yes. Genuine pluralism is the best way to avoid confrontation with a tight-knit Muslim community. Conservative and even fundamentalist views of religion are manageable in a plural environment, as shown by a host of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish cases. A pluralistic approach allows civil society to reach the cadres of youth who could be ideal targets for radicals and neofundamentalist groups.

State policy should be based on integration and even “notabilization” of Muslims and community leaders on a pluralistic basis. The priority should be to weaken the links with foreign elements by pushing for the “nativization” of Islam and for preventing the deepening of the ghetto syndrome. Transparency should be the aim.

If that general proposition is accepted, then certain proposals seem to follow logically. First, there should be much tighter control on fund-raising and subsidizing from abroad, which also means better access to open domestic fund-raising and subsidies (for building mosques, for example). Second, governments should establish more links between Islamic religious teaching institutions and the university and academe. Third, religious representation should be encouraged without monopoly. Fourth, mainstream political parties should court and enlist Muslim leaders. Fifth, social policy must avoid confronting Muslims with black-and-white choices. It must, instead, work to let Muslim youth experience a diversity of opinions in line with the spectrum of political diversity in the West.

In this sense, the debate on the issue of supporting or not supporting the U.S. military campaign in Iraq has had a positive impact. In Great Britain, as well in France and elsewhere in Europe, Muslims did not feel isolated or targeted; rather, they felt as though they belonged to mainstream public opinion. In this sense at least, in the European context, the debate between so-called old and new Europe has superseded the debate on the “clash of civilizations.”

Such a policy of encouraging pluralism will meet the aspirations of mainstream Muslims in Europe—Islam recognized as a Western religion, Muslims as full citizens—while avoiding the creation of a closed community, ghettos, and minority status. This policy will contribute to the isolation of the terrorists and prevent them from building a dangerous political constituency. Approaches that by design or error drive Muslim communities inward and into themselves will backfire, to the regret of all concerned.

[36] Hard evidence and data remain elusive; see Desmond Butler and Don Van Natta, Jr., “Trail of Anti-U.S. Fighters Said to Cross Europe to Iraq,” New York Times, December 6, 2003.

** 8. Saudi Arabia and the War on Terrorism

F. Gregory Gause III

The starting point for an effective approach toward Saudi Arabia in the war on terrorism is an accurate diagnosis of just what role the country has played in the growth of al Qaeda and Sunni Muslim extremism. Exaggeration of that role has become so common in the United States that it threatens to destroy a relationship that, though troubled, is essential to American national interests in the Middle East, in the fight against terrorism, and in the world oil market.

The next step is a realistic policy prescription that deals with the problems emanating from Saudi Arabia. The policy prescription must emphasize those areas where tangible progress can be made and must avoid, to the greatest extent possible, unintended consequences that would damage American interests.

*** Diagnosis

An accurate understanding of Wahhabism is the crucial first step in diagnosing the Saudi role in the global war on terrorism. This is not simply a semantic issue or an arcane exegesis of Islamic texts. Many in the United States contend that Wahhabism is itself the root of Sunni Muslim violence and terrorism.[37] In their appendix to the Congressional Joint Committee report on the September 11 attacks, Senators Jon Kyl and Pat Roberts refer to Wahhabism as “a radical, anti-American variant of Islam.”[38] Senators Kyl

and Charles Schumer later wrote that Wahhabism “seeks our society’s destruction.”[39]

If this were true, then we would have no choice but to treat Saudi Arabia as we treated the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, because Saudi Arabia is certainly a Wahhabi state. However, these views misunderstand both Wahhabism itself and its centrality in the growth of violent Sunni Muslim extremist groups.

The puritanical version of Islam preached by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab in central Arabia in the eighteenth century, which served as the animating ideology for the Al-Saud family’s efforts to build a state in Arabia, is not very attractive to most outside observers. It is literalist in its desire to replicate the milieu of the Prophet Muhammad in every possible way. It is extremely intolerant of other interpretations of Islam, particularly Shiism. It is wary and suspicious of non-Muslims. Its views on the role of women in society run counter to international norms, to say the least. It is also hostile to the canons of modern science with some Saudi clerics holding, to this day, that the world is flat and at the center of the solar system.

But none of this is new. Wahhabism has been the official interpretation of Islam in the Saudi domain since the founding of the modern state at the outset of the twentieth century. It has not been a barrier to a very close Saudi-American relationship over the past decades. The phenomenon of anti-American terror in the Sunni Muslim community is much more recent. If this terror were grounded solely in Wahhabism, it should have manifested itself much earlier and should have prevented the historically close Saudi-American relationship.

Wahhabism, as it has developed in Saudi Arabia, is a state ideology, not a revolutionary creed. As retrograde as it might be on social issues, Wahhabism’s official arbiters counsel loyalty to the ruler, not revolution. They accord the ruler wide latitude to conduct foreign affairs. Leading Wahhabi scholars and clerics, for example, publicly gave their seal of approval to both the invitation of American forces to Saudi Arabia in 1990 and the use of Saudi Arabia as a base for the 1991 attack on Iraq. They have vehemently

rejected the bin Ladenist logic of violence, condemning the attacks of September 11, the bombings in Riyadh in May and November 2003, and the surge of terrorist violence thereafter. Even Wahhabi clerics deeply critical of American policy in the Middle East and of the Saudi-American relationship have spoken out against bin Laden and the violence that he and his followers have perpetrated.[40]

One reason that many have equated “bin Ladenism” with Wahhabism is that bin Laden himself claims to follow the “true” Wahhabi line. He calls for the overthrow of the Saudi regime and condemns the official clerics for deviating from that line. But allowing bin Laden to define Wahhabism is like allowing the militia movement in the United States to define what it means to be a patriotic American. We should not be taken in by such claims.

Violent anti-American Sunni extremism, personified by bin Laden, is the product of a much more contemporary and complicated set of ideological trends and political experiences. Wahhabism is a part of that mix, but only a part. The crucible of the development of bin Ladenism was the jihad against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s. Among the Arab volunteers there, the retrograde social views and theological intolerance of Saudi Wahhabism came to be blended with the revolutionary political doctrines developed in the 1960s by Muslim Brotherhood thinkers, particularly in Egypt. It is no accident that bin Laden’s chief lieutenant in al Qaeda is an Egyptian, Ayman al-Zawahiri, who was prominent in the violent fringes of Egyptian Islamist movements of the 1970s and 1980s. This ideological mélange was filtered through the jihad’s success, which was taken as no less than a divine sanction for the political message that developed out of it. Imbued with this confidence, the “Arab Afghans” returned to continue the jihad against their “insufficiently Muslim” governments in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and, to a lesser extent, Saudi Arabia. It is only with their failure to remake the politics of the region that, in the mid-1990s, bin Laden began to focus his jihad explicitly against the United States.

Meanwhile, the success in Afghanistan brought a new luster to the concept of jihad in Saudi Arabia (and many other Muslim countries). The Saudi government had encouraged public support for the Afghan jihad (as had the American government). Jihad became a more prominent part of many

Saudis' understanding of Islam. Muslims were also "oppressed," as Saudis saw it, by non-Muslims in places like Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya, and the West Bank and Gaza. If jihad worked in Afghanistan to free a Muslim population from non-Muslim rule, why should it not work in these other places?

Some of these causes received more official support in Saudi Arabia than others. Bosnian and Palestinian Muslims received much largesse. Saudi diplomatic relations with Russia and India, however, put limits on official support for the Chechen and Kashmiri jihads. But it is undeniable that the Saudi government not only did not oppose the developing jihadist subculture in the country but in some ways encouraged it.

Here is the true intersection in the 1990s between the bin Ladenist movement and Saudi Arabia. Bin Laden himself had been expelled from the country and stripped of his citizenship in 1994. His movement in the country seemed to be rolled up in the mid-1990s, after large-scale arrests. But al Qaeda was active in these other jihadi movements and, in time, was able to make common cause with, or take over, Saudi-funded organizations active in these causes.[41]

It is this intersection that highlights the most important role of Saudi Arabia in the spread of Sunni Islamist extremism. Saudi funding sources, developed during the Afghan jihad and maintained through the 1990s, either wittingly or unwittingly came to support al Qaeda and groups like it. The new prominence of jihad in Saudi Arabia came to be transmitted through Saudi-supported Islamic international organizations (like the Islamic Conference Organization) and nongovernmental organizations (like the World Muslim League and the World Assembly of Muslim Youth) to the rest of the Muslim world. The spread of the jihadist subculture clearly facilitated al Qaeda recruitment and created an atmosphere in which sympathy for al Qaeda could grow. Saudi recruitment channels for jihadis at home, developed in the 1980s to send young Saudis to Afghanistan and continuing in the 1990s to other areas, came to be exploited by al Qaeda to recruit Saudis directly into the organization.

Funding, ideological legitimation, and recruitment are the areas where Saudi Arabia played a key role in developing Sunni Muslim extremism. But that is a far cry from claiming that the Saudi government itself, directly and wittingly, boosted bin Laden and his views. It is even a farther cry from the theories that the Al-Saud were behind September 11, theories on a par with those holding the CIA or the Israeli Mossad responsible for those atrocities. The reality is challenge enough; no good purpose is served by marketing error and delusion.

*** Prescription

Funding, ideological legitimation, and recruitment are precisely the areas that American foreign policy should target in its policy toward Saudi Arabia in the war on terrorism. In all of these areas, the United States is today dealing with a Saudi government that is usually, though not always, willing to cooperate. The level of cooperation has varied, in part because not all elements of the Saudi regime have been equally committed to that cooperation.

A number of factors contribute to that reluctance, including tensions over the direction of American Middle East policy in general and very clear differences between the two countries regarding the definition of terrorism as it relates to the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, the key to Saudi reluctance is the domestic political costs of confronting a movement that had considerable sympathy within Saudi Arabia for many of its goals if not its tactics. Being against Islam is not a winning position in Saudi politics. The fact that any cooperation with the United States would be seen by many as bowing to American pressure, when (from the late 1990s) the United States has been profoundly unpopular in Saudi Arabia, has furnished further disincentive.

However, the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, and on the housing compounds in Riyadh on May 12 and November 9, 2003, led to new levels of seriousness on the part of the Saudi authorities in addressing the problem of Sunni extremism that they had, however unwittingly, helped to create. These events brought home to the Saudi leadership, more quickly

to some than to others, the threat posed by Sunni Muslim extremism to the domestic stability of their own regime.

On the funding issue, American pressure and the Saudi realization of the seriousness of the threat have led to important steps by Riyadh to exercise more control over Saudi-supported charities and to monitor financial transactions from the kingdom. During 2002, the Saudi government took several steps in this direction, including requiring Foreign Ministry approval of any charitable project undertaken outside the country, ordering audits of Saudi charities, and establishing new oversight bodies in the government to monitor charities.[42] After the May 2003 bombings Riyadh moved to close ten of the foreign offices of the al-Haramain Foundation, frequently cited as a conduit of funds for extremist groups, after earlier closing the foundation's offices in Bosnia and Somalia.[43]

The task for American foreign policy is to hold the Saudi government's feet to the fire on this issue, pushing it to follow up on its own declared policy. The Bush administration has been doing so, dispatching in August 2003 a team of senior counterterrorist officials to press the Saudis.[44] Just a few weeks later, the Saudi cabinet adopted new regulations against money laundering, and the Saudi government allowed the IRS and FBI to establish a permanent liaison office in Riyadh to coordinate with Saudi counterparts.[45] A practical step in this direction would be to press the Saudis to actually create the Saudi Higher Authority for Relief and Charity Work, a step that had been announced but not implemented, to serve as the oversight body for all charitable organizations and associations offering services outside the country.[46]

In December 2003, Saudi sources at the embassy in Washington revealed that the Saudi government intends to stop providing diplomatic status for Islamic clerics and educators preaching and teaching overseas. These sources also claimed an intent to "shut down the Islamic affairs section in every embassy."[47] If this actually occurs, it will be a significant step and a major signal of change in Saudi policy.

While many in Washington remain skeptical of the Saudi commitment in this area, some appear to have become too complacent. It still makes sense to pressure Riyadh to demonstrate its good intentions rather than to assume they either will or will not follow through on recent initiatives. If further cooperation is not forthcoming, the United States should not hesitate to "name and shame" Saudi individuals and organizations involved in the deliberate financing of al Qaeda and affiliate groups.

One area of particular sensitivity in the issue of funding is Saudi support, official and private, for Hamas, the Palestinian Islamist group officially designated as a terrorist organization by the United States. There is no question that Saudi money goes to Hamas organizations and projects.[48] Pushing the Saudis to end as much of that support as they can would be valuable, but the negative consequences of making the Hamas issue a very high-profile public part of Saudi-American relations are considerable. In terms of Saudi public opinion, equating al Qaeda and Hamas does not delegitimate the latter; it legitimates the former. Better for Washington to separate the al Qaeda issue from the Hamas issue by pushing publicly and privately for absolute cooperation on the former and keeping the latter in the realm of private diplomacy, at least while al Qaeda remains America's foremost priority.

On legitimation, Washington has a less public role to play than on funding. The U.S. government will not be successful in telling Muslims what Islam is, and it should not try to do so. Here, the key is to press the Saudis to use their considerable ideological resources, both at home and in the Muslim world in general, to place bin Laden, his actions, and his interpretation of Islam outside the pale of acceptable Muslim discourse. This requires the Saudis to confront head-on the jihadist subculture that they indirectly nurtured during the past two decades.

As in the funding area, the Saudis have recently demonstrated a willingness to take on this task. In late May 2003, after the bombings in Riyadh, the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs announced the removal of 353 religious officials from their positions (because they lacked the "qualifications" to work in mosques) and the requirement that 1,357 religious officials undergo further training.[49] Immediately after September 11, leading Saudi religious

officials condemned the attacks and, since then, have consistently and publicly rejected bin Laden's interpretation of jihad. A recent example was the statement of the Higher Council of Ulama in August 2003, reaffirming that violent attacks on innocents "are criminal acts … not jihad in the path of God." The council called on the Saudi authorities to bring before the courts any scholar who issues a fatwa ("religious judgment") approving of such acts.[50] Continuing efforts by the Saudis in this direction, not only at home but also through the Islamic intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations that they fund, are essential.

On recruitment, the Saudis need to police much more stringently the networks of al Qaeda members and sympathizers that have developed within the kingdom itself. For too long, even after September 11, Riyadh refused to face up to this issue. Just days before the May 2003 bombing, the country's chief security official, Interior Minister Prince Na'if, termed the al Qaeda presence in the country as "weak and almost nonexistent."[51] Since the bombing, Saudi security forces have been much more aggressive in efforts to root out al Qaeda. In the aftermath of the May and November 2003 bombings, more than six hundred Saudis were arrested. There have been a number of shootouts between Saudi police and suspected al Qaeda sympathizers, with tens killed on each side, and Saudi security services have discovered a number of substantial arms caches.[52] The United States should urge the Saudis to make a special effort to prevent infiltration by al Qaeda sympathizers and other Islamist militants across the long and largely unguarded Saudi-Iraqi border.

The Saudis could do more on all of these issues, and the United States should monitor Saudi government actions carefully. There is also the larger issue, beyond the scope of this essay, of the consequences of Wahhabi proselytizing in the Muslim world. Even if the official Saudi interpretation of Islam is not, in and of itself, the wellspring of anti-American terror, its retrograde views on social tolerance, gender issues, and democracy place it at variance with American goals throughout the Muslim world, including in the United States itself. Helping other Muslim countries promote more tolerant and inclusive interpretations of Islam should be part of the American foreign policy agenda, to the extent that Washington can help on these issues. But on the specific issue of anti-American terrorism, there is a clear willingness, more pronounced since the May 2003 bombings, on the part of

the Saudi government to cooperate with Washington. That is a basis upon which to build.

*** Do No Harm

The United States should avoid superficially appealing policies toward Saudi Arabia that will redound to our disadvantage. In particular, Washington should suppress its natural tendency to believe that more democracy will make things better in foreign countries.

Democratic elections in Saudi Arabia would reflect the very strong anti-Americanism now prevalent in the country. A Gallup poll, conducted in late January-early February 2002, reported that 64 percent of Saudi respondents viewed the United States either very unfavorably or most unfavorably. Majorities in the poll associated America with the adjectives “conceited, ruthless and arrogant.” Fewer than 10 percent saw the United States as either friendly or trustworthy.[53] A Zogby International poll, conducted in March 2002, reported similar results. Only 30 percent of the Saudis polled supported American-led efforts to fight terrorism, while 57 percent opposed them.[54] A subsequent Zogby poll, conducted in July 2003, found that 70 percent of the Saudis polled had an unfavorable impression of the United States, with only 24 percent having a favorable impression.[55] An elected Saudi legislature, for example, would put pressure on the Saudi government to cooperate less, not more, with the United States in the war on terrorism and on general Middle East issues.

Saudi anti-Americanism is not an immutable fact. It reflects the tensions in the relationship since September 11, the negative reactions to American attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq, and the collapse of the Arab-Israeli peace process. But it can change with time, as regional realities change. However, a push for democracy in Saudi Arabia now would not serve American interests. President Bush cannot take back what he said at the National Endowment for Democracy on November 6, 2003, but he can selectively implement his vision. And he should. Cautious steps from the Saudis themselves to broaden the scope of political participation in their society, such as the October 2003 announcement of plans for municipal elections to

fill half the seats of the proposed municipal councils, should be welcomed. Washington should not push for countrywide elections to national institutions, such as the Consultative Council (an appointed body).

The United States must also avoid the temptation to simply throw up its hands and declare the Saudis an enemy. This impulse is based on a faulty reading of the role of Wahhabism and Saudi Arabia in the development of Sunni Islamist extremism, as discussed earlier. Beyond that, the temptation seems to be an emotionally satisfying thought for many who see Wahhabism, the monarchy, the treatment of women, the Saudi stance on Arab-Israeli issues, and various other elements of Saudi society and governance as so antithetical to American principles that our country should have no truck with the House of Saud. As in so many things in life, however, what temporarily satisfies our emotional needs would not be good for us in the long run.

Those who urge such a policy fail the basic test of practical politics: They offer no alternative to the Saudi-American relationship.[56] They are extremely fuzzy on what Washington should do the day after it declares Saudi Arabia an enemy. Military invasion and occupation of the oil fields? Given how difficult and expensive U.S. occupation of Iraq has become, this cannot be a serious option. Those who advocate “regime change” in Riyadh, through greater democracy or direct U.S. action, can offer no assurances that a new regime would be any friendlier to the United States, harder on Islamist extremists, or more in tune with global human rights norms than the incumbents.

The plain fact is that not only do the rulers of Riyadh sit on 25 percent of all the world’s known conventional oil reserves, but they also control the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the focal point of faith for 1.4 billion Muslims in the world. Surely having a government there that, despite its problems, responds to American pressures on oil questions and the war on terrorism is better for American interests than the leap into the dark that military occupation or regime change would represent. Looking around the region, it is better than several other easily imaginable alternatives as well.

[37] The first and most influential post-September 11 book to make this claim is Stephen Schwartz, The Two Faces of Islam: The House of Sa’ud from Tradition to Terror (New York: Doubleday, 2002).

[38] “Additional Views—Senator Jon Kyl, Senator Pat Roberts,” http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/911rpt/addviewsmem.pdf, p. 20.

[39] Jon Kyl and Charles Schumer, “Saudi Arabia’s Teachers of Terror,” Washington Post, August 18, 2003.

[40] See F. Gregory Gause III, “Be Careful What You Wish For: The Future of U.S.-Saudi Relations,” World Policy Journal 49, no. 1 (Spring 2002).

[41] There are persistent charges that members of the Saudi ruling family either directly or indirectly cut a deal with bin Laden, at minimum promising not to impede his fund-raising and recruiting in Saudi Arabia, perhaps even supporting him financially, in exchange for al Qaeda refraining from targeting Saudi Arabia. The major published source to raise this charge is Gerald Posner, Why America Slept: The Failure to Prevent 9/11 (New York: Random House, 2003). Nothing in the public record supports this charge. The car bomb attack on the American training mission to the Saudi National Guard in Riyadh in November 1995, which killed seven and wounded sixty, was perpetrated by Saudis who, before their execution, publicly identified bin Laden as their inspiration. However, it is impossible to disprove the charge as well. In the past, Saudi leaders have attempted to buy off foreign opponents, and the ruling family is large enough that it is possible that some prince or group of princes took it upon themselves to explore this option. The most that can be said with certainty is that, if there ever were such an agreement, it did not work very well for the Al-Saud.

[42] Al-Hayat, March 21, 2002, 1, 6; John Mintz, “Saudis Deny Dragging Feet on Terrorism,” Washington Post, December 4, 2002.

[43] John Mintz, “Wahhabi Strain of Islam Faulted,” Washington Post, June 27, 2003.

[44] Susan Schmidt, “U.S. Officials Press Saudis on Aiding Terror,” Washington Post, August 6, 2003.

[45] “Cabinet OK’s anti-money laundering legislation,” Arab News, August 19, 2003; “U.S. and Saudis Join in Anti-Terror Effort,” New York Times, August 26, 2003.

[46] As of late May 2003, the body had yet to be established, according to the Saudi response to questions posed by the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council. The reference to the body is on page 11 of the response, Counter-Terrorism Committee document S/2003/583.

[47] See Susan Schmidt and Caryle Murphy, “U.S. Revokes Visa of Cleric at Saudi Embassy,” Washington Post, December 7, 2003.

[48] Adil al-Jubeir, foreign affairs adviser to Crown Prince Abdallah, has admitted as much. David R. Sands, “Kingdom Moves Against Terrorism,” Washington Times, June 13, 2003. See also Matthew Levitt, “Who Pays for Palestinian Terror?” The Weekly Standard, August 25, 2003.

[49] Al-Hayat, May 28, 2003, 1, 6.

[50] Al-Hayat, August 17, 2003, 1, 6.

[51] Glenn Kessler and Alan Sipress, “Western Targets Bombed in Riyadh,” Washington Post, May 13, 2003.

[52] Neil MacFarquhar, “Al Qaeda Blamed in Deadly Attack on Saudi Homes,” New York Times, November 10, 2003.

[53] Richard Burkholder, “The U.S. and the West—Through Saudi Eyes,” Gallup Tuesday Briefing, August 6, 2002.

[54] “The 10 Nation ‘Impressions of America’ Poll Report,” Zogby International, August 7, 2002.

[55] www.zogby.com/news/ReadNews.dbm?ID=725.

[56] Argued in Adam Garfinkle, “Weak Realpolitik: The Vicissitudes of Saudi Bashing,” The National Interest, no. 67 (Spring 2002).

** 9. With Allies Like This: Pakistan and the War on Terrorism

Stephen Philip Cohen

During his 1999–2000 presidential campaign, George W. Bush could not name the leader of Pakistan. In June 2003, President (and army chief) Pervez Musharraf spent a high-profile day at Camp David, where a multiyear $3 billion American aid package was announced. We learn from this little anecdote that the September 11 attacks on the United States have propelled Pakistan into the limelight of U.S. national security concerns. There it remains today, labeled a “frontline ally” in the war on terrorism.[57]

To some extent, this recent contretemps repeats an old pattern of alliance and estrangement that has characterized U.S.-Pakistan relations since the early 1950s.[58] Pakistan was, in turn, an instrument of American policy in containing the Soviets and then the Chinese and then in removing the Soviets from Afghanistan. However, this time there is a difference: Pakistan is a critical ally, but it is also a potential source of terrorism, as well as a declared nuclear weapons state. Some have pointed to Pakistan's growing social extremism, its use of terror as an instrument of state policy in Kashmir, its continuing meddling in Afghanistan, and evidence of leakage of Pakistani nuclear technology to Iran, North Korea, and perhaps other states. If Pakistan is an ally as far as Afghanistan is concerned, it has not behaved like a friend of the United States in many other respects.

A closer look at Pakistan reveals that radical groups do not enjoy widespread support in the country. Despite recent electoral trends, most middle-class and urban Pakistanis do not subscribe to the radical agenda. They believe Pakistan should be a modern but Islamic state—with "Islamic" being confined to a few spheres of public life.

Nonetheless, Pakistan today finds itself at a critical juncture. Radical Islam has found a home in Pakistan, and the danger of the spread of extremism, though by no means imminent, is greater than it was a decade ago. Pakistan is also one of the world's most anti-American countries, which makes Americans especially vulnerable there.[59] If its radicalism is left unchecked, Pakistan could indeed evolve into a nuclear-armed terrorist state. Washington must seize the opportunity presented by its current alliance to help move Pakistan in the direction of moderation and stability.

To do this requires a policy of engagement on two parallel tracks. The first is short-term and "curative," ensuring that Pakistan's present terrorist groups are checked by better police, army, and intelligence operations and addressing the specific causes that motivate their acts. The second policy track is "preventive," a long-term engagement to revitalize Pakistan's enfeebled civilian and social institutions. This second track is a daunting but essential task.

*** Typologies of Terrorism

Terrorism in Pakistan has several dimensions. Three distinct types can be distinguished.

Type I concerns terrorism in Afghanistan and is the focus of the new American relationship with Pakistan, which derives primarily from the latter's importance in combating al Qaeda and the Taliban. Pakistan has been cooperative in rounding up al Qaeda cadres but much less obliging about the Taliban, which receives significant support from Pakistani Pashtuns and some of Pakistan's Islamist parties. In all, about five hundred al Qaeda members have been captured by the Pakistanis and turned over to the United States.

Type II terrorism is Pakistan's direct and indirect support for Kashmir-related groups that have attacked Indian forces and innocent civilians. A few such groups seem to be intent on precipitating a war between Delhi and Islamabad and oppose the latter government because it abandoned the Taliban and reversed course on Afghanistan.[60]

Type III terrorism in Pakistan refers to the domestic dimension. Many of Pakistan's terrorists are sectarian, and some have links to one or another group operating in Kashmir/India and Afghanistan. A number of these groups have links to various Pakistani political parties, Islamabad's intelligence services, or the army. In the past, the state had used some of these groups for domestic purposes.[61]

Pakistanis do not necessarily perceive terrorism in one location in the same way as they perceive it in another location. Although sectarian violence is stigmatized, the use of terrorism in Kashmir is widely seen as a legitimate last resort in the Kashmiri "freedom struggle"—although this struggle is never called terrorism. This difference in view complicates any strategy to deal with one kind of terrorism, for the types overlap in practice. In addition, some groups are involved in more than one kind of terrorism.

*** The Curative Track

An American policy designed to curb existing terrorism in Pakistan should deal with all three types. But America should take care not to get preoccupied with Type I terrorism while ignoring the other two. Along the curative track, three policies recommend themselves.

First, there should be continued support to improve the professionalism of Pakistan’s police forces, which are notorious for their abuse of power. The police are viewed by most citizens as predators, not protectors, and support for terrorist groups is often a by-product of alienation from the Pakistani state. For its part, the Pakistani government should ensure that the police receive salaries and support commensurate with their grave responsibilities; in the long run, this expenditure is more important for the security and stability of Pakistan than money spent on advanced weapons and military hardware.

Second, because the Pakistani army remains politically important, Washington should link the quantity and quality of military assistance to Pakistan to good performance in countering all three kinds of terrorist groups. The effort should begin, obviously, with the first category but should eventually include the second and third, as well. Many steps have been discussed between American and Pakistani officials in this regard, including exerting greater control over the madrassas, providing closer surveillance of suspect groups, shutting down terrorist training camps, improving surveillance along the Line of Control in Kashmir, and countering extremist propaganda. If Pakistan demonstrates vigor and competence in such matters, military aid and cooperation from the United States should be increased.

Finally, the United States should address the two major foreign policy issues that are the focus of some Pakistani terrorists and that give them broader legitimacy. Pakistan’s movement against terrorists operating in Kashmir will have to be linked to progress in a peace process with India. Absent such progress, Pakistan will not unilaterally strip itself of a vital, if provocative and risky, policy instrument. The United States must notch up its engagement in

the region and promote a peace process between the two countries, even if this process is disguised as “facilitation.”[62] American support for a peace process, which has as a major component the well-being of the Kashmiri people, will blunt one of the “causes” of radical Islamists. Such a process will meet with strong resistance from the radical Pakistanis and may well include violence and terrorism designed to disrupt it. However, engagement is essential, not only for long-term U.S. interests but also for the stability of the Pakistani state.

Similarly, any comprehensive policy toward Pakistan must address Pakistan’s relationship with Afghanistan. The two states have a long and complex relationship that took an astonishing turn when American forces removed the Taliban government with Pakistan’s help. Despite recent events, there remains sympathy for the Taliban and al Qaeda among the Pakistani Pashtuns. Radical Islamic groups in Pakistan’s North-West Frontier Province are especially attuned to developments in Afghanistan. A continuing U.S. presence next door, without any tangible positive results for the Afghan people, will further intensify grievances in Pakistan.

The best American policy is one of prevention: ensuring that Afghanistan does not collapse into chaos and that Pakistan remains supportive of the Hamid Karzai regime. The United States needs to advance the effective neutralization of Afghanistan in the region as it helps Afghans to rebuild the country from within. Clearly, Afghanistan needs substantial and long-term outside assistance to help manage its own security. Washington should actively support the process, with the knowledge that the greatest danger of an Afghan collapse might be the radicalization of large parts of Pakistan.

To summarize, nothing will happen if America merely demands an end to Pakistani support for terrorist groups. The United States must also offer positive inducements in the form of additional aid to Pakistan, political support for a dialogue with India, and assurance of a friendly and stable Afghanistan.

All this is absolutely necessary, but not sufficient. Washington must also move beyond short-term cures to address the deeper causes of radicalism and terrorism in Pakistan. That brings us to the preventive track.

*** The Preventive Track

The second policy track the United States needs to follow in Pakistan should focus on the mushrooming growth of extremism from which terrorists of several sorts are recruited. Pakistan is not an inherently extremist Islamic country. Despite its having reared some prominent Islamist theorists, it is not like Saudi Arabia, whose form of Salafi Islam is organic to its state formation. Pakistan's radical groups are a mixed lot. Some are criminals trying to wrap themselves in the mantle of divine justice. Some have modest, Pakistan-related objectives. Some are seized with sectarian hatred. A few are internationalist apocalyptical terrorists in tune with the al Qaeda philosophy.

The rise of all radical groups to prominence, however, can in large part be attributed to the patronage they have received from the Pakistan army. Over the years, the army has used these groups as instruments of domestic as well as foreign policy. But although the Pakistani state must bear responsibility for its cultivation of some of these terrorist groups, other problems now overwhelm the question of origins. There is currently increasing frustration with the lack of economic opportunities, the rise in crime and violence (especially against women) and a growing pool of unemployed college students and graduates who are potential supporters of terrorism. Pakistan's adverse educational and demographic trends, its enfeebled institutions, and its stagnant economy will eventually produce a situation where even the army cannot stem the growth of radical Islamism, and might even be captured by it.

To avert such a scenario, Washington must provide support to revitalize Pakistan's core institutions. Pakistan's economy requires an overhaul, its educational system must be reconstructed, and, above all, as political and administrative institutions gain strength, the army must curb its meddling in political affairs. Let us look at these three areas in turn.

**** The Economy

Since the 1999 coup, international assistance, close monitoring of expenditures, and consistent policies have produced a modest economic recovery in Pakistan. The country has moved away from default, but it still has a large international debt, and both unemployment and underemployment remain high.[63] America should continue to support the economy with macro-level assistance. Continued (and even expanded) economic aid, however, should be linked to several key policy changes.

One such change is that the Pakistani people must see tangible evidence that its government's tilt in favor of the United States brings significant benefits to all layers of society and all corners of the country. Most U.S. aid is invisible to the average Pakistani, who cares little about debt relief or balance of payment problems. Without being obtrusive or boasting, the message should be that America is vitally concerned about Pakistan's economic progress and wants to see the economy adapt to a fast-changing world. Specific projects in the arena of high technology, improving indigenous manufacturing, and research and development capabilities would demonstrate that a globally competitive Pakistan is in America's interest.[64] Further, Washington should encourage American companies to invest in Pakistan in areas that are seen to be important for balanced Pakistani growth, not merely the source of fat profits for a few American companies.[65]

Aid accountability is vital. Benchmarks and guidelines should certainly be negotiated with Pakistani authorities, as usual. But once the terms are agreed upon, economic assistance should be closely monitored to ensure that the funds are not funneled into other purposes and that corruption is kept to a minimum. The United States and other donors have every right to link economic assistance with conditions that ensure that the money is being properly utilized.[66] The essential principle that American aid administrators must keep in mind is that aid is not merely a payoff to a regime; its purpose, in this case, is to help that regime make the structural changes that will prevent Pakistan from evolving into a dangerous state.

**** Education

Both the American and Pakistani governments are aware of the collapse of Pakistan’s educational system, but they tend to look at different aspects of the problem. Washington has focused on the madrassas, the religious schools that are perceived to be teaching terror and preaching hatred toward the West.[67] Islamabad emphasizes the importance of improving advanced technical education and, thus, has started another scheme to massively train scientists and technicians.

While the United States must continue pressuring Pakistani authorities to revamp the madrassa system, as President Musharraf has promised to do, the agenda should not be confined to this dimension alone. The predominance of the madrassas in Pakistan is a consequence of the massive infusion of foreign, largely Saudi, funds for the conservative madrassas and of the Pakistani state’s failure to provide adequate educational facilities to begin with.[68] If modern educational institutions are not revitalized, the madrassas will continue to thrive. The new U.S. aid package only allocates $21.5 million to primary education and literacy in 2003, about a tenth of the cost of a single F-22 jet, and much of that will be swallowed up in administrative costs.

At the elementary and secondary education levels, more aid should be provided, but it must be conditional upon actual achievement in literacy levels and teacher training. Indeed, the problem of teacher training is so great that Pakistan should be encouraged to bring in foreign teachers, who will not only provide high levels of technical skill but who will also break down the cultural isolation of many Pakistanis.

At the graduate and postgraduate levels, American educational assistance should focus on restoring the many private institutions that once thrived in Pakistan (including some church-related schools) and on restoring Pakistan’s liberal arts, humanities, and social science expertise, which is so necessary for the training of an informed citizenry. The present approach, elevating

colleges to the university level, does not address the absence of quality faculty. Where will these instructors come from? A massive increase in the Fulbright program would make sense, as would an emergency training program for Pakistani educational administrators and faculty members. Moreover, Pakistan should follow the lead of Bangladesh and a few other states and send some advanced students to India for technical and nontechnical training.

Perhaps the most important condition that must be put on aid for the educational sector is that the Pakistan government itself should increasingly assume the responsibility for education’s funding and administration. The share of government expenditures on education should increase; if it is cut, Pakistan should pay the price in terms of reduced military and economic aid. [69]

Finally, any educational aid program must calibrate the amount of aid relative to the sector’s absorptive capacity. Dedicational aid programs should begin small and increase only when Pakistan’s capacity has grown. To reiterate, the essential principle to bear in mind is that this aid is not being given for its own sake but to achieve permanent and positive change in Pakistan.

**** Democratization

“Democratization” is one of the three benchmarks set forth by President Bush when he announced the 2003 aid package for Pakistan. Washington should encourage the Pakistani army to develop an informal timetable for the restoration of complete democracy and to stick to it. This timetable may last for several years, but now is the time to reshape the civil-military balance in Pakistan toward something resembling normalcy.

Although democracy in Pakistan may be difficult to bring about, the best way for the United States to forestall the rise of radical Islam, to safeguard a modicum of civil liberties, and to preempt separatist movements is to insist, as a condition of aid, that the Pakistani government allow the mainstream

political parties (the Pakistan Muslim League and the Pakistan People’s Party) to function freely.[70] The goal should be a spectrum of Islamic and liberal parties that are willing to operate within a parliamentary context and that are tolerant of sectarian and other minorities. As long as the Pakistani establishment does not tolerate groups, parties, and leaders that have practiced and preached violence within Pakistan and across its borders in India and Afghanistan, the United States should not be concerned about the ideological outlook of the parties. Indeed, avowedly Islamic parties that eschew violence are particularly useful in a Pakistani context; they allow for the expression of views whose believers, if excluded from the public realm, might more readily turn to violence and terror.

Finally, Washington must take seriously the fact that Pakistan is an important arena of ideas. Most educated Pakistanis are not ideologically anti-American, but they are angry with the United States for changing the regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq and supporting President Musharraf. There is no one telling America’s side of the story or engaging its critics in the realm of ideas and public discourse. American information programs in the country are practically nonexistent; these programs need to be revived and vastly expanded, and private organizations must be encouraged to increase their exchange and cultural programs, especially with younger Pakistanis, academics, journalists, and opinion leaders. In the long run the greatest challenge to the United States in Pakistan is in the realm of ideas—the field must not be abandoned to Islamic radicals or those who see the United States as an inherently evil state.

*** For the Long Haul

Despite its many problems, Pakistan is still one of the freest and most democratic Muslim states, even as it has become an increasingly dangerous one. While the threat from Islamic radicalism in Pakistan is not as high as is perceived by some in the West, the country is poised at a moment where further neglect could accelerate its descent into radicalism, producing a state that threatens regional and global security.

The United States should engage itself with Pakistan over the long haul, not just the short term. It needs to assist Pakistan in curbing the threat from radicalism at home while achieving a more normal relationship with India and Afghanistan. Equally important, the U.S. government should help Pakistan revitalize its enfeebled institutions and provide its population with much-needed opportunities for growth. The goal should not be to merely sustain a Pakistan that poses no threat but to help develop a stable Pakistan that can become a model for the Islamic world and, perhaps, a partner in establishing a more liberal order in parts of the Middle East and elsewhere. The best way to achieve this goal is to pursue a course of sustained engagement with Pakistan's civil side, breaking with the pattern of engagement and estrangement focusing on the military that characterized the past.

A necessary adjunct to such a policy would have global as well as Pakistan-specific components. A streamlining of laws in the United States to deal with terrorist-related detainees is in order. So is a still clearer message to repeatedly emphasize that the U.S. target in the war on terrorism is not Islam or Pakistanis, but solely terrorism.

There is no assurance that curative or preventive policies will succeed. Both would require active cooperation by the Pakistani government, as well as the support of key elites. Even with their support, some sectors of Pakistani society are so badly run down that a well-funded effort could still fail. However, we will only know this if such an attempt is made. What is certain is that without a concerted effort to curb Islamic radicalism in the short term, and to dry up its recruitment base in the long term, the worst predictions about a rogue, nuclear-armed, terrorist-supporting Pakistan are likely to come true.

*** Notes

I thank Mr. Moeed Yusuf for his assistance in writing this chapter.

[57] The term “terrorism” is defined differently by many people—we treat it as attacks on unarmed civilians; a perfected definition would term it a hatred that finds an expression in violence, often designed to shock and horrify.

[58] For an outstanding overview of the relationship, see Dennis Kux, The United States and Pakistan, 1947–2000: Disenchanted Allies (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001).

[59] Graham Fuller notes that there is widespread unfavorable opinion of the United States in the Muslim world (53%) with less than half of that (22%) holding a positive view. He states that anti-American perception is the highest in Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. Graham E. Fuller, “The Youth Factor: The New Demographics of the Middle East and Implications for U.S. Policy,” Brookings Project on U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic World, Analysis Paper 3, July 2003, 22–25.

[60] These Kashmir-specific groups may have a wider reach. A group was charged in northern Virginia as being part of a Lashkar-e-Toiba cell and accused of plotting attacks on a “friendly country” (i.e. India); at least two of the eight arrested were Pakistani nationals, with others being born in Pakistan. Dawn, June 28, 2003.

[61] Examples of such groups include Jaish-e-Muhammad, Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Pakistan.

[62] American officials vehemently rejected “facilitation” at one point but now accept it as a legitimate American role. Secretary of State Powell mentioned the matter in a September 5, 2003, speech at George Washington University. The Council on Foreign Relations, in a forthcoming report, will recommend the appointment of a high-level American facilitator based in the White House.

[63] For an assessment of prospects, see “Pakistan Plans $500 Million Return to Bond Market,” Financial Times, June 20, 2003.

[64] For an outstanding review of Pakistan’s economic and governmental problems, see Dr. Akmal Hussain, Pakistan: National Human Development Report, 2003 (Islamabad: UNDP, 2003). For a discussion of American economic policy options, see Ambassador Teresita C. Schaffer, Reviving Pakistan’s Economy: A Report from the CSIS Project (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 2002).

[65] One group of companies to focus on would be those already invested in South Asia: General Electric, Microsoft, and Boeing already have experience in the region, and their products might help break the region’s trade barriers.

[66] Pakistan has resisted conditionality with the recent aid package. Strong political voices in Pakistan are pushing the government to reject any U.S. aid that comes with strings attached. See “Leghari Asks Govt to Reject US Aid With Strings: Congressmen’s Bias Flayed,” Dawn, July 29, 2003.

[67] There were only 250 madrassas at independence and about 5,000 in the 1980s. This number has now jumped to 45,000, according to some estimates. Those that preach hatred may only constitute 10 to 15 percent of the total—but few offer an education that prepares their graduates for a modern occupation.

[68] For a discussion of the Pakistani madrassas, see P. W. Singer, “Pakistan’s Madrassahs: Ensuring a System of Education, Not Jihad,” Brookings Project on U.S. Policy Towards the Islamic World, Analysis Paper 14, November 2001.

[69] Pakistan is showing signs of improvement in this regard. The latest federal budget (FY04) has increased the allocation for education expenditures to 1.05 percent of total expenditures, from 0.9 percent in FY03.

[70] In the October 2002 elections, the leaders of both mainstream parties were allowed neither to return to Pakistan nor to compete in the elections.

** 10. American Muslims as Allies in the War on Terrorism

M. A. Muqtedar Khan

Any and every injury to America is as much an injury to American Muslims as it is to any other American. Therefore, the loss of life and property, as well as the erosion of security as a result of the attacks of September 11, 2001, hurt American Muslims as much as they hurt other Americans. More than two hundred American Muslims lost their lives on that fateful day, and many American Muslims have since suffered from the political and economic consequences of the attacks. American Muslims also suffered when America responded, militarily and otherwise, to September 11.

Today, other Americans view the entire American Muslim community with varying degrees of suspicion. The community's institutions are under siege, the status of its civil rights is in grave jeopardy, and many Muslims are suffering socially as well as professionally from rising anti-Muslim sentiments in America. American Muslims have also seen thousands of their fellow Muslims die in wars, which would not have been waged had America not been attacked.

The point is that when America is attacked, American Muslims suffer, and when America responds, American Muslims suffer again. It follows that American Muslims should be more concerned than anyone about essential American security and that they have a compelling incentive to do all they can to make sure that the international war on terrorism is effective and successful. That is not all. In the process of fighting terrorism, the U.S. government has undertaken actions that have raised the level of anti-Americanism worldwide. Perhaps these actions have been fully justified and wise, perhaps not—but there is no question that one side effect has been an

antipathy toward the United States of which Americans, in general, are increasingly aware. Arab countries and Muslim organizations in America have tried to manipulate this awareness by trying to get the United States to focus more on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and less on the war on terrorism, as if doing the former would palpably aid the latter.

The growth of anti-Americanism in non-Muslim societies, especially in western Europe and to a lesser extent in eastern Asia, has become a source of delight to many Muslim commentators overseas. They see it as a vindication of their claims about America's unjust foreign policy and diplomatic heavy-handedness. Unfortunately, some American Muslims also seem to enjoy the rise of anti-Americanism. This is not very smart: Anti-Americanism overseas engenders xenophobia at home, and today nobody is more "foreign" than American Muslims. American Muslims, more than anyone else, will become the victims of xenophobia in America. It is therefore in the interest of American Muslims to work to reverse the growth of anti-Americanism everywhere, particularly in the Muslim world.

*** American Muslims Need Regime Change

The American Muslim community has not been served well by its national organizations, such as the Council for American Islamic Relations and the American Muslim Council. In the aftermath of September 11, the instinctive response of the leaders of these and other, smaller organizations was to protect the Muslim world from America's revenge. They argued against any military reaction. They also hoped to cash in, quite literally, on the post–September 11 introspection in America, using the rising tempo of concern to raise money. They also sought to bring the Palestinian crisis to the front and center, thinking that enough Americans would blame the Jews for September 11 to force partisan progress on the issue.

All these tactics, and the strategy in general, have backfired. The overall strategy has undermined the credibility of these organizations and has made some of them targets of investigation.

All the major American Muslim organizations failed to condemn either Osama bin Laden or al Qaeda for weeks. They invariably hedged in their public statements by vaguely referring to “whoever was responsible.”[71] Many of these organizations encouraged a sense of denial within the community through statements that seemed vague and that even occasionally insinuated that other vested interests may have been responsible for the attacks. This sense of denial, nurtured by ridiculous conspiracy theories that still pervade the Muslim community, has undermined the capacity of many American Muslims to be effective partners in the war on terrorism. It has also undermined the efforts of liberal Muslims to heal the widening gulf between Americans and American Muslims.

Today the American Muslim community is deeply divided. For purposes of simplicity, we can define one side of the divide as consisting of those Muslims whose top priority is the future of their children and the American Muslim community and the other side as consisting of those whose top priority is advancing the interests of Arab and other Muslim nations, particularly Palestine. Among the American Muslims for the “Muslim world,” many are still in deep denial about who was responsible for September 11. They also believe that the United States is knowingly and consciously waging a war on Islam.[72] These Muslims do not recognize the dangers posed by rogue Islamists. These Muslims and some national organizations are more interested in using the American political system to advance back-home causes, even at the expense of the American Muslim community. For them, American Muslims are instruments to be manipulated and used. These groups and individuals do not constitute a significant direct threat to America, but they can and are undermining the efforts of other Muslims who do not share their vision.

In nearly every mosque, every institution, and every forum—and even within families—Muslims “for America” are locked in a struggle with Muslims for the Muslim world to shape the community’s direction. There is a silent and slow, but steady, revolution going on within the American Muslim community. More and more, Muslims for America are realizing that their national organizations are funded by foreign sources that have misguided and misrepresented them. Muslims for America are beginning to wake up to the fact that they have been gradually mesmerized by the jihad for Palestine, and they are struggling to break free.[73]

So far, however, American Muslims for the Muslim world remain dominant. Using foreign resources, they have hijacked the voice, the agenda, and even the future of what is, by every measure, an internally diverse American Muslim community. A quick survey of these organizations will immediately expose their misplaced loyalties and priorities.

A visit to the Web site of the Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR) showed that it was more interested in Daniel Pipes and the issues concerning Iraq and Palestine than with things that affect the future and the security of America.[74] From the CAIR Web site, one would gather that America was the problem, not rogue Islamists. The recent arrest of Abdurrahman Alamoudi—the founder of the other major national organization, American Muslim Council—has exposed him as an agent of the Libyan government. He has allegedly been using the American Muslim community's goodwill to advance the interests of Mu'ammar Qadaffi's Libya.[75]

Even the more progressive Los Angeles-based Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC) has very little to offer in terms of a strategy for fighting terrorism or anti-Americanism in its various forms. In an eighty-page position paper on counterterrorism, MPAC is more critical of the Department of Justice and the U.S. government than it is of al Qaeda, Hamas, or any other rogue Islamist groups.[76] MPAC even includes an apologia for Wahhabism, but has no advice on how the United States should deal with the fact that fifteen of the nineteen attackers on September 11 were from Saudi Arabia. MPAC's recommendations are designed to make life easier for American Muslims (an understandable and important objective) and to advance Palestinian interests as necessary for American security (once again, revealing greater concern for the Arab world than for America itself). Indeed, the paper does not have anything substantive to say about al Qaeda or about how to deal with it and its sympathizers overseas and at home. But MPAC does deserve credit for at least trying to do the right thing. The limitations of its paper are merely reflective of a lack of policy expertise.

As long as these organizations are seen as being truly representative of American Muslims, American Muslims cannot be a useful ally in America's

war on terrorism. Before that can happen, there must be a two-pronged regime change within the American Muslim community. First, those leaders who have used American Muslims to advance Arab interests must be marginalized. Second, American Muslim priorities must change. American Muslims must become a community for themselves and cease to be an instrument of the Muslim world. When American Muslim leaders and the American Muslim community begin to work in their own true self-interest, only then will they be able to assist America in fighting terrorism and other forms of anti-Americanism.

It is, however, important to note that, as early as December 2001, Imad ad-Deen Ahmad, a one-man think tank who is a libertarian and a dedicated Muslim, wrote a powerful article in which he argued that it was the Islamic duty of Muslims to bring the criminals responsible for September 11 to justice.[77] In that well-argued paper, Ahmad exhorts Muslims in general, and American Muslims in particular, to go beyond words and let their actions against bin Laden speak as their condemnation of his actions and his organization. It is amazing that Mr. Ahmad is not sought out by the National Security Council or the Department of Homeland Security. The global strategies he has proposed for dealing with al Qaeda are far better than any that the Bush administration has so far come up with. It is a pity that Muslim organizations and the Bush administration have not acted on his suggestions.

Ahmad makes several important points, the most important of which is his compelling moral argument that all Muslims, and especially American Muslims, are duty bound to bring the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks of September 11 to justice. He clearly indicates that it is not enough that Muslims unequivocally condemn the acts; they also must act, collectively and decisively, in pursuit of justice. Ahmad is also critical of the conspiracy theories that are circulating in the Muslim world, and he shows how these false claims are contrary to Islamic values. Ahmad identifies various projects that Muslim NGOs and international governmental organizations, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, can undertake to arrest the tide of extremism, delegitimize terrorism, and indeed launch, in his words, “a jihad against terror.”

*** George W. Bush Alienates American Muslims

American Muslim organizations have not made all the mistakes, however. Several misconceived policies of the Bush administration have deprived it of valuable assistance that American Muslims could provide in the war on terrorism. The administration, in its characteristically arrogant and shortsighted way, insulted and alienated the United Nations; then, when the United States needed the United Nations, the latter was unwilling to cooperate. Similarly, the Bush administration has mistreated and alienated the American Muslim community, which once voted for him overwhelmingly but which is now determined to see his back.

Most American Muslims feel that by passing the U.S. Patriot Act, which they think undermines their freedoms, and by invading Iraq even though there was no credible intelligence about its unconventional weapons programs and the supposed linkage between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda, Bush has betrayed their trust. They feel that he is now guided by the prejudice of supposed Islamophobes, such as Daniel Pipes, Jerry Falwell, and Pat Robertson, who are determined to roll back the growth of Islam in America. President Bush’s insistence on getting Daniel Pipes on the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace, by hook or by crook—appointing him when Congress was in recess—has convinced Muslims that Bush will go to inordinate lengths just to insult the American Muslim community.

In addition, President Bush’s steadfast support for Israel, no matter what it does, and his misadventure in Iraq strengthen the perception that there is a war on Islam and make many American Muslims less willing to do anything to assist America at this moment. Muslims are not going to help America if America is seen as using September 11 to help Israel. Perhaps, if there were a new administration in Washington, American Muslims might be more willing to come forward and work with the American government.

*** What Role Can American Muslims Play in the War on Terrorism?

American Muslims have an enormous potential to become an important ally in America's war against extremism. If consulted and brought into counterterrorism planning, they can help America become more effective, more focused, and more cost effective. Four areas of assistance stand out.

First, with regard to threat assessments and threat identification, American Muslims could have provided the Bush administration with a more accurate picture of the potential for threats from within the United States. Their analysis would have helped make the Department of Homeland Security a smaller, more effective, and less expensive institution. The American government is unnecessarily spending vast amounts of resources in surveillance of groups and individuals who do not constitute a threat, while they may be overlooking those who could be problematic. American Muslim input on this subject could be immensely useful.

Many U.S. policy makers continue to err in understanding and predicting the behavior of Muslim groups; the postwar chaos in Iraq is a case in point. If American Muslims had been more involved in the management of Iraq after the war, it would have been easier for Washington to establish better communications and perhaps gain more cooperation from various groups within Iraq.

Second, American Muslims could have given a Muslim face to America's response to September 11. That option, had it been pursued, could have averted the feeling in much of the Muslim world that the war on terrorism is a Christian-Zionist crusade against Islam. The Bush administration erred by not appointing a Muslim to a high position at the Department of Homeland Security. Senator Spencer Abraham—an American Christian proud of his Arab heritage, and a trusted Republican—might better serve the country there than at the Department of Energy.

Similarly, the Bush administration should have appointed a number of prominent American Muslim athletes, such as Hakeem Olajuwon, and some imams, such as Imam Hamza Yusuf (an American convert to Islam who is well respected in the Muslim world), as special goodwill envoys to the Muslim world. The State Department is now attempting this in a less prominent way

—better late than never. A more prominent Muslim presence in America's diplomatic and counterterrorism endeavors would have gone a long way, not only in preempting the rise of anti-Americanism but also in building trust between America and the Muslim world.

Third, there is the deficit in human intelligence. Some important assets that American Muslims can bring to the war on terrorism include human intelligence, cultural insights, linguistic skills, and experience and awareness of the diversity within Islamic groups and movements. It is possible that the FBI, CIA, and NSA can access these resources through recruitment, but voluntary support in this area from the community can be priceless.

Fourth is public diplomacy. Many American Muslim scholars have argued that Islam and democracy are compatible. The Bush administration could have recruited several of those scholars to make this case in Iraq and to help design Iraqi democracy and write its constitution. Without significant input from respectable Muslim scholars, the Iraqi constitution may not stand up to possible accusations that it is un-Islamic and written to make Iraq subservient to American interests.

Relatedly, an important arena where the United States badly needs its Muslim citizens is in countering anti-American propaganda. Islamists, as well as several Muslim governmental media, have launched a propaganda war against the United States in response to the war on terrorism. This anti-American media offensive is determined to focus on U.S. foreign policy excesses and failures. It also seeks to explain every aspect of American policy as if it were serving only Israeli interests. With American Muslims as spokespersons surfing the media and the airwaves in the Muslim world, the United States would have a better chance of sending out a more balanced view of its policies.

American Muslims can also counter the abuse of Islam by rogue Islamists and help to undermine their legitimacy. American Muslim scholars have consistently maintained that hirabah ("terrorism") is not jihad and is strictly prohibited by Islamic principles and law. They have also argued how suicide bombings violate the Islamic ethic of self-defense and are not

legitimate instruments of jihad.[78] If the voice of American Muslim scholars were given more attention, say through a White House–sponsored conference on jihad, many of the moderate and liberal elements in the Muslim world would recognize the fallacies in the so-called Islamic edicts of rogue Islamists and the scholars who support and justify their cause.

*** Restore Balance to America’s Foreign Policy

American foreign policy is currently being shaped by a small group of close-minded individuals who are open neither to criticism nor to suggestion. The White House has become a victim of groupthink. It even refuses to recognize that its foreign policy agenda is in shambles. Bin Laden is still out there, as is al Qaeda; Americans are dying nearly every day in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the American economy is bleeding constantly. Anti-Americanism has reached shocking proportions, even in countries considered to be traditional allies. The administration itself claims that serious threats to American security are still out there and that much of the world is decidedly committed to not cooperating with the United States. To put it bluntly, American foreign policy under Bush is a colossal failure and is even potentially dangerous to America’s security and economic health.

This administration would do well to listen to some moderate Muslim voices in shaping its foreign policy objectives and in determining its tactics. Most American Muslims have the same vision for the Muslim world as does the Bush administration. Most American Muslims want wholesale regime changes and the establishment of democracy in the entire Muslim world. They want to see the general human rights environment improving and wish that prosperity and freedom would take root in the Muslim world. The difference is that American Muslims would recommend strategies that are more humane and that involve less bombing and killing. The Bush administration needs American Muslims, and it is time it acted on this need and included them in its policy deliberations.

At the same time, patriotic American Muslims need the administration. Muslims for America are now locked in a struggle with Muslims for the Muslim world to determine the overall purpose and direction of the

community. The government must find a way to bypass the dominant Muslim organizations that are determined to advance foreign interests, and instead recruit American Muslims whose hearts are wedded to America. Doing so could tip the balance. These Muslims must be committed to Islam as well as to America, for Muslims who reject or ridicule Islam will not enjoy support within the community and cannot mobilize the goodwill of the community to help with America's crisis of legitimacy in the Muslim world. Truly, American Muslims and the U.S. government need each other.

[71] See Khalid Abou el-Fadl, "US Muslims, Unify and Stand Up," Los Angeles Times, July 14, 2002.

[72] According to a survey conducted by Project MAPS at Georgetown University and Zogby International in November/December 2001, only one out of three American Muslims believed that the war on terror was a war on Islam. This figure most certainly has changed since the use of the Patriot Act and the war and occupation of Iraq. To review the survey, go to http://www.projectmaps.com.

[73] See Muqtedar Khan, "Putting the American in 'American Muslims,'" New York Times, September 7, 2001. Also see Jane Lampman, "Muslim in America," Christian Science Monitor, January 10, 2002.

[74] See Council on American Islamic Relations, http://www.cair-net.org.

[75] For details about Alamoudi's arrest and his connections to the Libyan government, see the brief filed against him in a Virginia court by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/terrorism/usalamoudi93003cmp.pdf).

[76] See MPAC’s position paper on terrorism, “A Review of US Counterterrorism Policy: American Muslim Critique and Recommendations,” http://www.mpac.org/bucket_downloads/CTPaper.pdf.

[77] See Imad ad-Deen Ahmad, “Islam Demands a Muslim Response to the Terror of September 11,” Middle East Affairs Journal 7, no. 2–3 (Summer-Fall 2002).

[78] Sohail H. Hashmi, “Not What the Prophet Would Want: How Can Islamic Scholars Sanction Suicidal Tactics?” Washington Post, June 9, 2002.

* Public Arts

** 11. Déjà Vu: The ABCs of Public Diplomacy in the Middle East

Martin Kramer

There is a good deal of talk and hand-wringing about the “hearts and minds” problem in the global war on terrorism. Even Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has ruminated over the matter, dropping some of his famous snowflakes on his staff in asking that a better job be done with respect to the nonmilitary aspects of the challenge. Rumsfeld is rightly concerned not only with dispatching this generation’s terrorists but also with short-circuiting the processes that are producing the terrorists of the future.

Secretary Rumsfeld is probably right to worry that the United States and its allies are not doing a thorough job on what the Pentagon calls the nonkinetic aspects of the war on terrorism. In some areas, such as monitoring and interrupting the flow of money to terrorist organizations, some progress has been made. But in others, such as education reform and U.S. public diplomacy, it is not clear how much has been achieved. It may even be that in the public diplomacy domain, the United States has gone backward.

But how to tell, and what to do? It is difficult to generalize from anecdotes; polls are often unreliable; and no one has yet collected, collated, and analyzed all the relevant data. All of that needs to be done. Meanwhile, however, it is possible to sketch out the basic dos and don’ts of a public diplomacy campaign, because such campaigns have been designed and implemented before—by others in the Middle East and by Americans elsewhere. So, before we get to the question of whether to go with satellite television alongside FM radio, or whether to emphasize American pop culture or America’s traditions of tolerance, or whether this Gallup poll or that Zogby survey tells the real story, we have to remind ourselves, on a fundamental level, what public diplomacy has been and should be about.

*** Learning from France (Yes, Really)

As suggested above, the “hearts and minds” problem in the Middle East is not a new one. Every non-Muslim authority that has projected power into the Middle East has faced the problem of winning Muslim hearts and minds. This is because the projection of non-Muslim power into that part of the world has always been suspect in Muslim hearts and minds, often with good cause. Past episodes of Western public diplomacy, successful and not, offer both edification and some entertainment—and where better to begin a potted history of public diplomacy in the Middle East than in the Mediterranean Sea in 1798?

In that year, Napoleon invaded Egypt. On one of the approaching French ships, there was, of all things, an Arabic printing press. While en route, Napoleon ordered a broadsheet to be printed on that press for distribution. The points he wanted to make have an oddly familiar ring. “You will be told,” read the broadsheet, “that I have come to destroy your religion; do not believe it! Reply that I have come to restore your rights, to punish the usurpers, and that more than the Mamluks, I respect God, his Prophet, and the Qur’an.”

To drive home the point of his empathy for the Muslims, Napoleon added this evidence of sincerity: “Did we not destroy the Pope, who said that war should be waged against the Muslims? Did we not destroy the Knights of Malta, because those insane people thought God wanted them to wage war against the Muslims?” If Napoleon had hired speechwriters, he could not have paid them too much.

Not only were the French going to show friendship to Islam, or at least to claim it, they were also going to promote a revolutionary thing called equality. But they would do so in a way that presumed to be consistent with Islam. “All men are equal before God,” said Napoleon’s proclamation. “Wisdom, talents, and virtue alone make them different from one another.” Here was the first stab at democracy promotion. (Of course, the French also warned that any villages that did not surrender would be burnt to the ground, but that’s another matter.)

There is a good deal more in the 1798 French declaration to the Muslims, and every aspiring public diplomacy officer should master it. In this foundation statement of Western public diplomacy, diplomacy officers will find the two key talking points of any effective campaign already in mature readiness: promise to use your power to pursue enlightened ends that will benefit Muslims, and profess absolute respect for Islam.

There is a second famous instance of Western public diplomacy toward the Muslim world that deserves careful attention. During the First World War, France and Britain (and Russia) faced a serious problem: the Ottoman sultan, who was also the Caliph of the Islamic world and, not insignificantly, an ally of Germany, issued a jihad proclamation against them. The proclamation was circulated in every Muslim language, much like an Osama bin Laden video is circulated today by other means. The sultan’s proclamation pointed out, “He who summons you to this great holy war is the Caliph of your noble Prophet.”

At the time, all three of the aforementioned Entente powers ruled over subject Muslim peoples in the millions, and naturally, they feared the prospect of uprisings. In response, Britain and France launched very sophisticated public diplomacy campaigns. Muslim notables were persuaded

to certify that the Entente powers allowed Muslims complete freedom of religion. The British and French also made strenuous efforts to get out the word that the sultan’s call to jihad was not genuine. It was, they claimed, not really the work of the Caliph but of the Young Turk regime acting at German suggestion. The proclamation, they insisted, was a fake “holy war made in Germany.”

But the big coup came for the Entente powers when the British persuaded the sharif of Mecca, a descendant of the Prophet, to raise the standard of revolt against the Ottoman caliph in Mecca itself. All in all, this worked very well. The Allies had very little trouble from their Muslim subjects throughout the war. The lessons for us today should be clear: Get Muslims with the best Islamic pedigree on your side, and try to line up whoever has the say in Mecca.

In World War II, the “hearts and minds” problem returned. Indeed, the British had an even bigger problem in the 1930s and 1940s than they had had twenty years earlier. Large portions of Muslim, and especially Arab, opinion were pro-Axis. Many Arabs thought the British had betrayed promises of independence made during the previous war—perhaps because Hitler hosted the Mufti of Jerusalem in Berlin, claiming just that. The leading German orientalists were summoned to translate Mein Kampf into Arabic, cutting out all the parts about Semites that might offend the Arabs.

This was real trouble brewing. So the British launched yet another public diplomacy campaign, predicated on the idea that Britain had more respect for Islam than any other European power. How could they demonstrate that respect in a tangible way? Build a mosque, which is how the Regent’s Park Mosque in London began—as a piece of wartime propaganda.

Lord George Ambrose Lloyd, as secretary of state for the colonies, proposed the idea when war broke out, and in 1940 Winston Churchill’s war cabinet put up the money to buy the site. In 1944, King George VI officially opened the Islamic Center in Regent’s Lodge. In the British archives, there is file after file of press releases, radio broadcast transcripts, flyers, and brochures about

the mosque to be built in London. This was quite slick stuff, and for those tasked with similar duties today, it is well worth reviewing.

When the war ended, the urgency of the mosque project faded. Indeed, the mosque itself did not get built for another thirty years. But the plan to build it served its purpose. The lesson for a Western leader today? Get thee to a mosque. Do not just profess respect for Islam; get out and show it. A year ago, an Islamic Society of North America conference was broadcast on C-SPAN. When a speaker mentioned that Queen Elizabeth had entered a mosque recently and had taken her shoes off before doing so, the audience burst into spontaneous applause. Apparently, demonstrations of respect work.

*** Remedial Americans

The point from this very short history is clear: other powers have done the “hearts and minds” drill before, and done it successfully. To a considerable degree, we have been there and done that. The basic components of a public diplomacy campaign to win Muslim hearts and minds are clear enough. So, why do Americans appear to be so determined not to understand them?

The main reason is that the Cold War made it too easy for the United States, just as it came into its own as a Middle Eastern power. America’s adversary for over forty years was the godless, clumsy, cumbersome and downright ugly Soviet Union. Soviet commissars ruled over Muslims directly, while the God-fearing United States did not. Those commissars busied themselves with shutting down mosques and keeping Muslims from performing the hajj. It mattered not one whit how many times the Soviets sent KGB-appointed muftis to Cairo and Damascus to say that Muslims enjoyed religious freedom under Communist rule; no one in the Arab world believed it. The Soviets could offer all sorts of enticements, from MIG jet fighters to high dams, but Moscow could never erase the stigma of its reputation for hostility to religious faith. Moreover, the Saudis were themselves zealous in leading an Islamic campaign against atheistic communism, culminating in the jihad against the Russians in Afghanistan.

As long as the United States was up against the Soviets, it did not have to spend a lot of effort burnishing America's reputation as a friend of Islam. If the enemy of thine enemy is thy friend, then the United States walked in clover in the Muslim world so long as the Soviet Union existed. In retrospect, it is clear that all that changed a decade ago when the Soviet Union folded. But it took September 11 to bring home the two truths that now compel the United States to run a serious public diplomacy campaign in the Muslim world.

The first truth is now that the United States is the only great power, everyone everywhere who has a propensity to fix blame for problems on an external power is fixing it on the United States. That propensity is endemic in the Arab and Muslim worlds; because the British, the French, and the Russians are now all in the second tier of powerful nations, all the free-floating hostility of a wounded civilization is fixing itself on the United States. America stands out all too visibly, just as the World Trade Center did; all the other powers are just so many Chrysler buildings. Whatever the Russians do in Chechnya, or the Indians do in Kashmir, or the Chinese do in Xinjiang, the United States will remain the most hated of all powers. Most Americans did not realize that before September 11; they realize it now.

The second truth is that friendly Muslim governments that used to do the public relations job for America in their general neighborhood either are not doing it any longer, or are ineffective at it. For many years, the United States relied on Saudi Arabia to provide Islamic cover. But the Saudi spell—that "protector of the holy places" halo—is beginning to wear off. The religious zeal in Saudi society remains, but the royals can no longer fire it like a missile at whatever target they choose. Instead, the royals themselves seem to have become the primary target.

The Saudis will use what is left of whatever magic charms they possess to protect themselves. To judge from the current state of things, there probably will not be much left over for America. If one were to give a title to the final chapter of a book about how the United States relied on Muslim governments to provide Islamic cover, that chapter might aptly be called "15 of the 19."

The meaning of September 11, put simply and starkly, is that the United States now has no choice but to do public diplomacy for itself. The end of the Soviet Union has supplied the problem in a new shape, and the end of Saudi cover has provided the need for a new solution.

This is a sad situation, perhaps, but not one beyond saving. American public diplomacy does not have to reinvent the wheel. It should take a page or two from the successful episodes in the history of the European powers. There is plenty to learn about what those tasked with managing big empires with lots of Muslim subjects did right. There is also much to learn from their mistakes.

American officials can also learn from their own experience. The United States did very well with public diplomacy during the Cold War. The present context is different: Poles and Russians and Czechs are not the same as Iranians, Uzbeks, and Yemenis. Yet some of that experience is relevant. Add to it a dash of American can-do optimism, some of the latest gad-getry, and a serious budget, and the United States will have pretty much all it needs. Almost.

*** The Three Nos

So much for what the United States should have and should do. There are three things, however, that it should not have or do—things that need to be avoided at all costs. These three things must be mentioned, because even as Americans seem busy ignoring the relevant history—that of others and their own—some are making directional noises in the emerging discourse of public diplomacy that need to be squelched. If the United States goes down these roads, it will surely fail.

First, the United States must not confuse public diplomacy with policy making. This confusion comes in two forms. The less dangerous form is the argument that the best way to pursue a successful public diplomacy is simply to alter American policy to make it that much easier to sell. This argument obviously confuses ends with means. There would be no need for public diplomacy if policies were easy to sell, and, just as obviously,

diplomacies that are hard to sell can still be very much the right diplomacies. The purpose of public diplomacy may be formulated in a single phrase: to persuade foreign peoples to support, accept, or at least acquiesce to policies that, at first blush, they are likely to dislike, resent, or oppose.

To achieve this goal requires working in the teeth of what marketers call sales resistance. That has to be acknowledged as a given. American foreign policy is the product of a complex process; it is the job of the public diplomacy officer not to lament the outcome of the process but to sell the end product (and to do so without dwelling on its defects when presenting it to customers). Put another way, policy is not there to create leeway for public diplomacy; public diplomacy is there to create leeway for policy.

As fundamental and obvious as this point is, the public diplomacy function itself can become bureaucratically entrenched, and thus entrenched it will conceive itself to have its own interests. In light of this danger, the job of the real policy makers is to give public diplomacy its reading assignment and to keep it on the same page.

Confusing public diplomacy with policy making is the less dangerous of the two, precisely because it is so obvious. The second and more dangerous confusion could arise from putting the public diplomacy apparatus too close to the decision-making apparatus. Just such a confusion has been proposed by the Council on Foreign Relations' task force on public diplomacy, which recommends creating something parallel to the National Security Council for public diplomacy. The Djerejian Report proposes something similar, in the form of a new White House office to manage and coordinate public diplomacy.

No doubt, there should be someone near the Oval Office who can tell the president that it is not a good idea to use the word crusade in dealing with anything Middle Eastern. It would also be a good thing to have the occasional estimate of how a proposed course of action might affect Arab or Muslim public opinion—although the room for error in such assessments is enormous. But it is simply dangerous to put public diplomacy considerations

too close to the policy-formulating machinery, because public diplomacy could then become a virtual interest group representing foreign opinion. Although that is the legitimate role of foreign embassies, the State Department’s foreign contacts, and perhaps some of the ethnic lobbies that line K Street, putting public diplomacy smack in the middle of the Old Executive Office Building is to overprivilege foreign opinion in policy making, which is not the best idea in a democracy.

The second path to be avoided is this: Do not turn public diplomacy into an instrument for the domestic promotion of the multicultural ideal. In the United States, there has been a manifest temptation to do this, and it is a truly terrible idea. Arabs who live in Tunis or Damascus do not need to be convinced that Muslims in the United States can live happy and fulfilling lives as Muslims; they already know that. Anyway, it has nothing to do with promoting U.S. policy goals in the region.

The kind of distortion to which the multicultural idea gives rise has already twisted some aspects of homeland security. Anyone who has flown across an ocean on an airplane recently knows that certain “security” procedures are really rituals meant to affirm the multicultural ideal that we are all as one—and thus, we are all equally likely to be terrorists. This is nonsense, but the same potential exists in public diplomacy, which could too easily end up being an affirmative action or empowerment program for Arab-Americans. This may or may not be an end worth pursuing, but even if it is, public diplomacy is not the place to pursue it.

Public diplomacy, like homeland security, should be about getting the job done. If it can appease the gods of multicultural diversity along the way, fine—but that is not its main objective. If doing so becomes a primary objective, such concern for diversity will invariably produce a message that is muddled by diverse messengers. The United States needs to put out a message that is clear and unambiguous. The American ritual of presenting every possible perspective—in this case, to Arabs and Muslims in the Middle East—will leave friends isolated and bewildered and enemies dangerously confused. To the extent that the U.S. government has been guilty of such error in the past three years accounts for the counterproductive consequences of public diplomacy efforts thus far.

The third situation to avoid is an inverted structure for public diplomacy that would have Americans listening to Middle Easterners as much as or more than persuading them. This danger is implicit in the name “public diplomacy,” for what is diplomacy if not a process of give and take that ultimately ends in compromise?

This belief is a popular error. The Council on Foreign Relations study, mentioned earlier, recommends “listening tours” for special panels, for example. Of course listening is important, but there is already an apparatus —American embassies and intelligence organizations—in place for that. If public diplomacy simply adds one more layer of reportage about foreign opinion, then it will have been a wasted opportunity. The point is to get the message out—to make the other guy listen.

Getting that message out is probably the most difficult aspect for public diplomacy to insure, because “dialogue” and “exchange” and “people-to-people” are all parts of the lexicon of public diplomacy. But one of the lessons of September 11 is that there has been too much “people-to-people”—including very free movement of people—and not enough direct persuading. The United States is not going to win hearts and minds by listening to someone complain about America and then giving him a visa.

Unfortunately, some of the initiatives now under consideration in U.S. government circles do not seem to amount to much more than that. The mere experience of America is insufficient to inoculate against anti-Americanism—we know this from numerous cases, from Sayyid Qutb to Muhammad Atta. The only possible inoculation is a steady and relentless irradiation of the Arab and Muslim worlds by a unified message, and every muscle and sinew of public diplomacy should be devoted to just that.

*** Road Work Ahead

At the end of the day, it may well be that public diplomacy will not make the United States loved and admired. No matter. It is no less important, and perhaps more important, that the United States be feared and respected. Indeed, no amount of explanatory verbiage emanating from Washington can substitute for the sure knowledge that the United States will defend its interests with vigor, regardless of what anyone thinks. So let us not have exaggerated expectations of public diplomacy. Public diplomacy can magnify the effect of a victory, but it cannot mitigate the effect of a defeat. In a war, even a somewhat unusual one, it is no substitute for winning.

Just ask Napoleon.

** 12. Fixing Public Diplomacy for Arab and Muslim Audiences

William A. Rugh

The phrase “American public diplomacy” means, as it has meant for decades, U.S. government programs intended to support our national interests by providing information and interpretation to foreign audiences about matters relating to the United States. Unlike traditional diplomacy, which is essentially confined to intergovernmental relations, the target audience of public diplomacy is primarily nongovernmental foreign opinion leaders in the media, academia, and elsewhere.

For more than forty years, from 1958 to 1999, the primary responsibility for American public diplomacy was lodged in the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). In 1999, President Clinton decided to transfer this responsibility to the U.S. Department of State. It is true that many other government agencies, as well as many private organizations and individuals, have an impact on American public diplomacy programs when foreign audiences become aware of American actions and opinions reported in the public domain. In these days of expanding international media technology and volume, it is fair to say that the percentage of nongovernmental communications that affect the conduct of public diplomacy is growing. Nonetheless, the management of public diplomacy is strictly the State Department’s responsibility, and the fact that

State Department views are known to express U.S. government policy makes those views more significant than nearly all other sources of American opinion and interpretation available to foreign audiences.

*** The New Problem of Public Diplomacy

How should America’s public diplomacy problem with Arabs in particular and the Muslim world as a whole be defined? The most urgent question for Americans today is a very specific one: How can significant Arab and Muslim support for, or acquiescence to, terrorism be counteracted? Looked at closely, that support is of a relatively narrow sort.

Recent polls show that the overwhelming majority of Arab opinion of the United States is positive toward American values and essentially all aspects of American culture and society—with the sole exception of American foreign policy. Most Arabs admire American society and U.S. leadership in science, technology, and economics. Many who are able to do so want to send their children to American universities. But Arabs are invariably critical of U.S. foreign policy, and nearly all Muslims tend to share similar views about U.S. foreign policy.[79]

Arab and Muslim criticism of U.S. foreign policy has increased over the past half century, and particularly in recent years. The reasons seem fairly obvious. American involvement in the Middle East was minimal before World War II, when that involvement was confined primarily to work by educators and oilmen who, in general, were regarded as bringing benefits to the region. Strong Arab nationalist sentiment in the 1950s and 1960s increasingly focused negative attention on American support for Israel, as Arabs believed that Washington was unfairly taking the wrong side in the Arab-Israeli dispute. Most Arabs and Muslims, however, continued to respect most aspects of American society and culture. Also, since pious Muslims believed communism to be a threat to Islam, America’s stance against communism tended to reinforce positive attitudes toward the United States.

Since September 11, criticism of American policy has steadily increased. For the majority of Arabs and Muslims, the immediate reaction to the September 11 attack was sympathy for Americans as victims. The Arab world tended to understand the U.S. military invasion of Afghanistan and the elimination of the Taliban regime as an act of legitimate self-defense. They also regarded President Bush's initial declaration of war against terrorism as justified. As the president expanded the definition of "the enemy" beyond al Qaeda, Arabs and Muslims concluded that Bush's perception of the problem, and of the enemy, differed substantially from theirs.

Washington issued a list of terrorist organizations that was limited to Arab and Muslim groups, including, for example, Hizballah, an organization that is considered a legitimate political party in Lebanon with representatives in parliament. President Bush declared that any state not fighting terrorism was as bad as the terrorists themselves, and when American commentators writing in the press blamed Saudi Arabia and Egypt for not doing enough to counter terrorism, Saudis and Egyptians felt unfairly criticized. They replied that they had been combating terrorism for years before September 11, detaining or deporting terrorists acting against their governments. Also, as the violence between Palestinians and Israelis continued, it seemed to Arabs and Muslims that President Bush was unfairly siding with Israel and blaming only the Palestinians. Some argued and more believed that Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon had hijacked Bush's war on terrorism for his own purposes. President Bush's subsequent linking of Iran and Iraq with North Korea as an "axis of evil" also ran counter to the trend that had developed in the Arab world to effect reconciliation with Iran and Iraq.

Washington's confrontation with Iraq, followed by the coalition's invasion, was widely opposed by Arabs and Muslims, because they did not regard Iraq as a threat to them and because they resented outside intervention. Moreover, the war seemed to them further evidence of American hostility toward Arabs and Islam, and of a dangerous willingness to use force over the objections of others. Their satisfaction in seeing Saddam Hussein toppled was undercut by increased feelings of humiliation and weakness against the lone superpower acting without soliciting or caring about their views. Unlike 1991, when the first President Bush had support from most of the Arab and Muslim world in ending the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, President George W.

Bush was widely seen as imposing a new occupation on Iraq for parochial U.S. interests.

All of these American policy behaviors seem to most Arabs and Muslims to be anti-Muslim, despite the fact that President Bush, from time to time, has said he respects Islam and has repeatedly denied that the war on terrorism is either a clash of civilizations or a war against Islam. But post–September 11 American security measures having to do with visa procedures, as well as comments critical of Islam by people like Jerry Falwell, Frank Graham, and the occasional U.S. Army officer—comments immediately conveyed to audiences abroad by CNN, Fox, and foreign media—have reinforced the impression among Arabs and Muslims that the American government and its people have turned hostile. Since September 11, the gap between the Arab perception of the world and that of Washington has steadily increased, leading to an unprecedented level of tension between the two sides.

President Bush's endorsement after the Iraq War of a new "road map" for Arab-Israeli peace was welcomed by many Arabs as a sign of American interest in helping resolve the Arab's self-declared highest-priority issue. The welcome, however, was tempered by deep skepticism that the president possessed neither the evenhandedness nor the resolve necessary to broker a settlement, mainly because, up to that point, his policies on many issues had severely undermined American credibility in the eyes of most Arabs and Muslims.

*** Who Is the Target of Public Diplomacy?

With all this as background, we can see that the highest-priority problem for the United States is, for the most part, restricted to foreign policy issues. Fanatical Islamists aside, most Arabs and Muslims do not hate America for what it is; they dislike America for what they think it does.

Beyond that, however, it is useful, for practical purposes, to regard Arab opinion as divided into three broad categories: friends who know us, enemies

who sometimes know us and sometimes don’t, and a vast middle of those who mostly don’t care.

On one end of the spectrum are people who have spent time in the United States, as students or on business, and who have a reasonably sophisticated understanding of America. These are people who know some or a lot of English, who have had access to American culture and its information environment, and who tend to be the most favorably disposed to this country. They have informed, moderate, and basically positive opinions of the United States, although they too have been critical of aspects of our foreign policy. They have given us the benefit of the doubt and even defended America in discussion with their compatriots.

At the opposite extreme is a small group of radicals who are highly critical of the United States, based primarily on fear and apprehension that American involvement in their part of the world threatens their culture. Most of these radicals know little of America and have never been to America. Some, however, have been radicalized by their experience in the West—in Europe and the United States. The majority of these radicals are literate, reasonably well-educated people by standards of the region. As a rule, they are not from poor families nor from families near the bottom of their local social hierarchy.

Arab radicals have opposed existing Arab regimes as well as the United States, and the extremists among them have tended to support the use of violence and terrorism for political ends. Although these radicals have been doing this for a long time, in earlier decades they were essentially secular and leftist in orientation. But since the 1980s, they have tended increasingly to use, and presumably believe in, an Islamic fundamentalist vocabulary.

The third group is a large silent majority that tends not to focus on America very much, unless events in the region, such as the Palestinian uprising or the Iraq War, bring America to the group’s inescapable attention. Members of this group come from the lower rungs of society for the most part, where considerable percentages of people—more than half in Egypt—are either literally or functionally illiterate when it comes to political matters.

Since September 11, developments have tended to strengthen the radical group and to weaken the pro-American group. The members of the latter group have generally stopped speaking up in defense of the United States because public opinion has become so hostile. At the same time, recent events have raised the consciousness of the silent majority in ways unhelpful to American interests. Support for active opposition to America, and for terrorism, has increased among the radical minority, and others in the remaining two categories have become more reluctant to speak out against that support.

It is tempting to dismiss third world public opinion as irrelevant, and many do just that. But public opinion matters everywhere. Even rulers in authoritarian states pay careful attention to it. This is truer than ever since the growth of satellite television has eroded government controls over the information and opinion available to citizens. In the Arab world in particular, Arab satellite television that developed during the 1990s has amplified Arab voices throughout the Middle East, where local government-owned and Western media had previously dominated the discussion of international events.

It is also tempting to conclude that the only way to undermine foreign support for terrorism and to close the attitudinal gap between Washington and public opinion in the Arab and Muslim worlds would be for Washington to change its policies. Obviously, we should not change or abandon well-considered policies just because others abroad may not like them—whether because they misunderstand those policies (as is often the case in the Middle East) or because their interests genuinely conflict with our own. If that were to happen, public diplomacy would become a decidedly secondary concern.

An additional problem is that President Bush, by his policies, has badly eroded American credibility abroad, causing foreign audiences to doubt his intentions. If his administration can lead a transformation of Iraq and Afghanistan into internationally recognized successes, and if it can bring about a stable resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Arab and Muslim opinion would become more favorable. But the Arab world strongly doubts that he will succeed at any of this.

Yet even in lieu of foreign policy shifts or eventual policy successes, foreign opinion can be affected by a substantial public diplomacy effort that is well planned, systematic, and well targeted. In terms of the three groups here described, it is probably futile to try to convert the few extremists away from their anti-Americanism. It is possible, however, to work with and embolden those with pro-American views and, hence, to influence the great middle of Arab and Muslim opinion, which, thanks to new technologies, is gradually being brought into the public realm.

*** Tools of Public Diplomacy

Decades of experience demonstrate that an effective public diplomacy program that efficiently provides relevant information about the United States and its policies must have a well-defined target audience, clear priorities for its substantive content, the most effective instruments and communication tools, and a structure of responsibility that ensures coordination. Let us briefly review these criteria as they pertain to the problem at hand.

First, as noted, the target audience should include two of the three groups mentioned above: the silent majority and friendly moderates who know and appreciate America and its values. Because it is impractical to reach all the members of those two groups, the major effort should be directed at each group’s opinion leaders who are influential in their own societies today or who will be in the near future. The American effort should not try to directly target radical groups that are hostile to our values. We should leave that to others within the Arab and Muslim community, as they have a far better chance of effectively reaching the radicals than we do. For example, a moderate Muslim cleric with a following in his community should be a high-priority target because he can help deal with radicals and would-be radicals in terms that they understand. When appealing to moderate clerics, an important part of the message should be that it is in their own interest to keep radicals from controlling the agenda and the public discussion in their countries.

American public diplomacy priorities need to be based on an analysis of the major issues affecting Arab and Muslim opinion about America. Under current circumstances this means the highest priority should be given to explaining U.S. foreign policy and encouraging sympathetic understanding of it, because foreign policy is by far the most important source of criticism and misunderstanding of the United States today. In this context, it is important to note that although the foreign policies of the George W. Bush administration have been severely criticized abroad, they have enjoyed the support of large majorities of the American public and Congress. This huge disconnect between American and foreign opinion opens the door for the central function of public diplomacy to be activated, namely, to help explain to foreign audiences how Americans are thinking and why they support U.S. foreign policy. Arab and Muslim audiences should be told that the majority of American society supports U.S. foreign policies that Arabs and Muslims oppose. The hope is that this will help open the Arab and Muslim community to new information and interpretation.

The second priority after foreign policy should be to provide information about basic characteristics of American society that are important for Arab and Muslim audiences to know and understand. In today’s world, most of these audiences have access to large amounts of information about America through various channels. Indeed, at a basic informational level, they generally know much more about us than all but a tiny minority of Americans know about Arabs and Muslims.

Nevertheless, most Arabs and Muslims have important gaps in their knowledge of America—especially in terms of American government and politics. They may know from the media about our popular culture, and they may hear public statements by prominent personalities, but they tend to know little about our political system, such as the roles of Congress and the press, the court system, and the practical impact of the Bill of Rights. A broad program containing what USIA used to call “Americana” content is important in conveying an understanding of our foreign policy.

Recent American public diplomacy efforts, led until March 2003 by undersecretary of state Charlotte Beers, tended to give highest priority to Americana issues rather than to foreign policy. This is because policy under

Beers focused primarily on those radical groups that hate American society and its values. Thus, considerable sums were spent on a film project showing how well Muslims were treated in America. This policy focused on the wrong target audience (the radicals), however, and did not sufficiently address the key foreign policy complaints that important audiences were expressing.

Before Beers' tenure, the Clinton administration gave insufficient attention to foreign policy advocacy—for example, on the question of our confrontation with Saddam Hussein during the 1990s. Arab opinion increasingly criticized the UN embargo as hurting only Iraqi citizens. The U.S. government did not aggressively make public the case for continuing our policy by showing how the sanctions policy was caused by the Iraqi government's behavior. We did not explain how that policy was being manipulated to harm those segments of Iraqi society that the Iraqi regime held to be potential dangers.

Experience shows that the key to effective public diplomacy is people. There should be a cadre of professionals in our diplomatic missions abroad who are experienced in techniques of policy advocacy and Americana explication, and who are in direct contact with our target audiences. In the Muslim and Arab worlds especially, the most effective way to influence opinions and convey information is in face-to-face dialogue. Edward R. Murrow famously said that in public diplomacy, "It is the last three feet that count." Other U.S. officials abroad, including U.S. ambassadors, are also in a position to carry out public diplomacy functions when they interact with media editors, academics, and other opinion leaders.

Unfortunately, the large budget cuts for public diplomacy after the end of the Cold War, followed by the 1999 merger of USIA into the State Department, have severely reduced the number of public diplomacy specialists and undercut effective coordination between Washington and U.S. embassies abroad. The budget fell in real terms by 21 percent from 1988 to 1998. The budget has increased slightly since September 11, but it is nowhere near earlier levels. As the Djerejian Report on public diplomacy emphasized, there is an absurdly low level of support for such a critical function.

The merger of USIA into the State Department has weakened the public diplomacy function rather than strengthening it, as advocates had promised. Officers with experience in public diplomacy have less influence now and less control over programs, and public diplomacy positions are frequently filled with nonspecialists. In addition to the decline in funding, professionalism and cohesion have declined drastically. After the departure of Beers, the undersecretary for public diplomacy position was left vacant for nearly nine months—all during the recent war in Iraq and its daunting aftermath. Then Beers' replacement, Margaret Tutweiler, left the job after only a few months. The combination of resource scarcity and organizational weakness has been very harmful to the recent public diplomacy effort, at a time when that effort is needed more than ever.

The dual techniques of listening carefully to foreign opinion and engaging in dialogue are essential. For persuasion and conveying understanding, dialogue is a more powerful tool than monologue. Listening carefully to foreign opinion has the added benefit of showing respect for foreign concerns, a posture that, in itself, is likely to encourage a more rational dialogue and more moderate views. A public diplomacy professional must know what foreign audiences are thinking in matters relating to the United States. Monitoring editorials and headlines in foreign media and engaging in private discussions with key members of the foreign audience are absolutely necessary for understanding the depth of feelings and of matters that may not be clearly expressed in public forums. Most Americans would be surprised to learn how little attention U.S. policy makers pay to foreign media and that what is monitored is not systematically analyzed.

This is especially true of our efforts in the Muslim world. There is no adequate budget for it nor are there enough linguists to do this essential task. Similarly, Voice of America (VOA) call-in programs with American officials can deal effectively with foreign concerns, but these have been cut back since the 1999 merger.

Senior officials in Washington, starting with the president himself, have a significant impact on public diplomacy every time they make public statements. Yet very often, Washington officials speaking publicly are thinking about an American audience rather than a foreign one. In today's

world of heavy media coverage and instant reporting, it is impossible, and unwise, to imagine that senior officials can speak only to a domestic audience. The daily briefings given at the White House and at the Departments of State and Defense are exchanges almost exclusively with American journalists asking questions that are on the minds of Americans. Rarely are the journalists sensitive to foreign opinions and concerns.

The president and other senior officials, including State Department and Pentagon briefers, must be kept aware of major issues that arise in foreign public opinion so that they can address any important misunderstandings or distortions that affect American interests. They need public diplomacy professionals to monitor and analyze foreign opinion and to report their findings so foreign opinion will be taken into account when policy decisions and statements are made. Sometimes this happens, notably when a particularly egregious mistake is made. For example, after President Bush referred to his war on terrorism as a "crusade," he was told that word was counterproductive for foreign audiences, so he did not repeat it. But Muslims remember, and it would be better had such a mistake not been made in the first place. For that, however, senior officials must be cognizant of the public diplomacy role they invariably play, and well-trained public diplomacy professionals must be there, in adequate numbers and properly placed, to do their work.

Finally, public diplomacy professionals must have an array of communication tools that they can use to carry out their responsibilities. The following paragraphs cover the most important tools for the current circumstances.

A well-designed exchange-of-persons program can be a powerful support for American public diplomacy, again because face-to-face encounters have proven to be the most effective. Scholarships, such as Fulbrights and others, that make it possible for Arab and Muslim students, scholars, and others to come to the United States are extremely valuable means to educate those audiences about all aspects of America. Such programs do not always produce friends, of course. But they produce far more friends than avowed enemies, and knowledgeable critics are usually easier to deal with than ignorant ones.

Similarly, Americans sent abroad to study or lecture can be very helpful. The participants must be carefully chosen to ensure that they are fair-minded. It has been the wise practice not to tell American scholars what to say and for them to tolerate a certain amount of criticism of America because that usually enhances their credibility and effectiveness. Also, Arab Americans and American Muslims can often explain America abroad most effectively, just as the late Alistair Cook used to explain America on the BBC to British audiences.

Accurate, up-to-date, factual information about U.S. policy and developments in American society and culture is also essential to public diplomacy professionals. They must have information if they are to present it effectively to foreign audiences. Accuracy and truthfulness are keys to maintaining credibility in public diplomacy.[80] Officers at embassies abroad depend on daily transmissions from Washington containing texts of U.S. statements, policy guidance messages, excerpts from American media, and reports on developments in the United States. They pass this information to target audiences based on current audience interests, drawing special attention to materials that are helpful.

Publications written for Arab and Muslim audiences can also be helpful tools, especially if they are in local languages. There used to be many such publications, but Congress cut the public diplomacy budget after the Cold War so that most were forced to go out of print. The State Department has revived the idea of magazines in Arabic aimed at Arab readers, which is a most welcome development.

The Voice of America, too, is an important public diplomacy tool because its programs are specifically designed for foreign audiences. Unfortunately, two recent developments have weakened its impact. For many years, VOA was required to follow State Department policy guidance, but under the Clinton administration, this link was broken so that VOA no longer functions in coordination with the government’s public diplomacy professionals. This was a mistake; it should be fixed.

Then in 2002, the VOA Arabic service, which for decades had carried extensive policy-relevant and Americana material to a wide range of Arab audiences, was replaced by Radio Sawa, which mostly plays music for young people, severely reducing the effectiveness of our broadcasting in public diplomacy terms. Although Radio Sawa may be useful in some ways, it does not replace more serious broadcasts. There is no reason that we should be limited to sponsoring only one radio broadcast in Arabic. Radio stations are inexpensive, all things considered, especially when compared with the cost of fighter aircraft or tanks.

Gaining access to foreign media for helpful American material and for interviews with U.S. officials has also proven to be a vital means for reaching the largest numbers of target audience members with the greatest credibility and impact. Again, personal contact with the editors of foreign media is often what persuades them to carry materials and commentaries helpful to understanding the United States. Rather than boycotting al-Jazeera and other Arab media because they carry hostile attacks on the United States, we should seek more access to them. Secretary of State Powell was wise to appear on al-Jazeera; however, very blunt, if private, pressure on the Qatari government to exercise more control over al-Jazeera may be less wise. The U.S. government should not be insisting that other governments censor their media, particularly not in the midst of a campaign to advance democracy in the Arab world.

Several other tools have also proven useful in the past and should be sharpened. One involves overseas libraries and book translations, as suggested in the Djerejian Report. Because these programs take a great deal of time and only pay off in the longer run, however, they should currently be given lower priority due to the urgency of closing the gap with the Arab and Muslim worlds.

Finally, as suggested previously, public diplomacy must have the appropriate organization and adequate funding to be effective. After the end of the Cold War, funding for American public diplomacy declined too fast and too far. This was a terrible mistake. Spending cuts mandated by Congress have reduced the number of public diplomacy professionals working abroad, reduced educational exchange programs, closed libraries, canceled

vernacular language magazines, and hampered other efforts. This did not have to happen. The 1999 merger of USIA into the State Department fragmented public diplomacy and undermined it as a profession. The merger did not have to have those consequences, but it did. The coherence and professionalism of the public diplomacy function should be restored, if not by recreating USIA, then by elevating and consolidating it within the State Department. For the future of American foreign policy, it is urgent that we use proven techniques and that we find a better coordinated system and increased funding for public diplomacy for Arab and Muslim audiences.

[79] Polls reported by James J. Zogby, “What Arabs Think,” Zogby International (September 2002), and Shibley Telhami, The Stakes (Boulder: Westview, 2002), 46–49.

[80] In contrast, “propaganda” is usually defined as advocacy that can use lies and distortions and that need not be attributed.

** 13. A Civilized Way to Fight Terror

Daoud Kuttab

It might seem like a contradiction to pose the question of how the United States can deal with international terror in a civilized way, but there are many nonviolent things that can be done short of, or alongside, violent responses. To understand what these might be, we must first recognize the nature of the main actor: the United States.

*** America the Exceptional

In a unipolar world, in which the United States has lone superpower status on the political, financial, and military levels, much more is expected of America than of any other country. As the world leader, the United States has both a kind of authority as well as a level of responsibility toward the rest of the world that no other actor has. Consequently, U.S. actions, and nonactions, carry much more weight than the actions of other countries. The country's leading status makes everything it does shine brighter than do actions of other countries and sets such actions as reference points, especially for countries in the third world that look up to the United States, even as they criticize it from time to time.

In short, America is exceptional; hence, its words have exceptional impact. What America says or even hints at has wide-ranging effects the world over. This means that with the information age in which we are living, the United States can no longer hide from the rest of the world what it says and does in America. As a result of twenty-four-hour live television, beamed nearly everywhere, every utterance of the U.S. president, his spokespersons, or people in his cabinet and his party can be heard, read, and analyzed within seconds. Statements can no longer be packaged only for a local or ethnic audience. Everyone can hear and read everything within the public discourse.

This consequent need for consistency is essential not only in the content of statements but also in the mood and style of their delivery. A smile, a frown, as well as noteworthy body language can often be interpreted and explained differently from what is intended. So it is not enough for U.S. officials to guard what they say; they need to take an active stance in following up and correcting, if need be, how their views are interpreted the world over.

The authority and power of the words spoken by U.S. officials carry great responsibility. This responsibility requires a greater degree of care about how words might be interpreted and what they might mean in different cultures. When President Bush used the word crusade to describe the U.S. campaign against terrorism, the word took on a life of its own. In the Arab world, the term was translated as "Christian war." The modern American usage of the word as a mere campaign was totally missing. It took some time for the correction to be made and even longer for many in the Arab and Muslim

worlds to accept that what was meant was not a religious war but rather a campaign against terrorism.

*** Words, Values, and Double Standards

Although words are important, values are an even more important reference point. America has taken on the positive image not only of a successful, powerful, and rich country but also of a country based on great values. The United States stands for the best things people everywhere can hope for. The U.S. Constitution, the First Amendment, and the respect for individual rights are values beyond dispute virtually the world over. These are not just words on paper; for every American, these values are experienced every day in every state of the union.

Unfortunately, however, that is sometimes as far as it goes. Once outside the United States or when dealing with foreign policy, these values are often replaced with a variety of other considerations. People who have not lived in America, especially those who have been on the receiving end of certain realpolitik-oriented U.S. foreign policies, have little appreciation of what America stands for.

For years, people in the Middle East have been exposed to what seems to them a Janus-faced U.S. foreign policy. Human rights, the great Wilsonian concept of the people’s right to self-determination, seems to stop when the subjects of discussion are Palestinians. But this has been the case for some years, so why is antipathy to the United States so high in the Arab world today? What has the United States done recently to trigger this unprecedented response?

Although these are important questions, the answers are not necessarily in any specific action by the United States, but rather in the fact that people around the world have much more access in real time, and in full Technicolor, to acts, events, and pronouncements of American officials regarding foreign policy issues. The spread of satellite television, for example, has meant that stories about, say, the human suffering of Palestinians living under Israeli

military occupation enter the sitting rooms of hundreds of millions of people every day. When top U.S. officials defend or justify or merely look away from human rights violations in third world countries, few people can go back and think of the rosy picture of America as the defender of rights and the protector of freedoms.

When Vice President Cheney told Fox television that the United States "understands" Israel's need to assassinate top Palestinian officials, his statement was widely broadcast all over the Arab and Muslim world. To have a senior U.S. official understand the use of U.S. Apache helicopters by an ally in an offensive attack was hard to fathom. Some Arab commentators noted that even Timothy McVeigh was entitled to a trial, while in Palestine, Israeli generals are allowed to act as judge, jury, and executioner, with full support from the world's greatest champion of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

The double standard that is seen to be part of U.S. policy mystifies people in the Arab world. They cannot see how such policies can be based on U.S. national interests, let alone U.S. values, if these policies lead to 1.3 billion Muslims being alienated from the United States. Most people know that a country's foreign policy cannot be based solely on values, but where is the interest of the United States in such a result? This question leads many to conclude that the power of domestic groups to influence external policies that are not in the best national interest of the United States must be the explanation.

Most Arabs and Muslims cannot imagine that U.S. sympathy for Israel is based on genuine concern with Israel's security dilemma and its being an outpost of democracy in an otherwise authoritarian region. Their view of Israel has been shaped by a very different historical prism, which many assume America must share because it is so obvious to them. The result is that most Arabs and Muslims have become unsure of whether they are America's friend or foe, and they are prone to explaining U.S. policy behaviors in ways that most Americans, in turn, judge to be peculiar, if not conspiratorial, in nature.

Whatever the reasons for Arab and Muslim attitudes, the public attacks by many of America's own Arab allies against American policy in the Levant and in Iraq have not satisfied a population that daily witnesses what it defines as humiliation against fellow Arabs and Muslims. This is partly because Arab governments have proved themselves completely inept at doing anything about it.

Shortly after the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, President Bush spoke to the American people calling what happened an attack against America's values. He ended by saying, "We go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world." For Americans living in the United States, these words sounded true and genuine. But for many around the world, these values have not been translated in U.S. foreign policy; these words were empty rhetoric.

The values that America stands for are the envy of well-informed human beings living in authoritarian countries around the world. Those who have lived in America and who have experienced that great country try their best to tell people around the world about it. They do so hoping that these values can be emulated in their own countries. Those who only see the results of American foreign policy, however, often attack such efforts by pointing to the apparent contradiction between values preached and practices observed.

In the past, the U.S. government was often able to get away with this contradiction. Although accused of not doing enough by some right-wing circles in America, friendly Arab countries would protect the U.S. image, and their government-controlled media would ensure that America's policies were defended. But globalization, which has been a main vehicle of America's recent economic and political successes, has also brought with it media instruments (Internet and satellites) that circumvent government-controlled media and allow people freer access to the reality of U.S. foreign policy. Is it possible that the very instruments of its own success now haunt America? Preaching democracy, human rights, and transparency while supporting despots around the world weakens the U.S. position tremendously.

Within international agencies, this same issue also arises. In 2000, when the U.S. delegation walked out of the UN World Conference against Racism, held in Durban, South Africa, many around the world felt that America had allowed its policy to be hijacked by a single country, and for clearly domestic reasons. A world leader like the United States is expected to have a much more tolerant attitude and to understand that being on top means that it is more likely to be criticized than others. If the United States wants to defeat terrorism, it will have to tolerate indignities it might not otherwise tolerate.

*** Against Hopelessness

Although terrorism has different shapes and versions, the most dangerous kind is based on religious conviction. This danger is multiplied when one's mortal life is seen as being worthless, while the eternal life promised by religious leaders seems so grand. To counter such religious zealotry, various levels of responses are needed. Proper religious education and preaching are extremely important in this case. It is also critical to provide young people with alternative examples of religious leaders who can combine spiritual knowledge with a realistic and moderate view of life and world events.

Media geared toward the community where terrorism is based are critical. What is needed is not alternative media through public diplomacy channels, because people in the region will not trust it. Instead, local, indigenous media must be influenced. Although it might be more difficult to get a message into these media outlets, any success with such media can have beneficial long-term effects. Influencing local media should not be limited to news. Drama, soap operas, game shows, and children's programs provide many opportunities that are rarely used to effect change in attitudes.

Public opinion is not restricted to media, of course. Positive role models are needed to encourage young people. For example, sports heroes and music stars can be tapped to give messages of tolerance and moderation.

After all, terrorism does not fall from the sky. It needs a fertile environment in which to develop. Terrorism is not a virtual reality but a real act that requires

flesh-and-blood individuals to carry it out. A true search for the causes that drive people to act in such a violent way is a necessary first step in understanding and dealing with this threat. Such an attempt ought not be done in a heavy-handed, arrogant manner, but rather with a genuine interest in understanding those affected. Such empathy is a prerequisite to a true understanding of the underlying causes; without it, we will be unable to tackle those causes in an effective way.

Finally, to tackle these worldwide problems, one must come down to the level of the individuals who are involved. Understanding that terrorism is the weapon of the weak and helpless is a step toward understanding what drives people to carry out such inhumane acts, even at the cost of their own lives. A psychological profile of those carrying out acts of terrorism clearly shows the extremely high level of frustration and helplessness they felt. When a person’s own life becomes so worthless and when the hope of a future disappears, individuals have little care or concern for the lives of others.

Therefore, the best ways to combat terrorism are to change the atmosphere in which it grows and to replace the sense of hopelessness that so many young people experience with a vision for a better tomorrow. Naturally, lip service is not enough. People need to see that realistic and genuine visions are being followed in such a way that they can be convinced that their lives will likely improve. Public diplomacy can be an adjunct to such a process but never a substitute for it.

** 14. Relating to the Muslim World: Less Is More?

Ellen Laipson

Twenty-two years ago, Ramadan fell in the middle of summer, and I was residing in Rabat, Morocco, doing research and enjoying the opportunity to live in a Muslim country of great charm and beauty. I had no formal link to the U.S. embassy. However, as a courtesy to me as a Library of Congress employee, I was allowed some office space at the U.S. cultural office, part of

what was then called the U.S. Information Agency—since integrated into the Department of State.

The USIA office was in a modest downtown office building that happened to be close to the cultural office of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. To this day, I remember that USIA virtually shut down its programming during Ramadan, while the Soviets held a daily film program, allowing young people to spend an hour in a cool dark place off the shimmering sidewalks. The films were not memorable, to say the least. But as I sat in the Soviet cultural center, I wondered whether the access provided to these regular folk—decidedly not denizens of the embassy cocktail circuit—would make a lasting impression on their political views.

Perhaps not. But it stimulated me to reflect on whether our own ideas of outreach are too elitist and whether our tradition of respecting others' religion actually cuts us off from benign interactions with people of different faiths. In the years after my visit, the U.S. cultural office moved to the affluent suburbs for security reasons; even fewer Moroccans now have access to films, libraries, or cultural activities sponsored by the U.S. embassy. Today, too, we hear of U.S. reluctance to be visibly associated with secular or missionary schools in the Muslim world, out of fear of offending local sensibilities. In addition, many American nongovernment organizations and embassies struggle to interact in a normal way with "moderate" Islamists without running afoul of all the new antiterrorism rules and regulations.

The secretary of state, meanwhile, hosts elaborate iftar receptions with Muslim ambassadors, and the president has learned to send end-of-Ramadan greetings to Muslim Americans and to Muslim leaders around the world. The United States has much goodwill and good intentions to do the right thing by Muslim friends and partners, but there is clearly a lot of confusion and fumbling, too.

How do we get it right? Is it possible to be fair, open, and honest and have our message understood as transmitted? Or are our efforts to communicate officially with Muslim societies doomed to fail because our own cultural norms are so different from Islamic ones, and because of the agitated state

of mind that many, if not most, Muslims have toward the United States these days?

*** The New Context of Public Diplomacy

I believe we have serious problems on both the sending side and the receiving side of public diplomacy. We need now to reflect carefully on how much, if any, of the critical society-to-society communication can be managed by government. In the information age, after all, it is increasingly difficult to keep different kinds of messages in distinctly separate channels. Governments have many information-related policies and strategies: there is information generated by the bureaucracy for internal deliberations on policy; there is information in the official exchanges of diplomacy and intelligence prepared to convince allies or to bully adversaries; there is occasionally information deliberately altered to influence a foreign population (psychological operations or propaganda); and then there is the regular press function, with information prepared to inform the American public and the American media about the government's policies and activities. I believe that the information revolution has made it virtually impossible to keep these channels separate. Information moves too fast, and there is much greater transparency in government operations than there used to be. The result is that a message designed for a particular audience is now instantly available to a global audience. It is no longer possible to fine-tune a message for a distant Muslim audience and not have your political rivals at home know about it. It is equally difficult to share with the American public a policy's nuances without having it dissected in salons in Cairo and Karachi.

Public diplomacy, therefore, is an anachronism in today's world, and as such, it is probably doing more harm than good. The transparency required in our own society clashes directly with the notion of manipulating perceptions and opinions. For successful manipulation to occur, you must appear to be doing something sincere and straightforward. But in today's world, we talk in real time about why and how our government functions; one cannot publicly acknowledge that we are "spinning" our stories without that acknowledgment having an effect on the target of the spinning.

Would it not make more sense, therefore, to expand the press and information capacity to work in a more direct and honest way in talking about our policies and, yes, their shortcomings? Couldn't our press spokesmen take on a bit of additional work, giving more background and explanation of our policies, as opposed to the highly condensed sound bites they are expected to provide? Couldn't our media be staffed by people who can retrieve, on request, additional data or background on our policies and their impact?

Public diplomacy as conceived and ridiculed during the Bush administration has been too close to the marketplace and not nearly close enough to the underlying logic of our policies. By admitting that the government was importing some Madison Avenue techniques, we revealed too much of an inclination to our own crass thinking—that policies are commodities that must appeal to the current fads of consumers. The Madison Avenue approach undermined the more noble and often contradictory struggles behind policies that may not please everyone but that nevertheless embody our national aspirations and our democratic processes.

Public diplomacy toward the Muslim world also contains many other pitfalls. Muslims in general and Arabs in particular can distinguish between American consumer goods they like and American official policies they loathe. But we act as if we are surprised that consumers of our goods don't like us after all. We have also conflated the pro-Americanism that may exist in the Muslim world, often very superficially, with support for other aspects of American culture and power. We need to understand the complex attitudes toward us in a more nuanced way. We should not try to label people in the region; it is an insult to them and to our own political culture, which professes to have high tolerance for political disagreement.

*** Missing the Mark

There are at least three specific respects in which our efforts to communicate with Muslim audiences from official platforms have missed the mark:

economics, the pace of change, and the role of religion in public life. Let’s take a quick look at each.

**** Economics

When we try to commoditize our foreign policy for Muslims, we show glaring insensitivity to prevailing views about economic values. In mainstream American political discourse, free elections and free markets are equally important principles. For Muslim believers, however, the allocation of resources needs to address social justice, which resembles an economic model probably closer to European social democratic party positions than to American capitalism. Muslims may be able to embrace some, even many, of the core political concepts we hold dear, but preaching capitalism to societies with already distorted markets and income distributions—and with rampant poverty—may not make sense to most Arabs. It sets us up for a policy failure.

Of course, there are many capitalists in Muslim societies who have thrived due to their entrepreneurial skills and their business acumen. They are important members of the political and social elite in Egypt, Syria, North Africa, and Pakistan. Sometimes these capitalists become advocates for economic reforms because they are more attuned to the need to adapt to new EU policies, for example, or because they see opportunities in seeking free trade agreements with the United States. But when we think about the broader malaise in the Muslim Middle East, we are often talking about the part of the population that has not benefited from the profits of the private sector. New linkages between our capitalist system and Arab economic elites would not foster greater sympathy or support for U.S. policies among the ranks of the unemployed.

If we are truly open to an agenda for change in the region, as the Bush administration has declared, then we must be in a listening mode. Demand for change in the Arab world or in the large Muslim societies of southern Asia does not even remotely mean that would-be reformers or democrats would choose the American model, which has no social safety net, underfunded retirement programs, and no universal health care. Instead, agents for

change who may be our best partners on the political side may have quite different ideas about how to distribute and share a state's wealth and its foreign aid revenues. It is important that we show some flexibility and tolerance; a relentless drumbeat extolling the virtues of the Washington consensus on market economics will not serve our broader goals in the Muslim world.

**** Timing

We also miss each others' signals when it comes to matters of timing. Americans are impatient and want to measure attitudes of the moment. Our public diplomacy bureaucrats want to know how people in other countries are reacting to our "message" so that they can fine-tune it for the next poll, or even for the next day's news cycle. But attitudes in nondemocratic societies, where most Muslims live, are not easily changed. Cynicism from living with hypocritical rulers does not easily dissipate, as is evident in post-Saddam Iraq. The would-be democrats of the Muslim world have acquired some deeply ingrained beliefs about how the world works, and these beliefs cannot be shaken quickly with a few advertisements or articles.

We must reconcile ourselves to the fact that attitudes and behavior do not change quickly and that our efforts to manipulate or change deeply ingrained beliefs and experiences are often feckless. If attempted in culturally inappropriate ways, these efforts can do more harm than good and, in so doing, can feed the region's robust proclivity to conspiracy theories. For example, in our saturated information market, there is enormous pressure to have "news" of change in Iraq that actually misinforms world publics about how change truly does occur.

**** Religion in the Public Sphere

We do a poor job communicating about religion in public and about the ties between religion and state. Clearly, across the Muslim world, theologians and independent thinkers are in a fierce and important debate on this issue. There is a wide range of issues and opinions: Should clergy be employees of

the state? Have Iran's clerics been given, or taken, too much authority in matters of state? How should new constitutions address religion in societies where not all citizens are Muslim?

The United States, again, cannot claim to have the answers to such questions. Americans are raised with a myth about the separation of church and state, but our behavior suggests considerable confusion on the point. We have had presidents, including George W. Bush, who are deeply religious and speak of their beliefs in ways that can alienate or offend citizens who hold different beliefs, or who do not believe the president should see his official duties as having any religious content whatsoever.

Meanwhile, the secretary of state invites Muslim diplomats to the formal diplomatic rooms at the Department of State to celebrate the breaking of the fast on Ramadan. At first glance, many are pleased, even touched, at this gesture of cultural goodwill to the world's Muslims. But such a gesture seems strange, even patronizing, as a public demonstration of respect for a religious rite. Would it not be simpler and truer to our own principles to be consistent with respect to defining religion as a private matter? All that a liberal, Lockean state needs to do is create and preserve an environment in which there is freedom of religion and tolerance for all. Wouldn't that be the most appropriate U.S. message for the Muslim world?

*** Other Ways to Communicate

I am not suggesting that engaging with Muslim societies is too hard or should not be a goal of U.S. policy. I am simply suggesting that "public diplomacy" is not the way to do it. If one considers the current structure of the State Department, there is an undersecretary for public diplomacy and public affairs, with three bureaus reporting to that senior official (the Charlotte Beers position, vacant for many months until filled briefly by Margaret Tutweiler). The three bureaus that report to the undersecretary run important and useful programs that permit interaction with diverse groups in Muslim societies. There are cultural and educational programs, media exchanges, training opportunities, and more. I would reallocate the funding of this part of the State Department to maximize impact on the long-haul issues, education

in particular. I would phase out the more questionable public diplomacy activities that have generated controversy with no discernible benefit to the United States.

For example, our press activities should be expanded. We should help new foreign media establish professional standards—a worthy contribution as countries even in the more closed parts of the Muslim world make the transition from government monopolies on news and information to the wider world of open information.

If we are open to changing our ways of engaging with the Muslim world in the hopes of avoiding further estrangement, we also need to grapple with the elitism of our policies. More often than not, our programs are looking for winners, trying to scout out future leaders in whom to invest. This is true across a range of overseas activities that the U.S. government supports, with the notable exception of antipoverty programs and humanitarian relief activities. In diplomatic, educational, and military exchanges, we aim high. We are looking to invest in success, in individuals who may well emerge as a next generation of leaders and decision makers.

There is nothing inherently wrong with this policy, but it may not be sufficient as a communications strategy. Given the widening gap between haves and have-nots in Muslim societies, should we not also try to reach out to the populations that are vulnerable to hatred and despair and violence? Might a different kind of U.S. engagement help prevent the spread of suicide bombers? Former U.S. peace negotiators have expressed regret for neglecting civil society in Israel and Palestine, the nonofficial populations that must minimally accept the governments' policies for those policies to succeed, even in nondemocratic places. One former negotiator, Aaron David Miller, now heads Seeds for Peace, the innovative program that brings teenagers from key conflict zones (Arab-Israel, India-Pakistan) to the United States to communicate and even form bonds of friendship. It is worth considering whether a restructuring of programming priorities from elites to a mix that includes more popular audiences, and young people in particular, might not be the strategic investment that this particular historic juncture requires.

These modest ideas remain at a level of generality and cannot adequately address the deep divide that exists between the West and segments of Muslim society in a large group of countries. Generalizations can also cause harm by failing to recognize the enormous diversity of both American and Muslim societies. In the end, it is up to individuals to build the bridges and to find ways to communicate. In an increasingly interdependent world, more business partnerships, marriages, and friendships can be formed, and we should encourage and celebrate those ties. But governments do matter because they represent, for good or ill, the idea of a nation, the aspirations of a culture and its people. Our government has labored hard, and many individuals do so with great sensitivity and skill, but we need to look very closely at our policies and our style of communicating with the Muslim world. Perhaps it's time for our government to simplify and reduce the number of information initiatives it generates toward the Muslim world and to spend more time making sure its policies are wise and grounded in fairness and principle. Then the communication piece will follow naturally.

** 15. A Practical Guide to Tapping America's Underappreciated, Underutilized Anti-Islamist Allies across the Muslim World

Robert Satloff

With more than 1.3 billion Muslims worldwide, it is not realistic for the United States government—working both independently and in concert with other governments, international organizations, and private initiatives—to thoroughly "drain the swamp" in which Islamist[81] terrorist organizations find their recruits. Even if one were to accept a low-end estimate of the number of Islamists worldwide (say, 5 percent of all Muslims) and a low-end estimate of the number of terrorists or their activist sympathizers—financiers, logistical supporters, ideological advocates—among them (say, 1 percent of all Islamists), then there are at least 600,000 hard-core radicals fishing for followers in a sea of at least 60,000,000 potential recruits.[82] To identify, target, isolate, co-opt, and, in some cases, neutralize the former is a gargantuan task. To do the same to the latter is patently impossible.

If fully “draining the swamp” is not achievable, however, there remains much that can be done to decrease the number of Muslims who become Islamists and to decrease the number of Islamists who become terrorists or their activist sympathizers. Each of these challenges requires different tools and different strategies. In essence, whereas decreasing the number of Islamists who become terrorists is principally the province of intelligence and security agencies, decreasing the number of Muslims who become Islamists is a much wider concern that touches on numerous aspects of U.S. foreign policy.

Curtailing the appeal of Islamism should be a matter of prime importance to practitioners of what is popularly known as “public diplomacy.” To many, public diplomacy is merely a less grating term for “public relations abroad,” or the less-than-fine-art of packaging and selling America to foreign audiences. Although that is an element of the larger picture, public diplomacy is—or ought to be—much more than that.

Just as traditional diplomacy revolves around strengthening allies, weakening adversaries, and advancing America’s interests and values, the same can be said of public diplomacy. Although the targets are different (peoples, not government) and the operational time frame is often longer, the objectives are similar: empowering friends, undermining the influence of adversaries, and nurturing popular understanding of (and, one hopes, support for) U.S. national interests and values. Unfortunately, too few professional public diplomats view their mission in terms of allies and adversaries. Indeed, the fundamental problem of U.S. public diplomacy in the post–September 11 era is that it has rarely evinced a clear sense of mission, has rarely differentiated clearly between friend and foe, and has rarely focused its energies on extending a helping hand to those elements in society—especially in Muslim-majority countries—that are America’s natural allies in the struggle against radical Islamism.

Defining a detailed, full-scale, soup-to-nuts program to achieve those objectives is beyond the scope of this brief essay. However, what follows are three broad suggestions that, if implemented, would begin to put U.S. public diplomacy squarely on the right side of the fight against Islamism.

*** Identifying and Supporting Allies

As noted above, the overwhelming majority of the world's Muslims are not Islamists. However, Islamists are often highly motivated and well funded. Although they are not choreographed by some all-knowing Islamist wizard, they coordinate well among themselves and (especially the nonviolent ones) have a sophisticated, long-range plan to advance their goals. They are people of action. In contrast, non-Islamist Muslims are defined more by who they are not rather than by who they are. They range across political and religious spectra, from radical atheists to secular, lapsed Muslims to pious, traditional, orthodox believers. They have no common program, no organizational cohesion, no way even to know who in society shares their views.

An important, and rarely pursued, step toward minimizing recruits to Islamism is to identify the potential allies among these non-Islamist Muslims, build networks of common purpose among them, and show that the United States supports them in the currency that matters in local society—that is, visibility and money.

This task requires a different sort of outreach effort than is the norm for U.S. embassies in the Muslim world. Rather than seek out "moderate Islamists" for dialogue designed to promote understanding of U.S. policies and to narrow differences over contested issues, this alternative approach would have U.S. embassies pointedly avoid contact with Islamists (except for intelligence gathering). Instead, it highlights contacts with liberal, even secular, anti-Islamist individuals and organizations. Invitations to embassy functions, participation in ambassadorial press conferences, and opportunities for exchange visits and study tours to the United States are all ways for U.S. officials to shower favor upon groups and individuals. These actions should be viewed as arrows in the larger public diplomacy quiver, for even in this era of pessimistic Pew Research Center polls of America's standing abroad, the imprimatur of the United States is sorely coveted. So are the dollars that U.S. governmental agencies and quasi-official nongovernmental organizations (like the National Endowment for Democracy's recipient agencies) dole out to local groups.

In all these programs, the guiding principle should be that the United States supports its current friends and would welcome new ones. Local political communities around the Muslim world are sophisticated: when they see that anti-Islamists of varying stripes (whether female entrepreneurs, crusading investigative journalists, or kids who win English-language spelling bees) are featured at embassy events, receive embassy grants, and win trips to the United States—with nary an Islamist among them—the message will be clear. Conversely, a clear and damaging message is transmitted when Islamists, even of the mild variety, are the honored guests, lucky beneficiaries, and welcome visitors on those events, grants, and trips.

In addition to highlighting contact with cultural and political allies, U.S. embassies abroad and U.S. public diplomacy in general should focus efforts on networking among groups and individuals that, at least on the Islamist issue, share a common approach. Like building a popular front against Nazism in World War II or against Communism in the Cold War, this may involve bringing together people of very different world-views to work together for the larger cause of fighting the spread of Islamism. Ironically, U.S. officials who either shun “secularists” for fear of offending Muslim sensibilities, or who have little expertise in distinguishing between traditionalist Muslims and Islamists, are more likely to be reluctant to adopt this approach than are local anti-Islamist Muslims themselves. Because the latter are on the “front line,” facing the rising tide of Islamism in schools, mosques, youth groups, grassroots organizations, and civic groups, they are more likely to take risks. The United States should not leave such allies and potential allies out in the cold.

Building such networks is not only important for creating a force-multiplier of reformist activism to counter the Islamists, it is also useful for identifying individuals who could play lead roles in specific public policy issues. Curriculum reform, for example, is a critical battleground of the culture wars in many Muslim societies. The traditional U.S. approach is to offer technical assistance to ministries of education (in the form of consultants, study trips to the United States, the professional advice of English-language officers at embassies, and so forth). However, these efforts periodically fuel criticism

and resentment toward U.S. interference in one of the most sensitive areas of local concern.

A more effective and longer-lasting change—and one with fewer fingerprints of U.S. intervention—would result from behind-the-scenes U.S. endorsement of key reform-minded people from within the bureaucracy and civil society to positions of authority on the local and national review boards often formed to review curricula. Trying to influence the composition of various government bodies both removes the United States from direct interference in the actual process of curriculum reform and ensures that right-thinking people will be in important positions when the current battle is over and the next one is ready to be joined. This can only be achieved if U.S. embassies have already done the vital work of identifying local allies and building a communications infrastructure for networking among them.

*** Empowering Allies

Although lending visible political support to anti-Islamists is essential, it is not sufficient. The U.S. government should also find innovative ways to strengthen its local anti-Islamist allies. One critical, yet low-cost, arena in which the United States can empower anti-Islamists is in the information field.

One of the lesser-known phenomena in Arab and Muslim society in recent years is the flowering of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). From remote mountainous regions in the High Atlas to the urban slums of Cairo, these organizations have sprouted up to fulfill all sorts of communal and social needs. Sometimes they emerge from the commitment of local community organizers. Sometimes they are creatures of the government, which may construct ad hoc local groups to perform special functions or fulfill services that the government chooses to channel outside the formal system. Sometimes they are local branches of organizations that have large, international followings.

Whatever their origins, tens of thousands of these organizations now exist throughout the Middle East, and a large number of them are Islamist in orientation. Many of these are registered with local governments in accordance with law, but many others operate in a legal vacuum. In a region where the central government's delivery of basic social services is notoriously bad, NGOs have emerged in many places to supply what governments either cannot or do not provide. Of course, Islamist organizations only compensate for a small fraction of what governments are not able or willing to do, but the model they offer still provides a pathway for the spread of Islamist thought and, possibly, terrorist sympathies to millions of Muslims.

Throughout Arab and Muslim countries, for example, Islamist NGOs—many financed from Saudi Arabia, some with al Qaeda links—have established powerful networks of Islamist-oriented social welfare initiatives. Following a long-term strategy of nurturing the next generation of Islamists, some of the most insidious Islamist NGOs focus exclusively on children. (Hence, for example, they might opt to fund primary schools, youth camps, and after-school programming but not current needs of the adult population, such as adult literacy programs, vocational training classes, or battered women's shelters.) Often, these NGOs operate without formal government license because their services often fill a local need. Local administrators often either look the other way or welcome these organizations, regardless of what officialdom in faraway capitals might prefer (or say they prefer).

Among anti-Islamists, even without knowing about the shadier international links of many of these groups, there is a rising sense of alarm at the spread of such Islamist social welfare activities. Many civic activists, including journalists, would take up the cudgel against the presence of these foreign-funded Islamist organizations and would be especially moved to act if they knew about the possible terrorist connections of some of these outfits. What these activists lack, however, is information, such as documentary evidence describing the political activities and funding sources of these groups and, when it exists, evidence of connection to terrorist acts and organizations. Such information is, to a large extent, part of the U.S. public record, from court transcripts, FBI documents, and congressional reports and testimonies. Indeed, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Asset Control publishes a list of "specially designated nationals and blocked persons" that, in the

version of September 23, 2003, is 116 pages long. Many of the institutions cited on this list are the same Islamist NGOs that are active in many corners of the Muslim world.[83]

A simple, low-cost but high-value solution would be the creation of a user-friendly, Internet-based clearinghouse of information in Arabic and other local languages, outlining the operations, management, administration, financing, and personnel of all Islamist-oriented initiatives and NGOs and the linkages among them. Such an effort, if brought to the attention of the growing number of anti-Islamist activists and organizations through an aggressive, imaginative outreach campaign, would be a forceful stimulant to action. Information is power, and this sort of information would help empower anti-Islamist Muslims who are concerned about the direction of their own countries and communities to take matters into their own hands.

*** Nurturing Future Allies

In the campaign to limit the spread of Islamism, identifying, supporting, and empowering current allies is necessary but still not sufficient. To stand any chance of undercutting the Islamists' popular appeal, the United States must invest much more substantially in developing new and future allies. Here, a central battleground is children's education. Indeed, this is one area in which anti-Islamists should take their cue from Islamists, who, as noted above, have made the battle for the "hearts and minds" of young people a top priority. So far, the United States is not even putting up a fight.

In approaching this problem, it is important to remember another lesson learned from the Islamists: the power of example. In the context of populous countries like Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Yemen, Islamist social welfare programming is a proverbial drop in the bucket compared with what actual needs are, and even compared with what existing governments currently do. In a medium-sized town, for example, Islamists may successfully operate a model school, a professionally staffed hospital, or a well-functioning day-care center, but they cannot replace the government's massive, though admittedly broken-down, educational or health care systems. Like terrorists who have learned the ways of asymmetric warfare against conventional

armies, Islamists have mastered the tools of reaping considerable public sympathy from providing examples of a better-run alternative system without having the responsibility or burden of actually providing such an alternative system.

Curtailing the popular appeal of Islamism should be pursued with a similar strategy. Although the U.S. government can provide some assistance to help fix local school systems, the problems are too huge—and the Islamist challenge is too urgent—to rely on that approach. Instead, Washington needs to develop alternative opportunities for anti-Islamist excellence and highly visible models of it.

Promoting English-language education should be a central focus of this effort. Knowing English does not necessarily translate into liberal thought or pro-Americanism, as the legacy of Islamist radicals from Sayyid Qutb to the September 11 bombers underscores. But English is both a portal to Anglo-American culture as well as the access route to the Internet-based information revolution. Knowing English at least gives a resident in a Muslim-majority country the opportunity to learn about America and make judgments about its policies and values without the filter of translation or reliance on biased sources of information. Indeed, studies show that access to information is not itself the key criterion in shaping views on U.S. policy; rather, it is access to different sorts and sources of information—for example, CNN versus al-Jazeera—that could be the key to determining attitudes toward the United States.[84]

Specific initiatives that could be pursued in this strategy include the following:

- Create “English-for-all” after-school programs, at no or nominal cost to parents, in cities and towns throughout the Muslim world. This should be pursued cooperatively with existing NGOs as well as with the governments of other English-speaking countries and the English Speaking Union, the British-based organization that seeks to promote the use of the English language around the globe. Similarly, U.S. funds should subsidize the high fees that older students are currently asked to pay for English-language training at

specialized programs like AMIDEAST, thereby making those classes more accessible to a wider segment of the population. Few steps could earn the United States more goodwill in Muslim countries than to invest enough money to make English-language study free or extremely low-cost.

- Expand the existing paltry financial support for American-style educational opportunities for students of all ages throughout the Muslim world. Of the 185 U.S. government-recognized “American schools” around the world, fully one-quarter are in Muslim-majority countries and one-tenth are in Arab countries.[85] These schools—ready-made incubators of pro-Americanism—receive paltry levels of assistance from the U.S. government, only $8 million out of a combined annual operating budget of $450 million. Some schools receive as little as 1 percent of their annual operating budget from government funds. Many of these schools attract high concentrations—one-third to one-half—of local students but their often five-digit tuition fees mean that only wealthy, elite local children can attend, sometimes without regard to academic excellence. (Tuition fees for most other students are paid for by governments and international corporations.) Washington should target schools in Arab and Muslim countries for expanded merit-based, academic scholarship funds. These would help to expand the pool of local entrants and to reach beyond “old money” families to the rising middle class who yearn for a U.S.-style education and who are willing to pay substantial sums for it, but who cannot afford the exorbitant costs that cash-strapped schools are forced to charge to make ends meet.

- Support the development of U.S.-style universities throughout the Muslim world through enhanced distance-learning facilities, provision of books and supplies, educational training grants, and the like. The long-term goal should be the creation of at least one fully accredited English-language university in every country. The fact that new, U.S.-style, English-language universities are opening throughout the Muslim world—Kuwait’s is the most recent, scheduled to begin instruction in September 2004—is a trend to be embraced and cultivated. Given the heightened security concerns about foreign students in the United States, combined with a financial crunch that forced a cutback in foreign Muslim and Arab students in the United States well before September 11, promoting U.S.-style universities in Muslim countries is an especially smart idea.

- Promote the distribution in Muslim countries of overstock U.S. textbooks and academic materials. Current law provides for tax breaks for book publishers to donate overstocks, but the number of books that make their way to Arab or Muslim countries is shockingly low.[86]

- Integrate the U.S. private sector, especially U.S. companies operating abroad, in English-language promotion. This could range from developing incentive programs that promise postgraduation employment for students who complete certain coursework or technical training to providing tax incentives to corporations that provide financial support to book-purchasing initiatives, English-language programs, or scholarship funds in their local overseas communities.

Even a long list of initiatives such as this (and the list could be much longer) will only touch a relatively small number of students at all ages. But just as Islamists enjoy a reputation for providing efficient social welfare services far beyond the actual reach of people that receive such services, so, too, will the example of successful English-language programming attract admirers far beyond the actual number of students that directly benefit from it. And along the way, the United States will have invested in the next generation of Muslim allies to carry on the campaign to limit the appeal of Islamism.

*** A Diplomacy of Doing

There is a tendency to see public diplomacy as mainly talking: whether through radio broadcasts, speaker programs, or print publications and the like. That is about as inadequate a view of public diplomacy as demarching foreign governments is of traditional diplomacy. To be effective, public diplomacy requires action—assertive, aggressive, creative efforts to engage foreign publics, nurture friends, empower allies, build future supporters, and undercut the leverage of America’s adversaries. To succeed against as wily

and sophisticated a challenge as Islamism requires resorting to means not usually the hallmark of traditional diplomacy. These means include more public-private partnerships, for example, and the encouragement of a more entrepreneurial, risk-taking, opportunistic, and decentralized way of doing business by America's embassies and diplomats.

This, in turn, will require changes from the current pattern of foreign service recruitment, education, training, and placement. Indeed, to a great extent, a successful public diplomacy campaign against Islamism means a throwback to the days before all diplomacy was directed from Washington, to the era when embassies and diplomats were active, frontline agents in the advance of American national interests. Only a diplomatic corps imbued with mission, charged with action, and unleashed from bureaucracy can win the friends and allies America needs to triumph in the battle to curtail the appeal of Islamism.

[81] Islamist is defined here as a Muslim who seeks—either through peaceful or violent means—the imposition of Qur'anic law (Sharia) and a Qur'anic-based state, rejecting the legitimacy of the existing political structure in his/her country or region. Although organically antidemocratic (i.e., opposed to "rule of the people"), Islamists can equally reject democratic systems and monarchical ones, the principal point of departure for them being the imperative to impose "divine law" in place of human-made systems of governance.

[82] Daniel Pipes, for example, suggests that "perhaps 10 to 15 percent" of all Muslims subscribe to "militant Islam." See Pipes, Militant Islam Reaches America (New York: W.W. Norton, 2002), 3.

[83] For the OFAC list, periodically updated, see http://www.treas.org/office/eotffc/ofac/sdn/t11sdn.pdf.

[84] See Matthew A. Gentzkow and Jesse M. Shapiro, “Education, Media and Anti-Americanism in the Muslim World,” a study by two Harvard University students based on data from the 2002 Gallup poll of the Islamic World, http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~jmshapir/summary100303.pdf.

[85] For details on American schools around the world, see the Web site of the U.S. State Department’s Office of Overseas Schools, http://www.state.gov/m/a/os/.

[86] For details of tax exemptions and one overseas book-distribution program, see the Sabre Foundation, http://www.sabre.org.

* Last Exhibit

** 16. Anti-Americanism, U.S. Foreign Policy, and the War on Terrorism

Adam Garfinkle

To the extent that those who do not like America admit the fact, nearly all contend that the reason lies not with them but with and within America. A few such persons go beyond dislike to hatred, and a few of those go from passive to active expressions of that hatred. A few of those active expressions are violent, and a few of those, if they randomly target civilians, are terrorist. And a very few of those, if they cross trend lines with WMD proliferation, are arguably the most dangerous national security threat facing America today.

Now, if anti-Americanism is really the fault of the United States, if American policies justify the hatred of others toward the United States, then it follows logically that we can eliminate the terrorist threat if and only if we change our policies. If that is true, then all our exertions at public diplomacy, all our efforts to understand the sociology of the Arab and Muslim worlds, all our labors to liberalize the political cultures of the Middle East are pointless and

futile. If such a view were true, it would be very important to know it, because such knowledge could save us an enormous amount of time, money, and misplaced expectations. Armed with such knowledge, we could simply economically change the bad policies with dispatch, and that, presumably, would be that.

A good example of that very view is exemplified in a fairly recent article by Lamis Andoni, a Jordanian journalist who is by no means a radical, a terrorist, or an irrational hysteric. This well-known and well-respected Arab journalist is sure that American policies “perpetuate inequities and exacerbate regional conflicts,” which is a code phrase, of course, for America’s support for Israel. That support is why, Andoni claims, “neither U.S. control over the flow of news, nor the efforts of Pentagon and Madison Avenue spin doctors, can ease the resentment of U.S. policies and actions that have affected the lives, hearts, and minds of the people of the region.”

More than that, Andoni is “alarmed” that “the United States fails to realize that a foreign policy based solely on such principles of power and domination leave no room for legitimate political opposition, driving all discontent into the camp of extremists and terrorists.”[87] Hence the conclusion, so widespread even among those who do not hate America, that we “deserved” what we got on September 11, 2001. We presumably deserved what we got because we exacerbate conflicts, and we are responsible for authoritarian Arab and Muslim governments that repress all dissent and force people to extremism and terrorism. Our victimhood, in short, is all our own fault.

Those who believe this line of argument are thoroughly unconcerned about the principles and interests that might be adversely affected by abrupt and major changes in U.S. policy. They are unconcerned for one, or both, of two reasons. The first reason is the assumption that there would be no adverse effects—that policies that deserve to be hated ought to be changed, terrorism or no terrorism. The second is that no principle or interest could be as important as eliminating the threat of mass-casualty terrorism that confronts America.

If the situation is really so simple and clear-cut, why, then, do such supposedly terrible and counterproductive U.S. policies persist as they do? Many abroad, and some in the United States, who take this point of view have a handy explanation: because U.S. policy is in thrall to a powerful domestic lobby—the Jews.[88] It never occurs to most such people that the president and those of his cabinet members who are relevant to foreign policy—none of whom are Jews—might have good reasons, fully in the U.S. national interest, for the policies they determine. Were these people to acknowledge such reasons, however, it would mean that their own views were not so obviously justified after all. So, those who hold such views of the origins of U.S. policies instead prefer explanations based on plots and conspiracies because those explanations are so easy on the brain and are so comforting to preconceived biases.

Not a single element of what we may call the Andoni et al. argument is correct. Only some anti-Americanism is a function of American policy, and the most dangerous kind linked to terrorism really is not (of which, more below). Changing good, reasonable policies under the pressure of terrorist threats would not make us safer. To the contrary, it would unleash a feeding frenzy of pressure on American interests worldwide. A self-interested, parochial cabal does not control American foreign policy against the national interest. Nor is it true, as always implied if not always stated, that U.S. support for Israel is really at the top of every Arab and Muslim’s agenda, despite the efforts of al-Jazeera’s electronic yellow journalism to make it so.[89] And American foreign policy is most certainly not based solely on “principles of power and domination.”

For what it may be worth, the United States is also not responsible for the rise of authoritarian government in the Middle East. Such authoritarianism was firmly in place long before American influence arrived on the scene, and our capacity to change it today is much more limited than many think. In addition, the very same people who chastise us for intervening imperially into affairs that are supposedly none of our business are often the first ones to urge us to intervene into the affairs of those they dislike and wish to constrain or harm.

But because the general story line sketched above is so widely believed in the Middle East, and increasingly in Europe, public diplomacy and other “soft” instruments of American policy are necessary and important and can surely do some good if wisely employed.

Of course, there are limits. We will never convince most of our enemies that their addled, paranoid, conspiratorial way of seeing the world is mistaken, and we must still do what we think is right, even if others misunderstand our motives for doing it. The clearest and most unapologetic articulation of this truth is that of Fouad Ajami:

<quote>

There should be no illusions about the sort of Arab landscape that America is destined to find if, or when, it embarks on a war against the Iraqi regime. There would be no “hearts and minds” to be won in the Arab world, no public diplomacy that would convince the overwhelming majority of Arabs that this war would be a just war. An American expedition in the wake of thwarted UN inspections would be seen by the vast majority of Arabs as an imperial reach into their world, a favor to Israel, or a way for the United States to secure control over Iraq’s oil. No hearing would be given to the great foreign power.

America ought to be able to live with this distrust and discount a good deal of this anti-Americanism as the “road rage” of a thwarted Arab world—the congenital condition of a culture yet to take full responsibility for its self-inflicted wounds. There is no need to pay excessive deference to the political pieties and givens of the region.[90]

</quote>

All of this is true enough. But that misunderstanding, as pervasive as it is, is an autonomous factor—it is part of our problem, and not, all things considered, a small part. We can convince some in the Middle East that this story line is wrong, not least because it is wrong. We have to try. To try, however, we need a more sophisticated understanding of anti-Americanism and of a growing Middle Eastern anti-Semitism that is closely related to it.

*** The Nature of Anti-Americanism

There is loose in the world a perception of sharply rising anti-Americanism. That perception resides not least in the minds of many newspaper and journal editors and sundry other intellectuals, both in the United States and abroad. The frequent repetition of this perception bears influence in its own right, whether or not the facts match the perception—and to a considerable extent, they don't.

Let's be honest: much of the commentary on rising anti-Americanism presumes a cause—the supposed arrogance, self-absorption, and unilateralism of the George W. Bush administration. Those members of the "commentariat" who accept this characterization of the U.S. administration often begin with a conclusion that then presumes to sire its own factual premise.[91]

The actual facts say otherwise. True, there has been an increase in anti-Americanism in the past few years, and there has been a sharp spike corresponding to the period of the war in Iraq. But the increase has not been nearly as great as the commentariat typically suggests, and the reasons for the increase are more varied than usually averred. So says not only the U.S. Department of State's global opinion monitors but also a host of private professional polling and opinion analysis organizations.

Of course, measuring opinion is notoriously difficult, even in one's own country. It is harder still in countries with different attitudes toward the press and the common weal in general. Establishing the reasons that people express the opinions they do is harder still (of which also, more below). The beginning of wisdom in making one's way through this thorny topic is recognizing that distinctions matter. Anti-Americanism is, in truth, not one phenomenon but several.

Some people loathe the very idea of America. Even after “the end of history,” in Francis Fukuyama’s famous phrase, there are those who disparage the institutions of constitutional liberalism, who deprecate democracy, and who despise free-market economies. There are still many outside the zone of Western culture who equate liberty with license and equality under the law with the violation of some imagined hierarchy thought to inhere in nature itself. Opposition to America as an idea is an old prejudice indeed, going back to the very founding of the Republic. One may call it philosophical anti-Americanism.

Others do not like what they know of American culture, which inundates many societies these days without asking the permission of their elders. Not everyone likes popular cultural artifacts that are steeped in vulgarity, disrespect for elders and teachers, and countless variations on puerile promiscuity; even in the United States, there are a few of us left who feel the same way. We see, however, that freedom entails the right of others to debase themselves, and we know that we need not join their clubs if we do not wish to do so. But many abroad miss this subtlety. One may call their distate cultural anti-Americanism.

Still others like neither the particular policies of the American government nor the key personalities in a particular American administration. We may call this contingent anti-Americanism.

Sometimes philosophical, cultural, and contingent forms of anti-Americanism overlap. Often, however, they do not. Nor are these three varieties or facets of anti-Americanism evenly distributed around the world. The data show the sharpest contemporary anti-Americanism to be concentrated in two groups; but, as we will see, these groups do not much share the same kind of anti-Americanism.

The first of these groups is large: average citizens in most Arab and many majority-Muslim societies. Anti-Americanism is often expressed in these societies in terms of particular policies: toward the Arab-Israeli conflict, toward the stationing of U.S. military forces in the region, and, until spring 2003, toward the sanctions regime against Iraq (and since then toward the

American “occupation” of Iraq). Many people in the Arab and Muslim worlds distinguish between America and the American people on the one hand, and the American government on the other. This distinction is why it is really not so hard to understand why the same people who publicly excoriate America in one breath are often eager to express a desire to visit, work, and even immigrate to the United States in the next.

Not all Arab and Muslim anti-Americanism is of the contingent sort. Certainly, the supporters of Osama bin Laden are possessed of a rabid philosophical anti-Americanism. But in between the typical man on the street and the Islamist ideologue is a growing cultural anti-Americanism.

In this era of information technology diffusion, cultural anti-Americanism is spreading worldwide. So too, oddly enough as it would seem, is the popularity of American massmarket culture—rock music, jeans, backward baseball caps, and the rest. This seeming contradiction is not a contradiction at all, however. The fact is that rapid social change, accelerated by the information revolution, has produced a huge generation gap in many traditional and transitional societies. The young abroad tend to anathematize American policies while embracing American styles. Older people tend to anathematize American styles, regardless of what they may think and feel about American policies.

America’s image in the world, popular or not, is seriously distorted by our pop cultural extrusions. The source of the distortion exists, in part, because Hollywood and the American advertising culture export images of America abroad that do not match American social realities.

Several studies—including many directed by Dr. George Gerbner at the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg School of Communications—have shown, for example, that characters on network television are at least fifty times more likely to fall victim to acts of violence than the citizens of the real America. Violence is even more prevalent in exports of American television shows and movies, for the simple reason that the main expense in preparing a film for export is the cost of translation, whether dubbing or writing subtitles. The richer and more subtle the dialogue and

plot, the harder and more costly the translation. Explosions and gunfire, alas, do not require translation, so films rich in such pyrotechnics are usually cheaper to export, hence more profitable for the studios.

In American entertainment exports, depictions of sex outside marriage are nine to fourteen times more common than dramatizations of marital sex. This is a fictional proportionality, one can safely assume, that is wildly out of whack with the real America. It would be wildly out of whack even with the real France, Italy, and Germany. One hopes so, anyway.

For better and for worse, there is little the U.S. government can do about America's entertainment industry exports. However, the cumulative impact of those exports on how America is seen and judged outside our borders is not so small. This is particularly so in parts of the world where traditional religious attitudes toward sexuality remain intact—in other words, where they resemble attitudes almost universally held in the United States until only a few generations ago. (It is very important for Americans to realize that the values gap between American society and societies like those of Iran and Egypt has been produced not by recent changes in Iran and Egypt but by recent changes in America.)

The second major focus of contemporary anti-Americanism is much smaller in terms of the number of people involved: certain groups of intellectuals, mainly in Europe. But the influence of a small number of intellectuals is not thereby small. Ideas, even bad ones, have power. For these groups, disenchantment with American policies is more the pretext for an anti-Americanism that is philosophically deep-seated. This philosophical anti-Americanism has an old pedigree in resentment of a free and socially freewheeling America by the conservative, aristocratic blue bloods of Europe.

That such a prejudice, in somewhat modified form, has spread to the European Left over the past half-century is an ironic and interesting development. This spread can be seen in the recent book by Emmanuel Todd, Aprés I'Empire: Essai sur la décomposition du systéme américain, which was enormously popular and influential in France, and elsewhere in Europe, just before and during the war in Iraq. However,

Todd, who describes America as the “singular threat to global stability weighing on the world today,” has not been able to overtake the popularity of Michael Moore in Germany. “Stupid White Men”: Eine Abrechnung dem Amerika unter George W. Bush has been, by far, the best-selling item of its kind in German translation. This anti-administration diatribe has sold well over a million copies and was on the German best-seller list for more than forty weeks running in 2002 and 2003. For several weeks in spring 2003, it topped the list. As of this writing, Moore’s book has sold more copies in German than has the original English-language edition in North America, where the market is far larger.

Moore’s film Bowling for Columbine has also been very popular in Germany; about a million people have viewed it to date, according to sources in the U.S. embassy in Berlin. Touted as a true-to-life depiction of America’s violent culture, some German middle and high school teachers have proclaimed mandatory field trips to take students to see it. As Fred Kempe of the European Wall Street Journal put it, it cannot be without some significance (significance for Germany, not for the United States) that Michael Moore is the most popular American in Germany.

In Germany, and elsewhere in western Europe, cultural and contingent anti-Americanism have clearly mixed with and helped spread philosophical anti-Americanism during the past two years. Whether this new mixture will “take,” however, and give rise to a new anti-American reality in Europe remains an open question. Most likely it won’t, at least not among typical Europeans. Among Muslims living in Europe, however, it is another matter.

Outside of these two groups—the Arab/Muslim domain and a small group of European intellectuals—recent increases in anti-Americanism are either modest or nonexistent. One highly respected survey, the Pew Global Attitudes Project (PGAP), put it this way in 2002: “While criticism of America is on the rise, a reserve of goodwill toward the United States still remains.” The United States and its citizens were positively rated by majorities in thirty-five out of forty-two countries in the PGAP survey.

It is worth recalling, too, that recent increases in anti-Americanism have followed a period, after September 11, 2001, in which sympathy for the United States spiked up in most regions and countries. Increased anti-Americanism has also come in train with two U.S.-led wars, in Afghanistan and Iraq, that took place within a relatively short period. Clearly, the need for the United States to respond with military force to the events of September 11 inevitably magnified the perception of American “hard” power in a way that has made many people abroad uncomfortable.

Nonetheless, despite these special circumstances, the level of ill will for the United States expressed in the past two to three years is not markedly different from that expressed five or ten or twenty years ago. We have not, therefore, witnessed a deepening groundswell of hatred for the United States. In addition, it is very likely that the increases we have witnessed with the Iraq War will subside in due course, notably in Europe. Indeed, some recent data suggest that they already are.

Beyond media exaggerations, the perception of a sharp rise in anti-Americanism owes much to a key misperception among many Americans. The terrorist attacks of September 11 surprised most Americans, as well as frightened them. As the spate of “Why do they hate us?” press features illustrated, most Americans were not aware of much anti-American resentment in the world until it issued forth in large-scale murder on U.S. soil. As a rule, Americans are fairly informal and friendly people. Unless given a reason not to, they are inclined to like other peoples, and they expect other peoples to like them. Our citizens have been disturbed to learn that not everyone does like Americans, and this sudden awareness has led many to overestimate now what they underestimated before.

Other sorts of dynamics affect opinion and polling outside the United States. Some of what gets counted as anti-Americanism is not always as it seems. Anti-Americanism in some Middle Eastern climes has an almost allegorical character to it. In authoritarian political cultures, the average person is often reluctant to answer pollsters’ questions honestly. In some of those cultures, too, citizens may be tempted to deflect frustration with their own government and society by blaming America. After all, America is far away,

and it will not send goons with guns and billy clubs to knock on the door in the middle of the night.

Some authoritarian governments, justifiably frightened of their own people's wrath, actively encourage such deflectionary anti-Americanism in their official press. Many such governments have systematically been doing this for years, and some, amazingly, still claim to be true allies of the United States. If asked for a political opinion by a pollster, typical respondents stuck in such an information environment may say what they think their government wants them to say. They may believe their own answers, or they may not; it is almost impossible to know. Either way, toeing the official line is a way to stay out of trouble and to please those who control status, jobs, and access to credit.

The genealogy of Europe's philosophical anti-Americanism, on the other hand, has nothing to do with allegory. As James W. Ceaser pointed out in the summer 2002 issue of The Public Interest, in the late eighteenth century, many educated Europeans believed that the climate of America was prone to creating degeneracy and monstrosity in all living things. The Count de Buffon originated this preposterous thesis, which was taken up and popularized by Cornelius de Pauw. Thomas Jefferson took pains in his only book, Notes on the State of Virginia, to debunk it.

In the nineteenth century, European anti-Americanism focused on opposition to the universalist principles of American public life. Many anti-Americans were romantics who found in America an excess of rationalism and who excoriated America for having no real culture or history and no noteworthy national bloodline. What America did have, as many European intellectuals from privileged classes saw it, was a dangerous obsession with leveling of all kinds.

From Joseph de Maistre to Heinrich Heine, this anti-American view dominated European intellectual life for decades and it was joined toward the end of the nineteenth century by a more explicitly racist element. Americans were racially impure and hence degenerate, said Arthur de Gobineau, the inventor, it so happens, of modern "scientific" anti-Semitism. This idea was

more widespread than one would like nowadays to think. (The association of anti-Semitism with anti-Americanism has precedent, by the way: much anti-British sentiment during the heyday of British power, when London epitomized modernity and rationality, was also heavily laden with anti-Semitism, as the rantings of John Atkinson Hobson illustrate.)

In the twentieth century, anti-Americanism joined with newer streams of antimodernism. As Ceaser points out, not a small number of European intellectuals loathed standardized industrial production and were deeply suspicious of “culture for the masses.” Thus, for example, Friedrich Nietzsche and Rainer Marie Rilke’s intense dislike of America. The term Americanization was coined to mean turning true culture and spirit into base materialism. Thus, the influential view of Martin Heidegger, who started as a Nazi sympathizer but whose fulminations subsequently infused the postwar European Left through Jean-Paul Sartre and others. As prelude to Europe’s Luddite-like antiglobalization movement of our own time, to the thinking of Emmanuel Todd as well as Jose Bové, this legacy of European thought finds its place.

*** The Old-New Anti-Semitism

Obviously, there are many people in the Arab and Muslim worlds who are in no way anti-American. Obviously, too, most Europeans do not share the prejudices of a segment of their intellectual elite. Even so, anti-Americanism is a problem, not least because, as noted at the outset, a small number of people are motivated to translate their prejudice into violence. What is interesting, but also worrisome, is the coming together of strains of both anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism among radicalized Muslims born in Europe.

Olivier Roy’s analysis points to a rich and varied Muslim sociology in western Europe. Roy has given thought, in passing in this volume and in greater length elsewhere, to the possibility that radical Islam in Europe might ally with radical left-wing movements (and maybe even radical right-wing movements). If so, the rabid anti-Semitism of both would serve as an anchor of common belief.

Roy has also pointed out that radical Muslims really come in two different categories. There are local or regional radicals, whose targets tend to be all that they define as alien to Islam in their midst: Jews and foreigners and the locals who “serve” them. For example, recent attacks in Morocco, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere were aimed not at local residents or even at government targets, such as police or political figures; instead, they were aimed at synagogues, foreign consulates, and restaurants and facilities where nonresidents congregate. In the Saudi case of November 2003, the attacks were aimed at non-Saudi Arabs.

The other category Roy (and others) defines as internationalist. These are mostly Arabs who live in the West, speak a Western language, lack a formal Islamic religious education, and have taken a Western academic program. Most have been radicalized in Europe; some are immigrants, but most are European-born. Many do not speak Arabic or any Middle Eastern language. In the course of their radicalization, they break with their families and, indeed, with traditional Islamic and diaspora traditions. These are rootless internationalist radicals, who were followers of Sayyid Qutb before they were followers of Osama bin Laden. Their aim is to strike at the source of the humiliation and powerlessness of Islam—the West, led by the United States.

Such radicals have one foot in the West and one in an idealist Islam that lacks genuine Middle Eastern roots. They are a modern, or postmodern, phenomenon of deculturation under the pressures of globalization. Their methods, too, are modern, and their aims have little to do with the Middle East. Roy points out that the favorite destinations for jihad of Muslim internationalists are at the periphery of the Muslim world: Chechnya, Bosnia, Kashmir, and New York. There are no examples of people like Muhammad Atta returning to their or their family’s country of origin to engage in jihad.

These radicals, the most dangerous international terrorists, do not care about parochial conflicts in Algeria, Egypt, or Palestine. Osama bin Laden’s fatwa against Jews and crusaders was issued when the Oslo process appeared to be going fine. If they hate Ariel Sharon, they hated Ehud Barak no less. The contention that a settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian

conflict would have a significant positive effect on the kind of threat al Qaeda poses to the United States is therefore completely false.

A solution to that conflict would be a good thing, of course, for several other reasons. But any solution with which the United States would be involved would obviously leave Israel as a Jewish state in one set of borders or another. In return for that, the Palestinian Authority would have to agree to end the conflict short of totally recovering all of historical, geographical Palestine. If the Palestinians as a whole accept that sort of compromise, most Arabs and most Muslims would accept it, too. But some would not. Muslim radicals would see any Palestinian who agreed to such a settlement just as Istambuli saw Sadat: as an apostate from true Islam who deserves to be killed. Even among local Islamists, the prospect of such a settlement could be expected to increase terrorism, not reduce it, at least in the short term.

Such a settlement's impact on al Qaeda terrorists would probably not be very significant. But any impact it would have would most likely lead to more terrorism, against the United States, not less, for its having sponsored or mediated such an unacceptable settlement. The fact is that when most Arabs and Muslims argue that U.S. policy unfairly tilts in favor of Israel, they do not mean that the United States emboldens and supports Israel's occupation of territories taken in the June 1967 war. Rather, they refer to "occupied Palestinian territories," which to most means all of Palestine. Over the years, the Arab media, official and otherwise, have peddled a truly demonic image of Israel—state, society, ideology, everything. Israel sterilizes Egyptian women by putting secret ingredients in chewing gum. Israel deliberately spreads AIDS to the Arabs. Israelis kill Arab children to bake their blood into matzos for Passover. An extraordinary number of Arabs actually believe that such utter nonsense is true.

With such demonization has come a European-imported "literary" anti-Semitism circa the 1930s, complete with popular Arabic versions of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion.[92] The way Israel has been depicted makes the idea of peace and normalization with it virtually unthinkable to most Arabs—except, ironically, to many Palestinians, who actually have some degree of personal familiarity with Israel.

Given this “vision” of what Israel is, which is very widely shared from Morocco to Indonesia, no imaginable American-sponsored compromise settlement could erase the contention that American policy is one-sided, unfair, perpetuates inequities, and so forth. Indeed, for America to be truly liked these days in much of the Arab and Muslim worlds, American society and policy would have to become as routinely and as matter-of-factly anti-Semitic as theirs. Happily, this is not very likely.

The issue of Palestine has special resonance in the Arab and Muslim worlds for several reasons. One is that it is the quintessential pan-Islamic issue, largely because of the status of the Haram al-Sharif, the area in Jerusalem containing the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. In addition, Palestine is a collective symbol of Arab humiliation, particularly so at the hands of the Jews, who don’t come out too well in the Qur’an.

However, the Palestine issue is one that works only at the high symbolic level. It has nothing to do with borders, security arrangements, water rights, and all the other elements in dispute that Western analysts, casual and otherwise, spend almost all their time trying to figure out. Most Arabs and Muslims in countries that have no border with Israel are almost completely ignorant of the state of play on such discrete issues and couldn’t care less about them. All they know is that Israel is illegitimate, occupies holy Jerusalem, and is an anti-Islamic spearhead of the Christian West—a message whose resonance comes from the continued perseveration on Western colonialism in these societies. Failing elites deploy such a fixation to explain (away) the pathetic state of most of these countries.[93]

In short, those who see an imposed solution to the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab conflict as a U.S. strategic imperative because of the general context of the war on terrorism are mistaken about every one of their premises. If the United States were to pressure a democratic ally to make concessions to Islamist terrorism, it would be open season on U.S. interests wherever those interests touch the Muslim world. India, Russia, China, and other non-Muslim countries that share borders with Islam, either internally or externally, would come to regret such a decision, too.

It is true, however, that America supports Israel and that, because of Israel's wildly distorted image in the Arab and Muslim worlds, America suffers by association. What can be done about this?

As Ajami suggests, not much can be done, soon or directly. Ironically, the best way to go at this problem would be for Palestinian Arabs to become truth-tellers to the rest of the Arab and Muslim world. That could happen if Palestinians and Israelis, on their own, not by imposition, could arrive at a stable compromise peace. This is possible; it is even likely over the next half dozen years. Then it might be possible for Jordanians and Egyptians to get to know the real Israel better; the anti-Israel and anti-Semitic stereotypes so prevalent in the region might become weakened over time through Palestinian, Egyptian, and Jordanian media and word-of-mouth. In other words, if there is peace, reality will eventually intrude on lurid fantasy. In the meantime, there is a real limit to what American public diplomacy can achieve, particularly official, government-sponsored public diplomacy.

*** Last Words

A certain amount of anti-Americanism is inevitable. It goes with the territory of being number one in terms of raw military, political, and economic clout. The United States did not actively seek such a global status. Gideon Rose put it well: "America's role in international affairs today is not a sign of a quest for power, but a reflection of it."[94] But it doesn't matter how we got to be number one. There will always be those who fear the power of others, no matter the disposition of those who control that power. There will always be those whose capacity for envy exceeds their capacity for appreciation. It is as Machiavelli said: "Men's hatreds generally spring from fear and envy." That means, these days, that the potential for terrorism based in anti-Americanism can probably never be eliminated completely, only controlled and managed.

Although a certain amount of anti-Americanism does come with the territory of great power status, the U.S. government has no business making an

unfortunate situation worse. Those in government must be sensitive to the tone of their pronouncements, more so now than ever in the past: As U.S. power waxes, so must its sense of restraint and responsibility. American policy makers must exercise forethought as to how actions, even when taken with the most benevolent of motives, may be seen by others.

This means that public diplomacy functions must be taken more seriously. American officials can no longer assume, as has historically been their inclination, that the truth about American intentions will be obvious to everyone, or at least to everyone who matters. This is particularly true in regard to people in societies without access to free media and in which conspiracy theories are often accepted as matters of fact. Official American public diplomacy must do a much better job at monitoring falsehood and incitement, talking back to it, and unapologetically explaining American policies. As the Djerejian Report insists, we need to spend more money—a lot more money—to do this right.[95]

But getting at the broader cultural side of the problem is, as Ellen Laipson argues, no longer a job for government.[96] This function is very important, but it needs to be privatized. American and international foundations should be set up for such purposes, and those already in existence need to be quietly supported. Government can help coordinate some of these activities, encourage them with tax breaks, and help make sure the basic message is consistent with government policy. But any more direct role than that for government is the kiss of death as long as America’s image remains as sullied, justifably or not, as it is today. That is why the general “new” approach of Radio Sawa and Radio Farda is unfortunate; these media outlets are examples of approaches that ought to be in the private sector.[97] It is also why the U.S. government–run Al Hurra Arabic satellite television station, based in Springfield, Virginia, is likely to be a failure and a waste of money.[98]

The distinction between government and private sector efforts is important; but there is another distinction that bears stressing, or repeating. To the extent that anti-Americanism is based on honest disagreement with American philosophy or policies, Americans, in government and out, should accept it and learn to live with it. In some cases, some Americans see anti-

Americanism where there is only honest disagreement with a policy choice. Americans who cannot distinguish between those who hate Americans and those who disagree on the merits with the policy choices of the American government are liable to cause more anti-Americanism than they can possibly identify.

But to the extent that anti-Americanism is based on irrational premises that spring from social-political dysfunction abroad, we need to unmask and contend with that irrationality and dysfunction. Americans are, by and large, open to rational persuasion, and sometimes we are persuaded. But the American government should not, and will not, alter policies it knows to be correct just to please those who threaten the United States. It certainly will not bend before those who defame and impugn the United States from pathologies of their own making. After all, as many a wit has pointed out, it can be an honor to be hated, if one is hated by the right sort of people.

*** Note

This chapter reflects the author’s own views and does not represent the views of the U.S. government or the Department of State.

[87] Lamis Andoni, “Deeds Speak Louder Than Words,” in The Battle for Hearts and Minds: Using Soft Power to Undermine Terrorist Networks, ed. Alexander T.J. Lennon (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 262–63. A similar account of Muslim/Indonesian views may be gleaned from Jane Perlez, “U.S. Asks Muslims Why It Is Unloved. Indonesians Reply,” New York Times, September 27, 2003; and Pakistani views from Hussein Haqqaqi, “The Rage of Moderate Islam,” Foreign Policy, January/February 2004, 74–76. Haqqaqi reviews Khurshid

Ahmed's Amrika: Luslim Dunya ki Bey-Itminani ("America and Unrest in the Muslim World") (Islamabad: Institute of Policy Studies, 2002).

[88] A popular example in a European context is Michael Lind, "The Israel Lobby," Prospect (April 2002). My rebuttal may be found in "The Israel Lobby—Part II," Prospect (September 2002). In the United States, almost any issue of Patrick Buchanan's magazine The American Conservative will display an example.

[89] It certainly is not a big concern in post-Ba'athi Iraq, to take one important example. Ambassador Hume Horan was attached to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, from which he traveled the country for several months, having hundreds of conversations with Iraqis from all walks of life. "I've been here four months," Ambassador Horan wrote to me, "and no one has ever raised the Palestinians or the Arab-Israeli issue with me. Stale Arab causes are in the doghouse these days." E-mail communication, September 4, 2003 (emphasis in original).

[90] Fouad Ajami, "Iraq and the Arabs' Future," Foreign Affairs (January–February 2003).

[91] A similar argument is advanced by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell in The Economist's special issue, "The World in 2004" (January 2004): 66.

[92] See Robert S. Wistrich, "The Old-New Anti-Semitism," The National Interest, no. 72 (Summer 2003).

[93] See the excellent analysis on this point of Michael Doran, "Palestine, Iraq and American Strategy," Foreign Affairs (January-February 2002).

[94] Gideon Rose, “Imperialism: The Highest State of American Capitalism?” The National Interest, no. 71 (Spring 2003).

[95] Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World (Washington, D.C.: Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy in the Muslim World, October 1, 2003): 25–26.

[96] See also Michael Holtzman, “Privatize Public Diplomacy” and “Selling America to the Muslims,” New York Times, August 8, 2002, and October 7, 2003, respectively.

[97] Radio Sawa isn’t working. See, for example, Duraid al-Baik, “Media Battle Rages on Air to Win Over Arab Minds,” Arab News (Dubai), (November 11, 2003).

[98] See Jim Rutenberg, “Coming Soon to Arab TVs: U.S. Answer to Al Jazeera, Production Values and All,” New York Times, December 27, 2003.

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Encyclopedia Entries

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MAWLID is an Arabic word that literally means the time and place of a birth, but the word is used in particular for the birth of the prophet Muḥammad (mawlid al-nabī). In some Islamic countries it also refers to the festival days of local saints (walī s). The actual birth date of the prophet Muḥammad is unknown, but the anniversary of his birth is celebrated on 12 Rabīʿah al-Awwal of the Islamic lunar calendar, a day prior to the anniversary of his death (in 632 ce).

Muḥammad is portrayed in the Qurʾān as a messenger of God who was an ordinary mortal in other respects. Only in later centuries did many Muslims begin to assert a higher sanctity for his person. The first recorded celebrations of his birth occurred during the latter part of Fatimid rule in Egypt (909–1171). As Shīʿī Muslims who held descendants of the Prophet in particularly high esteem, the Fatimid elite similarly observed the mawlid s of Muḥammad’s son-in-law ʿAlī, his daughter Fāṭimah, and the reigning caliph. Palace dignitaries and religious notables held daylight processions and delivered sermons, a practice briefly prohibited but later revived. The Sunnī majority in Egypt took no part in these ceremonies.

The first popular mawlid occurred in 1207. Muẓaffar al-Dīn Kökbürü, brother-in-law of the famed Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn (Saladin), arranged for a festival in Arbalāʾ, a town near Mosul in present-day northern Iraq. As described by the historian Ibn Khallikān (d. 1282), a native of the town, the mawlid became an elaborate annual event, attracting scholars, notables, preachers, and poets from throughout the region. The deeds and person of Muḥammad were celebrated in religious poetry and songs and culminated on the eve of the mawlid in a torchlight procession led by the prince. Followers of Ṣūfī orders were also prominent in the celebrations, and gifts were lavishly distributed to participants.

Some aspects of early mawlid s appear to have been influenced by Middle Eastern Christian traditions of the period, such as lavish entertainments and nighttime processions in honor of saints. Even as mawlid s also developed for saints and other holy persons, especially in Egypt, the Prophet’s mawlid continued to be the most elaborate. Mawlid s quickly became highly popular occasions associated with mysticism, during which Ṣūfī orders congregated in public, reciting rhythmical chants in praise of God and in some cases entering into trance. From Egypt, mawlid s spread to many other parts of the Islamic world.

The popularity of mawlid s met initial resistance from some theologians. Ibn Taymīyah (d. 1328) and others condemned the Prophet’s mawlid as a harmful innovation (bidʿah). After considerable discussion, most theologians, except those precursors of the later Wahhābī movement, who espoused Islam in its most idealized and fundamental form, tolerated the mawlid as a praiseworthy innovation (bidʿah ḥasanah), since it inspired reverence for the Prophet. The central activity of mawlid s is the recital of long panegyrical poems and legends commemorating Muḥammad and his deeds, recitations so popular that they are repeated on festive occasions throughout the year.

The acceptance of popular practice by theologians shows the Islamic principle of consensus (ijmāʿ) at work. A key doctrinal tenet in Islam is that the community of believers cannot agree upon error. The legal opinions of religious jurists appear to have had minimal influence in reducing the popularity of mawlid s, so that most jurists were encouraged to accommodate theological doctrine to social realities.

As with other Islamic celebrations and rites of passage, mawlid s show considerable differences throughout the Islamic world. In some contexts, the mawlid is minimally distinguished from other festive occasions; elsewhere, it is one of the most important annual religious events. In nineteenth-century Cairo, mawlid celebrations started on the first day of Rabīʿah al-Awwal. Large tents were pitched in one of Cairo’s quarters and decorated with lamps and Qurʾanic inscriptions. Each

night Ṣūfī orders carried their banners in procession to their tents, where they chanted the name of God, recited poems in praise of Muḥammad, and provided refreshments to guests. In the daytime, dancers, clowns, and storytellers entertained the audience in a carnival atmosphere. Festivities climaxed on the eleventh and twelfth evenings of the month, with elaborate poems and songs in praise of Muḥammad that continued until morning. In recent times government restrictions against large public gatherings sought to curtail these events. Nonetheless, the Prophet’s mawlid and to a lesser extent those for local saints continue to be large communal festivals attracting hundreds of thousands of people in Egypt’s larger towns.

Elsewhere in the Islamic world, religious orders play a less central role in mawlid festivities. In Morocco, the month in which the Prophet’s birthday occurs is popularly known as mulūd, the local pronunciation of mawlid. Children born during this month are considered especially fortunate and are often named after it, and it is a good time to circumcise boys. Celebrations last a week, culminating with recitations of panegyrics of Muḥammad in decorated and illuminated community mosques. On the final night, recitations continue until daybreak. Some families offer a feast and distribute food to the poor; women decorate their hands and feet with henna and visit cemeteries. In Java, a feast is offered for the mawlid, which is one of the two most important calendrical ceremonies in a region given over to elaborate festival cycles. A popular Javanese belief is that the giving of feasts for the Prophet’s birthday and the end of Ramaḍān distinguishes Muslims from non-Muslims and humans from animals; this view of the importance of the occasion is not necessarily shared by those Javanese who have a more elaborate understanding of Islamic doctrine and ritual.

The symbolism of the mawlid is especially highly developed among Swahili-speaking East African Muslims. In the town and island of Lamu, located off the northern coast of Kenya, most Muslims hold that the prophet Muḥammad, created of dust, like all other persons, carried “light” to the earth in this month. The discipline of fasting during the month of Ramadan emphasizes the separation of nature and culture and the distance between actual human society and the Islamic ideal. Likewise, the month of Muḥammad’s birth is regarded as a joyous occasion that emphasizes life as lived here and now, combined with belief in the Prophet’s willingness to

intervene on behalf of his people and to accept them in full recognition of their individual shortcomings. It is said that during this month the Prophet lives on the earth like a human being and loves and hates just as they do. The first twelve days of the month are marked by processions, singing, and the music of tambourines and flutes. Intense competitions are held on successive evenings in the mosques and religious associations of the various quarters in Lamu. Each quarter vies in enthusiasm to praise Muḥammad’s life and deeds in song and prose and to show its love for the Prophet. Sharīf s, descendants of Muḥammad, are especially honored in Lamu during this period.

Sharīf‘s are invited to recite poems in praise of Muḥammad in most of the nineteen mosques of Lamu town. In beautiful performances on successive evenings, assemblies of young boys from mosque schools and musicians perform songs and poems that have been rehearsed for months. Brightly colored tunics, donated by wealthy Muslims, are worn for the ceremonies. The freeborn and the ex-slaves, members of two important local social categories, compete with one another during these celebrations to express a willingness to use earthly wealth—the offer of food and refreshments to guests—and talent to show their love for the Prophet. If not enough effort is put into the preparations for quarter festivities, the sharīf s are said to participate with less enthusiasm and to attract fewer blessings for the quarter. Love of the Prophet is said to join together the world of nature and the world of culture. Ceremonies include the sacrifice of cows, highly valued on the island, visits to cemeteries, and the distribution of rose water by sharīf s to symbolize Muḥammad’s ability to cleanse his followers of their sins. Until the 1970s distinctions between freeborn and ex-slave and sharīf and commoner remained significant for many East African Muslims, although in recent years such distinctions have been eroded under pressure from reformist Muslims.

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While Muslims throughout the world emphasize the unity of Islam, they also recognize the impressive diversity of cultural and historical contexts in which Islamic civilization has been elaborated and expressed. Because of this diversity, rites of passage in the Islamic world draw equally upon ritual forms and metaphors specific to local cultural contexts and upon the more universal elements of the Islamic tradition. Some of these ritual and expressive forms existed prior to the advent of Islam in the seventh century CE and were incorporated with appropriate shifts in context and meaning into the Islamic tradition. Others developed concurrently with the Islamic tradition.

Some transitions marked by rites of passage, including birth, naming, circumcision, social puberty, betrothal, marriage, pregnancy, motherhood, fatherhood, death, and mourning, are not specific to the Islamic world. These rites show an especially wide diversity of form and content because they incorporate major elements of local belief and practice. Marriage, for instance, is a secular contract in Islam. Muslim jurisprudence specifies certain legal requirements but not the form taken by marriage ceremonies. Provided that preexisting rites of passage are not directly contrary to the more universalistic aspects of the Islamic tradition, they remain a part of accepted local practice. Likewise, socially recognized transitions considered significant in some Islamic societies may be given much less emphasis in others. Some transitions, including the completion of Qurʾanic schooling and the pilgrimage (ḥājj) to Mecca, are specifically Islamic, yet how these occasions are ritually marked varies considerably with location.

Because of this diversity, rites of passage considered to be inherent components of the Islamic tradition in some parts of the Islamic world or by some social groups are not always accepted as having anything to do with Islam by Muslims elsewhere. For example, before departing for the pilgrimage to Mecca, many North African Muslims first circumambulate their town or village, visiting its principal shrines in the company of friends and relatives. Flags or banners associated with these shrines are carried in the procession. On their return from Mecca, the pilgrims participate in a similar procession and visit local shrines before crossing the thresholds of their

homes. Modernist Muslims claim that these “local” ceremonies have nothing to do with Islam or the pilgrimage proper, but for many North Africans these practices remain an integral part of Islam as they practice and understand their faith. Modernist sentiments are even more intense against the annual festivals (mūsim s) of some ethnic groups in North Africa, especially Morocco, in which ethnic collectivities renew their “covenant” (ʿahd) with particular saints and their living descendants through the offering of a sacrifice. Many such festivals occur annually just before the planting season and the moving of herds from summer to winter pastures. Similarly, the Alevi (Arab., ʿAlawī) Muslims of eastern Turkey, Syria, and northern Iraq fast only twelve days per year, in honor of the twelve imams (leaders of the Islamic community) whom they recognize, instead of for an entire lunar month. Alevis also consider that the true ḥājj is carried out in one’s heart, not in travel to Mecca. Their interpretation of Islamic obligations and practice is not recognized as valid by neighboring Muslims of other sects.

Although some rites of passage resemble one another in general form throughout the Muslim world, a thorough knowledge of how they are locally elaborated is essential to understanding their contextual meaning. Most of these rites derive in part from formal Islamic doctrine but are equally shaped by, and in turn shape, diverse underlying local conceptions of society. In Marrakesh, for example, the ceremonies marking birth, circumcision, marriage, and pilgrimage resemble one another because they share an underlying conception of social boundaries and social space. These conceptions are not derived from Islamic doctrine, but neither are they opposed to it. After a woman gives birth, she and her child are confined for seven days to the room in which the birth took place. Ceremonies involving only close relatives are then performed, but until the fortieth day after birth, the mother and her child refrain from crossing the threshold of the house. At the end of this period, they visit one of the principal shrines of Marrakesh. After a child is circumcised, he and his mother are likewise confined to one room of the house for the first week then to the entire house for another interval; finally, all restrictions on movement end after a visit to one of the major local shrines. For marriage, newly wed couples remain seven days in the nuptial chamber, followed by a few days in the house itself and finally a visit to one of the principal shrines. Returning pilgrims, once they have entered their houses, follow a similar progression to regain the full use of social space and to reincorporate themselves into ordinary society. Even with

the widespread expansion of mass education in recent years, which has the effect in many parts of the world of modifying or eliminating local ritual practices, those of Marrakesh remain largely intact.

In Islamic societies, as in others, the social and cultural significance accorded to specific rites of passage becomes clear only when the rites are considered in their full social context. In some parts of the Muslim world—in Silwa, a village in Egypt's Aswan province, for example—weddings are an important marker of transition, especially for women. Upon marriage a woman leaves the residence of her own parents and becomes part of her husband's domestic group. However, the significance of marriage elsewhere—as in Atjeh, in northern Sumatra, for example—is overshadowed by a woman's first live birth. In Atjeh, when a woman becomes a mother, she also becomes an adult and takes legal possession of her house. The ceremonies associated with her becoming a mother and the naming of her child are locally regarded as much more significant than marriage itself: Women claim that they are girls until they have children.

In the interior of Oman, a country in the southeastern corner of the Arabian Peninsula, marriages generally occur within the extended family and often involve a move of no more than several hundred feet for the bride, from the house of her father to that of a nearby relative. She continues to spend the better part of the day in the house of her own mother, although elsewhere in the Muslim world it is common to have a period of avoidance between a new wife and her family of birth. Marriage ceremonies in the Omani interior are such subdued, private occasions that non-family members often learn that they have taken place only after the event. In contrast, once a woman gives birth, the naming ceremony for her child is elaborate. It occasions visits from every household in the community and results in the mother's achieving full social status as a woman. The mother, not the child, is the center of attention at naming ceremonies.

Since the interpretation of rites of passage is dependent upon local cultural contexts, principal Moroccan practices are described here to illustrate a complete set of major social transitions. Examples are also provided from elsewhere in the Islamic world to indicate the range of major variation.

*** Birth and Naming

In Morocco, if a woman wishes to induce pregnancy or fears a difficult one, she visits the sanctuaries of marabouts (walī s) reputed for their efficacy in dealing with such difficulties. She will often leave a strip of cloth from her own dress as a promise that, if her childbirth occurs, she will return and sacrifice a sheep or goat, distributing its meat either to descendants of the walī or to the poor. Once a woman knows she is pregnant, she begins to eat special foods and to receive visits from female neighbors and relatives, practices that are common elsewhere in the Islamic world.

After she has given birth, a woman is confined to her house for a period that varies from a week to forty days. During this period she is regarded as ritually unclean and is unable to pray and fast, an indication of her marginal status. At the end of her confinement she is taken by female friends and relatives to the public bath, resumes normal activities, and is able once again to leave her house. The child is kept in its swaddling clothes during this period and is constantly guarded for fear that he or she might be exchanged for a malevolent spirit (jinnī). Most women unaffected by modernist Islamic belief and practice perform a series of rituals designed to propitiate any such spirits that might be nearby.

The most important event in the child’s life is the naming ceremony (subūʿ), which ideally occurs a week after the birth of a child of either sex. On this day the child is named, usually by its father but in agreement with the mother and other relatives. The mother is bathed, dressed in new clothes, and painted with henna, often by the midwife who has delivered the child. The child also has henna applied to its face, hands, and feet, both because henna is thought to be pleasing to the eye and because it is thought to protect the child’s spirit from harm. The mother receives visits from female relatives and neighbors on this occasion.

There is no fixed set of relatives involved in the naming of a child in Morocco. The choice is primarily a personal one and may also involve consultation with patrons or close friends. Likewise, the selection of names reflects a variety of influences and personal choices. Some persons prefer distinctly religious names such as Muḥammad (Mḥā in Berber-speaking regions) or ʿAbd Allāh (“servant of God”) for men, and Fāṭimah, the name of the Prophet’s daughter, for women. Other children are named after a religious feast day, such as Mulūdī for a man born on or near the Prophet’s birthday (colloquially, ʿĪd al-Mulūd). Other names reflect a commitment to nationalism, as in using the name ʿAllāl, after the Moroccan nationalist leader ʿAllāl al-Fāsī. The name chosen may honor a recently deceased relative; it is a bad omen to name a child after a living relative. In non-Arabic-speaking countries, such as Indonesia and Bangladesh, the growing use of Arabic names instead of non-Islamic ones or names in local languages is a direct result of a growing commitment to reform Islam.

For boys in Morocco, the naming ceremony is always accompanied by the sacrifice of a sheep or goat, although a blood sacrifice is often omitted in the case of girls. This sacrifice is known as the ʿaqīqah ceremony. The male relatives and friends of the father are invited to a midday feast, the child’s hair is cut for the first time, and alms are distributed to the poor. A separate feast is held for female relatives in the evening. This rite of passage is so significant that in wealthy families it is not unusual for hundreds of guests from throughout the country to attend. In many villages, each part of the sacrificed animal has a special significance and is designated for particular persons. The liver is eaten only by members of the household, and the heart and stomach fat are eaten by the mother alone. Other parts of the animal, usually including the skin and entrails, are destined for the midwife.

Moroccans consider the sacrifice for the naming ceremony to be an Islamic obligation, although of the four legal schools of Sunnī Islam only the Ḥanbali school regards it as compulsory. The other schools merely allow the practice, although Islamic tradition ascribes the sacrifice, which has pre-Islamic antecedents, to the prophet Muḥammad (d. 632). The sacrifice, like the haircutting, is thought to avert evil from the child by offering a substitute sacrifice. At the same time, with the acquisition of a name, the child becomes a full social person.

*** Circumcision

Circumcision is the next major rite of passage for boys. It usually occurs between the ages of two and seven. There is no equivalent ceremony in Morocco for girls. The day before the circumcision, the boy is bathed, and his head is shaved. His mother paints henna on his hands and feet to ward off the evil eye. A sacrifice is made, and a feast is prepared for friends, neighbors, and relatives, to which the guests bring small gifts. Many households wait until ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā or a marriage in the family or arrange with other households to have their children circumcised together. On the day after the circumcision feast, the boy, dressed in fine clothes and accompanied by musicians, is led around town on a mule. In the past in some areas, his clothes would have resembled those of a bride. Elements of the circumcision ceremonies are exactly parallel to those of marriage. The boy’s mother and sisters wear their hair loose, as they would for a wedding. Just before the circumcision itself, usually performed by an itinerant specialist but increasingly by medical personnel, the boy is dressed in a new, white shift, often similar to that worn by pilgrims to Mecca. The garment is another indication of the purificatory intent of the ritual.

In classical Arabic, circumcision is known as khitān, although in Morocco and elsewhere in the Arab world it is usually known as ṭahārah (“purification”), and in Turkey as sünnet, or the practice of the Prophet. Although not mentioned in the Qurʾān, circumcision is attributed to the Prophet and recognized as a pre-Islamic Arabian tradition; it appears to have been performed at puberty and as a preliminary to marriage. There is a modern tendency among educated Moroccans to have their children circumcised at an earlier age, sometimes even at birth, although for most families circumcision still takes place when a child, toward the age of six or seven, prepares to assume the responsibilities of an adult Muslim, including the daily prayers and the Ramaḍān fast.

In Morocco, as elsewhere in the Muslim world, the possession of reason (ʿaql) informed by accepted Islamic practice implies the ability of Muslims to subordinate their “natural” passions or personal inclinations

(hawa nafs) to God’s will. The concepts of ʿaql and hawa nafs occur in almost all Islamic societies. Children are said to be “ignorant” (jāhil) because they lack knowledge of the Islamic code of conduct and the capacity to abide by it. Thus, when circumcision occurs at the traditionally preferred age of six or seven, it marks the beginning of full participation in the Islamic community. Memorization of the Qurʾān, for those children who accomplish this feat, also sets a child apart from ordinary society through the mnemonic possession of the word of God. Like circumcision, the event is marked by a public procession and announcement of the child’s new status.

*** Marriage

After discreet private negotiations between the families involved, a date for the wedding and the size of the marriage payment (ṣadāq) are set. This payment, relative to the value placed on the girl and her family, is used to buy domestic furnishings that remain the bride’s property. By Islamic law, payment must be made in order for the marriage to be valid. The contract is usually signed in the presence of notaries or valid witnesses just after a ceremonial dinner at the girl’s home at which her father or guardian is formally asked for her hand. Later, an engagement party is held. This is primarily a woman’s party, with dancing and singing, the closing of the marriage contract, and payment of the bridewealth.

A day or two before the actual wedding, the bride’s family delivers to the bridegroom’s home the furnishings purchased with the ṣadāq money. These are publicly displayed, often on the back of a truck, and accompanied by drummers and musicians. There is often a small celebration at the woman’s house before she is taken to that of her future husband. In rural areas, the groom’s party may bring an animal to be sacrificed at her house. Several days later they return to carry the bride away to the groom’s house, where the major ceremony is held. As the groom’s party, often accompanied by the blowing of horns and drumming, approaches the woman’s house, there is a mock battle between the bride’s family and the groom’s, at the end of which the girl is allowed to be taken away. She has been prepared by purification with water and henna.

The day before the wedding, the groom also undergoes purification. He goes to the bath, accompanied by his friends, and is treated as if he were a sultan with his court. He is often painted with henna and entertained by musicians. In the past in some regions, the groom was himself dressed like a bride for a brief period, a custom that emphasized all the more the imminent transformation of his status. Afterward, he is washed, shaved, and dressed in new clothes.

Upon arrival at the groom’s house, the bride is ceremonially dressed in heavy layers of fine brocades and jewels, often rented for the occasion. After a long evening of music and feasting, the groom leaves his guests, enters the bridal chamber, lifts the bride’s veil, and ceremonially offers her milk and dates. Depending upon the region of Morocco and the social class, close relatives may visit the couple briefly at this stage. Wedding gifts are publicly announced and displayed at this time. Religious specialists are invited to the wedding feast, where they recite the Qurʾān and invoke blessings upon the couple but do not play a central role. Celebrations continue until proof of the bride’s virginity is brought to the guests, although Moroccans are rapidly abandoning this practice. For a week thereafter, the wife remains confined to her husband’s house, receiving visits only from close female friends. So that the bride may become accustomed to new patterns of domestic authority, she is forbidden to see her father, brothers, and other male relatives for at least three months. The public nature of parts of the ceremony, the bride’s change of residence, and the restrictions on her conduct formally denote the couple’s change of marital status.

*** Death

Deaths and funeral ceremonies show the most consistency in essential features throughout the Muslim world. More so than the other rites of passage, those for death and mourning are largely common to all Muslims. If the death is expected, the Qurʾān is recited continuously in the presence of the ailing person. At the point of death, the eyes and mouth of the person are closed, and the arms are straightened alongside the body. The deceased is placed with his or her face turned toward Mecca. For the duration of

mourning, regular social life is suspended for those affected. A person of the same sex who knows the prescribed ritual washing and preparation of the dead is called in. The women of the family are expected to cry and lose their composure, but men’s expressions of grief are expected to be much more restrained. The deceased is wrapped in a white seamless cloth similar to that worn for the pilgrimage; in the case of those who have actually made the ḥājj, the seamless white garments worn while in Mecca are used. The Qurʾān is recited. Burial occurs quickly, on the same day if death occurs in the morning or early afternoon; if death occurs late in the day, burial is postponed until the next morning. Friends and relatives accompany the procession to the cemetery, where a prayer for the dead is recited by a religious specialist. On returning from the cemetery, participants in the procession are provided with a meal at the house of the deceased. In some rural areas, food is also placed over the grave for the first three days after death.

Mourning continues for three days, the period thought to be sanctioned by the Qurʾān, and consolations are received by the relatives of the deceased. Since death is ordained by God, proper conduct for a Muslim after the initial shock of grief is to accept the will of God. The lack of forbearance and composure (ʿazaʾ) implies a lack of reason, in this context the capacity to adjust to an expression of God’s will. A widow remains in seclusion for four months and ten days, a period prescribed by the Qurʾān and the minimum legal waiting period (ʿiddah) before she is allowed to remarry. In Morocco, it is not unusual for elaborate stone markers or enclosures to be erected around the grave, a sharp contrast with, for example, the custom of the Ibāḍīyah of Oman, who indicate the equality of all Muslims after death by marking graves with simple stones, none of which carry inscriptions.

*** Major Variations

If there are numerous points of resemblance among rites of passage in the Islamic world, divergences are just as pronounced. In Egyptian villages along the Nile, women visit shrines and cross the river to encourage conception; the latter practice is directly related to a wish to induce a change in the woman’s status. In these practices, the parallels with Morocco are almost

exact, yet divergences also become clear when overall patterns are considered. In Atjeh, for instance, an elaborate series of visits takes place between the mothers of the wife and the husband, both before and after births, accompanied by complex food restrictions. Some of these restrictions occur only for odd-numbered pregnancies. In Java, the various rituals associated with birth are timed by the Javanese calendar, in which each month has thirty-five days. Many of the rituals involve a rich mixture of Islamic, Hindu-Buddhist, and indigenous spirits, and each food and gesture associated with these rituals has a specific implication. Thus, in the small feast for household members only, which occurs just before birth, a dish of rice is served with a peeled banana in the middle, to symbolize an easy birth. The precision with which events are timed and the punctilious concern with ritual detail are alien to other parts of the Islamic world. After childbirth in Atjeh, a woman may not leave her house for forty-four days. For much of this time, she lies on a platform over hot bricks with her legs extended and her ankles together. The idea behind this “roasting” is to become as dry as possible in order to expel the aftereffects of childbirth, again a set of notions without direct correspondences elsewhere.

The obligations incurred by guests at life-crisis ceremonies and the comportment appropriate to them also show considerable range. Egyptian villagers keep punctilious written accounts of the gifts they give to other members of the community and the value of those they receive in return. By contrast, the notion of strict, explicit equality of value is lacking in the Arabian Peninsula and is there considered to be against the spirit of Islam. In Java, certain foods such as wafer-thin disks of rice are served at major life-crisis feasts. Sharing them is meant to symbolize that all guests are internally composed and free from strong emotions such as envy, hate, and jealousy, a concern not equally emphasized elsewhere.

Circumcision shows two major patterns of variation throughout the Islamic world. Although all males are circumcised, women are circumcised only in certain areas, notably in Upper Egypt, the Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, West Africa, and Atjeh. Circumcision for women, which occurs between the ages of six or seven (Egypt) and twelve (Atjeh), occasions a minimum of ceremony. It does not result in any significant change of status for a girl, although the operation is considered a necessary prerequisite to marriage. Unlike boys undergoing circumcision, girls are allowed and even encouraged to cry out in

pain. The Islamic jurist al–Shāfiʿī (767–820 ce) argues that circumcision is obligatory for both sexes. Other jurists argue that it is merely “honorable” for women. The more extreme forms of circumcision, including infibulation, have been declared illegal in recent years by many governments, although enforcement is highly variable.

The age at which male circumcision occurs varies according to its significance in a particular cultural context. In northern Yemen, for example, circumcision until recently took place between the ages of twelve and fifteen and, despite official government bans, continues in some areas. The youth is surrounded by men and women of his village. A knife is held to his foreskin as he recites three times, “There is no god but God and Muḥammad is his Prophet.” The foreskin is then cut and thrown into the crowd. The youth retrieves it and is carried on his mother’s shoulders while he continues to display it proudly, leading a procession of dancers and brandishing his dagger. He is humiliated for life if he shows any sign of pain. In this context, circumcision is more a test of virility and a marker of young adult status than a point of entry into participation in the religious community, which is the case when circumcision occurs at the age of six or seven, as in Morocco. In Java, it traditionally occurred after a youth had completed religious studies, between the ages of ten and fourteen; two transitions that are kept separate elsewhere in the Islamic world were thus fused. Circumcision is also seen as a prelude to marriage, which is not the case when it occurs at a much younger age.

The vitality of the Islamic tradition is indicated in its capacity for self-renewal and transformation. The rites of passage described here for the Islamic world are inseparable from basic notions of social and cultural identity. As notions of identity shift, so do the forms of many of these rituals, even in the face of traditions previously accepted and taken for granted in specific contexts. Since the late nineteenth century, modernist and reform movements in Islam have given impetus to a reappraisal of the links between Islam and personal identity. Likewise, the abandonment or modification of practices not considered authentically Islamic, even if locally tolerated, signifies that notions of self and community are in a process of change, a process that is ongoing throughout the Islamic world.

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SNOUCK HURGRONJE, CHRISTIAAN (1857- 1936), Dutch Islamicist and colonial adviser. At the University of Leiden, Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje studied theology and initially intended to become a minister. His early interest in literary and historical criticism of the Bible, a field then still regarded as suspect by some conservative Christians, contributed to his decision in 1878 to renounce the ministry and pursue a scholarly career in Arabic and Islamic studies. In 1880 he defended a doctoral thesis on the origins of the traditional pilgrimage to Mecca. In August 1884 he traveled to Jidda, where he was invited by Meccan religious scholars and notables to visit Mecca. Although he dressed as a Muslim and adopted a Muslim name, 'Abd al-Ghaffar, Snouck Hurgronje did not conceal his identity as a non-Muslim from his hosts; he remained in Mecca from February to August 1884. In 1889 he published, with photographs, a detailed ethnographic account of contemporary Meccan social and intellectual life, translated as Mecca in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century (1931). A chapter of this work is devoted to Mecca’s Javanese colony.

Snouck Hurgronje’s interests as a historian of religions were strongly informed by ethnography. For Snouck Hurgronje, both historical and contemporary religious beliefs and movements had to be understood in terms of the social and political contexts in which they occurred. After his return to Europe from Mecca, he continued to lecture and write on general themes in Islam and Islamic jurisprudence but he became increasingly interested in the Dutch East Indies (present-day Indonesia). In 1889 he was sent to Batavia (present-day Djakarta), where he served as a colonial adviser while remaining an ethnographer and a religious scholar. In 1892 he was posted at Aceh, a region of Sumatra in frequent rebellion against Dutch rule since 1873. Living like a Muslim (though again not concealing his European identity) and reestablishing ties with Acehnese he had first met in Mecca, his comprehensive reporting on Islamic political and religious movements began to shape colonial policy. He recommended that the government co-opt the secular chieftains, while suppressing the Islamic leaders who were the instigators of the rebellion. His advice was informed by his view of the Islamic leadership as alien agitators intent upon imposing norms and values contrary to local customs. Snouck Hurgronje continued his role as Islamicist and colonial adviser to the Dutch government from his return to Leiden in 1906 until his retirement in 1927.

[See also Acehnese Religion.]

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Abstract

‘Transnational religious identity’ refers to personal or collective religious identities that transcend enclaves, localities, regions, nations, and states to achieve a wider unity of belief, practice, and community. The term implies the existence of the nationstate as the principal worldwide form of political sovereignty. Transnational religious identities are continuously reconstructed in differing contexts and ongoing struggles over ideology and authority in which shifting coalitions of elites, counterelites, ethnic groups, and those excluded from local authority structures compete for voice and recognition.

The subject of ‘transnational religious identity’ is unexpectedly complex. It refers to personal or collective religious identities that transcend enclaves,

localities, regions, nations, and states to attain a wider unity of belief, practice, or community. Transnational religious identities also imply an inherent tension between claims to universality and the specifics of language, ethnicity, place of origin, locally shared culture, values, and history. The term also implies the existence of the nation-state system - with its own competing claims for personal and collective identity - as the principal worldwide form of political sovereignty. Transnational religious identities are continuously reconstructed in different contexts and ongoing struggles over ideology and authority in which shifting coalitions of elites, counterelites, ethnic groups, or those excluded from local authority structures compete for voice and recognition.

*** Constructing Religious Identities

Transnational religious identities, like other personal and collective identities, are socially constructed. They are not given or ‘natural,’ although the advocates of some religious identities, like secular nationalists, often make such claims. In the nineteenth century, William Robertson Smith’s influential Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (Smith, 1956) traced the development of Semitic religious practices and institutions, stressing how a people’s social and political institutions, and the shifting boundaries between their own and ‘other’ communities, contributed to shaping their religious and ethical conceptions. Thus, the prophecies of Ezekiel and Samuel differed not because of a contradiction in the Bible, but because each prophet addressed himself to different groups and historical contexts.

For Smith and his successors, a key element in the growth and development of religions was the growing awareness that ideas and practices of community are socially constructed even if they are firmly rooted in divine revelation. In this view, a more ‘modern’ understanding of religious belief and practice implies a self-consciousness of ritual and tradition, places a high value on individual responsibility and commitment, and recognizes the existence of other religions and accords them some measure of legitimacy. In Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, this individual ‘taking charge’ of faith and practice also led to the greater role of a nonclerical ‘public’ in determining the role of religion in society (Salvatore, 2007). In this respect, Quranic verses such as the following, revealed in seventh century Arabia, are

distinctly modern: “To each among you, we have ordained a law and assigned a path for each of you. Had God pleased, he could have made you one nation, but His will is to test you by what He has given you; so compete in goodness” (Quran 5: 48). From its beginnings in seventh-century Arabia, Islam as religious tradition and practice has been remarkably open to the outside world (Ernst, 2011). The vast expanse of the Muslim majority world, ranging from Morocco to Indonesia, inevitably meant that it came to encompass a variety of civilizations and cultural forms. In Arabic, the Quran exhorted its initial seventh-century audience to break through parochial identities of tribe and kinship and aspire to a wider, more inclusive community of belief and practice.

Other religious traditions, including Judaism and Christianity, show similar diversity of form and interpretation, commingling local and universal elements. Pilgrimages in all faiths serve to project believers across lines of immediate locality or group. Pilgrims - and visitors to shrines and holy places - set off from home in the hope of reaffirming contact with a spiritual center, encountering ‘others’ and returning home with a sharpened awareness of difference and similarity (Eickelman and Piscatori, 2003; Sumption, 1975). Whether to Mecca, Jerusalem, Ayodhya, Rome, the holy places of Shi’a Muslims, or to the shrines of Sephardic saints (zaddiqim) in North Africa and Israel, pilgrimages and visitations create unity as they highlight differences of locality. In the Mediterranean (for Christians, Muslims, and Jews), as for South Asia (for Hindus and Muslims), pilgrimages and visitations often involve shared sacred spaces (Albera and Couroucli, 2012; Pemberton and Nijhawan, 2008).

Catholic missionaries and the adepts of Sufi religious brotherhoods also carried the word and practice of their respective faiths across vast spaces before they became nationstates (Rudolph and Piscatori, 1997). The missionary activities of the Catholic Church in Latin America date from the Spanish conquests of the sixteenth century. Missionary orders such as the Jesuits and Franciscans implanted complex networks of churches, missions, and schools, transferring people and resources between Spain and the colonies. In the Middle East in the nineteenth century, French Catholic and American Protestant missionaries opened religious schools in the Levant, and from the 1880s onward, the Alliance Israelite Universelle sent emissaries throughout North Africa and the Ottoman Empire. Although not primarily

religious in orientation, Alliance missionaries had a profound impact on the self-perception of the Jewish communities where they worked. The work of these missionary enterprises was aimed, respectively, at Christians and Jews. These activities occurred within a framework of economic hegemony and political domination in which foreign powers actively sought to protect the interests of Middle Eastern Jews and Christians. However, these ‘minority’ communities were widely distributed geographically throughout the Middle East in the nineteenth century, so that missionary activities aimed at them had a significant indirect impact on the region’s Muslim majority. For example, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna (1906-49), a strong opponent of Christian missionaries in Egypt and elsewhere, may have been strongly influenced by what he saw of their activities and organization when he was posted as a primary school teacher to Isma‘iliya, a town in the Suez Canal Zone, in 1927. Such ‘learning’ from other religious traditions is an important element in transnational religious movements and not confined to the last two centuries (Hofert and Salvatore, 2004).

Sufi orders had a major role in propagating Islam, both in the Islamization of North Africa and in the subsequent consolidation of Islamic domination. Some orders, such as the Bektashiya, attracted as adepts the political elite of the Ottoman Empire. Others, such as the Tijaniyya, had a major role in the spread of Islam to West Africa. Some orders were highly structured, but most were only loosely linked through informal but pervasive networks of affinity and trust. Their forms of association were widely understood and respected throughout the Muslim world, and their organizational forms continue to serve as a template for many contemporary religious movements.

*** Religious Identity and Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century

In nineteenth century Europe, the idea took hold that peoples could be divided into nations sharing a common language, religion, ethnicity, and culture, and therefore should form separate political units. This notion was complemented by a heightened self-consciousness, systematization, and explicitness of religious traditions. By the 1830s, the plural ‘religions’ came into common currency, with a similar development in Arabic, to signify the idea of ‘religion’ as a system of beliefs and practices that could be set alongside nonreligious elements of the human condition and apart from

other religions (Smith, 1963). This idea added impetus to the erosion of clerical authority over public discussions about religion in all faiths, an idea that often crossed from one faith to another (Hofert and Salvatore, 2004), as in the heated discussions between Ernest Renan and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani.

The linkage between nationalism and religion was implicit and the boundaries of religious and national identities rarely coincided. Partially in response to political and ideological developments in nineteenth-century Europe, a pan-Islamic movement developed in the late nineteenth century. Although the pan-Islamic movements of the 1880s bore similarities to the pan-Hellenic and pan-German movements of the time, only pan-Islam was based formally on a religious commonality (Landau, 1994). The pan-Islamic movements were initially confined to the educated elite, although this elite claimed to speak for all Muslims. The combined French and Spanish effort to crush the rebellion of Abd al-Karim al-Khattabi in 1927 generated protests throughout the Muslim world and appeals for pan-Islamic unity, but the results were transient and minimal. Equally profound is the accelerated nonelite transformation of world religions as they incrementally are influenced by the diverse national contexts in which they develop. For example, some observers write of the birth of a ‘French Islam’ (Kepel, 2011, p. 11).

*** The Reemergence of Religion in Public Life

Prevailing theories of modernity and modernization in the midtwentieth century assumed that religious movements, identities, and practice had become increasingly marginal to modern or modernizing societies and that only those religious intellectuals and leaders who attached themselves to the nation-state would continue to play a significant role in public life. As Casanova (1994) notes, by the late 1970s this prevalent view rapidly eroded through the impact of several nearly simultaneous developments: the Iranian revolution, the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland, the role of liberation theology in political movements throughout Latin America, and the return of Protestant fundamentalism as a force in American politics. Religion continues to play a significant role in politics and society worldwide. Even locally rooted movements benefit significantly with transnational sponsors or supporters, whether emigrants, states, or others sharing a group’s

objectives. Opposition to the Shah’s regime was firmly rooted in Iran, but the safe haven provided for opposition leaders in exile and their transnational ties and freedom of movement and action were integral to the revolution’s success, just as such transnational ties contribute strongly to reshaping how Iranians think of Islam and politics in the era of the post-1979 Islamic Republic (Adelkhah, 2012).

Contemporary religious transnationalism and the identities it supports take many forms. Some are highly structured, while others are only informally organized and related primarily by affinity of goals. Informality and the lack of formal structure can be a strength in contexts of political and religious oppression.

At one end of the spectrum of organizational structure is the vertical transnationalism of the Roman Catholic Church. In its encounter with the emerging system of sovereign nation-states in Europe, the Church incrementally reached an accommodation with nation-states so that the Church hierarchy, although transcending the boundaries of nation-states, also worked within them. The close ties formed with sovereign states often preserved a large measure of local freedom of action for the Church, but they also checked its ability to serve as a voice for social and political reform and for human rights.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) significantly altered the nature of Catholic transnationalism. With the Vatican’s Declaration of Religious Freedom, Dignitatis Humanae, it unambiguously supported the doctrine of universal human rights and used its voice internationally to secure these rights for all peoples and not just Catholics. Vatican II also intensified interfaith dialogue and formally recognized the diversity of Catholic belief and practice. It spurred the translation of liturgies into local languages and promoted lay participation in Church activities, further adapting the Church to local political and social circumstances.

The Church’s overall hierarchical structure remained intact after Vatican II, but it was complemented and sometimes overshadowed in importance by decentralized grassroots networks and organizations created for purposes as

diverse as Bible study, evangelism, and social and political actions. Many organizations and networks had direct ties to the Church hierarchy, while others operated autonomously. In Latin America, as elsewhere, both types of networks benefited from transnational support. Dutch, Italian, French, Swiss, the United States, Spanish, and other organizations acting transnationally contribute funds and personnel to sustain local developmental programs and action networks. Church-related human rights networks (along with groups with no religious affiliation, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch) have played a significant role in sustaining resistance to authoritarianism and repression, giving concrete form to the idea and practice of transnational civil society.

Protestant transnationalism lacks the time depth of the Catholic presence in Latin America, Africa, and elsewhere, but missionaries from mainline Protestant denominations established a stronghold in Africa by the last part of the nineteenth century, often informally dividing spheres of influence with competing Catholic and Protestant groups, establishing schools and hospitals that often had no state counterparts. Schools have been especially important, and often formed the cadres of early nationalist movements (Beidelman, 1982). Education, intended to inculcate Christian identity and practice, ironically undermined colonial authority and provided the cadres for African independence movements.

The first Protestant churches in Latin America were established primarily for European immigrants. By the 1960s, however, the mainline denominations were increasingly displaced by evangelical, Pentecostal, and fundamentalist churches and missionaries, trained and supported primarily from North America. Levine and Stoll (1997, p. 71) describe the growth of these groups, especially the ‘Religious Right,’ mixing evangelism with nationalism and anticommunism, as ‘spectacular.’ They suggest that these groups, in addition to providing needed community services, hospitals, and schools in areas where state facilities are minimal, appeal primarily to people experiencing intense social change and aspiring to improve their status and lives.

The ease of travel and the greatly enhanced role of the mass media have also enhanced the scope and ability of nongovernmental associations and networks to infuse an inherent transnational dimension to contemporary

religious identity and practice. Once established, the ‘horizontal’ networks of civic and religious engagement for both Catholic and Protestant groups became durable and self-sustaining. The transnational ties engendered through travel for labor migration, missionary activity, civic action, and human rights work creates both institutional ties and a sense of moral community for all participants, not just for the elite. Unlike the hierarchical transnationalism of the Church in earlier periods, the loose network organization that characterizes many contemporary groups is more difficult for states to regulate or control. Moreover, the ease with which participants in such networks can spread information across state boundaries and secure external support serves as a brake on the state abuse of authority. This is as much the case for Latin America as elsewhere. Della Cava (1993), for example, notes the influential role of Catholic nongovernmental philanthropic and service organizations in Central and Eastern Europe as a catalyst for change and an alternative, although not a replacement, for attachment to the nation-state.

*** Transnational Islamic Identities

Islamic transnational movements occur in a significantly different context than Christian ones because Islam lacks a central organizational hierarchy. Although some Muslim intellectuals call for a spiritual or political unity, the Muslim world has almost always been characterized by a de facto pluralism of belief and practice. Even radical Islamic groups such as Lebanon’s Hizbullah use the universal language of Islam but in practice seek only to establish an Islamic state or an Islamic order within their respective national borders even if they secure external support (Norton, 2009).

Some Islamic transnationalism is formal, organized, and linked to state organizations. After an arsonist’s attack on the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem in 1969, Muslim majority states founded the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which consists of 56 member states. However, this group has never advocated political unity and some member states, such as Nigeria, are anxious not to appear too closely identified with the organization. Nor has the OIC proved effective in the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88), in defusing the Iraqi- Kuwaiti tension that led to the 1990-91 Gulf War, or in other conflicts among Muslim majority states. However, its Islamic

Development Bank, established in Saudi Arabia in 1974, has become one of the most effective aid agencies in the developing world, and various charitable funds associated with it have had a significant impact in its regions of activity.

Unlike Catholicism, in which vertical and horizontal transnationalism coexist, Islamic transnationalism is entirely horizontal. In addition to formal organizations such as the OIC, some clandestine or 'deniable' transnationalism is state supported. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, for example, the United States, with the cooperation of Pakistani and Saudi Arabian security services, supported the recruitment and training of mercenaries from other countries, including Egypt, Algeria, the Yemen, and Sudan to operate alongside Afghan refugees from bases in Pakistan. This 'joint venture' subsequently turned against its initial sponsors. Relationships among like-minded groups are highly fluid, with loosely organized networks of ideological support, financing, and practical training (Sageman, 2008).

Islamic transnationalism is also manifested in nongovernmental movements such as the Muslim World League (Rabitat al-'alam al Islami). It sponsors educational programs, religious scholarships for students to study at Saudi and Muslim world universities, and a vigorous publication program throughout the world. Such nonstate organizations, particularly through their formal presentation of Islamic issues and standardization of language and approach, help create common ideological communities that transcend state and national frontiers. Such organizations also show an increasing concern over the situation of Muslim minorities throughout the world, bringing their plight to the wider Islamic community worldwide. The concern of these groups with Muslims living in North America, Europe, and Australia is reciprocated by the emigrants' active concern with the situation of coreligionists in their countries of origin or heritage and with the situation of Muslims in general. Other movements, such as those associated with the Turkish religious leader, Fetullah Gulen, are based on loosely connected clusters of supporters who lack formal central direction. Gulen's movement sponsors schools throughout Turkey, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe, as well as radio, newspaper, and television stations; notwithstanding the lack of central organization, the movement's educational and media programs have emerged as one of the most enduring forms of Turkish presence in Central

Asia and Turkish immigrant communities in Europe, North America, and Australia (Turam, 2006).

An even less formal and structured form of transnationalism is represented by da'wa (call to Islam) movements such as the Tablighi Jama'at (Masud, 2000). Founded in India in 1927, the movement expanded worldwide after 1947 and currently operates in 80 countries. One principle of the movement is that the practice of Islam does not depend on educated elites alone. The movement's main efforts are directed at deepening the faith of other Muslims and, to promote unity, it avoids theological controversies and politics. South Asian in origin, the Tablighi Jama'at is also active in Europe, North America, and the Arab world. The movement offers no formal training institutes, although some institutions of religious learning are attached to Tablighi centers. Unlike other Muslim organizations, the Tablighi Jama'at lacks welfare or educational programs. Since the movement eschews the broadcast and print media as a matter of doctrine, its spread is entirely through personal contact. With its emphasis on strict adherence to rituals and a concern with the development of individual morality and renewal of personal faith rather than collective action and community change, the Tablighi movement has limited appeal to educated Muslims.

*** Religious Identity and Globalization

Since the last third of the twentieth century, modern forms of travel, communication, and mass education have accelerated religious transnationalism - the flow of ideologies, access to information on organizational forms and tactics, and the transformation of formerly elite movements to mass ones - rendering obsolete earlier notions of frontier as defined primarily by geographical boundaries and accelerating in pace the earlier spread of ideas already speeded through the introduction of print technologies. Thus, the devotees of the North African Jewish saint, Baba Sali (Rabbi Israel Abou- hatzeira) meet not only in Israel and Morocco, but also in New York and Europe.

Especially in the Muslim majority world, the advent of mass higher education since the mid-twentieth century, combined with the proliferation of mass

media and the greater ease of communication and travel, has led to a significant reimagining of religious and political identities. One change is that patterns of authority have become more diffuse and open. Religiously committed activists increasingly replace traditionally educated scholars as sources of authority. Second, religion has implicitly been systematized and objectified in the popular imagination, making it selfcontained and facilitating innovation. Questions such as ‘What is my religion?’, ‘Why is it important to my life?’, and ‘How do my beliefs guide my conduct?’ have become foregrounded in the lives of large numbers of believers, facilitating individual questioning and encouraging individuals to assume responsibility for their conduct and to participate in movements of social and political action. These transformations also mean that ‘authentic’ religious tradition and identity are foregrounded, questioned, and constructed rather than taken for granted. Finally, the greater access to education, like access to the mass media, has broadened senses of language and community. Just as the rise of written vernacular languages in Europe since the sixteenth century and the spread of print technology created language communities wider than those of face-to-face interactions, mass education and mass communications play a role in the contemporary world, transcending the narrow bases of local communities and dialects and creating new, if fluctuating, bases of religious identity.

See also: Buddhism; Christianity, Origins of; Citizenship, Historical Development of; Judaism; Religion: Nationalism and Identity; Transnational Citizenship.

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Abstract

The adherents to Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the Middle East, while making universal claims for their respective faiths, increasingly recognize the significance of the highly varied local and particular contexts in which their religious symbols, ideas, and practices are understood. This ‘local knowledge’ also profoundly influences the understanding of ideas and practices considered global and universal. Since the midtwentieth century, the rise of mass education, the proliferation of new communications media,

and the greater ease of travel have reconfigured how people think about their own and other religious traditions. These understandings are often distorted, but the fact of their existence is now foregrounded in the consciousness of many believers. Local traditions of belief and practice, earlier taken for granted, increasingly are seen as systems of meaning and action to be articulated and reformed, argued and explained.

*** The Changed Setting for Religious Pluralism

Islam is the predominant religion in all the countries of the Middle East and North Africa with the obvious exception of Israel, where non-Jews make, primarily Arab Muslims and Christians, up 24% of the population. There are significant Christian and Jewish minorities throughout the region and the lives, doctrines, and practices of the carriers of all these faiths are intricately linked. As with Islam, the practice and understanding of Judaism and Christianity in the region have been highly diverse both in history and in the present, showing an ongoing creative tension between universalism and particularism. The labels ‘Muslim’, ‘Christian’, and ‘Jew’ — not to mention Zoroastrianism in Iran — aggregate the identities of distinct and often autonomous sectarian groups. Christians form significant minorities in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, and European settlers gave the North African states sizable Christian populations until the end of the colonial era in the midtwentieth century.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Christians and Jews were widely distributed throughout the Middle East and North Africa (Planhol, 1997; Courbage and Fargues, 1997; Sanasarian, 2000). Until the late 1940s in northern Iraq, for example, Sunni Arab Muslims formed a majority of the population in Mosul, with Jews living in both Mosul and surrounding agricultural communities. Shii Turkomen tribes resided in outlying villages, as did communities of Monophysite, Assyrian, and Nestorian Christians. Likewise, Lebanon has 23 recognized Christian and Muslim religious sects, each with separate community identities. At the beginning of the twentieth century there were also thriving Jewish communities distributed widely throughout the region. Some of these remained vital for decades after the declaration of Israel as a state in 1948, and Morocco’s Jewish community, although reduced in numbers, remains vital to this day, with Morocco’s

Jewish heritage formally recognized in its constitution (Gottreich and Schroeter, 2011).

Theologians and ideologues often highlight the distinctiveness of their respective faiths, but Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the region often share implicit background understandings and practices. Sacred spaces shared by all three faiths are found primarily only in Jerusalem and nearby places such as Hebron/al-Khalil, and shared Muslim and Jewish places of regional pilgrimage dot the Moroccan landscape and are equally venerated by Muslims and Jews. Such shared shrines continue to play a vital role in popular belief and practice. Thus in North Africa, festivals for Muslim saints (musims) and pilgrimages to regional shrines (ziyaras) have their counterpart in festivals (hillulas) for Jewish saints, with some shrines shared by the two faiths (Albera and Couroucli, 2012).

Variations in doctrine, religious practice, and traditions of shared memory also distinguish Muslim communities from one another. These include Sunni Muslims, the Shia (or ‘sectarians’, who comprise about 10% of Muslims worldwide and are further divided into numerous groups), and Ibadi Muslims of Oman, East Africa, and parts of Tunisia, Libya, and Algeria. The intellectual and educated elite often deny or downplay the significance of local, regional, and sectarian differences in faith and practice, but these practices often are powerfully linked to the local social order and continue to play a major role in the popular imagination.

‘Modernity’ in the form of uniform state schooling and mass communications often alters these practices, but does not erode them. Nonetheless, rising educational levels and the proliferation of communications media, including satellite television unrestrained by state authorities, are tilting the balance in favor of ideas and practices that can be explained, defended, and foregrounded in public.

*** Explaining Religious Diversity and Change

Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, is rich and varied in its creativity and cultural expression. It is a challenge for Muslim believers and scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim, to account for the variations of belief and practice as they have been expressed for over 1400 years in richly diverse cultural and historical traditions. As a response to this complexity, some scholars dismiss as non-Islamic or as incorrect those practices they consider not in accord with ‘central’ Islamic truths, even though people who hold such beliefs consider themselves fully Muslim. Some deal with these issues by seeing ‘foundation’ texts at the core of each religious tradition — the Qur’an in the case of Islam — and then seeing how successive generations understand and articulate them. If such texts and ideas are too closely bound to their original settings, no matter how persuasive for their original audience, they risk failing to attract wider audiences. Such texts must remain relevant to the social and political contexts of succeeding generations.

When first introduced in the late 1940s, the notion of ‘Great’ and ‘Little’ traditions offered one way of coming to terms with the universal and the particular in religious expression and practice. The Great/Little tradition contrast rekindled an interest in how popular understandings of religion — the ‘little’, localized, traditions — were related to elite, literary ones. It also encouraged attention to the specifics of who advocated or explained particular religious orientations and practices, whether they were influential in their own society or marginal, appealing primarily to a particular social group or category (Von Grunebaum, 1955). In some settings, individuals claiming descent from the family of the Prophet Muhammad were given precedence. The concept of the Great/Little tradition encouraged exploring the links among religious ideas and practices, authority, and influence.

Often, however, the concept was employed only to juxtapose statements of ‘essential’ Islamic principles, as elaborated in standard texts and by educated Muslims, with inventories of local religious practices. For example, the study of trance and possession states (called zar cults in the Sudan and East Africa), often indicative of the affective side of religious traditions, was often frequently relegated to the ‘little’ tradition side of the divide and attributed primarily to women.

Yet such ideas and practices also shed light on ideas of the person and how both women and men in societies with such practices express and explore alternative social realities (Boddy, 1989). Mosque-centered activities such as Friday prayers, almost the exclusive domain of men, often have been seen as part of the ‘great’ tradition. Women, who often predominate in visits to local shrines and in zar cults, are then seen as sustainers of ‘local’ traditions. This gendered division is made all the more plausible by the fact that until recent decades women had lower levels of education and mobility than men. An alternative explanation, however, is to see mosque-oriented and shrine-oriented practices as integrally complementary, and which must be ‘read’ together as a unit in order to understand religious practice (Tapper and Tapper, 1987).

In North Africa, Hammoudi (1993) suggested the explanatory utility of linking the canonical Muslim sacrificial feast associated with the annual pilgrimage to Mecca with practices such as Bujlud, a carnival-like masquerade in Morocco’s Berber highlands that follows a few days after the canonical feast. Colonial ethnographers regarded the two events as separate, as do Muslim intellectuals. In the masquerade, a young male villager dons the skin of a sacrificial animal and assumes the character of Bujlud (‘the wearer of the skins’), and with his cohorts cavorts noisily throughout the village, sacrilegiously mocking established religious and social conventions, entering homes, and bantering obscenely with women. Hammoudi argues that the masquerade evokes the contradictions implicit in the cultural classifications that regulate ordinary behavior, including gender roles, directing caricature and self-directed irony against local social hierarchies, tradition, and innovation. The canonical Muslim sacrifice, on the other hand, embodies the ideal community. The canonical sacrifice and masquerade inherently conjoin ritual piety and impiety, embodying an ongoing contest over significance and interpretation in which existing and alternative social orders are embodied and intertwined.

*** Ritual and Belief in Morocco

In the late 1960s, Morocco became ‘good to think with’ for understanding religion in complex societies, just as the Trobriand Islands had earlier entered the anthropological canon for understanding exchange systems and India for

understanding caste and stratification. The ethnographies of Morocco's colonial era did not lend themselves to comparative studies or lead to disciplinary classics. The publication of Clifford Geertz's Islam Observed (1971), originally a series of lectures delivered to historians of religion, marked a breakthrough in linking religious studies in general to the ethnographic study of specific cultural traditions. Geertz took for granted the unity of the Islamic tradition, but emphasized the highly divergent ways in time and space that it articulated with social experience. His point of departure was Islam as experienced, interpreted, and practiced from the fifteenth century to the present in Indonesia and Morocco, the two antipodes of the Muslim majority world. For Geertz, Islamic symbols and meanings are culturally defined and socially shared, like all other systems of meaning. If commonsense gives shared meaning to immediate practical experience, religion offers a higher and more general interpretive order. These two systems of meaning — commonsense and religion — are intricately intertwined, both shaped by historical experience and giving shape to it.

A key element of Geertz's argument was to explore the constructed meanings of sainthood and Sufism (mysticism) in the two contrasting settings. In Morocco, individuals with highly varied attributes — reputations for piety, scholarship, miracle working, or other distinctions — were popularly imputed with saintly authority. Since the current Moroccan social order took hold in the fifteenth century, Geertz argued, the cultural order in which Moroccan ideas of saintly authority was sustained was characterized by a 'strong man' politics of zealous warriors, rulers, and saints enforcing their will and inducing clients to act on their behalf. Their authority was charismatic, based on personal dominance. In contrast, the Indonesian view of sainthood is hierarchical. Saints incrementally achieved prominence through years of meditation and Indonesia's settled agricultural villages placed high value on cooperation and order.

In the contexts of both Indonesia and Morocco, the idea of saintly authority took significantly divergent forms because of the contrasting nexus of commonsense perceptions of the world and the different historically constructed senses of meaning through which Indonesians and Moroccans interpreted Islam. These commonsense perceptions and background understandings form the necessary point of departure for understanding religious belief, experience, and practice. Indeed, the perspectives of religion

and commonsense are intertwined in a dynamic, often unstable, dialectic (Zein, 1977; Eickelman, 2005).

Theologians and ‘common’ people interpret religious texts, including the ‘foundation’ texts of religious traditions such as the Qur’an, in multiple and contested ways. Thus, the most common term for saint in contemporary Morocco is ‘pious one’ (salih), although ‘marabout’, the term used by Geertz and which has made its way into French and English usage, is also understood. ‘Pious one’ conveys the multivalence of Moroccan usage. For educated Moroccans, the term is reserved solely for individuals of outstanding piety, and many speak of saint, or maraboutic, cults as ‘pre-Islamic’ vestiges. For many other Moroccans, however, both in towns and in rural areas, the ‘pious ones’, living or dead, are imputed with mystical powers, including the ability to secure positive outcomes for individuals and groups who have maintained a connection with them through gifts or donations to their descendants (Eickelman, 1976). Moroccan monarchs and senior government officials continue publicly to visit the shrines of pious ones and make gifts toward their maintenance. Elsewhere in the Muslim world there is a similar interplay between different notions of piety, and there is a similar dialectic of ideas of sainthood among Jews of North African origin (Weingrod, 1990).

The emphasis Geertz placed on the cultural dimension in understanding religious experience suggested an alternative to characterizing religious traditions in terms of an essential core prevalent in all places and for all historical periods. His approach instead stresses how systems of religious meaning and practice, like all cultural experience, are contested and dynamic, and therefore not reduced to a single, cohesive set of principles. Some conceptions of Islam are significantly intertwined with, although not limited to, the local social order. However, other conceptions are more universalistic and global, amenable to articulation with a wide range of contexts. These universalistic and particularistic conceptions are copresent and in a dynamic, often volatile, tension with one another.

Geertz’s approach, like other efforts to understand religious expression and practice in Moroccan society and elsewhere, including Ernest Gellner’s Muslim Society (1981) — note the singular — had significant

implications for understanding religious expression in earlier historical periods and outside the Muslim majority world. For example, Brown (1981) notes that his understanding of the moral order of early Latin Christianity, the ‘lasting, urgent problems of any civilized community — friendship and protection, justice, power and mercy’ — were in part inspired by ethnographies of contemporary North African saints. Similarly, Cornell (1998) shows how medieval Moroccan arguments on the nature of sainthood — cultural understanding of and debates among mystics in both urban and rural settings about concepts related to God’s love and authority from the eleventh through sixteenth centuries — contributed to the Sufi tradition elsewhere in the Muslim world. Cornell’s argument also compares the North African experience with sainthood as understood and practiced in Europe in the same period. Writings on Judaism in North African and Middle Eastern societies likewise indicate a reemphasis on the cultural dimension and explore the significance of local cultural contexts (Deshen, 1989; Goldberg, 1996; Gottreich and Schroeter, 2011).

*** The Iranian Revolution and Religious Politics

The 1978–79 Iranian revolution was one of several major events that underscored the continued significance of religion in politics and public life, notwithstanding its neglect in most midtwentieth century discussions concerning modernization and modernity. In Iran itself, the revolution led to the creation of a new, rapidly changing religious idiom for interpreting religious, social, and political events — and to contesting them (Khosrokhavar, 1997; Adelkhah, 2012). The debates in Iran continue unabated over the form that an Islamic state should take and the role that religion should play in society, including gender relations (e.g., Mir-Hosseini, 1999; Adelkhah, 2000). Successive incremental decisions and the unanticipated outcomes of earlier ones meant that the revolution looked different in the decades after the event both to many of those who participated in it and to the majority of Iranians not even born when it happened. Some observers use the term ‘postIslamism’ to describe Iranian society in the 1990s, emphasizing the significantly different way that many Iranians, including many clerics, began to argue publicly for a more limited role of religious institutions in Iranian politics and public life (Khosrokhavar and Roy, 1999).

In spite of contemporaneous hopes for some and fears for others at the time of the Iranian revolution, it did not trigger similar political movements in other Muslim majority countries. It did, however, compel regimes elsewhere in the Middle East, both secular (including Egypt, Turkey, Syria, and Algeria) and religiously oriented (including Morocco and Saudi Arabia) to become more attentive to popular understandings of social justice and religion in society. From the first decades of the twentieth century, new religious movements emerged that had distinctly modern political forms. Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, founded in the late 1920s and regarded by the midtwentieth century as Egypt's only genuinely popular mass political movement, foreshadowed the growth of similar later Islamic movements, many of which benefit from their ability to attract leaders with strong skills in organization and communication. Distinctly modern in organizational form, with a clear hierarchy and (at least at the outset) formal criteria for membership, the Brotherhood's leadership rested not with traditionally educated religious scholars but with those effective in organizing their followers and articulating their values, providing social and medical services as well as religious inspiration in many communities. After the fall of the Mubarak regime in Egypt in February 2011, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood reemerged as a powerful political force, but with strong competition from other secular and religious groups. As after many changes in political authority, those kept by force from exercising political authority and rights in Egypt and elsewhere in the region show inexperience in managing the state machinery once in office. The result has been to engender significant competition from both religious groups, whether or not formally organized for political purposes, and secular ones.

As dramatic as the events of the 2011 'Arab Spring' were in some parts of the Middle East, they were in many ways the culmination of long-term shifts in economy, society, and religious expression and practice. As early as the 1960s, for example, the Muslim Brotherhood and similar organizations looked conservative in contrast to the proliferation of movements advocating the Islamization of politics and society. These 'Islamist' movements ranged from small, radical groups such as the one responsible for the assassination of Egypt's Anwar Sadat in 1981 to larger ones sometimes organized like political parties, such as Hizbullah of Lebanon, the Virtue Party of Turkey (succeeded in 2001 by the Justice and Development Party (AKP)), or the

Islamic Salvation Front of Algeria. Some of these Islamist movements had their origins as ‘spokesmen for the despised’, and had Jewish and Christian analogues (Appleby, 1997; Marty and Appleby, 1995). In general, the influence of extremists, having taken off in the late 1960s, appeared to have waned by the 1990s (Kepel, 2000), only to have subsequently regained momentum. Most movements work within existing national boundaries, even if they sometimes receive external or transnational support. Some movements have advocated violence to achieve their goals, but others have been strong advocates of tolerance and civil society, and many movements have altered as they enter the mainstream of national political life.

*** Religion as System and Ideology

Since the latter half of the twentieth century, mass education and the proliferation of new communications media have profoundly altered how religious knowledge and practice are produced and understood in the Middle East. In the Arab world, for example, large numbers of people now have the level of literacy needed to follow religious and political debates from multiple sources and the command of formal language needed to participate effectively in public life. The religious lessons learned from state schooling may be regarded with skepticism, but like other aspects of state schooling, they inculcate the habits of thought and language needed to learn about and elaborate alternative views of the role of religion in society.

Ironically, the ideas of many radical Islamists mirror competing secular ideologies in form and structure. The writings of Sayyid Qutb, executed by Nasser’s Egypt in 1966, attracted a wide audience among white-collar workers, professionals, and students, the beneficiaries of modern education. In Arabic and in translation, Qutb’s writings continue to have widespread appeal because they offer ‘Islamic’ explanations for contemporary political and economic developments and for the perceived injustices of existing regimes. More contemporary religious ideologues, like Morocco’s ‘Abd al-Salam Yasin (1928–2012), argue that contemporary Muslim societies have been de-Islamized by imported ideologies and values. Yet the style and content of these writers, like others, imply an audience already familiar with the secular, imported ideologies against which they argue. This is the case even for the writings and speeches of Osama bin Laden (1957–2011) (Euben

and Zaman, 2009). Implicitly, they also convey a sense of Islam as an ideology and objectified system of meaning, which can be conveyed as one subject among others in schools, and in catechism-like pamphlets. In this sense, religion forms one of several systems of meaning in modern society, even as some believers argue that Islam is a ‘complete’ way of life. Yet the argument of ‘completion’ does not mean closure. As Iqtidar (2011) argues in a key study on a leading Islamic group in

Pakistan that has moderated its views and practices as it becomes more mainstream, the contents of shari’a and ‘tradition’ are constantly contested and adapted to changing social and economic circumstances.

The awareness of alternatives to immediate social circumstances is facilitated by the increased availability of contemporary forms of communication, ranging from the press and broadcast media to readily duplicated DVD (which have largely replaced audio cassettes), ubiquitous mobile telephones, and the Internet. In an earlier era, state authorities easily regulated the media. By the end of the twentieth century, the top-down asymmetry of broadcast radio and television was reversed by newer media that are readily adaptive, interactive, and difficult for states effectively to control. These developments have contributed to the fragmentation of religious and political authority by allowing large numbers of people to participate in an increasingly public debate over the symbolic language of Islam (Eickelman and Anderson, 2003). Combined with political change and the growth of diaspora communities, these developments indicate a changed social and cultural environment for religious expression and practice in which a mass and anonymous public has given way to one characterized by an increased multiplicity of horizontal relationships. The shift to a network society has created communities and communicative spaces in which large numbers of people, while not abandoning their ties of family and community, discover and create alternative ways of thinking about the role of the sacred in society and politics.

Seealso:Transnational Religious Identities (Islam, Catholicism, and Judaism): Cultural Concerns.

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